

Craig Bay Water Study Group

Summary Report of Residents’ Survey

This survey was distributed to the residents of all five strata groups within Craig Bay in early June of 2021. **We received a total of 255 responses out of the total of 426 units within the community, which is a participation rate of 59.9%.**

Here is a summary of the results from the survey.

This survey had three parts to it:

- A) Questions related to landscaping practices,
- B) Questions related to irrigation practices and
- C) A section for specific comments and inputs by residents.

A) Landscaping Practices

- 1) How would you rate the current impression of landscaping within Craig Bay? Choose one of the following descriptions: (250 responses)

- **Excessive, more than we need** **14% (36 responses)**
- **Beautiful, just right** **45% (113 responses)**
- **Reasonable and sustainable** **37% (93 responses)**
- **Needs to be enhanced** **3% (8 responses)**

- 2) Do you feel that there are aspects of our landscaping that could and should be changed?

YES 58% (143 responses) NO 42% (103 responses)

If yes, please share some of your suggestions for change:

Within the 143 individual comments submitted:

- 21% suggested that we let the lawns go brown in the summer.
- 21% recommended we consider more xeriscape areas, use of drought resistant plants and stone river rock beds.
- 17% commented that aggressive pruning of trees and shrubs, removal and replacement of old trees and shrubs and pruning of hedges was needed.
- 14% stated that pruning should be done by professionals.
- 13% suggested practices such as mowing less often, avoid trimming along patios, use better soil, fertilize, weed, mulch and aerate lawns and less leaf blowing.
- Specific individuals don’t want lawns replaced with stones because it looks cheap, want good fabric used in garden areas to prevent weeds, and suggested that we need to figure out how to irrigate trees and shrubs in large open areas separately from irrigating the lawns.

- 3) As the original trees and shrubs that were planted continue to grow over time, more water is required to keep them healthy. Do you think that we should look for ways to cull or reduce some of our current supply of trees and shrubs?

YES 57% (143 responses) NO 43% (107 responses)

- 4) Over time, some of the original ornamental plantings (bushes and shrubs) have become shaded over by trees, thus limiting their growth because of reduced sunlight. Do you think we need to consider removing or relocating these shrubs and bushes?

YES 68% (168 responses) NO 32% (78 responses)

- 5) There are many large common areas that are grassed. Some of these areas are not used regularly, yet they have to be fertilized, watered and cut regularly. Do you think we should look at modifying some of these areas through the introduction of new landscaping, such as rock / stone features, drought resistant plantings, etc.?

YES 80% (197 responses) NO 20% (50 responses)

- 6) It takes a huge amount of water to maintain all of our lawn areas in “golf course green” conditions throughout the summer. Do you think we should establish a set of minimum / maximum standards to keep our lawns in a “reasonably green” condition as the summer season progresses into the fall?

YES 81% (203 responses) NO 19% (47 responses)

- 7) If you answered YES to question # 6, how would you describe what your expectations are for maintaining our grassed areas throughout the summer?

174 of the 203 who answered yes to question #6 described their expectations. This represents **68% of the total 255 sample**.

27% Stay Green

- 27% are firm about maintaining green grassed areas: 2% golf-course green, 25% reasonably green.
- Of note: 6 of the 25% who want reasonably green suggest this can happen with even less watering or by changing landscaping practices.

18% Open to Patchwork

- 18% visualize a patchwork of green and brown grassed areas.
- In general, these respondents want green around the Beach Club, the Langara entrance, and their home but suggest large open areas can go brown. A few are open to brown back lawns.

- **43% Go Brown**

- 43% support grassed areas going brown/dormant, letting nature take its course.
- Of note: 5 of the 43% emphasize need to still water trees and shrubs, 2 of the 43% worried about dry grass posing a fire threat.

- **3% Change Landscaping Practices**

- 2% suggest different practices to improve grassed areas: longer lawns, fertilizing, liming and aerating.

- **5% Transform Lawns**

- 5% want more xeriscaping or rock scaping to reduce water and maintenance costs.

- **5% Other**

- 5% affirm the need for standards and to investigate different water sources.

- ***Noteworthy comments included in the above...***

- 4% criticize existing lawn conditions: moss, couch grass, weeds and bare areas.
- 5% say we don’t have golf-course green conditions.

8) Are there any areas around your home that present a landscape problem (e.g. too wet, too dry, too shady for plants, etc.)? If so, please provide some information about the situation, so that it can be examined and resolved. Please provide your name, address and phone number so that we can follow up with you.

There were 91 specific responses out of the 255 surveys returned. These were catalogued, by strata, and a list was prepared for each Strata Council to consider. The breakdown by strata was:

- Arbutus Grove – 24 comments (26.4%)
- Meadow Beach – 9 comments (9.9%)
- Seaside Village – 54 comments (59.3 %)
- Shorehaven – 4 comments (4.4%)

The list of specific situations will be delivered to each respective Strata Council when the survey results are presented to them.

B) Irrigation Practices

1) Over the past two years, modifications were made to the watering cycles of our irrigation systems. Our soil conditions do not allow for the grass to grow a deep root system, so water absorption is limited, due to the heavy subsoil that exists here in Craig Bay. We now water in shorter time cycles and water a bit more frequently to allow for better absorption and less water run-off. Are you in favour of this modified irrigation practice?

YES 98% (242 responses) NO 2% (6 responses)

2) Our modified irrigation practices have yielded some substantial cost savings over the past two summers. Our 2019 cost for summer water was 19% lower than 2018 and our 2020 summer water cost was 20% lower than 2019. Do you think that efforts to find an optimal minimum irrigation cost should be continued?

YES 95% (235 responses) NO 5% (13 responses)

3) If our reduced irrigation practices result in some of our large common areas becoming browner than the lawns around our homes, is this acceptable to you?

YES 83% (207 responses) NO 17% (41 responses)

4) As we move to establish a set of standard irrigation practices that meet community expectations, what should be emphasized? Please prioritize these five components - # 1 is most important and # 5 is least important.

In analyzing the priority choice responses, combining people’s first and second priority choices, the following results became quite clear:

#1	Water the garden areas (186 responses)	75%
#2	Water the trees and shrubs (181 responses)	73%
#3	Water the lawns around homes (129 responses)	53%
#4	Water large common areas (102 responses)	41%
#5	Water everything (30 responses)	12%

5) Our current irrigation systems have been in place for many years and continue to show signs of breakdowns that need to be repaired and/or replaced annually. Do you think that our strata councils should consider establishing a capital reserve fund for developing and installing a new, integrated irrigation system using the latest technology available, within the next ten years?

YES 86% (212 responses) NO 14% (35 responses)

6) We have many retired professionals living in Craig Bay. Do you have any professional expertise in engineering, irrigation, landscaping, etc. that could be helpful in developing a plan to replace our community’s irrigation system?

YES 6% (14 responses) NO 94% (234 responses)

Of the 14 that answered yes, 12 provided specific details related to their areas of expertise. There were:

- 6 with experience in landscaping,
- 4 with experience in irrigation,
- 2 with experience in both irrigation and landscaping, and
- 3 with experience in water management.

Several of these individuals are already providing support within our current Water Study Group and have provided lots of assistance over the past 10-15 years in managing the existing landscaping groups and irrigation systems. There were seven new individuals who stepped forward and we will be sure to follow up with each of them to see if and how they may be able to add strength to either the Landscape Committees or Irrigation Teams within their own strata.

C) Comments and Suggestions

Do you have any additional thoughts, comments or suggestions about developing a set of irrigation and landscaping practices that will meet our collective community expectations now and into the future? If so, please share these with us on the following page.

There were 104 individual responses received for this question and they provided 150 specific comments for consideration. Nineteen different categories of comments were identified:

- Thank You Comments – 19 comments
- Alternative Landscaping Practices – 19 comments
- Keep It Green / Impact on Property Values – 11 comments
- Water Conservation Efforts – 9 comments
- Consider Options for Cutting Back Foliage – 8 comments
- Modify ILS’s Landscaping Practices – 8 comments
- Seek Professional Advice – 8 comments
- Large, Open Areas – 6 comments
- Alternate Water Sources for Irrigation – 6 comments
- Separate the Irrigation System for Gardens / Shrubs from Lawns – 5 comments
- Supplementary Watering by Residents – 5 comments
- Concern for Trees – 4 comments
- Current Irrigation Cycles – 4 comments
- Separate Resident Water Meters – 4 comments
- Irrigation Equipment – 4 comments
- New / Replacement Irrigation System – 4 comments
- Excessive Car Washing – 4 comments
- Specific Water Cost Details – 3 comments
- A Plan for the Care and Maintenance of Lawns – 1 comment
