



TOWN OF CARBONEAR
What We Heard.....
Strategic Plan Public Engagement



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Carbonear committed to developing a strategic plan for the municipality, to define the direction for the municipality, guide the progress and identify from engagement, a future for the Town of Carbonear.

The **What We Heard** document reflects the compilation of feedback and input gathered through extensive engagement with a variety of stakeholders including Council and municipal staff. Within the first few months of moving forward with public engagement, lockdowns and strict public health guidelines from the COVID-19 global pandemic occurred. Due to the global pandemic, the engagement process was adjusted with physical distancing remaining a priority. Online surveys, virtual meetings, and telephone calls were predominantly utilized for the early engagement process.

As the process was extended and with analysis of gathered input, gaps were identified. A period of follow-up with stakeholders occurred. Identifying and engaging broader representation of our community with opportunities to provide input took place.



Engagement with municipalities is typically one of two types:

Inform: Updates, Advisories, Notices

Transactional: Apply for permits, Questions regarding services, Payment of Taxes

The Strategic Planning process employs two additional types of engagement: Consult and Collaborate.

Priorities for engagement:

- Identify and cultivate meaningful community engagement opportunities that will represent the whole community, not just a small and vocal number.
- Engage people in the community. Seek out multiple perspectives.
- Create the environment for an ongoing conversation. Remove barriers from giving feedback.



How & who we engaged....

Engagement Method
Community Survey (online, paper, in person, & telephone)
Business Survey (online, in person, telephone)
Council & senior manager Survey
Staff survey
One on one interviews (telephone, zoom, in-person)
Focus Groups (conference calls, zoom, in-person)
Follow up interviews and sessions

Who are the stakeholders?

Residents, businesses, council members, Town committees, management & staff, organizations, associations, incorporated bodies, provincial and regional departments, education institutions, incl. post secondary

Residents: 850 (18.1%)

Business owners/management staff: 48 (21.1%)

Organizations/Committees: 25

Focus Groups: 21



What we heard....

The Town of Carbonear believes a strategic plan is essential for establishing a living document that defines the direction for the future of the Town. Stakeholder engagement is a vital component of both the strategic planning process and the final product; a strategic plan that includes the ideas, concerns and goals identified by our community members. As a result of the global pandemic, additional time was spent ensuring we heard from multiple members of our community.

Through the intensive public engagement process, it is clear that the Town of Carbonear has many attributes that make the Town a great place to live, work and play. There are already many initiatives, programs and in-process plans that are seen by members of the community as contributing to the sense of belonging and the attributes that make the Town of Carbonear a place people want to live, work, and play here. There is also much work to be completed.

The principal questions posed to stakeholders during the engagement process were:

What do we want the Town of Carbonear to be?

What are we doing well? What are our strengths?

What could we do better? What barriers/challenges do we have to deal with?

What are our opportunities?

Throughout the extensive engagement process, there were several themes that stood out. Stakeholders, heightened by the global pandemic, were focusing on how our community and its infrastructure can move forward to be resilient; having genuine and user friendly interactions; improve organizational performance and communication; and create a vibrant and sustainable community.



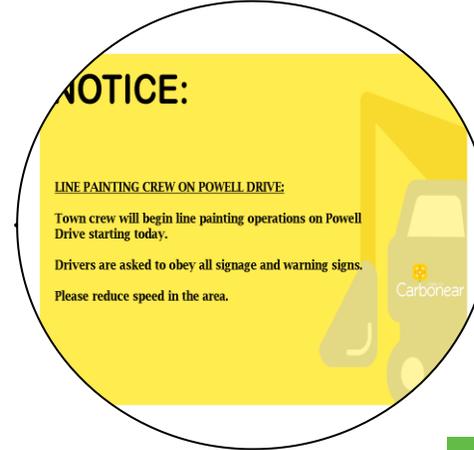
Resilient Community

Ensuring our infrastructure is maintained to meet future needs of our community, while also leveraging the use of technology to help meet those needs.

The municipality's physical infrastructure has seen improvements over the years. Examples include the new municipal depot, renovations to the changing rooms at the Carbonear Pool, and road improvements, as well as Phase 1 of the Downtown Heritage Revitalization Project.

The Downtown Heritage Revitalization Project received positive comments across all stakeholder groups, as well as town services such as snow clearing. With climate change expected to bring weather that is warmer, wetter and stormier to Newfoundland, stakeholders identified opportunities and weaknesses. They focused predominantly on the effects of climate change on Town infrastructure and questioned how prepared the Town is for these effects.

Additionally, wastewater and waste diversion were prevalent in responses. Increasing the recycling options, providing education and awareness around waste diversion and reduction for the general public were opportunities identified by stakeholders. Specific stakeholders also added the use of technology and asset management to enable staff and council to make informed decisions with additional data.



Vibrant Community

Supporting economic development strategies and building on the Town's stable service center foundation is the key to long-term economic success.

The initial engagement of the business community began shortly before the first provincial lockdown. As business owners and staff were navigating the public health guidelines, making extremely tough operational and human resource decisions, and dealing with uncertainty; we chose to pause the engagement process. From 2019 to 2021, the business community faced some of their greatest challenges.

As public health guidelines began to change our engagement process renewed with a unique perspective as owners were focused on returning to their "normal" business operations. Honest dialogue around challenges ranging from the effect of the global pandemic on supply chains to shifting employment patterns followed. There were frustrations expressed with Town communication and processes that will be addressed through the Strategic Plan.

Points from engagement included:

Feedback included clarifying the business development process, as well as assisting new business owners in understanding the supports available for them. Challenges of recruitment of workforce to the Town was heard across sectors. The need to promote the Town as a place that people would want to live and work in, as well as promoting the Town as a vibrant investment location to developers. Council focus on responsive and collaborative decision making to encourage development.



Connected Community

As needs change, it is essential that the Town continue to offer residents and visitors a diverse range of recreational and cultural opportunities. Also, prioritizing the continuation of providing high-quality essential services and programs that ensure quality of life.

Community programming creates safe places for people to try new things, breaks down barriers and ultimately brings community together. A connected community is essential to a growing and vibrant community. Respondents from every sector shared their input on current programming and ideas for the next 5 years. A unified response is that the Town of Carbonear be a healthy, sustainable community that delivers affordable and accessible multi-generational programming, facilities, and initiatives for residents of all ages and life stages.

Community builders were engaged to share the challenges and ideas for connecting our community better. Repeatedly, the challenges and exposed gaps the global pandemic exposed were discussed. Community organizations shared their pride and eagerness to collaborate more with the Town departments to support programming and engage a broader representation of the community.

Points from engagement process included:

Utilizing town facilities and green spaces more effectively, while also planning cultural programming beyond the summer season. Exploring and evaluating programming & playground infrastructure to ensure it meets changing needs of users. Incorporating current trends and identifying best practices.



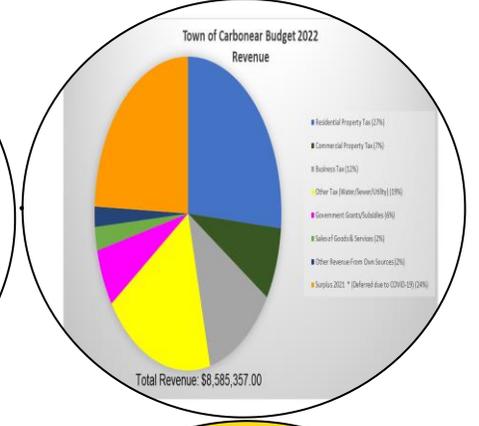
Corporate Excellence

Delivering excellence in core services and delivery of high quality services to the public. Town services are aligned with public expectation, responding to user needs and financially balanced.

The theme frequently mentioned in ~ 90% of the engagement process was communication. While the Town of Carbonear has moved forward with improvements to engaging with residents and community stakeholders, there remains much work to be completed. Eliminating barriers to ensure access for all in our community will remain a priority for the Town Council and staff.

A user-friendly approach to providing services and information is key to responding to the needs of the public as well as ensuring inclusivity and transparency in a timely manner. A clear communication plan as well as improving organizational efficiencies in combination with utilizing supporting technology is necessary.

Points from engagement process included:
 Clear outline of roles and responsibilities of staff and council, effective and efficient organizational service delivery, succession planning, digital strategy and review of policies and plans.



Community Survey Results



Age Range of those completing survey:

40-59: 46.66%

30-39: 17.95%

60-69: 17.44%

9 Questions (including if you would like to leave your contact information)

3 Questions were rate the answers given

5 Questions were content related

1 Question was contact info (if desired)

What we heard....

“Most amenities that are needed but also, close enough to St. John’s to drive if needed”

“Walkability, vibrancy”

“Great place to raise your family, only an hour from “town” aka St. John’s”

“Being free to walk in the night”

“Carbonear has everything anyone would need or want to live there”

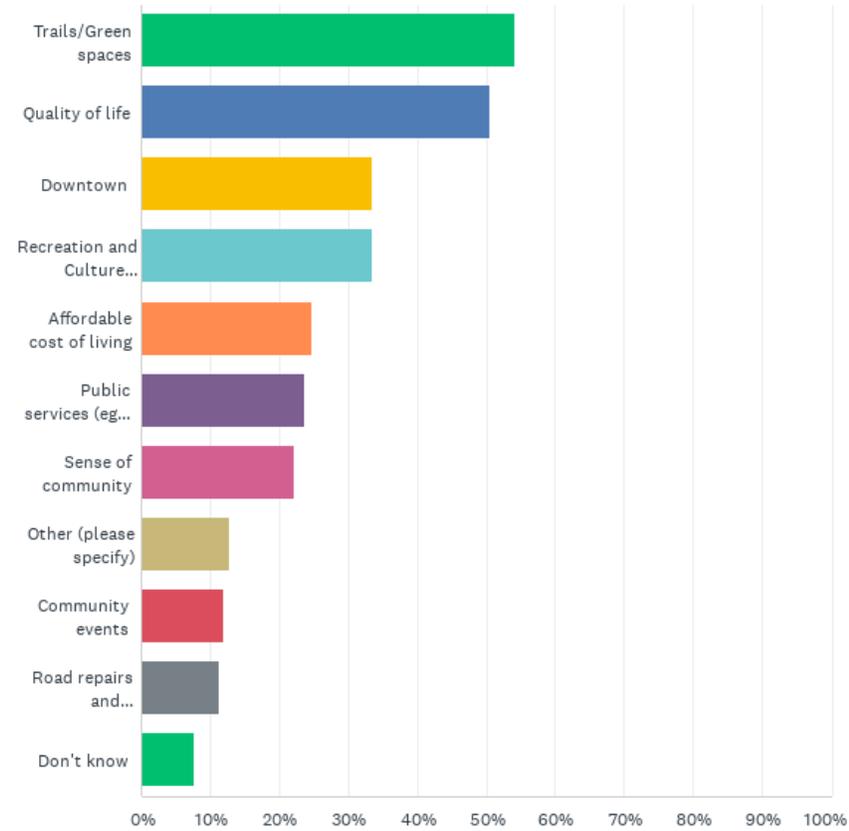
“The scenery, family living, amenities, safe place to raise a family”

“Access to indoor and outdoor recreation, healthcare, and education”

“Friends and family live here. History and connection to family”

What do you value most?

What would you say are the most appealing – or best things about living in the Town of Carbonear?

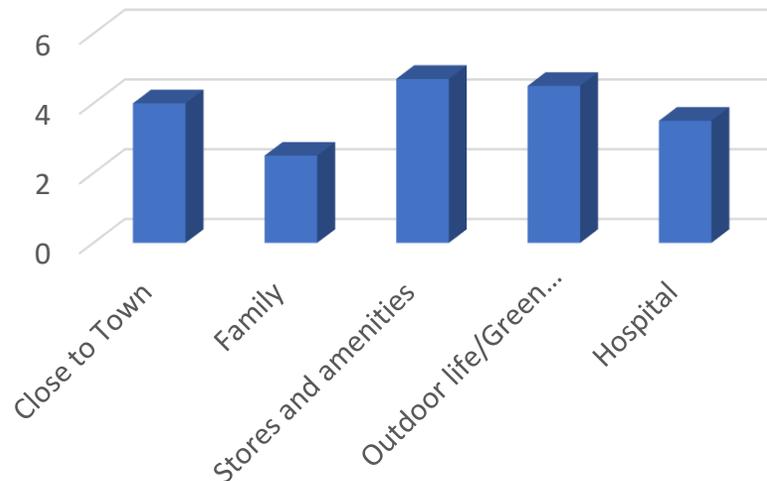


What we heard....

When you speak to someone about why you live in Carbonear, what two (2) things do you say make our Town a great place to live?

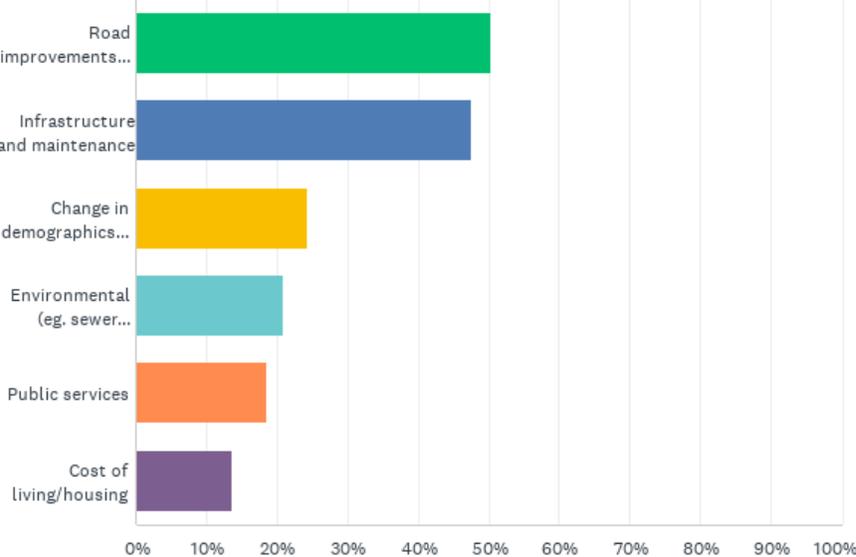
family proximity St John health care trail system small town Beautiful scenery lots
 activities Proximity retail needed work beautiful think trail culture city etc
 Carbonear St John s great everything shopping home S pretty
 live healthcare people schools hospital scenery
 services small town St John amenities grew
 close History community Medical Facilities Quiet hour
 businesses view recreation many downtown friendly good
 children area education facilities lot great Location Easy access access
 place raise family recreation facilities place

Top 5 Responses



What we heard....

What would you say is the single most important challenge facing the Town of Carbonear today?



What we heard....

What are the areas of improvement?

way health care many older buildings keep friendly outside work Council accommodations
make also new painting Carbonear walk community events create improve park
use know tourism closed events within Infrastructure houses
trails attract better support area old needs sidewalks
Roads public town facilities downtown buildings
business residents people young community Communication
development years Recreation walking trails family see Water Street
activities atv safer will etc bring promoting improvement visitors Water kids shopping ages
looking stay Continue access town focus

What we heard....

Treasures

Trails/green spaces

Attractions (both Town
& private)

Re-defined identity

Opportunities

Proximity to St. John's

Business attraction
younger
demographic/returning
home residents

Available land
development

Community

Increasing diversity

Post-covid eagerness to
engage & rebuild

New vision of
community
engagement

Fiscal Stability

Reputation for
responsible fiscal
management

Increasing costs require
stability & planning

Proven record of
project planning



TOWN OF
Carbonear

**The Town of Carbonear
Strategic Plan
will be released on our website
September 2022.**