

1 Introduction

Due to the increasing lack of interest and citizen participation in traditional public engagement methods, the project team approached this process in a very different way. The “Placemaking Vision Strategy” is similar to methods Organizational Development and Team Building experts use for problem solving and strategic planning with diverse user groups for corporations large and small.

This non-traditional strategy is an excellent way to interact with users that is approachable and engaging. The project team will use the “Placemaking Vision Strategy” as the method for engagement with the intention of obtaining creative ideas, building relationships, and inspiring imagination about the future of the Brownfield Opportunity Area.

In order to ensure that all residents and stakeholders have ample opportunity to weigh in on the Step 2 Nomination Study and to become true partners in the process of implementing the study’s recommendations, engagement activities for the program are guided by a Public Engagement Plan. The purpose of the Public Engagement Plan is to ensure that the local community is given a voice in the redevelopment planning for the study area. This was accomplished primarily through public and stakeholder meetings, attendance at events and meetings, and maintenance of a public project Facebook presence.

This is a summary of the public engagement activities for the Canton BOA Step 2 Nomination Study.

2 Local Events and Festivals

The project team held small community discussions beginning with the Farmers Market and Remington Festival of the Arts on September 27 and 28, respectively. This Initial outreach included “meeting the public in public” where they are, rather than inviting them to come to us. The goal of the project team is to hear local perspectives from as many viewpoints as possible. By going to community members where they are, we can have many casual conversations with real and valuable contributions.

2.1 September 27, 2019 Farmer’s Market

The project team had a presence at the Canton Village Farmers market on Sept. 27, 2019. The purpose of establishing a presence at festivals and local events is to get the word out about the study and encourage participation going forward. At the table there was a map of the Brownfield Opportunity Area to orient participants to the study area. “Small Conversations” questions were also available at the event. These are called small conversations questions because they are a fast way for people to provide input and allow the consultants the opportunity to interact with a greater number and greater diversity of people by “encountering the public in public” at local festivals and events.



College students dropped by the project table at the Farmer’s Market.

There were four open-ended questions and a ranking question for farmer's market visitors who were free to choose which, if any, of the questions they answered.

I want a _____ on _____ Street in Canton's BOA Area!

- Restaurant at Main and Court
- Grocery store where Family Dollar used to be
- Rebuild Dairy Queen or bring in another fast food restaurant
- Bookstore in town
- Playground

What kinds of events and activities would enhance the Canton BOA?

- Bike share, perhaps on campuses as well as downtown
- Biking tours and housing at the colleges for the bikers
- Concerts in the park
- Movie showings in the park
- Hallowe'en events
- Historical tours/events

How can Canton's gateway areas be enhanced so they are more appealing?

- Bike sharing with docks like Citibike and Boston Bike
- Better use of the river: Fly fishing tours, passive birding? kayaking
- SLU environmental programs: Land use, water purification, illegible
- We need a welcoming center down by the river, three floors:
 1. Welcoming center with chamber offices with café
 2. Government offices, town and village and rental offices pay rent
 3. Restaurants?
- The frat house on Riverside Drive is an eye sore

My family and I would visit the Grasse River parks in the BOA more often if we could _____

- We need an outhouse or portable stops for bathroom
- If they were cleaner, didn't have to pick up garbage; maybe volunteers could clean up
- Cross Route 11 on the bridge, need a crosswalk – raised table crossing Willow Island to Coakley Island
- Get there
- NYSARC bus schedule has a lot of gaps in it, if it ran weekends and had better Canton/Potsdam route it would be better
- Have a dog park

A final question invited participants to rank four statements in order of importance with 1 being most important and 4 being least important. The final ranking from most to least important from the nine responses received was:

1. Revitalize commercial areas with new shopping and dining options
2. Reuse vacant, underutilized and abandoned commercial and industrial areas to bring in more jobs
3. Develop Canton's tourism assets to support economic development
4. Revitalize housing stock in Canton's BOA

Note that nine responses are not enough from which to draw any solid conclusions. These questions, particularly the ranking question, were asked again and again through the project process.

2.2 September 28, 2019 Remington Festival of the Arts

The team also had a presence at the Remington Festival of the Arts on Sept. 28, 2019. Due to the overcast and rainy weather “traffic” at the project’s display was somewhat suppressed. The input received is below.



Mr. & Mrs. Remington stopped by the table at the Remington Arts Festival.

*I want a _____ on _____
Street in Canton's BOA Area!*

- Less traffic
- Less traffic
- Easier parking
- More restaurants and food trucks
- Food truck
- Band in River Park
- More trash cans on side streets (might help reduce litter)
- Restaurant on Riverside Drive – sit-down restaurant to take advantage of the view; buy a bottle at Riverside Liquors and have \$1 corkage with dinner
- Restaurants downtown – better food options; fresh, good food; currently go to 1844 House

What kinds of events and activities would enhance the Canton BOA?

- Food truck
- Free concerts by community players
- More advertising for existing fairs and events so it will be easier to learn about them
- Playground on the River Park with swing sets
- More restaurants and better after-hours activities

How can Canton's gateway areas be enhanced so they are more appealing?

- Less traffic
- More attractive Main Street
- Easier parking
- I think a bypass would be very helpful. I walk every day and I have heard several people say how bad Main Street, too crazy, so it makes it hard to visit the local shops

My family and I would visit the Grasse River parks in the BOA more often if we could _____

- More picnic area and leisure space
- Easier parking and less traffic
- Lunchtime food truck
- We visit 2X per week to walk our dogs – love the nice path with the trash cans
- Picnic, outdoor grills
- More advertising about the parks

The final ranking question received just four responses. Ranked from most to least important, they are:

1. Revitalize commercial areas with new shopping and dining options
2. Reuse vacant, underutilized and abandoned commercial and industrial areas to bring in more jobs
3. Develop Canton's tourism assets to support economic development
4. Revitalize housing stock in Canton's BOA

Again, it is important to note that these responses were not enough from which to draw any solid conclusions. These questions, particularly the ranking question, were asked again and again through the project process.

3 Public Workshops

3.1 November 20, 2019 Public Workshop

The first public meeting was an initial kick-off meeting to explain the Brownfield Opportunity Area Program and the project's intent and scope, and to solicit initial public input on a vision for the study area, goals, objectives, opportunities, and constraints. The workshop was held on the evening of November 20, 2019 at Traditional Arts in Upstate New York (TAUNY), 53 Main Street. There were 22 people at the meeting.

The evening's activities began with a brief PowerPoint presentation about the Brownfield Opportunity Area and the study's purpose. Throughout the evening a member of the consultant team was available to answer questions about the Brownfield Opportunity Areas program and about the Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area in particular. A poster-sized map of the area was available to aid this discussion. Following the presentation, attendees were invited to participate in several activities:

3.1.1 Collaging

Participants clipped images they found relevant from a collection of magazines that were provided and applied them to sheets of construction paper with glue sticks. Taken together, the collages were participants' vision of a preferred future for the Canton BOA. Themes represented in the 14 collages that were completed are:

- Social equity
- Inclusivity
- Sustainability
- Housing – repair, affordability, construction
- Parks and open spaces
- Waterfronts
- Outdoor recreation
- Dining
- Streetscapes with textures



Workshop participants work on collages.

3.1.2 Sounds and Smells

What does Canton sound like? And How should Canton sound?

What does Canton smell like and How should it smell?

Participants were invited to use Post-It Notes to express how they think Canton sounds and smells and how it should sound and smell.

What does Canton sound like?

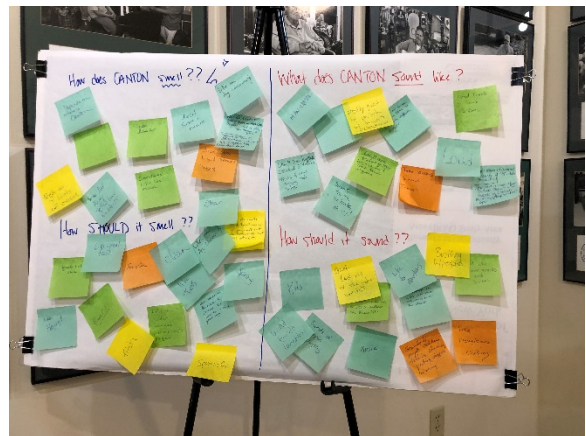
- Manhattan
- Mostly quiet with periods of train and Jake brake noise
- Noise of huge trucks on Main Street is really awful
- Like a four-lane highway, crowded with trucks.
- Trucks and cars running red lights
- Sirens, trains and airbrakes, oh my!
- Loud airbrakes from big trucks and loud diesel engines
- Jake brakes, sirens, trains
- Loud trucks and sirens
- Loud
- Main Street and Gouverneur Street, sound of 18-wheelers downshifting
- Upper Park and outer Miner streets during August, sound of students practicing/playing their sports

How should Canton sound?

- Kids
- Wind
- Birds
- Laughter
- Sound of people playing
- Quiet – get rid of the Jake brakes
- Pleasant – you should be able to have a conversation on Main Street
- Like neighbors chatting
- You should be able to have a conversation on the street
- Sounds of people walking, talking, sharing, greeting, shopping, relaxing
- Bustling with people
- Like the mountains
- Not like loud trucks and sirens

What does Canton smell like?

- Depends on where in Canton
- Like diesel
- Fresh air with hints of manure
- Brake dust
- Slurry
- Spilled beer
- Exhaust



How does Canton smell and sound and how should it smell and sound were questions posed to the workshop participants.

- Diesel smoke
- Liquid manure
- Pizza
- Diesel fumes and manure
- Like an ag community
- West Main Street side of town late summer – unfortunately like manure too often
- Throughout town at different times we smell like crayons from the cheese packaging plant
- Sometimes like cow manure

How should Canton smell?

- Like great food
- Clean
- Fresh
- Fresh and clean air
- Flowers
- Fresh
- Like hops!
- Clean
- Like a better managed manure waste program
- We need to be able to smell the water – in a good way
- Spring
- Spring
- Like the smells of different cuisines as you walk past the restaurants that don't yet exist

3.1.3 Time Magazine Community of the Year

Participants in the workshop were also invited to complete a Time magazine cover promoting Canton as the village of the year. The covers they imagined were:

- Canton Cares (inside a heart shape)
- Village of the decade: Annual balloon festival; safe and seasonal green space; LGBTQ all lives embraced; walking, biking, running, parcourse; small shops; downtown housing and shopping; natural watercourse (small sketches of attractions, kayaking, balloons, main street, zip line)
- Canton in the Middle of Everywhere: Exploring Northern NY and Canada from a quaint and welcoming hub; American Gems: Top College Communities in the US; -Diverse housing draws multiple generations to small town life; - A place that has it all: music, arts, outdoor sports; - Sustainable villages; -local foods, local suds! (Sketch of fountain in the park and church)
- Small town, big changes; A river runs through it!; Downtown: A snapshot of diversity; Local food in the spotlight; Colleges enrich village life' River hums with activity; Arts island draws audiences near and far; from kindergarten to Main Street Business Owner, a Canton Success Story (Cover photo: Bustling riverfront island with water activities, hops, restaurants)
- Canton, NY: The Village in the middle of everywhere; 5 10 places to dine after your whitewater adventure' Women rule: Entrepreneurs revive Main Street; Can Do: Expandable education partnerships inspire the community (cover photo: Drone view of downtown Canton and Village Green with tins of people out and about)
- Canton, NY, At the crossroads of New York's North Country; home of Rushton, Remington and Wright; Healthy Living; A Welcoming Community; Arts and education for all ages; Where the Adirondacks meet the Thousand Islands and Lake Champlain meets Lake Ontario

3.1.4 Small Conversations

The Small Conversations questions were also available at the workshop. Input received was:

My family and I would visit the Grasse River parks in the BOA more often if we could _____.

- Walk along the river. River access via green space with convenient parking, mobility accessible for a variety of populations. Reflecting and socializing spaces built onto the river scape, "naturalized." Maybe include "white water" features as well as calm pools
- Cleanup debris in river
- Get to it. More access points to paths by the river; don't have to be all connected, but good signage
- Develop special "go to" spots like those at Heritage Park
- Actually access the river
- If canoe/kayak access was available
- A riverwalk would be a plus
- Encounter more people there
- Parks are largely underutilized; need to draw more people to use them and create more opportunities for social interaction amongst community members
- Bring a bottle of wine with your picnic
- Play on the water – canoe/ kayak, etc. – downtown
- Safely play on equipment (actually we visit them a lot!)
- Play in covered areas (i.e out of the sun)
- Walk safely – I daily walk with my family, but largely stay off of Main Street as there are tractor trailers, speeding cars and numerous streets to cross. There must be a comprehensive effort that also addresses traffic and enforcement to the center of our village of our goal is to improve the areas along the Rt. 11 corridor.
- Access to water
- Walking trails along water
- Coffee/Wine
- Not step in goose poop
- Have a dog park!
- Take the dog

I want a _____ on _____ Street in Canton's BOA Area!

- Food pantry and thrift/gift shop on Gouverneur Street. This would attract pedestrians and car shoppers who would also use/shop at other stores on Main Street. It would serve the less wealthy in the community.
- Restaurant on Riverside Drive
- Street full of restaurants on Main Street
- Waterfront restaurant/coffee house/brewery on Riverside Drive
- Rushton Museum/info center on river (Riverside Drive? Miner Street?)
- NO village barn on Lincoln/County DPW on Park
- Café or seating area: 1. the alley next to Community Bank on Main; 2. the alley next to GLOW on Main
- We need to do more with our public spaces to make them more inviting for people to sit and gather. Use alleyways for tables, lights, music, etc.

- We need to move toward promoting retail only district downtown -- get offices and services out of prime retail locations; move auto away from prime waterfront
- May need to think about an area appropriate for offices and services outside of BOA. Or at least off Main Street
- Brewery on Main Street or Riverside Drive
- Whitewater park on the Grasse River
- Boutique hotel on Main
- Visitors Center on Gouverneur Street
- Convert former car dealership to chamber offices and showrooms, village and town museum, use access to river behind the building. Add restaurant and/or brewpub to the complex
- An outdoor seating area on Main Street -- 20,000 cars drive through Canton every day and outdoor seating would change people's perception about activity in the center of our village. Whether it is a restaurant, bar, café or outdoor venue, it would change the way people think about our town.
- Coffee shop on Main Street
- Park on Riverside Drive
- Brewpub on the river (five times)

What kinds of events and activities would enhance the Canton BOA?

- Public access on river would be helpful
- Maybe a club/restaurant on the river with music, etc.
- A stage set up in Willow Island area
- Riverwalk along Riverside Drive to bridge
- Need activities for teens and destinations for them, skate park, community center
- Need things for kids. Dance? Music?
- Need more activities such as musical acts, performances, places to "do" something, maker space? Places to gather and interact, street fair
- Concerts (small)
- Ice cream socials
- Outdoor family movies
- Canoeing/kayaking watersports in downtown portion of Grasse River BIRP
- Outdoor music/entertainment
- Block parties/street shopping
- Community picnics -- farm to table in parks
- Housing and commerce in the center of the BOA/ Village. Keep all of the people in the center of town and it will naturally create economic opportunities
- Music festivals
- Art festival
- Coffee shop, dancing, java house
- Shopping events
- Community festivals
- Music
- Dancing
- Music
- Theater
- Dance
- Need a club

How can Canton's gateway areas be enhanced so they are more appealing?

- Better aesthetics, better signage, more landscaping, removal of blight!
- Clean up/rehab the eyesores on Gouv Street
- New sidewalks and bike lanes on Riverside Drive, Gouv Street and Miner Street
- Better signage and maintenance of signage
- Safe attractive walkways with trees and shrubs well lit for evenings and later
- Pet friendly pet waste containers
- Comfortable restaurants/boutiques
- Nice signs
- Rehabbed buildings/get rid of blighted ones
- Green/trees
- Removal or remediation of pretty much all commercial property (on Gouverneur Street) from RR tracks to traffic light on Route 68 – Quonset hut, old Mace Motors, old Triple A are prime needs
- Triple A is possible green space and connection to Willow Island via foot bridge
- Canton should put their best foot forward and have their most beautiful buildings, recreational assets and cultural opportunities on Main Street, Gouverneur Street, Park Street, Rt 310, Rt 11, Rt 68, etc. We have more than enough space surrounding our village to hide commercial areas, industrial sites, equipment storage and government buildings
- New sidewalks
- Need a new municipal building where Family Dollar is
- Food food food on the river

Ranking question

There were 11 responses to the ranking question. The results, from most to least important are:

1. Revitalize commercial areas with new shopping and dining options
2. Reuse vacant, underutilized and abandoned commercial and industrial buildings to bring in new jobs
3. Revitalize the housing stock in Canton's BOA
4. Develop Canton's tourism assets to support economic development

4 Interactive Site Tours

We often look at our surroundings from a distance and moving quickly while we do it. A great way to understand any site is to truly experience it. It is amazing to discover what elements are remembered, imagined or interpreted that are different from reality. Our experience of a place comes from our interaction within it, and walking tours allow us to see the area with fresh eyes.

Interactive site tours allow members of the public and steering committee the opportunity to truly experience the project area and to discuss it in real time.

4.1 November 21, 2019 Interactive Site Tour

Members of the steering committee and members of the community participated in an interactive site tour of the Gouverneur Gateway on Nov. 21, 2019. There were about a dozen participants on the

tour. The tour began and ended at the Cascade Inn on West Main Street. The site analysis group walked the west side of Gouverneur Street to the train trestle just beyond the Village line and back on the east side of Gouverneur Street.

The Gouverneur Street Gateway is one of St. Lawrence County's busiest corridors with almost 7,700 cars entering the Village from the south on Route 11 each day.

This was once a thriving mixed-use corridor with homes, local businesses and services including the local bakery, one of Canton's two lumber yards and a car dealership among many other uses. Over the years the character of the corridor has eroded. It lacks defined curb cuts, and features narrow sidewalks, few streetscape amenities, and no bike lanes. There are some deteriorating vacant and underutilized properties. The Gouverneur Street Gateway can be a welcoming image for the Village of Canton. It should communicate a sense of prosperity and vitality.

Stop #1 Train Trestle and Village Line discussion:



Although the Village line is north of the train trestle, it was important to look at the gateway area from this vantage. The gateway potential here is great, but it currently lacks personality or a welcoming atmosphere. It's an unsafe place for walking and biking. Participants noted there are no sidewalks, although there are wide shoulders, it is not an inviting area. In the package of precedents provided with the participant package, there were several examples of train trestles that had been transformed into gateways. However, there was doubt that CSX the owner of the track would cooperate in a transformational project for the trestle based upon experience with the company. There is no sign here that says, "Welcome to Canton". In fact, the first sign after the trestle is a directional sign for the industrial park.

Stop #2 – Bimbo Bakeries/Dairy Queen discussion:



Note: The burned-out Dairy Queen building has been demolished since this photo was taken. However, it apparently is being replaced in kind, meaning that no additional effort at site enhancements, better site organization, landscaping or design is contemplated. The lack of site organization between the two businesses is ameliorated by the fact that the bakery does not operate a retail outlet.

Stop #3 Mace Motors discussion:



The participants are concerned that environmental issues may constrain reuse of this property. The property is not for sale, and while it appears to be significantly deteriorated, there are still automobiles in the showroom building. The site is unpaved, lacks organization and clear curb cuts. It does not contribute to Gouverneur Street in a positive way. Property has a lot of potential as it goes to the Grasse River.

After this stop, the group stopped by the former Triple A Lumber building. Owner Bob Ashley was with the group and he expressed regret that the building, which is for sale, has not yet sold and that it is significantly deteriorated. There are few out buildings that will probably require demolition. The property goes to the river and enjoys a pretty view of Willow Island.

Stop #4- Route 11/Route 69/Cascade Inn discussion:



The amount of noise at the intersection forced the group to retreat to the parking lot of County Seat Realty for a discussion. Owner Debbie Gibson told the group that the location has been a good one for her business. In 2016 she purchased 3-5 Gouverneur St. next door to her 1 Gouverneur St. office. She had 3-5 Gouverneur demolished and improved it for parking for her business.

While this location is good for her business, it's not a pedestrian friendly spot. The intersection at Main and Gouverneur streets is hard to cross and Dwight Church Park is all but lost. Following the tour, the participants debriefed in the Cascade Inn parking lot. Discussion items included whether the intersection could accommodate a roundabout – there's some concern about grade changes. Overall, the group found the corridor unfriendly and unwelcoming. Despite being a high-volume traffic corridor that is also a large employment center, one that is visited by people coming to do business and keep appointments, there is only one retail outlet, a Stewart's Shop; no restaurants currently operate on this leg of the BOA.

4.2 March 5, 2020 Interactive Site Tour

Members of the steering committee gathered for an interactive site tour of Main Street and Riverside Drive on Mar. 5, 2020. The tour was postponed from Feb. 7 because of a winter storm. There were approximately eight steering committee and consultant team members on the tour. The tour began at the corner of Court, Park and Main streets and concluded on Riverside Drive.

Main Street and Riverside Drive define the downtown portion of the Brownfield Opportunity Area. It includes two of St. Lawrence County's busiest intersections: Main Street and Riverside Drive, and Main Street and Gouverneur Street, which was the focus of a November interactive site tour.

On Main Street, there's a diverse mix of businesses and services, and there's room for plenty more. NYS DOT has implemented some traffic calming measures, but the corridor lacks human scale and character. After some clean-ups and demolitions, Riverside Drive is a world of new opportunity for river access and views.

Stop #1 – Park/Main/Court intersection discussion



This is a wide intersection that poses problems for pedestrian accessibility because Park and Court streets do not meet at 180-degree angles. Although it lacks pedestrian scale, much has been done in the past to improve it, including installation of pavers, period lighting and trash receptacles. In the summer there are hanging flower baskets on the light standards. Participants' perspectives were that absent removing the trucks from Main Street, there isn't much more that can be done to improve the intersection and it runs about as efficiently as it can.

Committee member Varick Chittenden and Village and Town Historian Linda Casserly developed a historic walking tour of Main Street with signage that included historic photos and brief narratives. The project did not go beyond the planning stages and participants agreed that it should be resurrected. A "Welcome to Downtown Canton" sign was also suggested, as were signs directing vehicles to the abundant free public parking behind Main Street.

Stop #2 – Main and Hodskin streets/Municipal Building



On the way to this stop, the group stopped at the former through alley between the Pear Tree and Glow Skin Care and Spa. Participants were inspired to think of reuses for the alley that could include entertainment, arts installations, performances, and public seating.

There are no protected crossings of Main Street between Main/Park/Court and Main Street and Riverside Drive. Group members also wondered if the crossing at the alley is a good place for a

HAWK signal. Another option would be to place a HAWK signal at Hodskin Street offering a safe crossing to the Municipal Building.

Hodskin Street has no retail operations currently except for Witherbee and Whalen monument dealers. Group members wondered if making the street a two-way thoroughfare would spark revitalization. Another idea was to close the street off for festivals. It has ample nearby parking and it is very visible from Main Street.

Stop #3 – Riverside Drive/State \ and Chapel streets, etc.



At this stop the group marveled at the scale of the opportunity to create a mixed-use neighborhood with strong linkages to the Grasse River. Currently, however this area features a problematic and unsafe intersection and a lot of open space where buildings have been demolished and environmental remediation has been completed. This is one of the most strategic sites in the study area.

Stop #4: Riverside Drive at municipal parking



Continuing toward Main Street, group members agreed there are too many auto-related uses. The entire corridor within the BOA should be addressed as one strategic site. This would give the community the opportunity to plan a cohesive and pleasant corridor with streetscaping, pedestrian amenities and views to the river. A clear plan will provide an incentive to businesses and developers to build here and calm traffic on one of the county's busiest roads. The strategic area runs from the Riverside/State/Chapel intersection on both sides of Main Street to the rear of the buildings facing Main Street.

5 Community Survey

A community survey was developed to gauge community sentiments about several BOA-related issues. The community survey is part of a robust community engagement program for the Step 2 Nomination Study and is the only engagement technique that results in scientifically quantifiable results.

With the support of the Economic Development Committee the survey instrument was developed for launching on the on-line Survey Monkey platform. The instrument included 11 questions, including numerous opened -ended questions and opportunities to add comments to closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions and closed-ended questions that allow a comment are important because they help overcome any unintended bias in the survey instrument and to allow survey respondents to clarify their responses. To publicize the survey news releases were distributed to local media and the survey was also promoted through the project's Facebook page. The link to the survey was also distributed by email.

5.1 Survey Results and Analysis

5.1.1 Summary

The survey opened on December 4, 2019 and stayed open until January 31, 2020. There were 291 responses received with a completion rate of 64%. This means that 64% of respondents answered all questions. This is considered a respectable response rate. Assuming the prime audience members for the survey are village residents, at a 95% confidence level the survey's confidence interval is 6%. That is to say that the responses to the survey can be assumed to accurately reflect public sentiment 95% of the time within a margin of error of +/- 6%. The survey responses revealed a high level of community consensus so there is no concern about the margin of error introducing a lack of confidence in the instrument or in responses to its individual questions.

The responses to the survey are summarized below.

5.1.2 Q1- Looking at the map of the Canton Brownfield Opportunity Area study boundary, please indicate if you live and/or work inside this boundary

5.1.3 Q2 - If you do not live within the BOA study area, where do you live?

Chart 1- Please indicate if you live and/or work inside the Canton BOA boundary

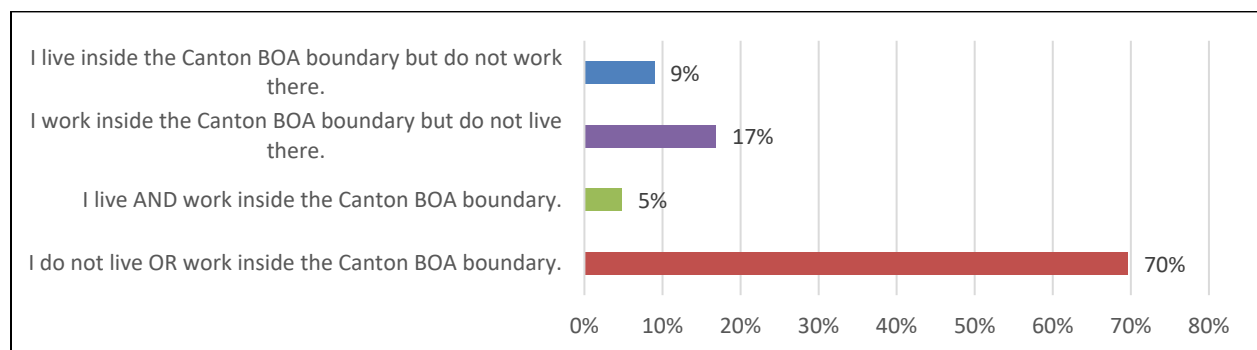
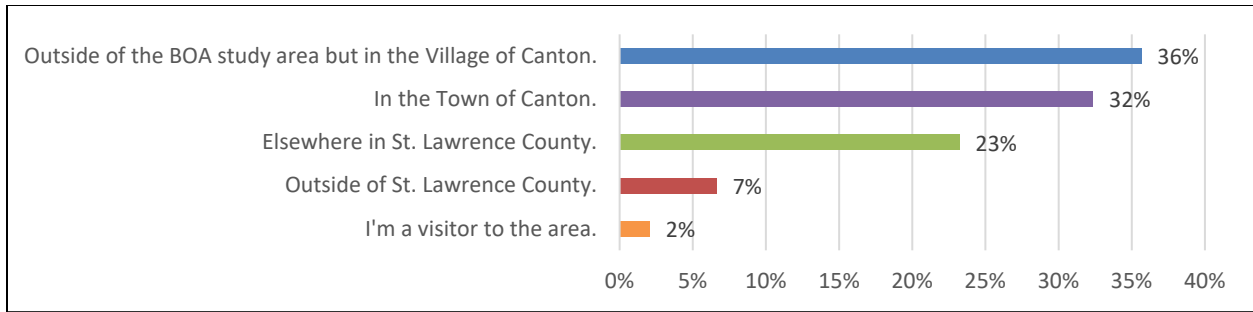


Chart 2 - If you do not live within the BOA study area, where do you live?



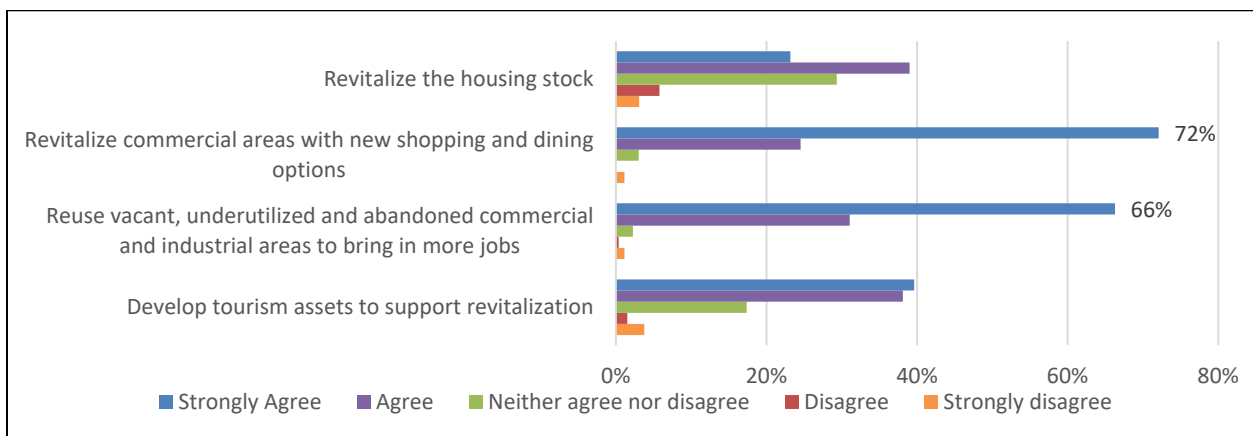
Roughly one third of survey respondents live, work, or live and work inside the Canton BOA boundary. Also among respondents, 36% indicated they live in the Village but outside the BOA boundary and another 32% live in the Town of Canton. Just under 10% of survey respondents live outside of St. Lawrence County.

These results are consistent with US Census travel to work estimates. In 2018, the American Community Survey estimated that almost 39% of Village residents who participate in the workforce walk to work – compared with 6% statewide – and further that the estimated commute time for Village workforce participants is just under 16 minutes; about half the statewide average. In other words, and extrapolating the data, Canton Village residents tend to work in the Village. An astonishing proportion walk to work, and the short commutes indicate that if they drive to work, their destinations are within or close to the Village.

These data indicate that the survey results are a fair representation of residents who are most impacted by the brownfields and stand to gain the most from their successful redevelopment.

5.1.4 Q3 – What are your priorities for revitalizing the Canton BOA study area?

Chart 3– What are your priorities for revitalizing the Canton BOA study area?



When asked their priorities for revitalizing the BOA study area, respondents focused on revitalizing commercial areas and reusing vacant, underutilized and abandoned buildings. Similar proportions of respondents agreed and strongly agreed, 97%, that these are the priority. Revitalizing the housing stock and developing tourism were less well supported with 61% strongly agreed and agreed that housing is a priority; 78% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that tourism development is a priority.

Respondents were invited to name other priorities for revitalization. Among the 45 other priorities specified, restaurants, dining, downtown and shopping were mentioned by 16 respondents. The river and waterfront were named by 17 respondents. Other responses included focus on parks, recreation, bicycling and walking. Several specified parking and traffic as priorities.

Some typical comments are:

- Walking path along the river, dining options overlooking the river. Clean up of old Dollar Store - maybe a community center to replace it. Canoe and kayak put in too.
- NEED TO ADDRESS THE PARKING PROBLEM if you are going to attract more people to stop and shop downtown!
- To help property owners and/or landowners who have lower income or have a hard time maintaining their property. Not millionaires or their trusts.
- Commercial property is the easiest way to add to the tax base-it requires limited service compared to residential property.
- Move the county, town, and village highway dept under one roof and consolidate some services.
- One of my dreams would be to have a small dam created/recreated in the area of the Main Street bridge to hold back enough water to allow recreational boating on the grass river upstream of the bridge; usually in the summer there is not enough water to allow that.
- Beautify the gateways into downtown Canton.
- More restaurants and retail opportunities.
- Consider complete streets approaches, mixed use development and form-based coding.
- Make the area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
- Address the gridlock. Traffic is ridiculous!
- Green space is important. Outside performance/entertainment space is desirable.
- Develop arts organizations downtown which are proven to bring evening industry to downtown business.
- Utilize our riverfront for dining and recreational spaces.
- Jubilee Plaza is a great entity. It is the center of the town. Please do SOMETHING with it.
- Revitalize areas with programs and entertainment activities for children and teens.
- Protect water quality along the Grasse River; restore shoreline to natural; remove oil and gas sales from within the brownfield; extend housing improvements further up Miner Street.

5.1.5 Q4 – What three things do you like the most about the area of Canton within the BOA study area?

The Grasse River in the Canton BOA, its parks and downtown are among the aspects of the study area that survey respondents appreciate most about the study area. Among the 174 survey respondents to the question: *What three things do you like the most about the area of Canton within the BOA study area?*, 63 named the river as something they like the most about the Canton BOA study area and 20 more specified water or waterfront. Among the 156 who named a second choice, 26 mentioned the river. There were 126 respondents who named a third choice; among these the river was mentioned seven times.

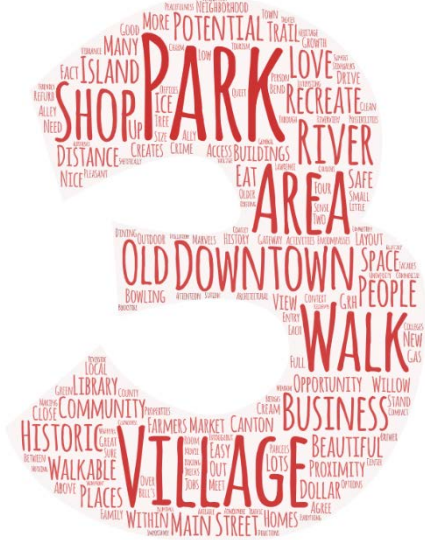
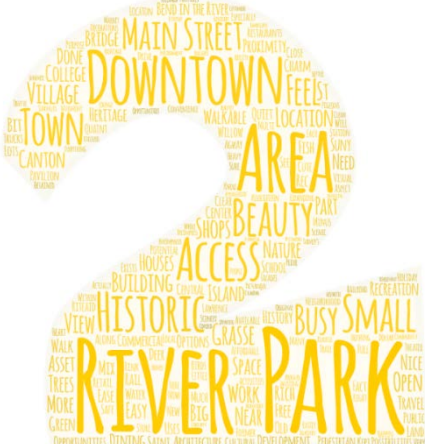
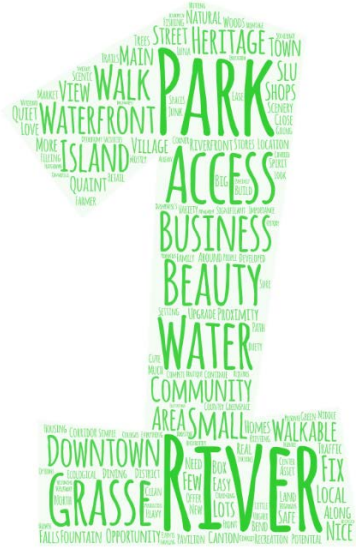
Many respondents who identified the river as something they like the most about the study area simply said, “river access,” or “the river” or “the Grasse River.” Others specified Bend in the River Park and Grasse River Heritage Park. Some specific comments received are:

- Variety of access to waterfront and the river
- Beauty of the river
- The river is a visual and recreational asset.
- The river is very beautiful and should be utilized as a destination
- I like how beautiful the river is and it is right here where we can see it every day
- Free access to the Grasse River to decompress and fish
- Two bridges over the river
- River tourism

Among the respondents who mentioned parks or a specific park as something they like the most about the Canton BOA, 21 named parks as a top choice; there were 22 park mentions in their second choices and 16 in their third choices. Many respondents named specific parks, and these included Grasse River Heritage Park, Willow Island Park, and Village Park. Many others simply entered “parks” or “the park.” Some specific comments received are:

- Downtown is rich with natural parks!
- Parks with river views and access to water
- We have a little bit of nature in our village (actually the deer are too much, but the birds (not pigeons) are nice as is the park and green spaces.
- Proximity to local businesses and parks

Businesses and shopping also figured prominently in the things that respondents like most about the study area. Business and shopping or shops had 13 mentions as the top choice, nine mentions as the second choice and 10 mentions as the third choice. Respondents also appreciate access to the study area, downtown, rivers and parks, naming access 18 times as a top choice, seven times as a second choice and twice as a third choice. The area’s beauty was also a



Figures 1, 2 and 3 – what do you like most about the BOA Study area?

popular choice, with six naming it as first choice and two as a second. The village emerged strongly as a third choice with 11 mentions, ameliorated somewhat by three mentions from one respondent. But the village also earned four mentions as a first choice and six as a second choice.

The three figures on the right-hand side of the page, above are “Wordles.” They illustrate the frequency of the words mentioned in the responses to this question as first, second and third choices. The larger the word, the more frequent the mention.

5.1.6 Q5 – What three things do you wish you could change about the area of Canton within the BOA study area?

If there is a theme in the answers to the question, *What three things do you wish you could change about the area of Canton within the BOA study area?*, it is the idea of *more*. Among the 171 responses naming a first choice on this question, the word “more” occurs 32 times; among the 155 responses specifying a second choice, the word “more” occurs 35 times and among the 135 responses specifying a third choice, the word “more” occurs 26 times. In all three cases, “more” occurs more than any other word, as evidenced by the “Wordles” illustrating the frequency of the words in these responses.

The responses to the question tend to fall into three separate categories of “more:” or conversely, things they find lacking in the Canton BOA. These are: dining and restaurants, recreation and river access, and commerce and business. Respondents across all three choices cited a need for more dining options and these were overwhelmingly present among the first priorities for change respondents named, mentioning them more than 20 times. For the second and third priorities dining and food options were still present (mentioned 14 and seven times, respectively), but recreation and access were more prevalent in both.

However, even more striking than the concept of “more” is the presence of the river throughout the responses. As with the responses to his indicates that the survey respondents clearly see the river as the key to the future success of the BOA study area. The Grasse River is mentioned 24 times in the first priority, 21 in the second and 15 times in the third. Some typical comments received are:

- More trails for foot/bike along the river
- Get rid of decrepit buildings along the river
- More riverfront dining
- Uses that enhance or are enhanced by the river view/access



- River walk from SUNY Canton’s bridge to (Bend in the River Park)
- I wish the river more accessible and safe for recreation like swimming and fishing areas clearly defined.
- Dilapidated buildings along the riverfront
- Increase the presence of river-dependent businesses
- Dining options on the river frontage
- Removal of the Dollar Store and other buildings right there on the river
- Uses that enhance or are enhanced by the river view/access
- Perfect place to put a couple of restaurants - with a view of the river



Some other typical comments received on additional topics:

- First impressions of the Village gateway on Route 11
- Demolish and re-create the entire Jubilee plaza
- The traffic noise– get rid of the 18 wheelers
- Rehab ugliness, it’s getting better on Riverside drive, McDonald’s and former Jubilee are such an eye sore.
- Lack of quality non low-income housing
- Fewer rental units
- Cleanup of abandoned/rundown properties
- Too many vacant sites.
- Empty commercial buildings maintenance upgrades of housing, enforce property codes
- An actual sit-down restaurant
- Facelift of downtown buildings, movie theater
- Establish businesses in abandoned properties (jubilee plaza, DQ)
- dining options
- More eateries, besides fast food
- Find a solution to the traffic congestion
- Bakery, fresh pastries
- Add restaurants (not pizza/Italian)



Figures 4, 5 and 6 – What would you most like to change in the BOA study area?

And finally:

My other dream is to win the mega millions and completely redo the shopping plaza, with some high end design shops, some shops that utilize locally sourced items, a space place for the Amish, an underground parking garage accessible from Miner street, relocation of the businesses west of Miner Street, for a small hotel/restaurant/bar on the Grasse River, with summer time boating excursions available, and other ideas that this space does have room for me to type right now.

The figures on the right-hand side of the page, above are “Wordles” that illustrate the frequency of the words mentioned in the responses to this question as first, second and third choices. The larger the word, the more frequent the mention.

5.1.7 Q6 – Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements about transportation volume and safety within the Canton BOA study area.

Based upon the public input received in the BOA study process, as well as the information in previous studies and reports, it made sense to ask a series of questions in the survey to gather attitudes and opinions on transportation volume and safety. The survey asked about pedestrian and bicycle safety, and about vehicle and tractor trailer volume, noise, and safety.

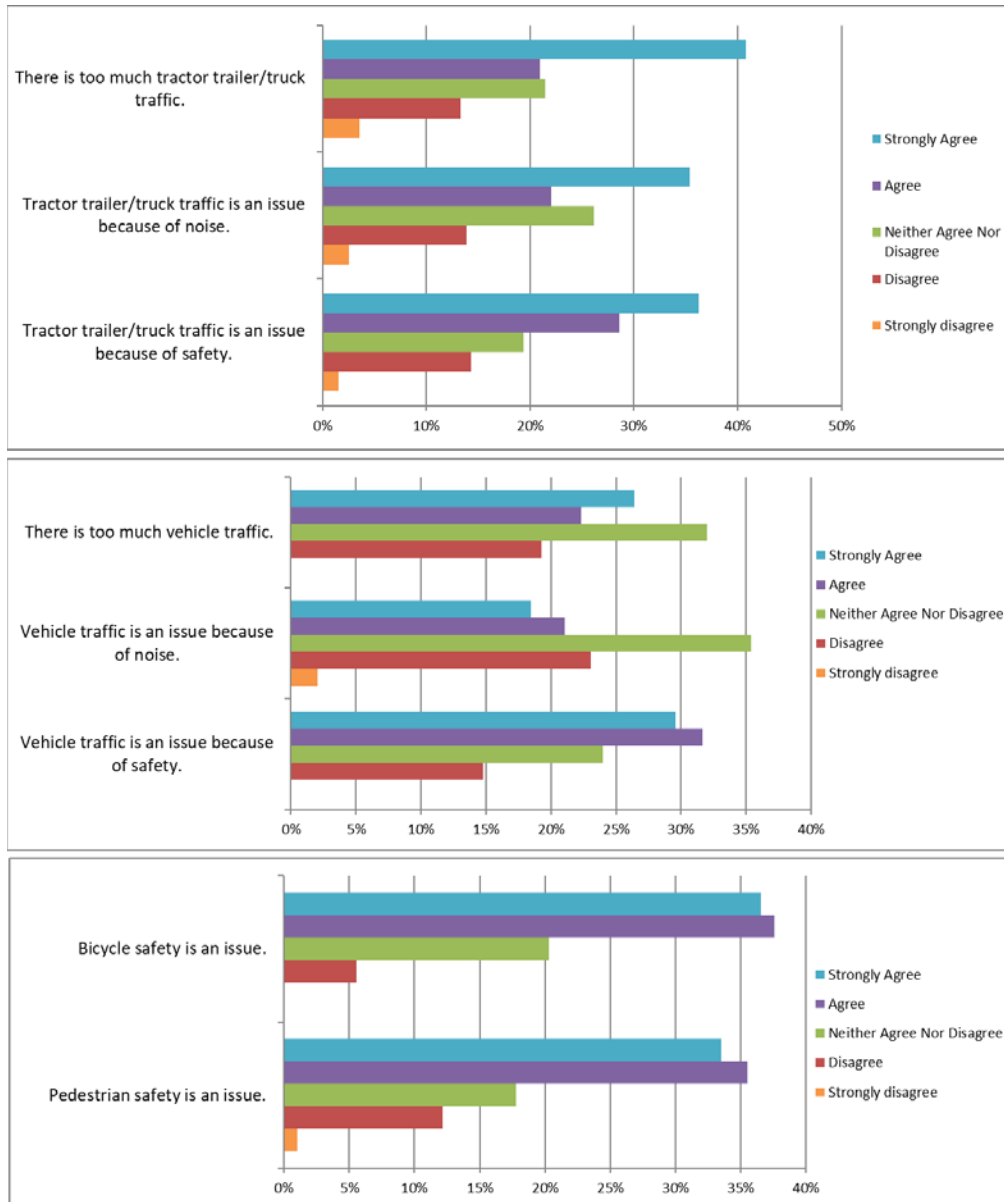
Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about traffic volume and safety. More than two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that pedestrian safety is an issue and almost three-quarters strongly agreed or agreed that bicycle safety is an issue.

A large proportion of respondents, 62%, strongly agreed or agreed that vehicle safety is an issue. The proportion of respondents that strongly agreed or agreed that vehicle noise is an issue, 40% was similar to the proportion that was ambivalent about traffic noise, 35%. Similarly, 49% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed there is too much vehicle traffic, and 31% are ambivalent about vehicle traffic volume.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that tractor trailer and truck traffic is a safety problem. A smaller proportion, 58% strongly agreed or agreed that this traffic is too noisy and a slightly higher proportion, 62% strongly agreed or agreed that there is too much tractor trailer/truck traffic.

Charts 4, 5 and 6 below summarize the responses.

Chart 4, 5, 6 – Transportation Volume and Safety



The survey invited respondents to specify areas where there are traffic problems or conflicts and to specify the nature of the problem. There were 141 responses to this question. There were 92 mentions of Main Street, including issues involving pedestrian safety and visibility, crosswalk issues, dangerous turns and others. Every intersection on the portion of Main Street within the study area was named. Comments about Main Street and downtown include:

- Dangerous turning left off Miner Street at Main Street
- Main and Riverside is scary. Drivers do not check for pedestrians when turning right onto Riverside or when turning right from Riverside onto Main.
- All crosswalks along Main Street. It is very hard to see people in the cross walks, especially at dusk. Putting the lights around the pedestrian sign, like the one by Morgan's would be awesome.
- Vehicles constantly running the red light on Main/Court Street intersection.
- Getting out of Miner Street onto Main

- The poorest and most terrifying crossing is on Main Street near the former McDonald's. Motorists – myself included! – rarely see pedestrians attempting to cross that horribly busy street.
- Any cross walk on Main Street
- Poor crossing safety and sidewalk safety on bridges over Grasse River
- Main Street – way too much congestion, poor sight distance and crossing safety.
- Along Gouverneur Street, corner of Main and Gouverneur, along Miner Street, ineffective crossings on Park Street
- I don't trust trucks to stop when I am crossing at crosswalks
- The need for a bypass is significant. Downtown Canton is almost wholly unappealing because of the volume of traffic and unfriendly pedestrian nature.
- Vehicles affect air quality throughout the area; crossing safety is only minimally adequate throughout village. However, we need improved conditions, NOT a bypass!
- It's entirely too loud to enjoy Main Street.
- Ped/bike paths lacking, Main Street needs major improvement for bike safety.
- I've nearly been hit by a Sheriff's patrol car in the crosswalk by the Pear Tree. People pull out to go around stopped cars and don't realize the car in front is stopped for a pedestrian. Sooner or later somebody is going to die there.
- Main Street has it all...speeding cars, congestion, and too many tractor trailers
- All of Route 11 through the village is dangerous. Speeding cars and trucks, noise from jack brakes, inability to cross the street, exhaust fumes, filth and grime from trucks, etc. etc, etc.

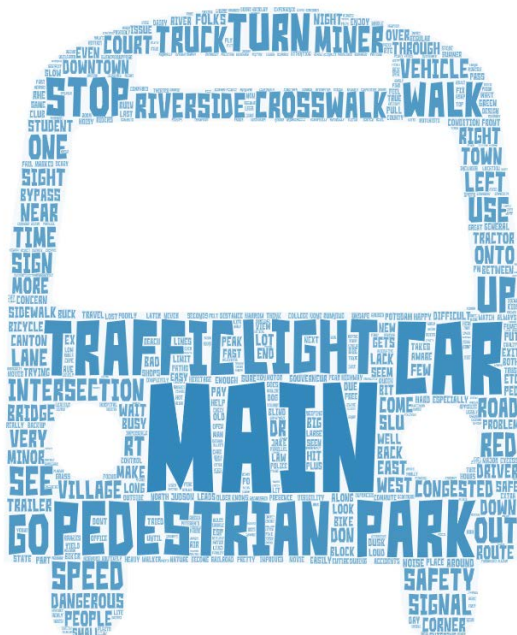


Figure 7 – Responses to an open-ended question about the locations of traffic conflicts in the BOA.

Other comments involved different sections of the study area. Here are some of them:

- Lincoln St., traffic often too fast. Trucks noisy. Folks turning into or out of SLU parking lots in an unsafe manner.
- Gouverneur Street from the Dairy Queen to Main Street
- Poor lighting on Riverside Drive and Park Street. Students are difficult to see at night. They need to use sidewalks not the streets
- Turning out of commerce lane is dangerous. Trucks fly up that area
- Cars routinely travel in the wrong direction on one-way streets (like Pine). Street parking occurs where unauthorized and blocks lines of sight even where it is authorized. Busy side streets (like Miner) need traffic lights.
- Riverside drive especially next to the pedestrian bridge.

Some comments had no geographic reference:

- Distracted drivers are seen everyday
- Poor sidewalks
- The speed of traffic is an issue

- Safety can easily be controlled by enforcing current laws.

5.1.8 Q7 –How often do you visit these Canton parks?

The Village and Town of Canton and Grasse River Heritage, along with New York State, have made significant investments in planning and developing Canton’s parks. New investments are planned for Canton Island Park on Willow Island in 2020, and for other parks in the future. To support these efforts, the survey asked a series of questions about the parks and about recreation in general. The first of these questions seeks to understand awareness of and use of the parks.

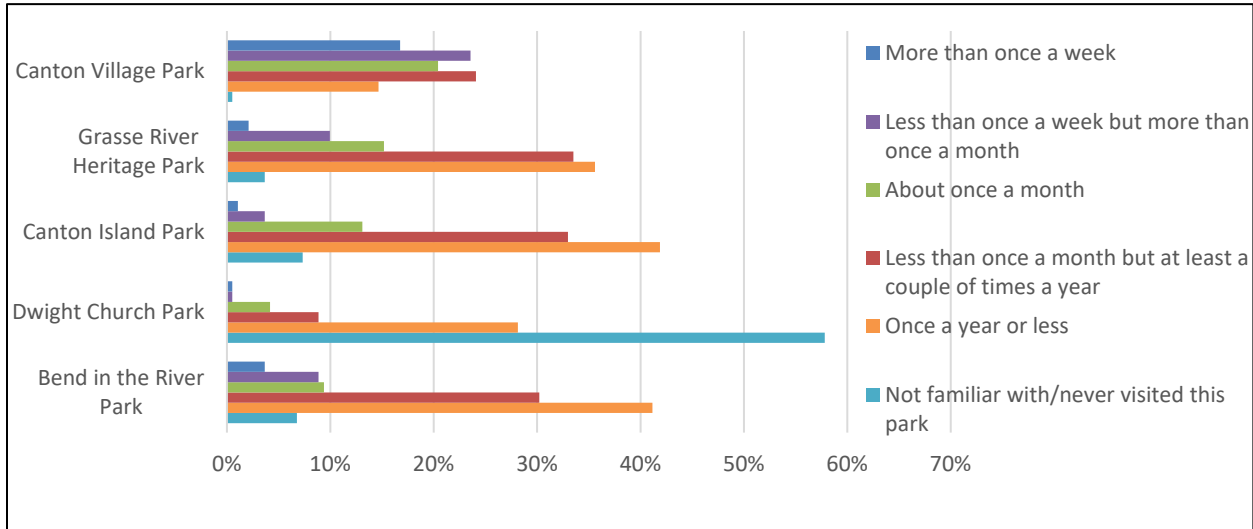
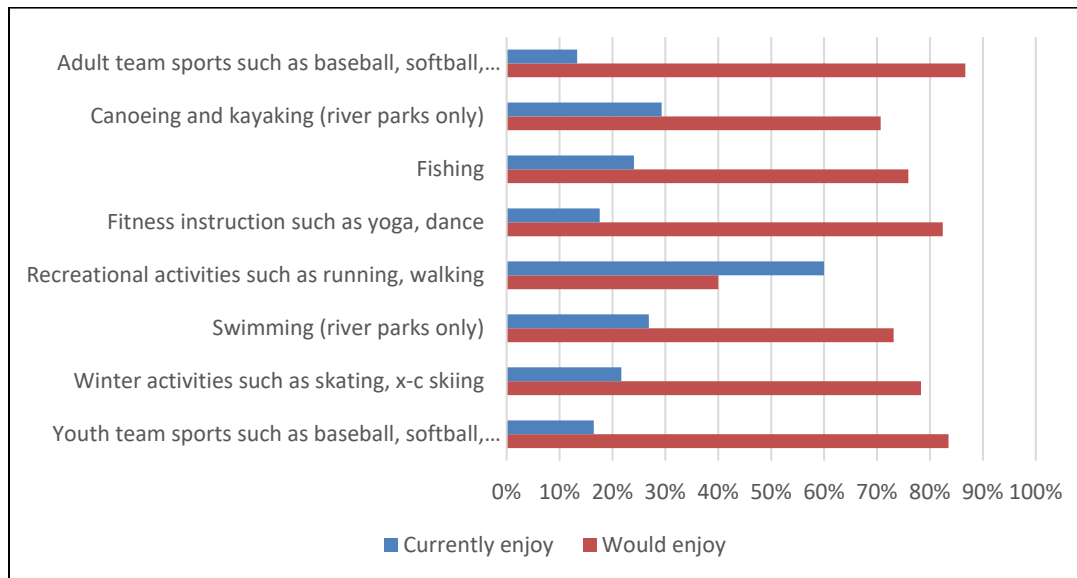


Figure 8 – How often do you visit these Canton Parks?

Canton Village Park is the most visited just over 60% of respondents saying they visit at least once monthly. Fewer than half this proportion of respondents said they go to next most-visited park, Grasse River Heritage Park at least once a month. Four of the five BOA study area parks are visited at least one time a year. However, almost 58% are either not familiar with or have never visited Dwight Church Park.

5.1.9 Q8 – What recreational activities do you currently or would you enjoy in the parks?

Chart 7 – What recreational activities do you currently or would you enjoy



The survey also gathered input and sentiments on the recreational and leisure activities that respondents currently enjoy in the parks or would enjoy if they were offered or if respondents were able to take advantage of them. These responses could be helpful to the Village and Town as they seek to provide current residents with additional things to do within the BOA as well as in their efforts to attract visitors and tourists.

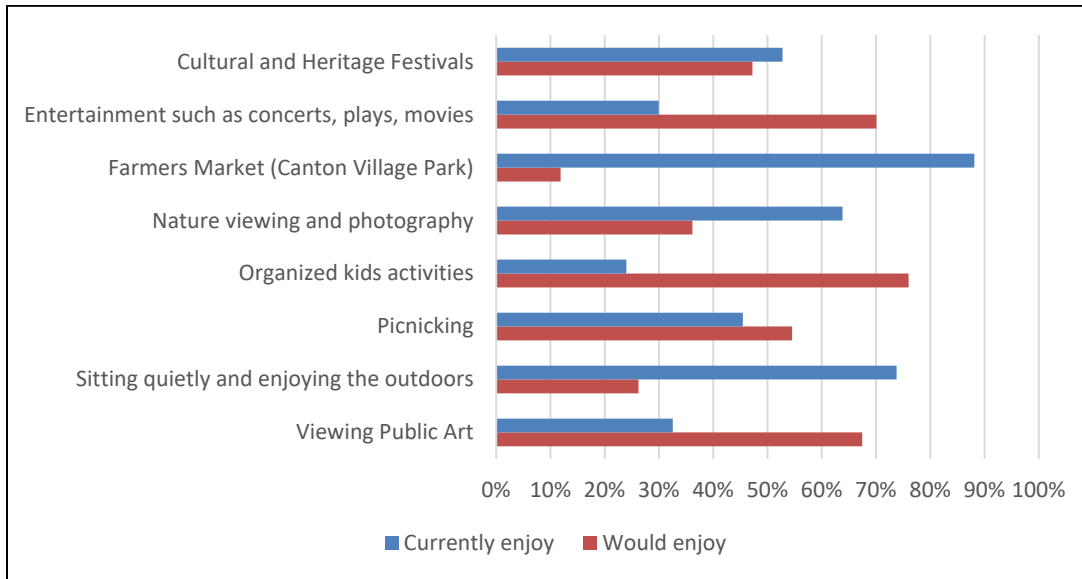
Except for recreational activities such as running and walking, a low proportion of respondents currently enjoy recreational and sports activities. However, they indicated they would enjoy activities particularly those that are programmed, such as youth (84% would enjoy) and adult team sports (87% would enjoy) and fitness instruction such as yoga and dance (82% would enjoy). Winter sports were also among the activities respondents said they would enjoy (78%) followed by fishing (76%), canoeing, swimming (73%) and kayaking (71%).

Respondents were invited to specify other activities and include additional comments. Here are some typical responses from among the 34 received:

- These parks are not big enough for skiing, etc. There are numerous trails in St. Lawrence County for hiking, skiing.
- Nothing much here for the disabled /elderly/handicapped person
- Better access to the waterways for recreation
- Even if I don't visit the parks, I enjoy seeing the green space while I'm in the village.
- Biking
- Mindfulness practice, meditation, and reiki
- Finding the time to participate in pre-scheduled activities is always an issue. If there were activities available on a come when you can basis, I would be able to do more of them and enjoy them more.
- Dog park, playgrounds
- Picnicking

5.1.10 Q9 –What other activities do you currently or would you enjoy in the parks?

Chart 8 – What other activities do you currently or would you enjoy in the parks?



The survey asked respondents about their interest in cultural and leisure activities in the parks. Similar to the question above regarding sports participation, the responses to this question will help guide the Village and Town as they plan to program parks to serve residents and attract visitors and tourists.

The top activities that respondents currently enjoy are the farmer’s market in Canton (64%) – although several complained that its weekday, midday timing makes it impossible for them to participate – and sitting quietly and enjoying the outdoors (74%). Nature viewing and photography (64%) and cultural and heritage festivals (53%) were third and fourth.

A larger proportion of respondents said they would enjoy organized kids’ activities (76%) more than any of the other activities listed. These were followed by entertainment such as concerts, plays and movies (70%); viewing public art (67%); and cultural and heritage festivals (53%)

Respondents were invited to specify other activities and include additional comments. Here are some typical responses:

- Fix the fountain, prioritize the most accessible parks
- Might focus on things more community wide, skating parties with hot cocoa and music behind social services like had in the 60s
- I’m not a huge fan of the art on Willow Island Park. I did however, love that there were a few musical concerts there last year!
- Would enjoy festivals, that include music and vendors other than the farmers market
- Lectures ... I sometimes attend lectures at SLU, it would be nice to have some quest speakers in the park, like SOAR or SLCHA or ??? anything except political or preaching type lectures
- I would enjoy the farmers market if it was on a Saturday. Its current hours of operation conflict with my working hours

leave Willow Island park alone. It is too small to allow for parking and any structure would interfere with its beauty.

- What I wouldn't give for a good restaurant on the water, bonus if it were a decent music venue as well.
- Please, for the love of Canton, be reasonable about how you use resources to make this place functional again.
- One thing that would be nice would be to use the alley between the Pear Tree and Glow as a three-season café space; my idea is to put in brick paving, have alfresco seating, a tasteful canopy, maybe like the one used on the chamber's offices (Main/Court corner), only with the addition of lighting. I would like to see service including aperitifs and/or beer, seasonal dishes (local as can be) and lite fare. perhaps a space for musical performances (not too loudly played). We would need to design a way to secure the valuables overnight when the alley would still be open for foot traffic. It would be like Church Street in Burlington, only much smaller and more our own.
- Sprucing up Riverside Drive; cleaning up some of the structures on Gouverneur Street
- Think 100 years out not 10-20
- I do not know why Canton cannot be a desirable little town like so many others in the country. It has many of the necessary ingredients, but the traffic and complete lack of amenities make it a place I only go if I have to. There has to be a dining option other than pizza, and one needs to be able to cross the street without being run over.