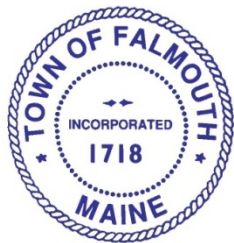




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Report



Long Range Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC+)

Town of Falmouth Comprehensive Plan Survey

Survey Report

Detailed Findings:

I. Open Space Preservation

September 2011

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Detailed Findings

Note: In summarizing the results, in many of these tables, categories on the scales are added together. For example, support and strongly support (4 and 5 on the 5-point scale). When comparing these summary tables to the charts that present each point on the scale, the percentages sometimes do not match. For example, if you were to add the percent support and strongly support in the chart. The percentages in the tables are accurate and differences are due to rounding when several categories are added together.

I. Open Space Preservation

Key Findings

Open Space Acquisition

- 58% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Town's efforts to acquire open space.
- 61% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Town's efforts to preserve and manage the open space it has already acquired.
- A majority of residents support or strongly support the Town acquiring more open space, the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space, and requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements.
- 61% of respondents support or strongly support the Town acquiring more open space while 21% oppose or strongly oppose.
- 18% of respondents support or strongly support the Town stopping the practice of acquiring more open space while 67% oppose or strongly oppose.
- 43% of respondents support or strongly support the Town spending tax funds to acquire more open space while 34% oppose or strongly oppose.
- 25% of respondents support or strongly support the Town spending tax funds beyond the \$5 million dollar authorization in 2007 to acquire more open space while 51% oppose or strongly oppose.
- 64% of respondents support or strongly support the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space while 20% oppose or strongly oppose.
- 42% of respondents support or strongly support the Town placing a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands it already has while 20% oppose or strongly oppose.
- 64% of respondents support or strongly support requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements while 18% oppose or strongly oppose.

Open Space in Subdivisions

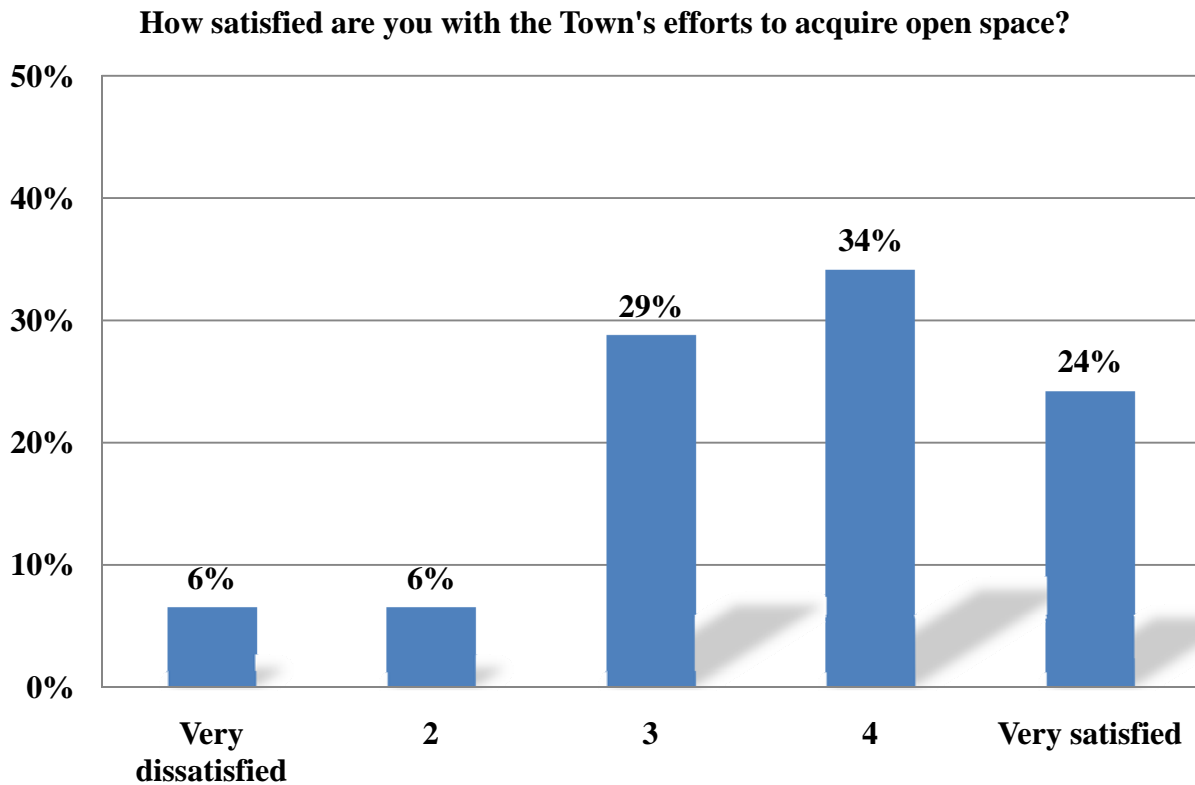
- The largest percentage of respondents (31%) indicates that 30% of land area suitable for development in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space.
- A majority of residents indicate it is important for the Town to manage open space for a range of purposes.

Open Space Acquisition

Falmouth has historically invested in acquiring open space to preserve natural areas for passive recreational pursuits and land conservation. In November 2007, Falmouth voters approved 5 million dollars over ten years to fund the acquisition of open space following recommendations from the Council-adopted Open Space Plan, of which, as of July 2011, approximately \$1 million dollars will have been spent.

Three tools have typically been used for that purpose: spending tax revenue; acquiring funding from alternative sources; and using development zoning stipulations to set aside additional open space. With that in mind, please answer the following questions.

58% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Town's efforts to acquire open space.



Comments:

Twenty-four percent of respondents are very satisfied with the Town's efforts to acquire open space. Another 34% of respondents are satisfied (rating as a 4 on the 5-point scale) with the Town's efforts. Six percent of respondents are very dissatisfied and 6% are dissatisfied (rating as a 2 on the 5-point scale) with the Town's efforts to acquire open space. Twenty-nine percent of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

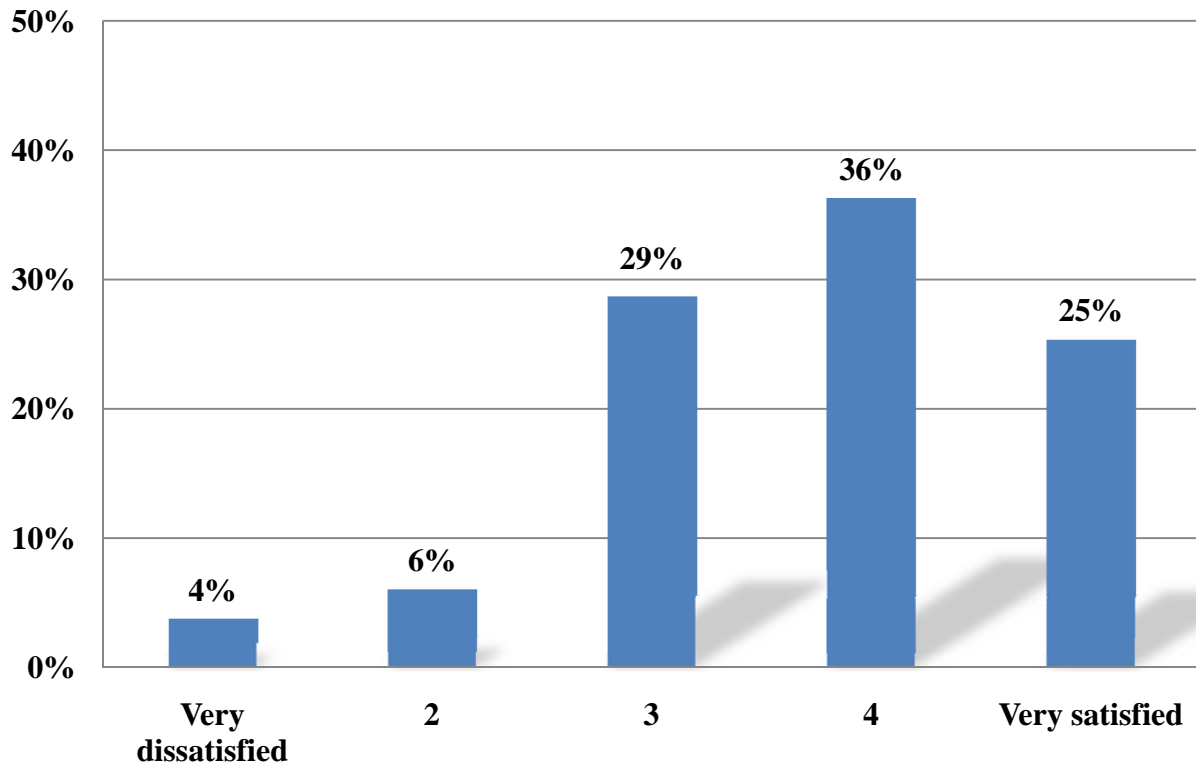
Residents most likely to be satisfied or very satisfied (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents aged 18 to 34 (68%)
- Residents living in Highland Lake/Poplar Ridge (74%)

Among those indicating they are dissatisfied, the reasons include that the Town shouldn't be spending money on open space, that the Town has acquired enough open space, open space preservation is causing a tax burden, and it is not the job of the Town to acquire open space. Others that are dissatisfied indicate that the Town should have spent more by now in purchasing open space, the Town should have spent more of the bond approved by voters, and that the Town should buy additional open space while real estate prices are low.

61% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Town's efforts to preserve and manage the open space it has already acquired.

How satisfied are you with the Town's efforts to preserve and manage the open space it has acquired?



Comments:

Twenty-five percent of respondents are very satisfied with the Town's efforts to preserve and manage the open space it has acquired. Another 36% of respondents are satisfied (rating as a 4 on the 5-point scale) with the Town's efforts. Four percent of respondents are very dissatisfied and 6% are dissatisfied (rating as a 2 on the 5-point scale) with the Town's efforts to preserve and manage the open space it has acquired. Twenty-nine percent of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Residents most likely to be satisfied or very satisfied (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents living in Highland Lake/Poplar Ridge (75%)
- Residents with an annual income between \$25,000 and \$50,000 (75%)

Among those indicating they are dissatisfied, the reasons include dissatisfaction with Town's efforts in maintaining some of the existing open space and parks, that the Town leaves it to other groups to maintain and preserve some of the open space and that the Town should not acquire open space or be in the business of acquiring open space.

A majority of residents support or strongly support the Town acquiring more open space, the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space, and requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements.

How strongly do you support or oppose the following:

	% Support or Strongly Support (rated 4 or 5)	% Oppose or Strongly Oppose (rated 1 or 2)
The Town acquiring more open space.	61%	21%
The Town stop the practice of acquiring open space.	18%	67%
The Town spending tax funds to acquire more open space.	43%	34%
The Town spending tax funds beyond the 5 million dollar authorization in 2007 to acquire more open space.	25%	51%
The Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space.	64%	20%
The Town placing a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands it already has rather than acquiring new open space.	42%	20%
Requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements.	64%	18%

Comments:

Respondents rated their level of support or opposition to various Town strategies regarding open space. Support for each of seven policies was rated on a 5-point scale where 1 is strongly oppose and 5 is strongly support.

Thirty-nine percent of respondents strongly support the Town acquiring more open space. Twenty-one percent of respondents support the Town acquiring more open space (rating as a 4 on the 5-point scale). Thirteen percent of respondents strongly oppose the Town acquiring more open space. Another 9% oppose the Town acquiring more open space (rating as a 2 on the 5-point scale). Eighteen percent of respondents are neutral.

Only 10% of respondents strongly support and only 8% support the Town stopping the practice of acquiring open space. Fifty-two percent strongly oppose and another 15% oppose stopping the practice of acquiring open space. Fifteen percent of respondents are neutral.

There is less support for using tax funds to acquire open space. Twenty-two percent of respondents strongly support and another 22% support the Town spending tax funds to acquire more open space. Twenty percent of respondents strongly oppose the Town spending tax funds to acquire more open space while 14% oppose spending tax funds. Twenty-three percent of respondents are neutral.

Only 13% of respondents strongly support and 12% support the Town spending tax funds beyond the 5 million dollar authorization in 2007 to acquire more open space. One-third (33%) of respondents strongly oppose and another 18% oppose spending tax funds beyond 2007 authorization. Twenty-four percent are neutral.

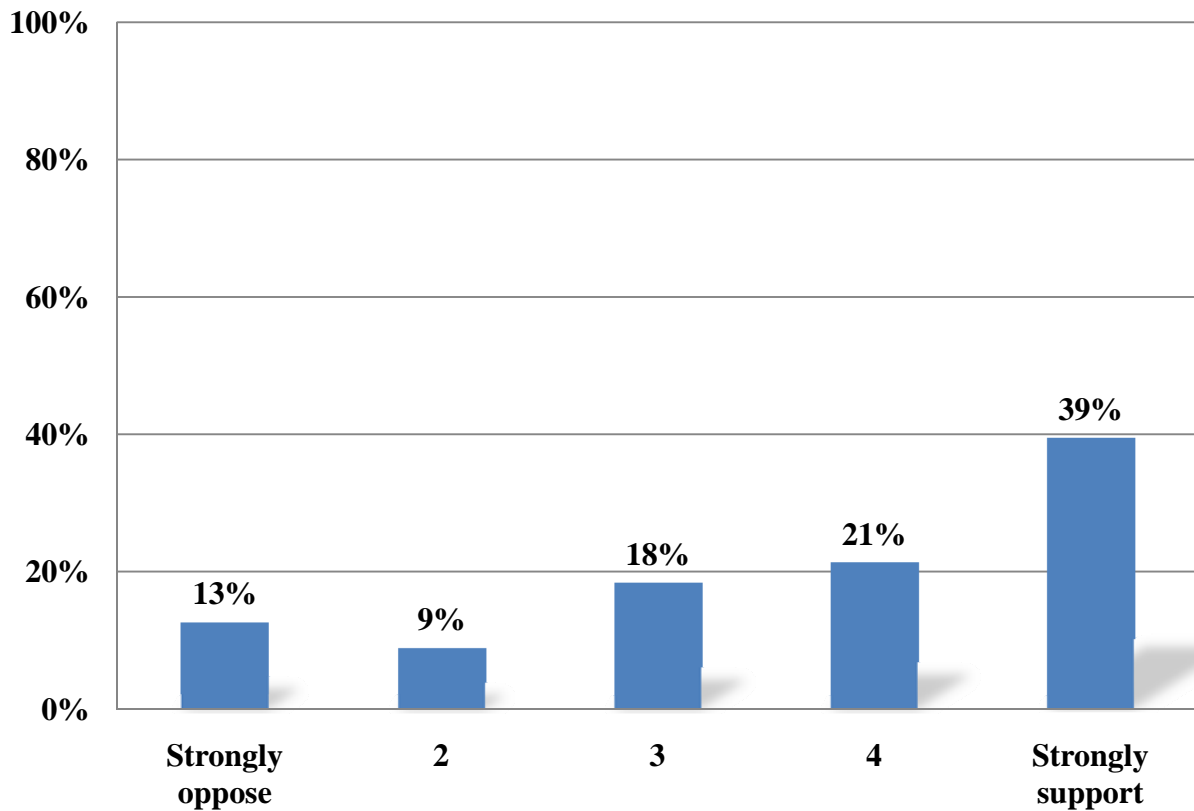
A majority support or strongly support the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space with 41% strongly supporting and 23% supporting. Thirteen percent of respondents strongly oppose the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space. Another 7% oppose the Town leveraging alternative funds. Sixteen percent of respondents are neutral.

Twenty percent of respondents would strongly support the Town placing a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands it already has rather than acquiring new open space and 21% would support a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands. Six percent of respondents would strongly oppose and 13% oppose the Town placing a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands it already has. Thirty-nine percent of respondents are neutral.

A majority support requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements; 43% strongly supporting and another 21% supporting this requirement. Eleven percent strongly oppose while 7% oppose a requirement that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments. Eighteen percent of respondents are neutral.

61% of respondents support or strongly support the Town acquiring more open space while 21% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose the Town acquiring more open space?

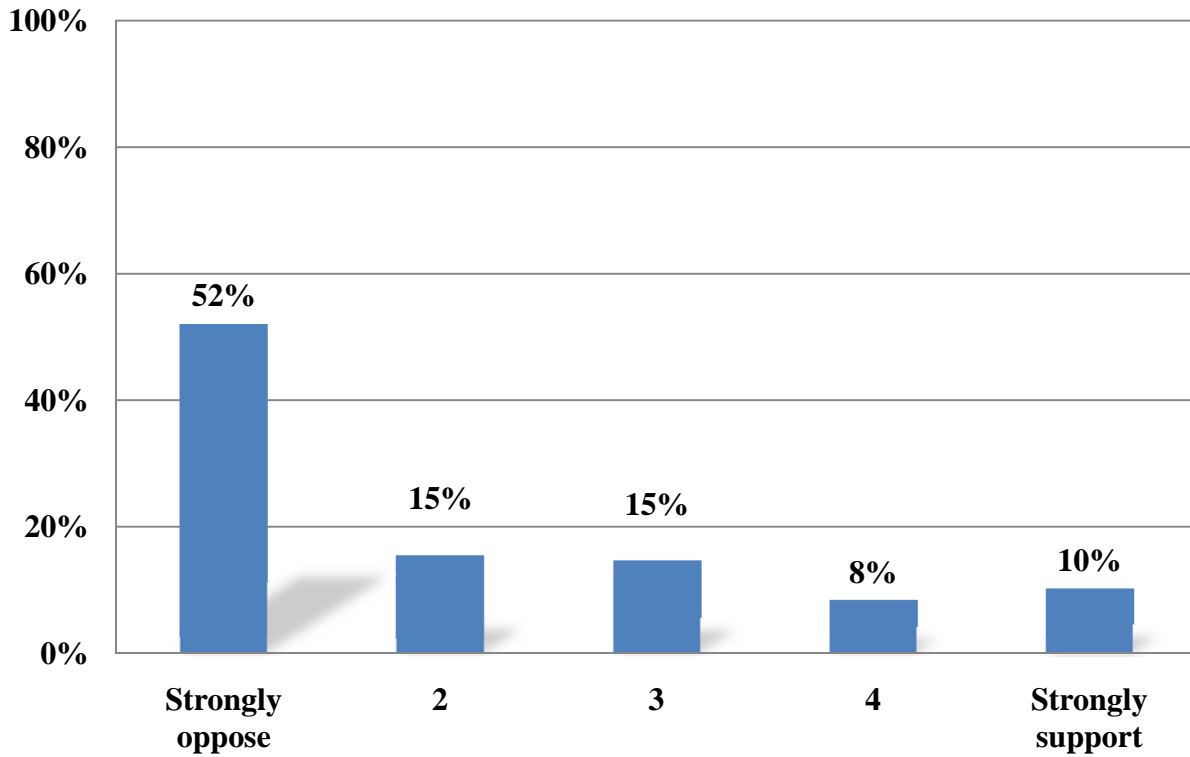


Residents most likely to support or strongly support (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents aged 18 to 34 (83%)
- Residents without children in Falmouth schools (79%)
- Residents living in Falmouth less than 5 years (78%)

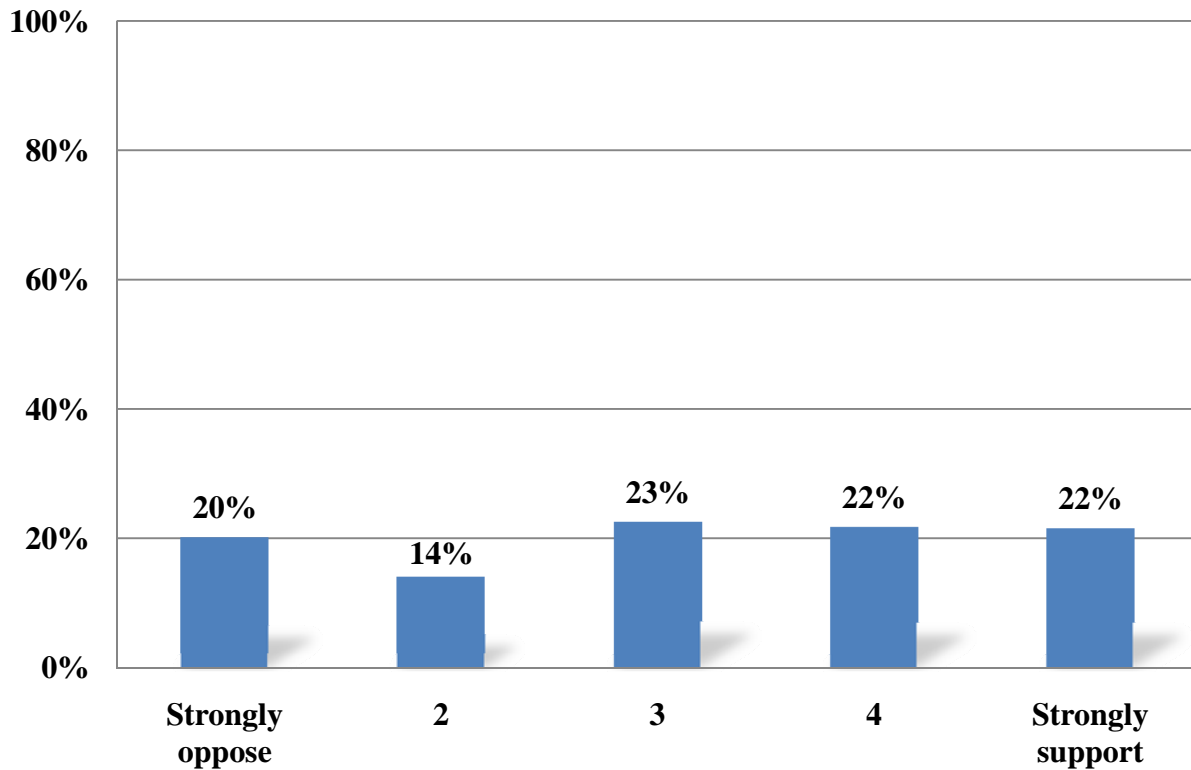
18% of respondents support or strongly support the Town stopping the practice of acquiring more open space while 67% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose the Town stop the practice of acquiring open space?



43% of respondents support or strongly support the Town spending tax funds to acquire more open space while 34% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose the Town spending tax funds to acquire more open space?

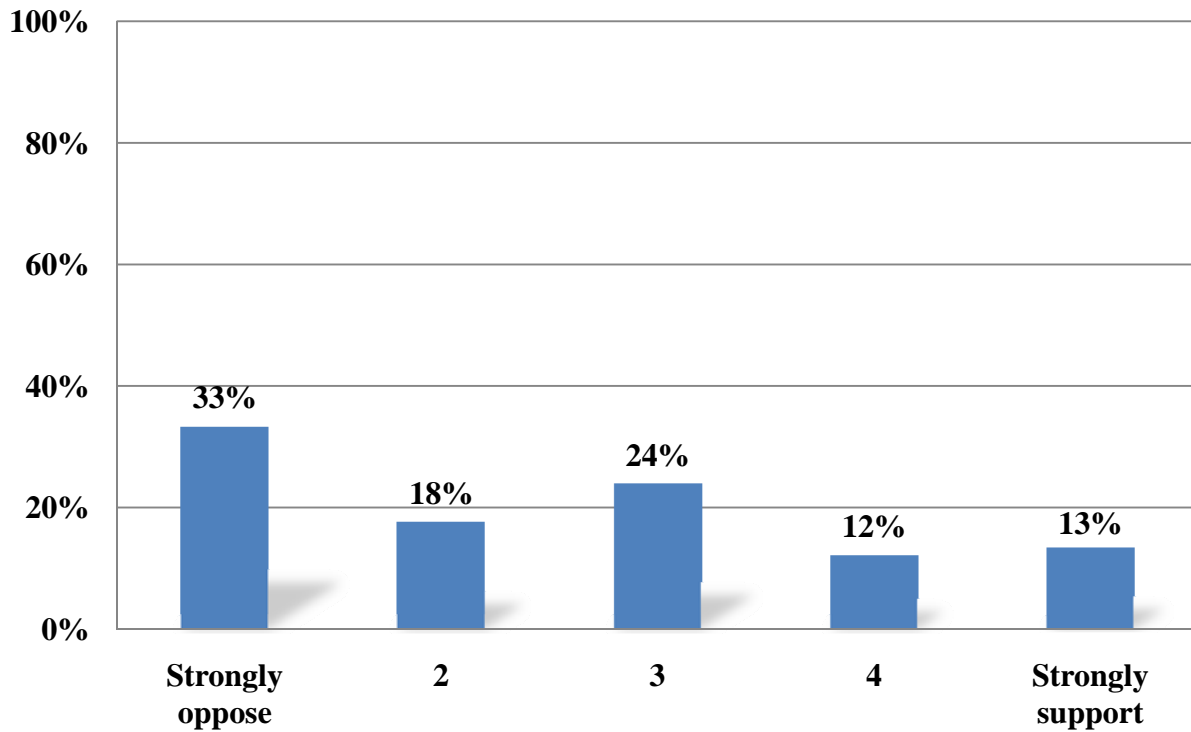


Residents most likely to support or strongly support (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents aged 18 to 34 (54%)
- Residents with an annual income between \$25,000 and \$50,000 (54%)
- Residents without children in Falmouth schools (71%)

25% of respondents support or strongly support the Town spending tax funds beyond the \$5 million dollar authorization in 2007 to acquire more open space while 51% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose the Town spending tax funds beyond the \$5 million dollar authorization in 2007 to acquire more open space?

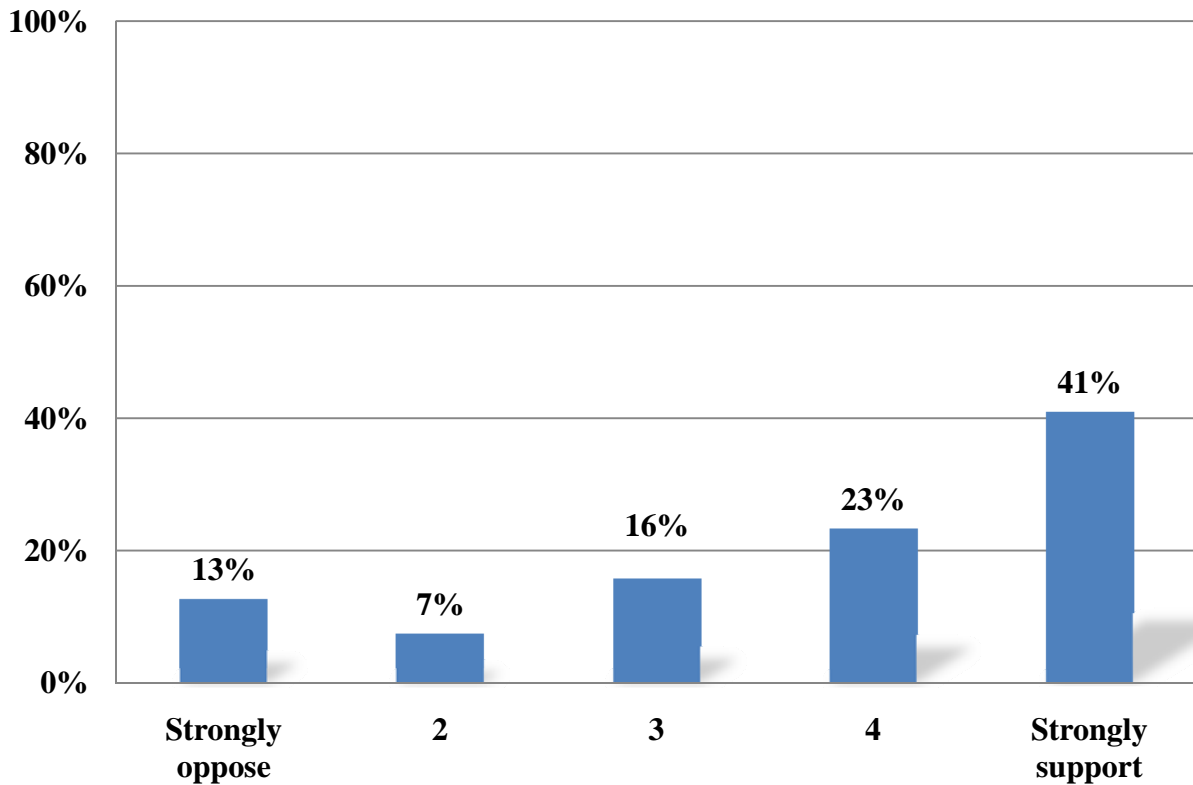


Residents most likely to support or strongly support (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents living in Pleasant Hill (37%)
- Residents without children in Falmouth schools (37%)

64% of respondents support or strongly support the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space while 20% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose the Town leveraging alternative funds through grants and other resources to continue to buy more open space?

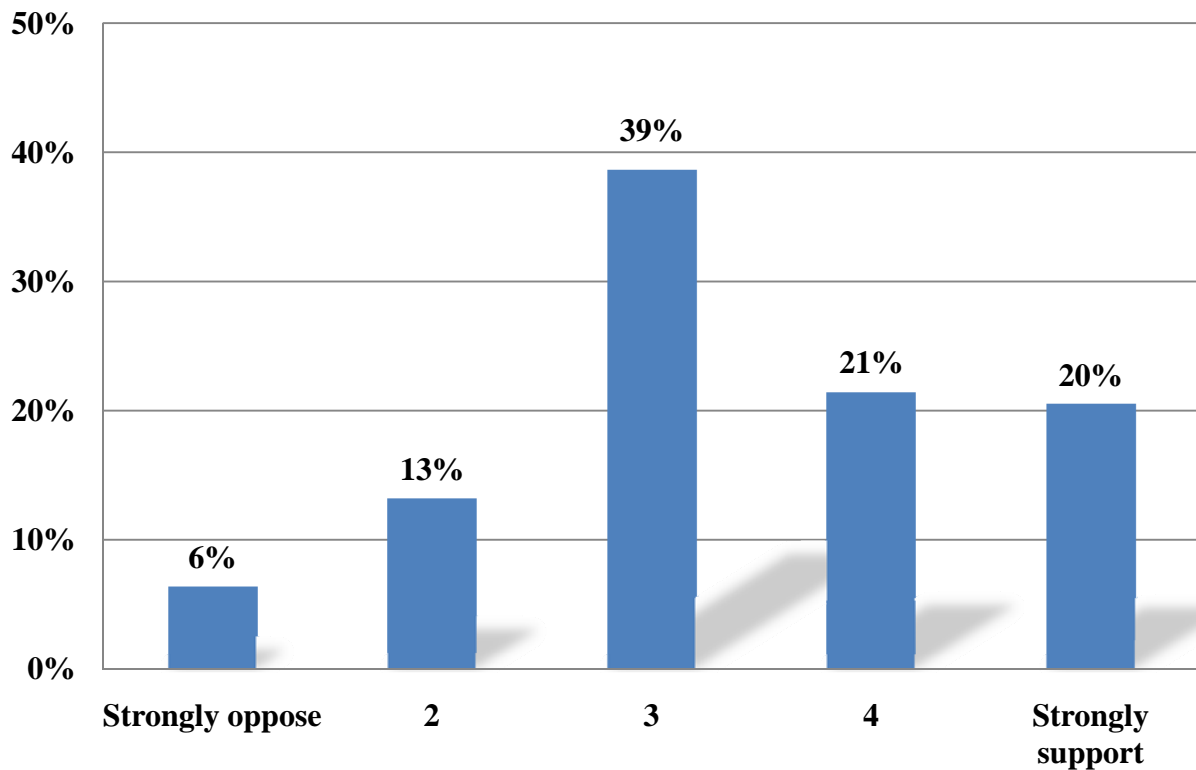


Residents most likely to support or strongly support (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents without children in Falmouth schools (79%)

42% of respondents support or strongly support the Town placing a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands it already has while 20% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose the Town placing a priority on managing and improving the open space and conservation lands it already has rather than acquiring new open space?

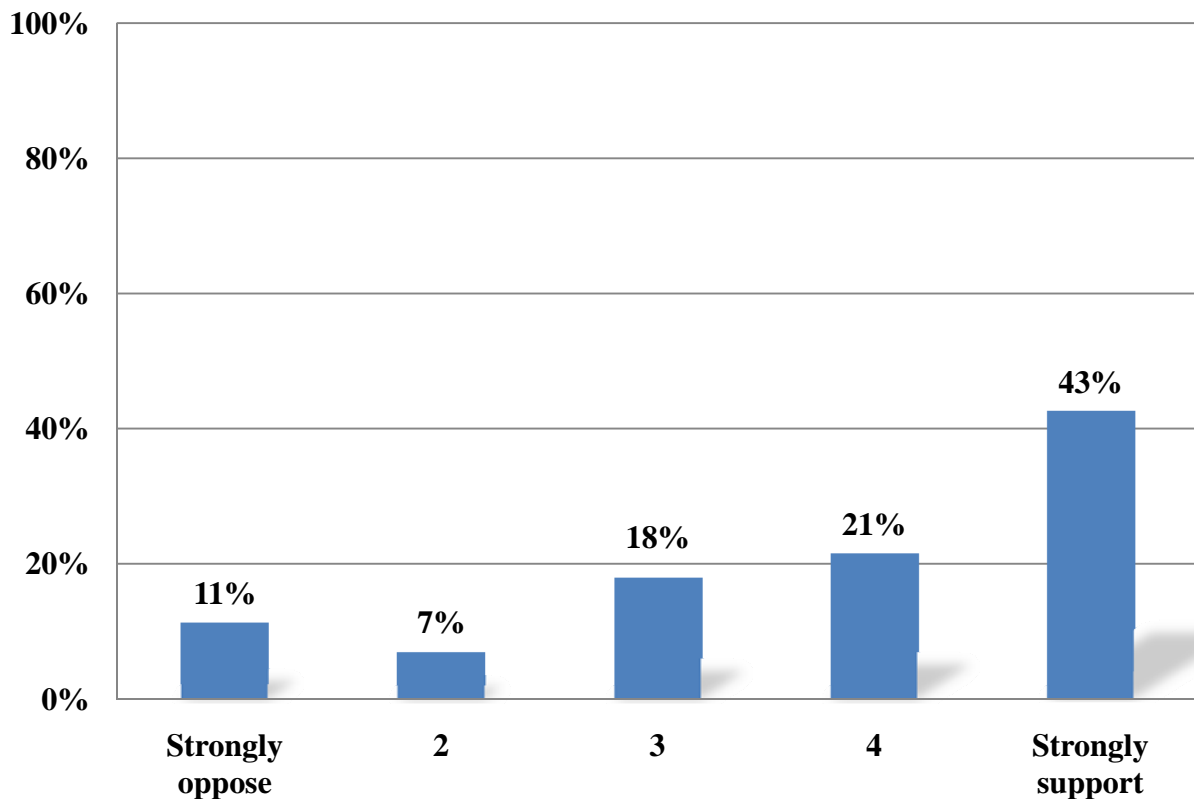


Residents most likely to support or strongly support (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents living in Leighton Hill/Brookside (53%)

64% of respondents support or strongly support requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements while 18% oppose or strongly oppose.

How strongly do you support or oppose requiring that land be set aside as open space in new residential developments through zoning ordinance requirements?



Residents most likely to support or strongly support (rating as 4 or 5) include:

- Residents without children in Falmouth schools (86%)
- Residents living in Falmouth less than 5 years (79%)
- Residents living in Falmouth between 6 and 10 (77%)

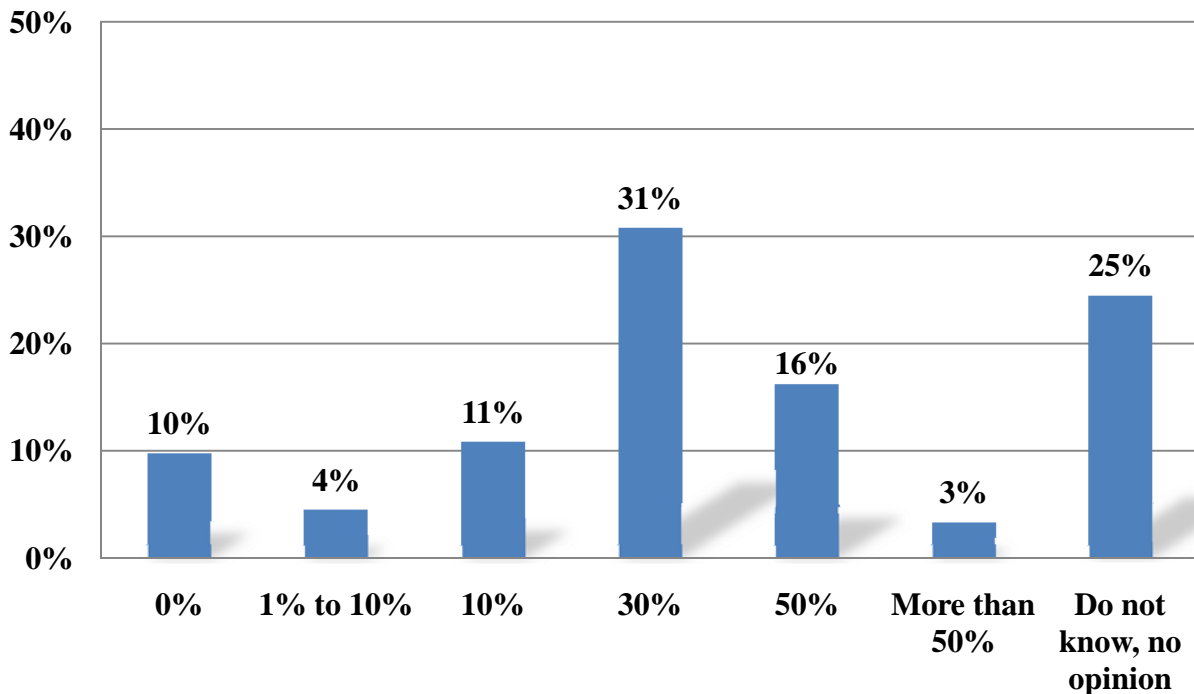
Open Space in Subdivisions

Current land use regulations in Falmouth require that property owners and/or developers who develop residential subdivisions set aside as permanently protected open space a land area equal to:

- All unsuitable areas for house lots of the development parcel, such as flood plains, wetlands, steep slopes, roads, and easements, plus 30% of the remainder of the development parcel.

The largest percentage of respondents (31%) indicates that 30% of land area suitable for development in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space.

What percent of land area suitable for development should property owners and/or developers be required to set aside as permanently protected open space in new residential developments in addition to all unsuitable land area of a development parcel?



Comments:

Respondents were asked to indicate what percentage of land area suitable for development should property owners and/or developers be required to set aside as permanently protected open space in new residential developments (in addition to all unsuitable land area of a development parcel).

The largest percentage, 31%, indicates that 30% of the land area suitable for development in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space. Sixteen percent of respondents indicate that 50% of the land in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space and 3% indicate that more than 50% should be set aside.

Ten percent of respondents indicate that none of the land area suitable for development in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space, 4% of respondents indicates 1 to 10% of the land area and 11% indicates 10% of the land area suitable for development in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space.

One-quarter (25%) are unsure how much the land area suitable for development in new residential developments should be set aside as permanent open space.

A majority of residents indicate it is important for the Town to manage open space for a range of purposes.

Open space can be used and managed for a number of purposes. Depending on the suitability of the land, how important is it that the Town manages open space for...

	% Rating Important or Very Important (rated 4 or 5)	% Rating Not Important or Not at all Important (rated 1 or 2)
Trails for walking	77%	9%
Trails for biking	64%	14%
Trails for horseback riding	21%	45%
Trails for snowmobiling	16%	60%
Trails for motorized off-road recreational vehicles	8%	80%
Organized outdoors events related to open space	53%	20%
Wildlife habitat preservation	81%	8%
Birding	67%	15%
Hunting	23%	60%
Fishing	52%	23%
Scenic quality	80%	7%
Land used for farming	60%	17%
Land used for forestry and wood products	42%	31%
Wetlands and the land adjacent to wetlands	66%	15%
Water quality protection	85%	5%
Recreation areas such as large parks and playing fields	58%	17%
Recreational use, such as canoeing or kayaking	66%	13%
Smaller, neighborhood parks or playgrounds within walking distance	68%	12%
Areas along waterways, river corridors, and streams	75%	8%

Comments:

Respondents were asked how important it was for the Town to manage open space for nineteen purposes. Importance was rated on a five-point scale where 1 is not at all important and 5 is very important.

Eighty percent or more of respondents indicate it is very important or important (rating as a 4 or 5 on the 5-point scale) to manage open space for water quality protection (85%), wildlife habitat preservation (81%), and scenic quality (80%). Seventy-seven percent indicate it is important or very important to manage open space for trails for walking and 75% for areas along waterways, river corridors, and streams.

A large majority also consider it important or very important to manage open space for smaller, neighborhood parks or playgrounds within walking distance (68%), birding (67%), wetlands and the land adjacent to wetlands (66%), recreational use, such as canoeing or kayaking (66%), trails for biking (64%), and land used for farming (60%). Fifty-eight percent consider it important or very important to manage open space for recreation areas such as large parks and playing fields while 53% indicate organized outdoors events related to open space and 52% consider it important or very important to manage open space for fishing.

Forty-two percent of respondents indicate it is very important or important to manage open space for land used for forestry and wood products while 31% consider it not at all or not very important (rating as a 1 or 2 on the 5-point scale).

Only 23% consider it very important or important to manage open space for hunting while a majority (60%) indicates it is not at all or not very important. Twenty-one percent indicate it is very important or important to manage open space for trails for horseback riding and 16% for trails for snowmobiling while 45% and 60% respectively indicate it is not at all or not very important. Only 8% consider it important or very important to manage open space for trails for motorized off-road recreational vehicles with eight in ten (80%) indicating it is not at all or not very important.

Residents most likely to indicate as important or very important (rating as 4 or 5) include:

Trails for walking	Residents aged 18 to 34 (92%), Residents living in Hurricane Valley (91%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (90%), Residents living in Falmouth less than 5 years (92%)
Trails for biking	Residents aged 18 to 34 (81%), Residents living in Hurricane Valley (78%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (82%), Residents living in Falmouth less than 5 years (78%)

Trails for horseback riding	Residents living in Hurricane Valley (34%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (38%)
Trails for snowmobiling	Residents living in Hurricane Valley (27%)
Trails for motorized off-road recreational vehicles	Residents living in Hurricane Valley (26%)
Organized outdoors events related to open space	Residents aged 18 to 34 (81%), Residents living in Falmouth Corners (68%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (66%)
Wildlife habitat preservation	Residents aged 18 to 34 (92%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (100%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (95%)
Birding	Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (86%)
Hunting	Residents living in Highland Park/Poplar Ridge (38%) and Hurricane Valley (39%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (65%)
Fishing	Residents living in Woodville (62%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (86%)
Scenic quality	Residents aged 18 to 34 (92%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (100%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (90%)
Land used for farming	Residents living in Hurricane Valley (81%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (76%)
Land used for forestry and wood products	Residents aged 65 and older (52%), Residents living in Hurricane Valley (52%) and Woodville (52%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (69%), Residents with an annual income between \$35,000 and \$50,000 (53%)
Wetlands and the land adjacent to wetlands	Residents aged 18 to 34 (77%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (85%), Residents living in Falmouth 5 years or less (77%)
Water quality protection	Residents living in Hurricane Valley (94%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (96%)
Recreation areas such as large parks and playing fields	Residents aged 18 to 34 (75%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (69%), Residents with children in Falmouth schools (72%), Residents living in Falmouth less than 5 years (70%)
Recreational use, such as canoeing or kayaking	Residents aged 18 to 34 (78%), Residents with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (90%), Residents living in Falmouth less than 5 years (77%)
Smaller, neighborhood parks or playgrounds within walking distance	Residents aged 18 to 34 (86%), Residents without children in Falmouth Schools (85%)
Areas along waterways, river corridors, and streams	Residents living in Hurricane Valley (88%)