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Research Report

Town of Falmouth

Citizen Survey

December, 1999



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Introduction and Methodology

The Falmouth Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) is in the process of updating the town's Comprehensive Plan. To obtain input from the broader community, Market Decisions assisted CPAC in conducting a community survey.

The community survey focused on the key policy issues faced by CPAC, including residential growth, development patterns, impacts of growth, growth and planning policies, affordable housing, economic development, transportation, public services and facilities and the sewer system. CPAC, with the assistance of George Theborge, the Falmouth Town Planner, identified the topics to be covered by the survey. Market Decisions, working with George Theborge and CPAC, developed the questionnaire.

The seven-page survey with an introductory letter from CPAC was mailed to 3,918, residences in the Town of Falmouth on October 29, 1999. The addresses were obtained from a commercially available mailing list.

A total of 1,215 completed surveys were received by the deadline of November 26, 1999, for a 31% response rate.

This response compares with a previous survey inserted in the Forecaster in 1995. Some 470 completed surveys were received for a response rate of 14-15%.

A random survey with a sample of 1,215 would have a margin of error of 2.8% +/- at the 95% confidence level. That is, we could be 95% confident that the results would be within 2.8% if the entire population was surveyed. However, this survey was not random. Respondents are "self selected", they decided whether or not to return the survey and this introduces an element of bias that cannot be quantified. In general, mail surveys of this type tend to under represent some groups of the population such as younger, less educated, and lower income residents and renters.

In the report, the total responses for each question are presented as well as differences in responses from demographic groups. Most differences that appear to be statistically different are identified to make as much of the data accessible for the analysis as possible.

Key Findings

#1 Preserving open space, important environmental areas, and the rural landscape are high priorities for residents.

- 87% of residents agree (4,5) that the town should actively work to retain these spaces.
- Preserving open space, and a rural or farm feel was mentioned as the top aspects of the town to preserve by more residents than any other aspects (22% and 10% respectively).
- 66% of residents agree (4,5) that the town should purchase important areas to protect them.
- 64% of residents agree that important areas should remain undeveloped even if this restricts landowner use.
- 66% of residents agree (4,5) that natural areas for passive recreational needs is an important need.
- 67% of residents favor clustering development so a part of the site remains as open space.
- 77% of respondents agreed (4,5) that being close to open space and natural areas is an important reason to live in Falmouth.

#2 Growth and its negative effects are important issues for residents.

- A majority of residents agree (4,5) that important open space and natural areas have been lost to development.
- 49% agree (4,5) that roads have become too congested or that Falmouth has lost its small town character.
- Only 35% agree (4,5) that development has increased property values or that the appearance of town has improved.
- Of the most important issues identified by residents as facing the town, eight of the top twelve were growth related.

Managing general growth	16%
Limiting/controlling general growth	12%
Urban sprawl/overdevelopment	12%
Traffic congestion	10%
Retaining open space	10%

Overcrowding in schools	10%
Maintaining small town character	8%
Limiting or controlling business and commercial growth	6%

#3 Residents are split between limiting residential growth and directing growth to appropriate locations.

- 49% agree (4,5) that the town's role should be to direct residential growth to appropriate locations.
- 45% agree (4,5) that the town should limit residential growth.
- A handful of residents agree that the town should promote residential growth (1%) or not be involved (3%).

#4 Residents favor development patterns with a mix of densities and uses to create a small town feel.

- 48% of residents prefer a small town community feel with a community center and a diversity of housing close to stores and schools.
- An additional 22% prefer neighborhoods with a mix of housing sizes, types and lot sizes.
- Only 17% of residents prefer dispersed subdivisions and only 7% prefer development along existing roads with size and setback largely determined by the landowners.

#5 Townspeople are very supportive of strong land-use regulations.

- 86% of respondents agree (4,5) that development should be restricted in flood plains, areas with poor drainage or areas with steep slopes.
- 85% of respondents agree (4,5) that housing densities should be based on environmental suitability.
- 84% of respondents agree (4,5) that development should be guided away from areas of natural, scenic or open space values.
- 66% of respondents agree (4,5) that the town should assure that important areas remain undeveloped even if this restricts landowner use of the land.

#6 Residents are supportive of commercial development – directed to appropriate locations.

- Only 12% of residents agree (4,5) that the town should discourage commercial growth.
- 18% agree (4,5) that the town should actually encourage commercial growth.
- 65% agree (4,5) that the town should direct commercial growth to appropriate locations and minimize its impacts on community character and traffic.

#7 Town facilities and services meet residents' needs – except for the elementary and middle schools.

- Most town facilities and services, the town hall, the new high school, the police department and the fire department meet the needs of a majority of residents. Importantly, only small segments (2-6%) say these services do not meet their needs.
- The middle school and elementary schools meet the needs of only 41% and 39% of respondents respectively.

#8 Most residents do not see additional needs for other public facilities and services.

- Only "natural areas for passive recreational use" was seen as an important need by a majority, 66% of residents.
- 72% of respondents agree (4,5) that the town should work to develop sidewalks, bikeways and paths.
- Purchasing land for town facilities, outdoor recreational fields, a teen center, a swimming pool, a senior center, and expanded harbor facilities were seen as important needs by less than a majority of respondents and for each of these facilities there are significant groups that do not see them as needs. (Public perceptions of needs may change as more details, and benefits of facilities become apparent.)

#9 Taxes and schools are also important priorities for the town.

- 17% of residents identified keeping taxes reasonable or high taxes as the most important issue facing the town. This is the top issue on the list.
- 69% of residents agreed that having good schools with quality academic programs is very important (4,5).
- 6% of residents mentioned the quality of the school system as the most important aspect of the town to preserve. This is the fourth most frequently mentioned aspect.

- Only 41% of respondents agreed the middle school meets needs (4,5) and only 39% agreed elementary schools meet needs (4,5).
- 10% of respondents mentioned maintaining the quality of the school system, and 10% mentioned overcrowding in schools as important issues facing the town.

#10 Residents seem to prefer expansion of sewers to serve existing developments but not expansion for additional development.

- 62% of respondents agree (4,5) that sewers should be extended to serve residents with septic system problems.
- 55% of respondents agree (4,5) that the town should encourage expansion of use of the sewers systems to spread cost among a larger group of users.
- 51% of respondents agree (4,5) that the sewer system should be extended to serve existing commercial users.
- Only 37% of respondents agree (4,5) that sewers should be extended to permit additional compact residential growth.
- Only 30% of respondents agreed (4,5) that sewers should be extended to serve new undeveloped property for commercial use.

#11 Affordable housing is not a priority for most residents.

- Just 46% of respondents agree (4,5) that the town should support voluntary efforts to develop affordable housing.
- An even smaller group (35%, those responding 4,5) agree that the town should actively promote affordable housing. A slightly larger number (39%) disagrees.
- When it comes to providing financial support or relaxing development standards to encourage affordable housing, residents are even less supportive. 26% agree that the town should relax development standards and 19% agree that the town should provide financial support.

Safety and quality of the neighborhood dominate reasons to live in Falmouth.

<u>FCS-1</u>			
Reasons for Living in Falmouth			
	<u>Very Important</u> (4,5)	<u>Neutral</u> (3)	<u>Not Important</u> (1,2)
	(%)	(%)	(%)
1. Being a safe place to live	91	6	1
2. The quality and appearance of my neighborhood	80	13	4
3. Being close to open space and natural areas	77	15	6
4. The spaciousness and privacy of my property	74	14	8
5. Having good schools with quality academic programs	69	13	15
6. The attractiveness of the Town	63	25	9
7. The number of recreational and cultural opportunities nearby	61	24	11
8. Prospects for growth in the value of my home	55	24	18
9. Proximity and access to the water	54	24	19
10. The sense of community in town	53	27	15
11. Being close to work	49	20	25

Survey Question:

Please indicate the importance of each of the following reasons for living in Falmouth by circling the number which best represents your views, on a scale of one to five where **one means not at all important**, and **five means very important**.

Comments:

Being a safe place to live is cited by 91% of respondents as a very important reason (4,5) to live in Falmouth.

Next in importance are appearance related areas, neighborhood appearance with cited by 80% of respondents as important, closeness to natural areas cited by 77%, and spacious and private property cited by 74%.

Surprisingly, being close to work is important (4,5) to only 49% of respondents and it is not important (1,2) to 25% of respondents.

Demographic Differences:

Access to the water is less important to respondents 65 years of age and older (47%, those responding 4,5), respondents with a high school education or less (38%), respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less and respondents living between Woodville Road and the Maine Turnpike and west of the turnpike (42%) as compared with respondents as a whole (54%). Conversely, respondents east of Route One are more likely to say access is important (77%) than respondents as a whole (54%).

A sense of community is more likely to be important to respondents between 35 and 44 years of age (61%, those responding 4,5) and respondents with a high school education or less (61%).

Spaciousness and privacy of property is somewhat less important to respondents with a high school education or less (62%, those responding 4,5), respondents with incomes of \$50,000 or less (65%, those responding 4,5) and respondents who live east of Route One (61%).

Having good quality schools is more important to respondents 44 years of age and younger (85%, those responding 4,5) than respondents 55 years of age and older (54% those responding 4,5).

Prospects for growth in home values is more important to respondents who have been in town for five years or less (61%, those responding 4,5) than respondents who have been in town for more than 20 years (47%, those responding 4,5).

The importance of being close to work appears to decline with age. Some 67% of those younger than 35 years old cited it as important (4,5), 59% of those between 35 and 44 years of age, 56% of those between 45 and 54, 49% of those between 55 and 64, and 21% of those 65 years of age and older.

Conversely, the importance of being close to work increases with income. Some 31% of those with incomes \$25,000 and below cited this as important (4,5) as compared with

60% of those with incomes greater than \$75,000 but less than \$100,000, and 55% of those with incomes greater than \$100,000. 8

Respondents see few positive aspects to growth.

FCS-2			
Impacts of Growth			
	<u>Agree</u> (4,5)	<u>Neutral</u> (3)	<u>Disagree</u> (1,2)
	(%)	(%)	(%)
1. Important open space and natural areas have been lost to development.	55	25	17
2. Roads have become too congested.	49	33	16
3. Falmouth has lost its small town character.	49	27	21
4. New development in Town has increased the value of my property.	35	37	23
5. The appearance of the Town has improved.	35	36	25
6. Overall, the quality of life in Falmouth has improved.	31	44	20
7. Schools have adjusted well to the increased number of students.	30	36	27
8. Town services such as fire and police are over extended.	29	43	23

Survey Question:

Considering the changes in Falmouth over the past five years, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views using a scale of one to five, where **one means completely disagree** and **five means completely agree**.

Comments:

Residents largely agree that the town has lost important open space (55%, those responding 4,5), that roads have become too congested (49%, those responding 4,5) and that Falmouth has lost its small town character (49%, those responding 4,5).

There is less agreement on the benefits of growth such as development having increased property values (35%, those responding 4,5) and that the appearance of town has improved (35%, those responding 4,5).

On the effect of growth on services, town attitudes are split. Almost as many respondents disagree that schools have adjusted to increased number of students (27%, those responding 4,5) as agree (30%, those responding 1,2) and 23% disagree (1,2) that town services are over extended and 29% agree (4,5).

Demographic Differences:

Respondents who have been in town for more than 20 years, respondents who have a high school education or less or some college, and respondents with incomes \$50,000 or below are more likely to agree that natural areas have been lost, roads have become too congested and Falmouth has lost its small town feel. Conversely, respondents who have been in Falmouth for two years or less are less likely to agree.

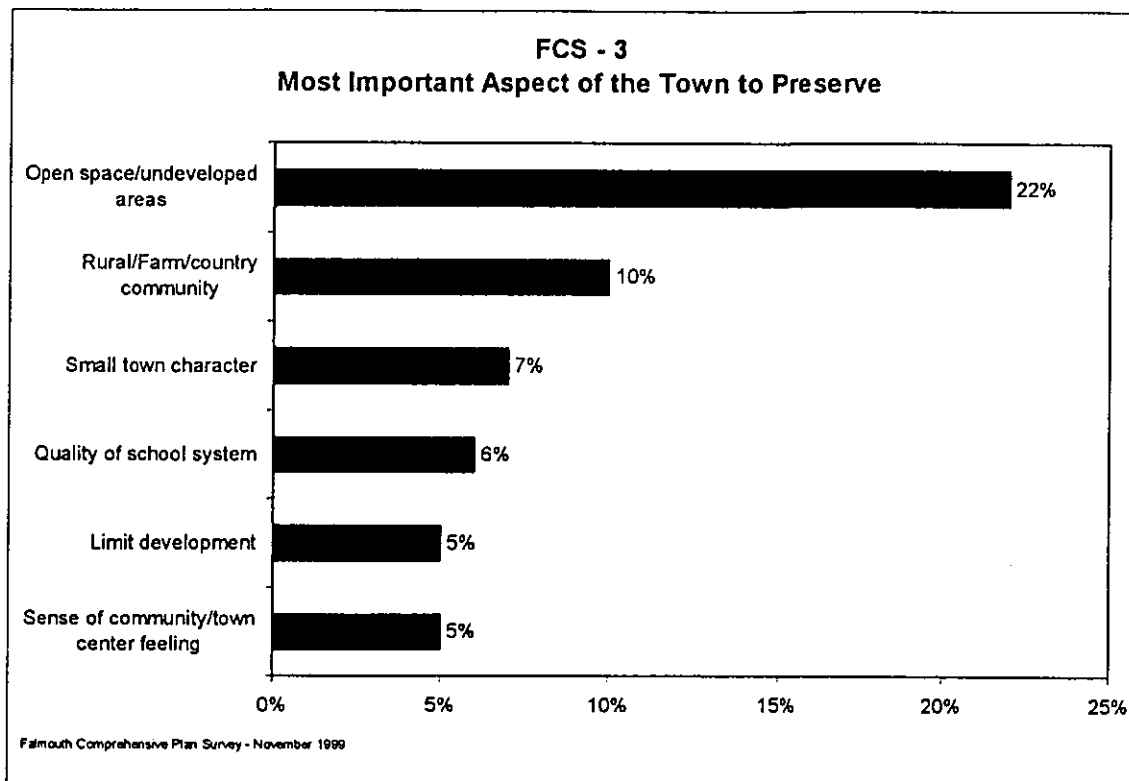
Respondents who live between Woodville Road and the Maine Turnpike are more likely to say that important open space and natural areas have been lost (67%, those responding 4,5) as compared with residents as a whole (55%).

Respondents 65 years of age and older (44%, those responding 4,5), respondents with a high school education or less (41%) and respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less (51%) are more likely to agree that the appearance of the town has improved as compared with respondents as a whole (35%).

Respondents younger than 35 years of age are less likely to agree that schools have adjusted well to increased number of students (15%, those responding 4,5) than respondents 65 years of age and older (38%) and respondents as a whole (30%).

Respondents who have lived in town for more than 20 years (39%, those responding 4,5), respondents with a high school education or less (49%) and respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less (41%) are more likely to say that town services are over extended than all respondents (29%).

Open space, rural environment and small town character are key aspects of the town to preserve.



Survey Question:

Most important Aspect of the Town to Preserve

In the space below, please identify one aspect of Falmouth you would like preserved as the Town grows.

Comments:

The "open-ended" responses to this question indicate that preserving open space, a rural feel and a small town character are top priorities for most citizens. This preservation mind set was demonstrated by 39% of respondents. Other related responses could bring this total to over 50%.

The quality of the school system was the only top issue that was not related to preservation (6%).

There is strong agreement on most planning policies.

FCS-4

Growth and Planning Policies

	<u>Agree</u> (4,5)		<u>Neutral</u> (3)		<u>Disagree</u> (1,2)	
	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)
	1. The Town's land use policies should be coordinated with the planning for the public sewer system.	70	--	18	--	7
2. Where it is appropriate, the Town should require new residential development to be clustered so a part of the site remains as permanent open space.	67	55	15	23	14	19
3. The number of homes in a given area should be partly based on the availability of town services to that area.	64	--	20	--	12	--
4. The number of homes in a given area should be compatible with adjacent development patterns.	64	--	20	--	12	--
5. The Town should allow higher development densities if public sewers are used in those areas where sewer service is available or could be provided.	23	--	21	--	50	--

Survey Question:

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views using a scale of one to five, where **one means strongly disagree** and **five means strongly agree**.

Comments:

Four of the five growth and planning policies described generated high levels of agreement with low levels of disagreement. This is consistent with attitudes towards limiting or controlling growth that is demonstrated in the next question.

Allowing increased densities in areas where sewer service is available generated little agreement. This is also consistent with attitudes towards limiting growth.

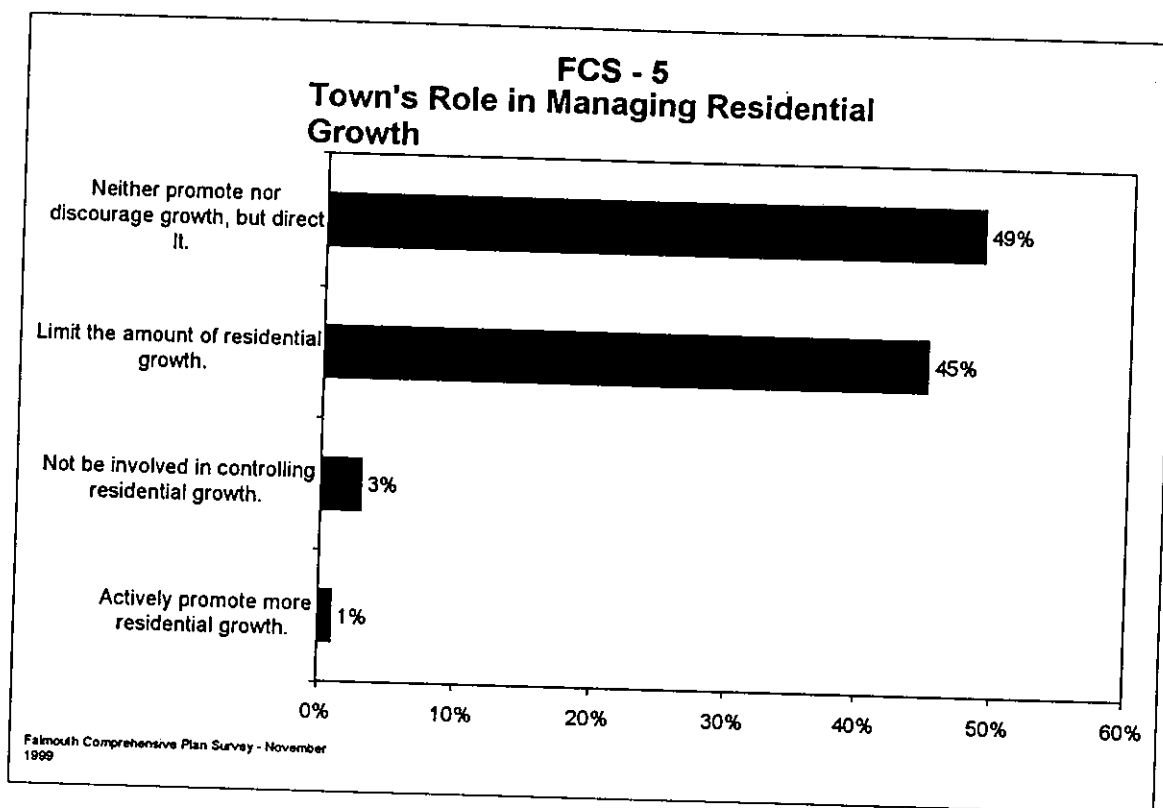
Demographic Differences:

There is generally broad agreement on the planning and growth policies across demographic segments.

Respondents with a high school education or some college are less likely to agree with the planning policies than respondents as a whole.

Respondents living west of the Maine Turnpike are somewhat less likely to be supportive of these policies.

Residents overwhelmingly support limiting or directing residential growth.



Survey Question:

Please circle the one statement below which best represents your view about the Town's role in managing residential growth. The Town of Falmouth should...

- A. Limit the amount of residential growth.
- B. Actively promote more residential growth.
- C. Not be involved in controlling residential growth.
- D. Neither promote nor discourage growth, but direct it to appropriate locations and control its impacts on the town and on neighbors.

Comments:

Townpeople are almost evenly split between directing growth and controlling its impacts and limiting residential growth.

Only 3% of respondents felt that the town should not be involved in controlling growth and 1% felt that the town should promote growth.

Demographic Differences:

Surprisingly, attitudes towards controlling or limiting growth did not vary significantly across demographic groups or location.

Newer residents, those in town for two years or less, are more likely to favor directing growth (58%, those responding 4,5) than all respondents (49%, those responding 4,5) and less likely to favor limiting growth (36%, those responding 4,5) than all respondents (45%).

Respondents who live between Woodville Road and the Maine Turnpike are more likely to favor limiting growth (52%, those responding 4,5) than all respondents (45%).

Residents strongly support protection of open space and the environment.

FCS-6						
Environment and Open Space						
	<u>Agree</u> (4,5)		<u>Neutral</u> (3)		<u>Disagree</u> (1,2)	
	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)
1. The Town should actively work to retain open spaces and environmentally important areas throughout the community.	87	81	8	9	3	7
2. Development in areas with significant development limitations such as poorly drained soil, steep slopes, and flood plains should be severely restricted.	86	84	9	8	3	6
3. The number of homes in a given area should be partly based upon environmental suitability of the area.	85	80	9	12	4	5
4. Residential development should be guided away from areas which are inappropriate for development because of natural resource or scenic or open space value.	84	84	8	8	6	6
5. The Town should assure that important open spaces and environmentally important areas remain undeveloped by purchasing these lands.	66	59	19	19	12	19
6. The Town should assure that important open spaces and environmentally important areas remain under-developed even if this restricts landowner use of the land.	64	--	16	--	18	--

Survey Question:

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views using a scale of one to five, where **one means strongly disagree** and **five means strongly agree**.

Comments:

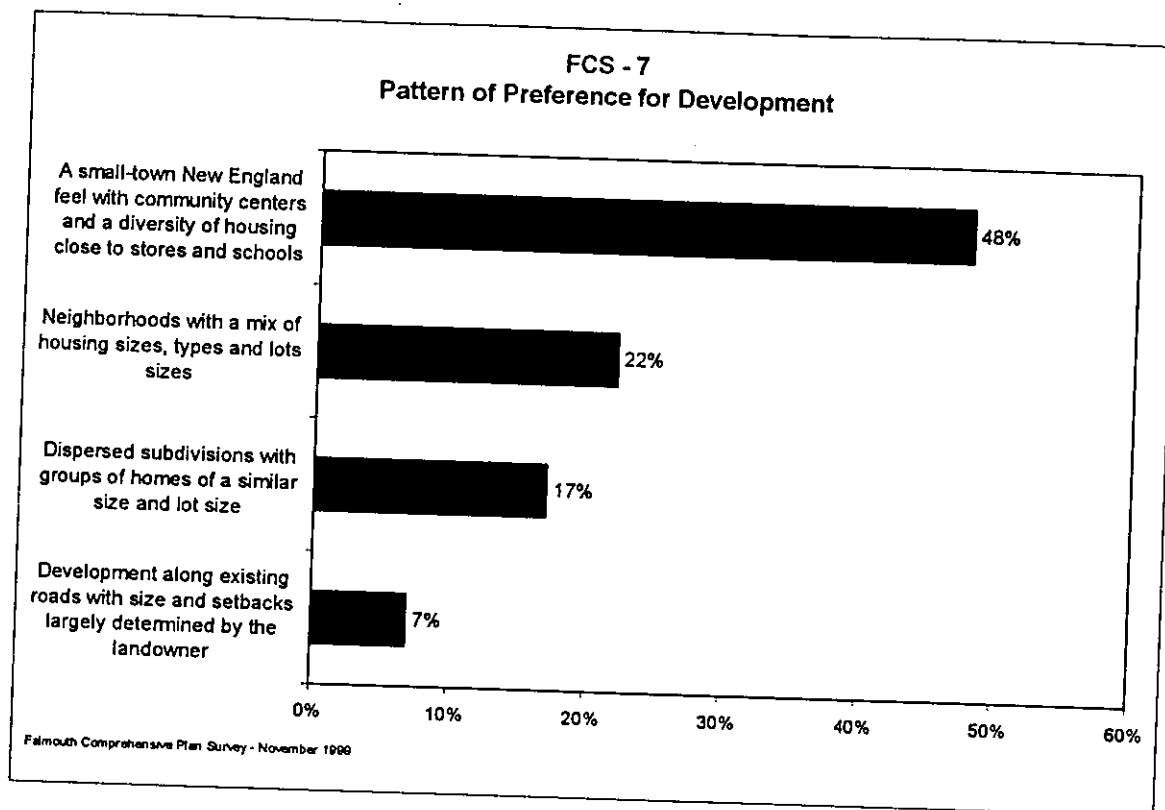
Support for protecting and preserving environmentally important areas is very strong with over 80% agreement and little disagreement. However, when residents are posed alternatives for how to accomplish this, there is somewhat less agreement as no alternatives attract more than 66% agreement, and disagreement is at 12% and 18%.

Demographic Differences:

In general those residents with a high school education or less and those with incomes of \$25,000 or less are somewhat less likely to be concerned about the environment and open space issues.

- Some 78% of those with a high school education or less agreed (4,5) that the town should work to retain open spaces, as compared with 87% of all residents.
- Some 76% of those with a high school education or less agreed (4,5) that residential development should be guided away from natural areas, as compared with 84% of all residents.
- Some 54% of those with a high school education or less and 57% of those with incomes of \$25,000 or less agreed (4,5) that the town should purchase undeveloped lands, as compared with 66% of all residents.
- Some 52% of those with a high school education or less and 57% of those with incomes of \$25,000 or less agreed to restrict landowner use of the land to preserve open space and environmentally important areas, as compared with 64% of all respondents.

Residents largely favor development that creates a small town feel.



Survey Question:

Listed below are descriptions of different patterns of development. Please circle one letter for the description that **best describes your preference**.

Comments:

Almost half of respondents (48%) prefer a pattern of development consistent with traditional New England Towns, and an additional 22% favor neighborhoods with a mix of housing types and lot sizes.

Only 17% of respondents favor the common subdivision style of development.

Even fewer respondents (7%) favor development along existing roads with size and setbacks determined by the owner.

Demographic Differences:

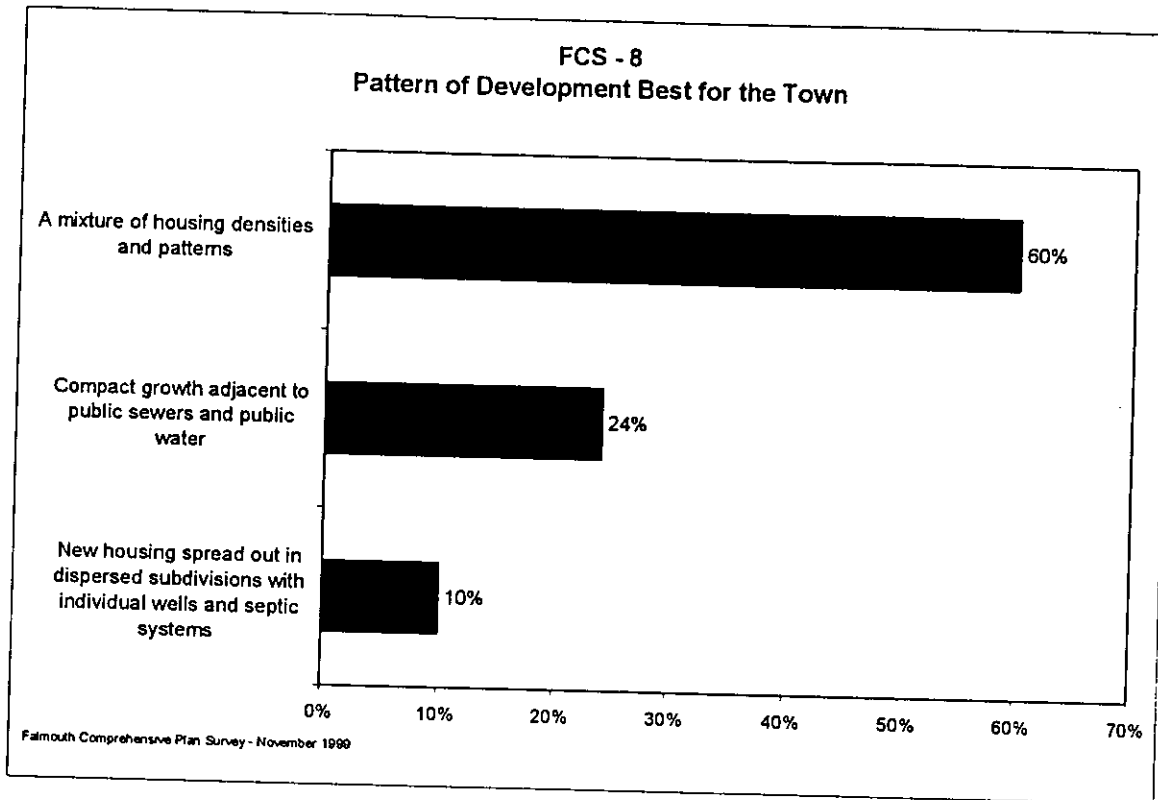
Residents who have been in town between 3 and 10 years are more likely to favor a small town pattern of development (57%, those responding 4,5) than residents as a whole (48%, those responding 4,5) and residents who have been in town for more than 20 years (39%).

Those respondents with incomes between \$75,000 and \$100,000 (57%, those responding 4,5) are more likely to favor a small town New England pattern than respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less.

Respondents living east of Route One (55%, those responding 4,5), are more likely to favor a small town pattern than residents as a whole (48%).

Respondents who have lived in town for more than 20 years (30%, those responding 4,5) and respondents with a high school education or less (29%, those responding 4,5) and respondents with incomes of \$50,000 or less (28%) and respondents 65 years of age and older (27%) are more likely to support neighborhoods with a mix of housing styles and lot sizes as compared with all respondents (22%, those responding 4,5).

Most residents favor a mixture of housing densities and patterns.



Survey Question:

Thinking about the future, please circle one letter for the pattern of new development that you think is **best for the Town**.

Comments:

Some 60% of respondents favor a mixture of housing densities and patterns.

Another 24% of respondents favor compact growth next to public sewers and water.

Only 10% of respondents favor traditional subdivision type development.

Demographic Differences:

There is broad agreement across demographic groups for a mixture of housing densities and patterns.

Respondents who are 65 years of age and older (49%, whose responding 4,5), respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less (44%) and respondents living between Woodville Road and the Maine Turnpike and west of the turnpike (53%) are less likely to support a mixture of housing densities and patterns than all respondents (60%).

Townpeople support voluntary efforts to develop affordable housing but not a more active town role.

FCS-9

Housing Diversity and Affordability

	<u>Agree</u> (4,5)		<u>Neutral</u> (3)		<u>Disagree</u> (1,2)	
	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)
1. The Town should support private and voluntary efforts to develop diverse and affordable housing but should not be directly involved in these activities.	46	47	24	24	24	27
2. The Town should actively work to promote diverse and affordable housing in Falmouth.	35	28	21	26	39	44
3. The Town should not be concerned about housing diversity and affordability in Falmouth.	28	32	17	24	51	42
4. The Town should allow more flexible development standards to enhance diversity and affordability.	26	14	23	15	45	69
5. The Town should provide limited financial support for initiatives for diverse or affordable housing.	19	17	19	17	57	63

Survey Question:

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements, by circling the number which best represents your views, on a scale from one to five where *one means strongly disagree* and *five means strongly agree*.

Comments:

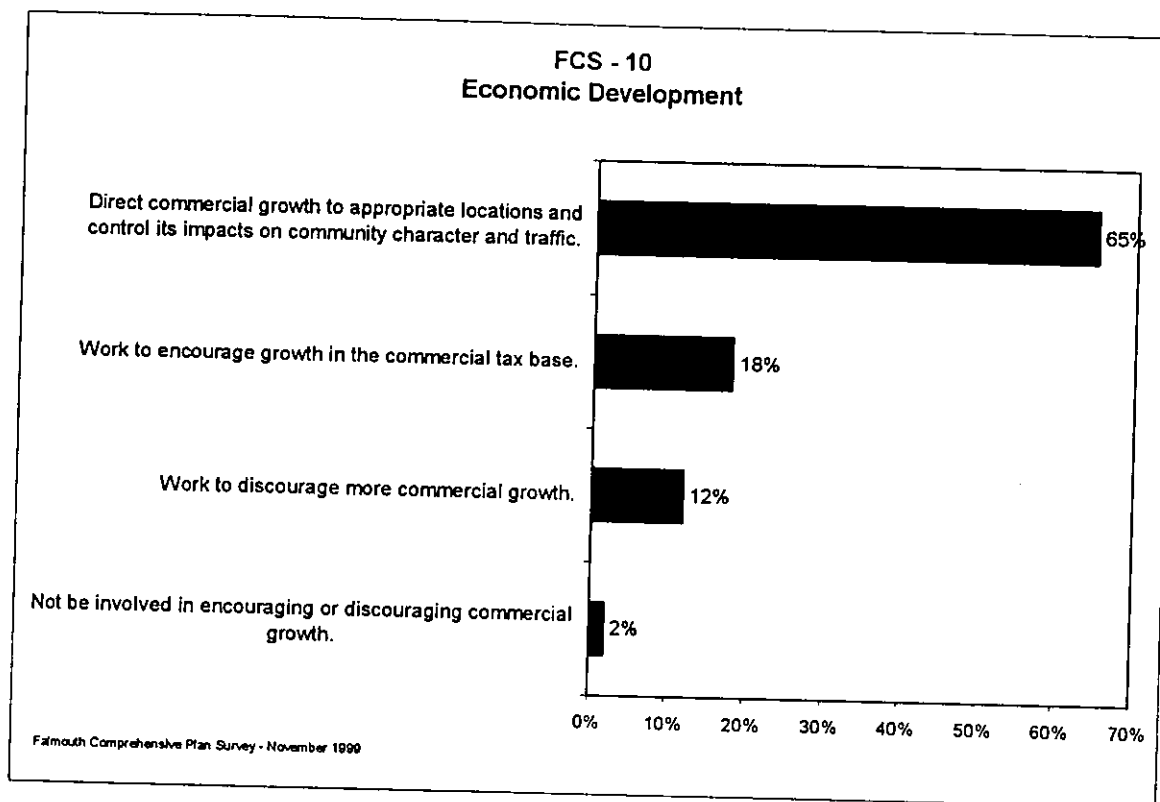
Almost half of townspeople (46%, those responding 4,5) support voluntary efforts to develop affordable housing, but 24% oppose this position.

On other possible town roles - with respect to affordable housing, respondents who disagree with the role outnumber those who agree with the role.

Demographic Differences:

As might be expected, respondents with incomes of \$50,000 or less are more likely to say that the town should work to promote affordable housing (47%, those responding 4,5) than respondents as a whole (35%). In addition, newer residents, those who have been in town for 5 years or less (27%, those responding 4,5), are less likely to say the town should promote affordable housing.

Most residents prefer directing commercial growth to appropriate locations.



Survey Question:

Please circle the number for the one statement that best represents your view on the town's role in managing commercial growth and economic development. The Town of Falmouth should...

Comments:

Almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents expect the town to direct commercial growth to appropriate locations and minimize its impacts.

A significant portion of respondents (18%) actually expect the town to encourage commercial growth.

A smaller portion (12%) of respondents expect the town to discourage commercial growth.

Only a small number of respondents (2%) expect the town to have no involvement.

Demographic Differences:

There were no significant differences in responses to this question across demographic groups.

Residents strongly support diversion of traffic onto major highways and the creation of pedestrian paths and bikeways.

FCS-11						
Transportation						
	<u>Agree</u> (4,5)		<u>Neutral</u> (3)		<u>Disagree</u> (1,2)	
	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)
1. Continue to explore ways to divert traffic off local roads and onto major highways.	74	71	17	15	5	11
2. Work to develop a system of pedestrian paths/sidewalks, bikeways and trails throughout the Town.	72	60	12	20	12	19
3. Maintain the scenic character of Falmouth's roads even if it means foregoing some needed safety and efficiency improvements.	35	37	23	25	36	36
4. Actively plan for increased public transportation.	34	41	25	29	25	29

Survey Question:

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views, on a scale of one to five, **one means strongly disagree** and **five mean strongly agree**. The town should...

Comments:

Three out of four residents agree that the town should explore ways to direct traffic from local roads and onto highways.

An almost equal number (72%) support the development of pedestrian walkways and bike paths throughout town.

Residents are divided about maintaining the scenic character of roads and planning for public transportation with almost equal numbers agreeing and disagreeing.

Demographic Differences:

Only younger residents, those younger than 35 years of age (64%, those responding 4,5), and very new residents, those who have been in town for 2 years or less (67%), are less likely to agree that the town should explore ways to divert traffic onto major roads than respondents as a whole (74%).

Newer residents, those who have been in town for 10 years or less (79%, those responding 4,5) and residents 44 years of age and younger (80%, those responding 4,5) are more likely to agree that the town should develop a system of pedestrian and bike paths than residents who have been in town for more than 20 years (60%) and residents 55 years of age or older (65%).

Residents with some college education or less (27%, those responding 4,5) and residents with incomes of \$25,000 or less (21%) are less likely to agree that the scenic character of Falmouth's roads should be preserved.

Younger residents, those less than 35 years of age (26%, those responding 4,5) are less likely to agree that the town should plan for public transportation and respondents with incomes between \$25,000 and \$50,000 (41%, those responding 4,5) are more likely to agree than respondents as a whole (34%).

Residents agree that the town hall, the high school and police department meet needs, but far fewer agree that the middle school and elementary schools do.

FCS-12			
Public Facilities and Services Meeting Needs			
	<u>Meet Needs</u> (4,5)	<u>Neutral</u> (3)	<u>Does Not Meet Needs</u> (1,2)
	(%)	(%)	(%)
1. Town Hall	75	16	2
2. The new High School	68	16	4
3. Police Department	67	22	4
4. Fire Department	59	26	6
5. Outdoor recreational fields	55	27	10
6. Harbor facilities such as the town landing	46	30	16
7. Middle School	41	33	14
8. Elementary Schools	39	33	16

Survey Question:

Based on anything you have seen, read or heard regarding the following public facilities and services, please circle the number that best represents your views, on a scale of one to five, where **one means does not at all meet Town needs** and **five means completely meets needs**.

Comments:

Over two-thirds of respondents agree that the town hall (75%, those responding 4,5), the high school (68%) and the police department (67%) meet needs.

A slimmer majority of respondents agree that the fire department meets needs (59%, those responding 4,5) and that recreational fields meet needs (55%).

A minority of respondents agree that the town landing (46%, those responding 4,5), the middle school (41%, those responding 4,5) and elementary schools (39%) meet needs.

A significant number of respondents (8-12%) gave no answer to any of the listed facilities or services.

Demographic Differences:

In all cases the newest residents of town, those who have been in town for two years or less, were less likely to agree that a town service or facility meets needs, and long term residents, those who have been in town for more than 20 years, were more likely to agree that the facility or service meets needs than residents as a whole.

In general, respondents 55 years of age and older and respondents with a high school education or less are more likely to agree that a facility or service meets needs.

Two-thirds of residents see the need for natural areas for passive recreation, but no other need is cited by a majority of respondents.

FCS-13			
Public Facilities and Services Needed As Town Grows			
	<u>Important Need</u> (4,5)	<u>Neutral</u> (3)	<u>Not Important Need</u> (1,2)
	(%)	(%)	(%)
1. Natural areas for passive recreational use	66	20	11
2. Purchasing land for future town facilities	49	27	20
3. Outdoor recreational fields	46	29	22
4. A teen center	45	28	22
5. A swimming pool	40	17	41
6. A senior center	38	33	26
7. Expanded harbor facilities	36	31	28

Survey Question:

On a scale of one to five where **one means not at all an important need and five means a very important need**, please circle the number that represents your views on **whether the following facilities will be needed as the town grows.**

Comments:

Natural areas for passive recreation are seen as an important need by 66% of respondents.

Other options such as purchasing land for future town facilities (49%, those responding 4,5), outdoor recreational fields (46%) and a teen center (45%) are seen as needs by a significant portion of respondents but not a majority.

A swimming pool, a senior center, and expanded harbor facilities are important needs to many respondents but are seen as not important by a significant group of respondents.

Demographic Differences:

Natural areas are more likely to be seen as an important need by respondents who have been in town for 10 years or less (74%, those responding 1,2) and residents younger than 35 years of age (82%) than residents over 65 years of age (55%) respondents with some college education or less (56%) and respondents with incomes of \$50,000 or less (60%).

Purchasing land for future town facilities is seen as an important need consistently across demographic groups.

Outdoor recreational fields are more likely to be seen as a need by the newest residents, those who have been in town for two years or less (60%, those responding 4,5), and respondents younger than 44 years of age (58%), as compared with respondents who have been in town for more than 20 years (30%), respondents 45 years of age and older (40%) and respondents with incomes of \$50,000 or less (39%).

A teen center has relatively even support across demographic groups. Respondents with incomes of \$50,000 and below are somewhat more likely to see a center as an important need (55%, those responding 4,5) as compared with all respondents (45%).

Surprisingly, a senior center did not receive greater support from seniors than from all respondents, but it was more likely to be identified as an important need by respondents with some college education or less (45%, those responding 4,5) and respondents with incomes of \$50,000 or less (47%), as compared with respondents as a whole (38%).

Expanded harbor facilities are more likely to be seen as an important need by respondents with incomes above \$100,000 (43%, those responding 4,5) and respondents who live east of Route One (43%) as compared with respondents as a whole (36%).

A swimming pool is more likely to be seen as an important need by respondents who have been in town between 11 and 20 years (47%, those responding 4,5), respondents between 35 and 44 years of age (55%), respondents with a college education (47%) and respondents with incomes above \$100,000. A pool is less likely to receive support from respondents who have been in town for more than 20 years (31%, those responding 4,5), respondents 55 years of age and older (37%) respondents who have some college education or less (32%), or respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less (28%).

Expansion of sewers to serve existing areas is supported but expansion to serve new users is not.

FCS-14

Public Utilities

	<u>Agree</u> (4,5)		<u>Neutral</u> (3)		<u>Disagree</u> (1,2)	
	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)	<u>1999</u> (%)	<u>1994</u> (%)
1. Sewers should be extended to serve existing residential areas with septic system problems.	62	--	21	--	13	--
2. The Town should encourage additional use of the existing sewer system to spread improvement costs among a larger group of users.	55	57	29	26	12	13
3. The Town should encourage the removal of overhead utilities in the Route One area and place them underground.	53	--	26	--	19	--
4. Sewers should be extended to serve existing commercial users.	50	--	29	--	15	--
5. The Town should encourage the expansion of gas lines on Route One to serve the business district.	40	--	35	--	20	--
6. Sewers should be extended to new areas permitting additional compact residential growth.	37	--	27	--	32	--
7. Sewers should be extended to serve new undeveloped property for commercial use.	30	--	29	--	35	--
8. The Town should allow the construction of communications towers to enhance portable phone and pager services.	21	--	24	--	52	--

Survey Question:

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of one to five where *one means completely disagree* and *five means completely agree*.

Comments:

Respondents largely agree that sewers should be extended to serve existing areas with septic problems and to existing commercial users.

Respondents are less likely to agree that sewers should be extended to new areas for residential growth, or new property for commercial use.

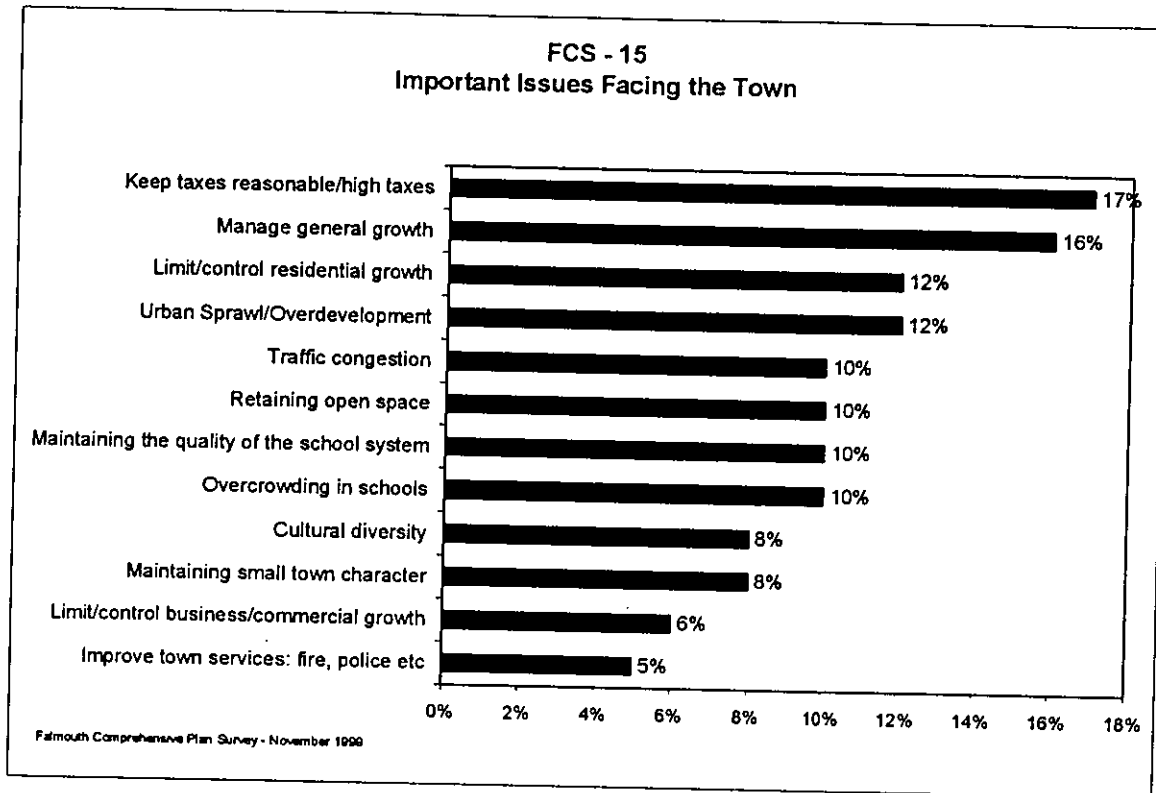
Respondents support the removal of overhead utilities and the placement of them underground.

Residents largely disagree that the town should allow construction of communication towers.

Demographic Differences:

Respondents with incomes of \$25,000 or less (51%, those responding 4,5) are less likely support extending sewers to serve areas with septic problems.

Residents see taxes and management of growth as top issues facing the town.



Survey Question:

In the spaces below, please write what you think are the three most important issues facing Falmouth.

Comments:

Keeping taxes reasonable or high taxes is the issue most frequently cited by respondents (17%).

The next five most important issues all relate to growth, managing it, controlling it, over development, traffic congestion and retaining open space.

**TABLE 1.
CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS TO SURVEY**

	1994	1999
	Total =(470)	Total =(1215)
YEARS IN FALMOUTH		
5 or less	29%	29%
6-10	16%	19%
11-20	17%	19%
More than 20	39%	32%
No answer	<1%	1%
RESIDENCE PRIOR TO FALMOUTH		
Year-round resident	100%	98%
Seasonal resident	<1%	1%
Nonresident landowner	<1%	<1%
Nonresident business person		
No answer	<1%	1%
HOME OWNERSHIP		
Own	95%	94%
Rent	5%	4%
Other	<1%	1%
No answer		1%
AGE OF RESPONDENT		
Under 34	10%	8%
35-44	28%	27%
45-54	21%	26%
55-64	16%	15%
65 and older	25%	21%
No answer	1%	2%
EDUCATION		
Less than high school	1%	<1%
High school graduate	14%	6%
Some college	11%	19%
College graduate	41%	27%
Beyond college	33%	46%
No answer	4%	2%
INCOME		
Less than \$25,000	11%	5%
\$25,001 - \$50,000	26%	17%
\$50,001 - \$75,000	25%	19%
More than \$75,000	28%	46%
No answer	10%	13%

TABLE 1. (cont'd)

<u>OCCUPATION OF THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD</u>		
White Collar	53%	54%
Professional/Executive/Managerial	37%	35%
Technical/Engineer/Analyst	3%	7%
Business owner	7%	5%
Sales	6%	6%
Other		1%
Blue Collar	4%	<1%
Trade/Skilled/unskilled	4%	<1%
Government/Military	6%	6%
Services/Clerical	2%	2%
Non-wage Earner	28%	32%
Retired	24%	18%
Other	4%	14%
No Answer	13%	13%
<u>AREA OF RESIDENCE</u>		
East of Route 1	30%	29%
Between Route and Woodville Road	29%	24%
Between woodville Rd and Maine trnpk	28%	14%
West of Maine Turnpike	11%	24%
Other		7%
No answer	2%	1%

Falmouth Comprehensive Plan 2000

CITIZEN SURVEY

This citizen survey is being conducted by the Falmouth Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) as part of an update to the town's master plan for growth and development. We hope you will take the time to participate in this process and make your views known.

In the past 40 years, Falmouth has grown from a quiet town of 4,000 people to a bustling suburb of nearly 10,000. In the mid-1950s, the primary land use was agriculture, with the vast majority of the town's populace living east of Middle Road. There were no highways, shopping centers, or sewer treatment plants.

Over the last three and a half decades, major changes were introduced, including construction of three major highways, public sewers, and commercial development along Routes 1 and 100, along with a more even distribution of housing and population.

The total residential development that occurred consisted of 500 units of multi-family housing on 175 acres of land, and about 1,500 units of single family housing on 1,500 acres. (Another 300 acres is currently proposed for development). During this same time frame, 900 acres of open space were set aside, bringing total protected land to 1,800 acres or about 10 percent of the total land area of Falmouth.

The Town's Comprehensive Plan tracks development over time and projects future growth and potential impacts on the community in a number of topical areas that are the subjects of this survey:

- Open Space & Conservation;
- Community Character;
- Housing;
- Public Facilities & Services;
- Public Utilities; and,
- Economic Development.

These groups of public issues affect the life and health of the community. Within each sector, there are numerous issues that vie for public attention and money. Priorities change over time as the town develops. People who focus on individual issues in isolation of other con-

siderations often miss the fact of "unintended consequences." Decisions made in one sector often have positive or negative effects on other sectors. Building new schools and commercial centers address current needs, but they can also stimulate further growth. But it is also important to recognize that recent housing growth pressures on the schools helped the town gain state funding for a needed facility at far lower cost to the taxpayers.

The 1988 Comprehensive Plan indicated that citizens were very concerned about and supportive of policies to preserve open space. In 1994, community sentiment shifted to the need for economic development to help pay for anticipated school building projects. At the same time, citizens expressed concern that Falmouth not look like downtown Freeport or Payne



Road in Scarborough.

What will the overarching theme of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan be? That is a question for the citizens of Falmouth to answer. By filling out and returning this survey, you can help develop the answer and provide input for guiding future town policies. CPAC will be providing other opportunities for public involvement, including community forums, design workshops, and public hearings. Watch *The Forecaster* and the Falmouth Public Access Channel for details.

Please return the completed survey to Market Decisions, Inc at P.O Box 2890, South Portland, ME 04116-2890 before November 26, 1999.

FALMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SURVEY

Reasons for Living in Falmouth

Please indicate the importance of each of the following reasons for living in Falmouth by circling the number which best represents your views, on a scale of one to five where *one means not at all important*, and *five means very important*.

	<u>Not at all</u> <u>Important</u>			<u>Very</u> <u>Important</u>		
1. Being close to work	1	2	3	4	5	(1)
2. The spaciousness and privacy of my property	1	2	3	4	5	(2)
3. Being close to open space and natural areas	1	2	3	4	5	(3)
4. Having good schools with quality academic programs	1	2	3	4	5	(4)
5. Being a safe place to live	1	2	3	4	5	(5)
6. The number of recreational and cultural opportunities nearby	1	2	3	4	5	(6)
7. The attractiveness of the Town	1	2	3	4	5	(7)
8. Prospects for growth in the value of my home	1	2	3	4	5	(8)
9. The sense of community in town	1	2	3	4	5	(9)
10. The quality and appearance of my neighborhood	1	2	3	4	5	(10)
11. Proximity and access to the water	1	2	3	4	5	(11)
12. Other _____						(12-13)

Impacts of Growth

Considering the changes in Falmouth over the past five years, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views using a scale of one to five, where *one means completely disagree* and *five means completely agree*.

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>			<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>		
1. Roads have become too congested.	1	2	3	4	5	(14)
2. New development in Town has increased the value of my property.	1	2	3	4	5	(15)
3. Town services such as fire and police are over extended.	1	2	3	4	5	(16)
4. Schools have adjusted well to the increased number of students.	1	2	3	4	5	(17)
5. Important open space and natural areas have been lost to development.	1	2	3	4	5	(18)



Questions? Call 767-6440

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>			<u>Strongly Agree</u>		
6. The appearance of the Town has improved.	1	2	3	4	5	(19)
7. Falmouth has lost its small town character.	1	2	3	4	5	(20)
8. Overall, the quality of life in Falmouth has improved.	1	2	3	4	5	(21)

Most important Aspect of the Town to Preserve

In the space below, please identify one aspect of Falmouth you would like preserved as the Town grows.

(22-27)

Growth and Planning Policies

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views using a scale of one to five, where **one means strongly disagree** and **five means strongly agree**.

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>			<u>Strongly Agree</u>		
1. The Town should allow higher development densities if public sewers are used in those areas where sewer service is available or could be provided.	1	2	3	4	5	(28)
2. The number of homes in a given area should be partly based on the availability of town services to that area.	1	2	3	4	5	(29)
3. The number of homes in a given area should be compatible with adjacent development patterns.	1	2	3	4	5	(30)
4. The Town's land use policies should be coordinated with the planning for the public sewer system.	1	2	3	4	5	(31)
5. Where it is appropriate, the Town should require new residential development to be clustered so a part of the site remains as permanent open space.	1	2	3	4	5	(32)
6. Please circle the one statement below which best represents your view about the Town's role in managing residential growth. The Town of Falmouth should...						(33)
A. Limit the amount of residential growth.						
B. Actively promote more residential growth.						
C. Not be involved in controlling residential growth.						
D. Neither promote nor discourage growth, but direct it to appropriate locations and control its impacts on the town and on neighbors.						



Questions? Call 767-6440

Environment and Open Space

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views using a scale of one to five, where *one means strongly disagree* and *five means strongly agree*.

- | | <u>Strongly
Disagree</u> | | | | <u>Strongly
Agree</u> | |
|--|------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------|------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 1. Residential development should be guided away from areas which are inappropriate for development because of natural resource or scenic or open space value. | | | | | | (34) |
| 2. The Town should actively work to retain open spaces and environmentally important areas throughout the community. | | | | | | (35) |
| 3. Development in areas with significant development limitations such as poorly drained soil, steep slopes, and flood plains should be severely restricted. | | | | | | (36) |
| 4. The Town should assure that important open spaces and environmentally important areas remain undeveloped even if this restricts landowner use of the land. | | | | | | (37) |
| 5. The number of homes in a given area should be partly based upon environmental suitability of the area. | | | | | | (38) |
| 6. The Town should assure that important open spaces and environmentally important areas remain undeveloped by purchasing these lands. | | | | | | (39) |

Community Character

1. Listed below are descriptions of different patterns of development. Please circle one letter for the description that **best describes your preference**. (40)
 - a. Dispersed subdivisions with groups of homes of a similar size and lot size
 - b. Neighborhoods with a mix of housing sizes, types and lots sizes
 - c. A small-town New England feel with community centers and a diversity of housing close to stores and schools
 - d. Development along existing roads with size and setbacks largely determined by the landowner

2. Thinking about the future, please circle one letter for the pattern of new development that you think is **best for the Town**. (41)
 - a. Compact growth adjacent to public sewers and public water
 - b. New housing spread out in dispersed subdivisions with individual wells and septic systems
 - c. A mixture of housing densities and patterns



Questions? Call 767-6440

Housing Diversity & Affordability

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements, by circling the number which best represents your views, on a scale from one to five where *one means strongly disagree* and *five means strongly agree*.

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree				
1. The Town should not be concerned about housing diversity and affordability in Falmouth.	1	2	3	4	5	(42)				
2. The Town should support private and voluntary efforts to develop diverse and affordable housing but should not be directly involved in these activities.	1	2	3	4	5	(43)				
3. The Town should actively work to promote diverse and affordable housing in Falmouth.	1	2	3	4	5	(44)				
4. The Town should allow more flexible development standards to enhance diversity and affordability.	1	2	3	4	5	(45)				
5. The Town should provide limited financial support for initiatives for diverse or affordable housing.	1	2	3	4	5	(46)				

Economic Development

Please circle the number for the one statement that best represents your view on the town's role in managing commercial growth and economic development. The Town of Falmouth should... (47)

1. Work to encourage growth in the commercial tax base.
2. Work to discourage more commercial growth.
3. Not be involved in encouraging or discouraging commercial growth.
4. Neither encourage nor discourage commercial growth but direct commercial growth to appropriate locations and control its impacts on community character and traffic.

Transportation

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling the number which best represents your views, on a scale of one to five, *one means strongly disagree* and *five mean strongly agree*. The town should...

	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree				
1. Continue to explore ways to divert traffic off local roads and onto major highways.	1	2	3	4	5	(48)				
2. Maintain the scenic character of Falmouth's roads even if it means foregoing some needed safety and efficiency improvements.	1	2	3	4	5	(49)				
3. Work to develop a system of pedestrian paths/sidewalks, bikeways and trails throughout the Town.	1	2	3	4	5	(50)				



Questions? Call 767-6440

4. Actively plan for increased public transportation.

Strongly Disagree
Strongly Agree
 1 2 3 4 5 (51)

Public Facilities and Services

Based on anything you have seen, read or heard regarding the following public facilities and services, please circle the number that best represents your views, on a scale of one to five, where **one means does not at all meet Town needs** and **five means completely meets needs**.

	<u>Does not Meet Needs at all</u>			<u>Completely Meets Needs</u>		
1. Elementary Schools	1	2	3	4	5	(52)
2. Middle School	1	2	3	4	5	(53)
3. The new High School	1	2	3	4	5	(54)
4. Fire Department	1	2	3	4	5	(55)
5. Outdoor recreational fields	1	2	3	4	5	(56)
6. Harbor facilities such as the town landing	1	2	3	4	5	(57)
7. Police Department	1	2	3	4	5	(58)
8. Town Hall	1	2	3	4	5	(59)

On a scale of one to five where **one means not at all an important need** and **five means a very important need**, please circle the number that represents your views on whether the following facilities will be needed as the town grows.

	<u>Not at all Important Need</u>			<u>Very Important need</u>		
1. A swimming pool	1	2	3	4	5	(60)
2. Outdoor recreational fields	1	2	3	4	5	(61)
3. Natural areas for passive recreational use	1	2	3	4	5	(62)
4. A senior center	1	2	3	4	5	(63)
5. Expanded harbor facilities	1	2	3	4	5	(64)
6. A teen center	1	2	3	4	5	(65)
7. Purchasing land for future town facilities.	1	2	3	4	5	(66)

Public Utilities

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of one to five where **one means completely disagree** and **five means completely agree**.

	<u>Completely Disagree</u>			<u>Completely Agree</u>		
1. The Town should encourage the expansion of gas lines on Route One to serve the business district	1	2	3	4	5	(67)



Questions? Call 767-6440

	<u>Completely Disagree</u>			<u>Completely Agree</u>			
	1	2	3	4	5		
2. The Town should encourage the removal of overhead utilities in the Route One area and place them underground.	1	2	3	4	5		(68)
3. The Town should allow the construction of communications towers to enhance portable phone and pager services.	1	2	3	4	5		(69)
4. The Town should encourage additional use of the existing sewer system to spread improvement costs among a larger group of users.	1	2	3	4	5		(70)
5. Sewers should be extended to serve existing residential areas with septic system problems.	1	2	3	4	5		(71)
6. Sewers should be extended to new areas permitting additional compact residential growth.	1	2	3	4	5		(72)
7. Sewers should be extended to serve existing commercial users.	1	2	3	4	5		(73)
8. Sewers should be extended to serve new undeveloped property for commercial use.	1	2	3	4	5		(74)

Most Important Issues Facing the Town

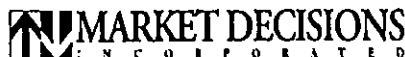
In the spaces below, please write what you think are the three most important issues facing Falmouth.

1. _____ (75-76)
2. _____ (77-78)
3. _____ (79-80)

Demographic and Household Information

The following information will be useful to us in developing a profile of the residents who respond to this survey.

1. Please indicate which of the following best describes your status. (81)
 1. Year-round resident
 2. Seasonal resident
 3. Nonresident landowner (Skip to Q3)
 4. Nonresident business person (Skip to Q3)
2. If you are a resident of Falmouth, do you own your home or do you pay rent? (If nonresident, skip to Q3) (82)
 1. Own
 2. Rent
 3. Caretaker/parsonage
 4. Other, please specify _____
3. Please indicate in which of the following areas of Falmouth you live. (83)
 1. East of Route 1
 2. Between Route 1 and the Woodville Road
 3. Between the Woodville Road and the Maine Turnpike (main line)
 4. West of the Maine Turnpike
 5. Don't know
 6. Other (Please specify) _____



Questions? Call 767-6440

3a. Are you a

(84-85)

1. A part time resident (less than 9 months)
2. A full time resident (more than 9 months)

4. How long have you lived in Falmouth?

(86)

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Two years or less | 3. Six to ten years | 5. More than twenty years |
| 2. Three to five years | 4. Eleven to twenty years | 6. Do not live in Falmouth |

6. How old are you?

(87)

- | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| 1. Under 25 | 2. 25-34 | 3. 35-44 | 4. 45-54 | 5. 55-64 | 6. 65 or older |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|

7. Please list the ages of all the other members of your household, **not including yourself**, who lives there most of the year, starting with the oldest.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ (88-97)

8. What was the highest grade or year in school that you have completed?

(98)

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 1. Less than high school | 2. High school graduate | 3. Some college (Including two and three year college and technical programs) |
| 4. Four year college | 5. Some graduate school | 6. Graduate degree |

9. In what community is the job of each of the wage earners in your household located?

(99-104)

Wage earner #1 _____ Wage earner#2 _____ Wage earner#3 _____

10. What is (are) the occupation(s) of the head(s) of household?

(105-108)

Household Head #1 _____ Household Head #2 _____

11. Please circle the number corresponding with your household's total annual income (before taxes). (109)

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Less than \$25,000 | 2. \$25,001 - \$50,000 | 3. \$50,001 - \$75,000 |
| 4. \$75,001 - \$100,000 | 5. \$100,001 - \$125,000 | 6. More than \$125,000 |

12. Please tell us if, in the last five years, you have been active in any of the following capacities. Circle all that apply.

(110-115)

1. Elected official (Council, School Committee, etc.)
2. Employee of Town or School Department
3. Member of an official board or commission (i.e., Planning Board, Board of Appeals, etc.)
4. Volunteer with municipal program (i.e., firefighter, E.M.T., school volunteer, etc.)
5. Volunteer in community organization which provides services or programs which is not associated with Town government (i.e., Little League, drama, etc.)

Thank you for completing the survey.

Please remember to mail the completed survey back to Market Decisions by November 26, 1999 at
PO Box 2890, South Portland, ME 04116-2890



Questions? Call 767-6440