

s u s t a i n A B L E

CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Our Vision for a Sustainable Future

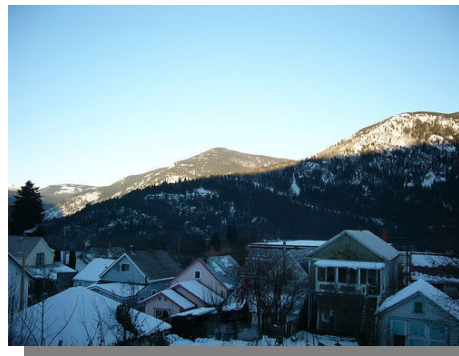
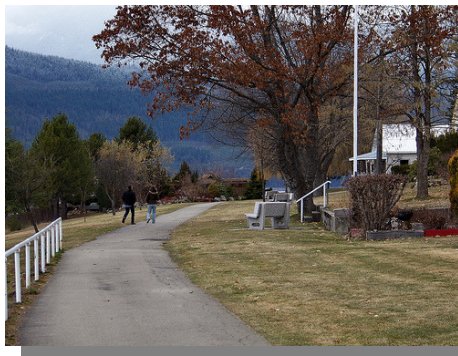
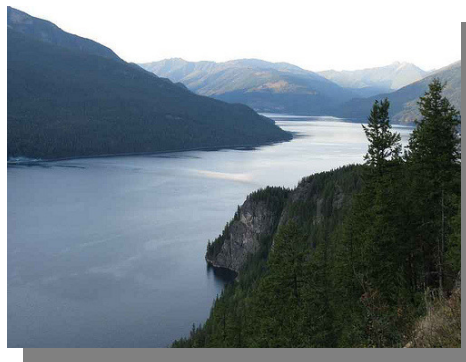
Introduction

The Regional District of Central Kootenay partnered with the Village of Nakusp, the Village of Kaslo, and the Town of Creston as part of the Central Kootenays' Integrated Community Sustainability Planning process.

SustainABLE Central Kootenay gathered input and engaged citizens in a dialogue about sustainability in our region. It is the start of an ongoing dialogue that will help shape our future, so it is important to hear what our residents are thinking.

In the fall of 2009, Regional District residents participated in a survey that gathered community input on seven themes that have surfaced as regional priorities to our sustainability vision. This was one of many similar input opportunities that occurred across the region.

This input from residents will help to guide our Official Community Plan and ongoing discussions on sustainability in the Regional District. It will also help guide the development of a greenhouse gas emissions target for our region.



Vision for the Future

Our ambition is that our pristine natural environment and spirited communities provide a peaceful home, balanced economy, and wild recreation experiences for all residents and visitors.

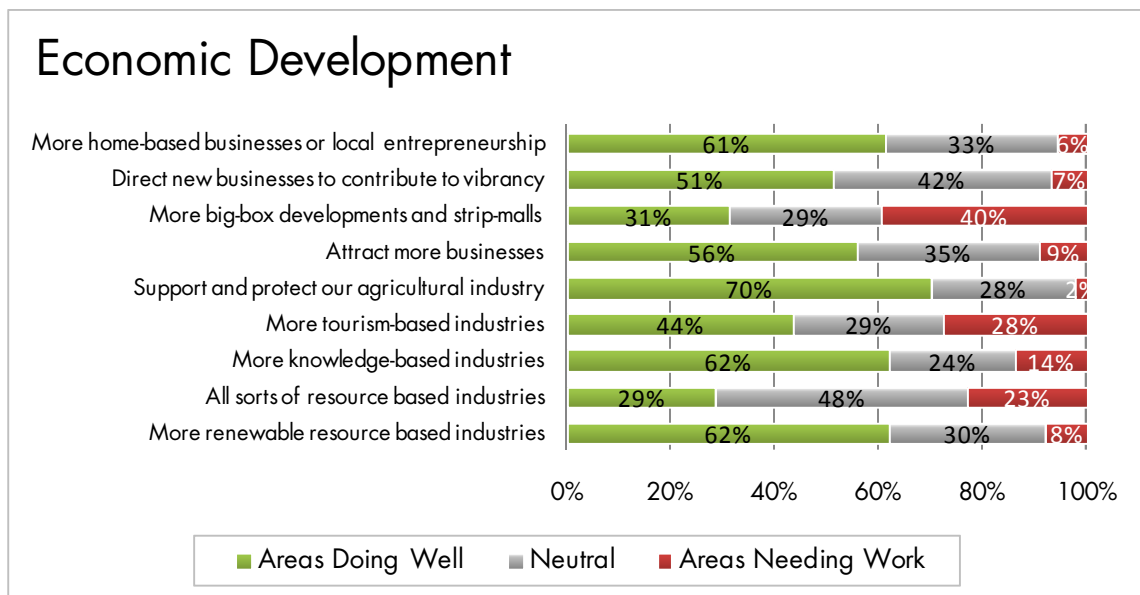
Collage: Things That Are Important To Us



Community Feedback Questionnaire Results

Economic Development

The graph below shows how residents would like to see economic development supported in the RDCK. There is community agreement that future economic activity should be pursued in tandem with environmental preservation, though the community is divided in terms of what that would look like in the context of our region. Some residents feel that we should not be attracting resource based industries to our region, be they renewable (19%) or non-renewable (31%) in nature. Over half feel that renewable resource industries such as forestry are an important part of our future economic reality (62%), and nearly half are not in support of any extraction based industries, such as mining (41%). Diversifying away from resource based industry is an attractive option for residents, who strongly support local agriculture (83%), and generally support knowledge (74%), tourism (59%), and small business (57%) based economic activity. This should happen in a way that supports community vibrancy and not big-box type development patterns (83%).

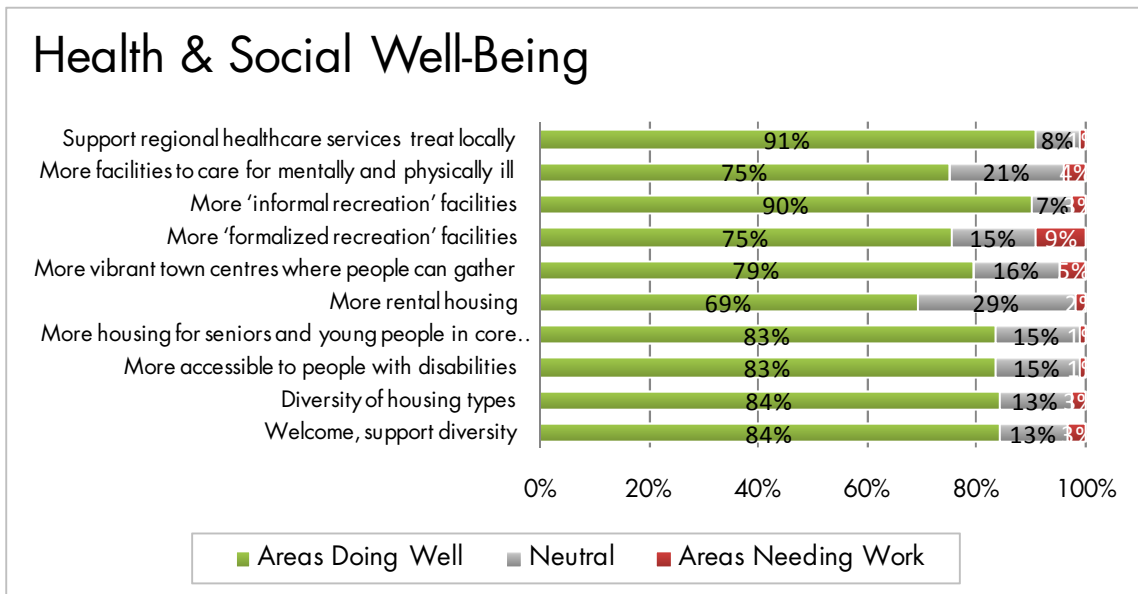


Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• We should attract more renewable resource based industries to the region (such as forestry)	30%	35%	16%	11%	8%	155
• We should attract all sorts of resource based industries to the region (such as mining)	9%	25%	25%	24%	17%	157
• We should attract more knowledge-based industries to the region (such as consulting firms, colleges, etc.)	31%	43%	21%	3%	1%	157
• We should attract more tourism-based industries to the region (such as hotels, museums, etc.)	19%	40%	30%	11%	0%	159
• We should support and protect our agricultural industry as a key part of our local economy.	55%	28%	11%	4%	1%	157

Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• We should attract more businesses to the region.	20%	37%	29%	13%	2%	157
• We should allow more big-box developments and strip-malls in designated areas.	4%	9%	21%	27%	38%	161
• We should direct new businesses to existing communities where it can contribute to the vibrancy and local character of town centers.	29%	44%	21%	5%	1%	155
• We should encourage and support more home-based businesses or local entrepreneurship.	48%	35%	16%	1%	0%	161

Health and Social Well-Being

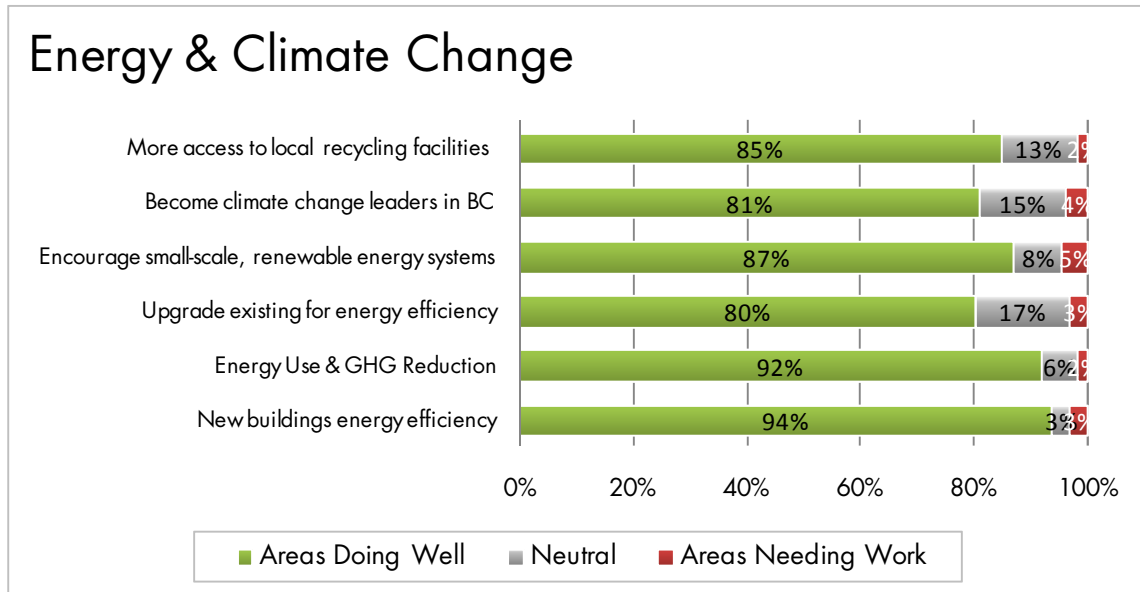
A high quality of health and social well-being is a priority to residents. There was strong support to ensure our communities welcome and attract a diversity of people, provide a diversity of housing types, and are welcome to seniors, youth, and people with disabilities in well services areas (84%). This level of interest was also shown for supporting town centers, formal recreation opportunities like pools and sports fields. The overwhelming majority indicated support for maintaining and developing 'informal recreation' facilities (such as hiking trails, picnic areas, back-country ski trails, etc.) and a desire for regional healthcare services that would allow us to treat common medical conditions locally. The graph below illustrates how residents were slightly less enthusiastic on supporting affordable housing and services for mentally ill, though still feel these issues deserve attention and resources.



Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• Our communities should welcome, support and celebrate people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.	57%	27%	13%	3%	1%	150
• A diversity of housing types (such as single family, duplexes, apartments, townhouses, etc.) should be provided in settlement areas.	47%	37%	13%	1%	1%	150
• Our communities should be more accessible to people with disabilities.	41%	43%	15%	1%	1%	150
• We should locate more housing for seniors and young people in existing community core areas where they can be closer to the hubs of activity.	49%	34%	15%	1%	0%	149
• We need more rental housing.	35%	34%	29%	1%	1%	149
• We should create more vibrant town centres and places where people can gather.	43%	36%	16%	4%	1%	145
• We should invest more resources for maintaining and developing 'formalized recreation' facilities in communities (such as skating rinks, sport fields, swimming pools).	33%	42%	15%	8%	1%	150
• We should invest more resources for maintaining and developing 'informal recreation' facilities (such as hiking trails, picnic areas, back-country ski trails, etc.).	44%	46%	7%	1%	1%	152
• We should invest more resources for facilities to care for mentally and physically ill residents.	40%	35%	21%	1%	3%	148
• We should attract and support regional healthcare services that would allow us to treat common medical conditions locally	58%	32%	8%	1%	1%	149

Energy and Climate Change

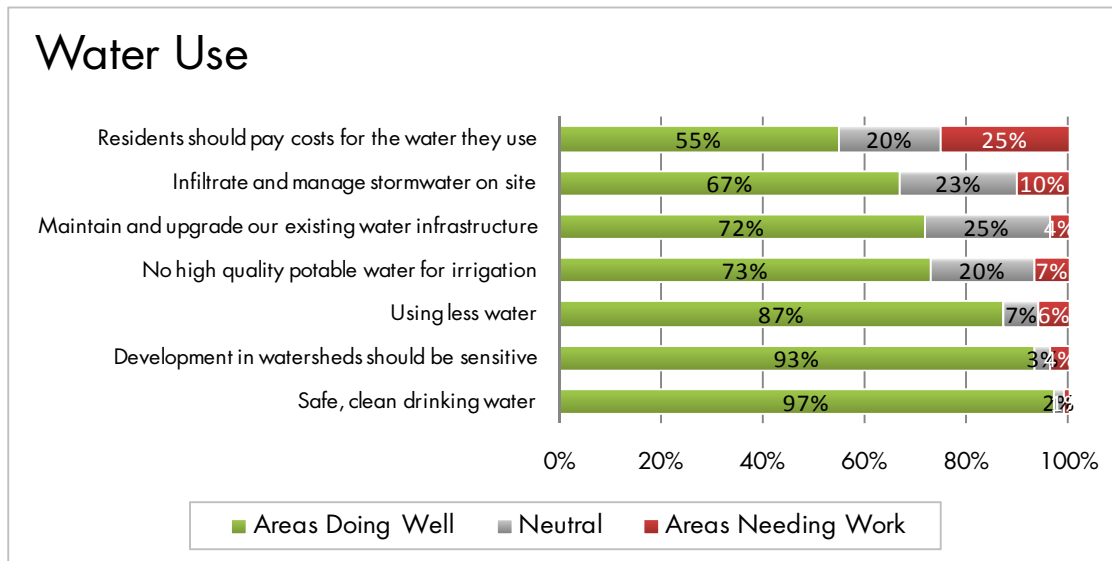
Residents in the Central Kootenays are united when it comes to issues of energy and climate change. Ninety percent of residents share the opinion that new buildings should be designed to a high standard of energy efficiency and that Saving energy and reducing our greenhouse gas emissions should be a priority to all energy users. Over eighty percent would like to see more services for recycling, small scale renewable energy systems, energy upgrades for existing buildings, and feel that the region should work towards becoming recognized leaders in energy efficiency and climate change.



Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• New buildings should be designed to a high standard of energy efficiency.	68%	26%	3%	3%	1%	82
• Saving energy and reducing our greenhouse gas emissions should be a priority to all energy users.	68%	24%	6%	1%	1%	81
• Existing buildings should be upgraded so that they are more energy efficient.	54%	27%	17%	2%	1%	82
• We should investigate and encourage small-scale, renewable energy systems that reduce our dependency on fossil fuels.	67%	20%	8%	2%	3%	81
• Our region should invest in and work towards becoming climate change leaders in BC.	61%	20%	15%	2%	2%	82
• Residents should have more access to local recycling facilities	59%	26%	13%	1%	1%	82

Water Use

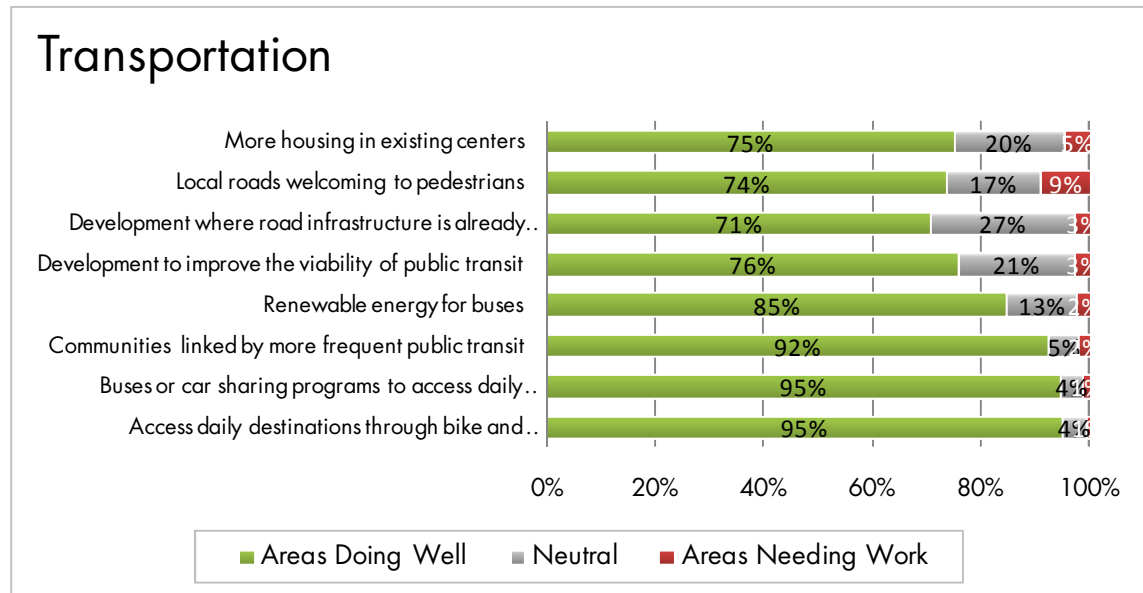
The community is in full agreement that all residents should have access to safe, clean drinking water (97%) and that development and resource-related activity in watersheds should be undertaken in a sensitive manner that respects the watershed (93%). Residents largely feel that water conservation should be a priority to all water users (87%), high quality, clean potable water should not be used for irrigation (72%), on-site storm water infiltration (67%), and that we should allocate resources to maintain and upgrade our existing water infrastructure, rather than taking on additional water infrastructure liability (72%). The community was less certain about residents paying for the water they use (55% for and 25% against).



Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• All residents should have access to safe, clean drinking water.	88%	9%	2%	0%	1%	82
• Development and resource-related activity in watersheds should be undertaken in a sensitive manner that respects the watershed.	73%	20%	3%	0%	4%	82
• Using less water should be a priority to all water users.	49%	38%	7%	2%	4%	82
• High quality, clean potable water should not be used for irrigation.	46%	27%	20%	3%	4%	80
• We should allocate resources to maintain and upgrade our existing water infrastructure, rather than taking on additional water infrastructure liability.	47%	25%	25%	3%	1%	81
• Stormwater should be allowed to infiltrate and be managed on site (like in nature) rather than collecting water into pipes and sending it downstream in large volumes.	38%	29%	23%	8%	2%	82
• As with any other service, the cost of providing and cleaning water can be very high and as responsible stewards, residents should pay costs for the water they use.	26%	29%	20%	14%	11%	81

Transportation

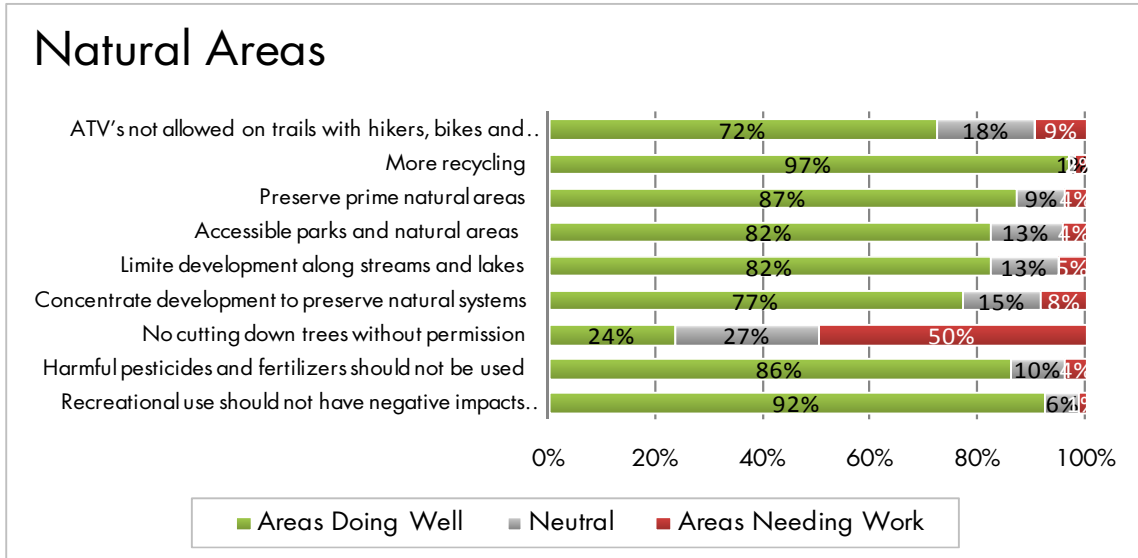
RDCK residents are largely in support of finding new ways to move around the region more efficiently. This includes support for daily use of transit and car sharing (94%), and bikes and pedestrian paths (95%). Communities should also be linked with more frequent public transit (93%). Resident also commented on how development patters should evolve in order to support sustainable transportation. Residents agree that development should be concentrated near town centers (75%), houses should be built along existing roads rather than building new roads and neighbourhoods (70%), and that local roads should to be more welcoming to pedestrians (74%).



Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• Residents should be able to easily access daily destinations through bike and pedestrian paths.	63%	32%	4%	0%	1%	81
• Residents should be able to rely on buses or car sharing programs to access daily destinations.	53%	41%	4%	0%	1%	79
• Communities within the region should be linked by more frequent public transit.	57%	36%	5%	1%	1%	81
• Buses should use renewable energy sources.	43%	42%	13%	1%	2%	81
• Development should be located in existing areas where it can improve the viability of public transit, rather than developing new areas that could not be served by transit.	46%	30%	21%	2%	1%	76
• Development should be directed to areas where road infrastructure is already available so that we don't need to expand the road network.	37%	33%	27%	1%	1%	77
• Local roads in the communities should be more welcoming to pedestrians (e.g. narrower roads, slower speeds).	43%	31%	17%	6%	3%	79
• We should locate more housing in existing centers where people can be closer to transit and the hub of their community.	38%	37%	20%	3%	1%	78

Natural Areas

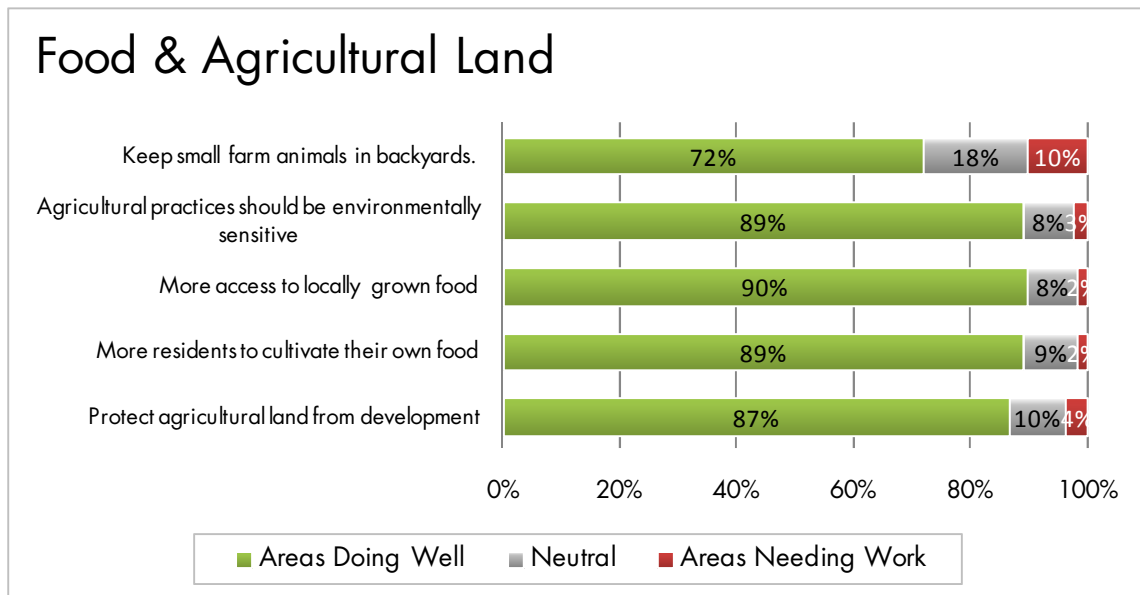
Residents agree that a variety of steps should be taken to protect the natural areas on the region. From protecting natural areas from negative impacts of recreational use (92%), to limiting the use of harmful pesticides (86%) and limiting development along streams and lakeshores (82%), residents are in support of acting in a manner that protects and enhances the environment. The only area where the community is divided relates to trees on private land. Only 24% of residents agree that private land owners should not be allowed to cut down trees on their properties without permission, while 50% disagree.



Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Recreational use of natural areas should not have negative impacts on the long-term integrity of our natural areas.	67%	25%	6%	0%	1%	80
Harmful pesticides and fertilizers should not be used in the community.	68%	18%	10%	2%	2%	80
Private land owners should not be allowed to cut down trees on their properties without permission.	10%	14%	27%	32%	18%	79
Development should be concentrated in certain areas so that natural areas can be preserved.	43%	34%	15%	5%	3%	80
Development along streams and lakes should be limited.	53%	29%	13%	3%	2%	79
Our parks and natural areas should be accessible to all residents.	50%	32%	13%	3%	2%	79
Prime natural areas should be preserved as a public asset for future generations.	61%	26%	9%	3%	1%	79
To avoid more land being taken up by our growing landfill, we should do more to recycle and reduce our solid waste.	73%	24%	1%	1%	1%	79
ATV's should not be allowed on the same trails as hikers, bikes and horses	56%	16%	18%	3%	6%	81

Food and Agricultural Land

Residents are largely unified when it comes to supporting local food and agriculture. Residents agree that agricultural land should be protected from development and used in an environmentally sensitive manner (89%). There was also a consensus that residents should have more opportunities for residents to cultivate their own food and be able to purchase local food (89%). While still in agreement, residents were slightly less certain about small farm animals being allowed in backyards (72%).



Topic Areas	Priority					Total responses
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
• Agricultural land should be protected from development.	62%	25%	10%	3%	1%	83
• There should be more opportunities for residents to cultivate their own food.	60%	29%	9%	1%	1%	82
• Residents should have more access to purchase locally grown food.	63%	27%	8%	1%	1%	83
• Agricultural practices should be conducted in an environmentally sensitive manner.	63%	26%	8%	1%	1%	83
• Residents should be allowed to keep small farm animals (like chickens) in backyards.	45%	27%	18%	7%	3%	83

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