



Municipal Plan Review Mayor's Symposium

- Preliminary Report -

“Given the unprecedented level of development taking place within the City of St. John’s over the past few years, it has become clear that we must move forward with our Municipal Plan Review.”

- Councillor Tom Hann,
Chair Planning and
Housing Standing
Committee

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Residents listen to Mayor Dennis O'Keefe as he welcomes them to the first Mayor's Symposium to launch the City's Municipal Plan Review process.

Residents engage in public consultation

The Mayor's Symposium is the launch of the Municipal Plan Review in the City of St. John's and more than 100 residents gave up a Saturday morning to help the City plot its course for the next 10-years.

The event was kicked-off by Mayor Dennis O'Keefe, who encouraged residents to feel free to let it “all hang out” and give their opinions today.

“We decided to hold our event today to get a diverse group of residents here to help us plan for our City for the next five, 10 and 20 years,” says Mayor O'Keefe. “This is going to be a very interesting day for all of us.”

Councillor Tom Hann, who is the



Councillor Tom Hann introduces the Mayor's Symposium.

Chair of the Planning and Housing Standing Committee, also spoke at the launch and emphasized that this is just the first opportunity for residents to engage in the review process.

“This is just the first step of a very long journey and there will be many opportunities to

provide input along the way,” says Councillor Hann.

“We will hold neighbourhood public consultations and other meetings on specific issues that are addressed in the Municipal Plan,” he added. “We also encourage residents to provide us with written submissions regarding what they feel is important to capture in the Municipal Plan.”



“The Mayor’s Symposium gave me an opportunity to have meaningful input into what my community will look like for the next 10 years. I love St. John’s and want to make it better.”

- Alisha Morrissey,
Resident

Polling Questions:

I would buy a home next to a convenience store.

Strongly Agree 14%

Agree 33%

Neutral 28%

Disagree 14%

Strongly Disagree 11%

I would support a small apartment building in my neighbourhood.

Strongly Agree 54%

Agree 22%

Neutral 13%

Disagree 8%

Strongly Disagree 4%

Quality of Life

The Municipal Plan paints a 10-year vision for our City by laying out policies that guide development. These policies have a great deal to do with the quality of life of residents because they determine how the City is structured from a land use perspective.

The first question participants were asked was whether they felt their quality of life was good. The results showed that 85 per cent of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that their quality of life was good.

Participants were then asked to identify the ways that the quality of life in the City of St. John’s can be improved and some of the ideas included:

- Protecting and increasing green space (ex. landscaping parks, trails, etc...)
- Better access to amenities within

walking distance

- Increasing recreation activities and infrastructure (ex. lighting in walking trails)

- Preserving historical areas

- Better public transit

- More access to affordable housing

- Having mixed income housing

(balanced approach)

- Reviewing taxation for seniors

- Keeping taxation affordable

- Having safer sidewalks, schools and playgrounds

- Better urban design in planning

- Better infrastructure

- Improving and maintaining road infrastructure

- Engaging citizens in city planning process

- Providing a more walkable city

General Land Use

The Land used within a municipality serves a variety of purposes. The City is growing quickly and we all have our own unique vision of what the City should look like.

Participants were asked to think about the neighbourhoods where they live and discuss what land uses they would like to see in their

neighbourhood. Land use development includes both the development of vacant land and redevelopment of existing properties. Ideas included:

- Green space and community gardens
- Sidewalks and walking trails to navigate city
- Blending residential, commercial and

recreation (mixed use)

- Utilize vacant land and brownfield sites for development

- Less car dependent city (ability to walk to amenities)

- Water and sewage planning (ex. floods and global warming)

- More low rise development

- When increasing density consider infrastructure

- Preserve and plan heritage areas

- Protect and preserve farmland

- Increase multi-use development

- Increase local shops, cafes and clothing stores

- Increase attractiveness of older buildings



Recreation Polling Questions:

Would you like to see facilities replaced with similar sized new neighbourhood facilities or one City-wide super facility?

Neighbourhood 94%

One City-wide 6%

Considering outdoor facilities, would you prefer a complex with amenities grouped together, or single stand-alone neighbourhood facilities?

Grouped 16%

Stand-alone 84%

What additional amenities would you like to see in neighbourhood parks.

Tennis Courts 12%

Basketball Court 13%

Blacktop 15%

Mini-Skate Park 9%

Ball Field 16%

Dog Park 15%

Exercise Equip. 12%

Other 14%

Housing

Residents were polled on the top three types of residential development they would like to see in their neighbourhood. The top answers were seniors housing at 18 per cent, apartments at 17 per cent and Condominiums and Townhouses tied with 15 per cent.

Then participants were asked what they would like to see in the city and apartments was first at 26 per cent, followed by seniors housing at 24 per cent and condos/townhouses at 13 per cent.

The top nine ideas that residents had on how the City can encourage more 'affordable' housing to be built within the City included:

1. Mandate inclusion of affordable housing in new and existing development
2. Increase access to affordable land for housing
3. Set a benchmark on what affordable housing is
4. Offer tax breaks and incentives for

building or improvement of affordable housing

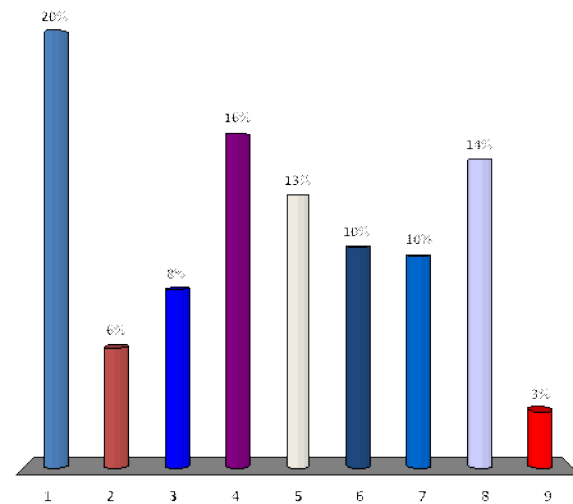
5. Create higher density to lower cost options (ie. apartment complex)

6. Develop plans and strategies for affordable housing

7. Provide government subsidies for affordable housing

8. Encourage public/private partnerships for affordable housing

9. Other



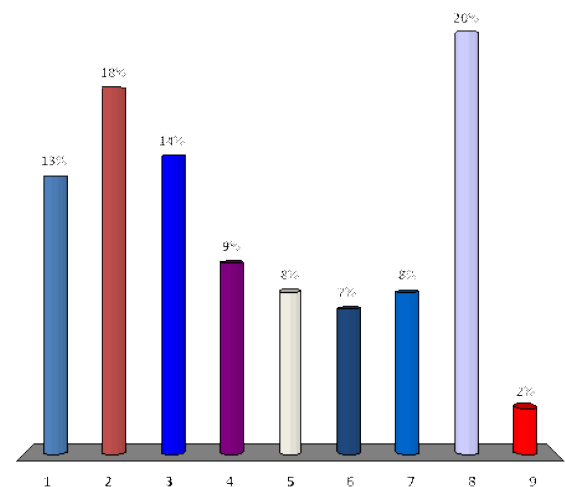
Population and Demographics

Participants had the following suggestions on what the City should do to prepare for an aging population:

1. Improve public transit (eg. accessibility)
2. Walkable neighbourhoods and accessible sidewalks
3. Multi-use centres for seniors
4. Taxation based on income
5. Use senior's expertise and knowledge (eg. adv comm)
6. Increase health infrastructure for seniors
7. Improve snow clearing/removal

8. Create affordable housing for seniors

9. Other





Heritage

St. John's is known worldwide for its unique architecture and colourful buildings. As the oldest continuous European settlement in North America, dating from 1497, it is important we preserve our heritage for generations to come.

When asked how the City should ensure the integrity of our Heritage Areas while encouraging new development, participants had the following ideas:

1. Subsidies for owners to maintain heritage properties
2. Creating a strong vision for downtown
3. Redevelopment and preservation of existing heritage buildings
4. Defining heritage
5. Regulations, guidelines and grants for

heritage areas

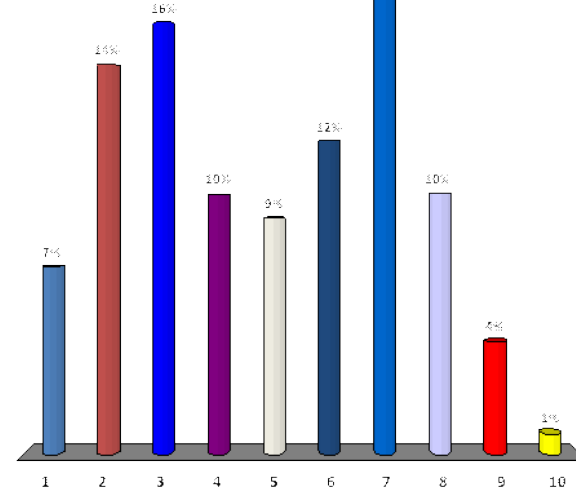
6. Preservation of view scapes (limiting of height of buildings)

7. Need for good design and architecture

8. Place larger structures outside of downtown areas

9. Reducing heritage area

10. Other



Factors important to retain/attract youth?

Living Space 35%

Activities 35%

Transportation 30%

Where do you look for art events & activities?

Newspaper 30%

City Website 3%

Social Media 26%

Internet Research 28%

Other 14%

Barriers to increased business development?

Transport costs 18%

Transportation 6%

Cost of Doing Bus. 20%

Regulations 29%

Labour Supply 16%

Other 11%

How often would you shop at a year-round marketplace?

> Once a week 35%

Once a week 33%

Twice a month 11%

Once a month 15%

Not at All 6%

Transportation would use on regular basis?

Park and Ride 10%

Metrobus 33%

Cycling Lanes 10%

Car Pool 4%

Walking 38%

Environment

Participants were polled on the top environmental issues related to the City's Municipal Plan. The top issue was parks, open space and trails at 19 per cent.

When participants were asked how they would balance development with environmental sustainability, they came up with the following ideas:

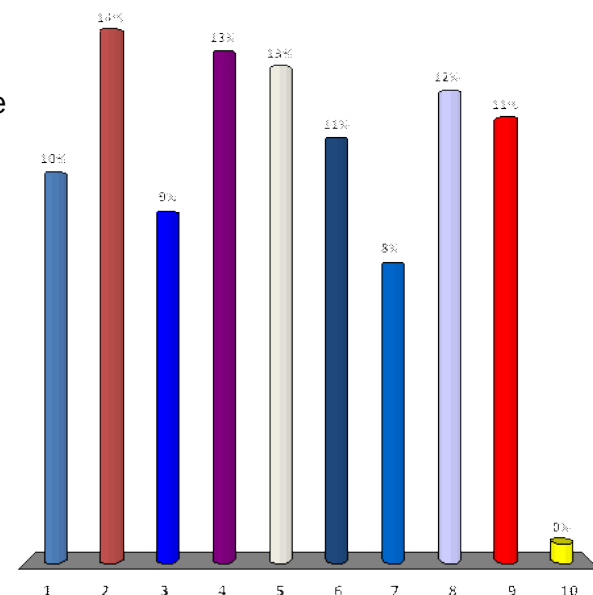
1. Creation of community and rooftop gardens
2. Protection of watersheds and wetlands
3. Enhanced mandatory recycling
4. More environmental regulations and building standards
5. Maintain a balance between development and environmental sustainability

6. More green space and parks

7. Agricultural land must be preserved

8. Encourage walking oriented city

9. Improve public transit





Additional Points of View

At the end of the Mayor's Symposium, the tables were opened up so that participants could talk about any additional issues or topics they felt the City should consider for inclusion in the Municipal Plan.

This gave participants an opportunity to discuss any issues they felt were important that were not addressed to that point in the Mayor's Symposium. All of the information gathered for this question, and for all of the questions asked throughout the day, will be posted to the City's website and e-mailed out to all participants in the Symposium.

Participants who would like to

provide written submissions on any of the topics discussed at the Mayor's Symposium or on any issue related to the Municipal Plan Review can submit their submissions to the City by e-mail at planning@stjohns.ca.

The City would like to thank all of the participants of the Mayor's Symposium for taking the time to provide us with feedback on this our first step of our Municipal Plan Review. There will be many other opportunities to engage in this process. Please check the City's webpage www.stjohns.ca which will post future engagement sessions. For more information you can also follow us on Twitter at @CityofStJohns.

Urban Forest

"We would like to see more trees. Open space does not just mean only grass"

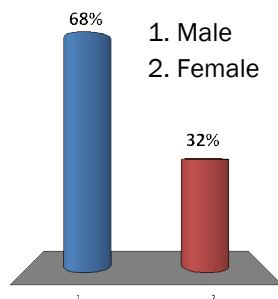
- Bruce Roberts,
Resident

"We need to look at development from different angles, because once developments are built it is hard to change."

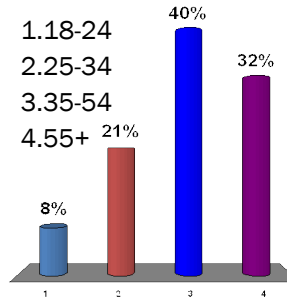
- Alexis Troake,
Resident

Who attended the Mayor's Symposium?

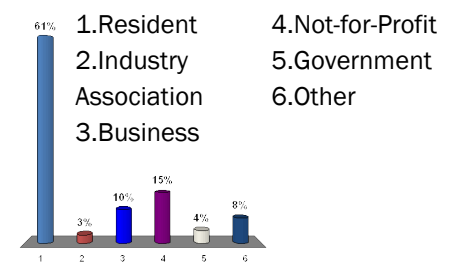
Gender



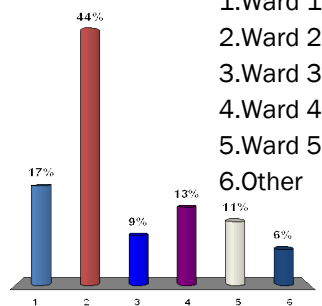
Age



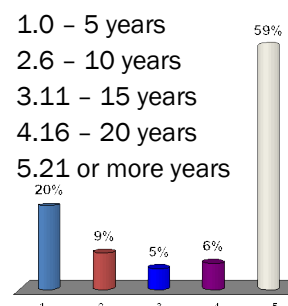
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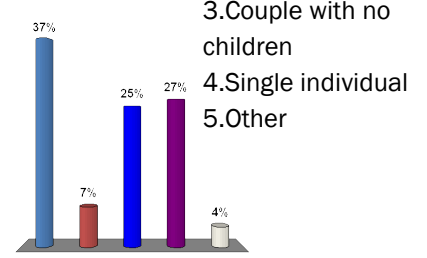
Ward



Years in St. John's



Family Structure



Living Arrangements
Home Owners 74%
Renter 25%
Other 1%

Current or Future
Business Owners
Yes 49%
No 51%