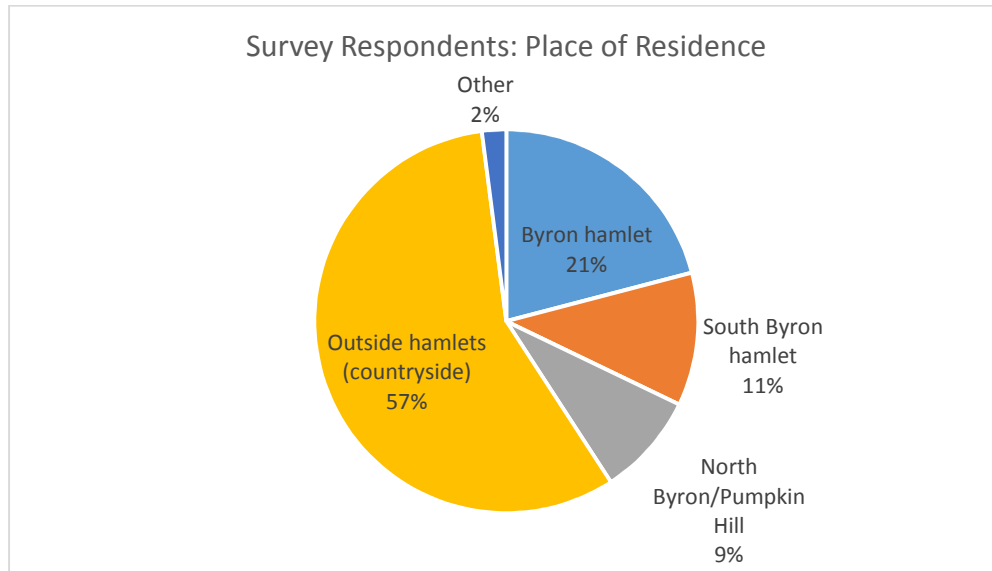


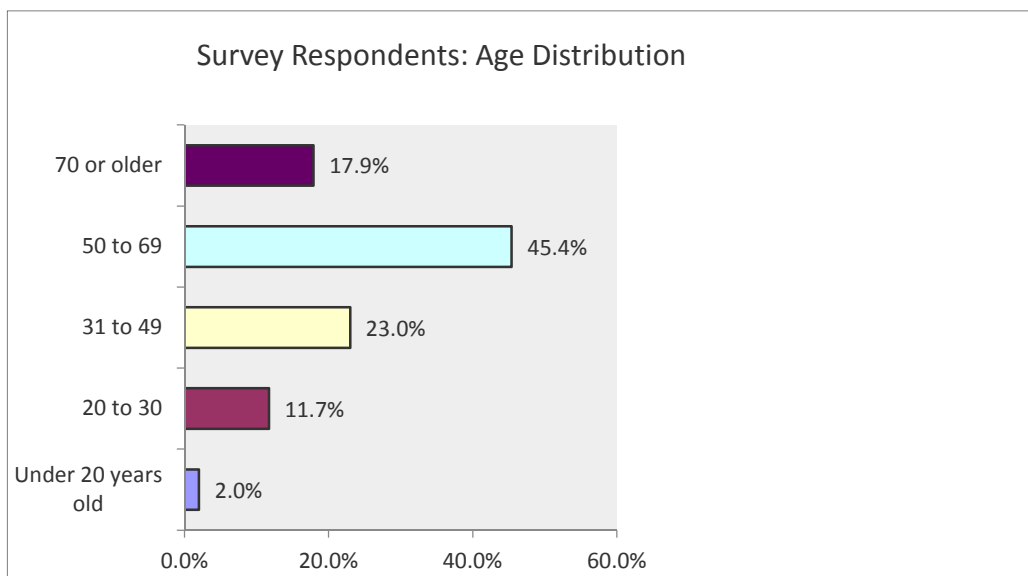
## Survey Results – Town of Byron Community Survey

A total of 198 persons participated in the Town of Byron Community Survey. <sup>1</sup>

The majority of people responding to the survey (57%) live in the rural portion of the Town (outside the hamlets). Just over 20% live in the main hamlet of Byron (including the Byron trailer park). The third most common response was the hamlet of South Byron. Approximately 2% of the respondents did not live in the Town of Byron.



The residents responding to the survey tended to be older, with over 63% of respondents aged 50 or older. However, at least some responses were received from each age category

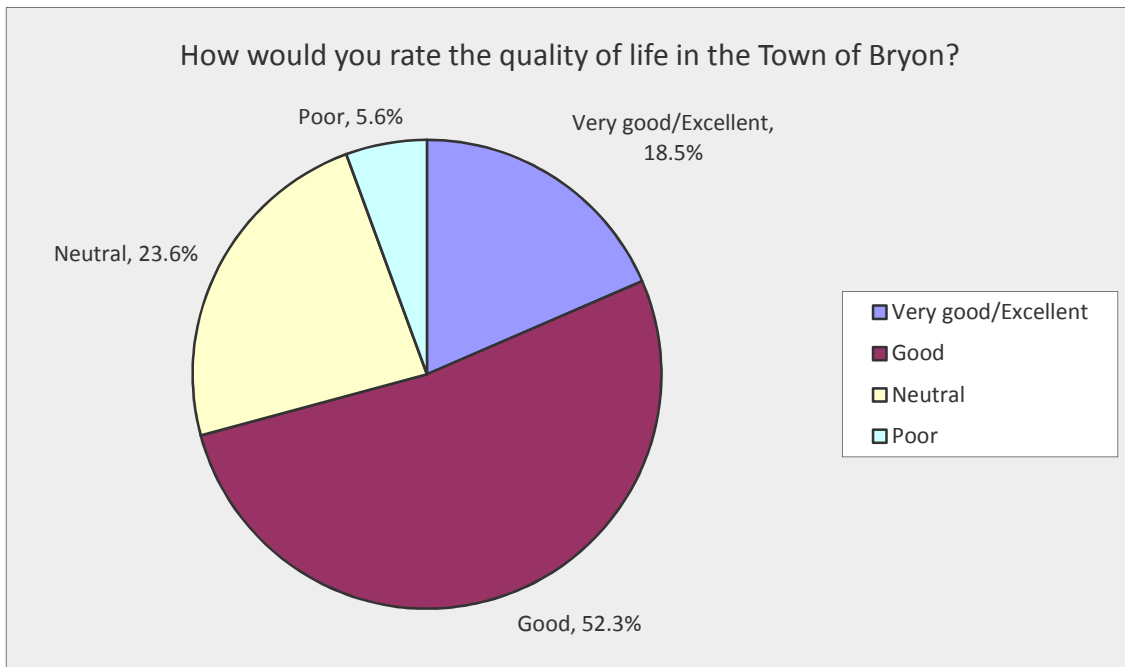


<sup>1</sup> The Survey was available to all residents and does not reflect a representative sample.

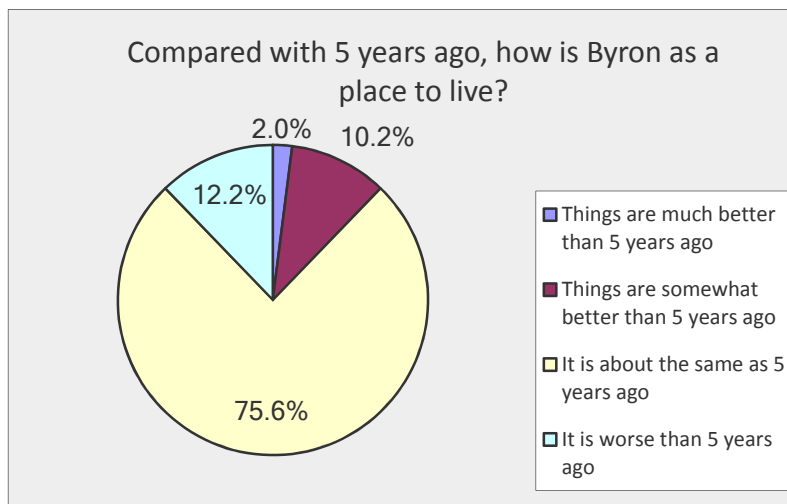
The majority of people who completed the survey were long-time residents of Byron. Fifty-eight percent had lived in the town for 21 years or more, and another 26% had lived in Byron for 11 to 20 years. Only 16% had lived in the town for less than 10 years.

Respondents have strong connections to Byron. Over 86% stated that they live in Byron, while close to 60% own property in the Town. Another 18% either work or farm in the Town. In the written comments, respondents also noted family ties, and were Volunteers for local Fire Companies, local business owners and retirees.

Residents are generally satisfied with the quality of life in Byron. Over 70% rate it as good to excellent, and only about 6% feel the quality of life in the Town is poor.

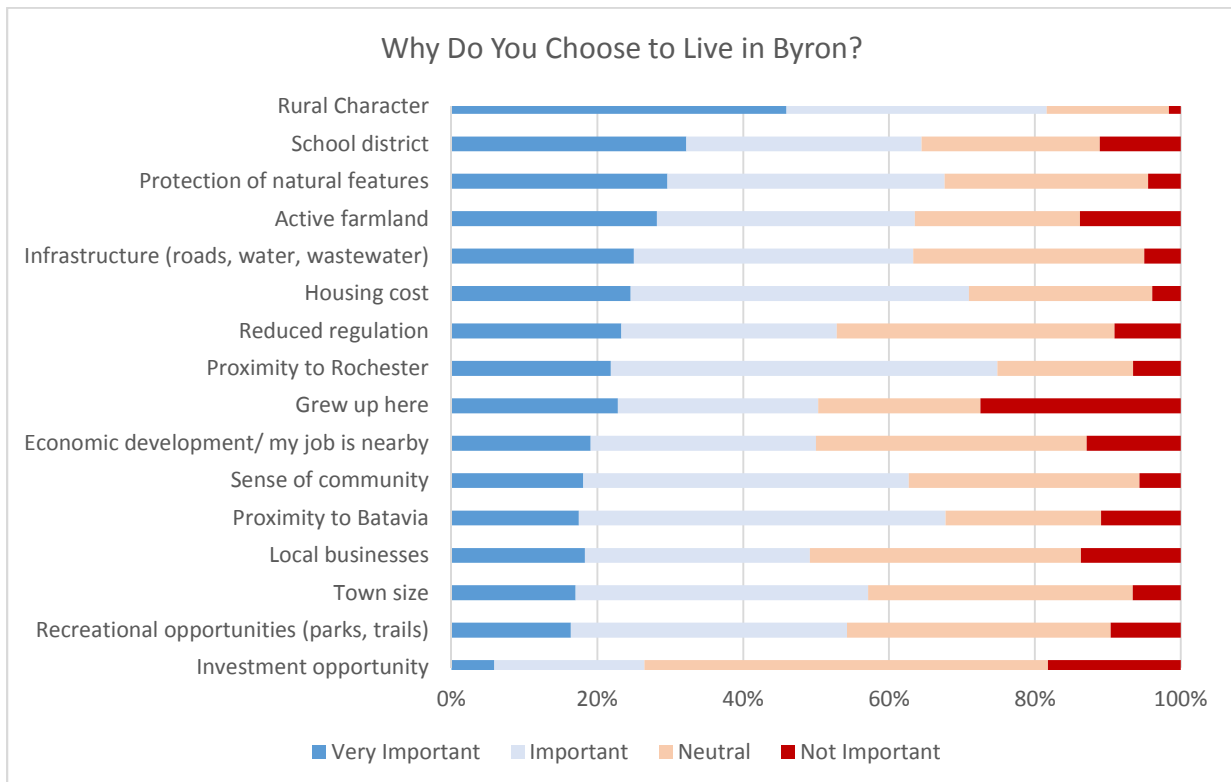


When asked how life in Byron compares to five years ago, three-quarters (75.6%) responded that things are about the same. The remainder were split about evenly over whether conditions are better or worse.



Respondents were asked to rate how important various factors were in their decision to live in Byron. Rural character is the most important reason for most residents, with 46% of residents citing rural character as “very important”. When those rating it as “important” are included, rural character is valued by 82% of residents.

Other categories with strong support include the school district, and nature, each rated as “very important” by 30% or more. When “very important” and “important” are combined, rural character remains as the most important factor, but the convenience of location (proximity to Rochester or Batavia) and housing cost are also influential reasons. The least important reason was the home town factor: “Grew up here” was the least important reason, rated as “not important” by 27%, and investment opportunities, which only 26% believe is important or very important.



The preferred method of obtaining information about the Town and community events is through direct mailings, which was the first choice of 28% of respondents, followed closely by the Town newsletter (first choice of 27%). Email is the third most popular method (21%). Only 13% give the Town’s website as the first choice, while 7% prefer the newspaper. Approximately 4% of respondents provided other suggestions, which included a Facebook page, a community bulletin board at local businesses, and word of mouth.

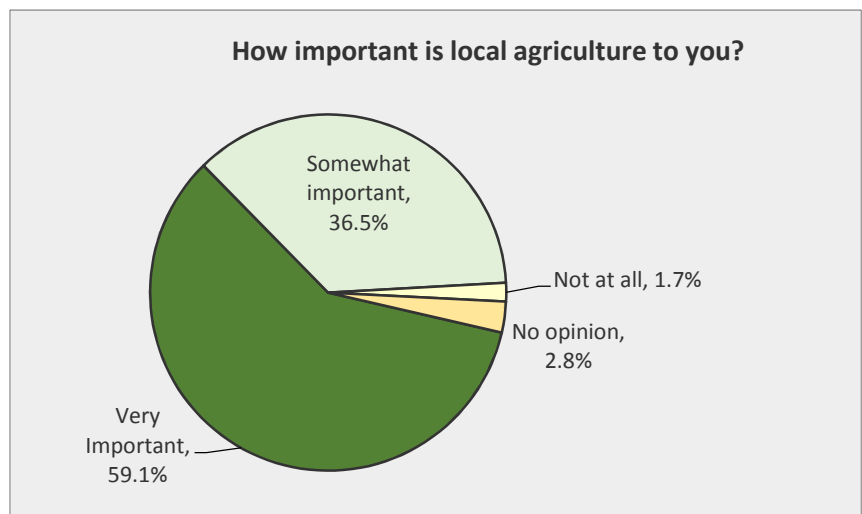
Residents taking the survey were asked to rate various types of development for the Town. The most popular response was a Town park with a picnic area and/or playground, which was favored by 86% of respondents. A farmers’ or artisans market was the second most popular choice, selected by 82%. Other popular activities included farming (78%), hiking and biking trails (72%), elder care (71%) and activities for youth (70%). The type of development that was most opposed was additional gas station or convenience store, which was opposed by 43% of respondents. A sizeable proportion of respondents did not have strong opinions on some types of development. Approximately one-third of

respondents did not have an opinion on whether to encourage a library, tourism-related businesses or day care centers. The following table summarizes the responses.

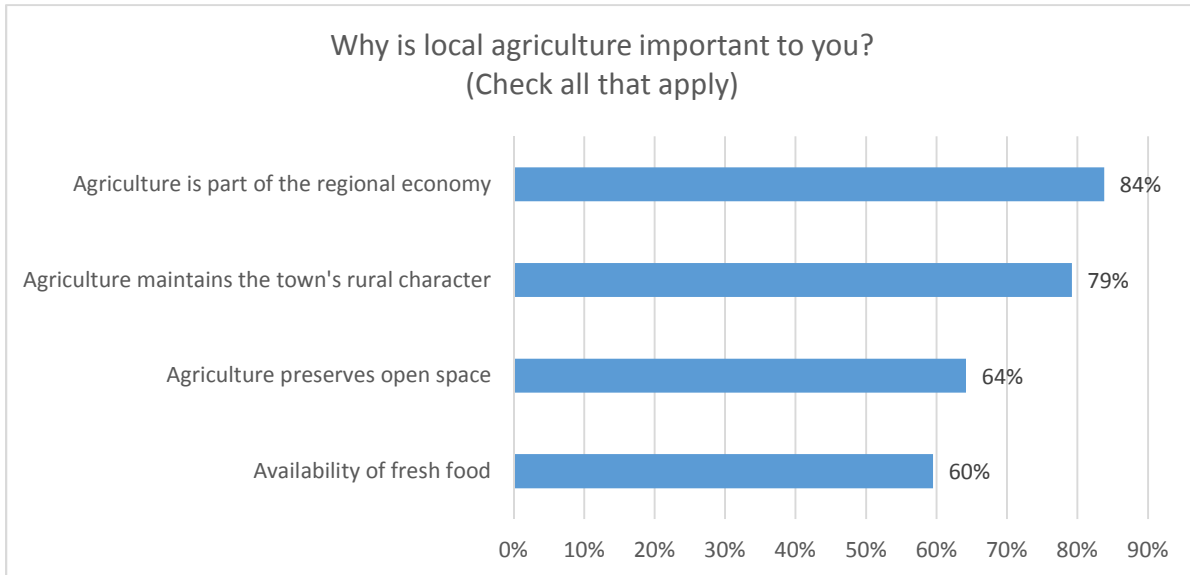
<b>What type of development would you like to encourage in Byron? (ranked by percent in favor)</b>			
Type of Development	Percent in Favor	Percent Opposed	No Opinion
Town park – picnic area/playground	86%	5%	9%
Farmers and/or artisans market	82%	6%	12%
Conventional farming	78%	3%	19%
Hiking & biking paths	72%	10%	18%
Elder care	71%	5%	23%
More activities for youth	70%	7%	23%
Town historical society/museum	68%	8%	24%
Home-based businesses	67%	8%	25%
“Green” energy businesses (weatherization, solar, wind, geothermal)	65%	16%	19%
Restaurants	64%	17%	20%
Day care	64%	4%	32%
Organic farming	63%	9%	28%
Professional offices (medical, legal, tech, etc.)	59%	19%	22%
Grocery/ retail stores	59%	26%	14%
Service businesses	55%	17%	27%
Snowmobile trails	55%	20%	25%
Light industrial/ manufacturing	55%	24%	22%
Outdoor athletic field(s)	54%	20%	26%
Off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail(s) - 4-wheeler, ATV, UTV, dirt bike	49%	32%	20%
Community Center	48%	23%	28%
Mixed Use (residential & business in one building)	46%	26%	27%
Additional gas station/ convenience store	40%	43%	16%
Library	37%	30%	33%
Tourism-related businesses (B&B, gift shops, etc.)	37%	31%	32%

### Agriculture

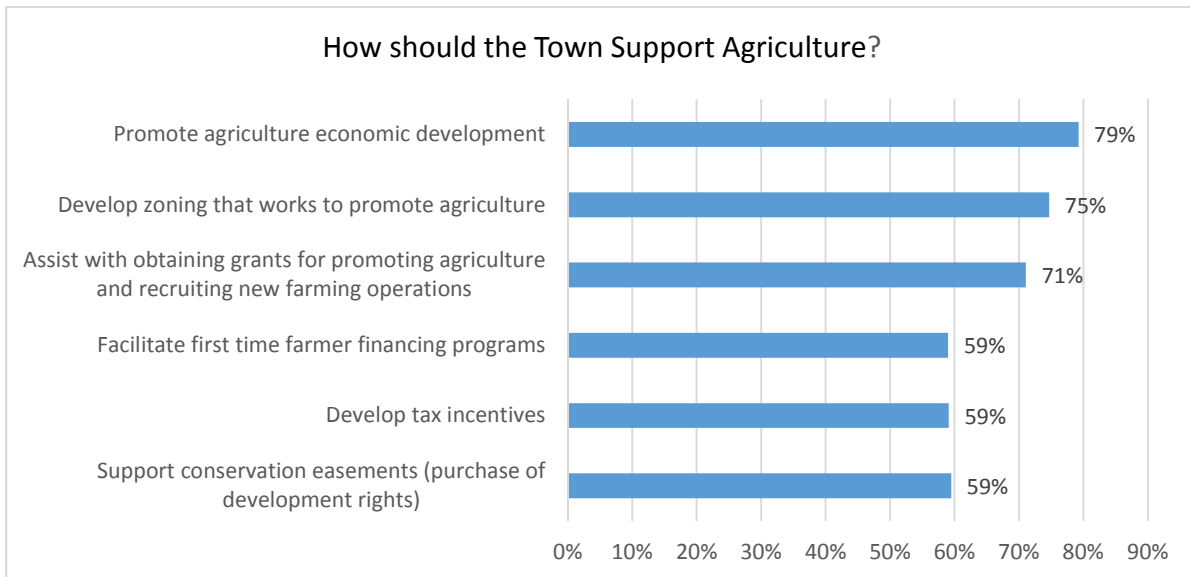
Residents support agriculture: over 95% responded that local agriculture is very or somewhat important, and only 2% did not feel agriculture is important (the remaining 3% had no opinion). Approximately two-thirds (65%) believe Town government should take an active role in supporting agriculture, compared to 18% who did not, and 16% who did not have an opinion.



Agriculture is important to local residents for a variety of reasons. The most common response was its importance to the local economy, cited by 84%. Rural character, preservation of open space and availability of fresh food were also important reasons.



Respondents were supportive of a range of methods of supporting agriculture. The most popular choices were agriculture economic development (79%), better zoning techniques (75%), and helping farmers obtain with grants (71%).



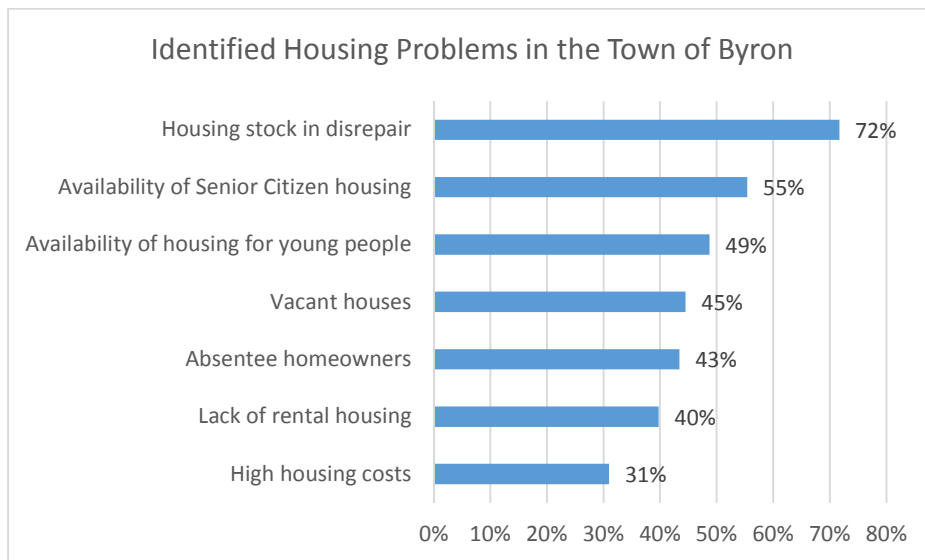
In the comments, respondents suggested improving infrastructure, and preparing a local Farmland Protection Plan.

Most respondents are not farmers: just under 13% of respondents are actively involved in farming in the Town of Byron. Of those who are farming, cash crops, and vegetable/grain farming are most common. Farm sizes ranged from a small hobby farm (1 acre) to large scale operations (3,500

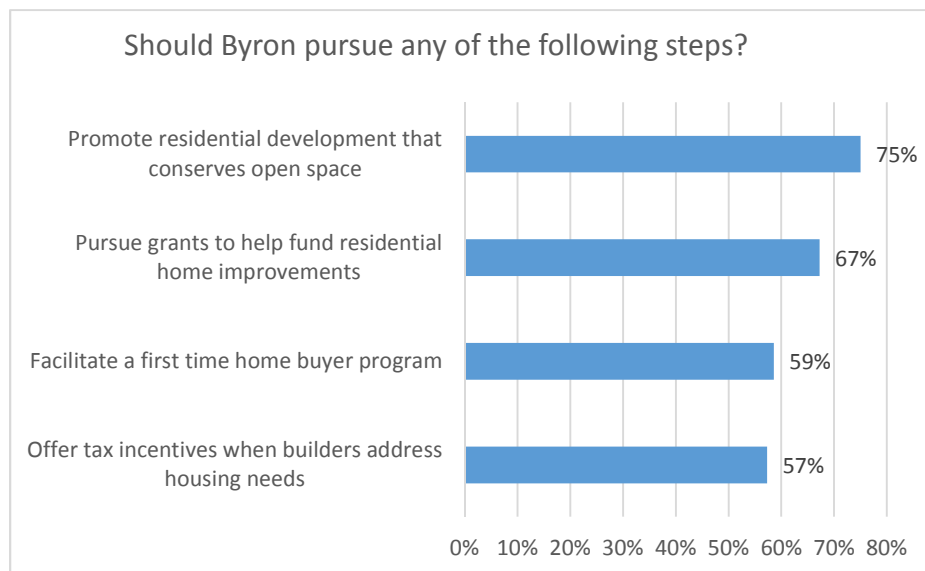
acres). Of those respondents who farm, 62% own at least a portion of their lands. A number of respondents have a mix of owned and leased lands. Just over 12% of respondents lease out lands for farming. The size of the leased lands range from 6 acres to 120 acres.

**Housing**

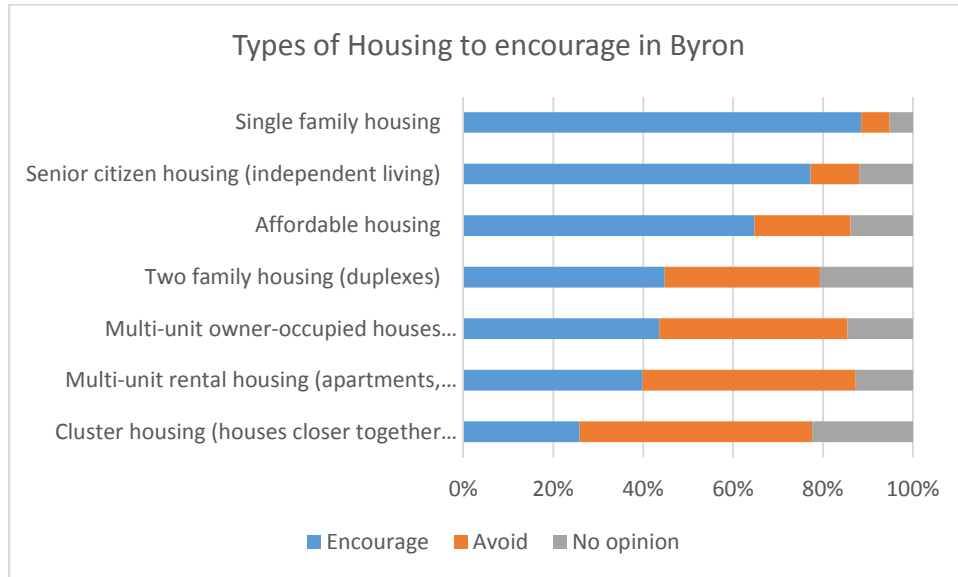
The survey included a number of questions regarding housing. In terms of identified problems, the main issue is the condition of the housing stock: 72% of respondents identified that as a problem in Byron, and nearly all the comments provided in this question related to the topic of housing conditions. Other than that issue, housing was not a huge concern. Senior citizen housing was identified as an issue by 55%, but other housing issues were not seen as problems by the majority of respondents.



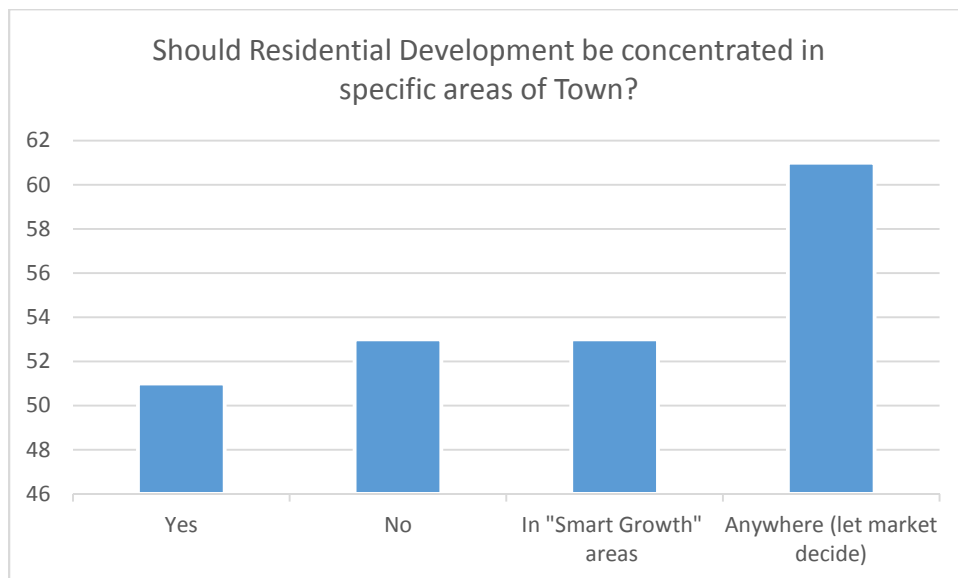
Residents generally supported the specific actions the town could pursue in support of improved housing. A majority supported each proposed action.



Respondents are most supportive of traditional, single family housing, with 89% of respondents indicated that the Town should encourage this type of housing. Independent housing for seniors was the second most popular, supported by 77%. Affordable housing is supported by 65%. The remaining housing types were less popular, with percentages ranging from a low of 26% (clustered housing) to 45% (duplexes).



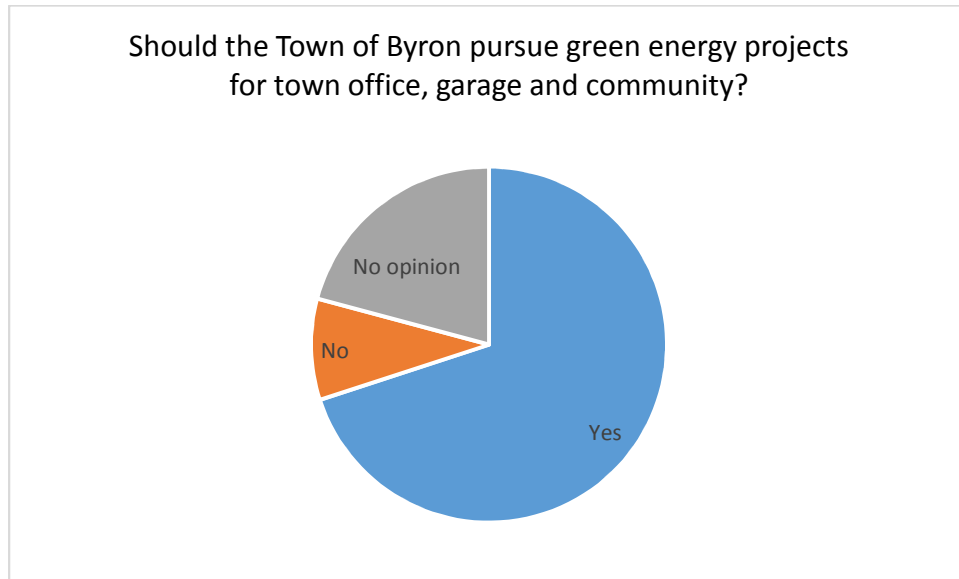
Residents are split in terms of where residential development should occur. Similar numbers of respondents were in favor and opposed concentrating development (51 vs. 53 responses).<sup>2</sup> The strongest response was to let the market decide, selected by 61 respondents. The comments received reinforced this ambivalence, with several supporting smart growth areas, while others supporting owners' rights. Generally, however, comments supported avoiding active farmlands.



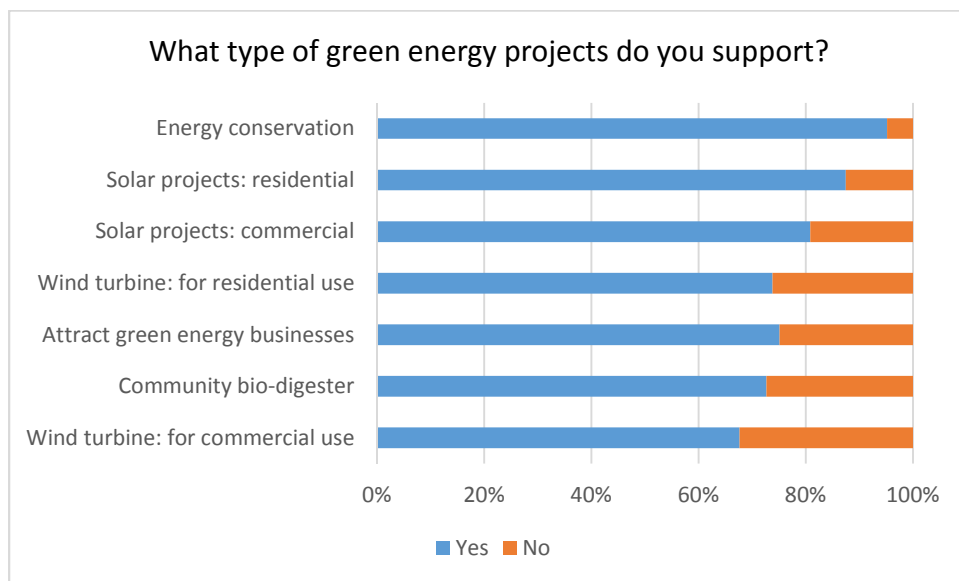
<sup>2</sup> Percentages not provided because respondents could choose more than one option

## Energy

A majority of residents who filled out the survey support instituting green energy projects. Approximately 70% were in favor, while 21% were undecided. Only 9% were opposed to the idea.



The most popular green energy option was conservation, supported by 95% of respondents. Solar projects – either residential (88%) or commercial (81%) were also popular. Residential wind was favored by 74%, and attracting green businesses was supported by 75%. Community bio-digesters<sup>3</sup> were supported by 73%, while commercial wind was supported by 68%. Comments suggested that residents did not want to pursue these projects if they increased town costs, however.

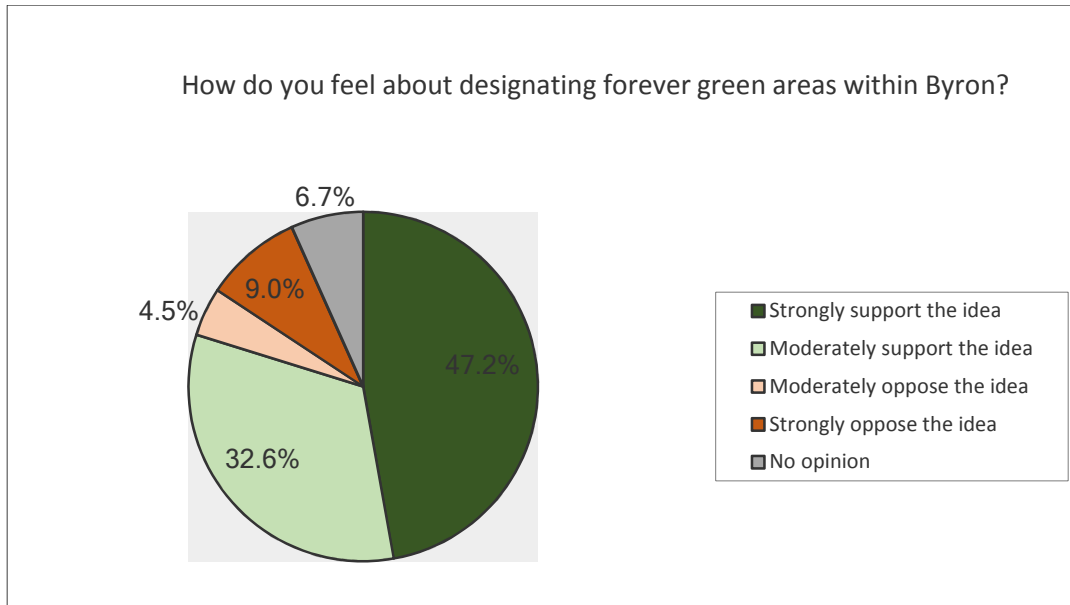


<sup>3</sup> Bio-digesters produce energy from farm and food waste

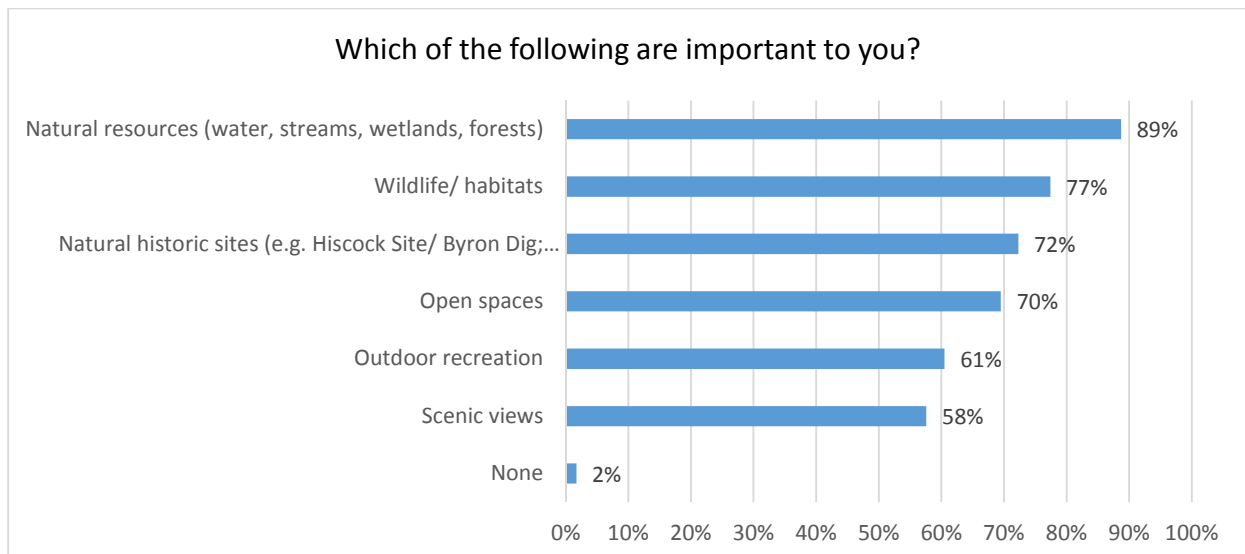


## Environment

Residents are supportive of “Forever Green” designations that preserve woodlands and open space in the Town. Nearly half (47%) strongly support the concept, while an additional third moderately support it, for a total of 80% in favor. A total of just under 14% either oppose the concept, while 7% are undecided.

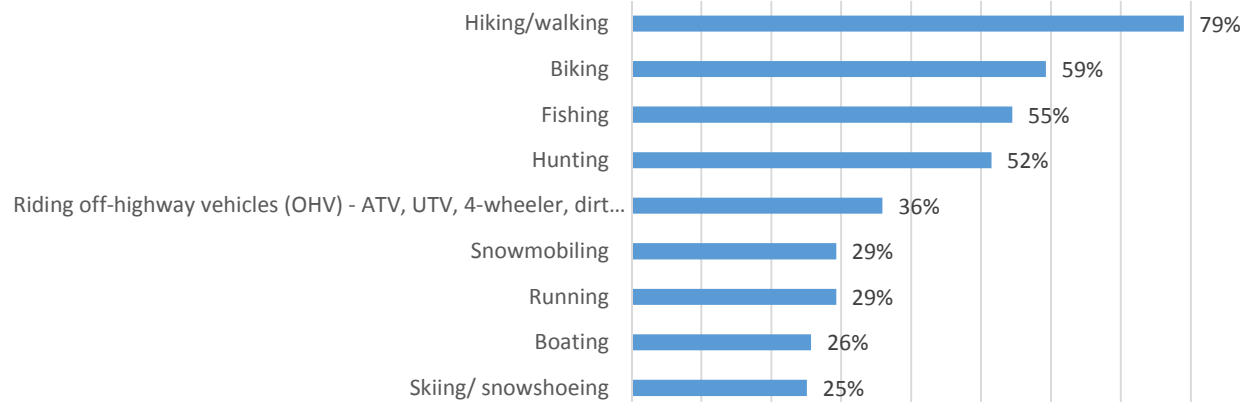


There is strong support for natural features: 70 to nearly 90% indicated that natural resources, wildlife habitats, natural sites and open spaces are important to them.



Additional items mentioned in the comments included Black Creek and Turtle Park's pond, and improved public access to these features. In terms of outdoor recreation, there is strong support for walking and hiking (79%), biking (59%), fishing (55%) and hunting (52%). Other sports have support, but at lower percentages.

### What outdoor recreational activities are important to you?

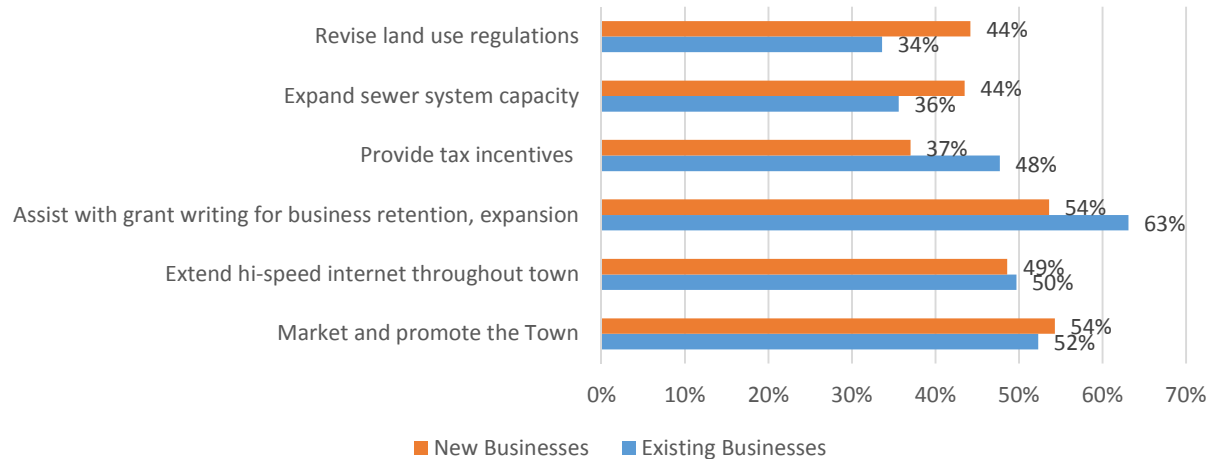


### Economic Development

Over three-quarters of respondents (76%) supported the Town seeking grants and/or other outside funding to help improve the character of the hamlet areas. The same percentage supported grants for other types of projects. From the comments, it appears that addressing run-down properties, improving parks and trails, and water are priorities. Residents are also supportive of creating a positive business environment, 74% of respondents support the Town taking an active role in attracting new businesses to the community, and 88% favor supporting existing local businesses.

Survey takers were asked about a range of potential ways to support local businesses. The most popular strategy was assistance with grant writing in support of business expansion and/or retention, supported by 63% in support of existing local businesses, and 54% for potential new businesses. The following table shows responses for both new and existing businesses.

### How should the Town support businesses?



## Land Use Regulations

Residents are generally supportive of the Town using land use regulations to address issues in the Town. In particular, there is strong sentiment for addressing property upkeep. Nearly 80% support regulations to address the upkeep of vacant parcels and dilapidated buildings, and 76% support regulations addressing the upkeep of occupied buildings. Development standards designed to protect surrounding land values are supported by 75%, and property maintenance laws are supported by 71%. Together, these were the four highest responses, indicated strong backing for this issue.

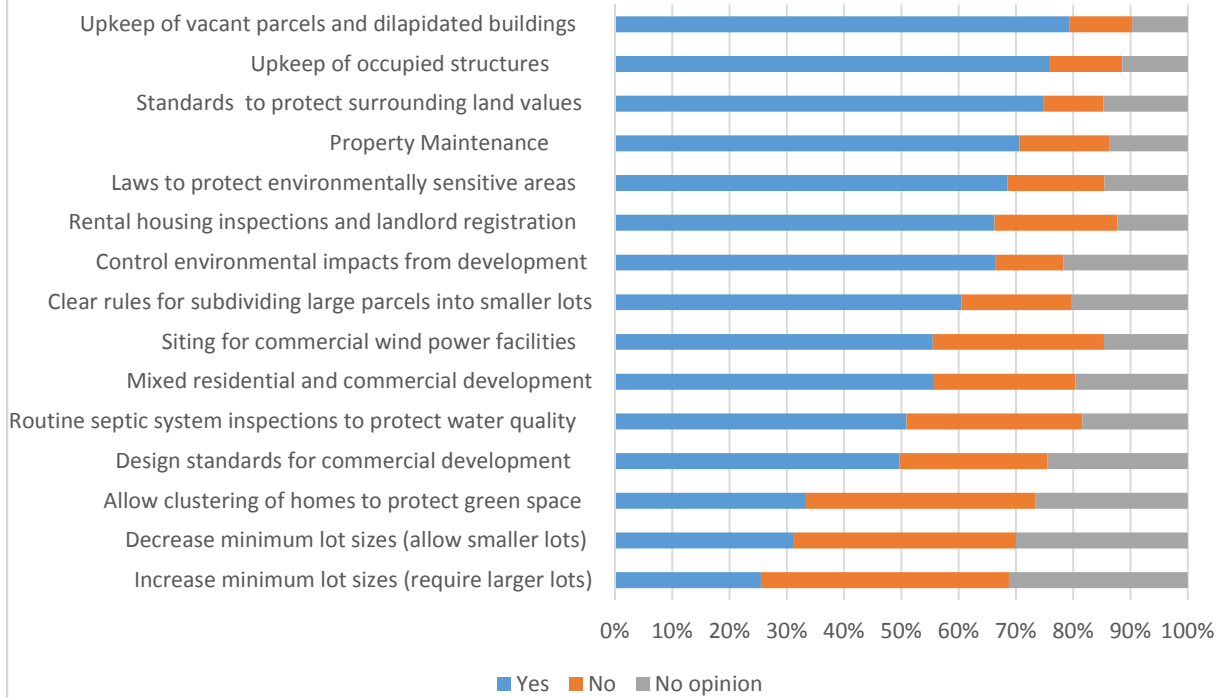
Regulations in support of environmental protection were the next most popular category: 68% of respondents favored laws to protect environmentally sensitive areas, and 66% support regulations that are designed to minimize environmental impacts from development.

Residents also support better controls over rental properties, with 66% supporting laws to register landlords, and/or inspect rental units. Clearer rules on subdividing properties into smaller lots were supported by 60% and 56% are in favor of allowing mixed use development, where residential and commercial uses could be combined. Approximately 55% of respondents support regulations to control commercial wind energy developments.

In the comments, several respondents indicated concern about regulations

<b>Should land use regulations be developed or revised by the Town of Byron to address the following?</b>			
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
Upkeep of vacant parcels and dilapidated buildings	79%	11%	10%
Upkeep of occupied structures	76%	13%	11%
Standards to protect surrounding land values	75%	10%	15%
Property Maintenance	71%	16%	14%
Laws to protect environmentally sensitive areas	68%	17%	15%
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No opinion</b>
Control environmental impacts from development	66%	12%	22%
Rental housing inspections and landlord registration	66%	21%	12%
Clear rules for subdividing large parcels into smaller lots	60%	19%	20%
Mixed residential and commercial development	56%	25%	20%
Siting for commercial wind power facilities	55%	30%	15%
Routine septic system inspections to protect water quality	51%	31%	18%
Design standards for commercial development	50%	26%	25%
Allow clustering of homes to protect green space	33%	40%	27%
Decrease minimum lot sizes (allow smaller lots)	31%	39%	30%
Increase minimum lot sizes (require larger lots)	25%	43%	31%

### Should land use regulations address the following:



The final questions on the survey provided an opportunity for residents to provide written comments. Residents were asked what was the most important issue facing the Town over the next 20 years. They were also asked for ways the Town could improve. There were over 200 combined responses to these two questions, many citing more than one answer. In general, the primary concerns of residents relate to property upkeep and improving conditions of the hamlets. There was strong concern about vacant properties, the four corners. There was also strong support for agriculture and farmland protection, along with preservation of rural character. At the same time, there was caution about rising taxes or the cost of living. There is support for extending water, and for encouraging new development in the Town in a manner that doesn't hurt its small town character.