COROLLA 27927

Community Incorporation Study Survey

FINAL RESULTS | 923 RESPONSES

November 4, 2026

The central finding

70.6%

favor conducting a fact-based study

652 of 923 respondents

This is not a vote on incorporation.

Residents also favor a study

73.7%

of full- and part-time residents

396 of 537 respondents in those groups

A survey finding—not a population estimate.

Who responded?

38.7%	32.1%	26.1%
Nonresident property owners	Part-time / seasonal residents	Full-time residents
357 responses	296 responses	241 responses

Other connections: 29 respondents (3.1%).

Many began with limited familiarity

55.0%

knew little or nothing beforehand

508 of 923 respondents

412 (44.6%) reported some or strong familiarity; 3 did not answer.

Study support is much broader than opposition

70.6%	16.6%	12.6%
Favor a study	Neutral or unsure	Oppose a study
652 respondents	153 respondents	116 respondents

Two respondents did not answer this question.

Study support across respondent groups

Full-time residents	70.5% 170 of 241
Part-time residents	76.4% 226 of 296
Nonresident property owners	66.9% 239 of 357

Percentages are within each respondent group.

How respondents view county governance

60.8%

Low confidence in representation

561 respondents

63.4%

Concerned about long-term needs

585 respondents

These are respondents' perceptions, not measured county performance.

The four issues influencing opinions most

Taxes and local revenues	82.8% 764 selected
Beach management	64.6% 596 selected
Local control and representation	61.3% 566 selected
Development and zoning	57.4% 530 selected

Multiple selections were allowed; totals exceed 100%.

Information respondents want before deciding

Estimated tax impact	91.5%	845 selected
Services a town would provide	79.7%	736 selected
Services the county would retain	66.8%	617 selected
Estimated town operating budget	61.1%	564 selected

Multiple selections were allowed; totals exceed 100%.

Added taxes: the answer depends on the case

59.6%

Conditional or need information

550 respondents

23.7%

Would / probably would oppose

219 respondents

16.5%

Would / probably would support

152 respondents

The largest group wants to see actual costs and benefits.

Support for a study varies by property area

72.4%

Paved-road area

614 of 848

50.7%

4x4 area

35 of 69

The smaller 4x4 group warrants caution in interpretation.

A potential pool of helpers

287

provided consent and a contact method

Available only in the confidential analyst workbook

This is not a commitment to volunteer.

Written comments were reviewed by meaning

669

respondents provided written comments

Equivalent language was grouped when context supported it

Qualitative themes—not counted theme frequencies.

Comments: reasons to consider incorporation

More local voice

Respondents want greater accountability and decisions closer to Corolla.

Beach protection and revenues

Some link tourism and property-tax revenue to nourishment and local reinvestment.

Paraphrased perspectives, not direct quotations.

Comments: other reasons to consider

Protect community character

Zoning, growth, environment, and the distinct 4x4 area matter.

More responsive services

Some want services and long-term planning tailored to Corolla.

Paraphrased perspectives, not direct quotations.

Comments: objections and cautions

Higher taxes and fees

Some fear added costs without enough benefit to justify them.

Another layer of government

Some question staffing, administration, and overlapping services.

These are respondent concerns, not established findings.

Comments: additional cautions

Who gets a voice?

Some worry about municipal voting rights and concentrated decision-making.

Transition and 4x4 impacts

Some question county relationships, services, access, and unintended effects.

These are respondent concerns, not established findings.

A study must answer: money and services

- What would taxes and fees actually be?
- Which services would a town provide?
- Which services would the county retain?
- What would startup and annual budgets cost?

A study must answer: governance and place

- How would beach protection be funded?
- Who could vote, serve, and make decisions?
- What happens to zoning and development?
- How would the 4x4 area be affected?

How the comments were analyzed

Group ideas, not just words

“Nourishment,” “replenishment,” “adding sand,” and “dune restoration” were treated as related when appropriate.

Preserve the speaker’s meaning

A beach-funding comment could support incorporation, oppose it, or simply ask a question.

No statistically coded theme counts or automated sentiment scores are claimed.

Important limits on interpretation

A voluntary, self-selected survey

These results describe respondents—not all Corolla residents or owners.

Responses were preserved, not weighted

All 923 were counted. Four repeated email addresses were flagged, not automatically removed.

What a fact-based study should examine

- Taxes, revenues, and the real cost to households
- Town services, county services, and startup costs
- Governance, voting, and legal requirements
- Beach funding, land use, and 4x4 impacts

What the survey supports

652

respondents favor a serious study

70.6% of the 923 people who responded

A study tests the facts. It does not predetermine incorporation.

Study supporters: five themes

Comments from respondents who favored conducting a study.

1. Establish actual taxes, budgets, and service costs.
2. Test how local revenues might serve Corolla.
3. Examine beach protection and its funding.
4. Clarify representation, governance, and voting.
5. Compare incorporation with other ways forward.

Paraphrased; grouped by study response. Not verbatim or frequency-ranked.

Study opponents: five concerns

Comments from respondents who opposed conducting a study.

1. Higher taxes could make living here less affordable.
2. More government may add cost and regulation.
3. The need for a new town has not been proven.
4. Work through Currituck County instead.
5. Protect full-time residents and the 4x4 area.

Paraphrased; grouped by study response. Not verbatim or frequency-ranked.

Incorporation: five supporting themes

Comments from respondents who favored incorporation.

1. Give Corolla a stronger voice in local decisions.
2. Keep more local tax revenues serving Corolla.
3. Prioritize beach nourishment and erosion response.
4. Guide zoning, growth, and community character.
5. Plan services and infrastructure for local needs.

Paraphrased recurring themes, not verbatim quotes or a frequency ranking.

Incorporation: five opposing concerns

Comments from respondents who opposed incorporation.

1. Higher taxes and fees could burden homeowners.
2. A new government adds bureaucracy and rules.
3. Town costs may outweigh any added benefits.
4. Nonresident owners may pay without a town vote.
5. 4x4 interests could lose out to paved-road interests.

Paraphrased recurring themes, not verbatim quotes or a frequency ranking.

Incorporation: what would change?

A town would have its own council, budget, and local rules.

TODAY

Currituck County commissioners make decisions for Corolla.

Elected countywide

WITH A TOWN

Corolla residents elect a council for local decisions.

Planning, zoning, priorities

The town plan must specify:

- **WHERE**
  Town boundaries
- **WHO DELIVERS**
  Local services
- **WHO PAYS**
  Funding and costs
- **WHO LEADS**
  Council and decisions

Incorporation: the four steps

The simplified process outlined in the source presentation.

1 **PETITION**

Residents sign a request for a new town.

2 **REVIEW**

A state commission checks the plan and finances.

3 **LEGISLATIVE VOTE**

The NC General Assembly decides whether to create the town.

4 **GOVERN**

Residents elect a town council to run local services.

Current opinion on incorporation

29.4%	51.2%	19.2%
Favor incorporation	Undecided / need information	Oppose incorporation
271 respondents	473 respondents	177 respondents

Two respondents left this question blank.

BACKUP SLIDES

Detailed results for questions and discussion. Current incorporation opinions are kept separate from study support.

Current incorporation opinion: support and unsure

Strongly / somewhat support	29.4% 148 + 123 = 271
Undecided	21.6% 199 respondents
Need more information	29.7% 274 respondents

Current opinion is a different question from whether to study incorporation.

Current incorporation opinion: opposition

6.8%

Somewhat oppose

63 respondents

12.4%

Strongly oppose

114 respondents

Together: 177 of 923 respondents (19.2%).

Study support versus incorporation support

	STUDY	INCORP.
Full-time residents	70.5%	33.2%
Part-time residents	76.4%	33.4%
Nonresident property owners	66.9%	23.0%

Percentages are within each respondent group.

Study support crosses opinion lines

83.9%

Undecided on incorporation

167 of 199 favor study

60.6%

Need more information

166 of 274 favor study

A willingness to study is not the same as support for incorporation.

Even some opponents favor studying it

46.0%

Somewhat oppose incorporation

29 of 63 favor study

18.4%

Strongly oppose incorporation

21 of 114 favor study

Property area: current incorporation support

30.3%

Paved-road area

257 of 848

18.8%

4x4 area

13 of 69

Small groups should not be treated as representative samples.

Other issues influencing opinions

Cost of operating a town	51.7% 477 selected
Town versus county services	48.8% 450 selected
Public safety / emergency services	43.9% 405 selected
Relationship with the county	42.1% 389 selected

Multiple selections were allowed.

Other information requested

Beach management funding	55.3% 510 selected
Governance and elected officials	41.3% 381 selected
Comparable North Carolina towns	38.7% 357 selected
Land use and zoning authority	34.1% 315 selected

Multiple selections were allowed.

Hypothetical added annual cost

39.1%	15.4%	7.6%
Depends on benefits	No additional cost	Not sure
361 respondents	142 respondents	70 respondents

Hypothetical answers are not estimates of actual incorporation costs.

Hypothetical annual cost: dollar bands

Less than $250	9.5%	88 responses
$250–$499	12.2%	113 responses
$500–$999	9.2%	85 responses
$1,000 or more	6.7%	62 responses

Dollar bands are respondents' hypothetical selections, not a cost forecast.

Where respondents identified property

91.9%

Paved-road area

848 respondents

7.5%

4x4 area

69 respondents

Six respondents (0.7%) indicated no residential property.

Other connections to Corolla

The 29 responses grouped as “other” on Slide 4

Business owner and Corolla resident	12
Business owner, not a Corolla resident	8
Corolla business employee living elsewhere	5
Commercial property owner	2
None	2

Survey question: “What best describes your connection to Corolla?”