



# **STRATEGIC PLAN (2022 to 2026)**

**– *a community for everyone***

## ***What We Heard Report***

July 2022



## **APPROACH**

Community engagement served as the foundation for the strategic planning project. Hearing from citizens, staff, Council and key stakeholders was a priority and essential to its development.

Our outreach and engagement included more than 30 one-on-one interviews with Council and Department Heads/Managers; 100+ participants at the staff and community open houses; four visioning workshops, along with four refinement workshops with Council, stakeholders, Department Heads/Managers and the Staff Advisory Group; 400+ respondents to the online survey; 19,000+ reach and 1,200+ engagements via social media; print ads and marketing/promotional materials.

We launched a new digital engagement platform, charlottetownhall.ca and prominently featured the Strategic Plan project on the homepage. The new platform was used to provide project information along with key documents to support our engagement efforts. With more than 150 visits to the new site, the largest amount of traffic came directly to the new platform with a smaller portion being directed through social media and the City's website. We received six comments on the Strategic Plan through the new platform.

## **ABOUT THE SURVEY**

The online survey engaged Charlottetown residents, City staff, Council and community stakeholders to explore their vision for Charlottetown.

The survey was promoted online, through social media, print ads and at the open house events. A news release was also issued to encourage participation.

There were 432 responses to the community survey.

The survey covered the following themes:

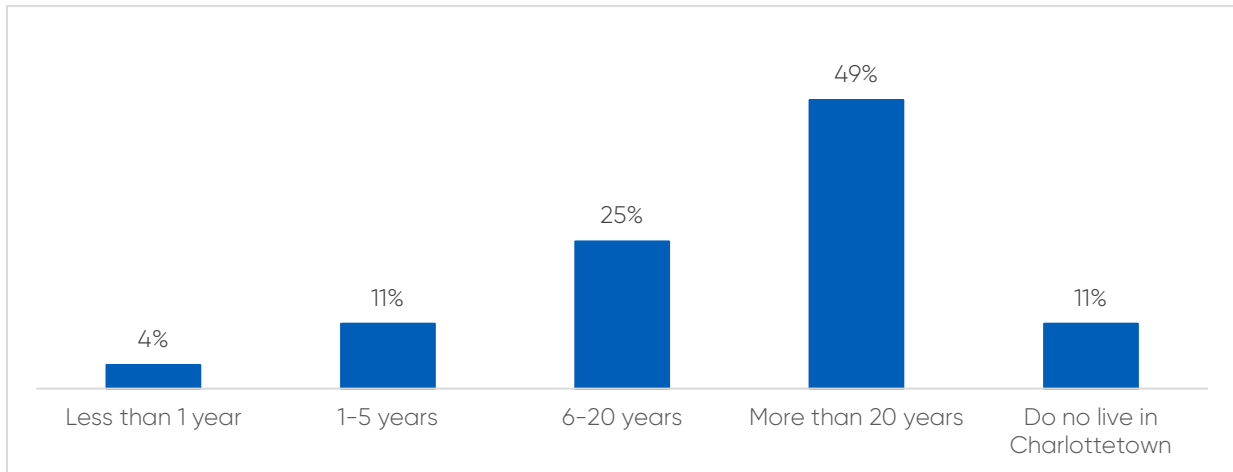
- strategic priorities for Charlottetown;
- concerns and thoughts about potential areas of improvement for the City; and,
- satisfaction with Charlottetown.

## Half of the respondents have lived in the City for more than 20 years

How long have you lived in Charlottetown?

A profile of how long survey respondents have lived in Charlottetown reveals:

- About half (49%) have lived for more than 20 years
- A quarter (25%) have lived for 6 to 20 years
- One in ten (11%) respondents do not live in Charlottetown

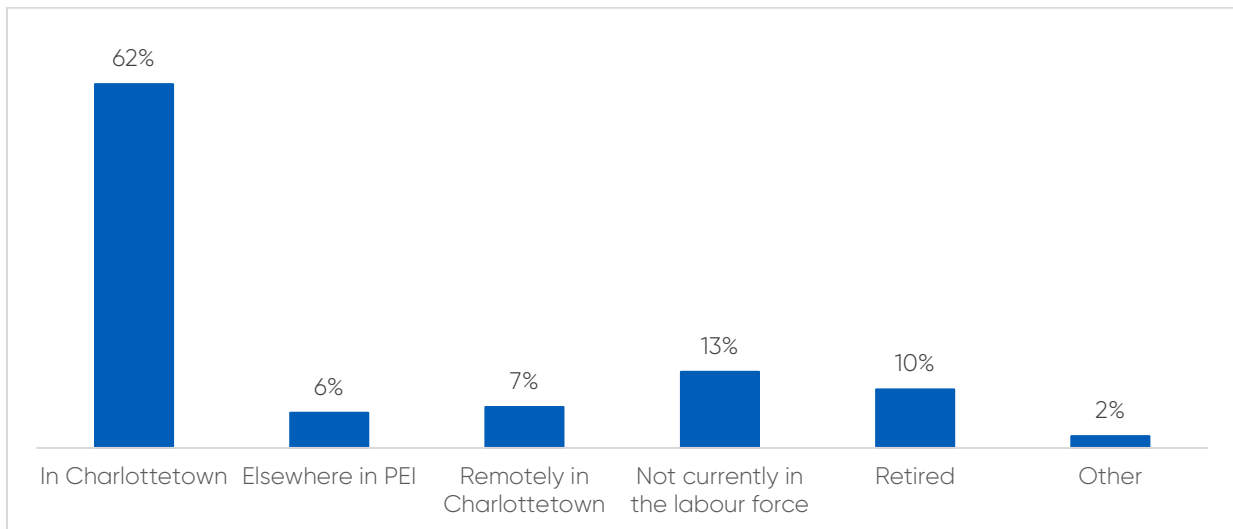


## More than half of the respondents work in the City

Where do you work?

A profile of where the respondents work indicates:

- Three in five (62%) work in the City
- One in ten (13%) participants are not currently in the labour force
- One in ten (10%) are retired

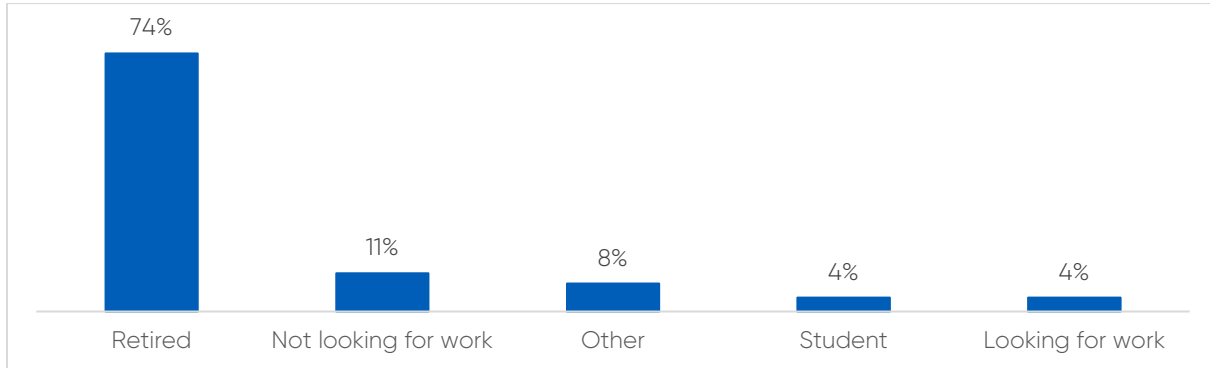


## Three-quarters of respondents are retired

Which of the following best describes you?

Among the respondents of the survey:

- Three quarter (74%) are retired
- One in ten (11%) are not looking for work
- One in twenty (4%) are students

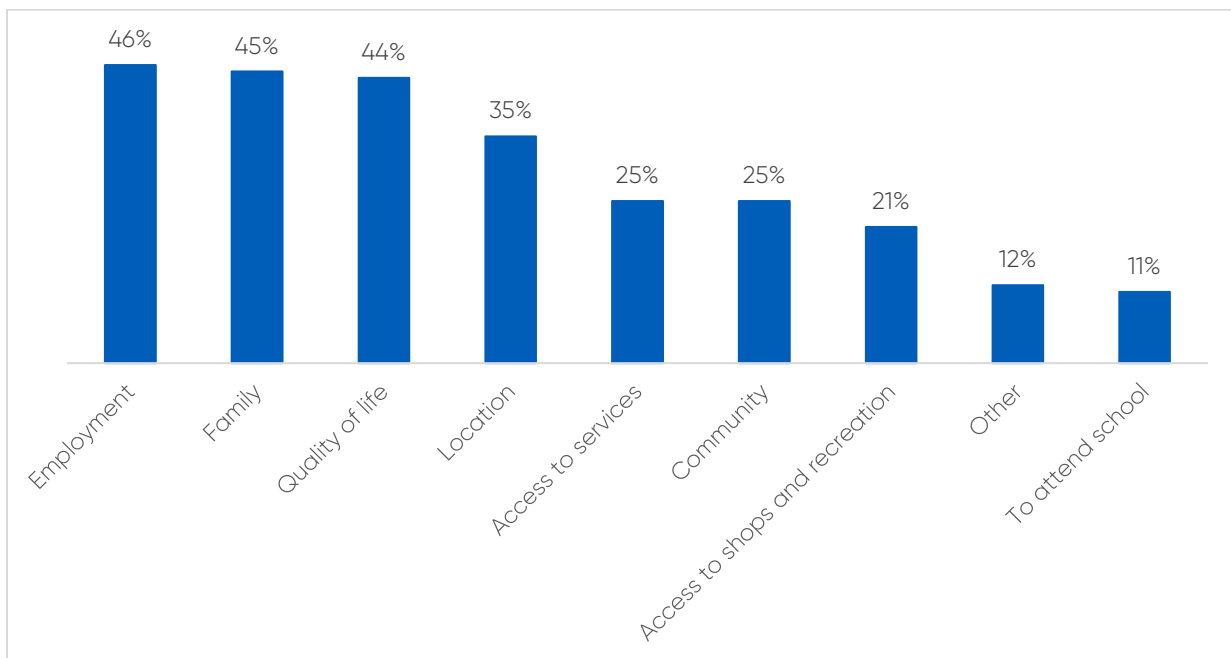


### Half of the respondents chose Charlottetown as a place to live for employment

What influenced you to move to Charlottetown (or stay if born in the City)?

Survey respondents chose Charlottetown for a range of reasons:

- About half (46%) chose the city for employment
- About half (45%) chose it for family
- About half (44%) chose it for quality of life

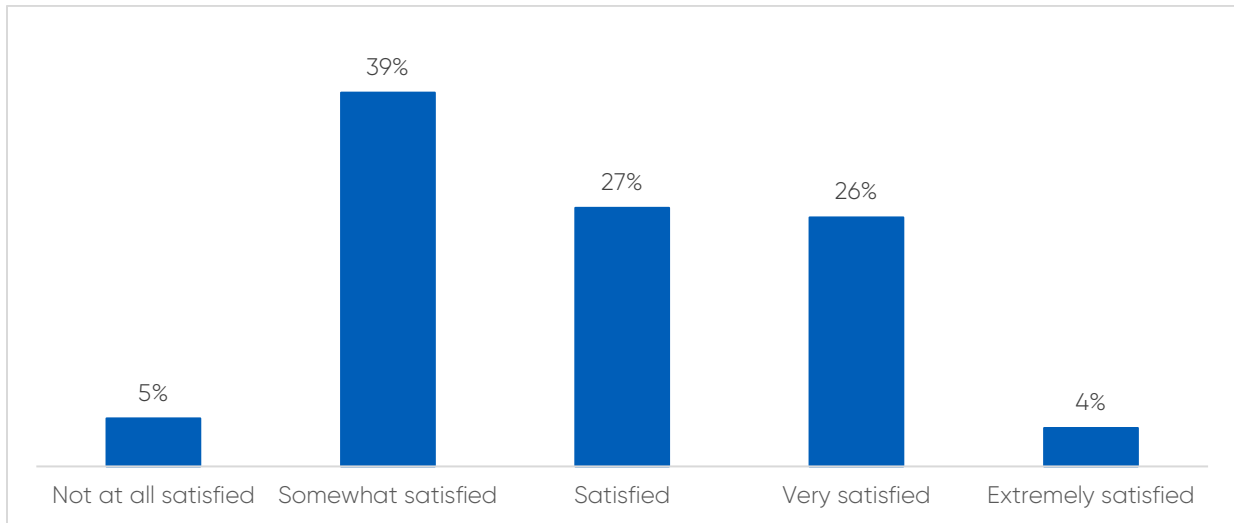


## Four in ten respondents are somewhat satisfied with the City as a place to live

Overall, how satisfied are you with Charlottetown as a place to live?

A profile of satisfaction with Charlottetown as a place to live reveals:

- Four in ten (39%) are somewhat satisfied
- Three in ten (27%) are satisfied
- Three in ten (26%) are very satisfied

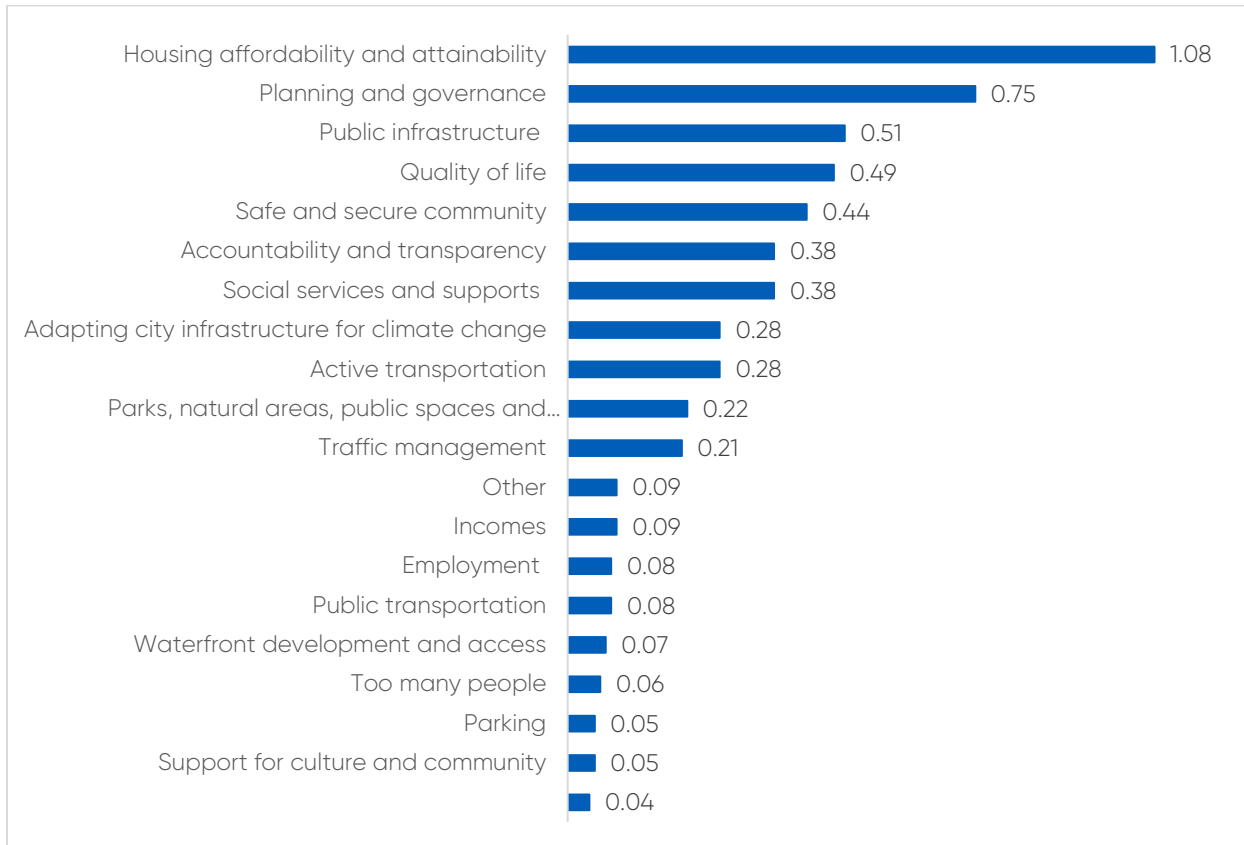


## Housing affordability and attainability is the most important concern for Charlottetown

What are your top three concerns for Charlottetown?

Respondents cited their top three concerns for Charlottetown and ranked them on a scale of 1-3 where 3 is the highest importance:

- Housing affordability and attainability is the most important concern at 1.08
- Planning and governance is the second most important concern at 0.75
- Public infrastructure is the third most important concern at 0.51

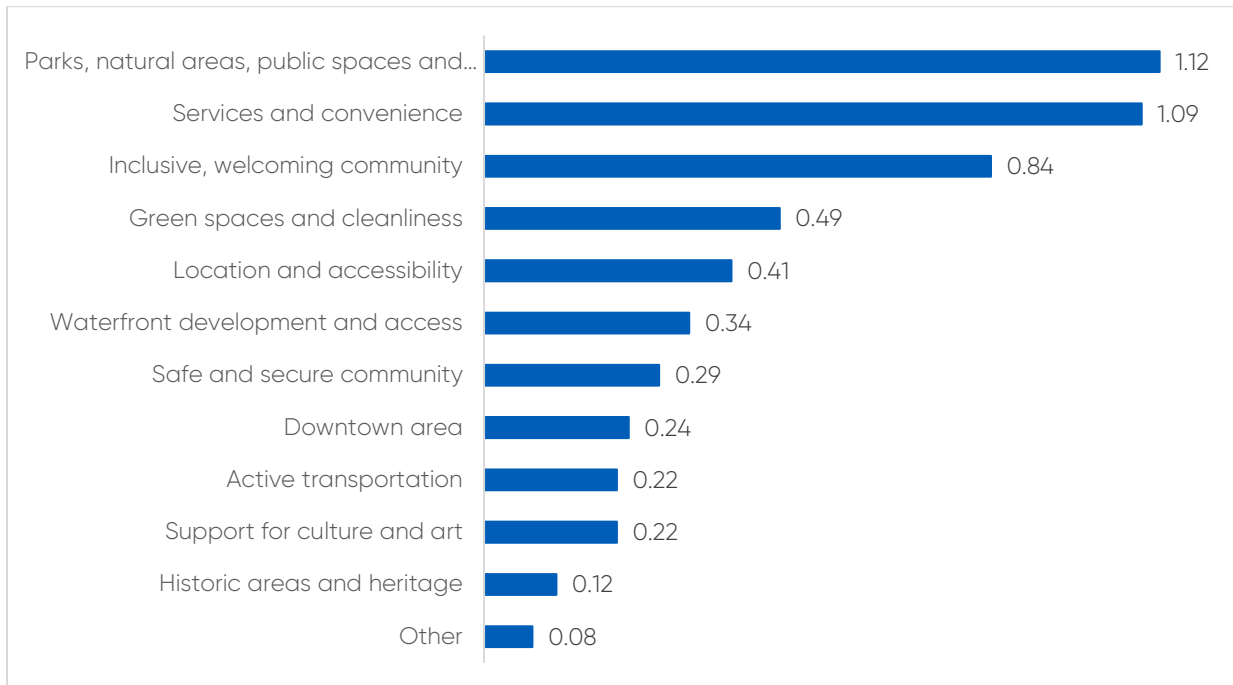


## Parks, natural areas, public spaces and recreational services is the most favourite thing about Charlottetown

What are your three favourite things about Charlottetown?

Respondents chose their three favourite things about Charlottetown and ranked them on a scale of 1 -3 where 3 is the highest importance:

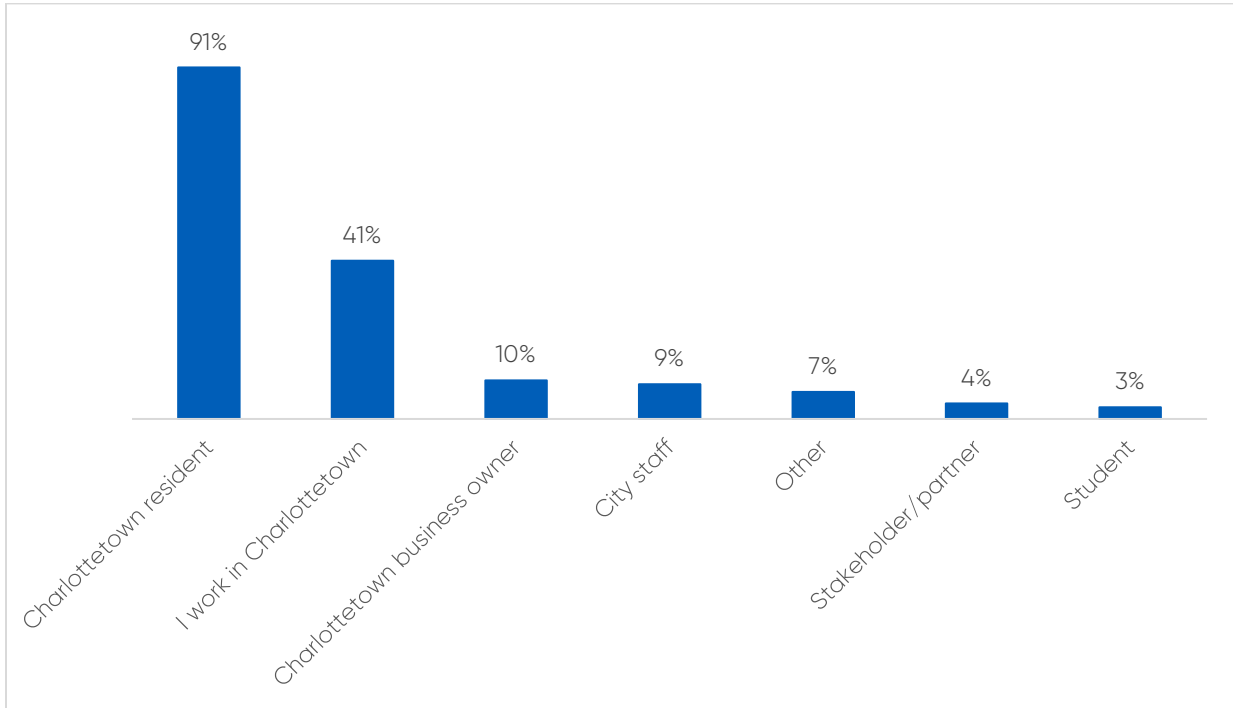
- Parks, natural areas, public spaces and recreational areas ranks first at 1.12
- Services and convenience ranks second at 1.09
- Inclusive welcoming community ranks third at 0.84



## Most of the respondents are Charlottetown residents

Among the respondents of the survey:

- Most (91%) are Charlottetown residents
- Four in ten (41%) work in Charlottetown
- One in ten (10%) own a business in Charlottetown



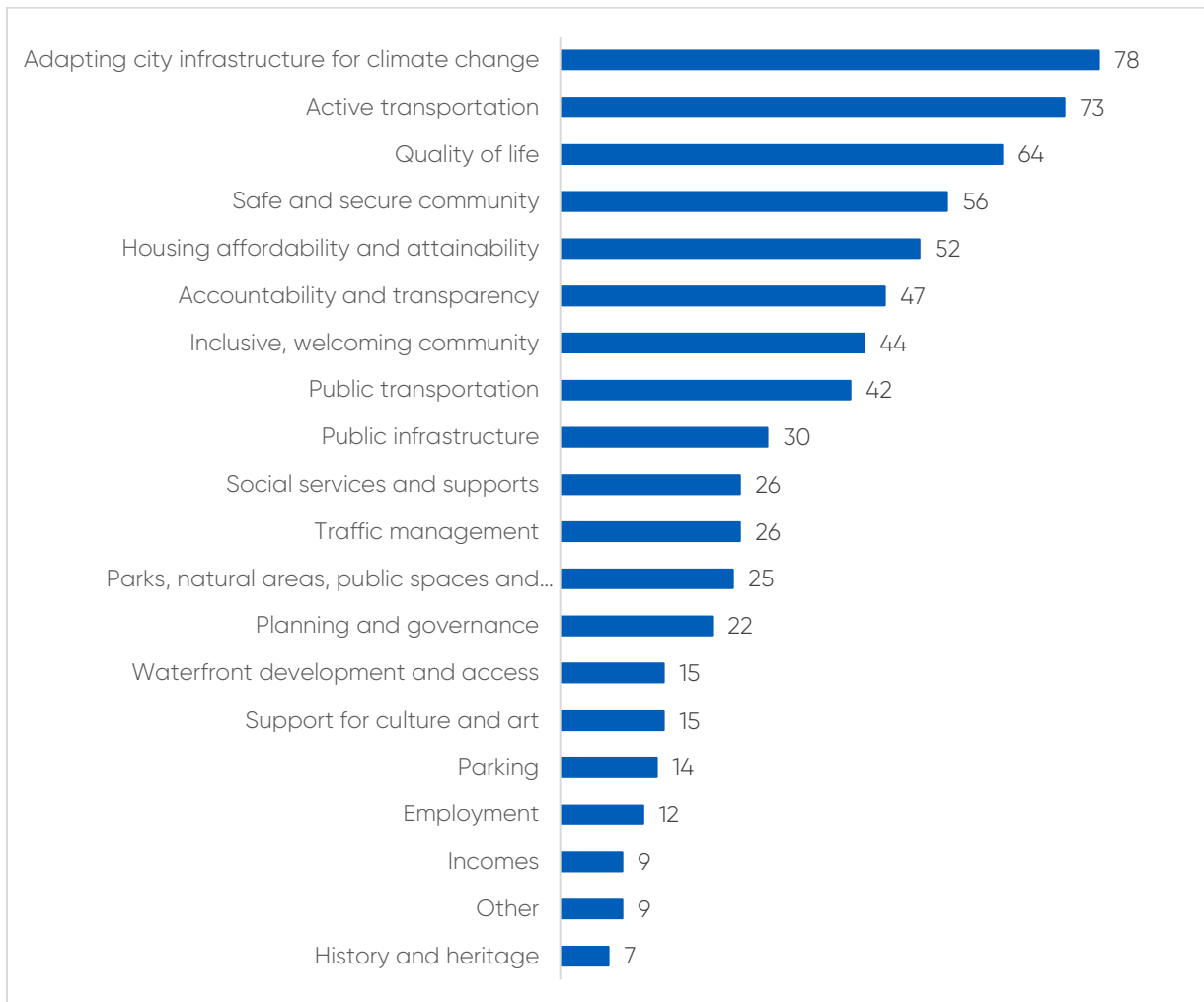


## Adapting city infrastructure for climate change is the top priority for an ideal Charlottetown in 2027

Describe what Charlottetown should ideally be like in 2027

Respondents described what Charlottetown should ideally be like in 2027. A profile of responses reveals the following:

- Adapting city infrastructure for climate change ranks first as 78 respondents described it as a priority
- Active transportation ranks second (73 responses)
- Quality of life ranks third (64 responses)

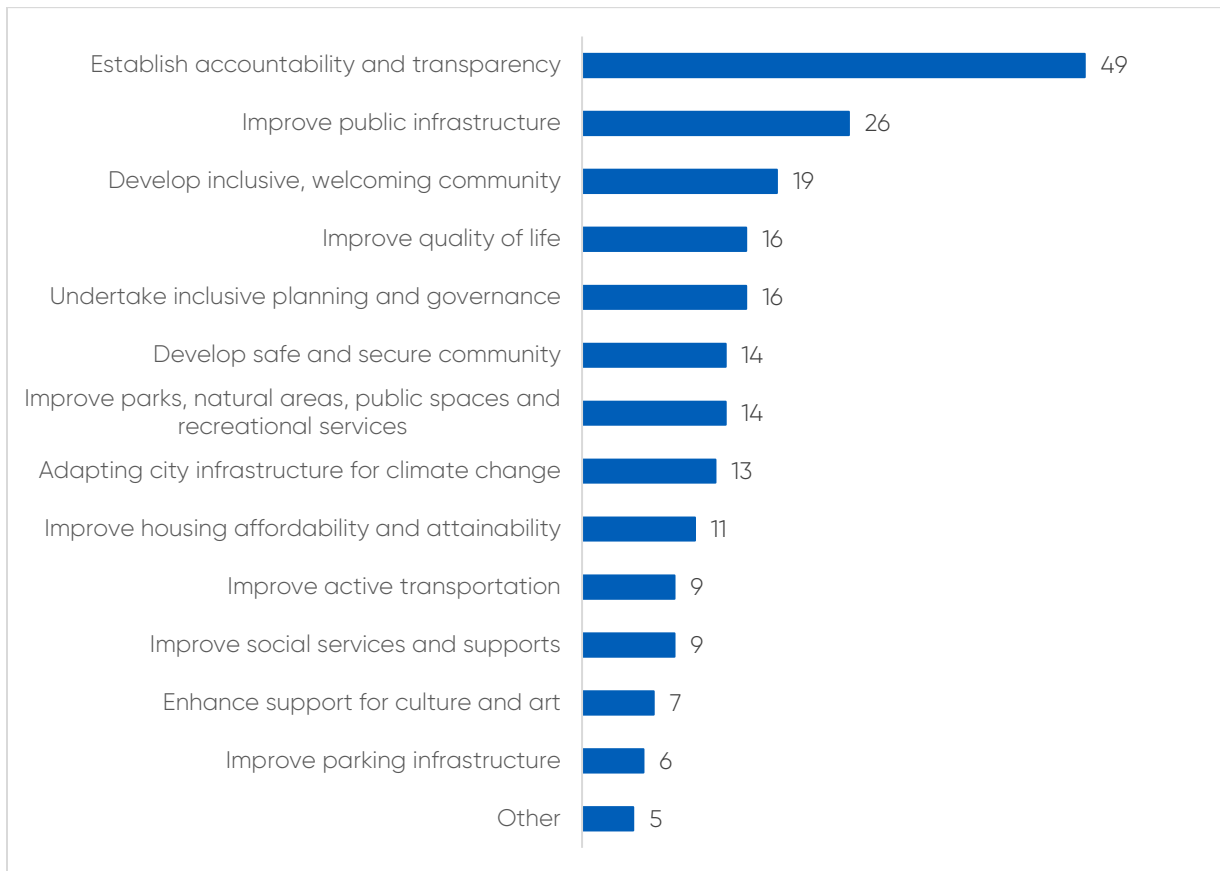


## Establishing accountability and transparency is the top priority among the other thoughts for the Charlottetown strategic plan

Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share as we develop the Charlottetown strategic plan?

The top priorities that respondents shared include:

- Establishing accountability and transparency ranks first as 49 responses included it
- Improving public infrastructure ranks second (26 responses)
- Developing inclusive welcoming community ranks third (19 responses)



# OPEN HOUSES

Top Ranked Priorities:

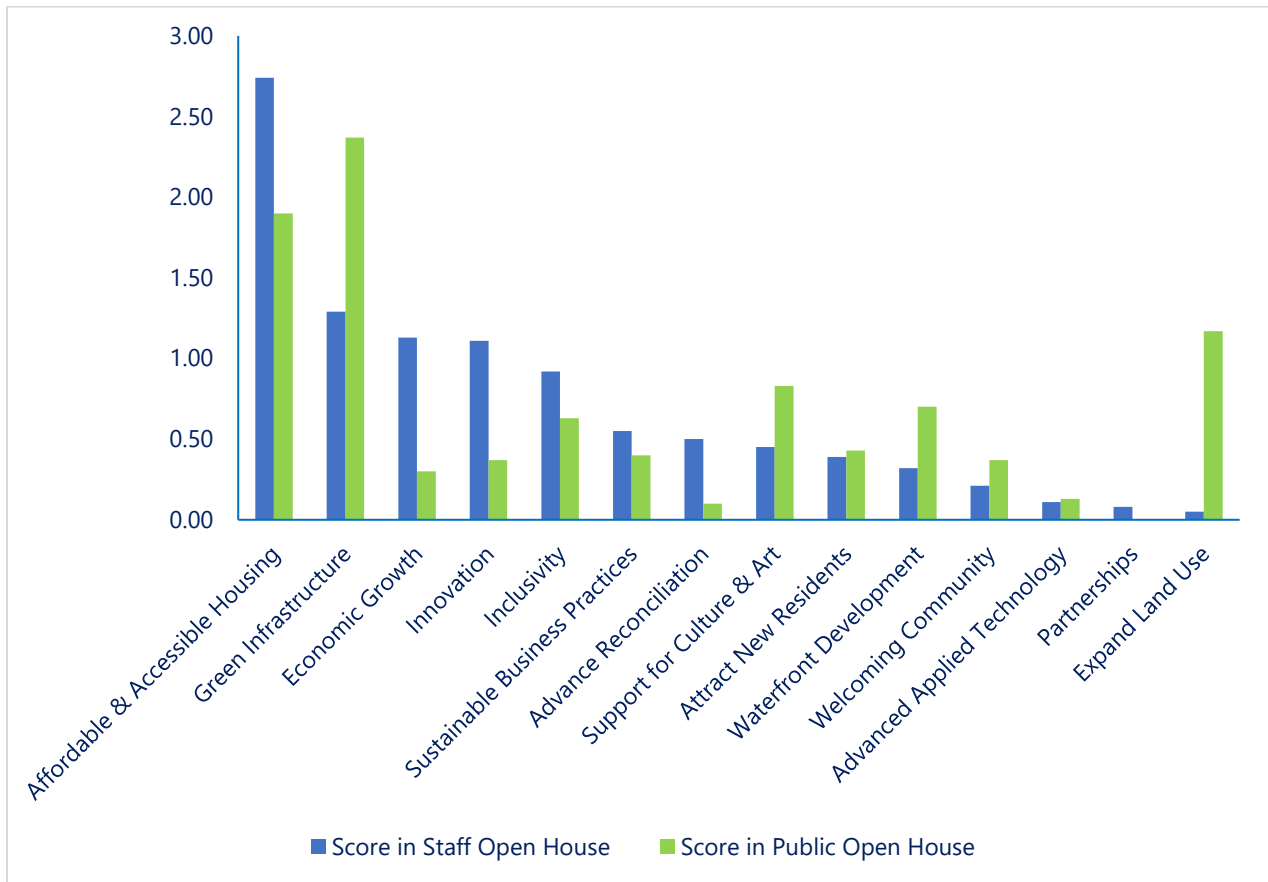
1. Affordability and attainability of housing
2. Adapting infrastructure for climate change and enhancing sustainable energy use
3. Transportation, parks and natural areas, recreation and other community services

Observations and Themes

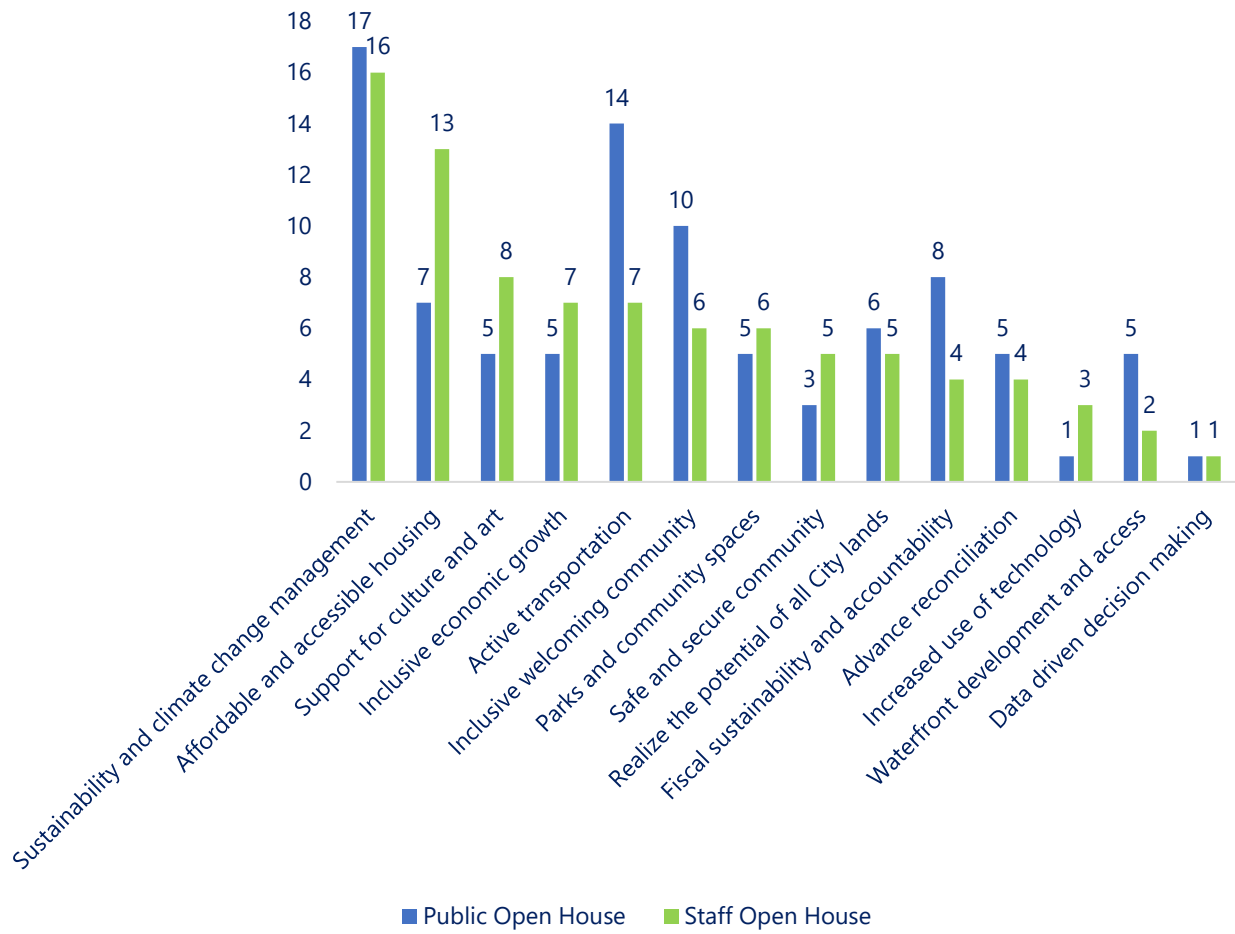
- Safe and secure community and active transportation were identified as main priorities across various activities (i.e., dotmocracy, visioning board, etc.)
- There is a great sense of pride in Charlottetown’s unique heritage and features
- Emphasis on longer term planning whether events, climate change management or infrastructure investment
- Respondents hoped to see positive headlines involving city growth, health care, affordability, reconciliation and overall strategic plan success in the City’s future

## Comparison of Staff and Public Open Houses:

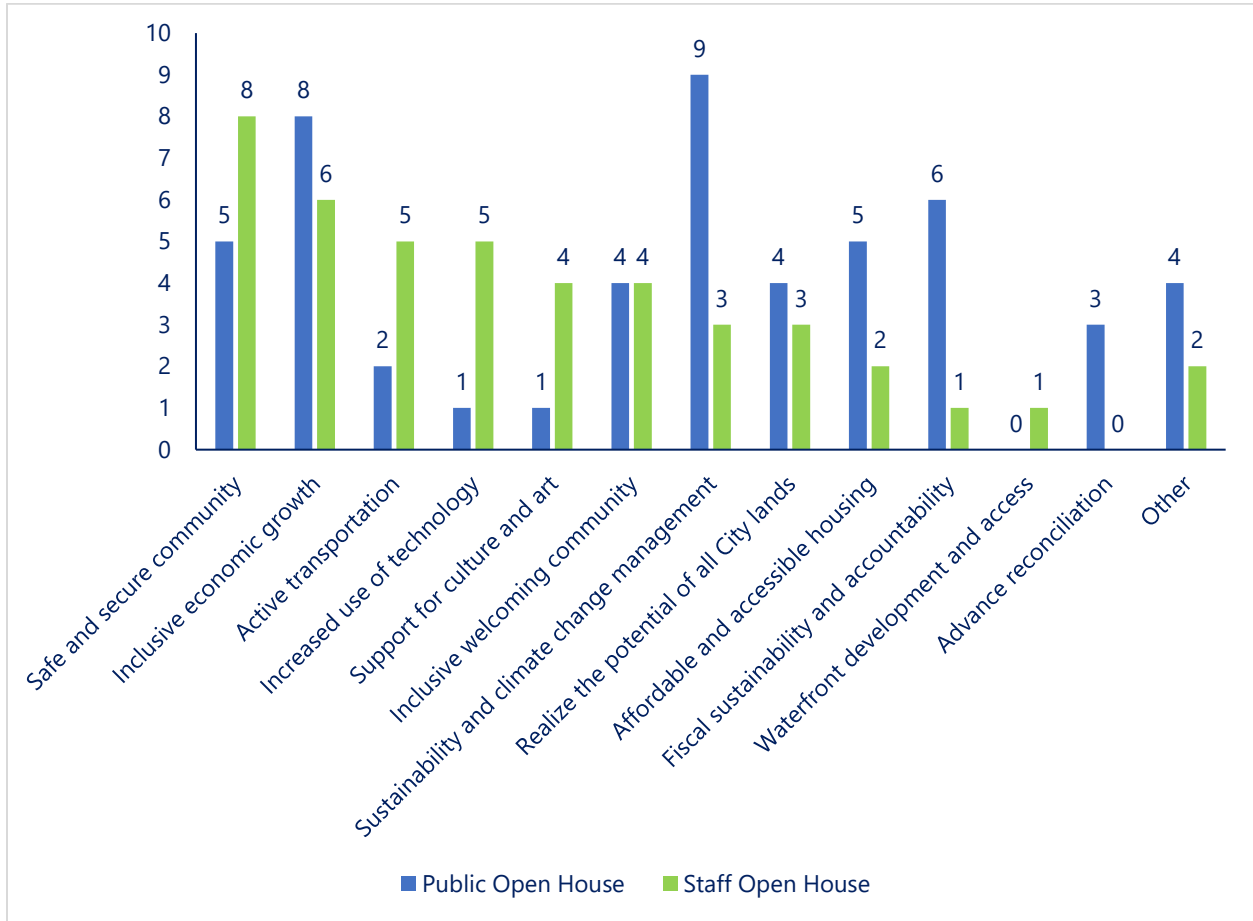
### Priorities for Charlottetown



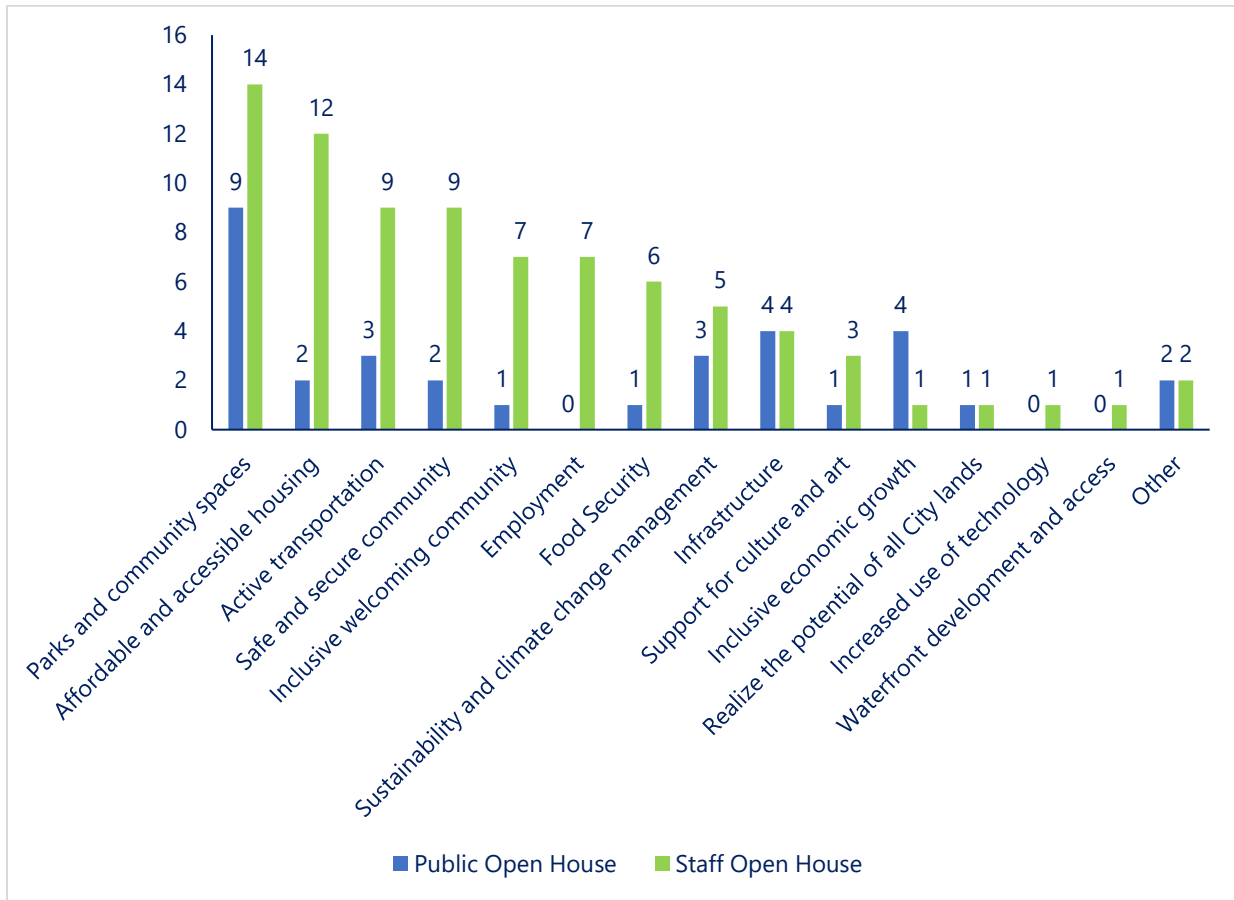
## Charlottetown Image Visioning



## Charlottetown Headlines

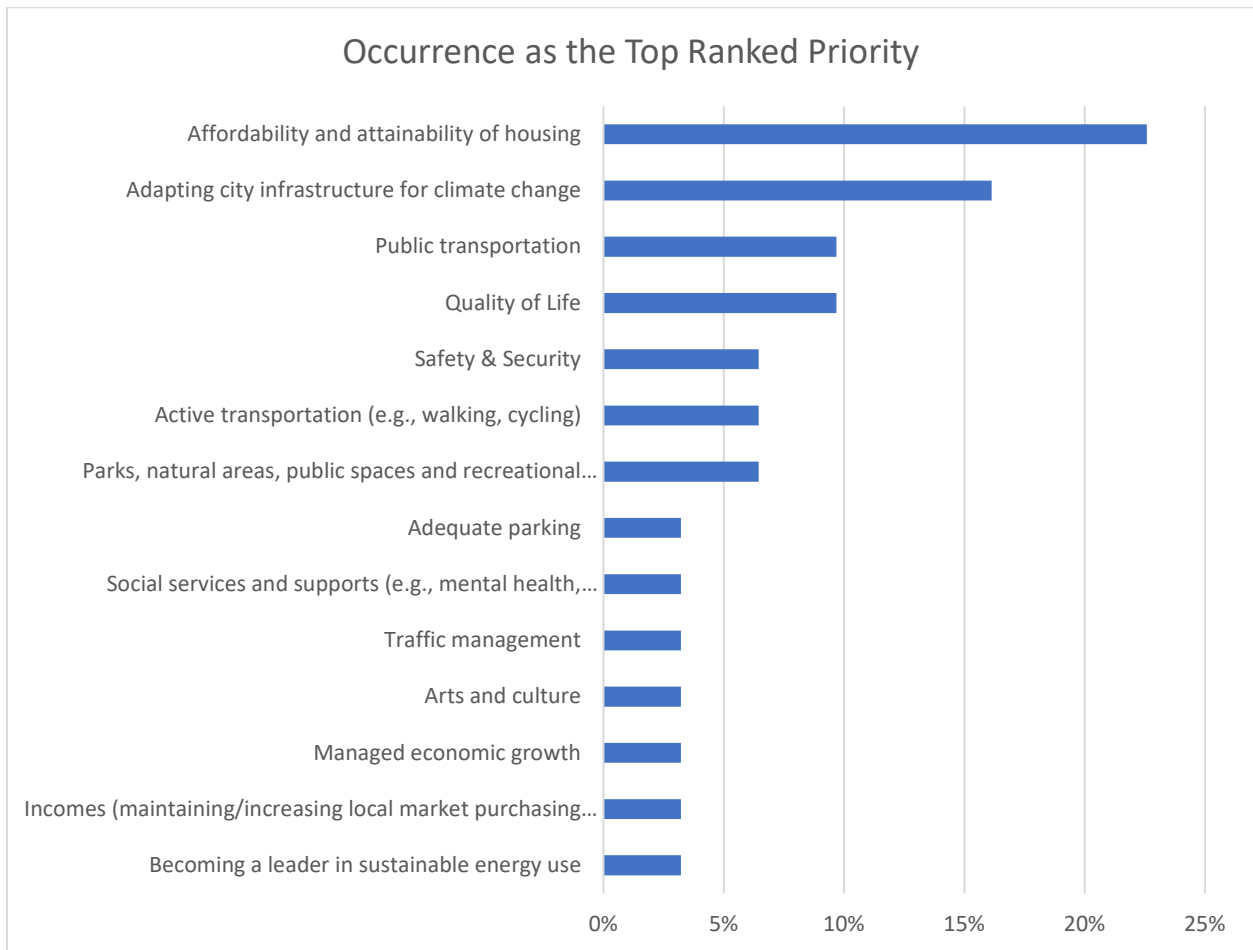


## Charlottetown Favourite Things Word Cloud Exercise

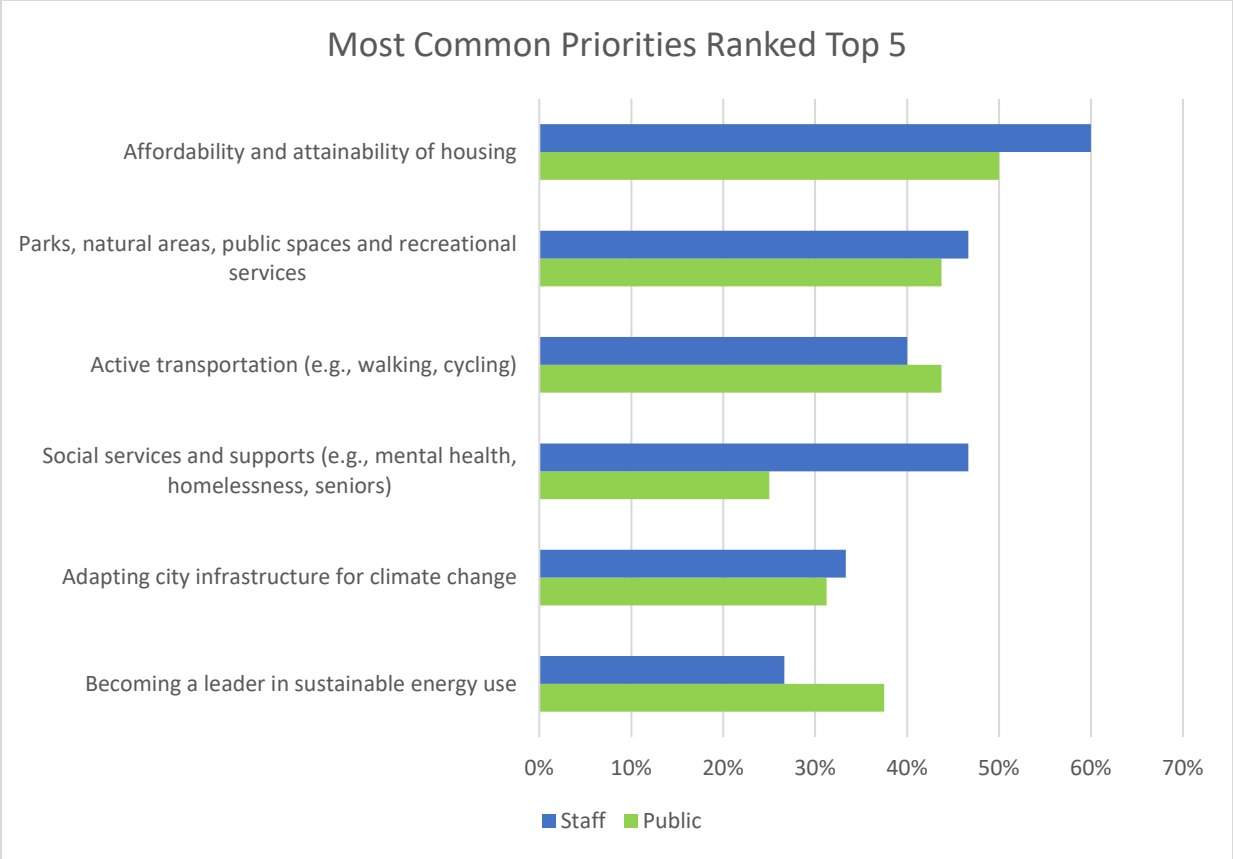


## Digital Engagement (Voxco)

Ranking Activity – rank the priorities



- Affordability and attainability of housing was most commonly ranked #1 (23%), followed by adapting city infrastructure for climate change (16%)
- Results varied only slightly between the staff and public feedback
  - Staff most commonly ranked housing affordability as the highest priority (33%)
  - The Public ranked city infrastructure enhancements as top priority (25%)



Honourable Mentions:

- 50% of Public participants included Arts & Culture as a top five priority
- 38% of Public participants included both Quality of Life and Traffic Management in their top five
- 33% of Staff indicated that Managed Economic Growth was a top five priority



## Digital Engagement (Slido)

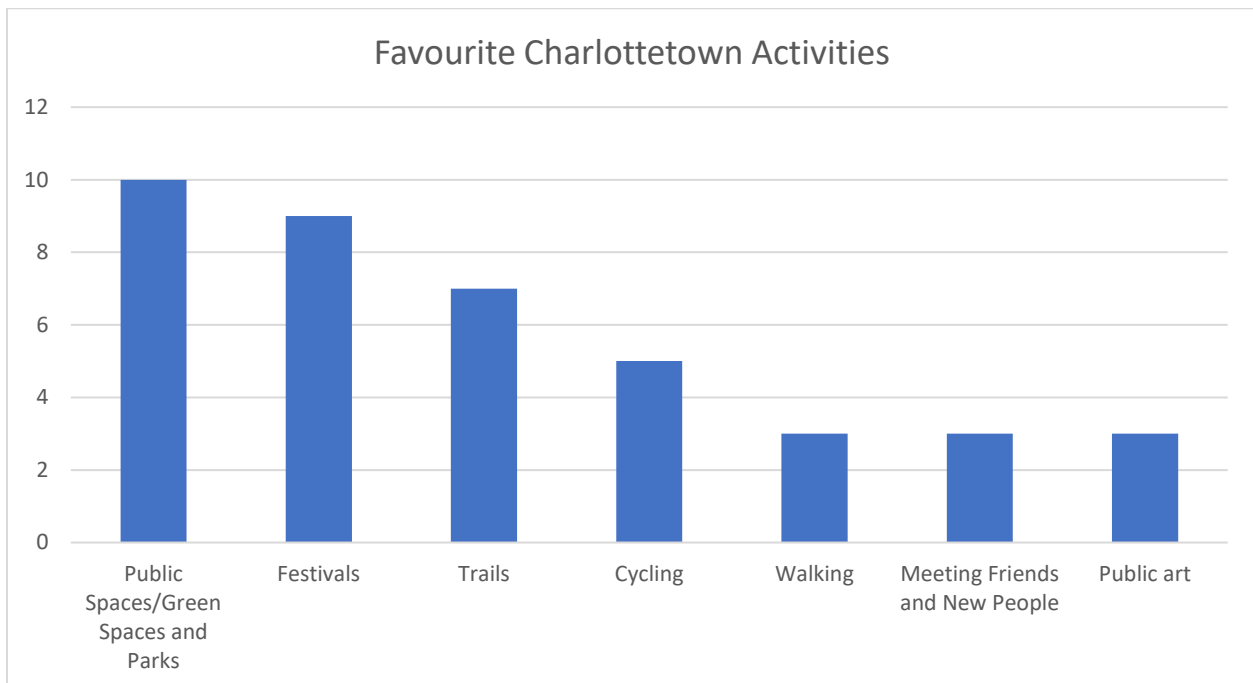
Question 1: Comparable cities, real or fictional, with admirable traits that Charlottetown may emulate



Comments included:

- References to "old town feel" and historic property preservation, maintenance, and upkeep (Halifax, Ottawa, Amsterdam/Europe)
- Strengths in Stockholm's education system, as an example

Question 2: Favourite places and activities in Charlottetown?



Question 3: What community prize would you award Charlottetown?

- Common Themes Reflected:
- Cleanliness
- Friendly city
- Best/most green space
- Welcoming and involved community
- Safe city
- Variety of events and festivals

*Standout Awards*

- *"Cleanest City" Award – awarded by 7 respondents*
- *The "Punching Above Its Weight" Award for the most things to do and best places to eat for a City of its size*
- *"Placemaking" Award for Victoria Park*

# SWOT ANALYSIS

## Strengths

- Safe City
- Quality of life
- Small City
- Tourism appeal & visitor economy
- Built heritage (incl Lot 500)
- Beautification
- Cooperation among senior management
- Enthusiastic public engagement
- Environmentally focussed residents
- High voter turnout
- Increased public communication coordination (e.g., branding, Bang the Table)
- Event hosting (e.g., sport) expertise & legacy
- Progress on sustainability, community energy plan, etc.
- Green spaces
- Technological leading practices (e.g. surveillance, City Fibre Op assets)
- Supports & services for newcomers
- Tax rate unchanged for decades
- Public transit
- Waste management system
- Coastal City
- Home to post-secondary institutions

## Weaknesses

- Perceived lack of accountability & transparency
- Trust & confidence among public
- Understaffing/under resourcing
- Inefficient funding models
- Public communication and expectation management
- Neighborhood / district focus vs overall City approach
- Lack of diversity in City and political leadership
- Immigrant retention
- Progress towards reconciliation
- Lack of access to the ocean / water
- Willingness to adjust tax rate
- Data gaps to support decision making
- Until recently, IT support was outsourced
- Perceived by some to be unfriendly to development
- Coordination & cooperation with the Province

## Opportunities

- Strategic plan and related focus on long term coordinated planning
- Renewed attention on beautification
- Build on sustainability success
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Technology upgrades
- Innovative communication and collaboration
  - With public
  - Across departments
  - Across all levels of government
- Northern Gateway Master Plan and other initiatives (e.g., Parks and Rec)
- Grow diversity and inclusion
- Strengthen and widen educational offerings
- Expand arts and culture efforts
- Build on successful partnerships with Cornwall & Stratford
- Increase walkability and active transportation generally
- Grow Smart City quotient
- Balance transparency and process, while reducing bureaucracy
- Build on City's green spaces
- Remote work

## **Threats**

- Affordable, accessible housing
- Rising sea level
- Climate change
- Urban sprawl
- Increasing demand on City services
- Resource drain/shortage
- Aging infrastructure
- Unique considerations related to Municipal Government Act
- Maintain historic fabric of City while advancing reconciliation
- Labour market access
- Cost escalation & inflation
- Resistance to change & innovation among some
- Pace of decision making
- Cyber security