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Municipal Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, July 8, 2025 – 6:00 p.m.

MODL Council Chambers – 10 Allée Champlain Drive, Cookville

- 1. Call to Order**
 - 1.1 Mi'kma'ki Territorial Acknowledgement
- 2. Announcements, Acknowledgements, Recognition**
- 3. Public Input (15 Minutes)**
- 4. Changes/Approval of Agenda** (as circulated)
- 5. Approval of Minutes** - Council, June 10, 2025 & June 24, 2025
- 6. Business Arising from Minutes**
- 7. Awarding of Tenders/RFPs**
 - 7.1 Award of RFQ 2024-01-307 Municipal App 1-5
- 8. Presentations/Scheduled Times - Nil**
- 9. Consideration of Correspondence**
 - 9.1 Letter from Town of Lunenburg re Mutual Boundary Change..... 6-8
- 10. Recommendations from Committees & Boards**
 - 10.1 Regional Growth Management Committee** 9
 - 10.1.1 Growth & Infrastructure Planning
 - 10.1.2 Intermunicipal Collaboration Planning
- 11. Staff Reports**
 - 11.1 Economic Development**
 - 11.1.1 Funding re Regional Economic Development Partnership Report..... 10-26
 - 11.2 Administration**
 - 11.2.1 Public Engagement and Communications – What we Heard Report..... 27-85
- 12. Mayor's/Deputy Mayor's/Councillors' Matters**
 - 12.1 MJSB Update
 - 12.2 Deputy Mayor's Update
 - 12.3 Mayor's Update
- 13. Added Items**
- 14. In Camera - Nil**
- 15. Adjournment**

Council
Item #7.1
Date: July 8, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Request for Decision

Report to: Council
Submitted by: Sarah Kucharski, Manager, Communications & Public Engagement
Date: July 8, 2025
Re: Municipal app

Recommendation

That Council award RFO 2024-01-307 Municipal App to 14 Oranges Software Inc. for the sum of \$9,500 plus HST for set up, and up to \$13,350 plus HST for subsequent licensing and support.

Background

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg requested quotations from qualified vendors for the purchase, implementation, and support of a self-managed mobile application that enhances engagement with residents. The app must enable MODL staff to independently add and update content through an intuitive backend management system. The software solution must be pre-developed and have been successfully in use by Canadian municipalities for a minimum of two years.

The RFO requested that each quotation include a fixed-price proposal, covering all costs associated with app development, deployment, hosting, maintenance, training, and a proposal for ongoing support.

The scope of work included:

1. Custom mobile application development for both iOS and Android platforms.
2. User-friendly content management system allowing MODL staff to independently update:
 - a. News, public notices, and emergency alerts.
 - b. Community events and municipal services.
 - c. Contact information and frequently asked questions.

3. Push notification functionality for real-time updates.
4. Integration with existing municipal platforms (e.g., website, social media), or automated workflows to push updates to web and app.
5. Resident engagement features, such as surveys, feedback forms, or service request submissions.
6. Ability to see usage metrics.
7. Secure, Canadian, cloud-based hosting with data protection measures in compliance with applicable privacy regulations.
8. Initial staff training and ongoing technical support.

One bid was received by the closing date, from 14 Oranges Software Inc., in Vancouver for an app called Info Grove. The licensing and support fee ranges from \$6,050 to \$13,350 per subsequent year. Depending on the support level we determine is required after the first year, we expect to see an annual fee in the \$6,050 range.

At the June 24, 2025 Council meeting, Council declined to award the RFQ and directed staff to review an alternative product, Alertable, which is used by several Nova Scotian municipalities. Staff connected with the Alertable sales team to discuss the app functionality and compare it to the features available in Info Grove.

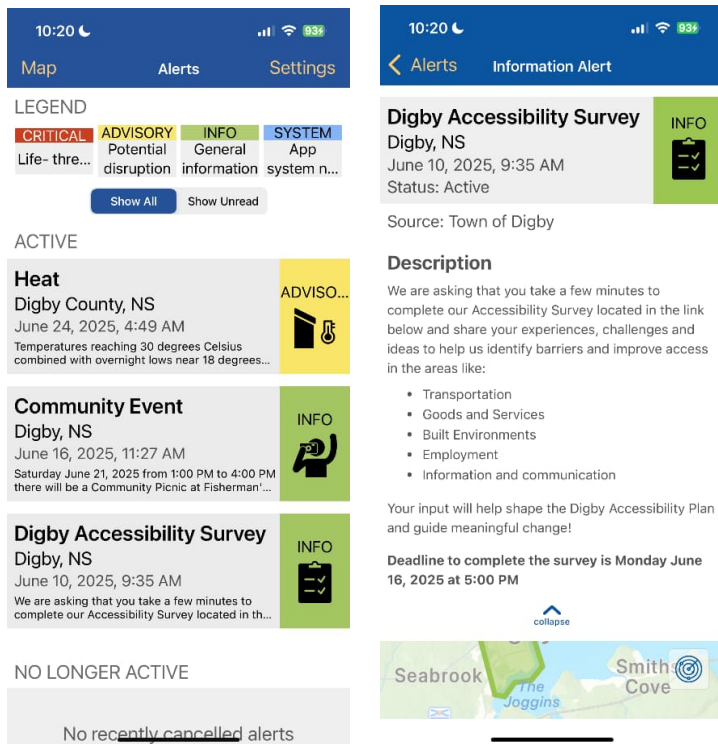
Alertable is a high-quality, targeted public alert system—quick to deploy and great for emergency/no-response needs. In contrast, Info Grove is a fully customizable civic engagement platform offering a suite of tools for two-way communication and municipal services. The choice depends on whether your primary goal is alerts only or broader citizen engagement.

App Comparison

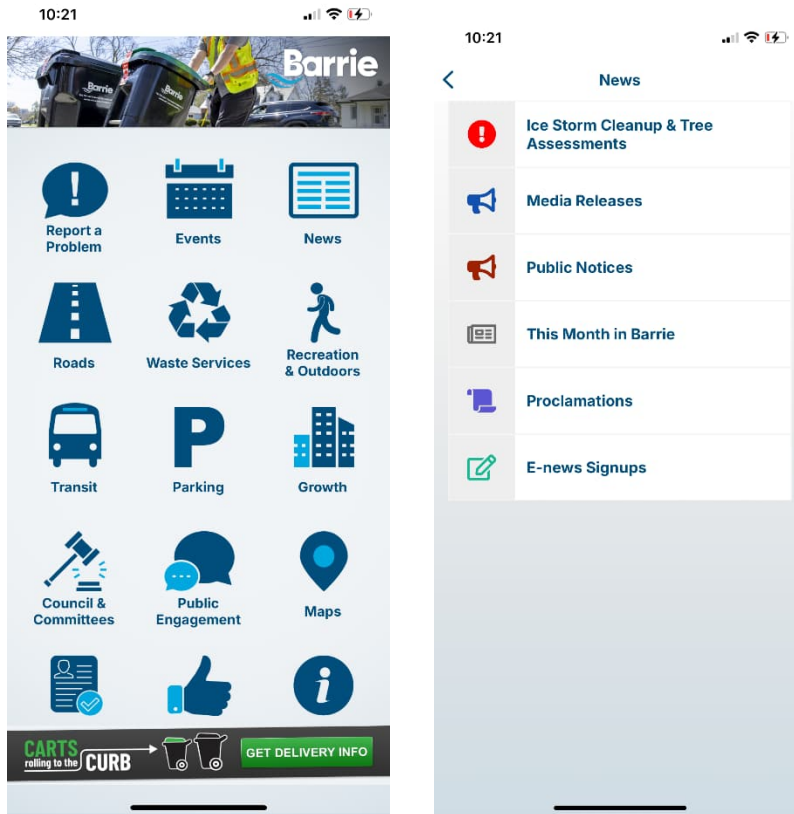
Alertable	Info Grove
<p>Alerts can be sent to landlines. For residents without a computer or cell phone, they will need to call the office and have a staff member help them sign up for alerts, changing their phone number, removing their number, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When residents sign up, they choose if they want non-emergency alerts by SMS and landline, they can get granular in the pre-defined categories 	<p>Alerts are customizable within the app</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Push notifications to smartphones • Must have a smartphone to use the app

Two screen design. Front page which links to individual alerts categorized as Critical, Advisory, Info, Waste Management, Employment, Events, Transit, etc. No option for "static" content	Multi-screen design allows users to choose to read alerts, events, job postings, engage.modl.ca, and general "static" information about transit, council meetings, waste services, etc. Everything feels "in app" and doesn't open another app (such as Google or Chrome)
Ability to include surveys and polls. No static link to Engage.modl.ca	Ability to include surveys and polls. Allows residents to visit engage.modl.ca "in app" so it feels like they haven't left the app
Analytics show number of residents that have signed up for SMS and landline alerts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannot differentiate between landline alerts in each category 	Integration with Google Analytics allows staff to track resident usage
Ability to schedule posts in advance	Ability to schedule posts in advance
User-friendly content management system allowing staff to independently update	User-friendly content management system allowing staff to independently update
No plan to add new features or functionality	Regularly adds new features and functions.
Setup fee: \$2,500 Annual fee: \$5,950 - \$10,950	Setup fee: \$9,500 Annual fee: \$6,050 to \$13,350

Alertable Screenshots



Info Grove Screenshots



Staff Recommendation

Given Council’s goal of increasing general communication and engagement efforts, Info Grove best suits this need. While Alertable can display and send non-emergency landline messages, it is fundamentally an emergency alert app. It is not as appealing in design and does not cover the vast array of communication functions as Info Grove.

The Province of Nova Scotia’s Department of Emergency Management is working on a province-wide emergency alert app. Any app they develop will not offer landline alerts for non-emergency messaging.

Strategic Focus

Implementing a municipal app was identified as an action under the Communication and Engagement Strategic Priority, under municipal app development.

Budget/Financial Implications

Funds for a municipal app have been included as part of the 2025/26 Operating Budget.

Climate Change/sustainability

Not applicable.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA@MODL)

Having a municipal app will provide yet another way for residents from various equity-seeking groups to receive communication from the municipality in a manner that works for them.

Strategic Communications

We will promote the app through our regular communication channels, including Facebook, modl.ca, Municipal Matters, District of Lunenburg Digest, CKBW and the South Shore Bulletin.

Work plan

This work is captured in the existing departmental workplan.

Alternatives

Should Council wish to pursue an alternative app to Info Grove, we will need to cancel the initial RFQ and issue a new RFQ with a revised scope that includes required features (such as text to talk alerts to landlines).

Report Preparation	
Department	Administration
Report Prepared by	Sarah Kucharski
Report Approved by	Alex Dumaresq
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	



Council
Item # 9.1
Date: July 8, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan

June 24, 2025

119 Cumberland Street
P.O. Box 129
Lunenburg, Nova Scotia
Canada B0J 2C0

Tom MacEwan, LB
Chief Administrative Officer
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
10 Allee Champlain Drive
Cookville, Nova Scotia
B4V 9E4

www.townoflunenburg.ca

TOWN OFFICE
902-634-4410

ELECTRIC UTILITY
902-634-4410

FIRE DEPARTMENT
902-634-8343

PUBLIC WORKS
902-634-8992

RECREATION
902-634-4006

FACSIMILIE
902-634-4416

Dear Tom,

At their May 27, 2025 Town of Lunenburg meeting of Council, a motion was passed to have the CAO send a letter to the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Council requesting their support to submit a joint letter to the NSUARB requesting a mutual boundary change between the Town and the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg in the Salt Meadows subdivision. The attached map shows the location of the existing Town/MODL boundary and the requested change.

Currently Wolff Street and Wood Street both cross the municipal boundaries so that a small corner portion of Salt Meadows subdivision is in the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg. This creates potential by-law enforcement issues, discrepancies in property taxation, complications for delivery of Town services and zoning questions regarding future development in the area.

Section 357 of the Municipal Government Act stipulates that where two or more municipalities agree to a change in a mutual boundary, the Board may confirm the change without a hearing if

- a) The agreed change is advertised in a newspaper circulating in the affected municipalities, as directed by the Board;
- b) The advertisement invites objectors to advise the Board of their objections;
- c) Proof of the advertising has been provided to the Board; and
- d) No objections are received by the Board within thirty (30) days after the first advertisement.

Town Council respectfully requests support from MODL Council for the change to the mutual boundary in the area described above and agreement to jointly, with the Town, submitting a request to the NSUARB. Please take this request forward to your Council for their consideration.

Sincerely,



Marvin MacDonald

Interim CAO

cc

Mayor Jamie Myra



Council
Item #10.1
Date: July 8, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



Memorandum

To: Municipal Council
From: Regional Growth Management Committee
Date: July 8, 2025
Re: Recommendation of Topics to Begin Discussions

The Regional Growth Management Committee met on June 24, 2024 and made the following recommendations:

1. Direct staff to compile information pertaining to growth and infrastructure planning for presentation to the Town of Bridgewater.
2. Direct the Committee to begin intermunicipal collaboration planning on Transit Service, Water Agreements, Wastewater Services, Planning for growth as a region, and Fire Services.

Regional Growth Management Committee

Council
Item #11.1.1
Date: July 8, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan



The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg Request for Decision

Report to: Council
Submitted by: Dave Waters Director of Economic Development
Date: July 8, 2025
Re: Regional Economic Development Partnership

Recommendation

Council approves funding for a report that explores opportunities to create a more formal Regional Economic Development Partnership in Lunenburg and Queens County and provide a financial contribution of \$20,000 towards the report.

Executive summary

See attached.

Strategic Focus

The project aligns itself with Council's Strategic Directions of Quality of Life and Regional Economic Development.

Budget/Financial Implications

The District of Lunenburg's contribution would be \$20,000 and come from account 01-2629017-253.

Climate Change/sustainability

N/A

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA@MODL)

N/A

Strategic Communications

The strategic communication plan will be outlined once the grant is approved and outlined in the Request for Proposal.

Work plan

This project is part of the Department of Economic Development current 5-year Strategic Plan.

Alternatives

Council could choose not to financially support the report.

Conclusion

Over the past couple of years staff have been working with our regional partners' staff and have identified gaps in existing regional economic activities and have identified projects that we have successfully collaborated on. The Lunenburg / Queens staff working group identified that a more formal partnership may prove beneficial to our residents and businesses and are putting a plan in place to do a complete evaluation of partnership models with recommendations to move forward.

In April a grant was submitted under the Municipal Innovation Program. We have not heard yet but are anticipating a positive response at any time. Once the grant is approved and Councils of the existing six municipal units in Lunenburg and Queens agree to move forward, Staff will submit a Request for Proposal to look at options for partnership models

Report Preparation	
Department	Economic Development
Report Prepared by	Dave Waters Director of Economic Development
Report Approved by	
Date Reviewed by C.A.O.	

Regional Economic Development Partnership

Municipal Innovation Program Grant

A Regional Economic Partnership (REP) can play a pivotal role in fostering growth, collaboration, and sustainable development within a specific geographical region. A regional partnership typically works to enhance the economic prospects of the region by focusing on key sectors, such as industry, infrastructure, labor, innovation, and local resources.

In many regions of Nova Scotia and Canada there are various forms of economic development which include staff lead and regional bodies, at present in Lunenburg and Queens County most economic activities are led by municipal staff with various agency doing a variety of regional economic development functions. In place of a formal regional model municipal staff meet as a working group and certain projects have received varying degrees of municipal participation. Through the Municipal Innovation Program, our partner municipalities are seeking financial assistance to hire a consulting team to explore a formalized model that meets the specific needs of our region.

The anticipated Scope of Work for this project includes:

- Research and identify current economic development plans and activities that are being facilitated by other regional partnerships with NS or areas similar in Canada.
- Complete a review of the primary activities being undertaken in the local municipal units.
- Identify what elements could best provide benefit to a Lunenburg/Queens Partnership
- Identify current municipal partnerships and evaluate benefits and deficiencies of current structure.
- Conduct engagement with the business community in Lunenburg and Queens Counties on interest and involvement in a Regional Economic Partnership.
- Identify gaps and overlaps between what local municipal units are doing and what a regional group could assist with.
- Assess whether a Regional Economic Partnership would be beneficial to the area and supported by the community.
- Recommend a system that will provide a metric to evaluate successes and collaboration with municipal units.
- Identify how the Regional Economic Partnership will align and partner with various provincial priorities that will impact the region.
- Make recommendations on possible regional partnership models and governance structures.
- Provide recommendations on how various models would be funded.

The anticipated impact of a Regional Economic Partnership includes:

1. Collaborative Economic Development

- Regional Economic Partnerships bring together municipalities, the province, and the business community to work together on economic development initiatives.
- This collaboration allows for the pooling of resources and expertise to address common challenges and pursue shared goals.

2. Focus on Business Growth and Retention

- Regional Economic Partnerships prioritize attracting, retaining, and expanding businesses within the region.
- They work to create an environment that is conducive to business operations, such as improving infrastructure, addressing regulatory hurdles, and promoting the region's strengths.

3. Support for Businesses

- Regional Economic Partnerships act as "opportunity connectors" between the private and public sectors, facilitating partnerships and collaborations.
- They can guide businesses through regional economic development processes, helping them navigate challenges and access resources.
- Regional Economic Partnerships may also provide direct support to businesses, such as through mentorship programs.

4. Regional Leadership and Advocacy

- Regional Economic Partnerships play a key role in communicating the region's advantages and potential to local, provincial, national, and international audiences.
- They can advocate for the region's economic needs and priorities at various levels of government.

5. Increased Revenue and Economic Prosperity

- By supporting business growth and investment, Regional Economic Partnerships help municipalities increase their tax base and diversify revenue streams.
- This can lead to improved funding for essential services such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, and public safety.
- Economic development efforts can also generate additional revenue through licensing fees, permits, and sales taxes.

The anticipated outcomes of the Regional Economic Partnership study include:

1. Establish a Clear Vision and Mission:
2. Engagement and Partnerships:
3. Conduct a Comprehensive Regional Assessment:
4. Develop a Strategic Economic Action Plan:
5. Create a Funding and Resource Mobilization Strategy:

6. Promote Innovation and Entrepreneurship:
7. Focus on Infrastructure Development:
8. Workforce Development and Education Initiatives:
9. Create a Marketing and Branding Strategy:
10. Monitor Progress and Adjust Strategies:
11. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):
12. Sustainability and Inclusivity:

Each partner municipality will:

- Approve the Scope of Work for the Regional Economic Partnership study
- Contribute financially to the study
- Allocate time for economic development staff (as relevant) to work on the project team to oversee the study
- Receive a final report and recommended next steps

Expense Budget: Regional Economic Partnership Study – \$107,500

Revenue Budget

Source	Amount	Confirmed
Province of NS (MIP)	50,000	No
MODL	20,000	No
MODC	10,000	No
TOB	10,000	No
TOL	5,000	No
TOMB	2,500	No
ROQM	10,000	No

Regional Economic Development



Agenda

- Regional Economic Development Partnership
- Municipal Innovation Program Grant
- Proposed Timeline
- Questions



Regional Economic Development Partnership

- Current working group
 - District of Chester – Brian Webb
 - Town of Bridgewater – Donna Hatt
 - Town of Lunenburg – Marc Keily
 - Region of Queens – Richard Lane
 - District of Lunenburg – Dave Waters
 - Town of Mahone Bay – Dylan Heide (kept informed)



Regional Economic Development Partnership

- Various collaborated projects over the past couple years
 - Regional BREI Program
 - Bioeconomy Development Opportunity Zone – A rating
 - Investment Attraction Training
 - Agriculture Days
 - Clean Fuels Study
 - Retail Market Gap and Accommodation Gap Analysis
 - Local Immigration Partnership
 - Housing Market Data Project
 - Marketing Levy/Tourism Development
 - Launch of the INMC
 - Small Business Week
 - And more



Municipal Innovation Program Grant

The Municipal Innovation Program (MIP) is a funding initiative by the Government of Nova Scotia designed to support municipalities and villages in developing innovative, collaborative approaches to regional challenges.

- ▶ 2023/24 Municipal Partners got together to explore the option of a more formal partnership
- ▶ Grant submitted April 23, 2025
- ▶ Grant submission included all Municipal units in Lunenburg County and Queens County.
- ▶ Project name – Regional Economic Partnership Study
- ▶ Project dates – July 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026
- ▶ MIP requested amount was \$50,000
- ▶ Total project cost was estimated to be \$105,500.



Municipal Innovation Program Grant

General Scope of work

- ▶ Research and identify current economic development plans and activities that are being facilitated by other regional partnerships within NS or areas similar in Canada.
- ▶ Complete a review of the primary activities being undertaken in the local municipal units.
- ▶ Identify what elements could best provide benefit to a Lunenburg/Queens Partnership



Municipal Innovation Program Grant

General Scope of work

- ▶ Identify current municipal partnership and evaluate benefits and deficiencies of current structure.
- ▶ Identify gaps and overlaps between what local municipal units are doing and what a regional group could assist with.
- ▶ Conduct engagement with the business community in Lunenburg and Queens Counties on interest and involvement in a Regional Economic Partnership.
- ▶ Assess whether a Regional Economic Partnership would be beneficial to the area and supported by the community.



Municipal Innovation Program Grant

General Scope of work

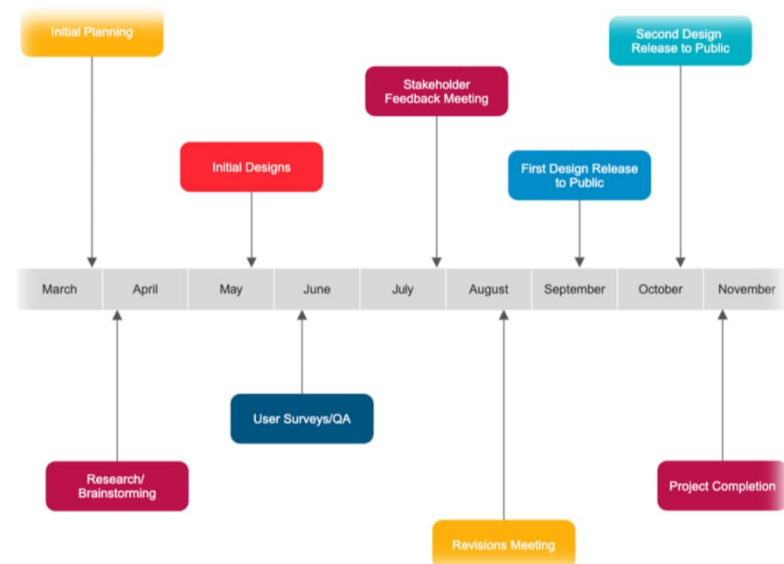
- ▶ Recommend a system that will provide a metric to evaluate successes and collaboration with municipal units.
- ▶ Identify how the Regional Economic Partnership will align and partner with various provincial priorities that will impact the region.
- ▶ Make recommendations on possible regional partnership models and governance structures.
- ▶ Provide recommendations on how various models could be funded.



Municipal Innovation Program Grant

Timeline

- ▶ Grant approval July 2025
- ▶ Councils' approvals July 2025
- ▶ Request for Proposals August / September 2025
- ▶ Program development October to March 2026
- ▶ Bring report back to councils



Anticipated Impact of a Regional Economic Partnership

- ▶ **Create a collaborative Economic Environment:**
 - Brings together Municipalities, Province and businesses
 - Pooling of resources to address common challenges and shared goals
- ▶ **Focus on Business Growth and Retention:**
 - Prioritize attracting, retaining and expanding businesses
 - Improving infrastructure, addressing regulations and promoting the region
- ▶ **Support for Business**
 - Opportunity connector between private and public sector
 - Guide business through processes, helping them navigate challenges and access resources
- ▶ **Regional Leadership and Advocacy**
 - Communicating regional advantages to local, provincial, national and International audiences
 - Advocate for regional needs and priorities
- ▶ **Increase revenue and Economic Prosperity**
 - Help increase regional tax base and diversify revenue streams
 - Assist with improved funding for essential services such as education, healthcare, infrastructure and public safety

Project outcomes

- ▶ Establish a clear Vision and Mission
- ▶ Engagement and Partnerships
- ▶ Conduct a Comprehensive Regional Assessment
- ▶ Develop a Strategic Economic Action Plan
- ▶ Create a Funding and Resource Mobilization Strategy
- ▶ Promote Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- ▶ Focus on Infrastructure Development
- ▶ Workforce Development and Education Initiatives
- ▶ Create a Marketing and Branding Strategy
- ▶ Monitor Progress and Adjust Strategies
- ▶ Sustainability and Inclusivity





Council
Item #11.2.1
Date: July 8, 2025
Authorization: T. MacEwan

What we

Heard

Report

Public Engagement and Communications



June 2025

Municipality of the District of Lunenburg
(902) 543-8181
info@modl.ca

10 Allée Champlain Drive
Cookville, NS B4V 9E4



Contents

1. Introduction & Background	3
2. How we Engaged	3
3. Survey Limitations	4
4. Survey Results	5
5. Recommendations	34





Introduction & Background

Effective communication and public engagement are crucial for local governance. The municipality conducted a Communication and Public Engagement Survey to understand how residents prefer to receive information and participate in municipal initiatives. This survey gathered insights on preferred communication channels, awareness of municipal programs, and engagement preferences.

Open to all residents and community stakeholders, the survey received 718 responses, providing valuable feedback on current practices and areas for improvement. The findings will help shape future communication strategies and public engagement efforts to better align with the community's needs.

How we Engaged

The survey was distributed in the spring issue of Municipal Matters, which was distributed to all municipal households. It was shared numerous times on our municipal Facebook page, and included in the monthly District of Lunenburg Digest, which is emailed to more than 1,000 subscribers.





Survey Limitations

1. Response Rate and Representativeness

While 718 responses provide valuable insight, and is a response rate much higher than our usual surveys, this represents a small proportion of the District’s total population (approximately 2.7%). The survey did not use a randomized or stratified sampling method. Participation was voluntary, meaning individuals with strong opinions or higher levels of engagement may have been more likely to respond. This can skew results toward the perspectives of those already engaged or interested in municipal communication and engagement.

Results may not fully represent the views of all demographic groups, geographic areas, or stakeholder types within the District. Some community voices (e.g., newcomers, renters, non-English speakers) may be underrepresented, and the data may not allow for statistically valid generalizations to the broader population.

2. Distribution Method

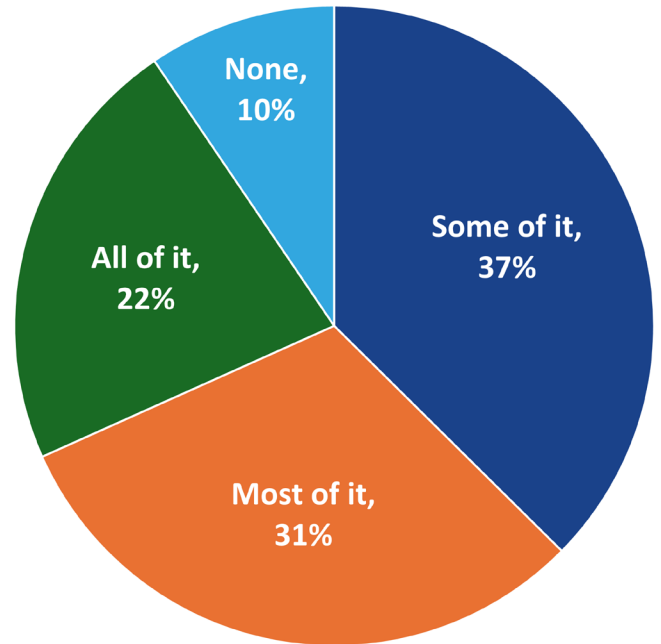
The survey was distributed via print in Municipal Matters and available online, which may have posed barriers to residents with low literacy, limited internet access, or challenges in returning physical copies. This may have limited participation from some groups, including older adults, those living in more remote areas, or residents with disabilities. Given the survey was distributed via a household newsletter, it’s likely many responses reflect the views of a single adult per household, rather than capturing the diversity of opinions within households.



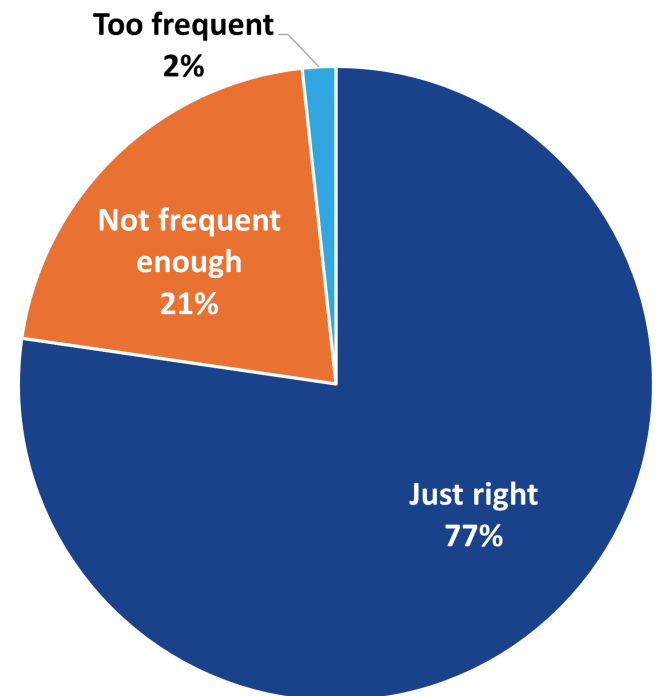


Survey Results

Q1: How much of each issue of Municipal Matters do you read?



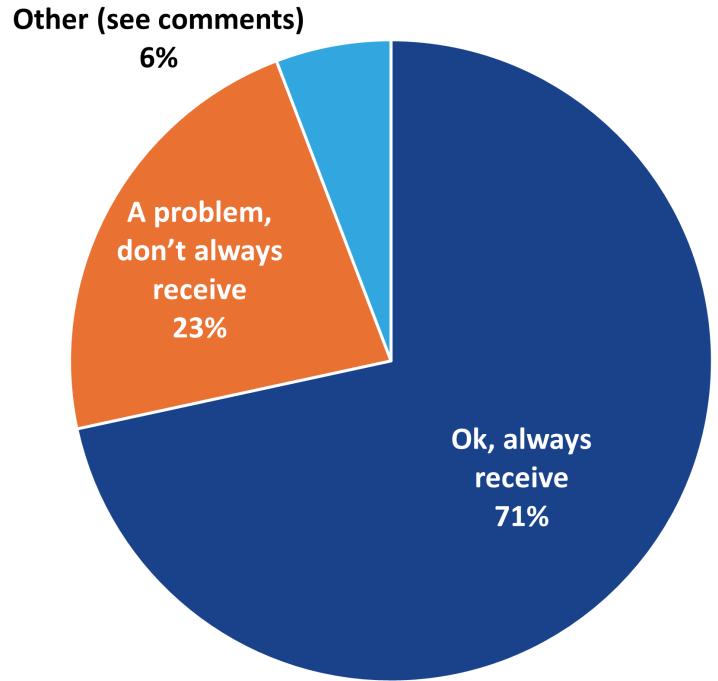
Q2: Municipal Matters is issued four times a year. Do you think this is?





Survey Results

Q3: Municipal Matters is delivered with flyers as unaddressed bulk mail. Do you think this is?



Other Responses (themed)	Number of Comments
Delivery Issues (Inconsistent, Missing, or Barriers to Receiving)	11
Never Seen / Not Aware	2
Preference for Digital Access	4
Waste or Environmental Concerns	3
Receives or Shares Copy Occasionally	2

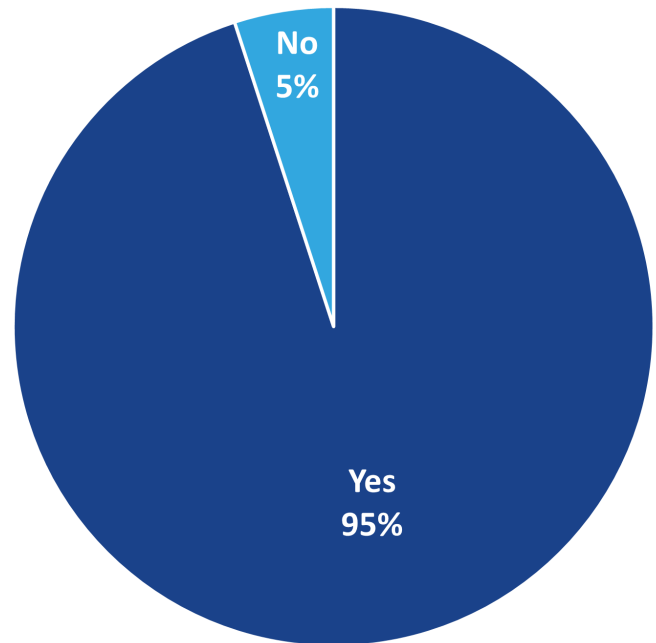


Survey Results

Q4: Do you think Municipal Matters is easy to read and find what you're looking for?



Q5: If you answered no, please let us know what you don't like about the design.



Design / Layout Criticism

1. Basic layout, nothing innovative
2. A table of contents and numbered pages
3. The format never changes, so it's boring to look at. From the first glance, it looks crowded, wordy and not overly appealing to dive into.
4. It's not that I don't like the design, I am dyslexic and ageing. So things like font size and use can be difficult.

Content Criticism / Editorial Bias

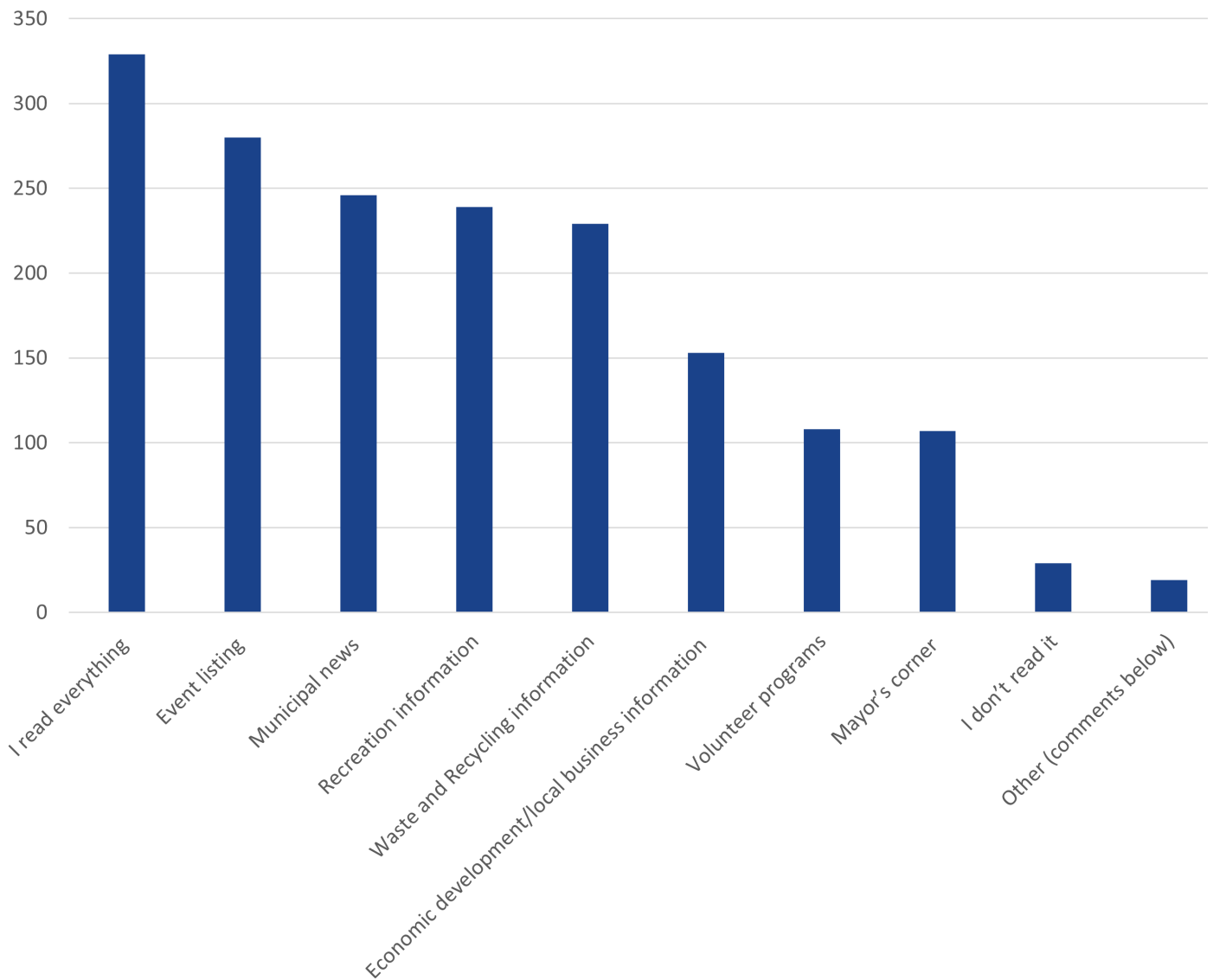
1. Mostly positive news and messages with a marketing slant. Should be issues driven and dealing with critical matters pertaining to providing essential infrastructure and economic growth and development. Tourism may contribute to small enterprises/

- sole proprietorships but has limited impact on GDP. It is the only sector ever mentioned.
2. A lot of what you hope to do and not enough what being done.
3. Some subjects, for example land use planning for the municipality is very vague. More detail is needed.
4. More detail on subjects needed
5. The important items are usually left out or some kind of positive spin put out on restrictions being implemented
6. It's wasting taxpayers' money, we pay far too much in taxes now



Survey Results

Q6: What type of stories are you most likely to read?





Survey Results

Q6: What type of stories are you most likely to read? (continued)

Interest-Based / Skim Reading

1. Varies depending on what catches my eye
2. A bit of everything if I have time to peruse it. Generally I manage time to read 2–3 articles in each issue. Just whatever catches my eye as I quick flip through
3. I scan for personal information
4. It can be hit or miss if I read it. An emailed electronic version would be great.

Topical or Specific Interests

1. Fire dept related
2. I want to have more comprehensive coverage of the issues that council are currently dealing with and all the ways stakeholders can involve themselves in the decision making.

Distrust / Critical Perspective

1. I would like to understand without bias about the corrupt planning department and their UN agenda

Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future?

Theme	Number of Comments
Community Engagement and Involvement	44
Economic and employment opportunities	25
Housing and Affordability	13
Environmental Awareness and Sustainability	12
Other	10



Survey Results

Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future? (continued)

Community Engagement & Involvement

1. Perhaps include a message/report by each Councillor on their region
2. Pick a volunteer group and promote them
3. Local interest/voices in the municipality - getting to know some of the people and communities in the area
4. More information on programs designed specifically for seniors and also more programs available for children and families.
5. Economic growth plans, your work to secure doctors and employers. All items that affect or could increase our taxes
6. Info regarding all grants and rebates that are available for MODL residents.
7. More development highlights
8. More information on development applications by the municipality
9. Non profit organizations
10. Senior concerns
11. I like to know about anything going on in the community
12. More silver-linings-features volunteers doing great work, students doing exceptional things etc.
13. More on economic development
14. A clearer read on exactly what this food hub is and how its going to benefit all or almost all of the citizens that pay property taxes
15. It would be nice to have an app that could include all municipality information. A place where we could easily contact with questions, concerns and ideas
16. Summer activities
17. Stray cat population and what can be done to help
18. More info on recreation and events happening. More information on developments happening in the county. An education piece about what municipalities do (and who to contact about other information needed) in a basic format to share with young people.
19. More silver-linings-features volunteers doing great work, students doing exceptional things etc.
20. More on recreation



Survey Results

Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future? (continued)

21. More about housing options
22. Enjoy learning about ongoing/ upcoming events and developments started or planned. Also enjoy hearing about different places to visit/eat etc.
23. More recreation information
24. More about environmental issues
25. Pay rates for municipal employees
26. A feature in an outstanding citizen could lead to more viewings
27. Minutes from council meetings
28. I really just like keeping up on community events
29. Housing
30. Updates on back road repair plans
31. Restaurant reviews
32. I would like to see more of what you put above. I do not remember ever seeing a volunteer section of the municipal matters for ex.
33. You are doing a great job
34. Community healthy lifestyle initiatives to encourage our communities to be active
35. Perhaps critical news items that impact over several months
36. Better coverage of council business and roles of the municipality



Economic & Employment Opportunities

1. Employment and empowerment
2. Job opportunities
3. Development and improvements
4. Upcoming proposed initiatives. Budget highlights. How taxpayer money is being used. Especially as people are struggling financially. Details about how rezoning bylaws will affect individuals.
5. More community based, what's coming
6. Any things that could help in saving money or things available to assist the low income.



Survey Results

Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future? (continued)

7. I read through everything, some things are not so my thing and I go over it quickly. It should contain the newest things going on as well as the rest. Think it would be good to receive it every two months.
8. More job listings within the community
9. Opportunities for our young people like jobs, training, etc. and their accomplishments.
10. Youth events
11. More opportunities and ways we can grow as a community or personally. So much is just about politics and not about what matters in our community. It would be nice to see the true spirit of this area and ways to increase such be a part of this program.
12. More information on job listings, especially in the local businesses
13. Information about councillors and what the council has been up to
14. We should have more job opportunities for young people
15. Community achievements
16. More focus encouraging recruitment and retention of volunteers
17. Opportunities for our youth and upcoming work programs.
18. I think you cover everything that is required
19. Highlight a community
20. I think it's a waste of time and money
21. More engagement topics, more of what decisions are currently being made. The feel-good things like Councillors and community events are great but not really what people need to see.
22. Updates on firefighting
23. Keep doing the job that's being done
24. More on volunteering opportunities for students
25. What, exactly, our property taxes are funding in our own community, and what, if anything, is being done about coastal erosion?





Survey Results

Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future? (continued)

Housing & Affordability

1. A section on where people can go to receive help with housing or financial issues. Heating etc. Something more than just 'call 211'
2. Affordable housing
3. More on housing issues for low-income families
4. More housing options
5. More information about affordable housing
6. Housing options and the prices of new housing developments
7. I like to know more about what is being done for affordable housing
8. I would like to see more housing information shared
9. More affordable housing programs or resources for those in need
10. Housing and how to access affordable housing resources
11. New housing projects and their accessibility to low-income families
12. Affordable housing issues and potential solutions
13. Housing in general, availability, pricing, and resources for the community

Environmental Awareness & Sustainability

1. Environmental issues or tips and tricks like planting native plants, water conservation etc
2. Environmental news, projects, awareness
3. More on environmental issues, tips, and how to improve our natural resources
4. Updates on coastal protection programs, library workshops/programs
5. Local environmental issues and how they are being addressed
6. More focus on environmental topics
7. Solar farms and developments
8. More environmental news
9. More recycling and landfill information
10. Keep working on environmental projects



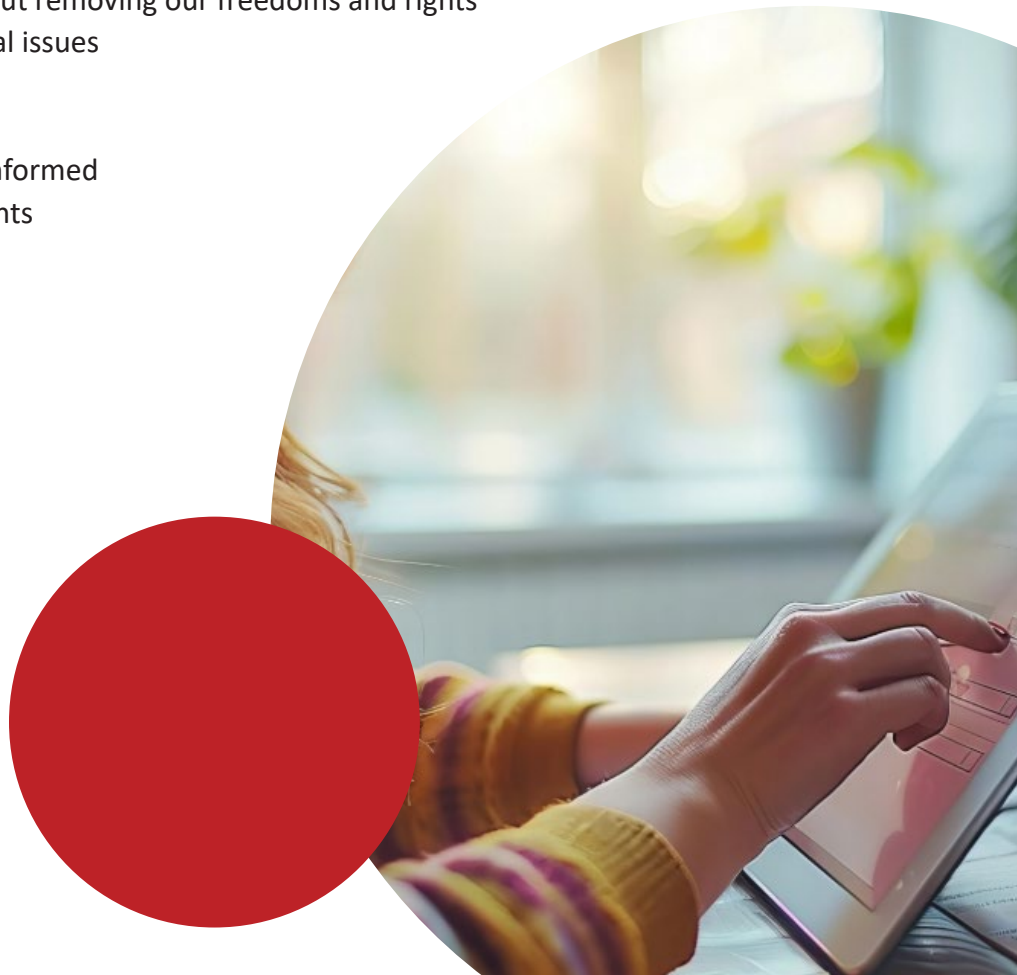
Survey Results

Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future? (continued)

- 10. Keep working on environmental projects
- 11. Water conservation and improving environmental sustainability
- 12. More on issues that affect the environment

Miscellaneous Topics

- 1. I think you cover everything
- 2. More focus on issues impacting our roads, repairs, and general maintenance
- 3. Local road conditions went and if they are being repaired and timelines
- 4. Please cover the topics that are about removing our freedoms and rights
- 5. Residents' opinion on pieces on local issues
- 6. I think its good
- 7. I like the info presented
- 8. I think it's well done and keeps us informed
- 9. Local road updates and improvements

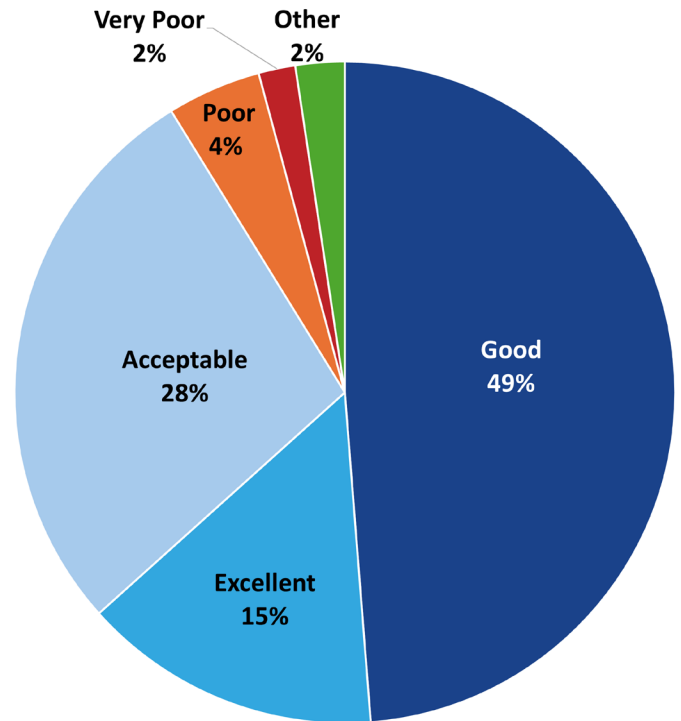




Survey Results

Q8: How would you rate the District's communication efforts overall?

Acceptable or higher = 92%
Poor or lower = 6%
Other = 2%



Accessibility and Engagement

1. They have gotten much better, but we need more opportunities to engage in our own communities without having to commute to Cookville.
2. Also, advertisements through flyers posted in community spaces all over the municipality.
3. For surveys, you should offer telephone surveys, have a dedicated number, or advertise that folks can call the main number and be put through to a telephone survey so folks without computers/cell phones can also participate easily.

Communication Channels

1. A great effort to inform communities. Social media reaches more youth.

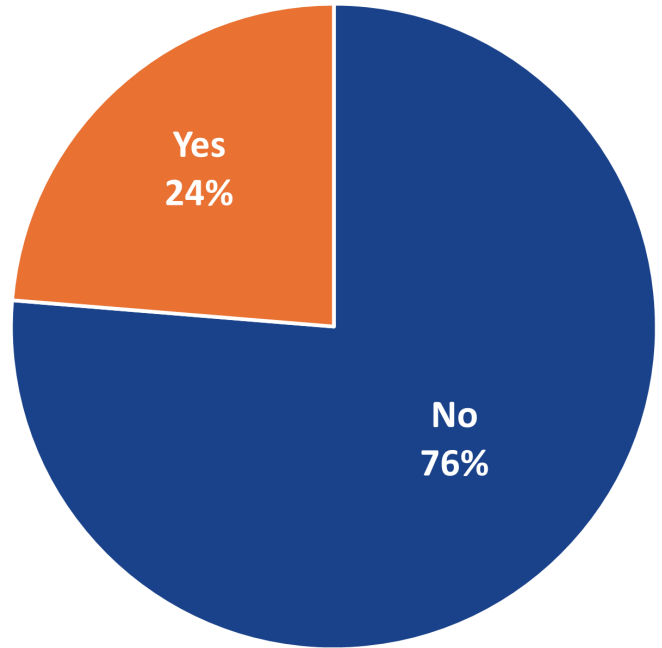
Appreciation and Positive Feedback

1. Excellent- I thank you; you are all doing a very good job.

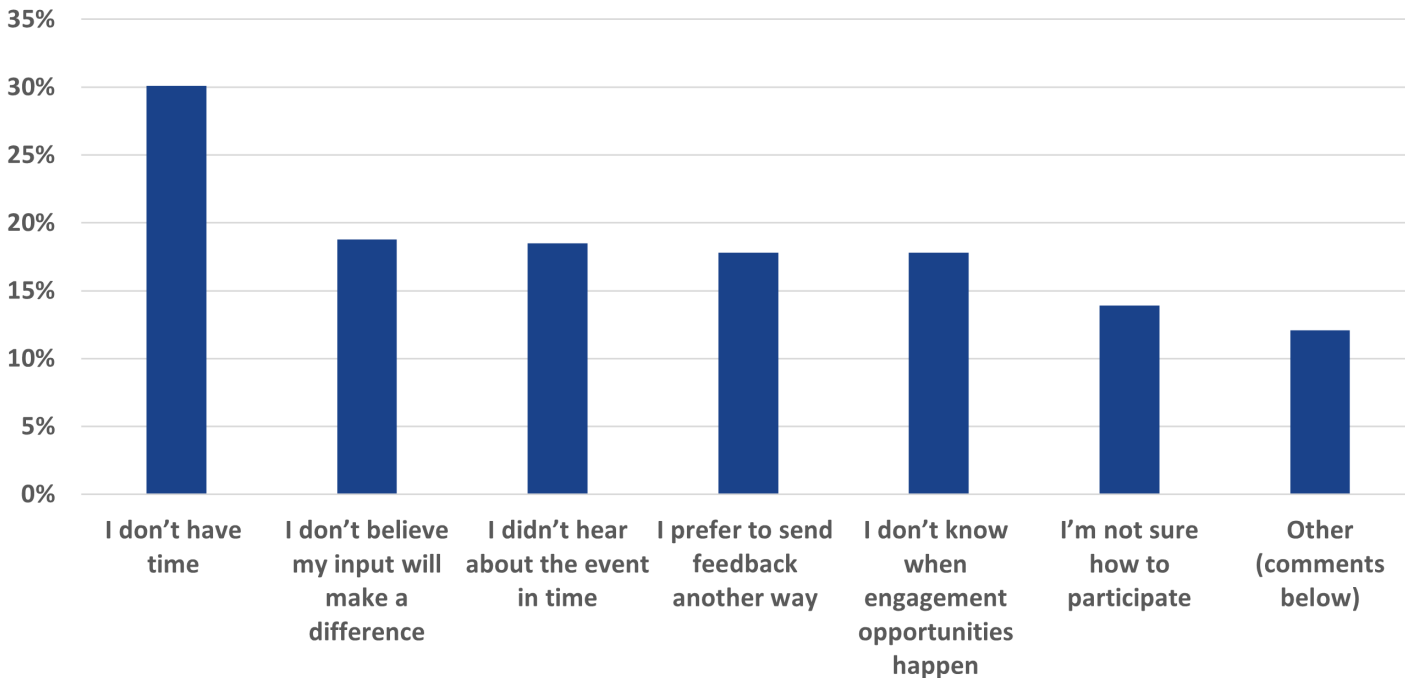


Survey Results

Q9: Since Jan 2022, have you attended an online or in person public engagement event with the District?
(i.e open house, info session, public hearing, etc.)



Q10: If not, what has prevented you from participating?





Survey Results

Q10: If not, what has prevented you from participating? (continued)

Personal Health & Medical Reasons

1. Stay home for medical reasons
2. Don't like night driving
3. Weather or illness, time not convenient
4. Health issues
5. Been in the hospital three times, bad timing
6. Senior
7. I'm mobility challenged and on a limited income, only to town once a week
8. I live 20 mins from Bridgewater

Work & Schedule Conflicts

1. I do shift work so I am not always available
2. Working
3. I was working
4. Shift worker
5. Schedule conflicts usually
6. They just seem to happen when I have something else going on
7. On a time I'm not available
8. I have 3 kids under 5 and work full time. My husband and I have a hard time finding the time to attend things like this.
9. Times are not available with needed respite care
10. Lack of childcare or at a time that clashes with work/children's events. My husband has gone to a few engagement events where we could only manage one of us.



Survey Results

Q10: If not, what has prevented you from participating? (continued)

Caregiving & Family Commitments

1. I'm a caregiver in our home so when I'm not at work I cannot leave
2. I have 3 kids under 5 and work full time. My husband and I have a hard time finding the time to attend things like this.
3. Times are not available with needed respite care
4. Lack of childcare or at a time that clashes with work/children's events
5. Husband attends for them

Communication, Notification & Accessibility Issues

1. I seem to find out about them through social media and often too late
2. Important events are not broadcast enough and rescheduled at last minute. Perhaps a mail delivery for each public event that is meant to inform the council should be made.
3. Meeting are put on social media, I would rather not appear
4. Forget about them
5. Because of transportation for one thing, also don't have the learning for their topics

Relocation / New to Area

1. Just moved to Nova Scotia
2. Have just moved to the area and getting settled. Will watch for upcoming engagements
3. I live in TOB



Survey Results

Q10: If not, what has prevented you from participating? (continued)

Disinterest or Perceived Lack of Relevance

1. Just can't be bothered to go and feel it's a waste of time anyway
2. Needs to be relevant to me and my environment preferably during day hours
3. I don't think I would be able to give any valuable input on most topics
4. No good reason
5. Scheduling and also being antisocial

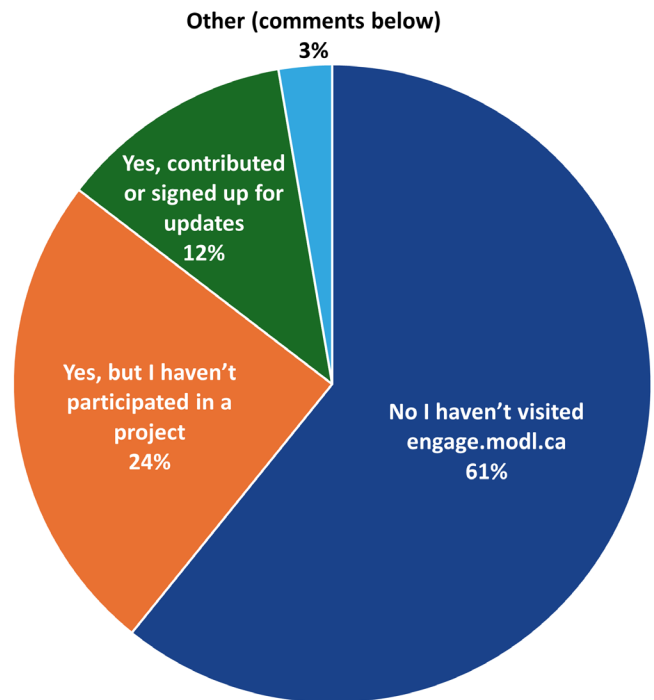
Already Participated

1. I visited 2 sessions
2. Husband attends for them

Q11: Have you visited engage.modl.ca, our online engagement platform?

Lack of Awareness

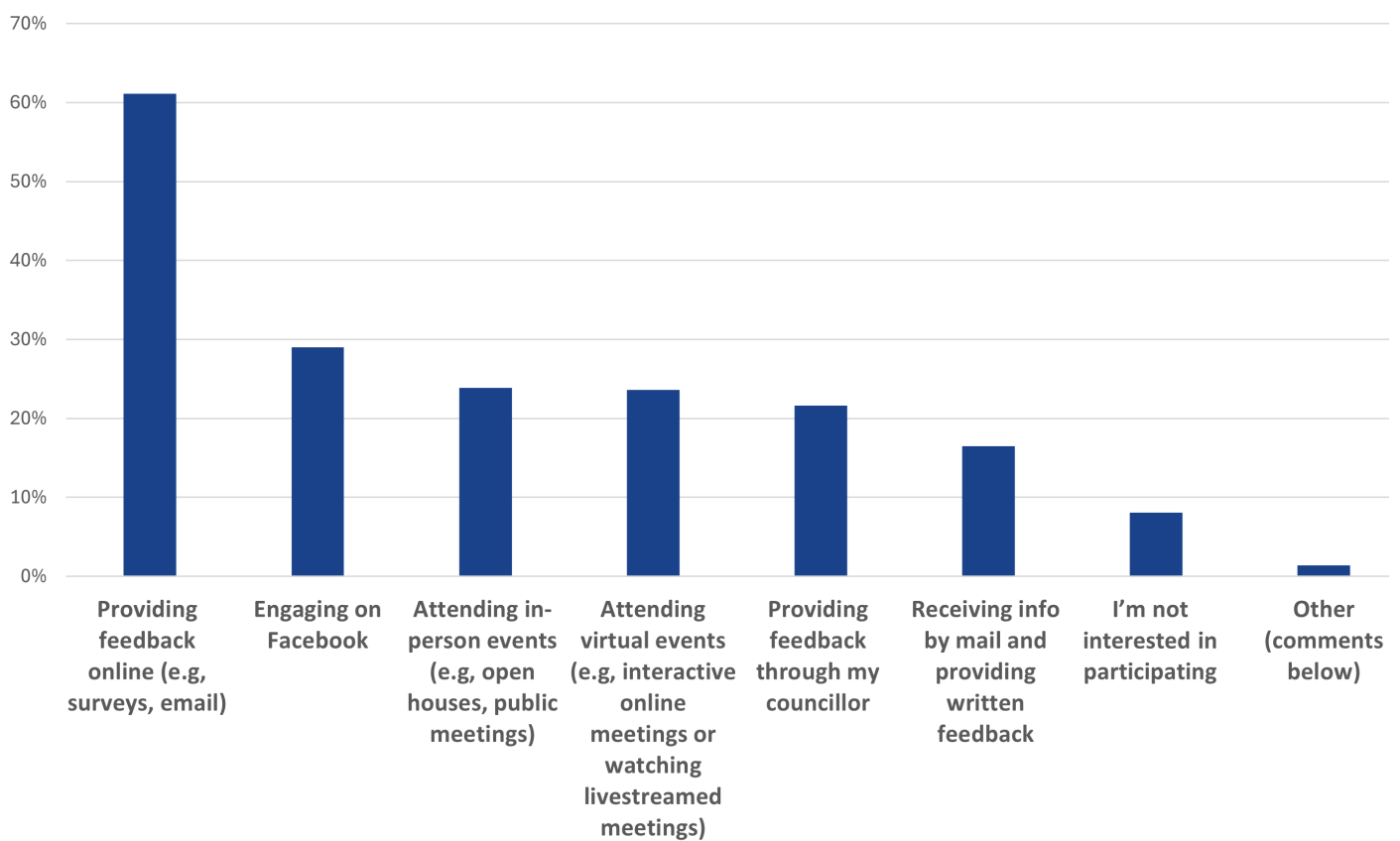
1. Did not know of it
2. Didn't know it existed
3. Just learned of the page visited
4. No but sounds like I should
5. I didn't realize I could sign up for updates





Survey Results

Q12: How do you prefer to participate in public engagement with the District?



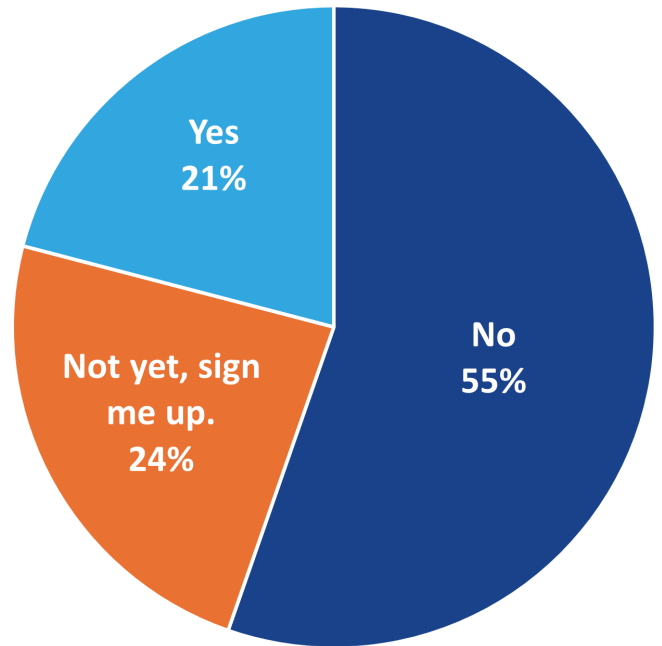
Desire for Diverse Communication & Engagement Channels

1. A combination of all these things
2. A public forum to discuss municipality issues not connected to Meta (Facebook) would be helpful for community engagement. I watch council on catch up often on YouTube and would love to have a conversation with others about the business.

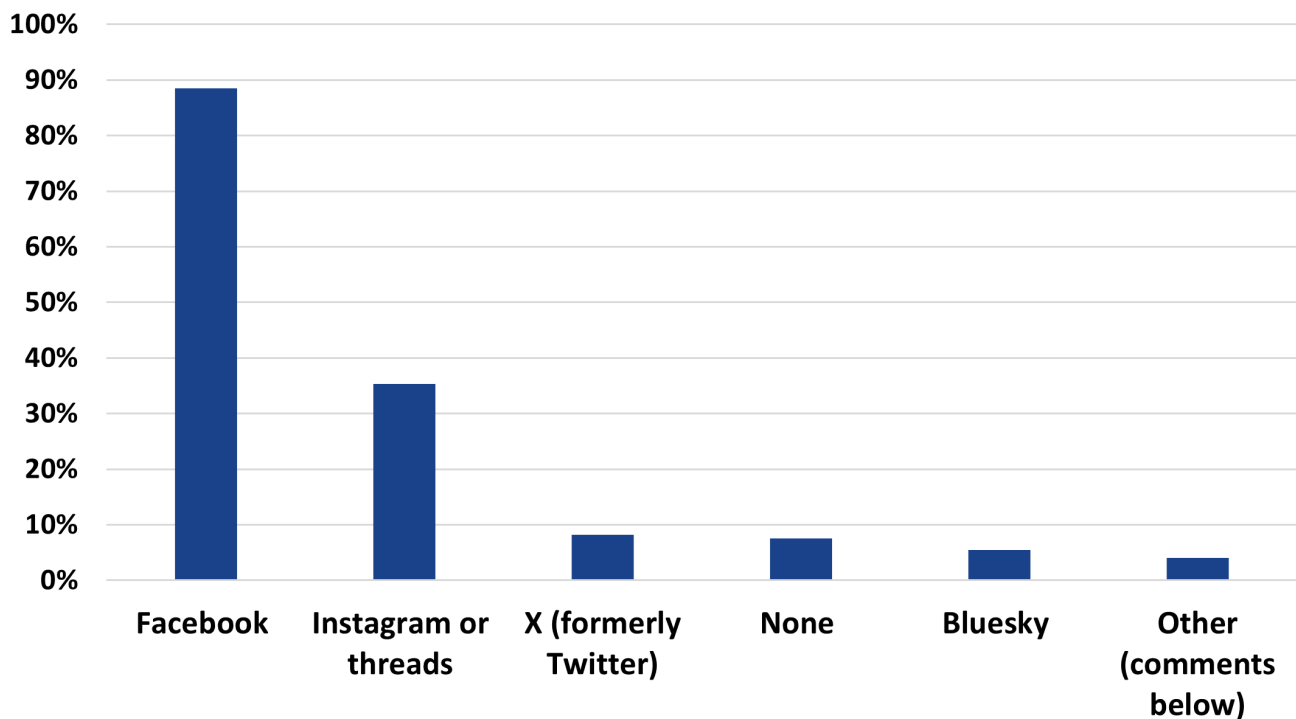


Survey Results

Q13: Do you receive the District of Lunenburg Digest, our monthly email newsletter?



Q14: Which social media platforms do you use?





Survey Results

Q14: Which social media platforms do you use? (continued)

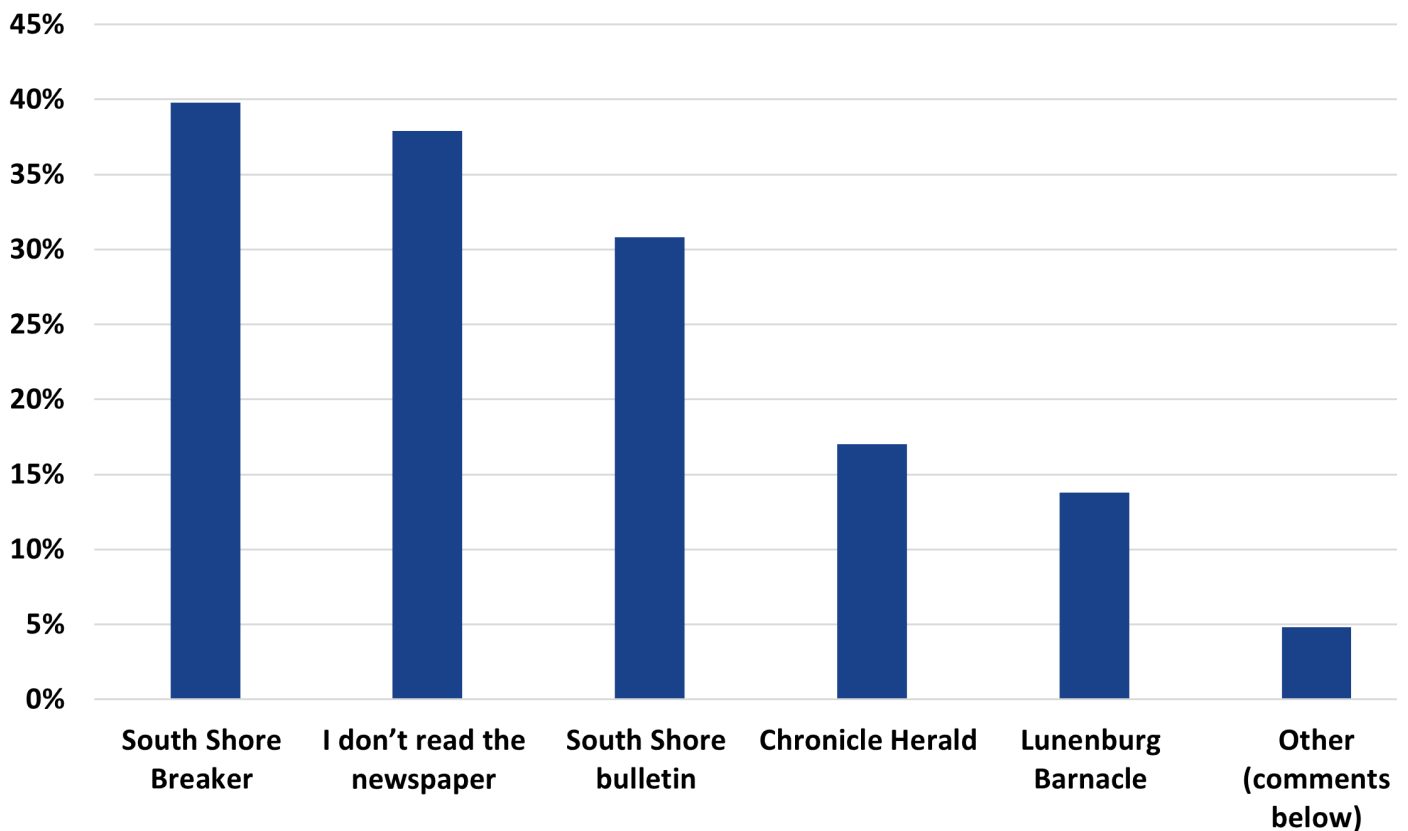
Platform	Number of Comments
Tiktok	3
Emails/texts	1
Substack	1
Reddit	1
Discord	1
Truth social, rebel news	1
Telegram	1
Opinion	I would prefer our public business had it own place and did not rely on private distribution.





Survey Results

Q15: Which newspaper do you read?



Local Print Media - Limited or Confusing Value

1. For \$100 the SS bulletin has very little news
2. I'm not sure which of the first 2 examples I read - names are so similar. I read what I get with my flyers
3. The telegraph
4. Masthead news



Survey Results

Q15: Which newspaper do you read? (continued)

Doesn't Receive or Access Local Newspapers

- 1. I don't receive them
- 2. All ns

Regional/Alternative Media

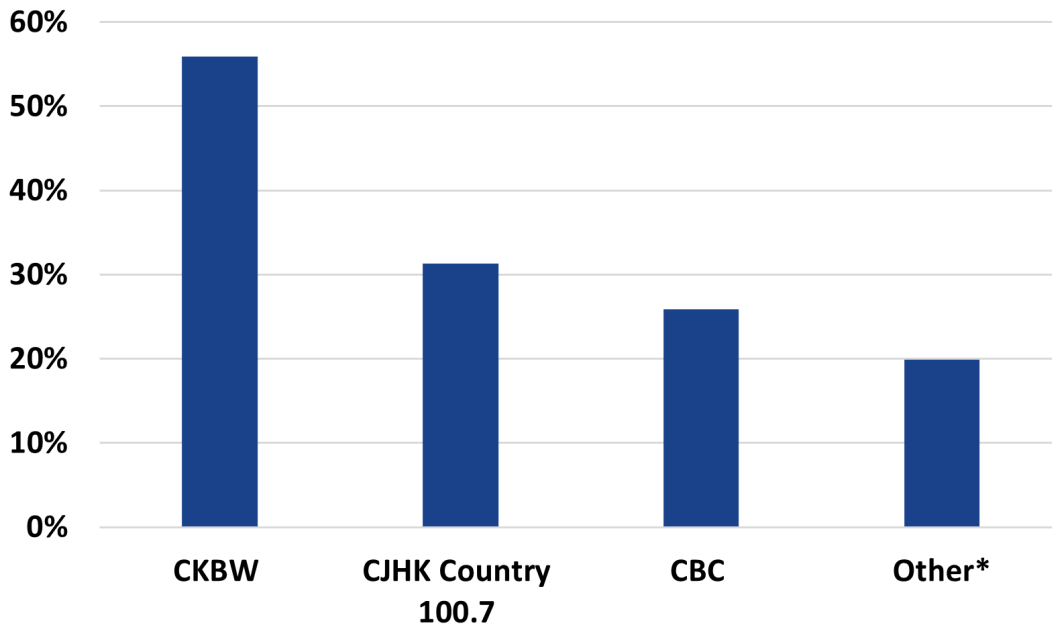
- 1. The coast
- 2. National and regional news online

International News Sources

- 1. International newspapers (Europe, US)

Q16: Which radio stations do you listen to?

*Stations identified under Other were primarily stations based in Halifax.



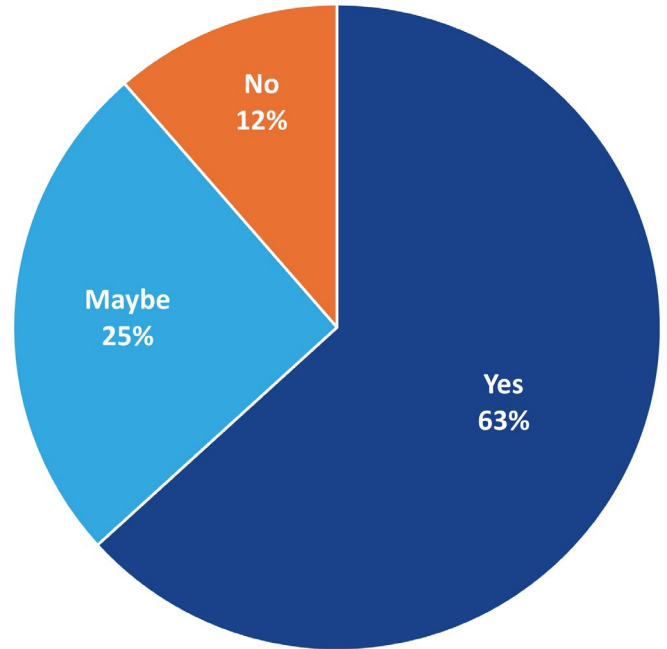


Survey Results

Q17: We're considering introducing a municipal app that would provide you with an easy way to access municipal news, see events, and more. Would you consider downloading a District of Lunenburg app?



Q18: If you answered no, what would keep you from trying our municipal app?



Too Many Apps / Phone Storage Concerns

1. I try to keep apps to a minimum and I can find all the info I need elsewhere
2. I keep unimportant apps off my phone
3. Would rather stay updated through social media then downloading another app
4. Don't want to add another app to my phone. I would rather engage through social media apps I already have
5. I have enough apps
6. Just another app on my phone I wouldn't use
7. Too much digital stuff
8. Too many apps. Phone storage won't support much more
9. I have enough apps
10. I have limited storage so download very few apps
11. It seems excessive. I already have so many apps



Survey Results

Q18: If you answered no, what would keep you from trying our municipal app? (continued)

Low Interest or Perceived Lack of Usefulness

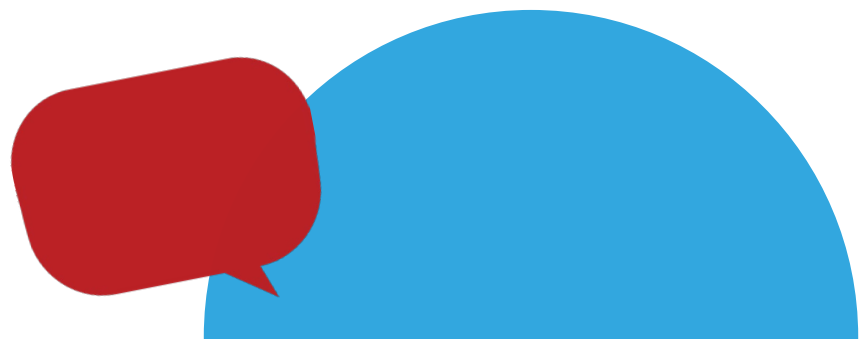
1. An app is something used with a measure of frequency. I simply wouldn't use it enough
2. Not interested in more apps
3. Wouldn't be helpful to me
4. My cellphone is for emergencies
5. I don't spend my life staring at electronic devices
6. I wouldn't use it enough to warrant the download

Privacy or Security Concerns

1. I prefer not to use apps because of privacy concerns
2. Viruses
3. An app opens up privacy discussions

Preference for Other Methods (Website, Call, Social Media)

1. Would just call or email someone at the municipality
2. I would rather engage through social media apps I already have
3. A functioning website should be all you need
4. Can't it be included with the Bridgewater app?
5. Social media is preferred





Survey Results

Q18: If you answered no, what would keep you from trying our municipal app? (continued)

Tech Limitations or Access Barriers

1. I'm not very tech savvy
2. I don't do any apps. My phone only has basic features
3. I do not have data on my cell phone
4. Not smart with all apps
5. I don't do apps; phones and computers are unreliable
6. Not much with technology
7. Have no cell phone

Cost / Resource Concerns

1. My cell phone package does not have data as what I have is all I can afford
2. Another waste of our tax dollars

General App Fatigue

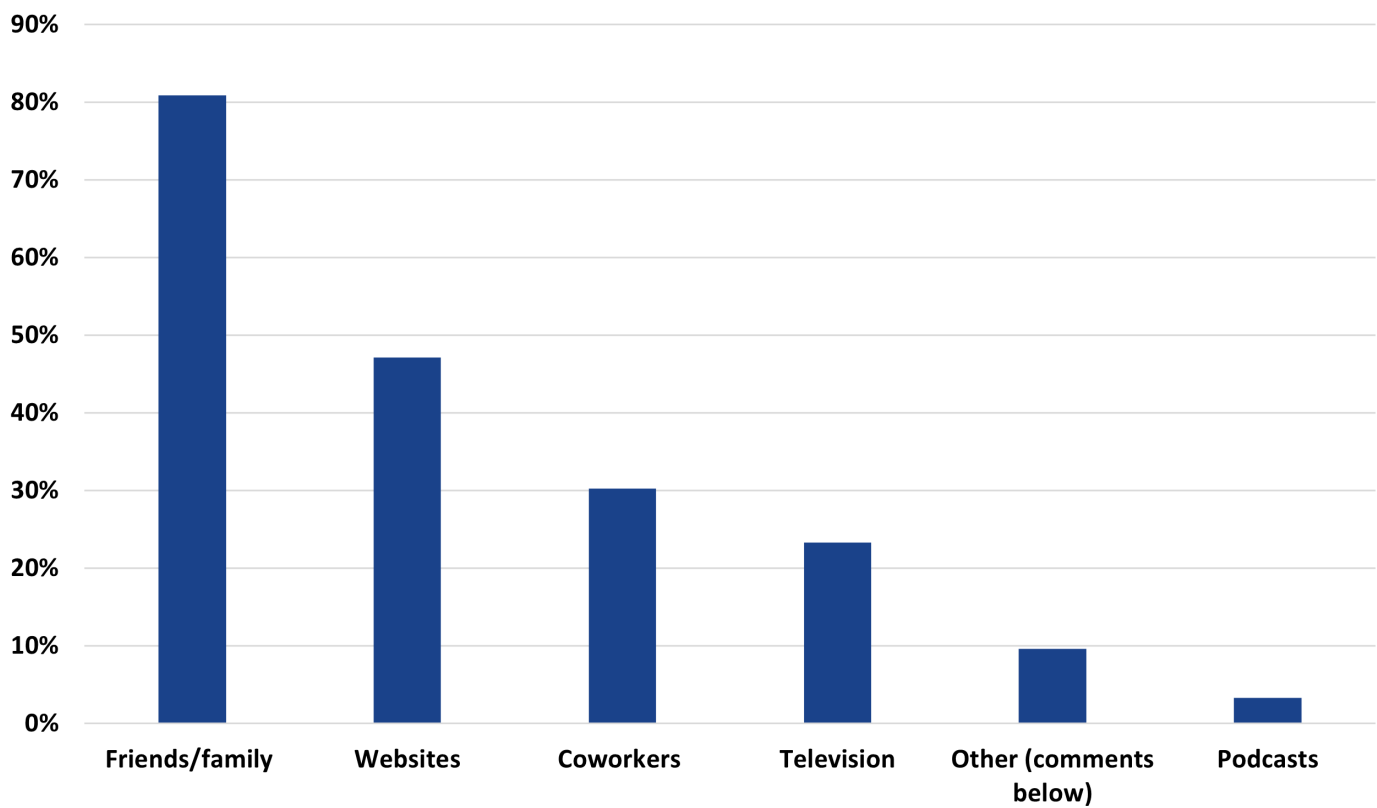
1. Apps are past tense – focus on innovation
2. I'm sick of all the apps clogging up the phone
3. My cell phone is not my life





Survey Results

Q19: Other than the media listed above, where do you get news about local events and happenings in the area?





Survey Results

Q22: Do you have any other suggestions for improving how we communicate with residents?

Employment & Empowerment Opportunities

1. There should always be employment and empowerment opportunities

Positive Feedback on Communication

1. I think you are doing a great job. Hard to keep up with everything
2. Everything good
3. Appreciate these surveys and the work your comms staff is doing!
4. I think you do a good job
5. I've only been here 3 years. I'm used to living in larger communities so still trying to figure out how to get my info here and be better involved.
6. If someone is not using the online tools or not receiving mail, phone calls should be done to make sure everyone is aware of issues.
7. It is the right amount
8. I have to say I am very impressed with how engaged you are with the public now! There seemed to be crickets from last Mayor and Council, so I really appreciate all that you have done!
9. I think the efforts being made are great
10. I think you do a great job
11. I think you do a great job getting info out





Survey Results

Q22: Do you have any other suggestions for improving how we communicate with residents? (continued)

App Feedback (positive)

1. I think adding an app would be a good step forward
2. Love the Town of Bridgewater app and would like to see you do the same
3. The app and email are a good idea
4. I'd love to see the mayor give more regular video updates. Weekly or biweekly, even monthly, could go on Instagram/stories etc. Video content is very engaging, and I think would go a long way to getting the word out about what council is working on.
5. The app is a great idea!!

App Feedback (negative)

1. I don't like the app idea above. Everyone wants to push apps that don't get used much.
2. App is a bad idea
3. The connect app needs fixing
4. An app could help some, like me but I believe there still needs to be a paper copy for people who cannot access an app
5. If there was an app I would not want municipality matters delivered



Survey Results

Q22: Do you have any other suggestions for improving how we communicate with residents? (continued)

Social Media

1. More FB information
2. I prefer Blue Sky. It is safer, saner and more moderated than X or FB. Too many strange people on those.
3. More active on social media. Most younger people only use social media to find out about events.
4. Facebook page
5. Maybe a Facebook page
6. Facebook
7. Facebook
8. Facebook seems to be a good outreach but more frequent posting to keep prominent in the algorithm would be good, I seldom see posts on my feed unless I search out the page. Also really appreciate the radio!
9. Maybe periodic town hall meetings hosted by councillors in their own districts.
10. Try to find ways to connect with the youth in your community, either through schools or through social media popular with them (like TikTok)

Traditional Communication (Paper, Radio, Bulletin, etc.)

1. Yes, you need flyers posted in community spaces all over MODL when there is something important happening. I also think, while there is a waste collection calendar, maybe that should be rolled into a calendar that includes dates for municipal events and allow community groups to put their events on the calendar.
2. More articles in Bulletin
3. Keep UPDATED developments on the CKBW radio and webpage (often outdated), categorize info in publications/news releases so it can be accessed more easily (transportation, community supports, waste management, policy).
4. I like the online communication, but I know a lot of my elderly neighbors rely on print and bulletins and word of mouth because they struggle with technology (and not all have access to the internet).
5. More radio announcements, community meetings, delivery via mail of details on specific large matters/ concerns such as letters to the community residents, and delivery of matters paper more often.



Survey Results

Q22: Do you have any other suggestions for improving how we communicate with residents? (continued)

Public Meetings / In-person Engagement

1. Hold information sessions at local community centres, provide buses to take people from central locations to the MODL event. We have lots of school buses sitting idle in the evenings. This helps people who don't want to drive at night and those without cars.
2. More family and cost-friendly events
3. Town hall meetings every few months.
4. Maybe periodic town hall meetings hosted by councillors in their own districts.
5. More face-to-face with councillors outside of their offices.

Councillor Engagement & Communication

1. I was concerned about some misleading statements my Councillor posted about arts funding at MODL. A disclaimer that these are personal views may not be sufficient when it's being posted to an official MODL Councillor page.
2. District Councillor must communicate better
3. Respond to constituents' emails or any communication. I have sent several emails and made several calls to confirm receipt of my emails. Spoke to Joanne a few times. That was almost 3 months ago.
4. It would be nice to have a yearly community hall meeting, in our community, where you explain what your plan is for our specific community.
5. I would like a clearer understanding of who covers what parts of the MODL
6. More Councillor interaction
7. More contact with Councillors
8. Councillors should visit more with the residents not just during re-election times!



Survey Results

Q22: Do you have any other suggestions for improving how we communicate with residents? (continued)

General Concerns / Feedback

1. People aren't overly engaged with government and politics, and the current efforts are sufficient. If I have questions, I reach out to the municipality directly.
2. I don't feel in-person events show any negativity comments in the report, only the positive comments are published.
3. I like your new ideas
4. I find it easier to engage with shorter and more frequent communication than one long publication that is outdated by the time it's printed/emailed. With social media available, reading a couple of articles online each week would be more engaging than a booklet sent every quarter.
Emails. Engage people. Let them know their concerns are heard. Find out their concerns. Elevate councillors' visibility.
5. Tells us what you are working on so we can help rather than roll out a predetermined outcome saying it is what we were asking for.
6. If there is a specific project or event that affects a certain group of residents, communicating with the residents directly affected would be a reasonable expectation. For example, the New Germany School project. A handful of residents near NGRHS have had their properties surveyed and marked with stakes, and they have received no information as to how this will impact them, despite reaching out to their Municipal Councillor and MLA.

Suggestions for Improvement

1. More evening meetings
2. Engage sign-up should cover all items not just the ones you sign up for
3. Less reliance on social media as a main communication platform. Create a publicly run online forum for public discourse to take place. Use Canada Post and individual emails for important engagement sessions. Brava on the increased streaming. That has been a great move for accessibility to municipal involvement for the community. I look forward to hearing more about your proposed application.



Recommendations

Based on the survey results, and keeping in mind long print lead times and limited staff and space, I have identified several recommendations to improve Municipal Matters.

1. Improve Visual Readability

Why: Readers noted difficulty with font size, layout, and visual appeal. Some readers said the design feels “crowded,” “boring,” or “repetitive.”

Addition: Switch to a print style that mimics local newspapers with columns and pull quotes. Add a table of contents and page numbers, use more white space and section headings

2. Add a Recurring “Council in Brief” Feature

Why: Many residents want more transparency and substance on council decisions, policies, and development applications.

Addition: A short, digestible column that highlights major decisions from recent Council meetings (1–2 short paragraphs + bullet points).

3. Introduce a Rotating Councillor Column

Why: Several residents requested messages from their Councillors.

Addition: Dedicate a small section in each issue to a message from one or two Councillors on local issues or successes. Rotate so each gets a turn throughout the year.

4. Cover the Topics People Ask For— Especially Engagement, Housing, Jobs, and Environment

Why: These four topics dominated open-ended responses.

Addition: Build a recurring editorial calendar:

- **Spring:** Community groups, economic development, hiring programs
- **Summer:** Housing updates, recreation, tourism
- **Fall:** Environmental initiatives, volunteer highlights
- **Winter:** Council priorities, budget, public consultations



Recommendations

5. Add a “You Asked, We Answered” or “Myth vs Fact” Section

Why: Some feedback reveals confusion, misinformation, and distrust.

Addition: Dedicate space to responding clearly and factually to common concerns (e.g., coastal erosion funding, land-use planning, what taxes pay for).

6. Promote the Online Version for Broader Access

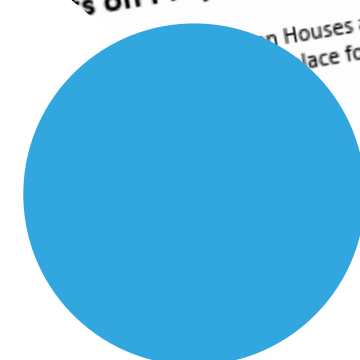
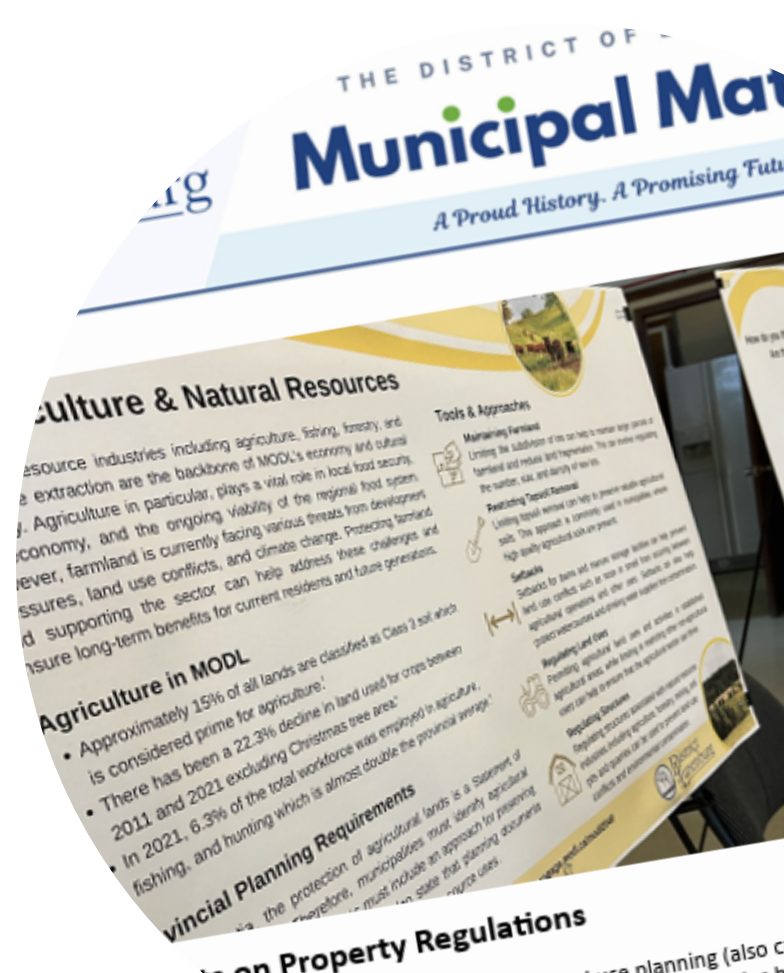
Why: Some residents said they don’t receive it, prefer digital, or find paper wasteful.

Addition: Promote the digital version on social media and in the District of Lunenburg Digest.

7. Include a Resident/Volunteer Spotlight in Every Issue

Why: Many readers want more community storytelling and volunteer recognition.

Addition: A 1/4 page profile of a resident, youth, community group, or volunteer each issue. Include a photo and quote.





What we

Heard

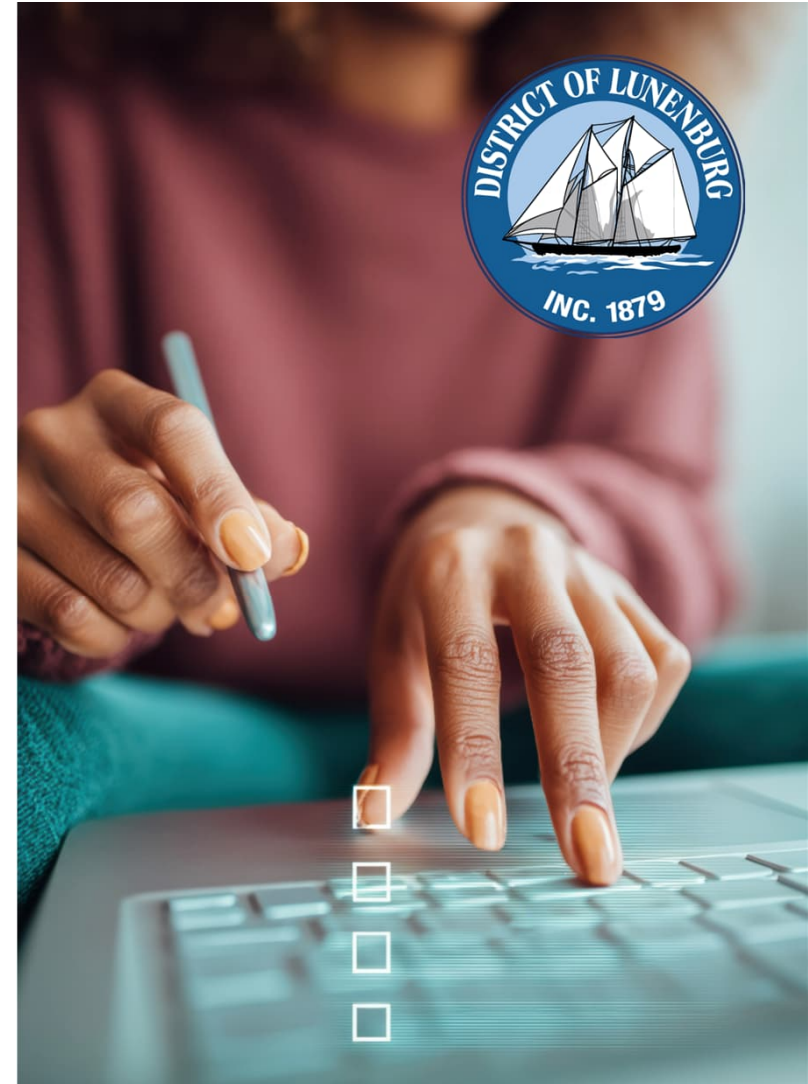
Report

Municipal Matters Public
Engagement and
Communications Survey

July 2025

Contents

1. Introduction & Background
2. How we Engaged
3. Survey Limitations
4. Survey Results
5. Recommendations





Introduction & Background

- We conducted a Communication and Public Engagement Survey to understand how residents prefer to receive information and participate in municipal initiatives.
- The survey received 718 responses.
- Findings will help shape future communication strategies and public engagement efforts.

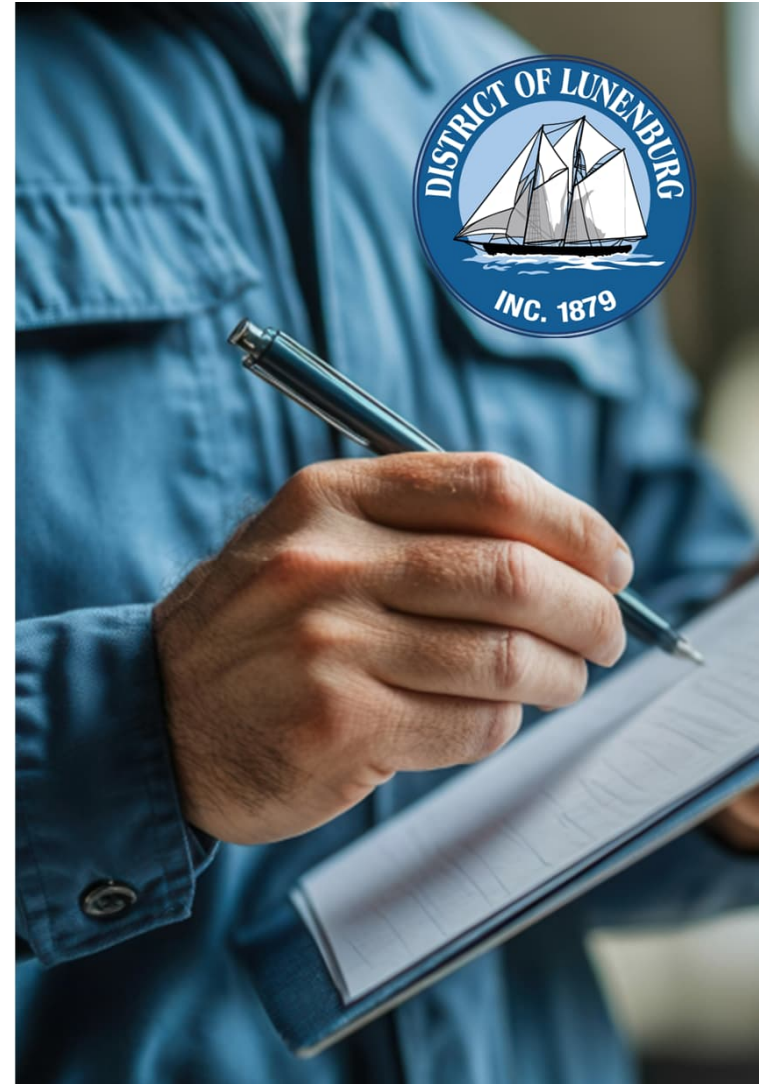


How we Engaged

- Spring issue of Municipal Matters (distributed to all households)
- Shared numerous times on Facebook
- Monthly District of Lunenburg Digest (emailed to more than 1,000 subscribers)

Survey Limitations

- Response rate and representativeness (approx. 2.7% of population responded)
- Distribution method (challenges accessing internet or returning physical copies)

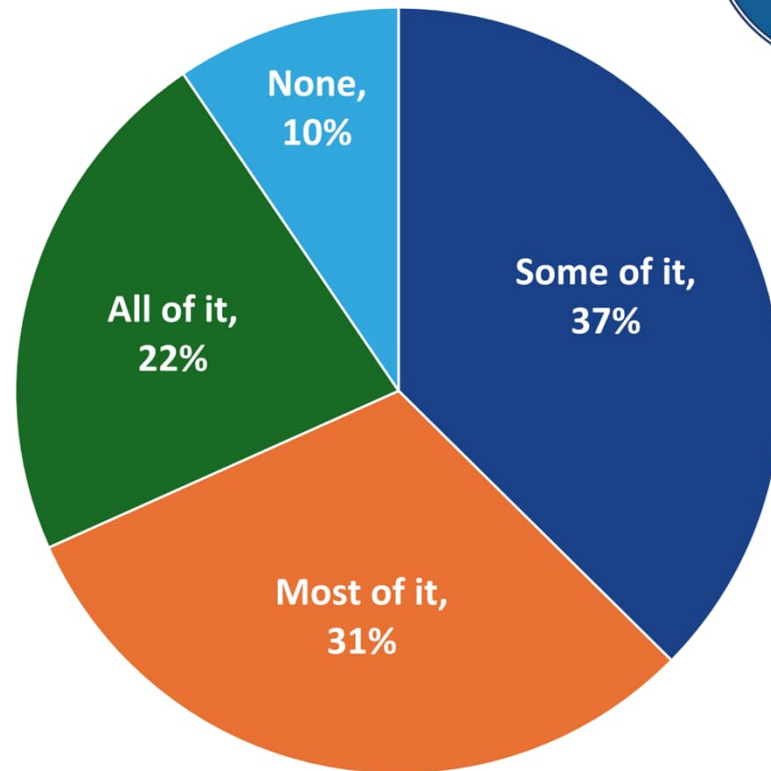


Survey Results



Q1: How much of each issue of Municipal Matters do you read?

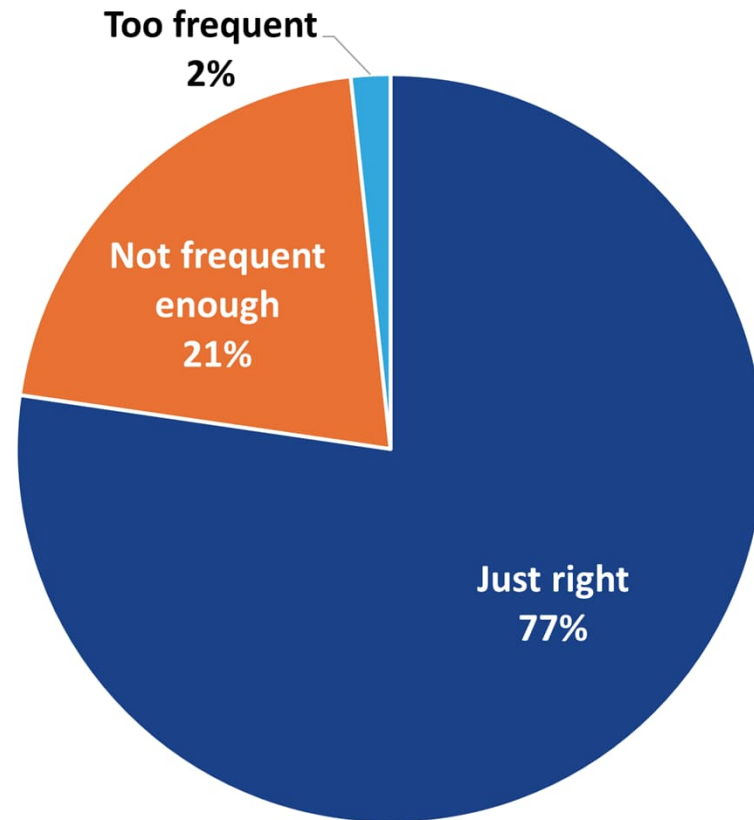
Some, most or all = 90%



Survey Results

Q2: Municipal Matters is issued four times a year.

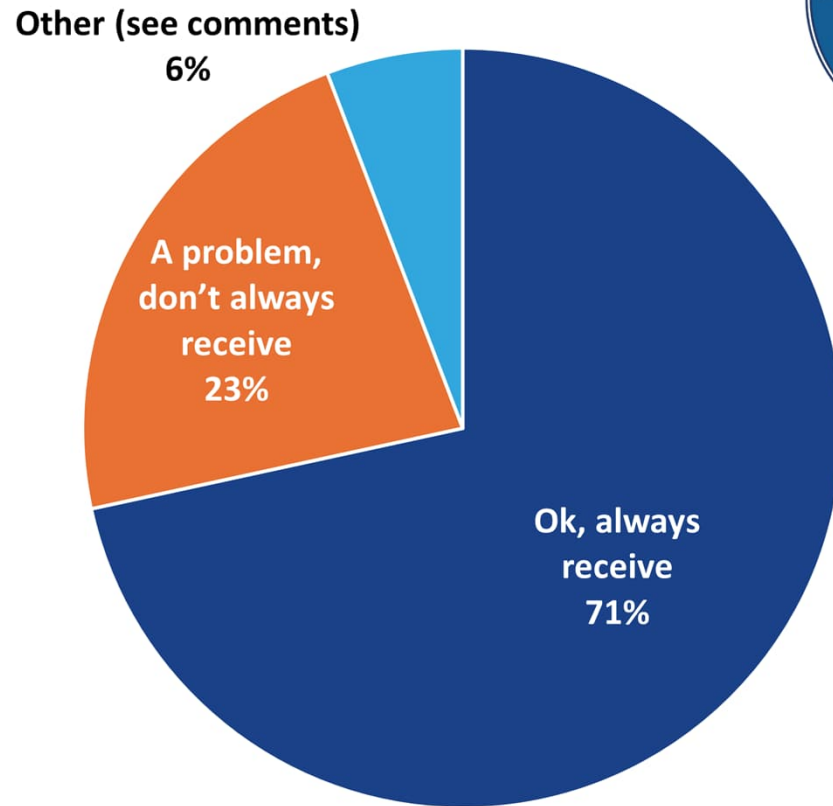
Do you think this is?



Survey Results

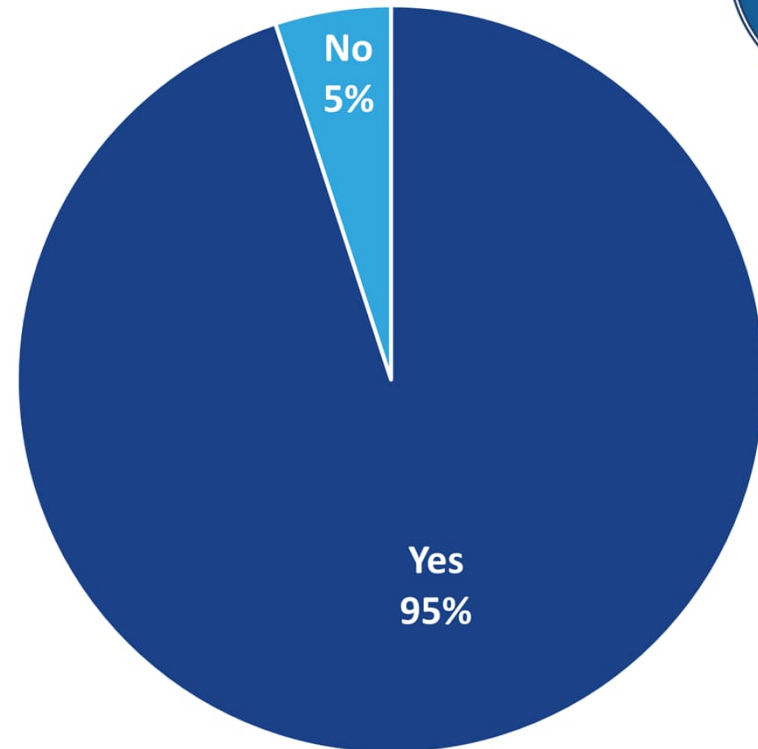
Q3: Municipal Matters is delivered with flyers as unaddressed bulk mail.

Do you think this is?



Survey Results

Q4: Do you think Municipal Matters is easy to read and find what you're looking for?



Survey Results



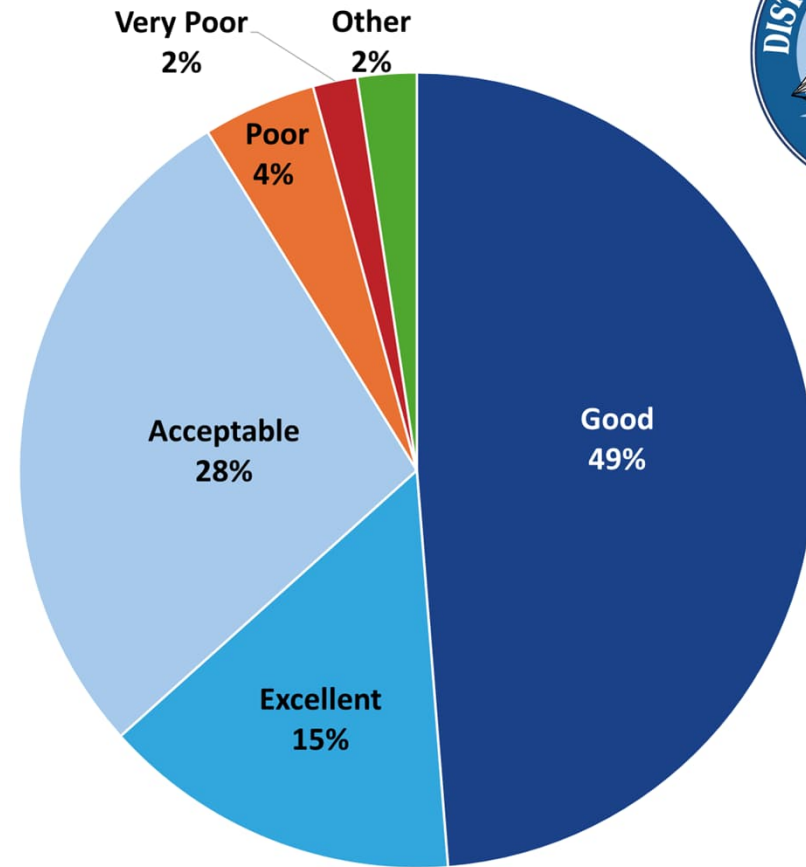
Q7: What topics would you like to see us cover in the future?

Theme	Number of Comments
Community Engagement and Involvement	44
Economic and employment opportunities	25
Housing and Affordability	13
Environmental Awareness and Sustainability	12
Other	10

Survey Results

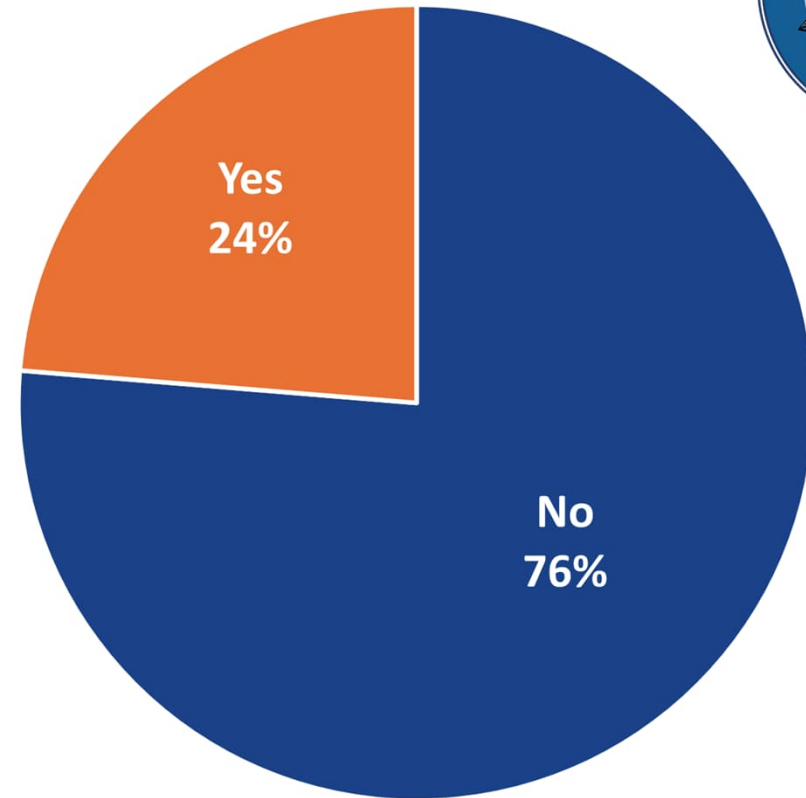
Q8: How would you rate the District's communication efforts overall?

Acceptable or higher = 92%
Poor or lower = 6%
Other = 2%



Survey Results

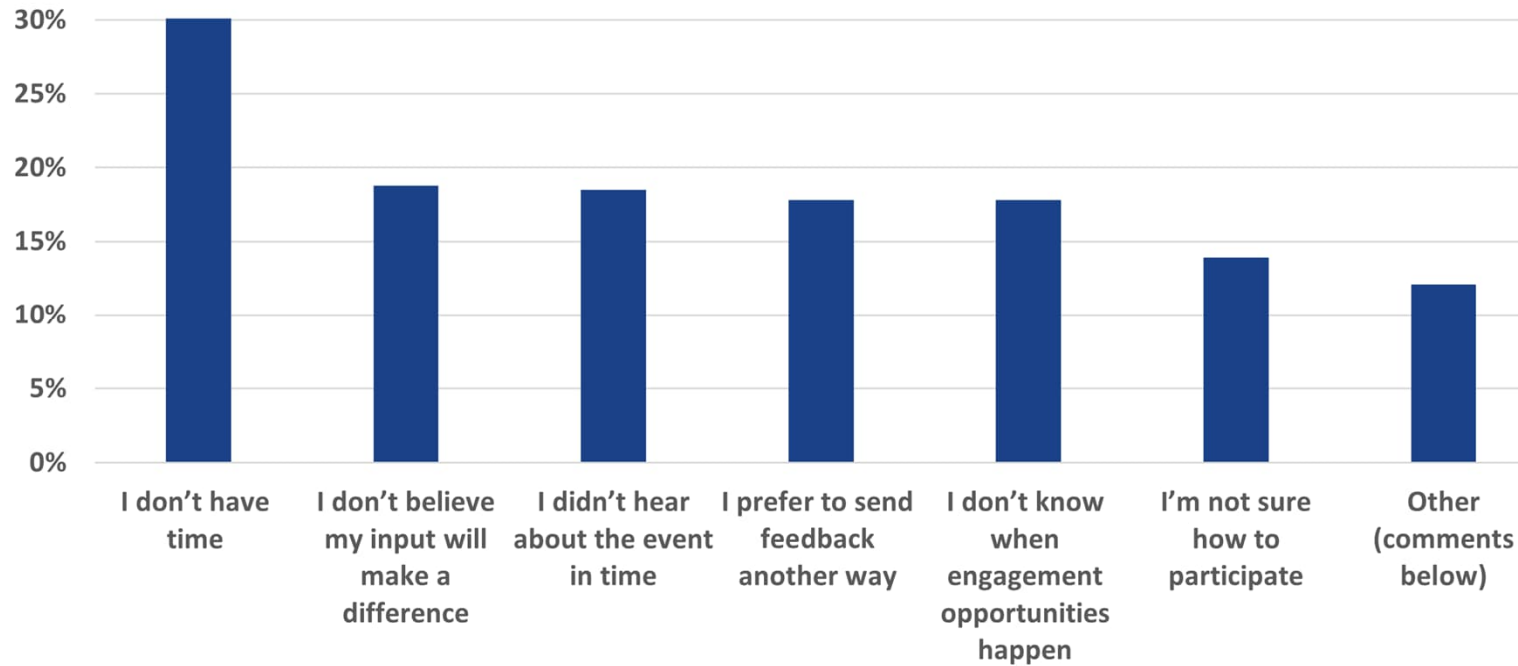
Q9: Since Jan 2022, have you attended an online or in person public engagement event with the District?
(i.e open house, info session, public hearing, etc.)





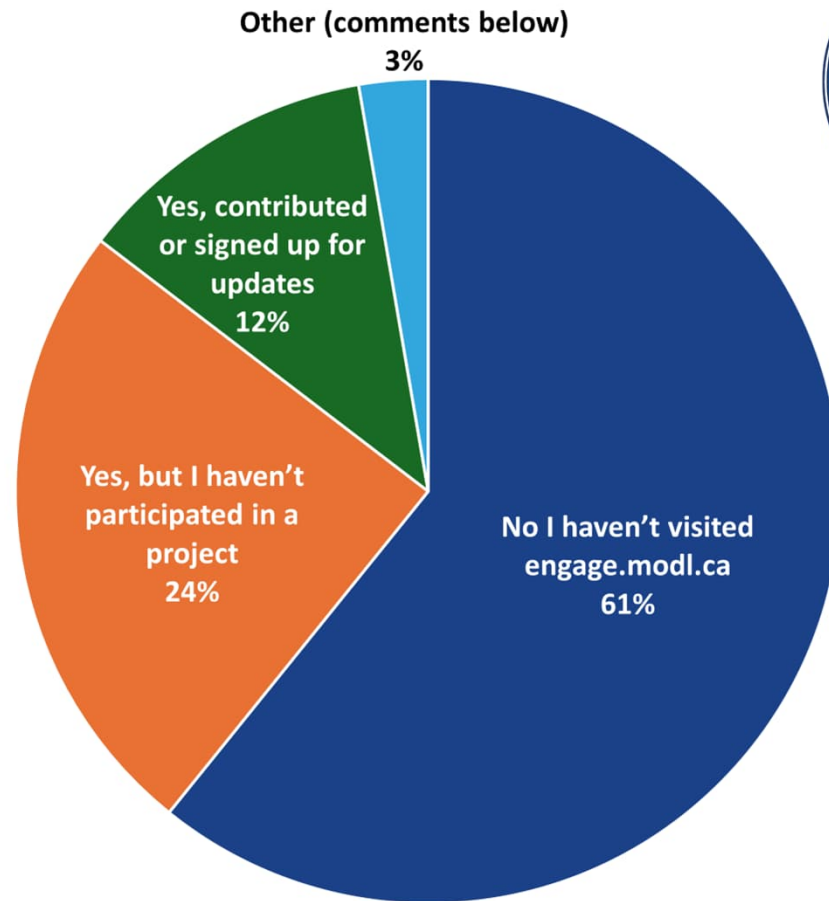
Survey Results

Q10: If not, what has prevented you from participating?



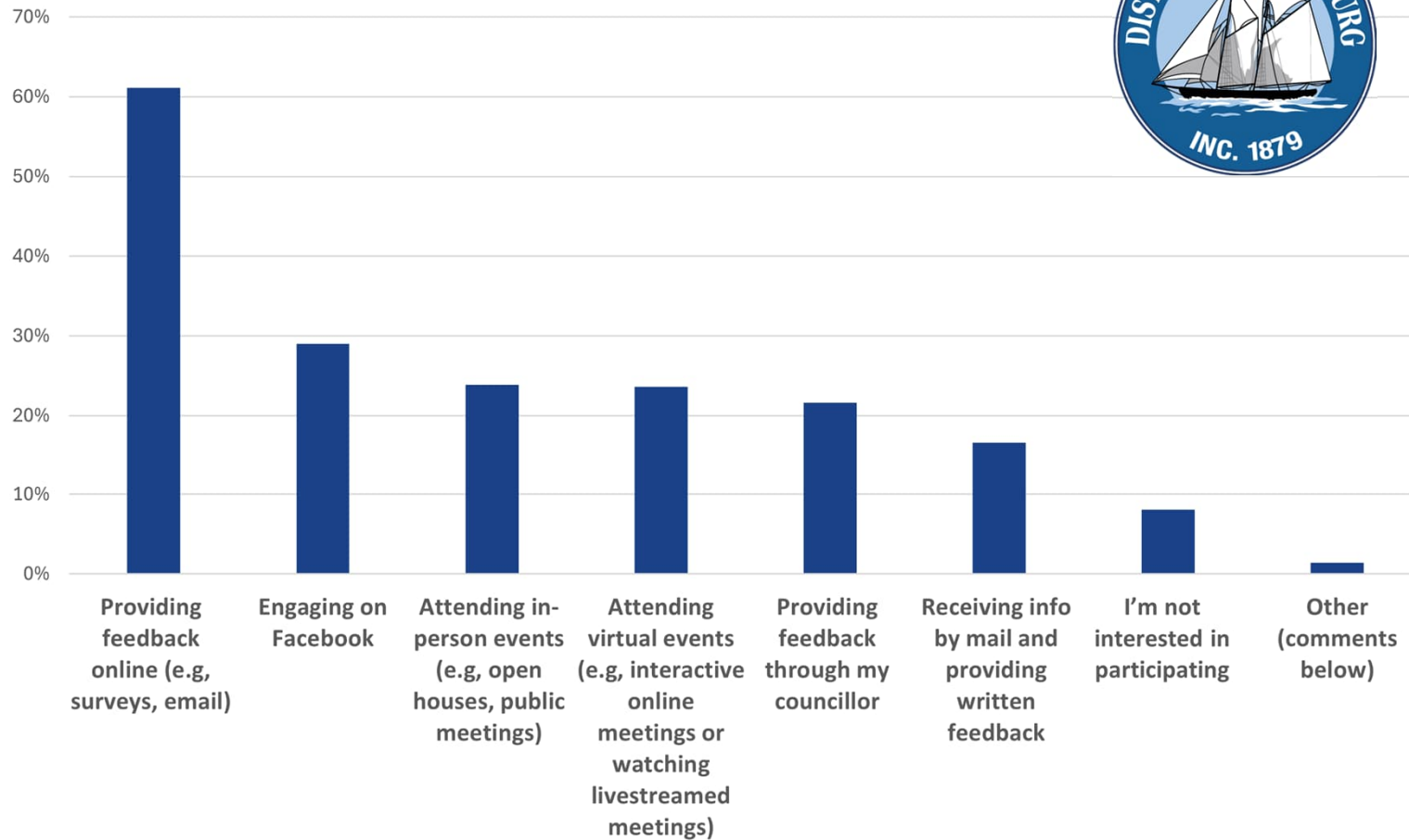
Survey Results

Q11: Have you visited engage.modl.ca, our online engagement platform?



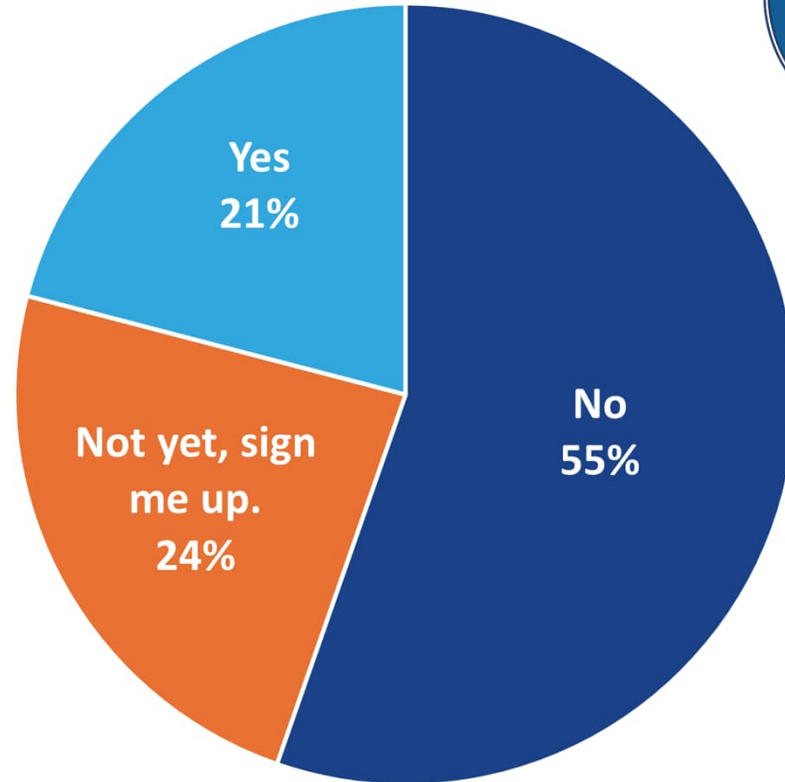
Survey Results

Q12: How do you prefer to participate in public engagement with the District?



Survey Results

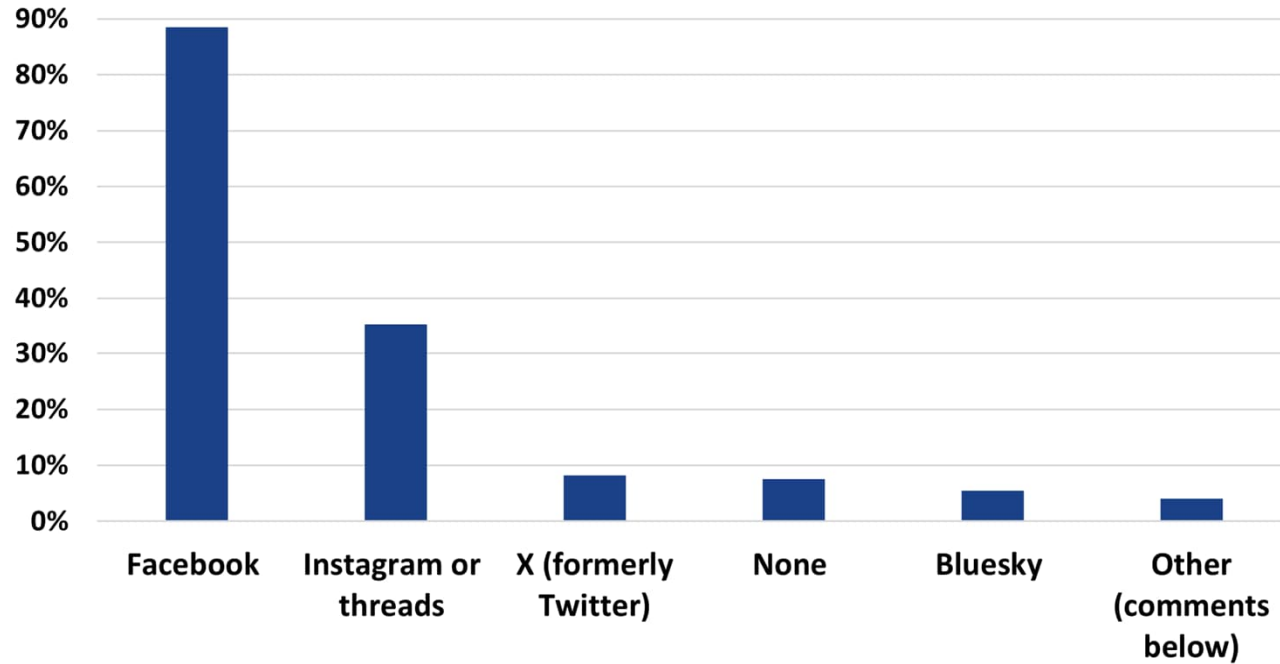
Q13: Do you receive the District of Lunenburg Digest, our monthly email newsletter?





Survey Results

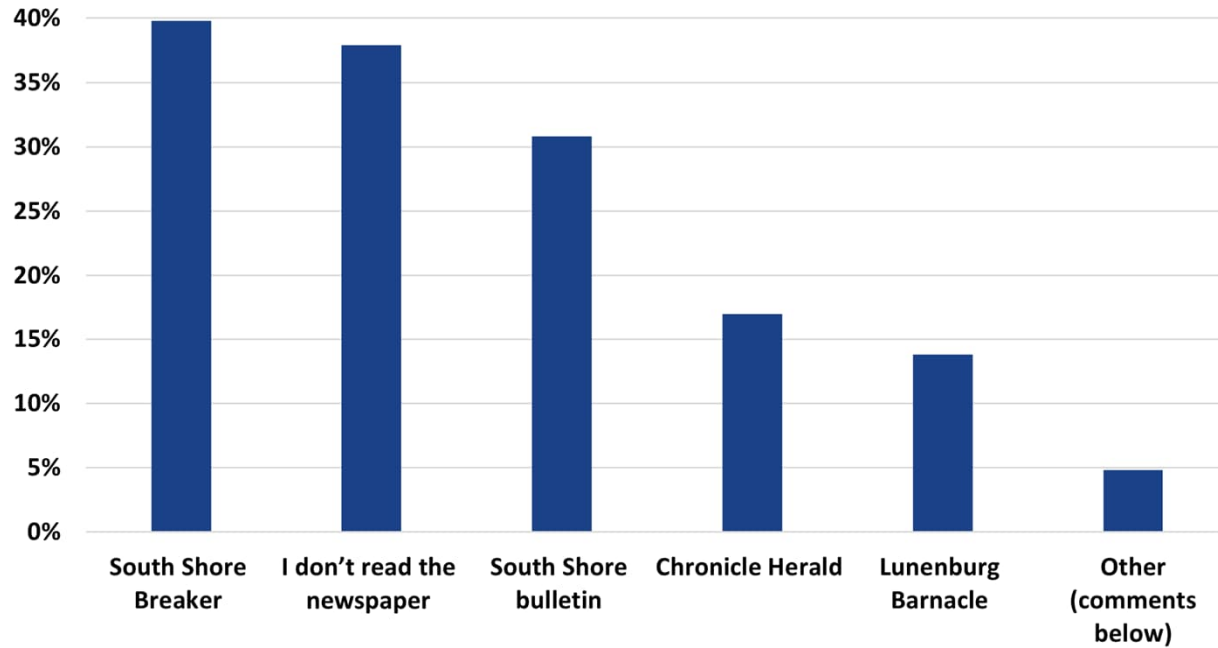
Q14: Which social media platforms do you use?





Survey Results

Q15: Which newspaper do you read?

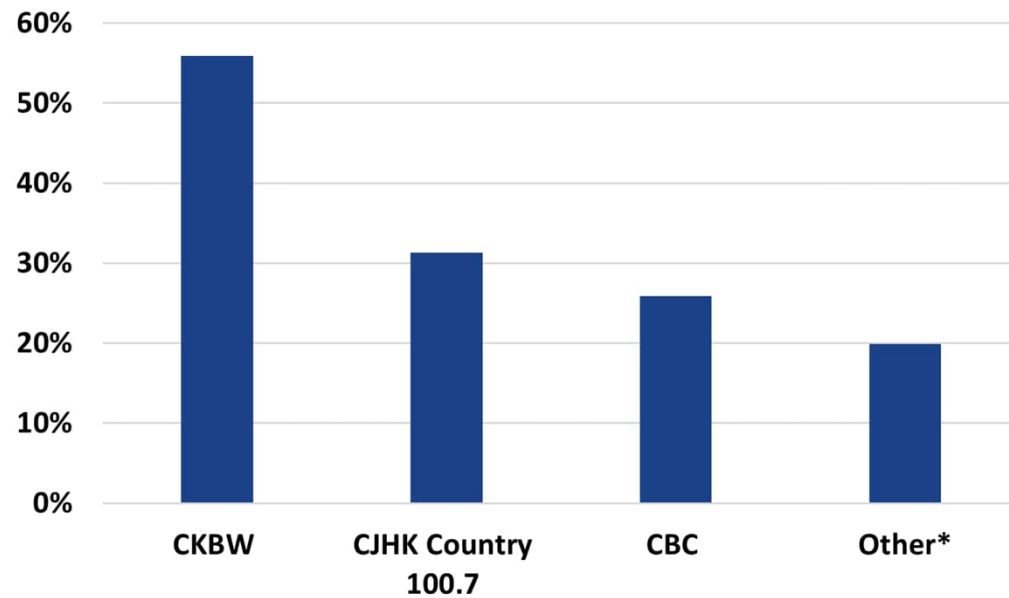




Survey Results

Q16: Which radio stations do you listen to?

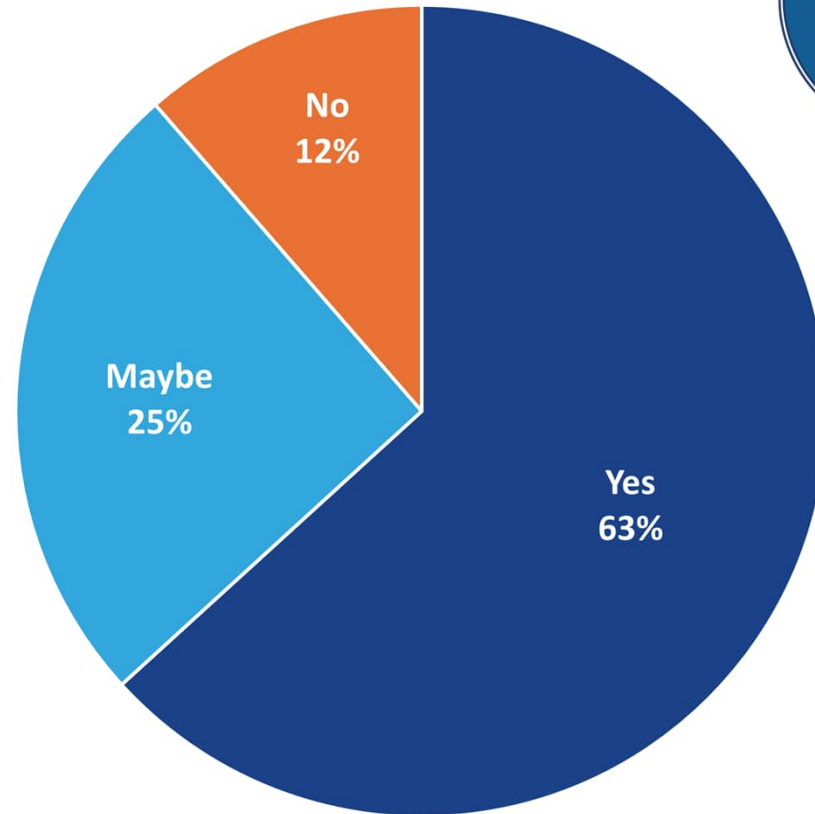
*Stations identified under Other were primarily stations based in Halifax.



Survey Results

Q17: We're considering introducing a municipal app that would provide you with an easy way to access municipal news, see events, and more.

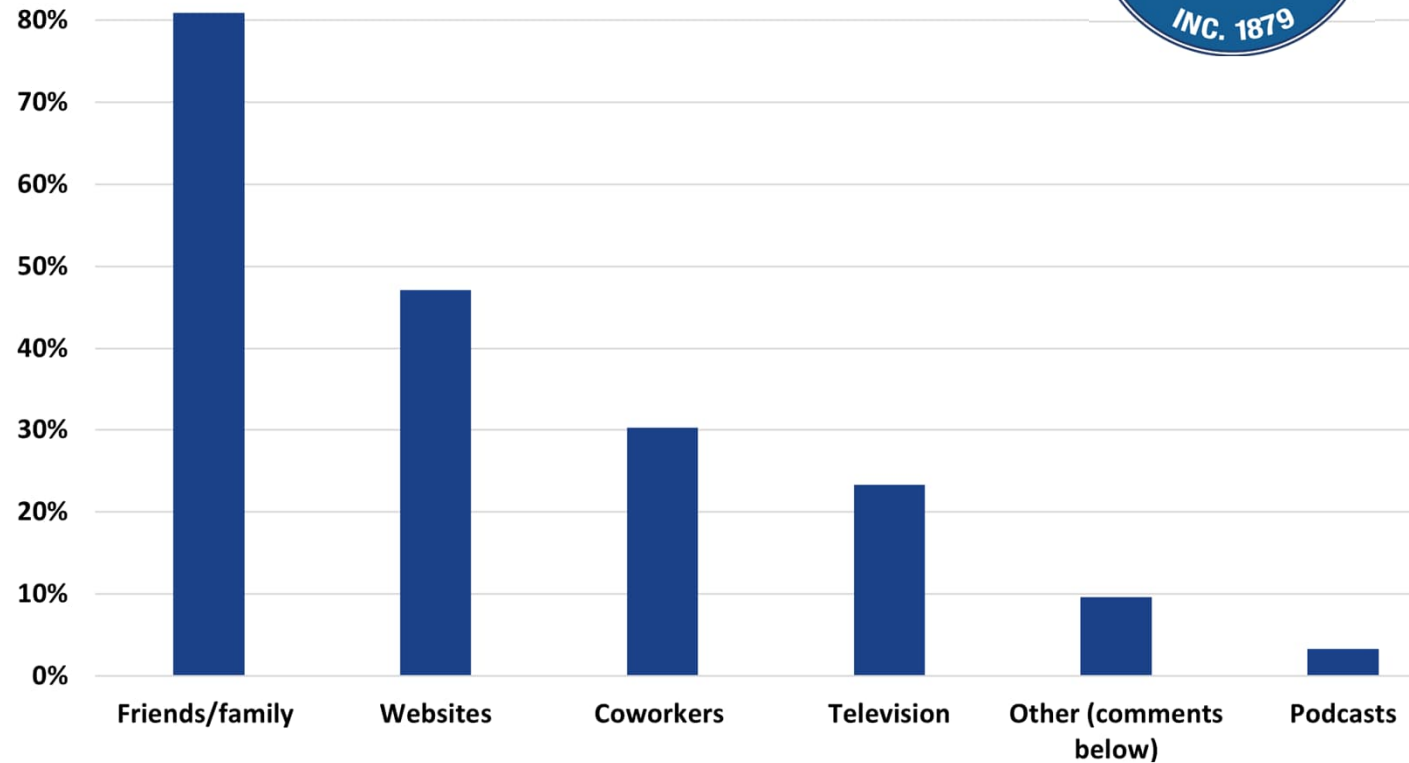
Would you consider downloading a District of Lunenburg app?



Survey Results



Q19: Other than the media listed above, where do you get news about local events and happenings in the area?



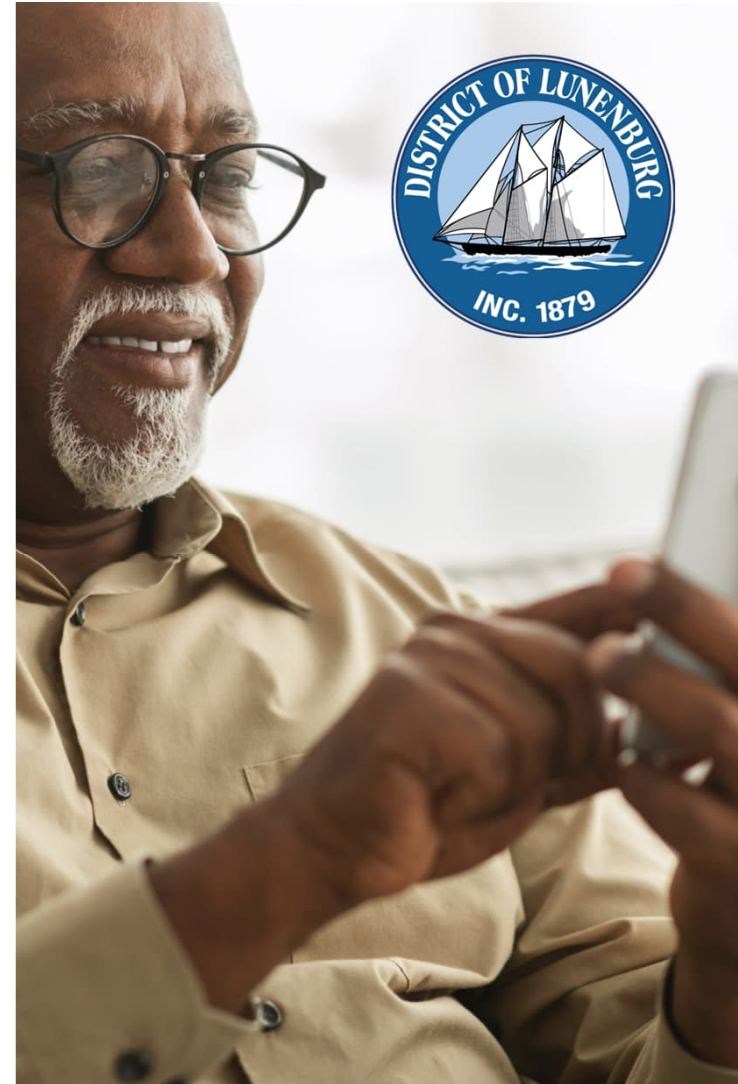
Recommendations

1. Improve visual readability
2. Add a recurring “Council in Brief” feature
3. Introduce rotating Councillor Column
4. Cover the Topics People Ask For—
Especially Engagement, Housing, Jobs,
and Environment



Recommendations

5. Add a “You Asked, We Answered” or “Myth vs Fact” section
6. Promote the online version for broader access
7. Include a resident/volunteer spotlight in every issue



Independent Survey

In the 2025/2026 Budget, Council approved \$13,000 to hire a firm to produce a statistically relevant survey of residents about Municipal Matters and how they want to be communicated with.

Given the high response rate and varied feedback of the internally produced survey, does Council still want to pursue another survey? The research firm would be seeking roughly 400 responses to be statistically valid at our population.

