



Colville East

Your input on our growing East Selkirk community

Summary Report of Colville East Open House Survey Responses, June 2015

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We wish to extend our sincere thanks to the more than 100 citizens who took the time to attend the Colville East Open House on June 18, 2015 or provide input via our online survey and website. The survey results are captured in the summary that follows. Input received will be used to help shape a concept plan which will guide development in the Colville East area.

1.0 Introduction

The RM of St. Clements is growing. Over 750 new homes were built in the past ten years, and current demand shows a need for at least 750 more in the next ten. New housing in the Colville East area will help St. Clements keep pace with the continued strong demand for housing in East Selkirk. The Colville East neighbourhood, close to schools, services and recreation facilities, is envisioned as a vibrant, connected area that includes:

- New housing options that meet the needs of residents of all ages
- Community gathering spaces
- An inviting streetscape
- Walking and cycling paths
- Design and density that is compatible with the existing neighbourhoods
- Preservation of the open, semi-rural character of St. Clements

2.0 Public engagement overview

The RM considers public consultation an essential part of the planning process. Prior to any construction taking place, the RM conducted a public consultation process in order to gather public input to ensure new development is aligned with citizens' expectations and that growth is appropriately managed.



The following activities have taken place to-date:

- **Project information website:** Information about Colville East was shared on dedicated webpages at www.rmofstclements.com/colvilleeast.
- **Direct mail letters:** Letters were mailed directly to 500 East Selkirk area households in June 2015 in advance of a public open house.
- **Public queries:** Questions about Colville East were welcome via emails sent to communications@rmofstclements.com. Three queries and comments were received in June 2015 and answers to frequently asked questions were posted on the project webpages at www.rmofstclements.com/colvilleeast.

- **Stakeholder interviews:** Five phone interviews were conducted in May and June 2015 to better understand key questions and concerns about Colville East.
- **Email updates and contact list development:** Email updates were circulated to the RM's existing database of more than 500 St. Clements residents providing information about Colville East and opportunities to provide input. During the consultation process 33 individuals provided email addresses in order to receive electronic updates as the project moves ahead.
- **General promotion of opportunities to participate:** The RM used multiple methods to tell the public about the open house including:
 - letters delivered to homes
 - emails sent to the RM's email database
 - ads in local newspapers
 - RM of St. Clements reader board
 - portable road sign
 - Facebook posts
 - RM of St. Clements website homepage
- **Public open house:** Over 90 people attended an open house on June 18, 2015. Attendees shared input via survey forms, idea boards (19 written suggestions submitted here), and in conversation with RM staff and members of council. Take-home information sheets were distributed at the event, and journalists from both local newspapers, the Selkirk Record and the Selkirk Journal, attended and wrote stories on the open house. All event materials were also posted online at www.rmofstclements.com/colvilleeast.
- **Public survey:** 42 people took the time to complete a 16-question survey about Colville East which was distributed on our website and at the open house.

Promotion at a glance

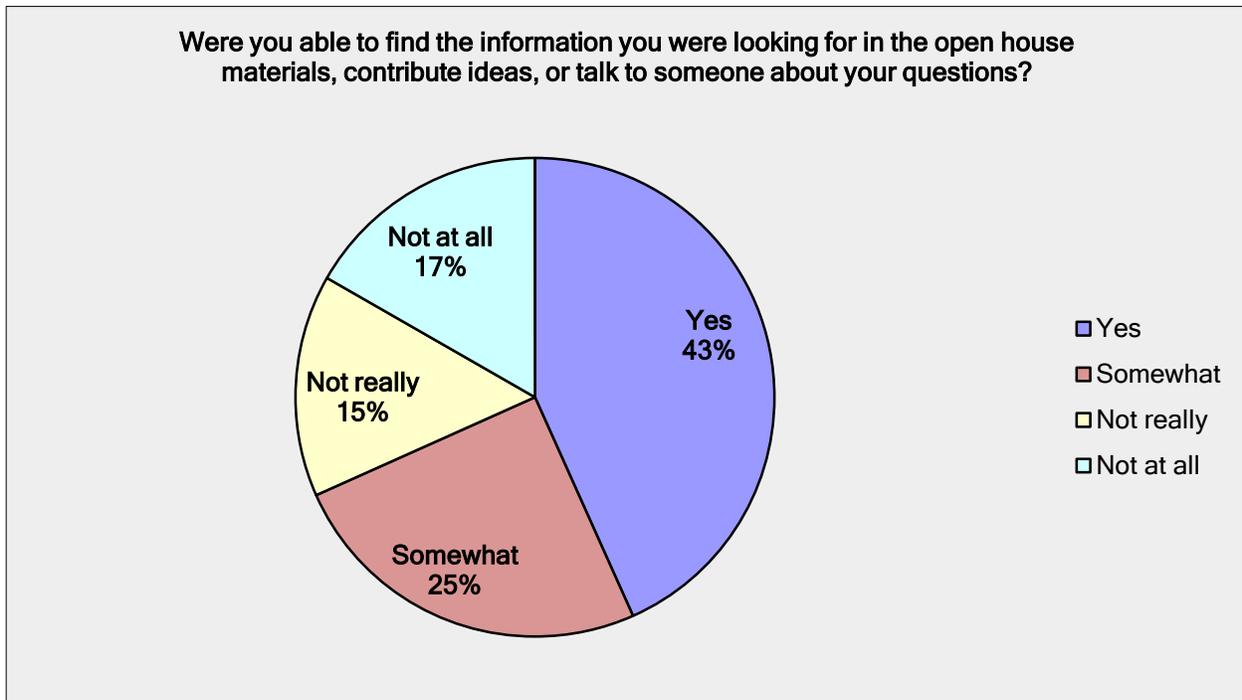
- 500 letters mailed to households, 5 Facebook posts and two email updates sent to database of more than 500 St. Clements residents
- 1 newspaper ad in Selkirk Journal and 1 ad in Selkirk Record
- Messages posted on 1 portable sign and RM readerboard

Participation at a glance

- 90+ citizens attended open house
- 42 citizens completed survey and 19 submitted comments at the open house
- Almost half of open house attendees were residents on Colville Road (23), Frank Street (9), and Two Mile Road (9).

3.0 What you told us: Consultation Results

Results area 1: Feedback on open house



Several survey questions focused on how people heard about the open house and whether they found it useful.

The majority of respondents indicated they found out about the open house via a *letter delivered to my home* (50%) and *e-mail from RM of St. Clements* (43%).

When asked whether they could find the information they were looking for at the open house, 68% of respondents said *yes* (43%) or *somewhat* (25%).

What was most helpful about today's open house?

"People there to explain"

"Got a rough idea of the plan"

"People got real info and not rumour"

"Being able to ask questions and get answers right away"

"Being able to verbally talk to a councillor and mayor about concerns over the future of the area [...] Whether [these ideas] are listened to or acted upon with sincerity is another issue."

Responses to the question "*What was most helpful about today's open house?*" were varied. Many respondents indicated it was helpful to have face-to-face conversations about their concerns. Others noted concerns that input from residents will be listened to.

Results area 2-6: Key areas of input

The survey focused on gathering input and ideas in five key areas:

- ✓ **Meeting the need for housing:** How important is it to you to have affordable housing options in the area?
- ✓ **Neighbourhood character:** How important is it to you to have enhanced landscaping, signage, decorative fencing or lighting that contribute to the look and feel of the area?
- ✓ **Traffic and safety:** As the community grows, how concerned are you about the potential for increased traffic flow in the area?
- ✓ **Walking, biking and rolling:** How important is it to you to have safe, accessible places to walk or bike in the area?
- ✓ **Community amenities and gathering spaces:** How important is it to you to have enhanced or new community amenities and gathering spaces in the area?

Respondents were asked to indicate how important or concerned they were about each area, and were provided with a place for additional comment on each topic.

Of these five areas, **traffic and safety** was by far of greatest concern, with over 91% of respondents being *very concerned* (71%) or *somewhat concerned* (20%).

This was followed closely by **walking, biking and rolling** with 84% being *very concerned* (69%) or *somewhat concerned* (15%).



June 18, 2015 Colville East Open House

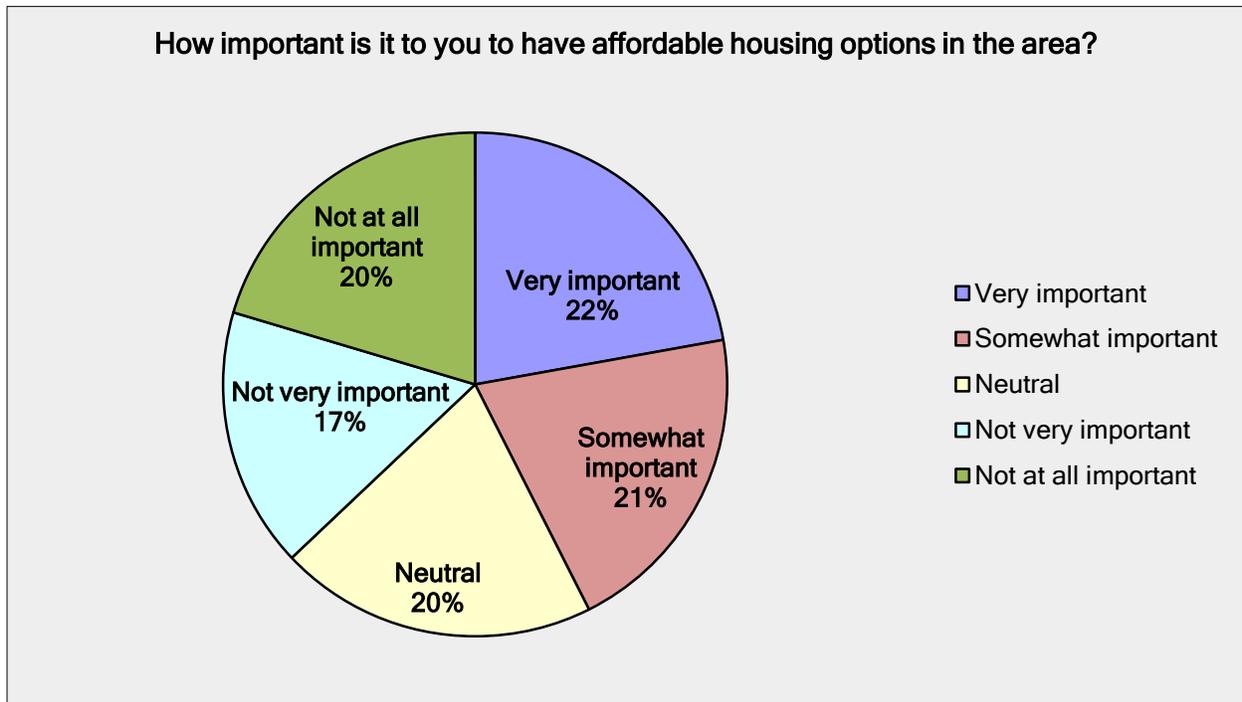
Of note, the comments received made clear there was some overlap between these two topic areas, particularly regarding safety, as vehicular traffic and pedestrian safety were viewed as closely connected issues. However, respondents also indicated an interest in bike trails and sidewalks for enhanced quality of life.

In contrast, there was less agreement with regards to the importance of provisions for affordable housing options in Colville East ("**meeting the need for housing**").

Interest was favourable toward enhancing features that contribute to the look of the area ("**neighbourhood character**") with 83% choosing *very important* (23%), *somewhat important* (34%) or *neutral* (26%). There was also some interest in establishing new or enhanced community use spaces ("**community amenities and gathering spaces**") with 78% choosing *very important* (26%), *somewhat important* (29%) or *neutral* (23%).

Results area 2: Meeting the need for housing

How important is it to you to have affordable housing options in the area?



When asked how important it is to have affordable housing options in the Colville East, there was no clear agreement - respondents were evenly split between all response options.



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Of the 55 respondents who answered this question, 20% (11 respondents) indicated it was *not at all important*.

At the other end of the spectrum, 22% (12 respondents) felt it was *very important* to have affordable housing options in the area.

Of the 34 comments submitted on this topic, there was a strong interest in 55+ housing (9 comments).

Several people indicated they were strongly against multi-unit dwellings and low-income housing. It was suggested many times that these housing options are already offered in Selkirk and don't need to be replicated in East Selkirk.

Several people expressed an interest in maintaining the "rural feel" of the village, either through no new development or development that maintains it.

There is some interest in attracting young families, particularly as area schools have capacity for them. Some respondents suggested that a mix of socio-economic groups is an important part of a healthy community.

"Young family members or the elderly often have to leave the area if there is not affordable housing."

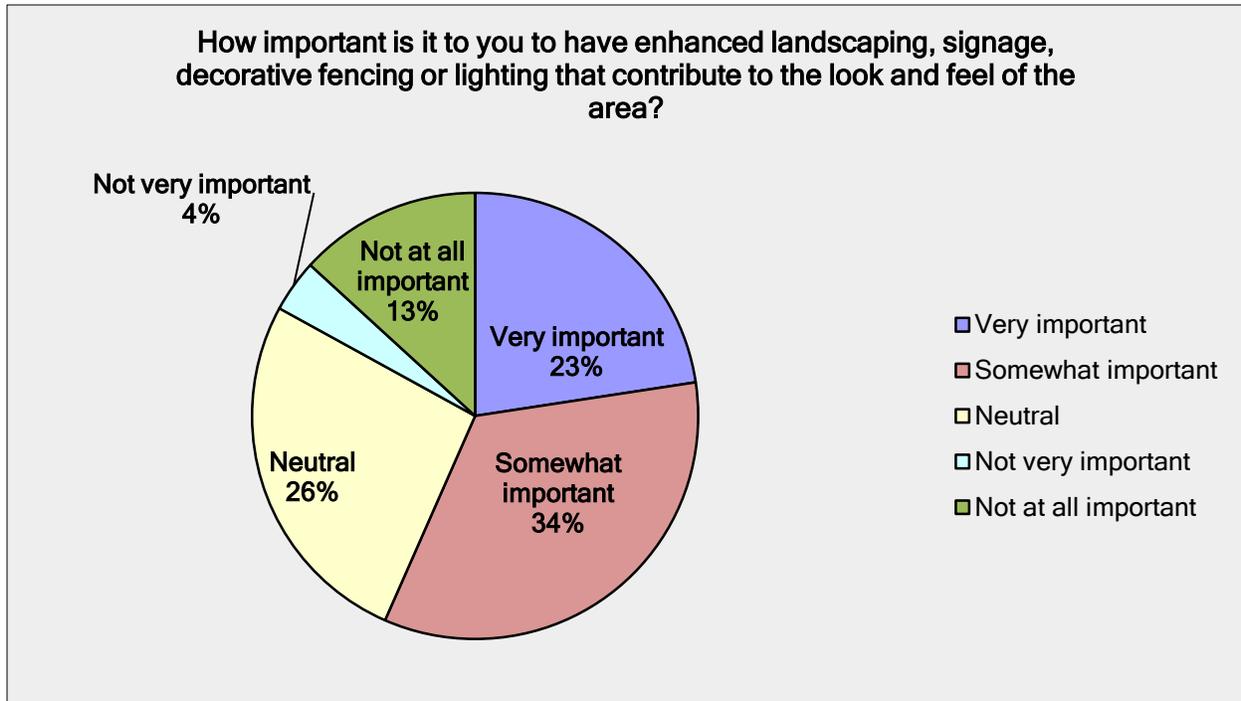
"Many options exist in the town of Selkirk. We are a rural community and should remain one."

"People want a country feel at an affordable rate without going into a 'city' setting."

"Please don't hinder community development over a few squeaky wheels. It's the not in my backyard scenario going on here....please keep in mind the 5% of the community not in favour of this are the only ones complaining and the 95% are for it or indifferent...please make the right decision for the community as a whole".

Results area 3: Neighbourhood character

How important is it to you to have enhanced landscaping, signage, decorative fencing or lighting that contribute to the look and feel of the area?



When asked about the importance of improvements that would contribute to the character of the Colville East area, the majority of responses chose *very important* (23%), *somewhat important* (34%), or *neutral* (26%). Only 13% of respondents felt this was *not at all important*.

A total of 28 comments were received on this question. Some commenters expressed an interest in having bike trails or sidewalks, which would add to the character of the area, but also enhance opportunities for safe walking and biking in East Selkirk.

Many others indicated they were supportive of an attractive community but not at significant additional expense to taxpayers, or that preserving the country, semi-rural feel of the area was important. Others suggested maintaining attractive properties that add to the character of the area was the responsibility of homeowners.

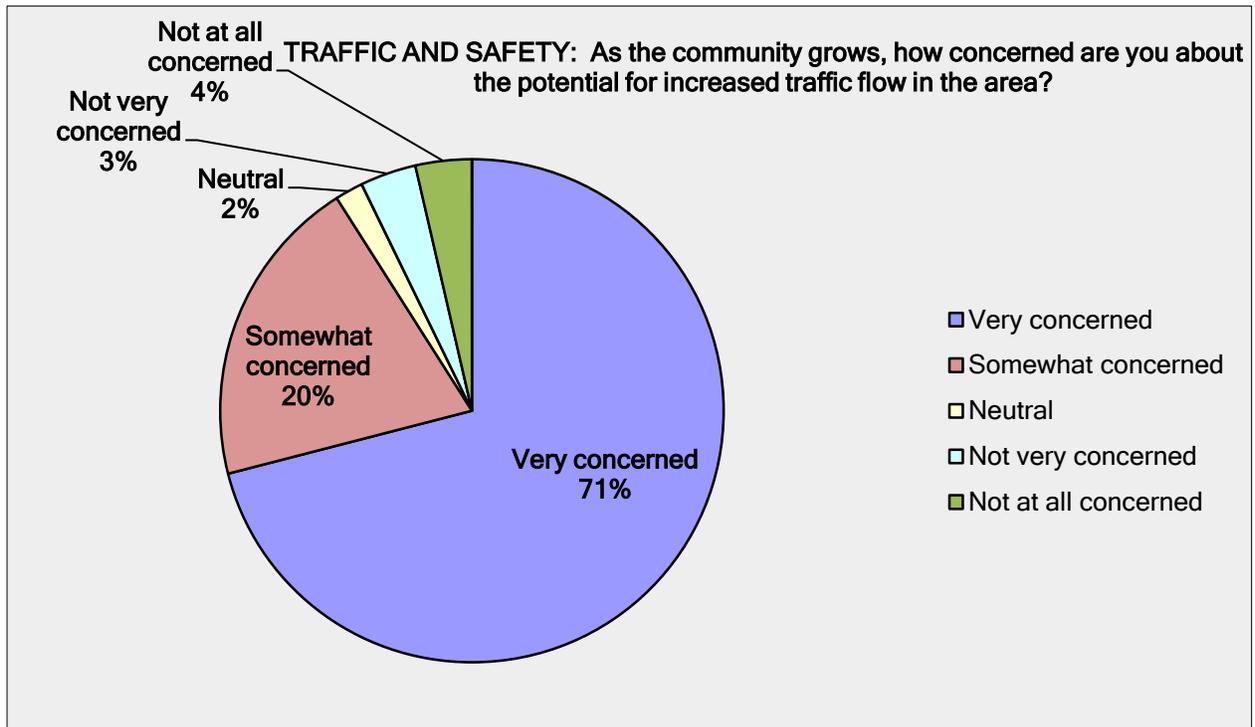
“Sidewalks, trails, parks, flower beds and shrubs would really enhance the look of East Selkirk and make it more welcoming for residents and visits.”

“Sounds nice but not interested in paying for it through taxes.”

“We could focus on more pressing issues before we move towards the further beautification of the community.”

Results area 4: Traffic and safety

As the community grows, how concerned are you about the potential for increased traffic flow in the area?



Traffic and safety was overwhelmingly the main concern of respondents; over 91% say they are *very concerned* (71%) or *somewhat concerned* (20%).

There were 42 comments received on this topic. The main concern expressed was safety at the Colville/Kittson Road and Quarry Road intersection near the proposed Colville Road subdivision.

Commenters wanted to know how the road traffic generated by new development will impact this intersection, Colville Road in general and the route to Selkirk. There were also concerns and questions raised regarding how traffic in and out of new development would be managed – where access points would be located, and how this traffic would be integrated into existing roads, including Frank Street and Two Mile Road.

“Colville Road cannot handle the existing traffic, how can we add more?”

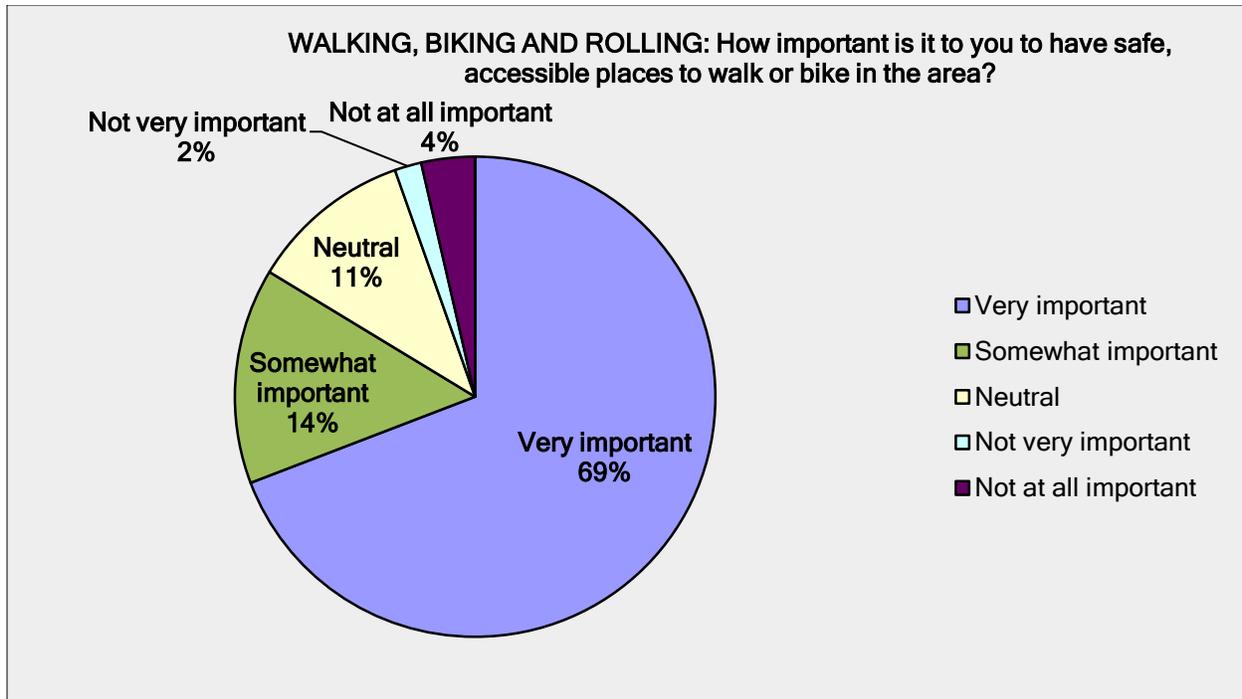
“Too many speeders.”

“We have to find solutions to have better traffic flow in the existing area before we create a new development.”

Many commenters noted traffic on Colville Road is already a concern with speeders, heavy use, truck traffic, and a lack of adequate shoulders and a sidewalk. Also noted among comments was a need for public transit and a desire for traffic analysis.

Results area 5: Walking, biking and rolling

How important is it to you to have safe, accessible places to walk or bike in the area?



When asked about safe, accessible places to walk or bike, the vast majority of respondents (69%) said this is *very important* to them, and an additional 14% said it was *somewhat important*. Only 6% of respondents indicated this was *not at all important* or *not very important*.

One third of the 30 people who commented suggested dedicated trails, paths, or sidewalks are important for safety of residents, particularly children and pets.

Many people would like to see a network of trails/paths throughout both new and existing areas that connect with Selkirk and perhaps the TransCanada Trail.

Again, some people emphasized that they like the idea of paths but don't want to lose the rural feel of the area.



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Several people commented that trails/paths would add to the health, appeal, character and quality of life in the community.

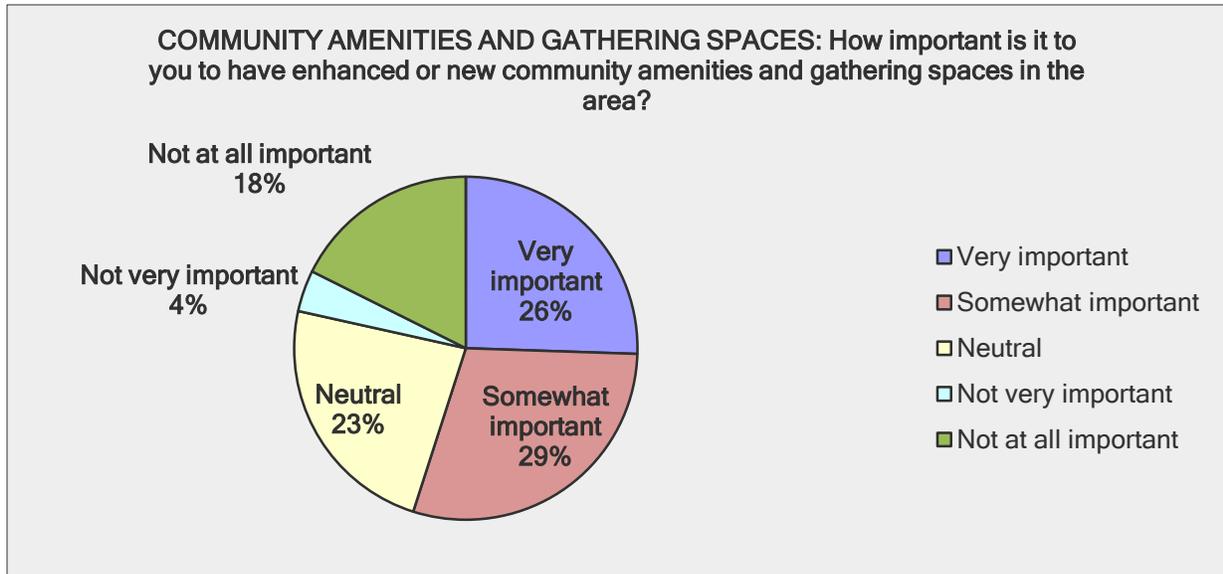
"We currently do not have safe places to bike or walk in East Selkirk. Dedicated biking/walking paths are desperately needed to promote a healthy community."

"Love to have a safe area to walk or hike – a place with picnic tables to sit and park benches. We are definitely lacking in this area."

"Fitness opportunities are critical for community health and to attract new residents to the village lifestyle."

Results area 6: Community amenities and gathering spaces

How important is it to you to have enhanced or new community amenities and gathering spaces in the area?



When asked about the importance of community amenities or gathering spaces, 58% of respondents feel community amenities and gathering spaces are *very important* (27%) or *somewhat important* (31%). 22% of respondents were *neutral* on this topic.

Of the 27 people who commented, several mentioned how they like and use existing places like Legacy Park, the arena, and the paved paths in the school grounds and would like to see them enhanced. Some people commented that East Selkirk is fine as it is right now and no changes/improvements are needed. Other suggestions included:

- Splash park/small pool
- Parks and green space with picnic tables, benches, bike racks, garbage cans, outdoor kitchens, fire pits, bandstand
- Outdoor ice rink
- Youth recreational activities
- Improvement to Cook's Creek boat launch such as better boat access, trails, garbage cans, bike racks

"A park, especially at Cook's Creek or near the RM office with benches, picnic tables, garbage cans and a bike rack would be great."

"Preserve as much green space, especially trees, as possible. It is a large part of the draw and tranquility of village living."

Results area 7: About respondents

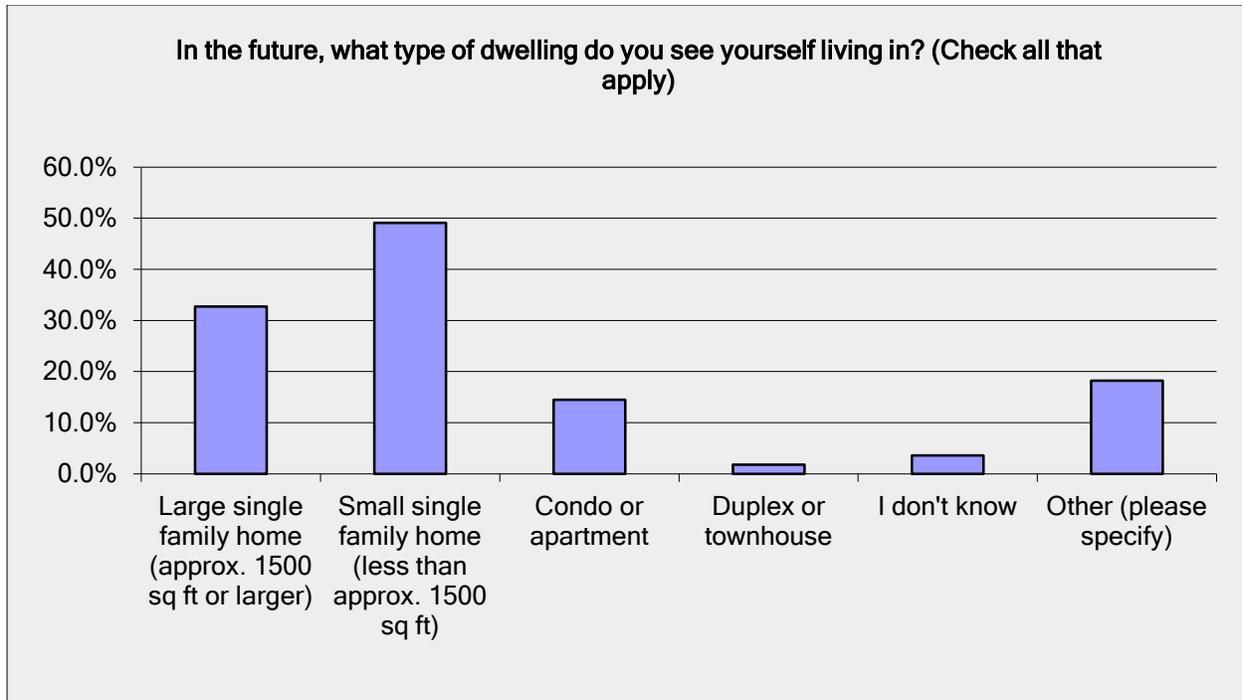


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Over 100 people from East Selkirk and surrounding areas participated in the consultation process. Almost half of open house attendees were residents on Colville Road (23), Frank Street (9), and Two Mile Road (9).

On the survey, six questions focused on learning a bit more about who was responding: age, where they live, where they might live in the future.

Almost two thirds of respondents were 55 years old or younger (62%). When asked where they lived now, and where they might live in the future, virtually all respondents to the survey indicated that they currently live in a single family home, with slightly more (51%) indicating they live in a "large" home over 1500sq ft.



When asked where they might live in the future, the responses showed more variation, with some respondents interested in downsizing from large single family homes in the future. The number of respondents who saw themselves in a *large single family home* went down to 33%, while 49% indicated they would see themselves in a *smaller single family home*, and 17% in a *condo, apartment, duplex or townhouse*.

Results area 8: Additional comments

Citizens had the opportunity to submit comments by email, discuss and submit questions and comments in person at the open house, or via the survey form. In addition to the topic-specific comments and themes described in the previous sections, several respondents shared more general comments. Key themes included:

- Concern over losing or compromising the country feel of the village.
- Opposition to construction of multi-unit dwellings in the Colville Road subdivision.
- Traffic safety and infrastructure problems must be addressed before new development proceeds.
- Concern over the planning process, accountability, poor communication and project management by the RM in the past, consideration of current residents, and transparency of the RM.
- Pleased with the integrated planning process and vision of the RM.



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4.0 How your input will be used

Thank you for your important input. Your Council will review this report and prepare a draft resolution to guide future development in the Colville East and East Selkirk area. **We ask all concerned citizens to take a moment to review the report and the draft resolution and email any suggestions to cao@rmofstclements.com prior to August 16, 2015.** These further comments will be shared with Council members for their final deliberation of this guideline.

The RM of St. Clements Council and administration is committed to considering the important input received through this consultation process to help shape a concept plan which will guide development in the Colville East area.

The RM is committed to keeping citizens fully informed at each stage of planning and development and citizens are encouraged to stay connected as this work continues. Information will be shared through updates on the website, Facebook, e-mail and newsletters. Please consider signing up to receive updates from us by:

- Sending your e-mail address to communications@rmofstclements.com, and requesting to sign up for e-mail updates
- Going to the 'Home' page of our website at <http://www.rmofstclements.com/> and clicking "Register with us" in the bottom right hand corner of the page
- Going to our [Rural Municipality of St. Clements Facebook page](#) and click "Share your e-mail..." under Apps in the left hand column

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