ALEXANDRIA BAY NY FORWARD
COMMUNITY SURVEY OVERVIEW

A. SURVEY OVERVIEW

As part of the public engagement component of the Village of Alexandria Bay's NY Forward downtown revitalization efforts, a community survey was developed. The purpose of this survey was to gather input from community members, residents, visitors, business owners, and other stakeholders about perceived challenges and opportunities that exist in the community of Alexandria Bay. This information derived from the survey will help inform the Local Planning Committee (LPC) and project team in the preparation of the Alexandria Bay Strategic Investment Plan (SIP).

The online version of the survey was created and distributed using the Survey Monkey web platform and went live on May 28th, 2024, to coincide with the Alexandria Bay NY Forward Public Open House event. Paper copies were made available at the Village Office and Macsherry Library. The survey remained open until June 30th, 2024, with 74 total responses received.

Community Survey Flyer

The survey was advertised on the Village's NY Forward project website (**www.AlexBayNYForward.com**). All members of the public in attendance at Public Open House #1 (May 28th, 2024, Village Hall) were informed when the survey went live. Informational flyers, which included a Quick Response (QR) code, were also distributed throughout the Village during the survey period, so respondents could access the survey directly on a mobile device.

Data Limitations

The survey is one of the numerous public engagement activities that help identify key themes throughout the community. Because the survey respondents are self-selecting, survey responses are not a statistically valid representation of the overall community. The survey alone cannot be used to find the "answer" or "solution", but it can help guide the community's long-term vision and identify the tools and actions needed to achieve that vision. Furthermore, creating State and local partnerships strengthens opportunities to apply for further funding from New York State for the implementation of projects.

B. Survey Topic Areas

The survey design covered several topic areas to focus and categorize the questions. The survey topic areas included Demographic & Background Information, Values, Opportunities & Business, and Ideal Vision. Below is a description of each survey topic area.

Demographic and Background Information (Q1-Q3 & Q11-Q12)

Questions to collect demographic and background information were included in the survey in order to provide an understanding of who is taking the survey. Getting a broad range of respondents from the local area is important to identify the varied needs of different demographics. Knowing age, relation to the Village, housing tenure, and values can help provide a fuller picture of the community's needs.

Opportunities and Business (Q3-Q6)

The survey also included questions to collect respondents' ideas about what they wish to see in Downtown Alexandria Bay. Information on how respondents perceive development opportunities can assist the Local Planning Committee and project team in determining how aligned project proposals are with community desires.
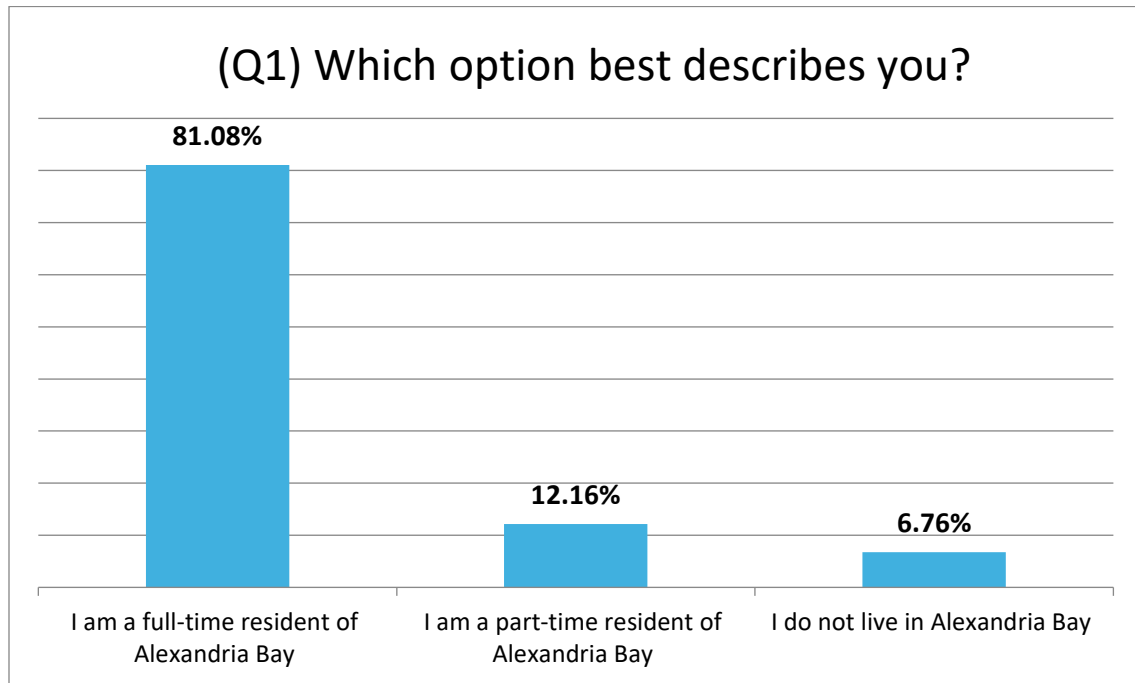
Ideal Vision (Q7-Q8)

In order to help establish the general character and vision that respondents see for their community, the survey included questions to collect descriptions of an ideal future state of the community.

C. Survey Highlights

The following is an overview of selected survey findings from each section of the survey.

Demographic, Background Information, & Values (*Q1-Q3)

(Q1) Which option best describes you?

- I am a full-time resident of Alexandria Bay — **81.08%**
- I am a part-time resident of Alexandria Bay — **12.16%**
- I do not live in Alexandria Bay — **6.76%**

Question 1 (Q1) of the survey asked respondents to identify whether they are full-time, part-time, or non-residents of Alexandria Bay. Out of the 74 respondents to this question, over two-thirds (81.08%) live in Alexandria Bay full-time. Approximately 12% of respondents are part-time residents, while approximately 7% self-identified as non-residents with other connections to the community. It is important to note that this survey was conducted early in the summer season and does not fully capture the community's influx of seasonal residents and visitors.

(Q2) Which of the following describes you? (check all that apply)
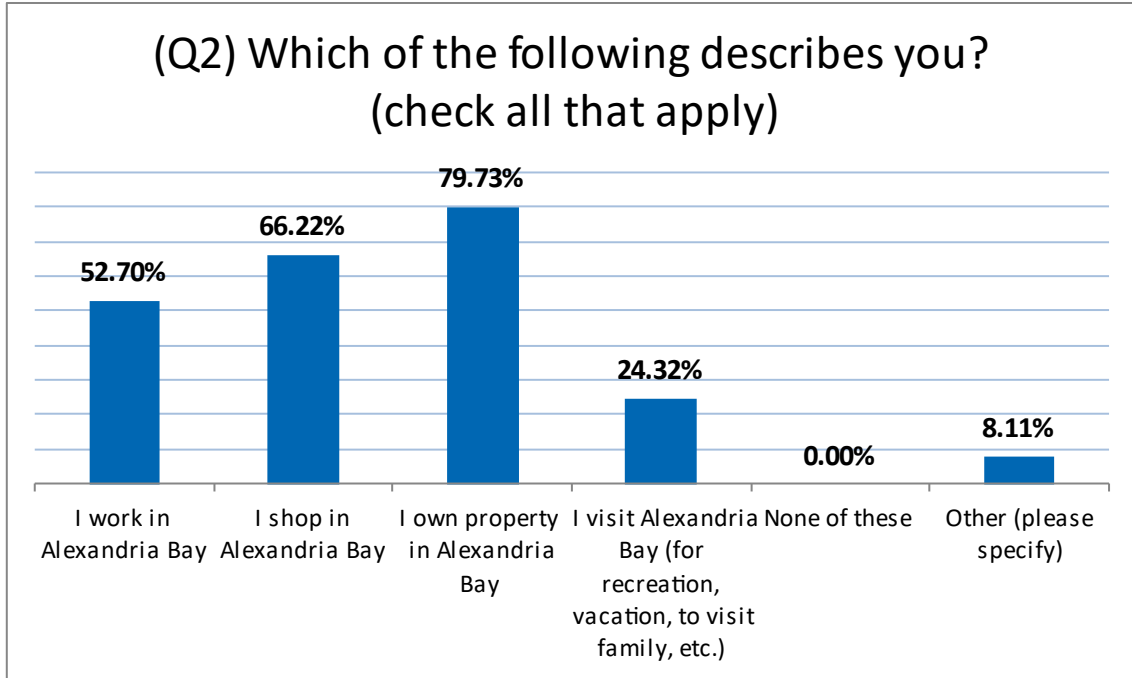
Question 2 (Q2) of the survey asked respondents to identify their connection to Alexandria Bay by checking one or more boxes relating to work, shopping, property ownership, and tourism. Out of the 74 total responses, more than three-quarters (79.73%) own property in Alexandria Bay including year-round residents, seasonal residents, and landlords. Approximately two-thirds (66.22%) of respondents shop within the community. More than half of the respondents (52.70%) work in the Village. There were also a significant number of respondents (24.32%) who visit Alexandria Bay for recreation and/or to see family. Those that selected "Other" described themselves as seasonal residents or business owners.

(Q3) What are the top three reasons you choose to live, work, visit or shop in Downtown Alexandria Bay ? Please pick three.

Category	Percentage
Other (please specify)	6.76%
The community (people)	37.84%
Employment opportunities	9.46%
Variety of shops and restaurants	12.16%
Small town feel	52.70%
History	18.92%
Location	31.08%
Family friendly	25.68%
Cultural activities	1.35%
Waterfront/Access to St. Lawrence River	75.68%
Outdoor recreation	29.73%
Natural beauty/natural setting	68.92%

Question 3 (Q3) of the survey asked respondents to select their top three (3) reasons as to why they have chosen to live, work, visit or shop in Alexandria Bay. This survey question is important to understand the values and motivations of residents and visitors that utilize the services within Alexandria Bay. The most prevalent responses were the Waterfront/Access to St. Lawrence River (75.68%) and the natural beauty/setting of Alexandria Bay (68.92%). Alexandria Bay's small-town feel (52.70%) also received considerable recognition as a draw.

Respondents were given the option to contribute their own response in the "Other" category, and the written responses echoed the sentiment of the most frequent responses. Some respondents highlighted personal connections to Alexandria Bay, such as:
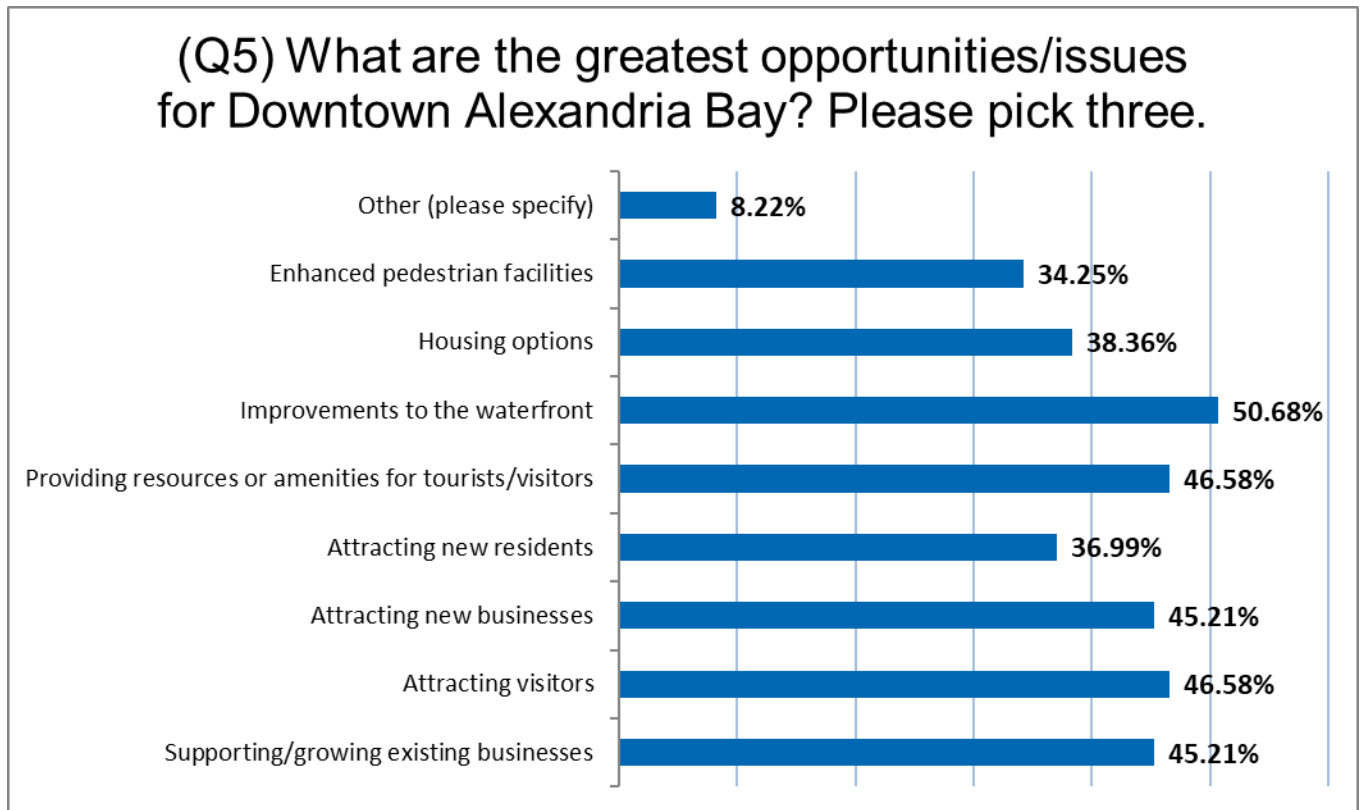
- *Family ties.*
- *Family is from here.*

Opportunities & Business (Q4-Q8)

Question 4 (Q4) of the survey was open ended and asked respondents to describe Downtown Alexandria Bay. Many respondents stated a desire to improve the aesthetics of buildings and storefronts through consistent design choices and improved maintenance. Respondents also advised hosting more family-friendly events throughout the year to engage both locals and visitors. Others suggested enhancing tourism amenities and services, such as expanding dining options and enhancing waterfront access. These themes and concepts reflect the community's aim for a more appealing, family-friendly, and vibrant Village that can accommodate both residents and tourists year-round.
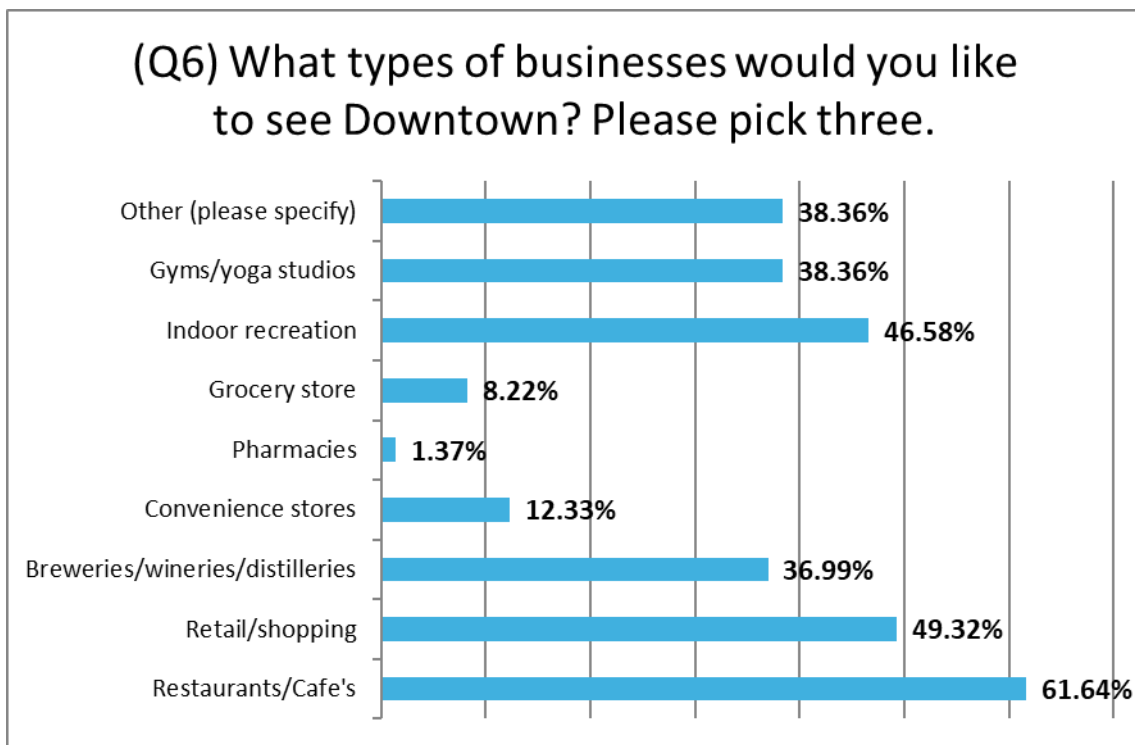
Responses include:

- *A special community that has looked much better in the last few years. New docks and flowers make a huge difference.*
- *Appearance has room for improvement, but it is a nice place to visit to be near the water.*
- *It needs more options for visitors, and to stimulate year-round visits to encourage businesses to open "off" season.*

(Q5) What are the greatest opportunities/issues for Downtown Alexandria Bay? Please pick three.

Category	Percentage
Other (please specify)	8.22%
Enhanced pedestrian facilities	34.25%
Housing options	38.36%
Improvements to the waterfront	50.68%
Providing resources or amenities for tourists/visitors	46.58%
Attracting new residents	36.99%
Attracting new businesses	45.21%
Attracting visitors	46.58%
Supporting/growing existing businesses	45.21%

Question 5 (Q5) of the survey asked respondents to pick their top three (3) greatest opportunities/issues for Downtown Alexandria Bay. Of the 74 respondents that answered this question, the top response were improvements to the waterfront (50.68%). The second most popular responses were attracting visitors (46.58%) and providing resources or amenities for tourists/visitors (46.58%). Other significant responses include supporting/growing existing businesses (45.21%) and attracting new businesses (45.21%).

Nearly 8% of respondent's chose "Other," with many recommending more opportunities for families to visit and making Alexandria Bay a community with a year-round economy:

- *Lack of year-round opportunity.*
- *More kid friendly and cultural activities.*

(Q6) What types of businesses would you like to see Downtown? Please pick three.

Category	Percentage
Other (please specify)	38.36%
Gyms/yoga studios	38.36%
Indoor recreation	46.58%
Grocery store	8.22%
Pharmacies	1.37%
Convenience stores	12.33%
Breweries/wineries/distilleries	36.99%
Retail/shopping	49.32%
Restaurants/Cafe's	61.64%

Question 6 (Q6) of the survey asked respondents to pick the top three (3) types of businesses they would like to see within Downtown Alexandria Bay. The most prevalent responses were restaurants/cafes (61.64%), followed by retail/shopping (49.32%) and indoor recreation (46.58%). Significant percentages of respondents (more than 30%) favored gyms and breweries. Family friendly spaces and cultural activities were suggested by respondents who chose "Other" (38.36%).

Ideal Vision (Q7-Q19)

Question 7 (Q7) of the survey was open-ended and asked respondents to submit any community needs, amenities, or other priorities for the Local Planning Committee to focus on. Overall, the common themes that came up from responses were a focus on infrastructure, family-friendly activities, tourism and business development. Many called for the repair and upgrade of sidewalks, roads and public restrooms. Other responses suggested developing a community center for recreational activities for kids and young adults. Responses also suggested encouraging businesses to stay open year-round.

Responses include:

- *Improving and developing our downtown district by adding more attractions that are family friendly!*
- *Improve the face of the Bay, make it more appealing, safe (new sidewalks) and a clean, fresh look*
- *Making Alexandria Bay a place people want to be. A place people want to visit more than once. Not just a one day stay.*

Question 8 (Q8) of the survey was open-ended and asked respondents to identify three (3) words that they would like to use in the next 15 years to describe Downtown Alexandria Bay to their friends/children/grandchildren. Of the 71 respondents, 211 individual words were submitted; the word cloud above depicts the words with the most submissions. The size of the text in the word cloud indicates the frequency with which the word was submitted by respondents. The top four (4) words in order of highest frequency are as follows:

- *Clean*
- *Family-friendly*
- *Safe*
- *Quaint*

Additional Comments/Ideas (Q9)

Question 9 (Q9) of the survey was open-ended and asked respondents to submit any comments or ideas they have relating to Downtown Alexandria Bay. Of the submitted surveys, fifty-one (51) comments were submitted. The most prevalent themes among the comments submitted were:

Infrastructure and Beautification:
- Many respondents expressed a desire for improvements to the roads, sidewalks and parking.
- Suggestions included upgrading public spaces such as the river walk, playgrounds and Casino Island.

Community and Year-Round Engagement:
- Develop and support year-round businesses and activities.
- Focus on promoting cultural activities, festivals and family-friendly events.

Utilization of Waterfront and Natural Areas:
- Create more walkable and accessible waterfront areas.
- Introduce amenities such as splash pads, piers and green space.

Favorite Photo Submissions – Alexandria Bay (Q10)

Question 10 (Q10) of the survey provided an opportunity for respondents to upload their favorite picture of Alexandria Bay. In total, community members submitted following seven (7) images.

Community Survey Photograph Submissions

(Q11) What is your age?

	33.78%	39.19%	27.03%
0.00%			
Under 20	20 – 39	40-64	65+
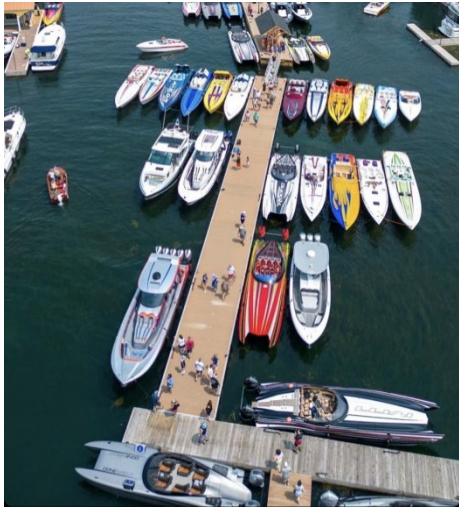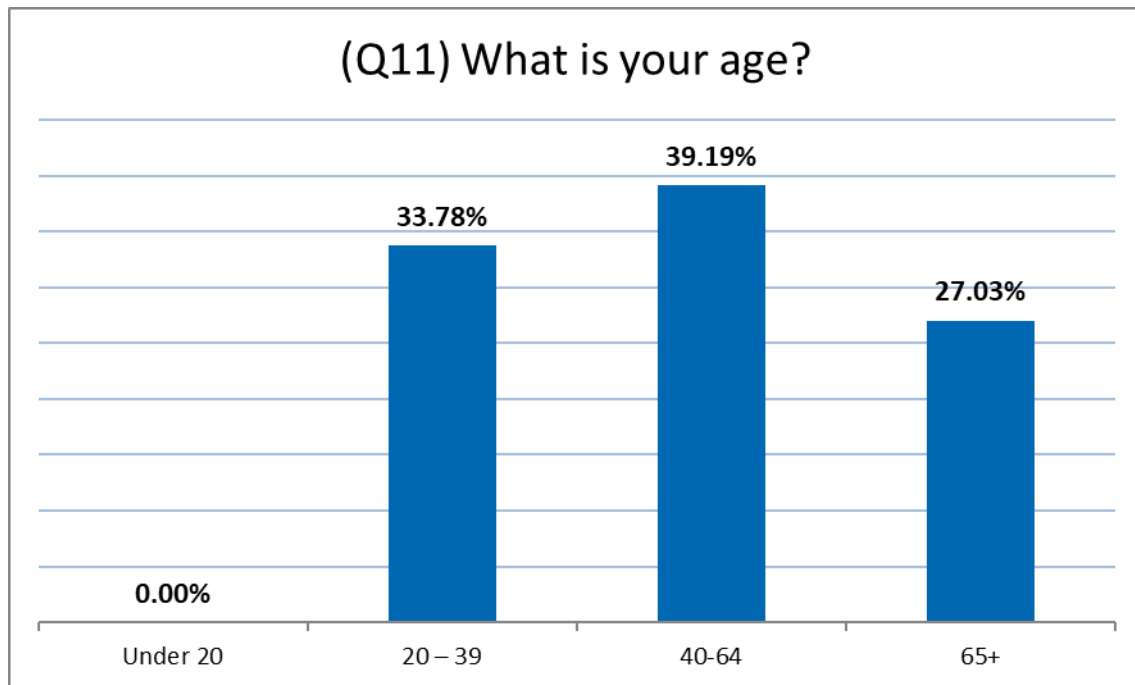
Question 11 (Q11) of the survey asked respondents to select their age cohort. The largest respondent age cohort was the 40-64 age group (39.19%). Of the 74 total respondents that answered this question, 27.03% were in the 65-years and older age group, 33.78% were in the 20-39 age group, and there were no respondents in the under 20 age group.

Question 12 (Q12) of the survey was open ended and asked respondents to input their home zip code. The two most prevalent zip codes for respondents were:

- 13607 (53)
- 13679 (7)