

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The East Bay Township Planning Commission developed a community survey to gather feedback for the Master Plan update. The survey was hosted online and distributed to residents, businesses, and property owners. A postcard with a link to the online survey was mailed to all residential and commercial addresses, as well as all permanent property owner addresses if they differed. Hard copies of the survey were mailed to residents upon request and made available at the Township Hall. The survey was open from November 1, 2020 through January 15, 2021. A total of 655 surveys were completed and returned.

Response rate is difficult to determine given the fact that the survey was open to residents, businesses, and property owners. The majority of respondents (84%) were year-round residents. Based on the 2015-2019 American Community Survey estimates, East Bay Township has 4,575 households. These are groups of individuals living together who claim East Bay Township as their primary residency. A total of 546 permanent residents completed the survey. Based on this information, the response rate is estimated at 12% of all households in East Bay Township. It should be noted that this does not account for the fact that in some instances, multiple people from one household may have completed the survey. What follows is a detailed summary of the survey results.

Question 1: How would you rate the Township on the following quality of life issues?


Referring to the graphic on the following page, it is interesting to note that at least half of all respondents rated the Township as good or excellent in the quality of emergency services, variety of parks and recreational facilities, quality of schools, access to shopping and dining opportunities, broadband and cellular services, and cost of living. A total of 81% of respondents felt quality of emergency services were either good or excellent, and variety of parks and recreation facilities was a close second, with 77% of all respondents characterizing them as good or excellent. Quality of schools and employment opportunities both had 30% or more of respondents unsure of quality, indicating they are not personally impacted by these topics.

SURVEY BY THE NUMBERS

A total of 655 individual completed the East Bay Township Community survey.

- 84% were year-round residents
- 12% were seasonal residents
- 4% lived elsewhere, and were likely completing the survey as a business owner or employee.

LET'S PLAN OUR FUTURE TOGETHER



Share your vision!

East Bay Charter Township is updating the Community Master Plan. The Master Plan is a blueprint for how a community aspires to grow and develop. Together, we will be making important decisions on land use, zoning, transportation, recreation, and resource conservation. Get involved today!

Complete the online survey by **December 18, 2020** at:

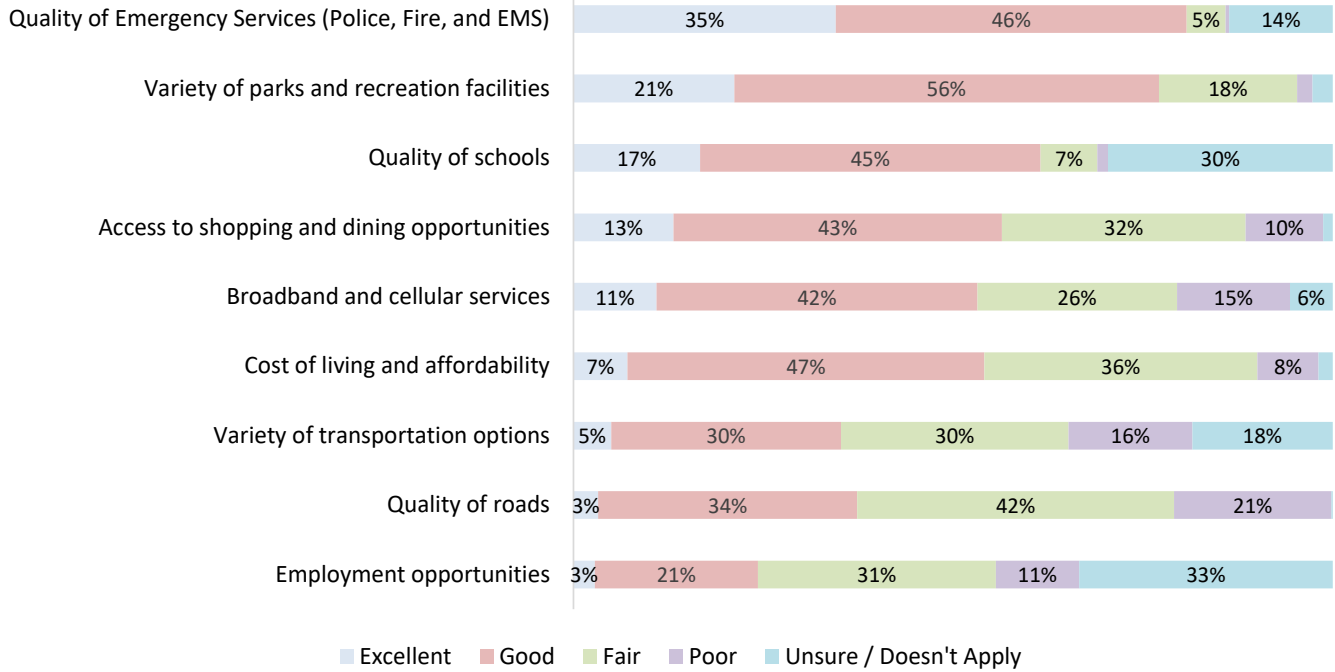
www.surveymonkey.com/r/East-Bay-Survey

Paper versions of the survey will be available at the Township Hall. To receive a mailed copy, please call Director of Planning & Zoning Claire Karner at 231-947-8681 ext. 2.

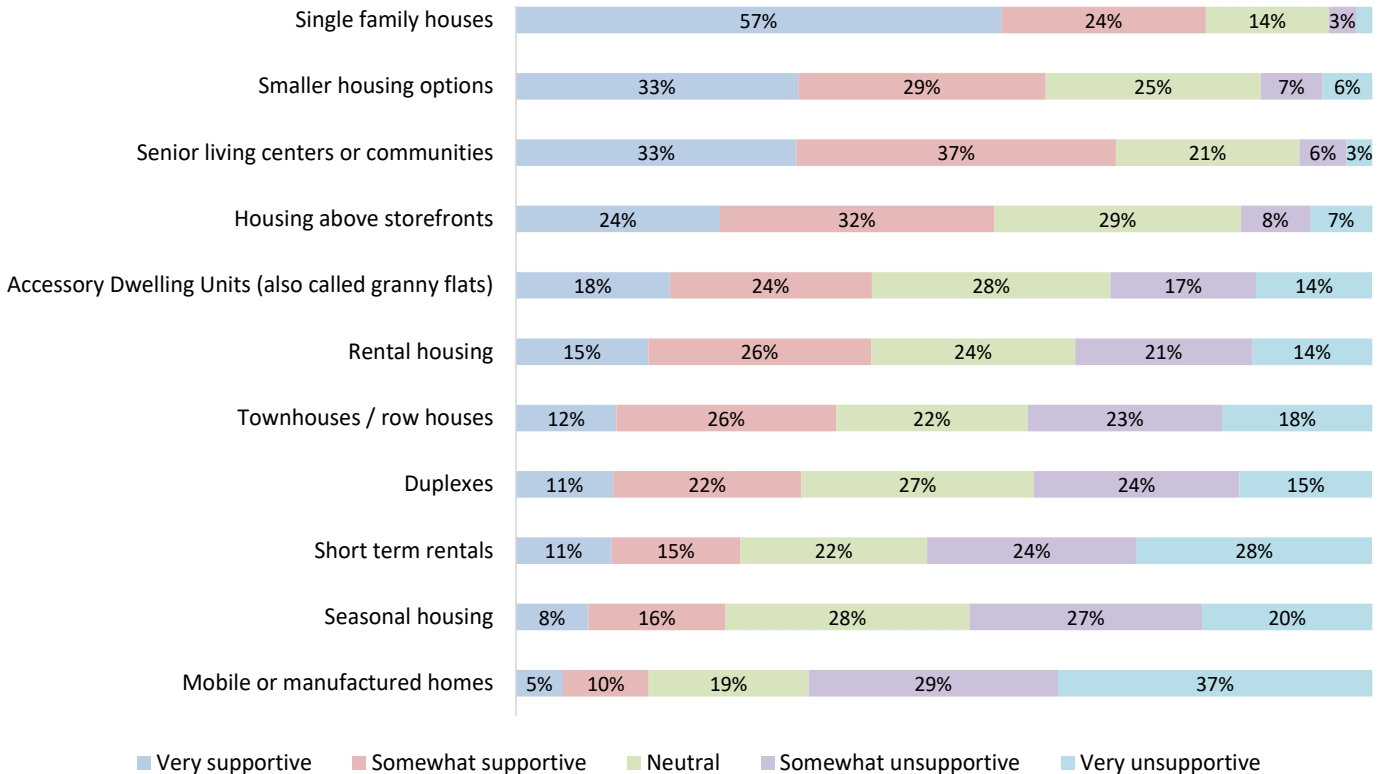
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To the left is a postcard sent out to all property addresses and property owner addresses in East Bay Township in early November 2020.

Question 1: How would you rate the Township on the following quality of life issues? While many of these issues are regional in nature, we want to know how you feel the Township is performing in these areas.



Question 2: Which of the following housing options would you support adding in East Bay Township?

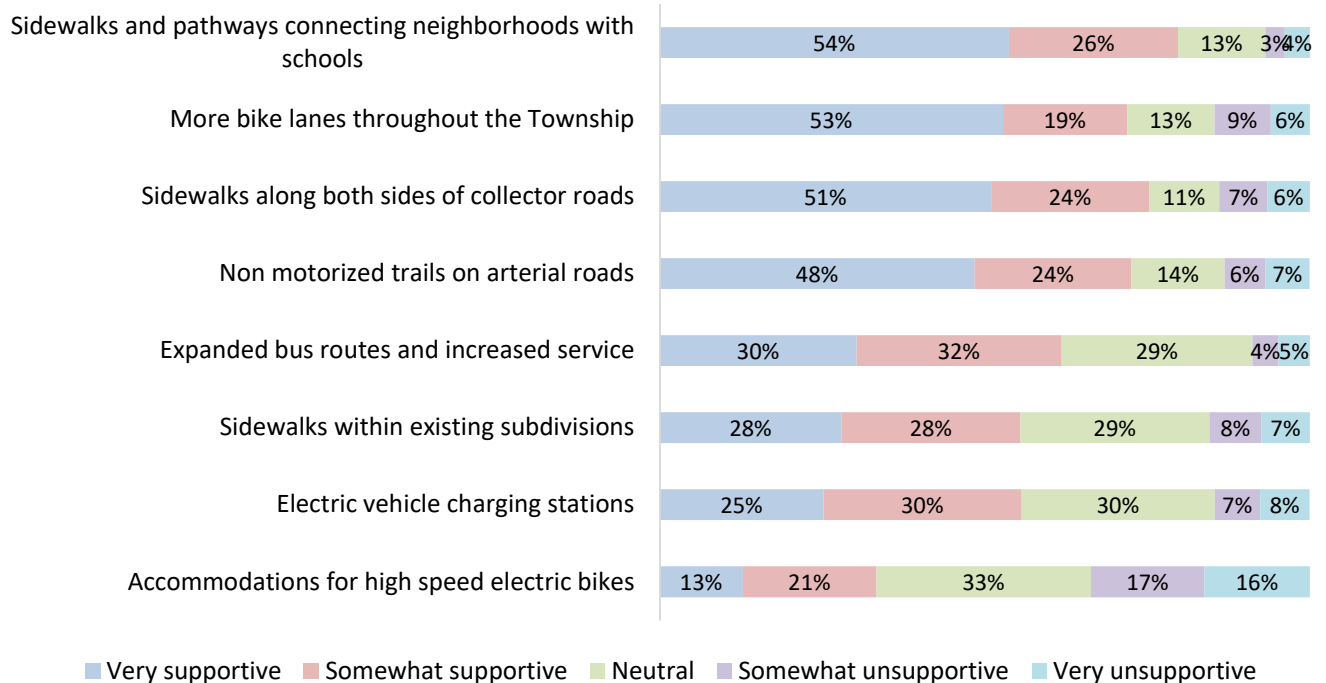


As shown in the Question 2 graphic on housing options, single family homes were the type of housing with the greatest level of support amongst survey respondents. However, this is not surprising due to the fact that 86% of occupied homes in the Township are owner-occupied and 86% are single unit homes. There still appears to be some support for other housing options. Over half of survey respondents were supportive of senior living centers or communities and housing above storefronts. The only options that elicited an “unsupportive” response from over half of survey respondents were mobile or manufactured homes and short term rentals.

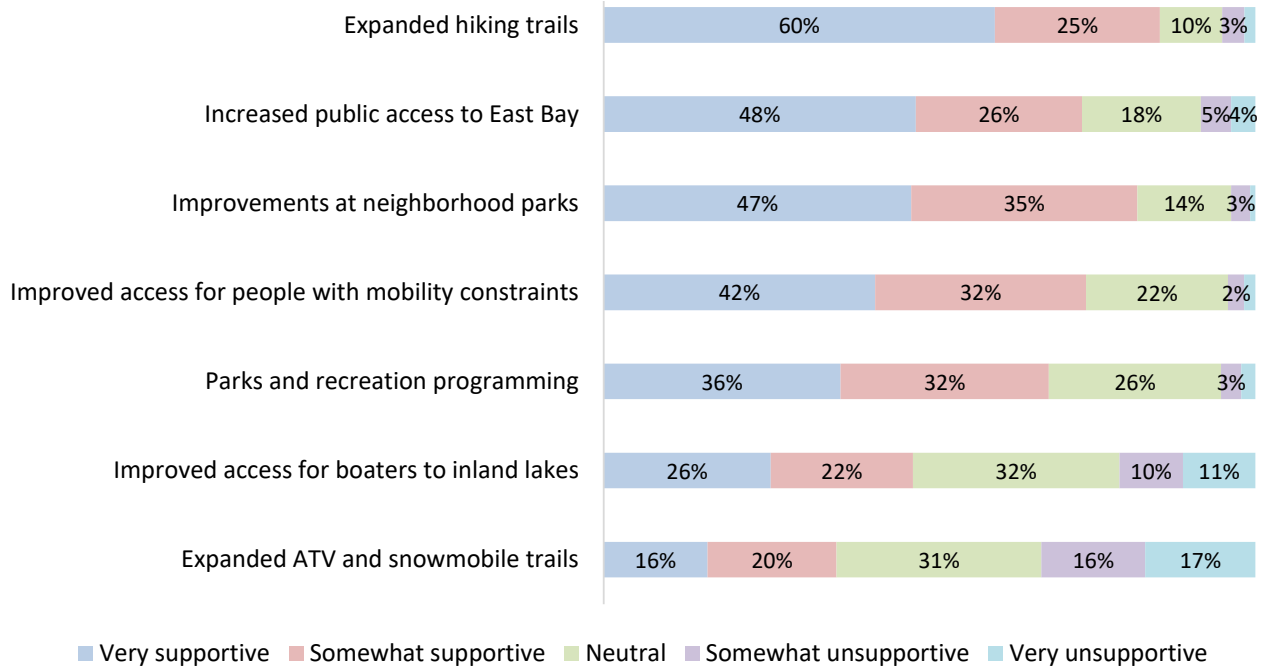
Question 3: Which of the following transportation improvements would you be in support of in the Township?

Expansion of non motorized options throughout the Township elicited strong support from survey respondents. Sidewalks and pathways connecting neighborhoods with schools was supported by three-quarters of all respondents. Similarly, 75% of respondents supported sidewalks along collector roads like Three Mile and 72% of respondents were in support of more bike lanes throughout the Township and non motorized trails along roads such as Hammond Road. Over half of respondents supported expanded bus routes and increased service, sidewalks in existing subdivisions, and electric vehicle charging stations. The only transportation amenity that received less support was accommodations for electric bikes. These survey results further support Safe Routes to School and other non motorized planning efforts underway in the Township.

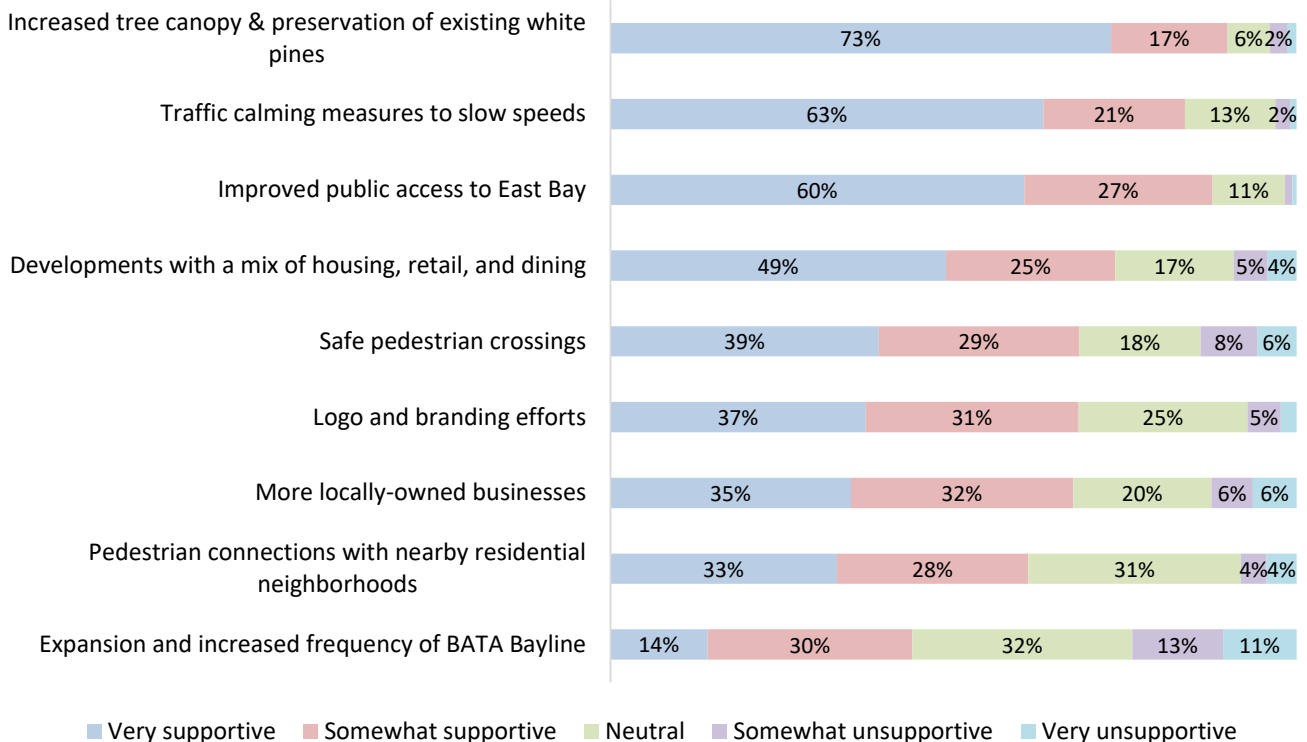
Question 3:



Question 4: Which of the following recreational improvements would you like to see in the Township?



Question 4: The Township is actively working to support placemaking and economic development along the U.S. 31 Beach District. Which of the following businesses/amenities would you like to see encouraged in this district? Please keep in mind that many of these actions would require partnerships with other agencies. Check all that apply.

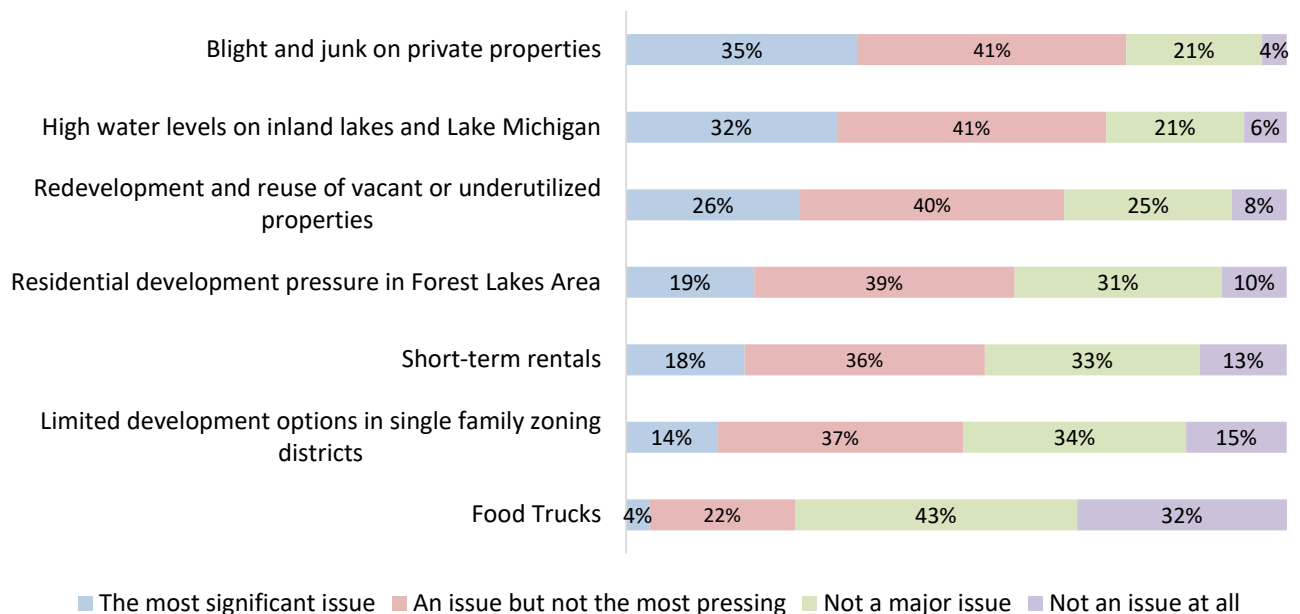


As shown in the results on Question 4, expanded hiking trails garnered the most support from survey respondents at 85% either very supportive or somewhat supportive. Improvements to neighborhood parks, increased public access to East Bay, and improved recreation access for those with mobility constraints all gained support by three quarters or more of respondents. Expanded ATV and snowmobile trails and improved access for boaters to inland lakes both garnered support from slightly less than half of respondents.

As illustrated by the responses to Question 5, there was strong support amongst survey respondents to placemaking improvements along the U.S. 31 corridor. A total of 90% of respondents were either very supportive or somewhat supportive of increasing tree canopy and preserving white pines on the corridor. This further supports the recent efforts undertaken by the tree preservation subcommittee focused on preserving iconic white pines along the U.S. 31 corridor. Similarly, 87% supported improved public access to East Bay and 84% supported traffic calming measures to slow speeds. Other notable improvements that garnered support from over half of survey respondents included mixed use developments, safe pedestrian crossings, logo and branding efforts for the Beach District corridor, support of more locally owned businesses, and better pedestrian connections with nearby neighborhoods.

Question 5 provided respondents with the opportunity to expand with additional ideas for placemaking on the U.S. 31 Beach District Corridor. Top priorities included adding more greenspace and investing in tree canopy, facilitating redevelopment on vacant and underutilized parcels, and a desire for more dining and entertainment options along the corridor. From a transportation standpoint, numerous respondents highlighted the need for better pedestrian crossings along U.S. 31. Traffic speeds were a top priority amongst respondents. Some favored traffic calming while others did not support any treatment to slow traffic.

Question 6: Which of the following do you feel are zoning and/or land use issues in the Township?



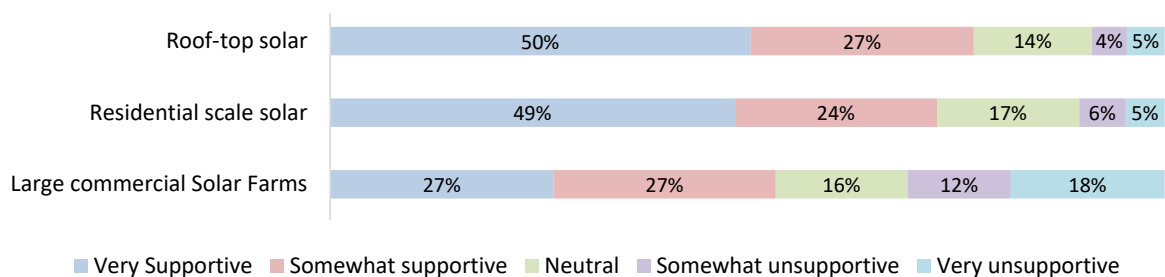
As noted in the results graphic for Question 6, a few land use and zoning issues rose to the top of the priority list for respondents. Blight and junk on private property was noted as the most significant issue by 35% of respondents while high water levels on inland lakes and Lake Michigan was a close second, with 32% of respondents identifying this as the most significant issue. Other items of significance included redevelopment and reuse of underutilized properties (rated as most pressing by 26% of respondents), residential redevelopment in the Forest Lakes Area (19% rated as most pressing), and short term rentals (18% rated as most pressing).

Question 6 invited respondents to expand on the multiple choice options or identify additional zoning and land use issues of importance. Environmental concerns were a recurring theme. Some respondents vocalized a desire for better ordinances and enforcement to protect water quality. There was also a desire for preservation of trees and native landscaping and monitoring of septic systems.

Traffic concerns came up in responses often, although many sentiments were related more to speeds and road condition as opposed to land use and zoning. A few respondents noted cut through traffic to neighborhoods adjacent to the U.S. 31 corridor. From an economic development standpoint, there were a number of respondents who supported expansion of water and sewer, along with promotion of mixed use and commercial development in targeted areas.

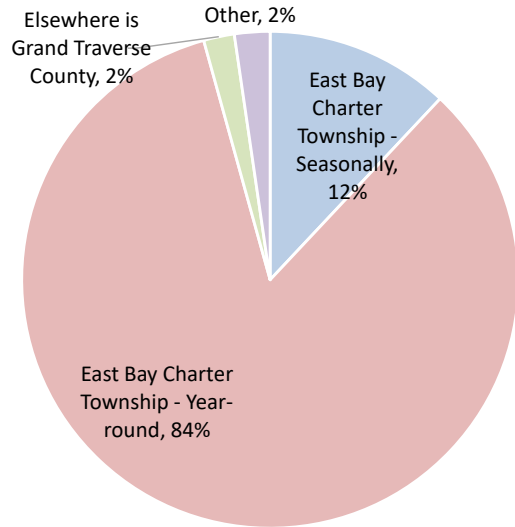
There were a variety of sentiments related to housing. Some respondents vocalized a strong desire for smaller housing options and workforce housing while others articulated a desire for less residential development.

Question 7: Do you support the following solar energy projects in the Township?

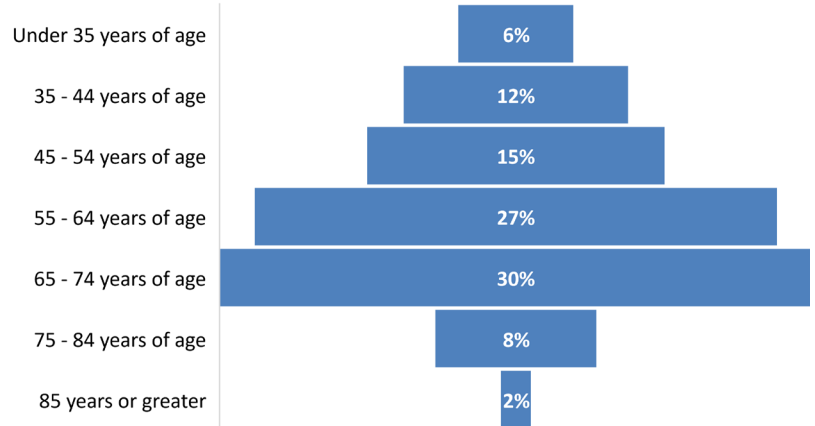


As shown in the graphic above, there was strong support for residential scale solar including rooftop solar and small scale residential ground-mounted solar panels amongst survey respondents. Large commercial solar farms had less overall support, but still were supported by over half of all survey respondents.

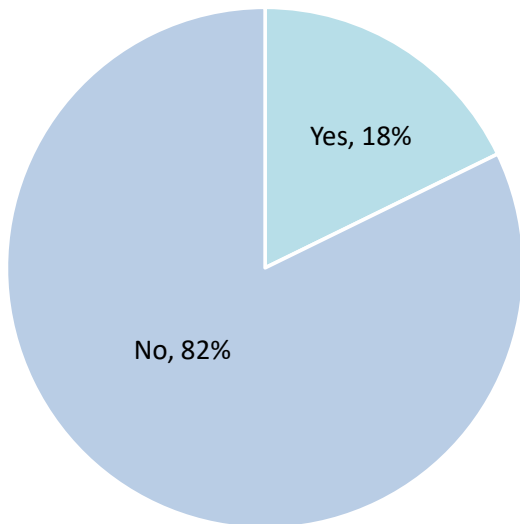
Question 8: Where do you live?



Question 9: What is your age category?



Question 10: Do you have school-aged children? (18 years or younger)



As shown in the survey demographic graphics, the vast majority of survey respondents were full time residents in the Township, while another 12% were seasonal residents. Sixty-seven percent of respondents were over 55 years of age. It is also interesting to note that 82% of respondents did not report having any children living in their home.

Question 11: Please provide your email address if you are interested in receiving updates on the master plan process. Your contact information will not be shared and will not be tied to any of your survey responses.

370 respondents provided email contact information and received follow-up communications to stay engaged.

Question 13. Please feel free to provide additional comments related to the questions above.

Many of the same themes can be found in additional comments as those articulated throughout the survey. There was a strong desire for environmental protection, support for walking and biking infrastructure, and a family friendly community. A number of people made comments on the management of corridors in East Bay Township, including concerns over speeds, a desire for better landscaping, and a desire for a concentration of commercial and residential development in targeted areas. A few respondents also voiced concerns over planned roundabouts on Hammond Road.

From an economic development perspective, there were comments on the availability and cost of water and sewer utilities, and concern over size and scope of new developments and how they fit with existing character. Numerous residents also stated a desire for vacant lots to be cleaned up. From a residential perspective there was a stated desire for well planned, landscaped, but affordable residential neighborhoods. Respondents noted the importance of meeting the needs of residents with concerns over impacts from short term rentals. A number of people noted concerns associated with zoning enforcement, particularly in the Forest lakes area. There were also comments related to Township initiatives. There was support for a Farmer's market at the Township Hall, an idea for a Township-wide clean-up day, appreciation of new park amenities, and appreciation of the Township newsletter. Taxes and preservation of property rights were also noted by a number of respondents.