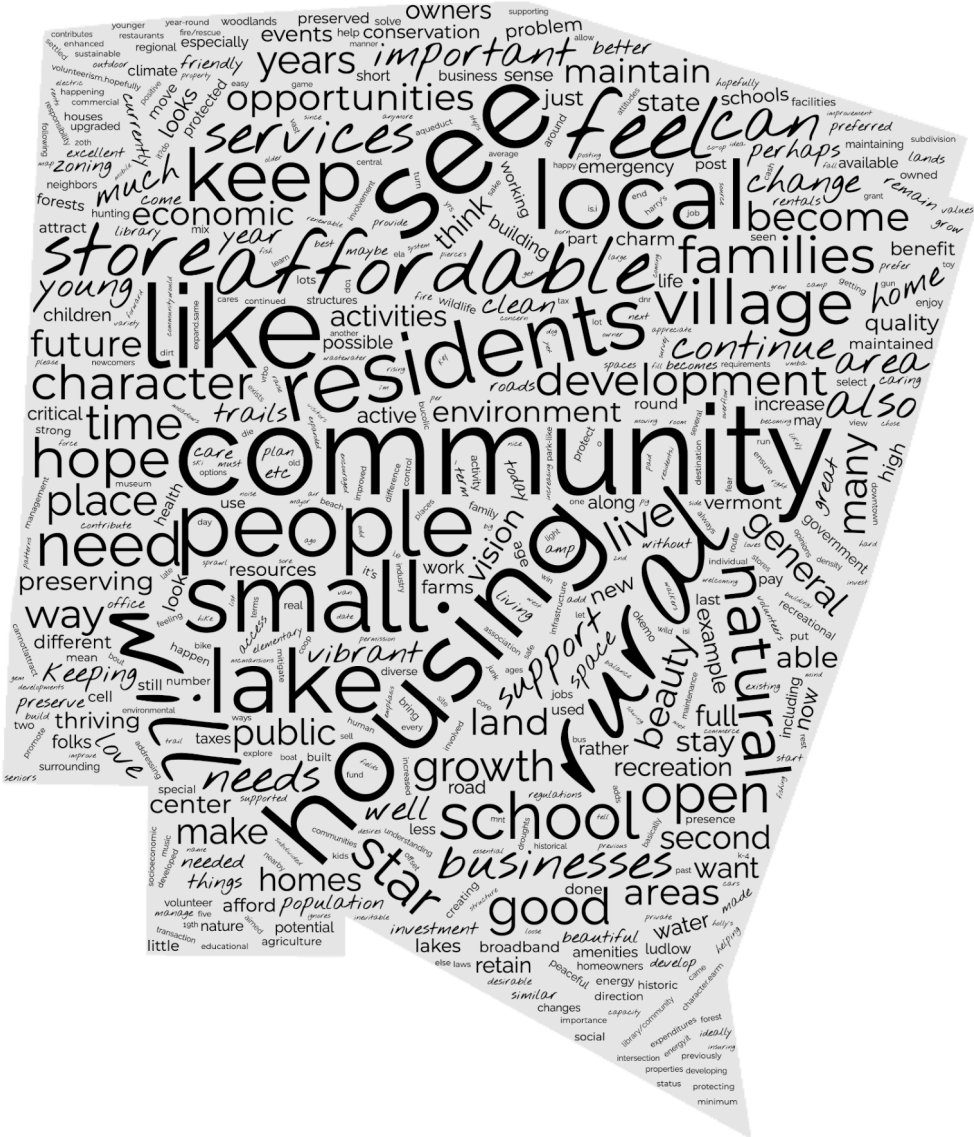


2022 Community Vision Survey



Summary Report

February 26, 2023

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Introduction

With support from the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, the Town of Mount Holly engaged community members, businesses, and organizations to identify and understand community concerns related to housing, economic development, and public infrastructure.

Historically, Mount Holly has had many thriving hamlets. Due to land use and economic changes, only two areas remain with a development density to support public infrastructure: the Municipal Center and the Village of Belmont.

The Municipal Center is the functional center of the town and hosts government, education, highway, and emergency services. There is no way to avoid continued public investment in these facilities. However, as these facilities age, those costs are likely to rise. Aging or inadequate infrastructure presents a financial liability to the community.

The historic Village of Belmont is the cultural center of the town—home to the store, library, church, museum, public park, village green, bandstand, and two community assembly areas. It is also where the beloved Cider Days is held. These are important assets that belong to all residents of Mount Holly.

This project aims to identify barriers to development in these two areas of town, consider methods of removing those barriers, and identify sources of funding that do not rely on local taxation. Key to this endeavor is community input. The first step of the plan is to enlist input from community members, businesses, and organizations. This report outlines the results of those inputs provided through a community survey.

Executive Summary

The survey provided a rich seam of information and ideas about the town of Mount Holly and its future. Several themes were identified as being important for the town:

1. Rural Identity and Character

There is overwhelming support for the town retaining its rural (and working) landscape and character and employing a variety of tools to do so.

2. Natural Environment and Outdoor Recreation

Healthy natural assets (Star Lake was frequently mentioned), some of which are available for outdoor, nature-based recreation and others serving as wilderness.

3. Residential Diversity

A healthy community composed of diverse ages, income levels, residential statuses, and backgrounds with specific attention paid to affordability, attracting and retaining young families, and better supporting older full-time residents.

4. Community Amenities and Services

A community store (whether privately owned, community-owned, or cooperatively owned) as well as village-focused development of affordable housing, senior housing, and small, local businesses.

5. Utilities and Infrastructure

Many mentioned the need for village water and sewer to support additional village development. Others mentioned the need for better broadband and cell service, more renewable energy, and EV chargers.

6. Community Strength and Culture

These two seem to go together, as they're about building social capital in Mount Holly. Social capital is trust, relationships, and networks in a community's population. When a community has strong social capital, it can accomplish more.¹ This can be done in many ways, including through events and other ways of building connections between people.

7. Governance and Public Safety

An inclusive and transparent local government and emergency services composed of engaged citizens providing for the general welfare. Furnished with modern and well-maintained facilities and equipment.

Respondents, in their comments, offered a number of suggestions for future action. Many of these suggestions are linked and interdependent and so these interdependencies were mapped onto a network graph shown below.

¹ The Eight Capitals. WealthWorks.

<https://www.wealthworks.org/basics/explore-regional-wealth-building/wealth-eight-capitals>

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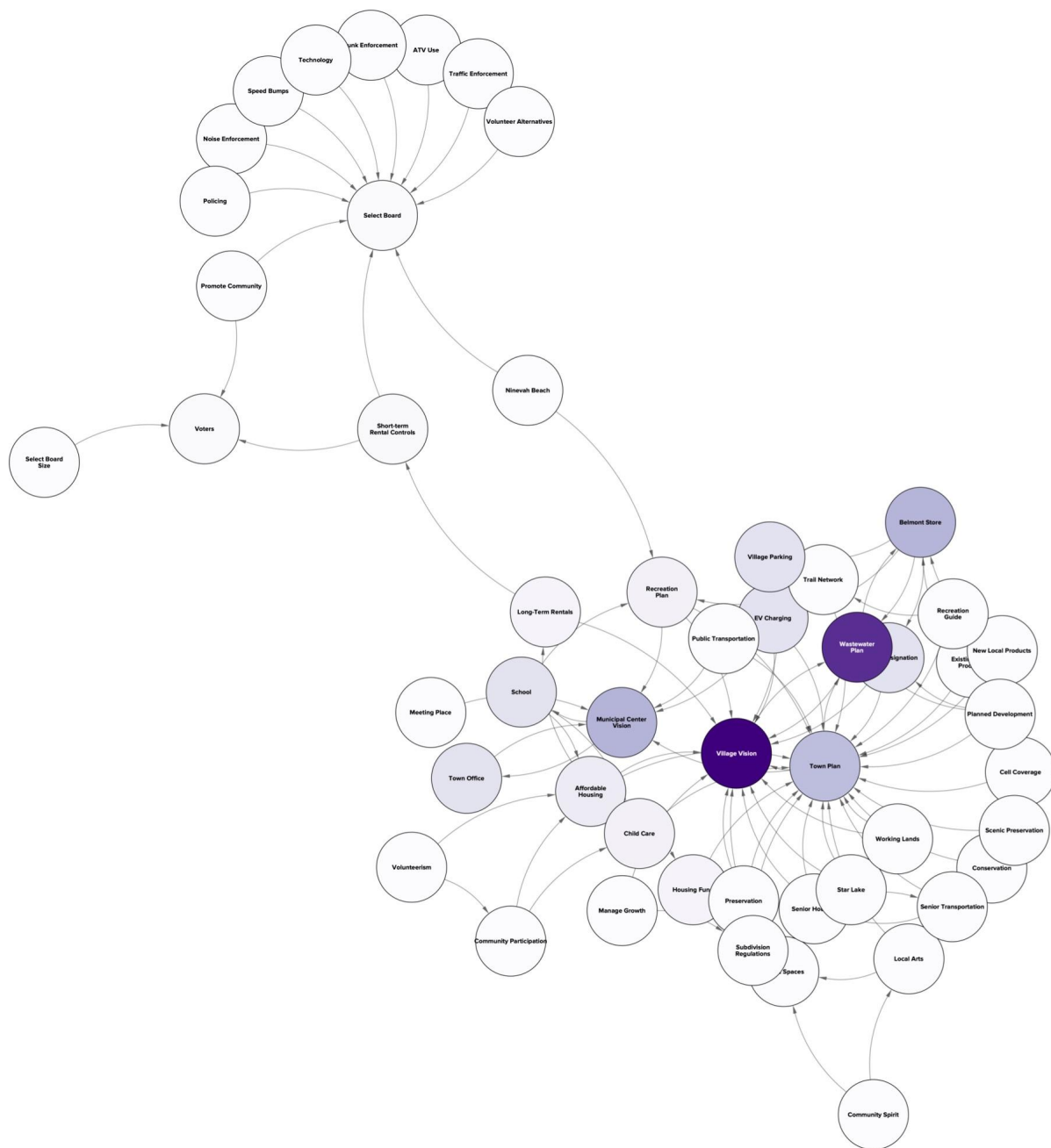


Figure 1. Links and interdependencies between suggestions for action

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From this graph we are able to see and measure the actions that will make the largest impact, summarized here:

Rank	Name	Value ²
1	Create a vision for the Village	0.222
2	Explore a Village wastewater plan	0.188
3	Create a vision for the Municipal Center	0.090
4	Revitalize the Belmont General Store	0.090
5	Update the Town Plan	0.082

This is just the first step. We have started to dig deeper into some of the suggestions offered and priorities identified in the survey responses. The next few weeks will involve gathering more information, consulting with stakeholders, and engaging with experts. We expect to hold a public meeting in the near future, probably in April, where we will present an initial outline of a report containing detailed recommendations for maximizing the benefit to the community from ARPA and other grant funding and addressing pressing community challenges.

² The value of the eigenvector centrality for each element in the graph is a measure of how well connected an element is to other well connected elements. In general, elements with high eigenvector centrality are those with the most influence on the overall network and therefore likely to have the largest impact.

Project Overview

The Town of Mount Holly applied for and received a Municipal Planning Grant from the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. The Select Board contracted with Community Roots, LLC, led by Melissa Levy, to identify and understand community concerns related to housing, economic development, and public infrastructure.

A number of community members have volunteered to help guide the project and are chipping in to help keep costs down.

Jeff Chase is the Municipal Authorizing Official for the Select Board. Jon McCann is helping with administration. Many thanks to engaged local citizens Andy Bolalek, Russ Garrow, Anna Hanson, Kevin Hollebeek, Lisa Kelley, David Martin, and Faith Tempest for stepping up to help.

This team determined that the first step would involve doing community outreach. A survey was created to collect data to help steer the grant objectives.

Survey Methodology

The survey questions were selected by a group of local citizens and stakeholders with assistance from Community Roots, LLC.

There are twelve questions in all. 6 are demographic-related; two are lifestyle and culture related; three are attempts to assess views of current and future needs; and, one is an open-ended invitation for the respondent to engage with us and share any thoughts they may have about their vision for the future of Mount Holly.

The number and type of questions were chosen so that respondents could complete the survey in under 10 minutes.

The survey was conducted from November 1–30, 2022, via an online survey and a hard copy print survey. The online survey was hosted by Google Forms and linked from the Town website. The link to the survey was additionally distributed on the Newsflash email list each week, and a QR code was published in the November edition of the Chit Chat. Individuals shared the link in various other local community forums and on Facebook. Hardcopies were available for pickup and return at the Town Office and the Town Library.

A relatively short collection period was selected for the survey to meet project deadline requirements for the Municipal Planning Grant and since this was merely the first step of the information-gathering and public involvement process.

Survey Responses

172 responses were received (22 hardcopies, 150 online).

Online survey results were collected under the mounthollycommunitysurvey@gmail.com Google Account.

Hardcopy surveys were manually entered into the online survey form by Community Roots, LLC.

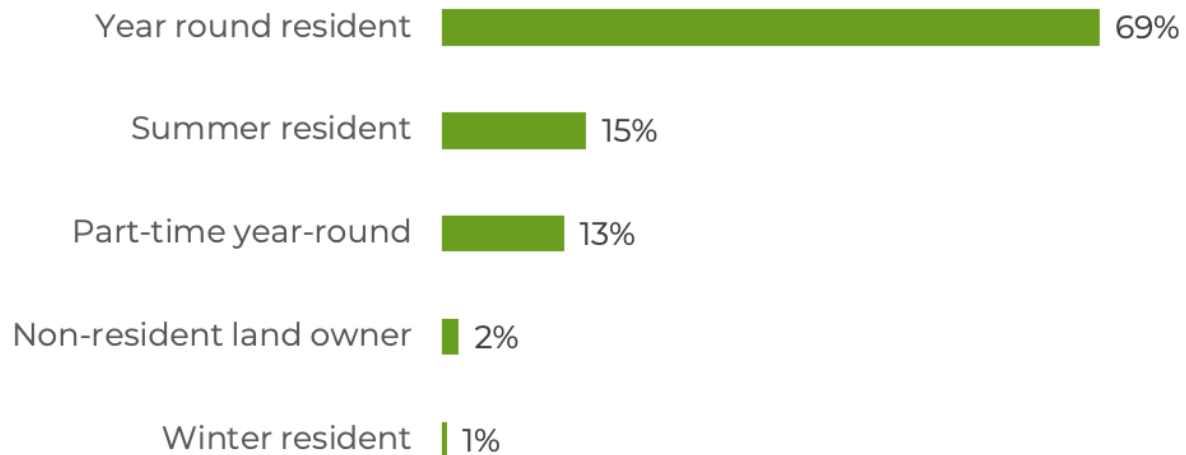
The results were collected in a spreadsheet, and analysis was performed by Jon McCann and Community Roots, LLC in Google Sheets and Microsoft Excel.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the Town of Mount Holly has a total population of 1,385 and an adult population of 950. The 172 responses represent 12% of the total population and 18% of the adult population. The survey results suggest that some fraction of the respondents completed one survey per household—rather than one per individual. As a result, the number of responses may represent up to 30-40% of the population.

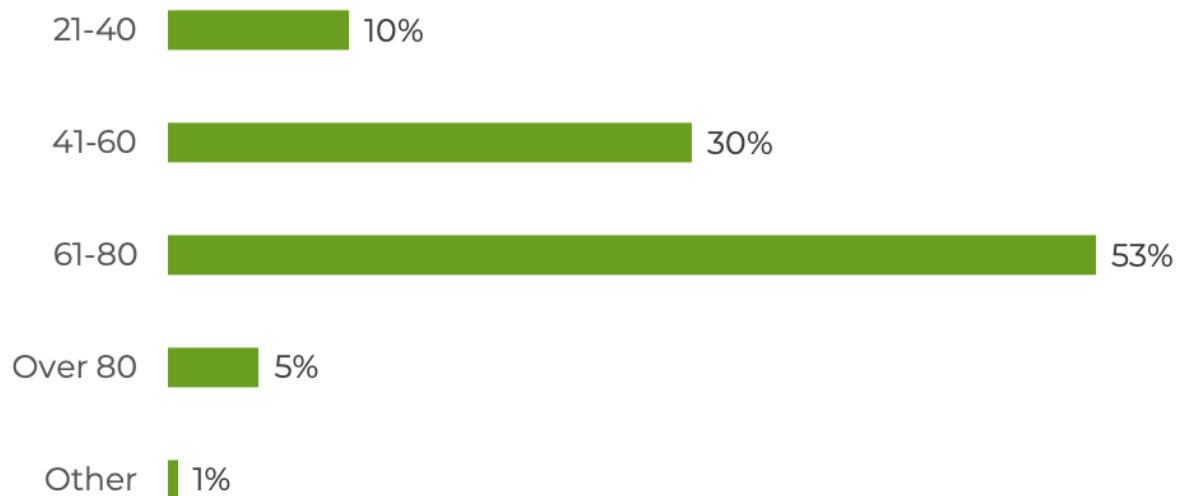
172 responses from an adult population of 950 yield a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of approximately 6%.

Survey Results

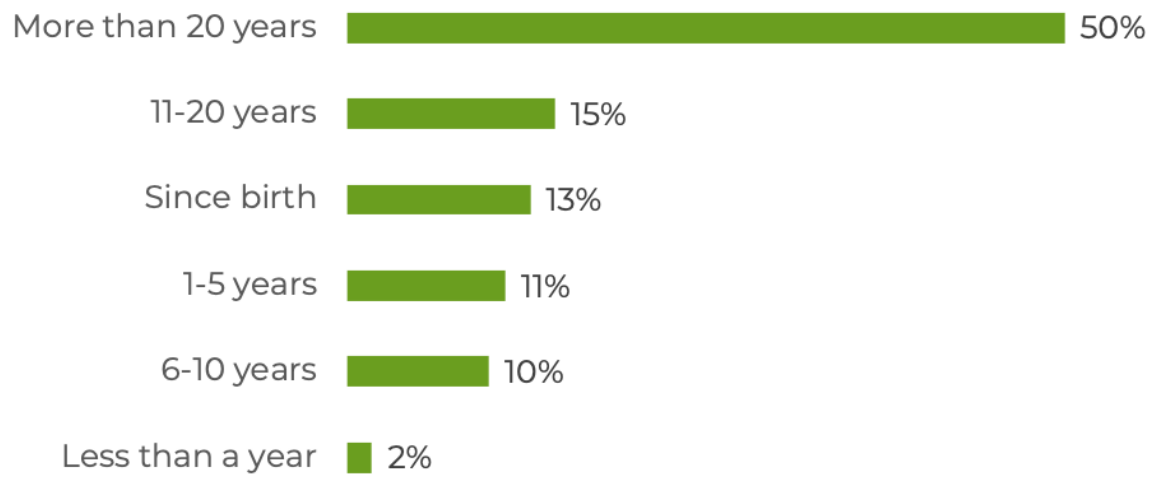
Question 1. Residential Status



Question 2. Age

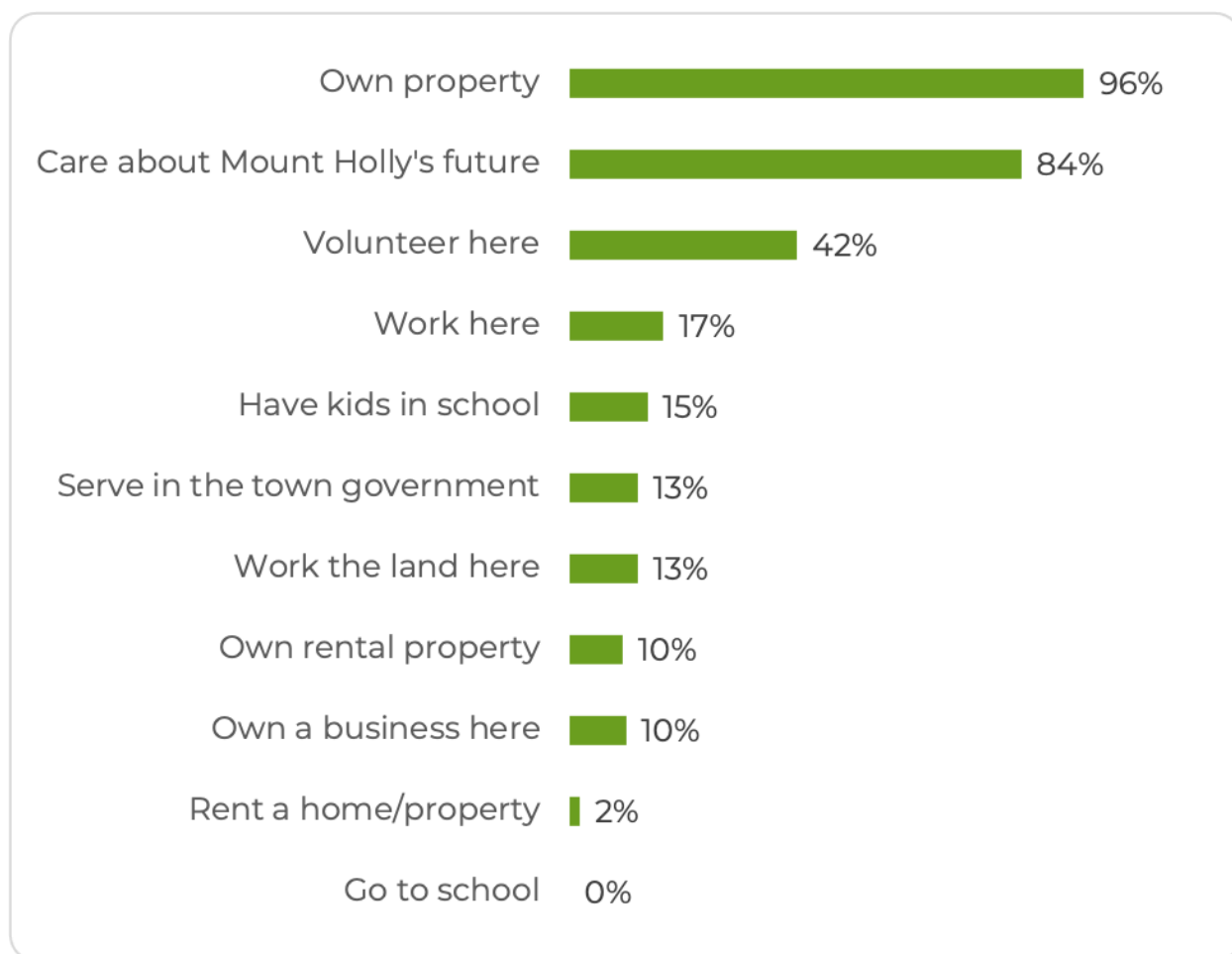


Question 3. Length of Residence



Question 4. Community Involvement

How are you involved in the community?

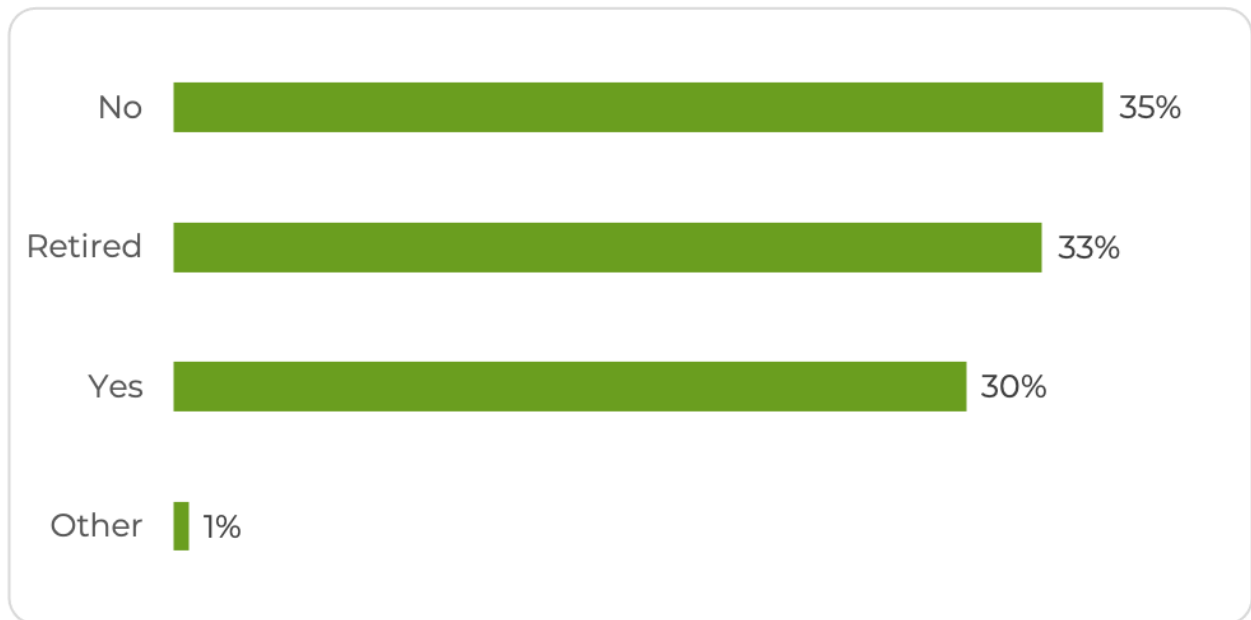


Responses written into "Other" included:

- "Was involved with the Mount Holly Library and Garden Club along with the Reading Group and Art Group."
- "Regretfully I have Long Haul Lyme and am basically bed and homebound making contributing my community impossible. When I get better I fully intend to get involved to make things better in my community."
- "care for my family who lives here"
- "Vermont Land Trust member"
- "Attend events, use the Belmont store, have a CSA at Plew Farm, use library, host friends and and family for holidays"
- "Visited Belmont my whole life, as I had extended family here."
- "Significant family history in Belmont. Care about its ongoing ability to thrive (including lake, general store, library, museum, church, community events)"
- "Raised my family here – we all graduated BRHS!"
- "Town librarian"

Question 5. Commuting

Do you commute to work outside of Mount Holly?

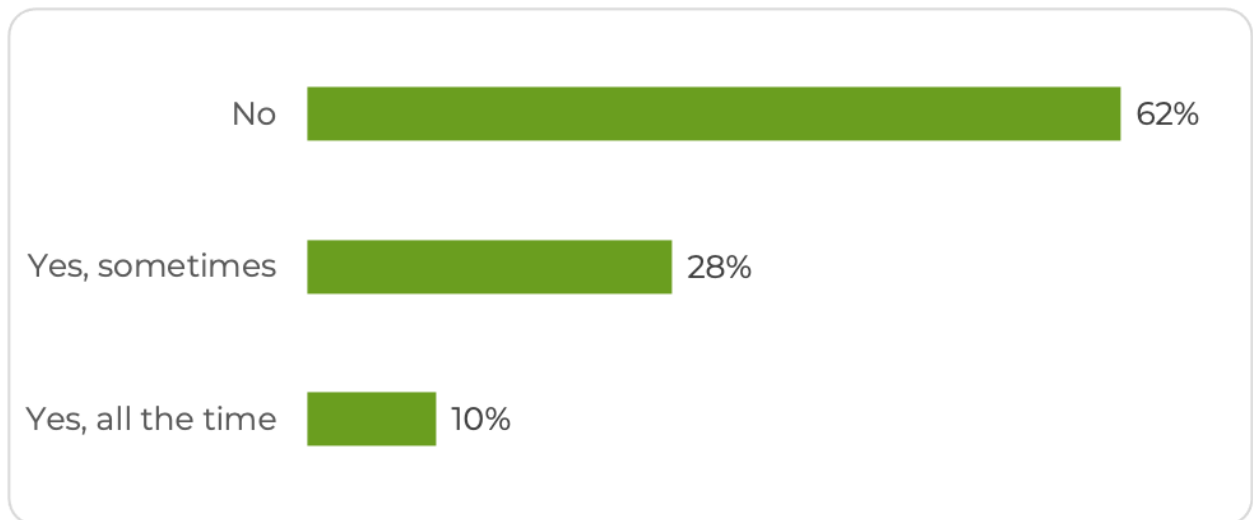


Responses written into "Other" included:

- "Work as contractor in and out of town"
- "I also work in Plymouth and we have conserved lands in Plymouth as well"
- "I work and volunteer here"
- "The property my family owns in Mount Holly is a second home."
- "Retired, but active fulltime volunteer in community groups"
- "Self employee brings me to wherever the job is"

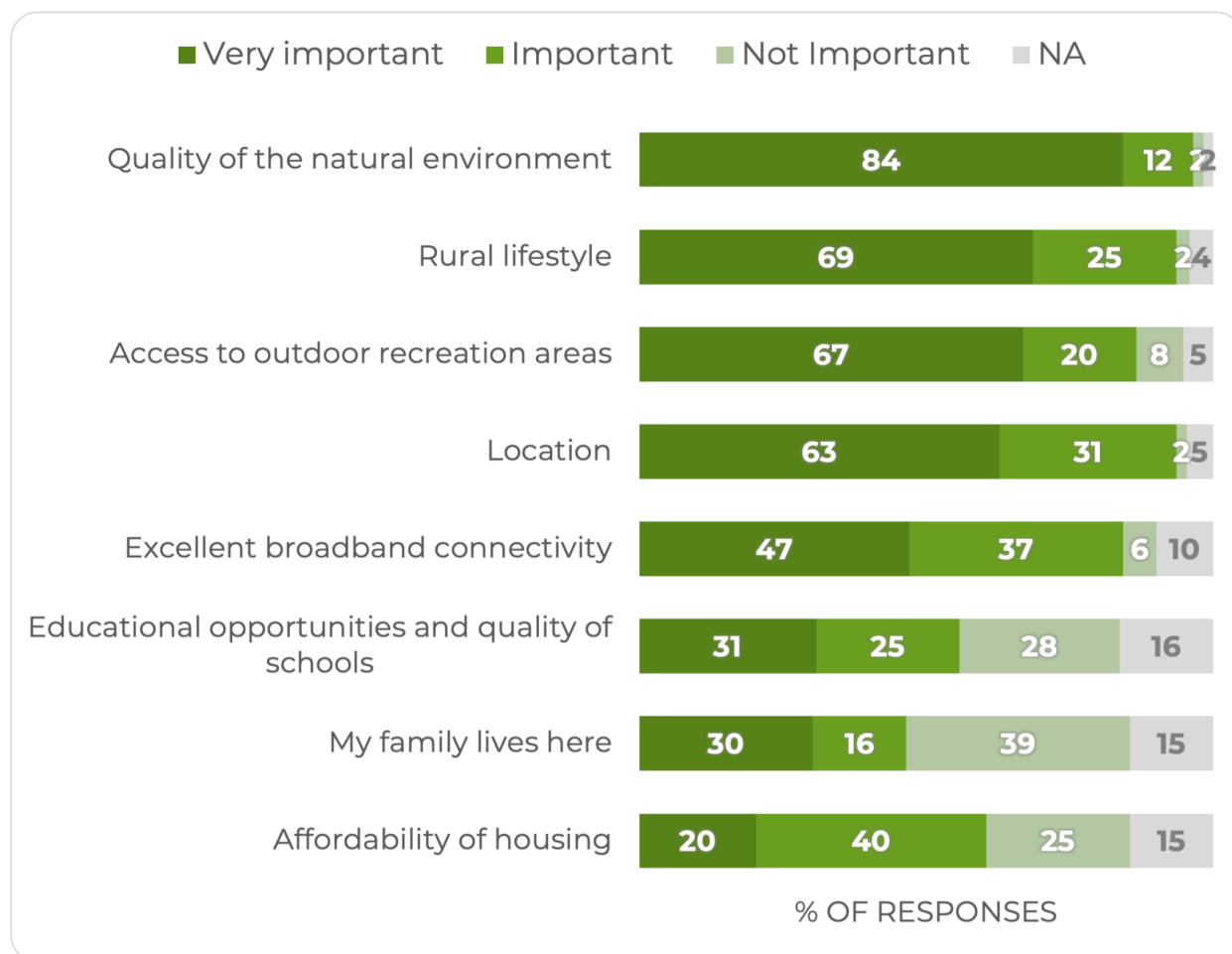
Question 6. Remote Work

Do you work remotely?



Question 7. Local / Resident's Values

How important are the following to you as to why you live in Mount Holly?



In addition to the reasons selected for living in Mount Holly detailed above, some respondents wrote in their own reasons in the field labeled “Other.” Within these write-ins, a number of themes were identified. These are summarized below, ranked in order of the number of responses corresponding to each theme. Full responses can be found in Appendix B.

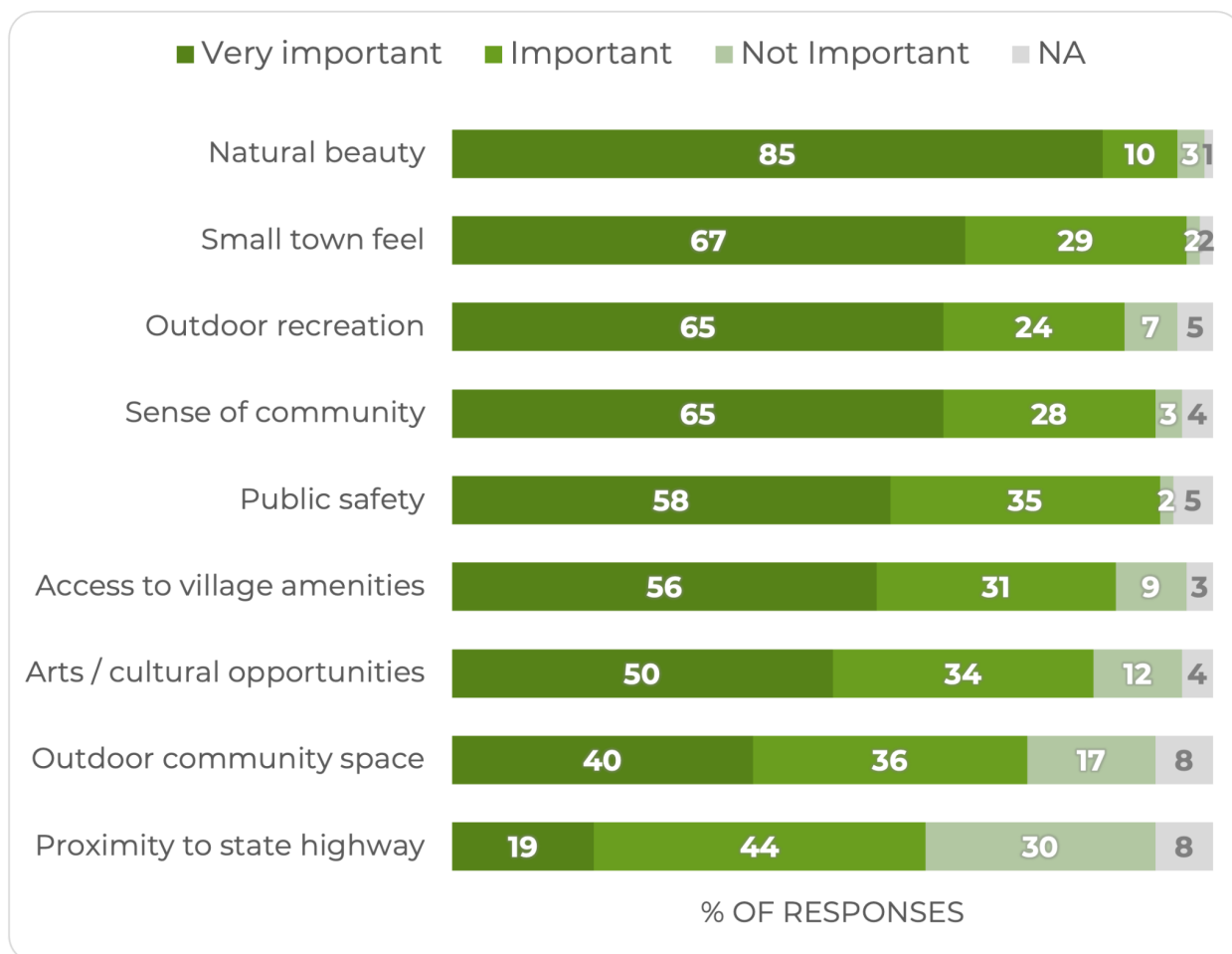
Theme	#	Summary
Rural Lifestyle	10	Camping. Managed, rural setting. Peaceful. Quality of life. Quiet. Natural. Respectful. Safe. Small town. Tranquil.

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Community / Cultural	9	Activities. Community spirit. Exceptional community. Friendly neighbors. Many interesting characters and groups. Great library. Organizations. Reunions and traditions. Small community. Welcoming.
Natural Environment / Conservation	8	Conservation orientation of landowners. Diversity of natural resources. Enjoying and preserving wildlife and environment. Lake Ninevah. Policies of the Wilderness Community. Preserving habitat. Sustainable land use.
Proximity to Goods and Services	5	Belmont Store. Local produce. Senior support. Urban services nearby.
Family Ties	4	200 years of family history Ancestral ties. History of land ownership. Home for many generations.

Question 8. Rural Lifestyle

How important are the following to your rural Mount Holly lifestyle?



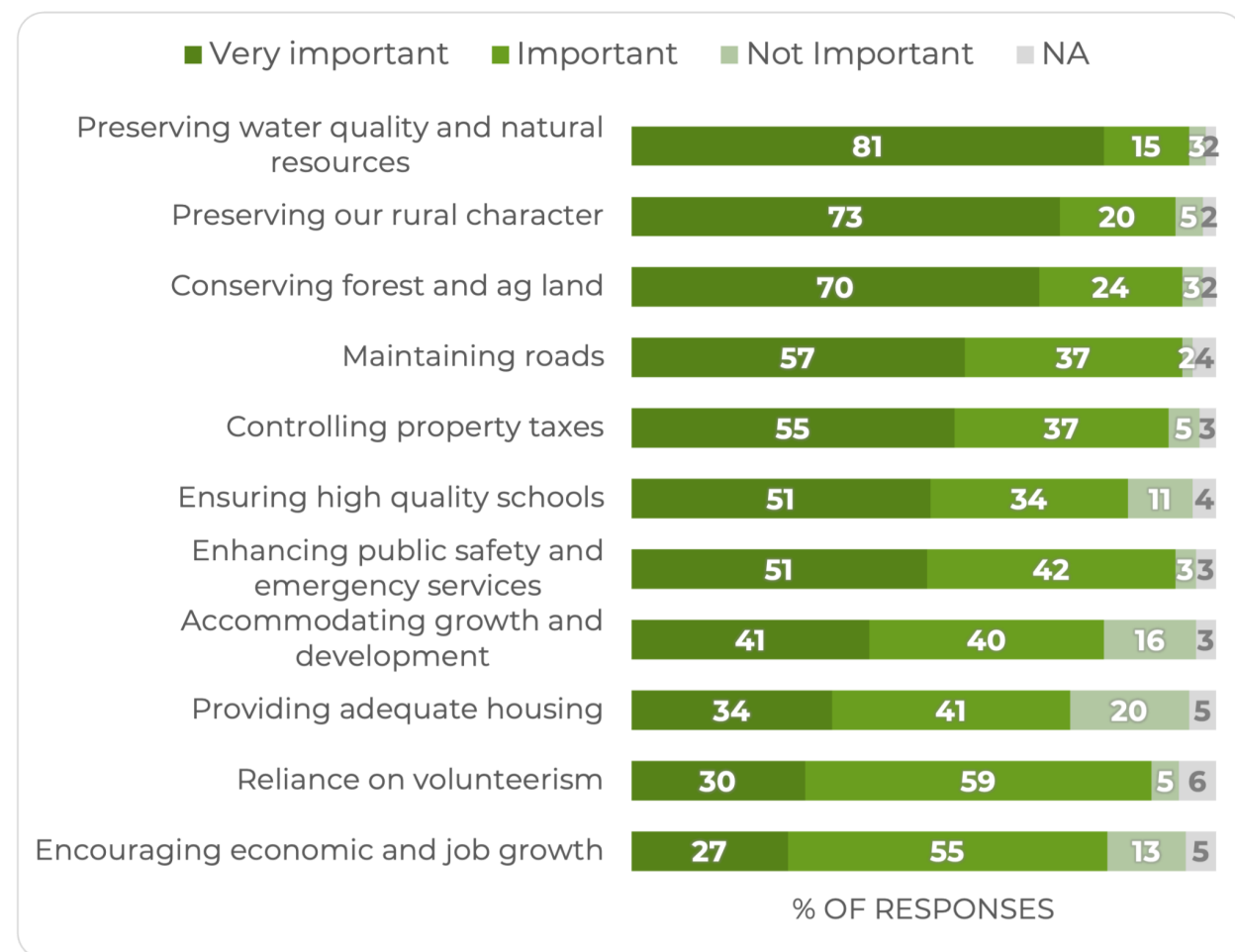
In addition to the rural values detailed above, some respondents wrote in their own in the field labeled “Other.” Within these write-ins, a number of themes were identified. These are summarized below, ranked in order of the number of responses corresponding to each theme. Full responses can be found in Appendix B.

Theme	#	Summary
Environment	7	Natural beauty and peace. Star Lake. Stone walls. Scenic views and roads. Wildlife and forest habitat. Protect wetlands.
Social Capital and Belonging	4	Activities. Close friends. Feeling open and welcoming. Good neighbors. Volunteerism.

Managed Development and Affordability	4	Becoming unaffordable. Losing rural lifestyle to subdivision and development. Enforce junk ordinance. Historic district preservation. Manage and plan development.
Proximity to Goods and Services	4	Biking, skiing, hiking nearby. Local food. Ludlow's restaurants.
Seniors	2	Senior housing needed. Walking trails.

Question 9. Community Challenges

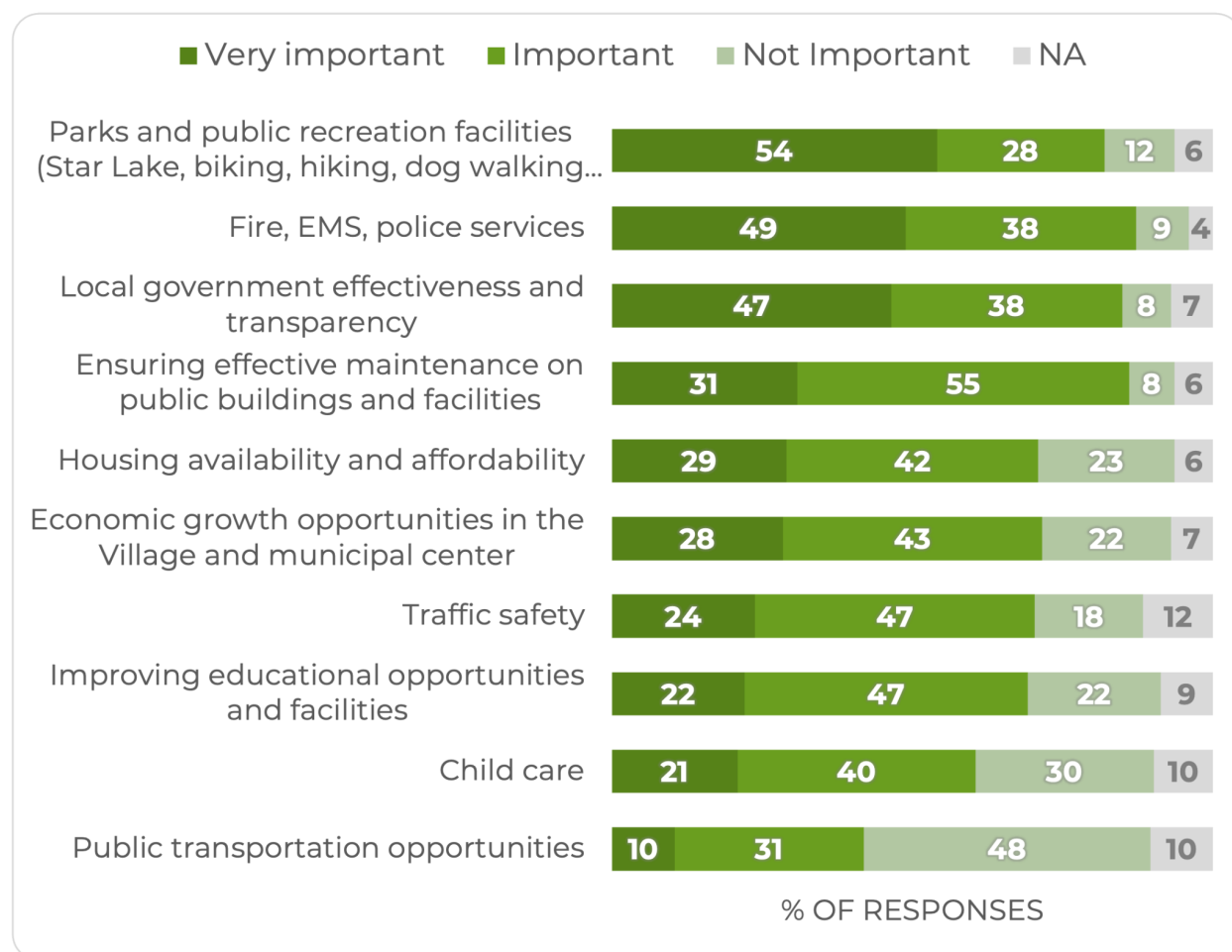
How do you rate the importance of these challenges facing Mount Holly over the next 5-10 years?



In addition to the community challenges identified above, respondents were given the opportunity to write in their own concerns in the field labeled “Other.” However, we collected no comments from that field.

Question 10. Community Needs

Which of these topics do you feel needs immediate attention in the Town within the next 2-3 years?

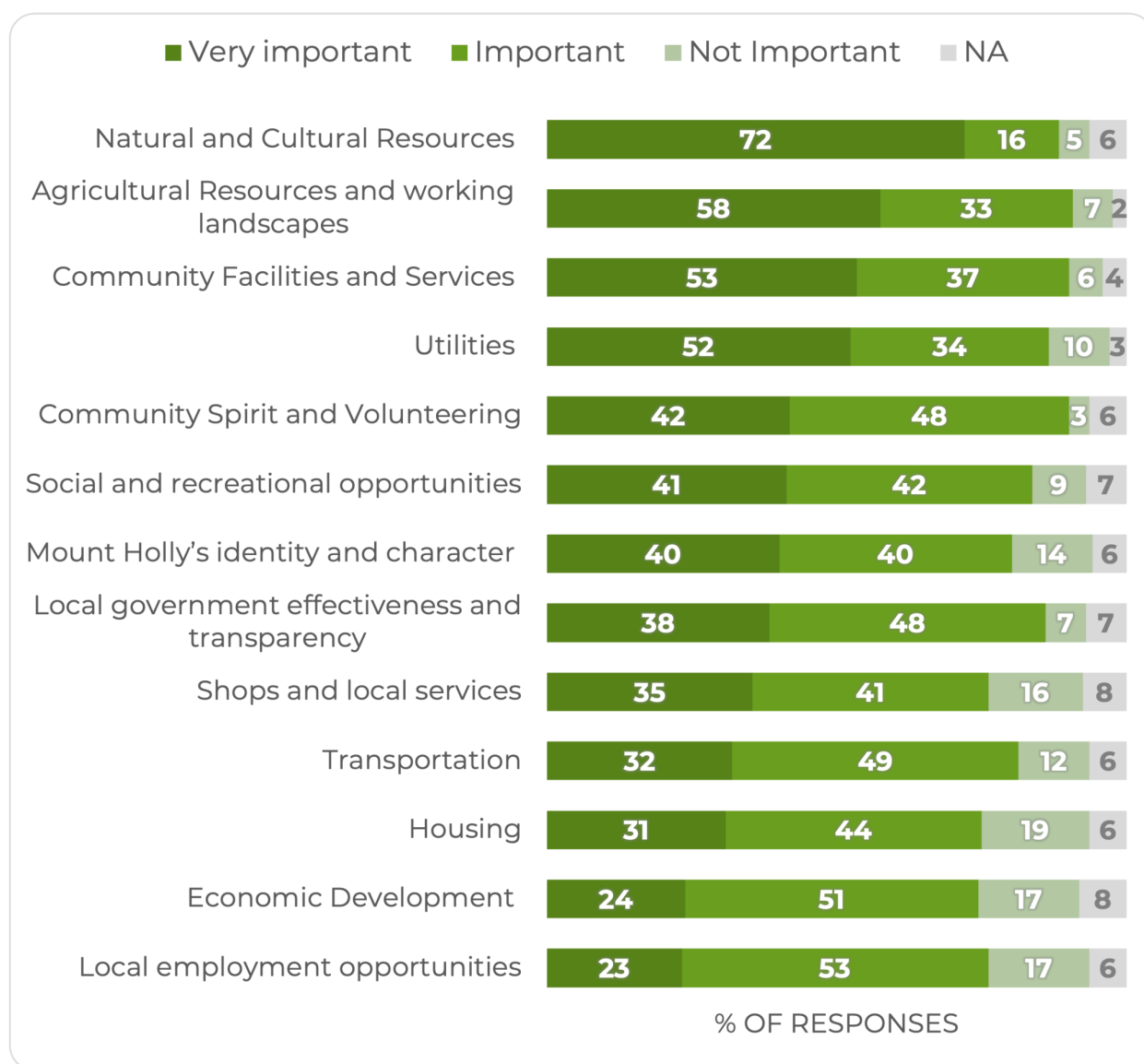


In addition to the community needs identified above, respondents were given the opportunity to write in their own in the field labeled “Other.” Due to an oversight, there was no option provided in the online survey for writing in “Other” topics. This was only afforded by the hardcopy survey forms. Two respondents provided comments, summarized below. Full responses can be found in Appendix B.

Theme	#	Summary
Traffic Safety	2	More law enforcement for speeding and aggressive driving. More enforcement for dangerous ATV use on public roads.

Question 11. Community Investment

How do you rate the importance of investment or enhancement in the following over the next 5-10 years?



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In addition to the investments or enhancements detailed above, some respondents wrote in their own in the field labeled “Other.” Within these write-ins, a number of themes were identified. These are summarized below, ranked in order of the number of responses corresponding to each theme. Full responses can be found in Appendix B.

Theme	#	Summary
Identity and Character	4	Better website. Enforce junk ordinance. Preserve scenic roads and historic look and feel. Store in Belmont important.
Utilities and Physical infrastructure	4	Belmont public parking needed for tourism and economic development. Bury power lines. Cell service needed. Public parks. Library. Community gathering places. Cemeteries.
Proximity to Goods and Services	4	Belmont General Store. Local food and products. Perhaps a coop store. Support Belmont General Store.
Natural Environment	4	Encourage Family Forest Carbon Program. Protect flood plains. Star Lake.
Transportation and Public Safety	3	Enforce speed limits. Vehicle noise. Incremental improvements in police and EMS. Safe walking needed. Consider removable speed bumps.
Social Capital and Belonging	3	Public gathering places (community center, odd fellows hall). Sick of seeing confederate flag. Store in Belmont important as social hub.
Governance	2	5-person Select Board. More public engagement. Active public health. Use website to increase transparency.
Seniors	2	Senior housing needed. Senior walking trails needed. Senior van service.
Housing	2	Affordable housing needed to attract and retain young families. Control short-term rentals. More long-term rentals.
Child Care	2	Address sooner than 5 years to attract and retain young families. Invest in child care services heavily.

Jobs and Economic opportunities	1	Promote opportunities region-wide.
Climate Change	1	Integrate climate change into planning process. Encourage Family Forest Carbon Program.
Second-home Owners and Taxes	1	Tax rates of resident vs non-resident.
Managed Development and Affordability	1	More regional planning.

Question 12. Community Vision

Describe your preferred vision for Mount Holly in the future.

You can consider questions such as:

What does it look and feel like in the year 2040? What is the same, and what is different?

This question collected descriptions of respondents' visions for Mount Holly. Within these responses, a number of themes were identified. These are summarized below, ranked in order of the number of responses corresponding to each theme. Full responses can be found in Appendix B.

Theme	#	Summary
Rural Identity / Character	72	A quieter, wilder, peaceful, vibrant town. As little change as possible. Be a leader in preserving rural and historical character of area. Beautiful small town, rural feel. Continue to feel like a special place. Continue to have open space, farms. Don't become Ludlow. Don't change too much. Happy the way things have been. Keep "localness" of town. Keep it the same. Looks as it does today. Looks same only better. Love it as it is. Maintain bucolic and friendly spirit. Hope things stay about the same. Maintain character off town. Maintain peaceful village character. Maintain rural lifestyle. Peace and tranquility. Peaceful and bucolic small town. Peaceful village. Place for children to grow up. Preserve Mount Holly's soul. Protect rural character and natural beauty. Quaint beautiful town similar to now. Remain nice quiet town. Remain rural. Retain rural character. Retain rural landscape. Retain small-town feel. Retain town charm. Rural charm is what was attractive. Rural environment with modern services. Rural with mowed fields and

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		meadows, open space, and woodlands. Similar but better. Similar to today. Small community charm. Small town and community values. Small village feeling. Stay a Vermont small town but improved. Stay as it is. Stay recognizable. Stay visually the same. Traditional rural Vermont town. Values the individual and individual responsibility We are a gem but must change with the times. Beware of NIMBY.
Natural Environment	51	Abundant natural resources and conservation lands. Address Star Lake. Beautiful nature protected by all of us. Beautiful natural environment. Beautiful protected woodlands, streams, lakes, and forests. Beauty and seclusion. Care for the natural environment. Clean lakes. Clean Star Lake a central part of the community and draw for visitors. Clean water. Correct invasive weed issues in Star Lake or fill it in for a park. Fix Star Lake. Improve Star Lake. Maintain wilderness aspect. Make environmental decisions based on biodiversity over aesthetics and human desires (let Star Lake become a marsh). More conservation around Star Lake and paths. More lands put into conservation trusts. Open undeveloped land available for farming, hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, horseback riding. Preservation of open space, natural environment, agricultural lands, forests. Preserve and enhance natural resources. Preserve natural surroundings. Preserve Star Lake. Preserve wildlands. Preserve wildlife and natural beauty. Preserved natural environments and habitats. Prioritize conservation. Prioritize protection. Protect forests and lakes from development. Protect forests from development. Protect open space. Protect rural character and natural beauty. Protect Star Lake by improving Belmont wastewater systems. Make Star Lake swimmable. Protect views. Protects natural resources. Restore Star Lake swimming access. Restore Star Lake. Retain clean air, forests, open space. Retain clean environment. Retain natural beauty and protect environment. Maintain open space, forests, and views. Retain open land uncluttered by solar panels. Show leadership in preserving open land and views. Small town surrounded by wilderness. Star Lake becoming 70% clear water. Support families who support keeping land open instead of selling or subdividing. Woodlands, mowed fields, and meadows enhanced.

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Affordable Housing	38	<p>Address investment homes used as short-term rentals. 2-3% tax on every real estate transaction paid to an affordable housing fund. Affordable for young families. Affordable housing for average Vermonters. Something must be done to offset buying by out-of-staters. Affordable housing for families will preserve our community. Affordable housing for year-round residents. Affordable housing offered to young families. Affordable housing. Attract full-time residents by emphasizing housing. Attract more housing. Attract young families. Be a great place for families. Create affordable housing that doesn't detract from rural values. Don't become a place of second homes for the wealthy. Encourage an age and economic diverse population. Ensure families can afford to live here. Great housing. Keep taxes affordable. Maintain the local population. More affordable homes for single people and seniors. More affordable housing for full time residents. More affordable housing in hamlets. Use more European village models. More affordable housing in villages. More affordable housing. More housing in Ludlow and Rutland. More long-term rental properties (perhaps farmhouse-type duplex units) in Belmont or hamlets. Offer more housing opportunities. Our children should be able to live here. Prioritize livability. Protect affordable housing. Regulate short-term rentals. Second homes driving up housing costs. Solve affordable housing problem. Some appropriately designed multifamily housing in town center. Young families can afford to live here.</p>
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Community Strength	32	<p>A caring community of people from all kinds of backgrounds! A community-centered group comes together for the better good of the town. Balance inevitable growth from second homes with having a stable community. Caring and friendly community. Community feel the same. Continue to build strong sense of community. Create a healthy and diverse community by being inclusive of differences. Encourage an age and economic diverse population. Excellent community involvement. Friendly neighbors. Mix of young families and older people. Full-time residents become more accepting of part-time residents who care about the community and contribute to town. Good friends. Have a diverse population with young working families and people of all ages living here full time. Reduce us versus them mentality. More welcoming. Increased sense of community around a series of events. Knowing neighbors contributes to safe communities. Age diversity. Looks and feels like residents care about the Town. Maintain community and volunteer spirit. More people volunteering. People don't get divided by politics. People helping people. Prioritize connection with each other. Residents on both north and south of Route 103 feel connected. Rural community feel. See community grow. Sense of shared community. Diverse opinions accepted. Solutions must come out of a feeling that we are all in this together. Stay good neighbors and an active community. Strong, friendly community. Warm, caring community. Warm, welcoming, inclusive community. Welcome newcomers and preserve traditions. Young families bring energy and volunteerism.</p>
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Economic Growth	31	<p>Another store or two. Attract full-time residents by emphasizing local business. Attract more businesses. Attract tourism and commerce. Support Plew Farm and Crowley Cheese. Attract young families. Cell signal essential for economic competitiveness. Create economic opportunities that don't detract from rural values. Encourage artisanal and digital business. More boutique or organic farms. Expand local food production. Growth of Okemo will hopefully affect us positively. Growth that doesn't detract from village and community. Improve Belmont wastewater systems to allow economic development. Incentives for local small businesses. Identify locations for local business. Increase economic activity by improving town center. Increased support to local farms and businesses. Invest in town wastewater systems to enable more development in Belmont Village. Local business. More business in Belmont. More businesses on Route 103. More farms. Local business thriving. More farms. More stores and businesses. More growth in Belmont. More local employment opportunities. More local employment. More local shops and restaurants. More vibrant job force. Small businesses thrive. Support local agriculture. Support small, locally owned home businesses. Sustainable development over growth. Thriving small businesses and abundant jobs.</p>
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Managed Development	27	<p>Address architectural compatibility. Adopt local land use regulations that protect our unique community instead of relying on state regulation. Balance inevitable growth from second homes with having a stable community. Consider zoning. Control over-development. Beware economic improvement. Control sprawl. Controlled development. Current rate of development along roads and on open land limits recreational opportunities. Discourage major developments and McMansions. Discourage subdivision and development of rural lands and instead develop town centers and hamlets with tasteful density and reduce sprawl. Consider municipal center, East Wallingford, other hamlets for increased development. Do not over-develop. Don't become built-up and suburban. Don't become extension of Okemo. Working farms and woodlands should be discouraged from subdivision. Don't turn into New Jersey. Don't want town to be overtaken by commercial development. Improved development limits. Keep development in check. Remain as rural as possible. No overflow from Okemo. Keep up with new regulations. Manage future development to keep Town small. Don't become Ludlow. Minimal subdivision and development. No over-development. No over-development. Not to grown anymore. Regulate development to preserve rural character. Regulate development. Smart development planning required to maintain character. Sustain what we have now and balance with planned growth.</p>
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Utilities and Facilities	26	Adapt to influx of new residents. Add a cell tower. Advertise our high speed broadband. Invest in town waste water systems to enable more development in Belmont Village. Attract full-time residents by emphasizing services. Better road maintenance (especially Ninevah Rd). Cell signal essential for economic competitiveness. Electric vehicle charging station. Expand local food production. Improved infrastructure. Keeping up with technology needs. Maintain facilities without overreliance on small number of volunteers and private fundraising. More affordable broadband. More paved and better maintained dirt roads. Partner with the Vermont Village Wastewater Initiative to explore wastewater system upgrade options for Belmont. Preserve local services. Prettify School Street. Park and ride with bus stop. Public parking in Belmont. Prioritize road maintenance. Provide good services to residents. Public transportation van. Roads maintained and plowed. Rural environment with modern services. Solve Belmont waste water problems. Transportation. Turn on cell service. Well-maintained roads and homes. Well maintained roads.
Community Facilities / Amenities	23	Active Belmont Village. Another store or two. Continue to have a store - perhaps co-op. Excellent museum and community association. Village store. Expand communal activities and services in Belmont. General store thriving. Invest in Belmont Store and run as a co-op. Keep Belmont Store open. Library. Local food. Maintain facilities without overreliance on small number of volunteers and private fundraising. Maintain vibrant town center in Belmont. Support Belmont General Store (see Brownsville Butcher in West Windsor). New town office and fire/rescue station. Public parking in Belmont. Properly maintain public institutions and government buildings. Quality stores and restaurants. Revive Belmont Village. Store in town. Support Belmont General Store. Support General store and post office. Thriving village amenities. Use Pierce's Store as model for Belmont General Store. Village-based development and walking access to town amenities. Village center needs upgraded store, post office, and green.

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Recreation	20	<p>Add a town forest with recreational trails. Better access. Better parks and hiking trails. Clean lake for swimming, boating, and enjoying. Community beach at Lake Ninevah. Dog walking trails. Fund recreation. Great recreational activities. Hunting, fishing, outdoor activity. Inventory and link recreation areas. More trails and park-like areas. Perhaps class 4 roads could be opened up or municipal agreements between VAST trail landowners for 4-season use. Produce a map of public recreation (including Lake Ninevah access). It is too hard to find access to outdoor recreation here. Open spaces for the public. Open undeveloped land available for hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, horseback riding. Outdoors. Preserved lands used for recreation. Preserved outdoor recreation areas. Respect for walkers along roads. Restore Star Lake recreation. Walking trails. Work with LAST and VMBA to develop mountain bike and sport trails.</p>
Full-time / Seasonal Residents	19	<p>Allow community members to live and work here. Attract full-time residents by emphasizing schools, local businesses, services, and housing. Balance inevitable growth from second homes with having a stable community. Don't appreciate out-of-state people trying to make town less rural. Don't appreciate condescension from out-of-staters. Don't hand over rural life to out of state, part-time residents. Grow in a way that enhances life for full-time residents. Keep year-round resident numbers from declining. Less distinction between newcomers and those who are not. Increase proportion of full-time residents. Make out-of-state owners pay more taxes. Something must be done to offset buying by out-of-staters. More full-time residents. More positive engagement from second-home owners in keeping our town character and social / economic viability. Rather not see area owned by out-of-staters. Regulate short-term rentals. Second-home owners act like in the "wild wild west". Second-home owners pay for services but do not bring volunteers or sense of community. Second-home owners don't raise children here and support the community. Second homes driving up housing costs. We have become a second-home community.</p>

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Young Families	16	Affordable for young families. Affordable housing for families will preserve our community. Affordable housing offered to young families. Attract young families. Be a great place for families. Be a place young people can raise children and live affordably. Community dies when no longer able to attract young families. Families of many ages. Mix of young families and older people. More housing for young families. More school-age children. Our children should be able to live here. Vitally important to attract young people to town. Young families participate in community activities. Young families bring energy and volunteerism. Young families can afford to live here.
Public Health / Safety	16	Continue to have local emergency services. Emergency response. Enhanced fire and emergency services and public safety. Expanded health services. Focus on public health. Have a robust volunteer fire/rescue squad. Health services available for year-round residents. Knowing neighbors contributes to safe communities. Lack of policing and emergency services is a concern. Monitor and police public use areas. More people volunteering for fire and rescue. More public safety presence. New town office and fire/rescue station. Speed bumps on Belmont Rd. Speed bumps. Water management upgraded to meet current standards.
Schools	16	Attract full-time residents by emphasizing schools. Continue to have excellent school. Have school choice for junior high and high school. Ensure school keeps good reputation. Excellent school. Fund schools. Good schools. Keep local schools. Keep small school (perhaps K-4). More young families will allow the school to expand. New school principal. Offering education opportunities is key. Quality education. School available for year-round residents. School facilities updated and well-maintained. School thriving. Separate school from Ludlow to avoid hyperfocus on testing and allow more science education.
Seniors	10	Affordable senior housing. Allow people to age in place. Develop programs and services for elderly. Ensure seniors can stay in town as they age. Families of many ages. Hope to age in place. Mix of young families and older people. Modern services for aging population. More affordable homes for seniors. Senior housing near Belmont center. Support older residents.

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Arts / Culture	10	A central meeting place for events and social gatherings. Apply for Village Center Designation for Belmont. Architecturally preserve historic charm. Continue annual town events. Expanded cultural services. Historical preservation. More grants for local artists, galleries, shops. More to do. Respect historic structures. Vibrant community activities.
Governance	7	Adopt a noise ordinance. Enforce junk ordinance. Great management of local government. Have a five person Select Board to help keep politics out. Quality government. Select Board needs to be more responsive to needs and transparent about finances and expenditures including those paid to staff. Should look and feel like Town cares about residents.
Negative Visions	5	Built-up and subdivided with less forest and field and 50% part-time residential. Don't appreciate out-of-state people trying to make town less rural. Don't appreciate condescension from out-of-staters. Don't hand over rural life to out-of-state, part-time residents. Rather not see area owned by out-of-staters. Risk of becoming town bereft of character.
Climate Resilience	6	Better understand and mitigate impacts of regional climate change. Educate community. Charging for electric cars. Electric vehicle charging station. Environment adapted for a changing climate. More people using renewable energy. More renewable energy. More climate resilience.
Child Care	2	Affordable childcare. Attract young families.

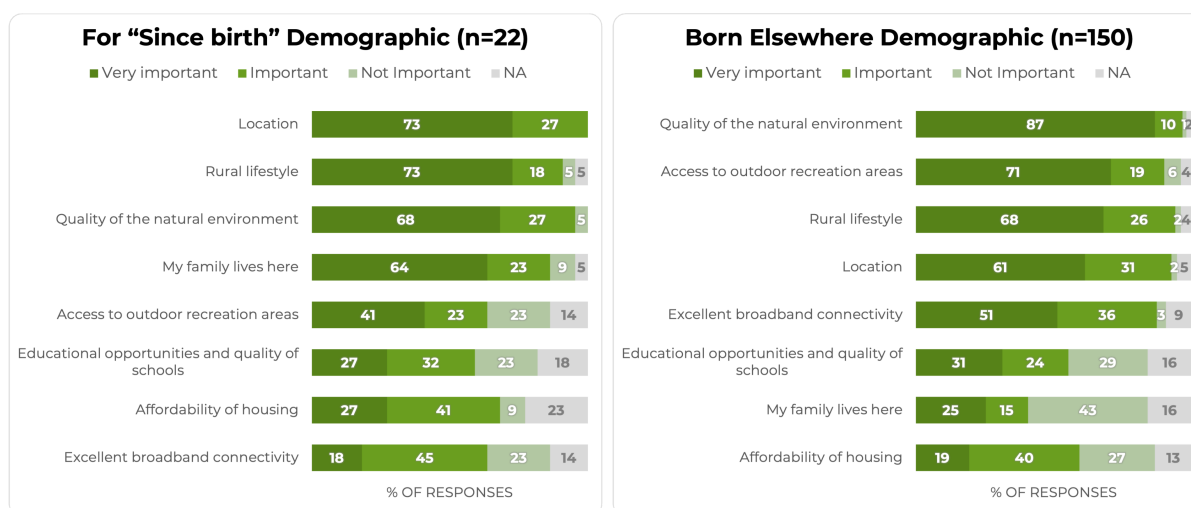
Summary of Findings

Demographic Variance

Several respondents, in their comments, pointed to perceived differences in values and vision between those who were born in Mount Holly and those who were not. It is useful to investigate whether there is any significant variation in the data collected from each of those different demographics.

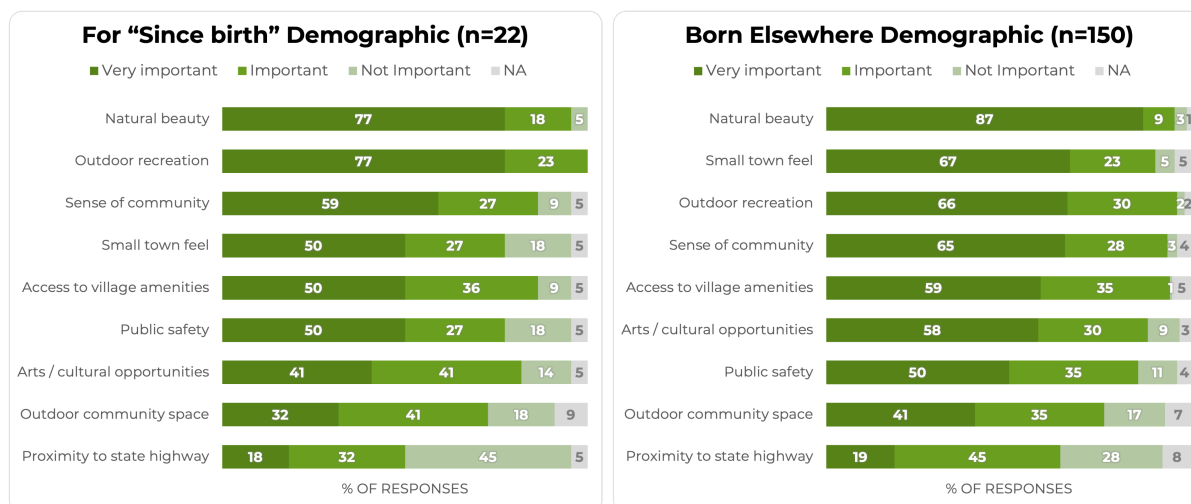
The following data seem to suggest that, while there are some notable differences between the two demographics, there is significant agreement on the most important priorities and therefore ample opportunities for cooperation and collaboration in order to address the current and future needs of the community.

Question 7 - How important are the following to you as to why you live in Mount Holly?



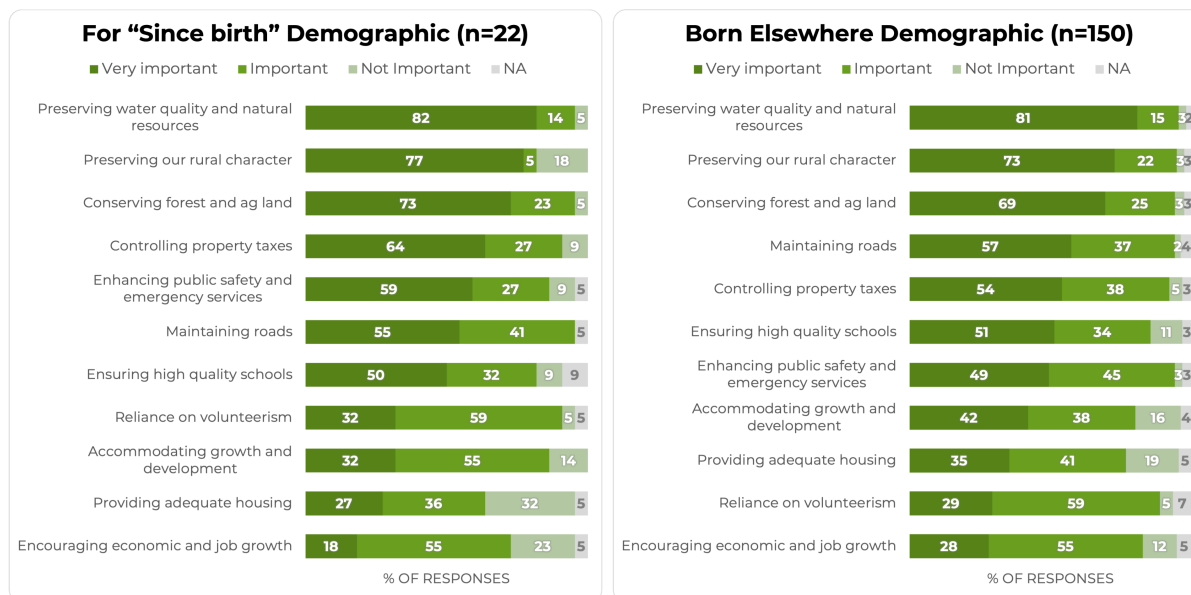
Rural lifestyle and **natural environment** are priorities for both demographics. However, **location** and **family ties** are, perhaps not surprisingly, valued higher by the since-birth demographic (SBD). While the born-elsewhere demographic (BED), seemed attracted by **outdoor recreation** and **high-speed broadband**.

Question 8 - How important are the following to your rural Mount Holly lifestyle?



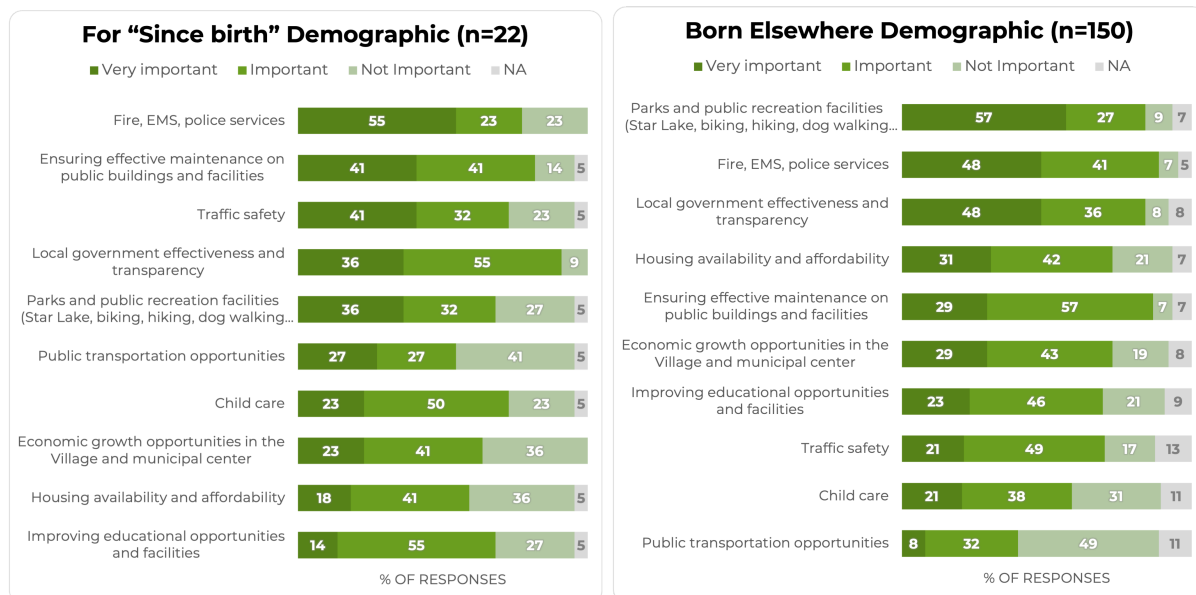
Both demographics share the top five values but with minor differences in the order: **natural beauty, outdoor recreation, sense of community, small-town feel, and access to village amenities**. The SBD values **outdoor recreation** (hunting, fishing, etc) and **public safety** slightly higher while the BED values **small-town feel** and **arts / cultural opportunities** slightly higher.

Question 9 - How do you rate the importance of these challenges facing Mount Holly over the next 5-10 years?



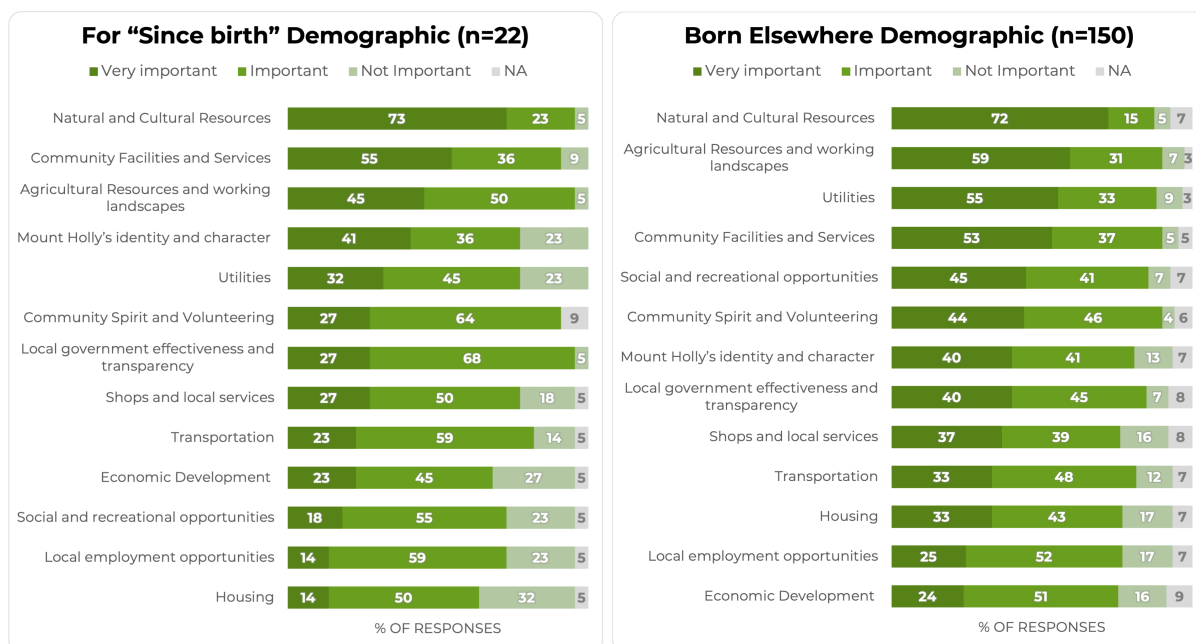
It is noteworthy that both demographics share the top three priorities: **preserving natural resources, rural character, and conserving forest and agriculture land**. The SBD ranks **controlling taxes** and **emergency services** slightly higher.

Question 10 - Which of these topics do you feel needs immediate attention in the Town within the next 2-3 years?



It is on the question of immediate priorities where we see the biggest difference between the two demographics. The SBD prioritizes **public building maintenance** and **traffic safety** higher. The BED prioritizes **public recreation** and **housing affordability** significantly higher. However, there is general agreement on prioritizing **emergency services** and **government transparency**.

Question 11 - How do you rate the importance of investment or enhancement in the following over the next 5-10 years?



Both demographics agree on the top priority being investment or enhancement in **natural and cultural resources** (protection of surface water quality, groundwater, wetlands, floodplains, streams, springs, steep slopes, wildlife habitat, woodlands, rural character, culture, events). There is also close agreement on prioritizing **community facilities** (parks, police, fire, EMS, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, libraries, schools, governmental facilities). The SBD prioritizes town **identity and character** (website, brand, etc.) higher. The BED prioritizes **agricultural resources and working landscapes** (protection of productive agricultural areas used for crop or forage production, keeping livestock, forest management, conservation), **utilities** (water, septic systems, electric, broadband, stormwater, garbage, emergency power and communication), and **social and recreational opportunities** higher.

Key Themes

Several themes were identified throughout the survey as being important for the future of Mount Holly.

1. Rural Identity and Character

There is overwhelming support for the town retaining its rural (and working) landscape and character and employing a variety of tools to do so.

2. Natural Environment and Outdoor Recreation

Healthy natural assets (Star Lake frequently mentioned), some of which are available for outdoor, nature-based recreation and others serving as wilderness.

3. Residential Diversity

A healthy community composed of diverse ages, income levels, residential statuses, and backgrounds with specific attention paid to affordability, attracting and retaining young families, and better supporting older full-time residents.

4. Community Amenities and Services

A community store (whether privately owned, community-owned, or cooperatively owned) as well as village-focused development of affordable housing, senior housing, and small, local businesses.

5. Utilities and Infrastructure

Many mentioned the need for village water and sewer to support additional village development. Others mentioned the need for better broadband and cell service, more renewable energy, and EV chargers.

6. Community Strength and Culture

These two seem to go together, as they're about building social capital in Mount Holly. Social capital is trust, relationships, and networks in a community's population. When a community has strong social capital, it can accomplish more.³ This can be done in many ways, including through events and other ways of building connections between people.

7. Governance and Public Safety

An inclusive and transparent local government and emergency services

³ The Eight Capitals. WealthWorks.

<https://www.wealthworks.org/basics/explore-regional-wealth-building/wealth-eight-capitals>

composed of engaged citizens providing for the general welfare. Furnished with modern and well-maintained facilities and equipment.

Rural Identity and Character

Many respondents are eager to maintain Mount Holly's rural character, preserving a particular quality of life for those who, as one person said it, "have settled here for the peace and tranquility of the area," while maintaining the services residents have come to expect. Often, these respondents are seeking to focus on Mount Holly's status as a small, rural community and a year-round home for many. Others mentioned not overdeveloping Mount Holly. Many mentioned maintaining a school in Mount Holly. Regulatory tools were discussed as a way of accomplishing these goals. Part of this vision of maintaining rural character is preserving the natural resources that surround the community, while also maintaining recreational opportunities and working lands occupations, economic opportunities and affordable housing in a village setting.

Natural Environment and Outdoor Recreation

Mount Holly is home to a variety of natural assets. Star Lake was mentioned by many, in terms of restoration, working on invasive weed issues, and transforming it into more of a recreation asset. Other discussion around the natural environment was focused on creating more recreational opportunities by building on recreational assets. Preserving wilderness around Mount Holly was also mentioned. There seems to be a divide between those who are seeking to use natural assets for recreation and those who would like to see natural assets left alone, as wilderness. Climate change was mentioned by several people, in terms of understanding the impacts of climate change and attempting to mitigate those impacts.

"We must prioritize protecting our natural environment, preserving our two lakes and helping people access local recreation in the town."

"Working farms should be protected and supported and subdivision of these parcels - as well as woodlands - discouraged."

"Preserved natural environments, habitats, and outdoor recreation areas."

"Ideally, environmental decisions would be made for the sake of the environment and biodiversity rather than aesthetics and human desires (for example, let Star Lake become a marsh as it would naturally become without human intervention)."

"My hope is that Mt. Holly will retain it's natural beauty and protect the environment while growing and developing in a way that enhances life for full time residents while also maintaining open spaces, forests and views, as well as the sense of community and volunteer spirit."

"I hope Mt. Holly is able to maintain the wilderness aspect."

Residential Diversity

Many mentioned the need for affordable and diverse housing, implying that this would help to attract and retain young families, single people and aging populations. Often, this was as a reaction to the many second-home owners in Mount Holly and their perceived “McMansions.” Many mentioned having more affordable housing in the Belmont village area, so that residents would have walking access to town amenities. Development of this affordable housing might require town septic/sewage and water systems. This was also often mentioned as a reaction to people buying investment properties and offering them as short term rentals through Airbnb and others.

“I would like to see Mount Holly take measures to protect its rural character and natural beauty, while at the same time also taking steps to create economic opportunities and affordable housing in a manner that does not detract from those gestures and values but rather is consistent with and promotes them.”

“Housing that is affordable for families should be available to preserve our community.”

Many respondents were hoping that there would be more jobs in the area to help attract and retain young families and young people. Others were interested in supporting the development of more local businesses. Small artisanal and IT businesses were mentioned; with Mount Holly’s excellent broadband, it could be an ideal place for IT businesses that require good broadband. Boutique farms were also mentioned, as were tourism related businesses.

“Thriving small businesses and abundant jobs for community members.”

“Encouragement of small artisanal and IT businesses and boutique farms with an emphasis on sustainable, organic, humane farming practices.”

Schools were discussed, including good schools to attract and retain young families, a new school principal, and less focus on testing.

“New school principal”

“Separate the school from Ludlow and the rest of TRSU--right now it's focused so much on testing, the students have two ELA and two math classes a day with only a hour of social studies/science per week. It's not the school a lot of people want to think it is. “

“Funding should be made for our schools and recreational use “

“2040 would continue to see a thriving elementary school. The school building and grounds would be clean, up to date, organized and well run. Remaining a desirable school.”

Many mentioned having Mount Holly be a place that is welcoming and accessible for people of all ages, but specifically for youth and seniors. Much of the discussion

around seniors was focused on affordable senior housing near the village so that seniors can get around more easily.

"Maintaining the town's rural lifestyle and active and vibrant community while encouraging a diverse population (including age and economic diversity as well as other factors)."

"Affordable & Senior Housing So Seniors Can Remain In The Area They Love"

"More affordable homes for single people, or seniors."

"I want Mount Holly to continue to build a strong sense of community and to develop programs and services for the elderly."

Along with affordable housing comes the need for available and affordable child care. This is an issue in all communities, creating challenges for those young families that communities are seeking.

"I hope we can attract young families by facilitating affordable housing, increasing child care opportunities and working to promote good jobs in the region."

Community Amenities and Services

Many respondents mentioned the importance of the general store, the Belmont Village Store, as critical to casual community gathering. Several mentioned transitioning it to a publicly owned/community owned store. A few mentioned Pierce's Store in Shrewsbury as a potential model.⁴ Community stores in rural areas do serve as third places, where social connections are fostered.

Other community facilities mentioned were cell service, town septic/sewage and water systems, reviving the Mechanicsville aqueduct, library, museum, community association, senior housing, speed bumps, public transportation van, EV charger and better roads.

"A general store is critical to community gathering casually and regularly. Perhaps the store should be a publicly owned building (like the library/community center) that is leased to an operator."

"...our Belmont Village Store needs investment and structure to run as a Community Store. Maybe it goes more in the direction of Pierces Store with a co-op approach."

"Can we continue to have a store. In [Mt] Holly. Do we need a Co-op? Will we have the means to support people to age in place?"

⁴ <http://www.piercesstore.com/>

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"Would love to see mount Holly build more local shops and restaurants. Also have more of a public safety presence and add a cell tower."

"Would be nice to see a couple more 5-7 day a week businesses in village, which would definitely include a general store. Road maintenance would be a high priority, and perhaps some zoning would be reasonable to keep the town looking and feeling good."

"I think it's important for the town to maintain and enhance a vibrant town center in Belmont, which will encourage people to live and visit the town. We have lots of room to grow without jeopardizing the small town character we all love. Some ideas I would like to see pursued include: 1. Apply for Vermont Village Center Designation in Belmont...there is no downside and it opens up grant and other opportunities. 2. Partner with the Vermont Village Wastewater Initiative to explore wastewater system upgrade options for Belmont...this would help to protect Star Lake and also open up options for community development and upgrades 3. Support a vibrant village center...supporting a general store is so important to this. See what the Brownsville Butcher has done for West Windsor. It's like glue for the community and really enhances quality of life. If we could solve the waste water problem, we could also support other businesses and community amenities 4. Work with LAST and VMBA to develop mountain bike and sport trails through Mount Holly. These could cross private land (with permission). Mountain bike trail systems have become important amenities in many Vermont communities, which make the town desirable to line in and visit. 5. Make Star Lake usable / swimmable if possible (realize this is not an easy problem to solve)."

"New town office and fire/rescue station. "

Community Strength and Culture

Having a welcoming and inclusive community was also high on people's lists. There was also discussion of getting away from an "us" vs. "them" mentality, and oldtimers vs. newcomers.

"Warm, welcoming, inclusive community"

"It's critical to pay attention and awareness to care the creation of a healthy and diverse community by being inclusive of difference and divergent ideas. How are we creating community in the town of Mount Holly? How are we including ALL and supporting the health of our community regardless of difference in socioeconomic status, race, gender? Just because it has always been doesn't mean that is should be that way. Creating space for shifts is critical for change, as change is constant. How is Mount Holly creating space for change and how is it hindering it?"

"I hope we can continue to avoid/reduce any 'us' vs 'them' mentality. I'd like to see the community assn, odd fellows, town events and town govt feel like they belong to and represent all of us - regardless of whether we were born here or

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chose to make Mt Holly our home. Newcomers should feel welcome and encouraged to contribute, and old timers should feel their voices are heard and needs met as well. “

“A caring community of people from all kinds of backgrounds!”

Arts and culture was mentioned by a few, including support for local artists and local galleries and shops.

“more grant opportunities for local artists (and local galleries/shops)”

“I think there should have been a question related to culture on the survey.”

A potential challenge to community strength exists in the dichotomy between year-round and seasonal residents, including the challenges around housing as a result of seasonal residents, the different expectations of seasonal residents, and the reduced engagement from seasonal residents.

“We (currently) do not appreciate people moving in from out of state who want to change it into a less rural environment/town/village. We also do not appreciate (currently) the attitudes from folks visiting or second home owners who judge (voice it in public settings - totally not appropriate) others who are full-time, year round residents who may not have the physical, financial, or educational skills of those who may have attended a higher end institution(s).”

“My preferred vision consists of keeping the year round residence numbers from declining, and ideally seeing that number go up.”

“We are more than happy to pay taxes so our kids are well educated! A quieter, wilder, peaceful, vibrant town preserving its local traditions while welcoming NEW COMERS in a way we all win!!! “

“what about second homers driving up housing costs?”

“I would like Mnt Holly to stay rural. Would rather not see the area owned by out of staters”

“We have become a second home community. That is an impact on our locals school and services. “

“I would like to see a Mount Holly where housing is affordable, so that living is here is possible for average Vermonters. You shouldn't need to make 6 figures just to live here. Something must be done to offset the extreme gobbling up of houses by out-of-state homeowners. Make them pay more taxes than... “

“More positive engagement from visitors/second home owners in keeping our town character and social/economic viability. “

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"Less of a distinction/divide between newcomers and those who have lived here for generations. Increase in proportion of full time residents who live in and contribute to the community year round."

Governance and Public Safety

Governance was mentioned in several ways, including desire for a five-person Select Board, increased government transparency, responsiveness, enforceable laws around noise and junk, and traffic safety.

"The Select Board needs to be more responsive to important needs and transparent about finances and expenditures including those paid to staff members."

"A five person Select Board to keep politics from sneaking in"

Public safety was mentioned by many, including more of a public safety presence, enhanced fire and emergency services, new fire/rescue station, and more volunteering for public safety agencies.

"Also have more of a public safety presence and add a cell tower."

"Lack of emergency services has always been a concern (no local police, for example); of course this is a small town."

"I hope to see enhanced fire and emergency services and public safety"

"New town office and fire/rescue station."

"To keep it as rural as it has been, get more people involved in volunteering for local agencies (ie. rescue, fire)"

Respondent's Suggestions

Respondents, in their comments, offered a number of suggestions for future action. These are collected and summarized as follows:

Rural Identity and Character

- Preserve scenic roads and views
- Consider historic designation for Belmont Village
- Protect and support working agricultural and forestry lands
- Better promotion of identity to outsiders and newcomers through website
- Consider updating regulatory controls to manage growth

Natural Environment and Outdoor Recreation

- Compile available options for Star Lake
- Explore compensation for landowners keeping land undeveloped
- Create a plan for public parks, municipal forest, and trail systems
- Explore partnership with private landowners for trail network
- Explore options for a community beach on Lake Ninevah
- Create a guide to local recreation opportunities

Residential Diversity

- Encourage affordable housing for young families
- Expand senior housing options
- Invest in child care services and facilities
- Ensure school remains high quality and well respected
- Plan for senior transportation option
- Consider controls on short-term rentals
- Encourage more long-term rentals
- Consider identifying areas capable of increased development (such as hamlets) in order to avoid sprawl and loss of rural landscape
- Consider ways to create and sustain an affordable housing fund
- Consider changes to Subdivision regulations to support smarter growth

Community Amenities and Services

- Revitalize and improve Belmont General Store (perhaps as a co-op)
- Improve or enhance public gathering spaces
- Support existing producers of local food and products
- Incentivize new producers of local food and products
- Consider how to maintain facilities and services without overreliance on few volunteers and private fundraising

Utilities and Infrastructure

- Create a parking and transportation plan for Belmont Village
- Create a plan for addressing wastewater deficiency in Belmont (to enable revitalization of store and enhancement of opportunities in whole village)

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- Explore additional cell phone coverage
- Add an electric vehicle charging station
- Consider adding a park and ride / bus stop on Route 103

Community Strength and Culture

- Encourage participation in community
- Consider alternatives to volunteer labor for some tasks
- Encourage “all in this together” problem solving
- Consider more support for local artists and artisans
- Establish a central meeting place for large events and gatherings
- Support historical preservation

Governance and Public Safety

- Continue to enforce Junk Ordinance
- Continue to enforce Traffic Ordinance
- Monitor unsafe on-road ATV use
- Increase Select Board to 5 members
- Use website and technology to increase transparency
- Create a plan for new Town Office / Fire / Rescue facilities
- Consider a noise ordinance
- Consider removable speed bumps
- Consider options for more policing

In order to gain useful insights, these suggestions and their interdependencies were added to a network graph. This graph was created on Kumu (<http://kumu.io>), a web application supporting systems mapping and network analysis. See Figure 2.

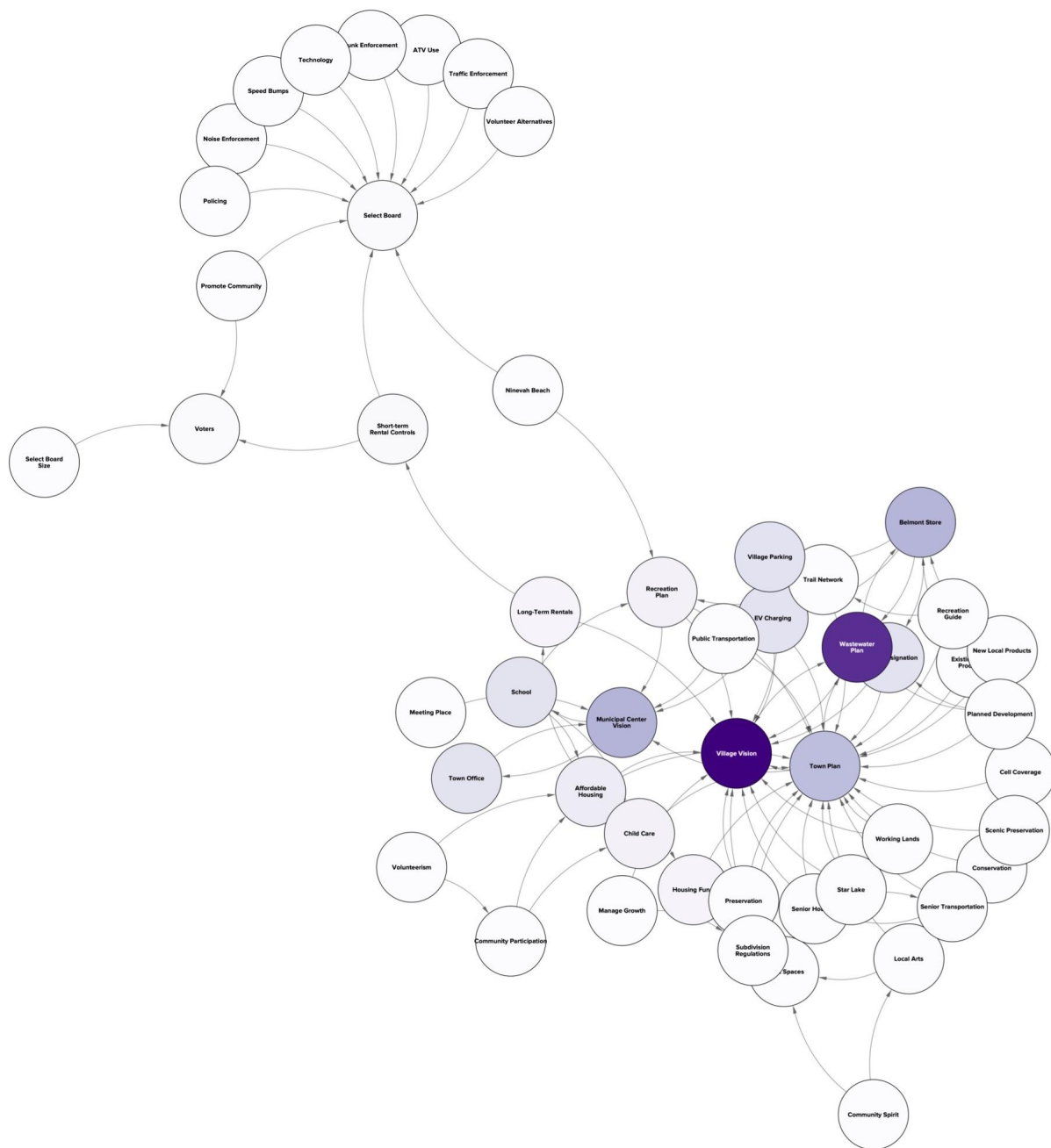


Figure 2. Suggestion Dependency Graph

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One of the challenges in a project of this kind, with so many important priorities and where nearly all of the suggestions are worth pursuing, is: “which first?” We attempt to answer that question by calculating the eigenvector centrality⁵ of all nodes in the graph. This reveals the suggestions that will make the largest impact, summarized here:

Rank	Name	Value
1	Create a vision for the Village	0.222
2	Explore a Village wastewater plan	0.188
3	Create a vision for the Municipal Center	0.090
4	Revitalize the Belmont General Store	0.090
5	Update the Town Plan	0.082

⁵ The **eigenvector centrality** is a measure of how well connected an element is to other well connected elements. In general, elements with high eigenvector centrality are those with the most influence on the overall network and therefore likely to have the largest impact.

Next Steps

The survey is just the first step. The responses collected in this survey, and the themes and ideas identified within, are critical pieces of information that will be used to assess community concerns related to housing, economic development, and public infrastructure.

This information will help determine the next steps to take. Future planning work will draw on the values identified by the respondents as important and the vision they outlined.

As the project moves into the next phase, we have started to dig deeper into some of the suggestions offered and priorities identified in the survey responses. The next month or two will involve gathering more information, consulting with stakeholders, and engaging with experts. We expect to hold a public meeting in the near future, probably in April, where we will present an initial outline of a report containing detailed recommendations for maximizing the benefit to the community from ARPA and other grant funding and addressing pressing community challenges.

The Town will continue to engage the community as we move forward. Updates will be posted to the [project website](#) and sent to the [Mount Holly Newsflash](#).

If you have any questions or comments you may contact the team at mounthollycommunitysurvey@gmail.com.

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Mount Holly Community Vision Survey

Mount Holly residents and landowners, we invite you to take an anonymous 5-minute survey to help the Town understand what is important to you and help inform our future priorities.

Your input is essential to this process. Your answers will guide us in maximizing the benefit to the community from our American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and any other grant funding to address community challenges.

Please complete and return this form to the drop box in the Town Office or the Library by November 30, 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact mounthollycommunitysurvey@gmail.com.

Thank you for your participation!

1. What is your residential status? (Check one)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Year-round resident | <input type="radio"/> Summer resident |
| <input type="radio"/> Winter resident | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |

2. How old are you? (Check one)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Under 20 | <input type="radio"/> 61-80 |
| <input type="radio"/> 21-40 | <input type="radio"/> Over 80 |
| <input type="radio"/> 41-60 | |

3. How long have you been in Mount Holly? (Check one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than a year | <input type="radio"/> 11-20 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 1-5 years | <input type="radio"/> More than 20 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 6-10 years | <input type="radio"/> Since birth |

4. How are you involved in the community? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Own a business here | <input type="checkbox"/> Rent a home/property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work the land here | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer here |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have kids in school | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve in the town government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to school | <input type="checkbox"/> Work here |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Own property | <input type="checkbox"/> Care about Mount Holly's future |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Own rental property | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

5. Do you commute to work outside of Mount Holly? (Check one)

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> Retired |
| <input type="radio"/> No | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |

6. Do you work remotely? (Check one)

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, all the time | <input type="radio"/> No |
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, sometimes | <input type="radio"/> Other _____ |

Mount Holly 2022 Community Vision Survey Summary Report

7. How important are the following to you as to why you live in Mount Holly?

(Check either "Very Important", "Important", or "Not Important" for each row)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
My family lives here	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Affordability of housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educational opportunities and quality of schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of the natural environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excellent broadband connectivity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rural lifestyle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to outdoor recreation areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: Please describe			

8. How important are the following to your rural Mount Holly lifestyle?

(Check either "Very Important", "Important", or "Not Important" for each row)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Small town feel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sense of community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to village amenities (General Store, Post Office, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arts and culture opportunities (Cider Days, Library, Museum, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity to state highway	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor community space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoor recreation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural beauty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: Please describe			

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Mount Holly Community Vision Survey

9. How do you rate the importance of these challenges facing Mount Holly over the next 5-10 years?

(Check either "Very Important", "Important", or "Not Important" for each row)	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Accommodating growth and development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing adequate housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conserving forest and agricultural land	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Controlling property taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring high quality schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preserving our rural character	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintaining roads	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliance on volunteerism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encouraging economic and job growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preserving water quality and natural resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enhancing public safety and emergency services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: Please describe			

10. Which of these topics do you feel needs immediate attention in the Town within the next 2-3 years?

(Check either "Very Important", "Important", or "Not Important" for each row)	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Housing availability and affordability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving educational opportunities and facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks and public recreation facilities (Star Lake, biking, hiking, dog walking trails...)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Economic growth opportunities in the Village	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government effectiveness and transparency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public transportation opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Traffic safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fire, EMS, police services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring effective maintenance on public building and facilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: Please describe			

Mount Holly 2022 Community Vision Survey Summary Report

11. How do you rate the importance of investment or enhancement in the following over the next 5-10 years?

(Check either "Very Important", "Important", or "Not Important" for each row)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Community spirit and volunteering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing (supply and affordability)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation (roads, trails, public transport, safety, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilities (water, septic systems, electric, broadband, stormwater, garbage, emergency power and communication)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Facilities and Services (parks, police, fire, EMS, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, libraries, schools, governmental facilities)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agricultural Resources and working landscapes (protection of productive agricultural areas used for crop or forage production, keeping livestock, forest management, conservation)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Natural and Cultural Resources (protection of surface water quality, groundwater, wetlands, floodplains, streams, springs, steep slopes, wildlife habitat, woodlands, rural character, culture, events)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Economic Development (business retention, recruitment, expansion)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local government effectiveness and transparency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mount Holly's identity and character (website, brand, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local employment opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social and recreational opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shops and local services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: Please describe			

12. Describe your preferred vision for Mount Holly in the future. You can consider questions such as: What does it look and feel like in the year 2040? What is the same, and what is different?

Appendix B: Qualitative Responses

Below are the complete, unedited responses from each of the freeform / write-in sections of the survey.

Question 7. How important are the following to you as to why you live in Mount Holly?

Lake Ninevah
Community activities
Community cultural organizations & activities
Ancestral family ties, family has maintained ties for generations
We moved here 20+ years ago because of the rural lifestyle, small town and tranquility of the area.
To live in a peaceful place where people are respectful of each other
A safe community.
Senior citizen support
Exceptional community
We admire the conservation policies of the Wilderness community.
To have a locally owned store such as the Belmont Store.
conservation orientation of land owners
I value that Mt. Holly contains a Wilderness Community that makes a mission of sustainable land use and forestry management
If access for snowmobiling or leg trapping or using hounds to hunt our wildlife then we can all do with less access. If "access" means enjoying and preserving our natural wildlife and environment in a compatible way (hiking, snow shoeing, bird watching, camping and ethical hunting (deer) then I'm all in)
Local produce and food

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<p>The community used to be more welcoming ----to everyone. In the past several years there seems to be (like the rest of the country) a "them" and "us" mentality...rather than a "we"...and I think as a result ----no one benefits. "We" is what made this community in the past strong and vibrant. The history of Mechanicsville has been that it has ALWAYS been a collection of year round residents and residents who owned second homes. (In fact the town changed its name to Belmont to welcome those new tourists) Even today many of the village homes are owned by the friends, kids or grandkids of the people who lived "elsewhere" in the 20's and 30's but came to Belmont for summers.</p> <p>Change is difficult if you feel it is being "done unto you". In fact it becomes a totally different experience if you are participating and helping to guide it. So my hope would be that everyone that has a stake in the future of Mount Holly ---join together to move the village forward, to make the changes that will allow it to thrive in the next 100 years, rather than sitting on the sidelines, blaming the "others" for not maintaining the status quo.</p>
Small town
Quality Of Life
Managed, rural setting.
Small community
It has always been home for many generations of my family.
Protecting and preserving the environment and habitat
Diversity of natural resources
Owned property here since 1959
WE only tent camp on our land in the summer.
I share ownership of the property with my brother. It is overlooking Lake Ninevah. We love nature and the naturalness of the area. Hope it remains quiet and peaceful, not congested.
Short distance to urban services when needed
Great community spirit, many interesting characters, great library, many socially and environmental active groups.
Connection to history of the town and my family's life here going back 200+ years
Friendly neighbors
Family reunions, traditions, love of the town
Peaceful

General store, access to staples close by

Question 8. How important are the following to your rural Mount Holly lifestyle?

Good neighbors
Access to local, healthy food and agriculture.
Need senior housing or way for seniors to stay in MH. Historic stone walls, street trees, views, etc. are important. Volunteerism in community,
Don't want to see further development from people from out of state, building massive houses or subdividing lands. We are losing our rural life style and it's becoming unaffordable to live here.
Enjoying all the natural beauty and peace.
Star Lake! It's lovely but not very useable
Maybe some senior trails
Might not be a bad idea to start thinking seriously about architectural guidelines for new building (wherever possible and if it's affordable) as historic districts do. Vermont boasts styles from the mid 18th to middle of the 20th century of architectural models to work from that make our area visually pleasing) Not talking about McMansions that aspire to classical proportions but actually adopting historical styles and using architects that are classically trained There are about 5 firms in the state, that I know of, that fit that bill.
Community Activities Close Friends
Planned and managed development
Proximity to Ludlow's restaurants is important.
healthy wildlife habitats, climate resilient forests, and protected wetlands
Proximity to amazing cycling, skiing, hiking etc.
Enjoyment of the lake
Star Lake!!
Mount Holly needs to do a better job enforcing the junk ordinance. Station Road is an absolute disgrace. I will move is something is not done over the next year. My taxes are too high to have to live near a pig pen.

Availability of quality local food
Star Lake
Feeling that our community is open and welcome to all. Whether it's visiting the store, a local event, or just a quick trip to the post office.

Question 9. How do you rate the importance of these challenges facing Mount Holly over the next 5-10 years?

No responses.

Question 10. Which of these topics do you feel needs immediate attention in the Town within the next 2-3 years?

Partnership with law enforcement to reduce aggressive driving and SPEEDING.
ATV usage on paved roads is extremely dangerous. The constant flying up and down our dirt roads on ATV's makes for an unsafe environment for the ATV operator and other drivers on the road. Someone is going to get killed (AGAIN).

Question 11. How do you rate the importance of investment or enhancement in the following over the next 5-10 years?

There probably never will be many good jobs in Mount Holly. The town should work to promote economic opportunities within our region.
Improve public engagement, expand select board to 5, active public health.
senior housing option needed; bury power lines and replant street trees along roads; protect historic look and feel of community;
Enforcement of speed limits and vehicle noise control
Just want to say that the 5-10 year list seems like a perfect medium term plan. Especially if child care gets taken care of earlier: we need investment in this along with affordable housing if we are to attract and retain the young families that are crucial to a vibrant community.

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Really sick of seeing the confederate flag in town.
A store in town, a coop perhaps, would be a great benefit to the town. Safe walking, some opportunity for van service, and housing for seniors would enable many to age in place. Of great importance is continued and increased speed control . We should consider removable speed bumps. Safe walking on our country roads is one of the great pleasures of living here.
The store in Belmont is critical to our community, not only for its convenience, bur for the role it plays as a hub for those of us who live here. Perhaps a Community Supported model could work, such as the Brownsville Butcher.
General store must continue! We need it!
Urgent.need for cell service in rural Mt. Holly, esp. for emergency conditions.
The Belmont village needs a parking area to increase tourism and economic activity. Maybe create a municipal parking area next to the fire house and walking path to the center of town, this would also help drive business to the new brewery and the general store. Both of these establishments need parking if they are going to be profitable. In addition, the outside of the general store is badly neglected and reflects poorly on the town.
Why isn't CLIMATE CHANGE and all of the above being addressed and specifically mentioned and integrated into planning and vision process? There is an all war on destroying wetlands in our town by killing beavers and thus destroying the wild life corridors they create AND important sources of WILDFIRE protection. Efforts should be made to stop farming in flood plains(which would otherwise be beaver habitat) to decrease wildfire spread and increase wildlife corridors. There are now Carbon Sequestration programs (we are particiipating) that will pay us to NOT cut down trees and manage our land with wildlife and climate change in mind. We are working with our forester and the Family Forest Carbon Program which is compatible with the current land use programs.

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Maintaining "Mount Holly's identity and character" is very important to me, but I don't think our "(website, brand, etc.)" have much to do with Mount Holly's identity or character.

I'd love to see more community facilities and services. I'd value investment in the following services more heavily:

- * More community dinners at Odd Fellows' Hall
- * Parks
- * Cemeteries
- * Libraries
- * Public gathering places (community center, odd fellows hall)
- * Child care facilities

And, while these services must be maintained to keep pace with Mount Holly, I value incremental improvements in these services less heavily:

- * Police
- * EMS
- * Health care facilities
- * Schools

Mt. Holly needs to have a better website. Right now there is no "official" web. That just isn't right. If you are posting (and you should) agendas, minutes, etc. and community information, then there should be an official local government source for that information and not an "unofficial website" as currently exists.

Wondering if regional planning has ever been considered? Where nearby towns can work together to share cost services

Restoration of Star Lake to its previous beauty and recreational functionality s VERY important to me - top priority!

Health of the lake

Grants to support our Belmont General Store! So important to this community!

Continuing to focus on controlling the visual eyesores around town

Star lake, as a lake, not a swamp.

Taxes I pay as a non resident shouldn't be MORE than a resident. I receive less services than a resident and am a far lesser impact to the environment, services, etc. I know those higher taxes are imposed by the state but towns/villages benefit from second homeowners quite a bit. If this practice continues, some of us will have to give up our homes unfortunately.

Good local food available and local products

Limits or better control over short term rentals in order to make more opportunities for local renters.

Question 12. Describe your preferred vision for Mount Holly in the future.

You can consider questions such as: What does it look and feel like in the year 2040? What is the same, and what is different?

I hope we can attract young families by facilitating affordable housing, increasing child care opportunities and working to promote good jobs in the region. We must prioritize protecting our natural environment, preserving our two lakes and helping people access local recreation in the town.

Keeping identity of mount holly the way it is. Strong active community, keeping local schools, preserving our services

Focus on sustainable development, not economic growth. Climate change resilience, renewable energy, public health, zoning to manage development.

Mount Holly should retain its small town feel and I would love to see it keep a small school maybe just K-4 then go regional. Star lake needs to be restored to an actual lake and our Belmont Village Store needs investment and structure to run as a Community Store. Maybe it goes more in the direction of Pierces Sore with a co-op approach. Future children need a small place to grow up. It's where they learn about the importance of community.

I would like to see Mount Holly maintain it's rural nature. I believe it is of utmost importance to preserve the quality of life for those year round residents who have settled here for the peace and tranquility of the area which, in the past several years, has come under fire from second home owners who think this area is the "wild Wild West."

To continue to have land, farms, clean water, and local emergency services. Expanding food growth of vegetables, fruit, cattle, chickens, etc. to see all people utilizing renewable clean energy.

It should not be so different that we do not recognize it but it should keep up with the regulations and be supported to at least remain as it is.

I feel saving Star Lake is important for the town. I realize the state has a strangle hold on their idea of treating the lake but those laws need to change. I feel the only solution is to petition Montpelier on how the DNR is killing lakes in the state rather than saving them.

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<p>It's critical to pay attention and awareness to care the creation of a healthy and diverse community by being inclusive of difference and divergent ideas. How are we creating community in the town of Mount Holly? How are we including ALL and supporting the health of our community regardless of difference in socioeconomic status, race, gender? Just because it has always been doesn't mean that is should be that way. Creating space for shifts is critical for change, as change is constant. How is Mount Holly creating space for change and how is it hindering it?</p>
<p>Do not over develop. Turn on the cell phone service.</p>
<p>I hope it will be the same - Clean air, forests, space, quiet, nature, good neighbors, active community. I hope it doesn't become built up and suburban.</p>
<p>Rural life handed over to OUT OF STATE , PART TIME RESIDENTS.</p>
<p>We need a mix of housing so the community does not become strictly 2nd homes and mcmansions. We need to make sure families can afford to live here/work here and there is a way for seniors to stay in town as they age. Young families bring energy and volunteers. 2nd homeowners pay for services but do not bring volunteers or sense of community. Seniors have time to volunteer. We need to support families who keep land open, rather than sell for the high land prices that second home owners can afford. A general store is critical to community gathering casually and regularly. Perhaps the store should be a publicly owned building (like the library/community center) that is leased to an operator. We need a 5 member select board.</p>
<p>I want it to stay rural, if we keep going like we are it will become another ski town like Ludlow and will loose it's charm. Everyone hates zoning, but I feel it needs to be introduced for all future development to keep our town small.</p>
<p>Mount Holly is a gem but we have to change with the times. We have to guard against the NIMBY theory. Not in my backyard. A good example of that to me was the Cell Tower debate</p>
<p>It looks and feels like residents care about the town and the town cares about its residents.</p>
<p>I believe Mount Holly will continue to be built up and subdivided. There will be less forest and fields. I would estimate population increase to 1500, with equal numbers of part time and full time homes being added.</p>
<p>Can we continue to have a store. In Mr Holly. Do we need a Co-op? Will we have the means to support people to age in place?</p>
<p>A robust volunteer fire/rescue squad, the Belmont Village being revived especially the historic Belmont General Store-perhaps a "coop model' such as Pierce's Store in Shrewsbury and the horrible invasive weed issues at Star Lake-clean it or fill it for a park.</p>

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I would like to see Mount Holly retain its rural character, (i.e. not become an extension of Okemo). I hope our population will increase somewhat, with a mix of young working families, along with people of all ages living here full time, many of them working remotely and all of them enjoying and caring for the natural beauty of our area and participating in community activities. Many of us here now will be elderly but will still be around and hope to stay in our homes. We will only be able to do so if our community has further grown and diversified in this way.

Getting to this point requires investment in the infrastructure that will make an active community possible: we already have the broadband we need and should advertise that further. It's important that the Mount Holly School keep its high quality and good reputation. We then need more affordable housing, aimed at people who will live here full time and work here or near by. Ideally this would be developed in Belmont village, so that people would have walking access to town amenities, and the presence of more people would in turn help keep these open and vibrant. This would likely work best with some investment in town septic/sewerage and water systems. How about reviving and updating the Mechanicsville aqueduct for example? Hopefully this would also help both keep our store and post office in operation and perhaps result in a few additional businesses in town or nearby that would benefit.

Working farms should be protected and supported and subdivision of these parcels - as well as woodlands - discouraged.

I hope we can continue to avoid/reduce any 'us' vs 'them' mentality. I'd like to see the community assn, odd fellows, town events and town govt feel like they belong to and represent all of us - regardless of whether we were born here or chose to make Mt Holly our home. Newcomers should feel welcome and encouraged to contribute, and old timers should feel their voices are heard and needs met as well.

Maintain peaceful village character.

Earm, welcoming, inclusive community

It is vitally important for Mount Holly to be able to attract young people to our town. This would involve attending to all the items above which are most important to me. Top of the list would be insuring the community spirit of the town and developing ways to integrate all of the town residents whether they have been here a year, or their entire lives.

I don't know

A town where the residents on the north side of Rt.103 feel connected to the folks on the south side and vice versa.

Retain its rural character with open undeveloped land available for a wide variety of activities including, but not limited to farming (very important because it will make most of the other activities possible) hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, XC skiing, horseback riding. Current rates of development along roads and on open land is putting a limit on many of these activities.

Looks much as it looks today, with more affordable housing clustered in the villages and local businesses thriving... a store in MTHolly. More farms.

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Rural with mowed fields and meadows, open spaces, woodlands enhanced, affordable housing, sense of shared community, diverse opinions accepted
People don't get divided by politics.
I would like to see Mount Holly take measures to protect its rural character and natural beauty, while at the same time also taking steps to create economic opportunities and affordable housing in a manner that does not detract from those gestures and values but rather is consistent with and promotes them.
Small town and community values
My. Holly in 2040 will continue to have an excellent elementary school, school choice for junior high and high school, vibrant library, museum, and community association, senior housing near Belmont center,(available to various income levels), respect for walkers, speed bumps, excellent broadband, a "village association" to support older residents and families, and a village store.
I would like to see the rural nature of Mount Holly maintained. I fear that we are quickly becoming a place of second homes for the wealthy. When the homes being built are ridiculously large and energy hogs, when people who stay in them are here on a part-time basis, they do not see the community as a place where people raise their children, and support their community. I prefer to know my neighbors. This contributes to safe communities. I would also like to see the population of Mount Holly made up of all ages - a place where young people can raise their children, and live affordably.
retain a rural environment with modern services, especially for the aging population
Well maintained roads and homes. Active Belmont village. Many families of all ages.
similar but better
Preserved natural environments, habitats, and outdoor recreation areas. Thriving small businesses and abundant jobs for community members.
The area may expand and develop, but it is essential that its conservation, wildlife, and natural beauty be preserved.
Maintain natural beauty & environmental improvements, keep it small town feel, historic preservation.
Better road maintenance (especially lake Ninevah road, which becomes detrimental twice yearly), more grant opportunities for local artists (and local galleries/shops), affordable childcare would be great!
Retain a rural, clean environment with support for small locally owned home businesses. Support keeping Belmont Store open perhaps following the Pierce's Store model.
A caring community of people from all kinds of backgrounds!
Keep development in check, want it to remain as rural as possible. No overflow from Okemo.

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Same. Hunting, fishing, outdoor activity, small town feel.

We (currently) do not appreciate people moving in from out of state who want to change it into a less rural environment/town/village. We also do not appreciate (currently) the attitudes from folks visiting or second home owners who judge (voice it in public settings - totally not appropriate) others who are full-time, year round residents who may not have the physical, financial, or educational skills of those who may have attended a higher end institution(s).

I am also not a proponent of the junk ordinance being applicable to those who scrap metal for a living. If, in fact that is how they are getting by.

I think there should have been a question related to culture on the survey.

A vision that provides a balance, somehow, between the needs of having a stable local community and the inevitable growth that comes from being increasingly a magnet for second homeowners. While some second homeowners become involved in and are assets to the community, many come and go with little interaction with the community. This adds little for the stability needed for businesses and services as well as involvement and volunteerism.

Hopefully Mt. Holly and surrounding areas will be able to maintain the bucolic and friendly spirit that now prevails. My family loves the area and we devoutly hope things stay about the same while maintaining the best for the whole community. I would hate to see our town, surrounding forests and lakes overtaken by big commercial developments and I suspect this will be a big problem in the future. Also Dave, I want to thank you for all your devotion and hard work through many years.

Mount Holly looks similar to today, with more small stores and businesses, more hours of community services, more farms and a public transpo van. Some appropriately designed (historic feel) multifamily housing in the town center.

Retains it's rural character but has more paved roads and better maintained dirt roads

Would love to see mount Holly build more local shops and restaurants. Also have more of a public safety presence and add a cell tower.

I would like it to visually stay the same yet solve the affordable housing problem and create more local employment.

Housing, schooling, health services & utilities are available and affordable for year-round residents; preserved lands continue to be used sustainably for recreation and forests are managed/protected from development; small businesses and community thrive

Maintaining the town's rural lifestyle and active and vibrant community while encouraging a diverse population (including age and economic diversity as well as other factors). The town has the capacity to manage its resources and opportunities to the benefit of all its residents - with capacity meaning both people (the right skills as well as volunteers when needed) and adequate finances to be able to ensure that the town does not lose things we have now (such as Start Lake), that we can maintain opportunities and facilities without being concerned about relying heavily on a small number of active people and a lot of private fundraising.

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Community
Most move or live in Mount Holly because we like it the way it is. There are many other places to move to if they don't like what we have.
Keep the small town feel but increase economic activity by improving the town center.
Perhaps more affordable housing in "downtown" areas, using more European village models and addressing architectural compatibility (not McMansions please) as a requirement so no one can actually tell the housing isn't 19th or 20th century. MORE lands are put into conservation trusts, beavers have created more water filled wildlife corridors so that some of us were able to save our houses and properties from wildfires when the droughts and heat waves outstripped our ability to avoid them. Encouragement of small artisanal and IT businesses and boutique farms with an emphasis on sustainable, organic, humane farming practices. MORE designated wildlife refuges with no hunting allowed and permanent posting system put in place for ALL residents who find current posting requirements onerous. We are more than happy to pay taxes so our kids are well educated! A quieter, wilder, peaceful, vibrant town preserving its local traditions while welcoming NEW COMERS in a way we all win!!!
Continue to be a great place for families to live that isn't just for those with money, time to be outside, enjoying life.
Keep things the same!
More full-time residents, taxes low
New school principal
Ideally, environmental decisions would be made for the sake of the environment and biodiversity rather than aesthetics and human desires (for example, let Star Lake become a marsh as it would naturally become without human intervention). Separate the school from Ludlow and the rest of TRSU--right now it's focused so much on testing, the students have two ELA and two math classes a day with only a hour of social studies/science per week. It's not the school a lot of people want to think it is.

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The hope would be that Mount Holly becomes not only a great place to live...(good schools, great management of local government, recreation activities, great housing with lots of protected open space) ...but it also attracts commerce, tourism and supports economic growth. Plew Farm is a perfect example of this kind of success....as is Crowley Cheese. Ludlow has done an amazing job in the past several years of recruiting chefs/restaurant owners to open facilities that not only support the local residents but provide fantastic meals to visitors: The Cookster, Homestyle Hostel, Harry's, etc. all great examples of businesses that are in keeping with the culture of the community...yet provide much needed economic growth opportunities. Mount Holly architecturally should preserve its historical charm, while supporting the advancement of different types of potential growth opportunities that will benefit the town. That might mean actively and strategically thinking as a collective community about what that might look like. It is exactly what the residents needed to do in the late 1890's when the toy factory closed...and there was no major source of employment/revenue. The town came together.....They changed the town's name, switched gears and became " the destination site for tourists". The industry brought much needed jobs, revenue and opportunity. We need to figure out what "that" is for 2022 and beyond. It needs to come out of feeling that we are all in this together...rather than how much will it benefit me? Change can be a potential gain...not necessarily a potential loss...if you carefully and collaboratively move forward.

Mount holly shouldn't change much too much in the future. The small town community and character should be preserved. Housing that is affordable for families should be available to preserve our community. Funding should be made for our schools and recreational use

The same small town I'm in now

Let's not Jersey Mt Holly!

I'd like to see the school and community thriving with young families who can afford to live here.

My preferred vision consists of keeping the year round residence numbers from declining, and ideally seeing that number go up.

Very importantly I would like to make sure there are regulations in place to ensure Airbnb and vrbo and other property rental companies are not a detriment to community!!

2040 would continue to see a thriving elementary school. The school building and grounds would be clean, up to date, organized and well run. Remaining a desirable school. Would be nice to see a couple more 5-7 day a week businesses in village, which would definitely include a general store. Road maintenance would be a high priority, and perhaps some zoning would be reasonable to keep the town looking and feeling good.

I am happy with the way things have been over the last 65 years.

A community centered group of folks coming together for the better good of the town. A central meeting place for events and social gatherings.

The Select Board needs to be more responsive to important needs and transparent about finances and expenditures including those paid to staff members.

what about second homers driving up housing costs?

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fix the lake, speed bumps on Belmont Road, General Store thriving, continue annual town events, retain town charm,
I love Mount Holly as it is, but I do know that growth in many areas must happen. The future Mount Holly may not reflect my desires, but I hope that the changes will be minimal.
Peaceful village with dog trails, maybe another store or 2. Lake looks better
Small town, beautiful natural environment, excellent community involvement, excellent school
My hope is that Mt. Holly will retain it's natural beauty and protect the environment while growing and developing in a way that enhances life for full time residents while also maintaining open spaces, forests and views, as well as the sense of community and volunteer spirit.
Affordable & Senior Housing So Seniors Can Remain In The Area They Love
I'd like to preserve much of what Mt Holly has. The small town, rural feel combined with the beauty of VT. I'm a seasonal resident but I think the most important step needed is to attract full time residents. This will mean emphasizing schools, local businesses and services and housing. My vision would be to have Mt Holly look very much like it Dora's now but have a more vibrant year-round population. It will be hard to invest in things like Star Lake, Belmont business or other things unless we have that key core.
Keep the small village feeling
I hope it looks very much the same as today- just well preserved
To keep our quaint beautiful town similar to what it is today! Keep taxes affordable and it is so important to improve our dying Star Lake! A community beach area on Lake Nineveh would be ideal!
Strong friendly community, abundant natural resources and conservation lands, small town feel
To keep it as rural as it has been, get more people involved in volunteering for local agencies(ie. rescue,fire)
I hope Mt. Holly is able to maintain the wilderness aspect.
A community that prioritizes livability, conservation, and connection with each other. Less of a distinction/divide between newcomers and those who have lived here for generations. Increase in proportion of full time residents who live in and contribute to the community year round.
More business on 103. More affordable housing. Clean lakes. Walking trails. Continued quality education. Expanded services (health and cultural)
Preservation of open space, natural environment, conserved agriculture space and forested areas, minimal subdivision and development. A thriving village (library, store, etc.)

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Ensuring rural community feel and protecting affordable housing as VT becomes a more desirable state to live in. Incentives for local small businesses and locations!!
<p>I see a real risk of Mount Holly losing its beauty to over-development in the next 20 years. I've seen similar patterns elsewhere over the last 20 years. That is, I've seen previously beautiful and rural areas become strung-out suburbs through the slow but insidious trudge of "economic improvement"</p> <p>If we only value what every other town values, we'll become unrecognizably bland. I _like_ that our cell reception is spotty, and honestly, I'd prefer to have the unmarred view. The aggregate effect of 20 years of this type of incremental improvement will be a town bereft of character.</p> <p>I hope we can preserve Mount Holly's soul, but it will take care and intention.</p>
As more development/subdivisions and building is happening - and as we are receiving this survey, there is clearly an interest in the future direction of our community. With this in mind, there needs to be a very basic zoning plan. To only rely on the state regulations ignores that we are our own unique community, complete with our own special needs, vision for the future and requirements. It doesn't need to be overly restrictive, but would give us some teeth in how we want our community to look and feel as we head into the future. It sometimes feels very backward as exists currently.
I'd like to see more affordable housing and an EV charger
Hopefully the town grows and becomes more attractive and available for business opportunities that will allow our community members to live and work here in our community and bring more availability of earning a real living here to our home.
Preserved wildlands, healthy natural environment adapted to changing climate, supported local agriculture, caring and friendly community.
Would love to see the plan address ways the town is better understanding the impacts of regional climate change in the next 10-20 years in Mount Holly and surrounding areas, especially if we start to see a rise in average temperatures and increase in extreme weather events. What are the risks to residents, agriculture, and our natural resources? And from this understanding, decide if there is anything the town can invest in to mitigate any negative impacts, promote climate resiliency, or provide educational resources to the community.
To remain the nice quiet town it currently is while still moving forward with modernization and adapting to the influx of new residents.

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<p>I think it's important for the town to maintain and enhance a vibrant town center in Belmont, which will encourage people to live and visit the town. We have lots of room to grow without jeopardizing the small town character we all love. Some ideas I would like to see pursued include: 1. Apply for Vermont Village Center Designation in Belmont...there is no downside and it opens up grant and other opportunities. 2. Partner with the Vermont Village Wastewater Initiative to explore wastewater system upgrade options for Belmont...this would help to protect Star Lake and also open up options for community development and upgrades 3. Support a vibrant village center...supporting a general store is so important to this. See what the Brownsville Butcher has done for West Windsor. It's like glue for the community and really enhances quality of life. If we could solve the waste water problem, we could also support other businesses and community amenities 4. Work with LAST and VMBA to develop mountain bike and sport trails through Mount Holly. These could cross private land (with permission). Mountain bike trail systems have become important amenities in many Vermont communities, which make the town desirable to line in and visit. 5. Make Star Lake usable / swimmable if possible (realize this is not an easy problem to solve) .</p> <p>Finally, since w</p>
Continuation of the feel of a very special place, in a very special State
A more vibrant community in terms of job force and school age children, continued protection and enhancement of natural resources, incorporation of state agencies in discussions of natural resource quality, inventories and comprehensive links between parks and recreation areas
Warm caring community, rural, services inclding emergency response, local businesses
<p>KEEPING THE LAND IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY GOOD WAY- PRESERVING THE NATURAL SURROUNDINGS..WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE WILDERNESS COMMUNITY</p> <p>MONITORING OF PUBLIC USE. WE CAMP ON OUR MEADOW ABOVE THE FISH AND GAME LAKE ACCESS AND ARE OFTEN DISTURBED BY THE NOISE - PEOPLE AND MUSIC- AND DRINKING -AT NIGHT. (MANY BEER BOTTLES IN THE MORNING)</p> <p>AND PEOPLE WHO COME INTO OUR SPACE TO USE IT AS A TOILET.EN-EVEN THOUGH THERE IS A PUBLIC POTTY AT THE LAKESIDE.</p>
Need smart development to maintain character of town. Broadband competition to make it more affordable and accesible
I enjoy Mt Holly presently as it is, rural. Think Ludlow and Rutland need to be upgraded and considered for housing, and good schools. I am unaware of the need for housing in Mt. Holly. But it should keep public institutions and government buildings and local services in good, up to date condition.
no comment
Looks the same only better!
I hope Mount Holly changes as little as possible

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My preferred vision for Mount Holly in the future is one where it maintains its rural character and protects its natural resources.
Local food. Affordable housing. Charging for electric cars. Good friends.
Quality stores, restaurants; quality government; amongst a beautiful protected woodlands, streams, lakes, forests
I would like Mnt Holly to stay rural. Would rather not see the area owned by out of staters
Leave it the way it is
I would like for the community to feel the same in the year 2040
Remains rural. Control sprawl. Add a town forest with recreational trails. New town office and fire/rescue station. Prettify School Street. Safer Belmont / 103 intersection with a park and ride and bus stop. Plan for better parking and more growth in Belmont.
Keeping it a small Town feel
Hoping for a balance of the best of what exists now , how to sustain it and plan for a regional planned growth.
community
The the range of communal activities and general services in village center of Belmont (general store, library, community center, museum, ...) will not only be kept but also expanded.
Affordable housing for younger folks with kids to move to Mount Holly is offered, so that also the local elementary school can expand.
Same feel, it offers participation and housing for new full time residents and young families
Keep the small town feel
Small town feel
To stay as rural as today. With beautiful nature protected by all of us.
Need to keep Belmont store open, all else could remain same.
Restoration of Star Lake to its previous beauty and recreational functionality s VERY important to me - top priority!
Main concern: preserving the lake

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<p>A clean lake where residents and guests can swim, boat and enjoy.</p> <p>A general store that serves the community's needs with an owner who truly cares about the community.</p> <p>NO over building</p> <p>Keeping up with technology needs -internet</p> <p>Otherwise, love it how it is!</p>
<p>My preferred vision would still be rural for Mount Holly. Growth of Okemo will continue to affect our town, and hopefully in a positive direction. We have become a second home community. That is an impact on our locals school and services.</p>
<p>A five person Select Board to keep politics from sneaking in</p>
<p>Won't be the same - need to put some laws in place that are enforceable - noise (excessive gun fire on Stewart road from out of staters) , junk & trashy properties</p>
<p>I wish my children could return "home" and be able to afford to live here. Currently they cannot!</p>
<p>Attract more business and housing to the area. Clean up the pig pens.</p>
<p>Keeping the same rural feel but with better parks and hiking trails, fixing Star Lake mess, helping fund general store as it's critical to community, and events on weekends.</p>
<p>Seeing the growth in a manner that doesn't take away for the village and community. Not so many air b& bs...</p>
<p>Community activities continue vibrant and interesting. People helping people. Star lake a central part of the community and a draw for new folks (as it was for my family in 1950).. Country store and US post offices.</p>
<p>Controlled development. Affordable housing. Open Spaces for the public. transportation</p>
<p>Keeping the rural feel while providing good services to residents. Not over building.</p>
<p>I would like to see zoning regulation that preserves Mount Holly's residential and rural character. For example, letting storage facilities build right in view on Route 103 really mars the area's natural beauty.</p>
<p>Small community charm with more to do, places to visit etc.</p>
<p>Maintaining the local population and keeping the Beauty and seclusion of living here!</p>
<p>A Small town that values the individual and individual responsibility</p>
<p>Traditional rural Vermont town.</p>
<p>A peaceful, bucolic small town with friendly neighbors, well-maintained roads and a library, with a mix of young families and older people, surrounded by wilderness</p>

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As a part timer, my vision most likely differs from full time residents. The rural charm is what attracted us to the Mount Holly area 30 years ago. Roads plowed and maintained are essential. Lack of emergency services has always been a concern (no local police, for example); of course this is a small town.
2040 needs the "town center" with the General store and Post office (needs to be upgraded) and green. Offering education and housing opportunities is key. Communication (broadband, mobile coverage!!!!) is essential for economic competitiveness.
Would love to see the town still a Vermont little town, but improved. Star Lake brought back to be used as a local swimming place and a family friendly beach, as it used to be. Would love to see the waste water problem of Belmont solved.
To maintain the "small town" feel but with improved infrastructure and zoning limits. Where fulltime residents are more accepting of non-fulltime residents who care and contribute to the town, and increased support to local farms/small businesses.
I want Mount Holly to continue to build a strong sense of community and to develop programs and services for the elderly.
Not to grow anymore, the outdoors is activities and recreation already have good school and emergency services
I hope to see enhanced fire and emergency services and public safety. A sense of community around a variety of events. More affordable homes for single people, or seniors.
Mount Holly has such a wonderful community and I want to see it grow. I'd really like to see more conservation around Star Lake and paths.
MH currently has a very different character as a town from where I lived before. The localness of the town and the townspeople is extremely different, but beneficial. I see this as a critical aspect to survival as a local town that wants to remain basically the same for the next 20 years. Need to keep it local, manage it with local people, be inviting and less restrictive regarding changes that will ultimately benefit all, not just a few.
Star Lake being 70% clear, water management upgraded and up to 2040 current standards,
Overall status matching standard of similar VT townships.
Open land without being cluttered with solar panels everywhere
Maintain rural character...

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Assuming growth is inevitable, it would be a shame to see the rural landscape of Mount Holly chopped up by developers, as I have seen happen where I grew up in PA over the last 30 yrs. I feel strongly against mass development of rural lands, and would prefer to see development happen in existing town centers and hamlets, along transportation arteries, etc., thereby increasing density at these nodes and not promoting sprawl. If done in a thoughtful way that is respectful of existing historic structures and community fabric, I think more density at these nodes could be quite lovely.

With this in mind, I think Mt Holly could support more long-term rental properties-- perhaps some farmhouse-type duplex units in Belmont or other hamlets. This could be accomplished by renovating existing structures or building new structures on previously developed lots.

Other areas of potential development (dwellings, businesses, amenities) could be: -At the blinking light intersection on 103 near the post office and school, -East Wallingford, -Along 103 between Harry's and Wright construction

I'd also love to see more trails and park-like areas in Mount Holly for residents to explore and enjoy year round. Perhaps old roads/class 4 could be brush-cut for this purpose. Or agreements could be made with land owners who have Vast trails on their property to allow pedestrians to hike along trails in summer and fall. Perhaps Lake Ninevah could be encouraged to publish a map of areas where the public are able to hike, swim, launch a boat. I've lived here almost 5 years and, aside from Healdville trail, finding access to outdoor recreation in Mt Holly in warmer months has not been straightforward.

Thank you for reading my comments!

Addressing the proliferation of investment homes being used as short term rentals on Airbnb and such like. When homes that are potentially affordable for young families are listed for sale they are purchased with cash by investors for use as short term rentals. When you can no longer attract young families or couples to town because they have been priced out of the housing market the community will die. That's what we see happening here. We need to adopt a tax structure that penalizes these sort of investment purchases and makes them unfavorable therefore reducing their number. Short term rentals do nothing to add to our community and as AirBnbs own research has shown the presence of short term rentals in a town contributes to rising rents. A 2-3% tax on every real estate transaction, to be paid into an affordable housing fund would be a good start.

Mount holly should be a leader in preserving the rural and historical character of the area and prioritize preserving open land and views as well as discouraging major developments and large houses "McMansions"

More positive engagement from visitors/second home owners in keeping our town character and social/economic viability.

Address Star Lake

Keep town affordable for young families. Restore Star Lake.

Keep rural country feel, keeping the farms, minimum commercial activity, maybe light industry and minimum government interference.

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Other on Q. 10: ATV usage on paved roads is extremely dangerous. The constant flying up and down our dirt roads on ATVs makes for an unsafe environment for the ATV operator and other drivers on the road. Someone is going to get killed (AGAIN).

I would like to see a Mount Holly where housing is affordable, so that living is here is possible for average Vermonters. You shouldn't need to make 6 figures just to live here. Something must be done to offset the extreme gobbling up of houses by out-of-state homeowners. Make them pay more taxes than...

What doesn't look and feel like in 2030?

What is the same - will be different in years. Too come for sure - some will be good - and some not so good.