

Town of Barnstable Citizen Survey

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the 2008 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 February 19, 2008 to February 28, 2007. A total of 400 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 (87.2%) rate the quality of life in Barnstable as excellent or good in this year's survey. This is very similar to the findings in 2007 (89.4%).
- Over ninety percent of the respondents (91.0%) rate Barnstable's Senior Services as excellent or good; 88.3 percent rate Barnstable Police, the transfer station (88.5%) and the Health Department (79.5%) as excellent or good.
- Over eighty-five percent of respondents (86.3%) are very or somewhat satisfied with the Barnstable town services they receive in relation to town taxes.
- Of respondents who contacted the town of Barnstable over the past year an overwhelming majority of them (92.5%) report the person who handled their call or visit was courteous, which is up 7.5% from 2007.
- Nearly 90 percent (88.6%) of respondents strongly or somewhat agree Barnstable's town government is managed professionally.
- A strong majority of respondents (87.9%) personally feel either more safe or about the same compared to one year ago.
- Over eighty percent of respondents (84.3%) state they are very or somewhat satisfied with the amount of information they receive from the town about issues and problems facing Barnstable.
- Over seventy-five percent of respondents (74.1%) report they are very or somewhat satisfied with the information they receive from the Town of Barnstable about its financial condition.
- The majority of respondents (68.0%) 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 February 2008. 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 interviewers administered the survey during daytime and evening hours. A total of 400 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.

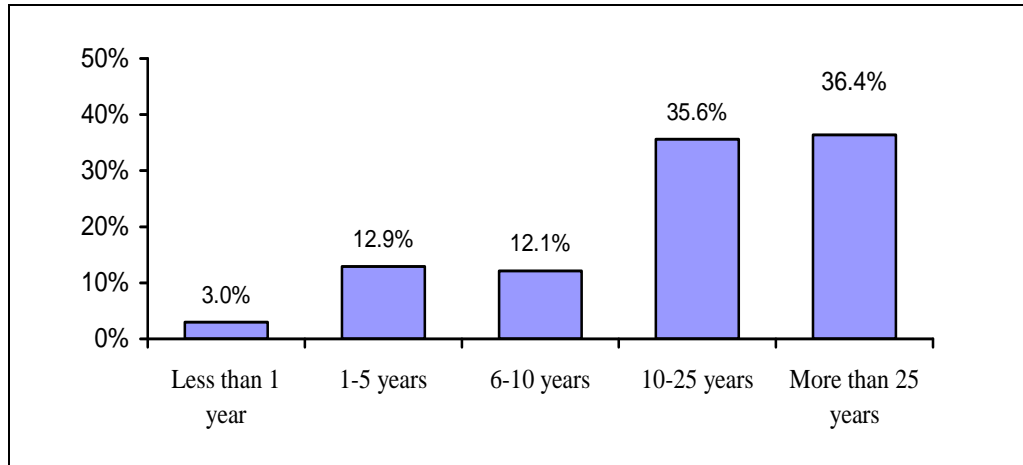
All interviewing was conducted from the Institute for Regional Development's telephone research center at Bridgewater State College. A project director was present at all times to supervise the administration of the survey, monitor for quality control, and handle any other problems. Shifts of interviewers were used during the evenings (6 to 9pm) from February 19-February 29, 2008. 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.

Prior to survey distribution, the Institute for Regional Development applied for and received approval from the Bridgewater State College Institutional Review Board. This board serves to protect human subjects who participate in research done by members of the college community.

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 15.0), 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 director, project manager and one research assistant.

Residency

Figure 1
How long have you lived in Barnstable?



Highlights:

- A majority of the respondents (36.4%) have lived in Barnstable for over 25 years.

Table 1
In which village of Barnstable do you reside?

Village	Percent Reporting
Centerville	25.5%
Hyannis	23.4%
Marstons Mills	18.1%
Osterville	11.5%
West Barnstable	7.9%
Barnstable	7.6%
Cotuit	6.0%

Highlights:

- Over twenty five percent of the respondents (25.5%) reside in Centerville; nearly twenty four percent (23.4%) of respondents reside in Hyannis.

Table 2
Why did you move to Barnstable?

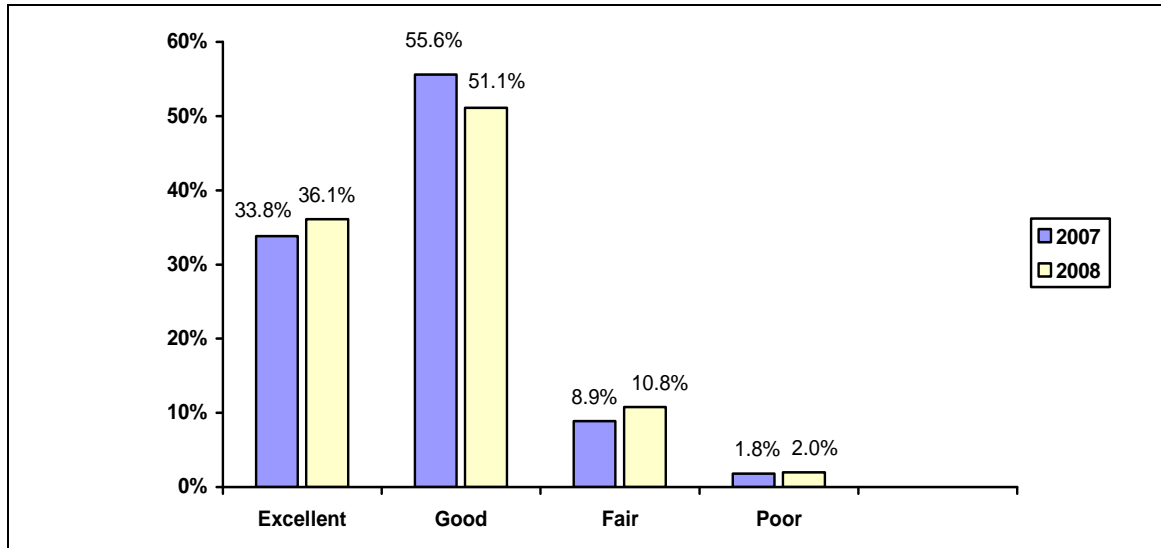
Reason	Percent Reporting (2006)
Family/friends/born here	31.9%
Location	18.1%
Access to jobs	18.1%
Quality of housing	10.1%
Reputation of community	6.9%
Appearance and character of town	2.9%
Other	12.0%

Highlights:

- The majority of respondents (31.9%) stated that they live in Barnstable because they were born in Barnstable or because of family and friends.
- Nearly twenty percent (18.1%) were attracted to Barnstable because of the location on Cape Cod.

Quality of Life

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



Highlights:

- An overwhelming majority of residents (87.2%) rate the quality of life in Barnstable as excellent or good in this year’s survey. This is very similar to the findings in 2007 (89.4%).

Table 3
Barnstable Quality of Life

	Village						
	Hyannis	West Barnstable	Cotuit	Marstons Mills	Centerville	Osterville	Barnstable
Percent of Village Residents Responding Excellent or Good	70.8%	100.0%	87.0%	84.1%	91.7%	90.9%	86.2%

Highlights:

- The above table illustrates that the total majority of respondents in West Barnstable (100.0%) rate that the quality of life in Barnstable as excellent or good.

Table 4
What do you like most about living in Barnstable?
(N=372)

Reason	Percent Reporting
Community/town atmosphere	34.4%
Beaches/ocean	30.1%
Location	24.2%
Weather/environment	5.1%
Other	6.2%

Highlights:

- 34.4 percent of the respondents report that they like the “community/town atmosphere” of Barnstable, followed by 30.1 percent of respondents citing the “beach/ocean” as what they like most about living in Barnstable.

Table 5
What do you like least about living in Barnstable?
(N=327)

Reason	Percent Reporting
Traffic/Street Maintenance	29.1%
Cost of living, high utilities	18.3%
Too rural/lack of services & transportation	15.0%
Other	37.5%

Highlights:

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

Town Services

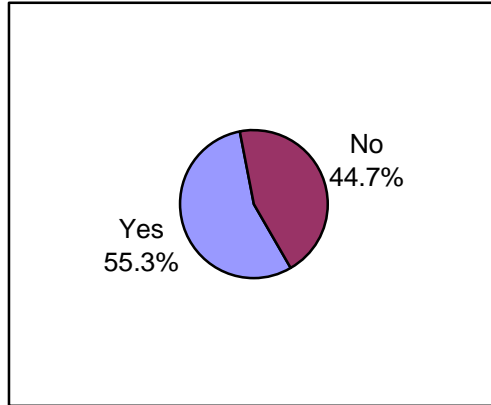
Table 6
Rating of Town Services

Service	Excellent (2008)	Good (2008)	Percent Excellent or Good		Change 2007-2008
			2007	2008	
Senior Services	35.5%	55.5%	89.8%	91.0%	1.2%
Police	29.7%	58.6%	87.8%	88.3%	.5%
Transfer station	37.3%	51.2%	84.5%	88.5%	4%
Health Department	16.0%	63.5%	81.6%	79.5%	-2.1%
Conservation efforts	26.3%	52.8%	81.2%	79.1%	-2.1%
Municipal Airport	12.5%	68.1%	80.4%	80.6%	.2%
Animal Control	13.8%	58.1%	77.7%	71.9%	-5.8%
Recreation programs	29.4%	52.3%	77.6%	81.7%	4.1%
Schools	18.9%	56.7%	74.5%	75.6%	1.1%
Building Inspection Services	11.8%	53.8%	68.9%	65.6%	-3.3%
Street Maintenance	7.9%	41.9%	55.8%	49.8%	-6%
Community Planning	6.8%	39.0%	--	45.8%	--
Historical Preservation	20.2%	53.9%	--	74.1%	--

Highlights:

- Over ninety percent of the respondents (91.0%) rate Barnstable’s Senior Services as excellent or good; 88.3 percent rate Barnstable Police, the transfer station (88.5%) and the Health Department (79.5%) as excellent or good.
- The largest changes in rating from 2007-2008 are recreation programs (+4.1%).

Figure 3
Is there a specific town service that you would like to see improved?
(N=385)



Highlights:

- The majority of respondents (55.3%) reported there is a specific town service they would like to see improved.

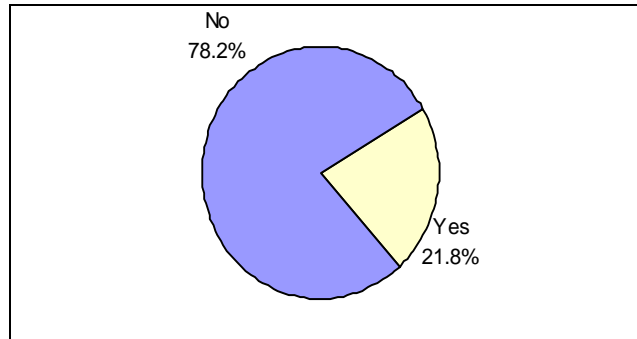
Table 7
Services that need improvement
(N=213)

Service/Program	Frequency
Roads, traffic, street maintenance	50
Town Government Services	40
Schools	30
Youth programs	20
Transportation	16
Town Transfer Station/Trash pick up	14
Multiple Fire Department	8
Other	35

Highlights:

- Over twenty percent of respondents (23.5%) report roads, traffic and street maintenance as the service that needs the most improvement.

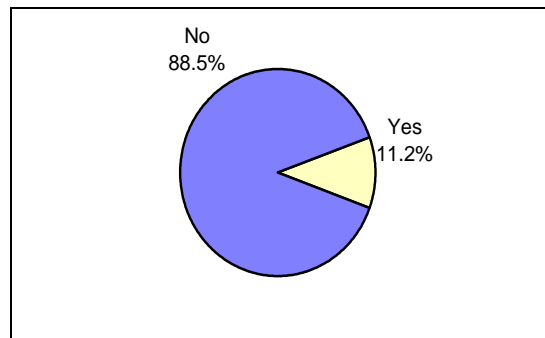
Figure 4
Is there a specific town service that you would like to see reduced?
(N=381)



Highlights:

- An overwhelming majority (78.2%) of respondents report that there is not a specific town service that they would like to see reduced.

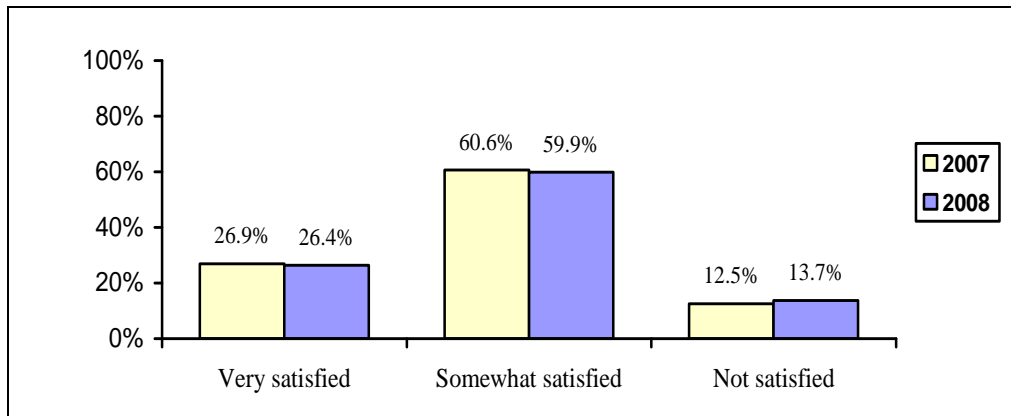
Figure 5
Is there a specific town service that you would like to see eliminated?
(N=375)



Highlights:

- A strong majority of respondents (88.5%) report that there is not a specific town service they would like to see eliminated.

Figure 6
Overall, how satisfied are you with the town's services in relation to town taxes?



Highlights:

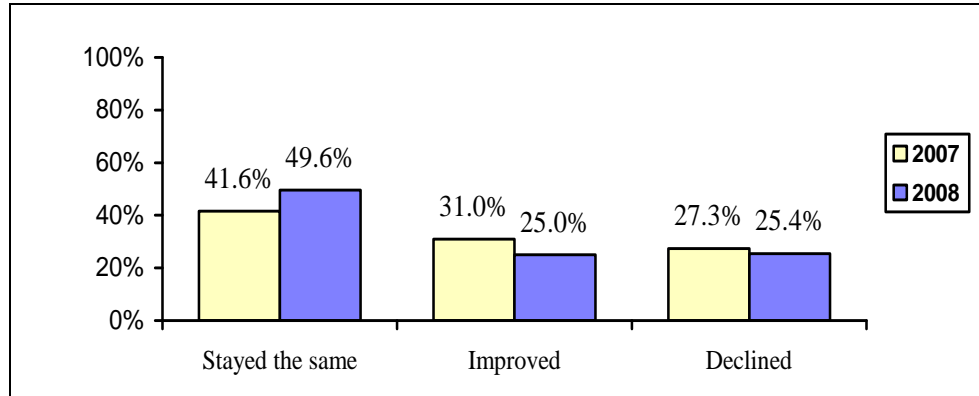
- Over eighty-five percent of respondents (86.3%) are very or somewhat satisfied with the Barnstable town services they receive in relation to town taxes.

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=252)



Highlights:

- The majority of respondents (74.6%) state that the quality of education has improved or remained the same, which is a two percent increase from last year's response of 72.6 percent.

Table 8
Why would you say that the quality of education has improved?
(N=57)

Reason	Frequency
More/better programs and facilities	26
Feedback from children	16
Teachers	11
Other	4

Highlights:

- Of 57 respondents, the majority (26) attribute the improvement to better programs, facilities, and teachers.
- Sixteen respondents reported that the quality of education has improved due to the feedback they receive from their children.

Table 9
Why would you say that the quality of education has declined?
(N=58)

Reason	Frequency
Lack of programs or activities	12
Children lack motivation/discipline	9
School program cuts/budget issues/lack of funding	9
Other	28

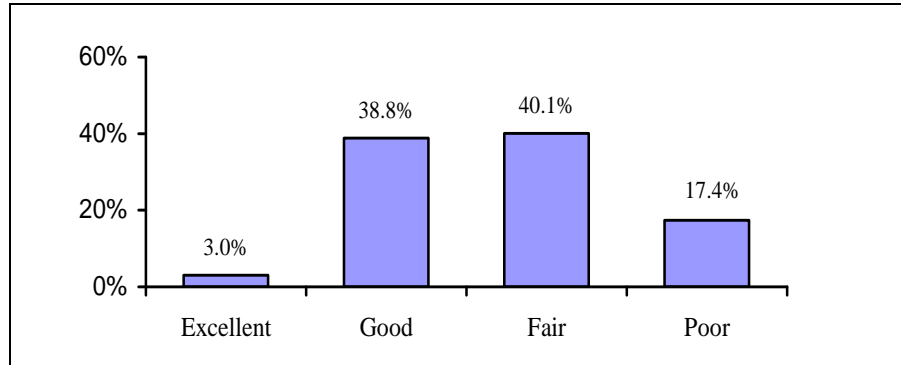
Highlights:

- 12 out of 58 respondents stated the quality of education has declined due to lack of programs or activities.

Traffic and Development

Figure 8

Overall, how would you characterize the conditions of Barnstable's roads?

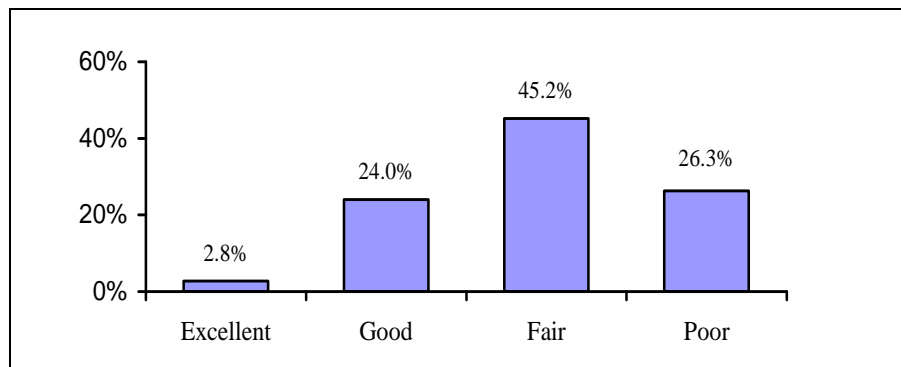


Highlights:

- 41.8 percent of respondents report the condition of Barnstable's roads as excellent or good.

Figure 9

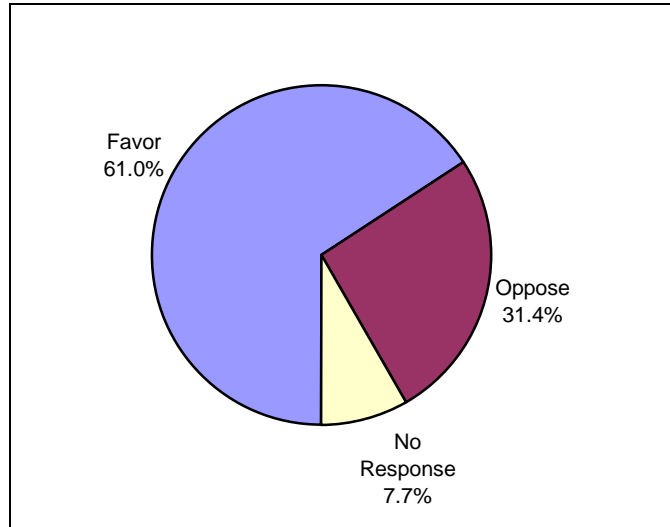
Overall, how would you characterize the traffic conditions in Barnstable?



Highlights:

- Over seventy percent of respondents (71.5%) rate traffic conditions in Barnstable as fair or poor.

Figure 10
Do you favor or oppose a plan which would limit retail growth as a means to improve traffic on areas such as Route 132, the Cape Cod Mall area, Route 28 or in your village?



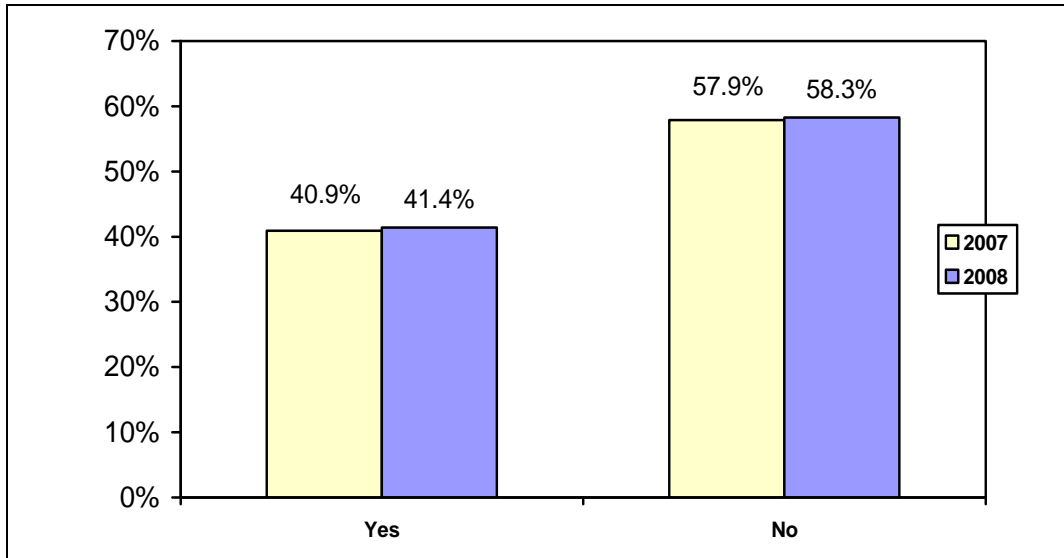
Highlights:

- A clear majority of respondents (61.0%) favor a plan which would limit retail growth as a means to improve traffic on areas such as Route 132, the Cape Cod Mall area, Route 28 or in their village.

Contact with Town Offices

Figure 11

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:

- 41.4 percent of respondents contacted the Town of Barnstable about a request for service, for information, or to log a complaint in the past 12 months.

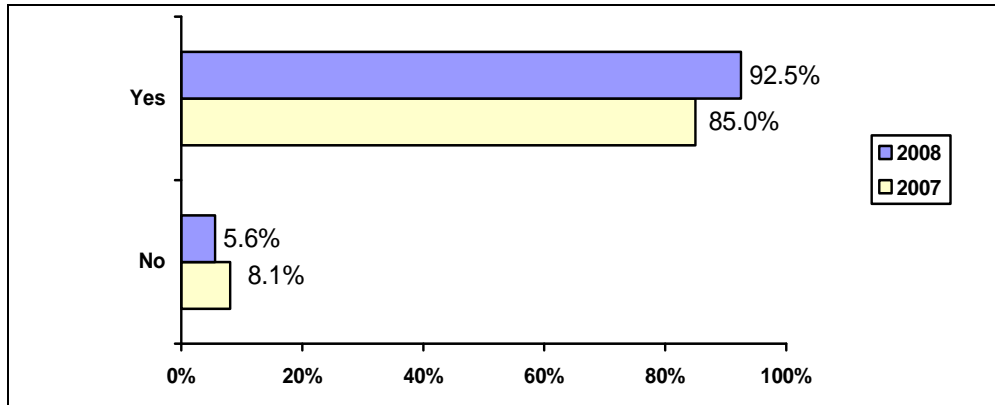
Table 10
What person or which office in town did you most recently contact?
N=150

Town Office	Percent Reporting
Regulatory Services	18.7%
DPW	17.3%
Building Department	10.7%
Town Collector	9.3%
Police	7.3%
Town Clerk	6.7%
Town Council	6.7%
Town Manager	6.7%
Marine and Environmental Affairs	4.0%
Recreation	3.3%
Animal Control	2.7%
Growth Management	2.0%
Human Resources	2.0%
Veterans	.7%
Schools	.7%

Highlights:

- 18.7 percent of respondents have contacted regulatory affairs (building, health, consumer affairs) in the past 12 months.

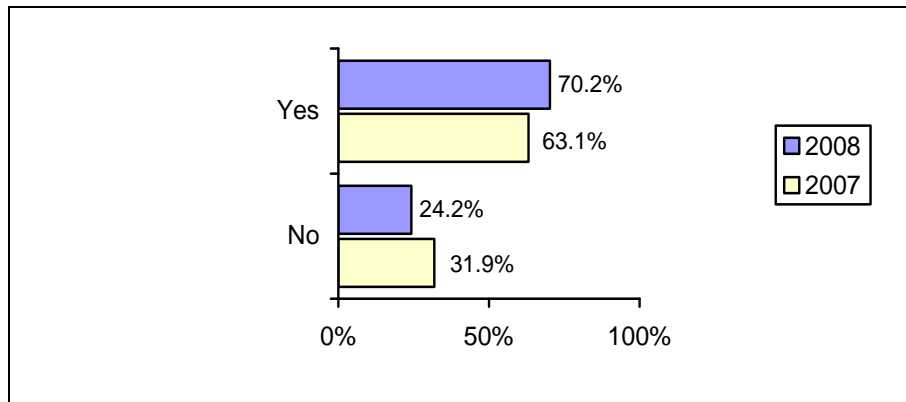
Figure 12
Was the person who handled your call or visit courteous?
(N=161)



Highlights:

- Of respondents who contacted the town of Barnstable over the past year an overwhelming majority of them (92.5%) report the person who handled their call or visit was courteous, which is a 7.5% improvement from 2007.

Figure 13
Did the result of your call or visit resolve your problem, request or question?
(N=161)



Highlights:

- Over two-thirds of respondents (70.2%) report their problem, request or question was resolved.

Citizen Perceptions of Barnstable Leadership

Table 11a

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

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Percent Strongly Agree & Somewhat Agree
Overall, Barnstable’s town government is managed professionally.	23.4%	65.2%	11.4%	88.6
Barnstable’s town council is working on issues that are important to me and my family.	23.9%	58.6%	17.5%	82.5

Highlights:

Managed professionally:

- 88.7 percent of respondents strongly or somewhat agree Barnstable’s town government is managed professionally.

Citizen’s needs and concerns:

- Over 80 percent of respondents (82.5%) strongly agree or agree that Barnstable’s town council is working on issues that are important to them and their family.

Table 11b
Please tell me how strongly you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Percent Strongly Agree & Somewhat Agree 2007	Percent Strongly Agree & Somewhat Agree 2008
Barnstable’s town officials are fiscally responsible.	23.1%	59.9%	17.5%	87.1%	83.0%
Barnstable officials are adequately planning for the town’s future.	19.7%	60.8%	19.4%	81.8%	80.5%
Barnstable leaders provide enough information to the public.	22.4%	50.6%	27.0%	72.2%	73.0%

Highlights:

Fiscally responsible:

- 83.0 percent of respondents report Barnstable’s town officials are fiscally responsible.

Planning for the town’s future:

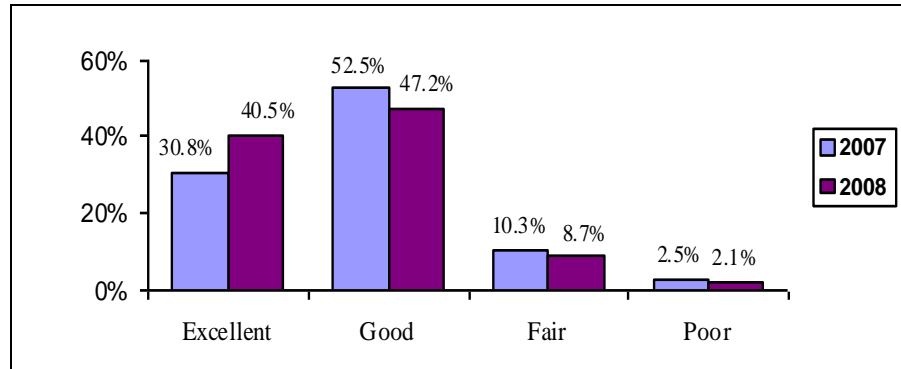
- 80.5 percent report Barnstable’s officials are adequately planning for the town’s future.

Information to the public:

- 73.0 percent of respondents stated Barnstable leaders provide enough information to the public.

Public Safety

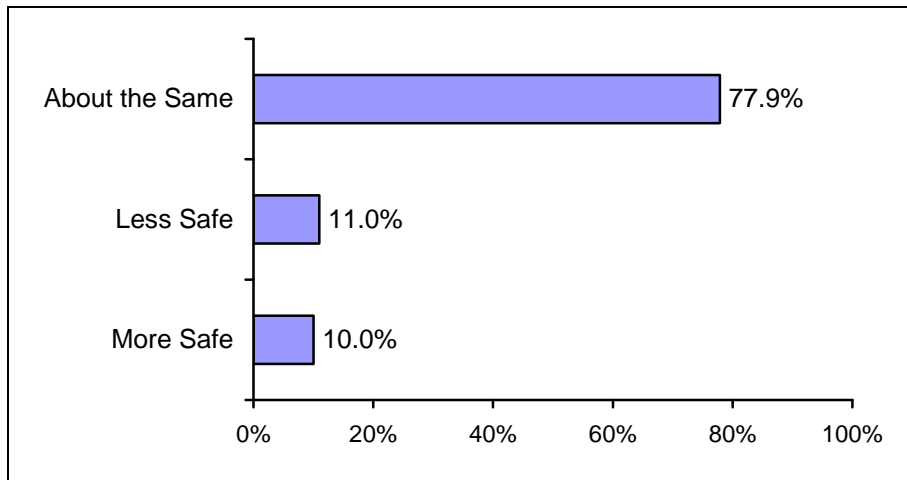
Figure 14
How would you rate the adequacy of police protection in the town of Barnstable?



Highlights:

- A strong majority of respondents (87.7%) rate the adequacy of police protection as excellent or good in the Town of Barnstable.

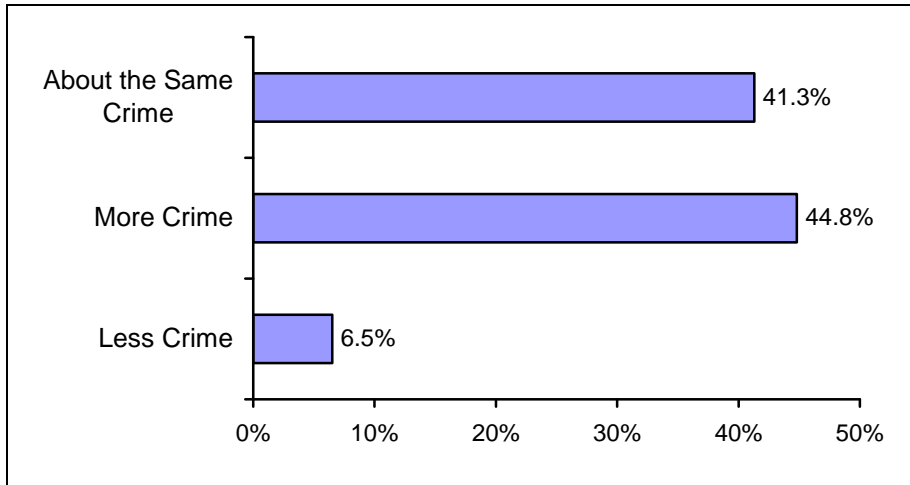
Figure 15
Compared to one year ago, do you feel personally more safe, less safe or about the same?



Highlights:

- A strong majority of respondents (87.9%) personally feel either more safe or about the same compared to one year ago.

Figure 16
Compared to one year ago, do you feel there is more crime, less crime or about the same crime?
(N=400)



Highlights:

- 41.3 percent of respondents report that compared to one year ago there is about the same crime.
- 44.8 percent of respondents reported that compared to one year ago there is more crime.

Issues and Problems Facing Barnstable

Table 12

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

Issue	Percent Reporting
Overgrowth, overpopulation	19.1%
Availability/affordable housing	14.5%
Schools/Education	9.4%
Traffic/roads	8.5%
Other	48.4%

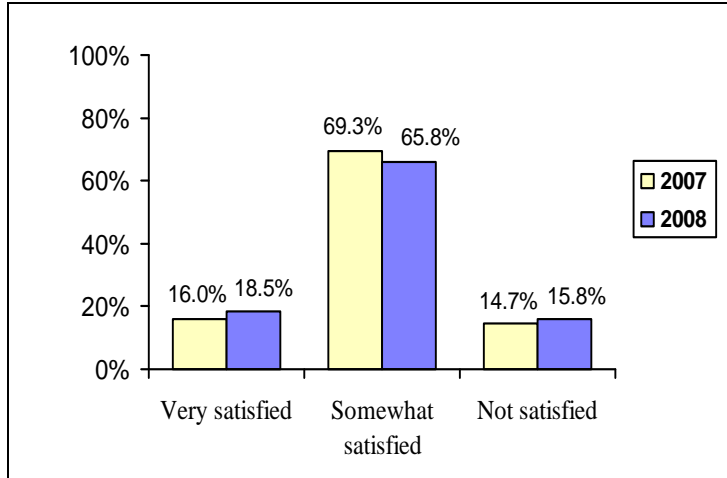
Highlights:

- Nearly 20 percent (19.1%) of respondents report the most serious problem facing the town of Barnstable in the next few years is overgrowth and overpopulation.

Service and Satisfaction of Town Information

Figure 17

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

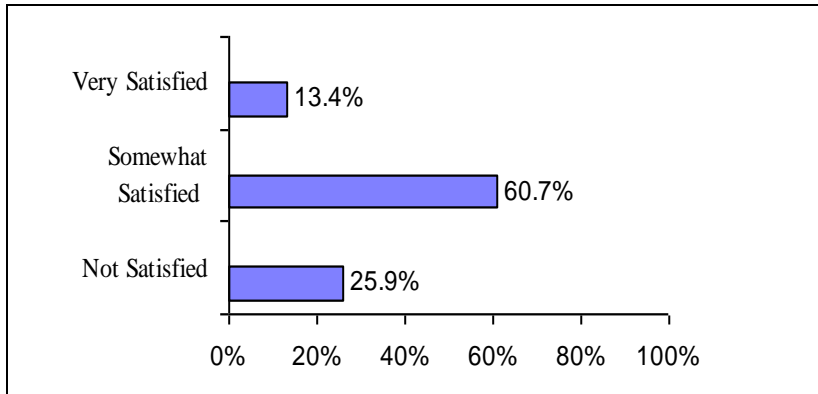


Highlights:

- Over eighty percent of respondents (84.3%) state they are very or somewhat satisfied with the amount of information they receive from the town about issues and problems facing Barnstable.

Figure 18

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



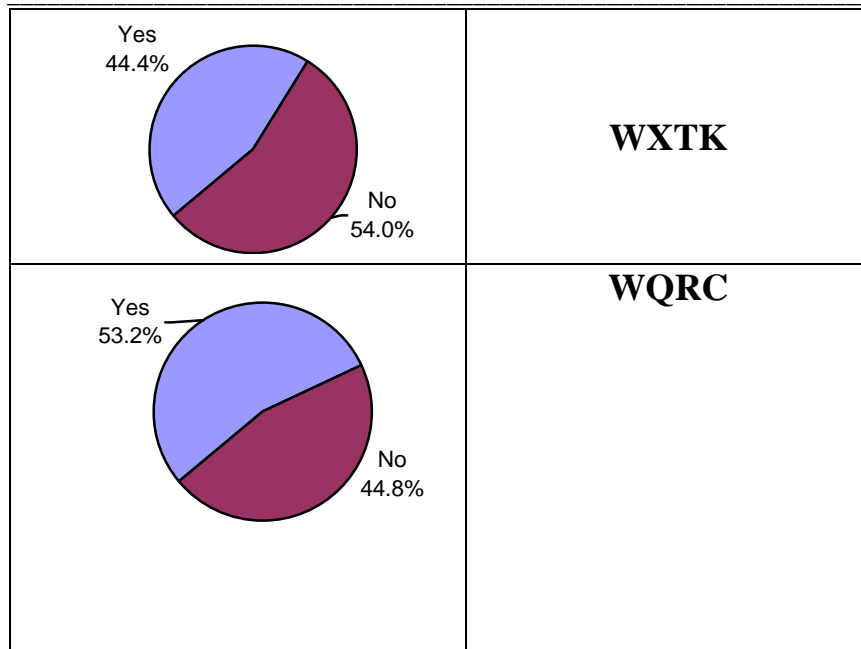
Highlights:

- Over seventy-five percent of respondents (74.1%) report they are very or somewhat satisfied with the information they receive from the Town of Barnstable about its financial condition.

Town News and Cable

Figure 19
Do you read, watch or listen to any of the following news outlets regularly?
Cape Cod Times, the Barnstable Patriot, etc....

<p>A pie chart showing the distribution of responses for Channel 18. The 'Yes' response is represented by a blue slice (47.4%) and the 'No' response is represented by a maroon slice (51.5%).</p>	Channel 18
<p>A pie chart showing the distribution of responses for the Municipal Newsletter. The 'Yes' response is represented by a blue slice (22.2%) and the 'No' response is represented by a maroon slice (76.5%).</p>	Municipal Newsletter
<p>A pie chart showing the distribution of responses for Cape Cod Times. The 'Yes' response is represented by a large blue slice (87.9%) and the 'No' response is represented by a small maroon slice (11.6%).</p>	Cape Cod Times
<p>A pie chart showing the distribution of responses for the Barnstable Patriot. The 'Yes' response is represented by a blue slice (45.9%) and the 'No' response is represented by a maroon slice (53.3%).</p>	Barnstable Patriot
<p>A pie chart showing the distribution of responses for The Register. The 'Yes' response is represented by a blue slice (20.5%) and the 'No' response is represented by a maroon slice (78.5%).</p>	The Register

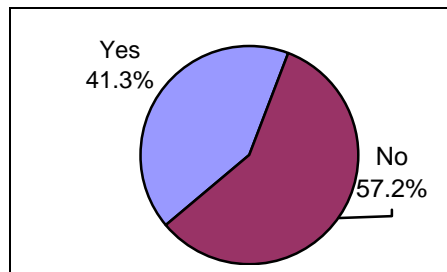


Highlights:

- An overwhelming majority of respondents (87.9%) read the Cape Cod Times regularly.

Figure 20

Are you aware that the town board and commission meetings can be viewed online with a video on demand (streaming video)?

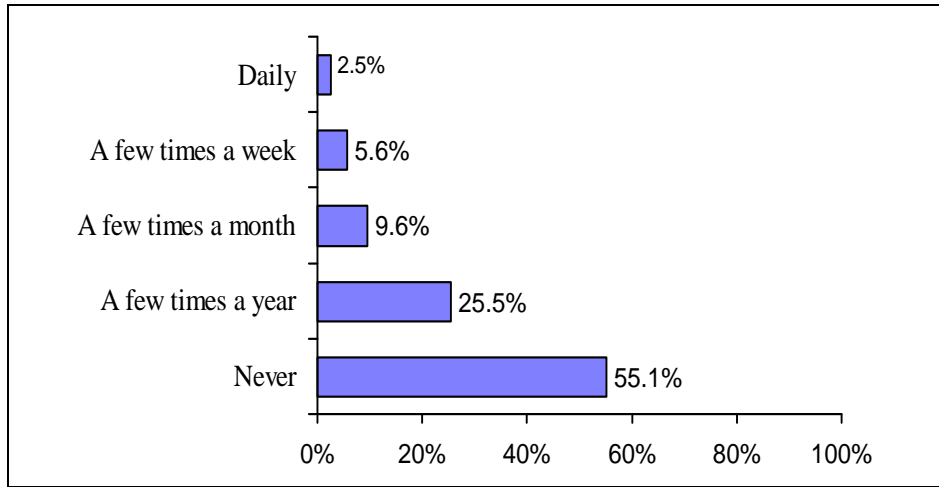


Highlights:

- 41.3 percent of respondents are aware that the town board and commission meetings can be viewed online with a video on demand (streaming video).

Figure 21

How often do you visit the Town of Barnstable’s website?



Highlights:

- Over half of respondents (43.2%) report that they have visited the town of Barnstable’s website.

Table 13

**What is the main reason you visit the town website?
(N=161)**

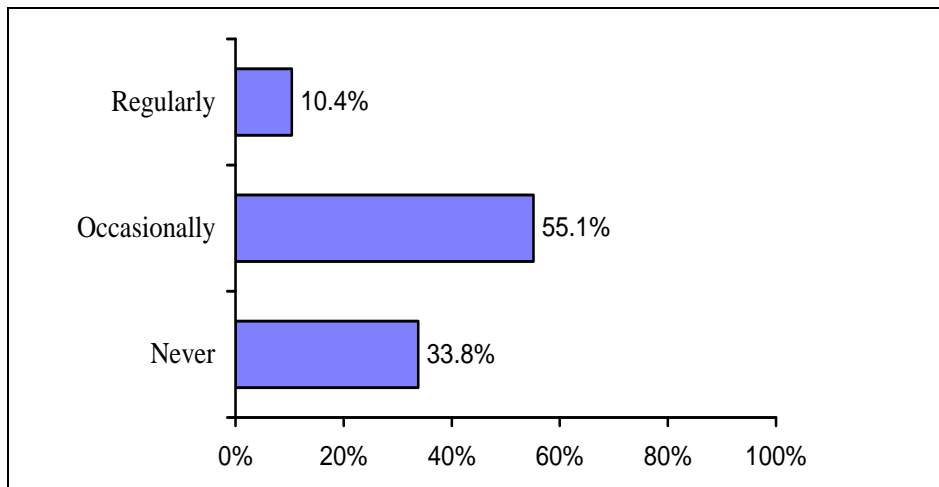
Reason	Percent Reporting
Stay up-to-date on town issues/events	24.8%
General information	24.2%
Assessor/Property information and maps	12.4%
Tax/fee information	9.3%
Schools	6.8%
Recreation information	5.0%
Professional Use	3.1%
Browsing	1.9%
Job listings	1.9%
Other	10.6%

Highlights:

- Nearly twenty-five percent of respondents (24.8%) visit the town website to stay up-to-date on town issues and events.
- Residents report visiting the website for general information (24.2%) and to look up Assessor’s Office/Property information (12.4%).

Figure 22

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

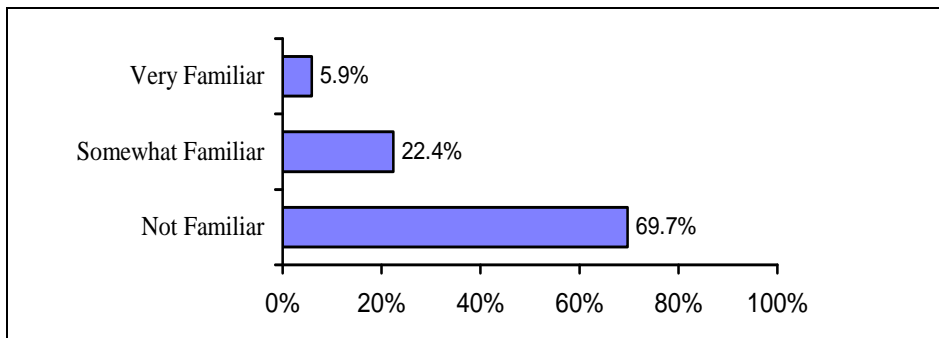


Highlights:

- 65.5 percent of respondents regularly or occasionally watch televised meetings of Barnstable town boards or commission on cable television Channel 18.

Figure 23

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



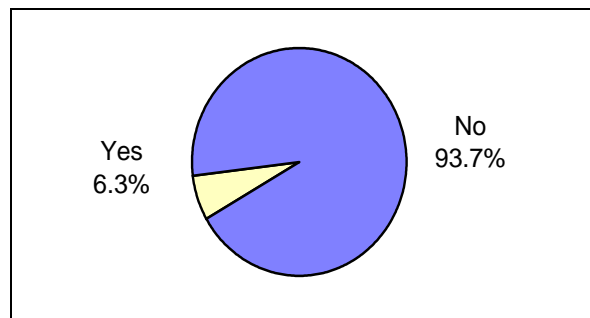
Highlights:

- Almost thirty percent of respondents (28.3%) are very or somewhat familiar with the town’s cable programming, like “Talk of the Town” and informational videos shown on Cable 18.

Table 14
Is there a particular program or information that
you would like to see on Town Cable 18?
(N=29)

Programs	Frequency
Event information	4
Weekly town news	3
Board/committee meetings	3
Environmental information	3
School information	3
Other	9

Figure 24
Are you a subscriber to the Barnstable Bulletin?
(N=396)



Highlights:

- 6.3 percent of respondents are subscribers to the Barnstable Bulletin.

Image of Barnstable

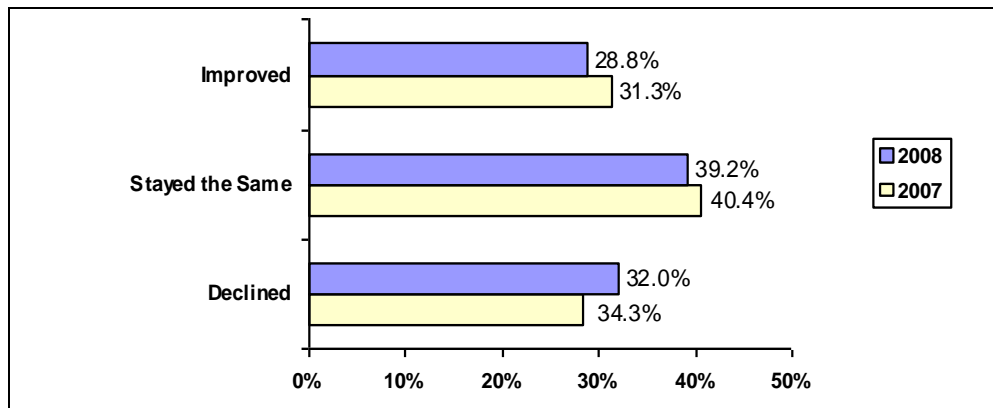
Table 15
What one word or phrase best describes your image of Barnstable?

Description	Percent Reporting
Great and Pleasant	49.9%
Beautiful and quaint	15.9%
Needs improvement/declining	4.8%
Other	29.2%

Highlights:

- Nearly half of respondents (49.9%) describe Barnstable as great and pleasant.
- 15.9 percent of respondents report Barnstable is beautiful and quaint.

Figure 25
Do you think the image of Barnstable has improved, stayed the same, or declined over the past five years?



Highlights:

- A majority of respondents (68.0%) think the image of Barnstable has improved or stayed the same over the past five years.

Table 16
Why do you think the town's image has improved?
(N=96)

Reasons	Frequency
Physical improvements	37
Effort put forth to improve	17
Growth	10
Activities, services	9
Quality of life	4
Leadership	2
Other	17

Highlights:

- 37 respondents Barnstable's town image has improved due to physical improvements.

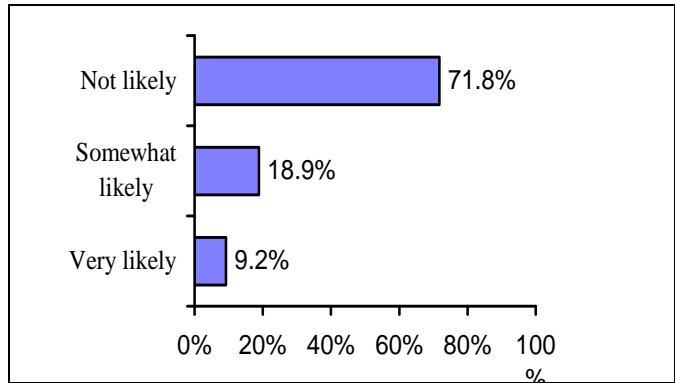
Table 17
Why do you think the town's image has declined?
(N=113)

Reasons	Frequency
Growth, population, overdevelopment	36
Safety issues	20
Housing issues	8
Immigration	4
Expense	3
Other	42

Highlights:

- 36 respondents report the town's image has declined due to growth, population and overdevelopment.

Figure 26
Over the next five years, what is your likelihood of moving out of Barnstable?



Highlights:

- A strong majority of respondents (71.8%) report they are not likely to move out of Barnstable within the next five years.

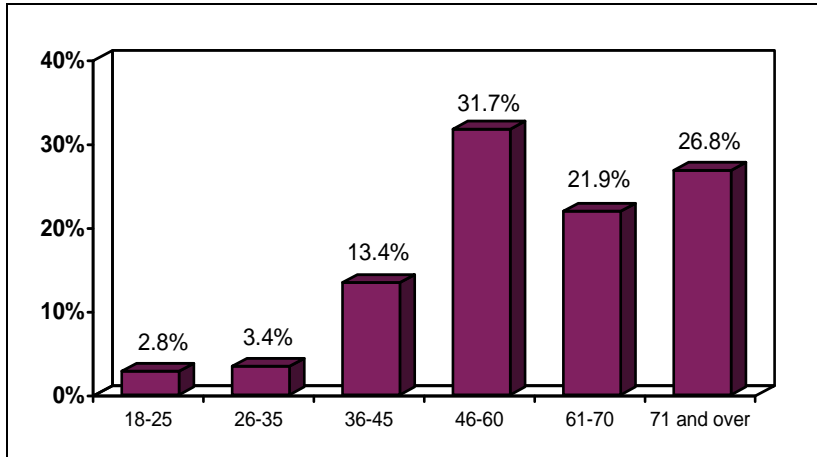
Table 18
What would be your primary reason for leaving?
(N=98)

Issue	Frequency
Affordability	19
Age, retire	11
Family	9
Lack of jobs, services	9
Crowding	8
Warmer climate	5
College, school system	4
Other	33

Highlights:

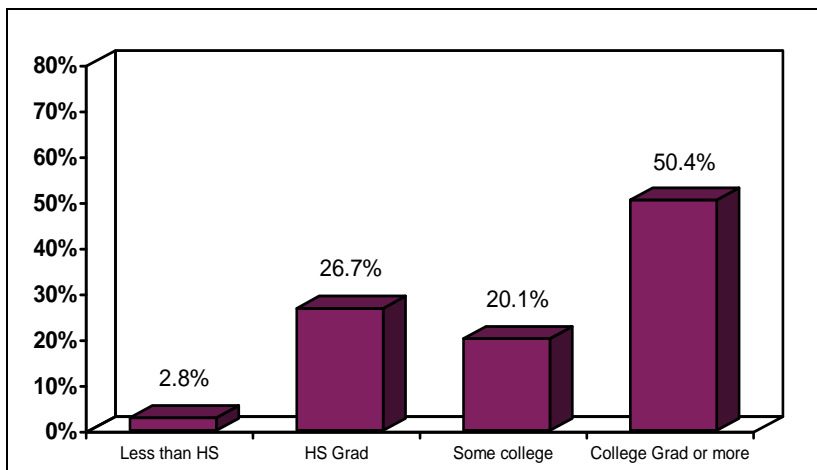
- Respondents report affordability (19) is the primary reason for leaving Barnstable.

Sample Demographic Characteristics



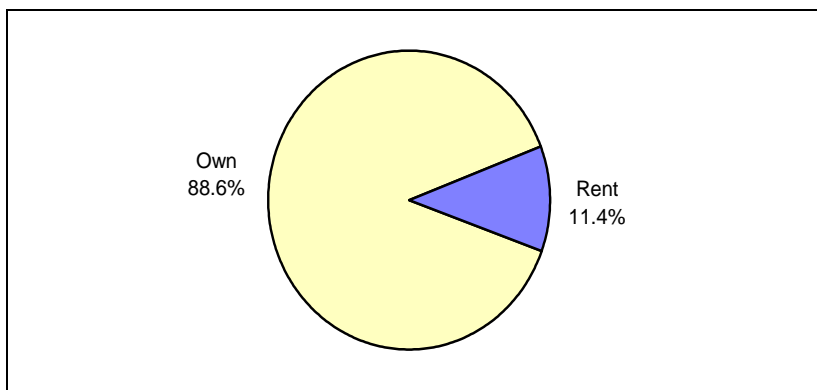
Age

The majority of respondents (31.7%) ages range from 46 to 60.



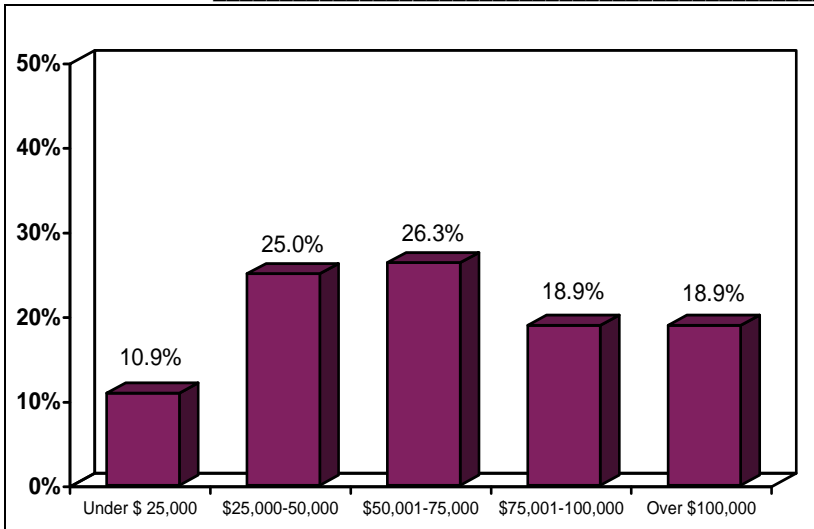
Education

A strong majority (70.5%) of respondents have attained a college degree or more.



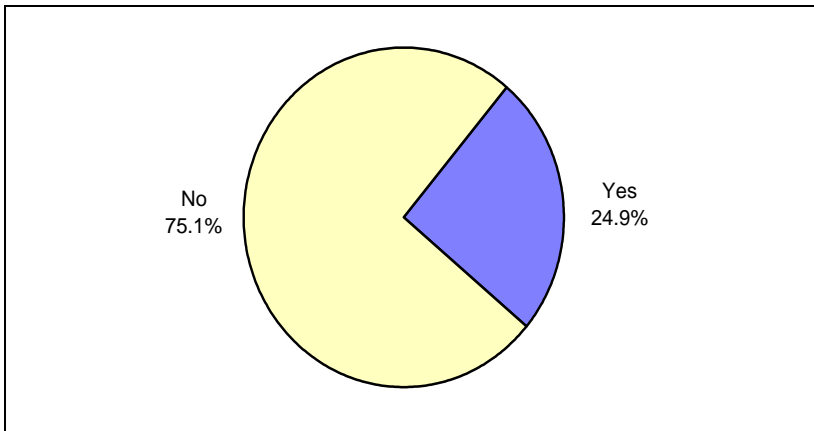
Own or Rent

Nearly ninety percent of respondents (88.6%) own their home.



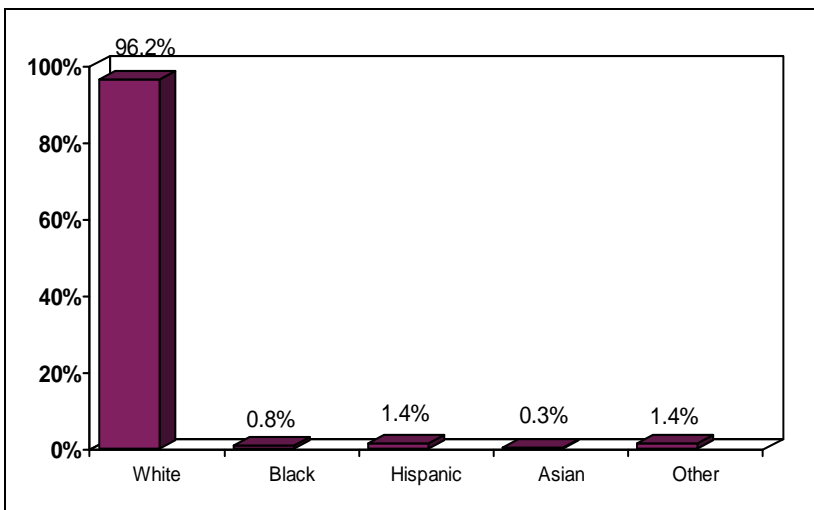
Income

The majority of respondents (26.3%) have an annual income of \$50,000 to \$75,000.



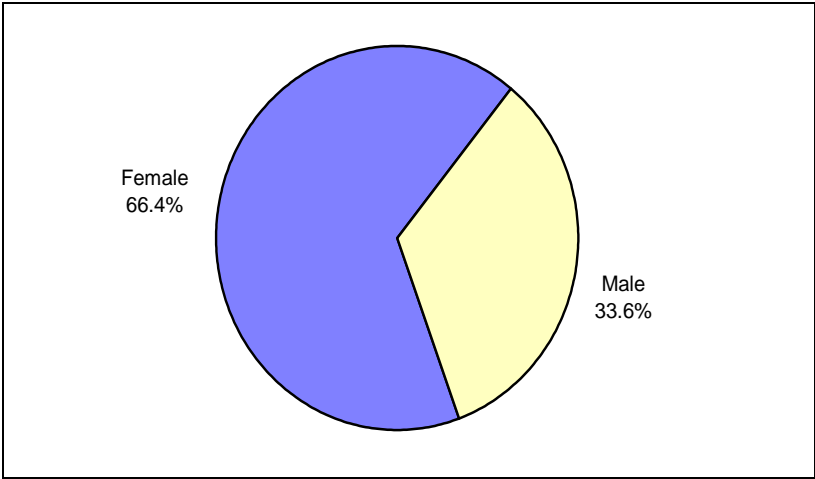
Children Living at Home

Nearly 25 percent of respondents (24.9%) have children living at home.



Ethnic Group

An overwhelming majority of respondents (96.2%) are white Caucasian.



Gender

The majority of respondents (66.4%) were female.



***Division of External Affairs
Institute for Regional Development***

One of the missions of Bridgewater State College is to serve the Southeastern Massachusetts region by working to enhance its intellectual, economic, cultural and civic well being. To this end, the College established the Institute for Regional Development on September 1, 1996. The Institute serves as the viable focal point for College initiatives related to enhancing the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts. The mission of the Institute is to serve as a resource center for the public, private, and non-profit sectors of Southeastern Massachusetts through applied research, training, and technical assistance programs.

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