Attachment 3 – What We Heard Summary

Themes	Comments
1. Support for Diversifying Uses at Yarmouth Mall	• Multiple correspondents strongly support permitting medical clinics and professional offices at the mall. • Current restrictions are seen as outdated, "ridiculous," and limiting the mall's ability to thrive. • Tenants and community members argue that the mall has ample vacant space and parking that could accommodate new uses without negatively impacting existing businesses.
2. Recognition of Downtown's Importance but Concerns About Its Limitations	• There is acknowledgment that the downtown remains vital to Yarmouth's cultural and civic identity. • However, many feel Council views downtown in a "one-dimensional" way, focusing mainly on ground-floor retail and not addressing challenges with underutilized upper floors. • Barriers like taxes, renovation costs, insurance, and parking are mentioned as reasons why downtown spaces remain vacant or unmarketable.
3. Regional Service Hub Perspective	• Starrs Road, including the mall, is seen as part of a larger commercial corridor ("Big L" concept) extending from Downtown to Starrs Road and beyond. • This corridor is described as a regional destination, and restricting uses at the mall risks pushing services to other municipalities. • The mall already draws regional traffic; allowing more services (offices, clinics) could strengthen its role as part of a unified commercial system.
4. Tension Between Mall and Downtown Models	• Emails received reflect the longstanding tension between the mall and downtown formats: ○ Downtown is valued for heritage, walkability, and revitalization efforts.

	○ The mall is criticized as an unattractive, automobile-oriented "big box" space with too much parking and drainage issues. ○ Yet, the mall is also seen as necessary and complementary, particularly if repositioned to include professional and health services.
5. Calls for Modernization and Growth	• Strong sentiment that Yarmouth needs to move forward, adapt to current times, and create opportunities for growth. • Some describe the mall as "dying a slow death" under current restrictions, and that allowing offices/clinics could breathe new life into the property. • There's a broader desire for prosperity, development, and new opportunities in Yarmouth, beyond preserving existing patterns.
6. Opportunities Beyond Retail/Offices	• Suggestions also touch on residential development within Starrs Road lands, especially given the housing shortage. • Visual improvements (tree planting, landscaping, signage, cohesive design) are seen as ways to make the "Big L" corridor more attractive. • Expanded land use policies could balance retail, office, residential, and cultural amenities across the town.