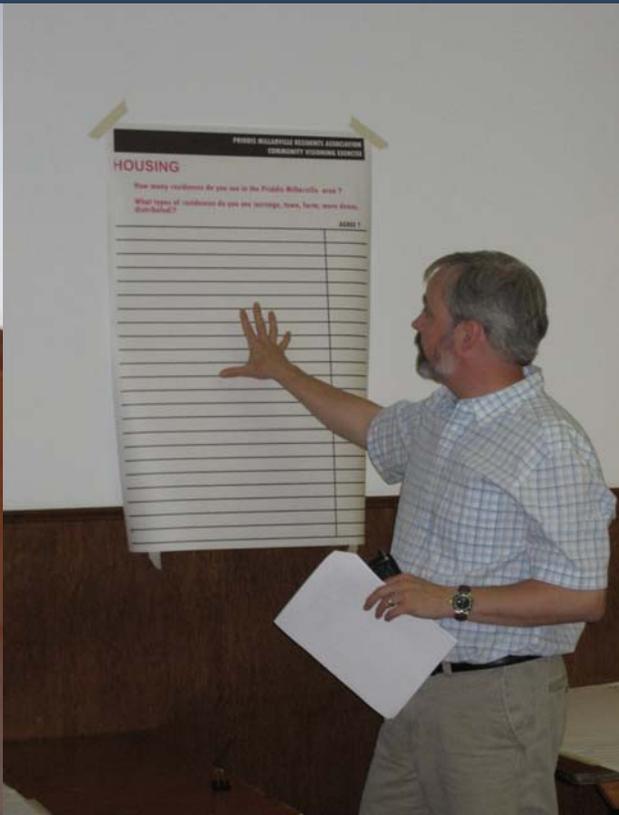


Developing a Community Vision for the Priddis-Millarville Area



**A report on the
May 16, 2007
Priddis-Millarville
Community
Visioning
Exercise**

**Prepared by the
Miistakis Institute
for the
Priddis-Millarville
Residents Association
(PMRA)**

June 2007



**MIISTAKIS
INSTITUTE**

**Developing a Community Vision
for the Priddis-Millarville Area:**

**A report on the May 16, 2007
Priddis-Millarville Visioning Exercise**

Prepared by Guy Greenaway and Tracy Lee
for the Priddis Millarville Residents Association (PMRA)

June 2007

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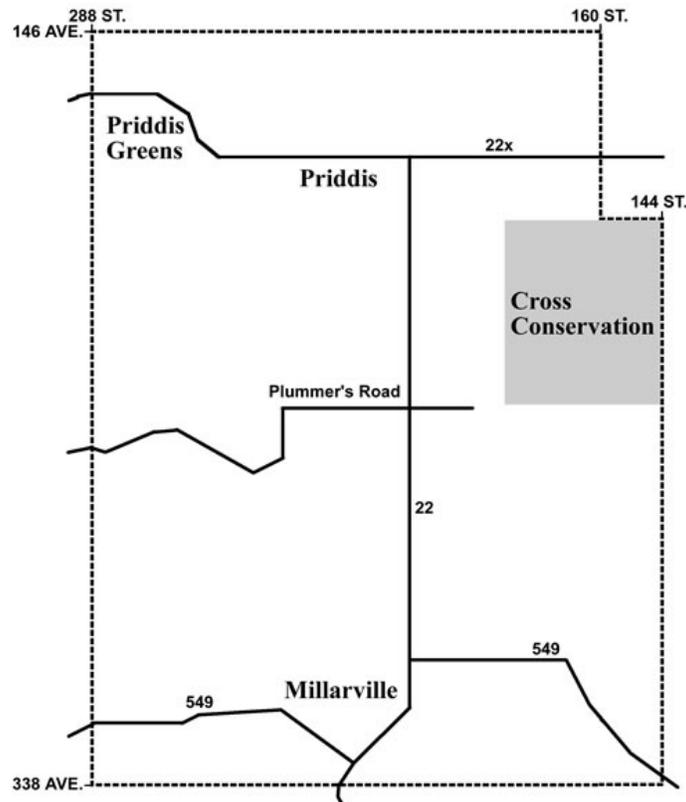
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INTRODUCTION

Situated in the scenic foothills of Alberta, and directly south of the city of Calgary, the Priddis Millarville area (see map below) is experiencing tremendous growth pressure, and has seen an accelerated rate of change over the last several years. This has translated into a more rapid pace of activity, but challenges in understanding what the community is progressing towards, and what are desirable versus undesirable changes.



In this light, the Priddis Millarville Residents Association (PMRA) approached the Miistakis Institute to facilitate a meeting with the local community to articulate the character of the community as they hope to see it 30-50 years (on to two generations) from now. Approximately 75 people responded to the PMRA's invitation to a May 16, 2007 evening meeting in the Millarville Race Track Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to initiate discussions on defining a community vision or identifying characteristics the community wishes to maintain or introduce to the Priddis Millarville landscape.

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of that visioning exercise, identifying some initial value-based and collective elements of how the community views itself in the future. It accomplishes that by first looking at the data and analyzing the picture it shows (Results), then by drawing some conclusions about what that picture implies (General Conclusions). Although this report is not

intended to be a blue print to the future, it does propose further steps (Recommendations) to be taken to create a shared vision for the community amongst the residents of the Priddis Millarville area.

METHODOLOGY

Community meeting

On May 16, 2007, the Miistakis Institute facilitated a community meeting hosted by the PMRA at the Millarville Race Track Hall. The meeting was designed to gather a large number of individuals from the community and provide them with an opportunity to identify their future vision for the area. To facilitate this process, seven key vision categories were initially derived, each with 1-2 questions for participants to consider during the visioning process. The seven headings and associated questions were:

- Housing
 - How many residences do you see in the Priddis Millarville area?
 - What type of residences do you see (acreages, town, farm, more dense, disbursed)?
- Agriculture
 - How much land is in agriculture?
 - What types of agriculture are being practiced?
- Transportation
 - Characterise the transportation ways. What are their types (major roads, minor roads, trains, airports) and their purposes?
- Commerce and Employment
 - What types of businesses are in the community?
 - Do residents work in the community?
- Environment
 - What is the status of the areas wildlife?
 - What is the status of the water (surface water, groundwater, waste water)?
- Lifestyle
 - Characterize the scenic beauty
 - Characterize the recreational opportunity
- Other
 - Are there other outstanding characteristics you wish to describe?

The Miistakis Institute set the stage for the meeting by providing the context for the visioning exercise and explaining to participants how to frame their feedback. Each vision category was reviewed, including the associated questions. Participants were asked to write on charts under each heading what they would like to see, with particular focus on the *character* and not *specifics* of the area. They were explicitly asked not to refer to existing properties, developments, proposals, individuals, etc. They were also directed not to focus on what they do NOT want to see, but rather

what the DO want to see. Finally, they were asked to steer away from strategies for achieving their vision, and limit themselves to describing the resultant look and character.

Each chart included spaces to write out a statement of their desired vision, as well as an accompanying 'agreement' column; if a participant agreed with another participant's view they could simply mark with a check in that column. The vision categories were posted at seven stations around the community hall and participants were given approximately 1.5 hours to document their vision for the different headings. Five facilitator assistants were stationed around the room to address process questions. At the end of the evening, participants were also provided with a handout, and requested to pass the questions along to individuals who could not attend the meeting.

Qualitative analysis

The charts for each vision category were transcribed by the Miistakis Institute into text files, including a tally of the supporting checks for each statement. The category source files were analyzed using HyperReseach v2.7, a qualitative analysis software package that assists researchers in organizing the data by assigning common codes to raw data entered by participants. Coding or labelling the source data allows themes to be identified. Once the raw data has been coded, broader concepts can be derived from the codes to identify major patterns emerging from the participants' information.

The HyperReserach software was used to draw out common codes between the seven vision categories as well as within an individual category. Additionally, the frequency of a code was calculated to determine the level of support for that vision element.

The Miistakis Institute identified distinct vision elements or "codes", which are simplified, general statements representing a number of individual participant comments. Codes were created to reflect distinct and/or common concepts emerging from the participants individual statements. For example, a variety of comments relating to the desire to see more hiking, hunting or bird-watching opportunities in the community would all be coded under, *Nature-based recreation is strong*. As well, an individual participant comment may have expressed several concepts, so a comment such as, "There are still places to go duck hunting in the area," could be coded under both *Nature-based recreation is strong* and *Wetlands are conserved*.

A challenge with any visioning exercise is the difficulty for participants in getting beyond immediate strategies and statements about what they do NOT want to see, to statements describing a community of the future. For that reason, all action comments ("we have to do ___") or negative comments ("get rid of the ___") were attached to vision-based codes ("the community has more ___")

RESULTS

Participants in the visioning exercise, entered 329 separate participant comments under the seven vision categories (Housing – 58, Agriculture – 46, Transportation – 41, Commerce and Employment – 44, Environment – 62, Lifestyle – 57, Other – 21). Based on a review of these, the Miistakis Institute developed 71 individual vision elements or “codes”, most spanning multiple vision categories. Once the frequency of each statement was taken into account (agreement checkmarks), there were 2777 individual inputs.

The resulting codes were grouped and analyzed in three ways:

- *Overall* – looking at all codes across all vision categories;
- *Based on vision category* – looking at the frequency of codes within each of the seven pre-determined vision categories; and
- *Based on emergent theme* – grouping vision codes based on similarity, then calculating their frequency across all vision categories.

The last of these three provides perhaps the most insightful analysis because concepts are captured regardless of the vision category under which they were originally entered. For example, one participant statement relating to nature-based recreation may have appeared under Environment and another under Lifestyle; the theme analysis brings them together.

In all cases, results are based on calculating then ranking codes based on their frequency of occurrence, to determine a relative measure of their importance in the aggregated community view of a desirable future. For the most part, the graphical representations were put on a scale of 1 to 100 simply because that encompassed most of the scores, and keeping the same scale allows for better comparability. In a few rare cases, some counts exceeded 100, and their scale was set at 1 to 200.

Overall results

Although the more narrow views of the data begin to show some detailed impressions of the community’s desired future state, it is important to get an overall picture of what the participant input was saying to provide higher level context.

This section contains three components:

- An alphabetized list of the vision elements or codes,
- A ranking of the most popular single statements, and
- A list of the top most frequently occurring codes across the entire dataset.

CODE (VISION ELEMENT) LIST

The analysis of the 329 participant statements yielded the following list of 71 distinct vision elements or ‘codes.’ Recall that an individual participant statement could spawn multiple code occurrences.

Code (Vision Element)
Active management of overabundant wildlife species
Agricultural culture is conserved
Agricultural land base maintained at current scale
Agricultural operations similar to today
Agriculture responsive to global markets
Air quality good
Alternate water management
Cluster development
Controls on timber supply / sustainable forestry
Controls on water use
Culture based commerce
Culture based recreation
Dark skies maintained
Decreased or eliminated agricultural land base
Designated commercial centres
Development is better controlled and directed
Development linked to existing transportation system
Development rights are protected
Development subservient to water security
Ecological integrity of conservation areas maintained
Environmental literacy higher
Expanded controls on roadways
Extensive agriculture
Focus development around hamlets
Foot bike and horse paths integrated into transportation network
Groundwater supply secure
Growth in recreation activity has been accommodated
Higher density development
Home based businesses
Housing satisfies a range of needs
Iconic features maintained
Increased tree cover
Infrastructure and services support local needs
Large scale or extensive industrial activity
Limited air transportation
Limited increase in housing
Limited industrial activity
Locally based employment significant
Maintenance and protection of sensitive habitat
Maintenance of or increase in low density housing
Maintenance of wildlife corridors
Maintenance / protection of sensitive species
Major roads flow through and minor roads dead-end
Market gardens and value added agriculture

Minimum parcel size
Moderate increase in housing
More facility-based recreation
More non-traditional agriculture
More people on farms
Natural scenic viewscapes respected
Nature based recreation is strong
No parcel subdivision beyond current situation
Noise levels are controlled
Rail link to Calgary and city transit
Recreational access maintained or improved
Recreational use controlled
Road network similar to today
Roadway system significantly expanded
Rural character of roadway system maintained
Rural character predominates
Separation from City of Calgary
Sewage systems safe and capable
Significant retirement community
Small scale cottage businesses
Small scale intensive crop operations
Small scale tourism
Sustainable building or architectural controls in place
Tree farming
Water supply safe and secure
Well maintained properties
Wetlands conserved

Figure 1: Vision element (code) list

MOST POPULAR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

In order to save time at the vision exercise meeting, but also to identify points of greater agreement, participants had the option of putting a checkmark beside another person’s statement, indicating their agreement with the statement. In many cases, there were no checkmarks, but in other cases, as many as 21 additional people indicated the statement represented their vision for the future of the community.

Although by no means a complete picture, this does give some sense of where strong agreement existed. The list includes only those statements where there were at least 10 participants indicating agreement. The statements here represent the raw, un-manipulated data.

Participant statement	Count
Protect water as a priority	22

Recreation: outdoor pursuits- non-motorized, guided hikes cross county stuff- expanded over larger areas	18
Dark skies enforced, kill the yard lights	17
Designated wildlife corridors that are untouched to development	17
Keep Priddis and Millarville fair going	17
Plant more trees. Retain major wooded areas. Protect/ build lakes	17
Water and sewage waste are thought of before subdivision occurs	17
Connected wildlife corridors or green space	15
More opportunities for working at home- less commuting	15
No Airports	15
No high rises	15
Alternative transport routes that allow for more environmentally sensitive means (ie bicycles, horses extra)	14
Architectural control on the levels of light emissions from industrial properties	14
Better control on development. Will help keep scenic views etc.	14
Try to support the viability of long term family farms- historical	14
Wildlife Preserves	14
Green belts around cities and towns	13
Increase areas with walking/riding trails while maintaining human free wild zones	13
Over development severally drains groundwater	13
Services so we don't have to go to town (grocery, restaurant, small office)	13
Support for technologies that encourage alternative energy use, solar and wind	13
Water conservation restrictions	13
Adequate water supply established for the type of development "First step"	12
Encourage more land donation to Nature Conservancy (eg Cross Conservation Area)	12
Encourage water conservation ("re-use" water)	12
More small market gardens, employing locals	12
Protect wetlands and their habitat	12
Green belt to help wildlife	11
Maintain scenic view from cowboy trail	11
More designated recreation areas- park community space, bike paths, less roads for commuting	11
Rail transport from areas into Calgary- underground through wildlife corridors	11
Reduce light pollution	11
Strict restrictions on ATV's	11
By laws to force the clean up of properties	10
Connected green spaces for wildlife movement	10
Light control so dark nights contained	10
On site waste water controls to be tighter	10

Residence would work in the community (home business, market gardens or small restaurants)	10
Retain the absolutely breath taking beauty of the Eastern Slopes	10
Types of agriculture: farm, cattle, organic greenhouse to create jobs	10

Figure 2: Most agreed-upon participant statements

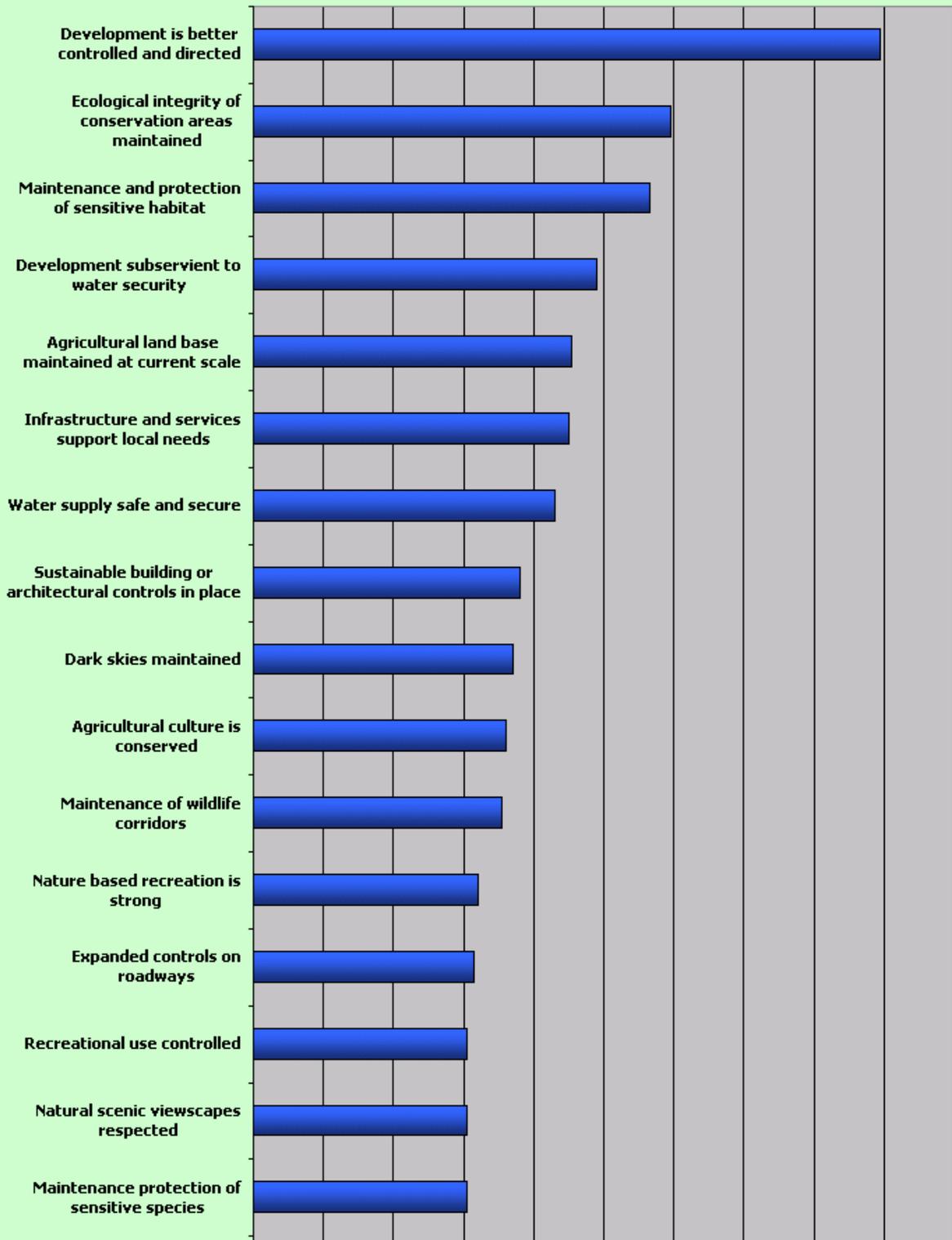
MOST FREQUENTLY OCCURRING CODES

Of the 71 identified vision elements (codes), there was a wide variation in occurrence: 17 occurred three or fewer times, while the most frequent occurred 179 times. The median frequency was 30.

Because some codes may be related, and therefore give an accurate picture only when combined, care must be taken in looking only at the simple frequency of occurrence. However, this frequency count across the whole dataset does give a high-level summary representation of the relative importance of vision elements.

The graph includes only the top thirty, representing a frequency of occurrence of 40 or more.

Most Frequently Occurring Codes



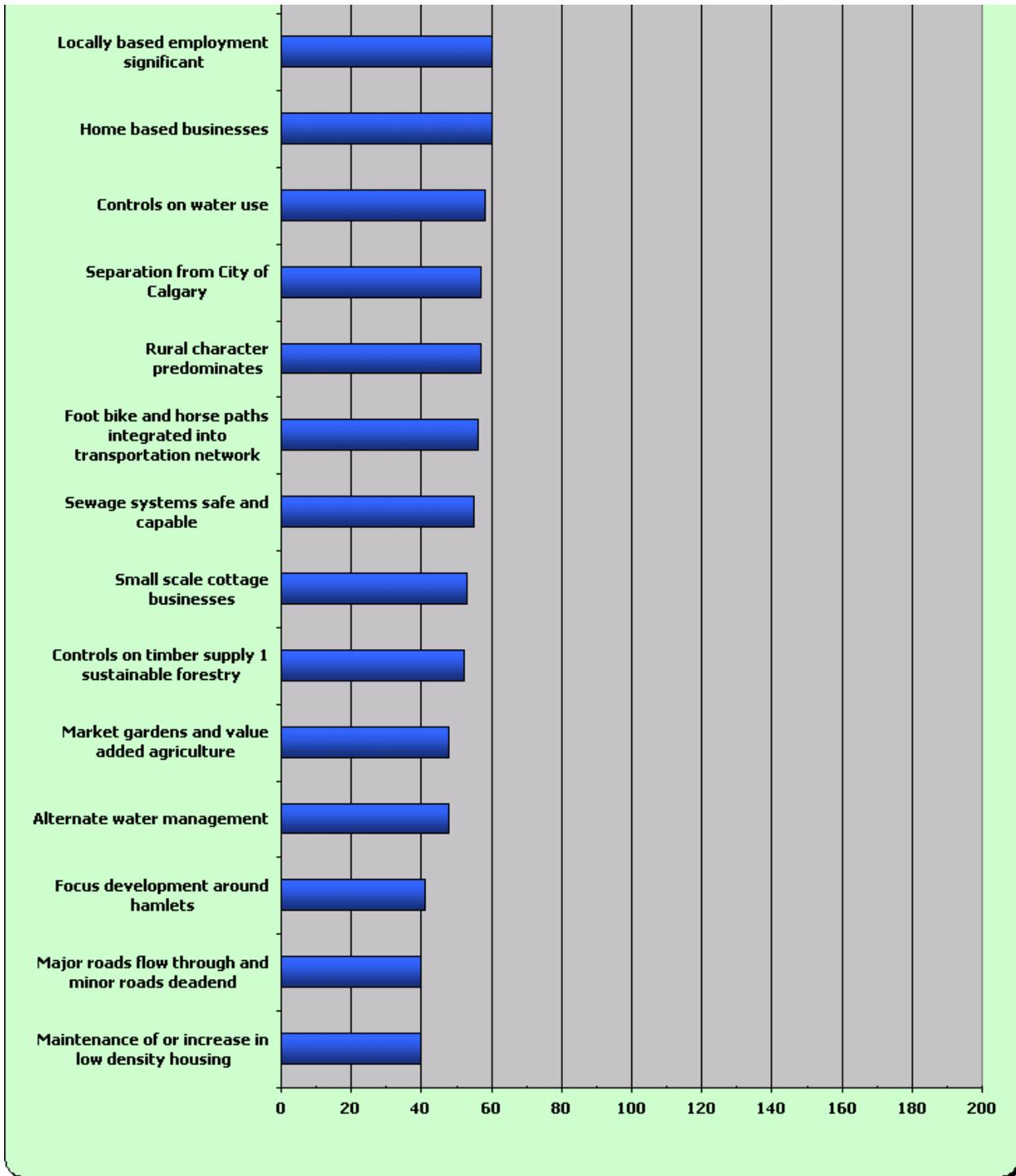


Figure 3: Most frequently occurring vision elements (codes) across the entire dataset

Results by vision category

Prior to the commencement of the visioning exercise, the Miistakis Institute developed seven broad categories under which to collect input from the Priddis-Millarville area community members.

HOUSING

Participant statements in the vision category of 'Housing' ranged widely, and spoke beyond housing to development patterns more broadly, ecological integrity, agriculture, and the importance of water.

Residents saw a future where there was significantly more control and direction regarding development, including placement, style, and density of housing. Related to that, there was a clear preference for a future where development was clustered and located near the existing hamlets.

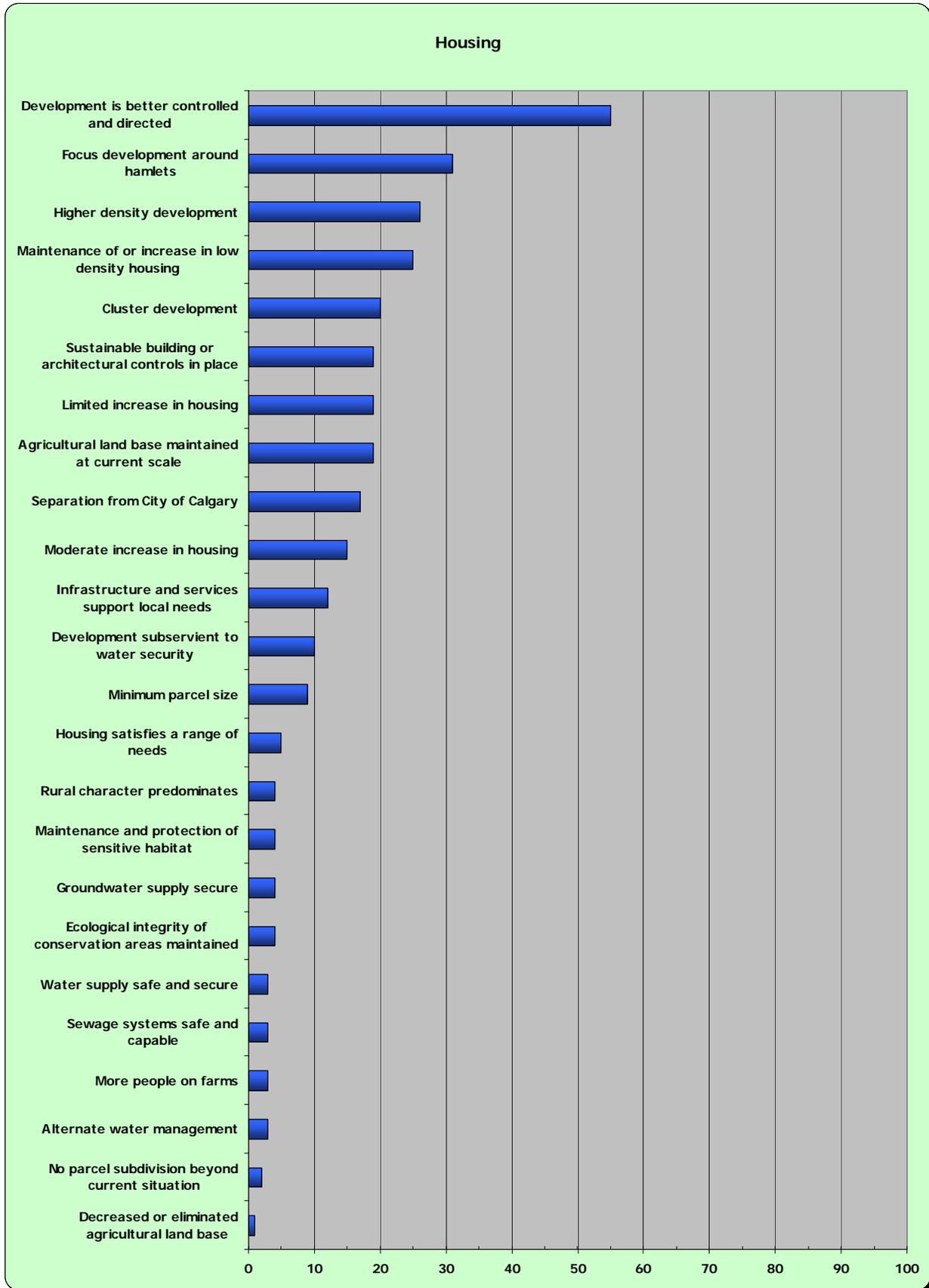
In terms of density of housing, there was a relatively even split between whether the future should hold a higher density of housing or a lower density (though that was not the case when vision elements were tallied across all vision categories; see *Results by emergent theme - Development*).

There was a marked preference for a future that reflected a limited (less than or equal to 2x current supply, or 1.75% increase per annum over 40 years) to moderate (between 2x and 5x current supply, or up to 4.1% increase per annum over 40 years) growth in housing supply, with no statement indicating a preferred future of greater than 5x current supply.

The character of that future housing figured prominently as well, with some participants looking to see specific elements and a significantly different character from homes in nearby Calgary (comments included preference for no development in flood plains, homes with 'rural' character, more seniors housing, smaller houses but not mobile homes, and tidier properties).

Despite the fact that the category was *Housing*, participants indicated that ecological preservation, water management, and agriculture were vital considerations. Issues which residents saw as directly related to the character of residences in the community included:

- a strong desire to see the agricultural land base maintained at current levels;
- the security of wildlife, their habitat and preserves; and
- the importance of water, specifically a future where water has primacy in development decisions, alternate management measures are in place including conservation and more capable sewage management, and ground and surface water supplies are safe and secure.



AGRICULTURE

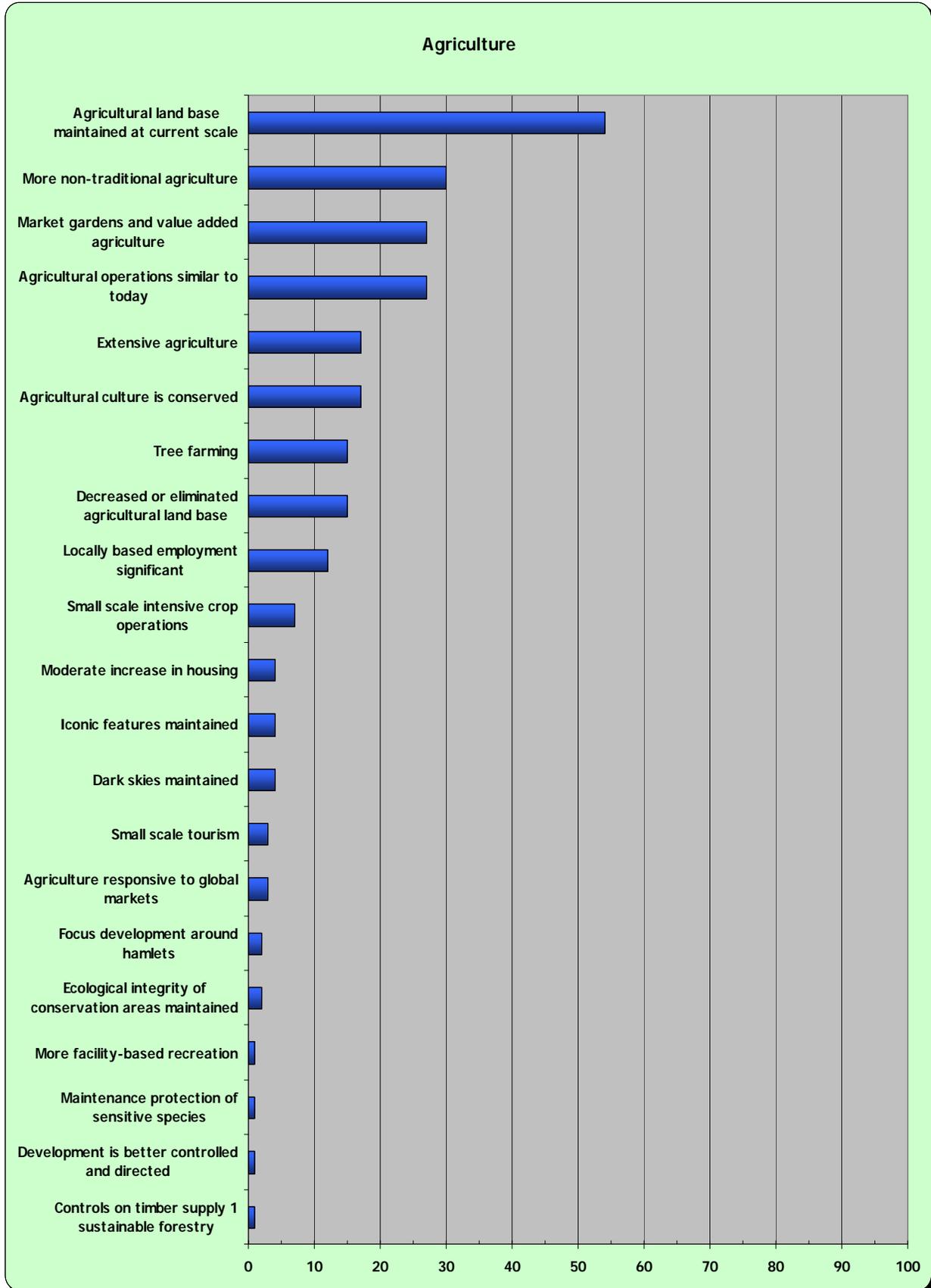
The picture of citizens desires regarding agriculture in the Priddis Millarville area is in many ways one of conservation. Participant statements reflected a view of agriculture being largely similar in 30 – 50 years to what it is today in terms of the land base, the nature of operations and the culture which agriculture supports.

In support of that, statements under the Agriculture vision category emphasized a view of a community where development is better controlled and directed, housing supply increases have been moderate and clustered away from quality agricultural land.

On the other hand, there is a significant undercurrent of desired change, as well. Citizens saw a future where the agriculture industry has embraced less locally-traditional focuses, such as tree farming, value-added agriculture and market gardens. Citizens saw agriculture as still being predominated by extensive operations, but with an increase in small scale intensive crop farming.

Building on the historical culture of agriculture which citizens wanted conserved for the future (the Cowboy Trail, the Priddis and Millarville fair), participant statements also reflected a desire for that culture to persist to support future enterprises such as small scale tourism and local employment.

Although the vision category was Agriculture, citizens made direct links between their future vision of agriculture and their desires for maintenance of ecological integrity in conservation areas, protection of sensitive wildlife species, and more sustainable timber harvest.



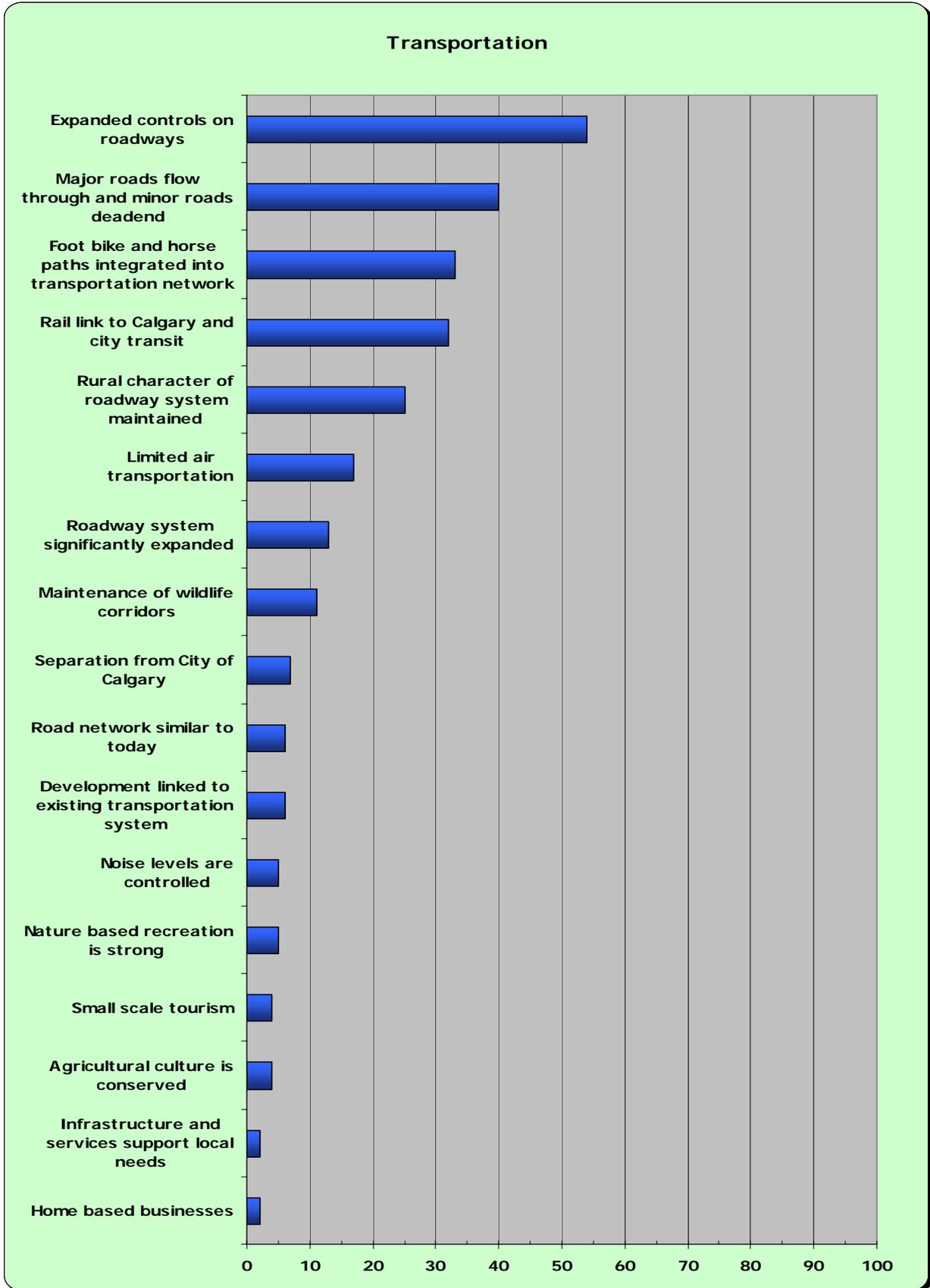
TRANSPORTATION

Vision exercise participants had a view of transportation for the future of the Priddis Millarville area which on the surface appears fundamentally conservation. The underlying themes in participant statements were ones of increased control and limited upgrades, through there were some participant statements suggesting they desired (or at least presumed) a significant increase in the roadway system, particularly to Highway 22.

Participating citizens saw a future with more controls (speed limits, noise limits) on traffic, and maintenance of increases in a structural character which would slow traffic (minor roads servicing local areas only which dead-end or run one-way only). In particular participant statements indicated a view where the fundamentally rural character of the roadway system was maintained.

On the other hand, the view of transportation ways in the future had a decidedly strategic tone. Limits were to promote a future with decreased vehicle use, congestion and traffic noise. Roadways in the future were seen to incorporate foot, bike and horse pathways as alternative transportation was promoted. There was no desire for air transportation, but a view of a transit system connected with Calgary (again to promote more expedient transport with less vehicular traffic), and an explicit recognition of the connection between more home-based business and a decrease in transportation connections needed with Calgary.

Ancillary considerations included the vision of a transportation system built with specific concern for wildlife corridors, limited impact on agriculture, and promotion of local recreation and small scale tourism.



COMMERCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Participants in the visioning exercise envision a community in the future where commerce and employment are small scale and locally focused. The four most frequently supported vision elements were:

- “Infrastructure and services support local needs”,
- “Small scale cottage businesses”,
- “Locally based employment significant”, and
- “Home based businesses”.

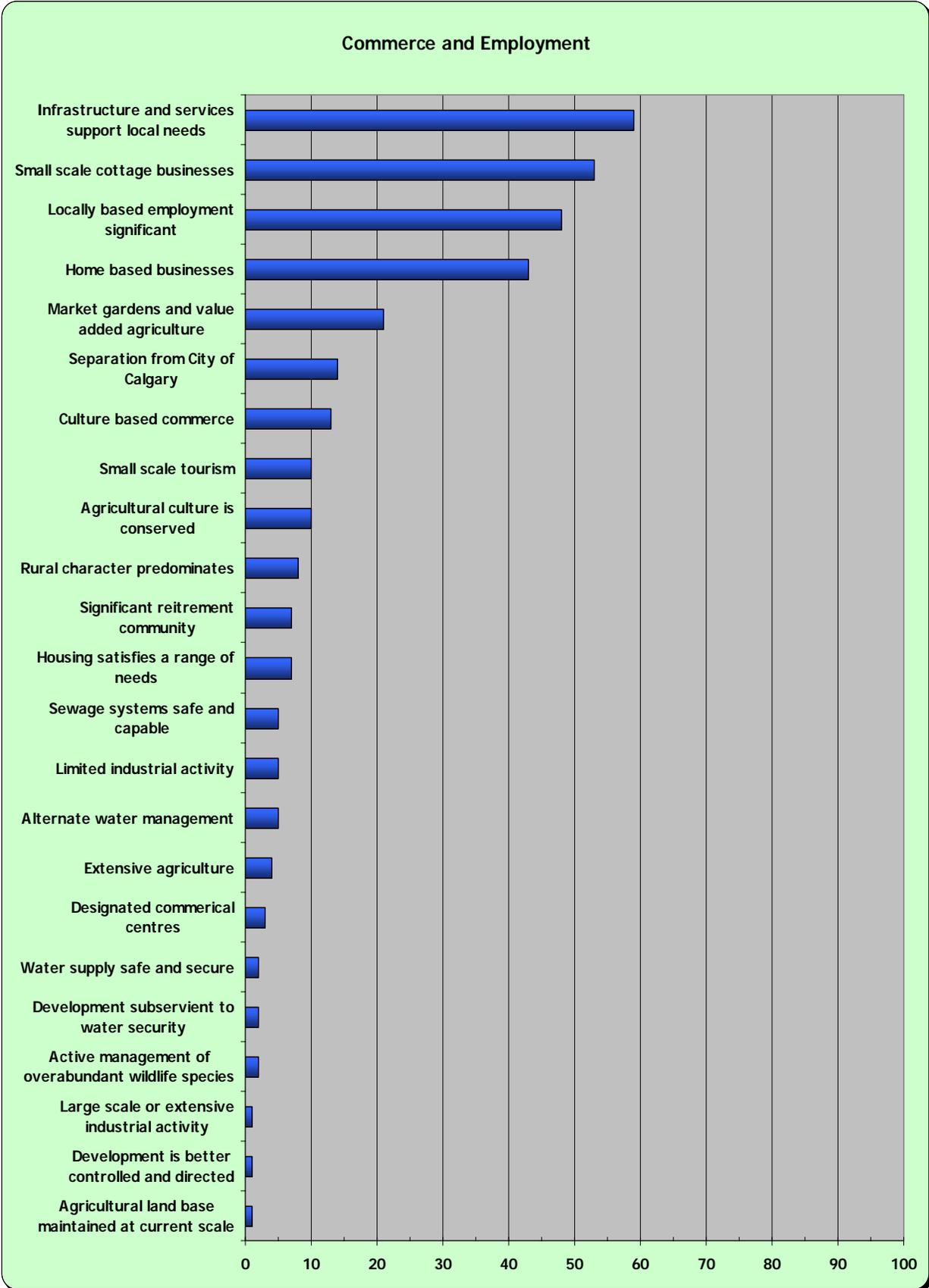
Participant statements saw commercial enterprises in the community being primarily focused on serving community needs. Examples given include restaurants, grocery stores, garden centres, barber, pub, coffee shops, a spa. Similarly, the envisioned community had a greater level of services such as doctors and medical offices.

In most aspects of commerce, participant statements emphasized smaller scale enterprises such as market gardens selling local and organic produce, small offices, cottage crafts, light industry catering to local community, and small scale tourism such as B&Bs and dude ranches.

The community is envisioned to have a significant, but still minority local and home-based employment base. Participant statements suggested local employment would include local artisans and craftsmen, as well as more home-based businesses and employees (in a community with wide-spread high-speed Internet), but still 70%-85% of the work force employed elsewhere (primarily Calgary).

A small number of statements also emphasized agriculture as a continued employment driver, through direct production but also through value-added, local retail, and culture-based enterprises.

Despite being somewhat out of place, secure water quality and supply arose as key features of the future community even here under the *Commerce and Employment* vision category.



ENVIRONMENT

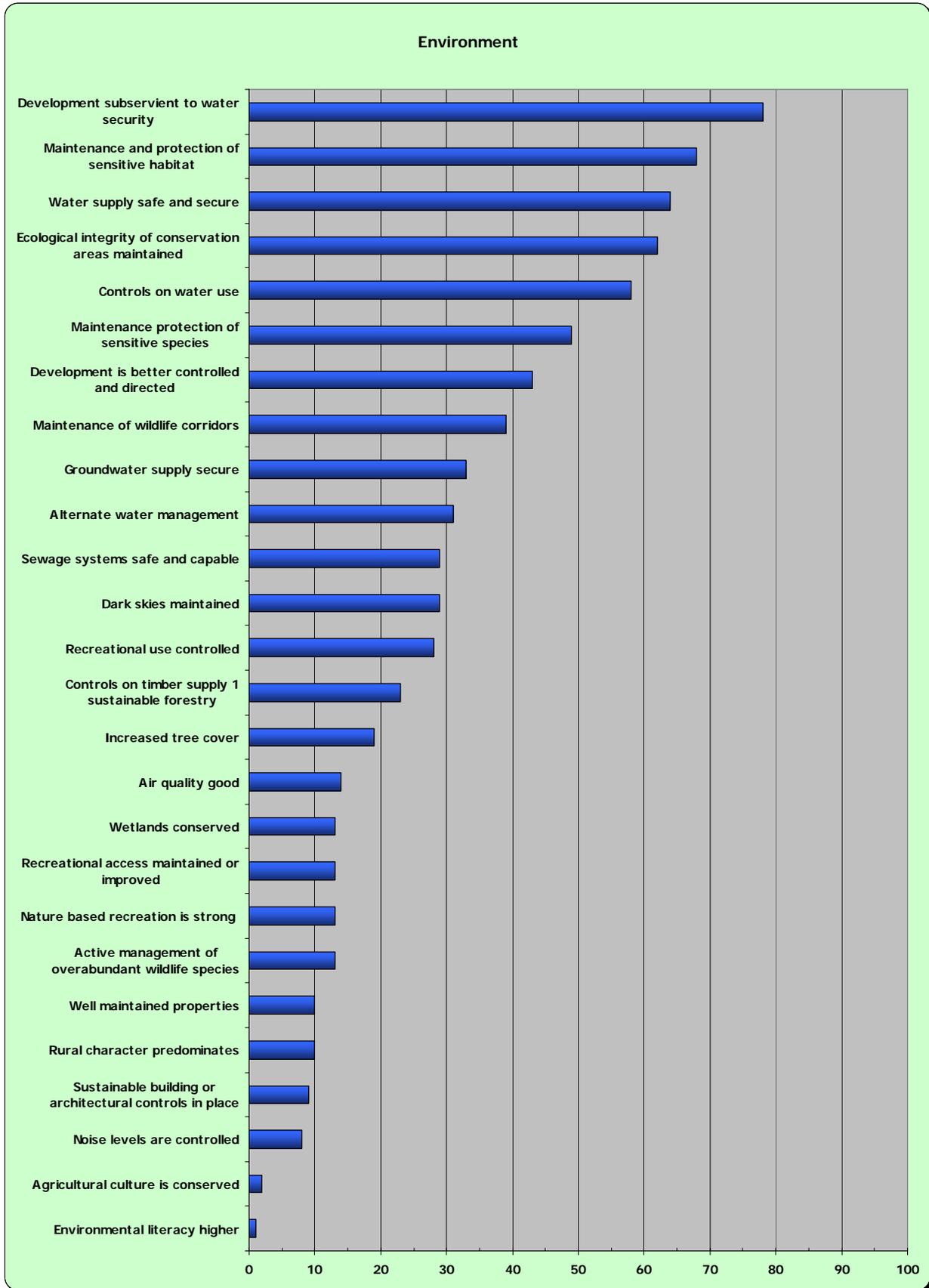
One participant statement, “No water, no development” summed up the general vision of a future community with increased water scarcity issues, and increased controls that respect that scarcity. Likewise, sensitive wildlife – and in particular their habitat – are envisioned as “primary” considerations in the community’s development and activities.

In terms of water, participants saw the future community’s water supply being paramount. Development and subdivision would proceed only with guarantees of secure water, seasonal variations would be taken into consideration, wells would be replaced with distributed water systems, conservation measures would be in place throughout the community, monitoring of ground and surface water would be comprehensive, no new septic fields would be created, wetlands would be protected, and irrigation would be with grey water.

Similarly, participant statements regarding wildlife and their habitat indicated both a high level of literacy (understanding of corridors and sensitive species), and heightened desire to see wildlife prevalent and secure on the landscape of the community in 30 to 50 years. Areas of sensitive habitat would be protected as well as the corridors that link them, more human free zones and preserves (like the Cross Conservation area) would be established, wildlife – especially sensitive species such as grizzly bears and cougars – would be given special consideration in development decisions, waterways would be protected, and linkages between areas like Kananaskis Country and the Cross Conservation Area would be maintained.

To protect various types of adverse environmental impacts, a significant volume of participant statements envisioned controls on recreation (particularly ATVs and golf courses), timber harvest, as well as development. Likewise, they envisioned a greater prevalence of nature-based recreation (walking and hiking), increased tree cover.

Nuisance pollution such as light at night and noise were also envisioned as well controlled.



LIFESTYLE

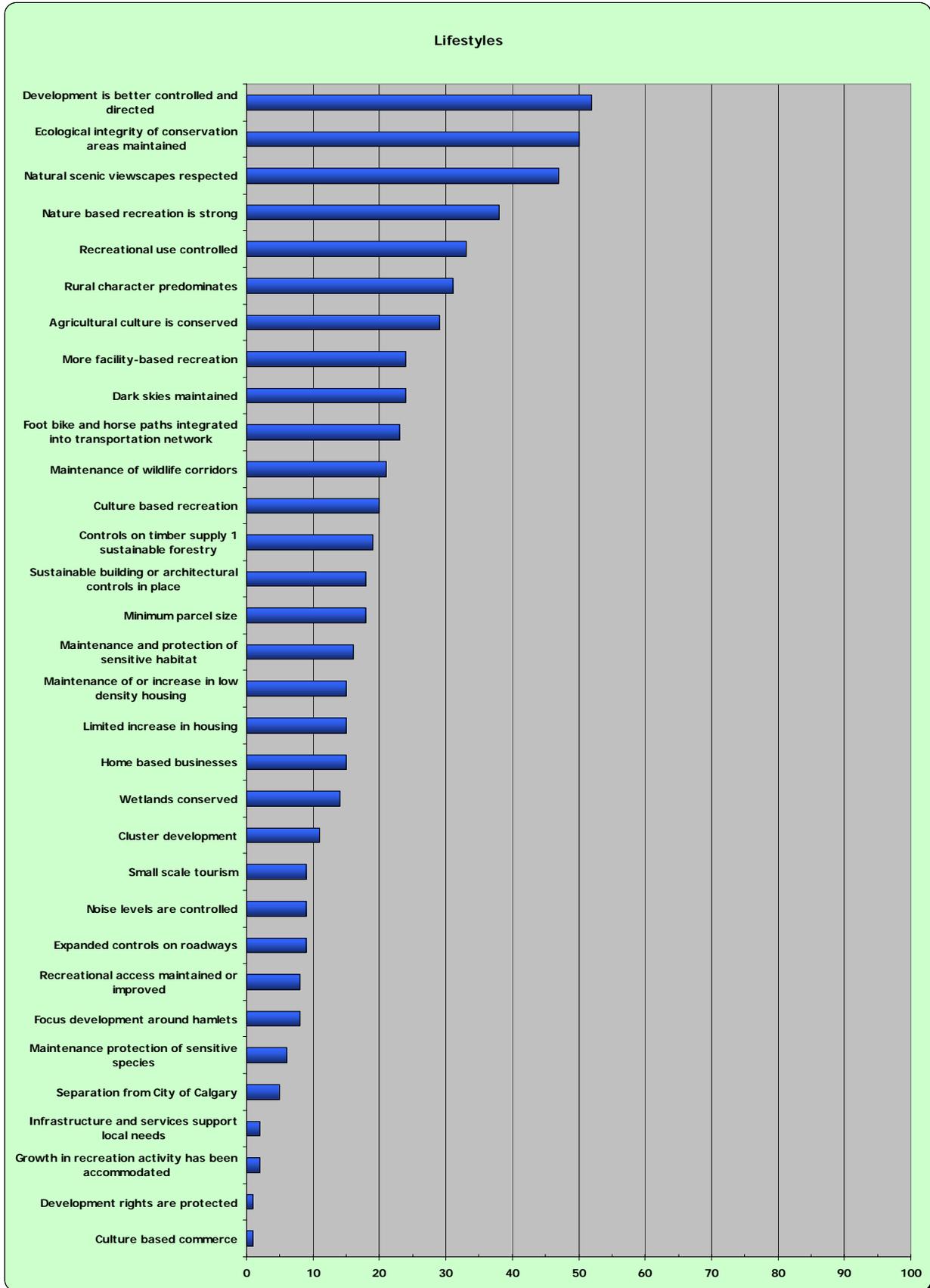
Participant feedback regarding lifestyle in the community 30 – 50 years from now, indicates development and land use, the natural environment, recreation opportunities, and the general character of the area will be the major determinants of lifestyle.

Citizens saw a community where development is better controlled and directed in support of scenery, tourism, wildlife, water, and undesirable housing styles (high rises). Viewscapes are protected from inappropriate development by controls on light pollution, prevalence of greenbelts, and safeguarding of the Cowboy Trail. Development has supported the rural character of the area by avoiding small parcel sizes, and clustering higher density near hamlets.

In terms of the natural environment, on-going land donations (to the Nature Conservancy and others), establishment of greenbelts, protection of wildlife corridors, controls of forestry, and increased tree cover have supported the development of the prevalent nature preserves.

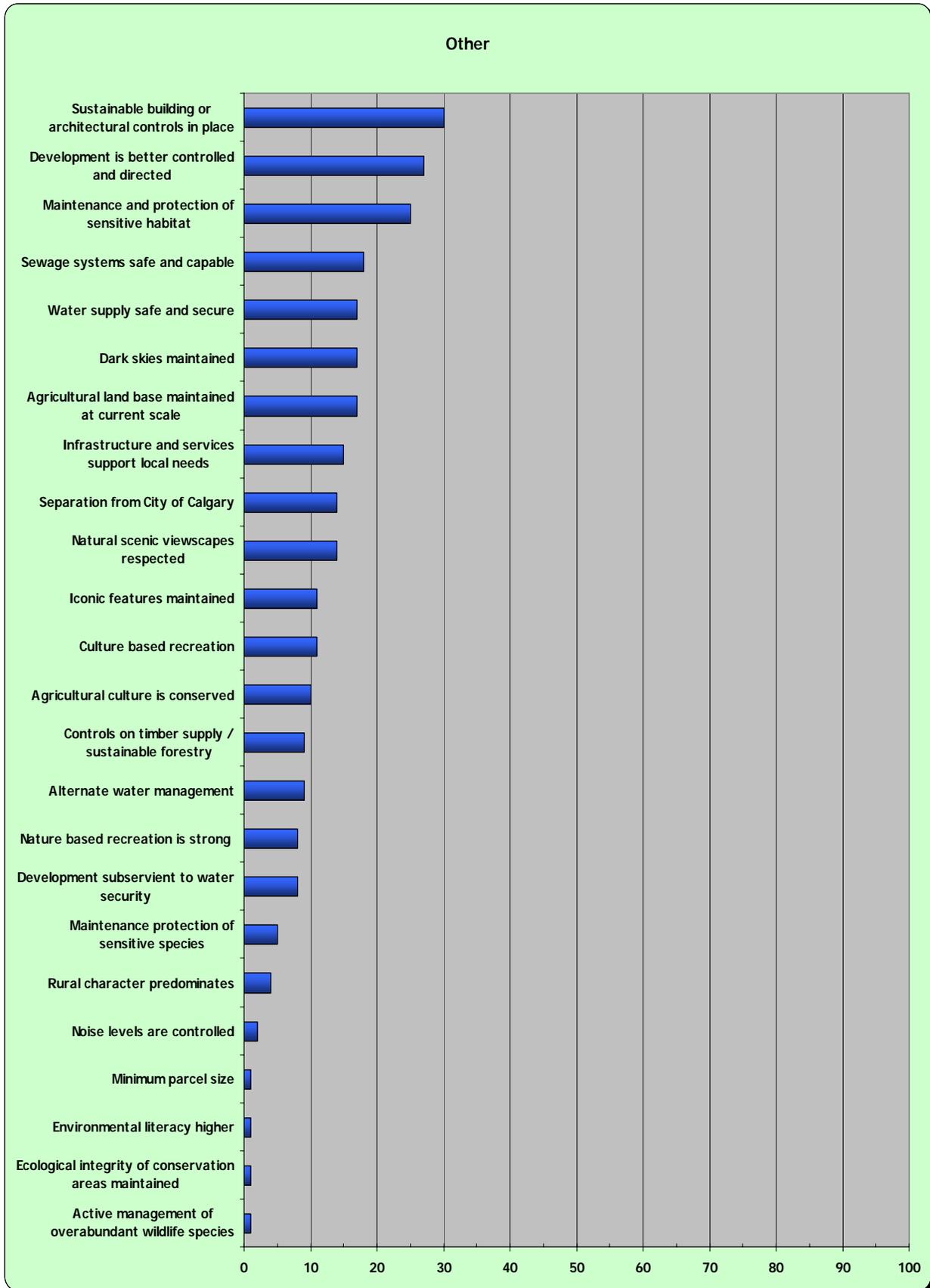
Recreation is envisioned as equally key to the future lifestyles of area residents as it is to their lifestyles today. Nature-based and non-motorized recreation predominates, such as hiking, horseback riding, and visits to the expanded park system. Controls on recreation, such as restrictions on ATVs and concentration of recreation in Kananaskis Country have protected the integrity of the desired recreation experiences. Facility-based recreation has expanded, including development of rinks, swimming pools, soccer and fastball fields, parks, an outdoor amphitheater, paths and community halls. Finally, culture-based recreation such as rodeos, fairs, and visits to dude ranches have also significantly expanded.

The desired general character of the area is supported by the maintenance of scenic views of the eastern slopes and Cowboy Trail, as well as the continued maintenance of the rural character of the area, and controls of light pollution. Agriculture continues to be a major factor in the cultural character with the agricultural landscape predominating.



OTHER

The Other vision category was intended to allow people to add vision statements which they didn't necessarily feel fell properly into the other categories. As is usually the case, the vision elements represented here actually coordinate quite well with vision elements under the other six categories. They are represented here, but are fully analyzed by their inclusion in the *Results by emergent theme*, and *General conclusions*.



Results by emergent theme

Although an analysis by vision category is very useful, there are limitations in that any given participant statement may speak to several categories (environment, housing, lifestyle, etc.). Looking across the entire data set, more far-reaching themes become apparent, and more comprehensive data informs them. While still organized essentially by vision category, this section looks at some of the emergent themes that arise when viewing the data in this way.

ENVIRONMENT

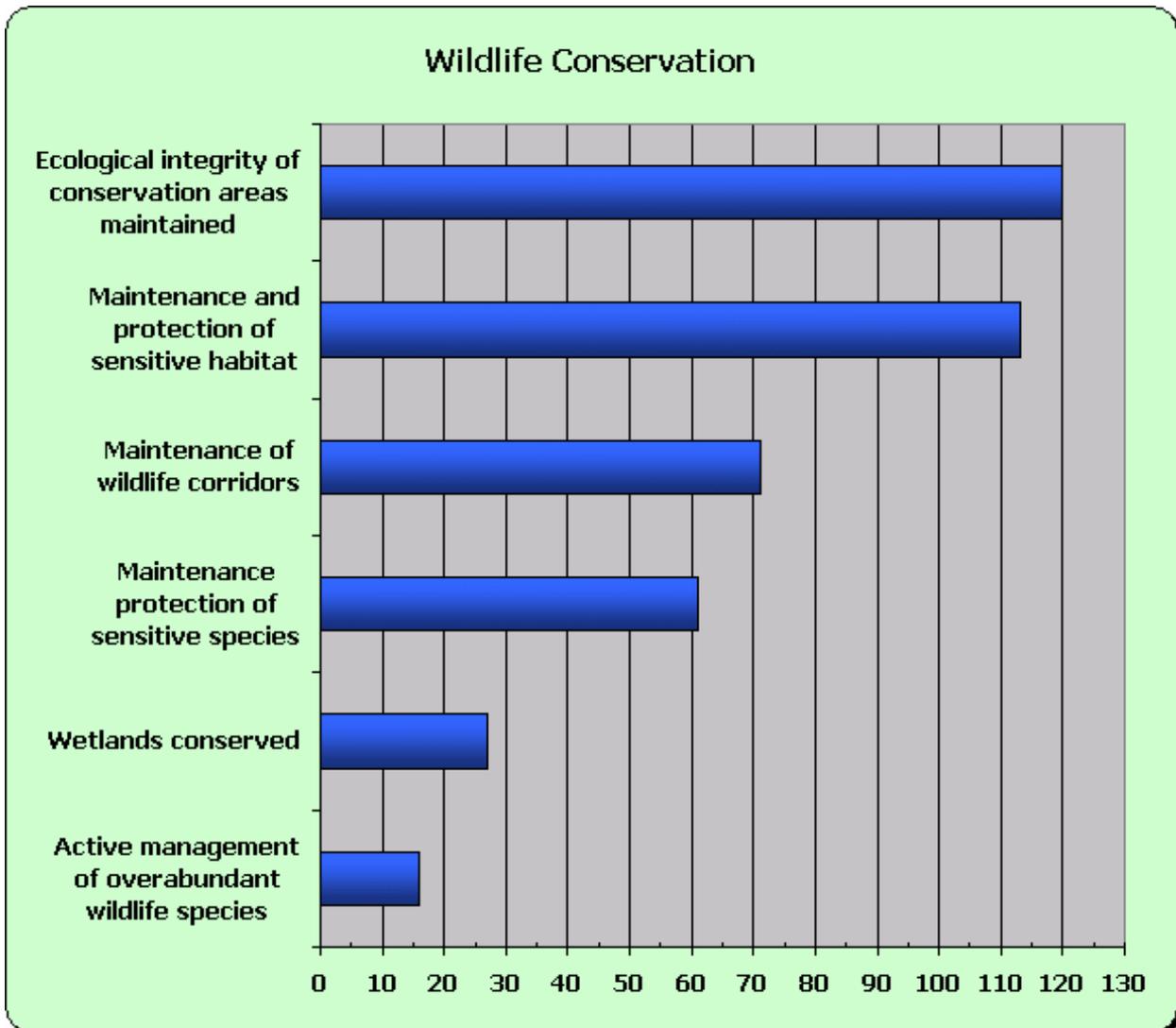
Wildlife management and conservation

Although the questions related to the *Environment* vision category asked about the future status of wildlife in the community, the responses spoke more directly to residents' hopes for secure habitat.

Vision elements around maintaining the ecological integrity of conservation areas, included desires for more tree planting, expanded preserves, limiting access, and preserving carbon sinks. Those around protection of sensitive habitat spoke to the promotion of wetland habitats, green belts, the Upper Parkland, corridors and preserves. Wetland conservation alone received a moderately high frequency ranking. Desires around the future of wildlife corridors mentioned development controls to protect them, enhanced connectivity, modifying transportation routes, and links to Kananaskis Country. The future vision of protection for sensitive species identified native species, the need for recreation limits and education, and particular attention for large carnivores and prey species such as ground squirrels.

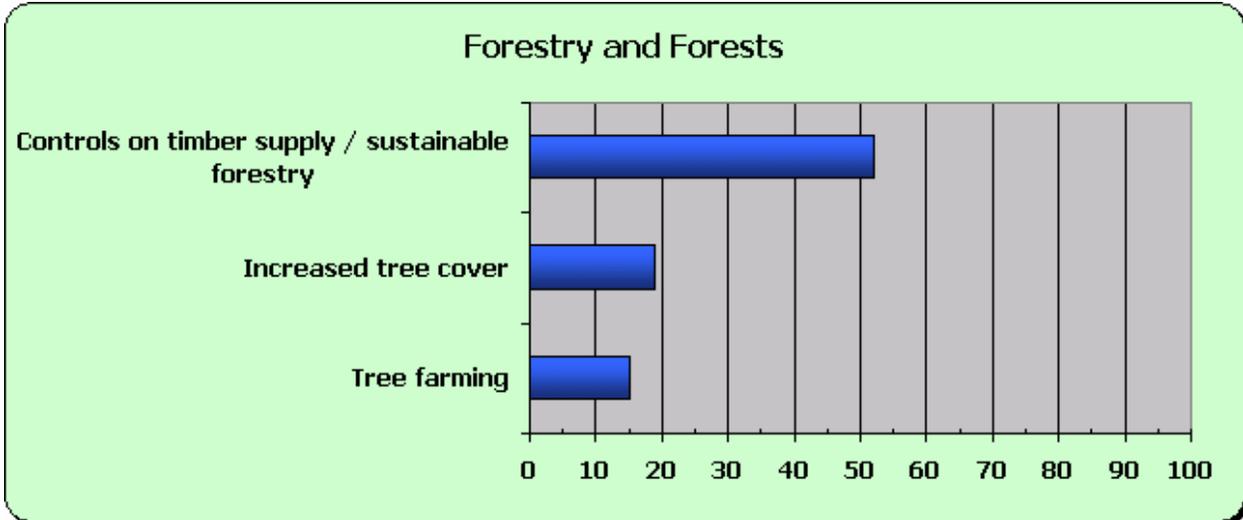
To a lesser degree, participants saw a future where overly abundant wildlife species (such as deer and coyotes) had been more actively managed and reduced in numbers.

Interestingly, in calculating the frequency of codes' occurrence just in the *Environment* vision category, *Ecological integrity of conservation areas maintained* ranked fourth, and *Maintenance and protection of sensitive habitat* ranked second. However, when looking across all categories, they ranked second and third respectively. This suggests that when residents think of the future, they see consideration of habitat and conservation areas as integral to *all* aspects of the community's character.



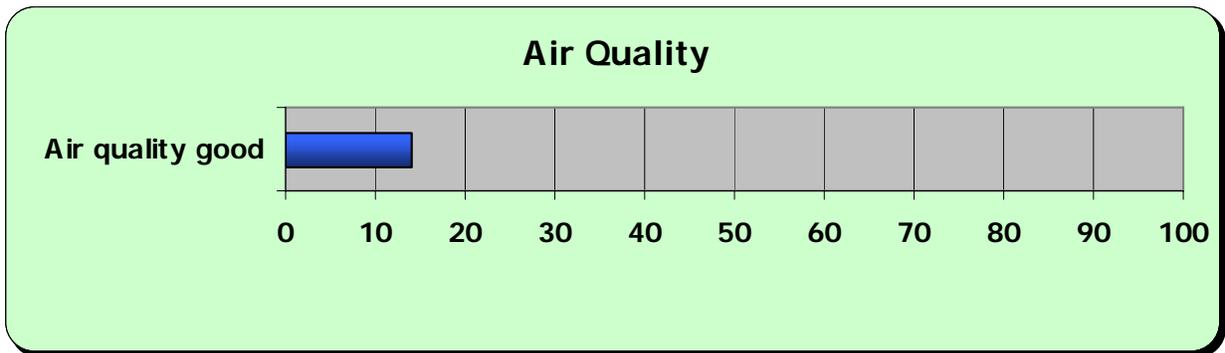
Forestry

Across the Agriculture, Environment, and Lifestyles categories, a number of references were made to forestry and afforestation. In particular, they alluded to a community with stricter controls on forest harvest activity, and the protection of natural forests. In the Agriculture category, there were a small number of comments looking to increased tree farming as a silvicultural option for crop production.



Air quality

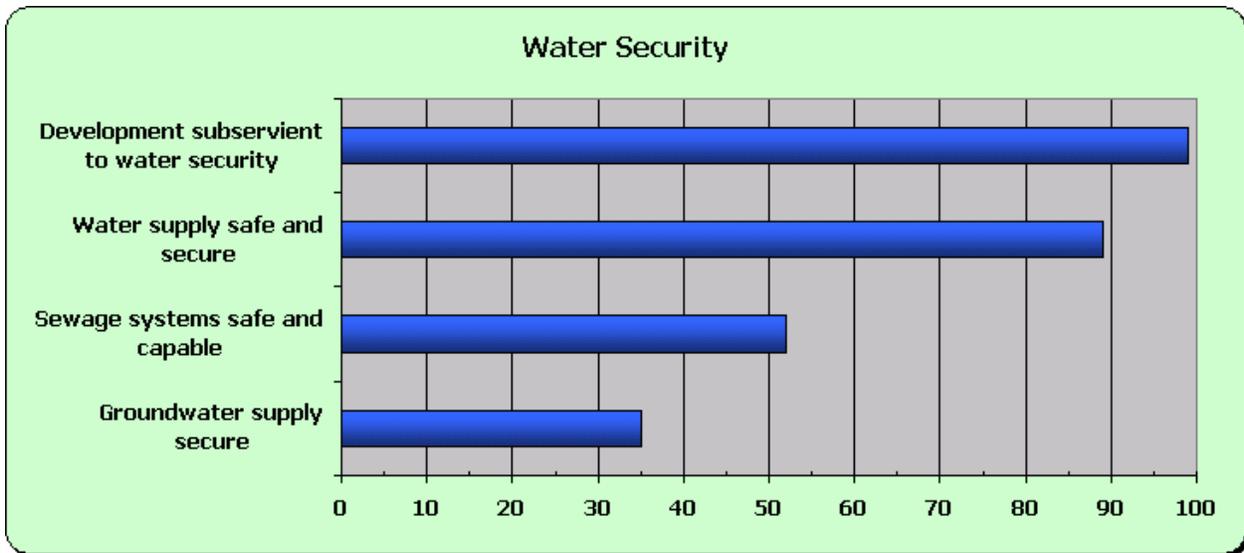
In the Environment category, there were two references made to a future with good air quality, but those each received significant agreement check marks.



Water security and safety

Water security and safety codes received some of the highest frequency rankings. The most agreed-upon single statement at the visioning exercise was, "Protect water as a priority" (22 people indicated their agreement).

Participants indicated very clearly that their desired future saw the degree and type of development being contingent on demonstrated availability and guaranteed security of the surface and groundwater supply. They also saw a future with much tighter controls on water use and sewage, with an emphasis on new technologies, a central water and sewage system, and no septic fields.

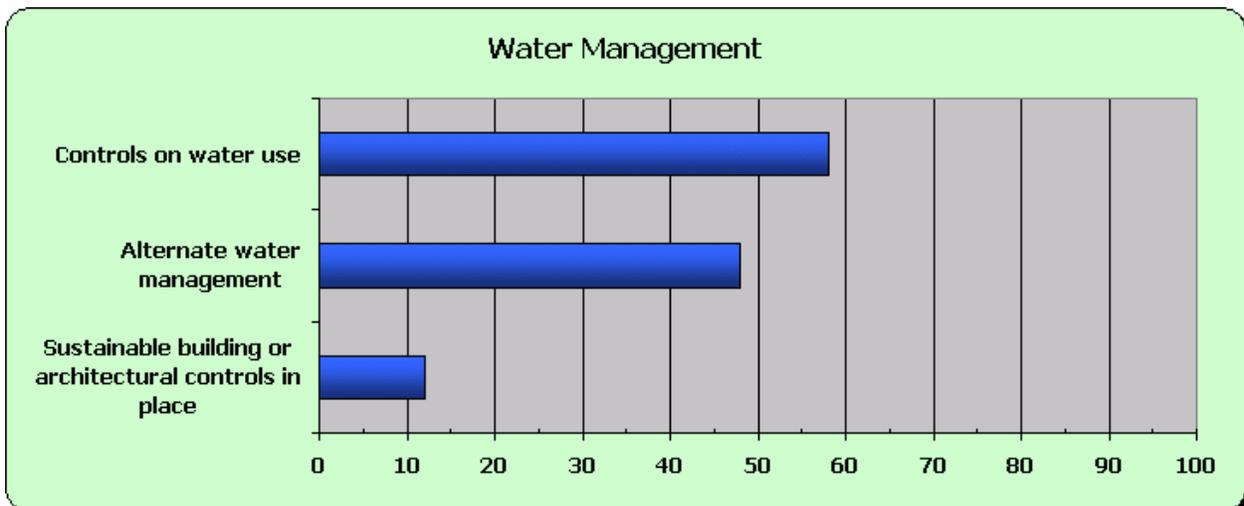


Water management

Similar to the security side of water, participants saw a future with a greater emphasis on water management and controls. Although these codes occurred with lesser frequency than those related to water security, they still appeared with a significant frequency.

Concepts around water controls and promotion of alternative water management strategies included mandated restrictions and in-home efficiencies, grey water recycling, and a future with no water being trucked in.

Participant statements around water conservation received high levels of agreement checkmarks.



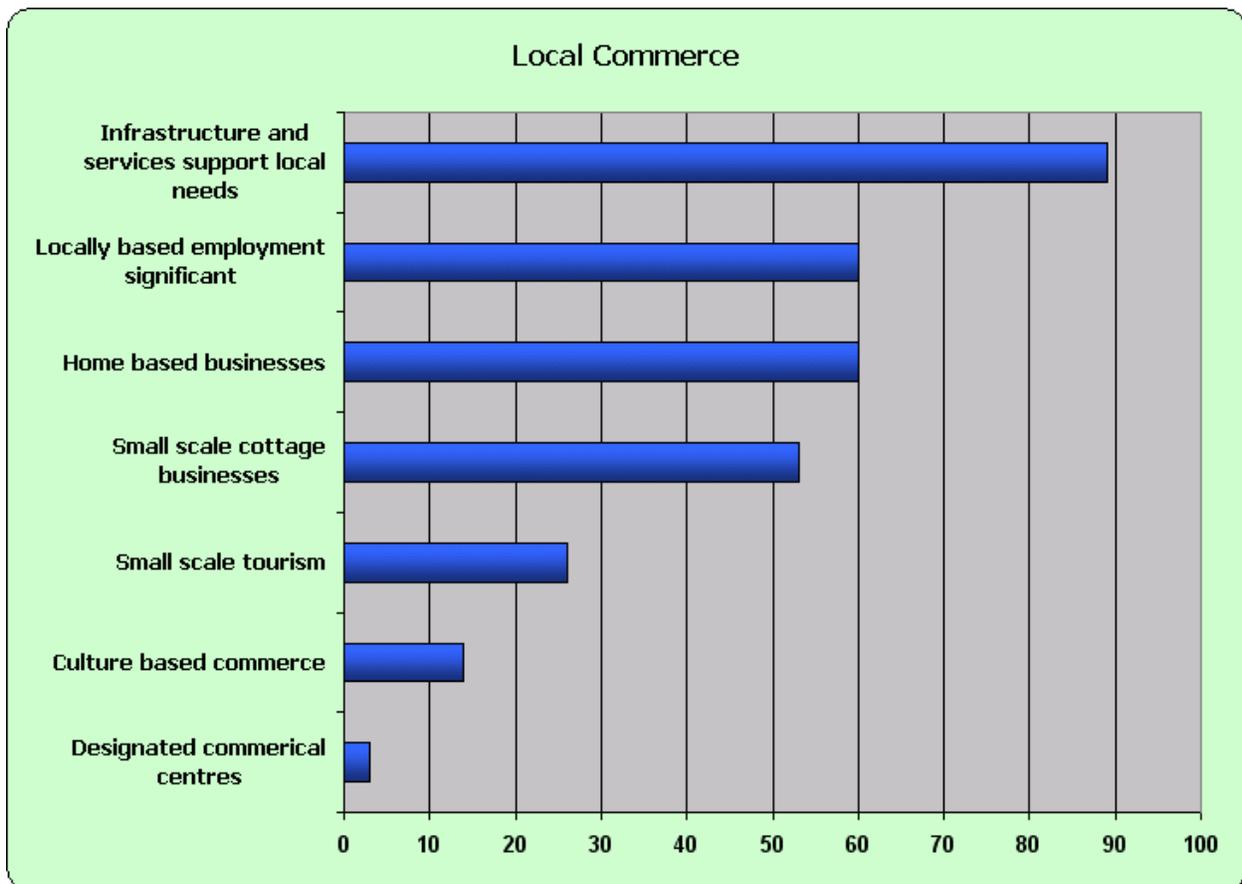
COMMERCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Local commerce

Residents' collective vision of the future contained a strong aspect of self-reliance, predicated on the ability to maintain a local commerce and employment. The sixth most popular vision element (code) was *Infrastructure and services support local needs*. Those services and facilities included grocery stores, restaurants, barber shops, and such, but also a retirement home, hospital, pool and rink, common spaces and schools.

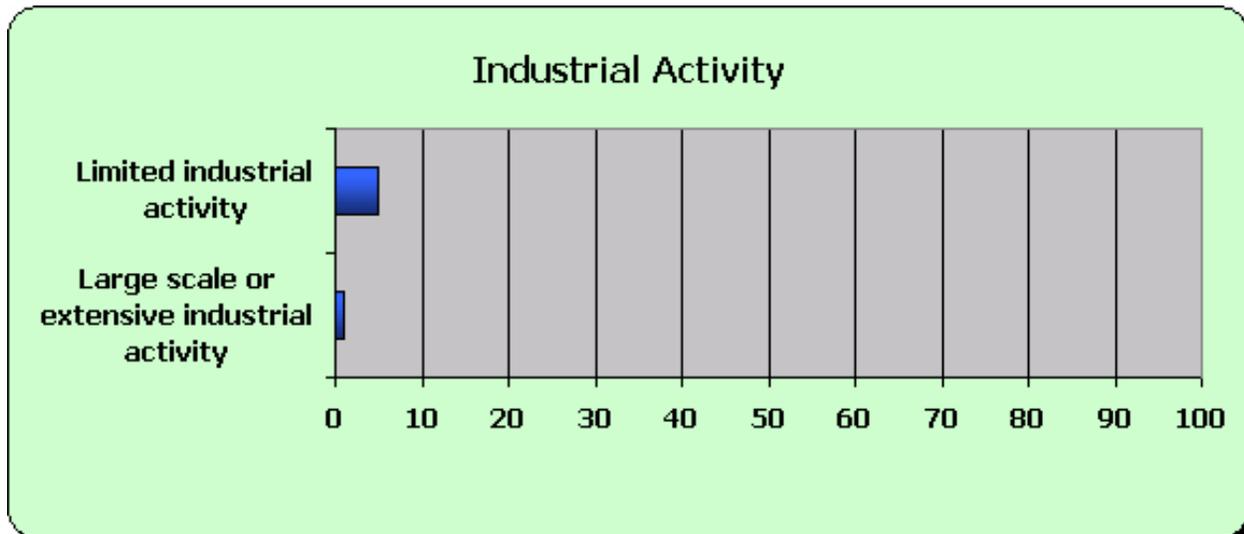
Local employment was seen to be significant, anchored by home businesses (decreasing commuting and store-front commercial), with some participants pegging local employment at around 20% (the remainder being in Calgary).

Other key dimensions of the local employment character were culture based commerce such as artisans and saddle makers, and small scale tourism based on B&B's, dude ranches and low impact recreation opportunities, but not major hotels nor resorts.



Industrial activity

Industrial activity is worth mentioning because of its low profile. It was clearly not seen to be a significant aspect of the local economy in the future. Very few participant statements mentioned industrial activity (six of 329), with half of those explicitly saying it was not part of the future vision.



LIFESTYLE

Recreation

It is clear from the responses that Priddis Millarville residents view recreation opportunities as a significant part of the lifestyle facilitated by their community, but they are also clear on what types of recreation are preferred.

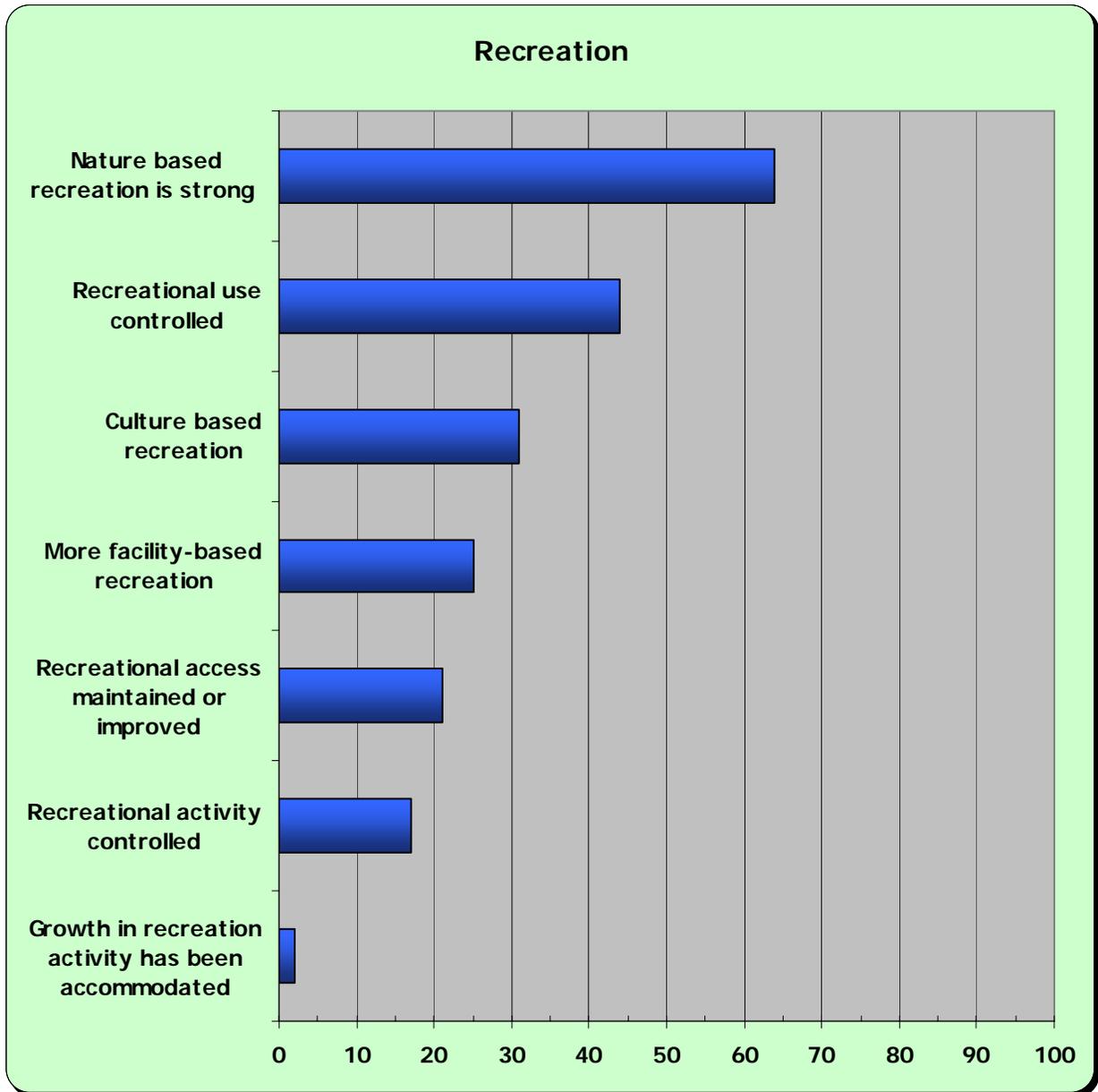
Participant statements emphasized three types of recreation: nature-based, culture-based, and facility-based. Nature-based outdoor recreation was most often emphasized, with a preference that those opportunities be strongly available in the future. Statements emphasized hiking and walking trails, outdoor recreation, non-motorized use of areas, cycling opportunities, and bird-watching. Hunting was conspicuous by its complete absence in participant statements.

The next most popular recreation type was culture-based. This included visions of a future community with the fairs, rodeos and other recreation opportunities based primarily on the agricultural character of the community. Although there were fewer participant statements in this area, the statement to "*Keep Priddis and Millarville fair going*" tied for the third most agreed-upon participant statement.

Facility-based recreation opportunities were envisioned less frequently than nature- or culture-based ones, but still figured prominently. Participants saw a future with more skating areas, swimming pools, community halls, picnic facilities, and soccer

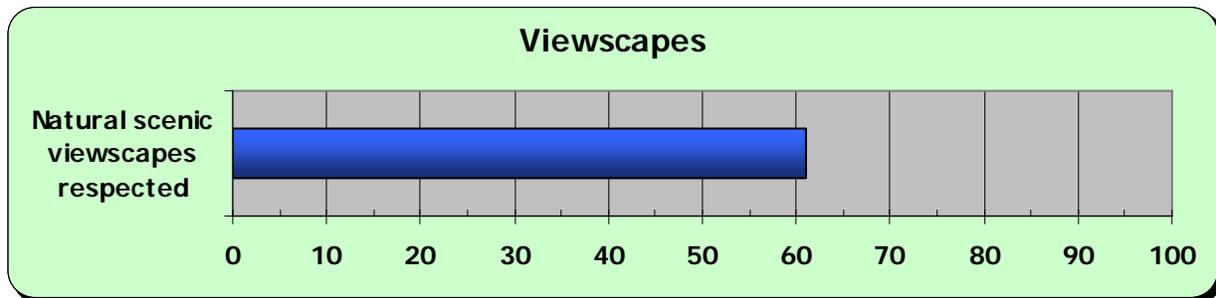
and ball fields. Golf courses were mentioned rarely, and in the context of undesirability.

A strong message was the need for control of recreation activity. While a small number of participant statements suggested growth in recreation activity be accommodated, there were several statements regarding the need for low-impact use, minimum footprint, controls on water-based recreation, and severe restrictions on ATVs.



Viewscapes

Community members were directed to speak specifically to the future character of the area's scenic beauty, so not surprisingly there were a large number of participant statements to that effect. However, their feedback reflected only a small number of themes: maintaining views of the eastern slopes, preserving views off of the Cowboy Trail, the direct link between controlling development and protecting viewscapes, maintaining greenery as well as greenbelts around the city, and maintaining dark skies to protect night-time scenic beauty (i.e., the night sky).

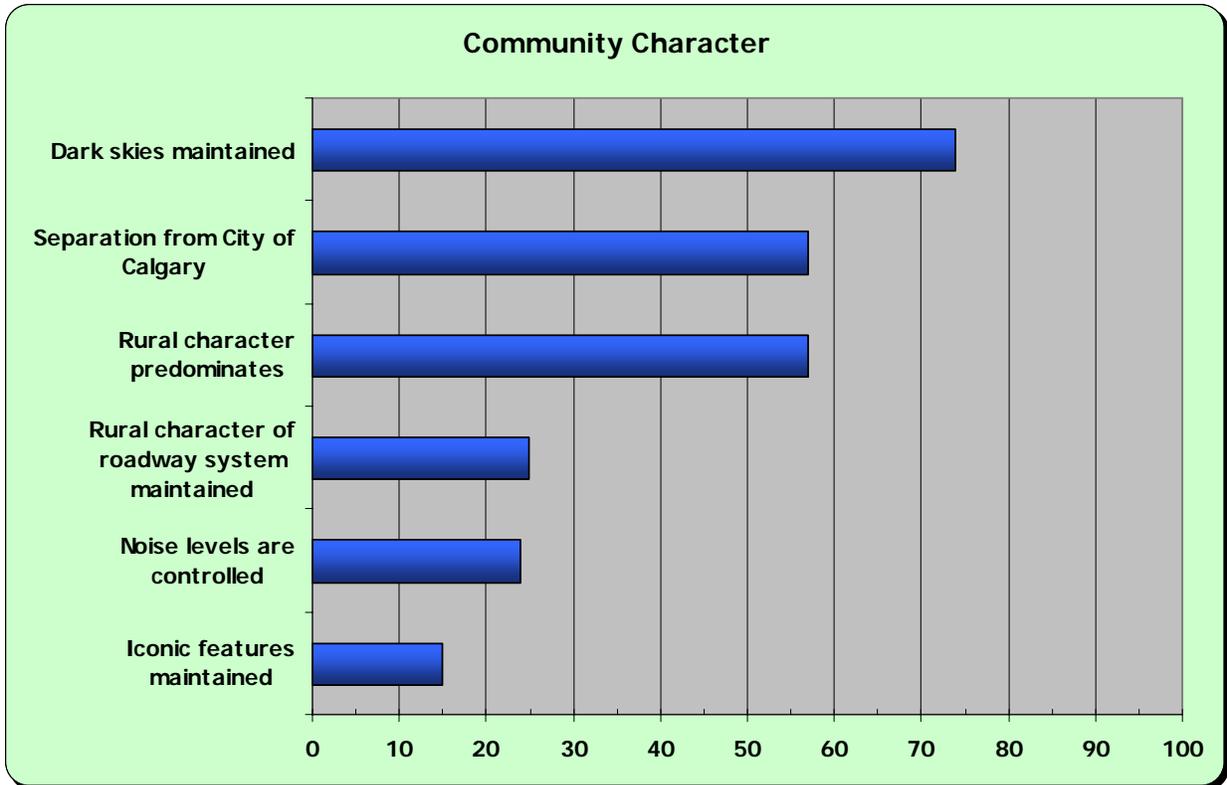


Community character

Overwhelmingly, participants expressed a vision of their area in the future being 'rural', a concept often widely agreed upon, and poorly defined. However, in the case of this exercise, an examination of individual vision elements starts to paint a picture of what that likely means.

Participant statements coded as 'rural character predominates' generally reflected a desire to see the agricultural landscape persist, local markets, iconic features (local institutions, race track, observatory, Priddis and Millarville fair) still in place, and certain characteristics of housing (stately, larger lots) and roadways (winding, dead-ends, contoured). Participant citizens also expressed a strong desire to see 'light pollution' controlled (especially from yard lights), and to a lesser degree excessive noise.

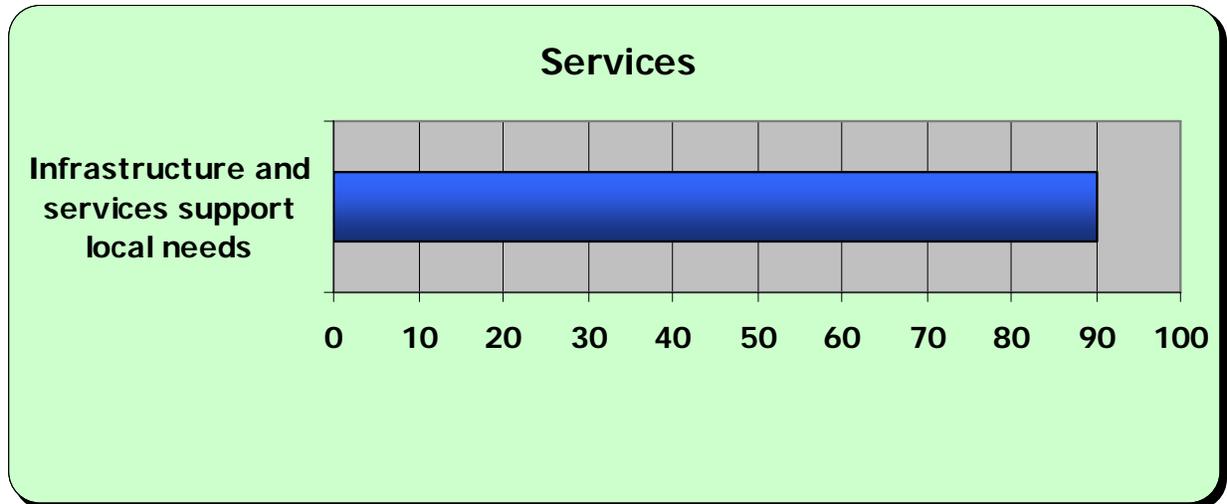
A key feature expressed was the continued separation from the city of Calgary. In particular, participants saw the employment base (especially industrial) largely in Calgary with some home-based and local services, a green belt around the city, larger lots and lower density in the community, and a 'slower' pace of life.



Community services

A large number of participant statements reflected a desire for a future with increased service industry, but mostly those that supported the local community. In particular, the collective vision saw more market gardens, restaurants, grocery stores, small offices, gas stations, medical offices, high speed internet, and coffee shops. Again, those suggestions were almost uniformly qualified with the view that they would be very small scale.

Similarly, residents looked for a future with more schools, hospital services, and emergency services.



TRANSPORTATION

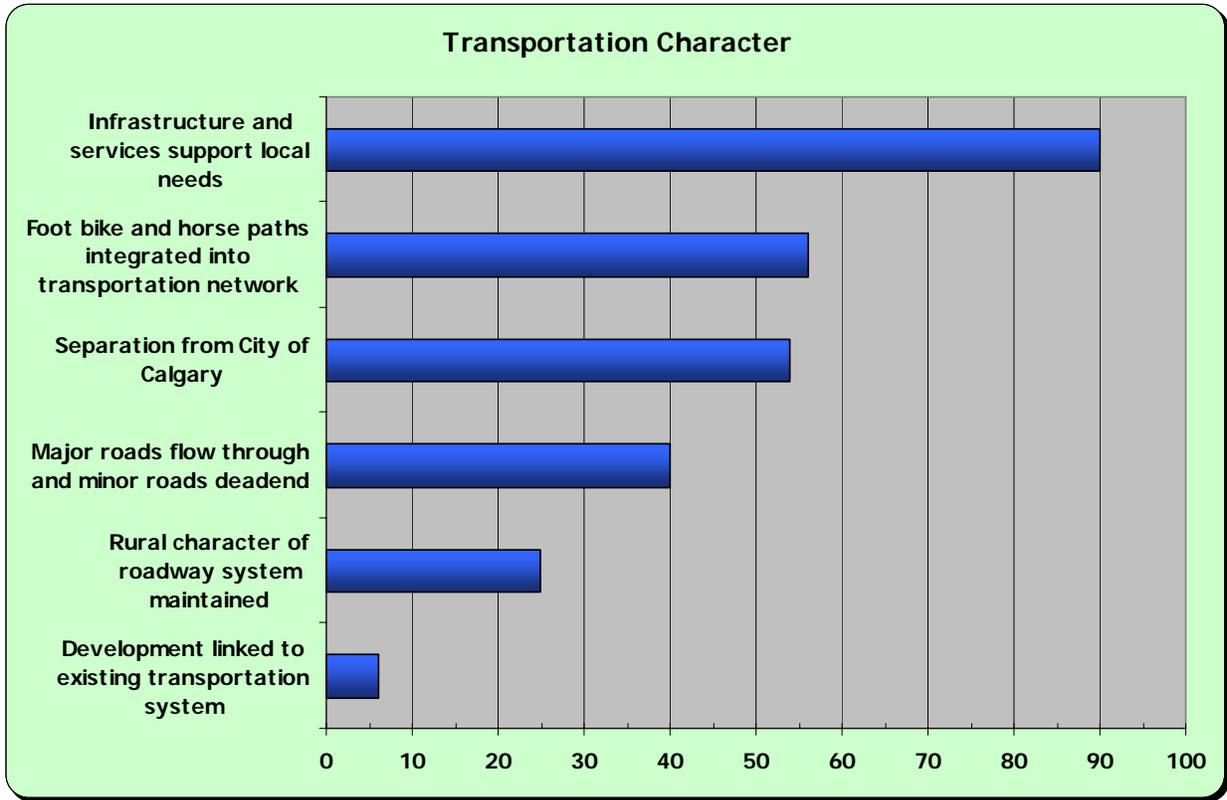
Transportation character

Similar to other themes, there was a strong flavour of connection to / support of the local community in the statements surrounding the character of transportation in the future.

The numerous statements regarding more local services and home-based businesses emphasized the desire to see the roadways service the local community. Likewise, there were a number of statements promoting a future with the 'rural' character of roadways maintained (see *Community Character* above).

Several vision statements describing the desired separation between the community and the city of Calgary suggested a ring road around the city, and making provision for transit connections to limit road use. There was a solid desire to see control minor roads controlled for local access only (winding road,s dead-ends, one ways), and limiting major thoroughfares to Hwy 22.

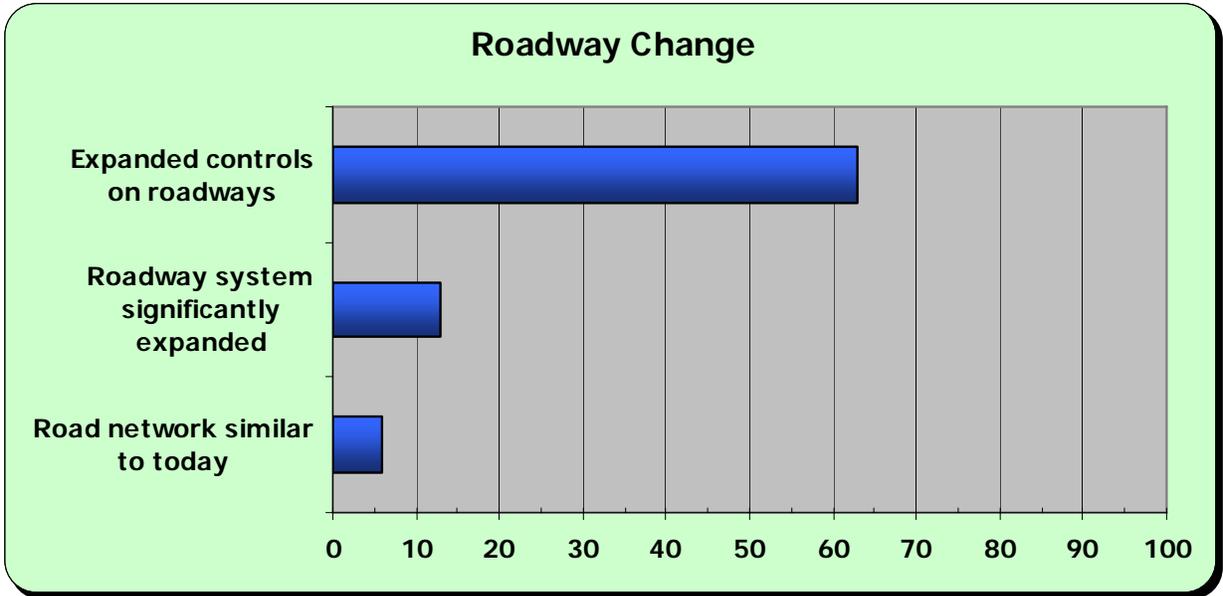
The single strongest road-related vision element, was the desire to see horse/bicycle/foot paths integrated into the rural roadway system. A small number made a direct link between roadways and development, suggesting subdivision must happen after roadway construction.



Road network change

Three vision elements (codes) reflected statements about the desired change in the road network. The vision of the road network significantly expanded, and the vision of it similar to today showed comparable frequency rates, but both were relatively modest.

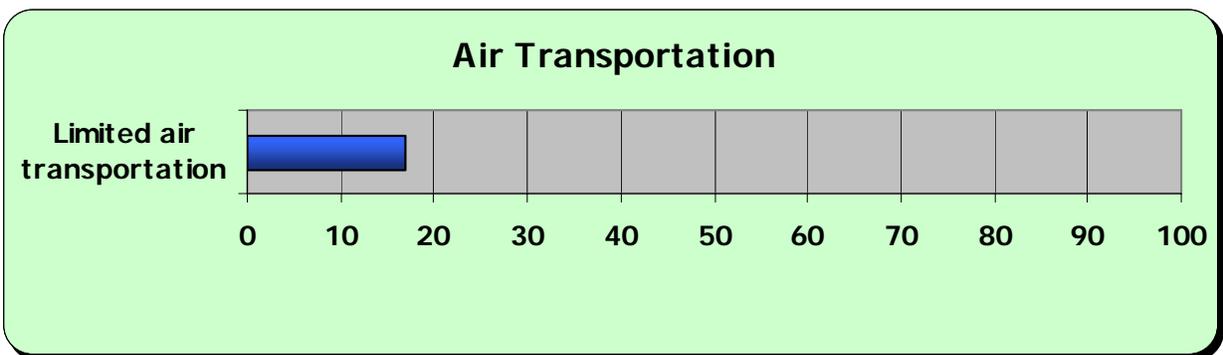
However, there was a significant number of statements reflecting a view of the area’s future including expanded controls on roadways. These included noise and exhaust controls, vehicle and speed limitations, controlling minor roads for local access only, and limiting major thoroughfares to Hwy 22.



Air transportation

Although not an issue that received a great deal of comment, there was a high level of unanimity against the idea of air transport based in the community. In fact, “No airports” tied for eighth most agreed-upon statement.

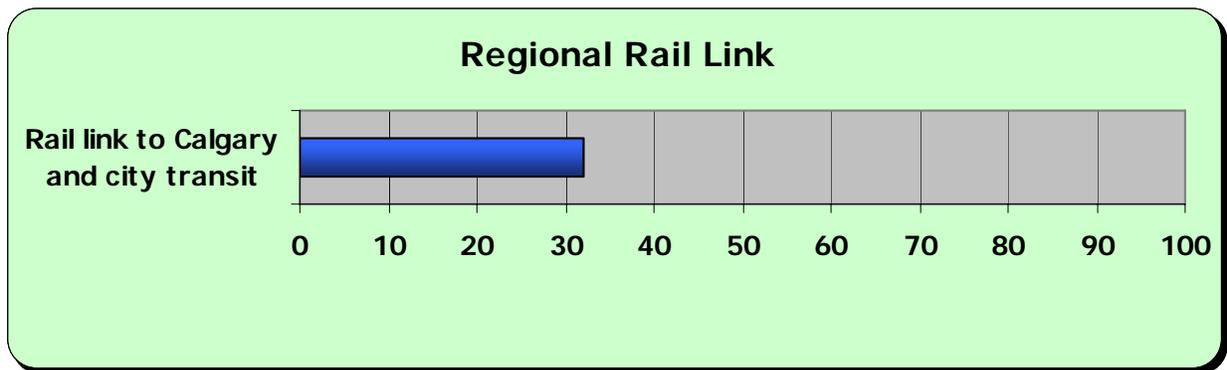
Again, this question reflected the difficulty some participants had with thinking in terms of a 30 to 50 year vision. One participant characterized the possibility of air transport in the area as ‘silly’ because of terrain issues, but society went from the first airplane to landing on the moon in only 66 years.



Rail link

A significant number of participants expressed a desire to see rail links (specifically light rail transit) connecting the area to the city of Calgary, as well as linking the towns of Black Diamond, Turner Valley and Okotoks.

There were no participant statements speaking against rail transport in the area, but several cautionary caveats were expressed as part of the vision, including preference for avoiding (going beneath) wildlife corridors, and the need for park-and-ride lots for area residents.



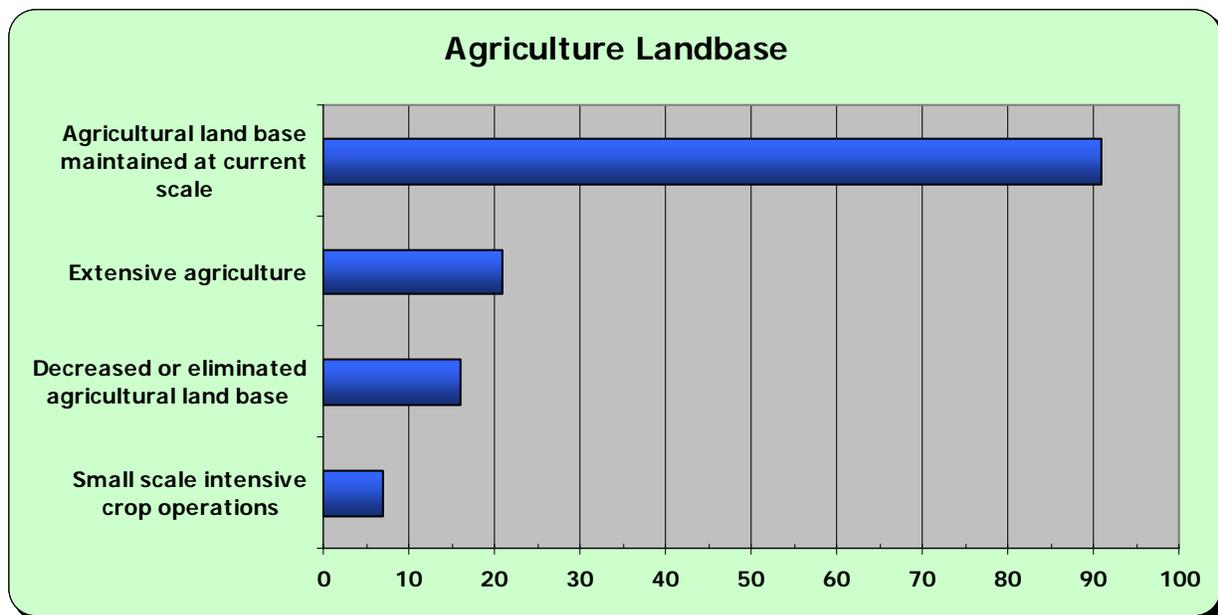
AGRICULTURE

Agricultural land base

A large number of participant statements expressed a desired future as having essentially the “same” amount of land in agriculture, or only minimum decreases (suggestions were in the range of 20% decrease). It should also be noted that participants were specifically told not to say ‘things will stay the same in the future’. This likely reflects the fervour with which citizens appreciate the agricultural land base in the community.

Those who did express a vision of the future community as having significantly less agricultural land (a minority), did so more from a resigned acceptance than a desire. Even so, they generally hoped to see a decrease of no more than 50%.

Those who expressed a vision of the character of that landscape saw it predominated with extensive agricultural practices (cattle grazing, haying). A smaller group of citizen participants envisioned a future agricultural landscape increasingly characterized by small scale intensive cropping operations.

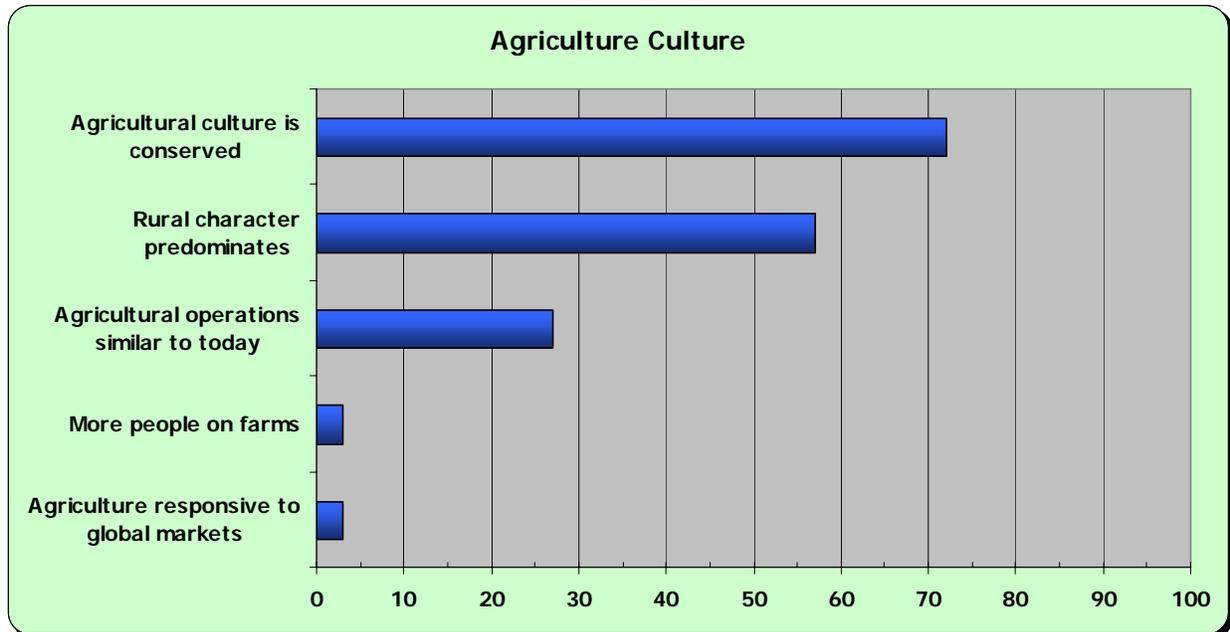


Agricultural culture

Participants seem generally to see agriculture as the basis of the cultural identity of the community in 30 to 50 years. In particular, they hope to see long-term families still attached to the community and land, the Cowboy Trail a prevalent and preserved feature, and more local businesses based on the community's agricultural character.

Tied very closely to that is the desire to see the rural character continue to predominate. Although, that character includes desired visions of acreages and stately homes, and winding rural roadways, it also speaks to a desire to see only small industry that is based on agriculture, and more market garden opportunities.

A significant number of participant statement included preference for a future where agricultural operations were similar today. A very small minority envisioned a community where more people were on the farm, and local agriculture is formed to be responsive to global markets.

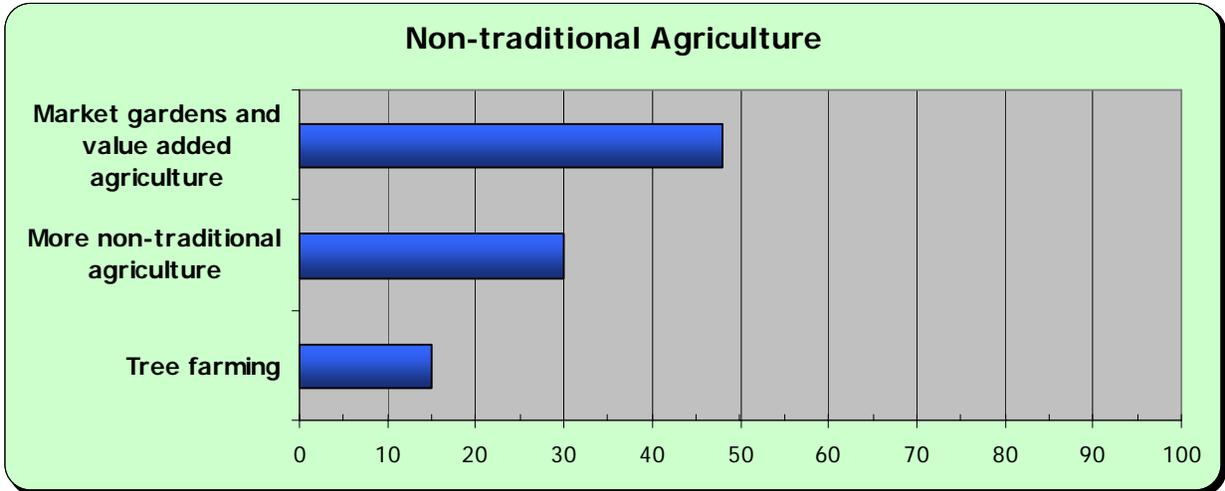


Non-traditional agriculture

As participants looked to the future, they saw agriculture that is vibrant but which has better embraced non-traditional options.

Market garden operations, and value-added, agriculture-related opportunities were seen as more prominent. In particular, citizens saw more market gardens (employing locals), year round markets, blacksmiths and saddlers, and greenhouses.

Specific examples of non-traditional agriculture included more organic crops and livestock, elk ranching, and more sheep. A large number of participants spoke of a future with more tree farming replacing current crop or livestock farming.



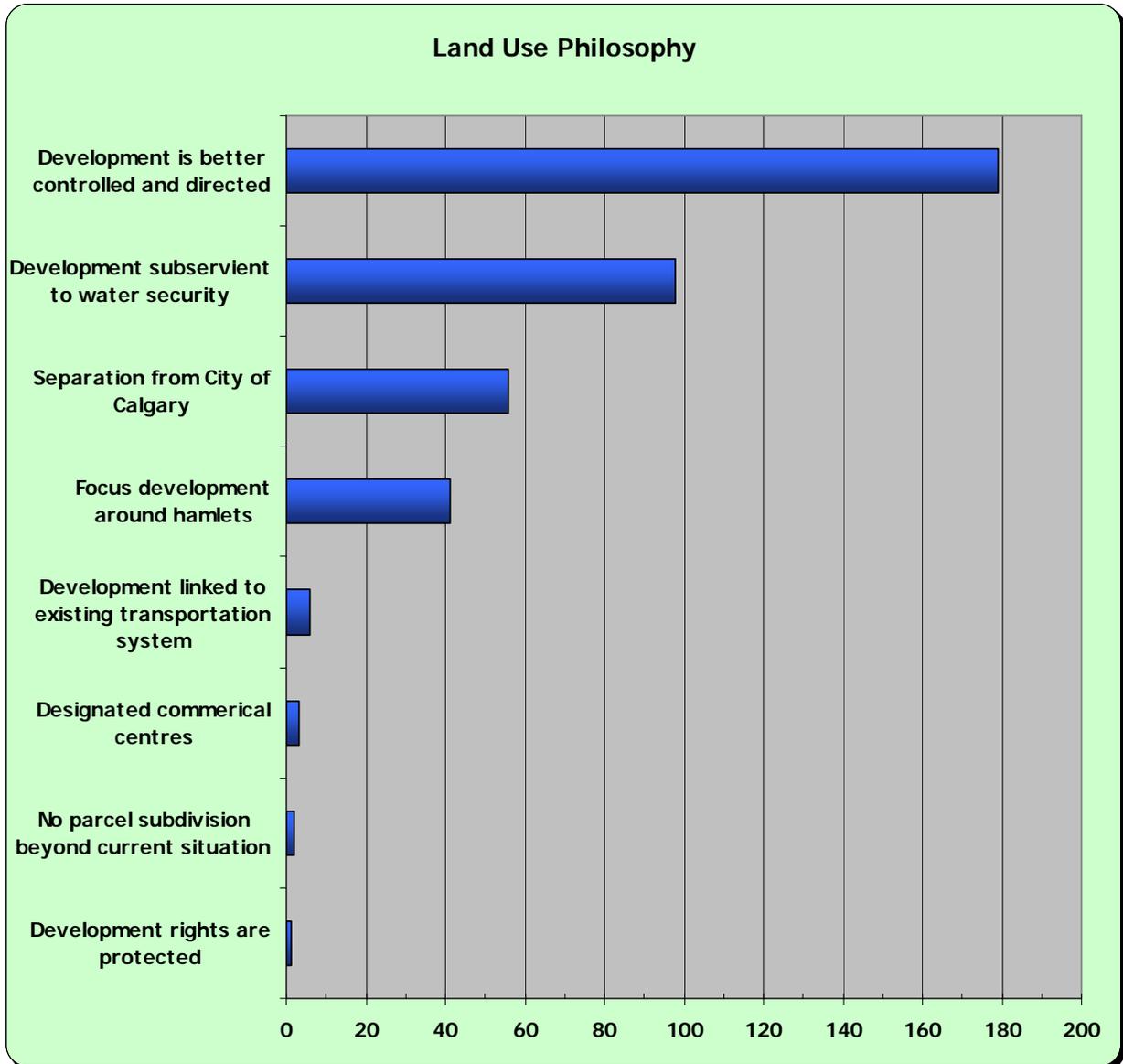
DEVELOPMENT

Land use philosophy

Getting sense of the community's future vision for land use requires looking across all the Vision categories. It is clear that the future view of development activity is one of better control. References for the need to control development (primarily residential housing), appeared in participant statements written under the Agriculture, Commerce and Employment, Environment, Housing, Lifestyles, and Other vision categories. References were made in particular to a future community where considerations of agriculture, conservation areas and wildlife, and scenic viewscapes are paramount to development.

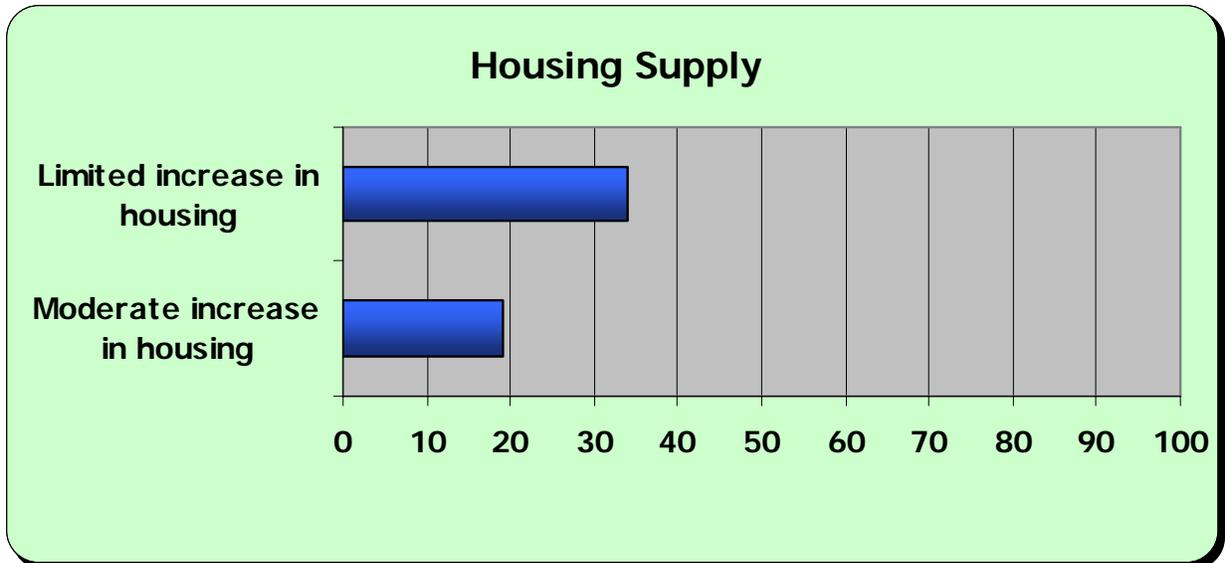
Looking at some of the other vision elements in conjunction with the vision element, "Development is better controlled and directed", begins to show the land use philosophy which emerges from the collective community statements. Top on that list is the vision of a community where water security overrides all other considerations related to development. Similarly, citizens indicated a desired future where residential and commercial development that did occur was concentrated around and within the existing hamlets, and that there is a physical separation from the city of Calgary.

Less well supported, but related, vision elements included the desire for development to be linked to the transportation system, and no further subdivision. Interestingly, there was virtually no mention of private property rights in relation to the right to seek to develop.



Housing supply

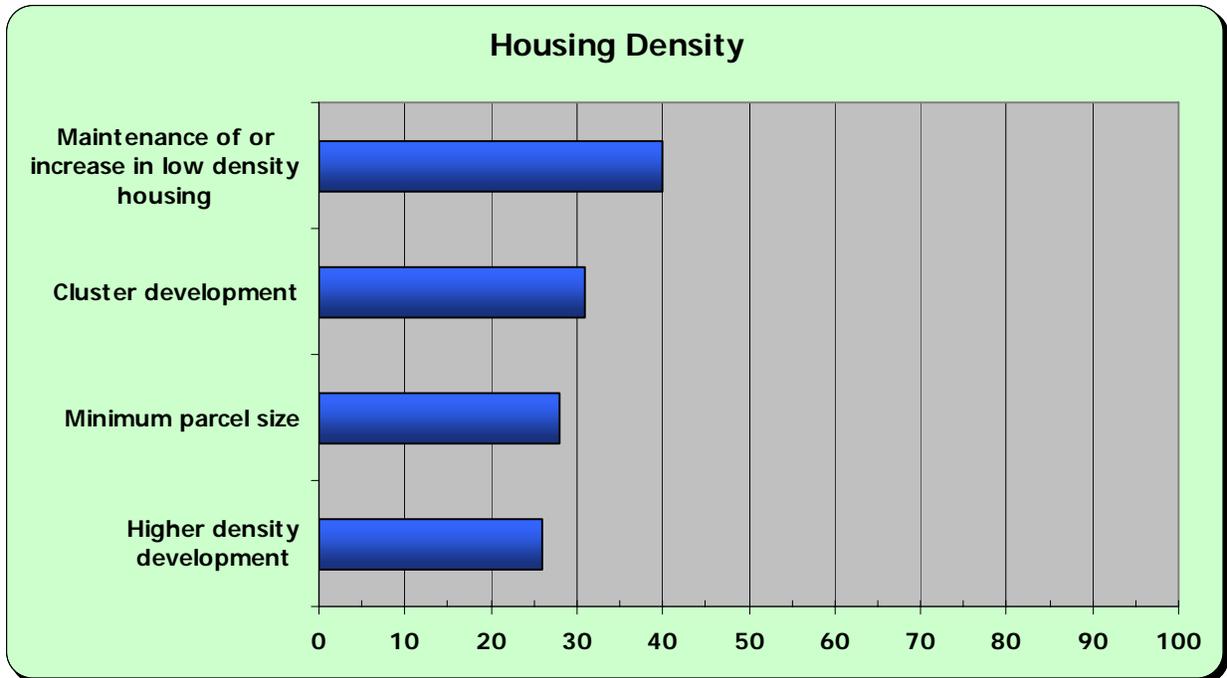
Similar to the case noted above when looking only at the statements included under the *Housing* vision category, there was a marked preference for a future that reflected a limited (less than or equal to 2x current supply, or 1.75% increase per annum over 40 years) to moderate (between 2x and 5x current supply, or up to 4.1% increase per annum over 40 years) growth in housing supply, with no statement indicating a preferred future of greater than 5x current supply.



Housing density

When looking at the community's vision for the *density* of housing, there was a relatively even split between whether the future should hold a higher density of housing or a lower density when looking only at the *Housing* vision element. However, when vision elements were tallied across all vision categories, there was a greater preference indicated for low density housing, and a significant number of participant statements envisioning a regulated minimum lot size to maintain that low density.

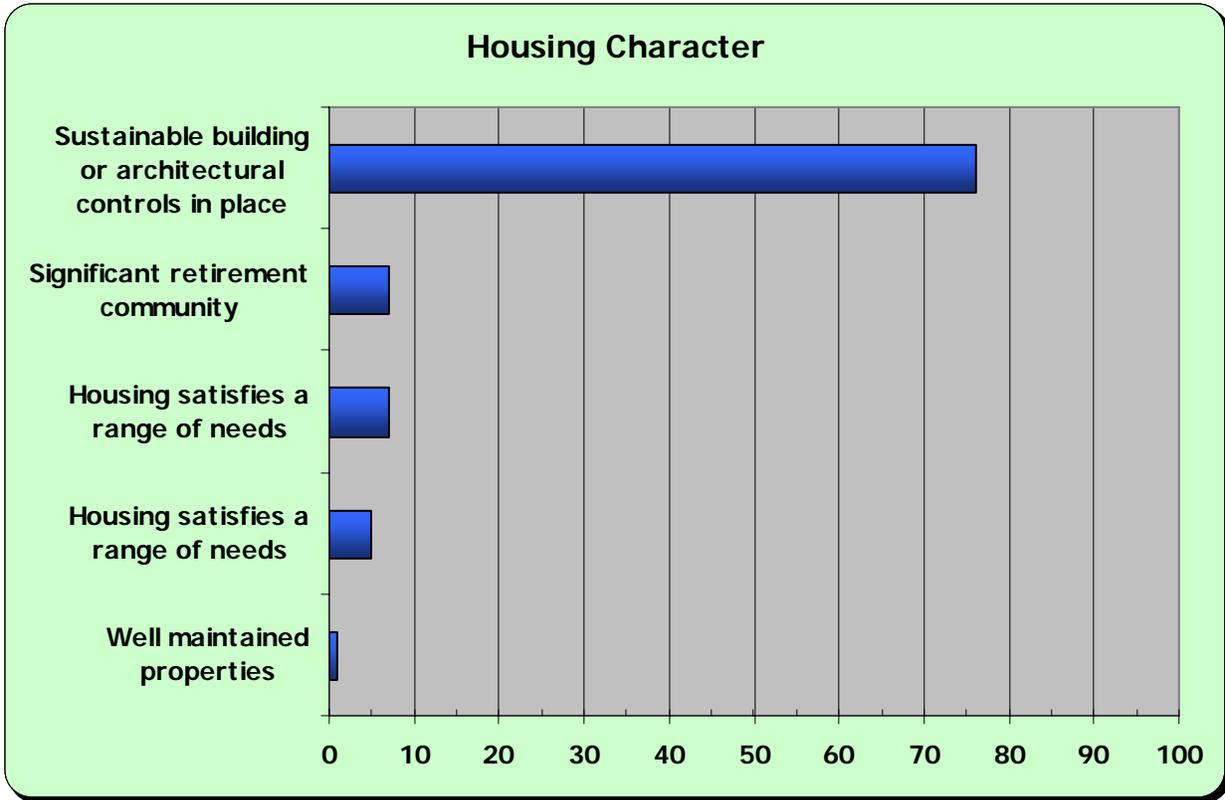
Where higher density was envisioned (around and within existing hamlets), citizens saw this development clustered in some fashion.



Character of housing

When participants looked to the character of the housing in the community in 30 to 50 years, they saw houses with more architectural controls, chiefly in support of sustainability and light pollution control. Participant statements emphasized houses with mandated water efficiency, alternative energy regimes and strict controls on yard lights. As well, they saw house sizes restricted in size, restrictions against mobile homes, and more enforcement of clean property bylaws.

One of the sub-themes that emerged was that the future community would be more characterized by retirees (~20%), and that housing options would support that (retirement residences). Also, a small number of citizens expressed a desire to see a community which represented a broad range of socio-economic echelons, included the development of affordable cooperatives.



GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The calculations of the vision element (code) frequencies provide the highest level of quantification of the data from the community visioning exercise, but the lowest level of interpretation. The summary of that data, especially by emergent theme, moves away from the quantification, but more into the interpretation, and therefore more into the type of information most useful to anyone wishing to apply the results of this exercise. This section is the next step in that evolution, seeking to draw a few generalized conclusions about the data, and put them in terms explicitly intended to support the next steps in creating a community vision for the Priddis Millarville area. Most of these conclusions relate to the emerging picture of the future being crafted by the Priddis Millarville area residents, though a couple relate to the process of getting to that vision.

ARTICULATING VALUES IN TERMS OF 'VISION' WAS DIFFICULT

Participants in the exercise had difficulty articulating their thoughts and their values about the community in terms of a 'vision.' This was not surprising, but it is important to point out, as it must continue to be taken into account as the community continues on the path towards generating a common vision.

More specifically, the difficulties were:

1. A tendency toward giving 'strategies' (the steps taken to achieve a desired end state) rather than the 'vision' (the desired end state).
2. A focus on the negative (what we don't want) versus the positive (what we do want); imagine building a house based on a list of things a prospective homeowner does not want.
3. An inability or unwillingness to look far enough into the future; one participant described the question of air transport in 50 years as "silly" despite the world moving from the first powered flight to the moon landing in 66 years.

These are not challenges specific to the participant group, and in fact they did quite well for a first attempt. However, future steps in the visioning process will have to be aware of this limitation.

FRUSTRATION EXISTS ON A NUMBER OF FRONTS

Despite being specifically and repeatedly instructed not to list items they do NOT want to see in the future, many participants did just that. A good portion of the participant statements had to be re-framed as positives in order to be coded in the analysis.

This likely reflects less on their aptitude for this sort of exercise, and more on their frustration with the current state of affairs in the community on a number of fronts. Descriptions of features that they did not want to see came in all vision categories.

CONCERN IS HIGH REGARDING NATURE AND PACE OF DEVELOPMENT

It is clear that a number of vision elements reflect a concern about the nature and pace of development in the area. These were reflected in a desire to see a change in:

- *Priorities* – participants commented frequently on the need to re-adjust priorities for the future, putting consideration of water, wildlife and lifestyle ahead of development approvals;
- *Character* – participant comments indicated a fear that densities would be inappropriate, the rural feel of the area would be lost, and that developments would be too big (castles) and/or too inelegant (mobile homes);
- *Support* – residential growth was characterized as outstripping the ability to service the area, in particular that water and waste systems were inadequate;
- *Planning* – comments indicated a concern that development was proceeding with due consideration of the appropriate transportation (dead-end residential roads), impact on the water systems, and the need to direct growth to certain areas (hamlets).

ANXIETY ABOUT WATER FOR TODAY ECHOED IN VISION

A vision of the future often reflects a concern for the present, and this was clearly the case with water. Issues related to the management of surface water, groundwater, and sewage were stressed throughout the participant responses, and were arguably the most adamant and consensual aspect of the future vision. Participants saw, or hoped for, a community where the safety and security of the surface and groundwater supply were paramount (especially in relation to development activity), that sewage systems were sophisticated and capable, and that alternative water management strategies were in place and effective.

CONCERN ABOUT WILDLIFE IS SIGNIFICANT AND SOPHISTICATED

Vision statements describing a more secure environment for local wildlife were very numerous, identifying a desired future with specific reference to conservation areas, wildlife corridors, sensitive species, and the need to protect habitat. Additionally, the supporting text represented a greater-than-average understanding of linkage zones, wetlands, predator-prey relationships, natural regions, habitat pressures, and other such conservation biology concepts. Few communities with whom the Miistakis Institute has worked have been able to articulate their concern for wildlife in these terms.

MAINTAINING THE 'RURAL' CHARACTER IS PARAMOUNT

Not surprisingly, the data indicated a widespread desire to see the Priddis-Millarville area maintained as a 'rural' area in the future. This is evidenced in the desire for

un-straightened roads, dead-end country roads, larger 'acreage'-sized lots, sizable green spaces, continuing agricultural character, and ecologically sensitive areas.

However, the definition of 'rural' appears unclear, and perhaps inconsistent. Some look for 'stately' homes, others for farm houses; some for basic services, others for the full array of services. Etc.

Despite the stated goal, the challenges of remaining 'rural' on the edge of a city growing as fast as Calgary are significant.

AGRICULTURE IS ENVISIONED AS CHANGING

Despite a very strong desire on the part of participants to see agriculture continue to be a strong component of the community, and the agricultural land base persist in its current state, participants expressed a vision of agriculture with a significantly different look. Responses indicated an expectation that along with a decrease in extensive agriculture (cattle and haying operations), would be an increase in value-added agriculture, smaller-scale intensive crop production, tree farming, specialty livestock, market gardens, and locally marketed products.

HIGH LEVEL OF DESIRE FOR REGULATION

Many of the participant statements indicated the route to a desired community led through a myriad of regulations. There were high levels of frequency and agreement for increased regulation, including architectural controls, controls on recreation, water restrictions, wildlife protection, directed development areas, etc.

This sort of apparent trend has to be taken with significant caution: it is human nature to want to regulate others, but not necessarily oneself.

QUALITY OF LIFE FIGURES PROMINENTLY

The Priddis-Millarville area is a region chosen by residents for quality of life reasons (as opposed to economic reasons, local industry, convenience, affordability, etc.), and their vision for the future is likewise based on being a community that defines itself by its commitment to quality of life. Participants saw a community that provided ample recreation opportunities, low-impact transportation, unobtrusive housing and roadways, scenic beauty, and traditional lifestyles.

A RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY, BUT NOT A BEDROOM COMMUNITY

Responses indicated a view of a community which was primarily residential, with limited commercial and industrial outside of agriculture. Despite a vision that the city of Calgary would continue to be the major employment centre for the community, there was a vision of increased opportunities for local and home-based employment in the area. There is a strong sense of the future community being a complete community, with a sophisticated level of local services and facilities, thriving agricultural industry, age-in-place capability, small-scale tourism, and local culture-based enterprises.

The collective vision is one of a community separate from, but connected to the city of Calgary. Major employment and the full spectrum of services would come from Calgary, but participant statements related to rail links, transit connections, commuting pods often dovetail with those related to maintaining rural roadways, significant conservation areas, a local employment base, and culture-based enterprises and recreation.

PARTICIPANTS PROVIDED A RELATIVELY CONSISTENT VISION

Based on the vision elements, relatively few contradictions appear across the community, indicating a relatively solid and common vision. For example, visions of water supply security come with visions of alternate water management approaches; and maintenance of the 'rural' character comes with controls on roadways, lot sizes and housing.

However, there are some inconsistencies. For example, maintenance of the agricultural land base at current levels is paired with at least a 2x increase in the current housing supply.

NEXT STEPS/RECOMMENDATIONS

It would be somewhat Quixotic to expect that after a 1.5-hour community visioning exercise that a comprehensive and shared vision could be created for the Priddis-Millarville area. However, the May 16th community meeting, and this subsequent analysis, do provide both a very solid base for the Priddis Millarville Residents Association and others in the community to move forward on refining a vision, and also a useful tool in the interim.

The following suggested actions are provided in that spirit.

RESPONSE

The Priddis-Millarville Residents Association (PMRA) should develop a specific response to the May 16, 2007 visioning exercise, and – more specifically – to this report. Currently it represents the views of the Miistakis Institute, but the interested audiences will be anxious to hear what this means to the residents group.

The basis of the response should be, “What this suggests to us”. A synopsis should be created to briefly answer that question, then circulated widely, including a media release.

DISTRIBUTION

The Priddis-Millarville Residents Association should circulate the full report as widely as possible. Digital copies can be made available through the PMRA web site, while print copies should be made available to the local library, and key audiences.

The most important immediate audience will be the Council and senior staff at the Municipal District of Foothills No. 31. Copies should be made available to the M.D., and a presentation should be made focused on a summary of the findings and the PMRA synopsis.

The PMRA should convene another meeting of the Priddis-Millarville area residents for a “this is what we heard” meeting. The PMRA may wish to outline the next steps in the visioning process (see below), but at a minimum, it will be an opportunity for residents to see the results of their input, and have a chance to discuss them as a community.

USE

Although this report does not represent a complete vision, that does not mean it does not have an immediate utility in that respect. If acceptable to the PMRA, the report should become a staple in all responses to activity in the community.

The intent of the eventual comprehensive shared vision is as a touchstone past which all issues of interest to the PMRA should be passed. For example, Municipal

Development Plans, Land Use Bylaws, Area Structure Plans, development proposals, etc. should all be measured against the vision to see if they support the ultimate goals of the community.

In the interim, this document can function in that same manner, providing a basis on which the PMRA can comment on planning and activity in the community, especially relative to the emergent themes.

FUTURE VISIONING

The next steps for the PMRA will be refining the themes emerging from this work, with the ultimate goal not only of producing a comprehensive vision for the area, but also of ensuring it is understood and well supported by the greater portion of the residents in the community.

As a first step, this report has identified what people have *said*; the next step will be to understand what they *meant*. Each of the emerging themes illustrates in vague and general terms the rough direction the community wants to go. Removing the vagaries, quantifying the characteristics described (where possible), and discussing the implications of various vision elements will allow residents to establish their true goals.

Convening focus groups on each of these themes, or even a workshop on the full suite, will allow the PMRA to lay out more clearly the true desires of the community relative to the future character of the area. The PMRA should consider retaining the Co-Design Group or similar co-design specialists to assist with this task. These graphic artists and planners create a visual representation of community members' hopes for their area by drawing and re-drawing (on the fly) various scenes of the community based on residents' input. Visuals such as drawings give people a more accessible sense of the potential look of their community, necessarily focused on what people want, rather than what they do not want.

This activity will also go a long way to creating the critical buy-in to the eventual product.