



TOWN OF POUGHKEEPSIE

Natural Resources Inventory and Open Space Plan

TOWN OF POUGHKEEPSIE OPEN SPACE SURVEY SUMMARY

A. Survey Overview

As part of the public engagement component of the Town of Poughkeepsie Town-wide Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) and Open Space Plan, an online survey was developed. The purpose of the survey is to identify what the community’s vision and priorities are for open space in the Town of Poughkeepsie. The information gathered from the survey and other public engagement will help shape the vision and goals for the Town of Poughkeepsie Open Space Plan. The Open Space Plan will identify priorities for protection and create a foundation for future implementation of conservation projects.

A twenty (20) question online survey was created and distributed using the Survey Monkey platform. The survey opened on June 21, 2021 and remained open until July 31, 2021 with 618 responses received.

The survey was made available on the project website at www.townofpoughkeepsieopenspace.com.

Information and links to the survey were also distributed during the survey period on flyers and on the towns cable channel which included a Quick Response (QR) code for direct access to the survey on a smartphone or tablet.

Data Limitations

The survey is one of multiple public engagement activities intended to gather input from the community. The survey responses are self-selecting and are not statistically valid. The survey alone cannot be used to find the “answer” or “solution” but can in part help identify common themes and trends.

B. Survey Topic Areas

The survey was organized around the following components: Participant Information, Open Space Priorities, Visioning Questions, and Other Thoughts.

This project is funded, in part, through a grant from the New York State Environmental Protection fund through the Hudson River Estuary Program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC).



TOWN OF POUGHKEEPSIE

Natural Resources Inventory & Open Space Plan



Online Open Space Survey

The Town of Poughkeepsie wants to hear your thoughts and ideas about the preservation and use of open space in Poughkeepsie! The Town has initiated the development of a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) and Open Space Plan. The purpose of this survey is to identify the community’s vision and priorities for open space. The information gathered will help shape the vision and goals for the Town of Poughkeepsie Open Space Plan. Take the survey and be a part of the process! The survey closes on July 31st, 2021.

Take the online survey through the project website:
www.townofpoughkeepsieopenspace.com/survey

OR

Scan the QR code on your mobile device to access the survey

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For more information visit:
www.townofpoughkeepsieopenspace.com

Survey Flyer

Participant Information

Participant Information focused on who was taking the survey. Questions asked about demographic information and how survey participants interact with town. Getting a broad range of survey participants from the local area is important to address the needs of different demographics. Understanding age and the total number of people in a household help inform how to address the needs of the community. Furthermore, knowing that responses are representative of a variety of community members can assist in inclusive decision making.

Open Space Priorities

This section asked about open space visitation, the types of activities patrons enjoy, and how they travel to the areas. Questions about the types of open spaces they would like to see more of in the Town and specific natural areas or features that they would like to see protected for future generations.

Visioning

Visioning questions focused on the importance of maintaining open spaces, the top three concerns or challenges, and top three opportunities patrons see relating to open space for the Town of Poughkeepsie.

Other Thoughts

The last question was an open-ended option for people to note any additional ideas relating to the future of open space in the Town of Poughkeepsie as well as, upload any open space photos they would like to share.

C. [Survey Highlights](#)

The following is a brief highlight of each question of the survey. For the full survey results see the attached survey questions and responses.

Participant Information

Question 1 (Q1) asked participants to select all that apply to them with options including Business Owner, Property Owner, Resident, Visitor, Student, and Person Requiring Accommodation. The most selected option was Resident of Town of Poughkeepsie with 419 people (68%). Property owner was the next most selected with 371 (60%) and the third most selected was Work in Town of Poughkeepsie (22%).

Question 2 (Q2) of the survey asked survey respondents to indicate their age. The largest age group was the 55-64 years old age group (25%). Of the 605 responses, 19% were in the 65-74-year-old age group, 17% were in the 35-44 year old age group, and 13% in the 45-54 year old. Having multiple responders from a differing age range can help identify particular needs of opportunities of the different age groups.

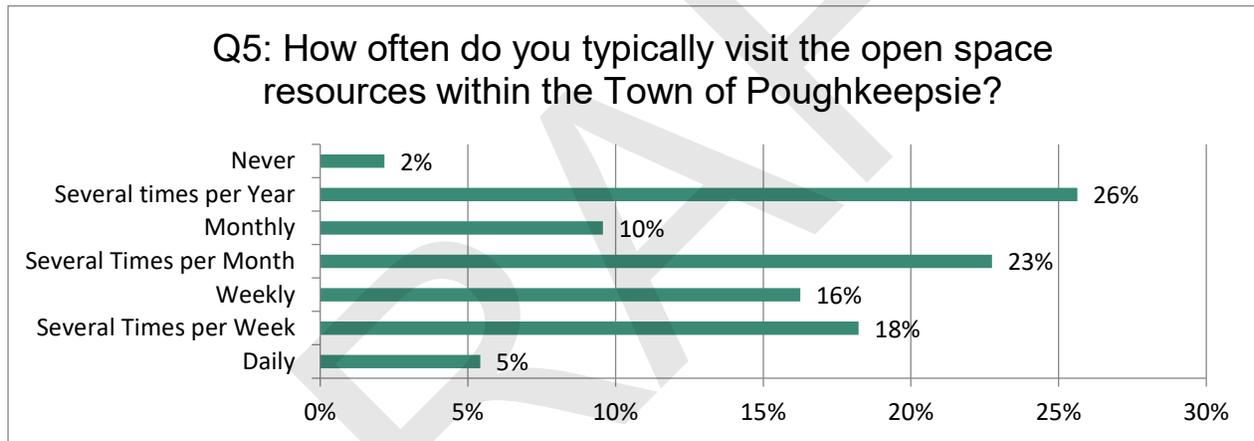
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Question 3 (Q3) of the survey asked survey respondents to select the number of people in their household below the age of 18. This question helps to understand the makeup of households of survey respondents which may provide an indication of their needs from an open space and natural resources standpoint. Based on the response, approximately 64% of the 603 responses to this question have no children in their household below the age of 18.

Open Space Priorities

Question 4 (Q4) asked survey respondents to select the space resources include that they have visited or used in the last year. Of the 32 response choices, the top ten (10) visited include Dutchess Rail Trail (83%), Bowdoin Park (66%), Vassar College (59%), Locust Grove Estate (52%), and Vassar Farms (43%). Quiet Cove Riverfront Park (39%), Peach Hill Park (34%), Greenvale Park (27%), Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery (25%), and Wappinger Creek Greenway Trail (20%).

Question 5 (Q5) asked survey respondents how often they typically visit the open space resources within the Town of Poughkeepsie. Of the responses received 39% visited weekly or more, 10% selected monthly and 23% selected several times per month.



Question 6 (Q6) asked survey respondents to select how they usually travel to open space resources in the Town of Poughkeepsie. By a large margin, a car was the most selected mode of transportation (82%). Walking was selected by 11% and bike was selected by 5%.

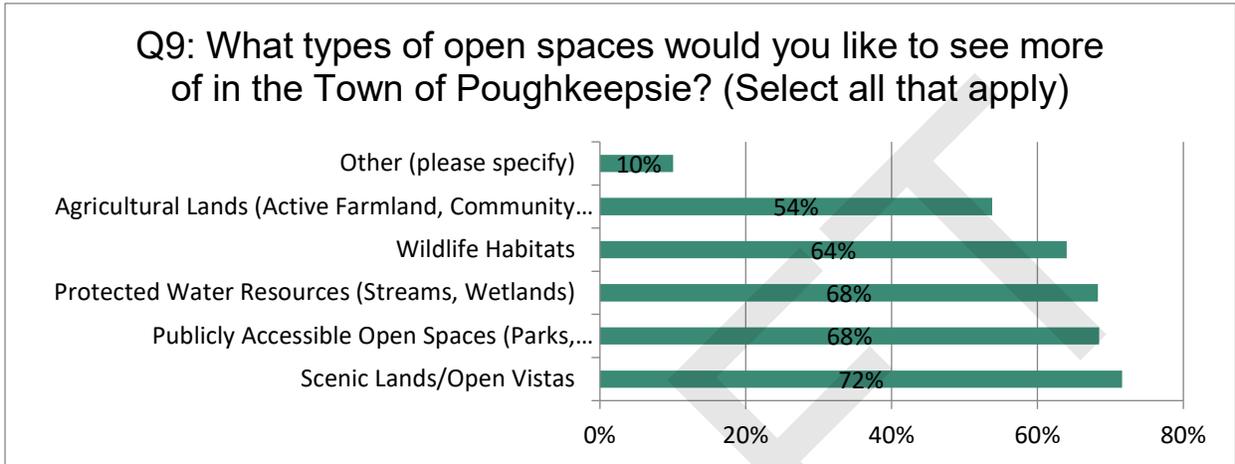
Question 7 (Q7) asked survey respondents to select all the activities they participate in open space resources. The top five (5) activities that were selected by the respondents are Hiking/Walking on nature trails (78%), Walking/Biking on paved trails (70%), Exercise (54%), Bird watching/ Wildlife viewing (46%), and Farmers Markets (39%).

Question 8 (Q8) asked survey respondents if their interest in open spaces changed in the past year. Of the responses received 35% selected that their interest increased, 32% selected stayed the same and 24% selected increased significantly. Due to COVID-19 this is an important consideration as towns are

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experiencing a larger number of people using their outdoor spaces thus bringing more attention to available resources.

Question 9 (Q9) asked survey respondents what types of open spaces they would like to see more of in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Overall the resources listed all received 50% or more in favor the most selected was Scenic Lands/ Open Vistas with 72%.

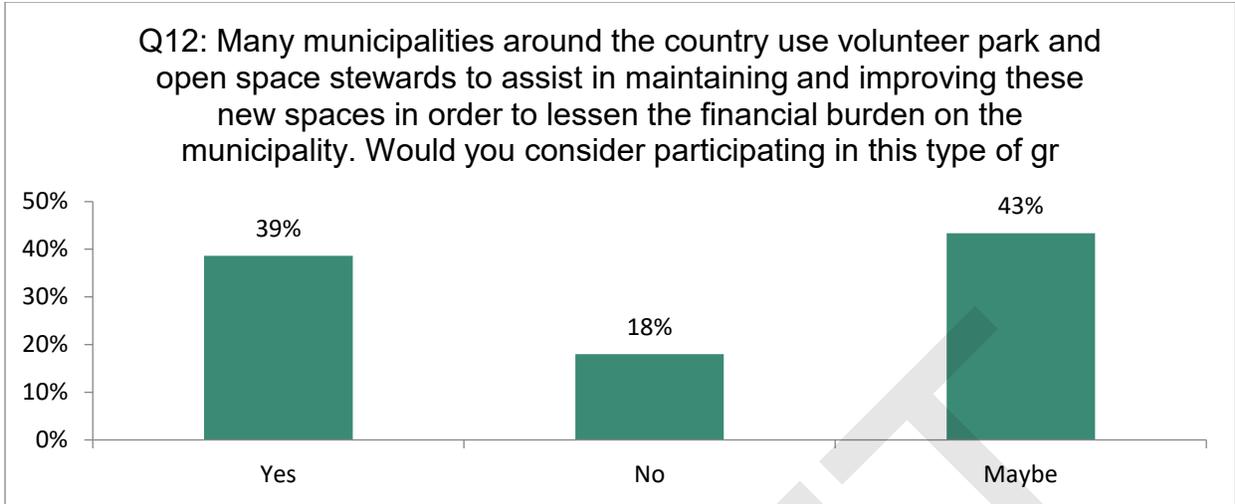


Question 10 (Q10) was an open-ended question asking if there specific natural areas or features within the Town of Poughkeepsie that participants would like to see protected for future generations. Common mentions include the waterfront areas along the Hudson River, any areas that have endangered species as well as future development should consider how they affect the open spaces.

Question 11 (Q11) asked survey respondents if open spaces may require funding for conservation or for ongoing maintenance and improvements, would they be supportive of creating a public mechanism to fund the maintenance and upkeep of spaces. The large majority selected strongly support (54%) and support (21%). Only a small percentage (3%) showed any opposition and the remaining 22% selected need more information. Through this process introducing concepts and giving resources for people to learn more about open space conservation is a great way to spread valuable information.

Question 12 (Q12) stated many municipalities around the country use volunteer park and open space stewards to assist in maintaining and improving new spaces in order to lessen the financial burden on the municipality. And asked if the respondent would consider participating in this type of group. The question got a mix of responses with Maybe getting the most (43%) by a small margin followed by, Yes (39%) and finally No (18%)

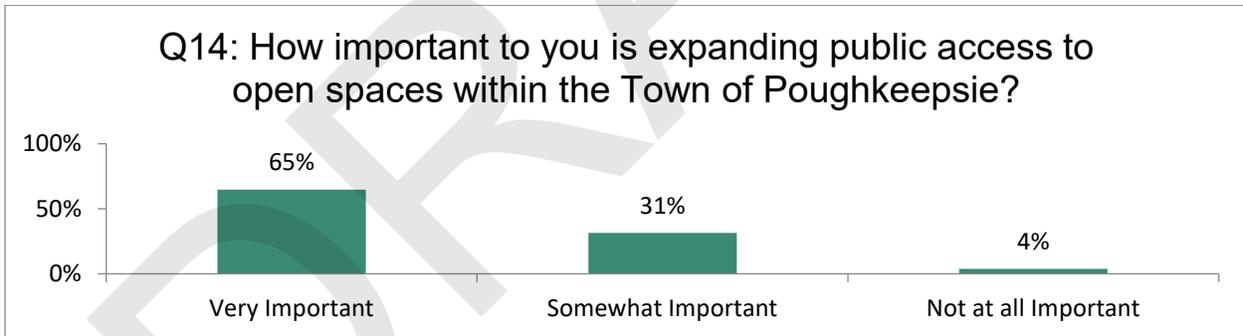
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Question 13 (Q13) was an open-ended question asking participants to describe in a few words why maintaining open spaces in the Town of Poughkeepsie is important. Some themes that emerged from the answers include preserving the natural habitat improves the quality of life for residents and visitors, allows people free activities, and protecting open space is crucial in battling climate change.

Visioning

Question 14 (Q14) asked survey respondents how important is expanding public access to open spaces within the Town of Poughkeepsie. The majority (65%) stated very important, 31% selected somewhat important, and only a small percentage (4%) state not at all important.



Question 15 (Q15) asked survey respondents how important is conserving additional open spaces (public and/or private) within the Town of Poughkeepsie. Like the previous question, the majority (76%) stated very important, 21% selected somewhat important, and only a small percentage (3%) state not at all important

Question 16 (Q16) asked survey respondents to identify the top 3 concerns or challenges relating to open space for the Town of Poughkeepsie. The top answer was development, followed by maintenance and funding.

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Question 17 (Q17) asked survey respondents identify the top 3 opportunities relating to open space for the Town of Poughkeepsie. The top noted answer was tourism followed by education and preservation of what resources the Town has.

Other Thoughts

Question 18 (Q18) was an open-ended option for respondents to note any additional comment or ideas relating to the future of open space in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Of the 153 respondents who answered (465 skipped) the most common recurring suggestions were for the town to foster the open spaces they have and continue to create open space preservation and be mindful of where development goes so it does not intrude open space preservation.

Question 19 (Q19) was an optional photo upload from the survey participants to share their favorite photo of open spaces from around the Town of Poughkeepsie. A total of 40 photographs were shared.

Question 20 (Q20) was a follow up to question 19 the photo upload, to identify where the photo was taken.

The results from the survey will be reviewed by the NRI/Open Space Plan Steering Committee. Ultimately, these responses will help to inform vision, goals and priorities for the Town of Poughkeepsie Open Space Plan.

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