

What We've Heard So Far

Visioning Survey Results



Town of Salem Master Plan

By the numbers

This online survey was active for **2 months** from March 12 - May 12, 2024.

How it works: participants vote on short statements submitted by others who have already voted. Participants can also submit their own statements for later participants to vote on. An algorithm sorts participants into like-minded groups based on their votes and identifies consensus statements that the majority agrees upon.

809
people
voted

714
people
grouped

423
statements
submitted

64,129
votes
cast

Who participated?

85%
live in Salem

77%
homeowners

39%
work in Salem

90%
shop in Salem

What was the conversation like?



Two distinct opinion groups emerged from the conversation based on different attitudes towards public investment in shared amenities and infrastructure.

Opinion Group A

182 people

91% residents | **84%** homeowners | **93%** shoppers | **52%** workers

This group valued doing the basics well and maintaining what Salem has with cautious public spending on expansion of amenities and recreation infrastructure like bike and pedestrian infrastructure and gathering places.

Statement	Group A	Group B
Cars are a fact of life in Salem, and focusing on bicycles and pedestrian access is a waste of resources.	66% 20% 13%	13% 72% 13%
Promote/recruit fine arts, theater, etc. Large, diverse park (Windham), appeals to/access all ages.	11% 73% 15%	77% 5% 16%
Salem should invest in more recreational opportunities and locations, placemaking, community spaces, and public art.	14% 69% 16%	80% 4% 14%
Salem needs more sidewalks, parks, and regulation of speed zones around schools.	8% 74% 16%	80% 5% 13%
Salem should focus on walkability improvements and investing in infrastructure to get around town without the need for a car.	16% 69% 13%	75% 9% 14%

Opinion Group B

532 people

83% residents | **75%** homeowners | **89%** shoppers | **34%** workers

This group wanted to see public investment in amenities and infrastructure focused on the environment, recreation, and arts and culture, with a focus around schools and gathering places.

Statement	Group A	Group B
Salem should invest in more recreational opportunities and locations, placemaking, community spaces, and public art.	14% 69% 16%	80% 4% 14%
Promote/recruit fine arts, theater, etc. Large, diverse park (Windham), appeals to/access all ages.	11% 73% 15%	77% 5% 16%
I support the idea of maintaining, improving, connecting, and expanding natural systems in a linked network of parks, open spaces, and waterways, including street trees and public spaces.	31% 49% 18%	88% 2% 8%
Salem should work to create new recreational spaces, while improving existing ones.	29% 50% 19%	90% 1% 8%
Salem needs public parks, public transportation, and more cultural events.	5% 85% 8%	76% 12% 11%

What are the takeaways?

While opinions varied on how to approach the following goals, over 50% of participants agree that Salem needs to invest in:

- a vibrant **Town Center**
- safer and more connected **sidewalks**
- a linked network of **quality parks, open spaces, and waterways**
- quality **housing** that fits within residents' budgets

See below for detailed voting patterns on key issues:

	% Agreed	% Disagreed	% Passed	% Didn't Vote
Statement	Overall 714	Group A 182	Group B 532	
A vibrant Town Center active through the evening hours will be an asset to the entire town.	70% 16% 12%	53% 34% 12%	78% 9% 12%	
The Town should invest in enhancing and/or connecting existing sidewalks .	71% 18% 10%	40% 47% 11%	84% 5% 9%	
I support the idea of maintaining, improving, connecting, and expanding quality natural systems in a linked network of parks, open spaces, and waterways , including street trees and public spaces.	71% 16% 11%	31% 49% 18%	88% 2% 8%	
Cars are a fact of life in Salem, and focusing on bicycles and pedestrian access is a waste of resources.	29% 57% 13%	66% 20% 13%	13% 72% 13%	
If I need to move, I am confident I can find quality housing in the town that fits my household needs and budget.	19% 62% 17%	22% 62% 15%	18% 62% 19%	
Future development should encourage higher density and taller buildings along the Rt-28 corridor.	24% 60% 15%	16% 77% 6%	27% 53% 18%	
I like the idea of adding more multi-family buildings to increase housing supply options in Salem.	33% 53% 12%	6% 84% 8%	43% 41% 14%	
The Town should investigate various energy/electric sources and contract to reduce utility bills .	77% 9% 13%	67% 19% 13%	82% 3% 14%	