

ONLINE SURVEYS RESULTS (ORGANIZED)

Who Responded:

- 57 responses
- 62.5% female, 37.5 % male
- 28.6 % have lived in Guilford for more than 20 years and over 39% have lived in Guilford for over 10 years. About 7% of respondents were born in Guilford, with 25% living in Guilford for less than 10 years
- 92.6% of respondents were Caucasian, 3.7 were Hispanic, 1.9% were Black and 1.9% were Other
- Over 41% were aged 46-55, 19.6% were aged 56-65 and 12.5% were over age 65. So over 73% of respondents were over age 45 with an additional 23.3% being between ages 36-45. Only 2 of the 57 respondents were under age 36, with one of them being under age 18.
- Over 89% of respondents had either a college or graduate degree

WEAKNESSES

Town Development/Government

- Unequal distribution of wealth.
- Not enough manufacturing.
- Not paying attention to what the people in town want regarding development.
- our small historic town could quickly become the next Milford or Orange if we don't put some new zoning and development ordinances into place to protect our small-town, rural character. We don't need any more strip malls.
- Too much development of open space. McMansions everywhere and lack of sidewalks.
- I'm appalled by the Rock-Pile decision.
- Too political and afraid of change.
- Lack of safe bike paths and sidewalks.
- I think there's a greater need to innovate and try new ways, less mired in how things have always been done.
- The government is run by a small rotating group of people who have no imagination and are generally just focused on retaining their own power. It is fragmented, convoluted and somewhat opaque; so that it takes extraordinary effort just to figure out what is going on or how to get something done.
- No leadership at the government level.
- Lack of energy resources.
- We have made Route 1, for example, an ugly, tensed experience.
- Financial capacity-Dependence on the property tax.
- Loss of manufacturing base and shrinking agricultural business.
- The taxes are creeping up and if it continues, we may have to consider downsizing or moving out of this town.
- High property taxes.

- No “town water”.
- No town garbage or waste pick-up.
- No natural gas.
- No town leaf pick-up.
- High cost of electricity.
- I wish Route 1 had been better planned to preserve the town’s historic beauty.

ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUTH/ DRUGS

- Drugs prevalent in teens unlike just 10 years ago.
- Kids feel police are against them, not for them.
- Not enough activities for teenagers.
- Lack of awareness of some of the real issues facing our young people.
- Too much traffic.

CITIZEN BEHAVIOR

- Elitism.
- Too many children with an “entitlement” attitude, too much money, and not enough parent involvement.
- Some town officials that are not very polite and respectful of others (even on TV).
- If you weren’t born here, the “natives” think your opinion doesn’t count.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- It sometimes seems closed minded, not very diversified.
- Viewing differences as a threat to quality of life.
- Lack of ethnic diversity.
- The lack of ethnic and economic diversity in the population. The housing costs are pretty much out of the reach for most lower and middle class people.

SCHOOL SYSTEM

Schools still need to enrich their extra-curricular schedules with clubs that enrich academics. Should be academic clubs for the non-athletes/musicians (i.e. Science Club, Math Team, and Lego League).

- Outrageous that our swim team has to use a pool in Branford.
- The Special Education Department has crumbled drastically, at the expense of the children.
- Buildings are in need of updating, to meet the technological advances of the times and to increase the overall comfort for our students.

STRENGTHS

SCHOOL SYSTEM

- I think that the school system is decent.

- Hiring Tom Forcella was a good move.
- I am impressed with the schools since we have hired a new Superintendent who is prioritizing academics, but not losing sight of other important elements of childhood/young adult development.
- The school system is what made us move to Guilford. The Elementary and Middle Schools have strong, yet supportive teachers with creative ways of teaching the curriculum. The High School provides many varied courses.
- The Mentoring Program that provides role models for other students.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY/VOLUNTEERISM

- The peoples' support of programs-new and established. The effort made to be a community.
- Small town-Great people!
- Small town feeling.
- The Community Center is great!
- I've been happy in many different places, but what I like about Guilford is the small town feel.
- Many ways to get involved in the community, both for adults and children.
- Always meeting someone I know.
- Simple living.
- Community Spirit and involvement.
- "Sense of Place".
- Reasonable balance of preservation and commercial growth.
- Sense of community that includes more than just those with means. Through endeavors such as the mentoring program, SARAH, local businesses like Page's Hardware and The Food Center.
- We don't limit the town to the wealthy.
- Generosity.
- TEAM Guilford is a strength.
- A strong group of volunteers in the various non-profit groups that are in town.
- Helping and understanding those less fortunate and in need.
- "A Spirit of Giving."
- "A Spirit of Caring."
- A desire to work together and to get things accomplished.

QUALITY/BEHAVIOR OF CITIZENS

- Great people.
- The people here are on average, fairly sophisticated.
- People tend to be positive and like living here.
- Maintaining a reasonably positive attitude and timely responses to most needs, wants and desires.
- Communicating with each other with open minds and hearts.
- It seems to me that there are very well educated people in this town who are willing to stand up for their beliefs.

- In the time of need, the town's people pull together to form united forces where needed.
- Less "social-climbing" than in neighboring towns.
- It seems that every week in the newspaper, there are more people mentioned who have unique talents and perspectives, and there are more who haven't been mentioned. The sense of giving is palpable.
- Great artists and craftspeople.
- A "Soul" towards helping those who are less fortunate or in need.
- Talents come from the children.

THE TOWN GREEN

- I Like the Town Green.
- The fact that we have a true heart of the community in our town green, surrounded by small, locally owned businesses.
- The Guilford Green is not too congested as in other towns.
- The downtown has a center/heart. This gathering place allows neighbors to gather for playtime with children, attend religious services nearby, walk to shops, attend Summer concerts and arts events.

PHYSICAL BEAUTY/GEOGRAPHY

- The natural beauty, the town beach, the town lake, and all of the hiking trails are just wonderful for all of us to enjoy.
- We are close to the Sound and near Open Spaces.
- Living by the water in a beautiful setting.
- We like the ambiance, the look and the atmosphere of Guilford.
- There are many trails to run and ride on.
- Very scenic and quaint.
- Surrounding tree-lined streets.
- Keeping the town clean and quiet.

PROXIMITY TO URBAN CENTER

- Guilford is suburban and it is small townish, while being close to New York, Boston and New Haven for big-city advantages.
- Location of the shoreline between Boston and NYC.
- Proximity and access to urban culture.

LAND USE

- Open Space
- That we are purchasing Open Space areas to preserve the beauty and the ecosystem in Guilford.
- Preserving land in Land Trusts.
- Strict guidelines on development.

ACTIVITIES/SERVICE/GROUPS

- The Marina and the beach.
- I love that we have a place to store our kayaks right on the beach.

BUSINESSES

- Friendly local shops and businesses.
- Yale New Haven Medical Center satellite clinic is great and convenient for emergencies.
- Maintaining a beautiful environment, which includes new economic development done in an appropriate manner consistent with the style of Guilford?
- Developing the Rock Pile is not a bad thing to me.

SENSE OF HISTORY

- The historic preservation-all of the old homes.
- So many old homes.
- Preserving old buildings.

ACTION PLANS

SUPPORTING YOUTH

More Activities

- Get a YMCA or Town Indoor Recreation Facility. It not only improves much needed indoor fitness activities for all ages, but it brings the community together.

Drugs

- Prevention issues-drug abuse at younger and younger ages. The high school is in desperate need of more help with kids and drugs in the school.
- Our children's ready access to alcohol and drugs.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS

Programs/Curriculum/Services

- To become a leader in education
- To see the Special Education Program get back on track.
- Why are so many kids not taking the buses? Hundreds of cars travel Long Hill Road daily going to the HS and Baldwin alone. Why?
- More support services with 504 kids, like the ones with ADHD.
- Change the way that Language Arts is taught.

IMPROVING TOWN GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

- Get a non-political team to run the town and school system based on outcomes.
- A more representative, broader-based town government that can raise and deliberate on issues, rather than the outmoded town meeting that does not work in the modern world.
- Fresh blood in the town government, particularly in the town planning sectors.
- I would set town priorities and goals by a more democratic process than the two parties that are run by about 20 people each. I believe there are more independent voters than either party and they have no forum.
- The school's Business Manager spend at least two days a month in Hartford lobbying for a better ECS allocation and that all parameters of the allocation formula be optimized.
- Provide continuing lobbying for reduction in property taxes.
- That the town have someone lobbying our state legislators to maximize grants.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a growth plan for the future
- City water with fire hydrants everywhere
- To see a ban on nationally-owned chains, like they have in a number of communities including Nantucket, Portland Oregon, and Bristol Rhode Island. I am worried that as the

chain stores move into our community, the locally-owned shops will eventually go out of business, and we will lose the very heart and soul of our small town community.

- Make sure that the total town population is included in everything the town has to offer. That is, make sure no one segment, or age group, receives preferential treatment.
- Regular bus service from the Green to New Haven and back.
- Making it a town that is affordable to retired families.
- Sidewalks on River Street
- A pedestrian walkway along the water at the marina and on the Woodruff property.
- Keeping a mindful eye on the infrastructure and our transportation needs as we grow.

BREAKDOWN IN SERVICES

- Give a more organized aid and support to destitute and marginal income individuals and families.

DIVERSITY

- Invite people from other ethnic backgrounds to come out and participate in the community, making themselves known.
- Lack of cultural and economic diversity.

ISOLATED SENIORS

- Regular bus service from the Green to New Haven and back.

GREEN TOWN

- The recycling program is very weak at the transfer station and I see local businesses not bothering to recycle.
- Clean Slew's Creek

MISCELLANEOUS

- I'd like to see a designated Dog Park
- Nice looking trash cans on the Town Green