

SABDA 2016 Community Survey

Summary of Survey Responses

The St Ann's Bay Development Association (*SABDA*) establishes and supports long- and short-term social and economic goals for our community. From our beginnings over 20 years ago, we have done this by surveying for community input.

This spring, we asked for your ideas once again. The following is an overview of those survey results.

Thank you to the 39 people who responded to the 2016 SABDA survey. Your input will be very helpful in determining SABDA's direction in the 2016–17 season.

Note that these responses are not statistics; in some ways, they may represent better those who are willing to join surveys, rather than defining the community!

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1. 72% of respondents are over the age of 55; 10% are under 35.
 2. 90% of respondents currently live in North Shore/St Ann's; 30% of those are originally from this community, and 60% are originally from elsewhere.
 3. Of those who came from elsewhere:
40% came to set up businesses 23% came to retire
23% came to raise families 15% came to work
 4. 82% of respondents participate in community activities.

“A community where people live by choice ... not by circumstance”

5. What participants enjoy most about this community:

- the people, their values; welcoming, friendly, sense of community, vibrant culture 24 mentions
- nature, scenery, the outdoors 21 mentions
- lifestyle; quiet, peaceful, the arts, small businesses 9 mentions

6. The biggest challenges for those participants who live here, or biggest obstacles to moving here:

- transportation/ferry service/distances to shopping and health care 13 mentions
- availability of workers/employees/young people 8 mentions
- security in old age 5 mentions
- long winters, cold, weather 3 mentions
- housing—rentals, affordable, age-friendly 3 mentions
- no school/distant schools 3 mentions
- Internet/cellular service (availability, reliability) 2 mentions
- business infrastructure 2 mentions
- lack of jobs 1 mention

7. Several people offered ideas for new initiatives:

- **Community action:**
Support to seniors, networking systems re transportation and services (Internet-based)
- **Business initiatives:**
Coffee roaster; dog park; pitch-and-putt course; swimming pool; café; deli; holiday rentals with farm/eco living; coffee house with entertainment; housing: rental/leasing web site
- **Volunteer action:**
Cabot Trail clean-up
- **Government/infrastructure action:**
Internet/cellular service upgrades; replace ferry with a bridge (2 mentions); road upgrades; a 24-hr rest area; land grants to immigrants
- **Community projects:**
Arts centre; Montessori school (2 mentions); web site improvements

8. Five respondents offered their names as willing participants for follow-up on their ideas. A member of the SABDA board will be in touch with each before the recommencement of activities in September 2016.
9. **Social Development** *1 = most important*
Concerns regarding social development were prioritised as follows:
- 1 Assisted living for seniors
 - 2 Immigration and retention of youth
 - 3 Revitalize SABDA; e.g., fun new events, workshops, community engagement
 - 4 Local sharing; e.g., car-pooling, shopping, shared/exchanged meal prep
 - 5 Local transportation
 - 6 Other:
 - replace ferry with bridge
 - more frequent local health clinics/care
 - environmental protection
 - local schooling for grades 0–6
 - 7 Child care
10. A wide range of suggestions and ideas were offered, including things like better networking and support via the Internet, lobbying local and provincial governments, support for our flourishing entrepreneurial spirit, doing more frequent surveys, doing whatever we can to attract younger families. We appreciate and will consider all ideas submitted.
11. 28 respondents expressed an interest in participating in social development initiatives in these ways:
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| • Join a focus group | 43% |
| • Work solo for a few hours on a specific task | 38% |
| • Write a letter of support | 38% |
| • Join a committee | 36% |
| • Act as a consultant or reviewer | 18% |
| • Other | :18% |
| • participate with others | |
| • share skills: lead workshops | |
| • provide financial help | |

12. Economic Development

1 = most important

Directions for focus in economic development were prioritised as follows:

- 1 Entrepreneurship
- 2 Infrastructure; e.g., trails, roads, cycling lanes
- 3 Immigration and retention of youth
- 4 A year-round tourism industry
- 5 Other:
 - promote area to current businesses and startups
 - recruit artisans and other entrepreneurs to the community
 - support a revitalised, value-added agriculture sector
 - extend tourism shoulder seasons
 - make the area a Cape Breton destination for eating, shopping, hiking
 - be open to resource development, inclusive trails use
- 6 A large-scale employer

13. Again, many helpful, hopeful comments and suggestions were offered, all of which are documented and will be used when we formulate our plans for the next SABDA working season, commencing in September.

14. 25 respondents expressed interest in participating in economic development initiatives in these ways:

- Work solo for a few hours on a specific task 60%
- Join a focus group 40%
- Write a letter of support 38%
- Join a committee 32%
- Act as a consultant or reviewer 20%
- Other: 8%
 - share skills

Thank you for your participation and/or interest in this survey. You will find the survey itself, and a record of past surveys, on our [web site](#). If you would like to comment on this summary, or missed the survey and would like to participate, please [let us know](#).

Wishing you an enjoyable and productive summer season—*the SABDA board of directors*