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# Corporate Strategic Plan | **Current State, Environmental and Trends Report**

Town of The Blue Mountains

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025



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## Section 1 | Project Overview





# Project Overview

## Project Context & Objectives

The Town of The Blue Mountains has retained StrategyCorp to support the development of its 2025-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan.

The strategic planning process includes several key activities, including:

- Extensive consultation with Council members, Town staff, and the public, using a range of engagement tools including interviews, surveys, pop-ups, public information centres, and focus groups.
- Completion of an environmental scan to review the Town's internal and external landscape and understand current trends and issues impacting the community.
- Creation of vision and mission statements, informed through Council, staff and public input, to guide the corporation and community over the next planning cycle.
- Identification of realistic and attainable goals, actions to support realization of those goals, and performance measures to track and monitor progress.

## Project Timeline



# Report Purpose and Methodology

This **Current State, Environmental and Trends Report** outlines the Town's current operating and community landscape and identifies key trends and impacts that should be considered as part of the process to update the Town's Corporate Strategic Plan.

*This document includes:*

- An overview of key strategic considerations and findings;
- An environmental scan to consider and assess issues and trends facing the Town and wider Ontario municipal sector, including consideration of Town's current state, as well as best practices in other municipalities, as appropriate and relevant;
- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis;
- Recommendations to inform the development of the Town's updated strategic Framework;
- Detailed appendices, including the results of the staff and public surveys and a Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental (PESTLE) analysis.

**The report has been informed by the following inputs:**

- **Internal consultations:** StrategyCorp conducted 1:1 interviews with members of Council and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to gather initial input on key priorities, opportunities, and challenges facing the TBM. StrategyCorp also designed and deployed a survey to all Town staff, which received 76 complete responses.
- **Community consultations:** StrategyCorp and Town staff facilitated a range of engagements to gather community input. These included an open house, focus groups, pop-up events, and a survey open to all members of the public. *Additional engagement details and metrics are available on the next slide.*
- **Data and document review:** StrategyCorp reviewed relevant internal documents, including past strategic plans, master plans and staff reports, among others, as well as external data, including demographic data, policy reports, thought leadership, etc.
- **Best practices scan:** StrategyCorp explored and identified various approaches, initiatives, policies and programs to key municipal challenges and priorities that may be useful or applicable to TBM.

# Community Engagement Activities

In a 4-week period between June 17-July 7, 2025, StrategyCorp and Town staff facilitated 14 engagement activities to gather input from TBM community members and interest-holders.



**Public open house** at Town Hall to formally launch the project. Presentation materials and the recording can be located on the Town's project webpage.



**2 community pop-up events** at the Clarksburg Kid's Fest and the Foodland Sample Fest.



**10 focus groups** with: The Blue Mountains Ratepayers Association; Craigleith Community Working Group; Climate Action Now Network; Team Blue (Local Business Associations); Georgian Bay Youth Roots; Blue Mountain Seniors Network; Beaver Valley Outreach; South Georgian Bay Innovation Fund; TBM Public Library Board; and Community Matters.



**Public survey**, which received 822 responses. The survey was available online through the Town's project webpage, with physical copies available at various public facilities, including the Library, Museum, Beaver Valley Community Centre, and Tomahawk Recreation Complex.



To introduce the Corporate Strategic Plan project to the community and build awareness, Town staff developed a robust [Communications Plan](#), presented to the Accountability and Transparency Committee on June 12, 2025.

This plan includes a dedicated project webpage, media release, social media campaign, Spotify ad campaign, mailed postcards, curbex signs, Town Hall information hub, and a dedicated mail campaign to the TBM's rural communities.



## Section 2 | Strategic Overview



# Key Strategic Findings | Defining the Future

This initial phase of the strategic planning process distilled two critical and interrelated observations, which appear as recurring themes throughout this report:

## 1) Creating a Shared Vision

- The Town does not currently have a consensus on a vision for the future.
- Various vision statements exist – in the previous 2020-2024 Corporate Strategic Plan, in The TBM Future Story, in the Official Plan – but there is not one that has the collective buy-in of Council, staff, and community members.

## 2) Improving Decision-Making

- Form follows function: Without a clear vision, it is more difficult to engage in effective and accountable decision-making about what to prioritize and how to allocate limited resources.
- The creation of a collective long-term vision – informed by Council, staff and community input – can help align decisions, policies, services, and resources with the Town's future aspirations and help minimize short-term thinking.
- It can serve as a compass or North Star for elected officials, Town staff, and the community, particularly as they navigate periods of growth and change and must balance competing and sometimes conflicting priorities.

## How This Process Can Help

- The updated Corporate Strategic Plan will help address these issues and position the Town for long-term success.
- This is precisely why the Town has elected to undertake this strategic planning process now, as opposed to waiting for the next term of Council.
- A key focus of the process is developing, validating, and aligning on a long-term vision for TBM's future.
- This vision will be rooted in a shared understanding of what the Town wants to be and achieve and broadly how it plans to get there.

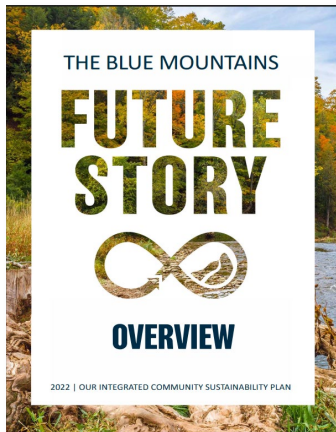


# The Town's Current Strategic Direction

## It's In Our Nature | Corporate Strategic Plan (2020-2024)

The Town's previous Corporate Strategic Plan, [It's In Our Nature](#), was developed by the administration in 2019, with a specific focus on the corporation's operations and management.

- **Vision:** *"An approachable Council and Staff serving an engaged and well informed community."*
- **What we heard:** While some of the high-level priorities in the plan continue to resonate, there is interest in a more "strategic" and less "operational" roadmap that defines a community-focused vision for the Town's future and a scoped list of priorities that have the consensus of Council, staff, and the public. Further, only 33% of members of the public and 50% of Town employees surveyed indicated that the vision from the plan still resonated, with many observing that the vision is too generic and corporate-focused. Additional areas of improvement and success criteria for the 2025-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan include a greater focus on community outcomes and mechanisms to track, monitor, and report on progress.



## The Future Story | Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (2022)

The Town's [Community Sustainability Plan](#) outlines the Town's vision for a sustainable future on the basis of six interrelated systems: natural and built environments, local economy, community and culture and social well-being, and governance.

- **Vision:** *"The Blue Mountains' communities are world renowned as stewards of a healthy environment and as champions of well-being, sociocultural diversity, innovation, and regeneration to become the best place to live, work, and play for future generations."*
- **What we heard:** Although approved by Council three years ago, this plan is not universally accepted as the overall guiding document or vision for Council and the corporation. While there is support for the vision and priorities within the plan as well as areas that align with the previous Corporate Strategic Plan and other corporate master plans and strategies, The Future Story is not widely viewed as comprehensive or outcomes-focused enough to serve as a true "strategic plan" for the Town.

# Where the Corporation is Today

Over the last few years, the Town has continued to **evolve and mature its organizational capacity and capability** to respond to **changing community needs**, as well as **evergreen expectations and priorities**.

- **Major Organizational Changes:** Over the last five years, the Town has experienced significant change at the leadership level both on Council and in the administration. The Town is also advancing implementation of major internal restructuring based on recommendations from the Corporate Organizational Structure Review completed in June 2024.
- **Continuous Operational and Long-Term Planning:** The Town has invested in the development of a suite of long-term master plans and strategies, including:
  - Asset Management Plan Update (*planned*)
  - Official Plan Update (*ongoing*)
  - Sustainability Plan (2022)
  - Destination Strategy (2025)
  - Drainage Master Plan (2024)
  - Transportation Master Plan (2022)
  - Communications Strategy (2021)
  - Economic Development Strategy (2021)
  - Leisure Activities Plan (2021)
  - IT Strategic Plan (2024)
  - Fire Master Plan (2022)
- **Challenges with Implementation:** Despite a robust and ambitious set of plans and strategies for advancing the key interests of the community, the Town continues to struggle transitioning from planning to implementation.

Interest holders generally reported feeling as though recent and planned changes continue to point the Town in the right direction.

However, the Town continues to struggle with prioritization, resourcing, and prolonged decision-making processes, which are leading to delays in delivering progress.



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## Section 3 | Environmental Scan



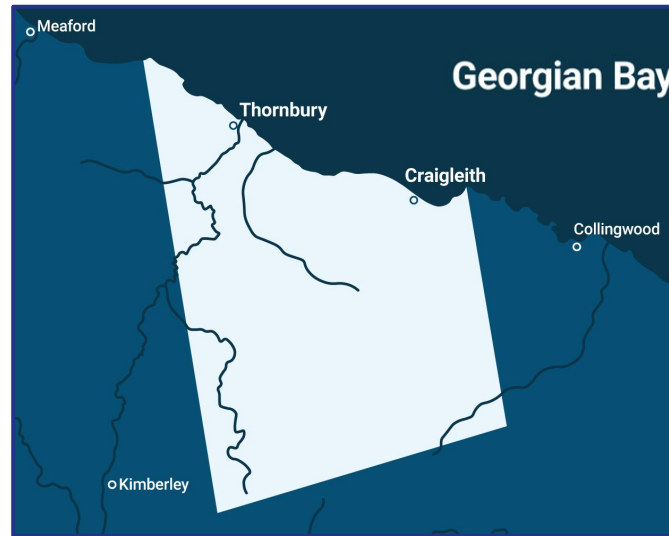


# About The Town of The Blue Mountains

The **Town of The Blue Mountains** is situated along the southern shore of Georgian Bay at the base of the Niagara Escarpment, in Grey County. Incorporated in 2001 from the Township of Collingwood and the Town of Thornbury, the Town encompasses many **distinct communities** including **Thornbury**, **Clarksburg**, **Craigleith**, **Ravenna**, and **Blue Mountain Village**, among others.

## Local Demographics

- One of Canada's **fastest growing communities** – 38% population increase from 2011-2021.
- TBM is home to **9,390 full-time residents, 6,000 seasonal or part-time residents**, and welcomes **2.5 million tourists annually**.
- Disproportionately **high share of older residents**, with 34% of aged 65 and older, well above the provincial average (18.5%).
- **High level of education among residents**, with 41.3% holding a bachelor's degree or higher, surpassing the provincial average of 36.8% and national average of 32.9%.
- **Average household incomes are above the provincial average**, although 50% of households earn less than \$100,000.
- Only **36% of the local workforce lives in TBM**; the remaining 64% commute into the Town.



*Most TBM residents live on either end or the shoreline in **Thornbury** (39%) and **Craigleith** (20%). (StatsCan 2021)*

## Key Economic Drivers

*The area has historic roots dating back to the 1800s with a rich heritage of agriculture, shipping, and early settlement along Georgian Bay.*

**Today, the local economy is driven primarily by:**

- **Tourism and hospitality:** TBM is a four-season destination with extensive recreation, cultural, and hospitality services and amenities that support a strong tourism industry, as well as local retail and professional services.
- **Agriculture:** Significant agricultural lands that support artisanal and commercial producers and agri-food and tourism opportunities.
- **Construction and real estate:** Local growth promotes a robust construction sector and significant activity in the luxury and seasonal real estate market.

# Pressures from Rapid Growth

The growth in population and popularity of The Blue Mountains is exacerbating existing pressures related to housing, local infrastructure, local amenities, the lived and natural environment, and overall community well-being.

- **More Residents:** While The Blue Mountains' has been a popular recreation and retirement community for families and older community members for decades, the COVID-19 pandemic saw a huge influx of residents fleeing large urban centres to traditionally smaller communities like TBM, increasing the Town's permanent population by almost half since 2016.
- **More Visitors:** Growth pressures have also been further exacerbated by a surge in domestic tourism, experienced initially during the COVID-19 pandemic and presently in response to strained Canadian-U.S. relations and the ongoing trade war. There is strong interest to support the Canadian economy by seeking local vacation and recreation spots. A recent survey by the Regional Tourism Organization for BruceGreySimcoe (RTO7) and the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario found 33% of Ontario tourism operators reported year-over-year increases in domestic bookings.

Growth can generate tangible financial, economic, and cultural benefits for municipal administrations and the communities they serve. However, it must be appropriately managed to avoid the risks and pains that can accompany growth, including strained public services and infrastructure, loss of natural heritage, and increasing social inequalities and tensions.

Alignment on a balanced approach to growth management – and what this tangibly means in terms of the policies and processes that will inform *how and in what ways* TBM grows – is critical to the future success of the many communities that make up The Blue Mountains.

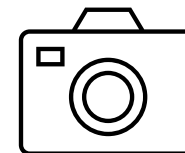
Access to Attainable and Affordable Housing



Local Infrastructure Capacity and Expansion



Managing Tourism Impacts on Community



Preserving Natural Assets and Environment



# The Affordable & Attainable Housing Crisis

**Housing affordability is a major concern** in TBM, particularly for younger people and families, retail and tourism workers, and older residents looking to downsize. While cost of living, housing affordability and the lack of attainable housing was identified in the 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey as the most important issue facing the Town today, participants in the Strategic Planning Survey ranked it much lower for prioritization over the next several years.

## TBM's Housing Landscape:

- **Home ownership dominates:** Most residents own their homes, with only 13% renting.
- **Shortage of housing types:** 80% of local housing stock is single-detached homes. There are no purpose-built rental buildings in the Town.
- **"Over-housing":** 2/3 households have more bedrooms than household members, and those who want to downsize to a smaller home face limited options.
- **Inflationary pricing:** About 60% of owned units are listed above \$1M due to inflationary market pressures.
- **Limited settlement areas** for residential development, given population growth and the need to preserve commercial or industrial lands.

## What the Town is doing:

- **Declaration of a Housing Crisis:** In August 2024, Council declared a local housing crisis, which may help accelerate projects that can deliver on local housing priorities.
- **2025-2026 Housing Action Plan:** In 2025, Town staff identified the various actions either underway, planned or envisioned to prioritize the creation on more affordable and attainable housing options.
- **Housing Needs Assessment:** The Town completed a Housing Needs Assessment in 2023, which established a baseline on the existing supply and affordability levels and should inform future municipal decisions on growth and housing development.
- **Official Plan 5-Year Review:** Following significant delays and extensive public engagement, the Town completed its mandated OP review in June 2025. The updated OP will guide all future land-use decisions, including the type of permitted housing, density standards, and how agricultural and natural features will be protected. In the final OP, Council passed a resolution to amend the height policies to 3 storeys for most of the municipality with some exceptions.
- **Budget Priorities:** The approved 2025 Budget identified the definition of the Town's role in the provision of affordable and attainable housing as a key priority. This past spring Council also approved a new staff position to lead initiatives focused on affordable housing, long-range planning and development review.
- **Streamlining Planning and Development Processes:** The Town continues to work to improve development timelines and processes (e.g., streamlining Additional Residential Unit (ARU) approvals).
- **Intergovernmental funding:** Since September 2024, TBM has been awarded \$26.7M in provincial funding to support housing-enabling infrastructure and services.



# Efforts to Build Affordable & Attainable Housing

**Municipalities across Ontario face growing expectations to accelerate the creation of housing, particularly more diverse options at a range of price points that reflect the full housing spectrum.**

While the province continues to advance an aggressive housing agenda, local governments are navigating a complex landscape shaped by rapidly evolving provincial legislation, local political dynamics, market conditions, and escalating construction costs that are making many projects financially unviable for developers. Such pressures are compounded by municipalities' limited direct control over housing development.

In spite of these barriers, local governments across Ontario are exploring a range of solutions, including enhancing intergovernmental advocacy efforts, creating the conditions for housing through infrastructure investment, new funding programs, and policy and process reforms.

## **Case Study | Town of Saugeen Shores' – Property Repurpose Program (PRP)**

The PRP is a policy-driven initiative to streamline the redevelopment of surplus and underused municipal land to encourage the creation of more affordable housing. The program includes standardized evaluation criteria, a scoring matrix to assess land potential, and a commitment to review the framework every 2–3 years.

## **Case Study | City of Guelph – Affordable Housing Seed Funding Program**

Launched in 2025, the Affordable Housing Seed Funding Program to support non-profit and charitable housing providers in advancing early-stage development. The program offers grants of up to \$25k per project (with an annual program budget of \$100k) for expenses such as feasibility studies, planning applications, and preliminary design. The program requires a 25-year affordability commitment.

TBM has previously explored innovative housing initiatives, with limited success.

## ***The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation (BMAHC)***

In 2014, the Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation was established as a non-profit organization to expand attainable housing options for moderate income earners, including workers, seniors and young families.

However, following the failure to secure a bidder for the attainable housing project and concerns about transparency, delays, and escalating costs, the project was cancelled, and Council dissolved BMAHC in 2024.

TBM has set a minimum target of 30% of new housing to be affordable. Moving forward, the Housing Action Plan indicates that the Town plans to focus its efforts on focus on policy, process improvement, capacity-building, and advocacy initiatives to meet this goal.

# Increasing Service & Infrastructure Demands

The Town owns and operates over **\$637M in assets** as reported in its last Asset Management Plan in 2021, in addition to **various legislated and discretionary services** funded or directly provided by the Town. However, **increasing demand and service level expectations continue to put pressure on the Town** to both expand services and infrastructure to keep pace with growth, while also maintaining existing assets and amenities.

## Key Service Needs and Expectations

- **Condition of Existing Infrastructure:** As of 2021, 1/3 of the Town's assets were in poor or very poor condition. Only 8% are in very poor condition.
- **Demand for New Projects:** Growth has increased demand for expanded infrastructure capacity, especially around roads and pedestrian infrastructure, servicing for new development, and recreation.
- **Growing Service Expectations:** Growth and demographic changes have increased resident service level expectations, including in areas such as winter maintenance and road paving.
- **Public Transit Gaps:** With the end of service of Grey Transit Routes in TBM, no transit options exist outside of the Craighleith area. Interest holders identified access to public transit as a concern, particularly in view of the Town's proportion of older adults.

## What the Town is doing:

- **Infrastructure Investment & Planning:** The Town's approved 2025 budget committed \$103M in capital spending including new expansion projects, infrastructure enhancements, and maintenance. An update to the Town's existing Asset Management Plan, approved in 2021, is planned to align with legislative requirements, improve condition reporting, and update service level expectations and costs.
- **Leisure Activities Plan:** The Town's 2021 Leisure Activities Plan outlined a 10-year strategy with over 50 recommendations focused on improving recreational facilities, programs, and services in response to changing resident needs and growth.
- **Public Transit:** The Town's 2022 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) includes recommendations to improve transit access and coverage, including creation of a Transit Strategy and further partnerships with neighbouring municipalities and Grey County and Simcoe County. Implementation of the TMP, however, has been slow.
- **Intermunicipal Collaboration & Shared Services:** The Town continues to investigate shared service opportunities to optimize resources and efficiently deliver community needs:
  - Collingwood/Blue Mountain Link, providing transit services from the Craighleith area to the Resort and Collingwood.
  - Joint Multi-Use Recreation Facility Feasibility Assessment with the Town of Collingwood.
  - Shared building inspection services with the Municipality of Meaford.

# Exploring New Approaches to Service Delivery

Small and medium-sized rural municipalities face unique challenges in achieving the same service levels and infrastructure standards as larger urban centres, primarily due to limited economies of scale. As a result, many are exploring [shared services or innovative delivery options](#) to maintain or enhance the quality of municipal services and meeting community needs while managing cost and resource allocation.

## **Case Study | Bradford West Gwillimbury – Argo Transit Partnership**

In April 2025, Bradford West Gwillimbury launched an innovative partnership with the Ontario-based Argo Corporation to provide fully electric, municipality-wide, on-demand transit service. The system uses Argo's intelligent routing software, and vertically integrated transit system to enable residents to request rides near their door on an app. As of June 2025, ridership of the new system had doubled, and the Town has decided to fully decommission its legacy fixed-route bus system.

## **Case Study | West Parry Sound – Recreation & Cultural Centre**

In 2021, six local municipalities and two First Nations in the West Perry Sound entered into an Agreement to establish a municipal service board to develop and operate a pool, recreation, and cultural centre. Approximately 75% of the planned capital costs is funded by senior governments, with the remaining capital and operational costs shared by the partner municipalities. Construction began in early 2024 and the facility is expected to open in 2026, on schedule and budget.

## **Case Study | Towns of Lincoln and Grimsby – Shared Fire Services**

In 2021, Lincoln and Grimsby launched a pilot project to establish a shared fire department, Niagara West Fire and Emergency Services, with the goal of maximizing collective resources and delivering efficiencies to maintain a cost-effective volunteer fire service model. Governed a Joint Advisory Committee, the pilot project was initially set for 24-months but has been extended through June 2025 to further evaluate and determine the feasibility of a permanent shared service model.

## **Case Study | Midland – AI-Based Risk Assessment for Water and Wastewater System**

In 2024, the Town of Midland implemented an award-winning AI-driven approach to assess risks in its 200 km of water and wastewater infrastructure. Partnering with CANN Forecast, the project uses historical failure data, work orders, and acoustical monitoring to predict where failures are most likely to occur. This enables the Town to prioritize maintenance, reduce costly disruptions, and extend the lifespan of critical infrastructure.

**TBM is currently exploring some new service delivery models and partnerships – a key area of focus moving forward. The Town cannot and should not do everything on its own as it looks to balance affordability for residents and the municipality's long-term financial sustainability.**



# Growing the Local Economy

The Blue Mountains' **tourism and hospitality sector is a key driver of the Town's local economy** – employing more than 1,780 people across 164 tourism-related businesses and supporting robust local retailers and cultural amenities for visitors and residents alike.

The Town's **tourism sector relies heavily on the Town's natural environment** as a key attraction, including the escarpment, extensive trail network, waterfront, beaches, agricultural lands, and scenic vistas. Managing traffic and utilization of these natural assets is critical to the **ongoing protection of these resources for generations to come**. The Town is keenly aware of this critical need to balance priorities and has developed a robust network of strategic partnerships and suite of management plans designed to ensure the industry continues to offer net benefits for the community.

## Managing the Tourism Sector:

- **Planning & Management:** The Town has approved two tourism strategic plans over the last two years: the *Beaver Valley Sustainable Tourism Strategy* developed in partnership with surrounding communities and its own *Destination Strategy* that outlines how the Town intends to develop, manage, and market itself as a four-season destination.
- **New Revenue Opportunities:** The Town's Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) was approved in 2024 and is anticipated to generate \$4 million in annual revenue to support local tourism and visitor-related infrastructure.
- **Robust Business Partnerships:** The Town benefits from an active local businesses community that are active participants in the numerous village and business associations within the Town ("Team Blue") who provide a voice for local businesses.



**Other Economic Drivers:** The Town supports a number of other sectors including agriculture, professional, and retail services. While many of these industries also benefit from tourism, there is an ongoing interest in **economic diversification**, including through possible commercial or industrial development.

- **Economic Development Strategy:** The Town's existing economic development strategy expires in 2025 and prioritizes attracting new businesses and sectors to support a more diverse local economy. The Town needs to re-establish or re-define its priorities in this area for the next 5-years.
- **Navigating Red Tape:** Local business representatives want an "open for business" environment at the Town, reporting significant challenges navigating the regulatory and service environment within the Town (e.g., sign bylaws, sidewalk clearance, etc.).
- **Employment Housing:** The Town's housing mix does not include enough affordable housing options for workers in the retail, hospitality, or tourism sector, creating hiring challenges for smaller employers in particular.



**While managing Tourism remains a key priority, an ongoing, broader approach to economic development will be key to the Town's future success and resiliency.**

# Protection of the Natural Environment & Climate Change

The Town's natural landscape and assets are critical to its identity and a key reason people want to live and visit The Blue Mountains. The impacts associated with climate change and the increase in extreme weather events and seasonal volatility pose a significant threat to the Town's natural assets, tourism attractions, and critical infrastructure. This new reality also places growing pressure on emergency management services and can significantly increase municipal response and recovery costs, in addition to direct impacts on residents, including damaged or destroyed property,

## What the Town is doing:

- **Protection of the Natural Environment:** This is the top priority for community members in terms of where residents want to see the Town focus its attention, according to the 2025 Public Survey conducted as part of this project. In 2024, the Town completed a Natural Asset Inventory and Natural Heritage Study to identify, protect and manage those natural features of great importance to the community. The Town's 2025 Approved Budget also included the establishment of a dedicated Urban Forestry Division to manage the Town's urban canopy.
- **Climate Emergency Declaration:** In October 2019, the Town declared a Climate Emergency to enhance and accelerate action on their commitment to protecting their community, economy, and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change.
- **Sustainability Planning:** In 2010, TBM adopted The Sustainable Path, a long-term plan that focused on guiding both the community and municipality towards a sustainable future through a focus on the three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental and social. One of the first in Ontario at the time, the plan was subsequently updated in 2022 and became the Future Story.
- **Investing in Green Priorities and Partnerships:** Over the last five years, the Town has provided funding for a series of green-related initiatives such as over \$100,000 in additional support from the Youth Climate Action Fund and the creation of The Blue Mountains Environmental Sustainability Fund.
- **Policy Development:** The Town continues to work with Grey County in the development of green development standards and a Climate Adaptation Plan.

## Moving from Planning to Implementation

Between 2019 and 2021, nearly 75 Ontario municipalities declared climate emergencies in response to the growing impacts of climate change, including increasingly frequent and severe extreme weather events.

However, many local governments face challenging in translating their declarations into concrete action plans due to limited financial resources and staff capacity as well as competing priorities.

In the 2025 Budget, the Town of The Blue Mountains acknowledged some of these constraints but also reiterated the importance of embedding sustainability into all corporate plans and programs with the ultimate goal of achieving a resilient and adaptive community.

# Access to Local Healthcare & Aging in Place

Like many smaller communities across Ontario, TBM residents **face increasing challenges accessing healthcare** including preventative (i.e. family physicians), diagnostic (e.g. hospital and/or clinic settings), supportive (e.g., long-term care) and emergency care services. While these challenges apply to all residents, regardless of age, it is particularly acute in TBM due to its higher demographic share of older adults, who wish to age in place.

## What the Town is doing:

- **Family Physician Recruitment Working Group:** In February 2025, The Town established a working group dedicated to investigating and executing recruitment strategies to attract local family physicians. This builds on several years of work to identify barriers to accessing physician care, including through a community-wide Family Physician Survey (2021) and the Housing Needs Assessment (2023). Long-wait times and lack of services within the local community have been identified as the biggest challenges for local residents. High home prices were also identified as a barrier for young or newly graduated physicians considering starting a practice in TBM.
- **Hospital Access:** Residents and visitors to the Town rely most heavily on Collingwood General and Marine Hospital (CGMH), an 84-bed hospital located in Collingwood, as well as Meaford General, a 15-bed rural hospital and ER west of Thornbury. Based on growing need in the region, the province has committed \$95.5 million for a new hospital in Collingwood. As of July, the CGMH Foundation has reached almost 75% of its \$100M fundraising goal, which includes funding pledges from Simcoe County, Collingwood, and Clearview.
- **Long-Term Care (LTC):** Access to local long-term care beds is key to enabling the Town's older residents to "age in place". There were previous plans for a Campus of Care project on Town-owned land that would have provided 160 LTC beds, retirement living options, affordable/attainable and commercial components. In 2024, the Town terminated negotiations with the proponents as the project was no longer viable due to shifting economic conditions and changes to DCs, leading to some frustration in the community about sunk costs and the lack of progress. In May 2025, the Town announced a new partnership with peopleCare Communities to develop a new LTC home in Craighleith.

## Access to healthcare-related services is repeatedly flagged as a top priority by TBM residents.

- The **2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey** identified increased access to family health care as the highest priority for the next term of Council (78%), with long-term care taking third place (53%).
- The **2025 Public Survey** undertaken as part of the Corporate Strategic Plan identified healthcare access as the fifth top priority (53%).



# Municipal Efforts to Improve Healthcare Access

**In response to increasing pressure from residents, an increasing number of regional and local municipalities are taking on larger role in advocating for – and even funding – local access to healthcare, outside their jurisdiction.**

While municipalities are seeking to ensure their responsiveness to community needs and priorities and fill local service gaps, there are also risks to extending outside of the 'municipal lane.'

- **Municipal Competition:** Some programs have raised concerns within the sector due the creation of a “Hunger Games”-like scenario for limited health human resources as well as the risk that existing disparities in healthcare access may be exacerbated.
- **Financial Capacity:** Program costs are likely to rise over time. Without stable, long-term funding from other levels of government, municipalities may be forced to subsidize these programs through the local tax base.
- **Precedent and the ‘Slippery Slope’:** Involvement in healthcare blurs jurisdictional responsibilities between the province and municipalities and may set a precedent for future service downloads or gap-filling in the absence of provincial policy action or funding.
- **Impact on Core Responsibilities:** The allocation of limited resources to healthcare may strain the available financial and human capacity to deliver core municipal services, such as parks and recreation, emergency response, winter operations, and waste management.

## **Case Study | Town of Huntsville – Physician Incentive Program**

In May 2024, Huntsville introduced a five-year incentive program to attract and retain family physicians in response to rising community demand. The program provides financial incentives of \$60,000 for taking over a family practice, \$70,000 for assuming an existing practice and removing 200 local patients from the waitlist, and \$80,000 for establishing a new family practice. Physicians and their families are also offered family passes to local attractions, along with discounts, memberships, and vouchers from local businesses and organizations.

## **Case Study | Town of Saugeen Shores – Physician Recruitment Efforts**

Saugeen Shores has several healthcare initiatives underway. The Town offers various incentives to attract doctors to the area, including rent subsidies, housing loans, moving expenses, and options for turn-key medical space. In 2024, the Town also reestablished the Healthcare Partnership Program with the Municipality of Kincardine. A three-year pilot program supported by a \$150,000 annual contribution from Bruce Power, the initiative aims to strategically pool resources and investments to deliver on local healthcare priorities, including keeping ERs open and reducing the number of patients without a primary care provider.

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## Section 4 | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats Analysis



# Introduction to the SWOT

A **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** (SWOT) framework is a useful tool in strategic planning, as it brings together information about the internal and external factors and realities that should be considered as part of the strategic planning and prioritization process. At the same time, however, it is not a perfect categorization and there can be overlap among the four categories – for example, there can be a factor that is both a strength and weakness.

## SWOT Definitions

### INTERNAL

**Strengths:** Attributes, resources, and factors that contribute to The Blue Mountains' success as a community and administration and can be leveraged as it looks to the future.

**Weaknesses:** Limitations, attributes, or factors that require improvement or are areas of concern that require attention.

### EXTERNAL

**Opportunities:** Favourable trends, resources, or factors that can support the Town in achieving its goals and vision.

**Threats:** Risks or factors that could adversely impact the community and administration that should be considered or addressed in future planning.



The following slides present insights from the research and consultation activities facilitated in June-July 2025, organized into a SWOT framework. Note that this SWOT analysis is not an exhaustive list of everything we heard from interest holders or uncovered through desktop research. Rather, it aggregates the input and findings to date and presents key themes.



Following the SWOT is a set of recommendations for consideration as part of the development of the 2025-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan.

# TBM Community – Strengths and Weaknesses (1/3)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Quality of life:</b> Interest holders highly value living in TBM because of both the place and the people.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong sense of civic pride.</li><li>• Desire to maintain and enhance what makes the Town special and unique.</li><li>• Many references to the importance of retaining “small town feel” or “small town character” (though this did not resonate with all).</li><li>• Recognition that TBM is not a single community, but “a community of communities.”</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Concerns about gaps that may hinder quality of life for everyone:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited housing options (type and affordability) for residents and workers.</li><li>• Increasing cost of living.</li><li>• Income variability among residents, despite continuing perception that the community is primarily higher income.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>‘Drawbridge’ mentality:</b> Residents “want to be the last ones who move here” and keep the Town exactly as it is, which can conflict with other priorities around housing, for example.</li><li>• <b>Perceptions of unfairness among TBM communities:</b> Some TBM communities feel their interests are not fairly or equitably represented at the political level or in the distribution of Town services and infrastructure.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Natural environment:</b> TBM is widely known and recognized for its stunning natural landscape and significant natural assets.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These include parks, trails, beaches, ski mountains, scenic caves, etc.</li><li>• Strong network of parks and trails that are well-used and valued by the community.</li><li>• TBM offers a healthy and active lifestyle for residents and visitors – this is what draws people here.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Threat of growth to natural environment:</b> Significant concern about adverse impacts to the natural environment.</li><li>• <b>Limited mobility options:</b> TBM is predominantly car dependent, which limits the ability for those that cannot or do not drive (such as youth and seniors) to access services, programs, and recreational activities.</li><li>• <b>Climate action:</b> Some resident and groups are concerned that the Town is not advancing climate-related initiatives – from policy to action – with enough urgency.</li></ul>



# TBM Community – Strengths and Weaknesses (2/3)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Growing community:</b> TBM is one of Ontario's fastest growing rural municipalities.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant population surge during the COVID pandemic.</li><li>• Growth supports growth of assessment base, which in turn supports the Town's financial position and long-term sustainability...though this may be slowing.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Divided perspectives on growth management:</b> Concern about the loss of local character and adverse environmental impacts if growth is not appropriately planned and integrated into the existing community landscape.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is acceptance that growth should occur but there is not consensus on a clear vision for <i>how</i> growth should be managed nor the capacity of the Town to effectively manage growth.</li><li>• Desire for “affordable housing” but unclear what the definition is or where it should go; some NIMBYism.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Social tensions exist:</b> Rapid growth has amplified divisions between various groups of residents – full vs. part-time residents, new vs. generational residents, east vs. west, tourists, vs. residents.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Such divisions have made it difficult to define a shared vision for the future.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Population is disproportionately older adults:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficult to age in place without certain senior services (e.g., long-term care, family physicians, non-car dependent modes of transportation, dedicated space for programming).</li><li>• Concern about the ability to attract and retain young families and ensure TBM is a place for all ages and stages of life.</li><li>• Need to continue to advance youth-led initiatives and amplify youth voices as the Town makes decisions about programs, space needs, partnerships, etc.</li></ul></li></ul>

# TBM Community – Strengths and Weaknesses (3/3)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Strong mix of rural and urban communities:</b> Residents appreciate the mix of “village-based” (e.g., Thornbury and Craighleith) and agricultural (e.g., Ravenna) communities that support a blend of economic activity and lifestyle options for residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Risk to agricultural lands:</b> There remains ongoing concern that residential “sprawl” will begin to encroach on agricultural lands, citing the importance of these properties to the local economy and overall character of the community.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Highly engaged community members:</b> Many residents are or want to be engaged in their local government - e.g., through deputations to Council, participation of Committees, consultations on Town projects and initiatives, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBM has active resident groups (BMRA, CCWG, Community Matters) that seek to engage on Town matters.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>“Loud and vocal minority”:</b> There is a perception that a small group of residents is highly active in efforts to influence Town decision-making relative to others in the community.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Four-season economy:</b> TBM is anchored by tourism, the Blue Mountain Village, the hospitality and service industry, and the Town’s historic agricultural sector. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Destination Strategy was approved in the past year.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Economic diversification:</b> Some interest holders advise recommending ensuring that the Town’s economic development approach is holistic and focuses on other sectors and opportunities in addition to local tourism.</li> <li>• <b>Concerns about overtourism,</b> including impacts on Town infrastructure (e.g., trails, Northwinds Beach) and services as well as livability for residents.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Vibrant local business community:</b> Active businesses and business associations bolster local economic prosperity and vibrancy and work closely with the Town – Team Blue! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong ecosystem of entrepreneurship – “no big box stores”.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lack of “open for business” environment:</b> Town’s focus is on marketing and communications, instead of implementing more streamlined processes, policies, and measures that make it easier for businesses to set up and operate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need the infrastructure to attract businesses and investment (e.g., WC).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Culture of volunteerism:</b> Strong network of community partners and volunteer groups that support community activities, events, and engagements, often in partnership with the Town.</li> </ul>	

# TBM Corporation – Strengths and Weaknesses (1/4)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>General satisfaction with Town programs and services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs and services are in high demand and valued by residents.</li> <li>• Town generally approachable and responsive to residents.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Some gaps in Town services</b>, such as active transportation (connected network of trails, cycling lanes) and public transit.</li> <li>• <b>Some gaps in services not solely within the municipality’s jurisdiction:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seniors and healthcare services – long-term care, hospital, family physicians.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Reliance on neighbouring municipalities:</b> Some community members rely on Collingwood and Meaford for some services and amenities, depending on where they are located. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political boundaries do not always align with lived experiences in terms of how people seek and access services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Growing service expectations:</b> New residents, especially post-COVID, bring expectations of services and service levels akin to those in large urban municipalities (e.g., snow removal on all Town sidewalks). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community expectations not always aligned with the realities of the Town’s size and capacity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Responsive to full breadth of community challenges:</b> Physician recruitment, affordable housing, long-term care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Concern about “Town getting out of its lane”:</b> To what degree should TBM fill gaps in services that are the responsibility of other governments?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Plans in place:</b> TBM has completed many master plans and long-range documents that can support growth planning with the objective of a complete and livable community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Implementation challenges:</b> There is a sense that these plans do not progress or integrate/connect with each other in a meaningful way. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g., Transportation Master Plan approved but in 2025, there are no resources or deliverables to demonstrate progress.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# TBM Corporation – Strengths and Weaknesses (2/4)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Strong staff team and internal staff workplace culture:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff focused on delivering on Council's direction and in serving in the best interest of the public.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Risk of potential future turnover</b> (e.g., retirements) and need to ensure a robust attraction and retention strategy.</li><li>• <b>Staff capacity:</b> Strained by Council requests for staff reports; it becomes difficult to prioritize the work, which leads to delays for the public.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Huge backlog of projects.</li></ul></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Strong focus on transparency and accountability:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organization committed to clear and open communication with the public and ensuring public access and participation in the business of the municipality.</li><li>• Creation of Accountability and Transparency Committee.</li><li>• More recent focus on providing updates to Council and the public on Town projects and initiatives.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Access to information:</b> Council and the public sometimes find it difficult to get information from staff or to understand the status of key initiatives ("report backs").</li><li>• <b>"Trust deficit":</b> There remain lingering trust issues between the administration and the public.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some in the community are frustrated about delays in projects and initiatives and question who is being held accountable.</li></ul></li></ul>



# TBM Corporation – Strengths and Weaknesses (3/4)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Enthusiastic and engaged Council:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open to creativity and doing some things differently (e.g., strategic planning, corporate performance reporting, etc.).</li><li>• Significant focus on community engagement and communications; willing to listen and act on concerns from the community.</li><li>• Recognition that Mayor and Councillors are serving full-time even if the official role is part-time.</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Lack of alignment on priorities:</b> Without a current strategic plan or long-term vision for the future, Council does not have a collective agenda to guide how it works together or inform prioritization and resource allocation.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As a result, the strategic planning process has been viewed by many – among Council, staff, and the community, as a critical endeavour.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Decision-paralysis:</b> The lack of a clear strategic direction, in turn, has made decision-making more difficult, with many observing the need to finally to come agreement and ‘pick a lane’ (even when decisions may be difficult or unpopular among some).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Currently, many decisions are deferred or delayed by asking for more consultation or additional staff reports.</li><li>• Some also attributed delays on key priorities and projects to dynamics and divisions on Council or the propensity to let the “perfect be the enemy of the good.”</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Operational vs. strategic focus:</b> There is some concern that due to this lack of strategic direction, Council is occasionally “in the weeds” at the expense of more strategic or policy matters.</li><li>• <b>Strained Council/staff relations:</b> Council does not always feel it is given the information needed to govern effectively, while staff do not feel their professional expertise is valued by Council. This underscore the need to reinforce norms of the two roles consistent with the <i>Municipal Act</i> and Council-staff relations policy.</li></ul>

# TBM Corporation – Strengths and Weaknesses (4/4)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Enhanced communications and engagement capacity and best-in-class practices:</b> Town has invested heavily in its communications function to enhance information-sharing with residents and engage them on issues that matter to them.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive feedback on the Town’s communications efforts.</li><li>• Staff using innovative methods to target key audiences.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Organizational modernization:</b> Town is increasingly fostering a culture of innovation, including optimizing technology and best practices where it can (e.g., adoption of CityWorks, online payments, etc.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Process delays due to focus on engagement:</b> Some concern that the Town engages too often and too long with the community, including on perceived minor matters such as a minor road improvement through to major policy initiatives such as the Official Plan.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This can delay progress and decisions on key operational and capital projects and priorities, resulting in frustrations for the public.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Corporate reporting and performance measurement:</b> Strong interest for more regular reporting on projects and initiatives, including the creation of performance measures to track and monitor progress.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a sense that projects and plans go into a “black box” without regular reporting back to Council.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Continuous Improvement:</b> Town could continue to consider alternative or more efficient models of service delivery, including shared services in some cases (e.g., purchasing) with neighbouring municipalities.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Stronger relationship between TBM and Grey County:</b> Focus on collaboration and how they can better work together.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Lingering concerns about “fair share”:</b> Some still hold the view that TBM is not receiving value for the tax dollars it contributes to the County.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Asset management:</b> Town is starting to head on the right track, and there is generally a plan for infrastructure investment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sustainable longer-term financial planning required:</b> Town is late to the game and needs more long-term planning to avoid a reactive (and more expensive) approach to infrastructure renewal and enhancement.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Town will need to contemplate how best to address reduced fiscal capacity, due to reduced DCs or slow assessment growth, for example</li></ul></li></ul>

# Opportunities

- **Agriculture and production:** With Ontario's expanding role as an agricultural powerhouse, and the Town's strong existing agricultural base, presents the Town with a key opportunity for economic diversification and sustainable development. Expansion of value-added production, agri-business, and Agri-tourism, represent further opportunities for the sector to grow more integrated with other areas of the Town's economy and support overall food security in the region and province.
- **Tax fairness for craft cideries:** The Town contains the most apple orchards in Ontario. Recent harmonization to taxation for craft cider represents a huge opportunity for both apple producers and local cideries to grow and expand local production, but also to feed into expanding cider production in other areas of the province.
- **Increased tourism:** While the need to manage tourism and its impacts on the natural and lived environment continues, the industry continues to grow in popularity and the Town's key attractions continue to bring in significant business for other local businesses and industries. The Town will need to balance the benefits of the industry for the whole community with the its sustainably, in particular how the industry impacts the assets it relies on including the Town's rural character, natural environment, and quality of place.
- **Senior government interest in housing :** Housing supply and affordability is a top priority for the provincial and federal governments, but the Town should better define and align on its housing objectives – particularly as it relates to “affordable housing” – and its role in advancing these objectives, so it can better seize on and advocate for the local supports needed to build the housing mix the Town needs.
- **Enhanced regional collaboration:** The Town's location on the boarder of Grey and Simcoe Counties and its proximity to many other neighbouring communities in the South Georgian Bay region offer strong opportunities for collaboration on both advocacy and service delivery priorities to ensure residents have access to the services and amenities they need within the broader community. These opportunities offer the chance to increase impact, reduce financial burden for taxpayers, and reduce duplication of efforts across the region.

# Threats

- **“Growth without a plan”:** Without a vision for the future and alignment on how TBM wants to grow, there is a risk that growth may not be managed purposefully or appropriately, which brings risk to those elements – the Town’s urban and rural character and natural and cultural heritage – that are critical to its identity.
- **Economic uncertainty:** The ongoing trade war with the United States has escalated existing economic anxieties around the cost of living and inflation. Local businesses may be impacted by the tariffs, as well as the municipality in terms of major capital projects and other materials and/or services that must be procured to enable “business as usual.”
- **Potential provincial policy / legislative changes:** Further changes to key legislation as it relates to municipal governance or service delivery (e.g., strong mayor powers, growth funding tools, land use planning policies, etc.) could impact Town operations and decision-making.
- **Erosion of public trust in government:** There is an increasing sense of apathy and distrust towards government (at all levels) among some members of the public, further amplified by social media and the spread of misinformation.
- **Municipal “scope creep”:** Municipal activities continue to grow outside of areas for which they are directly responsible in terms of what they deliver, regulate, or fund through the budget, per the *Municipal Act*. It will be important for the Town to define what role it endeavours to play in key community issues such as physician recruitment and affordable housing.
- **Adverse impacts resulting from climate change-related events:** The growing frequency of extreme weather events (tornadoes, flooding, heat waves, forest fires, etc.) threatens the condition and cost of municipal infrastructure. There may also be direct impacts due to the local tourism industry, such as shortened ski seasons, as well as individual impacts on residents, such as destroyed or damaged homes or other assets.



# Recommendations for the 2025-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan

- **Align on a vision for the future:** The Town requires a clear, consensus-based long-term vision for the future. This will support more timely and informed decision-making by Council, give staff clear direction, and improve resource allocation, while clearly and transparently demonstrating to TBM's communities what the Town is working toward and what its priorities are.
- **"Dial it in":** There is an opportunity for the strategic plan to refocus the Town on a critical set of core priorities and deliver outcomes-oriented results. This updated plan can focus the efforts of the elected and public service leadership, rather than the current approach of trying to be "all things to all people."
- **Balance growth with the Town's agricultural heritage and natural assets:** The Town is and will continue to grow, but it can guide and plan for this growth in an integrated and thoughtful way that preserves its rural character, supports environmental sustainability, and enhances – not diminishes – quality of place.
- **Align capacity and services to the pace of growth:** As TBM grows, it will be critical to invest in the Town's capacity to meet growing service demands. This means both expanding and/or enhancing programs and services, such as recreation programs, as well as building Town resources (staff, technology, etc.) to deliver.
- **Improve clarity on the housing file:** Housing supply and affordability are top priorities, but the Town should better define and align on its housing objectives – particularly as it relates to "affordable housing" – and its role in advancing these objectives.
- **Focus on all ages and stages:** TBM is for everyone. Enhancing affordability, accessibility, and quality of life, particularly for certain demographics such as youth, young families, and seniors, requires the identification and development of strategies to address service gaps.
- **Support economic diversification:** While tourism remains a key economic driver for the Town and should continue to be supported, a parallel focus on other sectors, such as commercial and industrial attraction and agri-food and tourism can strengthen the Town's economic resilience.
- **Strengthen the Council-staff relationship:** Council and staff must build trust and work collaboratively within the boundaries of their appropriate roles and responsibilities in order to serve in the best interest of the TBM community and deliver on key priorities.
- **Improve reporting and performance measurement:** Enhanced information-sharing with Council and the public and demonstrating how the Town is measuring success and making progress can strengthen transparency and accountability and build trust.
- **Continue to explore regional collaboration:** Partnerships with neighbouring communities in the South Georgian Bay region can support the Town in more efficiently meeting growing community demands while managing its financial capacity, whether on infrastructure projects or potential shared service opportunities.
- **Enhance asset management planning:** Greater long-term financial planning is required to support the renewal and enhancement of municipal infrastructure.

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# Appendix A | Public Survey Results

# Survey Methodology and Metrics

## Context

- The public survey was available on the Town's SurveyMonkey platform from June 16 to July 7, 2025.
- The survey included 15 questions soliciting feedback on the strengths and gaps in the community, resident priorities for the Town, and the previous 2020-2024 Corporate Strategic Plan as well as four demographic questions, including one screening question for The Blue Mountains community members.

## Response Metrics

- A total of 822 responses from community members were received. Between 70-80% of all responses were complete.
- The survey included a mix of multiple choice and open-ended questions. Open-ended questions were optional and had significantly lower response rates overall.
- Respondents were screened for those who reported living, working in, or regularly visiting the Town.
  - The majority of respondents reported being full time residents (68%). Almost 30% of respondents reported being part-time, seasonal, or property owners in the Town.
  - Over 70% of respondents reported being the age of 55 or over.
  - The largest portion of respondents reported living in Thornbury, followed by the Blue Mountain Village and surrounding area (16%), and Craiglieth and Clarksburg (~10% each) and a strong mix of newer and long-term residents across all respondents.

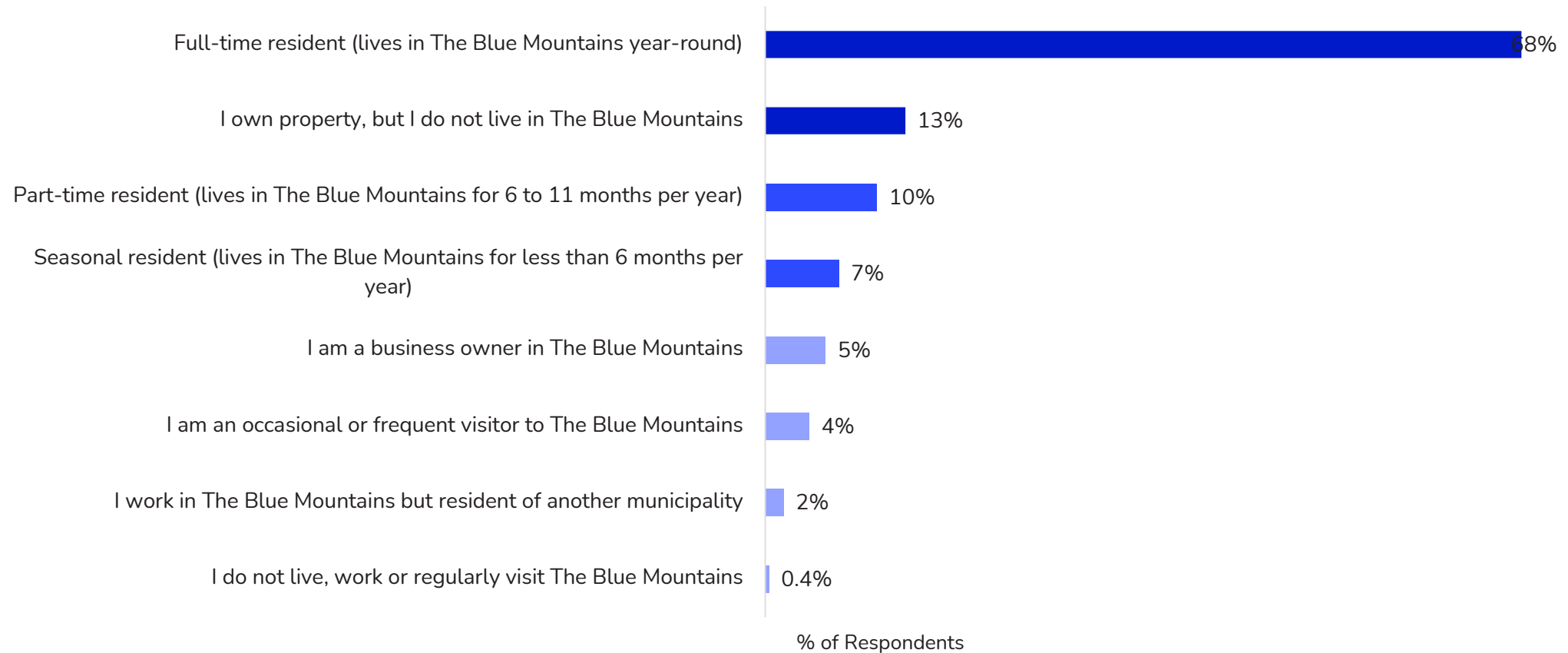
## Key Assumptions & Limitations

- This survey was self-selecting and did not use a randomized sample. As a result, the survey results may not be broadly representative of the Town's entire population.

# Question 1

## Question 1

Please select the option(s) that best describes yourself (100% response rate)



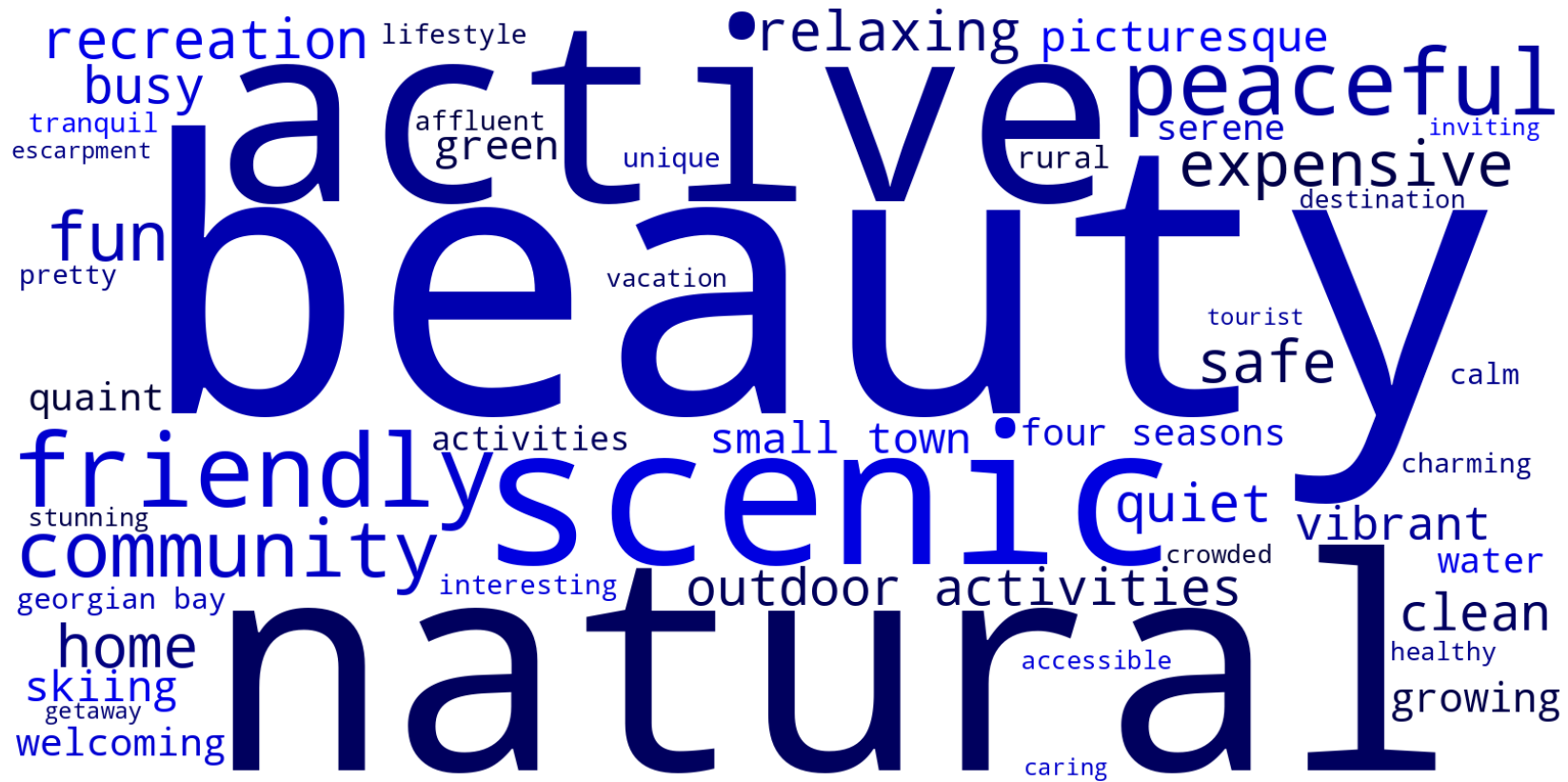


# Question 2

## Question 2

What are three words you would use to describe The Blue Mountains? (91% response rate)

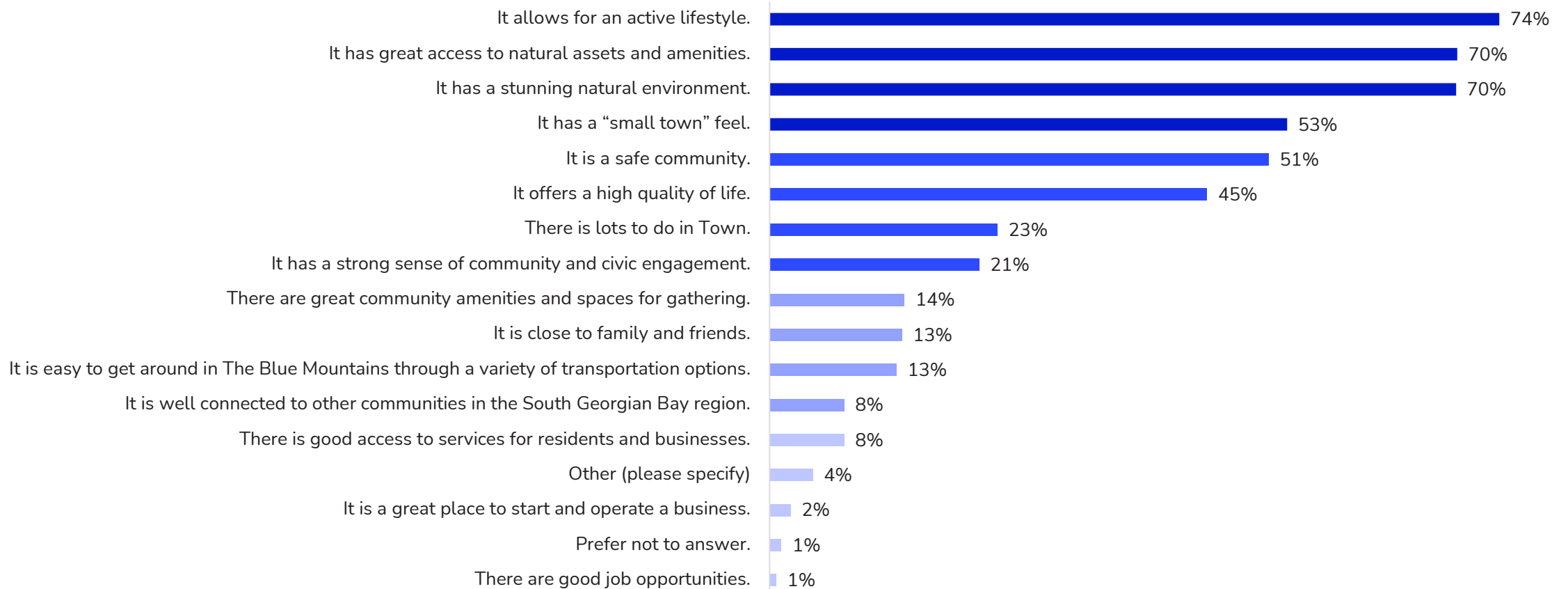
Top Responses:



# Question 3

## Question 3

What do you like most about The Blue Mountains? (91% response rate)

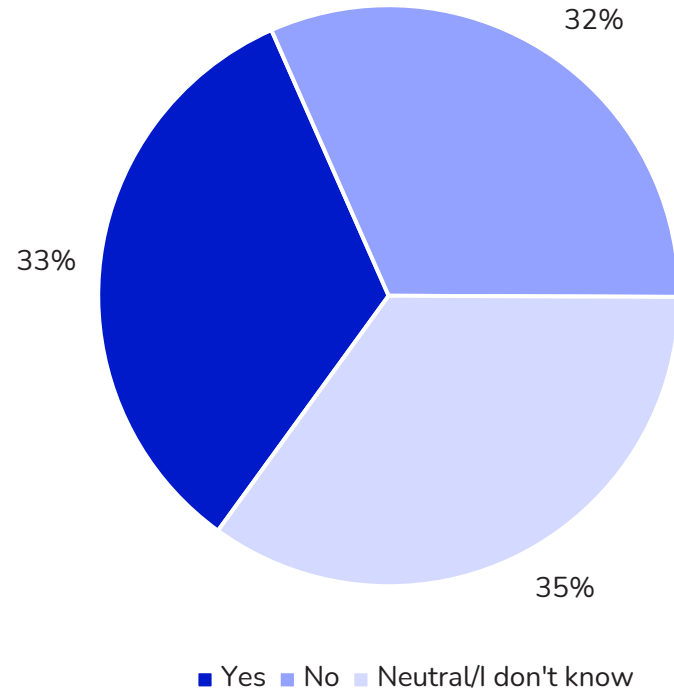


% of Respondents

# Question 4 & 5

## Question 4

Does the current vision statement\* still resonate with you? (78% response rate)



## Question 5

Why do you feel this way [about the vision statement]? (78% response rate)

### Key Findings:

- **Uninspiring and unclear vision statement:** Many respondents felt the current vision is vague and lacks inspiration. Rather than articulating a clear and future-oriented vision for the Town, it is considered a generic statement focused on Council and staff operations. Numerous participants noted that the statement fails to reflect what makes TBM unique – such as its natural beauty, small-town character, and community values – and suggested it should better capture the Town.
- **Concerns about Council and Staff Approachability:** Respondents were divided in their experiences with Town Council and staff. While some shared positive interactions, many others reported challenges such as slow response times, lack of follow-up, or inaccessible decision-makers. There was a widespread concern that approachability, as outlined in the vision statement, is not sufficient on its own in terms and that must be paired with matched by meaningful action and responsiveness. Residents want words must translate into actions.
- **Mixed feedback on communication efforts:** While some praised the Town's newsletters and email updates, others noted difficulty accessing timely or complete information. There was a call for more proactive and consistent communication that reaches a broader cross-section of the community (including working age people) and fosters trust through transparency and follow-through.

# Question 6 & 7

## Question 6

Looking ahead to 20 years in the future, what kind of place do you hope the Blue Mountains will be? (78% response rate)

### Key Findings:

- **Small-town character preserved:** Respondents strongly value the Town's small-town charm and community feel. Many expressed concern about overdevelopment and a loss of identity, emphasizing the need to maintain the area's distinct atmosphere and quality of life.
- **Protection of the natural environment:** Environmental preservation was a major priority. Residents want to see green space, natural heritage and assets, and ecological features safeguarded against overdevelopment, with long-term sustainability front-of-mind.
- **Vibrant and inclusive community:** Many envision a dynamic and socially rich community that supports arts, culture, local business, and diverse events. Inclusivity and belonging were emphasized across respondents.
- **Sustainable growth:** Growth was supported by many, but only if it is carefully managed. Respondents called for balanced, well-planned development that protects the Town's character and avoids overburdening local infrastructure.
- **Increased housing affordability:** There is strong interest in ensuring a mix of housing options that are affordable for families, workers, and young people. Affordability was seen as critical to ensuring the future inclusivity and sustainability of the local community.

## Question 7

What do you believe makes for a great community? Identify up to five qualities. (78% response rate)

**Overall Sentiment:** Responses to this question were forward-looking and reflected a deep appreciation for what makes The Blue Mountains unique and the need to respect those qualities, such as its natural assets, sense of place, and community identity, while embracing thoughtful improvements that meet the needs of residents.

### Commonly Identified Qualities:

- Sense of community
- Protected natural environment
- Reliable transportation infrastructure (e.g., roads, active transportation, public transit, etc.)
- Sustainable growth
- Small-town feel
- Cleanliness
- Safety
- Friendliness
- Beautiful
- Affordable (housing, amenities, entertainment, etc.)
- Healthcare access (e.g., family clinics, seniors' care)
- Access to recreation activities and amenities (e.g., parks, pools, sports facilities, etc.)



# Question 8

## Question 8

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What are you most concerned about when you think about the future of The Blue Mountains (78% response rate)

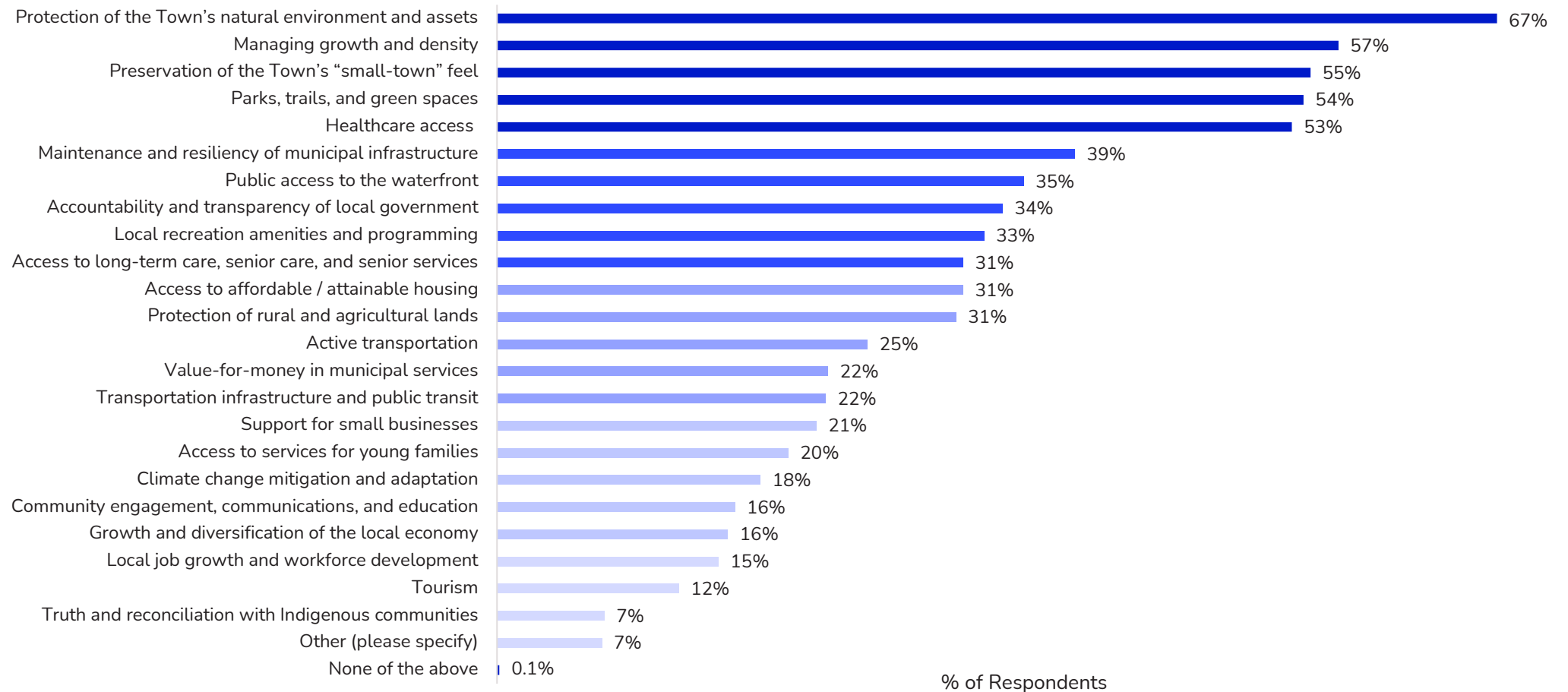
### Key Findings:

- **Overdevelopment and Loss of Small-Town Character:** Many residents are concerned that the scale and speed of development are altering the area's rural identity, reducing its small-town charm and replacing it with dense housing and seasonal properties.
- **Strain on Infrastructure and Services:** Residents noted that infrastructure is struggling to keep pace with population growth. Concerns included traffic congestion, especially along Highway 26, limited public transportation, and pressure on water, wastewater, and stormwater systems. Delays in capital projects were also mentioned.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Respondents expressed strong concern about the destruction of forests, green space, and wildlife habitats. Many emphasized the need to preserve the natural environment and scenic beauty that define the region.
- **Housing Affordability:** The rising cost of housing is pushing out young families, workers, and long-time residents. Many feel the community is becoming exclusive, with limited options for diverse and full-time populations.
- **Limited Access to Healthcare and Aging Supports:** Residents highlighted challenges accessing doctors, homecare, and long-term care. With a large senior population, many called for better planning to ensure aging in place is safe and supported.

# Question 9

## Question 9

Where would you like to see the Town focus its attention over the next several years? (78% response rate)



# Question 10 & 11

## Question 10

Are there any other priorities you would like the Town to focus on that were not listed? (30% response rate)

### Key Findings:

- **Infrastructure, Roads, and Safety:** Many respondents emphasized the need for improved infrastructure. Priorities included improved road quality (i.e., paving), safer pedestrian crossings on Highway 26, extended sidewalks, traffic calming, enhanced lighting, and water and wastewater upgrades to support growth.
- **Recreation and Community Facilities:** There was strong support for expanded recreational opportunities in the Town. Suggestions included more sports courts, updated parks, multipurpose recreation centres, dog parks, trails, and indoor fitness and aquatic facilities for all ages.
- **Leadership, Governance, and Engagement:** Residents expressed a desire for more effective civic leadership and stronger community engagement. Several comments called for improved accountability, transparency, collaboration, and responsible fiscal management within Town Council and staff.
- **Affordability and Equity in Service Delivery:** A number of responses highlighted the need for more equitable service delivery. These included calls for improved and affordable transit, better access to healthcare, increased availability of affordable senior housing, and fair investment across communities.

## Question 11

Please explain why the selected priorities are important to you. (26% response rate)

### Key Findings:

- **Community Values and Respect:** Many residents emphasized the importance of maintaining a respectful, connected community. Concerns included a perceived decline in shared values, reduced neighbourliness, and a desire to preserve the area's welcoming and considerate character.
- **Overdevelopment and Growth Concerns:** Respondents frequently raised issues with the pace and focus of development. Some feel the Town has prioritized growth over livability, resulting in overcrowding, loss of character, and increased pressure and adverse impacts on the local environment.
- **Infrastructure and Services:** A number of responses highlighted gaps in infrastructure and basic services. Concerns included the condition of gravel roads, lack of consistent year-round maintenance, and the need to adapt services to support permanent residents.
- **Seasonality and Tourism Impact:** Residents expressed concern about the growing influence of tourism and seasonal visitors. Some noted disrespectful behaviour from day-trippers and short-term renters, and a desire to rebalance the Town's priorities in favour of full-time residents.

# Question 12

## Question 12

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Is there any additional feedback you would like to share as the Town develops its updated Corporate Strategic Plan (24% response rate)

### Key Findings:

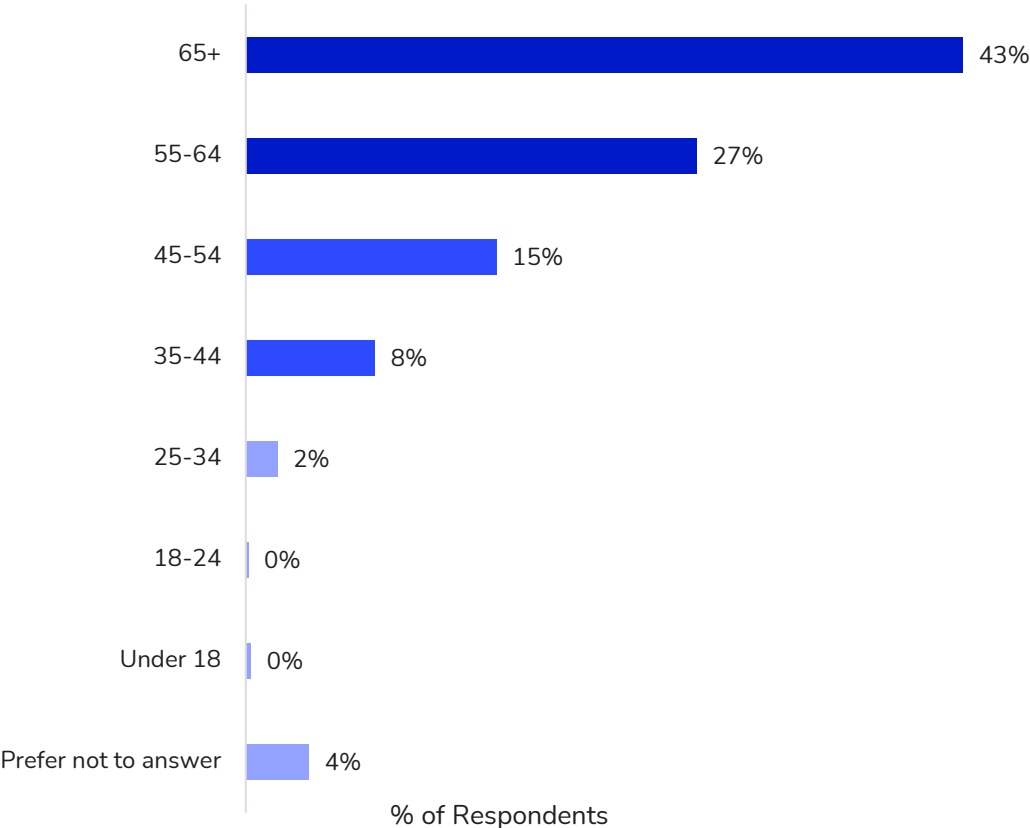
- **Reiteration of Commonly Expressed Themes:** Many of the additional comments echoed feedback shared in earlier sections of the survey. Respondents reiterated the importance of several priority areas, including transportation and infrastructure, recreation and active living, environmental preservation, growth management, access to healthcare services, and the long-term role of tourism in the local economy. These responses reinforce a consistent set of concerns and aspirations raised throughout the broader consultation.
- **Trust and Accountability in Local Government:** Many respondents emphasized the need for greater transparency, honesty, and follow-through from Council and staff. Concerns were raised about whether public input is genuinely considered, with calls to rebuild trust through more meaningful engagement and visible action on resident priorities.
- **Concerns about Council and Staff:** A number of responses expressed frustrations with Council and senior Town staff. Comments pointed to perceived inefficiencies, lack of leadership and qualifications, and frustration with internal decision-making processes and spending priorities.



# Question 13 & 14

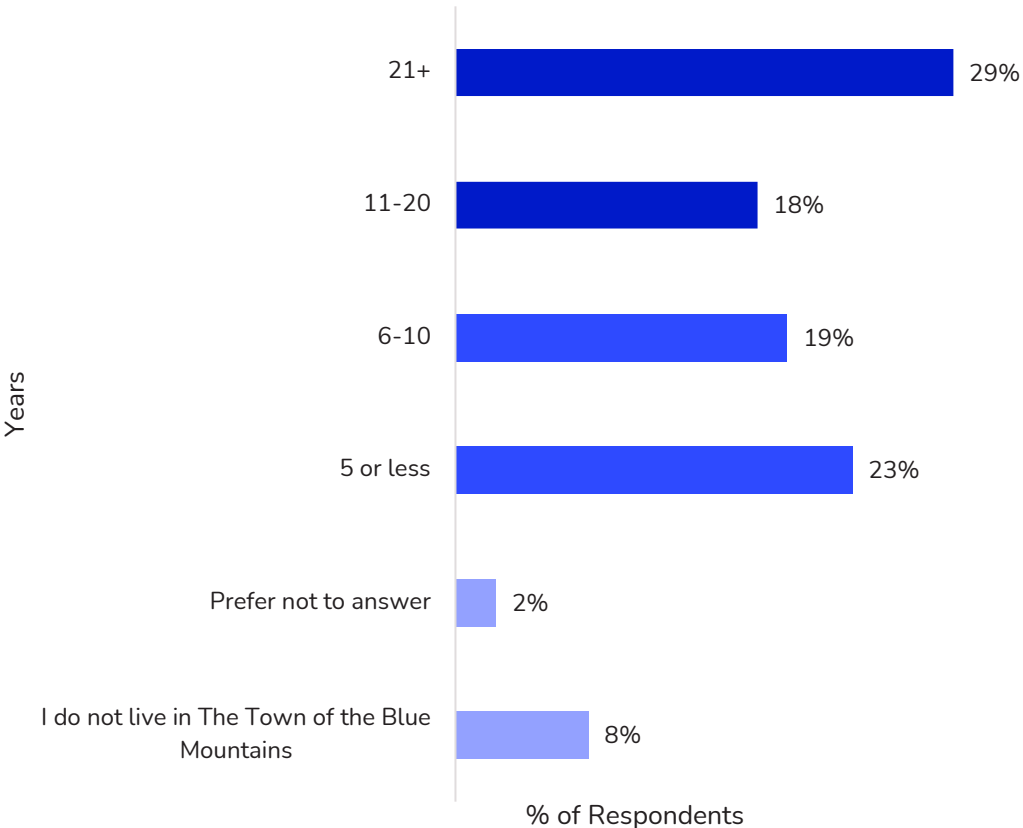
## Question 13

What is your age? (76% response rate)



## Question 14

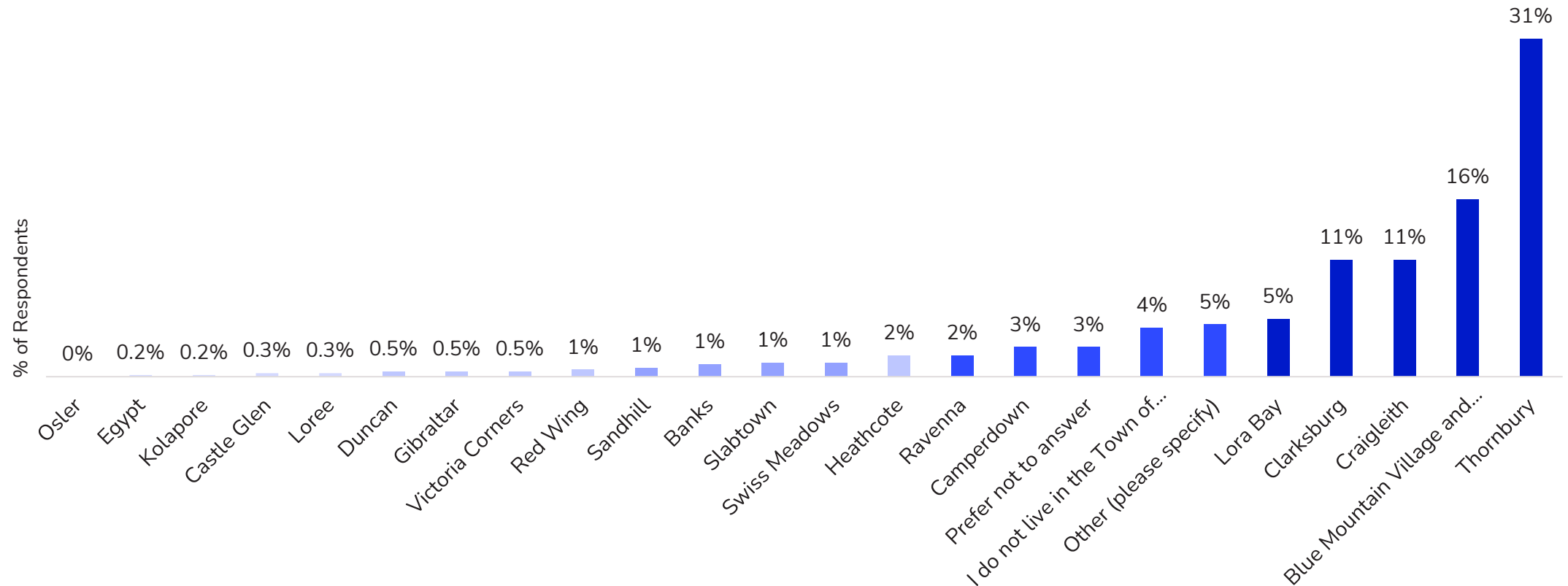
How long have you lived in the Town of the Blue Mountains? (76% response rate)



# Question 15

## Question 15

If you are a resident of The Blue Mountains, in which community do you live? (76% response rate)



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## Appendix B | Staff Survey Results

# Survey Methodology and Metrics

## Context

- The staff survey was available on SurveyMonkey from June 12 to July 2, 2025.
- The survey included 12 questions soliciting feedback on employee priorities for the Town, workplace culture, and the previous 2020-2024 Corporate Strategic Plan as well as two demographic questions.

## Response Metrics

- A total of 97 staff participated in the survey, and there were 76 complete responses.
- Not all respondents answered every question, and 7 out of the 14 questions were optional to answer.
- The survey included representation from all Town departments.
  - Operations and Planning and Development Services had the highest responses rates at 20% for each department.
  - 12% selected “Prefer Not to Say” when asked about their department membership.
- 41% of respondents have worked for the Town for between one and five years, whereas 23% have been with the Town for 10+ years.

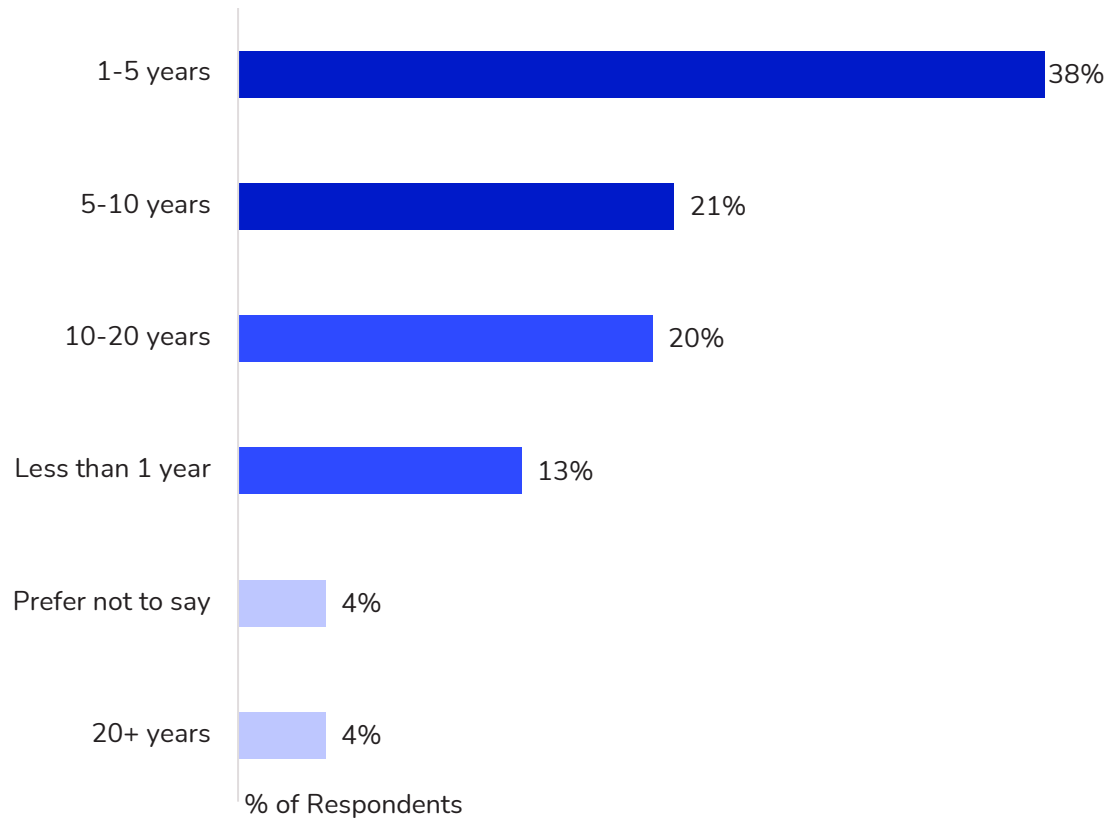
## Key Assumptions & Limitations

- This survey was self-selecting and did not use a randomized sample. As a result, the survey results may not be broadly representative of the Town’s employee cohort.

# Question 1 & 2

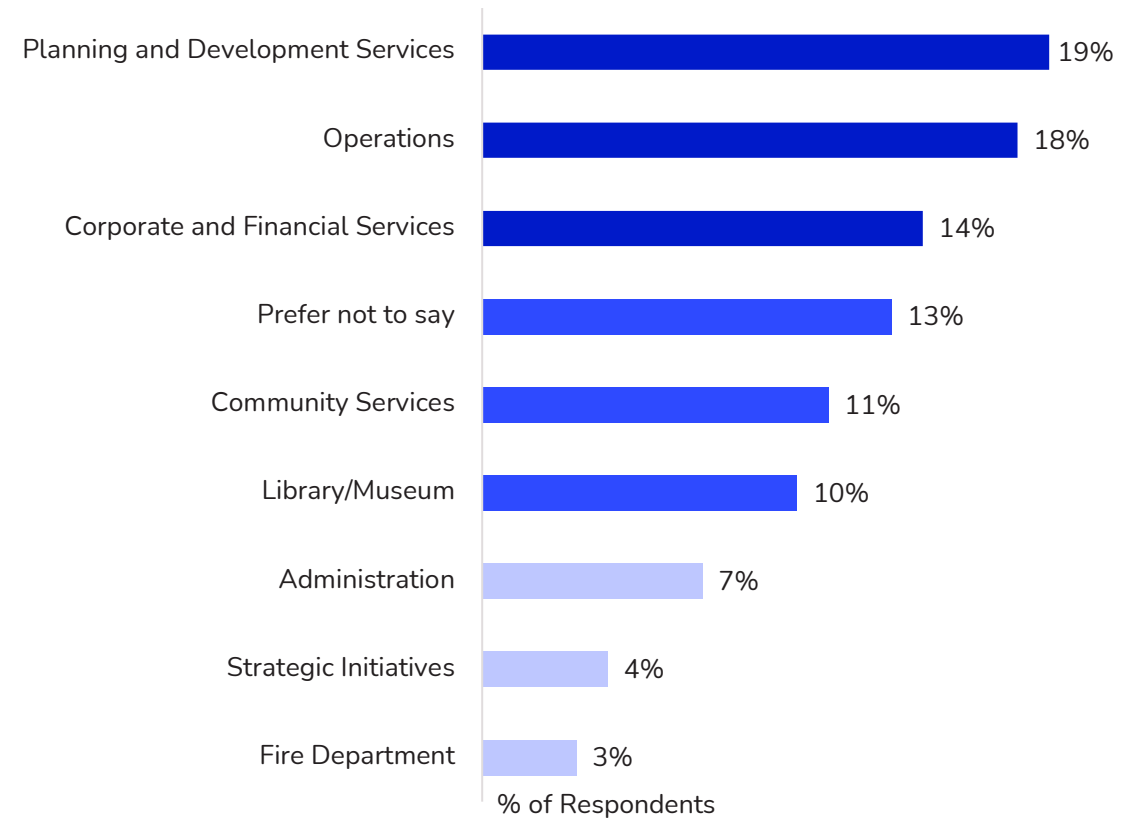
## Question 1

How long have you worked for the Town? (100% response rate)



## Question 2

What Town department do you work in? (100% response rate)

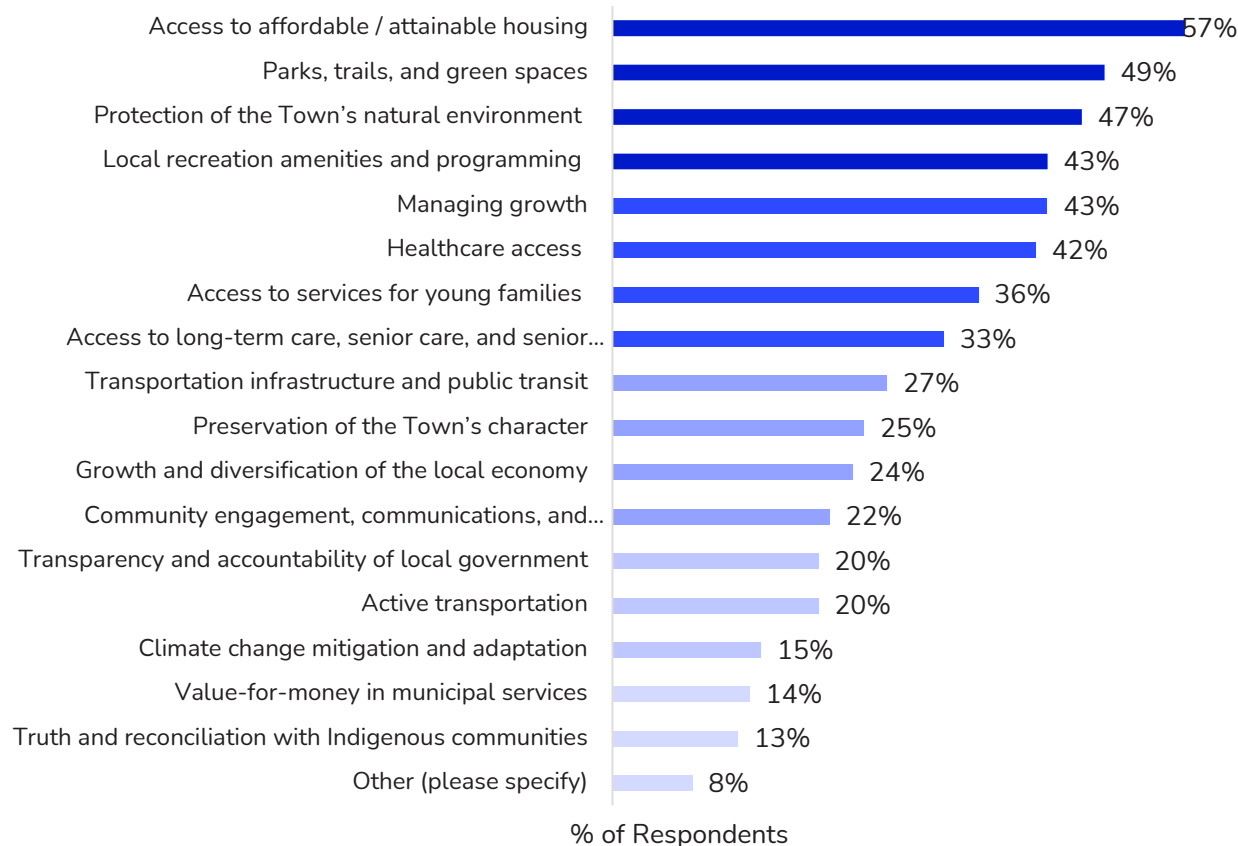




# Question 3 & 4

## Question 3

From your perspective, what are your top priorities for the Town in terms of where it should focus attention over the next several years? (91% response rate)



## Question 4

Is there one priority that stands out to you as being most important for the Town to consider as it looks to the years ahead? (66% response rate)

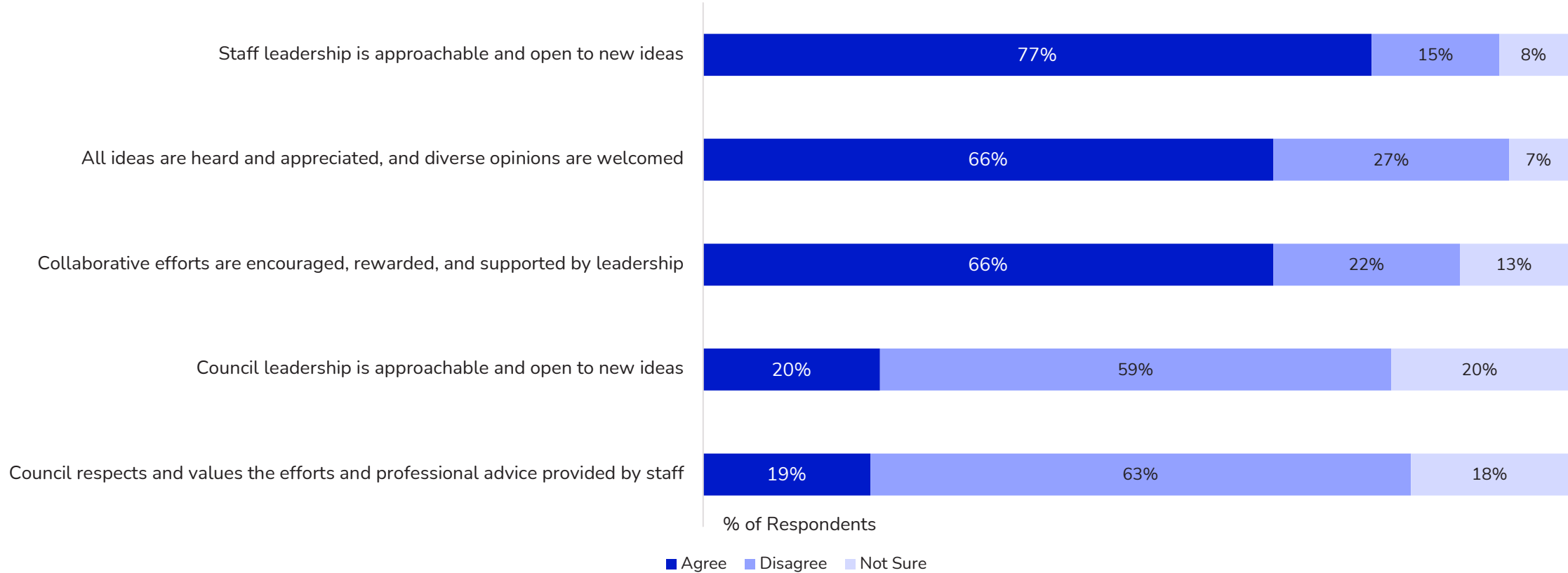
### Key Findings:

- **Affordable and attainable housing:** Respondents consistently emphasized the lack of affordable and attainable housing in TBM. Many called for a greater supply of both rental and ownership options to support local workers, young families, and Town staff.
- **Managing growth:** Many raised concerns about rapid residential expansion and its impacts. Respondents called for coordinated planning to ensure infrastructure, services, and staffing levels keep pace with population and development pressures.
- **Environmental and community preservation:** Participants stressed the importance of protecting green spaces, natural resources, and the Town's unique character. Many expressed concern that ongoing development could erode long-term environmental and cultural sustainability.
- **Access to healthcare and community services:** Several respondents highlighted the need to improve access to key services, including healthcare, recreation, and family supports. They emphasized the need to ensure that both young families and seniors can access timely, affordable services locally.

# Question 5

## Question 5

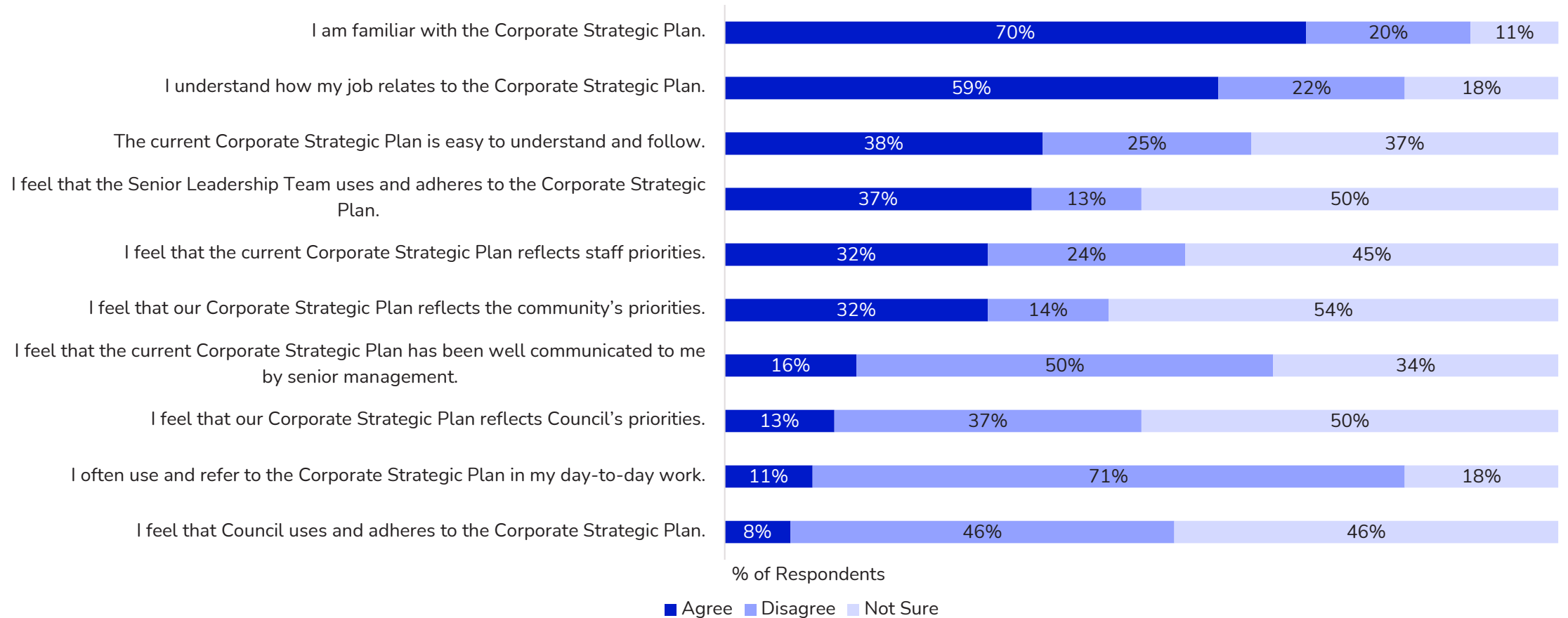
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your workplace: (91% response rate)



# Question 6

## Question 6

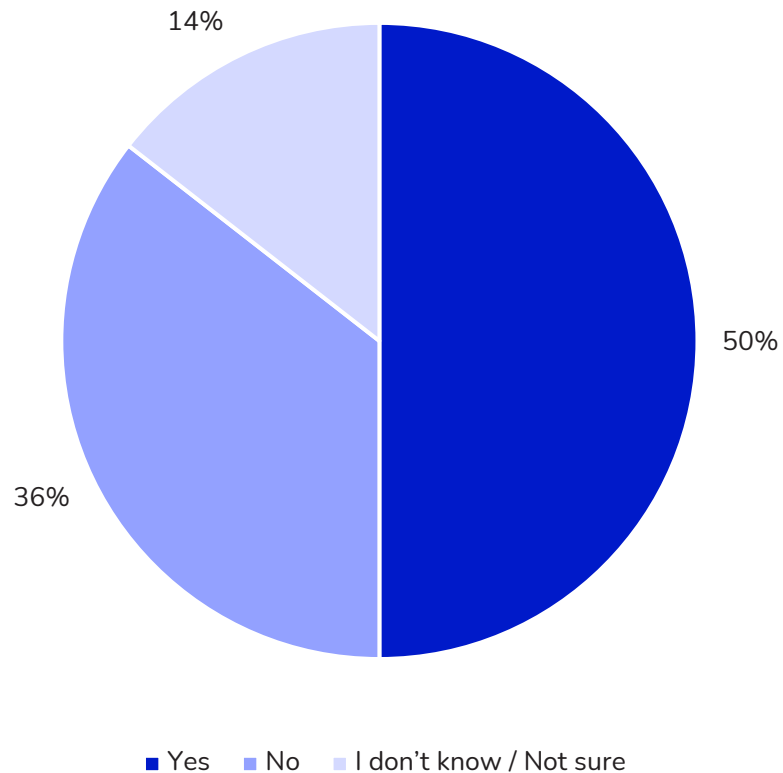
Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your workplace: (78% response rate)



# Question 7 & 8

## Question 7

Does the current vision statement\* resonate with your vision for the Town? (78% response rate)



## Question 8

What could be improved in the vision statement? (37% response rate)

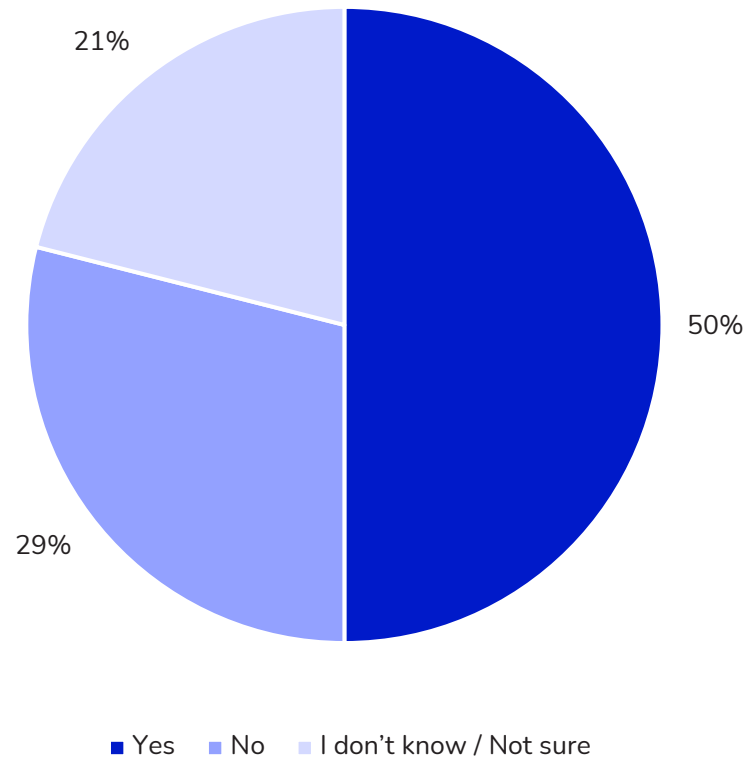
### Key Findings:

- **Disconnect between vision and practice:** Many respondents felt that while the vision statement may be well written, it does not reflect how decisions are made or how Council and staff operate. Concerns included lack of follow-through, performative goals, and a gap between the statement's promises and actual engagement with staff and the community.
- **Concerns about Council approachability:** Some respondents expressed that Council does not always feel approachable or receptive to differing perspectives, including those from staff. There was a desire for Council to be willing to hear a greater diversity of opinions (including dissenting opinions) and also demonstrate stronger leadership in acting on the Town's vision.
- **Need for clearer future orientation:** Respondents emphasized that the vision should be more forward-looking, inspirational, and long-term in nature. Some suggested it lacked a concrete picture of the Town's future or failed to serve as a true guiding statement.
- **Desire for expanded or more specific content:** Respondents noted that the vision should be more forward-looking, inspirational, and long-term in nature. Some suggested it lacked a concrete picture of the Town's future or failed to serve as a true guiding statement.

# Question 9 & 10

## Question 9

Do you feel like the current mission statement reflects the Town's purpose or mission going forward? (78% Response Rate)



## Question 10

What could be improved in the mission statement? (36% response rate)

### Key Findings:

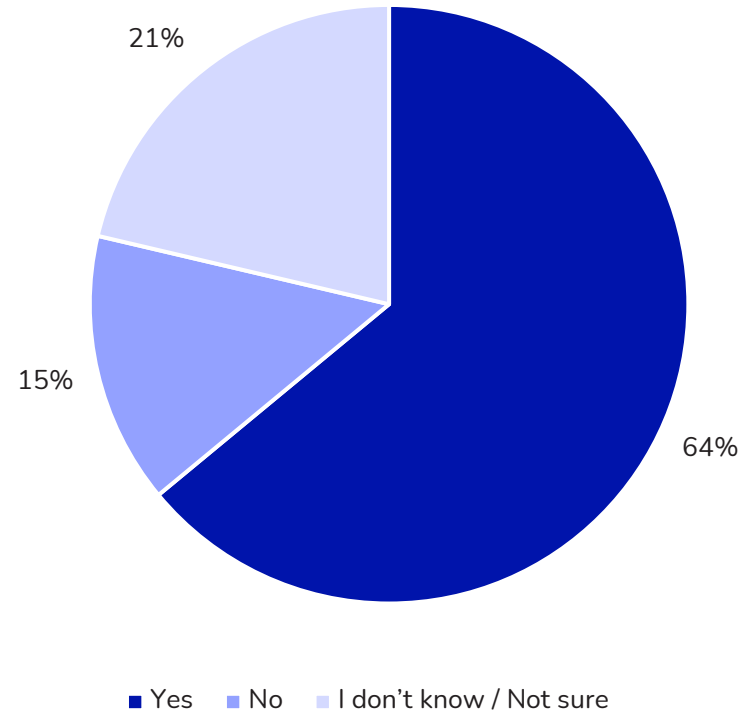
- **Too internally focused:** Respondents noted that the mission statement centers too heavily on Council and staff, rather than on residents or the broader community. Several suggested it should more clearly emphasize service to the public, not internal roles.
- **Lacks clarity and boldness:** Respondents felt the statement is overly general, vague, or filled with "fluffy" language. Suggestions included making it more direct, confident, and practical to clearly reflect priorities, goals, and responsibilities.
- **Insufficient future orientation:** Several comments indicated that the mission does not adequately convey a forward-looking or strategic direction. Respondents recommended stronger links to future growth, sustainability, and the evolving needs of the community.



# Question 11 & 12

## Question 11

The Town's 2020-2024 Corporate Strategic Plan includes 3 “Pillars of Sustainability”. Do you believe these should remain as distinct considerations for Council and staff decision-making? (77% response rate)



## Question 12

Are there specific changes you would like to see made to the Pillars of Sustainability or how they are reflected in the Corporate Strategic Plan moving forward? (25% response rate)

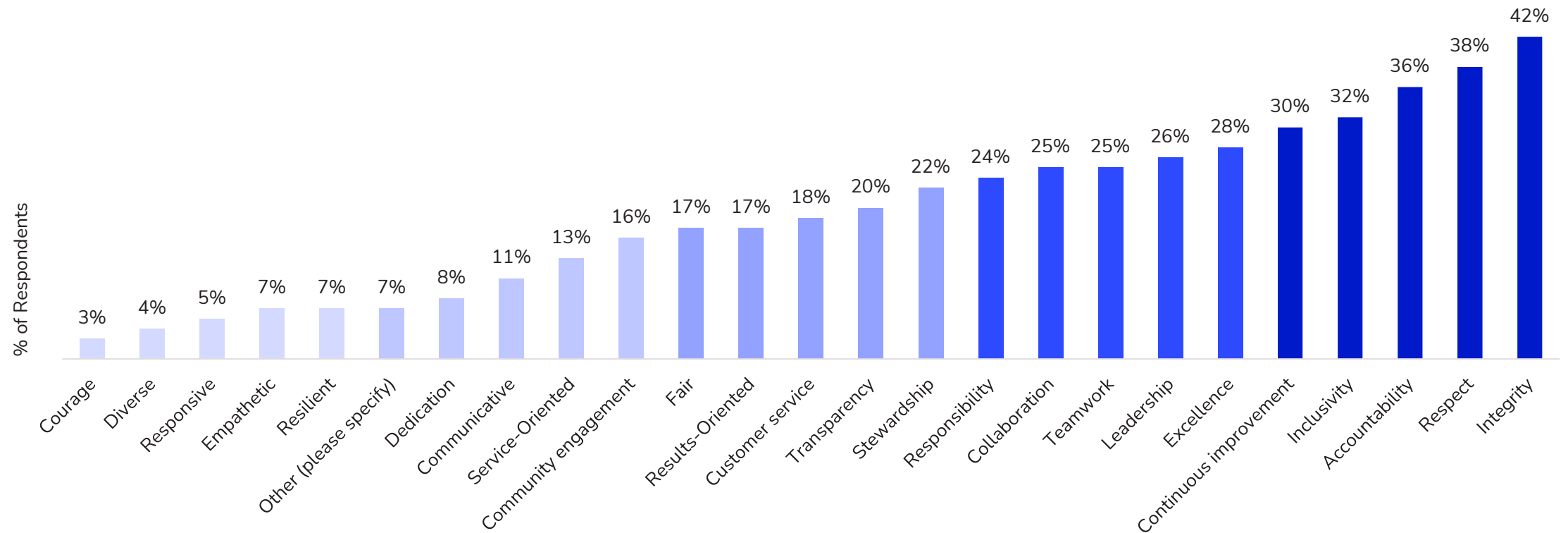
### Key Findings:

- **Limited desire for change:** Many respondents explicitly stated that no changes are needed to the existing Pillars of Sustainability. This suggests a level of satisfaction with the current framework and its continued relevance to the Town's direction.
- **Desire for greater clarity and practicality:** Several respondents called for clearer definitions of the pillars and how they work together in practice. Without this, some felt the pillars risk being aspirational or performative rather than actionable or measurable.
- **Perception of imbalance among Pillars:** Some respondents felt that the economic pillar receives disproportionate attention, while environmental and social aspects are inconsistently applied or underdeveloped. Calls were made to elevate climate action, equity, and community livability.

# Question 13

## Question 13

Below is a list of organizational values often associated with municipalities. What values resonate for you as an employee of the Town? Select up to 5. (78% response rate)



# Question 14

## Question 14

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**Additional feedback for the Town to consider in the development of the new Corporate Strategic Plan.** (23% response rate)

### Key Findings:

- **Strengthen alignment across the organization:** Several respondents emphasized the need for stronger links between the strategic plan and departmental or operational goals. They stressed the importance of engaging frontline staff and ensuring consistent alignment throughout the organization.
- **Support for staff and workplace culture:** Respondents called for greater focus on staff well-being, inclusion, and workplace culture. Suggestions included building respect between leadership and staff, improving communication, and creating space for innovation and growth across the organization.
- **Ground the plan in values and realism:** Multiple comments urged the Town to build the plan on clearly defined values and keep it practical and achievable. Respondents expressed skepticism of overused language and stressed the importance of meaningful implementation.

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## Appendix C | PESTLE Inputs

# Introduction to the PESTLE Framework

A **PESTLE analysis** focuses on six key factors to better understand and identify key trends, issues and concerns in the macroenvironment that should be considered as inputs into the strategic planning process.

Although typically externally focused, this PESTLE analysis also includes internal considerations that may influence the future direction of the Town.

These factors were considered in the exploration and analysis of the key themes outlined above in the SWOT above.

<b>P</b>	<b>Political</b>	Factors related to government policy, priorities, structure, and roles.
<b>E</b>	<b>Economic</b>	Factors affecting the economic environment in which the municipality operates.
<b>S</b>	<b>Social</b>	Factors impacting the wider societal environment, including demographics, culture, and values.
<b>T</b>	<b>Technological</b>	Emerging technologies and innovations that can impact municipal service delivery.
<b>L</b>	<b>Legal</b>	The legislative and regulatory framework that the municipality exists within.
<b>E</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	Environmental and ecological factors, including climate risks and sustainability.

Note that there may be some overlap between PESTLE inputs, whereby an identified issue applies to more than one category (e.g., housing affordability is both an economic and social factor). In the interest of efficiency, inputs have not been duplicated across categories.



# Political Factors (1/2)

- **Absence of future vision:** The Town does not currently have a vision for the future that is widely agreed upon, which is likely adding to challenges in decision-making and prioritization. There are some corporate vision statements that exist in various plans and documents (e.g., Corporate Strategic Plan, TBM Future Story, Official Plan), but it is unclear whether or how these fit together.
- **Decision-making challenges:** There is a perception that Town Council is challenged in making decisions in part due to the lack of a clear vision or set of priorities for the Town. As a result, progress on projects and priorities, such as the Official Plan and some capital projects, can often be significantly delayed, which has resulted in frustration among residents and other interest-holders.
- **Strong Mayor powers:** Strong Mayor powers came into effect in TBM on May 1, 2025. The current Mayor has delegated some of these powers back to Council and CAO, as appropriate, but future Town Mayors may use their enhanced authorities differently. There may be future provincial changes to the strong mayor legislation that could impact local governance.
- **“Creature of the province”:** Like all municipalities, the Town derives its powers and authorities from the province. This can impose limits in terms of what municipalities can do on certain policy or operational matters as their fiscal and legislative autonomy is limited.
- **Focus on transparency and accountability:** There is a strong and sustained demand from the community for greater transparency and accountability in local governance. In response, the Town established the Accountability and Transparency Committee in 2023. This reflects a broader shift toward open and accessible government and may influence how policies are developed, communicated, and implemented.
- **Local governance structure and community representation:** In smaller and amalgamated communities like The Blue Mountains, there can be perceived gaps in local representation and uneven access to municipal programs and infrastructure that intensify community scrutiny and reduce trust in government.
- **Changing provincial priorities and/or legislation:** Provincial legislative or regulatory changes may impact TBM governance, policies, service delivery, and funding, among other elements (e.g. Bill 17, strong mayor power expansion, etc.)
- **Upcoming municipal election:** The October 2026 election could result in a change on Council, which may impact Council’s defined priorities as set out in the 2025-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan.

# Political Factors (2/2)

- **Incivility in local political culture:** There are heightened concerns across Ontario and Canada about the decline in civic dialogue and political discourse, and the rising instances of harassment and bullying of public servants and elected officials. This has been accompanied by the continued erosion of trust and growing skepticism towards government institutions.
- **Regional collaboration:** There is interest in greater collaboration with neighbouring municipalities, such as Meaford and Collingwood, to look explore more partnerships and shared services that improve efficiency of services and quality of life for community members. This aligns with continued pressure from the province to identify efficiencies, explore opportunities to reduce costs, and optimize limited resources and also reduces the risk that in the absence of sufficient municipal action, the province may pursue governance reforms.
- **County relationship and two-tier structure:** There are differing local perspectives on the utility of the Town's relationship with the County in terms of the value TBM receives for its financial contributions to the County. There is also ongoing uncertainty around potential changes by the province to the two-tier structure, including "who does what" through uploads or downloads of certain services.

# Economic Factors

- **Trade war and economic uncertainty:** The constantly shifting position of the Trump administration regarding tariffs and the impact of the US economy on the global economy may adversely impact residents, local businesses and industries and the corporation.
- **Impacts of tourism:** Tourism is TBM's economic engine. However, there remains strong seasonal aspect to local tourism, and risks such as climate change and changing weather patterns may impact service demands. Further, beyond the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT), the Town, like many other tourism-based municipalities, does not benefit from economic growth and has limited fiscal capacity to address the impacts of tourism on Town services and infrastructure.
- **Growth in domestic tourism:** Many Ontario communities are reporting surges in local tourism in response to the uncertain economic relationship with the United States and as part of a concerted effort to support the Canadian economy by staying and spending locally.
- **Limited commercial and industrial tax base:** The Town is heavily reliant on residential property taxes. Slowing housing growth and broader economic uncertainty could limit future revenue generation, posing risks to long-term financial sustainability and the ability to fund core services and infrastructure.
- **Limited opportunities to diversify municipal revenues:** Like all of Ontario's 444 municipalities, the Town is limited in its ability to generate or diversify revenues. As a result, the Town will need to balance investment in new or expanded services and infrastructure with affordability for residents (e.g., tax rate and user fee increases).
- **Infrastructure-related financial pressures:** The Town's Asset Management Plan requires a significant investment in order to maintain municipal infrastructure in a state-of-good-repair and build the new infrastructure required to keep pace with its growing population. Increasing construction costs, inflation, supply chain challenges, and the impact of tariffs may increase the cost and complexity of delivering capital projects.
- **Changes to growth funding tools:** The province continues to directly impact municipalities' ability to fund growth related infrastructure, including most recently through changes to Development Charges through Bill 17.

# Social Factors

- **Mature demographic profile:** The Town has a significantly older population, compared to the provincial average. This increases demand for seniors and age-friendly services, including accessible infrastructure (transportation), recreational program and space, healthcare access, and long-term care.
- **Attraction and retention of youth, young families, and working age people:** Given current demographics and housing trends, there is a risk of TBM becoming a retirement community, which may impact the Town's long-term economic sustainability due to a shrinking workforce as well as the overall vibrancy and diversity of the community achieved through a multi-generational population.
- **Housing pressures:** Population growth, demographic shifts, and regional migration have increased demand for housing, while supply has struggled to keep pace. In TBM, there is insufficient housing to support the local workforce, which may have downstream impacts in key sectors like tourism and hospitality. Municipalities are under pressure from senior governments to accelerate housing development, often with limited tools and funding and no control over market forces.
- **Social tensions:** As in many other rapidly growing municipalities, there are some lines of social division between newer arrivals or "transplants" to the Town and long-term residents. These dynamics can influence community cohesion and public discourse around how the Town should grow and evolve over time.
- **Income variability:** There is a common perception that TBM residents are primarily high-income earners; while there are multiple high-income households, these skew the income average. In reality, 50% of local households make less than \$100,000 year. This disparity impacts affordability and access to services, and the Town will need to consider how to balance the needs of all residents, regardless of income level.
- **Healthcare access:** Many municipalities are contending with the shortage of family physicians. In Grey and Bruce Counties, more than 30,000 people do not a primary health care provider, and that challenge will only become more acute given the region's projected growth.
- **Evolving resident service expectations:** As is the case in other municipalities that have experienced rapid growth, including a pandemic-related influx of new residents from urban areas, there are increasing expectations regarding the the scope, speed, and quality of municipal services, which must be managed.
- **Community engagement:** The Town operates in a civic environment where residents are highly engaged and expect frequent and in-depth consultation on any issue that may impact them. While this presents valuable opportunities for civic input and transparency, it can also create contribute to delays in project delivery and policy execution.

# Technological Factors

- **Digital modernization:** Although a trend underway before but amplified by the pandemic, municipalities are under pressure to modernize operations by optimizing digital tools and methods of internal and external service delivery. The overarching goal is to maintain (or reduce) costs, improve productivity, and enhance the customer experience without sacrificing service quality. The Town is advancing some of these efforts (e.g., implementation of CityWorks for asset management and Dayforce HCM for human resources; online parking renewals and service requests).
- **Artificial Intelligence:** There is the potential, as some municipalities are exploring, to consider the benefits of generative AI to streamline service delivery (e.g., AI-powered chatbots, traffic management), support community engagement (e.g., survey analysis), enhance predictive analytics for maintenance and infrastructure, etc. However, this needs to be balanced with clear policy guidelines that consider data privacy, ethical use, and oversight mechanisms.
- **Data-driven decision-making:** Many municipalities are focused on improve their data architecture – including governance, policies, training, etc. – to support more robust and consistent data collection to help inform operational and strategic decision-making and resource allocation.
- **Performance measurement and reporting:** Related to improved data analytics and literacy, municipalities of all sizes are increasingly using tools like PowerBI and dashboards to understand and measure how they are doing in the interests of providing better information to Council and the public.
- **Cybersecurity vulnerability:** The growing risk of cybersecurity threats and attacks – and recent cases such as the cyberattacks on Huntsville and Hamilton – highlight the vulnerabilities of municipal networks and data. Continued focus must be placed on education and training training, ongoing investments to strengthen IT infrastructure and the development of readiness procedures and protocols.



# Legal Factors

- **Municipalities as an entity are governed by provincial legislation and regulations:** Key frameworks include *Municipal Act, 2001*, *Planning Act*, *Development Charges Act*, and *Building Code Act*, and many others. This legislative relationship between the province and municipalities sets the boundaries (including the limits) of the scope of activities and powers of local government. As noted above, this legislative and regulatory context can change and directly impact municipal governance and operations.
- **Provincial policies, legislation and regulations directly inform areas of municipal activity:** Employment and labour law; privacy and information management; human rights and accessibility; environmental protection and heritage preservation; transportation standards, etc.
- **Risk management:** Municipalities are increasingly facing legal scrutiny in areas such as planning, accessibility, procurement, all of which indicate the importance of risk management planning and legal compliance and monitoring.

# Environmental Factors

- **Protection of the natural environment:** TBM's natural landscape is critical to its identity. There are concerns about the risks of growth, increased recreational use, and overtourism on the integrity of the Town's natural assets and heritage (e.g, loss of wetlands, woodlots, and forests). These potential risks will need to be appropriately balanced and managed as the Town grows.
- **Climate change impacts:** Like many other shoreline municipalities, the Town must continue to plan for and evaluate growing risks to municipal services and infrastructure as it relates to more extreme weather events resulting from a more volatile climate. There may also be impacts on the seasonal tourist economy, which further indicates the benefit of continued economic diversification.
- **Sustainable approaches to development:** Provincial pressures to accelerate the planning and construction of new developments has raised concerns about the ability to apply standards or tools that can support enhanced environmental sustainability (e.g., (i.e., green building standards, waste management, etc.).
- **Transportation and accessibility:** There are limited options to travel to or within the Town without owning or driving a personal vehicle. Public transit is limited to the Collingwood/Blue Mountain link, but this is not considered a sufficient mode of transit, particularly as the Town grows.
- **Active transportation:** Growing public and governmental emphasis on sustainable, healthy communities is driving expectations for safe, accessible active transportation infrastructure such as sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. While the Town's Transportation Master Plan outlines strategies to expand these modes, implementation has been slow and there is pressure to accelerate implementation and ensure integrated, connected networks. These expectations are tied to broader climate goals, public health outcomes, and quality of life standards.

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## Appendix D | Sources Consulted

# Sources Consulted

The following Town were consulted as part of the development of this report. Additional data and information was also provided by the Town directly and is not listed below as it is not publicly available.

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