A WORKING VISION FOR BELMONT'S FUTURE:

PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS

REPORT OF THE BELMONT VISION 21 IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE'S 2014 TOWN-WIDE SURVEY

PREPARED APRIL 2015

TOWN OF BELMONT
OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
455 CONCORD AVENUE
BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS 02478

Selectmen@belmont-ma.gov

455 CONCORD AVENUE
BELMONT, MA 02478-2573
PHONE (617) 993-2610
FAX (617) 993-2611

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SAMI S. BAGHDADY
MARK A. PAOLILLO
JAMES R. WILLIAMS

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
DAVID J. KALE

ASSISTANT TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
PHYLLIS L. MARSHALL

The Board of Selectmen received this report on November 9, 2015 from the Vision 21 Implementation Committee and as discussed the Board of Selectmen and Vision 21 Implementation Committee agreed that this report should be used for informational purposes only.

Contents

A WORKING VISION FOR BELMONT'S FUTURE - PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS 4

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 4

SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND DISTRIBUTION 4

WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY? 5

RANKING THE VISION'S GOALS BY IMPORTANCE 8

IS THE TOWN SUCCEEDING IN FULFILLING THE VISION GOALS? 9

AREAS OF POSITIVE PERFORMANCE 11

AREAS FOR GREATER FOCUS 11

COMMENTS BY TOPIC 11

RECOMMENDATIONS 15

CONCLUSION 16

RESPONSES DEPICTED IN GRAPHS 17

Sense of Community Goal 17

Character of Our Town Goal 19

Quality of Life Goal 21

APPENDIX I - SURVEY COMMENTS BY TOPIC 24

I - ARTS & CULTURE 24

II – CENTERS/RETAIL 30

III - DIVERSITY 38

IV - ENVIRONMENT/ENERGY 41

V - LAND USE/ PLANNING/ HOUSING 46

VI - LIBRARY 59

VII - PARKS & RECREATION 62

VIII - POOL 66

IX - SENIOR CITIZENS 68

X - SCHOOLS 70

XI - TAXES 82

XII - TOWN CHARACTER 87

XIII - TOWN GOVERNANCE 97

XIV - TOWN SERVICES 110

XV - TRAFFIC/ ROADS/ PAVING 117

XVI - BIKE PATH/COMMUNITY PATH 129

XVII –THE SURVEY, THE VISION STATEMENT AND THE PROCESS 131
APPENDIX II - SURVEY COMMENTS BY QUESTION 133
APPENDIX III – ORIGINAL SURVEY 205

A WORKING VISION FOR BELMONT'S FUTURE - PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 2001, the Town of Belmont's Town Meeting unanimously adopted a vision statement entitled "A Working Vision for Belmont's Future," which included several goals for the Town. The complete Vision can be found in Appendix III of this report or online on the Town's website.[1]

Following the adoption of the Vision Statement, the Board of Selectmen established the Belmont Vision 21 Implementation Committee (VIC) in 2001 to facilitate, enable, and help the Town achieve the Working Vision for the Town. In addition to this responsibility, the Committee has been charged with performing the following tasks:

- Identify areas of activity that will move the Town toward realizing the Vision and encourage town-wide participation in the process.
- Confer with Town officials or committees responsible for the designated area of activity to define action steps and determine the appropriate method of support by this Committee, as needed.
- Periodically identify townspeople's priorities, using a survey and/or other methods.
- Annually provide an update to the Selectmen on progress achieved.

In an effort to gather updated opinions from people in the town regarding which of the Vision's goals currently are most important to them and on which of the goals they believe the Town should focus its efforts, the Vision 21 Implementation Committee conducted a town-wide survey throughout the spring and summer of 2014. This report presents the results of these efforts by providing a summary of the survey results, along with the VIC's analysis, conclusions, and recommendations on the findings.

This report would not have been possible without the active assistance and cooperation of many departments and residents of the Town of Belmont. We are grateful to the 1118 individuals who took time to provide their valued thoughts as survey participants. We also acknowledge the support of the Belmont Board of Selectmen, Belmont Public Schools, the Belmont Public Library, The Town Clerk's Office and Senior Center in distributing the survey.

We would also like to thank former Selectman Andy Rojas for his contributions and support throughout this initiative, as he served as the Board of Selectmen's liaison to the VIC.

Respectfully, the Belmont Vision Implementation Committee:

Allen Babroudi
George Durante, Chair
Doug John
Natalie Leino, Vice Chair
Don Mercier
Jennifer Page
Mary Power
Paul Solomon
Carol Trager

SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND DISTRIBUTION

In the winter of 2013/2014, the Vision21 Implementation Committee (VIC) identified a need to gather feedback from town residents and businesses for the purpose of understanding how well the Town was achieving the goals outlined in the Vision Statement adopted in 2001; and also to give direction and guidance to the Committee regarding its future work.

In the late winter and early spring of 2014, the VIC developed a survey tool that consisted of 29 questions (including subparts) (See Appendix III for a copy of the survey). The first part of the survey was structured based on the Vision Statement, listing each of the three overarching goal categories. These included the Sense of Community, Character of Our Town, and Quality of Life.

[1] See http://www.belmont-ma.gov/sites/belmontma/files/file/file/a_working_vision_for_belmont.pdf

Within the three broad categories, three specific goals were stated, each drawn from the Vision. For each goal, respondents were asked to rank (a) how important the goal was to the respondent personally; and (b) how well the respondent thought the Town was accomplishing the goal. Thus, for each goal, there were two "ranking" questions. Respondents also were invited to respond to one open-ended question for each overarching category: "Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving" the implementation of the goals (in that overarching category).

The Belmont Public School System generously agreed to host the survey from April through September of 2014 on its account for the online survey tool, SurveyMonkey, and hard copies were distributed throughout the town. The survey responses were extracted from SurveyMonkey, which allowed the VIC to view the qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data (the rankings) have been depicted through charts, graphs, and tables for each applicable question.

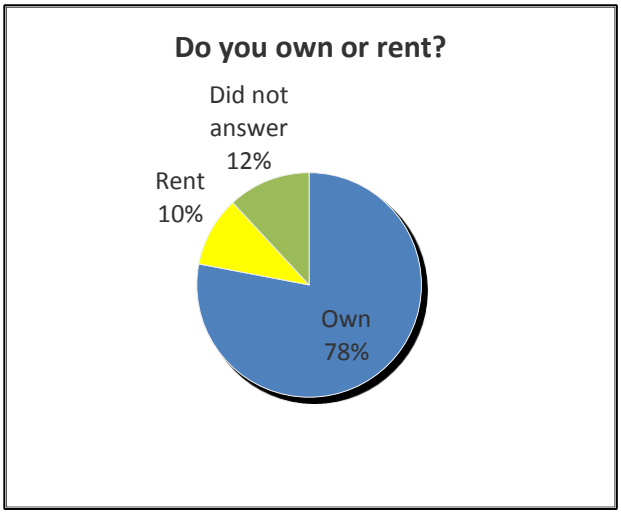
The qualitative data, which consisted of the written comments that were submitted, were divided into two separate sections for analysis and review in this report. In Appendix I of this report, the VIC categorized the comments to fit within prevalent themes that frequently reoccurred within the collected statements. Examples of thematic categories that were created include "School System," "Roads and Traffic," and "Arts and Culture." The VIC engaged in this additional exercise in an effort to make it easier for individual Town Departments, Boards and Committees to quickly see the comments that may be specifically pertinent to their areas of specialization and jurisdiction. Appendix II of this report contains the comments in their pure form. It should be noted that it is possible that a high percentage of survey respondents did not opt to provide written comments, which may have resulted in a high representation of individuals who have strong positions or opinions on particular issues and an underrepresentation of respondents who were generally neutral on a subject. Appendix III contains the survey for that was distributed both on line and in hard copy form.

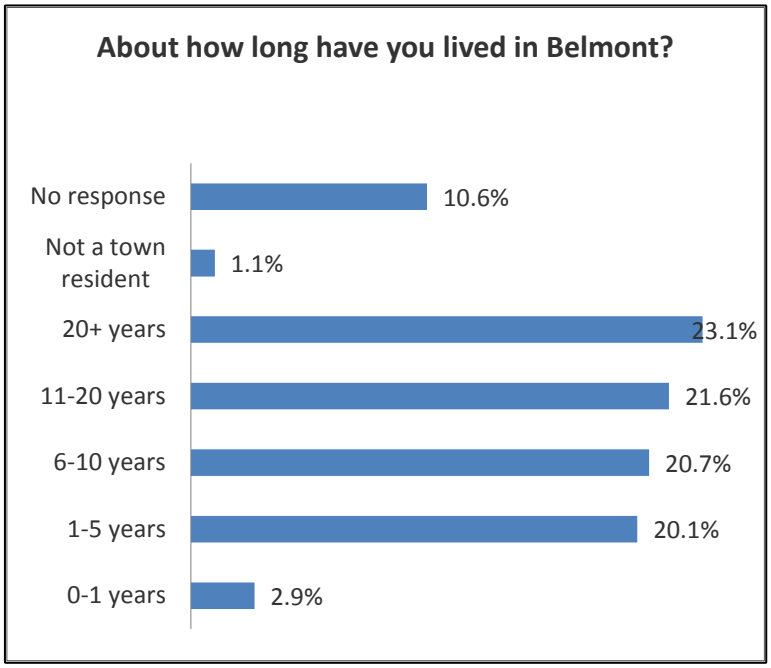
Finally, the survey asked respondents to rank the importance of each goal and to provide some basic demographic information. This provides a greater degree of context for readers as they review the data contained in this report.

WHO COMPLETED THE SURVEY?

A total of 1,118 people responded to the survey, or approximately 4.5% of Belmont's total population. Of these responses, only 12 people did not live in Belmont and 32 people had lived in town for less than one year. All other responses to the survey were fairly evenly distributed between people who have lived in Belmont from 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-20 years, and 20+ years, each ranging approximately 20-23%.

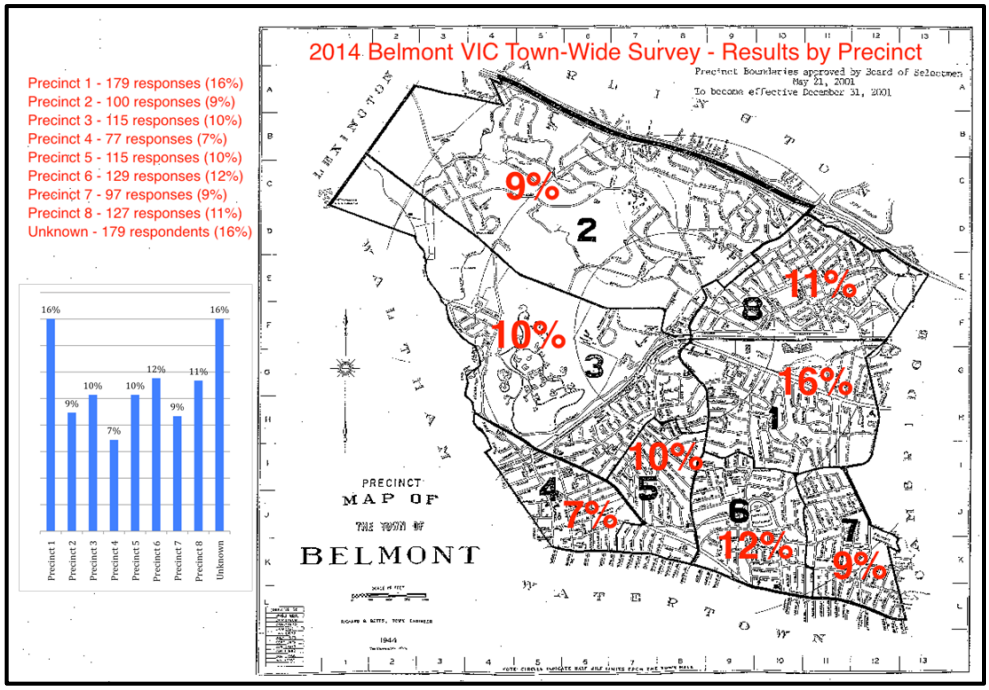
The overwhelming majority of people who responded to the survey own a home in Belmont, with only 10% of respondents indicating that they rent. It is noted that this respondent group is underrepresented, as Belmont's renting population is approximately 30%.





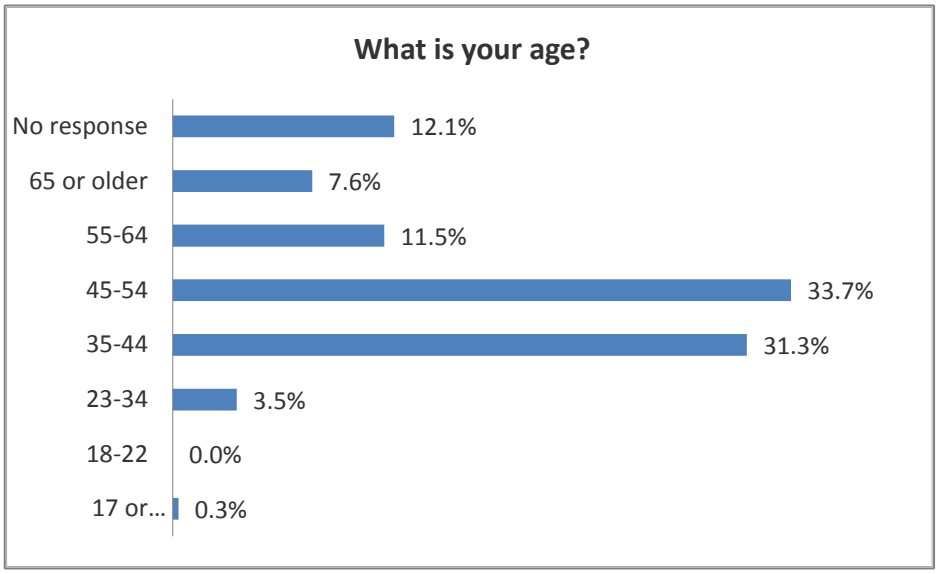
Geographic distribution

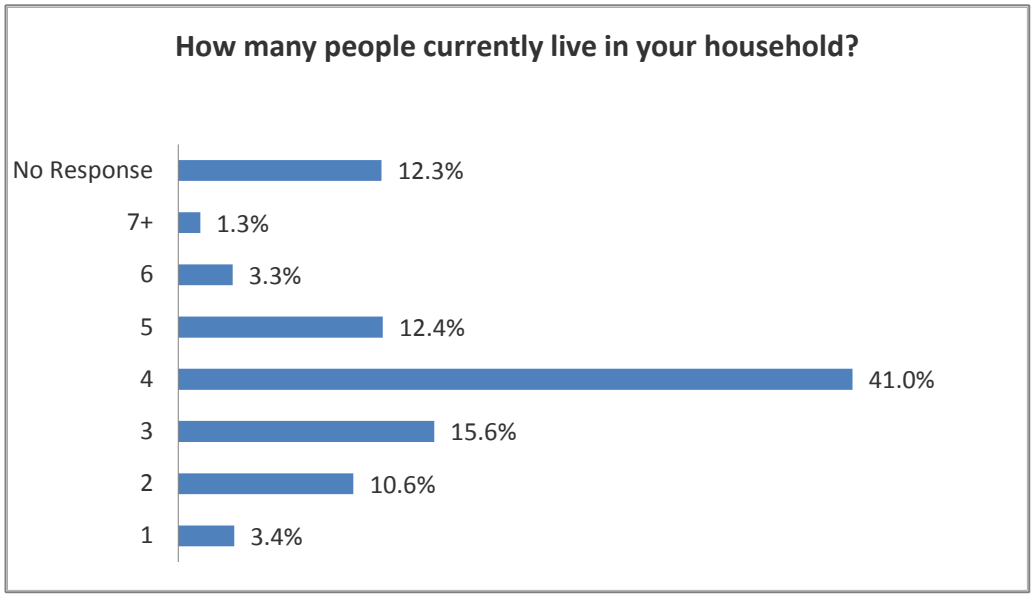
Survey participants were also asked to indicate what voting precinct they lived in. Residents from all areas in Belmont responded in fairly high numbers. The participation by precinct roughly corresponds to the participation of voting residents during elections. Precinct 1 appeared to have the highest participation with 16%. Precinct 4 had the lowest participation at 7% with all other precincts ranging from 9 – 12%. A total of 16% of respondents either did not know their precinct or opted not to answer the question.

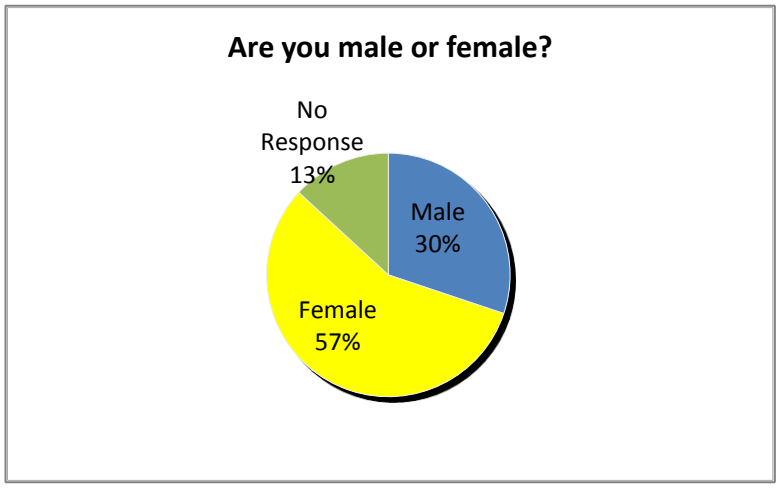


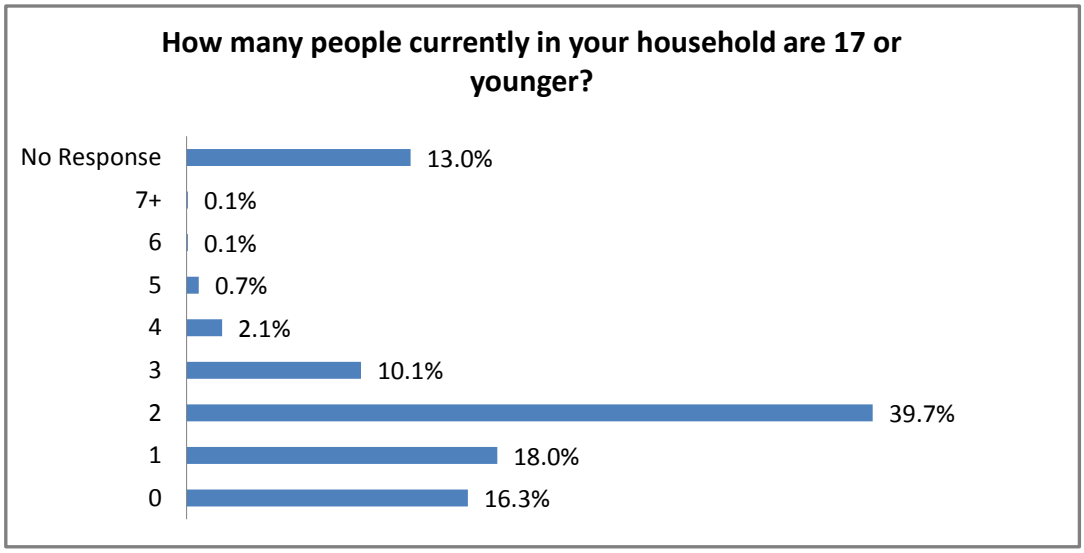
Age and Gender

Survey respondents between the ages of 35-44 or 45-54 accounted for 65% of all of the responses. There was minimal participation from those of high school and college age in the town and only 4% of respondents identified themselves as 23-34. Further, there were far more female respondents (57 %) than male respondents (30 %). Most households responding to the survey were comprised of four people (41%) and a nearly equivalent amount of those households contained people 17 or younger (39.7%). The graphs below depict the demographics of respondents in further detail.




How many people currently live in your household?
No Response
12.3%
7+
1.3%
6
3.3%
5
12.4%
4
41.0%
3
15.6%
2
10.6%
1
3.4%


Are you male or female?
No Response 13%
Male 30%
Female 57%


How many people currently in your household are 17 or younger?
No Response
13.0%
7+
0.1%
6
0.1%
5
0.7%
4
2.1%
3
10.1%
2
39.7%
1
18.0%
0
16.3%

RANKING THE VISION'S GOALS BY IMPORTANCE

The survey asked respondents to rank the goals from 1 to 9 in the order of the importance they believe the Town should place on them, with 1 being the most important. The top three priorities were ranked as follows:

1. "We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents."

2. "We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witnesses to our past."

3. "We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists."

These top three ranked priorities are in alignment with what one would expect, given the high proportion of survey respondents with school age children. The goals that were identified to be least important for the Town to focus on are ranked as follows:

7. "We will be an environmentally responsible community and conserve our natural habitats."

8. "We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities."

9. "We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity."

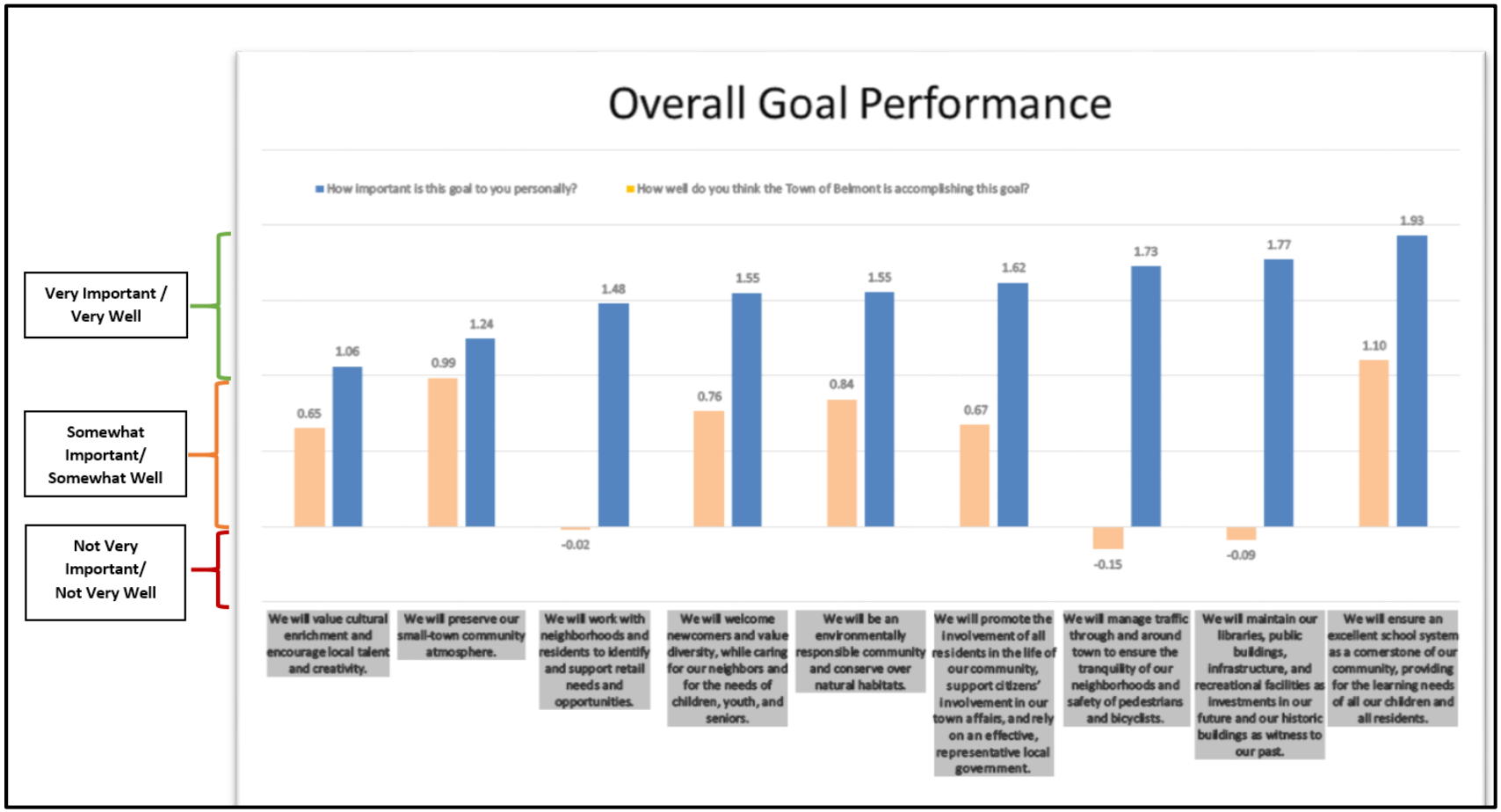
The full list of rankings is shown in the graph on the following page, with the number on the Y-axis representing the average ranking of each goal.

IS THE TOWN SUCCEEDING IN FULFILLING THE VISION GOALS?

Of the nine goals that were listed in the survey, the majority of respondents list eight of them as being "Very Important" to them personally. The one goal that was not viewed as personally "Very Important" to the majority of respondents was "We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity." The responses were more or less ranked evenly as being "Somewhat Important" or "Very Important" to individuals personally, with a slight edge going to "Somewhat Important."

In terms of the Town's performance on achieving each of the nine goals that are presented in the Vision Statement, respondents overwhelmingly responded that they thought the Town was accomplishing most of the goals "Somewhat Well." However, there were some notable exceptions where opinions on specific goals deviated from an otherwise satisfactory performance assessment for the Town. It is also important to note that the Town did not receive a higher percentage of "Very Well" responses than "Somewhat Well," "Not Very Well," or "Not at All" for any of the nine goals of the Vision. Conversely, the "Not at All" category consistently received the lowest percentage of responses for each goal.

The chart on the next page compiles the questions asking respondents how important each goal is and how well the Town is performing onto one graph to show how results for each of the goals compares to the others. Additional graphs in Section I break down the results graphically by question and by goal category. For the purposes of the graphs on pages 17 through 24 and the summary data outlined on the following page, respondents who entered "No Opinion" or skipped the question altogether were not included.


Overall Goal Performance
How important is this goal to you personally?
How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?
Very Important / Very Well
Somewhat Important/ Somewhat Well
Not Very Important/ Not Very Well
0.65
1.06
0.99
1.24
-0.02
1.48
0.76
1.55
0.84
1.55
0.67
1.62
-0.15
1.73
-0.09
1.77
1.10
1.93
We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity.
We will preserve our small-town community atmosphere.
We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities.
We will welcome newcomers and value diversity, while caring for our neighbors and for the needs of children, youth, and seniors.
We will be an environmentally responsible community and conserve over natural habitats.
We will promote the involvement of all residents in the life of our community, support citizens' involvement in our town affairs, and rely on an effective, representative local government.
We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.
We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witness to our past.
We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents.

AREAS OF POSITIVE PERFORMANCE

The goal that respondents deemed that the Town was accomplishing the best was "We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents." This goal received the highest percentage of "Very Well" responses, at 40%, with 43% of respondents indicating that the Town was accomplishing this goal "Somewhat Well." This is a favorable result, since ensuring an excellent school system was also ranked as the number one priority for the Town.

The goal with the second highest performance rating for the Town was "We will preserve our small-town community atmosphere." In this case, 33% of respondents indicated that the Town was accomplishing this "Very Well" and 48% of the respondents indicated that the Town was accomplishing this "Somewhat Well." This goal was ranked 6 out of 9 in its overall importance for the Town to focus on as a priority.

AREAS FOR GREATER FOCUS

There were two goals for which a majority of respondents indicated that the Town was performing "Not Very Well." These results are particularly concerning given that these goals ranked as the second and third priorities that respondents thought the Town should be focusing on. There was also one instance where a goal was ranked as being accomplished "Somewhat Well," but also received a high percentage of responses under "Not Very Well."

The first goal that respondents indicated was not being adequately advanced was "We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witness to our past." For this goal, 45% of respondents chose "Not Very Well" to rank the Town's performance, compared to 34% who selected "Somewhat Well." This goal was ranked as the number two priority on which the Town should focus its resources.

The second goal for which the Town received a poor evaluation regarding accomplishment was "We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicycles." 42% of respondents who answered this question rated this as "Not Very Well," compared to 37% of respondents who indicated that the Town was accomplishing this "Somewhat Well." Traffic management was ranked as the number three priority for the Town.

Finally, "We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities" received a 40% response rate at "Somewhat Well" and a 39% response rate of "Not very Well." The insignificant variance in percentage points differentiating the Town's progress towards achieving this goal from a positive opinion to a negative opinion warranted it to be flagged as an area for improvement. However, this goal was ranked eighth out of nine in terms of importance for the Town.

COMMENTS BY TOPIC

The survey included several areas where respondents were encouraged to write comments related to the goals of the Vision Statement. These comments can be seen in their entirety and pure form in Appendix I of this report. In reviewing these comments, readers will notice that there are several reoccurring themes that emerge ranging from town governance to arts and culture. The VIC determined that sorting the responses by category would be helpful in analyzing the data, and that once sorted, it would be easier to summarize overall trends in the responses. As such, members of the VIC distributed the comments into 17 regularly occurring thematic categories in an effort to make the results more pertinent for specific Town boards, committees, and departments. It is the Committee's hope that this will also be useful for those readers that do not have time to read all of the responses but wish to have a flavor of how respondents feel about certain topics.

While the Committee made its best efforts to categorize each comment consistently and according to the same set of general guidelines, categorizing the comments was an art, not a science, and there will no doubt be instances where a reader might disagree with a categorization. The VIC also kept comments intact to the extent possible. In some cases the original comments contained multiple themes and subjects, so in an effort to save space and avoid duplicate statements throughout the document, comments with these characteristics have been spliced and distributed into their appropriate category. Some comments still appropriately belonged in more than one category, and so may appear multiple times. VIC committee members also made their best effort to provide a short unbiased summary for each of these categories, but the readers are encouraged to review all of the comments under each theme they are interested in and derive their own conclusions.

The themes and comment summaries are as follows:

Arts & Culture: Respondents enjoy and appreciate Belmont's cultural offerings such as the Payson Park concerts and school and Art Gallery art shows, but were frustrated by how few such events there are and the lack of variety. Community members desire more public art exhibitions and more outdoor art and music events. Respondents suggested longer hours and better promotion of the Belmont Art Gallery, establishing an artists' studio, use of the Beech Street Center and schools for events and shows, and offering arts classes for adults through the Adult Education program. The Library was commended for promoting local writers.

Centers/Retail: Survey respondents voiced a clear desire for more diversified retail centers to provide valued services for residents and increase the commercial tax base. Many commented on the need for more grocery stores, restaurants, and independent businesses, which should be actively recruited. Several respondents felt that the Town hampers such development with red tape and that the process needs to be streamlined. A recurring theme is that Belmont must be more open to increased retail and residential density to create vibrant centers – not hamstrung by the "small town/town of homes" idea. Respondents cited a desire for more walkable streets and better bike connections to the centers. Beautification of the business centers was suggested in many responses.

Diversity: Respondents cited a desire for Belmont to have greater income/economic diversity, racial/ethnic diversity and age diversity. There is a perception that the town is run by a select group and that others feel alienated. Increasing efforts to welcome newcomers was a theme.

Environment/Energy: The comments show strong interest in environmental and energy issues. Recycling was a dominant theme, with strong advocacy expressed for single-stream recycling, weekly recycling and bi-weekly trash pickup, larger containers, the expansion of items that can be recycled, and the placement of recycling containers in commercial centers, parks and playgrounds. Great appreciation was expressed for our open spaces and wetlands, encouraging their protection and maintenance. Town leadership was criticized for its lack of support for renewable energy sources, both residential and municipal. Other themes included limiting noise pollution and the promotion of bicycling and walking

Land Use/Planning/Housing: Respondents expressed the most concern over controlling the number of tear-downs of single family houses followed by replacement with "mega-mansions" or two family houses. Many favor increasing density in the business districts. Several responses cited a desire for a more integrated approach to long term planning to encourage smart growth as well as maintaining Belmont's infrastructure. The idea of "preserving our small town atmosphere" was cited by many as a possible hindrance to our adaptability to changing circumstances. Preservation of open space and "the Uplands" were mentioned in many responses as well as a desire to have a bike/walking path.

Library: Most respondents cited the need for a new, more modern library noting that it would serve all residents and also function as an important gathering place for the community. Fewer respondents felt that more resources should go into repairing and better maintaining the existing library.

Parks & Recreation: Respondents value Belmont's parks, sports facilities and playgrounds and cite a need for better maintenance. Respondents called for more multi-generational programming in addition to more programming for teens, families and young children. Greater use of Beech Street Center for the wider community and a general interest in facilities that serve more than one constituency is desired. More town-wide events like Town Day as well as more neighborhood events such as block parties are desired. Dogs' need for space remains an issue.

Pool: Respondents largely voiced support for rebuilding the pool, but significant numbers expressed opposition to the planning process, which some felt has yielded an extravagant plan. Respondents expressed desires for more integrated long term planning and prioritization of town needs to maximize efficient use of town resources.

Senior Citizens: Responses regarding senior issues primarily focused on encouraging the promotion of more intergenerational activities between children and seniors. Some respondents also noted that the Senior Center could be better used for additional Town activities, school performances and functions.

Schools: Respondents value the Town's focus on education and regard Belmont schools as the center of the community, yet they are deeply concerned about the future. Comments overwhelmingly call for greater investment in the schools to (1) rebuild the aging high school; (2) address the emerging issue of overcrowding and increasing class size; and (3) reinstate elective courses and other resources that have been cut. Numerous respondents commented that the schools are the bedrock of the community and the reason that many people move to Belmont but they are deeply worried that the quality of our children's education is rapidly eroding and that without greater funding for schools, Belmont will quickly lose its appeal and property values will decline.

Taxes: The most frequent responses supported the expansion of Belmont's tax base by encouraging increased growth of our commercial/business/retail sector. The tax burden on homeowners in order to maintain schools and services was a deep concern. There were approximately equal responses from those in favor of overrides, particularly for schools, and those opposed to using overrides.

Town Character: Many respondents challenged the idea that preserving the small town atmosphere is a positive. Many noted that the town can be experienced as unwelcoming, exclusive, closed to change, discouraging of new businesses and lacking diversity. It was noted that we must balance our small town feel with progress in these areas. Respondents wanted more gatherings that bring people from all parts of town, young and old, new comers and long timers together. Many also noted the link between the Town's reputation and the quality of the schools that is the draw for many.

Town Governance: The overwhelming majority of comments expressed criticism of the Town's governance. A perception of inefficiency and inability to make decisions in a timely manner was raised frequently. The decision-making process is seen as bogged down by narrow interests competing with one another and stymying progress. Respondents cited a lack of comprehensive planning regarding Town spending. Respondents voiced concern that Town officials are not representative of the town and are a small, closed circle that is unwelcoming of other voices. The need for better and more open communication channels between elected officials/committees/employees and residents were frequently raised.

Town Services: Many respondents called for improved maintenance of and investment in facilities and roads. Expansion of recycling was also frequently cited with respondents calling for weekly recycling pick-ups, inclusion of more materials (Styrofoam, compost) and single barrel services. Better communication to town residents was also highlighted.

Traffic/Roads/Paving: The overwhelming focus of most comments was the need for repair of the roads. Many suggested ways to reduce or calm traffic through Belmont. Many responses mentioned the need to make Belmont safer for pedestrians and cyclists, including a designated bike/walking path. The need for a solution to the traffic problem at the Belmont Center underpass was frequently cited.

Bike Path/Community Path: The comments unanimously expressed support for completing the bike path. A few responses also included frustration with the ability of a small number of residents to delay the project.

The Survey, the Vision Statement and the Process: Respondents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share views. Some commented that the Town should create tangible goals linked to the broad vision principles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The VIC plans to distribute this report to the Board of Selectmen and Town committees, and recommends that these members of Town government review the survey results and take them into account when determining areas of prioritization and how best to accomplish the work they are tasked with on behalf of the Town. The VIC looks forward to coordinating with the Board of Selectmen and other Town bodies regarding Vision implementation efforts going forward. Based on this analysis of survey results, we see the following high-level focus areas for our continued coordinated efforts:

PRIORITY RANKING	PROGRESS RATING	PROGRESS -PRIORITY GAP	RECOMMENDED PRIORITY
1. We will **ensure an excellent school system** as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents.	1. Somewhat Well	Significant	**INCREASE FOCUS**
2. We will **maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facili**ties as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witnesses to our past.	8. Not very well	Highest	**INCREASE FOCUS**
3. We will **manage traffic** through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.	9.Not very well	Highest	**INCREASE FOCUS**
4. We will **welcome newcomers and value diversity**, while caring for our neighbors and for the needs of children, youth and seniors.	4. Somewhat well	Significant	MAINTAIN FOCUS
5. We will **promote the involvement** of all residents in the life of our community, support citizen involvement in our town affairs, and rely on an effective, representative local government.	5.Somewhat well	Significant	MAINTAIN FOCUS
6. We will **preserve our small town** community atmosphere.	2. Somewhat well	Lowest	FURTHER EXPLORATION OF EMERGING VIEWS
7. We will be an **environmentally responsible** community and conserve our natural habitats.	3. Somewhat well	Lowest	RESPOND TO OPPORTUNITIES
8. We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and **support retail** needs and opportunities.	7. Somewhat well	Highest	MAINTAIN FOCUS
9. We will value **cultural enrichment** and encourage local talent and creativity.	6. Somewhat well	Lowest	RESPOND TO OPPORTUNITIES

CONCLUSION

Fourteen years ago, the Town of Belmont adopted a Vision Statement that was to serve as a compass for the Town to create an environment that would make Belmont a great place for people to live, work, and play. This survey served as a valuable tool for residents and others connected to Belmont to assess how we collectively feel about how well the goals that were originally depicted in the Vision Statement are being achieved by the Town and how important those goals and priorities are now for the people of Belmont.

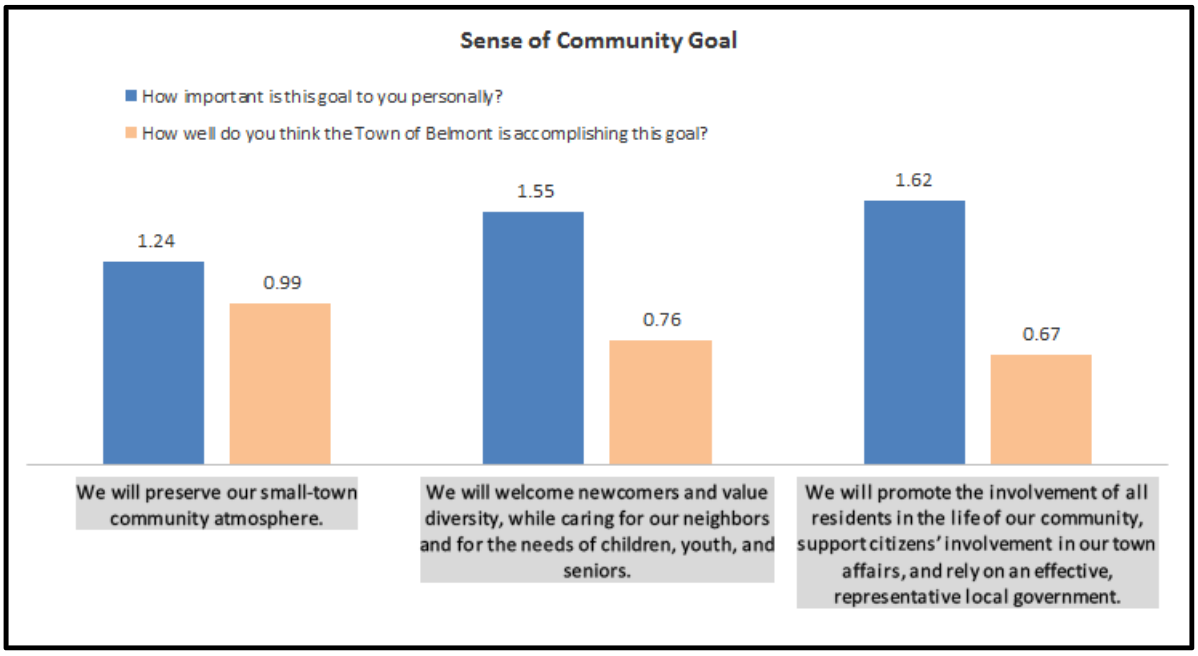
While the VIC is satisfied with the number of people who participated in the survey, it is clear from the collective demographic information that despite our outreach efforts, we did not adequately capture the opinions of those residents under 35, nor those who rent their homes in Belmont. This must be taken into consideration as the reader analyzes the results contained in this report. With that said, the survey responses do an excellent job of capturing the opinions of residents with school aged children and long-time residents. Survey respondents have affirmed that maintaining a high-quality school system is a defining aspect of the town's quality of life and generally recognize the Town's continuing efforts to preserve this legacy.

Overall, survey respondents expressed satisfaction in the Town's progress towards achieving the Vision's goals. However, two of the three top ranked focus areas for the town received the only predominantly negative evaluations from respondents. These included the maintenance of our public buildings and infrastructure and traffic management. Each of these goals received high volumes of "Somewhat Well" and "Not Very Well" assessments indicating that the Town should prioritize efforts towards accomplishing these goals in the future.

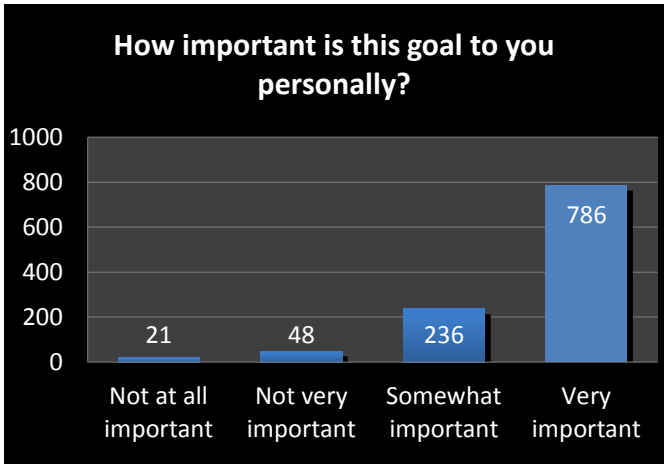
RESPONSES DEPICTED IN GRAPHS

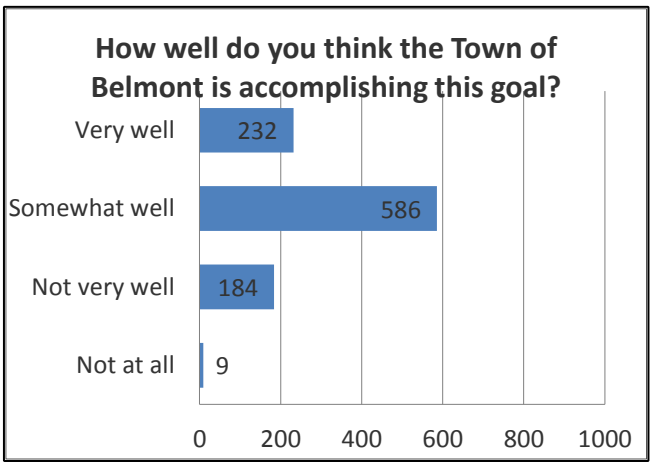
This Section consists of a compilation of the responses to each question. These are represented through charts and graphs and include information about how important each goal of the Vision was to the respondents, how well they thought the Town was making progress towards achieving each goal of the Vision, a ranking of which goals the Town should be prioritizing, and basic demographic data. Respondents were encouraged to provide comments throughout the survey.

Sense of Community Goal

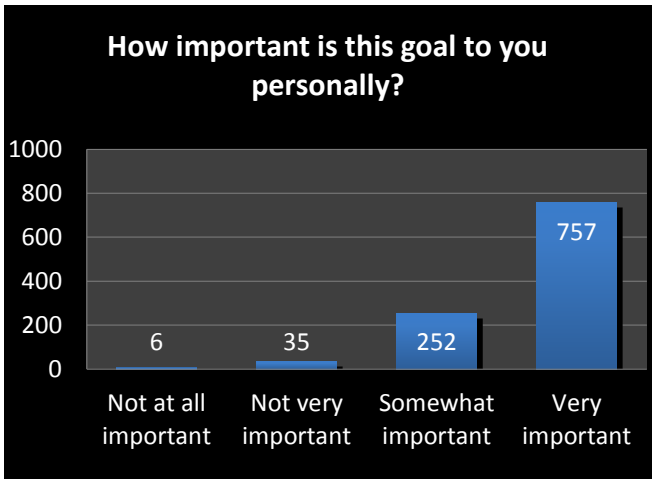


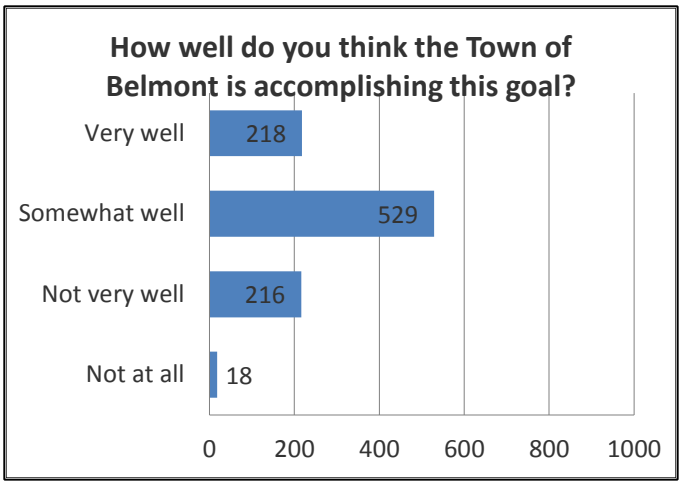
1. We will welcome newcomers and value diversity, while caring for our neighbors and for the needs of children, youth, and seniors.



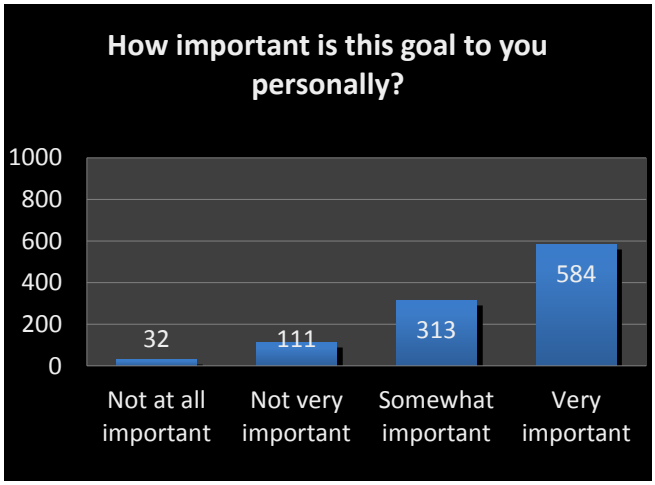


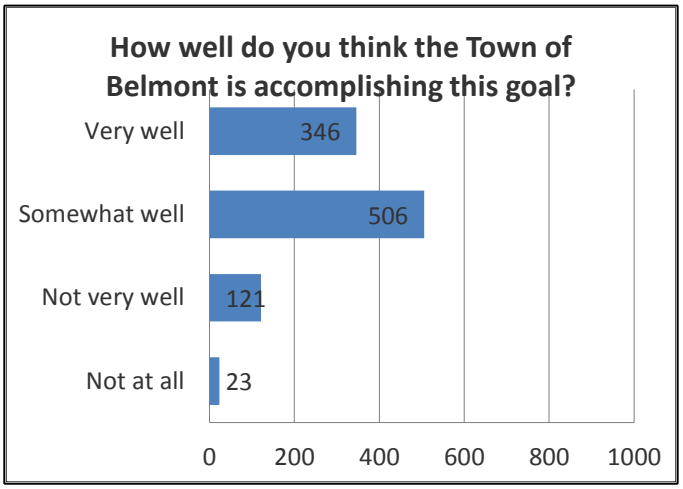
2. We will promote the involvement of all residents in the life of our community, support citizens' involvement in our town affairs, and rely on an effective, representative local government.



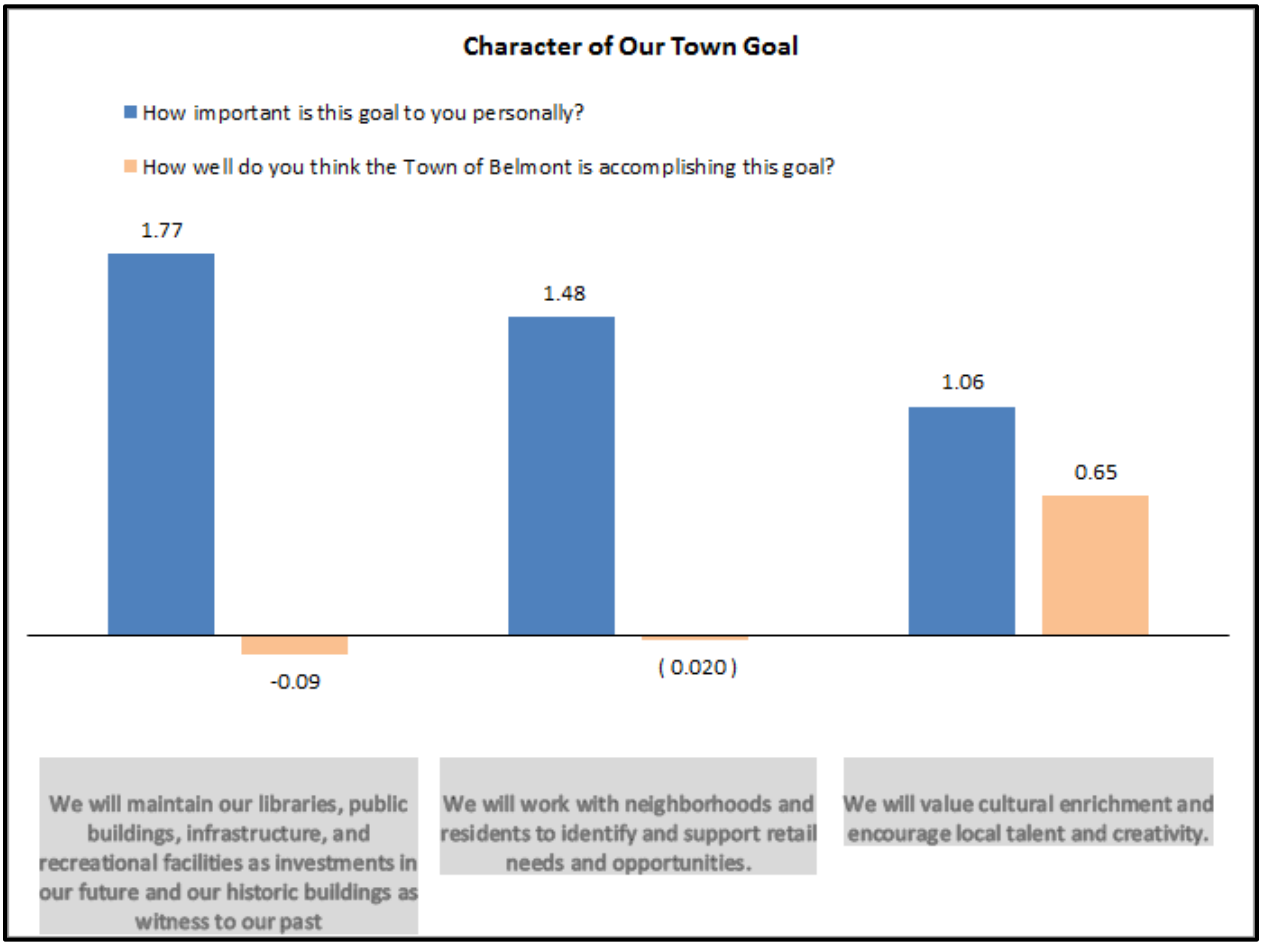


3. We will preserve our small-town community atmosphere.

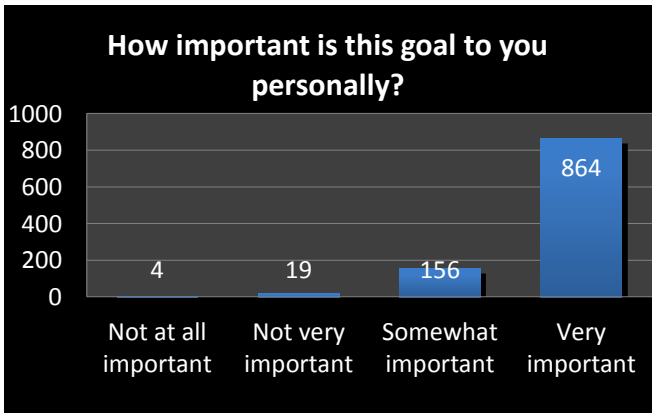


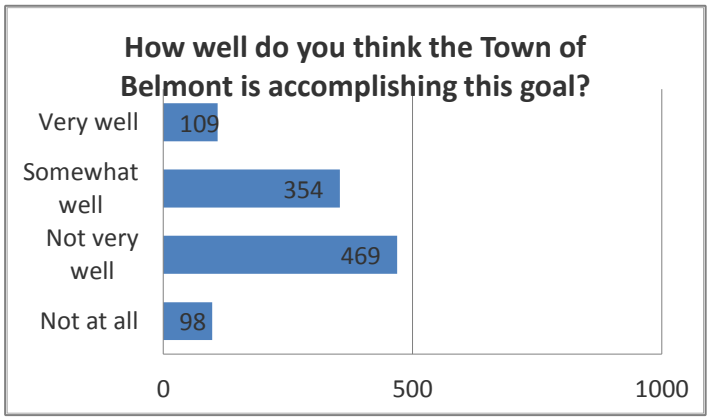


Character of Our Town Goal

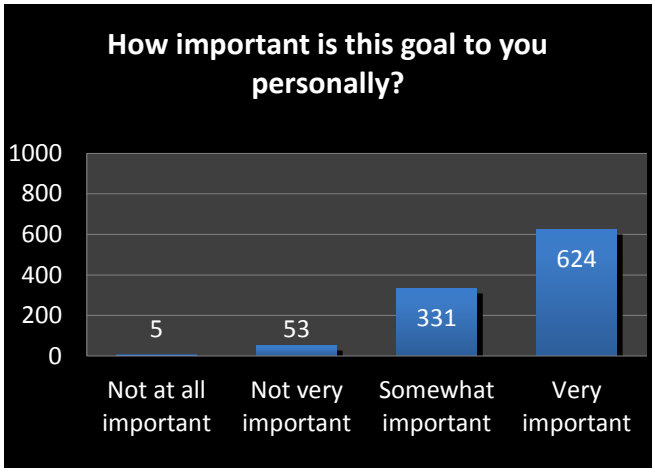


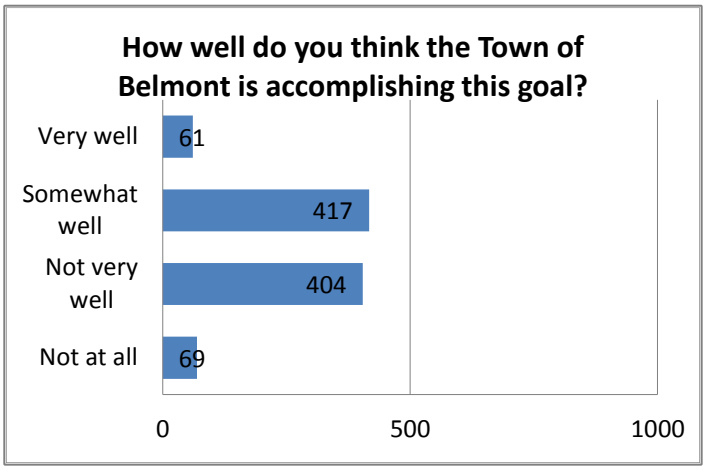
1. We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witness to our past.



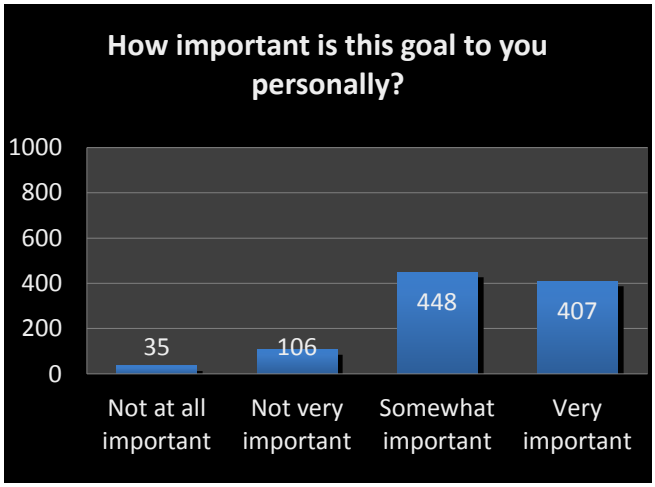


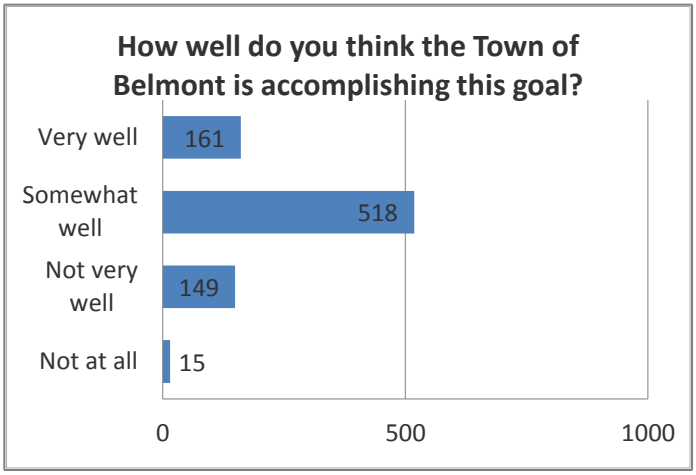
2. We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities.



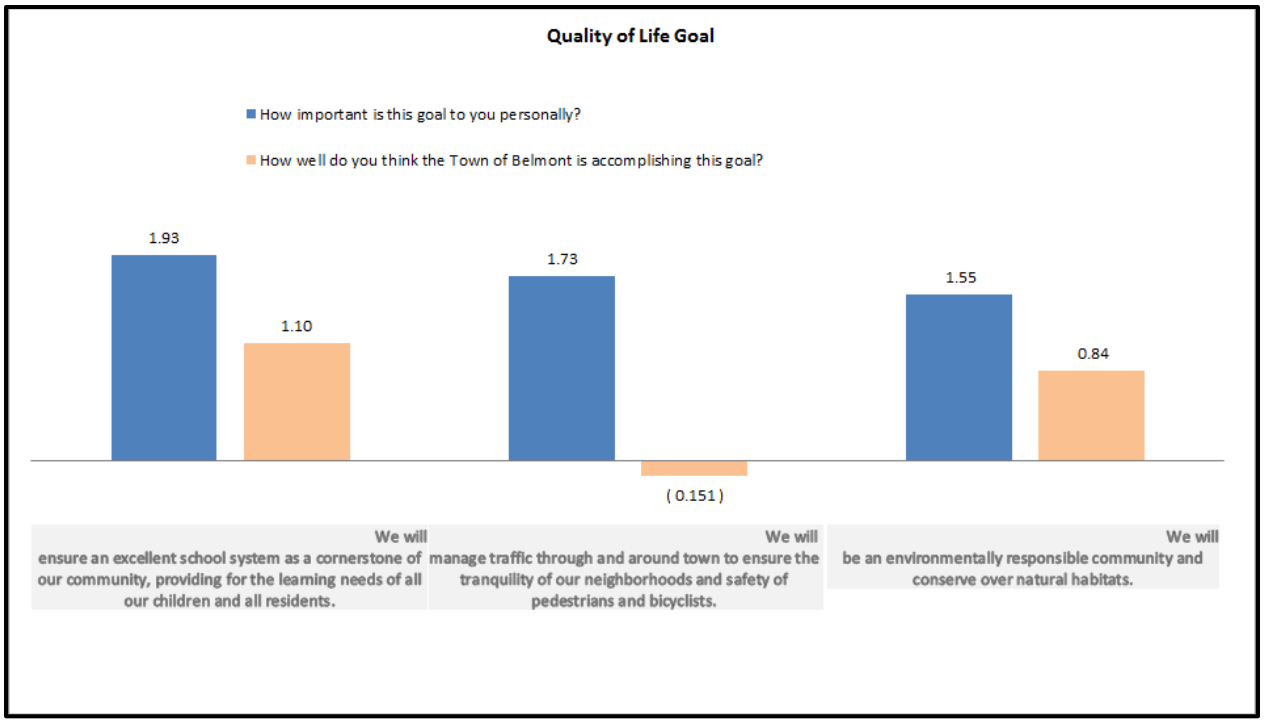


3. We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity.

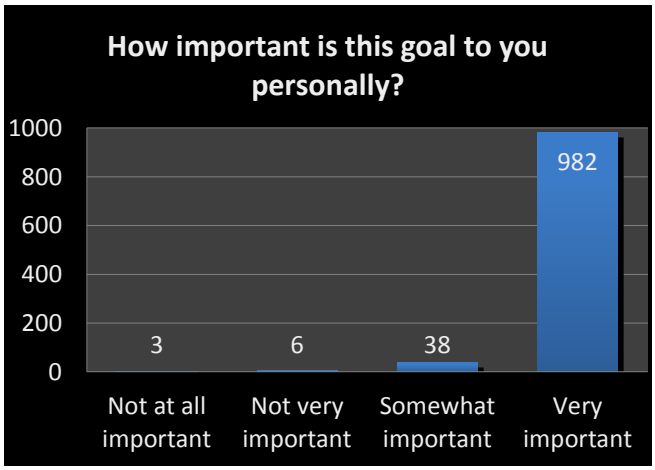


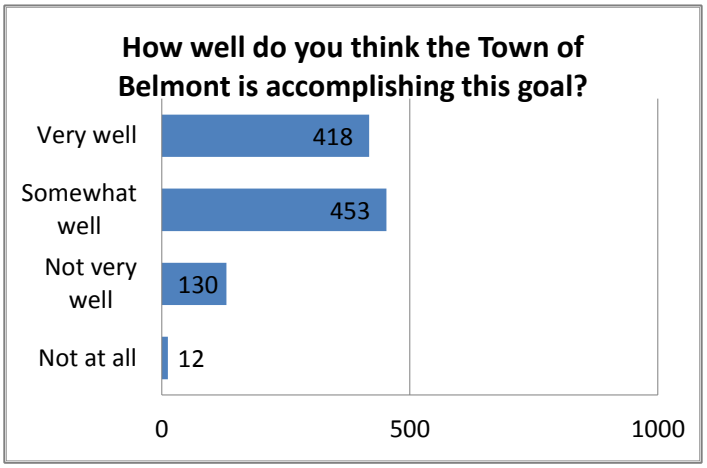


Quality of Life Goal

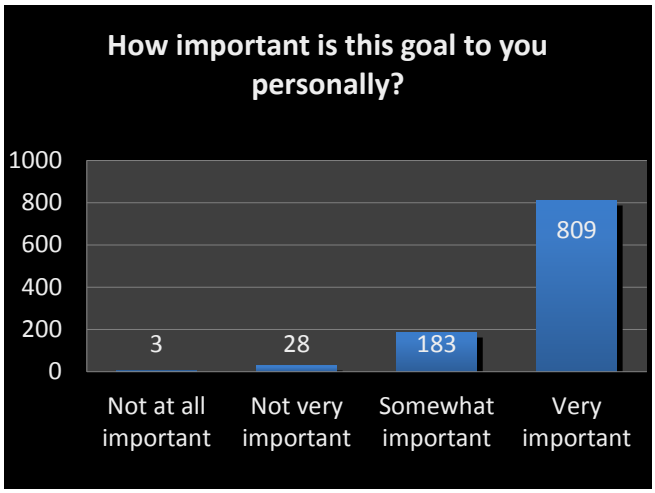


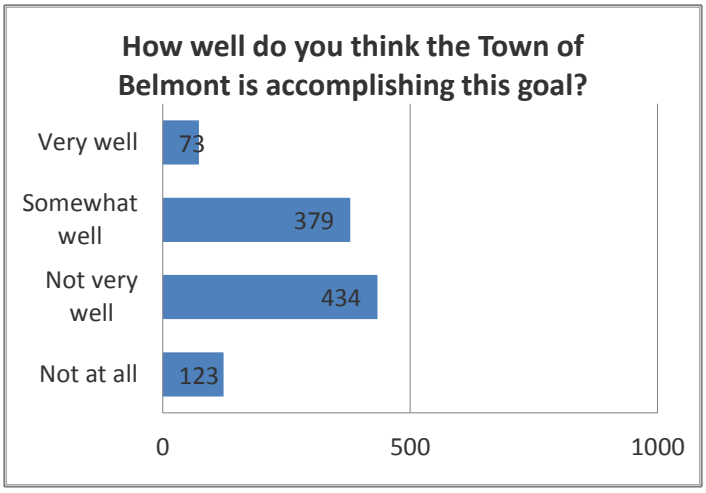
1. We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents.



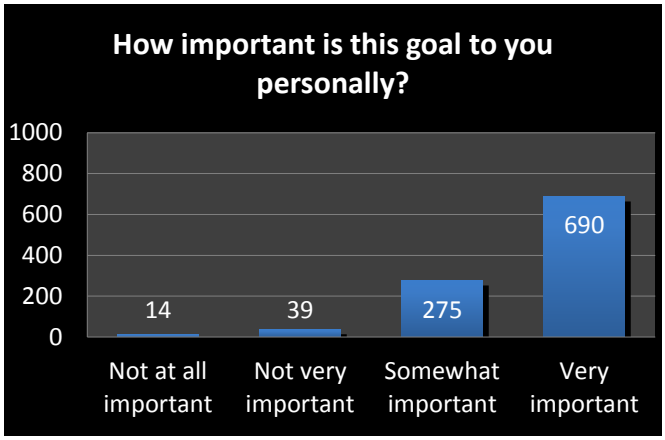


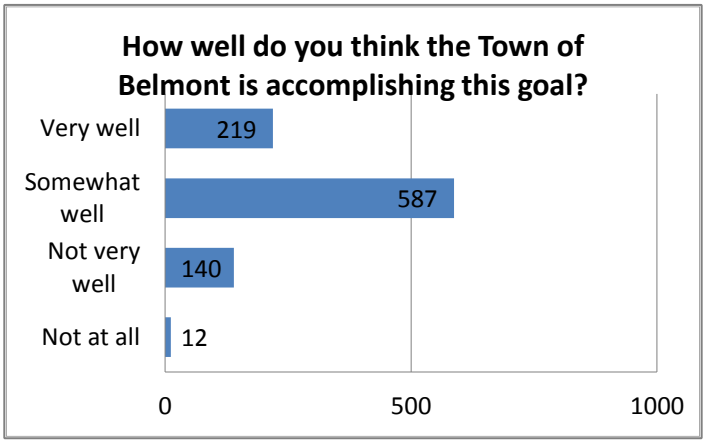
2. We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.





3. We will be an environmentally responsible community and conserve our natural habitats.





Goal Ranking

Goal	Rating Average
1) "We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents	1.87
2) "We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witnesses to our past"	3.55
3) "We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists"	4.95
4) "We will welcome newcomers and value diversity, while caring for our neighbors and for the needs of children, youth, and seniors."	5.00
5) "We will promote the involvement of all residents in the life of our community, support citizen involvement in our town affairs, and rely on an effective, representative local government"	5.07
6) "We will preserve our small-town community atmosphere"	5.60
7) "We will be an environmentally responsible community and conserve our natural habitats"	5.90
8) "We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities"	5.91
9) "We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity"	7.15

APPENDIX I - SURVEY COMMENTS BY TOPIC

APPENDIX I includes a reorganized collection of comments from the survey that have been distributed into thematic categories. There were several issues that were repeatedly commented on by respondents. These reoccurring topics were grouped into themes in an effort to derive additional value from the survey results by providing an efficient way for various Town departments, committees, elected officials and citizens to review the comments on subjects that are most pertinent to them. A brief summary precedes the comments to capture reoccurring comments. Where a single comment contained several topics, the comment is listed in more than one section. Similarly, comments that pertain to more than one topic were listed under each topic accordingly. All comments are the opinions of individuals as a part of the survey, which was anonymous by design. Several comments injurious to identified individuals were minimally modified to remove the identity of the individual, while preserving the point of the comment.

The views and opinions expressed herein are those of individual survey respondents and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Town of Belmont, its affiliates, its employees, or its elected officials.

I - ARTS & CULTURE

Respondents enjoy and appreciate Belmont's cultural offerings such as the Payson Park concerts and school and Art Gallery art shows, but were frustrated by how few such events there are and the lack of variety. Community members desire more public art exhibitions and more outdoor art and music events. Respondents suggested longer hours and better promotion of the Belmont Art Gallery, establishing an artists' studio, use of the Beech Street Center and schools for events and shows, and offering arts classes for adults through the Adult Education program. The Library was commended for promoting local writers.

1. Please, it would be wonderful to renovate the High School Auditorium. It's such a big part of what we do here, theatre, that we can't be putting on award winning plays in a theatre that's falling apart

2. The Payson Park Concert series in the summer is nice, but most of Belmont doesn't know about them. Perhaps having a similar series in the Winn Brook and Butler areas would help to build community togetherness. Belmont does a very poor job of reaching out to the many groups and organizations based right here. For instance Banbury Cross Morris and Sword is the oldest children's Morris dance troupe in all of America. They are based right here in Belmont. Because they are run by the parents of the performers, it is rare that the skills of the parents lie in marketing. The town should know about community gems like Banbury Cross and actively promote them as boasting points of community.

1. Need to town-sponsored neighborhood events. Is there a real playground program? Parades? There are the events like outdoor arts festivals or block parties or kite flying? Town day is our one thing. Not enough!

3. More gathering opportunities like the summer concerts in Payson Park

4. I believe the Payson Park Music Festival is among the most exemplary programs in the Town which fosters a deep sense of community

5. Continue community events like Town Day and Music in the Park. Look to add other events like a dine around at local restaurants and welcome dinners for new residents hosted by volunteers/neighbors (happy to discuss in person)
6. More recurring activities and events (like farmers market) and less emphasis on bigger ones (town day, specific fundraisers)
7. We need to be careful to balance the small town feel with progress that makes the town financially viable. Love the payson park concerts, town day and other town-wide events. Perhaps more use of the public spaces for pick-up games of frisbee, concerts, etc.
8. continue to place value on our schools including enrichment activities: music, performing arts, sports...
9. Belmont has no distinguishing characteristics, and has little or no artistic community, there is nothing that makes it a destination other than the small shops and where we all live
10. More community based activities that everyone can attend
11. Use Beech Street Center to celebrate Diversity (Cultures, languages). There are a number of functions during the school day. It would nice to have something during the weekend. The schools try to do this but they are not funded and depending on the school are not as good as they could be.
12. Improve coverage of local events in newspaper
13. Keep up things such as payson park concerts, golden shoes, town day, underwood pool revival, parades. these programs are important to our family!
14. The Town could provide more recreational events like a father daughter dance, a summer fun picnic, bands to play on the new joeys park stage, more opportunities for children's recreational activities, make the beech St senior center available to all ages...even if just for a few hours per week, make the streets safer for children by enforcing speed limits locally, budget more money to repair potholes in streets, increase the size of the farmers market to include music and crafts.
15. more town hall events. more community wide events-music, 4th of july, community service projects. Especially more places for families with children to congregate-refurbishing some old parks; new library!!!!
16. Community events, block parties
17. Promise to keep the Farmers' Market in the center of town and support its activities.
    Support the schools (with an override, and regular overrides) so that all children can take part in art and sports without out of pocket expenses, while encouraging all members of the community to get involved in those activities
18. adult/student theater ensemble
19. See note re Banbury Cross Morris on prior page.
    Also, both Cambridge Adult Education and Newton adult education do a better job promoting their programs than Belmont does
    Arlington does an *Amazing* job at courting outside artists/performers. For the past several years, they have offered to the morris dancers free use of their senior center for a dinner party because they are a 501(c)(3) non profit org. In exchange, the dancers perform for their seniors for free.
20. Having a festival for children and seniors to express their culture. Town day can have some of these to be more diverse.
    -Looking at town census and see what is the largest population and invite leaders of that community to develop new programs and bring new ideas.
21. Better publicity for who's here, what people are doing, etc. More requests for local people to get involved to showcase local talent

22. Payson Park concerts need more PR.
23. Designate a building as a cultural center where arts + crafts etc could be done. Or expand the hours that Beech Street Center is available. Week nights and weekends?
24. More public art on display and outdoor music events
    Community "play days" in the parks
25. The commitment to cultural enrichment is wonderful, but I just don't have enough information about fostering local talent...though I guess the Sidewalk Art day is one way that this is done, and Payson Park includes local musicians as well. And I guess the library highlights local authors too.
26. I like the local author events and various fundraisers around town. I think there are already a lot of options available for local talent and creativiity
27. The Town is sports-mad. Any other type of "cultural enrichment" is ignored.
28. Not enough financial support for schools based arts (music, theater, fine arts), with too much burden shifted to parents. Arts in the schools would be a catalyst for rest of community
29. More open competitions - eg. spelling bee, 2nd Soccer, a photography league and exhibits for juniors through seniors, etc
30. Don't we have a playhouse in town? I go to plays at playhouses in other towns but never hear about any in Belmont
31. An art studio that teaches children would be nice. My child took formal art lessons in another state, but there in no option locally. The Belmont Art Assoc. was no help.
32. where can we get the info??? it needs to be marketed to the public..
33. Taste of Belmont type events
    More Arts and Crafts Fairs other that "Town Day".
34. have local talent on display at breakfasts or potluck get-togethers
35. I went to a school art show at town hall and thought it was great -- packed evening crowd. What if we did similar events for local artists? or more town day like events that promoted local craftsman/artists/performers?
36. An artist's studio building to replace the one that burned down.
37. Encourage more cultural events / performing arts related activities that could be enjoyed by all ages. have a town-wide art show.
38. Belmont must modernize and have local businesses that fuel creativity and talents of its residence to contribute. We don't have murals/beautiful sculptures, gardens, etc that can enhance our town but also bring in the talents of our neighbors. So much is outdated. Cushing square needs an overhaul. The parson park concerts are nice but the music does not match the community as an example
39. I think the question is 'how do we support access to cultural enrichment' I believe that a community of 30K can only directly support so much culture (schools, belmont dramatic, music recitals in churches etc.) so I fear that this goal implies that we should build new cultural institutions. If that is the case, I disagree and offer instead that our goal be to provide ACCESS to the culture around the town - Arsenal Center for the Arts, Harvard and Central Squares, museums and programs in neighboring towns, etc.
40. The taxes that go to pay for an underutilized media center prevent people from spending their money on things they want, including the cultural activities they want to engage in.
41. Have an art gallery... we have the Powers school of music, but nothing equivalent for art
42. Other than the Belmont Cinema's film series, there are few new or challenging artistic ideas or venues in Belmont. Look at what Watertown did on Arsenal st. with its small theaters/stages. Why can't we do that

43. The art program in the elementary schools is deplorable. With the exception of music, there is nothing worthwhile happening. Outside of town funding, grant opportunities should be explored to address this
44. Create a more active partnership between Powers Music School and the Town or the School District
45. more support of local businesses and artists
46. Keep funding arts, music and theater in the public schools. Find opportunities to do community art projects to beautify areas of town, with community involvement
47. We need a local venue for the fine and performing arts. The gallery isn't open enough and very inaccessible on the top floor there! More licenses to local establishments for performing and displaying arts!
48. I think one of the biggest advantages of Belmont is that many residents are college professors, scholars, and artists. It would be nice to have these intellectuals involved in the culture enrichment program. And this could be a more interesting character of the town.
49. I love the art gallery in the town building but it should be more visible and centrally located. I feel its location on top floor is so far removed. Also, there is a fantastic auditorium with a stage that I saw for the first time in one of the town buildings that should be used for community events
50. look to Somerville Arts Council's efforts to get ideas for making arts culture more vibrant
51. publicity of opportunities and events is not very well handled. Much is left to a commercial news source, or website, and not freely otherwise
52. I think that the town's school system is encouraging individuals and their art, but not working at their levels, or inspiring.
53. More arts development for kids
54. 1) Provide space and other resources to residential culture and educational groups. For instance, open elementary school for group activity rental at an affordable price over the weekend 2) provide town wide performance opportunities
55. All residents possess different gifts, talents and expertise. If these talents can be donated for the good of the town, terrific
56. More town and school unity. We have such a source of this in the talents of our kids through the Belmont schools. The concerts and drama programs are top notch. I wish the greater town felt more a part of these wonderful events
57. Copy some of the Somerville Arts Council's programming.
58. Local talent primarily seems to be defined as those who grew up here.
59. This is a great town for composed ("classical") music performance and an OK one for children's theater. Grade-school and middle-school rock, jazz and visual art opportunities would be welcome (collaborations with Somerville or Watertown or Cambridge might be wise
60. More town sponsored events for local artists. Open studios. Bring back institution similar to Kendall ctr for arts.
61. we could use more concerts!
62. Provide more showcases for local talent, at times when working people in the community can attend. For example, the schoolwide art show is a great way to showcase and cultivate artistic talents of children in Belmont. However, the limited hours of the gallery make it almost impossible for working parents to attend without missing work. This personally impacted our family, as we could not make it to the one set of evening hours last week, so we decided to go on Sunday from 3-4. When we arrived at the gallery at the Town Hall, there was a handwritten sign saying it had closed at 3 (contrary to what was on its website, and to an email I had received specifically asking

for weekend open hours). This is frustrating for us, and discouraging for our children. I had a similar reaction after receiving a newsletter today talking about several concerts and performances coming up in town that were being held in the late afternoon. While convenient for some, many others in our growing working parent population can't take part. It would be great to consider this as events and venues are planned.

63. Have center for arts/music - get people and get grants...

64. Have more community arts events

65. The town art gallery is a wonderful asset

66. outdoor concerts inviting local talent during the summer;

67. *community arts center where children, youth and adults can take classes, attend art shows, watch documentaries with local speakers on topic;

68. Bring an art, music or cultural event to Waverley or pq park to extend the reach of the arts into more areas of town. Open up opportunities for community artists to display outdoors like Newton does at Newton highlands where the cost is still on the artist but the public reaps the rewards.

69. utilize beech st center with more arts n cultural activities-like mural project that is supposed to go up on belmont cinema brick wall on trapelo rd

70. Focus on priorities of government such as schools and roads as well as safety (i.e. police and fire) Services not feel good measures such as cultural enrichment. Arts and Culture if people want that they can get it on their own.

71. Make the all-school art show more inclusive, rather than exclusive like it has become. Expose MORE kids to seeing their artwork displayed publicly, and not just in the schools.

72. The Town has or makes available venues for culture/creativity (Town Hall Art Exhibits, etc.) and promotes public and private events in this area well. Not a gov't function to fund

73. Come up with new ideas to have the Town sponsor arts and music festival. It's the same old same old every year (Payson Park, etc.). Very tired.

74. What about an outdoor art show? (perhaps on Concord ave next to Clay pit pond). Poetry slam at a coffee shop? (or somewhere, I'm not sure where) . Mini-Jazz festival, small groups in multiple shops around town

75. Keep the Belmont Gallery of Art open more, and pay to staff and promote it.

76. invite more local authors/artists/poets (like steven burt!) to do public readings at the Library.

77. We could try to get artists to move into the social housing we have, and have them teach art in the schools.

78. resident outdoor art projects

79. Belmont seems to have a very low presence of arts. I think again revamping the community education and enrichment programs would help. Community murals in the playgrounds...more arts presence at community events....

80. I loved the Cushing Square Art Day... would love to see more. A wider diversity at the Summer outdoor concerts at Payson Park--getting tired of the same lineup year after year. Love Belmont Serves and would love to see it twice a year. Same for the recent recycling day--let's do it more! Would love to see an artist's workspace in Belmont--a place where artists could rent out workspace--so valuable and needed.

81. Belmont does encourage its writers.

82. Offer temporary art projects / installations on the empty, ugly spaces waiting to be built on. Make the town gallery more accessible (hours, location, duration of exhibits).

83. Belmont Gallery's hours are very limited so I usually miss exhibits even though I LOVE seeing what they have. I am Jewish and attend services on Friday evenings, so I do not feel opening receptions

are inclusive. I bet others don't even know it is there. Maybe a big sign with what the exhibit is and when the gallery is open outside the building would help encourage visitors.

84. The main indicator of this to me would be community music/theater/art programs, and support for same in the public schools. I have found little community of this type, and don't know yet what the schools offer after all the budget brouhaha.

85. Promote the arts in Schools and open the school concerts, art shows, and plays more broadly to the community, not just for the parents of children involved. Better promotions would be good. For example, maybe some of the chamber music groups or choral singers could perform at the Beech Street Center.

86. Love the one book belmont . Wonder if there are similar type initiatives.

87. I value cultural enrichment; however, encouraging local talent and creativity -- not so much.

88. inter-generational cultural activities at BCC. more cultural opportunities for youth outside of school

89. Would be nice to have some carnivals or town wide events at the park - what about craft fair that also has carnival games. No need for rides - they are not safe.

90. More community wide events. Much better community recreation program and community education program---Belmont needs to revamp their community education program and also summer enrichment for kids! Belmont is changing and town programs need to reflect this ???

91. Better adult education.

92. Local" should not mean Belmont-only! More cross-town cultural collaboration should be encouraged.

93. Encourage local talent: how is the town doing this?

II – CENTERS/RETAIL

Survey respondents voiced a clear desire for more diversified retail centers to provide valued services for residents and increase the commercial tax base. Many commented on the need for more grocery stores, restaurants, and independent businesses, which should be actively recruited. Several respondents felt that the Town hampers such development with red tape and that the process needs to be streamlined. A recurring theme is that Belmont must be more open to increased retail and residential density to create vibrant centers – not hamstrung by the small town/town of homes idea. Respondents cited a desire for more walkable streets and better bike connections to the centers. Beautification of the business centers was suggested in many responses.

1. We need Cushing Square cleaned up. We need restaurants in the town, not just pizza shops. We need new stores, restraints and services. No more banks or dry cleaners.
2. Please allow more gathering places, restaurants/shops - Cushing Sq project is good start - let it happen quickly!!
3. The roads in the town are horribly maintained and while traffic is addressed in many areas, something needs to be done with the traffic in and through Belmont Center. Finally, we love seeing all of the new shops and stores in cushing square and elsewhere, but we need additional commercial retail to help prop up the tax base. Why is the Macy's site still vacant and when is Cushing Square going to move forward. Why is the old CVS still vacant for so long? It not only looks horrible, but there is lost revenue. The town needs to consider what businesses will generate the most revenue and remain for years to come. While I do not want to see a Target or Walmart anywhere in town, do we really need another frozen yogurt place? Macy's was perfect. Small enough but easily accessible when needed for items that did not require a boutique feel.
4. If this town doesn't broaden its tax base in a way that includes and welcomes more business, then it is doomed. It will be left behind.
5. Shaws is struggling. They are owned and run by a group that is looking to innovate and find a way to bring themselves back in the marketplace. Couldn't somebody reach out and negotiate a deal between them, the town and some local landlords to open three small focused stores that they could feed off the inventory in Waverly Square store and provide good groceries within walking distance of a couple key neighborhoods? Maybe one in the open spot at the new shops on Concord, one in town center and one in Cushing Square?
6. Need to promote business opportunities to keep taxes down. We need restaurants etc to keep people in town.
7. (i) integrate Hubway bike sharing and public transportation modes more effectively for residents, and extend bike path from Brighton St. to town center; (ii) promote 'convenient' retail -- e.g. coffee, grocery, beer/wine -- in areas outside of town center, such as Brighton & Concord;
8. Get moving on the Cushing Square project. Stop letting local politicians hold things up.
9. useful store in Macy's location, encourage more commercial business to increase belmont's commercial tax base,
10. Belmont could really use 1-2 more mid-range dining options that are NOT Italian food/pizza. A place to get a good burger and/or nice sandwiches (a "gastropub"?) would be VERY well-received! Perhaps the town could work to recruit something like this for the new Cushing Square development? El Centro in Belmont Center should be a wonderful addition!
11. Allow for a brew pub in the Town Center. Change parking on Leonard street from one hour to at least two hours so we can at least enjoy a leisurely dinner there. PLEASE, encourage other small

local businesses to occupy retail spaces, NO MORE BANKS, please!!! It robs our town of uniqueness and character.

12. Get past the small-town stuff. We are part of a vibrant metro-politan area. Welcome more density. Do preserve open space, but develop our town centers and thoroughfares! That's how we will support our schools. We are very unrealistic about what our community has to do succeed financially.

13. Retail: please fewer banks

14. we need to expand the retail base and stop flooding the school system by building so much housing

15. We need cushion square developed. This should be priority!

16. I would love to see the following retail additions to Belmont:
1. Bookstore! We desperately need one.
2. Local Pub or more casual fun restaurant
3. Sushi restaurant

17. We should invest in electric vehicle infrastructure in Town Center to attract business

18. Love town day! How can we get young families involved in politics? More upscale retail. More parking. More walkable centers. Too dangerous to cross the road right now

19. We need more commercial revenue to survive and provide the services to the "community"

20. We need to be more active planners. Development does not need to be a bad word. Done correctly it will bring economic and housing opportunities that will help to revitalize town centers.

21. Allow some industry to promote jobs and take the property tax burden off of taxpayers

22. We need more independent shops and fewer chains and banks. Is there a way to make it affordable to the little guy and encourage this business?

23. let some small commercial businesses have a chance of starting up in Belmont, don't make it so difficult

24. we need increased commercialism (more stores) to gain revenue for the town

25. Plant some trees down main street, outside seating (parking only on one side as the parking is very close, less banks, black top the main street with nice cross walks. flowers, flowers, clean that CVS front and that Bank of Ametica building the worst looking in town. what is coming in the old Macys??? one more bank??? or Walgreen??? nothing small town feeling. you need small shop the you find in the Cape, and for that you need a town manager that understand that feeling, like the ice cream store or sports store that we have etc..anyway much more

26. I think this requires a proper definition of "small town". That could mean anything: no national franchise businesses, no colored signs (my hometown only allowed black/grey/white signage on retail stores), no cell towers, no businesses that will affect parking (but the truth is if there are no worthwhile businesses to travel to then parking is the least of your problems), etc. Towns that "grow" naturally develop into sections or "villages" that then adopt that "small town" feel all over again (look at the various sections of Newton or Arlington). Belmont already has "sections" (Cushing Square, Waverly, Belmont Center) that each bring their own unique "small town" feel. Forcing "small town-ness" does not mean adopting prejudicial rules that might chase out businesses and people. Thoughtless parking ordinances, light ordinances, noise ordinances, school overcrowding policies that basically leave storefronts littered with pizza joints, ramshackle businesses, and funeral homes don't promote the town. Luckily things have changed in Belmont over the years. There are now 2 fine-dining locations (Savinos & il Casale) where a family could bring grandmother to celebrate her 70th birthday or mom's promotion to the corner office at an investment bank. The senior center on Beech Street is another great place to celebrate grandmother's 70th.

How about a vintage car show at the high school (or Belmont Country Club) during the summer? (just like Larz Andersen park). How about a 5K run for charity? How about a showcase of MIT Media Lab projects at the high school during the summer?
Belmont has "competition" from the surrounding towns who have more dining options, more small businesses that promote entrepreneurship, and more young people that want to begin their families. But Belmont has an ideal & a better location and accessibility to some of the best institutions of higher learning and research.

27. We need just the opposite- town needs to be more lively, instead we have only 1 restaurant and bunch of pizza places...

28. I believe the goal "to preserve the small-town community atmosphere" is directly in opposition to the idea of welcoming new people into the town. To preserve the atmosphere, progress must be throttled, businesses prevented from opening in the town, new construction forbidden etc. The boarded up businesses and collapsing middle class in Belmont stand in tribute to the outstanding way in which the town's officers are accomplishing this conservative effort to prevent change.

29. Beautify town center by enlarging leonard street sidewalks so that restaurants & cafes could have outside terraces. Maybe make Leonard st one way to reduce traffic through center.

30. Important to create/support/sustain informal community gathering places: new library, new Underwood pool Important to encourage and retain locally owned retail presence

31. Belmont has no distinguishing characteristics, and has little or no artistic community, there is nothing that makes it a destination other than the small shops and where we all live; there's little business development (the empty Filene's is embarrassing).

32. more local small businesses and less banks; community bike path

33. Please ensure that landlords enable the small "mom and pop" shops to continue to do business. I love the feel of Cushing Square and the small number of shops near Moozy's Ice Cream store. I've heard that the developer who is bringing in the new commercial/residential complex at Cushing Square is trying to get zoning for Starbucks where the small "mom and pop" shops are near Moozy's. We don't want Starbucks in our neighborhood! Keep the small shops run by people who have invested their lives in maintaining them. Keep the big franchises out!

34. Make sure the downtown is fully rented.

35. Make Cushing Square more pedestrian- and bike-friendly.

36. There should be a forum that we contribute too that speaks to what shops should go in vacant building such as the center, for example. What would be prosperous for the Belmont demographic instead of allowing buildings to be vacant for years without any information to be found from any resource on future plans.

37. prevent more banks from opening up in Belmont Center

38. I think this goal has got in the way of necessary development -- see for example the Cushing Square situation. While preserving the neighborhoods we need to make it easier to develop in our centres, to encourage business and increase the attractiveness of the centres as local shopping areas.

39. Open more restaurants - Make the residents want to socialize in the town and have a place to do it.

40. The town's resistance to come into the modern era is apparent with the lack of updated stores and services

41. more local shops instead of chains. fewer banks! a small grocery with produce would be very community friendly.

42. More support for family-friendly independently-owned retail. The complex on Concord Ave that now has a bank and a Mathnasium could really use an independent coffee shop!

43. Allow for more gathering places to enter Belmont, more restaurants/bars.

44. Reduce commercial and add more retail space.
45. Promote small businesses that provide useful services and support shared public infrastructure like the community path
46. Encouraging mom and pop stores and restaurants - no more banks!
47. A town center that is not populated with empty building s and banks alone.
48. As for "small-town feel," we have attracted too many banks and nail salons and too few businesses that bring people out into one another's company.
49. The town has three centers (Leonard St, Cushing Sq, and Waverly Sq.) and none of them are pretty. Lexington has one and is charming. Arlington Heights is prettier than any of ours. Hanging flower baskets? More street trees are needed everywhere, especially White St., Waverly St., Grove, Baker, etc. I fear Waverly Square will be full of boring locust trees. Let's think outside the box.
50. I love Belmont. However, I think we need less red tape in our governing bodies and more action! The Cushing Square development is an example of lack of leadership and decision-making quality, in my opinion. That old CVS and auto parts stores have sat empty for YEARS! We need to move more swiftly toward progress in our town.
51. I know this has been discussed at length, but I find it bewildering that the town continues to allow the chaos that rules the main intersection(s) in Belmont Center. We would spend 90% more in town if I just didn't have to confront that gambit on a daily basis. We even have taken that intersection into account in deciding where to send our children to preschool.
52. the addition of fine dining restaurants to belmont was a huge success. we should encourage outdoor sculpture by local artists to add some more color to the town centers. Something needs to be done to make cushing square more peedestrian friendly
53. Our retail centers, including Belmont Center, Cushing Square, Waverly, all have many vacant buildings that in shambles.
How can we ease the process for small business owners to get established in Belmont, so we increase the livelihood and vitality of our urban centers?
54. Give commercial space a chance, they can help pay taxes and be an asset to the town, not a burden
55. Too much conservation land, bring in more strong business for revenue.
56. I'd like to see more retail / corporate presence to enhance our tax base.
57. the town center needs to be beautified. reduce town center traffic by making leonard st one way. create outdoor terraces for restaurants & cafes by enlarging the sidewalks.
58. I also dont think they have done a good job in supporting retail and local businesses
59. We do not need any more beauty parlors, pizza places or over priced stores here. Most of the people here are working class people and things are way to expensive here.
60. Increase Retail (restaurants, businesses and bars), the Downtown area, roads, retail
61. Need more shops and fewer banks in the center.
62. More promotion of local business- grocery , restaurant , cafe, fish & meat stores.
63. Please...no more banks, realtors, or hair salons, or tacky franchises, especially in Belmont Center.
64. I think that "working with neighborhoods to identify retail opportunities" is the wrong goal. Neighborhoods often fear change at the time it happens, even if three years later everyone is happy with how things are. A better goal is simply to enable retail opportunities -- make it easy for developers to develop retail properties in specified areas and let them try out retail ideas and succeed or fail.
I also think that the town should encourage more dense development around our transit stations. We have great connections and can handle more residents. More residents would also improve the opportunities for local retail to prosper. All of Belmont Centre, Cushing Square and Waverly Square

could and should have more people living nearby. This wouldn't hurt the neighborhood feel of the rest of the town and would make those centres more attractive.

65. We need to be able to raise money to address our growing school population that doesn't solely rely on residential/ property taxes. Our families can't continue to support the needs of the town without string retail partners

66. To be specific, I like the idea of a community atmosphere, but "small town" implies a number of things which I don't care for. I would love to see our business centers develop. Would love to see some high density condo developments so that young professionals and empty nesters had more options (and we had more tax base without more students). And with more density, perhaps we would have more mass transit options. I'd love all that, even though it is not "small town

67. Extending existing bike path from Alewife to Belmont center will help with local businesses downtown

68. too many large scale banks; town center should have a unified look - CVS has a glaring presence - nice signs!

69. Reach out to small town businesses offering assistance and build small business supports and/or networking within the town. Invite small (internet) type business with bigger bottom lines into our community

70. Develop the commercial centers at faster than a glacial pace so they actually are centers.

71. don't allow 4 story buildings!
don't favor Concord Av/the Center over Cushing Sq as currently happens!

72. Invite shops and restaurants that teens like there isn't much here for them

73. bring more restaurants into centers

74. Belmont is not good at welcoming diverse small businesses (please, NO MORE BANKS). In such a dense town, people should be able to walk to the various services and business areas safely and easily.

75. I would love to see more restaurants and stores move that encourage residents to interact

76. I would love to see the downtown (Leonard Street) become more of a pedestrian mall, and traffic get routed to either side. And, it would be fabulous to allow commuter parking downtown BEFORE 8:30 so we could take the train and cut down on some of that traffic. It's a mess there in the mornings.

77. The goal of preserving the small-town atmosphere currently and into the future is a NEGATIVE. In order to survive financially and not chase citizens away because of the excessive tax burden, we must actively explore avenues to develop more residential housing, Cushing Square is a good start. They need not be this large but need to be on the town agenda. Other communities surrounding Belmont are increasing their housing stock. If Belmont does not, too much outlay of $$ will be required of two few. This concept worked well 100 years ago; now it is keeping the town from growing responsibly

78. Not sure where this fits but...actively supporting vibrant and diverse business districts that are inviting and attractive are a key component of fostering a sense of community in town. This should involve actively pursuing certain kinds of business development and developing and fostering business friendly practices

79. I think the crossing from Concord Ave under the bridge to Belmont Center makes me feel cut off from that side of town. I don't feel safe biking under it and I also hate driving under it.

80. Business districts appear uneven with Belmont Centre beautified and other areas not. If needed develop neighborhood based business districts with active action plans, or offer opportunities for volunteers to help improve look and feel

81. Belmont needs more destinations where people of all ages can go to meet others, socialize with friends, and have a bite to eat, a cup of coffee, or an ice cream. It should be attractive and lively, with seating to encourage people to linger. Currently, only Belmont Center fits the bill -- but barely

82. need more large commercial tax payers

83. promise to keep the Farmers' Market in the center of town and support its activities..
support quality businesses in our retail centers.
NO MORE BANKS AND CHAIN STORES
more pedestrian friendly and plentiful parking business areas!

84. Stop harping on "Town of Homes". It is kind of a myth. Belmont is more urban than many large sections of Boston. Living in an isolated cluster of houses without food places, shopping, recreation, etc., is not always compelling. The Horne Rd crowd hurt Belmont in this respect

85. $2.4 million about to be spent on belmont center without having factored in community path -- or even moved forward with THINKING about path? That is a disgrace. An insult to the hardworking committee members and the 90% of town that clearly wants a path. And a waste of money should Belmont Center be updated only to need to spend more money integrating path down the road when eventually the town wakes up to how important the path would be to residents AND businesses

86. #6 Glad to see mix of stores in Belmont Center - Il Casale AND subway

87. Macy's empty for almost 2 years.
Other storefronts empty

88. We have almost every bank in belmont center, what about other businesses, a small market, bakery (not so high end

89. Stop meddling in the business development of the town via the permitting and licensing process. The retailer who was told he could choose between selling alcoholic beverages and tobacco products is a good example. We don't need the Selectmen to protect our personal choices, particularly when both are legal activities. We do need the Selectmen to help enforce (and/or raise) age limitations on tobacco and alcohol use by Belmont youths.

90. Encourage more independent businesses which bring small town character. Do not change zoning restrictions to accommodate chain stores and restaurants

91. everything is in little bunches throughout the town, Not one fluid flow. Some areas have been growing and being renewed while others languish and stay stuck in time and out of the way from where most people are

92. Unless the town is receiving SIGNIFICANT and LARGE money from the ridiculous number of BANKS in town, get rid of at least some of them. How much are the contributing to the town's coffers? We would be better off with small retail businesses and industry

93. Macy's, Macy's, Macy's redevelopment

94. Too high rent and retailers exit.

95. We have pizza places and banks - we need a wide variety of restaurants. We need to recruit small business owners with vested interests in the community - they won't come if we don't reach out and invite them - there are so many unused/empty spots along Trapelo

96. Belmont must modernize and have local businesses that fuel creativity and talents of it's residence to contribute. We don't have murals/beautiful sculptures, gardens, etc that can enhance our town but also bring in the talents of our neighbors. So much is outdated. Cushing square needs an overhaul. The parson park concerts are nice but the music does not match the community as an example.

97. GET OUT OF THE WAY!!!!!!!!!Allow people wide latitude in the sorts of businesses they operate within the town and allow the community to grow organically from the bottom up.

98. expressing and highlightin historical elements of towns are important BUT also need to balance with the changing times and needs of citizens. appropraite retail would increase tax base. No more Banks! Convienence/grocery store...enhance town fields - compared to peer towns in pretty bad shape.
99. Stop putting in banks, let's find something else!
100. Develop the commercial centers more. Get going on Cushing Village, fill the empty Macy's location
101. more support of local businesses and artists
102. Support the Belmont Farmer's Market. Support increasing socioeconomic and cultural diversity in our town
103. need more diversity in terms of retail shops available - keep adding character to our retail options. eg no more banks
104. Help Belmont residents open small businesses.
105. I wish we had better shops and stores. Fewer banks.
106. Stop having banks, nail salons and pizza places come into town. How about panera?
107. Support the local movie theater more
108. I love the progress we've made in building and evolving our town centers - Belmont Center now has a nice selection of restaurants, cafes, shops (and banks!) and is a great destination. It would be great to have focused development plans for other hubs in Belmont like Cushing Square (which has come a long way in the last few years, but has lots of room for improvement) and Waverley Square.
109. stop having banks and pizza shops on each street and promote new independent stores that will attach people to the Center and Cushing Square, Trapelo Road, etc.
110. *more regular and weekend farmers' markets in town;
111. We need to develop more businesses that are consistent with the town character (especially in the Trapelo Rd-Belmont St Corridor). Centers retail This will broaden the tax base Taxes and keep out the big box stores.
112. We need design review committee to improve new buildings in the three town center areas and we need to stop allowing bank branches in the town center areas to improve vibrancy.
113. In terms of "retail needs and opportunities", there is an insane number of banks in town. We need to get rid of some and establish zoning that prevents them from moving into retail space.
114. No more banks! There are way too many banks in the center. We love the restaurants and toy store. Please do not allow anymore banks to occupy prime retail space.
115. The flow of traffic through the center needs to be addressed. There are eight lanes trying to get through. A smaller grocery store, like what the One Stop Market could be, would be great as there is nowhere to stop for bread or milk in the town center. And PLEASE, I would love to take the train in the morning but can't park until 8:30 - that does not help me at all.
116. There appears to be no effort to work on increasing business and commerce in town, certainly not in cooperation with neighbors.
117. Again, need to be more proactive in creating incentives to attract the retailers we want and then ID those retailers and invite them.
118. Please bring a Trader Joe's to our area!
119. We do not need any more banks. We could use more restuarants, pubs, stores that will generate revenue and provide jobs.
120. More small local events to allow residents to interact and learn about one another while promoting the local business districts.
121. Don't look to development only to generate more revenue. Look to reengineer the organizational structure and infrastructure. We are overdeveloping (retail at Cushing Square) and trying to

compensate for it by thinking that road design can (Trapelo Road, bike paths, wider sidewalks. We are increasing people/# cars and reducing lanes.

122. Do not allow large stores/restaurants in LBIII business districts. The traffic associated with these is harmful to the adjacent neighborhoods.

123. More retail (of quality & diversity) is needed in town, especially on Brighton, pleasant and leonard streets. trapelo road retail remains a HUGE eyesore in most sections. Start with signage restrictions - neon and tacky plastic must go. It's a simple start.

124. I see a effort and it is a town in the green already, just the down town where people need to walk that will make the difference.

125. I have been bemused at HOW LONG the Cushing Square commercial initiative is taking and at the plethora of banks and real estate agencies as opposed to a rich variety of stores. I miss the book store greatly. We do need more commerce so that families are not so strapped by property taxes.

126. Open more restaurants and let them put tables outside so people can spend time outside talking to each others, drink coffee etc - like in European cities

127. If we could get Belmont residents biking and walking, and make it safe for their children to do so, we would have less traffic and be more environmentally responsible. Belmont could and should lead the way in this. By a happy accident we are positioned to actually already be exactly like the "planned communities" that people pay significantly to inhabit. To me, the two lynch pins for this are traffic and a more useful set of stores and retail opportunities that are within walking distance.

128. Also, keep franchised business out or restricted (eg limit capacity; hours of operation, etc)

129. We need a community bike path that links Belmont Center with Alewife. This will help with traffic, keep children safe as they go to the high school and bring foot and bike traffic to retailers in the Center. It's time to stop talking about this and make it a reality!!!!!!!!!!!!

130. And install bike racks in Belmont Center!!

131. Can we get a small grocery store into Cushing Sq or the Center? Maybe one that delivers?
More emphasis on recycling by addition of more recycling bins in public places like the Center

132. Build a community path so that I can walk/bike to Belmont Center rather than driving. That would help meet several goals.

133. Let's force our local businesses to recycle too

134. Make progress on the bike path to connect the Center with the bike trail.

135. Do not overdevelop with high density commercial activity to the disadvantage of good town services.

136. We do not need any more beauty parlors, pizza places or over-priced stores here. Most of the people here are working class people and things are way too expensive here.

137. Let's hire an energy manager and get serious on conservation in all our public buildings especially schools. Let's force our local businesses to recycle too AND our schools and public buildings.

III - DIVERSITY

Respondents cited a desire for Belmont to have greater income/economic diversity, racial/ethnic diversity and age diversity. There is a perception that the town is run by a select group and that others feel alienated. Increasing efforts to welcome newcomers was a theme.

1. I know several long time Belmont residents who have recently moved because rents have gotten too high. Meanwhile, developers are coming in and building mega-houses which frankly look ugly and greedy. This hurts diversity and leaves a guilty conscience behind. Let's please do more affordable housing!
2. "Welcoming diversity" should include addressing the (racial and socio-economic) prejudices already in the community, not just changing the demographics.
3. Look up Lexington's Diversity Study and learn from it.
4. 11. The town is still boring re Globe article 7 or 8 years ago! It has no identity. Diversity in Belmont is Asian, not Latino or Black except for the Project. We should be ashamed. But we're not. Why not? Need to town-sponsored neighborhood events. Is there a real playground program? Parades? There are the events like outdoor arts festivals or block parties or kite flying? Town day is our one thing. Not enough!
5. Senior citizens feel excluded.
   Real estate taxes are too high for people on fixed income. This falls mainly on people who live alone most of whom are women.
   Seniors contribute a lot to the town. They are a valuable asset. We should recognize their value.
   Let us not turn Belmont into a town of residents with school age children only who will make use of our schools and move away when their children graduate. We need a range of ages, ethnic backgrounds, incomes in our town
   The Circuit Breaker should be modified. Its restrictions disqualify people who live alone - mostly women
   Give seniors a break - they want to stay in their homes as long as they can. Other towns do.
6. Belmont continues to be a very elite town. It needs to become more embracing of difference. We need to also become more environmentally conscious.
7. I hope that Belmont continues to become and more diverse and integrated community.
8. Although the town wants to promote diversity, we are moving toward a total lack of economic diversity. Even for those residents with good incomes, the town is getting too expensive. Property values are getting to the point where only families with incomes of 250K or more have a remote chance of living in town and rents are quickly chasing home prices. While the small town atmosphere is wonderful, it would be nice if we could promote more diversity in our small enclave.
9. Offer programs about diversity, not just population-wise but also architecturally. A proposed 4-story building shouldn't elicit responses as if a skyscraper were being proposed!
10. Better outreach. Sometimes it seems like the Town is run by a small group of insiders
11. I have not felt that Belmont citizens are that welcoming of differences, whether it's someone who is new or a family that doesn't fit into the typical Belmont demographic of white, two parents with kids. I don't know what the town per se can do about that.
12. A sense of community is extremely important. However, I don't care for the sense to be exclusive or elitist. The "small-town community" attitude can sometimes feel dated and not inviting

13. small-town can sometimes mean a lack of open mindedness. I would prefer to aim for the cosmopolitan
14. Belmont is not good at welcoming diverse small businesses (please, NO MORE BANKS). In such a dense town, people should be able to walk to the various services and business areas safely and easily.
15. I have lived in Belmont about 15 years and I still feel like a newcomer.
16. Not sure where this fits but...actively supporting vibrant and diverse business districts that are inviting and attractive are a key component of fostering a sense of community in town. This should involve actively pursuing certain kinds of business development and developing and fostering business friendly practices
17. Actively encourage more young families to serve on committees and boards. Last year when a woman volunteered to run for School Committee, current School Committee members said they prefer someone else with "existing experience on the School Committee" -- shorthand for wanting someone who'd been in Belmont for years and years. She was ultimately accepted and elected to the Committee. The existing committee members seemed to prefer one of the Belmont in-crowd to a newer community member with sterling credentials. This type of reaction has a chilling effect on anyone who thinks they can move to Belmont and make a contribution
18. Have more ethnic related activities, encourage neighborhoods for the residents to get to know one another, encourage voter participation even on non-election years
19. There is sense of secrecy and elitism in our town affairs. Butler playground fiasco is the best example how dysfunctional our town government is and continues to be. We should all be ashamed. Open conversation about this would be not just very welcomed but healing to a fragile sense of community
20. First by allowing diversity to come into Belmont. More affordable housing. And at the same time to become more tolerant of different cultures.
21. I think we need to increase diversity in this town and make people visible who are not middle class and white
22. The "character of our Town" is a white family with 2 kids. People from other countries feel alienated. heck I felt alienated and I grew up in Cambridge! Townies won't change, so something else has to give. supporting the Diversity groups that already exist with more than just a Martin Luther King breakfast turn-out; more speakers in the schools to try to get these spoiled racist kids to open their eyes, better support of the low income housing area, teaching locals to stop calling it "the wave", support of Benton Branch library as a community center, stop acting like one of the schools is a ghetto, etc.
23. Support the Belmont Farmer's Market. Support increasing socioeconomic and cultural diversity in our town
24. It is great to recognize, learn and understand all cultures while also Holding fast that we have one connector - we are all Americans. We should celebrate all celebrations not give one for the other.
25. Don't forget to celebrate US traditions, schools are having lots of say "Asian history nights" and other nationalities, but the U.S. culture seems to get lost.
26. More multicultural activities should be permitted in the schools. There can be an atmosphere of fear around teaching about minority cultures and it's limiting our students' exposure to "other."
27. Promote the arts in Schools and open the school concerts, art shows, and plays more broadly to the community, not just for the parents of children involved. Better promotions would be good. For example, maybe some of the chamber music groups or choral singers could perform at the Beech Street Center.

28. Quality of life is not just about bike paths. It's about passable sidewalks. It's not about food markets in the Center. It's about housing and services for those in need. I'd like to see a permanent and welcoming food pantry that offers other basic services to people in need.

IV - ENVIRONMENT/ENERGY

The comments show strong interest in environmental and energy issues. Recycling was a dominant theme, with strong advocacy expressed for single-stream recycling, weekly recycling and bi-weekly trash pickup, larger containers, the expansion of items that can be recycled, and the placement of recycling containers in commercial centers, parks and playgrounds. Great appreciation was expressed for our open spaces and wetlands, encouraging their protection and maintenance. Town leadership was criticized for its lack of support for renewable energy sources, both residential and municipal. Other themes included limiting noise pollution and the promotion of bicycling and walking.

1. The town should do more to encourage energy conservation and renewable energy.
2. Please institute a snow-shoveling policy with monitoring and _enforcement_. When sidewalks are covered with ice and snow, it keeps people inside reducing our ability to interact and be a community. Also, it encourages the use of cars which are environmentally undesirable, while discouraging such environmentally desirable activities as walking and cycling.
3. Leaf blowers contribute noise pollution, particulate pollution, air pollution, harm soil health, are a nuisance to walkers and bikers, and harmful to hearing and breathing of workers. We should start working on plan to curtail their use.
4. Consider adding recyling bins around all playgrounds.
   Expand home recycling program to include plastic bags.
   Perhaps a community garden with area for composting material.
5. We should invest in electric vehicle infrastructure in Town Center to attract business
6. Need more support of renewable energy, solar in particular-why isn't the electric company supporting and promoting this in our community
7. We need to also become more environmentally conscious.
8. The small town thing is very much over-rated and not environmentally sound -- we need more density. We are achieving this goal all to well through overly restrictive zoning by not encouraging big city development by rescuing and protecting our green spaces, large and small
9. Pretending we are a small town is preventing us from developing a commercial and office tax base, and it is hurting the environment by preventing us from encouraging density and smart growth.
10. Please enforce decibel limits for leaf blowers. Noise pollution is a huge issue
11. Increase town efficiencies, LED street lights.
11. *regular speakers' series with area experts on issues such as climate change, environmental conservation, and other global issues to raise community awareness and encourage engagement.
12. Tax on those with solar panels?? Ridiculous. Has town looked into leaf blowing laws?
13. weekly compost pick up (or include compost with greens)
14. Yes! Move toward single-stream recycling and weekly recycling pickup. Offer curbside composting. Neighboring communities have already made these changes, and Belmont should do the same.
15. Belmont's recycling system is long out-of-date. We need single stream recycling of a larger array of materials.
16. Single-stream recycling.
17. Recycling on a weekly basis for example. Make solar energy a possibility for everybody. Not make it so expensive that people can't afford it.
18. Switch from small recycle bins to large recycle barrels.
19. Do not allow the MLB to implement a policy that discourages solar panels. We should be supporting alternative energy in every way possible.
20. Be careful of construction disturbing nature and displacing wildlife such as deer.

21. Recycle every week. People will not hold extra trash for the next recycle day! All that trash that isn't recycled ends up scattered over the town.
22. The current recycling program encourages waste. We should have recycling every week and through a program that accepts more items. People should be encouraged not to use lawn chemicals.
23. How about solar panels or alternative energy
24. Need to preserve the Uplands as a natural habitat and support citizens efforts to this end.
25. Take a stance on issues such as the wetlands development.
26. Weekly, single-barrel recycling, like most modern towns do it, would be a nice step. The current system is embarrassing.
27. Recycling needs to be single stream. Participate in Solarize programs. Provide Energy Star subsidies/rebates. Provide education on electric cars, charging, etc.
28. Do the school lunches still get handed out on styrofoam trays that get thrown away? How many trays are thrown away every day? The schools are NOT "green"
29. 1.Noise pollution issue
    2. Main St (Leonard St) recycling bins. Cushing St, Waverly Sq. etc.
    3. Promote Edible gardens (and keep Rock Meadow Gardens affordable by not adding more improvement requirements to appease one neighbor.
30. Limit trash pick-up, have recycling every week instead of every two weeks, and do single stream recycling to encourage people to do more of it. Maintain town properties without using pesticides/chemicals.
31. Single stream recycling! Good lord....the antiquated way of separating recyclables is ridiculous.
32. The sustainability committee is an utter waste of tax payer money in that it is trying to solve a non-problem and should be immediately disbanded.
33. ...a better sound ordinance would be nice. Cutting lawns at 7:00 AM or 7:00 PM on Sundays just isnt right.
34. We should consider a plastic bag ban for retailers similar to other communities in our Commonwealth
35. Save the Maple Forest! Add a bike path.
36. More education in the schools about Belmont's own natural habitats -- kids pass this information up to their parents.
37. More support for initiatives like the Waverly Trail that would help make Belmont's significant environmental heritage better know to the general public.
38. Recycling every other week discourages environmental conservation.
39. Vastly decrease or eliminate the use of road salt. Road salt causes great harm with little to no safety benefit. Restore a full program of tree replacement and maintenance.
40. Need updated waste and recycling management (convert to large automated system with single barrels...)
41. The selectmen do not value environmental responsibility, regardless of what they say in public their actions speak even more loudly. They have a track record of zero. Sust Belmont is very ineffectual. The Energy Committee tries, as do a few individuals. But we need more.
42. The town is not very responsive to requests regarding environment. There is serious gutter puddling problem in front of my house. I called the town to report. The call was transferred to about five people, nobody claimed responsibility for the problem and nobody came to fix the problem.
43. Try to buy land to put into trust. Preserve the uplands.
    More recycling for homes and public buildings and parks. I.E. pick up of styrofoam and food waste.

44. Curbside composting;
toxic disposal day(s) for the town;
support open space;
restrict large house building on small lots...they leave no yard and looks so out of place!!
eliminate plastic water bottles like other towns

45. I think that the community could encourage visits to places like habitat and to take hikes/walks in nature.

46. More local business would cut down on car trips.

47. More education to the community to inform what we are currently doing and plans of what we can do, in terms of environment, sustainability, energy conservation, etc.

48. The silver maple forest development is a major problem. Overall, as I compare Belmont to other area towns, we are not doing a good job -- at all -- on environmental responsibility.

49. Mandatory Recycling should be required from all residents, which is a local ordinance requiring all persons located Belmont to separate their recyclables, compostables and landfilled trash and to participate in recycling and composting programs.

50. Weekly pick up of recyclables is necessary.

51. Provide some encouragement for folks to plant trees on their properties.

52. Incorporate a trash and recycling collection program like Watertown.

53. I would love to see the Town of Belmont more directly encourage adoption of solar energy and other clean energy initiatives, it seems to lag behind other local towns.

54. Maintain open spaces such as Rock Meadow and the Belmont Uplands. Green landscaping practices such as rain gardens on public lands. Generating renewable energy for public buildings.

55. Need to bring the recycling program up to par with surrounding communities.

56. When we make a decision about the built environment or about conservation it's important to let even residents who did not take part in the process know why we made it (e.g. why bike paths).

57. We need to preserve the Little Pond wetlands and not allow any building on it at all. The conservation tax on the property needs to be repealed. It is just allowing people to use any excuse to use it.

58. Duck ponds need maintenance and improvement.

59. Release utilities for individual choice or buy power from green power sources, Allow net metering from solar roof panels

60. Recycle pick ups every week.

61. Make more information about recycling available, encourage supermarkets to give up plastic bags and educate people about bringing their own, incorporate more environmental education into classroom teaching, involve school kids in more clean ups and study of local habitats.

62. if we could get Belmont residents biking and walking, and make it safe for their children to do so, we would have less traffic and be more environmentally responsible.

63. Start or support a composting initiative for the community.

64. Increase recycling program. Pick up more types of recyclables and increase frequency of pickup to weekly.

65. Solar/renewable energy supported more by BMLD (see program in Concord, for example).
Stop all building on current open space!!!!

66. Promote the "Habitat" and the various bike trails and paths. If people in the community get involved more and experience the natural habitats that Belmont has to offer, then they will support these efforts more.

67. We incinerate our trash, adding to many environmentally unfriendly issues. How about one stream recyling? A styrofoam collection place to recycle that? Remove all styrofoam trays from school lunch rooms? Add dishwashers (machines) in school cafeterias.

68. Single stream recycling in public buildings, rethink school lunch waste.

69. Make it easier to install solar power; provide larger recycling bins; provide town-wide food waste/composting collection; charge for garbage collection based on quantity of garbage.

70. Preserve the Uplands. Offer better recycling program (every week for residents) and more public receptacles. E.g. There was no obvious recycle bins at town day.

71. Put recycle trash cans in the Center and Cushing Square and start empting the trash bin in front of CVS in the Center

72. I love the green spaces that we have in Belmont, and believe we should continue to conserve them. We should have more money budgeted towards trees.

73. I would also like to get rid of disposable trays and flatware in the schools. That is a penny wise pound foolish solution and is inconsistent with our town values.

74. Recycling! Recycling should be picked up free of charge every week. Household trash should be managed. Each trash bag should have a sticker attached. The town can provide 52 stickers to each household free each year. Additional sticker can be purchased easily at convenient locations (grocery store, hardware store, town hall, etc...) This would shift the incentive towards recycling.

75. Pay-as –you-throw garbage pick-up; Community recycling receptacles in town

76. Also, the Light Board should be much more hands-on with Belmont Light to insist that the utility provide friendlier policies for/support of renewable energy.

77. Planting more trees throughout the neighborhoods, and not just taking down sick trees.

78. Environmental goals: Belmont Light could support and facilitate residential solar installations.

79. With a town owned electric company, can we do something clever with solar?

80. Start composting, or collecting table scraps for compost. Recycle more; have people pay per trash bag collected.

81. Promote solar energy; limit noise including that of planes overhead

82. Many Town leaders seem unwilling to learn how to live a more eco-friendly lifestyle. Change is hard and we lack the leadership to steward it. We need to elect people more in tune with environment.

83. Re: bike transportation and walking- allowing leaf blowers all spring, summer and fall is a detriment - blowing dust and sand into faces of bike commuters not conducive. Also not environmentally responsible.

84. More emphasis on recycling by addition of more recycling bins in public places like the Center

85. Consider building community organic gardens.

86. Fewer leaf blowers and banks.

87. Single-stream recycling toters, or at least doing away with the open blue recycling buckets. With the open blue buckets, the wind carries all of the neighborhood's papers, plastic containers, and other bits of trash up and down the street. It's frankly ridiculous that these blue bins haven't been improved upon or replaced.

88. Lone Tree Hill, Rock Meadow, and Beaver Brook provide an impressive amount of conservation land for a small inner-suburb town such as Belmont. More trees along town roads should be the next goal. It increases value of homes and reduces AC energy usage during the summer.

89. Recycling every week would be better.

90. Think about limiting use of pesticides on lawns; encourage curbside composting, recycling, water containers etc. More of these programs within the schools would help.

91. On recycling: (a) why don't we have single stream recycling?; (b) why don't more people recycle?; (c) we have to PAY to recycle electronics? (I took mine to an event in Burlington rather than

attending the much-advertised event here in town that required paying money to dispose of equipment that recyclers profit from.

92. - Add weekly recycling, and single-stream recycling. - Be better at discussing and informing about Logan Airport's flight routes over Belmont and providing options for the citizens to help combat airplane noise and pollution. - Identify a plan and put it in action to better prepare for the effects of climate change.

93. More recycling opportunities.

94. Increase recycling to every week

95. Selectmen could encourage greater energy efficiency with Town and Light Dept. to achieve its Climate Action Plan.

96. Weekly recycling pickup, encouraging composting and reclaiming rain water.

97. Let's hire an energy manager and get serious on conservation in all our public buildings especially schools. Let's change recycling to weekly and trash to bi-weekly. Let's figure out a way to compost curbside. Let's force our local businesses to recycle too AND our schools and public buildings.

98. increase recycling frequency.

99. I also think that their should be more leadership on a proposed solar farm for the town.

100. More local programming for environmentally responsible activities around town. For example, the town could support distribution of natural compost for our gardens and lawns, just as the Electric Dept gives away efficient light bulbs.

101. Increase percentage of electricity sourced from renewable sources.

102. Expand recycling services, encourage solar power, offer appliance rebates for energy efficiency...

103. Need composting program

104. Single bin recycling weekly, yard chips from Xmas trees for residents

105. Recycling every week instead of every two weeks.

106. More encouragement of recycling and composting. My mother's apartment building in NYC is beginning a composting program!

107. And I love the green, open space. As a gardener at the Victory Gardens, it is really nice to be able to be self-sufficient in some respects by growing our own vegetables six months out of the year.

108. Hoping the CPA will help with maintaining green spaces and preserving any wooded areas left.

109. Do not build on the conservation land.

110. Hazardous material recycling should be encouraged, made easier, and on a quarterly basis.

111. Improve or increase green space in general residence areas and be mindful of zoning.

112. I think the recycling coordinator is a great benefit to the town and the efforts for recyling day in May was great. We should have more of that. I also think we should have pay as you throw to reduce waste and increase recycling.

113. Reinforce “how to” practices for trash and recycle days. Folks need to put stuff out so that it does not blow away. For example -- visit Davis Road between Trapelo and Irving some Thursday. Folks also need to be encouraged to pick-up trash in front of their residences on a regular basis.

114. It was notable that the town rejected making the high school parking lot greener even after the town finally adopted a stormwater bylaw a decade after it promised to do so.

115. We appreciated the recycling program for odd items (textiles, shredding, etc) and would make use of it if offered more often. Maybe quarterly?

116. Pay as You Throw service will predictably reduce garbage tonnage by 30% from current levels.

117. Get large trash and recycle barrels that have automatic pickup like every other town.

118. Give up on the solar, the Uplands, no one cares!!!! Stop doing a "green" agenda! NO ONE cares!!!

119. Continue to support and expand recycling; protect if possible the Uplands from development; prevent polluted runoff and sediment into Claypit Pond; improve drainage from Claypit Pond.

120. New recycling/trash contract with large closed containers to avoid blowing trash/ animals in trash. Increase energy efficiency of all buildings. Increase recycling/ composting at public buildings including schools. More local food used in schools. And BCC makes the new library and Underwood Pool buildings LEED-certified for energy efficiency. Same with the new high school...

121. I would like to see a Textile Recycling Rebate Program in Belmont such as that provided by Bay State Textiles. Initiating an ongoing school box program would be an easy thing to do and require very little maintenance. Think of all the clothing, accessories, linens, stuffed animals, etc that could be recycled and for which the town would be paid -- not to mention the savings in trash hauling fees.

122. My heartfelt thanks to all of our friends and neighbors who have given so generously of their time, talent and energies to help our town create a sustainable future.

123. Promote solar energy.

124. Preserve our green spaces, protect open space, control expansion of Rock Meadow gardens into the open space.

125. SAVE our trees with better maintenance and CUT SALT use in winter, Control storm-water runoff: pervious paving in parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, etc. with rain gardens/swales, Dredge Claypit for more water storage, clear out pond exit pipes,

126. Maintain open spaces such as Rock Meadow and the Belmont Uplands. Green landscaping practices such as rain gardens on public lands. Generate renewable energy for public buildings. Ensure bike and pedestrian- friendly streets.

127. The Town should participate in Hubway bike sharing and have stations at Alewife, the commuter rail, and key neighborhood locations (e.g. schools, main traffic circles, etc.);

128. Make it easier to install solar power;

129. Identify a plan and put it in action to better prepare for the effects of climate change.

130. Promote solar energy;

131. Preserve our green spaces, protect open space, control expansion of Rock Meadow gardens into the open space.

132. Control storm-water runoff: pervious paving in parking lots, sidewalks, driveways etc, with rain gardens/swales. Dredge Claypit for more water storage, clear out pond exit pipes

133. We have not worked closely enough with neighboring towns in this area (eg, Met State land, and we kind of missed the opportunities at Alewife)

134. I say "not very well" on the accomplishment scale because I'm not sure many people know where these (land) areas are and hence they can never be admired.

135. The Uplands situation is troubling as we do not have the money in the coffers to preserve them but all plans put forth so far have been short-sighted gains. Preserving that land is so important.

136. Encourage broader use of Lone Tree Hill and Beaver Brook for walking and socializing.

137. Figure out the Silver Maple Forest.

138. Perhaps a community garden with area for composting material.

139. Partner with Habitat/Audubon experts to plan preservation and mitigation.

140. Incentives to residents to increase energy efficiency of houses.

141. Town needs to work to control noise pollution. The new air traffic over Belmont threatens our peace of mind and quiet enjoyment. Belmont is not a quiet town if there are dozens of loud jets overhead every hour, from 6:55 am until past Midnight some nights.

V - LAND USE/ PLANNING/ HOUSING

Respondents expressed the most concern over controlling the number of tear-downs of single family houses followed by replacement with "mega-mansions" or two family houses. Many favor increasing density in the business districts. Several responses cited a desire for a more integrated approach to long term planning to encourage smart growth as well as maintaining Belmont's infrastructure. The idea of " preserving our small town atmosphere" was cited by many as a possible hindrance to our adaptability to changing circumstances. Preservation of open space and "the Uplands" were mentioned in many responses as well as a desire to have a bike/walking path.

1. We need new stores, restraints and services. Stop the two family building on single family lots. Make housing more affordable in town. No more banks or dry cleaners. For gods sake please do something with the pool and the crumbling police and light departments
2. I think that it is really important for Belmont to increase its affordable housing.
3. When was the McMansion subdivision on Concord approved? Need to have a more open discussion of when density makes sense and when it simply is done in a way that waters down the look and feel of the Town. Density can be done well. In this case it missed the mark.
4. Maintain the buildings on an annual basis instead of allowing them to fall apart and be torn down. Allow community input on all public building being built.
5. Developers are coming in and building mega-houses which frankly look ugly and greedy. This hurts diversity and leaves a guilty conscience behind. Let's please do more affordable housing!
6. Your question linked together libraries, recreational facilities and historic preservation. I strongly support historic preservation and a new pool, and strongly oppose using public funds to construct a new library.
7. The Town's approach is just hopeless - it is poorly managed, enables historic churches to be pulled down, monstrous houses to be built on Belmont Hill, builds fire stations and senior centers which are very expensive, while neglecting to invest in Belmont High School etc. We have huge residential taxes as obvious commercial opportunities(like using Pleasant Street more creatively than parking school buses) are missed, primarily because of the wrong kind of small town mentality and lack of imagination. The town is living off a school system which is clearly under pressure, with no obvious evidence that there are plans to move things forward.
8. We need to encourage additional forms of revenue besides exclusions and tax increases, in order to maintain our level services (we do not in reality) and pay for our high priority items. We could be more pro-business without sacrificing our small-town feel.
9. This is a wealthy community with the means to have better public commons - libraries, pools, roads etc. I'd like to see increased spending.
10. Please add an overpass for kids to walk safely to the high school over the railroad tracks. The Brighton bike path is too narrow and very unsafe. Encourage neighborhood block parties. Allow for a brew pub in the Town Center, make the upkeep and maintenance of the new Joeys Park a high priority, the Town website needs to be updated...it is very difficult for anyone to navigate the site and often times information is not current. Change parking on Leonard street from one hour to at least two hours so we can at least enjoy a leisurely dinner there. PLEASE, encourage other small local businesses to occupy retail spaces, NO MORE BANKS, please!!! It robs our town of uniqueness and character. Increase the size and effectiveness of the Town Planning Department...please hire more highly educated and specialized Town Planners.
11. Get past the small-town stuff. We are part of a vibrant metro-politan area. Welcome more density. Do preserve open space, but develop our town centers and thoroughfares! That's how we will support our schools. We are very unrealistic about what our community has to do succeed financially.

12. There was nothing about expanding the tax base. It is impossible with the current mix to fund our needs and the town must allow increased density and commercial development where it makes sense (along Rt 2, Trapelo/Belmont, Center, etc.)
13. The town is divided: sports facilities v. library, young v. old, school v. town. Capital projects shouldn't be pitted against each other. Need a more proactive, cohesive approach to capital planning and use of both town and school land. Belmont is losing ground to neighboring communities in its quality of life with its outdated library and 3rd world roads.
14. we need to expand the retail base and stop flooding the school system by building so much housing.
15. We need to invest more $ in schools, not relying on the smart kids/families to keep our schools highly ranked, we need to invest in buildings and roads, so we need to be more encouraging to business to bring in more money, and we need regular overrides as well. Although people feel our taxes are high, compared to many areas of the country (Chicago suburbs for example), they are extremely reasonable and we need to educate people about that.
16. More upscale retail. More parking. More walkable centers. Too dangerous to cross the road right now
17. Personally, I think that trying to maintain small town community feeling may be at odds with the 1st 2 goals. Zoning should be protected so that the town does not have proliferation of McMansions. Affordable housing needs to expand so that seniors can stay. If diversity and newcomers are to be welcome than "small town" idea of maintaining neighborhoods with certain ethnic groups needs to be reconsidered
18. discourage out of scale, inappropriate development.;
19. We need more commercial revenue to survive and provide the services to the "community"
20. The Town has to contend with a serious split in its goal. The eastern part of the Town has a Cambridge/Boston orientation, with an interest in public transit, higher density, commercial development and city-like services, while the western part of the town is oriented towards suburban ideals, like free parking, low-density development, and is anti-commercial development. It's hard to reconcile such opposite points of view.
21. rezoning to keep megamansions from destroying neighborhoods, preserve our historical buildings, analyze available vacant Town properties to help meet these needs, preserve our trees and plant appropriately (not under power lines!)
22. Prevent large housing projects from being built.
23. Restrict developers' ability to build outsized homes in residential areas.
24. We need to be more active planners. Development does not need to be a bad word. Done correctly it will bring economic and housing opportunities that will help to revitalize town centers.
25. try to keep out chain stores. promote local businesses. curb teardowns i.e. converting single family homes to multifamily. encourage town meeting membersto be in touch with their precincts wishes.
26. The insane number of two family townhouses being jammed into the Butler area gives lie to this aspiration. The lack of support for additional tax revenue through developing (smartly) more industry, is driving out an entire economic strata (because the tax burden is increasingly placed on homeowners) that has been vital to the success of Belmont as a desirable place to live. Our schools will begins to suffer as we cannot continue to squeeze money from residents, and as we stuff the town with additional students living in two family townhouses on lots that once contained simple ranches. It is tactical, short-sighted behavior that will have negative strategic consequences for Belmont. Once we lose the school quality rankings, good luck selling your expensive Belmont home.
27. Protect the town from development internally and externally.

28. You cannot have a strong sense of community when poor planning means that every new family puts your child's educational experience at risk. Belmont is not a town of homes, its a town of children. Plan for the children and schools and their relationship to homes (zoning), roads, and utilities. These are currently disconnected..

29. let some small commercial businesses have a chance of starting up in Belmont, don't make it so difficult

30. Stop allowing homes to be destroyed and huge mega houses built on its place. No more condos also.

31. we need increased commercialism (more stores) to gain revenue for the town

32. I think this requires a proper definition of "small town". That could mean anything: no national franchise businesses, no colored signs (my hometown only allowed black/grey/white signage on retail stores), no cell towers, no businesses that will affect parking (but the truth is if there are no worthwhile businesses to travel to then parking is the least of your problems), etc. Towns that "grow" naturally develop into sections or "villages" that then adopt that "small town" feel all over again (look at the various sections of Newton or Arlington). Belmont already has "sections" (Cushing Square, Waverly, Belmont Center) that each bring their own unique "small town" feel. Forcing "small town-ness" does not mean adopting prejudicial rules that might chase out businesses and people. Thoughtless parking ordinances, light ordinances, noise ordinances, school overcrowding policies that basically leave storefronts littered with pizza joints, ramshackle businesses, and funeral homes don't promote the town. Luckily things have changed in Belmont over the years. There are now 2 fine-dining locations (Savinos & il Casale) where a family could bring grandmother to celebrate her 70th birthday or mom's promotion to the corner office at an investment bank. The senior center on Beech Street is another great place to celebrate grandmother's 70th.
How about a vintage car show at the high school (or Belmont Country Club) during the summer? (just like Larz Andersen park). How about a 5K run for charity? How about a showcase of MIT Media Lab projects at the high school during the summer?
Belmont has "competition" from the surrounding towns who have more dining options, more small businesses that promote entrepreneurship, and more young people that want to begin their families. But Belmont has an ideal & a better location and accessibility to some of the best institutions of higher learning and research. Integrate that into the Belmont public schools - work with MIT, work with Harvard. The absolute essential skills will have to be technology related as the Belmont school children graduate and enter the work force. These will be the same children that will then have the desire and the means to return to Belmont and continue to creative in preserving its "small town" nature.

33. Install the community bike path; continue to place value on our schools including enrichment activities: music, performing arts, sports...

34. Rather than focusing on preserving "our small town community atmosphere," I would prefer we focus on a high quality of life and"promote and encourage community events and regional programs, and recreational facilities, and plan for and maintain our walkable community.

35. I believe the goal "to preserve the small-town community atmosphere" is directly in opposition to the idea of welcoming new people into the town. To preserve the atmosphere, progress must be throttled, businesses prevented from opening in the town, new construction forbidden etc. The boarded up businesses and collapsing middle class in Belmont stand in tribute to the outstanding way in which the town's officers are accomplishing this conservative effort to prevent change.
To improve the sense of community, the town needs to stop meddling in the lives of the citizenry. It should be easier to build in the town; the attacks on industry and commerce need to stop; rather

than wasting money on boondoggles like the senior center, a new municipal swimming complex and yet another study on getting a new library, fix the bloody roads! If the citizenry want a new library or a swimming center, raise the funds through donations. We don't need the to harry property owners, particularly the ones on fixed incomes who seek to retire in homes they bought decades ago for funds that benefit a tiny well connected minority of vocal meddlers!

36. ensure that new constructions maintains the small town spirit. Beautify town center by enlarging leonard street sidewalks so that restaurants & cafes could have outside terraces. Maybe make Leonard st one way to reduce traffic through center.

37. Multi-family in single-family neighborhoods NOT the way to go. Legacy single family residence tear-downs with NEW construction 1.5-3x larger NOT the way to go. More than single-family, e.g. 2-parents/2+childrens in ONE spalnned single-family residence is NOT the way to go, e.g. 2-6 parents with ALL children under one single family roof.

38. Better planning and outreach BEFORE big changes take place. i.e., the demolition of the church in Waverley Square and replacement of townhouses was a big change and does effect a small town atmosphere - but it seems this was not well known much before the week of demolition.

39. Stop the teardowns of existing 'starter homes' and building of unsightly cramped duplexes by builders and flippers looking out just for a profit while eliminating starter home stock for new families

40. Increase affordable housing opportunities; pass an override to improve the match between revenues and services; maintain the physical plant of the town.

41. Make sure the downtown is fully rented. Have more events like the dan sharfman run, that brings people together.

42. do not overdevelop with high density commercial activity to the disadvantage of good town services

43. I think this goal has got in the way of necessary development -- see for example the Cushing Square situation. While preserving the neighborhoods we need to make it easier to develop in our centres, to encourage business and increase the attractiveness of the centres as local shopping areas.

44. Open more restaurants - Make the residents want to socialize in the town and have a place to do it.

45. Continue to limit the tear-downs of older homes, and limit the construction of new cramped condos which only serve to line the pockets of the builders and the real estate agents.

46. Stop allowing houses to be torn down and larger ones built, stop putting in over-rides and over taxing us on the property and giving us nothing in return. All the beautiful old buildings can be updated instead of allowing them to fall apart and then asking for over-rides to fix it. All the streets are terrible and the town is always wanting to tax us to pay for it.

47. Stop building so many huge mansions that make force out regular people from the economy. Include more middle class housing. Encourage bikes instead of cars.

48. Reduce commercial and add more retail space.

49. Promote small businesses that provide useful services and support shared public infrastructure like the community path

50. Allowing huge houses to be built in the neighborhoods surrounding the Burbank (Dalton Rd, Washington St) takes away from the small town feel. STOP allowing this!

51. Please don't make this town into a smaller version of cambridge by putting in big business or housing. Cambridge is great but as a neighbor. I moved to Belmont (and overpaid for a house & taxes) because it is a small town. My choice. Please don't try to change this, you will damage the sense of community.

52. Limit the construction of McMansions; limit the tearing down of old houses to build overly large and cheaply fabricated condos/town houses

53. Town needs to do a better job of controlling development. Commercial development needs to be "right sized" and respectful of neighborhood scale. Residential develomplent needs to be controlled. Too many changes from single family homes to multifamily units.

54. We need business tax revenue desperately. We can still have a sense of small-town community while promoting developments such as Cushing Village. We need to be more open to change, and faster change. Decisions take too long. Get community feedback, but then ACT. And don't let a few citizens' voices drown the majority. Mixed-use developments in Bel Ctr/Waverley and other locations close to the train would be a great way to get affordable housing and new businesses into town while maintaining our small-town feel.

55. The overlay district for Cushing Square is a disaster -- it will seriously erode our small town atmosphere; drive out small businesses; bring congestion; parking problems and shadows to the square. The trouble has already begun, with Starr threatening to evict two decades old businesses that are not even in the square so he can park Starbucks there until he has finished building his plastic city. And those apartments will house transients with different goals for Belmont from homeowners. Many will only be here to take advantage of our schools, while contributing only a pittance in property taxes.

56. Please do not allow homes that are single families to be torn down and two townhouses to be built.

57. As long as constituencies that strongly promote conservation and sustainability are at odds with the constituencies that want commercial growth and resources for infrastructure there will remain deadlock on much that can be done for the town. Personally I think it's time to move away from trying to promote the community as a "small town". It's more important to promote "community friendly." BY geography Belmont is a small town but it can no longer offer its residents, present and future, the promise of being a "Town of Homes" as such. Such a vision, given current realities, means that just the super wealthy can afford to live here over the long term.

58. We need to abandon the idea of "A town of Homes" It is out-dated, and a model to sustain our town that does not work in 2014. We need to embrace change, encourage business and smart growth/development and turn this into the fantastic subURBAN community it could be. There is so much going for this town: a phenomenal location outside a major metropolitan city, a great school system, and a vibrant community with intellectual capital.

59. Schools are the number 1 priority. Do not overdevelop and crowd this town.

60. It is time for a multi-year Strategic Plan! It is time to create structures and processes for bringing our town into the 21st century

61. Will just reiterate that this town needs to change with the times. We can preserve small town atmosphere with modern amenities and take advantage of our proximity to Boston/Cambridge/Somerville for bringing in new ideas, creativity and becoming a close friend of these innovation centers. Preparing our children to become part of that broader fabric of our larger Boston area rather than isolated from what is right next door to us.

62. Less apartment complexes, more single family homes to create more of a sense of community and continuity.

63. We need to make sure our priorities are straight , we need a new highschool, police station, fix our roads and sports facilties are embarrassing

64. More thoughtful planning is essential. We should not be addressing the loudest voice, but rather the most pressing needs in town. The roads, the schools, and attracting a business tax base are of primary importance.

65. The town fails to plan and prepare for things -- an aging pool, terrible roads, a large fourth grade population entering the middle school next year and not enough teachers to manage it, to name a

few. The pool has been here for 100 years. The roads have been here since who knows when. And this year's fourth grade class has been in the school system for five years. Where is the planning? Oh, and how old is the high school? That's in terrible shape, too. There are divisions in this "community" that prevent anything from getting done.

And every time I drive by the ill- and unused Senior Center, I am sickened. What a waste of space and money. Not because I don't want senior to have a place for themselves to gather, but because it is not used enough. Why was this built and not a school?

66. Belmont is a lovely town that is blessed with tremendous human resources, a lovely built environment and advantageous geographic location. The town, however, is poorly managed and operates on a crisis-to-crisis basis that makes it impossible to articulate, let alone achieve, long term objectives that would improve the quality of life in town.

67. think that "working with neighborhoods to identify retail opportunities" is the wrong goal. Neighborhoods often fear change at the time it happens, even if three years later everyone is happy with how things are. A better goal is simply to enable retail opportunities -- make it easy for developers to develop retail properties in specified areas and let them try out retail ideas and succeed or fail.
I also think that the town should encourage more dense development around our transit stations. We have great connections and can handle more residents. More residents would also improve the opportunities for local retail to prosper. All of Belmont Centre, Cushing Square and Waverly Square could and should have more people living nearby. This wouldn't hurt the neighborhood feel of the rest of the town and would make those centres more attractive.

68. Don't allow to build rental houses. Set strict building requirements.

69. The small town thing is very much over-rated and not environmentally sound -- we need more density. We are achieving this goal all to well through overly restrictive zoning

70. To be specific, I like the idea of a community atmosphere, but "small town" implies a number of things which I don't care for. I would love to see our business centers develop. Would love to see some high density condo developments so that young professionals and empty nesters had more options (and we had more tax base without more students). And with more density, perhaps we would have more mass transit options. I'd love all that, even though it is not "small town**.**

71. Do not build or encourage to build rental properties

72. Offer programs about diversity, not just population-wise but also architecturally. A proposed 4-story building shouldn't elicit responses as if a skyscraper were being proposed!

73. Be cautious of development that tears down existing homes/buildings and over-builds. i.e. squeezing multi family houses on a single family lot. What "Cushing Village" looks to be -- too big in the area of land.

74. proper zoning, limiting tear downs, limiting size of house vs lot and number of units/lot

75. Avoid more large scale developments like Cushing Sq

76. don't allow 4 story buildings!
don't favor Concord Av/the Center over Cushing Sq as currently happens!

77. Stop permitting for all those mega-houses going up on the hill! I would love to see the downtown (Leonard Street) become more of a pedestrian mall, and traffic get routed to either side. And, it would be fabulous to allow commuter parking downtown BEFORE 8:30 so we could take the train and cut down on some of that traffic. It's a mess there in the mornings.

78. small town communities do not build developments with 100+ units on a main road that is already over used and a traffic jam at rush hour

79. The goal of preserving the small-town atmosphere currently and into the future is a NEGATIVE. In order to survive financially and not chase citizens away because of the excessive tax burden, we must actively explore avenues to develop more residential housing, Cushing Square is a good start. They need not be this large but need to be on the town agenda. Other communities surrounding Belmont are increasing their housing stock. If Belmont does not, too much outlay of $$ will be required of two few. This concept worked well 100 years ago; now it is keeping the town from growing responsibly

80. Sense of community" should include acknowledging and seeking to fulfill a public good that sometimes conflicts with the interests of specific residents. We are too ready to bow to neighbors' objections.

81. Stop the tear-downs and overbuilt houses.

82. Need to be more proactive and instill effective long-term planning, rather than reactive, as is now the case.

83. by not encouraging big city development
byt rescuing and protecting our green spaces, large and small

84. Sense of community is enhanced by support of moderate development and increased revenue to support the needs of the town.

85. I didn't know how to mark this because it is the most important goal we have, but in the opposite direction. It is very important that we stop trying to preserve our imaginary small-town community atmosphere. Belmont is not a small town. (I grew up in a small town.) We are a suburb 4 miles from one of the largest cities in America. We are not a small town. Small towns do not have bus service, commuter rail, access to symphonies, art and science museums, world-class universities, major league teams, and highly professional job opportunities. Pretending we are a small town is preventing us from developing a commercial and office tax base, and it is hurting the environment by preventing us from encouraging density and smart growth. Regrettably we are doing very well this goal. Keeping on like this will soon destroy our school and pension funding and make it impossible for children and older people to afford to live here.

86. Stop harping on "Town of Homes". It is kind of a myth. Belmont is more urban than many large sections of Boston. Living in an isolated cluster of houses without food places, shopping, recreation, etc., is not always compelling.

87. The Town, especially the Planning Board, can start by respecting those of us on "the other side of the tracks" by not allowing everything to happen along Trapelo Rd. Also, the mere suggestion by the PB that So. Pleasant Street should be zoned to allow an unlimited number of dogs in a potential kennel is insulting and totally hypocritical

88. Where does the money go and how can town stop being in crisis mode? Town needs to do a better job of doing projects in tandem. $2.4 million about to be spent on belmont center without having factored in community path -- or even moved forward with THINKING about path? That is a disgrace. An insult to the hardworking committee members and the 90% of town that clearly wants a path. And a waste of money should Belmont Center be updated only to need to spend more money integrating path down the road when eventually the town wakes up to how important the path would be to residents AND businesses

89. First of all, it's important to maintain the identity of belmont, i.e, "town of homes." If one could describe clusters of condominiums/townhouses being built in place of "neighborhood" homes, it then changes the landscape and possibly the characterization of such.

90. Less tearing down on traditional/historic structures to be replaced with "mega" buildings that don't fit our town

91. Waverly Congregational Church allowed to be secretly bought and torn down A DISGRACE. Replaced by expensive condos. No diversity there. Shame!

92. First by allowing diversity to come into Belmont. More affordable housing. And at the same time to become more tolerant of different cultures.

93. Invest more in preserving historic buildings such as library

94. Encourage more independent businesses which bring small town character. Do not change zoning restrictions to accommodate chain stores and restaurants

95. it would be fascinating to do a town-wide survey to identify the relative importance of various infrastructure projects (high school, library, police station, etc.), so that we can better construct a long-term plan that represents the priorities of residents

96. With regards to our public buildings, we are doing a horrible job at maintaining them consistently. Its somewhat amazing to see the beautiful new fire stations in town, just miles away from the falling down Electric Building, and a very aged Police Station. The town does not seem to take an integrated approach to planning and maintaining buildings. Instead, it seems like the "loudest voice" gets heard, and that single building, or cause, gets attention. A recent example was the library. The plan put forward for a new Library was not logical and could not be supported. I would love to see an integrated plan for improving/rebuilding key town buildings that includes a plan for the library, police station, electric building, and our schools. And finding ways to make our public buildings better suited (and intentionally designed) for multiple uses, just makes sense. It took ages for the Senior Center to be able to be used for other things - this is not right. Our community buildings, while having a primary purpose, should also strive to meet the diverse and evolving needs of our full community.

97. The town art gallery is a wonderful asset, Arts & Culture but please see my earlier comments about my relative disappointment with new commercial development. Also, with the exception of the recent pool vote, our capital improvement activities have not been adequate to maintain some of our historic buildings and recreation facilities.

98. The new Joey's Park, Parks and recreation albeit a small project, was planned and implemented super-efficiently and with the injection of a lot of private money and volunteer labor. Look to scale up that model for project planning and implementation for larger projects in town, and get moving!

99. We need to develop more businesses that are consistent with the town character (especially in the Trapelo Rd-Belmont St Corridor). Centers retail This will broaden the tax base Taxes and keep out the big box stores. Whose idea was it to let the Waverly Church get torn down and turned into ugly condos? If the church could not be kept, that lot should have been rezoned to make it eligible for a small tasteful commercial building.

100. Yes, we should maintain our infrastructure and we have not been doing a good job at all. In fact, in the case of the Chenery school, the library, and other buildings, it seems that maintenance has been deliberately not done so that advocates for new buildings could plead that we need entirely new structures instead of recycling/rehabbing current buildings . But re: recreational facilities -- we already have entirely too many of those, and it seems that whenever a group decides it needs something new (like a lighted softball field), bingo, it gets it. No one ever stops to think that taxpayers have been called upon for years to finance these facilities, even though most taxpayers have no use for them (we do not all have children, and at any given time households with children are a minority of the taxpayers). Belmont, like other towns, is about to be hit with a financial crisis due to foolish contracts negotiated with public sector employees. At the same time, our roads and sidewalks, which are used by everyone, are going to ruin. For the foreseeable future we should engage in no more capital projects, repair the roads and sidewalks, and never make the mistake again of inviting in greedy developers to put 4 story buildings in our commercial districts! Look at

Lexington, Concord -- even Arlington. The TM there took only a half hour to reject for Arlington center what is going to happen in Cushing Sq. Shame on the Planning Board and Town Meeting for being so short sighted.

101. The building department could make the permitted process more streamlined with a faster turnaround.

102. Pass a prop 2 1/2 override to allow meaningful investment in our infrastructure, particularly our schools and roads.

103. We need design review committee to improve new buildings in the three town center areas and we need to stop allowing bank branches in the town center areas to improve vibrancy

104. The town's infrastructure is decaying and the town's voters have not been willing to assume the tax hikes needed to reverse decades of under investment. If the voters are not willing to invest, then I don't know what the "town" can do about that. Based on what I read in the Citizen-Herald, it appears that the town is unfriendly to new businesses by having long, laborious permitting and approval processes, which has a negative economic impact on the town. I believe that this is an issue that town government could address and fix, although there doesn't seem to be an appetite to do so.

105. be mindful of big developments- i.e. cushing square and the traffic it will bring.

106. One must be careful with what we wish for or have as a goal. Historically, the town has not been open to retail of a mid-size and negative about increasing the range of housing stock for renters (other than houses). Our 'Character" is locking our feet and heads into concrete. We must open our heads to a wider range of ideas for real growth. It will help stabilize the tax burden on a limited populous. At some point, people will leave and 'really wealthy' people will move in to raise their children. This will unfairly burden citizens of less than wealthy means.

107. Belmont is a great town, however it does not manage or plan growth thoughtfully. The roads, abundance of banks, dearth of useful, diverse businesses, ridiculously low taxes on business, willingness to sell off residential property to nonprofits (Belmont Hill School), wreaks of cronyism and shortedness. It makes me sad that such a wonderful place is being short changed by the few.

108. Land not used on residential properties should be taxed at a much lower rate than the physical structure thus encouraging more open space and shifting the burden to housing sqft which is more indicative of services used.

109. Don't look to development only to generate more revenue. Look to reengineer the organizational structure and infrastructure. We are overdeveloping (retail at Cushing Square) and trying to compensate for it by thinking that road design can (Trapelo Road, bike paths, wider sidewalks. We are increasing people/# cars and reducing lanes.

110. Town should do more to encourage walking and safe biking; and facilitate/promote residential development near transit (doing so will also support existing retail hubs).

111. Facilitate the Cushing Square project!!

112. Infrastructure - Face the problem head on, and make a list of each building oldest to newest, repairs they would need to "maintain them as investments in our future". Demonstrate and document progress

113. The town of Belmont is currently a residential town where most of the residents work outside the town. So the pedestrian, cycling friendly policies translate to more traffic snarl, longer commute times, and greater danger to both cars and pedestrians as cranky drivers try to navigate the impediments to their commutes. In the meantime the roads are neglecting and crumbling.In the meantime the empty gestures promoting the green religion are actively harming the quality of life of residents. The lack of new residential construction, particularly of apartment blocks prevents

the high density housing that is in demand so close to Boston. The anti-idling law amounts to a bit of useless hectoring.

114. Stop building apartments all over! We're full.Make sure that trees ans landscapes are properly maintained and when houses are destroyed, new housing incorporates trees and is in line with a small town development.

115. We can not approve more development without thoughtful planning on how it effects the neighborhood. There is way too much traffic on brighton street. and doing any more development near the arlington line (No new development should be done) will be unsafe for the neighborhood.

116. Bike path; stop developing houses next to Habitat. Keep the zoning restrictions and building heights in place.

117. We need more public parks and especially gardens, rather than just conservation and open areas.

118. The town is selling off all the open space which is contrary to this goal.

119. Try to buy land to put into trust. Preserve the uplands.

120. support open space
restrict large house building on small lots...they leave no yard and looks so out of place!!

121. Safe the silver maple forest**.**

122. More local business would cut down on car trips.

123. The silver maple forest development is a major problem. Overall, as I compare Belmont to other area towns, we are not doing a good job -- at all -- on environmental responsibility.

124. A mentality of not wanting to invest in something if it will be completely redone soon is not right.

125. Open more restaurants and let them put tables outside so people can spend time outside talking to each others, drink coffee etc - like in European cities.

126. I would love to see the Town of Belmont more directly encourage adoption of solar energy and other clean energy initiatives, it seems to lag behind other local towns.

127. Maintain open spaces such as Rock Meadow and the Belmont Uplands. Green landscaping practices such as rain gardens on public lands. Generating renewable energy for public buildings. Ensure bike and pedestrian- friendly streets

128. When we make a decision about the built environment or about conservation it's important to let even residents who did not take part in the process know why we made it (e.g. why bike paths).

129. We need to preserve the Little Pond wetlands and not allow any building on it at all. The conservation tax on the property needs to be repealed. It is just allowing people to use any excuse to use it.

130. Duck ponds need maintenance and improvement.

131. More recreation space.

132. Better bike routes; more initiatives to encourage personal stewardship; limiting size of new houses

133. We need to protect what's left of nature in Belmont. Save the Belmont Uplands and the silver maple forest.

134. Well, Belmont Hill is being destroyed. Just drive up Concord ave. and it is sickening what they are doing and the poor animals are bulldozed out of their homes and people wonder why they have them in their yards....stop the greedy developers..

135. The horses have left the barn with the development of McMansions on Belmont Hill. We need more green spaces.

136. The town should protect our natural habitats and not put development in them.

137. Stop all building on current open space!!!!

138. Population density needs to be managed better especially with regards to new construction. Also, keep franchised business out or restricted (eg limit capacity; hours of operation, etc.)

139. Promote the "Habitat" and the various bike trails and paths. If people in the community get involved more and experience the natural habitats that Belmont has to offer, then they will support these efforts more.

140. Preserve the Uplands.

141. Prevent further building on conservation land.

142. We need to redistrict the town school districts. With regards to the new developments on the Trapelo corridor, I wonder how much thought was given to infrastructure. We have more and more kids getting put into Wellington. Moreover, public transportation in general is a problem. The 73 bus is packed. If you live around school or grove street, good luck on actually getting a bus. I love the green spaces that we have in Belmont, and believe we should continue to conserve them. We should have more money budgeted towards trees.

143. 1. The Town should participate in Hubway bike sharing and have stations at Alewife, the commuter rail, and key neighborhood locations (e.g. schools, main traffic circles, etc.); 2. The Town should extend the bike path from Brighton St. to the town center; 3. The town should use traffic calming devices such as speed bumps (prevalent in Somerville and Cambridge) especially near high traffic areas, schools, and playgrounds; 4. The Town should encourage more "convenient" retail -- e.g. coffee, grocery, beer/wine, restaurant/sandwich -- in other areas besides town center (e.g. corner of Concord & Brighton); 5. The Town should develop resident parking near commuter rail and subway stations for commuting downtown; 6. The Town should push the T to run the 74/75 bus from Harvard Sq. more often during rush hour so that this is a viable commuter option.

144. Could do more with green space and parks--again, too much cut through traffic, completely unregulated.

145. A proper conservation program for buildings of architectural importance; community paths - Belmont is a (bad) joke compared to our neighbors.

146. Clay Pit Pond seems to be a neglected opportunity.

147. Planting more trees throughout the neighborhoods, and not just taking down sick trees.

148. Stop tearing down houses and building bigger ones and more apartment buildings.

149. Prevent construction of houses that cover too much of the lot. Prevent Uplands development.

150. Build the proposed off-road community path and tunnel connecting Winn Brook to BHS without further delay! Invest in pedestrian- and bike-friendly infrastructure all over town -- at only 5 square miles, it should be easy to get anywhere in Belmont without a car, but right now it is not. Along with maintaining great schools, I believe improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is the best investment our town can make, and if we don't, I think we will be left behind by our more forward-thinking neighbors.

151. Sadly, we are still a town where a car is usually the easiest way to get around. Can we get a small grocery store into Cushing Sq or the Center? Maybe one that delivers?
With a town owned electric company, can we do something clever with solar?

152. Lone Tree Hill, Rock Meadow, and Beaver Brook provide an impressive amount of conservation land for a small inner-suburb town such as Belmont. More trees along town roads should be the next goal. It increases value of homes and reduces AC energy usage during the summer.

153. Buy Uplands and avoid development.

154. More investment in parks and protected spaces.

155. Approve town walking path

156. Encourage broader use of Lone Tree Hill and Beaver Brook for walking and socializing.
I am very concerned about the proposed Uplands development. I think the town could be more activist in making sure that it does not get final approval. I also think that their should be more leadership on a proposed solar farm for the town.

157. I love the green, open space. As a gardener at the Victory Gardens, it is really nice to be able to be self-sufficient in some respects by growing our own vegetables six months out of the year.
158. Hoping the CPA will help with maintaining green spaces and preserving any wooded areas left.
159. Sadly, it appears that we will be losing the Uplands as a natural habitat. A 40-B complex will bring untold financial burdens instantaneously to community infrastructure services and to abutters, the homeowners whose cellars and streets will regularly flood.
160. Do not build on the conservation land.
161. Preserve the Uplands!
162. . -- The uplands situation is troubling as we do not have the money in the coffers to preserve them but all plans put forth so far have been short sighted gaims. Preserving that land is so important.
163. Improve or increase green space in general residence areas and be mindful of zoning.
164. Strictly limit the teardown/construction of mammoth houses in settled neighborhoods. They overpower the streetscape and require more resources.
165. More local food used in schools. And BCC makes the new library and Underwood Pool buildings LEED-certified for energy efficiency. Same with the new high school.
166. I've noticed several single family homes are knocked down and replaced with McMansions as well as multi family dwellings.
167. We have not worked closely enough with neighboring towns in this area (e.g. Met State land, and we kind of missed the opportunities at Alewife.

VI - LIBRARY

Most respondents cited the need for a new, more modern library noting that it would serve all residents and also function as an important gathering place for the community. Fewer respondents felt that more resources should go into repairing and better maintaining the existing library.

1. Find a way to prioritize the BHS renovation (really needs a total rebuild), possibly folded into the abortive attempt to build a new library. Give some SERIOUS thought to what a library needs to be in the future, and whom it should serve. Ben Franklin established the concept in a time when people needed free and fair access to materials required for education and trades. The students of a community are the constituents that should primarily be served by resources aimed at improving the library. In the future there should be no need for each town to have its own cumbersome and space-hogging repository of physical books; we need a computer/media center that could serve the same function in far less space and could possibly be co-located with a new high school facility.
2. Rebuilding/maintaining facilities: new dev't (e.g. the swimming pool, library) does not have to be the Taj Mahal but should be functional, durable, and maintainable.
3. Your question linked together libraries, recreational facilities and historic preservation. I strongly support historic preservation and a new pool, and strongly oppose using public funds to construct a new library.
4. New library please. The town needs to spend more money on buildings and schools and then keep them up--our hockey rink and high school and library are an not any where near the quality they should be for this town and that is just to name a few things...
5. A new library -- or an extremely updated/renovated one -- would be great.
6. We should invest more in schools and community infastructure (library, etc).
7. Please support the library! It is used by more residents than any other town facility, takes the least of the budget and provides the most value.
8. The town is doing a great job on many issues. However, keeping pace with other communities is necessary if we are to preserve the excellence that is associated with Belmont. This includes making significant investments in our schools, library, and infrastructure. …Similarly, the Belmont library is terrible. While the staff and programs offered through the library are good, the facility is outdated, drab and unwelcoming. It is also small and under-serves the community.
9. More community spaces. I'm grateful we're building a new pool, If we had a new attractive workable library people would flock to it. We need a true community center for town wide events. The senior center doesn't seem to be working.
10. rather than wasting money on boondoggles like the senior center, a new municipal swimming complex and yet another study on getting a new library, fix the bloody roads! If the citizenry want a new library or a swimming center, raise the funds through donations. We don't need the to harry property owners, particularly the ones on fixed incomes who seek to retire in homes they bought decades ago for funds that benefit a tiny well connected minority of vocal meddlers!
11. Important to create/support/sustain informal community gathering places: new library, new Underwood pool
12. Preserve the library and swimming pools as they are
13. We need a new library
14. Belmont desperately needs a new, updated library facility to support children, teens, adults and seniors and continue to offer excellent programs and services.

15. The library is the most-used public facility, yet is put behind other town projects year after year. It could be the most important community center.
16. Why don't we use the empty Macy space as temporary library and renovate the library?
17. We also need to focus on a new library.
18. Fix the facilities! the outdoor pool is disgusting, the library has mold, the tennis courts need to be redone, and oh god the roads...
19. Need new library & need to renovate high school
20. We need a modern library with a modern building to accommodate the modern needs of the community benefitting from the library.
21. Please focus more on preserving what you have (ie: fix the roads, repair the library / police station) rather than spending on what you don't have or need (Beech St. Center, new library) and neglecting infrastructure.
22. Belmont has finite resources and substantial needs. It is imperative that investments in the town generate synergies to benefit more than one constituency. Examples include recreation facilities also supporting school athletic programs, service facilities benefiting multiple demographic groups and library facilities also serving school system programming
23. If Belmont could somehow upgrade its library, that would enable the town to achieve many of the priorities identified in this survey. We have an excellent senior center; to me, a library is even more important as it serves seniors and everyone else.
24. Why do we want to tear down a beautiful library building and preserve an eyesore of neglect across the street?
25. I don't understand why maintaining historic buildings was lumped in with maintaining libraries. We NEED libraries and necessary infrastructures for our town. But historic buildings are not as much a necessity.
26. Belmont vision seems to be very short-sighted. There is no community spirit for the good of the WHOLE community. Each Department works hard to protect its own goals. A prime example is the failure to take advantage of our Grant to build a new library, which is a true community center - cultural, educational, social etc. How great would have been a combination of the Senior Center, High School and Library. ALL Belmont citizens would have benefitted tremendously. Our vision seems very narrow right now. Perhaps we need to education our community better
27. Especially more places for families with children to congregate-refurbishing some old parks; new library!!!!
28. Continue to support community spaces like pool, library, playgrounds...bring more restaurants into centers
29. Oh, forgot to mention, We need a new library. Energy efficient building that will pay for itself, instead of making do with old outdated
30. I dont understand why the public buildings are not better maintained. I am tempted to take Murphy's oil soap to the doors of the library!
31. Get off the dime and make some decisions. Be proactive, not just reactionary. e.g., Library, Police Station/Light Dept. Building
32. Look at the stairs at the library - are they ever going to be fixed or do we wait for the library to fall down??
33. Library is too small, crowded, and outmoded. What's needed is a new, larger library which can provide space for modern library functions in a pleasant and safe facility.
    More off-street parking needed at many town facilities, such as library, senior center, town field, etc.

34. Committing resources to new library, police station and other infrastructure projects, not to mention the roads, is vital to this.

35. Invest more in preserving historic buildings such as library

36. It would be great to have a better location - ie, a real library - where we could have events like this. The white elephant that is the Senior Center should be re-purposed as our town library, and the current library into a Senior Center. It would be a neat solution to our current library woes...

37. We need a new library! I realize this went to a vote. I spend a lot of time at the library (I'm a graduate student and a mother of 3). I love our library, but it is subpar compared to surrounding town. There's not enough seating, and there's no optimal space for middle and high schoolers to study. It's also a bit dreary. Have you seen Winchester's library? Or Newton's? Needham's? Wellesley's? I realize these towns have a lot of commercial enterprise to fund libraries, but I feel Belmont could do better

38. Libraries are important, Underwood pool, No.

39. We need to improve our library . . . which should be a safe and inviting place for people to study, read, meet, for students to come after school for homework, for toddlers to explore books and be read to. The current library is cramped, well worn, and in need of a face lift and expansion. As I studied in the back reading room one day, I overheard 2 women talking about the various town libraries . . . one described the Belmont library to the other as "gritty".

40. people in the town who are not already invested in the existing library or library satellites(at the schools) . Innovative change requires ideation and fresh look. The internet, tablets and smartphones put enormous resources at the finger tips of many/most within the town. This sort of change all driven by technology moves much faster than the town or community. What does the library of the future look like...and in a town the size of Belmont. Can you come up with a "one page plan" we can share with the community. Do we need a libraries at schools and also a central library ? Be bold and ask....if we create a new library is it essentially going to be an extension of the Senior Center ? Is it going to be used by those without an internet connection at home ?
Print investments (books, periodicals, even advertising) continue to decline at an astonishing pace and this has nothing to do with our community, it is simple change happening around us.
I would love to see more investment in local infrastructure - many of the playgrounds need upgrading, we need a new library, etc. I recently moved to Belmont and was surprised - given how high property taxes are and how wealthy the town is - to find so much of the infrastructure in disrepair.

41. As more and more families are moving into town, we need to maintain a strong focus on keeping our schools and libraries well maintained (the infrastructure)…

42. Belmont is strapped for money that is much needed to maintain our excellent school, build a new pool, and improve our library.

43. Invest in necessities before investing in non-essentials. For example, invest in improving schools and library. Do NOT build a new pool complex that will cost all residents tax money, especially a pool facility that is not free or of a reasonable cost for all residents to use once it is built. There are many summer swimming options in bordering towns. A new pool complex is not a necessity for this town when our roads are a mess and our schools need more money.

VII - PARKS & RECREATION

Respondents value Belmont's parks, sports facilities and playgrounds and cite a need for better maintenance. Respondents called for more multi-generational programming in addition to more programming for teens, families and young children. Greater use of Beech Street Center for the wider community and a general interest in facilities that serve more than one constituency is desired. More town-wide events like Town Day as well as more neighborhood events such as block parties are desired. Dogs' need for space remains an issue.

1. I try to take my kids to Town Field for some catch with a ball but my kids end up competing with the dogs that are allowed to run free.
2. There are so many things to love about Belmont. The 1 neglected aspect is the town's commitment to athletics as a way to raise well-rounded kids. The lack of investment of the town in athletic fields is embarrassing. The participation in these programs is HUGE but the town is a minimal partner in financing and brokering strong playing fields (relying on the league). The absence of a solution to the batting cages for baseball players is crazy that a few residents can hold that up. Where is the town's leadership on this?
3. We need a community center for kids to use throughout the year. A pool for two months is not sufficient, make it an indoor facility for much more utility.
4. The town needs to spend more money on buildings and schools and then keep them up--our hockey rink and high school and library are an not any where near the quality they should be for this town and that is just to name a few things...
   Shade trees at playgrounds. Bike lanes and bike paths
   fenced in dog park (could be as simple as putting gates on town field and still requiring goose buster permit)
5. Please add an overpass for kids to walk safely to the high school over the railroad tracks. The Brighton bike path is too narrow and very unsafe. Encourage neighborhood block parties. Make the upkeep and maintenance of the new Joeys Park a high priority,
   2) Consider adding recyling bins around all playgrounds.
   3) Perhaps a community garden with area for composting material.
6. More town wide events, better website and better job of advertising events town does have.
7. Additional town wide activities; E.g., "junior olympics"; Annual veteran appreciation parade
8. Trees that shade tables with chairs in the parks so seniors can enjoy the outdoors- Why is it that the only park in the Butler School District gets all the dogs to do their necessities and our children play on that ground - More intergenerational projects with Wellington and Butler schools to beautify their grounds
9. Need to town-sponsored neighborhood events. Is there a real playground program? Parades? There are the events like outdoor arts festivals or block parties or kite flying? Town day is our one thing. Not enough!
10. Less user fees for youth and children, better recreation programs for youth and children and adults, get ideas and learn from other towns such as Lexington, Winchester, Burlington
11. We have activities (namely soccer) for our youth, we have a wonderful place for our seniors to gather and do activities, we are very lacking in helping young-families be a part of the community - it can be very hard to get to know people and there are not a lot of programs for babies-toddlers under 5. (Better safer enclosed park structures)

12. Love the payson park concerts, town day and other town-wide events. Perhaps more use of the public spaces for pick-up games of frisbee, concerts, etc.
13. continue to place value on our schools including enrichment activities: music, performing arts, sports...
14. fenced in dog park-i know town fields and goose buster permit, but rescue dogs are prone to run off and not listen to owners
15. The offerings of the recreation department need to be improved, user fees for student activities need to be eliminated or reduced.
16. Fix the facilities! the outdoor pool is disgusting, the tennis courts need to be redone, We need to make sure our priorities are straight , sports facilties are embarrassing
17. It is imperative that investments in the town generate synergies to benefit more than one constituency. Examples include recreation facilities also supporting school athletic programs
18. Can we use the Beech Center more for community events? This is a huge potential resource for the town which is underutilized. Also, is not clear when sometimes an event is held there if it's audience is mainly seniors or for the entire community. The Rec department is amazing, and it would be great if possible to develop it even more to promote community involvement- looking to Arlington's rec department as a possible source of inspiration. It also would be nice to generate money even more money for the town. Town Day, Turn on the Town, and the Easter Egg hunt are all wildly popular.
19. The Town could provide more recreational events like a father daughter dance, a summer fun picnic, bands to play on the new joeys park stage, more opportunities for children's recreational activities, make the beech St senior center available to all ages...even if just for a few hours per week.
20. Provide modest funding for neighborhood-focused social events, like block parties.
21. spend some resources fixing up public spaces like community pool, playgrounds (the addition of some basketball hoops would be nice) and other public spaces
22. Promote and support "block parties" to help neighbors get to know each other and eventually help each other. Promote and support events based on lifestyle at appropriate venues eg. Families with dogs get together at Beech St Ctr and Town Field.
23. More improvements to public playgrounds (Chenery playground, other playgrounds) and helping spruce up all parts of town. More town-wide events like Town Day.
24. more events like town day
25. More community wide events. Much better community recreation program and community education program---Belmont needs to revamp their community education program and also summer enrichment for kids! Belmont is changing and town programs need to reflect this
26. Encourage events in the Town sponsored / hosted by the large landowners - McLean, Belmont Hill, Habitat. These are within our borders but feel like separate entities.
27. More evening sporting events at the high school. Turn on the lights all the way for the lacrosse players.
28. more town hall events more community wide events-music, 4th of july, community service projects Especially more places for families with children to congregate-refurbishing some old parks;
29. Continue to support community spaces like pool, playgrounds.
30. picnic tables at the parks would offer families more time to gather together in public spaces, creating a better sense of community
31. Offer more meeting spaces / opportunities for teenagers.
    Renovate the playgrounds for younger children.
32. I would love to see the downtown (Leonard Street) become more of a pedestrian mall, and traffic get routed to either side. I love the town-wide sports teams that allow us to meet kids from other schools, so that is a huge plus!

Butler playground fiasco is the best example how dysfunctional our town government is and continues to be.

33. Community "play days" in the parks

34. The Town is sports-mad. Any other type of "cultural enrichment" is ignored.

35. More open competitions - eg. spelling bee, 2nd Soccer, a photography league and exhibits for juniors through seniors, etc

36. develop an activity center that teens would be interested in going to, especial mid to older teenagers

37. The Pool thing - fine. enhance town fields - compared to peer towns in pretty bad shape.

38. I'd rather Belmont invest its scarce resources in better athletic fields and playgrounds and not require the leagues to raise those funds themselves. Some of the fields are an embarrassment for the town when teams travel from other towns here. Other towns have invested in Turf

39. Again, I think that the farmers market and open, green spaces are key to this issue.

40. I would love to see more investment - many of the playgrounds need upgrading.

41. I see many Belmontonians using the nearby Cambridge parks and recreation facilities because theirs are better.

42. The conservation land is great. There are other quality of life measures like making it more pleasurable to walk to both town centers. The traffic patterns are tough in both cases with increased traffic coming thru Belmont.

43. More support for initiatives like the Waverly Trail that would help make Belmont's significant environmental heritage better know to the general public.

44. We need more public parks and especially gardens, rather than just conservation and open areas.

45. Try to buy land to put into trust.

46. support open space;

47. Safe the silver maple forest

48. I think that the community could encourage visits to places like habitat and to take hikes/walks in nature.

49. More education to the community to inform what we are currently doing and plans of what we can do, in terms of environment, sustainability, energy conservation etc.

50. Do away with a "goosebusters permit" add a $5 fee to every pet license to cover keeping parks clean. My quality of life makes me want to go to pet friendly towns and stay away from Belmont parks.

51. Would be nice to have some carnivals or town wide events at the park - what about craft fair that also has carnival games. No need for rides - they are not safe.

52. Control dogs in our public parks and conservation lands.

53. Maintain open spaces such as Rock Meadow and the Belmont Uplands. Green landscaping practices such as rain gardens on public lands.

54. Duck ponds need maintenance and improvement.

55. More recreation space

56. Ensure the parks/playgrounds are taken care of, updated!!

57. I think the quality and supply of the athletic fields in town needs to be invested in like other similar elite suburban towns. It's an embarrassment to have opposing coaches from other towns comment on our poor fields. It's a key investment in the future of our kids and the "curb appeal" of our community.

58. Keep dogs out of the parks. I know people love their dogs, but the parks should be for the kids/athletes/families that want to use them. Not everyone has control of their dogs. Belmont should designate a plot of land to be used solely as a dog park.

59. More bike accommodations (the bike parking in the center is nice!) would be great Hoping the CPA will help with maintaining green spaces and preserving any wooded areas left.

60. I love the new off-leash pilot program. It may need some tweaking to keep the non-dog owner/ dog non-friendly residents happy, but the idea that owners must show control and knowledge will make this a friendly place for canines and ideally the natural habitats be protected from dogs

VIII - POOL

Respondents largely voiced support for rebuilding the pool, but significant numbers expressed opposition to the planning process, which some felt has yielded an extravagant plan. Respondents expressed desires for more integrated long term planning and prioritization of town needs to maximize efficient use of town resources.

1. For gods sake please do something with the pool and the crumbling police and light departments
2. Rebuilding/maintaining facilities: new dev't (e.g. the swimming pool, library) does not have to be the Taj Mahal but should be functional, durable, and maintainable.
3. Your question linked together libraries, recreational facilities and historic preservation. I strongly support historic preservation and a new pool, and strongly oppose using public funds to construct a new library.
4. We need a community center for kids to use throughout the year. A pool for two months is not sufficient, make it an indoor facility for much more utility.
5. Fix the high school, the facilities are shameful and should take priority over building a new Underwood pool. It doesn't matter what the vote says. That pool gets used for about 70 days during the year and the high school needs to be replaced!
6. Stop doing overrides to solve the problems like the pool instead do a fundraiser like the past joey's park to solve some issues and focus tax dollars on the school infrastructure and the roads
7. Obviously we need to do a better job with facilities and the new pool is a good step.
8. Stop doing everything by committee. You can never please everyone, so stop trying. The pool is a classic example: everyone agrees that it should be rebuilt, yet the committee came up with a design nobody seems to like.
9. More community spaces. I'm grateful we're building a new pool,
10. It should be easier to build in the town; the attacks on industry and commerce need to stop; rather than wasting money on boondoggles like the senior center, a new municipal swimming complex and yet another study on getting a new library, fix the bloody roads! If the citizenry want a new library or a swimming center, raise the funds through donations.
11. Important to create/support/sustain informal community gathering places: new library, new Underwood pool
12. Preserve the library and swimming pools as they are
13. Make the new Underwood pool happen - a less expensive version works for me.
    An ignorant citizenry is contrary to democratic values. 3/4 of the residents don't know what is going on and don't vote. The new fangled over the top town pool, that will increase our taxes, is a case in point.
14. Fix the facilities! the outdoor pool is disgusting, the library has mold, the tennis courts need to be redone, and oh god the roads...
15. I still can't figure out how a pool and spending nearly $6M on that is more important than bringing down class sizes.
16. The town fails to plan and prepare for things -- an aging pool, terrible roads, a large fourth grade population entering the middle school next year and not enough teachers to manage it, to name a few. The pool has been here for 100 years.
17. Town projects should be looked at together rather than operating as independent entities i.e. Underwood Pool, Senior Center
18. spend some resources fixing up public spaces like community pool, playgrounds (the addition of some basketball hoops would be nice) and other public spaces

19. Continue to support community spaces like pool, library, playgrounds...bring more restaurants into centers
20. open pool underwood - for more hours
21. The Pool thing - fine.
22. Need clear investment priorities -- how can we invest $6.2 million in a 2-month pool used by about 200 when our schools and roads are falling apart?
23. Libraries are important, Underwood pool, No.
24. And we need to keep the pool budget under control. It is not nice to our students to build an extravagant pool across from the moldy, rodent infested high school. Recreation comes before education?
25. Belmont is strapped for money that is much needed to maintain our excellent school, build a new pool, and improve our library. Do NOT build a new pool complex that will cost all residents tax money, especially a pool facility that is not free or of a reasonable cost for all residents to use once it is built. There are many summer swimming options in bordering towns. A new pool complex is not a necessity for this town when our roads are a mess and our schools need more money.

IX - SENIOR CITIZENS

Responses regarding senior issues primarily focused on encouraging the promotion of more intergenerational activities between children and seniors. Some respondents also noted that the Senior Center could be better used for additional Town activities, school performances and functions.

1. Trees that shade tables with chairs in the parks so seniors can enjoy the outdoors- Why is it that the only park in the Butler School District gets all the dogs to do their necessities and our children play on that ground - More intergenerational projects with Wellington and Butler schools to beautify their grounds
2. Senior citizens feel left out; The senior center does a lot - but seniors should not be made to feel superfluous.
3. More and higher "user fees" for parents with kids. Don't make the seniors starve so these kids can have the best. The seniors built the town and now can hardly stay in their own homes....
4. Better use of computers - such as ordering meals online.
5. Pair up neighborhood children with senior citizens
6. There are almost no areas in which older residents interact with younger ones. I think solving this problem would go a long way to increasing a sense of community and helping different generations see and understand and work to solve each others problems
7. Senior center is a wonderful place for all ages to come. Make use we keep up with the maintenance of grounds and buildings. Keep it open on very hot days.
8. Try taking care of the seniors and handicapped who are supposed to shovel the sidewalks. The seniors were told that help would be available - what a joke!! The seniors living in senior housing in and around waverly square have to either mail or bring their rent check to Peirce Rd. Wy can they not drop it in a lock box at their complex?
   Those living at the Belmont Housing Authority have to mail their rent or bring it to the Watertown Savings Bank - what a waste. Waverly Sq only "2" handicapped parking spaces - Are you joking?
9. Senior citizens feel excluded.
   Real estate taxes are too high for people on fixed income. This falls mainly on people who live alone most of whom are women.
   Make the CPA surtax voluntary for senior citizens.
   Seniors contribute a lot to the town. They are a valuable asset. We should recognize their value.
   Let us not turn Belmont into a town of residents with school age children only who will make use of our schools and move away when their children graduate. We need a range of ages, ethnic backgrounds, incomes in our town
   The Circuit Breaker should be modified. Its restrictions disqualify people who live alone - mostly women
   Give seniors a break - they want to stay in their homes as long as they can. Other towns do.
   No more overrides until some are paid off.
   The senior center is wonderful but it does not help pay the exorbitant real estate tax.
10. And every time I drive by the ill- and unused Senior Center, I am sickened. What a waste of space and money. Not because I don't want senior to have a place for themselves to gather, but because it is not used enough. Why was this built and not a school?
11. Town projects should be looked at together rather than operating as independent entities i.e. Underwood Pool, Senior Center

12. Greater cross generational integration - we are a town of sub-groups not a cohesive community. Lack a unifying glue that binds us together.
13. Hold a meeting at the Beech Street Ctr
14. Arlington does an *Amazing* job at courting outside artists/performers. For the past several years, they have offered to the morris dancers free use of their senior center for a dinner party because they are a 501(c)(3) non profit org. In exchange, the dancers perform for their seniors for free.
15. Having a festival for children and seniors to express their culture. Town day can have some of these to be more diverse.
16. More off-street parking needed at many town facilities, such as library, senior center, town field, etc.
17. The white elephant that is the Senior Center should be re-purposed as our town library, and the current library into a Senior Center. It would be a neat solution to our current library woes...
18. Have school performances at senior center for easy accessibility of elderly.
19. A huge amount was spent on the Senior Center but efforts to work with that center and children in town has been difficult. There should be more collaboration.
20. More opportunities for the students to do community service with the seniors, and also opportunities for the seniors to help the students (tutoring, teaching crafts etc)

X - SCHOOLS

Respondents value the Town's focus on education and regard Belmont schools as the center of the community, yet they are deeply concerned about the future. Comments overwhelmingly call for greater investment in the schools to (1) rebuild the aging high school; (2) address the emerging issue of overcrowding and increasing class size; and (3) reinstate elective courses and other resources that have been cut. Numerous respondents commented that the schools are the bedrock of the community and the reason that many people move to Belmont but they are deeply worried that the quality of our childrens' education is rapidly eroding and that without greater funding for schools, Belmont will quickly lose its appeal and property values will decline.

1. Find a way to prioritize the BHS renovation (really needs a total rebuild), possibly folded into the abortive attempt to build a new library. Give some SERIOUS thought to what a library needs to be in the future, and whom it should serve. Ben Franklin established the concept in a time when people needed free and fair access to materials required for education and trades. The students of a community are the constituents that should primarily be served by resources aimed at improving the library. In the future there should be no need for each town to have its own cumbersome and space-hogging repository of physical books; we need a computer/media center that could serve the same function in far less space and could possibly be co-located with a new high school facility.
2. We need one more elementary school.
3. I would like to see the roads and sidewalks repaired and the High School repaired or rebuilt.
4. I have been concerned about the cuts in the schools that I've been hearing about, and hope that we don't get to be one of those communities where the schools only care about math and English because that's what's on the standardized tests. If we were to get to the point where schools were no longer stellar, we would lose our character as a truly vibrant, attractive, pleasant community where people want to live. The excellent schools are a really big part of what makes Belmont Belmont. It's actually a little embarrassing to me when I hear about members of our town wanting to make cuts to the public schools. It seems so foolish and short-sighted, not to mention kind of mean.
5. We need a new high school!
6. Concern over age of high school.
7. The 1 neglected aspect is the town's commitment to athletics as a way to raise well-rounded kids. The lack of investment of the town in athletic fields is embarrassing. The participation in these programs is HUGE but the town is a minimal partner in financing and brokering strong playing fields (relying on the league). The absence of a solution to the batting cages for baseball players is crazy that a few residents can hold that up. Where is the town's leadership on this?
8. The high school building is in disrepair and is currently an embarassment to the town. Anyone who comes to one of the school's excellent shows is mortified that most seats are broken and many are unusuable or dangerous. The building is dark and depressing. It's structures are outdated and dilapidated. Along the same lines, Belmont needs to maintain it's focus on retaining excellent classes and varieties of classes at the high school. Theatre electives were cut years ago (restored next year?), there is no dance program, there is very little computer science, no German or Russian language, very little opportunity for independent study. Some classes are too full to learn productively.
9. The schools are the cornerstone of this community and the reason most people move to Belmont and why home prices are so high. Yet we do not provide the schools with the necessary resources

it needs. The Wellington, as well as some of the other schools are suffering from expanded enrollment and very large class sizes. The high school is in need of serious attention as well but nothing seems to get done. Everything is done piecemeal and without real vision.

10. Please consider either renovating or upgrading the current high school building. BHS is often the top reason people choose Belmont over other area towns. The current condition it is in is a disgrace to the town.

11. Schools are becoming crowded. There is a need to redistrict the elementary schools. Plans for middle school and high school expansion should be considered.

12. More money for teachers and teachers aides at the Wellington school. The class sizes at the Wellington are too high and should be reduced, as should elementary class sizes throughout Belmont.

13. We really need to build a new high school. It would be easier to maintain a successful high school, like we have now, than to have to reclaim our status as one of the top schools in the state. The building negatively impacts our students' ability to learn.

14. The town needs to spend more money on buildings and schools and then keep them up--our hockey rink and high school and library are an not any where near the quality they should be for this town and that is just to name a few things...

15. A new high school would be a great idea.

16. Fix the high school, the facilities are shameful and should take priority over building a new Underwood pool. It doesn't matter what the vote says. That pool gets used for about 70 days during the year and the high school needs to be replaced!

17. Fewer children per classroom. New high school.

18. need a short and long range plan that addresses schools and infrastructure. Can we have good schools that meet the needs of ALL students with different learning needs and how do we get there within our poor budget. We underfund our school system and push cost of tutors to the parents. Our overall SAT scores do not reflect the real problems in the schools. We have students excelling and other who struggle with inadequate support.

19. Schools are fantastic but getting overcrowded. We need to expand to meet the needs of the growing number of families in town.

20. I see the number of children per class increases with every year. My concern is that nothing is being done about this - no thoughts about renovating schools to be able to handle the increased amount of children.

21. As a teacher in Belmont for the past 15 years, I have witnessed how, in recent years, we have to do more with less. Lack of space and class sizes are serious issues that must be resolved if we are to continue to have quality schools.

22. We should invest more in schools and community infastructure (library, etc). We are in danger of losing our attractiveness as a community for young families (and therefore real estate value) because of large class sizes in the schools, the sorry state of the high school physical plant, etc.

23. Schools are the basis for the strength and appeal of our community. They keep our town vibrant and young without sacrificing what the place offers to older or childless residents.

24. Stop doing overrides to solve the problems like the pool instead do a fundraiser like the past joey's park to solve some issues and focus tax dollars on the school infrastructure and the roads

25. Keep the school system as strong as possible. It is why people move to Belmont.

26. The schools are the bedrock of our community, but we cannot "rest on our laurels" for much longer. The budget gets picked apart each year, and the features that make our schools strong are replaced with "free periods" or fee-based programs. A school that teaches just the three Rs is not building good citizens or well-rounded kids and a strong community. We must act quickly and often

to secure new sources of business tax revenue. It's not sustainable to keep asking for overrides. And it is not ethical to keep raising fees for what is supposed to be a public education. It creates two classes of kids and deepens the socioeconomic rift in our community. We need to do everything possible to stop this disturbing trend.

27. (iv) only accept excellence as the standard for schools without requiring early morning starts, exhausting and overwhelming homework, or sacrificing daily exercise/activity (i.e. recess).

28. How much money would it cost to reupholster the high school auditorium chairs? They are an embarrassment. Can we think of some creative solutions for that fundraising?

29. We need a new high school. How many more years do we have to wait for this? The thing is falling apart.

30. Smaller class sizes on all levels. Class sizes are too big -- children who struggle do not get the attention they need -- especially those without 504 or IEP's. they call through the cracks.

31. The Town's approach is just hopeless - it is poorly managed, enables historic churches to be pulled down, monstrous houses to be built on Belmont Hill, builds fire stations and senior centers which are very expensive, while neglecting to invest in Belmont High School etc. The town is living off a school system which is clearly under pressure, with no obvious evidence that there are plans to move things forward.

32. It is unfortunate that "no child left behind" has made it harder for the school system to devote the resources needed to help every individual move forward. The reputation of Belmont's school system is suffering.

33. Please, it would be wonderful to renovate the High School Auditorium. It's such a big part of what we do here, theatre, that we can't be putting on award winning plays in a theatre that's falling apart

34. control growth to prevent over-crowding of schools

35. Every year I have lived in Belmont the school budget has been substantially constrained. A "good" year means that we don't lose any additional services, but there is never enough money to restore services that have already been lost. We need to reverse the direction on this trend. We need smaller classes, we need music and art and recreation, and we need excellent teachers.

36. Need to focus on class sizes in our community and add more teachers and classes. Big problem in this town.

37. Class sizes in school need to be smaller. 27 students for the incoming 5th grade in Chenery is too high.

38. About the schools: I understand that the schools' portion of the budget has slipped beyond the usual 50% and I would urge people to be less fixated on things like class size and bricks and mortar than they are. Many that I know in town agree that the single most important factor in the education of a child, and one that seems never to be mentioned, is involvement of the parents. Belmont children are fortunate in having well educated and very responsible parents, and I feel confident that the portion of the budget that goes to the schools could fall considerably with no diminution in the quality of education. We will soon be facing the pressure on the budget that will come from decades of incompetently negotiated contracts, and I hope Belmont parents will have the sense to stay calm and to understand that their children will be well educated, no matter what, because they have well-educated and involved parents. Classrooms full of similarly advantaged students are the primary factors in an excellent education.

39. I feel the children are not being well-served because school funding is too low. An override is needed. However, the teachers are administrators are doing a great job with the little they have.

40. The new elementary school was also a good step.

41. The school system must be a priority for the town. College placement outcomes have declined notably for the Class of 2014, the class who faced limits on total courses they could take at BHS. Top-notch schools benefit all; even families without children in the system benefit from increased property values.
42. Our $ needs to go FIRST to improving the High School facility for our children. It is in VERY bad shape.
43. we need to expand the retail base and stop flooding the school system by building so much housing
44. We need the high school fixed, the roads fixed, and cushion square developed. This should be priority!
45. The town is doing a great job on many issues. However, keeping pace with other communities is necessary if we are to preserve the excellence that is associated with Belmont. This includes making significant investments in our schools, library, and infrastructure…. Lastly, schools, while high performing, are in need to capital improvements. Already the newest school is over-enrolled and the high school is in desperate need of improvements. The town should consider all options to bring these institutions and infrastructure into the 21st century and keep Belmont moving forward.
46. The stabilization of our schools and our infrastructure must be our top priority. The schools are what separates us from surrounding towns, and our infrastructure is, in fact, the physical "town". Without them, there is no "Belmont".
47. We need to invest more $ in schools, not relying on the smart kids/families to keep our schools highly ranked, we need to invest in buildings and roads, so we need to be more encouraging to business to bring in more money, and we need regular overrides as well.
48. Smaller class sizes
49. don't be so exclusionary while people are trying to register for school - or get information. we just moved here and it was like trying to break through the mafia to get registered. and the town clerk was the rudest of them all.
50. I am concerned the overcrowding the schools is going to have an impact on the community.
51. Do a better job of welcoming newcomers into the school system. We were new to Belmont for the 2013-14 school year. We have 2 children in Chenery Middle School. While the guidance counselors were very helpful in helping our children to settle in at school, we found the office staff at Chenery to be extremely unfriendly during the registration process. We have been very happy with the quality of education at CMS, but our first interaction with the office staff was not at all welcoming.
52. continue to place value on our schools including enrichment activities: music, performing arts, sports...
53. realize that the reason people move to Belmont is for the schools, and as such, supporting a strong school system and supporting services (library, recreation, activities, etc.) is a priority for keeping up property value, attracting new residences, etc. I have been a resident of Belmont for 5 years and have observed that seniors and those who don't have children are the vocal minority and are hampering those of us who want to invest in our future, our children and our town.
54. Why do we have such an emphasis on security cameras and police in schools - terrible over reaction to the world at large. I don't like living in the new highly regulated, over policed Belmont.
55. Free full day Kindergarten.
56. We need to make more investments within the town - the high school, library, athletic fields for student athletes and rec programs
57. Our town has under-funded the schools, leading to crowded classrooms, fewer educational offerings, less support staff, and fees that put enrichment activities and sports out of reach for

some families. The town abdicated its responsibility in the most important phase of replacing the Butler playground.

58. More community support for elementary schools.

59. No more apartment buildings overwhleming the schools and making the school populations too transient.

60. The school department seems very separate from the rest of the town. there is no cooperation with other town activities like the recreation department or other groups. It seems very "this is ours, that is yours".

61. The 5th grade is pushing 30 students in a classroom, and despite rankings from some publications, we are turning into a town with a factory system of education that is impersonal.

62. The goals/questions in this survey were ridiculous when you consider the high property taxes, deplorable road conditions, over crowded classrooms, etc...

63. The schools need more money. I was shocked to discover that Wellington doesn't have a budget for library books.

64. Belmont needs to raise taxes! It can't do more with less and the town is starting to fall apart. The schools are declining even with the best efforts of all involved.

65. Schools need to be the major focus with quality of life for all residents comings next - not just some special interest groups.

66. More budget needs to be allocated for the schools to keep us a top school. We NEED a new high school building! The one we have is embarrassingly ineffective & run down!

67. Too much on teacher /town employee pensions and healthcare. School spends so much not on kids, but on paying teachers contracts that are unrealistic. unfunded debt is killing this town. Have employees join obamacare

68. Schools are the number 1 priority. Do not overdevelop and crowd this town.

69. We need an override to better fund our schools

70. Education of youth is the single most important issue that will determine our future, and the kind of town we live in.

71. It's time that the town recognizes that it's first responsibility is to the schools, not the Beech Street Senior Center...that place where kids aren't welcome and that's never open.

72. Need new library & need to renovate high school

73. We need to make sure our priorities are straight , we need a new high chool, police station, fix our roads and sports facilities are embarrassing

74. A new high school has to be the #1 priority in the Town. Too small and it's falling apart. If education is so important in Belmont, this needs to get done ASAP.

75. need better food for lunch in our schools. The provided food is bad with no value. Nationally there is a major push to have this done and Belmont should adopt this initiative.

76. The high school needs renovation/rebuilding as the priority!

77. Please continue and improve on the excellence of the school system. Please allow more opportunities for gifted and smart students by creating advanced curricula, fellowships, musical stipends etc.

78. More thoughtful planning is essential. We should not be addressing the loudest voice, but rather the most pressing needs in town. The roads, the schools, and attracting a business tax base are of primary importance.

79. Belmont has finite resources and substantial needs. It is imperative that investments in the town generate synergies to benefit more than one constituency. Examples include recreation facilities also supporting school athletic programs, service facilities benefiting multiple demographic groups and library facilities also serving school system programming

80. Need more pressure for schools to focus on their atmosphere/environment rather than sacrificing that to achieve only academic success.

81. We desperately need an override to cover the schools' increasing enrollments and to prioritize spending. I still can't figure out how a pool and spending nearly $6M on that is more important than bringing down class sizes. The Board of Selectmen need to work in harmony and conjunction with the School Board to avoid the fiasco that occurred with regards to the rebuilding of the public library. And, the School Committee needs to have greater oversight of the new Superintendent's actions, both public and private, including being transparent about the redistricting that is taking place behind the scenes to move elementary schools families into districts other than their own.

82. Let's try to get three class levels for the high school. There are kids who want to learn but are getting distracted with ultimate educational deficits in CP classes because they are mixed in with kids who should be a level lower due to various reasons. There needs to be a level for kids who are curious enough for honors but don't want to go so fast-yet they don't get any stimulation from those who are not interested There should not be just 2 levels.

83. 3) Improve High School esp Science Dept.

84. The town fails to plan and prepare for things -- an aging pool, terrible roads, a large fourth grade population entering the middle school next year and not enough teachers to manage it, to name a few. The pool has been here for 100 years. The roads have been here since who knows when. And this year's fourth grade class has been in the school system for five years. Where is the planning? Oh, and how old is the high school? That's in terrible shape, too. There are divisions in this "community" that prevent anything from getting done.
And every time I drive by the ill- and unused Senior Center, I am sickened. What a waste of space and money. Not because I don't want senior to have a place for themselves to gather, but because it is not used enough. Why was this built and not a school?

85. I'm not sure how we've managed to maintain such a wonderful school system with the lack of investment in the high school. How can this town re-build its pool when the high school is literally crumbling? This does not seem to conform with the stated goals, but rather is the result of a few activist voters who can drive an issue.

86. Schools need to be a priority. Historical houses don't.

87. We need to ensure all Belmont Elementary schools have the same programs available to their students and all kids are proud to live in Belmont. For example, children of Butler School district are not offered opportunity to go to the Belmont House for the Strawberry Festival. We have a division of class right there. It is hard to be one if we do not teach are kids that we are one. Winn Brook and Wellington attend. I am not sure about Burbank.

88. Would like override to fix roads and build new high school

89. We need to be able to raise money to address our growing school population that doesn't solely rely on residential/ property taxes. Our families can't continue to support the needs of the town without string retail partners

90. support the schools...this is vital and stand up to the state if necessary to maintain developmentally appropriate and relevant integrated curricula rather than rigid inappropriate 'lessons'

91. would be helpful to know about important town meetings, information about schools etc well in advance. It often seems like things are posted just days before or information isn't readily shared. More online information re: meetings, votes, school information is welcomed.

92. More evening sporting events at the high school. Turn on the lights all the way for the lacrosse players.

93. Fix the roads and buildings (high school) to build pride in community

94. Actively encourage more young families to serve on committees and boards. Last year when a woman volunteered to run for School Committee, current School Committee members said they prefer someone else with "existing experience on the School Committee" -- shorthand for wanting someone who'd been in Belmont for years and years. She was ultimately accepted and elected to the Committee. But the existing committee members seemed to prefer one of the Belmont in-crowd to a newer community member with sterling credentials. This type of reaction has a chilling effect on anyone who thinks they can move to Belmont and make a contribution

95. I think about folks who wish to continue to reside in the Town after educating their children instead of the Town becoming a revolving door around education

96. Respect the taxpayer as well as the requests from the school dept.

97. Support the schools (with an override, and regular overrides) so that all children can take part in art and sports without out of pocket expenses, while encouraging all members of the community to get involved in those activities.
Did I mention an override??? Long overdue. We want the best in life without paying for it. We need an override. Our schools are at their limit- teachers stressed, students stressed.

98. I didn't know how to mark this because it is the most important goal we have, but in the opposite direction. It is very important that we stop trying to preserve our imaginary small-town community atmosphere. Belmont is not a small town. (I grew up in a small town.) We are a suburb 4 miles from one of the largest cities in America. We are not a small town. Small towns do not have bus service, commuter rail, access to symphonies, art and science museums, world-class universities, major league teams, and highly professional job opportunities. Pretending we are a small town is preventing us from developing a commercial and office tax base, and it is hurting the environment by preventing us from encouraging density and smart growth. Regrettably we are doing very well this goal. Keeping on like this will soon destroy our school and pension funding and make it impossible for children and older people to afford to live here.

99. Not enough financial support for schools based arts (music, theater, fine arts), with too mug burden shifted to parents. Arts in the schools would be a catalyst for rest of community

100. We need to bring the amazing talent into the schools and after-school programs. It would also create a larger sense of civic engagement, with youth and adults getting to know one another

101. include the "poor end" of town - Butler School area - when WinnBrook needed their playground rebuilt the entire community was in support - when Butler needed a new playground it was a huge undertaking not supported by the rest of the town

102. The art program in the elementary schools is deplorable. With the exception of music, there is nothing worthwhile happening. Outside of town funding, grant opportunities should be explored to address this

103. Create a more active partnership between Powers Music School and the Town or the School District

104. Need clear investment priorities -- how can we invest $6.2 million in a 2-month pool used by about 200 when our schools and roads are falling apart?

105. Keep funding arts, music and theater in the public schools.

106. I think that the town's school system is encouraging individuals and their art, but not working at their levels, or inspiring.

107. Provide space and other resources to residential culture and educational groups. For instance, open elementary school for group activity rental at an affordable price over the weekend

108. More town and school unity. We have such a source of this in the talents of our kids through the Belmont schools. The concerts and drama programs are top notch. I wish the greater town felt more a part of these wonderful events

109. See prior comment about investment in schools and infrastructure. Town government needs to work to bring people together on this issue, i.e., educate ALL residents on the need to maintain the school system for the good of the town. One specific suggestion would be to put a muzzle on the Belmont Citizen-Herald, which seems to thrive on reporting strife and conflict rather than pieces that could inform citizens regarding WHY it is in our best interests to maintain the town.

110. More language courses like Spanish, Mandarin etc.

111. I think that the music programs presented by the Public Schools with the support of parents are brilliant and important to the cultural enrichment of the community

112. Consider how towns like Arlington manage some of these issues - again, more consistent activities integrated from school curriculums into town-wide events so that younger folks and families make these connections an ongoing philosophical principle that we uphold, e.g. our family follows the "Burbank Way", E.G. We strive for LOVE OF LEARNING, RESPECT, and Well BEING

113. This seems less crucial than the question of schools, frankly. (And I am a writer married to a former singer)

114. *more opportunities for youth community service;

115. Foremost, they should act swiftly to bring business tax revenue Taxes to the town so we can support schools Schools without fees and build the amenities that will further connect our community (such as a new library and an off-road community path). Solid plans that have broad community support will also open avenues for private fund-raising

116. Focus on priorities of government such as schools and roads as well as safety (i.e. police and fire) Services not feel good measures such as cultural enrichment. Arts and Culture if people want that they can get it on their own.

117. Make the all-school art show more inclusive, rather than exclusive like it has become. Expose MORE kids to seeing their artwork displayed publicly, and not just in the schools.

118. Pass a prop 2 1/2 override to allow meaningful investment in our infrastructure, particularly our schools and roads.

119. I am appalled by the physical condition of the high school every time I go there. It is shameful that there is no financial commitment to basic maintenance. And we need to keep the pool budget under control. It is not nice to our students to build an extravagant pool across from the moldy, rodent infested high school. Recreation comes before education?

120. SCHOOLS< SCHOOLS, SCHOOLS!! The better the schools are, the more people we're able to attract. Next in line are family services-ie. a new library and a much better rec ctr/complex even if part of a new high school!!! Need to make these priorities.

121. Save our crumbling schools and parks. Stop the deferred maintenance and focus on proper upkeep schedules for all town assets.

122. The main indicator of this to me would be community music/theater/art programs, and support for same in the public schools. I have found little community of this type, and don't know yet what the schools offer after all the budget brouhaha.

123. Also, the discrepancy between the schools still seems so pronounced. At Butler the building is so tired and although they make do well, it seems a large divide with the care/concern shown over the other schools. As well as the building, the road on the back entrance doesn't even have a real sidewalk even though it is a main entry point.

124. I was taken aback to hear a Supt. of Schools apologize for sending out an e-mail to all school population and say "I never read it." Dealing with education administration for a good part of my career I was taken aback that such a basic task was so mishandled. I also have not been impressed with actions of SC. Let's hope things improve with new superintendent - can't get much worse!

125. Please help us to get a new H.S. The performance is outstanding the building is a disgrace. The kids feel we don't care.

126. High school students should have a sense of pride - keep a clean campus and pick up their trash. They should have a sense of responsibility - they too are a part of the town.

127. Do not only measure the quality of the schools by MCAS or the high achievers. Belmont has never paid adequate attention to middle and struggling students. They feel like losers in this town. That's a result of tracking, an insidious way of labeling kids.

128. Class sizes are too big - there is always a budget crunch for the schools and they are lacking 21st century science labs.

129. The schools are of the utmost importance to maintaining Belmont's reputation as a highly desirable place to live. As more and more families are moving into town, we need to maintain a strong focus on keeping our schools and libraries well maintained (the infrastructure) and hire teachers and administrators that continue the tradition of strong academic achievement while also engaging children and families in community involvement/citizenship.

130. look into the benefits of starting middle school and high school at later times. this also helps with morning traffic.

131. Do the school lunches still get handed out on styrofoam trays that get thrown away? How many trays are thrown away every day? The schools are NOT "green"

132. Exceptional school. Even for seniors we need good schools as it increases our property value.

133. The struggles with the school budget each year are frustrating. There are so many great folks involved in the school system from the leadership to the teachers and parents. it seems as if there is more room for collaborative thinking rather than there being threats of cuts every year.

134. We could fire half the administrative staff in the schools and improve the education of the children immediately.

135. Classes in primary schools are getting more and more kids. Are we sure that only Belmont residents can attend Belmont schools?

136. More education in the schools about Belmont's own natural habitats -- kids pass this information up to their parents.

137. The schools are vastly underfunded and being compromised. The strong results that show are the result of a dedicated teaching staff that has stayed despite the poor funding - they won't always - and the extremely involved parents that pay for and enrich their children's lives. The town cannot rest of the backs of those parents who provide private opportunities for students. The whole town benefits from a school well funded school system. The roads are unsafe, inadequate curbing on main streets (School Street) that border schools with no busing (Burbank). Crossing guards are sworn at, disregarded and it is a wonder there are not more pedestrian accidents although it would seem that Belmont already has more each year than is acceptable.

138. Schools: Need to focus on more than just academics -- also need to focus on Quality of Life/Balance in school. Also need to stress opportunity to go to Minuteman High instead of Belmont High to reduce overcrowding and use the available resource.

139. stop pretending the clay pits have living things in them..what a waste of time for school children; support the garden at the Chenery, stop putting emphasis on school sports (way out of proportion to the support given to academics and the arts).

140. Belmont is strapped for money that is much needed to maintain our excellent school, build a new pool, and improve our library.

141. Primarily I think the focus needs to be on the schools. I find very disturbing that the children do not have the access that they need to their school libraries and share librarians at the elementary

school level. Reading is one of the most important skills throughout life and our children are not learning the basic knowledge of how to navigate a library properly. This to me is outrageous.

142. Rebuild the high school now.

143. Design things properly and maintain them. Despite all the awards, Wellington's interior is not holding up. Glass and drywall in high traffic corridors of elementary school? Ridiculous. Other buildings seem to get minimum maintenance in anticipation of some BIG fix. A mentality of not wanting to invest in something if it will be completely redone soon is not right.

144. School has been the attraction of Belmont, and it should remain strong.

145. Need to spend more money to reduce class sizes.

146. The "Town" has to stop battling its own school system. The school system is one of Belmont's primary attractions to outside buyers at this point -- no one is paying $1M plus for 3 bedroom homes unless they have kids and want an excellent school system. As a parent of children who have gone through elementary and are now experiencing the joys of Chenery and BHS, it is my considered opinion that the high ranking of the school system (e.g., US News Report) is mostly due to the innate pool of talent in Belmont's student population and IN SPITE OF considerable deficiencies in school infrastructure (BHS), organization (BHS), and attention to all levels of students (Chenery, BHS). We as a town have to stop sitting on our school system's laurels before the deficiencies start dragging down even the reputed quality of the system (and property values with it). The prevailing opinion of seniors in this town (as reported by that august organ the Citizen-Herald) seems to be that property values will keep going up forever regardless of how much we invest in the school system. Concrete suggestion: give tours of the BHS facility (grimy corridors, sprung auditorium seats, half-lit library) and contrast with photos of Burlington High, Newton North High, Lexington High; shameful.

147. Education: I think our schools are very good - but I think they could be better. Having seen students go through the high school and Belmont Hill - I am very surprised at how poorly our high school students are supported in the college process, compared to the Belmont Hill boys. And how much better equally talented boys do from Belmont Hill vs Belmont High….

148. School buildings (high school) are dilapidated and overcrowded --need some vision here desperately to deal with reality of maintaining a safe, healthy environment rather than the illusion of excellence based on inflated AP rankings and the like. Priorities should be on involving students in creative solutions for their own well-being rather than breathalyzers and drug sniffing dogs.

149. Work with the local elementary schools to encourage families to bike, rather than drive, kids to school. Wellington school has one tiny, ill-placed bike rack and didn't even include biking as an option on the survey sent to all families about how children will get to/from school. If I drop off by bike, the traffic pattern for cars sends me into Belmont Center (not safe for cycling with my preschooler). There is not an alternative route designated for bicycles so I have to use the sidewalk. Planning for traffic flow needs to include planning for cyclists.

150. incorporate more environmental education into classroom teaching, involve school kids in more clean ups and study of local habitats.

151. Support initiatives like solar powered water heaters and recycling in schools, reducing waste in school lunches.

152. 1. We need a new high school. Yesterday. It is really awful.
3. Linked to the above, there is no reason that the vast majority of children in this town shouldn't feel safe and capable of walking to school, this should be one of Belmont's most important "selling points" but the town has failed to invest in viable sidewalks, proper signage around schools and the employment of crossing guards. I think it would greatly improve the sense of community if people

saw children on the streets more often. They live here, but are never seen, because the town has basically ceded the roadways to pass through traffic.

153. The schools get great ratings, but the way that school assignments are done, and the growing class sizes at the elementary school levels are very concerning. And the state of the High School is unacceptable. It has not changed in over 30 years - this needs to be addressed so that we can continue to provide excellent educational environments for our children.

154. Remove all styrofoam trays from school lunch rooms? Add dishwashers (machines) in school cafeterias. Have designated bike lanes throughout town to promote safer, more consistent travel thus improving health and well being and encouraging kids to get to schools in multiple safe ways.

155. Single stream recycling in public buildings, rethink school lunch waste.

156. I note the lack of a comment space on the school question that came before this one... In any case, we do a decent job with the environmental question, but I see this as directly tied to elevating pedestrians and bikers over cars and to outreach into our schools. Kids at each of the elementary schools might be asked to do a literal "field trip" to Habitat/Rock Meadow each year, for example. It's close, it's cheap, and it's important. I've seen these happen only once in my child's time at school.

157. We need to redistrict the town school districts. With regards to the new developments on the Trapelo corridor, I wonder how much thought was given to infrastructure. We have more and more kids getting put into Wellington.

158. The public schools are the sole reason I moved to Belmont. I am now thinking of moving out or private school due to overcrowding and declining quality.

159. I would also like to get rid of disposable trays and flatware in the schools. That is a penny wise pound foolish solution and is inconsistent with our town values.

160. .the Town should maintain excellence as the only acceptable standard for all of its schools, but not start classes too early in the morning, nor overburden children with exhausting levels of homework, nor eliminate exercise/activity (e.g. recess) during the day.

161. The town needs better school funding to improve the quality of our schools. The public schools seem overwhelmed and unable to offer the quality of education we were expecting when we moved to Belmont. Even without better funding, I wish the schools would work creatively to serve the needs of gifted kids -- right now, they seemed so focused on the bottom-to-middle that parents of gifted kids are choosing private schools when they can afford them. This is short-sighted because it will bring down the overall quality of the schools further in the medium run.

162. Parental support in schools and at home is an important foundation to BPS great reputation - acknowledge this please.

163. Think about limiting use of pesticides on lawns; encourage curbside composting, recycling, water containers etc. More of these programs within the schools would help.

164. Invest in necessities before investing in non-essentials. For example, invest in improving schools and library. Do NOT build a new pool complex that will cost all residents tax money, especially a pool facility that is not free or of a reasonable cost for all residents to use once it is built. There are many summer swimming options in bordering towns. A new pool complex is not a necessity for this town when our roads are a mess and our schools need more money.

165. Let's hire an energy manager and get serious on conservation in all our public buildings especially schools. Let's force our local businesses to recycle too AND our schools and public buildings.

166. The schools ROCK. We are thankful that we are in a town centered on education.

167. Increase recycling/ composting at public buildings including schools. More local food used in schools. And BCC makes the new library and Underwood Pool buildings LEED-certified for energy efficiency. Same with the new high school...

168. Residents need to be educated on why it is so costly to provide excellent schools, public buildings and infrastructure.
169. . Rethink school lunch waste.
170. The new elementary school was also a good step.

XI - TAXES

The most frequent responses supported the expansion of Belmont's tax base by encouraging increased growth of our commercial/business/retail sector. The tax burden on home-owners in order to maintain schools and services was a deep concern. There were approximately equal responses from those in favor of overrides, particularly for schools, and those opposed to using overrides.

1. Stop allowing votes to put over-rides on the taxes.
2. Need to promote business opportunities to keep taxes down. We need restaurants etc to keep people in town.
3. We need to increase revenue to support our town's needs.
   I'd like to see an off road community path.
4. Stop doing overrides to solve the problems like the pool instead do a fundraiser like the past joey's park to solve some issues and focus tax dollars on the school infrastructure and the roads
5. The schools are the bedrock of our community, but we cannot "rest on our laurels" for much longer. The budget gets picked apart each year, and the features that make our schools strong are replaced with "free periods" or fee-based programs. A school that teaches just the three Rs is not building good citizens or well-rounded kids and a strong community. We must act quickly and often to secure new sources of business tax revenue. It's not sustainable to keep asking for overrides. And it is not ethical to keep raising fees for what is supposed to be a public education. It creates two classes of kids and deepens the socioeconomic rift in our community. We need to do everything possible to stop this disturbing trend.
6. When every I tell someone I live in Belmont the 1st thoughts is I must have $$, then bad taxes and bad roads. These seem to be what we're known for.
7. bike path, useful store in Macy's location, encourage more commercial business to increase belmont's commercial tax base, control growth to prevent over-crowding of schools,
   fenced in dog park (could be as simple as putting gates on town field and still requiring goose buster permit)
8. We need to encourage additional forms of revenue besides exclusions and tax increases, in order to maintain our level services (we do not in reality) and pay for our high priority items. We could be more pro-business without sacrificing our small-town feel.
9. Implementing these goals -- which I think are all very important -- will cost money. We need to acknowledge that fact and make sufficient money available to actually implement these goals (whether through an override or otherwise). We must think of these items as investments in our town's future, and plan accordingly.
10. There was nothing about expanding the tax base. It is impossible with the current mix to fund our needs and the town must allow increased density and commercial development where it makes sense (along Rt 2, Trapelo/Belmont, Center, etc.)
11. We need to broaden the tax base by bringing in businesses. The ever-increasing taxes make living in Belmont unsustainable.
12. We cannot remain a Town of Homes, while simultaneously providing an acceptable level of services with an acceptable tax burden.
13. We need to invest more $ in schools, not relying on the smart kids/families to keep our schools highly ranked, we need to invest in buildings and roads, so we need to be more encouraging to business to bring in more money, and we need regular overrides as well. Although people feel our taxes are high, compared to many areas of the country (Chicago suburbs for example), they are extremely reasonable and we need to educate people about that.

14. Reduce taxes and spending

15. The insane number of two family townhouses being jammed into the Butler area gives lie to this aspiration. The lack of support for additional tax revenue through developing (smartly) more industry, is driving out an entire economic strata (because the tax burden is increasingly placed on homeowners) that has been vital to the success of Belmont as a desirable place to live. Our schools will begins to suffer as we cannot continue to squeeze money from residents, and as we stuff the town with additional students living in two family townhouses on lots that once contained simple ranches. It is tactical, short-sighted behavior that will have negative strategic consequences for Belmont. Once we lose the school quality rankings, good luck selling your expensive Belmont home.

16. Survey the taxpayers on what they want and balance that with what we need to sustain the town long-term.

17. If the citizenry want a new library or a swimming center, raise the funds through donations. We don't need the to harry property owners, particularly the ones on fixed incomes who seek to retire in homes they bought decades ago for funds that benefit a tiny well connected minority of vocal meddlers!

18. Some proactive attention must be paid to bringing together the divisive and often opposing "interests" of parents vs. retirees. Some resolution needs to be found to the problem of the substantial investment needed for the school system versus inability of retirees to pay taxes based on ridiculously inflated property values. Maybe some creative sliding scale of tax ceiling/rebates for residents who have owned in Belmont for a specific number of years -- this would assist retirees as well as acclimating incoming residents to the idea that the town requires substantial capital investment (i.e., tip the balance of required revenue toward newcomers to somewhat moderate the influx of school-age children straining the system). Somehow seniors must be made to understand that they cannot "have their cake and eat it too" - that is, they cannot have indefinitely increasing property values without the town maintaining its desirability to the outside market, which requires capital investment (roads, new high school).

19. We need business tax revenue desperately. We can still have a sense of small-town community while promoting developments such as Cushing Village. We need to be more open to change, and faster change. Decisions take too long. Get community feedback, but then ACT. And don't let a few citizens' voices drown the majority. Mixed-use developments in Bel Ctr/Waverley and other locations close to the train would be a great way to get affordable housing and new businesses into town while maintaining our small-town feel.

20. Real estate taxes are too high for people on fixed income. This falls mainly on people who live alone most of whom are women.
Make the CPA surtax voluntary for senior citizens.
The Circuit Breaker should be modified. Its restrictions disqualify people who live alone - mostly women
Give seniors a break - they want to stay in their homes as long as they can. Other towns do.
No more overrides until some are paid off.
The senior center is wonderful but it does not help pay the exorbitant real estate tax.

21. An ignorant citizenry is contrary to democratic values. 3/4 of the residents don't know what is going on and don't vote. The new fangled over the top town pool, that will increase our taxes, is a case in point.

22. Keep taxes low should be priority #1. Throwing money at things does not insure improvement, it often insures waste.

23. Property taxes should be based more on living space sq/ft than a combo of land/living space. This would slow the rush of building oversize homes on small lots and may help more fairly distribute taxes to multi families that disproportionately use town sources but pay less because of living on smaller land lots.

24. The goals/questions in this survey were ridiculous when you consider the high property taxes, deplorable road conditions, over crowded classrooms, etc...

25. Page 11 did not allow entrys :Reduce taxes and spending

26. Belmont needs to raise taxes! It can't do more with less and the town is starting to fall apart. The schools are declining even with the best efforts of all involved. The roads are a joke.

27. This town needs more tax revenue from business more than it needs to be a "town of homes". If we value education and safe roads, both of those require financial support. It can't all come from the citizens, lest you push-out the lower economic status and have a "town of well-off".

28. More thoughtful planning is essential. We should not be addressing the loudest voice, but rather the most pressing needs in town. The roads, the schools, and attracting a business tax base are of primary importance.

29. We desperately need an override to cover the schools' increasing enrollments and to prioritize spending. I still can't figure out how a pool and spending nearly $6M on that is more important than bringing down class sizes. The Board of Selectmen need to work in harmony and conjunction with the School Board to avoid the fiasco that occurred with regards to the rebuilding of the public library.

30. Keep the community affordable for longer term residents. Diffuse the 'long-term residents vs. 'Cambridge' newcomers' tensions (recent Selectman race, Library over-ride, etc.)

31. I think we should focus much more on generating tax revenue, at the expense in places of preserving the "small-town community atmosphere

32. The goal of preserving the small-town atmosphere currently and into the future is a NEGATIVE. In order to survive financially and not chase citizens away because of the excessive tax burden, we must actively explore avenues to develop more residential housing, Cushing Square is a good start. They need not be this large but need to be on the town agenda. Other communities surrounding Belmont are increasing their housing stock. If Belmont does not, too much outlay of $$ will be required of two few. This concept worked well 100 years ago; now it is keeping the town from growing responsibly

33. Stop the tear-downs and overbuilt houses. Respect the taxpayer as well as the requests from the school dept. Stop wrangling over snow removal and yard sales and just be considerate of one's neighbors

34. Make sure the Town is not spending money it doesn't have or making commitments it can't keep

35. need more large commercial tax payers

36. Sense of community is enhanced by support of moderate development and increased revenue to support the needs of the town.

37. Corporate taxes

38. Support the schools (with an override, and regular overrides) so that all children can take part in art and sports without out of pocket expenses, while encouraging all members of the community to get involved in those activities.
support quality businesses in our retail centers.
NO MORE BANKS AND CHAIN STORES
Did I mention an override??? Long overdue. We want the best in life without paying for it. We need an override. Our schools are at their limit- teachers stressed, students stressed.
Oh, forgot to mention, We need a new library. Energy efficient building that will pay for itself, instead of making do with old outdated

39. I didn't know how to mark this because it is the most important goal we have, but in the opposite direction. It is very important that we stop trying to preserve our imaginary small-town community atmosphere. Belmont is not a small town. (I grew up in a small town.) We are a suburb 4 miles from one of the largest cities in America. We are not a small town. Small towns do not have bus service,

commuter rail, access to symphonies, art and science museums, world-class universities, major league teams, and highly professional job opportunities. Pretending we are a small town is preventing us from developing a commercial and office tax base, and it is hurting the environment by preventing us from encouraging density and smart growth. Regrettably we are doing very well this goal. Keeping on like this will soon destroy our school and pension funding and make it impossible for children and older people to afford to live here.

40. Reduce taxes and spending

41. We live next to two great cities that have bigger tax bases and can support this goal. Belmont can't take on too much given the budget

42. GET OUT OF THE WAY!!!!!!!!!
Allow people wide latitude in the sorts of businesses they operate within the town and allow the community to grow organically from the bottom up.
The taxes that go to pay for an underutilized media center prevent people from spending their money on things they want, including the cultural activities they want to engage in.

43. The taxes are unbearable....it is pushing a lot of people out and bringing in people who don't really care about the town and just send their kids to the school and then leave. After paying our taxes we can't afford to shop or eat in Belmont Center and it is very sad!

44. Foremost, they should act swiftly to bring business tax revenue Taxes to the town so we can support schools Schools without fees and build the amenities that will further connect our community (such as a new library and an off-road community path). Solid plans that have broad community support will also open avenues for private fund-raising

45. We need to develop more businesses that are consistent with the town character (especially in the Trapelo Rd-Belmont St Corridor). Centers retail This will broaden the tax base Taxes and keep out the big box stores. Whose idea was it to let the Waverly Church get torn down and turned into ugly condos? If the church could not be kept, that lot should have been rezoned to make it eligible for a small tasteful commercial building. Land Use Planning Housing

46. The town's infrastructure is decaying and the town's voters have not been willing to assume the tax hikes needed to reverse decades of under investment. If the voters are not willing to invest, then I don't know what the "town" can do about that.

47. I would love to see more investment in local infrastructure - many of the playgrounds need upgrading, we need a new library, etc. I recently moved to Belmont and was surprised - given how high property taxes are and how wealthy the town is - to find so much of the infrastructure in disrepair.

48. Belmont is a great town, however it does not manage or plan growth thoughtfully. The roads, abundance of banks, dearth of useful, diverse businesses, ridiculously low taxes on business, willingness to sell off residential property to nonprofits (Belmont Hill School), wreaks of cronyism and shortedness. It makes me sad that such a wonderful place is being short changed by the few.

49. Tax on those with solar panels?? Ridiculous. Has town looked into leaf blowing laws?

50. Land not used on residential properties should be taxed at a much lower rate than the physical structure thus encouraging more open space and shifting the burden to housing sqft which is more indicative of services used.

51. Reduce taxes and spending.

52. Work with the current taxes rather than trying to pass over rides or debt exclusions all the time.

53. Belmont is strapped for money that is much needed to maintain our excellent school, build a new pool, and improve our library. I have been bemused at HOW LONG the Cushing Square commercial initiative is taking and at the plethora of banks and real estate agencies as opposed to a rich variety of stores. I miss the book store greatly. We do need more commerce so that families are not so

strapped by property taxes. We also need to have a better long-term vision on how to maintain Belmont's essential resources.

54. We need to preserve the Little Pond wetlands and not allow any building on it at all. The conservation tax on the property needs to be repealed. It is just allowing people to use any excuse to use it.

55. No mention of keeping Belmont affordable from a property tax standpoint; Some of these goals are just so abstract it is difficult to know what they mean.

56. Add industrial property to increase tax base and free resources for residents and the environment.

57. Weekly recycling pickup, encouraging composting and reclaiming rain water. Fix roads and sidewalks. Invest in necessities before investing in non-essentials. For example, invest in improving schools and library. Do NOT build a new pool complex that will cost all residents tax money, especially a pool facility that is not free or of a reasonable cost for all residents to use once it is built. There are many summer swimming options in bordering towns. A new pool complex is not a necessity for this town when our roads are a mess and our schools need more money.

XII - TOWN CHARACTER

Many respondents challenged the idea that preserving the small town atmosphere is a positive. Many noted that the town can be experienced as unwelcoming, exclusive, closed to change, discouraging of new businesses and lacking diversity. It was noted that we must balance our small town feel with progress in these areas. Respondents wanted more gatherings that bring people from all parts of town, young and old, new comers and long timers together. Many also noted the link between the Town's reputation and the quality of the schools that is the draw for many.

1. Residents are much too insular, and worse, pride themselves on a rather bizarre form of isolationism.
2. Belmont is a fantastic place to live; please continue the great job!
3. great town + great citizens + great leadership = greater future
4. If we were to get to the point where schools were no longer stellar, we would lose our character as a truly vibrant, attractive, pleasant community where people want to live. The excellent schools are a really big part of what makes Belmont Belmont. It's actually a little embarrassing to me when I hear about members of our town wanting to make cuts to the public schools. It seems so foolish and short-sighted, not to mention kind of mean.
5. When every I tell someone I live in Belmont the 1st thoughts is I must have $$, then bad taxes and bad roads. These seem to be what we're known for.
6. The town still has a feeling of entitlement. It is a tight knit community of people who have lived in town for a significant length of time. New residents are often excluded through lack of communication.
7. Get past the small-town stuff. We are part of a vibrant metro-politan area. Welcome more density. Do preserve open space, but develop our town centers and thoroughfares!
8. We cannot remain a Town of Homes, while simultaneously providing an acceptable level of services with an acceptable tax burden.
9. I moved to Belmont 5 years ago not knowing much about the town. I am so happy we moved here. We love the diverse community, the family environment, the accessibility to Boston & Cambridge. I think the town resources here are very good. Could things be better? Yes, but I think it is pretty good as is. We need to stop comparing ourselves to Lexington. People CHOOSE to live here because it is not Lexington. I did.
10. Love town day! How can we get young families involved in politics? More upscale retail. More parking. More walkable centers. Too dangerous to cross the road right now
11. Promote a small town with a big heart atmosphere; Encourage hospitality, generosity, and friendliness - as town values. Encourage neighbors to get to know each other; Increase awareness of the needs of the community and how we can assist others.
12. The town is still boring re Globe article 7 or 8 years ago! It has no identity. Diversity in Belmont is Asian, not Latino or Black except for the Project. We should be ashamed. But we're not. Why not? Need to town-sponsored neighborhood events. Is there a real playground program? Parades? There are the events like outdoor arts festivals or block parties or kite flying? Town day is our one thing. Not enough!
13. When we have approached a local body wanting to participate, the first reaction is to invite to visit the web or contact by email. An effort needs to be done to invite to "real" nor "virtual" meetings, to really feel people think that they are welcome.
14. The neighborhoods abutting Trapelo Road/Belmont Street are part this Town of Homes, and should be treated as such

15. The Town has to contend with a serious split in its goal. The eastern part of the Town has a Cambridge/Boston orientation, with an interest in public transit, higher density, commercial development and city-like services, while the western part of the town is oriented towards suburban ideals, like free parking, low-density development, and is anti-commercial development. It's hard to reconcile such opposite points of view.
16. Stop allowing homes to be destroyed and huge mega houses built on its place. No more condos also.
17. We need to be careful to balance the small town feel with progress that makes the town financially viable. Love the payson park concerts, town day and other town-wide events. Perhaps more use of the public spaces for pick-up games of frisbee, concerts, etc.
18. As individual residents: don't be so judgmental re: other residents and re: those who 'appear' different. Don't micro manage each other. Respect individual independence more.
19. reduce friction between families with school-aged children and those without, perhaps by having greater cross-group activities (difficult, I know...I thinking of things like plays that the HS could put on that seniors would enjoy going to, or events that are equally open to families with and without school aged children)
20. In some ways, the small-town atmosphere is what hurts us because the squeaky wheel can get his way without a community process.
21. Rather than focusing on preserving "our small town community atmosphere," I would prefer we focus on a high quality of life and"promote and encourage community events and regional programs, and recreational facilities, and plan for and maintain our walkable community.
22. We need just the opposite- town needs to be more lively, instead we have only 1 restaurant and bunch of pizza places...
23. Sense of community must be felt by connection and there is more that can be done with technology to help foster connections. I think if you come from somewhere else it is pretty hard to feel a sense of community and this what this town is becoming. Belmont needs to change with the times. A small town feel is nice but it must be supported by modern amenities and connections based on who lives here.
24. I believe the goal "to preserve the small-town community atmosphere" is directly in opposition to the idea of welcoming new people into the town. To preserve the atmosphere, progress must be throttled, businesses prevented from opening in the town, new construction forbidden etc. The boarded up businesses and collapsing middle class in Belmont stand in tribute to the outstanding way in which the town's officers are accomplishing this conservative effort to prevent change.
    To improve the sense of community, the town needs to stop meddling in the lives of the citizenry. It should be easier to build in the town;
25. if the Townies weren't so damned obvious about how they have their hands in every pocket (government, services, permits, trash, grants, sports, etc.) the town would be more unified.
26. This goal contradicts the first goal of making the town and open and diverse community for new comers. While the feeling of being part of a small and cozy community can be nice for families who have lived in the community for the generations, I don't see much effort in taking in new comers.
27. The town seems very segregated by location. Residents of Belmont Hill even refer to their part of town as though it were it's own town. I think more effort needs to be made to include all residents regardless of location or financial affluence. Many of the towns residents cannot participate in events simple because they cannot afford to. This results in them feeling unwelcome and generally unhappy with their town of residency.
28. I think too many people want to preserve the "small-town community atmosphere" to the detriment of the town - nothing ever seems to change because those that have lived in town for a

long time seem to have the attitude that "well, that's the way we always did it so why should we change?". Because of this, progress in town moves at a glacial pace.

29. Promote community involvement with activities that give back to the community as well as promote healthy living.

30. I think this goal has got in the way of necessary development -- see for example the Cushing Square situation. While preserving the neighborhoods we need to make it easier to develop in our centres, to encourage business and increase the attractiveness of the centres as local shopping areas.

31. The town's resistance to come into the modern era is apparent with the lack of updated stores and services

32. It seems the town defines "community" as those who have either grown up in Belmont or who have "earned" their right by living here for a while. Message: Newcomers' ideas and expertise not welcomed at any meetings or committees.

33. We need to find a better balance on diversity and sense of community. I am not a US citizen but am a US permanent resident and find it very frustrating that as a consequence, I cannot vote even for the school committee. I pay significant property taxes and have a child in Belmont Schools. One part of welcoming immigrants is to give us a voice in town affairs.

34. Get people out of their cars and walking or biking around town. The heavy reliance on cars leads to a sense of isolation.

35. There is not a feeling of inclusiveness in Belmont.

36. I like the idea of a sense of community. I don't care so much about the small-town thing, though I'd prefer that Belmont not be filled with strip malls either. As for ideas about creating community, the town could sponsor Cambridge Time Trade Circle events. The Time Trade Circle allows members to barter services with each other in an easy way.

37. Please don't make this town into a smaller version of cambridge by putting in big business or housing. Cambridge is great but as a neighbor. I moved to Belmont (and overpaid for a house & taxes) because it is a small town. My choice. Please don't try to change this, you will damage the sense of community.

38. As long as constituencies that strongly promote conservation and sustainability are at odds with the constituencies that want commercial growth and resources for infrastructure there will remain deadlock on much that can be done for the town. Personally I think it's time to move away from trying to promote the community as a "small town". It's more important to promote "community friendly." BY geography Belmont is a small town but it can no longer offer its residents, present and future, the promise of being a "Town of Homes" as such. Such a vision, given current realities, means that just the super wealthy can afford to live here over the long term.

39. The growing use of cameras to track people is insidious and erodes a sense of community and respect.

One specific thing that disturbs me is the use of license plate scanners by town police. Most people in town do not seem to be aware that this is happening. It is one thing to check the computer when someone is stopped for a violation, it is another thing when police sit on the side of the road scanning people without any probable cause or reasonable suspicion. Furthermore there is no transparency or oversight about what is being done with this information. Even if there was transparency, I still feel strongly that this is wrong.

A second specific development that concerns me is the plan to put cameras in the schools. This is an instance where a lack of real thoughtful consideration is painfully apparent to me. People say we obviously need cameras for safety. I question this thinking.

We have always been very fortunate in Belmont to have low levels of crime. In fact, crime is at an all time low everywhere. Cameras do not prevent crime, they don't prevent terrorism. If you think

they do - show me the evidence. Why do people lose all sense of skepticism when technology is involved? What a surveillance society does is create a climate of mistrust in each other and a culture of fear. The police have all the eyes they need in the citizens of the town. We all have a responsibility to look out for each other - that's what community is.
What is the common denominator here? It's all about power. Cameras create this attitude: "I'm in charge and you better not step out of line because I'm watching you." Why are cameras automatically put in when buildings are remodeled? Do the fire station, town hall and the senior center need surveillance? Really?? How do I convey to you the real despair and dread I feel about this? My vision is for Belmont to be a place that rejects a surveillance society and recognizes the range to liberty this poses. I do not want any cameras either publicly or privately owned on our streets. I want our town to think more deeply and question "quick fixes" that don't work. I want us to treat each other with kindness + respect - not fear + suspicion.

40. We are newcomers and really feel that we are welcome in Belmont, thanks!

41. promote walkability of belmont (we are the right sized town for this) --sidewalks, attract pedestrian friendly retail, calm traffic. this addresses a lot of the priorities listed--small town community, environment, traffic, neighborhood invested retail...

42. Bring back the electric 73 bus as the old-school trolley system gives Belmont that "small town" feel. I imagine that after Trapelo is fixed, it will return.

43. The idea of preserving a sense of community by definition includes many of the specific goals listed here.

44. Will just reiterate that this town needs to change with the times. We can preserve small town atmosphere with modern amenities and take advantage of our proximity to Boston/Cambridge/Somerville for bringing in new ideas, creativity and becoming a close friend of these innovation centers. Preparing our children to become part of that broader fabric of our larger Boston area rather than isolated from what is right next door to us.

45. We also need to preserve Belmonts' small and safe town profile, our police department and firefighters should have more attention and support from the town.

46. Can we use the Beech Center more for community events? This is a huge potential resource for the town which is underutilized. Town Day, Turn on the Town, and the Easter Egg hunt are all wildly popular community building events- are there more events like this we could have to promote our small town atmosphere?
Also- this is a bit off topic but the merging of Concord, Common, and Leonard street remains a mess for pedestrians and for cars- this is a terrible entry into our Town Center, and does little to promote a good sense of community.

47. Just because there is inevitable change, it does not mean that the Sense of Community is not being preserved. People need to be less afraid of change in Town.

48. Sense of Community" differs from "small-town community atmosphere

49. To be specific, I like the idea of a community atmosphere, but "small town" implies a number of things which I don't care for. I would love to see our business centers develop. Would love to see some high density condo developments so that young professionals and empty nesters had more options (and we had more tax base without more students). And with more density, perhaps we would have more mass transit options. I'd love all that, even though it is not "small town

50. I don't think we have a small town community atmosphere

51. I think we should focus much more on generating tax revenue, at the expense in places of preserving the "small-town community atmosphere

52. Promote and support "block parties" to help neighbors get to know each other and eventually help each other. Promote and support events based on lifestyle at appropriate venues eg. Families with dogs get together at Beech St Ctr and Town Field. ??

53. A sense of community is extremely important. However, I don't care for the sense to be exclusive or elitist. The "small-town community" attitude can sometimes feel dated and not inviting

54. It would be nice if there was a "Newcomer's Club" or something like that. Where somebody in each precinct would organize a basket of goods from local businesses, welcoming them to town. My sister lives in Ridgewood, NJ and they do something like this.

55. more town hall events
more community wide events-music, 4th of july, community service projects
Especially mroe places for families with children to congregate-refurbishing some old parks; new library!!!

56. small-town can sometimes mean a lack of open mindedness. I would prefer to aim for the cosmopolitan

57. Community events, blovk parties

58. Parades
More town celebrations like for the 4th of july

59. Create a newcomers group and a 0-5 group similar to the Arlington Family Connection.

60. More community service events and activities.

61. cut short residential streets in half so we have more 'cul de sacs', it facilitates neighborhoods

62. First of all, it's important to maintain the identity of belmont, i.e, "town of homes." If one could describe clusters of condominiums/townhouses being built in place of "neighborhood" homes, it then changes the landscape and possibly the characterization of such.

63. I have lived in Belmont about 15 years and I still feel like a newcomer.

64. Greater cross generational integration - we are a town of sub-groups not a cohesive community. Lack a unifying glue that binds us together.

65. Have more ethnic related activities, encourage neighborhoods for the residents to get to know one another, encourage voter participation even on non-election years

66. Business districts appear uneven with Belmont Centre beautified and other areas not. If needed develop neighborhood based business districts with active action plans, or offer opportunities for volunteers to help improve look and feel

67. believe it is better to look beyond the Belmont borders and a metropolitan approach

68. I'm not sure the Town can do this. I wish people were friendlier-- smiling, greeting, chatting. But this is New England, and there is more reserve, more distance

69. think about folks who wish to continue to reside in the Town after educating their children instead of the Town becoming a revolving door around education

70. through town meeting members - encourage neighborhood or precinct list-serves to provide neighbor news, tool sharing, etc

71. There is sense of secrecy and elitism in our town affairs. Butler playground fiasco is the best example how dysfunctional our town government is and continues to be. We should all be ashamed. Open conversation about this would be not just very welcomed but healing to a fragile sense of community

72. I didn't know how to mark this because it is the most important goal we have, but in the opposite direction. It is very important that we stop trying to preserve our imaginary small-town community atmosphere. Belmont is not a small town. (I grew up in a small town.) We are a suburb 4 miles from one of the largest cities in America. We are not a small town. Small towns do not have bus service, commuter rail, access to symphonies, art and science museums, world-class universities, major league teams, and highly professional job opportunities. Pretending we are a small town is preventing us from developing a commercial and office tax base, and it is hurting the environment by preventing us from encouraging density and smart growth. Regrettably we are doing very well

this goal. Keeping on like this will soon destroy our school and pension funding and make it impossible for children and older people to afford to live here.

73. Stop harping on "Town of Homes". It is kind of a myth. Belmont is more urban than many large sections of Boston. Living in an isolated cluster of houses without food places, shopping, recreation, etc., is not always compelling. The Horne Rd crowd hurt Belmont in this respect

74. I would like to see Belmont modernize in creative progressive ways so preserving the status quo is not usually appealing to me.

75. Less tearing down on traditional/historic structures to be replaced with "mega" buildings that don't fit our town

76. Let the people define the character without government intervention. Have the town develop the character as defined by the building designs and size and by the events hosted like Town Day

77. I think belmont does a good job on tjis

78. expressing and highlightin historical elements of towns are important BUT also need to balance with the changing times and needs of citizens. appropraite retail would increase tax base. The Pool thing - fine. I dont see the value of preserving the Clark House - i understand the importance of the historic value BUT is this REALLY Belmont? Safer pedestrian travel would be benefical - especially under the Bridge. More established bike lanes - like bikers or not - there WILL BE bikers so might as well make sense of it. Clean the Bridge. Entry Town signs at key locations would ADD character. No more Banks! Convienence/grocery store...enhance town fields - compared to peer towns in pretty bad shape.

79. This is important, but I think some of the other goals take precedence

80. I think one of the biggest advantage of Belmont is that many residents are college professors, scholars, and artists. It would be nice to have these intellectuals involved in the culture enrichment program. And this could be a more interesting character of the town.

81. Give more identity to neighborhoods. I live on winn brook and there are several opportunities to easily create "gateways" such as the intersection of cross and Channing which is currently an eyesore

82. Creativity is fine--but the town must be peaceful and beautiful.

83. There is only so much a town can do improve the character of the town.

84. One must be careful with what we wish for or have as a goal. Historically, the town has not been open to retail of a mid-size and negative about increasing the range of housing stock for renters (other than houses). Our 'Character" is locking our feet and heads into concrete. We must open our heads to a wider range of ideas for real growth. It will help stabilize the tax burden on a limited populous. At some point, people will leave and 'really wealthy' people will move in to raise their children. This will unfairly burden citizens of less than wealthy means.

85. I think the character of our town is intact(would need to have your definition of "cultural enrichment" before making suggestions for improvement).

86. The silver maple forest development is a major problem. Overall, as I compare Belmont to other area towns, we are not doing a good job -- at all -- on environmental responsibility.

87. Would be nice to have some carnivals or town wide events at the park - what about craft fair that also has carnival games. No need for rides - they are not safe.

88. The "Town" has to stop battling its own school system. The school system is one of Belmont's primary attractions to outside buyers at this point -- no one is paying $1M plus for 3 bedroom homes unless they have kids and want an excellent school system. As a parent of children who have gone through elementary and are now experiencing the joys of Chenery and BHS, it is my considered opinion that the high ranking of the school system (e.g., US News Report) is mostly due to the innate pool of talent in Belmont's student population and IN SPITE OF considerable

deficiencies in school infrastructure (BHS), organization (BHS), and attention to all levels of students (Chenery, BHS). We as a town have to stop sitting on our school system's laurels before the deficiencies start dragging down even the reputed quality of the system (and property values with it). The prevailing opinion of seniors in this town (as reported by that august organ the Citizen-Herald) seems to be that property values will keep going up forever regardless of how much we invest in the school system. Concrete suggestion: give tours of the BHS facility (grimy corridors, sprung auditorium seats, half-lit library) and contrast with photos of Burlington High, Newton North High, Lexington High; shameful.

89. I would love to see the Town of Belmont more directly encourage adoption of solar energy and other clean energy initiatives, it seems to lag behind other local towns.

90. Need to bring the recycling program up to par with surrounding communities. Need to do much better at maintaining public buildings; the high school in particular.

91. We need to be able to change. We cannot support or continue to live in 1950.

92. Well, Belmont Hill is being destroyed. Just drive up Concord ave. and it is sickening what they are doing and the poor animals are bulldozed out of their homes and people wonder why they have them in their yards....stop the greedy developers..

93. I would like to see more cycling infrastructure. This would promote safe cycling which would reduce traffic, reduce pollution, preserve town character, and increase community health.

94. A proper conservation program for buildings of architectural importance; community paths - Belmont is a (bad) joke compared to our neighbors.

95. Work together.

96. Quality of life is not just about bike paths. It's about passable sidewalks. It's not about food markets in the center. It's about housing and services for those in need. I'd like to see a permanent and welcoming food pantry that offers other basic services to people in need. Belmont is ideally situated geographically and has desirable physical attributes, not to be lost.

97. The senior center seems to be under-utilized. Would love to see this be a "community" center, not just a senior center

98. New programs to encourage new residents to get involved in town

99. Additional town wide-activities; E.g., "junior olympics"; Annual veteran appreciation parade

100. More town-wide events, better website and better job of advertising events town does have.

101. Establish a teen center.

102. Things like the welcome to Belmont event, allow us to offer to take part or volunteer at it.

103. More gathering opportunities like the summer concerts in Payson Park.

104. It is critical to maintain events like Town Day and the Dan Scharfman Run to build community unity. However, how about a press campaign too, like "I love Belmont" stickers, or cool t-shirts for the kids?

105. Continue community events like Town Day and Music in the Park. Look to add other events like a dine around at local restaurants and welcome dinners for new residents hosted by volunteers/neighbors (happy to discuss in person)

106. More recurring activities and events (like Farmers Market) and less emphasis on bigger ones (Town Day, specific fundraisers)

107. Have more community-wide events like Town Day and Meet Belmont.

108. Love the town wide activities but need more sandwich boards to advertise for those residents not on a school listserv.

109. Change the Senior Center to a Community Center where meetings can happen for updates on community issues, plus a place for all Belmont residents to interact.

110. We have activities (namely soccer) for our youth, we have a wonderful place for our seniors to gather and do activities, we are very lacking in helping young-families be a part of the community - it can be very hard to get to know people and there are not a lot of programs for babies-toddlers under 5. Better safer enclosed park structures, and more room for children at the library would be a start.

111. Some sort of organization of block parties that is driven at the town level. Getting to know your neighbors is even more important as we welcome a more diverse population. Some sort of committee in that area to drive this might have more people step up to organize them on their blocks...

112. Encourage local ways for us to come together such as more pancake breakfasts or potluck dinners.

113. More community based activities that everyone can attend.

114. Have more events like the Dan Sharfman run, that brings people together.

115. The more all-Belmont events, the better.

116. More community involved projects -like town days- that also includes diversity.

117. Town Day is amazing - I would like to bring a bit of that spirit to the Friday night home football games - the community event or series of events during the Fall.

118. More frequent community service opportunities within the town.

119. More events like TOWN DAY and THE TREE LIGHTING. Maybe something for ADULTS ONLY.

120. With the exception of Town Day and the Christmas Tree Lighting, which happens once per year, there is no other community event that Belmont sponsors to bring the community together. We need more events to bring the community together!

121. Many new families are involved in youth sports. I think there should be regular town gatherings at the fields on Saturdays to build greater community.

122. More consistent and frequent community events related to some of these 'Common Goals"

123. The Town Day recipe is simply broken, and it squanders valuable resources and reaches a finite segment of the community - There needs to be a mix of "micro events" that bring people together. For example : Neighborhood block parties are life long memories for kids and bring parents, newcomers, and seniors all together. Come up with a "Block party in a box" format : Publish out to the town how simple it is to have a neighborhood party and explain why this type of neighborhood event is supported by the larger community and the benefits it yields. Explain how resources such as the DPW, Police, Rec Department, Fire Dept, etc. map into supporting your community event as you come together. The primary driver should be making sure the seniors and new arrivals have a substantive opportunity to be part of the community around them. There should be no funding parsed out to the neighborhoods groups. The message should be how the existing town investments map to support the community.

124. More Town Day / Christmas Lighting type of activities

125. Use Town web site to promote community event awareness.

126. Increase multiple small local social events like street parties.

127. Organize more community service opportunities.

128. Festivals like Town Day on Leonard Street are great, as are the two road races. Community suppers; Events for whole community (multi generational) around music, sports, food, and the environment and outdoors.

129. There are lots of opportunities here for newcomers, but we have had a very difficult time finding anything out easily. It's all been by chance, and very frustrating when trying to settle kids.

130. Need more community input -- an on-line Suggestion Box would help identify issues and potential solutions.

131. Promote ways for old and young to get together .

132. A huge amount was spent on the Senior Center but efforts to work with that center and children in town has been difficult. There should be more collaboration.

133. More community events like picnics, town days, etc

134. I love the community events I have attended at the Beech Street Center. I think they should have more events there. Its a great space. Events need better advertising.

135. Community events.

136. First define what " small-town community atmosphere" is; what is the vision for Belmont's "atmosphere"?

137. What defines a "small-town" atmosphere? Hard to comment on such a subjective term.

138. I don't know what "preserve our small-town community atmosphere" means. Create working group to address issues/concerns and communicate these initiatives widely? We are not aware of these initiatives.

139. Encourage events in the Town sponsored / hosted by the large landowners - McLean, Belmont Hill, Habitat. These are within our borders but feel like separate entities.

140. More volunteer activities

141. Does not preserve "small town atmosphere"

142. Foster pride in being part of the Belmont "community" vs. just residency. We have a lot of residents who are not really members of the community. The only time I see seniors in the high school is for Town Meeting - maybe there should be a special section and transportation next time there is a play. Beech Street Center has become a private haven for seniors to further isolate themselves. There should be kids yoga classes there too!

143. More community spaces. I'm grateful we're building a new pool. If we had a new attractiveworkable library people would flock to it. We need a true community center for town wide events. The Senior Center doesn't seem to be working.

144. Keep up things such as Payson Park concerts, golden shoes, Town Day, Underwood Pool revival, parades…. these programs are important to our family!

145. Better outreach/involvement to people without kids in the school system. We didn't feel like we became a real part of the town until our kids entered kindergarten.

146. More town-wide events like Town Day.

147. Can we use the Beech Center more for community events? This is a huge potential resource for the town which is underutilized. Also, is not clear when sometimes an event is held there if its audience is mainly seniors or for the entire community. The Rec department is amazing, and it would be great if possible to develop it even more to promote community involvement- looking to Arlington's rec department as a possible source of inspiration. It also would be nice to generate money, even more money, for the town.

148. Meet Belmont is a great event for newcomers to the community. Town Day is a great event for residents who have been here for longer. It might be nice to have one more community-wide event, not tailored to newcomers, in hopes of looping in people who have been here for a while, but who may not benefit from the amusements of Town Day in the same way. Maybe an ice cream social on the town green? Or a winter-time gathering at the Beech Street to get folks out in the colder temps?

149. Publishing and distribution of Belmont Community quarterly or semiannual

150. Link the new residents/longer Residents. Link older population with younger population. Promote kindness.

151. The Town could provide more recreational events like a father daughter dance, a summer fun picnic, bands to play on the new Joeys Park stage, more opportunities for children's recreational activities, make the Beech St senior center available to all ages...even if just for a few hours per week. Make the streets safer for children by enforcing speed limits locally. Increase the size of the Farmers Market to include music and crafts.

152. Designate a building as a cultural center where arts + crafts etc could be done. Or expand the hours that Beech Street Center is available. Week nights and weekends?

153. Bring an event to the Waverley/Sq side of town once a year.

154. Celebrate diversity -- not just Christian holidays (egg hunt, Santa). Town day is a great event.

155. Increase BMC awareness and local programming

156. Increase local talent and exposure through BMC local programming and awareness. Create incentives to watch local programming.

XIII - TOWN GOVERNANCE

The overwhelming majority of comments expressed criticism of the Town's governance. A perception of inefficiency and inability to make decisions in a timely manner was raised frequently. The decision-making process is seen as bogged down by narrow interests competing with one another and stymying progress. Respondents cited a lack of comprehensive planning regarding Town spending. Respondents voiced concern that Town officials are not representative of the town and are a small, closed circle that is unwelcoming of other voices. The need for better and more open communication channels between elected officials/committees/employees and residents was frequently raised.

1. Hopefully the town can speed up the time it takes projects to get completed.
2. Too much focus on funding for security - town meeting just approved $50,000 to evaluate putting security cameras in town buildings and put $60,000 towards a police officer to be in the high school. I think there is too much focus on a remote probability of a catastrophic event and not enough focus on daily life - improving education in the classroom, investing in maintaining our infrastructure, etc.
   I also want to say that there is too much living in the past in this town - I followed the Wellington School project closely and am now following the Underwood Pool project closely. In both instances the architects proposed beautiful modern buildings which would have been very harmonious with the sites and surrounding homes, only to be told to build something more traditional. Many communities with more historical relevance are successful in building new municipal buildings which reflect the century we are living in while paying respect to the past (see the new main library in Cambridge). Must the folks who have lived here longest dictate everything that happens in town? I have been here 22 years, but evidently that is not long enough. Other communities have more forward looking energy and are able to attract better restaurants and more interesting shops - think Arlington - we only have the schools going for us - and we need to keep investing in those or those will decline too.
   OK - that's about all! Thanks for letting me get that on paper.
3. Two more opinions: 1. This town should seriously consider modifying the Town Meeting form more toward a City government. Someone needs to be IN CHARGE and RESPONSIBLE for implementing improvements. Government by committee is working only to maintain a frustrating status quo.
4. great town + great citizens + great leadership = greater future
5. Stop allowing votes to put over-rides on the taxes. Maintain the buildings on an annual basis instead of allowing them to fall apart and be torn down. Allow community input on all public building being built. Fix the traffic and roads.
6. more communciation on how to get involved in town
7. To get more people informed about what is going on in town do a better job of effective communication
8. As a town we do not accomplish many projects. We spend far to much money on study's and discuss items that are black & white.
9. More surveys and outreach. This is the first time I've been contacted like this and I have lived in belmont for over 5 years. Town meetings are difficult to attend when you have two working prints with kids--create some form of electronic participation or digital streaming so we can observe what is going on and respond. Improve the website. It is is very difficult to find the right information or get updates reflecting the community.
10. The town is run outwardly as 8am - 4pm operation, which does not map to how the community functions. This is an antiquated model. Make it clear to the community how each town

department is both virtual (what are the Web resources of each department) and flexible . How does each group works with the community outside 8 - 4 working hours.
This flexibility could yield tremendous job satisfaction for the town's employees if well executed.

11. The rank order portion of the survey was very useful. It is worthwhile to gather data on relative priorities, so that we can best invest our limited resources.

12. I wish there were a better way to stay in touch with goings on in town for those without kids in school. The newspaper is awful. I'm a reasonably active person, but I had no idea this survey was going on till my husband bumped into someone at Starbucks. We need an electronic newsletter!

13. The vision set forth is great. What's needed is a plan and roadmap to achieve the vision, and a way to gain broad understanding and support for the plan from multiple stakeholders. Crafting a more integrated plan for developing, maintaining and evolving the town would be greatly appreciated.

14. Residents need to be educated on why it is so costly to provide excellent schools, public buildings and infrastructure.

15. The committee's commitment to gathering community input is so great; it keeps me hopeful as a long-time resident that you're on the right track and that Belmont can flourish now and in the future. Thank you for all your work and dedication.

16. Like the idea of the survey. Please keep us updated on what comes of it.

17. repair the roads and improve project managment - there is lots of waste of money due to very poor planning!

18. The Town's approach is just hopeless - it is poorly managed, enables historic churches to be pulled down, monstrous houses to be built on Belmont Hill, builds fire stations and senior centers which are very expensive, while neglecting to invest in Belmont High School etc. We have huge residential taxes as obvious commercial opportunities(like using Pleasant Street more creatively than parking school buses) are missed, primarily because of the wrong kind of small town mentality and lack of imagination. The town is living off a school system which is clearly under pressure, with no obvious evidence that there are plans to move things forward.

19. Get moving on the Cushing Square project. Stop letting local politicians hold things up.

20. The town's website is terrible; it's poorly designed and difficult to find needed information. A major rehaul is in order and could help encourage citizen participation and transparency. It takes major digging to regularly find information I am looking for. The calendar is badly designed and not possible to search (e.g. for meetings of a specific group). The Selectman's office hours do not seem to be included in the town calendar. My sense is that meeting minutes are not routinely posted in a timely fashion. There is no easy way for residents to submit requests for service (e.g. by webform) when problems are identified-- animal carcasses, potholes, and the like. All aspects of the town's website could be greatly improved in format and function.

21. Town needs to function like it is the 21st century not the 19th!! Goals need to be established and achieved before other goals are started. Not one goal has been established and completed in a timely fashion for 30 years or more.

22. the Town website needs to be updated...it is very difficult for anyone to navigate the site and often times information is not current. Increase the size and effectiveness of the Town Planning Department...please hire more highly educated and specialized Town Planners.

23. This survey has too many questions about diversity and not enough about the issues that should be our government's real concern (i.e. roads, utilities and services, schools and level of taxes, etc).

24. Implementing these goals -- which I think are all very important -- will cost money. We need to acknowledge that fact and make sufficient money available to actually implement these goals (whether through an override or otherwise). We must think of these items as investments in our town's future, and plan accordingly.

25. We should have a goal to create and live within a sustainable budget including pension and other costs
26. We need this plan to do more than collect dust on a shelf. We should share it with each principal and all businesses. It should be seen and promoted by more than just those who are politically tuned in.
27. great idea to have this survey to get community input!
28. Set time limits at TM. Set a goal for each meeting and make a decision on some issue at the end.
29. The town is divided: sports facilities v. library, young v. old, school v. town. Capital projects shouldn't be pitted against each other. Need a more proactive, cohesive approach to capital planning and use of both town and school land. Belmont is losing ground to neighboring communities in its quality of life with its outdated library and 3rd world roads.
30. make representative government more representative
31. Stop doing everything by committee. You can never please everyone, so stop trying. The pool is a classic example: everyone agrees that it should be rebuilt, yet the committee came up with a design nobody seems to like. The bike-path seems to be heading the same way. Everyone agrees it's a good thing, yet current estimates indicate it will take another 10 years to get it built! All this committee work just prolongs the drama of endless NIMBY arguments. If the town wants a bike path then pick a safe and cost-effective route and build it!
32. Goals are too mushy.
33. The goal regarding libraries, historic buildings, recreation is too broad. Parts of that goal are extremely important to me and parts are extremely unimportant. It should be split into four:
    1) recreation
    2) library
    3) infrastructure (lights, water, gas, cable, sewer, etc)
    4) historical beauty
34. More town wide events, better website and better job of advertising events town does have. Need to make people in town understand how much power the town government has and how much more town could offer them if the people as a whole became outraged by the slowness of BOS and inability to make any decisions.
35. I am concerned about "newcomers" who choose Belmont knowing the community and then want to change it when they settle here.; #3 I don't like seeing BOS forming "committees" to study issues. Then committee "packed" with members with a particular agenda i.e., CPAC. "Involvement"needs to be monitored - these are not elected officials.; #4 In the 45 years I've lived here the OS have moved slowly and conservately to make changes - an example is the Beech St. Center - 40 years in the making! A long time coming but far superior to any other centers I've experienced.
36. Love town day! How can we get young families involved in politics?
37. Through houses of worship and/or the Beech St. center activities. Local representation (town reps, elected officials, etc)
38. When we have approached a local body wanting to participate, the first reaction is to invite to visit the web or contact by email. An effort needs to be done to invite to "real" nor "virtual" meetings, to really feel people think that they are welcome.
39. Less committees
40. I think the structure of town government, with an inefficient town meeting, and a town manager that does not hold enough power, to dissuade people from wanting to get involved and hurts our sense of community.
41. conduct town hall style meeting to discuss and present issues to non-town meeting members

42. encourage town meeting members to be in touch with their precincts wishes.

43. Encourage newcomers to become part of Town government by inviting them to meetings and to speak. Too often I see Town officials berating residents for expressing their opinions and discouraging them from attending meetings by using tactics such as not providing enough seating and giving intimidating looks at those who are speaking.

44. While I believe in town meeting as a governing method, it is too slow and cumbersome to accomlish the work necessary in thse fast-paced times - and to accomplish the Vision 21 goals. We need to *seriously* consider other options.

45. Too many elections, should be combined!

46. Continue to build out social presence on Facebook, Google+, and Facebook to allow communication and collaboration within the community. Also all town officials should have public emails. Right now they do not. In fact the new web site makes it very hard to interact with town employees via email (if not impossible).

47. I believe the goal "to preserve the small-town community atmosphere" is directly in opposition to the idea of welcoming new people into the town. To preserve the atmosphere, progress must be throttled, businesses prevented from opening in the town, new construction forbidden etc. The boarded up businesses and collapsing middle class in Belmont stand in tribute to the outstanding way in which the town's officers are accomplishing this conservative effort to prevent change.
To improve the sense of community, the town needs to stop meddling in the lives of the citizenry. It should be easier to build in the town; the attacks on industry and commerce need to stop; rather than wasting money on boondoggles like the senior center, a new municipal swimming complex and yet another study on getting a new library, fix the bloody roads! If the citizenry want a new library or a swimming center, raise the funds through donations. We don't need the to harry property owners, particularly the ones on fixed incomes who seek to retire in homes they bought decades ago for funds that benefit a tiny well connected minority of vocal meddlers!

48. Reduce the size of the town government and departments within same

49. The Aldermen (and councils) should collect more input from the residents. Could we have an on-line "Suggestion Box" where suggestions could be gathered and summarized?

50. Elect a mayor who is empowered to and capable of actually leading.

51. Overall, I do feel that Belmont is a strong community. Effective governance and decision making are at times weak. We get bogged down in details or overblown complaints, such as one or two families complaining about the size of the bathhouse for the new pool or just a few families not wanting a bike path. The bigger communal picture can get lost. I was also concerned about the display of huge signs in front of commercial properties for a recent candidate to office. This was in bad taste and sent the message that money matters rather than the democratic process.

52. The town listens too much to "the special interest" groups (senior center, pool, etc) and then holds special elections in which everyone does not vote

53. Always seems that small vocal group derails projects that would benefit community (bike path, temporary Starbucks location, etc)

54. I would like to see more than 3 select persons. It would be nice to have more divergent opinions on the select committee.

55. We need to find a better balance on diversity and sense of community. I am not a US citizen but am a US permanent resident and find it very frustrating that as a consequence, I cannot vote even for the school committee. I pay significant property taxes and have a child in Belmont Schools. One part of welcoming immigrants is to give us a voice in town affairs.

56. Better communication of what is happening in town. What is being voted on, etc. maybe a Selectmen's blog

57. more open discussions. have special events to discuss the budget, schools, infrastructure. Publicize widely, bring in guest speakers to show what the possibilities are...

58. It seems that many town committees are run by the same group of involved people and newcomers are not included. For example, there is a growing Asian population in town but I do not see them represented on town committees. I also feel that many parts of the town are run by people who are retired or do not work full time. It's not easy, but it would be great to have more representation from the large majority of full-time workers.

59. The board of selectmen needs to add a few seats. There is too much work for 3 people.

60. More open and transparent communication. Inclusion of all residents including new residents.

61. Form of government needs to be changed. The current form is old and non-productive. no goals are fully completed. By virtue of demographics Belmont will always be a "small" town but it needs to change with the times. Sustainabliity is in jeopardy to those who have lived here for generations.

62. Town meeting members need to communicate the issues and how they are voting and why with the people they represent and this is not done at all

63. Can committee do a study on how to get government to work more effectively and more quickly. The lack of decision-making is absurd. It slows down or prevents (or ultimately, makes more expensive) so many good projects. For example, there is wide support for tunnel under tracks near high school, and MBTA says now is perfect time. We could do it if town would act FAST. If not, it will likely be done down the road for more money when track work not being done. Town also needs to do a better job of deciding what it wants and going through right processes to get state funding. By not being labelled green town losing out on lots of opportunities – very shortsighted.

64. Not all groups are represented in town government - a majority are not being heard from and a minority to putting excess restrictions on individuals and businesses

65. I love Belmont. However, I think we need less red tape in our governing bodies and more action! The Cushing Square development is an example of lack of leadership and decision-making quality, in my opinion. That old CVS and auto parts stores have sat empty for YEARS! We need to move more swiftly toward progress in our town.

66. Less government ...

67. I think the structure of town government, with an inefficient town meeting, and a town manager that does not hold enough power, to dissuade people from wanting to get involved and hurts our sense of community. It has allowed the town to avoid tough decisions, like pushing for an override, that is long overdue. The 5th grade is pushing 30 students in a classroom, and despite rankings from some publications, we are turning into a town with a factory system of education that is impersonal. The lack of leadership in town is sad. On the other-hand, people in Belmont are nice, it is conveniently located. I think streamlining the system of government would allow the town to further reach it's potential

68. I don't think the questions allow us to capture peoples thoughts. I'd like to see smaller sized and fewer government buildings. Our trend is to build bigger ones positioned as consolidations (fire station) or ADA compliance (Town Hall). I want to preserve our buildings but want fewer of them. We should look to have one town hall building. Take a walk through the buildings on any given day and office space is underutilized - way too much space. Fire stations and Police should be housed in one public safety building. I have to laugh in the at we position our efforts as being LEED certified/green, yet the buildings are huge (Senior Center, etc.). From a people standpoint, we cannot afford the infrastructure the town has, we need to do more or the same with less. We aren't progressive in this area.

69. A five member board of selectmen would provide much better governance than we now have.

70. Town government does not give me confidence. Key boards (selectman, planning board, warrant com) are run by the same closed circle.

71. Town boards need term limits (individual and collectively - all board limit) to encourage diverse participation.

72. I believe there are too many Town meeting members and as a result it is not an effective way to govern.

73. Too much on teacher /town employee pensions and healthcare. School spends so much no on kids, but on paying teachers contracts that are unrealistic. unfunded debt is killing this town. Have employees join obamacare

74. I would suggest recruiting more diverse representatives for all town-related committees.

75. I think we should encourage newcomers to join town government and become more involved. I have observed that many newcomers, especially those moving from overseas, are adrift in how to particiate in a community like Belmont. We are a small enough community to reach out to new residents to welcome them and orient them to the priorities of the town and how to get involved. Also, we need new blood on the warrant committee and in some of the major town committees. It's time that the town recognizes that it's first responsibility is to the schools, not the Beech Street Senior Center...that place where kids aren't welcome and that's never open.

76. Voted offices should have a time limit on term.

77. Most of the goals being expressed in the vision statement are not good things but bad things. They represent the officers of the town government substituting their ideas as to what is good for the residents in place of the residents' actual desires.
The desire to maintain the environment, for example, involves preventing property owners from developing their property as they see and saps the economic vitality of the town.
The town's officers have consistently followed a doctine of not maintaining infrastructure and allowing it to crumble into ruin so that they can buy new expensive infrastructure to replace it. This profligate and imprudent leaves us all poorer.
The desire to assist the residents in identifying new opportunities is codswallop! In all the years I've read the Belmont Citizen Herald, I've watched the town's officers stand in the way of people who had identified new opportunities and fight to crush their dreams. New construction is abandoned; factories have been chased out of town; retail stores are closing their doors because they can't succeed in the face of the terrible road network that they are taxed usuriously to pay for. Ditto for fostering culture in the town; Could I open a skate park, or a Lan gaming cafe in town? What permits would I have to get to open a night club? How much money would it cost to start a music school or a dance studio?

The kindest thing you could do to us is to get out of our way!!!! Stop taxing us to pay for things a few well-connected people want! Allow the market place and the entrepreneurial spirit of the residents to flourish. Stop strangling every good idea in its crib so that you can publish letters to the editor in the Herald congratulating yourselves on your leadership!

78. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 police officers, two $million+ fire stations (in a town of 4 square miles), building inspectors who essentially only have to work am hours, schools that cannot go more than a couple days without trying to squeeze more money out of the parents, DPW employees filling their own vehicles up with gas at the dept's pump, town employee benefits that exceed those of average private sector employees and drive an unrelenting need to squeeze more money out of the residents ... you can talk about diversity or environmental friendliness ... it is just window dressing a town that is increasingly difficult to enjoy living in.

79. Lazy town employee's that steal time, do NOTHING at work all day long but facebook, instant message and talk on the phone all day and nothing happens because they are buddy buddy with the boss's I think is disgusting.

80. Belmont is a town where the "special interest" groups always win (pool, senior center, CPA fund) I think we should avoid special elections where only the supporters of a proposal come out to vote

81. i dont think that they have prioritized budgeting well, they spent so much money on the town hall which is only rarely used instead of funding a library or new pool years ago. They put in granite everywhere and we still have unsafe sidewalks near our elementary schools. I also dont think they have done a good job in supporting retail and local businesses

82. The Board of Selectmen need to work in harmony and conjunction with the School Board to avoid the fiasco that occurred with regards to the rebuilding of the public library. And, the School Committee needs to have greater oversight of the new Superintendent's actions, both public and private, including being transparent about the redistricting that is taking place behind the scenes to move elementary schools families into districts other than their own.

83. until we got the absurdly bloated costs of so many administrators, heads of this/that under control we can not afford this town. watching interim school admistrators swoop in and then retire at a higher salary defines Belmont. Townies good, everyone else a usurper who doesn't deserve the tax spoils. what a joke this place is. Value Diversity? ha-ha. value retirement and all the side benefits that's what the vision of Belmont is. somebody might actaully want to put in an honest day's work along the line and stop relying on Volunteers to take over the hard work. I spent countless hours volunteering so that things would actually happen, watched my kids get shafted financially because the money goes to sports, watched illegal drive-ways built because somebody knew somebody..and on and on. BLOATED town government, lazy admins., vicious pool guards (second day in town 15 years ago we were screamed at because she thoight we had tried to sneak in the day before, what a welcome to this town!

84. Good luck! Its gotta be tough going...Any WOMEN willing to step up and lead as selectWOMEN?

85. 4) Increase Communication about town affairs

86. Town governance seems to be the major challenge. Please...no more banks, realtors, or hair salons, or tacky franchises, especially in Belmont Center.

87. My spouse recently opened a business in Belmont and dealing with the town officials was like dealing with a banana republic. No one took responsibility for clearly stating rules (e.g. food preparation, signage) but different officials felt very comfortable giving off-the-cuff, sometimes conflicting advice. It was extremely frustrating.
I'm not sure how we've managed to maintain such a wonderful school system with the lack of investment in the high school. How can this town re-build its pool when the high school is literally crumbling? This does not seem to conform with the stated goals, but rather is the result of a few activist voters who can drive an issue.
Thanks for listening.

88. Belmont is a lovely town that is blessed with tremendous human resources, a lovely built environment and advantageous geographic location. The town, however, is poorly managed and operates on a crisis-to-crisis basis that makes it impossible to articulate, let alone achieve, long term objectives that would improve the quality of life in town.

89. Belmont home owners, regardless their visa status should have the rights to vote for town election.

90. Support the creation of neighborhood associations. Provide modest funding for neighborhood-focused social events, like block parties. Provide opportunities for voters to hear from and provide feedback to the town meeting members that represent them

91. Belmont vision seems to be very short-sighted. There is no communicty spirit for the good of the WHOLE community. Each Department works hard to protect its own goals. A prime example is the failure to take advantage of our Grant to build a new library, which is a true community center - cultural, educational, social etc. How great would have been a combination of the Senior Center, High School and Library. ALL Belmont citizens would have benefitted tremendously. Our vision seems very narrow right now. Perhaps we need to education our community better

92. Town projects should be looked at together rather than operating as independent entities i.e. Underwood Pool, Senior Center

93. Provide for more voter/community input. This survey is great, let's have more

94. Better outreach. Sometimes it seems like the Town is run by a small group of insiders

95. Develop the commercial centers at faster than a glacial pace so they actually are centers. Make town gov't less of an insiders club

96. need better strategic planning with a government structure and leaders capable of implementing the plans. We're too reactive now which pits demographic groups against each other.

97. It would be helpful to know about important town meetings, information about schools etc well in advance. It often seems like things are posted just days before or information isn't readily shared. More online information re: meetings, votes, school information is welcomed.

98. Better outreach to announce and accommodate potential candidacies for town meeting and other boards, and appointments.

99. Selectmen should respond to every email.
continued announcements/central place for information about town happenings- i.e. the public pool, library renovations.

100. the town website is rough could have more info. town election information is hard to find, and when you do it is the candidates websites which really does little to distinguish them.

101. Provide more information about upcoming decisions for citizens in the paper and on web.

102. Most town functions seem to be scheduled in ways that make it difficult for those with young families to participate. When we have important meetings for feedback e.g. to selectmen, schedule several sessions to accommodate parents, full time workers, and 2nd/3rd shift workers.

103. enforce term limits for all appointed positions

104. Sense of community" should include acknowledging and seeking to fulfill a public good that sometimes conflicts with the interests of specific residents. We are too ready to bow to neighbors' objections. Also, our democracy is in danger from the increasing reach of the Planning Board combined with the fact that two Selectmen are close allies and will undoubtedly violate the rule that they cannot communicate directly outside of public meetings

105. Actively encourage more young families to serve on committees and boards. Last year when a woman volunteered to run for School Committee, current School Committee members said they prefer someone else with "existing experience on the School Committee" -- shorthand for wanting someone who'd been in Belmont for years and years. She was ultimately accepted and elected to the Committee. But the existing committee members seemed to prefer one of the Belmont in-crowd to a newer community member with sterling credentials. This type of reaction has a chilling effect on anyone who thinks they can move to Belmont and make a contribution

106. Stop the tear-downs and overbuilt houses. Respect the taxpayer as well as the requests from the school dept. Stop wrangling over snow removal and yard sales and just be considerate of one's neighbors

107. Are there two websites? This was brought up recently on a list, but not confirmed answer as to why there appear to be two: http://www.town.belmont.ma.us/Public_Documents/index and http://belmontma.vt-s.net/

108. There is sense of secrecy and elitism in our town affairs. Butler playground fiasco is the best example how dysfunctional our town government is and continues to be. We should all be ashamed. Open conversation about this would be not just very welcomed but healing to a fragile sense of community

109. Make sure the Town is not spending money it doesn't have or making commitments it can't keep

110. somehow make it easier for young people to get involved in town issues, not just the education issues, but like running for town meeting and selectman/woman

111. The Town, especially the Planning Board, can start by respecting those of us on "the other side of the tracks" by not allowing everything to happen along Trapelo Rd. Also, the mere suggestion by the PB that So. Pleasant Street should be zoned to allow an unlimited number of dogs in a potential kennel is insulting and totally hypocritical

112. Many who are not involved in Town government don't seem to have a strong understanding of the governing structure which may make it harder for them to get involved

113. Where does the money go and how can town stop being in crisis mode? Town needs to do a better job of doing projects in tandem. $2.4 million about to be spent on belmont center without having factored in community path -- or even moved forward with THINKING about path? That is a disgrace. An insult to the hardworking committee members and the 90% of town that clearly wants a path. And a waste of money should Belmont Center be updated only to need to spend more money integrating path down the road when eventually the town wakes up to how important the path would be to residents AND businesses

114. Get off the dime and make some decisions. Be proactive, not just reactionary. e.g., Library, Police Station/Light Dept. Building

115. Looking at town census and see what is the largest population and invite leaders of that community to develop new programs and bring new ideas.

116. Institute a maintenance plan for town buildings - include regular inspections and upkeep costs in the town budget. Let us not continue to go from crisis to crisis.
Coordinate road paving with utility upkeep - no sooner is a road paved than it is torn up for gas, water, or other maintenance.
Plan ahead and budge for upkeep

117. A community calendar on the Town's Web site could include all public offerings including those presented by private organizations

118. Stop meddling in the business development of the town via the permitting and licensing process. The retailer who was told he could choose between selling alcoholic beverages and tobacco products is a good example. We don't need the Selectmen to protect our personal choices, particularly when both are legal activities. We do need the Selectmen to help enforce (and/or raise) age limitations on tobacco and alcohol use by Belmont youths.

119. Let the people define the character without government intervention. Have the town develop the character as defined by the building designs and size and by the events hosted like Town Day

120. The infrastructure question is a challenging one - as the resources are limited, but the roads are downright treacherous in places. And, the issues wth the Higgenbottom pool last year were an example of what can happen when investments are delayed. that being said, the new head of operations seems phenomenal, so there are great opportunities for continued focus on these important issues going forward. thank you for asking

121. include the "poor end" of town - Butler School area - when WInBrook needed their playground rebuilt the entire community was in support - when Butler needed a new playground it was a huge undertaking not supported by the rest of the townSee prior comment about investment in schools and infrastructure. Town government needs to work to bring people together on this issue, i.e.,

educate ALL residents on the need to maintain the school system for the good of the town. One specific suggestion would be to put a muzzle on the Belmont Citizen-Herald, which seems to thrive on reporting strife and conflict rather than pieces that could inform citizens regarding WHY it is in our best interests to maintain the town.

122. Less talk, more action!! We need more Selectmen and Selectwomen (perhaps a rep from each Precinct?) to hear and represent the people of their precinct and make decisions in a timely fashion. –

123. The lack of support shown by town government is a disgrace. Too much attention to the wish list of sports interests and public service unions (lavish fire stations). Town Services , Governance

124. The town's infrastructure is decaying and the town's voters have not been willing to assume the tax hikes needed to reverse decades of under investment. If the voters are not willing to invest, then I don't know what the "town" can do about that. Based on what I read in the Citizen-Herald, it appears that the town is unfriendly to new businesses by having long, laborious permitting and approval processes, which has a negative economic impact on the town. I believe that this is an issue that town government could address and fix, although there doesn't seem to be an appetite to do so.

125. Not allow individual and special interests to trump the greater good of the community at large.

126. If town gov't was smaller ... places like McLean would not have needed to be developed to provide additional tax revenue for the local gov't and traffic would not be the insane mess that it is in Belmont between 8-9 on weekday mornings

127. BMLD is disgraceful. MLAB is a cabal of snobs who refuse to listen the public and are not held accountable to anyone. The selectmen do not value environmental responsibility, regardless of what they say in public their actions speak even more loudly. They have a track record of zero. Sust Belmont is very ineffectual. The Energy Committee tries, as do a few individuals. But we need more.

128. The town is not very responsive to requests regarding environment. There is serious gutter puddling problem in front of my house. I called the town to report. The call was transferred to about five people, nobody claimed responsibility for the problem and nobody came to fix the problem.

129. A mentality of not wanting to invest in something if it will be completely redone soon is not right. Why can some residents (town mtg members) remove their sidewalks and replace with turf/grass-seed? Why do so many residential projects go on without proper permitting?

130. When we make a decision about the built environment or about conservation it's important to let even residents who did not take part in the process know why we made it (e.g. why bike paths).

131. We need to be able to change. We cannot support or continue to live in 1950

132. We need a series of overrides that will address school cuts and crumbling streets, sidewalks, and public buildings. The current tendency to act on whatever pet project has a vocal advocacy group keeps us from pursuing a cohesive, integrated approach to maintaining and improving our community.

133. We should have more money budgeted towards trees.

134. Also, the Light Board should be much more hands-on with Belmont Light to insist that the utility provide friendlier policies for/support of renewable energy.

135. Many Town leaders seem unwilling to learn how to live a more eco-friendly lifestyle. Change is hard and we lack the leadership to steward it. We need to elect people more in tune with environment.

136. Better enforcement of laws. For instance all day parking on residential streets is only sporadically enforced.

137. Minimize handouts at Town Meeting.

138. Selectmen could encourage greater energy efficiency with Town and Light Dept. to achieve its Climate Action Plan.

139. I am very concerned about the proposed Uplands development. I think the town could be more activist in making sure that it does not get final approval. I also think that their should be more leadership on a proposed solar farm for the town.

140. More local programming for environmentally responsible activities around town. For example, the town could support distribution of natural compost for our gardens and lawns, just as the Electric Dept gives away efficient light bulbs.

141. Plan on more budget for new trees where old ones need to be felled.

142. Hoping the CPA will help with maintaining green spaces and preserving any wooded areas left.

143. Would like to see leadership from our elected and appointed officials with regard to a proactive and consistent commitment to energy conservation and other environmental sustainability policies and practices.

144. Sell Belmont Light immediately after substation is built.

145. Everyone needs to stop being so territorial.

146. The Town is not proactive in this area AT ALL. Even with the Underwood Pool, the landscaping seems to be an after-thought, rather than an integral part of the design. Meanwhile, we put very little money into trees (and upkeep of those trees). It will be interesting to see if the Trapelo Rd. construction makes traffic and commuting better or worse. Also the town govt. allows a few NIMBYs to control the agenda rather than looking at what's best for the town as a whole. One can be responsive to addressing individual rational concerns while still doing what's best for the entire community.

147. It was notable that the town rejected making the high school parking lot greener even after the town finally adopted a stormwater bylaw a decade after it promised to do so.

148. More regional efforts - it's all interconnected. Alewife/Uplands collaboration is a good example. Not enough work with other towns on development (eg, Alewife, Fresh Pond, Met State) and traffic.
Town government could benefit and save a lot from "going paperless."

149. I think part of our problem is the situation -- state rules and laws and funding formulas give us financial incentives that are not necessarily the best ones.

150. I think it is important for us to move forward with an agenda for the future of our town and the families that live here. It would be ideal if that could be done while keeping the character- as it has been in neighboring towns like Lexington. To me, though, this doesn't seem possible in Belmont.

151. Recent liquor license, why?

152. Make sure the Town is not spending money it doesn't have or making commitments it can't keep.

153. I can't think of any ways that Belmont does this as a town -- the examples I can think of seem to be run by non-governmental concerns. Need to know what Belmont (the town government) does!

154. We cannot remain a Town of Homes, while simultaneously providing an acceptable level of services with an acceptable tax burden.

155. Need to make people in town understand how much power the town government has and how much more the Town could offer them if the people as a whole became outraged by the slowness of BOS and inability to make any decisions.

156. Have a central point of information for everything Belmont- i.e. build up the Town of Belmont web site; it is informative but not always timely.

157. The stabilization of our schools and our infrastructure must be our top priority. The schools are what separates us from surrounding towns, and our infrastructure is, in fact, the physical "town". Without them, there is no "Belmont".

158. Increase affordable housing opportunities. Pass an override to improve the match between revenues and services.
159. Publish the town's budget and a summary of committees (e.g. what is the Warrant Committee?) in the Citizen Herald as well as on the town site in PDF.
160. Please do not use public school "community rooms" to hold town meetings. This impacts space to have after school programs run effectively and to keep our children safe.
161. There needs to be more transparency with regard to the Town's agreements with businesses and developers.
162. Better promotion on how people can stay up to date -- this survey made me look to see if the town has any e-newsletter -- and you've got a whole e-alert system! People don't know about it.
163. Focus on priorities of government such as schools and roads as well as safety (i.e. police and fire) services, not feel-good measures such as cultural enrichment. -- arts and culture; if people want that, they can get it on their own.
164. Sadly, it appears that we will be losing the Uplands as a natural habitat. A 40-B complex will bring untold financial burdens instantaneously to community infrastructure services and to abutters, the homeowners whose cellars and streets will regularly flood.
165. Invest in necessities before investing in non-essentials. For example, invest in improving schools and library. Do NOT build a new pool complex that will cost all residents tax money, especially a pool facility that is not free or of a reasonable cost for all residents to use once it is built. There are many summer swimming options in bordering towns. A new pool complex is not a necessity for this town when our roads are a mess and our schools need more money.
166. Let's hire an energy manager and get serious on conservation in all our public buildings especially schools. Let's force our local businesses to recycle too AND our schools and public buildings.
167. Increase percentage of electricity sourced from renewable sources.
168. Encourage solar power.
169. The roads are atrocious, I don't want to drive on them let alone let my children ride their bicycles. We value ourselves as "Town of Homes" but soon we will not attract home buyers who can pay the inflated rates because driving here is so unpleasant.
170. Do not let important long range decisions lie in the hands of a few!
171. I know there's never enough money to go around. I would like to see the goals aligned with our spending - of money, time, and energy. If money we're spending isn't tied to a vision statement then there may not be valid justification for spending it. And, if there are other projects or pursuits the local gov't is taking on, but they aren't part of the vision - they are likely not as important and may be distractions.
172. We have not worked closely enough with neighboring towns in this area (eg, Met State land, and we kind of missed the opportunities at Alewife)
173. A better sound ordinance would be nice. Cutting lawns at 7:00 AM or 7:00 PM on Sundays just isn't right.
174. Noise pollution issue.
175. Allow more "gathering places" to enter Belmont, more restaurants/bars.
176. The Town should push the T to run the 74/75 bus from Harvard Sq. more often during rush hour so that this is a viable commuter option.
177. Identify a plan and put it in action to better prepare for the effects of climate change.
178. Need more communication, information on how to get involved in town.
179. More education to the community to inform what we are currently doing and plans of what we can do, in terms of environment, sustainability, energy conservation, etc.
180. There should be a forum that we contribute to that speaks to what shops should go in vacant building such as the center, for example. What would be prosperous for the Belmont demographic instead of allowing buildings to be vacant for years without any information to be found from any resource on future plans.

181. Need more community input -- an on-line Suggestion Box would help identify issues and potential solutions. My priorities:

182. 1) Road improvement
2) Increase Retail (restaurants, businesses and bars)
3) Improve High School esp Science Dept.
4) Increase Communication about town affairs
5) Increase town efficiencies, LED street lights.
6) Improve the Downtown area, roads, retail

183. Please also consider building pedestrian/bike access underneath community rail so that high school children, and others, can have safe and direct access to BHS from Channing.

184. Put real limits on leaf-blowers. Their use is out of control in this town.

185. Get rid of this Comcast albatross that you have saddled us with. $75 a month for internet is a rip off. You sold us out for money; that is not what a community does to one another. We want competition to make our prices fair and equitable.

186. The town should send out emails notifying the community of events. We lived in Arlington prior to Belmont and their town does a fabulous job with email notifications of all the town events.

187. The Town website is not user-friendly. For instance, I tried to search for public parking lots to see where various ones are located, but could not find any information. Also tried to look up parks to see where they are located in town... again, could not find any information on the town website.

188. I can't think of any ways that Belmont does this as a town -- the examples I can think of seem to be run by non-governmental concerns. Need to know what Belmont (the town government) does!

XIV - TOWN SERVICES

Many respondents called for improved maintenance of and investment in facilities and roads. Expansion of recycling was also frequently cited with respondents calling for weekly recycling pick-ups, inclusion of more materials (Styrofoam, compost) and single barrel services. Better communication to town residents was also highlighted.

1. For gods sake, please do something with the pool and the crumbling police and light departments(buildings.)
2. Rebuilding/maintaining facilities: new dev't (e.g. the swimming pool, library) does not have to be the Taj Mahal but should be functional, durable, and maintainable.
3. The Senior Center seems to be under-utilized. Would love to see this be a "community" center, not just a senior center. The roads could use some work. Overall, we love living in Belmont.
4. The Town is run outwardly as an 8am - 4pm operation, which does not map to how the community functions. This is an antiquated model. Make it clear to the community how each town department is both virtual (what are the Web resources of each department?) and flexible . How does each group work with the community outside the 8 - 4 working hours? This flexibility could yield tremendous job satisfaction for the Town's employees if well executed.
5. Leaf blowers contribute noise pollution, particulate pollution, air pollution, harm soil health, are a nuisance to walkers and bikers, and harmful to hearing and breathing of workers. We should start working on plan to curtail their use.
6. Obviously we need to do a better job with facilities and the new pool is a good step.
7. 1) Consider adding recycling bins around all playgrounds.
   2) Expand home recycling program to include plastic bags.
   3) Perhaps a community garden with area for composting material.
8. A better customer service atmosphere in Town Hall is needed. I go in and try to do something and am ignored - I feel it is a club in some depts for people who want to talk to each other.
9. Maintain the physical plant of the town.
10. A Youth Center or somewhere for kids to go on weekends or evenings. Possibly sharing the senior center as a youth center.
11. More kids' programs.
12. Make the new Underwood Pool happen - a less expensive version works for me.
13. Keeping in tradition with poor roads and sidewalks, I would say you're doing a bang-up job. The sidewalks are overgrown with shrubs, ill planted trees on boulevards that are clearly not able to thrive without disrupting sidewalks to make them impassable to anyone on wheels and no real enforcement of standards for keeping residents held responsible for their portion of keeping the community safe.
14. All segments of town financially support the school operating budget including regular overrides and regular infrastructure and capital improvements.
15. Stop putting in over-rides and over-taxing us on the property and giving us nothing in return. All the beautiful old buildings can be updated instead of allowing them to fall apart and then asking for over-rides to fix it. All the streets are terrible, and the town is always wanting to tax us to pay for it.
16. Allow for more gathering places to enter Belmont, more restaurants/bars. Please fix roads!
17. Improve the town website and communication of town information electronically.
18. Use Town web site to promote community event awareness.
19. More easily walkable access from the Waverley side of town to the Center.
20. are essential for our community - more cars are being used.

21. Senior Center is a wonderful place for all ages to come. Make sure we keep up with the maintenance of grounds and buildings. Keep them open on very hot days.

22. I have been a resident of Belmont for over 60 years and never have I seen the road-ways in such poor shape. Fix them!

23. Bring back the leaf vacuum machine in the fall. That way you just rake the leaves into the gutter and the vacuum machine comes by and vacuums them up. It made it easy for everyone when we had it.

24. Large recycling trash cans would be great.

25. Put real limits on leafblowers. Their use is out of control in this town.

26. We need to find something for the children to do in this town instead of partying and getting in trouble.

27. The Rec department is amazing, and it would be great if possible to develop it even more to promote community involvement- looking to Arlington's rec department as a possible source of inspiration. It also would be nice to generate money, even more money, for the town.

28. The merging of Concord, Common, and Leonard streets remains a mess for pedestrians and for cars- this is a terrible entry into our Town Center, and does little to promote a good sense of community.

29. More improvements to public playgrounds (Chenery playground, other playgrounds) and helping spruce up all parts of town.

30. We need continued announcements/central place for information about town happenings- i.e. the public pool, library renovations.

31. In such a dense town, people should be able to walk to the various services and business areas safely and easily. The snow removal bylaw was a start in the right direction, but year-round, there are still many sidewalks that are not walkable.

32. Fix the roads and buildings (high school) to build pride in community

33. I feel the small community atmosphere sometimes lends itself to small-minded when it comes to improvements to town roads and town facilities

34. I don't understand why the public buildings are not better maintained. I am tempted to take Murphy's oil soap to the doors of the library!

35. Look at the stairs at the library - are they ever going to be fixed or do we wait for the library to fall down?? - What about the old Belmont Light Department on Concord Ave. Are we waiting for that to fall down, too??

36. Institute a maintenance plan for town buildings - include regular inspections and upkeep costs in the town budget. Let us not continue to go from crisis to crisis.
Coordinate road paving with utility upkeep - no sooner is a road paved than it is torn up for gas, water, or other maintenance.
Plan ahead and budget for upkeep.

37. Committing resources to new library, police station and other infrastructure projects, not to mention the roads, is vital to this. From managing the Beech St. Center I have had first hand knowledge of how much creativity and talent exists here. We try to utilize and foster these talents as much as possible, but more can be done

38. The infrastructure question is a challenging one - as the resources are limited, but the roads are downright treacherous in places. And, the issues with the Higgenbottom pool last year were an example of what can happen when investments are delayed. That being said, the new head of operations seems phenomenal, so there are great opportunities for continued focus on these important issues going forward. Thank you for asking.

39. Please do not try to work on libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities unnecessarily.

40. Curbside composting; toxic disposal day(s) for the Town; support open space; restrict large house building on small lots...they leave no yard and looks so out of place!! Eliminate plastic water bottles like other towns.

41. More recycling for homes and public buildings and parks. I.E. pick up of styrofoam and food waste.

42. TRAFFIC! Police details need to do their jobs to maintain safety and keep the traffic moving. This is not happening. Signage at the bridge debacle (3 way stop) and clearly marked lane designations.

43. Design things properly and maintain them. Despite all the awards, Wellington's interior is not holding up. Glass and drywall in high traffic corridors of elementary school? Ridiculous. Other buildings seem to get minimum maintenance in anticipation of some BIG fix. A mentality of not wanting to invest in something if it will be completely redone soon is not right. Why can some residents (Town Mtg Members) remove their sidewalks and replace with turf/grass-seed? Why do so many residential projects go on without proper permitting?

44. Mandatory Recycling should be required from all residents, which is a local ordinance requiring all persons located in Belmont to separate their recyclables, compostables and landfilled trash and to participate in recycling and composting programs.

45. Weekly pick up of recyclables is necessary.

46. Do away with a "goosebusters permit" add a $5 fee to every pet license to cover keeping parks clean. My quality of life makes me want to go to pet friendly towns and stay away from Belmont parks.

47. Traffic problems will increase with all the new housing on our borders--let's not get bogged down in small town image and hire professional planners to help us cope!

48. Incorporate a trash and recycling collection program like Watertown.

49. Control dogs in our public parks and conservation lands

50. Need to bring the recycling program up to par with surrounding communities.

51. Need to do much better at maintaining public buildings; the high school in particular.

52. Duck ponds need maintenance and improvement.

53. See previous answer: improve sidewalks, place trash barrels along public walkways

54. Recycle pick ups every week

55. Ensure the parks/playgrounds are taken care of, updated!!

56. Make more information about recycling available, encourage supermarkets to give up plastic bags and educate people about bringing their own,

57. Start or support a composting initiative for the community

58. Increase recycling program.. Pick up more types of recyclables and increase frequency of pickup to weekly.

59. More bike lanes/paths

60. We incinerate our trash adding to many environmentally unfriendly issues. How about one- stream recyling? Styrofoam collection place to recycle that? Have designated bike lanes throughout town to promote safer, more consistent travel thus improving health and well being and encouraging kids to get to schools in multiple safe ways.

61. Single stream recycling in public buildings, rethink school lunch waste.

62. Provide larger recycling bins; provide town-wide food waste/composting collection; charge for garbage collection based on quantity of garbage.

63. Preserve the Uplands.
Offer better recycling program (every week for residents) and more public receptacles. Eg. There were no obvious recycle bins at Town Day.

64. Find ways to make recycling easier for residents: Less sorting/bigger containers.

65. Put recycle trash cans in the Center and Cushing Square and start empting the trash bin in front of CVS in the Center

66. The town should use traffic calming devices such as speed bumps (prevalent in Somerville and Cambridge) especially near high traffic areas, schools, and playgrounds; The Town should develop resident parking near commuter rail and subway stations for commuting downtown;

67. Recycling! Recycling should be picked up free of charge every week. Household trash should be managed. Each trash bag should have a sticker attached. The town can provide 52 stickers to each household free each year. Additional sticker can be purchased easily at convenient locations (grocery store, hardware store, town hall, etc...) This would shift the incentive towards recycling.

68. Pay as you throw garbage pick up;
Community recycling receptacles in town centers and parks.

69. Fix the roads. Put benches at public transportation stops.

70. Planting more trees throughout the neighborhoods, and not just taking down sick trees.

71. FIX THE HORRENDOUS ROADS AND PUT SIGNS UP AT RIDICULOUSLY DANGEROUS COMMON ST/CONCORD ST. INTERSECTION

72. Start composting, or collecting table scraps for compost. Recycle more; have people pay per trash bag collected

73. More recycling bins!

74. Better enforcement of laws. For instance all day parking on residential streets is only sporadically enforced.

75. More emphasis on recycling by addition of more recycling bins in public places like the Center .

76. More trees along town roads should be the next goal. It increases value of homes and reduces AC energy usage during the summer.

77. Mandatory recycling, Increase recyclable materials. Minimize handouts at Town Meeting.

78. Single-stream recycling toters, or at least doing away with the open blue recycling buckets. With the open blue buckets, the wind carries all of the neighborhood's papers, plastic containers, and other bits of trash up and down the street. It's frankly ridiculous that these blue bins haven't been improved upon or replaced.

79. Recycling every week would be better.

80. Think about limiting use of pesticides on lawns; encourage curbside composting, recycling, water containers etc. More of these programs within the schools would help.

81. Belmont's traffic is getting worse and worse which, given the relatively stable housing stock in the town, is an indication of more people cutting through. We should be thankful that the railway cuts through town as it has a self-limiting effect on the traffic that can flow across town. However Mill Street now jams up during rush hour, Brighton Street jams up during rush hour, etc. These are not Belmont residents but rather drivers seeking to get to points south from points north or vice versa. Maybe it would be worthwhile investigating improvements of Lexington Street in Waltham (it is already a wide commercial street) as a thoroughfare.

82. On recycling: (a) why don't we have single stream recycling?; (b) why don't more people recycle?; (c) we have to PAY to recycle electronics? (I took mine to an event in Burlington rather than attending the much-advertised event here in town that required paying money to dispose of equipment that recyclers profit from.

83. Add weekly recycling, and single-stream recycling. Be better at discussing and informing about Logan Airport's flight routes over Belmont and providing options for the citizens to help combat airplane noise and pollution. Identify a plan and put it in action to better prepare for the effects of climate change.

84. More recycling opportunities.

85. Increase recycling to every week

86. Potholes are an embarrassment to the Town not to mention a safety hazard and damaging to cars.

87. Is there a reason why there are still no signals at intersection of Channing and Leonard? and even more urgently at intersection of Concord and Leonard? This is a major public safety and traffic issue and seems illogical not to address it.

88. Weekly recycling pickup, encouraging composting and reclaiming rain water. Fix roads and sidewalks

89. Better Trash System

90. The trash cans in Belmont center are always overflowing

91. Improve the roads, enforce traffic rules, and add more bike paths

92. Increase recycling frequency.

93. More local programming for environmentally responsible activities around town. For example, the town could support distribution of natural compost for our gardens and lawns, just as the Electric Dept gives away efficient light bulbs.

94. Let's change recycling to weekly and trash to bi-weekly. Let's figure out a way to compost curbside.

95. Expand recycling services; offer appliance rebates for energy efficiency...

96. Need composting program

97. Lots of pot holes in the street.
Lots of open space.
Also, is it possible that the trash men could put the trash barrels on the side of the driveway rather than in the middle of the driveway, so when I return home at night, in the dark cold winter I do not have to get out of my car, move the trash barrels, get into the car again, and drive into the driveway?

98. Single bin recycling weekly, yard chips from Xmas trees for residents

99. Recycling every week instead of every two weeks.

100. More encouragement of recycling and composting. My mother's apartment building in NYC is beginning a composting program!

101. Traffic flows should in some cases be optimized for safety when there is not a great solution for throughput e.g. Belmont Center. More bike accommodations (the bike parking in the center is nice!) would be great, and of course, it would be nice if our roads were not renowned throughout the Commonwealth for their abysmal quality. Also, street sweeping to clean up from winter would be nice too. Hazardous material recycling should be encouraged, made easier, and on a quarterly basis.

102. I think the recycling coordinator is a great benefit to the town and the efforts for “recycling day” in May were great. We should have more of that. I also think we should have pay as you throw to reduce waste and increase recycling. Reinforce “how to” practices for trash and recycle days. Folks need to put stuff out so that it does not blow away. For example -- visit Davis Road between Trapelo and Irving some Thursday. Folks also need to be encouraged to pick-up trash in front of their residences on a regular basis.

103. We appreciated the recycling program for odd items (textiles, shredding, etc) and would make use of it if offered more often. Maybe quarterly?

104. Belmont has too generously allowed cross-traffic to choke any pedestrian activity. Most traffic lights are heavily in favor of moving cars and on many crosswalks pedestrians are forced to wait two or more traffic light cycles to be able to cross safely. That is utter disgrace for a town full of sidewalks and it is in general an accident waiting to happen. Cars cannot have right of way and always.

105. Commuters who park all over Belmont and crowd our streets should be paying for parking privilege.

106. Raised crosswalks and singe lanes of traffic should be present on Trapelo and Belmont corridor. Leftover space should be used for bikes and wider sidewalks/parking areas.

107. Pay as You Throw service will predictably reduce garbage tonnage by 30% from current levels.

108. Get large trash and recycle barrels that have automatic pickup like every other town.

109. Continue to support and expand recycling;

110. Protect if possible the Uplands from development; prevent polluted runoff and sediment into Claypit Pond; improve drainage from Claypit Pond.

111. Control pass-through traffic: Increased traffic through main cut-throughs are damaging our roads, our air and our peace! Incidentally Bike lanes are NOT a painted line on a road, they are dedicated lanes constructed off the road at a different level: see Concord Ave to Fresh Pond.!!

112. New recycling/trash contract with large closed containers to avoid blowing trash/ animals in trash.

113. Increase energy efficiency of all buildings.

114. Traffic calming means no light at Train overpass (Leonard/Common/Concord intersection; slowing down and eye contact are the way to go.)

115. Increase recycling/ composting at public buildings including schools. More local food used in schools. And BCC makes the new library and Underwood Pool buildings LEED-certified for energy efficiency. Same with the new high school...

116. Management of animals, regulations:
Why do we tolerate bee keeping in a major, crowded, residential neighborhood, such as Winn St and Claflin Streets? Should be limited to large, more rural areas without abutters.

117. Add weekly recycling, and single-stream recycling.

118. Increase BMC awareness and local programming.

119. Control storm-water runoff: pervious paving in parking lots, sidewalks, driveways etc, with rain gardens/swales, Dredge Claypit for more water storage, clear out pond exit pipes.

120. Put real limits on leaf-blowers. Their use is out of control in this town.

121. Put all the cable infrastructure underground (TV, electrical, internet cables ...)

122. Require that cable (internet) companies remove redundant cables at least once a year.

123. Incentives to residents to increase energy efficiency of houses.

124. Roads are deplorable. Sidewalks worse - extremely dangerous to bike and walk on; e.g. tree root upheaval main cause.

125. Vastly decrease or eliminate the use of road salt. Road salt causes great harm with little to no safety benefit. Restore a full program of tree replacement and maintenance.

126. The town is not very responsive to requests regarding environment. There is serious gutter puddling problem in front of my house. I called the town to report. The call was transferred to about five people, nobody claimed responsibility for the problem and nobody came to fix the problem.

127. I would like to see more cycling infrastructure. This would promote safe cycling which would reduce traffic, reduce pollution, preserve town character, and increase community health.

128. FIX THE HORRENDOUS ROADS AND PUT SIGNS UP AT RIDICULOUSLY DANGEROUS COMMON ST/CONCORD ST. INTERSECTION

129. This comment is regarding the previous question, about ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety. There are very few routes connecting the parts of Belmont separated by the railroad, and they are both nightmares for cyclists: Brighton Rd. after Concord has no shoulder and often has heavy traffic, and the entrance to Belmont Center, a 5-way blind intersection with no traffic signals, is a nightmare for cyclists and automobile drivers both. If ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety is indeed part of our vision, doing something to resolve these issues should be a priority.

130. Potholes are an embarrassment to the Town not to mention a safety hazard and damaging to cars.

131. Is there a reason why there are still no signals at intersection of Channing and Leonard? and even more urgently at intersection of Concord and Leonard? This is a major public safety and traffic issue and seems illogical not to address it.

132. Work ACTIVELY to manage traffic flow, especially on our most heavily traveled corridors of Trapelo and Concord Avenues. Develop safe, OFF ROAD routes so that pedestrians and cyclists *of any age and ability* may get around town without having to deal with the impatience/distraction of drivers.

133. The roads are atrocious, I don't want to drive on them let alone let my children ride their bicycles.

134. The intersection at Common and Leonard is very difficult to navigate, add a light or clearly post rules of road.

135. Please also consider building pedestrian/bike access underneath community rail so that high school children, and others, can have safe and direct access to BHS from Channing.

136. Consider adding recyling bins around all playgrounds.

137. Expand home recycling program to include plastic bags.

XV - TRAFFIC/ ROADS/ PAVING

The overwhelming focus of most comments was the need for repair of the roads. Many suggested ways to reduce or calm traffic through Belmont. Many responses mentioned the need to make Belmont safer for pedestrians and cyclists, including a designated bike/walking path. The need for a solution to the traffic problem at the Belmont Center underpass was frequently cited.

1. Fix the roads- they are in a terrible shape! Complaining that there is no money is a lame excuses! Fix them or get out and let other people in your place that WILL fix them!!
2. roads need to be repaired
3. I would like to see the roads and sidewalks repaired.
4. 1. Road condition of Trapelo road is pathetic and need immediate attention.
5. While improvide safety for pedestrians efforts should be made to keep in mind ease of traversing town and traffic congestion.
6. Fix the traffic and roads.
7. Please fix roads quickly!! Makes driving around town very unpleasant!!
8. Also, let's catch up with the other towns around us by making Belmont a more bike friendly place.
9. The ongoing disruption of traffic, poorly managed traffic flow, and insensitive road work timing schedules have made Waverly Square and the adjacent sections of Trapelo Road an eyesore, a major inconvenience, and a blight on Belmont's character for a long time. Public works in this area should be better planned to minimize impediment of bikes and vehicles, with more support to traffic direction, effective detours, and as much work as possible done at night and during off-peak hours
10. A question focused on traffic management, when a better question would have focused on support for an override to finance desperately needed road repairs throughout the Town.
11. The roads in the town are horribly maintained and while traffic is addressed in many areas, something needs to be done with the traffic in and through Belmont Center.
12. The roads could use some work. Overall, we love living in Belmont.
13. When I tell people i live in Belmont, people's first response is that "Oh, that's the town with the terrible roads." That's not exactly flattering nor how I'd like to be recocgnized. Find a way prioritize and sustatain some much needed infastructure improvements to the roadways.
14. Please institute a snow-shoveling policy with monitoring and _enforcement_. When sidewalks are covered with ice and snow, it keeps people inside reducing our ability to interact and be a community. Also, it encourages the use of cars which are environmentally undesirable, while discouraging such environmentally desirable activities as walking and cycling.
15. I think to preserve the small town feel AND to protect our children, we should make a concerted effort to identify roads where there is a lot of foot traffic and make sure there are sidewalks there. One example would be Sycamore Street. Many children walk down that road every day to school and there are a high number of vehicles (cars and trucks) that race down the road or park onto the poorly outline sidewalk. Slowing down traffic and ensuring our children have a safe way of getting around town would go a long way.
16. As I previously indicated, the roads and sidewalks within Belmont are an embarrassment to our town. I am givning you my sincere word that whenever I'm discussing our town with people who do not live in Belmont, the first comment they make is in regards to our terrible our roads and sidewalks are throughout the town. When you rive down a beautiful tree-lines street in Belmont, the experience is completely diminished by the fact that your car is bouncing up and down hitting

bumps and potholes, and it makes the street look terrible! Over the past 18 years of living in Belmont, I have blown at least 9 tires from the potholes, and have damaged my car's suspension several ties also.

17. And something DESPERATELY needs to be done about the NIGHTMARE that is the Leonard Street/Concord Avenue/Channing Road/Common Street traffic. It's a horrific accident waiting to happen every single day.

18. The intersection at Common and Leonard is very difficult to navigate, add a light or a clearly post rules of road. I

19. THE ROADS ARE A DISGRACE. They are about as terrible as can be. Truly all I can picture is a corrupt official that is just pocketing infrastructure repair money. Of course that isn't happening but I have a hard time explaining it away to anybody around me. I'm a resident near cushing square. Trapelo road is a MAJOR road.

20. Fix the roads; manage traffic through the town center better.

21. the road conditions in Belmont are bad for driving and biking. Any improvement projects in the future?

22. focus tax dollars on the school infrastructure and the roads

23. the town needs to take immediate traffic action at the commuter train underpass intersection - that intersection is the most dangerous spot in belmont- PLEASE ADVISE

24. we need to fix our roads. I have never seen so many potholes in any other town (not related so much to the goals, but had to be said).

25. Traffic flow in belomont center needs to be addressed.

26. (i) integrate Hubway bike sharing and public transportation modes more effectively for residents, and extend bike path from Brighton St. to town center; (iii) institute traffic calming devices especially near schools, playgrounds, high traffic areas; and (iv)

27. The roads in Belmont are awful!!!! something needs to be done.. Pedestrians,Children on bikes, scooters etc can't ride safely through the neighborhood for fear they will get lost in the potholes!! (especially the Hillcrest neighborhood) The town should be embarrassed by these roads. The first thing out of town friends, relative say when they visit is "nice roads" !

28. When every I tell someone I live in Belmont the 1st thoughts is I must have $$, then bad taxes and bad roads. These seem to be what we're known for.

29. Fix the roads ASAP.

30. The roads throughout belmont are horrific! Something needs to be done in order to improve them. Not only are the unkept roads an eyesore but are terrible for our vehicles!

31. repair the roads and improve project managment - there is lots of waste of money due to very poor planning!

32. I do not understand why a town with so much in the way of resources cannot do simple traffic claming and control. I am afraid to have my children cross Common Street.

33. PLEASE do something (a traffic light perhaps?) about the hazardous traffic conditions in front of and coming out from the little bridge going into Belmont center! There is traffic coming from 5 different directions...how is it that there is no light there!?!?! I witness one or more of the following every day...near miss car accidents, car accidents, aggressive driving and pedestrians nervously trying to navigate that area. It's truly dangerous.

34. open the Clark Street bridge

35. Please add an overpass for kids to walk safely to the high school over the railroad tracks. The Brighton bike path is too narrow and very unsafe. Change parking on Leonard street from one hour to at least two hours so we can at least enjoy a leisurely dinner there.

36. The roads in the town are in desperate need of repair. Their condition is a serious negative of living here and undoubtedly depresses real estate prices. They make the town seem so badly run.
37. PLEASE fix the roads!
38. We need to fix the roads. They are an embarrassment.
39. I think fixing the broken roads should be placed at a much higher priority. They just look ugly and are not functioning well. The neighbouring towns did a better job than us.
40. I believe that the town has spent far too much money upgrading municipal buildings and ignoring the most significant short-term issue in the town - traffic congestion and road quality. I personally would not spend any additional town funds on building improvemet until and unless a vastly imporved traffic pattern is designed and implemented at the intersection of Concord Ave and Leonard St. Traffic congestion and road conditions are poor at best. I think we should try to involve the State and the MBTA in designing and building a new train bridge and traffic flow. It seems as though the train station and Lion's club could be moved towards the police station and thereby allow for wider traffic flow and lessen congestion. Part of the town area across the street could potentially be used as well. I know that this is not a "Visionary" need, but I do think it is a very big detractor to living in the town.
41. fixing some of the bigger potholes would be a welcome change for all our cyclists!
42. Fix the roads! Embarrassing. Outsiders comment on the deplorable conditions of our roads. We're becoming famous for them.
43. Our $ then needs to go towards improving our roads. They are an embarrassment.
44. We need the high school fixed, the roads fixed, and cushion square developed. This should be priority!
45. The condition of our roads is poor and inexcusable and belies the community's wealth and it's desire to be taken seriously as a retail destination.
46. Please pave / fix the roads - landscape common areas better
47. We need to invest in buildings and roads, so we need to be more encouraging to business to bring in more money.
48. What about the roads? They are a complete embarrassment.
49. In addition to areas discussed, the state of roads is deplorable and has caused a lot of cost in vehicle repair.
50. More parking. More walkable centers. Too dangerous to cross the road right now
51. The traffic issues are horrible and will only get worse as neighbor towns build up.
52. Need to alleviate the traffic flow problem at rush hour getting across the railroad tracks at Brighton and downtown.
53. re-pave the streets so we don't ruin our cars.....
54. More traffic enforcement (speeding, right on red)
55. would be nice to not have big city things like subway!
56. The roads are a disaster.
57. I would see us really strengthen some of the basic infrastructure geared to promote walking and biking in town. The bike path linking the two sides of Belmont is a good example; likewise a bit more attention to key pedestrian intersections (Trapelo and Lexington and a couple of places around Belmont Center) would be cheap ways to get people out of cars and homes and into the community.
58. More easily walkable access from the Waverley side of town to the center.
59. Do more to promote walking and bike use (ie. better sidewalks, crosswalks and trails). When I walk the neighborhoods, it gives me the opportunity to see my neighbors and town.
60. Fix the roads ASAP.

61. Control traffic!!! Too much speeding traffic everywhere--too many trees cut down!
62. Fix the pot holes
63. Enforce speed limits (or reduce speed limits) on side roads. It is dangerous for children to walk or ride their bikes on side roads (that don't have sidewalks) because cars drive too fast and do not pay attention. This should be a priority.
64. Traffic lights are essential for our community - more cars are being used
65. Provide better parking needs
    Do not allow all day parking around Waverly Sq.
66. open clark street bridge to improve trafic flow
67. The roads are always in terrible shape. I know people who have moved here recently, and that's the first thing they comment on!
68. I know this has been discussed at length, but I find it bewildering that the town continues to allow the chaos that rules the main intersection(s) in Belmont Center. We would spend 90% more in town if I just didn't have to confront that gambit on a daily basis. We even have taken that intersection into account in deciding where to send our children to preschool.
69. The goals/questions in this survey were ridiculous when you consider the high property taxes, deplorable road conditions,
70. Let's first pave our terrible pot-holed roads before building a new library and/or a new pool, which are not needed if the old structures are refurbished.
71. The biggest issue is transportation and safety in moving around town. Most families I know drive their children to school since it is not safe for them to walk or bike. And the quality of the roads is poor, as we all know, though abuse to our cars is not as critical as safety for our bikers and pedestrians.
72. The roads could also be improved; Trapelo is an embarrassment.
73. At a very selfish level, a raised crosswalk on Waverley, somewhere between Trapelo and Beach - the speed that cars take the road is increasing, and there are more and more children on & around the road thanks to all the townhouses that have sprung up. A tragic accident is becoming a matter of time.
74. The roads are a joke.
75. Better overall infrastructure and traffic planning are critical. People from other towns comment that they can easily tell when they go from Cambridge or Watertown to Belmont because the roads make it seem like you are driving on a dirt road. In addition if they could make Trapelo Road two lanes each way that would make the flow of traffic much more efficient.
76. Promote walkability of belmont (we are the right sized town for this) --sidewalks, attract pedestrian friendly retail, calm traffic. this addresses a lot of the priorities listed--small town community, environment, traffic, neighborhood invested retail...
77. pave the roads
78. ROADS AND TRAFFIC NEED TO IMPROVE A GREAT DEAL!
79. Please fix the roads!
80. The roads are in terrible shape and at places there are no sidewalks.
81. This community needs well-paved roads to attract residents, retailers and others. Nobody likes driving over hundreds of lousy roads on their way to school, business, shopping or recreation.
82. Why can't we pave streets that have multiple potholes that continuously need to be patched? Is there a way to get neighbors involved on specific streets to pool resources to fix our own streets if the town will not or can not do it?
83. Please fix the roads....their killing our cars. Friends from all different Mass. community's who come here, often joke with me, asking if people in Belmont are trying to keep "outsiders" away from our

town with our horrendous roads ..as well as saying "isn't Belmont supposed to be one of the nicer towns to live in; what's up with your roads" I've lived here for 20 years now, and these comments have been going on for at least 10 years. The poor condition of our roads, actually does reflect how much we care about our town.

84. Please repair Trapello road as soon as possible. It needs new asphalt paving for decades now!!!!! Shame on you for having this road in this horrible condition!!!!

85. All roads urgently need repair and RE PAVING.
The intersections on each side of the commuter tunnel are always a mess, yet I'v never seen an accident, it seems pretty dangerous and disorganized. Kinda scary sometimes.

86. Please please better traffic enforcement. Texting while driving, speeding, illegal right on red.

87. and oh god the roads...

88. reduce town center traffic by making leonard st one way. create outdoor terraces for restaurants & cafes by enlarging the sidewalks. And PLEASE fix the roads... they are a disgrace for the town.

89. Add a mini rotary by the underpass

90. The roads in Belmont are in terrible condition. We need more bike lanes and more bike racks - for example, there is no public bike rack in Cushing Square. The intersection under the bridge and between Concord Ave and Leonard Street is a circus and needs to be reworked. I have absolutely no idea who has the right of way in multiple parts of that traffic disaster area.

91. Please fix the roads. There are in absolutely indecent shape. Money invested in building and repairing roads stays in the town.

92. Please fix the big pot holes in the roads and the unsafe and poorly maintained sidewalks.

93. The roads, the schools, and attracting a business tax base are of primary importance.

94. Please focus more on preserving what you have (ie: fix the roads, repair the library / police station) rather than spending on what you don't have or need (Beech St. Center, new library) and neglecting infrastructure. The roads alone are an embarrassment to our community.

95. We need to invest in fixing our roads. They are deplorable and make driving difficult and uncomfortable plus they damage our cars

96. The quality of roads in Belmont need to be improved!

97. Also- this is a bit off topic but the merging of Concord, Common, and Leonard street remains a mess for pedestrians and for cars- this is a terrible entry into our Town Center, and does little to promote a good sense of community.

98. If the traffic issue at Concord and Leonard Street is addressed and resolved, thousands of Belmontians will be gleeful and relieved.

99. Fix the roads!!!

100. 1) Road improvement
5) Increase town efficiencies, LED street lights

101. Road and Traffic system need to be fixed. Total disas ter of Belmont, I believe.

102. Looking forward to Trapelo road make over!

103. Each street should have a sidewalk, free of parked cars. This is an extremely important public safety factor.

104. Trapelo road reaally needs to be repaired. it is a major problem daily for all.

105. The town fails to plan and prepare for things -- an aging pool, terrible roads, The roads have been here since who knows when.

106. Please fix the roads!! I've been in under developed countries with better roads.
Restore the Clark St Bridge and relieve the traffic issues in the center!

107. Would like override to fix roads and build new high school

108. Also, where was the maintenance of roads? I assume that was in the traffic line. We need better road maintenance!!
109. make the streets safer for children by enforcing speed limits locally, budget more money to repair potholes in streets,
110. Fix the town's roads
111. Traffic is consistent with a large urban city and destroys the small town feel. Belmont IS a cut through. Possible ideas to decrease cut through traffic include: permits or tolls; lights designed to reduce cut through entrances.
112. In such a dense town, people should be able to walk to the various services and business areas safely and easily.The snow removal bylaw was a start in the right direction, but year-round, there are still many sidewalks that are not walkable.
113. cut short residential streets in half so we have more 'cul de sacs', it facilitates neighborhoods
114. Fix the roads and buildings (high school) to build pride in community
115. I would love to see the downtown (Leonard Street) become more of a pedestrian mall, and traffic get routed to either side. And, it would be fabulous to allow commuter parking downtown BEFORE 8:30 so we could take the train and cut down on some of that traffic. It's a mess there in the mornings.
116. Small town communities do not build developments with 100+ units on a main road that is already over used and a traffic jam at rush hour
117. I think the crossing from Concord Ave under the bridge to Belmont Center makes me feel cut off from that side of town. I don't feel safe biking under it and I also hate driving under it
118. Fix the roads!
119. I feel the small community atmosphere sometimes lends itself to small minded when it comes to improvments to town roads and town facilities
120. more pedestrian friendly and plentiful parking business areas!
121. Fix the traffic under bridge
122. More off-street parking needed at many town facilities, such as library, senior center, town field, etc.
123. Coordinate road paving with utility upkeep - no sooner is a road paved than it is torn up for gas, water, or other maintenance.
Plan ahead and budge for upkeep
124. Roads are awful.
125. Fix the roads
126. I think the town should fix the roads first
127. Improve the roads. The roads are in horrible shape and take away from the beauty of the town.
128. For one thing keep up with the ROADS to repair!
129. The infrastructure question is a challenging one - as the resources are limited, but the roads are downright treacherous in places.
130. fix the roads
131. Please, repare (pave) the Trapello road and other streets which are in need for new asfalt for decades!!!!
132. Safer pedestrian travel would be benefical - especially under the Bridge.
133. Need clear investment priorities -- how can we invest $6.2 million in a 2-month pool used by about 200 when our schools and roads are falling apart?
134. FIX THE ROADS AND OUR SIDEWALKS!!!! Everyone that I speak to, "who lives outside of Belmont" comments about how horrible our roads are, and how it takes away from the beauty our town has to offer because there are potholes everywhere, and the roads look terrible

135. Your roads are a disaster.
136. Leonard sq. intersection is a good start,it's a mess pave it,lines would make the town more civil.... Slow down speeders and cut through traffic...Tickets!
137. Fix the roads ASAP.
138. Focus on priorities of government such as schools and roads as well as safety
139. At the same time, our roads and sidewalks, which are used by everyone, are going to ruin. For the foreseeable future we should engage in no more capital projects, repair the roads and sidewalks,
140. Fix the roads.
141. Pass a prop 2 1/2 override to allow meaningful investment in our infrastructure, particularly our schools and roads.
142. First, the roads are AWFUL. I don't really care if we have a new library, but a new pool is a huge plus. The flow of traffic through the center needs to be addressed. There are eight lanes trying to get through. PLEASE, I would love to take the train in the morning but can't park until 8:30 - that does not help me at all.
143. Also, the infrastructure issues need to be dealt with in a more systemic way, roads and sidewalks, especially.
144. As well as the Butler building, the road on the back entrance doesn't even have a real sidewalk even though it is a main entry point. In the winter the car parking ban was not enforced on Maple Terrace, so there were heaps of snow left to further restrict parking when the snow plows had to go around them, creating a very unsafe environment. Many children had to walk down the center of the road with cars in these hazardous conditions, which were left this way for weeks with the long winter. The town was unconcerned when called about this.
145. Belmont does well, indeed.As in most towns and cities, road improvement, where needed, would help.
146. want to see enforcement of traffic rules with bicyclists. I am concerned about increasing number of aggressive bicyclists on Belmont roads. Let's not become arlington. I see cars and pedestrians adhering to traffic rules but not bicyclists. I know many people avoid Arlington Center now because of aggressive bicyclists.
147. Manage traffic?!! You have got to be kidding!The intersection of Common St. and Concord Ave is designated as a "historical intersection" and has actually been written about as one of the worst intersections in New England! The town should put up 2 sets of traffic lights on either side of the tunnel. They should be times to allow optimal traffic flow based upon a study performed by a professional.As a non-traffic professional, I would hope the lights would become flashing signals once heavy traffic subsides, say around 9:00 pm. Just thinking outloud here...
148. Something should be done with traffic problems.
149. At major center section such as near bridge to Belmont center we need traffic lights for our seniors and high school students who cross there. Safety is crucial. The small town affect needs to keeps up safe. Also the major intersection at Waverly and School Street. A traffic light needs to be in place near the old library and fire house. Even a light at the CUS to prevent any to die. For bicyclists and pedestrians to walk around town potholes and streets need to be repaved to keep everyone safe.
150. Get more traffic enforcement out on Trapelo Rd in Waverly. Have the signal lights work - instead of the light at Lexington St turning green and the one on Trapelo turning read have both red to let cars out of Moraine St. Enforce the stop sigh and directional signs at Mill St.
151. Traffic in Belmont Center is awful.Intersection of Concord Ave and Common St. at the railroad overpass needs traffic lights!!!! Sidewalks on most residential streets are a disgrace. They are

dangerously uneven and nearly unusable for strollers or wheelchairs.Bus stop near stores on trapelo need parking enforcement.More bicycle lanes needed.

152. Walking paths around town need to improve. There are many people who would like to do more walking but cannot due to poor or nonexistent sidewalks. Of course, resources need to be devoted to road improvements.

153. We could use more enforcement of motor vehicle + speed laws - pedestrian crossings should be well marked with stand-up signs in the center of the street. Cars parked in "no parking" areas should be ticketed.

154. Parking in Waverly Sq - Clogs up.Neighbors from out of town workers unable to park all night yet cars park all day 12-14 hours.

155. Fix the roads, how can we divert some of the pass-through traffic from rt. 2? How about a toll?

156. no sure, but there are a lot of cars that travel through belmont in the morning.

157. The street and road maintenance and reconstuction has become inherently unfair and continues to do nothing more than make the town easy to drive through by automobiles. Bikes and pedestrians are on their own. Infrastructure maintenance continues to be very poor, approaching 3rd world quality standards. (I have worked in the 3rd world and know what I'm talking about.)

158. Don't look to development only to generate more revenue. Look to reengineer the organizational structure and infrastructure. We are overdeveloping (retail at Cushing Square) and trying to compensate for it by thinking that road design can (Trapelo Road, bike paths, wider sidewalks. We are increasing people/# cars and reducing lanes.

159. Improve the roads. Put a no-idle policy in place for cars.

160. Do not allow large stores/restaurants in LBIII business districts. The traffic associated with these is harmful to the adjacent neighborhoods.

161. look into the benefits of starting middle school and high school at later times. this also helps with morning traffic. Traffic lights would be beneficial in some areas--like by the bridge-turning left onto pleseant st from a side street--even if only are on during certain hours.

162. Town should do more to encourage walking and safe biking; and facilitate/promote residential development near transit (doing so will also support existing retail hubs).

163. FIX THE ROADS.Biker/walking path(s) Re-assess traffic patters at the bridge in the center.

164. Consider parking garages - there's not enough spacces for on street parking in Waverly or Cushing Square. Facilitate the Cushing Square project!!

165. Traffic in Belmont Center is very bad! ? of lights be there! Traffic

166. 1. The roads are unpassable by bike and simply MUST BE FIXED. 2. Main St (Leonard St) recycling bins. Cushing St, Traffic.

167. No more bike lanes.

168. Too much car traffic, too many bicycles -- accidents waiting to happen

169. More retail (of quality & diversity) is needed in town, especially on Brighton, pleasant and leonard streets. trapelo road retail remains a HUGE eyesore in most sections. Start with signage restrictions - neon and tacky plastic must go. It's a simple start.

170. Fix the roads!

171. I am a firm believer in the bike path and marked bike ways on the roads

172. make bike lanes (and get the bikeway finished) a priority

173. fix the roads

174. If bicycling was a little easier around town, we'd do that more often instead of taking the car. Many of the roads are in rough shape

175. I think we should include sidewalks everywhere and wherever possible bike lanes.

176. Please repair the Trapello road!!!! It needs a new surfice!!!!!

177. Provide accessible bike and walking paths; maintain the streets and sidewalks to encourage safe walking options.

178. There are other quality of life measures like making it more pleasurable to walk to both town centers. The traffic patterns are tough in both cases with increased traffic coming thru Belmont.

179. So the pedestrian, cycling friendly policies translate to more traffic snarl, longer commute times, and greater danger to both cars and pedestrians as cranky drivers try to navigate the impediments to their commutes. In the meantime the roads are neglecting and crumbling. The anti-idling law amounts to a bit of useless hectoring.

180. Improve the streets. I feel like all my fillings are falling out because of how bumpy the roads are.

181. Make the downtown traffic less a bottleneck and safer. Too many cars parked in second lanes.

182. If town gov't was smaller ... places like McLean would not have needed to be developed to provide additional tax revenue for the local gov't and traffic would not be the insane mess that it is in Belmont between 8-9 on weekday mornings.

183. Roads are deplorable. Sidewalks worse - extremely dangerous to bike and walk on e.g. tree root upheaval main cause.

184. There is way too much traffic on brighton street.

185. The roads are unsafe, inadequate curbing on main streets (School Street) that border schools with no busing (Burbank). Crossing guards are sworn at, disregarded and it is a wonder there are not more pedestrian accidents although it would seem that Belmont already has more each year than is acceptable.

186. Vastly decrease or eliminate the use of road salt. Road salt causes great harm with little to no safety benefit.

187. We need a traffic light or a 3-way stop sign as Concord Avenue and Leonard Street meet. This is a NIGHTMARE every morning and every night. Currently, there is no prevailing concept of drivers "taking turns." Some drivers hog the road, while others wait interminally. Why has this gone on so long? Forced stops via stop signs, with a rule to alternate car-by-car, will facilitate a much more civilized traffic spot, which is the bane of everyone's morning and evening commute. There's a traffic light at the corner of Common Street in front of St. Joseph's Church, but the level of traffic at this spot pales in comparison to the 3 roads coming together at Concord and Leonard Street. Save us from this nightmare!

188. Traffic backups in Waverley Square at rush hour have really made things a lot less pleasant. They seem to be largely construction related, so hopefully things will loosen back up after the construction is complete. But if not, it should really be addressed.

189. TRAFFIC! Police details need to do their jobs to maintain safety and keep the traffic moving. This is not happening. Signage at the bridge debacle (3 way stop) and clearly marked lane designations.

190. Better designed roads, better road conditions, and bike paths to support safe alternative transportation alternatives, and to create better traffic flow (eg cars not jammed up at tunnel)

191. In terms of traffic - it is getting worse every year. I would like to see a solution for the stone bridge traffic problem - perhaps a light on the common street side??

192. Traffic problems will increase with all the new housing on our borders--let's not get bogged down in small town image and hire professional planners to help us cope!

193. Add more traffic limiting/speeding methods.

194. Road condition in Belmont especially Trapelo road all the way to Cambridge is very, very bad. I can say for sure it is one of worst in the whole world. It is horrible. Hope you can solve this big, big problem as early as possible. No chance of riding bicycle on this road.

195. Ensure bike and pedestrian- friendly streets.

196. Work with the local elementary schools to encourage families to bike, rather than drive, kids to school. Wellington school has one tiny, ill-placed bike rack and didn't even include biking as an option on the survey sent to all families about how children will get to/ from school.

197. The rush hour traffic through Belmont center is a mess. Something needs to be done to fix the flow of traffic through the train tracks underpass.

198. The roads in town are beyond horrible. Why doesn't the municipality have appropriate funding to maintain the roads?

199. We need to find a way to dissuade NWern commuters from cutting through Belmont on their way to/from work locations in other towns/Boston.

200. (2.) The town does a poor job of monitoring major roadways for speeding and traffic violations. It feels like we have just ceded several roads to commuters who are passing through and have no commitment to community. This is a residential town, and while I realize that people must travel through it, we should be diligently monitoring to make sure that they observe laws and conform to social norms.

(3.) Linked to the above, there is no reason that the vast majority of children in this town shouldn't feel safe and capable of walking to school, this should be one of Belmont's most important "selling points" but the town has failed to invest in viable sidewalks, proper signage around schools and the employment of crossing guards. I think it would greatly improve the sense of community if people saw children on the streets more often. They live here, but are never seen, because the town has basically ceded the roadways to pass through traffic.

(4.) Also linked to the first two, if we could get Belmont residents biking and walking, and make it safe for their children to do so, we would have less traffic and be more environmentally responsible. Belmont could and should lead the way in this. By a happy accident we are positioned to actually already be exactly like the "planned communities" that people pay significantly to inhabit. To me, the two lynch pins for this are traffic and a more useful set of stores and retail opportunities that are within walking distance.

201. If we were to close off Leonard Street to all cars and make Pleasant Street and Cross Street the routes to take – each being a one-way so that the foot traffic in Belmont Center would be safer and people could freely walk from store to store without the fear of being hit by a car that was not paying attention.

202. Block roads that are identified as common short cuts at the commute peak hours...and let only locals through. The intent would be to breakup commute drive-though traffic patterns. Partially block roads. Starting at 7;00 a.m. and later at 3:00 p.m people zoom through the streets....they are cutting across Belmont to avoid traffic lights. You have to mix it up for these people...and frustrate these short cuts to change the behavior.

Additionally, there are plenty of people who park and ride. Using Belmont as a free parking lot while they are at work. You can see this everyday on Newton St, Falmouth St, Worcester St ...streets off of Belmont St. Another way is to just pass out speeding tickets on the minor roads ...there is not shortage of speeding on lesser roads during the commute time.

203. Better assessment and planning for traffic flows and safety are really needed. The traffic through Belmont Center and the severe DANGERS posed to drivers, bikers and pedestrians going under the Bridge in Belmont Center and attempting to make turns off of Leonard Street are unacceptable.

204. As a bicyclist, the roads are dangerous, period. Try going under the bridge into the Center (either on bike or walking) - between the traffic and road conditions...

205. During rush hour you can not get across town- morning or evening.

We are a huge pass through town for commuters which adds to unwanted pollution of all kinds,

road destruction, etc. Residents are paying for it in being unable to use roads and then pay heavily for damaged cars due to the condition of the roads.

206. THE ROADS ARE A DISASTER and it is truly a disgrace when people come visit my home.

207. Clay Pit Pond seems to be a neglected opportunity.

208. The Town should participate in Hubway bike sharing and have stations at Alewife, the commuter rail, and key neighborhood locations (e.g. schools, main traffic circles, etc.); 3. The town should use traffic calming devices such as speed bumps (prevalent in Somerville and Cambridge) especially near high traffic areas, schools, and playgrounds; 5. The Town should develop resident parking near commuter rail and subway stations for commuting downtown; 6. The Town should push the T to run the 74/75 bus from Harvard Sq. more often during rush hour so that this is a viable commuter option;

209. Fix the roads ASAP.

210. Again, too much cut through traffic, completely unregulated.

211. Fix the roads, put benches at public transportation stops.

212. FIX THE HORRENDOUS ROADS AND PUT SIGNS UP AT RIDICULOUSLY DANGEROUS COMMON ST/CONCORD ST. INTERSECTION

213. About the traffic .. .(you really should have an open-ended question on every page). It seems futile to me to carry on about traffic. Belmont is situated at the edge of a major metropolitan area, and there is no way we can tell people not to drive on public roads, nor is there much of anything we can do to mitigate their doing so. One way streets may help in certain instances, but they will also inconvenience Belmont residents. We all live here because it is terrific to have a yard and trees and a garden, and yet live so close to the city where so many work. That convenience carries with it the burden of through-traffic. You can't have everything.

214. Fixing the roads.

215. Bike paths and traffic safety = priority.

216. Traffic is increasing in Belmont and in neighboring towns. I hope we can develop our traffic patterns to minimize problems. Belmont center has become much more harrowing in the 20 years I have lived here.

217. We need to increase the budget to fix the roads. It is not an overstatement to say that they must be among the worst in Massachusetts.

218. Traffic is congested most of the day primarily by people using Belmont as a cut through. Need to reduce convenience of Belmont as a cut through: perhaps lights, permits, tolls, one way streets at certain hours, etc

219. Better quality of road repairs, which look messy and are falling apart within a year or two. Creation of sidewalks and bike lanes when repairs are done - this does not seem to be a priority.

220. 1. Put in speed bumps and enforce speed limits on the busiest streets. I live on Washington Street and people regularly fly down that street at 50 mph. There should be a speed trap there to deter speeders and potentially speed bumps given it's near a school.

221. Traffic in town and around the HS is awful. There ought to be light or stop sign at Leonard and Concord.

222. Belmont's traffic is getting worse and worse which, given the relatively stable housing stock in the town, is an indication of more people cutting through. We should be thankful that the railway cuts through town as it has a self-limiting effect on the traffic that can flow across town. However Mill Street now jams up during rush hour, Brighton Street jams up during rush hour, etc. These are not Belmont residents but rather drivers seeking to get to points south from points north or vice versa. Maybe it would be worthwhile investigating improvements of Lexington Street in Waltham (it is already a wide commercial street) as a thoroughfare

223. The intersection by the Center by the bridge on Concord Ave. is a mess-- something should be done to manage traffic and make it more safe.

224. Is there a reason why there are still no signals at intersection of Channing and Leonard? and even more urgently at intersection of Concrod and Leonard? This is a major public safety and traffic issue and seems illogical not to address it.

225. Improve the roads, enforce traffic rules, and add more bike paths

226. Work ACTIVELY to manage traffic flow, especially on our most heavily traveled corridors of Trapelo and Concord Avenues. Encourage broader use of Lone Tree Hill and Beaver Brook for walking and socializing.

227. Lots of pot holes in the street.
Also, is it possible that the trash men could put the trash barrels on the side of the driveway rather than in the middle of the driveway,

228. So this will be the third time putting this in here. The traffic is a mess. If the commuter rail from Belmont Center offered better parking and stopped there more than twice in the morning, I'd never drive to work again. Please consider more day-long parking to alleviate traffic congestion on Leonard Road/Concord Ave in the morning.

229. Traffic flows should in some cases be optimized for safety when there is not a great solution for throughput e.g. Belmont Center. More bike accommodations (the bike parking in the center is nice!) would be great, and of course, it would be nice if our roads were not renowned throughout the Commonwealth for their abysmal quality.

230. Our roads should be in much better repair to also encourage biking.

231. The roads are atrocious, I don't want to drive on them let alone let my children ride their bicycles. We value ourselves as "Town of Homes" but soon we will not attract home buyers who can pay the inflated rates because driving here is so unpleasant. --

232. Belmont has too generously allowed cross-traffic to choke any pedestrian activity. Most traffic light are heavily in favor of moving cars and on many crosswalks pedestrians are forced to wait two or more traffic light cycles to be able to cross safely. That is utter disgrace for town full of sidewalks and it is in general accident waiting to happen. Cars can not have right of way and always. Commuters who park all over Belmont and crowd our streets should be paying for parking privilege. Raised crosswalks and singe lanes of traffic should be present on Trapelo and Belmont corridor. Leftover space should be used for bikes and wider sidewalks/parking areas.

233. Control pass-through traffic: Increased traffic through main cut- throughs are damaging our roads, our air and our peace! Incidentally Bike lanes are NOT a painted line on a road, they are dedicated lanes constructed off the road at a different level: see Concord Ave to Fresh Pond.!!

234. Road repair and upkeep needs to be a focus. Traffic awareness and enforcement need to pick up.

XVI - BIKE PATH/COMMUNITY PATH

The comments unanimously expressed support for completing the bike path. A few responses also included frustration with the ability of a small number of residents to delay the project.

1. Install the community bike path;
2. community bike path
3. Finish the bike path into town.
4. allow the bike path along RR tracks
5. Promote small businesses that provide useful services and support shared public infrastructure like the community path
6. Always seems that small vocal group derails projects that would benefit community (bike path, temporary Starbucks location, etc)
7. I am very pro-bike path to Belmont Center so my children and I can enjoy our small-town community and SAFELY get to the center. There needs to be bike racks in Belmont Center. Also the town should send out emails notifying the community of events. We lived in Arlington prior to Belmont and their town does a fabulous job with email notifications of all the town events.
8. better connect each half of Belmont bisected by the train tracks through Belmont Center via bike paths. As a resident living near Pleasant and Prospect, it's really difficult to bike through Belmont Center and under the bridge with the asteroid field of traffic on a daily basis.
9. A bike path
10. Off road community bike path
11. I would see us really strengthen some of the basic infrastructure geared to promote walking and biking in town. The bike path linking the two sides of Belmont is a good example; likewise a bit more attention to key pedestrian intersections (Trapelo and Lexington and a couple of places around Belmont Center) would be cheap ways to get people out of cars and homes and into the community. Schools are THE key to a "small-town community" but means of easy and common interaction are another. These should be geared to knit the neighborhoods together.

12. This comment is regarding the previous question, about ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety. There are very few routes connecting the parts of Belmont separated by the railroad, and they are both nightmares for cyclists: Brighton Rd. after Concord has no shoulder and often has heavy traffic, and the entrance to Belmont Center, a 5-way blind intersection with no traffic signals, is a nightmare for cyclists and automobile drivers both. If ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety is indeed part of our vision, doing something to resolve these issues should be a priority.
13. I would like to see more cycling infrastructure. This would promote safe cycling which would reduce traffic, reduce pollution, preserve town character, and increase community health.
14. Put bicycle lanes OFF the road onto a different level with pedestrians as on Concord Ave./ Cambridge and Vassar Street, Camb.. A painted line does NOT do it!
15. The Town should extend the bike path from Brighton St. to the Town Center;.
16. Approve town walking path.
17. It would be great to make movement on the bike path - by starting on the west side of town where there is full support to connect Waverley to Belmont Center.
18. Create the community path! Please don't let the few residents on one portion alter a solid, sound plan for the benefit of thousands.
19. Community Path off the main road.

20. The bike path along the MBTA route is being hijacked by the few residents along Channing Road who have moved their fence lines onto MBTA land. Unbelievable. Why is this being allowed? An off-road bike path is good for everyone, especially people whose homes abut the path. They don't see it because they will lose the land they stole.
21. Get the bike path going already.
22. I believe extending bike path from Alewife to Belmont center is a wonderful opportunity to draw attention to businesses in town center, and also create a safe commute/recreational route for local residents.
23. Bike paths and traffic safety = priority.
24. More bike lanes/paths.
25. The Town should participate in Hubway bike sharing and have stations at Alewife, the commuter rail, and key neighborhood locations (e.g. schools, main traffic circles, etc.); The Town should extend the bike path from Brighton St. to the town center;
26. Develop safe, OFF ROAD routes so that pedestrians and cyclists *of any age and ability* may get around town without having to deal with the impatience/distraction of drivers.
27. More easily walkable access from the Waverley side of town to the Center.
28. Add more bike lanes/paths
29. Have designated bike lanes throughout town to promote safer, more consistent travel thus improving health and well being and encouraging kids to get to schools in multiple safe ways.
30. More bike accommodations (the bike parking in the center is nice!) would be great
31. Incidentally Bike lanes are NOT a painted line on a road, they are dedicated lanes constructed off the road at a different level: see Concord Ave to Fresh Pond.!!

.

XVII –THE SURVEY, THE VISION STATEMENT AND THE PROCESS

Respondents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share views. Some commented that the Town should create tangible goals linked to the broad vision principles.

1. Thanks !
2. Thank you for your work and for seeking our feedback!
3. Like the idea of the survey. Please keep us updated on what comes of it.
4. Thanks!
5. Thank you for your work!!! I appreciate this opportunity to give feedback.
6. Distribute the citizen-herald in every home.
7. Think about this before we make decisions. We don't have to do what another town is doing; we can make decisions based on what is best for Belmont.
8. I am curious as to who is funding this survey.
9. Truly, the goals stated above are so vague and superficial that I have no idea what they mean.
10. No time to attend mtgs to understand progress. However, it will be a good idea to provide short update on progress via email.
11. Thank you for outreaching to the community for input
12. Previous page glitch: cannot number them as you choose since it jumps to number them in order. First: Environment, 2: small town atmosphere 3 historic preservation 4 encourage participation,
13. This survey is a great idea!
14. Given the lack of more meaningful town priorities, I don't share the point of prioritizing the Vision Statement goals.
15. The previous page is not working correctly. The rankings prepopulate and you can't change them.
16. I appreciate the survey. However, it is heavy in its use of key phrases which are not elaborated and so I question that people are responding to the same idea. It needs to be more concrete in its statements so that we are sure we all know what "valuing diversity" or "maintaining small town" means - how is it expressed - what sorts of projects would these entail - is “valuing diversity” about housing prices, the Martin Luther King breakfast -- it is just too general, too many buzz words without definition. I was more confused by this survey and concerned that big ideas will come from this that are not actually what people meant. I would expect a better survey from Belmont.
17. On question 5, I feel the question is written to pander to different groups of people. You should have separated the future from the past. Belmont spends way too much time worrying about historical buildings. The "temporary" relocation of the historical house to Concord Avenue is just one example. It is now an eyesore that was moved there to accommodate the desires of a small number of vocal people. I answered the question "very important" but in truth I think it is "very important" for facilities that are currently used and "not very important" for historical buildings
18. Statement is without meaning. too much motherhood.
19. Why do only some of these questions have a space for comments?
20. Listen to current residents more than look for new ones
21. Give neighbors some good things to talk about, not about how bad the roads are, construction, yet another bank or high taxes
22. I think the Vision should be even more of a guiding document and the principles (which are great!) should be displayed even more prominently and discussed repeatedly in public.
23. Belmont is a town in between...it needs to create itself and assert its vision
24. I believe it is better to look beyond the Belmont borders and take a metropolitan approach.
25. Hold a meeting at the Beech Street Ctr.

26. Exposure - awareness (public), such as this committee goal(s), senior newsletter - community newspaper - local/tv - vote. Learn -discern - enforce!

27. In my view (and perhaps this is your intention), following this extensively soft Quality of Life Vision Statement (which suggests a town government in search of a feel-good pat on the back), the town should establish a serious priorities, starting with a Mission Statement -- for example, one that proposes to "provide high quality services through the town departments of administration, fire, police, and public works." Following this, we should establish our strategic goals and objectives -- goals such as

"1. Provide for high-quality government services;

2. Promote the stability of our existing residential neighborhoods, while fostering diverse housing opportunities;

3. Promote diverse economic development that conforms with the town's residential character and the environment;

4. Provide, support, and encourage a high quality of life for the town."

The objectives we then draw up for these goals should be clear and measurable.

APPENDIX II - SURVEY COMMENTS BY QUESTION

This appendix includes the original comments that were submitted. These comments are tied to the question that they corresponded with in the survey and were left unedited or reformatted in an effort to maintain the integrity of the commentators' statements.

The views and opinions expressed herein are those of individual survey respondents and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Town of Belmont, its affiliates, its employees, or its elected officials.

Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving the Town's "Sense of Community" in line with the above goals? Please briefly describe below:

Answer Options	Response Count
	298
answered question	**298**
skipped question	**820**

1	More town wide events, better website and better job of advertising events town does have. Need to make people in town understand how much power the town government has and how much more town could offer them if the people as a whole became outraged by the slowness of BOS and inability to make any decisions.
2	Additional town wide activities. E.g., "junior olympics" Annual veteran appreciation parade
3	#2 I am concerned about "newcomers" who choose Belmont knowing the community and then want to change it when they settle here. #3 I don't like seeing BOS forming "committees" to study issues. Then committee "packed" with members with a particular agenda i.e., CPAC. "Involvement"needs to be monitored - these are not elected officials. #4 In the 45 years I've lived here the OS have moved slowly and conservately to make changes - an example is the Beech St. Center - 40 years in the making! A long time coming but far superior to any other centers I've experienced.
4	Love town day! How can we get young families involved in politics? More upscale retail. More parking. More walkable centers. Too dangerous to cross the road right now
5	The Payson Park Concert series in the summer is nice, but most of Belmont doesn't know about them. Perhaps having a similar series in the Winn Brook and Butler areas would help to build community togetherness.

	Belmont does a very poor job of reaching out to the many groups and organizations based right here. For instance Banbury Cross Morris and Sword is the oldest children's morris dance troupe in all of America. They are based right here in Belmont. Because they are run by the parents of the performers, it is rare that the skills of the parents lie in marketing. The town should know about community gems like Banbury Cross and actively promote them as boasting points of community.
6	- Trees that shade tables with chairs in the parks so seniors can enjoy the outdoors - Why is it that the only park in the Butler School District gets all the dogs to do their necessities and our children play on that ground - More intergenerational projects with Wellington and Butler schools to beautify their grounds
7	Through houses of worship and/or the Beech St. center activities. Local representation (town reps, elected officials, etc)
8	Senior citizens feel left out The senior center does a lot - but seniors should not be made to feel superfluous.
9	Personally, I think that trying to maintain small town community feeling may be at odds with the 1st 2 goals. Zoning should be protected so that the town does not have proliferation of McMansions. Affordable housing needs to expand so that seniors can stay. If diversity and newcomers are to be welcome than "small town" idea of maintaining neighborhoods with certain ethnic groups needs to be reconsidered
10	Promote a small town with a big heart atmosphere Encourage hospitality, generosity, and friendliness - as town values. Encourage neighbors to get to know each other Increase awareness of the needs of the community and how we can assist others.
11	The town is still boring re Globe article 7 or 8 years ago! It has no identity. Diversity in Belmont is Asian, not Latino or Black except for the Project. We should be ashamed. But we're not. Why not? Need to town-sponsored neighborhood events. Is there a real playground program? Parades? There are the events like outdoor arts festivals or block parties or kite flying? Town day is our one thing. Not enough!
12	Better use of computers - such as ordering meals online.
13	discourage out of scale, inappropriate development.;
14	Establish a teen center Smaller class sizes

15	When we have approached a local body wanting to participate, the first reaction is to invite to visit the web or contact by email. An effort needs to be done to invite to "real" nor "virtual" meetings, to really feel people think that they are welcome.
16	Meet Belmont is a great event for newcomers to the community, Town Day is a great event for residents who have been here for longer. It might be nice to have one more community-wide event, not tailored to newcomers, in hopes of looping in people who have been here for a while, but who may not benefit from the amusements of Town Day in the same way. Maybe an ice cream social on the town green? Or a winter-time gathering at the Beech Street to get folks out in the colder temps?
17	don't be so exclusionary while people are trying to register for school - or get information. we just moved here and it was like trying to break through the mafia to get registered. and the town clerk was the rudest of them all.
18	Things like the welcome to belmont event, allow us to offer to take part or volunteer at it.
19	The neighborhoods abutting Trapelo Road/Belmont Street are part this Town of Homes, and should be treated as such
20	More community spaces. I'm grateful we're building a new pool, If we had a new attractive workable library people would flock to it. We need a true community center for town wide events. The senior center doesn't seem to be working.
21	We need more commercial revenue to survive and provide the services to the "community"
22	The Town has to contend with a serious split in its goal. The eastern part of the Town has a Cambridge/Boston orientation, with an interest in public transit, higher density, commercial development and city-like services, while the western part of the town is oriented towards suburban ideals, like free parking, low-density development, and is anti-commercial development. It's hard to reconcile such opposite points of view.
23	More gathering opportunities like the summer concerts in Payson Park
24	Distribute the citizen-herald in every home.
25	Change the Senior Center to a Community Center where meetings can happen for updates on community issues, plus a place for all Belmont residents to interact
26	rezoning to keep megamansions from destroying neighborhoods, preserve our historical buildings, analyze available vacant Town properties to help meet these needs, preserve our trees and plant appropriately (not under power lines!)
27	It is critical to maintain events like Town Day and the Dan Scharfman run to build community unity. However, how about a press campaign too, like "I love Belmont" stickers, or cool t-shirts for the kids?
28	Less user fees for youth and children, better recreation programs for youth and children and adults, get ideas and learn from other towns such as Lexington, Winchester, Burlington
29	Prevent large housing projects from being built.
30	Less committees
31	I think the structure of town government, with an inefficient town meeting, and a town manager that does not hold enough power, to dissuade people from wanting to get involved and hurts our sense of community.
32	promote ways for old and young to get togeher
33	I believe the Payson Park Music Festival is among the most exemplary programs in the Town which fosters a deep sense of community/
34	I am concerned the the overcrowding the schools is going to have an impact on the community.
35	Continue community events like Town Day and Music in the Park. Look to add other events like a dine around at local restaurants and welcome dinners for new residents hosted by volunteers/neighbors (happy to discuss in person)
36	Restrict developers' ability to build outsized homes in residential areas.
37	Reduce taxes and spending

38	More recurring activities and events (like farmers market) and less emphasis on bigger ones (town day, specific fundraisers)
39	We need to be more active planners. Development does not need to be a bad word. Done correctly it will bring economic and housing opportunities that will help to revitalize town centers.
40	conduct town hall style meeting to discuss and present issues to non-town meeting members
41	try to keep out chain stores. promote local businesses. curb teardowns i.e. converting single family homes to multifamily. encourage town meetingmembersto bein touch with their precincts wishes.
42	Have more community-wide events like town day and meet belmont.
43	Do a better job of welcoming newcomers into the school system. We were new to Belmont for the 2013-14 school year. We have 2 children in Chenery Middle School. While the guidance counsellors were very helpful in helping our children to settle in at school, we found the office staff at Chenery to be extremely unfriendly during the registration process. We have been very happy with the quality of education at CMS, but our first interaction with the office staff was not at all welcoming.
44	The insane number of two family townhouses being jammed into the Butler area gives lie to this aspiration. The lack of support for additional tax revenue through developing (smartly) more industry, is driving out an entire economic strata (because the tax burden is increasingly placed on homeowners) that has been vital to the success of Belmont as a desirable place to live. Our schools will begins to suffer as we cannot continue to squeeze money from residents, and as we stuff the town with additional students living in two family townhouses on lots that once contained simple ranches. It is tactical, short-sighted behavior that will have negative strategic consequences for Belmont. Once we lose the school quality rankings, good luck selling your expensive Belmont home.
45	Protect the town from development internally and externally. The traffic issues are horrible and will only get worse as neighbor towns build up.
46	Encourage newcomers to become part of Town government by inviting them to meetings and to speak. Too often I see Town officials berating residents for expressing their opinions and discouraging them from attending meetings by using tactics such as not providing enough seating and giving intimidating looks at those who are speaking.
47	You cannot have a strong sense of community when poor planning means that every new family puts your child's educational experience at risk. Belmont is not a town of homes, its a town of children. Plan for the children and schools and their relationship to homes (zoning), roads, and utilities. These are currently disconnected..
48	Think about this before we make decisions. We don't have to do what other town is doing, we do can make decisions based on what is best for Belmont.
49	Allow some industry to promote jobs and take the property tax burden off of taxpayers
50	We need more independent shops and fewer chains and banks. Is there a way to make it affordable to the little guy and encourage this business?
51	Love the town wide activities but need more sandwich boards to advertise for those residents not on a school listserv
52	let some small commercial businesses have a chance of starting up in Belmont, don't make it so difficult
53	While I believe in town meeting as a governing method, it is too slow and cumbersome to accomlish the work necessary in thse fast-paced times - and to accomplish the Vision 21 goals. We need to *seriously* consider other options.
54	I am curious as to who is funding this survey.
55	Too many elections, should be combined!
56	A better customer service atmosphere in Town Hall is needed. I go in and try to do something and am ignored - I feel it is a club in some depts for people who want to talk to each other.
57	Stop allowing homes to be destroyed and huge mega houses built on its place. No more condos also.
58	We have activities (namely soccer) for our youth, we have a wonderful place for our seniors to gather and do activities, we are very lacking in helping young-families be a part of the community - it can be very hard to get to know people and there are not a lot of programs for babies-toddlers under 5. (Better safer enclosed park structures, and more room for children at the library would be

	a start.)
59	we need increased commercialism (more stores) to gain revenue for the town
60	Plant some trees down main street, outside seating (parking only on one side as the parking is very close, less banks, black top the main street with nice cross walks. flowers, flowers, clean that CVS front and that Bank of Ametica building the worst looking in town. what is coming in the old Macys??? one more bank??? or Walgreen??? nothing small town feeling. you need small shop the you find in the Cape, and for that you need a town manager that understand that feeling, like the ice cream store or sports store that we have etc.. anyway much more
61	We need to be careful to balance the small town feel with progress that makes the town financially viable. Love the payson park concerts, town day and other town-wide events. Perhaps more use of the public spaces for pick-up games of frisbee, concerts, etc.
62	I think this requires a proper definition of "small town". That could mean anything: no national franchise businesses, no colored signs (my hometown only allowed black/grey/white signage on retail stores), no cell towers, no businesses that will affect parking (but the truth is if there are no worthwhile businesses to travel to then parking is the least of your problems), etc. Towns that "grow" naturally develop into sections or "villages" that then adopt that "small town" feel all over again (look at the various sections of Newton or Arlington). Belmont already has "sections" (Cushing Square, Waverly, Belmont Center) that each bring their own unique "small town" feel. Forcing "small town-ness" does not mean adopting prejudicial rules that might chase out businesses and people. Thoughtless parking ordinances, light ordinances, noise ordinances, school overcrowding policies that basically leave storefronts littered with pizza joints, ramshackle businesses, and funeral homes don't promote the town. Luckily things have changed in Belmont over the years. There are now 2 fine-dining locations (Savinos & il Casale) where a family could bring grandmother to celebrate her 70th birthday or mom's promotion to the corner office at an investment bank. The senior center on Beech Street is another great place to celebrate grandmother's 70th. How about a vintage car show at the high school (or Belmont Country Club) during the summer? (just like Larz Andersen park). How about a 5K run for charity? How about a showcase of MIT Media Lab projects at the high school during the summer? Belmont has "competition" from the surrounding towns who have more dining options, more small businesses that promote entrepreneurship, and more young people that want to begin their families. But Belmont has an ideal & a better location and accessibility to some of the best institutions of higher learning and research. Integrate that into the Belmont public schools - work with MIT, work with Harvard. The absolute essential skills will have to be technology related as the Belmont school children graduate and enter the work force. These will be the same children that will then have the desire and the means to return to Belmont and continue to creative in preserving its "small town" nature.
63	As individual residents: don't be so judgmental re: other residents and re: those who 'appear' different. Don't micro manage each other. Respect individual independence more.
64	Continue to build out social presence on Facebook, Google+, and Facebook to allow communication and collaboration within the community. Also all town officials should have public emails. Right now they do not. In fact the new web site makes it very hard to interact with town employees via email (if not impossible).
65	Some sort of organization of block parties that is driven at the town level. Getting to know your neighbors is even more important as we welcome a more diverse population. Some sort of

	committee in that area to drive this might have more people step up to organize them on their blocks...
66	encourage local ways for us to come together such as more pancake breakfasts or potluck dinners
67	reduce friction between families with school-aged children and those without, perhaps by having greater cross-group activities (difficult, I know...I thinking of things like plays that the HS could put on that seniors would enjoy going to, or events that are equally open to families with and without school aged children)
68	first define what " small-town community atmosphere" is . what is the vision for Belmont's "atmosphere"?
69	I wish I did.
70	Need to alleviate the traffic flow problem at rush hour getting across the railroad tracks at Brighton and downtown.
71	Install the community bike path; continue to place value on our schools including enrichment activities: music, performing arts, sports...
72	In some ways, the small-town atmosphere is what hurts us because the squeaky wheel can get his way without a community process.
73	re-pave the streets so we don't ruin our cars.....
74	Rather than focusing on preserving "our small town community atmosphere," I would prefer we focus on a high quality of life and"promote and encourage community events and regional programs, and recreational facilities, and plan for and maintain our walkable community.
75	More traffic enforcement (speeding, right on red)
76	We need just the opposite- town needs to be more lively, instead we have only 1 restaurant and bunch of pizza places...
77	Sense of community must be felt by connection and there is more that can be done with technology to help foster connections. I think if you come from somewhere else it is pretty hard to feel a sense of community and this what this town is becoming. Belmont needs to change with the times. A small town feel is nice but it must be supported by modern amenities and connections based on who lives here.
78	realize that the the reason people move to Belmont is for the schools, and as such, supporting a strong school system and supporting services (library, recreation, activities, etc.) is a priority for keeping up property value, attracting new residences, etc. I have been a resident of Belmont for 5 years and have observed that seniors and those who don't have children are the vocal minority and are hampering those of us who want to invest in our future, our children and our town.
79	Survey the taxpayers on what they want and balance that with what we need to sustain the town long-term.
80	I believe the goal "to preserve the small-town community atmosphere" is directly in opposition to the idea of welcoming new people into the town. To preserve the atmosphere, progress must be throttled, businesses prevented from opening in the town, new construction forbidden etc. The boarded up businesses and collapsing middle class in Belmont stand in tribute to the outstanding way in which the town's officers are accomplishing this conservative effort to prevent change. To improve the sense of community, the town needs to stop meddling in the lives of the citizenry. It should be easier to build in the town; the attacks on industry and commerce need to stop; rather than wasting money on boondoggles like the senior center, a new municipal swimming complex and yet another study on getting a new library, fix the bloody roads! If the citizenry want a new library or a swimming center, raise the funds through donations. We don't need the to harry property owners, particularly the ones on fixed incomes who seek to retire in homes they bought decades ago for funds that benefit a tiny well connected minority of vocal meddlers!
81	ensure that new constructions maintains the small town spirit. Beautify town center by enlarging leonard street sidewalks so that restaurants & cafes could have outside terraces. Maybe make Leonard st one way to reduce traffic through center.
82	better connect each half of Belmont bisected by the train tracks through Belmont Center via bike

	paths. As a resident living near Pleasant and Prospect, it's really difficult to bike through Belmont Center and under the bridge with the asteroid field of traffic on a daily basis.
83	Truly, the goals stated above are so vague and superficial that I have no idea what they mean.
84	Pair up neighborhood children with senior citizens
85	Multi-family in single-family neighborhoods NOT the way to go. Legacy single family residence tear-downs with NEW construction 1.5-3x larger NOT the way to go. More than single-family, e.g. 2-parents/2+childrens in ONE spalnned single-family residence is NOT the way to go, e.g. 2-6 parents with ALL children under one single family roof.
86	Reduce the size of the town government and departments within same
87	Better planning and outreach BEFORE big changes take place. i.e., the demolition of the church in Waverley Square and replacement of townhouses was a big change and does effect a small town atmosphere - but it seems this was not well known much before the week of demolition.
88	Important to create/support/sustain informal community gathering places: new library, new Underwood pool Important to encourage and retain locally owned retail presence
89	Belmont has no distinguishing characteristics, and has little or no artistic community, there is nothing that makes it a destination other than the small shops and where we all live; there's little business development (the empty Filene's is embarrassing).
90	What defines a "small-town" atmosphere? Hard to comment on such a subjective term.
91	A bike path
92	no time to attend mtg to understand progress. However, it will be a good idea to provide short update on progress via email.
93	Publishing and distribution of Belmont Community quarterly or semiannual newsletter
94	more local small businesses and less banks; community bike path
95	would be nice to not have big city things like subway!
96	Stop the teardowns of existing 'starter homes' and building of unsightly cramped duplexes by builders and flippers looking out just for a profit while eliminating starter home stock for new families
97	I don't know what "preserve our small-town community atmosphere" means.
98	create working group to address issues/concerns and communicate these initiatives widely. we are not aware of these initiatives
99	Increase affordable housing opportunities; pass an override to improve the match between revenues and services; maintain the physical plant of the town.
100	Please ensure that landlords enable the small "mom and pop" shops to continue to do business. I love the feel of Cushing Square and the small number of shops near Moozy's Ice Cream store. I've heard that the developer who is bringing in the new commercial/residential complex at Cushing Square is trying to get zoning for Starbucks where the small "mom and pop" shops are near Moozy's. We don't want Starbucks in our neighborhood! Keep the small shops run by people who have invested their lives in maintaining them. Keep the big franchises out!
101	more community based activities that everyone can attend
102	The Aldermen (and councils) should collect more input from the residents. Could we have an on-line "Suggestion Box" where suggestions could be gathered and summarized?
103	Make sure the downtown is fully rented. Have more events like the dan sharfman run, that brings people together. Finish the bike path into town.
104	if the Townies weren't so damned obvious about how they have their hands in every pocket (government, services, permits, trash, grants, sports, etc.) the town would be more unified. but when newcomers see the same nepotism in every town office and the resulting behavior ("oh just cut the freon line and tell them the A/C is empty", "just go behind the HS to dump your TVs, we all do it" "Little Billy is the most outstanding soccer player on our team" (while the actual best player was Asian, but you know, who cares? He's not a Townie)
105	Elect a mayor who is empowered to and capable of actually leading.

106	Overall, I do feel that Belmont is a strong community. Effective governance and decision making are at times weak. We get bogged down in details or overblown complaints, such as one or two families complaining about the size of the bathhouse for the new pool or just a few families not wanting a bike path. The bigger communal picture can get lost. I was also concerned about the display of huge signs in front of commercial properties for a recent candidate to office. This was in bad taste and sent the message that money matters rather than the democratic process.
107	Make Cushing Square more pedestrian- and bike-friendly.
108	This goal contradicts the first goal of making the town and open and diverse community for new comers. While the feeling of being part of a small and cozy community can be nice for families who have lived in the community for the generations, I don't see much effort in taking in new comers.
109	There should be a forum that we contribute too that speaks to what shops should go in vacant building such as the center, for example. What would be prosperous for the Belmont demographic instead of allowing buildings to be vacant for years without any information to be found from any resource on future plans.
110	allow the bike path along RR tracks
111	prevent more banks from opening up in Belmont Center
112	The town seems very segregated by location. Residents of Belmont Hill even refer to their part of town as though it were it's own town. I think more effort needs to be made to include all residents regardless of location or financial affluence. Many of the towns residents cannot participate in events simple because they cannot afford to. This results in them feeling unwelcome and generally unhappy with their town of residency.
113	The more all-Belmont events, the better.
114	do not overdevelop with high density commercial activity to the disadvantage of good town services
115	The town listens too much to "the special interest" groups (senior center, pool, etc) and then holds special elections in which everyone does not vote
116	A Youth Center or somewhere for kids to go on weekednds or evenings. Possibly sharing the senior center as a youth center.
117	I think too many people want to preserve the "small-town community atmosphere" to the detriment of the town - nothing ever seems to change because those that have lived in town for a long time seem to have the attitude that "well, that's the way we always did it so why should we change?". Because of this, progress in town moves at a glacial pace.
118	Promote community involvement with activities that give back to the community as well as promote healthy living.
119	Preserve the library and swimming pools as they are
120	SIGNAGE AT THE BRIDGE in Belmont Center. People behave abysmally at this intersection and it makes it difficult for me to feel good about my fellow Belmontonians with the lack of common sense and courtesy. A few signs and some enforcement of 3 way stop (Concord/Common/Leonard) would bring back civility even if it's imposed.
121	I think this goal has got in the way of necessary development -- see for example the Cushing Square situation. While preserving the neighborhoods we need to make it easier to develop in our centres, to encourage business and increase the attractiveness of the centres as local shopping areas.
122	More community involved projects -like town days- that also includes diversity.
123	Make the new Underwood pool happen - a less expensive version works for me. Town day is amazing - I would like to bring a bit of that spirit to the Friday night home football games - the team plays, the marching band plays - this could be another great community event or series of events during the Fall
124	keeping in tradition with poor roads and sidewalks, I would say your doing a bang up job. The side walks are overgrown with shrubs ill planted trees on boulevards that are clearly not able to thrive without disrupting sidewalks to make them impassable to anyone on wheels and no real enforcement of standards for keeping residents held responsible for their portion of keeping the community safe.

125	Use Beech Street Center to celebrate Diversity (Cultures, languages) There are a number of functions during the school day. It would nice to have something during the weekend. The schools try to do this but they are not funded and depending on the school are not as good as they could be.
126	Always seems that small vocal group derails projects that would benefit community (bike path, temporary Starbucks location, etc)
127	Improve coverage of local events in newspaper
128	More frequent community service opportunities within the town
129	Not important
130	Open more restaurants - Make the residents want to socialize in the town and have a place to do it.
131	Some proactive attention must be paid to bringing together the divisive and often opposing "interests" of parents vs. retirees. Some resolution needs to be found to the problem of the substantial investment needed for the school system versus inability of retirees to pay taxes based on ridiculously inflated property values. Maybe some creative sliding scale of tax ceiling/rebates for residents who have owned in Belmont for a specific number of years -- this would assist retirees as well as acclimating incoming residents to the idea that the town requires substantial capital investment (i.e., tip the balance of required revenue toward newcomers to somewhat moderate the influx of school-age children straining the system). Somehow seniors must be made to understand that they cannot "have their cake and eat it too" - that is, they cannot have indefinitely increasing property values without the town maintaining its desirability to the outside market, which requires capital investment (roads, new high school).
132	Why do we have such an emphasis on security cameras and police in schools - terrible over reaction to the world at large. I don't like living in the new highly regulated, over policed Belmont.
133	I would like to see more than 3 select persons. It would be nice to have more divergent opinions on the select committee.
134	All segments of town financially support the school operating budget including regular overrides and regular infrastructure and capital improvements.
135	The town's resistance to come into the modern era is apparent with the lack of updated stores and services
136	Continue to limit the tear-downs of older homes, and limit the construction of new cramped condos which only serve to line the pockets of the builders and the real estate agents.
137	more local shops instead of chains. fewer banks! a small grocery with produce would be very community friendly.
138	It seems the town defines "community" as those who have either grown up in Belmont or who have "earned" their right by living here for a while. Message: Newcomers' ideas and expertise not welcomed at any meetings or committees.
139	more events like TOWN DAY and THE TREE LIGHTING. Maybe something for ADULTS ONLY
140	Belmont Farmer's Market, open spaces like the Rock Meadow and the Uplands, public parks, excellent schools, new public library, bikeable roads, sidewalks that are shoveled in the winter.
141	We need to find a better balance on diversity and sense of community. I am not a US citizen but am a US permanent resident and find it very frustrating that as a consequence, I cannot vote even for the school committee. I pay significant property taxes and have a child in Belmont Schools. One part of welcoming immigrants is to give us a voice in town affairs.
142	More support for family-friendly independently-owned retail. The complex on Concord Ave that now has a bank and a Mathnasium could really use an independent coffee shop! Also more programs for grade schoolers in the town library (the programs for younger kids are great). Something involving comics?
143	More kids programs. Free full day Kindergarten.
144	Get people out of their cars and walking or biking around town. The heavy reliance on cars leads to a sense of isolation.
145	Stop allowing houses to be torn down and larger ones built, stop putting in over-rides and over taxing us on the property and giving us nothing in return. All the beautiful old buildings can be updated instead of allowing them to fall apart and then asking for over-rides to fix it. All the streets are terrible and the town is always wanting to tax us to pay for it.

146	A 'sense of community' would be stronger if people walked more rather than driving all the time from point A to point B. Walking in turn could be promoted by 1) sidewalk maintenance and 2) availability of trash receptacles along walking routes.
147	Allow for more gathering places to enter Belmont, more restaurants/bars. Please fix roads!
148	Stop building so many huge mansions that make force out regular people from the economy. Include more middle class housing. Encourage bikes instead of cars.
149	Many new families are involved in youth sports. I think there should be regular town gatherings at the fields on Saturdays to build greater community.
150	Reduce commercial and add more retail space.
151	Better communication of what is happening in town. What is being voted on, etc. maybe a Selectmen's blog
152	Promote small businesses that provide useful services and support shared public infrastructure like the community path
153	We need more support for open spaces, community gardens, and the Farmers Market. The Farmers Market is especially important for meeting this goal, since it promotes a strong sense of community and provides an opportunity for the town to shop together, socially.
154	There is not a feeling of inclusiveness in Belmont.
155	There are almost no areas in which older residents interact with younger ones. I think solving this problem would go a long way to increasing a sense of community and helping different generations see and understand and work to solve each others problems.
156	keep up things such as payson park concerts, golden shoes, town day, underwood pool revival, parades. these programs are important to our family!
157	Improve the town website and communication of town information electronically
158	I like the idea of a sense of community. I don't care so much about the small-town thing, though I'd prefer that Belmont not be filled with strip malls either. As for ideas about creating community, the town could sponsor Cambridge Time Trade Circle events. The Time Trade Circle allows members to barter services with each other in an easy way.
159	Allowing huge houses to be built in the neighborhoods surrounding the Burbank (Dalton Rd, Washington St) takes away from the small town feel. STOP allowing this!
160	Please don't make this town into a smaller version of cambridge by putting in big business or housing. Cambridge is great but as a neighbor. I moved to Belmont (and overpaid for a house & taxes) because it is a small town. My choice. Please don't try to change this, you will damage the sense of community.
161	Limit the construction of McMansions; limit the tearing down of old houses to build overly large and cheaply fabricated condos/town houses
162	We need to make more investments within the town - the high school, library, athletic fields for student athletes and rec programs
163	Encouraging mom and pop stores and restaurants - no more banks!
164	With the exception of Town Day and the Christmas Tree Lighting, which happens once per year, there is no other community event that Belmont sponsors to bring the community together. We need more events to bring the community together!
165	Listen to current residents more than look for new ones
166	More consistent and frequent community events related to some of these 'Common Goals"
167	more open discussions. have special events to discuss the budget, schools, infrastructure. Publicize widely, bring in guest speakers to show what the possibilities are...
168	The roads are a disaster.
169	Link the new residents/longer Residents. Link older population with younger population. Promote kindness
170	The town day recipe is simply broken and it squander valuable resources and reaches a finite

	segment of the community - There needs to be mix of "micro events" that bring people together. For example : Neighborhood block parties are life long memories for kids and bring parents, newcomers, and seniors all together. Come up with a "Block party in a box" format : Publish out to the town how simple it is to have a neighborhood party and explain why this type of neighborhood event is supported by the larger community and the benefits it yields. Explain how the DPW, Policr, Rec Department , Fire Dept, etc resource map into supporting your community event as you come together. The primary driver should be making sure the seniors and new arrivals have a substantive opportunity to be part of the community around them . There should be no funding parsed out to the neighborhoods groups. The message should be how the existing town investments map to support the community.
171	Off road community bike path
172	I would see us really strengthen some of the basic infrastructure geared to promote walking and biking in town. The bike path linking the two sides of Belmont is a good example; likewise a bit more attention to key pedestrian intersections (Trapelo and Lexington and a couple of places around Belmont Center) would be cheap ways to get people out of cars and homes and into the community. Schools are THE key to a "small-town community" but means of easy and common interaction are another. These should be geared to knit the neighborhoods together.
173	More Town Day / Christmas Lighting type of activities
174	community event awareness
175	A town center that is not populated with empty building s and banks alone
176	Our town has under-funded the schools, leading to crowded classrooms, fewer educational offerings, less support staff, and fees that put enrichment activities and sports out of reach for some families. The town abdicated it's responsibility in the most important phase of replacing the Butler playground. There's a nearly-empty senior center while programming for kids and youth is sparse. As for "small-town feel," we have attracted too many banks and nail salons and too few businesses that bring people out into one another's company.
177	More easily walkable access from the Waverley side of town to the center. More community support for elementary schools. Bring an event to the Waverley/pq side of town once a year.
178	Increase multiple small local social events like street parties
179	No more apartment buildings overwhleming the schools and making the school populations too transient.
180	Do more to promote walking and bike use (ie. better sidewalks, crosswalks and trails). When I walk the neighborhoods, it gives me the opportunity to see my neighbors and town.
181	It seems that many town committees are run by the same group of involved people and newcomers are not included. For example, there is a growing Asian population in town but I do not see them represented on town committees. I also feel that many parts of the town are run by people who are retired or do not work full time. It's not easy, but it would be great to have more representation from the large majority of full-time workers.
182	The board of selectmen needs to add a few seats. There is too much work for 3 people.
183	Fix the roads ASAP.
184	Give neighbors some good things to take about, not about how bad the roads are, construction, yet another bank or high taxes
185	Control traffic!!! Too much speeding traffic everywhere--too many trees cut down!
186	organize more community service opportunities
187	More open and transparent communication. Inclusion of all residents including new residents.
188	Festivals like Town Day on Leonard Street are great, as are the two road races.
189	Community suppers Events for whole community (multi generational) around music, sports, food, and the environment and outdoors.
190	The school department seems very separate from the rest of the town. there is no cooperation with other town activities like the recreation department or other groups. It seems very "this is ours, that is yours".
191	Celebrate diversity not Just Christian holidays (egg hunt, Santa). Town day is a great event

192	Town needs to do a better job of controlling development. Commercial development needs to be "right sized" and respectful of neighborhood scale. Residential develomplent needs to be controlled. Too many changes from single family homes to multifamily units.
193	We need business tax revenue desperately. We can still have a sense of small-town community while promoting developments such as Cushing Village. We need to be more open to change, and faster change. Decisions take too long. Get community feedback, but then ACT. And don't let a few citizens' voices drown the majority. Mixed-use developments in Bel Ctr/Waverley and other locations close to the train would be a great way to get affordable housing and new businesses into town while maintaining our small-town feel.
194	bike path fenced in dog park-i know town fields and goose buster permit, but rescue dogs are prone to run off and not listen to owners
195	Form of government needs to be changed. The current form is old and non-productive. no goals are fully completed. By virtue of demographics Belmont will always be a "small" town but it needs to change with the times. Sustainabliity is in jeopardy to those who have lived here for generations.
196	I am very pro-bike path to Belmont Center so my children and I can enjoy our small-town community and SAFELY get to the center. There needs to be bike racks in Belmont Center. Also the town should send out emails notifying the community of events. We lived in Arlington prior to Belmont and their town does a fabulous job with email notifications of all the town events.
197	town meeting members need to communicate the issues and how they are voting and why with the people they represent and this is not done at all
198	Fix the pot holes
199	The overlay district for Cushing Square is a disaster -- it will seriously erode our small town atmosphere; drive out small businesses; bring congestion; parking problems and shadows to the square. The trouble has already begun, with Starr threatening to evict two decades old businesses that are not even in the square so he can park Starbucks there until he has finished building his plastic city. And those apartments will house transients with different goals for Belmont from homeowners. Many will only be here to take advantage of our schools, while contributing only a pittance in property taxes.
200	Enforce speed limits (or reduce speed limits) on side roads. It is dangerous for children to walk or ride their bikes on side roads (that don't have sidewalks) because cars drive too fast and do not pay attention. This should be a priority.
201	Just because there is inevitable change, it does not mean that the Sense of Community is not being preserved. People need to be less afraid of change in Town.
202	The Town could provide more recreational events like a father daughter dance, a summer fun picnic, bands to play on the new joeys park stage, more opportunities for children's recreational activities, make the beech St senior center available to all ages...even if just for a few hours per week, make the streets safer for children by enforcing speed limits locally, budget more money to repair potholes in streets, increase the size of the farmers market to include music and crafts.
203	Support the creation of neighborhood associations. Provide modest funding for neighborhood-focused social events, like block parties. Provide opportunities for voters to hear from and provide feedback to the town meeting members that represent them.
204	Keep the community affordable for longer term residents. Diffuse the 'long-term residents vs. 'Cambridge' newcomers' tensions (recent Selectman race, Library over-ride, etc.)
205	Belmont vision seems to be very short-sighted. There is no communicty spirit for the good of the WHOLE community. Each Department works hard to protect its own goals. A prime example is the failure to take advantage of our Grant to build a new library, which is a true community center - cultural, educational, social etc. How great would have been a combination of the Senior Center, High School and Library. ALL Belmont citizens would have benefitted tremendously. Our vision seems very narrow right now. Perhaps we need to education our community better.
206	Fix the town's roads
207	None.
208	"Sense of Community" differs from "small-town community atmosphere".
209	The small town thing is very much over-rated and not environmentally sound -- we need more

	density. We are achieving this goal all to well through overly restrictive zoning.
210	To be specific, I like the idea of a community atmosphere, but "small town" implies a number of things which I don't care for. I would love to see our business centers develop. Would love to see some high density condo developments so that young professionals and empty nesters had more options (and we had more tax base without more students). And with more density, perhaps we would have more mass transit options. I'd love all that, even though it is not "small town."
211	Town projects should be looked at together rather than operating as independent entities i.e. Underwood Pool, Senior Center.
212	Do not build or encourage to build rental properties.
213	Provide for more voter/community input. This survey is great, let's have more.
214	Traffic is consistent with a large urban city and destroys the small town feel. Belmont IS a cut through. Possible ideas to decrease cut through traffic include: permits or tolls; lights designed to reduce cut through entrances.
215	Offer programs about diversity, not just population-wise but also architecturally. A proposed 4-story building shouldn't elicit responses as if a skyscraper were being proposed!
216	I don't think we have a small town community atmosphere
217	Be cautious of development that tears down existing homes/buildings and over-builds. i.e. squeezing multi family houses on a single family lot. What "Cushing Village" looks to be -- too big in the area of land.
218	spend some resources fixing up public spaces like community pool, playgrounds (the addition of some basketball hoops would be nice) and other public spaces
219	I have not felt that Belmont citizens are that welcoming of differences, whether it's someone who is new or a family that doesn't fit into the typical Belmont demographic of white, two parents with kids. I don't know what the town per se can do about that.
220	Extending existing bike path from Alewife to Belmont center will help with local businesses downtown.
221	Better outreach. Sometimes it seems like the Town is run by a small group of insiders.
222	I think we should focus much more on generating tax revenue, at the expense in places of preserving the "small-town community atmosphere"
223	too many large scale banks; town center should have a unified look - CVS has a glaring presence - nice signs!
224	Promote and support "block parties" to help neighbors get to know each other and eventually help each other. Promote and support events based on lifestyle at appropriate venues eg. Families with dogs get together at Beech St Ctr and Town Field.
225	proper zoning, limiting tear downs, limiting size of house vs lot and number of units/lot
226	Reach out to small town businesses offering assistance and build small business supports and/or networking within the town. Invite small (internet) type business with bigger bottom lines into our community.
227	Develop the commercial centers at faster than a glacial pace so they actually are centers. Make town gov't less of an insiders club.
228	More improvements to public playgrounds (Chenery playground, other playgrounds) and helping spruce up all parts of town. More town-wide events like Town Day.
229	Avoid more large scale developments like Cushing Sq
230	need better strategic planning with a government structure and leaders capable of implementing the plans. We're too reactive now which pits demographic groups against each other.
231	It would be helpful to know about important town meetings, information about schools etc well in advance. It often seems like things are posted just days before or information isn't readily shared. More online information re: meetings, votes, school information is welcomed.
232	more events like town day
233	Allowing the development of the bike trail would be a wonderful addition to the community.
234	More community wide events. Much better community recreation program and community education program---Belmont needs to revamp their community education program and also summer enrichment for kids! Belmont is changing and town programs need to reflect this
235	Encourage events in the Town sponsored / hosted by the large landowners - McLean, Belmont

	Hill, Habitat. These are within our borders but feel like separate entities.
236	don't allow 4 story buildings! don't favor Concord Av/the Center over Cushing Sq as currently happens!
237	A sense of community is extremely important. However, I don't care for the sense to be exclusive or elitist. The "small-town community" attitude can sometimes feel dated and not inviting.
238	More volunteer activities
239	Better outreach to announce and accommodate potential candidacies for town meeting and other boards, and appointments.
240	Selectmen should respond to every email. More evening sporting events at the high school. Turn on the lights all the way for the lacrosse players.
241	continued announcements/central place for information about town happenings- i.e. the public pool, library renovations.
242	the town website is rough could have more info. town election information is hard to find, and when you do it is the candidates websites which really does little to distinguish them.
243	Invite shops and restaurants that teens like there isn't much here for them
244	It would be nice if there was a "Newcomer's Club" or something like that. Where somebody in each precinct would organize a basket of goods from local businesses, welcoming them to town. My sister lives in Ridgewood, NJ and they do something like this.
245	Provide more information about upcoming decisions for citizens in the paper and on web.
246	more town hall events more community wide events-music, 4th of july, community service projects Especially mroe places for families with children to congregate-refurbishing some old parks; new library!!!!
247	small-town can sometimes mean a lack of open mindedness. I would prefer to aim for the cosmopolitan.
248	Community events, blovk parties
249	Parades More town celebrations like for the 4th of july
250	Create a newcomers group and a 0-5 group similar to the Arlington Family Connection.
251	More community service events and activities.
252	Continue to support community spaces like pool, library, playgrounds...bring more restaurants into centers
253	Belmont is not good at welcoming diverse small businesses (please, NO MORE BANKS). In such a dense town, people should be able to walk to the various services and business areas safely and easily.The snow removal bylaw was a start in the right direction, but year-round, there are still many sidewalks that are not walkable.
254	Increase BMC awareness and local programming
255	I would love to see more restaurants and stores move that encourage residents to interact
256	cut short residential streets in half so we have more 'cul de sacs', it facilitates neighborhoods.
257	I have lived in Belmont about 15 years and I still feel like a newcomer.
258	picnic tables at the parks would offer families more time to gather together in public spaces, creating a better sense of community
259	Offer more meeting spaces / opportunities for teenagers. Renovate the playgrounds for younger children.
260	Fix the roads and buildings (high school) to build pride in community
261	Stop permitting for all those mega-houses going up on the hill! I would love to see the downtown (Leonard Street) become more of a pedestrian mall, and traffic get routed to either side. And, it

	would be fabulous to allow commuter parking downtown BEFORE 8:30 so we could take the train and cut down on some of that traffic. It's a mess there in the mornings. I love the town-wide sports teams that allow us to meet kids from other schools, so that is a huge plus!
262	Small town communities do not build developments with 100+ units on a main road that is already over used and a traffic jam at rush hour
263	no ideas right now, will keep it in mind and email if I come up with anything
264	Most town functions seem to be scheduled in ways that make it difficult for those with young families to participate. When we have important meetings for feedback e.g. to selectmen, schedule several sessions to accommodate parents, full time workers, and 2nd/3rd shift workers.
265	The goal of preserving the small-town atmosphere currently and into the future is a NEGATIVE. In order to survive financially and not chase citizens away because of the excessive tax burden, we must actively explore avenues to develop more residential housing, Cushing Square is a good start. They need not be this large but need to be on the town agenda. Other communities surrounding Belmont are increasing their housing stock. If Belmont does not, too much outlay of $$ will be required of two few. This concept worked well 100 years ago; now it is keeping the town from growing responsibly.
266	Greater cross generational integration - we are a town of sub-groups not a cohesive community. Lack a unifying glue that binds us together.
267	Not sure where this fits but...actively supporting vibrant and diverse business districts that are inviting and attractive are a key component of fostering a sense of community in town. This should involve actively pursuing certain kinds of business development and developing and fostering business friendly practices.
268	enforce term limits for all appointed positions
269	"Sense of community" should include acknowledging and seeking to fulfill a public good that sometimes conflicts with the interests of specific residents. We are too ready to bow to neighbors' objections. Also, our democracy is in danger from the increasing reach of the Planning Board combined with the fact that two Selectmen are close allies and will undoubtedly violate the rule that they cannot communicate directly outside of public meetings.
270	Actively encourage more young families to serve on committees and boards. Last year when a woman volunteered to run for School Committee, current School Committee members said they prefer someone else with "existing experience on the School Committee" -- shorthand for wanting someone who'd been in Belmont for years and years. She was ultimately accepted and elected to the Committee. But the existing committee members seemed to prefer one of the Belmont in-crowd to a newer community member with sterling credentials. This type of reaction has a chilling effect on anyone who thinks they can move to Belmont and make a contribution.
271	Have more ethnic related activities, encourage neighborhoods for the residents to get to know one another, encourage voter participation even on non-election years
272	I think the crossing from Concord Ave under the bridge to Belmont Center makes me feel cut off from that side of town. I don't feel safe biking under it and I also hate driving under it.
273	Business districts appear uneven with Belmont Centre beautified and other areas not. If needed develop neighborhood based business districts with active action plans, or offer opportunities for volunteers to help improve look and feel.
274	I believe it is better to look beyond the Belmont borders and a metropolitan approach.
275	Belmont needs more destinations where people of all ages can go to meet others, socialize with friends, and have a bite to eat, a cup of coffee, or an ice cream. It should be attractive and lively, with seating to encourage people to linger. Currently, only Belmont Center fits the bill -- but barely.
276	I'm not sure the Town can do this. I wish people were friendlier-- smiling, greeting, chatting. But this is New England, and there is more reserve, more distance.
277	think about folks who wish to continue to reside in the Town after educating their children instead of the Town becoming a revolving door around education
278	Stop the tear-downs and overbuilt houses. Respect the taxpayer as well as the requests from the school dept. Stop wrangling over snow removal and yard sales and just be considerate of one's neighbors.
279	Need to be more proactive and instill effective long-term planning, rather than reactive, as is now the case.

280	Fix the roads!
281	through town meeting members - encourage neighborhood or precinct list-serves to provide neighbor news, tool sharing, etc
282	Hold a meeting at the Beech Street Ctr.
283	Are there two websites? This was brought up recently on a list, but not confirmed answer as to why there appear to be two: http://www.town.belmont.ma.us/Public_Documents/index and http://belmontma.vt-s.net/
284	There is sense of secrecy and elitism in our town affairs. Butler playground fiasco is the best example how dysfunctional our town government is and continues to be. We should all be ashamed. Open conversation about this would be not just very welcomed but healing to a fragile sense of community.
285	Make sure the Town is not spending money it doesn't have or making commitments it can't keep.
286	need more large commercial tax payers
287	Sense of community is enhanced by support of moderate development and increased revenue to support the needs of the town.
288	Corporate taxes
289	by not encouraging big city development byt rescuing and protecting our green spaces, large and small
290	promise to keep the Farmers' Market in the center of town and support its activities. Support the schools (with an override, and regular overrides) so that all children can take part in art and sports without out of pocket expenses, while encouraging all members of the community to get involved in those activities. support quality businesses in our retail centers. NO MORE BANKS AND CHAIN STORES Did I mention an override??? Long overdue. We want the best in life without paying for it. We need an override. Our schools are at their limit- teachers stressed, students stressed. Oh, forgot to mention, We need a new library. Energy efficient building that will pay for itself, instead of making do with old outdated.
291	I feel the small community atmosphere sometimes lends itself to small minded when it comes to improvments to town roads and town facilities
292	somehow make it easier for young people to get involved in town issues, not just the education issues, but like running for town meeting and selectman/woman
293	I didn't know how to mark this because it is the most important goal we have, but in the opposite direction. It is very important that we stop trying to preserve our imaginary small-town community atmosphere. Belmont is not a small town. (I grew up in a small town.) We are a suburb 4 miles from one of the largest cities in America. We are not a small town. Small towns do not have bus service, commuter rail, access to symphonies, art and science museums, world-class universities, major league teams, and highly professional job opportunities. Pretending we are a small town is preventing us from developing a commercial and office tax base, and it is hurting the environment by preventing us from encouraging density and smart growth. Regrettably we are doing very well this goal. Keeping on like this will soon destroy our school and pension funding and make it impossible for children and older people to afford to live here.
294	more pedestrian friendly and plentiful parking business areas!
295	Stop harping on "Town of Homes". It is kind of a myth. Belmont is more urban than many large sections of Boston. Living in an isolated cluster of houses without food places, shopping, recreation, etc., is not always compelling. The Horne Rd crowd hurt Belmont in this respect.
296	The Town, especially the Planning Board, can start by respecting those of us on "the other side of the tracks" by not allowing everything to happen along Trapelo Rd. Also, the mere suggestion by the PB that So. Pleasant Street should be zoned to allow an unlimited number of dogs in a

	potential kennel is insulting and totally hypocritical.
297	I would like to see Belmont modernize in creative progressive ways so preserving the status quo is not usually appealing to me.
298	Many who are not involved in Town government don't seem to have a strong understanding of the governing structure which may make it harder for them to get involved

Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving the "Character of our Town" in line with the above goals? Please briefly describe below:

Answer Options	Response Count
	188
answered question	**188**
skipped question	**930**

1	Where does the money go and how can town stop being in crisis mode? Town needs to do a better job of doing projects in tandem. $2.4 million about to be spent on belmont center without having factored in community path -- or even moved forward with THINKING about path? That is a disgrace. An insult to the hardworking committee members and the 90% of town that clearly wants a path. And a waste of money should Belmont Center be updated only to need to spend more money integrating path down the road when eventually the town wakes up to how important the path would be to residents AND businesses.
2	adult/student theater ensemble
3	#5 I dont understand why the public buildings are not better maintained. I am tempted to take Murphy's oil soap to the doors of the library! #6 Glad to see mix of stores in Belmont Center - Il Casale AND subway
4	Fix the traffic under bridge
5	See note re Banbury Cross Morris on prior page. Also, both Cambridge Adult Education and Newton adult education do a better job promoting their programs than Belmont does. Arlington does an *Amazing* job at courting outside artists/performers. For the past several years, they have offered to the morris dancers free use of their senior center for a dinner party because they are a 501(c)(3) non profit org. In exchange, the dancers perform for their seniors for free.
6	Get off the dime and make some decisions. Be proactive, not just reactionary. e.g., Library, Police Station/Light Dept. Building

7	Having a festival for children and seniors to express their culture. Town day can have some of these to be more diverse. -Looking at town census and see what is the largest population and invite leaders of that community to develop new programs and bring new ideas.
8	Look at the stairs at the library - are they ever going to be fixed or do we wait for the library to fall down?? - what about the old Belmont light department on Concord Ave. Are we waiting for that to fall down too??
9	Library is too small, crowded, and outmoded. What's needed is a new, larger library which can provide space for modern library functions in a pleasant and safe facility. More off-street parking needed at many town facilities, such as library, senior center, town field, etc.
10	First of all, it's important to maintain the identity of belmont, i.e, "town of homes." If one could describe clusters of condominiums/townhouses being built in place of "neighborhood" homes, it then changes the landscape and possibly the characterization of such.
11	#5 - Institute a maintenance plan for town buildings - include regular inspections and upkeep costs in the town budget. Let us not continue to go from crisis to crisis. Coordinate road paving with utility upkeep - no sooner is a road paved than it is torn up for gas, water, or other maintenance. Plan ahead and budge for upkeep.
12	Better publicity for who's here, what people are doing, etc. More requests for local people to get involved to showcase local talent.
13	Committing resources to new library, police station and other infrastructure projects, not to mention the roads, is vital to this. From managing the Beech St. Center I have had first hand knowledge of how much creativity and talent exists here. We try to utilize and foster these talents as much as possible, but more can be done.
14	Less tearing down on traditional/historic structures to be replaced with "mega" buildings that don't fit our town.
15	Roads are awful. Macy's empty for almost 2 years. Other storefronts empty Waverly Congregational Church allowed to be secretly bought and torn down A DISGRACE. Replaced by expensive condos. No diversity there. Shame! Payson Park concerts need more PR.
16	Designate a building as a cultural center where arts + crafts etc could be done. Or expand the hours that Beech Street Center is available. Week nights and weekends?
17	open pool underwood - for more hours
18	Fix the roads More public art on display and outdoor music events Community "play days" in the parks

19	The commitment to cultural enrichment is wonderful, but I just don't have enough information about fostering local talent...though I guess the Sidewalk Art day is one way that this is done, and Payson Park includes local musicians as well. And I guess the library highlights local authors too. No ideas about how else this can be done. Sorry!
20	A community calendar on the Town's Web site could include all public offerings including those presented by private organizations
21	We have almost every bank in belmont center, what about other businesses, a small market, bakery (not so high end
22	Stop meddling in the business development of the town via the permitting and licensing process. The retailer who was told he could choose between selling alcoholic beverages and tobacco products is a good example. We don't need the Selectmen to protect our personal choices, particularly when both are legal activities. We do need the Selectmen to help enforce (and/or raise) age limitations on tobacco and alcohol use by Belmont youths.
23	First by allowing diversity to come into Belmont. More affordable housing. And at the same time to become more tolerant of different cultures.
24	I like the local author events and various fundraisers around town. I think there are already a lot of options available for local talent and creativity here.
25	Invest more in preserving historic buildings such as library
26	Let the people define the character without government intervention. Have the town develop the character as defined by the building designs and size and by the events hosted like Town Day
27	I think the town should fix the roads first
28	The Town is sports-mad. Any other type of "cultural enrichment" is ignored.
29	Reduce taxes and spending
30	Not enough financial support for schools based arts (music, theater, fine arts), with too mug burden shifted to parents. Arts in the schools would be a catalyst for rest of community.
31	I think belmont does a good job on tjis
32	I think we need to increase diversity in this town and make people visible who are not middle class and white
33	Improve the roads. The roads are in horrible shape and take away from the beauty of the town.
34	It would be great to have a better location - ie, a real library - where we could have events like this. The white elephant that is the Senior Center should be re-purposed as our town library, and the current library into a Senior Center. It would be a neat solution to our current library woes...
35	We live next to two great cities that have bigger tax bases and can support this goal. Belmont can't take on too much given the budget.
36	Encourage more independent businesses which bring small town character. Do not change zoning restrictions to accommodate chain stores and restaurants.
37	More open competitions - eg. spelling bee, 2nd Soccer, a photography league and exhibits for juniors through seniors, etc.
38	everything is in little bunches throughout the town, Not one fluid flow. Some areas have been growing and being renewed while others languish and stay stuck in time and out of the way from where most people are.
39	Don't we have a playhouse in town? I go to plays at playhouses in other towns but never hear about any in belmont
40	An art studio that teaches children would be nice. My child took formal art lessons in another state, but there in no option locally. The Belmont Art Assoc. was no help.
41	Unless the town is receiving SIGNIFICANT and LARGE money from the ridiculous number of BANKS in town, get rid of at least some of them. How much are the contributing to the town's coffers? We would be better off with small retail businesses and industry.
42	Please enforce decibel limits for leaf blowers. Noise pollution is a huge issue.
43	For one thing keep up with the ROADS to repair!
44	Macy's, Macy's, Macy's redevelopment.

45	Too high rent and retailers exit. Have school performances at senior center for easy accessability of elderly.
46	Infrastructure is extremely lacking and no progress has been shown in recent years. We have pizza places and banks - we need a wide variety of restaurants. We need to recruit small business owners with vested interests in the community - they won't come if we don't reach out and invite them - there are so many unused/empty spots along Trapelo.
47	where can we get the info??? it needs to be marketed to the public...
48	The infrastructure question is a challenging one - as the resources are limited, but the roads are downright treacherous in places. And, the issues wth the Higgenbottom pool last year were an example of what can happen when investments are delayed. that being said, the new head of operations seems phenomenal, so there are great opportunities for continued focus on these important issues going forward. thank you for asking
49	See my earlier & lengthy comment
50	Taste of Belmont type events More Arts and Crafts Fairs other that "Town Day"
51	have local talent on display at breakfasts or potluck get-togethers
52	Please do not try to work on libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities unnecessarily.
53	fix the roads and develop an activity center that teens would be interested in going to, especial mid to older teenagers.
54	I went to a school art show at town hall and thought it was great -- packed evening crowd. What if we did similar events for local artists? or more town day like events that promoted local craftsman/artists/performers?
55	An artist's studio building to replace the one that burned down.
56	Please, repare (pave) the Trapello road and other streets which are in need for new asfalt for decades!!!!
57	Encourage more cultural events / performing arts related activities that could be enjoyed by all ages. have a town-wide art show.
58	We need to bring the amazing talent into the schools and after-school programs. It would also create a larger sense of civic engagement, with youth and adults getting to know one another.
59	Belmont must modernize and have local businesses that fuel creativity and talents of it's residence to contribute. We don't have murals/beautiful sculptures, gardens, etc that can enhance our town but also bring in the talents of our neighbors. So much is outdated. Cushing square needs an overhaul. The parson park concerts are nice but the music does not match the community as an example.
60	I think the question is 'how do we support access to cultrual enrichment' I believe that a community of 30K can only directly support so much culture (schools, belmont dramatic, music recitals in churches etc.) so I fear that this goal implies that we should build new cultural insitutions. If that is the case, I disagree and offer instead that our goal be to provide ACCESS to the cuture around the town - Arsenal Center for the Arts, Harvard and Central Squares, museums and programs in neighborhing towns, etc.
61	GET OUT OF THE WAY!!!!!!!!! Allow people wide latitude in the sorts of businesses they operate within the town and allow the community to grow organically from the bottom up. The taxes that go to pay for an underutilized media center prevent people from spending their money on things they want, including the cultural activities they want to engage in.
62	Again, I'm not sure what these goals mean. They seem so empty and obvious, I feel I can't comment on them

63	Have an art gallery... we have the Powers school of music, but nothing equivalent for art
64	expressing and highlightin historical elements of towns are important BUT also need to balance with the changing times and needs of citizens. appropraite retail would increase tax base. The Pool thing - fine. I dont see the value of preserving the Clark House - i understand the importance of the historic value BUT is this REALLY Belmont? Safer pedestrian travel would be benefical - especially under the Bridge. More established bike lanes - like bikers or not - there WILL BE bikers so might as well make sense of it. Clean the Bridge. Entry Town signs at key locations would ADD character. No more Banks! Convienence/grocery store...enhance town fields - compared to peer towns in pretty bad shape.
65	include the "poor end" of town - Butler School area - when WInBrook needed their playground rebuilt the entire community was in support - when Butler needed a new playground it was a huge undertaking not supported by the rest of the town.
66	Other than the Belmont Cinema's film series, there are few new or challenging artistic ideas or venues in Belmont. Look at what Watertown did on Arsenal st. with it's small theaters/stages. Why can't we do that?
67	Stop putting in banks, let's find something else!
68	The art program in the elementary schools is deplorable. With the exception of music, there is nothing worthwhile happening. Outside of town funding, grant opportunities should be explored to address this.
69	A huge amount was spent on the Senior Center but efforts to work with that center and children in town has been difficult. There should be more collaboration.
70	Create a more active partnership between Powers Music School and the Town or the School District.
71	This is important, but I think some of the other goals take precedence.
72	We need a new library! I realize this went to a vote. I spend a lot of time at the library (I'm a graduate student and a mother of 3). I love our library, but it is subpar compared to surrounding town. There's not enough seating, and there's no optimal space for middle and high schoolers to study. It's also a bit dreary. Have you seen Winchester's library? Or Newton's? Needham's? Wellesley's? I realize these towns have a lot of commercial enterprise to fund libraries, but I feel Belmont could do better.
73	more support of local businesses and artists
74	Need clear investment priorities -- how can we invest $6.2 million in a 2-month pool used by about 200 when our schools and roads are falling apart?
75	Keep funding arts, music and theater in the public schools. Find opportunities to do community art projects to beautify areas of town, with community involvement.
76	The "character of our Town" is a white family with 2 kids. People from other countries feel alienated. heck I felt alienated and I grew up in Cambridge! Townies won't change, so something else has to give. supporting the Diversity groups that already exist with more than just a Martin Luther King breakfast turn-out; more speakers in the schools to try to get these spoiled racist kids to open their eyes, better support of the low income housing area, teaching locals to stop calling it "the wave", support of Benton Branch library as a community center, stop acting like one of the schools is a ghetto, etc.
77	We need a local venue for the fine and performing arts. The gallery isn't open enough and very inaccessible on the top floor there! More licenses to local establishments for performing and displaying arts!
78	I think one of the biggest advantage of Belmont is that many residents are college professors, scholars, and artists. It would be nice to have these intellectuals involved in the culture enrichment program. And this could be a more interesting character of the town.
79	I love the art gallery in the town building but it should be more visible and centrally located. I feel it's location on top floor is so far removed. Also, there is a fantastic auditorium with a stage that I saw for the first time in one of the town buildings that should be used for community events.
80	look to Somerville Arts Council's efforts to get ideas for making arts culture more vibrant.

81	publicity of opportunities and events is not very well handled. Much is left to a commercial news source, or website, and not freely otherwise
82	I think that the town's school system is encouraging individuals and their art, but not working at their levels, or inspiring.
83	More arts development for kids
84	1) Provide space and other resources to residential culture and educational groups. For instance, open elementary school for group activity rental at an affordable price over the weekend 2) provide town wide performance opportunities
85	Develop the commercial centers more. Get going on Cushing Village, fill the empty Macy's location.
86	All residents possess different gifts, talents and expertise. If these talents can be donated for the good of the town, terrific.
87	Libraries are important, Underwood pool, No.
88	More town and school unity. We have such a source of this in the talents of our kids through the Belmont schools. The concerts and drama programs are top notch. I wish the greater town felt more a part of these wonderful events.
89	Copy some of the Somerville Arts Council's programming.
90	Give more identity to neighborhoods. I live on winn brook and there are several opportunities to easily create "gateways" such as the intersection of cross and Channing which is currently an eyesore.
91	See prior comment about investment in schools and infrastructure. Town government needs to work to bring people together on this issue, i.e., educate ALL residents on the need to maintain the school system for the good of the town. One specific suggestion would be to put a muzzle on the Belmont Citizen-Herald, which seems to thrive on reporting strife and conflict rather than pieces that could inform citizens regarding WHY it is in our best interests to maintain the town.
92	We need to improve our library . . . which should be a safe and inviting place for people to study, read, meet, for students to come after school for homework, for toddlers to explore books and be read to. The current library is cramped, well worn, and in need of a face lift and expansion. As I studied in the back reading room one day, I overheard 2 women talking about the various town libraries . . . one described the Belmont library to the other as "gritty".
93	More community events like picnics, town days, etc.
94	Local talent primarily seems to be defined as those who grew up here.
95	Support the Belmont Farmer's Market. Support increasing socioeconomic and cultural diversity in our town.
96	This is a great town for composed ("classical") music performance and an OK one for children's theater. Grade-school and middle-school rock, jazz and visual art opportunities would be welcome (collaborations with Somerville or Watertown or Cambridge might be wise).
97	More language courses like Spanish, Mandarin etc.
98	More town sponsored events for local artists. Open studios. Bring back institution similar to Kendall ctr for arts.
99	need more diversity in terms of retail shops available - keep adding character to our retail options. eg no more banks!
100	Help Belmont residents open small businesses.
101	We have so many cultural opportunities in Boston, Cambridge and nearby. I'd rather Belmont invest its scarce resources in better athletic fields and playgrounds and not require the leagues to raise those funds themselves. Some of the fields are an embarrassment for the town when teams travel from other towns here. Other towns have invested in Turf.
102	Again, I think that the farmers market and open, green spaces are key to this issue.
103	I think that the music programs presented by the Public Schools with the support of parents are brillians and important to the cultural enrichment of the community.

104	I wish we had better shops and stores. Fewer banks. I also am less concerned about the town being responsible to encourage local talent and creativity. That really isn't the job of the town and seems a little ridiculous.
105	Stop having banks, nail salons and pizza places come into town. How about panera?
106	we could use more concerts! we also desperately need a new library!!!!!!!!!!
107	The taxes are unbearable....it is pushing a lot of people out and bringing in people who don't really care about the town and just send their kids to the school and then leave. After paying our taxes we can't afford to shop or eat in Belmont Center and it is very sad!
108	Support the local movie theater more.
109	In some cases, the opinion poll would give more information if it broke down questions into more subparts. For instance, it would be fascinating to do a town-wide survey to identify the relative importance of various infrastructure projects (high school, library, police station, etc.), so that we can better construct a long-term plan that represents the priorities of residents.
110	FIX THE ROADS AND OUR SIDEWALKS!!!! Everyone that I speak to, "who lives outside of Belmont" comments about how horrible our roads are, and how it takes away from the beauty our town has to offer because there are potholes everywhere, and the roads look terrible
111	More opportunities for the students to do community service with the seniors, and also opportunities for the seniors to help the students (tutoring, teaching crafts etc)
112	Provide more showcases for local talent, at times when working people in the community can attend. For example, the schoolwide art show is a great way to showcase and cultivate artistic talents of children in Belmont. However, the limited hours of the gallery make it almost impossible for working parents to attend without missing work. This personally impacted our family, as we could not make it to the one set of evening hours last week, so we decided to go on Sunday from 3-4. When we arrived at the gallery at the Town Hall, there was a handwritten sign saying it had closed at 3 (contrary to what was on its website, and to an email I had received specifically asking for weekend open hours). This is frustrating for us, and discouraging for our children. I had a similar reaction after receiving a newsletter today talking about several concerts and performances coming up in town that were being held in the late afternoon. While convenient for some, many others in our growing working parent population can't take part. It would be great to consider this as events and venues are planned. I love the progress we've made in building and evolving our town centers - Belmont Center now has a nice selection of restaurants, cafes, shops (and banks!) and is a great destination. It would be great to have focused development plans for other hubs in Belmont like Cushing Square (which has come a long way in the last few years, but has lots of room for improvement) and Waverley Square. With regards to our public buildings, we are doing a horrible job at maintaining them consistently. Its somewhat amazing to see the beautiful new fire stations in town, just miles away from the falling down Electric Building, and a very aged Police Station. The town does not seem to take an integrated approach to planning and maintaining buildings. Instead, it seems like the "loudest voice" gets heard, and that single building, or cause, gets attention. A recent example was the library. The plan put forward for a new Library was not logical and could not be supported. I would love to see an integrated plan for improving/rebuilding key town buildings that includes a plan for the library, police station, electric building, and our schools. And finding ways to make our public buildings better suited (and intentionally designed) for multiple uses, just makes sense. It took ages for the Senior Center to be able to be used for other things - this is not right. Our community buildings, while having a primary purpose, should also strive to meet the diverse and evolving needs of our full community.

113	The library is a disaster. The whole library concept needs to thought about by a new group of people in the town who are not already invested in the existing library or library satellites(at the schools) . Innovative change requires ideation and fresh look. The internet, tablets and smartphones put enormous resources at the finger tips of many/most within the town. This sort of change all driven by technology moves much faster than the town or community. What does the library of the future look like...and in a town the size of Belmont. Can you come up with a "one page plan" we can share with the community. Do we need a libraries at schools and also a central library ? Be bold and ask....if we create a new library is it essentially going to be an extension of the Senior Center ? Is it going to be used by those without an internet connection at home ? Print investments (books, periodicals, even advertising) continue to decline at an astonishing pace and this has nothing to do with our community, it is simple change happening around us.
114	Consider how towns like Arlington manage some of these issues - again, more consistent activities integrated from school curriculums into town-wide events so that younger folks and families make these connections an ongoing philosophical principle that we uphold, e.g. our family follows the "Burbank Way", E.G. We strive for LOVE OF LEARNING, RESPECT, and Well BEING
115	stop having banks and pizza shops on each street and promote new independent stores that will attach people to the Center and Cushing Square, Trapelo Road, etc. Have center for arts/music - get people and get grants...
116	It is great to recognize, learn and understand all cultures while also Holding fast that we have one connector - we are all Americans We should celebrate all celebrations not give one for the other.
117	Your roads are a disaster.
118	This seems less crucial than the question of schools, frankly. (And I am a writer married to a former singer)
119	Have more community arts ebentd
120	The town art gallery is a wonderful asset, but please see my easier comments about my relative disappointment with new commercial development. Also, with the exception of the recent pool vote, our capital improvement activities have not been adequate to maintain some of our historic buildings and recreation facilities.
121	*outdoor concerts inviting local talent during the summer; *more opportunities for youth community service; *community arts center where children, youth and adults can take classes, attend art shows, watch documentaries with local speakers on topic; *more regular and weekend farmers' markets in town; *regular speakers' series with area experts on issues such as climate change, environmental conservation, and other global issues to raise community awareness and encourage engagement.
122	Leonard sq. intersection is a good start,it's a mess pave it,lines would make the town more civil.... Slow down speeders and cut through traffic...Tickets!
123	Bring an art, music or cultural event to Waverley or pq park to extend the reach of the arts into more areas of town. Open up opportunities for community artists to display outdoors like Newton does at Newton highlands where the cost is still on the artist but the public reaps the rewards.

124	Less talk, more action!! We need more Selectmen and Selectwomen (perhaps a rep from each Precinct?) to hear and represent the people of their precinct and make decisions in a timely fashion. Foremost, they should act swiftly to bring business tax revenue to the town so we can support schools without fees and build the amenities that will further connect our community (such as a new library and an off-road community path). Solid plans that have broad community support will also open avenues for private fund-raising. Half-baked compromise plans that drag on for decades will not. The new Joey's Park, albeit a small project, was planned and implemented super-efficiently and with the injection of a lot of private money and volunteer labor. Look to scale up that model for project planning and implementation for larger projects in town, and get moving!
125	We need to develop more businesses that are consistent with the town character (especially in the Trapelo Rd-Belmont St Corridor). This will broaden the tax base and keep out the big box stores. Whose idea was it to let the Waverly Church get torn down and turned into ugly condos? If the church could not be kept, that lot should have been rezoned to make it eligible for a small tasteful commercial building.
126	Fix the roads ASAP.
127	Don't forget to celebrate US traditions, schools are having lots of say "Asian history nights" and other nationalities, but the U.S. culture seems to get lost.
128	Creativity is fine--but the town must be peaceful and beautiful.
129	utilize beech st center with more arts n cultural activities-like mural project that is supposed to go up on belmont cinema brick wall on trapelo rd
130	Focus on priorities of government such as schools and roads as well as safety (i.e. police and fire) not feel good measures such as cultural enrichment. if peeolpe want that they can get it on their own.
131	Make the all-school art show more inclusive, rather than exclusive like it has become. Expose MORE kids to seeing their artwork displayed publicly, and not just in the schools.
132	Question 5 lumped recreational facilities in with public buildings, library, infrastructure & historic buildings. Those are apples and oranges, making the question useless,so here is my opinion. Yes, we should maintain our infrastructure and we have not been doing a good job at all. In fact, in the case of the Chenery school, the library, and other buildings, it seems that maintenance has been deliberately not done so that advocates for new buildings could plead that we need entirely new structures instead of recycling/rehabbing current buildings . But re: recreational facilities -- we already have entirely too many of those, and it seems that whenever a group decides it needs something new (like a lighted softball field), bingo, it gets it. No one ever stops to think that taxpayers have been called upon for years to finance these facilities, even though most taxpayers have no use for them (we do not all have children, and at any given time households with children are a minority of the taxpayers). Belmont, like other towns, is about to be hit with a financial crisis due to foolish contracts negotiated with public sector employees. At the same time, our roads and sidewalks, which are used by everyone, are going to ruin. For the foreseeable future we should engage in no more capital projects, repair the roads and sidewalks, and never make the mistake again of inviting in greedy developers to put 4 story buildings in our commercial districts! Look at Lexington, Concord -- even Arlington. The TM there took only a half hour to reject for Arlington center what is going to happen in Cushing Sq. Shame on the Planning Board and Town Meeting for being so short sighted.
133	The lack of support shown by town government is a disgrace. Too much attention to the wish list of sports interests and public service unions (lavish fire stations).
134	The trees that are being planted in the public areas should be of high quality, sidewalk repair should be high priority, building department could make the permitted process more streamlined with a faster turnaround.
135	Fix the roads.
136	Pass a prop 2 1/2 override to allow meaningful investment in our infrastructure, particularly our schools and roads.
137	The Town has or makes available venues for culture/creativity (Town Hall Art Exhibits, etc.) and promotes public and private events in this area well. Not a gov't function to fund.

138	I am appalled by the physical condition of the high school every time I go there. It is shameful that there is no financial commitment to basic maintenance. And we need to keep the pool budget under control. It is not nice to our students to build an extravagant pool across from the moldy, rodent infested high school. Recreation comes before education?
139	Come up with new ideas to have the Town sponsor arts and music festival. It's the same old same old every year (Payson Park, etc.). Very tired.
140	None
141	What about an outdoor art show? (perhaps on Concord ave next to Clay pit pond) Poetry slam at a coffee shop? (or somewhere, I'm not sure where) Mini-Jazz festival, small groups in multiple shops around town... ?
142	Keep the Belmont Gallery of Art open more, and pay to staff and promote it.
143	There is only so much a town can do improve the character of the town.
144	More multicultural activities should be permitted in the schools. There can be an atmosphere of fear around teaching about minority cultures and it's limiting our students' exposure to "other."
145	We need design review committee to improve new buildings in the three town center areas and we need to stop allowing bank branches in the town center areas to improve vibrancy
146	The town's infrastructure is decaying and the town's voters have not been willing to assume the tax hikes needed to reverse decades of under investment. If the voters are not willing to invest, then I don't know what the "town" can do about that. Based on what I read in the Citizen-Herald, it appears that the town is unfriendly to new businesses by having long, laborious permitting and approval processes, which has a negative economic impact on the town. I believe that this is an issue that town government could address and fix, although there doesn't seem to be an appetite to do so.
147	invite more local authors/artists/poets (like steven burt!) to do public readings at the library
148	I think this will happen without any effort by the Town, so I don't think this should be a priority.
149	I would love to see more investment in local infrastructure - many of the playgrounds need upgrading, we need a new library, etc. I recently moved to Belmont and was surprised - given how high property taxes are and how wealthy the town is - to find so much of the infrastructure in disrepair.
150	We could try to get artists to move into the social housing we have, and have them teach art in the schools
151	I think it is important for us to move forward with an agenda for the future of our town and the families that love here. It would be ideal if that could be done while keeping the character- as it has been in neighboring towns like Lexington. To me, though, this doesn't seem possible in belmont
152	In terms of "retail needs and opportunities", there is an insane number of banks in town. We need to get rid of some and establish zoning that prevents them from moving into retail space.
153	resident outdoor art projects
154	I love the community events I have attended at the Beech Street Center. I think they should have more events there. Its a great space. Events need better advertising.
155	Belmont seems to have a very low presence of arts. I think again revamping the community education and enrichmnent programs would help. Community murals in the playgrounds...more arts presence at community events....

156	On question 5, I feel the question is written to pander to different groups of people. You should have separated the future from the past. Belmont spends way too much time worrying about historical buildings. The "temporary" relocation of the historical house to Concord Avenue is just one example. It is now an eyesore that was moved there to accommodate the desires of a small number of vocal people. I answered the question "very important" but in truth I think it is "very important" for facilities that are currently used and "not very important" for historical buildings.
157	Statement is without meaning. too much motherhood.
158	be mindful of big developments- i.e. cushing square and the traffic it will bring.
159	I can't think of any ways that Belmont does this as a town -- the examples I can think of seem to be run by non-governmental concerns. Need to know what Belmont (the town government) does!
160	SCHOOLS< SCHOOLS, SCHOOLS!! The better the schools are, the more people we're able to attract. Next in line are family services-ie. a new library and a much better rec ctr/complex even if part of a new high school!!! Need to make these priorities
161	Community events
162	No more banks! There are way too many banks in the center. We love the restaurants and toy store. Please do not allow anymore banks to occupy prime retail space.
163	I loved the Cushing Square Art Day... would love to see more. A wider diversity at the Summer outdoor concerts at Payson Park--getting tired of the same lineup year after year. Love Belmont Serves and would love to see it twice a year. Same for the recent recycling day--let's do it more! Would love to see an artist's workspace in Belmont--a place where artists could rent out workspace--so valuable and needed.
164	Save our crumbling schools and parks. Stop the deferred maintenance and focus on proper upkeep schedules for all town assets.
165	Increase local talent and exposure through BMC local programming and awareness. Create incentives to watch local programming.
166	recent liquior license, why? does not preserve "small town atmosphere" encourage local talent: how is town doing this?
167	Belmont does encourage it's writers.
168	Offer temporary art projects / installations on the empty, ugly spaces waiting to be built on. Make the town gallery more accessible (hours, location, duration of exhibits).
169	First, the roads are AWFUL. I don't really care if we have a new library, but a new pool is a huge plus. The flow of traffic through the center needs to be addressed. There are eight lanes trying to get through. A smaller grocery store, like what the One Stop Market could be, would be great as there is nowhere to stop for bread or milk in the town center. And PLEASE, I would love to take the train in the morning but can't park until 8:30 - that does not help me at all.
170	Everyone needs to stop being so territorial
171	Belmont Gallery's hours are very limited so I usually miss exhibits even though I LOVE seeing what they have. I am Jewish and attend services on Friday evenings, so I do not feel opening receptions are inclusive. I bet others don't even know it is there. Maybe a big sign with what the exhibit is and when the gallery is open outside the building would help encourage visitors.
172	The main indicator of this to me would be community music/theater/art programs, and support for same in the public schools. I have found little community of this type, and don't know yet what the schools offer after all the budget brouhaha.
173	One must be careful with what we wish for or have as a goal. Historically, the town has not been open to retail of a mid-size and negative about increasing the range of housing stock for renters (other than houses). Our 'Character" is locking our feet and heads into concrete. We must open our heads to a wider range of ideas for real growth. It will help stabilize the tax burden on a limited populous. At some point, people will leave and 'really wealthy' people will move in to raise their children. This will unfairly burden citizens of less than wealthy means.

174	Foster pride in being part of the Belmont "community" vs. just residency. We have a lot of residents who are not really members of the community. The only time I see seniors in the high school is for Town Meeting - maybe there should be a special section and transportation next time there is a play. Beech street center has become a private haven for seniors to further isolate themselves. There should be kids yoga classes there too!
175	There appears to be no effort to work on increasing business and commerce in town, certainly not in cooperation with neighbors.
176	Promote the arts in Schools and open the school concerts, art shows, and plays more broadly to the community, not just for the parents of children involved. Better promotions would be good. For example, maybe some of the chamber music groups or choral singers could perform at the Beech Street Center.
177	The town feels very white and affluent to me. I crave more diversity which I think affordable housing opportunities would help.
178	Belmont is a great town, however it does not manage or plan growth thoughtfully. The roads, abundance of banks, dearth of useful, diverse businesses, ridiculously low taxes on business, willingness to sell off residential property to nonprofits (Belmont Hill School), wreaks of cronyism and shortedness. It makes me sad that such a wonderful place is being short changed by the few.
179	Again, need to be more proactive in creating incentives to attract the retailers we want and then ID those retailers and invite them. Also, the infrastructure issues need to be dealt with in a more systemic way, roads and sidewalks, especially.
180	Love the one book belmont Wonder if there are similar type initiatives
181	I value cultural enrichment; however, encouraging local talent and creativity -- not so much.
182	Please bring a Trader Joe's to our area! Also, the discrepancy between the schools still seems so pronounced. At Butler the building is so tired and although they make do well, it seems a large divide with the care/concern shown over the other schools. As well as the building, the road on the back entrance doesn't even have a real sidewalk even though it is a main entry point. In the winter the car parking ban was not enforced on Maple Terrace, so there were heaps of snow left to further restrict parking when the snow plows had to go around them, creating a very unsafe environment. Many children had to walk down the center of the road with cars in these hazardous conditions, which were left this way for weeks with the long winter. The town was unconcerned when called about this.
183	Make sure the Town is not spendiing money it doesn't have or making commitments it can't keep
184	I think the character of our town is intact(would need to have your definition of "cultural enrichment" before making suggestions for improvement).
185	inter-generational cultural activities at BCC more cultural opportunities for youth outside of school
186	We do not need any more banks. We could use more restuarants, pubs, stores that will generate revenue and provide jobs.
187	"Local" should not mean Belmont-only! More cross-town cultural collaboration should be encouraged.
188	More small local events to allow residents to interact and learn about one another while promoting the local business districts

Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving "Quality of Life" in the Town in line with the above goals? Please briefly describe below:	
Answer Options	**Response Count**
	299
answered question	**299**
skipped question	**819**

1	Tax on those with solar panels?? Ridiculous. Has town looked into leaf blowing laws?
2	Belmont does well, indeed As in most towns and cities, road improvement, where needed, would help
3	#8 I was taken aback to hear a Supt. of Schools apologize for sending out an e-mail to all school population and say "I never read it." Dealing with education administration for a good part of my career I was taken aback that such a basic task was so mishandled. I also have not been impressed with actions o SC chair - "Laurie". Let's hope things improve with new superintendent - can't get much worse! #9 I want to see enforcement of traffic rules with bicyclists. I am concerned about increasing number of aggressive bicyclists on Belmont roads. Let's not become arlington. I see cars and pedestrians adhering to traffic rules but not bicyclists. I know many people avoid Arlington Center now because of aggressive bicyclists.
4	Please help us to get a new H.S. The performance is outstanding the building is a disgrace. The kids feel we don't care. Also - why are we building McMansions everywhere? Particularly on Concord Ave?
5	Manage traffic?!! You have got to be kidding! The intersection of Common St. and Concord Ave is designated as a "historical intersection" and has actually been written about as one of the worst intersections in New England! The town should put up 2 sets of traffic lights on either side of the tunnel. They should be times to allow optimal traffic flow based upon a study performed by a professional. As a non-traffic professional, I would hope the lights would become flashing signals once heavy traffic subsides, say around 9:00 pm. Just thinking outloud here...
6	Get the state involved more, and push our own agenda. Something should be done with traffic problems.
7	At major center section such as near bridge to Belmont center we need traffic lights for our seniors and high school students who cross there. Safety is crucial. The small town affect needs to keeps up safe. Also the major intersection at Waverly and School Street. A traffic light needs to be in place near the old library and fire house. Even a light at the CUS to prevent any to die.

	For bicyclists and pedestrians to walk around town potholes and streets need to be repaved to keep everyone safe More support for ESL students and their parents to transition into the American system
8	Get more traffic enforcement out on Trapelo Rd in Waverly. Have the signal lights work - instead of the light at Lexington St turning green and the one on Trapelo turning read have both red to let cars out of Moraine St. Enforce the stop sigh and directional signs at Mill St.
9	Traffic in Belmont Center is awful. Intersection of Concord Ave and Common St. at the railroad overpass needs traffic lights!!!! Sidewalks on most residential streets are a disgrace. They are dangerously uneven and nearly unusable for strollers or wheelchairs. Bus stop near stores on trapelo need parking enforcement. More bicycle lanes needed.
10	Exposure - awareness (public), such as this committee goal(s), senior newsletter - community newspaper - local/tv - vote. Learn -discern - enforce!
11	High school students should have a sense of pride - keep a clean campus and pick up their trash. They should have a sense of responsibility - they too are a part of the town.
12	Walking paths around town need to improve. There are many people who would like to do more walking but cannot due to poor or nonexistent sidewalks. Of course, resources need to be devoted to road improvements.
13	We could use more enforcement of motor vehicle + speed laws - pedestrian crossings should be well marked with stand-up signs in the center of the street. Cars parked in "no parking" areas should be ticketed.
14	Do not only measure the quality of the schools by MCAS or the high achievers. Belmont has never paid adequate attention to middle and struggling students. They feel like losers in this town. That's a result of tracking, an insidious way of labeling kids.
15	Get rid of eyesore "historical" building parked too long on Concord Ave. A real eyesore and distraction to drivers.
16	Parking in Waverly Sq - Clogs up Neighbors from out of town workers unable to park all night yet cars park all day 12-14 hours.
17	Class sizes are too big - there is always a budget crunch for the schools and they are lacking 21st century science labs Fix the roads, how can we divert some of the pass-through traffic from rt. 2 to watertown? How about a toll?
18	weekly compost pick up (or include compost with greens)
19	Yes! Move toward single-stream recycling and weekly recycling pickup. Offer curbside composting. Neighboring communities have already made these changes, and Belmont should do

	the same.
20	no sure, but there are a lot of cars that travel through belmont in the morning
21	Belmont's recycling system is long out-of-date. We need single stream recycling of a larger array of materials. The street and road maintenance and reconstuction has become inherently unfair and continues to do nothing more than make the town easy to drive through by automobiles. Bikes and pedestrians are on their own. Infrastructure maintenance continues to be very poor, approaching 3rd world quality standards. (I have worked in the 3rd world and know what I'm talking about.) I see many Belmontonians using the nearby Cambridge parks and recreation facilities because theirs are better.
22	Single-stream recycling
23	Recycling on a weekly basis for example. Make solar energy a possibility for everybody. Not make it so expensive that people can't afford it.
24	preserve our green spaces, protect open space, control expansion of Rock Meadow gardens into the open space, put bicycle lanes OFF the road onto a different level with pedestrians as on Concord Ave/Cambridge and Vassar Street, Camb.. A painted line does NOT do it! SAVE our trees with better maintenance and CUT SALT use in winter, Control stormwater runoff: pervious paving in parking lots, sidewalks, driveways etc, with rain gardens/swales, dredge Claypit for more water storage, clear out pond exit pipes, enforce litter laws, clean up trash in streets, encourage retailers to sweep street and gutter in front of their stores. Belmont Center is a disgrace, Empty public barrels more frequently
25	Switch from small recycle bins to large recycle barrels.
26	Do not allow the MLB to implement a policy that discourages solar panels. We should be supporting alternative energy in every way possible.
27	Be careful of construction disturbing nature and displacing wildlife such as deer
28	Recycle every week. People will not hold extra trash for the next recycle day! All that trash that isn't recycled ends up scattered over the town
29	Land not used on residential properties should be taxed at a much lower rate than the physical structure thus encouraging more open space and shifting the burden to housing sqft which is more indicative of services used. .
30	Put in the Bike Path!!!
31	The current recycling program encourages waste. We should have recycling every week and through a program that accepts more items. People should be encouraged not to use lawn chemicals.
32	Don't look to development only to generate more revenue. Look to reengineer the organizational structure and infrastructure. We are overdeveloping (retail at Cushing Square) and trying to compensate for it by thinking that road design can (Trapelo Road, bike paths, wider sidewalks. We are increasing people/# cars and reducing lanes.
33	Not allow individual and special interests to trump the greater good of the community at large.
34	How about solar panels or alternative energy
35	partner with Habitat/Audubon experts to pln preservation and mitigation
36	Reduce taxes and spending
37	We have not works closely enough with neighboring towns in this area (eg, Met State land, and we kind of missed the opportunities at Alewife)
38	Need to preserve the Uplands as a natural habitat and support citizens efforts to this end
39	Belmont has done a great job on this
40	Take a stance on issues such as the wetlands development.
41	Improve the roads. Encourage recycling in public places like parks, Belmont Center by adding recycling bins for cans/bottles. Put a no-idle policy in place for cars.
42	The schools are of the utmost importance to maintaining Belmont's reputation as a highly desirable place to live. As more and more families are moving into town, we need to maintain a strong focus on keeping our schools and libraries well maintained (the infrastructure) and hire teachers and administrators that continue the tradition of strong academic achievement while also engaging children and families in community involvement/citizenship.

43	Work with the current taxes rather than trying to pass over rides or debt exclusions all the time.
44	Weekly, single-barrel recycling, like most modern towns do it, would be a nice step. The current system is embarrassing.
45	Do not allow large stores/restaurants in LBIII business districts. The traffic associated with these is harmful to the adjacent neighborhoods.
46	Recycling needs to be single stream. The bike path must be pushed through. Get the DPW, Water, and Lighting teams out in front of the citizens. Participate in Solarize programs. Provide Energy Star subsidies/rebates. Provide education on electric cars, charging, etc.
47	look into the benefits of starting middle school and high school at later times. this also helps with morning traffic. Traffic lights would be beneficial in some areas--like by the bridge-turning left onto pleseant st from a side street--even if only are on during certain hours
48	Do the school lunches still get handed out on styrofoam trays that get thrown away? How many trays are thrown away every day? The schools are NOT "green"
49	Town should do more to encourage walking and safe biking; and facilitate/promote residential development near transit (doing so will also support existing retail hubs)
50	FIX THE ROADS. Biker/walking path(s) Re-assess traffic patters at the bridge in the center. Consider parking garages - there's not enough spacces for on street parking in Waverly or Cushing Square. Facilitate the Cushing Square project!!
51	Noise pollution issue
52	Traffic in Belmont Center is very bad! ? of lights be there!
53	1. The roads are unpassable by bike and simply MUST BE FIXED. 2. Main St (Leonard St) recycling bins. Cushing St, Waverly Sq. etc. 3. Promote Edible gardens (and keep Rock Meadow Gardens affordable by not adding more improvement requirements to appease one neighbor.
54	No more bike lanes.
55	Exceptional school. Even for seniors we need good schools as it increases our property value. Too much car traffic, too many bicycles -- accidents waiting to happen.
56	More retail (of quality & diversity) is needed in town, especially on Brighton, pleasant and leonard streets. trapelo road retail remains a HUGE eyesore in most sections. Start with signage restrictions - neon and tacky plastic must go. It's a simple start.
57	Limit trash pick-up, have recycling every week instead of every two weeks, and do single stream recycling to encourage people to do more of it. Maintain town properties without using pesticides/chemicals.
58	Infrastructure - Face the problem head on, and make a list of each building oldest to newest, repairs they would need to "maintain them as investments in our future". Demonstrate and document progress.
59	promote more public events at the natural habitats we are conserving to raise awareness
60	I see a effort and it is a town in the green already, just the down town where people need to walk that will make the difference
61	The struggles with the school budget each year are frustrating. There are so many great folks involved in the school system from the leadership to the teachers and parents. it seems as if there

	is more room for collaborative thinking rather than there being threats of cuts every year.
62	I say "not very well" on the accomplishment scale because I'm not sure many people know where these areas are and hence they can never be admired.
63	Fix the roads!
64	I am a firm believer in the bike path and marked bike ways on the road.
65	make bike lanes (and get the bikeway finished) a priority
66	fix the roads
67	Continue to expand bike paths1
68	Put real limits on leafblowers. Their use is out of control in this town.
69	If bicycling was a little easier around town, we'd do that more often instead of taking the car. Many of the roads are in rough shape.
70	put all the cable infrastructure underground (TV, electrical, internet cables ...) require that cable (internet) companies remove redundant cables at least once a year. incentieves to residents to increase energy efficiency of houses.
71	I think we should include sidewalks everywhere and wherever possible bike lanes.
72	Please repair the Trapello road!!!! It needs a new surfice!!!!!
73	In my view (and perhaps this is your intention), following this extensively soft Quality of Life Vision Statement (which suggests a town government in search of a feel-good pat on the back), the town should establish a serious priorities, starting with a Mission Statement -- for example, one that proposes to "provide high quality services through the town departments of administration, fire, police, and public works." Following this, we should establish our strategic goals and objectives -- goals such as "1. Provide for high-quality government services; 2. Promote the stability of our existing residential neighborhoods, while fostering diverse housing opportunities; 3. Promote diverse economic development that conforms with the town's residential character and the environment; 4. Provide, support, and encourage a high quality of life for the town." The objectives we then draw up for these goals should be clear and measurable.
74	Provide accessible bike and walking paths; maintain the streets and sidewalks to encourage safe walking options.
75	The conservation land is great. There are other quality of life measures like making it more pleasurable to walk to both town centers. The traffic patterns are tough in both cases with increased traffic coming thru Belmont.
76	Single stream recycling! Good lord....the antiquated way of separating recyclables is ridiculous
77	We could fire half the administrative staff in the schools and improve the education of the children immediately. The town of Belmont is currently a residential town where most of the residents work outside the town. So the pedestrian, cycling friendly policies translate to more traffic snarl, longer commute times, and greater danger to both cars and pedestrians as cranky drivers try to navigate the impediments to their commutes. In the meantime the roads are neglecting and crumbling.

	In the meantime the empty gestures promoting the green religion are actively harming the quality of life of residents. The lack of new residential construction, particularly of apartment blocks prevents the high density housing that is in demand so close to Boston. The anti-idling law amounts to a bit of useless hectoring. The sustainability committee is an utter waste of tax payer money in that it is trying to solve a non-problem and should be immediately disbanded.
78	Improve the streets. I feel like all my fillings are falling out because of how bumpy the roads are.
79	Stop building apartments all over! We're full.
80	Make the downtown traffic less a bottleneck and safer. Too many cars parked in second lanes. Classes in primary schools are getting more and more kids. Are we sure that only Belmont redidents can attend Belmont schools? Make sure that trees ans landscapes are properly maintained and when houses are destroyed, new housing incorporates trees and is in line with a small town development.
81	If town gov't was smaller ... places like McLean would not have needed to be developed to provide additional tax revenue for the local gov't and traffic would not be the insane mess that it is in Belmont between 8-9 on weekday mornings
82	see comments from above question...a better sound ordinance would be nice. Cutting lawns at 7:00 AM or 7:00 PM on Sundays just isnt right. Roads are deplorable. Sidewalks worse - extremely dangerous to bike and walk on e.g. tree root upheaval main cause.
83	We should consider a plastic bag ban for retailers similar to other communities in our Commonwealth
84	Save the Maple Forest! Add a bike path
85	We can not approve more development without thoughtful planning on how it effects the neighborhood. There is way too much traffic on brighton street. and doing any more development near the arlington line (No new development should be done) will be unsafe for the neighborhood
86	More education in the schools about Belmont's own natural habitats -- kids pass this information up to their parents
87	More support for initiatives like the Waverly Trail that would help make Belmont's significant environmental heritage better know to the general public
88	Bike path; stop developing houses next to Habitat. Keep the zoning restrictions and building heights in place.
89	We need more public parks and especially gardens, rather than just conservation and open areas.
90	The town is selling off all the open space which is contrary to this goal.
91	The schools are vastly underfunded and being compromised. The strong results that show are the result of a dedicated teaching staff that has stayed despite the poor funding - they won't always - and the extremely involved parents that pay for and enrich their children's lives. The town can not rest of the backs of those parents who provide private opportunities for students. The whole town benefits from a school well funded school system..The roads are unsafe, inadequate curbing on main streets (School Street) that border schools with no busing (Burbank). Crossing guards are sworn at, disregarded and it is a wonder there are not more pedestrian accidents although it would seem that Belmont already has more each year than is acceptable. Recycling every other week discourages environmental conservation.
92	Vastly decrease or eliminate the use of road salt. Road salt causes great harm with little to no safety benefit. Restore a full program of tree replacement and maintenance.
93	Community path to encourage bike and pedestrian traffic. Although personal safety on the path is important- we want something that is well trafficked, well monitored.
94	We need a traffic light or a 3-way stop sign as Concord Avenue and Leonard Street meet. This is a NIGHTMARE every morning and every night. Currently, there is no prevailing concept of drivers "taking turns." Some drivers hog the road, while others wait interminally. Why has this gone on so long? Forced stops via stop signs, with a rule to alternate car-by-car, will facilitate a much more civilized traffic spot, which is the bane of everyone's morning and evening commute. There's a traffic light at the corner of Common Street in front of St. Joseph's Church, but the level of traffic at this spot pales in comparison to the 3 roads coming together at Concord and Leonard Street. Save us from this nightmare!
95	Schools: Need to focus on more than just academics -- also need to focus on Quality of Life/Balance in school. Also need to stress opportunity to go to Minuteman High instead of

	Belmont High to reduce overcrowding and use the available resource.
96	Need updated waste and recycling management (convert to large automated system with single barrels...)
97	stop pretending the clay pits have living things in them..what a waste of time for school children; support the garden at the Chenery, stop putting emphasis on school sports (way out of proportion to the support given to academics and the arts)
98	BMLD is disgraceful. MLAB is a cabal of snobs who refuse to listen the public and are not held accountable to anyone. The selectmen do not value environmental responsibility, regardless of what they say in public their actions speak even more loudly. They have a track record of zero. Sust Belmont is very ineffectual. The Energy Committee tries, as do a few individuals. But we need more.
99	Belmont is strapped for money that is much needed to maintain our excellent school, build a new pool, and improve our library. I have been bemused at HOW LONG the Cushing Square commercial initiative is taking and at the plethora of banks and real estate agencies as opposed to a rich variety of stores. I miss the book store greatly. We do need more commerce so that families are not so strapped by property taxes. We also need to have a better long-term vision on how to maintain Belmont's essential resources.
100	The town is not very responsive to requests regarding environment. There is serious gutter puddling problem in front of my house. I called the town to report. The call was transferred to about five people, nobody claimed responsibility for the problem and nobody came to fix the problem.
101	Try to buy land to put into trust. Preserve the uplands. More recycling for homes and public buildings and parks. I.E. pick up of styrofoam and food waste.
102	curbside composting toxic disposal day(s) for the town support open space restrict large house building on small lots...they leave no yard and looks so out of place!! eliminate plastic water bottles like other towns
103	Primarily I think the focus needs to be on the schools. I find very disturbing that the children do not have the access that they need to their school libraries and share librarians at the elementary school level. Reading is one of the most important skills throughout life and our children are not learning the basic knowledge of how to navigate a library properly. This to me is outrageous.
104	Safe the silver maple forest
105	Traffic backups in Waverley Square at rush hour have really made things a lot less pleasant. They seem to be largely construction related, so hopefully things will loosen back up after the construction is complete. But if not, it should really be addressed.
106	This area seems to be a political football and not deeply routed in town administration.
107	I think that the community could encourage visits to places like habitat and to take hikes/walks in nature.
108	More local business would cut down on car trips
109	More education to the community to inform what we are currently doing and plans of what we can do, in terms of environment, sustainability, energy conservation etc.
110	The silver maple forest development is a major problem. Overall, as I compare Belmont to other area towns, we are not doing a good job -- at all -- on environmental responsibility.
111	We need more athletic fields remove that eyesore of a house from the skating rink area!
112	Rebuild the high school now. Fix the intersection at Concord/Common (where it goes under the track)!
113	TRAFFIC! Police details need to do their jobs to maintain safety and keep the traffic moving.

	This is not happening. Signage at the bridge debacle (3 way stop) and clearly marked lane designations. Design things properly and maintain them. Despite all the awards, Wellington's interior is not holding up. Glass and drywall in high traffic corridors of elementary school? Ridiculous. Other buildings seem to get minimum maintenance in anticipation of some BIG fix. A mentality of not wanting to invest in something if it will be completely redone soon is not right. Why can some residents (town mtg members) remove their sidewalks and replace with turf/grass-seed? Why do so many residential projects go on without proper permitting?
114	Mandatory Recycling should be required from all residents, which is a local ordinance requiring all persons located Belmont to separate their recyclables, compostables and landfilled trash and to participate in recycling and composting programs.
115	School has been the attraction of Belmont, and it should remain strong.
116	Weekly pick up of recyclables is necessary.
117	Do away with a "goosebusters permit" add a $5 fee to every pet license to cover keeping parks clean. My quality of life makes me want to go to pet friendly towns and stay away from Belmont parks.
118	Would be nice to have some carnivals or town wide events at the park - what about craft fair that also has carnival games. No need for rides - they are not safe.
119	Need to spend more money to reduce class sizes
120	Open more restaurants and let them put tables outside so people can spend time outside talking to each others, drink coffee etc - like in European cities
121	The "Town" has to stop battling its own school system. The school system is one of Belmont's primary attractions to outside buyers at this point -- no one is paying $1M plus for 3 bedroom homes unless they have kids and want an excellent school system. As a parent of children who have gone through elementary and are now experiencing the joys of Chenery and BHS, it is my considered opinion that the high ranking of the school system (e.g., US News Report) is mostly due to the innate pool of talent in Belmont's student population and IN SPITE OF considerable deficiencies in school infrastructure (BHS), organization (BHS), and attention to all levels of students (Chenery, BHS). We as a town have to stop sitting on our school system's laurels before the deficiencies start dragging down even the reputed quality of the system (and property values with it). The prevailing opinion of seniors in this town (as reported by that august organ the Citizen-Herald) seems to be that property values will keep going up forever regardless of how much we invest in the school system. Concrete suggestion: give tours of the BHS facility (grimy corridors, sprung auditorium seats, half-lit library) and contrast with photos of Burlington High, Newton North High, Lexington High; shameful.
122	better designed roads, better road conditions, and bike paths to support safe alternative transportation alternatives, and to create better traffic flow (eg cars not jammed up at tunnel)
123	Education: I think our schools are very good - but I think they could be better. Having seen students go through the high school and Belmont Hill - I am very surprised at how poorly our high school students are supported in the college process, compared to the Belmont Hill boys. And how much better equally talented boys do from Belmont Hill vs Belmont High. In terms of traffic - it is getting worse every year. I would like to see a solution for the stone bridge traffic problem - perhaps a light on the common street side??
124	School buildings (high school) are dilapidated and overcrowded --need some vision here desperately to deal with reality of maintaining a safe, healthy environment rather than the illusion of excellence based on inflated AP rankings and the like. Priorities should be on involving students in creative solutions for their own well-being rather than breathalyzers and drug sniffing dogs. Traffic problems will increase with all the new housing on our borders--let's not get bogged down in small town image and hire professional planners to help us cope!
125	Add more traffic limiting/speeding methods. Provide some encouragement for folks to plant trees on their properties.
126	Incorporate a trash and recycling collection program like Watertown.
127	I would love to see the Town of Belmont more directly encourage adoption of solar energy and

	other clean energy initiatives, it seems to lag behind other local towns.
128	Control dogs in our public parks and conservation lands
129	Maintain open spaces such as Rock Meadow and the Belmont Uplands. Green landscaping practices such as rain gardens on public lands. Generating renewable energy for public buildings. Ensure bike and pedestrian- friendly streets.
130	Road condition in Belmont especially Trapelo road all the way to Cambrindge is very very bad. I can say for sure it is one of worst in the whole world. It is horrible. Hope you can solve this big big problem as early as possible. No chance of riding bicycle on this road.
131	Need to bring the recycling program up to par with surrounding communities. Need to do much better at maintaining public buildings; the high school in particular.
132	When we make a decision about the built environment or about conservation it's important to let even residents who did not take part in the process know why we made it (e.g. why bike paths).
133	We need to preserve the Little Pond wetlands and not allow any building on it at all. The conservation tax on the property needs to be repealed. It is just allowing people to use any excuse to use it.
134	Complete the recreation path that currently ends at Blanchard Road through Belmnt to the Waltham line. Work with the local elementary schools to encourage families to bike, rather than drive, kids to school. Wellington school has one tiny, ill-placed bike rack and didn't even include biking as an option on the survey sent to all families about how children will get to/from school. If I drop off by bike, the traffic pattern for cars sends me into Belmont Center (not safe for cycling with my preschooler). There is not an alternative route designated for bicycles so I have to use the sidewalk. Planning for traffic flow needs to include planning for cyclists.
135	Duck ponds need maintenance and improvement.
136	See previous answer: improve sidewalks, place trash barrels along public walkways
137	There are not enough renewable energy projects. Why is the town not more supportive of solar energy and wind energy?
138	More recreation space
139	Release utilities for individual choice or buy pow from green power sources,allow net metering from solar roof panels
140	The rush hour traffic through Belmont center is a mess. Something needs to be done to fix the flow of traffic through the train tracks underpass.
141	recycle pick ups every week
142	The roads i town are beyond horrible. Why doesn't the municipality have appropriate funding to maintain the roads?
143	Ensure the parks/playgrounds are taken care of, updated!!
144	-better bike routes -more initiatives to encourage personal stewardship -limiting size of new houses
145	I think the quality and supply of the athletic fields in town needs to be invested in like other similar elite suburban towns. It's an embarrassment to have opposing coaches from other towns comment on our poor fields. It's a key investment in the future of our kids and the "curb appeal" of our community.
146	Make more information about recycling available, encourage supermarkets to give up plastic bags and educate people about bringing their own, incorporate more environmental education into classroom teaching, involve school kids in more clean ups and study of local habitats
147	We need to find a way to dissuade NWern commuters from cutting through Belmont on their way to/from work locations in other towns/Boston.
148	Support initiatives like solar powered water heaters and recycling in schools, reducing waste in school lunches
149	We need to protect what's left of nature in Belmont. Save the Belmont Uplands and the silver maple forest.
150	We need to be able to change. We can not support or continue to live in 1950.

151	1. We need a new high school. Yesterday. It is really awful. 2. The town does a poor job of monitoring major roadways for speeding and traffic violations. It feels like we have just ceded several roads to commuters who are passing through and have no commitment to community. This is a residential town, and while I realize that people must travel through it, we should be diligently monitoring to make sure that they observe laws and conform to social norms. 3. Linked to the above, there is no reason that the vast majority of children in this town shouldn't feel safe and capable of walking to school, this should be one of Belmont's most important "selling points" but the town has failed to invest in viable sidewalks, proper signage around schools and the employment of crossing guards. I think it would greatly improve the sense of community if people saw children on the streets more often. They live here, but are never seen, because the town has basically ceded the roadways to pass through traffic. 3. Also linked to the first two, if we could get Belmont residents biking and walking, and make it safe for their children to do so, we would have less traffic and be more environmentally responsible. Belmont could and should lead the way in this. By a happy accident we are positioned to actually already be exactly like the "planned communities" that people pay significantly to inhabit. To me, the two lynch pins for this are traffic and a more useful set of stores and retail opportunities that are within walking distance.
152	If we were to close off Leonard Street to all cars and make Pleasant Street and Cross Street the routes to take - each being a one way so that, the foot traffic in Belmont Center would be safer and people could freely walk from store to store without the fear of being hit by a car that was not paying attention
153	Start or support a composting initiative for the community
154	continuing the bike path to existing paths is extremely important!
155	Increase recycling program. Pick up more types of recyclables and increase frequency of pickup to weekly.
156	Well, Belmont Hill is being destroyed. Just drive up Concord ave. and it is sickening what they are doing and the poor animals are bulldozed out of their homes and people wonder why they have them in their yards....stop the greedy developers..
157	The horses have left the barn with the development of McMansions on Belmont Hill. We need more green spaces.
158	I have to comment on the previous question - PLEASE institute a shovel your sidewalk program with some sort of monitoring and punishment for people who do not shovel well. It is a real hazard. The town should protect our natural habitats and not put development in them.
159	Block roads that are identified as common short cuts at the commute peak hours...and let only locals through. The intent would be to breakup commute drive-though traffic patterns. Partially block roads. Starting at 7;00 a.m. and later at 3:00 p.m people zoom through the streets....they are cutting across Belmont to avoid traffic lights. You have to mix it up for these people...and frustrate these short cuts to change the behavior. Additionally, there are plenty of people who park and ride. Using Belmont as a free parking lot while they are at work. You can see this everyday on Newton St, Falmouth St, Worcester St ...streets off of Belmont St. Another way is to just pass out speeding tickets on the minor roads ...there is not shortage of speeding on lesser roads during the commute time.
160	Solar/renewable energy supported more by BMLD (see program in Concord, for example). Stop all building on current open space!!!!

161	population density needs to be managed better especially with regards to new construction. Also, keep franchised business out or restricted (eg limit capacity; hours of operation, etc)
162	Promote the "Habitat" and the various bike trails and paths. If people in the community get involved more and experience the natural habitats that Belmont has to offer, then they will support these efforts more.
163	Better adult education
164	more bike lines/paths
165	Not clear that residents and staff of the town are on the same page environmentally, e.g., too much salt on roads, too much asphalt, field lights on late at night in the rain, school dept. building lights on all night, etc.
166	Better assessment and planning for traffic flows and safety are really needed. The traffic through Belmont Center and the severe DANGERS posed to drivers, bikers and pedestrians going under the Bridge in Belmont Center and attempting to make turns off of Leonard Street are unacceptable. The schools get great ratings, but the way that school assignments are done, and the growing class sizes at the elementary school levels are very concerning. And the state of the High School is unacceptable. It has not changed in over 30 years - this needs to be addressed so that we can continue to provide excellent educational environments for our children.
167	We incinerate our trash adding to many environmentally unfriendly issues. How about one stream recyling? styrofoam collection place to recycle that? Remove all styrofoam trays from school lunch rooms? Add dishwashers (machines) in school cafeterias. Have designated bike lanes throughout town to promote safer, more consistent travel thus improving health and well being and encouraging kids to get to schools in multiple safe ways.
168	Single stream recycling in public buildings, rethink school lunch waste
169	Make it easier to install solar power; provide larger recycling bins; provide town-wide food waste/composting collection; charge for garbage collection based on quantity of garbage.
170	as a bicyclist, the roads are dangerous, period. Try going under the bridge into the Center (either on bike or walking) - between the traffic and road conditions...
171	During rush hour you can not get across town- morning or evening We are a huge pass through town for commuters which adds to unwanted pollution of all kinds, Road destruction, etc. residents are paying for it in being unable to use roads and then pay heavily for damaged cars due to the condition of the roads.
172	THE ROADS ARE A DISASTER and it is truly a disgrace when people come visit my home.
173	Preserve the uplands Offer better recycling program (every week for residents) and more public receptacles. Eg. There was no obvious recycle bins at town day.
174	I note the lack of a comment space on the school question that came before this one... In any case, we do a decent job with the environmental question, but I see this as directly tied to elevating pedestrians and bikers over cars and to outreach into our schools. Kids at each of the elementary schools might be asked to do a literal "field trip" to Habitat/Rock Meadow each year, for example. It's close, it's cheap, and it's important. I've seen these happen only once in my child's time at school.
175	find ways to make recycling easier for residents less sorting/bigger containers
176	We need a series of overrides that will address school cuts and crumbling streets, sidewalks, and public buildings. The current tendency to act on whatever pet project has a vocal advocacy group keeps us from pursuing a cohesive, integrated approach to maintaining and improving our community.
177	put recycle trash cans in the center and cushing square and start empting the trash bin infront of

	CVS in the center
178	See prior comments
179	Extend an off-road bicycle path through Belmont to connect to other towns. Work with affected residents to reopen dialogue.
180	Two words: community path.
181	Fix Leonard sq...make the town inviting,not like a dump...
182	prevent further building on conservation land-
183	We need to redistrict the town school districts. With regards to the new developments on the Trapelo corridor, I wonder how much thought was given to infrastructure. We have more and more kids getting put into Wellington. Moreover, public transportation in general is a problem. The 73 bus is packed. If you live around school or grove street, good luck on actually getting a bus. I do support the community path. I think it needs to get pushed through. Make it safe and get it done. I love the green spaces that we have in Belmont, and believe we should continue to conserve them. We should have more money budgeted towards trees.
184	The public schools are the sole reason I moved to Belmont. I am now thinking of moving out or private school due to overcrowding and declining quality.
185	We need a community bike path that links Belmont Center with Alewife. This will help with traffic, keep children safe as they go to the high school and bring foot and bike traffic to retailers in the center. It's time to stop talking about this and make it a reality!!!!!!!!!!!!
186	I would like to see more cycling infrastructure. This would promote safe cycling which would reduce traffic, reduce pollution, preserve town character, and increase community health. I would also like to get rid of disposable trays and flatware in the schools. That is a penny wise pound foolish solution and is inconsistent with our town values.
187	1. The Town should participate in Hubway bike sharing and have stations at Alewife, the commuter rail, and key neighborhood locations (e.g. schools, main traffic circles, etc.); 2. The Town should extend the bike path from Brighton St. to the town center; 3. The town should use traffic calming devices such as speed bumps (prevalent in Somerville and Cambridge) especially near high traffic areas, schools, and playgrounds; 4. the Town should encourage more "convenient" retail -- e.g. coffee, grocery, beer/wine, restaurant/sandwich -- in other areas besides town center (e.g. corner of Concord & Brighton); 5. the Town should develop resident parking near commuter rail and subway stations for commuting downtown; 6. the Town should push the T to run the 74/75 bus from Harvard Sq. more often during rush hour so that this is a viable commuter option; and 7. the Town should maintain excellence as the only acceptable standard for all of its schools, but not start classes too early in the morning, nor overburden children with exhausting levels of homework, nor eliminate exercise/activity (e.g. recess) during the day.
188	make the options more know to people
189	Fix the roads ASAP.
190	Recycling!. Recycling should be picked up free of charge every week. Household trash should be managed. Each trash bag should have a sticker attached. The town can provide 52 stickers to each household free each year. Additional sticker can be purchased easily at convenient locations (grocery store, hardware store, town hall, etc...) This would shift the incentive towards recycling.
191	Could do more with green space and parks--again, too much cut through traffic, completely unregulated.
192	Pay as you throw garbage pick up Community recycling receptacles in town centers and parks
193	1)Keep dogs out of the parks. I know people love their dogs, but the parks should be for the kids/athletes/families that want to use them. Not everyone has control of their dogs. Belmont should designate a plot of land to be used solely as a dog park.
194	A proper conservation program for buildings of architectural importance; community paths -

	Belmont is a (bad) joke compared to our neighbors.
195	Bring in the bike path!! And install bike racks in Belmont Center!!
196	Fix the roads, but benches at public transportation stops
197	Clay Pit Pond seems to be a neglected opportunity. Also, the Light Board should be much more hands-on with Belmont Light to insist that the utility provide friendlier policies for/support of renewable energy.
198	Why do only some of these questions have a space for comments? This comment is regarding the previous question, about ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety. There are very few routes connecting the parts of Belmont separated by the railroad, and they are both nightmares for cyclists: Brighton Rd. after Concord has no shoulder and often has heavy traffic, and the entrance to Belmont Center, a 5-way blind intersection with no traffic signals, is a nightmare for cyclists and automobile drivers both. If ensuring pedestrian and bicycle safety is indeed part of our vision, doing something to resolve these issues should be a priority.
199	FIX THE HORRENDOUS ROADS AND PUT SIGNS UP AT RIDICULOUSLY DANGEROUS COMMON ST/CONCORD ST. INTERSECTION
200	Planting more trees throughout the neighborhoods, and not just taking down sick trees.
201	The town needs better school funding to improve the quality of our schools. The public schools seem overwhelmed and unable to offer the quality of education we were expecting when we moved to Belmont. Even without better funding, I wish the schools would work creatively to serve the needs of gifted kids -- right now, they seemed so focused on the bottom-to-middle that parents of gifted kids are choosing private schools when they can afford them. This is short-sighted because it will bring down the overall quality of the schools further in the medium run.
202	About the traffic .. .(you really should have an open-ended question on every page). It seems futile to me to carry on about traffic. Belmont is situated at the edge of a major metropolitan area, and there is no way we can tell people not to drive on public roads, nor is there much of anything we can do to mitigate their doing so. One way streets may help in certain instances, but they will also inconvenience Belmont residents. We all live here because it is terrific to have a yard and trees and a garden, and yet live so close to the city where so many work. That convenience carries with it the burden of through-traffic. You can't have everything.
203	Stop tearing down houses and building bigger ones and more apartment buildings.
204	No mention of keeping Belmont affordable from a property tax standpoint; Some of these goals are just so abstract it is difficult to know what they mean
205	Dedicated Bike Path! Fixing the roads.
206	Prevent construction of houses that cover too much of the lot. Prevent Uplands development.
207	Historic houses have been demolished. Wet lands are soon to be developed. Government should be ashamed.
208	Build the proposed off-road community path and tunnel connecting Winn Brook to BHS without further delay! Invest in pedestrian- and bike-friendly infrastructure all over town -- at only 5 square miles, it should be easy to get anywhere in Belmont without a car, but right now it is not. Along with maintaining great schools, I believe improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is the best investment our town can make, and if we don't, I think we will be left behind by our more forward-thinking neighbors.
209	Parental support in schools and at home is an important foundation to BPS great reputation - acknowledge this please. Bike paths and traffic safety = priority
210	Traffic is increasing in Belmont and in neighboring towns. I hope we can develop our traffic patterns to minimize problems. Belmont center has become much more harrowing in the 20 years I have lived here.
211	Environmental goals: Belmont Light could support and facilitate residential solar installations.
212	We need to increase the budget to fix the roads. It is not an overstatement to say that they must be among the worst in Massachusetts.

213	Sadly, we are still a town where a car is usually the easiest way to get around. Can we get a small grocery store into Cushing sq or the center? Maybe one that delivers? And let's do everything we can to encourage bicycle use! With a town owned electric company, can we do something clever with solar?
214	Start composting, or collecting table scraps for compost. Recycle more; have people pay per trash bag collected. Get the bike path going already. Figure out the Silver Maple Forest.
215	promote solar energy, limit noise including that of planes overhead
216	Traffic is congested most of the day primarily by people using Belmont as a cut through. Need to reduce convenience of Belmont as a cut through: perhaps lights, permits, tolls, one way streets at certain hours, etc
217	More recycling bins!
218	Many Town leaders seem unwilling to learn how to live a more eco-friendly lifestyle. Change is hard and we lack the leadership to steward it. We need to elect people more in tune with environment.
219	Re: bike transportation and walking- allowing leaf blowers all spring, summer and fall is a detriment - blowing dust and sand into faces of bike commuters not conducive. Also not environmentally responsible
220	Better enforcement of laws. For instance all day parking on residential streets is only sporadically enforced.
221	more emphasis on recycling by addition of more recycling bins in public places like the center
222	Better quality of road repairs, which look messy and are falling apart within a year or two. Creation of sidewalks and bike lanes when repairs are done - this does not seem to be a priority.
223	Consider building community organic gardens
224	fewer leaf blowers and banks
225	finish bike path to the minuteman trail
226	Build a community path so that I can walk/bike to belmont center rather than driving. That would help meet several goals.
227	Mandatory recyling, Increase recyclable materials. Minumize hadnotus at Town Meeting
228	1. Put in speed bumps and enforce speed limits on the busiest streets. I live on Washington Street and people regularly fly down that street at 50 mph. There should be a speed trap there to deter speeders and potentially speed bumps given it's near a school. 2. Create a community bike path!
229	Bike path
230	Traffic in town and around the hS is awful. There out to be light or stop sign at Leonard and Concord.
231	Single-stream recycling toters, or at least doing away with the open blue recycling buckets. With the open blue buckets, the wind carries all of the neighborhood's papers, plastic containers, and other bits of trash up and down the street. It's frankly ridiculous that these blue bins haven't been improved upon or replaced.
232	Lone Tree Hill, Rock Meadow, and Beaver Brook provide an impressive amount of conservation land for a small inner-suburb town such as Belmont. More trees along town roads should be the next goal. It increases value of homes and reduces AC energy usage during the summer.
233	buy Uplands and avoid development
234	Recycling every week would be better.
235	Think about limiting use of pesticides on lawns, encourage curbside composting, recycling, water containers etc. More of these programs within the schools would help
236	Belmont's traffic is getting worse and worse, which given the relatively stable housing stock in the

	town is an indication of more people cutting through. We should be thankful that the railway cuts through town as it has a self-limiting effect on the traffic that can flow across town. However Mill Street now jams up during rush hour, Brighton Street jams up during rush hour, etc. These are not Belmont residents but rather drivers seeking to get to points south from points north or vice versa. Maybe it would be worthwhile investigating improvements of Lexington Street in Waltham (it is already a wide commercial street) as a thoroughfare. On recycling: (a) why don't we have single stream recycling?; (b) why don't more people recycle?; (c) we have to PAY to recycle electronics? (I took mine to an event in Burlington rather than attending the much-advertised event here in town that required paying money to dispose of equipment that recyclers profit from.
237	Add weekly recycling, and single-stream recycling. Be better at discussing and informing about Logan Airport's flight routes over Belmont and providing options for the citizens to help combat airplane noise and pollution. Identify a plan and put it in action to better prepare for the effects of climate change.
238	More recycling opportunities.
239	Walking path through town is needed
240	Add industrial property to increase tax base and free resources for residents and the environment
241	Increase recycling to every week
242	Build a bike path where the old track used to be along the commuter line. This has been in the works for SO LONG that Belmont looks foolish. Why should "NIMBY" prevail over common sense? Build a bike lane on Pleasant street north of town center to connect to Arlington town center.
243	the intersection by the center by the bridge on cncord street is a mess- something should be done to manage traffic and make it more safe
244	Bike path would be very nice. More investment in parks and protected spaces.
245	regarding item 9: potholes are an embarrassment to the Town not to mention a safety hazard and damaging to cars
246	Selectmen could encourage greater energy efficiency with Town and Light Dept. to achieve its Climate Action Plan
247	Is there a reason why there are still no signals at intersection of Channing and Leonard? and even more urgently at intersection of Concrod and Leonard? This is a major public safety and traffic issue and seems illogical not to address it
248	Weekly recycling pickup, encouraging composting and reclaiming rain water. Fix roads and sidewalks. Invest in necessities before investing in non-essentials. For example, invest in improving schools and library. Do NOT build a new pool complex that will cost all residents tax money, especially a pool facility that is not free or of a reasonable cost for all residents to use once it is built. There are many summer swimming options in bordering towns. A new pool complex is not a necessity for this town when our roads are a mess and our schools need more money.
249	Better Trash System.
250	Work together
251	The trash cans in Belmont center are always overflowing
252	The community path and a short cut for Winn Brook to the high school.
253	Let's hire an energy manager and get serious on conservation in all our public buildings especially schools. Let's change recycling to weekly and trash to bi-weekly. Let's figure out a way to compost curbside. Let's force our local businesses to recycle too AND our schools and public buildings.
254	Improve the roads, enforce traffic rules, and add more bike paths
255	Approve town walking path, increase recycling frequency
256	Work ACTIVELY to manage traffic flow, especially on our most heavily traveled corridors of

	Trapelo and Concord Avenues. Develop safe, OFF ROAD routes so that pedestrians and cyclists of any age and ability may get around town without having to deal with the impatience/distraction of drivers. Encourage broader use of Lone Tree Hill and Beaver Brook for walking and socializing.
257	I am very concerned about the proposed Uplands development. I think the town could be more activist in making sure that it does not get final approval. I also think that their should be more leadership on a proposed solar farm for the town.
258	More local programming for environmentally responsible activities around town. For example, the town could support distribution of natural compost for our gardens and lawns, just as the Electric Dept gives away efficient light bulbs.
259	make progress on the bike path to connecct the center with the bike trail
260	Increase percentage of electricity sourced from renewable sources
261	expand recycling services, encourage solar power, offer appliance rebates for energy efficiency...
262	need composting program
263	lots of pot holes in the street. lots of open space. I;ve noticed several single family homes are knocked down and replaced with McMansions as well as multi family dwellings. also, is it possible that the trash men could put the trash barrels on the side of the driveway rather than in the middle of the driveway, so when I return home at night, in the dark cold winter I do not have to get out of my car, move the trash barrels, get into the car again, and drive into the driveway?
264	single bin recycling weekly, yard chips from xmas trees for residents
265	Recycling every week instead of every two weeks
266	More encouragement of recycling and composting. My mother's apartment building in NYC is beginning a composting program!
267	Plan on more budget for new trees where old ones need to be felled.
268	So this will be the third time putting this in here. The traffic is a mess. If the commuter rail from Belmont Center offered better parking and stopped there more than twice in the morning, I'd never drive to work again. Please consider more day-long parking to alleviate traffic congestion on Leonard Road/Concord Ave in the morning. The schools ROCK. We are thankful that we are in a town centered on education. And I love the green, open space. As a gardener at the Victory Gardens, it is really nice to be able to be self-sufficient in some respects by growing our own vegetables six months out of the year.
269	More bicycle and pedestrian accommodations around town, such as finally building the Community Path and building a bridge or tunnel from the Winn Brook neighborhood to the high school area.
270	Traffic flows should in some cases be optimized for safety when there is not a great solution for throughput e.g. belmont center. More bike accommodations (the bike parking in the center is nice!) would be great, and of course, it would be nice if our roads were not renowned throughout the commonwealth for their abysmal quality. Also, street sweeping to clean up from winter would be nice too. Hoping the CPA will help with maintaining green spaces and preserving any wooded areas left.
271	Sadly, it appears that we will be losing the Uplands as a natural habitat. A 40-B complex will bring untold financial burdens instantaneously to community infrastructure services and to abutters, the homeowners whose cellars and streets will regularly flood.
272	Do not build on the conservation land. Approve the offroad Community PATH from Alewife to Belmont Center along the commuter rail line.
273	Make progress on bike/walking path.
274	Would like to see leadership from our elected and appointed officials with regard to a proactive and consistent commitment to energy conservation and other environmental sustainability policies and practices.

275	We should have more bike paths to encourage biking over car trips. Our roads should be in much better repair to also encourage biking.
276	sell Belmont Light immediately after substation is built
277	Town needs to work to control noise pollution. The new air traffic over Belmont threatens our peace of mind and quiet enjoyment. Belmont is not a quiet town if there are dozens of loud jets overhead every hour, from 6:55 am until past Midnight some nights.
278	Hazardous material recycling should be encouraged, made easier, and on a quarterly basis.
279	Preserve the Uplands!
280	The bike path along the MBTA route is being hijacked by the few residents along Channing Road who have moved their fence lines on to MBTA land. Unbelievable. Why is this being allowed? An off-road bike path is good for everyone, especially people whose homes abut the path. They don't see it because they will lose the land they stole. The roads are atrocious, I don't want to drive on them let alone let my children ride their bicycles. We value ourselves as "Town of Homes" but soon we will not attract home buyers who can pay the inflated rates because driving here is so unpleasant. I love the new off leash pilot program. It may need some tweaking to keep the non dog owner/ dog non friendly residents happy, but the idea that owners must show control and knowledge will make this a friendly place for canines and ideally the natural habitats be protected from dogs. The uplands situation is troubling as we do not have the money in the coffers to preserve them but all plans put forth so far have been short sighted gaims. Preserving that land is so important.
281	Improve or increase green space in general residence areas and be mindful of zoning.
282	I would like to see a Textile Recycling Rebate Program in Belmont such as that provided by Bay State Textiles. Initiating an ongoing school box program would be an easy thing to do and require very little maintenance. Think of all the clothing, accessories, linens, stuffed animals, etc that could be recycled and for which the town would be paid -- not to mention the savings in trash hauling fees.
283	Strictly limit the teardown/construction of mammoth houses in settled neighborhoods. They overpower the streetscape and require more resources.
284	Quality of life is not just about bike paths. It's about passable sidewalks. It's not about food markets in the center. It's about housing and services for those in need. I'd like to see a permanent and welcoming food pantry that offers other basic services to people in need.
285	The Town is not proactive in this area AT ALL. Even with the Underwood Pool, the landscaping seems to be an after-thought, rather than an integral part of the design. Meanwhile, we put very little money into trees (and upkeep of those trees). It will be interesting to see if the Trapelo Rd. construction makes traffic and commuting better or worse. Also the town govt. allows a few NIMBYs to control the agenda rather than looking at what's best for the town as a whole. One can be responsive to addressing individual rational concerns while still doing what's best for the entire community.
286	I think the recycling coordinator is a great benefit to the town and the efforts for recyling day in May was great. We should have more of that. I also think we should have pay as you throw to reduce waste and increase recycling. It would be great to make movement on the bike path - by starting on the west side of town where there is full support to connect Waverley to Belmont Center.
287	Reinforce “how to” practices for trash and recycle days. Folks need to put stuff out so that it does not blow away. For example -- visit Davis Road between Trapelo and Irving some Thursday. Folks also need to be encouraged to pick-up trash in front of their residences on a regular basis.
288	It was notable that the town rejected making the high school parking lot greener even after the town finally adopted a stormwater bylaw a decade after it promised to do so.
289	Create the community path! Please don't let the few residents on one portion alter a solid, sound plan for the benefit of thousands. We appreciated the recycling program for odd items (textiles, shredding, etc) and would make use of it if offered more often. Maybe quarterly?
290	Belmont has too generously allowed cross-traffic to choke any pedestrian activity. Most traffic light are heavily in favor of moving cars and on many crosswalks pedestrians are forced to wait two or more traffic light cycles to be able to cross safely. That is utter disgrace for town full of sidewalks and it is in general accident waiting to happen. Cars can not have right of way and always. Commuters who park all over Belmont and crowd our streets should be paying for parking

	privilege. Raised crosswalks and singe lanes of traffic should be present on Trapelo and Belmont corridor. Leftover space should be used for bikes and wider sidewalks/parking areas.
291	Pay as You Throw reduse service will predictably reduce gabage tonnage by 30% from current levels.
292	Get large trash and recycle barrels that have automatic pickup like every other town
293	Lower costs of Solar heating
294	Give up on the solar, the uplands, no one cares!!!! Stop doing a "green" agenda! NO ONE cares!!!
295	continue to support and expand recycling, protect if possible the Uplands from development, prevent polluted runoff and sediment into Claypit Pond, improve drainage from Claypit Pond, control pass through traffic:increased traffic through main cut- throughs are damaging our roads, our air and our peace! Incidentally Bike lanes are NOT a painted line on a road, they are dedicated lanes constructed off the road at a different level: see Concord Ave to Fresh Pond.!!
296	Community path off the main road New recycling/trash contract with large closed containers to avoid blowing trash/animals in trash Increase energy efficiency of all buildings traffic calming means no light at Train overpass (Leonard/Common/Concord intersection). Slowing down and eye contact are the way to go increase recycling/composting at public buildings including schools more local food used in schools and BCC make the new library and underwood pool buildings LEED certified for energy efficiency. Same with the new high school...
297	Road repair and upkeep needs to be a focus. Traffic awareness and enforcement need to pick up.
298	More regional efforts - it's all interconnected. Alewife/Uplands collaboration is a good example. Not enough work with other towns on development (eg, Alewife, Fresh Pond, Met State) and traffic.
299	Town government could benefit and save a lot from "going paperless"

Open Comment: Please feel free to contribute any additional ideas, comments, or concerns regarding the Town's approach to achieving the goals set forth in the vision statement.	
Answer Options	**Response Count**
	299
answered question	**299**
skipped question	**819**

1 Can committee do a study on how to get government to work more effectively and more quickly.

The lack of decision-making is absurd. It slows down or prevents (or ultimately, makes more expensive) so many good projects. For example, there is wide support for tunnel under tracks near high school, and MBTA says now is perfect time. We could do it if town would act FAST. If not, it will likely be done down the road for more money when track work not being done. Town also needs to do a better job of deciding what it wants and going through right processes to get state funding. By not being labelled green town losing out on lots of opportunities – very shortsighted.

2 -Please do not use public school "community rooms" to hold town meetings. This impacts space to have after school programs run effectively and to keep our children safe.

Please do not allow homes that are single families to be torn down and two townhouses to be built.

Traffic lights are essential for our community - more cars are being used

- Senior center is a wonderful place for all ages to come. Make use we keep up with the maintenance of grounds and buildings. Keep it open on very hot days.

3 Try taking care of the seniors and handicapped who are supposed to shovel the sidewalks. The seniors were told that help would be available - what a joke!! The seniors living in senior housing in and around waverly square have to either mail or bring their rent check to Peirce Rd. Wy can they not drop it in a lock box at their complex?

Those living at the Belmont Housing Authority have to mail their rent or bring it to the Watertown Savings Bank - what a waste. Waverly Sq only "2" handicapped parking spaces - Are you joking?

4 Senior citizens feel excluded.

Real estate taxes are too high for people on fixed income. This falls mainly on people who live alone most of whom are women.

Make the CPA surtax voluntary for senior citizens.

Seniors contribute a lot to the town. They are a valuable asset. We should recognize their value.

Let us not turn Belmont into a town of residents with school age children only who will make use of our schools and move away when their children graduate. We need a range of ages, ethnic backgrounds, incomes in our town

The Circuit Breaker should be modified. Its restrictions disqualify people who live alone - mostly women

Give seniors a break - they want to stay in their homes as long as they can. Other towns do.

No more overrides until some are paid off.

The senior center is wonderful but it does not help pay the exorbitant real estate tax.

5 As long as constituencies that strongly promote conservation and sustainability are at odds with the constituencies that want commercial growth and resources for infrastructure there will remain deadlock on much that can be done for the town. Personally I think it's time to move away from trying to promote the community as a "small town". It's more important to promote "community friendly." BY geography Belmont is a small town but it can no longer offer its residents, present and future, the promise of being a "Town of Homes" as such. Such a vision, given current realities, means that just the super wealthy can afford to live here over the long term.

6 The town has three centers (Leonard St, Cushing Sq, and Waverly Sq.) and none of them are pretty. Lexington has one and is charming. Hanging flower baskets? More street trees are needed everywhere, especially White St., Waverly St., Grove, Baker, etc. I fear Waverly Square will be full of boring locust trees. Let's think outside the box.

7 Management of animals, regulations

Why do we tolerate bee keeping in a major, crowded, residential neighborhood. Such as Winn St and Claflin Streets. Should be limited to large, more rural areas without abutters.

8 Provide better parking needs

Do not allow all day parking around Waverly Sq.

9 The subject that concerns me most is not to see surveillance cameras on the streets of Belmont. I wrote to the committee about this when you had your first survey. I believe that all people should have the right to go about their business and live their lives without being recorded. The right to a presumption of innocence is basic to a free society. The growing use of cameras to track people is insidious and erodes a sense of community and respect.

One specific thing that disturbs me is the use of license plate scanners by town police. Most people in town do not seem to be aware that this is happening. It is one thing to check the computer when someone is stopped for a violation, it is another thing when police sit on the side of the road scanning people without any probable cause or reasonable suspicion. Furthermore there is no transparency or oversight about what is being done with this information. Even if there was transparency, I still feel strongly that this is wrong.

A second specific development that concerns me is the plan to put cameras in the schools. This is an instance where a lack of real thoughtful consideration is painfully apparent to me. People say we obviously need cameras for safety. I question this thinking. The mania for cameras started after the columbine tragedy. What no one seems to remember is that columbine h.s. had cameras - it did nothing to stop a horrific attack. Did you know when they redid columbine h.s. they removed the cameras? Why? Because they wanted to create a school culture of respect and caring. Cameras are mean. We say we want to protect students, but that is not honest. We want to control them. Recent articles in the Boston Globe highlighted this attitude. One high school has 275 (!) cameras and the principal admitted he is more concerned about petty thief than any kind of attack. Well, if that is your real problem isn't there a better way to deal with it than treating all students like suspects? Can't we do better than this? What about an honor code?

We have always been very fortunate in Belmont to have low levels of crime. In fact, crime is at an all time low everywhere. Cameras do not prevent crime, they don't prevent terrorism. If you think they do - show me the evidence. Why do people lose all sense of skepticism when technology is involved? What a surveillance society does is create a climate of mistrust in each other and a culture of fear. The police have all the eyes they need in the citizens of the town. We all have a responsibility to look out for each other - that's what community is.

What is the common denominator here? It's all about power. Cameras create this attitude: "I'm in charge and you better not step out of line because I'm watching you." It is bad enough that many people have to work all day under surveillance, now they're going to put four centrally networked cameras on every bus - despite acknowledging the very low crime on the T. Is there no escape? Why are cameras automatically put in when buildings are remodeled? Do the fire station, town hall and the senior center need surveillance? Really?? How do I convey to you the real despair and dread I feel about this? My vision is for Belmont to be a place that rejects a surveillance society and recognizes the range to liberty this poses. I do not want any cameras either publicly or privately owned on our streets. I want our town to think more deeply and question "quick fixes"

that don't work. I want us to treat each other with kindness + respect - not fear + suspicion. I appreciate the Vision 21 committee reaching out to citizens for their input, and I hope you appreciate how difficult for me it was to write this.

10 open clark street bridge to improve trafic flow

11 We need a new library

12 thank you for outreaching to the community for input

13 We are newcomers and really feel that we are welcome in Belmont, thanks!

14 There are lots of opportunities here for newcomers, but we have had a very difficult finding anything out easily. It's all been by chance, and very frustrating when trying to settle kids...

15 not all groups are represented in town government - a majority are not being heard from and a minority to putting excess restrictions on individuals and businesses

16 Need more support of renewable energy, solar in particular-why isn't the electric company supporting and promoting this in our community

17 Interesting how this survey asks nothing about public safety operations for the town.

18 The roads are always in terrible shape. I know people who have moved here recently, and that's the first thing they comment on!

19 An ignorant citizenry is contrary to democratic values. 3/4 of the residents don't know what is going on and don't vote. The new fangled over the top town pool, that will increase our taxes, is a case in point.

20 Belmont continues to be a very elite town. It needs to become more embracing of difference. We need to also become more environmentally conscious.

21 Keep taxes low should be priority #1. Throwing money at things does not insure improvement, it often insures waste.

22 previous page glitch: cannot number them as you choose since it jumps to number them in order. First:environment, 2: small town atmosphere 3 historic preservation 4 encourage participation, 5 do not let important long range decisions lie in the hands of a few! 6 support the schools...this is vital and stand up to the state if necessary to maintain developmentally appropriate and relevant integrated curricula rather than rigid inappropriate 'lessons'

23 I love Belmont. However, I think we need less red tape in our governing bodies and more action! The Cushing Square development is an example of lack of leadership and decision-making quality, in my opinion. That old CVS and auto parts stores have sat empty for YEARS! We need to move more swiftly toward progress in our town.

24 I know this has been discussed at length, but I find it bewildering that the town continues to allow the chaos that rules the main intersection(s) in Belmont Center. We would spend 90% more in town if I just didn't have to confront that gambit on a daily basis. We even have taken that intersection into account in deciding where to send our children to preschool.

25 The offerings of the recreation department need to be improved, user fees for student activities need to be eliminated or reduced. If Belmont's reputation of not having enough money to fix things gets around, more people will move to other towns like Wellesley

26 Property taxes should be based more on living space sq/ft than a combo of land/living space. This would slow the rush of building oversize homes on small lots and may help more fairly distribute taxes to multi families that disproportionately use town sources but pay less because of living on smaller land lots.

27 Less government ...

28 I think the structure of town government, with an inefficient town meeting, and a town manager that does not hold enough power, to dissuade people from wanting to get involved and hurts our sense of community. It has allowed the town to avoid tough decisions, like pushing for an override, that is long overdue. The 5th grade is pushing 30 students in a classroom, and despite rankings from some publications, we are turning into a town with a factory system of education that is impersonal. The lack of leadership in town is sad. On the other-hand, people in Belmont are nice, it is conveniently located. I think streamlining the system of government would allow the town to further reach it's potential

29 I have been a resident of Belmont for over 60 years and never have I seen the road ways in such poor shape. Fix them!

30 The goals/questions in this survey were ridiculous when you consider the high property taxes, deplorable road conditions, over crowded classrooms, etc...

31 I don't think the questions allow us to capture peoples thoughts. I'd like to see smaller sized and fewer government buildings. Our trend is to build bigger ones positioned as consolidations (fire station) or ADA compliance (Town Hall). I want to preserve our buildings but want fewer of them. We should look to have one town hall building. Take a walk through the buildings on any given day and office space is underutilized - way too much space. Fire stations and Police should be housed in one public safety building. I have to laugh in the at we position our efforts as being LEED certified/green, yet the buildings are huge (Senior Center, etc.). From a people standpoint, we cannot afford the infrastructure the town has, we need to do more or the same with less. We aren't progressive in this area.

32 A five member board of selectmen would provide much better governance than we now have.

33 Belmont desperately needs a new, updated library facility to support children, teens, adults and seniors and continue to offer excellent programs and services.

34 The library is the most-used public facility, yet is put behind other town projects year after year. It could be the most important community center.

35 Let's first pave our terrible pot-holed roads before building a new library and/or a new pool, which are not not needed if the old structures are refurbished.

36 Page 11 did not allow entrys

Reduce taxes and spending

37 Town government does not give me confidence. Key boards (selectman, planning board, warrant com) are run by the same closed circle.

38 Belmont is doing a good job with most basic services provided by the government, such as schools and safety (fire, police, etc.). The biggest issue is transportation and safety in moving around town. Most families I know drive their children to school since it is not safe for them to walk or bike. And the quality of the roads is poor, as we all know, though abuse to our cars is not as critical as safety for our bikers and pedestrians. Belmont needs to catch up with the rest of the Boston metro area in providing safer transportation alternatives for walking and biking.

39 the addition of fine dining restaurants to belmont was a huge success. we should encourage outdoor sculpture by local artists to add some more color to the town centers. Something needs to be done to make cushing square more peedestrian friendly

40 I think the vision should be even more of a guiding document and the principles (which are great!) should be displayed even more prominently and discussed repeatedly in public.

41 bring back the leaf vacuum machine in the fall. That way you just rake the leaves into the gutter and the vacuum machine comes by and vacuums them up. It made it easy for everyone when we had it.

42 The schools need more money. I was shocked to discover that Wellington doesn't have a budget for library books. The roads could also be improved; Trapelo is an embarrassment. Though the fire department doesn't need more money, to judge by the beauty of the fire stations. I would be happy to pay more in property taxes, though I know some of my fellow Belmontonians would not.

43 At a very selfish level, a raised crosswalk on Waverley, somewhere between Trapelo and Beach - the speed that cars take the road is increasing, and there are more and more children on & around the road thanks to all the townhouses that have sprung up. A tragic accident is becoming a matter of time.

44 Belmont needs to raise taxes! It can't do more with less and the town is starting to fall apart. The schools are declining even with the best efforts of all involved. The roads are a joke.

45 Our retail centers, including Belmont Center, Cushing Square, Waverly, all have many vacant buildings that in shambles.

How can we ease the process for small business owners to get established in Belmont, so we increase the livelihood and vitality of our urban centers?

46 We need to abandon the idea of "A town of Homes" It is out-dated, and a model to sustain our town that does not work in 2014. We need to embrace change, encourage business and smart growth/development and turn this into the fantastic subURBAN community it could be. There is so much going for this town: a phenomenal location outside a major metropolitan city, a great school system, and a vibrant community with intellectual capital.

47 There needs to be more transparency with regard to the Town's agreements with businesses and developers. Also the Town website is not user-friendly. For instance, I tried to search for public parking lots to see where various ones are located, but could not find any information. Also tried to look up parks to see where they are located in town... again, could not find any information on the town website.

48 Better overall infrastructure and traffic planning are critical. People from other towns comment that they can easily tell when they go from Cambridge or Watertown to Belmont because the roads make it seem like you are driving on a dirt road. In addition if they could make Trapelo Road two lanes each way that would make the flow of traffic much more efficient.

Everything else (schools, town atmosphere) is very good.

49 Publish the town's budget and a summary of committees (e.g. what is the warrant committee) in the Citizen Herald as well as on the town site in PDF.

50 Schools need to be the major focus with quality of life for all residents comings next - not just some special interest groups. Everyone moves here and wants to change Belmont in some way.

People need to realize that we are a little haven surrounded by cities with city problems. If we change too much, we will lose what makes Belmont special.

51 promote walkability of belmont (we are the right sized town for this) --sidewalks, attract pedestrian friendly retail, calm traffic. this addresses a lot of the priorities listed--small town community, environment, traffic, neighborhood invested retail...

52 Give commercial space a chance, they can help pay taxes and be an asset to the town, not a burden

53 pave the roads

54 ROADS AND TRAFFIC NEED TO IMPROVE A GREAT DEAL!

55 Town boards need term limits (individual and collectively - all board limit) to encourage diverse participation.

Please fix the roads!

56 Why don't we use the empty Macy space as temporary library and renovate the library?

57 Please extend the bike path into town center! We also need to focus on a new library.

58 The roads are in terrible shape and at places there are no sidewalks.

59 I know there's never enough money to go around. I would like to see the goals aligned with our spending - of money, time, and energy. If money we're spending isn't tied to a vision statement then there may not be valid justification for spending it. And, if there are other projects or pursuits the local gov't is taking on, but they aren't part of the vision - they are likely not as impotant and may be distractions.

60 Belmont is a town in between...it need to create itself and assert it s vision

61 Bring back the electric 73 bus as the old-school trolley system gives Belmont that "small town" feel. I imagine that after Trapelo is fixed, it will return.

62 Too much conservation land, bring in more strong business for revenue. More budget needs to be allocated for the schools to keep us a top school. We NEED a new high school building! The one we have is embarrassingly ineffective & run down!

63 Residenrts are much too insular, and worse, pride themselves on a rather bizarre form of isolationism.

64 This community needs well-paved roads to attract residents, retailers and others. Nobody likes driving over hundreds of lousy roads on their way to school, business, shopping or recreation.

65 Belmont is a fantastic place to live; please continue the great job!

66 Why can't we pave streets that have multiple potholes that continuously need to be patched? Is there a way to get neighbors involved on specific streets to pool resources to fix our own streets if the town will not or can not do it?

67 I believe there are too many Town meeting members and as a result it is not an effective way to govern.

68 this survey is a great idea!

69 I hope that Belmont continues to become and more diverse and integrated community.

70 Too much on teacher /town employee pensions and healthcare. School spends so much no on kids, but on paying teachers contracts that are unrealistic. unfunded debt is killing this town. Have employees join obamacare .

71 Schools are the number 1 priority. Do not overdevelop and crowd this town.

72 Please fix the roads....their killing our cars. Friends from all different Mass. community's who come here, often joke with me, asking if people in Belmont are trying to keep "outsiders" away from our town with our horrendous roads ..as well as saying "isn't Belmont supposed to be one of the nicer towns to live in; what's up with your roads" I've lived here for 20 years now, and these comments have been going on for at least 10 years. The poor condition of our roads, actually does reflect how much we care about our town.

73 We need an override to better fund our schools

74 We are hoping the bike path connecting Belmont Center to Alewife will become a reality.

75 Education of youth is the single most important issue that will determine our future, and the kind of town we live in.

76 The idea of preserving a sense of community by definition includes many of the specific goals listed here.

77 Please repair Trapello road as soon as possible. It needs new asphalt paving for decades now!!!!!

Shame on you for having this road in this horrible condition!!!!

78 I'd like to see more retail / corporate presence to enhance our tax base.

79 Given the lack of more meaningful town priorities, I don't share the point of prioritizing the Vision Statement goals.

80 I would suggest recruiting more diverse representatives for all town-related committees.

81 It is time for a multi-year Strategic Plan!

It is time to create structures and processes for bringing our town into the 21st century

82 All roads urgently need repair and RE PAVING.

The intersections on each side of the commuter tunnel are always a mess, yet I'v never seen an accident, it seems pretty dangerous and disorganized. Kinda scary sometimes.

83 Please please better traffic enforcement. Texting while driving, speeding, illegal right on red.

84 Will just reiterate that this town needs to change with the times. We can preserve small town atmosphere with modern amenities and take advantage of our proximity to Boston/Cambridge/Somerville for bringing in new ideas, creativity and becoming a close friend of these innovation centers. Preparing our children to become part of that broader fabric of our larger Boston area rather than isolated from what is right next door to us.

85 I think we should encourage newcomers to join town government and become more involved. I have observed that many newcomers, especially those moving from overseas, are adrift in how to particiate in a community like Belmont. We are a small enough community to reach out to new

residents to welcome them and orient them to the priorities of the town and how to get involved.

Also, we need new blood on the warrant committee and in some of the major town committees. It's time that the town recognizes that it's first responsibility is to the schools, not the Beech Street Senior Center...that place where kids aren't welcome and that's never open.

86 Voted offices should have a time limit on term.

87 Most of the goals being expressed in the vision statement are not good things but bad things.

They represent the officers of the town government substituting their ideas as to what is good for the residents in place of the residents' actual desires.

The desire to maintain the environment, for example, involves preventing property owners from developing their property as they see and saps the economic vitality of the town.

The high quality school system seems to be more of a jobs program for administrators who waste students' time hectoring them about the color of shirt they wear on anti-bullying days.

The town's officers have consistently followed a doctine of not maintaining infrastructure and allowing it to crumble into ruin so that they can buy new expensive infrastructure to replace it. This profligate and imprudent leaves us all poorer.

The desire to assist the residents in identifying new opportunities is codswallop! In all the years I've read the Belmont Citizen Herald, I've watched the town's officers stand in the way of people who had identified new opportunities and fight to crush their dreams. New construction is abandoned; factories have been chased out of town; retail stores are closing their doors because they can't succeed in the face of the terrible road network that they are taxed usuriously to pay for.

Ditto for fostering culture in the town; Could I open a skate park, or a Lan gaming cafe in town? What permits would I have to get to open a night club? How much money would it cost to start a music school or a dance studio?

The kindest thing you could do to us is to get out of our way!!!! Stop taxing us to pay for things a few well-connected people want! Allow the market place and the entrepreneurial spirit of the residents to flourish. Stop strangling every good idea in its crib so that you can publish letters to the editor in the Herald congratulating yourselves on your leadership!

88 fix the facilities! the outdoor pool is disgusting, the library has mold, the tennis courts need to be redone, and oh god the roads...

89 I am for a town bike path

90 the town center needs to be beautified. reduce town center traffic by making leonard st one way. create outdoor terraces for restaurants & cafes by enlarging the sidewalks. And PLEASE fix the roads... they are a disgrace for the town.

91 Need new library & need to renovate high school

92 large recycling trash cans would be great

93 The previous page is not working correctly. The rankings prepopulate and you can't change them.

94 Less apartment complexes, more single family homes to create more of a sense of community and continuity.

95 We need a modern library with a modern building to accommodate the modern needs of the community benefitting from the library. We also need to preserve Belmonts' small and safe town profile, our police department and firefighters should have more attention and support from the town.

96 Somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 police officers, two $million+ fire stations (in a town of 4 square miles), building inspectors who essentially only have to work am hours, schools that cannot go more than a couple days without trying to squeeze more money out of the parents, DPW employees filling their own vehicles up with gas at the dept's pump, town employee benefits that exceed those of average private sector employees and drive an unrelenting need to squeeze more money out of the residents ... you can talk about diversity or environmental friendliness ... it is just window dressing a town that is increasingly difficult to enjoy living in.

97 Add a mini rotary by the underpass

98 This town needs more tax revenue from business more than it needs to be a "town of homes". If we value education and safe roads, both of those require financial support. It can't all come from the citizens, lest you push-out the lower economic status and have a "town of well-off".

99 We need to make sure our priorities are straight , we need a new highschool, police station, fix our roads and sports facilties are embarrassing

100 1) Better outreach/involvement to people without kids in the school system. We didn't feel like we became a real part of the town until our kids entered kindergarten. 2) Better promotion on how people can stay up to date -- this survey made to look to see if the town has any e-newsletter -- and you've got a whole e-alert system! People don't know about it.

101 My heartfelt thanks to all of our friends and neighbors who have given so generously of their time, talent and energies to help our town create a sustainable future

102 A new high school has to be the #1 priority in the Town. Too small and it's falling apart. If education is so important in Belmont, this needs to get done ASAP.

103 The percentage of the Town's revnue that is used to fund the school should be increased to stop the erosion in class sizes, etc. that have resulted from several years of "available revenue" as opposed to "level service" budgets.

104 The roads in Belmont are in terrible condition. We need more bike lanes and more bike racks - for example, there is no public bike rack in Cushing Square. The intersection under the bridge and between Concord Ave and Leonard Street is a circus and needs to be reworked. I have absolutely no idea who has the right of way in multiple parts of that traffic disaster area. Although the town wants to promote diversity, we are moving toward a total lack of economic diversity. Even for those residents with good incomes, the town is getting too expensive. Property values are getting to the point where only families with incomes of 250K or more have a remote chance of living in town and rents are quickly chasing home prices. We have to create opportunities to generate revenue besides property taxes and excessive water and electrical bills. While the small town atmosphere is wonderful, it would be nice if we could promote more diversity in our small enclave.

105 Lazy town employee's that steal time, do NOTHING at work all day long but facebook, instant message and talk on the phone all day and nothing happens because they are buddy buddy with the boss's I think is disgusting.

106 need better food for lunch in our schools. The provided food is bad with no value. Nationally there is a major push to have this done and Belmont should adopt this initiative.

107 The high school needs renovation/rebuilding as the priority!

108 repair the police station steps

109 Please fix the roads. There are in absolutely indecent shape. Money invested in building and repairing roads stays in the town.

Please continue and improve on the excellence of the school system. Please allow more opportunities for gifted and smart students by creating advanced curricula, fellowships, musical stipends etc.

110 Please fix the big pot holes in the roads and the unsafe and poorly maintained sidewalks.

111 More thoughtful planning is essential. We should not be addressing the loudest voice, but rather the most pressing needs in town. The roads, the schools, and attracting a business tax base are of primary importance.

112 Please focus more on preserving what you have (ie: fix the roads, repair the library / police station) rather than spending on what you don't have or need (Beech St. Center, new library) and neglecting infrastructure. The roads alone are an embarrassment to our community.

113 I appreciate the surgery. However, it is heavy in its use of key phrases which are not elaborated and so I question that people are responding to the same idea. It needs to be more concrete in its statements so that we are sure we all know what "valuing diversity" or "maintaining small town" means - how is it expressed - what sorts of projects would these entail - is valuing diversity about housing prices, the Martin Luther King breakfast -- it is just too general, too many buzz words without definition. I was more confused by this survey and concerned that big ideas will come from this that are not actually what people meant. I would expect a better survey from Belmont.

114 We need to invest in fixing our roads. They are deplorable and make driving difficult and uncomfortable plus they damage our cars

115 The quality of roads in Belmont need to be improved!

116 Belmont has finite resources and substantial needs. It is imperative that investments in the town generate synergies to benefit more than one constituency. Examples include recreation facilities also supporting school athletic programs, service facilities benefiting multiple demographic groups and library facilities also serving school system programming

117 Belmont is a town where the "special interest" groups always win (pool, senior center, CPA fund) I think we should avoid special elections where only the supporters of a proposal come out to vote

118 The immediate and cost-effective means to improve the town is to place the Community Path on the available railroad right of way. Funding is readily available from outside sources and any other route would endanger children needlessly.

119 Can we use the Beech Center more for community events? This is a huge potential resource for the town which is underutilized. Also, is not clear when sometimes an event is held there if it's audience is mainly seniors or for the entire community. The Rec department is amazing, and it would be great if possible to develop it even more to promote community involvement- looking to Arlington's rec department as a possible source of inspiration. It also would be nice to generate money even more money for the town. Town Day, Turn on the Town, and the Easter Egg hunt are all wildly popular community building events- are there more events like this we could have to promote our small town atmosphere?

Also- this is a bit off topic but the merging of Concord, Common, and Leonard street remains a

mess for pedestrians and for cars- this is a terrible entry into our Town Center, and does little to promote a good sense of community.

120 i dont think that they have prioritized budgeting well, they spent so much money on the town hall which is only rarely used instead of funding a library or new pool years ago. They put in granite everywhere and we still have unsafe sidewalks near our elementary schools. I also dont think they have done a good job in supporting retail and local businesses

121 If the traffic issue at Concord and Leonard Street is addressed and resolved, thousands of Belmontians will be gleeful and relieved. If Belmont could somehow upgrade its library, that would enable the town to achieve many of the priorities identified in this survey. We have an excellent senior center; to me, a library is even more important as it serves seniors and everyone else. My family and I love living in Belmont. It's a magical town.

122 we do not need any more beauty parlors, pizza places or over priced stores here. Most of the people here are working class people and things are way to expensive here. We also need to find something for the children to do in this town instead of partying and getting in trouble

123 Need more community input -- an on-line Suggestion Box would help identify issues and potential solutions. Need more pressure for schools to focus on their atmosphere/environment rather than sacrificing that to achieve only academic success.

124 Why did only some of the questions have comment areas? We desperately need an override to cover the schools' increasing enrollments and to prioritize spending. I still can't figure out how a pool and spending nearly $6M on that is more important than bringing down class sizes. The Board of Selectmen need to work in harmony and conjunction with the School Board to avoid the fiasco that occurred with regards to the rebuilding of the public library. And, the School Committee needs to have greater oversight of the new Superintendent's actions, both public and private, including being transparent about the redistricting that is taking place behind the scenes to move elementary schools families into districts other than their own.

125 Let's try to get three class levels for the high school. There are kids who want to learn but are getting distracted with ultimate educational deficits in CP classes because they are mixed in with kids who should be a level lower due to various reasons. There needs to be a level for kids who are curious enough for honors but don't want to go so fast-yet they don't get any stimulation from those who are not interested There should not be just 2 levels.

126 until we got the absurdly bloated costs of so many administrators, heads of this/that under control we can not afford this town. watching interim school admistrators swoop in and then retire at a higher salary defines Belmont. Townies good, everyone else a usurper who doesn't deserve the tax spoils. what a joke this place is. Value Diversity? ha-ha. value retirement and all the side benefits that's what the vision of Belmont is. somebody might actaully want to put in an honest day's work along the line and stop relying on Volunteers to take over the hard work. I spent countless hours volunteering so that things would actually happen, watched my kids get shafted financially because the money goes to sports, watched illegal drive-ways built because somebody knew somebody..and on and on. BLOATED town government, lazy admins., vicious pool guards (second day in town 15 years ago we were screamed at because she thoight we had tried to sneak in the day before, what a welcome to this town!

127 Good luck! Its gotta be tough going...Any WOMEN willing to step up and lead as selectWOMEN?

128 Fix the roads!!!

129 1) Road improvement

2) Increase Retail (restaurants, businesses and bars)

3) Improve High School esp Science Dept.

4) Increase Communication about town affairs

5) Increase town efficiencies, LED street lights.

6) Improve the Downtown area, roads, retail

130 Road and Traffic system need to be fixed. Total disaster of Belmont, I believe.

131 Need more shops and fewer banks in the center.

Looking forward to Trapelo road make over!

132 Each street should have a sidewalk, free of parked cars. This is an extremely important public safety factor.

133 Belmont is ideally situated geographically and has desirable physical attributes, not to be lost

134 Trapelo road really needs to be repaired. It is a major problem daily for all.

135 More promotion of local business- grocery , restaurant , cafe, fish & meat stores.

136 Town governance seems to be the major challenge. Please...no more banks, realtors, or hair salons, or tacky franchises, especially in Belmont Center.

137 I think part of our problem is the situation -- state rules and laws and funding formulas give us financial incentives that are not necessarily the best ones.

138 The town fails to plan and prepare for things -- an aging pool, terrible roads, a large fourth grade population entering the middle school next year and not enough teachers to manage it, to name a few. The pool has been here for 100 years. The roads have been here since who knows when. And this year's fourth grade class has been in the school system for five years. Where is the planning? Oh, and how old is the high school? That's in terrible shape, too. There are divisions in this "community" that prevent anything from getting done.

And every time I drive by the ill- and unused Senior Center, I am sickened. What a waste of space and money. Not because I don't want senior to have a place for themselves to gather, but because it is not used enough. Why was this built and not a school?

139 My spouse recently opened a business in Belmont and dealing with the town officials was like dealing with a banana republic. No one took responsibility for clearly stating rules (e.g. food preparation, signage) but different officials felt very comfortable giving off-the-cuff, sometimes conflicting advice. It was extremely frustrating.

I'm not sure how we've managed to maintain such a wonderful school system with the lack of investment in the high school. How can this town re-build its pool when the high school is literally crumbling? This does not seem to conform with the stated goals, but rather is the result of a few activist voters who can drive an issue.

Thanks for listening.

140 Belmont is a lovely town that is blessed with tremendous human resources, a lovely built environment and advantageous geographic location. The town, however, is poorly managed and

operates on a crisis-to-crisis basis that makes it impossible to articulate, let alone achieve, long term objectives that would improve the quality of life in town.

141 Please fix the roads!! I've been in under developed countries with better roads.

142 Why do we want to tear down a beautiful library building and preserve an eyesore of neglect across the street?

Restore the Clark St Bridge and relieve the traffic issues in the center!

143 Belmont home owners, regardless their visa status should have the rights to vote for town election.

144 I think that "working with neighborhoods to identify retail opportunities" is the wrong goal. Neighborhoods often fear change at the time it happens, even if three years later everyone is happy with how things are. A better goal is simply to enable retail opportunities -- make it easy for developers to develop retail properties in specified areas and let them try out retail ideas and succeed or fail.

I also think that the town should encourage more dense development around our transit stations. We have great connections and can handle more residents. More residents would also improve the opportunities for local retail to prosper. All of Belmont Centre, Cushing Square and Waverly Square could and should have more people living nearby. This wouldn't hurt the neighborhood feel of the rest of the town and would make those centres more attractive.

145 Don't allow to build rental houses,

Set strict building requirements.

146 Schools need to be a priority. Historical houses don't.

147 We need to ensure all Belmont Elementary schools have the same programs available to their students and all kids are proud to live in Belmont. For example, children of Butler School district are not offered opportunity to go to the Belmont House for the Strawberry Festival. We have a division of class right there. It is hard to be one if we do not teach are kids that we are one. Winn Brook and Wellington attend. I am not sure about Burbank.

148 Would like override to fix roads and build new high school

149 I don't understand why maintaining historic buildings was lumped in with maintaining libraries. We NEED libraries and necessary infrastructures for our town. But historic buildings are not as much a necessity. Also, where was the maintenance of roads? I assume that was in the traffic line. We need better road maintenance!!!

150 We need to be able to raise money to address our growing school population that doesn't solely rely on residential/ property taxes. Our families can't continue to support the needs of the town without string retail partners

151 Fix the roads- they are in a terrible shape! Complaining that there is no money is a lame excuses! Fix them or get out and let other people in your place that WILL fix them!!

152 Hopefully the town can speed up the time it takes projects to get completed.

153 Too much focus on funding for security - town meeting just approved $50,000 to evaluate putting security cameras in town buildings and put $60,000 towards a police officer to be in the high school. I think there is too much focus on a remote probability of a catastrophic event and not

enough focus on daily life - improving education in the classroom, investing in maintaining our infrastructure, etc.

I also want to say that there is too much living in the past in this town - I followed the Wellington School project closely and am now following the Underwood Pool project closely. In both instances the architects proposed beautiful modern buildings which would have been very harmonious with the sites and surrounding homes, only to be told to build something more traditional. Many communities with more historical relevance are successful in building new municipal buildings which reflect the century we are living in while paying respect to the past (see the new main library in Cambridge). Must the folks who have lived here longest dictate everything that happens in town? I have been here 22 years, but evidently that is not long enough. Other communities have more forward looking energy and are able to attract better restaurants and more interesting shops - think Arlington - we only have the schools going for us - and we need to keep investing in those or those will decline too.

OK - that's about all! Thanks for letting me get that on paper.

154 Two more opinions:

1. This town should seriously consider modifying the Town Meeting form more toward a City government. Someone needs to be IN CHARGE and RESPONSIBLE for implementing improvements. Government by committee is working only to maintain a frustrating status quo.

2. Find a way to prioritize the BHS renovation (really needs a total rebuild), possibly folded into the abortive attempt to build a new library. Give some SERIOUS thought to what a library needs to be in the future, and whom it should serve. Ben Franklin established the concept in a time when people needed free and fair access to materials required for education and trades. The students of a community are the constituents that should primarily be served by resources aimed at improving the library. In the future there should be no need for each town to have its own cumbersome and space-hogging repository of physical books; we need a computer/media center that could serve the same function in far less space and could possibly be co-located with a new high school facility.

155 We need Cushing Square cleaned up. We need restaurants in the town, not just pizza shops. We need one more elementary school.

156 great town + great citizens + great leadership = greater future

157 roads need to be repaired

158 We need new stores, restraints and services. Stop the two family building on single family lots. Make housing more affordable in town. No more banks or dry cleaners. For gods sake please do something with the pool and the crumbling police and light departments

159 I would like to see the roads and sidewalks repaired and the High School repaired or rebuilt.

160 I try to take my kids to Town Field for some catch with a ball but my kids end up competing with the dogs that are allowed to run free.

161 Rebuilding/maintaining facilities: new dev't (e.g. the swimming pool, library) does not have to be the Taj Mahal but should be functional, durable, and maintainable.

162 I think that it is really important for Belmont to increase its affordable housing.

163 I have been concerned about the cuts in the schools that I've been hearing about, and hope that we don't get to be one of those communities where the schools only care about math and English because that's what's on the standardized tests. If we were to get to the point where schools were no longer stellar, we would lose our character as a truly vibrant, attractive, pleasant community where people want to live. The excellent schools are a really big part of what makes Belmont Belmont. It's actually a little embarrassing to me when I hear about members of our town wanting to make cuts to the public schools. It seems so foolish and short-sighted, not to mention kind of mean.

164 1. Road condition of Trapelo road is pathetic and need immediate attention.

165 We need a new high school!

166 When was the McMansion subdivision on Concord approved? Need to have a more open discussion of when density makes sense and when it simply is done in a way that waters down the look and feel of the Town. Density can be done well. In this case it missed the mark.

167 While improvide safety for pedestrians efforts should be made to keep in mind ease of traversing town and traffic congestion.

168 Stop allowing votes to put over-rides on the taxes. Maintain the buildings on an annual basis instead of allowing them to fall apart and be torn down. Allow community input on all public building being built. Fix the traffic and roads.

169 The town should do more to encourage energy conservation and renewable energy. There should be an extension of the bike path from Alewife into the center of the town. It is not clear why this has not been established.

170 Get rid of this Comcast albatross that you have saddled us with. $75 a month for internet is a rip off. You sold us out for money, that is not what a community does to one another. We want competition to make our prices fair and equitable.

171 Please fix roads quickly!! Makes driving around town very unpleasant!! Please allow more gathering places, restaurants/shops - Cushing Sq project is good start - let it happen quickly!! Concern over age of high school.

172 I know several long time Belmont residents who have recently moved because rents have gotten too high. Meanwhile, developers are coming in and building mega-houses which frankly look ugly and greedy. This hurts diversity and leaves a guilty conscience behind. Let's please do more affordable housing! Also, let's catch up with the other towns around us by making Belmont a more bike friendly place.

173 more communciation on how to get involved in town

174 There are so many things to love about Belmont. The 1 neglected aspect is the town's commitment to athletics as a way to raise well-rounded kids. The lack of investment of the town in athletic fields is embarrassing. The participation in these programs is HUGE but the town is a minimal partner in financing and brokering strong playing fields (relying on the league). The absence of a solution to the batting cages for baseball players is crazy that a few residents can hold that up. Where is the town's leadership on this?

175 The ongoing disruption of traffic, poorly managed traffic flow, and insensitive road work timing schedules have made Waverly Square and the adjacent sections of Trapelo Road an eyesore, a major inconvenience, and a blight on Belmont's character for a long time. Public works in this area should be better planned to minimize impediment of bikes and vehicles, with more support to

traffic direction, effective detours, and as much work as possible done at night and during off-peak hours

176 Your question linked together libraries, recreational facilities and historic preservation. I strongly support historic preservation and a new pool, and strongly oppose using public funds to construct a new library. Second, a question focused on traffic management, when a better question would have focused on support for an override to finance desperately needed road repairs throughout the Town.

177 The high school building is in disrepair and is currently an embarassment to the town. Anyone who comes to one of the school's excellent shows is mortified that most seats are broken and many are unusuable or dangerous. The building is dark and depressing. It's structures are outdated and dilapidated. Along the same lines, Belmont needs to maintain it's focus on retaining excellent classes and varieties of classes at the high school. Theatre electives were cut years ago (restored next year?), there is no dance program, there is very little computer science, no German or Russian language, very little opportunity for independent study. Some classes are too full to learn productively.

178 The schools are the cornerstone of this community and the reason most people move to Belmont and why home prices are so high. Yet we do not provide the schools with the necessary resources it needs. The Wellington, as well as some of the other schools are suffering from expanded enrollment and very large class sizes. The high school is in need of serious attention as well but nothing seems to get done. Everything is done piecemeal and without real vision. The roads in the town are horribly maintained and while traffic is addressed in many areas, something needs to be done with the traffic in and through Belmont Center. Finally, we love seeing all of the new shops and stores in cushing square and elsewhere, but we need additional commercial retail to help prop up the tax base. Why is the Macy's site still vacant and when is Cushing Square going to move forward. Why is the old CVS still vacant for so long? It not only looks horrible, but there is lost revenue. The town needs to consider what businesses will generate the most revenue and remain for years to come. While I do not want to see a Target or Walmart anywhere in town, do we really need another frozen yogurt place? Macy's was perfect. Small enough but easily accessible when needed for items that did not require a boutique feel.

179 To get more people informed about what is going on in town do a better job of effective communication

180 If this town doesn't broaden its tax base in a way that includes and welcomes more business, then it is doomed. It will be left behind.

181 Shaws is struggling. They are owned and run by a group that is looking to innovate and find a way to bring themselves back in the marketplace. Couldn't somebody reach out and negotiate a deal between them, the town and some local landlords to open three small focused stores that they could feed off the inventory in Waverly Square store and provide good groceries within walking distance of a couple key neighborhoods? Maybe one in the open spot at the new shops on Concord, one in town center and one in Cushing Square?

182 As a town we do not accomplish many projects. We spend far to much money on study's and discuss items that are black & white.

183 We need a community center for kids to use throughout the year. A pool for two months is not sufficient, make it an indoor facility for much more utility.

184 Please consider either renovating or upgrading the current high school building. BHS is often the top reason people choose Belmont over other area towns. The current condition it is in is a disgrace to the town.

185 More surveys and outreach. This is the first time I've been contacted like this and I have lived in belmont for over 5 years. Town meetings are difficult to attend when you have two working prints with kids--create some form of electronic participation or digital streaming so we can observe what is going on and respond. Improve the website. It is is very difficult to find the right information or get updates reflecting the community.

186 Schools are becoming crowded. There is a need to redistrict the elementary schools. Plans for middle school and high school expansion should be considered. The senior center seems to be under-utilized. Would love to see this be a "community" center not just a senior center. The roads could use some work. Overall, we love living in Belmont.

187 When I tell people i live in Belmont, people's first response is that "Oh, that's the town with the terrible roads." That's not exactly flattering nor how I'd like to be recocgnized. Find a way prioritize and sustatain some much needed infastructure improvements to the roadways.

188 More and higher "user fees" for parents with kids. Don't make the seniors starve so these kids can have the best. The seniors built the town and now can hardly stay in their own homes....

189 Need a bike path which our neighbor towns have.

190 New library please.

More money for teachers and teachers aides at the Wellington school. The class sizes at the Wellington are too high and should be reduced, as should elementary class sizes throughout Belmont.

Please institute a snow-shoveling policy with monitoring and _enforcement_. When sidewalks are covered with ice and snow, it keeps people inside reducing our ability to interact and be a community. Also, it encourages the use of cars which are environmentally undesirable, while discouraging such environmentally desirable activities as walking and cycling.

191 I think to preserve the small town feel AND to protect our children, we should make a concerted effort to identify roads where there is a lot of foot traffic and make sure there are sidewalks there. One example would be Sycamore Street. Many children walk down that road every day to school and there are a high number of vehicles (cars and trucks) that race down the road or park onto the poorly outline sidewalk. Slowing down traffic and ensuring our children have a safe way of getting around town would go a long way.

192 The town is run outwardly as 8am - 4pm operation, which does not map to how the community functions. This is an antiquated model. Make it clear to the community how each town department is both virtual (what are the Web resources of each department) and flexible . How does each group works with the community outside 8 - 4 working hours.

This flexibility could yield tremendous job satisfaction for the town's employees if well executed.

193 We really need to build a new high school. It would be easier to maintain a successful high school, like we have now, than to have to reclaim our status as one of the top schools in the state. The building negatively impacts our students' ability to learn.

194 The town needs to spend more money on buildings and schools and then keep them up--our hockey rink and high school and library are an not any where near the quality they should be for this town and that is just to name a few things...

195 As I previously indicated, the roads and sidewalks within Belmont are an embarrassment to our town. I am givning you my sincere word that whenever I'm discussing our town with people who do not live in Belmont, the first comment they make is in regards to our terrible our roads and

sidewalks are throughout the town. When you rive down a beautiful tree-lines street in Belmont, the experience is completely diminished by the fact that your car is bouncing up and down hitting bumps and potholes, and it makes the street look terrible! Over the past 18 years of living in Belmont, I have blown at least 9 tires from the potholes, and have damaged my car's suspension several ties also.

196 A new high school would be a great idea. A new library -- or an extremely updated/renovated one -- would be great. And something DESPERATELY needs to be done about the NIGHTMARE that is the Leonard Street/Concord Avenue/Channing Road/Common Street traffic. It's a horrific accident waiting to happen every single day.

197 The rank order portion of the survey was very useful. It is worthwhile to gather data on relative priorities, so that we can best invest our limited resources.

198 Fix the high school, the facilities are shameful and should take priority over building a new Underwood pool. It doesn't matter what the vote says. That pool gets used for about 70 days during the year and the high school needs to be replaced!

199 "Welcoming diversity" should include addressing the (racial and socio-economic) prejudices already in the community, not just changing the demographics.

200 I wish there were a better way to stay in touch with goings on in town for those without kids in school. The newspaper is awful. I'm a reasonably active person, but I had no idea this survey was going on till my husband bumped into someone at Starbucks. We need an electronic newsletter!

201 Thank you to everyone who volunteers for the town. Fewer children per classroom. New high school.

Shade trees at playgrounds.

Bike lanes and bike paths

202 The vision set forth is great. What's needed is a plan and roadmap to achieve the vision, and a way to gain broad understanding and support for the plan from multiple stakeholders. Crafting a more integrated plan for developing, maintaining and evolving the town would be greatly appreciated.

203 need a short and long range plan that addresses schools and infrastructure. Can we have good schools that meet the needs of ALL students with different learning needs and how do we get there within our poor budget. We underfund our school system and push cost of tutors to the parents. Our overall SAT scores do not reflect the real problems in the schools. We have students excelling and other who struggle with inadequate support.

204 Schools are fantastic but getting overcrowded. We need to expand to meet the needs of the growing number of families in town. The intersection at Common and Leonard is very difficult to navigate, add a light or a clearly post rules of road. I

205 Thanks !

206 I see the number of children per class increases with every year. My concern is that nothing is being done about this - no thoughts about renovating schools to be able to handle the increased amount of children.

207 As a teacher in Belmont for the past 15 years, I have witnessed how, in recent years, we have to do more with less. Lack of space and class sizes are serious issues that must be resolved if we are to continue to have quality schools.

208 Need to promote business opportunities to keep taxes down. We need restaurants etc to keep people in town.

209 We should invest more in schools and community infastructure (library, etc). We are in danger of losing our attractiveness as a community for young families (and therefore real estate value) because of large class sizes in the schools, the sorry state of the high school physical plant, etc.

210 THE ROADS ARE A DISGRACE. They are about as terrible as can be. Truly all I can picture is a corrupt official that is just pocketing infrastructure repair money. Of course that isn't happening but I have a hard time explaining it away to anybody around me. I'm a resident near cushing square. Trapelo road is a MAJOR road.

211 We need to increase revenue to support our town's needs.

I'd like to see an off road community path.

212 Schools are the basis for the strength and appeal of our community. They keep our town vibrant and young without sacrificing what the place offers to older or childless residents. We should also be placing strong emphasis on making this town more bike-friendly. We're doing a terrible job on this front, esp. compared with our neighbors.

213 Residents need to be educated on why it is so costly to provide excellent schools, public buildings and infrastructure.

214 Fix the roads; manage traffic through the town center better.

215 the road conditions in Belmont are bad for driving and biking. Any improvement projects in the future?

216 Thank you for your work and for seeking our feedback!

217 Stop doing overrides to solve the problems like the pool instead do a fundraiser like the past joey's park to solve some issues and focus tax dollars on the school infrastructure and the roads

218 Keep the school system as strong as possible. It is why people move to Belmont.

219 The committee's commitment to gathering community input is so great; it keeps me hopeful as a long-time resident that you're on the right track and that Belmont can flourish now and in the future. Thank you for all your work and dedication.

220 the town needs to take immediate traffic action at the commuter train underpass intersection - that intersection is the most dangerous spot in belmont- PLEASE ADVISE

221 we need to fix our roads. I have never seen so many potholes in any other town (not related so much to the goals, but had to be said).

222 Like the idea of the survey. Please keep us updated on what comes of it.

223 The schools are the bedrock of our community, but we cannot "rest on our laurels" for much longer. The budget gets picked apart each year, and the features that make our schools strong are replaced with "free periods" or fee-based programs. A school that teaches just the three Rs is not building good citizens or well-rounded kids and a strong community. We must act quickly and

often to secure new sources of business tax revenue. It's not sustainable to keep asking for overrides. And it is not ethical to keep raising fees for what is supposed to be a public education. It creates two classes of kids and deepens the socioeconomic rift in our community. We need to do everything possible to stop this disturbing trend.

224 Traffic flow in belomont center needs to be addressed.

225 Please see comments 1-7, above, concerning quality of life -- (i) integrate Hubway bike sharing and public transportation modes more effectively for residents, and extend bike path from Brighton St. to town center; (ii) promote 'convenient' retail -- e.g. coffee, grocery, beer/wine -- in areas outside of town center, such as Brighton & Concord; (iii) institute traffic calming devices especially near schools, playgrounds, high traffic areas; and (iv) only accept excellence as the standard for schools without requiring early morning starts, exhausting and overwhelming homework, or sacrificing daily exercise/activity (i.e. recess).

226 How much money would it cost to reupholster the high school auditorium chairs? They are an embarrassment. Can we think of some creative solutions for that fundraising?

227 Our community would be greatly enhanced by a bike path (not lane). It's been discussed for years and years and it's time to move forward. It's in the best interest of the vast majority of our citizens. As an abutter I feel strongly that we need to do this and stop dragging our heels.

228 The roads in Belmont are awful!!!! something needs to be done.. Pedestrians,Children on bikes, scooters etc can't ride safely through the neighborhood for fear they will get lost in the potholes!! (especially the Hillcrest neighborhood) The town should be embarrassed by these roads. The first thing out of town friends, relative say when they visit is "nice roads" !

229 We need a new high school. How many more years do we have to wait for this? The thing is falling apart.

230 When every I tell someone I live in Belmont the 1st thoughts is I must have $$, then bad taxes and bad roads. These seem to be what we're known for.

231 Fix the roads ASAP.

232 The roads throughout belmont are horrific! Something needs to be done in order to improve them. Not only are the unkept roads an eyesore but are terrible for our vehicles!

233 The town still has a feeling of entitlement. It is a tight knit community of people who have lived in town for a significant length of time. New residents are often excluded through lack of communication.

234 repair the roads and improve project managment - there is lots of waste of money due to very poor planning!

235 Smaller class sizes on all levels. Class sizes are too big -- children who struggle do not get the attention they need -- especially those without 504 or IEP's. they call through the cracks.

236 The Town's approach is just hopeless - it is poorly managed, enables historic churches to be pulled down, monstrous houses to be built on Belmont Hill, builds fire stations and senior centers which are very expensive, while neglecting to invest in Belmont High School etc. We have huge residential taxes as obvious commercial opportunities(like using Pleasant Street more creatively than parking school buses) are missed, primarily because of the wrong kind of small town mentality and lack of imagination. The town is living off a school system which is clearly under pressure, with no obvious evidence that there are plans to move things forward.

237 I do not understand why a town with so much in the way of resources cannot do simple traffic claming and control. I am afraid to have my children cross Common Street. Preserve green, plant more, stop Belmont from being a cut through between Watertown and Cambridge!

238 Get moving on the Cushing Square project. Stop letting local politicians hold things up.

239 It is unfortunate that "no child left behind" has made it harder for the school system to devote the resources needed to help every individual move forward. The reputation of Belmont's school system is suffering.

240 PLEASE do something (a traffic light perhaps?) about the hazardous traffic conditions in front of and coming out from the little bridge going into Belmont center! There is traffic coming from 5 different directions...how is it that there is no light there!?!?! I witness one or more of the following every day...near miss car accidents, car accidents, aggressive driving and pedestrians nervously trying to navigate that area. It's truly dangerous.

241 Please, it would be wonderful to renovate the Hogh School Auditorium. It's such a big part of what we do here, theatre, that we can't be putting on award winning plays in a theatre that's falling apart.

242 Please remember safety of bike paths, especially for kids. It would be nice to have a better "bike path system"! It contributes to the quality of life and sense of small environmental friendly community.

243 The town's website is terrible; it's poorly designed and difficult to find needed information. A major rehaul is in order and could help encourage citizen participation and transparency. It takes major digging to regularly find information I am looking for. The calendar is badly designed and not possible to search (e.g. for meetings of a specific group). The Selectman's office hours do not seem to be included in the town calendar. My sense is that meeting minutes are not routinely posted in a timely fashion. There is no easy way for residents to submit requests for service (e.g. by webform) when problems are identified-- animal carcasses, potholes, and the like. All aspects of the town's website could be greatly improved in format and function.

244 Town needs to function like it is the 21st century not the 19th!! Goals need to be established and achieved before other goals are started. Not one goal has been established and completed in a timely fashion for 30 years or more.

245 bike path, useful store in Macy's location, encourage more commercial business to increase belmont's commercial tax base, control growth to prevent over-crowding of schools,

fenced in dog park (could be as simple as putting gates on town field and still requiring goose buster permit)

246 Belmont could really use 1-2 more mid-range dining options that are NOT Italian food/pizza. A place to get a good burger and/or nice sandwiches (a "gastropub"?) would be VERY well-received! Perhaps the town could work to recruit something like this for the new Cushing Square development? El Centro in Belmont Center should be a wonderful addition!

247 Every year I have lived in Belmont the school budget has been substantially constrained. A "good" year means that we don't lose any additional services, but there is never enough money to restore services that have already been lost.

We need to reverse the direction on this trend. We need smaller classes, we need music and art and recreation, and we need excellent teachers.

248 Need to focus on class sizes in our community and add more teachers and classes. Big problem in this town.

249 Class sizes in school need to be smaller. 27 students for the incoming 5th grade in Chenery is too high.

250 open the Clark Street bridge

251 We need to encourage additional forms of revenue besides exclusions and tax increases, in order to maintain our level services (we do not in reality) and pay for our high priority items. We could be more pro-business without sacrificing our small-town feel.

252 About the schools: I understand that the schools' portion of the budget has slipped beyond the usual 50% and I would urge people to be less fixated on things like class size and bricks and mortar than they are. Many that I know in town agree that the single most important factor in the education of a child, and one that seems never to be mentioned, is involvement of the parents. Belmont children are fortunate in having well educated and very responsible parents, and I feel confident that the portion of the budget that goes to the schools could fall considerably with no diminution in the quality of education. We will soon be facing the pressure on the budget that will come from decades of incompetently negotiated contracts, and I hope Belmont parents will have the sense to stay calm and to understand that their children will be well educated, no matter what, because they have well-educated and involved parents. Classrooms full of similarly advantaged students are the primary factors in an excellent education.

253 See previous comments - these are values or principles more than goals - If you could be more specific you might get more meaningful answers

254 This is a wealthy community with the means to have better public commons - libraries, pools, roads etc. I'd like to see increased spending. Finally the bike path won't just contribute to Belmont, it will be doing our part to the wife community. I enjoy the paths of other towns and I'm embarrassed the path ends here!

255 The survey needs to be more specific. I feel the children are not being well-served because school funding is too low. An override is needed. However, the teachers are administrators are doing a great job with the little they have.

256 Please add an overpass for kids to walk safely to the high school over the railroad tracks. The Brighton bike path is too narrow and very unsafe. Encourage neighborhood block parties. Allow for a brew pub in the Town Center, make the upkeep and maintenance of the new Joeys Park a high priority, the Town website needs to be updated...it is very difficult for anyone to navigate the site and often times information is not current. Change parking on Leonard street from one hour to at least two hours so we can at least enjoy a leisurely dinner there. PLEASE, encourage other small local businesses to occupy retail spaces, NO MORE BANKS, please!!! It robs our town of uniqueness and character. Increase the size and effectiveness of the Town Planning Department...please hire more highly educated and specialized Town Planners.

257 This survey has too many questions about diversity and not enough about the issues that should be our governmebt's real concern (i.e. roads, utilities and services, schools and level of taxes, etc).

258 Implementing these goals -- which I think are all very important -- will cost money. We need to acknowledge that fact and make sufficient money available to actually implement these goals (whether through an override or otherwise). We must think of these items as investments in our town's future, and plan accordingly.

259 The roads in the town are in desperate need of repair. Their condition is a serious negative of living here and undoubtedly depresses real estate prices. They make the town seem so badly run.

260 PLEASE fix the roads!

261 We need to fix the roads. They are an embarrassment.

262 Get past the small-town stuff. We are part of a vibrant metro-politan area. Welcome more density. Do preserve open space, but develop our town centers and thoroughfares! That's how we will support our schools. We are very unrealistic about what our community has to do succeed financially.

263 Thanks!

264 There was nothing about expanding the tax base. It is impossible with the current mix to fund our needs and the town must allow increased density and commercial development where it makes sense (along Rt 2, Trapelo/Belmont, Center, etc.)

265 Please support the library! It is used by more residents than any other town facility, takes the least of the budget and provides the most value.

266 Retail: please fewer banks

267 We should have a goal to create and live within a sustainable budget including pension and other costs

268 I think fixing the broken roads should be placed at a much higher priority. They just look ugly and are not functioning well. The neighbouring towns did a better job than us.

269 We need this plan to do more than collect dust on a shelf. We should share it with each principal and all businesses. It should be seen and promoted by more than just those who are politically tuned in.

270 I believe that the town has spent far too much money upgrading municipal buildings and ignoring the most significant short-term issue in the town - traffic congestion and road quality. I personally would not spend any additional town funds on building improvemet until and unless a vastly imporved traffic pattern is designed and implemented at the intersection of Concord Ave and Leonard St. Traffic congestion and road conditions are poor at best. I think we should try to involve the State and the MBTA in designing and building a new train bridge and traffic flow. It seems as though the train station and Lion's club could be moved towards the police station and thereby allow for wider traffic flow and lessen congestion. Part of the town area across the street could potentially be used as well. I know that this is not a "Visionary" need, but I do think it is a very big detractor to living in the town.

271 Leaf blowers contribute noise pollution, particulate pollution, air pollution, harm soil health, are a nuisance to walkers and bikers, and harmful to hearing and breathing of workers. We should start working on plan to curtail their use. Obviously we need to do a better job with facilities and the new pool is a good step. The new elementary school was also a good step.

272 fixing some of the bigger potholes would be a welcome change for all our cyclists!

273 great idea to have this survey to get community input!

274 1) I believe extending bike path from Alewife to Belmont center is a wonderful opportunity to draw attention to businesses in town center, and also create a safe commute/recreational route for local residents.

2) Please also consider building pedestrian/bike access underneath community rail so that high school children, and others, can have safe and direct access to BHS from Channing.

3) Consider adding recyling bins around all playgrounds.

3) Expand home recycling program to include plastic bags.

4) Perhaps a community garden with area for composting material.

275 Set time limits at TM. Set a goal for each meeting and make a decision on some issue at the end.

Fix the roads! Embarrassing. Outsiders comment on the deplorable conditions of our roads. We're becoming famous for them.

We need to broaden the tax base by bringing in businesses. The ever-increasing taxes make living in Belmont unsustainable.

276 The town is divided: sports facilities v. library, young v. old, school v. town. Capital projects shouldn't be pitted against each other. Need a more proactive, cohesive approach to capital planning and use of both town and school land. Belmont is losing ground to neighboring communities in its quality of life with its outdated library and 3rd world roads.

277 The school system must be a priority for the town. College placement outcomes have declined notably for the Class of 2014, the class who faced limits on total courses they could take at BHS. Top-notch schools benefit all; even families without children in the system benefit from increased property values.

278 We cannot remain a Town of Homes, while simultaneously providing an acceptable level of services with an acceptable tax burden.

279 Our $ needs to go FIRST to improving the High School facility for our children. It is in VERY bad shape. Our $ then needs to go towards improving our roads. They are an embarrassment.

280 make representative government more representative

281 we need to expand the retail base and stop flooding the school system by building so much housing

282 We need the high school fixed, the roads fixed, and cushion square developed. This should be priority!

283 I would love to see the following retail additions to Belmont:

1. Bookstore! We desperately need one.

2. Local Pub or more casual fun restaurant

3. Sushi restaurant

284 We should invest in electric vehicle infrastructure in Town Center to attract business

285 The town is doing a great job on many issues. However, keeping pace with other communities is necessary if we are to preserve the excellence that is associated with Belmont. This includes making significant investments in our schools, library, and infrastructure. The condition of our roads is poor and inexcusable and belies the community's wealth and it's desire to be taken

seriously as a retail destination. Similarly, the Belmont library is terrible. While the staff and programs offered through the library are good, the facility is outdated, drab and unwelcoming. It is also small and under-serves the community. Lastly, schools, while high performing, are in need to capital improvements. Already the newest school is over-enrolled and the high school is in desperate need of improvements. The town should consider all options to bring these institutions and infrastructure into the 21st century and keep Belmont moving forward.

286 The stabilization of our schools and our infrastructure must be our top priority. The schools are what separates us from surrounding towns, and our infrastructure is, in fact, the physical "town". Without them, there is no "Belmont".

287 Stop doing everything by committee. You can never please everyone, so stop trying. The pool is a classic example: everyone agrees that it should be rebuilt, yet the committee came up with a design nobody seems to like. The bike-path seems to be heading the same way. Everyone agrees it's a good thing, yet current estimates indicate it will take another 10 years to get it built! All this committee work just prolongs the drama of endless NIMBY arguments. If the town wants a bike path then pick a safe and cost-effective route and build it!

288 I moved to Belmont 5 years ago not knowing much about the town. I am so happy we moved here. We love the diverse community, the family environment, the accessibility to Boston & Cambridge. I think the town resources here are very good. Could things be better? Yes, but I think it is pretty good as is. We need to stop comparing ourselves to Lexington. People CHOOSE to live here because it is not Lexington. I did.

289 New programs to encourage new residents to get involved in town

290 Look up Lexington's Diversity Study and learn from it.

Thank you.

291 Thank you for your work!!! I appreciate this opportunity to give feedback.

292 Please pave / fix the roads - landscape common areas better

293 Make all landlords lower the rents so we can afford to stay here,

294 Goals are too mushy.

295 We need to invest more $ in schools, not relying on the smart kids/families to keep our schools highly ranked, we need to invest in buildings and roads, so we need to be more encouraging to business to bring in more money, and we need regular overrides as well. Although people feel our taxes are high, compared to many areas of the country (Chicago suburbs for example), they are extremely reasonable and we need to educate people about that.

296 The goal regarding libraries, historic buildings, recreation is too broad. Parts of that goal are extremely important to me and parts are extremely unimportant. It should be split into four:

1) recreation

2) library

3) infrastructure (lights, water, gas, cable, sewer, etc)

4) historical beauty

297 What about the roads? They are a complete embarrassment.

298 have a central point of information for everything belmont- i.e. build up the town of belmont site, it is informative but not always timely?

299 In addition to areas discussed, the state of roads is deplorable and has caused a lot of cost in vehicle repair.

APPENDIX III – ORIGINAL SURVEY

APPENDIX II includes a copy of the original survey as it was distributed in hard-copy form throughout the town. While the content of this version of the survey and the one that was loaded into SurveyMonkey are identical, there is an inconsistency in the question numbering between the two documents, which is due to the technological limitations of the SurveyMonkey tool.

Vision 21 Implementation Committee - 2014 Town-Wide Survey

In 2001, the Town of Belmont adopted a vision statement entitled "A Working Vision for Belmont's Future," which included several goals for the Town. Through this survey, the Vision 21 Implementation Committee seeks updated input from people in the town regarding which of the Vision's goals currently are most important to them and which of the goals they believe the Town should focus its efforts on working towards. The complete Vision can be found here:
http://www.town.belmont.ma.us/Public_Documents/BelmontMA_BComm/vision21/index.
Thank you in advance for your valuable input!

1. "Sense of Community" Goal: "We will welcome newcomers and value diversity, while caring for our neighbors and for the needs of children, youth, and seniors."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt.3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

2. "Sense of Community" Goal: "We will promote the involvement of all residents in the life of our community, support citizen involvement in our town affairs, and rely on an effective, representative local government."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt.3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

3. "Sense of Community" Goal: "We will preserve our small-town community atmosphere."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt.3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

4. Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving the Town's "Sense of Community" in line with the above goals? Please briefly describe below:

_____
_____
_____

5. "Character of our Town" Goal: "We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witnesses to our past."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt.3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

6. "Character of our Town" Goal: "We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt.3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

7. "Character of our Town" Goal: "We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt.3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

8. Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving the "Character of our Town" in line with the above goals? Please briefly describe below:

_____
_____
_____

9. "Quality of Life" Goal: "We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt. 3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

10. "Quality of Life" Goal: "We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt. 3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

11. "Quality of Life" Goal: "We will be an environmentally responsible community and conserve our natural habitats."

A. How important is this goal to you personally?

1. Not at all impt. 2. Not very impt. 3. Somewhat impt. 4. Very impt. 5. No opinion

B. How well do you think the Town of Belmont is accomplishing this goal?

1. Not at all 2. Not very well 3. Somewhat well 4. Very well 5. No opinion

12. Do you have any ideas of ways the Town could work towards further improving "Quality of Life" in the Town in line with the above goals? Please briefly describe below:

_____
_____
_____

13. Please rank the goals from 1 to 9 in order of the importance you believe the town should place on them (1 being most important):

___ "We will welcome newcomers and value diversity, while caring for our neighbors and for the needs of children, youth, and seniors."
___ "We will promote the involvement of all residents in the life of our community, support citizen involvement in our town affairs, and rely on an effective, representative local government"
___ "We will preserve our small-town community atmosphere"

___ "We will maintain our libraries, public buildings, infrastructure, and recreational facilities as investments in our future and our historic buildings as witnesses to our past"
___ "We will work with neighborhoods and residents to identify and support retail needs and opportunities"
___ "We will value cultural enrichment and encourage local talent and creativity"
___ "We will ensure an excellent school system as a cornerstone of our community, providing for the learning needs of all our children and all residents
___ "We will manage traffic through and around town to ensure the tranquility of our neighborhoods and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists"
___ "We will be an environmentally responsible community and conserve our natural habitats"

Next please tell us a little about yourself:

14. About how long have you lived in Belmont?

0-1 years
1-5 years
6-10 years
11-20 years
20+ years
Not a town resident

15. Do you own or rent?

Own
Rent

16. Do you work in Belmont?

Yes
No

17. Which voting precinct do you live in? (If you don't know your precinct number, please include where you vote or the unofficial name of your neighborhood)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
If unsure, please let us know where you vote or the unofficial name of your neighborhood
_____

18. What is your age?

17 or younger
18-22
23-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65 or older

19. Are you male or female?

Male

Female

20. How many people currently live in your household?

Total: _____

17 or younger: _____