

2025

Town of Dunstable

www.dunstable-ma.gov

Annual Resident Survey Results



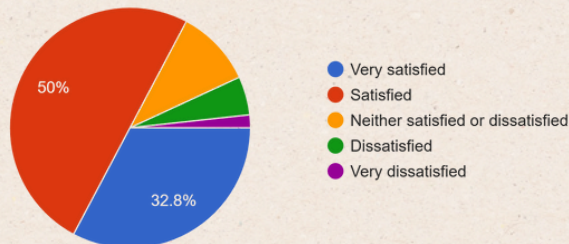
The Town of Dunstable conducted a resident survey to gather community feedback on issues, priorities, and perceptions regarding local governance, services, and quality of life. This survey aimed to better understand residents' concerns and preferences, enabling town leadership to make informed decisions that align with the community's needs - 116 residents completed the survey.

The survey covered a range of topics, including satisfaction with town services, challenges, budget priorities, and communication preferences. Responses were collected from a cross-section of residents, reflecting a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences.

This report provides a detailed analysis of the survey results, highlighting trends, insights, and areas for improvement. It also includes visual representations of key findings to ensure clarity and accessibility for stakeholders. The goal of this report is to foster transparency, help guide policy discussions, and enhance community engagement as the town plans for the future.

Question #1

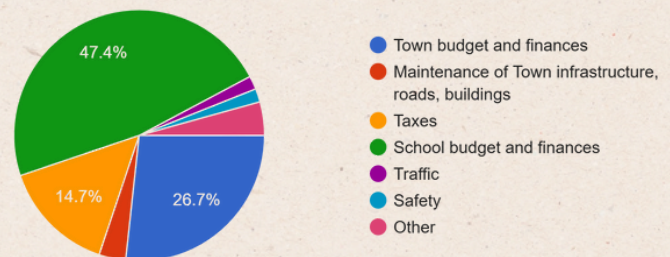
How would you describe your overall opinion of Dunstable Town Government (Town Hall, Police, and Fire, Highway, Boards/Committees)?



A combined 82.8% of respondents had an overall opinion of satisfied or very satisfied of Town Government with 6.9% being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Question #2

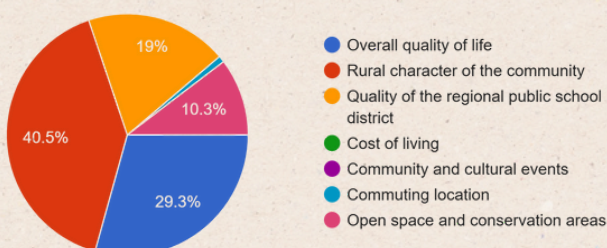
Select the single biggest issue facing Dunstable.



47.4% of respondents identified school budget and finances as the single biggest issue facing Dunstable, followed by concerns about the town budget and finances.

Question #3

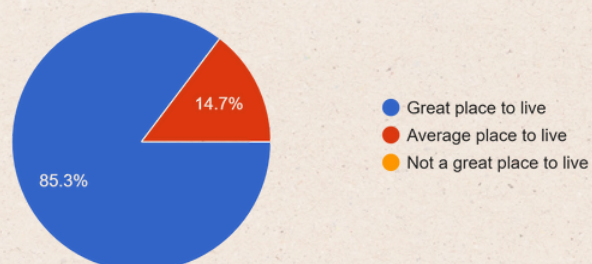
What do you like most about the Town of Dunstable?



Respondents primarily like the community's rural character most with the overall quality of life and the quality of the regional public school district ranked as second and third, respectively.

Question #13

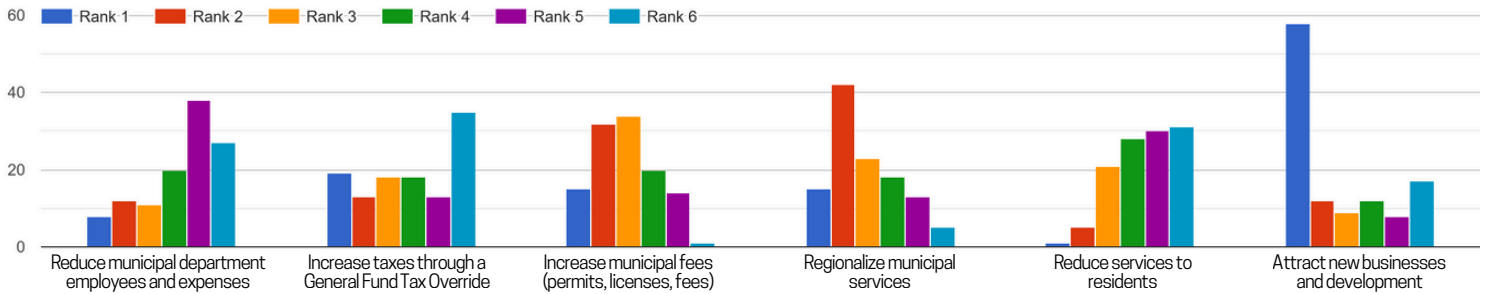
How do you rate Dunstable as a place to live?



A significant majority of respondents rated Dunstable as a "great place to live," underscoring the town's appeal with no residents rating the Town as "not a great place to live."

Question #4

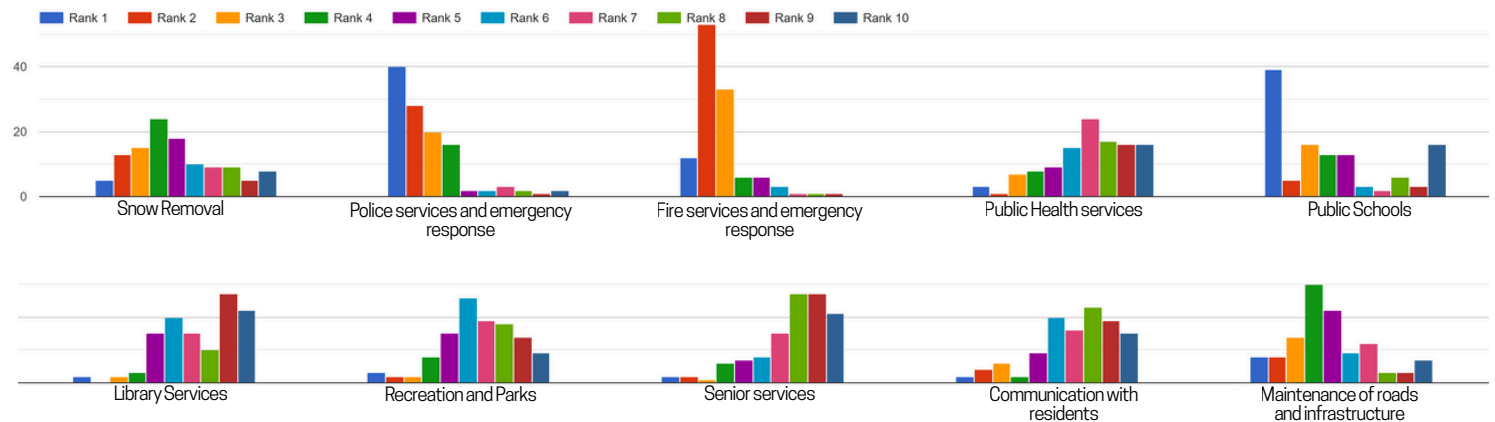
If the Town faces another budget shortfall, please rank the following options to help close the budget gap (1 is most supportive and 6 is least supportive)



Overall, respondents most strongly supported attracting new businesses and development as the preferred way to close a budget gap, while reducing services to residents was consistently ranked among the least favorable options. Regionalizing services and increasing fees received mixed, mid-range support, while tax overrides and reductions in municipal staffing tended to draw more lower rankings.

Question #5

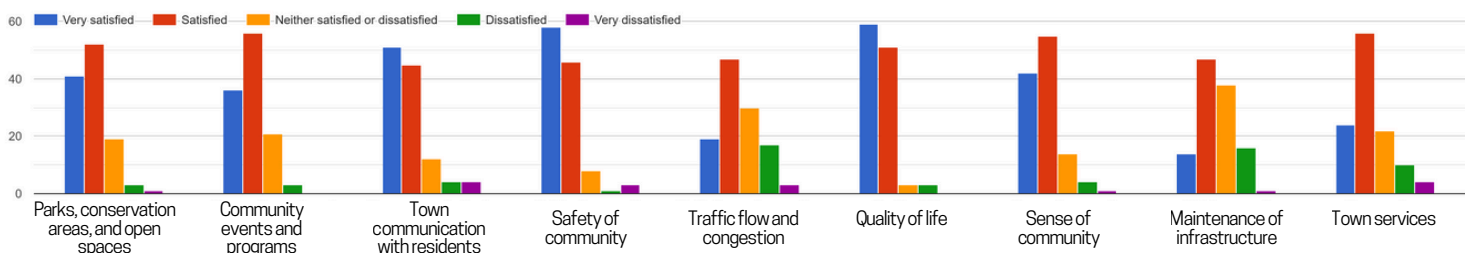
Please rank the importance of the following town services to you. (1 is most important, 10 is least important)



Public safety services, including police, fire, and emergency response, were most frequently ranked as the highest priorities with strong consensus among residents. Public schools ranked high overall but showed a more divided response, with rankings spread across both higher and lower importance. Road and infrastructure maintenance also rated as a strong priority. Public health, senior services, recreational and parks, library services, and communication with residents tended to receive mid to lower rankings. The results seem to indicate that these services are seen as secondary compared to core services like safety and infrastructure.

Question #6

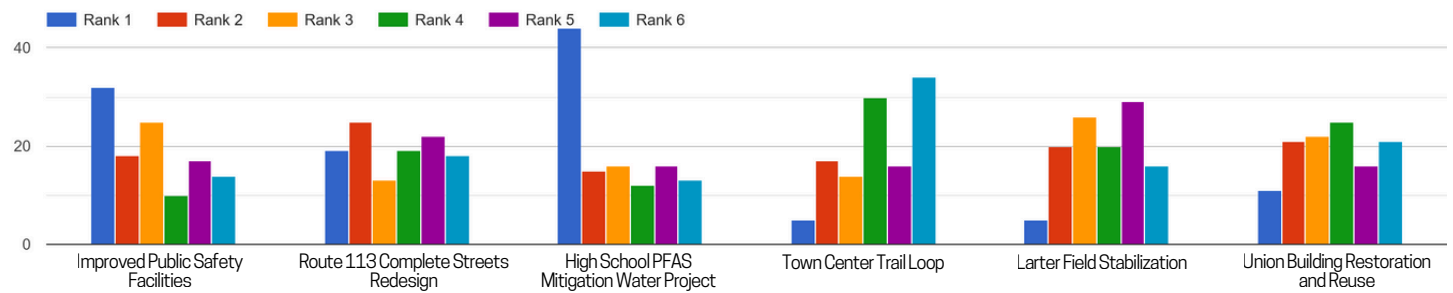
How satisfied are you with the following in Dunstable?



Overall, satisfaction is strongest for quality of life, community safety, sense of community, parks and open space, and communication with residents where a clear majority of respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied. Town services and community events also received generally positive ratings, with a slightly higher share of neutral responses. Traffic flow and congestion and maintenance of infrastructure were the weakest ranked areas, drawing the highest levels of neutral and dissatisfied responses representing opportunities for improvement.

Question #7

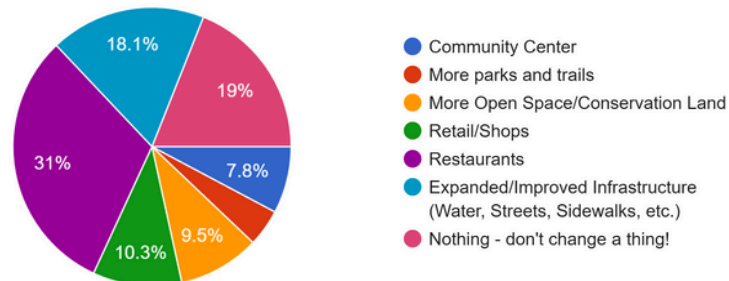
Please rank the importance of the following capital projects and needs (1 is most important and 6 is least important):



Overall, respondents ranked the High School PFAS Mitigation Water Project and improved public safety facilities as highest ranked project priorities. The Union Building Restoration and Reuse, Route 113 Complete Streets Redesign, and Larter Field Stabilization projects received mixed, mid-range support from respondents with the Town Center Trail Loop project generally receiving the lowest rankings.

Question #8

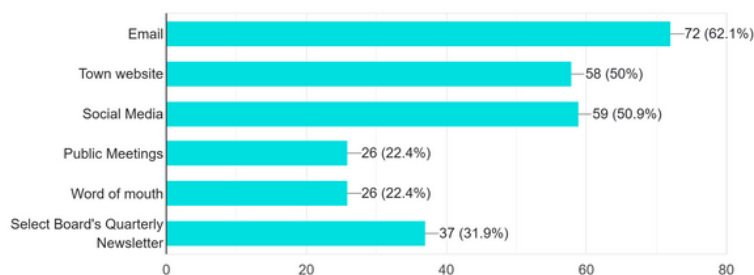
What is currently missing from the Town of Dunstable which, if present, would improve the quality of life for residents?



Responses show a desire for more restaurants which are cited most frequently as the missing element that would improve quality of life. A large share of residents also chose expanded or improved infrastructure (such as water, streets, and sidewalks), while interest in retail/shops, more open space, and a community center was moderate. Nearly one in five respondents indicated that nothing is missing, suggesting a significant portion of residents are satisfied with the town as it is today.

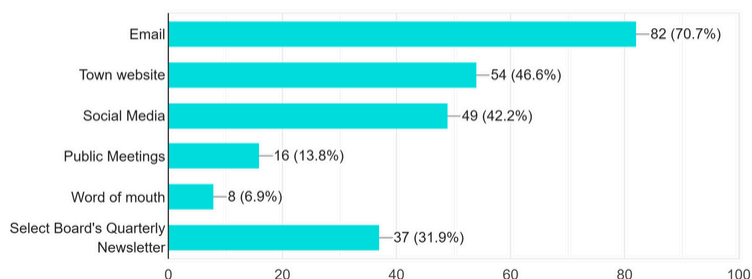
Question #9 and #10

How do you usually get information about Town Government in Dunstable?



The most common ways residents currently get information about Town Government include email, the town website, and social media.

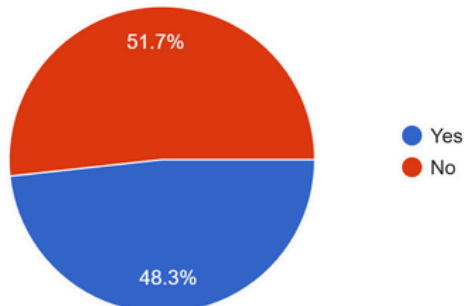
How would you prefer to get information about Town Government in Dunstable?



Respondents overwhelmingly prefer email as the primary method to receive information. The Town website and social media also rank as strong secondary options. The Select Board's quarterly newsletter serves as a meaningful but more limited audience. Public meetings and word of mouth were least preferred, indicating residents favor more accessible means of communication.

Question #11

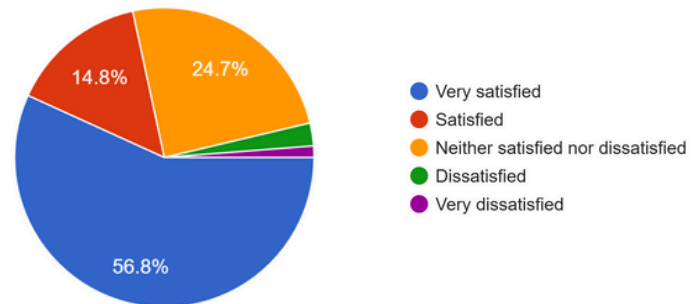
In the last 12 months, have you contacted the Town for information or service requests?



Almost half of respondents reported contacting the town within the past 12 months for information or service requests.

Question #12

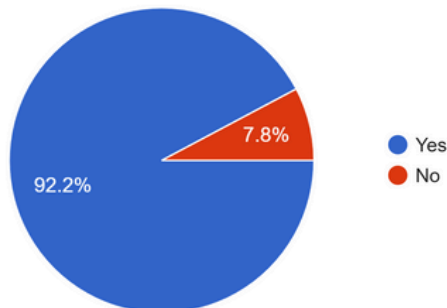
If so, how satisfied were you with your interaction with the Town official you most recently had contact?



Resident interaction with Town officials are overall viewed very positively, with more than half of respondents reporting they were very satisfied and another 15% were satisfied. About a quarter of respondents felt neutral about their experience, while 3.7% of respondents were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Question #13

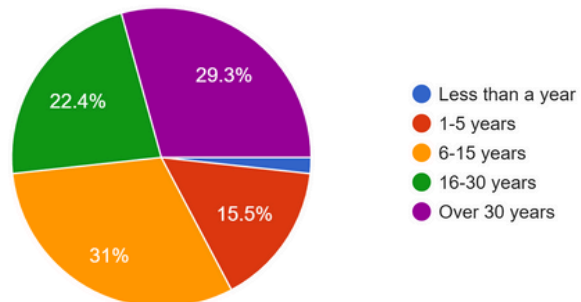
Would you recommend Dunstable as a place to live?



Nearly all respondents stated they would recommend Dunstable as a place to live.

Question #14

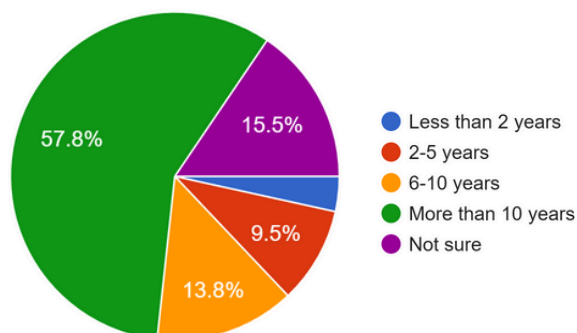
How long have you lived in Dunstable?



A majority of respondents have lived in Dunstable for more than six years. The largest share of respondents reported 6-15 years of residency, followed by those who have lived in town over 30 years and 16-30 years, respectively. Newer residents represent a small portion of responses.

Question #15

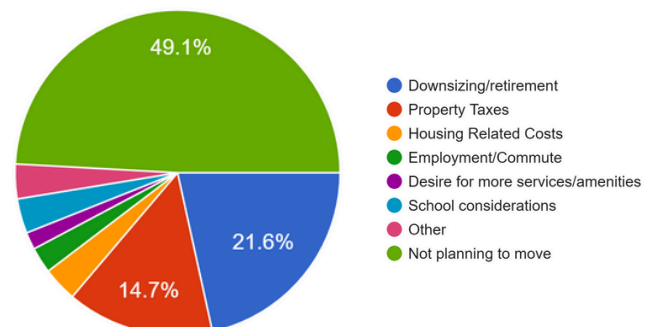
How long do you expect to continue living in Dunstable?



Nearly six in ten respondents expect to remain in Dunstable for more than 10 years. A smaller group anticipate staying 6-10 years or less, and 15.5% are unsure.

Question #16

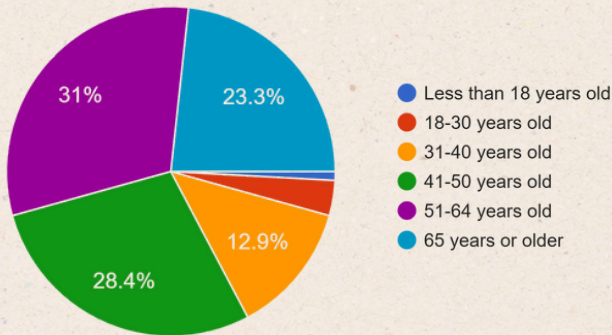
If you are planning to move from Dunstable, what is the primary reason?



Almost half of the respondents indicated they are not planning to move. For those who are considering moving, the most common reason is downsizing/retirement followed by property taxes. Other options such as housing costs, employment/commute, or school considerations were selected far less frequently.

Question #17

What age group are you in?



The majority of survey respondents are older than 40 years of age, with the largest shares in the 51-64 and 41-50 age groups, followed by a substantial portion 65 and older. Younger adults, particularly those under 30, are underrepresented.

2023 vs. 2024 vs. 2025

How would you describe your overall opinion of Dunstable Town Government (Town Hall, Police, and Fire, Highway, Boards/Committees)?

2023 Results

Very Satisfied: 23.3%
Satisfied: 44.8%
TOTAL: 68.1%

2024 Results

Very Satisfied: 38.4%
Satisfied: 41.6%
TOTAL: 80%

2025 Results

Very Satisfied: 32.8%
Satisfied: 50%
TOTAL: 82.8%

2024 vs. 2025

What do you like most about the Town of Dunstable?

2024 Results

Rural character of the community: 36%
Overall quality of life: 29.6%
Quality of the regional school district: 27.2%
Open space and conservation areas: 4.8%

2025 Results

Rural character of the community: 40.5%
Overall quality of life: 29.3%
Quality of the regional school district: 19%
Open space and conservation areas: 10.3%

How satisfied were you with your interaction with the Town official you most recently had contact?

2023 Results

Very Satisfied: 38.4%
Satisfied: 22.4%
TOTAL: 60.8%

2024 Results

Very Satisfied: 57.6%
Satisfied: 19.6%
TOTAL: 77.2%

2025 Results

Very Satisfied: 56.8%
Satisfied: 14.8%
TOTAL: 71.6%

Select the single biggest issue facing Dunstable.

2024 Results

School budget and finances: 54.4%
Town budget and finances: 26.4%
Property taxes: 9.6%

2025 Results

School budget and finances: 47.4%
Town budget and finances: 26.7%
Property taxes: 14.7%

While the 2025 Town of Dunstable Resident Survey is not a scientific survey, it serves as an important tool for gathering community feedback and is one component of the Town's broader strategy to engage residents and solicit community feedback.

The survey provides important insights into residents' priorities, satisfaction levels, and goals for the future. Respondents expressed strong support for maintaining essential services such as public safety and infrastructure, while also raising concerns about issues related to school funding and the Town's long-term financial picture. The results further highlight Dunstable's appeal as a place to live, with high levels of satisfaction related to its rural character, quality of life, and sense of community.

As the Town continues to navigate both challenges and opportunities, these findings will be part of a foundation for informed decision-making. By addressing resident concerns, strengthening communication and engagement, and prioritizing the services and values most important to the community, Dunstable's leadership boards and committees can build on existing strengths and foster greater transparency and understanding.

This survey reflects the Town's ongoing commitment to involving residents in planning, decision-making, and local governance.