



Sooke Region  
Chamber of Commerce  
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## Sooke Economic Survey 2024



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## Survey Overview.

The "Shopping in Sooke" survey serves as a crucial tool for understanding consumer behavior and evaluating the strength of Sooke's economy. Its primary aim is to pinpoint where residents spend their money and assess the vitality of various sectors within the local economy. By analyzing spending habits and preferences, the survey helps identify popular shopping destinations, areas for growth, and opportunities for entrepreneurs. Additionally, insights gleaned from the survey inform strategic planning efforts aimed at supporting local businesses and fostering economic development in Sooke. Overall, the survey plays a pivotal role in guiding decision-making processes and promoting the prosperity of our community.

## About

The survey report provides essential context regarding its methodology and scope. The survey, conducted via Facebook throughout March, aimed to gather insights into the shopping habits of Sooke residents. With a robust response from 612 participants, the findings presented in this report represent a comprehensive analysis of consumer behavior within our community. It's important to note that the survey questions were designed to maintain consistency and facilitate comparison with previous years' data, ensuring reliability and relevance. By leveraging social media platforms like Facebook, we were able to engage a broad cross-section of the community, enriching the validity of the study's findings.

## Executive Summary

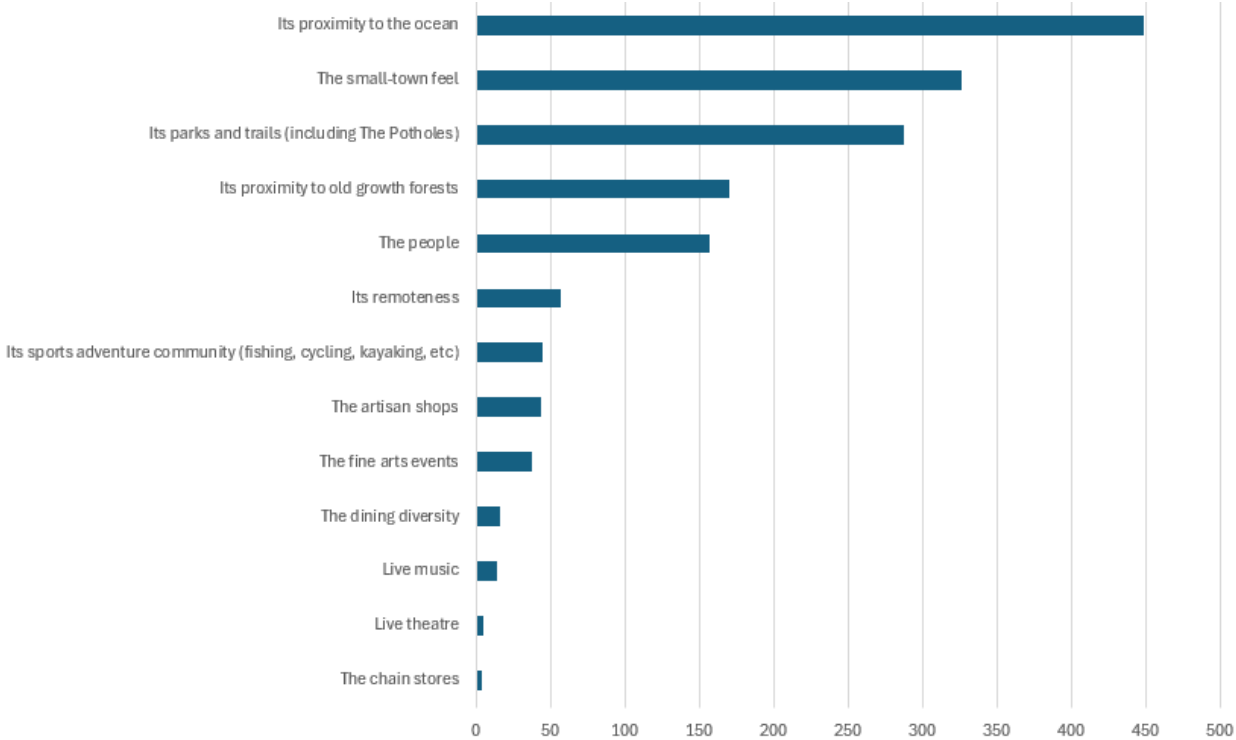
The document provides a thorough analysis of survey responses encompassing various facets of Sooke's community, economy, and resident spending behaviors. It underscores Sooke's unique attributes, including its coastal location, small-town ambiance, and abundant parks, as well as the prevalent local engagement among residents, despite a notable proportion commuting outside the district for work.

Insights into consumer preferences reveal the significance of groceries, dining, and essential services within Sooke, alongside expenditure areas outside the community such as clothing and entertainment. Residents express a willingness to support local businesses, while also indicating areas for improvement, including the need for more dining options, clothing stores, and alternative food providers, as well as desires for enhanced transportation infrastructure and cultural offerings.

Understanding residents' preferences and spending habits can guide businesses in aligning their offerings to better meet community needs, thus bolstering customer attraction and economic growth. The document emphasizes the interconnectedness between businesses and community well-being, emphasizing the importance of supporting local enterprises for economic stimulation and fostering community pride. Ultimately, the insights provided serve as a roadmap for businesses to effectively serve their customers, strengthen community ties, and drive the district's continued growth and development.

Question 1. What do you most love about Sooke? Select up to 3.

Its proximity to the ocean	449
The small-town feel	326
Its parks and trails (including The Potholes)	288
Its proximity to old growth forests	170
The people	157
Its remoteness	57
Its sports adventure community (fishing, cycling, kayaking, etc)	45
The artisan shops	44
The fine arts events	38
The dining diversity	16
Live music	14
Live theatre	5
The chain stores	4



Other things include:

- The ability to have a large yard.
- Quaint character
- The free parking
- Kids activities (sports, Guides, etc)
- Rent is a bit more affordable.
- Housing affordability
- All the above.
- The Legion
- Proximity to Victoria but not in Victoria
- I'll cheat here and say (since three is too few!) parks & trails, the restaurants and cafes, the locally owned businesses, and the overall #Sooke vibes :-)
- Quiet
- All of the above
- Small businesses
- The wildlife
- Family generations and memories
- It's pretty, the sky views the moon, sunset etc
- A lot of the above-mentioned has disappeared over the years. There is no longer a small-town feel. Too much traffic congestion
- Beautiful Pickleball courts
- Not much anymore
- Campground at the flats
- Ocean & mountain views
- The quietness
- My farm
- The weather
- My son lives here.
- Nature - the scenic views, people who come together etc
- Not a lot anymore

The responses offer valuable insights into the unique characteristics and attractions that resonate most with residents. With 449 respondents selecting its proximity to the ocean as a beloved aspect, it's evident that Sooke's coastal location holds significant appeal within the community. Following closely behind, 326 participants appreciate the small-town feel, highlighting the charm and intimacy of the area. Additionally, 288 individuals value Sooke's parks and trails, including popular spots like The Potholes, underscoring the importance of outdoor recreational opportunities. Other notable responses include 170 respondents appreciating the proximity to old-growth forests and 157 individuals citing the warmth and camaraderie of the local community as a cherished aspect. These findings illuminate the diverse array of attractions and qualities that contribute to Sooke's appeal as a place to live and thrive.

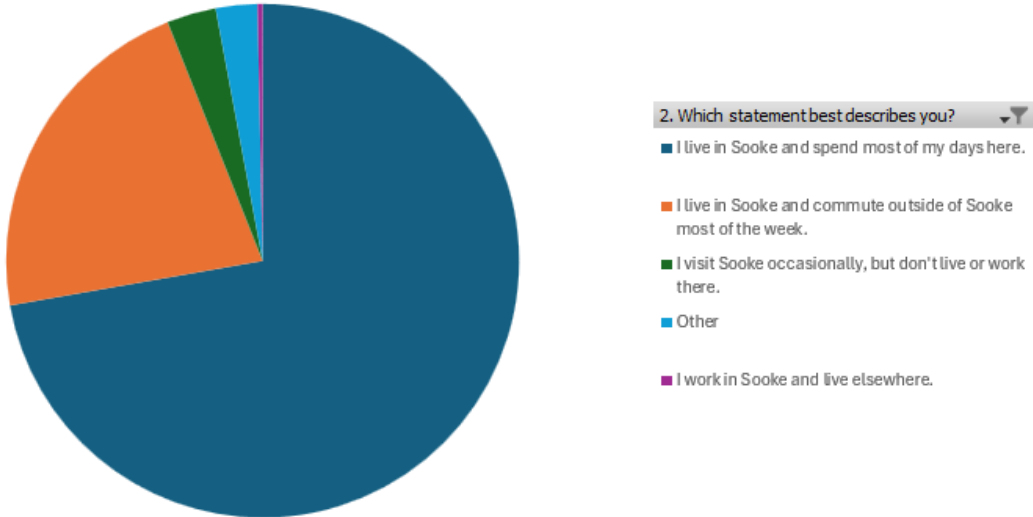
- 1. Proximity to Nature:** Sooke's natural surroundings, particularly its proximity to the ocean and old-growth forests, are highly cherished. This suggests that residents value access to outdoor recreational activities and the opportunity to connect with nature.
- 2. Parks and Trails:** The presence of parks and trails, including popular destinations like The Potholes, is another significant factor contributing to Sooke's appeal. These amenities likely enhance residents' quality of life by providing opportunities for outdoor leisure and exercise.
- 3. Community Engagement:** The positive mentions of "the people" and the "sports adventure community" highlight the importance of social connections and shared interests within the community. This sense of belonging and camaraderie contributes to Sooke's overall attractiveness.
- 4. Artisan Shops and Cultural Offerings:** While not as prominent as other factors, mentions of artisan shops and fine arts events suggest an appreciation for Sooke's cultural scene and opportunities for local shopping and entertainment.
- 5. Remoteness:** Some respondents value Sooke's remoteness, indicating a preference for a quieter, more secluded lifestyle away from urban centers.

Overall, the survey results paint a picture of Sooke as a community that prioritizes a close connection to nature, a strong sense of community, and opportunities for outdoor recreation and cultural enrichment. These factors likely contribute to Sooke's appeal as a desirable place to live and visit.

## Question 2: Where our respondents live and work

### 2. Which statement best describes you?

I live in Sooke and spend most of my days here.	442
I live in Sooke and commute outside of Sooke most of the week.	133
I visit Sooke occasionally, but don't live or work there.	19
Other	16
I work in Sooke and live elsewhere.	2



These statements shed light on the residential and commuting patterns of our survey participants. The majority, comprising 442 individuals, indicate that they live in Sooke and spend most of their days within the community, reflecting a strong presence of residents actively engaged in the area. Additionally, 133 respondents reveal that they reside in Sooke but commute outside of the community for work most of the week, highlighting the interconnectedness of Sooke with neighboring regions for employment opportunities. Furthermore, 19 individuals indicate that they visit Sooke occasionally but do not live or work there, underscoring the significance of tourism and recreational visitors to the area. A smaller portion of respondents, comprising 2 individuals, report working in Sooke while residing elsewhere, suggesting a degree of employment diversity within the community.

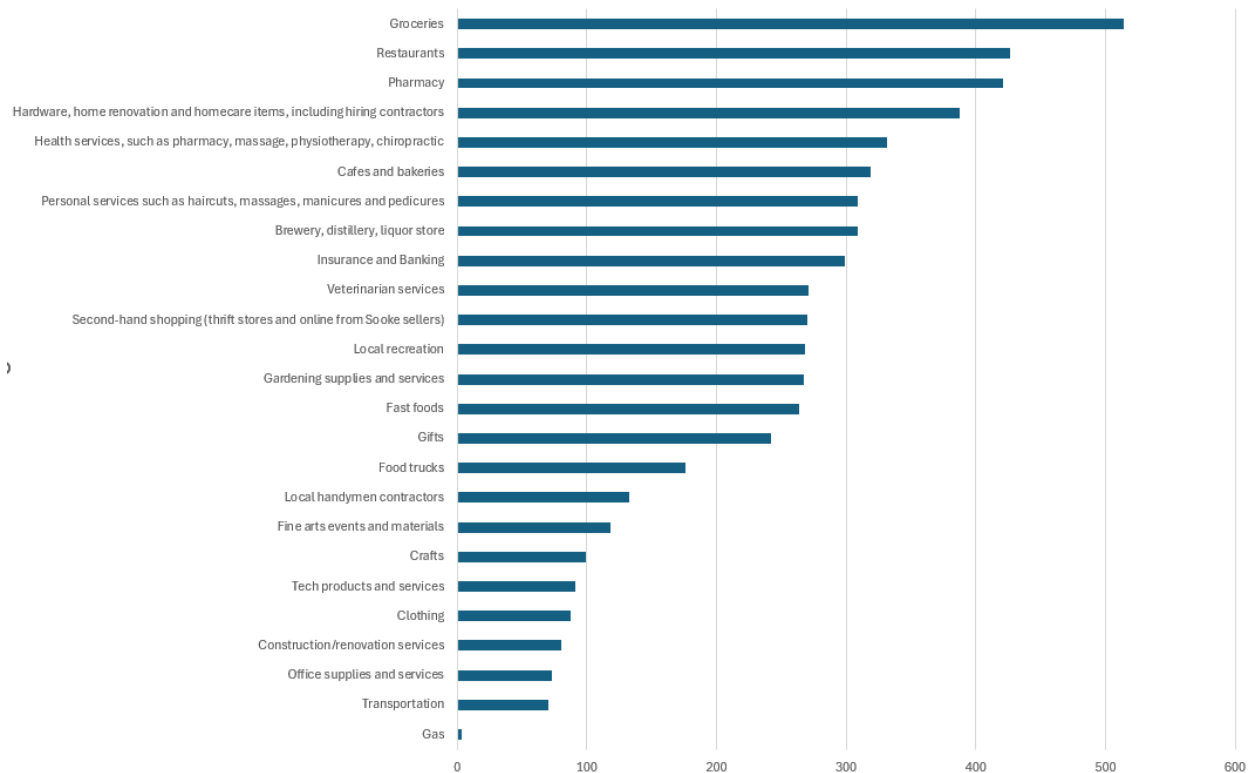
These findings provide valuable insights into the geographic distribution and mobility patterns of individuals associated with Sooke, informing strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing local amenities and addressing transportation needs. With a significant portion of respondents commuting outside of Sooke for work, there's an opportunity to explore initiatives that promote local job creation and reduce the need for lengthy commutes. Moreover, understanding the presence of occasional visitors underscores the importance of developing tourist-friendly infrastructure and amenities to capitalize on Sooke's appeal as a destination. Additionally, for those who reside in Sooke but work elsewhere, there may be avenues to improve transportation options, such as enhancing public transit routes or facilitating carpooling initiatives. By addressing these aspects, we can work towards fostering a more sustainable and connected community that caters to the needs of both residents and visitors alike.

Question 3. In which business categories do you spend money in Sooke?  
Choose all that apply.

Top 25

Groceries	514
Restaurants	426
Pharmacy	421
Hardware, home renovation, and homecare items, including hiring contractors	387
Health services, such as pharmacy, massage, physiotherapy, chiropractic	331
Cafes and bakeries	319
Personal services such as haircuts, massages, manicures, and pedicures	309
Brewery, distillery, liquor store	309
Insurance and Banking	299
Veterinarian services	271
Second-hand shopping (thrift stores and online from Sooke sellers)	270
Local recreation	268
Gardening supplies and services	267
Fast foods	264
Gifts	242
Food trucks	176
Local handymen contractors	133
Fine arts events and materials	118
Crafts	99
Tech products and services	91
Clothing	87
Construction/renovation services	80
Office supplies and services	73
Transportation	70
Gas	3





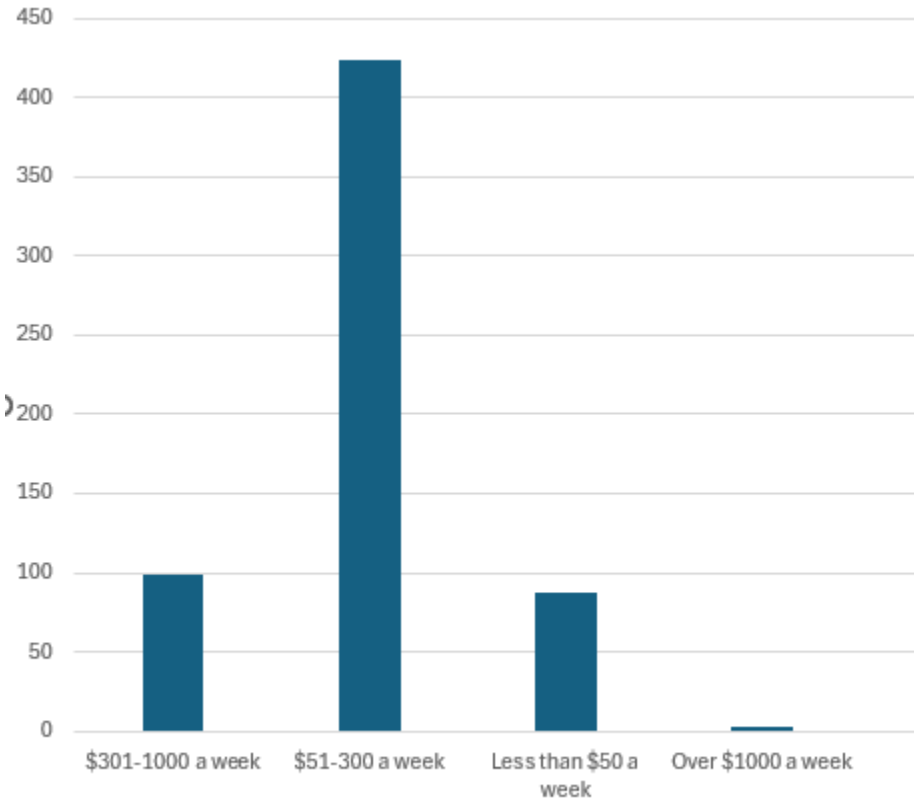
Other expenditures include:

- Dentist, optometrist
- Rec centre
- Physio, massage, and chiro etc
- Local farmstands, community sales like Marketplace
- Sports
- Coffee shop
- dental
- buy gas/home hardware, an eye doctor, and a dentist.
- Plan to hire local hand-people/contractors this year + vet services if we follow through on intentions for a pet.
- local utilities and services
- Cheap gas
- Farmer's Market and farm gate sales
- It is too expensive to shop in Sooke and limited products that I use. We go into Langford to get what I need.
- Performing Arts events
- Too costly to buy in Sooke
- Boat maintenance and repair
- I try to shop elsewhere now due to high prices, except for Daniel's market, great gas prices.
- I don't spend my money in Sooke, too expensive compared to Langford.
- I honestly don't have to leave Sooke unless I am doing a large grocery shop for the family as the larger retailers in Langford are priced better for the larger hauls. That and not all the items I need for raising kids can be found in Sooke.

This offers rich insights into the diverse spending habits and consumer preferences shaping Sooke's local economy. With 514 respondents prioritizing groceries, it's evident that residents heavily invest in essential goods, underlining the foundational role of local supermarkets and grocery stores. Following closely behind, 426 participants express a strong inclination towards dining out, emphasizing the significant contribution of the restaurant industry to Sooke's culinary landscape and social fabric. Additionally, categories such as pharmacy (421), hardware, home renovation, and homecare items (387), and health services (331) emerge as key pillars of local commerce, reflecting residents' reliance on essential services and healthcare provisions within the community. Furthermore, the prevalence of spending in areas like cafes and bakeries, personal services, and breweries/distilleries signifies a vibrant ecosystem of small businesses that not only meet residents' needs but also contribute to the unique character and quality of life in Sooke. These findings underscore the importance of nurturing a diverse business ecosystem to ensure economic resilience and sustained growth in Sooke.

These additional comments provide valuable context comments offer insights into consumer behavior in Sooke, highlighting factors such as affordability and product availability that influence spending decisions. They underscore the challenges faced by local businesses in remaining competitive with larger retailers in neighboring areas while also showcasing instances where businesses thrive due to competitive pricing and quality offerings, as seen in positive remarks about specific establishments like "Daniel's market, great gas prices." Additionally, comments about specific expenditures, such as "Dentist, optometrist" and "Boat maintenance and repair," demonstrate the diverse range of spending categories beyond those listed in the survey. These insights emphasize the importance of considering a wide range of business sectors when assessing Sooke's economic landscape and highlight opportunities for fostering community engagement and economic resilience through support for local services.

### Question 4. How much money do you spend locally (excluding rent/mortgage and car payments)?



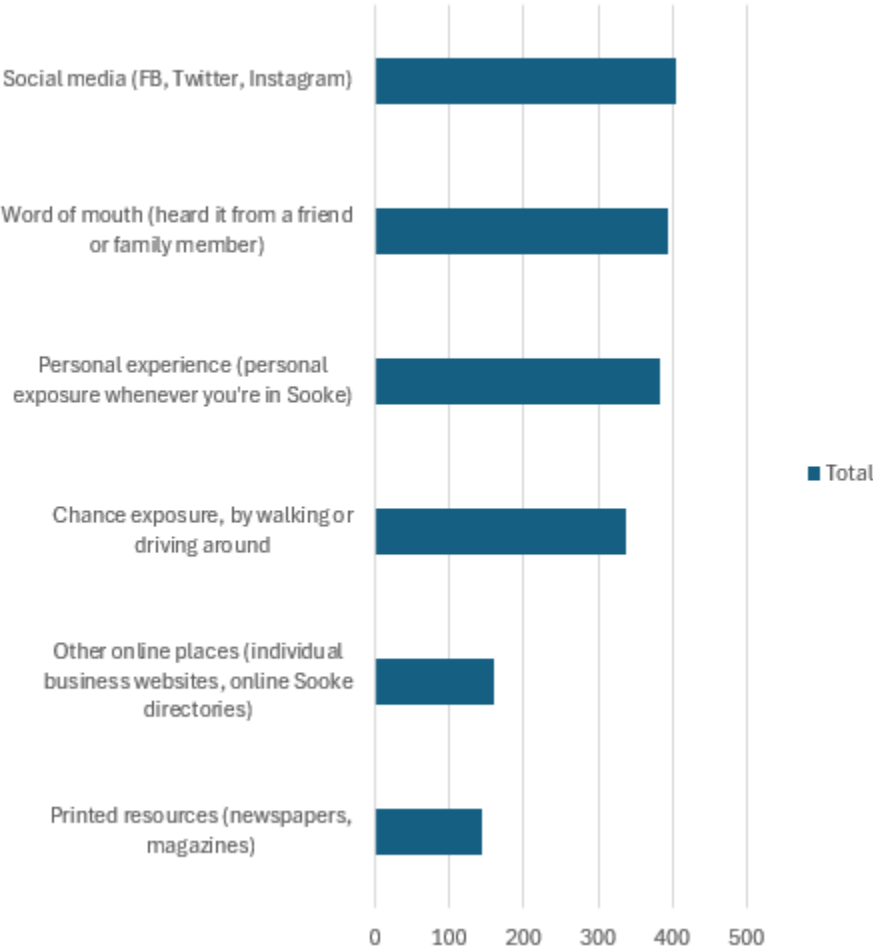
4. How much money do you spend locally? (Excluding rent/mortgage and car payments.)

Spending habits reveal varying levels of weekly expenditure among Sooke residents. The majority, comprising 425 individuals, indicate spending between \$51 and \$300 per week locally, reflecting a moderate level of economic activity within the community. Additionally, 100 respondents report spending between \$301 and \$1000 per week, indicating a significant segment of the population with higher spending capacities. Conversely, 75 individuals report spending less than \$75 per week locally, suggesting a more conservative approach to expenditure among some residents. Finally, 10 respondents indicate spending over \$1000 per week, highlighting a smaller yet notable portion of the population with substantial purchasing power. These findings provide valuable insights into the spending behaviors and economic dynamics within Sooke, informing strategies aimed at supporting local businesses and fostering sustainable economic growth.

This can include promoting local shopping events and initiatives to encourage residents to prioritize spending within the community. Additionally, facilitating networking opportunities and providing resources for small business development can empower local entrepreneurs to thrive. Collaborative efforts between local government, business associations, and community organizations can further strengthen the economic ecosystem by identifying and addressing challenges faced by businesses. By fostering a vibrant and resilient local economy, Sooke can enhance its quality of life and create opportunities for long-term prosperity.

Question 5. Where do you get your information about the shopping and business community in Sooke? Select all that apply.

Social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram)	406
Word of mouth (heard it from a friend or family member)	394
Personal experience (personal exposure whenever you're in Sooke)	382
Chance exposure, by walking or driving around	337
Other online places (individual business websites, online Sooke directories)	159
Printed resources (newspapers, magazines)	143



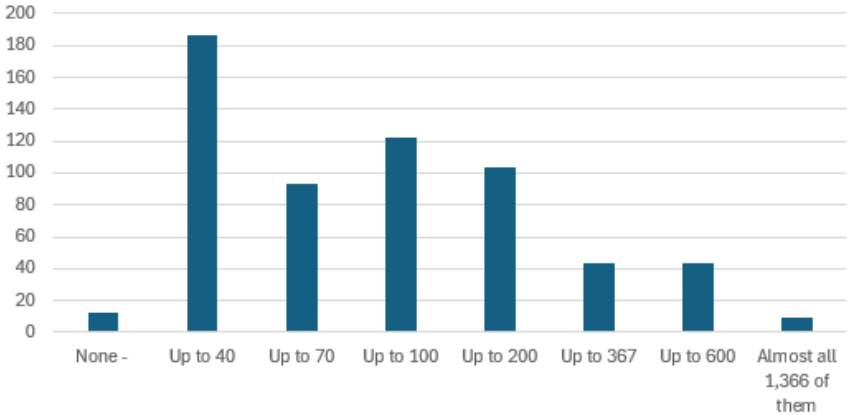
The responses to the fifth question shed light on key avenues through which businesses and entrepreneurs in Sooke can effectively engage with the community and enhance their visibility. With **social media emerging as a dominant source** of information, businesses can leverage platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to connect directly with their target audience, foster community engagement, and build brand loyalty. Additionally, **word of mouth remains a powerful influencer**, highlighting the importance of cultivating positive relationships with customers and providing exceptional experiences that inspire advocacy and referrals. Moreover, **personal experiences within the community** and chance exposure while navigating Sooke's streets underscore the significance of strategic location and visibility for businesses. Investing in eye-catching signage, storefront displays, and **creating inviting storefronts can capture the attention of passersby** and drive foot traffic, contributing to increased brand awareness and customer engagement. Finally, while **online resources** such as individual business websites and online directories play a role in information dissemination, businesses should also consider complementary strategies such as **advertising in print publications to reach a diverse audience**. By understanding and leveraging these key channels, businesses and entrepreneurs can effectively connect with the Sooke community, enhance their visibility, and drive business growth.



Question 6. In 2021, the District of Sooke had 1,366 businesses registered. Of those, 367 had staff. Roughly, how many Sooke businesses might you know of?

- None - 12
- Up to 40 - 186
- Up to 70 - 93
- Up to 100 - 122
- Up to 200 - 104
- Up to 367 - 43
- Up to 600 - 43
- Almost all 1,366 of them – 9

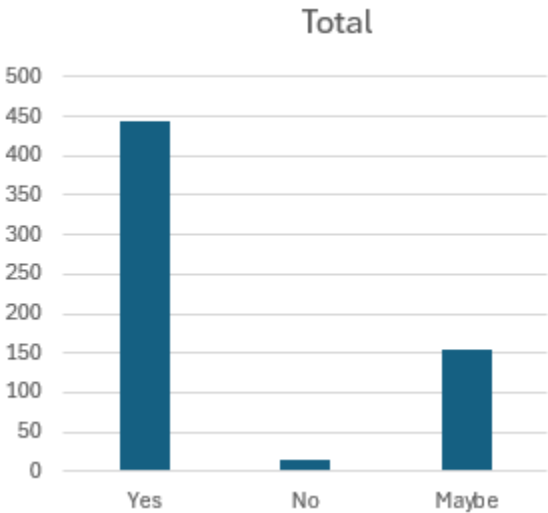
**Roughly, how many Sooke businesses might you know of?**



The responses show the diverse levels of awareness among respondents regarding the local business landscape in Sooke. While a small fraction claims familiarity with almost all of the registered businesses, the majority demonstrate varying degrees of limited awareness. This disparity in awareness highlights an opportunity for businesses in Sooke to enhance their visibility and engagement within the community. For residents, a broader awareness of local businesses can foster a stronger sense of community connection and encourage support for local establishments. Initiatives such as community events, digital marketing campaigns, and collaborative efforts between businesses and local organizations can play a crucial role in increasing awareness and promoting a vibrant business ecosystem in Sooke. Moreover, improving accessibility to information about local businesses through online directories, social media platforms, and community publications can empower residents to make informed purchasing decisions and contribute to the growth and sustainability of Sooke's economy. By bridging the gap between businesses and residents, Sooke can cultivate a thriving entrepreneurial culture and strengthen its identity as a supportive and interconnected community.

# Question 7. Would you like to spend more of your money locally at Sooke businesses?

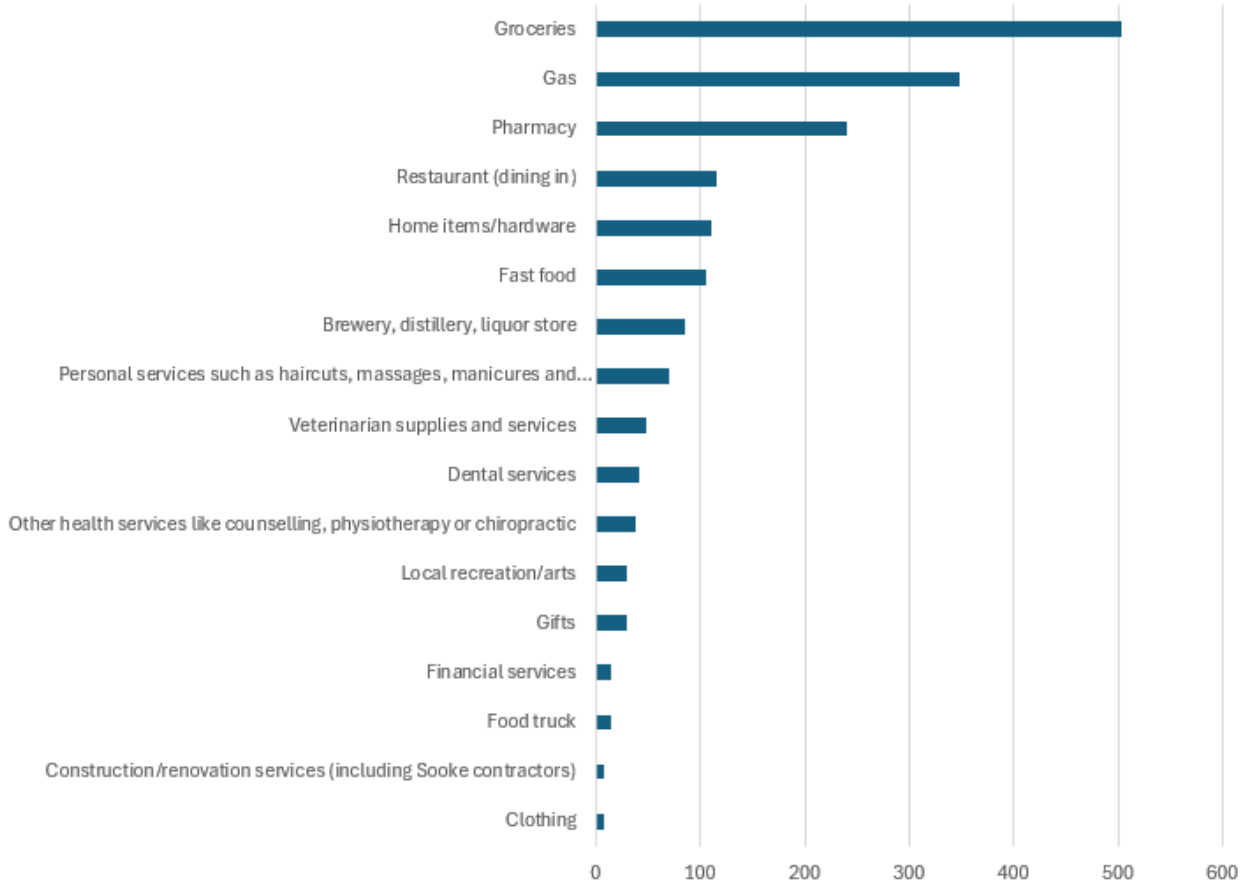
Yes	444
No	14
Maybe	154



This reflects varying attitudes among respondents regarding their willingness to spend more money at local businesses in Sooke. A significant majority of 444 respondents express a positive inclination, indicating a desire to support the local economy by increasing their spending at Sooke businesses. This sentiment aligns with efforts to promote community prosperity and foster a strong sense of local pride. Conversely, a small minority of 14 respondents indicate a reluctance to spend more money locally, potentially due to factors such as perceived limited options or preferences for non-local alternatives. Additionally, 154 respondents' express uncertainty, indicating a potential willingness to consider increasing their spending at Sooke businesses under certain conditions. These findings highlight opportunities for businesses in Sooke to engage with the community and promote the benefits of supporting local enterprises, potentially through initiatives aimed at showcasing the unique offerings and contributions of Sooke businesses to residents. By nurturing a supportive consumer base and fostering a culture of local patronage, businesses in Sooke can further enhance their sustainability and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the community.

### Question 8. What were your last three purchases in Sooke?

Groceries	503
Gas	348
Pharmacy	241
Restaurant (dining in)	115
Home items/hardware	111
Fast food	106
Brewery, distillery, liquor store	85
Personal services such as haircuts, massages, manicures, and pedicures	70
Veterinarian supplies and services	49
Dental services	42
Other health services like counseling, physiotherapy, or chiropractic	38
Local recreation/arts	30
Gifts	30
Financial services	15
Food truck	14
Construction/renovation services (including Sooke contractors)	8
Clothing	8

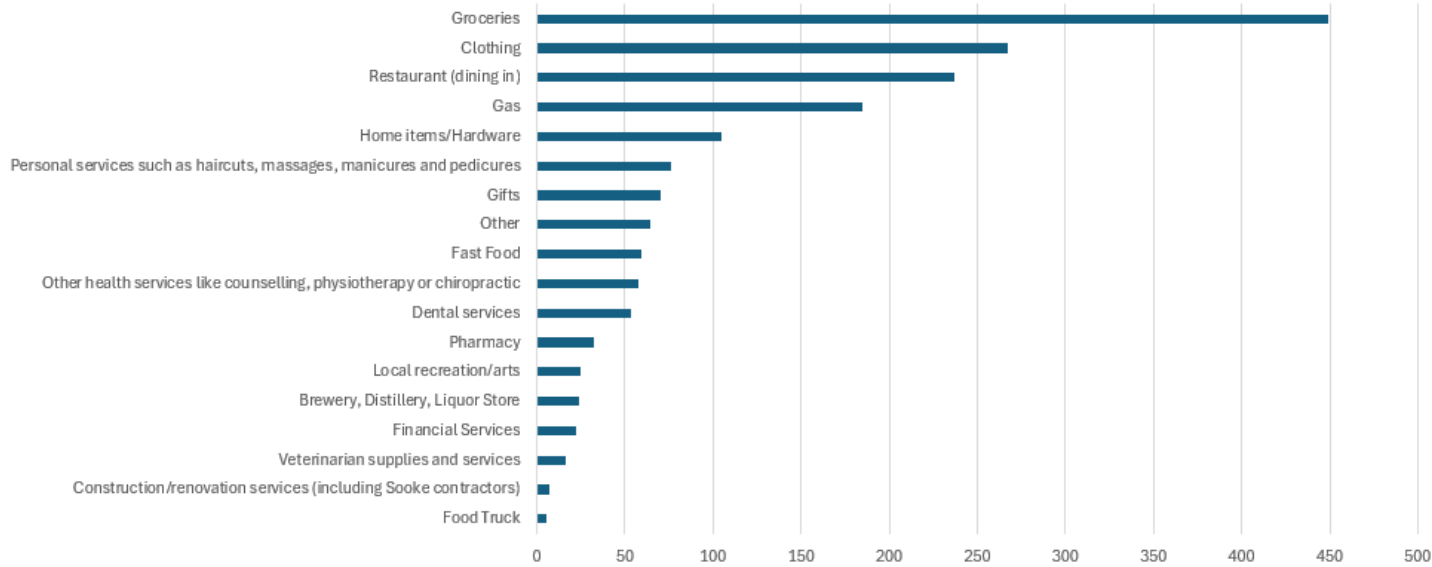




The responses provide insights into the recent spending patterns of respondents in Sooke, highlighting the diversity of purchases made within the community. Groceries emerge as the most frequently cited purchase, with 503 respondents indicating recent expenditure in this category, underscoring the essential role of local supermarkets and grocery stores in meeting residents' daily needs. Gasoline follows closely behind, with 348 respondents reporting recent purchases, reflecting the reliance on local fuel stations for transportation needs. Additionally, pharmacy purchases (241) demonstrate the importance of local healthcare services and wellness provisions within the community. Other notable categories include dining at restaurants (115), purchasing home items/hardware (111), and fast-food purchases (106), indicating a range of consumer preferences and spending behaviors. These findings highlight the diverse array of businesses contributing to Sooke's economic landscape and emphasize the importance of supporting local enterprises to sustain community vibrancy and prosperity.

### Question 9. What were your last three (3) purchases or transactions outside of Sooke?

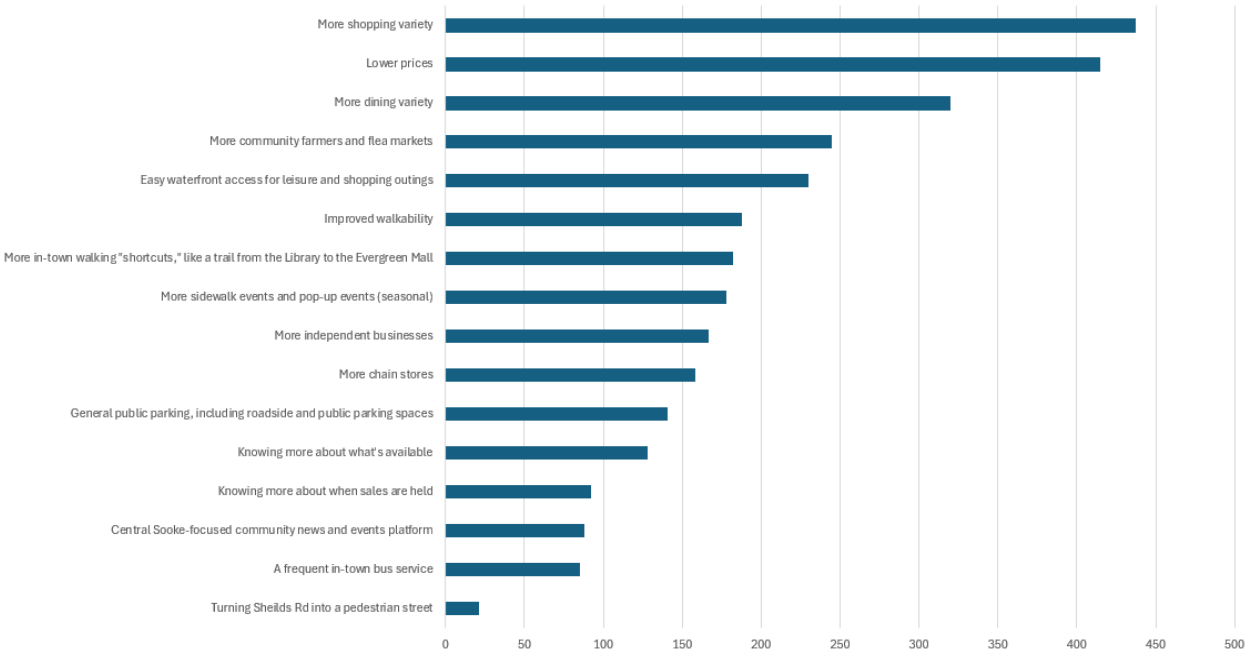
Groceries	449
Clothing	267
Restaurant (dining in)	237
Gas	185
Home items/Hardware	105
Personal services such as haircuts, massages, manicures, and pedicures	76
Gifts	70
Other	64
Fast Food	59
Other health services like counseling, physiotherapy, or chiropractic	58
Dental services	53
Pharmacy	32
Local recreation/arts	25
Brewery, Distillery, Liquor Store	24
Financial Services	22
Veterinarian supplies and services	16
Construction/renovation services (including Sooke contractors)	7
Food Truck	5



The responses to the ninth question provide insights into the recent spending patterns of respondents outside of Sooke, highlighting the diversity of purchases made beyond the local community. Groceries emerge as the most frequently cited purchase, with 449 respondents indicating recent expenditure in this category, suggesting a reliance on retailers outside of Sooke for food purchases. Clothing follows as the next most common purchase, with 267 respondents reporting recent transactions, indicating a preference for shopping at retailers located outside of the community for apparel needs. Additionally, dining at restaurants (237) and purchasing gasoline (185) are significant categories, reflecting spending on leisure and transportation services beyond Sooke's borders. These findings underscore the importance of understanding residents' spending habits both locally and outside of the community and highlight opportunities for local businesses to capture a greater share of consumer spending through targeted marketing and offerings that meet the needs and preferences of residents.

# Question 10: What would make it easier to spend more money in Sooke? Choose all that apply.

More shopping variety	437
Lower prices	415
More dining variety	320
More community farmers and flea markets	245
Easy waterfront access for leisure and shopping outings	230
Improved walkability	188
More in-town walking "shortcuts," like a trail from the Library to the Evergreen Mall	182
More sidewalk events and pop-up events (seasonal)	178
More independent businesses	167
More chain stores	158
General public parking, including roadside and public parking spaces	141
Knowing more about what's available	128
Knowing more about when sales are held	92
Central Sooke-focused community news and events platform	88
A frequent in-town bus service	85
Turning Sheilds Rd into a pedestrian street	21



OTHER added items included the following:

- A more charming shopping area, longer hours
- Better quality merchandise, especially groceries

- Alternate vehicle access that doesn't require every vehicle funneling through main town highway.
- highway that is not dangerous at night
- More protected bicycle/mobility lanes
- I already do spend my money in Sooke! I've lived here since 1983 and worked in Sooke since 1986. I support business and arts in Sooke, or it will be gone and you will have to go to Victoria for everything!
- Clothing, shoes, and bookstores, and a proper pub
- I do big grocery shopping at a big box in Langford and daily shopping locally.
- better bike accessibility and places to lock bikes.
- I purchase what I need and when I need it usually in Sooke.
- More jobs so I could work locally and spend more time in Sooke.
- I'm not sure if there is anything that can help. We shop for some food in Langford because of food intolerance and try to keep the costs down. Other places we shop at, like big box stores, I don't want to have in Sooke.
- A fresh seafood restaurant
- Improved bike-ability
- New town council, and Sooke town office employees, considering the amount of taxes (development or property) collected by local government.
- A way to bike around safely and lock my bike safely.
- More centralized physical spaces that connect either through an attractive, walkable streetscape or a space where you can park once and easily get to all the places you want to go (and encourage people to stop and browse along the way). Everything is spread out and encourages driving everywhere. Some of the nicest stores are hard to reach because they sit by themselves and parking is tricky (like Carolyn's Boutique, or Bits of Bliss). The easiest place to go is Evergreen Mall because of the variety of stores there.
- It wouldn't let me choose waterfront access for leisure and shopping outings which is a top choice.
- More commercial space for business, centrally located. Easy walking access to storefronts. Disability access, no stairs.
- Accessible long walking path along the ocean with shops, and cafes on the other side
- Better hours (Thrift Store & Bits of Bliss, for example)
- Sidewalks
- Better traffic
- Spending more time in Sooke
- More paved sidewalks for accessibility for the mobility impaired.
- Stores open later and on Sundays.
- Business hours were open later on weekdays or on weekends that meet a regular worker's schedule. Also, it's hard to book appointments for specialized services (ex: registered massage therapists) when they are only available 3 days/week.
- Traffic in-town traffic shortcuts ie exit from Evergreen Plaza to Townsend Rd, Wadams Way, or Church Rd.
- More sidewalks & mobility scooter trails inside town.

- More sidewalks for safer walking. Specifically, a sidewalk to Whiffin Spit Road
- More stores and lower prices. Does not cost \$1-&3 per item just to transport from Langford to Sooke
- More variety - I want a shoe store. Lingerie store.
- Parks for children
- Feeling safe
- Safer to walk about without worrying about the drug problem shoved in our and our children's faces.
- Safety issues with homeless drug addicts
- Affordability .. too expensive to shop in Sooke.
- More bike racks.
- Starbucks
- Less people on drugs. I don't want to walk around the core of Sooke. It is awful the number of people that walk into traffic or we see slumped over on the sidewalk.
- The homeless make me not want to go into town.
- Less traffic
- Trail infrastructure connecting Sunriver to town.
- Less traffic from Saseenos to Sooke core
- WATERFRONT ACCESS/ PIER
- Live in treatment centers for addicts who need help.

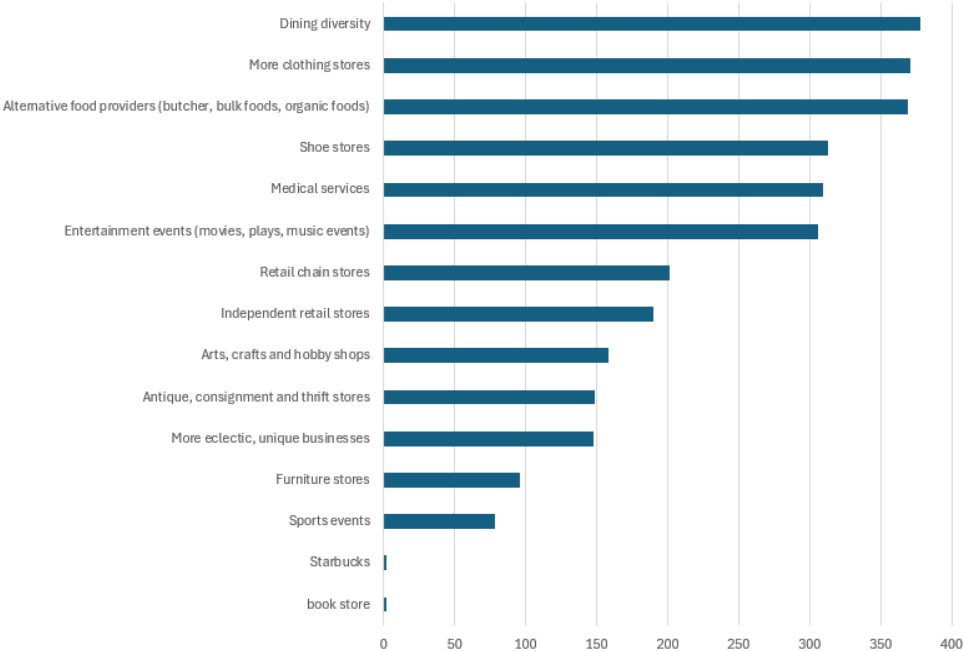
The responses to the tenth question provide valuable insights into the factors that would make it easier for residents to spend more money in Sooke. The majority of respondents (437) cite the need for more shopping variety, suggesting a desire for a broader range of retail options to cater to diverse preferences and needs. Lower prices are also a significant consideration for 415 respondents, indicating a desire for more competitive pricing to incentivize local spending. Additionally, 320 respondents express a desire for more dining variety, highlighting the importance of culinary diversity in enhancing the local dining experience. Other notable factors include the availability of community farmers and flea markets (245), easy waterfront access for leisure and shopping outings (230), and improved walkability (188), all of which contribute to the overall attractiveness and convenience of shopping in Sooke. Furthermore, respondents express a desire for more in-town walking "shortcuts" (182), sidewalk events and pop-up events (178), and more independent businesses (167), underscoring the importance of community engagement and supporting local entrepreneurship in fostering a vibrant local economy.

These additional responses provide a comprehensive view of the diverse needs and desires of residents regarding spending in Sooke. They highlight several key themes, including the importance of enhancing the overall shopping experience through factors such as more charming shopping areas, longer hours, and better-quality merchandise, particularly in groceries. Moreover, respondents emphasize the significance of improving transportation infrastructure and accessibility, such as alternate vehicle access routes, safer highways, and protected bicycle lanes, to facilitate easier movement within the community. Safety concerns, including addressing issues related to homelessness and drug addiction, are also prominently mentioned, indicating the importance of creating a secure and welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike.

Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on promoting local businesses, supporting entrepreneurship, and fostering community engagement through initiatives such as centralized physical spaces, improved business hours, and vibrant cultural and recreational offerings. Overall, these responses underscore the multifaceted nature of enhancing the shopping experience in Sooke and highlight the importance of collaborative efforts between local government, businesses, and community stakeholders to address residents' diverse needs and preferences effectively.

**Question 11: What types of businesses/services are missing in Sooke, that you would frequently support if they were here? Choose all that you would financially support.**

Dining Diversity	378
More clothing stores	371
Alternative food providers (butcher, bulk foods, organic foods)	369
Shoe stores	313
Medical services	309
Entertainment events (movies, plays, music events)	306
Retail chain stores	201
Independent retail stores	190
Arts, crafts, and hobby shops	158
Antique, consignment, and thrift stores	149
More eclectic, unique businesses	148
Furniture Stores	96
Sports events	78
Book store	2
Starbucks	2



Other items that were mentioned just once:

- Registered massage therapists
- Basketball Court
- How about a clothing store for short people, like Cleo, Le Petit Monaco
- Butcher and greengrocer
- None
- Cafes and pubs with children's play area
- Shoe repair, environmentally friendly dry cleaning - ie more services
- Chain restaurants-Saltys-Keg-
- Larger grocery stores like Super Store or Thrifty's or Save on Foods
- Cheaper groceries
- Being retired I don't purchase new clothes, shoes, or furniture often. I'm satisfied with what is available here. When I need new jeans, I go to Costco and pay \$20.00. I occasionally shop at Fields for a few clothing items.
- Checked are a few businesses in Sooke, we just need more.
- Produce store!
- Dairy Queen
- Seafood specialty store
- An affordable discount dollar store that offers groceries
- Sooke has a lot to offer already. There are so many events that compete with each other. Better coordination and communication of all the things going on would be helpful.
- Dry cleaner
- Bar/pub
- A legitimate pub would be spectacular.
- Locally owned, community, and eco-focused businesses for regular purchases!. A cafe grocery combo is one example.
- Everything
- More affordable options for essentials
- Artisan bakery, oceanfront brewpub
- Big box stores, Costco, superstore, Walmart, Canadian Tire, we are a city, let's start acting like it
- The ability to order more food via Door Dash.
- Parks and activities for children
- Things I purchase regularly outside of Sooke. Robotic supplies, yarn, 3d printing supplies. Because I order most of these items, I also will add anything to my cart that j would purchase from Sooke if it's cheaper when I order it.
- Pub with entertainment
- Yoga studio
- A decent dollar store like Dollarama, a place to buy popular, decent-priced kids' birthday presents (like Superstore/Walmart), competitive grocery prices, grocery delivery service.
- A children's drop-in play facility
- Secondhand furniture and curated goods

- A real dollar store like Dollar Tree
- Book store!
- hardware, office supplies, homewares, large garden centre, (actual) dollar store
- Bowling alley, movie theatre
- Healthy restaurant options on the waterfront and an organic bakery
- Feed and farm store.
- There is nowhere to buy affordable children's clothing.
- Feed and farm supply store.
- upgraded swimming pool, movie theater, bowling, bouldering gym, and community pottery studio.
- Feed store.
- Yoga studio, juice bar
- Feed store (farm animals)
- Feed store for livestock.

The responses to the eleventh question highlight the types of businesses and services that residents feel are lacking in Sooke and that they would financially support if available. Dining diversity emerges as a top priority, with 378 respondents expressing a desire for a wider range of culinary options. Additionally, there is a strong demand for more clothing stores (371) and alternative food providers such as butchers, bulk foods, and organic foods (369), indicating a desire for greater variety and convenience in these categories. Shoe stores (313) and medical services (309) are also cited as important areas for improvement, reflecting residents' needs for essential goods and healthcare provisions within the community. Moreover, there is a desire for more entertainment events (306), including movies, plays, and music events, highlighting the importance of cultural and recreational offerings in enhancing the quality of life in Sooke.

These additional comments provide a rich tapestry of insights into the diverse needs and desires of Sooke residents, offering valuable guidance for future business development and community enhancement initiatives. Several recurring themes emerge, including the desire for expanded retail options, such as clothing stores catering to specific demographics, butcher and greengrocer services, and larger grocery stores to meet the needs of a growing population. Additionally, there is a clear call for more family-friendly amenities, including cafes and pubs with children's play areas, as well as parks and activities for children. Furthermore, residents express a desire for a more vibrant cultural scene, including entertainment venues like movie theaters and bowling alleys, as well as artisanal and eco-focused businesses that contribute to the local economy while promoting sustainability. Overall, these insights underscore the dynamic and evolving nature of Sooke's community fabric, highlighting opportunities for businesses and policymakers to collaborate in creating a more inclusive, vibrant, and resilient community for all residents. Incorporating these perspectives into future planning efforts can help ensure that Sooke continues to thrive and grow in a way that reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of its residents.



## Question 12: Please add any other comments you may have about Sooke's economy.

See the Appendix for the original comments.

1. **Affordable Shopping:** Many residents express concerns about the high cost of living in Sooke, particularly when it comes to groceries and other essentials. They desire more affordable shopping options and express frustration about having to travel to neighboring areas like Langford for better prices.
2. **Infrastructure and Traffic:** Issues related to infrastructure, traffic congestion, and road safety are prevalent. Concerns about the need for better roads, more sidewalks, improved traffic flow, and solutions to address the growing traffic congestion, especially during rush hours. The need for improved infrastructure, including sidewalks, parking, and road maintenance, is prevalent. Addressing these issues is essential for the town's livability and economic development.
3. **Community Services:** There's a desire for more community-based services and amenities, including healthcare facilities, entertainment options, job opportunities, and access to waterfront areas. Improved access to these essential services such as healthcare, including the establishment of a medical center or hospital, and better support for seniors and vulnerable populations. Residents also expressed concerns about safety, especially regarding interactions with individuals affected by drugs.
4. **Local Businesses and Economy:** Residents emphasize the importance of supporting local businesses and promoting economic growth while maintaining the town's unique character. Many express a preference for independent stores over chain stores and suggest initiatives to attract more businesses and create a vibrant downtown core. Residents value local businesses but express concerns about high prices, limited variety, and the dominance of chain stores in neighboring areas. Supporting small, independent businesses and attracting diverse retail options are priorities.
5. **Town Planning and Growth:** Some residents express concerns about the lack of organized planning for Sooke's growth, suggesting the need for a clear vision and strategy to address issues related to housing, commercial development, and community infrastructure.
6. **Affordable Housing:** There is a pressing need for more affordable housing options in Sooke, as current developments are perceived as unaffordable for many residents. Balancing housing growth with affordability concerns is crucial.
7. **Waterfront Development:** Many residents desire enhanced waterfront access and amenities, such as cafes, restaurants, and recreational spaces, to capitalize on Sooke's coastal location and attract visitors.
8. **Community Engagement:** Residents want more opportunities for engagement with local government and input into decision-making processes. Strengthening communication and transparency can help build trust and ensure that community needs are prioritized.

**One additional aspect that stands out is the need for improved communication and engagement between local government officials and residents.** Many comments express frustration with the perceived lack of action or responsiveness from local authorities regarding issues such as infrastructure and traffic, community services, and town planning. Strengthening communication channels and fostering greater community involvement in decision-making processes could help address these concerns and ensure that residents feel heard and represented in shaping the future of Sooke.

Addressing these key points can help foster sustainable growth, enhance quality of life, and maintain the unique character of Sooke as it continues to evolve.

Overall, there's a strong sense of community pride and a desire to see Sooke thrive while addressing the challenges associated with its growth and development. Residents are keen on preserving the town's small-town charm while enhancing its livability and economic vitality.



# Appendix: Complete answers from all respondents on “Other Comments.”

Sooke Survey Comments 2024

Sooke's economy has the potential for growth and diversification. With its beautiful natural surroundings, including coastal areas and forests, there are opportunities to develop eco-tourism and outdoor recreational activities. Additionally, supporting local businesses and entrepreneurship can contribute to a thriving economy. **However, it's essential to consider infrastructure development, such as transportation** and utilities, to support economic expansion sustainably. Encouraging collaboration between local government, businesses, and community organizations can help foster innovation and create a resilient economy for Sooke's future, but above all, we must apply limits to residential growth.

Good to support local

**There needs to be another road in and out to alleviate traffic.**

Sooke needs a good cleanup. It's tired, dirty, and looks unloved. Peeling paint on restaurants. Inconsistent signage. Tired planters. Contentious signage at Barry's Marine. It all makes Sooke look impoverished and unwelcoming.

"Sooke needs a good scrub. A concerted effort by business owners ( large or small) to revitalize the outward look of their buildings. Get rid of peeling paint etc.

The Sooke Museum on the way into town is an eyesore. Do something with all the dilapidated machinery, it's a great idea to have artifacts but it honestly looks like a wrecker's yard.

The homeless situation is out of hand that is a mammoth task in itself. I for one have no desire to go to any of the public parks, Ed McGregor etc. Human waste, garbage, and a real sense of danger when the residents are convening. "

Can we slow down development until services catch up

I'm probably in the minority, but I would love to have a few of the bigger retailers locally.

Easier to spend if there are more reasonably priced options. Why spend \$10.00 on something, when you can drive 20 minutes and pay \$5.00 for the same item?

I'm quite new to Sooke. I'm impressed by the quality and range in the two supermarkets

Too many people with not enough services

Sooke is fast growing and we need to **see more parking available and ways to deal with the constant traffic in and out now.** More locally owned business options to support local.

We need more commercial spaces in the core to support business owners.

If the everyday prices for regular items hadn't been so high (double and sometimes triple than the stores in Langford/GVA) people maybe could spend more in Sooke!

We need a Red Barn!

I live in Sooke and appreciate the walkability however it needs safer sidewalks and rid of the traffic lights

Please get a sporting goods store

I think we need a bookstore

### **The traffic is concerning**

Sooke needs more affordable shopping options

More grocery store variety

"A chain grocery store would be helpful to lower grocery costs to allow more

Shoppers to get weekly groceries locally."

Definitely need more places to shop/eat, lower prices another road in/out of Sooke

Sooke needs to grow and bring in some big chain stores

Regular hours, open late

### **Sort out the afternoon traffic problems**

So expensive to live and shop here

Question 2 missed those who live outside Sooke but shop in Sooke regularly (Eg. living in Otter Point, Shirley, Jordan River, etc)

**Sooke requires rapid, reliable, frequent transit service to bring people into and out of the town. Sooke needs to figure out an alternate route into and out of the town center, possibly via Sunriver.** Also maybe a completely different way for pick up from schools, possibly a sidewalk from Sassenos to the high school so kids can be picked up from the existing high school parking lot instead of crossing sooke rd. Sooke Elementary could have pickup behind the school, purchase 4 properties, and turn them into parking lots. The situation is untenable and citizens of Sooke need alternatives.

I wish things were not so expensive here.

I absolutely love Sooke. I would like to see some extra shops such as clothing, shoes, and crafting.

Love this community and the people of Sooke!

Sooke is expensive to grocery shop in. It could benefit from some quality variety in restaurants too. Towns with a cute shopping strip for pedestrians with local artisans and odd stuff stores are always some of my favorites to visit and shop in. Sooke doesn't have that.

I would love to see more arts and markets

More economic Businesses

**Better public transportation** to try and get people out of their cars. Better policing, have our district staff, stop waste, and do a better job saving our water supply.

I feel that it's time to allow more chain retailers into Sooke. It would make our cost of living lower and we'd be able to justify spending more money there instead of avoiding higher costs. Also, this will create more jobs for our increasing population.

I wish the grocery prices out here matched what they are in Langford so I don't have to travel to shop. Including the cost of gas, it's cheaper to shop at Costco and Superstore.

More lower price grocery stores are needed

More current clothing stores.

I'm generally satisfied with our community and it's businesses. Wouldn't live anywhere else.

concerned about infrastructure keeping up with rapid growth

Prices are too high for everything, especially housing.

Love the uniqueness of Sooke

### **Not enough parking at businesses**

More healthy business spaces are required to bring businesses to Sooke. We should not have to do business in mold-ridden structures. The grocery stores are taking advantage financially of locals by marking up costs. More competition would be beneficial.

Sooke needs more variety for dining, shopping, and especially an affordable grocery store. I spend more money outside of Sooke because the prices and selection are better – even with the cost of gas.

More variety from grocers to restaurants to shops

I think **there needs to be parking for recreational vehicles**. People would shop in Sooke if they could park. They tend to shop before driving through.

Please try and keep prices accessible!

The grocery stores are too expensive.

I think money has been invested in the wrong areas for a long time now in Sooke

Will be moving to Sooke and would love to see this beautiful town continue to thrive but stay authentic

"We require landlords to be fair on the cost of rent. Real estate is pricy but having a tenant that works hard and treats the building as their own is a win-win situation. Reduce the rent so it shows you relate not just want their money..

When I moved here in 2014 it was a nice growing community, now it is full of traffic. **Bumper-to-bumper traffic. You don't dare go shopping after 1 pm no parking and cars everywhere.** Council has all these homes being built. Have they looked at the infrastructure? When you go into Langford, by **ESSO on Sooke Rd starts bumper-to-bumper traffic.** We should have four lanes coming into Sooke. It is getting too crowded and not sure the council understands what is going on. Sooke is not the quiet enjoyable place when I moved here in 2014. The cost of groceries is higher than Langford. To purchase 1L of egg whites in either grocery store in Sooke costs \$11.99. To purchase 1L of egg whites in Super Store costs \$6.99. If you purchase two 1L your gas is paid for by shopping in Langford.

I would like to see more stores sell Baby Formula, as a new Mom i am shocked to see none of the grocery stores carry Baby Formula, only shoppers does and they are very unreliable, almost always out of stock.

Medical services

**It is hard to drive into town to get anything with all the traffic, I counted 101 vehicles from the lights at Philips and the traffic circle,** too many dental offices and hair salons.

Grocery store pricing is out of touch in Sooke compared to Langford, I want to support local by any means. I love Sooke

It's becoming far too expensive to live here

We need more veteran and senior services

Groceries 30% higher than Langford. It is a huge deterrent to shopping locally.

Need more family restaurants and nighttime pubs for adults

I think that if we don't do something about the homeless population, and the amount of drug addicts that are living right in the town of Sooke, it's gonna eventually overpower. I think more of her money should be put into resolving this issue.

It's a pretty complete little community

More shopping options!

Coffee shops are hardly ever open past 3 pm.

I like to support local businesses and would not want too many big chain stores that might have a negative impact on them.

We need more businesses in town! That would create **more jobs here and reduce the need to travel out of town to work.** We can be so much more than a sleepy bedroom community.

Prices are up everywhere but it frustrates me when people who work in Victoria drive back and forth daily then on the weekends shop in Victoria driving the road again. Shop locally, and stop complaining about the grocery store prices here, it's all relevant, there is no place that is always cheaper somewhere else. Buy what's on sale, and the next week get the other items, there is great

variety. I was very pleased with the sales at Village Market today. I prefer to shop there regularly, it's clean, nice friendly staff, always ready to help and they have great draws with lots of happy winners.

Everything is way more money expensive and the selection (like sports drinks and coffee creamer)

Waterfront access walkways

**Better infrastructure** for the growing population

**The traffic is terrible**-how many of those cars are people driving to and from Langford for cheaper items and more variety?

We need a feed store, either independent or a Buckerfields. I have a hobby farm and I have to go to Langford at least once a month for supplies.

Sooke is afraid of losing its small-town charm but at the same point, we are also wanting to have more so we don't have to go out to Langford to get things all the time. I think this is a fine line to walk and going to be hard to address because we can't make everyone happy. I feel it would be nice to be able to have a smaller scaled Walmart store where people could have options for different things: clothes/food/goods at somewhat reasonable prices. I believe deep down people want to support locally but also can't necessarily afford to with some of the in-town prices.

Keep and support local agricultural land alive for food safety I.E: fair pricing, freshness, Quality, and variety of foods

We could use another grocery store as our population is growing

The growth is too rapid and ruining the small-town feel. We don't need big box stores - we don't want another Langford!!

I want to support local but can no longer afford to shop at Sooke's grocery stores. Daniels Market is the exception with their reasonable prices. I do all my shopping in Langford on my way home from work and save a ton of money that way.

Specifically, I'd love a soft-serve ice cream place like Dairy Queen

A BMO and Starbucks would be 100%

Very expensive food and dining.

Tourist town needs boutiques and shopping to keep tourists happy

Better bike access from Saseason to town

Needs to grow and create more local well-paying jobs

**Infrastructure cannot support the development** of Sooke

Would love a large-scale grocer to offer cheaper groceries.

I love Sooke so much and enjoy raising my daughter here. I do wish there were safer sidewalks to be able to walk to the stores and around the community because we love to shop local and enjoy the weather by walking!

Don't allow planning & development plans to squeeze out and isolate small business opportunities. Planning should accommodate small business needs first. Outcomes are more sustainable and healthier for the community. Allowing developers and larger companies to be the drivers for growth = less healthy community outcomes.

Local grocery prices are ridiculous, it's unfortunately worth the gas to shop elsewhere.

It is lacking of variety. Especially in the restaurant section. Also, 1 or 2 big chains would help such as a Canadian Tire or a superstore would be ideal.

The two grocery stores are WAY overpriced, Shoppers aren't any better for food prices. It's cheaper for me to buy our groceries from Walmart and pay to have them delivered by Instacart, then if I run out of basics between orders I'll get those locally (ie, milk, cheese, eggs). We need more affordable grocery options.

Waterfront cafes, a boardwalk around the entire Sooke basin, with boutique stores and cafes, would draw worldwide visitors, and an Art Centre, for theatre, dance, music, and fine arts. We regularly go to Chemainus Theatre for wonderful performances, love to see a similar theatre for Sooke, with the dining capacity.

To make shopping in Sooke sustainable we need to have prices reflect what other stores are offering

More restaurants are needed in Sooke

Too many houses are being built.

As conveniently laid out the central Sooke area is for pedestrian shoppers with lots of sidewalk/crosswalk access, walking around in Sooke can be an ordeal for those same shoppers due to the **massive traffic volume** exacerbated by its speed. Lower the in-town traffic limit to 30, or at least 40 km/h. The current 50 km/h is too fast. Otherwise, Sooke is laid out perfectly for people wanting to minimize reliance on vehicles for their general shopping needs.

The homeless population makes walking around up Sooke a little daunting

There are no major employers in Sooke. Most households have dual incomes **and they both travel out of Sooke to the Victoria area for employment, That puts a lot of traffic on Sooke Road, overwhelming the current road infrastructure** to the point of multiple accidents per week. We need businesses in Sooke for local employment. Also, there is a lot of taxes being paid in Sooke with **little reinvestment into infrastructure, and roads in and out of Sooke. There is only one bridge crossing Sooke River, if the bridge is closed, for any reason, traffic to and from Sooke stops, perhaps another bridge is required, unlike the proposed pedestrian bridge** currently in the works. The town council needs to get in touch with current needs and not worry about approving self-serving raises ( which has recently happened). **I realize Sooke Road is a provincial road but our town council has a responsibility to Sooke residences to coordinate with the province on infrastructure.** As a taxpayer, I feel Sooke Town Council is failing its residences. They are overpaid and self-serving. Please feel free to contact me for further communications.



Big box stores need to come to Sooke, movie theatres, and restaurants, we need businesses so Sooke residents can live and work in Sooke. We are a city with most of our residents working out of Sooke. **We need better roads, four lanes from Langford, and a Duncan or Cowichan connector going through the Sooke Hills. It can take two hours to commute to Sooke from Victoria.** We pay a lot of taxes and our town council for some reason can put money into Sooke roads, For example, Charters Road has been one lane for three years now and Sooke downtown is gridlocked daily. Sooke Town Council is more apt to give themselves a raise, two years before their union employment contract expires, vice investing in Sooke infrastructure (roads, a bridge, ) with all the homes currently under construction. Perhaps it's time to clear all staff out of town hall and start over with competent employees. Also, we **need another way to cross Sooke River, another bridge, for vehicles, not a pedestrian bridge** like the one Sooke council is working on implementing, that is just Not What Is Needed

**Traffic is getting too heavy to enjoy going anywhere on the weekends.** The Traffic circle slows things down.

the economy is quickly growing therefore we need to grow with it

We need more variety of stores to spend local. Use the waterfront spaces for business development. A more walkable community.

Grocery prices need to come way down before I could consistently shop for them in Sooke with a family of four but I am not sure if that is something that ever could or would happen

Lower prices are crucial

Walkability would be a huge incentive. I live near the Sooke core and noticed I stopped walking into Sooke as often once previous shortcuts were made impassable or unsafe

Would be nice to feel safer walking around as well

Love to find local businesses to support.

Sustainable only for the higher income earners.

I've been here for over 20 years, I'm now a disabled Sooke resident for 7 years and believe our town's economic state is great at the moment. Unfortunately, I will probably have to leave Sooke due to the high cost of food/housing as my entire CPP goes to rent, growth is good but most of us original Sooke people are struggling to survive

The people make this town and I'm so inspired by everyone's kindness

Sooke being a destination, not just to drive thru to go to beaches past us

I'm happy with what Sooke has but it doesn't feel like it's keeping up with the influx in population

I love our natural resources and would be saddened to have big box stores here for our convenience. We would lose a lot of our charm. farmers' markets including local artisan markets add to the charm of Sooke and hopefully provide income for the providers

The town is getting uglier and less livable by the month - uncontrolled development, destruction of the environment, relentless construction noise that has been going on for years on Brailsford, **big traffic problems**, lack of foresight by the mayor and council, no public waterfront except littered Wiffin Spit, drug addicts everywhere. Few would want a trail from the library to Evergreen due to safety issues with the drug addicts. At least someone seems to have gotten rid of the addict tents in McGregor

Someplace to buy auto parts like a Canadian Tire or a Lordco

Need more accountability

I live and work in Sooke, and my wife and I have not left Sooke since Covid started we purchase all our needs here in Sooke, and support local.

We need a vibrant waterfront

I'd like the proposed development by the Hope Center thru to Eustace to happen and slow down on subdivisions until we can **address the freaking gong show of traffic**

Would love to have a larger farmers market to take in and enjoy the tastes of Sooke and neighboring communities (Shirley, JR, etc). More community garden space.

**The roads aren't built for the amount of people living here so that should be the main priority**

Groceries are too much

Looking forward to more local shopping and services

I don't see any real growth in the business sector of Sooke, very limited shopping here, but I see lots of housing and apartments being built, will Sooke bring in more diverse shopping, or will we all continue to go to Langford/Victoria to purchase our lower prices groceries, gas, and clothing etc? The city core of Sooke is quite boring, not a lot of diversity, and the local grocery stores are out-pricing themselves, I'd rather spend the extra \$\$\$, go into Langford and shop, and get more bang for my hard-earned buck.

Love Sooke & appreciate the effort to improve it

I feel we need more retail stores to keep my money here in Sooke

I would love to see more friends and family type of events that many retail businesses would participate in.

Please don't wreck this beautiful town with large retail or grocery stores. Sooke still has charm & uniqueness, build on that.

Would be nice to have more restaurants and stores, so didn't have to travel to Langford or Victoria.

1. Sooke's economy is not just business. The not-for-profit sector adds amenities, events, ambiance, etc. The not-for-profit sector provides enriching volunteer experiences, delivers major events and festivals that improve our community and attract visitors (and help local businesses), provides sport, recreation, arts activities, and services for families, seniors, and more, and supplies

valuable infrastructure. There are the obvious major events (such as Sooke Fine Arts, for example) but also numerous other annual events that bring in thousands of visitors who buy gas and food while they are here - consider the annual sports tournaments (hockey, soccer, fastball for kids and adults), Jamborees, fishing derbies, Seedy Saturday, craft shows, markets, etc. 2. Many businesses and organizations lack in-house professional skills (e.g. marketing and communications; HR; financial management). Having pools of professionals to draw from would be extremely helpful. 3. Don't reinvent the wheel - many organizations are probably already doing things you would like to do. Reach out and learn about what's already happening. Enhance existing efforts (with funding and capacity, for example) to build on what they have achieved rather than starting something new (like another website). 4. Thank you for reaching out and all the best in your planning!

Grocery store prices are way more expensive than superstore

Fully understanding that supply chain issues arise and that costs trickle down to suppliers: to pay \$8/lb for strawberries (just an example) it would be in the store's best interest to not have moldy strawberries

Probably the **highway in the winter is my biggest concern. Maybe a better bus service?**

We seem to be spending money on housing when I think Sooke is growing too fast. **We do not have the info structure to support it. One road does not work.**

"I'd love to spend more money locally but **I commute 6 days a week into town for work and getting into Sooke at the end of the day is a crawl.** We shouldn't have major school slowdowns and access on a main road and the church road backs up so severely **that when it's a choice to stop in Victoria or Langford versus spending more time in traffic for often less selection and higher prices, sometimes even stores closed (shoppers often for example), the choice is easy to make.**

Growth is also wonderful provided we have medical facilities, **safer roads**, and enough school infrastructure. **More businesses locally would divert much of the traffic however many who commute daily will still support elsewhere if the road system into Sooke doesn't change.** We need flowing lights or roundabouts and bypasses for schools.

**We also need better policing of our highways to prevent closures and delays due to consistent accidents.** This further delays my time to get home and my decision not to go further into town.

As a mother of young children, I also worry that there won't be the ability for my kids to get into schools despite my living nearby to all.

I often desire dining options for any meal time and sometimes fast food however such minimal selection, long waits and otherwise everything is closed before it gets dark. And after dark so many homeless people. I'd love to see much more activity regarding this too. People won't want to have businesses nevermind shop there/eat there if the addict is passed out at the subway table, or if fires are being set at the bank. Sadly this is what I am seeing more often.

Seaparc is amazing but it's small and not enough classes for those already here. Minimal other child activities. All of this requires travel into town. I've waited a year and still haven't been able to achieve success getting my 3-year-old into swimming lessons for her age.

**I'm 110% for growth but we need to be able to support this growth. "**

Sooke needs to feel more inviting and West Coast, it still feels like a town you just want to drive-thru

More diversity = more choice for consumers.

We need more activities for youth (to keep out of trouble), clean up the streets (homeless)

The more shops and services we have at hand, **and less traffic problems going to Langford and Victoria.**

We need **more infrastructure**, but need to maintain greenspace

**The traffic is the biggest hindrance**

With a rapidly growing population, I see great value in **expanding the local commerce scene. Not only would it keep the dollars local but also keep people off the roads commuting to town for needs.** I think realistically **Sooke struggles the most with infrastructure. we lack commercial space** and the walkability factor to get people out of their houses and shopping locally.

For a community where many leave during the day for work, it behooves me that businesses aren't open later

We need more affordable grocery stores

Prices in some Sooke stores are unfortunately not very affordable (compared to equal groceries in Langford), so it makes sense for many ppl to shop outside of Sooke.

Cheaper options for smoke

I like the plans for growth

There needs to be an end to the untrue talk about shopping at Costco being cheaper than shopping in Sooke.

**Too many people have to work and shop outside of Sooke due to a lack of employment and high prices.** More retail stores would encourage people to stay closer to home and spend their money here. However, it is important that we don't destroy the "small town" feel!

Sooke is great!

"Grocery stores are no completion with any in Langford for price or quality. We're trapped with mediocre offerings.

No bike lanes or secure storage for bikes means no time to explore - drive in, drive out. Also, downtown Sooke is ugly. "

Sooke is a beautiful community!

We need to be able to purchase clothing essentials locally and groceries that are not marked up so high

I love the small town feel and the nature around it and do not want to see that disappear like Langford. but I do think with a growing population we do need our town center to grow a little more with a little more thought and creativity I think we can do that with the land we have available in the area to accommodate a lot of the above. Do we need a mall? NO Do we need a Walmart? NO but smaller chains would be nice, especially for the younger youth who want to spend money on clothing, etc but have to get to Langford to do so.

I think Sooke is heading in the right direction!

Sooke definitely needs more competitive grocery options with both the stores being owned by the same people does not give us the opportunity for lower-cost groceries.

There just is t enough office space to accommodate new businesses

Even though Sooke is a great place to live and play with such a down-home feel Sooke could use a Walmart or a Costco **and by having one or both the traffic congestion on the Sooke road would be less as the local people will be able to stay in town to have all they need.**

The cost of necessities is too high **and traveling to Sooke cares and back is inconvenient.** More efficient to have groceries delivered from Langford.

Lower groceries, low property taxes

More restaurants/ small unique stores in a walkable area near the waterfront would draw more money to Sooke

"Development in Sooke has been piecemeal with no clear plan for a cohesive centre, **or suitable access roads.** We need to develop those empty plots that lead to the waterfront as destination venues, not just more housing. Residents of longer standing can feel connected to the town through their shared history of time and place. However, as the community expands, we need to create a focal hub to which everyone can feel connected. Those waterfront lots need to have a mix of dining and shopping outlets, with boardwalks and convenient parking, and a great play area for kids.

And, of course. **the same old problem of another route in and out of Sooke needs to be solved, URGENTLY!** Before long, as the additional residents take occupation of the various new apartment blocks, **Sooke traffic will be at a standstill!**

Too expensive to shop in Sooke

Need more commercial development

**Need to deal with traffic congestion**

Sooke keeps building more housing and we need more affordable housing for the people that work in the service industry, yet there are no more services offered for the people that will move here such as more dining options, more basic needs stores, more medical services **and we need another highway into town for when there is an emergency and Hwy.14 is closed for hours.**  
Thank you.

Better local Seafood selections at a fair price > Better public ocean access somewhat like Sidney with local eateries!

I like that it has a strong local arts, music, and entertainment scene for a small town. Improving tourism could complement this, **and (of course) improving our highway/access to town.**

I think our consumerism is being poorly affected by the homeless population overtaking our streets, making people feel unsafe to walk around, **and the extensive time it takes to drive into Sooke because of traffic congestion.**

We need a pub and a drink bar (milkshakes, bubble tea, smoothies)

Lower grocery prices would be great and would stop people from driving to Langford to shop

Needs in-town waterfront access

It would be great to have more outdoor patios and pubs for dining out in Sooke. A Greek or Italian Restaurant would be nice. If enough locals would support them, more restaurants could stay open on Sundays and Mondays. We need to keep building affordable rental housing to accommodate workers in the service industry.

Particularly groceries, I would shop more in Sooke if prices were more competitive than in Langford.

As much as we all want convenience, the priority should be to keep Sooke unique; NOT turn it into another Langford. Keep it funky, keep it cool, keep it West Coast and rustic.

**Improving our road/traffic infrastructure. It takes me on average 15 minutes to get up Sooke from Drennan St when it should only be a 3-5 minute drive.**

Sooke needs more eating establishments. Not fast food necessarily. I feel Sooke is thriving with the population growth. I haven't lived here long but have seen the growth.

Sooke has a growing economy and I try to support it as much as possible

More sidewalks especially on Rhodonite Road.

More dining diversity, please

Need higher paying jobs in Sooke, keep more people in Sooke

Missing an appealing waterfront with shops and services that draw you in to spend time there

No big box stores, please. And no chain stores, please. And time for a moratorium on building unaffordable housing. Thank you.

Shoppers should be closing at 9 pm or 10 pm instead of at 7 pm. The later hours are what other Shoppers Drug Mart abide by - how come Sooke's location is different? A nice fine dining restaurant in the downtown core of Sooke would be well received - it is slim pickings for upscale restaurants in the heart of Sooke.

Would be nice if the workforce was a bit kinder... in particular Timmies... some of them are pretty nasty... and with the shortage of people wanting to work....they get away with it...

Sooke needs more sidewalks

Desperately need more police presence

**The current state of traffic backup means I do not want to be in Sooke town after 2:45 pm M-F**

Love the small town

Plan for more density when building new developments. **Build roads to suit future neighborhoods ahead of time.**

Businesses need to grow with the population variety etc

More diverse retail

The Bylaws need to change to allow more B&B and vacation homes. This is basically a tourist town now, we need to encourage this. New money coming in from outside to support our community

To make more businesses viable, more people have to be locals and live here but the traffic coming into Sooke is unsustainable and undesirable. First, a solution to traffic must be figured out.

Sooke is growing perfectly!! Slow and steady wins the race!

"I truly feel very bad for a lot of our small local businesses who are trying so hard to make a go of it. The town is not very accessible or walkable. Many shops are scattered and are in old rundown buildings. If you compare it to places like Sidney or Duncan that have rows of beautiful little shops often many of them being local. They also have the diversity of chain stores like winners or variations of grocery stores that help make staying and shopping local much easier. We often make a point of going to a place like Duncan to go and walk around for the day. Eat lunch and wander all the little shops. In Sooke, you are **unable to park in one spot** and wander around different rows of stores. They are scattered and hidden throughout the community. I feel this would be very hard for those shops because attracting customers by curb appeal and helping to draw attention to their shops would prove to be very difficult.

Another example in Duncan is that they have a very famous weekend market. Part of the roadway is closed down, and people can go and visit the market as well as enter several local shops that are right within walking distance. I think Sooke needs to focus on its core to help small businesses, as well as encourage chains to open up here. This would help with employment and encourage more people to shop locally. "

Sooke is my community and I love living and recreating near the ocean and forests. Wish we had more services for entertainment in our community and for our younger generation.

Love the walkability of living in the town core. Am very happy with the current grocery and hardware stores.

**The traffic is horrible.** Groceries are too expensive. But I love it here. Born and raised.

Waterfront access- like Parksville, Campbell River, and Port Hardy- waterfront walkway with easy access to business. Walking distance

My kids used to go to McDonalds for ice cream, or to the candy shop, or the library. But as of lately, they are scared for their safety to walk past the Hope Center.

I try to do all the shopping in Sooke, but when you live on a budget and rural you have to be aware of spending. I find myself buying bulk groceries, at the big box stores at least once a month, to save money in the long run. We do not need more fast food or grocery, we need emergency medical services in a 24-hour clinic-style setting.

I know I'm not alone in shopping for groceries elsewhere owing to high costs

I do as much shopping as possible locally, but make a Langford trip every couple of weeks for things not available in town, or for the cheaper groceries

Food stores open later would be nice .. but try and keep the community small it's starting to be over crowded here and that's why most of us live here cause it's the small town feel

**Traffic!!! Need HOV & more transit!!! Can only visit town core 10-2 to avoid traffic congestion!**

I just love the Sooke area. Born and raised here. Family has been here since Sooke started.

**Traffic control could be better**

**Accessibility to Sooke.. better rds**

Love living here

**Keep up road improvements**

Redesign downtown, so stores are on the sidewalk and parking is behind.

The shops in Sooke don't offer enough variety and the prices are not affordable.

I don't feel we need more fast food restaurants or a Canadian tire.

More intentional waterfront development for public access and walkability for families. Would love to see the Sea to Tree development go in with the nature playground so close to the town core.

We need more choices

it needs to grow

Thanks for your work and continued collaboration with the District as it implements the Community Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan

**Improve transportation around schools**

Needs more competitive pricing to Langford

Grocery stores a generally 30 percent more than shopping in Langford. Hard to feed a house full of people shopping there

I think Sooke has the opportunity to have businesses work together to create an atmosphere of a true destination for shopping. Currently, I feel like each business is working solo and disconnected from one another. A combination of pedestrian-centred traffic with festivals/ markets working alongside the brick-and-mortar shops to enhance the idea of community. A distinct district highlighting independent restaurants, shops, and premium services together with locally grown



food and artists. Selling the spirit of the area, and the benefit of shopping local. I think it works for both tourists and locals alike.

Greater advantage could be taken of our most wonderful asset: the waterfront - in attracting more visitors by better access from downtown; a center with gift/trophy shops, restaurant, facilities, overlooking sea, and a longer walking trail.

**There is more residential construction than the local infrastructure can support.**

Let's build it up!

High prices for groceries

Need more competitive pricing

I wish there was more retail space available to encourage new small businesses to open in Sooke. **If more Sooke residents could find employment in Sooke there would be less congestion on our highway.**

I'd like to see another grocery-type store, one that sells local food

I hope the economy in Sooke can make some changes to contribute towards affordable living

Prices are higher in Sooke which means we try to plan our bulk grocery purchases in Langford, and while we are there will also buy gas for our vehicle, get lunch, do clothes shopping, etc

Walkability would be great, I would love to be able to ride my bike from Sunriver into Sooke without having to go onto the side of Sooke Rd.

Need better quality grocery stores and butcher shops with fresh meat not just frozen

As Sooke town core develops, please make it more walkable - ie. safe sidewalks, etc!

Although I love the small-time feel this town is growing at a rapid rate **and unfortunately the road system and amenities are not in line with its growth.** I worry about **the lack of parking space** in the central core and new businesses coming on Otter Point. accessibility is becoming and will become a greater issue soon and can deter people from visiting the great little shops we have in Sooke.

**I love Sooke but I wish the infrastructure was better. We need better/more road access** and more accessibility to the businesses and entertainment we have already.

I would probably spend more money in retail/hobby/art stores that are already in Sooke if the hours and parking were more convenient. For example: the shops and cafes along otter point/Eustace don't have enough parking and I can't turn right down Shields to backtrack to the west coast road facing the parking lot so I often just give up and drive home instead of popping in somewhere.

**Would be nice if you could do something to repair the roads**

I believe Sooke to be a gem, but a gem that sadly is not growing or diversifying fast enough for the number of people who are moving here in search of the small-town values we have. Many people come because our prices in housing are more obtainable for a family starting out or a couple sizing

down. We have to stop being a doormat for larger councils to push their problems on to us and have a better response to the homeless population especially those who pose a danger to themselves and others. Not all those who are homeless are a problem or harmful, but are just on hard times and need a leg up to get back into the normal living swing of things again. We also need to have better communication with the general public when the council is sitting so those who have concerns and or ideas for solutions can get involved.

It's time to stop building new houses and have more services accessible according to the growth of the population.

If things are unique then it's worth the extra price, however, can't always be spending extra dollars to stay local - wages just aren't high enough for that.

More diversity in retail, entertainment, and restaurants would help boost its economy.

Sadly I do have to drive to Langford to get groceries for a family of 5, it's just not affordable to do in Sooke. We will pick up some odds and ends here but that's all.

Keep prices on par with Victoria and Langford

It needs to grow

I wish we had a more developed commercial waterfront that would attract both locals & tourists.

**The driving from Langford to Sooke is only going to get worse instead of better.** Nothing in this town for the kids to do.

Going downhill fast

I think Sooke should be taking advantage of it's waterfront similar to what Steveston has on the mainland.

**A better traffic solution. Not sure exactly how it could be done but I think it needs to be thought about.**

Would love to see live comedy nights! And music in the park in the summer.

The very worst thing about Sooke is the difficulty of getting around on foot, walker, or wheelchair. Even the paved downtown sidewalks (the older ones) are so poorly designed it is very hard to navigate intersections. But everywhere should be accessible to everyone: stores, parks, pathways.

For retail, and to maintain the feel of Sooke, the buildings that house them matter. If more retail space is to be made available, try to design it more along the lines of markets. No ugly malls. Eg Uptown or Mayfair or Hillside would be a flat no. Good newer examples are the Sooke Brewery and Forbes Pharmacy buildings. An older example is the little strip mall along Otter Point Rd.

Red Barn or affordable produce would be great out here. I would shop there twice a week

I think it would be sad if bigger chain stores came out here. I enjoy living where it doesn't feel so busy and used.

Don't build more big multi-plex buildings. Does not suit Sooke at all

I would shop more often in Sooke if the prices were better and more shopping options

I love the small-town vibe and being close to nature trails. I would love more variety for food options and professional services and a centralized place to find business information including sales, offers, and biz development news.

We need a big chain store such as Walmart or superstore, a bigger hardware/home store like CanadianTire or Lowe's, and more grocery selection such as save-on foods, quality foods, and Thriftys.

We absolutely love Sooke. But we are a family with four young children and cannot afford to shop in Sooke. Even after calculating the gas consumption to drive into Langford for all of our retail/ grocery/ miscellaneous needs, we are still saving money shopping outside of Sooke. We support small businesses but in this economy, we can only afford to shop at chain stores. I would love if Sooke offered a store such as Walmart where we could buy multiple needs in one place. Clothes, groceries, outdoor supplies, kitchen, home, bath and body etc.

We do most of our shopping in Sooke now, but would like to do more

I love the access to nature that living in Sooke gives me and would love to be able to spend more of my money here and not have to travel to Langford or Victoria for anything.

In order to spend all our dollars out here, we are looking for reliability, competitive pricing, and variety. **We end up because of the traffic along Sooke Road going into Langford or Victoria once a week and completing all our errands in one day on one trip, we would love to stay out in Sooke!**

Fewer new homes/people until infrastructure to support is available.

Groceries in Sooke (aside from Daniel's market) are twice as expensive as in Langford. We need some competition or someone to step in to remove the greed.

Love Sooke

Prices are far too high and I will continue to make the majority of my purchases where costs are lower

More competition with grocery prices.

I have loved living in Sooke

We need a local Pub

I live and work (remotely) in Sooke. Would love to support local and support more employment in Sooke, but selection and price need to be more competitive. Grocery store quality and prices are not competitive, our dollar store doesn't have competitive items, we don't have the items locally to meet common needs like new shoes for kids, kids' birthday presents, or school supplies.

Need clothing and shoe options

We have everything in Sooke! **Having the infrastructure to support it would be a dream**

Love Sooke

I don't shop outside of Sooke. I wish that prices were more competitive in exchange for my loyalty.

Shopping local is generally expensive.

Groceries are too expensive here for my family of four so I have to drive to Langford for affordable food.

With working in Langford we get about 95% of things in Langford as it's more cost-effective and there are more stores to choose from. My mother-in-law is visiting from Toronto and looking for a sweater without a hood and Fields only had hoodies and there's a boutique in Sooke she's tried multiple times and it's never open... even mid-day during the week. The hours aren't posted on the door to know when she can go back despite there being a sign that has hours... the hours aren't filled in. Today we'll be taking her to Mayfair.

It's usually cheaper to purchase what I need in Langford, am nervous about Sooke because of the homeless vagrants.

for a small town its well organized

"I know 3 single parents in Sooke who live in an RV with their kids and they shouldn't be in that position. People have been on the BC Housing waitlist for more than 5 years and still don't have housing in Sooke. If you look at the BC Housing Registry list for Sooke; there is next to nothing to choose from. Including when the Drennan apartments open up. In fact, there are maybe 10 suites available to those on the waitlist out of those 2 massive buildings.

The new Otter Point buildings are not priced for the majority of folks living in Sooke. There are zero housing options in those 2 massive buildings for anyone who is low-income.

We begged for more housing. And we're certainly getting it but no one can afford these places.

It feels like the rich are welcome and the rest of us will have to move or become homeless ...or live in an RV."

### **Traffic concerns**

Stores open later would be ideal.

**More parking for the main strip.** Better variety and mix of chain and independent stores. Women's shoes and clothing variety. Better organic/healthy grocery store options (like Millstream Market style)

"I have lived in Sooke for over 50 years. I love this place. I do 95% of my business here. Just the other day I went to Bits of Bliss bakery ( but parked at Whiskers and Wags, because that little parking lot is a nightmare). Of course, I picked up some dog treats and fumbled around cement barriers. My point is, that just trying to get around to all the wonderful independent businesses in our core shopping area is not user-friendly. Those that struggle on the periphery need to be drawn in more.

Good luck and keep on supporting our local businesses"

My main issue about shopping in Sooke is the high prices of the groceries.

I haven't been here long but Sooke is missing available affordable shopping units for independent retailers. Building apartments the infrastructure can't handle but not improving the shopping centre.

Love it here

Identify and build on existing assets.

Engage all members of the community to plan for the future.

Take advantage of outside funding.

Create incentives for redevelopment and encourage investment in the community.

Encourage cooperation within the community and across the region.

Support a clean and healthy environment.

Just more business for competitive prices

We try to shop here but frankly, the selection is usually better and less expensive in Langford... it's worth the drive. Generally, we need far more commercial space for our population

Fast car charger

My biggest complaint is the lack of walkability due to no sidewalks or construction this is what puts me off of walking to local businesses

It's grown a lot since I was small, I love the potholes and old trees.

Shopping locally is expensive, especially for low-income families, as a new dad I'm shocked that I need to go into Langford to get baby formula, not one store in Sooke sells baby formula

Local and independent is always best. Keep Sooke economy strong by investing in small, local businesses that reinvest in our community. Avoid big box stores.

Keep it with the small-town charm

**"Obviously the traffic needs to be addressed but more businesses and jobs here will help that perhaps.** More of the city needs to move closer to the Oceanfront to have more appeal and increase revenue...its currently not very appealing...eg Sidney has a different vibe..more vibrant but also peaceful and hopeful.

Needs to be a mental health centre for the homeless further away from parks where families would like to frequent or they will soon be taken over and harder to clean up."

My family has just moved to Sooke. I do have family that has lived in Sooke for over 40 years. It has definitely grown a lot.

**The roadways/traffic, limited parking options,** and very few waterfront access/activity options are deterrents to tourism and local usage

The town is missing a main street or centralized shopping core.

More affordable housing

Sooke is a fast-growing community. Vibrant yet close to nature.

We need a 3rd grocery store that offers better quality food at good prices. Both Village and especially Western foods have very high prices. Village often has expired products on shelves. Many people get delivery from Save On or go to Costco to get the best prices. Locals are getting gouged for basic food. Meat and seafood selection could be improved. We live right by the ocean, many local fishing companies we could support. We could support a larger hardware store with more home good options. I.e. Canadian Tire. **Offering more retail and services in Sooke would create jobs and create less traffic on the road. The highway infrastructure is severely lacking access. One way in/out yet we continue to build. We create more homes for people to spend money outside of Sooke? Makes no sense. We want to support local.**

As the population continues to grow I hope more relevant businesses and infrastructure move to Sooke - more restaurants, more relevant shops, more waterfront access. Also please bring back the food trucks!!! At least in the summer, there is diversity!

There is not sufficient business for the population of Sooke which relies strongly on neighboring Langford for necessities. The current council is actively deterring efforts by prioritizing personal benefit at the cost of the community. Increased business in the area contributes significant tax dollars which can then be used for **infrastructure upgrades that are sorely needed**. There is an approved community plan, but every time there is a variance proposed, the council waives the opportunity for the betterment of the community and approves the variance for personal gain. It would benefit the community when the short-sightedness subsides to sustainable planning for the community to grow.

Sooke is too expensive for groceries.

Making Sooke core more aesthetically pleasing by infusing it with Westcoast charm along with interesting permanent markets would entice more tourists \$ and outside Sooke area shoppers which would boost the local economy. The drab run-of-the-mill strip malls does nothing. Even as a local, I want an experience when I go out. Examples such as Sidney, Salt Spring Island, and Coombs markets.

"Love Sooke but so disappointed I cannot find better dining (NOT TRUCK FOOD) clothing/fun/more coffee shops

Would & do support Sooke services as often as I can"

I'm conflicted. I love our town but it's very expensive for groceries. I want a Starbucks and Browns Social House and really want a retail boardwalk area with cafes and cool shops, but I **also need our roads to be better and more safe** and fun options for our youth.

Housing prices creeping up like everywhere else. The cost of living is no longer as affordable to live out of the big city.

Need more stores

I think things are looking up in Sooke.

Still waiting for the new shopping area promised a while back.

Groceries, in particular, are too expensive in Sooke

Getting harder to extend our pensions to be able to shop in Sooke (groceries, gas) so much more expensive!

Nice town to shop and visit for recreation, I have family in Sooke. **Downside traveling to or from Sooke during rush hours and the amount of accidents on Sooke Rd.** Enjoy the trails and beaches and all the small independent stores, caf  s and restaurants

I love supporting local businesses and wish there were more variety.

I feel a wider range of restaurant options with later hours would be very valuable and lucrative with the influx of young families

As a working, single mom. It is extremely difficult to affordably feed my kids. Or dress them appropriately for the weather. I am always going into town or shopping online to purchase anything for my kids (food and/or clothing) **Thus, clogging up the road unnecessarily** had we have the ability to shop locally. **The time it takes to go into Langford to get the necessities and the wonder whether we'll be stuck on Sooke rd coming home is stressful.** You're going to lose the younger demographic because it's too expensive to live here as it is and with a lack of choices for shopping (food/clothing), parents will find areas closer to all the amenities to live.

I prefer to shop locally, if at all possible. Pop-up shops or markets would perhaps broaden consumer awareness of small businesses.

I love Sooke

I would love to see a children's art space open up. I have a home pottery studio, and one day hope to open a community art space for everyone.

Pub, please!!

Sooke desperately needs to decide on an image. Are we a drive-through town or a tourist destination? Develop the downtown community towards the waterfront now.

I have just moved here and would prefer not to have to leave for purchases so shoe store (small town feel tho not chain) more clothing, and lingerie. Things like that would be nice here.

We do not have a fresh fish store in a seaside community

We need more doctors or a hospital. More decent paying job opportunities for locals.

**Improve traffic flow with bypass and another bridge.**

More public restrooms.

Would love to see more beautiful areas in Sooke and less garbage and hideous new buildings.

Needs more competitive pricing and variety

If we want people to come to Sooke to shop, visit, and spend money, it would be great if we could develop a unique character .. eg. Funky little shops, maybe interesting graffiti or other art on buildings. Create ocean-view places to picnic, organize adventures for families, advertise hiking/biking.

I cherish the charm of Sooke and deeply value the tight-knit community and slower pace of life that comes with a smaller population. I like that we know each other by name, conversations flow freely at the coffee shops and recenter, and life is just simple. However, the rising cost of essential items is placing undue pressure on individuals and families already facing economic challenges. Everyone in our community deserves to have access to affordable and nutritious food options.

**Commuter ferry to downtown so we can avoid the awful traffic. Would also increase visitors from downtown, which would result in more support for our businesses.**

**Stop building so many new condo and townhouse buildings when we don't have the roads to support the growth. More commuters will NOT make any of us happy and will lead to more people leaving for good. We moved here in 2020, and the traffic is causing us to question if the beauty is worth the stress, gas, and loss of time. We often spend money on dinner downtown before driving home so that we can eat at a decent time after work. By the time we get home, the last thing we want to do is drive around Sooke to support local businesses.**

Outdoor sports (hiking/camping) gear/clothing/shoe stores would be a natural fit for our community. **The nonstop summer camper van traffic would probably shop there as well.** Nothing to do here in the evenings, so improvements could be made there."

Love the idea of having more local shops and dining to make Sooke more of a destination and serve the locals with more variety!

I appreciate the smallness. And I drive to Langford weekly for cheaper groceries.

Beautiful place but very expensive

I love it here! Grocery prices are just a bit insane though

**We just really need more businesses so we don't have to travel to Langford as often**

Especially more dining diversity

I think we need more local businesses to keep up with our growing population.

**Make the bus service better**

It needs to be more affordable. Sadly, chains will allow for that.

I love living and working in this small town so close to the wild sea and forests. I am happy to support others in my community who support and protect this precious ecosystem.

I like how independent and friendly businesses can thrive. No need for more franchises (other than maybe a Starbucks with a drive-thru) or a Dairy Queen

It could be useful to have a cheaper grocery store



Great town to call home.

Sooke shopping has not changed very much since 1985

It would be really nice to have a small shopping center near the water with good walking and park space. This might include some more restaurant options as well as retail. Giving it the a small surfer town feel, and somewhere you can spend the day with your family.

Sidewalks are needed everywhere

### **Better traffic flow**

The cost of everything in Sooke is expensive... the lower cost would be an incentive for me to spend my hard-earned money in Sooke. **Parking is another huge issue there is not enough.** If we are opening our community to new home buyers we need to match our retail growth to the growth of the community

Stores, shoes and clothes, restaurants

Newer residents to Sooke with limited awareness of Sooke's economy. Eager to know more.

The grocery prices are out of hand

Creating more commercial space would benefit our community the most, by providing a sound tax base for the politicians to take money from, instead of constantly raising property taxes.

Less housing, more unique businesses. Keep out the chain stores, keep supporting the specialty shops, and keep the town as unique and green as it should be. Not Langford.

Let's develop it

**The infrastructure needs to be addressed if they keep building housing. More housing is great but I feel it will become unsafe if there aren't enough roads to get around on.**

Would like to find more info on trades/home repairs.

### **Need another way into and out of town.**

Need more sidewalks

**It would be nice if the traffic situation could be alleviated, maybe have an alternate road for the school traffic to move it off Sooke Rd?** Would love to see an extended boardwalk along the water, from Ed McGregor to the Church Rd area.

Groceries are very expensive. Love supporting local but it's costly to do in Sooke.

"#1 priority should be a medical center and/or hospital. That goes without saying and has been needed for years.

It is really hard to spend money locally on quality goods and groceries. It's unfortunate to have to spend time and money shopping elsewhere, but Sooke shopping is lacking in quality and variety.

We need chain stores to offer local jobs and local shopping. Chain stores that make sense for our working-class population. Mark's work warehouse and Canadian Tire would thrive here. Country Grocer would be a good fit. Family-style restaurants with consistent, good food; White Spot? A steak house? A pub open late would be amazing. An actual bar with live entertainment, dancing, karaoke, and special events (the Legion is not enough or attractive to some, and neither is going to a hipster micro brew house).

We need a movie theater, a bowling alley, mini golf. Something to do with our families!

This town is not a small town anymore and needs to adapt."

Sooke needs to pretty up downtown, when I drive through Sooke all I see are homeless wondering around, and does not make Sooke Beautiful, I understand there are always going to be homeless but they need to be further out of Sooke, it's pretty bad when you can't go to your bank because it's closed, because of homeless doing nasty stuff inside the doors, our town needs to be cleaned up

Sooke is growing, **a parking plan is needed.**

Better accessibility to waterfront areas. Walking areas along the oceanfront with cafes/restaurants/parks/playgrounds

Less taxes. The government taxes us enough! More freedom, let people live in RV trailers on people's land and lots as that is becoming one of the only affordable solutions to homelessness.

The lack of affordable retail space severely limits businesses from opening here.

I would love there to be a Walmart and a Canadian Tire store in Sooke

**The majority of people who live in Sooke work elsewhere.** We need more practical stores and hours for the commuters.

"I don't know what the massive lot is for on Goodmere and Sooke Road, but it would be a good lot for a hospital or at least a clinic. Add on a local coffee shop/ bakery, maybe a daycare. This would open up hundreds of jobs (I would transfer from VGH to work at the new hospital), **and save hundreds of cars on the road from commuters.**

The town is getting so full with the new townhouses, and condos, it needs more options to help keep everyone local for shopping and emergencies. "

Groceries are ridiculously expensive in Sooke. I would happily support Sooke stores if it wasn't so financially worth it for me to drive into Langford, including the money spent on gas. This needs to change - we get ripped off like crazy out in Sooke.

Sooke can do better

With the growth that we have had in the past few years, **we need more commercial space** and a reasonably priced grocery store. **The highway needs to be improved with an alternate route**

**The traffic is a hindrance to wanting to come to Sooke to shop or dine.**

**Too much money is driving out of Sooke every day. We need more jobs here to keep more of us out of the commute.** I don't understand how everything can cost more here yet most of the jobs pay less than their counterparts in Victoria.

Hope to get more shopping options! And sidewalks!

**We need more roads and parking** to access local businesses easily.

I think Sooke is amazing and the diversity is just above and beyond. But with a few more things it's be the perfect little community one would never leave.

We need a mayor that works for the people of Sooke. We need sidewalks on busy roads.

Sooke is beautiful **however the infrastructure is struggling to keep up with demand.** I also find our two main grocery stores are very expensive, and typically choose to shop in Langford for groceries.

Sooke needs a few more services easily available for seniors and the disabled, ie: mini taxi

Sooke needs a town park (playground and walking trail) and parking for the bus lot closer to church road with views of the ocean. Like Tofino has. Sooke needs to become more of a destination, not a pass-through or a place where people only sleep and leave during the day

Would love to see more job opportunities in Sooke for not only "first-time employees" but also ones that pay a livable wage

I would love to see downtown Sooke more pedestrian-friendly. I'm really enjoying the current mix of shops in the town core. I always try to buy in Sooke first. It's super important for me to support local!

I appreciate all of your efforts to keep Sooke las a small friendly community with quality services and maintaining a focus on our local natural beauty and bounty.

Keep up the great work building our community!

I feel like the expanding drug issue in Sooke is driving a lot of residents to leave Sooke to shop elsewhere and **slowing down foot traffic.** I have four children in Sooke who used to always go spend their allowance at the shops and now won't as they are too afraid.

Need more variety in shops to keep shopping local.

Sooke is a wonderful place to live!!

Love living here.

No more chain stores, please

**Planning for the future and population growth will help businesses grow**

**Need more razors out of Sooke**

Good. I go to Langford for family activities and groceries mostly. Clothing and shoe shopping.

I love Sooke! I remember playing ball there 62 years ago great community!

I think people are extremely frustrated by the inflated pricing of groceries and being told it's due to our remoteness when we are not that remote. **Having affordable shopping options keeps people from clogging up the fragile highway** as while providing a sense of security that comes with knowing our community is self-sustaining.

We need to find a solution for older people to feel safe in shopping and park areas, I tend to be uncomfortable leaving my vehicle where the vagrants issue is worse, we need a center for day-time gatherings of the homeless and another for drug addiction and mental health, they need not be one and the same, as a homeless elderly individual would be afraid to be with people having a mental health break or drug issue.

Little diversity for dining out, expensive groceries, **and poor infrastructure**. Trying to keep a small town feel in a place that is no longer small. The Sooke center needs to expand

Sidewalks

Shopping is very expensive in Sooke, especially for Groceries

With today's economy and prices of groceries here unfortunately we have to leave town to be able to afford them

More restaurants, please

Love the idea of small-town. Friday events

More retail spaces need to be made available for independent businesses, as well as a more functional downtown core that allows for a leisurely shopping experience. I find shopping in Sooke very errand-based as opposed to a fun leisurely experience.

Nothing for teens

More restaurant variety is always welcome

**Improve roads.** Build outside of the town core

Don't let the proposed 4+ stories happen on Sooke Rd between Church & Shields

**I would love to see another grocery store on the other side of Sooke River.. takes me so long to get into town with all the traffic**

Great place to live but growing rapidly and needs more services and options for residents.

Avoid chain stores, attract unique independent businesses

**Please put money and attention into infrastructure** that the municipality is in control of like sidewalks. Specifically Westcoast Road between maple and whiffin spit. Proper street lighting for nighttime. More beach access in Sooke core/walking areas in Sooke proper not just out Westcoast rd and the Potholes.

I love Sooke. I feel blessed to live here.

More shopping and dining options beyond 8 pm. Even though many say open until 9 they close early at 8 or 830.

Book store

Cheaper grocery prices

If the town could be more safely walkable

I love independent stores, but price is a barrier. We often do small shops local, but unfortunately, go to Langford for the bulk of our purchases.

I love Sooke

I know the shops/dining in the main shopping district, but not if they are on the outskirts of the main town.

We need better crosswalk visibility all should have flashing lights.

Its growing population demands growth sadly no one likes growth and it's scary but to bring more to the local economy with a growing community and more people wanting to move here more chain stores are a necessity if this was the case I would shop locally Unfortunately the few options with their marked up prices make it hard to shop here any longer.

We need more doctors

We need more choices of clothes

Too expensive for local shopping so worth the drive out of town to shop.

It is a growing community that could use more in-town options for shopping locally. I would spend far more money in town if there were

it would be better if prices were a little lower

We need a hospital

**We need more places of work here which will be less traffic on Sooke Rd. Industry larger businesses that will keep people working here with more spending in Sooke**

Be more competitive with the price of groceries in Langford

Maybe one night a month stores can stay open late? OR, we can do more outdoor shopping events like sidewalk sales?

**We live in North Sooke so getting into Sooke is usually gridlocked with traffic. We tend to go to Langford or Colwood to shop. Easier, faster, more variety & more competitive prices. They also have a movie theatre & a bowling alley**

It's a small town community that helps when asked

**Sooke needs to have more parking for RV& trailers to have them stop to shop and better walkability throughout Sooke to reduce local car traffic & parking problems**

### **We need another road out of Sooke.**

More reasonable pricing with groceries. It's worth it for us Sookies to do our big grocery shop in Langford.

I usually try to shop locally but in this economy, I have found myself going to Costco more often or buying from Amazon. I am sorry to say that but we all need to make it through somehow.

### **Too much residential bldg for infrastructure**

Need lower prices to keep shopping local, supporting local, supporting community... should be a priority.

Lower prices

### **Better road infrastructure would help me decide to go to Sooke vs the WestShore**

I love this town

Need an events calendar to plan our activities locally

Better sidewalks along ALL OF SOOKE ROAD! So frigging dangerous!

Sooke has a good variety of stores but **parking is nonexistent** for many of the shops

### **Too much housing is being built with not enough work available and poor infrastructure for commuters**

It's a catch between wanting to remain a small town but also wanting more services.

I would love to see a greater variety of goods and services in Sooke. I prefer to shop here, but much of what I want simply isn't available, such as decent shoes, underwear, and good meat and fish.

I love to support local and will always choose that over a chain store whenever possible. I think some local businesses could use support with improving their marketing and promotion, to make it easier for people to find them and learn more about them online. I live in the town centre and will also always prioritize shopping and spending money at a place I can safely walk or bike to (safe to me = sidewalks, bike lanes, bike paths, crosswalks).

We need more commercial space for businesses and a clear downtown area

We need more competitive grocery stores, and an enhanced ocean-side area : cafes, pubs , small boutiques, and galleries

Every new building should require to add something to beautify Sooke. An art installation on the property, a mural on the building, plant a tree, shrubs, and or flowers.

I'd love to get groceries in Sooke but it's too expensive

Sooke is a great town, but definitely needs some improvement to draw more people here and to keep locals dollars here as well.

We need more shopping available of every kind honestly. But more than anything else, we need a more affordable grocery store. We never buy food locally, but I wish we could.

It is simply too expensive to shop in Sooke for our groceries and home hardware. Most of our money is spent in Langford or Victoria.

Sooke doesn't have what I need/looking for and if it does, it costs more here than in other places.

**Definitely impacted by the difficult commute to work.**

It would be nice to not leave Sooke. We need diversity and choice.

I think it's important to encourage Sooke citizens to spend their money in Sooke. If we don't reinvest in our community, our community will die. The prices may be better in Langford but when you factor in the time and gas prices to go to Langford it tends to make it that shopping in Sooke is cheaper.

Improve walk/ bike trails, street sweep shoulders

I'd like to see unique small storefronts but I'm guessing there are none available or rent is too high

With the prices for rent alone. It's nearly impossible to shop in Sooke as everything is way too expensive. As a single mom, **I'd rather not have to travel for groceries to Langford..** however, it's insane the prices in town.

**More infrastructure**

Need an emergency room for after-hours

Grocery Stores are so expensive. We do most of our food shopping in Langford, Superstore, Costco, etc

Other than fuel, it seems basic grocery and day-to-day needs are far more expensive in Sooke. For example, a plastic package of mixed greens is \$4.99 in Langford and \$8.99 in Sooke. Same product, same brand. I don't mind spending a bit more to support the community I live in, but it has become difficult to do that. Sooke needs variety, competition, and just more business. Thx

More variety but not open to big box stores. Not even happy we have fast-food big businesses, more incentive to keep Sooke quaint as it grows.

Love Sooke. Stay small. Stay local.

We need more than cannabis shops and cheap, discount, and used clothing stores

I order groceries and travel to West Shore to shop for things in Sooke are insanely expensive in comparison. I don't love big box stores but unfortunately, a Walmart or superstore would be amazing for convenience and affordability.

Groceries cost so much, things are expensive here in Sooke unfortunately. Wish I could spend more in Sooke

Not enough local jobs. Retailers/restaurants are overpriced.

Question 10 regarding waterfront access is flawed. There is no shopping on the waterfront and due to the slope and cost of the waterfront there never will be. People might want it but this style of waterfront is never going to happen in Sooke. If you want something like Steveston or Sydney then move to Steveston or Sydney. Stop feeding the delusion that Sooke can be like that,

Things are much more expensive in Sooke. **The road is ridiculous too in Core.**

Needs more Retail shops

We need options for entertainment for all ages. Sooke does not offer much to the young adults in the evenings.

Grocery stores are too expensive and often poor quality produce

Increased numbers of residents are stretching the resources we currently enjoy.

It is a small community. The types of business reflect this.

**Sooke needs better roads and infrastructure plus green space.**

I think there is a lot of potential here.

**More diverse local businesses with competitive prices would mean less traffic in and out of Langford.** Competitive prices require reasonable costs (rents, taxes, etc) and more competition (particularly groceries).

I had a premade house built as housing was too expensive.

Worried about the ability to age in place with appropriate services

We could use anything to bring property taxes down

I grew up here and the only thing that has always been missing is more shopping variety that's somewhat affordable I would love to see more small independent businesses as well as waterfront boardwalk entertainment.

We need more community-based events and spaces that bring people together and support one another.

Needs a boost

**Please do not encourage more people to come here to visit and shop- that adds to traffic congestion** where very few gain. Focus on lower grocery and gas prices to support locals who live here and commute less.

If we keep growing, we're going to lose our small town vibe

The streets of Sooke recently feel unsafe for my children and teens. More than once we've been inappropriately approached by obvious drug-affected individuals. I feel uncomfortable in the Sooke town core with my children some days.

For Sooke to achieve its potential we need to diversify the economy. I.e. grow the tech sector, **build more commercial space**, create more affordable and middle-income housing and for God's sake



embrace the fact Sooke is an Oceanside community. Create more access to the oceanfront. With the sole exception of Whiffin Spit, we are an oceanside community that only offers glimpses of the ocean.

Our family would like to see an improvement in the quality of produce available at the grocery stores.

More support for upcoming local businesses that are finding it hard to start up

I think we need more sidewalks on busy streets, maybe a traffic light at Grant Rd West and Otter Point Rd.

More shopping and outdoor dining by the water

We love living here- been here for 4 years- but we would love it more if it had a Starbucks. Also if things would be open a bit later like Shoppers or Daniels market

Sooke has some EXCELLENT stores, restaurants, and workers that go above and beyond to help with not only what one needs but wants!!!

Need more competition and better variety of restaurants lower prices

Having lived in Sooke for 4 years now the biggest concern I have is that **there seems to be no plan. How Sooke is being built seems extremely disorganized.** The last town I called home was Squamish and to compare the two, it seemed from the outside looking in that Squamish had a organized concrete plan where we don't in sooke.

Wish I could find employment here and support the economy.

Moved to Sooke from the prairies and everyone has been very welcoming, I just wish there were better ways to make connections, possibly through events.