

# COMMUNITY SURVEY REPORT

As part of the community engagement for the Atlantic Beach CAMA Plan Update, the project team conducted a community survey. The survey ran from February 7 – February 28, and was available online and on paper copies available at Town Hall. A total of 428 people took the survey, including one paper copy that staff entered into the online software.

The survey was made up of three sections, each with a different type of question.



The first section asked about the importance of several specific topics that the project team had identified as possibly important for inclusion in the plan.

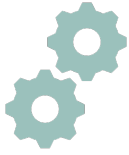


The second section asked respondents to think broadly about the future of the Town.



The final section collected information about the respondents.

The following pages give an overview of the key findings from each section. The full results, including the text of all comments, will be included in the appendix of the plan.



# SPECIFIC GOALS

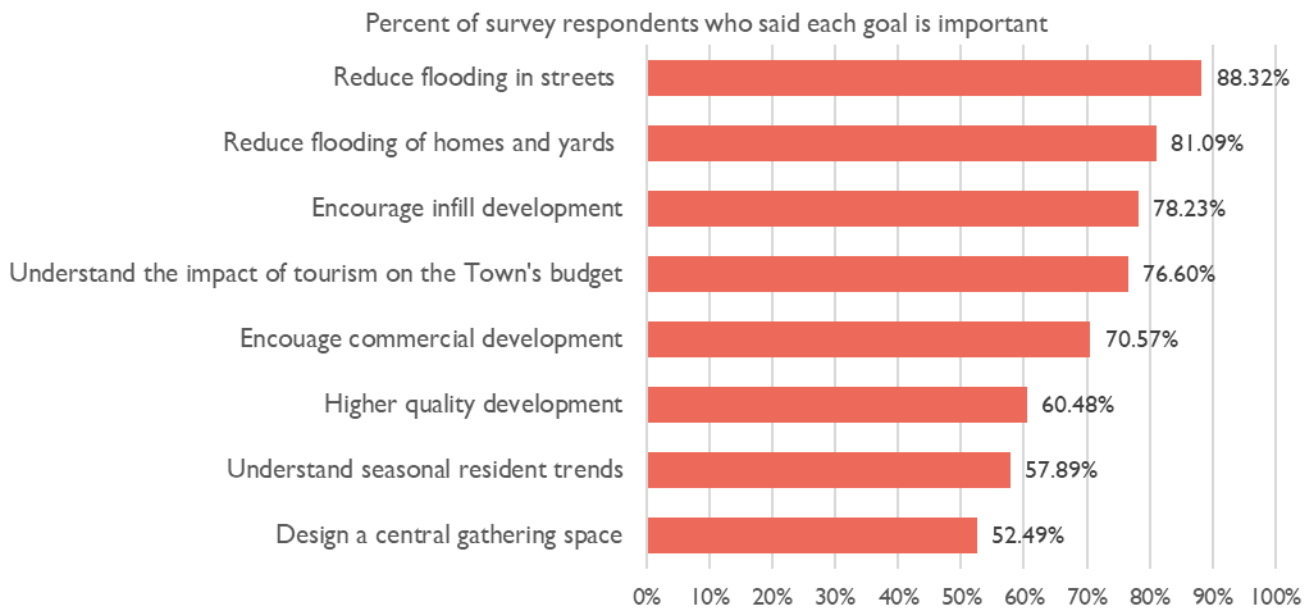


The first section presented respondents with eight topics and asked whether the respondent thought each was important for Atlantic Beach to consider, not important, or that they weren't sure. These questions were designed to help the Town know what issues most need attention in the plan and in future Town efforts. Each question also included a place for respondents to leave any comments related to that topic.

This chart shows the number of respondents who said that a goal was important, and ranks the issues with the one that most people said was important at the top. Note that even the goal with the least number of "important" votes still had over 52% of respondents agreeing that it is important.

The two top-ranked goals both have to do with flooding after storms. After that come some development-related topics and having a better understanding of the impacts of tourism on the Town's budget. Understanding trends in seasonal residency and designing a central gathering space for the Town were the lowest-ranked.

## Goals



133 respondents wrote something on the question asking about other goals not listed in the survey.

Some common themes emerged from these responses:

- Improve the Causeway with more diverse businesses and development on empty lots;
- Install and improve sidewalks and bike infrastructure around town;
- Need for cleanup and better maintenance of both public and private spaces, including everyday garbage, dog waste, and after-storm cleanup;
- Need to increase the number of activities for families with children;
- Consider banning or reducing driving on beaches; and
- Public sewer—comments were of two types, with some calling for the Town to invest in public sewer infrastructure, and others strongly discouraging it.



# BROAD VISIONING



The next section asked respondents to “think big” about the future of the Town. It asked three open-ended questions aimed at understanding the broader vision for the Town. These responses will be used to update the Vision Statement in the plan, which serves as the “North Star” that guides the community’s choices over the next 20 years.

## Imagine...

The first question asked respondents to imagine they travelled to the future and saw Atlantic Beach in 20 years, and asked, “What do you hope you see as you look around?”

The responses showed consensus on most points, and many people’s answers spoke to one of three key topic areas:

### The overall image and feel of the Town:

- A small, quaint beach town;
- A town that is safe, clean, and well-maintained;
- More family-oriented activities and businesses; and
- More restaurants and retail businesses, but a focus on local “mom and pop” small businesses, rather than becoming a “commercialized” area.

### Development and the built environment:

- Infill in vacant lots;
- Higher quality and attractive construction and redevelopment;
- Small-scale development/redevelopment – many people mentioned “no more high rises;” and
- Development of the Circle (as planned).

### Public infrastructure and government:

- Walkable and bikeable town with infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks, bike paths, bike parking;
- Environmental focus, including dark skies, green construction, landscaping and trees;
- Improvements to public parks and the boardwalk area; and
- Overall “good government” including responsive officials and staff.



The final question in the visioning section asked:

## What would you change about Atlantic Beach to make it a better place to live?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this question drew some of the most diverse responses, with many people giving highly specific ideas. Still, the common themes were in line with the results of the rest of the survey. This page offers a sampling of these responses, and highlights common responses shared by multiple respondents.

Utilize natural areas with more trails.

It's currently too spread out. I would focus on making the circle and causeway a central location for shopping/dining and make it walkable and friendly to bikes/carts.

More beach access points, including handicap accessible accesses and bathroom facilities, and a public boat ramp.

Focus less on condos for folks that have money for 2nd homes, have places for families to be able to stay

Clean up some of the under kept businesses and homes.

More community events and opportunities for locals to get together.

A few more service oriented businesses (pharmacy, medical office, fast food).

A dog park!

More year-round businesses, restaurants and shops.

Continue the plans that are in progress and to update AB, the oldest community on the island, we don't want to be we don't want to be perceived as "tired."

Renovate and rejuvenate the empty commercial properties. If this isn't possible then remove or convert them to another use.

More community events and opportunities for locals to get together.



# WHO RESPONDED?



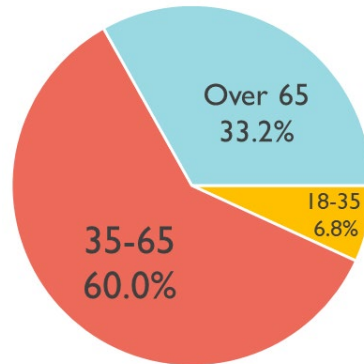
In order to understand who responded to the survey and ensure that a wide variety of perspectives were included, the survey asked three questions aimed at getting to know the respondent.

A grand total of

# 428

people took the survey.

Age of Respondent



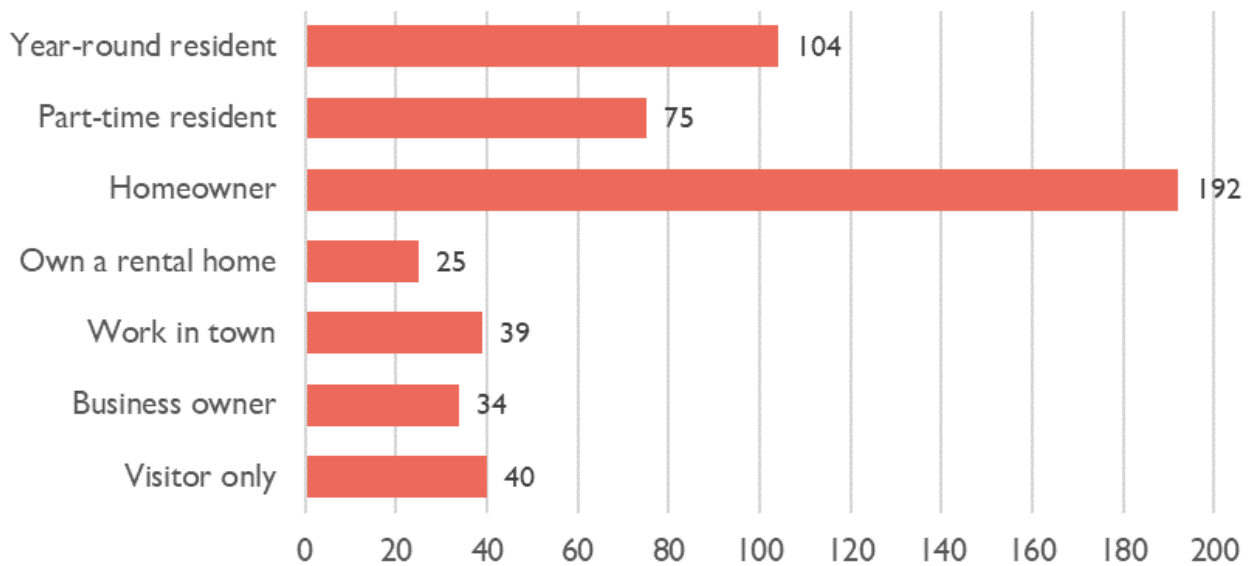
# 23%

of respondents live in a home with children.

Most respondents were between 35 and 65 years old, and about a third of respondents were over 65. This mix is fairly representative of the age structure of Town residents, with the exception of those under 18.

This group of respondents is important because of the Town's reputation as a family-friendly community, and because they can speak to children's needs, filling the gap in age of survey respondents.

Connection to Atlantic Beach



The survey drew responses from a wide range of people connected to Atlantic Beach, including more than 100 year-round residents and 75 part-time residents. 192 people who own and live in a home in Town at least part-time responded. 40 visitors also took the survey, providing an important perspective, but importantly not overshadowing the responses from year-round or part-time residents.