{Background}

From **May 8 through July 7** a survey was conducted in the Town of Madison, gathering valuable input from residents that will play an integral role in updating the town's strategic plan. This initiative aims to ensure that the voices, ideas, and concerns of the community are actively considered in shaping the future direction of Madison. By engaging residents and business owners in the survey, the town demonstrates its commitment to inclusive decision-making and seeks to create a strategic plan that aligns with the needs and aspirations of its residents.

The online survey link to the full results is here: Town of Madison Community Survey

{Process}

From May 8 through July 7, 2023, interested parties in the community of Madison were able to engage in the strategic planning process by answering an online survey. The survey is a feedback/opinion survey and as such is not a statistically based form of information.

Demographic data was collected for the sole purpose of determining what involvement the respondents had with the Town of Madison, CT.

674 respondents answered 18 questions:

{Survey Questions}

1. On a scale of 1 star to 5 stars, how much do you know about the community services, programs, and events offered by the Town of Madison?

2. Does the Town do a good job of communicating important information to town residents?

3. What Town of Madison services do you feel provide you, your family, and/or your business the most value? Please use the arrows to rearrange your answers, with the most valuable at the top.

4. In your opinion, are there any services the Town of Madison should offer the community that we don't currently offer?

5. Madison has a volunteer driven town government that relies on over 50 boards and commissions. Are you familiar with how Town Boards and Commissions assist the Town in its operations?

6. Have you ever served on a board or commission for the Town of Madison?

7. When you think about Madison town operations, what are the three greatest strengths that come to your mind?
8. Please pick the top five challenges you believe Madison will face in the next ten years.

9. What improvements should the Town make to address issues such as accessibility, diversity, bias and/or inclusion in the community? (Please check all that apply)

10. We know that we will experience growth, and we want to plan. If you think about all the things, you love and treasure about Madison, what are the main things you want to PRESERVE as we grow?

11. If you could wave a magic wand, what are TWO things you would like to see improve within the community?

12. As the Town plans for the future, what are three things we should STOP DOING?

13. Below is a list of the different land uses in Madison. For each land use option, please let us know whether you would like to see more of this use, the same amount of this use, or less of this use in Madison. Please pick one option for each land use listed.

14. The Town has a history of acquiring open space. What qualities or characteristics should the Town prioritize when obtaining land? Please rank priorities with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.

15. Thinking to the future, please name your #1 TOP PRIORITY for the Town of Madison to focus on moving forward. Please use as few words as possible.

16. Please tell us if you are a (check all that apply)

17. How long have you been a Madison resident?

18. What is your age?
Key Theme by Question

1. On a scale of 1 star to 5 stars, how much do you know about the community services, programs, and events offered by the Town of Madison?

3.2★
average rating

50.89% (344 out of 676) has an average knowledge about the Town’s community services, programs and events.
2. Does the Town do a good job of communicating important information to town residents?

The common theme among the responses is that there is a perceived lack of effective communication from the town to its residents. Many individuals mention that they are not well-informed about various town resources, events, and important issues.

Overall, the residents' feedback highlights the need for more effective, transparent, and accessible communication from the town to its residents across various platforms and on a wide range of topics.
3. What Town of Madison services do you feel provide you, your family, and/or your business the most value? Please use the arrows to rearrange your answers, with the most valuable at the top.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. In your opinion, are there any services the Town of Madison should offer the community that we don't currently offer? Here are the top answers by category:

**Category 1: Infrastructure and Services**
- Sidewalks, safe places to walk and bike
- Water and sewer
- Trash and recycling pickup
- Expand Bark Swim
- Sewer system in the downtown area
- Curbside municipal waste collection
- Waste collection

**Category 2: Public Facilities and Activities**
- Additional services provided by the new Academy Community Center
- Community pool (several times)
- Teen volunteer opportunities
- More access to gymnasiums
- More arts and entertainment
- More recreational classes at affordable rates
- More winter activities and recreational opportunities
- Town pool, splash pad
- Free beach passes for all taxpayers
- More programs at the library, library open on Sundays, more family activities
- Vocational education
- Programs for children under 3

**Category 3: Housing and Development**
- More opportunity for low-income housing/apartments in safe areas
- More lenient zoning restrictions for private gyms and businesses
- Providing sewer systems, natural gas, and city water accessible to all Madison residents
- Better walking and biking paths connecting north and south Madison
- More modern dining options downtown, improved retail stores to support small businesses
- More pedestrian access between town and shoreline greenway trail at Hammonasset
- Second "town center" at the Circle with shopping, offices, and amenities for North Madison residents

**Category 4: Environmental Concerns**
- Information on and control assistance over invasive plants along roadways and throughout the town
- More opportunities for beach clean up
- Tree trimming in Madison

**Category 5: Transportation and Connectivity**
TOWN OF MADISON COMMUNITY SURVEY

- More public transit
- Shuttle services to Guilford and Clinton
- More sidewalks and bike paths
- More pedestrian access between town and shoreline greenway trail at Hammonasset
- Expand transportation services
- Continue to push bike paths and pedestrian sidewalks, require sidewalks in all new construction where appropriate
- More monitoring of speeding along main arteries to the beach, addressing needs for sidewalks

5. Madison has a volunteer driven town government that relies on over 50 boards and commissions. Are you familiar with how Town Boards and Commissions assist the Town in its operations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>38.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 676
6. **Have you ever served on a board or commission for the Town of Madison?**

Many individuals in Madison, CT, express concerns about the time commitment required to serve on boards and committees. Some mention challenges related to the current political environment, lack of transparency, and limited impact or recognition of their efforts. Others have uncertainty about available opportunities and responsibilities. Despite this, there is a positive sentiment from those who have served, highlighting the gratifying experience of contributing to the community and the importance of volunteerism.

7. **When you think about Madison town operations, what are the three greatest strengths that come to your mind?**

The common theme that emerges from the provided responses are:

- **Community and Residents:** There is a strong focus on caring for residents, community input, collaboration, and a feeling of community spirit.
- **Services and Facilities:** Themes related to emergency services (police, ambulance, fire), education (schools, library), recreational activities, town maintenance, and beach/recreational areas are mentioned frequently.
- **Leadership and Decision-Making:** Respondents appreciate proactive and smart leadership, female leadership that values input from the whole population, hardworking committee members, and capable individuals serving in director roles. There is an emphasis on making sound decisions and supporting small businesses.

Overall, the responses show a strong sense of satisfaction with various aspects of the community and a desire to maintain and improve the positive aspects of living in Madison, CT.
8. Please pick the top five challenges you believe Madison will face in the next ten years.
The top 5 challenges according to the community’s response are the following:

1. Preserving history and heritage
2. Maintaining high standards for commercial design and development
3. Infrastructure maintenance
4. Regional cooperation to leverage resources
5. Small business vitality
Other answers

1. Education
2. Development and Growth
3. Infrastructure and Services:

9. **What improvements should the Town make to address issues such as accessibility, diversity, bias and/or inclusion in the community?** (Please check all that apply)
1. Training for staff, volunteers, elected officials and appointed Board members
2. Create opportunities for authentic, inclusive and welcoming conversations
3. Attract a more diverse Town workforce
4. Review Town policies and procedures
5. Make recreational programming more inclusive and accessible

10. We know that we will experience growth, and we want to plan. If you think about all the things you love and treasure about Madison, what are the main things you want to PRESERVE as we grow?

Based on the provided responses, the top five common themes are:

1. Small Town Feel: Several responses emphasize the importance of preserving the small town charm, culture, and community spirit.
2. Public Safety: Safety is mentioned as a significant concern, including public safety measures and low crime rates.
3. Beaches and Open Space: The beauty, accessibility, and quality of beaches, as well as open space preservation, are important priorities.
4. Education: High-quality public education, successful schools, and offerings are highlighted as essential factors.
5. Zoning and Planning: Local control of zoning, high standards for commercial design and development, and responsive planning for the future, including climate issues, are mentioned as important considerations.

11. If you could wave a magic wand, what are TWO things you would like to see improve within the community?

Based on the provided responses, the top two common themes are:

- **Small Town Feel and Community**: Many respondents express a desire to preserve the small-town charm, maintain a sense of community, and improve social interaction and friendliness among residents.
Infrastructure Improvement: There is a strong emphasis on various infrastructure improvements, including more sidewalks, better road maintenance, bike lanes, and the renovation of public spaces like the Surf Club buildings.

12. As the Town plans for the future, what are three things we should STOP DOING?

Infrastructure and Development: Several responses express concerns about town development, overbuilding, height limitations, zoning variances, and maintaining architectural consistency. There are also mentions of infrastructure improvements like sidewalks, roads, and underground utilities.

Taxes and Financial Matters: Many respondents mention concerns about tax increases, wasteful spending, funding for various projects, and managing resources effectively.

Education and Social Issues: Some responses mention issues related to education, including curriculum choices, political ideologies in schools, and funding for schools. Social issues, diversity, and inclusivity are also brought up by some participants.

13. Below is a list of the different land uses in Madison. For each land use option, please let us know whether you would like to see more of this use, the same amount of this use, or less of this use in Madison. Please pick one option for each land use listed.
TOWN OF MADISON COMMUNITY SURVEY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>I WANT TO SEE MORE OF THIS USE</th>
<th>I WANT TO SEE THE SAME AMOUNT OF THIS USE</th>
<th>I WANT TO SEE LESS OF THIS USE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>Open spaces for public access</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing fields/courts/parks for recreation</td>
<td>32.57%</td>
<td>58.31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>76.42%</td>
<td>22.47%</td>
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<td>Professional offices</td>
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<td>26.38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail stores</td>
<td>43.30%</td>
<td>52.12%</td>
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<td>61.75%</td>
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<td>Cultural and arts related facilities</td>
<td>54.56%</td>
<td>32.79%</td>
<td>6.63%</td>
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</table>
14. The Town has a history of acquiring open space. What qualities or characteristics should the Town prioritize when obtaining land? Please rank priorities with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.

The highest weighted average is the most important answer and they are shown below in order of importance.

15. Thinking to the future, please name your #1 TOP PRIORITY for the Town of Madison to focus on moving forward. Please use as few words as possible

Community and Quality of Life: The main focus of the responses revolves around improving the overall community and enhancing the quality of life for residents in Madison.

Others responses include:

- **Infrastructure and Services:** Many respondents express concerns or suggestions related to the improvement of infrastructure, such as sidewalks, roads, and public safety
services (e.g., police, fire, and ambulance). They also mention the need for recreational facilities like an indoor pool, community centers, and amenities to enhance the overall quality of life.

- **Preservation and Conservation:** Several responses emphasize the importance of preserving and conserving natural resources, open spaces, historic habitats, and the town’s small-town feel. Participants express a desire to maintain the town’s unique character and charm while being mindful of sustainable development practices.

- **Affordability and Diversity:** A significant number of responses highlight the need for affordable housing options, services, and programs that cater to all age groups and socio-economic backgrounds. There are also mentions of promoting diversity, inclusivity, and equity within the community to create a welcoming and vibrant town for everyone.

### 16. Please tell us if you are a (check all that apply)

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<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
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<td>Year Round Resident</td>
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Total Respondents: 676
17. How long have you been a Madison resident?

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<td>Over 10 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seasonal Resident</td>
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<tr>
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443
125
106
2
676
18. What is your age?
Again, it should be noted that this is one part of several types of community feedback gathered for the Strategic Plan. While all the feedback components are valuable, they must be evaluated in light of the other data and information collected during the process.

For questions or comments, please contact Sheryl Trent of SBrand Solutions at sheryl@sbrandsolutions.com or 970-208-6633.