

Accessibility & Inclusion Public Feedback Report





The Survey

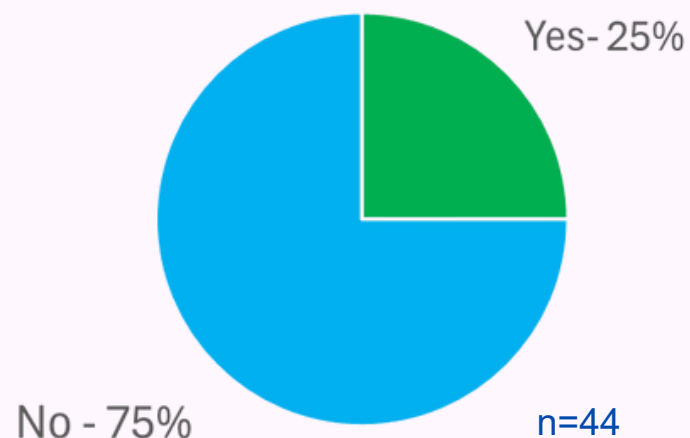
A 12-question online survey was opened on January 28, 2025 to get information from residents about their views on the state of accessibility and inclusion in Thames Centre and to solicit their opinions on what they think the top priorities of the Municipality and of the Accessibility & Inclusivity Advisory Committee should be.



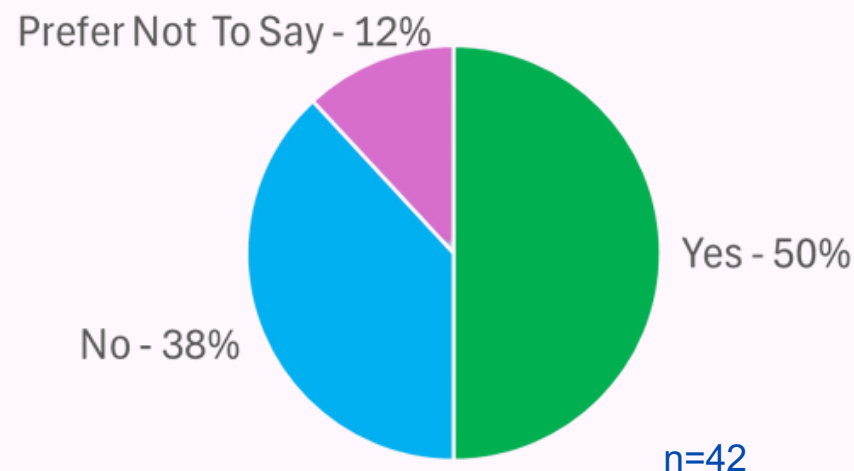
A screenshot of the preamble of the online survey preamble.

Who Responded

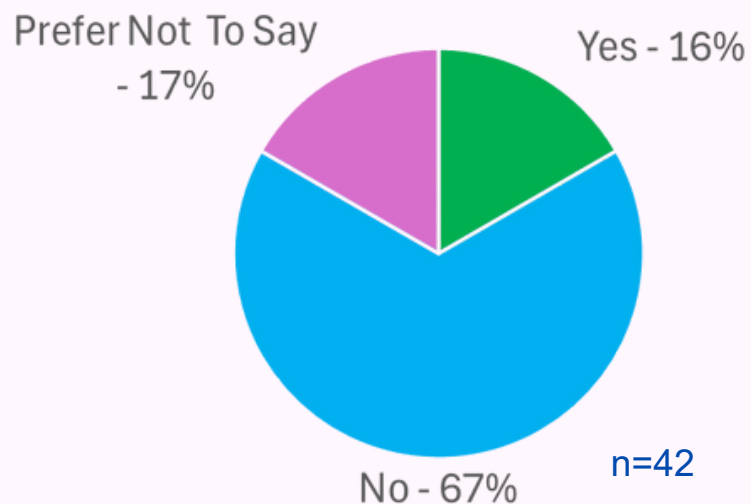
Those Who Personally Experienced Difficulty Accessing Municipal Services



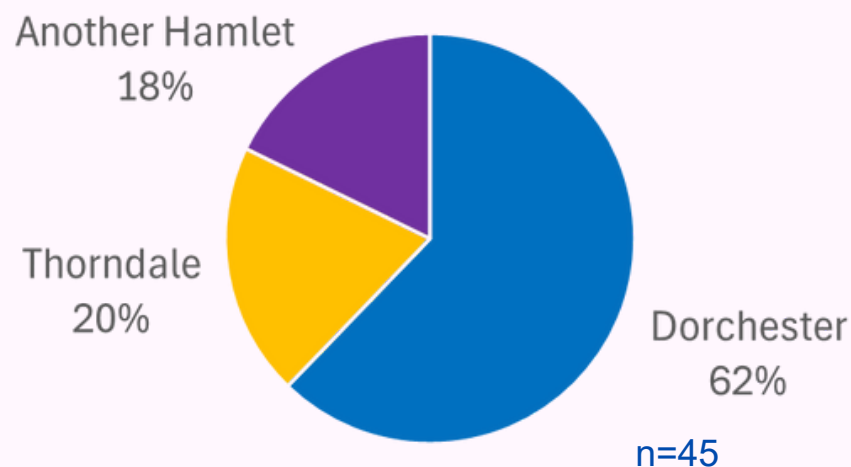
Those Who Live With a Person With Accessibility Issues in their Household



Those Who Identify as a Visible or Non-Visible Minority Group

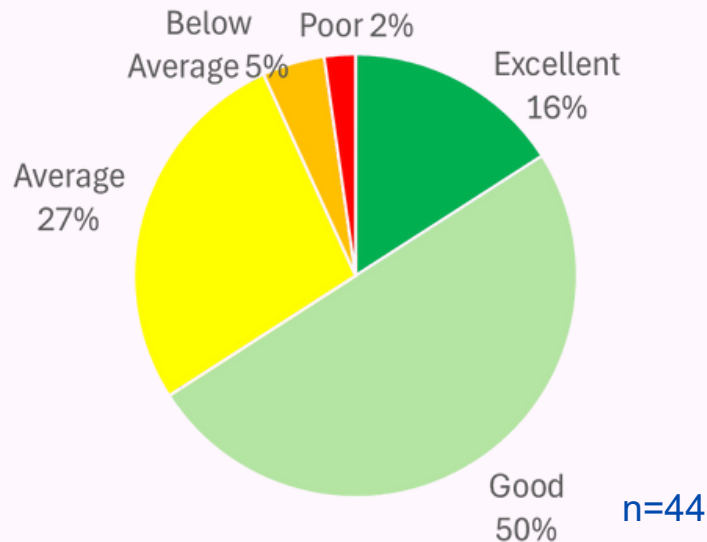


Where Respondents Live

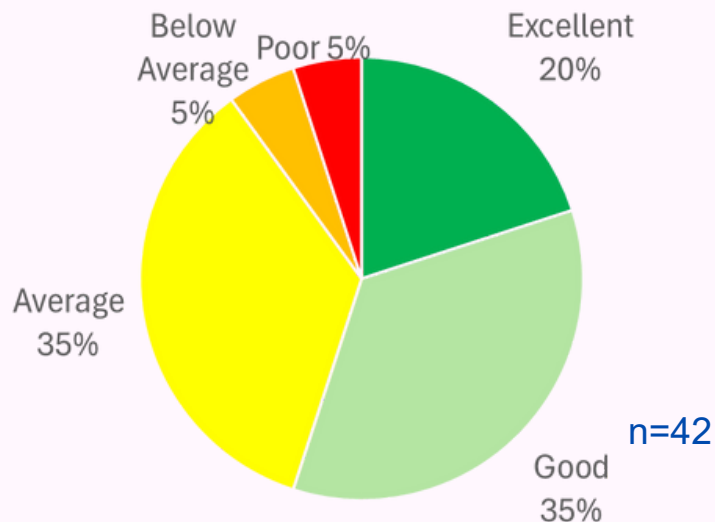


Overall Accessibility of Public Buildings

How Residents Rate the Overall Accessibility of Public Buildings



Scores Among Those With Accessibility or Living With Persons With Accessibility Issues



76% of respondents rated the accessibility of public buildings as Good or Excellent. 7% rated accessibility as Below Average or Poor.

Among those respondents who said they had accessibility challenges or lived in a household with persons with accessibility issues, the results yielded broadly similar results, although this group was more willing to reply with answers at both extremes.

The only respondent who rated public building accessibility as Poor and one of two who responded as Below Average were from this subsection of respondents. The share of people who rated accessibility as Excellent increased as well, going from 15% to 20%.

Areas of Focus - Accessibility



The expansions to the inclusive Dorchester Dream Park (above) and the FlightExec Centre were cited as the most impactful improvements to accessibility.

The Most Impactful Improvements to Accessibility

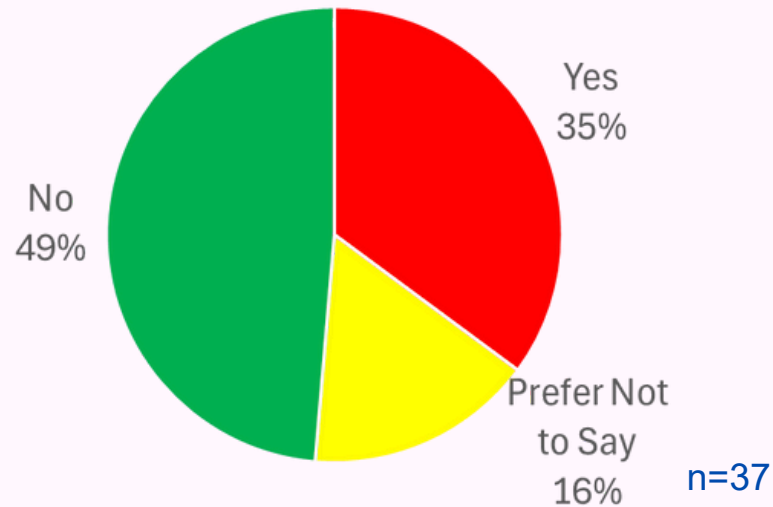
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Renovation and expansion at FlightExec Centre	26.19%	11
Doubling the space available to the Victoria Order of Nurses (VON)	7.14%	3
Paving the walking trail at Thorndale Community Park	9.52%	4
Creating more accessible raised vegetable gardens at the Community Garden in Dorchester	0.00%	0
Staff training to create more accessible documents.	0.00%	0
Accessible Customer Service training for staff	7.14%	3
Review of Evacuation Plans for all municipal buildings including accessibility requirements	2.38%	1
Updated Audio/Visual equipment in Council Chambers to provide improved online access to Council meetings	4.76%	2
Opened Phase II of the inclusive park in Dorchester in June 2024	26.19%	11
Other (please specify)	16.67%	7
TOTAL		42

Recommended Areas of Focus

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sidewalks and Trails	30.95%	13
Designated Parking Spaces at Municipal Buildings	9.52%	4
Communication and Information (e.g. large print, audio content)	4.76%	2
Information Availability in Other Languages	0.00%	0
Accommodation at Public Events (e.g. Festival of Lights, CornFest)	14.29%	6
Feedback and Issue Reporting	7.14%	3
Other (please specify)	33.33%	14
TOTAL		42

Inclusion and Representation

Residents Who Feel Specific Groups Are Disadvantaged in Thames Centre



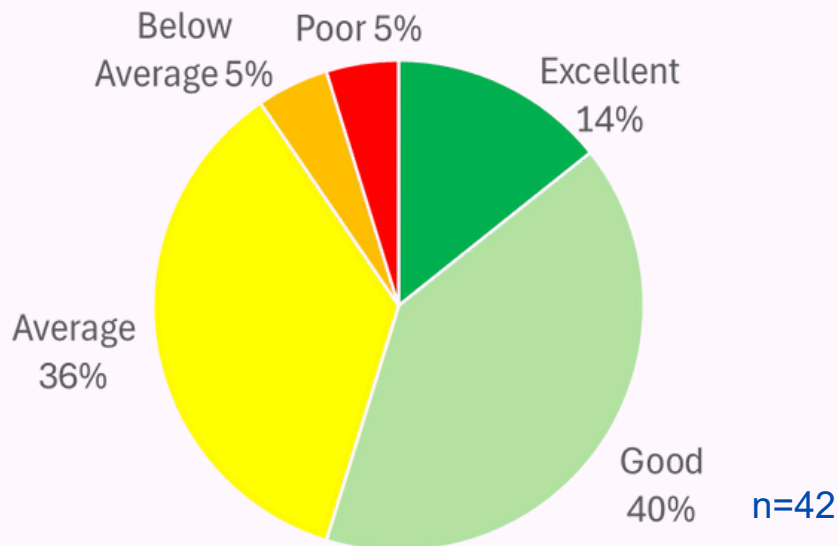
35% of respondents felt that specific groups were disadvantaged in Thames Centre. The most commonly referred to group in the comments from these respondents were seniors or persons with physical disabilities or mobility issues.

This is in line with the 31% of respondents who believed the top priority for a future Area of Focus should be Sidewalks & Trails (see table on previous page).

Persons with mental health issues were mentioned by three commenters.

The scores for accessing municipal services were close to those for the question regarding accessibility of public buildings.

Overall Experience with Accessing Municipal Services



Future Areas of Focus for Accessibility & Inclusion

Committee Focus: What areas should the Accessibility & Inclusivity Advisory Committee Focus On?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accessibility of buildings, including entrances and restrooms	27.78%	10
More accessibility requirements in planning standards	25.00%	9
Accessible municipal communications	2.78%	1
Accessible activities, parks/trails	25.00%	9
More inclusive public events	2.78%	1
Public awareness efforts	11.11%	4
Outreach to designated communities	5.56%	2
TOTAL		36

Opinions on the future focus of the committee were split on specific answers, with a heavy focus on increasing accessibility. The largest share of respondents (27.78%) identified the accessibility of buildings as the top priority, with another 25% calling for more accessible planning standards, and another 25% identifying more accessible parks and trails.

Comments from residents included increasing snow removal on trails (particularly in Thorndale), increasing the promotion of information via online channels (particularly social media), using more surveys, and having more sidewalks and increased sidewalk clearing in the winter.

Staff has made a number of recommendations that align with the goals identified by public feedback in the survey. Proposals for **Budget 2026** include:

- **A New Sidewalk Plow**
 - A second sidewalk plow will allow for more efficient snow removal on sidewalks, and simultaneous snow removal operations in Dorchester and Thorndale.
- **New Sidewalk Construction, Sidewalk Repairs**
 - New sidewalk construction is proposed in Budget 2026 for Catherine Street, Thorndale Road, and Dorchester Road. Another \$50,000 was proposed for minor sidewalk repairs across the municipality.
- **Increased Funds for Community Improvement Plan Grants**
 - CIP Grants are used as economic development incentives, and these funds were recommended to be Increased in 2026. This increases the pool for businesses, including grants for property improvements to increase accessibility.

The most impactful improvements cited by residents were the **FlightExec Centre**, and the **Dorchester Dream Park**. The accessible doors to the meeting rooms at the Active Living Centre were replaced in early 2026, and potential improvements to the Dorchester Dream Park are currently under review. The municipality also continues to provide space to **The Playroom Experiment** at the FlightExec Centre at no charge, where they hold a number of inclusive events and activities, including hosting sensory-friendly gaming sessions every week.

Produced By The Municipality of Thames Centre



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