

# Town of Hague Community Survey Summary: April 6, 2025

## **GENERAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS**

The Town of Hague is working with the community to update the 2017 Comprehensive Plan.

Town of Hague Community Survey: Summary of 248 Responses

This summary represents feedback from approximately 200 respondents across multiple survey questions, revealing a community that values its natural assets, seeks balanced economic development, and desires practical improvements to enhance quality of life for all residents.

### Key Places to Protect and Preserve

- Lake George and waterfront areas are overwhelmingly the most valued community assets
- Hague Beach and Town Park considered community "gems" needing regular maintenance
- Peggy's Point consistently highlighted as a special place needing protection
- Boat launch and docks important for resident and visitor lake access
- Natural areas including Hague Brook, wetlands, trails, and forested areas
- Historic and community buildings including the Hague Market, Fire Department, and historic structures

### Top Community Concerns

1. Tax Issues
  - School taxes identified as disproportionately high
  - Many residents feel burdened by the Ticonderoga school district arrangement
  - Concerns about tax impacts on affordability for families and seniors
2. Economic Vitality
  - Lack of year-round businesses, particularly restaurants
  - Limited retail options and essential services
  - Need for a more vibrant town center
  - Desire for economic opportunities to attract younger residents and families
3. Infrastructure Needs
  - Sewer system expansion is the highest municipal investment priority
  - Safety concerns about Route 9N for pedestrians and cyclists
  - Need for improved sidewalks and bike paths
  - Boat docking facilities and waterfront access need enhancement
  - Cell service and utility reliability concerns
4. Recreation and Community
  - Desire for more diverse recreational facilities (pickleball courts, trails, etc.)
  - Need for year-round gathering spaces and activities
  - Better maintenance of beach and waterfront areas
  - Division between seasonal and year-round residents

### Desired Municipal Investments

1. Infrastructure Improvements
  - Expanded sewer service (particularly to lakefront properties)
  - Improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities
  - Better maintenance of public facilities
  - Highway Department/Town Shed improvements

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2. Economic Development Support
  - Tax incentives for new businesses
  - Support for restaurants and year-round businesses
  - Downtown revitalization efforts
  - Strategies to attract younger families
3. Recreational Enhancements
  - Beach and waterfront improvements
  - Expanded boat docking facilities
  - Trail development and maintenance
  - Sports courts and facilities updates
4. Essential Services
  - Improved EMS/ambulance services
  - Medical care access
  - Better communication systems
  - Transportation options, especially for seniors

## Resident Suggestions for Improvement

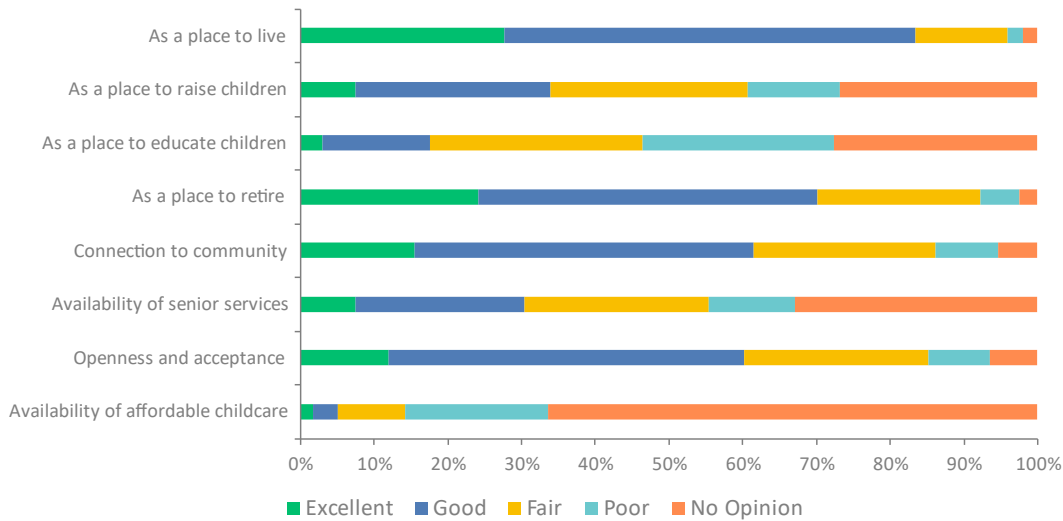
1. Government Operations
  - More consistent code enforcement
  - Better communication with residents
  - Increased transparency
  - Inclusive governance involving both seasonal and year-round residents
2. Community Development
  - Balance growth with preservation of town character
  - Support for small businesses, especially in town center
  - Programs to attract younger families
  - Address affordable housing needs
3. Transportation and Safety
  - Creative solutions for pedestrian and cyclist safety on Route 9N
  - Alternative trail systems connecting key community areas
  - Better maintenance of road shoulders
  - Improved crosswalks and signage
4. Environmental Protection
  - Lake water quality protection
  - Hague Brook delta cleanup
  - Responsible development practices
  - Preservation of natural areas

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## ACTUAL SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARIZED

### Q1: Please rate Hague as a community on each of the items listed below:

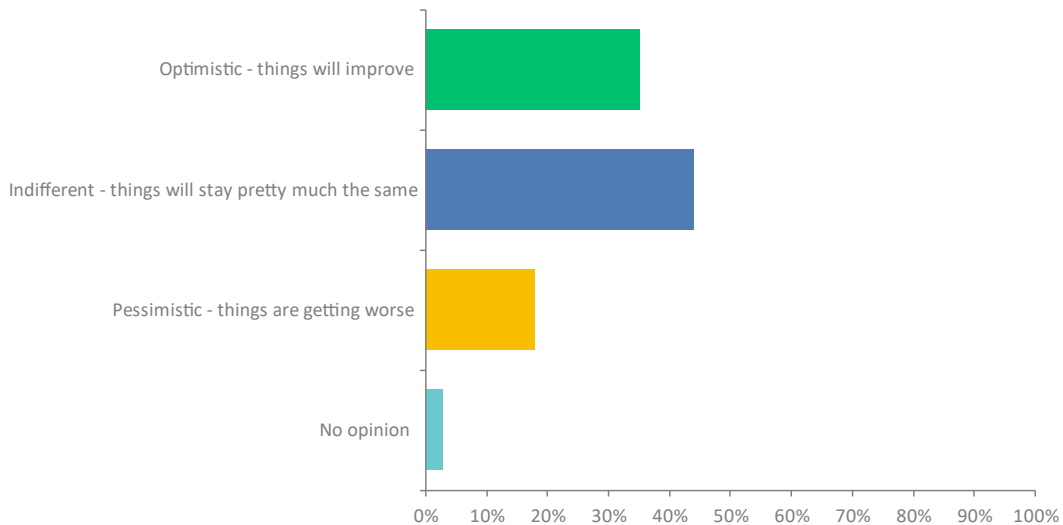
Answered: 246 Skipped: 2



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### Q2: Thinking broadly, how do you feel about the future of the Hague over the next five to ten years?

Answered: 245 Skipped: 3



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## Q3: Please identify any special places in the community that need long term protection or preservation

Based on the 166 responses to question. The survey shows a strong community attachment to the lake and public spaces, with particular emphasis on maintaining environmental quality while balancing the need for economic vitality and essential services. Many responses reflect concern about maintaining the town's character while addressing infrastructure needs.

### Top Areas of Concern

1. **The Lake and Waterfront** (mentioned in ~70 responses)
  - Lake George was the most frequently cited area needing protection
  - Specific concern for water quality and shoreline preservation
  - Several mentions of preventing erosion and managing invasive species
2. **Hague Beach and Town Park** (~40 mentions)
  - Many residents consider this a community "gem"
  - Concerns about cleanliness and maintenance
  - Several mentions of debris and silt from Hague Brook affecting the beach
3. **Peggy's Point** (~15 mentions)
  - Described as a "gem" of the community
  - Concerns about preservation and maintenance
4. **Boat Launch and Docks** (~15 mentions)
  - Access concerns for residents
  - Maintenance issues (one mention that "boat launch entry is too shallow")
5. **Natural Areas and Recreation**
  - Hague Brook and its wetlands (~10 mentions)
  - Jabe's Pond and hiking trails
  - Rogers Rock Campground
  - Forest land and wildlife habitats
6. **Local Businesses and Town Center**
  - The Hague Market (~5 mentions)
  - Firehouse/Firehouse Restaurant
  - Concerns about lack of year-round businesses
  - Requests for retail revitalization
7. **Historic and Community Buildings**
  - Town Cemetery maintenance
  - Highway Department Building (needs repair)
  - Community Center
  - Silver Bay YMCA

### Other Notable Concerns

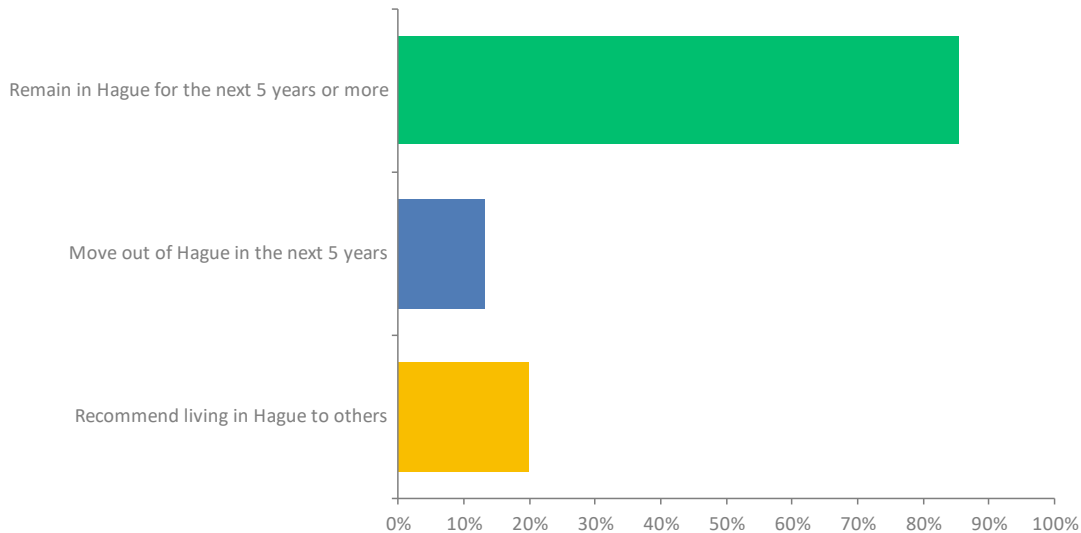
- **Development Issues:** Several comments about limiting variances for large homes and preventing over-development
- **Affordability:** Mentions of high taxes and need for affordable/low-income housing
- **Essential Services:** Fire Department, EMS, and public infrastructure

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- **Community Character:** Preserving the quiet, small-town feel unlike more developed areas

## Q4: Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:

Answered: 226 Skipped: 22



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## Q5: "If you could change one thing about Hague, what would it be?"

The responses reveal a community concerned with balancing economic vitality and essential services while maintaining Hague's character. There's a strong desire for more year-round amenities that would serve both permanent residents and seasonal visitors, with restaurants being the most frequently mentioned need. School tax reform appears to be a unifying concern across various demographic groups in the community. The feedback suggests that residents want Hague to be more self-sufficient with basic services while still maintaining its distinct identity from more developed areas like Bolton Landing. Based on the 186 responses to this question, there are several clear priorities that emerge from the community:

### Top Desired Changes

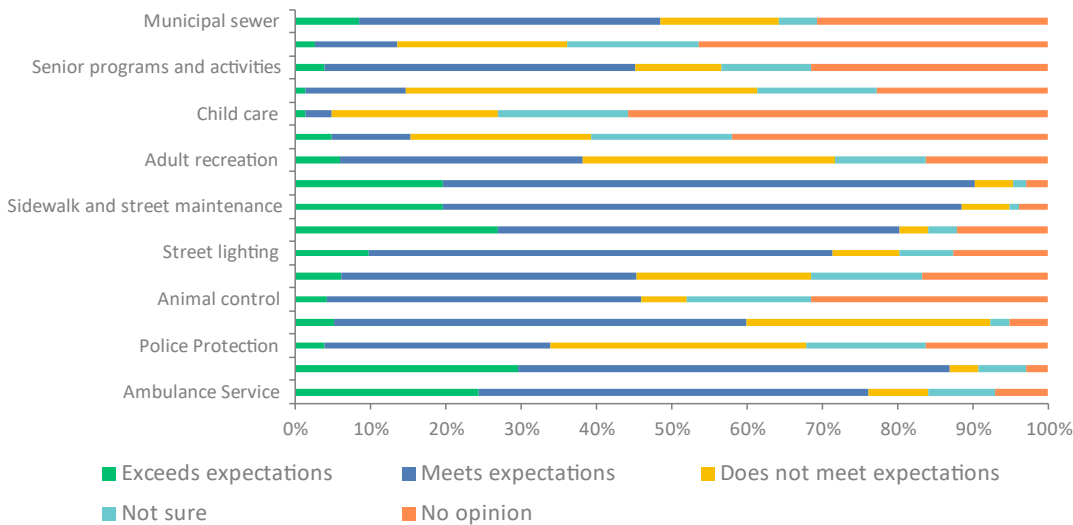
1. **More Year-Round Businesses** (mentioned in ~70 responses)
  - Restaurants were overwhelmingly the most requested business type (50+ mentions)
  - Grocery/market services that operate year-round (15+ mentions)
  - General desire for a more vibrant downtown with diverse shops
2. **Tax Concerns** (~40 mentions)
  - School taxes were specifically cited as too high in many responses

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- Many residents feel the tax burden is disproportionate to services received
  - Several mentioned the inequity of Hague's contribution to Ticonderoga schools
  - One resident noted paying "\$19,200 per year" with "\$13.4k in school" taxes
- 3. Community Services and Infrastructure**
- Medical services/urgent care access (10+ mentions)
  - Better EMS/ambulance services (mentioned as needing to be 24/7)
  - Transportation services, especially for seniors
  - Sidewalks on Route 9N for pedestrian safety
  - Improved cell service and utilities
- 4. Community Cohesion**
- Reducing division between "summer people" and year-round residents
  - More community events and gathering spaces
  - Addressing perceived negativity in town politics
  - More opportunities for younger families to afford living in the area
- 5. Improved Access and Amenities**
- Extended hours for town facilities (boat launch, transfer station)
  - More parking at beach and launch areas
  - Better lake access and maintenance of waterfront areas
  - More public docking

## Q6: Please rate each of the following services offered by the Town:

Answered: 243 Skipped: 5



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## **Q7: Please identify what municipal investment would have the greatest impact on the Town.**

Many of the suggested investments align closely with the "changes" mentioned in Q5, particularly around supporting year-round businesses and creating a more vibrant community space in the town center. The recurring mentions of the Darrin parking lot acquisition suggest this is viewed as a critical piece of infrastructure for community events and town vitality. Based on the 140 responses to the question, the following responses are summarized.

### **Top Investment Priorities**

1. **Infrastructure Improvements** (~45 mentions)
  - Sewer System Expansion (20+ mentions) - Particularly extending to Silver Bay, Route 9N, and lakefront properties
  - Utilities Improvements - Several mentions of burying power lines to reduce outages
  - Highway Department/Town Shed (10+ mentions) - Many respondents noted the need for improvements
  - Town Park/Beach Facilities - Including a new town building at the park, playground renovations
2. **Business Development** (~25 mentions)
  - Tax incentives/breaks for new businesses
  - Support programs for restaurants and year-round businesses
  - "Pilot program to encourage new business"
  - Downtown revitalization efforts
3. **Transportation and Accessibility** (~20 mentions)
  - Parking - Particularly acquiring the Darrin parking lot across from the beach (multiple mentions)
  - Sidewalks on Route 9N - For pedestrian safety
  - Bike/pedestrian paths - Including "off 9N pedestrian/bike route"
  - Transportation services for seniors and medical appointments
4. **Recreational Amenities** (~15 mentions)
  - Public Docking - Expanded boat docking facilities
  - Dog Park (mentioned several times)
  - Year-round activities - Similar to the summer concert series
  - Youth/family activities
5. **Essential Services** (~10 mentions)
  - EMS/Ambulance Services - Including creating an EMS district
  - Fire Department support
  - Medical services/urgent care

### **Other Notable Mentions**

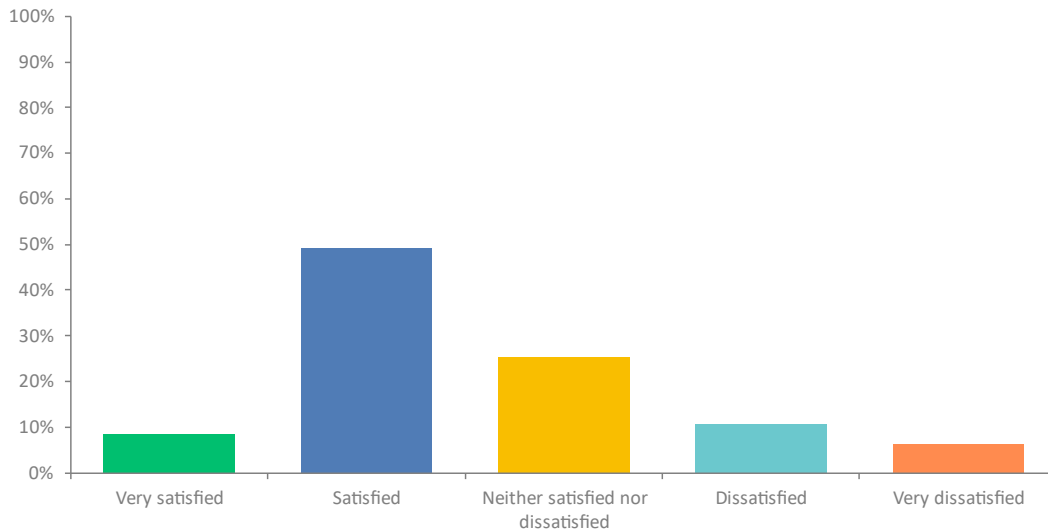
- School Tax Reform - Multiple respondents suggesting legal efforts to address tax inequity
- Lake Protection - Maintaining water quality, milfoil removal, Hague Brook delta cleanup
- Cell Service improvements

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- Code Enforcement - Better enforcement of regulations, particularly for rentals and property maintenance

## Q8: Are you satisfied with the overall performance of Town government?

Answered: 225 Skipped: 23



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## Q9: Areas for Improvement in Town Government

The responses reveal a community at a transition point, with mixed opinions about its leadership and direction. There appears to be tension between:

1. **Growth vs. Preservation:** Some residents want more business development and tourism, while others are concerned about over-development.
2. **Resident Types:** There are ongoing tensions between year-round residents and seasonal property owners.
3. **Governance Style:** Some appreciate the current leadership's approach, while others feel improvements are needed in communication and collaboration.

A unifying concern across many responses is the school tax situation, which continues to be a major issue for residents regardless of their other views on town governance.

The comments suggest a need for stronger community-wide dialogue about Hague's future vision, balancing growth with preservation of the town's character, and creating opportunities for families and businesses to thrive year-round. Based on the 58 responses, several key themes emerge regarding areas that need improvement:

### Primary Areas of Concern

1. **Tax Issues** (10+ mentions)
  - School taxes remain a dominant concern
  - "Outrageous school taxes need to be more aggressively addressed"

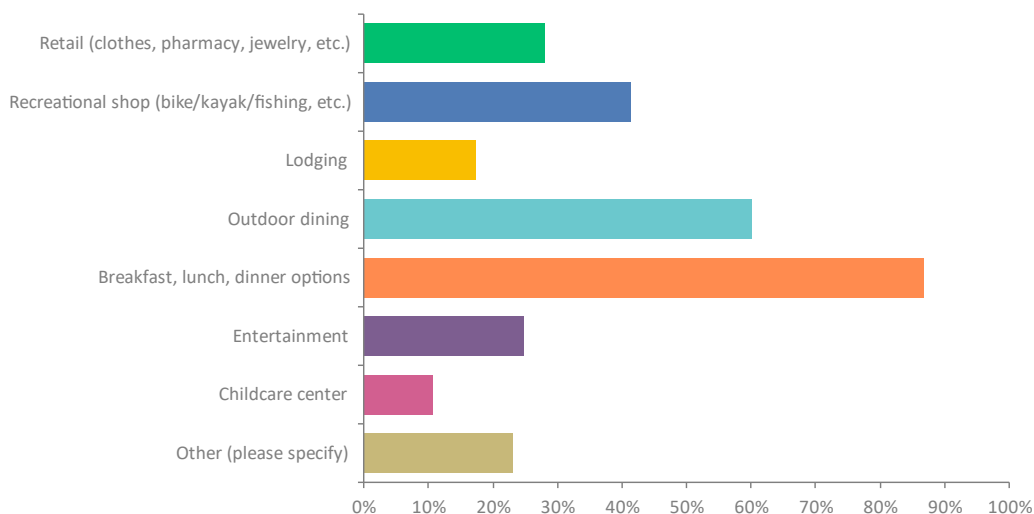


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- Multiple suggestions to leave Ticonderoga school district
- Concerns about property tax assessments
- 2. **Business Development Support** (10+ mentions)
  - Need for more "business friendly" governance
  - Incentives for restaurants and year-round businesses
  - "Zoning laws maybe too Strick-prohibits growth"
  - Perception that government discourages tourism/visitors
- 3. **Governance and Leadership** (10+ mentions)
  - Mixed opinions on current leadership
  - Some praise for the new administration
  - Concerns about divisiveness and lack of collaboration
  - "Work better together & listen to residents more"
- 4. **Zoning and Code Enforcement** (8+ mentions)
  - Inconsistent enforcement
  - Concerns about timeliness of applications
  - "Zoning Board of Appeals has been too lenient in approving variances"
  - Mixed desires (some want stricter enforcement, others less)
- 5. **Community Vision and Growth** (5+ mentions)
  - Need for strategies to address "declining population"
  - Support for "year-round employment"
  - Making Hague "more accessible for year-round residents"
  - "We need more families and a younger generation"

## Q10: Please identify what kind of businesses you would like to see in Hague. (check all that apply)

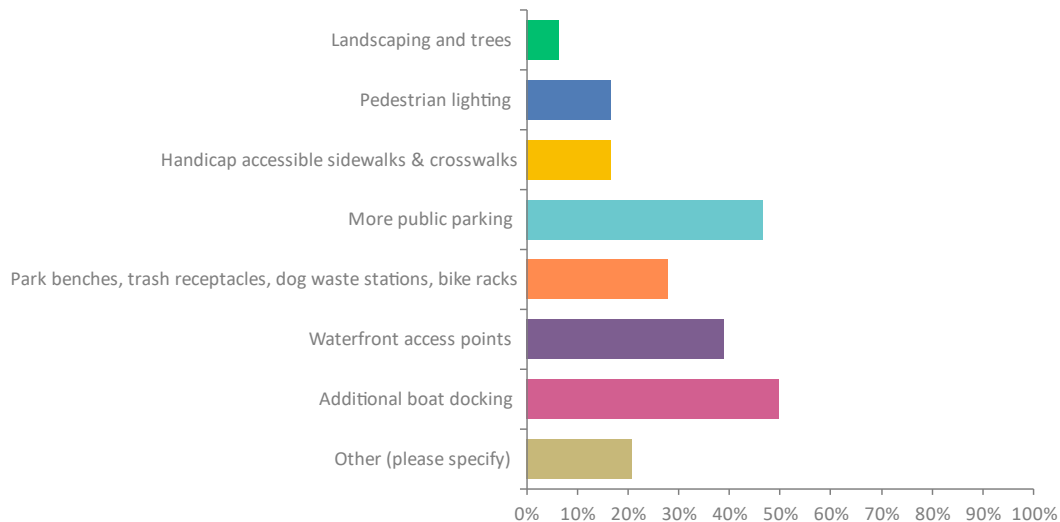
Answered: 225 Skipped: 23



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## Q11: What specific improvements are needed in Hague? (check all that apply)

Answered: 187 Skipped: 61



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## Q12: What specific recreational facilities need improvement in Hague?

The responses demonstrate a community that values outdoor recreation, particularly water-related activities, while also recognizing the need for year-round options. There's a strong desire for better maintenance of existing facilities along with strategic enhancements that would serve both residents and visitors. The feedback shows particular concern about beach and waterfront facilities, which aligns with the community's identification of the lake as a key asset in previous questions. There's also significant interest in trails and paths that would improve connectivity and safety, especially along busy roadways. Many responses also suggest greater integration with and support of the Silver Bay YMCA to maximize existing resources rather than duplicating facilities.

Based on the 103 responses, several clear priorities emerge:

### Top Priorities for Recreational Improvements

- 1. Beach and Waterfront Enhancements (35+ mentions)**
  - Beach Cleanup/Maintenance - Multiple concerns about cleanliness
    - "Clean up black mud at water's edge at Hague Beach"
    - "The beach is very poorly cleaned"
  - Swimming Area Improvements - Including dredging for better swimming
    - "Dredging at the beach to improve quality of swimming"

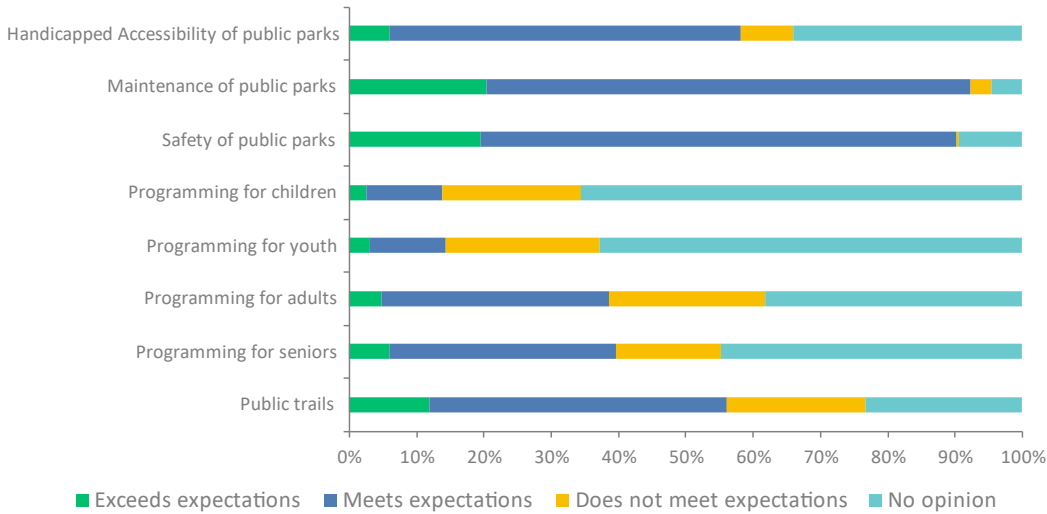
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- "It would also be great if Hague beach had a deeper area for adult swimmers"
- 2. **Boating Facilities** (30+ mentions)
  - Expanded Boat Docking - Many requests for more docks
  - Boat Launch Improvements
    - "Dredge access to boat launch"
    - "Town launch ramp. Need sole access, like Mossy Point & Rogers Rock Campground ramps"
  - Non-motorized Boat Support
    - "Install public kayak racks on shores of lake"
    - "Kayak rentals"
- 3. **Trails and Paths** (20+ mentions)
  - Walking/Hiking Trails - More development and maintenance
  - Bike Paths - Particularly for safety along Route 9N
  - Multi-use Trail Networks
    - "Cross country & hiking trails & maps maintained for safety"
    - "A relatively flat and safe walking, biking, and running path"
- 4. **Sports Courts and Facilities** (15+ mentions)
  - Pickleball Courts - Multiple requests (8+ mentions)
  - Tennis Courts
  - Basketball Court Improvements - "Basketball court is uneven, needs lighting"
  - Softball Field
- 5. **Park Amenities** (10+ mentions)
  - Playground Updates
  - Pavilion for Events
    - "Covered pavilion in town park for events"
    - "Pavilion for the summer concert series"
- 6. **Indoor Recreation** (10+ mentions)
  - Winter activity options
  - "Indoor - there are no indoor places to exercise or play a sport during the long winter"
  - "An indoor location that offers activities such as pool, ping pong, etc."
  - Indoor options for winter months
- **Community Gathering Spaces**
  - Summer farmers market
  - Concert areas
  - Event spaces

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## Q13: Please rate the parks and recreational opportunities in Hague.

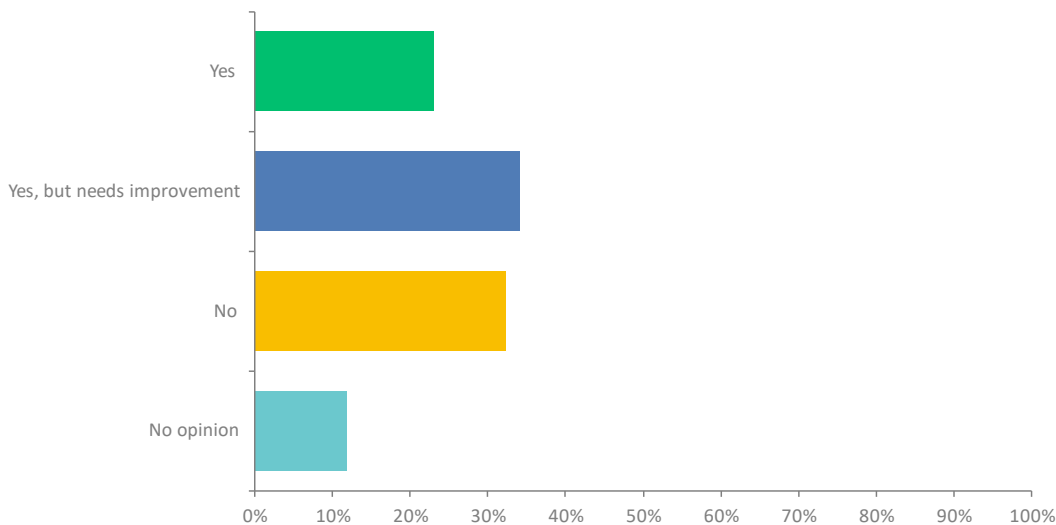
Answered: 237 Skipped: 11



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## Q14: Do you find Hague to be user-friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists?

Answered: 235 Skipped: 13



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## Q15: What specific improvements are needed for pedestrians and bicyclists?

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Based on the 148 responses, a strong consensus that current road conditions pose significant safety risks to pedestrians and cyclists. While many acknowledge the physical constraints of the existing roads, there's a clear desire for solutions that would improve safety and access.

Most residents prioritize:

1. Creating dedicated, separate spaces for pedestrians and cyclists where possible
2. Improving signage and crosswalks in high-traffic areas
3. Exploring alternative routes that avoid the main roads
4. Addressing speed and traffic issues

Given the physical constraints of the existing roads, a comprehensive approach that combines targeted infrastructure improvements, traffic management, and development of alternative routes would likely be most effective in addressing community concerns.

## Major Concerns and Improvement Needs

1. **Road Safety on Route 9N** (80+ mentions)
  - "Roads narrow-no real sidewalks, no shoulder"
  - "9N is dangerous for runners/bikers!"
  - "9N is pretty dangerous!"
  - "Walking on 9N is a death wish!"
  - Many mentions of the dangerous curves and narrow shoulders
2. **Bike Lanes and Paths** (60+ mentions)
  - Dedicated lanes on main roads where possible
  - Separate bike paths away from traffic
  - "Bike lanes, sidewalks on 9N & 8 and more hiking trails"
  - "Bike trails and safe use of roads"
3. **Sidewalks and Pedestrian Paths** (50+ mentions)
  - Extension of existing sidewalks
  - New sidewalks along dangerous sections
  - "Extend sidewalks past Trout House"
  - "Sidewalks in hamlet"
4. **Alternative Routes** (15+ mentions)
  - Off-road trails connecting key areas
  - "Off 9N pedestrian and bicyclist route"
  - "The 'Friendship Trail' is an example: current path from Pine Cove, Arcady, Pudding Island. Onida Bay, Silver Bay=2.6 miles avoiding 9N."
5. **Crosswalks and Signage** (15+ mentions)
  - "Crosswalk across Rt.8"
  - "Clearly marked pedestrian crossing at beach"
  - "Smart pedestrian crossing warning signs with flashing lights"
  - "Needs signs for pedestrian crossing"
6. **Traffic Calming Measures** (10+ mentions)
  - "Monitor speed of cars through town"
  - "Change speed limit to 40mph from town to Rogers Rock Campground"
  - "Lower speed limit for motor vehicles"

## Notable Insights

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- **Physical Constraints Recognized:** Many residents acknowledge the challenges presented by the narrow, winding roads
  - "Bicycle lanes but not feasible on 9N"
  - "I'm not sure where that could be, but we really need it" (regarding safe trails)
  - "Not sure if this could be improved due to narrowness of 9n would be major road overhaul"
- **Creative Solutions Proposed:**
  - "Putting a third lane in on 9N from Route 8 to Sabbath Day Point and putting in some kind of bollards to block it off"
  - "Disallow large trucks on 9N in order to increase road safety"
  - Working with YMCA on trail development
- **High-Risk Areas Identified:**
  - S-curves on Route 8 north of village
  - Area near Dockside Landing Marina
  - Curves near "the Ruah"
  - Section from town to Rogers Rock Campground

## Q16: Please identify the special places in Hague that should be protected or preserved

The responses to this question strongly reinforce the findings from Question 3, highlighting the community's deep connection to its waterfront areas (especially the town beach and Peggy's Point) and natural landscapes. The consistency between responses to Questions 3 and 16 demonstrates a clear community consensus about Hague's most valued assets. There's also a strong sentiment about preserving the town's character against over-development, while maintaining access to these special places for residents and visitors. The multiple mentions of the "elephant" (presumably a local landmark) and specific locations like the old steamship dock suggest that these places have cultural and historical significance that contribute to the community's identity and sense of place. Based on the 137 responses, several locations consistently emerge as valued community assets:

### Top Places to Protect and Preserve

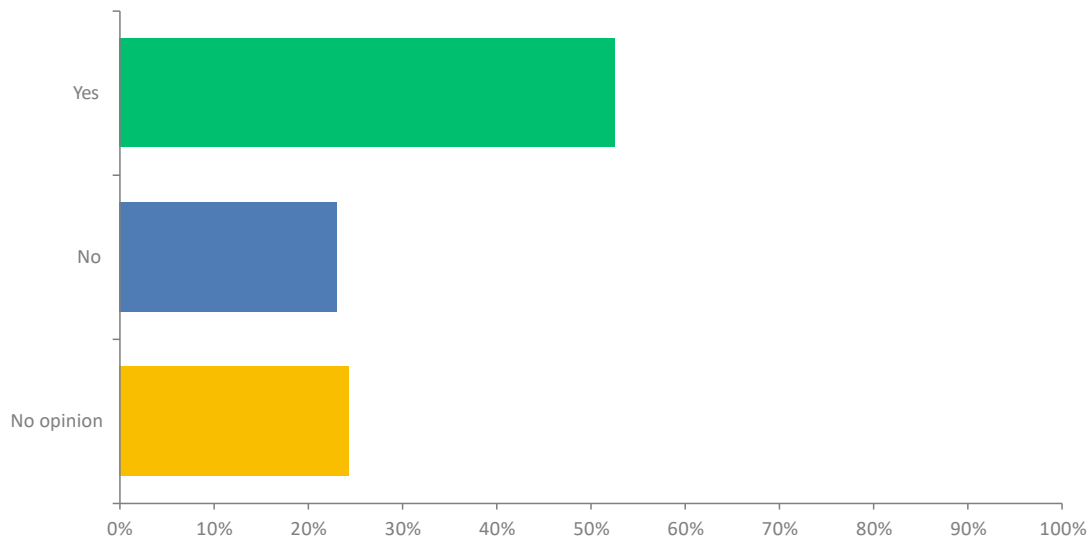
1. **Waterfront Areas** (70+ mentions)
  - Town Beach/Hague Beach (40+ mentions) - Consistently rated as a top priority
  - Lake George (general mentions of "the lake") - A foundational community asset
  - Peggy's Point (30+ mentions) - Repeatedly described as a "gem" of the community
  - Hague Brook and its delta area (15+ mentions)
  - Boat launch and docks (10+ mentions)
2. **Natural Areas and Trails** (25+ mentions)
  - Jabe's Pond (mentioned several times)
  - Rock & Rye Trail
  - Lookout Trail

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- Waltonian Islands
  - North Pond
  - Swede Mountain
  - The old fish hatchery trail ("a hidden gem")
- 3. Town Center and Historic Areas (20+ mentions)**
- Downtown buildings
  - The Hague Market
  - Firehouse/Firehouse Restaurant
  - Post Office
  - Graphite mill and mines (historic areas)
  - "The elephant" (mentioned several times)
  - Old steamship dock
- 4. Other Community Assets (15+ mentions)**
- Silver Bay YMCA (several mentions)
  - Cemeteries
  - Veterans Park
  - Community Center

## Q17: Would you like to see the Town invest in improvements that would offset potential impacts from climate change?

Answered: 234 Skipped: 14

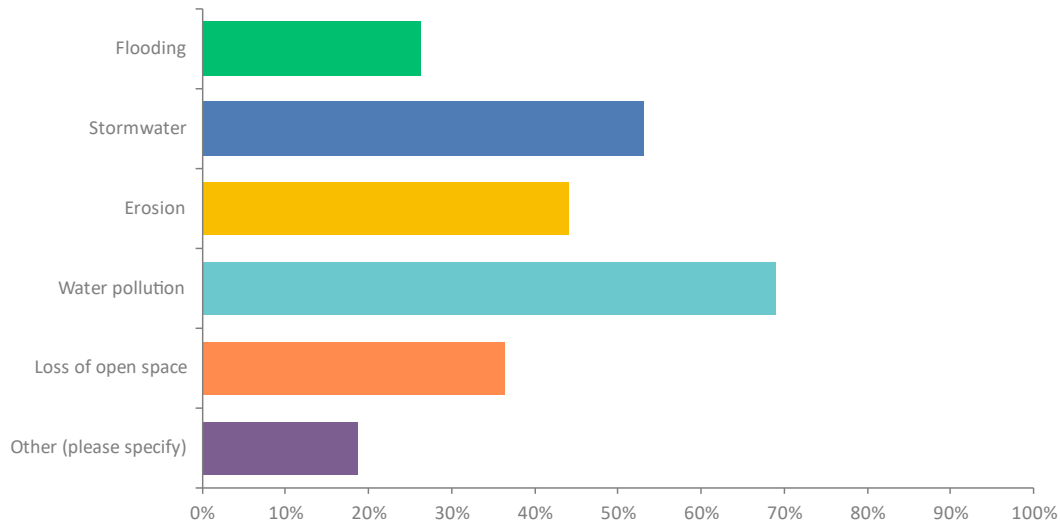


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## Q18: Please identify any specific environmental concerns you have in the community. (check all that apply)

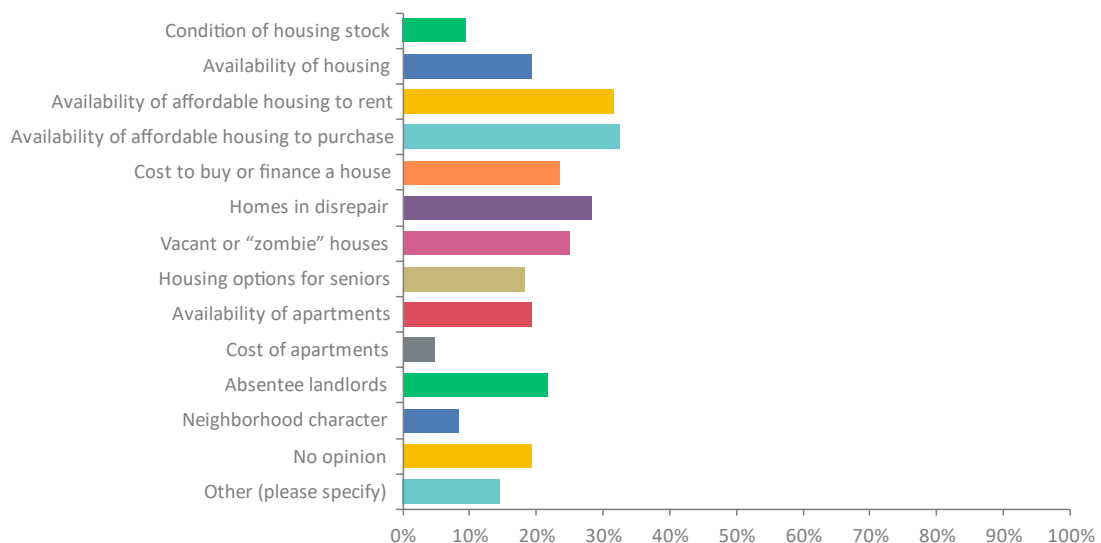
Answered: 209 Skipped: 39



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## Q19: Please identify housing issues in the Town of Hague: (check all that apply)

Answered: 213 Skipped: 35



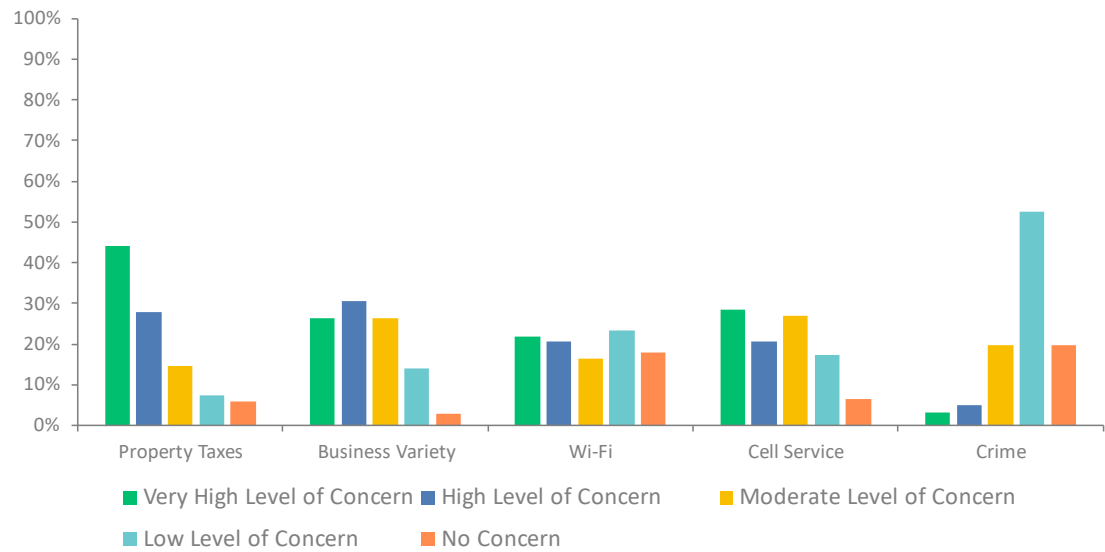
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## Q20: Please indicate your level of concern on the following issues.

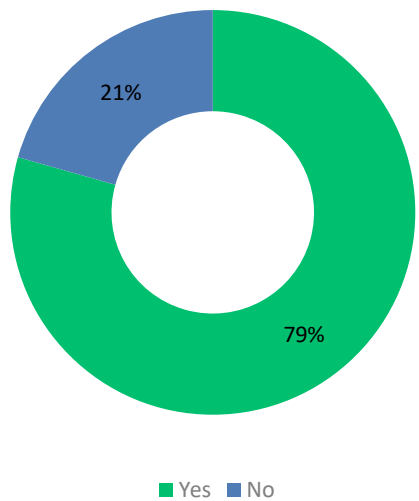
Answered: 73 Skipped: 175



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## Q21: Are you currently a resident of Hague?

Answered: 233 Skipped: 15

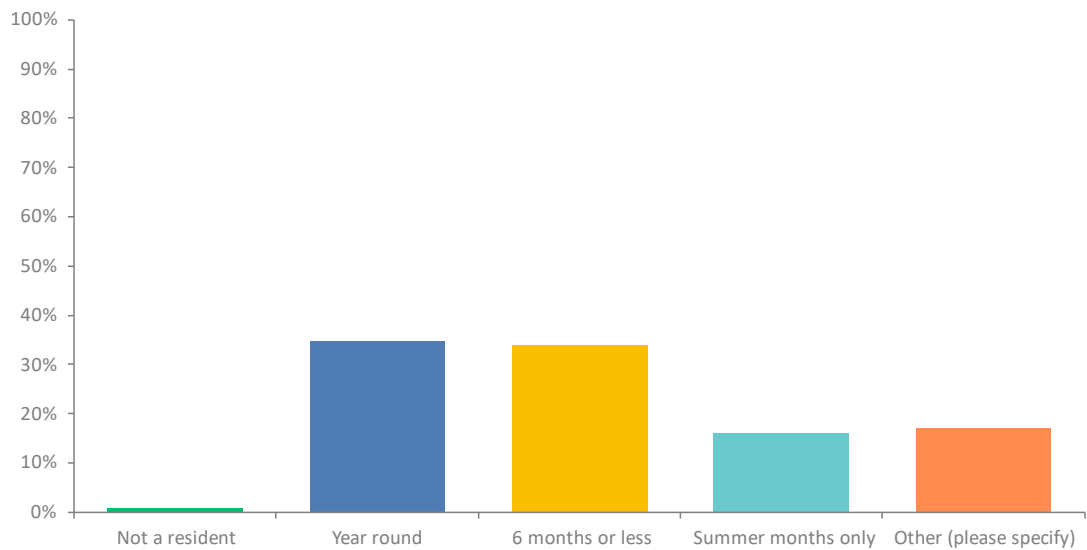


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## Q22: Please indicate how much time you live in Hague over the entire year.

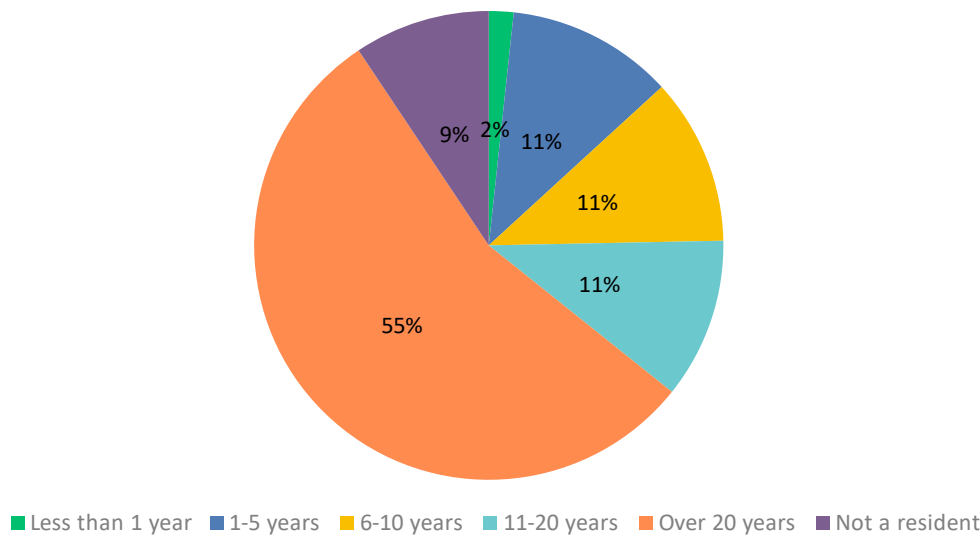
Answered: 236 Skipped: 12



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## Q23: How long have you been a resident of Hague?

Answered: 235 Skipped: 13

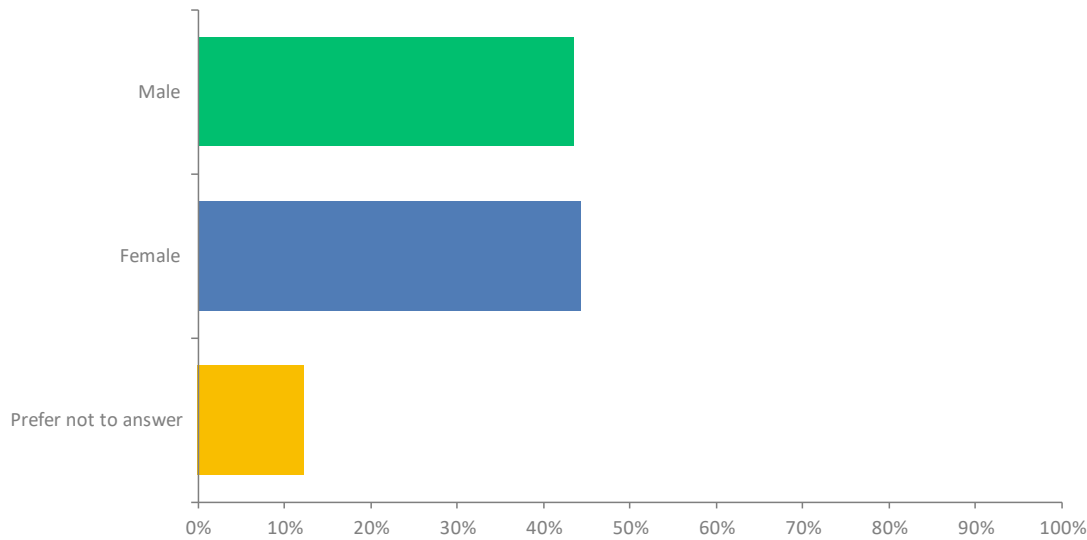


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## Q24: What is your gender?

Answered: 228 Skipped: 20



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## Q25: What is your age?

Answered: 237 Skipped: 11

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.42%	1
18-24	0.42%	1
25-34	0.84%	2
35-44	5.49%	13
45-54	6.33%	15
55-64	20.68%	49
65-74	35.86%	85
75-84	24.89%	59
85 and older	5.06%	12
TOTAL		237

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## Q26: How many children under the age of 18 currently live in your household?

Answered: 237 Skipped: 11

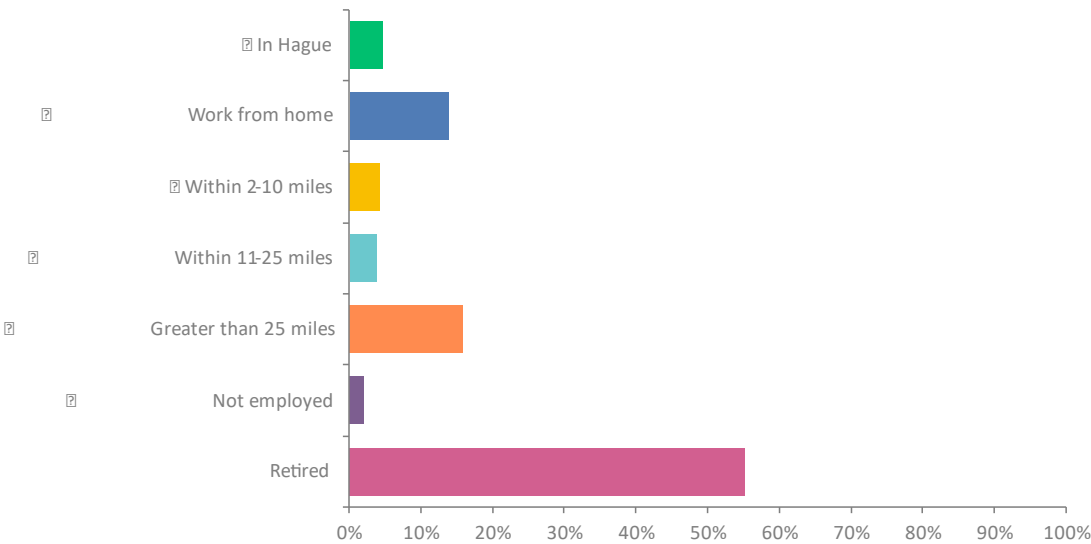
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	86.50%	205
1	6.33%	15
2	4.22%	10
3	0.42%	1
4	1.69%	4
5	0.00%	0
6	0.42%	1
7+	0.42%	1
TOTAL		237

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## Q27: Where do you work in relation to your residence?

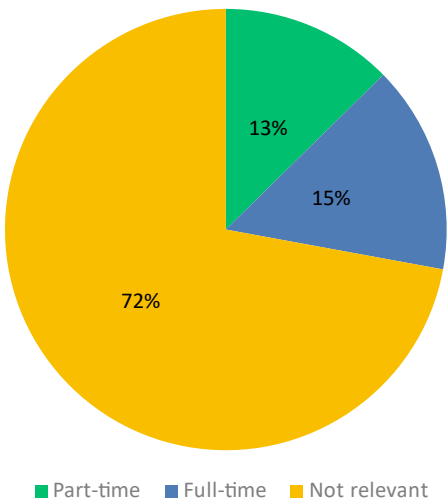
Answered: 232 Skipped: 16



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## Q28: If you work from home is it part-time or full-time?

Answered: 190 Skipped: 58



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# Town of Hague Community Survey Summary: April 6, 2025

## Q29 Please share any other suggestions or feedback for local officials.

### Comprehensive Analysis of Hague Community Survey

Based on the extensive survey responses reviewed, the community's feedback is organized into key themes, priorities, and recommendations.

#### Community Priorities and Assets

##### 1. Lake George and Waterfront

- Consistently identified as Hague's most valuable asset
- Beach and public access areas need maintenance and protection
- Concerns about water quality, silt accumulation, and Hague Brook delta
- Peggy's Point repeatedly described as a "gem" needing preservation

##### 2. Economic Revitalization

- Strong desire for year-round businesses, especially restaurants
- Need for more diverse retail options
- Support for incentives to attract and retain businesses
- Balance desired between development and preserving town character

##### 3. Tax Issues

- School taxes consistently cited as excessive and inequitable
- Many suggestions to renegotiate with Ticonderoga or explore other districts
- High taxes identified as barrier to affordability and year-round residency
- "Hague pays about \$80k for each Hague child educated in Ti schools"

##### 4. Infrastructure Improvements

- Sewer system expansion (highest municipal investment priority)
- Better transportation infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists
- More public docking facilities
- Enhanced recreational amenities

#### Safety and Accessibility Concerns

##### 1. Road Safety

- Route 9N repeatedly identified as dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists
- Need for bike lanes, wider shoulders, or alternative pathways
- Safety concerns limit community mobility and recreation
- Recognition of physical constraints requiring creative solutions

##### 2. Recreational Facilities

- Beach facilities need maintenance and improvements
- Desire for more diverse recreation options (pickleball, trails, etc.)
- Need for year-round and indoor recreational options
- Better maintenance of existing facilities

##### 3. Community Cohesion

- Divide between seasonal and year-round residents
- Need for more community gathering places and events
- Desire for more inclusive governance and communication
- Concerns about affordability driving out long-term residents

# Town of Hague Community Survey Summary: April 6, 2025

## Recommendations and Community Vision

The survey reveals a community at a crossroads, balancing:

### 1. Preservation vs. Development

- Protect natural assets while enabling economic vitality
- Maintain small-town character while attracting necessary services
- Address seasonal fluctuations with year-round solutions

### 2. Short-term Actions

- Address school tax issues through legal/negotiation strategies
- Implement targeted infrastructure improvements (particularly pedestrian safety)
- Develop business incentive programs
- Improve beach/waterfront maintenance

### 3. Long-term Vision

- Create a sustainable year-round economy
- Develop comprehensive infrastructure plan including alternative transportation routes
- Balance growth with environmental protection
- Foster a more diverse, multi-generational community

## Conclusion

Hague residents clearly value their community's natural beauty, lakefront access, and small-town atmosphere. However, they see significant challenges in economic vitality, infrastructure, and tax equity that threaten long-term sustainability. The community appears ready for thoughtful, balanced development that preserves Hague's character while creating more opportunities for businesses, year-round residents, and diverse recreational activities.