

DILLON
CONSULTING

Attachment #7 - Engagement Summary

TOWN OF WHITBY Official Plan Review

Engagement Summary #1

Final
August 2024



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1.0 Introduction

The Town of Whitby is undertaking its five-year Official Plan Review, which will help to set policies that manage how Whitby should grow between now and 2051. The review is building on the 2018 Official Plan, and will focus on four key project areas:

- Focus Area #1: Increasing the housing supply in the Whitby GO Protected Major Transit Station Area
- Focus Area #2: Increasing the housing supply in other Strategic Growth Areas, Nodes and Corridors including along major transit routes, In addition to the Whitby GO Protected Major Transit Station Area, these areas include:
 - Brock/Taunton Regional Centre
 - Dundas East Urban Central Area
 - Rossland/Garden Urban Central Area
 - Dundas Rapid Transit Corridor & Regional Corridors
- Focus Area #3: Planning for more homes and jobs in the new Brooklin Urban Expansion Area
- Focus Area #4: General Official Plan updates, as required by Provincial legislation and policy, and the newly adopted Region of Durham Official Plan – Envision Durham

Community engagement and outreach is a key part of the Official Plan Review, and continued opportunities for community engagement will be provided throughout the process.

Figure 1-1 shows the four Community Open Houses and two Statutory Public Meetings scheduled during the project. This summary provides an overview of the first three open houses and the first online survey, all held between May and July 2024, as follows:

- The first Open House was held at Whitby Town Hall on May 29th, 2024, as a Special Meeting of Council to launch the engagement process and share key information on the project process. The event included a drop-in from 6:30 to 7:00pm with a set of panel boards presenting the overall project approach and key topics (also posted on the Connect Whitby project page). The Special Meeting of Council started at 7:00pm and was live streamed to the Town’s YouTube page. Whitby Councillors along with members of the public attended the session in-person, with delegations from three attendees sharing their input on the process.
- The second Open House was held on June 25th, 2024, from 6pm-8pm at the Brooklin Community Centre and Library on Focus Area #3, relating to the opportunities to plan for growth in the expansion areas around Brooklin. Approximately 15 people attended the session. SGL Planning and Design delivered a presentation on the opportunities for how the expansion areas could be planned, and attendees had the opportunity to give their feedback on where the main land types of land uses and community facilities including schools and parks could be located.
- The third Open House was held on June 26th, 2024, from 6pm-8pm at the Heydenshore Pavilion, exploring Focus Area #1 and #2 relating to planning for growth around the Whitby GO Transit Station and other Strategic Growth Areas, Nodes and Corridors in the town. A total of approximately 40 people attended the session. SGL Planning and Design along with Dillon Consulting delivered a presentation, after which participants were invited to circulate to various stations set up in the room to participate in facilitated discussions on opportunities to grow in the different assigned areas in Whitby.
- An online survey on the Connect Whitby page was also made available from June 2nd to July 20th to invite input on general issues that matter to Whitby residents in the planning for the Town today and into 2051.

Figure 1-1 Whitby Official Plan Review – Project Process



The recorded presentations and materials from the Open Houses were posted on the Connect Whitby page. Feedback from the Open Houses and Survey will be used to inform the concept plans for the Brooklin expansion areas and the Whitby Major Transit Station Area, and growth and development policies for the Strategic Growth Areas, Nodes and Corridors.





2.0 What We Heard Overview

The following sections present a consolidated and themed summary of the feedback heard through Online Survey #1 as well as the first three Open Houses, as described in Section 1.

2.1 Whitby GO Protected Major Transit Station Area

The workshop exercise on the Whitby Protected Major Transit Station Area that was held as part of Open House #3 included a facilitated discussion on opportunities to redevelop surface parking areas along with where and how to integrate different types of land uses. The feedback received is summarized below.

Built form types, heights, and transitions

- Consider limiting heights in this area.
- Consider limiting high-rise development in Port Whitby to align with existing residential development and manage traffic impacts.
- Consider benefits of more intensification.
- Provide more access to a range of housing types and opportunities for more people to enjoy living in Port Whitby and close to the GO Station.

Types of land uses

- Focus larger scale mixed uses along main street corridors.
 - Support more food and grocery shopping opportunities in neighbourhoods and closer to residential areas and offer more small-scale retail and commercial areas that are integrated and walkable in residential areas.
 - Preserve the waterfront and limit new development in this area.
-

- Provide more opportunities for affordable housing close to the GO Station.
- Plan for more commercial and employment areas to support the growing population.



Transportation and transit

- Improve traffic flow along Victoria Street and plan for improved mobility in this area, including rapid bus transit along this route.
- Maintain multi-storey parking and plan for adequate parking and other modes to reach the GO Station including cycling and local transit.
- Consider a pedestrian bridge over Victoria Street.
- Provide more secure bicycle parking at the GO Station.

Green and open spaces

- Maintain green space adjacent to the Major Transit Station area.
- Design for more community gathering spaces and smaller spaces to encourage neighbours to gather.
- Integrate sustainable design practices and consider climate change and flooding.

2.2 Growing in Whitby – Strategic Growth Areas, Nodes and Corridors

The workshop exercise held as part of Open House #3 explored the opportunities to develop or redevelop areas within the identified growth areas within Whitby (in addition to the Whitby GO Protected Major Transit Station Area). These areas are identified in Envision Durham, and/or in the current Whitby Official Plan. The feedback received is summarized below.



Built form types, heights, and transitions

- Consider more mid-rise density options like four to six storey mixed use buildings in areas like the Brock/Taunton Regional Centre in transition areas adjacent to existing residential neighbourhoods.
- Focus taller buildings along key corridors like Brock Street South.

Types of land uses

- Plan for new mixed-use development in the growth areas like Rossland/Garden to be walkable with more multi-use paths to support mobility that is not car dependent.
- Provide more opportunities for mid-rise mixed-use buildings and reduce single storey commercial and big box stores.
- Maintain neighbourhood commercial areas like smaller shopping plazas that provide convenient retail opportunities for residents.

Transportation and transit

- Provide more accessible and secure bicycle parking along commercial and mixed-use corridors.
 - Improve transit connectivity between growing neighbourhoods and hubs in the town.
-

Rossland Garden Urban Central Area

If the existing plaza and other uses were to redevelop, how would you like to see transition between permitted taller buildings on this site to lower buildings further north and west?

If the existing plaza were to redevelop, what do you think is appropriate for this site?
Just keep our plazas as we like to walk to plaza.
I have lived here since 1992 & seen many changes - but I do need handy plazas!

Are there anything else we should know when planning this Rossland Garden Urban Central Area or anything else you like to see in this area?
mixed-use multi-level walkable ^{ways} accessible via multi-use paths so people don't have to drive

Keep Mixed Use Walkable

Any location of the new City and Rossland Garden Urban Central Area Plaza - is intended by design of the team, and not approved by the Province
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Green and open spaces

- Maintain existing green spaces and provide additional outdoor areas for new residents.

2.3 Growing around Brooklin

The workshop exercise held as part of Open House #2 presented the existing planned land uses in the Brooklin Secondary Plan Area and offered participants an opportunity to share their thoughts on where various land uses and community facilities could be located within the expansion areas.

Planning for the Future: Brooklin Expansion Areas

Tell us how you think the expansion areas should be planned, including where key community facilities could be located and your thoughts on where the different types of residential, commercial, industrial development could go.

Land Uses

- Low Density Residential: Use a yellow marker
- Medium Density Residential: Use an orange marker
- High Density Residential: Use a brown marker
- Local Commercial: Use a purple marker
- Mixed Use: Use a red marker

Community Facilities

- Four Elementary Schools: Use yellow round stickers
- One High School: Use a red round sticker
- Ten Local Parks (each 1.5 hectare in size): Use small green round stickers
- One District Park (4 hectares in size): Use a blue round sticker

For reference: A baseball field is roughly 0.8 hectares in size (infield and outfield)

Major Roads

Use a black marker to draw the roads to connect the expansion areas to the current Brooklin Secondary Plan area

Figure 2-1 Worksheet for the Brooklin expansion areas activity in Open House #2

2.4 Online Survey #1

Participant Profile

The first survey garnered a total of 74 responses. The participant profile shown in **Figure 2-1** shows the majority of participants being Whitby residents (70%), along with a number of people who work in Whitby (12%) and a few who own businesses, are frequent visitors, or have a professional interest in growth and planning in Whitby.

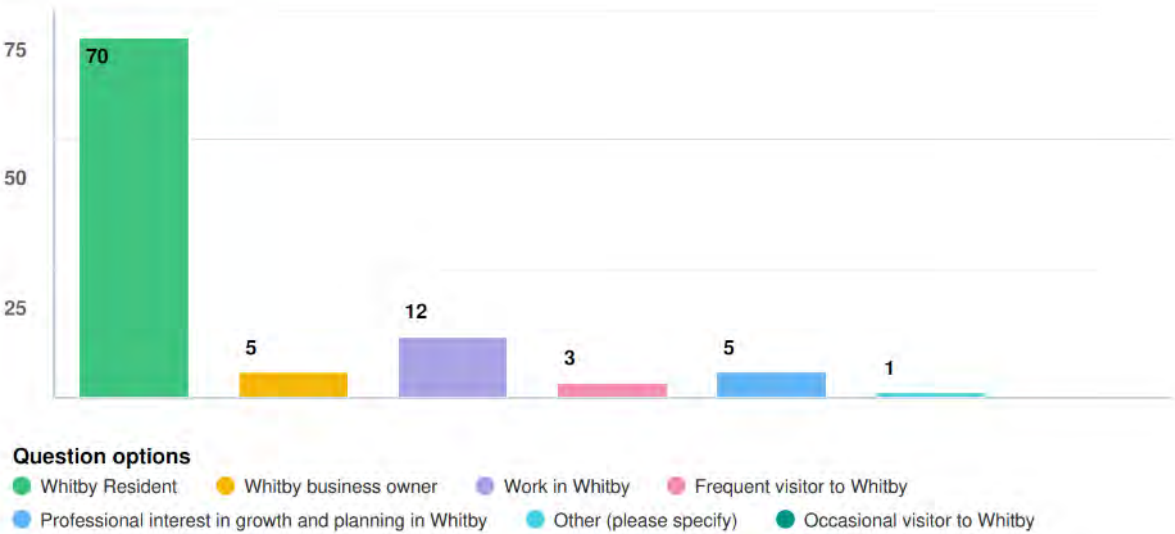
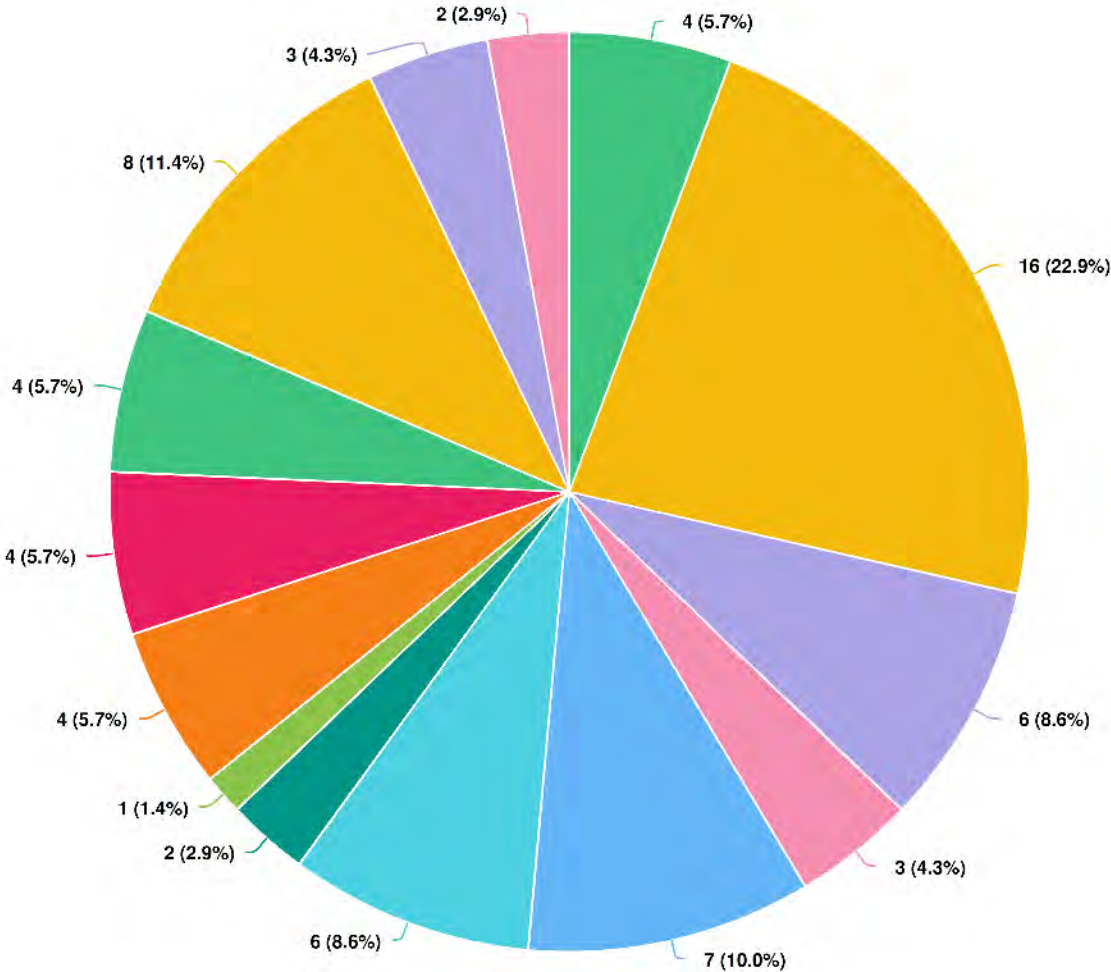


Figure 2-3 Survey #1 Participants - Background

There was wide variability in the communities that participants who live in Whitby resided in, with the highest number being from Brooklin (23%) followed by Williamsburg (11%). A summary of where respondents of the survey live is shown in **Figure 2-2**.



- Question options**
- Blue Grass Meadows
 - Brooklin
 - Downtown Whitby
 - Lynde Creek
 - Port Whitby
 - Pringle Creek
 - Rolling Acres
 - Rural Whitby
 - Taunton North
 - West Whitby
 - Whitby Shores
 - Williamsburg
 - Prefer not to say
 - Other (please specify)

Figure 2-4 Survey #1 Participants – Neighbourhood of Residence

The majority of respondents stated that their primary means of moving around Whitby was by driving (91%), with a few (under 10) selecting transit, cycling, walking or riding as a passenger, as shown on **Figure 2-3**.

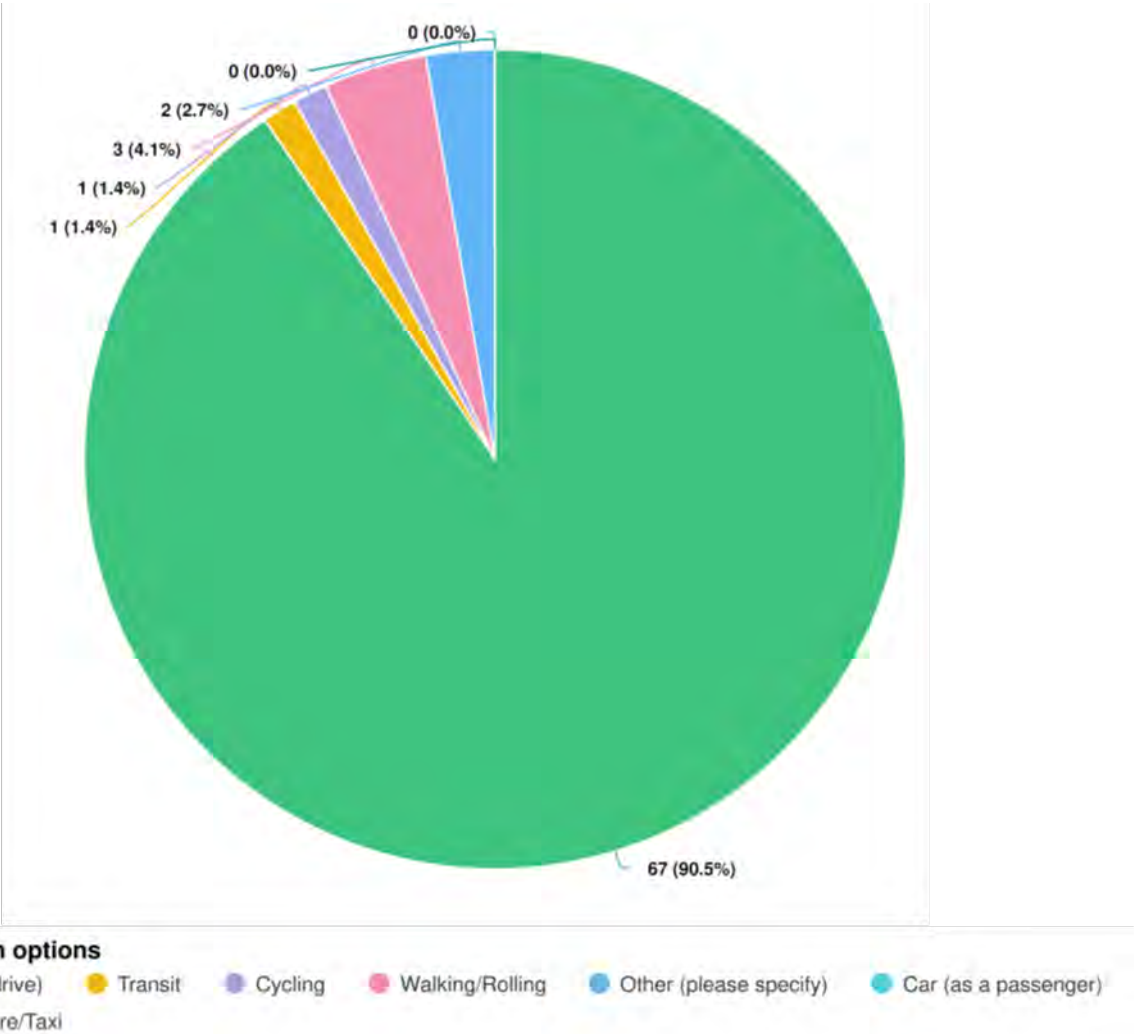


Figure 2-5 Survey #1 Participants – Travel Modes

Key Topics of Interest

What are the topics that interest you most in discussions on the Official Plan Review and how Whitby will grow and develop into the future?

Of the 74 responses to this question, the highest rated topics selected by 40 or more participants were:

1. The new proposed Durham hospital (near Highway 407 and 412)
2. Whitby's waterfront
3. Parks and recreational spaces
4. Natural spaces like local forests and trails
5. Taller buildings and intensification (more people living in Whitby's urban areas)

Between 25-40 participants selected the following topics as being of interest:

1. Transportation (transit, roads, cycling, and pedestrian facilities)
2. Downtowns
3. Community facilities and other amenities
4. The GO Station and development around it
5. Housing and affordability
6. Planning considerations for rural areas in Whitby that are being brought into the urban boundary

The following topics were selected by less than 20 participants:

1. Brooklin neighbourhood development
2. Historic properties
3. Transit and development along Dundas Street

Types of Housing

What types of housing would you like to see in your neighbourhood and/or residential areas in Whitby more broadly?

There were 72 responses to this question, with the top four options selected being Detached/Semi-detached houses, affordable housing, mid-rise apartments (up to four storeys), and townhouses, as presented in **Figure 2-4**.

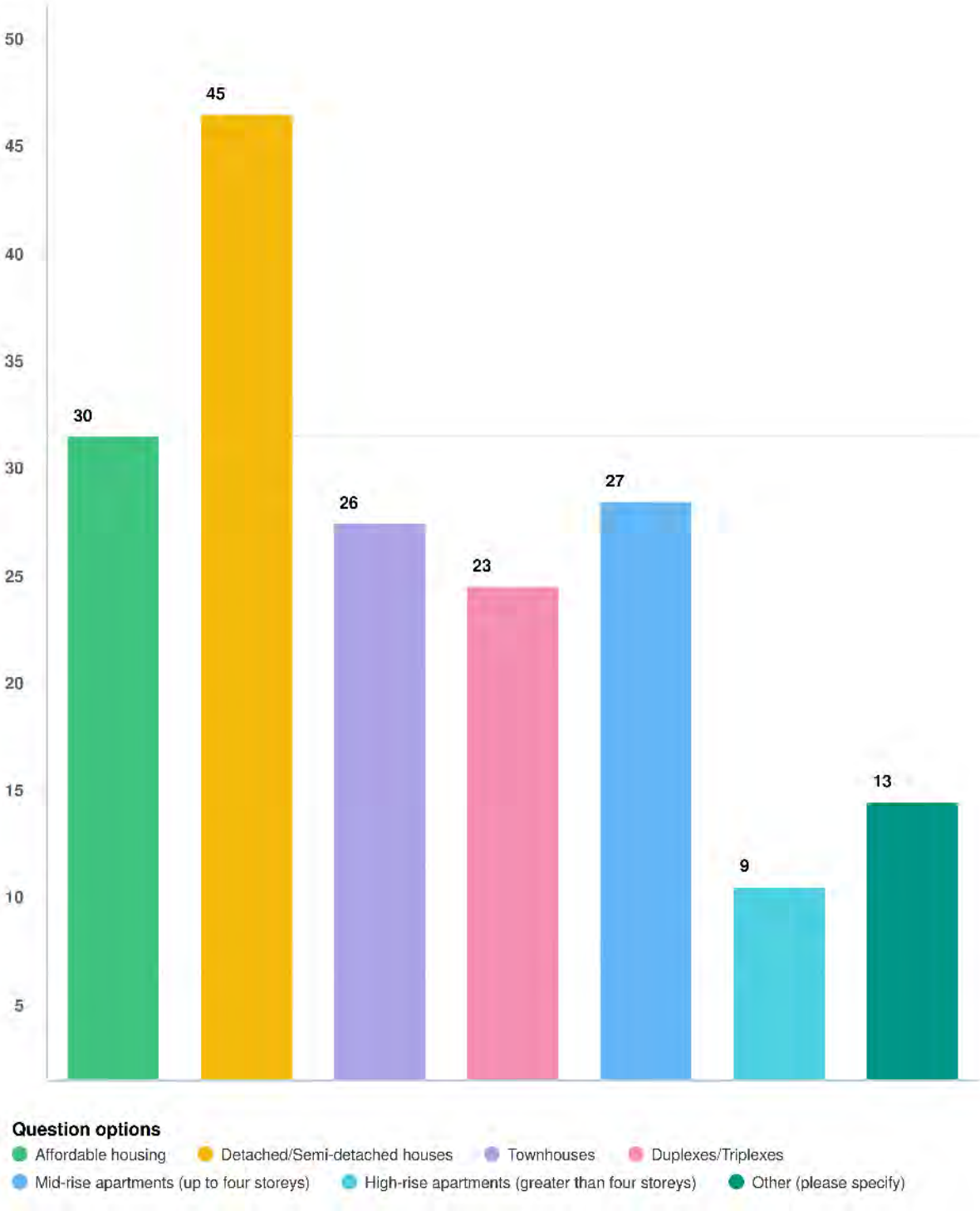


Figure 2-6 Types of housing Whitby residents would like to see in their neighbourhood

Types of Infrastructure

What other types of community infrastructure would you like to see more of in your neighbourhood and/or residential areas in Whitby more broadly?

There were 70 responses to this question, with the top three options selected being parks, clinics/medical facilities, and schools, as presented in **Figure 2-5**.

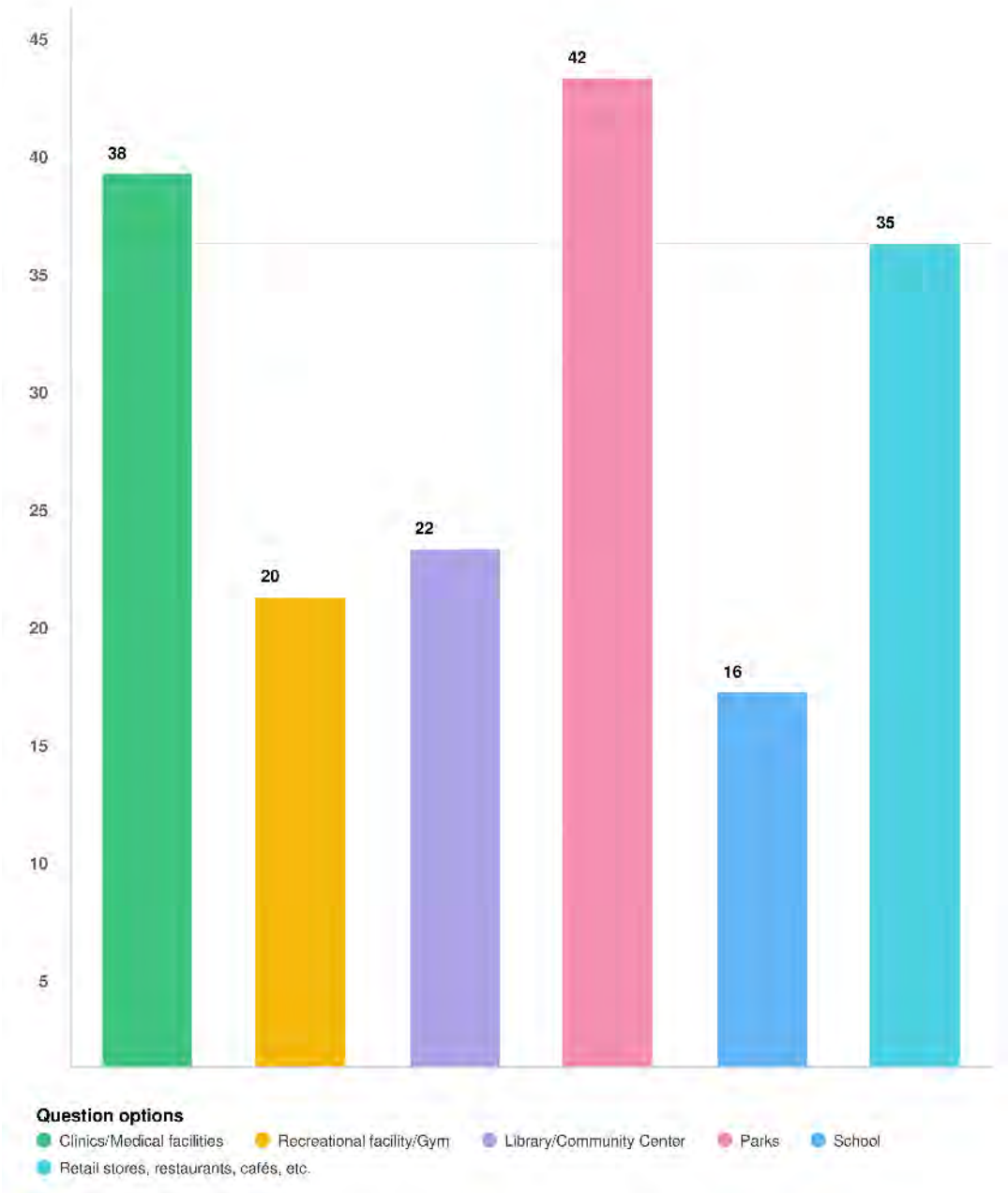


Figure 2-7 Types of community infrastructure Whitby residents would like to see in their neighbourhood

Challenges and Questions in Planning for Growth in Whitby

What do you think are the biggest challenges for Whitby as we plan towards welcoming more neighbours and developing new communities? Please let us know your questions or comments related to growth in Whitby or the Official Plan Review

There was a total of 64 responses to the question on the biggest challenges in planning for growth, and 18 responses identifying additional questions or comments on the Official Plan Review, as summarized below:

Governance and decision-making

- Concern over the governance/regulatory authority of Durham Region and the Envision Durham Plan as pertains to the Town's Official Plan Review, given the impending Provincially-directed change to transfer all planning authority over local matters to the Town.
- Desire for transparency and ongoing communication with the community on any comments from the Province or the Region regarding the Official Plan Review.

Integrating new development and density

- Balancing competing priorities at the Provincial level with local desires from town residents.
- Developing complete communities that have adequate parks and retail spaces to support new residents and more walkable neighbourhoods.
- Promoting and building safe and vibrant downtowns.
- Integrating more density and height in existing neighbourhoods.
- Reduce minimum parking requirements to limit the number of large surface parking and make more room for green spaces and more beneficial types of uses including recreational and community facilities.
- Maintaining the historic feel of some neighbourhoods while also integrating new development, taller buildings, and more facilities and amenities for residents.

Affordable and accessible Housing

- Providing a diverse range of housing types and forms.
- Need for more affordable rental and ownership housing options, particularly for older residents and those looking to downsize or who need accessible housing.
- Improving the quality of new builds particularly multi-residential development to manage noise impacts.
- Addressing increasing rates of homelessness, particularly with respect to downtown Whitby.

Transportation and transit

- Managing increased traffic within the existing road network and enforcing speed limits and slower speeds in residential and school areas to improve road safety.
 - Need for frequent and reliable local transit.
 - Increasing access to non-car mobility options including cycling, walking and rolling through improved street design and infrastructure.
-

- How parking requirements will be addressed given recent regulatory changes to remove parking minimums (Bill 185), particularly in the Whitby GO Station area.

Infrastructure, community services and facilities

- Community safety and providing more accessible recreational and community facilities in neighbourhoods to support the growing population.
- Lack of adequate hospital/medical facilities to support a growing population.
- Cost of providing the infrastructure to support new growth including water, wastewater, electricity, and roads.
- Increased pressure on the school system and lack of adequate neighbourhood school options to support existing and new families.
- Need for more food/grocery stores closer to where people live.
- Concern about the potential impacts to property taxes as a result of the need for new infrastructure.

Parks, recreational and open spaces

- Increase the number of publicly accessible parks and recreational spaces, not just privately owned green spaces.
- Creating and maintaining an appealing and accessible waterfront for public use.

Jobs and employment

- Need for a wider range of job opportunities and local employment growth.

Preserving farmland

- Supporting farmlands and local farming.

Addressing climate change and protecting the environment

- Protecting the natural environment and focusing new development in areas where there is the infrastructure to support it.
 - Managing the amount of paved land and integrating more natural spaces to support stormwater management.
-

Preferred Ways to Engage

How would you like to be engaged in discussions about the Official Plan Review?

There were 71 responses to this question, with the top method to engage selected by 58 respondents being through online surveys and recorded presentations at their convenience.



Figure 2-8 Preferred ways to engage in the Official Plan Review process

3.0 Next Steps and Staying Involved

The next steps of the project include the following tasks:

- Further input through a survey on Connect Whitby;
- Development of a concept plan for the Brooklin expansion areas and Open House #4; and
- Preparation of draft policy and any mapping updates for the Whitby GO Major Transit Station Area and other Strategic Growth Areas, Nodes and Corridors, to be presented at a Statutory Public Meeting in fall 2024.

Further information as well as project updates and will be available on the project website at: connectwhitby.ca/opreview.

Project Contact

If you have a question or comment about the Whitby Official Plan Review, please contact:

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