



— Township of —

**SEVERN**

# **Port Severn Property Feasibility Study: *Community engagement results***



# About the Port Severn Feasibility Study



## Project overview

- Severn is working with Lakehead University under the **Mitacs Business Strategy Internship program** to complete a Feasibility Study for the development of the bequeathed Port Severn Property (3253 Port Severn Road)
- This action was taken by staff due to direction from Council
- The project start date was November 20, 2023



## Key points

### Where is the property?

- 3253 Port Severn Road, Port Severn

### How did Severn acquire the property?

- The property was donated to the Township by Mr. Reginald Bush upon his passing.

### How can the property be used?

- Per the conditions outlined in the will of Mr. Bush, the property can be utilized for arts, culture, recreation or parks purposes **only**.



## Project tasks

The project involves the completion of the following tasks:

- research and analysis of the property and its history
- release and analysis of an online community survey
  - Total responses: 210
- 13 one-on-one interviews with community stakeholders
- targeted mailout (+380) to Port Severn property owners
- organization/hosting of one in-person open house



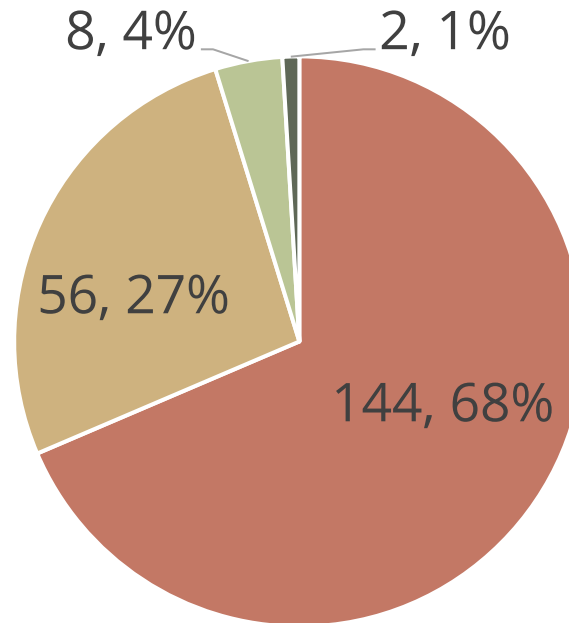
## Project tasks, continued

- completion of a draft report
- completion of a final report that summarizes the study results and provides recommendations for the use of the Port Severn property
- presentation of the final report to Severn's Culture and Recreation Advisory Committee in June 2024



# Survey results

# Q1: Is Severn the location of your primary residence?



■ Yes

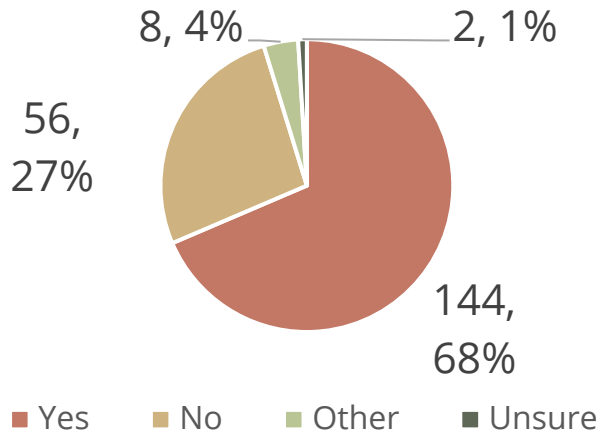
■ No

■ Other

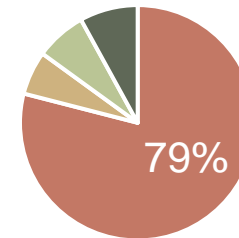
■ Unsure



# Q1: Is Severn the location of your primary residence?

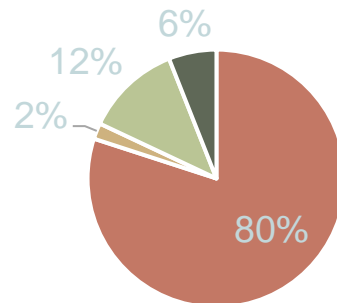


Support for redevelopment among those who use Severn as primary residence



■ Yes ■ Unsure ■ No

Support for development amongst those who do NOT use Severn as primary residence



■ Yes ■ Unsure ■ Somewhat ■ No



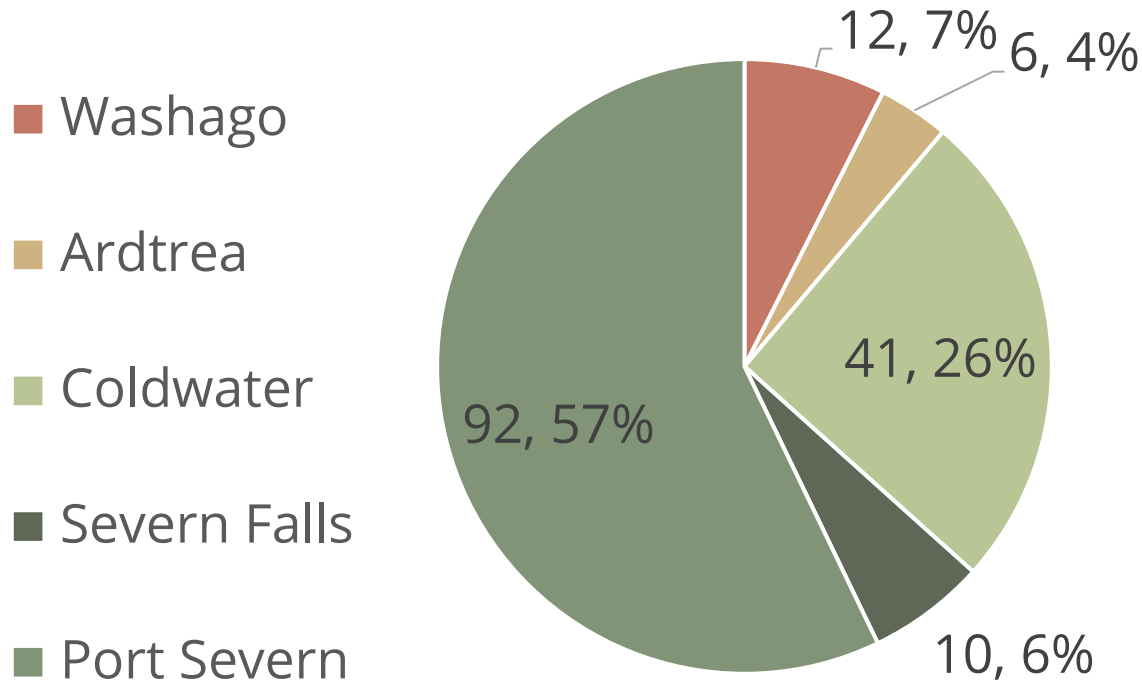
## Q1: Primary residence

### *Initial analysis*

**Primary vs. Secondary Residence:** The majority of respondents (68.57%) consider Severn their primary residence. This suggests a strong local interest and potentially high engagement with the proposed development. The fact that a significant portion of the population (26.67%) does not reside in Severn year-round but still participated in the survey indicates interest or stake in the area's development from non-residents and seasonal visitors.

- **Additional considerations:** Geographical Diversity of Respondents, Engagement from Surrounding Areas, Varied Usage of Residences, Potential for Broad Community Engagement

# Q2: Where in Severn do you reside?





## Q2: Location of respondents

### *Initial analysis*

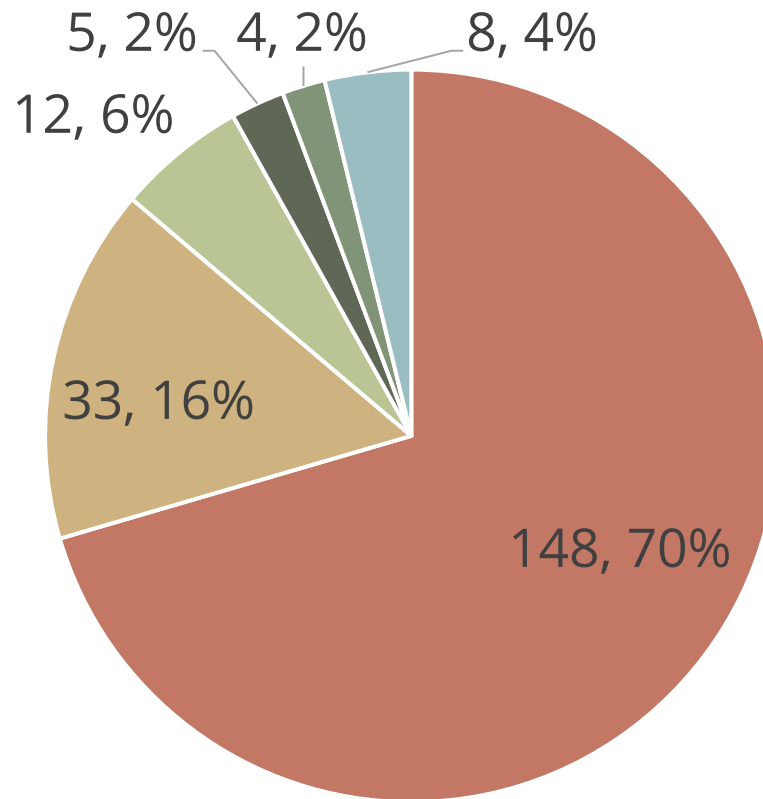
**High Concentration in Port Severn:** A significant majority of respondents (57%) reside in Port Severn. This suggests that Port Severn is a major hub for both the local population and possibly for visitors or secondary homeowners. Given this concentration, any development in Severn, especially near or within Port Severn, could see high local engagement and usage. It would be beneficial to consider the specific needs and preferences of this community segment in the project planning.

- **Additional considerations:** Diverse but Focused Residency Areas, Non-Resident Interest, Identifying Gaps and Opportunities, Tailoring to Local and Visitor Needs

# Q3: Respondents identified themselves as:



- Permanent resident
- Seasonal resident
- Both a resident and a business owner
- Business owner
- Visitor
- Working in Severn but living elsewhere





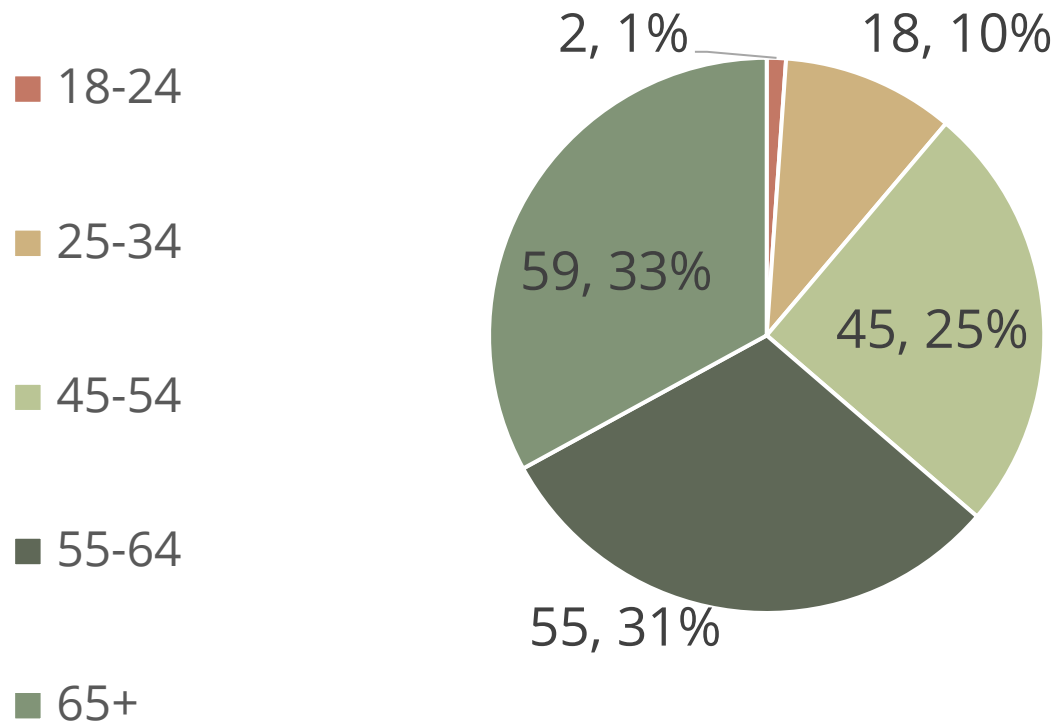
### **Q3: Respondents identified themselves as...**

#### *Initial analysis*

The majority of respondents (70.48%) identify as permanent residents. This strong presence of permanent residents emphasizes the importance of creating a facility that serves year-round needs and interests, offering activities and resources that enhance the quality of life for those who live in Severn throughout the year.

- **Additional considerations:** Significant Seasonal Engagement, Business and Economic Perspectives, Work-Related Engagement, Visitor Insights

# Q4: What age group applies to you?





## Q4: Age of respondents

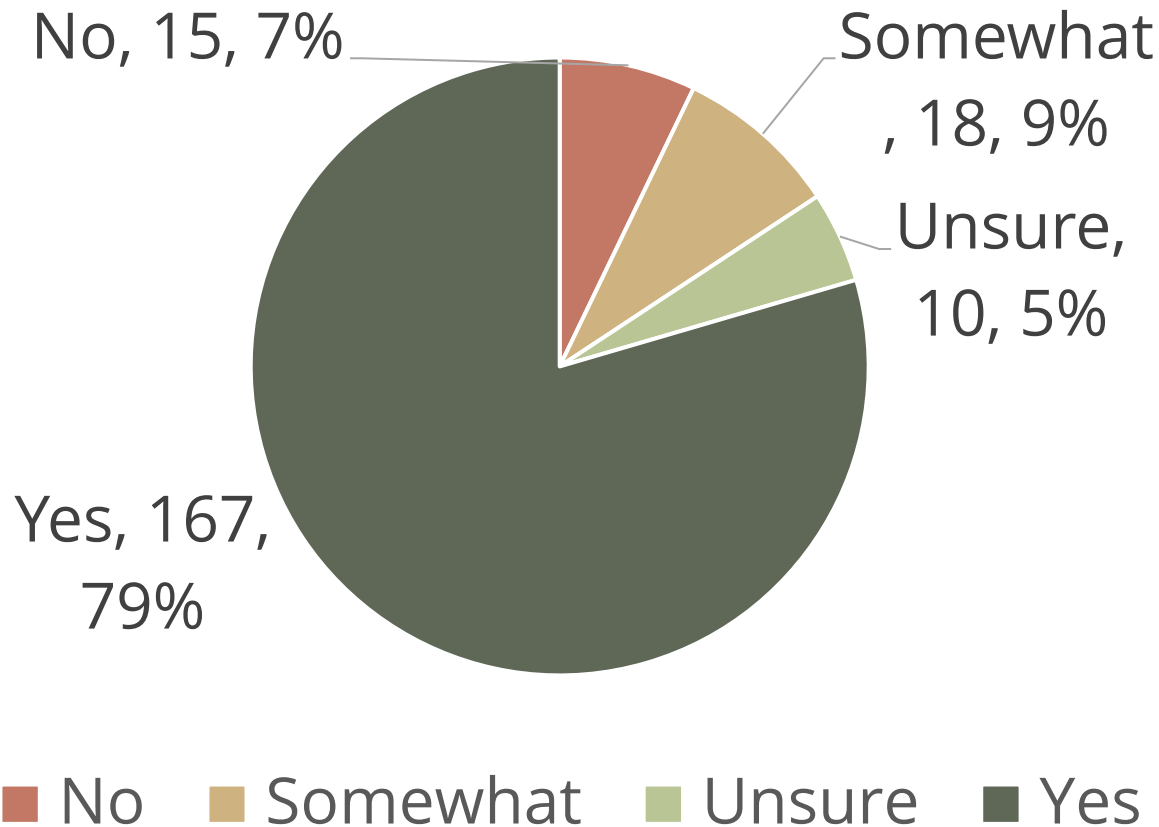
### *Initial analysis*

**Mature Population Dominance:** The age groups with the highest representations are 55-64 (26.19%) and 65+ (28.10%), totaling over 54% of respondents. This indicates a predominantly mature population engaging with the survey, suggesting that the development should consider facilities and programs that cater to the interests and needs of older adults. This could include accessible walkways, seating areas, and activities that encourage social interaction, physical activity, and cultural enrichment suited to this demographic.

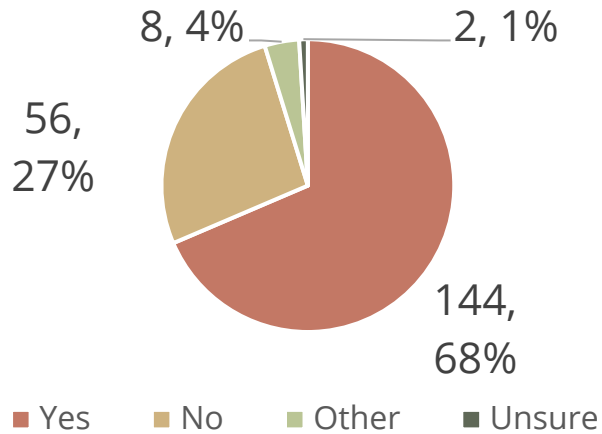
- **Additional considerations:** Middle-Aged and Young Adults, Youth Engagement is Minimal, Diversity in Planning, Accessibility and Inclusivity.



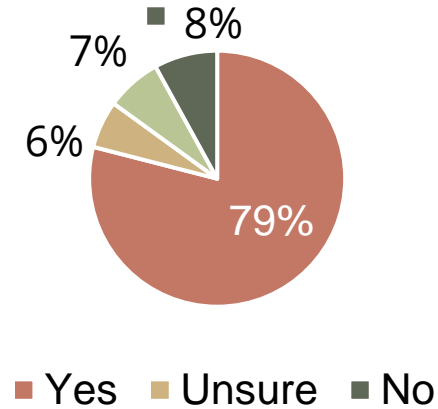
# Q5: Do you support the redevelopment/use of this property for an arts, culture, recreation and/or heritage center?



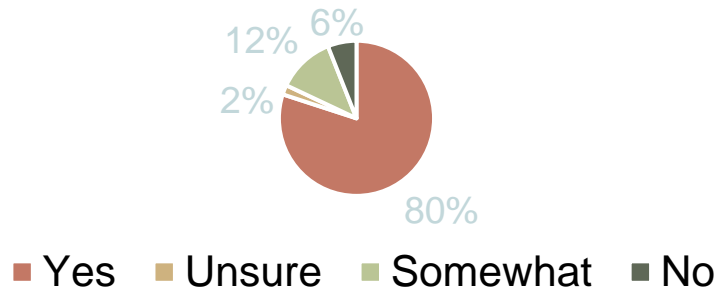
# Primary residence and indication of support



Support for redevelopment among those (144 respondents) who use Severn as their primary residence



Support for development amongst those (66 respondents) who do NOT use Severn as their primary residence





## Q5: Do you support the redevelopment/use of this property as proposed?

### *Initial analysis*

**Strong Support for Redevelopment:** A significant majority of respondents (79.52%) support the redevelopment project. This high level of support suggests a strong community interest in enhancing local amenities through arts, culture, recreation, and heritage programming. It indicates a community-wide recognition of the value such a development could bring, including opportunities for social interaction, cultural enrichment, economic development, and improved quality of life.

- **Additional considerations:** Composition, The Importance of Clear Communication and Transparency. Minor Opposition and Hesitancy, Opportunity for Comprehensive Community Engagement, Reflecting on Community.



## **Q6: Open-ended comments from our community**

*residents*



## Q6: Open-ended comments from our community

### *Initial analysis*

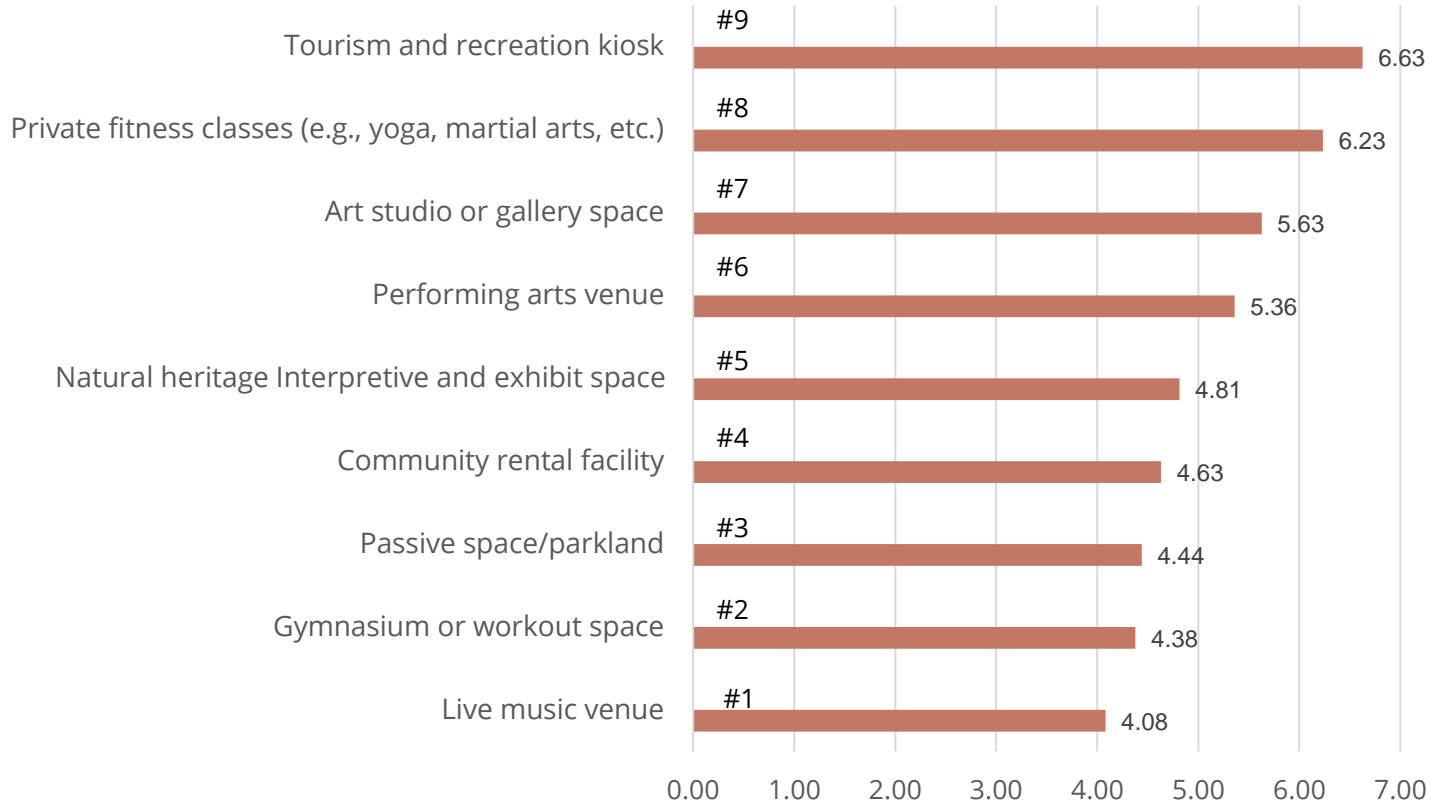
**Environmental Impact:** Some comments raise concerns about the environmental impact of the project, including potential strain on local resources and the risk of environmental degradation. These comments stress the importance of conducting thorough environmental assessments and implementing measures to mitigate any adverse effects.

**Additional considerations:** Need for Adequate Infrastructure, Cost to Taxpayers, Transparent Communication

## Q7: Ranking of nine proposed uses (1 'most important', and 9 'least important')



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■ Average Scores (9.00 = 'least important', a score closer to 1.00 = 'most important')



## Q7: Ranking of 9 proposed uses (1 'most important', and 9 least important)

**Nature and Heritage Appreciation:** Natural heritage interpretive and exhibit spaces score an average of 4.81 out of 9\* pointing to a keen community interest in learning about and preserving the local environment and history. This suggests incorporating elements that educate and engage residents and visitors with the area's natural surroundings and historical background.

Additional considerations: Multipurpose Community Hub, Community and Multi-use Spaces

\*A score closer to 1 represents 'more important', while a score closer to 9 represents a use identified as 'least important'.



# Interview results



# Responses and themes

## Summary of results

The interviews with key stakeholders in the Port Severn area provided a wealth of information and insights into community needs, values, and visions for the redevelopment. Drawing from each individual's perspective, several overarching themes emerged.

1. Community Engagement and Support for Recreational and Cultural Spaces
2. Environmental Sustainability and Preservation
3. Economic Development and Community Benefit
4. Concerns About Infrastructure and Accessibility
5. Desire for Inclusive and Diverse Programming
6. Collaboration and Partnerships
7. Strategic Development with a Long-term Vision
8. Open Communication and Community Involvement

# Responses and themes

## 1. Community Engagement and Support for Recreational and Cultural Spaces

- Stakeholders express a strong desire for the development to include spaces that serve both recreational and cultural needs.
- Suggestions range from children's recreational facilities, arts and culture centers, to environmental education spaces.
- The emphasis on providing amenities for all age groups, preserving natural beauty, and fostering a sense of community underscores the need for a multipurpose community hub.

# Responses and themes

## 2. Environmental Sustainability and Preservation

- A recurring theme is the importance of maintaining the area's natural environment and ensuring sustainable development practices.
- Stakeholders suggest incorporating green spaces, preserving trees, and implementing eco-friendly features to maintain the unique character of Port Severn.

# Responses and themes

## 3. Economic Development and Community Benefit

- The interviews highlight a shared belief that the redevelopment can stimulate local economic growth by attracting more visitors and benefiting local businesses.
- There's a consensus on the potential for the project to create a destination that draws both residents and tourists, thus contributing to the community's economic vitality.

# Responses and themes

## 4. Concerns About Infrastructure and Accessibility

- Parking, traffic congestion, and accessibility emerge as significant concerns.
- Stakeholders advocate for solutions that address current infrastructural challenges without compromising the area's environmental integrity.
- Ideas include leveraging existing parking areas, improving public transportation, and enhancing pedestrian and bike access.

# Responses and themes

## 5. Desire for Inclusive and Diverse Programming

- Community leaders and residents emphasize the need for programming that appeals to a wide range of interests and demographics.
- This includes arts and culture, recreational activities, environmental education, and spaces for community gatherings and events.
- The aim is to create a vibrant, inclusive space that offers something for everyone.

# Responses and themes

## 6. Collaboration and Partnerships

- Several stakeholders suggest exploring partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies to ensure the project's success.
- This approach can leverage additional resources, expertise, and support, making the redevelopment more feasible and aligned with broader community goals.

# Responses and themes

## 7. Strategic Development with a Long-term Vision

- Stakeholders express a desire for thoughtful, strategic development that considers the long-term impact on the community.
- This includes balancing development with preservation, ensuring the project aligns with the community's identity, and planning for future growth and changing needs.



# Responses and themes

## 8. Open Communication and Community Involvement

- A common suggestion is the importance of ongoing communication and engagement with the community throughout the planning and development process.
- This includes holding public meetings, gathering feedback, and ensuring transparency to build trust and ensure the project reflects community values and needs.



# Next steps

- Summarize dialogue and discussions gathered at tonight's Open House
- Complete the final Feasibility Study Report (draft) for review by the Project Team
- Prepare the Feasibility Study Report and submit to Severn's Culture and Recreation Advisory Committee (CRAC) for review in June
- Action direction from the CRAC (e.g., recommended revisions to the report, or forwarding of the report to Council for further review and direction, etc.)



# Stay informed

Project page at: [severn.ca/portsevernproperty](https://severn.ca/portsevernproperty)

News and Notices at: [severn.ca/subscribe](https://severn.ca/subscribe)

Community Calendar at: [severn.ca/calendar](https://severn.ca/calendar)

Council and Committee meetings at: [severn.ca/portal](https://severn.ca/portal)



# Thank you.

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