

Searsmont Community Engagement Survey

Return survey to town office by mail or drop off by **March 14, 2024**

You may also fill out the survey online: www.surveymonkey.com/r/searsmont

This survey is intended to engage the Searsmont community around topics that are of importance to the future of our community, including local services, housing, priorities for preservation and development, and future land use. It also asks some demographic questions so we know how well the survey respondents reflect the Searsmont community as a whole. Your feedback is important.

You may either fill out the survey as an individual or on behalf of your household. There are 17 questions followed by a short demographics section. **Please respond to all questions.** If you think a question is unclear or limiting, please use the comment box.

Your responses to this survey are **completely anonymous** and cannot be traced back to you.

Thank you for your time.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee: David Marceau, Jane Kirsling, Bobby Ward, Hubert McCabe, Sara Beth Casburn, Tim Wilson, Sonny Prescott, Jodi Staples, Arlo Redman, Adi Philson

1. Are you completing this survey on behalf of your entire household or as an individual?

- Household
- Individual
- Unsure

2. How would you prefer to learn about municipal services, meetings, and events going forward? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Republican Journal – Searsmont column | <input type="radio"/> Email |
| <input type="radio"/> Town Newsletter | <input type="radio"/> Social Media (eg. Facebook) |
| <input type="radio"/> Town Website | <input type="radio"/> Bulletin Boards |
| <input type="radio"/> Mail | <input type="radio"/> None of the above |

Is there anything else that the town can do to improve communication with residents?

3. What are 2 or 3 things you love about Searsmont?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

4. What 2 or 3 things do you see as the biggest challenges for Searsmont’s future in the next 10 years? (Answer on next page)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. Please provide your opinion of the quality of these Town services, facilities, and aspects of community life in Searsmont. Check one box per row.

	Excellent	Adequate/Good	Needs Improvement	Don't Know/Unsure
Ambulance/EMT				
Animal Control				
Boat launch facilities				
Code Enforcement				
Community gathering spaces and events				
Drinking water quality				
Education				
Fire Department services				
Healthcare access/availability				
Historic preservation				
Housing affordability and quality				
Law enforcement (shared service)				
Library				
Local job opportunities				
Town road and culvert maintenance				
Outdoor recreation opportunities				
Public access to lakes, river, streams, and ponds				
Senior citizens' services/activities				
Sidewalks				
Snow plowing/sanding				
Town communication with residents				
Town office services and hours				
Town website				
Traffic enforcement				
Transfer station				

If you would like to see improvements or new services, please comment below.

6. Does more than 30% of your household income go towards your housing?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- Other (please specify) _____

7. To the best of your knowledge, do you think Searsmont's housing adequately accommodates people of all ages, living arrangements, and income levels?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Please provide additional comments below on housing in Searsmont.

8. As of July 1st, the State now permits all properties with existing housing to have an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) (a self-contained dwelling unit located within, attached to or detached from a single-family home). Do you think Searsmont should regulate the use of ADUs for short-term rentals? Short-term rentals here are defined as furnished self-contained apartments or houses with a rental period of 28 days or fewer.

- Yes
- No
- Undecided
- Other (please specify) _____

9. What transportation issues, if any, do think need to be improved in Searsmont? (Select all that apply)

- Speeding
- Lack of traffic enforcement
- Poor road and traffic signage
- Traffic noise
- Regular road maintenance issues
- Road damage by heavy trucks
- Winter snow/ice removal issues
- Unpaved/dirt road issues
- Bad road design
- Lack of transportation options, including public transportation
- Lack of infrastructure to support walking and/or bicycling
- Not enough parking in the village
- None of the above

Please provide additional comments or transportation-related improvements below.

10. Community Enhancement and Recreation: How often do you use the following in Searsmont:

	Frequently	Somewhat	Rarely	Never
Town Library				
Town Post Office				
Hiking or snowmobile trails				
St. George River				
Quantabacook Lake				
Levenseller Pond				
Ruffingham Meadow				
Searsmont Ballfield				
Other (please specify)				

11. What barriers, if any, prevent you from using the internet? (Check all that apply)

- No barriers.
- We have internet, but it is too slow or unreliable.
- We do not know how to use computers, tablets or other internet devices
- We are not interested in using the internet
- No service is available at my house
- Our house does not have a computer, tablet or other internet device
- The cost of Internet service is too high
- Other (please specify)

12. TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

	High	Medium	Low	None
Encourage development of housing for local workers and families				
Encourage development of senior housing to support local seniors aging in place				
Encourage development of local childcare options				
Provide more programs for seniors				
Provide more programs for youth				
Improve downtown village area				
Place a greater emphasis on building community and community events				
Explore public infrastructure such as water and sewer to support increased housing opportunities for locals and/or business development in the village core				
Improve/relocate transfer station				
Explore curbside trash pick up				
Explore recycling options				
Professionalize emergency services through hiring full-time staff				
Improve town management capacity by adding a staff person such as a town administrator				
Explore hiring a separate road commissioner to meet maintenance needs				
Support bicycle infrastructure to improve safety and bike-ability of town				
Improve walkability of town (sidewalks, crosswalks, signage)				
Improve boat launch and/or water access				
Protect water body resources				
Reduce light pollution				
Take measures to address the impacts of climate change				
Encourage business attraction/commercial development as a means to lower property taxes and create local jobs				
Encourage tourism/visitors in order to support local businesses				

Please use the space below to provide comments on town priorities.

13. TOWN INVESTMENTS: Answers to this question will help determine future Town budget priorities.

I would like the Town to invest in: (Please check one box per row)

	YES	Potentially—but only if grants/subsidies substantially reduce cost	I support this item, but do not think the town should financially contribute	NO - I don't support under any circumstances	Undecided
High speed broadband internet availability					
Business development/attraction (any size)					
Business development/attraction (small only)					
Downtown village area development/improvement					
Affordable childcare					
Senior housing					
Expanding resources and assistance to help low-income residents continue to live within the community					
Acquiring additional land or easements for open space, preservation, agriculture, or conservation					
Acquiring land for future growth of municipal services or initiatives (housing, public works, economic development)					
Adding management and/or public works staffing					
Additional street lighting					
Parking in village area					
New Sand & Salt Shed					
Better snow removal/sanding					
Road improvements					
Additional sidewalks					
Biking infrastructure					
Physical disability accessibility					
Recycling					
Improving/relocating transfer station					
Support for local arts & culture					
Town-sponsored recreation opportunities, facilities & programming					
Creating an annual Searsmont Heritage Day event/celebration					
Charitable services					

Do you have any additional comments on town investments?

14. LAND USE: Please check where you feel it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur in the future ((you may select more than one column for each row):

	Anywhere	In Areas Designated By the Town	With Size Limitations	Close to Village Center	Nowhere	Unsure
Manufacturing & Industrial scale businesses						
Commercial businesses (small)						
Home occupation						
Restaurants						
Chain stores						
Big box stores						
Agriculture (does not include personal gardens)						
Forestry						
Land based contained aquaculture						
Gun ranges						
Junkyards						
Gravel pits/quarries						
Mining						
Solar farm development						
Residential						
Affordable housing (subsidized)						
Tiny and/or mobile home park						
Multi-family housing (3+ units)						
Workforce housing						
Campgrounds						
Inns, hotels, B&Bs, commercial scale short-term rentals						
Locally owned short-term rental properties						
Seasonal rental properties						

Do you have any additional comments on land uses?

15. What needs do you [and your family] have within the community that are not being met: daily and long-term?

16. Where would you like to see Searsmont in the next 10-20 years? What would improve the livability and outlook for the town?

17. What are we missing? What other comments and perspectives do you wish to share with the Comprehensive Plan Committee?

18. What type of Searsmont resident are you?

- Year-round
- Seasonal, residing in Searsmont under 6 months/per year
- Seasonal, residing in Searsmont 6 or more months/per year
- Landowner only
- Not a resident or landowner
- Other (please specify)

19. If you're a year-round resident, how long have you lived in Searsmont?

- 0-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10-14 years
- 15-29 years
- 30+ years
- Born and raised in Searsmont

20. Do you own or rent where you live in Searsmont?

- Rent
- Own
- Other (please specify)

21. Do you own rental property (that you rent to tenants) in Searsmont?

- No
- Yes, short-term rental(s)
- Yes, long-term rental(s)
- Yes, short-term and long-term rentals
- Other (please specify)

22. What is your age? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. (Optional)

- 19 and under
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80+
- Prefer not to answer

23. What is your annual household income? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. (Optional)

- Prefer to not answer
- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$14,999
- \$15,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more

24. What is your household size (number of people living in your house, including you)?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more

25. How many school age children (ages 18 and under) live in your household?

- 0 2 4 or more
 1 3

26. What is the employment status of each adult in your household? (Select one for each adult)

- Employed full-time Full time caregiver (uncompensated)
 Employed part-time Seasonally-employed
 Retired Other (please specify)
 Self-employed

27. Do any adults in your household work remotely/telecommute?

- Yes
 No
 I am retired or not currently employed
 Other (please specify)