



# Town of Newmarket Residential Parking Study

Survey Results Summer 2024

# Acknowledgements

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## Acknowledgements

All of those who participated in the development of the survey and this summary document, including Town of Newmarket Planning Services and Communications staff, and WSP Canada.

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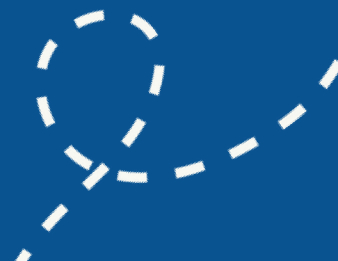
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# 01 Executive Summary

The **Residential Parking Survey** was conducted by the Town of Newmarket, in collaboration with WSP Canada, during the summer of 2024. The purpose of the survey was to better understand parking challenges and opportunities in Newmarket’s low- and medium-density residential areas and align draft parking recommendations with the community’s equity, sustainability, and accessibility goals, and vision for residential parking in the future. The Residential Parking Survey forms part of a broader engagement program for **Phase 1** of the Town’s **Residential Parking Study**.

The study collected insights from over 880 respondents through questions covering a broad range of topics including current on-street and off-street parking habits, accessibility challenges, the availability of on-street parking, and future aspirations for residential parking in the short (5–10 years) and long term (10+ years).

The findings reveal the community’s perceptions of key challenges, such as restrictive parking by-laws—particularly concerning overnight parking— challenges in finding visitor parking in some areas, concerns with garage sizes, and accessibility barriers for some users with mobility challenges. Community feedback highlighted the need for more inclusive short-term solutions, including allowing overnight parking and stricter enforcement of accessibility parking. Respondents also emphasized the importance of sustainability in parking solutions for the future. Some options include repurposing underutilized parking spaces into green spaces where appropriate, installing publicly accessible EV charging stations, and using advanced technologies like smart parking systems to optimize space and reduce congestion in problem areas.

Looking ahead to **Phase 2 - Draft Recommendations**, the study consultant will review this data to confirm the problem areas and develop recommendations for comprehensive policies, zoning and design standards, and parking rates that address the diverse needs of the community while balancing Newmarket’s goals for sustainable growth and an enhanced quality of life.



# 1.1 Introduction

The Town of Newmarket, in collaboration with WSP Canada, is reviewing parking standards for low- and medium-density residential areas in Newmarket. As part of the **Phase 1** engagement program for the **Residential Parking Study**, the study team issued the **Residential Parking Survey** (“the Survey”). The survey asked key questions about how parking in residential areas influences daily life, from accessibility for residents and visitors with mobility issues, to broader implications for community equity and urban design.

This document summarizes feedback from the survey, which was posted online on the project webpage and marketed through various mediums, between June and August 2024. A comprehensive report detailing all Phase 1 engagement activities will be provided separately and made available on the project webpage at [www.heynewmarket.ca/residentialparkingstudy](http://www.heynewmarket.ca/residentialparkingstudy). Together with the consultant’s background analysis and input from other Phase 1 engagement activities, the survey findings will help shape the draft recommendations in Phase 2 of the study (see **Figure 1**).



**Figure 1:** Residential Parking Study Process

**Newmarket**

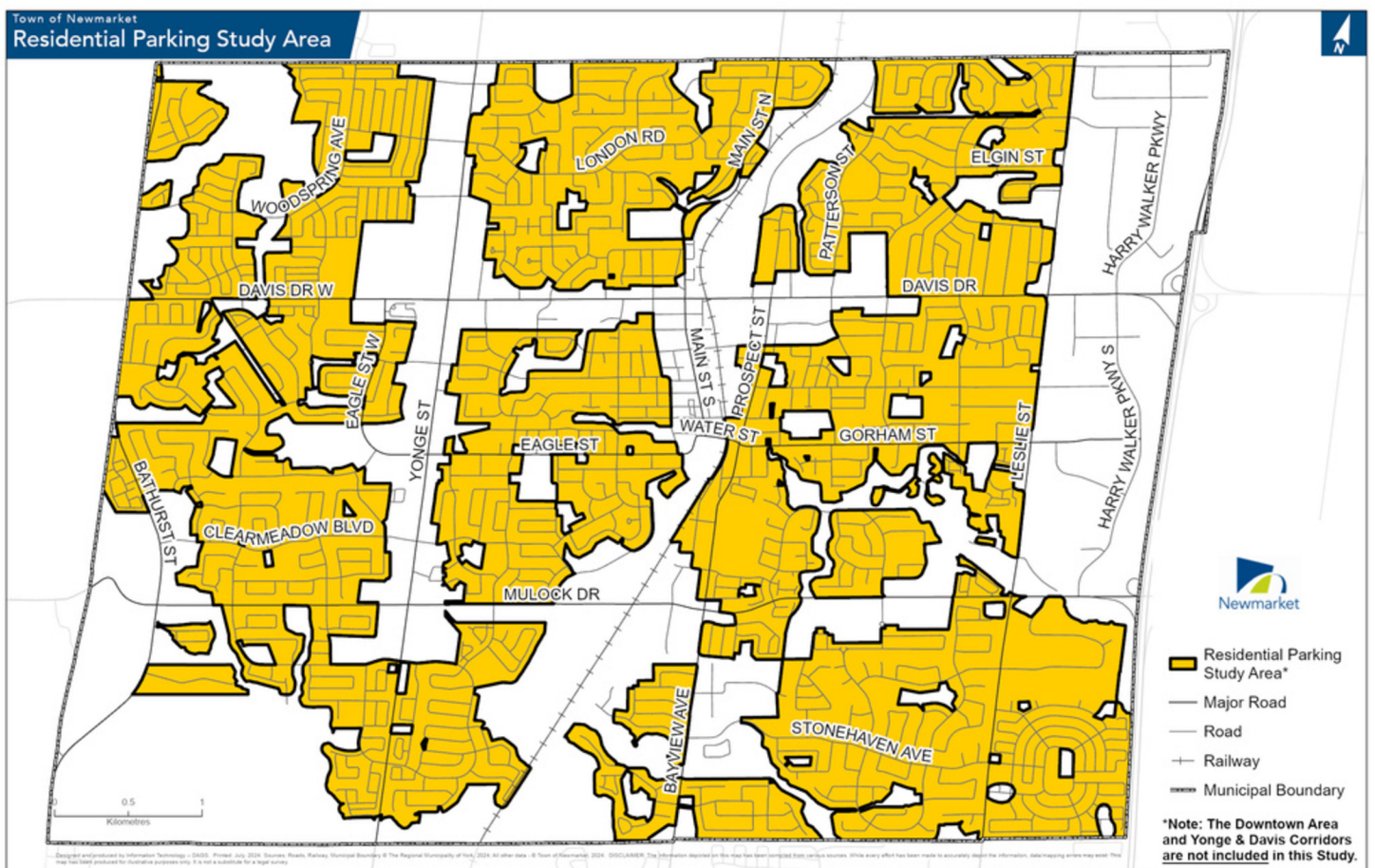
**RESIDENTIAL PARKING STUDY**

Icons: Parking sign, People, Car/Bus, House/Car

# 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the **Newmarket Residential Parking Study** is to develop strategies to address the parking demands of a growing residential community while promoting sustainable development, urban design, economic growth, and alternative transportation options. The Study will explore how to balance the need for alternative transportation modes and parking within street rights-of-way, provide recommendations for the design of private condominium roads, and explore options for driveway standards, among other matters.

The purpose of the Survey was to better understand the diverse experiences, challenges, and priorities of residents and visitors parking in Newmarket's residential areas to align future parking strategies with the lived experiences and values of the community.



**Figure 2: Residential Parking Study Area**

# 1.3 Methodology

The Survey was available on the Town of Newmarket's Hey Newmarket project webpage ([www.heynewmarket.ca/residentialparkingstudy](http://www.heynewmarket.ca/residentialparkingstudy)) from June to August 2024. Survey participants, including residents and regular visitors to Newmarket's residential areas, were invited to reflect on their parking behaviours, any existing parking restrictions that impact daily living, any accessibility challenges, and respondents' vision for sustainable residential parking solutions in the medium and long term. Respondents were directed to access a link to the survey on the study webpage which included a map of the study area.

## Media Promotions

The survey was marketed using a variety of media channels, which are described in more detail below. Additionally, a gift card was offered as an incentive to complete the survey.

**Media/promotions May 3: Website Post** Approximate Reach: 4,400

### Social Media Posts:

- **Facebook:** 3 posts - Total 23,501 impressions
- **IG Stories:** 2 Posts Total: 4,400 impressions
- **X:** 4 Posts - Total: 2,914 impressions
- **LinkedIn:** 1 1,694 impressions
- **Media Articles:** 1, 2
  - Approximate Reach of article 1: 379,000 (approx.) and 2,280 views
  - Approximate Views of article 2: 113,000 and 143 views



Figure 3: Media Article Post

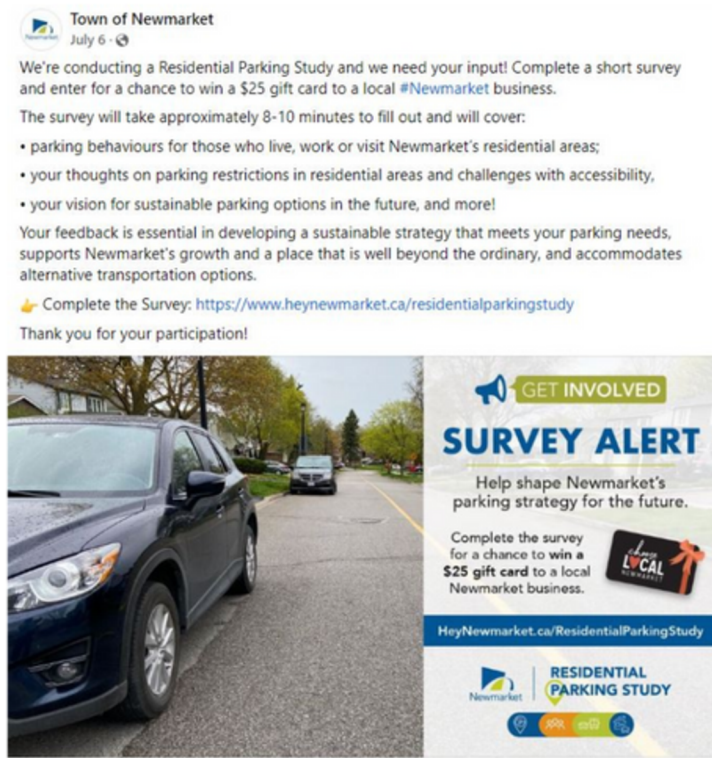


Figure 4: Sample Post on the Town's LinkedIn Account

# 1.3 Methodology

The purpose of the Survey was to gauge the community's sentiments on the issue of residential parking in the Town in key areas (see [Figure 2](#)). The survey collected responses from over 880 people connected to Newmarket's residential areas — this includes residents, workers, and visitors.

**Is this a good response?** The survey reached about 0.95% of the total population of Newmarket. This is typical for large-scale surveys, especially those distributed via email or online platforms. Response rates often fall within the 1% to 5% range. For the Town's population of about 93,000\*, 886 responses represent a strong response for this type of survey.

Notwithstanding the strong overall response rate, the survey was not undertaken using a rigorous scientific process. This means some questions may have been skipped (e.g., questions related to accessibility needs) if the user did not feel it applied to them, or for other reasons. Some respondents who live in Newmarket may live outside of the study area (e.g. in the Historic Downtown or Urban Centres Secondary Plan area). These responses may still offer valuable observations based on the community members' lived experiences in the study area, which the study team can take into consideration. Ultimately, while the survey provides valuable insights, the results have some limitations.

## Why This Matters

While the results do not fully represent every individual in Newmarket, the responses received are still valuable when making informed decisions.

In short, the Survey results provide the study team with a snapshot of what the community thinks about residential parking issues in Newmarket, which will guide the Town and its consultants in making recommendations in Phase 2. The project team will continue to engage the community in the upcoming phases of the study to further confirm the Survey findings in the context of future recommendations.

\*Newmarket population of 93,000 as of Oct 2024.



# 1.4

## Respondent Characteristics

(Q1, Q4, Q5)

To better understand the diverse backgrounds of the survey respondents, participants were asked to reflect on their connection to Newmarket (e.g., resident, visitor, worker), their current housing situation, and their transportation habits. These insights provide valuable context on user characteristics to help better understand who may be experiencing parking issues and to inform the study recommendations.

The Survey results provide valuable insights into participants' connections to Newmarket, their home ownership status, and the types of homes they occupy. For example, the majority of respondents (**83%**) reported that they lived in Newmarket, while the remainder indicated their connection to the Town was primarily through work or visits. Single-detached dwellings were the most commonly reported housing type (**63%**), followed by semi-detached homes (**15%**), townhouses or stacked townhouses (**11%**), and apartments or condominiums (**5%**). Vehicle ownership was also near universal, with **98%** of respondents reporting they own at least one vehicle.

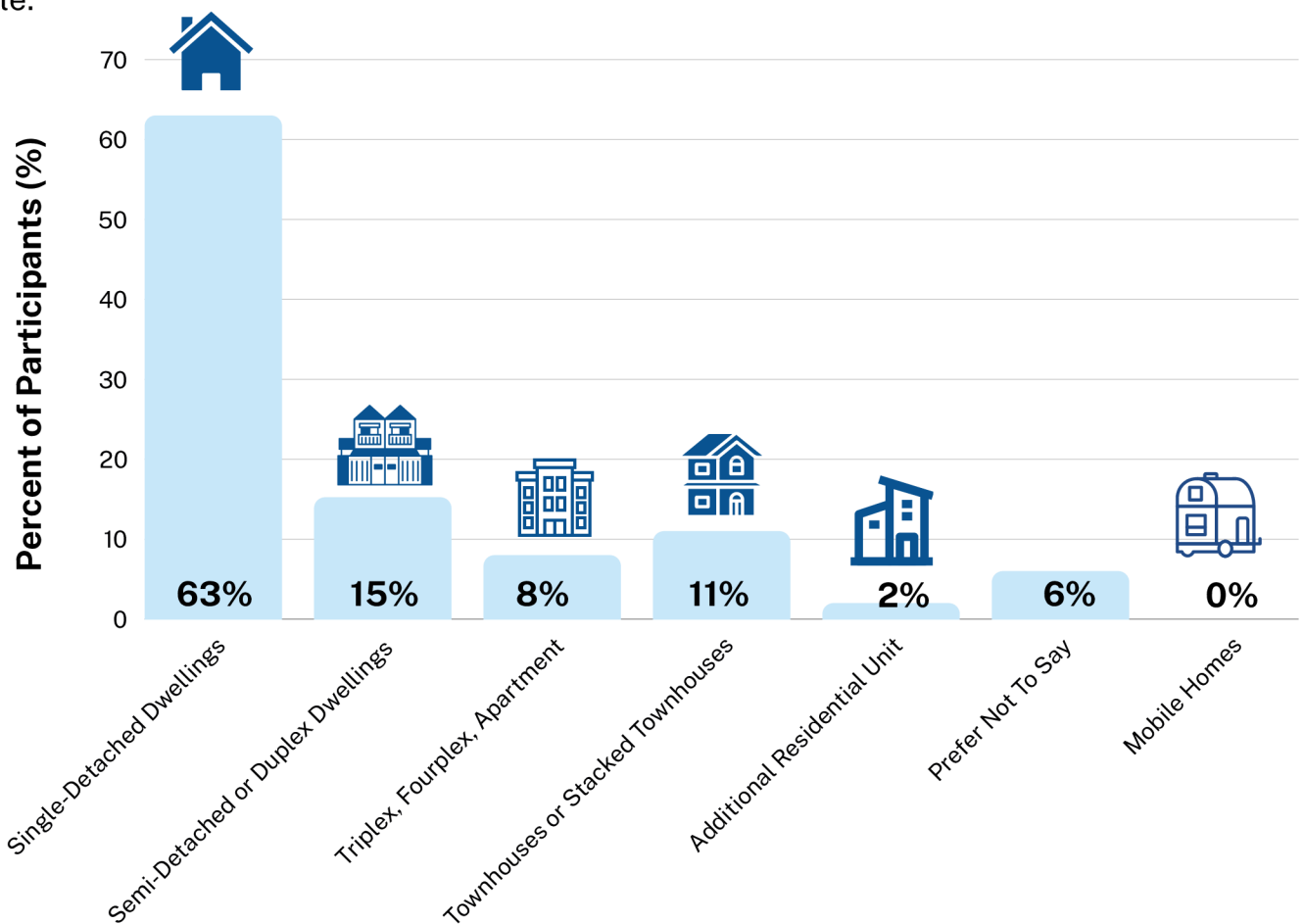


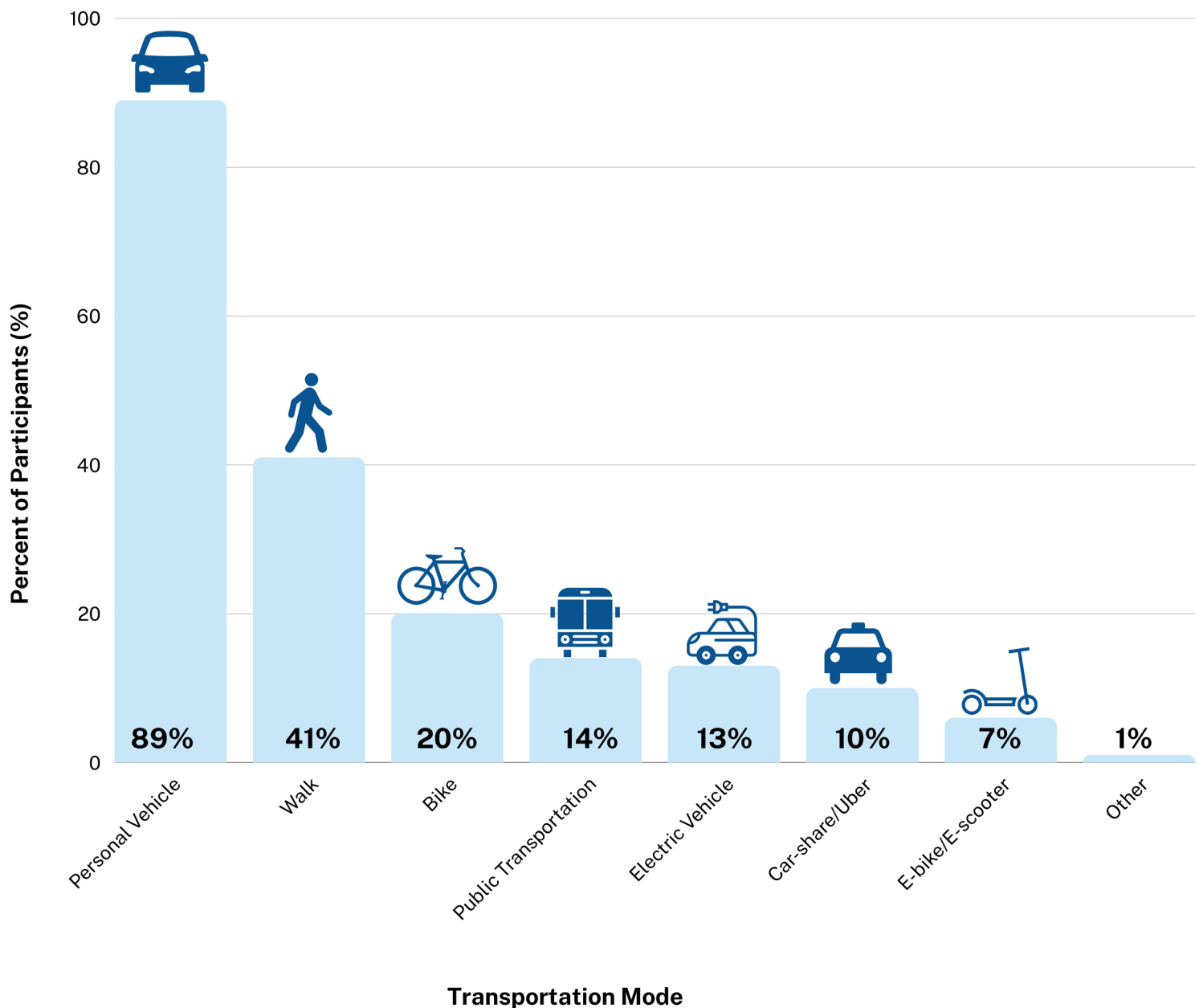
Figure 5: Dwelling Type by Household

# 1.4

## Respondent Characteristics

(Q25)

To gain a deeper understanding of respondents' transportation-related behaviours, the Survey asked participants to list their preferred method of travel and to select **all that apply**. The majority of respondents (**89%**) reported that their preferred method of transportation was using their personal vehicles. Walking was the second highest preferred method of transportation (**41%**). A further **20%** reported cycling as their preferred mode of transportation, while **14%** prefer to utilize public transportation.



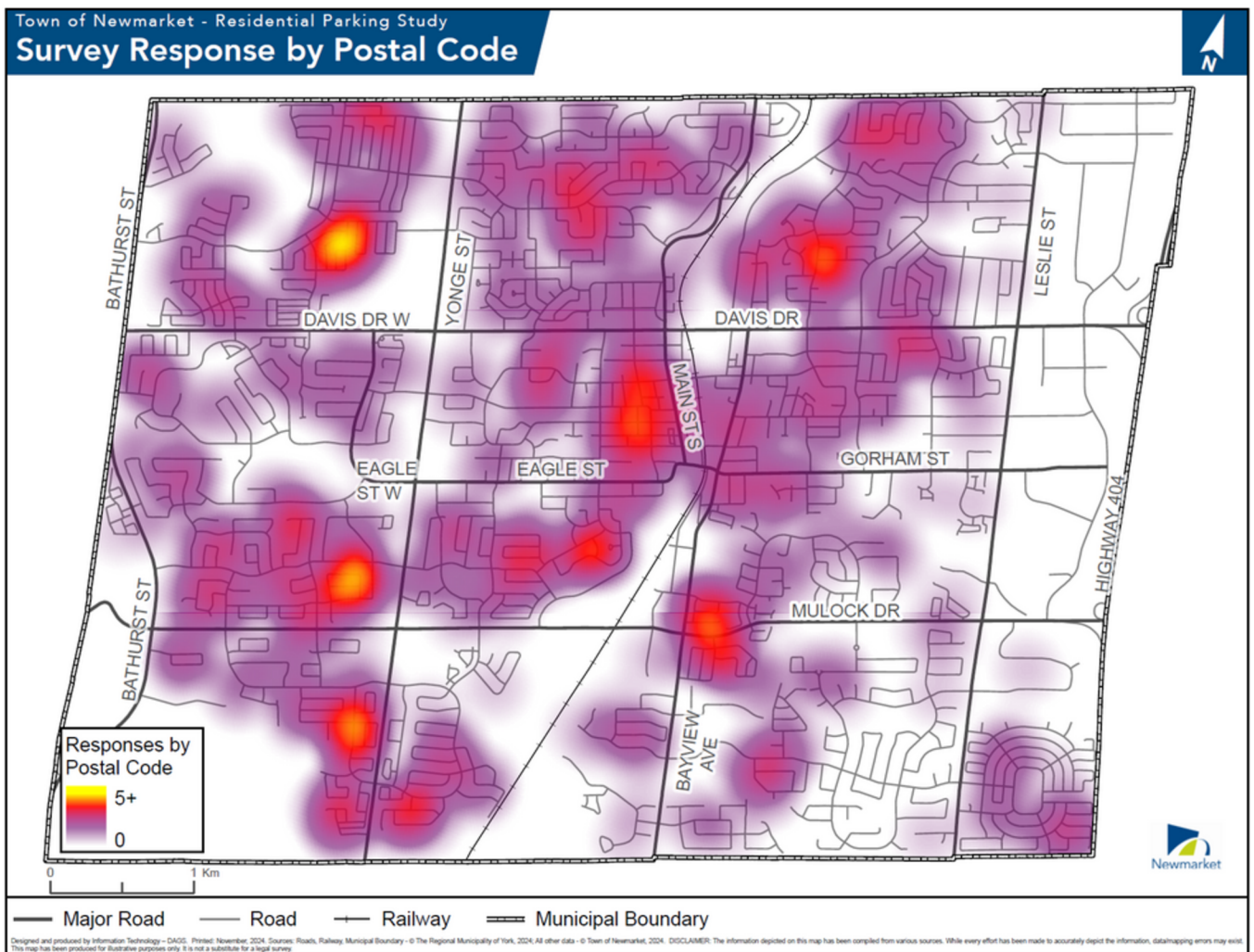
**Figure 6:** Ranking of Preferred Transportation Method

*\* Respondents were asked to "check all that apply"*

(Q2)

## Survey Responses

The Survey gathered input from participants who either live in Newmarket (85%) or have some connection to the Town's residential areas through work or visits including residents from Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Bradford-West Gwillimbury, and Toronto. The Heat Map in **Figure 7** provides a visual representation of where the survey responses are coming from in Newmarket, which are mostly in the study area save for responses received in the Historic Downtown area. While there may be concentrations of responses in certain geographic areas of the Town, this doesn't necessarily mean that parking issues are more prevalent in those areas. Higher response rates in certain areas may reflect greater engagement rather than a higher incidence of issues.



**Figure 7:** Survey Respondent Heat Map, Newmarket

# 1.5.1 Current Conditions and Challenges

## Off-Street Parking Habits (Q3, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q10, Q14, Q15)

Understanding resident and visitor parking habits in Newmarket’s residential areas provides the study team with insights into behaviours that influence parking management, zoning and urban design. This section summarizes responses related to off-street parking habits, including where and why individuals choose to park on their property, and how these practices shape off-street parking in residential areas.

*\* Respondents were asked to “check all that apply”*

**7%** reported they park in a public parking lot or rented a spot

**52%** indicated that they park in their garage, in a carport, or in a dedicated parking space (owner or visitor) within their building

**78%** reported parking on their driveway



**82%** reported having a private garage

The **top 3 reasons** for predominately parking on the driveway:

- **39%** said they use their garage for storage
- **34%** said they have a garage too small for their vehicle
- **19%** said they use their garage to store seasonal vehicles (i.e. ATV, boats)

**According to 98% of survey respondents, on-street parking is typically used for:**

*\* Respondents were asked to “check all that apply”*



**64%**  
When visiting family or friends



**59%**  
Attending local events



**57%**  
when guests visit



**50%**  
local shops



**58%**  
doing renovations

**On-street parking is typically used during:**



**45%** 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm

**36%** 7:00 pm - 12:00 am

**On-street parking is typically used for:**



**41%** 30-minutes to 2 hours

**26%** 3+ hours per day

# 1.5.2 Current Conditions and Challenges

## On-Street Parking (Q12, Q13)

This section summarizes the challenges residents and visitors experience with on-street parking in Newmarket's residential neighbourhoods. Survey respondents were asked, "What are the biggest challenges you experience when finding on-street parking in your neighbourhood?" and "What are the biggest challenges you experience when parking in residential areas in the neighbourhood you are visiting?" Respondents could select up to three responses, identifying existing on-street parking restrictions/by-laws (36%), challenges with visitor parking availability (34%), and the impact of cars parked on both sides of the street (31%) as the top three concerns.



### Top 3 challenges associated with on-street residential parking as a resident:

*\* Respondents were asked to "select top 3"*

-  **36%** said that parking by-laws were too restrictive
-  **34%** reported challenges with visitors finding parking nearby
-  **31%** said cars parked on both sides of the street make it feel like a one-way street



### Top 3 challenges associated with on-street parking as a visitor in residential areas:

*\* Respondents were asked to "select top 3"*

- 55%** said parking by-laws, such as 3-hour time limits or no overnight parking, are too restrictive
- 41%** said visiting friends and family cannot find nearby parking
- 29%** said they had difficulty accessing visitor parking to reach nearby businesses

# 1.5.3 Current Conditions and Challenges

## Paid Parking & Parking Affordability (Q20, Q23, Q24)

This section explores the role of paid parking facilities (e.g., in a parking lot) in Newmarket, their effect on on-street parking availability, and resident feedback on their benefits and challenges. This section also highlights respondent's thoughts on how parking costs affected their overall household budget.



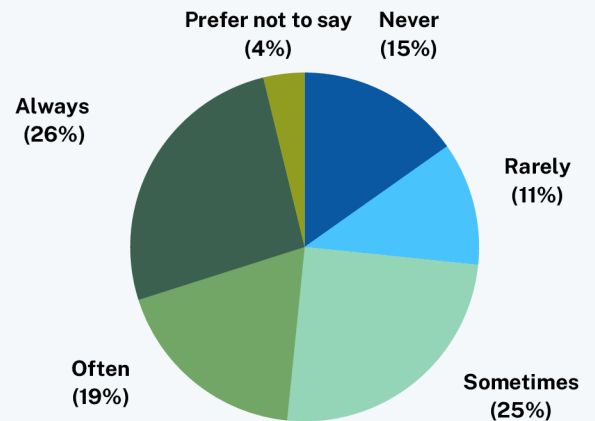
70%

of respondents indicated that there were no paid parking lots near their homes. 19% said there was a paid parking lot near their home, while 11% said they were not sure or not applicable.



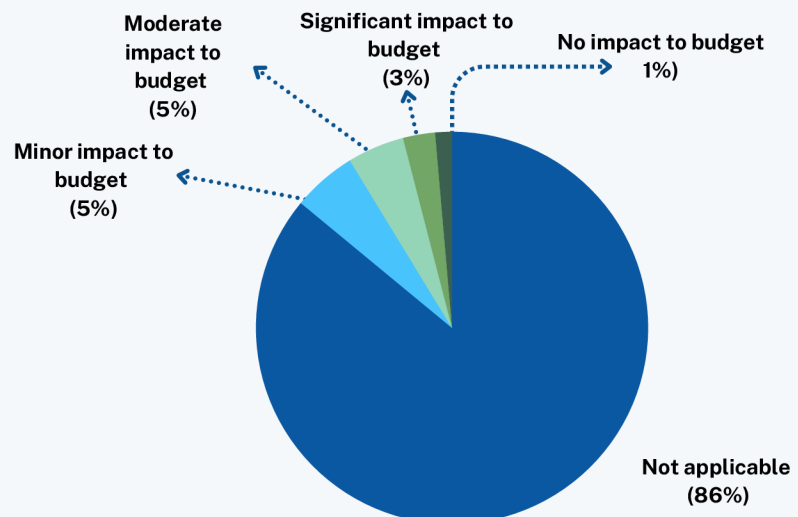
### Impact of Paid Parking on On-Street Parking Availability

Of participants living in a residential area near a paid parking lot (19%), the impact of the parking lot to available on-street parking near their home was as follows:



### Parking Affordability

Respondents were asked to reflect on how parking costs (e.g., permits, meters, fees) affected their overall household budget using a scale of 'no impact' to 'significant impacts'. The responses were as follows:



# 2.0

## Equity and Inclusion

### Identifying Opportunities to Promote Inclusion (Q16, Q17, Q19)






Understanding and addressing accessibility needs can lead to more equitable and inclusive land use practices. With this goal in mind, the survey included questions to better understand the accessibility challenges that residents might face in their neighbourhoods. Of the 886 respondents, **8%** reported having a mobility impairment. Participants were asked to what extent current parking arrangements met their needs or the needs of people with disabilities in accessing residential areas and to consider the proximity of accessible parking spots in destinations in residential areas and the adequacy of the parking space sizes.



nearly **9%** indicated that their current parking arrangement fully meets their needs. **52%** said that their current arrangement **moderately or barely meets their needs**, and accessible spots are available but could be better located or sized, or are often too far away from destinations or inadequately sized., while **14%** noted that accessible parking sometimes meets their needs due to cars parking in these spaces illegally.

#### Improving Residential Parking Accessibility

Participants were asked to provide suggestions to help improve accessible residential parking needs in the Town. Responses varied, from providing special concessions/fee reductions for older adults, individuals with mobility challenges, or other special interest groups, reducing fees in parking garages and paid lots, offering long-term parking passes at reduced rates, implementing tiered pricing for short term parking, and reduced parking prices for residents. The **top five** suggested solutions for individuals with mobility challenges to improve parking accessibility in areas near their homes were:

- 1.**  **15%** Clearly marked and well-maintained spaces close to entrances, equipped with proper signage
- 2.**  **16%** Minimizing distance between parking and residential entrances, which may include reconfiguring the parking arrangements
- 3.**  **13%** Ensuring pathways from parking to residential buildings are smooth, level, and free from obstructions
- 4.**  **9%** Conducting awareness campaigns on the importance of leaving accessible spaces available for those in need
- 5.**  **36%** All of the above of the above options implemented

# 3.0 Green Considerations

## Priorities for Converting Under-Utilized Spaces (Q22)

Repurposing under-used parking spaces presents an opportunity to create more **vibrant, sustainable, and community-focused spaces** and improve transportation infrastructure. We asked participants for their thoughts on repurposing under-used parking spaces for other uses. Respondents were provided 6 options and asked to choose their top 3 priorities. While options 1 to 3 emerged as the most frequently selected, the difference between each option was marginal - only 2% separated the top and third choices. Moreover, the difference between the first and fourth options was 10%, suggesting that many participants viewed many of these options as equally important.

**44%** want to enhance the Town's **natural beauty** and provide more **recreational spaces** for residents

**43%** want to prioritize transforming underutilized parking spaces into **green areas, parks, and gardens**

**42%** want to prioritize exploring mixed-use parking areas that are **parking lots during the day and community gathering spaces** at night

**34%** want to prioritize allocating parking spaces for **community patios and seating areas**

**32%** want to prioritize implementing **smart parking systems**

**25%** want to prioritize encouraging active transportation through creation of **more bike paths**



Low impact development retrofit at the Ray Twinney Recreation Complex, promoting stormwater management and climate resilience through repurposing part of the paved parking area.

# 4.1

## Future Vision

### Parking Improvements in the Near Future (5-10 Years)<sup>(Q28)</sup>

To understand community priorities for the future of residential parking in the Town, survey participants were asked about the improvements they would like to see in the near term (5-10 years), focusing on solutions that may promote convenience, sustainability, or alternative transportation options. Participants were allowed to choose as many options as they liked.



**22%** said that they hoped to see an increase in green spaces, planting of trees, and incorporating green infrastructures to enhance aesthetics and **environmental sustainability**



**21%** said that they hoped to see implementation of **smart parking systems** that guide drivers to available spaces, optimize space usage, and reduce congestion



**13%** said that they hoped to see improvements to local **public transportation** options



**10%** said that they hope to see more and improved bike lanes, secure bike storage, and bike-sharing programs that **encourage cycling**

**19%**



said that they hoped to see **all of the above** options implemented

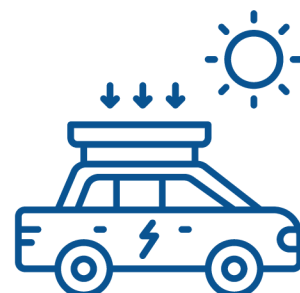
# 4.2 Future Vision

## Evolution for Parking Over Next 30 Years (Q27)

Aligned with the Official Plan vision for becoming a more sustainable, climate resilient place in the next 30 years, residential parking is expected to evolve in response to advancements in new technologies and shifts in transportation habits. Respondents were presented with several potential options for the evolution of parking and asked for their feedback. Multiple selections were permitted.



**57%** predict that pooled residential areas will need more dedicated **public EV charging stations**



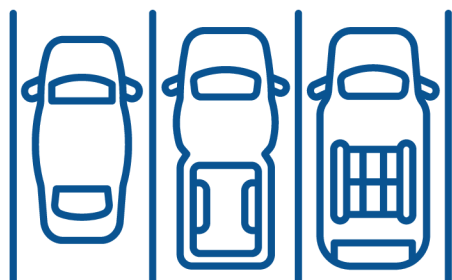
**48%** advocated for more **green initiatives**, such as solar-powered carports or green roofs over parking area



**35%** noted that as the Town becomes more walkable, residents would need to rely **less on personal vehicles**



**30%** said that improved public transportation and ride-sharing services can allow residential areas to **prioritize green spaces** over parking lots



**30%** said advanced **automated parking systems** could optimize space utilization in more urban areas around transit



**33%** said that as neighbourhoods gradually become more urban, there will be an increased need for **shared parking spaces**

# 5.1

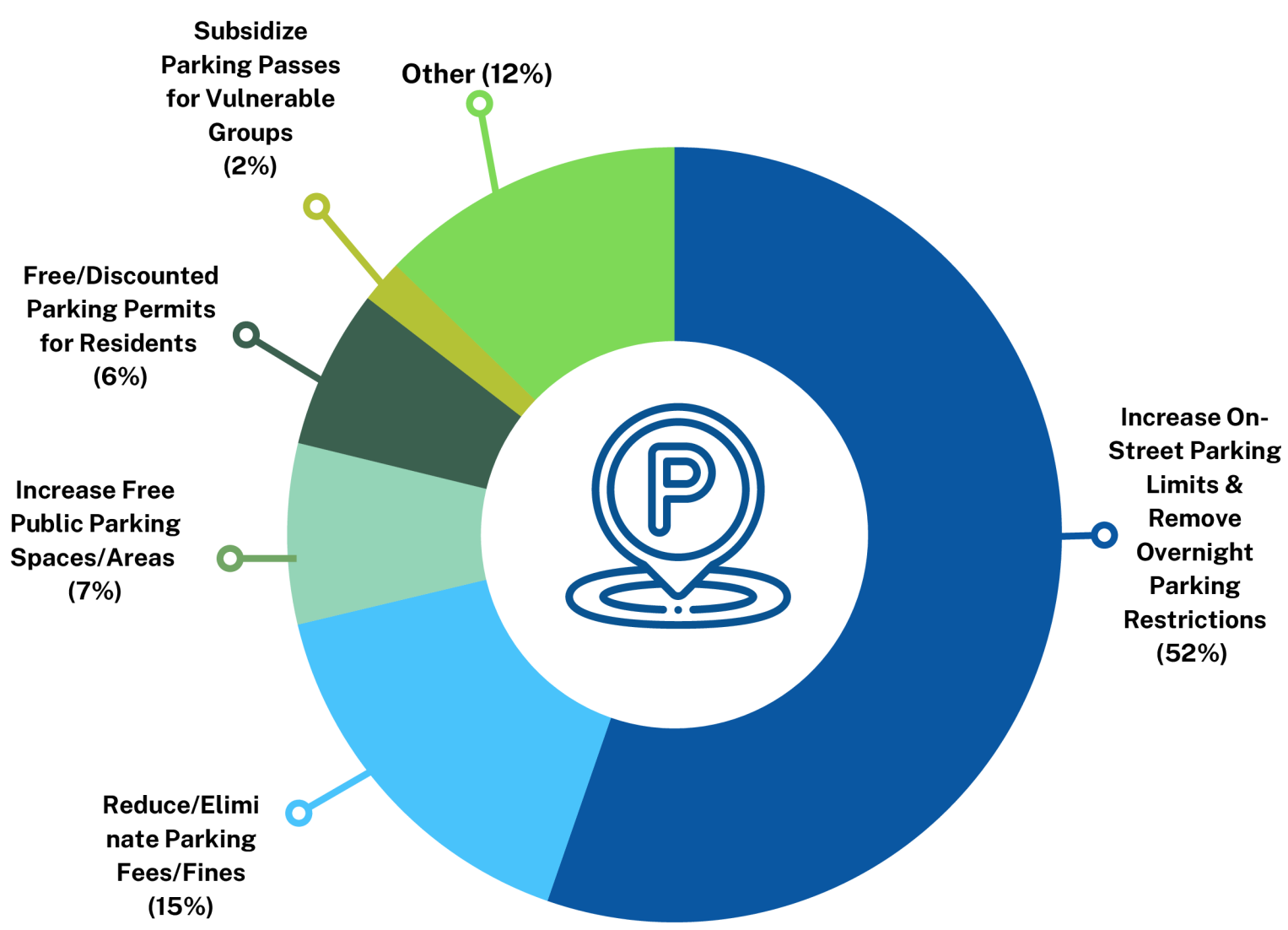
## Identifying Possible Solutions

### Parking Affordability (Q21)

Respondents were provided an opportunity to offer their thoughts on potential solutions to increase parking affordability. A wide range of responses was received. After reviewing these suggestions carefully, similar ideas were grouped into themes to provide an overview of the overall needs of respondents, illustrated in **Figure 8**.

Other solutions captured in Figure 8 under 'Other' include: investing in and incentivizing alternative modes of transportation (i.e. cycling, public transit), increasing the driveway size, utilizing empty school or office parking lots during off-peak hours, moving the sidewalk closer to the curb to eliminate the municipal boulevard, and allowing free temporary on-street parking passes.

**Figure 8: Solutions to Increase Parking Affordability**

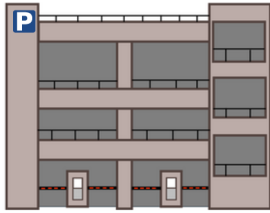


# 5.2

## Identifying Possible Solutions (Q26)

To assess the importance of various parking solutions, participants were asked to rate six (6) potential options on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being “not very important” and 5 being “absolutely essential”. Based on the feedback received, and ranked using a weighted average, the potential solutions in order of preference are highlighted below.

1.



Building parking garages [in key locations] to reduce the need for on-street parking.

2.



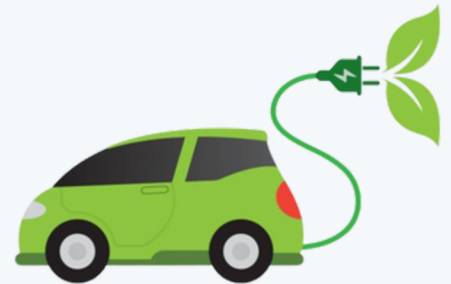
Implementing a permit parking system on residential streets where only people who live on a residential street, and their visitors, can park on the street or in front of their homes.

3.



Implementing paid parking near certain hotspots in Town to prevent people from parking in residential areas

4.



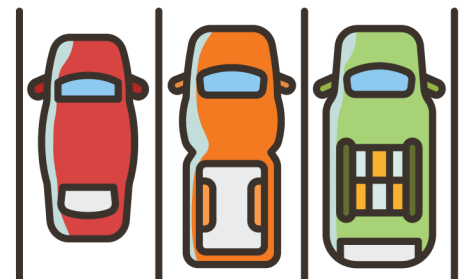
Reducing vehicles emissions by providing more sustainable travel options for residents (i.e. biking, walking trails).

5.



Promoting other travel options such as walking, biking, or using an e-scooter in residential areas by repurposing parking on collector roads for bicycle lanes.

6.



Implementing paid parking near hotspots to prevent people from parking on residential streets

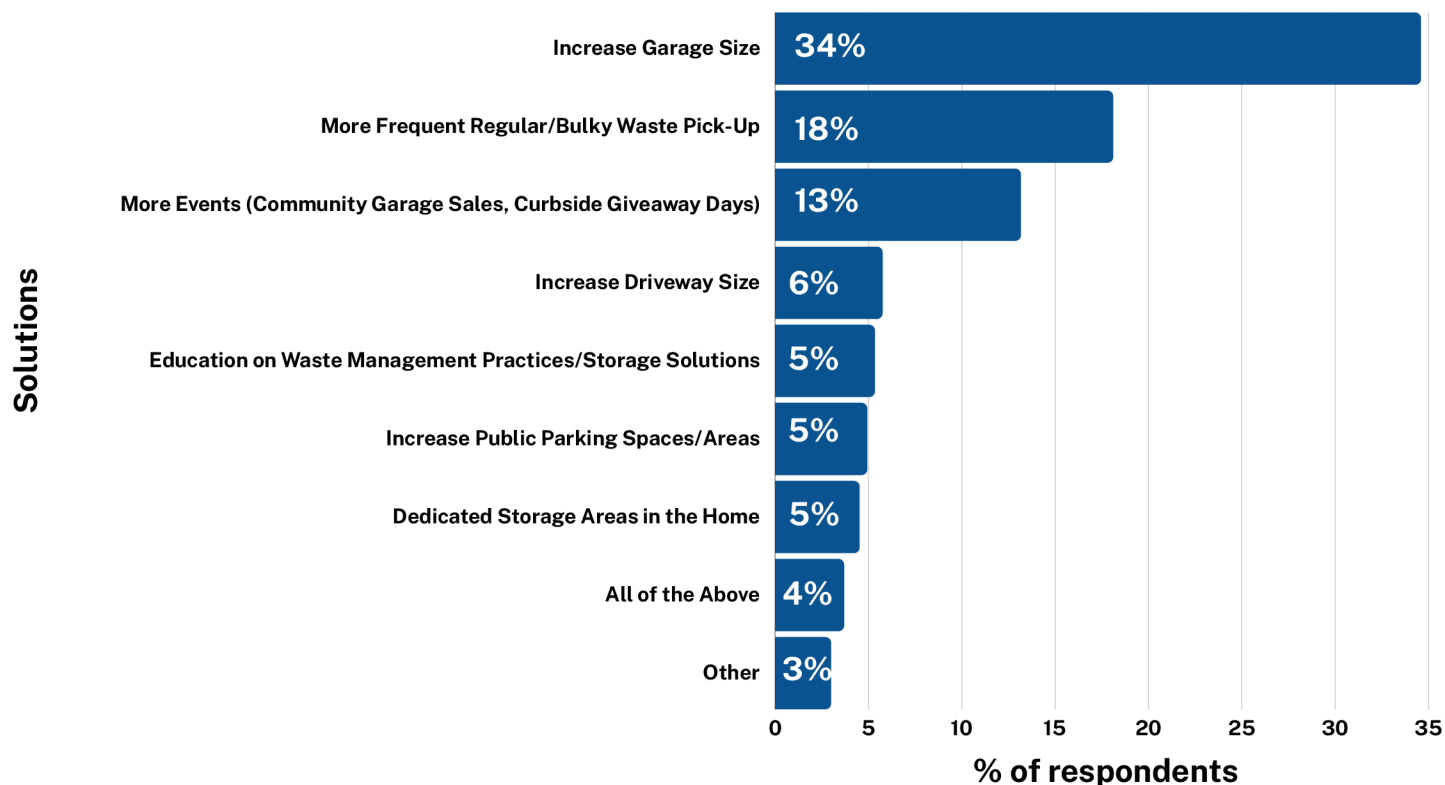
# 5.3 Identifying Possible Solutions (Q11)

Respondents were asked, using an open-ended question, “If you or someone in your household predominately park in your driveway, what can the Town do to assist you so that you can park in your garage”. The answers were carefully reviewed and grouped into themes to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the proposed solutions (see **Figure 9**).

These suggestions ranged from more large item waste pick-up days, community garage sales or swap events hosted by the Town, to more information about storage solutions, educational workshops on organization and decluttering, information about local donation centres, and ensuring new homes are built with larger garages that include dedicated storage space.

Some solutions offered by respondents, captured under ‘Other’ in Figure 9, include providing discounts on storage solutions (e.g., sheds or garage shelving), utilizing empty school, office, or church parking lots, offering lockable waste containers so they can be safely placed outside the garage, reducing or removing parking fees, offering financial incentives for garage renovations, or increase zoning by-law standards to allow larger sheds (accessory structures) on properties.

**Figure 9:** Solutions to Parking in the Garage



# 5.4 Identifying Possible Solutions

## We Heard You: Additional Comments & Suggestions (Q29)

### Additional Comments or Suggestions Regarding Residential Parking

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide any other comments or suggestions that may not have been covered in the survey. A wide variety of answers were received through this question. Responses were analyzed and grouped into themes to put all the ‘puzzle pieces’ together and allow the study team to better understand residents’ lived experiences. Several words and phrases appeared frequently and touched upon various themes, which are illustrated in the word cloud in **Figure 10** below.

**Figure 10:** What We Heard



#### Complete Communities

Zoning should allow for small shops in neighbourhoods so people don't have to get in their car as often.



#### Technology

Advanced automated parking systems could optimize space utilization especially near transit.



#### Parking Restrictions

Parking on residential streets shouldn't be so restrictive that residents can't park there when needed.



#### Engagement & Education

The Town should organize community meetings to discuss and solve parking problems and increase resident's sense of participation and satisfaction.

# 6.0 Conclusion

The Residential Parking Study survey provides insights into parking challenges, and aspirations for the near and future term, in Newmarket's residential areas, capturing feedback from over 880 respondents that live, work or visit in these areas.

## Next Steps

As the study progresses into Phase 2, the survey findings will inform the study team's recommendations for potential parking strategies, which may include recommendations to update parking standards, policies, by-laws, and design strategies to address the Town's evolving parking needs.



## Survey Questions

**Q1** What is your connection to Newmarket?

**Q2** Please provide your postal code.

**Q3** When do you park on the street in Newmarket's residential areas?

**Q4** What type of dwelling do you live in?

**Q5** Do you own a vehicle?

**Q6** Do you have a garage in your home?

**Q7** If you own a vehicle, where do you usually park in relation to your home?

**Q8** Where do other members of your household normally park?

**Q9** Not counting you or someone from your household, on average how often do cars park on your street?

**Q10** If you or someone in your household predominately park on your driveway, why do you do so?

**Q11** If you or someone in your household predominately park in your driveway, what can the Town do to assist so that you can park in your garage?

**Q12** What are the biggest challenges you experience when finding on-street parking your neighbourhood?

**Q13** What are the biggest challenges you experience when parking in residential areas in the neighbourhood you are visiting?

**Q14** When do you typically park on the street in Newmarket's residential areas?

**Q15** How long do you typically park on the street in Newmarket's residential areas?

**Q16** Are you or your family members impacted by disabilities that affect parking accessibility?

**Q17** To what extent do current parking arrangements meet your needs or the needs of people with disabilities in accessing residential areas?

## Survey Questions Cont.

**Q18** Please provide any specific suggestions or descriptions of how parking accessibility could be improved in your area?

**Q19** What is one effective way to improve residential parking accessibility for people with disabilities, families with children, and seniors?

**Q20** How do the costs associated with parking (such as permits, meters, and fines) affect your household budget?

**Q21** If parking costs are a burden, what changes or solutions would you suggest to make parking more affordable for you and others in similar financial situations?

**Q22** When addressing parking challenges in the Town, it's an important to strike a balance between hard surface areas and increasing the Town's green spaces. What are your priorities regarding converting under-used parking spaces to other uses.

**Q23** Is there a parking lot with paid parking near your home?

**Q24** If you answered yes to the question above, does the paid parking lot impact on-street parking on your street?

**Q25** What is your preferred method of travel?

**Q26** On a scale of 1-5, how important are the approaches listed below to supporting parking solutions in Newmarket's residential areas?

**Q27** How do you envision parking evolving in residential areas in the next 30 years?

**Q28** What parking improvements (if any) do you hope to see in Newmarket's residential areas the near future (5-10 years)?

**Q29** Do you have any other comments or suggestions regarding parking in residential areas in Newmarket not covered in the survey?

# Town of Newmarket Residential Parking Study



2024



## RESIDENTIAL PARKING STUDY



**Webpage:** <https://www.heynewmarket.ca/residentialparkingstudy>

**Questions?** Email [planning@newmarket.ca](mailto:planning@newmarket.ca)