

2026 Westmore Town Survey

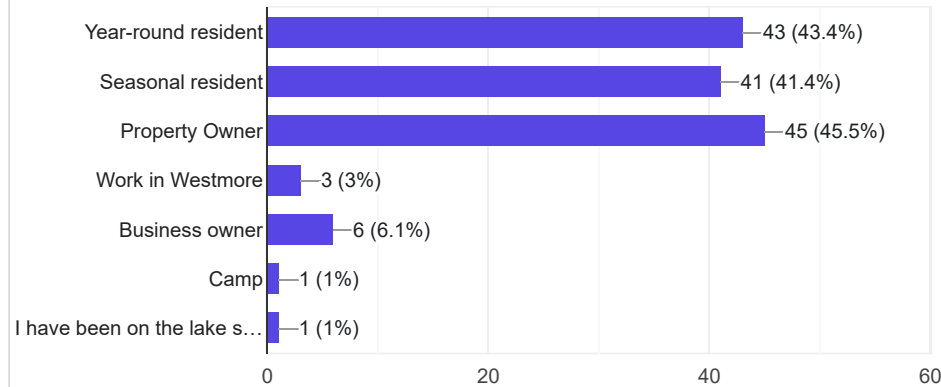
100 responses

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What is your association with Westmore?

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99 responses

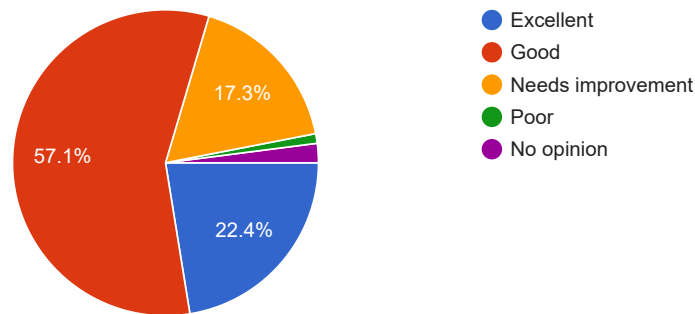


Town Services & Community Performance

Water Protection: Protecting the cleanliness and health of Willoughby Lake, local streams and ponds.

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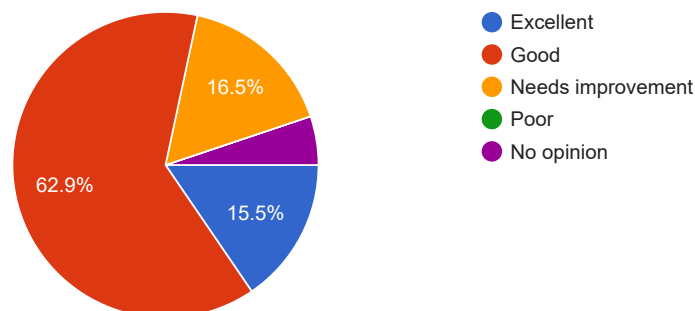
98 responses



Flood Resilience: Upgrading roads, bridges, and culverts to better withstand heavy rain and severe weather.

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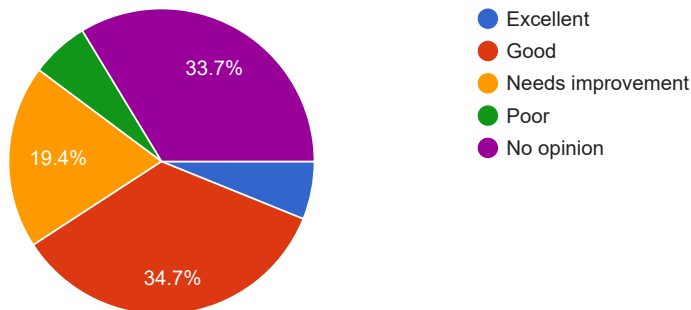
97 responses



Emergency Preparedness: Readiness and planning for natural disasters or emergency events.

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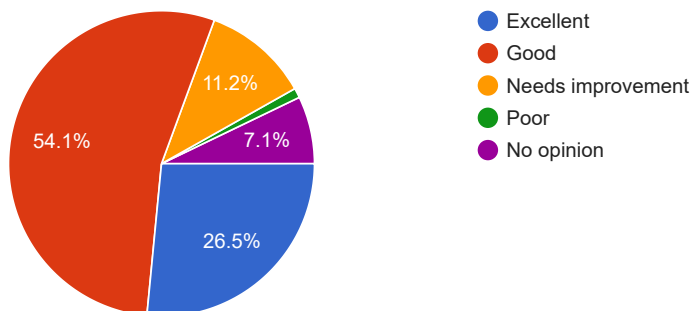
98 responses



Parks & Recreation: Maintaining clean, safe, and welcoming town forests and recreational facilities.

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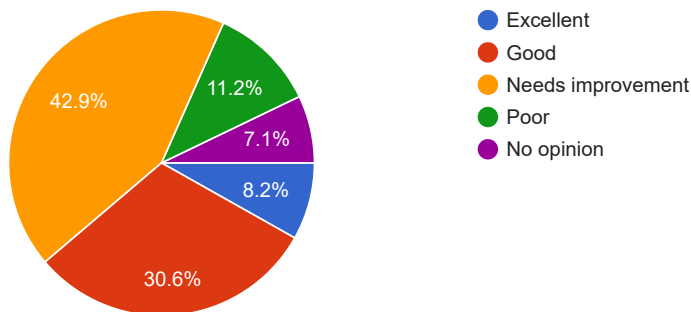
98 responses



Roadway Safety: Ensuring roads are safe and accessible for all users, including pedestrians, runners, and cyclists.

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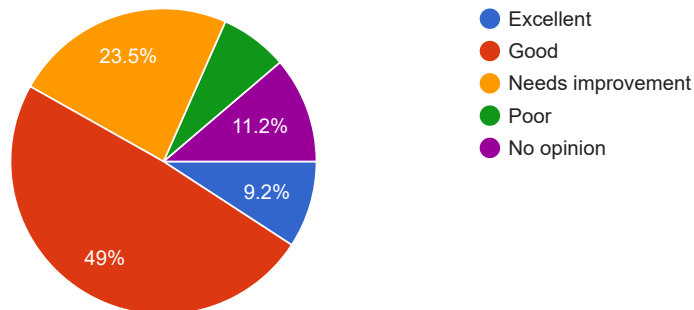
98 responses



Broadband Access: Expanding high-speed internet availability throughout all areas of Westmore.

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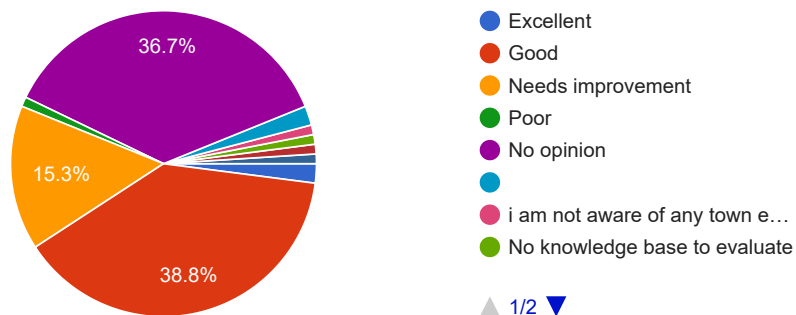
98 responses



Energy Efficiency: Supporting and promoting energy conservation measures for municipal buildings and households.

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98 responses



Comments on Westmore's Services & Community Performance:

36 responses

great heartfull effort. but terribly indecisive at select board level.
 we need leadership or at least less obstruction.
 I think all of the select board cares- but fears how to address the coming change.
 I suspect reluctance to act without concensous or sure results.

By consistently "kicking the can down the road" many decisions are therefore made by default-
 no action or only remaining options. i.e, Arrpa funds

Promotion of Lakewise program in Westmore is poor compared to other lakes. Nothing was
 pursued from the MembreMagog Watershed Association recommendations. Water quality
 continues to deteriorate.

No Radio Tower!

1. I appreciate the transfer station being open on both Wednesday and Saturdays. Would like to see it stay open on Wednesdays from May 1st through Columbus Day. Thank you.
2. Would like to see the all culverts on the main road cleaned out as some have not been to prevent flooding.

Thank you!

Would love to see the transfer station and garbage pickup changes as part of this conversation. The cuts to pickup, then the reduction of hours, then the switch to manual sorting, feel pretty onerous.

I think that the town needs to continue to have a rescue squad if not a fire department. I have seen the articles regarding the Westmore fire department and it seems that the town should support a rescue squad for the lake, hiking trails, skiing trails, ice climbers, ice fisherman, snowmobilers, and all of the recreational uses on town land and beyond. What percentage of the fire department calls are for actual fires and how many are for mountain and lake rescues? I would think that most of the calls in Westmore are for rescues not fires. Let's use the town resources wisely and support a rescue squad without the fire department and leave the fire to Orleans, Charleston and other towns with bigger fire department resources. It seems much more practical to support a rescue squad that supports the recreational use of the lands in Westmore. If the entire Westmore fire department no longer exists you will lose the expertise of the local volunteers that are vital for the lake and mountain rescues, they are the ones who know the area best and are willing and able to hike to the top of the mountains and carry injured people to safety and help stranded boaters. We should support training for a squad that can do low angle ropes rescues, cold water and ice rescues, swift water, and mountain rescues and not the firefighter 1 and other firefighter trainings. The volunteers can only give so much time and energy, so lets use their time, energy and our resources efficiently rather than running so thin with trying to do it all. If these mountain and lake rescues need to rely on departments that travel from a distance and don't know the area it could mean a much more tragic ending for them. Please ignore the small town petty arguments of which fire department is worthy and do what is best for the town of Westmore which is to put our resources where they are needed most and support a local rescue squad, not fire, for this beautiful area.

I appreciate the strong commitment to building/maintaining a community experience in Westmore



Westmore does a great job in trying to recruit and retain high caliber staff

We should create more access to Westmore's beautiful trails, lakes, etc. Grow the trails, better parking, more facilities, etc.

The road crew does a great job maintaining roads and plowing in the winter.

Water protection is the very most important issue. Nothing is being done to catalog and audit septic systems and water use especially on Willoughby lake. Town roads are poorly maintained and costly. The road department is sadly incompetent and waste money and materials. Equipment costs are obscene and out of control.

We need trash and recycling pick up

I don't know much about the items listed above so I answered No Opinion. I don't have any way of knowing about performance.

minimal services provided by the Town, except excellent road maintenance. PLEASE keep at least the current level of transfer station operation.

The ability to contact and coordinate with emergency services is very limited due to cell reception. The tower should have gone through

It is a wonderful rural town with incredible natural resources - keep it that way

As a new resident, I don't have much feedback. One of my only challenges locally is cellular coverage at my property (Lakeview & Cook Rd), any help lobbying telecom companies to expand coverage would be very helpful.

I appreciate community efforts for all of the above, but I fear we are starting to turn our cozy town into something it was never meant to be. I urge members to reflect on what Westmore has meant for generations past and help preserve it for generations future.

Speeding and unnecessary vehicular noise are a big problem on 5A. Even on the west side of Willoughby the noise can sometimes be jarring. I have checked "no Opinion" because I don't have sufficient information on some categories above. Under protecting Water quality, I am concerned about the problem of wake boats and other large boats with bilges bringing in invasive species such as zebra mussels.

1. For us, it took Comcast entering our market to achieve high speed internet.
2. It's an embarrassment that there is no cellphone service on the beach and in residential areas of the town.
3. Sorry, the emergency response for the "plane crash" was a glaring example of how inadequate coverage for communications can lead to a public safety nightmare.
4. How on earth did our public safety personnel respond as if there was a plane crash when there were no eye witnesses or flight data to back up that conclusion? Will lessons be learned from that debacle?

I think we need to focus efforts on safety of State Route 5A through the center of town.

Honestly, the broadband access is too good. It may draw too many people. I don't like to see the population increase and the damage and light pollution that comes with it.



Something needs to be done at North Beach. There are too many users with no financial benefit to the town. We spend a lot of money cleaning the beach and maintaining the parking lot. We need to offset this cost somehow. As a property owner I would be happy to pay for an annual parking pass. Beaches all over New England charge for water access- why can't we? Distinguishing between daily visitors and residents can be factored in on the price. We need to do something before our water and land is polluted!

Concerned about growth and the towns ability to cope with rising tourism traffic

Need more days / longer hours for the transfer station, especially having cut curbside pickup

On broadband access I think it is good but highly lacking in Verizon Wireless Cell and broadband. The current administration seems to be addressing all of the above issues moving toward improvements. Cudos..keep moving. I also think the town needs to address the move toward the increase in short term rentals.

It's been a huge disappointment to sit back and watch the town continue to do nothing regarding the misuse and abuse of the resources at North Beach on our beautiful Willoughby Lake. Great expense was put into the parking lot and daily raking and attempted cleaning of the beach every morning. There is little to no effort to enforce the regulations that are clearly posted in the parking lot and the entrance to the beach and which are ignored on a daily basis. It would be very simple for the town to implement and charge a small parking/day-use fee to non-residents to utilize the beach. The town (and the health of our lake)would greatly benefit from the revenue generated from such an effort and said revenue would pay for workers to staff and enforce said rules and regulations.

I believe the Town is doing all it can to make Westmore a great place to live but it is a hard job with the funds available.

Love Elaine

All efforts should be towards improving the everyday living standards for residents, not tourists. If the state owns the lake, then they should be responsible for every dollar it takes to keep it clean and safe.

I feel they're doing a very good job!

We do not need sidewalks. It will take away the natural beauty of our small town.

Need sidewalks and bike path and speed bumps

I think it's terrible that we pay premium taxes as non residents and now have to pay for trash pickups

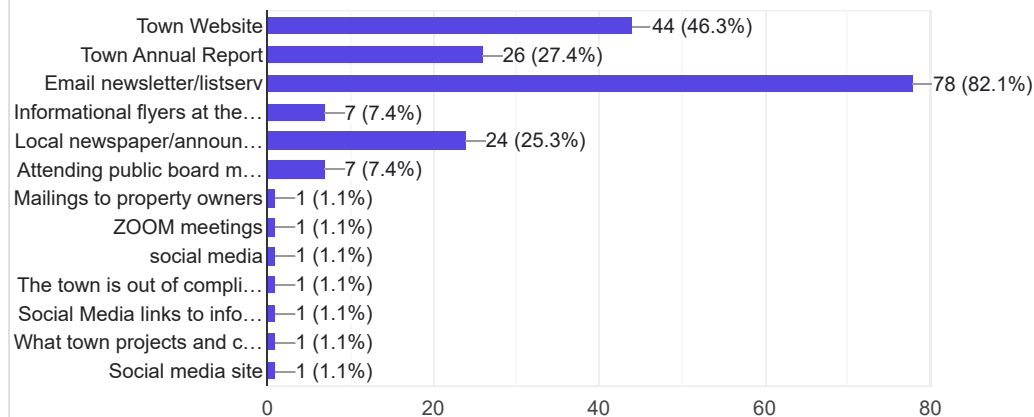
Lower our property taxes, especially since we have NO schools in Westmore!



How would you prefer to receive updates on these town projects and committee initiatives?

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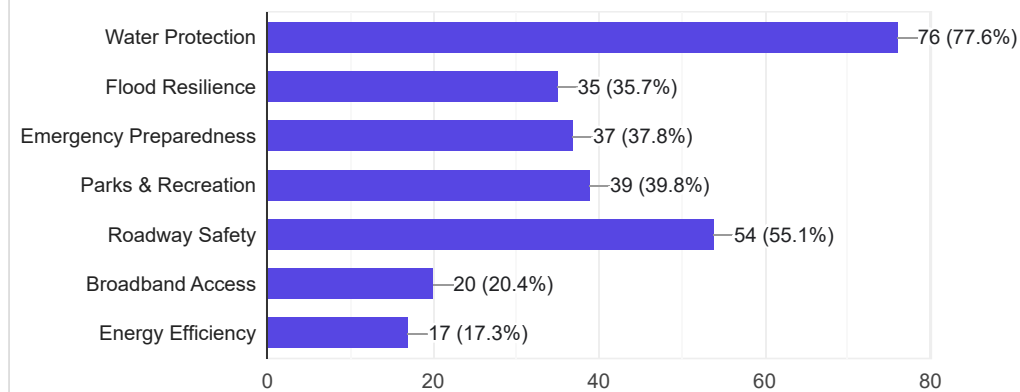
95 responses



Which THREE areas should be the highest priorities for Westmore over the next 5-10 years? Select up to three

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98 responses

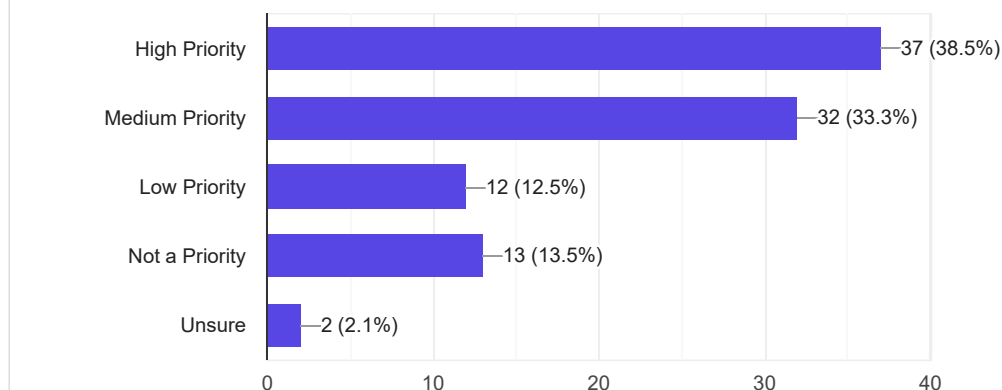


Community Vision and Demographics

How important is it for Westmore to actively take steps to attract and retain younger families and working-age residents over the next 8 years?

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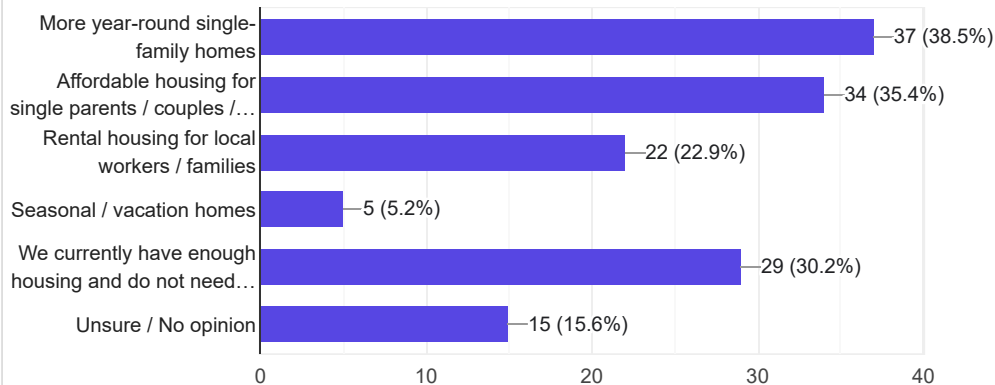
96 responses



Looking ahead over the next 8 years, what type of housing availability do you think Westmore needs most? (Select all that apply)

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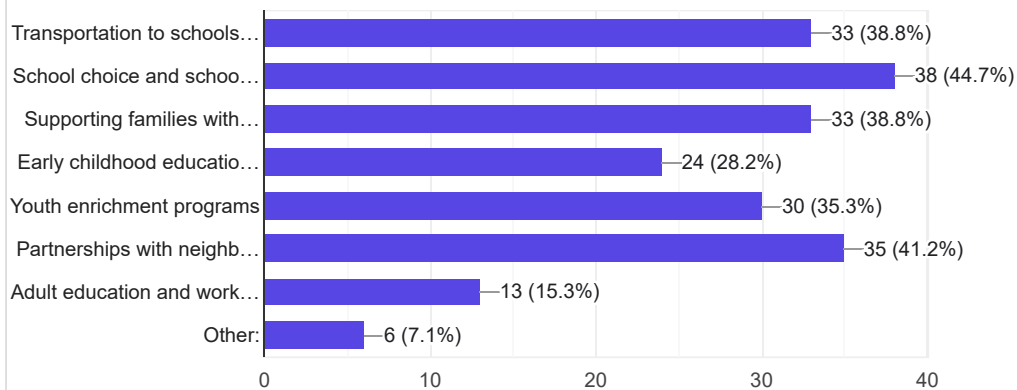
96 responses



Which education-related issues are most important for Westmore to consider in the next Town Plan? Select up to three.

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85 responses



Land Conservation & Natural Resources: Water, Agriculture, Forestry, & Wildlife Priorities

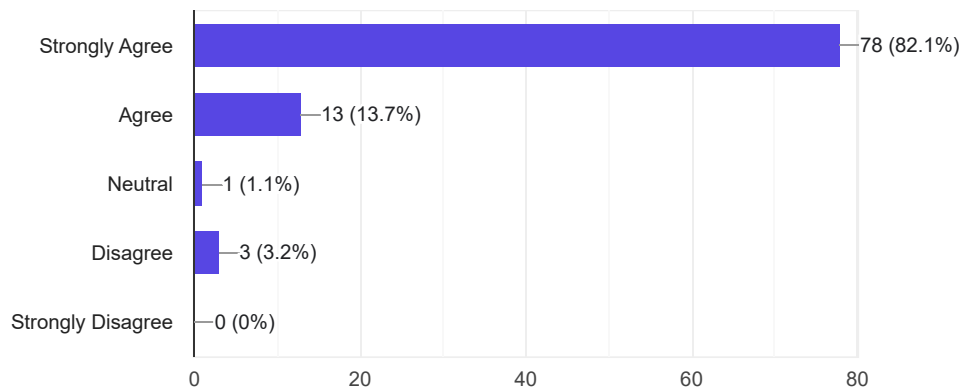


Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement:

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"Future town development must be balanced with strict protections for Westmore's natural resources, water quality (including Willoughby Lake), and open spaces."

95 responses

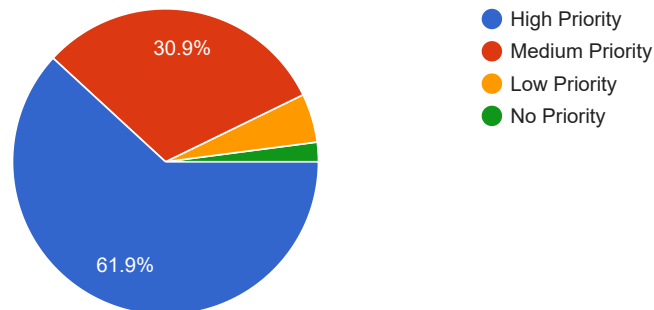


How important should each of the following conservation goals be in Westmore's Town Plan

Preserving active agricultural land and working farms?

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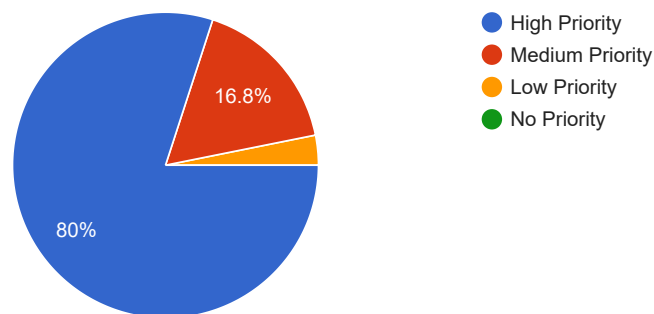
97 responses



Protecting large, contiguous forest tracts (forest blocks)

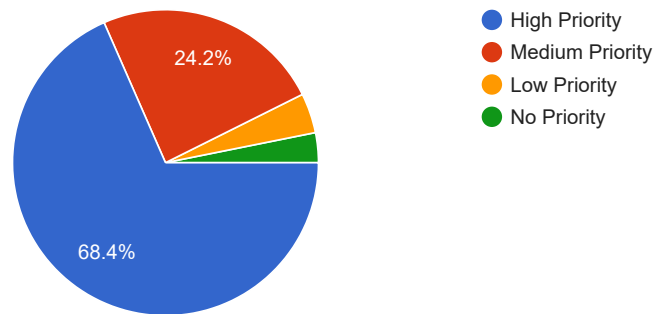
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95 responses

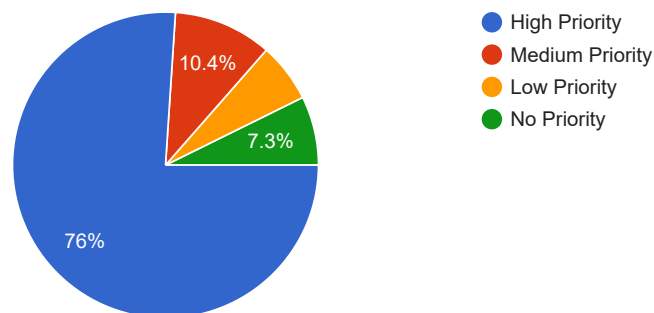


Maintaining connected land corridors for wildlife movement [Copy chart](#)

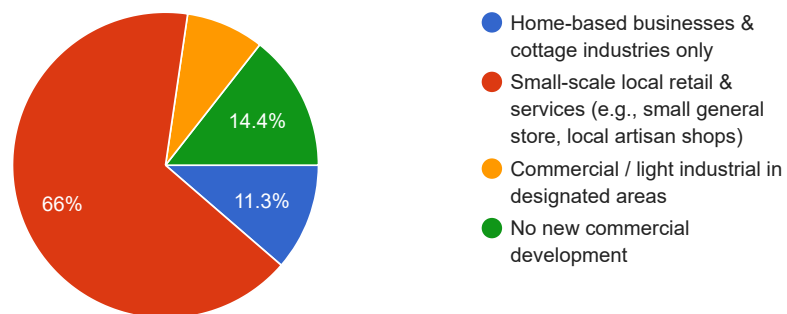
95 responses

**Preventing large-scale suburban-style residential subdivisions** [Copy chart](#)

96 responses

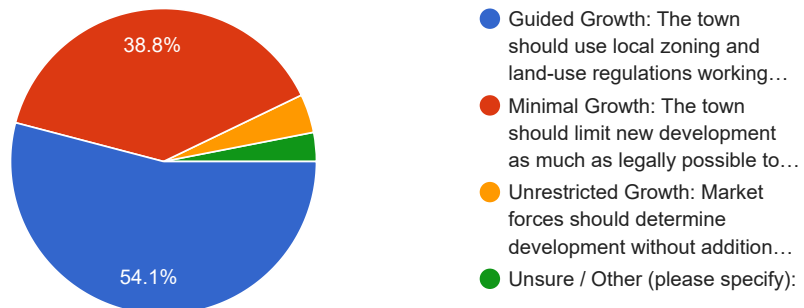
**Approach to Development****What scale of commercial development should the town encourage, if any?** [Copy chart](#)

97 responses



Which of the following statements best aligns with your view on future residential or commercial development in Westmore? [Copy chart](#)

98 responses



Is there anything else you would like the Planning Commission to know as it updates the Town Plan? *Please share any additional comments, concerns, ideas, or priorities for Westmore.*

43 responses

please become proactive, put teeth in town regulations and employ them.

it is clear everyone loves and cherishes our town,
become pro active defending and guiding this deep conviction

especially against the state agencies

Found it impossible to answer "Balancing Conservation and Growth" in the context of "managing influx of people" because we have little to no experience on this influx. Also, what's the concern about land corridors and large tracts of forest when so much is already tied up in trust (e.g. Dotoli land) and the state forest. What are we afraid of? Without an influx this town is going to become an enclave for the wealthy and the property taxes will continue to soar. We need new housing to broaden the tax base. Can't tell you what this entails but the plan needs to anticipate this better. As the planning board we are looking for you to provide a measured and guided approach so that it CAN happen. At the same time we can't expect to tell landowners what they can and cannot do with thier land aka Act 181. It should not matter what we think might happen, it should be that we are there to assist in this influx. What is the plan saying about STRs? The plan needs to ensure the Town has a voice in the room on this situation and not rely on, and just wait for, what the state may do.

North Beach needs paid parking and a fence

Would like to see resident property owners and out of state property owners charged the same tax rate.

Add police to stop speeders

Cell tower needed for emergencies like the latest 'plane crash' on mt Pisgah

Please consider supporting a Westmore town mountain and lake rescue squad that would serve the lake, hiking trails, mountains all year round and stop wasting time and resources on trying to equip and support a full fire department.

I am proud to be a member of the Westmore community. Thank you.

Great effort to deploy the survey Bob and team!

The Town needs to grow (not unrestricted, but balanced and encouraged). Embrace visitors and recreational activities. Connect trails and recreational activities to other neighboring towns and systems including motorized recreation.

Route 5A for walking is extremely dangerous. We need STRICT enforcement of speed limits in this town!!



Airbnb and short term rentals need regulations, restrictions and annual fees payable to the town. More and more people are buying homes just to rent them out short term on airbnb, VRBO, etc. These are essentially businesses and should be regulated as such and have to follow the same rules, tax requirements, safety requirements, occupancy limits, noise regulations, etc as lodging properties. The town should maintain a registry of these rentals, charge property owners an annual fee of \$100 per rental and have rules in place to require things like smoke detectors, land line phone service, carbon monoxide detectors, sanitation requirements, etc. These rentals should also be inspected annually just like hotels, inns, etc. are inspected. They should also have to go through a permit process so that abutting neighbors know about a potential short term rental next to them and can ask questions or voice concerns. In addition to the permit fee, the town should charge property owners an annual fee of \$100 per rental (regardless of whether it is rented year round or part time). There also need to be restrictions in place to prevent too many short term rentals in a condensed area or on more rural roads. Otherwise, it could very well happen that a majority of properties on a (previously) quiet dirt road become short term rentals leaving those people who live their year round surrounded by short term rentals and tourists who may not respect the neighborhood. Short term rentals are becoming increasingly popular in Westmore which has a negative impact on residents and makes it difficult for potential residents/families to find affordable housing in the area. You need to do something ASAP before it gets more out of control.

Water Quality, water quality, water quality. Audit all lakefront properties for proper septic systems. Renewable energy development should not be restricted from ridgelines. License short term rentals and charge fees.

We need trash and recycling pick up. It's an essential resident and visitor service. It helps prevent issues with wildlife and littering.

I am very concerned about businesses locating in residential areas and ruining the quality of life for residents in these areas. Since Westmore doesn't have zoning districts, it is difficult to control where businesses and multifamily developments are built. I don't know enough about the development pressures in Westmore, but this issue needs to be addressed.

one of my main concerns is road safety, the south end is where I'm located, the speed limit should be lowered, not just at certain times of the year. Vehicles go through incredibly fast, while people are walking and crossing over to the campground. I worry each time I pull out of my parking area; it is a blind corner; I'm just waiting for the worst to happen. I think better signage, or something to make traffic slow down. Our family actually has someone cross the road to see if any traffic is coming before we pull out. It's very dangerous in my opinion.

It's incredibly important for us as a town to focus on attracting and retain families and it's directly tied to education, housing, recreation, childcare and community life. I would love to see more focus from the town on creating an open and supportive environment for families to thrive

many of the functions listed in the survey above (water quality monitoring, town forest maintenance, broadband expansion) are the province of, or largely contributed to by, non-municipal organizations (Westmore Association, NEK Broadband, VT state agencies)

There should be a waterfront fee for opting for a lake view over tree plantings to promoting the cooling of the water around the lake to assist in the prevention of milfoil and algae growth. There should be a run off plan for new developments/owners that are removing tree lines for lake views on the hills surrounding.

it is a wonderful town - let's keep it that way.



Westmore is a gem - however, non-resident developers will happily destroy Westmore's character, charm, and natural beauty for the chance to make a \$50K profit. Westmore should use zoning and taxation where possible to discourage non-owner occupied, built-on-spec housing (there are several large unoccupied houses on Cook Road, for example)

Improved zoning bylaws; enforcement; Dark Sky, limited motorized boating, recreation coordinator, grant writer, administrative assistant,

Be careful to let home builders create ponds - twice now, one flooded years ago and created/displaced wetlands where there used to be none. And now more recently, a man-made pond has created a gulley that funnels runoff from the road directly into tributaries and a brook that empties into Willoughby Lake.

I appreciate the Planning Commission reaching out to all residents, summer as well as year round, renters as well as property owners, for our opinions as it moves forward to update our Town Plan. I would like to stress the importance of holding well-publicized public hearings and meetings when issues such as development of the South end or corporations like ITW proposing to build speculative projects or ATV clubs want to open the roads.

With all the social media exposure that Willoughby has received recently it is certain that Westmore will be a target for more and more outside developers, corporations, etc. to increase their profits. Hearing Andy Burley state that almost every week he receives a call from a developer asking about zoning regulations sends shivers down my spine. I think of all of us in Westmore being stewards of this very precious scenic area, designated a National Natural Landmark for good reason, protected and treasured by past generations for us to enjoy. We need to do the same going forward. It would be a crime to allow Westmore to become industrialized, commercialized, and urbanized and to lose its unique natural beauty and rural character - the very reason that visitors come and most residents choose to live here. For that reason I am in favor of forward thinking planning for minimal growth, small commercial enterprises like a general store or two, restaurants like the Gap and Willoughvale, cottage industries, etc. and preserving Westmore's rural character as an agricultural and mixed year round/seasonal residential community.

Tom Slayton, editor of Vermont Life, eloquently articulated in its Winter 1995 issue, "the economic importance of landscape in Vermont is growing every day. In an increasingly competitive market for tourists, landscape is one of the unique things Vermont has to offer... If that landscape were lost, as some fear it may be, Vermont would lose not only its prime economic resource in the battle for tourists, it would lose a part of tourists, it would lose a part of its identity, and possibly its soul, as well." Almost 30 years later, with fewer and fewer places in Vermont unmarred by industrial structures, it is all the more critical that we in Westmore preserve the non-industrialized, irreplaceable natural character of its scenic landmarks like Willoughby and surrounding environs, the "soul" of our state of Vermont.

I believe that the current Town Plan does an excellent job of expressing this desire to preserve the beauty and tranquility of our community. Having been involved in the litigation surrounding the proposed ITW radio tower, it seems to me that the language used needs to be even more specific in a legal sense in order to not be misconstrued or twisted around as it has been by the ITW lawyers and also that zoning regulations may need to be updated and spelled out clearly.

Allow access for snowmobiles and atv on public roads to drive more revenue. These folks rents camps and spend money in the town. There would be no negative effects what so ever! Time to use our heads and stop catering to certain people.

The town should be thinking about how to manage quality of life issues with zoning and ordinances - noise, traffic speed, ambient lighting, etc. Encouraging more development, or



development that directly affects the quality of life of others in the community is a huge mistake. High density development (condominiums, resort like facilities) would not be an asset here in Westmore. Consider why people come to Westmore and Willoughby for the first time, and then return for generations. Don't allow corporate greed and smaller scale "investors" to profit from changing our landscape and culture. If folks want Winnepesaukee-type accommodations, amenities, restaurants, or entertainment, let them go to Winnepesaukee.

While guided growth is a fair concept, State agencies can not be trusted to have the best interests of Westmore in mind (i.e. putting a prison in Fox Hall). Avoid bringing national and international issues into town politics. Focus on local areas that need improvement. Keep drugs out of the community. Add food and ice cream trucks to North Beach for revenue.

The rural nature of our beautiful town must be protected. Business should be limited to the area around rt.. 5a. Quiet, back/dirt roads should be remain as such, with limited traffic and noise pollution.

I am.oposed to cell towers at either end of the lake

Two things:

- 1.We need to make sure the town plan still includes the encouragement of a safer/walker friendly/ biker friendly corridor through the center of town. Traffic needs to be calmed using strategic engineering measures.
2. I think we need to get ahead of those who want to exploit our resources by creating businesses that change the peaceful nature and beauty of the area. Before we say "yes" to our next "wedding/function barn", we need to create a system for evaluating the impact on the community and for determining if this business idea is in sync with what the community envisions for Westmore, VT eight years hence. We should have some sort of zoning laws for businesses and noise producing events.

It would be helpful, I think, to include a question in this survey that asks why the responder has chosen this area. It would be good to document the fact that most people live here for its quiet beauty and nature. The loons, not the wedding venues.

Once you develop away the land, it is lost forever.

Adopt a simple low cost mooring plan for lake willoughby

Discussion around making Westmore part of the NEK Choice School District. This would bring young families to the town for permanent residence.

I'd like to see both home based businesses and cottage industry as well as small scale local retail & services

It is a tourism economy and Westmore should embrace that inviting a town center with shops to encourage visitors. That includes preserving the trails, and clean water people are so fond of.

Crosswalks/pedestrian safety from Old 5A to the North Beach. Light pollution from lakefront properties. Get Northern Exposure open in some capacity.

I see future growth in Westmore and feel we should do everything we can to keep it in line with the natural beauty of our forests, our lake and our ponds and streams.

Please consider noise and light pollution a high priority.



The natural beauty of Lake Willoughby and the surrounding mountains must be of highest priority. Not one single tower of any kind should ever be allowed to destroy this view. The telephone poles, alone, are getting to be an eyesore with all the new lines and transformer boxes and added health concerns they bring. If the super wealthy are demanding more lines and connectivity then they should foot the bill to put the infrastructure underground.

Do not allow the cell tower fight it till the end

I believe we should put up a gate and charge for our beach use. Residents should be free. And someone needs to strictly enforce no dogs. Money can go to our roads. The Sheriff's department are never around and do not enforce speeders, vehicles parked in the road which is a safety hazard. Look at the the roads and burnout marks made at 1-2 am. Yes, I can hear them each time.

Regulate short term rentals (STR).

Thank you!

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