

Town of Barnstable Citizen Survey

Project Directed By:
Victor S. DeSantis, Ph.D.
Jennifer Reid, M.P.A

Report Authored By:
Jennifer Reid, M.P.A.
Kara Neymeyr, M.P.A.

**Institute for Regional Development
Bridgewater State College
June 2005**

**Research Report,
Vol. 05, No. 3**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Project Overview	4
Residency/Quality of Life	5
Town Services	9
Quality of Education	14
Open Space	16
Contact with Town Offices	20
Citizens Perceptions of Barnstable Leadership	23
Issues and Problems Facing Barnstable	24
Service and Satisfaction of Town Information	25
Town News and Cable	27
Image of Barnstable	29
Sample Demographic Characteristics	34

Executive Summary

The purpose of the 2005 Barnstable Citizen Survey is to determine citizen satisfaction with town services and resident's perceptions of Barnstable's quality of life and town government. The data was collected through a random sample of Barnstable's adult residents from April 12-26, 2005. A total of 401 interviews were conducted with Barnstable residents for a margin of error at approximately +/- 4.8 percent.

Some of the highlights of the survey are as follows:

- ? An overwhelming majority of residents (85.7%) rate the quality of life in Barnstable as excellent or good in this year's survey.
- ? Almost eighty-five percent of the respondents (82.4%) are very or somewhat satisfied with the town services they receive in relation to town taxes.
- ? Almost half of the respondents (47.3%) have contacted the Town of Barnstable in the past 12 months for service, information, or to log a complaint; this is up 6.1 percent from 2004.
- ? Over eighty percent of respondents (83.9%) strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable leaders respond effectively to citizen's needs and concerns. This is a 2.0 percent increase from 2004.
- ? 33.0 percent of respondents feel that over-development, growth and population are the most serious problems facing Barnstable.
- ? The majority of respondents (84.2%) are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the amount of information from the town about the issues and problems facing Barnstable and its citizens.
- ? 72.0 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable officials are adequately planning for the town's future.
- ? A majority of respondents (67.8%) think the image of Barnstable has improved or stayed the same over the past five years.

Project Overview

Bridgewater State College's Institute for Regional Development, contracted by the Town of Barnstable, designed and administered a citizen survey of Barnstable residents during the month of April 2005. The purpose of this survey is to obtain information and citizen perceptions about Barnstable to assist in planning for the future.

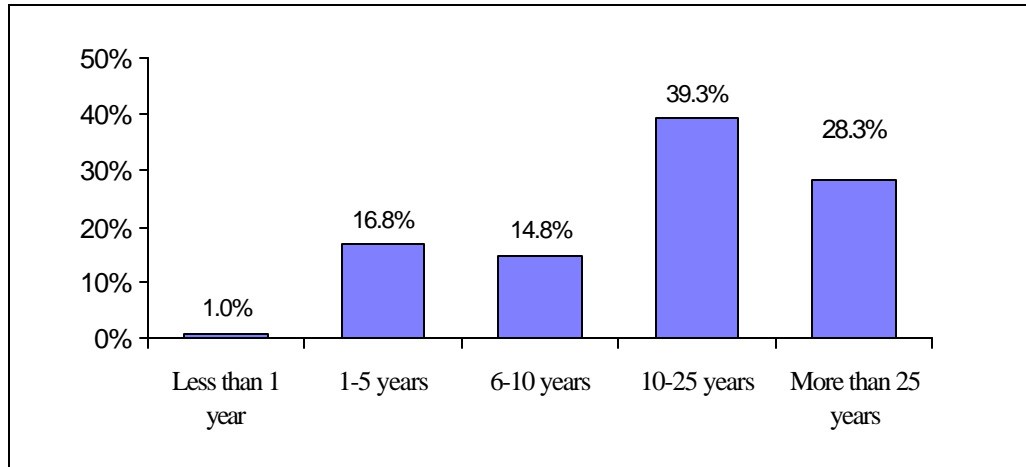
By means of a random sampling process, the survey gathered data from a diverse group of citizens in Barnstable. A team of trained student interviewers administered the survey during daytime and evening hours. A total of 401 interviews were conducted with Barnstable residents over the age of 18. The margin of error is approximately +/- 4.8 percent at the 95 percent confidence level.

All interviewing was conducted from the Institute for Regional Development's telephone research center at Bridgewater State College. A project director was present at all times to supervise the administration of the survey, monitor for quality control, and handle any other problems. Shifts of interviewers were used during the evenings (6 to 9pm) from April 12-26, 2005. Telephone numbers were selected at random and purged of non-working and business numbers. All telephone numbers in the sample were then called up to three times, using a rotating schedule of callbacks to ensure that a telephone number had been tried on different weekday evenings. Additionally, some callbacks were conducted during daytime hours.

Upon completion of calls, the survey responses were entered into a computer database. Using the latest state-of-the-art statistical software (SPSS for Windows Version 12.0), the data file was analyzed. Complete protection and confidentiality of the survey database was assured during all phases of data analysis. Access to the database is limited to the project directors.

Residency/Quality of Life

Figure 1
How long have you lived in Barnstable?



Highlights:

- ? A majority of the respondents (39.3%) have lived in Barnstable for 10 to 25 years; approximately one-third of the respondents have lived in Barnstable for fewer than ten years (32.6%) and 28.3 percent have lived in Barnstable for more than 25 years.

Table 1
In which village of Barnstable do you reside?

Village	Percent Reporting (2005)
Centerville	28.6%
Marstons Mills	19.3%
Hyannis	17.9%
Cotuit	10.7%
Osterville	10.2%
Barnstable	7.8%
West Barnstable	5.6%

Highlights:

- ? Over twenty five percent of the respondents (28.6%) reside in Centerville; fewer than twenty percent of respondents resided in each of the other six villages.

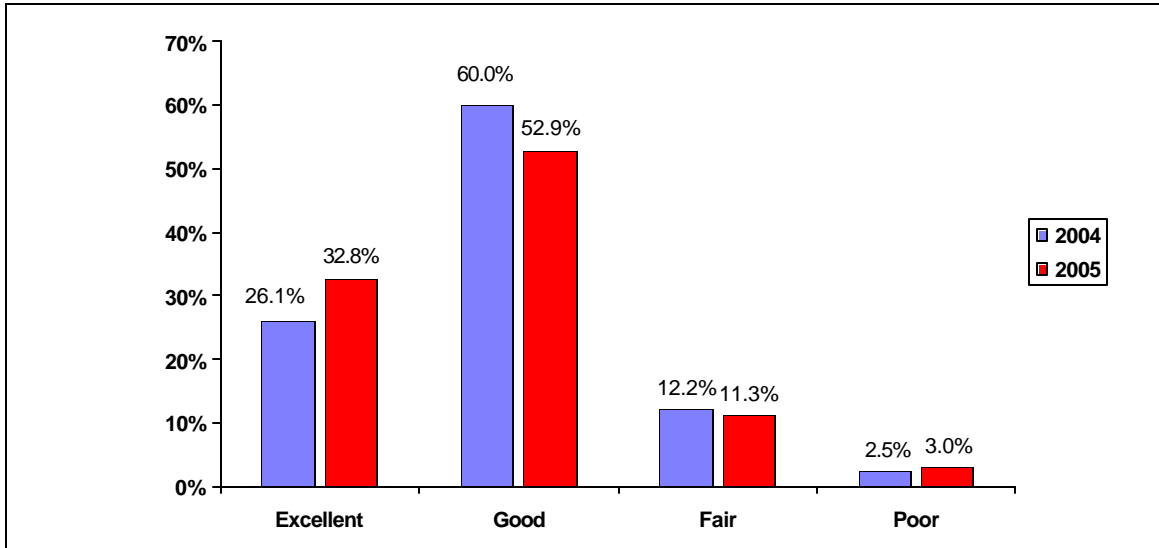
Table 2
Why did you move to Barnstable?

Reason	Percent Reporting (2005)
Location	27.6%
Access to jobs	18.7%
Family/friends	14.1%
Appearance/character of town or reputation of community	10.2%
Quality of housing	6.9%
Born there	5.9%
Retirement	5.4%
Married someone from there	2.6%
Quality of schools	1.0%
Other	7.7%

Highlights:

- ? The majority of respondents (27.6 %) stated that they moved to Barnstable because of its location on Cape Cod.
- ? Almost twenty percent of respondents (18.7%) were attracted to Barnstable for its accessibility to jobs; 10.2 percent of the respondents moved to Barnstable for the appearance, character and reputation of the community, and 6.9% of respondents moved because of the quality of housing.
- ? 61.0 percent of respondents over 61 years old reported moving to Barnstable due to its location on Cape Cod.

Figure 2
How would you rate the overall quality of life in Barnstable?



Highlights:

? An overwhelming majority of residents (85.7%) rate the quality of life in Barnstable as excellent or good in this year’s survey. This is very similar to the findings in 2004 (86.1 %).

Table 3
Quality of life by village

	Village						
	Hyannis	Osterville	Marstons Mills	Barnstable	Centerville	Cotuit	West Barnstable
Percent Responding Excellent or Good	71.2%	86.8%	87.5%	89.7%	88.6%	95.0%	90.4%

Highlights:

? The above table illustrates that an overwhelming majority of respondents in Cotuit (95.0%) rate that the quality of Barnstable as excellent or good; while 71.2 percent of respondents from Hyannis rate that the quality of Barnstable as excellent or good.

Table 4
What do you like most about living in Barnstable? N=378

Reason	Percent Reporting
Beaches/ocean	32.0%
Location	17.2%
Community/town atmosphere	15.9%
Weather/environment	9.5%
Quiet	7.9%
Other	17.5%

Highlights:

- ? 32.0 percent of the respondents report that they like the beaches and ocean the most in Barnstable; slightly less than 16.0 percent (15.9%) like the community and town atmosphere the most.

Table 5
What do you like least about living in Barnstable? N=341

Reason	Percent Reporting
Traffic/Street Maintenance	32.0%
Too rural/lack of public services & transportation	10.3%
Taxes	9.4%
Crowding/development/tourism	8.5%
Cost of living	6.7%
Schools	5.0%
Other	28.1%

Highlights:

- ? 32.0 percent of residents cite traffic and street maintenance as what they like least about living in Barnstable.

Town Services

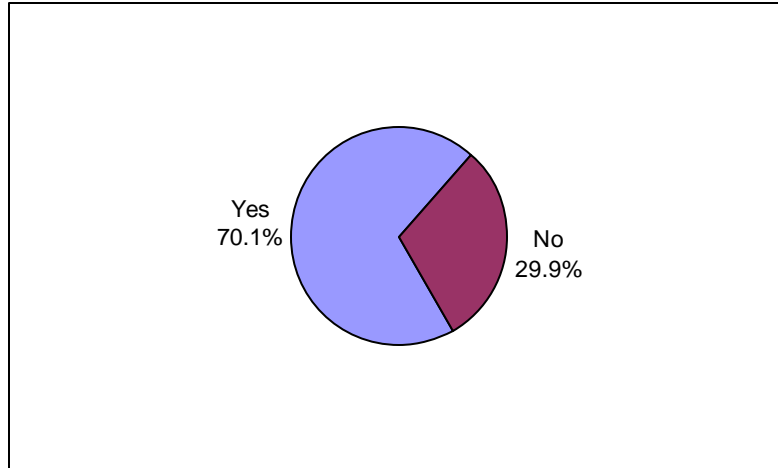
Table 6
Rating of Town Services

Service	Excellent (2005)	Good (2005)	Percent Excellent or Good		Change 2004-2005
			2004	2005	
Senior Services	38.7%	49.6%	85.4%	88.3%	2.9%
Health Department	17.2%	66.3%	79.8%	83.5%	3.7%
Police	28.2%	54.8%	84.5%	83.0%	-1.5%
Town Landfill	27.5%	55.0%	77.2%	82.5%	5.3%
Recreation	25.8%	54.0%	75.9%	79.8%	3.9%
Conservation	24.1%	54.3%	80.8%	78.4%	-2.4%
Animal Control	10.5%	60.4%	79.4%	70.9%	-8.5%
Municipal Airport	16.0%	62.0%	81.7%	78.0%	-3.7%
Schools	19.4%	45.1%	61.5%	64.5%	3.0%
Building Inspection	9.8%	54.5%	68.5%	64.3%	-4.2%
Street Maintenance	5.3%	30.6%	41.4%	35.9%	-5.5%

Highlights:

- ? Nearly ninety percent of the respondents (88.3%) rate Senior Services as excellent or good; 83.0 percent rate Barnstable Police, the Health Department (83.5%) and the town landfill (82.5%) as excellent or good.
- ? Street maintenance was rated excellent and good the lowest percentage of the time, at 35.9 percent.
- ? The largest changes in rating from 2004-2005 is the town landfill (+5.3), animal control (-8.5) and street maintenance (-5.5).

Figure 3
Is there a specific town services that you would like to see improved?



Highlights:

- ? A strong majority of the respondents (70.1 %) reported there is a specific town service they would like to see improved.

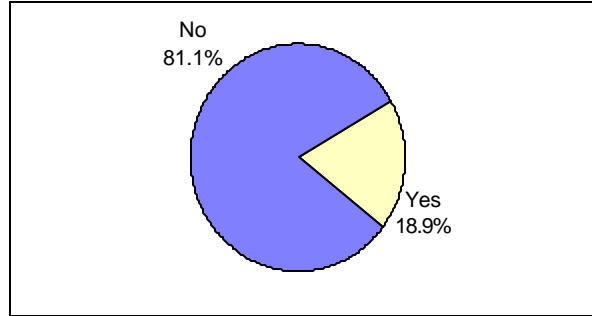
Table 7
Services that need improvement N=271

Service/Program	Percent
Roads	25.4%
Schools	17.7%
Landfill/trash	7.3%
Recreation	6.9%
Youth programs	6.5%
Plowing	5.8%
Other	30.4%

Highlights:

- ? Of the 271 respondents reporting that a specific town service needs improvement, 42.0 percent cite public services, including roads (25.4%), landfill/trash (7.3%), plowing (5.8%) and public transportation (3.5%).

Figure 4
Is there a specific town services that you would like to see reduced?



Highlights:

- ? An overwhelming majority (81.1%) of respondents report that there is not a specific town service that they would like to see reduced.

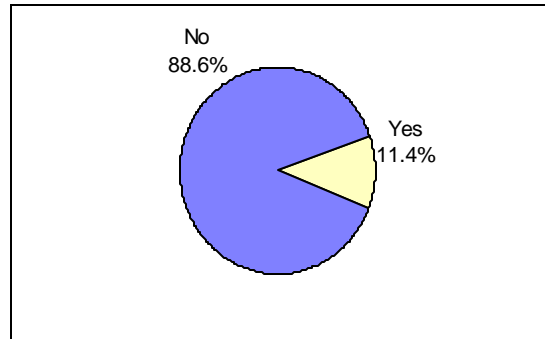
Table 8
Specific town services/program needing reduction N=71

Service/Program	Frequency
Taxes/other town services	27
Schools	10
Fire department	9
Other	25

Highlights:

- ? Of the 71 respondents indicating that there is a specific town service that they would like to see reduced, 27 indicated that they would like to see Barnstable's taxes and select town services reduced.

Figure 5
Is there a specific town services that you would like to see eliminated?



Highlights:

- ? A strong majority of respondents (88.6%) report that there is not a specific town service they would like to see eliminated.

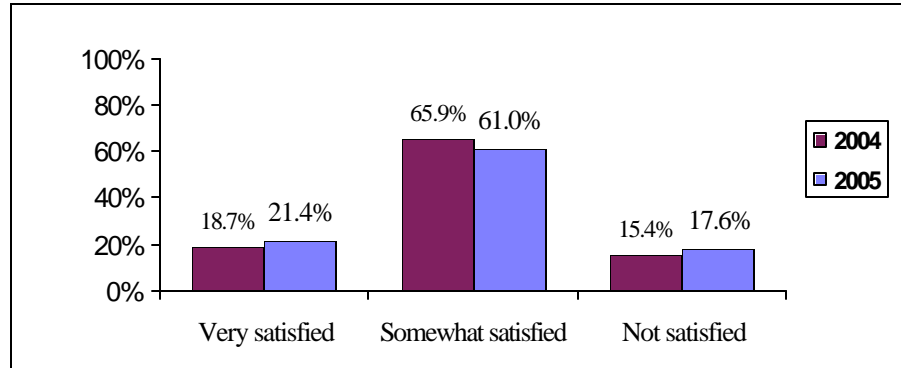
Specific town Services/program needing elimination
N=41

Highlights:

- ? Only 41 respondents reported that there was a town government service or program that they would like to see reduced.

Figure 6

Overall, how satisfied are you with the town's services in relation to town taxes?



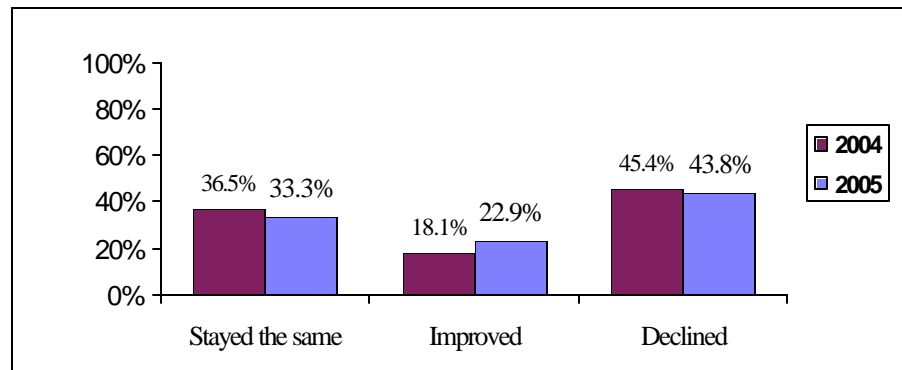
Highlights:

- ? Almost eighty-five percent of the respondents (82.4%) are very or somewhat satisfied with the town services they receive in relation to town taxes.

Quality of Education

Figure 7

In thinking about Barnstable public schools over the past five years, would you say that the quality of education that students receive has improved, declined, or stayed the same? (N=240)



Highlights:

- ? Over half of the respondents (56.2%) state that the quality of education has improved or remained the same, which is nearly equivalent to last year's response of 54.6 percent.

Table 9A

Why would you say that the quality of education has improved? (N=52)

	Frequency
More/better programs and facilities	11
Teachers	10
Charter schools	7
Feedback from children	7
Other	17

Highlights:

- ? Of 52 respondents, the majority (17) attribute the improvement to better programs, facilities, and teachers.
- ? Seven respondents reported that the quality of education has improved due to the feedback they receive from their children.

Table 9B

Why would you say that the quality of education has declined? (N=101)

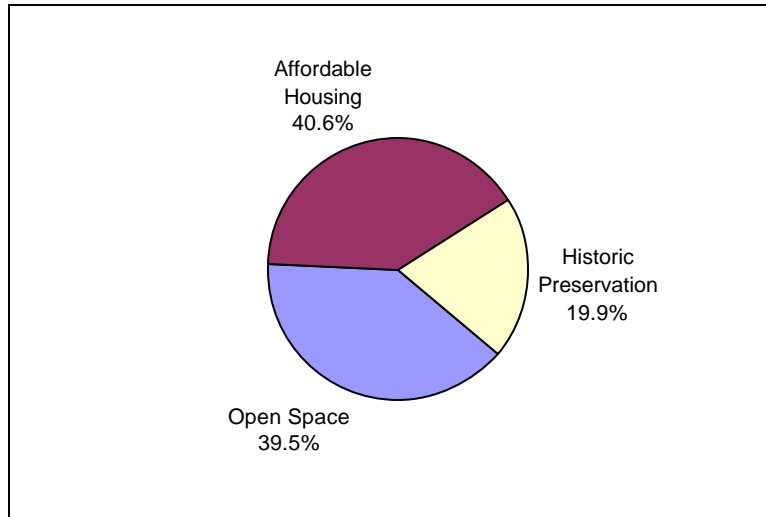
	Frequency
School program cuts/lack of funding	55
Teachers	9
Childrens' feedback	6
Heard from other source	5
Other	26

Highlights:

- ? 101 respondents stated the quality of education has declined, the majority of whom (54.5%) feel that the quality of education has declined due to lack of funding and program cuts.

Open Space

Figure 8
Recently voters in Barnstable passed the Community Preservation Act. The CPA allows funds to be used to purchase open space, affordable housing and/or historic preservation lands. Which item would you consider the most important?



Highlights:

- ? The majority of respondents (40.6%) consider affordable housing most important.

Figure 9

I am going to read you a list of things that may be considered when making open space land acquisitions. Please tell me if you consider the item to be very important, somewhat important or not important?

Figure 9A

Aesthetics and Scenic Vistas

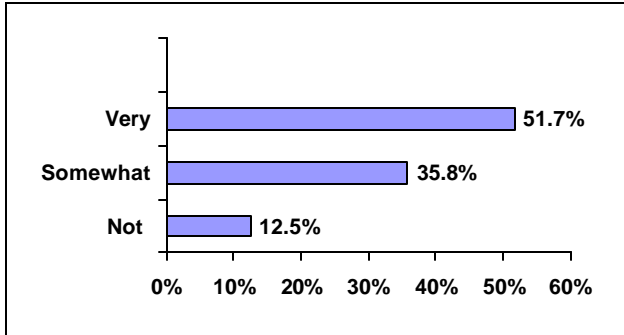


Figure 9B

Preservation of Endangered and Threatened Species

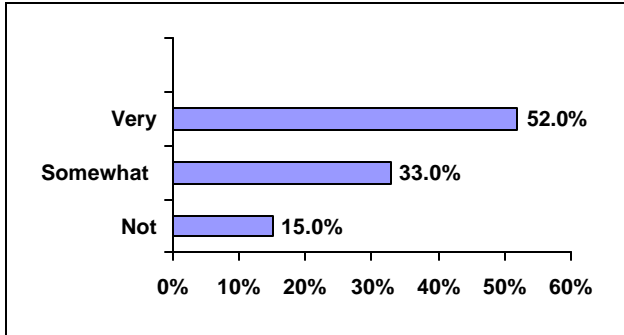


Figure 9C

Land Protected from Development Forever

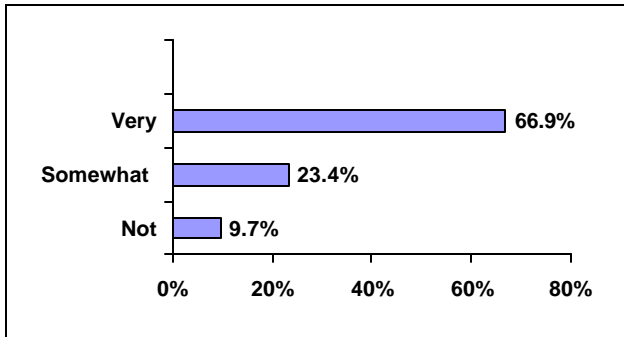


Figure 9D

Drinking Water Preservation

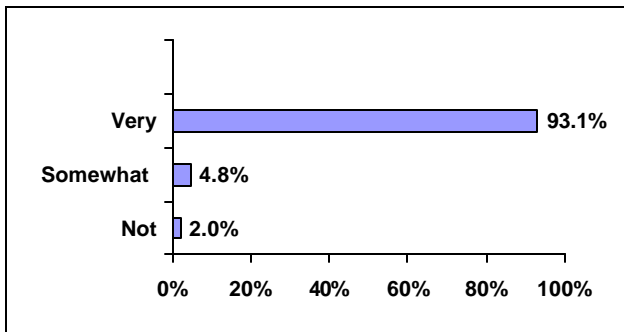


Figure 9E

Linking Open Space Parcels to Give Town More of a Rural Feel

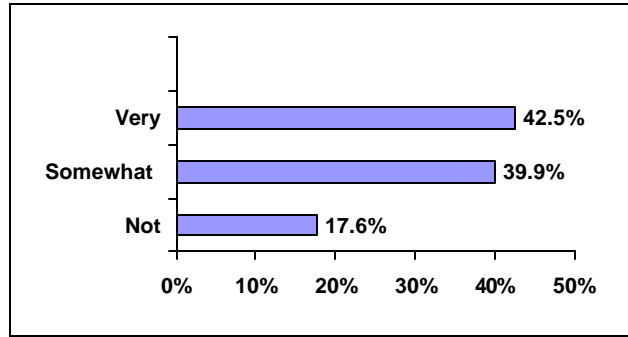
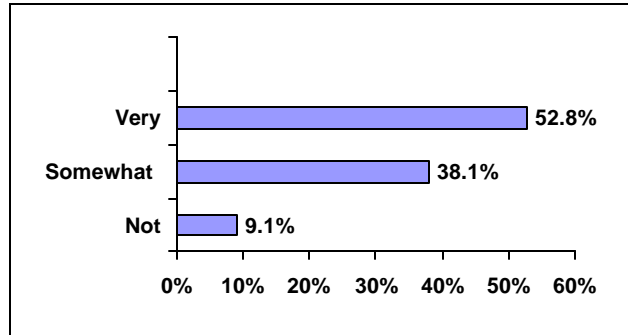


Figure 9F

Land for Recreation



Highlights:

- ? The largest percentage of respondents (93.1%) report that the preservation of drinking water is very important.
- ? Aesthetics and scenic vistas, preservation of endangered and threatened species, and land for recreation were all indicated as very important by approximately 50 percent of respondents.
- ? Linking open space parcels together to give the town more of a rural feel was indicated by the highest percentage of respondents at 17.6 percent as not important.

Table 10

Now I am going to read you a list of recreational facilities. Please tell me if it is very important, somewhat important or not important to have the following in Barnstable.

Recreational Facility	Percent Very Important	Percent Somewhat Important	Very and Somewhat Important	Percent Not Important
Ponds and lakes	85.8%	11.7%	97.5%	2.5%
Playing fields (soccer, baseball, etc.)	71.3%	25.9%	97.2%	2.8%
Ocean/open water	89.8%	7.4%	97.2%	2.8%
Fishing and boating	77.2%	19.7%	96.9%	3.0%
Beach access & amenities	82.6%	13.9%	96.5%	3.5%
Forested lands	73.1%	22.1%	95.2%	4.8%
Bogs and agricultural lands	70.5%	24.4%	94.9%	5.1%
Walking & hiking trails	66.3%	26.9%	93.2%	6.8%
Open fields	57.0%	35.6%	92.6%	7.4%
Salt marshes	71.5%	20.2%	91.7%	8.3%
Bicycling trails	63.5%	27.8%	91.3%	8.6%
Sailing, kayaking, canoeing	55.8%	34.5%	90.3%	9.6%
Golf courses	26.6%	38.1%	64.7%	35.3%
Extreme sports (motocross, windsurfing, etc.)	15.4%	31.1%	46.5%	53.5%
Hunting	10.4%	18.5%	28.9%	71.1%

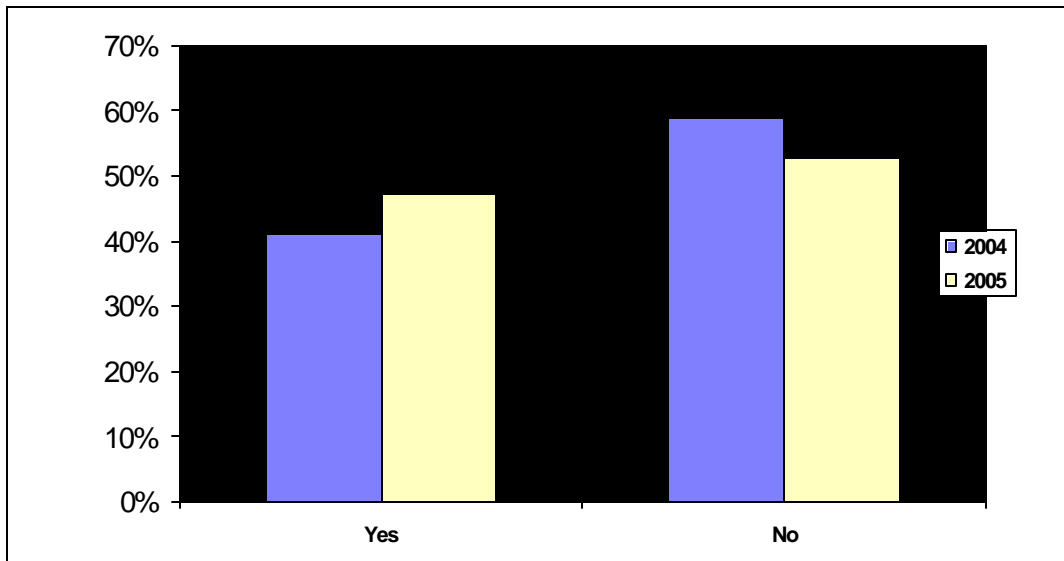
Highlights:

- ? Almost 90 percent (89.8%) of respondents indicated that the ocean and open water is a very important recreational amenity in Barnstable. Ponds and lakes ranked second-highest in terms of very important recreational amenities, at 85.8 percent.
- ? Hunting scored highest in terms of unimportant recreational amenities at 71.1 percent, followed by extreme sports at 53.5 percent, and golf at 35.3 percent.

Contact with Town Offices

Figure 10

Have you or a member of your household contacted the Town of Barnstable about a request for service, for information, or to log a complaint in the past 12 months?



Highlights:

- ? Almost half of the respondents (47.3%) have contacted the Town of Barnstable in the past 12 months for service, information, or to log a complaint; this is up 6.1 percent from 2004.

Table 11

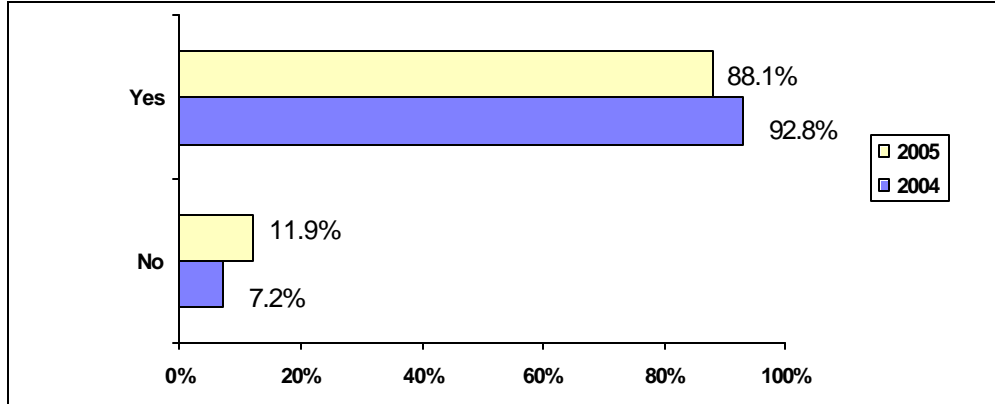
What person or which office in town did you most recently contact? N=172

Town Office	Percent Reporting
Public Works	15.7%
Police	8.1%
Building Inspector	8.1%
Town Collector	6.4%
Town Manager	6.4%
Planning/Zoning	5.8%
Highway Department	5.8%
Town Council	4.7%
Assessor	4.6%
Health Department	4.6%
School Department	4.0%
Conservation Office	3.5%
Animal Control	2.9%
Town Clerk	2.3%
Human Resources	2.3%
Community and Economic Development	1.7%
Veterans Services	0.6%
Other	12.7%

Highlights:

- ? Of the 98 respondents who recently contacted the town, 27.6 percent most recently contacted the Public Works Department.

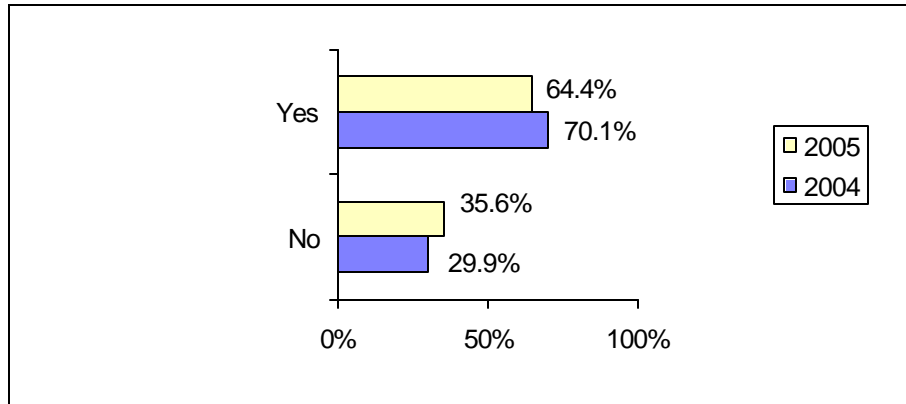
Figure 11
Was the person who handled your call or visit courteous? N=176



Highlights:

- ? An overwhelming majority of the respondents (88.1%) said the person who handled their call or visit was courteous.

Figure 12
Did the result of your call or visit resolve your problem, request or question? N=174



Highlights:

- ? A strong majority of respondents (64.4%) said their problem, request or question was resolved after speaking to the appropriate person. This is a slight decrease from 2004, at 70.1 percent.

Citizen Perceptions of Barnstable Leadership

Table 12
Please tell me how strongly you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Percent Strongly Agree & Somewhat Agree 2005	Percent Strongly Agree & Somewhat Agree 2004	Change 2004-2005
Overall, Barnstable’s town government is managed professionally.	23.7%	62.9%	86.6	85.9	0.7
Barnstable leaders respond effectively to citizen’s needs and concerns.	18.8%	65.1%	83.9	81.9	2.0
Barnstable’s town officials are acting fiscally responsible.	26.7%	48.6%	75.3	73.7	1.6
Barnstable officials are adequately planning for the town’s future.	19.2%	52.8%	72.0	71.9	0.1
Barnstable leaders provide enough information to the public.	25.1%	41.2%	66.3	69.6	-3.3

Highlights:

Managed professionally:

? An overwhelming majority of respondents (86.6%) strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable’s town government is managed professionally, a 0.7 percent increase from 2004.

Citizen’s needs and concerns:

? Over eighty percent of respondents (83.9%) strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable leaders respond effectively to citizen’s needs and concerns. This is a 2.0 percent increase from 2004.

Fiscally responsible:

? More than 75 percent of respondents (75.3%) strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable’s town officials act fiscally responsible, a 1.6 percent increase from 2004.

Planning for the town’s future:

? 72.0 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable officials are adequately planning for the town’s future.

Information to the public:

66.3 percent of respondent strongly or somewhat strongly agree that Barnstable leaders provide enough information to the public.

Issues and Problems Facing Barnstable

Table 13

What is the single most serious problem facing the Town of Barnstable in the next few years?

Issue	Percent Reporting
Growth/development	33.0%
Schools	14.1%
Affordable living	13.2%
Overdevelopment/overcrowding	11.4%
Traffic/roads	6.5%
Water	5.4%
Wind farm/water management	5.1%
Other	11.4%

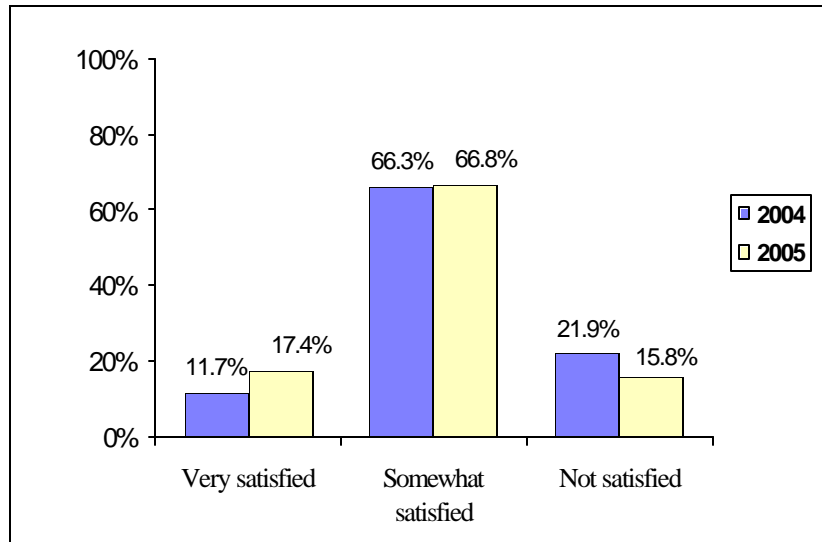
Highlights:

- ? 33.0 percent of respondents feel that over-development, growth and population are the most serious problems facing Barnstable. Affordable living is identified as an important issue by 13.2 percent of respondents; 11.4 percent feel that city fiscal issues and public services are the most serious problems facing Barnstable.

Service and Satisfaction of Town Information

Figure 13

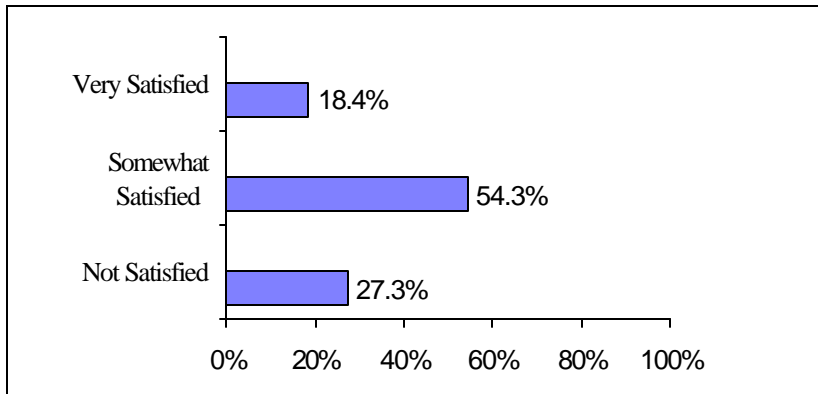
How satisfied are you with the amount of information from the town about the issues and problems facing Barnstable and its citizens?



Highlights:

- ? The majority of respondents (84.2%) are either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the amount of information from the town about the issues and problems facing Barnstable and its citizens.

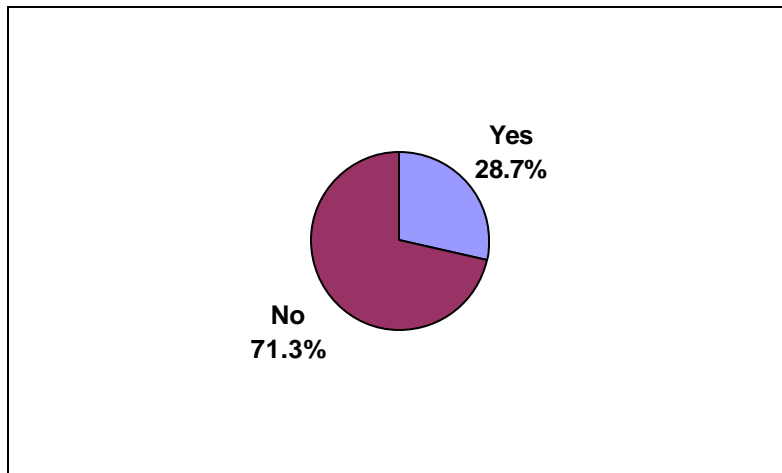
Figure 14
Specifically, how satisfied are you with the information you receive from the town regarding its financial condition?



Highlights:

- ? 72.7 percent of respondents are very or somewhat satisfied with the information they receive from the town regarding its financial condition.

Figure 15
Do you participate in or attend your Village Association Meetings?



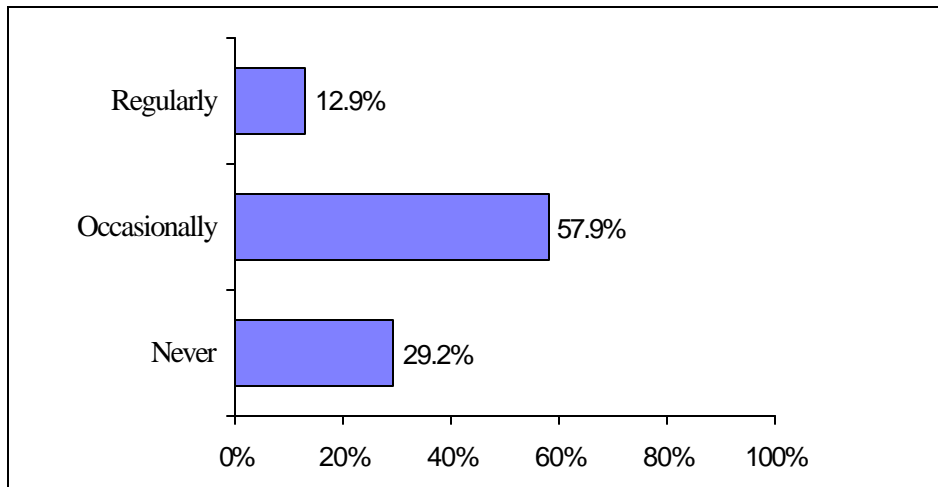
Highlights:

- ? A strong majority of respondents (71.3%) do not participate in or attend Village Association Meetings.

Town News and Cable

Figure 16

Do you regularly, occasionally or never watch the televised meetings of the Barnstable town boards or commissions on cable television Channel 18?

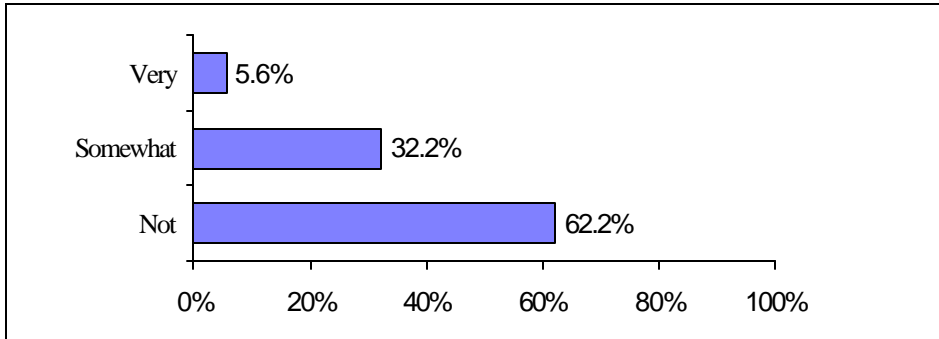


Highlights:

- ? A strong majority of respondents (70.8%) regularly or occasionally watch Barnstable town boards or commission on cable television Channel 18.

Figure 17

How familiar are you with the town’s cable programming, like “Talk of the Town,” “About Town” and informational videos shown on Cable 18?

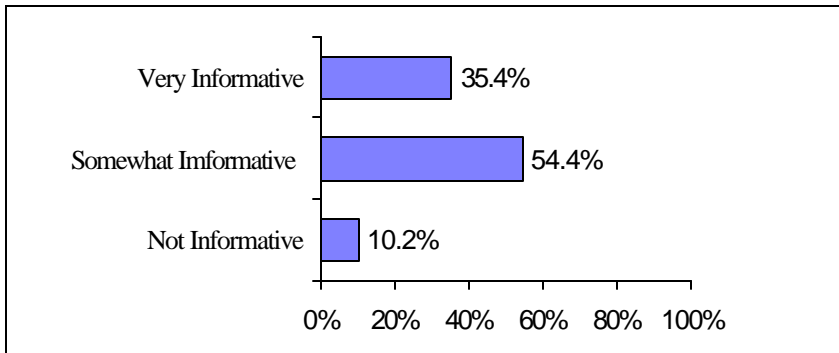


Highlights:

- ? 62.2 percent of respondents are not familiar with Barnstable’s cable programming, like “Talk of the Town,” or “About Town,” and informational videos shown on Cable 18.

Figure 18

How informative is the town’s cable programming?



Highlights:

- ? 89.8 percent of respondents report that Barnstable’s cable programming is either somewhat or very informative.

Image of Barnstable

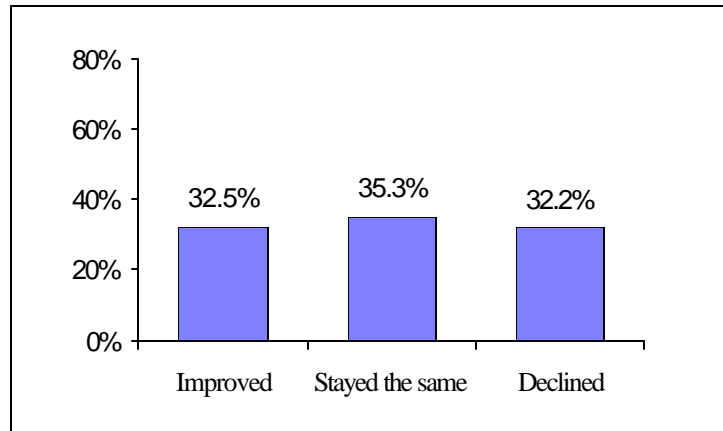
Table 14
What one word or phrase best describes your image of Barnstable?

Description	Percent Reporting
O.K./good/great	45.5%
Beautiful/quaint/friendly	24.3%
Needs improvement/declining	10.6%
Crowded	6.2%
Improving/growing	4.4%
Other	9.1%

Highlights:

- ? Over half of the respondents (69.8%) describe Barnstable as good, great, beautiful, quaint or friendly.
- ? Only 16.8 percent describe the town as needing improvement, declining, or crowded.

Figure 19
Do you think the image of Barnstable has improved, stayed the same, or declined over the past five years?



Highlights:

- ? A majority of respondents (67.8%) think the image of Barnstable has improved or stayed the same over the past five years.

Table 15
Why do you think the town’s image has improved? (N=110)

Reasons	Frequency
Quality of life	30
Physical improvements	28
Observed efforts to improve	17
Leadership	12
Other	23

Highlights:

- ? Of the 110 respondents who feel the image of Barnstable has improved, 30 attribute it to the overall quality of life.
- ? 46 respondents think the image of Barnstable has improved because of physical or other efforts to improve made on behalf of the town.

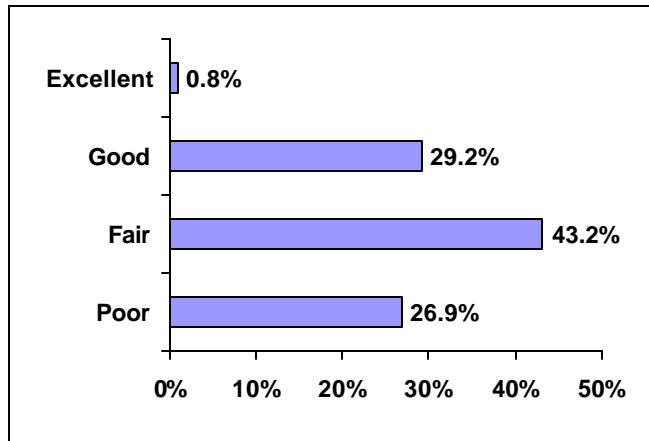
Table 16
Why do you think the town’s image has declined? (N=110)

Reasons	Frequency
Over-development	17
Taxes	16
Growth/population	14
Safety issues	11
Housing issues	9
Cost	7
Other	36

Highlights:

- ? Of the 110 respondents who feel the image of Barnstable has declined, 16 attribute it to the government, leadership and taxes.
- ? 31 respondents feel that the town’s image has declined due to over-development, growth and population.

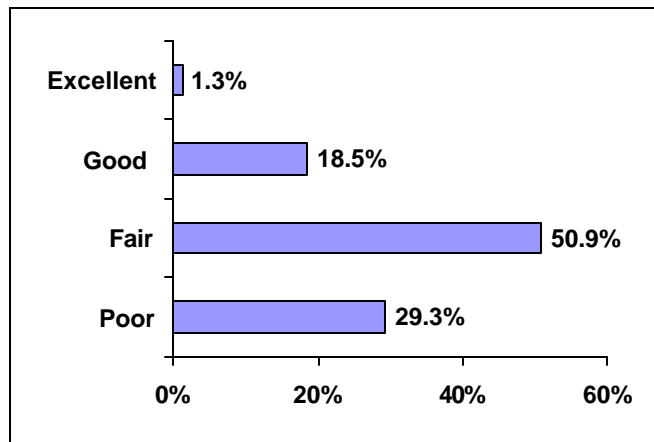
Figure 20
Overall, would you say the condition of Barnstable’s roads is excellent, good, fair or poor?



Highlights:

- ? The majority of respondents (43.2%) rate the condition of Barnstable’s roads as fair.
- ? Approximately one-third of respondents rate the condition of the roads as good (29.2%) or excellent (0.8%).

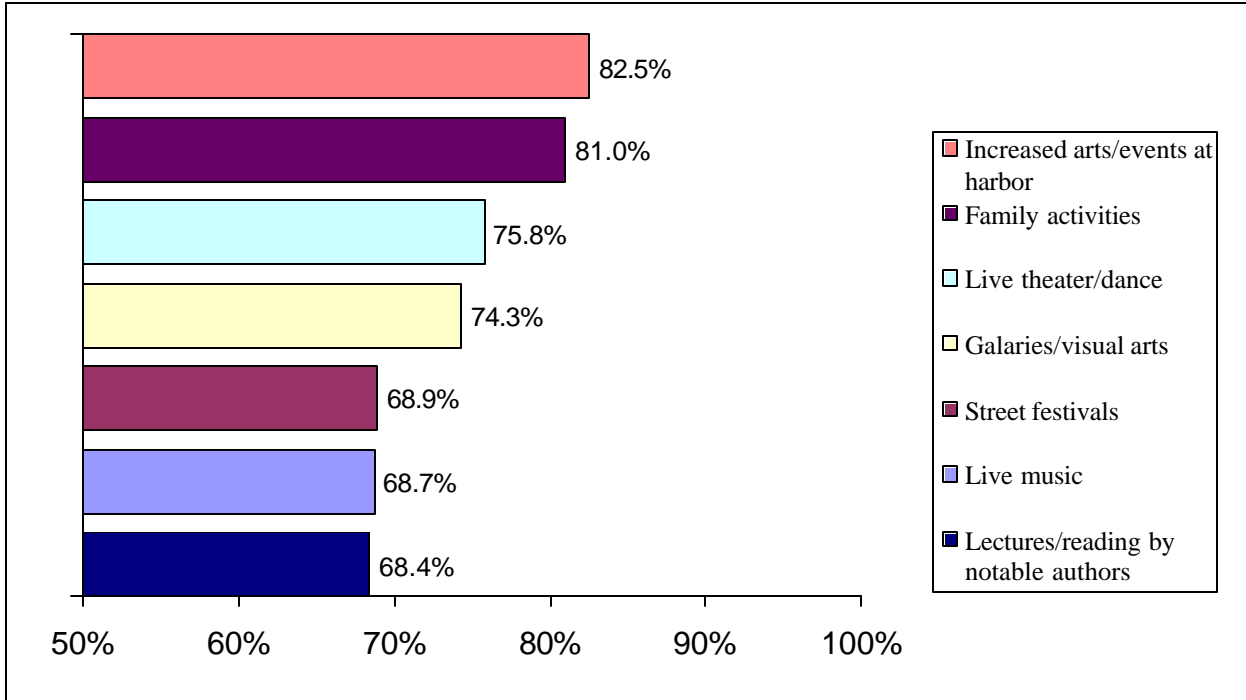
Figure 21
Overall, would you say that the traffic conditions in Barnstable are excellent, good, fair or poor?



Highlights:

- ? 50.9 percent of respondents rate Barnstable traffic conditions as fair. One-third of respondents (29.3%) rate traffic conditions as poor.

Figure 22
When thinking about things that may be done to improve the town of Barnstable, what additional arts or entertainment activities would you like to see in Barnstable? (Percentage “Yes”)

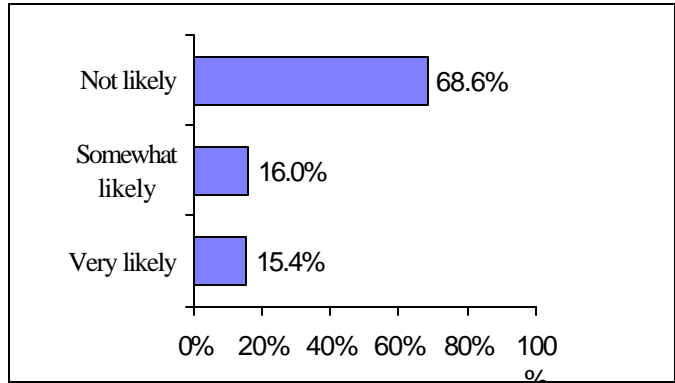


Highlights:

- ? 82.5 percent of respondents would like to see an increase in arts and cultural events at the harbor front, and 81.0 percent would like to see an increase in family activities.
- ? The lowest-rated arts and entertainment activity, lectures or readings by notable authors, is indicated by 68.4 percent of respondents.
- ? 85.7 percent of those who rent in Barnstable would like to see more street festivals, compared to 67.2 percent of homeowners.

Figure 23

Over the next five years, what is your likelihood of moving out of Barnstable?



Highlights:

- ? The overwhelming majority of the respondents (68.6%) said it is not likely they will be moving out of Barnstable in the next five years.

Table 17

Likelihood of moving out of Barnstable by age

	18-25 years	26-35 years	36-45 years	46-60 years	61-70 years	71+ years
Percent very likely	58.3%	43.8%	19.6%	18.0%	8.1%	5.3%

Highlights:

- ? The above table illustrates that as age increases, the likelihood of moving out of Barnstable in the next five years decreases.

Table 18

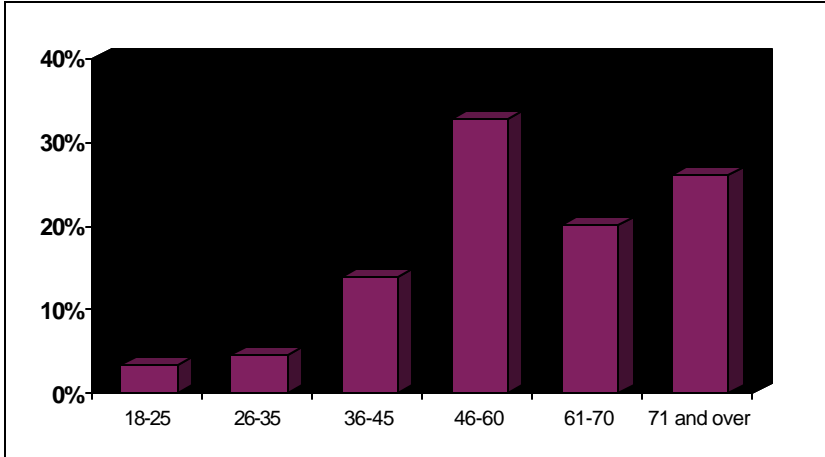
What would be your primary reason for leaving? (N=113)

Issue	Frequency
Affordability	31
Age/retirement	11
Warmer climate	11
Crowding	9
Lack of jobs/public services	7
College/school system	6
Other	38

Highlights:

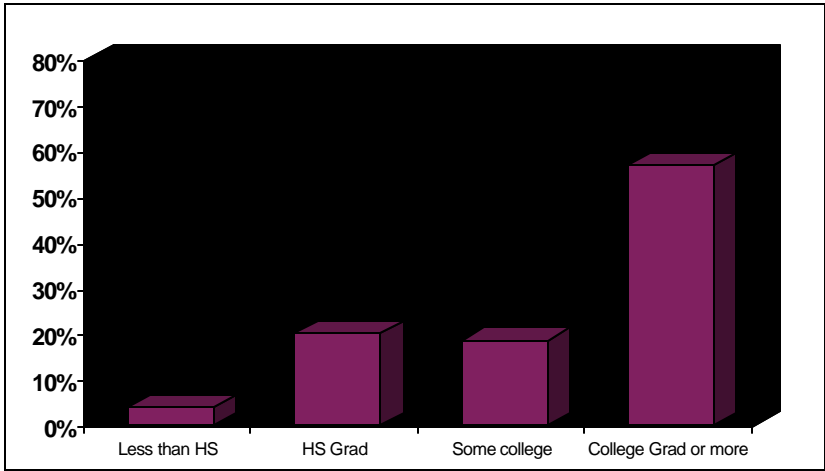
- ? Of 113 respondents, 31 report that affordability would be the primary reason for leaving. A lack of jobs and public services, and for college or other school systems, were reported as primary reasons for leaving by 13 respondents.

Sample Demographic Characteristics



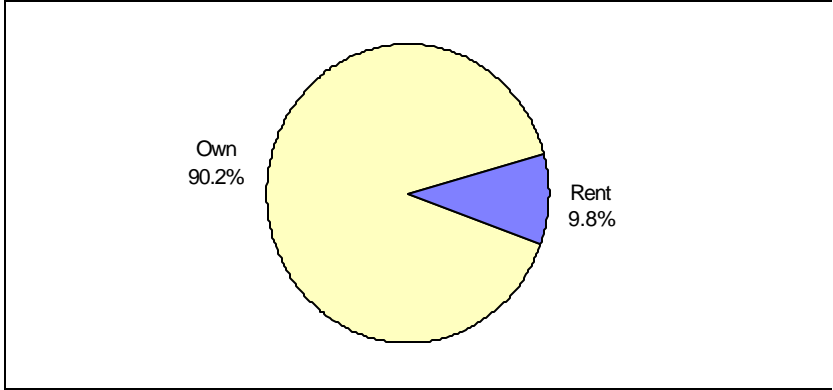
Age

The largest percentage of respondents is in the 46-60 year old age range (32.6%), followed by the 71 year old and over age group (26.0%).



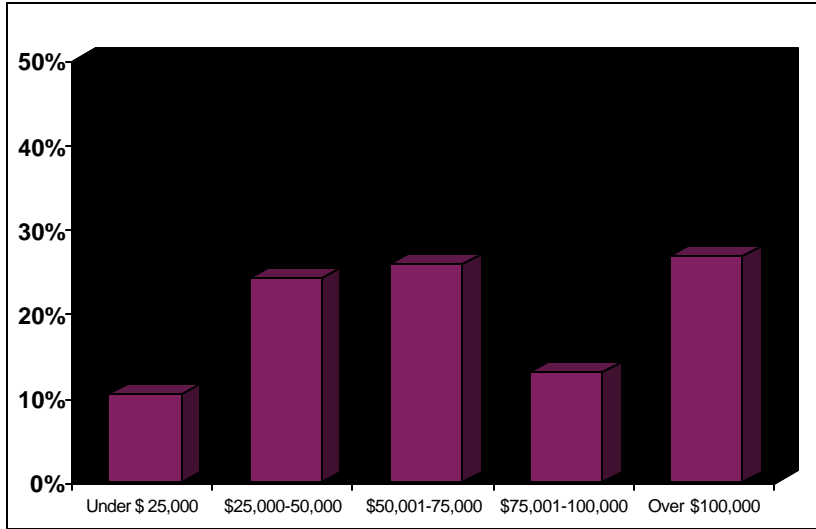
Education

The highest percentage of respondents had an education consisting of a college degree or more (57.1%). Just over twenty percent were high school graduates (20.3%) and approximately 19 percent had some college experience (18.7%). Only 4.0 percent of respondents had less than a high school diploma.



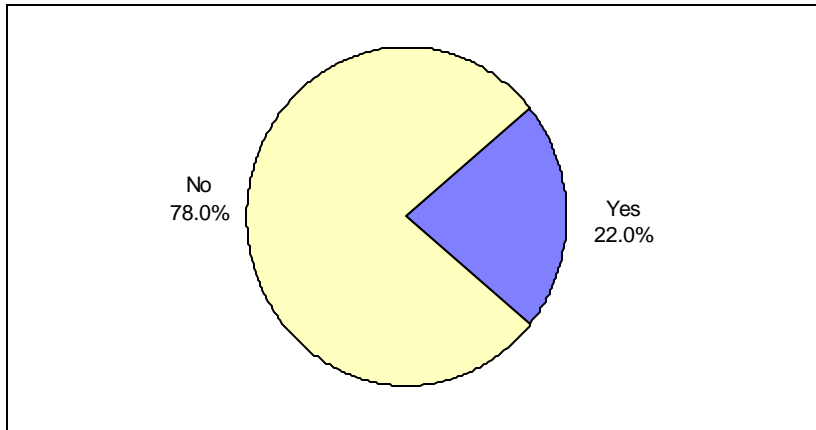
Own or Rent

An overwhelming majority of respondents own a home (90.2%).



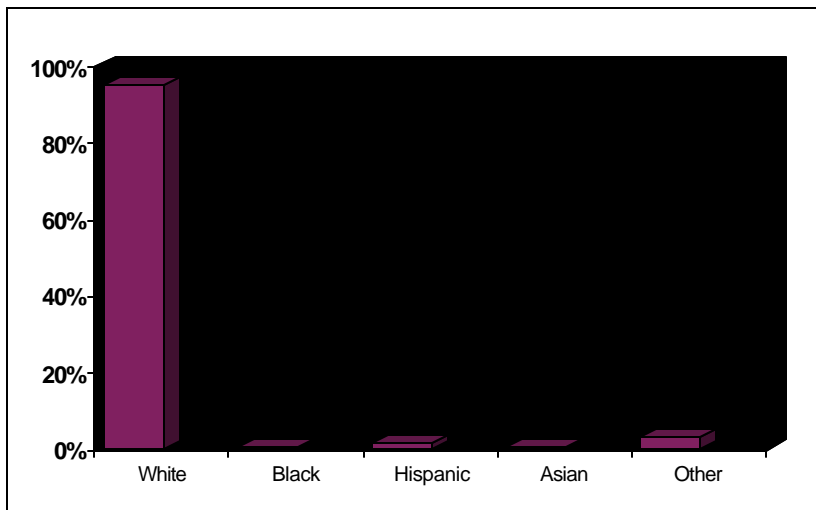
Income

The largest percentage of respondents (26.8%) had an income over \$100,000, Slightly fewer respondents at 25.8 percent had incomes between \$50,001 and \$75,000.



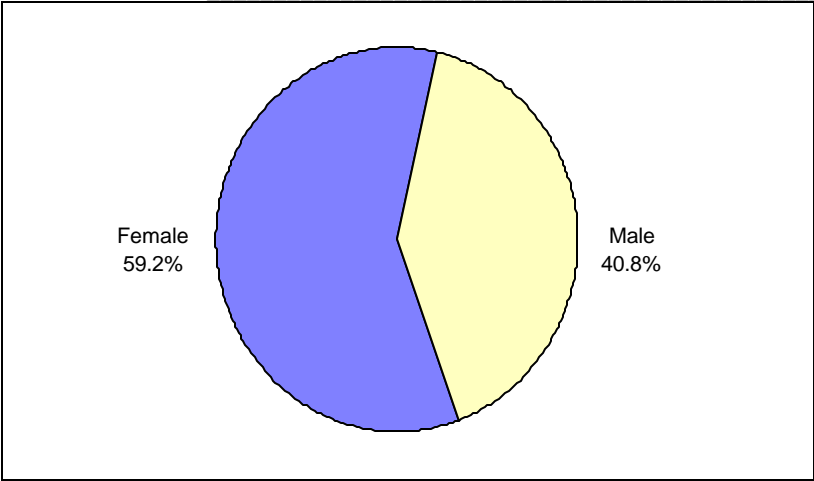
Children Living at Home

A majority of respondents do not have children living at home (78.0%).



Ethnic Group

The overwhelming majority of respondents are white (94.8%).



Gender

The majority of respondents (59.2%) were female.