

## CANTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

### Canton Community Preservation Act Survey

*Prepared by JM Goldson LLC 4/29/2022*

#### Overview

The purpose of the Canton Community Preservation Act Survey was primarily to solicit community members' perspectives on overall priorities for CPA funding and on specific priorities around housing, open space, and historic preservation in the town. This survey is not intended to be a scientifically significant poll, rather it is a way to reach more people in the community than can be reached through public forums. Nine hundred and eighty three people participated in the survey. The survey was active for about two and a half months from early February until mid April 2022. Full responses to all survey questions can be found in the Appendix.

#### Key Findings

- Survey respondents were more likely to be female and had higher incomes than the town's population overall but were similar in age breakdown to the town's population.
- Respondents were moderate users of parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields in Canton.
- When asked which types of outdoor recreation projects in Canton are the most important, two categories of projects scored the most highly – projects related to walking and biking including creating new trails, and improvements and updates to existing parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields.
- When asked about their main concerns about housing issues in Canton, most respondents showed concern that existing residents and adult children raised in Canton will not be able to buy a home due to rising prices.
- The most pressing housing issues for respondents were housing affordability for seniors and veterans, affordable housing for low and middle income households, and maintenance and upgrades to existing housing in Canton.
- When asked what types of historic preservation projects are the most important, protecting historic resources threatened by new development scored the most highly
- When asked about specific project ideas, a number of residents specifically noted that they would like to see more done at the Paul Revere Heritage Site, such as a museum. In addition to this, many respondents expressed a desire to find a project that honors the area's Native American history.
- About 40 percent of respondents indicated that they visit protected natural areas 1-2 times a month, and 26 percent never visit them.
- Priorities for open space in Canton include acquisition or protection of undeveloped land for the purpose of mitigating the impacts of climate change and for open space conservation that provides public access, according to respondents
- In order of priority, respondents would like to see CPA funding spent on Active Recreation, Open Space & Passive Recreation, Historic Preservation, and Community Housing.

## Demographics of Survey Respondents

The following summarizes how the demographic and housing characteristics of survey respondents compare with the characteristics of Canton’s population overall, per the 2020 ACS five year estimates.

- Nearly all live in Canton (94 percent), with 2 percent who work in Canton and live elsewhere, and the remaining 4 percent with other connections to Canton.
- Most respondents identified as Female (66 percent, while 34 percent identified as Male)
- Similar in age breakdown to Town population over 18, with more respondents between the age of 35 and 54 than the town as a whole, and fewer respondents between 18 and 34 than the town as a whole. Sixty-one percent of respondents have children under age 18
- More likely to be higher-income earners (see table below for details)

<b>What is your total gross annual household income (on average)?</b>		
	<b>Survey Respondents</b>	<b>Canton Population</b>
Under \$50,000	6.8%	21%
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	7.08%	15%
Between \$75,000 and \$99,999	9.63%	13%
Between \$100,000 and \$150,000	25.07%	18%
Over \$150,000	51.42%	34%

Source: 2019 ACS 5-year Estimates

## Survey Topics

Overall, most respondents indicated some familiarity with the Community Preservation Act. About 40 percent of respondents indicated they were “somewhat familiar.” About 18 percent were “very familiar” or “extremely familiar,” and 33 percent were “not so familiar” or “not at all familiar.”

### Active Recreation

**Overall, respondents were moderate users of parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields in Canton, with about 50 percent of respondents saying they visit between one and seven times per month.**

About 20 percent of respondents indicated that they never use any of these facilities, and 25 percent indicated that they use them 1-2 times per month. About a quarter of respondents use them 3-7 times per month, and over 30 percent of respondents indicated using the town’s parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields more than 8 times per month (twice a week or more).

**When asked which types of outdoor recreation projects in Canton are the most important, two categories of projects scored the most highly – projects related to walking and biking including creating new trails, and improvements and updates to existing parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields.**

Nearly 85 percent of respondents indicated that creating bike trails and/or walking paths was somewhat or very important. On the other hand, the addition of more parks, dog parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields scored significantly lower. The addition of more parks and playgrounds produced the most “neutral” responses of any categories, along with the creation of new skateboard parks and

dog parks. Nearly 25 percent of respondents said that creating new dog parks was not at all important, and over 30 percent indicated that creating new skateboard parks was not important at all.

### Community Housing

**When asked about their main concerns about housing issues in Canton, most respondents showed concern that existing residents and adult children raised in Canton will not be able to buy a home due to rising prices.**

Respondents were less concerned about the character of Canton changing due to housing costs or people moving out due to rising rents. The table below shows detailed responses to the survey question about housing concerns:

Which of these statements best reflect any concerns you may have about housing in Canton?	Very Concerned	Slightly Concerned	Not Concerned	No Opinion
Existing residents will not be able to buy a home due to rising prices	43%	34%	16%	7%
Existing residents are being evicted because they cannot afford to pay their monthly rent	39%	33%	16%	12%
Existing homes are being foreclosed because residents cannot afford to pay their mortgages	35%	34%	20%	11%
Adult children raised in Canton will not afford to remain or return to Canton.	42%	32%	18%	8%
Town employees or others who work in Canton can not afford to live in Canton	40%	35%	15%	9%
The high cost of housing will cause the character of Canton to change	30%	35%	26%	9%
People do not know where to find information about housing resources and/or assistance in Canton	30%	34%	18%	18%
People will have to move out of Canton due to rising rents	30%	36%	23%	12%
Current Housing Authority units (over 200) may lack long-term preservation	37%	32%	16%	15%

When asked “Are there any specific community housing projects/programs that you would like to see considered for CPA funding in the upcoming years?”, responses were primarily focused on senior housing and affordable housing:

- **Senior and Veteran Housing: Many respondents would like to see affordable housing options for seniors to live independently. Several respondents mentioned housing for veterans as well. Overall, affordable housing for seniors was one of the most common ideas given in answer to this question.**

- **Affordable Housing:** *While some respondents indicated that there is already enough affordable housing in Canton, others indicated a need for more affordable units for low and middle income households.*
- **Maintenance:** *Many respondents indicated a need for improving and maintaining existing housing, like Hagen and Rubin Court.*
- **Other:** Other responses included concerns of overdevelopment and a need for proper planning before adding new housing, particularly when considering the impact that new housing has on the local school system and traffic.

### Historic Preservation

***When asked what types of historic preservation projects are the most important, protecting historic resources threatened by new development scored the most highly (46 percent selected “very important”)***

Respondents also indicated that preserving or restoring Canton’s historic artifacts and documents, preserving or restoring historic properties that are open to the public, and improving handicapped access to historic resources are all very important (each response had 30 percent of respondents mark it as “very important”).

***When asked “Are there any specific historic preservation projects that you would like to see considered for CPA funding in the upcoming years?”, a number of residents specifically noted that they would like to see more done at the Paul Revere Heritage Site, such as a museum. In addition to this, many respondents expressed a desire to find a project that honors the area’s Native American history.***

Other historic preservation location and project ideas include Memorial Hall, the local cemeteries, signs around town showing historic assets and places around town, Town Hall, and the Gridley School.

### Open Space & Passive Recreation

Respondents were asked how many times a month they visit protected natural areas in Canton like the Paul Revere Heritage Site or the Earl Newhouse Waterfront.

***About 40 percent of respondents indicated that they visit protected natural areas 1-2 times a month, and 26 percent never visit them.***

Twenty percent visit these areas 3-7 times a month and the remaining 14 percent visit them more than 8 times per month.

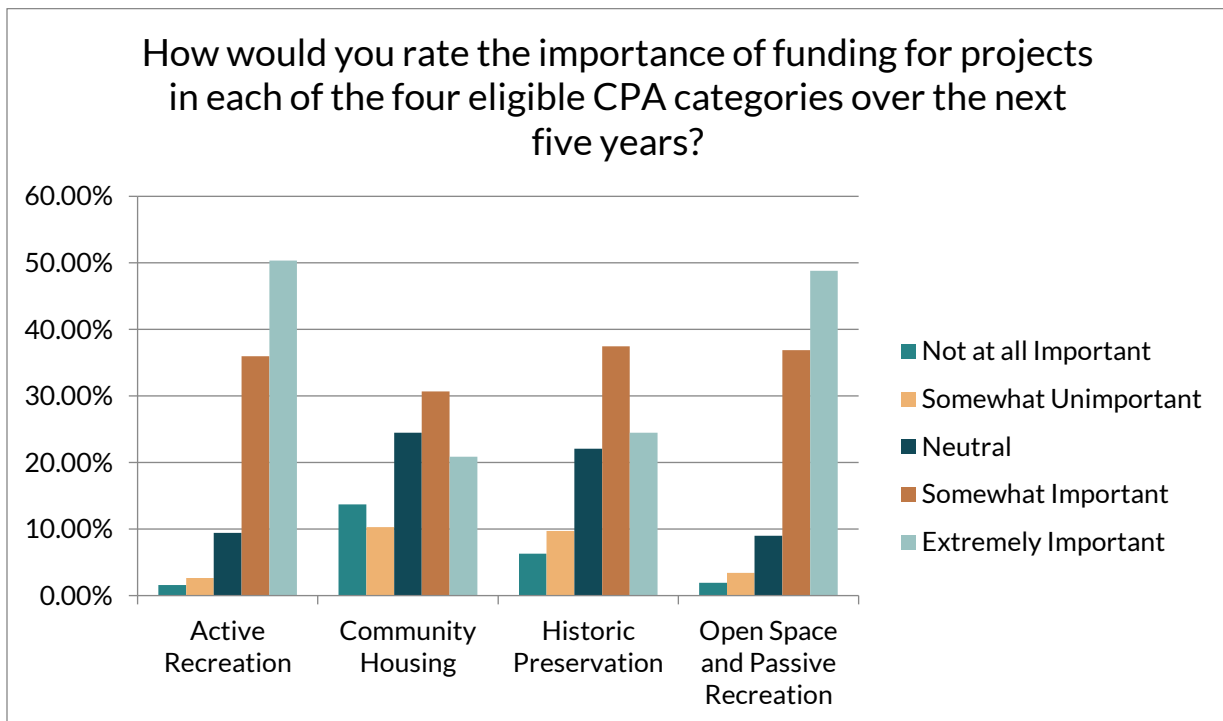
***When asked about specific types of open space and passive recreation projects in Canton, respondents rated the acquisition or protection of undeveloped land for the purpose of mitigating the impacts of climate change and for open space conservation that provides public access most highly.***

About ten percent of respondents indicated that the acquisition or protection of undeveloped land for the purpose of mitigating the impacts of climate change was not important. Over 40 percent of respondents indicated that the creation of new walking paths or hiking trails in general and those that connect existing open space areas were very important. About 40 percent of respondents also indicated that creating handicap access to open space was very important.

When asked about specific open space or passive recreation project ideas, many people mentioned specific locations and connections for walking, hiking, and biking trails, like the reservoir, Bolivar Pond, and more.

### Funding Priorities

When asked to rate their priorities for the CPA funding categories, Active Recreation scored the highest, followed by Open Space and Passive Recreation, Historic Preservation, and finally Community Housing. A breakdown of responses is shown below:



### Appendix – Full Survey Responses

1. What is your age?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	0.41%	4
18-24	0.20%	2
25-34	5.01%	49
35-44	31.97%	313
45-54	29.32%	287
55-64	14.81%	145
65-74	13.79%	135
75-84	3.98%	39
85 or older	0.51%	5
<b>Answered</b>	<b>979</b>	
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>4</b>	

2. What is your gender?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Female	65.44%	640
Male	34.25%	335
Other (please specify)	0.31%	3
<b>Answered</b>	<b>978</b>	
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>	

Response Date	Other (please specify)
Feb 24 2022 10:56 PM	They
Feb 24 2022 05:29 PM	Other
Feb 11 2022 10:20 AM	Non binary

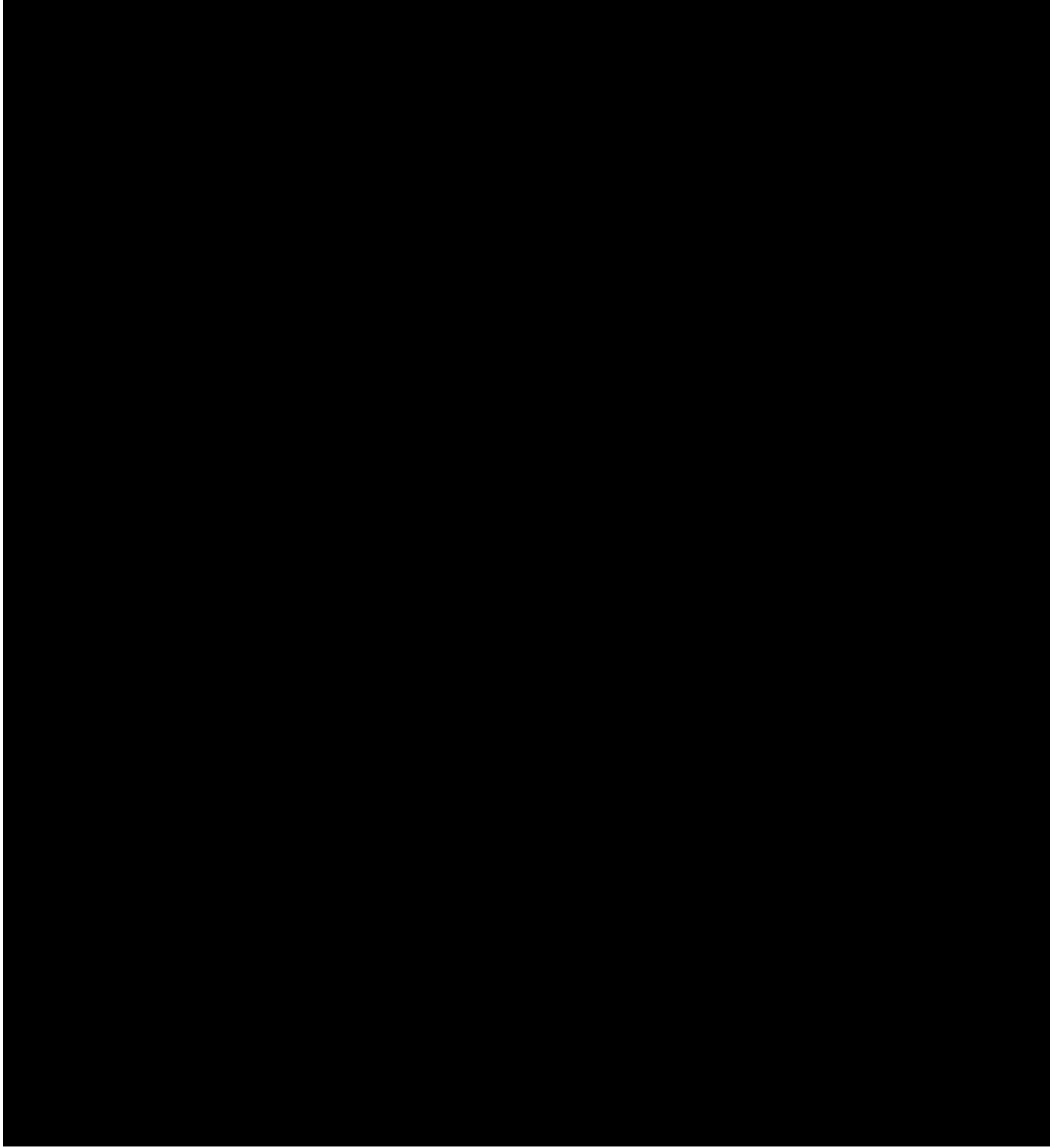
3. Do you have any children under the age of 18?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	61.33%	601
No	38.67%	379
<b>Answered</b>	<b>980</b>	
<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>	

4. Are you a resident of Canton?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	93.69%	920
No, but I work in Canton	2.55%	25

No, but I have another connection (please explain below)	3.77%	37
Please Explain		41
<b>Answered</b>		<b>982</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>1</b>





5. How familiar are you with the Community Preservation Act?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely familiar	7.54%	74
Very familiar	18.04%	177
Somewhat familiar	40.67%	399
Not so familiar	22.63%	222
Not at all familiar	11.11%	109
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>981</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>2</b>

6. How often in a month do you use any of the parks, playgrounds, or athletic fields in Canton?

Answer Choices	Responses	
1-2 times	25.11%	231
3-7 times	25.33%	233
8-14 times	15.98%	147
15 or more times	15.54%	143
None	18.04%	166
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>920</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>63</b>

7. How important to you are the following potential types of outdoor recreation projects in Canton?

	Not at all Important		Somewhat Unimportant		Neutral		Somewhat Important		Very Important		Total	Weighted Average
Creating bike trails and/or walking paths	3.92%	36	1.85%	17	10.02%	92	31.15%	286	53.05%	487	918	4.28
Creating dog parks	24.78%	226	9.87%	90	23.90%	218	21.27%	194	20.18%	184	912	3.02
Improvements/updates to existing parks	31.54%	287	14.29%	130	33.30%	303	15.82%	144	5.05%	46	910	2.49
Improvements/updates to existing playgrounds	1.52%	14	2.94%	27	11.64%	107	42.00%	386	41.89%	385	919	4.2
Improvements/updates to existing athletic fields	3.16%	29	3.71%	34	14.83%	136	33.48%	307	44.82%	411	917	4.13



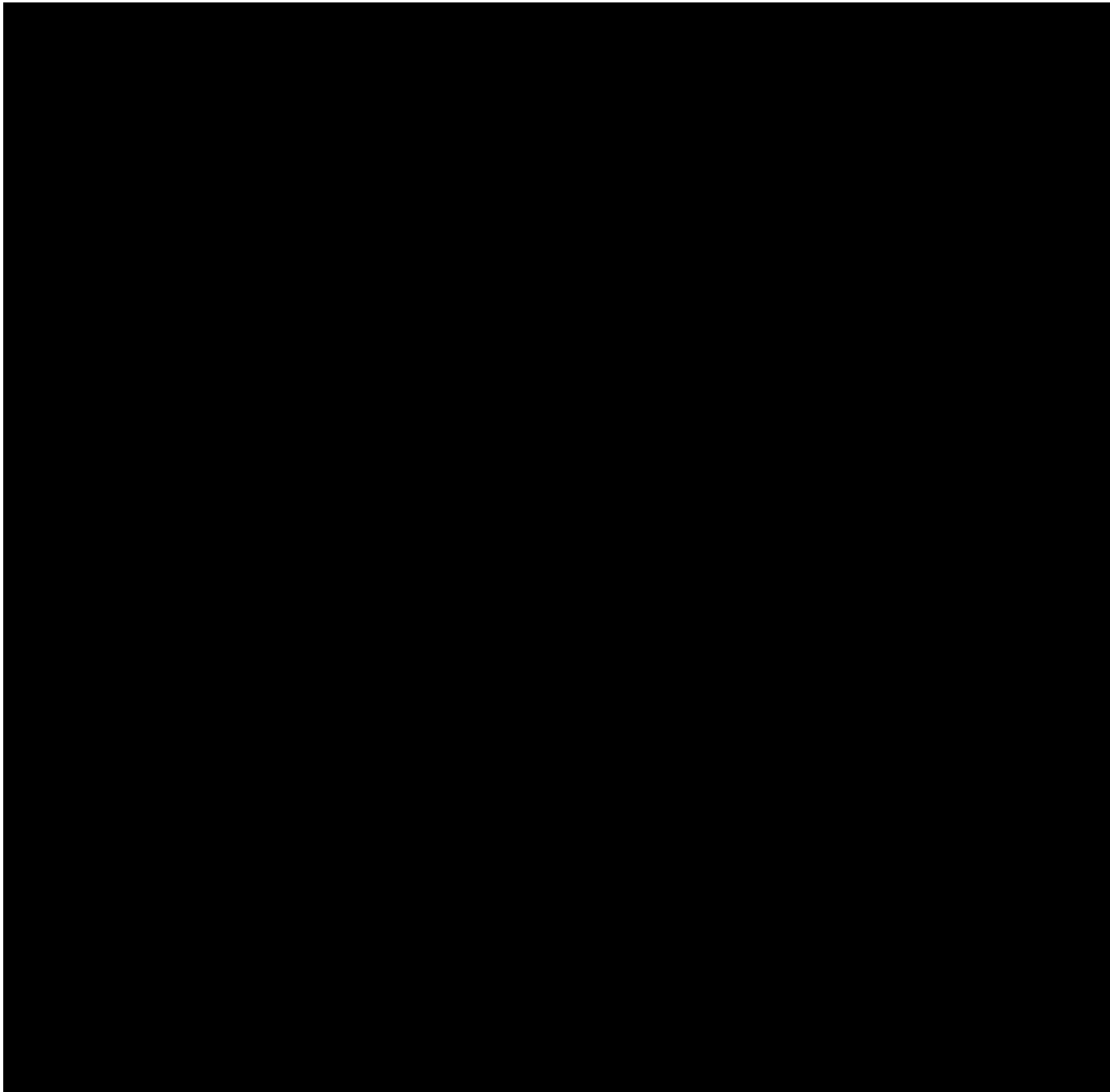


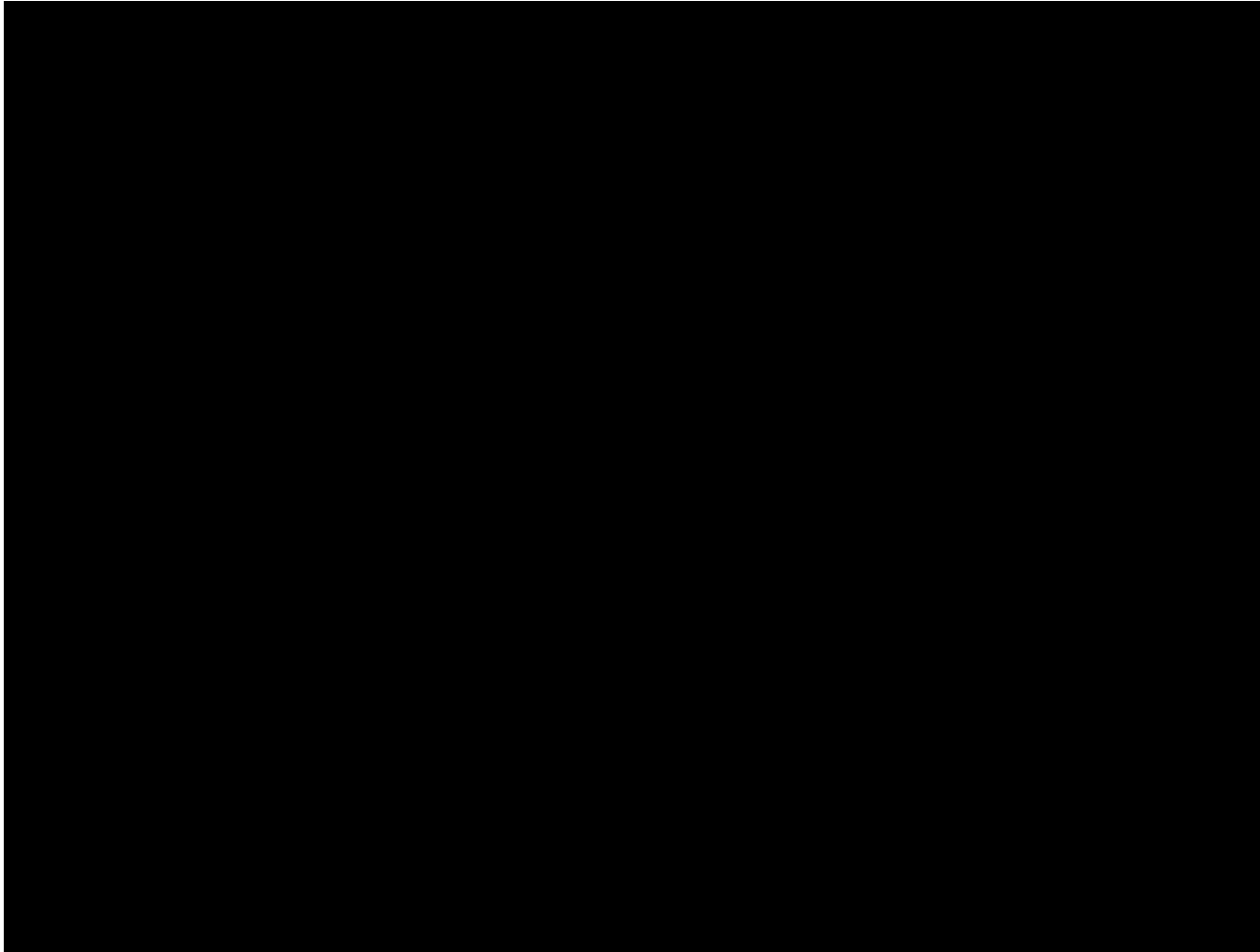
# Canton Community Preservation Plan – Survey Summary

More athletic fields	3.59%	33	4.68%	43	16.78%	154	35.40%	325	39.54%	363	918	4.03
More parks	4.81%	44	5.57%	51	21.53%	197	39.34%	360	28.74%	263	915	3.82
More playgrounds	15.92%	145	10.10%	92	33.81%	308	21.84%	199	18.33%	167	911	3.17
Create a river walk	8.30%	76	5.57%	51	25.22%	231	37.55%	344	23.36%	214	916	3.62
	12.94%	118	9.65%	88	36.84%	336	25.55%	233	15.02%	137	912	3.2
											<b>Answered</b>	<b>924</b>

8. Are there any specific active recreation projects that you would like to see considered for CPA funding in the upcoming years?

Response Date	Responses
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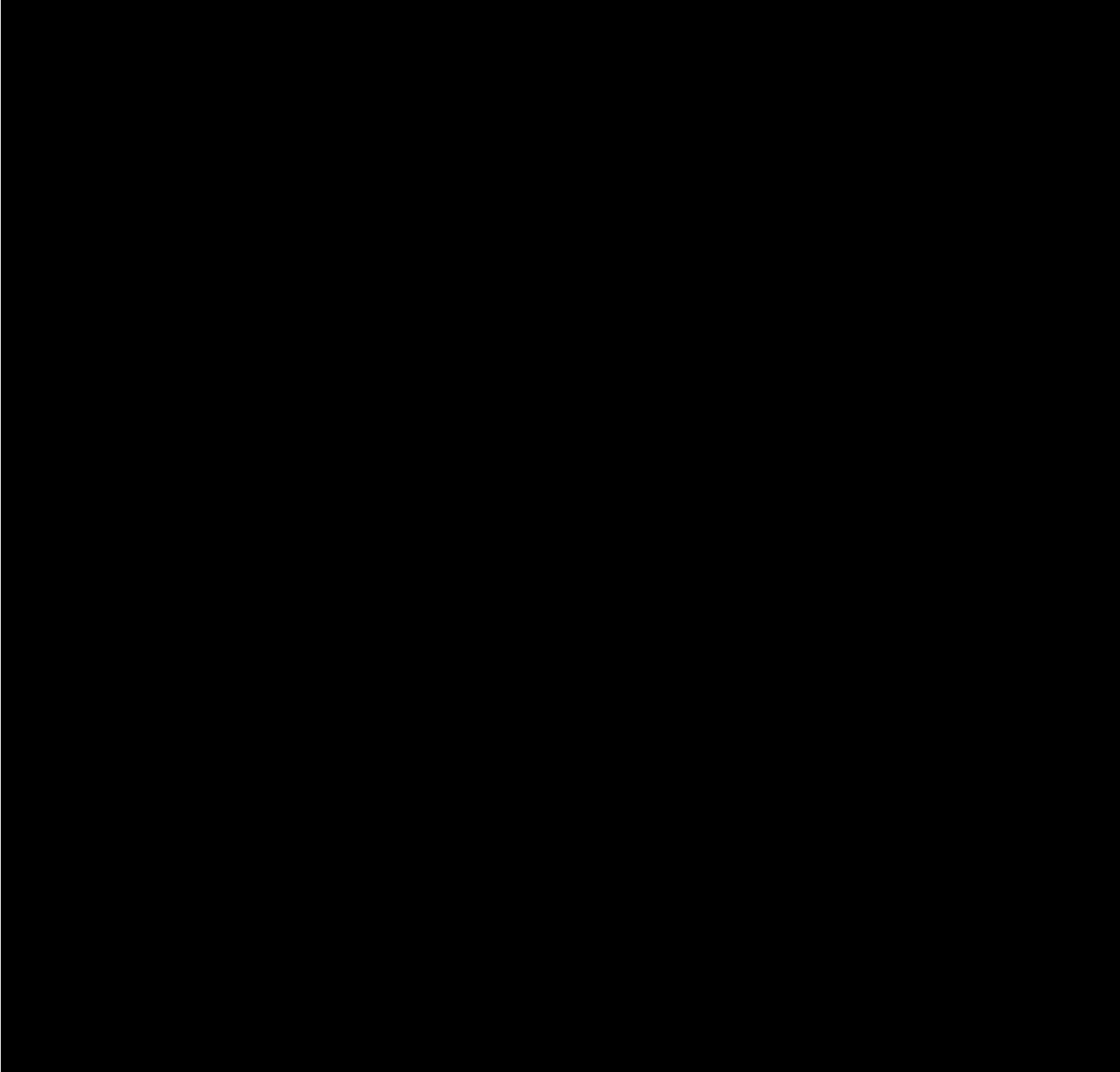


9. Which of these statements best reflect any concerns you may have about housing in Canton?

	Not concerned at all		Slightly concerned		Very concerned		No opinion		Total	Weighted Average
Existing residents will not be able to buy a home due to rising prices	16.01%	139	33.53%	291	43.20%	375	7.26%	63	868	2.42
Existing residents are being evicted because they cannot afford to pay their monthly rent	15.87%	137	33.26%	287	39.28%	339	11.59%	100	863	2.47
Existing homes are being foreclosed because residents cannot afford to pay their mortgages	19.88%	172	33.99%	294	34.68%	300	11.45%	99	865	2.38
Adult children raised in Canton will not afford to remain or return to Canton.	18.13%	157	32.10%	278	41.69%	361	8.08%	70	866	2.4
Town employees or others who work in Canton can not afford to live in Canton	15.24%	132	35.45%	307	39.84%	345	9.47%	82	866	2.44
The high cost of housing will cause the character of Canton to change	26.44%	229	35.10%	304	29.56%	256	8.89%	77	866	2.21

People do not know where to find information about housing resources and/or assistance in Canton	18.45%	159	34.11%	294	29.58%	255	17.87%	154	862	2.47
People will have to move out of Canton due to rising rents	22.53%	194	36.00%	310	29.97%	258	11.50%	99	861	2.3

10. Are there any specific community housing projects/programs that you would like to see considered for CPA funding in the upcoming years?



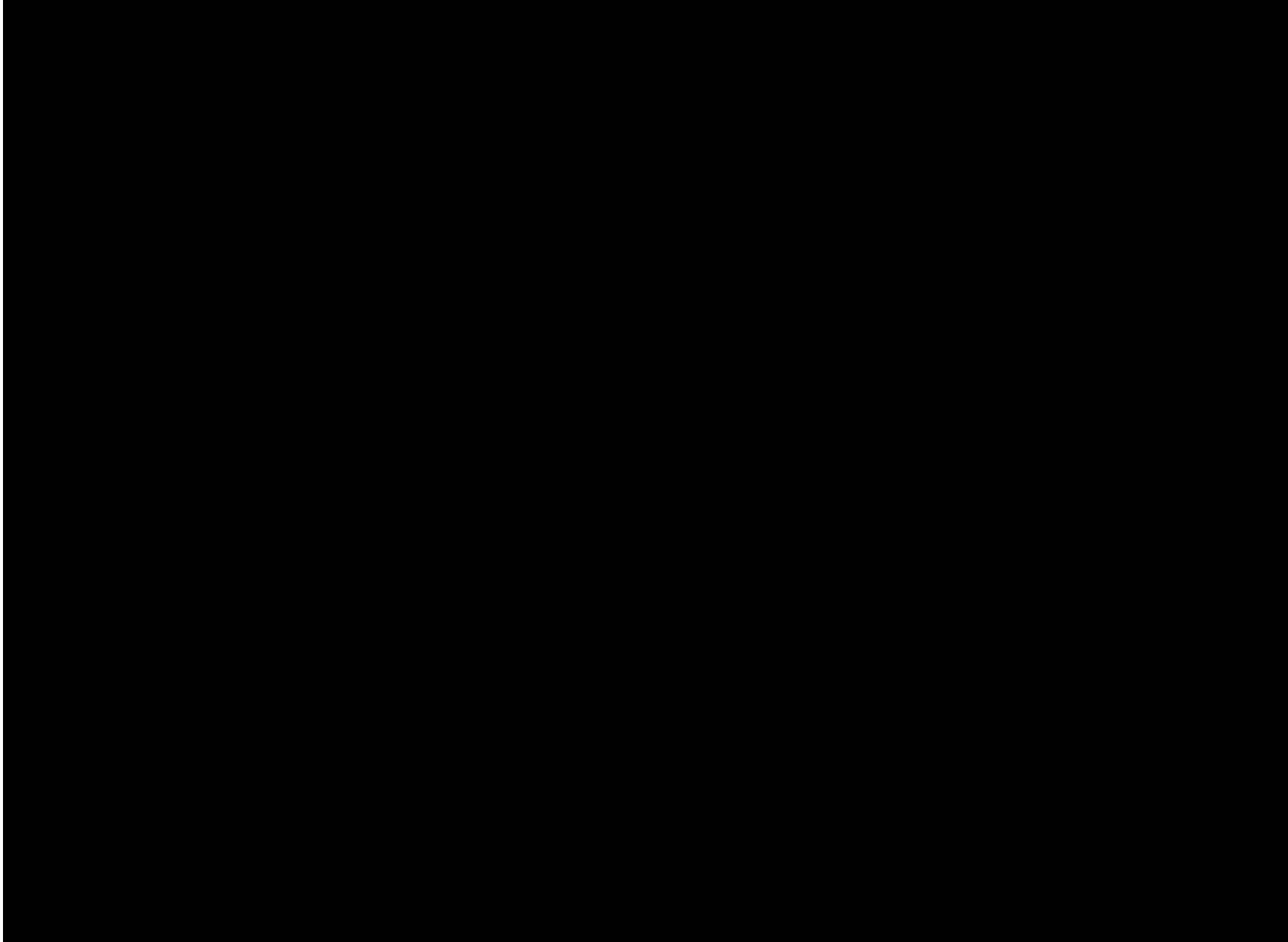


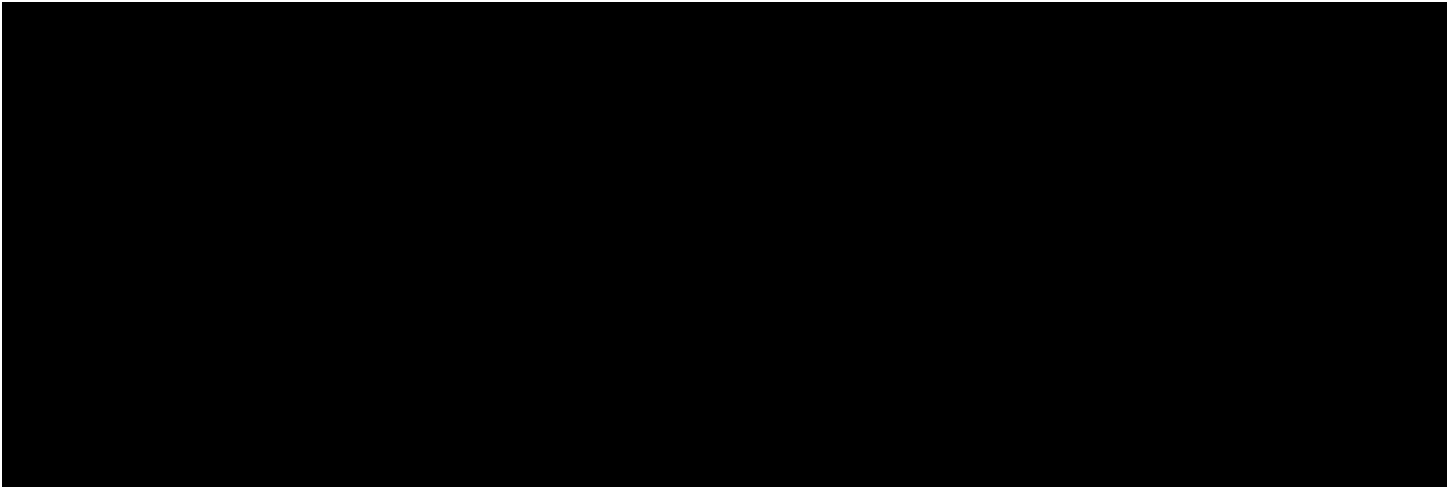
# Canton Community Preservation Plan – Survey Summary

Feb 07 2022 12:15 PM Making more buildings handicap accessible

## 11. How important to you are the following types of historic preservation projects in Canton?

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Total					
Improve handicapped access to historic resources	6.35%	54	5.29%	45	21.18%	180	34.59%	294	32.59%	277	850
Preserve or restore historic properties that are open to the public	5.76%	49	5.29%	45	16.92%	144	39.13%	333	32.90%	280	851
Protect historic resources threatened by new development	4.96%	42	4.60%	39	14.88%	126	29.40%	249	46.16%	391	847
Preserve or restore Canton's historic cemeteries	5.42%	46	6.84%	58	21.70%	184	35.85%	304	30.19%	256	848
Preserve or restore the town's historic artifacts or documents	5.65%	48	5.06%	43	19.67%	167	36.16%	307	33.45%	284	849
Creating a unified vision for the preservation of historic resources	6.52%	55	4.98%	42	26.57%	224	33.33%	281	28.59%	241	843
Promote a "Historic Canton" - a town whose wealth of historic resources is at the center of its identity	9.33%	79	6.14%	52	24.79%	210	31.40%	266	28.34%	240	847
										<b>Answered</b>	<b>853</b>
										<b>Skipped</b>	<b>130</b>





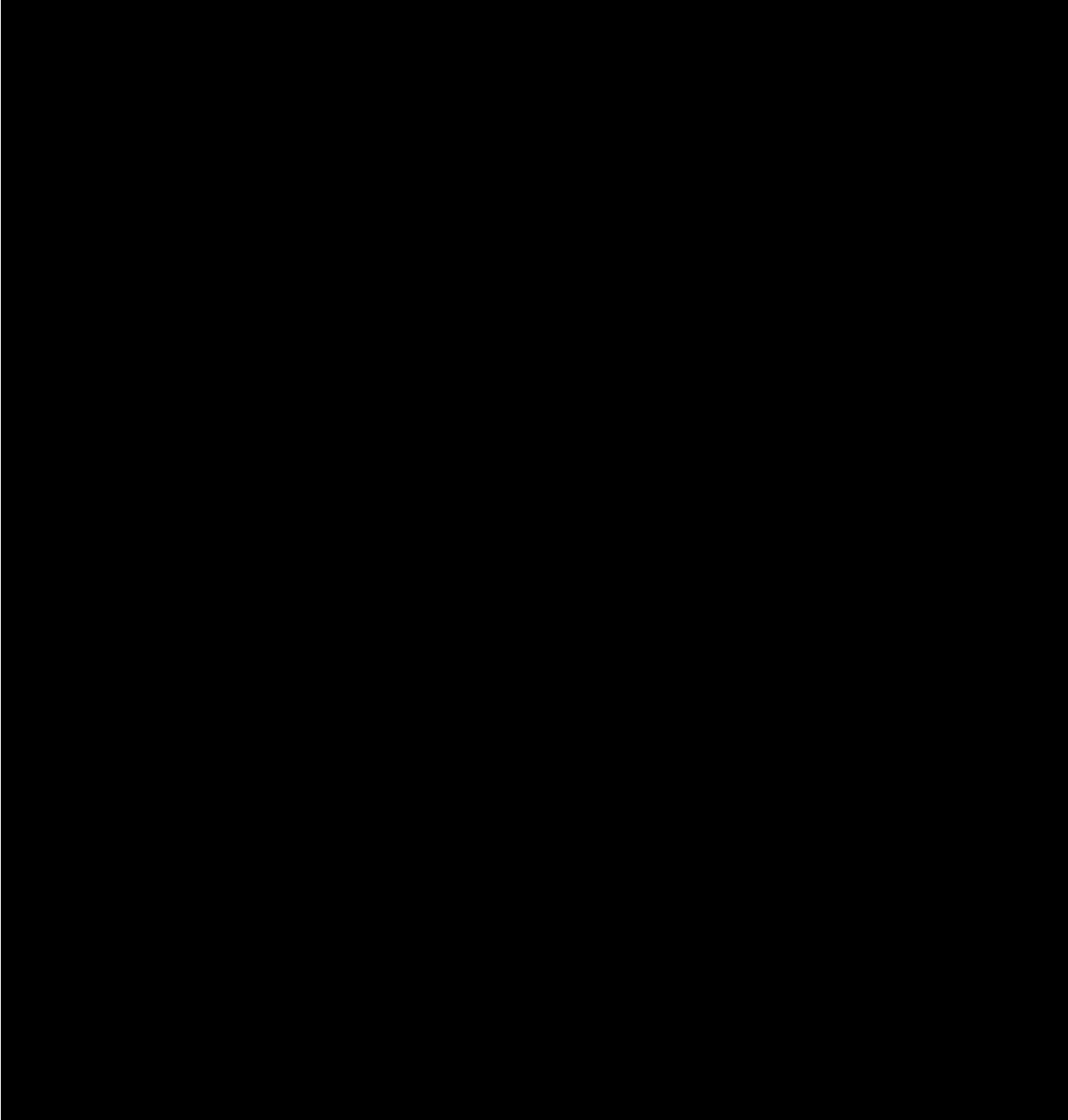
13. How many times in a month do you visit the Paul Revere Heritage Site, the Earl Newhouse Waterfront, or other protected natural areas in Canton?

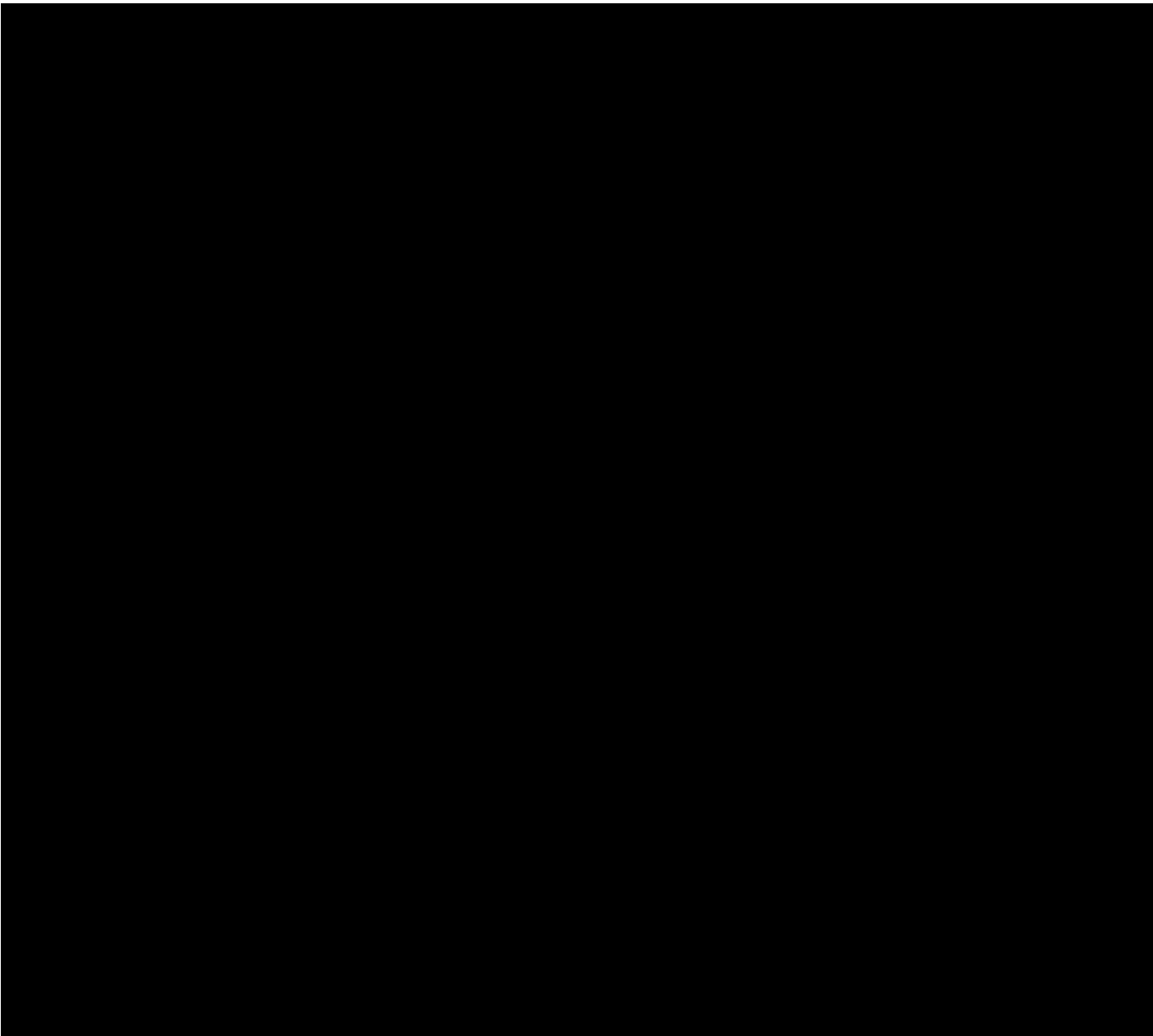
Answer Choices	Responses	
1-2 times	40.67%	340
3-7 times	20.81%	174
8-14 times	6.46%	54
15 or more times	5.62%	47
None	26.44%	221
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>836</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>147</b>

14. How important to you are the following potential types of open space and passive recreation projects in Canton?

	Not Important		Somewhat Unimportant		Neutral		Somewhat Important		Very Important		Total
Acquire or protect more undeveloped land for open space conservation that provides public access	4.91%	41	2.99%	25	11.86%	99	35.57%	297	44.67%	373	835
Create handicap access to open space areas	3.83%	32	2.27%	19	18.54%	155	35.05%	293	40.31%	337	836
Create community gardens	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	100.00%	1	0.00%	0	1
Create new walking paths or hiking trails	5.17%	43	3.61%	30	12.76%	106	35.98%	299	42.48%	353	831
Preserve and protect natural habitats and wildlife areas with limited or no public access	5.88%	49	4.44%	37	17.27%	144	32.85%	274	39.57%	330	834
Create walking or paths that connect existing open space areas	3.61%	30	3.13%	26	13.84%	115	35.62%	296	43.80%	364	831
Acquire or protect undeveloped land for the purpose of mitigating the impacts of climate change	10.59%	88	4.33%	36	16.61%	138	23.59%	196	44.89%	373	831
										<b>Answered</b>	<b>837</b>
										<b>Skipped</b>	<b>146</b>

15. Are there any specific open space or passive recreation projects that you would like to see considered for CPA funding in the upcoming years?



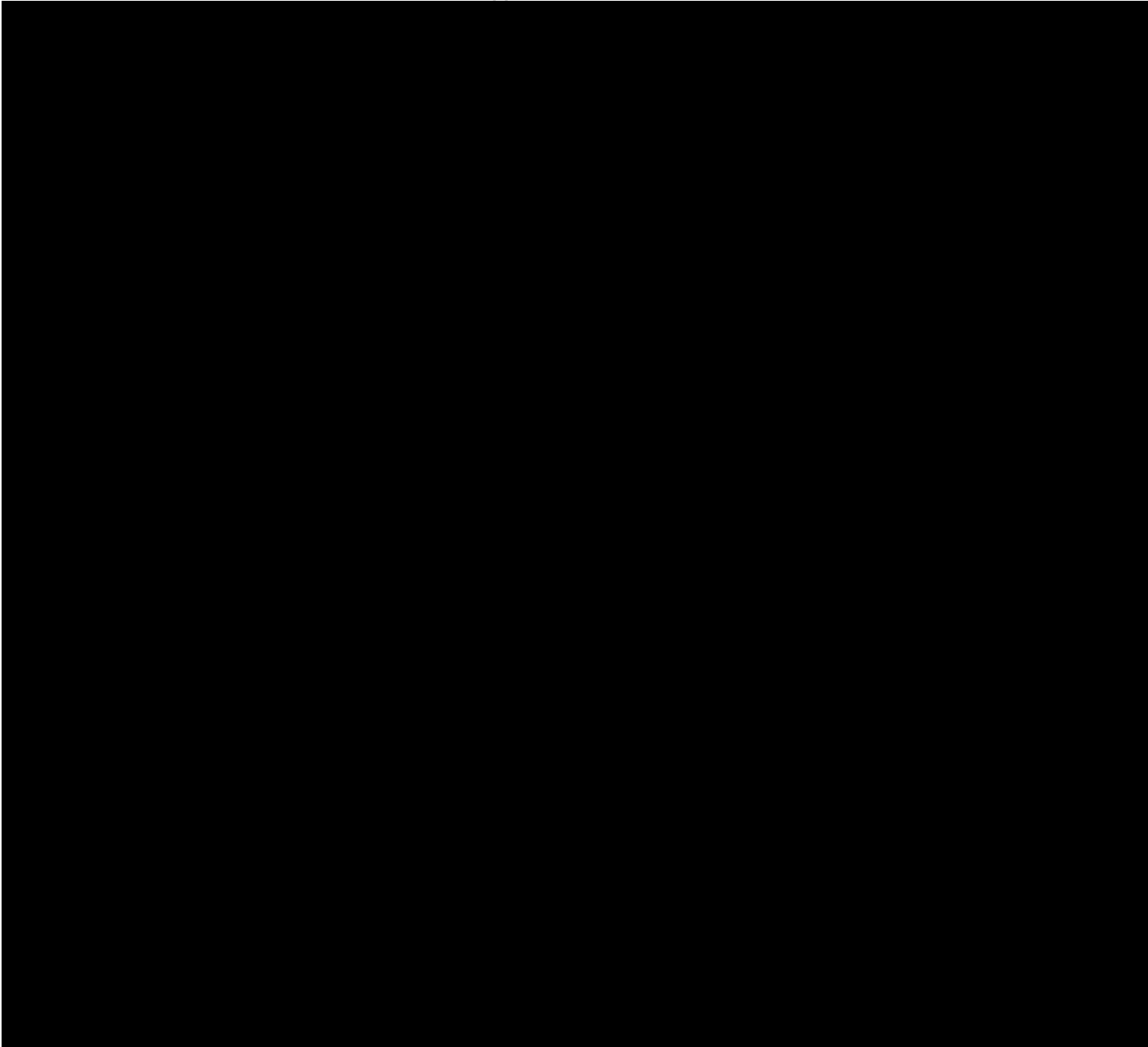


16. How would you rate the importance of funding for projects in each of the four eligible CPA categories over the next five years?

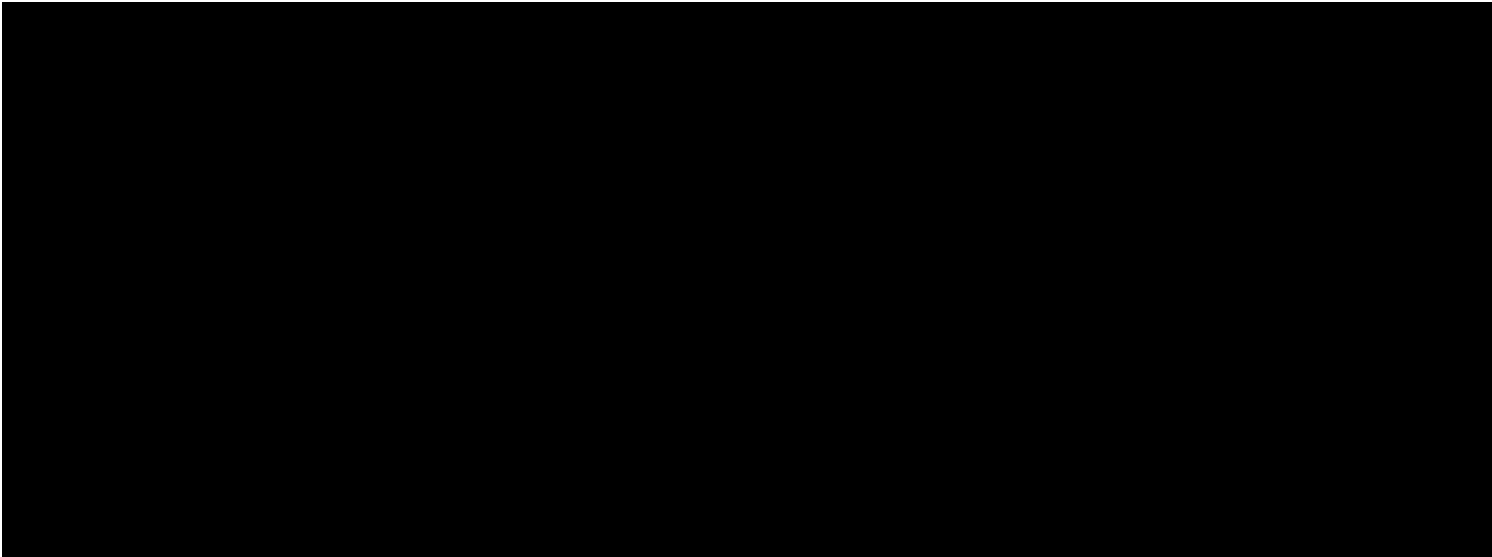
	Not at all Important		Somewhat Unimportant		Neutral		Somewhat Important		Extremely Important		Total
Active Recreation	1.57%	13	2.66%	22	9.44%	78	35.96%	297	50.36%	416	826
Community Housing	13.70%	113	10.30%	85	24.48%	202	30.67%	253	20.85%	172	825
Historic Preservation	6.30%	52	9.70%	80	22.06%	182	37.45%	309	24.48%	202	825
Open Space and Passive Recreation	1.94%	16	3.40%	28	8.98%	74	36.89%	304	48.79%	402	824
										<b>Answered</b>	<b>827</b>
										<b>Skipped</b>	<b>156</b>

17. How would you describe your racial/ethnic identity? Select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.08%	8
Asian	3.37%	25
Black or African American	2.97%	22
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.54%	4
White	88.93%	659
Prefer to self-describe:	5.94%	44
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>741</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>242</b>

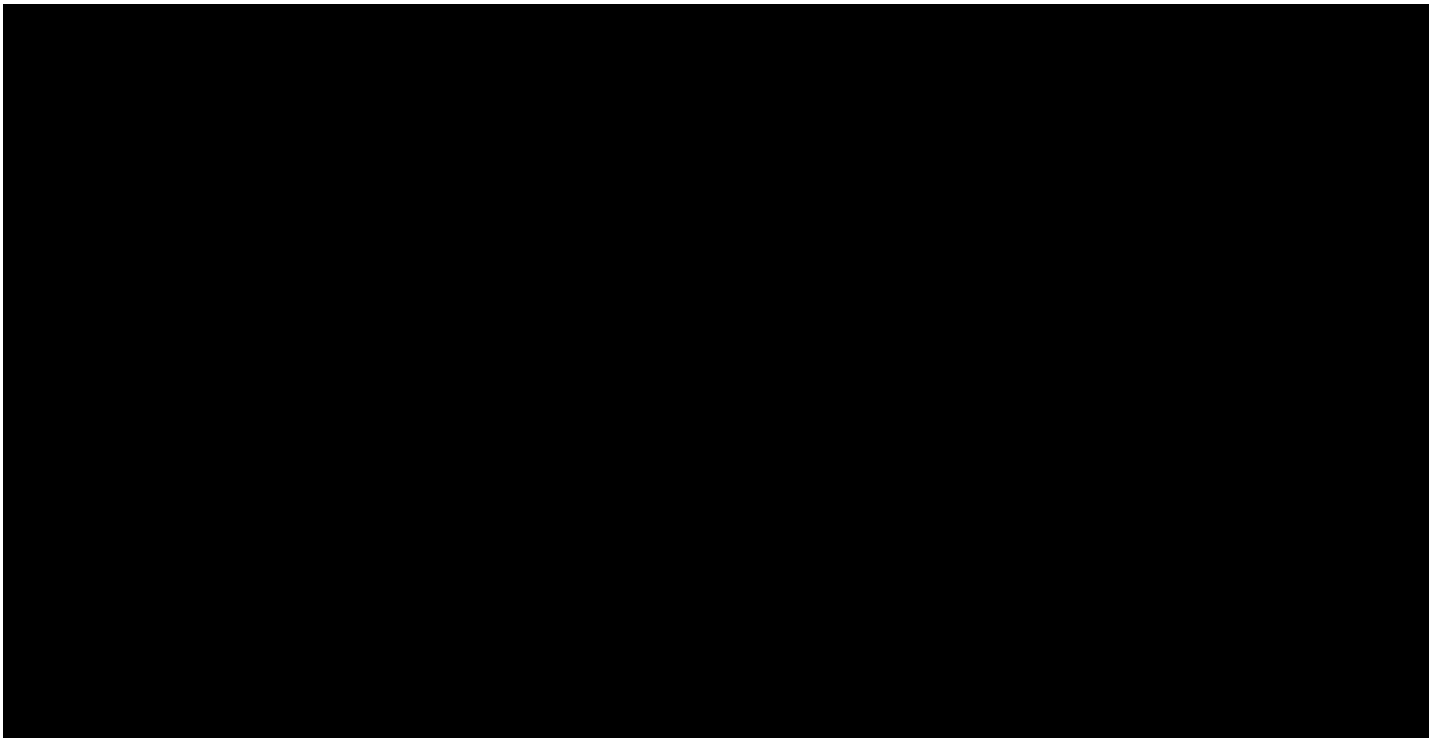


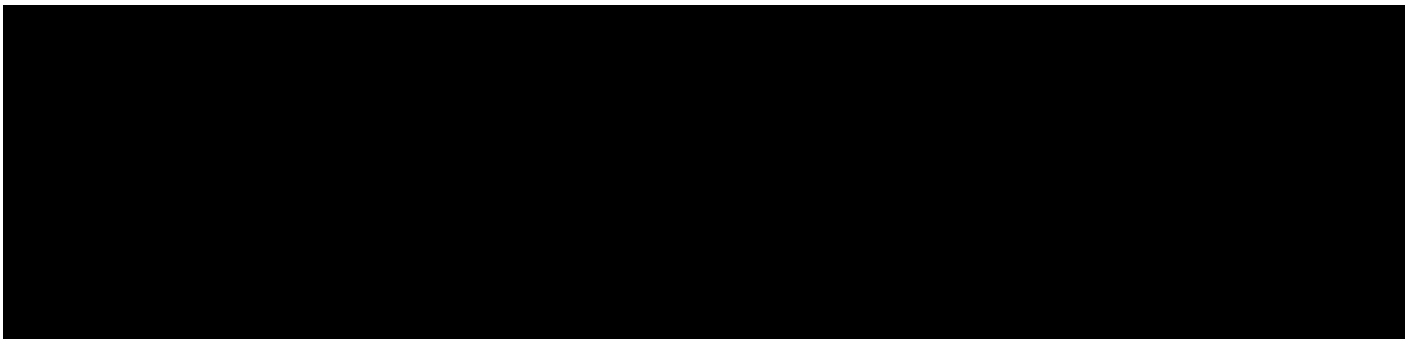




18. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? Select all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	95.30%	649
Yes, Mexican or Mexican American	1.03%	7
Yes, Puerto Rican	0.73%	5
Yes, Cuban or Cuban American	0.15%	1
Some other Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish group, please specify:	3.52%	24
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>681</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>302</b>





19. What is your total gross annual household income (on average)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under \$50,000	6.80%	48
Between \$50,000 and \$74,999	7.08%	50
Between \$75,000 and \$99,999	9.63%	68
Between \$100,000 and \$150,000	25.07%	177
Over \$150,000	51.42%	363
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>706</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>277</b>

20. How long have you lived in, worked in, or otherwise been associated with Canton?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 1 year	2.14%	17
1-3 years	5.42%	43
4-9 years	18.89%	150
10-14 years	14.48%	115
15-20 years	13.60%	108
More than 20 years	45.47%	361
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>794</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>189</b>

21. Do you rent or own your place of residence?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Rent	5.56%	44
Own	92.17%	730
Neither (please specify)	2.27%	18
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>792</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>191</b>