

Patio Program Survey Results

SURVEY DETAILS

On August 14, 2023, Town Staff published a survey on Join the Conversation (JTC) for feedback about the Town's Temporary Patio Program. This survey was open until midnight on September 8, 2023.

Three hundred and ninety-four (394) respondents completed the survey. This response rate is above average for the Town's JTC site surveys. Over the past two years, the average number of survey responses is 161 per project.

The survey was advertised via a media release on the Town's website, social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), newspaper advertisements in the three local newspapers and via a newsletter through JTC.

Of the 394 respondents:

- 1.0% of respondents lived in Glendale
- 51.0% of respondents live in Old Town
- 2.0% of respondents live in Queenston
- 9.1% of respondents live in Rural Niagara-on-the-Lake
- 7.1% of respondents live in St. Davids
- 8.9% of respondents live in Virgil
- 20.8% of respondents do not live in Niagara-on-the-Lake

Summary of Survey Responses

Staff has reviewed and analyzed the survey data. A summary of the survey results and emerging themes can be found below. In alignment with best practices associated with survey analytics and to protect the anonymity of survey respondents, the raw written data of this survey will not be provided for public viewing. This best practice aligns with the *Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario*, whereby the agency advises reporting survey results as aggregated information without identifying specific individuals.

Questions are presented as a percentage (%). Due to rounding, some percentage totals may not add to 100%.

For Council's convenience, the highest responses in each category have been **bolded**.

SURVEY RESULTS

Q1: Please identify the perspective(s) through which you are responding to the survey.

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
As a Niagara-on-the-Lake Resident	75.9%
As a Niagara-on-the-Lake Visitor	16.8%
As a Niagara-on-the-Lake Business Owner who operates a patio (past or present)	2.8%
As a Niagara-on-the-Lake Business Owner who does not operate a patio	4.6%
As someone who works in Niagara-on-the-Lake	6.9%
Other (please specify)	3.0%

Other (please specify) comments included that the respondent(s) used to live in Niagara-on-the-Lake, that the respondent(s) is a frequent visitor to Niagara-on-the-Lake, and that the respondent(s) used to work in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Q2: Which of the following age categories do you belong to?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Under 18 years	0.3%
18-24 years	1.5%
25-34 years	3.3%
35-44 years	7.6%
45-54 years	15.0%
55-64 years	32.0%
65+ years	40.4%

Q3: Do you support the Town's Patio Program as it currently stands?

The Town's Temporary Patio Program allows existing food and drink establishments to extend their operations by providing a patio on a temporary basis, subject to Town requirements. These patios can be located adjacent to businesses/buildings, within municipal parking spaces, or on privately owned parking lots/areas. Food and drink establishments are required to apply for a Temporary Patio Permit annually under the current program.

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	93.1%
No	6.9%

Q4: From the perspective in which you are answering this survey, what (if anything) do you think are some positive aspects about patios in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

**Optional question: 365 respondents.*

The top three emerging themes from the written responses provided include:

- **OUTDOOR DINING:** Patio goers have the opportunity to enjoy the warm weather, look at the view of Queen Street, and outdoor dining allows for additional space.
- **VIBRANT ATMOSPHERE:** Patios offer a vibrant, beautiful, charming ambience and create an inviting environment.
- **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS REVENUE:** Patios support tourism and economic development within the Niagara-on-the-Lake community.

Q5: From the perspective in which you are answering this survey, what (if anything) do you think are some negative aspects about patios in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

**Optional question: 334 respondents.*

The top three emerging themes from the written responses provided include:

- **PARKING:** Patios take up parking spaces.
- **TRAFFIC AND CONGESTION:** Patios cause vehicular and pedestrian traffic congestion.
- **UNATTRACTIVE:** Patios need design requirements to fit into the beauty and aesthetic of the surrounding streetscape.

Q6: Approximately how many times have you personally visited a Niagara-on-the-Lake patio in the last year?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
1-5 times	29.4%
6-10 times	25.6%
11+ times	37.3%
I have not visited a patio in Niagara-on-the-Lake in the last year, but have in previous years.	4.3%
I have never visited a patio in Niagara-on-the-Lake.	3.3%

Q7: If you have visited a patio(s) in Niagara-on-the-Lake, which area was the patio(s) in?

**Optional question: 378 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Glendale	2.9%
Old Town	98.9%
Rural / Agricultural	16.9%
St. Davids	29.4%
Queenston	4.2%
Virgil	38.4%

Q8: Why did/do you choose to sit on a patio in Niagara-on-the-Lake?

**Optional question: 363 respondents.*

The top three emerging themes from the written responses provided include:

- **NICE WEATHER AND FRESH AIR:** Respondents chose to sit on a patio because of good weather, fresh air, and to be outside instead of inside.
- **ATMOSPHERE:** Respondents chose to sit on a patio because of the atmosphere on and surrounding the patio and the things to watch outside as they are dining.
- **PET-FRIENDLY:** Respondents chose to sit on a patio as they could be accompanied by their dog(s).

Q9: Based on your experience visiting a patio(s) in Niagara-on-the-Lake, on a scale from 1 to 10, please rank the following. (1 is the lowest ranking and 10 is the highest ranking)

**Optional question: 379 respondents.*

Item	Answer Options and Percentage of Respondents									
	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Did/does the patio enhance the public realm and surrounding streetscape?	54.6%	14.7%	15.5%	3.69%	2.37%	2.11%	1.05%	1.84%	2.11%	2.90%
Did/does the patio contribute to the character of the surrounding area?	57.2%	11.8%	12.9%	4.22%	3.69%	2.90%	0.26%	1.31%	1.31%	3.43%
Did/do you find it safe?	72.5%	10.2%	7.38%	3.16%	1.31%	1.05%	0.52%	0.52%	0.52%	1.58%
Did/do you find it comfortable?	57.5%	15.5%	13.7%	4.22%	3.16%	1.31%	0.79%	1.31%	0.52%	1.05%
How likely are you to recommend a Niagara-on-the-Lake patio experience to someone?	74.9%	8.17%	5.80%	1.84%	1.58%	1.58%	0.79%	1.31%	0.52%	2.63%

Q10: Have you experienced any accessibility concerns specific to temporary patios?

**Optional question: 376 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes, accessibility to the patio area	2.4%
Yes, accessibility while maneuvering within the patio	3.2%
Yes, accessibility maneuvering around the outside of the patio	5.9%
No, I have not experienced any accessibility concerns	89.6%
Other (please specify)	2.7%

Other (please specify) comments included that patios are even easier to access than indoor seating, more space is needed on patios, access to washrooms from the outside needs improvement, and a designated wheelchair table with signage is needed.

Q11: How likely are you to recommend a Niagara-on-the-Lake patio experience to someone?

**Optional question: 381 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Very Likely	81.9%
Likely	11.0%
Unlikely	4.5%
I will not recommend a Niagara-on-the-Lake patio experience.	0.8%
I don't know.	1.8%

Q12: In your experience, has the presence of temporary patios impacted the following?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Item	Answer Options and Percentage of Respondents	
	Yes	No
Vehicular access and circulation	15.2%	84.7%
Pedestrian access and circulation	17.7%	82.2%
Active transportation access and circulation	12.4%	87.5%

Q13: Temporary patios are currently permitted on Town-owned property including on sidewalks and municipal parking stalls. Would you support the continued use of municipal parking stalls and sidewalks for patio use on a seasonal basis?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes, in all areas	88.1%
No, not in any areas	5.3%
Other (please specify)	7.4%

Other (please specify) comments included that a fee should be implemented, that the respondent is in support as long as the patio does not impede pedestrian traffic or parking, that the respondent is in support as long as all businesses have equal opportunity, that sidewalks are overcrowded, and that the respondent does not support patios in Old Town, Queen Street specifically.

Q14: Have you applied for a Patio Permit through the Town's Temporary Patio Program?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	2.5%
No	97.5%

Q15: Where is your business(es) located?

**Optional question: 10 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Glendale	0%
Old Town	80.0%
Rural / Agricultural	10.0%
Queenston	0%
St. Davids	10.0%
Queenston	0%

Q16: If your business includes a patio, where is your patio located?

**Optional question: 10 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Within the Town's sidewalk	0%
Within the Town's road allowance / right-of-way	20.0%
On private property	50.0%
Other (please specify)	30.0%

Other (please specify) comments included that their patio was on private property and within the Town's right-of-way, on a flower bed, and that the Town did not approve their patio.

Q17: Does your business offer indoor dining?

**Optional question: 9 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	88.9%
No	11.1%

Q18: Has the patio resulted in a positive impact for your business?

**Optional question: 9 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

Q19: What benefits (if any) does a temporary patio offer your business?

**Optional question: 10 respondents.*

Responses included that patios offer increased customer space and seating, increased revenue (especially after the pandemic), and guests can enjoy the outdoors.

Q20: What challenges (if any) does your business face with regards to a temporary patio?

**Optional question: 8 respondents.*

Responses included that there are no challenges, that patios only being available for 8 months is a challenge, that weather is a challenge, and that limitations on the size of a patio is a challenge.

Q21: As a result of having a patio, have you had to hire additional Staff?

**Optional question: 9 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	77.8%
No	22.2%

Q22: Does your patio meet accessibility requirements? (i.e. AODA compliance)

**Optional question: 8 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	100%
No	0%

Q23: If the Town was to implement a Permit fee for patios, what is the highest amount you would be willing to spend on an annual fee?

**Optional question: 10 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Less than \$200	30.0%
\$201 - \$500	40.0%
\$500+	30.0%

Q24: If the Town was to implement a Permit fee for patios, what fee structure would you prefer?

**Optional question: 10 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
An annual application fee	80.0%
Fees per square foot	20.0%
Other (please specify)	0%

Q25: Would you apply for a Patio Permit through the Town's Temporary Patio Program in future years?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	4.3%
No	15.0%
N/A	80.7%

Q26: Please explain why you would not apply for a Permit through the Town's Temporary Patio Program in the future.

**Optional question: 50 respondents.*

The top emerging theme from the written responses provided include:

- **NOT A BUSINESS OWNER:** Respondents do not own or operate a business in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Q27: The Town's current Temporary Patio Program identifies a number of minimum design requirements. If changes or enhancements to the following requirements were made, would this impact your interest in applying for a Temporary Patio Permit?

**Optional question: 17 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes, if changes to umbrellas were required, it would impact my interest	17.6%

Yes, if changes to patio base materials were required, it would impact my interest	17.6%
Yes, if changes to fencing were required, it would impact my interest	17.6%
Yes, if changes to landscaping were required, it would impact my interest	17.6%
Yes, if changes to lighting were required, it would impact my interest	17.6%
No, additional design requirements would not impact my interest	64.7%
Other (please specify)	17.6%

Other (please specify) comments included that all patios should look permanent and be landscaped accordingly, that the Patio Program process is good now but the respondent would be willing to make additional design requirements, and that design requirements would be welcomed, especially landscaping and design.

Q28: Are there any ways to improve the Town's existing Temporary Patio Program?

**Optional question: 221 respondents.*

The top three emerging themes from the written responses provided include:

- **MAKE THE PATIO PROGRAM PERMAMENT:** Respondents answered that the patio program should be permanent in Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- **STANDARDIZED RULES:** Respondents answered that standardized aesthetics, design, safety, and structure should be standardized to create cohesion amongst patios.
- **PEDESTRIANS ONLY ON QUEEN STREET:** Respondents answered that Queen Street should be a pedestrian-only zone during the summer season and/or on weekends, as vehicular traffic poses concerns.

Q29: If Town Council approve the continuation of the review of the Temporary Patio Program, the Town will hold a focus group session to connect with residents, business owners and patio operators to gain further insight into their experiences and perspectives. Are you interested in being a part of a Temporary Patio Program focus group?

**Mandatory question: 394 respondents.*

Answer	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	32.0%
No	68.0%

Q30: If you answered yes to joining a focus group, please provide your email address in the space below.

**Optional question: 125 respondents.*

Responses included respondent's email addresses.

Q31: Using the space below, please provide any additional comments you have regarding temporary patios in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

**Optional question: 177 respondents.*

The top three emerging themes from the written responses provided include:

- **AMBIENCE:** Respondents answered that patios add to the overall atmosphere and charm of Niagara-on-the-Lake.
- **SUPPORTS JOBS, TOURISM AND BUSINESS REVENUE:** Respondents answered that patios support overall business revenue and jobs, especially for youth, and provide more tourism opportunities.
- **MAKE THE PATIO PROGRAM PERMANENT:** Respondents answered that the patio program should be permanent in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE (PIC) RESULTS

Town Staff also received feedback in person via a Public Information Centre (PIC) held on Monday, August 28, from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Courthouse.

Approximately 10 individuals attended the PIC to specifically discuss the program, and Staff spoke with approximately 75 individuals through informal discussion who were walking by or visiting the Courthouse.

The majority of comments indicated that individuals enjoyed the patios in NOTL. Comments generally focused on parking, consistent design and material requirements, and landscaping/planting. Most individuals took a QR code card from Staff to take the survey online.