

CHAT

COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTHY AGING TRANSITIONS

Community ASSESSMENT

————— FOR THE —————

TOWN of ROLLINSFORD

GREATER SEACOAST COMMUNITY HEALTH



PUBLISHED: OCT 2022

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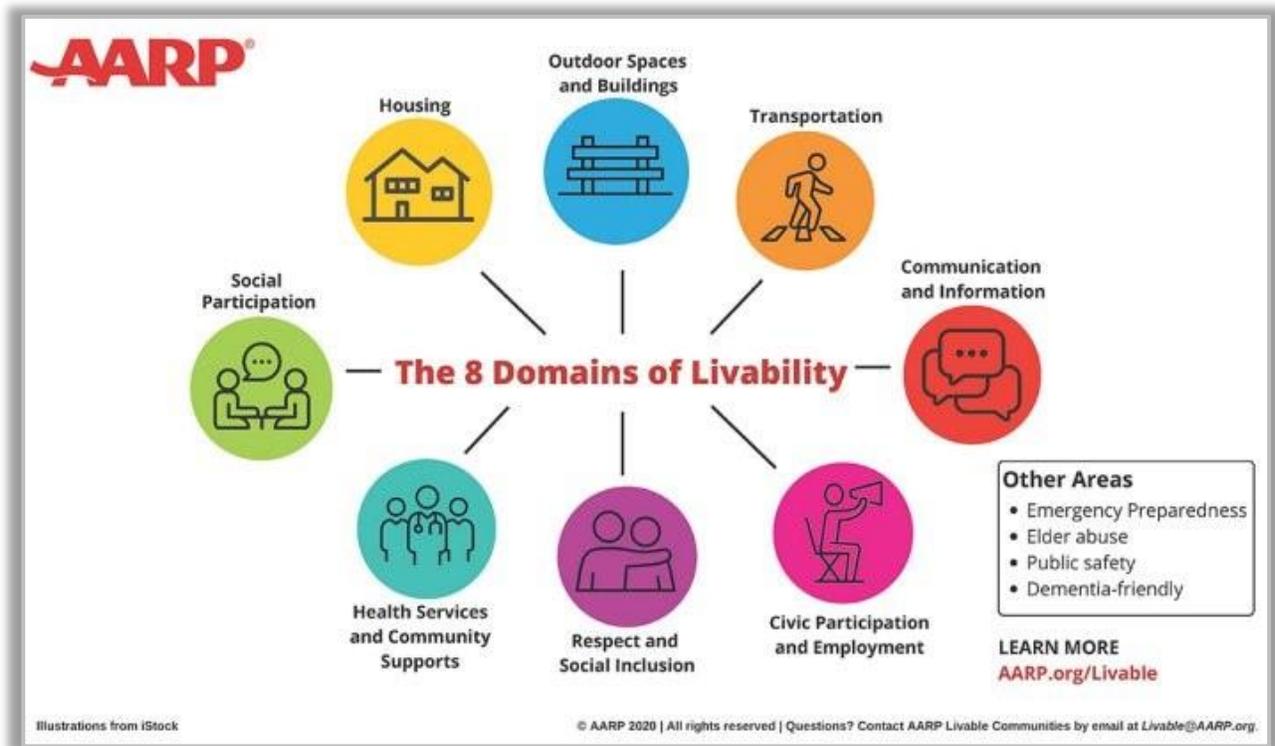
INTRODUCTION AND FRAMEWORK

[Communities for Healthy Aging Transitions \(CHAT\)](#), a regional project, examined age-friendliness in Strafford County, as well as Brookfield, Wakefield, Newmarket, Nottingham and Northwood in Carroll and Rockingham counties, respectively. The project was funded by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation and conducted in partnership with Greater Seacoast Community Health (GSCH)'s Strafford County Public Health Network (SCPHN) program.

The project mission was to engage our communities looking at and promoting diverse, equitable, inclusive, livable environments where people can grow and thrive, regardless of age.

To achieve this mission, SRPC and partners at SCPHN designed engagement activities to understand strengths and opportunities in each community, which were framed within [AARP's eight domains of livability](#) from its [Livable Communities program](#): Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Housing, Transportation, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, and Health Services and Community Support.

The qualitative and quantitative information presented in this Community Assessment was also framed within the eight domains of livability.



CHAT OUTREACH PROCESS

SRPC and partners at SCPHN enacted a modified outreach process due to the pandemic. Most of the outreach for the CHAT project was conducted via online channels as described below.

COMMUNITY ZOOM FORUMS

Residents from across the region were invited to participate in a series of seven municipal or subregional community Zoom forums between February and June 2021. SRPC and SCPHN held a Zoom community forum for the Town in addition to the surrounding communities of Lee and Madbury, on April 22, 2021.

SURVEY

Launched in early 2021, the CHAT online survey was distributed through multiple regional outlets, through social media, and shared with those who participated at the community Zoom forums. Eleven Rollinsford residents responded to the survey.

POSTCARD ART ACTIVITY

With the pandemic, SRPC and GSCH brainstormed creative ways to engage people and give them a different outlet for expressing themselves. SRPC staff designed and printed postcards that prompted individuals to draw (paint, collage, etc.) or write what it means to age as you play, live or work in each community. These were distributed at various Covid-19 vaccine clinics and a variety of other locations.

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

The above outreach strategies were supplemented with community draft assessment reviews by community representatives. Draft review was provided by Herb Ueda, SRPC Commissioner representing Rollinsford.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

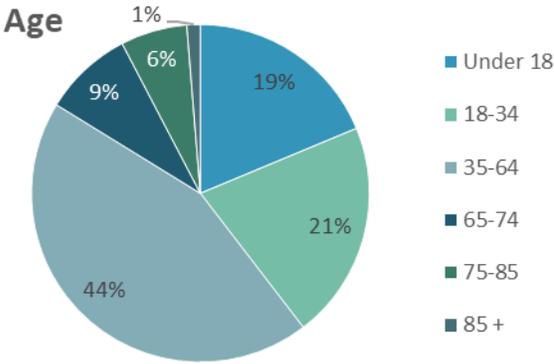
Rollinsford lies along the bank of the tidal Salmon Falls River. Several large open fields with rolling hills remain throughout town adding to the rural feel of the community.

The downtown area is the most densely populated portion of town and surrounds the multi-building Salmon Falls Mills complex. Historic uses of the mills included cotton and textile production. Today, these mill buildings are the core of a small downtown which contains the library and other small businesses and art studios.

The Town is home to several churches, a legion, community gardens and several popular businesses including Wentworth Greenhouse and Alexanders Italian restaurant. Rollinsford's Association for Rollinsford Culture and History (ARCH) is the community's active historic society, and regularly hosts community tours of the old town cemetery, reenactments of colonial times, and paddles on the Salmon Falls River. The town has one elementary school, and older Rollinsford students attend the Marshwood district middle and high school located in South Berwick, Maine.

The outreach process, combined with supplementary data analysis, was used to outline the many ways in which Rollinsford provides an inclusive, welcoming, supportive, and healthy environment for people of all ages, as well as opportunities for improvement. The findings are presented below in relation to each of the eight AARP domains of livability.

Total Population	2579
Median Age	45.6
Total Housing Units	1040
Number of Jobs in Town	527
Life expectancy	82.1



Sex



LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #1 - OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

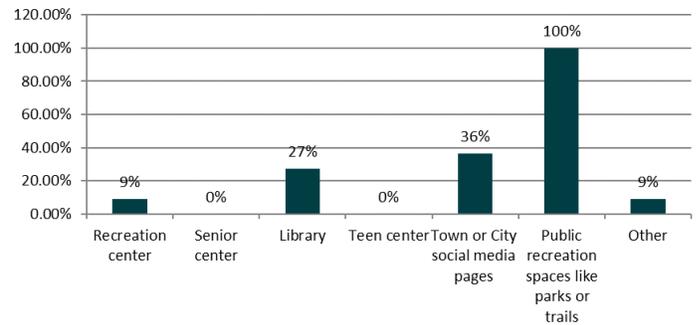
“People need public places to gather — indoors and out. Green spaces, seating and accessible buildings (elevators, zero-step entrances, staircases with railings) can be used and enjoyed by people of all ages.”¹

DATA

Recreation Site Type	Number of Sites
Beach	0
Boating Access	2
Community Garden	1
Disc Golf Course	0
Dog Park	0
Fishing Access	0
Golf Course	0
Gym	0
Open Space and Trails	2
Park	3
Playground	1
Pool	0
Rail Trail	0
Skatepark	0
Skating Rink	0
Sledding Hill	0
Sports Fields and Courts	3
Total	12

Community Resources	Number of Sites
Places of Worship	0
Historic Places, Buildings, or Structures	4
Libraries	1
Medical and Health Care Facilities	0
Governmental Services	1
Non-Governmental Services	2
Fire and Police Stations	1
Schools	1
Total	10

Do you use any of these public spaces in your town?



18% of land in Rollinsford is conserved.





STRENGTHS

- **Salmon Falls Mill Building** – The former cotton and textile mill now houses over 100 artists, who utilize rooms as studio spaces. The mill is also home to the Rollinsford Public Library in addition to many other businesses like HomeGrown Eats and Belletete Ballet Performing Arts.
- **The Salmon Falls River** – This 38-mile river is a wonderful natural resource for water sports like kayaking or canoeing.
- **Gold Star Park** – This fenced-in, shaded park provides a peaceful setting along the Salmon Falls River with a gazebo and green space for all to enjoy.
- **Rollinsford Public Library** - This space in the Salmon Falls Mill building offers abundant resources (see Social Participation section) and has meeting space available.
- **Additional recreational resources**- 100% of respondents on the CHAT online survey noted making use of the natural and recreational resources in town like the Scoutland Loop Trail or the Foundry Boat Launch, in addition to those mentioned above.
- **Rollinsford Community Garden** – This community space, located on Foundry Street, is maintained by the Rollinsford Garden and Local Sustainability Club, which is a 501(c)(3).



OPPORTUNITIES

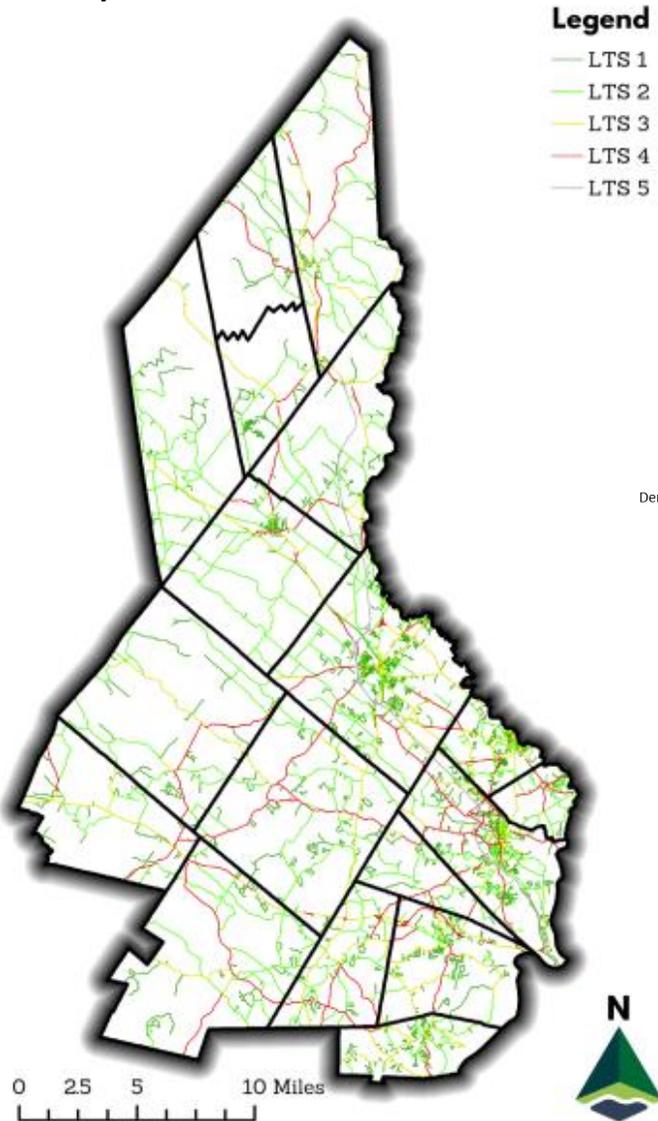
- **Utilize top floor of Town Hall** – It was noted during the CHAT Community Zoom Forum that there could be potential for the town to better utilize the space on the second floor of town hall. It was suggested that it could be used to hold community events.
- **Better market and utilize the Salmon Falls Mill Building** – In this 2015 Master Plan the town noted in its recommendations to, “Work closely with the owners of Rollinsford Mills to develop the property into a true “mixed use” facility that will provide a means of high-quality housing and economic development for the town.”ⁱⁱ

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #2 - TRANSPORTATION

“Driving shouldn’t be the only way to get around. Pedestrians need sidewalks and safe, crossable streets. Dedicated bicycle lanes benefit nondrivers and drivers alike. Public transit options can range from the large-scale (trains, buses, light rail) to the small (taxis, shuttles or ride share services).”ⁱⁱⁱ

DATA

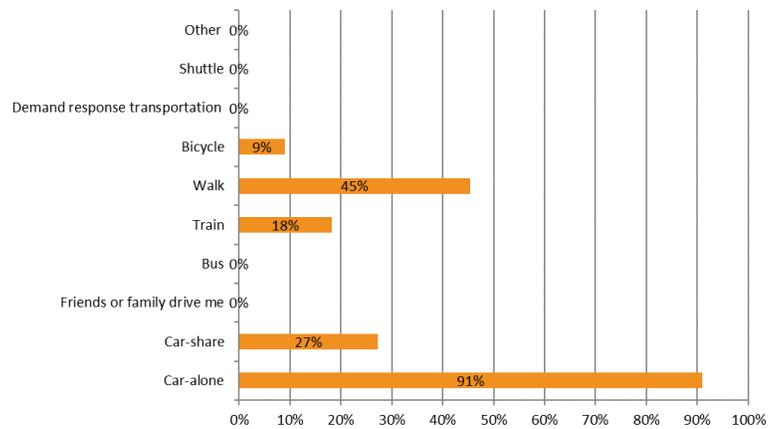
Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress



LTS Rating	LTS Rating Description	Population Class
LTS 1	Lowest stress ; suitable for all riders	Kids and Beginners
LTS 2	Lower stress ; suitable for adults with some experience	Willing but Wary Riders
LTS 3	Moderate stress ; suitable for those who ride regularly	Comfortably Confident Riders
LTS 4	High stress ; suitable for experienced riders with tolerance to high speeds and traffic	Exposure-Experienced Riders
LTS 5	Bicycles prohibited	

Source: Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress. Year: 2019. Granularity: SRPC.

How do you and your household members generally travel around for work, school, recreation, or other errands?



COAST Routes (including ADA On-Demand Transit)	0
Wildcat Routes	1
Demand Response Transit	Yes



STRENGTHS

- **Access to main thoroughways** - Rollinsford is in a prime location with State Highway access via Route 4, and Route 236 in Maine.
- **Compact, walkable downtown area** – The downtown area is in close proximity to areas like the Salmon Falls Mill building, and services like the post office and Town Hall are walkable.
- **Community Rides** – “The Alliance for Community Transportation (ACT) offers curb-to-curb non-emergency medical transportation called Community Rides. Community Rides is open to older adults (60+) or individuals with a qualifying disability who live within ACT's 38-town service area, which includes Rollinsford. Trips are provided only to destinations within the 38-town service area as well. Community Rides is meant to serve as a "provider of last resort" for people who aren't eligible for other services such as COAST ADA Paratransit, Portsmouth Senior Transportation, or Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels Senior Shuttle.”^{iv}



OPPORTUNITIES

- **Increased public transportation or rideshare** - With the aging population, residents vocalized the need for increased public transportation options that are affordable. While COAST Bus provides transportation in surrounding communities like Dover and Somersworth, it does not serve Rollinsford. Reliable transportation options are important for those that do not drive alone. This could be visualized in creative ways like network of volunteer drivers or rideshare for seniors, and the community in general, or by leveraging ridesharing options through resources like the CommuteSmart NH online and mobile app.
- **Sidewalk improvements** – There are opportunities to improve the Town’s current sidewalk network. On the CHAT online survey, a respondent noted that “there is no safe way to walk on Oak St.”

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #3 – HOUSING

“AARP surveys consistently find that the vast majority of older adults want to reside in their current home or community for as long as possible. Doing so is possible if a home is designed or modified for aging in place, or if a community has housing options that are suitable for differing incomes, ages and life stages.”v

DATA

Housing Stock

■ Single family ■ Multi-family ■ Mobile Home



Own vs Rent



1,040 total housing units in Rollinsford.



STRENGTHS

- **Mix of housing options** –With 23% renting and 77% owning a home, there are options for both renters, and those looking to purchase. This includes single and multi-family homes, in addition to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- **New construction** – In 2020 building permits were issued for 11 new single residential units. In 2019, 19 multi-family units were permitted.



OPPORTUNITIES

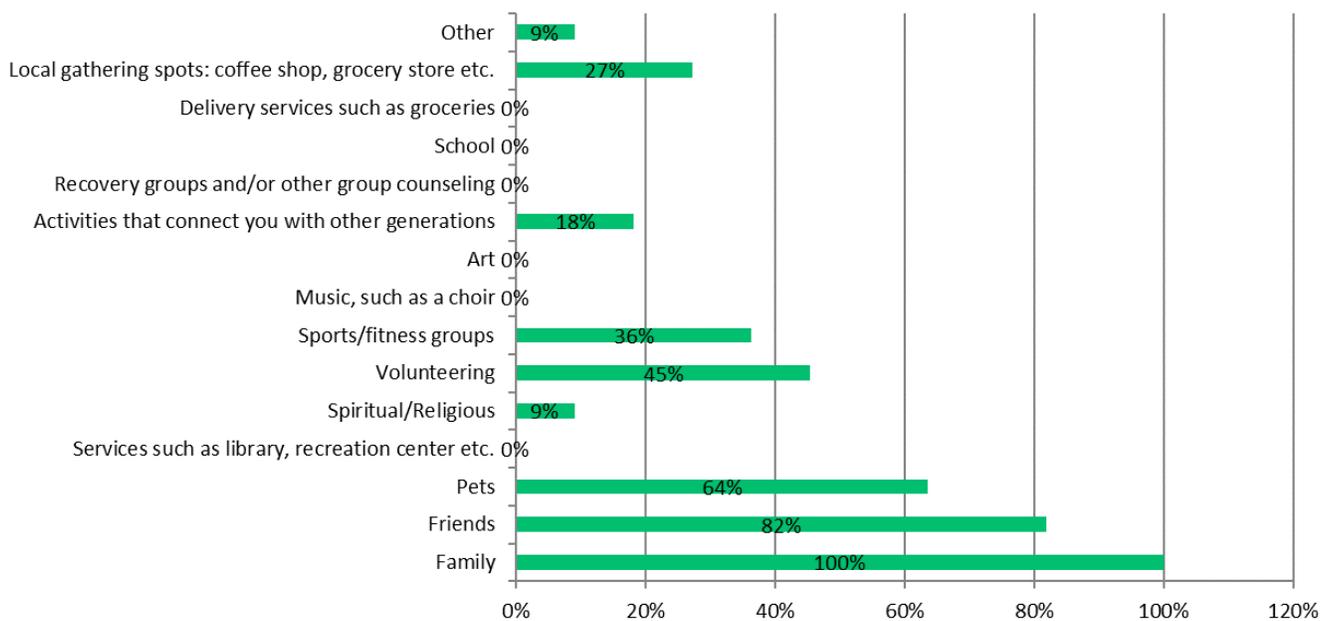
- **Increased housing options for the aging population** – There are currently no options for assisted living, nursing homes, and independent senior living in town.
- **Increase in affordable housing stock** – There could be a greater variety of housing options at different prices considering that 15% of Rollinsford residents are considered low income.

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #4 – SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

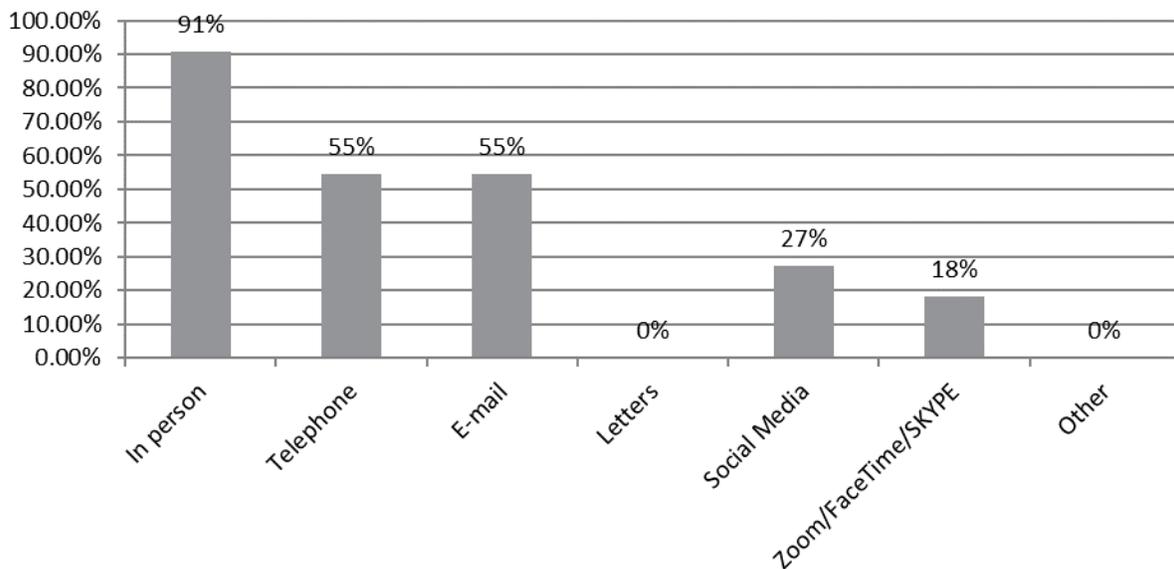
“Regardless of a person’s age, loneliness is often as debilitating a health condition as having a chronic illness or disease. Sadness and isolation can be combated by having opportunities to socialize and the availability of accessible, affordable and fun social activities.”^{vi}

DATA

What are your main social interactions? Check all that apply



How do you most commonly socialize? Check all that apply.





STRENGTHS

- **Artists of Salmon Falls Mills Open Studios** – Periodically the artists with studio space in the Salmon Falls Mill building invite the public to come and view their art.
- **Rollinsford Recreation Committee** – This entity promotes sports programming that is shared with bordering communities like Somersworth, South Berwick, and Eliot, including soccer and summer recreation camps.
- **Salmon Falls Family Fun Day**- Salmon Falls Family Fun Day is an annual community event held in mid-September with fun activities for the whole family like touch a truck, dancing performances, and fireworks.
- **Seacoast Eat Local Winter Farmers Markets at Wentworth Greenhouses** – This seasonal program draws hundreds to Wentworth Greenhouses for local produce and crafts.
- **Rollinsford’s Association for Rollinsford Culture and History (ARCH)** - The community’s active historic society regularly hosts community tours of the old town cemetery, reenactments of colonial times, and paddles on the Salmon Falls River.



OPPORTUNITIES

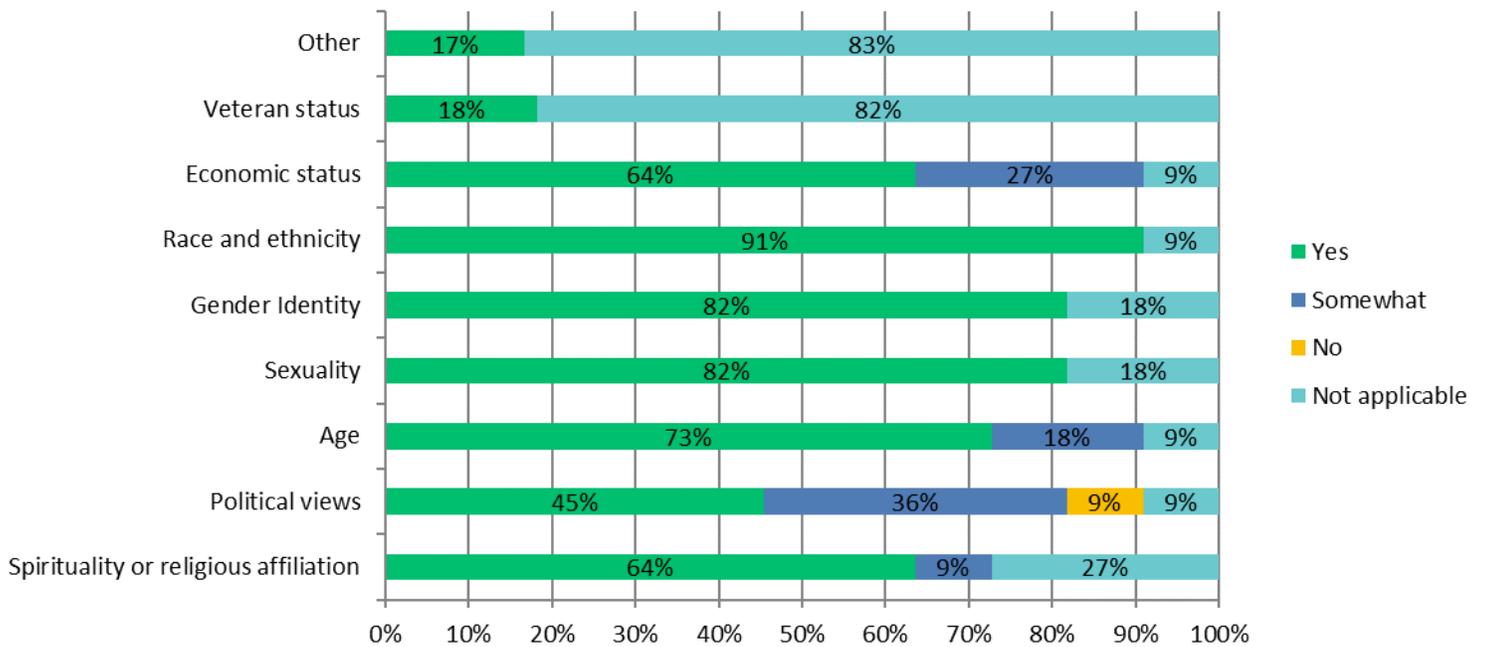
- **A designated community center** - Rollinsford does not currently have a recreation or senior center. Having a space in the community that could be utilized for this type of programming could allow for increased community events.
- **Senior programming**- In the CHAT online survey it was noted that having, “group travel opportunities (i.e., to Boston or NYC for cultural experiences - theater, museums, etc.) would make it better to age in town.

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #5 – RESPECT AND INCLUSION

“Everyone wants to feel valued. Intergenerational gatherings and activities are a great way for young and older people to learn from one another, honor what each has to offer and, at the same time, feel good about themselves.”^{vii}

DATA

Do you feel accepted in your community with regards to:



STRENGTHS

- **Close-knit community**- Rollinsford is a rural town with a close community that helps each other out. The Town’s master plan vision states “maintain the friendly small-town atmosphere through a strong sense of community by encouraging community functions, and recreational opportunities.”^{viii}
- **Acceptance in the Community** - Residents feel accepted in terms of their spirituality, politics, age, sexuality, race, and economic status in Rollinsford, as expressed on the CHAT online survey.



OPPORTUNITIES

- **Increase options for community connection**-Social isolation increased during the Covid-19, so opportunities for inclusion were difficult. Respondents to the CHAT online survey noted that social isolation had the biggest impact on their lives during this time along with loss of income and mental health effects. Increased options for socially inclusive events are most important following this period.

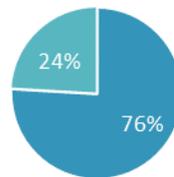
LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #6 – WORK AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

“Why does work need to be an all or nothing experience? An age-friendly community encourages older people to be actively engaged in community life and has opportunities for residents to work for pay or volunteer their skills.”ix

DATA

Income	Median Household Income	\$75,682
	Income Inequality (Gini Index)	0.43
	Low income households	14.96%
	High income households	8.50%

Ballots Cast



■ In-Person ■ Absentee

* This data is from the 2020 general election



527 total jobs in Rollinsford.



STRENGTHS

- **Proximity to Jobs** – According to the CHAT survey, residents of Rollinsford feel like they have access (via Route 4 and Maine 236) and proximity to jobs. Janco Inc. and Janco Electronics are the town’s largest employers.
- **Salmon Falls Mill building**- The Salmon Falls Mill building offers an opportunity for cottage industries and start-up companies to work in. It attracts artists and entrepreneurs that add significantly to the community.

- **Committee descriptions and openings posted on town website** – The town does a good job of posting the descriptions of all town committees on its website, and posts board openings on its homepage.



OPPORTUNITIES

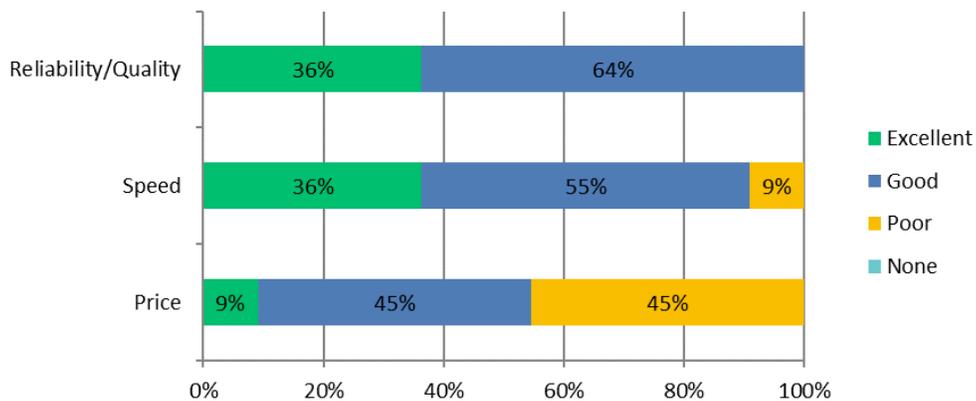
- **Beautification Committee** – In its 2015 Master Plan the town recommended, “the development (through volunteer efforts) of beautification programs for the town that tie the downtown elements together.”^x
- **Welcome new businesses in a way that balances with open space** – In its 2015 Master Plan the town recommended, “maintain[ing] an appropriate balance between economic development and the preservation of open space, natural resources and the environment”.^{xi}

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #7 – COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

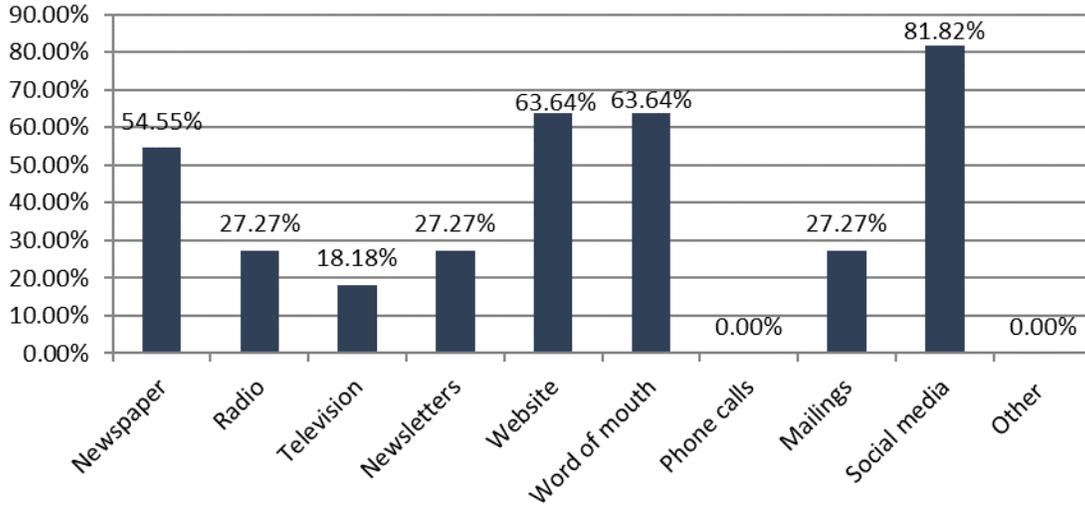
“We now communicate in ways few could have imagined a decade ago. Age-friendly communities recognize that information needs to be shared through a variety of methods since not everyone is tech-savvy, and not everyone has a smartphone or home-based access to the internet.”^{xii}

DATA

How would you rate your internet access in regard to? Please select none if you do not have internet access.



How do you learn about community news and activities? Check all that apply.

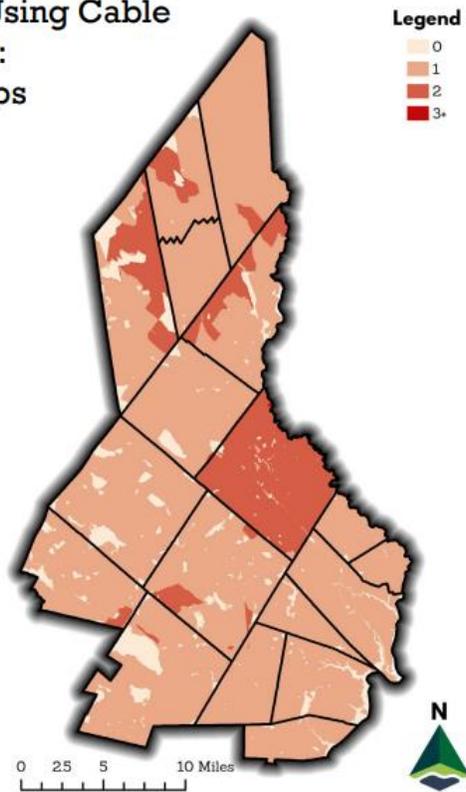


Broadband Access

Providers Using Fiber
Min. Speed:
100/20 Mbps



Providers Using Cable
Min. Speed:
100/20 Mbps





STRENGTHS

- **Community resources kiosk** - The Rollinsford library hosts a space with specific information on services and local news.
- **Official town Facebook page and email list** - The town maintains a Facebook page, @townofrollinsford where it posts about meetings, community news, and more! You can also sign up for the town's email list on their website.
- **Facebook town groups**– While not maintained or interacted with by the Town, town Facebook groups like “Rollinsford NH Happenings” and “You know you’re from Rollinsford if...” prove to be a popular source of what is going on in town.
- **Town website** – The town maintains a robust website with information about various happenings at the Town Hall, and important information for residents for essential business such as dog licensing and car registrations.



OPPORTUNITIES

- **Continue to utilize the Town YouTube Channel**- The town was utilizing staff through the library to post on-demand meeting videos and was also posting videos via Google Drive. This practice has not been maintained in 2022 and could be beneficial to upkeep to share news with residents.

LIVABILITY PRINCIPLE #8 – COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES

“At some point, every person of every age gets hurt, becomes ill or simply needs some help. While it’s important that assistance and care be available nearby, it’s essential that residents are able to access and afford the services required.”^{xiii}

DATA

Healthcare and Aging Services	Number of Sites
Assisted Living Sites	0
Nursing Homes	1*
Senior Centers	0
Primary Care Providers	52*
Hospitals	0
Community Health Centers	0
Home Health Agencies	8
Memory Cafes	0
Dementia Support Group	0
Total	51*

Community Resources	Number of Sites
Places of Worship	0
Historic Places, Buildings, or Structures	4
Libraries	1
Medical and Health Care Facilities	0
Governmental Services	1
Non-Governmental Services	2
Fire and Police Stations	1
Schools	1
TOTAL	10



STRENGTHS

- **Centrally located, with access to health services** – Rollinsford is adjacent to Dover and Somersworth, which both abound in health services like Wentworth Douglass Hospital and Goodwin Community Health.
- **The Rollinsford Public Library** – This public institution is an important community service. It provides free services for downloading eBooks, provides discounted museum passes, alongside free books, and computer access.



OPPORTUNITIES

- **Increased home care services-** On the CHAT online survey respondents noted that having affordable home care services in town would make it easier to age in Rollinsford. This could be something like small support services for elderly people; for example, someone to help clean or perform small house maintenance tasks, or even healthcare services.

NEXT STEPS

Following completion of the community assessments, SRPC and SCPHN staff will solicit interest from and work with a limited number of communities to develop action plans. Selected municipalities will be able to take the information in the community assessments a step further, to identify specific implementation strategies that respond to the assessment findings and aim to enhance the community’s “age-friendliness.” Communities will be selected based upon interest and engagement in promoting age friendly communities, local support and willingness to implement recommendations, and geographic diversity. With the goal of adoption, final plans will be presented to each community. There is also the opportunity for completion of one or two pilot projects that will be selected from the action plan recommendations. Lastly, SRPC and SCPHN will publish an extensive resource guide that will be widely distributed via channels appropriate to our key audiences.

ⁱ <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B6EUcqIIAf5COTJFbUYtRXRZSxc?resourcekey=0-oc6GZp0DYU9kl89m2I2Y0Q>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

^{iv} <https://communityrides.org/community-rides-0>

^v <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

^{vi} <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

^{vii} <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

^{viii} Town of Rollinsford Master Plan, Vision Toward 2020

^{ix} <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

^x <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B6EUcqIIAf5COTJFbUYtRXRZSxc?resourcekey=0-oc6GZp0DYU9kl89m2I2Y0Q>

^{xi} <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B6EUcqIIAf5COTJFbUYtRXRZSxc?resourcekey=0-oc6GZp0DYU9kl89m2I2Y0Q>

^{xii} <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>

^{xiii} <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2016/8-domains-of-livability-introduction.html>