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**Town of Longboat Key, FL
Citizen Survey
Final Report: April 2021**

Prepared for:

Town of Longboat Key

Prepared By:

The Florida Institute of Government
at the University of South Florida

2021 Citizen Survey

Town of Longboat Key, FL

Final Report, April 2021

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Disclaimer: This study was conducted on behalf of the Town of Longboat Key, FL as part of the Town's ongoing quality improvement efforts. The findings of this study should not be construed as generalizable research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	1
Table of Figures	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
COMPLETE REPORT	12
Introduction	13
Data and Methods	13
2021 Citizen Survey Results.....	15
Quality of Life.....	15
Gulf of Mexico Drive.....	18
Community Amenities	19
Government Services.....	23
Town Communications.....	25
Town Priorities	27
Town Center Events and Amenities.....	30
Conclusions	32
Appendix (Survey Instrument)	35

TABLE OF FIGURES

Executive Summary

Figure E1: Overall Quality of Life on Longboat Key	5
Figure E2: Proposed Enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive	6
Figure E3: Desired Amenities	7
Figure E4: Most Important Challenges Facing the Town of Longboat Key	10
Figure E5: Desired Space in Future Town Center Developments	11
Table E1: Satisfaction with Elected Leadership	8
Table E2: How Residents Stay Informed About Town Issues	9

Full Report

Table 1: Profile of Survey Respondents	14
Table 2: Overall Quality of Life on Longboat Key	15
Table 3: Citizen Perceptions of Longboat Key	16
Table 4: Perceptions of Town Characteristics	16
Table 5: Summary of Open-Ended Responses for Quality of Life	17
Table 6: Potential Enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive	19
Table 7: Awareness of Town Amenities.....	20
Table 8: Satisfaction with Town Amenities	20
Table 9: Reasons for Leaving Longboat Key	21
Table 10: Preferred Amenities on Longboat Key	22
Table 11: Satisfaction with Government Services	23
Table 12: Customer Service Provided by Town Staff and Officials	24
Table 13: Satisfaction with Elected Leadership	25
Table 14: Means of Staying Informed About Town Issues	25
Table 15: Satisfaction with Town Communications	26
Table 16: Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System	27
Table 17: Town Priorities	28
Table 18: Most Important Challenges Facing the Town of Longboat Key.....	29
Table 19: Under-Funded Budget Priorities	30
Table 20: Likelihood of Attending Town Center Events	31
Table 21: Desired Spaces in Future Town Center Developments.....	31



Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This second annual *Citizen Survey* was conducted by the Town of Longboat Key in an effort to obtain input from residents on a broad range of issues ranging from their quality of life on Longboat Key, to government services and policy priorities. The survey was conducted in January of 2021 with the goal of helping Town officials better understand public opinions and preferences as they relate to Town amenities and services, as well as to help Town management set priorities for the future and identify opportunities to improve public service delivery. Building off of the previous year's survey, the questionnaire addressed seven key topics, which included:

- ✓ Quality of Life on Longboat Key
- ✓ Potential Enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive
- ✓ Community Amenities
- ✓ Government Services
- ✓ Town Communications
- ✓ Town Priorities
- ✓ Town Center Events and Amenities

The survey was administered using a web-based questionnaire, and citizens were encouraged to participate via a postal mail invitation. Awareness about the survey was also raised through the use of several mediums, including local media, the Town website, and social media. The John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government (FIOG) at the University of South Florida was contracted to assist the Town in administering the 2021 *Citizen Survey*. In collaboration with Town officials, FIOG helped to design, administer, and analyze the survey. A total of 8,320 survey invitations were mailed out, and 1,524 completed and usable questionnaires were received, equaling a response rate of roughly 18%. This represented a considerable increase in completed surveys, up from 597 in 2020. The increase underscores that Town management has effectively communicated the existence and value of the survey to residents, both through its pre-survey communications, as well as its public discussion of the previous year's survey results.

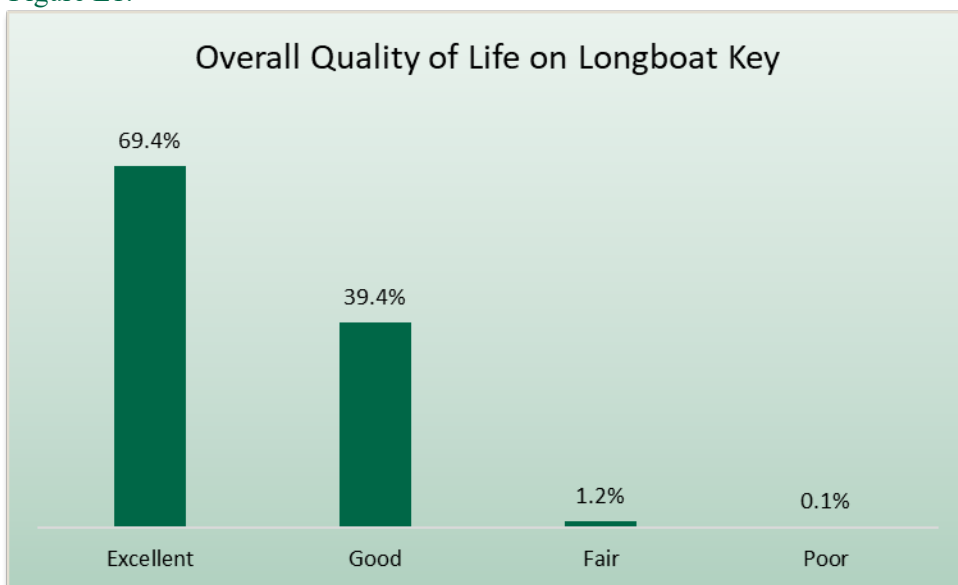
This **Executive Summary** provides an abbreviated overview of the major findings from each individual section of the survey. A more complete account of the survey responses, accompanied by a more detailed discussion of the results, is provided in the full *Citizen Survey Report* (beginning on page 12). A copy of the original survey instrument can be found in the Appendix at the conclusion of this document.

Quality of Life

The survey results show that residents enjoy the quality of life on Longboat Key and hold very positive perceptions of the community. Some anticipated concerns were raised over traffic congestion and safety, as well as the loss of public transportation options. Overall, the responses appear to be slightly improved in some instances, though it's unclear if these changes reflect temporary fluctuations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ✓ Almost 99% of respondents described the overall quality of life on Longboat Key as either “excellent” or “good”. Of them, 69% chose “excellent”; this is up from 57% in the 2020 survey (Figure E1).
- ✓ 94% rated the Town as either an “excellent” or “good” place to live, visit, and retire.
- ✓ More than 95% of respondents reported being satisfied with the Town’s overall reputation, aesthetic appeal, and safety.
- ✓ A small majority (52%) reported being either “somewhat” or “very dissatisfied” with traffic and congestion on Longboat Key.
 - This was down considerably from 82% in 2020.
 - It’s unclear whether or to what extent this change reflects temporary reductions in traffic associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure E1.



Source: 2021 Citizen Survey – Longboat Key, FL

Gulf of Mexico Drive

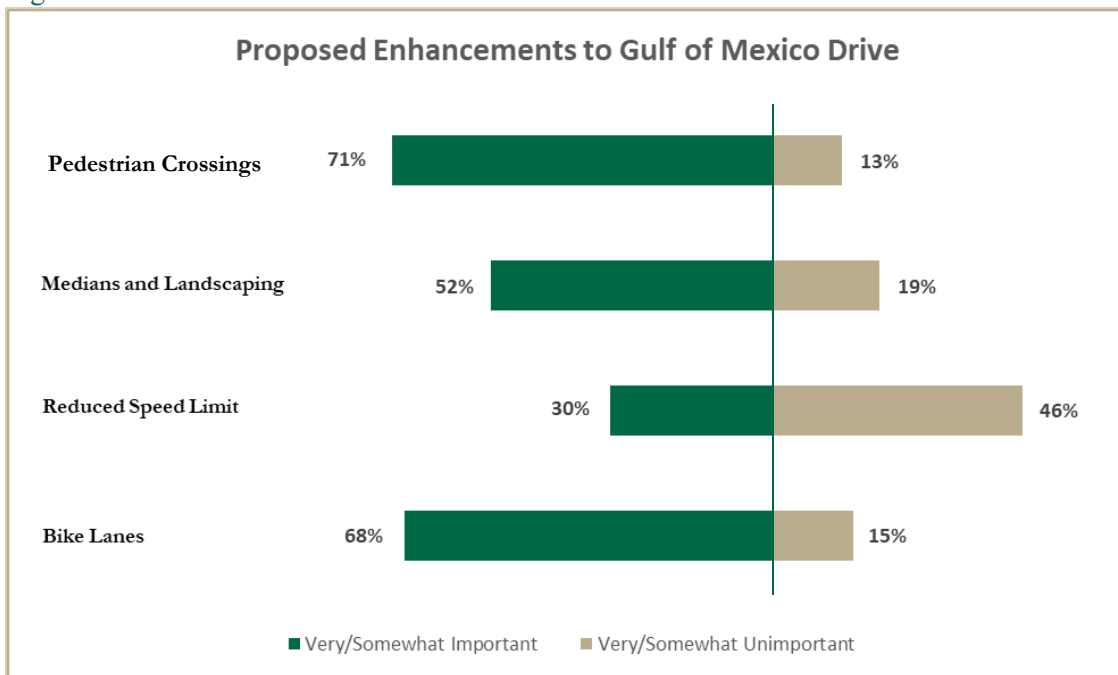
In response to the prior year’s survey results, Town officials added a set of questions addressing specific potential enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive. Responses provided at several points throughout the survey highlight how central the thoroughfare is to citizens’ perceptions of their quality of life on Longboat Key. The responses show a strong preference among residents for future enhancements to safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

- ✓ 71% of respondents favor improving pedestrian crossing on Gulf of Mexico Drive
 - In the open-ended responses, a number of residents emphasized a desire for caution lights in the crosswalks to be changed from yellow to red as a means of improving their visibility and enhancing pedestrian safety.

- ✓ 68% of respondents favor improving bike lanes along Gulf of Mexico Drive

- ✓ 46% of respondents indicated that reducing the speed limit on Gulf of Mexico Drive was either “somewhat” or “very unimportant”. Only 30% indicated that it was important.
 - The open-ended comments confirmed that residents are fairly divided on this issue.

Figure E2.



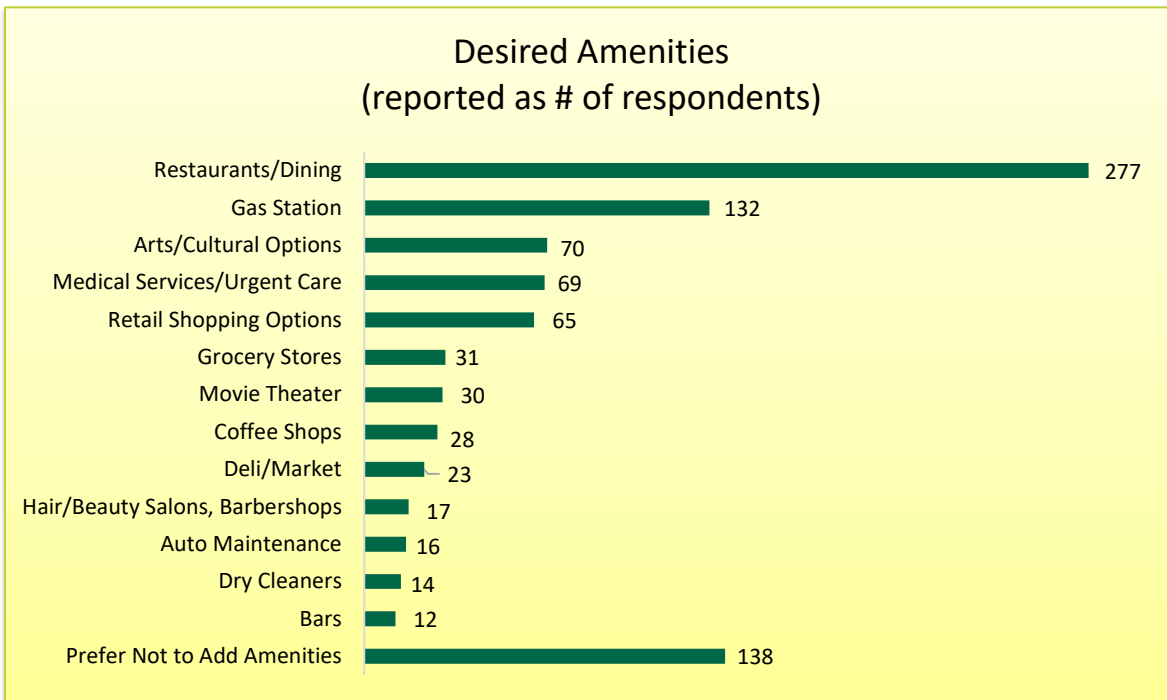
Source: 2021 Citizen Survey – Longboat Key, FL

Community Amenities

Respondents reported high levels of familiarity and satisfaction with the Town’s parks and beaches, though many indicated a lack of familiarity with the Quick Point Nature Preserve. Open-ended responses highlighted a desire for expanded access to pickleball courts as well as concerns over beach re-nourishment.

- ✓ 93% of respondents report being either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the Town’s beaches.
- ✓ 63% of respondents are “not very familiar” or “not at all familiar” with the Quick Point Nature Preserve.
 - This is relatively unchanged from the 2020 survey, though that is likely due to the shutdowns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The most common reasons why residents go outside of Longboat Key include:
 - retail shopping (81%)
 - dining/restaurants (79%)
 - gas stations (72%)
 - medical appointments (70%)
- ✓ The amenities that residents would most like to see added to Longboat Key include restaurants and a gas station, though many indicate a preference for not adding such amenities (Figure E3).

Figure E3.



Source: 2021 Citizen Survey – Longboat Key, FL

Government Services

Overall, respondents rated the Town’s local government services very positively, including the assistance provided by Town staff and officials. A notable majority of respondents also expressed satisfaction with the overall direction being taken by the Town.

- ✓ Customer service provided by Town staff and officials was rated very positively by those respondents who had reached out to them in the past six months:
 - Easy to Contact – 91%
 - Courteousness and Respectful – 93%
 - Knowledgeable – 88%

- ✓ High satisfaction ratings were given for a number of key public services:
 - Fire and Ambulance – 94%
 - Police Department – 93%
 - Solid Waste Services – 93%
 - Parks and Town Facilities – 91%
 - Emergency Management and Preparedness – 91%

- ✓ Respondents also reported high levels of satisfaction with the overall direction of the Town, as well as with the elected Town Commission (Table E1).

Table E1.
Satisfaction with Elected Leadership and Overall Direction of the Town (Reported as Percentages)

<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
...the overall direction that the Town of Longboat Key is taking? (N=1,510)	27.0	56.0	13.8	2.6	0.5
...the job that the elected Town Commission is doing to serve the residents of Longboat Key? (N=1,510)	22.4	51.2	22.3	3.6	0.5

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Town Communications

In general, respondents are satisfied with the Town’s efforts to communicate with the community and keep residents informed about local services, issues, and events. Respondents remain very heavily reliant on the Town’s newspapers for local information, as well as on the E-Notification system and website. Satisfaction with opportunities to get involved and participate in Town government did decline by over 10% from 2020, though this is likely due in part to the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on public gatherings.

- ✓ 82% of respondents (rely on the Town’s newspapers to say informed and up to date about local issues and events. A small majority (51%) also rely on the Town’s E-Notification System.
- ✓ Residents are generally pleased with their access to information about Town services (77%), as well as with the Town’s efforts to keep them informed (83%).
- ✓ 65% of respondents have signed up for the ***Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System***.
 - Among those who have not signed up, 76% indicated that they were not familiar with the service.
 - The survey results may overstate participation in the alert system due to selection bias.

Table E2
How Residents Stay Informed About Town Issues

<i>Which of the following sources do you use to stay informed about Town issues, services, and events? (Please check all that apply)</i>	Frequency	% of Total Sample†
Local Newspapers	1,251	82.1
Town E-Notification (i.e. Email Announcements)	782	51.3
Town Website	649	42.6
Facebook	148	9.7
Instagram	57	3.7
Twitter	42	2.7

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

† Percentages do not total to 100, as respondents were allowed to select multiple items.

Town Priorities

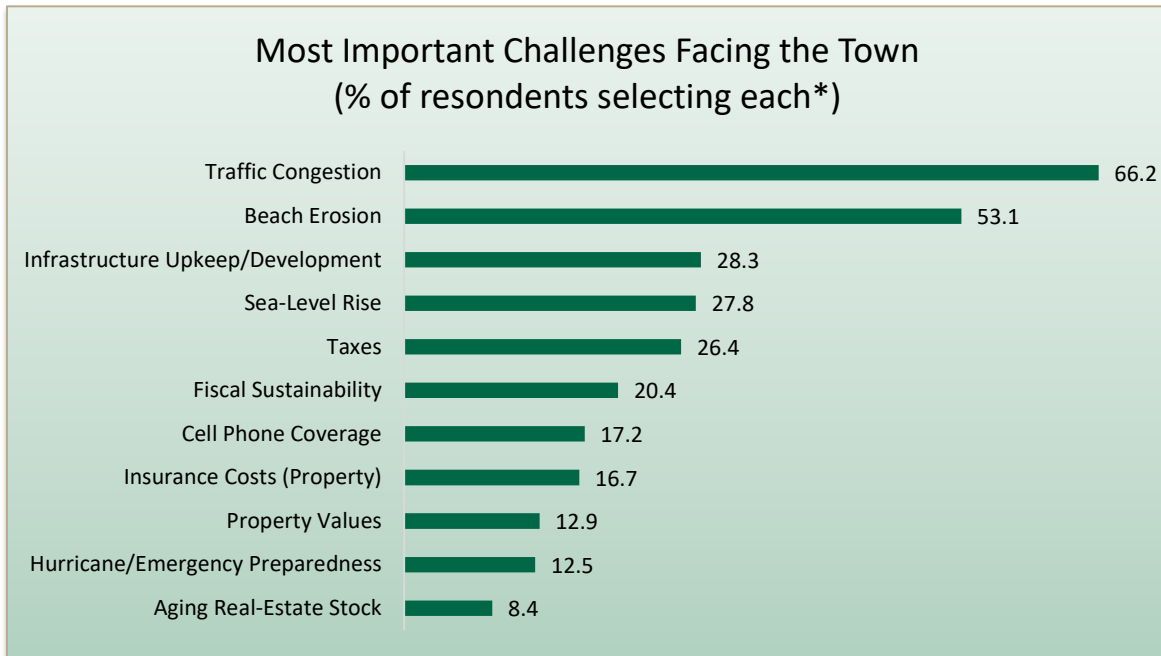
The top priorities for the Town moving forward, as identified by survey respondent, include (1) beach management/shoreline protection, (2) traffic congestion, (3) infrastructure upkeep, and (4) sea-level rise planning. Among the Town’s current underfunded initiatives, respondents identified sea-level rise planning and enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive as the most important places to direct available funding. Replacing the Bayfront Rec Center, the “One-County” initiative, and investing in round-about projects were among the least important priorities, as indicated by the survey respondents.

- ✓ The issues that respondents see as most important to address in the coming years include:
 - beach management/shoreline protection (97%)
 - infrastructure upkeep (96%)
 - fiscal sustainability (96%)
 - traffic congestion/safety (96%)

- ✓ The two most commonly cited “challenges facing the town” included traffic congestion (66%) and beach erosion (53%)

- ✓ 68% of respondents agreed that among current underfunded mandates, the top priorities should be either completing seal-level rise planning (38%) or making enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive (30%).

Figure E4.



Source: 2021 Citizen Survey – Longboat Key, FL

*Responses do not total to 100%, as respondents were able to select multiple items.

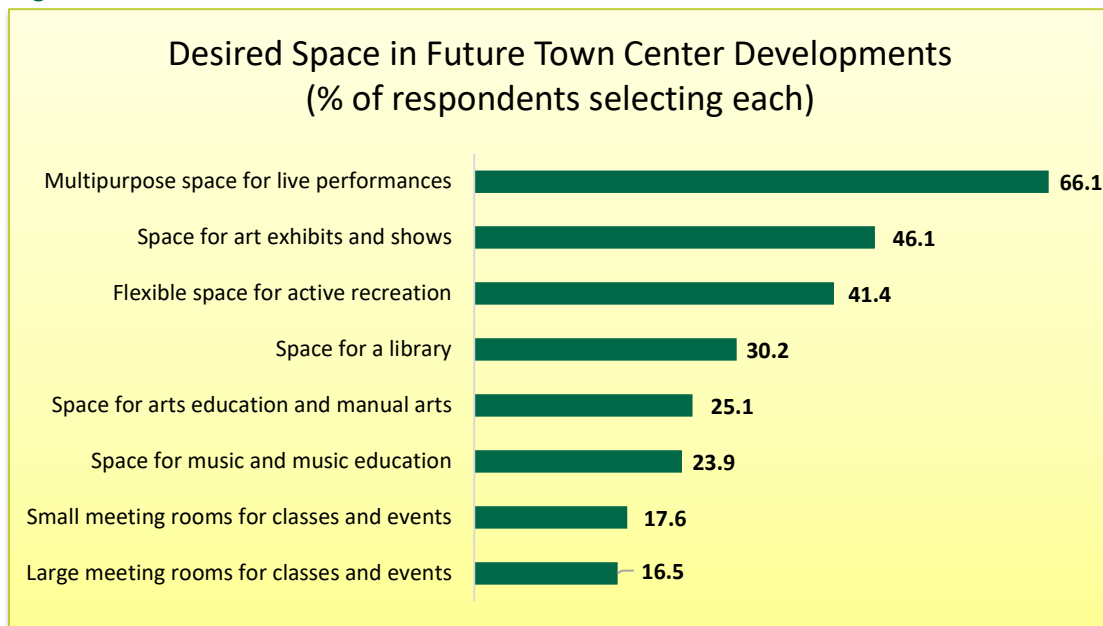
Town Center Events and Amenities

The final section of the survey asked respondents to share their thoughts related to the new outdoor events venue at the Town Center, as well as their preferences for future additions to the Town Center. The responses were consistent with open-ended comments provided at earlier points in the survey, and they indicated a preference for amenities such as farmers markets, outdoor concerts, and art shows/craft festivals.

- ✓ A large percentage of respondents indicated that they would be “somewhat” or “very likely” to attend the following type of events at the Town Center
 - farmers markets (94%)
 - art shows/craft festivals (87%)
 - outdoor concerts (83%)

- ✓ When thinking about future developments at the Town Center, respondents favored a multi-purpose space for live performances such and theater and music, as well as additional spaces for art exhibits and active recreation, such as exercise, dance, and yoga classes (Figure E5).

Figure E5.



Source: 2021 Citizen Survey – Longboat Key, FL

*Responses do not total to 100%, as respondents were able to select multiple items.



Complete Report

INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings from the 2021 *Citizen Survey*, conducted by the Florida Institute of Government (FIOG) on behalf of the Town of Longboat Key, FL. This is the 2nd annual iteration of the survey, which is being conducted by the Town of Longboat Key in order to obtain input from residents on a broad range of issues and to better incorporate public feedback into planning, prioritization, and Town management. Building on the previous year's questionnaire, the survey collected input from property owners and resident in the following areas: (1) the quality of life on Longboat Key, (2) potential enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive, (3) satisfaction and preferences regarding community amenities, (4) satisfaction with government services, (5) Town communications, (6) priorities for the Town's future, and also (7) Town Center amenities. The data collection process for this survey is outlined briefly below, followed by a detailed discussion of the survey results.

DATA AND METHODS

The questionnaire administered for this year's *Citizen Survey* was based on the initial questionnaire created in 2020 by FIOG and in partnership with Town staff/officials. A copy of the survey instrument is available in the Appendix of this report. Respondents completed the survey in an online, web-based format (using Qualtrics survey software). Invitations to complete the survey were distributed via postal mail to all registered property owners. These directed respondents to the Town's online landing page where the survey was located. The list of property owners was provided to FIOG by Town officials. A personal identifier/code was generated for each address and included on the respective postcards (via a "scratch-off" method). Those residents and property owners who did not receive a post-card invitation for any reason were able to obtain the code by contacting FIOG and verifying their name and address. This was done to ensure that only responses from property owners and/or Town residents were counted in the analysis, as well as to ensure that only one response was received for each household.

Awareness of the survey was promoted in several ways, including through local media as well as the Town's official social media accounts and webpage. In total, 8,320 residential addresses were identified by the Town for the sample, and 1,524 completed responses were received. This represents a response rate of 18.3%, which is exceptionally strong for a mail-based survey. Notably, this also represents an increase of over 900 responses from the 2020 survey, which received 597 completed responses. This is a very positive increase and suggests the Town has effectively promoted the existence and value of the survey to residents, both through its pre-survey promotional efforts, as well as its public discussion of the previous year's survey results.

Table 1 below summarizes the sample of respondents based on key demographic factors. The highly educated nature of the respondents (with 85.5% possessing a bachelors' degree or higher) is slightly above data reported by the Census Bureau for Longboat Key, but it is consistent with the highly educated level of the Town's population¹. At the Town's request, data on age and race/ethnicity were not collected, as there is limited variability along these dimensions in the Town's population, making them potentially identifying variables for some respondents. A detailed summary of the survey responses is provided below.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/longboatkeytownflorida/PST045219>

Table 1.
Profile of Survey Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
<i>What is your gender? (N=1,513)</i>		
Male	802	53.0
Female	634	41.9
No Answer	77	5.1
<i>What is your household income? (N=1,316)</i>		
Less than \$15,000	5	0.4
\$15,000 - 34,999	7	0.5
\$35,000 - 49,999	26	2.0
\$50,000 - 74,999	64	4.9
\$75,000 - 99,999	95	7.2
\$100,000 - \$150,000	211	16.0
More than \$150,000	908	69.0
<i>What is the last grade or class you completed? (N=1,489)</i>		
High School Diploma or Equivalent/Less	37	2.4
Technical or Vocational School After HS	14	0.9
Some College, No Degree	111	7.5
Associate's or Two-Year Degree	54	3.6
Four-Year College Degree	422	28.3
Graduate School, No Degree	105	7.1
Graduate or Professional Degree	746	50.1
<i>Which county do you live in? (N=1,516)</i>		
Manatee	588	38.8
Sarasota	928	61.2
<i>What type of home do you live in? (N=1,517)</i>		
Apartment	24	1.6
Town House or Condominium	1,030	67.9
Single Family Home	445	29.3
Other	18	1.2
<i>How long have you lived on Longboat Key? (N=1,517)</i>		
Less than 5 Years	361	23.8
5-10 Years	382	25.2
11-20 Years	375	24.7
More than 20 Years	399	26.3

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

2021 CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

The subsections below provide a detailed summary of the survey responses. These are outlined as follows: (1) Quality of Life on Longboat Key, (2) Gulf of Mexico Drive, (3) Community Amenities, (4) Government Services, (5) Town Communications, (6) Future Priorities, and (7) Town Center Amenities. Each subsection provides a summary and discussion of the survey responses. Where appropriate, noteworthy deviations from the prior years’ results (2020) are highlighted, though the changes are not depicted as “trends” for this iteration of the survey. Statistically speaking, it is important to have several years of data before attempting to distinguish larger underlying trends from random variations based on sampling error. (Note that tables and figures include a value “N” for the number of respondents. This number often varies from the overall sample size of 1,524, as not all respondents choose to answer each question).

Quality of Life

Respondents were asked several questions about the quality of life on Longboat Key. These include their perceptions of the Town as a place to live, work, visit, and retire. Collectively, respondents expressed very positive attitudes regarding their quality of life on Longboat Key and rated the Town highly in every category. As noted in the 2020 survey report, these responses compare very favorably to recent surveys conducted in other local communities, and they continue to suggest a strong sense of satisfaction among members of the community. Only a small portion of respondents expressed negative opinions about their quality of life on Longboat Key. When raised, these concerns generally focused on the issues of traffic congestion/safety, and – to a lesser a degree – access to public transportation. The tables and discussion below summarize these responses in greater detail.

Table 2 shows that aggregate perceptions of the community were very positive, with more than two-thirds of respondents (69%) describing their overall quality of life on Longboat Key as “excellent”. In total, approximately 99% of respondents described the quality of life as either “excellent” or “good”. As noted, these results compare very favorably with other communities in the Tampa Bay region and throughout the State of Florida. The 2021 responses represent a noteworthy improvement over the responses from 2020, when 57% of respondents rated the overall quality of life as “excellent”.

Table 2.
Overall Quality of Life on Longboat Key (N=1,519)

<i>How would you rate your overall quality of life on Longboat Key?</i>	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	1,054	69.4
Good	446	29.4
Fair	18	1.2
Poor	1	0.1

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Along with their overall quality of life, respondents were also asked to share their perceptions of the Town in a several specific areas, such as its quality and appeal as a place to live, retire, visit, and work. Their responses – reported in Table 3 below – show that citizens have very positive perceptions of the community as a place to live, retire, and visit, with close to 70% rating Longboat Key as “excellent” in those categories and at least 94% rating it as either “excellent” or “good”. Notably, half of all respondents to the survey (50%) indicated that they were “unsure” of how to rate the Town as a place to work. Among those who did rate the Town in this area, responses were slightly improved from last year; 28% rated the Town as either an “excellent” or “good” place to work, as opposed to (23.8%) in 2020.

Table 3.
Citizen Perceptions of Longboat Key (Reported as Percentages)

<i>How would you rate the Town of Longboat Key in each of the following areas?</i>	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
As a Place to Live (N=1,516)	67.4	29.4	2.2	0.1	0.9
As a Place to Retire (N=1,510)	71.9	25.2	1.7	0.1	1.1
As a Place to Visit (N=1,503)	68.4	25.5	2.9	0.2	3.0
As a Place to Work (N=1,472)	12.0	15.9	16.0	6.1	50.0

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Table 4 summarizes responses about specific characteristics or attributes of the Town. Citizens reported high levels of satisfaction with the Town’s overall reputation, aesthetics and safety. In each case, roughly 97% of respondents indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with each of these Town attributes. A smaller majority (73%) reported being satisfied with their access to retail, dining, and entertainment, though notably this was up from 60% the year prior. It’s unclear if and how the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected this change in responses, as respondents are likely to have utilized these amenities less frequently than in prior years and to have experienced less traffic when accessing them in recent months. Consistently with the previous years’ response, roughly a quarter of those who completed the survey (22%) indicated that they were dissatisfied with their access to retail, dining, and entertainment, and this was further underscored in the open-ended responses (discussed below).

Table 4.
Perceptions of Town Characteristics (Reported as Percentages)

<i>Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following characteristics of Longboat Key:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Overall Reputation of the Community	73.2	23.8	2.6	0.3	0.0
Overall Aesthetics of the Community	69.5	26.8	2.9	0.7	0.1
Overall Safety of the Community	80.1	17.5	1.5	0.7	0.1
The Flow of Traffic and Congestion	4.2	22.2	20.9	39.2	13.5
Access to Public Transportation	5.7	18.3	53.8	15.2	7.0
Access to Retail, Dining and Entertainment	26.9	46.2	15.2	10.3	1.5

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

In the 2020 survey, respondents expressed considerable dissatisfaction with regard to traffic congestion. This remained the most significant source of citizen dissatisfaction in the 2021 survey results as well. However, while a majority remained dissatisfied with traffic and congestion, these responses appear to be notably improved in the 2021 survey results. In 2020, almost 43% of respondents indicated that they were “very dissatisfied” with traffic and congestion, while 82% indicated that they were either “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”. In contrast, for 2021 52% of respondents (down from 82% in 2020) indicated that they were either “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with traffic congestion. Among them, only 14% indicated that they were “very dissatisfied”. This may signal improvements in both management and communication on the part of Town leaders, though again, it’s important to note that these responses may be significantly influenced by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has reduced traffic congestion on Longboat Key. Notably, just under a quarter of respondents (22%) also indicated some level of dissatisfaction with their access to public transportation on Longboat Key. (This also was down slightly from the previous year).

Throughout the survey, respondents were given several opportunities to elaborate on their responses by providing more qualitative, open-ended feedback. The first such prompt read: *Please provide any additional information that you would like us to know about your responses to the questions above and your quality of life on Longboat Key.* In total, 851 open-ended responses were provided to this question. These responses were reviewed and assigned “category codes” based on the issues/concerns raised. Table 5 summarizes these responses; a complete data set containing all responses has been provided to Town leaders for further review and analysis.

Table 5.
Summary of Open-Ended Responses for Quality of Life (Frequency of the Issue)

Issue/Category	Frequency
Traffic (Congestion & Safety)	424
Desire for Additional Amenities	127
Public Transportation	74
Walkability/Safety	45
Over-Development	35
Bicycle Access/Safety	20
Parking (Availability/Charges)	18
Upkeep on North-End of the Island	14
Beach Renourishment	13
Poor Cell Service	11
High Local Taxes	9
Trash Removal/Litter	9
Short Term Rentals	6
Flooding	5
Red Tide	5

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Consistent with the prior year's responses, the most frequently raised concern was traffic congestion (n=424). Additional traffic related questions and comments are discussed in the next section. A few important themes stood out in the traffic related comments, including (1) mixed-attitudes toward the likely effects of proposed roundabouts, (2) concerns about traffic/road construction being completed "in-season", as well as (3) a general understanding that Longboat Key's traffic concern are related to factors out of the Town's control, such as slowdowns originating off the island. On this latter point, many respondents urged greater collaboration with external partners such as the City of Sarasota, as well as the Sarasota and Manatee County governments/planning authorities.

In these comments, many respondents also expressed a desire to see more amenities available on Longboat Key. These included a range of retail and dining options, as well as consumer services and entertainment venues. The amenities that respondents would most like to see made available on Longboat Key are discussed further below. The third most common category of responses focused on the lack of public transportation options available to residents. Several of these comments expressed dissatisfaction over eliminated bus routes, while others suggested a desire for other novel and/or convenient options such as trolley cars, water taxis, and ferry services. Several of these responses also noted that many public transit options shut down too early in the evening to be conveniently utilized.

Other frequently cited topics included walkability (n=45), bicycle access and safety (n=20), and concerns about the over-development of Longboat Key (n=35). Notably, many of the open-ended comments revolved around access and safety for different modalities of transportation on Gulf of Mexico Drive (GMD). Some suggested that bicycles make sidewalks unsafe for pedestrians, while others noted that bike lanes on GMD are too narrow and unsafe for cyclists. A significant number of respondents also expressed a desire for caution-lights in the pedestrian crosswalks to be changed from yellow to red as a means of improving their visibility and enhancing pedestrian safety. The next section further examines responses related to potential enhancement for Gulf of Mexico Drive. Collectively, the survey responses outlined above highlight how central the thoroughfare is to citizens' perceptions of their quality of life on Longboat Key.

Gulf of Mexico Drive

Building on last year's survey responses, Town officials added several specific questions to the 2021 survey instrument in order to better understand public opinions related to traffic congestion and pedestrian safety. These included questions about several potential enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive, which might be considered to improve both safety and congestion related issues. Table 6 summarizes responses to several of these questions. The potential enhancements identified as most important by respondents were improving pedestrian crossings (71%) and improving bike lanes (68%). A slight majority of respondents (52%) also rated improving landscaping and medians along Gulf of Mexico Drive as an important potential enhancement.

Respondents were relatively split when it came to lowering the posted speed limit on Gulf of Mexico Drive, with 30% identifying it as either "very" or "somewhat important", while another 46% identified it as either "somewhat" or "very unimportant". The open-ended responses outlined in the previous section also underscored this split. While some comments did indeed request that the speed-limit be lowered for safety reasons, several others cited slow traffic on GMD (i.e. those traveling 10 mph or more *under* the posted speed limit) as a contributing factor when discussing traffic congestion. On balance, respondents appeared to be slightly more opposed to a speed limit change than supportive.

Table 6.

Potential Enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive (Reported as Percentages)

<i>In your opinion, how important are each of the following potential enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive?</i>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Unsure
Improved Bike Lanes (N=1,517)	38.0	30.3	15.7	6.7	7.9	1.5
Reduced Speed Limit (N=1,512)	11.4	19.0	22.6	16.3	29.7	1.0
Improved Medians and Landscaping (N=1,514)	18.4	34.0	27.3	9.6	9.8	0.8
Improved Pedestrian Crossings (N=1,513)	37.1	33.6	16.1	6.6	5.9	0.7

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Respondents were also asked to share their broader ideals and opinions about improving traffic congestion on Longboat Key. These were provided as open-ended responses to the following prompt: *In your opinion, what other steps could be taken to improve traffic congestion on Longboat Key?* Given the specific, and at times technical nature of these responses, they are not categorized or summarized in this report. However, a complete list of these responses has been provided to Town officials for further review and consideration.

Community Amenities

Next, respondents were asked several questions about their awareness of and satisfaction with the various amenities available to them on Longboat Key. Building off of last year’s results, the instrument included new questions gauging which amenities residents are most likely to leave Longboat Key for on a routine basis, as well as which of those amenities they would potentially like to see available on Longboat Key. Familiarity with Town amenities was largely unchanged from last year, which is unsurprising in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Respondents were mixed in regard to their desire for additional services and amenities on the island. Many expressed an interest in additional amenities such as restaurants/dining options, an additional gas station, and expanded access to medical services. However, others expressed concern over the potential traffic and development implications of adding such services and amenities.

Table 7 summarizes responses regarding familiarity with Town amenities. Approximately three-quarters of respondents indicated familiarity with the Town amenities available at both Bayfront Park and Durante Park (combining the “very” and “somewhat familiar” responses). A small majority also indicated familiarity with the Tennis Center (51%), though nearly a quarter indicated that they were “not at all familiar” with the Tennis Center. The least recognized amenities were those attached to the Quick Point Nature Preserve. In this case, approximately two-thirds of respondents (63%) indicated that they were either “not very” or “not at all familiar” with those

amenities. These responses are roughly the same as those reported in the 2020 Citizen Survey, suggesting that familiarity with Town amenities has not significantly improved in the last year. This is likely to be due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has limited public events and the use of such amenities.

Table 7.
Awareness of Town Amenities (Reported as Percentages)

<i>How familiar are you with the Town of Longboat Key amenities provided at the following locations?</i>	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Very Familiar	Not at All Familiar
Bayfront Park (N=1,521)	44.8	33.1	14.9	7.2
Durante Park (N=1,525)	42.2	29.5	18.3	10.0
Quick Point Nature Preserve (N=1,516)	14.0	22.8	36.7	26.6
Tennis Center (N=1,519)	22.2	28.9	26.3	22.6

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

The survey also gave respondents an opportunity to share their levels of satisfaction with existing Town amenities. Table 8 summarizes these responses. Respondents reported being very satisfied with the community’s beaches; 93% indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with this amenity. Satisfaction also remained high in the case of the Town’s parks, where roughly three-quarters of respondents indicated that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with both Bayfront and Durante Parks.

Table 8.
Satisfaction with Town Amenities (Reported as Percentages)

<i>Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the quality of the following Town of Longboat Key amenities:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Beaches (N=1,500)	62.1	31.0	4.9	1.7	0.3
Bayfront Park (N=1,320)	44.5	34.7	19.6	1.1	0.1
Durante Park (N=1,242)	44.4	31.9	23.4	0.1	0.2
Quick Point Nature Preserve (N=916)	20.0	29.7	49.7	0.7	0.0
Tennis Center (N=999)	22.2	24.2	52.1	1.0	0.5
Way-Finding Signage (N=1,275)	16.5	43.5	34.0	5.0	1.0

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

As was the case in 2020, approximately half of those who answered for Quick Point Nature Preserve (50%) indicated that they were satisfied with the amenities provided there. However, the other half (50%) provided a neutral response. A similar pattern was observed in the case of the Tennis Center, where a third of respondents (34%) provided a neutral response. However, reported satisfaction with the Tennis Center did rise slightly in 2021, with 60% of respondents indicating that they are either “satisfied” or “very satisfied”. This is up from 46% in 2020. Again, it should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have had a negative impact on the Town’s plans to increase community awareness around these amenities in the past year.

As an addition to last year’s survey, respondents were asked two additional questions about amenities. These new questions were included to help the Town better understand the reasons and amenities for which residents frequently leave Longboat Key, as well as which of those amenities they might prefer to have available in Town. The first question asked: *For which of the following reasons do you frequently leave Longboat Key?* Respondents were provided the list of options shown in Table 9 below. As the data show, the most commonly cited reasons for leaving Longboat Key were retail shopping (81% of respondents), dining/restaurants (79%), gas stations (72%), and medical appointments (70%). Approximately a two-thirds majority also indicated that they frequently leave Longboat Key for shows and performances (64%) and consumer services like hair salons, dry cleaning, and auto maintenance (63%).

Table 9.
Reasons for Frequently Leaving Longboat Key

<i>For which of the following reasons do you frequently leave Longboat Key?</i>	Frequency	% of Total Sample†
Retail Shopping	1,229	80.6
Dining/Restaurants	1,205	79.1
Gas Stations	1,097	72.0
Doctor, Dentist, Medical Appointments	1,068	70.1
Performances (i.e. shows, concerts, arts)	978	64.2
Consumer Services (i.e. hair, dry cleaning, auto)	966	63.4
Movie Theater	648	42.5
Visit Family and Friends	646	42.4
Grocery Shopping	504	33.1
Work/Employment Off the Island	172	11.3

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

† Percentages do not total to 100, as respondents were able to select multiple items.

These responses provide Town officials with valuable information and a deeper understanding of what amenities residents typically find off of Longboat Key. However, these data alone are incomplete, as it cannot be inferred that residents would prefer to have these amenities “in their backyard” so to speak. For this reason, a follow-up question was posed, which asked: *Thinking about your responses to the previous question, which services and amenities would you most like to see added on Longboat Key?* An open-ended space was provided for unique and specific responses. Table 10 summarizes the most common categories of responses.

Table 10.**Preferred Amenities on Longboat Key**

<i>Which services and amenities would you most like to see added on Longboat Key?</i>	Frequency
Restaurants/Dining	277
Gas Station	132
Arts/Cultural Options	70
Medical Services/Urgent Care	69
Retail Shopping Options	65
Grocery Stores	31
Movie Theater	30
Coffee Shops	28
Deli/Market	23
Hair/Beauty Salons, Barbershops	17
Auto Maintenance	16
Dry Cleaners	14
Bars	12
Prefer Not to Add Amenities	138

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

A total of 818 responses were received for this question. The most commonly cited amenity that respondents indicated that they would like to see added on Longboat Key was additional restaurant/dining options (n=277). The responses covered a range of preferences, though among the most common themes was a desire for more casual, café style dining options, as well as some preference for higher-end fast food options. Outdoor dining was also a frequently listed desire. The other most commonly cited amenity was a gas station (n=132). These comments tended to focus on an additional gas station on the north-end of the island. A notable number of respondents also listed a preference for additional arts and cultural options (n=70), medical services and/or an urgent care facility (n=69), and additional retail shopping options (n=65).

Notably, the second most common answer to this question (n=138) was that the respondents would not like to see any additional amenities added on Longboat Key, with several emphasizing their preference for the island’s residential/non-commercial environment. Several other respondents, while not explicitly objecting to new amenities, acknowledged the challenges that such businesses face given the seasonal nature of economic activity on the island. A dataset containing the complete list of responses was provided to Town leaders for additional review.

Government Services

In order to gauge public satisfaction with government services, respondents were asked several questions regarding their perceptions of various Town departments and services. Those who have interacted with a Town official or department in the past six months were also asked to share some feedback about their most recent experience. Across the board, respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the quality of local government services as well as their interactions with Town staff. A majority of respondents indicated being either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with each of the government services considered in the survey. Respondents gave especially high marks to the Town’s police, fire, and ambulance services, as well as in the areas of emergency management, solid waste services, and parks/town facilities. Table 11 provides a detailed summary of these responses for each service/department. The highest rated services included fire and ambulance (94%), police (93%), solid waste services (92.8%), emergency management (91%), and parks/town facilities (91%). A smaller majority reported satisfaction with the Town’s code enforcement (56%) and permitting (52%) services. However, in each case, more than a third of respondents provided a neutral rating, suggesting that many residents may have limited familiarity with these services.

Table 11.
Satisfaction with Government Services (Reported as Percentages)

<i>Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the quality of the following services provided by the Town of Longboat Key:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Police Services (N=1,459)	66.3	26.3	6.0	1.0	0.4
Fire and Ambulance Services (N=1,426)	71.2	22.4	6.1	0.1	0.1
Emergency Management and Preparedness (N=1,387)	62.5	28.4	8.4	0.5	0.2
Maintenance of Streets and Sidewalks (N=1,495)	47.4	42.4	6.0	3.5	0.7
Solid Waste Services (Trash & Recycling) (N=1,446)	56.4	36.4	5.7	1.3	0.2
Parks and Town Facilities (N=1,443)	50.8	40.1	8.2	0.6	0.3
Water and Waste-Water Utilities (N=1,380)	41.2	42.2	13.1	2.2	1.2
Storm Water Management (N=1,320)	27.0	39.0	22.6	8.9	2.5
Permitting (i.e. Planning and Building) (N=1,200)	16.7	35.1	35.1	9.4	3.8
Code Enforcement (N=1,221)	19.7	36.3	34.1	7.6	2.4
General Town Administration (N=1,391)	33.2	44.5	19.3	2.2	0.9

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Respondents who had contacted a Town department or official for assistance in the six months prior to the survey were asked to share some additional information about their experience. Of the 1,524 total survey respondents, 458 (30%) indicated that they had contacted a Town official or department in the past six months. Their responses to a series of follow-up questions are summarized in Table 12 below. Overall, respondents rated their

interactions with Town staff and officials positively, with majorities agreeing that the Town staff member or official performed well in each area. In particular, 91% of respondents indicated that it was easy to contact the appropriate individual to address their concern, while an even larger percentage (93%) indicated that Town employees were courteous and respectful.

Table 12.
Customer Service Provided by Town Staff and Officials (Reported as Percentages)

<i>Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements (as they pertain to your most recent contact with a Town official or department):</i>	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It was easy to contact the appropriate Town official or department (N=454)	59.7	31.1	5.5	3.5	0.2
My concern was addressed in a reasonable time (N=453)	54.1	29.6	9.1	4.6	2.6
My concern was completely resolved (N=448)	43.5	26.1	15.4	10.3	4.7
Town employees were courteous and respectful (N=450)	68.9	24.4	5.8	0.4	0.4
Town employees were knowledgeable (N=449)	62.6	25.6	9.4	1.6	0.9
I was satisfied with my experience (N=453)	56.3	25.8	9.7	5.3	2.9

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Respondents gave the lowest overall rating when prompted: *My concern was completely resolved*. In this case, 70% of respondents chose either “agree” or “strongly agree”. Notably, this represents more than a two-thirds majority, and only 15% of respondents expressed disagreement with this statement. These responses represented a slight improvement over the prior year, though additional data points will be required to demonstrate an upward trend. Overall, the responses suggest a robust level of satisfaction on the part of Longboat Key’s citizen with the services provided by the Town.

Lastly, respondents were asked to indicate their current levels of satisfaction with both the overall direction that the Town is taking, as well as with the performance of the elected Town Commission. Table 13 summarizes responses to both questions. A significant majority (83%) indicated that they were satisfied with the overall direction being taken by the Town, while nearly three-quarters (74%) indicated the same about the job being done by the elected Town Commission. This latter response was up from 63% in 2020. These responses are consistent with the very positive attitudes expressed about the quality of government services.

Table 13.**Satisfaction with Elected Leadership and Overall Direction of the Town (Reported as Percentages)**

<i>How satisfied are you with...</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
...the overall direction that the Town of Longboat Key is taking? (N=1,510)	27.0	56.0	13.8	2.6	0.5
...the job that the elected Town Commission is doing to serve the residents of Longboat Key? (N=1,510)	22.4	51.2	22.3	3.6	0.5

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Town Communications

In order to understand evolving public preferences for Town related information and emergency updates, respondents were asked several questions about their means and preferences for being informed about Town issues, services, and events. Table 14 summarizes the methods that citizens report using (currently) for these purposes. The most popular source of information by far is the Town’s local newspapers, with 82% indicating that they utilize them. The next most common sources of information included the Town’s E-Notification system and website, which were noted by 51% and 43% of respondents, respectively. As was the case in 2020, each of the Town’s three social media accounts was selected by less than 10% of respondents. While this may lag behind social media usage among other local government jurisdictions, it’s noteworthy that open-ended responses from the previous year’s survey indicated that many residents are not interested in using social media as a primary source of Town information.

Table 14.**Means of Staying Informed About Town Issues**

<i>Which of the following sources do you use to stay informed about Town issues, services, and events? (Please check all that apply)</i>	Frequency	% of Total Sample†
Local Newspapers	1,251	82.1
Town E-Notification (i.e. Email Announcements)	782	51.3
Town Website	649	42.6
Facebook	148	9.7
Instagram	57	3.7
Twitter	42	2.7

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

† Percentages do not total to 100, as respondents were allowed to select multiple items.

Table 15 summarizes current levels of satisfaction with the Town’s ongoing community outreach and communication efforts. Respondents reported relatively high levels of satisfaction with their access to Town information (77%) as well as the Town’s efforts to keep them informed (83%). Notably, the proportion of respondents who reported being satisfied with their opportunities to participate in Town government decreased from 59% in the 2020 survey to 46% in 2021. It’s unclear if or how much this change may be related to the Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent changes to in-person gatherings and accessibility, but the change warrants further consideration on the part of Town leaders. Roughly two-thirds of respondents were satisfied with the Town’s website (63%). Only 41% indicated that they were satisfied with the Town’s social media activity, but notably 57% responded to this question neutrally. This may indicate a lack of familiarity with the services. It’s important to emphasize that in the 2020 survey results, many residents indicated that they would not like to see the Town become over-reliant on social media as a means of communicating important public information.

Table 15.
Satisfaction with Town Communications (Reported as Percentages)

<i>Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Access to Information About Town Services (N=1,399)	42.0	35.0	20.7	2.0	0.2
Town Efforts to Keep Citizens Informed (N=1,463)	50.2	32.9	13.1	3.2	0.5
Opportunities to Participate in Town Government (N=1,214)	25.9	19.9	51.1	2.2	1.0
Town's Website (N=1,247)	30.7	32.6	35.0	1.5	0.2
Town's Social Media Sites (N=976)	19.4	22.0	56.8	1.5	0.3

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

In order to maximize the value of the Town’s text-based emergency notification system – the *Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System* – respondents were asked whether or no they’ve signed up to receive emergency alerts through the optional system. Those who reported not having done so were asked to let the Town know whether that was due to a lack of familiarity with the system or a desire not to be contacted by text message with emergency updates. Notably, the concluding screen of the survey provided a link where residents could learn more about the system and sign-up for emergency alerts. Table 16 shows that roughly two-thirds of respondents (65%) have signed up for text-based emergency alerts, while 25% had not. Another 10% were unsure.

Table 16.

Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System (N=1,518)

<i>Have you signed up for the Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System?</i>	Frequency	% of Total Sample†
Yes	985	64.9
No	384	25.3
Unsure	149	9.8

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Among those who had not signed up for the emergency alert system, 76% indicated that it was because they were not familiar with the service, while only 9% indicated that they were not interest in being contacted by text-message alerts (data not picture). The responses indicate that the Town has an opportunity to increase participation by raising awareness about the *Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System*. It should also be noted that the survey results may overstate public participation in the program, as more civically engaged residents are likely to have completed the survey as well as to have signed up for the emergency alert system.

Town Priorities

Among the chief goals of the *Citizen Survey* is to collect public input regarding Town priorities for future planning. To that end, respondents were asked several questions about the importance of key policy issues and the biggest challenges facing the Town in the coming years. The responses indicate that citizens view beach/shoreline management, traffic congestion, infrastructure upkeep, and sea-level rise as among the top priorities for the Town in the coming years. Among the Town’s current underfunded initiatives, respondents identified sea-level rise planning and enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive as the most important places to direct available funding. Replacing the Bayfront Rec Center and investing in round-about projects were among the least important priorities, as indicated by the survey respondents.

The first prompt asked respondents: *In your opinion, how important is it for the Town of Longboat Key to address each of the following issues in the coming years?* The list of issues was constructed by Town leadership and FIOG based on current issues and initiatives under consideration in Longboat Key. The responses are summarized in Table 17 below. Four specific items were identified as either “somewhat important” or “very important” by over 90% of respondents. These included Beach Management/Shoreline Protection (97%), Infrastructure Upkeep (96%), Fiscal Sustainability (96%), and Traffic Congestion/Safety (96%). The least important issues, based on the survey responses, were Replacing the Bayfront Rec Center and the “One-County Initiative”. In each case, less than half of the respondents indicated that these items were either “very” or “somewhat important”.

Table 17.
Town Priorities

<i>In your opinion, how important is it for the Town of Longboat Key to address each of the following issues in the coming years?</i>	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Not at All Important
Beach/Shoreline Management (N=1,504)	78.6	18.9	1.9	0.4	0.3
Sea-Level Rise (Adaptation Plan) (N=1,490)	55.1	27.7	10.3	3.2	3.7
Canal Dredging (N=1,475)	32.1	38.2	22.4	4.1	3.1
Street Flooding (N=1,496)	48.9	36.6	10.6	2.1	0.9
“One-County” Initiative (N=1,438)	23.7	25.1	35.0	4.7	11.5
Encourage Redevelopment of Aging Properties (N=1,491)	30.3	37.9	19.6	6.5	5.7
Infrastructure Upkeep (i.e. Roads, Utilities, etc.) (N=1,497)	71.3	25.1	3.2	0.3	0.1
Fiscal Sustainability (N=1,485)	72.5	23.4	3.7	0.2	0.3
Traffic (Congestion/Safety) (N=1,506)	79.4	16.3	3.1	0.8	0.5
Waste-Water Line to the Mainland (N=1,479)	49.5	34.6	12.4	1.2	2.3
Bayfront Rec Center (N=1,472)	11.4	28.5	39.7	10.5	9.9

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

To augment these data, respondents were asked to identify the most important challenges facing the Town. Each respondent was able to select up to three issues from the list summarized in Table 18 below. The two most commonly cited issues included traffic congestion and beach erosion. These were selected by more than half of respondents (66% and 53% respectively). These two received considerably more attention than other topics, with the next commonly cited issues being selected by just over a quarter of respondents: i.e. infrastructure upkeep and development (28%), sea-level rise (28%), and taxes (26%). Issues related to property-values, real-estate, and insurance costs were the least likely to be selected among the “most important challenges”.

Table 18.

Most Important Challenges Facing the Town of Longboat Key

<i>In your opinion, what are the three most important challenges facing the Town of Longboat Key at this time?</i>	Frequency	% of Total Sample†
Traffic Congestion	1,009	66.2
Beach Erosion	810	53.1
Infrastructure Upkeep/Development	431	28.3
Sea-Level Rise	423	27.8
Taxes	402	26.4
Fiscal Sustainability	311	20.4
Cell Phone Coverage	262	17.2
Insurance Costs (Property)	254	16.7
Property Values	197	12.9
Hurricane/Emergency Preparedness	191	12.5
Aging Real-Estate Stock	128	8.4

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

† Percentages do not total to 100, as respondents were allowed to select multiple items.

Finally, respondents were asked to provide feedback about the importance of several specific Town initiatives that are currently identified as “underfunded”. A more extensive prompt was provided in this instance in order to properly contextualize the question: *As you know, public funds are limited, and local governments often have to choose between competing projects and priorities. The items listed below are currently not fully budgeted. Please rank the following items in order of importance, with 1 being the most important priority and 6 being the least important priority*”. Table 19 below summarizes the responses, including the average rating as well as the number of respondents who identified each item as the number 1 priority. Note that “1” denoted the top-rated priority, so lower averages equate to higher priorities. The top-rated priorities (by average ranking) were sea-level rise planning efforts (average = 2.52) and enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive (average = 2.54). When considering the use of limited government funds, respondents placed a much higher priority on these initiatives than on the completion of “round-about” projects and replacing the Bayfront Rec Center. Each of these initiatives received an average ranking of greater than 4, indicating that they are relatively low priorities at this time compared to other potential uses of public funding.

Table 19.
Under-Funded Budget Priorities

Please rank the following items in order of importance, with 1 being the most important priority and 6 being the least important priority.

	Average Rating	% Who Rated as Top Priority
Complete Sea-Level Rise Planning	2.52	38.1
Enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive	2.54	30.1
Canal Dredging Program	3.38	13.3
Replacing Bayfront Rec Center	4.09	5.7
Longboat Club Round-About Project	4.24	6.4
Broadway Round-About Project	4.24	6.5

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Town Center Events and Amenities

The final section of the survey asked respondents to share their thoughts related to the new outdoor events venue at the Town Center, as well as their preferences for future additions to the Town Center. Two specific questions were posed; the first asked respondents *Now that an outdoor events venue has been added to the Town Center, how likely are you to attend the following types of events?* Table 20 summarizes the responses. Respondents were most enthusiastic about attending events such as farmer markets (94% “very” or “somewhat likely”), art shows/art and craft festivals (87%), and outdoor concerts (83%). Notably, these responses were consistent with responses reported above, particularly the amenities that respondents indicated they would like to see available on Longboat Key. The events that respondents were least likely to express support for included walking/running events (38%) and yard sales (32%). Nearly a two-thirds majority (63%) also indicated that they would be likely to attend educational or speaker series events.

Table 20.**Likelihood of Attending Town Center Events**

<i>Now that an outdoor events venue has been added to the Town Center, how likely are you to attend the following types of events?</i>	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Very Likely	Not at All Likely
Outdoor Concerts (N=1,511)	45.5	37.5	12.0	5.0
Art Shows and Craft Festivals (N=1,512)	53.2	33.8	9.5	3.5
Farmer’s Market (N=1,507)	64.2	29.8	4.3	1.7
Outdoor Movies (N=1,470)	19.8	27.7	35.5	17.0
Yoga/Exercise Classes (N=1,468)	15.2	28.1	34.9	21.7
Author Events (N=1,474)	14.9	31.9	34.7	18.5
Educational/Speaker Series (N=1,482)	22.9	40.3	25.5	11.3
Yard Sale (N=1,470)	11.2	21.1	34.8	32.9
Walking/Running Events (N=1,468)	12.9	25.5	32.6	29.0

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

Lastly, respondents were asked to indicate which types of spaces they would like to see included in any future developments at the Town Center. Table 21 shows that a multipurpose space for live performances (i.e. music and theater) is the most desired addition by a considerable margin. Two-thirds of respondents (66%) indicated that they would like to see this type of space incorporated into the Town Center facilities. The next most commonly selected amenities included a space for art exhibits and shows (46%) and flexible space for active recreation, such as exercise, dance, or yoga classes (41%). The least popular options included large and small meeting rooms.

Table 21.**Desired Spaces in Future Town Center Developments**

<i>If future community facilities were to be built as part of the Town Center, what type of space for activities would you prefer to see included? (Please check all that apply).</i>	Frequency	% of Total Sample†
Multipurpose space for live performances	1,008	66.1
Space for art exhibits and shows	703	46.1
Flexible space for active recreation	631	41.4
Space for a library	461	30.2
Space for arts education and manual arts	382	25.1
Space for music and music education	365	23.9
Small meeting rooms for classes and events	269	17.6
Large meeting rooms for classes and events	251	16.5

Source: 2021 Citizen Survey

† Percentages do not total to 100, as respondents were allowed to select multiple items.

CONCLUSIONS

This second annual *Citizen Survey* was conducted in January of 2021 by the Town of Longboat Key in order to obtain input from residents on a broad range of issues related to quality of life, Town amenities, and satisfaction with government services. Some common themes were evident in the results.

1. Residents continue to express very **positive sentiments about the Quality of Life on Longboat Key**. In some instances, these ratings were even slightly more positive than in the prior year's survey.
 - ✓ 99% of respondents described the overall quality of life on Longboat Key as either “excellent” or “good”.
 - The proportion who chose “excellent” was 69%, up from 57% in 2020.
 - ✓ 94% rated the Town as either an “excellent” or “good” place to live, retire, and visit.
 - ✓ Over 95% of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the Town's overall reputation, aesthetic appeal, and safety.

2. **Traffic congestion and safety remains a significant concern** for residents. Majorities favor enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive that would improve safety for driver, pedestrians and cyclists.
 - ✓ 52% of respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with traffic congestion on Longboat Key.
 - This was down considerably from 82% in 2020, though this change is likely due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - ✓ Traffic was identified by respondents as the “most important challenge facing the Town”, with 66% of respondents identifying it among the top 3 issues.
 - ✓ 71% of respondents said that it is either “somewhat” or “very important” to improve pedestrian crossings on Gulf of Mexico Drive, with many indicating a preference for flashing red lights instead of yellow in the existing crosswalks.
 - ✓ 68% of respondents said it is either “somewhat” or “very important” to improve bike lanes along Gulf of Mexico Drive.

3. Along with traffic congestion, several other issues were consistently raised as **top priorities** by the survey respondents:
- ✓ **Beach Re-Nourishment** was ranked as the second most important challenge facing the Town, and 97% of respondents indicated that it is either “somewhat” or “very important” for the Town to address beach management and shoreline protection in the coming years.
 - ✓ **Infrastructure Upkeep** was identified as the third biggest challenge facing the Town, and 96% of respondents indicated that it is important to them that the Town take steps to address the issue in the coming years.
 - ✓ **Sea-Level Rise Planning** was rated as the most important under-funded budget priority, as well as the 4th biggest challenge facing the Town in the coming years.
4. Respondents indicated very **high levels of satisfaction with government services** and performance, including the customer service provided by Town staff and officials. In most cases these numbers were slightly improved from the 2020 survey responses.
- ✓ In several categories, roughly 90% of respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with the services provided by the Town of Longboat Key:
 - Fire and Ambulance – 94%
 - Police Services – 93%
 - Solid Waste Services – 93%
 - Parks and Town Facilities – 91%
 - Emergency Management and Preparedness – 91%
 - ✓ Respondents were also very satisfied with the customer service provided by Town staff and officials, with over 90% indicating that staff are easy to contact and courteous.
 - ✓ 74% of respondents are satisfied with the job being done by the elected Town Commission. This is up from 63% in 2020.

5. The responses did highlight a few **opportunities to raise awareness** about the Town’s amenities and services.
- ✓ 63% of respondents indicated that they were not familiar with Town amenities available at the Quick Point Nature Preserve.
 - i. This was largely unchanged from the prior year, though that is likely due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - ✓ While a majority (65%) have signed up for the **Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System**, among those who have not, 76% said that they were not familiar with the service.

APPENDIX: Survey Instrument

This Appendix includes a complete copy of the survey instrument.

Dear Resident,

You are receiving this survey because we want to know what you think about the quality of the services you receive from the Town and the amenities available to you here on Longboat Key. We also want to hear your thoughts about the Town's most important priorities for the coming year and into the future. Your input will be very helpful as we set priorities for the future and make sure we continue to provide the highest level of service possible within our existing resources.

While we are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a variety of significant disruptions over the past year, for the purposes of this survey we are primarily interested in your attitudes and experiences with the Town's "normal operations" rather than the short term effects of the pandemic, as these will guide our planning and decision-making moving forward.

In order to collect this important feedback, we have contracted the Florida Institute of Government at the University of South Florida. We would like to request that one member of each household complete the survey. This questionnaire will only take 10-15 minutes of your time to complete, and your responses will be entirely confidential. We are greatly appreciative of your time and participation in this important effort!

For questions, please contact us at:

Carolyn Brown
Town of Longboat Key
Support Services Director
CBrown@longboatkey.org

Stephen Neely, PhD
University of South Florida
Associate Professor
sneely@usf.edu

Sincerely,

Tom Harmer
Town Manager

Please enter the unique survey access code from your survey invitation in the space below.

Section 1: Quality of Life

How would you rate your overall quality of life on Longboat Key?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

How would you rate the Town of Longboat Key in each of the following areas?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
As a place to live	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a place to retire	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a place to work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a place to visit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following characteristics of Longboat Key:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
The overall reputation of the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The overall aesthetics of the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The overall safety of the community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The flow of traffic and congestion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your access to public transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your access to retail, dining, and entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the space below, please provide any additional information that you would like us to know about your responses to the questions above and your quality of life on Longboat Key.

In the past, traffic congestion and safety has been a considerable source of concern for Town residents. In the past year, the Town has taken several actions in an effort to address traffic congestion and safety on Longboat Key, including:

1. Negotiating a delay in the start of construction for the Gulfstream and US-41 Roundabout until after the 2021 season;
2. Working with FDOT to modify their detour plan and reduce the construction timeframe by 100 days;
3. Requesting pedestrian monitors at St. Armands "in-season"; including a cost-sharing partnership with City of Sarasota and FDOT;
4. Coordinating with various agencies to have traffic related work conducted during non-peak times.

Please answer the questions below to help us better understand how we can continue making traffic and safety improvements for our community.

In your opinion, how important are each of the following potential enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important Nor Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Unsure
Improved Bike Lanes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced Speed Limit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved Medians and Landscaping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improved Pedestrian Crossings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what other steps could be taken to improve traffic congestion on Longboat Key?

Section 2: Community Amenities

How familiar are you with the Town of Longboat Key amenities provided at the following locations?

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Very Familiar	Not at All Familiar
Bayfront Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Durante Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quick Point Nature Preserve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the quality of the following Town of Longboat Key amenities:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Unsure
Beaches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bayfront Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Durante Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quick Point Nature Preserve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tennis Center	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Way-Finding Signage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In the space below, please share any information that would help us to better understand your responses to the previous two questions.

For which of the following reasons do you **frequently** leave Longboat Key? (Please check all that apply).

- Work/Employment Off the Island
- Grocery Shopping
- Retail Shopping
- Gas Stations
- Visit Family and Friends
- Dining/Restaurants
- Doctor, Dentist, Medical Appointments
- Movie Theater
- Performances (i.e. Shows, Concerts, Arts)
- Consumer Services (i.e. Dry Cleaning, Hair Salon, Auto Maintenance, etc.)

Thinking about your responses to the previous question, which services and amenities would you most like to see added on Longboat Key?

Section 3: Government Services

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the quality of the following services provided by the Town of Longboat Key:	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Unsure
Police Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fire and Ambulance Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emergency Management and Preparedness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintenance of Streets and Sidewalks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solid Waste Services (i.e. Trash and Recycling)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks and Town Facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water and Waste Water Utilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Storm Water Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Permitting (i.e. Planning and Building)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Code Enforcement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General Town Administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide any additional information that you would like us to know about your responses to the question above.

Have you visited the Town's website in the **past six months?**

- Yes
- No

Have you contacted a Town official or department in the **past six months?**

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Block If Have you contacted a Town official or department in the past six months? = No

For the following questions, please answer based on **your most recent contact** with a Town official or department.

How did you first contact the Town for your most recent inquiry?

- Walk-In
- Phone
- Email
- Website ("Report a Concern" Link)
- Other (Please Specify in the Box Below) _____

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements (as they pertain to your most recent contact with a Town official or department).

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It was easy to contact the appropriate Town official or department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My concern was addressed in a reasonable time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My concern was completely resolved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Town employees were courteous and respectful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Town employees were knowledgeable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was satisfied with my experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please feel free to share any additional information that you would like us to know about your most recent contact with the Town.

Section 4: Town Communications

Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following:

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Unsure
Access to information about Town services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Town efforts to keep citizens informed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to participate in Town government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Town's website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Town's social media sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide any additional information that you would like us to know about your responses to the previous question.

Which of the following sources do you use to stay informed about Town issues, services, and events? (Please check all that apply)

- Town Website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Town E-Notification (i.e. Email Announcements)
- Local Newspapers

Have you signed up for the **Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System**?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Skip To: End of Block If Have you signed up for the Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System? != No

Please let us know why you haven't signed up for the **Alert Longboat Key Emergency Notification System**.

- I'm not familiar with the service
- I'm not interested in being contacted by text message alerts
- Other (Please Specify) _____

Section 5: Town Priorities

In your opinion, how important is it for the Town of Longboat Key to address each of the following issues in the coming years?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Not at All Important
Beach Management/Shoreline Protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sea-Level Rise (Adaptation Plan)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canal Dredging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Street Flooding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
“One-County Initiative”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage the Redevelopment of Aging Nonconforming Properties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infrastructure Upkeep (i.e. Roads, Utilities, Town Facilities, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fiscal Sustainability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic Congestion/Safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Waste-Water Line to the Mainland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bayfront Rec Center Replacement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what are **the three most important challenges** facing the Town of Longboat Key at this time?

(Please select no more than three).

- Beach Erosion
- Sea-Level Rise
- Aging Real-Estate Stock
- Infrastructure Upkeep and Development
- Hurricane/Emergency Preparedness
- Property Values
- Fiscal Sustainability
- Taxes
- Property Insurance Costs
- Cell Phone Coverage
- Traffic Congestion
- Other (Please Specify in the Box Below) _____

As you know, public funds are limited, and local governments often have to choose between competing projects and priorities. The items listed below are currently not fully budgeted. Please rank the following items in order of importance, with 1 being the most important priority and 6 being the least important priority. (You can "drag and drop" the responses to rank them).

- _____ Broadway Roundabout Project
- _____ Longboat Club Road Roundabout Project
- _____ Canal Dredging Program
- _____ Recreation Center in Bayfront Park (Replacement)
- _____ Complete Sea-Level Rise Planning Efforts
- _____ Enhancements to Gulf of Mexico Drive

How satisfied are you with the overall direction that the Town of Longboat Key is taking?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

How satisfied are you with the job that the elected Town Commission is doing to serve the residents of Longboat Key?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

Section 6: Specific Policy Initiatives

Now that an outdoor events venue has been added to the Town Center, how likely are you to attend the following types of events?

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not Very Likely	Not at All Likely
Outdoor Concerts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Art Shows/Art and Craft Festivals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farmers Market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor Movies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yoga/Exercise Classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Author Events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational/Speaker Series	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yard Sale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking Club or Walking/Running Events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If future community facilities were to be built as part of the Town Center, what type of space for activities would you prefer to see included? (Please check all that apply)

- Multipurpose space for live performances (i.e. Music and Theater)
- Larger meeting and events spaces (i.e. 100-person capacity)
- Smaller sized meeting rooms (i.e. 20-person capacity) for classes and events
- Space for Music and Music Education
- Space for Arts Education and Manual Arts (i.e. Jewelry Making, Wood Carving, etc.)
- Space for art exhibits and shows
- Space for a library (i.e. with books, reference, audio, video, and digital collections)
- Flexible space for active recreation (i.e. exercise classes, dance, yoga, martial arts, etc.)
- Other (Please Specify) _____

Section 7: Demographic Questions

How long have you lived on Longboat Key?

- Less than 5 years
- 5-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years

Where do you expect to be living in 5 years?

- Longboat Key
- Another community in the Tampa Bay region
- Another community in Florida
- Outside of Florida
- Unsure

Skip To: Q33 If Where do you expect to be living in 5 years? = Longboat Key

Please tell us why you don't expect to be living in Longboat Key in 5 years?

What type of home do you live in?

- Single Family Home
- Town House or Condominium
- Apartment
- Other

Do you currently own or rent your home?

Own

Rent

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Prefer not to answer

Which of the following categories describes your total household income?

Less than \$15,000

\$15,000 - 34,999

\$35,000 - 49,999

\$50,000 - 74,999

\$75,000 - 99,999

\$100,000 - \$150,000

More than \$150,000

What is the last grade or class you completed in school?

- Grade 8 or lower
- Some high school, no diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent
- Technical or vocational school after high school
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's or two-year college degree
- Four-year college degree
- Graduate or professional school after college, no degree
- Graduate or professional degree

Do you have children under the age of 18 living in your home?

- Yes
- No

Did you respond to the Town's 2020 Citizen Satisfaction Survey?

- Yes
- No