

III. Summary and Key Findings

Residents of Cumberland like the peace and quiet (mentioned by 90% of survey respondents), that the town still has active farms and orchards (86%), and that the town is centrally located and convenient to travel to other towns (83%). Residents describe Cumberland as a small and rural town, a suburban bedroom community, diverse, and quiet.

A majority of residents (59%) did express concerns about continually rising taxes and that they may eventually have to move to another town with lower taxes. Forty-one percent (41%) of residents were concerned about the lack of public oceanfront to enjoy and 38% were concerned that not enough growth has occurred in Cumberland to hold the line on taxes.

More than two-thirds (68%) believed that the pace of residential growth in Cumberland is about right while 26% see it as too fast and 6% as too slow. A majority of residents also saw the pace of commercial growth as about right in most areas of Cumberland. Sixty-nine percent (69%) thought the pace of commercial growth is about right along upper Main Street, 62% along lower Main Street, 53% along Route 1 North and 53% in West Cumberland. There was some sentiment for additional growth along Route 1; 45% believed the pace of growth was too slow along Route 1 South and 41% along Route 1 North.

There is no clear consensus about the minimum lot size requirements for the Rural Residential Zones other than a majority (54%) did not want one Rural Residential zone with a 4 acre lot size minimum. Nearly half (48%) believed that the current RR1 and RR2 zones should be retained though 42% felt that there should be one Rural Residential zone with a 2 acre lot size minimum. Forty percent disagreed that there should be only one rural residential zoning district.

More than a quarter (28%) thought the Town should consider other minimum lot sizes in the RR1 and RR2 areas with one to two acres (29%), two to three acres (13%), and one half to one acre (13%) being the most commonly mentioned lot sizes.

While only 31% thought that there should be specific areas in the rural residential zones where residential growth should be encouraged, 78% believed that there should be specific areas in the rural residential zones where the protection of the rural character (such as forestry, farming, habitat and open space) should be encouraged.

Among those that wanted specific areas where residential growth should be encouraged, the most commonly mentioned areas were the Blanchard Road area (52%), the Tuttle Road area (50%), and the Greely Road area (46%). A majority of those wanting areas where the protection of the rural character should be encouraged mentioned the Blanchard Road area (66%), the Greely Road area (65%), the Range Road area (61%), the Tuttle Road area (61%), and the Orchard Road area (58%).

A large majority favored small independent stores (81%) and medium size independent stores (79%) along Route 1. About half (51%) supported medium size chain stores along Route 1. Only 23% supported large big box stores while 12% did not want any of these types of retail development.

A large majority favored small independent restaurants (87%) and medium size independent restaurants (79%) along Route 1. Less than half favored large independent restaurants (38%). Only 27% favored franchise restaurants and 22% favored fast food restaurants. Less than one in ten (9%) did not support any type of restaurant along Route 1.

More than eight in ten (84%) thought there should be mandatory design requirements that specify how the building and parking areas should look and function in the Route 1 area while 45% thought there should be other limitations on retail and restaurants if allowed on Route 1. Among those that see the need for other limitations, the most commonly mentioned were reducing lights and limiting signage (20%), allowing only smaller sized retail stores (19%), setting architectural and appearance standards (16%), and the use of buffering and green space (14%).

Factors Liked Most about Living in Cumberland

- Residents of Cumberland liked the peace and quiet, that the town still has active farms and orchards, and that the town is centrally located and convenient to travel to other towns.
- Residents describe Cumberland as a small and rural town, a suburban bedroom community, diverse, and quiet.

Concerns about Living in Cumberland

- The largest percentage of residents were concerned about taxes continuing to rise (59%) followed by the lack of public oceanfront to enjoy (41%), and the lack of growth to hold the line on taxes (38%).

Pace of Commercial Growth in Cumberland

- More than two-thirds (68%) considered the pace of residential growth to be about right.

Pace of Residential Growth in Cumberland

- Residents considered the pace of commercial growth to be about right in most areas though 45% consider the pace too slow along Route 1 South and 41% consider the pace too slow along Route 1 North.
- More than half (53%) considered the pace of commercial growth in West Cumberland to be about right while 36% considered the pace too slow.
- More than two-thirds (69%) considered the pace of commercial growth along Upper Main Street to be about right while 21% considered the pace too slow.
- More than six in ten (62%) considered the pace of commercial growth along Lower Main Street to be about right while 30% considered the pace too slow.
- More than half (53%) considered the pace of commercial growth along Route 1 North to be about right while 41% considered the pace too slow.
- Nearly half (48%) considered the pace of commercial growth along Route 1 South to be about right while 45% considered the pace too slow.
- Comments about land use regulations and growth focused on support for limited commercial growth but also maintaining green spaces.

Rural Residential Zoning

- Nearly half (48%) agreed that the current RR1 and RR2 zones should be retained while 42% agreed that there should be one Rural Residential zone with a 2 acre lot size minimum.
- Nearly half (48%) agreed that the current RR1 and RR2 zones should be retained while nearly one quarter (24%) disagreed.
- More than four in ten (42%) agree that there should be one Rural Residential zone with a 2 acre lot size minimum while 37% disagree.
- Nearly three in ten (28%) agree that there should be only one rural residential zoning district while 40% disagree.
- Nearly one-quarter (23%) agree that there should be only one Rural Residential zone with a 4 acre lot size minimum while 54% disagree.
- More than half (54%) disagree that there should be only one Rural Residential zone with a 4 acre lot size minimum while 23% agree.

- More than one-quarter (28%) thought the Town should consider other minimum lot sizes in the RR1 and RR2 areas with one to two acres being the most commonly mentioned lot sizes.

Growth and Rural Character in the Residential Zones

- About than one in three (31%) thought there should be specific areas in the rural residential zones where residential growth should be encouraged, with the Blanchard Road area (52%) and the Tuttle Road area (50%) the most commonly mentioned.
- More than three-quarters (78%) thought there should be specific areas in the rural residential zones where the protection of the rural character should be encouraged with the Blanchard Road area (66%), the Greely Road area (65%), the Range Road area (61%), and the Tuttle Road area (61%) the most commonly mentioned.
- Comments about rural residential issues focus on ways to maintain Cumberland's rural character (35%) and maintaining current rules involving growth and development (20%).

Allowing Stores and/or Restaurants along Route 1

- A large majority favored small independent stores (81%) and Medium size independent stores (79%) along Route 1.
- A large majority favored small independent restaurants (87%) and medium size independent restaurants (79%) along Route 1.

Design Standards for Retail and Restaurants along Route 1

- More than eight in ten (84%) thought there should be mandatory design requirements that specify how the building and parking areas should look and function in the Route 1 area.
- 45% thought there should be other limitations on retail and restaurants if allowed on Route 1. These include reducing lights and limiting signage, allowing only smaller sized retail stores, setting architectural and appearance standards, and the use of buffering and green space.
- Comments about Route 1 corridor issues focus on just allowing development along Route 1 but maintaining Cumberland's scenic appeal.