



CABOT HEAD ROAD

PROJECT HISTORY, LEGAL CONTEXT, AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
RESULTS



About Us

- Clerks on Call is a municipal management consulting team, offering a range of specialized municipal governance and administration services, including:
 - virtual and onsite facilitator-led training for Councils and Staff
 - community engagement projects
 - municipal policy and by-law reviews
 - mentoring/coaching for municipal staff
- Consultant Team:
 - Michelle Casavecchia-Somers
 - Michelle Smibert





AGENDA

- Introduction
- Project History
- Public Engagement Results
- Next Steps
- Additional Public Feedback



PURPOSE OF TONIGHT



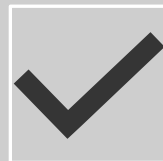
Share information



Summarize legal and operational plans



Present survey results



Outline next steps



Seek understanding and receive ideas



BACKGROUND



Cabot Head has been part of ongoing municipal discussions, involving several important considerations for both the community and the environment.



Public Access
Demands



Environmental
sensitivity



Infrastructure
deterioration



Cultural
Preservation



HISTORICAL



1962 – Township of Lindsay enters into an agreement with the Department of Transport to build Cabot Head Road to provide access to Wigfield Basin.

2019 – Storm damages road

2020 – Cabot Head Road is closed due to 200m of road deterioration
Cabot Head Road was closed to all traffic except for property owners

2025 – Council directs staff to review the potential of providing access to the public

CAO 25-19 Cabot Head Road – requested direction on 4 options

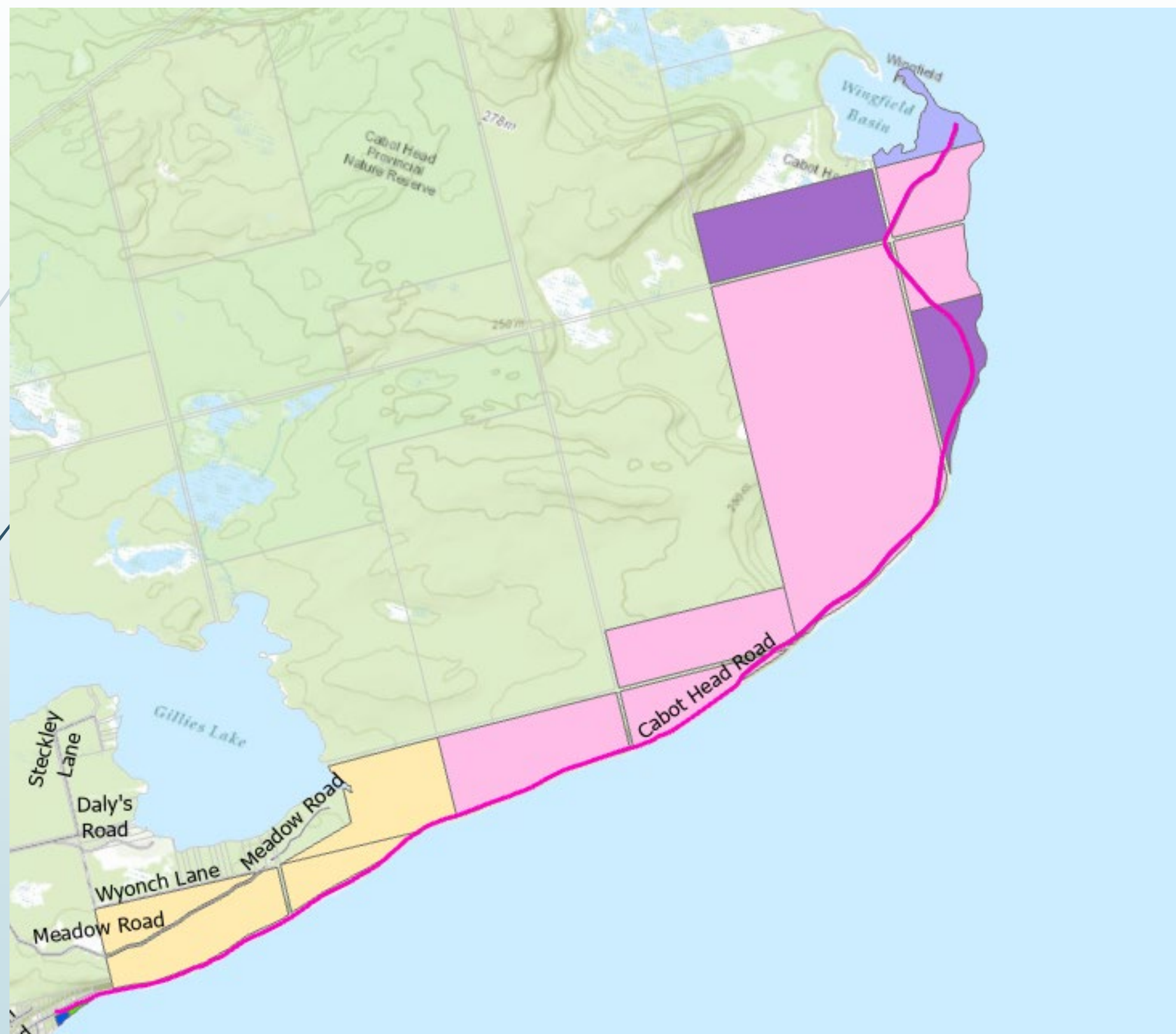
CAO 25-21 Cabot Head Project

“It is recommended that Council receive Report CAO 25 –21 Cabot Head Road – Draft Operational Plan and Communication & Engagement Plan as information; and,

That Council approve the Communication & Engagement Plan for immediate implementation; and further, that Council endorses the Draft Operational Plan as a conceptual framework only, with the understanding that it will be refined following the completion of public, stakeholder, and partner engagement.”



OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE



☑ CabotHeadParcels

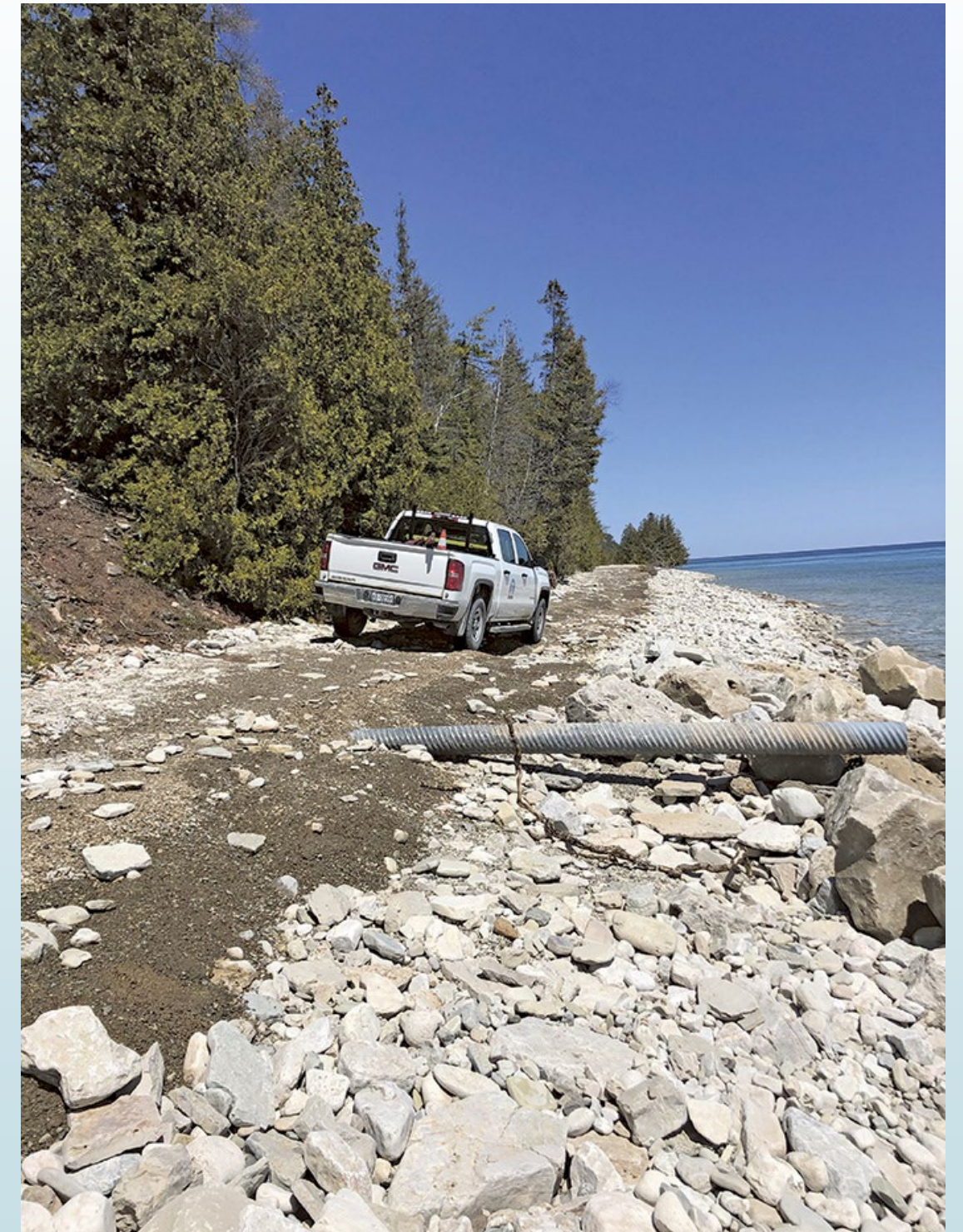
- Natural Resources Ministry
- Northern Bruce Peninsula
- Private Owner
- Multiple Owners
- Province of Ontario Minister
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Snap Shot

The roadway is narrow and runs through environmentally sensitive terrain, limiting options for expansion or significant modifications without ecological impact.

The corridor is subject to ongoing erosion and severe weather impacts, requiring frequent monitoring and maintenance interventions to ensure safe passage.

Historically, high traffic volumes have created safety concerns for both motorists and pedestrians, while accelerating infrastructure deterioration.





PROPOSED OPERATIONAL MODEL

Controlled Vehicle Access (Authorized Only)

- Gated entry system (key / keypad / fob)
- Access limited to approved users:
- BPBO, Lighthouse group, contractors, staff, emergency services
- Permits + signed agreements required (liability, compliance)
- Entry monitored (logs, signage, optional surveillance)
- Restricted vehicle types only (no public vehicles)

Public Multi -Use Trail

- Non-motorized trail for:
- Walking • Hiking • Cycling • Nature use
- Features:
- Trailhead kiosk (maps, safety info)
- Wayfinding + interpretive signage
- Rest areas where appropriate
- No motorized public access



Public Engagement



COMMUNITY SURVEYS



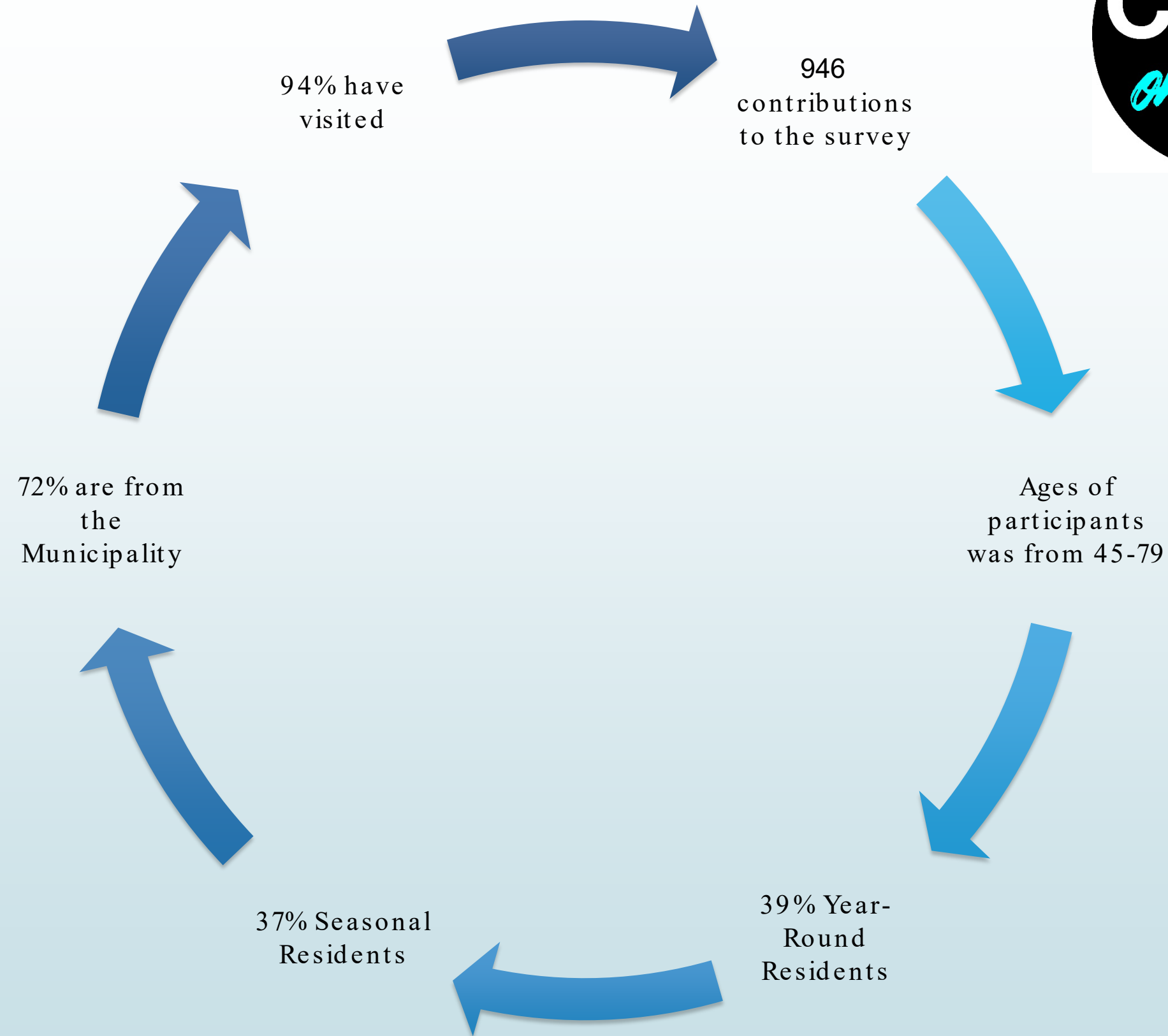
FOCUSED CONSULTATIONS



CULTURAL PROTECTION
ASSESSED

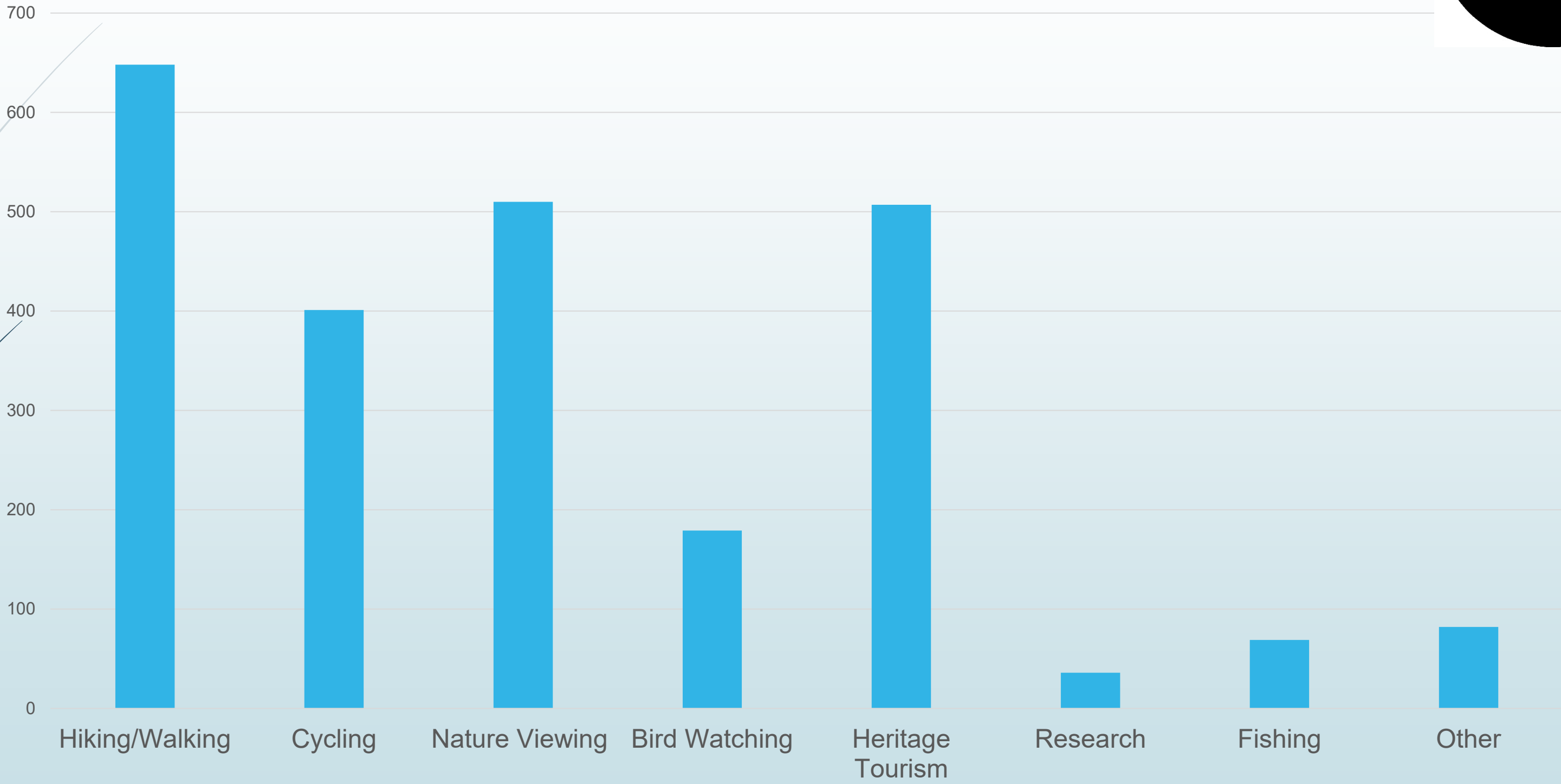


Snapshot of Participants





Primary Interest in Cabot Head



Priorities



Public Access and
Recreation



Environmental
Protection



Safety and
Emergency Access



Heritage and
Tourism

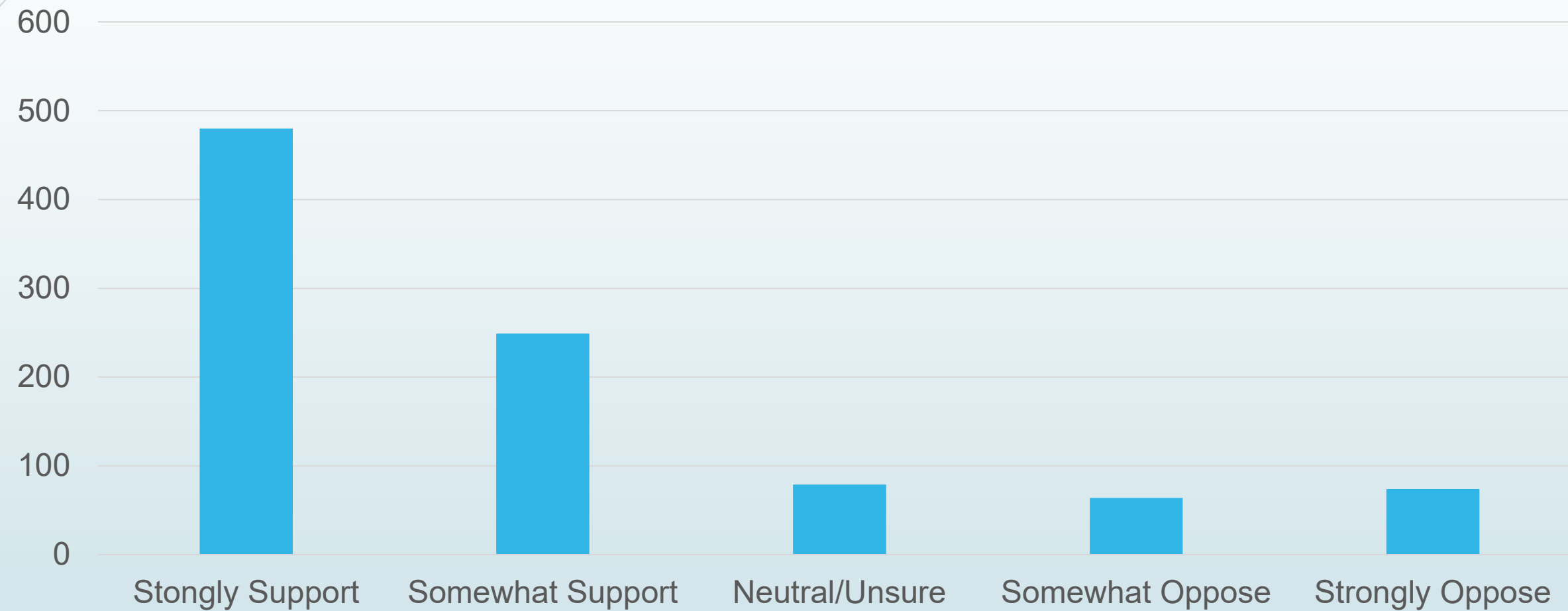


Municipality
affordability



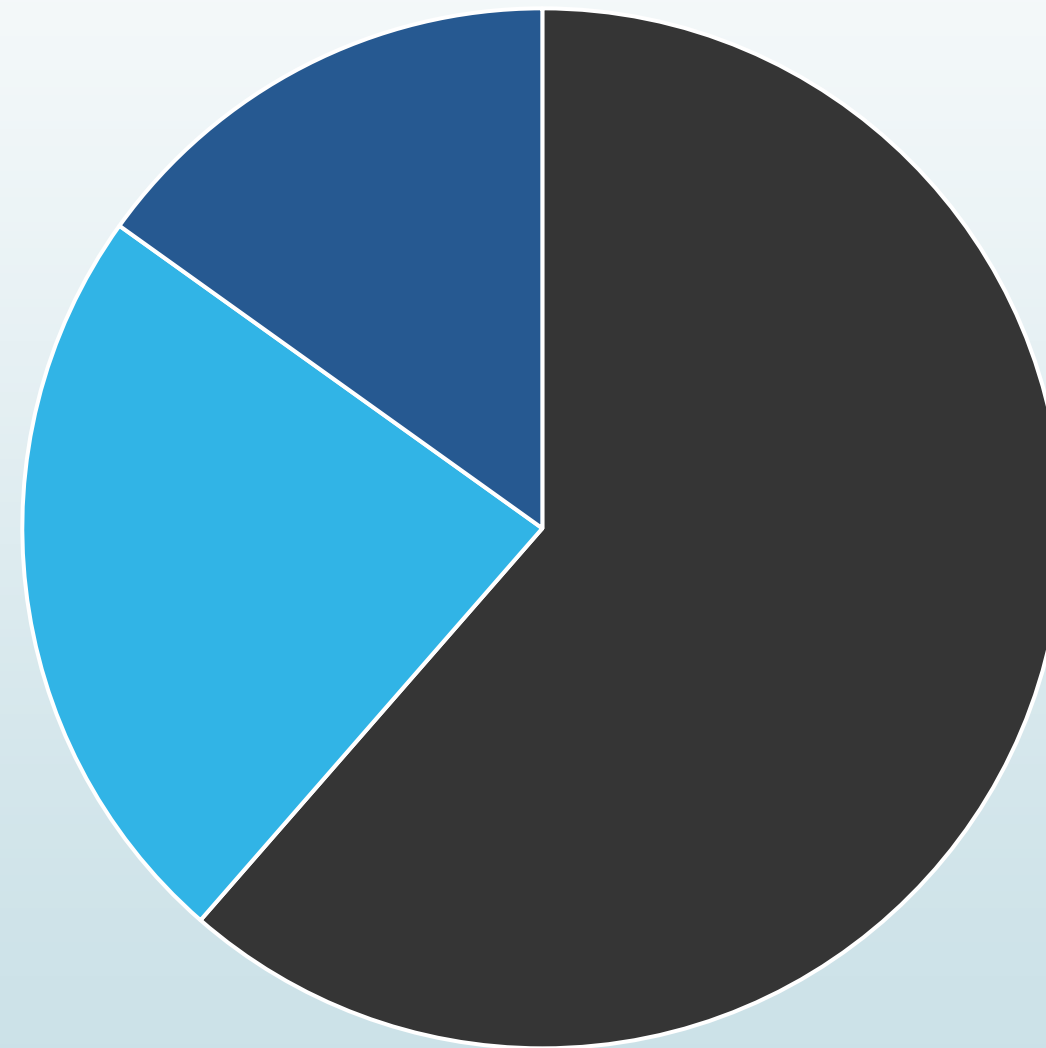
Fairness and
enforceability

Support for the Proposed Combined Model





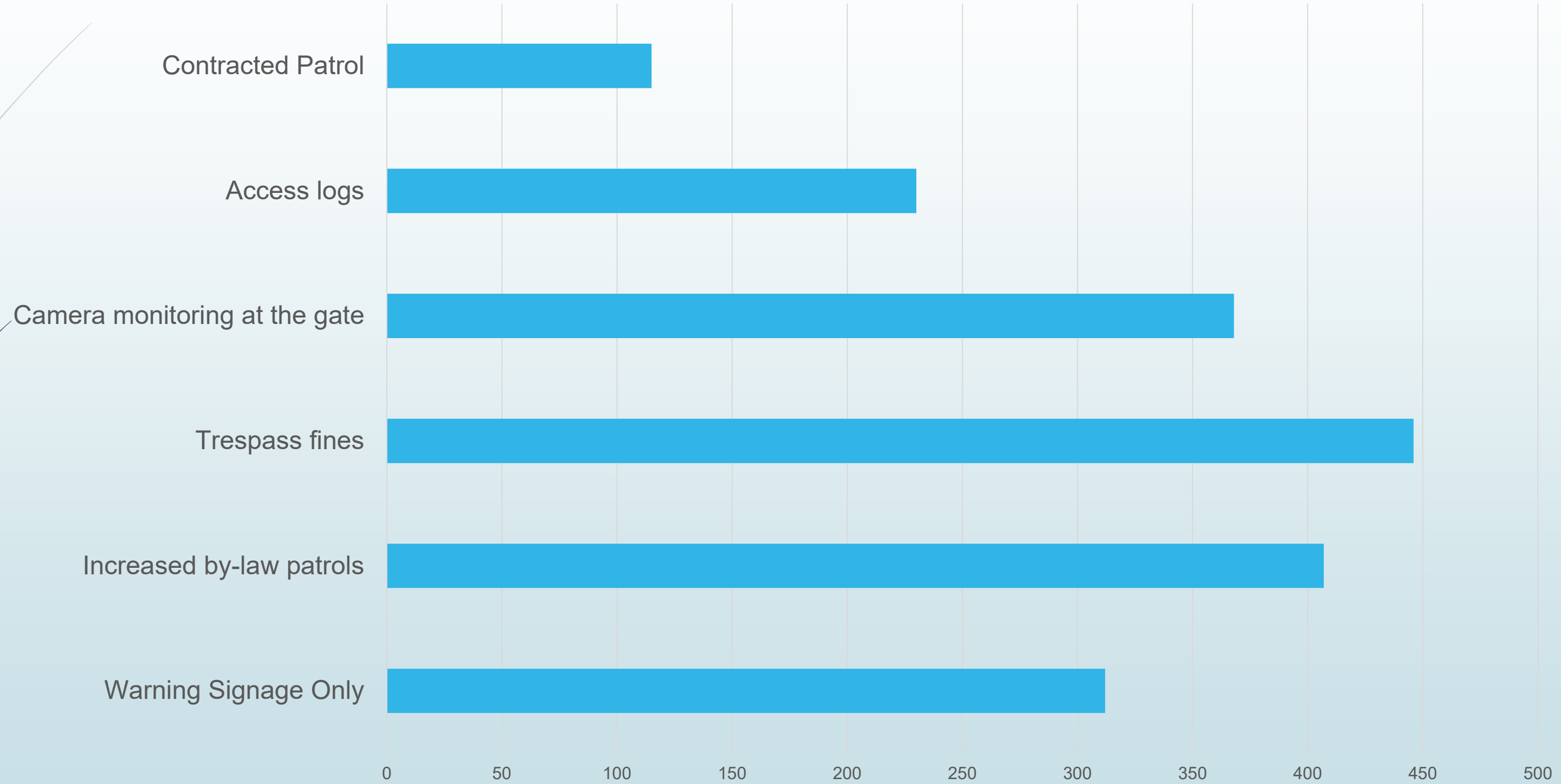
Do you support a gate authorized-user access system



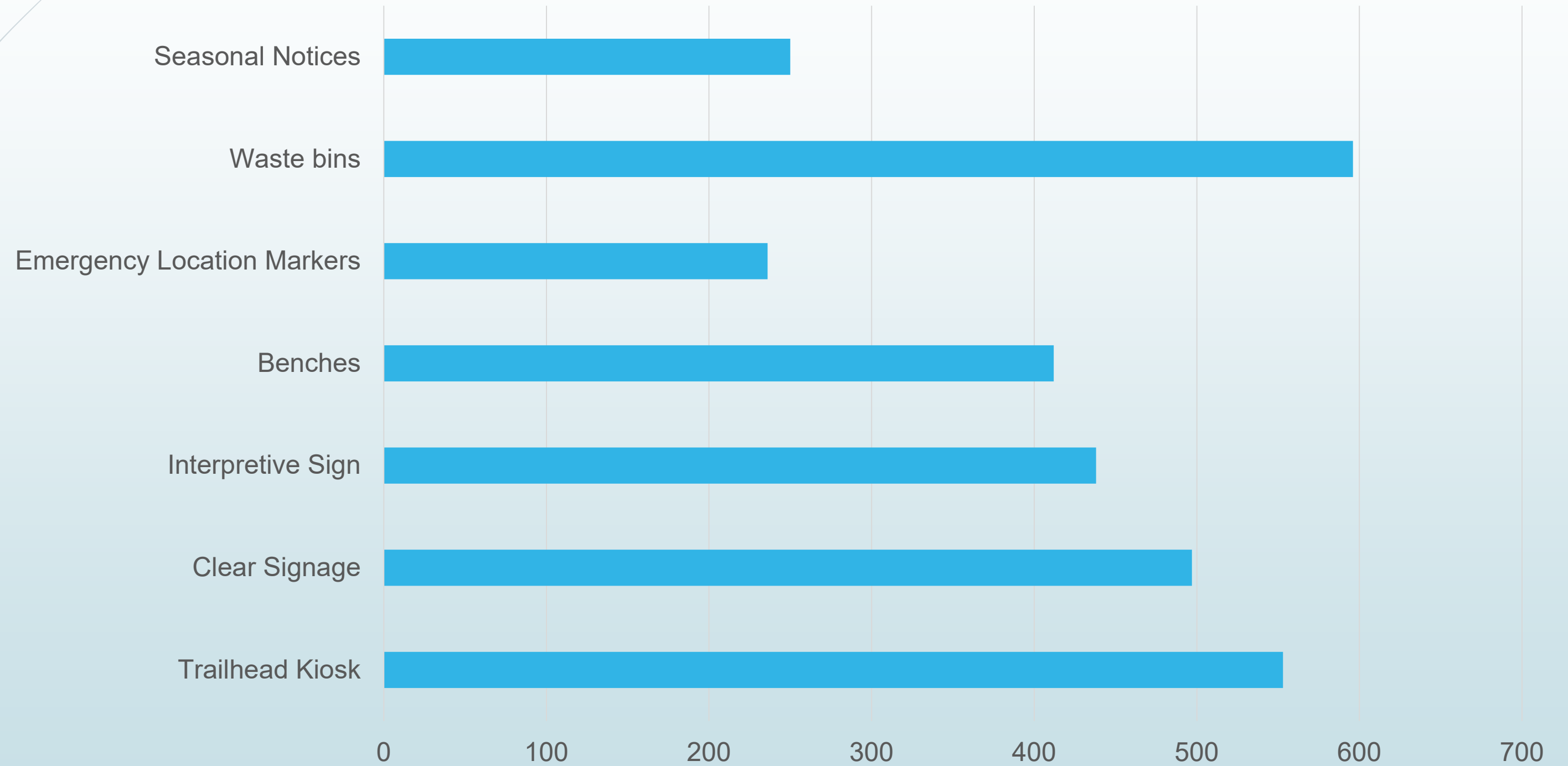
61% - Yes
23% - No
15% - Unsure



Enforcement Measures

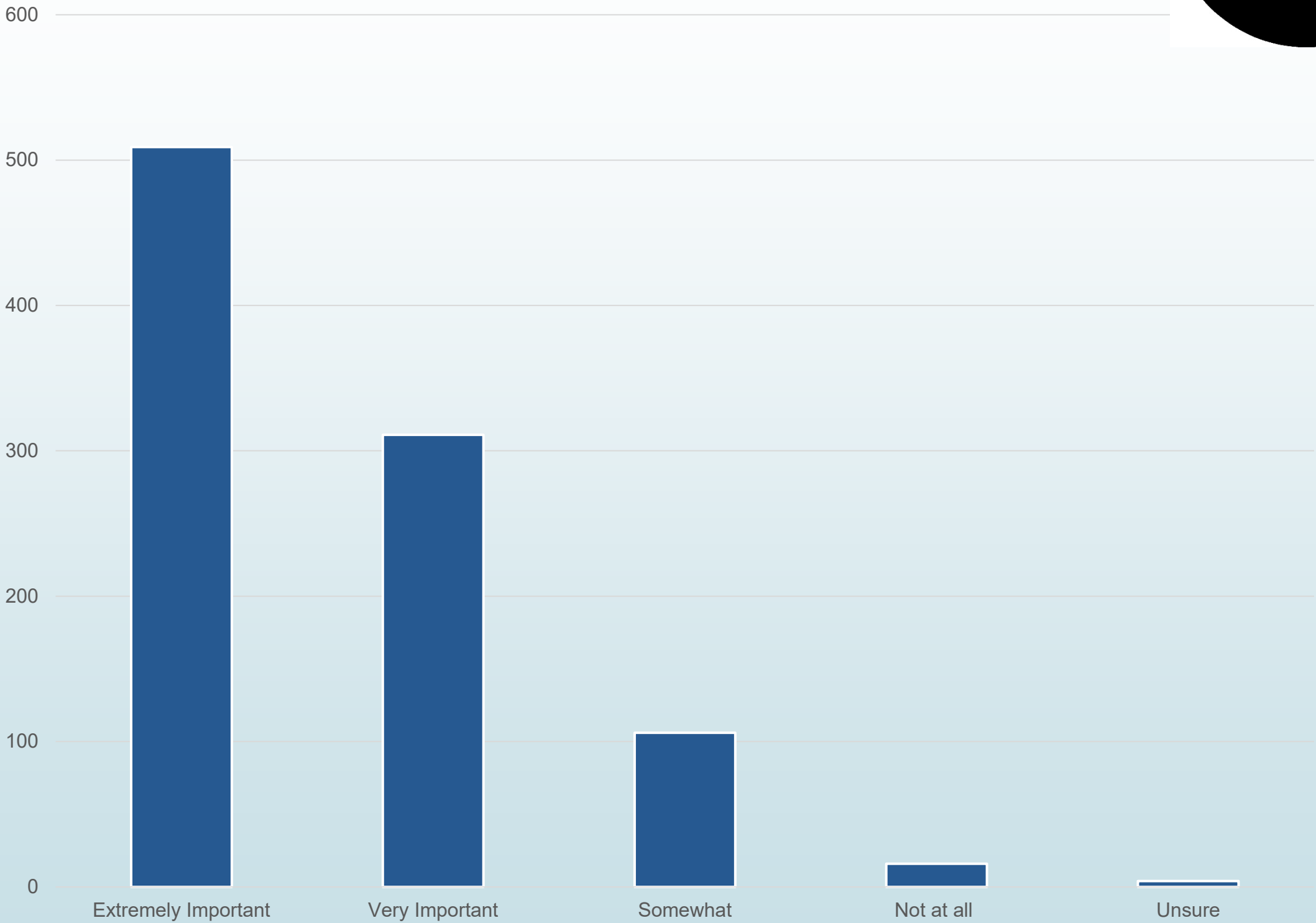


TRAIL FEATURES



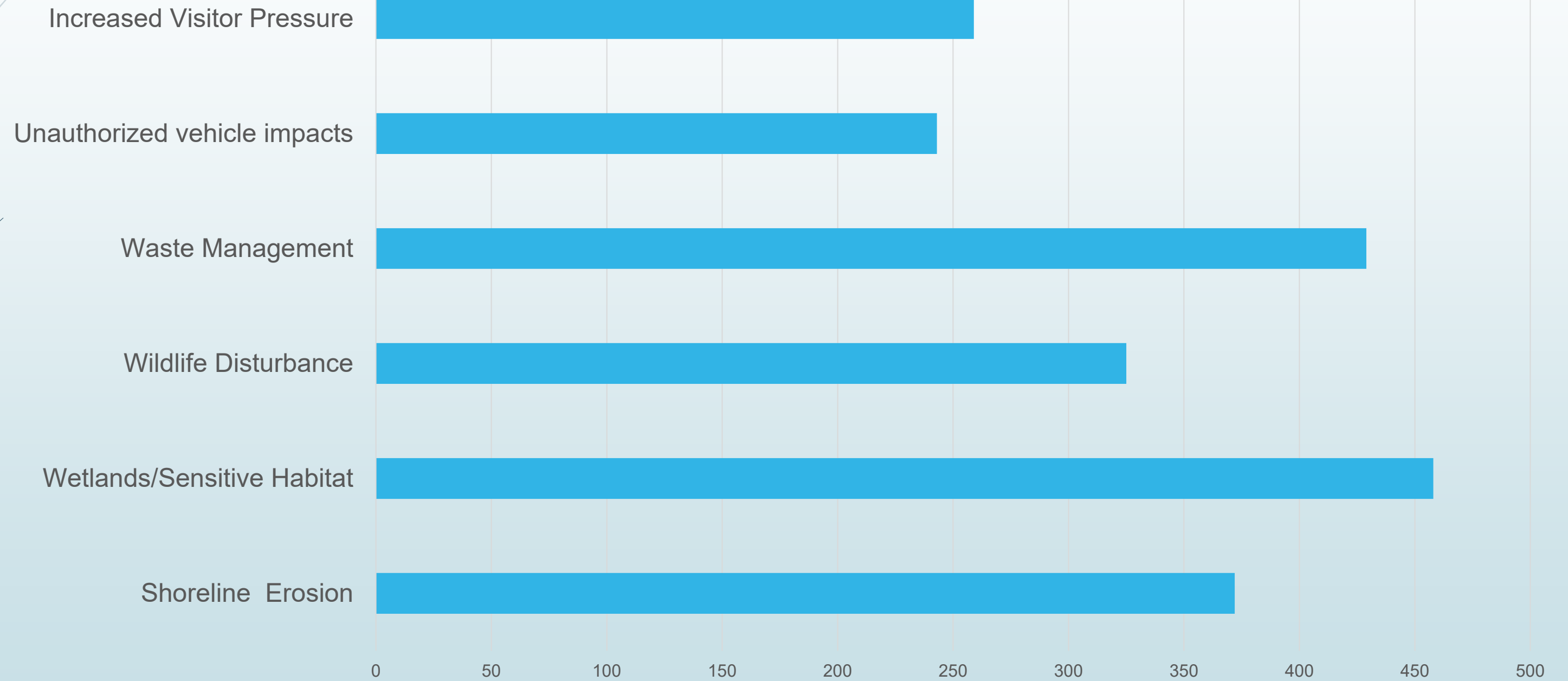


IMPORTANCE OF ENVIROMENTAL PROTECTION



ENVIROMENTAL PRIORITY

Clerks
on Call





Strong support for balanced
access + environmental
protection



Clear preference for non-
motorized, trail-based use



Majority support for controlled,
gated access for authorized users
only



Expectation of enforcement,
safety measures, and clear rules

KEY TAKEAWAYS



PURPOSE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Focus areas include Access, Environment, Safety, Trail Use, and Long-Term Vision to ensure comprehensive understanding of community priorities and concerns.

Targeted engagement with stakeholders who either own property or are a community group who have a direct connection with the area.



WHAT WE HEARD

No single consensus emerged from stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholders consistently emphasized;

- environmental protection,
- emergency access requirements, and
- the need for effective management and enforcement.

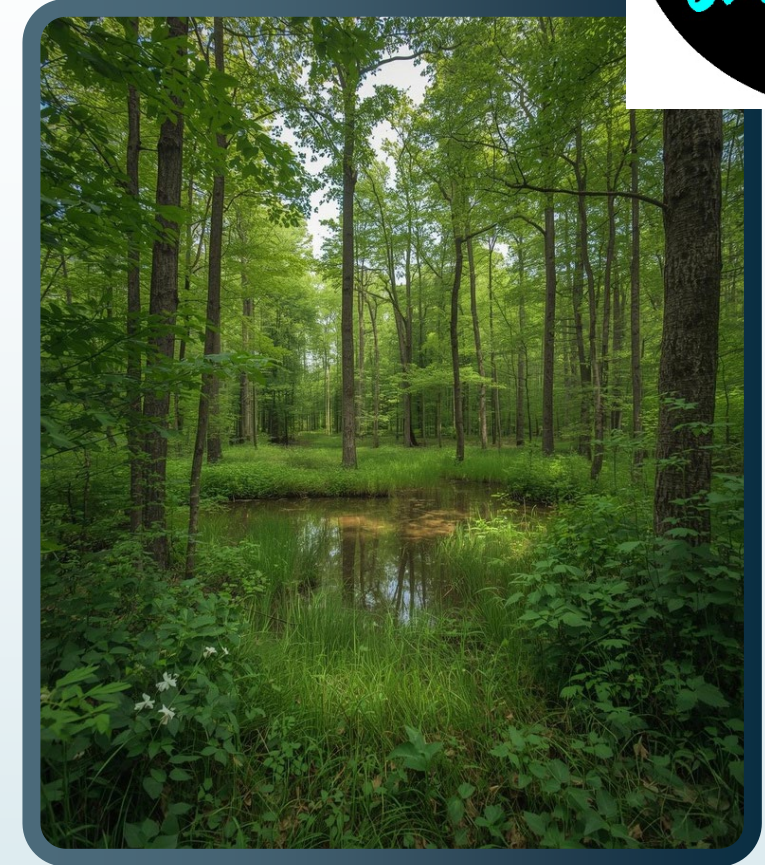
Areas of division;

- level of public access
- multi-use trail considerations generated the most differences of opinions

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IS THE TOP PRIORITY

- Stakeholder feedback consistently ranked environmental protection as the highest priority for Cabot Head Road.
- Ecological integrity must be protected to preserve the area's unique natural character.
- Sensitive features including rare habitats and wildlife corridors are at risk from increased activity.
- The clear message: conservation must take precedence over access expansion.

Clerks
on Call



Emergency Access is Essential



- Strong support exists for fire, EMS, and enforcement access to Cabot Head Road.
- Stakeholders emphasized that authorized emergency vehicle access is required to ensure public safety and effective response times.
- Emergency access was identified as a non-negotiable requirement by stakeholders.
- This represents one of the clearest areas of alignment in the engagement findings, with broad consensus that emergency services must have reliable access.



LEVEL OF PUBLIC ACCESS

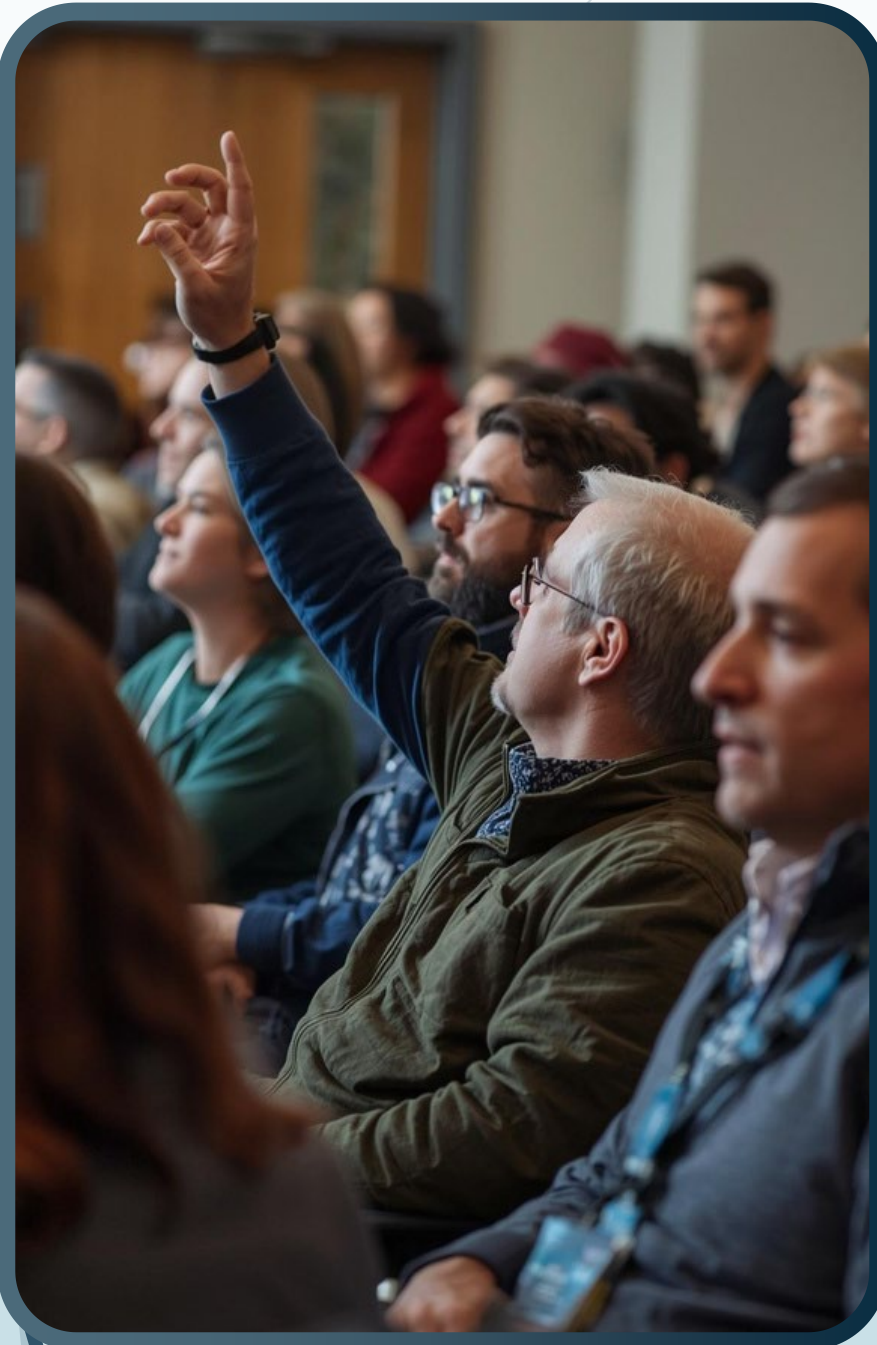


Opposition to Increased Access

Some stakeholders expressed strong concerns about expanding public access to Cabot Head Road. Key concerns include potential environmental damage, safety risks, and the inability to manage increased visitor volumes effectively.

Conditional & Expanded Access Support

Others voiced conditional support for controlled access with proper management measures in place. A segment of stakeholders also advocated for expanded recreational use, citing community benefits and tourism opportunities.



MULTI -USE TRAIL DEBATE

Stakeholder engagement revealed mixed perspectives on multi -use trail access along Cabot Head Road.

Support emerged for controlled non -motorized use, with advocates emphasizing hiking, cycling, and nature observation as compatible activities.

Key considerations include;

- seasonal restrictions,
- designated trail routes, and
- user capacity limits.

Opponents expressed concerns about habitat disturbance and enforcement challenges.





FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Full road reconstruction presents significant cost uncertainty due to the challenging terrain, environmental requirements, and deteriorating infrastructure.

COST RISKS

Full reconstruction costs remain highly uncertain

Environmental compliance adds unpredictable expenses

Ongoing maintenance burden with unrestricted access

CONTROLLED ACCESS BENEFITS

Reduces long-term municipal financial exposure

Limits ongoing maintenance and repair costs

Supports sustainable use patterns over time

FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Predictable budget planning with controlled model

Potential for user fees to offset operational costs

Aligns spending with community-supported approach





QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Questions and Answers

Access & Use of Cabot Head Road

Questions:

- Will the road be open to vehicles, bikes, hikers?
- Will locals have access?
- Can it be used for events (e.g., Fondo)?
- Will it remain a trail?

The proposed plan does not propose full public vehicular access.

The preferred direction is a controlled-access model:

- Open for walking and cycling
- Restricted vehicle access only for property owners and emergency vehicles
- Special events (e.g., cycling events) could be permitted through an application process, subject to environmental and operational review.



Questions and Answers

Accessibility (Seniors & Mobility Challenges)

Questions addressed:

How will seniors or people with disabilities access the site?

Is the current gate a barrier?

Is this discriminatory?

Answer:

Accessibility is a recognized gap in the current condition.

The operational plan will explore:

- Permitted assisted access (e.g., accessible transport)
- Designated drop-off or controlled vehicle access permits
- Rest areas/benches along the route
- Full road reopening is not required to improve accessibility.

The goal is inclusive access without creating mass traffic impacts.



Questions and Answers Environmental Protection

Questions addressed:

Impact on wildlife (e.g., massasauga rattlesnake)

Flora/fauna preservation

Risk of becoming “another Grotto”

Answer:

Environmental protection is the top priority across all feedback.

Measures include:

- Maintaining low-impact use (non-motorized priority)
- Limiting traffic volumes
- Avoiding mass tourism promotion
- Working with environmental partners
- Increased vehicle access is directly linked to higher wildlife mortality and habitat disruption, which is a key reason for restricting access.



Questions and Answers Traffic, Parking & Dyers Bay Impacts

Questions addressed:

Increased traffic on Dyers Bay Road
Safety for children, cyclists, residents
Parking overflow and illegal parking

Answer:

No plan for a large -scale parking expansion
in sensitive areas

Enforcement of:

- No overnight parking
- No roadside blocking
- Potential traffic calming measures if needed



Questions and Answers Gate Security & Unauthorized Access

Questions addressed:

How will you stop people from bypassing or cutting the gate?

How will unauthorized vehicles be prevented?

Answer:

- A secured controlled-access system will include:
- Locked gate (keypad, fob, or key system)
- Possible camera monitoring
- Authorized user agreements
- Enforcement and penalties for tampering
- Design improvements will aim to prevent physical bypassing.

Unauthorized access is a known issue and will be actively managed.



Questions and Answers Operational Plan (Day to Day Management)

Questions addressed:

Garbage, washrooms, camping,
enforcement

Who manages the site?

Answer:

The operational plan will include:

No overnight camping enforcement

Pack-in/pack -out garbage approach (or
limited waste infrastructure)

Seasonal washroom strategy (if required)

Defined maintenance responsibilities

Coordination with partners



Questions and Answers

Lighthouse & Cultural Heritage

Questions addressed:

- Will the lighthouse be preserved?
- Who pays?
- Will it be opened?

Answer:

The lighthouse is owned by DFO

DFO has no operational requirement for any roads on their property, to their property, or throughout their property, and nor do they have a mandate to support public access or tourism on their operational site.

The lighthouse preservation has not been included within the draft operational plan.



Questions and Answers

Legal Ownership & Municipal Authority

Questions addressed:

Does the Municipality own the road?

Why invest if ownership is unclear?

Why wasn't the legal opinion included?

Answer:

- Ownership is complex
- The Municipality does own the wheel track
- Any major changes will require Agency, Property owner and Municipal collaboration



Questions and Answers

Project Cost & Taxpayer Impact

Questions addressed:

Is the cost underestimated?

Can taxpayers afford this?

Answer:

Costs are preliminary and subject to change.

Council will be presented with:

- Full lifecycle cost estimates
- Phasing options
- Do-nothing vs. invest scenarios
- No final funding decision has been made.



Questions and Answers

Alternative Access & Transportation Options

Questions addressed:

- Are there other access routes?
- Can access be managed differently?

Answer:

- Currently, access is via Dyers Bay Road.



Questions and Answers

Future Vision & Use of the Area

Questions:

What is the long -term vision?

Will this become a major tourist destination?

Answer:

Focus On:

- Nature Research
- Passive recreation



Questions and Answers

Community Fairness & Local Access

Questions addressed:

Why are locals restricted?

Can locals get special access?

Answer:

- Public infrastructure must remain equitable
- Creating a “local-only” access presents legal and operational challenges



Questions and Answers

Monitoring, Enforcement & Governance

Questions:

Who enforces rules?

Will there be inspections, quotas, fees?

Answer:

- Municipal by-law enforcement
- Monitoring systems (if implemented)

Tools may include:

- Permits
- Usage limits (if required)
- Signage and education



Questions and Answers

Engagement Process & Transparency

Questions addressed:

Why wasn't legal info included?

Are landowners involved?

Is this process fair?

Answer:

The Municipality is:

Conducting multi engagement

Using third -party facilitation (Clerks on Call) for neutrality

The legal is included in the report section of the project page.

The process is ongoing —no final decisions have been made.



NEXT STEPS

- Survey results and presentation will be placed on LetsTalkNBP.ca
- Staff will be providing Council with a report regarding the findings of the engagement sessions
- Staff will be request direction regarding next steps





THANK YOU

We appreciate your input and participation in shaping the future of Cabot Head Road.

CONTACT

