



# **Town of Essex Long-Term Planning Survey**

**June 2010**

# 2010 LTPC Survey - Highlights

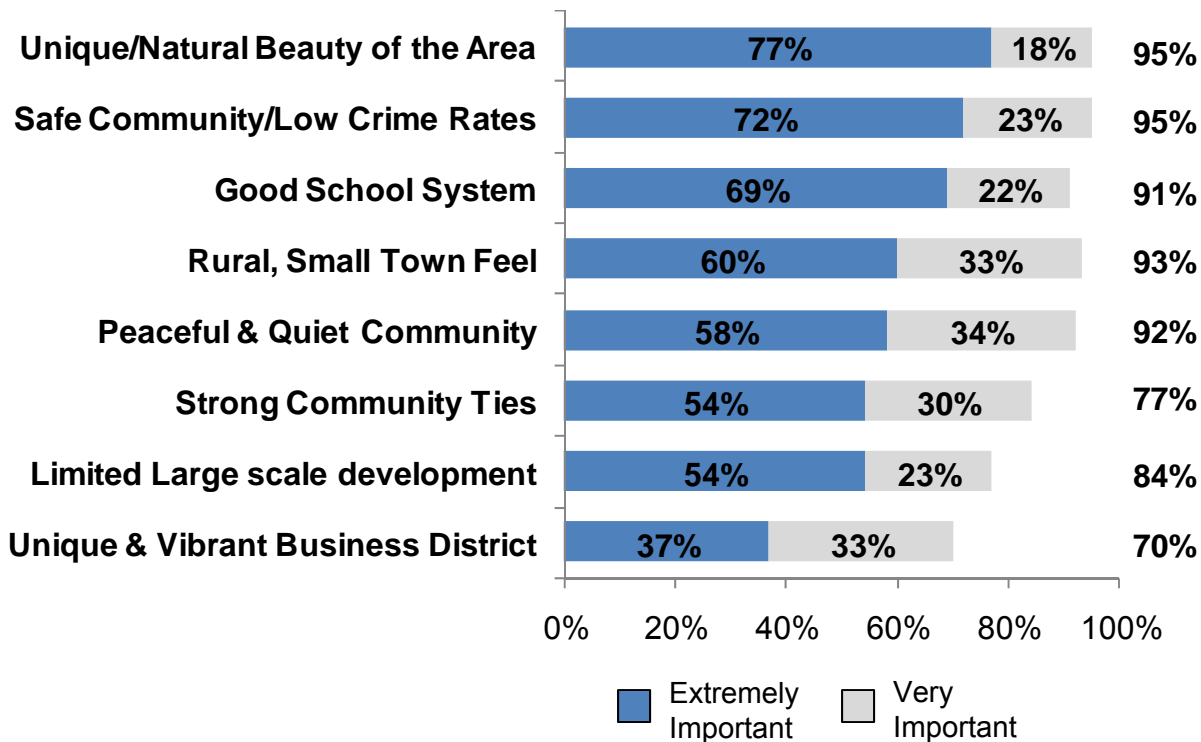
- The unique/natural beauty of Essex is viewed as the most important attribute contributing to the character of the town. In line with this, 'increased focus on environmental protection and preservation of natural resources' is viewed as *highly* important. More than three-quarters of respondents ranked 'management of natural, historic and recreational resources' in their top three priorities for the town.
- Overall familiarity with town planning programs is fairly low, and as a result, satisfaction with these programs is moderate at best. A quarter of respondents indicate they are not familiar enough with programs to rate their satisfaction with them. While getting residents engaged in planning programs can be challenging, there is clearly an opportunity to increase awareness of the programs underway/being proposed.
- Not surprisingly, resolving the Conomo Point issue is also rated as highly important. Despite mixed viewpoints about whether the town should retain, lease or sell the land, there was vast agreement that *Resident* access to the river/waterfront should be improved. This viewpoint was also expressed in numerous verbatim comments.
- While nearly all of the projects presented as part of the 'Essex Village Initiative' elicited strong interest, the coordinated design plan, a walking path/bike path and the creation of a causeway dock & boardwalk were of most interest. There were also several comments submitted related to how an improved causeway area will increase pride in the town, help draw more tourism and lead to increased revenue for town businesses.

Most Important Long Term Planning Issues					
Natural , Historic & Recreational Resources	Town Facilities	Town Housing	Community Services	Economic Development	Transportation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Increased focus on environmental protection and open space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Improving roads, sidewalk, crosswalks</li> <li>•Improving public safety facilities (fire/police station)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Availability of Elderly housing</li> <li>•Availability &amp; access to affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•School system</li> <li>•Public safety services (fire, police)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Improving the down town business district</li> <li>•Promoting patronage of local businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Pedestrian safety</li> <li>•Public parking</li> </ul>

# Town Character

The natural beauty of the area and low crime rates are viewed as the most important town characteristics. Other important elements include the town's shipbuilding history and the diversity of people living here.

## Importance of Town Characteristics



## Additional Elements that Contribute to Character

*"Shipbuilding, Schooner history"*

*"We moved to Essex because it has a terrific feel about it and a natural beauty which is free of the hustle & bustle of other Cape Ann towns."*

*"Diversity of people"*

*"The historical buildings really add to the "Old New England" feel of the town and I believe we should have a historical district that preserves this aspect of the town."*

*"Essex is one big neighborhood, residents take care of each other."*

*"Hassle free nature of town"*

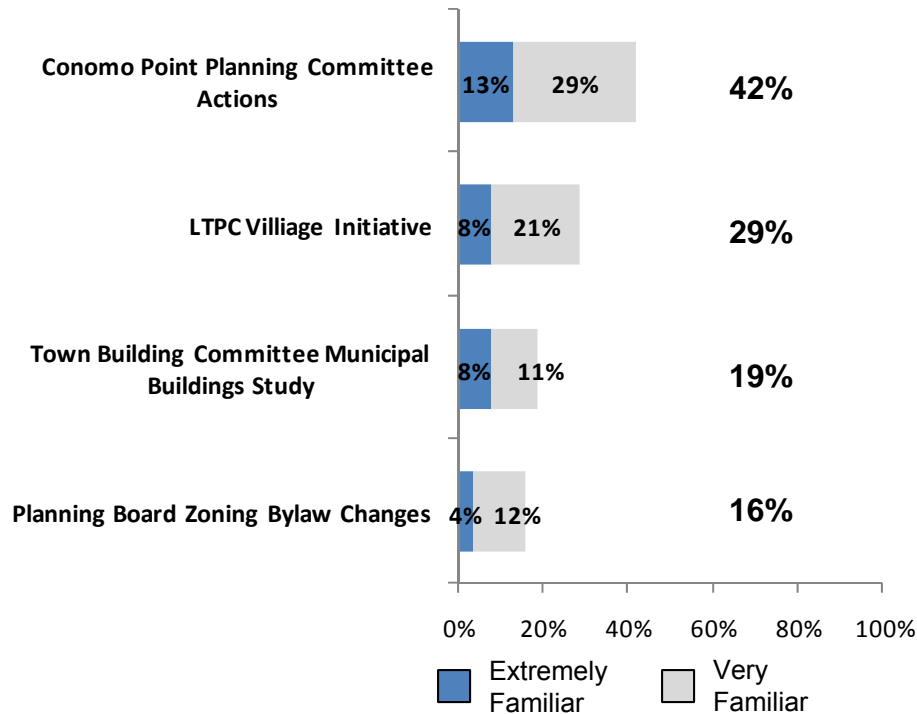
*"Traditional New England seacoast community"*

*"Destination for antiques, dining"*

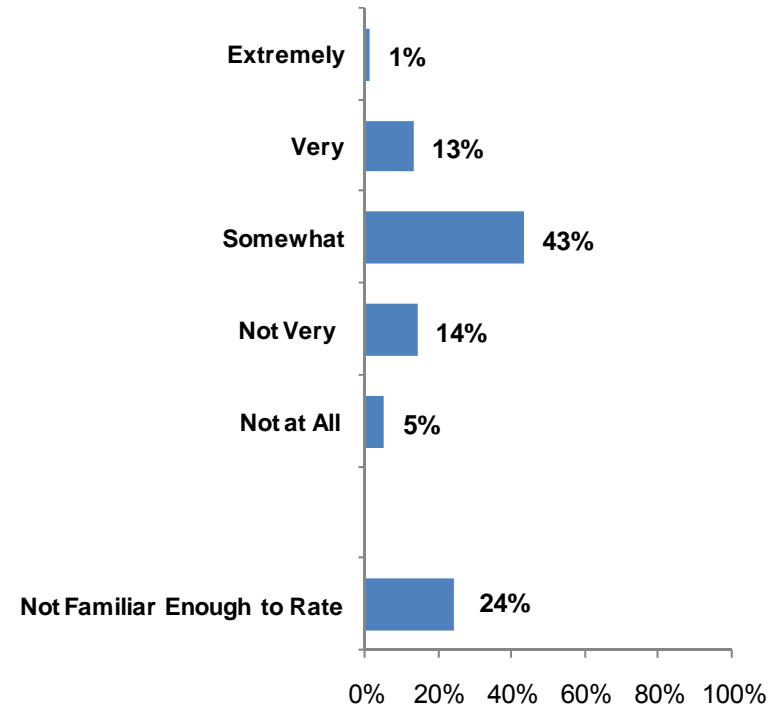
# Familiarity & Satisfaction with Planning Programs

Familiarity with town planning programs is low. As a result most express moderate to low satisfaction with these programs.

***Familiarity with Town Planning Programs***



***Satisfaction with Town Planning Programs***



# Ranking of Planning & Development Issues

Managing our natural, historic and recreational resources is deemed most important. The majority of respondents had this in their top three planning and development priorities.

## ***Importance of Planning & Development Issues*** ***(Ranking with 1 = Most Important & 7 = Least Important)***

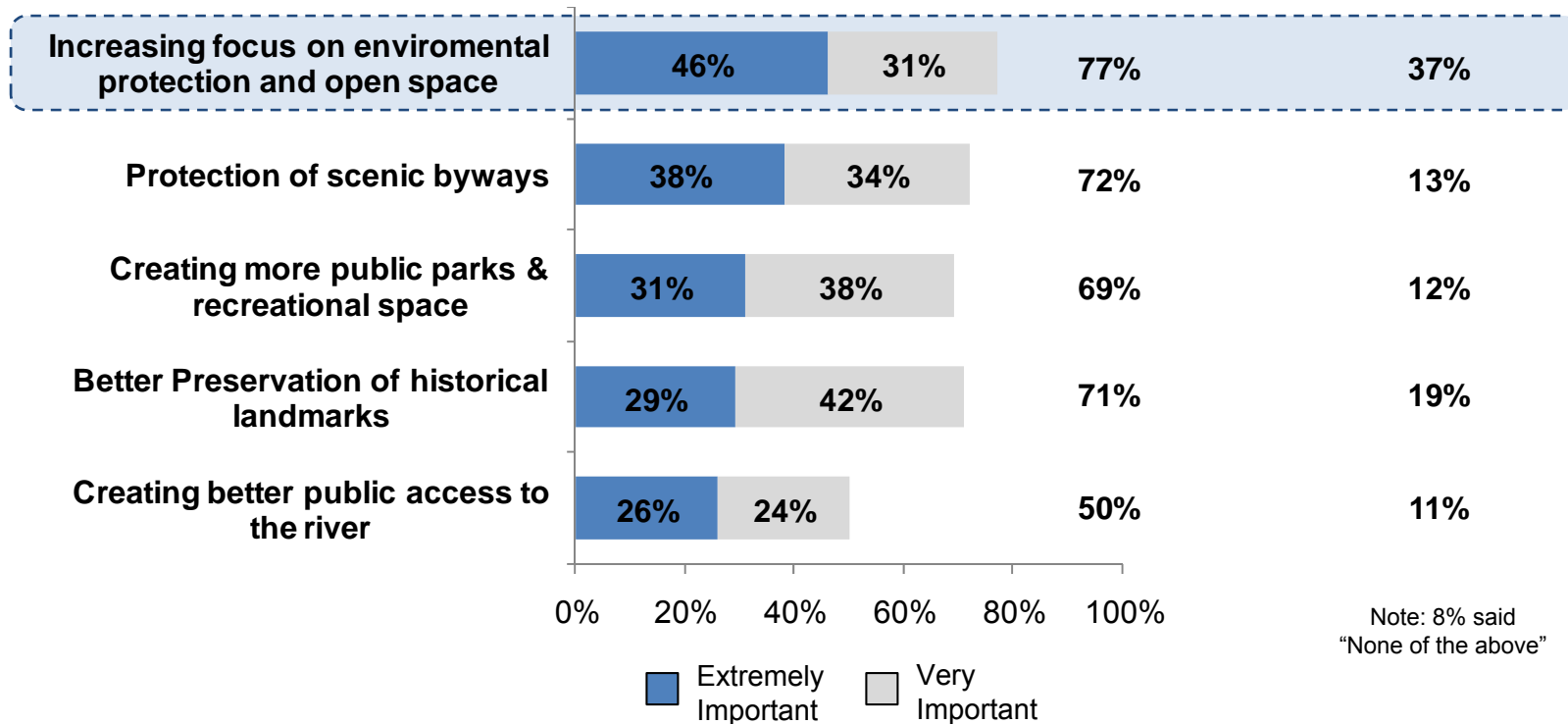
	Average Score	Percent Ranked “1, 2 or 3”
Management of Essex’s natural, historic, and recreational resources	2.37	77%
Resolution of Conomo Point Planning	2.91	69%
Community Services (library, senior services, school system)	2.98	66%
Encouragement of economic development (tourism, business district)	3.81	43%
Development of the town’s facilities (roads, buildings)	3.77	45%
Development of transportation options (public transport, pedestrian access, parking)	5.11	20%
Availability of mixed stock, affordable, and multi-use housing	5.28	22%

# Natural, Historic & Recreational Resources

The natural beauty of the area and low crime rates are viewed as the most important town characteristics. Other important elements include the town's shipbuilding history and the diversity of people living here.

## Importance of Natural, Historic & Recreational Resources

## Most Important

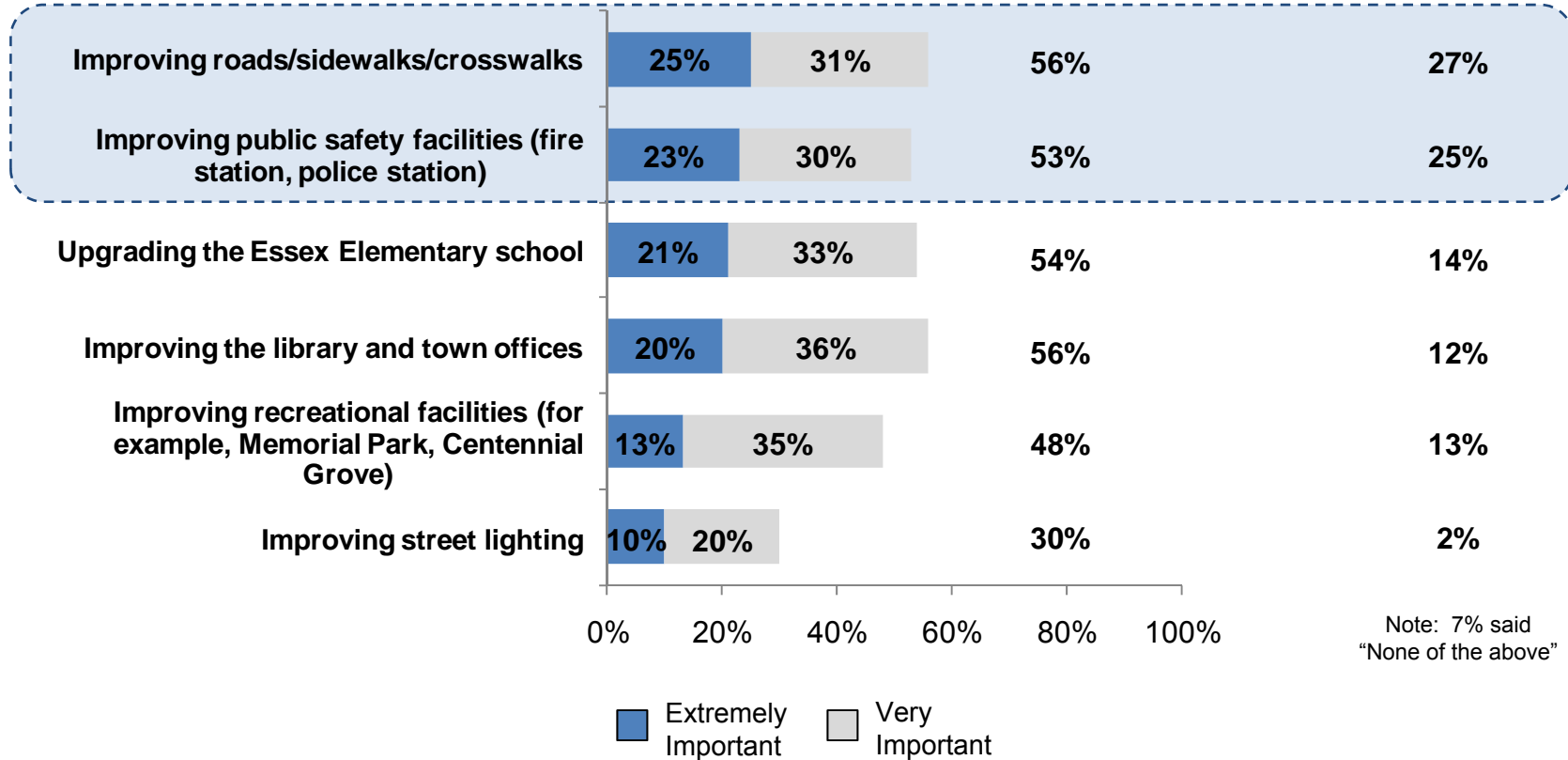


# Town Facilities

Making upgrades to nearly all the town facility components listed is considered important. However, when forced to choose, improvements to roads/sidewalks/crosswalks as well as public safety facilities were rated most important.

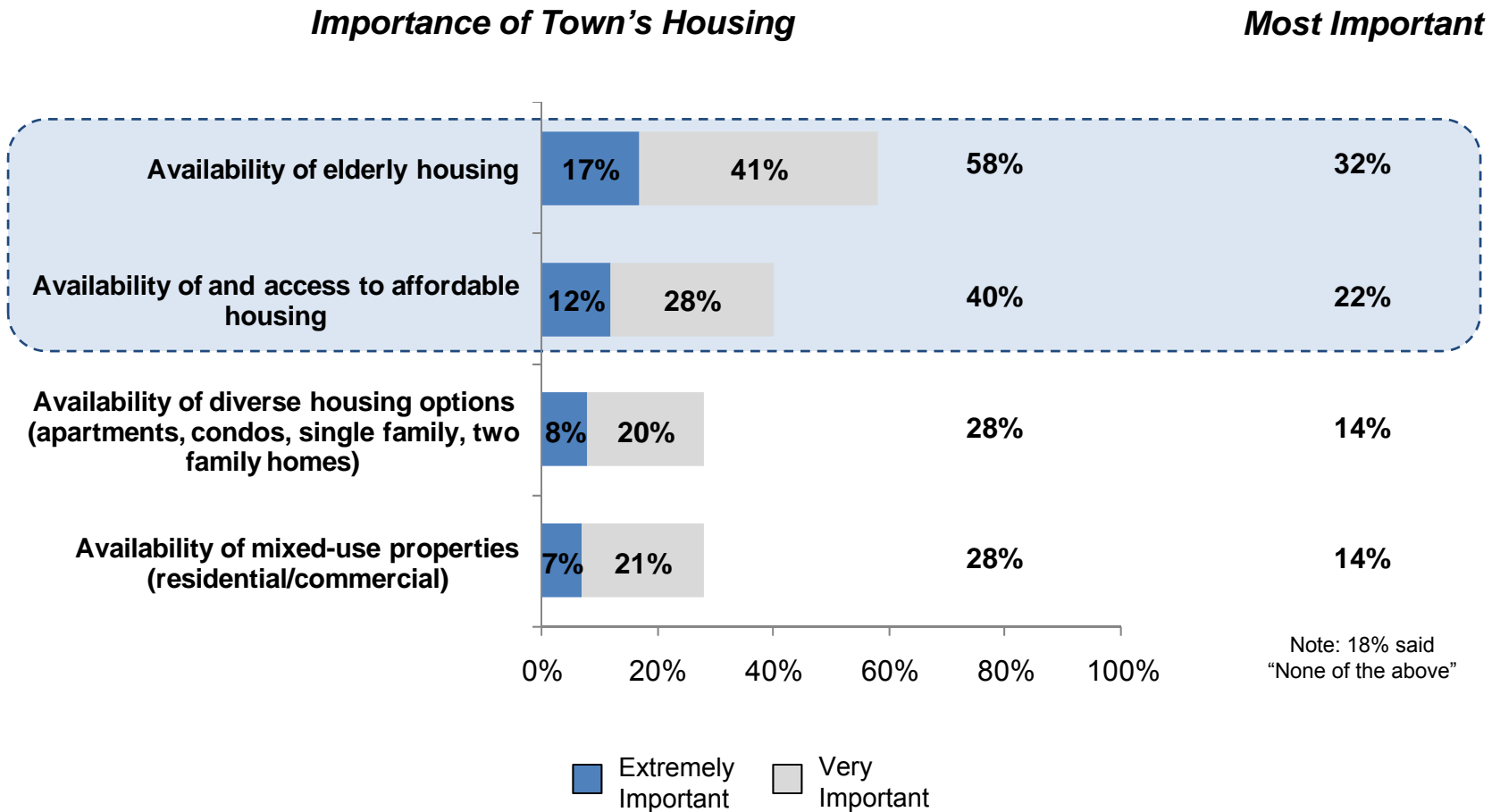
*Importance of Town Facilities*

*Most Important*



# Town Housing

Availability of elderly housing is viewed as most important, but access to affordable housing was a close second.



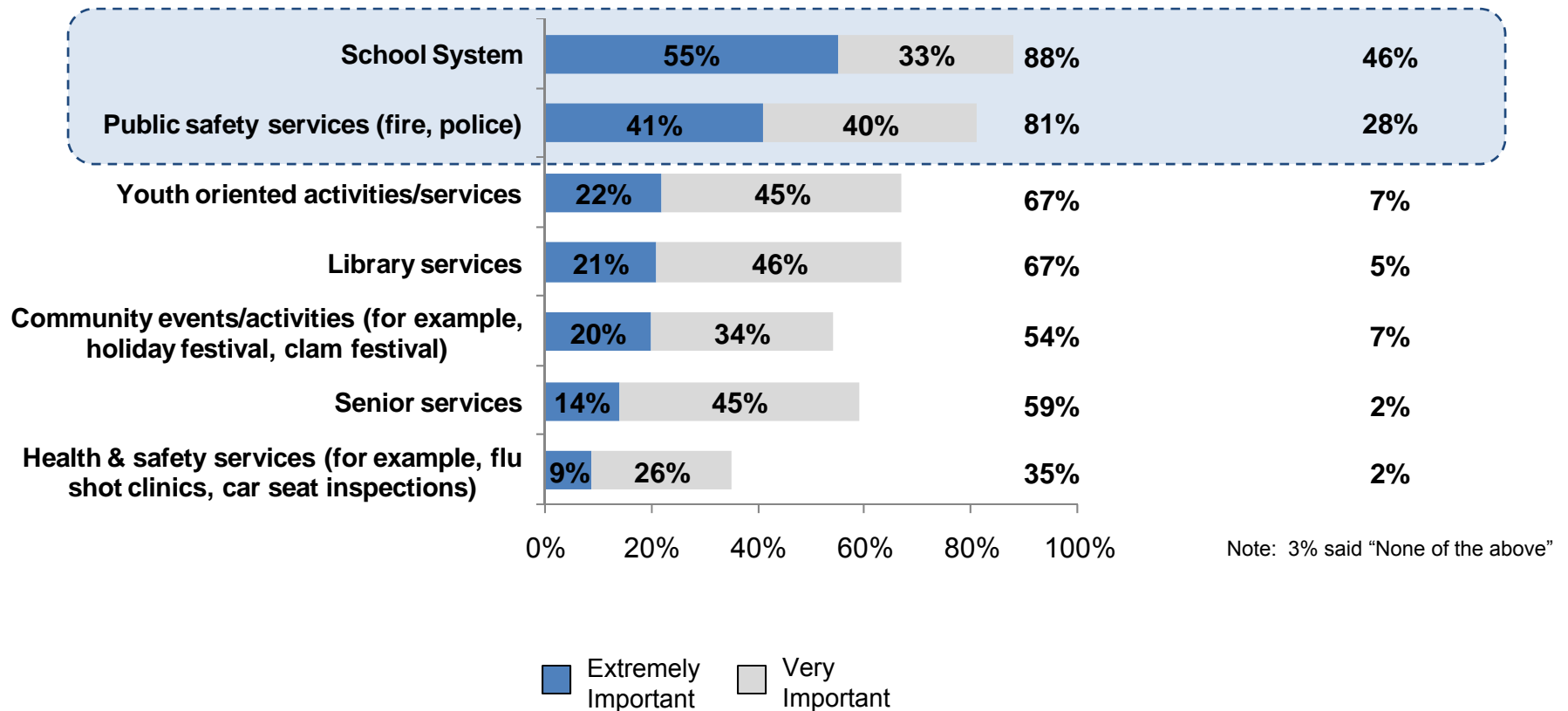


# Community Services

The school system was viewed as the most important 'community service', with nearly half of respondents rating it so. Just over a quarter believe public safety services are most important.

## Importance of Community Services

## Most Important

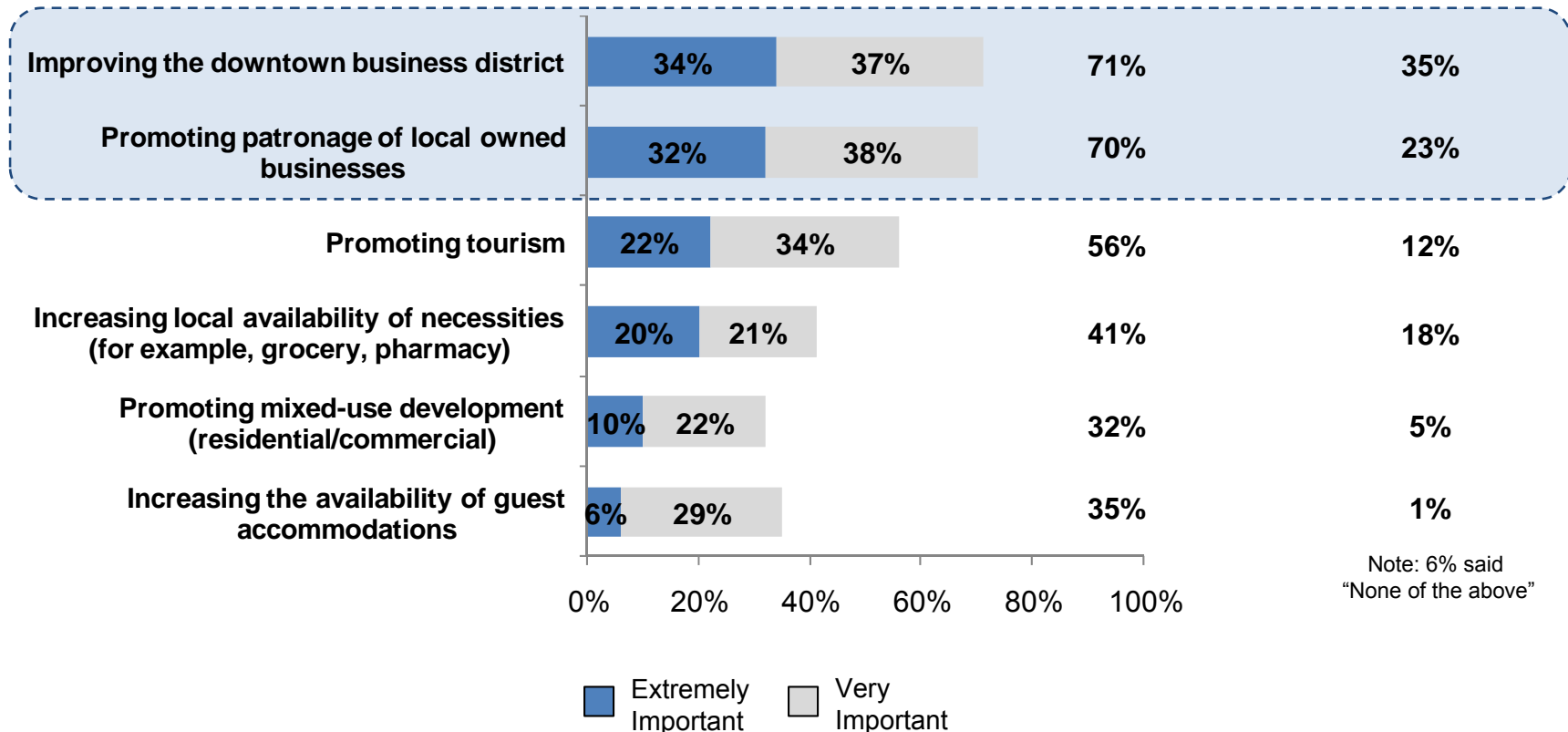


# Economic Development

Improving the village business district and promoting patronage of local business were clear winners. There were mixed feelings about promoting tourism. Several comments alluded to concerns over increased tourism resulting in more traffic/congestion/crime, particularly during the summer season.

## Importance of Economic Development

## Most Important

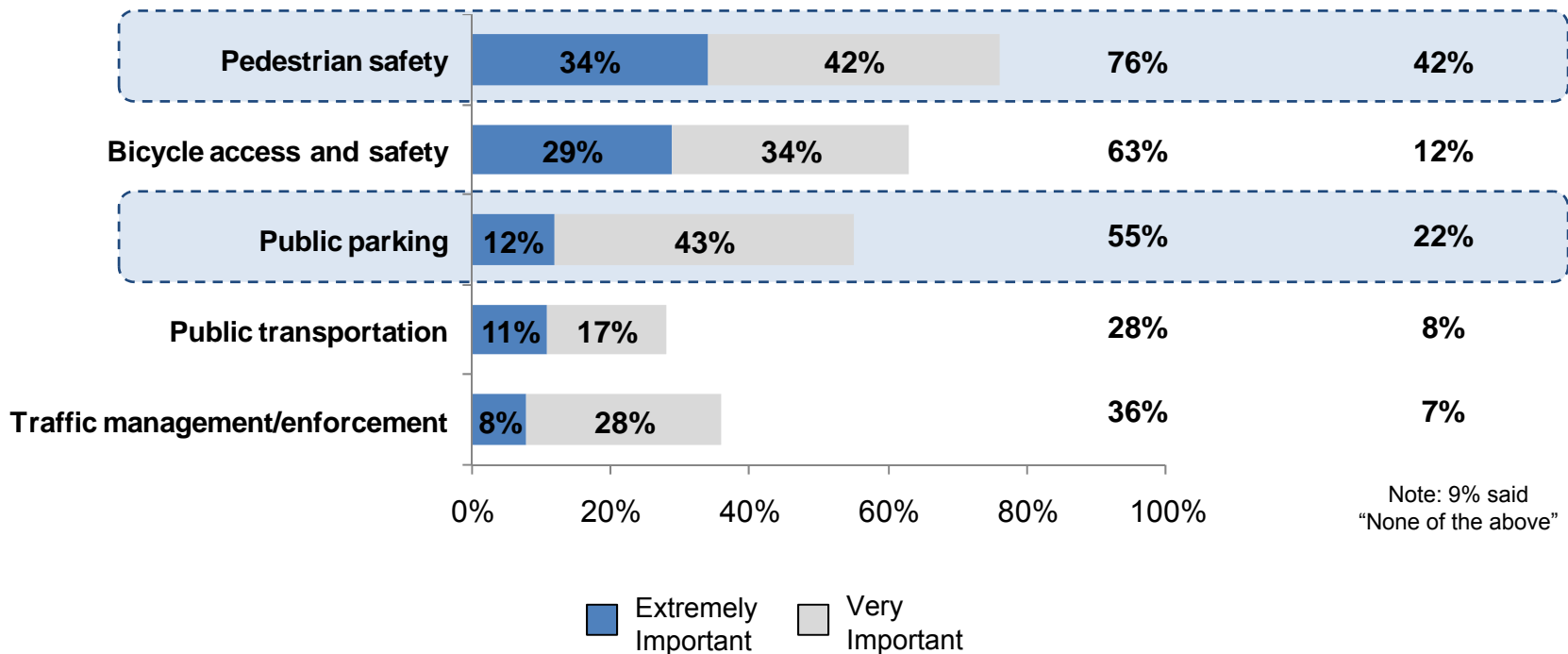


# Transportation

Pedestrian safety and public parking were the most important components among the transportation issues.

## *Importance of Transportation*

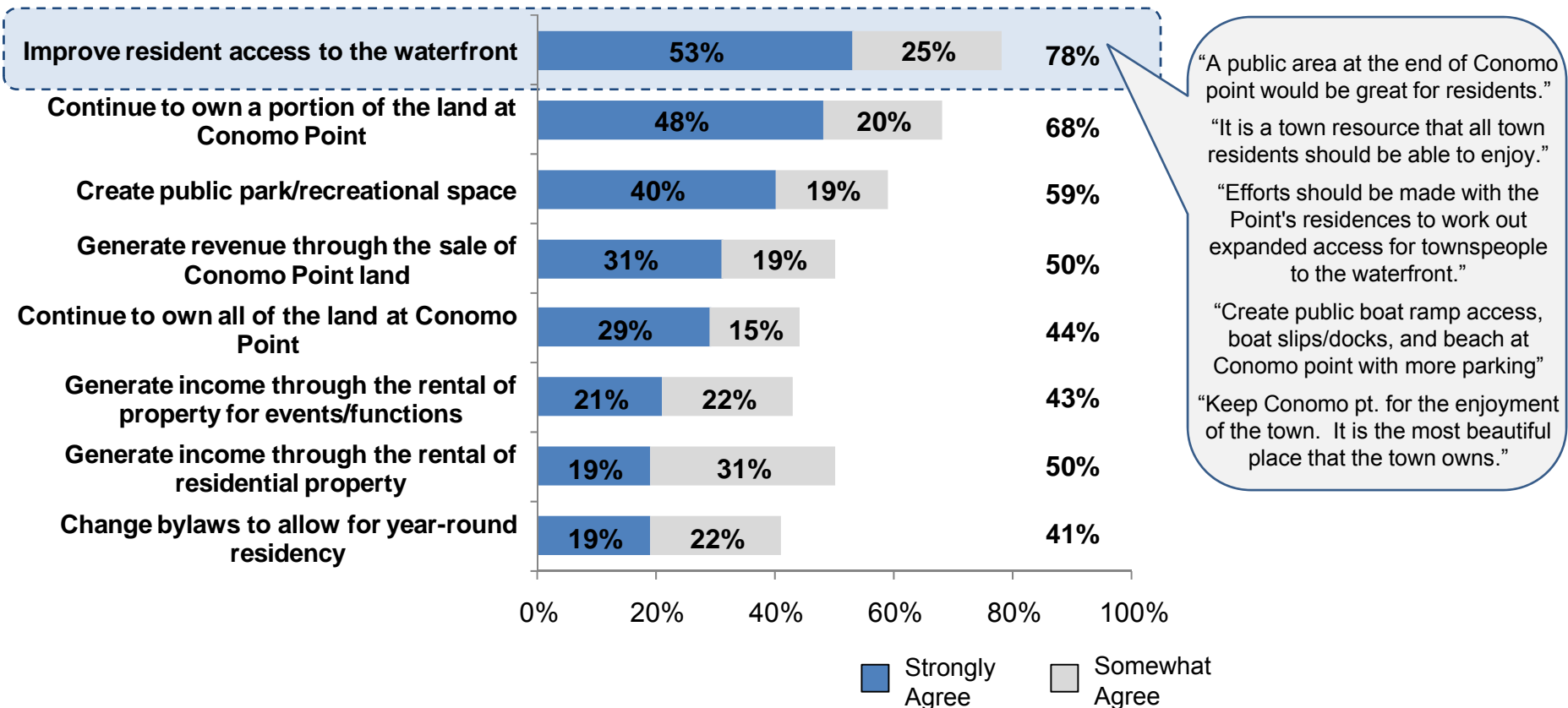
## *Most Important*



# Conomo Point Options

While viewpoints on the future of Conomo Point continue to be mixed, the majority agree that there should be improved access to the river for Essex residents.

## Agreement with Conomo Point Options

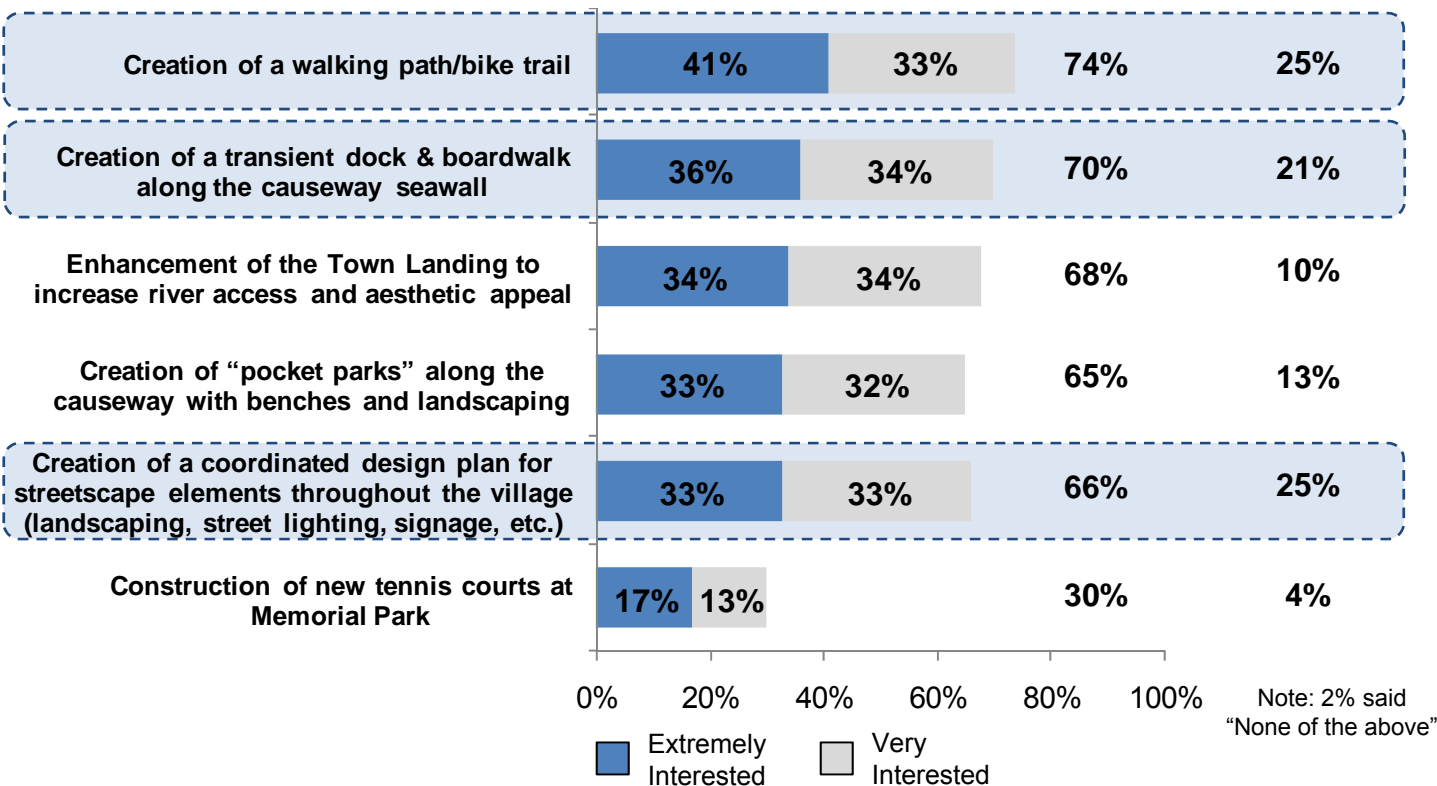


# LTPC Essex Village Initiative

Most of the projects proposed for the Village Initiative garnered strong interest, particularly the coordinated design plan, walking/bike path and the creation of a causeway dock & boardwalk.

## Interest in Essex Village Initiative Projects

**Most Interest**



"A bike path between Essex and Manchester would promote a safe environment for children, road races, and access to the Manchester/Essex woods."

"Transient slips would enable boaters from all over to come and stay awhile"

"The causeway always looks like the back side of a boat yard, spruce it up and fix Town Hall, it's a disgrace"

"I think Essex is a beautiful town but the downtown area doesn't showcase that at all."

"The combination of proper sidewalks, parking, and landscaping in the downtown area would greatly increase tourism and thereby benefit local businesses."

**Two topics of interest mentioned in verbatim comments that may be considered for future planning activities include:  
Retaining/maintaining the Grove cottage & Planning for the upcoming bicentennial**

# Respondent Profile

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	Percent
<b>Age:</b>	
18-24	3%
25-34	3%
35-44	22%
45-54	24%
55-64	26%
65+	22%
<b>Residency:</b>	
Year round	83%
Seasonal	13%
Non-resident	5%
<b>Length of Residency:</b>	
Less than 2 years	2%
2-5 years	6%
6-10 years	14%
11-25 years	35%
25 years +	43%
<b>Have Children under 18 in household</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Essex Business Owner</b>	<b>27%</b>

# Appendix: Methodology

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## **Objectives:**

- Gather feedback about the issues deemed most important for the future planning programs for the town
- Insights will be used to drive the strategy and vision for the future needs and development Essex

## **Methodology:**

- Online survey posted on the Essex town website
- Paper copies provided at the Town Hall/Library/Sr. Center
- Survey fielded from May 3<sup>rd</sup> – June 15<sup>th</sup> 2010
- Received 220 completed surveys (192 online & 28 paper)

## Appendix – Additional Comments about Town Character (Q.2)

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- Small , diverse town feel with many citizens feeling a commitment to be involved with town government.
- Hasn't been too gentrified yet
- Maritime link/river connection
- Historic, shelling fishing
- Ties to the ocean
- Nature
- River and marshes
- More public access to water beaches
- Open space
- Water Access
- Socio-economic diversity
- Shipbuilding. Schooner history. Connection to history. And the future: we need real families growing up in town on a going fwd basis, with good schools (Essex schools have been inadequate for generations!) and jobs and careers here, rather than becoming a bedroom community for commuters, retirement home, and antique merchants.
- Access to boating, beaches etc.
- Transportation network: maintain good roadway surfaces, incorporate bike lanes, keep town roads stoplight-free. Conomo Point: maintain town-control of the natural treasure that is The Point.
- Mixed business uses
- One more thing: (survey submitted yesterday) as much as I appreciate the "marine" theme, the use of mooring blocks (at least that is what I think they are) at the major intersections around town (e.g. rte. 133 and southern/main streets as well as Winthrop and Western) seem a little unimaginative and brutish. Intersections at either end on Western Ave. could use some help too! How about replacing these with some combination of Cape Ann granite blocks and flower box arrangements?
- Diversity of people
- Protecting environment
- Sub-standard roads, few street lights and few sidewalks on secondary roads
- Maritime history
- Open space for recreation
- Not a suburb of Boston
- Waterfront
- All of the above attracted us to Essex. Although it took over ten years we are now starting to see some improvements.
- We moved to Essex because it has a terrific feel about it and a natural beauty which is free of the hustle and bustle of other Cape Ann towns



## Appendix – Additional Comments about Town Character (Q.2)

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- With so many small businesses that have been in town I feel it is important to limit the ability to do so. I believe that has made up the unique character of Essex. I believe that when people can live and work where they live is important.
- Any aspect of its architecture that adds to the historic and significant character of the Town
- Strong historical elements - shipbuilding and supporting industries, etc.
- Historical elements - shipbuilding and supporting industries, etc. More easy access to river for residents
- Lots of undeveloped open space
- Play up the Lake Area
- Unique individuals
- Protect the river, out of town boaters are ruining it
- Exclusion of the Conomo Point planning process to owners of cottage at the Point.
- Traditional New England seacoast community
- Historic preservation
- Focus on Marine history
- The historical buildings really add to the "Old New England" feel of the town and I believe we should have a historical district that preserves this aspect of the town. I also believe we should use our waterfront more effectively.
- Essex is one big neighborhood, residents take care of each other.
- Hassle free nature of town
- Friendly, helpful town employees and residents
- Good police and fire and town employees
- Adequate open space for wildlife
- Historical boat building, clamming, etc.
- Having a 'down town' would be nice
- Historical communities
- River, heritage
- Quality recreational facilities for children and adults
- The people (locals); Essex is unique. It is one big neighborhood.
- Viable, real business so that Essex isn't just a tourist/bedroom community

## Appendix – Additional Comments about Town Character (Q.2)

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- Active Town Support of the Museum, public tennis courts, other public spaces.
- Rural beautification. Public plantings. Making the causeway a causeway and not a throughway.
- Letting people have their home occupations
- Destination for antiques, dining
- Varied opportunities for civic engagement
- Retail diversity
- Economic diversity
- I think it would be nice to develop the town center more into an area that is a destination point...shops, restaurants, etc. It would also be nice if the town area were spruced up with nice sidewalks, lighting, etc. Manchester has a defined town center. Essex doesn't really have that. I don't think we need to compete with Manchester but having some sort of focal point on the town would be nice. If the police / fire were moved away from their current position and the strip was cleaned up / developed a little more I think that would be a good start.
- The diverse mix of people , the commitment to the town shared by same
- Community events/social opportunities
- Economic diversity...not a bedroom community
- Local jobs for local residents
- Conomo Point
- The business district is unique, but far from what it used to be years ago!
- More user friendly - out of town boater can tie up for a walk, dinner, etc. Baseball bathrooms open full time Apr 1 - Nov 1
- Preservation of historical landmarks
- Historical homes, historical businesses
- Swap Shop! Bldg town hall/library; Chebacco Lake; seafood restaurants, The Grove
- Well maintained streets (especially Main Street)
- Excellent Senior citizen club
- Don't Sell Conomo Pt
- Eliminate the junk people have in their yards
- Protection of its scenic beauty and country roads and open places. Keep Conomo pt. for the enjoyment of the town. It is the most beautiful place that the town owns.
- Essex is unique, it is one big neighborhood! People know & care about each other. Volunteer fire & ambulance are gifts!

## Appendix: Additional Comments about Long Term Planning(Q.21)

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- While all these ideas are worthwhile, and I applaud the effort that has been put forth, my concerns are the costs involved in these projects. We need to put an equal amount of time and effort in pursuing avenues that will increase revenues to the town.
- Create a mixed use at Conomo Pt that expands recreation, parking, open space and eliminates the domination of that space by tenants. New leases should restrict rentals or occupancy to 4 months to eliminate the voters from CP ruining town politics with single issue 'block' voting. Essex need not change lets leave it alone for the most part just make CP a resource for all of us.
- Make Conomo Point accessible for all and anyone who is year round needs to have that stopped. That was a mistake needing correction. If any sales, limit to 20 - 30 homes, seasonal only.
- Creation of a zoning district or overlay that provides different criteria for parking, uses, dimensional regulations, street trees, etc. from the remainder of the town zoning requirements.
- Come together as a friendly community
- DO NOT SELL THE GROVE HOUSE....
- The problem with increasing Essex's visibility by increasing tourism is it may decrease our safety and break ins. We need a balance.
- Lumping roads and buildings into one category is misleading. We can't afford to construct new buildings now, Also, lumping public safety buildings in with the need for actual public safety is also misleading. Yes to public safety and the people who provide it. NO to constructing new buildings now to house these departments.
- No one has a clue as what Essex will look like in 25 years. The revenue from renting at Conomo has a stabilizing effect on the town finances.
- We need less tourist and business promotion so that the worsening traffic and congestion situation can be addressed. We moved here because we loved the river and marshes and quiet and now feel like we are in the middle of North Conway on weekends, especially in the summer. We hate the traffic, loud motorcycles and loud boats in the river. We need noise enforcement - maybe new bylaw - but certainly some effort by police. We need to stop letting merchants have people park on Rt 133 - get rid of all the parking spaces between the Village and the bridge and between Dunkin Donuts and Southern Ave. I am tired of dodging vehicles coming at me on the wrong side of the road due to parked cars.
- It would be good to make Essex's downtown village area a place that people want to stay a bit longer instead of driving by perhaps they can walk and take in the river and shops. Overnight guest accommodations will allow for more people to visit and shop in Essex creating a revenue stream that has been redirected from potential revenue loss project considerations that have been discussed. Creating office park environments that can have a symbiotic relation with nature and the community can be done if planned well. Note where the old Mullen office complex is in Wenham. Hard to see from Route 22 even in the winter. Give more options for people to work and live in the same location allows for a sustainable lifestyle in conjunction with a sustainable environment. Keep agricultural activities alive and vibrant showing that capitalistic gains can be had from growing food. Population is increasing and we need to take every opportunity to feed them. Always maintain the look & feel that Essex has and complement it with development.
- Please consider the role of the town's bicentennial in your planning
- Aesthetics would be enjoyed all year and encourage thru traffic to stop.
- The town is so disjointed. There are too many committees doing the same thing. Too much interest in "the bottom line" overlooking what is good for the town.

## Appendix: Additional Comments about Long Term Planning(Q.21)

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- Historical Markers and signage showing importance of causeway and shipbuilding.
- I think walking/bike path, as well as creating a 'boardwalk' and more pedestrian friendly causeway would bring a lot of positive tourism to Essex.
- Long Term planning... (1) Re the Village concept: we do not live in Bearskin Neck or Epcot. Coordinated design? Good grief.  
(2) How about doing something about the ridiculously loud motorcycles roaring down 133 all summer nights... have YOU tried sleeping with the windows open listening to fat drunks on Harleys a mile away? (3) We should not be in the business of subsidizing exclusive waterfront housing at Conomo. Look at Little Neck Ipswich or Annisquam for examples of attractive year-round waterfront housing of similar density. Sell the land at market rates, no sweetheart deals, no grandfather giveaways. Collect the revenue, fix up the schools, village center and town waterfront, and watch tourism revenue and tax base improve going fwd. This is not rocket science.
- Once the land at Conomo Point is sold it is gone forever. This is only a one-time gain that will not protect the town for long from fiscal problems. The Robbins Rd land is remote and could easily be sold but to sell the land at Conomo Point itself is foolish. It is a town resource that all town residents should be able to enjoy. Also, there are real issues re: sewage. The congestion of homes and the number of year-round residents has really made that a huge issue. People who bought homes there in the last few years have deep pockets and are trying to influence the town citizens to let them keep their homes.
- Improve aesthetics with better signage regulation; enforcement of numbers of unregistered/inoperable autos allowed to be stored on residential lots (e.g. Belcher Street); minimum acreage requirements for housing horses. Consider development of kayak launch, along with restored tennis courts, behind Memorial Park; replacement of baseball scoreboard (as well as backstop) with similar-sized, ad-free, scoreboard that will blend with setting and not detract from marsh view. Bike trail should be designed connect communities: how about a beach-to-beach trail (Singing Beach -through Essex- to Cranes Beach).
- Overrides always seem to be about schools & public safety. Why not put together an override for the causeway and river enhancement.
- I believe we should settle the Conomo Point issue. Sell the lots to the home owners and continue to assure all residents of access to Clammer's Beach etc. I feel very welcome there and use it constantly although I don't live on the point.
- I am less interested in making Essex accessible to non-residents, and more supportive of measures to improve public safety...new fire & police depts., better library & town offices being built. River access is great, but not for non-Essex residents!
- There are many things from which the town could benefit. Sometimes it's tough to choose just one.
- While I answered it would be beneficial to have local availability of necessities, I would want it in small stores in town, not allow a large chain supermarket or CVS, etc. to be built on 133. I think we should maintain our small town quality of life while adding some much needed improvements.
- Tax/fee burden has risen sharply in recent years. This has been a necessary adjustment as we address critical problems. However, budget growth must be checked where possible and as feasible to continue essential services.
- Tear down those houses on Conomo Point per order of two town meeting votes and two superior court decisions. This matter was settled in 1991. Carry out that agreement.
- Restore the town hall and do not build a new one!
- Pedestrian safety is lacking in this town! Traffic is too fast and the volume of heavy trucks passing throughout to other towns on Cape Ann present a danger to the general public. Police should be more focused on public safety by slowing traffic down.

## Appendix: Additional Comments about Long Term Planning(Q.21)

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- First of all thank you for putting this survey together. Long overdue. I feel that Essex has great potential to offer both residents and visitors a special experience. Things I would like to see happen are.... Bury the utilities on the causeway. No matter how beautiful we make it those ugly poles will be a black eye on an otherwise great improvement. A bike path between Essex and Manchester would promote a safe environment for children, road races, and access to the Manchester/Essex woods. Transient Slips would enable boaters from all over to come and stay awhile . I can't tell you how many times people have asked if there was a place to tie up their boat for lunch. Conomo point should be sold and developed. A public area at the end of Conomo point would great for residents. Concerts, weddings etc. Think of Tucks point in Manchester. Finally I would love to see more businesses and different businesses in town. Needing to drive to Manchester for some basic things is not always convenient.
- I think Essex hasn't changed as much as other communities because of present by laws. It is EXTREMELY important not to violate the rights of present LAND owners.
- The Town is in dire need of revenues. It frightens me that we may be getting in over our heads. Let's consider well the potential for loss of revenues and look toward preservation of revenue sources.
- For years the town has very short on looking at the over all picture and planning for the future, often resulting in doing too little too late at excessive cost to the tax payers. I would be nice if for once the town leaders would try to do some far sighted planning on several fronts.
- I do not like a lot of development - it will change the feel of the town. I'd like to sell Conomo Point land to the homeowners and keep the house at Centennial Grove.
- Think outside the box
- How can the Town raise more revenue? We need more businesses that generate tax dollars. Too many antique shops, not enough diverse businesses to attract many different people.
- Require non-residents using the boat ramp to pay for access. Every other town requires this, why not Essex. This could generate some revenue to help maintain the parks, etc.
- Responsible financial planning
- How to slow down traffic entering from Ipswich.
- Making Essex part of the bike trail from Newburyport to Boston would encourage year around bike tourists.
- Sale of the Conomo Point land to those families who own houses located at the point would raise capital development funds for many other town priority development projects.
- I have concern for the fate of Conomo Pt. and Robbins Is. As a place of special historic architectural significance it should be preserved, with the income it generates from rental of the land or its sale going to the town. Efforts should be made with the Point's residences to work out expanded access for townspeople to the waterfront. When a house comes up for sale there, the town should consider purchasing it for use by the townspeople, something like a rec center. The "Point" community might even be willing to help maintain the building in exchange for the town's willingness to let the residents buy the land under their buildings (or continue to rent it.)
- ADDITION OF A WALKING/BIKE PATH FROM ESSEX TO MANCHESTER
- The combination of proper sidewalks, parking, and landscaping in the downtown area would greatly increase tourism and thereby benefit local businesses .

## Appendix: Additional Comments about Long Term Planning(Q.21)

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- Development of enhancements for historical assets in Essex—including Conomo Point—with tight restrictions on properties should the leases extend and an eye to restore the area and possibly make a link with Grant money for Historical districts. This may lead to a small revenue stream on top of rents and taxes.
- RE Conomo Point - Town residents should be informed that Essex owns 100+ acres of land. Only 20% of it is leased for private use. Town could enhance public benefits of its C.Pt. property by improving non-leased land, in addition to its current efforts to resolve town/tenant relations. Better maintenance of non-leased waterfront at C.Pt. could also improve Essex residents' access & enhance their overall experiences at Conomo Pt.
- Sidewalks around town are not listed here specifically, but they are such an important upgrade to allow for shopping and walking.
- Solid presentation of ideas, good team work from the committees! Essex demographics are varied and presentations should be explicit about the impact on the tax rate per household. Many residents are still without employment.
- Essex should stop emphasizing antique stores and restaurants. The town's future is not linked to those services. Develop a plan that will attract a major industry with good paying jobs. The children get a good education but must commute a distance to get suitable jobs. Attract a foundation or university that wants water access and have them mix use Conomo Point with town citizens. Essex is only town on North Shore without decent access to water and without decent jobs.
- Preserving the character, history, and landscape of Essex as well as much needed maintenance and improvement to public safety are of the utmost importance.
- There is a strong need for public parking for the village area as well as along the street (Rte. 133) for the local business & restaurants.
- Thank you for the opportunity to submit my thoughts.
- I recently moved into Essex, I do think the TD Bank, Pickering/Martin Street is a mess. The newly erected No Parking signs need to be enforced.
- Away from the highways with tree cover, a pharmacy and/or a grocery store are needed!
- Essex is an integral part of the North Shore mountain and road biking network. Pursuing development that allows for safer cycling through Essex would help to put it on the map as a national cycling destination (e.g. Moab Utah).
- Maintain the town owned building (cottage), at Centennial Grove for the citizens of Essex, EYC, etc., etc. Do not entertain selling it for the small sum of cash and lose it forever to private ownership. This includes all the town owned lands, buildings, etc. Be it Conomo Point, or other town holdings. As a homeowner in this town. I would rather pay more taxes, than to see the town sell off the very "Gems" that make Essex the wonderful town that it is.
- Skate board park/tennis/basketball--Can we seek out an other Hollywood Hit to build it!
- It would be great to have boat access the river from Conomo Pt ... parking, etc.
- The tennis courts which are in place are rarely used because of the shape they are in. Resurfacing them would serve the town better than creating entirely new courts.
- Essex will be defined by developers and others moving into town. Conservation of land and restriction of development should be a main focus - otherwise outsiders will take advantage of the lack of zoning in town. Create a downtown development zone and much more restrictive zoning outside of downtown. Look at Choate Street to see what unbridled development does to a rural community – almost all the farms have been developed or are in the process of being developed. What be the largest travesty is the development of the 133 corridor into more commercial prospects – perhaps the proceeds from the sale of a portion of the land at Conomo can be applied to conserving more land?

## Appendix: Additional Comments about Long Term Planning(Q.21)

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- Think Essex is a beautiful town but the downtown area doesn't showcase that at all. Making our downtown more like Manchester by the Sea with nice sidewalks, street lamps, landscaping, etc would increase the value of all Essex homes. In addition the town and local businesses would do better since more tourists would stay in the area and spend money. Doing these things is long overdue and my top priority for the town.
- Clarify and unify the zoning regulations so property values can be maintained. Keep taxes under control, encourage more to live here. If families can't be somewhat guaranteed that their homes will maintain their value, and if taxes can't be kept under control, they will choose Manchester over Essex to live. Lower taxes, same good school. Secondly: try to avoid these glacial-paced scenarios like the endless stalemate over Conomo Point, the eyesore empty lot next to the Village Market (that used to be an eyesore house), Bill Allen's property, etc.
- Please, please bury the wires going through the downtown area and consider spraying for mosquitoes.
- We need to finish Memorial Park by creating basketball, tennis and parking. We are extremely under-served by the town's existing recreational facilities for these sports. Finishing the work on Memorial Park would not only serve the youth and sportspeople of town but would also create a significant civic focal point and place of pride for townspeople.
- This town needs zones so that storefronts with residences above, home businesses, and really capitalizing on the historical value of this Village - there should be a historic district, for instance - we have such great 19 and 18th century homes.
- I know it is too late but those damn utility lines should be put underground at any cost and the whole causeway planted and landscaped for walking.
- Many years ago a family member asked the Town for help in dividing his land. They came up with a plan for several lots and a "park" in the middle. Years later when he went to give these lots to his grandchildren - the town said "sorry they are too small you can't use this plan. I don't feel the town should be able to restrict what you want to do on your own property if it falls with in the law. As for Conomo Point. Instead of the selectman and groups like you talking about the loss of rent why not be honest and tell people about the money we have loss in taxes. We as a town have carried the area of town for many years. If we were allowed to tax these home as water front properties we would face greater loss of income. They have been living in one of the most beautiful areas of town and paying peanuts for taxes. The towns people should have better public access to the point.
- Create public boat ramp access, town-own boat slips/docks, and beach at Conomo point with more parking
- All of the above items would be nice, but I would say we need to focus on what is attainable and affordable. Priorities to our biggest responsibilities must come first.
- Better zoning laws to better control location of commercial development.
- I like the coordinated flower efforts, Halloween decorating etc... so all in town can participate in enhancing the look of the town.
- With respect to Conomo Pt, sell enough lots to avoid the DEP constraints on more than 10,000 gal/day sewage on Town owned land. Retain & lease remainder by gradation, short leases for waterfront lots, longer leases for second tier lots & 10 year leases for lots further away from water. Shift to seasonal only leases, but letting tenants in their only residence have year round life tenancy if septic and cistern systems approved. The gradation will allow enough time for appropriate due diligence in deciding ultimate use of Town owned lots.
- As an Essex taxpayer, I think it is morally wrong to force someone to abandon his/her home (re: Conomo issue).
- I feel the town needs to concentrate on fixing and maintaining what already exists.
- Small town charm is what brought us here, please preserve it. Bigger is not always better.

## Appendix: Additional Comments about Long Term Planning(Q.21)

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- The causeway always looks like the back side of a boat yard, spruce it up and fix Town Hall, it's a disgrace
- The cottage at the grove should be preserved and utilized = not sold! recommend leash law & animal officer - do something special with the abandoned Riverview/riverside restaurant causeway
- The town should capitalize on its location and character. A combination of the items in #19 should be seriously considered; make the town attractive, thereby generating income and building pride.
- Sell the land at Conomo so we can have better schools, police and fire offices and city hall and library. And maybe our taxes will not sky rocket.
- Don't sell Conomo Point; once gone, it's gone forever. Don't be so short-sighted
- Please do not sell the north section of Conomo pt. If we do sell it, we will never be able to buy even a portion of it. We will still have the money from selling the south side to help with the towns expenses and projects.
- Small town charm is what brought us here, please preserve it. Bigger is not always better.
- Small town charm, don't take it away. Upgrade the fire station and police if you want to but do (IMPORTANT) it as aesthetically correct as you can.
- I feel its very important that we take responsibility for the Town Hall - It is a disgrace- and fire/police station. And maintain the Elementary school so we don't end up with a huge bill.