

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.1 TRURO, LET'S CONNECT

The 2023 Town of Truro Community Plan is the result of a comprehensive review of the 2010 Community Plan. The review was led by the Town's Planning and Development Services Department and a Plan Review Working Group made up of Truro Council, the Planning Advisory Committee, and Senior Staff.

The research and discussions of these elected officials, community volunteers, and staff was informed by input gathered through a public engagement campaign called *Truro, Let's Connect*. The project was designed to elicit diverse views from a cross-section of Truro residents on topics such as growth, housing, environment, activities, and community belonging.

A *Truro, Let's Connect* Findings Report was released in December 2021. The Report explains the design of the campaign and discusses findings from its survey and public meetings. The full report is available online at www.truro.ca. An excerpt from the Findings Report that presents data and analysis from the *Truro, Let's Connect* Survey is presented below.



1.2 ENGAGEMENT METHODS

Truro, Let's Connect public engagement efforts gather community opinions on matters of development and sustainability, while also increasing awareness about roles citizens and government can play in realizing these visions.

The project's branding is designed to feel more like contemporary advertising than a notice from municipal government. The *Truro, Let's Connect* slogan is a call to action. The slogan and visuals are new, but allude to both the 2009 Truro, Have Your Say project and the Town's current branding:





Today, social media provides the widest reach for the least cost and was the main way the *Truro, Let's Connect* initiative was promoted. Truro has dedicated presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram which was used to direct people to the Town's website for detailed information. The *Truro, Let's Connect* social media strategy included regular postings to establish brand, purpose, ways to engage, and a series of themed background primer infographics. Several short videos were commissioned from the local company Truro Buzz to extend the campaign to its audience.

Because not all residents use these sites or the internet itself, radio ads, newspaper interviews, and a paper mailout of the survey questionnaire were also used to generate participation. Other potential barriers to participation were addressed by telephone and in-person options for survey completion. These methods were promoted by distribution of rack cards (including a QR Code) and on the survey itself, which was mailed to 8,903 addresses. The Downtown Truro Partnership contributed ten \$50 prizes of Downtown Truro Dollars which were matched by the Town as further incentive to complete the survey.

The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey, discussed in detail in Section 3.4, was promoted in person by the Community Plan Review Team at scheduled times while the survey was open at the Town's Welcome Centre in Victoria Square. Pop-up booths were also set up in Civic Square and the Truro Mall. A special assembly took place at the Cobequid Education Centre to discuss Truro's Plan Review and encourage students to complete the survey.



The COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency declared in Nova Scotia on 22 March 2020 placed constraints on indoor public gatherings. Two Fire Hall Sessions were able to take place in October 2021 under guidelines that restricted size and set-up. The sessions were open to the public but pre-registration was required. Targeted invitations were also sent to community organizations and government representatives. Contact tracing measures and mask-wearing while away from tables was enforced.

The Fire Hall Sessions were organized around three mapping exercises. Prior to the Fire Hall Sessions, the Municipal staff Plan Review Team had two sessions with Town Council and senior staff to discuss preliminary survey findings and workshop the mapping activities. Numerous changes were made to the process in time for the Fire Hall Sessions.

1.3 SURVEY DESIGN

1.3.1 Survey Purpose, Type, and Integrity

The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey is a citizen survey designed to engage area residents in shaping Truro through a refreshed Community Plan. A citizen survey aims to:

- gather perspectives on local issues
- inform residents of development choices
- reveal citizen priorities
- familiarize local government with situations facing residents
- identify challenges and opportunities for research and action.

Citizen surveys can be open to any citizens of a certain jurisdiction or restricted to relevant groups such as those living within a specified distance from a proposed development. In the case of the latter, some form of registration or identification is required to ensure eligibility.

Citizen surveys are more in depth than single-issue polls often featured in radio or social media, but typically not as detailed as professionally conducted opinion polls or mandatory surveys such as a national census. Results of a citizen survey may influence policymakers but are not binding on them, unlike a referendum. This type of survey is better suited as a tool for visioning or canvassing a range of views on local issues. It is less suited for consultations on already drafted policies.

An open citizen survey such as the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey was designed to get as many respondents as possible, including diverse opinions within the same household. The likelihood of broad participation was increased since registration and identification was not required. The trade-off, however, in opting for an open and anonymous citizen survey over a restricted or random call survey is that it could be completed multiple times by an individual.

The longer the survey, the more effort required to defraud the process and attempt to skew results. Motivation for fraud is also reduced when outcomes are not binding as was the case with the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey. The *Let's Connect* survey offered prizes as incentive to participate. To be eligible for a prize, survey takers needed to provide a distinct piece of contact information such as a personal email address or telephone number (name and street address were not required).

Online surveys offer some measures to mitigate against multiple entries, especially the tracking of internet protocol (IP) addresses. However, this technology is easily skirted by use of public Wi-Fi sites and VPNs (Virtual Private Networks). It is also problematic because multiple residents of a household share an IP so multiple entries from one IP might be legitimate.

Completed *Truro, Let's Connect* survey questionnaires, paper or electronic, were scrutinized for clear signs of abuse. Indicators include identical response selections or comments, proximity of time surveys were received, handwriting, and incomplete surveys with some sections completed identically.

Anonymous open citizen surveys can offer important insights from citizens but generate data that cannot be deemed to be verifiably extended to

the full population of a jurisdiction. Registered surveys such as a census aggregate personal information that is provided to produce statistics accurate for a larger population. Surveys executed properly using a random sample method of data collection, target a cross-section of participants. Based on a sample size relative to the entire population covered by the scope of the survey, data gathered can be calculated to reflect the whole population's views within a set margin of error. This people completing the survey, often by telephone or online, must provide enough personal information to ensure that the sample group is representative of the larger population. Consequently, data gathered can be cross tabulated by demographic category.

The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey accurately reflects only the views of those who voluntarily completed the survey. Results cannot be extended to represent views of Truro's full population within a certain margin of error because its respondents are self-selected rather than targeted to be representative. Despite efforts to connect with people whose voices get excluded because of systemic barriers, it is quite likely that the cross-section of community finding voice in *Truro, Let's Connect* is less diverse than the community that makes up Truro.

1.3.2 Themes and Questions

The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey needed to cover issues and policies on a broad range of subjects that parallel content of the Community Plan. At the same time, it could not be so long and dense that it would discourage survey completion. The survey was organized into ten themes with a total of twenty-two questions.



HEY TRURO, check out the
10 key themes in our Survey

- Belonging
- How Truro Looks
- Places to Live
- Livelihoods & Prosperity
- Environment
- Wellness
- Stuff to Do
- Getting Around
- Money & People
- Community Leadership

The Town of Truro is renewing our Community Plan and we want to hear from you.

Truro, Let's Connect - Survey release date:
AUGUST 25th, 2021

Truro, Let's Connect
#truroletsconnect

Truro is GROWING

Let's Connect to decide how!



Help **SHAPE** our town's future We have **PRIZES** to giveaway



WANT TO KNOW MORE?
VISIT www.truro.ca and look for the "Truro Let's Connect" button at the bottom of our home page.
EMAIL planning@truro.ca or **CALL** 902.895.1148.
COME CHAT with us at the visitor information centre in Victoria Square (across from the Atlantic Superstore) on Tuesdays 9-11 am and Thursdays 3-6 pm from September 2nd to October 7th, 2021.
You are also invited to **JOIN US** for one of two in-person interactive planning workshops at the Truro Fire Hall:
FIRE HALL SESSIONS
TRURO FIRE HALL (PROMENADE ENTRANCE)
Tuesday, October 19th
2:00-4:00 pm & 6:00-8:00 pm



SURVEY WILL BE OPEN UNTIL OCTOBER 8TH

There are 4 ways you can complete this survey:



VISIT www.truro.ca and click the "Truro, Let's Connect" button at the bottom of the webpage, or use the QR Code shown here:



COMPLETE this survey and drop it off at Truro Town Hall, 695 Prince Street, during regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm).
Extra copies are also available at Town Hall.



CALL 902.895.1148 during regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm).
Planning Staff will review the survey questions with you and record your responses.



MEET with us at the visitor information centre in Victoria Square (across from the Atlantic Superstore) on Tuesdays 9-11 am and Thursdays 3-6 pm from September 2nd to October 7th, 2021.

Complete this **SURVEY** and be entered in a draw to win one of twenty **\$50 PRIZES**
Downtown Truro Dollars are redeemable at over 400 downtown businesses

the Town of Truro is renewing our **Community Plan** and we want to hear from **you**

Want a Say in the Future of Your Town?
Please take a moment to answer...

22 Questions About Truro



DROP OFF YOUR COMPLETED SURVEY AT TOWN HALL, 695 PRINCE STREET

For more information about this survey visit www.truro.ca and look for the "Truro, Let's Connect" button

YOU CAN DO THIS SURVEY ONLINE

See reverse for more details

BELONGING

1) Truro is a place where I feel at home. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? (choose 1)

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

HOW TRURO LOOKS

2) How would you describe the Town's appearance today compared to 10 years ago? (choose 1):

Much better Somewhat better Stayed the same Somewhat worse Much worse Not Sure

3) Describe Truro's reputation as a place to live? (choose 1)

Excellent Good Fair Poor Not sure

4) Recent development proposals in Truro have included buildings that are 8 or 9 storeys tall. Do you feel that taller buildings are appropriate for Truro?

Yes No Not sure Yes, but only in certain circumstances

5) If the Town was to permit more buildings with 5+ storeys, where do you think they would be appropriate? (check all that apply)

Downtown commercial area Downtown residential areas
 Other commercial areas Other residential areas
 Mixed use areas Other

6) How important is it for the Town to do the following to preserve/protect historic homes and buildings in Truro? (use a scale of 1-5, with 1 = not important, 2 = low importance, 3 = neutral, 4 = important, 5 = very important)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| New buildings must not be taller than nearby heritage homes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| New buildings should match nearby heritage styles | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| New buildings should match nearby heritage materials | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Limit changes to heritage buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

ENVIRONMENT

7) What are the 3 most important environmental actions Truro should take? (rank your choices from 1 to 3, with 1 being most important)

| | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce vehicle emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase local food production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce waste | <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage energy efficient buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increase active transportation options | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance plant & animal habitat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Produce renewable energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase public transit options |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage more housing downtown | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

MONEY & PEOPLE

8) Many of the Town's expenses are fixed (police, fire, etc.). Where should the rest of the Budget be spent? (choose 3, rank your choices 1 to 3, with 1 being your top choice)

| | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bike lanes and trails | <input type="checkbox"/> Improved parks & recreation facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repairing/maintaining roads | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial park expansion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct new roads | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism promotion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental initiatives | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting festivals and events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preserve/promote heritage architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Town beautification/public art |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public transit | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

9) How should Truro raise money for special projects? (choose your top 2)

Attract new business & development Work with private partners
 Increase taxes and fees Cut municipal services
 Go after more Federal/Provincial funding Seek sponsorship/donations
 Work with communities in the region Other _____

GETTING AROUND

10) Getting around Truro is... (choose 1)

Very easy Easy Difficult Very difficult Not sure

11) If you had a choice, how would you get around Truro? (choose 3, rank your choices 1 to 3, with 1 being your top choice)

| | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal or family vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle on trails/off-street bike route | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared car service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle on streets/bike lanes | <input type="checkbox"/> On-demand bus service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled/fixe route bus service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility scooter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

12) Finding a parking spot in downtown Truro is... (choose 1)

Very easy Easy Difficult Very difficult Not sure

PLACES TO LIVE

13) What type of housing do you live in now? (choose 1)

Apartment building (2-3 units) Single family (detached) house
 Apartment building (4-8 units) Townhouse, semi-detached house
 Apartment building (8+ units) Assisted living/nursing home
 Other _____

14) If you were to move in the next 5 years, what might be the reason? (choose 1)

Not applicable/not likely to move Shorter commute to work/school
 Downsizing Want better quality housing
 Need more space Repairs/upkeep or utilities too costly
 Moving outside of Truro Health/mobility reasons
 Rent/mortgage too expensive Other _____

15) How important is it to you that Truro has new housing? (choose 1)

Not important Somewhat important Very important Essential No opinion

16) Would you support the Town allowing the following to encourage new housing development? (use a scale of 1-5, with 1 = strongly oppose, 2 = somewhat oppose, 3 = neutral, 4 = somewhat support, 5 = strongly support)

| | strongly oppose | neutral | strongly support | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Additional apartments in existing homes (in-law suites) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Backyard suites/apartments | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Conversion of large heritage homes to 3 or more units | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reduced parking space requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fewer landscaping requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reduced recreation/amenity space requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Smaller unit sizes/more density | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taller buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17) What are the 3 most important things the Town should consider when looking at new apartment building proposals? (rank your choices from 1 to 3, with 1 being most important)

| | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supply of parking spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> Impact on nearby heritage homes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping | <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant amenities (gym, balconies, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Protection of existing trees | <input type="checkbox"/> Support/opposition by neighbours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of architectural design/materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable rents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Height is similar to surrounding buildings | <input type="checkbox"/> Property tax revenue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy efficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

STUFF TO DO

18) How satisfied are you with the variety of stuff to do in Truro? (choose 1)

Very dissatisfied Somewhat dissatisfied Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied Somewhat satisfied Very Satisfied

19) What are your 2 favourite things to do in the Truro area? (choose just 2).

Attend arts, music, or cultural events Go to the Farmers' Market
 Participate in sports and recreation Visit the library
 Go to restaurants or bars Shop Downtown
 Use parks or trails Shop elsewhere in Town
 Take classes or workshops Other _____

WELLNESS

20) What is the biggest wellness issue facing Truro? (choose 1)

Mental health Physical health
 Access to a family doctor Poverty
 Housing/homelessness Drug and/or alcohol addiction
 Accessibility Other _____

LIVELIHOODS & PROSPERITY

21) After regular monthly expenses (housing, utilities, groceries, etc.), how often do you have money left over to save or spend? (choose 1)

Always Almost Always Sometimes Seldom Never

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

22) Truro offers many ways to contribute to community life such as volunteering, service clubs, or engaging in local issues. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? (choose 1)

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree

TO ENTER OUR PRIZE DRAW
Provide your contact information here:

Email or Phone Number

Street Address (optional)

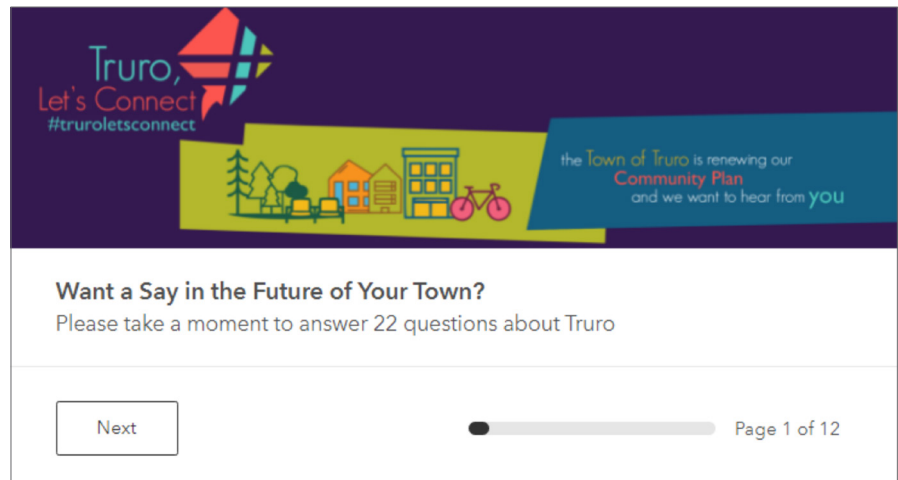
Wherever possible, plain concise language was used. No references were made to specific policies or by-laws, nor was knowledge of these presumed. The revised Community Sustainability Plan (CSP) will, like the current CSP, deal with community values and priorities. It will present action opportunities on issues informed by citizen engagement and research. Truro's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law have more specific content primarily relating to property development and are governed in scope by the Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act. Survey themes and questions were crafted to inform revision of all three documents.

Unlike the 2009 Truro, Have Your Say survey, *Truro, Let's Connect* did not feature open-ended questions. Open-ended questions provide an opportunity for respondents to elaborate on ideas and concerns, but present challenges for data analysis and reporting. Instead, the 2021 survey employed a variety of questions formed with specific response options. These ranged from questions of satisfaction, agreement or disagreement, degree of importance, ranking, and frequency. Nine of the questions allow for elaboration in an "Other" space.

The order of response options can bias survey responses. For example, studies have shown that first or second options are sometimes selected by respondents over options lower down based on their position in a list. Likewise, if positive options, for example Excellent, are always placed first in a list, respondents may form a response pattern without noticing all aspects of the question. For this reason, response types were varied throughout the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey.

1.3.3 Participation Numbers and Data Integrity

A total of 1784 completed surveys were received. Scrutiny of the surveys did not reveal significant numbers of irregularities. In fact, only four digital surveys and two paper surveys showed evidence that they are duplicates. It is possible that some surveys were purposely varied to avoid being seen as obvious duplicates. No survey responses were removed from the tabulations because the proportion of possibly fraudulent surveys relative to the overall number received was inconsequential to the numerical results. To influence a question's result by 1% would require completion of 17 surveys. Furthermore, the survey results are non-binding.



Screenshot of the on-line version of the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey.

More problematic to the integrity of overall results is a technical issue with the online version of the survey involving the ability to rank options in questions asking respondents to do so. This issue is known to have affected at least .06% survey.

of respondents. This is the percentage of people who noted the problem using the Other space. An indeterminate number of others may have experienced the problem but not mentioned it. Within a few days of the survey opening, staff clarified instructions for ranking questions, but some respondents reported issues even after the clarifications.

Participation in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey of 2021 compares very favourably with that of *Truro, Have Your Say* in 2009. In 2009, 698 responses were received; in 2021, there were 1784 surveys completed. Some increase can be attributed to population growth in the 15+ aged population of Truro since 2009. That number can be approximated as an addition of 450 but is subject

to estimation because numbers are based on 2006 and 2016 census data. A sharp increase in online presence both for the Town and for its citizens also contributed to higher participation rates. Optimistically, the sharp rise in responses to the survey can be seen as evidence of an increasingly engaged community.

The number of respondents to the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey amount to approximately 15% of Truro's population. This number includes an indeterminate number of survey takers who have a stake in the future of Truro even though it is not their place of residence. For instance, respondents may work and shop in Truro but live in the Village of Bible Hill. It is not possible to calculate the statistical validity of survey results without knowing the size of the full population eligible to take the survey. For reasons discussed above, it is also not valid to ascribe a margin of error for data obtained in a methodology not designed to produce a representative sample group.

Potential confusion about question wording or interpretations is discussed, in the commentary and analysis accompanying each question. Each question and the corresponding analysis are grouped by theme beginning at Section 3.4 of this report.



1.4 SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS BY THEME

The analysis below was prepared by an independent consultant under contract to the Town of Truro, with input from staff of the Planning Department. Views and interpretations in commentary are not necessarily those of Council or staff of the Town of Truro.

1.4.1 Belonging

The survey begins with the topic of Belonging. Belonging is a sense of connection and being welcomed. Sense of belonging is widely recognized as a core human need and increasingly is measured to assess the wellness of individuals and groups. Most definitions of belonging emphasize acceptance within a situation, place, or relationship.

Question 1 offers a simple definition of the term as a feeling of being at home in this place called Truro. By asking about a feeling of belonging it was hoped that the question would not be interpreted as asking whether a person is originally from Truro.

Unlike building lot or zoning regulations, belonging is not something readily legislated in municipal by-laws or a planning strategy. Nonetheless, it is a central to the Town of Truro Community Plan as an underlying value of social sustainability. Belonging is the goal of creating an inclusive community and adopting policies against discrimination.

In the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey, 82% of respondents indicated feeling a positive sense of belonging in Truro. In 2015, the Province released a study called the Nova Scotia Health Profile showing that province-wide 71% of citizens in Nova Scotia felt a positive sense of belonging in their communities. The Health Zone that includes Truro and Colchester was slightly above that at 72%. These rates compared favourably to the Canada-wide figure of 65%.

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing is a system to assess people's quality of life that was developed at the University of Waterloo, Ontario. In 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, they partnered with Engage Nova Scotia for the Nova Scotia Quality of Life survey. A component



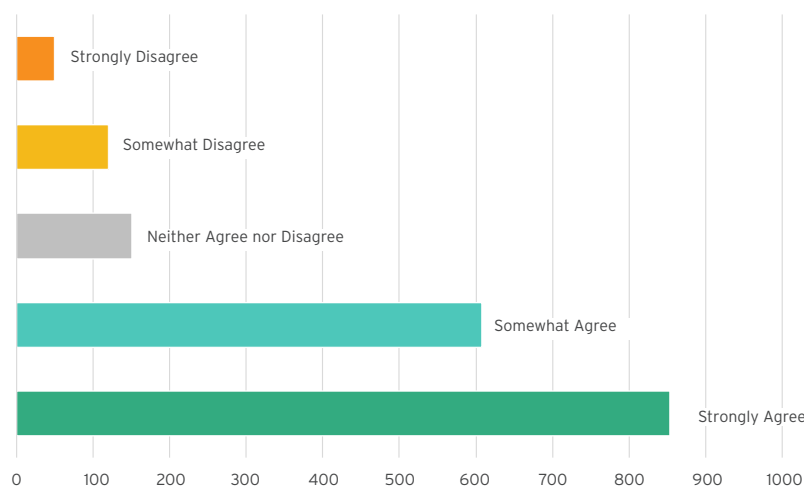
focused on sense of belonging within communities. A total of 868 surveys were completed by self-selected respondents in the Colchester region (including Truro).

The Nova Scotia Quality of Life survey used thirteen questions to determine sense of belonging to community. These included topics such as friendship, helping others, discrimination, and connecting socially. Analysis of responses resulted in a

Belonging | Question 1

Truro is a place where I feel at home. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Strongly agree | 853 | 47.9% |
| Somewhat agree | 608 | 34.1% |
| Neither agree or disagree | 151 | 8.5% |
| Somewhat disagree | 120 | 6.7% |
| Strongly disagree | 50 | 2.8% |
| TOTAL | 1782 | 100.0% |



positive sense of belonging for 65% of Colchester respondents. This was slightly higher than the Nova Scotia average of 63.6%. Halifax Regional Municipality had the lowest rating at 62%. Because this survey gathered demographic information such as income, relationship status, and length of time living in a community, researchers were able to measure sense of belonging differences by cohort. For instance, new residents and those with lower-than-average incomes were less likely to feel a strong sense of belonging than those not in those categories.

Over the six years since the Nova Scotia Health Profile study was completed, it is reasonable to conclude that Truro has developed into a community where

more people feel at home. Certainly, the increase in recreational and cultural activities, and new public spaces such as the Rath Eastlink Community Centre and Civic Square, foster social and community connection. The Town has even branded itself as a place of connection with its slogan Truro, Make the Connection. The branding was completed by a community task force responsible for conducting consultations on values, assets, and visions of Truro.

The contrast between the 82% positive responses in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey and the figure of 65% for Colchester in the Nova Scotia Quality of Life survey done in 2019 warrants some examination. Neither survey used random or targeted cross section respondents to get samples that could be deemed to represent the whole community population. The surveys were completed by those who wanted to either have their say or provide information (presumably to affect policy or program decisions).

The motivations of respondents likely account for the different results. Why do people voluntarily take time to do surveys? For a chance to win prizes? Civic duty? More likely it is because they realize that things close to home are at stake - things that will impact their personal quality of life.

The Nova Scotia Quality of Life survey aimed to assess wellbeing of individuals, communities, and Nova Scotia. Hopefully, it will inform both policy and place makers, but it was not part of a process tied to specific policy change. By contrast, the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey is part of Truro's Community Plan review. Changes will be made in the Plan and to priorities for community and Municipal action based to some extent on the views expressed by survey participants.

A sense of belonging, of feeling at home, can manifest as enthusiasm, anger, or concern about issues in one's community. These are all forms of engagement or connection rather than apathy. Both the 82% who expressed a feeling of being at home in Truro and the 9.5% who stated they did not are among those who took time to do the survey. These statistics also do not account for those who were either unaware or apathetic toward the survey and its purpose and so did not fill it out. The high positive response may also indicate that our survey respondent group under-represents those in circumstances that the Nova Scotia Quality of Life survey indicates feel less sense of belonging (i.e., lower income and new residents).

1.4.2 How Truro Looks

The topic How Truro Looks intends to explore perceptions of how our community appears visually to residents and visitors. The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey is part of a Community Plan review undertaken in the context of ongoing community growth. Growth brings change. Shaping change to ensure improvement rather than loss is the goal of community planning and development.

To measure perceptions of how Truro looks, Question 2 asked respondents to compare how Truro looks now to how it looked ten years ago. The 10-year timeline roughly matches the time the 2010 Community Plan has been in place. This is not to suggest that the previous plan has been responsible for all changes and developments, but it has been a factor in shaping some changes to the Town's streetscapes, including preventing some proposed changes.

Comparing present-day Truro to its past self is a way to describe change. Unfortunately, it excludes those without recollection of Truro's appearance ten years ago. The survey's authors understood the limitations but still found the information this question gathered more valuable than what would result from a question simply rating Truro's current appearance. A relatively high

How Truro Looks



About Us:
Truro takes pride in how its neighborhoods, businesses, and public spaces look.

We don't just look good; we are good! We want others to see us this way too.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

TRURO
make the connection

BRAND & Signage
Downtown Truro
Town Voice Info
Cook Square
Victoria Park
Farmers Market
Cultural Centre
Museums

Truro

HERITAGE & Style

STREETSCAPES

Architecture & SITE STANDARDS

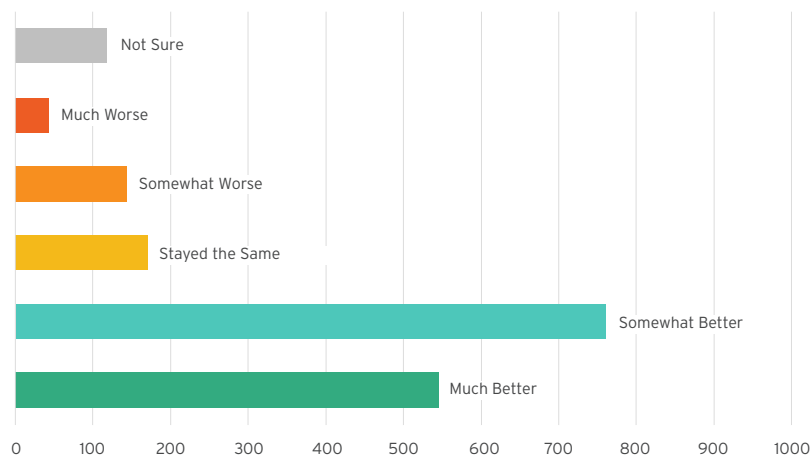
ESSENCE & Character

LANDSCAPING & Trees

How Truro Looks | Question 2

How would you describe the Town's appearance today compared to 10 years ago?

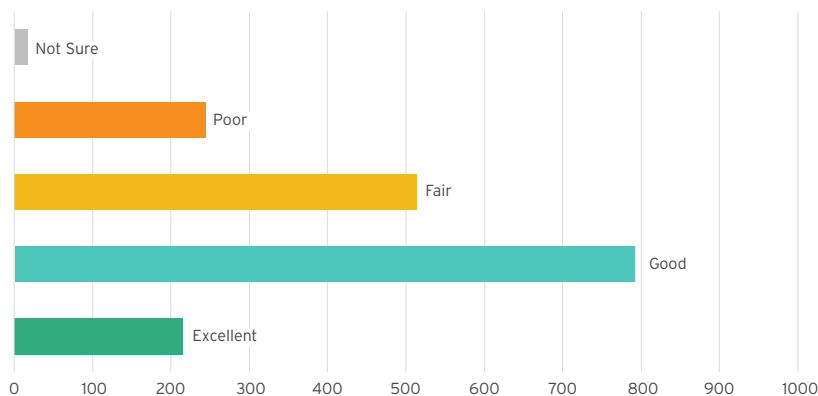
| | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Much Better | 546 | 30.6% |
| Somewhat Better | 760 | 42.6% |
| Stayed the Same | 171 | 9.6% |
| Somewhat Worse | 144 | 8.1% |
| Much Worse | 43 | 2.4% |
| Not Sure | 118 | 6.6% |
| TOTAL | 1782 | 100.0% |



How Truro Looks | Question 3

Describe Truro's reputation as a place to live?

| | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Excellent | 216 | 12.1% |
| Good | 791 | 44.4% |
| Fair | 514 | 28.8% |
| Poor | 244 | 13.7% |
| Not Sure | 17 | 1.0% |
| TOTAL | 1782 | 100.0% |



number of responses (compared to other question responses) chose the option Not Sure. This category likely includes some responses of indecision, but it is presumed that many of the 118 responses were from those not familiar with Truro ten years ago.

Combining the responses Much Better and Somewhat Better, 1,306 out of 1,782 respondents or 73.2% perceive improvement in the Town's appearance over the past ten years. 8.1% or 144 out of 1,782 indicated that Truro looks Somewhat Worse than it did 10 years ago and 43 people or 2.45% of respondents expressed the view that Truro's appearance is Much Worse. 171 or 9.6% detected little improvement or decline. These results, while indicating satisfaction with changes to how Truro looks, confirm the concept of beauty as being 'in the eye of the beholder'. Community developments such as the Civic Square, signage and streetscape programs, and a new river-front park have enhanced Truro's visual appeal, as have private investments in developments like the Willow Street School property and restoration of the former Hat Factory (now occupied by U-Haul).

Question 3 aimed to gauge how respondents think those not living in the Truro area think about Truro. Over half of respondents, 56.5%, are of the view that Truro has an Excellent or Good reputation and another 28.8% believe Truro's reputation is Fair. Only 13.7% judge Town's reputation to be Poor.

The only way to determine the accuracy of these perceptions would be to poll those who know about Truro but are not directly connected to it. A possible misinterpretation of this question might have had respondents answering it as if the question was, describe Truro as a place to live.

Anecdotally, Truro has a mixed reputation that is changing. The idea of Truro as staying a quaint community is being displaced by the image of a progressive and active town. Truro is gaining reputation as a host of national and international sporting and cultural events, for example the World Junior A Hockey Challenge, Down Syndrome World Swimming Championships, and Nova Scotia Music Week. The now-annual Pride Festival and large gatherings such as Black Lives Matters have also changed perceptions about Truro. Has Truro turned the corner in terms of image? Those coming to Truro for activities might be surprised to find the variety of shopping and dining offered. Visitors will also see evidence of Truro’s stewardship of trees, green spaces, and heritage properties that contrasts to other urban places experiencing growth.

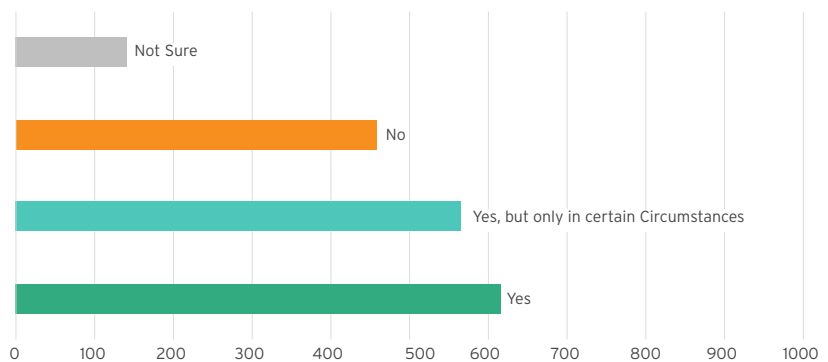
Question 4 asks how respondents feel about the appropriateness of taller buildings for Truro. It does this under the theme of How Truro Looks. Elsewhere in the survey, height-related options factor into the themes of Environment and Places to Live. Question 4 is the only question in the survey that provides a specific fact situation as context: several housing development proposals received by the Town in the past two years have been for taller buildings than currently exist in Truro.

Discussions about these housing proposals have been passionate and even polarizing at times. Proponents have been adamant that taller developments are needed to address housing shortages and Truro’s available land limitations. Supporters also cite the fiscal and environmental efficiencies of increased housing density on existing infrastructure. Opposition to taller buildings in Truro centres on lack of

How Truro Looks | Question 4

Recent development proposals in Truro have included buildings that are 8 or 9 storeys tall. Do you feel that taller buildings are appropriate for Truro?

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Yes | 617 | 34.6% |
| Yes, but Only in Certain Circumstances | 566 | 31.7% |
| No | 458 | 25.7% |
| Not Sure | 142 | 8.0% |
| TOTAL | 1783 | 100.0% |



fit with community character and neighbourhood livability. Livability includes considering views, light and shadow, parking, and the busyness of a neighbourhood which could be affected by the introduction of a tall multi-unit housing development. Environmental benefits of tall buildings have also been scrutinized by those opposed to allowing taller buildings.

Proposals are considered individually by Municipal decision-makers -- the Planning & Development Services Department, Planning Advisory Committee, and Town Council -- using the Community Plan framework. Building height and other factors such as overall scale and lot coverage are set out for each zone in the Land Use By-law based on policies stated in the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS). The policies within the MPS are themselves informed by the Town of Truro Community Sustainability Plan.

Policies in the MPS that regulate height are linked to purposes such as:

- to contribute to maintaining a low intensity residential character
- to ensure the orderly development of single- and two-unit residential dwellings
- to ensure a high quality of life for residents
- to complement the open space of parks and accommodate a diverse range of recreation.

Under policies of Truro's 2010 MPS, new multi-unit residential development proposals within the General Residential Land Use Designation must be considered by Development Agreement. The Development Agreement process, which is enabled by the Municipal Government Act of Nova Scotia, allows for justifiable variances from height and other requirements of the Land Use By-law. The Development Agreement process allows for height compatible with adjacent uses and does not detract from the streetscape by significantly varying from the typical height for that streetscape.

Tabulated responses to Question 4 will not provide decision-makers or Community Plan revisers with clear majority public support for, or opposition to, taller buildings in Truro. Of the respondents, 34.6% answered yes to taller buildings being appropriate for Truro. This is modestly more than the 25.7% who said no. Adding in the 31.7% who answered yes, but only in certain circumstances tells us that a majority (66.3%) of survey respondents are open to higher buildings in Truro. Again, this is not a large majority pointing to a clear path of approval for all taller buildings.

The 2009-10 review of Truro's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law was concurrent with the writing of Truro's Community Sustainability Plan. A public engagement effort branded Truro, Have Your Say also used a survey to get input. The Truro, Have Your Say survey did not ask a specific question about the appropriate height of buildings. It began with an open question (without specific options to choose a response from): What do you like most about Truro?

The number one response to this question, about Truro's best attribute, was the Town's size. It is unclear whether what was liked about Truro's size was its smallness or the fact that it was large enough to offer many urban amenities. Other common responses included small-town atmosphere and friendliness.

Truro is a small town by most definitions. No doubt, Truro's smallness contributes to what gets described as its character and what is deemed to fit here. However, defining the Town's character, its architecture, or its streetscapes as having a dominant characteristic has its perils. There are many differences within Truro relative to types of housing, traffic, and nearby amenities.

In 2009, when the Have Your Say survey was conducted, Truro was experiencing population growth that had not yet noticeably outpaced housing stock. Vacancy rates and real estate prices were not issues as prevalent as they are in 2021. Jumping ahead to Question 15 of the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey, 92% of respondents indicated that new housing for Truro is important or essential. This level of concern for housing was expressed even though 70% of survey participants currently live in single family detached housing (see Question 13 results below) indicating some level of housing security.

With 60.4% of survey takers now open to some taller buildings, has the clear need for more housing options in Truro trumped concerns about loosing some of the perceived small-town character of the Town? Or is aspiring to growth and more urbanity also part of that character?

Awareness of the climate change crisis has also increased significantly since 2009. In 2009 density was primarily seen as an answer to costly sprawl. Is this a factor in acceptance of greater vertical density? Perhaps there's been an adjustment to what makes up the desirable elements and characteristics of Truro. Alternatively, maybe slightly taller developments, as opposed to high rise apartment buildings, are seen to fit within Truro without taking away from its small-town atmosphere.

It is tempting to assume (in the absence of local data) that age is a determining factor in how people feel about taller buildings. During one of the *Truro, Let's Connect* activities this notion was challenged. In the Cobequid Education Centre auditorium, four groups of upper-grade students participated in a session devoted to Truro's Community Plan review. The event included an impromptu re-creation of a public hearing about a proposed multi-unit development. Students questioned the Planning Department presenters about the proposed 8-storey residential design and then spoke either in favour or against it, leading to a vote. The dominant theme of opposition to the development was that it didn't fit with Truro's small-town charm largely due to height. Those in favour emphasized the grave need for more housing, noting that even if the proposed units were not affordable, having them here would free up other options. In conclusion, the room was divided almost evenly in favour and against the proposal.

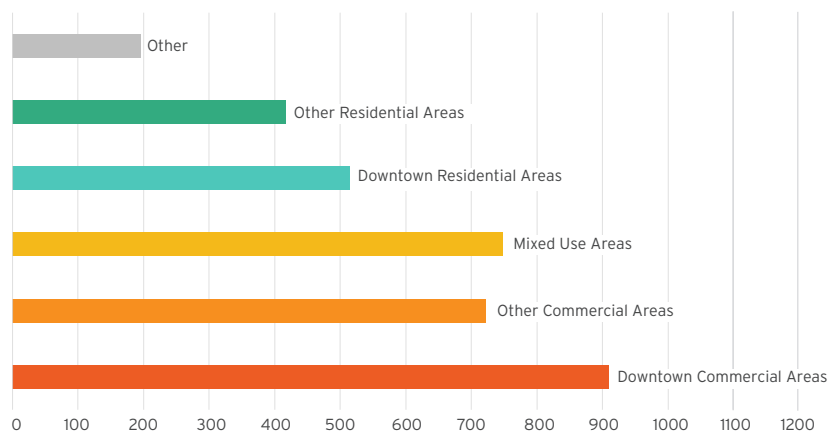
The height of proposed developments is also an element of survey questions 5, 6, 16, and 17.

Question 5 describes a 'what if' scenario of Council permitting buildings with five or more storeys to gauge opinion on where in Truro such buildings might be appropriate. Five response-options were described by dominant use (commercial, residential, mixed) and by the geographic designation of 'downtown' or 'other'. Respondents were instructed to select any of the six options (including an Other option) deemed appropriate for buildings with 5+ storeys.

How Truro Looks | Question 5

If the Town was to permit more buildings with 5+ storeys, where do you think they would be appropriate?

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Downtown Commercial Area | 910 | 26.0% |
| Other Commercial Areas | 722 | 20.6% |
| Mixed Use Areas | 748 | 21.3% |
| Downtown Residential Areas | 514 | 14.7% |
| Other Residential Areas | 416 | 11.9% |
| Other | 196 | 5.6% |
| TOTAL | 3506 | 100.0% |



This question about building height appropriateness for Truro was not intended to connect with any specific proposed development. However, some responses may have been informed by

specific proposals that had come before Council or were pending. In early June 2021, Council voted against entering into a Development Agreement for a proposed 76 unit, 8-storey residential development at 60 Golf Street (General Commercial C4 Zone). The Truro Let's Connect survey opened for responses on 25 August. On 13 September, Council approved entering into a Development Agreement for a proposed 8-storey, 56-unit residential development at 54-58 Walker Street (Downtown Commercial C1 Zone). The Let's Connect survey closed on 8 October. On 25 October, Planning Advisory Committee recommend that Council approve entering into a development agreement for a proposed 8-storey development with street-level commercial units and 88 residential units at 557-573 Prince Street (Downtown Commercial C1 Zone).

Question 5 had four identified limitations, and these are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first limitation is that the hypothetical situation posed in Question 5 doesn't elaborate on anything about the approved developments apart from their height being 5+ storeys. Other facets of a proposed development could render it suitable or unsuitable for a specific site. It was also not specified as to whether the buildings were primarily residential. If the question had been placed in the Places to Live topic section, this would be clearer. However, given that all taller building proposals received by Truro's Planning & Development Services Department in recent years have all been for residential developments (some with limited commercial use as well), the assumed understanding of the scenario is that the developments are residential.

A second limitation of Questions 5 is that the descriptive term 'downtown' is not defined.

Another limitation is that Question 5 doesn't explain whether Council would be approving developments in a Development Agreement that allows for variances to the Land Use By-law or whether the approvals would take place within a revised Land Use By-law that allows 'by right' buildings of this height

The final identified limitation is that Question 4 provided a No response option to the question of whether taller buildings are appropriate in Truro. Question 5 only provides the category of Other for those who answered No in Question 4 and did not wish to select any locations. A Nowhere or None of the Above option could have been provided. The survey authors opted against that route in an attempt to get views from all respondents about best locations in Truro in the hypothetical scenario of taller buildings being approved. Those answering No in Question 4 could have either skipped Question 5 or used the Other category to convey their opposition to taller buildings. Space constraints on the paper version of the survey did not allow for explicit instructions in this regard.

Of the 458 respondents who selected the No option in Question 4, 89 chose only Other in Question 5 (most with explanatory comments that they did not want buildings of 5+ storeys anywhere in Truro) and three survey takers skipped Question 5. These 92 respondents represent 20% of those who answered No to Question 4.

On average, respondents selected two of the six response options. Of the 1,780 individuals completing Question 5, 1,518 selected one to four of the options provided and 163 selected five options as appropriate areas for taller buildings. Ten respondents selected six. This equates to only 10% of Question 5 respondents expressing that 5+ storey buildings are appropriate in all areas of Truro, despite 34.6% of respondents choosing the unqualified Yes option in Question 4. This indicates that even among supporters of taller buildings, a large majority would not support allowing them ‘by right’ (in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law) in all areas of Truro.

Respondents chose the Mixed-use areas option 748 times in Question 5. The two response options specifying residential areas were selected 930 times. In comparison, the two commercial areas garnered 1,632 selections. Because multiple options were allowed in this question, every combination of mixed, residential, and commercial appeared. As such, those involved in revisions to the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law will need to reconcile a public preference for taller residential buildings in commercial rather than residential areas.

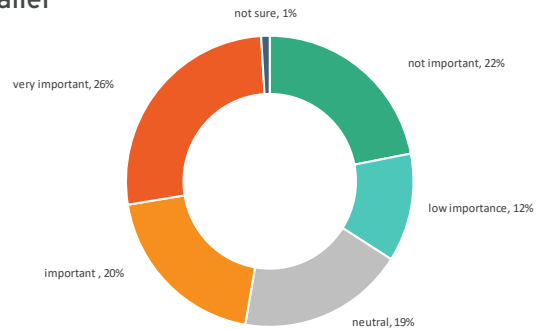
Question 6 of the How Truro Looks topic section presents policy directions that relate to new construction or renovations. The question does not directly ask for views on the overall importance of preserving/protecting historic homes and buildings in Truro. Rather, it asks respondents to rate the importance of measures relating to new construction close to heritage properties and renovations to heritage buildings.

How Truro Looks | Question 6

How important is it for the Town to do the following to preserve/protect historic homes and buildings in Truro?

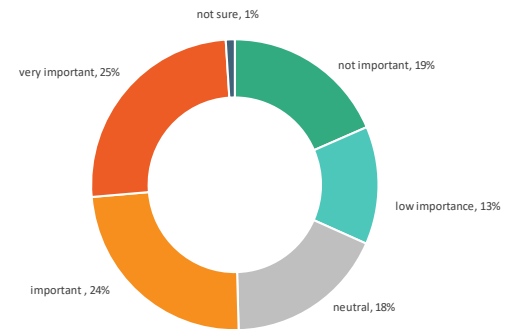
New buildings must not be taller than nearby heritage homes

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| not important | 390 | 21.9% |
| low importance | 214 | 12.0% |
| neutral | 333 | 18.7% |
| important | 350 | 19.7% |
| very important | 473 | 26.6% |
| not sure | 17 | 1.0% |
| TOTAL | 1777 | 100.0% |



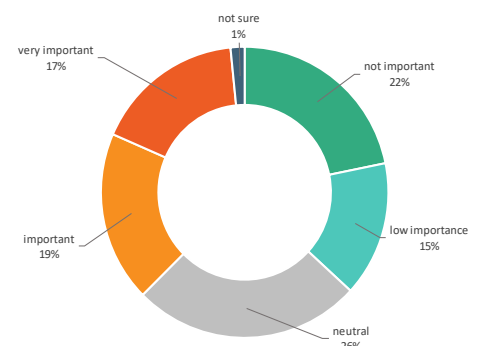
New buildings should match nearby heritage styles

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| not important | 329 | 18.5% |
| low importance | 233 | 13.1% |
| neutral | 319 | 18.0% |
| important | 428 | 24.1% |
| very important | 450 | 25.3% |
| not sure | 18 | 1.0% |
| TOTAL | 1777 | 100.0% |



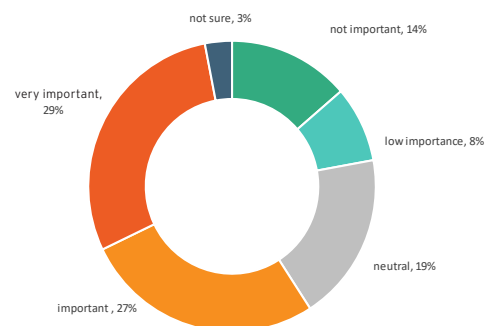
New buildings should match nearby heritage materials

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| not important | 387 | 21.8% |
| low importance | 267 | 15.0% |
| neutral | 457 | 25.7% |
| important | 337 | 19.0% |
| very important | 300 | 16.9% |
| not sure | 28 | 1.6% |
| TOTAL | 1776 | 100.0% |



Limit changes to heritage buildings

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| not important | 243 | 13.7% |
| low importance | 150 | 8.4% |
| neutral | 333 | 18.7% |
| important | 480 | 27.0% |
| very important | 517 | 29.1% |
| not sure | 54 | 3.0% |
| TOTAL | 1777 | 100.0% |



Heritage is discussed throughout Truro's Community Plan as an important part of community identity. Its preservation is deemed to contribute to community's cultural and social fabric. The Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law recognize three heritage districts that include almost 100 properties with heritage designation under either the Provincial Heritage Property Act or through Municipal heritage designation with Truro's Heritage Advisory Committee. The MPS also outlines a role for the Heritage Advisory Committee in reviewing and commenting on proposed developments during the Development Agreement process.

In the context of Municipal commitment, Question 6 seeks views about how to accommodate growth and new housing needs. It is not possible to discern from the response data whether some respondents feel that heritage protection itself is not important or that heritage protection is not affected by the outlined measures.

The question does not articulate definitions of heritage, historic, nearby, nor the term match. The Community Plan and a *Truro, Let's Connect* background information primer on How Truro Looks are informative to some extent on the concept of heritage. Nearby and Match were chosen over alternatives such as Close To, Beside, Be Compatible With, and Replicate.

The first sub-question returns to the issue of building height, this time relative to heritage or historic homes. Combining responses of Important and Very Important, 46% support measures to restrict the height of new buildings to the level of a nearby heritage home. 34% did not view height as an important restriction. Consistent with three of the four sub-questions, 19% were neutral.

Because a category of not sure was offered, Neutral can be interpreted as not having a preference rather than unable to decide.

On the sub-question of new buildings matching nearby heritage styles, those expressing the view that this would be an important measure again outweigh those believing it not to be: 49% versus 32%, with 18% neutral. If policies were developed to embody this strategy deemed as important by nearly half of survey respondents, Plan revisors would need to clarify whether 'matching' means mimicking or being compatible with. Would new construction done in a historic style help to preserve authentic in the area? Or would the actual heritage buildings lose their distinctiveness? Does a decorative façade or feature such as a non-structural pillar match one on a historic building that functions structurally or alludes to another non-local historical style? Could an entirely different modern style serve to preserve heritage by its visual contrast? If the heritage property is one that endeavoured to display contemporary architecture of the time, would the current match be to mimic that style or to match by featuring today's styles?

The third sub-question focuses on materials of new construction in relation to nearby heritage properties. Of the four sub-questions, it is the only one where more people considered the measure unimportant than important, although just barely at 37% to 36%. It also garnered the highest percentage of neutral responses at 25%. The question does not pose the scenario in which new buildings should be constructed of heritage materials (which would be close to impossible), but that new construction materials should match those of nearby heritage buildings. This could involve

exterior colours, the choice of wood, stone, or brick, or roofing material. Envisioning policies or regulations to affect mandatory heritage material matching raises questions similar to those posed in the paragraph above. Would constructing using materials similar to those of a nearby heritage building serve to preserve it or instead dilute the authenticity of the streetscape?

Moving away from new construction, sub-question 4 looks at the situation of changes to historic properties. Changes to registered heritage properties are subject to the act or by-law they are registered with in addition to Municipal Planning Strategy, Land Use By-law, and Building Code governance. Responses show the largest differential within Question 6 between those believing restrictive alteration measures to be important versus those believing them not to be: 56% saying that restrictions are important to 22% indicating they are not important, with 19% neutral.

Nearly everyone residing in or coming to Truro has some familiarity with the historic Provincial Normal College building at the centre of Civic Square. It is now home to the Truro Branch of the Colchester East Hants Public Library. The major renovation that gave rebirth to the building both restored and significantly altered the building with upgrades and a modern addition. As a heritage site of importance to Truro and to many families historically with connections to the Normal College, it would be an interesting case study for the issues raised in Question 6 of the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey.

The project introduced accessibility ramps to the exterior, entirely redesigned the interior layout, and featured an addition in a contemporary architectural style. To prepare for the

Civic Square to be realized, the former library, itself with some history and architectural uniqueness, was torn down. The Normal College building addition matched the original building in ways such as colour palette, brick and siding choices (matching the look of the Normal College's wall and roof materials), and scale/height. In contrast to the arched windows characteristic of the Normal College's Second Empire architecture, windows in the addition are square and contemporary.

The Library development has been widely embraced as a great success. Without the changes to the Normal College building inside and out, including



the addition, that made it functional for a new purpose, it is difficult to believe that the property would have been preserved and protected indefinitely. Has its heritage value been diminished or enhanced by allowing the changes? Does the architectural style of the addition match that of the original building? Does the use of matching materials honour it or should more have been done (such as mimicking the contrasting white inlay

bricks of the original building)? Should design and materials used in the addition have been required by legislation to match the original building or should that have just been at the discretion of the design team and overseers from the Town? Should the addition have matched the original historic building, or be the later version with modern windows inserted? Would the addition of solar panels violate the integrity of this now-renovated heritage building? Would new residential less than a block away be considered nearby and therefore subject to restrictive design measures supported by many survey takers?

Spending on heritage architecture preservation and promotion is also a category option within Question 8.

1.4.3 Environment

Question 7 of the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey concerns actions for environmental improvements under the theme Environment. Respondents were asked to rank suggested actions with space provided for other issues to be noted.

Within a few days of opening the survey, concerns were raised about difficulties with the ranking function in the online version. The software was found not to be malfunctioning. Town Planning staff addressed the issue by adding clearer instructions to the relevant sections of the survey. After the clarification no further concerns were raised.

The actions listed in Question 7 are not specific projects or programs, but rather, goals to be prioritized. For measurable achievement toward any of the listed goals, multiple initiatives would be necessary. The intention of asking respondents to rank the importance of actions was not to suggest certain

Environment



About Us:
For 49 years the Town of Truro helps citizens' plant new trees within the urban forest.

84.4%
of Truro residents who leave the home for work get to their workplace by car.

Tree Planting Program
Rebate of up to \$50 per tree.

DIY Planting Program
Trees and Shrubs for \$10 each.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

In 2009, Council adopted the Town of Truro **SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER** recognizing stewardship of the environment as the foundation of sustainability.

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Truro commit to developing a sustainable community. Our actions and policies will consider the needs of both current and future citizens of Truro. Our vision for a sustainable Truro reflects our responsibility to balance:

- Stewardship of our natural environment
- Pursuit of a thriving economy
- Building a just and vibrant community



HOW HAVE WE DONE SINCE? ENERGY & CARBON REDUCTION

Some Town Initiatives:

BUILDINGS:

Energy efficiency upgrades to public buildings, including the RECC, that will achieve elimination of **452** tonnes per year of CO₂ emissions (roughly equal to the annual emissions of **153** cars).

Some Community Initiatives:

The **LIVING EARTH COUNCIL** has undertaken projects and education on climate change, active transportation, and sustainable food. This group hosted Truro Seedy Saturday since **2007**.

TREES:

Truro is a national leader in urban forestry. The Truro Tree Committee was formed in **1971** and the Town employs a full-time Forestry Coordinator.



OTHER:

Community gardens.
Storm water management requirements for development.

Collaboration with Colchester and the Province on Marshland Restoration.

On Fridays in 2018 and 2019 students from CEC led noon rallies in Truro's Civic Square to raise concerns about the need for climate change action. They were part of a global movement called

FRIDAYS FOR FUTURE



actions are not important, rather it was to garner people’s views on which actions best fit local resources and could have the greatest impact.

At least seven of the nine options can be linked to the crisis of climate change. Effective actions on many of the actions would positively affect goals for most others. For instance, increasing local food production and consumption would help displace dependence on imported food. This would not only increase local food security but would decrease transportation vehicle emissions.

Environmental policies and action opportunities are at the core of Truro’s Community Sustainability Plan, but also feature prominently in the Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law in relation to subjects such as sewage, green space, and urban agriculture and forestry. The *Truro, Let’s Connect* background primer on Environment highlights some local environmental initiatives. Although only one question in the survey is dedicated to environment, related issues are elements of at least four other survey questions.

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of environmental actions that Truro should take. The survey authors deliberately avoided using Town of Truro, which would put the onus on Council and Municipal staff for environmental actions to the exclusion of community leadership and activism. A collaborative, all-hands-on-deck approach to sustainability actions is called for in the current Sustainability Plan and remains the only route to substantial environmental achievements locally.

The chart to the right shows respondent rankings of the environmental actions by tallying the first, second, and third selections in three columns. Because respondents were asked to prioritize and

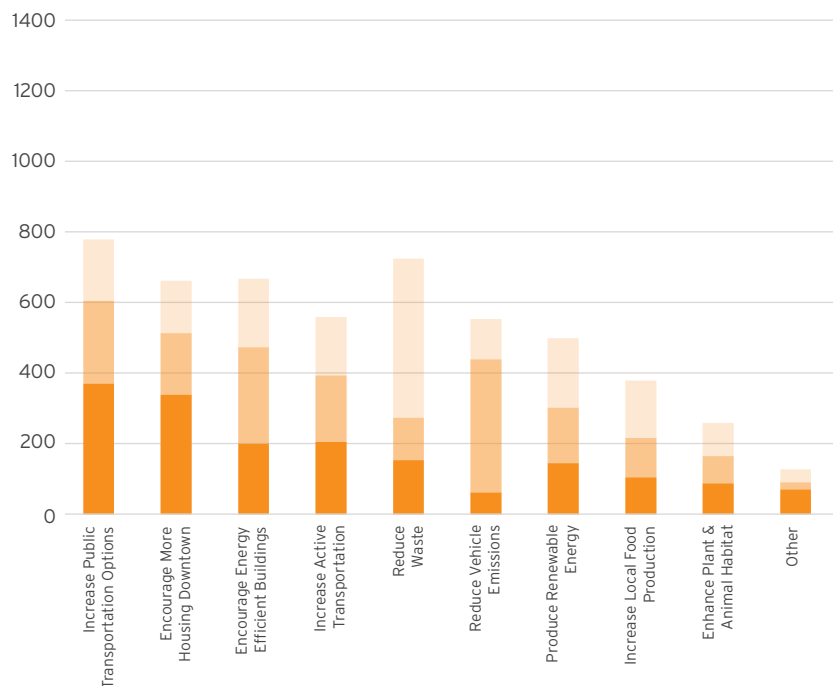
rank their responses, the responses were weighted with values assigned to the rankings. A first choice received a weight of 3, second received a weight of 2, and third a weight of 1.

The graph below uses an orange hue in three intensities to show how each idea ranked in terms of being chosen

Environment | Question 7

Rank the 3 most important environmental actions Truro should take?

| Action | 1 st Choice | 2 nd Choice | 3 rd Choice |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Increase public transportation options | 371 | 234 | 175 |
| Encourage more housing downtown | 338 | 176 | 149 |
| Encourage energy efficient buildings | 199 | 274 | 195 |
| Increase active transportation | 206 | 186 | 166 |
| Reduce waste | 153 | 121 | 451 |
| Reduce vehicle emissions | 62 | 378 | 113 |
| Produce renewable energy | 144 | 158 | 196 |
| Increase local food production | 106 | 111 | 162 |
| Enhance plant & animal habitat | 87 | 78 | 94 |
| Other | 71 | 21 | 36 |



as the first, second, or third priority. The intensity also reflects the weighting of each. For instance, increase public transportation options was selected in respondents' top three priorities more than any other category. Accordingly, it is the highest bar on the graph. The lightest hue within that vertical bar represents the proportion of survey takers who made this their third choice. The middle hue shows the proportion who selected public transportation as the second most important priority. Finally, the most intense orange reflects the number of respondents who chose that action as being the most important priority.

Increase public transportation options, with 371 selections, was most frequently chosen by survey respondents as being the most important action that Truro could take. Public transportation also ranks highest in the tabulation of weighted first, second, and third choices with a total of 1,756. Following public transportation, the next highest top priority was Encourage more housing downtown. The concentration of housing in the downtown area is an environmental issue. It would reduce vehicle use, reduce requirements for new infrastructure in undeveloped areas, and presumably, re-purpose existing buildings. Encourage energy efficient buildings and Reduce waste were also popular choices as either second or third in importance, as was Increase active transportation options and Reduce vehicle emissions. As mentioned, action on most of these issues would result in improvements in several other categories.

Respondents used the Other space to express the importance of actions related to: deer population; increased green space; enforced bike lanes; litter clean-up; affordable housing;

reduction of vehicle noise; wheelchair accessibility; improved lighting; grey water reuse; reuse of existing buildings; and stormwater run-off.

The Truro, Have Your Say survey that was done in 2009 also had a question dedicated to the environment with nine themes for action that differed only slightly from the choices in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey. In the 2009 questionnaire, respondents were asked to rank their top five priorities. For comparison, the 2009 Truro, Have Your Say results are summarized as follows:

- Increase public transportation options was the top first choice and second most selected overall
- Support active transport such as biking and walking was the second most popular first choice and third overall
- Promote local goods and food choices ranked third as a first choice but first overall
- Reduce consumption, waste, and garbage was just ahead of use clean energy sources as the next highest 1 through 3 ranked choice.

Consistent with the current survey, respondents chose public transportation more than any other category as the best way to make Truro a better place environmentally. Public transportation was also the top suggestion in the Truro, Have Your Say opening survey question about what would make Truro a better town. Active transport was second as a first choice and promotion of local goods and food was third. Progress made or not made on these environmental actions will be considered carefully as a revised Community Plan is drafted, with a view to identifying priorities, resources, and practical actions.

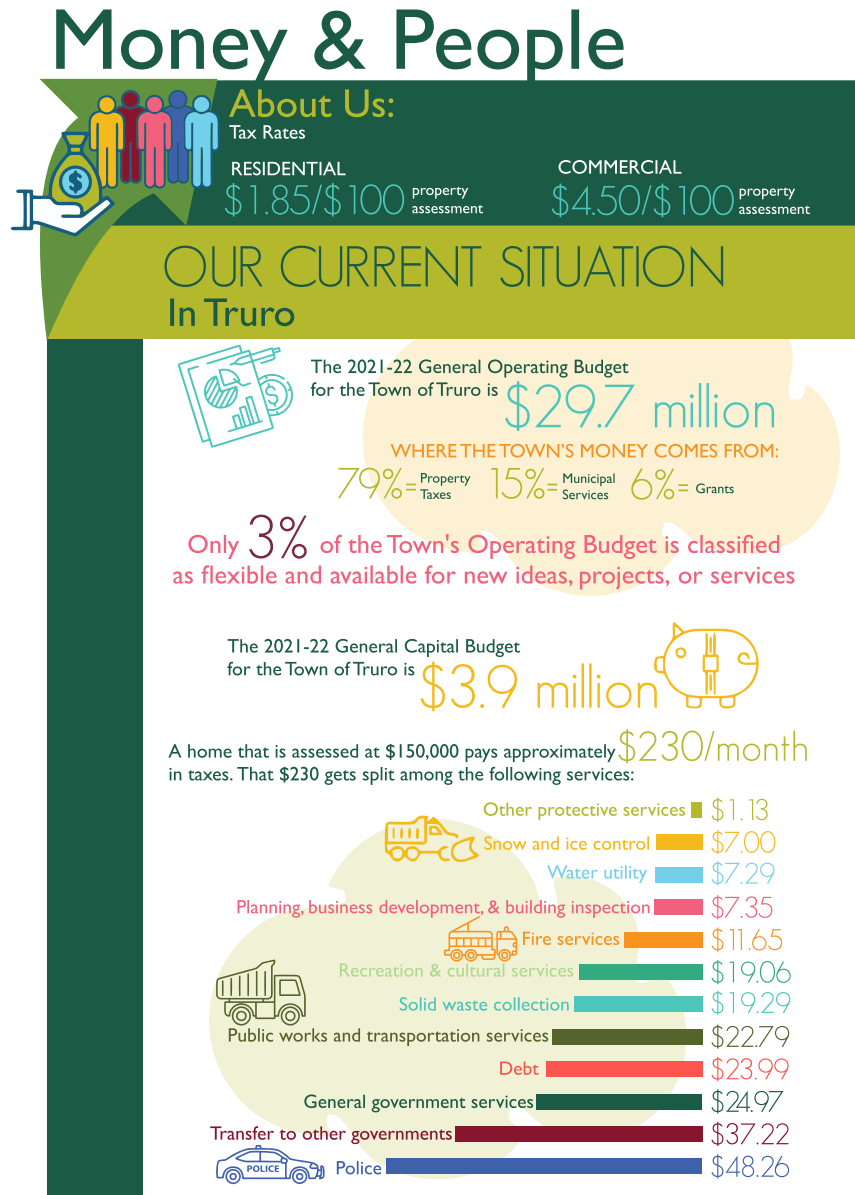
1.4.4 Money & People

Money & People are the resources needed to develop our community. The theme of Money & People is explored in two survey questions as well as in a *Truro, Let's Connect* background primer. A key part of shaping change through a plan is identifying not only priorities but resources. This includes calculations of costs, source of funds, and human resources.

The Money & People background primer elaborates on information contained in Question 8 which states that “many of the Town’s expenses are fixed” meaning non-discretionary budget items for things that are core responsibilities of municipalities. The 2021-22 General Operating Budget for the Town of Truro totals \$29.7 million. Only 3% (\$891,000) is not pre-committed in categories of mandatory municipal spending or programs previously enabled by Council motions. In addition to tight financial circumstances, there is little room to add new responsibilities to existing human resources.

Questions 8 and 9 together allow for the possibility of new initiatives using Municipal funding, but remind survey takers of limited Municipal resources. As suggested in Question 7, collaboration and leadership from within the community, including organizations and businesses, will be crucial to address the needs and seize the many opportunities voiced in the *Truro, Let's Connect* engagement activities.

Question 8 asked respondents to rank spending priorities for Municipal funds available for new services or projects. Eleven options were offered, plus an open Other category.

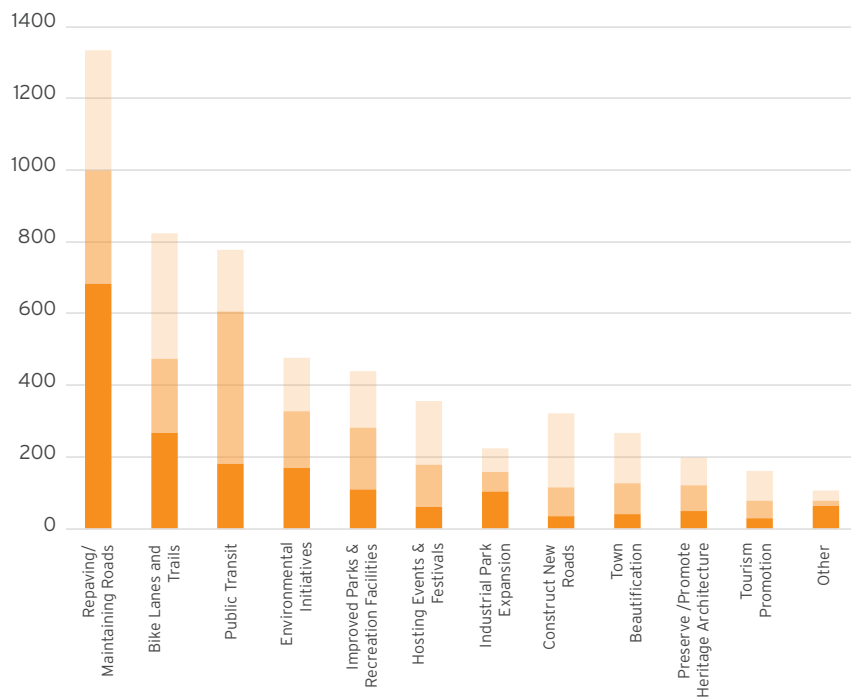


The chart on the following page shows respondent rankings of the environmental actions by tallying first, second, and third selections in three columns. The final column shows the sum of weighted values assigned to the rankings. A first choice counts as 3, second as 2, and third as 1.

Money & People | Question 8

Many of the Town's expenses are fixed. Where should the rest of the budget be spent?

| Expenditure | 1 st Choice | 2 nd Choice | 3 rd Choice |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Repaving/maintaining roads | 684 | 315 | 336 |
| Bike lanes and trails | 267 | 207 | 351 |
| Public transit | 180 | 426 | 173 |
| Environmental initiatives | 169 | 158 | 150 |
| Improved parks & recreation facilities | 109 | 173 | 158 |
| Hosting events and festivals | 60 | 118 | 179 |
| Industrial park expansion | 103 | 55 | 65 |
| Construct new roads | 34 | 81 | 207 |
| Town beautification | 40 | 85 | 141 |
| Preserve/promote heritage architecture | 48 | 73 | 76 |
| Tourism promotion | 30 | 47 | 84 |
| Other | 64 | 14 | 27 |



The graph above uses an orange hue in three intensities to show how each idea ranked in terms of being chosen as the first, second, or third most important goal. Within the vertical bar, the lightest hue represents the proportion of survey takers who made this their third choice. The slightly more intense middle hue

shows the proportion of respondents selecting that option as the second most important action. Finally, the most intense orange, reflects the number of respondents who chose that action as being the most important.

By a considerable margin, respondents ranked Repaving/maintaining roads as their top spending priority for the annual Town's non-committed funds. That the category is a clear priority is shown by the tabulation of first, second, and third choices as well. It surprises most citizens to learn that municipal road repair is not a provincially legislated responsibility of municipalities under the Municipal Government Act. Nonetheless, road improvements are consistently a high priority of Councils and the electorate. Maintaining what you own is also a common-sense approach. In the Town's Operating Budget, nearly 10% of its annual spending is for public works and transportation services, a category that includes regular street maintenance. It is not possible to discern whether responders to Question 8 who selected Repaving/maintaining roads were calling for additional discretionary spending or confirming the importance of ongoing Municipal spending on streets.

Active and public transit initiatives were once again identified as spending priorities. With Public transit the most popular second choice and Bike Lanes and Trails ranking third. The three top categories can be viewed as intertwined to the extent that alternatives to single vehicle reliance would also reduce wear and tear on roads.

High levels of participation in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey are one indicator that engagement in local issues is on the upswing in Truro. Ideas, priorities, and concerns are regularly conveyed with passion to Councillors year-round.

Question 9 delivers the message that implementing new projects or programs will require new resources, both human and financial. Respondents were asked to choose the two best ways to raise new money from a list of seven options as well as an Other category.

Two routes for the Town to increase capacity for special projects were clearly favoured in response to Question 9: Attract New Business & Development and Go After More Federal/Provincial Funding. Respondents understand that new businesses and the construction of properties results in more Municipal revenues because of property taxation. It also creates employment and spending, supporting other businesses and population growth.

Priorities and programs of federal and provincial governments constantly change, sometimes relating to regional needs, current issues such as climate change or COVID recovery, or sometimes because of political party strategies. New funding announcements are carefully crafted to inspire confidence in the government making the announcement. Sometimes they are announced long before a process for accessing funds is in place. Once in place, and if the amounts are significant enough, successfully accessing funding from federal and/or provincial partners could enable Truro to realize far more of the vision of its citizens and leaders.

Some initiatives, such as the Federal Gas Tax, fund municipalities directly with spending eligibility tied to specific priorities. Often, these limited-time programs of support name municipalities as eligible applicants for loans or grants. Question 9 presents the concept of Truro 'going after' more of these funds. The pursuit of Federal or Provincial funding requires skill and dedicated person-

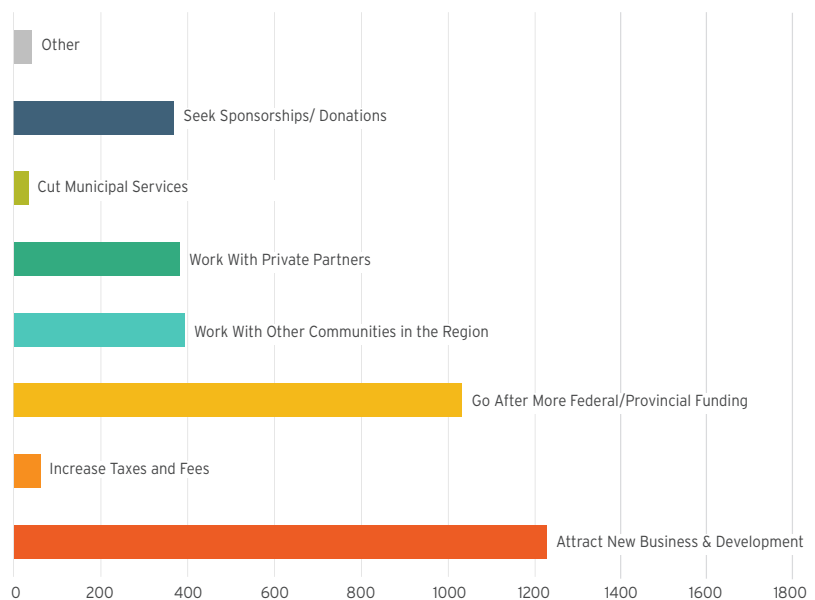
hours from both municipal staff and various political representatives in the area. In the face of competing regular duties, it is a challenge to prioritize going after these funds because of the amount of work required for applications, implementation, and accountability reporting.

Support, although more modest, was also voiced for seeking more support from donors such as foundations or perhaps through crowd funding, or through sponsorships (maybe more naming rights?). There was little appetite for tax increases or service cuts.

Money & People | Question 9

How should Truro raise money for special projects?

| | | |
|---|-------------|---------------|
| Attract new business & development | 1227 | 34.7% |
| Increase taxes and fees | 61 | 1.7% |
| Go after more Federal/Provincial Funding | 1031 | 29.1% |
| Work with other communities in the region | 393 | 11.1% |
| Work with private partners | 381 | 10.8% |
| Cut municipal services | 34 | 1.0% |
| Seek sponsorships/donations | 369 | 10.4% |
| Other | 42 | 1.2% |
| TOTAL | 3538 | 100.0% |



1.4.5 Getting Around

Getting Around is how we move about in our community. To fully belong in a community, you need to be able to get around within it. Mobility is needed by most people for getting to a place of employment, for shopping, to go to school, to access medical services, or simply/essentially to connect with family and friends. The theme of Getting Around is explored in the *Truro, Let's Connect* Survey by three questions.

Question 10 asks respondents to complete the sentence Getting around Truro is.... The choices range from Very easy to Very difficult and a Not sure option was also available. The question did not ask how people typically get around Truro, so whether by car, walking, or accessibus, what was being asked was is it working?. Fortunately, more than half of respondents, 52%, find it easy to get around Truro using the means they have available to them.

Again, the survey data does not reveal what contributes to this situation, but external sources can help. Statistics Canada tells us that 66% of Nova Scotians over 15 owned or shared a vehicle in 2019. That number is likely higher in places where public transport is not available. Truro does experience traffic congestion and delays such as those at rail crossings, but, compared to larger centres, it is compact and has road access nearly everywhere. These factors could account for the combined 64.3% of respondents saying it is easy or very easy to get around.

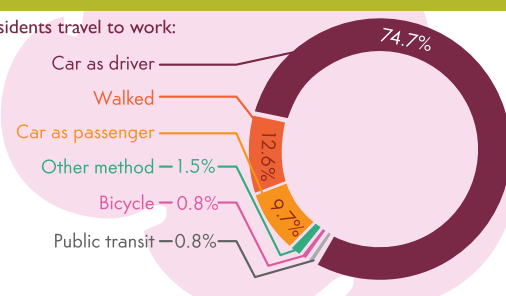
Unfortunately, for 33.6% of those participating in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey, getting around Truro is either difficult or very difficult. 597 of 1,777 people surveyed expressed difficulty getting around in Truro. Transportation and mobility issues impact quality of life, community togetherness, equality, and economic participation. Difficulties may be because of lack of vehicle access, inadequate transportation infrastructure or services, or personal mobility or financial challenges. Perhaps a look at responses to Question 11 can help clarify the causes in ways that point to possible solutions.

Getting Around

About Us:
Truro households spend an average of **\$7,963** per year on transportation

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

How Truro residents travel to work:



| Method | Percentage |
|------------------|------------|
| Car as driver | 74.7% |
| Car as passenger | 12.6% |
| Walked | 9.7% |
| Other method | 1.5% |
| Bicycle | 0.8% |
| Public transit | 0.8% |

The Town's busiest roads are with estimated daily traffic counts of

| Road | Estimated Daily Traffic Count |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| McCLURES MILLS | 17,180 |
| WILLOW ST | 18,210 |
| ROBIE ST | 19,470 |

There are **35** taxis operating in Truro

There are over **3000** parking spaces in downtown Truro.
Of those, **780** spaces are considered public parking

The Town of Truro spends approximately **20%** of the Town's overall operating expenses on transportation services

Truro is well connected to Highway 102 and and Trans-Canada Highway #104, the Halifax Stanfield International Airport, and is at the intersection of Atlantic Canada's main north-south and east-west rail lines

CONNECTING YOU TO
ROAD RAIL AIR SEA

Question 11 asks respondents to rank the three top ways they would get around Truro if all listed options were available to them. So, if a survey taker did not have a personal or family vehicle, they were asked to indicate how they would like to get around, as if that choice did exist for them. A list of nine options was provided in the question, as well as an Other option.

The chart above shows respondent rankings of the actions by tallying first, second, and third selections in three columns. As in previous ranking questions, the first choice received a weighting of 3, second received a weighting of 2, and third received a weighting of 1.

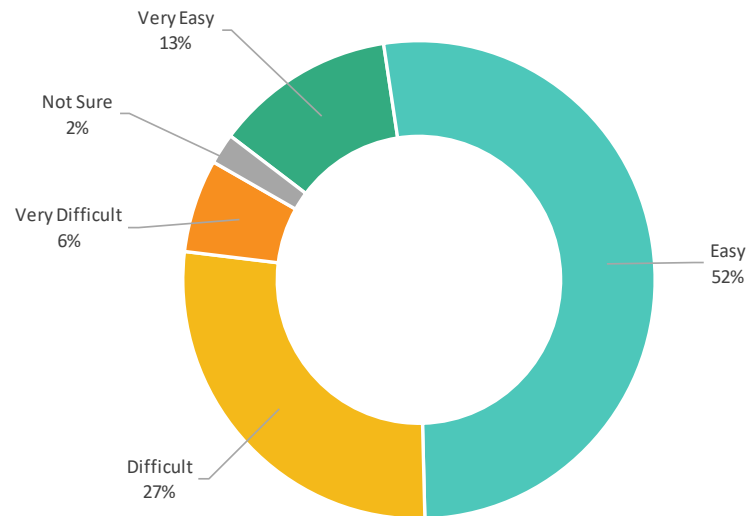
The graph above uses an orange hue in three intensities to show how each idea ranked in terms of being chosen as the first, second, or third most important goal. Within the vertical bar, the lightest hue represents the proportion of survey takers who made this their third choice. The slightly more intense middle hue shows the proportion of respondents selecting that option as the second most important action. Finally, the most intense orange, reflects the number of respondents who chose that action as being the most important.

Respondents would prefer to get around in a Personal or family vehicle over other means of transport, by a large margin. Second in the overall ranking is Walking. Third is Bicycle on trails/off-street bike routes, while Bicycle on streets/bike lanes was the fourth most selected option. If combined, the choice of bicycle transportation is or would be very popular in Truro, at least in the possible world of Question 11 where a full network of trails and dedicated bike lanes exist.

Getting Around | Question 10

Getting around in Truro is...

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Very Easy | 219 | 12.3% |
| Easy | 924 | 52.0% |
| Difficult | 485 | 27.3% |
| Very Difficult | 112 | 6.3% |
| Not Sure | 37 | 2.1% |
| TOTAL | 1777 | 100.0% |



Scheduled/fixed route bus service ranked fourth in weighted rankings. This is at odds with data from survey questions 7 and 8, as well as the 2009 Truro, Have Your Say survey that produced a clear call for public transit that has not been realized. It may be that these results point to some confusion about Question 11 asking how people get around rather than how they would if all the options existed (Truro does not currently have a scheduled fixed route bus service).

Would a convenient, well-marketed fixed route scheduled system win people over, even if they had the actual choice of personal vehicle? No matter how it was financed, a bus system without riders

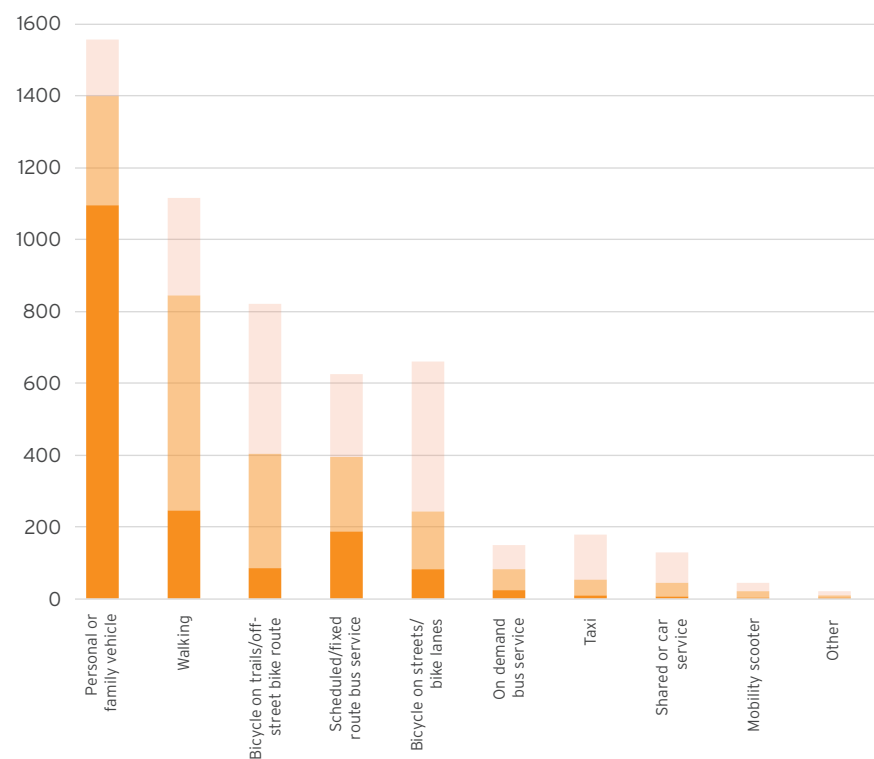
or with only riders unable to find other modes of transport would be unsustainable for Truro and Colchester. It would fail in its goals of reducing emissions, creating social equality, and economic connection. It would also divert resources from other important uses. Truro, where do we go from here? Let's connect.

The small percentage of respondents choosing the Other space mentioned: rented electric scooter and bikes; Uber; accessibility vehicles with 24/7 service; manual wheelchair on improved routes; and a sight-seeing vehicle for tourists.

Getting Around | Question 11

If you had a choice, how would you get around Truro?

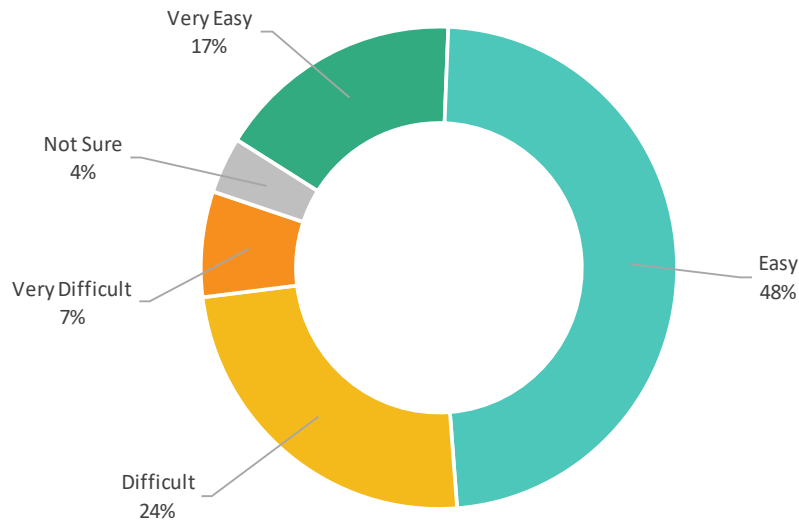
| <i>Mode of Travel</i> | <i>1st Choice</i> | <i>2nd Choice</i> | <i>3rd Choice</i> |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Personal or family vehicle | 1095 | 306 | 156 |
| Walking | 246 | 599 | 271 |
| Bicycle on trails/off-street bike route | 85 | 320 | 416 |
| Scheduled/fixe route bus service | 188 | 207 | 231 |
| Bicycle on streets/bike lanes | 84 | 160 | 416 |
| On demand bus service | 25 | 57 | 69 |
| Taxi | 11 | 42 | 126 |
| Shared or car service | 6 | 39 | 84 |
| Mobility scooter | 5 | 16 | 23 |
| Other | 5 | 4 | 13 |



Getting Around | Question 12

Finding a parking spot in downtown Truro is...

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Very Easy | 298 | 16.7% |
| Easy | 857 | 48.1% |
| Difficult | 432 | 24.3% |
| Very Difficult | 126 | 7.1% |
| Not Sure | 67 | 3.8% |
| TOTAL | 1780 | 100.0% |



Question 12 is the final question under the topic Getting Around. Those taking the survey are asked to complete a sentence about the parking situation in downtown Truro.

1,155 respondents out of 1,780 (or 64.8%) who answered the parking question find it easy or very easy to find a parking spot in downtown Truro. 558 respondents out of 1,780 (or 31.4%) find it difficult or very difficult to find parking in downtown Truro. What can account for the differing experiences of survey takers? Could day and time be a factor? Is it a good sign that the downtown is so vibrant that

some find it difficult to find parking? Or is this result an indication that more parking is needed downtown? One variable in how easy people think it is to find parking could be what is considered an acceptable distance between the parking spot and destination.

Parking is a component of evaluation in the Development Agreement process. Parking availability also factors into event planning, decisions on street or lane closures, and, in general, in planning to support local businesses and services located downtown.

1.4.6 Places to Live

Places to Live are where we make our homes. Homes combine to create neighbourhoods which together form communities. Places to Live is the topic of five questions in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey. Emphasis on this topic stems from this work being part of a review of planning documents that include policies and regulations for building development.

Question 13 is the only question in the survey that asks for personal information. This information was gathered in a survey not requiring identity disclosure and is intended for aggregated anonymous use only.

Question 13 results show that 70% of the 1,784 surveys were completed by occupants of single-family houses. On the surface, this represents a notable difference between survey respondents and Truro's mix of dwelling types. Although the survey data can not be deemed to representative of Truro's whole population, the approximately 15% of Truro's population over 14 years old is large enough to assume there should be approximate conformity with the whole population.

Let's take a closer look at the numbers to assess possible bias:

- Number of survey respondents living in single-family (detached) houses: 1252 of 1784 = 70.3%
- Single-family houses in Truro as a percentage of all private dwellings, according to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census (2021 data not yet available): 2530 of 6050 = 41.8%
- Average household size in Truro (based on all private dwelling types), according to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census: 1.9 people.
- Population of Truro, according to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census: 12,261.
- Percentage of Truro residents living in single-family houses, using 2016 Census statistics: 39% (2,530 x 1.9 = 4,807 of 12,261 = 39%)

Places to Live



About Us:
Truro households spend an average of **\$11,144** per year on shelter

The majority of houses in Truro (39.4%) were built before **1961**

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

43% of homes are owner-occupied | **53%** are rented
(The remaining 4% is "other")

6,389 There are total of household dwellings → **3,124** are considered HOUSES | **3,126** are considered APARTMENTS
(The remaining 139 are "other" dwelling types.)

Apartment Buildings

In 2020, the vacancy rate for multi-unit residential buildings was **1.6%**

A healthy market vacancy rate is between 3% & 4%

The average rent for an apartment in Truro was **\$849** in 2020.

This increased by **6.25%** IN ONE YEAR!

Since 2015, the Town of Truro has approved

769 NEW UNITS!

Housing

In 2021, the price of an average home was

\$213,958

That's a **34.6% INCREASE** from 2020.

Truro, Let's Connect survey data does not include information on how many people per household completed the survey. If that number conformed exactly to the average household size in Truro, it would mean that occupants from 659 single-family houses participated in the survey. This would represent only 10.9% of the total private dwellings in Truro. As a percentage of overall survey respondents, that equates to 37% living in single-family dwellings, which is not far off the 39% projected using Statistics Canada data.

If estimated that half of those self-identifying as living in single family houses were the sole occupant completing the *Let's Connect* survey, we arrive at the figure of 39%, matching the Statistics Canada data.

Limitations to the analysis:

- Census data used is from 2016 while the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey was conducted in the fall of 2021.
- The Statistics Canada data used is for the Town of Truro. Not all *Truro, Let's Connect* survey data is geo-located. The survey was not restricted to Truro residents only. There were participants from surrounding communities (evident from address information that was voluntarily provided).
- Average occupancy per dwelling varies slightly by dwelling type. 1.9 is an occupancy figure that averages all dwelling types.
- The number of single-family-house survey respondents who were the sole occupant in their household responding to the survey can not be determined, as the survey was open to any individual rather than one-per-household.

- Personal demographic information was not gathered and methods of assuring one person did not complete multiple surveys are limited.

In conclusion, there is no certainty about how different the dwelling-type makeup of our 1,784 survey respondents is to that of Truro's full population. The Question 13 data is still valuable in assuring that individuals from all dwelling types participated in the survey.

Determining the possibility of bias and understanding what those biases are in relation to specific topics are distinctly different endeavours. For instance, to assume that those with housing security, whether in a single-family dwelling or another satisfactory arrangement, would be unconcerned or unaware of the housing needs of others in Truro is to discount both empathy and awareness of issues not directly impacting oneself. This is illustrated in the results of survey Question 15 where only 4.9% of respondents expressed that development of new housing in Truro was Not important.

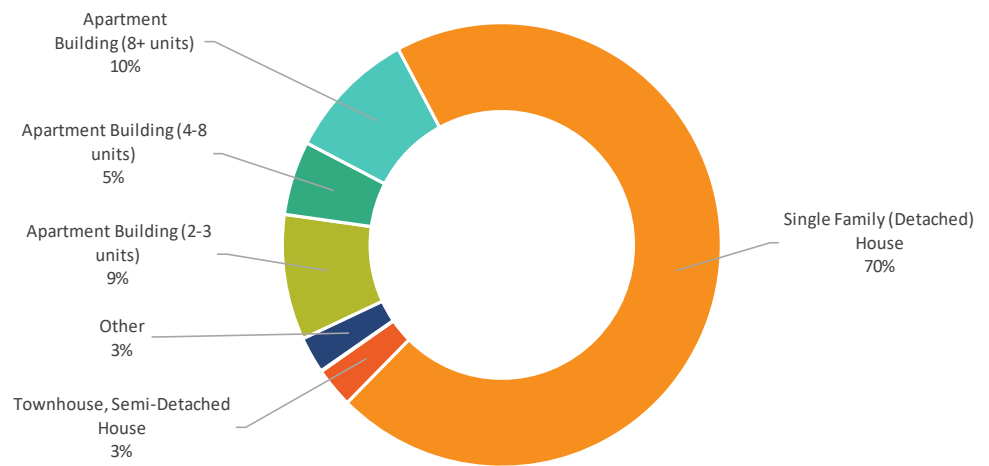
Question 13 included an Other option to describe the current housing situation of respondents. Responses in Other included: my car; I couch surf; apartment within a house; homeless; hotel or with friends; mobile home (a single-family dwelling); answering as a business owner, not resident; nursing home; staying in a room; staying with friends; staying with my parents.

Question 14, under the theme Places To Live, seeks information about Truro's current and near-future housing situation. Changes in housing availability result not only from the addition of new housing, but also from turnover of existing housing stock.

Places to Live | Question 13

What type of housing do you live in now?

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Apartment Building (2-3 units) | 163 | 9.1% |
| Apartment Building (4-8 units) | 96 | 5.4% |
| Apartment Building (8+ units) | 171 | 9.6% |
| Single Family (Detached) House | 1252 | 70.3% |
| Townhouse, Semi-Detached House | 52 | 2.9% |
| Assisted Living/Nursing Home | 1 | 0.1% |
| Other | 47 | 2.6% |
| TOTAL | 1782 | 100.0% |



Respondents were asked to consider what factors could bring about a move from their current housing, as identified in response to Question 13, by choosing either one of eight possibilities or Other. Alternatively, a Not applicable/not likely to move category could be selected.

Information gathered by this question does not provide statistical likelihood of people moving. Nor is it an indicator of overall demand for housing, especially as it does not account for demand for housing from those moving to Truro. What it does provide is an imprecise glimpse at how satisfied people are with their housing situation and factors contributing to churn in the sector.

Results of Question 14 raise concerns about how it was formulated. The most popular response was Not applicable/not likely to move. This is a 'what if' question, like Question 5 earlier in the survey. That question asked where taller buildings would be appropriate in Truro. Unlike Question 14, there was not an option to say 'not applicable' or 'nowhere' even for those who had answered Question 4 by stating that taller buildings are not appropriate for Truro. In the case of Question 5, only 20% of those opposed to taller buildings chose the Other category to reiterate their opposition, meaning 80% engaged in the 'what if' scenario.

24.1% of Question 14 respondents indicated that they are not likely to move in the next five years. That figure is not a clear indicator of how many respondents think of themselves as unlikely to move because an indeterminant number of survey takers would have deferred to the 'what if' nature of the question. In other words, they might have selected a possible reason to move even though they see themselves as unlikely to move. This is supported by the analysis above of Questions 4 and 5.

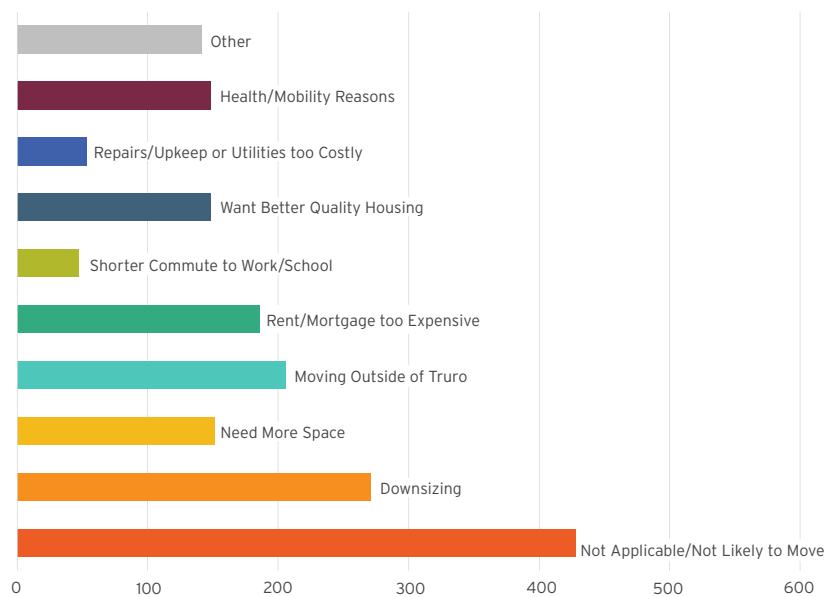
Despite a clear choice of opting out of offering a specific reason for a possible move by saying Not applicable, Question 14 garnered the largest percentage of Other responses of any *Truro, Let's Connect* survey question. This suggests that the categories fell short in terms of providing appropriate options. This could have been addressed by either a longer list of specific options or by bundling into less specific categories. For instance, two of the listed options relate to cost. A category of cost would have covered both options as well as a category for the twenty Other respondents who mentioned the cost of property tax.

Despite constraints of data reliability as discussed, Question 14 results do provide a glimpse into Truro's housing stability versus churn. By providing a category Moving outside Truro as a reason to move, the remaining choices, aside from some of the Other explanations, constitute choices that can be made within Truro. 36 responses under Other indicated reasons for moving that necessitated leaving Truro. Added to the 206 who selected Moving outside Truro, this means that 242 out 1,779 respondents, or 13.6%, thought that if they were to move in the next 5 years it would be away from Truro for a variety of reasons. 86.4% would stay.

Places to Live | Question 14

If you were to move in the next 5 years, what might be the reason?

| | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| Not applicable/not likely to move | 428 | 24.1% |
| Downsizing | 271 | 15.2% |
| Need more space | 151 | 8.5% |
| Moving outside of Truro | 206 | 11.6% |
| Rent/mortgage too expensive | 186 | 10.5% |
| Shorter commute to work/school | 47 | 2.6% |
| Want better quality housing | 148 | 8.3% |
| Repairs/upkeep or utilities too costly | 53 | 3.0% |
| Health/mobility reasons | 148 | 8.3% |
| Other | 141 | 7.9% |
| TOTAL | 1779 | 100% |

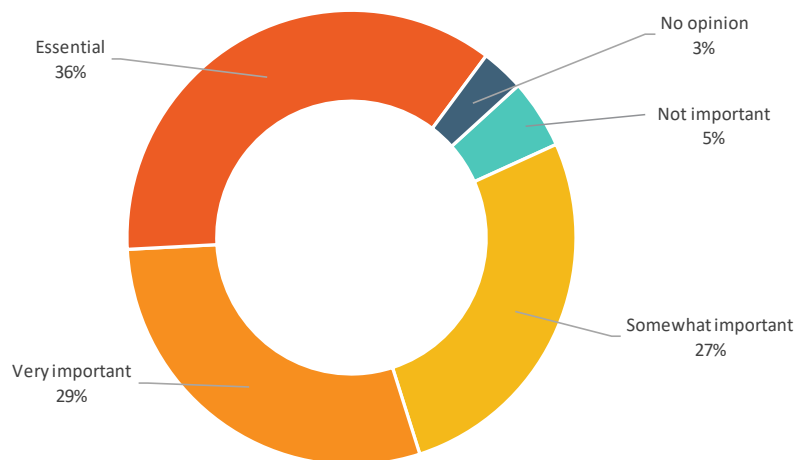


Question 15 produced the most agreement of any *Truro, Let's Connect* survey question. When asked about the importance of new housing in Truro, Essential was the top response at 36% and Very Important was next at 29%. Adding these two categories of strong importance to the Somewhat important option, 92% of respondents conveyed that new housing is important. Only 5% disagreed and 3% offered no opinion.

Places to Live | Question 15

How important is it to you that Truro has new housing?

| | | |
|--------------------|------|--------|
| Not important | 88 | 4.9% |
| Somewhat important | 477 | 26.8% |
| Very important | 518 | 29.1% |
| Essential | 642 | 36.1% |
| No opinion | 55 | 3.1% |
| TOTAL | 1780 | 100.0% |



According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Town of Truro had 3,116 rented or rentable housing units in October 2020. This makes Truro the second largest rental market in Nova Scotia, with 49,797 fewer units than Greater Halifax and 955 more than Greater Sydney.

Vacancy rate information and new housing construction statistics support the clear majority view that new housing is vital for Truro.

The 2016 Census of Canada put Truro's population at 12,261. The 2021 Census indicated that there were 12,954 people living in Truro. This represents 5.5% population growth over a four-year period or 1.4% per year. If Truro continues to experience the steady increase in 2021

that it has each of the past four years, the Town's current population will be over 13,100.

The increasing demand for housing in Truro is linked directly to the Town's increasing population. Comparing Truro's population growth to new construction completions statistics shown in the previous chart provides the best explanation for very low vacancy rates.

While Question 15 asked about the importance of new housing generally, housing that is affordable in relation to income is clearly also an issue tied to market demand. Increased demand versus supply of housing results in higher rental rates and housing purchase-sale prices. The Nova Scotia Association of Realtors reports a 36.2% increase in

house sales between 2020 and 2021 along with a 31.3% increase in average price in Northern Nova Scotia (including East Hants, Colchester, Cumberland, and Towns within these municipalities).

The Town of Truro has approved more, and larger, housing proposals through Development Agreements in the past three years than in any other previous three-year period. While developers are seizing market opportunities, they are also facing higher material costs, material shortages, and skilled labour shortages that delay construction and increase costs. These challenges decrease the likelihood of private developers building non-market rental housing, without significant incentives.

Truro, October Apartment Vacancy Rates, Housing Completions, and Housing Under Construction Numbers

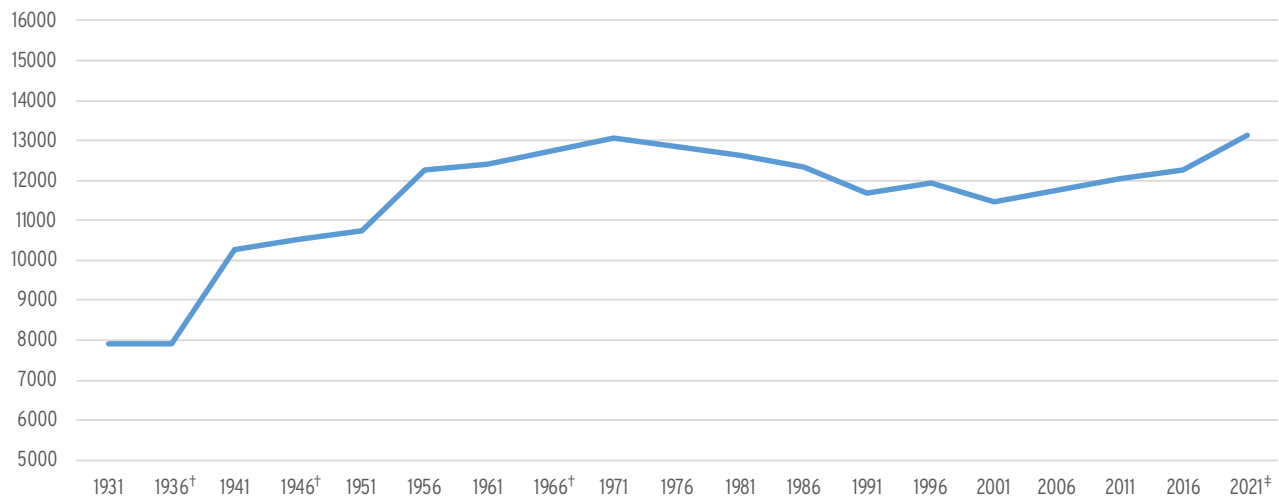
| <i>Year</i> | <i>Vacancy Rate %</i> | <i>Housing Unit Completions</i> | <i>Housing Units Under Construction</i> |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 2010 | 5.6 | 97 | 151 |
| 2011 | 4.2 | 69 | 147 |
| 2012 | 5.9 | 68 | 86 |
| 2013 | 8.1 | 28 | 85 |
| 2014 | 5.6 | 30 | 72 |
| 2015 | 5.6 | 26 | 91 |
| 2016 | 3.5 | 18 | 98 |
| 2017 | 1.7 | 23 | 158 |
| 2018 | 4.3 | 94 | 95 |
| 2019 | 1.8 | 18 | 63 |
| 2020 | 1.5 | 41 | 169 |
| 2021 | not yet available | 63 | 201 |
| TOTAL | 4.4% Average | 575 | 1,416 |

Sources: Statistics Canada: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts, under construction and completions in census agglomerations of 10,000 to 49,999 Table: 34-10-0138-01; Statistics Canada: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, vacancy rates, row and apartment structures of three units and over, privately initiated in census agglomerations of 10,000 to 49,999 and cities, weighted average Table: 34-10-0132-01

Question 16 asks survey takers about their support for measures the Town of Truro could take to encourage new housing development.

All of the measures presented in Question 16 is regulated in the current Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and Land Use By-law (LUB) that is under review. While most respondents would not be familiar with the specific provisions of the MPS/LUB, indication of strong support or opposition could inform the revision of policies to become either more permissive or more restrictive.

Town of Truro, Population



Source: Statistics Canada Data

Question 16 works from the premise tested in Question 15: that new housing in Truro is viewed as important and needed. Response to Question 15 verified this, but it is also consistent with population growth being a policy goal of Council.

The question's wording indicates that the Town's current and historic role in developing new housing is to encourage and regulate, not to design, construct, or own. Municipal planning policies and processes influence housing development, but the Town does not initiate specific development proposals. While housing proposals could come from community organizations, co-operatives, or social enterprises, all new housing proposals have come from private developers in recent years.

Public housing in Nova Scotia is owned by the Province and overseen by Housing Nova Scotia via regional housing authorities such as the Cobequid Housing

Authority in Truro. Changes to the Town's role, especially in relation to affordable housing, will be considered as part of the current Community Plan review.

Each of the measures presented in Question 16 garnered relatively high response rankings of Neutral, ranging from 18.4% (taller buildings) to 31.2% (landscaping). Provision of a Not Sure option clarifies that neutral conveyed not having a preference one way or the other, rather than being undecided.

Three Municipal measures to encourage new housing development received more than fifty percent support:

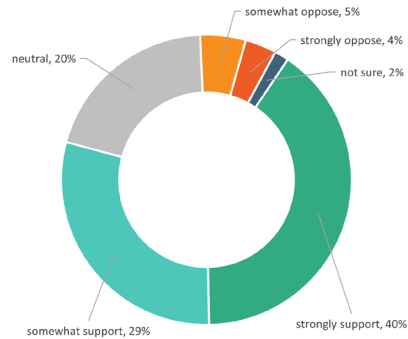
- Additional apartments in existing homes - 69.8% (combining somewhat and strongly support)
- Backyard suites/apartments - 56.8%
- Conversion of large heritage homes to 3 or more units - 54.7%.

Places to Live | Question 16

Would you support the Town allowing the following to encourage new housing development?

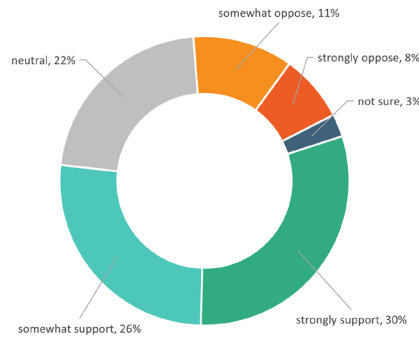
Additional apartments in existing homes (in-law suites)

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 715 | 40.3% |
| somewhat support | 523 | 29.5% |
| neutral | 357 | 20.1% |
| somewhat oppose | 90 | 5.1% |
| strongly oppose | 62 | 3.5% |
| not sure | 28 | 1.6% |
| TOTAL | 1775 | 100.0% |



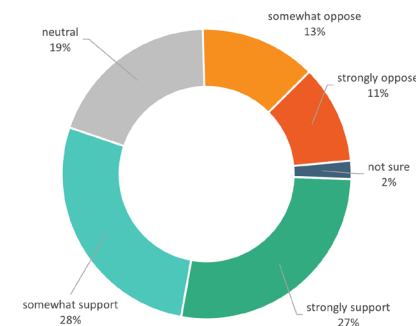
Backyard suites/apartments

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 540 | 30.4% |
| somewhat support | 468 | 26.4% |
| neutral | 391 | 22.0% |
| somewhat oppose | 199 | 11.2% |
| strongly oppose | 133 | 7.5% |
| not sure | 45 | 2.5% |
| TOTAL | 1776 | 100.0% |



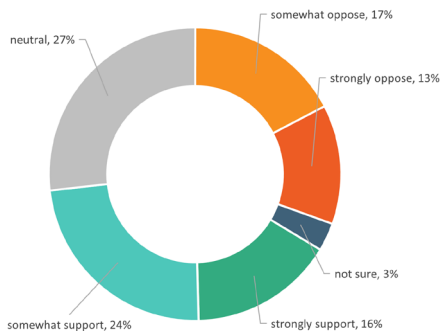
Conversion of large heritage homes to 3 or more units

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 484 | 27.3% |
| somewhat support | 486 | 27.4% |
| neutral | 344 | 19.4% |
| somewhat oppose | 230 | 13.0% |
| strongly oppose | 195 | 11.0% |
| not sure | 36 | 2.0% |
| TOTAL | 1775 | 100.0% |



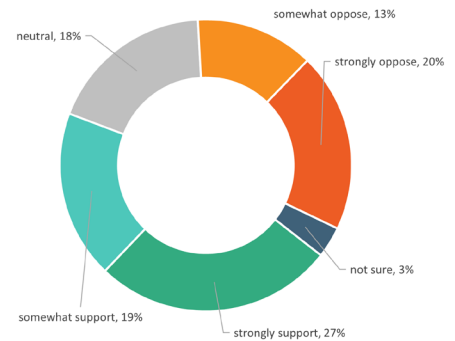
Smaller unit sizes/more density

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 284 | 16.0% |
| somewhat support | 419 | 23.6% |
| neutral | 476 | 26.8% |
| somewhat oppose | 307 | 17.3% |
| strongly oppose | 234 | 13.2% |
| not sure | 55 | 3.1% |
| TOTAL | 1775 | 100.0% |



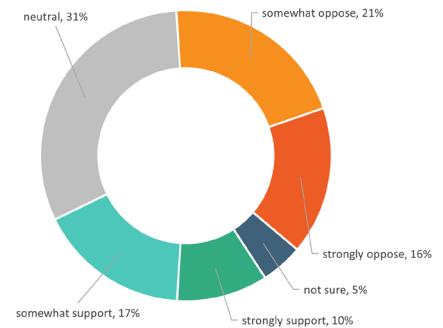
Taller buildings

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 472 | 26.6% |
| somewhat support | 331 | 18.6% |
| neutral | 326 | 18.4% |
| somewhat oppose | 233 | 13.1% |
| strongly oppose | 353 | 19.9% |
| not sure | 61 | 3.4% |
| TOTAL | 1776 | 100.0% |



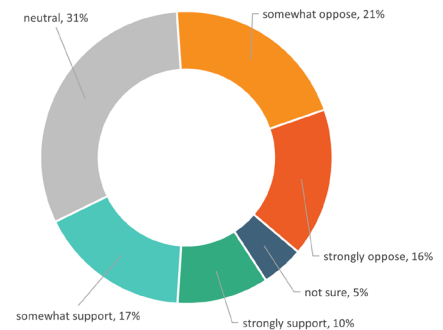
Reduced parking space requirements

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 196 | 11.0% |
| somewhat support | 266 | 15.0% |
| neutral | 510 | 28.7% |
| somewhat oppose | 358 | 20.2% |
| strongly oppose | 353 | 19.9% |
| not sure | 91 | 5.1% |
| TOTAL | 1774 | 100.0% |



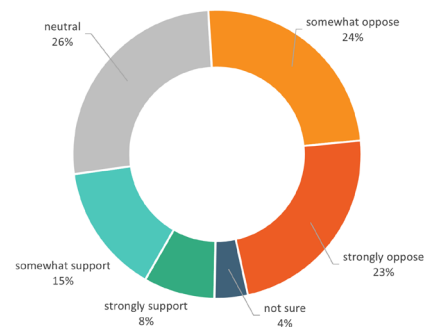
Fewer landscaping requirements

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 180 | 10.1% |
| somewhat support | 298 | 16.8% |
| neutral | 553 | 31.2% |
| somewhat oppose | 368 | 20.7% |
| strongly oppose | 292 | 16.5% |
| not sure | 83 | 4.7% |
| TOTAL | 1774 | 100.0% |



Reduced recreation/amenity space requirements

| | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| strongly support | 142 | 8.0% |
| somewhat support | 258 | 14.5% |
| neutral | 466 | 26.2% |
| somewhat oppose | 434 | 24.4% |
| strongly oppose | 410 | 23.1% |
| not sure | 66 | 3.7% |
| TOTAL | 1776 | 100.0% |



There was no response option ranked above fifty percent opposed, with Reduced amenity/recreation space requirements coming close at 47.5% somewhat or strongly opposed:

- Reduced recreation/amenity space requirements - 47.5%
- Reduced parking space requirements - 40.1%
- Fewer landscaping requirements - 37.2%.

Three options had quite even distribution of support, neutral, or opposed rankings:

- Smaller unit sizes/more density - 8.8% more supported than opposed
- Fewer landscaping requirements - 10.3% more opposed than supported
- Taller buildings - 10.6% more supported than opposed.

When asked in Question 4 whether taller buildings are appropriate for Truro, the spread between Yes and No responses was 8.9% (34.6% Yes and 25.7% No). In that question there was an option to say Yes, but Only in Certain Circumstances (selected by 31.7% of respondents). The Taller buildings option in Question 16 had the smallest proportion of neutral rankings of the measures present at 18.4%. Results of Question 4 show 8% or 142 survey takers as Not Sure about the appropriateness of taller buildings for Truro. By Question 16 there were fewer than half that number, 61 or 3.4% not sure.

Question 17 of Places to Live asked respondents to choose the three most important things for the Town to consider when looking at new apartment building proposals. As in the previous question, this concerns the role of the Municipality, commonly understood as Truro's Council, staff, and Committees.

The chart on the following page shows respondent rankings of the actions by tallying first, second, and third selections in three columns. A first choice received a weighting of 3, second a weighting of 2, and third a weighting of 1.

The chart uses an orange hue in three intensities to show how each idea ranked in terms of being chosen as the first, second, or third most important goal. Within the vertical bar, the lightest hue represents the proportion of survey takers who made this their third choice. The slightly more intense middle hue shows the proportion of respondents selecting that option as the second most important action. Finally, the most intense orange, reflects the number of respondents who chose that action as being the most important.

Affordable rents was selected as the most important factor the Town should consider when assessing new apartment building proposals by nearly half of respondents (46.7%). It received 829 top priority rankings, 652 more than any other option. This sends a clear message to the Town and, as it gets communicated, to the Province and private developers about the current importance of affordable housing. Together with results from Questions 7, 9, 14, and 15, affordable housing is notable as the most prevailing concern on the minds of participants in the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey.

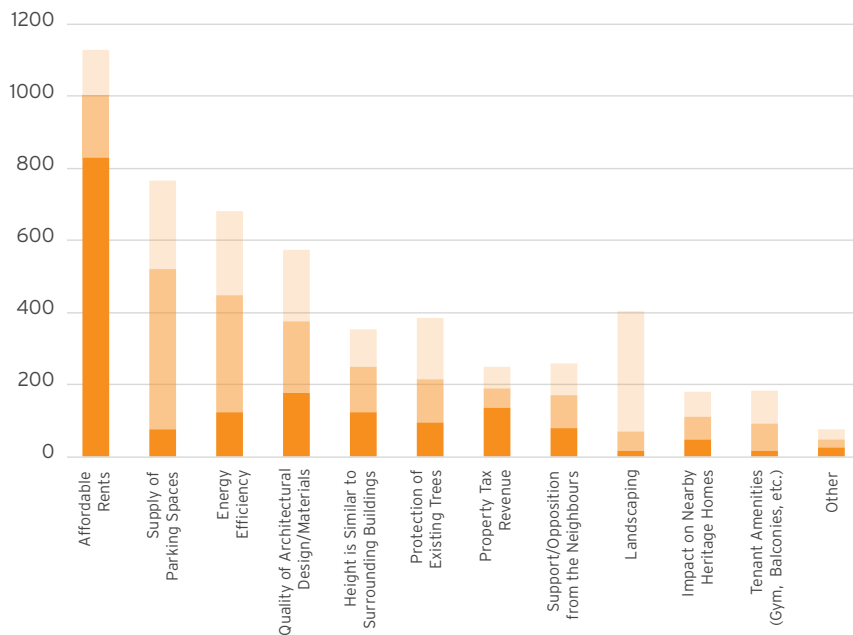
The Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act includes a Statement of Provincial Interest Regarding Housing that mandates municipalities to include policies in their planning documents as following:

Planning documents must include housing policies addressing affordable housing, special-needs housing, and rental accommodation. This includes

Places to Live | Question 17

What are the 3 most important things that the Town of Truro should consider when looking at new apartment building proposals?

| Consideration | 1 st Choice | 2 nd Choice | 3 rd Choice |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Affordable rents | 829 | 174 | 125 |
| Supply of parking spaces | 77 | 443 | 246 |
| Energy efficiency | 125 | 324 | 232 |
| Quality of architectural design/materials | 177 | 198 | 200 |
| Height is similar to surrounding buildings | 122 | 129 | 104 |
| Protection of existing trees | 96 | 119 | 169 |
| Property tax revenue | 136 | 53 | 60 |
| Support/opposition from the neighbours | 80 | 91 | 88 |
| Landscaping | 16 | 55 | 334 |
| Impact on nearby heritage homes | 48 | 63 | 70 |
| Tenant amenities (gym, balconies, etc). | 15 | 77 | 91 |
| Other | 26 | 21 | 28 |



assessing the need and supply of these housing types and developing solutions appropriate to the planning area. The definition of the terms affordable housing, special-needs housing, and rental housing is left to the individual municipality to define in the context of its individual situation.

Depending upon the community and the housing supply and need, the measures that should be considered in planning documents include enabling higher densities, smaller lot sizes, and reduced yard requirements that encourage a range of housing types. (NS MGA Schedule B)

Affordability is an indirect policy goal of many policies of the Truro Municipal Planning Strategy that enable multiple-unit dwellings, intensification (density), and manufactured homes. The MPS also contains a specific directive: It shall be a policy of Council to encourage residential development in Truro that includes affordable housing units (MPS Policy R-15). Affordable rent or designated affordable units are not assessment criteria formally set out in the Development Agreement application or application review. However, the topic is often raised in applications, as well as staff reports and review by Planning Advisory Committee and Council.

Although not the top priority for most respondents, Supply of Parking Spaces was the most popular second choice with 443 selections and second in the weighted rankings. This is consistent with results from Question 16 where reducing parking space requirements had the most opposition (40.1%) of any of the measures present to encourage new housing.

Energy efficiency was identified as the next most frequently chosen factor of importance. This matches its ranking in Question 7 which asked about environmental actions for Truro. Energy efficiency and other sustainability features of proposed buildings are considered in the review of applications for Development Agreements under the current MPS/LUB. The National Building Code of Canada, National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings, and the Nova Scotia Building Code are the key vehicles to ensure energy efficiency in new buildings. Regulations under these acts are enforced by municipalities.

Quality of architectural design/materials received the second most first choices and ranked fourth overall.

Height similar to surrounding buildings was not deemed to be as important as the four higher ranked options, but still gathered support consistent with concerns expressed earlier in the survey at questions 4, 5, 6, and 16.

Truro has a well-deserved reputation as being a beautifully treed town. Trees throughout the downtown and neighbourhoods, and, of course, green spaces such as Victoria Park, are highly valued and protected. Increasingly, their importance not only relates to beauty but to environmental functions of habitat, cooling, and air filtration. Perhaps the current state of abundance and protection resulted in only modest support for Protection of existing trees as something important to consider when looking at new apartment building proposals.

Ten of the eleven choices in Question 17 (not counting Other) are already components of Truro's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law, which set out criteria to be considered in Development Agreement application

reviews. The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey seeks community input on whether the relative weighing of these factors is appropriate.

The factor not already explicitly a matter of policy is Property tax revenue. Property tax revenue is vital to the Town as its primary revenue source for its capital and operating costs. Commercial and residential property taxes collected by Nova Scotia municipalities also support Provincial services such as health and schooling.

Apartment buildings are taxed at the residential rate, except for any portion of the building assessed as being for commercial use. At no point in the Development Agreement process is it mandatory to consider property tax revenue based on anticipated assessment value. This includes all stages of the application process including: public engagement, staff reporting to the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), PAC recommendation to Council, Public Hearing, and Council deliberations. By policy, Council's primary concern is the provision of housing, but revenue and economic impact aspects of large new construction must have some influence. Results from Question 17 show that participants want property tax revenues to remain of relatively low importance as new apartment building proposals are considered by the Town, although its overall ranking is bolstered by being the third most selected first choice.

All of the remaining options were selected hundreds of times in the responses, each being a first choice for some, and therefore can't be deemed to be unimportant factors. Landscaping was the most popular third choice for respondents. The current Development Agreement process and MPS/LUB consider each of these factors.

1.4.7 Stuff to Do

The theme Stuff to Do deals with how we spend our leisure time and it is the theme of two survey questions created to gauge the vibrancy of Truro's cultural, recreational, and entertainment offerings. In hindsight, reversing the order of questions 18 and 19 would have presented the respondent with a list of activities that constitute stuff to do. Perhaps once reminded of the variety of choices, more people would be inclined toward a positive response.

Stuff to Do



About Us:
Victoria Park is one of Truro's hidden gems. A breathtaking and scenic urban forest.

This 3,000 acre park is in the heart of our town!

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

ACTIVITIES

The Railyard Mountain Bike Park has over 40kms of bike trails available for free public use!



VICTORA PARK
In the winter, the Town of Truro grooms over 20kms of trails for winter activities such as cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and fat biking.



RECC

The Rath Eastlink Community Centre is a multi purpose sporting facility featuring an NHL sized arena, a competition-sized swimming pool, a water slide, a fitness centre and, a rock climbing wall.






DOG FRIENDLY
DOG PARK



MARIGOLD CENTRE



OUTDOOR PATIOS



SKATEPARK



CIVIC SQUARE & FARMERS' MARKET

FESTIVALS & EVENTS



EASTER EGG HUNT



PINTY'S GRAND SLAM OF CURLING



HEMMINGS MOTOR GREAT RACE



ROCK THE HUB



EMBRACE



ROGERS HOMETOWN HOCKEY



WINTER LONG JOHN

Question 18 asked respondents to indicate their level of satisfaction with the choice of activities available in Truro. In response, 897 of 1,772 reported being very or somewhat satisfied (50.6%). Alternatively, 517 responders expressed being somewhat or very dissatisfied (29.2%). To account for these differing experiences, a deeper probe would need to investigate expectations and interests with the activities available in Truro. It's possible that the reduced number, and the variety of events, taking place through the COVID-19 pandemic lessened satisfaction levels.

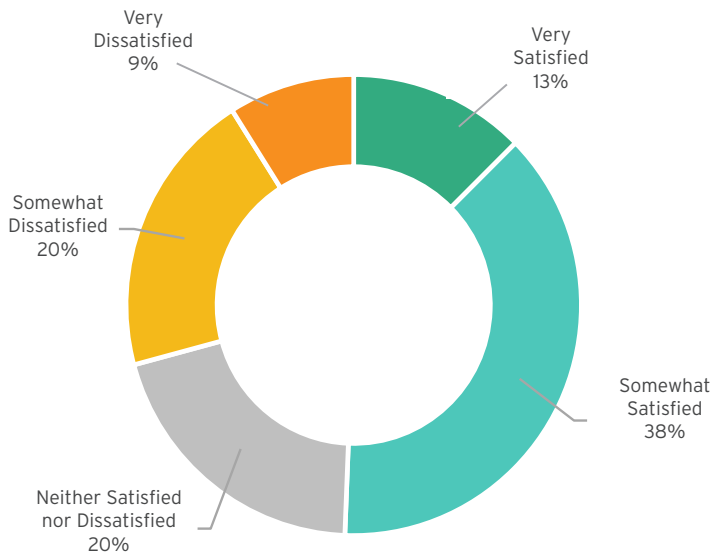
A total of 358 respondents (20.2%) described their level of satisfaction in Question 18 by selecting neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Explaining this result would take conjecture. Did people who are sometimes satisfied and sometimes not find this the most appropriate response option? Are significant numbers of citizens indifferent to the cultural, recreational, entertainment, or consumer options in their community?

Although we do not have baseline data gathered from the same question posed in the past for direct comparison, it is notable that in the 2009 Truro, Have Your Say survey numerous responses to the open-ended question What would make Truro a better town? involved increasing the amount and variety of activities in Truro:

Stuff to Do | Question 18

How satisfied are you with the variety of stuff to do in Truro?

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Very satisfied | 223 | 12.6% |
| Somewhat satisfied | 674 | 38.0% |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 358 | 20.2% |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 358 | 20.2% |
| Very dissatisfied | 159 | 9.0% |
| TOTAL | 1772 | 100.0% |



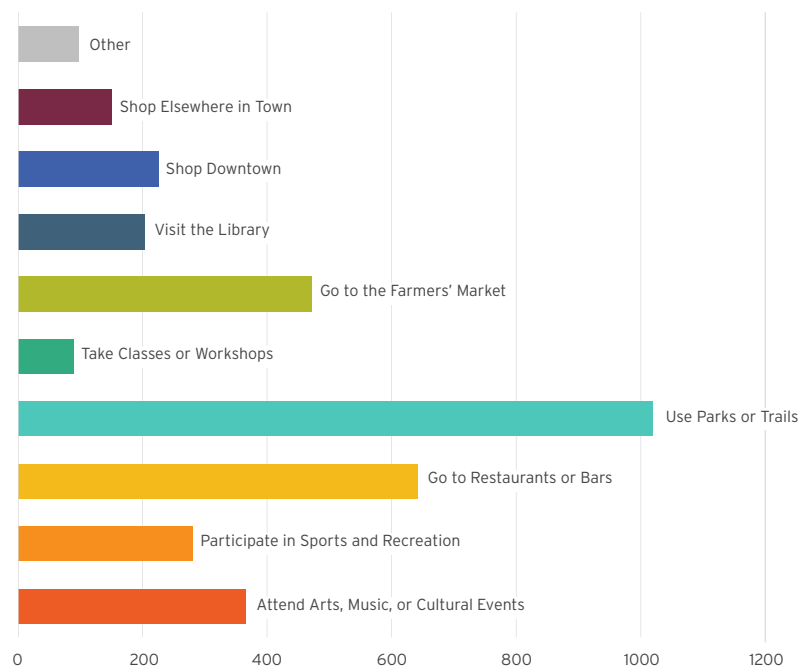
The desire for more or better parks and trails, events and festivals, stores, restaurants and outdoor cafes, facilities such as a library and a civic centre, and sport and recreation opportunities that came to light in the 2009 survey, have been largely answered. Through community, government, and entrepreneurial leadership, significant progress has been made on these aspects of 'stuff to do' in Truro.

Question 19 was simply intended to gain a better understanding of what activities are valued by residents and visitors. This will help identify gaps and inform recreation planning and business opportunities.

Stuff to Do | Question 19

What are your 2 favourite things to do in the Truro area?

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Attend arts, music, or cultural events | 365 | 10.3% |
| Participate in sports and recreation | 280 | 7.9% |
| Go to restaurants or bars | 641 | 18.1% |
| Use parks or trails | 1020 | 28.8% |
| Take classes or workshops | 88 | 2.5% |
| Go to the Farmers' Market | 471 | 13.3% |
| Visit the library | 203 | 5.7% |
| Shop Downtown | 225 | 6.4% |
| Shop elsewhere in Town | 151 | 4.3% |
| Other | 98 | 2.8% |
| TOTAL | 3542 | 100.0% |



1.4.8 Wellness


Wellness is our state of mental and physical health. It is included as a theme in the survey even though municipal governments are not directly involved in delivering many of the services outlined here. However, the Town is committed to the quality of life of its citizens and to community sustainability that contributes to wellness.

On the topic of Wellness, the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey asked respondents to identify the biggest issue facing the residents of Truro. Each of the seven issues named in Question 20 can be seen as linked to the others. Wellness is an ever-changing state, susceptible to problems in any of these categories. Any of the issues listed can disrupt the wellness of an individual and their family. There is no single correct answer to this question. Although the question asks about which issue is the biggest facing Truro as a community, it is understandable if an individual experiencing accessibility challenges or who is close to someone who is, selected Accessibility. Likewise, a person experiencing homelessness could point to that as Truro's biggest wellness issue or see poverty as being the root cause.

Shortages of family physicians in Nova Scotia are increasingly discussed in media and in social circles. Current prominence of this issue may have skewed responses to Question 18. 51.8% of respondents, 919 out of 1,775, identified Access to a Family Doctor as the biggest wellness issue in Truro. That is 34.6% higher than the next most selected issue, Housing/Homelessness.

An anomaly in the responses is that while family doctors are primarily concerned with dealing with issues of physical

Wellness



About Us:
The Town of Truro owns
3,225 acres
of outdoor public spaces

and over **80 kms**
of trails available for free
public use!

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

Truro strives to be a giving community. By volunteering and supporting local causes, folks show they care for each other. But, mental and physical wellness statistics show that we need to spend more time caring for ourselves.

The following stats relate to the **NORTHERN HEALTH ZONE:**
(Total population is 146,000 people)

63.8% of people reported very good or excellent mental health.

21.5% of people consume the recommended servings of fruit and vegetables each day.

80% of adults do not meet the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week.

65% of 5 to 17 year olds are not reaching the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity per week.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

The Colchester East Hants Hospital and the Rath Eastlink Community Centre were both constructed less than 10 years ago in Truro. These state of the art facilities have positively contributed to the physical health of residents in the surrounding area.

MENTAL HEALTH

The Colchester East Hants branch of the CMHA has a NEW mental health building in downtown Truro! With the new building comes new opportunities to connect with our community through programs, events, collaborations, and a safe space to share a tea and talk.

1 in 10 Households in the Northern Health Zone are food insecure.

The average household in Truro spends **\$3,944** per year on health care

health, Physical health itself was deemed much less of a problem in Truro than the need for doctors. While no doubt Truro needs more family doctors, a healthier population would require fewer doctors. Health promotion seeks to shift away from illness treatment toward illness prevention.

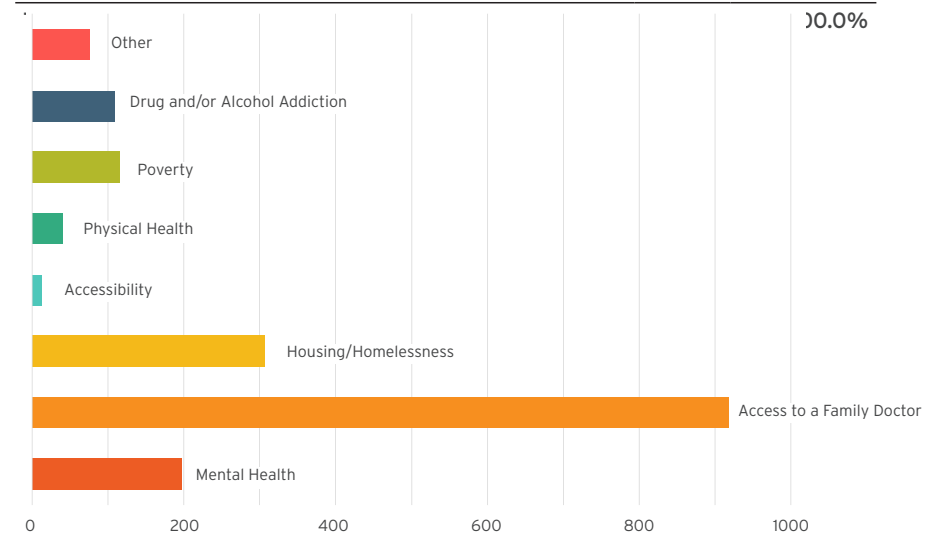
Housing insecurity is usually linked to conditions of poverty, although increasingly the root issue is lack of housing availability. Homelessness is frequently, but not always, a result of poverty and is sometimes connected to mental health and/or addiction.

Using a ‘social determinants of health’ lens, it would be hard to argue that there is a bigger wellness issue than poverty facing Truro, because of its impact on both physical and mental health (increasing demand for doctors). In its 2020 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Nova Scotia the Centre for Policy Alternatives uses 2018 Statistics Canada data to determine that child poverty rates in the Truro postal code area were a disturbing 31.1%. This compares unfavourably to Nova Scotia’s overall rate of 24.6% of children and even more unfavourably to the national average rate of 19.6%.

Wellness | Question 20

What is the biggest wellness issue facing Truro?

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Mental health | 197 | 11.1% |
| Access to a family doctor | 919 | 51.8% |
| Housing/homelessness | 306 | 17.2% |
| Accessibility | 13 | 0.7% |
| Physical health | 40 | 2.3% |
| Poverty | 115 | 6.5% |
| Drug and/or alcohol addiction | 109 | 6.1% |
| Other | 76 | 4.3% |



1.4.9 Livelihoods & Prosperity

Livelihoods & Prosperity are how we make a living. This theme of *Truro, Let's Connect* could be labelled 'Economy'. While national and provincial economies are often measured by statistics on productivity and stock-market performance, in communities, employment and wages are more relevant indicators. However, there is a more personal level of economy that simply looks at the ability of individuals to have enough money for the basics or more and this is the focus of the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey.

Question 21 asks if individuals have enough money for the basics or more after regular monthly expenses.

What is considered essential monthly expense varies from household to household and was not fully defined in the question. The examples given, housing, utilities, groceries are followed by etc. to allow the respondent to determine the rest. These could include items such as transportation, internet, tuition, debt payments, healthcare, insurance, and so forth.

The first two options in Question 21 describe a situation of having usually enough money for more than the basics. Sometimes likely indicates a tight balance between income and expenses. The final two options describe the state of not having enough funds to cover essential expenses. People in these circumstances are either not meeting basic expenses or are incurring debt to do so.

The responses can be clustered into three categories: always or almost always; sometimes; and seldom or never.

Looking at Question 21 outcomes through this lens, 48% of survey respondents are in category 1. They report being

able to prosper in Truro. 25.1% are in a less prosperous situation as they only sometimes have money left after basics costs are met. The data does not tell us the extent to which those who sometimes have discretionary funds also sometimes have less than what they need for monthly essentials. 26.9% of those who answered Question 21 of the *Truro, Let's Connect* survey seldom or never have enough income to cover regular monthly expenses.

Livelihoods & Prosperity



About Us:
The average household size in Truro is **1.9** PEOPLE

Cost of living for Nova Scotian's increased by **4.8%** from May 2020 to May 2021

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

Economic development tries to improve people's ability to create and share prosperity. Truro has a diverse economy that makes us resilient.

The median household income in Truro is
\$48,033

The average household income in Truro is
\$64,626

Average Annual Household Spending in Truro:



The **Top 6** largest sectors in Truro are:



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

- SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS
- ATTRACT EMPLOYERS AND INVESTMENT
- DEVELOP OUR WORKFORCE
- MARKET OURSELVES
- DEVELOP NEW LAND
- FOSTER ENTREPRENEURSHIP
- ATTRACT AND RETAIN PEOPLE

As discussed earlier, this survey did not ask participants personal or demographic questions such as age and income. Demographic categories in a survey allow for result comparisons by sub-groups of survey takers. For instance, if the survey asked in one question your age and in another your whether you smoke, results could then be charted to show the number of smokers in certain age brackets. Surveys of this sort, for instance the national Census, are not usually anonymous: respondents must identify themselves. Privacy is then respected by keeping individual responses confidential.

The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey is both voluntary and anonymous. Individuals were not required to identify themselves and only aggregated results (responses lumped together) will be disclosed. Within this context, some sub-group comparisons can still be made from survey results. Question 13, which asked respondents the type of housing they live in, can be used to analysis results from other questions.

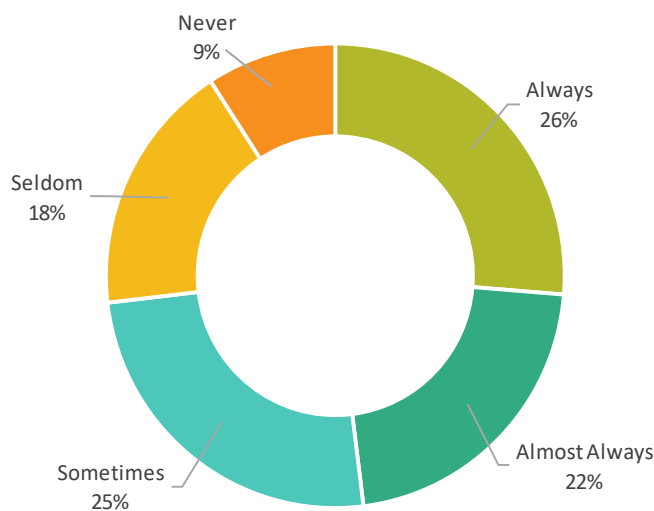
Question 21, about people's ability to pay monthly expenses, can be looked at in relation to housing type, as determined by Question 13. The graph on the following page uses results data from the two questions to look for correlations. For these purposes, housing types are clustered into four categories: apartment; single family dwelling; townhouse/semi-detached dwelling; or other

The results of these cross-tabulations make it clear why affordable housing is of great concern to so many in Truro. Among survey participants who live in apartments, 40% seldom or never have money leftover after monthly expenses. We cannot determine from this data what proportion of these respondents are able to meet expenses exactly versus falling behind or neglecting some needs. However, given inflation and unexpected expenses, those in this situation are vulnerable. If the Sometimes category is combined with Seldom or Never, 48% of those living in single family houses also face tight money situations.

Livelihoods & Prosperity | Question 21

After regular monthly expenses (housing, utilities, groceries, etc.), how often do you have money left over to save or spend?

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| Always | 468 | 26.3% |
| Almost Always | 387 | 21.7% |
| Sometimes | 447 | 25.1% |
| Seldom | 315 | 17.7% |
| Never | 163 | 9.2% |
| TOTAL | 1780 | 100.0% |



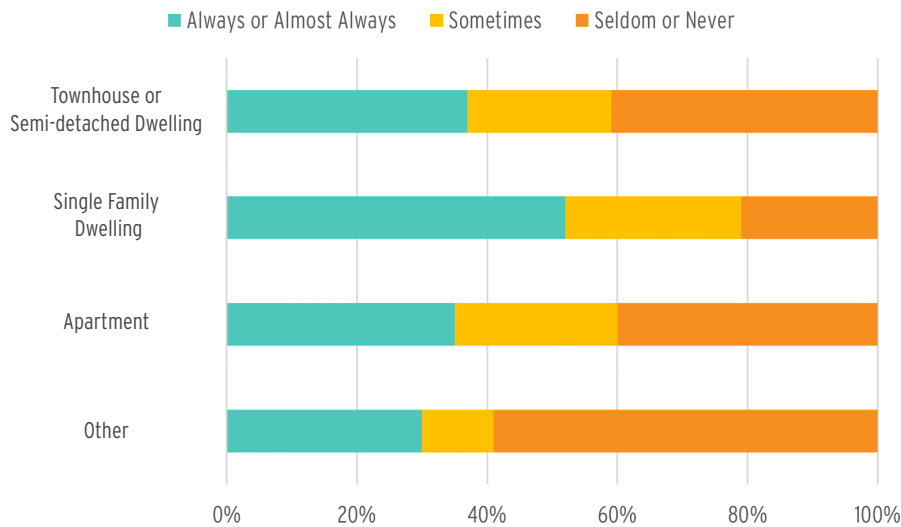
Truro's Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law are not economic development plans, although they do aim to create development that contributes to the local economy. However, Truro's integrated Community Plan also includes a Sustainability Plan. The Sustainability Plan asserts the Town's values of environmental, economic, and

community sustainability. The goal of community sustainability is the social and cultural well-being of those who live in Truro. This goal is difficult to realize in the context of financial struggle. Results from Question 21 are concerning and must inform the review and updating of Truro's Sustainability Plan.

Disposable Income by Housing Type

| Housing Type | Frequency resident has money left over after regular monthly expenses | | |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------|-----------------|
| | Always or Almost Always | Sometimes | Seldom or Never |
| Townhouse/Semi-Detached Dwelling | 37% | 22% | 41% |
| Single Family Dwelling | 52% | 27% | 21% |
| Apartment | 35% | 25% | 40% |
| Other | 30% | 11% | 59% |

Frequency resident has money left over after regular monthly expenses



1.4.10 Community Leadership

Community Leadership creates a community where people want to live. The *Truro, Let's Connect* survey ends on the theme of community leadership. This theme is presented last to tie together many of the preceding themes. Belonging was the opening survey theme. The closing question presents a key to belonging within a community: engaging with it through contributions such as volunteering. Themes of the

survey such as Environment, Money & People, Getting Around, and Stuff to Do presented options for action that will require collective effort to address, sometimes with entities other than the Municipality in the lead. Progress will require community leadership.

Question 22 presents the statement, Truro offers many ways to contribute to community life and asks respondents if they agree. 64.3% of survey respondents agreed (1,147 out of 1,783). Only 11.3% disagreed. A relatively large proportion of respondents stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed at 24.3%. Without an option of not sure, that response could include some who did not find the question clear.

For Truro to take new action on affordable housing, public transportation, wellness issues, and the environment, those who are already engaged and those who have not yet found a way to be will need to contribute.



Community Leadership

About Us:
Truro was incorporated as a Town in **1875**
We have a Mayor, elected at large, and six Councillors.

Truro is a community, not only led by elected representatives, but by the invaluable contributions of community organizations and leaders.

OUR CURRENT SITUATION In Truro

Leadership can come from anyone working to build our community. From elected representatives to youth volunteers, Truro thrives when its citizens are fully engaged in shaping this place.

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Citizens of Truro are represented by a Federal Member of Parliament (MP), a Provincial Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), and a Municipal Council.



TOWN EMPLOYEES

Town Council oversees a Chief Administrative Officer who is in charge of the Municipal staff. Currently the Town of Truro has 174 public servants including Police and Fire.

BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Truro is fortunate to be home to strong community-minded business owners and organizations.

DOWNTOWN TRURO PARTNERSHIP
TRURO COLCHESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
TRURO COLCHESTER PARTNERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

INSTITUTIONS & ORGANIZATIONS

UNITED WAY OF COLCHESTER COUNTY
SERVICE CLUBS: ROTARY, KIWANIS, KINSMAN, OTHERS
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY, NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



DID YOU KNOW?

Truro Town Council meetings can be seen on Eastlink, Facebook, or the Town's website. They air the 1st Monday of each month at 1pm



TRURO YOUTH COUNCIL
SENIORS CLUBS
FAITH GROUPS
NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATES

Community Leadership | Question 22

Truro offers many ways to contribute to community life such as volunteering, service clubs, or engaging in local issues. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Strongly agree | 426 | 23.9% |
| Somewhat agree | 721 | 40.4% |
| Neither agree or disagree | 433 | 24.3% |
| Somewhat disagree | 147 | 8.2% |
| Strongly disagree | 56 | 3.1% |
| TOTAL | 1783 | 100.0% |

