TOWN OF HALFMOON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT AUGUST 2024

ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Town of Halfmoon

A. SURVEY OVERVIEW

As part of the public engagement component of the Town of Halfmoon Comprehensive Plan Update, an online community needs survey was developed. The purpose of this survey was to gather input from community members, business owners and other stakeholders about Halfmoon. This information will help inform the overall vision, goals and strategies for the town and help shape the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Community Survey Card Handout

The survey was created and distributed using Survey Monkey and went live on March 23rd, 2023. Paper copies were available at request and submitted to Town Hall (2 Halfmoon Town Plaza, Halfmoon, NY 12065). The survey remained open until May 19th, 2023, with exactly four hundred (400) responses received.

The survey was advertised on the Town of Halfmoon Comprehensive Plan Update website (www.planhalfmoon.com/survey) and the Town of Halfmoon Website (www.townofhalfmoon-ny.gov). Additionally, several news releases were distributed prior to and during the survey period. Information and links to the survey were also distributed during the survey period on project cards which included a Quick Response (QR) code so respondents could access the survey directly on their mobile device.

Data Limitations

The survey is one piece of multiple public engagement activities that help recognize themes throughout the community. Because the survey responses are self-selecting, they are not statistically valid. The survey alone cannot be used to find the "answer" or "solution" but, can in part help find themes.

B. SURVEY TOPIC AREAS

The survey was divided into several topical areas to focus and categorize the questions. The survey topic areas include Demographic and Background information, Important Values, Important Assets to Town, Ideal Vision of the Town, Concerns, Opportunities, Future Housing and Future Growth. The following below is a description of each survey topic area.

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Demographic and Background Information

The demographic and background information section focuses on who is taking the survey. Getting a broad range of responders from the local area is important to address the needs of different demographics. Knowing age, location, housing demographics et cetera, can help address the Town's needs and where to broadcast information. Furthermore, knowing the responses are representative of a variety of respondents can assist in decision making that incorporates everyone.

Important Assets to Town

This section asks the respondents to name one place in Halfmoon that is an especially important asset. Information regarding what makes Halfmoon special to the community can indicate how the community uses the land, and opportunities for shaping future growth.

Opportunities

In this section the open-ended question had responders list three (3) opportunities they see to improve Halfmoon in the future. Furthermore, responders were asked a wide-array of potential areas of development, to rank on an opinion-based scale of 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'. Information on how residents perceive developmental opportunities can help Halfmoon prioritize accordingly.

Future Housing

The future housing section asks respondents what type of housing they'd prefer to see constructed in the next twenty (20) years. Responders were given the opportunity to submit their own responses as well. The responses can indicate what housing type(s) are lacking and/or what housing types are overdeveloped. This can help the Town of Halfmoon adjust to the housing needs of a growing community.

Important Values

The important values section focuses on what the community values most. Responders were given eight (8) values and selected their top three (3). Focusing on the outdoors, housing, business, the arts/culture, and community. Moreover, respondents were given the opportunity to submit their own responses. This information will help inform how the community views Halfmoon and existing community character.

Ideal Vision of the Town

This section asks respondents to describe their ideal vision for future Halfmoon in 5 to 10 years. The information received can inform Halfmoon about the overall needs and concerns of current land-use and developing community character. Further, the responses can help generate support for future projects that fit the vision of the community.

Concerns

This section focuses on what the community is concerned about now and in the future of Halfmoon. Responders were given nine (9) concerns and selected their top three (3). Focusing on land-use, housing, business/retail, resources, and neighborhoods. With the opportunity to submit their own responses. This information will help the Town define areas of concern and adapt as deemed fit for future developmental plans.

Future Growth

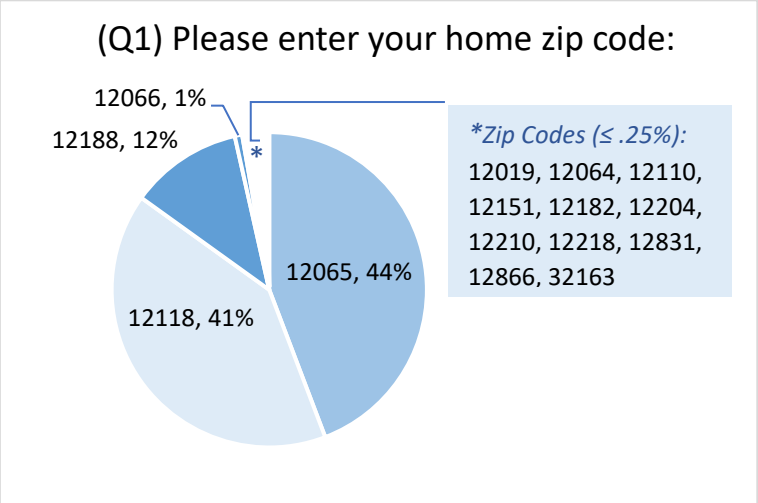
The future growth section asks a variation of potential avenues of growth in the Town. Responders were given nine (9) areas on residential, commercial, industrial, preservation/sustainable growth and no growth. With the ability to submit other responses. The information drawn can give insight into how the community views current growth and how the land-use should be allocated in the future.

C. Survey Highlights

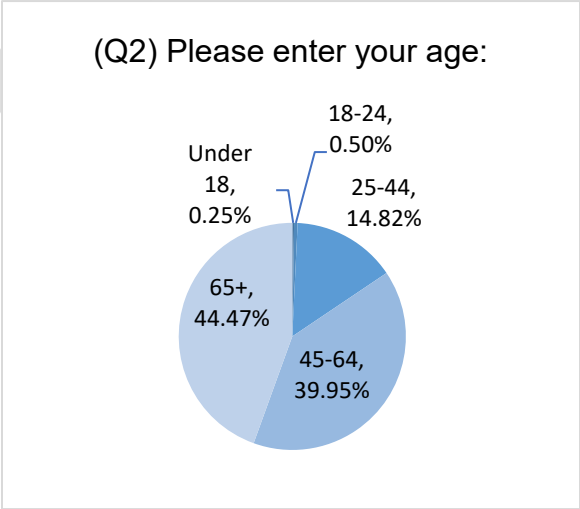
The following is a brief highlight of selected survey findings from each section of the survey.

Demographic and Background Information (Q1 – Q7)

Question 1 (Q1) of the survey asked respondents to indicate their zip code. The most frequent zip codes were 12065 and 12118. The survey results are representative of Halfmoon as the 12065, 12118 and 12188 zip codes cover majority of Halfmoon. In total, 2.75% of respondents lived in zip codes outside of Halfmoon. The following survey responses are representative of the Halfmoon community.

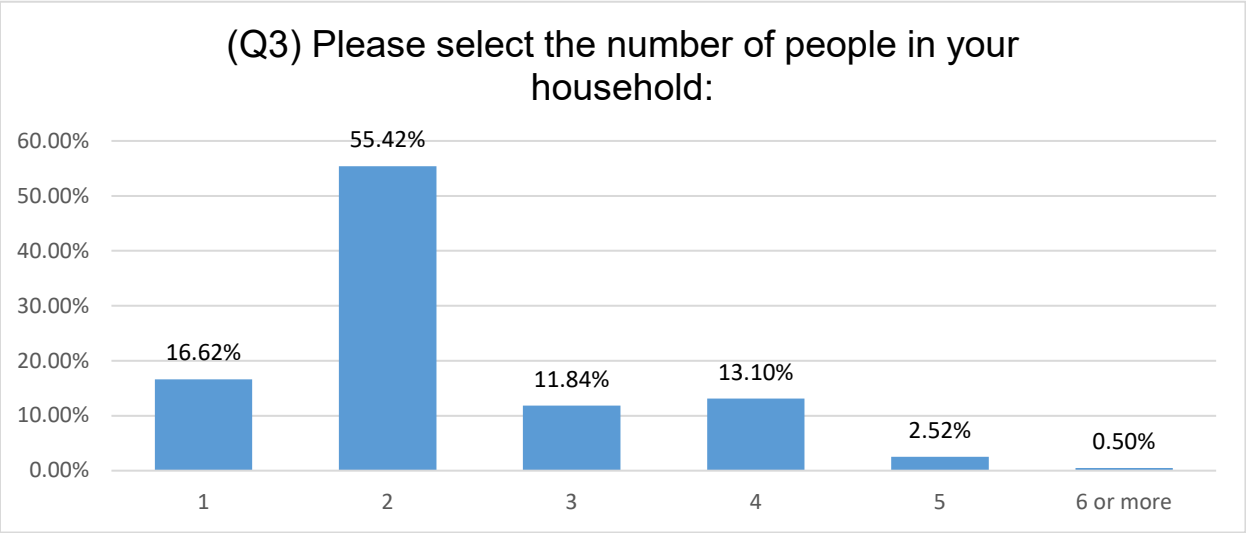


Question 2 (Q2) of the survey asked respondents to enter their age. The largest respondent age group was the 65+ age group. Of the 398 respondents that answered this question, 39.95% were in the 45-64-year-old age group, 14.82% were in the 25-44-year-old age group, 0.50% were in the 18-24-year-old age group, and 0.025% were in the under 18 age group. According to the ACS 2021 5-year estimate, 29.7% of the 45-64-year-old and 27.5% of the 25-44-year-old age groups make up the largest cohorts in Halfmoon[1]. This indicates that the age of respondents who completed the survey is closely representative of Halfmoons population. As the 65+ and 45-64-year-old age group had a comparable number of respondents at 44.47% (64+) and 39.95% (45-64). The trend in Halfmoon is towards an aging population, this will impact the needs of each demographic.

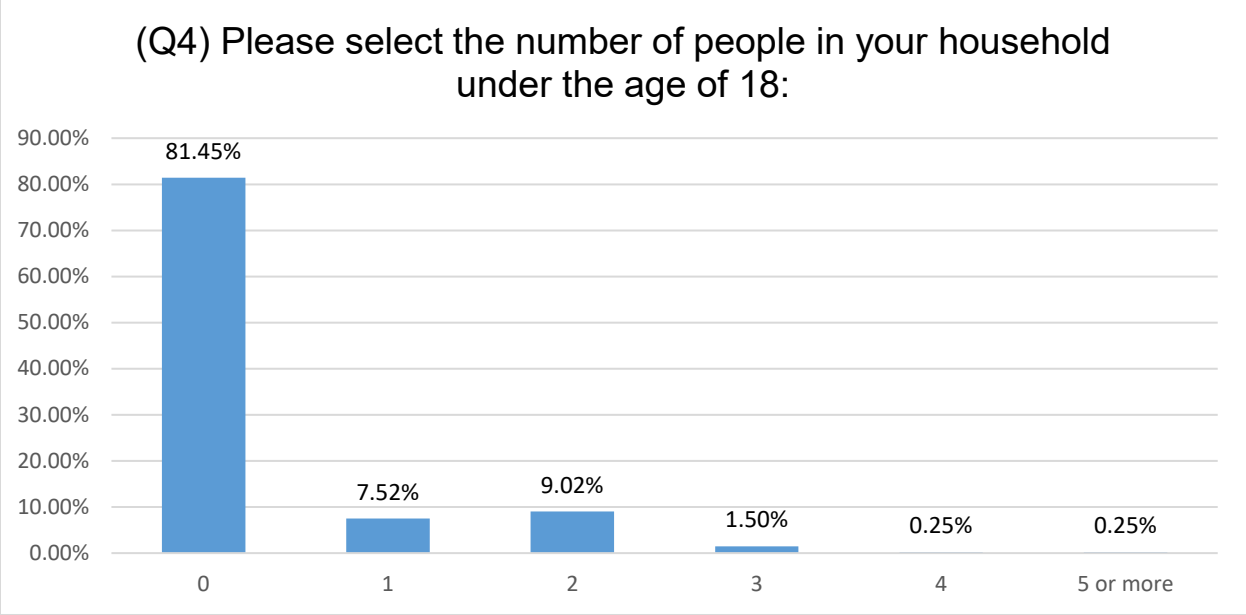


[1] American Community Survey, 2021 Five-Year Estimates

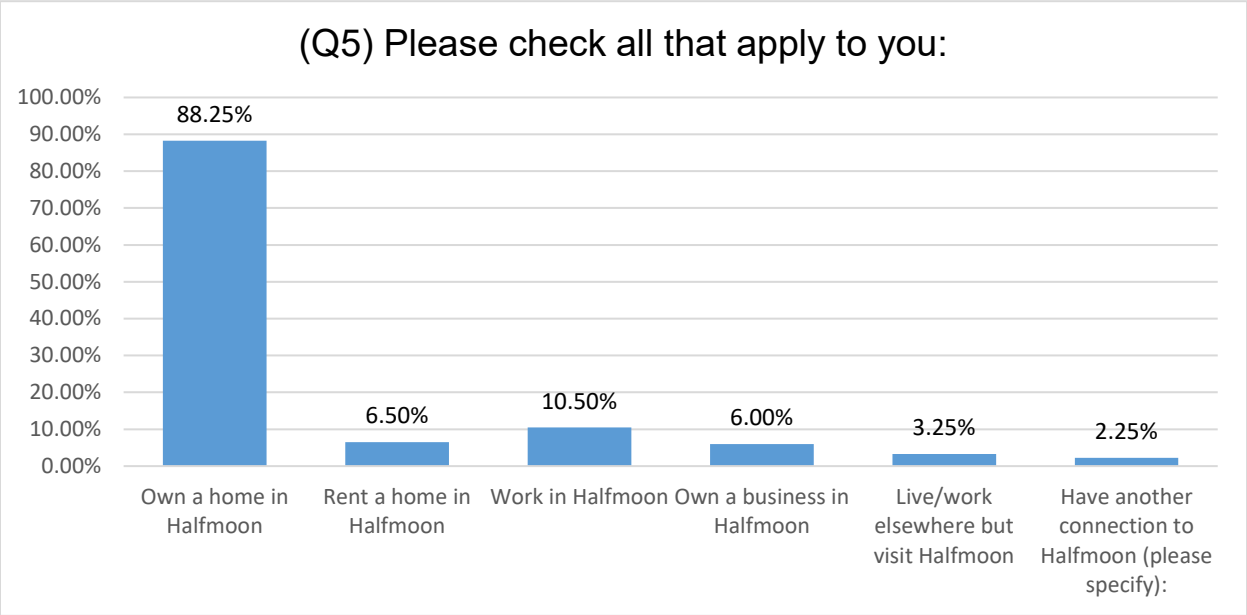
Question 3 (Q3) of the survey asked respondents to select the number of people in their household. This question gives insight into what the average household in Halfmoon looks like and future housing needs. Based on the response, 55.42% of the 397 respondents have a two-person household. Further, indicating majority of households likely comprise of young adults and/or empty nesters. In Question 4 (Q4), this information is further illustrated.



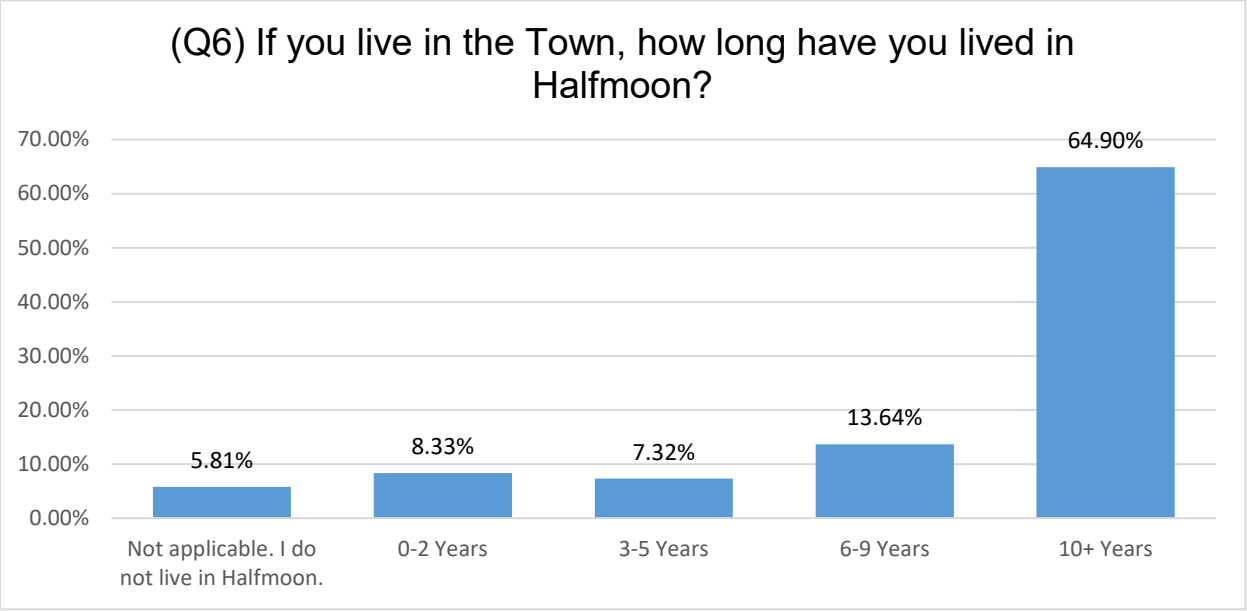
Question 4 (Q4) of the survey asked respondents to select the number of people in their household under the age of 18. This question allows the Town to better understand the youth population growing up in Halfmoon. Subsequently, the responses indicate 81.45% of the 399 respondents have no one in their household below the age of 18. This is consistent with a growing older population across the state. Often, baby boomer households are downsizing, and young adults are looking for early-stage housing.



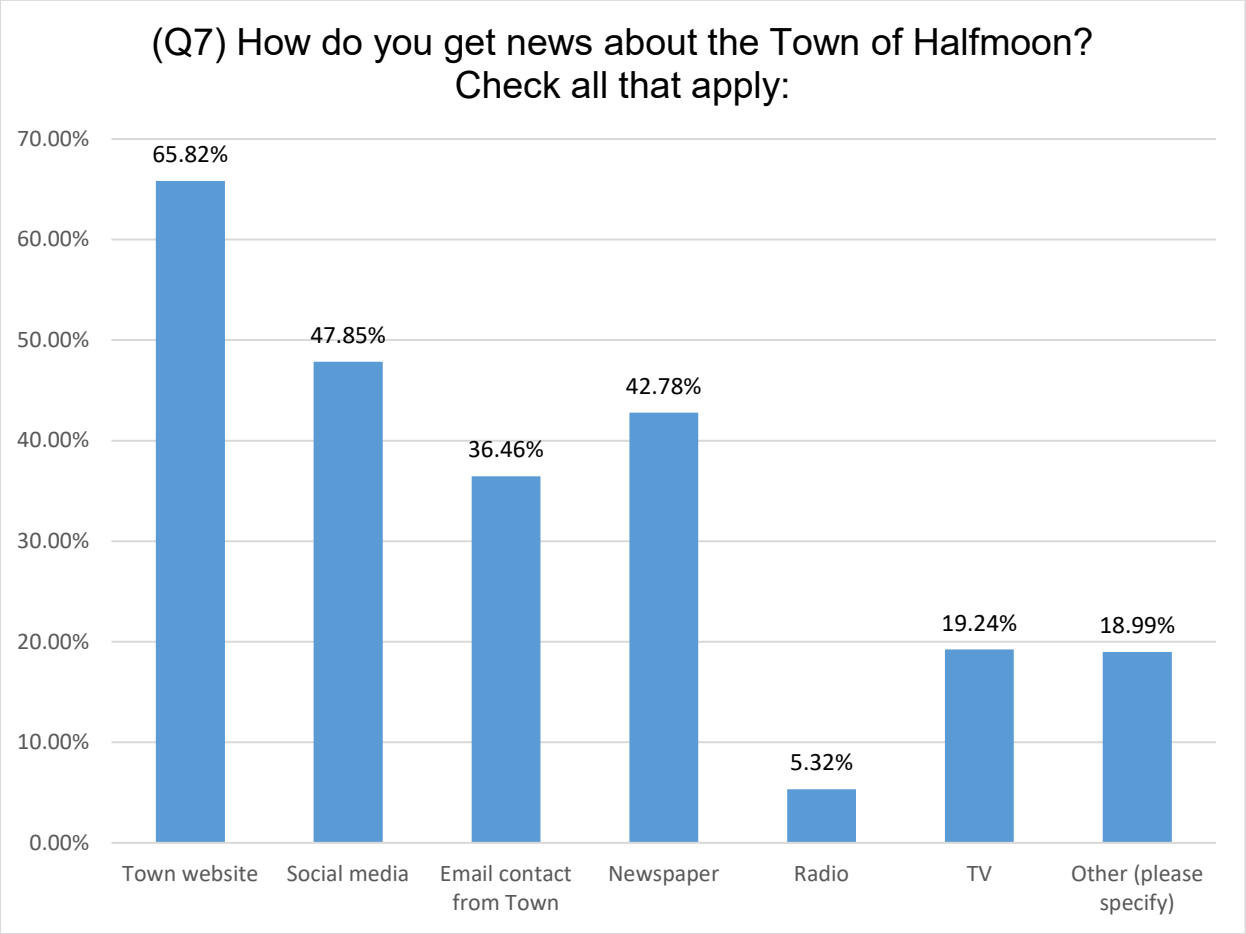
Question 5 (Q5) of the survey asked respondents to check all boxes that applied to them. This question gives further insight into the respondent's relation to Halfmoon. Out of the 400 respondents, 88.25% own a home in Halfmoon. This is an important consideration when analyzing the survey results. As the results closely represent the view of an average Halfmoon resident.



Question 6 (Q6) asked respondents if they live in town, how long have they lived here for. The graph below indicates that of the 396 respondents, 64.90% have lived in Town for ten (10) years or more. Based on the responses it's inferred majority of the survey pool has experienced change/growth in Town. This is important to consider as responders likely have insightful opinions and plan on continuing to live in Halfmoon for an extended period.

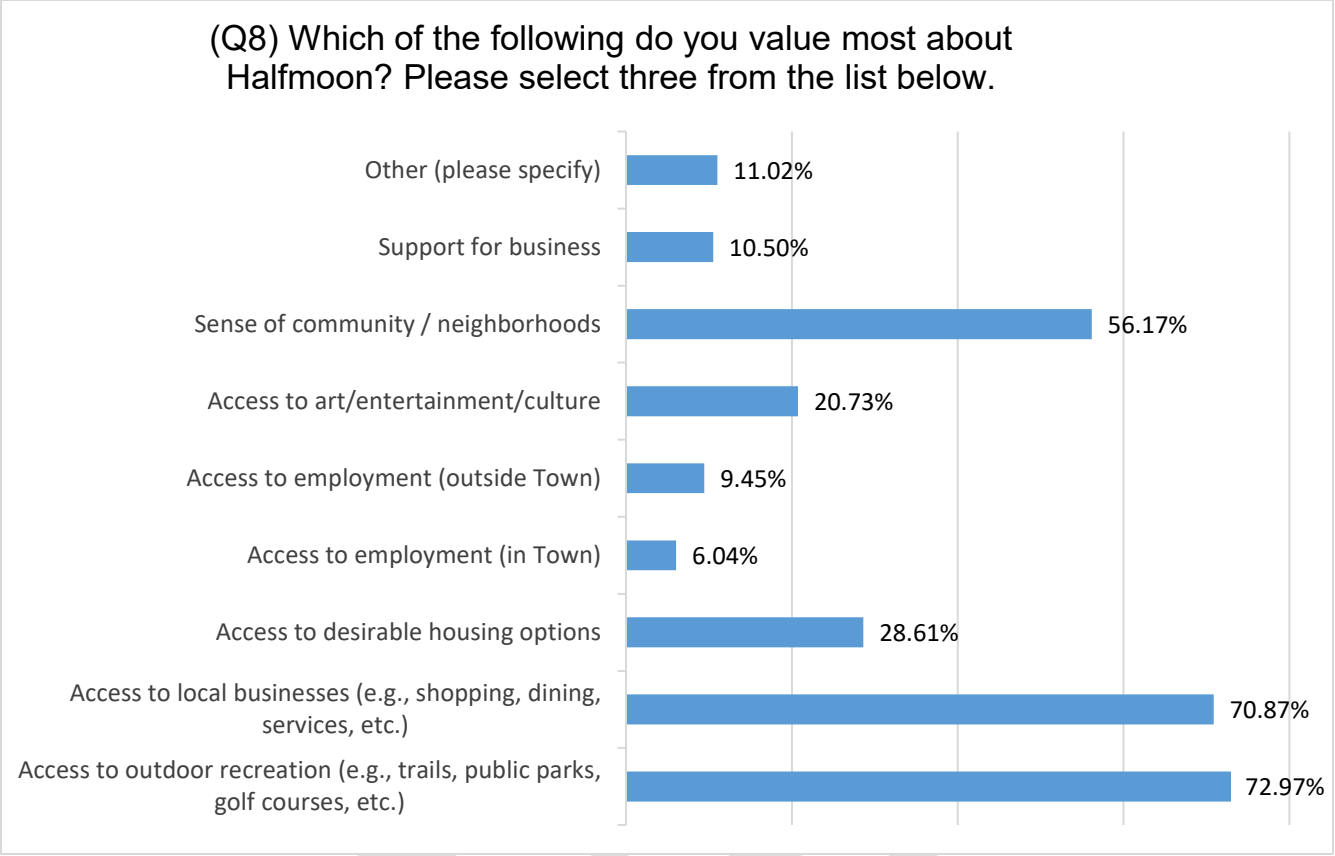


Question 7 (Q7) asked respondents how they get news about the Town. This is informative for future project plans, identifying where to publish information to reach the widest audience. Out of 395 respondents, 65.82% receive news from the Town's website. Moreover, 47.85% of respondents get news from social media. While 42.78% get news from the Newspaper. Similarly, in the "Other" category the most common source was the "Halfmoon Navigator" (the Town Newsletter). This suggests a mix of online and physical copies of Town news would reach the most people.



Important Values

Question 8 (Q8) asked respondents to select three (3) of their top values regarding the Town of Halfmoon. The graph below shows a breakdown of what respondents value the most. Out of the 381 responses, 72.97% of respondents value access to outdoor recreation, with access to local businesses at a close second. The least valued were access to employment in and out of Town. This is important when proposing future developments on what features Halfmoon residents want maintained, and potential areas of improvement.



Important Assets to Town

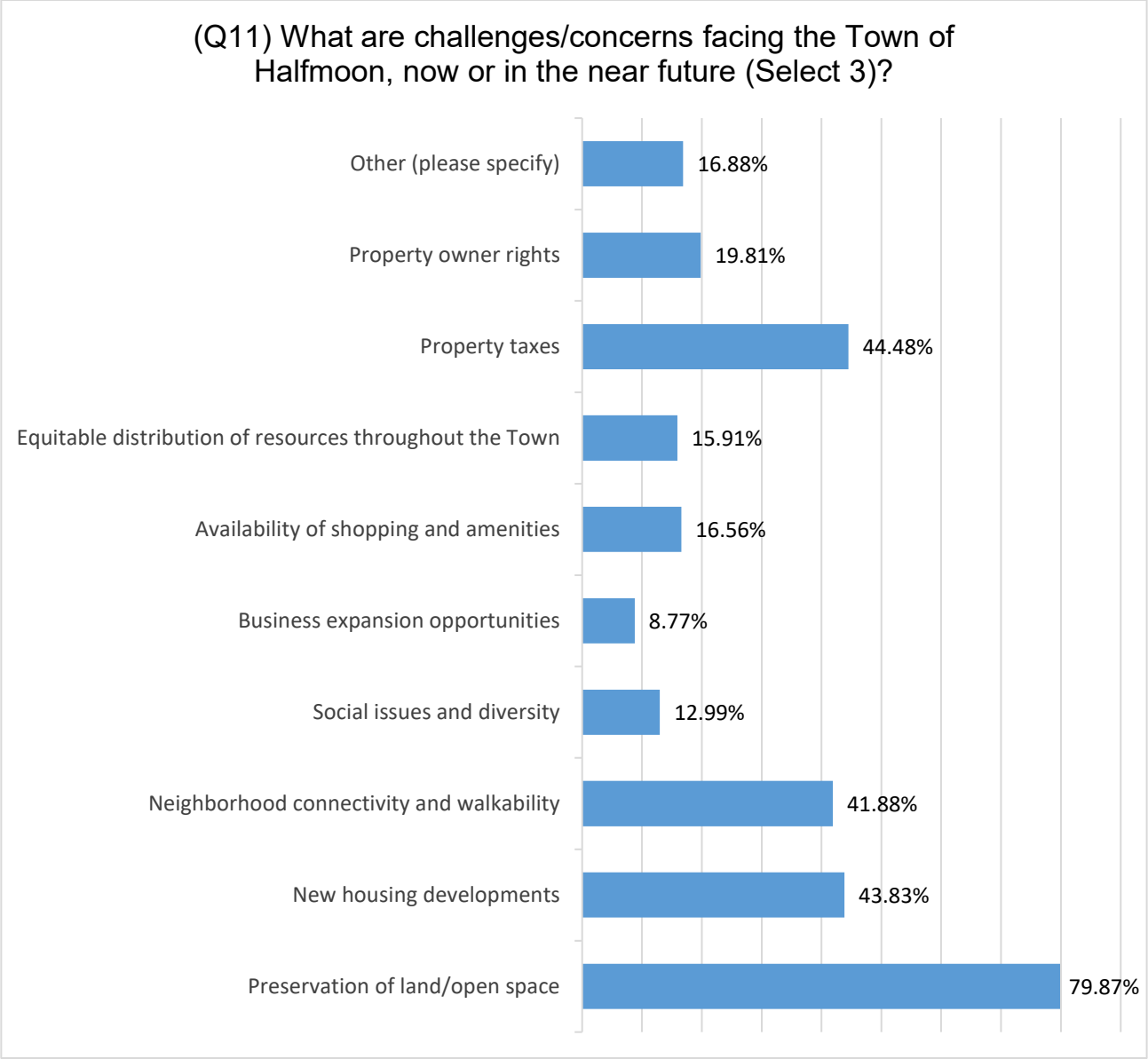
Question 9 (Q9) was open ended and asked respondents to give a place in Halfmoon they consider an important asset. The locations with the most comments included: the Town Park, Walking trails (ex. Zim Smith Trail), the Riverfront and the Senior Center.

Ideal Vision of the Town

Question 10 (Q10) was open ended and asked for respondents to describe their ideal vision of Halfmoon 5 to 10 years from now. Common themes from the responses included: none - slow growth, maintain and/or increase green/ open spaces, and greater walkability. It is worth noting that the prospect of future development is split between slow and no growth.

Concerns

Question 11 (Q11) asked respondents to select 3 of their largest challenges/concerns with Halfmoon now and in the future. Of the 308 respondents, the most selected responses were “preservation of land/open space” (79.87%), “property taxes” (44.48%), “new housing developments” (43.83%), and “neighborhood connectivity/walkability” (41.88%). Notably, the most common response in the “Other” category was traffic. The responses align with the most frequent themes from Question 10 (Q10). Taking note of challenges will help the Town best allocate future development for the good of all.

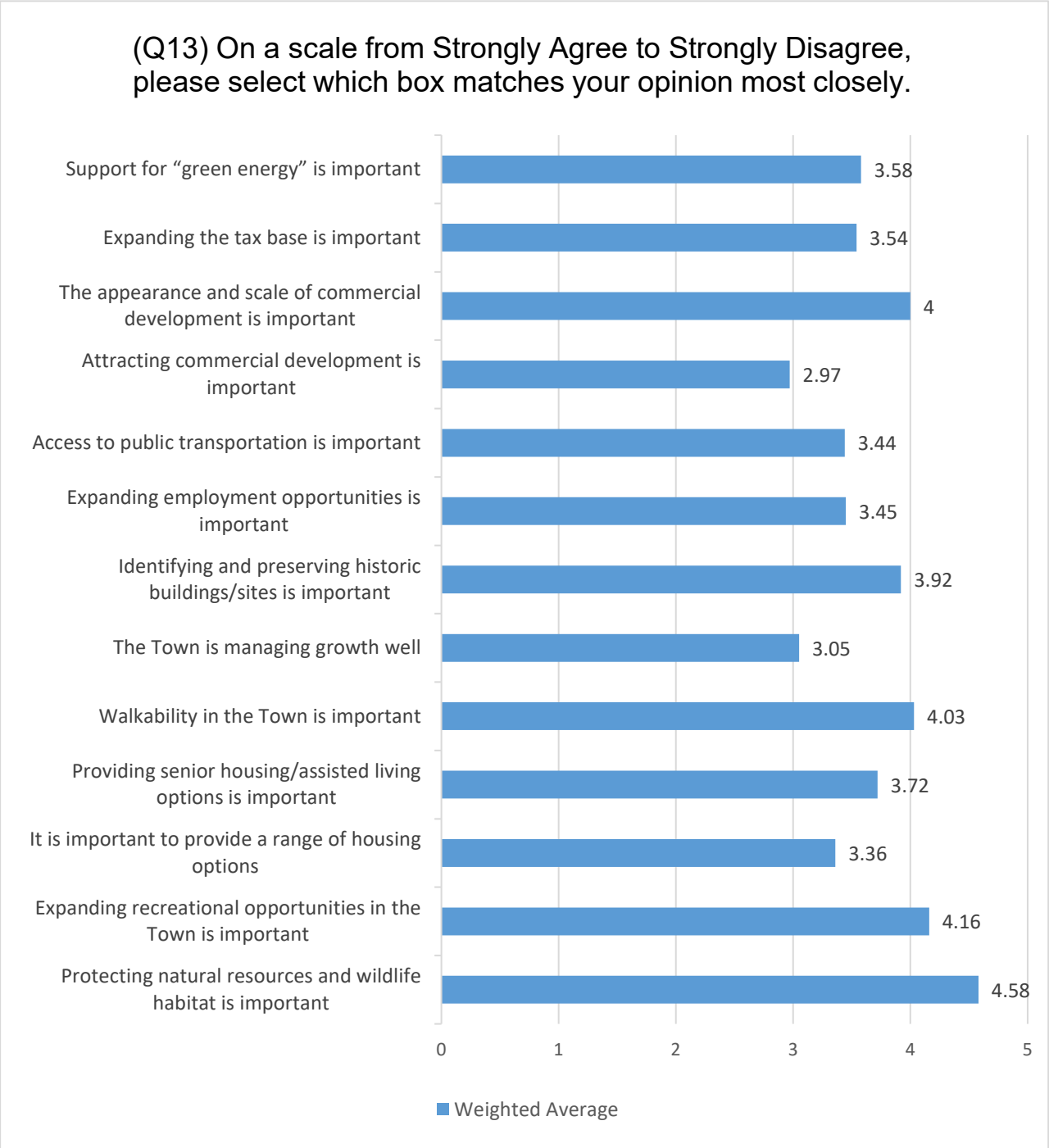


Opportunities (Q12 – Q13)

Question 12 (Q12) was open ended and asked respondents to list three (3) opportunities they see for Halfmoon to improve in the future. The most common themes are as follows: preservation of open/ green spaces, control of traffic, improve roads and slowed development.

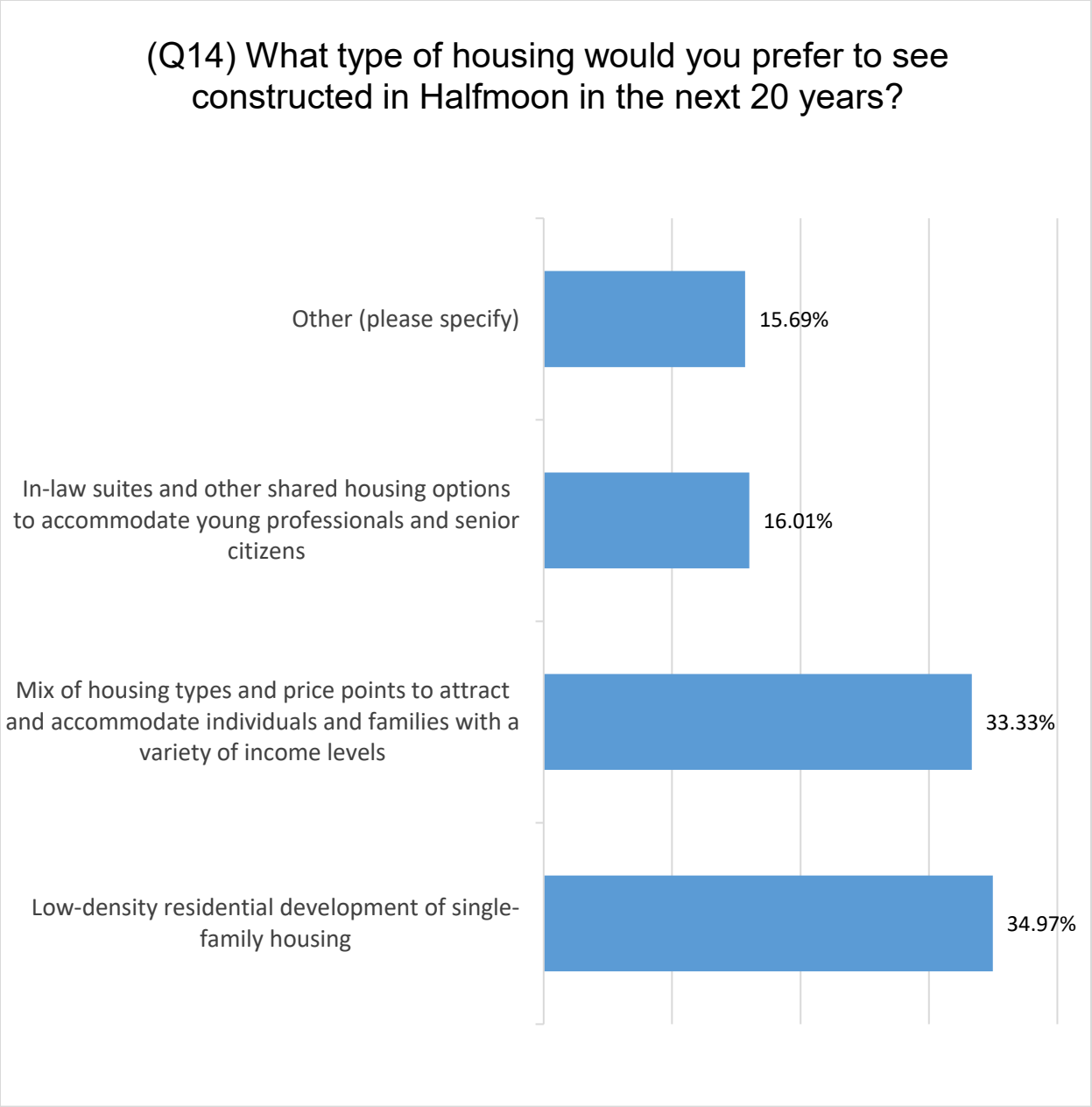
Question 13 (Q13) asked respondents to rate the following thirteen (13) questions, using a scale of "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The responses are charted as weighted averages, the notable responses are as follows. Of the 312 responses "protecting natural resources and wildlife habitat…" (65.16%, Strongly Agree), had the highest frequency of voters. Following in a close second, "expanding recreational opportunities…" had 39.41% of respondents strongly agree. Whereas, increasing

commercial development (13.25%, Strongly Disagree) and the Town managing growth well (11.48%, Strongly Disagree), fell lower on the opinion-based scale. Further suggesting respondents beyond a place of residency, value Halfmoon for its community, recreational activities, and open/ green spaces.



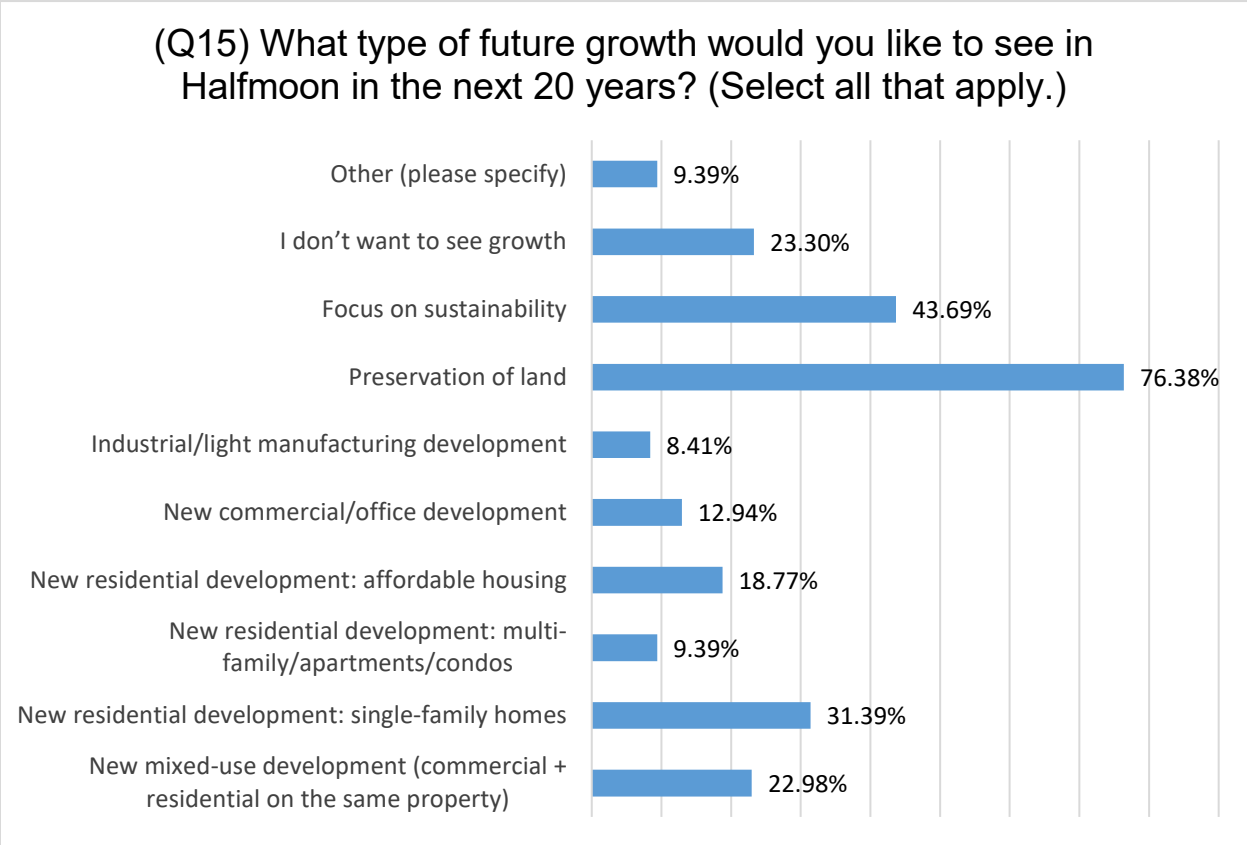
Future Housing

Question 14 (Q14) asked respondents to choose what type of housing they would prefer to see built or to suggest another idea. Of the 306 respondents 34.97% would prefer "low-density residential development of single-family housing". In a close second, 33.33% would prefer a "mix of housing types and price points…individuals and families…variety of income levels". The most common responses in the "Other" category are as follows: none and affordable senior housing. This demonstrates that there is a lack of low-density and affordable options for those who are looking to downsize or in the market for a starter home.



Future Growth

Question 15 (Q15) asked respondents to select the types of future growth they'd like to see in the next twenty (20) years. Of the 309 respondents, 76.38% would like to see the preservation of land in Halfmoon. Moreover, 43.69% of respondents would like to see a greater focus on sustainability. Whereas 8.41% of respondents want to see more industrial/light manufacturing development. The common theme that arose from the "Other" category is for slow/careful growth. The results align with previous results, emphasizing the preservation of open/ green spaces that make Halfmoon unique. The survey responses can help the Town of Halfmoon gain insight into potential avenues of future growth.



Q16 "Please Share any other ideas you have for Halfmoon"

Question 16 (Q16) asked respondents to share any other ideas they have for the Town of Halfmoon. Of the submitted comments, forty-five (45) were submitted, four (4) of which were saying thank you. The content of the substantive comments varied. A common theme that arose concerned the increase of traffic in Halfmoon (16 comments), focusing on Route 9 and speed concerns. Many expressed concerns over the changing character of Halfmoon (ex. Less rural, "becoming Clifton Park"), in tandem with rapid development (Apartments, Loss of green space etc.). The concern over future growth in Halfmoon varied. Out of ten (10) comments the consensus was growth is inevitable. But the Town's infrastructure must adapt with the growth, without losing Halfmoons historic charm. The remaining comments were

mixed, majority mentioned an increase of recreational opportunities. One example provided was optimizing the riverfront (kayak rental, walking trails). More parks and/or increased community activities at the park ((more sports (ex. disc golf) food truck days, walkable food options)). Additionally, a town pool was mentioned in a couple comments, along with further development to the Senior Center. Lastly the need of public transport options was raised along with Senior transport, bike safety concerns and better/more frequent Town communication methods (Text list, posting updates in the Facebook again etc.).

Q17 "If you would like, please upload your favorite photo that depicts a favorite place or activity in the Town of Halfmoon"

Question 17 (Q17) asked respondents to upload an image of their favorite place/activity in Halfmoon. In total, community members submitted eleven (11) images. Images uploaded included but are not limited to: Hayner's Country Store, Open/ Green Spaces (the Park, the Riverfront etc.), Wildlife, and A Sweet Retreat Café.

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