

Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula

Strategic Plan 2021-2025



March 2021

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Dear Reader,

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula's strategic plan helps guide the work and priorities of municipal staff. Along with the municipality's official plan, annual budget, and various other master plans it outlines a path to making the Municipality a livable, welcoming, and thriving place for all.

In the 2021-2025 Plan, the Municipality has identified four priority areas that will be its focus in the coming years, each with specific initiatives and measures that will be used in order to track progress. These priorities and initiatives were developed through an extensive community consultation process in 2020 – adapted to the unique needs of the pandemic. The four priorities are:

1. Creating a strong & resilient economy,
2. Maintaining a transparent & responsible government,
3. Supporting the sustainability of environment and infrastructure
4. Building a safe & vibrant community

The completion of this plan marks an important milestone for the municipality, even though the work to refine its strategy will continue. This is intended to be a living document: one that helps guide the Municipality's actions but is regularly reviewed, revisited, and added-to in order to better reflecting the changing needs of the community.

Thank you for your input, participation, and ongoing engagement – we look forward to much more in the years ahead.

Community Profile

All data as of May 2021

1999

Municipality was formed through the amalgamation of more than a dozen communities

780 km²

In total area across the peninsula with 100s of kms of shoreline

~4,000

full-time residents as of 2016; increasing ~2% per year prior to COVID-19

\$1.5 billion

value of all private or municipally owned property on the peninsula (estimate for tax purposes)

1000's

of annual tourists, focused on Lion's Head, Tobermory, and surrounding camp grounds

4

Schools & daycares

6

Sports facilities

12+

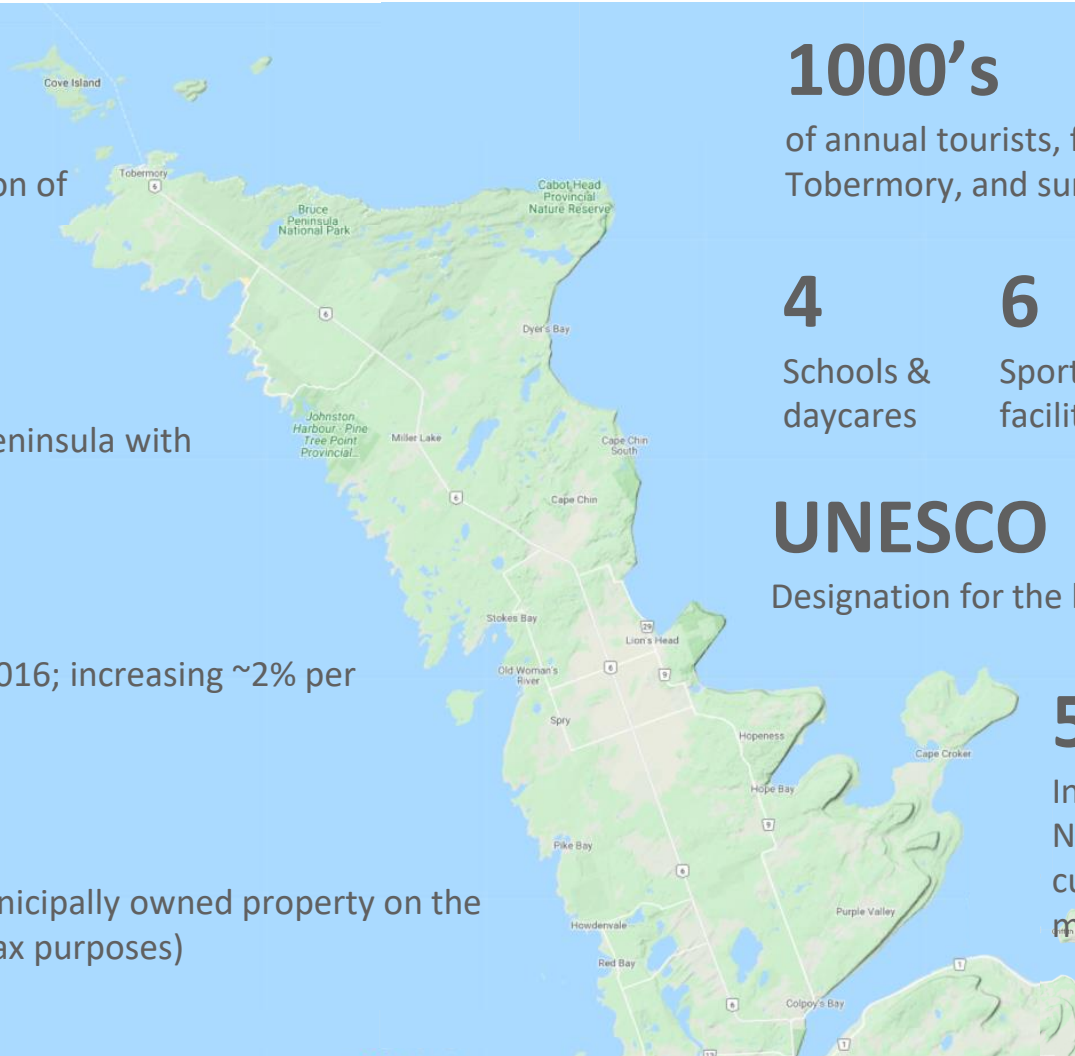
Churches & community centres

UNESCO

Designation for the local biosphere

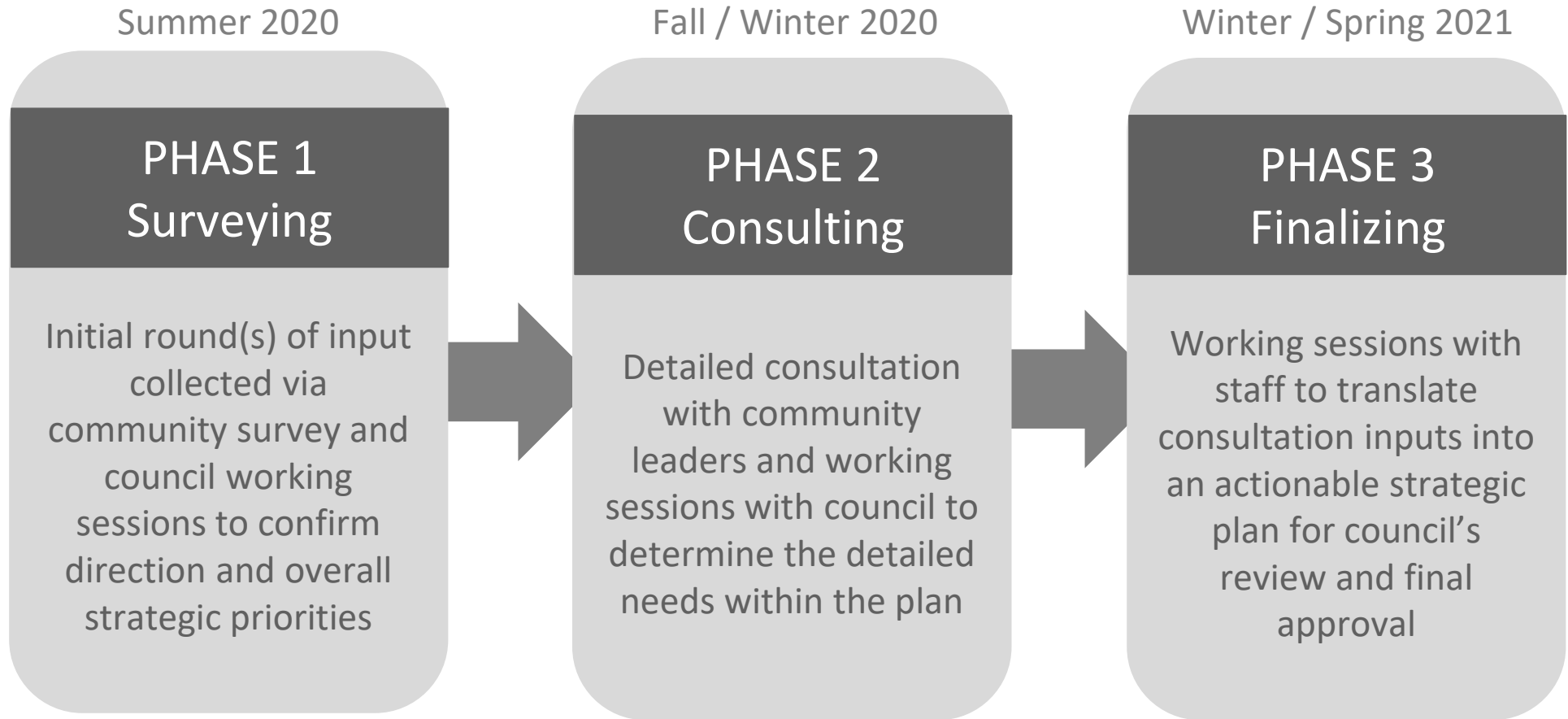
5 Parks

Including the Bruce Peninsula National Park at the culmination of the province's most unique trail



Project Recap

The Strategic Plan was developed through consultation with the community, council, and staff, that began in the summer of 2020



Strategic Priorities

In 2015, Council identified four focus areas for its strategic plan; per our 2020 consultations, these remain the municipalities top priorities

Priority #1
Strong &
resilient
economy



Priority #2
Transparent &
responsible
government



Priority #3
Sustainable
environment &
infrastructure



Priority #4
Safe & vibrant
communities



See the following pages for details on these priorities



Strategic Priority #1 Strong & resilient economy

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHY IS IT A PRIORITY?	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE?
We ensure the economic environment is attractive to new & existing businesses	Focuses on keeping investment and wealth in the community	• Conduct a Business Retention & Expansion (BR+E) study to identify specific issues for businesses • Review existing business licensing / permitting / bylaws for “red tape reduction” • Explore a “fixer / concierge” model across municipal staff for business inquiries and issues	Business satisfaction (e.g., from survey or number of complaints / issues)
We are diversified across industries, types of consumer, and season	Reduces the region’s vulnerability to shocks or downturns	• Conduct a community amenity / small business gap and sector prioritization plan • Update and refresh overall Economic Development Strategy based on the updated Official Plan • Implement business attraction strategies for prioritized areas (e.g., remote workers)	Business mix (i.e., number of businesses by industry and season)
We have the workforce & infrastructure that meets the needs of existing & interested businesses	Enables the ongoing operation or expansion of businesses	• Support and implement the work of the Affordable Housing Committee • Develop partnerships for broadband expansion • Explore potential for “Bruce Peninsula Future Skills and Entrepreneurship Centre”	Labour force profile (e.g., population by age, demographic, & skillset)
We create employment & opportunities that support a high quality of life	Reinforces that we are generating wealth within the community	• Support and implement the recommendations of the Tourism Advisory Group • Pilot new initiative that encourage cross-selling between businesses (e.g., tourism packages) • Create program to support the launch of community events (e.g., concert series)	Economic trends (e.g., average incomes and employment rates)



Strategic Priority #2

Transparent and responsible government

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHY IS IT A PRIOTIY?	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE?
We are proactive, comprehensive, & creative in how we ask for community input	Ensures that we receive input from all corners of the community	• Execute on the new Communications Strategy • Test new digital engagement platform for use in public consultations (“Bang the Table”) • Launch specific consultations focused at target groups (e.g., youth, new full-time residents)	Resident engagement (e.g., # of survey responses, consultation attendees, depositions)
We make decisions that are well-supported, clearly communicated, and easy to access	Allows for more regular feedback on the choices we make	• Continue regular reporting through peninsula press, website and mail, but test new mechanisms for sharing council’s work (e.g., email newsletter) • Increase staff training on communications tools (e.g., social media) and incorporate into their plans	
We allocate resources carefully and ensure that we always receive good value for money	Helps us make the most of the resources that we have available	• Introduce a business case / plan requirement for all new spending initiatives • Evaluate and enhance existing financial management / budget process	Financial stability (e.g., annual operating budget surplus / deficit, % change in reserve fund)
We regularly review, update, enhance and proactively address our strategies & plans	Ensures that responsibilities are not passed on to the future	• Update and execute on all infrastructure master plans for the municipality (<i>see priority #3</i>) • Conduct update and review of zoning bylaws • Continue to maintain and update other municipal plans (e.g., emergency management)	Planning quality (e.g., % of municipal strategies updated in the last X years)



Strategic Priority #3

Sustainable environment & infrastructure

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHY IS IT A PRIOTIY?	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE?
We create the transit infrastructure to support a “20 minute community”	Enables greater connectivity between communities and access to services	• Update & execute on Roads Needs study; include process for evaluating & prioritizing road projects • Evaluate & implement dedicated cycling infrastructure in partnership with county / province • Conduct pedestrian traffic study in Tobermory and Lion’s Head with focus on issues in peak seasons • Evaluate potential for other transit programs to be pursued with partners (e.g., ride share or shuttles)	Traffic incidents (e.g., # of reported traffic issues for pedestrians, drivers, and cyclists)
We proactively manage and enhance our waste management and water & waste water infrastructure	Ensures that municipal services able to maintain standards even as demand grows	• Update the Waste Management Plan based on new regulations to be introduced by the province • Improve communications regarding current levels of service by municipality and any changes • Develop a water and waste water master plan • Ensure all future development adheres to infrastructure master plan guidelines	Resident feedback (e.g., # of issues / concerns raised on water or waste issues)
We protect the peninsula’s unique environmental assets	Preserves the environmental qualities of the peninsula for present and future generations to enjoy	• Maintain and update the municipality’s Asset Management Plan • Improve education and communication regarding the environmental risks and impacts • Review and support the recommendations of the Climate Action Committee	

Focus of additional consultation
(See attached summaries for details)



Strategic Priority #4

Safe and vibrant communities

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?	WHY IS IT A PRIOTIY?	HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?	HOW WILL WE MEASURE?
We create a wide variety of recreation across the peninsula	Ensures that recreation activities are available, affordable, and accessible to all	• Update and execute on the Facilities Master Plan • Expand uses for existing facilities in the municipality (e.g., arena, school gymnasiums) • Explore partnerships for new facilities to ensure they can be made affordable (e.g., pool) • Improve communications regarding activities, space, subsidies already available • Encourage greater volunteerism (e.g., volunteer lists, promotion of opportunities) • Evaluate regularly affordability of programming for residents to ensure accessibility is maintained	Programming fit (e.g., # of activities offered, \$ average cost, & # of residents by activity)
We maintain a community where everyone feels safe at all times & in all areas	Ensures that the municipality is welcoming and equally enjoyed by all	• Evaluate options for increases in police / bylaw presence and supporting funding sources • Improve the communication regarding safety issues and service levels to avoid disinformation • Explore methods for community to provide safety-related services (e.g., neighbourhood watches) • Complete upgrades to road / pedestrian infrastructure to increase traffic safety • Address the impacts of overcrowding through the recommendations of the tourism advisory board	Safety record (e.g., # of safety incidents by severity and type)

Focus of additional consultation
(See attached summaries for details)

Implementation – Future Planning

Much of the work in this Strategic Plan involves developing updating other plans and strategies



Implementation – Strategy Workplan

Much of the work is frontloaded, in many cases focused on developing these Master Plan

	2021	2022	2023+
 Strong & resilient economy	Remote workers strategy ★ ★ ★ Implement tourism advisory group recommendations	Business sentiment survey & red tape reduction Business concierge model ★ Community events series ★	★ Economic Development Strategy Refresh ★ Future Skills Centre Business Case & Proposal ★ Sector-specific attraction strategies (TBD)
 Transparent & responsible government	★ Launch new digital engagement tools (e.g., Bang the Table)	★ New spending initiative business case requirements ★ Budget 2022 Financial Process Enhancements	
 Sustainable environment & infrastructure		★ Pedestrian safety study ★ Complete Roads Needs Study	★ Waste & Water Management Plans ★ Update the Asset Management Plan ★ Upgrades to cycling infrastructure
 Safe & vibrant communities	★ New STA bylaws	Rec facilities master plan ★ ★ Report on partnership opportunities for community pool ★ Evaluate options to increase police presence ★ Improve recreation comms.	

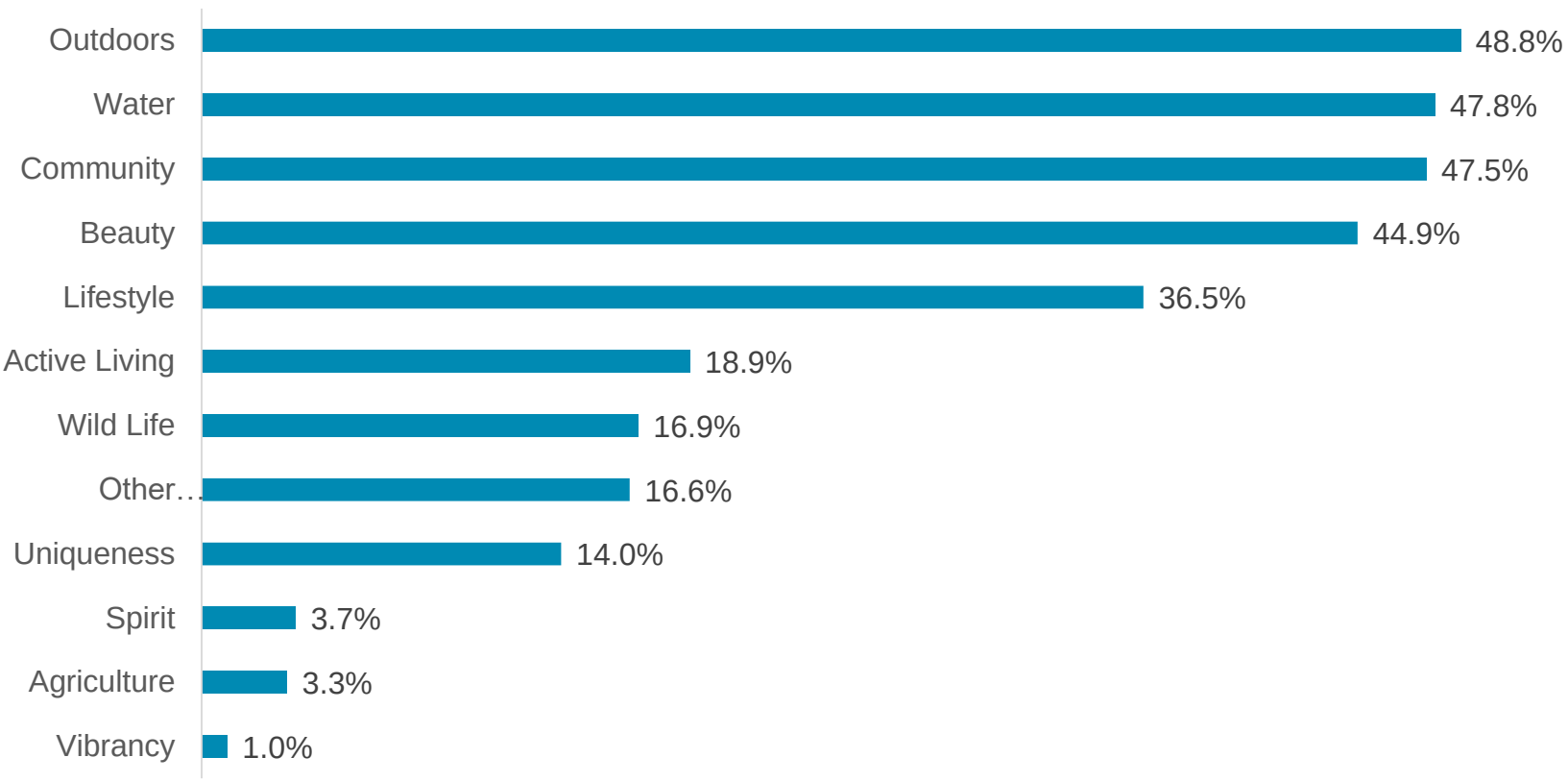
See the attached workplan for additional details on initiatives

Appendix A

Survey Feedback

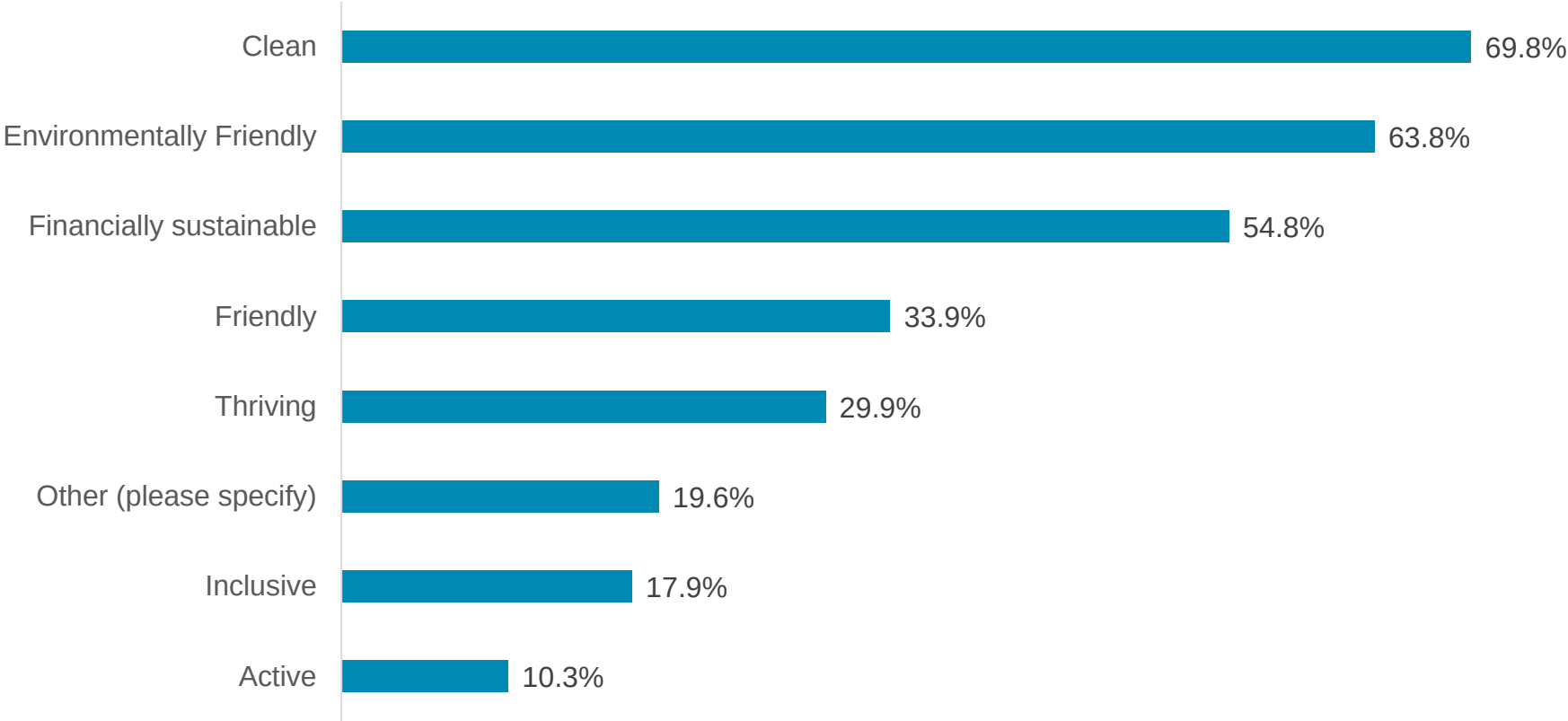
Q1. What attracts you to the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula? Please choose three.

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



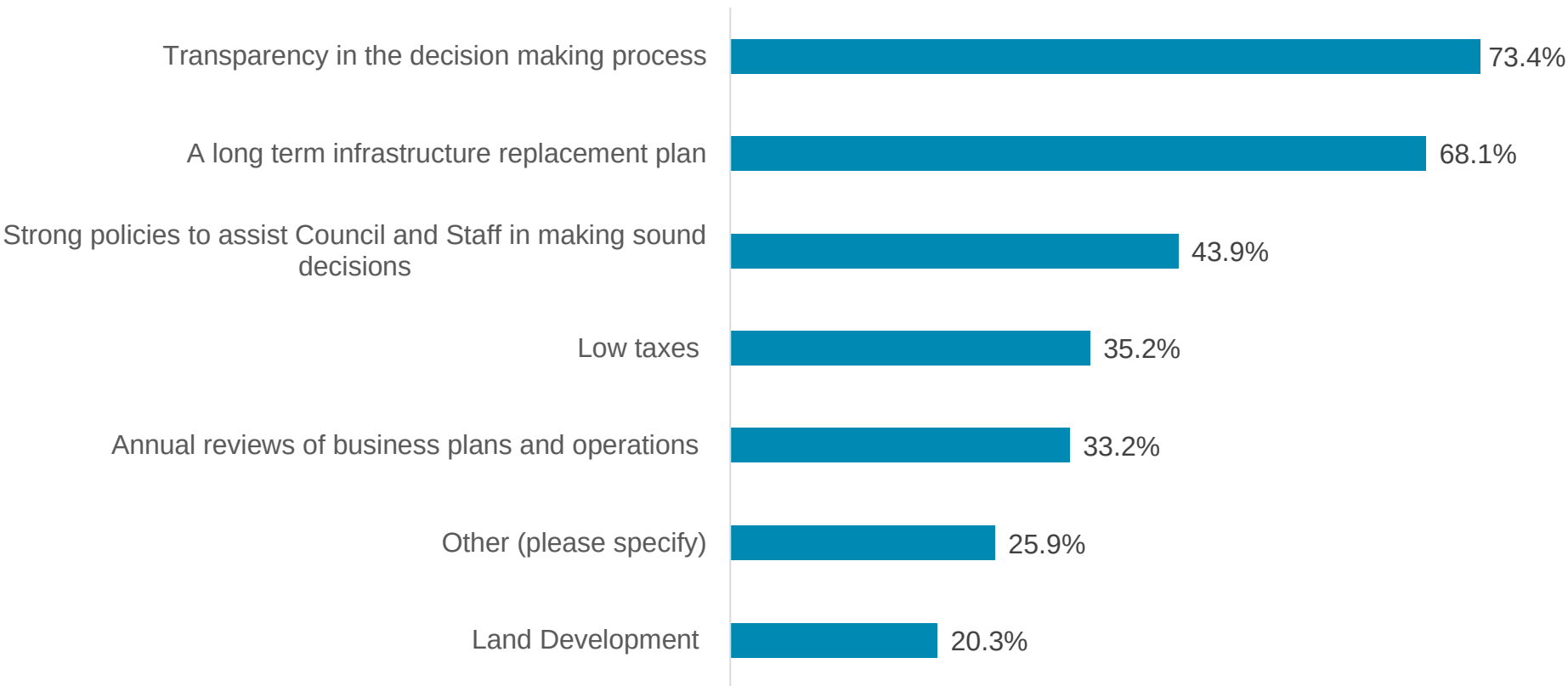
Q2. To assist in the development of our vision statement, what would you want Northern Bruce Peninsula to be like in 2030? Please choose three.

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



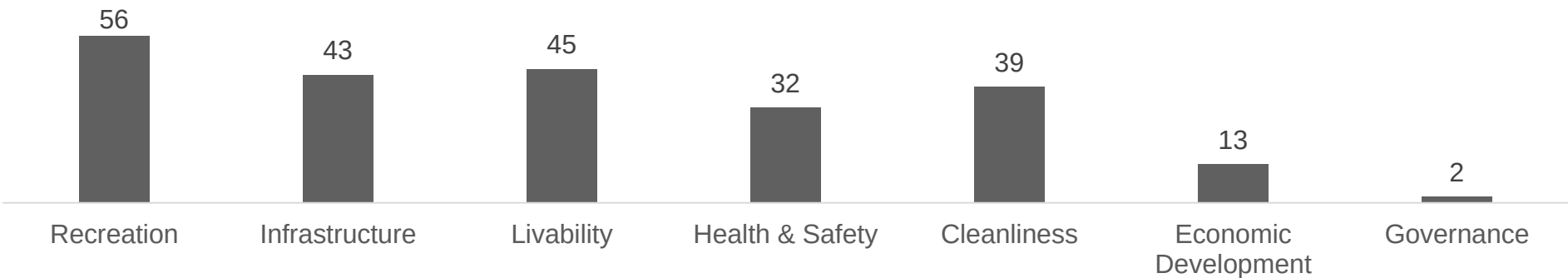
Q3. What would you consider a priority when discussing fiscal responsibility and municipal government? Please choose three.

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



Q3. What new services would you like to see the Municipality provide to the Community?

Percent of Total Respondents
200 Respondents



Recreation	#
Activities (e.g., Ecotourism)	2
Activities (e.g., Events)	2
Activities (e.g., Seniors)	3
Activities (e.g., Youth)	5
Activities (Misc.)	1
Facilities (e.g., Community Centre)	3
Facilities (e.g., Library)	1
Facilities (e.g., Misc Sports)	2
Facilities (e.g., Picnic)	2
Facilities (e.g., Pool)	27
Water Access (e.g., Boat)	4
Water Access (Misc.)	4

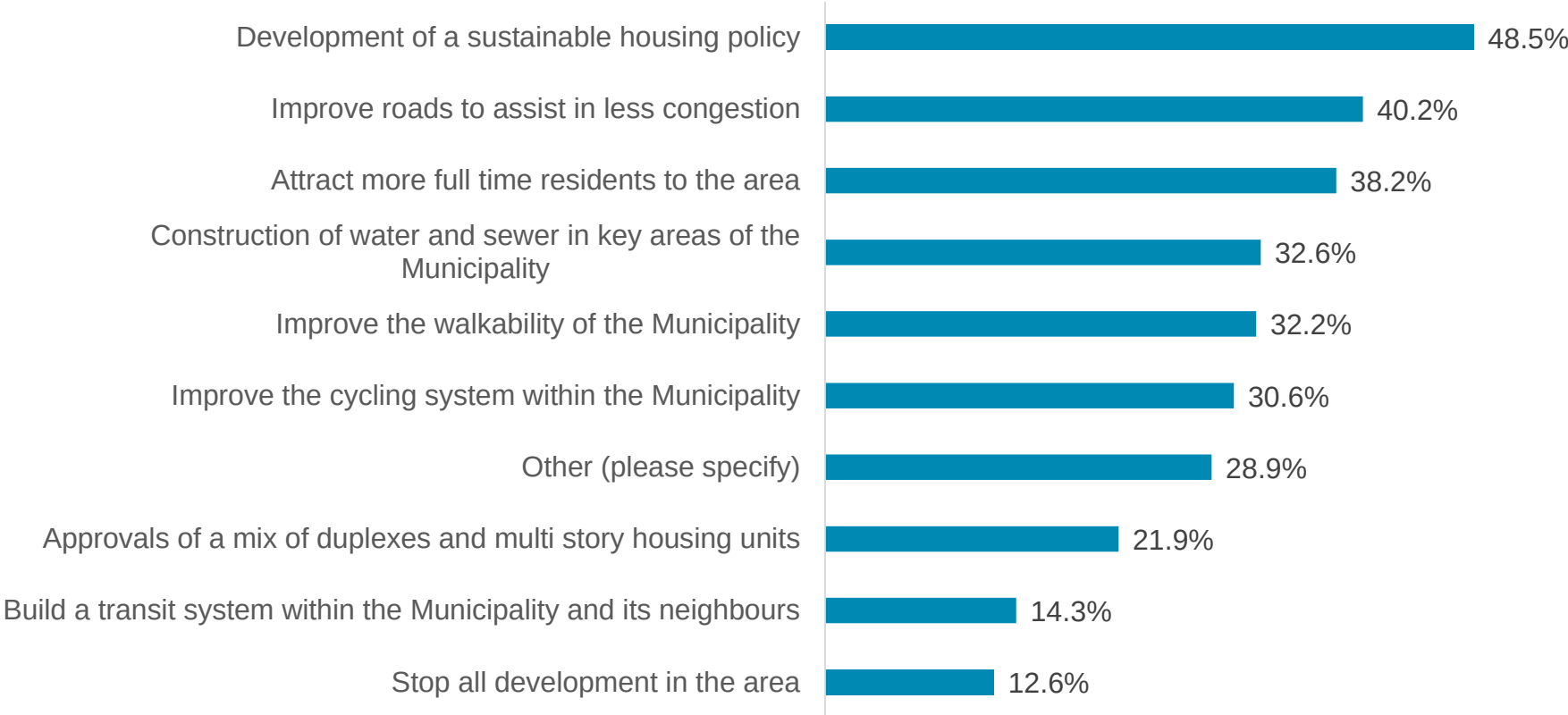
Infrastructure	#
Maintenance (e.g., Roads)	2
Parking & Traffic	28
Public Transit	8
Road Maintenance	1
Sewage	3
Snow Removal	1

Livability	#
Affordable Housing	11
Managing Tourism	31
Retail (e.g., Variety Store)	1
Schools & Daycare	1
Senior Care	1

Health & Safety	#
Bylaw Enforcement	14
Health Inspections	2
Healthcare Access	8
Police Presence	8

Q5. How would you balance the conservation of the environment along with growth? (Please choose three)

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



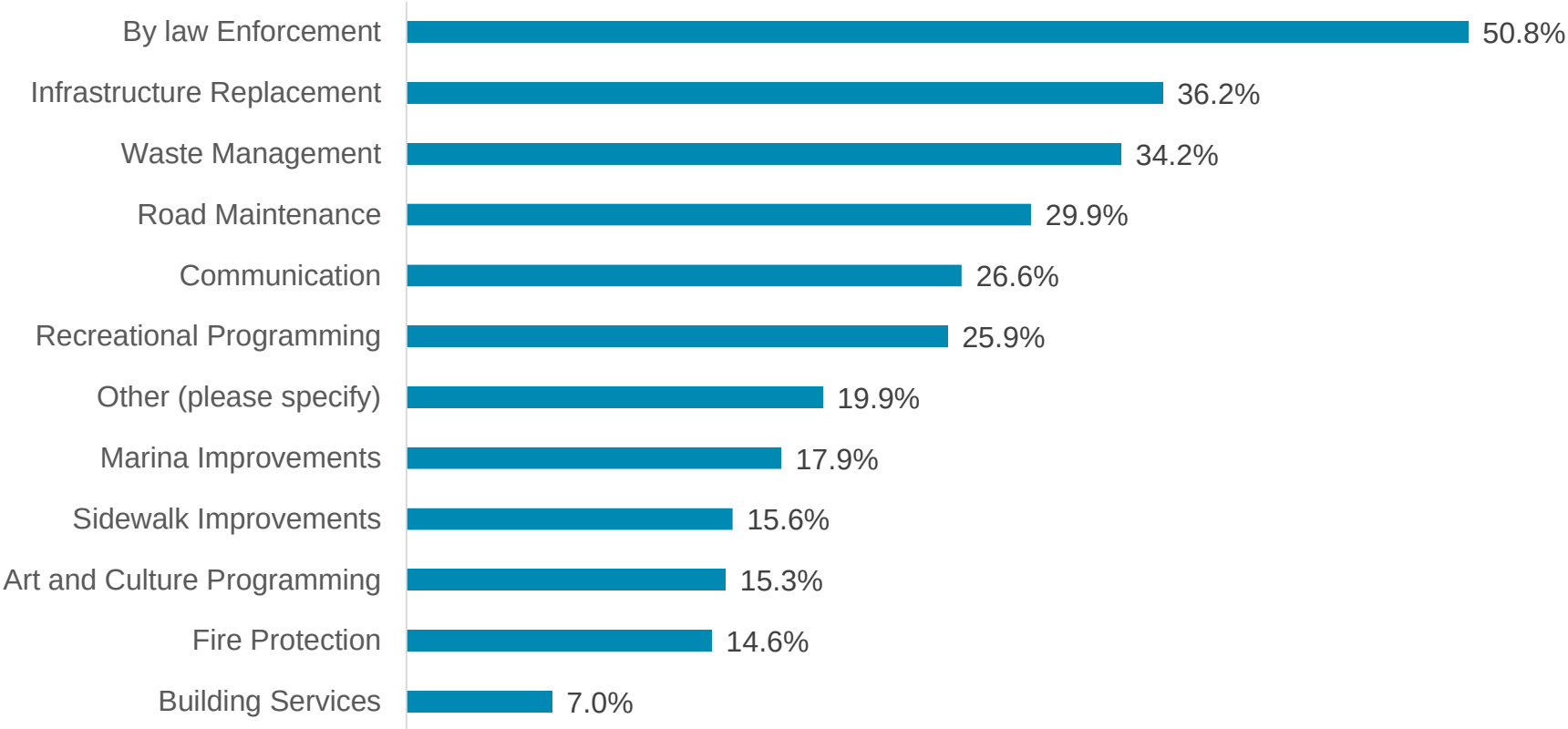
Q6. How would you enhance the health and safety of the community? (Please choose 3)

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



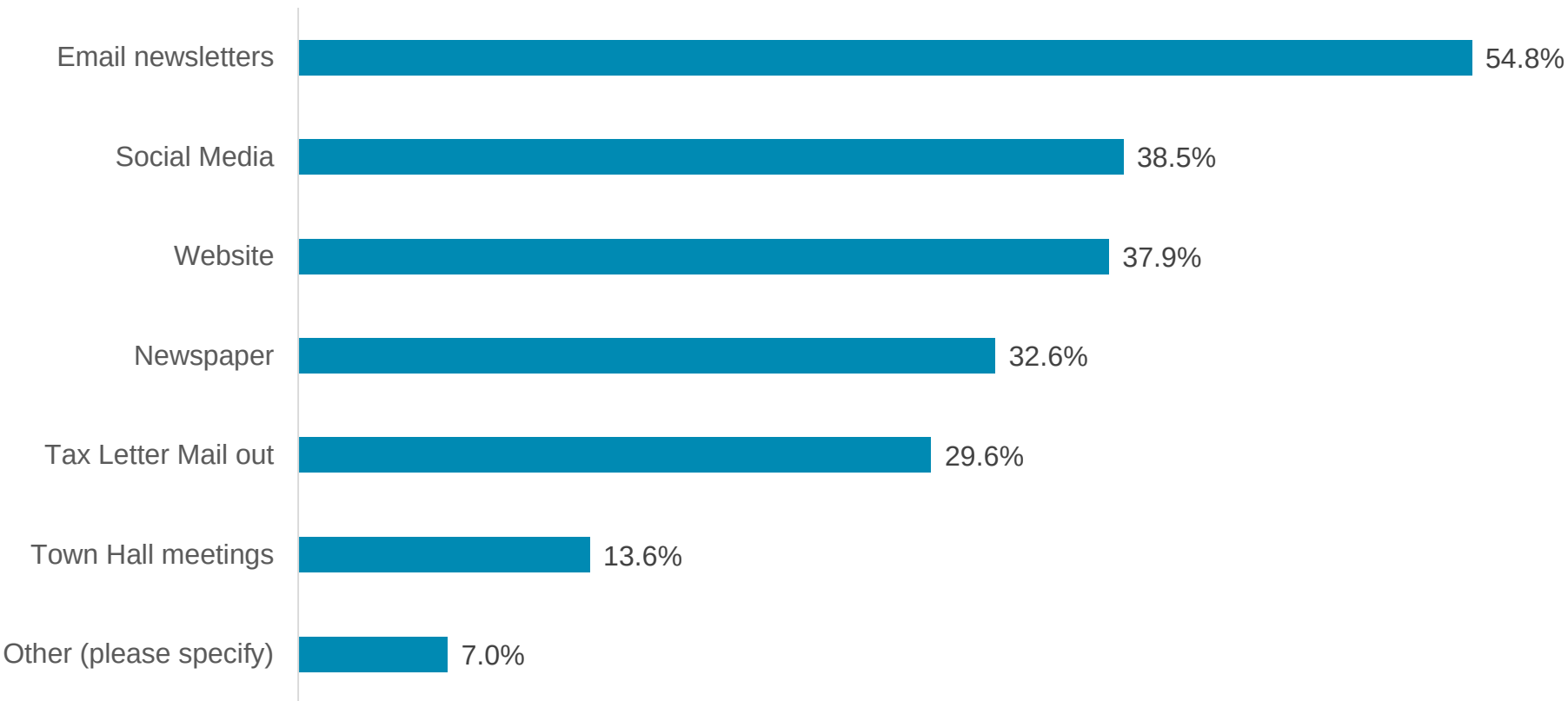
Q7. What services should the Municipality concentrate on in regard to improving its level of service to the community? (Please choose 3)

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



Q9. How would you prefer to receive your information regarding updates from the Municipality?

Percent of Total Respondents
301 Respondents



| Appendix B

| Consultation – Recreation

Definitions

What do we mean by recreation?

Activities and experiences that enhance members of the community's wellbeing. They can take a number of forms, including physical, social, environmental, intellectual, creative, spiritual, or cultural.



Current State

Recreation today in MNBP



5 meeting places

Including two libraries and three community spaces between Tobermory & Lion's Head



3 sports facilities

including the Lion's Head arena and baseball diamonds in Ferndale and Tobermory



3 beaches

including Lion's Head beach park, as well as Sandy Beach and Singing Sands



100km+ of trails

spanning the peninsula, including the Bruce trail and the Lindsay Tract



15+ groups

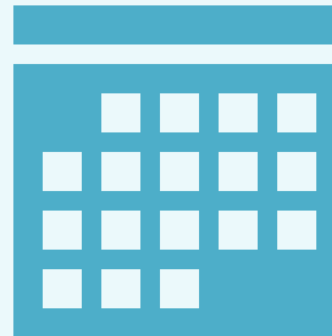
In the community for recreational programming of all types

Summer music

Events on Friday evenings in Lion's Head for July and August



20+ key events



that draw from across the community, including

- Hockey Tournaments
- Seasonal Parades
- Races & charity runs
- Yard sale trails
- Holiday weekends

Consultation Feedback

Goals

Three goals / themes emerged from the discussion that should guide our decisions around recreation

Goal	Description
1 Availability	• Participants indicated a keen interest in ensuring there were sufficient recreation opportunities to cater to a diverse set of interests / needs • This includes variety across type (e.g., physical, social, cultural), age (e.g., youth, families, seniors), and season
2 Affordability	• Participants indicated affordability as “table stakes” for recreation in the MNBP • The intent was not that all activities must be priced low – there was a recognition that certain ones will need to cost more – but that there be sufficient opportunities for individuals in all income brackets
3 Accessibility	• Given the peninsula’s rural character, the accessibility of nearby recreation was also highlighted as a clear goal • The plan should strive to shorten the physical distances and access barriers – either through the creation of new programming or creative approaches to travel

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Availability

“

...There are actually a lot of programs here...but not everyone knows about them.

...more cycling is a no-brainer...it's accessible, affordable, and green.

...it seems crazy in a community surrounded by water that not every child knows how to swim!

...We should look at programs for the mind, spirit, and body and give people a chance to try them.

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Improve communications regarding the activities already available (e.g., create a central repository, increase the use of social media)
2. Expand the range of uses for our key recreational amenities (e.g., using the arena in off-seasons for indoor walking or weightlifting)
3. Expand the range of cycling infrastructure, as an all-ages activity and potential solution to transportation challenges
4. Expand the swimming / watersports programs – possibly partnering with the private sector to cover capital costs (e.g., hotel operators)
5. Create ability for low / no cost “trial membership” for programs to encourage experimentation amongst community
6. Poll community members to determine specific recreational programs that are missing, needed, or of interest

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Affordability

“

...there people here who could run low cost workshops but we haven't made it easy for them...

...there are subsidies available but no one knows what they are.

...we need to better use the facilities we already have and have paid for...

...affordability feels okay right now...but it could become a big problem down the road

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Encourage greater volunteerism (e.g., through volunteer lists, promotion of opportunities, or “welcome wagon” when new people arrive)
2. Help connect recreation groups and owners of spaces to create programming (e.g., maintaining an inventory of spaces)
3. Particularly focus on civic-owned facilities and making them more available to residents (e.g., arena, school gymnasiums)
4. Support residents in applying for subsidy programs to participate in recreation (e.g., Canadian Tire JumpStart)
5. Communicate upcoming programs early to help in budgeting and / or application for subsidies to participate in programs
6. Monitor changes in affordability over time as community grows, balancing access with economic development

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Accessibility

“

...I'm not keen on driving for 30-45 minutes for a 30 minute class!

...I either have to go to Tobermory or Lion's Head – there's almost nothing in between...

...its would be really hard to get to these classes in the winter especially...

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Investigate potential for resident-led carpooling program to support physical access to recreational facilities
2. Address traffic-related issues emerging as a result of increase in tourism (e.g., resident only parking passes)

Consultation Feedback

Role of the Municipality

Across all three of these goals, the conversation generally indicated the municipality should play an instigator / facilitator role



INSTIGATOR

Suggests / recommends activities to potentially interested groups or partners



FACILITATOR

Enables others to create new recreational activities by providing resources to groups



EXECUTOR

Delivers a program or service end-to-end where no other group or interested party exists

Generally viewed as the preferred model for the municipality given the resource constraints and the flexibility it affords to residents / community groups to create their own programming

Examples: maintaining list of community programs, facilitating access to school gyms / arena, creating partnership with private sector for a pool

Municipality would only take on this role where necessary / otherwise unfilled by community

Examples: subsidy programs, maintenance of facilities

| Appendix C

| Consultation – Safety

Definitions

What do we mean by public safety?

The services and people that reduce the risk and impact of harm to ensure the wellbeing of the community



Context: Public Safety today in MNBP

2 police

detachments serving the municipality, based out of Wiarton and Chatsworth (with local office in Ferndale)

~40 volunteers

firefighters, with two stations in Lion's Head and Tobermory

4 physicians

as well as a slate of specialists

7 emergency plans

maintained by the municipality and reviewed / updated annually to ensure efficacy



Consultation Feedback

Goals

Three goals emerged from the discussion that should guide our decisions around safety

Goal	Description
1 Awareness & Education	• Participants indicated a strong interest in ensuring that all residents – and visitors – are well-educated on safety related issues and resources • This was particularly flagged in areas like the environment where knowledge around fire or water safety was deemed to be low
2 Responsiveness & Coverage	• Participants indicated police / bylaw coverage was inadequate today and needed to be increased (both to pursue offenders and discourage future) • However participants also acknowledged the limitations the municipality faced and were open to creative solutions that the community could provide
3 Prioritization & Focus	• Participants highlighted a number of top priority safety concerns that should be the focus of work • The majority had to do with the impacts of tourism (e.g., litter, hygiene, overcrowding, traffic) though they had other sources as well

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Awareness & Education

“

There was a [safety notice] a few days ago. Many people started to get very alarmed before they eventually realized it was no longer valid!

I keep hearing about break-ins but don't know if they're true or not...so I'm not even sure if I need to be scared.

Who do I call if a kayak is overturned? What about if it isn't an emergency? Do I still go to 911?

We need education for people who are new here and don't know the ins and outs of living somewhere rural.

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Develop training and communication campaign for visitors, short-term rental owners, and newcomers
2. Increase signage across the peninsula to remind or reinforce the potential risks and safety obligations of all
3. Expand scope of community on safety trends / news to help dispel disinformation (e.g., by utilizing methods like Facebook)
4. Partner with businesses to proactively advertise / communicate potential safety issues that are known in advance,. such as overcrowding
5. Partner with local community groups to create a “welcome package” for new residents on key aspects of living safely in the community
6. Increase communication about training opportunities related to safety (e.g., fire danger)

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Responsiveness & Coverage

“

The threat of a ticket needs to be credible to work...so we need officers that are visible

Having volunteers who have an AED and have been trained on it closes a big gap in access

We need to be realistic and tell everyone what the response times actually are gonna be so they can plan accordingly

There are these campers who know how to game the system and move to where enforcement isn't

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Clearly communicate the current levels of service to all residents
2. Evaluate options for increases in police / bylaw presence; investigate potential funding options from other user fees related to safety (e.g., tolls or parking levies)
3. Assess changes to the coverage models for law enforcement (e.g., starting shifts at unpredictable points of the peninsula)
4. Continue to look for ways for the community to provide safety-related services themselves (e.g., automated external defibrillators example)
5. Create toolkit for community groups who want to form in order to monitor / support one another on safety issues

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Prioritization & Focus

“

The solution to issues like fires or nuisance is more police presence. If preventative measures can't cover it, enforcement is the issue.

It's not just major routes like highway 6 either. It's also the popular routes that are areas that need to get considered

We need better road design, period – more shoulders, better lighting, clearer lines

Use of public access sites to Georgian Bay has become dangerous to people and the environment

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Expand the access to public washrooms and garbage cans in high traffic areas as well as key water access points
2. Increase the enforcement of other safety issues related to overcrowding (e.g., exceeding capacity limits in buildings) and visitors more generally (e.g., environmental degradation)
3. Implement the recommendations of the tourism advisory group in areas like short-term accommodations
4. Evaluate the secondary tourism hotspots for potential safety issues, not just the larger city areas (e.g., Sandy Beach road)

Note: many of the suggested safety improvements were covered in the previous consultation on mobility; the group present to talk safety reinforced that all of these points were crucial

Other Considerations

- A portion of participants also included protecting the most vulnerable as part of their definition of safety. The group defined “vulnerable” broadly – including individuals experiencing substance abuse issues, homelessness, or social isolation.
- Amidst the list of ideas, several participants highlighted that we must properly balance safety with a desire to preserve characteristics of the area. One cited example was the impact of more street lighting on the dark sky designation.
- The participants were also keenly interested in how the municipality could link user fees for activities that cause possible safety issues with increased service. The preferred example was funding additional police from visitor parking revenues.

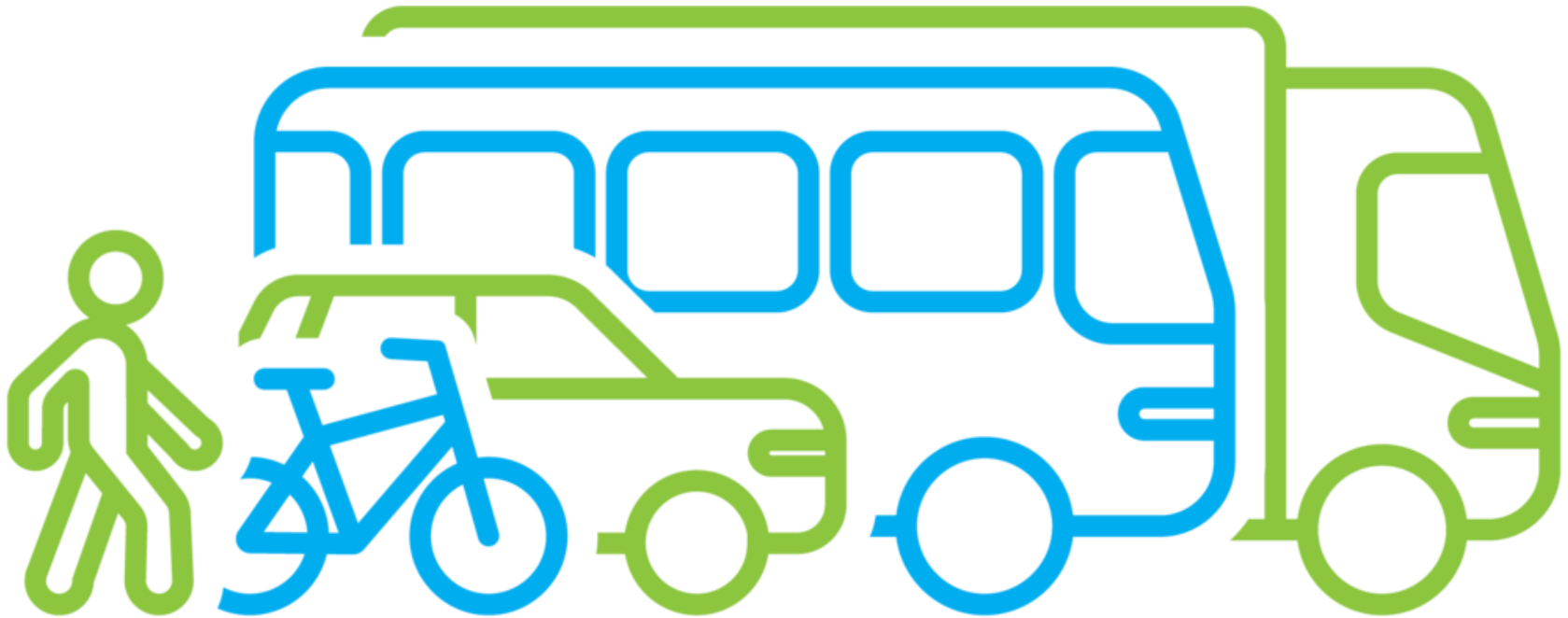
| Appendix D

| Consultation – Mobility

Definitions

What do we mean by mobility?

We're interested in mobility in all its forms – whether that's active modes (i.e., walking, hiking, cycling) or vehicular modes (e.g., cars, trucks, shuttles)



Current State

Mobility today in MNB

475 kilometers

of roads spread throughout the municipality; a mix of paved and unpaved roads

Highway 6

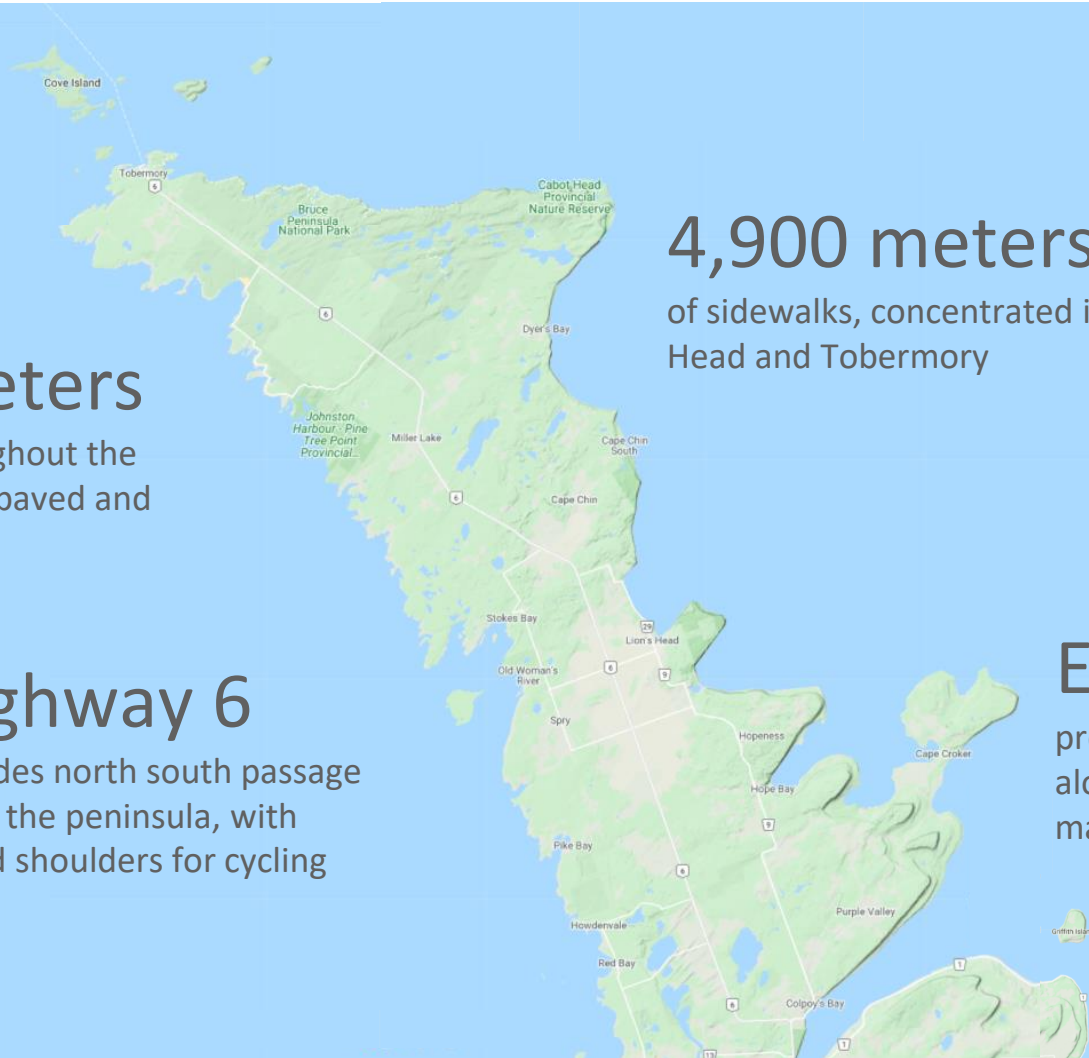
provides north south passage along the peninsula, with paved shoulders for cycling

4,900 meters

of sidewalks, concentrated in Lion's Head and Tobermory

East Road

providing a more scenic route along Georgian Bay, maintained by the municipality



Consultation Feedback

Goals

Two goals / themes emerged from the discussion that should guide our decisions around mobility

Goal	Description
1 Flexibility & Safety	• Participants indicated that they wanted flexibility with the municipality’s infrastructure to support a variety of uses in order to make the roads safer • This includes adapting it to seasonal variations in demand (e.g., increased pedestrian traffic in the summer) to improve safety
2 Connectivity & Diversity	• Participants proposed aiming for a “15 minute community” - one where all of the essentials are within reach by a variety of modes of transportation • While not part of the “essentials”, this included increasing the accessibility of areas outside the peninsula • This also includes both encouraging different modes transportation as well as routes to avoid overcrowding and other negative repercussions

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Flexibility & Safety

“

...The issue is the Tobermory area in July / August...it's far less of an issue off-season...

...We need to dedicate space on the side of the road for cyclists...they don't have to be paved!

...Right now, there are places that are scary to walk or cycle...some of these roads are EVIL.

...Johnston Harbour and other small communities aren't the issue...they're safe to walk or cycle...

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Conduct pedestrian traffic study in Tobermory and Lion's Head to determine key changes required for safety and efficient movement
2. Evaluate options for closing key areas to car traffic during peak tourist season (i.e., to safely accommodate increase in pedestrians)
3. Identify priority candidates for dedicated bike lanes and other supporting services or infrastructure (e.g., bike racks, bike stores)
4. Create online portal for residents to self-identify unsafe intersections / stretches of road to the municipality

Consultation Feedback

Deep-Dive: Connectivity & Diversity

“

...We cannot continue to be so car dependant...it's bad for our wallets and our environment...

...taxis don't work up here but there is no reason some kind of ride sharing couldn't...

...We should aim to be a 15 minute community, where all the essentials are easily within reach...

...We should be creating options for how people get off the peninsula...not just get on it...

”

Key Potential Opportunities

1. Investigate potential ride-share (e.g., cooperatives models or public-private partnerships), with municipality playing role of the convener or catalyst vs. the provider
2. Explore incentive programs to create the behaviors that we want (e.g., parking in safer / more appropriate areas during overcrowding)
3. Evaluate requires to create alternatives to Highway 6 for traversing the peninsula (i.e., what changes to the East Road / Isthmus Bay Road)
4. Discuss with regional transit authorities options for increasing service / connection
5. Consider dedicated parking (or rebates) for residents near essentials