



PLAN VICTORIA COUNTY

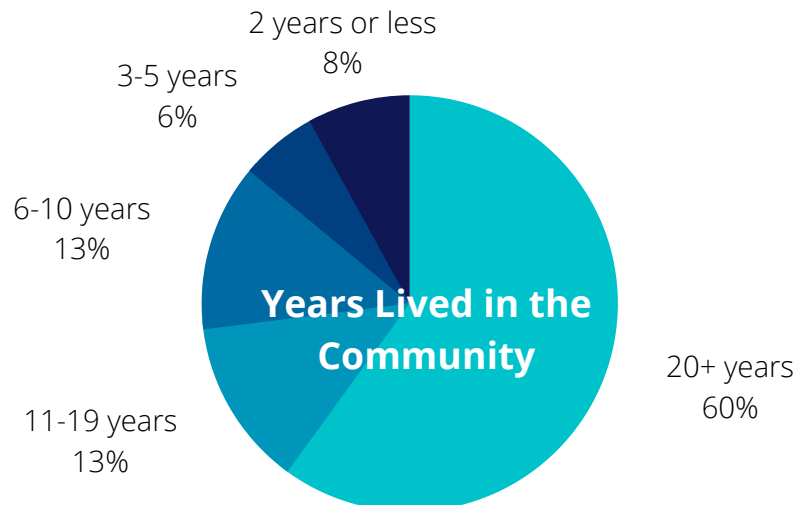
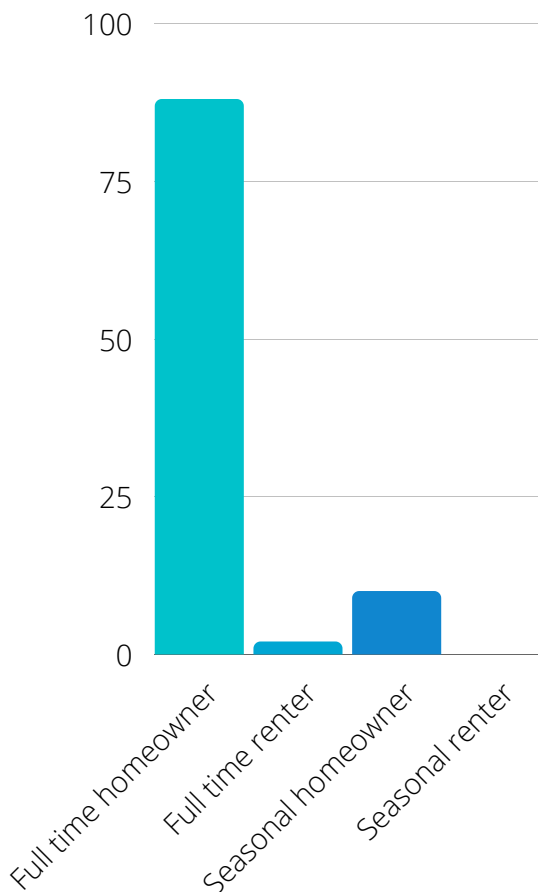
WHAT WE HEARD: INITIAL ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY April 2022

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)

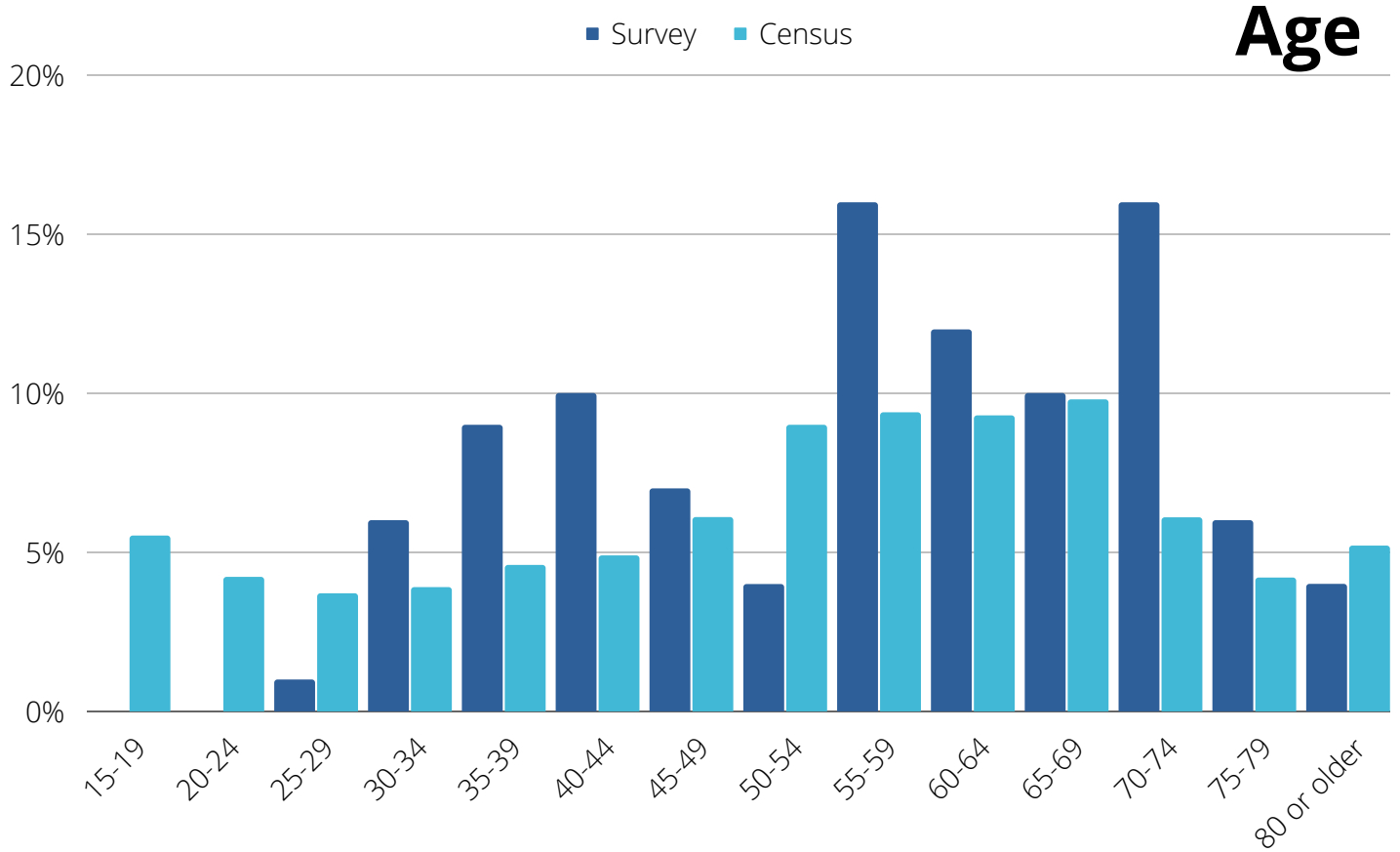
Who Did We Hear From

- + 133 survey respondents (see below for breakdown)
- + 3 email submissions
- + 6 Community Vision Workbooks
- + 20 map comments

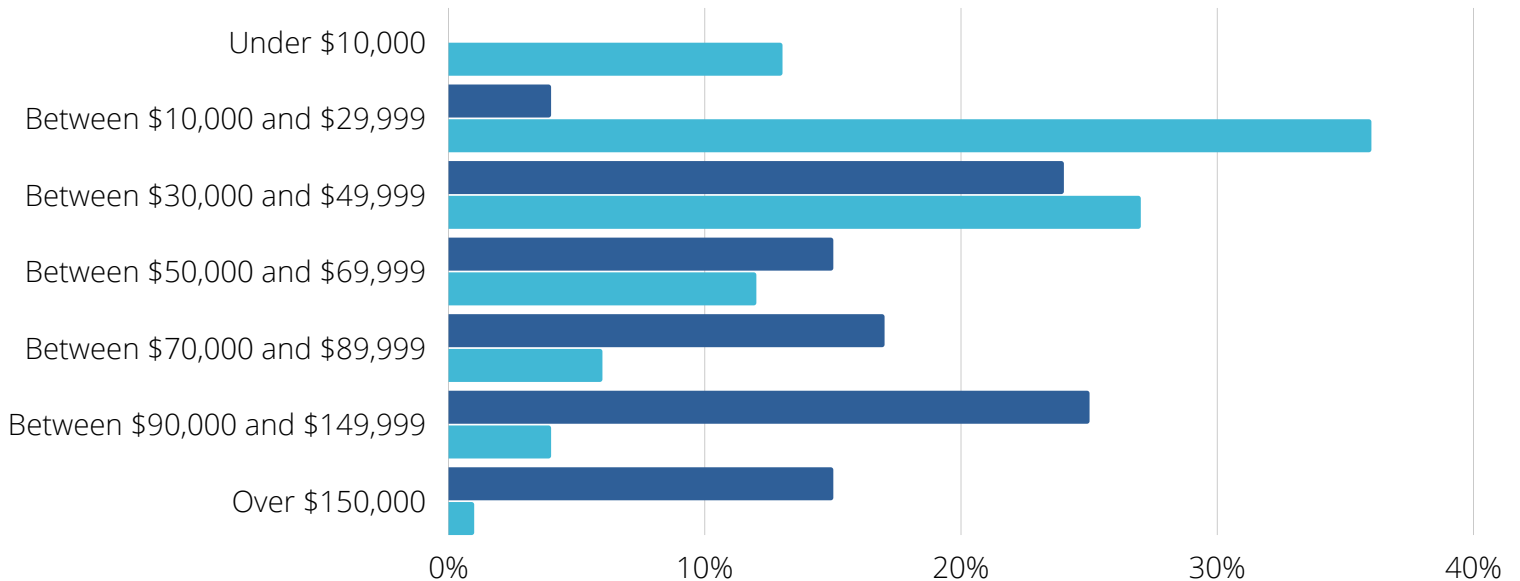


Survey Demographics vs Census Data

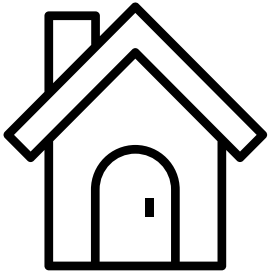
It's important when reading survey response data to understand *who* the survey has reached and *who it hasn't*. Below is a comparison of demographic data that shows survey respondents versus the most recent census data - this way we can see whose voices were over or under represented in the survey results.



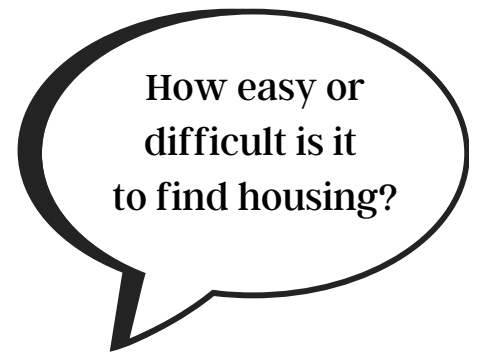
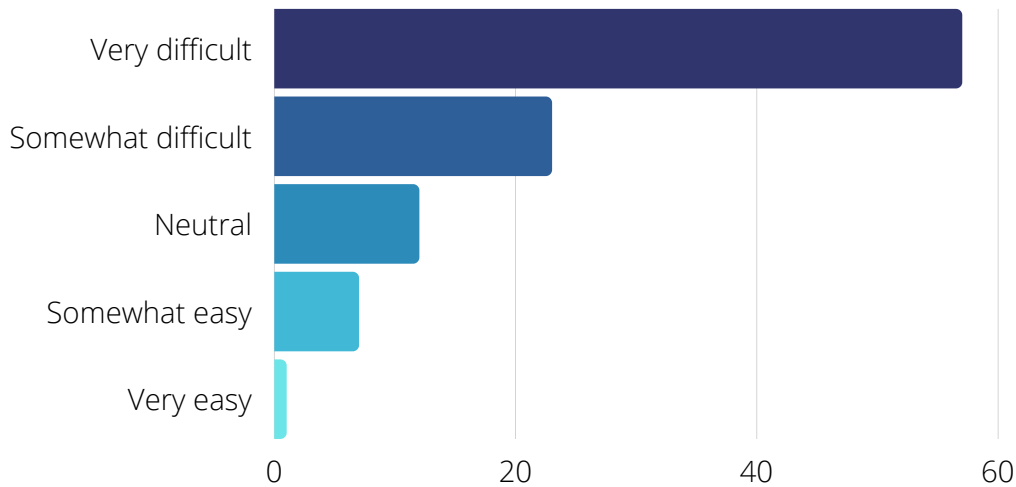
Income



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. Residents would also like to see more smaller housing options that factor in accessibility.



Top Issues for Renters:

1. Lack of options
2. Difficulty accessing amenities without a vehicle
3. Difficulty doing routine upkeep
4. Unaffordability
5. Need for supportive housing options

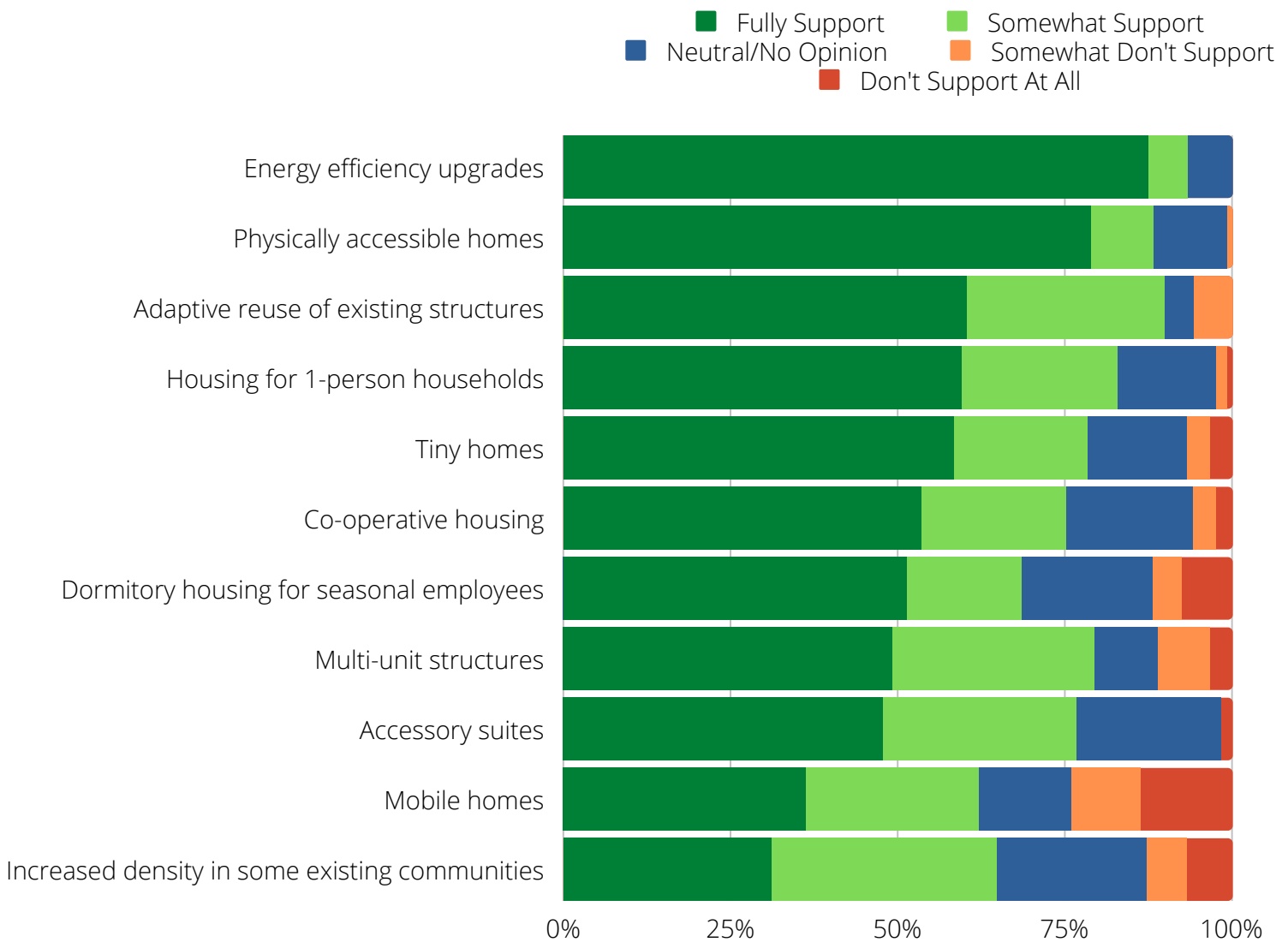
Top Issues for Homeowners:

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

What We Heard About Housing

Approaches to increasing housing diversity & affordability

The most favourable approaches to increasing housing availability and affordability were energy efficiency upgrades, physically accessible homes, adaptive reuse or conversion of large homes, former churches and halls into smaller accommodations, and housing for 1-person households. Approaches like accessory suites, tiny homes and co-operative housing all saw very little opposition from respondents.

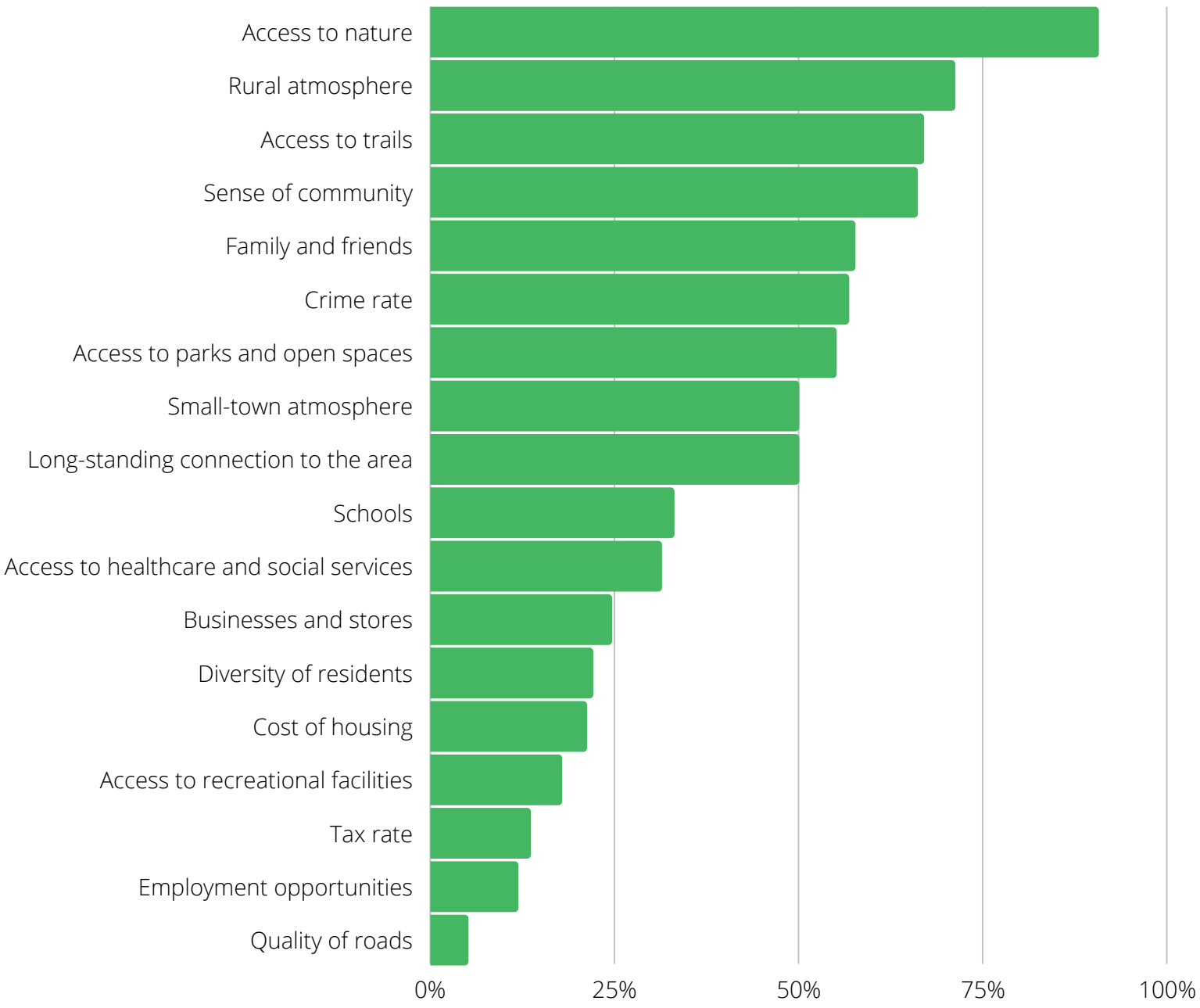


Other concerns we heard around housing:

- Development around lakeshores and coastal areas
- Seniors housing and access to healthcare supports in rural areas
- Short term rentals impacting long-term rental housing availability

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 and trails, the rural atmosphere and sense of community, taking the top spots.

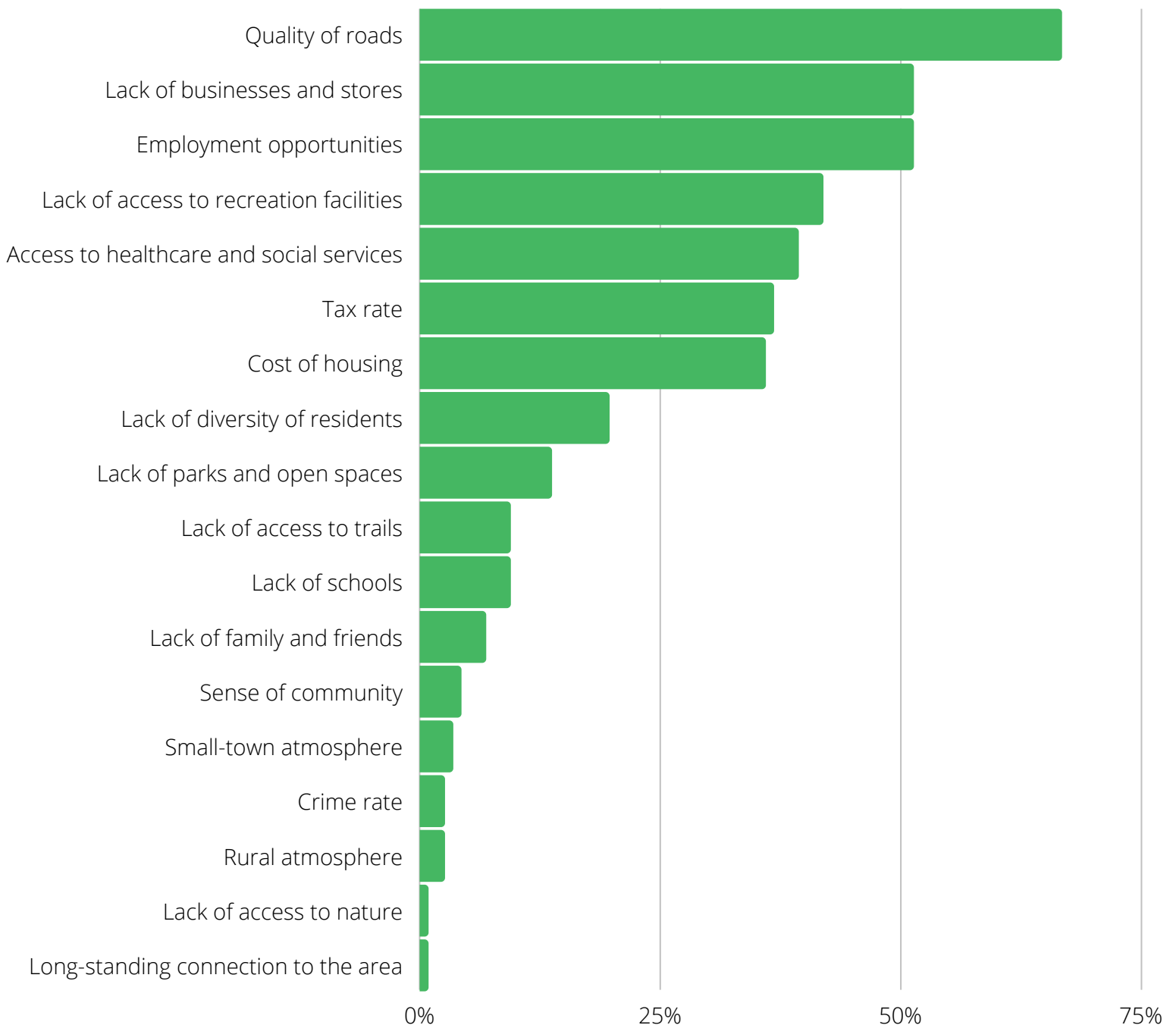


When asked what three words best describe their community, respondents were overwhelmingly positive. They also showed some concern around the aging population in Victoria. The most commonly used words to describe the community were:

Friendly, rural, beautiful, quiet, aging

What We Heard About Community Life

The biggest challenges of living in the community were cited as the quality of the roads, lack of businesses and stores, employment opportunities and access to recreation facilities (especially those for children). Other challenges that came up across engagement methods included coastal erosion, water quality and the impacts of climate change, as well as access to healthcare and other social service supports.

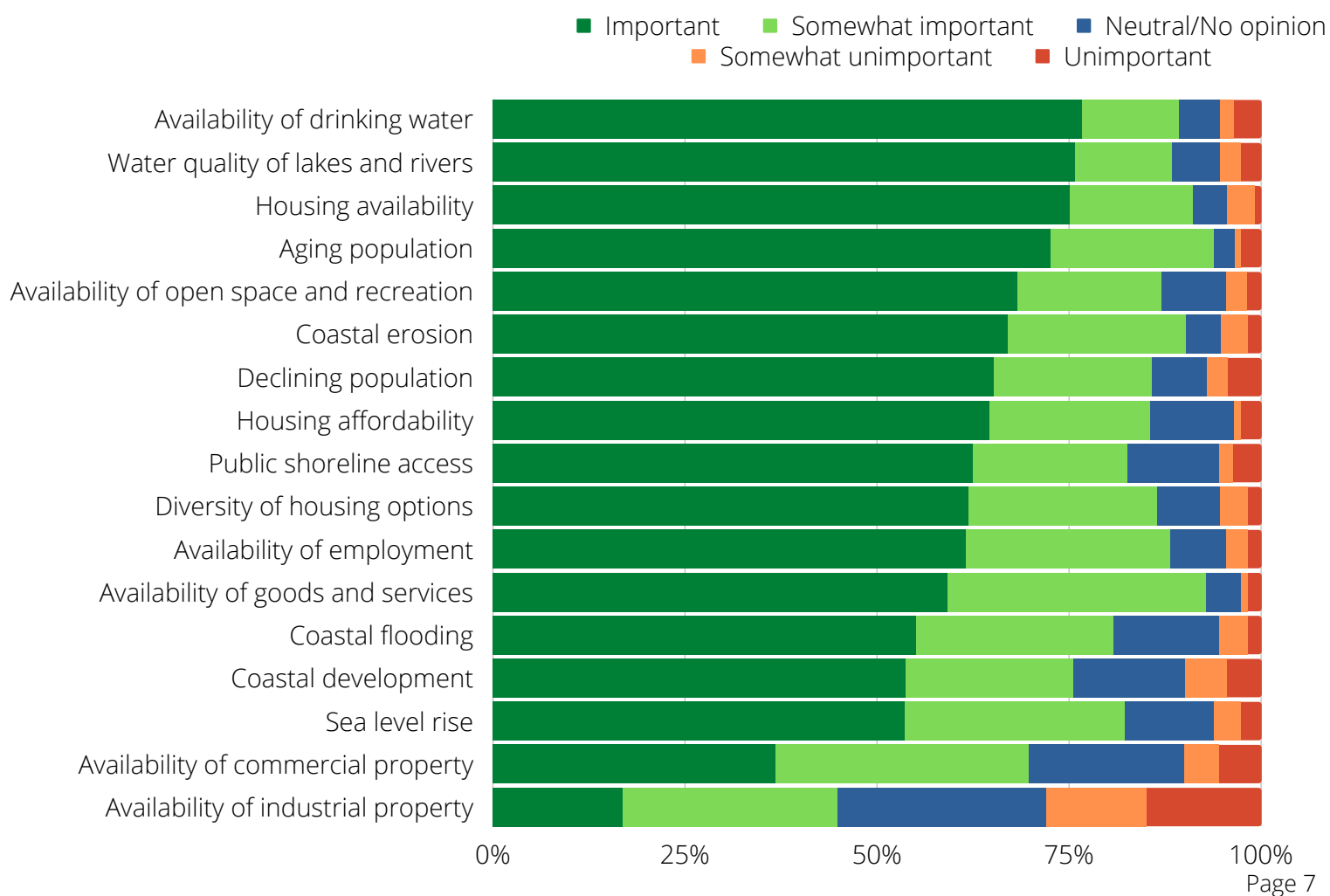


What We Heard About Planning

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 Victoria, 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 (47%) while another 39% felt they weren't restrictive enough, and the rest (14%) 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, water quality of lakes and rivers, housing availability, the aging population and recreation, followed closely by coastal erosion, the declining population and housing affordability.



What We Heard About Planning

Ingonish

We heard some specific feedback around this community, particularly the desire to see more comprehensive planning for Ingonish in the future, as its profile for tourism continues to grow.

The community is experiencing a severe housing shortage, with many of the local businesses unable to secure employees due to a lack of affordable rental options. The need for increased residential development in the community is top of mind for residents, though development should be in keeping with the character and feel of the existing community.

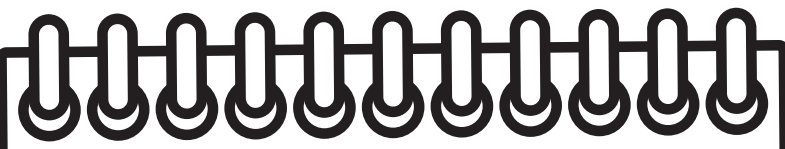
We also heard specific feedback around growing the year-round tourism offerings, including accommodations and amenities and developing a 4-season economy in Ingonish.

Middle River and Area

We heard from residents in the Middle River area about the challenges that increased land prices, as well as erosion, are having on local farmers. There are concerns that these impacts will deter further agricultural development and the area will lose its identity.

Baddeck and Area

Although Baddeck currently has planning documents in place and therefor is not a major priority of this project, we heard a considerable amount of feedback from Victoria residents about the future of this community. Many are concerned that the Village will lose its status in the near future and want to ensure that the Municipality has a plan in place to address this possible eventuality.



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
- Investment in recreation opportunities and infrastructure, such as playgrounds
- Climate change adaptation
- Preserving rural character
- Protecting important view planes
- Unregulated campgrounds/RV parks

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.planvictoria.ca
www.planeasternnova.ca

Questions or Comments?

Contact the project team at:
hello@planvictoria.ca



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