



## **COTI SURVEY: ISLANDERS GENERALLY CONTENT WITH ISLAND LIFE**

COTI's (Committee of the Islands) February and March 2008 electronic survey of Sanibel Island residents indicates that the 367 Islanders who responded are generally content with life on the Sanibel and happy with how their City is being run. However, they do have significant concerns about environmental and other issues facing the community and about the way they are being dealt with.

As might be expected, the survey shows that the most important factors that drew them to Sanibel were the climate, the natural environment and the safe community. After they became full-time or part time residents, nearly all (9 out of 10) had their expectations satisfied. Investment prospects, family and friends or schools did not seem to be important factors in their considerations.

Helping with satisfaction with life on Sanibel are the recreational and volunteer activities respondents participate in; walking, beaches, bicycling and environmental affairs received the highest rating; theater, museums and tennis are at the low end. About half of the respondents serve as volunteers for one or more organizations.

A majority has not used the new Recreation Center but three out of four who do use it rate it excellent.

Life on Sanibel is not without its concerns, however.

More than nine out of ten respondents think that water quality (including Lake Okeechobee water releases) is the most urgent issue which has confronted Sanibel in recent years with beach condition/red drift algae removal a close second. Well over half said that oversized residences is an urgent issue, with property taxes and traffic following closely. Nearly half found annual growth in city budget, businesses struggling to survive and growth in city staff urgent. About one third found emergency medical services an urgent problem (but nearly 40% have no opinion on this topic.) Short term rentals and Youth Recreation are not considered urgent by a large majority of respondents.

On more urgent issues, respondents are divided on how well they are being addressed.

On water quality and beach condition/red drift algae removal, about half believe that it is being dealt with adequately but 40% do not agree.

On property taxes, growth in city budget, and growth in city staff, about four out of ten said that the issues are not being dealt with adequately and an equal number had “No Opinion.”

Efforts to deal with traffic issues also have evenly divided reviews.

Three out of four respondents are either very satisfied or satisfied with the way Sanibel City Council is performing. Many offered individual comments on several of these topics. The complete list of comments is being provided to City Council and staff for their information. Retail business on Sanibel meets the needs of almost three out of four respondents. Interestingly, three out of five women feel that way but four out of five men think that the retail business on Sanibel meets their needs.

Who are the respondents expressing these opinions?

Fifty-four percent are male, 46% are female. Respondents are evenly divided between longer-term residents (more than ten years) and the more recently arrived. Four out of five are registered voters. About two-thirds live on Sanibel more than six months per year. Nearly half are full-time residents. Four out of five live in a house, and the rest in condominiums; very few renters completed the survey. Over half maintain an additional residence in a place other than Sanibel. Almost seven out of ten are retired with eight out of ten having two persons in their household and over nine of ten do not have children living at home. One out of seven is either employed full time or part time.

The COTI Board of Directors is gratified at the very high ratings of their performance in the activities in which they are involved. They also appreciate the substantial number of comments offering suggestions on how the organization can improve its performance. They thank all respondents for spending the time to take the Community Survey. Their input will help shape COTI’s future activities.

A copy of the full survey report may be found on the COTI web site: [www.coti.org](http://www.coti.org).

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Committee of the Islands (COTI) was founded in 1975 by those inspired individuals who helped incorporate Sanibel as an independent, self-governing city within Lee County. Guided by the mission of Sanibel’s founders, we seek to ensure the continuity of good local government, to protect the environment, and to preserve the sanctuary character of our barrier island community. You may contact COTI by mail at PO Box 88, Sanibel, FL 33957; by email at [coti@coti.org](mailto:coti@coti.org) or by visiting the COTI website at [www.coti.org](http://www.coti.org).



## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF COTI COMMUNITY SURVEY

An electronic survey of Sanibel residents was conducted during February and March, 2008. There were 367 respondents.

<b>1. Reasons why I came to Sanibel</b>	<b>2. My degree of satisfaction identified in #1</b>
<b>Ranking of reasons</b>	<b>Strongly Agree/ Agree</b>

1. Climate/Weather	94%
2. Natural Environment/Wildlife	91%
3. Beaches	77%
4. Small Community/Quiet	86%
5. Safe place to live	91%
6. Cultural Activities	73%
7. Good Investment	69%
8. Family/Friends	61%
9. Good Schools	42%

### **3. The City of Sanibel and/or organized groups provide facilities for recreation.**

#### **How would you rate your experience with these facilities?**

The satisfaction rates (Very Satisfied/Satisfied) for these facilities are:

Boating	40%	Bridge	36%
Fishing	36%	Concerts	60%
Fitness/Exercise	65%	Live Theatre	45%
Bicycling	81%	Museums	44%
Tennis	28%	Classes/Workshops	54%
Swimming	55%	Book Discussion Groups	36%
Walking	88%	Current Events/Lectures	53%
Beaches	86%	Environmental Affairs	67%
Senior Center	29%		

The reason for the low percentages in some cases occurs is because many of the respondents do not participate in these programs or use the facilities.

**4. If you have used the new Recreation Center, please rate its facilities and staff.**

Sixty percent of respondents have not used the new Recreation Center, 73% of those that have rate it excellent, 16% rate it adequate and 11% rate it deficient.

**5. How urgent do you think the following issues which have confronted Sanibel for some time are and 6. How do you feel these issues are being dealt with? (Answers in percentages)**

	<b>Urgent</b>	<b>Not Urgent</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Adequately</b>	<b>Not Adequately</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>Water Quality (incl. Lake O. Water Releases)</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Beach Condition and Red Drift Algae Removal</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>9</b>
<i>68% of COTI members think this issue is urgent – 73% of non COTI members think it is. 60% of COTI members think this issue is adequately dealt with - 40% of non-members do.</i>						
<b>Oversized Residences</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>29</b>
<i>68% of respondents who have lived on Sanibel 26 or over years think this issue is urgent.</i>						
<b>Property Taxes</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>38% of COTI members think this issue is urgent – 62% of non-members do.</i>						
<b>Traffic</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Business struggling to survive</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>
<i>44% of COTI members think this issue is urgent – 61% of non members do. 32% of COTI members think this issue is adequately dealt with – 19% of non-members do.</i>						
<b>Annual Growth in City Budget</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Growth in City Staff</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Emergency Medical services</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>38</b>

<b>Short Term Renting</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Youth Recreation</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>50</b>

**7. Open-ended question**

**8. Sixty-five percent feel that the Sanibel City Council is performing satisfactorily – 12% are very satisfied, 53% satisfied; 18% have no opinion, 14% are dissatisfied and 3% are very dissatisfied.**

**9. Open-ended question**

**10. Seventy-one percent of respondents feel that the Retail Business on Sanibel meets their needs while 23% say they do not; 17% of COTI members feel that the Retail Business does not meet their needs while 28% of non-members think so; 61% of female respondents feel that the Retail Business meets their needs while 79% of male respondents do.**

**11. Open-ended question**

**12. Many respondents serve as volunteers:**

Community Service	47%	Cultural Organization	37%
Environmental Organization	41%	Political Organization	21%
Religious Organization	28%	City Sponsored Committee	13%
Other	18%		

**13. Eighty-one percent of respondents are registered voters, 19% are not.**

**14. One percent of respondents are on the Island one month or less, 3% two months, 4% three months, 18% four to six month, 29% seven to nine months and 43% spend 10 to 12 month on Sanibel. There is no significant variance in replies from these demographic groups.**

**15. Seventeen percent of respondents have lived on Sanibel from 1-5 years, 38% for 6-10 years, 34% from 11-25 years and 10% have lived here for more than 25 years. There is no significant variance in replies from these demographic groups.**

**16. Eighty percent of respondents’ residence is a home, 15% live in a condominium and 4% rent.**

There is no significant variance in replies from these demographic groups.

**17. Fifty-seven percent of respondents maintain a residence in a place other than Sanibel, 43% do not.**

- 18. A large majority – 82% have two persons living in their household.
- 19. An even larger majority – 93% - have no children living in their household.
- 20. Sixty-eight percent of respondents are retired, 15% are employed full time and 15% are employed part time.
- 21. 54% of respondents are male, 46% are female. There is no significant variance in answers from these demographic groups.
- 22. 43% of respondents are members of COTI, 57% are not.

**23. How do you rate the value of the following activities in which COTI is involved?**

	<b>Very Valuable</b>	<b>Somewhat Valuable</b>	<b>Not Valuable</b>	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>
Promote Good Government by monitoring and providing input to City Government	63%	22%	6%	8%
Help preserve and defend the Sanibel Vision Statement and the Sanibel Plan	69%	17%	5%	9%
Find and endorse candidates for City Council and Planning Commission	53%	23%	13%	11%

An overwhelming majority of respondents, 85% - 86% - 76% found these activities valuable or somewhat valuable.

The Committee of the Islands (COTI) is pleased to bring you the results of the Community Survey which was conducted to find out how Sanibel residents feel about issues dealing with our Island as well as finding out how COTI can improve their focus.

## Zoomerang Survey Results

COTI COMMUNITY SURVEY

Response Status: Completes | Partial

Filter: No filter applied

Mar 15, 2008 1:41 PM PST

### 1. Reasons Why I Came To Sanibel

Please rate your priority of reasons: 1 - was your highest priority 2 - was a secondary priority, etc. ... 5 - was not a factor in my consideration.

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	1	2	3	4	5
Natural Environment/Wildlife	201 60%	81 24%	32 10%	7 2%	15 4%
Climate/Weather	231 69%	63 19%	17 5%	12 4%	14 4%
Beaches	175 53%	93 28%	39 12%	12 4%	14 4%
Small Community/Quiet Atmosphere	158 48%	100 31%	39 12%	18 6%	11 3%
Safe Place to Live	122 38%	84 26%	57 18%	23 7%	36 11%
Family/Friends	45 14%	43 14%	46 15%	31 10%	150 48%
Cultural Activities	65 20%	74 23%	91 28%	52 16%	40 12%
Good Schools	21 7%	12 4%	24 8%	23 7%	230 74%
Good Investment	61 19%	85 27%	84 27%	38 12%	46 15%

## 2. My Expectations, identified in Question #1, have been satisfied

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Natural Environment/Wildlife	203 62%	94 29%	24 7%	6 2%	2 1%
Climate/Weather	225 69%	81 25%	20 6%	0 0%	2 1%
Beaches	149 46%	102 31%	52 16%	19 6%	3 1%
Small Community/Quiet Atmosphere	175 54%	102 32%	38 12%	5 2%	2 1%
Safe Place to Live	209 66%	80 25%	27 8%	0 0%	2 1%
Family/Friends	108 36%	75 25%	105 35%	8 3%	5 2%
Cultural Activities	123 40%	103 33%	75 24%	5 2%	4 1%
Good Schools	75 27%	42 15%	124 44%	8 3%	30 11%
Good Investment	117 38%	94 31%	78 25%	13 4%	5 2%

**3. The City of Sanibel and/or organized groups provide facilities for recreation. How would you rate your experience with these facilities?**

(indicate N/A for those in which you do not participate.)

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A
Boating	51 15%	82 25%	73 22%	6 2%	3 1%	119 36%
Fishing	39 12%	81 24%	77 23%	3 1%	0 0%	132 40%
Fitness/Exercise	105 32%	109 33%	54 16%	5 2%	2 1%	58 17%
Bicycling	157 47%	115 34%	30 9%	6 2%	5 1%	23 7%
Tennis	51 15%	44 13%	79 24%	6 2%	4 1%	147 44%
Swimming	96 29%	87 26%	65 20%	4 1%	0 0%	78 24%
Walking	192 58%	101 30%	23 7%	4 1%	0 0%	12 4%
Beaches	175 53%	109 33%	26 8%	14 4%	3 1%	4 1%
Senior Center	52 16%	42 13%	71 22%	3 1%	3 1%	155 48%
Bridge	77 24%	38 12%	67 21%	11 3%	5 2%	127 39%
Concerts	98 30%	98 30%	69 21%	9 3%	5 2%	52 16%
Live Theatre	52 16%	97 29%	90 27%	26 8%	20 6%	44 13%
Museums	53 16%	92 28%	108 33%	20 6%	8 2%	42 13%
Learning - Classes/Workshops	73 23%	100 31%	73 23%	8 2%	7 2%	61 19%
Book Discussion Groups	47 15%	69 21%	76 24%	2 1%	3 1%	126 39%
Current Events - Lectures & Discussion Groups	79 25%	91 28%	70 22%	4 1%	3 1%	75 23%
Environmental Affairs - lectures, volunteering, etc.	125 38%	95 29%	61 19%	3 1%	3 1%	39 12%

**4. If you have used the new Recreation Center, please rate its facilities and staff**

Excellent	91	29%
Adequate	20	6%
Deficient	14	4%
Not Used Facilities	190	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100%</b>

**5. Listed below are ongoing major issues which have confronted Sanibel for some time. How urgent do you think each issue is?**

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Urgent	Not Urgent	No Opinion/ Neutral
Water Quality (Including Lake Okeechobee Water Releases)	316 95%	11 3%	5 2%
Traffic	174 52%	139 42%	20 6%
Beach Conditions and Red Drift Algae Removal	235 71%	80 24%	18 5%
Short Term Renting	66 20%	162 49%	103 31%
Emergency Medical Services	120 36%	152 46%	59 18%
Businesses Struggling to Survive	146 44%	135 40%	54 16%
Youth Recreation	39 12%	173 52%	118 36%
Oversized Residences	186 56%	108 33%	38 11%
Property Taxes	183 55%	117 35%	30 9%
Annual Growth in City Budget	156 47%	115 35%	60 18%
Growth in City Staff	138 42%	116 35%	73 22%

**6. How adequately do you feel each of these issues are being dealt with?**

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	<b>Adequately</b>	<b>Not Adequately</b>	<b>No Opinion/Neutral</b>
Water Quality(Including Lake Okeechobee Water Releases)	174 52%	143 43%	16 5%
Traffic	141 43%	155 47%	35 11%
Beach Conditions and Red Algae Removal	157 48%	140 43%	32 10%
Short Term Renting	84 26%	69 21%	175 53%
Emergency Medical Services	152 46%	51 15%	127 38%
Small Businesses Struggling To Survive	85 26%	111 34%	129 40%
Youth Recreation	140 43%	23 7%	163 50%
Oversized Residences	83 26%	154 47%	88 27%
Property Taxes	92 28%	159 48%	78 24%
Annual Growth in City Budget	84 26%	143 44%	99 30%
Growth in City's Staff	68 21%	132 41%	122 38%

**7. Please add your comments on any of the above mentioned issues.**

101 Responses

**8. How do you feel the Sanibel City Council is performing?**

Very Satisfied	40	12%
Satisfied	176	53%
No Opinion/Neutral	61	18%
Dissatisfied	45	14%
Very Dissatisfied	9	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. Comments on your opinions about Sanibel City Council**

100 Responses

**10. Do the Retail Businesses on Sanibel meet your needs?**

Adequately	235	71%
Inadequately	77	23%
No Opinion	19	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>100%</b>

**11. Additional comments on the Sanibel retail scene?**

118 Responses

**12. Do you serve as a Volunteer for any ...**

**(Check all that apply)**

Community Service	109	47%
Cultural Organization	86	37%
Environmental Organization	96	41%
Political Organization	50	21%
Religious Organization	65	28%
City Sponsored Committee	31	13%
Other, Please Specify	41	18%

**13. Are you a Registered Voter on Sanibel?**

Yes	266	81%
No	63	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>100%</b>

**14. How many months do you normally spend on Sanibel in a year?**

One month or less	4	1%
2 months	11	3%
3 months	14	4%
4-6 months	60	18%
7-9 months	97	29%
10-12 months	143	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>100%</b>

**15. How many years have you lived on Sanibel?**

1 to 5	55	17%
6 to 10	121	38%
11 to 25	109	34%
26 or over	31	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>100%</b>

**16. Is your residence on Sanibel a ...**

House	260	80%
Condominium	50	15%
Rental	13	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>100%</b>

**17. Do you maintain a residence in a place other than Sanibel?**

Yes	186	57%
No	141	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>100%</b>

**18. How many adults (age 18 or over) live in your household?**

1	41	13%
2	261	82%
3	9	3%
4 or more	9	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>100%</b>

**19. How many children under 18 are living in your household?**

None	300	93%
1	7	2%
2	10	3%
3	2	1%
4 or more	4	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>100%</b>

**20. Are you ...**

Employed full time	48	15%
Employed part time	48	15%
Retired	223	68%
Otherwise unemployed	10	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>100%</b>

**21. Are you ...**

Male	177	54%
Female	151	46%
<b>Total</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>100%</b>

**22. Are you a member of COTI?**

Yes	135	43%
No	182	57%
<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>100%</b>

**23. How do you rate the value of the following activities in which COTI is involved?**

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Very Valuable	Somewhat Valuable	Not Valuable	No Answer/Neutral
Promote Good Government by monitoring and providing input to City Government	205 63%	72 22%	21 6%	27 8%
Help preserve and defend the Sanibel Vision Statement and the Sanibel Plan	225 69%	55 17%	16 5%	29 9%
Find and endorse candidates for City Council and Planning Commission	169 53%	72 23%	42 13%	36 11%

**24. How might COTI serve our community better?**

110 Responses

25. Would you like to receive a report of the results of this survey? If so, please provide an email address below.

Yes	167	55%
No	138	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>100%</b>