

Bucksport NEXT Survey 01
RESULTS NARRATIVE
7/27/2015



Results are in for the first Bucksport NEXT Public Opinion Poll. To date, Ninety-eight people filled out the online and newspaper survey forms, mostly from Bucksport, but also from other towns and states. Survey forms and complete results may be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/BucksportNEXT-Poll1> .

On the first question, 42% said we should aggressively try to increase the town's population in the face of predictions of future losses. Another 34% said that we should try to slow down any loss of people while 19% expressed a hands-off approach. Only one person thought the town's population should go down. The remaining 4% also favored growth by suggesting ways to draw people to the area including marketing the town, setting up long-range plans, building attractions and making it more business friendly.

On the second question, which highlighted Bucksport's aging population, 47% said we should encourage a diverse blend of people, 37% indicated that we should inspire young families to locate here while 7% were "hands-off". Catering to the elderly garnered 4% of the responses, plus recommendations on how that could be accomplished, including development of a retirement village on the riverfront. Other suggestions offered were to promote eco-tourism and jobs to draw in more families & young people.

Concerning the recent big hit taken by the local economy, 56% responded that smaller industrial, commercial and residential uses should be sought to fill the void created by the loss of the paper mill. Only 22% favored action to aggressively (or patiently) go after a large industry to replace Verso. Eliminating industrial uses there altogether was chosen by 7%. Written commentaries pointed out that the town does not own the mill site and wondered what (if any) role the town could or should play in its redevelopment. Additional thoughts included promoting various kinds of tourism, green development and home grown commercial endeavors.

Regarding town services, 32% of respondents favored some cuts to minimize local property taxes. An additional 24% favored user fees toward that end. Keeping services as they are by raising taxes was chosen by 17%. The remaining 13% proposed a mix of the choices given as well as a proposition that town growth could help make up the tax base deficit.

That's my take on the poll results. See the actual questions, choices and response data for yourself at <http://tinyurl.com/BucksportNEXT-Poll1> . if you have not filled it out, the surveys will available to take online until we are done with the inventory phase of the Comp Plan. We will use the final results to help build the goals and objectives section.

Jef Fitzgerald
Comprehensive Plan Committee Chair