



PLAN ANTIGONISH COUNTY

WHAT WE HEARD: INITIAL CONSULTATION SUMMARY

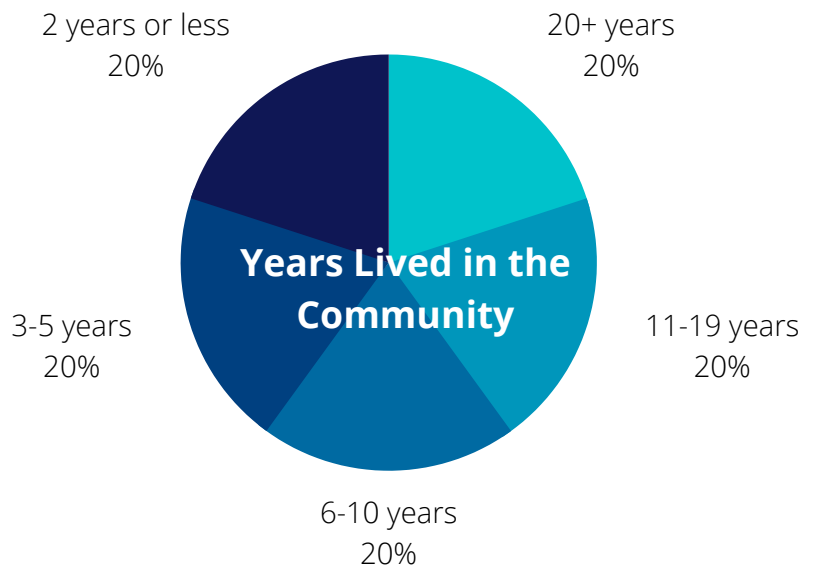
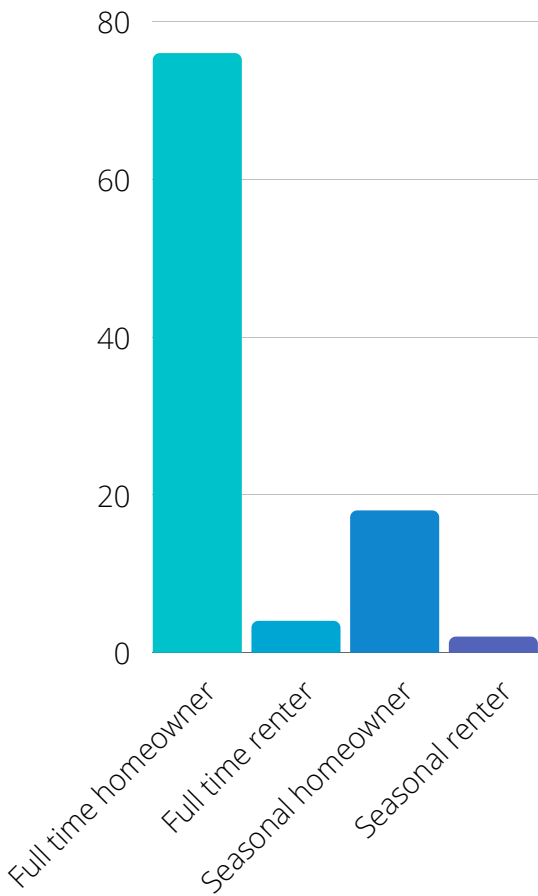
April 2022

What We Did

- + Community Open Houses to introduce the project (November 2021)
- + Public Survey (November 2021 through February 2022)
- + Online Interactive Map (November 2021 through February 2022)
- + Stakeholder Meetings (January-February 2022)
- + Community Visioning Workbooks (January-February 2022)
- + Email, letter & phone submissions of feedback (November 2021-February 2022)

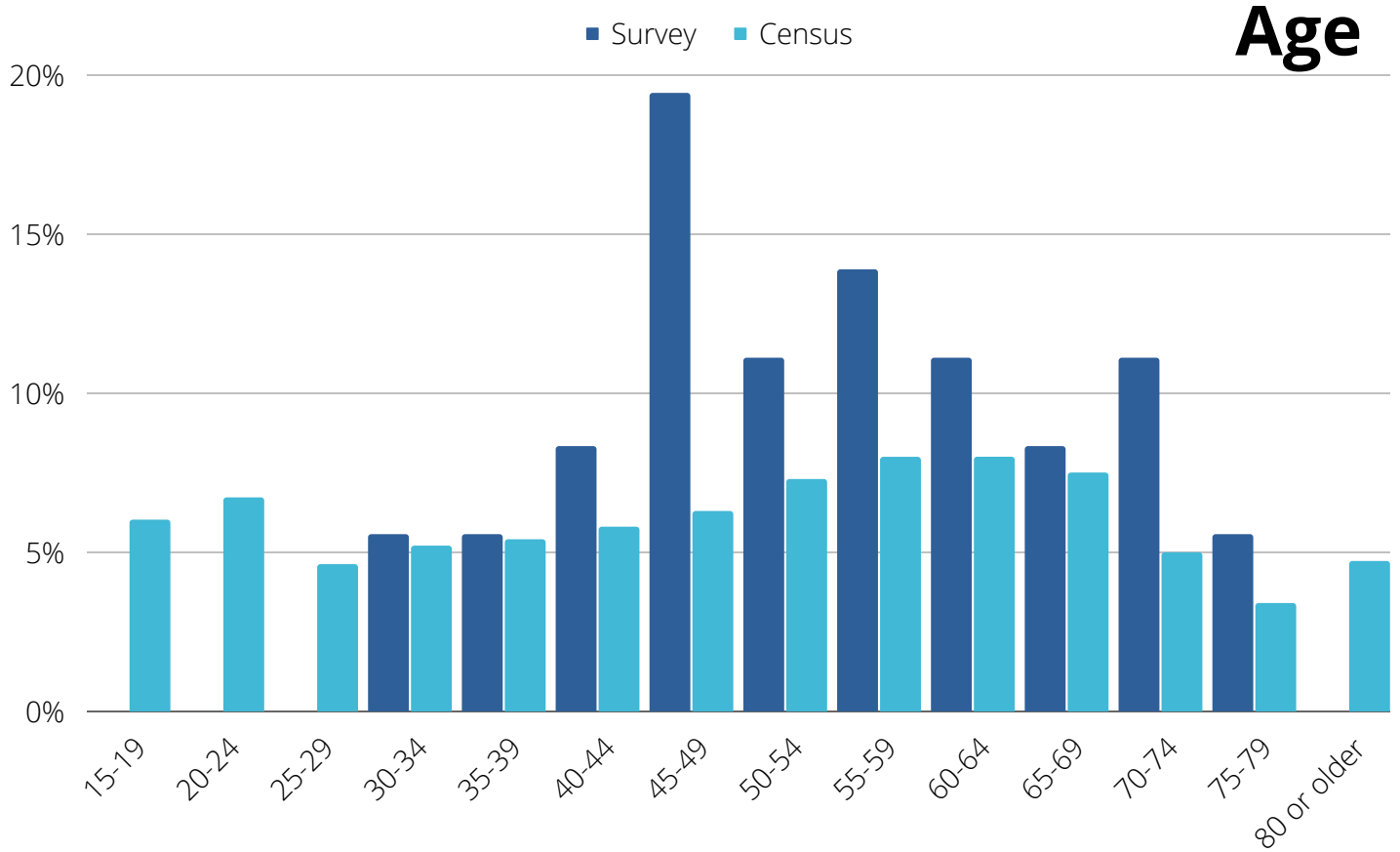
Who Did We Hear From

- + 55 survey respondents (see below for breakdown)
- + 5 email submissions
- + 2 Community Vision Workbooks
- + 3 map comments

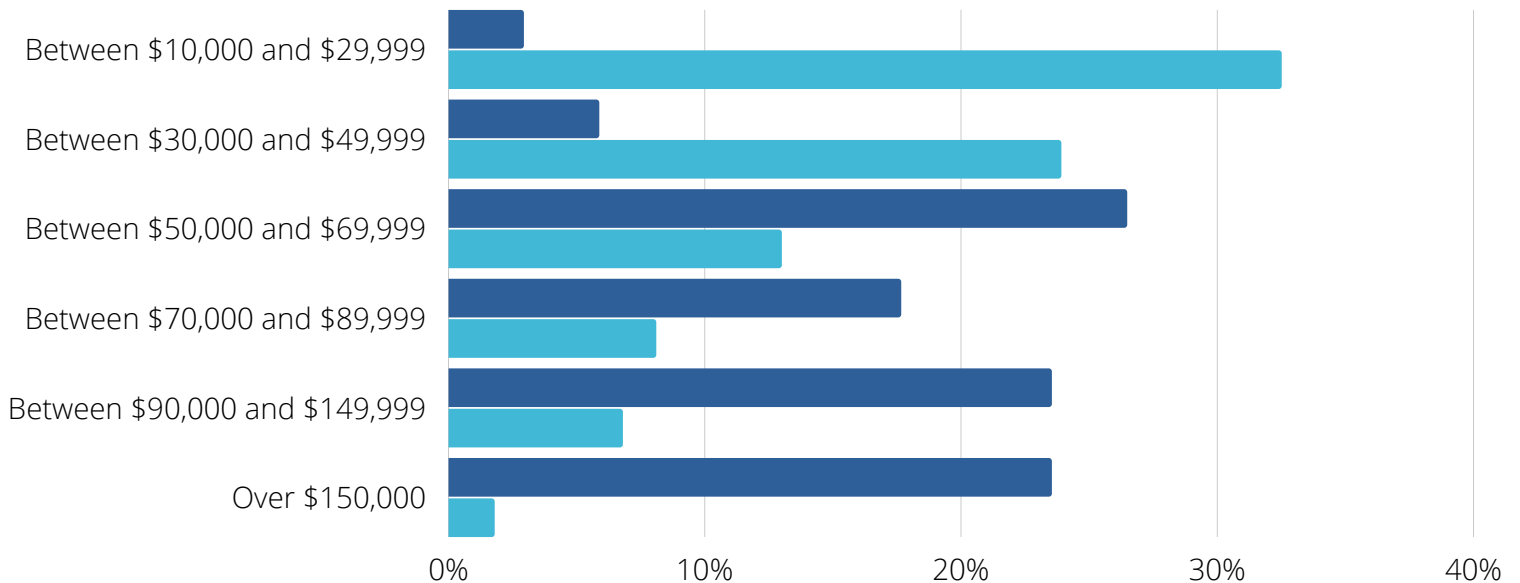


Survey Demographics vs Census Data

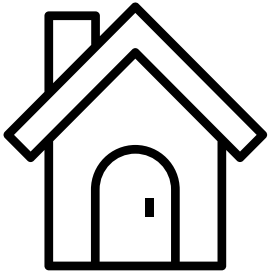
It's important when reading survey response data to understand *who* the survey has reached and *who it hasn't*. Below is a comparison of demographic data that shows survey respondents versus the most recent census data - this way we can see whose voices were over or under represented in the survey results.



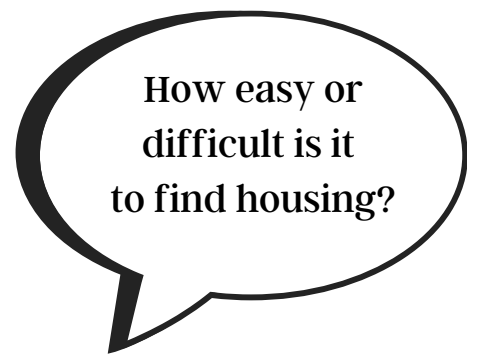
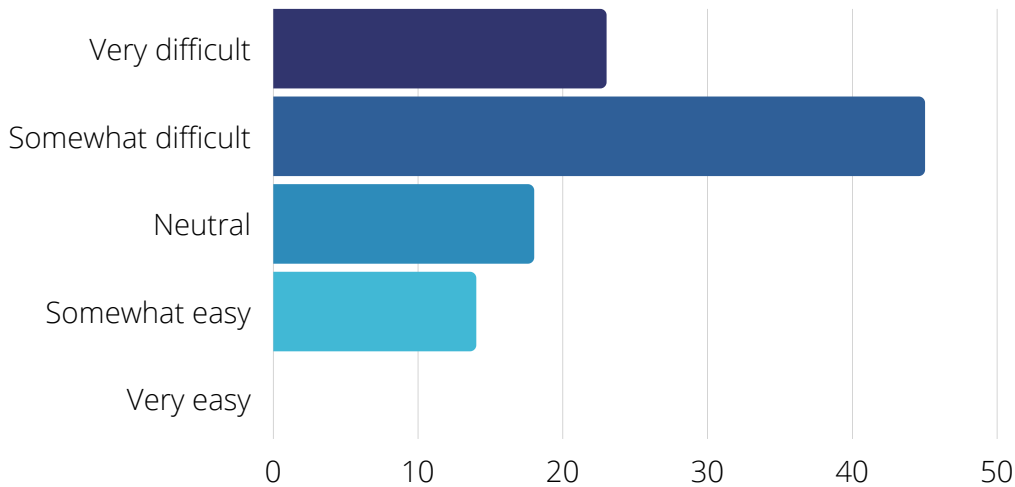
Income



What We Heard About Housing



Housing was a common topic across all engagement methods. Respondents felt that there was a lack of rental options, entry level homes for young families and supportive housing for seniors to age in place. Another topic that came up consistently was the proposed tax for out of province homeowners, with many citing this would be bad for the local economy and deter new residents to the area.



Top Issues for Renters:

1. Lack of options
2. Unaffordability
3. Difficulty accessing amenities without a vehicle
4. Need for physically accessible homes
5. Need for supportive housing options

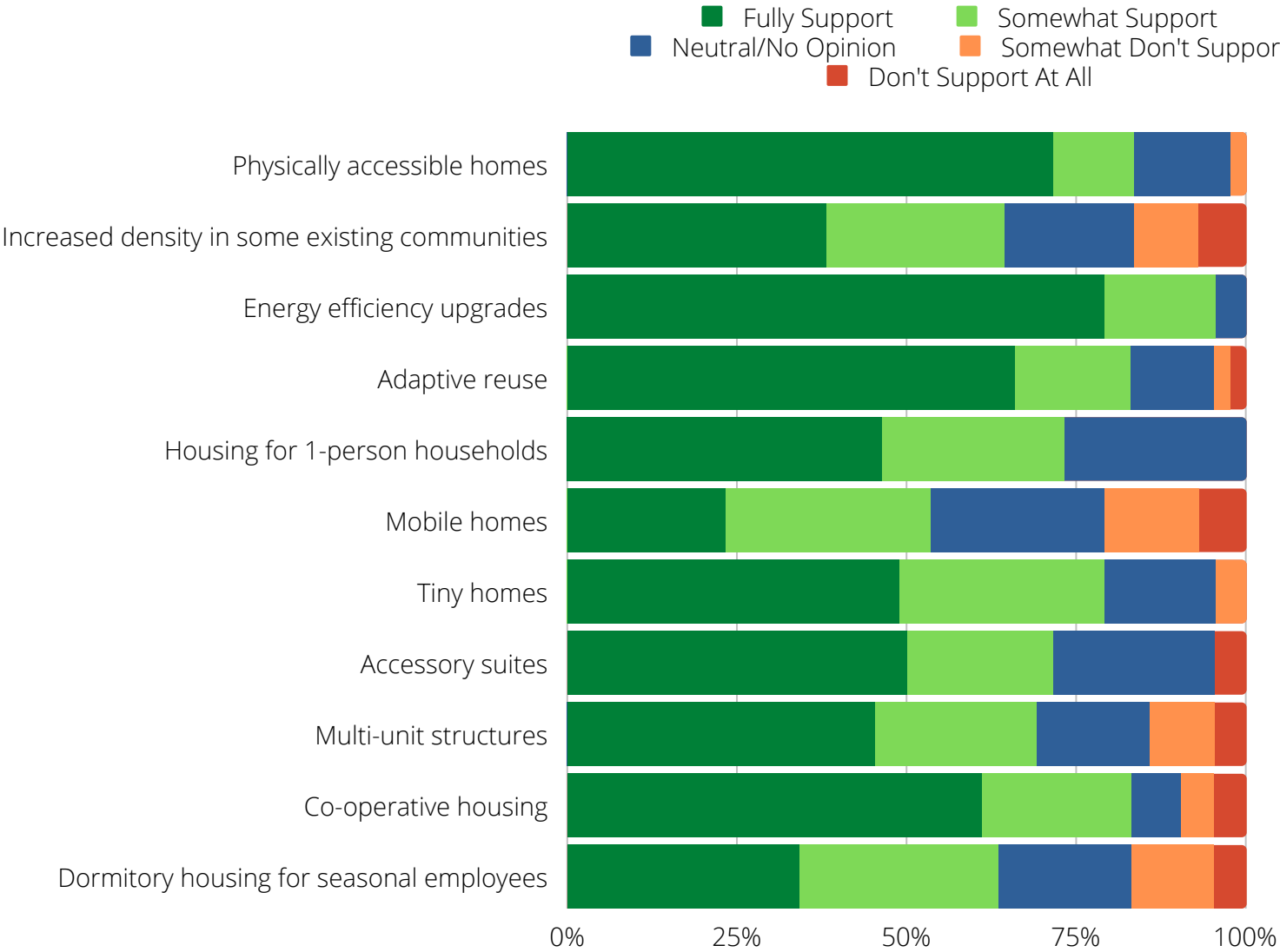
Top Issues for Homeowners:

1. Difficulties accessing amenities without a vehicle
2. Need for smaller housing options
3. Difficulty doing routine upkeep
4. Difficulty paying property taxes
5. Property in need of major maintenance or repair

What We Heard About Housing

Approaches to increasing housing diversity & affordability

When asked about the level of support for certain approaches to increasing housing diversity and affordability in the Municipality, there was unanimous support for energy efficiency upgrades and housing for 1-person families. Other popular approaches included physically accessible homes, tiny homes and adaptive reuse of existing buildings (like converting larger homes into smaller units). Mobile homes saw the least support, followed closely by dormitory housing for seasonal employees.

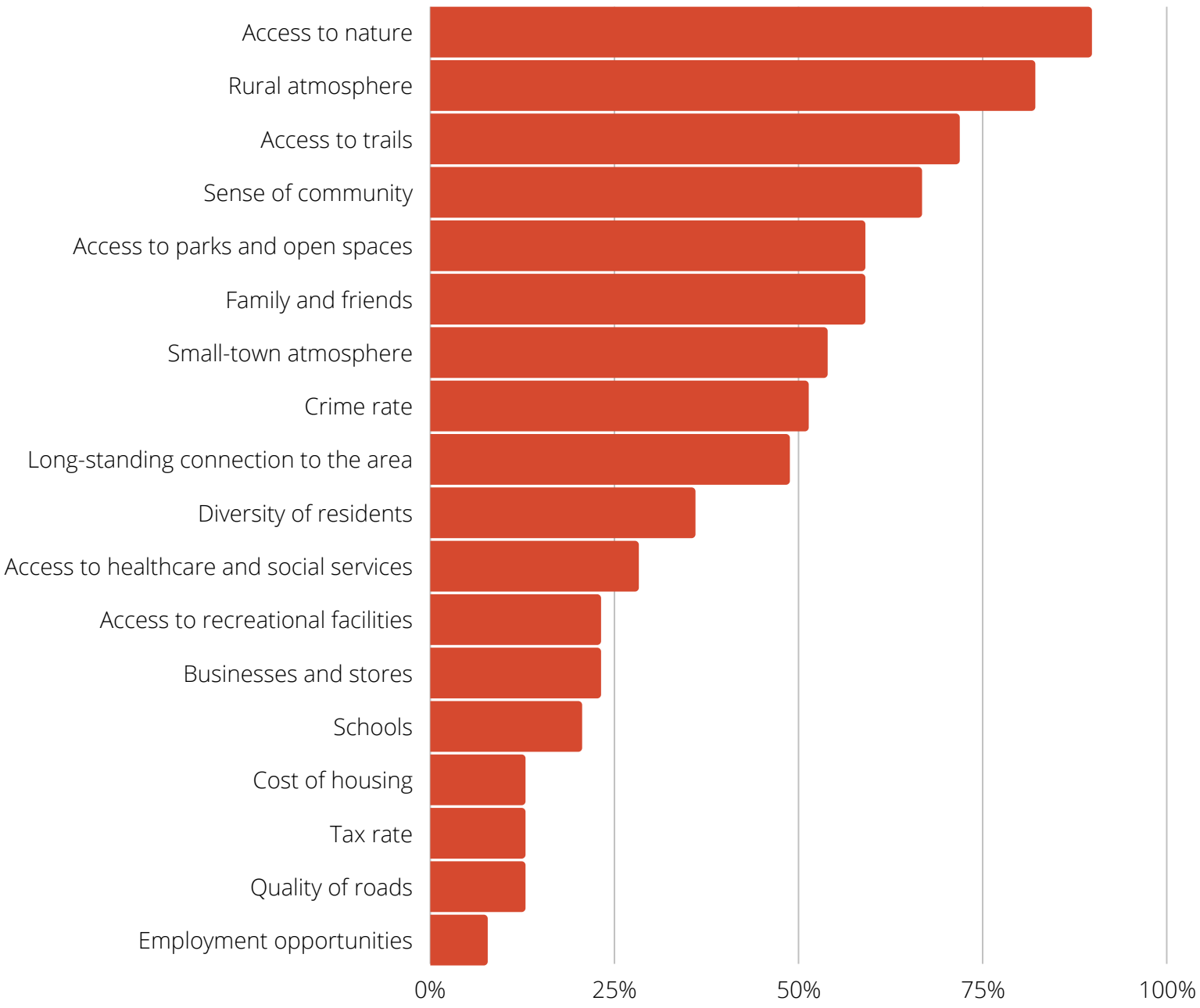


Other concerns we heard around housing:

- Development around lakeshores and coastal areas
- Attracting and retaining young families in the community
- Access to healthcare in more rural areas

What We Heard About Community Life

When asked what makes the community a great place to live, the natural environment was top of mind with access to nature, trails, parks and open spaces, as well as the rural atmosphere and sense of community, taking the top spots.



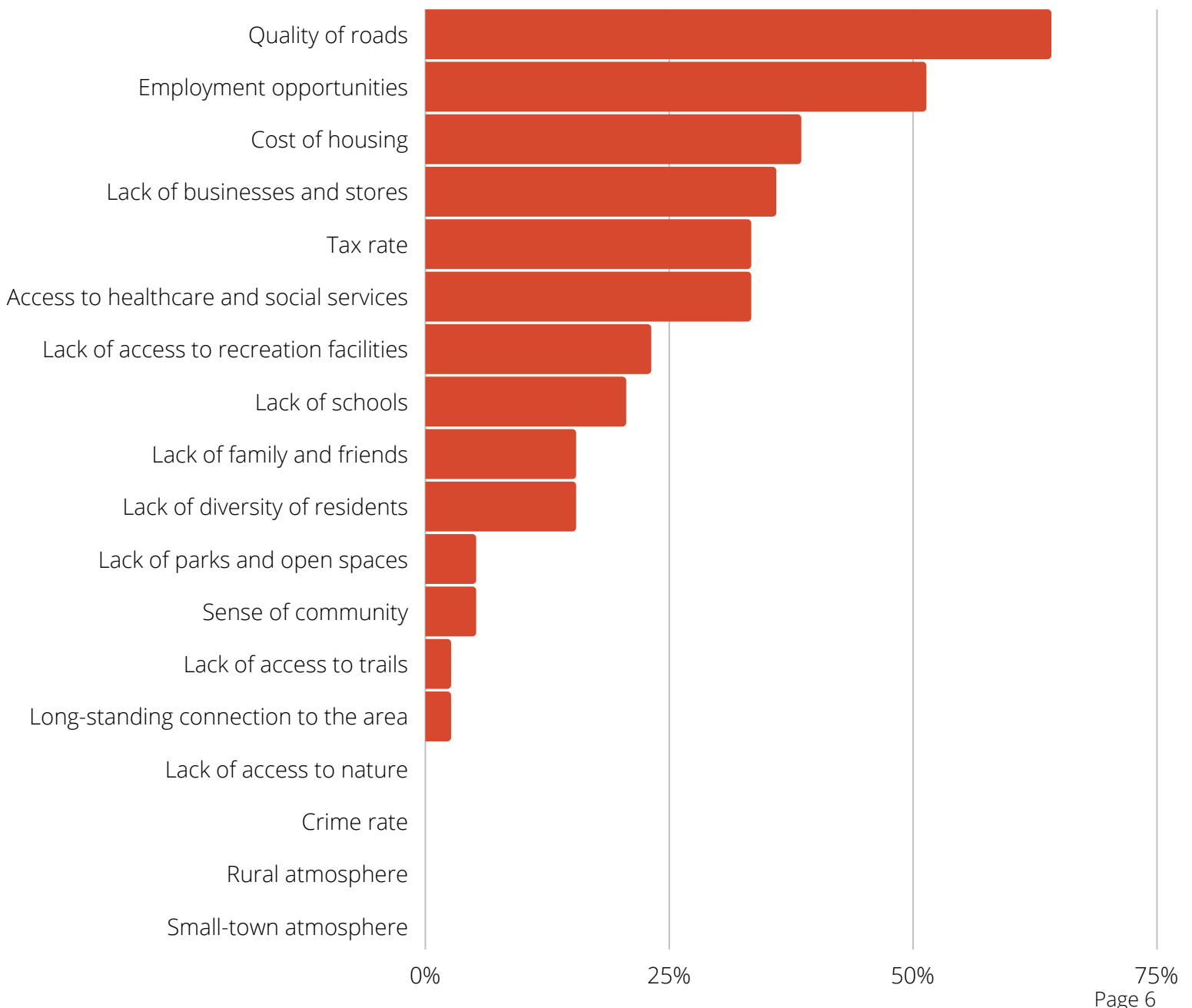
When asked what three words best describe their community, respondents were overwhelmingly positive using words like:

friendly, scenic, beautiful, natural, rural and quiet

What We Heard About Community Life

The biggest challenges of living in the community were cited as the quality of the roads, employment opportunities, cost of housing and lack of businesses and stores. Other challenges that came up across engagement methods included coastal erosion and the impacts of climate change. There was particular concern around the effects on the fishery of sedimentation from coastal development along the north shore near Ballantynes Cove. Survey respondents and stakeholders were adamant that this area receive additional considerations to protect the local fishing industry.

From a social perspective, some newer residents felt that the community can be difficult to permeate, leaving them feeling somewhat isolated.

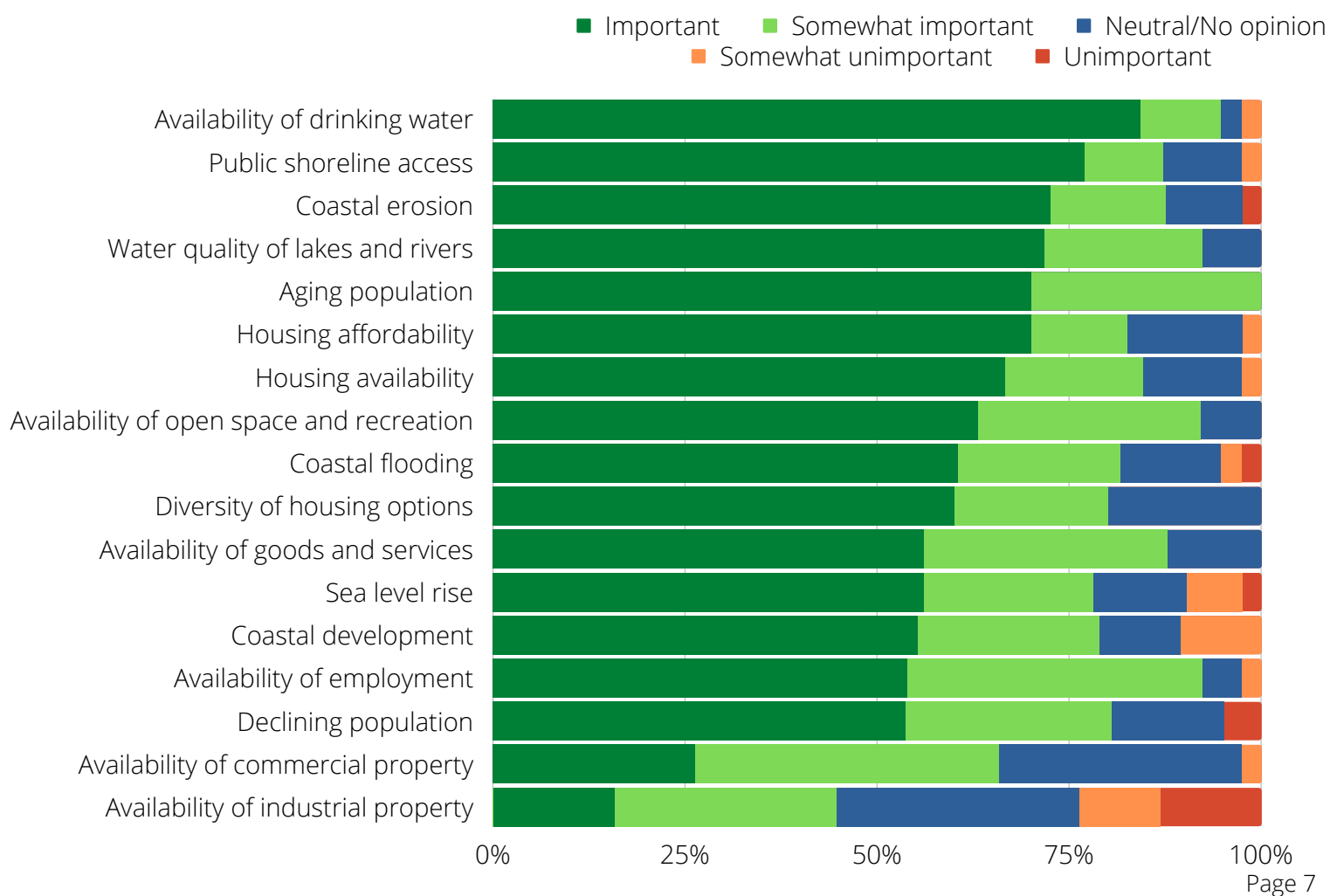


What We Heard About Planning

Across engagement methods, the majority of respondents were in support of developing planning documents for the unplanned parts of the Municipality of the County of Antigonish, however they were clear that planning regulations needed to be appropriate for the rural nature of these communities. There was a strong desire to see the community character remain intact, and to avoid overly restrictive regulations whenever possible.

Survey respondents were asked about their perceptions of existing planning restrictions. The majority of residents felt that restrictions were appropriate (61%) while another 30% felt they weren't restrictive enough, and the rest felt they were too restrictive.

When asked what the major issues respondents wanted to see the planning process address (see table below), the top responses were availability of drinking water, aging population, water quality of lakes and rivers, public shoreline access, availability of open space and recreation and coastal erosion, followed closely by housing affordability and availability.



What We Heard About Planning

Ballantyne's Cove

We heard some specific feedback around this community, including a lack of electrical infrastructure from the Cove to Cape George Point. Due to the interest in tourism in this area, there is a desire to see this infrastructure developed.

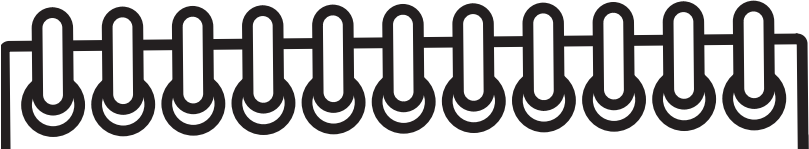
There is also a desire to see more stringent restrictions to protect runoff and sedimentation to the ocean in this area, to protect the important fisheries that operate out of the Cove.

Survey respondents also want to see viewplanes in this area protected, as it is seen as a "Mini Cabot Trail".

Lochaber Lake

We also heard specific feedback around Lochaber Lake. There is significant concern around the impact that increased development is having on the water quality of the lake and the quality of life for residents in this community.

In addition to the environmental concerns in this area, there is also a desire to encourage more commercial development in the community. Residents would like to see more small business in the area, resulting in more local employment.



Other Important Issues Raised:

- Preserving public access to trails and beaches
- Coastal erosion and protecting sensitive ecosystems from development
- Lack of infrastructure to support development
- Expansion of services such as public and active transportation facilities, high speed internet and cell reception
- Climate change adaptation
- Preserving rural character
- Balancing tourism with quality of life

Next Steps

Draft Engagement

There will be another round of engagement in early Summer 2022 where residents will be given the opportunity to comment on the Draft Planning Documents (both the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Land Use Bylaw). These documents are a first draft and will be subject to change pending the results of the engagement.

Engagement opportunities will include both online and in-person activities. Stay tuned for dates and locations for a workshop near you. To stay in the loop and receive regular updates, sign up on the project website:

www.planantigonish.ca
www.planeasternnova.ca

Questions or Comments?

Contact the project team at:
hello@planantigonish.ca

