



Results are in for the sixth and final Bucksport NEXT Public Opinion Poll. People filled out the online and newspaper surveys, but most got their forms at the Jewett School on November 8th when they dropped in to vote. Most responders to these polls are from Bucksport, but some are from other towns and states.

Regarding the **NEXT Big Thing** for Bucksport, the survey consisted of only one question along with twelve suggested answers and the opportunity to express one's own opinion:

If the town were to invest in a project to enhance its image and promote its future growth, what should it be?

The suggested answers to the question are given here in order of their popularity from most to least...

- Work with the mill site owners and interested parties on a joint plan for redevelopment.

Not surprisingly, this answer garnered the most support with 13% of all votes and 41% of indicated #1 choices. Though the town does not own the mill site, its anticipated redevelopment seems to hold the key to Bucksport's future in many ways. The town was defined as a "mill" town for over 80 years. The site's potential for industry or as a riverfront location for some other uses will be best realized through mutual planning. Survey responders added these related comments:

- *The Mill site is an excellent location for a retirement-assisted living community.*
- *Put in some kind of mall in where the mill used to be*
- *Prefer light, non-polluting industry*
- *Make a plan without it costing taxpayers money, with owner paying for service.*

- Promote the growth of Main Street with a variety of retail/restaurants to bring in business.

This choice came in #2 with 12% of all votes and 6% of number ones. Other survey results and comments reveal strong support for growing Main Street with the understanding that patronage of local businesses is vital for their survival and advancement.

- *Promote only restaurants on Main Street.*
- *Get a Burger King or family restaurant that stays open year round.*
- *Need a year round bathroom facility-- To advertise "shop Bucksport" without public restroom access is unthinkable.*
- *Create a portion of Main St. as a walking mall. Would require re-routing traffic*
- *Knowing that many cars (tourists + others) turn right off the bridge, develop the commercial potential there on Route 1 without big box or aluminum styled building. In most cases maintaining the existing buildings with a commercial residential appeal.*
- *A community center of support: to locate community concerns food bank and talk-and-shop, and a place for the lonely or needy to get a cup-of-coffee or tea and have volunteers to talk to: (a caring place)*

- Champion Bucksport as a commercial port with multimodal transportation connections.

One of the mill site area's obvious employments would take advantage of existing infrastructure to fill the role of a deep water port with ship, rail, road and pipeline connections. Responders picked this as #3 with 11% of all votes. It also got 17% of indicated number one choices—second place in that way of counting.

➤ *What multimodal transportation besides boats? No bus service (regular), No train service.*

- Construct an all-seasons, indoor/outdoor recreation and events center with a pool, etc.

This choice came in #4 with 10% of all votes and 14% of number ones. No indication was given in the poll as to where this might happen. However, some in previous surveys have suggested an events center as a new use for the former mill property. Comments submitted:

- *Use the pool in a newly constructed all-seasons rec center for school swim program*
- *What is the cost to use after taxes are used to build it?*
- *Do local residents who pay taxes get free use?*
- *Get a YMCA in town area*
- *Do not build an all-seasons, indoor/outdoor recreation and events center with a pool, etc.*
- *Do not lose our outdoor pool, outdoor skating rink, etc.*

The next five answers were the medium response range with 7 to 8 percent of all votes.

- Improve the Town's marina to serve more vessels with dockage and expanded services.

8% of votes. The Waterfront Committee is investigating these possibilities.

- Improve the technology and support infrastructure for the Main Street commercial area.

8% of votes. The Economic Development Committee and the Downtown-Main Street group are working on ideas to enhance commercial areas. Comments submitted:

- *Recommend community business storefront+ signage standards for a Bucksport "look".*
- *Do not improve technology and support infrastructure for the Main Street commercial area.*
- *Improve technology and support infrastructure for the Main Street commercial area + the right hand turn off the bridge where the majority of the customers are.*

- Develop the town land on the west side of Silver Lake as a swimming & recreation area.

7% of votes. The newly formed "Friends of Silver Lake" group is looking into these matters.

➤ *The drinking water supply needs protection.*

- Connect Broadway to Park Street and alleviate congestion on Route 1 and Nicholson Ave.

7% of votes. Comments submitted:

- *Nicholson Ave. sidewalk. Do something about the traffic at the bottom of Nicholson Ave.*
- *Do not connect Broadway to Park St. and alleviate congestion on Route 1 and Nicholson Ave.*
- *Connect Broadway to Route 46 instead.*

- *Replace yield signs on the corner of Nicholson Ave. + Broadway. If you connect Broadway to Park Street signs will have to be changed. Straight shot!*

- Build an outdoor amphitheater and events center between Main Street and the waterfront.

7% of votes.

- *Do not build an outdoor amphitheater and events center between Main St and the waterfront*
- *We have the gazebo + other things - lets over utilize those before wanting more.*

The last four answers were the lowest response range with 3 to 5 percent of all votes.

- Acquire a site to build a scenic overlook, picnic area and launch site off River Road.

4% of votes

- *Do not acquire a site to build a scenic overlook, picnic area and launch site off River Road.*
- *We had a boat launch area on the River so we tore it down + want a new one someplace else wasting money - tear down what we have, wanting it back again someplace else. Need better long range planning instead of redoing what we had someplace else*

- Complete a planned development of the town's "Feldman" property on Main Street.

4% of votes

- *Do not complete a planned development of the "Feldman" property - Sell! Lower price -get it on the tax map*

- Work with developers to further the restoration/re-use of the Town-owned Wilson Hall.

5% of votes

- *Keep our great historic community alive.*
- *Do not work with developers to further the restoration/re-use of the Town-owned Wilson Hall*

- Other: (Write your own)

3% of responses

- *Combine Rec Depts of Bucksport and Orland*
- *The town should participate in the Land for Maine's Future Program.*
- *Promote development of a paper museum*
- *Promote development of a regional "food hub".*
- *Down size and reduce taxes*
- *Keep it simple*
- *Set up a system to keep teenagers etc. out of the Elm St. park at night!*
- *Senior Housing*
- *Hotels, transportation to and from Bar Harbor.*
- *Develop camping grounds.*
- *Put a botanical gardens using grants, contributions, etc*
- *Let's over utilize what we have before looking for New, Better, Cost money.*
- *Taxes need to be lower Town + School*

- *RSU's were supposed to cut Administrative and other overlapping cost if that can't happen we need to relook at the RSU because as a town to hear leaders in the town say they have NO control over the school budget - that is the last clue that should lead you to this RSU experiment Does Not Work + The school has been indifferent to the needs of the town taxpayers.*
- *Salaries in the town + school need to better reflect what taxpayers can afford - NOT what other towns can afford.*
- *Town needs to have more say in the school + expenditures if the school continues to be indifferent to the plight of the taxpayers.*
- *School cost should have been cut with reduction of student population immediately when the mill closed and for years since.*
- *We need more interesting activities on a weekly basis to draw people to the town.*
- *The town should not spend money on TV marketing but advertise more directly through publications related to tourist activities, retirement and family relocation.*
- *The town could use site seeing guides for tourists.*
- *Take advantage of the walkway and other waterfront amenities.*

See the actual questions, choices and data at <http://tinyurl.com/BucksportNEXT-Poll1>.

Jef Fitzgerald, Comprehensive Plan Committee Chair