

Searsmont Community Engagement Survey

Monday, March 25, 2024

174 Total Responses, Representing 322 Individuals

Wednesday, Feb 14, 2024 - Thursday, March 14, 2024

Agenda

Introduction

Who responded?

Top 5 Priorities

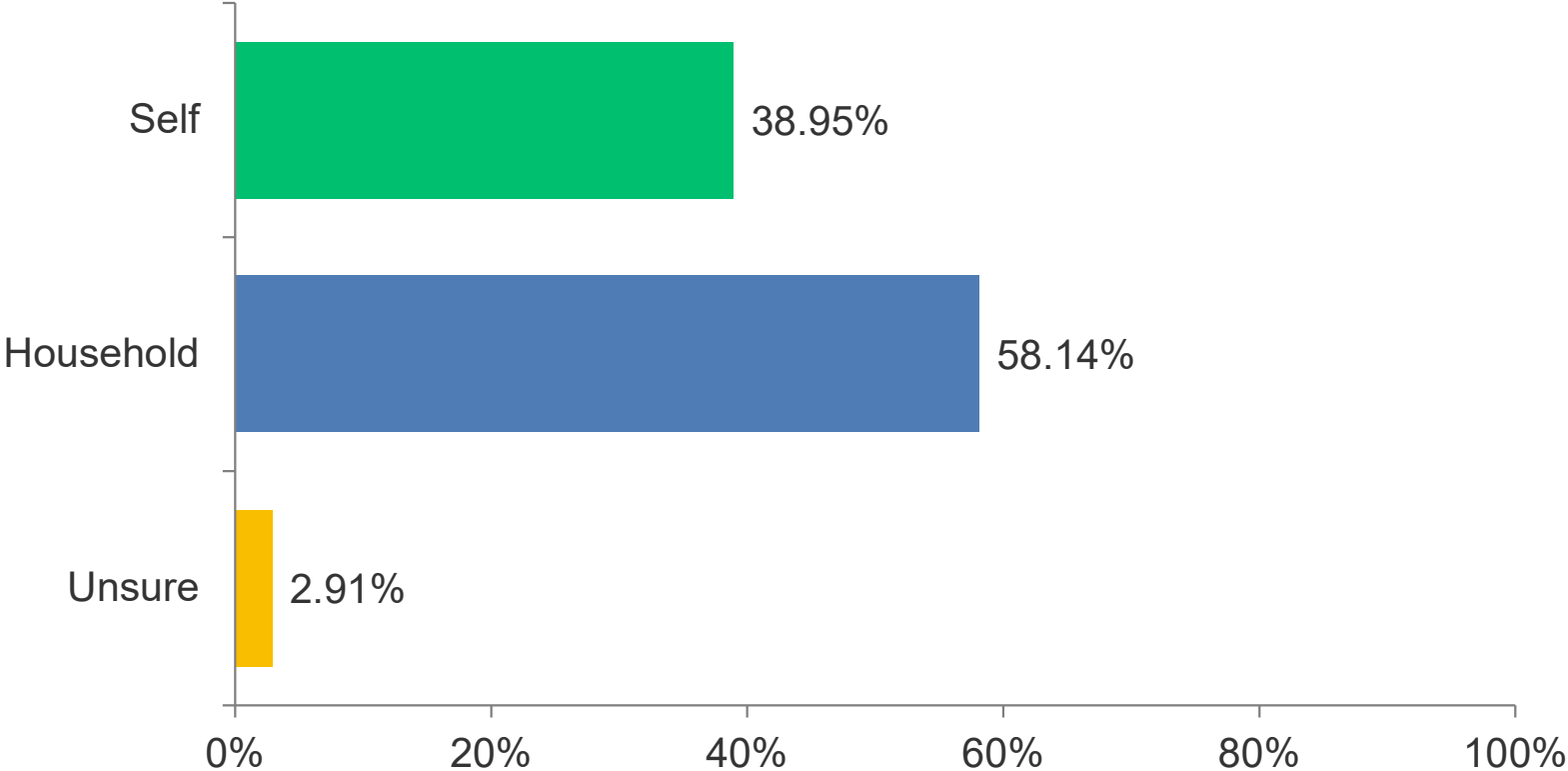
Themes

Discussion

Next steps

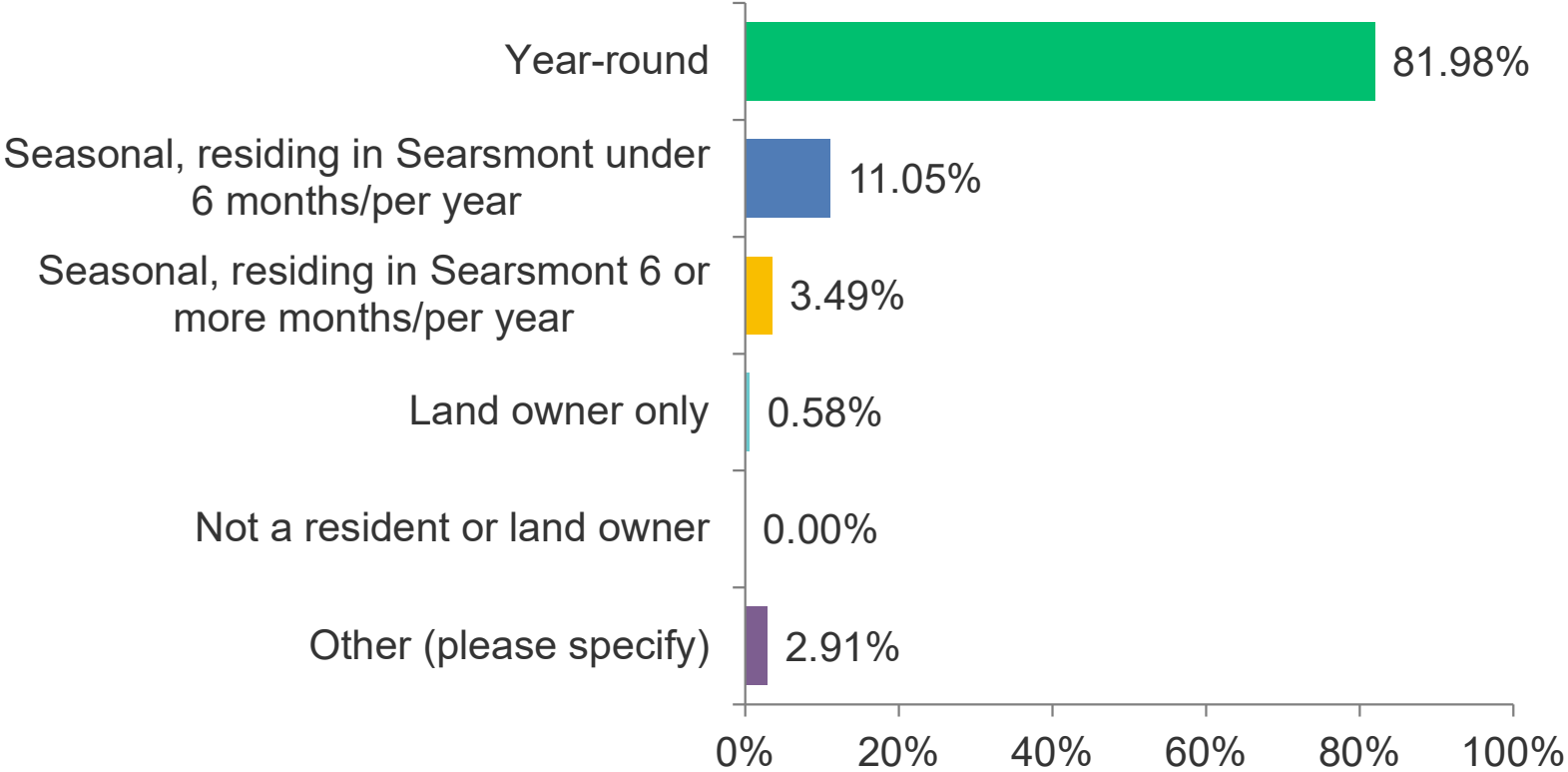
Q1: Are you filling this survey out for your entire household or as an individual?

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0



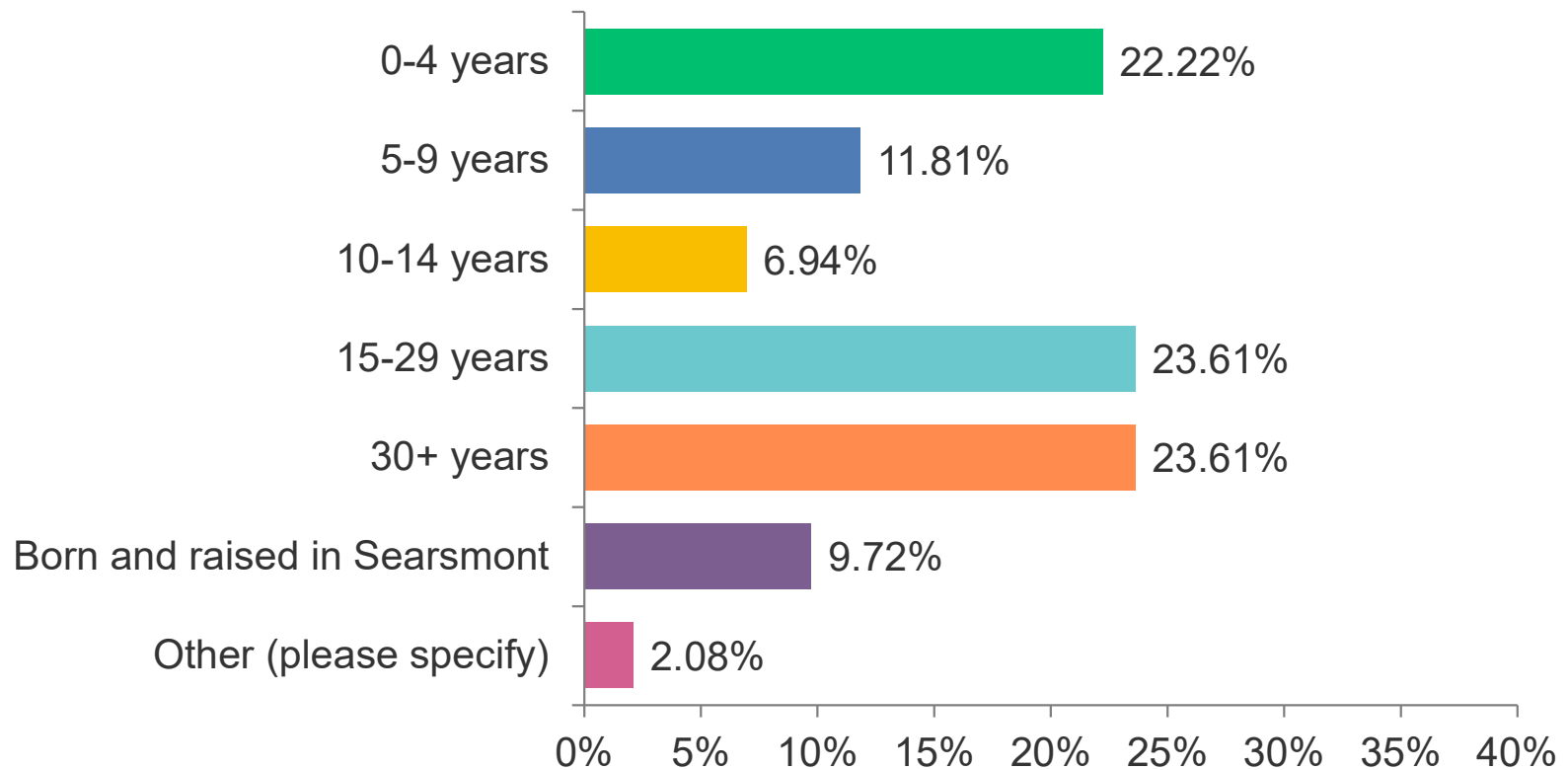
Q18: What type of Searsmont resident are you?

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0



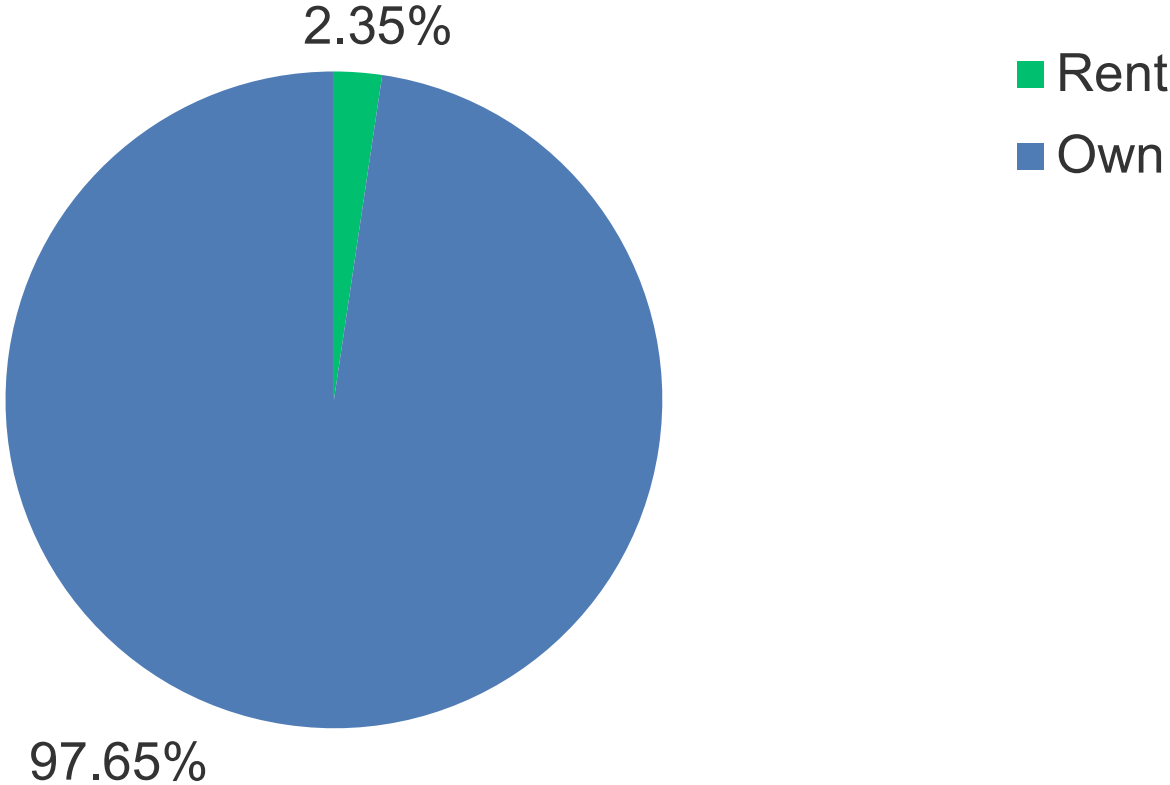
Q19: If you're a year-round resident, how long have you lived in Searsmont?

Answered: 144 Skipped: 28



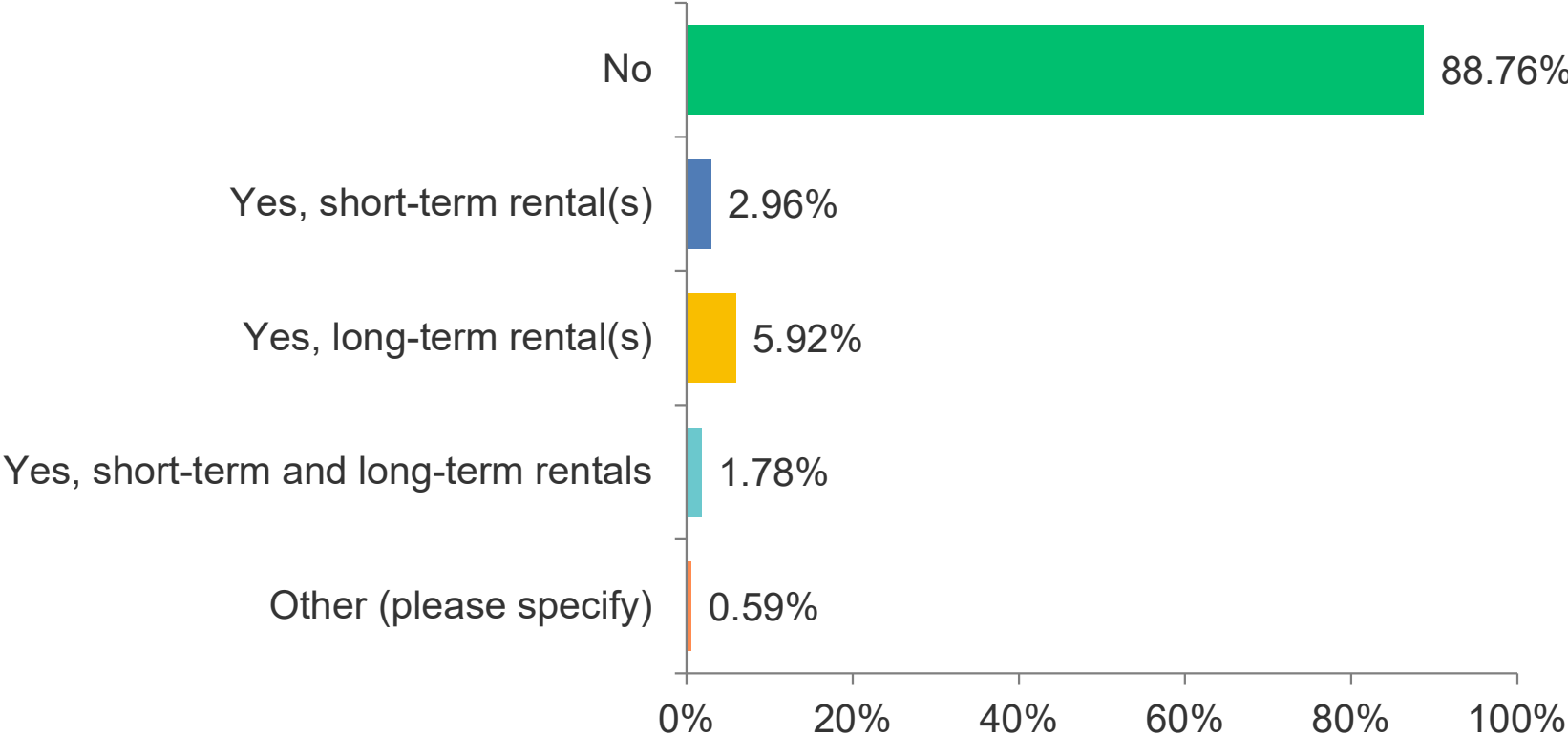
Q20: Do you own or rent where you live in Searsmont?

Answered: 170 Skipped: 2



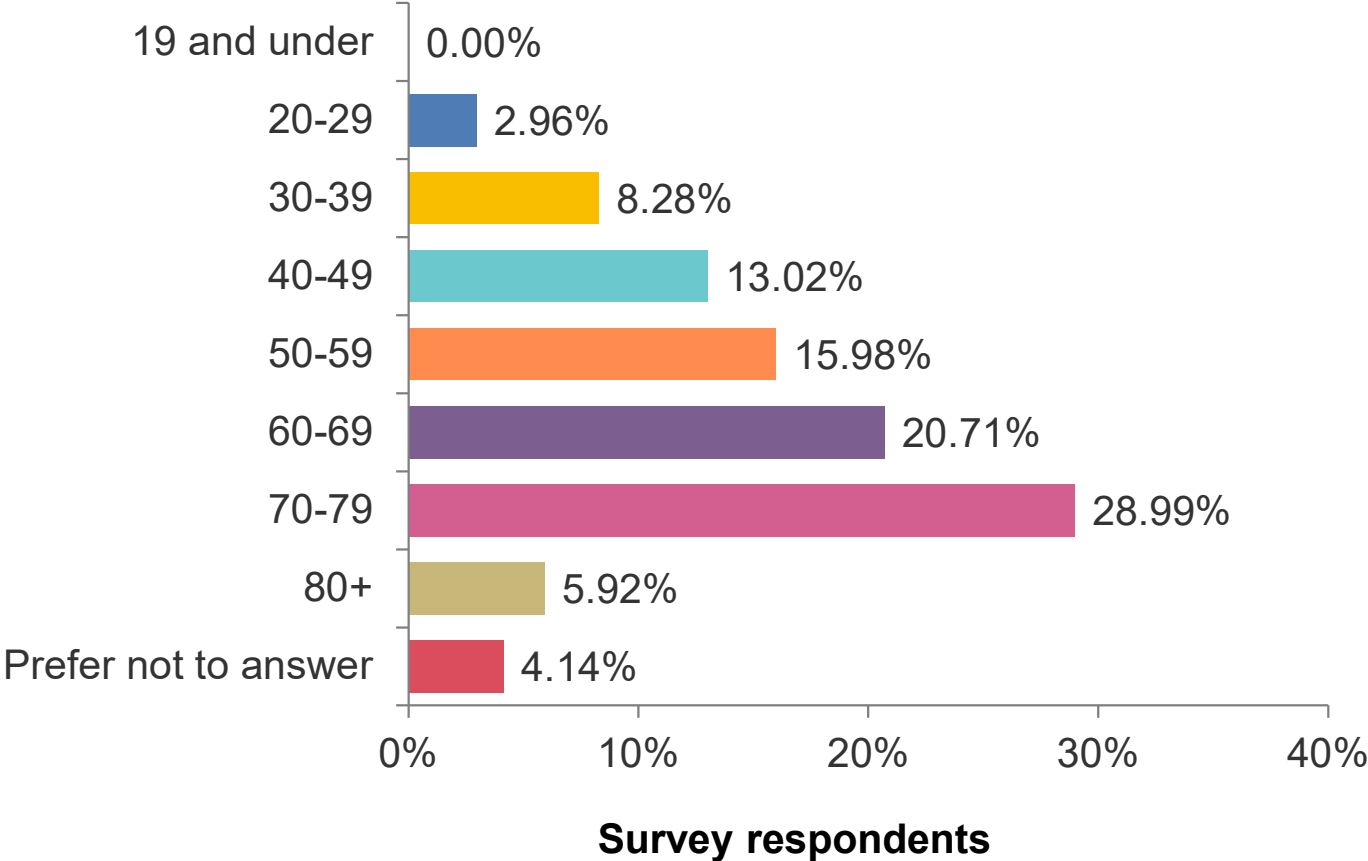
Q21: Do you own rental property (that you rent to tenants) in Searsmont?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 3

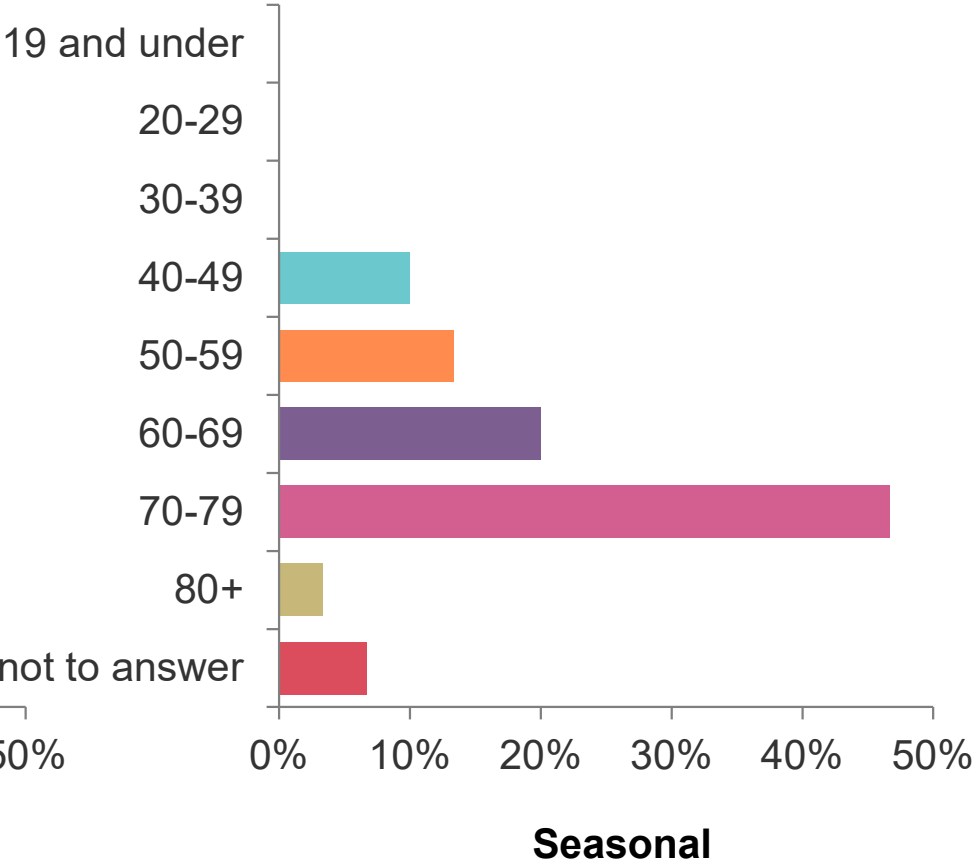
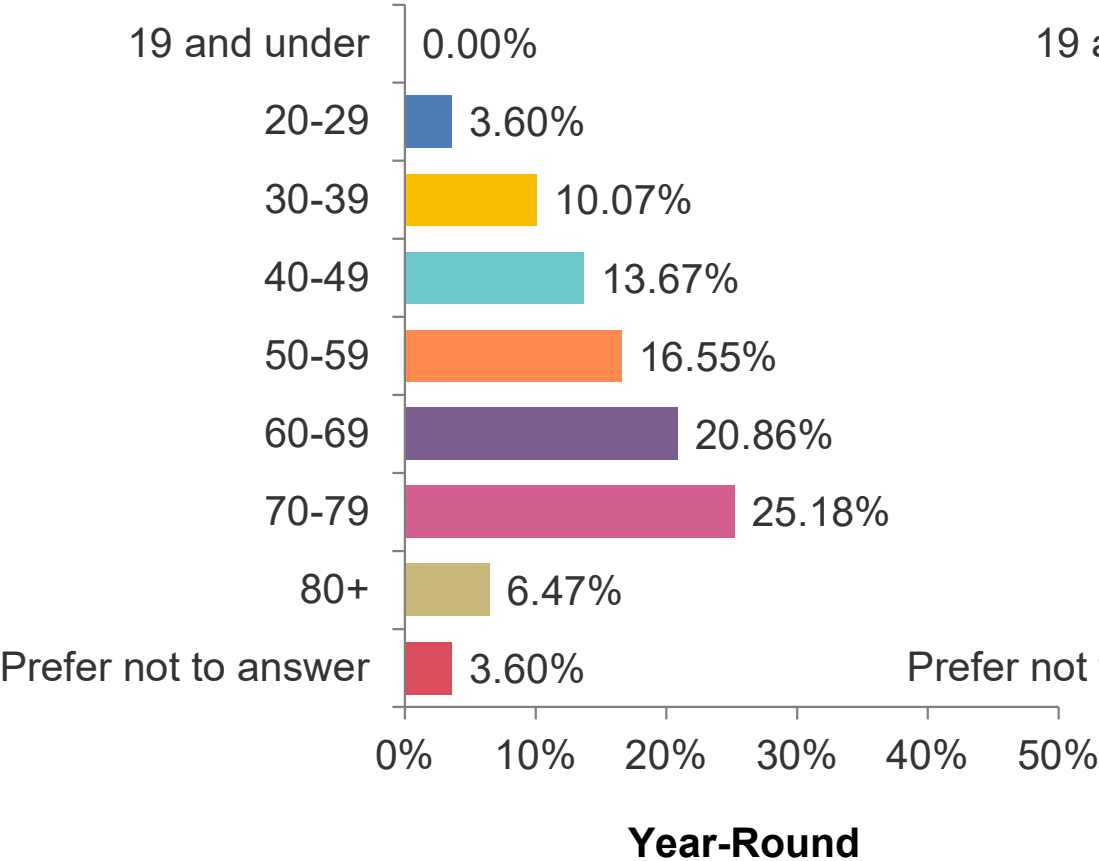


Q22: What is your age? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. (Optional)

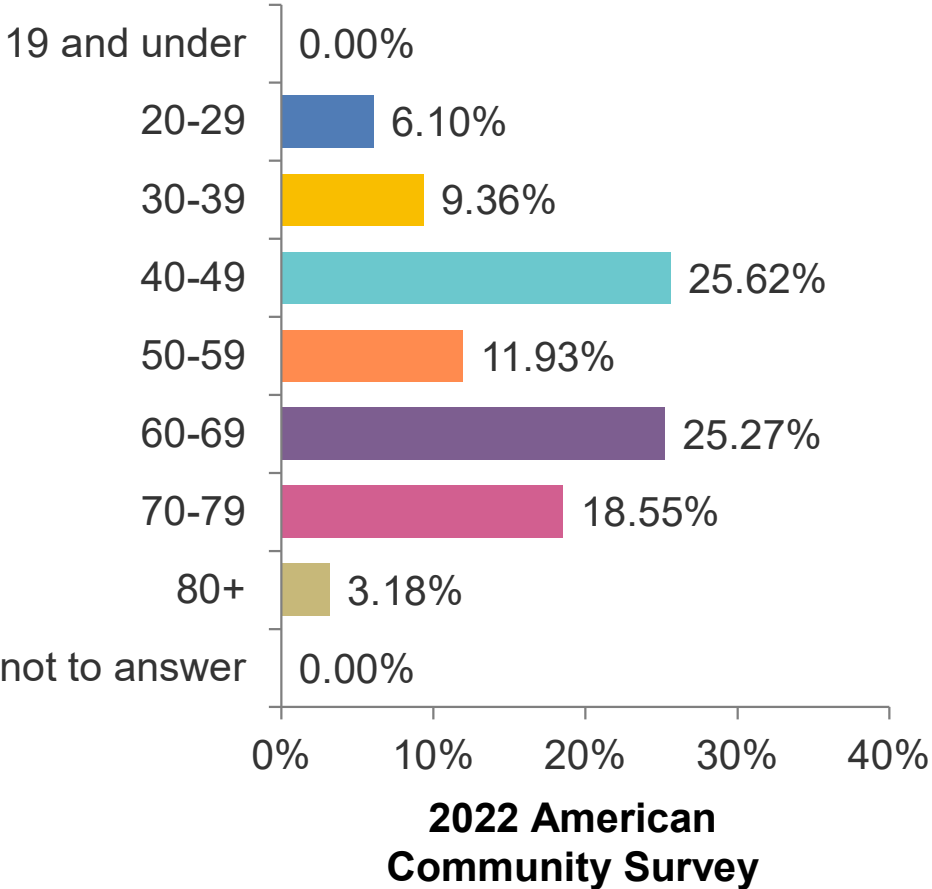
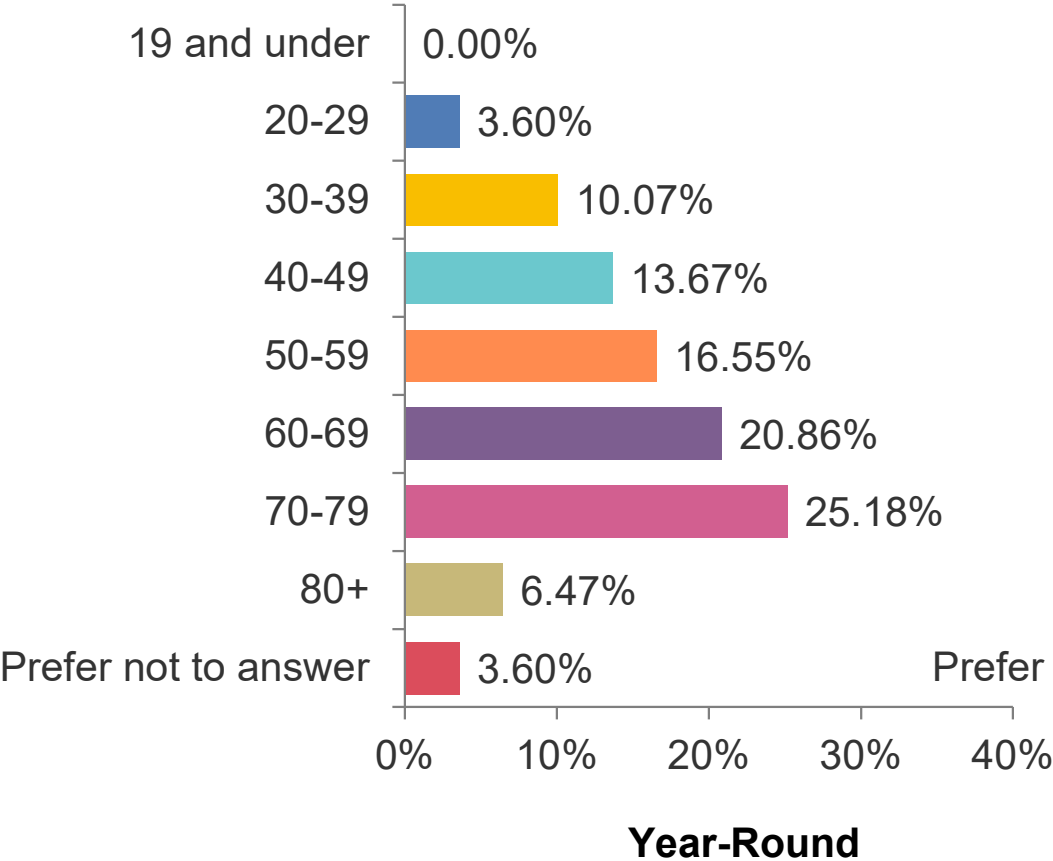
Answered: 169 Skipped: 3



Q22: What is your age? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. (Optional)

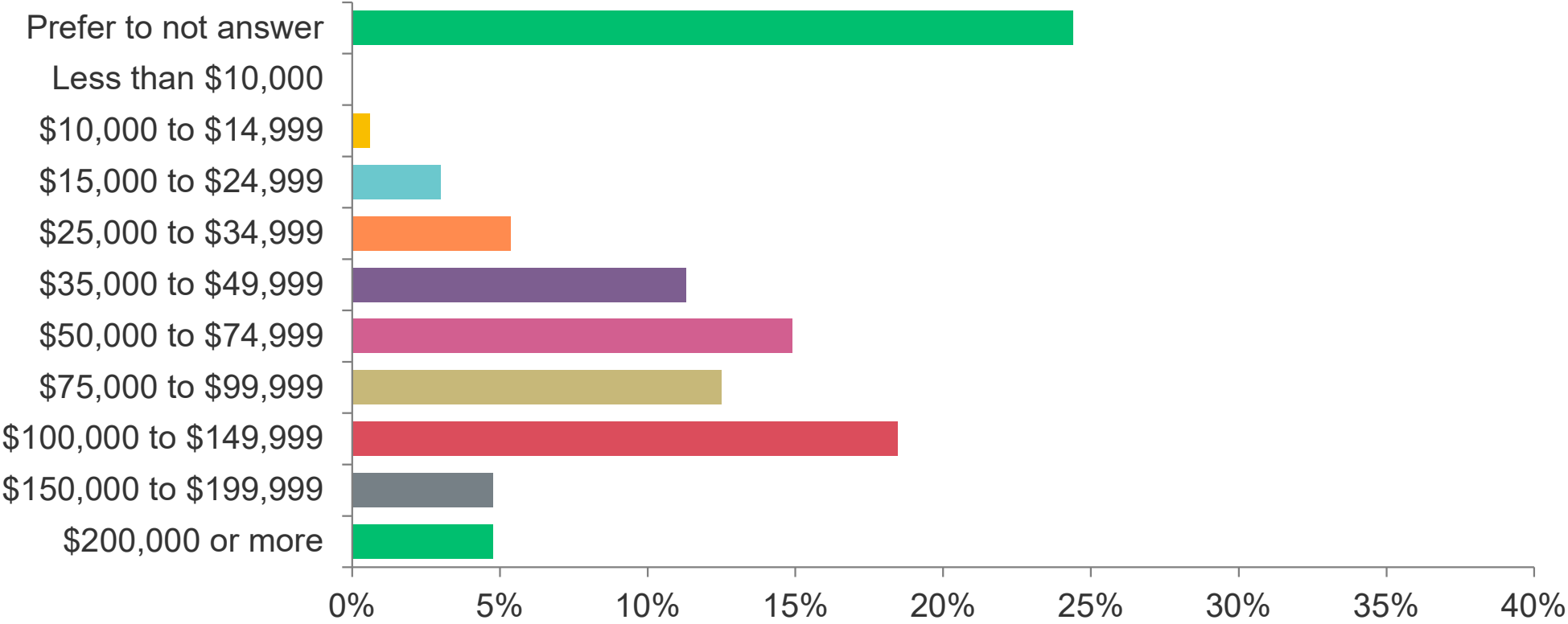


Q22: What is your age? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. (Optional)



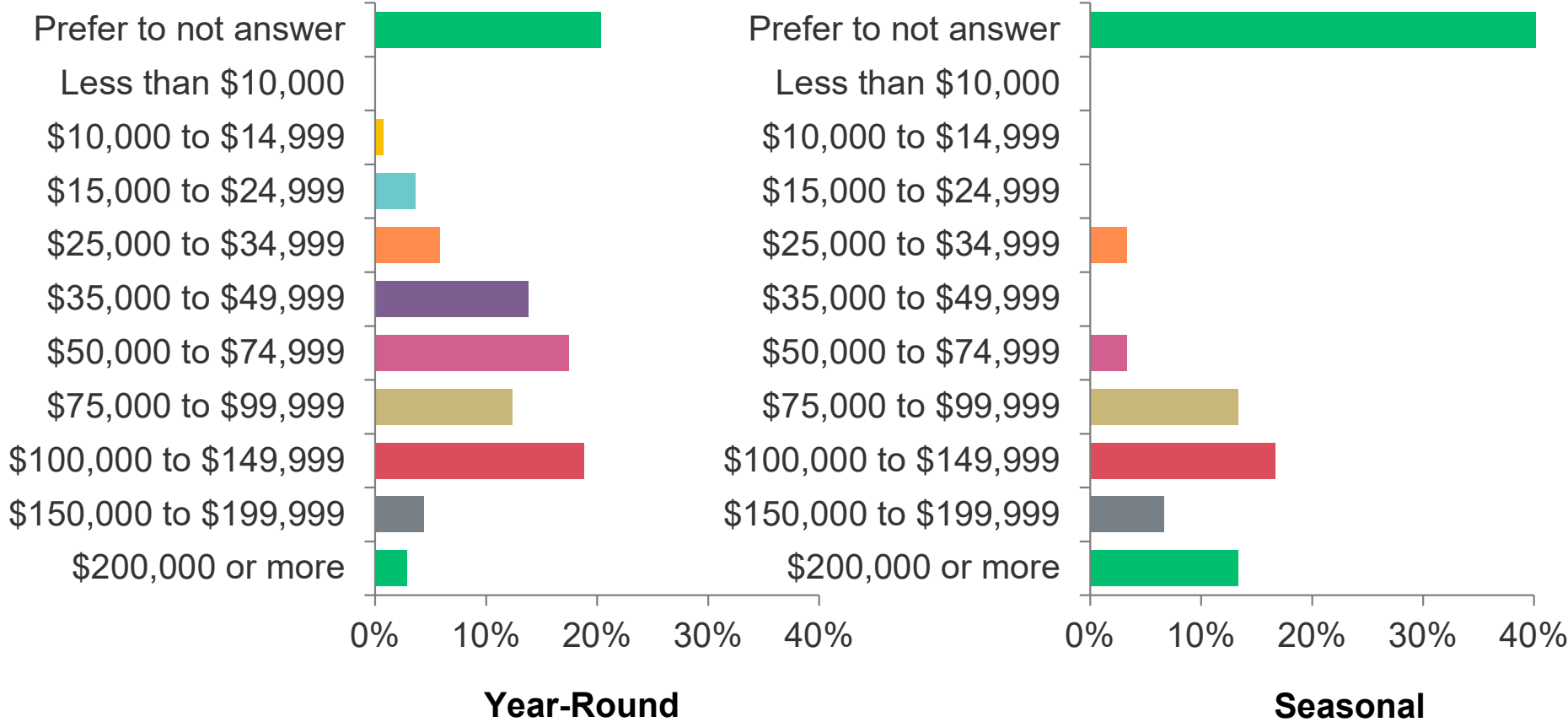
Q23: What is your annual household income? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. Optional

Answered: 168 Skipped: 4



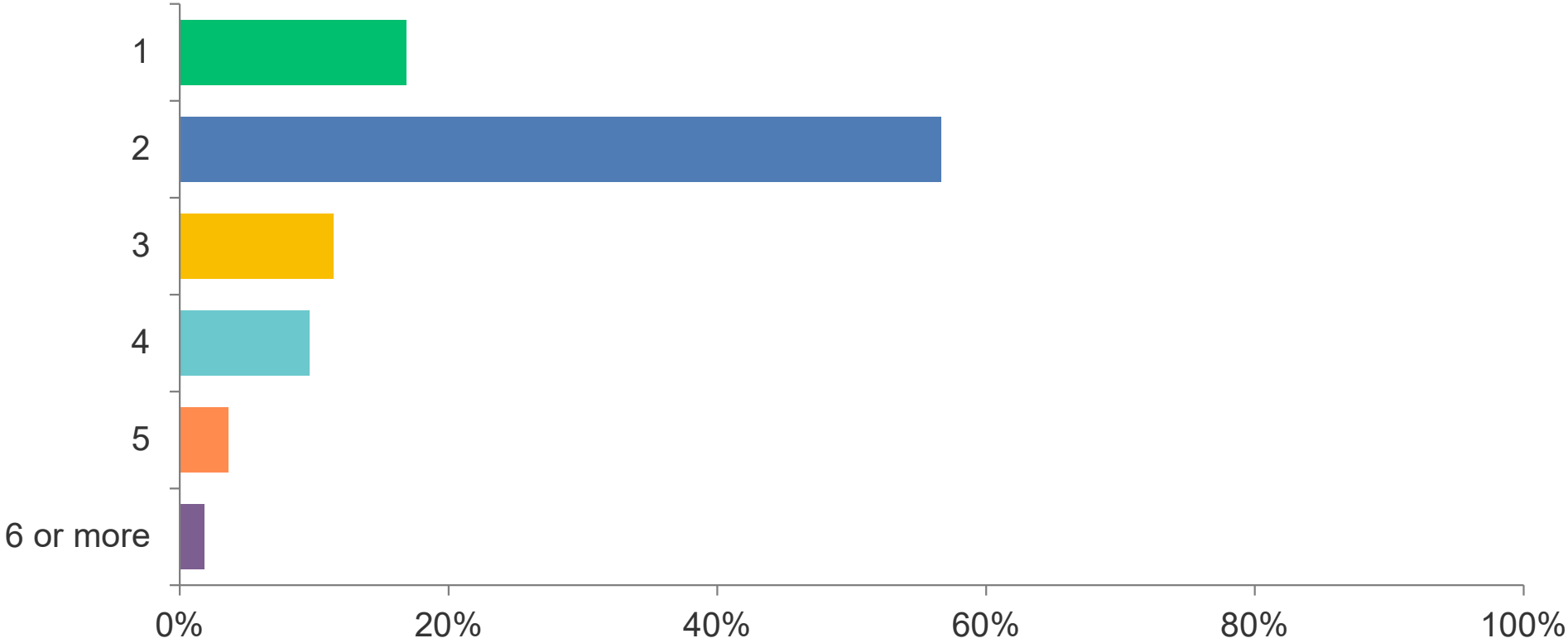
Q23: What is your annual household income? We will use this question to understand if our survey respondents are representative of our overall community by comparing to census data. Optional

Answered: 138 Skipped: 3



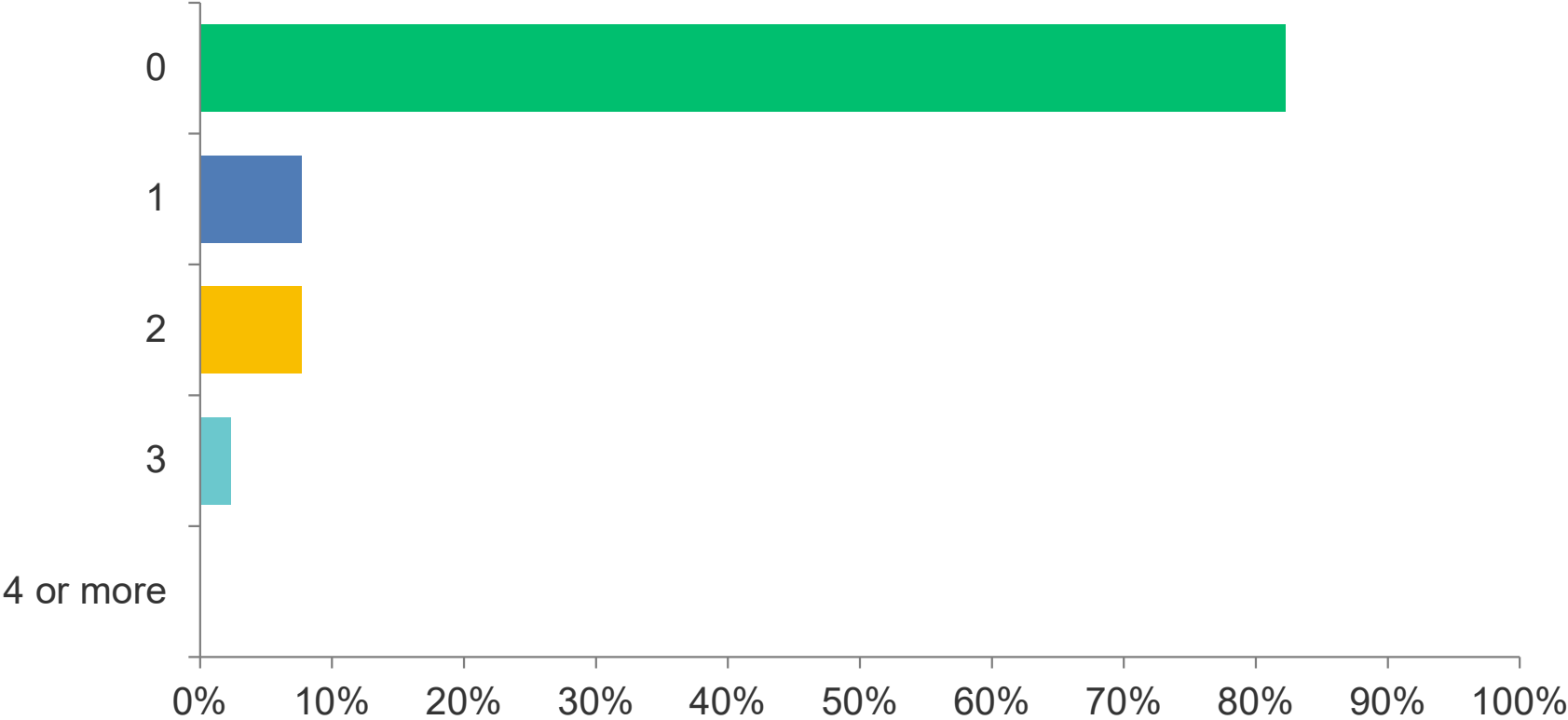
Q24: What is your household size (number of people living in your house, including you)?

Answered: 166 Skipped: 6



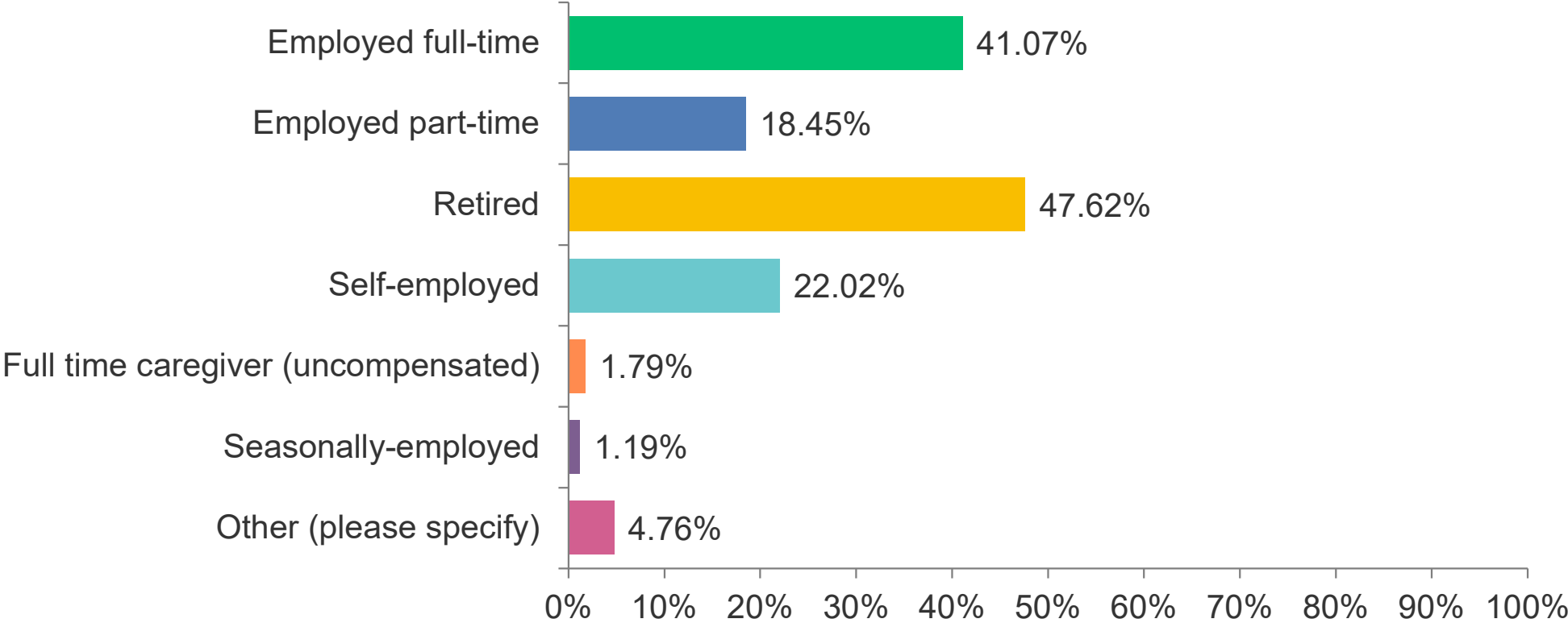
Q25: How many school age children (ages 18 and under) live in your household?

Answered: 169 Skipped: 3



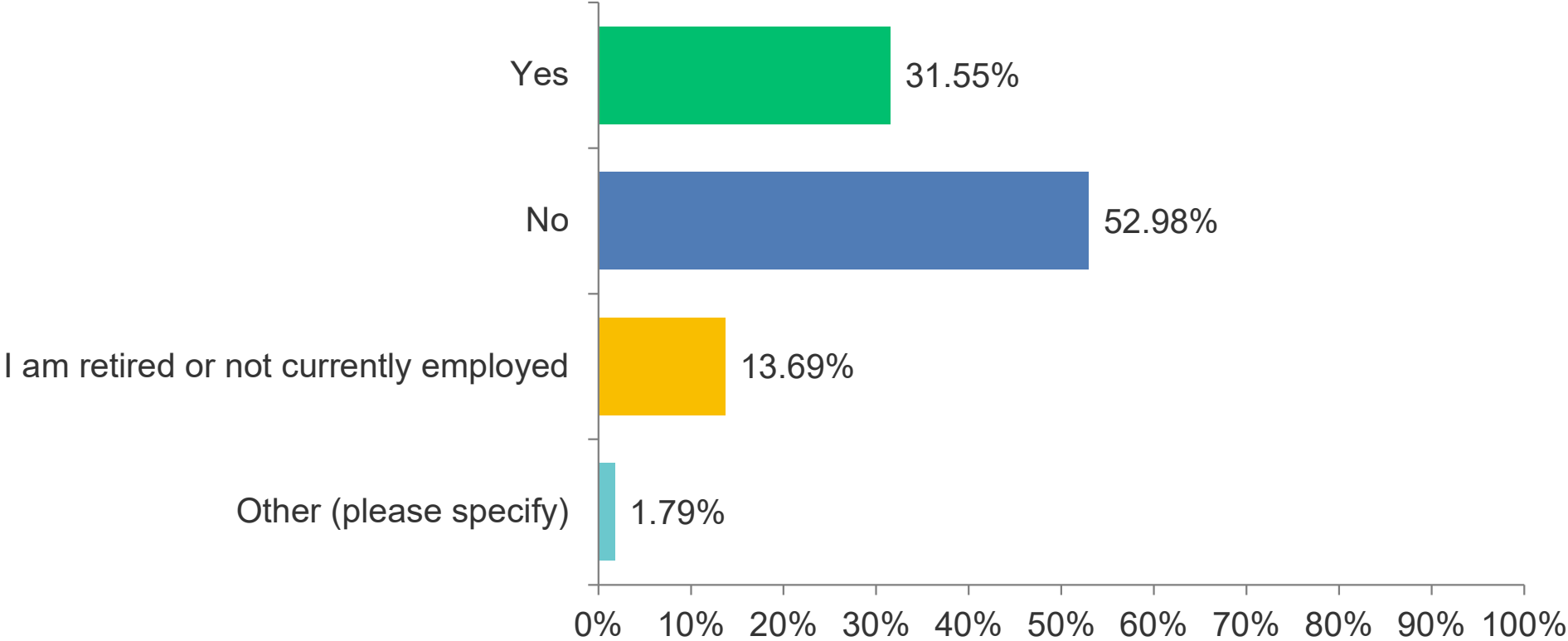
Q26: What is the employment status of each adult in your household? (Select one for each adult)

Answered: 168 Skipped: 4



Q27: Do any adults in your household work remotely/telecommute?

Answered: 168 Skipped: 4



Top 5 Town Priorities

1

**Explore
recycling
options**

2

**Protect water
body
resources**

3

**Place a greater
emphasis on
building
community and
community
events**

4

**Improve or
relocate
transfer
station**

5

**Encourage
development
of local
childcare
options**



THEMES

1. Transportation & Roads
2. Town Communications
3. Housing & Affordability
4. Public Infrastructure Projects
5. Community & Character
6. Protecting Natural Resources

Theme 1: Transportation

Year-round residents most concerned with general maintenance, whereas seasonal residents' focus is maintenance of dirt roads

Sidewalks need improvement and lack of infrastructure to support walking and biking is a concern, but improving walk and bikeability of town is low on the overall priorities list

Q5: Please provide your opinion of the quality of these Town services, facilities, and aspects of community life in Searsmont.

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0

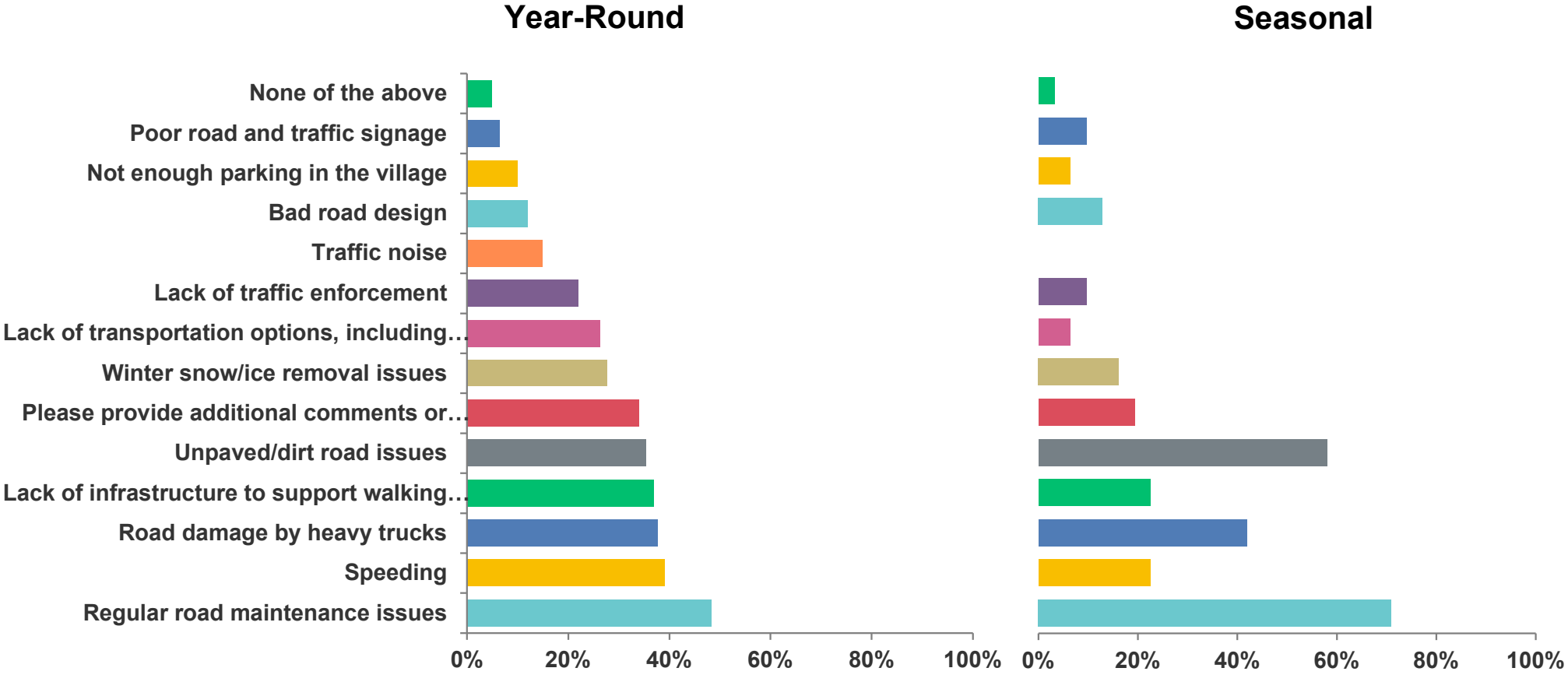
Year-Round

Seasonal



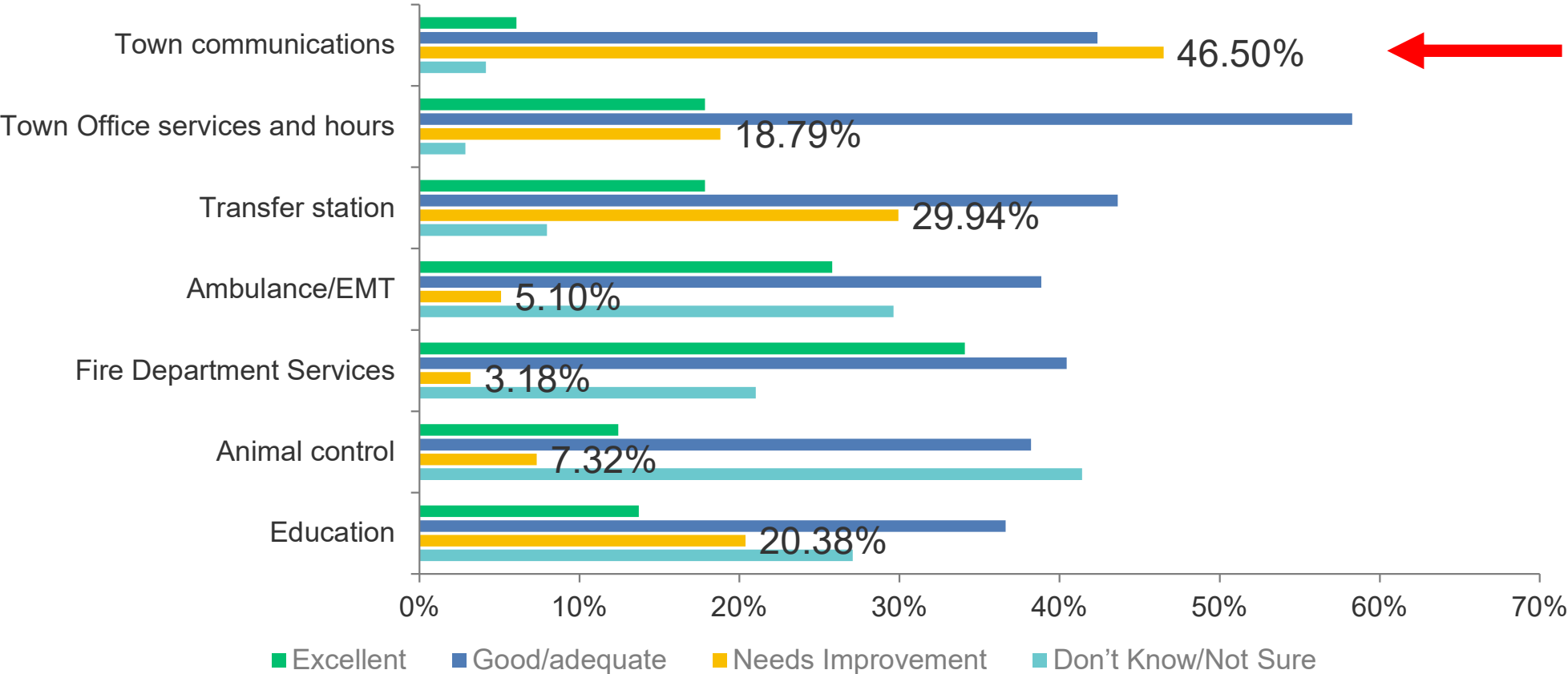
Q9: What transportation issues, if any, do you think need to be improved in Searsmont? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0



Theme 2. Town Communications

Theme 2. Town Communications



Theme 2. Town Communications

“Increase the amount of communication. Currently, the communication is extremely limited to what is included in the library newsletter.”

“Improve the mode of communication. In this social media and electronic delivery age, Searsmont needs to come up to speed on using these types of delivery methods.”

“Maintain two-way communication with town residents. Develop a mechanism to receive feedback on an ongoing basis about Searsmont issues.”

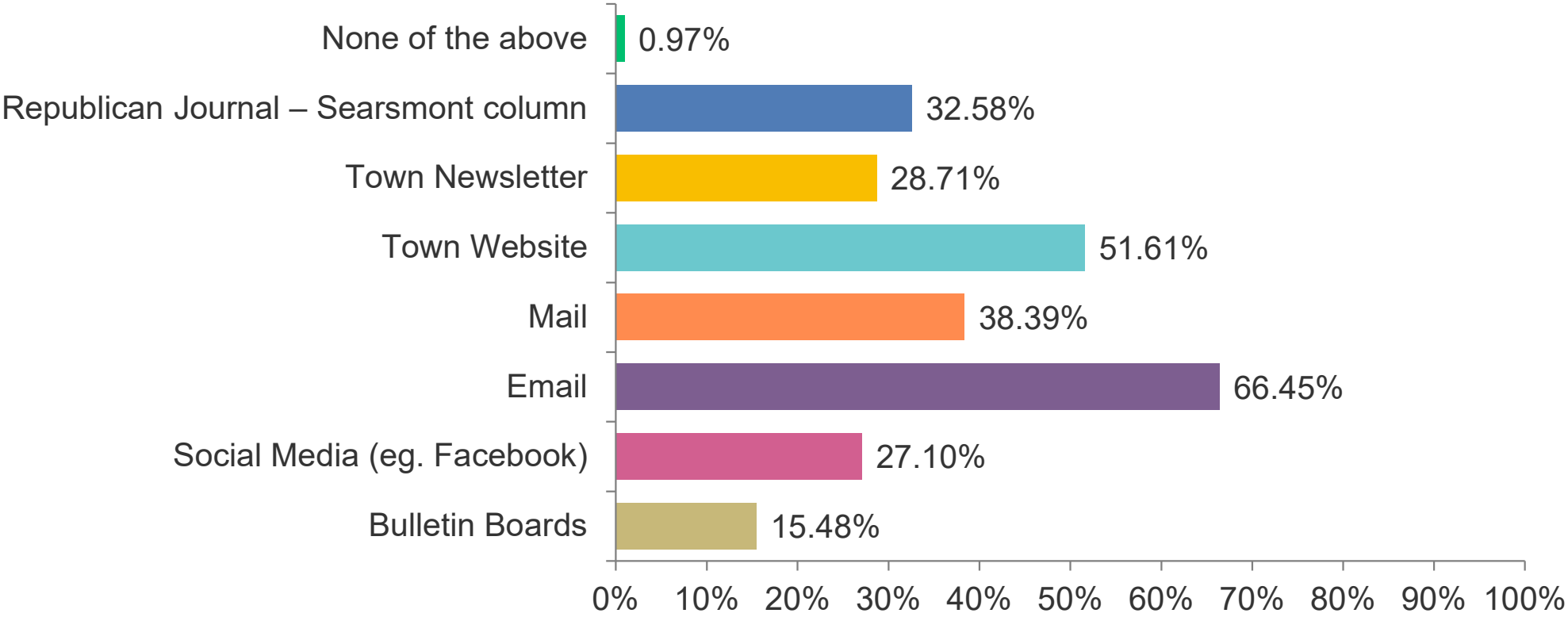
“The town website is underutilized--could be a timely comprehensive clearinghouse for all town activities--hope that happens.”

Text message option

Emphasis on inclusivity for folks who don't use email or social media

Q2: How would you prefer to learn about municipal services, meetings, and events going forward? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 310 Skipped: 4



Theme 3. Housing & Affordability

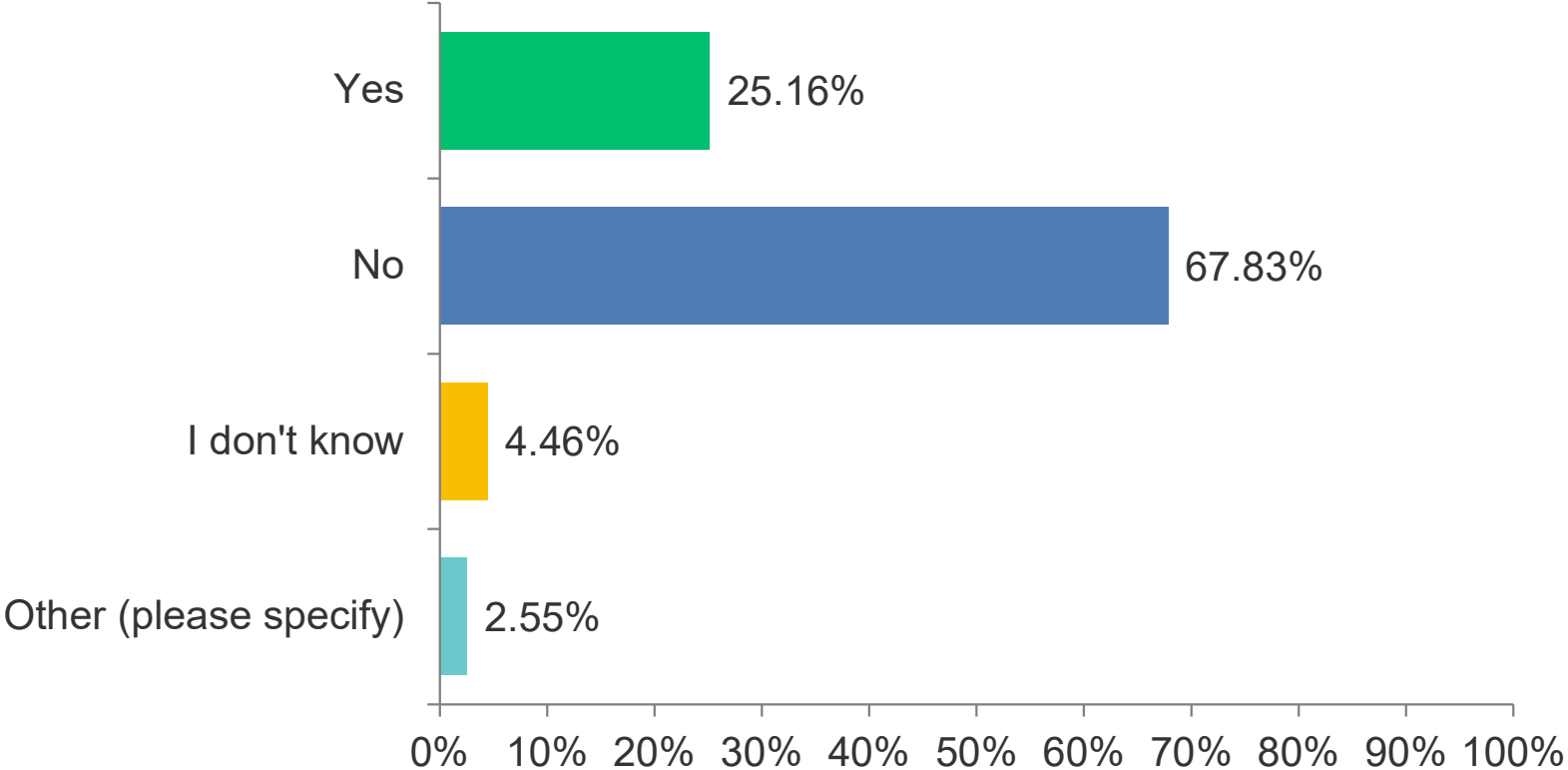
Q5A: Please provide your opinion of the quality of these Town services, facilities, and aspects of community life in Searsmont.

Answered: 314 Skipped: 0



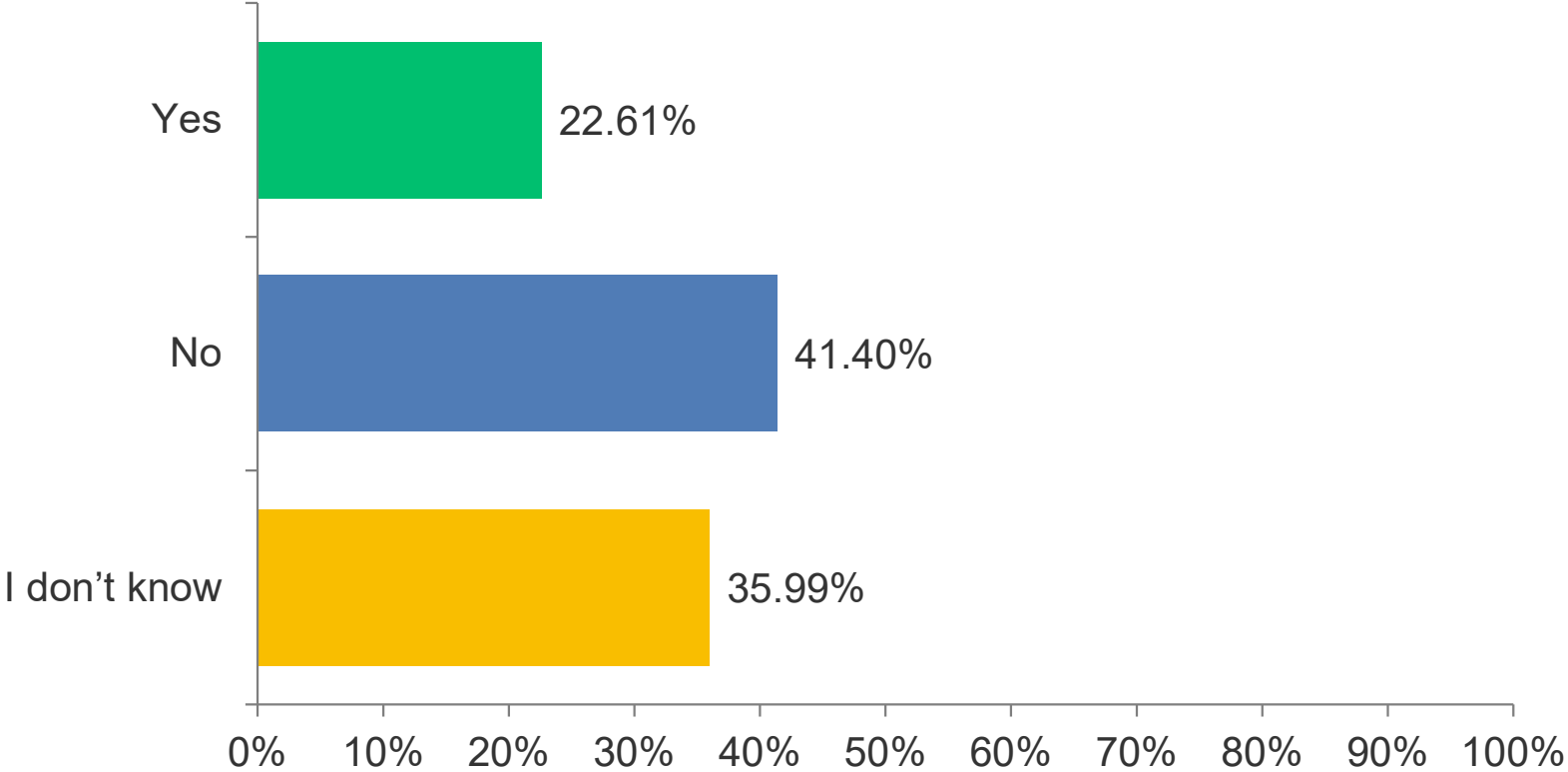
Q6: Does more than 30% of your household's income go towards your housing?

Answered: 314 Skipped: 0



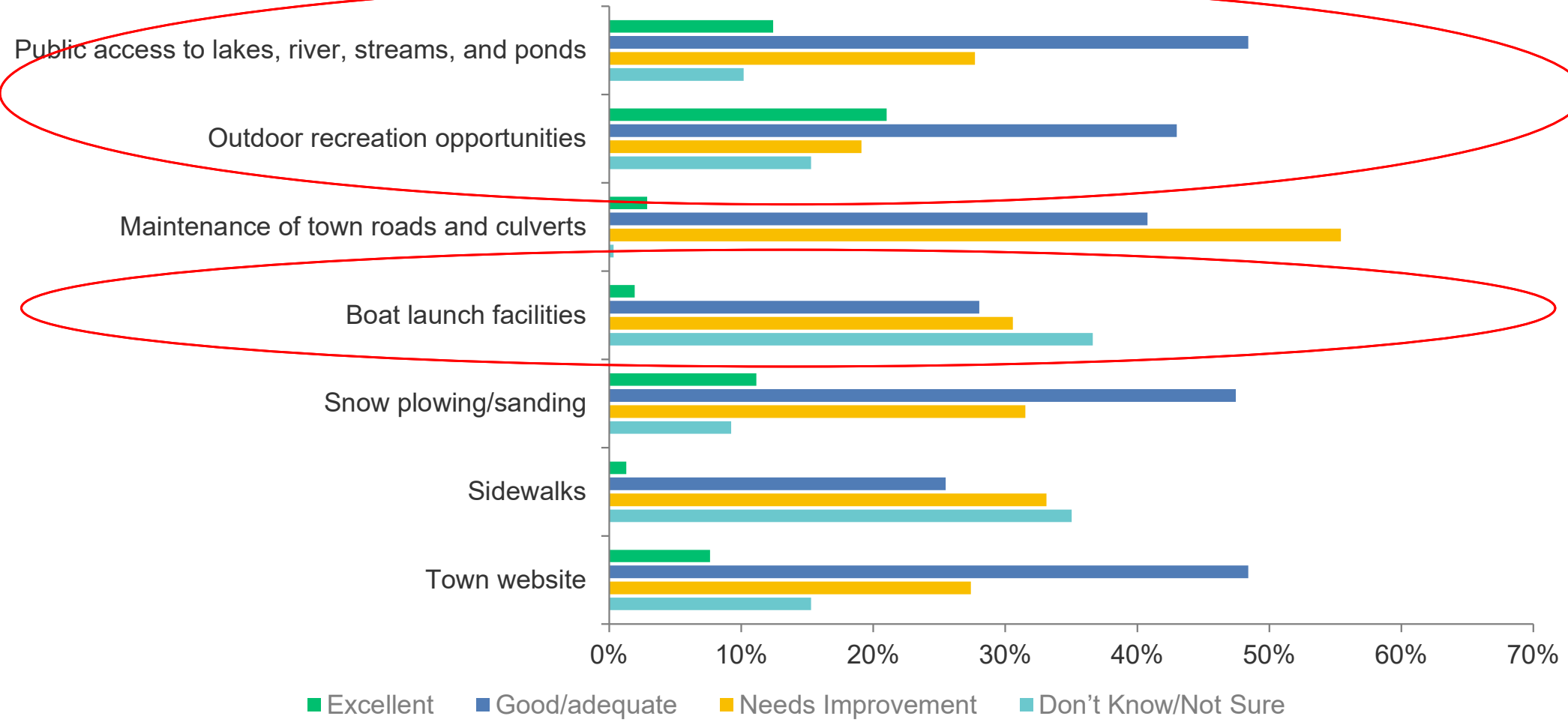
Q7: To the best of your knowledge, do you think Searsmont's housing adequately accommodates people of all ages, living arrangements, and income levels?

Answered: 314 Skipped: 0



Q5B: Please provide your opinion of the quality of these Town services, facilities, and aspects of community life in Searsmont.

Answered: 314 Skipped: 0

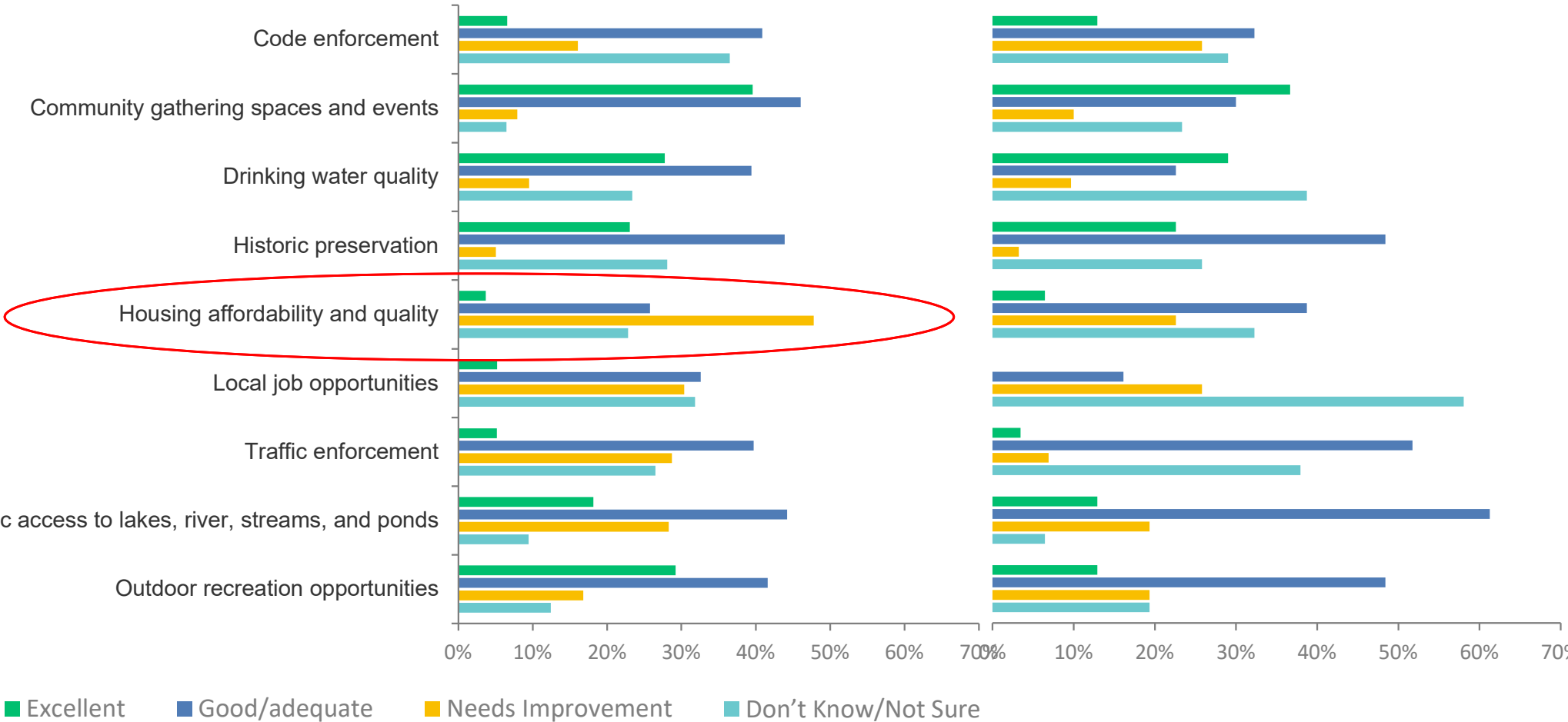


Q5: Please provide your opinion of the quality of these Town services, facilities, and aspects of community life in Searsmont.

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0

Year-Round

Seasonal



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Answered: 141 Skipped: 0

Year-Round

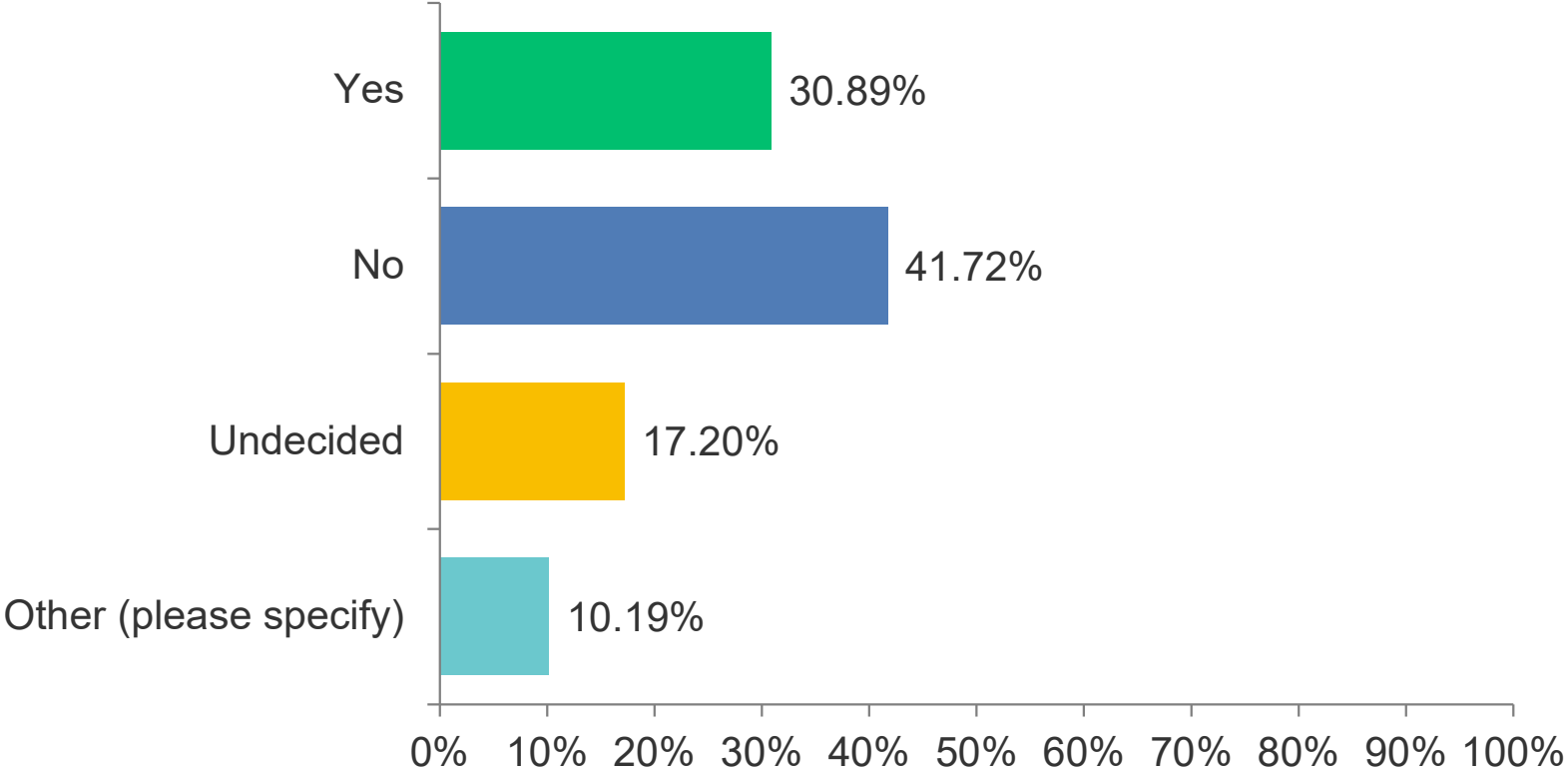
Seasonal



■ Excellent
 ■ Good/adequate
 ■ Needs Improvement
 ■ Don't Know/Not Sure

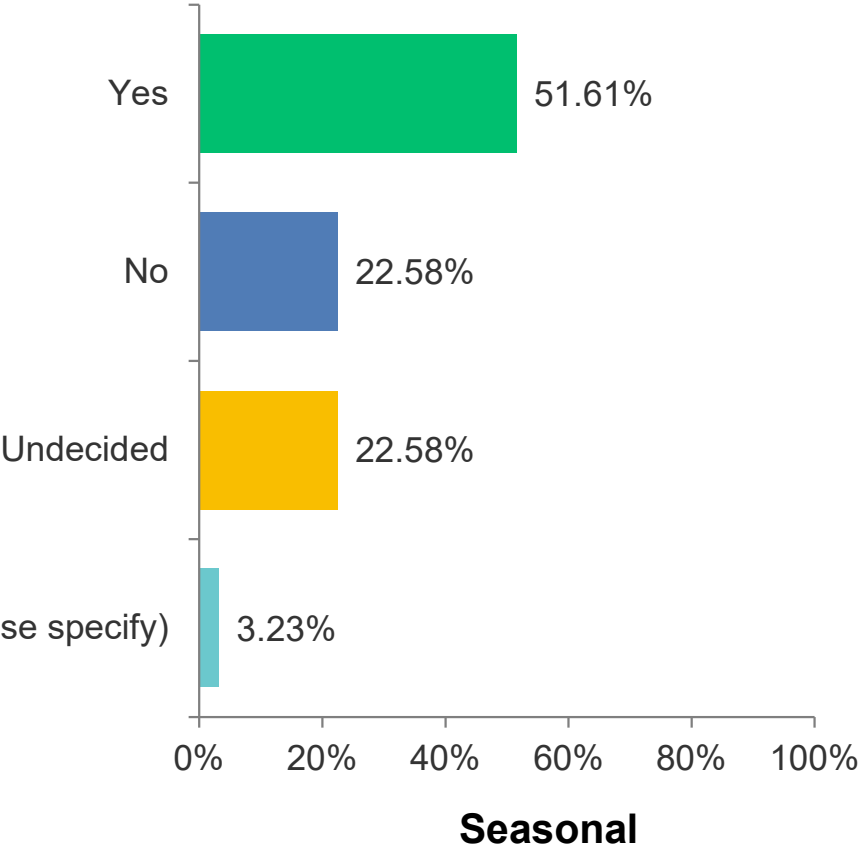
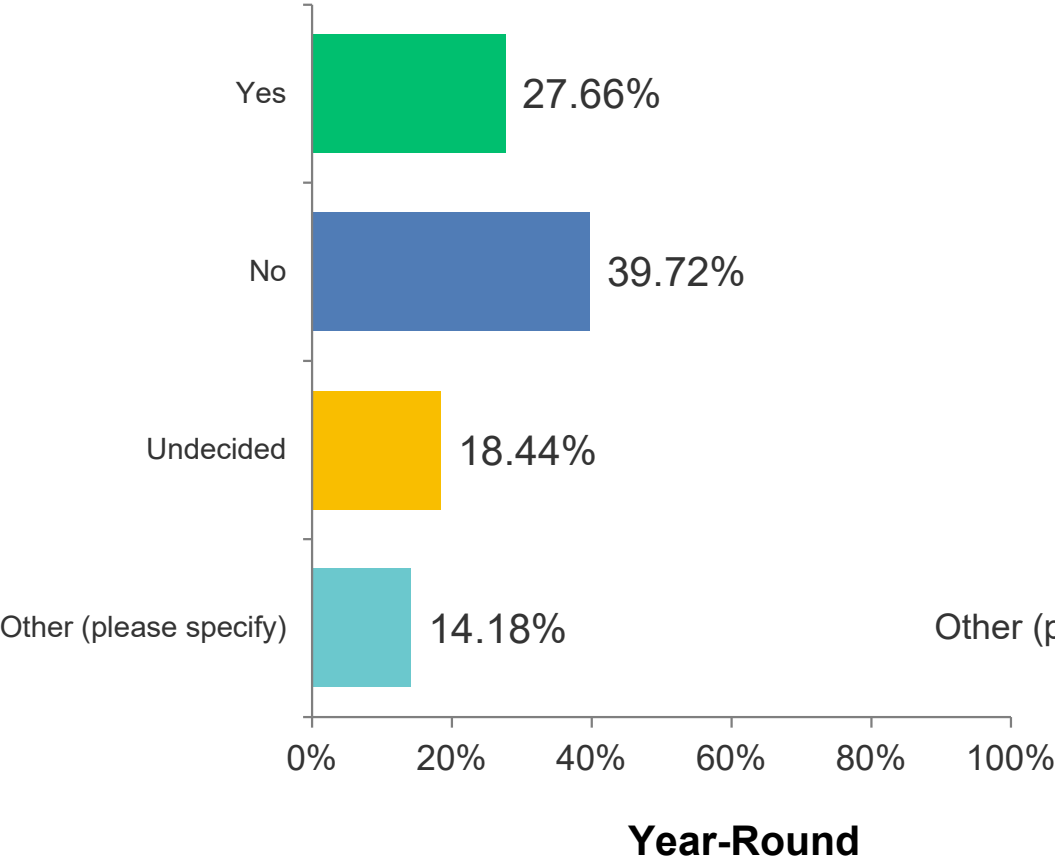
**Q8: Do you think Searsmont should regulate the use of ADUs for short-term rentals?
Short-term rentals here are defined as furnished self-contained apartments or houses with
a rental period of 28 days or fewer.**

Answered: 314 Skipped: 0



Do you think Searsmont should regulate the use of ADUs for short-term rentals? Short-term rentals here are defined as furnished self-contained apartments or houses with a rental period of 28 days or fewer.

Answered: 141 Skipped: 0

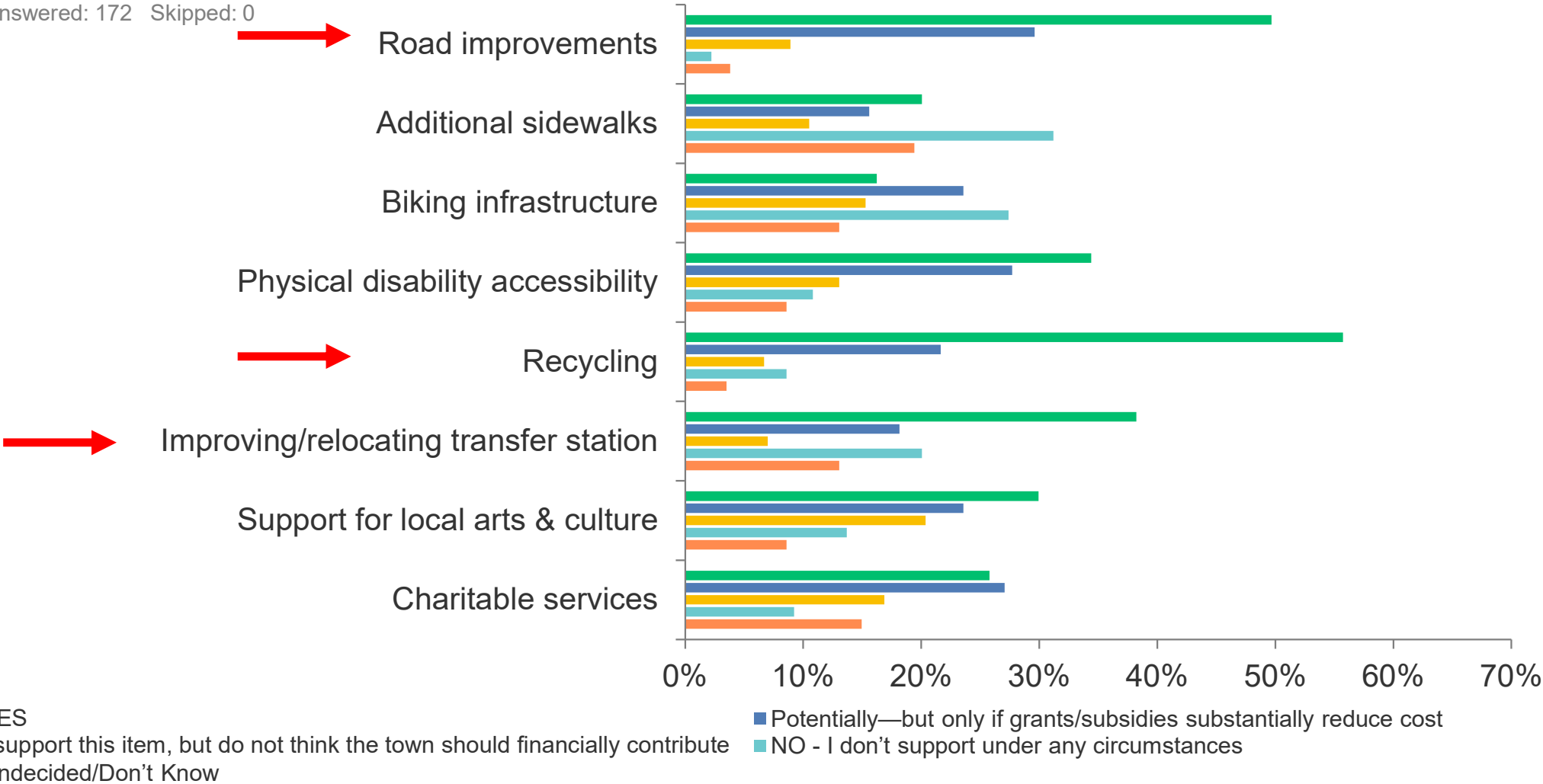


“I think short term rentals can be life saving for people who lose jobs and need another source of income or for so many people in Maine who rely on multiple sources of income and cobble together a bunch of job revenue streams. I think it is important to regulate short term housing if it is causing a problem but it's also important to find a way for people to do it so that it helps them when they need it.”

Theme 4. Public infrastructure projects

Q13C: TOWN INVESTMENTS: Answers to this question will help determine future Town budget priorities. I would like the Town to invest in: (Please check one circle per row)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0



Q13A: TOWN INVESTMENTS: Answers to this question will help determine future Town budget priorities. I would like the Town to invest in: (Please check one circle per row)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0

→ High speed broadband internet availability

Business development/attraction (any size)

Business development/attraction (small only)

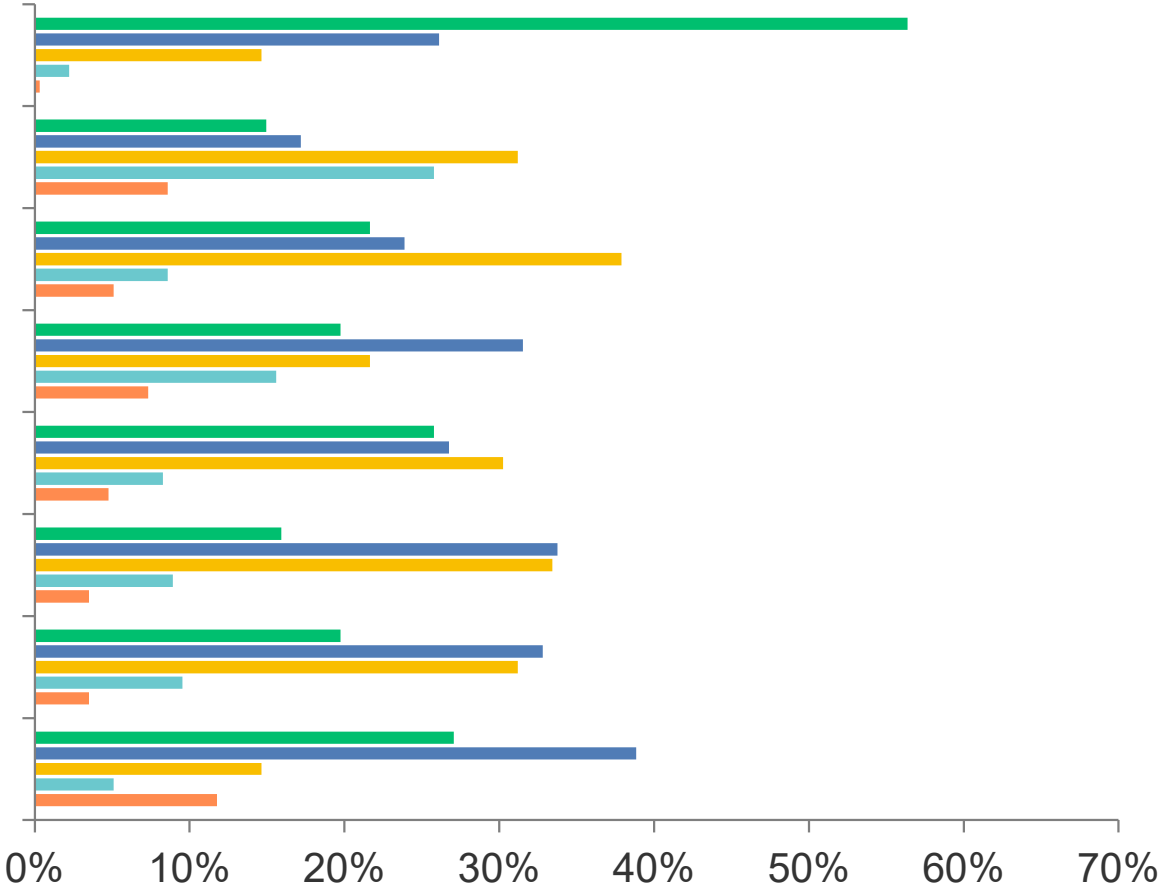
Downtown village area development/improvement

Affordable childcare

Senior housing

Expanding resources and assistance to help low-income residents continue to live within the...

Town-sponsored recreation opportunities, facilities & programming



- YES
- Potentially—but only if grants/subsidies substantially reduce cost
- I support this item, but do not think the town should financially contribute
- NO - I don't support under any circumstances
- Undecided/Don't Know

Q13B: TOWN INVESTMENTS: Answers to this question will help determine future Town budget priorities. I would like the Town to invest in: (Please check one circle per row)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0

Acquiring additional land or easements for open space, preservation, agriculture, or conservation

Acquiring land for future growth of municipal services or initiatives (housing, public works, ...)

Adding management and/or public works staffing

Additional street lighting

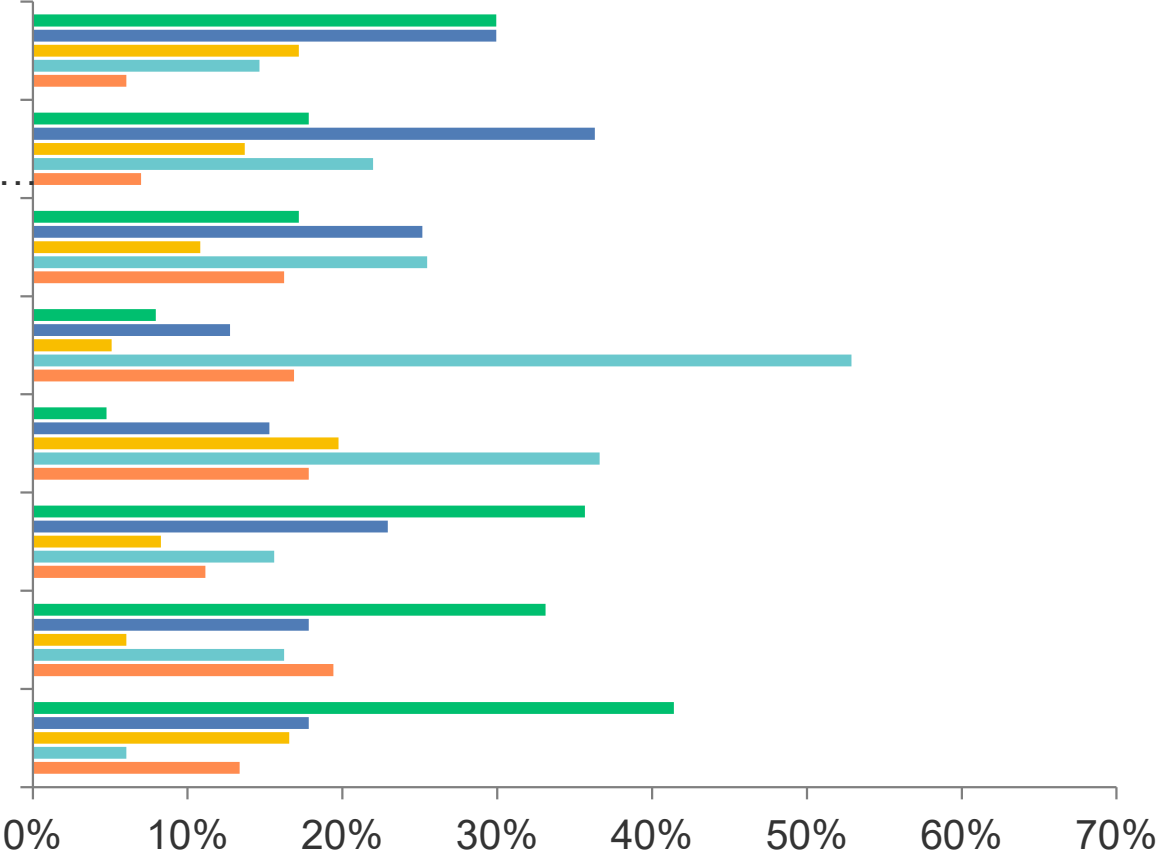
Parking in village area



New Town Sand & Salt Shed

Better snow removal/sanding

Creating an annual Searsmont Heritage Day event/celebration



- YES
- Potentially—but only if grants/subsidies substantially reduce cost
- I support this item, but do not think the town should financially contribute
- Undecided/Don't Know
- NO - I don't support under any circumstances

Theme 5. Community & Character

Emphasis on community spaces

Ensuring growth is in line with community character

Childcare and elder services

“You did not ask about the need for community connections/conversations. Fraternity Village Store satisfies this a bit, but an evening spot is needed that fosters connections among Searsmonsters.”

“Fraternity Village Country Store provides a place for communicating with neighbors and information about town events.”

“Encourage... development... to make the village center grow as a village center where people mingle. Threshers is missed as a local gathering place.”

“Sorry at loss of Threshers as community gathering place - how could town encourage/enable facilities for another version of this.”

I am a senior and would (and have asked) for the possibility of lists or volunteers for help with yard work/handyman to help me find help since my husband died. I think if we had a local services list at the town office, it would be really helpful. I have seen "senior services" advertised here. As for snowplowing, again, lists for volunteer help would be nice but las year or so, they have seemed to really attack mailboxes and driveways. Water - I would love to know of help to get the orange out of my water - again, a list of local services would be awesome. Without my husband, I am sunk in alot of this stuff.

Q13B: TOWN INVESTMENTS: Answers to this question will help determine future Town budget priorities. I would like the Town to invest in: (Please check one circle per row)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0

Acquiring additional land or easements for open space, preservation, agriculture, or conservation

Acquiring land for future growth of municipal services or initiatives (housing, public works, ...)

Adding management and/or public works staffing

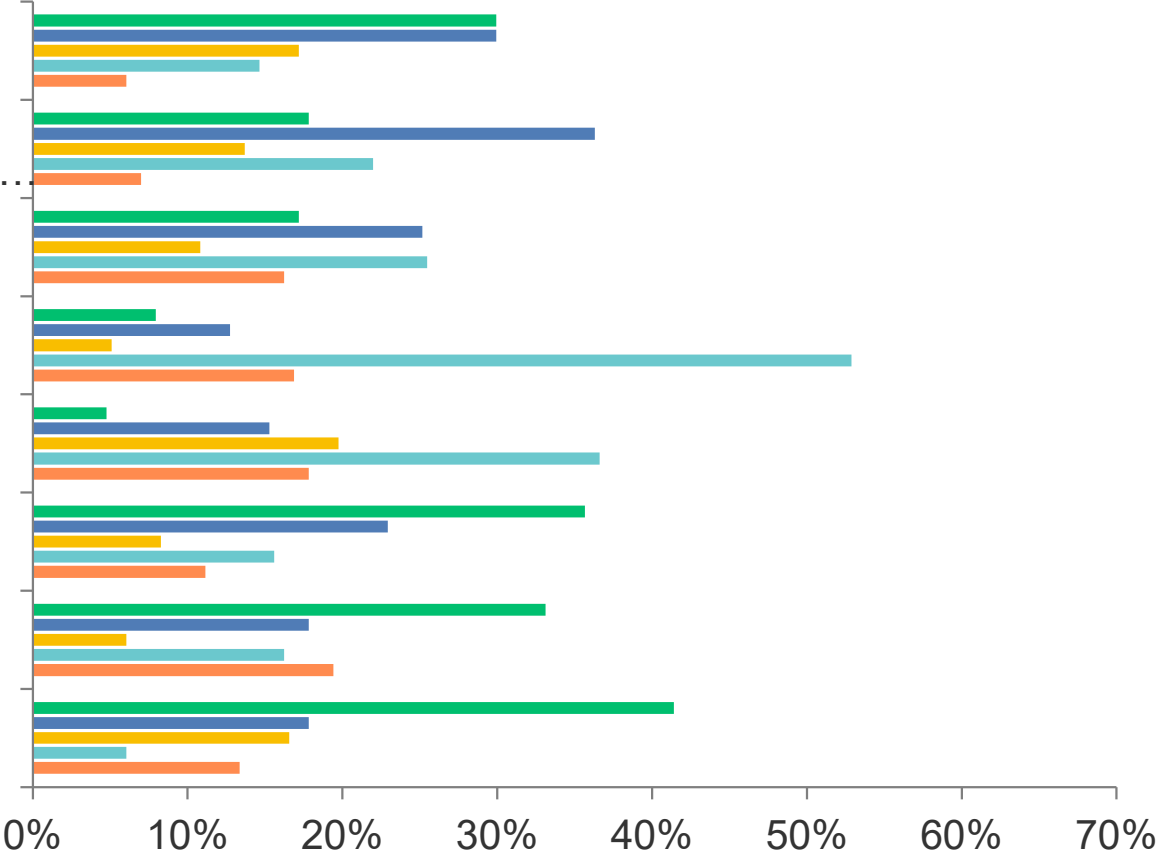
Additional street lighting

Parking in village area

New Town Sand & Salt Shed

Better snow removal/sanding

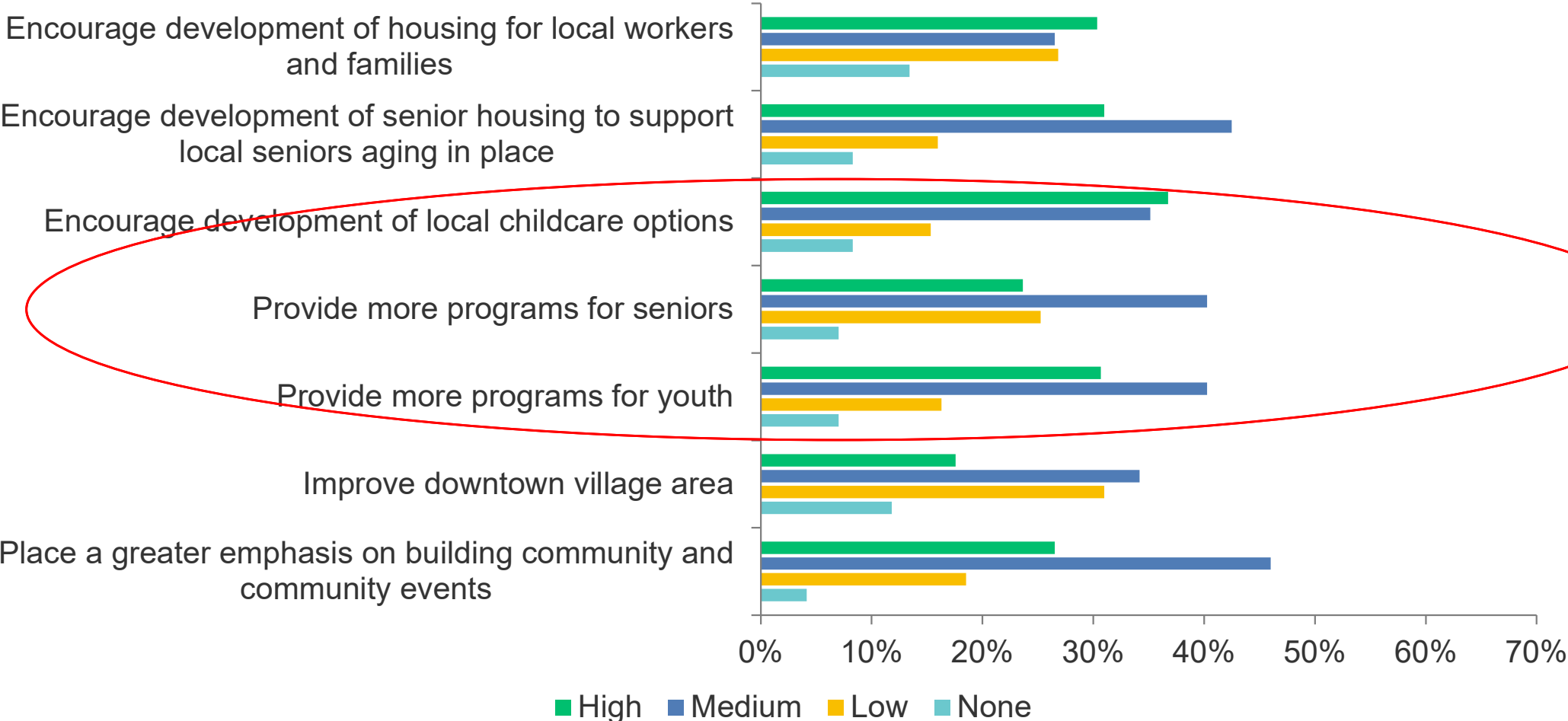
→ Creating an annual Searsmont Heritage Day event/celebration



- YES
- Potentially—but only if grants/subsidies substantially reduce cost
- I support this item, but do not think the town should financially contribute
- NO - I don't support under any circumstances
- Undecided/Don't Know

Q12A: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 313 Skipped: 1



Theme 6. Protecting Natural Resources

Water bodies

Outdoor space access and availability

Conservation

Q12: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 1

Year-Round

Seasonal



Q13B: TOWN INVESTMENTS: Answers to this question will help determine future Town budget priorities. I would like the Town to invest in: (Please check one circle per row)

Answered: 172 Skipped: 0

Acquiring additional land or easements for open space, preservation, agriculture, or conservation

Acquiring land for future growth of municipal services or initiatives (housing, public works, ...)

Adding management and/or public works staffing

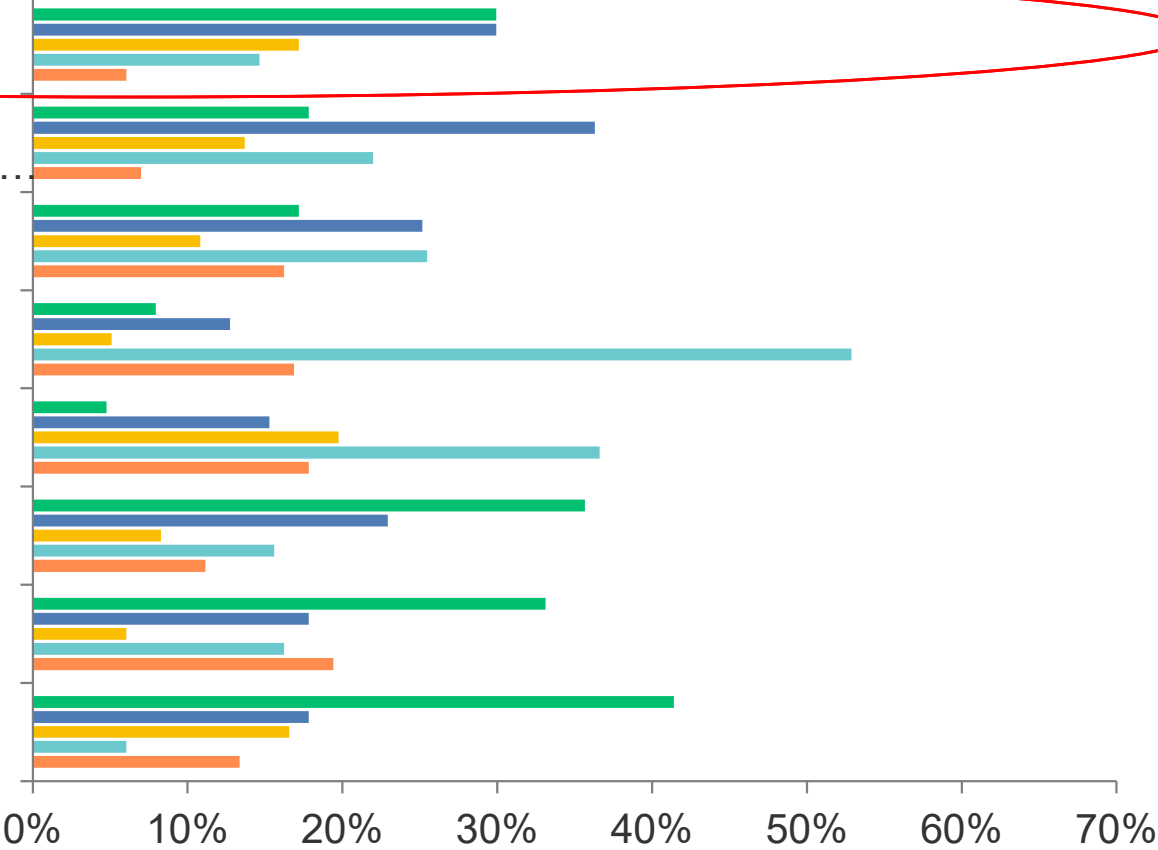
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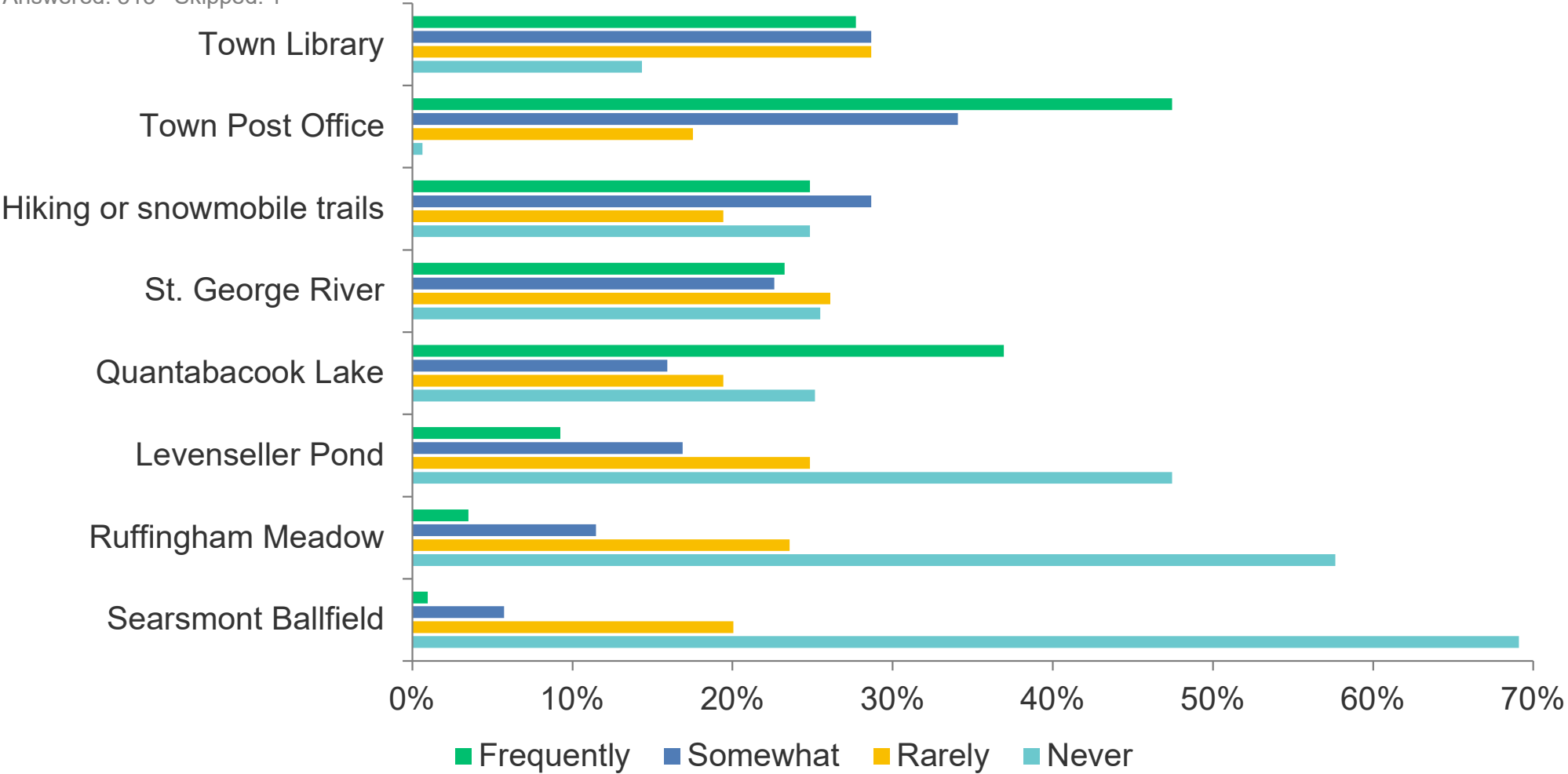
- YES
- Potentially—but only if grants/subsidies substantially reduce cost
- NO - I don't support under any circumstances
- I support this item, but do not think the town should financially contribute
- Undecided/Don't Know

Discussion

- What are your impressions of the survey results? Do you find any of the results surprising, or are the results in keeping with your expectations?
- Do you have outstanding questions that the survey results do not address?
- What do you think people are most concerned about with regards to road maintenance and protection of water body resources?

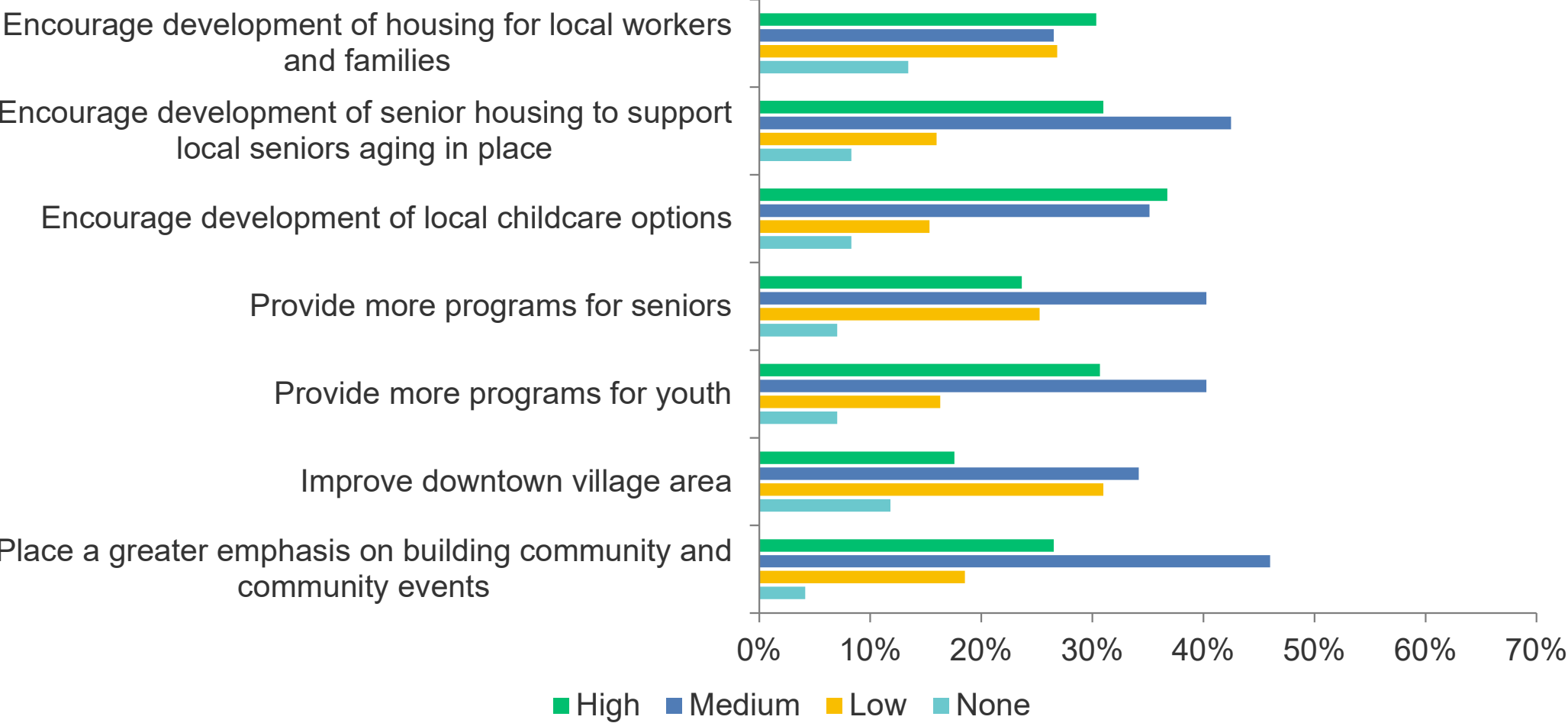
Q10: Community Enhancement and Recreation: How often do you use the following in Searsmont:

Answered: 313 Skipped: 1



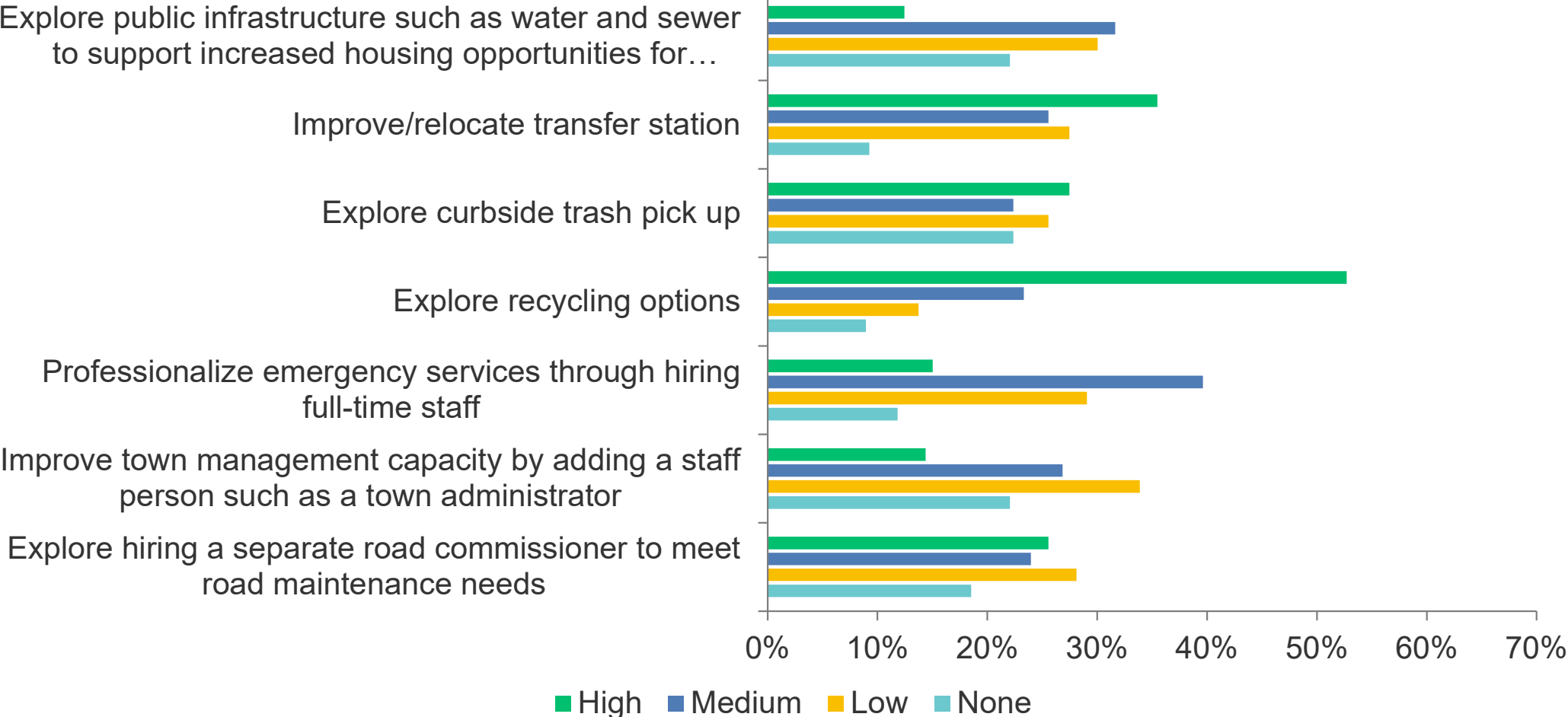
Q12A: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 313 Skipped: 1



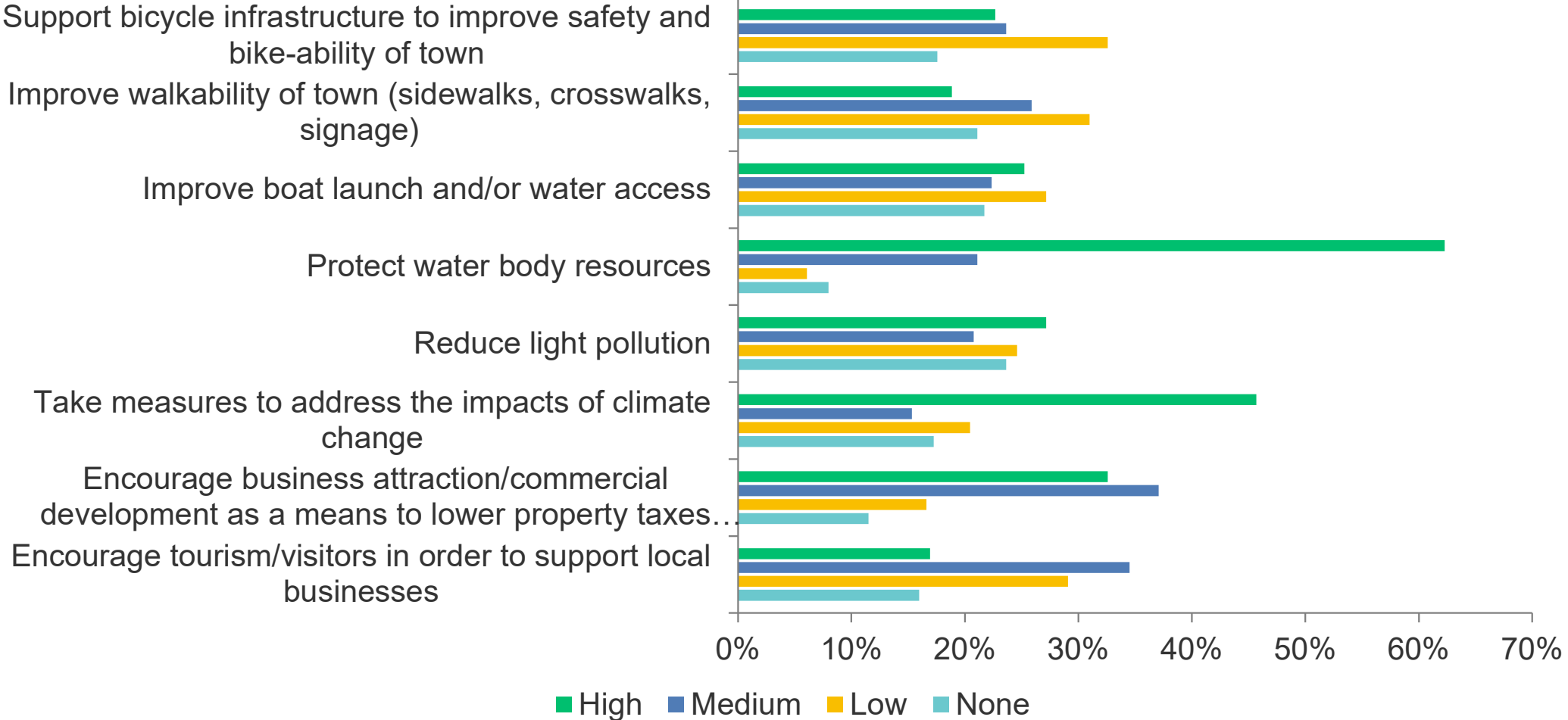
Q12B: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 313 Skipped: 1



Q12C: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 313 Skipped: 1



Q12: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 1

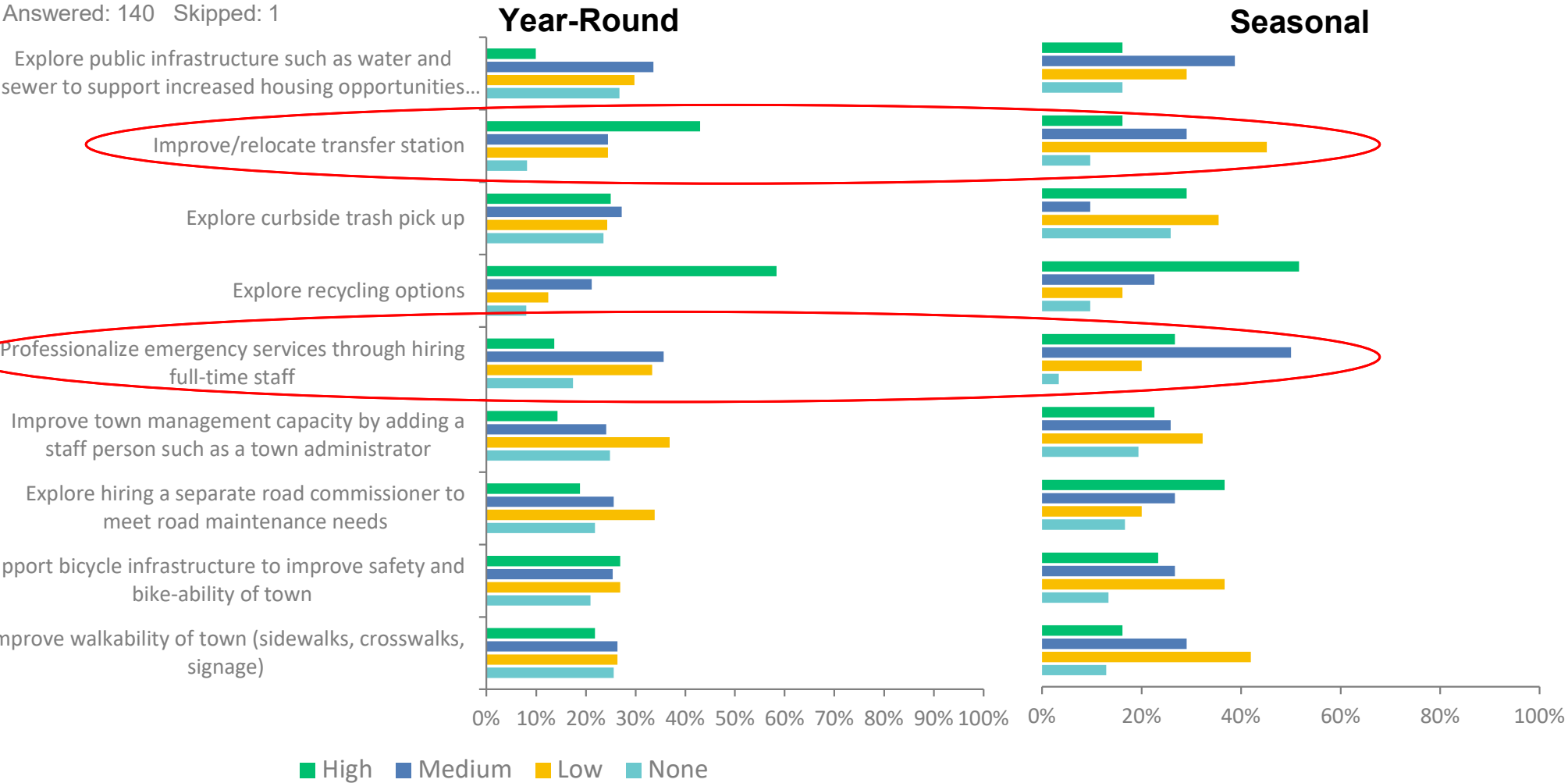
Year-Round

Seasonal



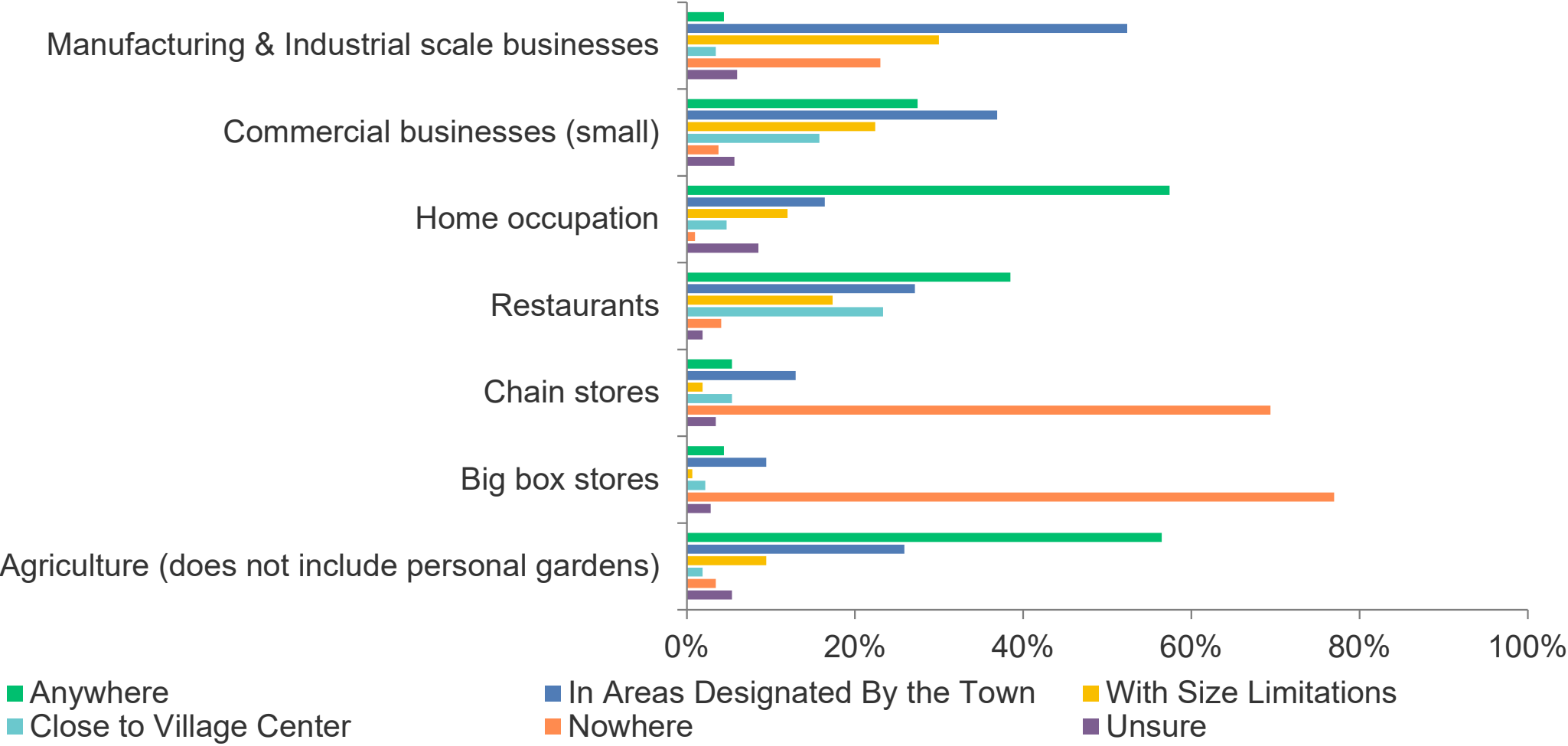
Q12: TOWN PRIORITIES: As a community, what level of priority should the Town place on the following actions over the next 10 years?

Answered: 140 Skipped: 1



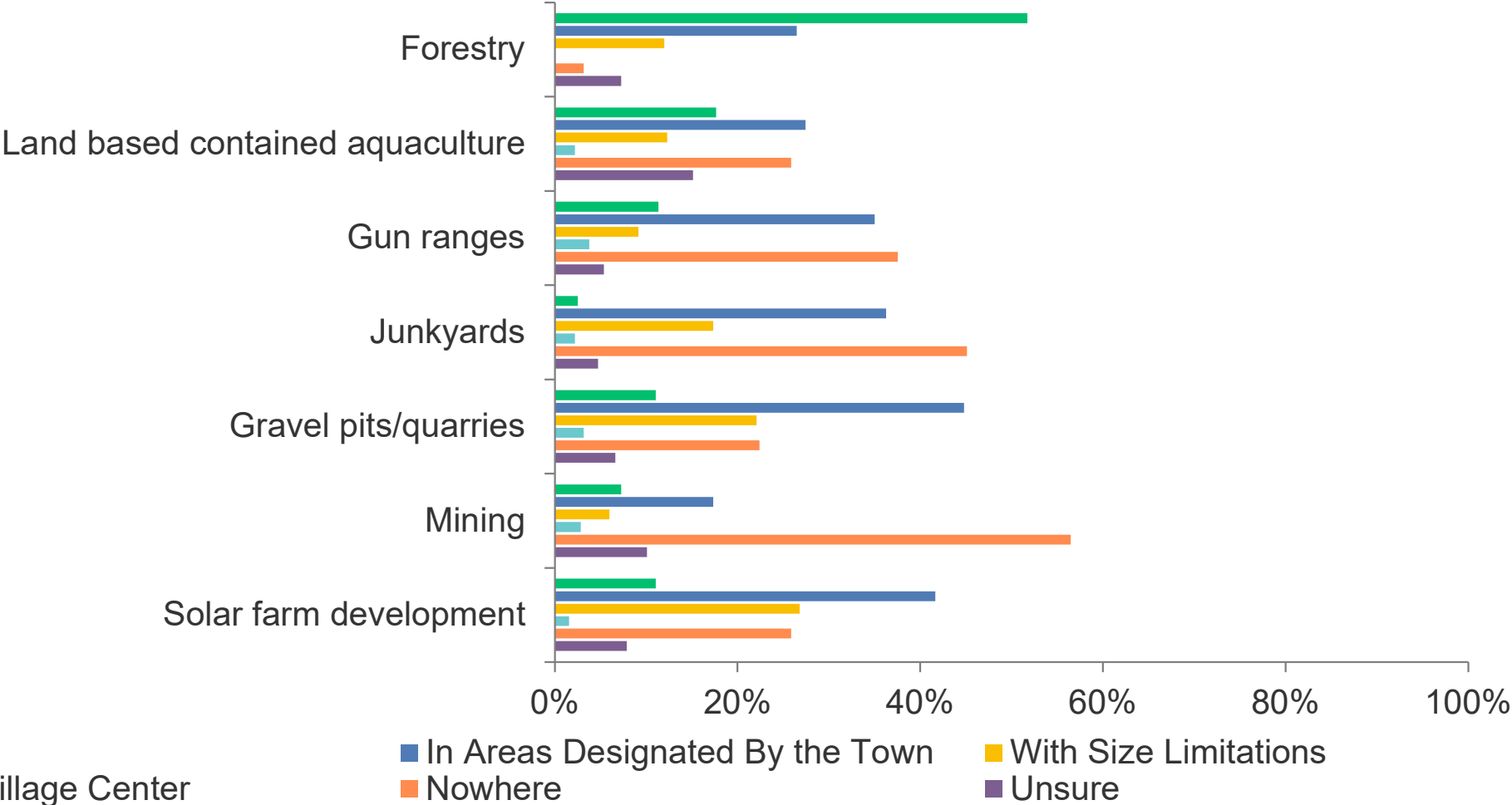
Q14A: LAND USE: Please check where you feel it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur in the future (you may select more than one column for each row):

Answered: 307 Skipped: 7



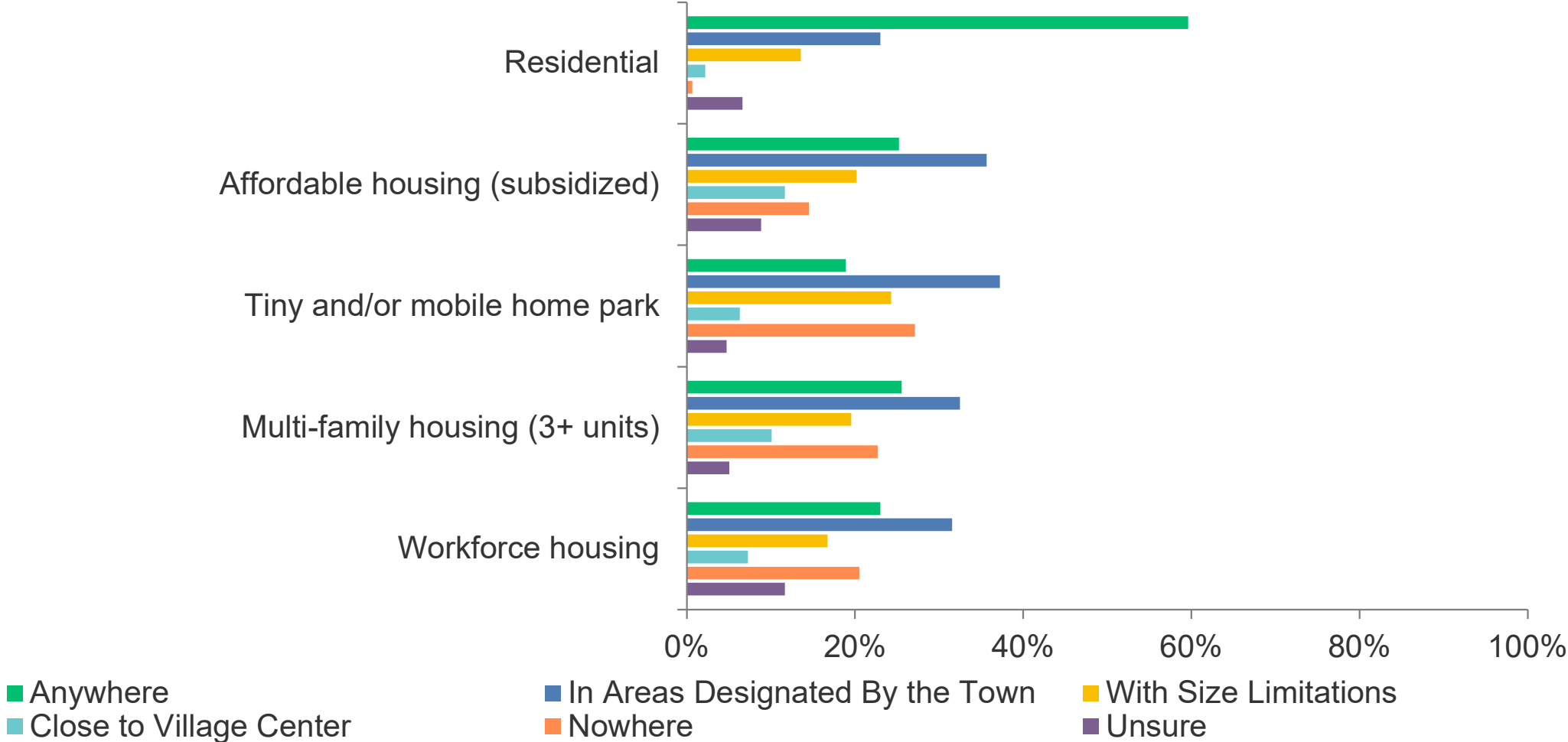
Q14B: LAND USE: Please check where you feel it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur in the future (you may select more than one column for each row):

Answered: 307 Skipped: 7



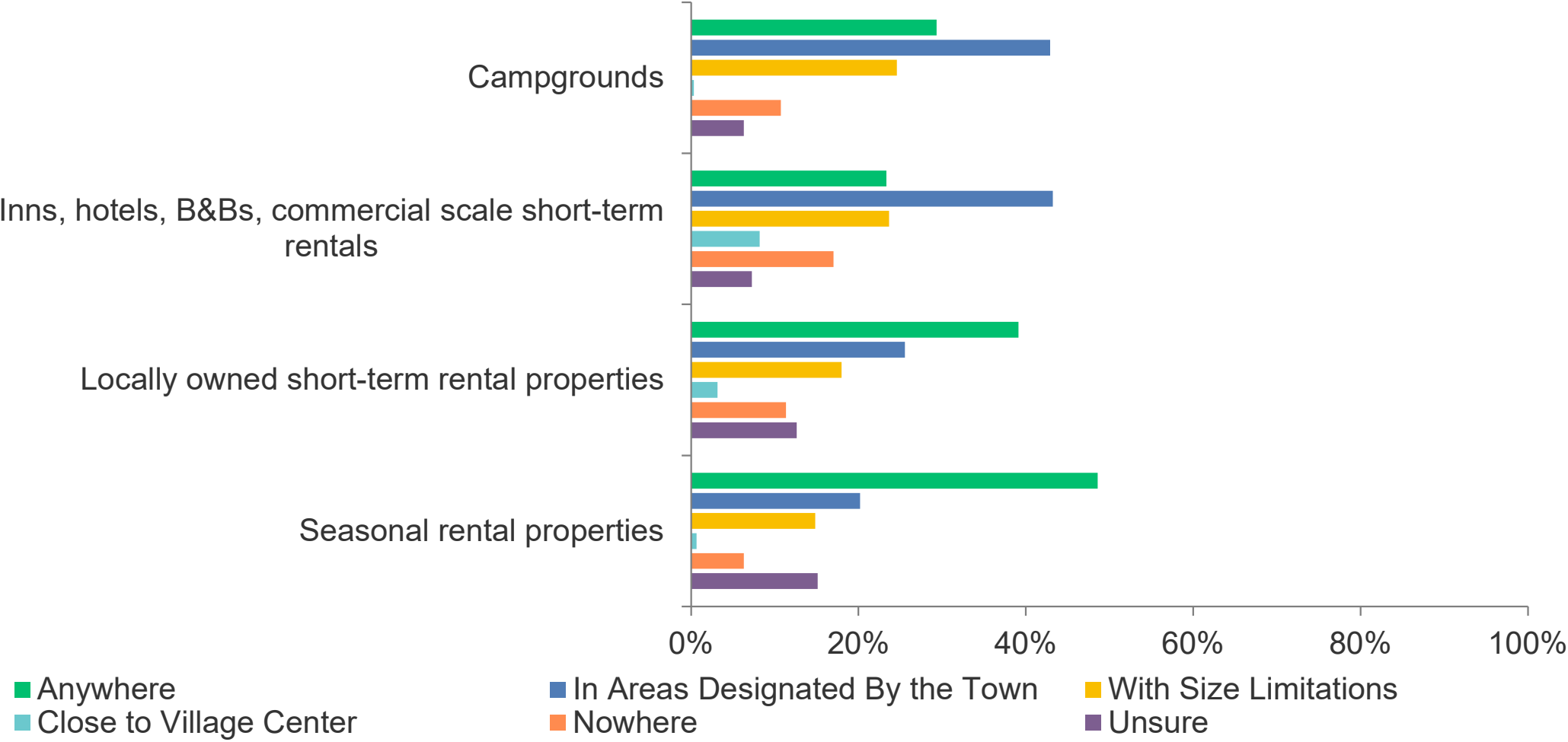
Q14C: LAND USE: Please check where you feel it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur in the future (you may select more than one column for each row):

Answered: 307 Skipped: 7



Q14D: LAND USE: Please check where you feel it is most appropriate for the following land uses to occur in the future (you may select more than one column for each row):

Answered: 307 Skipped: 7



Keep is small and quaint!

Controlled growth. Preservation of natural beauty. Expanded services for elderly and low-income. Expansion of tax base through tourism, hospitality and small business.

about like it is - doing some wonderful stuff with the trail systems & keeping a lid on growth

Slow, but steady growth, centered around living, working and recreating in the area for persons who want to come here and work, and not seeking handouts. Improvements to help senior citizens to be able to stay in their homes.

An agricultural and arts center, with a thriving local village and lots of outdoor recreation opportunities. A place with a reputation as a place to raise a family and not just another bedroom community. Our population is old and low-income and we want to bring new energy to this town.

I would love to see Searsmont remaining a quiet, rural town. I would love to see businesses thriving in the village area and all the old commercial buildings being productively used. I'd love to see a Searsmont Farmer's Market happen again being supported by the community.

I'd love Searsmont be the shining example of well-plowed roads. I'd love for Searsmont to feel like home - just as it did when I first moved here.

Remain a small, friendly community that welcomes new residents but retains the village vibe and low taxes.

A largely residential area with some small businesses and recreational opportunities

Carefully managed growth and deveopement of local businesses that "give back to the community" in terms of jobs, income and taxes. Control of sprawl makes Searsmont a fabuious place to live over the next 10-20 years.

The rural small town feel is why we're here and why folks come to stay, we need to be committed as a community to build, preserve and provide spaces for our elders to stay with their communities and provide affordable housing to our young families to live and work in the area and to provide services/housing for our struggling families to get on their feet.

I would like to see Searsmont continue to be a well maintained rural town with emphasis on farming, historic landmarks preserved and environmental issues always addressed.

Desire the town to have a strong community identity with a... profile... of being thoughtful, prudent, safe, smart and accepting. Essential is to have a community / village center. The Community building is FABULOUS, but it is only the start.