

L. PERRY SURVEY RESULTS

SURVEY CHAPTER : Comprehensive Plan Committee Report

In the interest of drafting a comprehensive plan that best represents the opinions and will of the people of Town of Perry, this plan is based on a broad representation of public participation and input.

The survey described in this chapter was mailed to every household in Perry as well as non-resident taxpayers. In an effort to encourage participation, those households where more than one adult lives were encouraged to make copies of the survey so each adult could participate. This was done on the honor system with the assumption that no one would complete more than one survey.

Surveys were returned by 132 people, the demographics of which do not reflect an accurate cross-section of Perry residents. Older people were vastly over-represented, with 88 respondents (69%) being over the age of 50, while just one respondent (0.76 %) was under the age of 30. It is also noteworthy that a full one-third (42) of the respondents were non-residents.

Given the unrepresentative nature of the survey respondents, the majority of the comprehensive plan committee feels that the survey is not an appropriate measure to use as the sole factor upon which to base the goals of the comprehensive plan. Rather it is viewed as providing one component of gauging public opinion.

As we consider the views of those who participated in the survey, we believe that recent municipal elections with four to five times the number of residents participating must be given even greater weight. The Town of Perry has had several high turnout elections in recent years and the voters have spoken on important issues facing the community.

In fact, in the three most recent elections for Selectman, in which the candidates' positions on development issues were a central issue, the citizens of Perry voted for the pro-development candidate each time.

2006		2007		2008	
<i>Theriault</i>	<i>Turner</i>	<i>Adams</i>	<i>Frost</i>	<i>Guisinger</i>	<i>Spinney</i>
151	178	223	210	160	182
45.90%	54.10%	51.50%	48.50%	46.78%	53.22%

On the specific issue of LNG development, the town is clearly divided with a majority of voters supporting LNG-related ballot issues in three of four referendum questions.

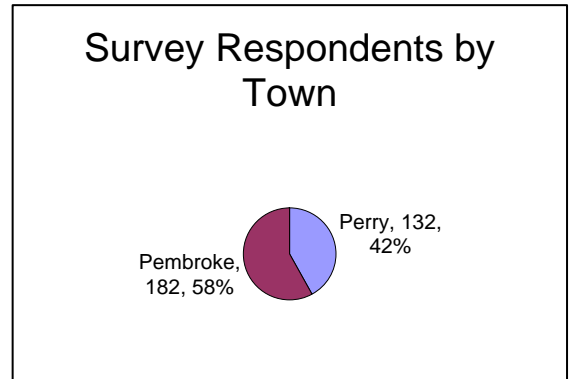
2005		2006		2007		2007	
<u>Gleason Cove Proposal</u>		<u>Quoddy Bay Funds</u>		<u>Quoddy Bay Financial Framework</u>		<u>Additional Negotiation Committee</u>	
<i>NO</i>	<i>YES</i>	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
279	214	167	238	211	229	236	205
56.59%	43.41%	41.23%	58.77%	47.95%	52.05%	53.51%	46.49%
<i>Sought approval for LNG development on annexed tribal land</i>		<i>Sought approval to accept funds from QB LNG to pay for legal fees related to project</i>		<i>Sought approval for financial agreement negotiated by the Selectman</i>		<i>Sought to re-open negotiations with a larger group of participants</i>	
<i>Note: The 2006 and 2007 ballot questions related to the new Quoddy Bay LNG project with an LNG pier on Pleasant Point land and tanks proposed for Perry land.</i>							

Further calling into question the accuracy of the survey is the fact that an overwhelming 74% (98) of the respondents indicated support for the sharing of administrative services with neighboring towns. Yet, in the 2008 municipal election, Perry voters rejected such a proposal to share services with Pembroke and Charlotte that was supported by Selectmen Adams, Guisinger and Turner. Likewise, 62% (82) survey respondents indicated support for school district consolidation yet 266 of the 323 Perry residents (82%) voting in November 2007 signed petitions in opposition to the consolidation law.

In addition to the survey and election results, members of the comprehensive plan committee brought to the table our individual and collective life experiences. When appointing the committee, then-Selectmen Adams, Guisinger and Turner sought volunteers and jointly made appointments based on their recognition that each member would bring something positive to the process as small business owners, civic leaders, a school board member, parents, retirees, long-time residents and newcomers.

Throughout the process, the majority of the comprehensive plan committee sought to reach agreement on how to best approach those issues where the survey results and actual election results are in conflict. Our goal as a committee was to create a working document that accurately reflects the views of a majority of voters so that the plan can be approved and we can move forward as a community.

A combined survey that was mailed to all residents and non-residents of Perry and Pembroke in July-August of 2007 is reproduced in Appendix A. There were 581 surveys mailed to all resident households and non-resident property owners. Surveys were mailed back to the WCCOG office, or dropped off at Johnsons Store in Pembroke or at the Perry Farmers Union in Perry. A total of 132 surveys were returned, a 23% response rate. The survey included an incentive for the chance to win \$100 gift certificate at a local vendor of the winner's choice for all completely filled out survey forms.

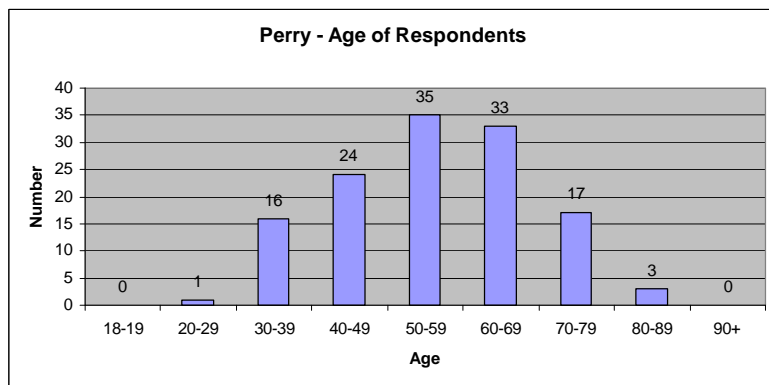
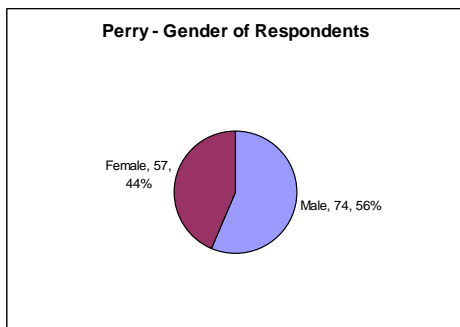


There were many responses to the four open ended questions at the end of the survey as well as other written comments throughout the survey. All of the written responses are reproduced in Appendix A. Summaries of some of the written comments are noted with the charted data here and throughout the document as the issues they address are raised. The raw data is available at the town office and graphical summaries of the responses are provided here.

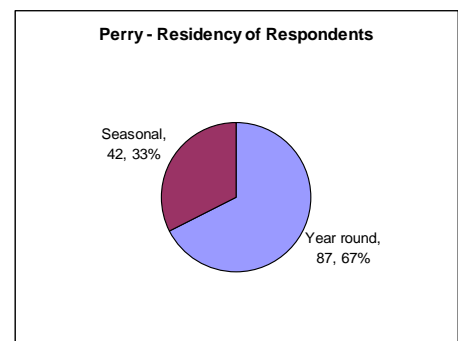
SURVEY RESULTS

A. General

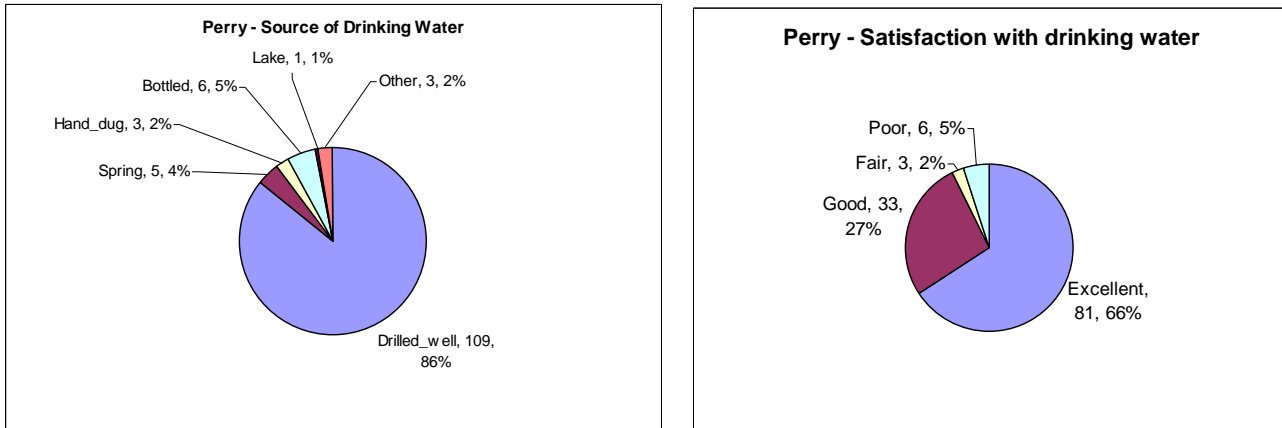
The cross section of survey respondents reflects a greater proportion of men than exist in the general population and is somewhat more heavily weighted to the opinions of those over 50 years of age.



Respondents have lived in Perry all or most of their lives with an average length of residency of 26.2 years for year round residents and 19.5 years for seasonal residents.



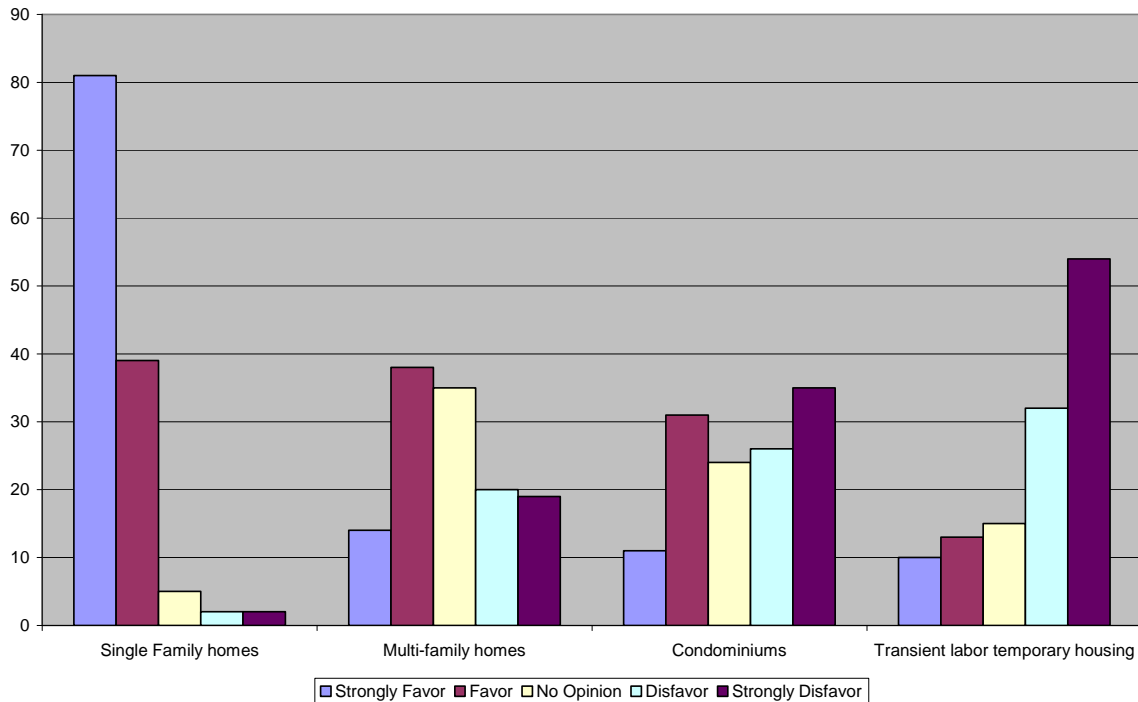
The majority of respondents described their water source as a drilled well. Satisfaction with water is generally very good.



B. Housing, Development and Preservation

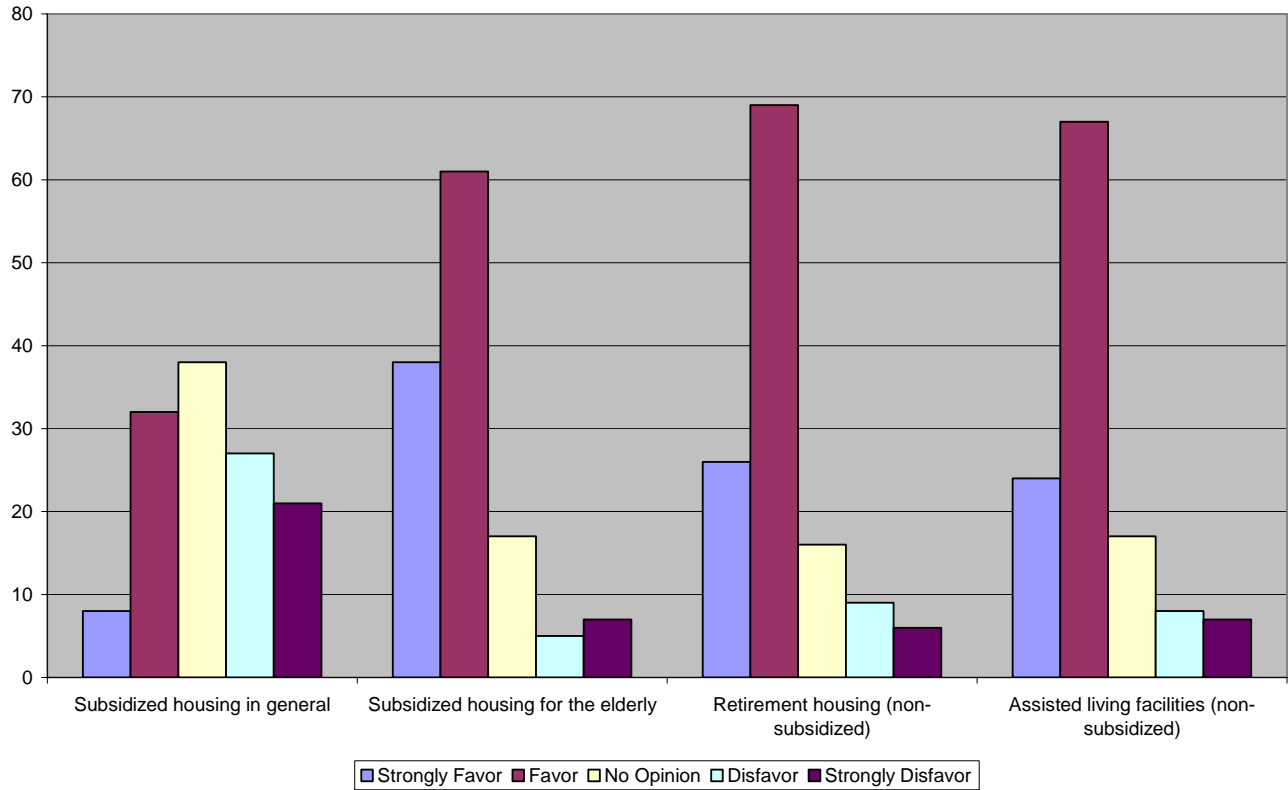
As in many Maine communities, Perry respondents strongly support single-family housing with less support for multi-family units or condominiums. Respondents also disfavor transient labor temporary housing.

Perry opinions on type of housing

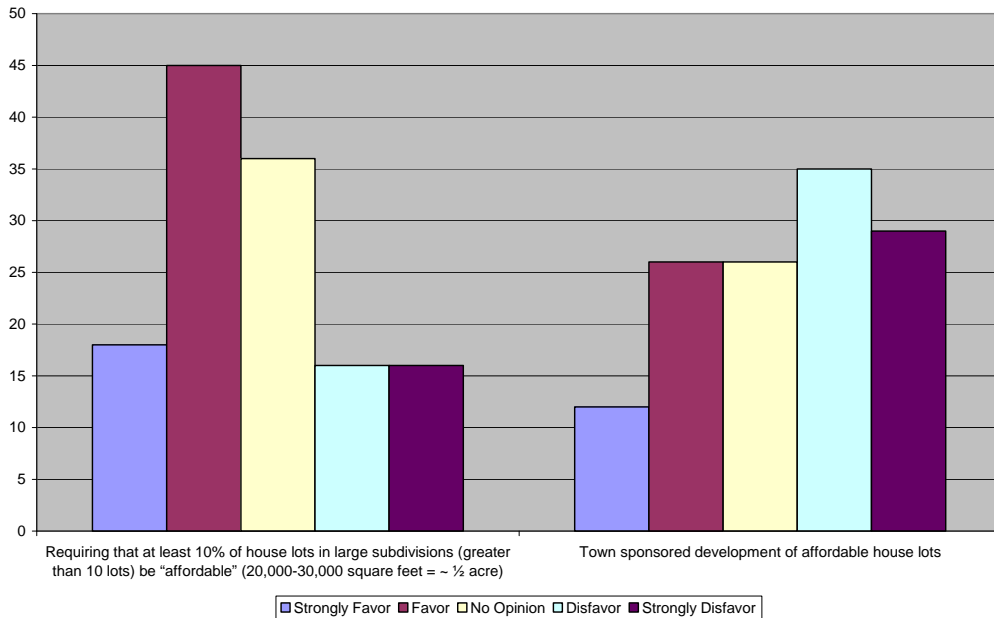


There is relatively strong support for retirement housing, assisted living facilities and subsidized housing for the elderly but less support for subsidized housing in general.

Perry opinions on subsidized housing



Perry opinions on affordable housing options



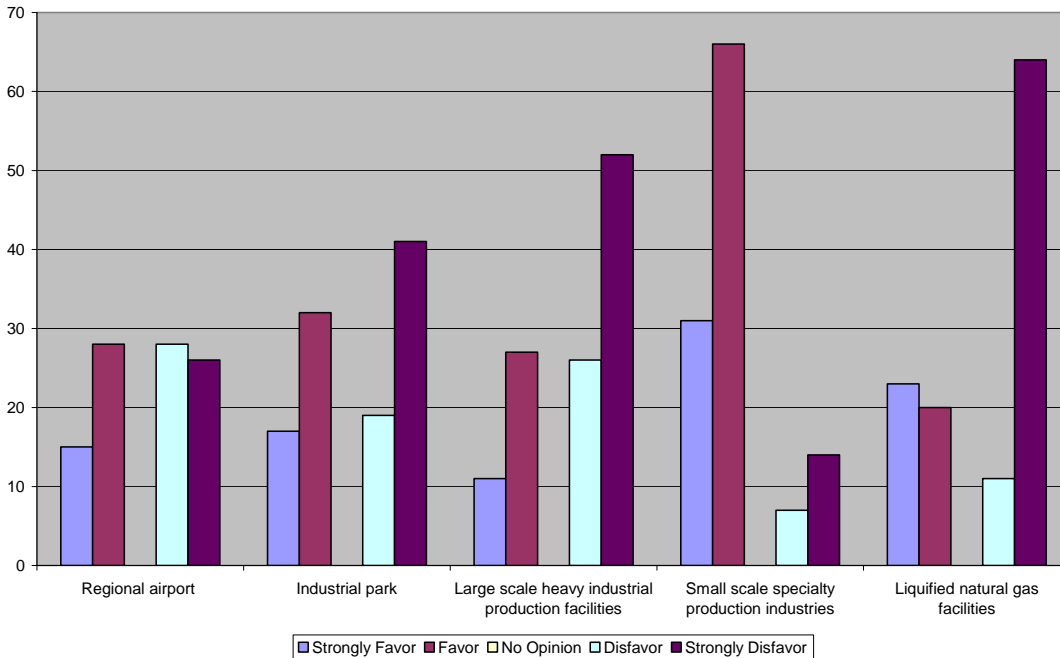
Opinions were generally favorable towards requirements that "affordable (small)" lots be required in large subdivisions but were less favorable toward town sponsored development of affordable house lots.

Development

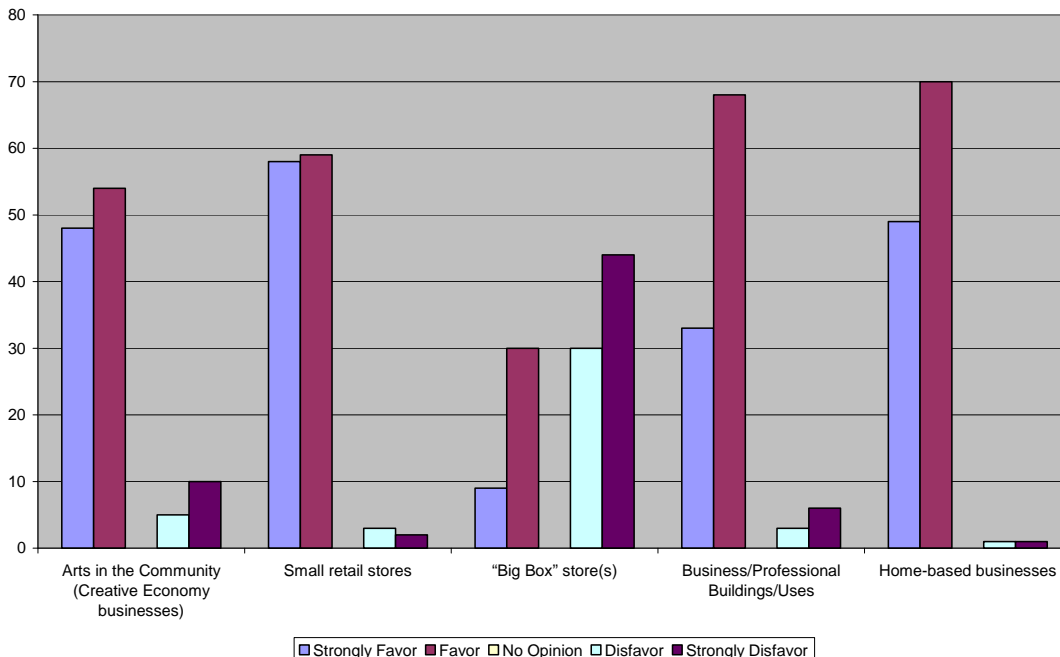
A wide variety of questions sought input on development types and opportunities. There were no questions on development types for which respondents had no opinion. Support of a regional airport

was mixed presumably because no specific site is currently proposed. Support was clearer for small scale specialty production than for large scale industrial facilities or an industrial park. Opinions on liquefied natural gas facilities were polarized with many expressing strong disfavor.

Perry opinions on development

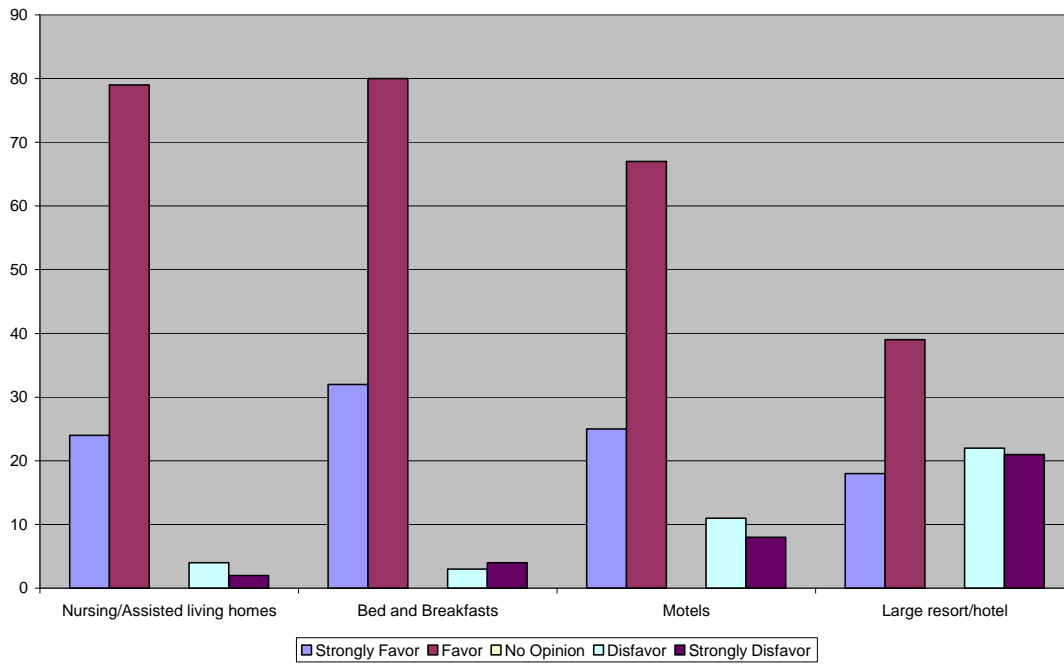


Perry opinions on development



Home based businesses were especially supported as were providing an opportunity for some retail and professional business uses. Likewise small retail and creative economy businesses favored. "big box" stores were not favored by most respondents.

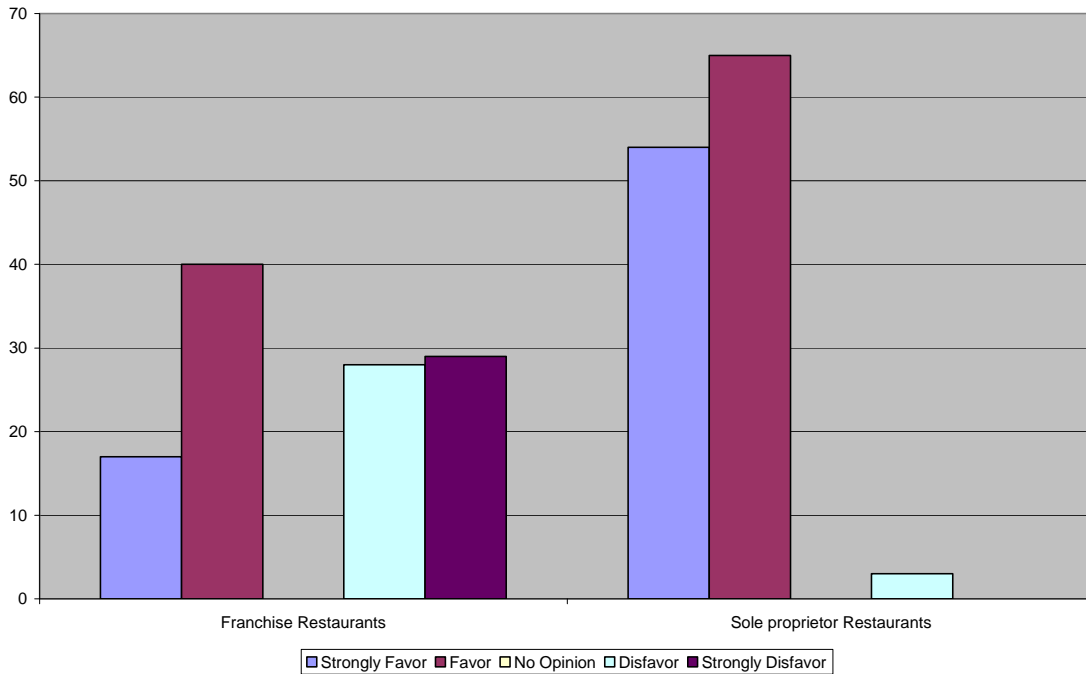
Perry opinions on multi-unit development



Perry respondents favor multi-unit housing for assisted living and visitors but have mixed opinions on a large scale operation like a resort or hotel.

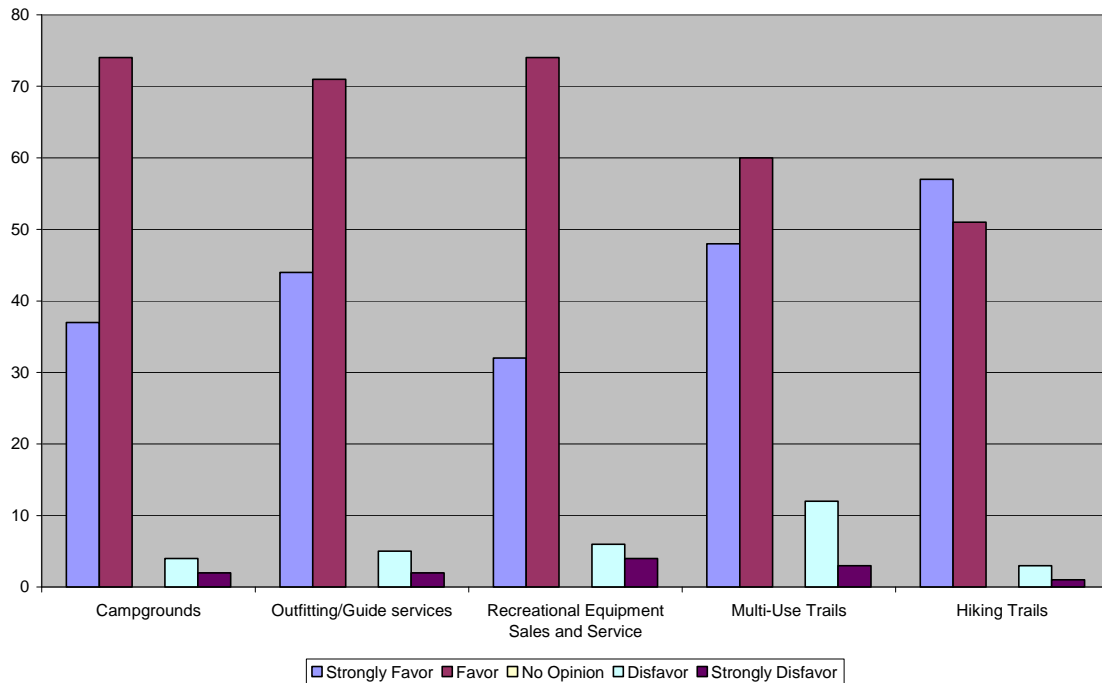
Respondents favor sole proprietor restaurants over franchise operations.

Perry opinions on restaurants



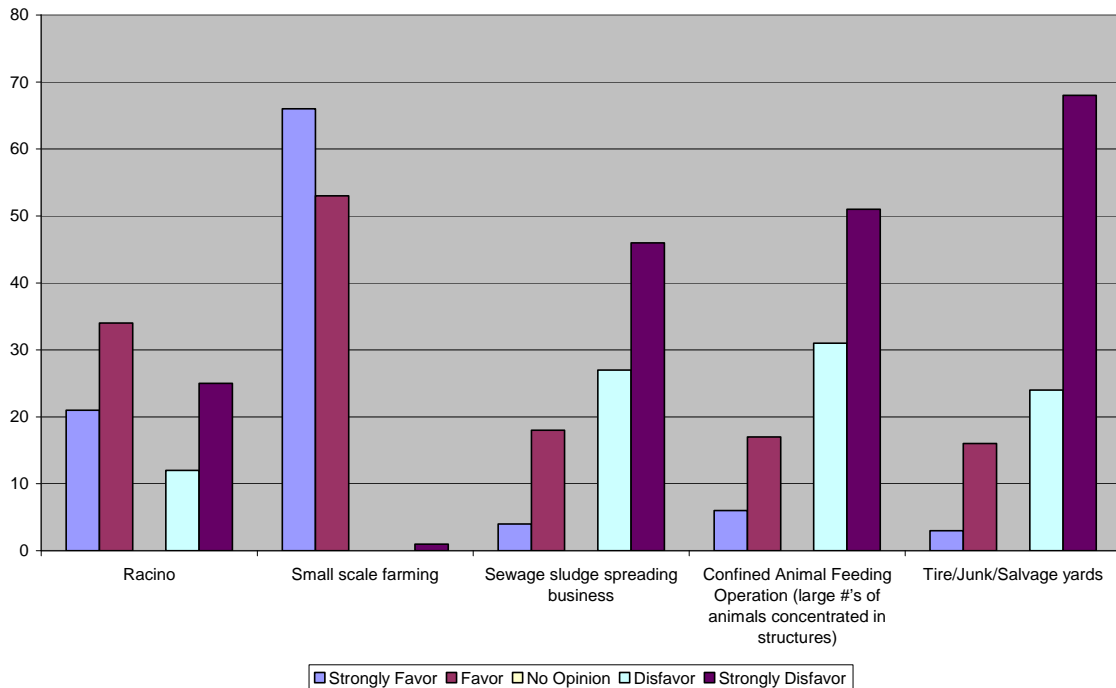
Opinions on outdoor recreation business development were consistently favorable.

Perry opinions on outdoor recreation businesses



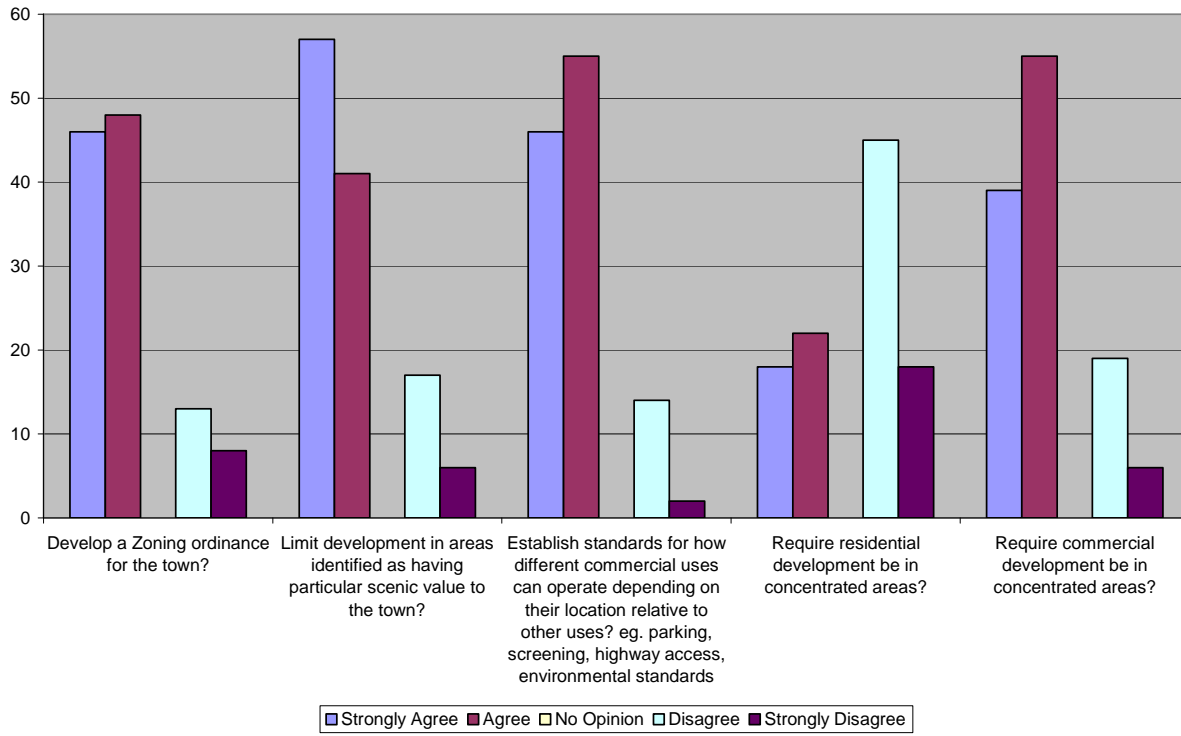
Opinions on a racino were mixed, small farming was strongly supported while more intensive and often unsightly operations were strongly disfavored.

Perry opinions on development



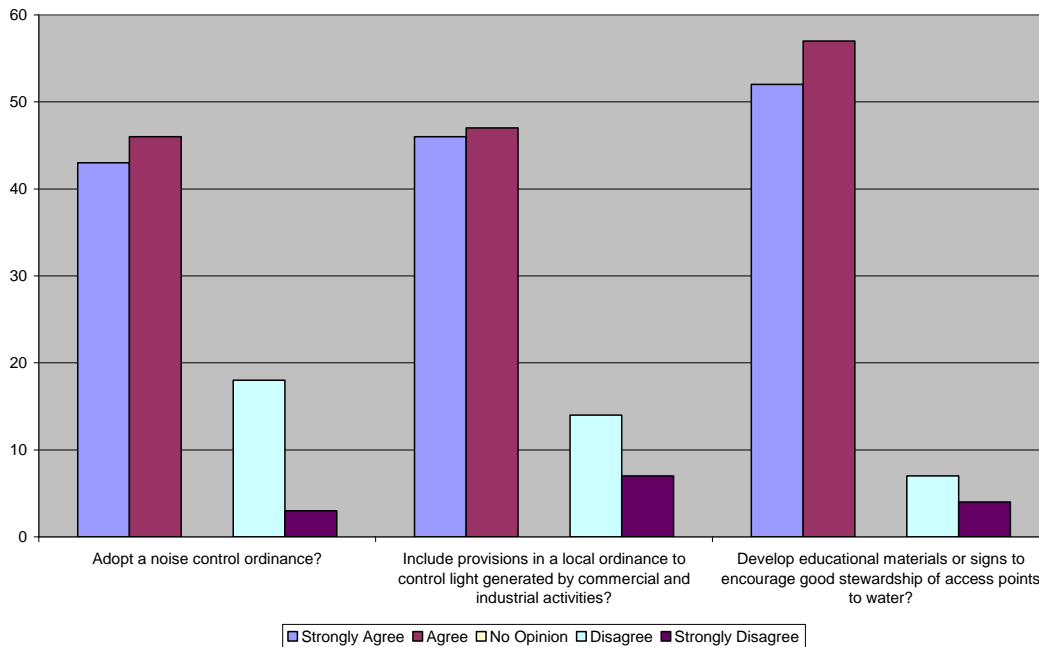
Regulation

Perry opinions on development controls



Opinions on a variety of development controls in Perry were consistently favorable except a requirement that residential development directed to concentrated areas.

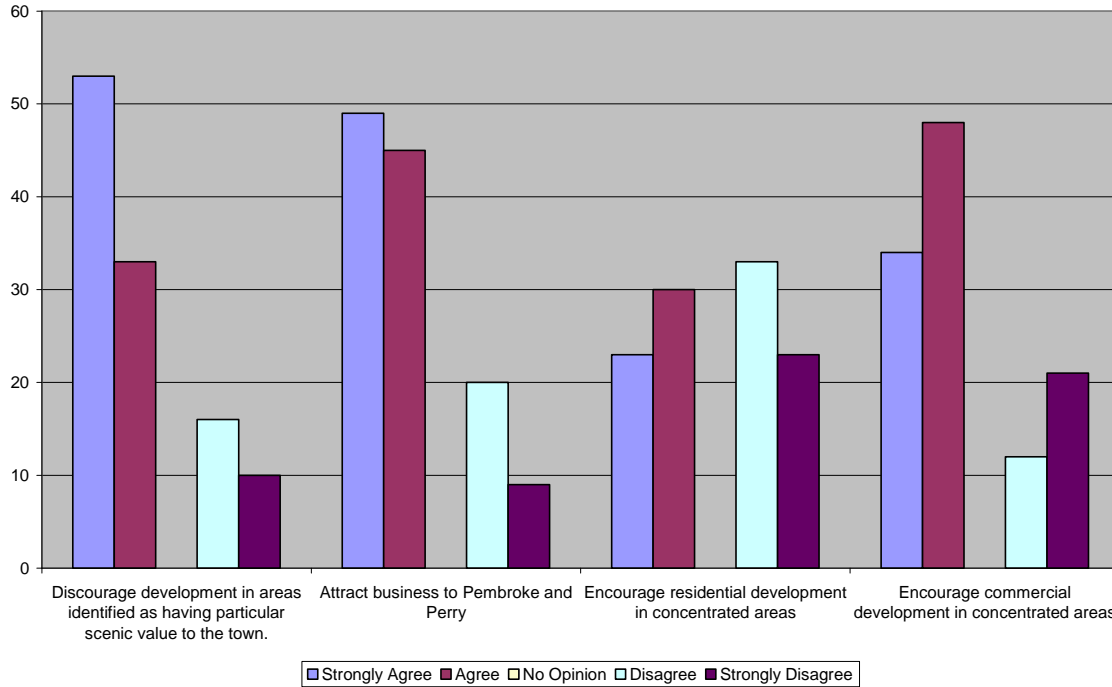
Perry opinions on regulations



Incentives

Perry respondents were more favorable toward the use of incentives rather than regulations to direct development in concentrated areas. Opinions were still mixed though less strongly unfavorable on the use of incentives (rather than regulation) to concentrate residential development.

Perry opinions on offering tax and other incentives to...

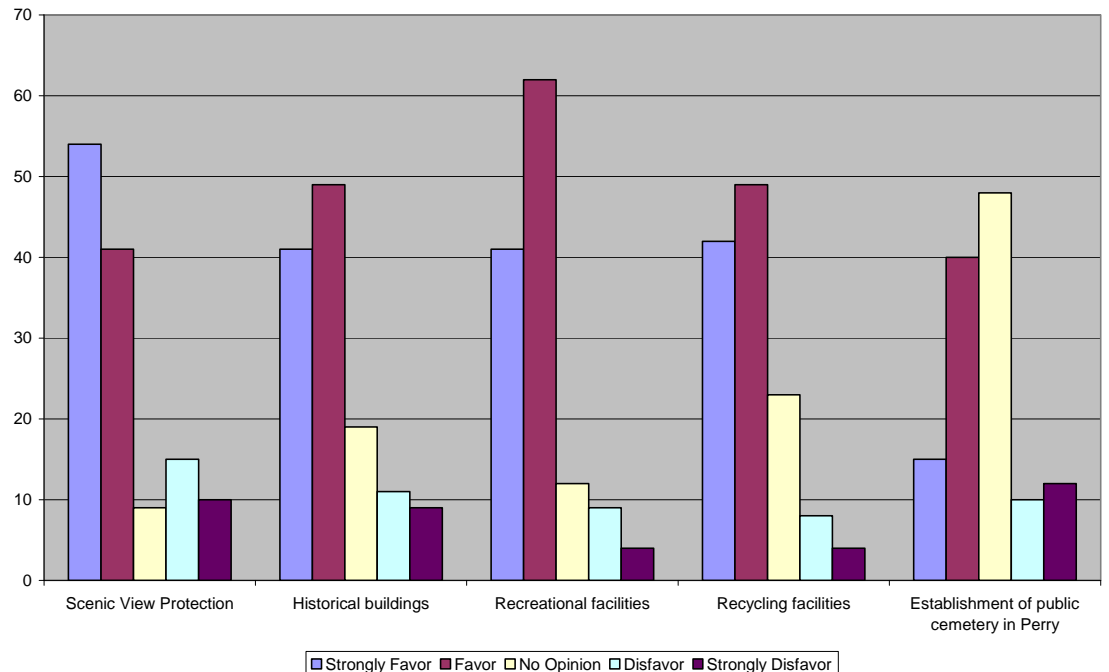


Public Investments

The next set of survey questions sought to understand how much taxpayers are prepared to spend or invest in their preservation priorities and in community services.

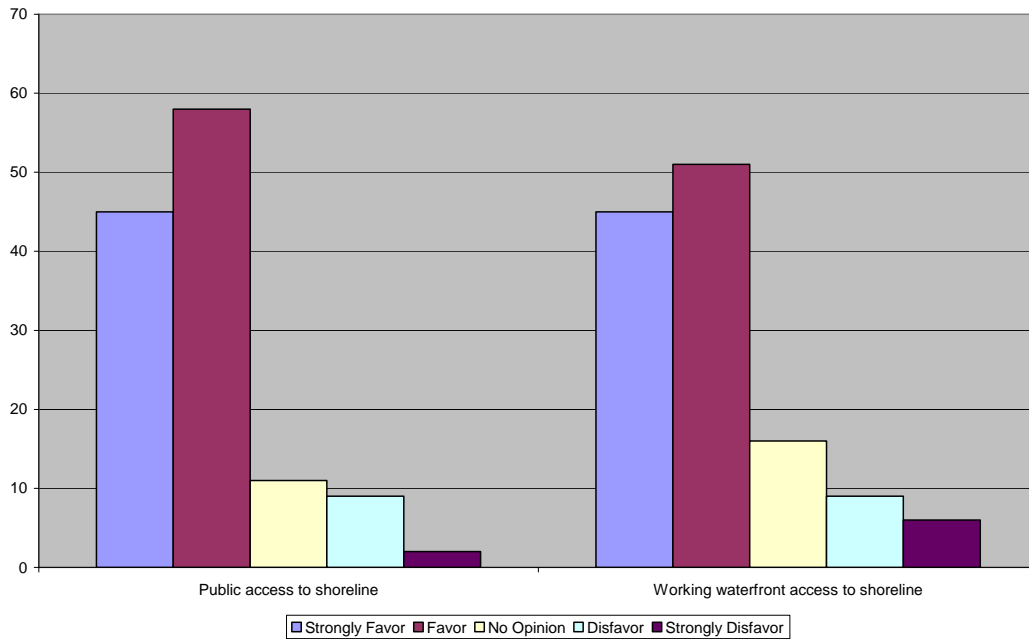
Respondents were asked how much they favored/disfavored investment in each item and then to mark an X beside their highest priorities.

Perry Opinions on Investments in..



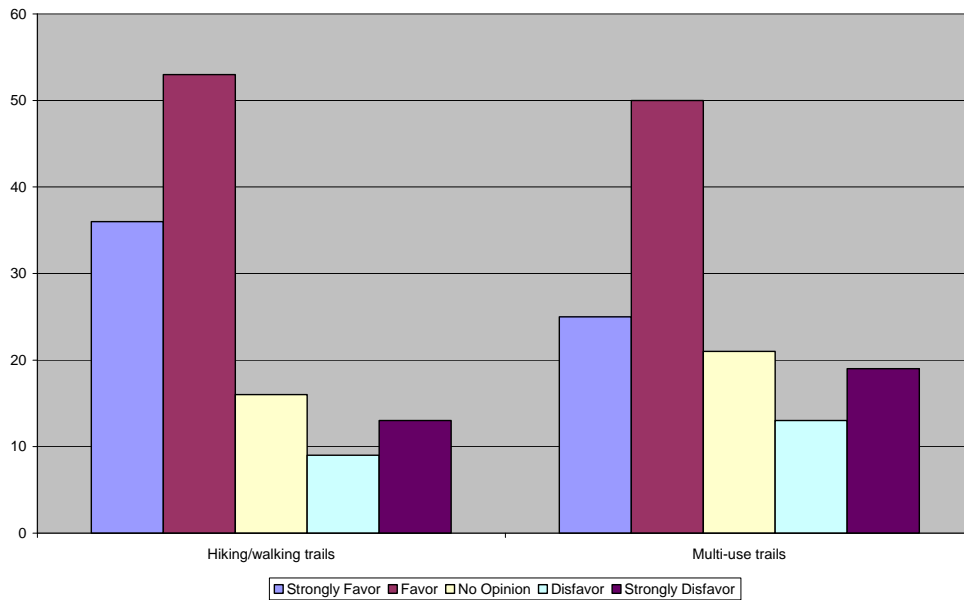
Unfortunately very few respondents “played along” with using an “X” to make choices on their priorities so there is insufficient data to draw any conclusions on respondent priorities.

Perry Opinions on Public Access Investments



One way to gauge relative priority is to look at the types of investments that had many favorable responses as well as very little “no opinion” responses.

Perry Opinions on Investments in Trails

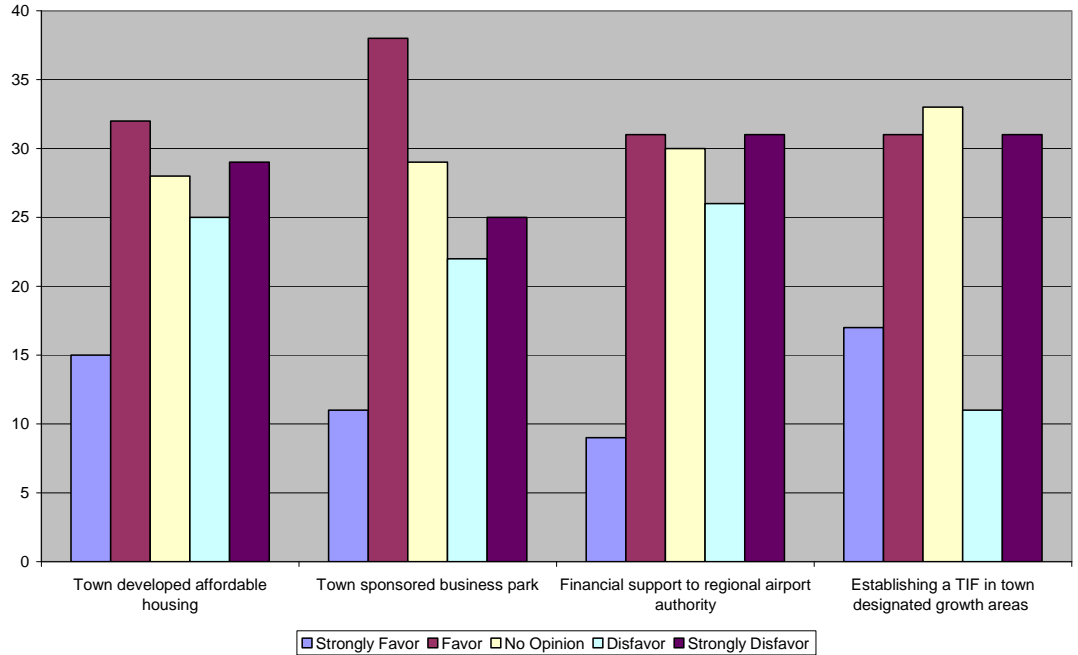


This suggests that recreational facilities, including trails, scenic view protection, historical buildings, and public access to water rank among the highest priorities for public investment.

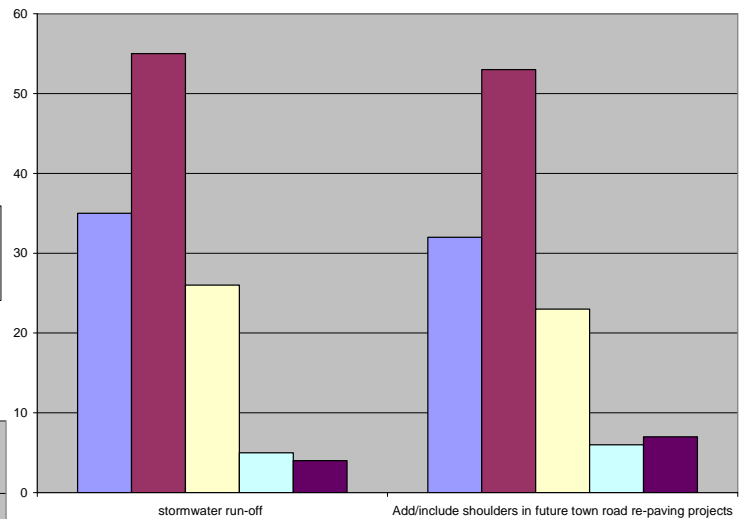
Perry Opinions on Town Investments

Opinions about town investments to support the private sector were more mixed. Some may not understand what a TIF district involves while others, as reflected in the written comments, believe it is proposed to support LNG development.

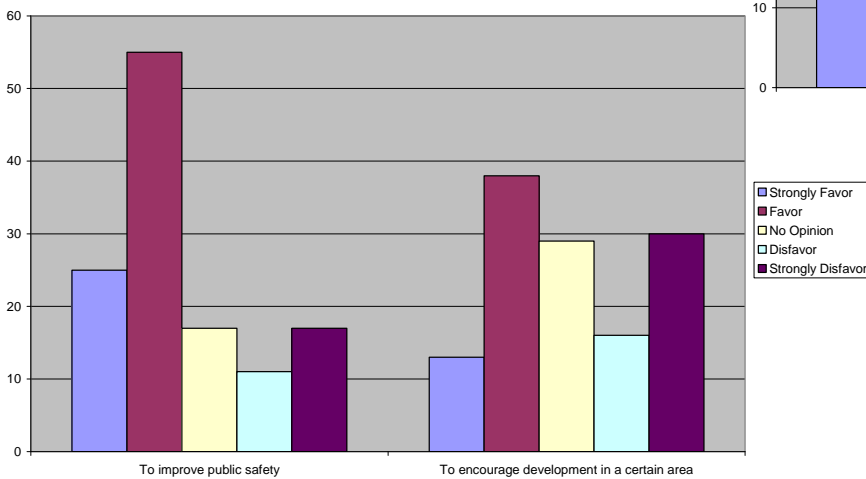
The survey also asked about the types of investments the town should make on its roads and under what conditions the town should consider take-over of private roads. Town investments to add shoulders and address stormwater runoff were supported. Improving public safety on private roads was less clearly supported and encouraging development in certain areas produced a very mixed response.



Perry Opinions on Investments in Road Maintenance/Improvements



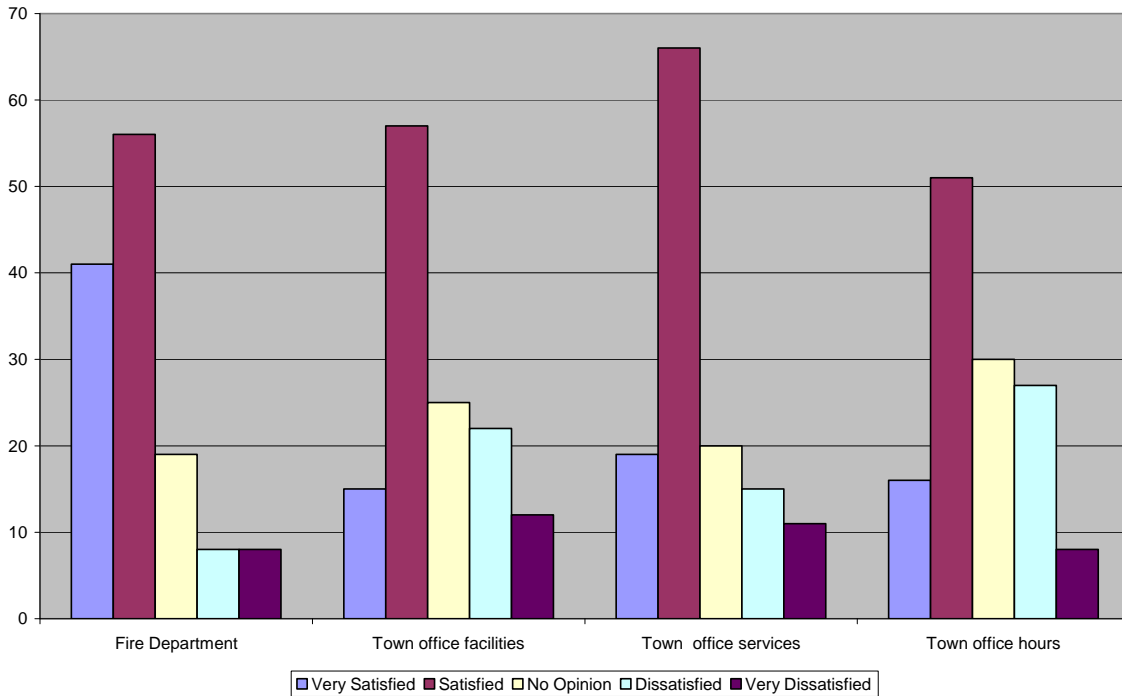
Perry Opinions on Conditions when the town should consider takeover of private roads.



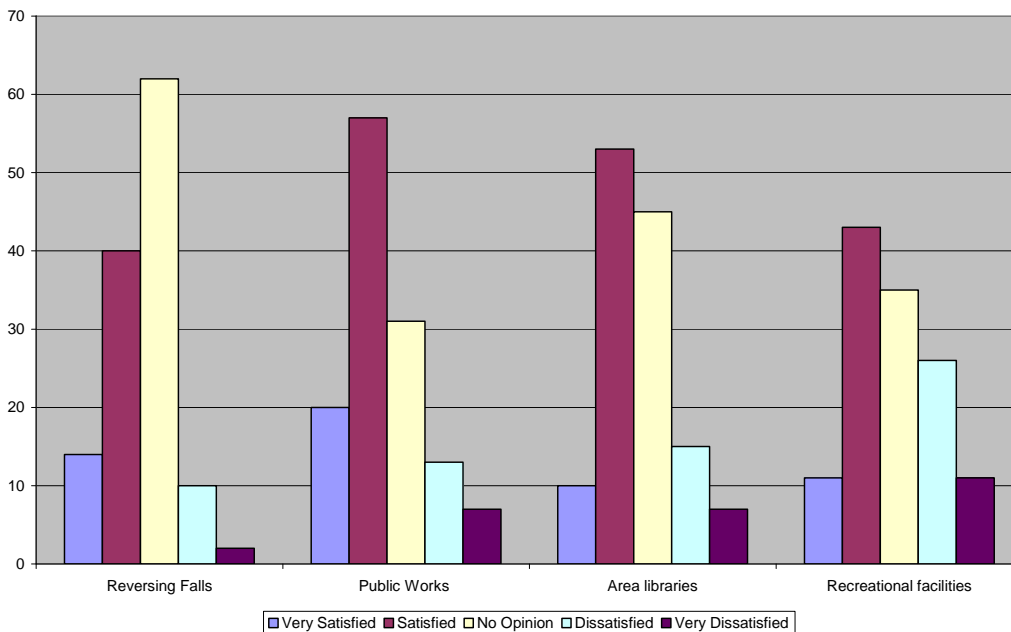
C. Facilities and Services

Respondents were generally satisfied with town services with the greatest dissatisfaction expressed about town office hours.

Perry Satisfaction with Town Services



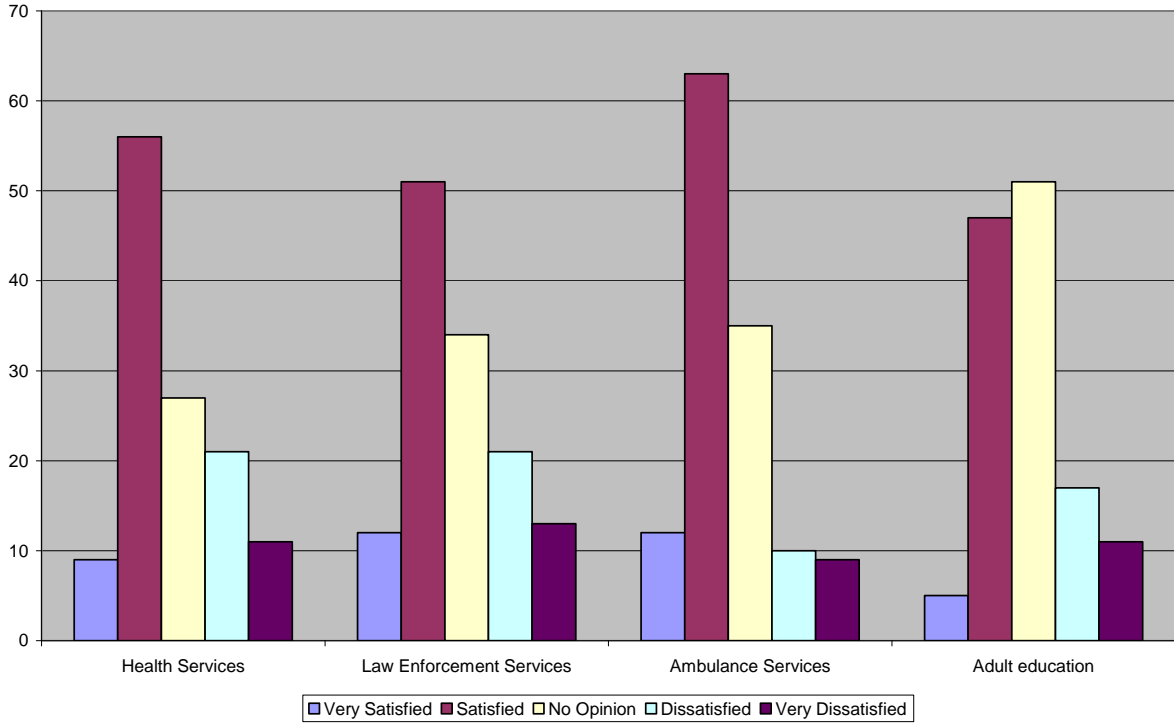
Perry Satisfaction with Local Services



Respondents are also generally satisfied with community services or had no opinion. Many expressed some dissatisfaction with recreational facilities and with Reversing Falls. This is consistent with the priorities many placed on the need for town investment in recreational facilities.

Respondents are also generally satisfied with other regionally delivered services or had no opinion about them.

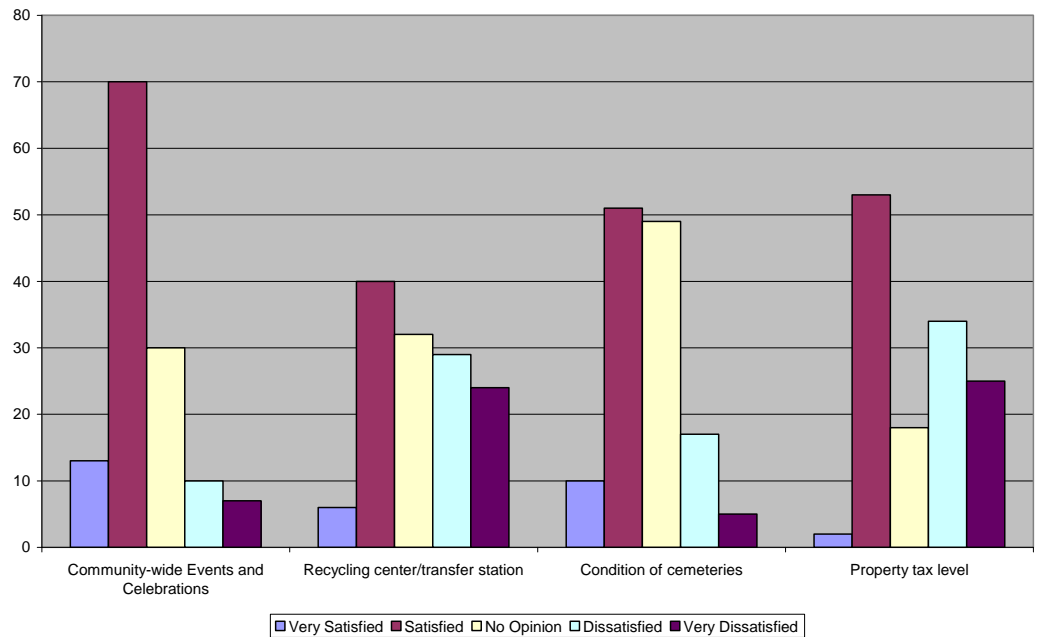
Perry Satisfaction with Regional Services



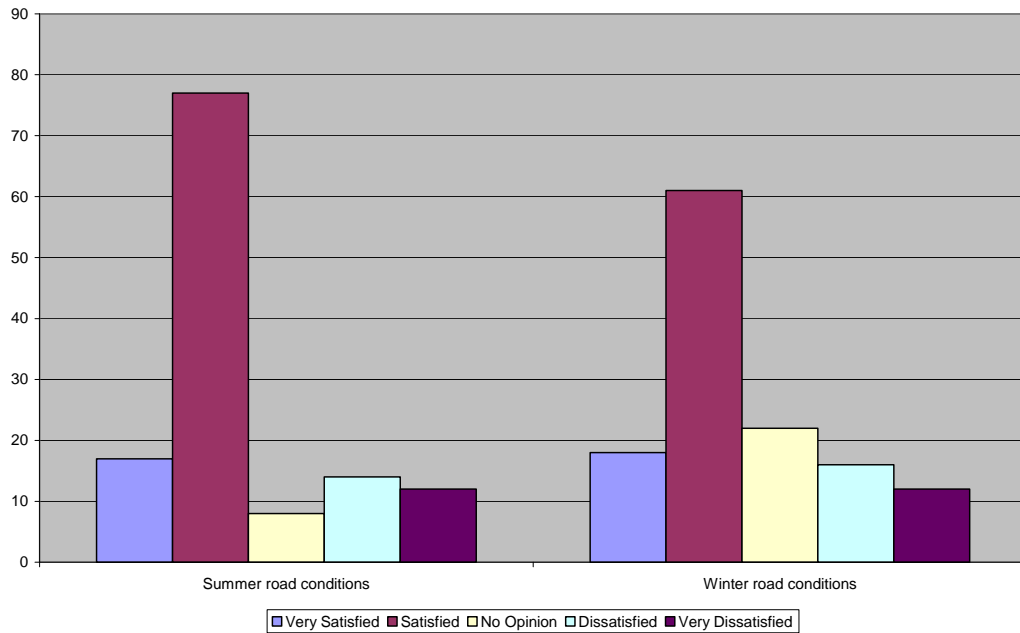
Perry Satisfaction with Services

Many are satisfied with community events and the condition of cemeteries but there is relatively high dissatisfaction with recycling opportunities and the property tax level.

Most are also satisfied with both summer and winter road conditions – see next page.



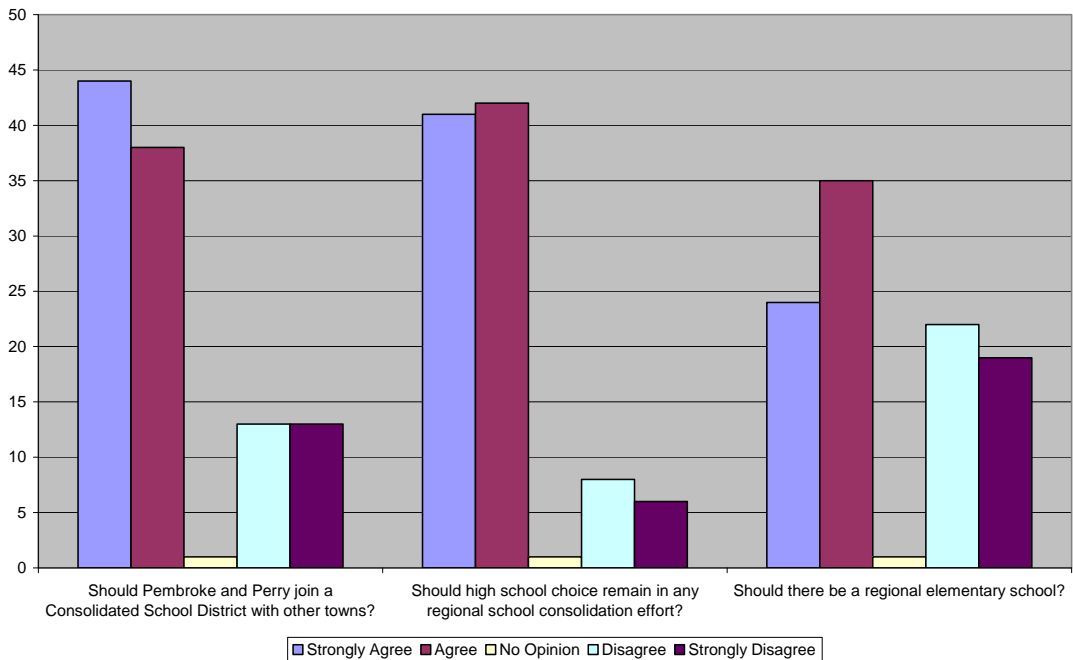
Perry Satisfaction with Roads



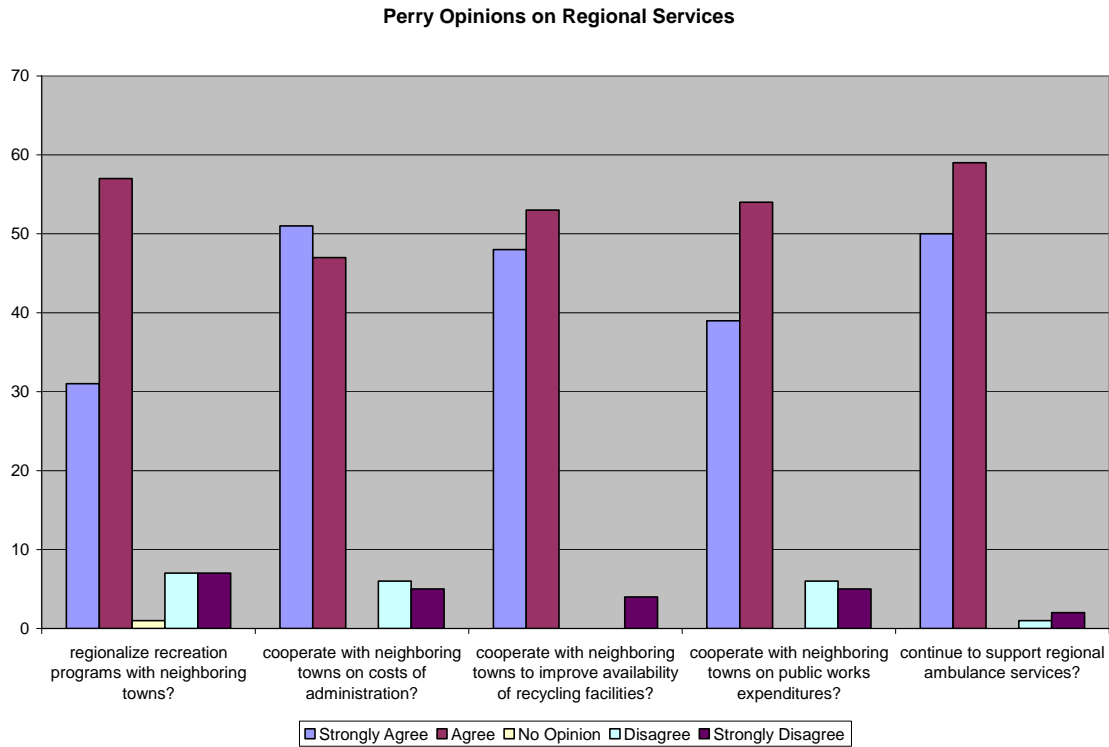
Regionalization of Services

Opinions on school regionalization were generally positive and both towns are now engaged in the state-mandated consolidation of administrative units. Opinions on a regional elementary school are polarized.

Perry Opinions on Regional School Issues



Respondents generally favor regionalization (or continuance of existing regional coordination) on other issues.



SUMMARY

The survey asked some basic demographic questions to establish how closely respondents reflected the population as a whole. We found that survey respondents reflect a greater proportion of men than exist in the general population and are more heavily weighted to the opinions of those over 50 years of age. Respondents have lived in Perry all or most of their lives with an average length of residency of 26.2 years for year round residents and 19.5 years for seasonal residents.

As in many Maine communities, Perry respondents strongly support single-family housing with less support for multi-family units or condominiums. Respondents also disfavor transient labor temporary housing. There is relatively strong support for retirement housing, assisted living facilities and subsidized housing for the elderly but less support for subsidized housing in general. Opinions were generally favorable towards requirements that “affordable” (small) lots be required in large subdivisions but were less favorable toward town sponsored development of affordable house lots.

A wide variety of questions sought input on development types and opportunities. There were no questions on development types for which respondents had no opinion. Support of a regional airport was mixed presumably because no specific site is currently proposed. Support was clearer for small scale specialty production than for large scale industrial facilities or an industrial park. Opinions on liquefied natural gas facilities were polarized with many expressing strong disfavor.

Perry respondents favor multi-unit housing for assisted living and visitors (tourists) but have mixed opinions on a large scale operation like a resort or hotel. Even though zoning controls can only regulate

use (and not ownership) of development proposals, respondents favor sole proprietor restaurants over franchise operations.

Opinions on outdoor recreation business development were consistently favorable. Opinions on a racino were mixed, small farming was strongly supported while more intensive and often unsightly operations were strongly disfavored.

Opinions on a variety of development controls (develop a zoning ordinance, limiting development in areas having particular scenic significance, establishing standards for commercial development depending on its location relative to other uses) in Perry were consistently favorable except a requirement that residential development directed to concentrated areas. Perry respondents were more favorable toward the use of incentives rather than regulations to direct development in concentrated areas. Opinions were still mixed though less strongly unfavorable on the use of incentives (rather than regulation) to concentrate residential development.

The next set of survey questions sought to understand how much taxpayers are prepared to spend or invest in their preservation priorities and in community services. Respondents were asked how much they favored/disfavored investment in each item and then to mark an X beside their highest priorities. Perhaps because of the survey design, very few respondents made choices on their priorities so there is insufficient data to draw any conclusions on respondent priorities.

An alternative way to gauge relative priority is to examine those types of investments with many favorable responses and very little “no opinion” responses. This suggests that recreational facilities, including trails, scenic view protection, historical buildings, and public access to water rank among the highest priorities for public investment in Perry. Opinions about town investments to support the private sector were more mixed. Some may not understand what a TIF district involves while others, as reflected in the written comments, believe it is proposed to support LNG development.

The survey also asked about the types of investments the town should make on its roads and under what conditions the town should consider take-over of private roads. Town investments to add shoulders and address stormwater runoff were supported. Improving public safety on private roads was less clearly supported and encouraging development in certain areas produced a very mixed response.

Respondents were generally satisfied with town services with the greatest dissatisfaction expressed about town office hours. Respondents are also generally satisfied with community services or had no opinion. Many expressed some dissatisfaction with recreational facilities and with Reversing Falls. This is consistent with the priorities many placed on the need for town investment in recreational facilities. Respondents are also generally satisfied with other regionally delivered services or had no opinion about them.

Many are satisfied with community events and the condition of cemeteries but there is relatively high dissatisfaction with recycling opportunities and the property tax level. Most are also satisfied with both summer and winter road conditions. Opinions on school regionalization were generally positive and both towns are now engaged in the state-mandated consolidation of administrative units. Opinions on a regional elementary school are polarized while respondents generally favor regionalization (or continuance of existing regional coordination) on other issues.