



SURVEY
SUMMARY

COMMUNITY IDENTITY &
INCLUSION

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THE PERSPECTIVE

"We enjoy the slower pace of life here in Digby. The people are friendly and always willing to help each other. The rural setting and the beautiful scenery are something that stole my heart immediately and the people I've since met and grown to love were just the added bonus."

When survey participants were asked what they liked most about their community, a majority mentioned the people around them and several noted the quiet rural lifestyle.

Concerns were raised about a weakening of community identity, caused by the youth out-migration and a loss of services, organizations and activities within small communities. Some respondents also noted a related concern that decisions and resources are being centralized;

decisions are being made in Halifax for rural Nova Scotia and opportunities are brought to Digby but not to smaller communities.

A few participants also identified concerns about loss of heritage and culture. Others noted experiences of racism and prejudice, and how this factor impacts negatively on all aspects of life. While some people feel supported and cared for within their community, others feel excluded.

"(We should have) more local, small rural communities, cohesiveness. We have lost the local churches and halls, with that goes the loss of community identity."

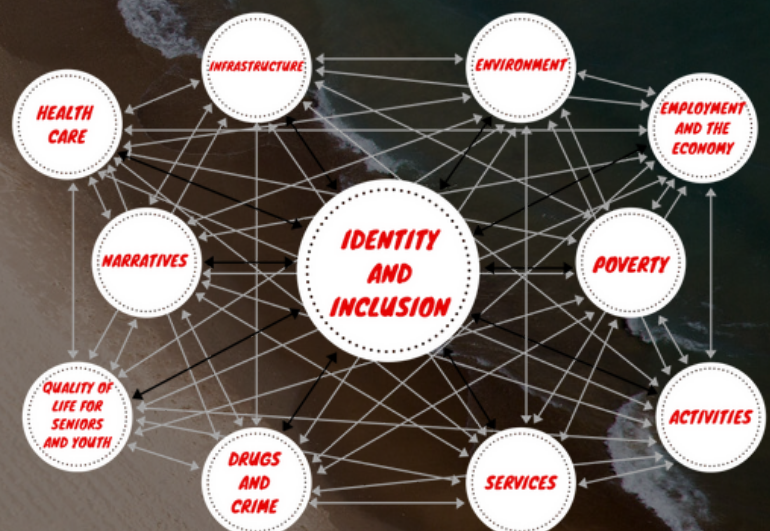
"(Concerns about) the continued impact of racism, marginalization and the oppression of the African Nova Scotia Section community."

CROSSING THEMES

The Community Identity & Inclusion theme has many tensions and interconnections between themes:

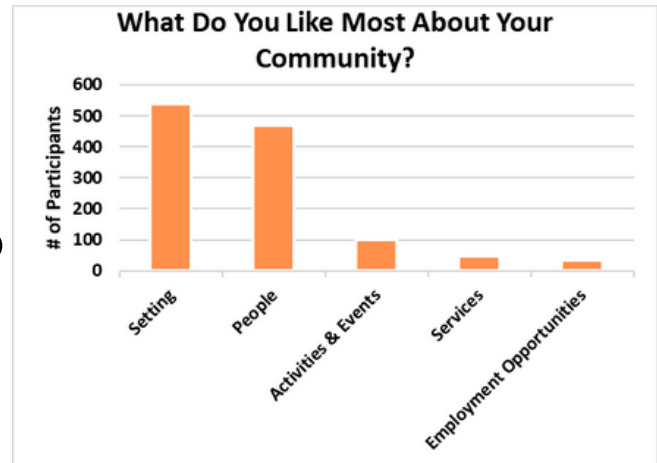
- a quiet rural lifestyle / a vibrant economy;
- opportunities available / equal accessibility;
- concerns about a declining, aging population, / enjoying a community that's familiar;
- closeness with family and friends / a sense of exclusion

"I do want more jobs, but that means Digby would have to grow. So, it's kind of counter-intuitive because I like Digby as a small town. I like the people here, so more people would be hard to deal with."



WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY?

When asked what they liked most about their community, a majority of participants mentioned the setting in which they live, and almost two-thirds mentioned the people within their community.

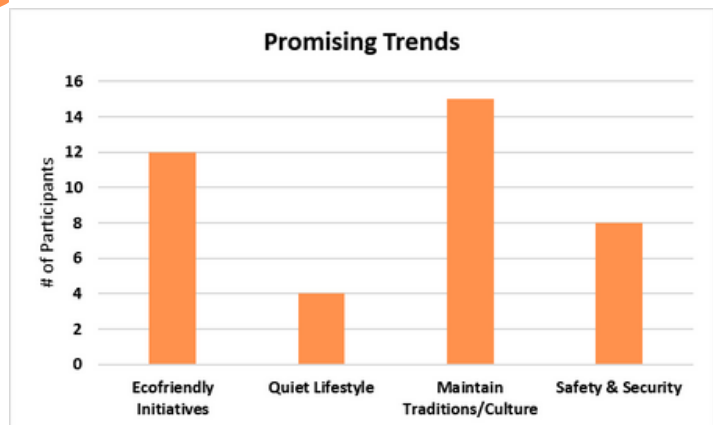


PROMISING TRENDS

POSITIVES IN LOCAL LIFESTYLE

When asked what good things are happening within their community, responses related to setting and lifestyle included:

- efforts to maintain traditions & culture (38%);
- ecofriendly initiatives (31%);
- safety & security (21%); and
- quiet lifestyle (10%)



SUGGESTIONS TO SHIFT THE THEME

INTERESTING IDEAS FROM PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED...

"Access to health services, employment, poverty, crime, segregation. It is a historic segregation. There are different facets in the community. It is very difficult to open up a conversation about this."

Participants noted efforts that have begun to create community centres and hubs including:

- the Digby Neck Collective and Schoolhouse Café;
- efforts to create a community centre at the old Barton School; and
- the development of the Jordantown Acaciaville Conway Betterment Association Centre of Excellence.

Efforts to celebrate culture and heritage have also been referenced, examples include:

- more culturally based activities at the Bear River First Nation;
- a new play about Sam Langford; and
- the New France Historical Society

A few participants suggested that there is an increasing acceptance of diversity.