

Bucksport NEXT Survey 02
RESULTS NARRATIVE
9/3/2015



Results are in for the second Bucksport NEXT Public Opinion Poll. To date, fifty-three 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>. It is not too late to fill out any of the polls!

On the first question regarding housing, the largest response (29%) was in favor of continuing the town's grant programs to assist property owners with upgrades. The remaining "votes" were about equally divided between promoting new units for the elderly, low to middle income & high-end condos as well as providing a favorable situation for private investment in housing. Comments included desires to see revisions to building codes and investigation of alternative housing types and energy sources.

The second question asked about Bucksport's roads. The biggest support shown (34%) was for adequately funding Public Works to keep our roads well maintained. Not far behind was the desire to expand public transportation options (28%) and improving the sidewalk system (25%). Continuing projects such as connecting Broadway to Park Street garnered only 13%. Comments expressed appreciation for the good condition of our local streets as compared to other towns and an understanding that not maintaining roads now costs more \$\$ later in repair/rebuild costs. That said, the most comments focused on trying to save money, perhaps through efficiency and the use of private contractors. Planning for better bicycling and walking routes were also plugged.

Regarding the Penobscot River, the most popular responses were to work with the mill site owners on commercial port options (35%) and promoting tourism (34%). Building up the marina for recreational boating drew 21% of all responses and a suggestion to turn it back over to private ownership. Restoring commercial fishing to the area was supported by only 8%. Widening navigation lanes, publicity for the harbor services and more affordable marina rates were suggested improvements.

On the branch rail line to Bucksport, discussing the future of the railroad with other towns (29%) and its owners (23%) made the most sense to people while waiting to see what happens with the mill site (17%). Creating a multi-use trail was supported by 20%. Dismantling or altering the rail line to allow more access to riverfront property garnered 11%. In addition to its commercial freight utility, the rail line inspired some creative thinking with ideas for revamping it for tourism, connected to Bangor and scenic railroad destinations beyond.

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