



City of Smithville Strategic Planning Sessions

Board of Alderman

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September 24, 2026

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Overview of Strategic Planning
3. Review Environmental Scan and SWOC (Table of Contents on next slide)
4. Review and Update Strategic Priorities
5. Develop Mission, Review Vision, and Develop Values
6. Develop Outcomes for Strategic Priorities
7. Strategic Plan Progress Reporting
8. Reflection and Closure
9. Next Steps

Environmental Scan Table of Contents

1. Environmental Scan Overview	21
2. Community Perspective	25
3. Social Point Survey Data	33
4. Ideas Wall Data	56
5. Forum Data	58
6. Employee Survey	60
7. Youth Survey	80

Guidelines for Effective Participation



Speak from your own perspective using “I” statements.



Respect others’ viewpoints while listening respectfully and intently.



Speak in “we” statements when reporting out from breakout discussions.



Stay focused on the discussion at hand.



Contribute original ideas and perspectives.



Ask questions.

Define Success

- What does success look like for you today?
- What do you want to get out of today?
- What would be a successful outcome from today?

Strategic Planning

Introduction

Strategic Plan: What and Why?

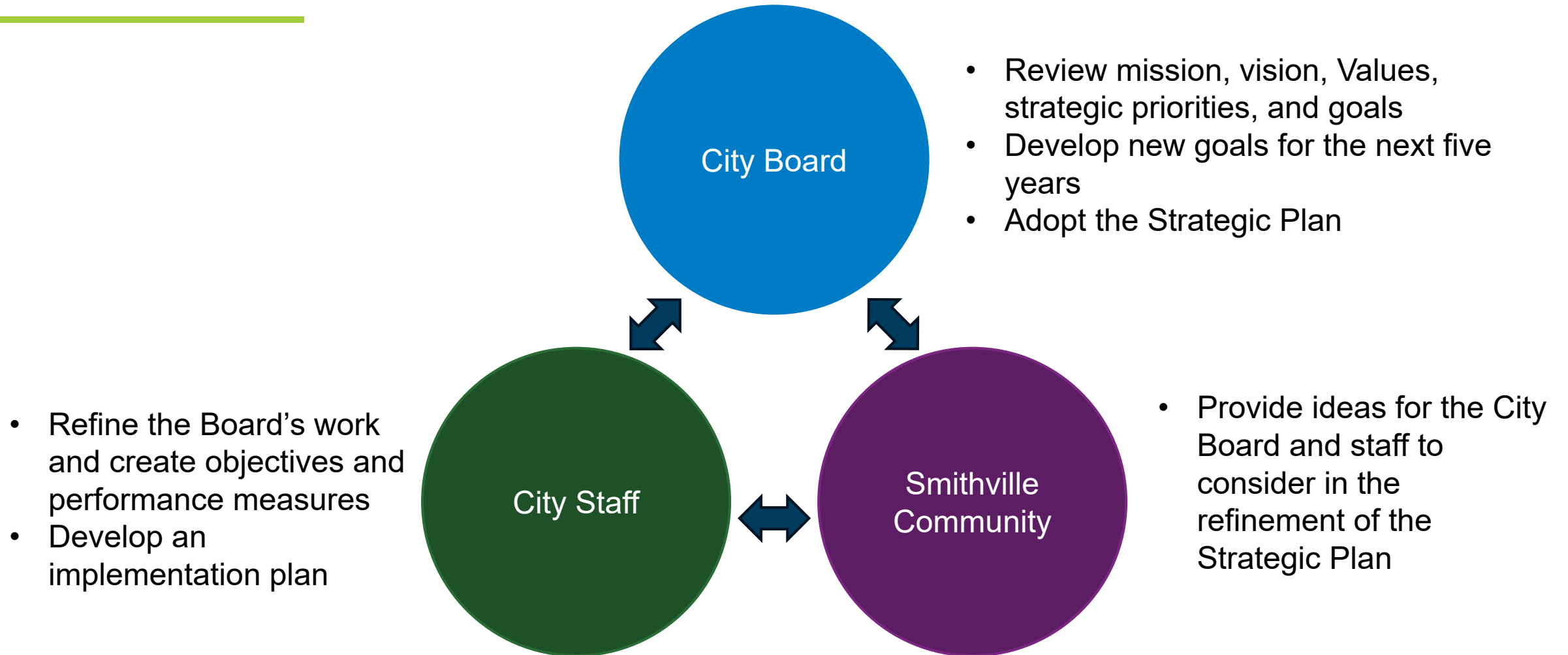
What is a strategic plan and why does the City need one?

- Strategic plans help local government:
 - Develop a clear direction for the future.
 - Set clear goals and priorities to effectively allocate resources toward achievement of future vision.
 - Maintain focus to make progress on issues of most importance to the needs of community members and the City.

What is a Strategic Plan?



Plan Refinement



Strategic Plan Elements

Mission

What you do now
For whom
How you do it



Vision

Where you're going
What you want to achieve for the community



Values

How the organization carries out its mission
How the City interacts with the community

Strategic Priorities

What the focus areas are to move toward the vision

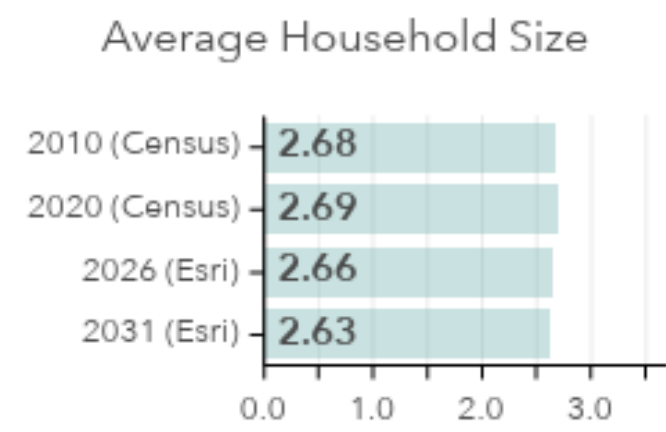
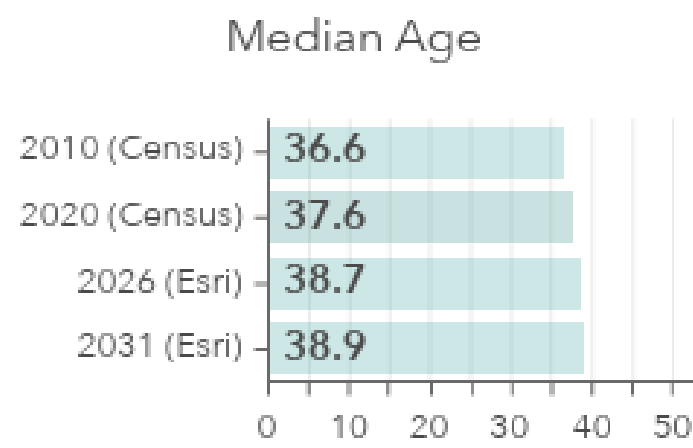
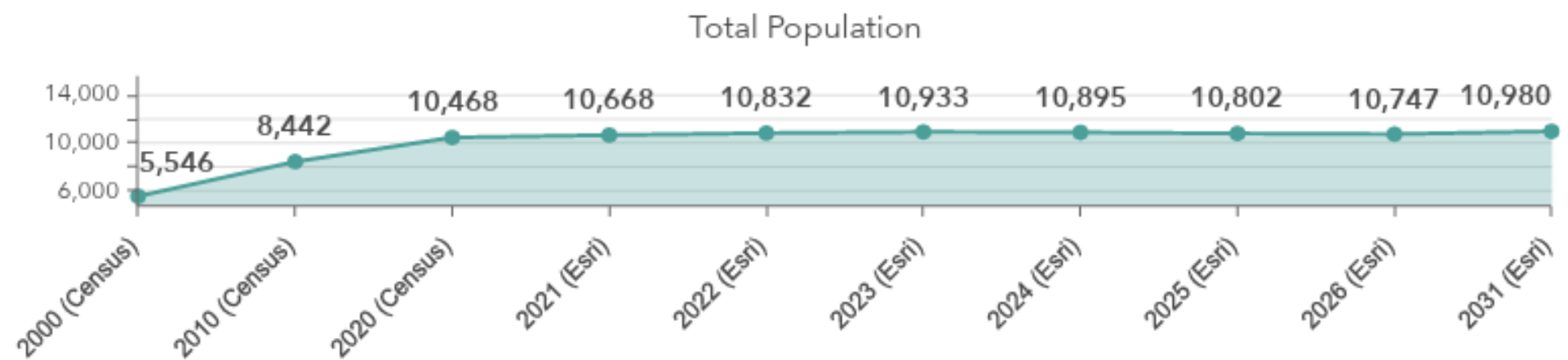


How Elements of a Strategic Plan Fit Together



Community Profile

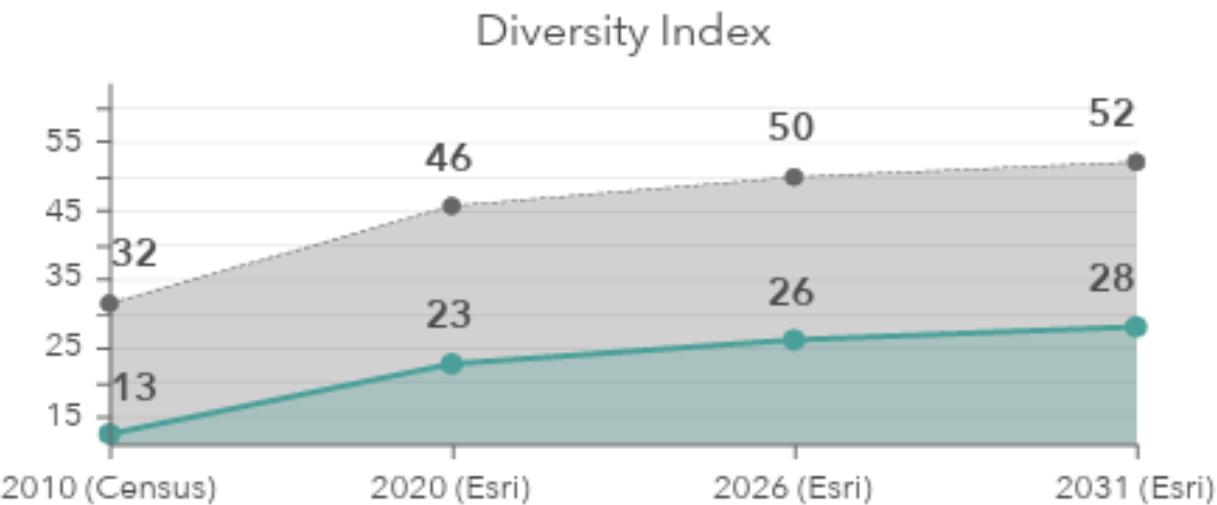
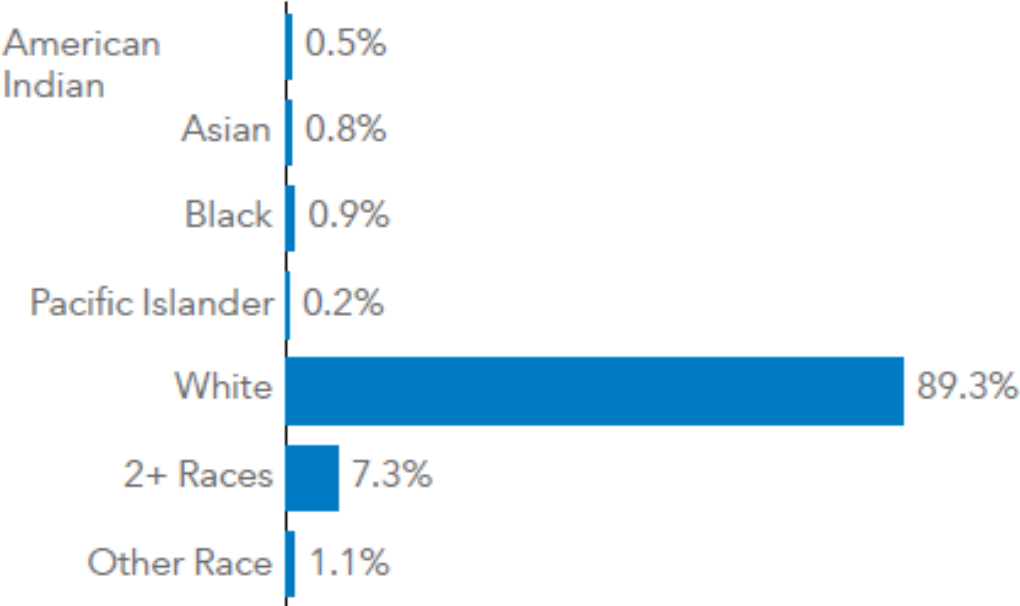
Smithville Demographics: Population, Median Age, Average Household Size



Source: Esri-Data Axle (2025), Esri (2025)

Smithville Demographics: Race and Diversity

Population by Race



Diversity index – the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different races or ethnic groups (ESRI).

Top (dotted) line = Clay County
Bottom (solid) line = Smithville

Smithville Demographics: Economics



4,040

Total Household:



\$292,314

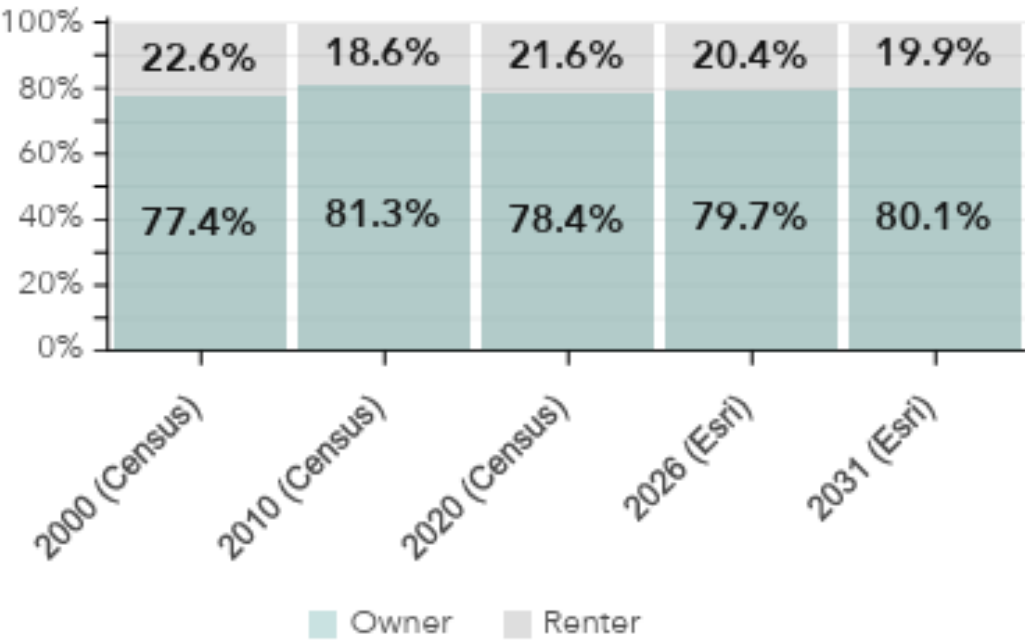
Median Home Value



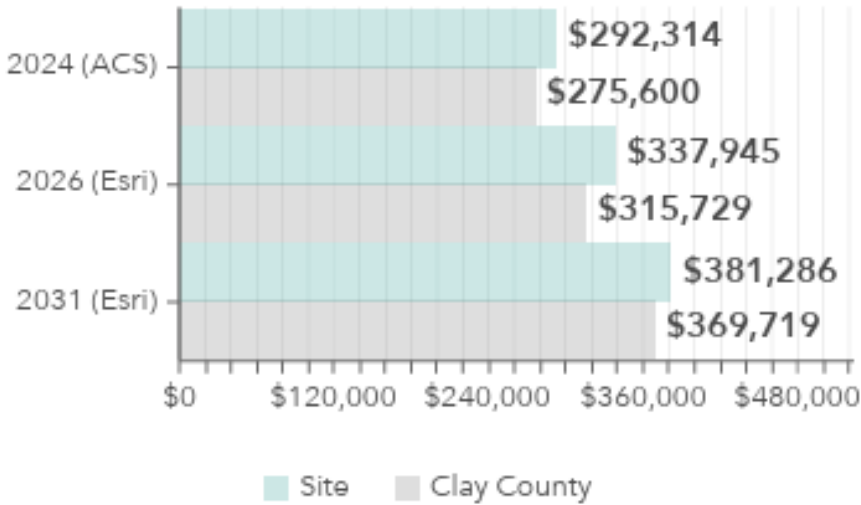
\$104K

Median Household Income

Owner vs Renter Occupied Units



Median Home Value



Bars show comparison to Clay County

Site = Smithville

Source: Esri-Data Axle (2025), Esri (2025)

Smithville Demographics: Economics (Cont'd.)

Key Statistics

297

Total Businesses

2,747

Total Employees

\$370M

Total Sales

1.0%

Unemployment Rate

Daytime Population



10,747

Total Population

Ratio of daytime to total
population:

0.78

Values > 1.0 mean that more
people come to the area during
the day than live there.



5.7

Avg Number of
Employees



18

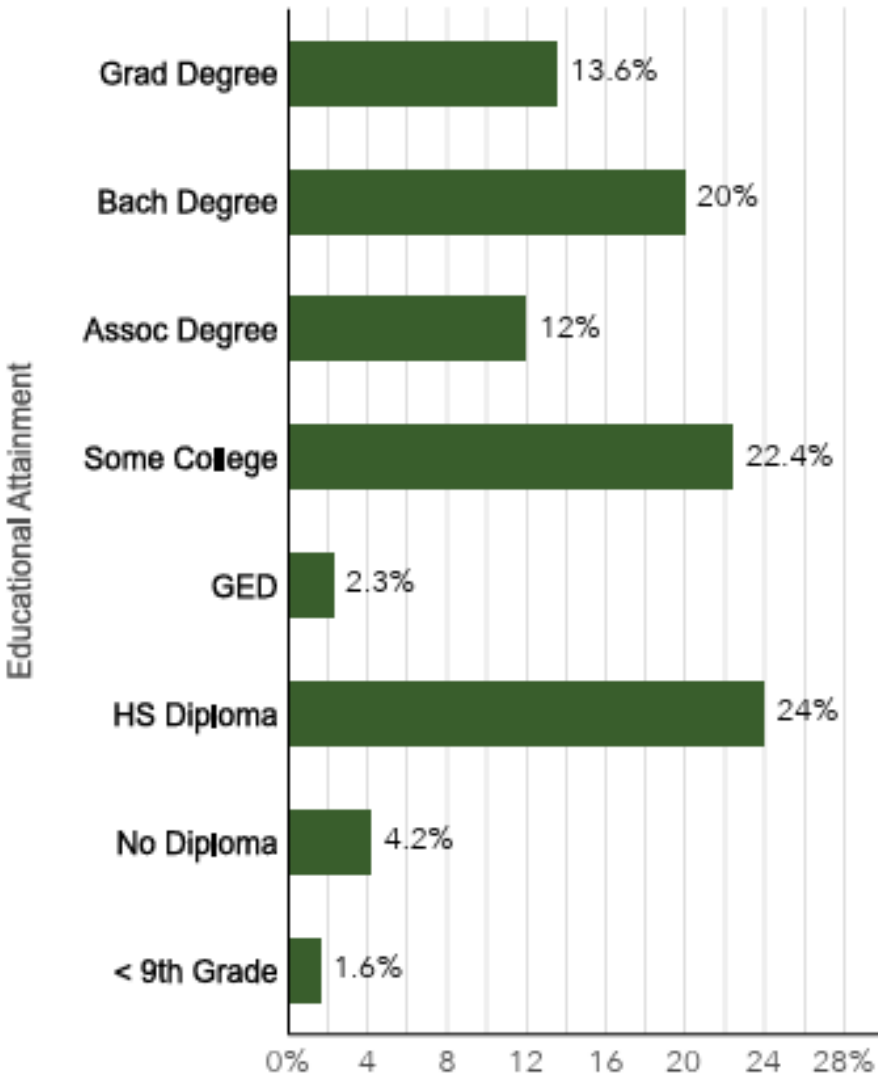
Total Businesses Per
Square Mile



8,357

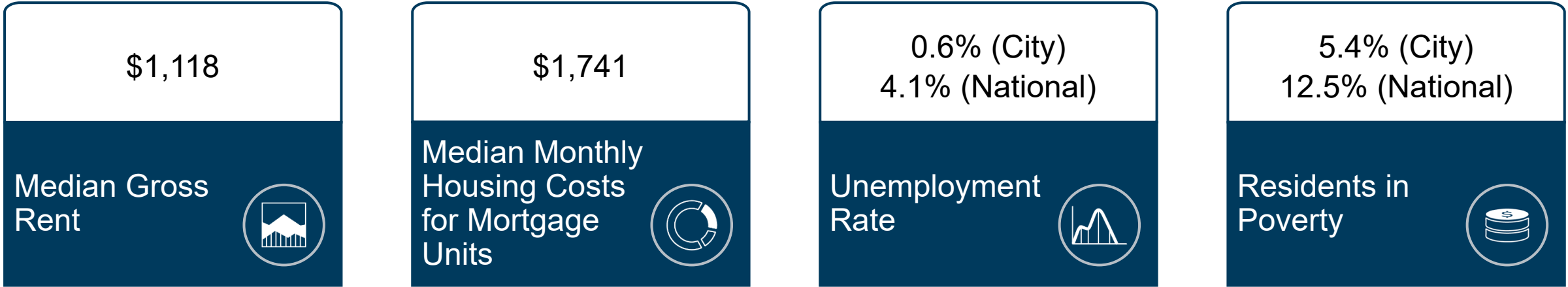
Total Daytime Population

Smithville Demographics: Workforce



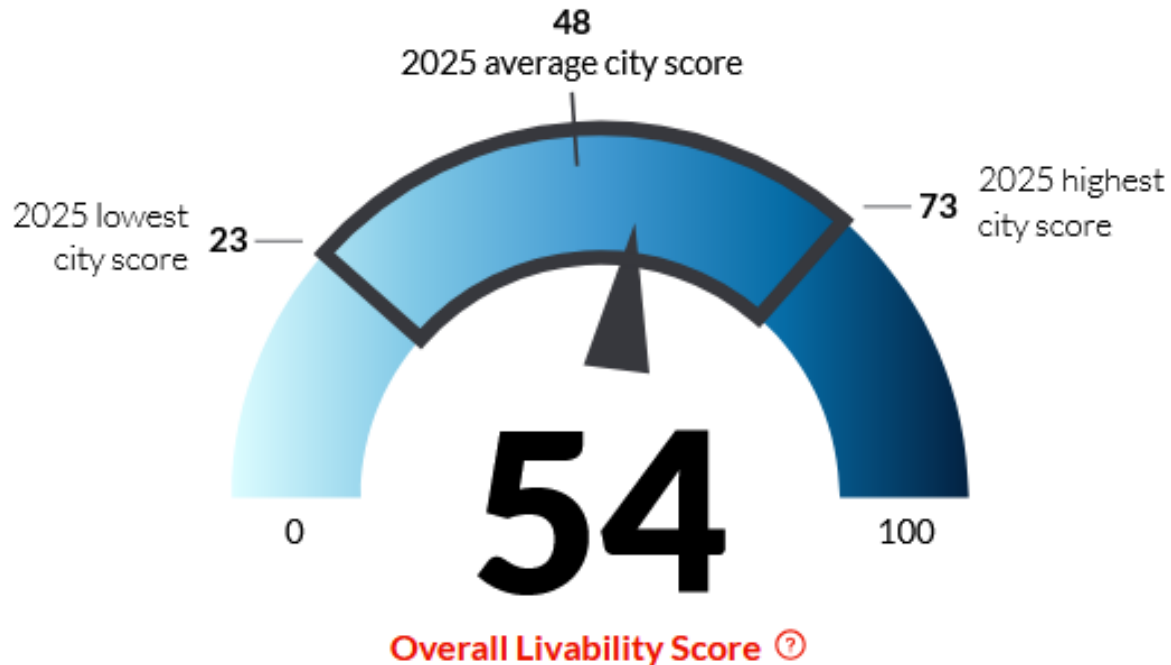
Source: Esri-Data Axle (2025), Esri (2025)

Smithville Cost of Living Indicators



Source: American Community Survey 2024, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2026, ESRI 2025

Smithville Livability Index



The factors that determine this score include

- Housing – affordability and access (50)
- Neighborhood – proximity and security (49)
- Transportation – safety and convenience (36)
- Environment – clean air and water (59)
- Health – prevention, access, and quality (49)
- Engagement – civic and social involvement (54)
- Opportunity – inclusion and possibilities (78)

Demographic Information Discussion



What did the demographic information reveal to you? What stood out in the presentation?



Did you learn anything new?



Which themes are the most important in shaping your thinking about the future direction of the City?

Environmental Scan

What is an Environmental Scan?



An **environmental scan** presents current and anticipated events and their relationships within an organization's internal and external environments.

The scan serves as a basis of determining the future direction of the organization.

How to Use an Environmental Scan



Identify potential opportunities, challenges, and trends that can drive the City's focus and effectiveness.



Provide everyone involved in strategic planning with a shared understanding of the City's current environment.



Help City leaders successfully navigate the forces and obstacles that can hinder the achievement of a shared vision.

What Sources Inform This Process?



Current Strategic Plan



City and regional demographic and economic data



Existing City data, current strategic plan, comprehensive plan, citizen satisfaction survey, capital improvement plan, and various master plans



Social Point strategic planning website including a survey, ideas wall, and forum



Community and employee input including a survey, individual interviews, group interviews, written responses, and community forums



City Board and staff refinement sessions

Community Perspective

Analysis of Stakeholder Input



All individual stakeholder input and survey responses were compiled, analyzed, and coded by theme.

- A response, idea, or comment had to be mentioned multiple times to be listed as a theme.
- Themes are identified as possible strategic priorities for City consideration.
- All specific ideas for improvements have been captured for consideration and will be presented to the City and City staff as strategies and actions to support the vision and strategic goal development in the planning process.

Who Was Invited to Participate

- City Board of Alderman, leadership, and staff
- City advisory boards and commissions
- Community members (residents, businesses, visitors, youth)
- Leadership from other taxing bodies
- Non-profit and community organizations

Outreach

- Shared during the Chamber Luncheon - including handouts, paper surveys, and the presentation
- Published in The Ville magazine
- Published in the Courier Tribune Newspaper
- Highlighted in two Citizen Newsletters
- Utility Bill Insert featuring only information on the Strategic Plan
- Shared weekly in the Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce's Weekly Scoop on the Chamber's website and social media
- Shared weekly in the City's Weekly Newsflash on social media and City website
- 13 individual social media posts (in addition to the weekly newsflash)
- Listed in all City Administrator Reports for the Board of Aldermen Meetings
- Brochures in City Hall lobby, back of City Hall, and in Board Room
- Brochures at Parks & Rec Booth at Farmers Market Event
- Information at the Trough-A-Truck Event / sticky note activity

Engagement: Social Point Site

English ▾



Smithville Strategic Plan Update

The City of Smithville is updating its Strategic Plan with a vision for the next few years.

Your Vision, Our Future: Help shape the Strategic Plan.

The City is updating its current strategic plan which will include the City's mission, vision, priorities, and goals. The plan will help guide the City over the next three to five years in its decision making and actions to meet the needs of the community.

This page is an opportunity to engage our community members in defining clear goals and actionable strategies for the City's future. You play a critical role and the City wants to hear your thoughts to incorporate them in the strategic plan. Your input is essential for providing clarity and direction to elected officials, leadership, and staff.

The City is collecting responses through **September 13, 2026**. Please submit your feedback through the various engagement methods below!

Community Survey

Ideas Wall

Forum

Timeline

- ✓ Phase 1: Project Initiation and Management
- ★ Phase 2: Engagement and Strategic Analysis
- ☆ Phase 3: Strategic Plan Development

[See less](#)

Previous & Upcoming Events

Statistics:

- Views: 1,758
- Visits: 1,524
- Visitors: 1,133
- Contributions: 296
 - Survey: 262
 - Idea wall: 29
 - Forum: 5
- Contributors: 257

Other Engagement

Interviews:

- 14 one-on-one interviews with internal stakeholders
- 6 external focus groups with a total of 14 attendees and 8 written responses
- 4 employee group interviews with a total of 32 attendees

Community forums (40+ attendees):

- Mid-Continent Public Library
- Smithville Activity Center x2
- Smithville High School

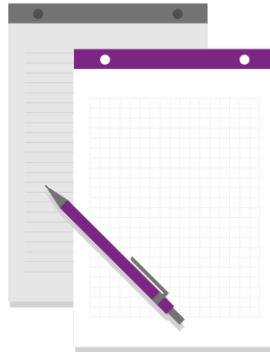
Surveys:

- Employee: 40 responses
- Youth: 59 responses

Activity Brainstorm and Build Consensus

Individually

- Reflect individually on the focused question.
- Write down your initial thoughts.
- Decide on the ideas you want to share with the small group.



Small Groups

- Discuss individual ideas, check for understanding and meaning of each idea.
- Use a marker to write one idea (3 – 5 words) on each note card.
- Write BIG.

One idea

NOT

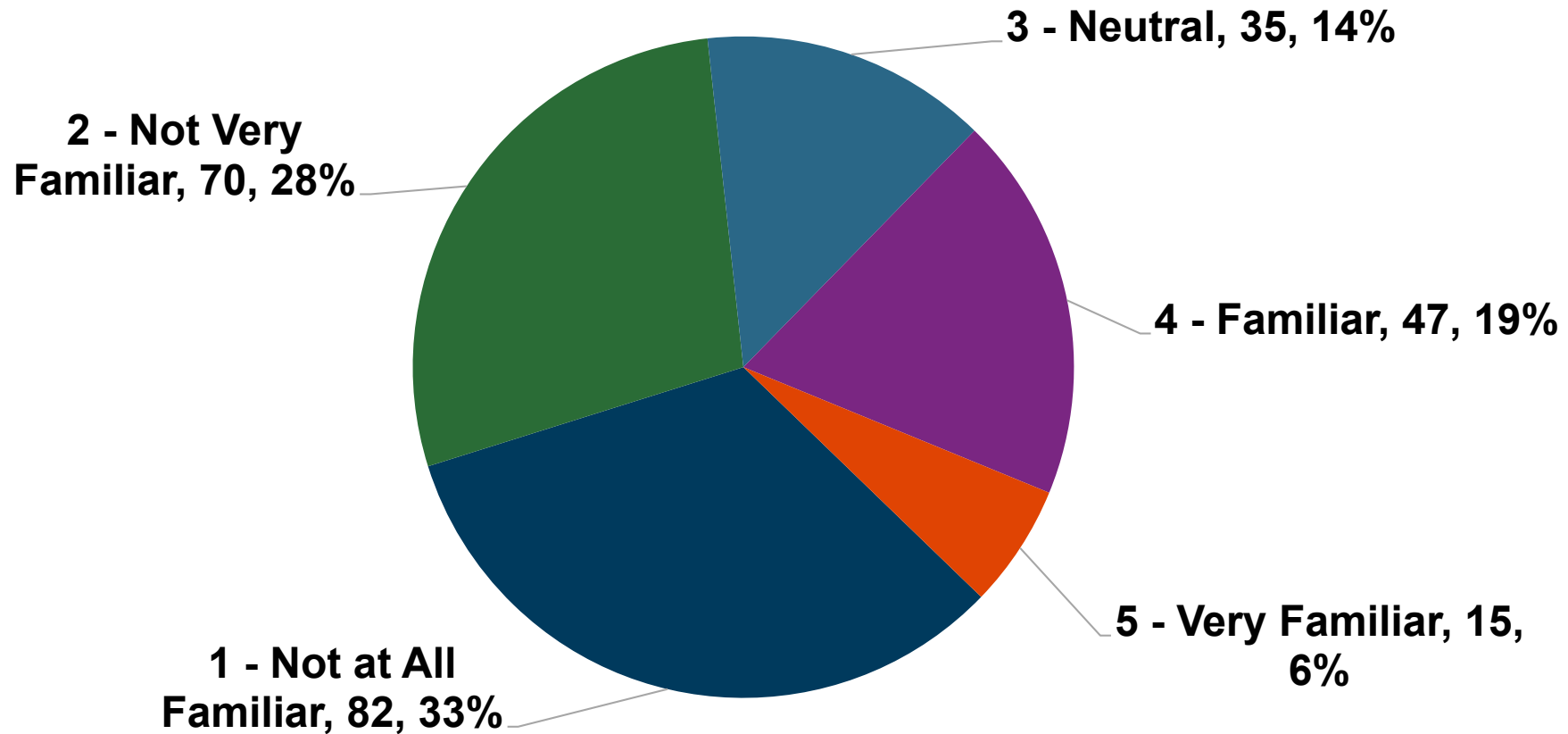
Idea
Idea
Idea

Activity Data Review and Report Out

- **Form groups** – Elected officials and staff will create four groups
- **Review data** – Groups will discuss their two assigned sections (10 minutes each)
- **Report out** – Groups will report out the top 3 findings that stood out the most

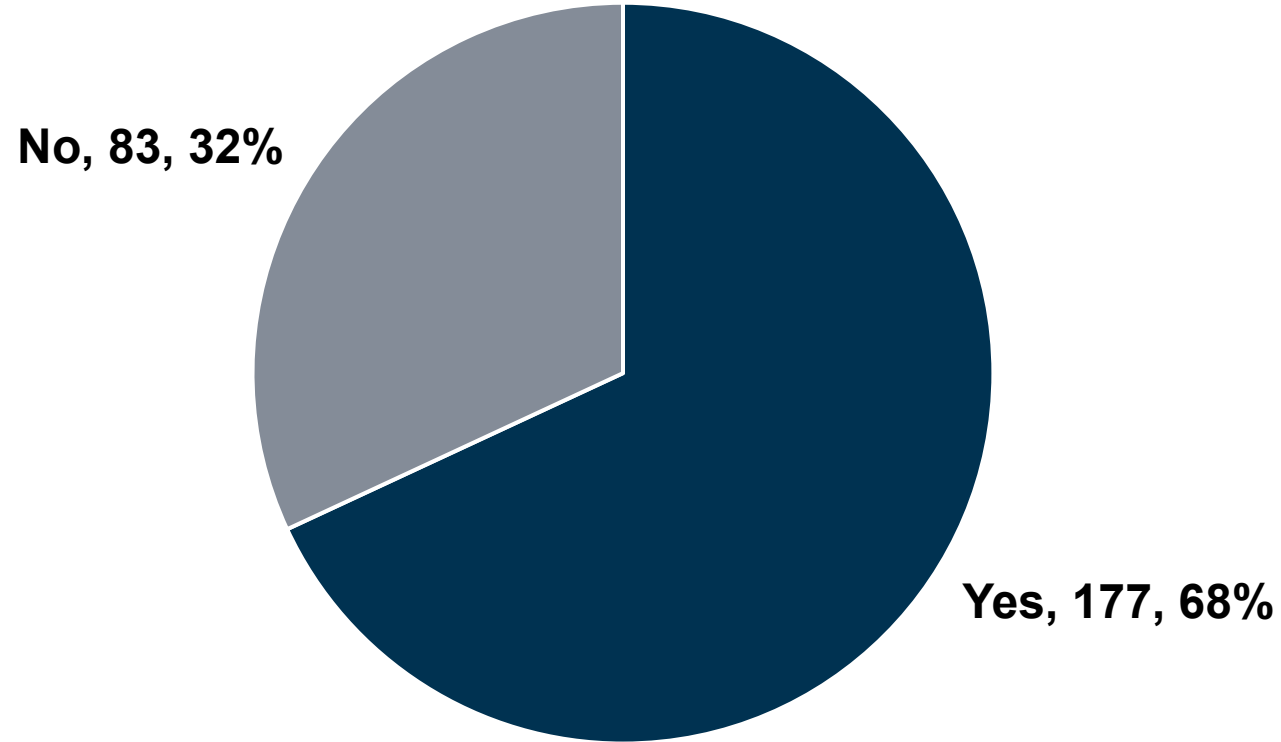
Social Point Survey

Familiarity with 2019 Strategic Plan

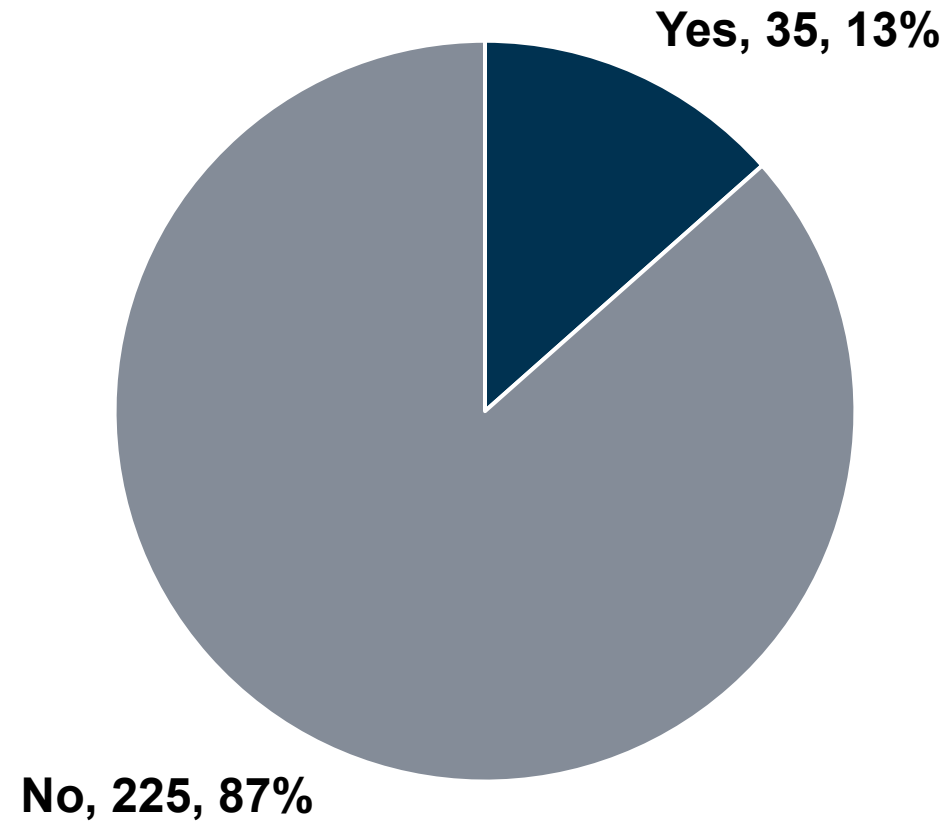


Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

Did you live in Smithville during the creation of the 2019 Strategic Plan?

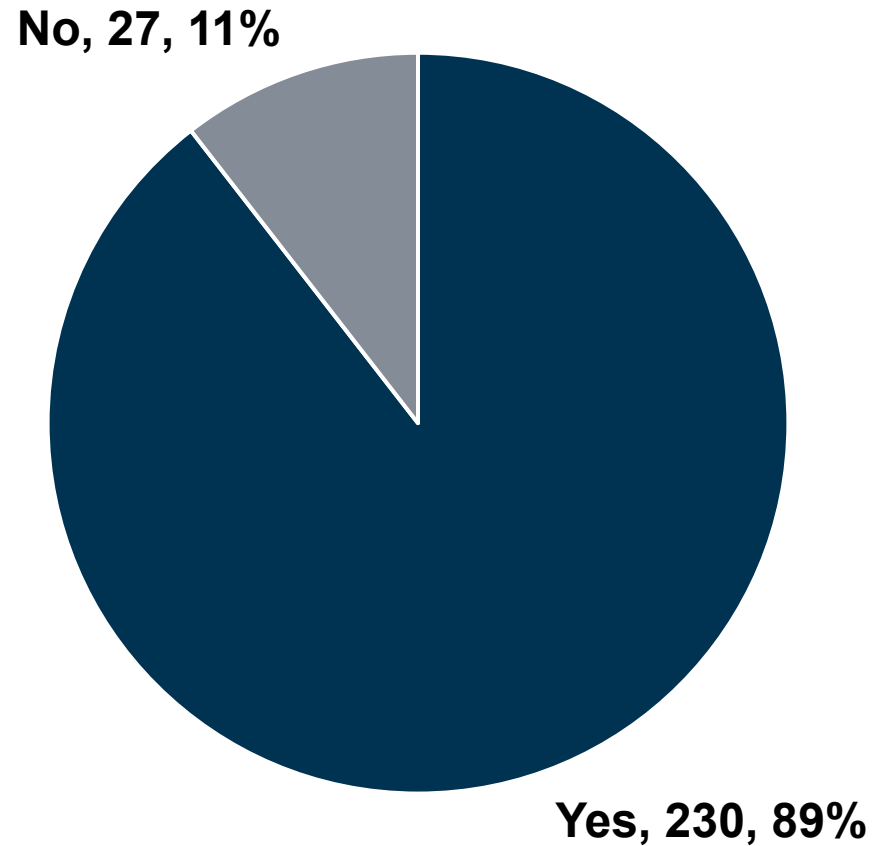


Did you participate in the planning process?



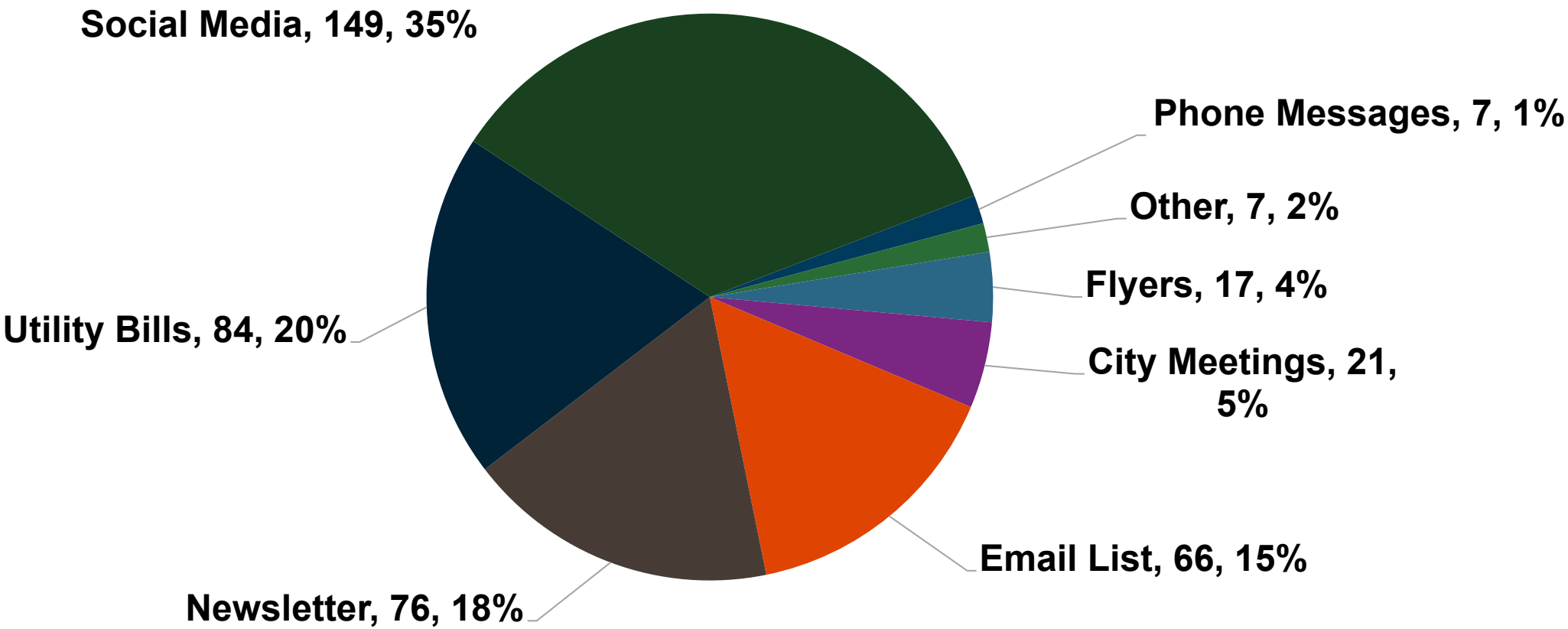
Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

Would you like to receive information about progress of the next plan?

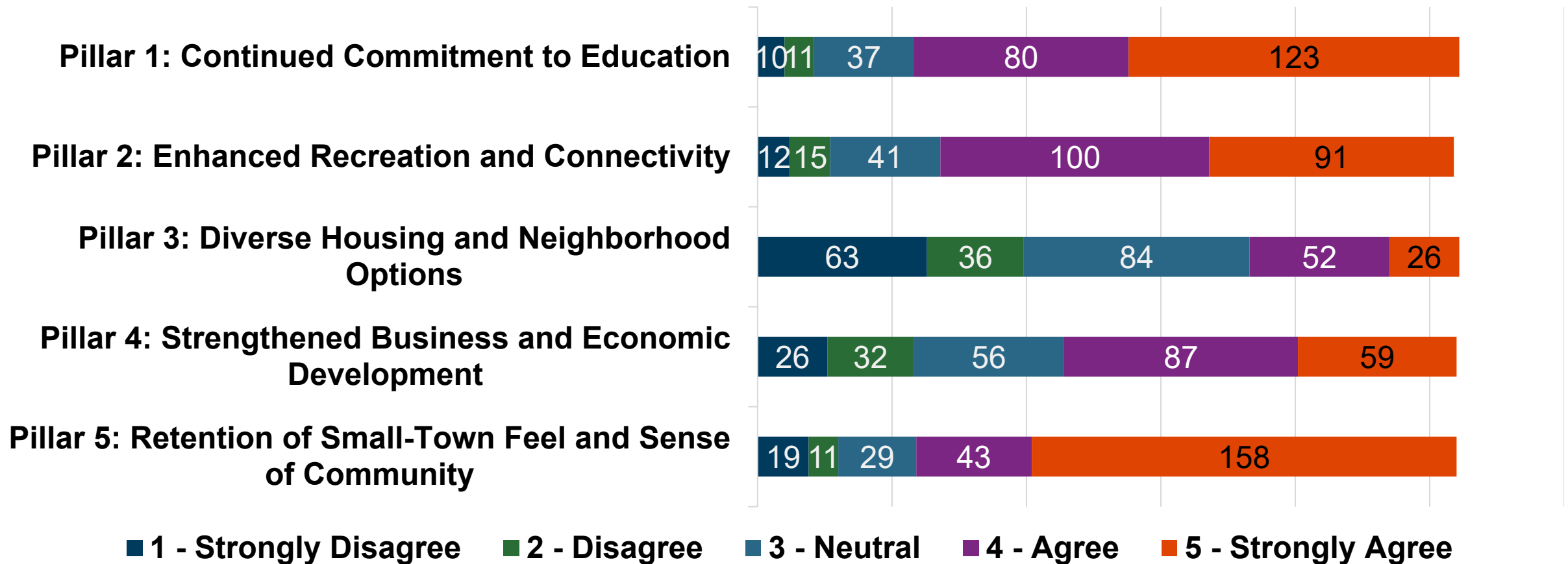


Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

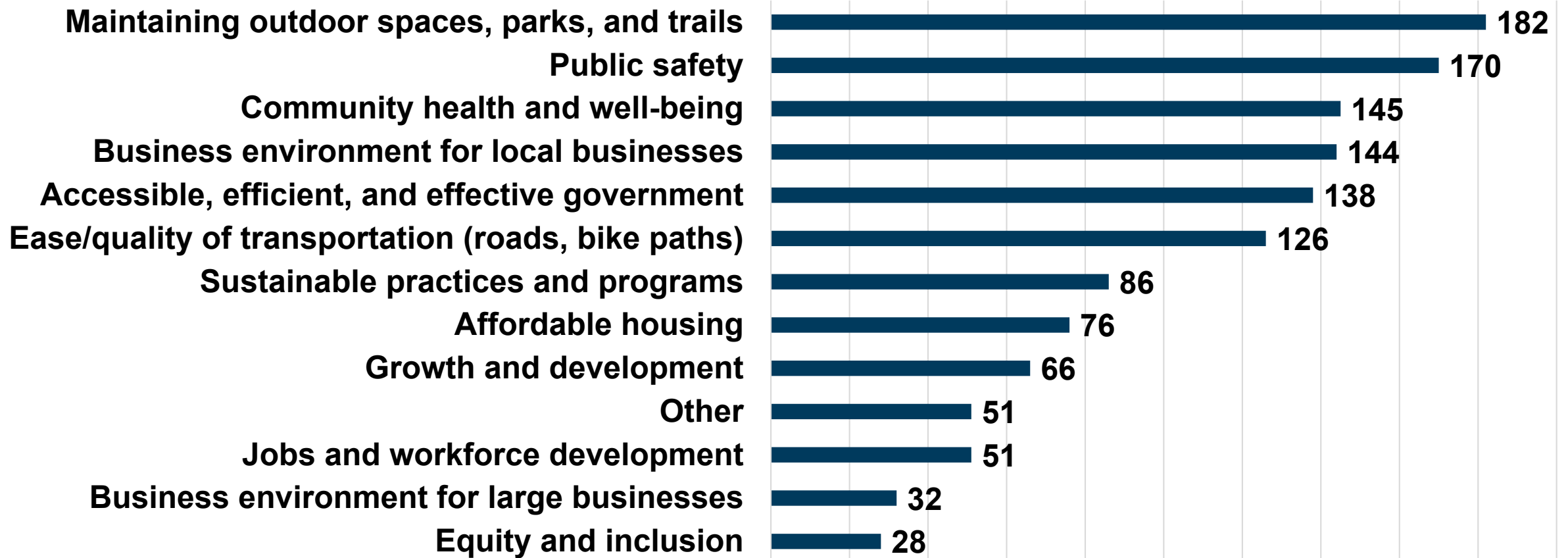
How do you typically receive information about the City?



Rate 2019 Strategic Plan Pillars by how Well it Aligns With Your Vision for the City



Top Five Areas of Focus for the City

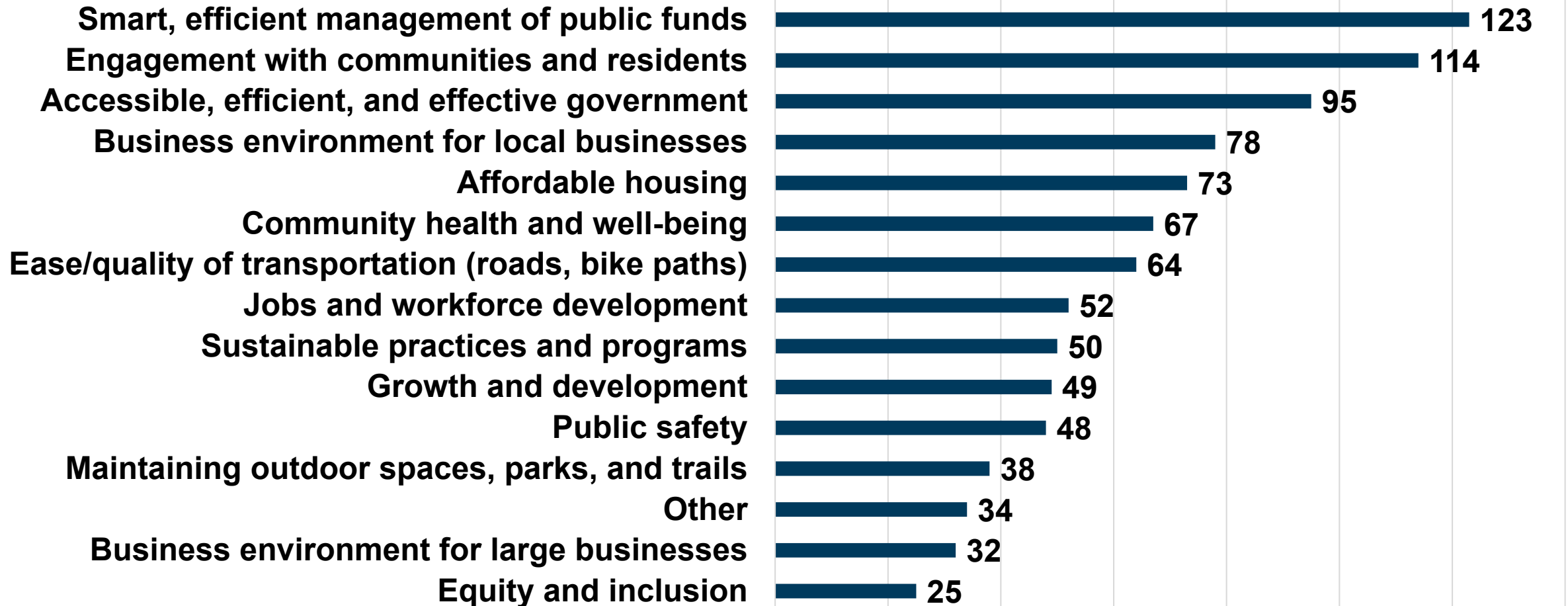


Things the City Does Well

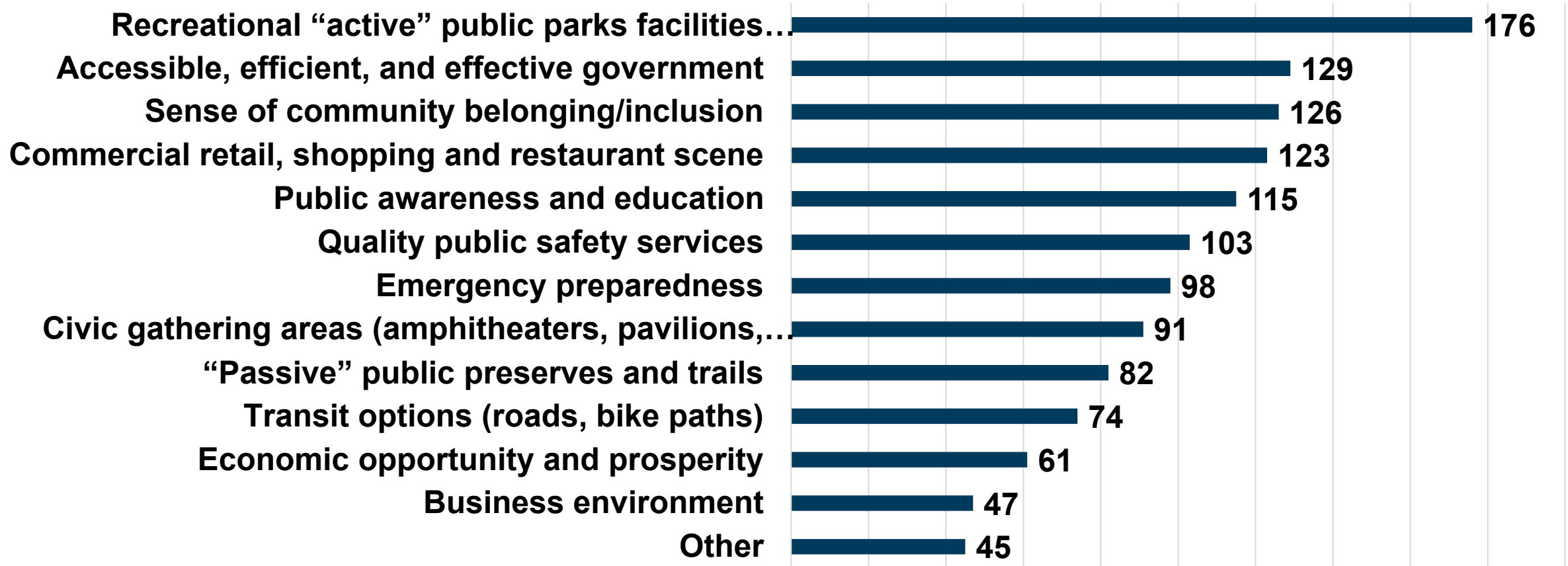


Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

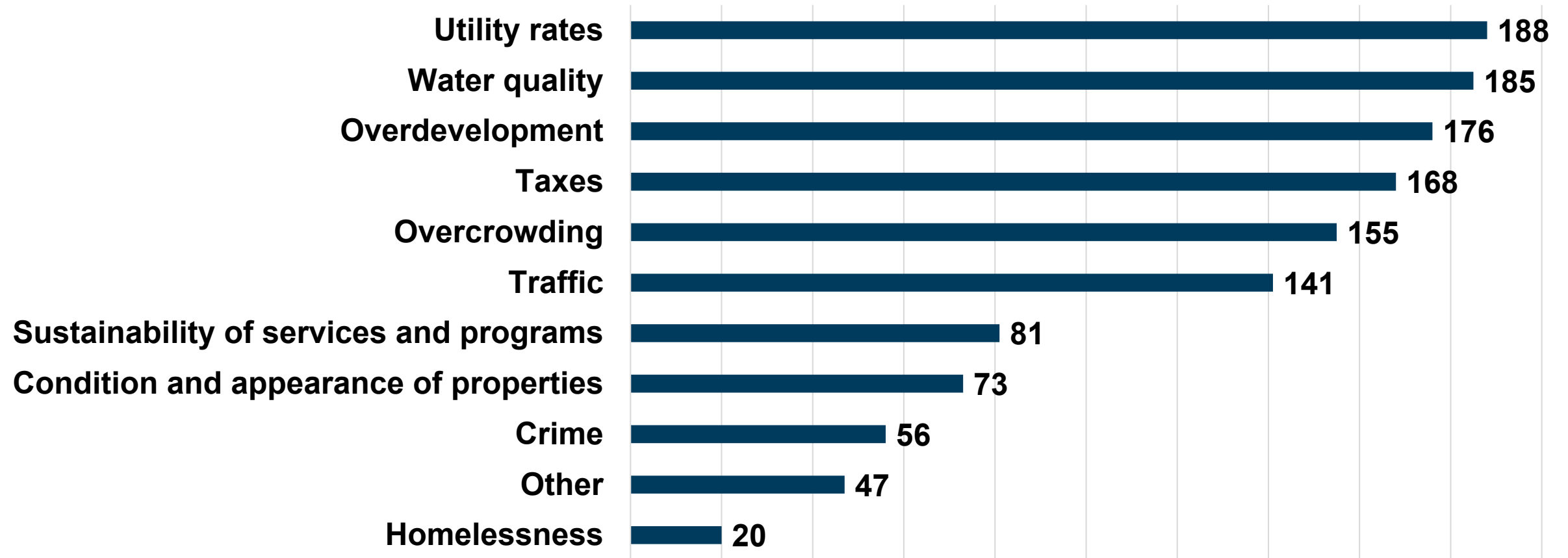
Things the City Could Do Better



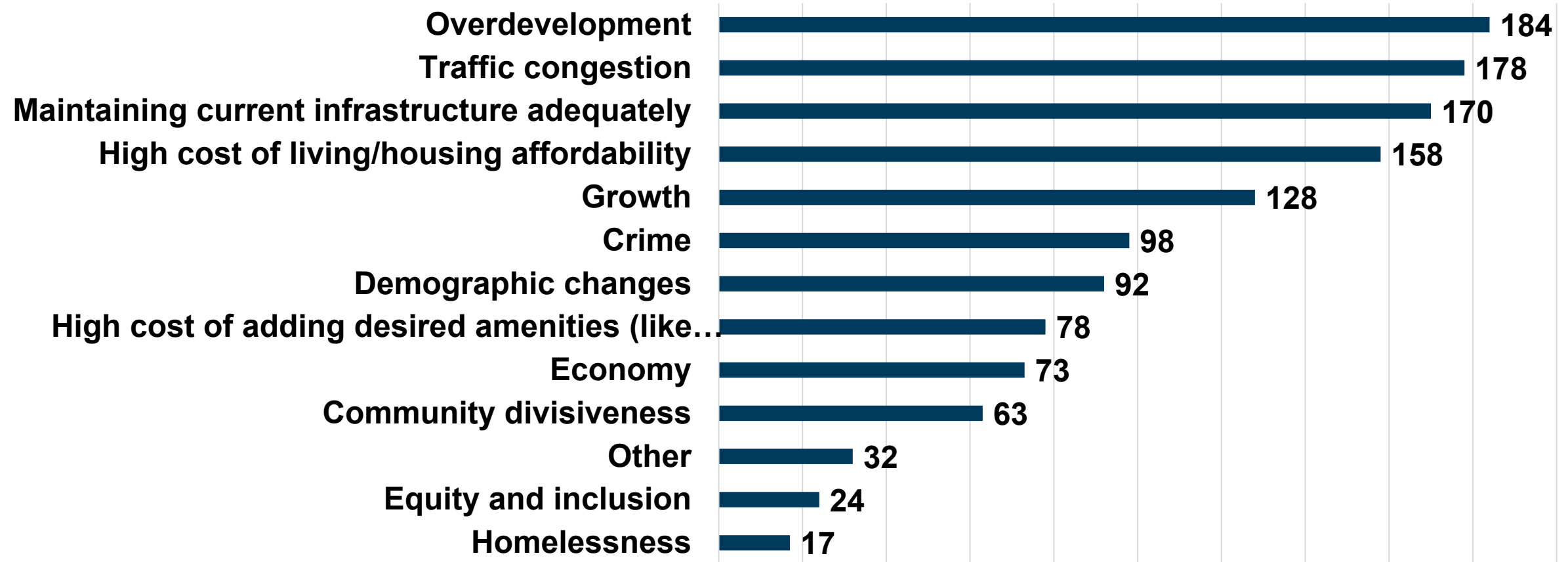
Five Things to See More



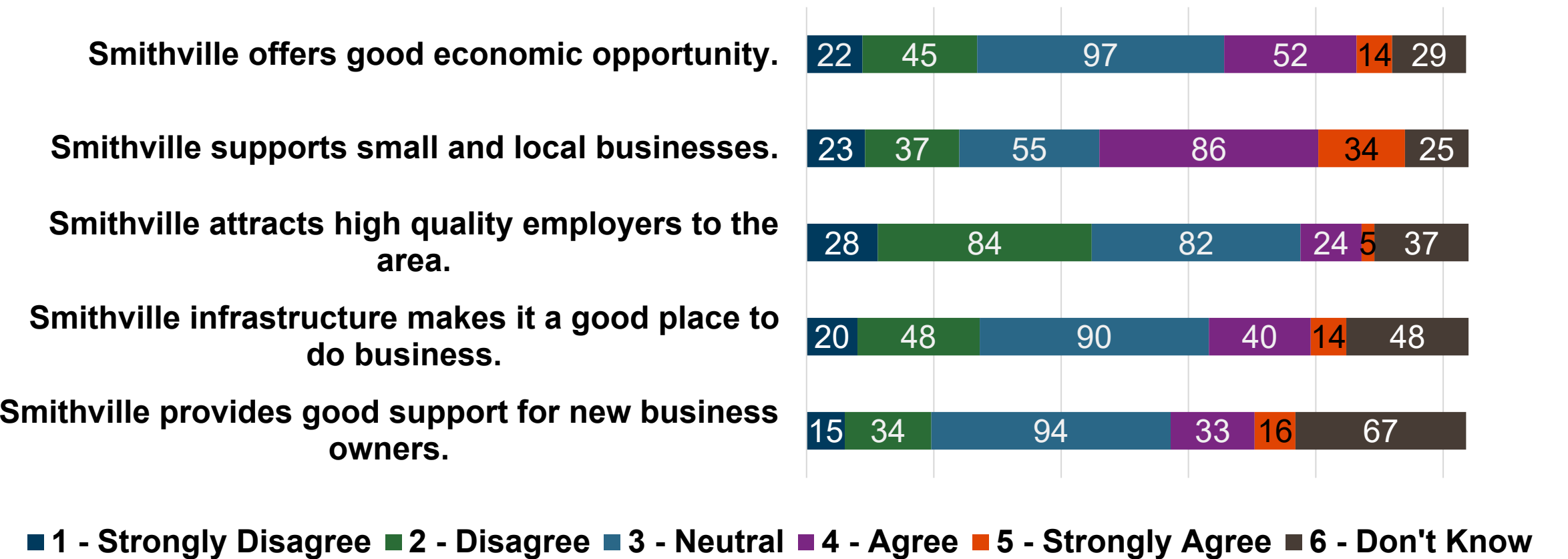
Top Five Concerns in the City



Top Five Biggest Challenges

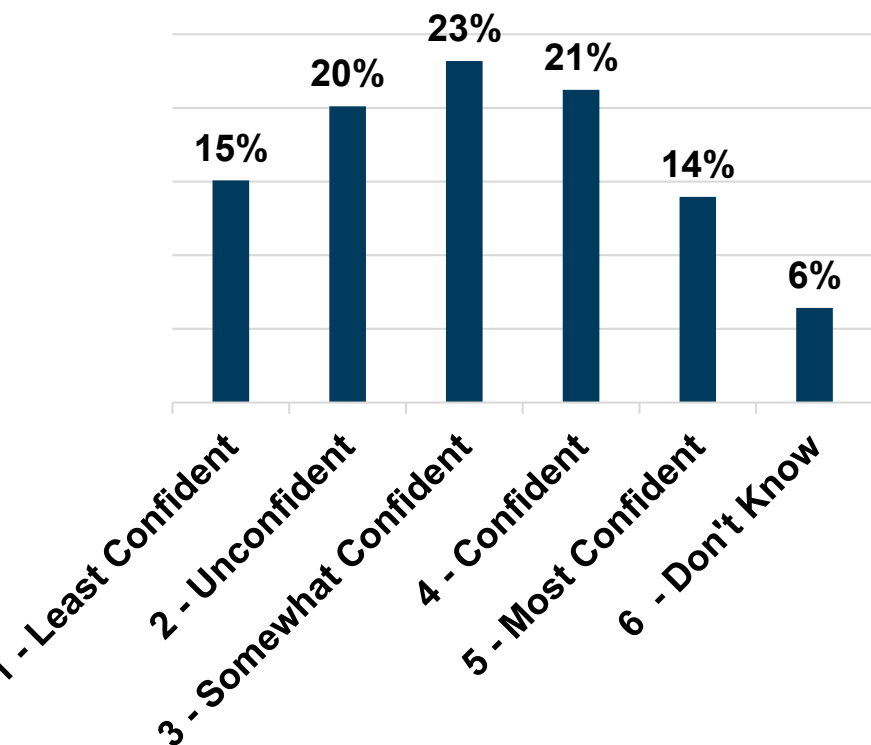


Rate the Business/Economic Opportunity



Confidence in the City

Confidence level that the City will be a better place to live in five years



*Open-ended question

If response is 3 or lower what would make it a 4 or 5?*

Theme	Count
Balance Development	68
Preserve Small-Town Character	45
Improve City Government Transparency and Trust	40
Infrastructure Improvements (Roads/Utilities)	33
Improve Traffic and Transportation	24
Greater Housing Diversity	23
Stabilize Industrial Development	11
Increase Economic Development (Business/Retail)	11
Improve Water Quality and Utility Costs	10
Increase Recreational Actives and Facilities	6

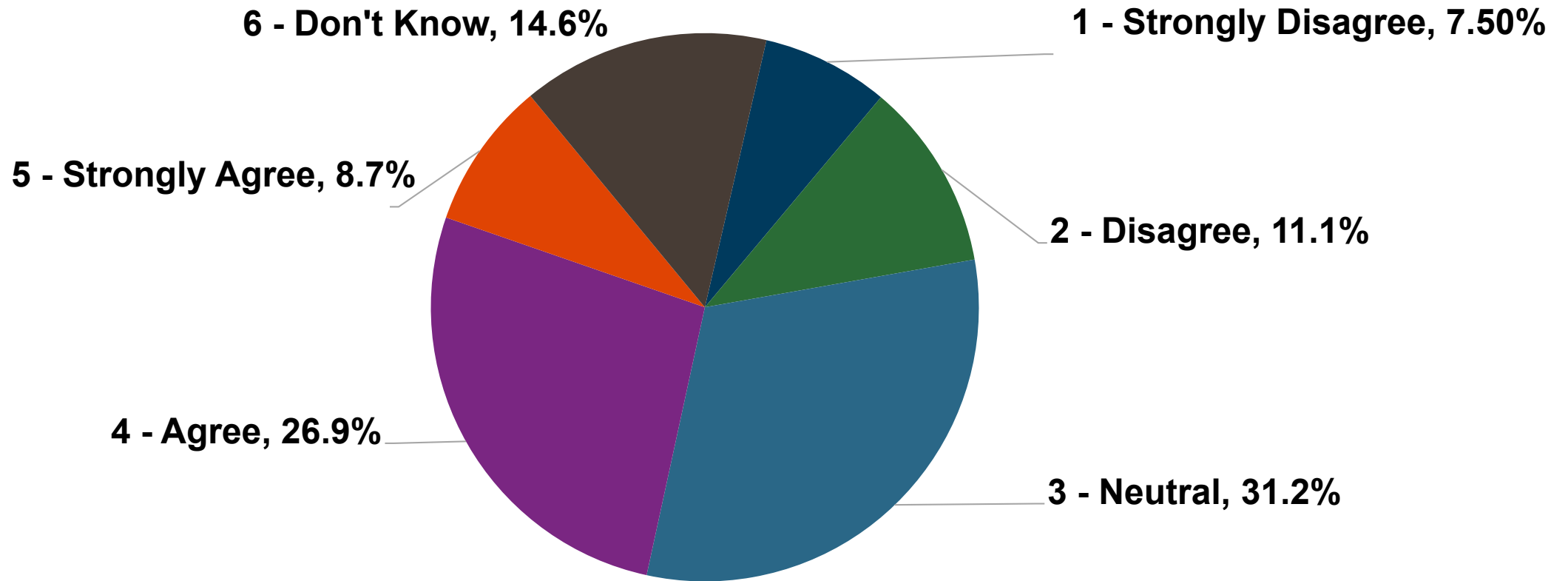
One Thing That Would Improve Quality of Life and Serve Unmet Need*

Theme	Count
Expand Community Facilities (Community Center, Senior Center, Recreation Center, Pool)	31
Increase Retail Options (Retail, Grocery Stores, Restaurants)	22
Preserve Small-Town Character and Slow Down Development	21
Increase Transparency and Communication with City Government	15
Maintain Service-Related Infrastructure (Water Quality and Utility Costs)	14
Expand Outdoor Recreation	8
Increase Diverse Housing Options	8
Increase Emergency Medical Services	5
Increase Economic Development (Jobs and Small Businesses)	5
Expand Environmental Protection and Farmland Preservation	3

*Open-ended question:
205 responses

Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

Is the City Welcoming to Diverse Individuals?



Real or Perceived Barriers of Community Members to Engage in the City*

Theme	Count
Local Government, Leadership, Transparency, and Trust	30
Growth, Overdevelopment and Loss of Small-Town Character	22
Lack of Sense of Belonging/Feeling Unwelcome	15
Traffic and Parking	15
Lack of Community Amenities, Activities, and Entertainment	14
Development and Environmental Concerns	10
Communication and Awareness of City Events	9
Lack of Retail and Local Services	8
Cost of Living	7
Lack of Local Employment Opportunities	4
Transportation Limitations	3

*Open-ended question
140 responses

Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

What Makes the City Unique?*

Theme	Count
Small-Town Feel	75
Tight-Knit Community	24
Outdoor Recreation (Lake, Parks, Trails)	22
Proximity to Kansas City	16
School Pride	8
Downtown Charm	8
Safety	6
Civic Participation and Community Events	5
Nothing Unique / Losing Identity	18

*Open-ended question
190 responses

Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

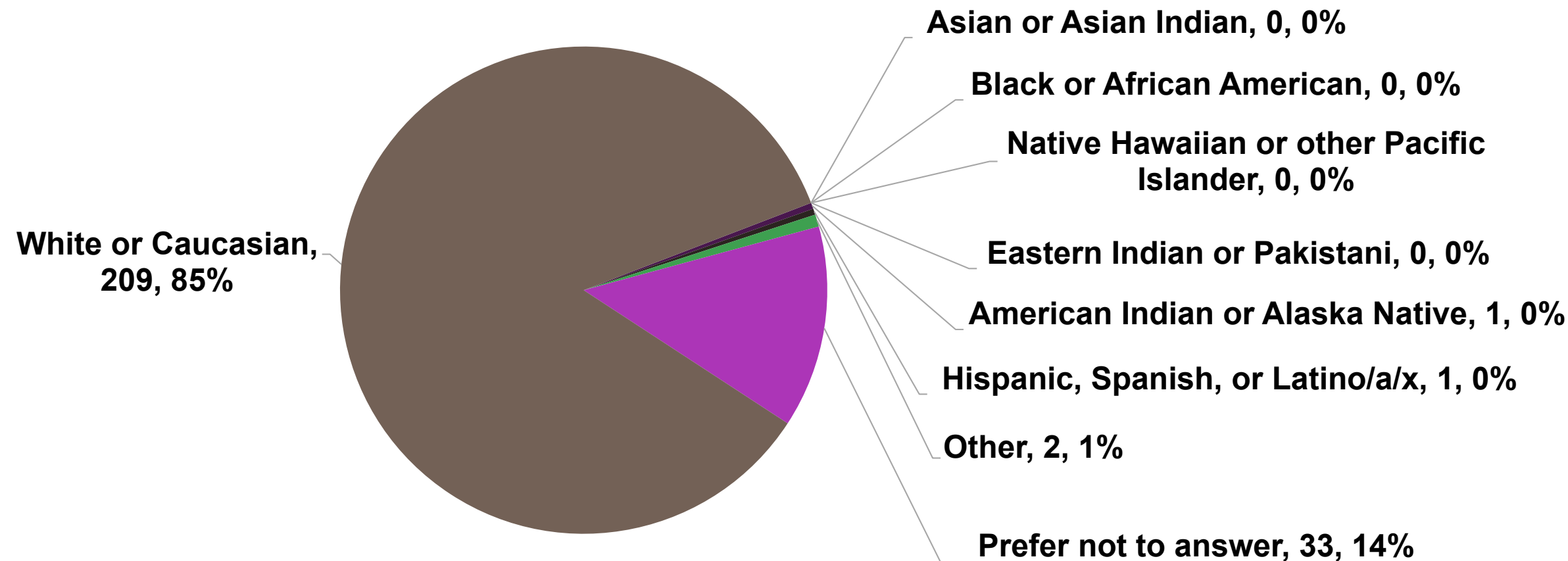
Characteristics of Pride*

Theme	Count
Small-Town Feel	50
Schools and Education	25
Sense of Community	24
Outdoor Recreation (Lake, Parks, Trails)	22
Safety/Low Crime	12
Community Events and Local Traditions	8
Cleanliness and Beautification	7
Proximity to Kansas City	5
Nothing Anymore/Pride Being Lost	20

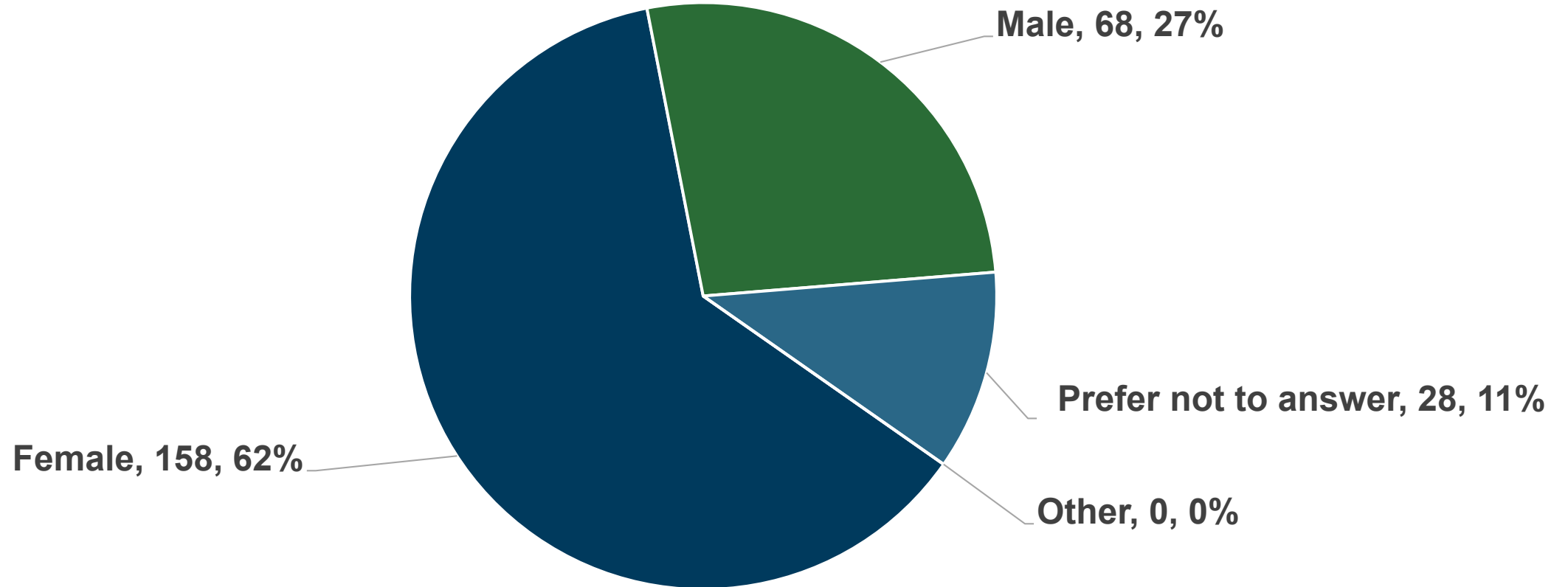
*Open-ended question
174 responses

Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

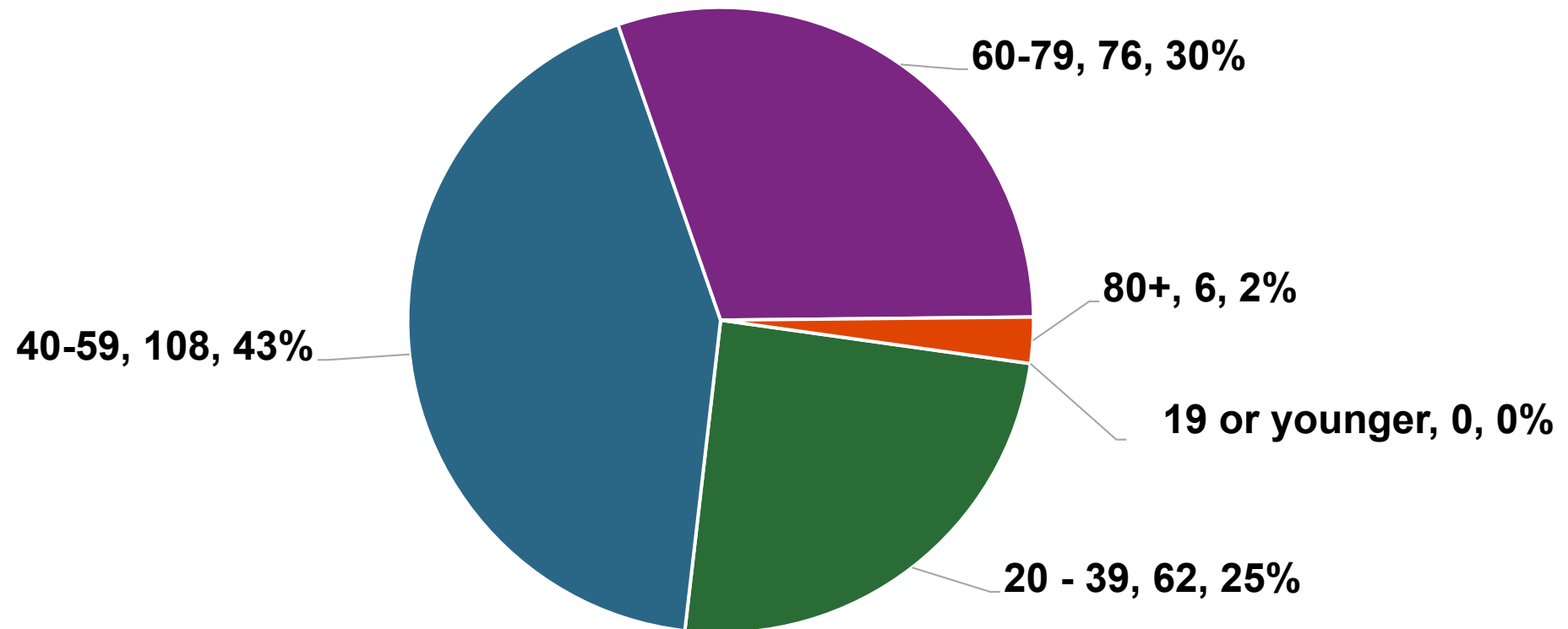
Race of Respondents



Gender of Respondents



Age of Respondents



Source: 2026 BerryDunn Social Point Site

Social Point Ideas Wall

What would be the same and what would be different in the City in the next three to five years?

Theme	Count
Future Growth and Development	17
Recreation	5
Streets/Transportation	4
Public Safety	2

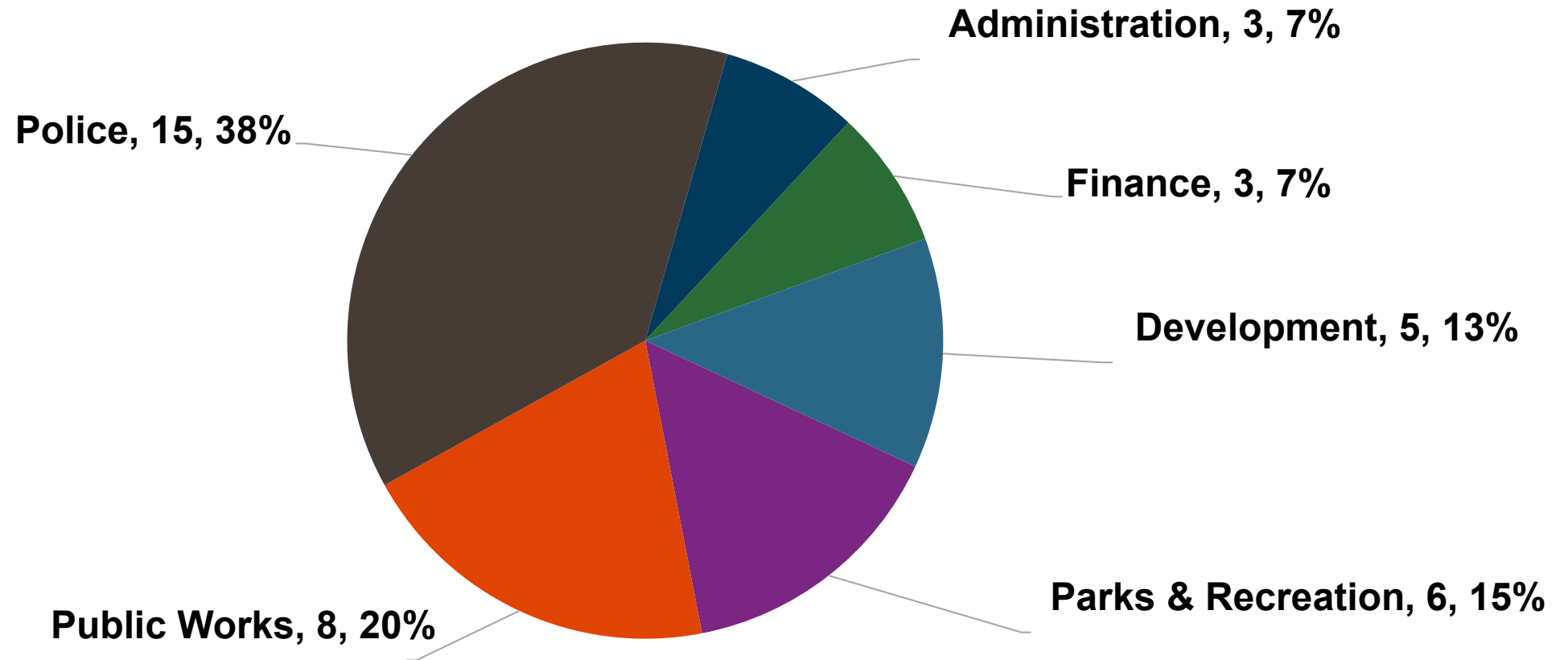
Social Point Forum

What Do You Want Smithville To Be Like Three To Five Years From Now?

Themes
Maintain Small-Town Character
Maintain Tight-Knit Community
Increase Economic Development (Retail, Grocery Stores, Restaurants)
Maintain Strong Schools
Manage Growth
Increase Recreational Amenities
Maintain Safety and Low Crime

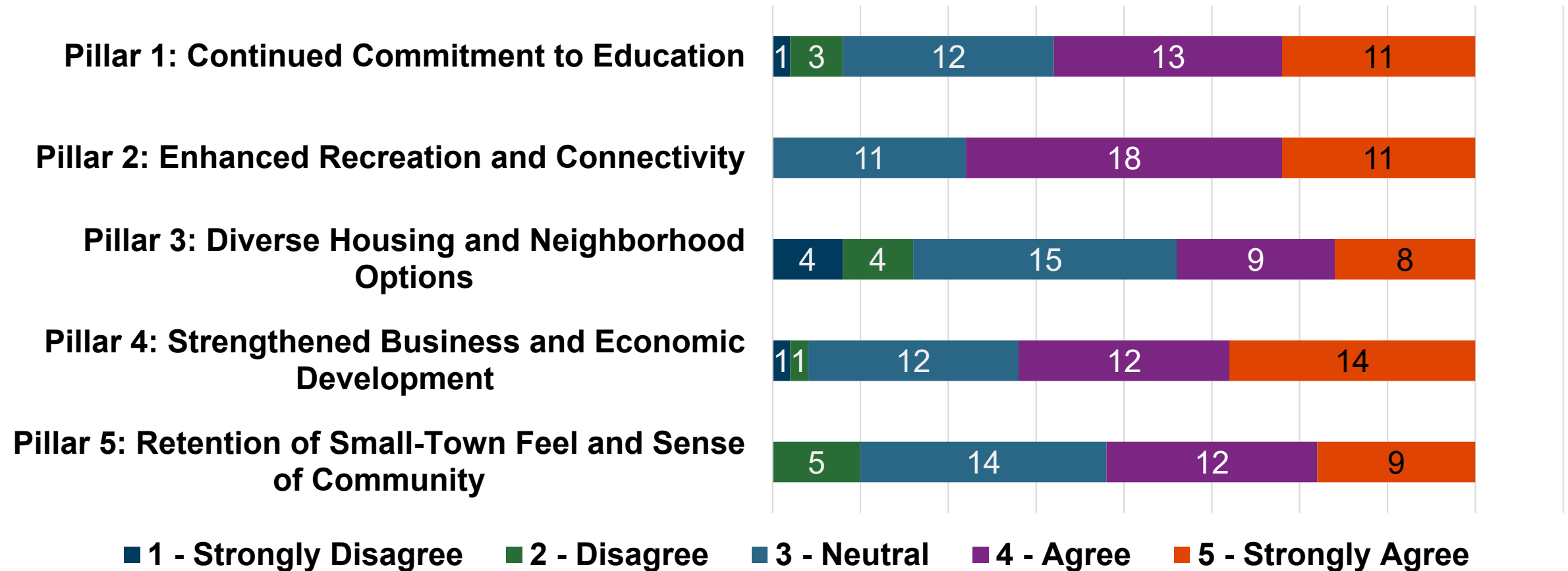
Employee Survey

Which department do you work in?

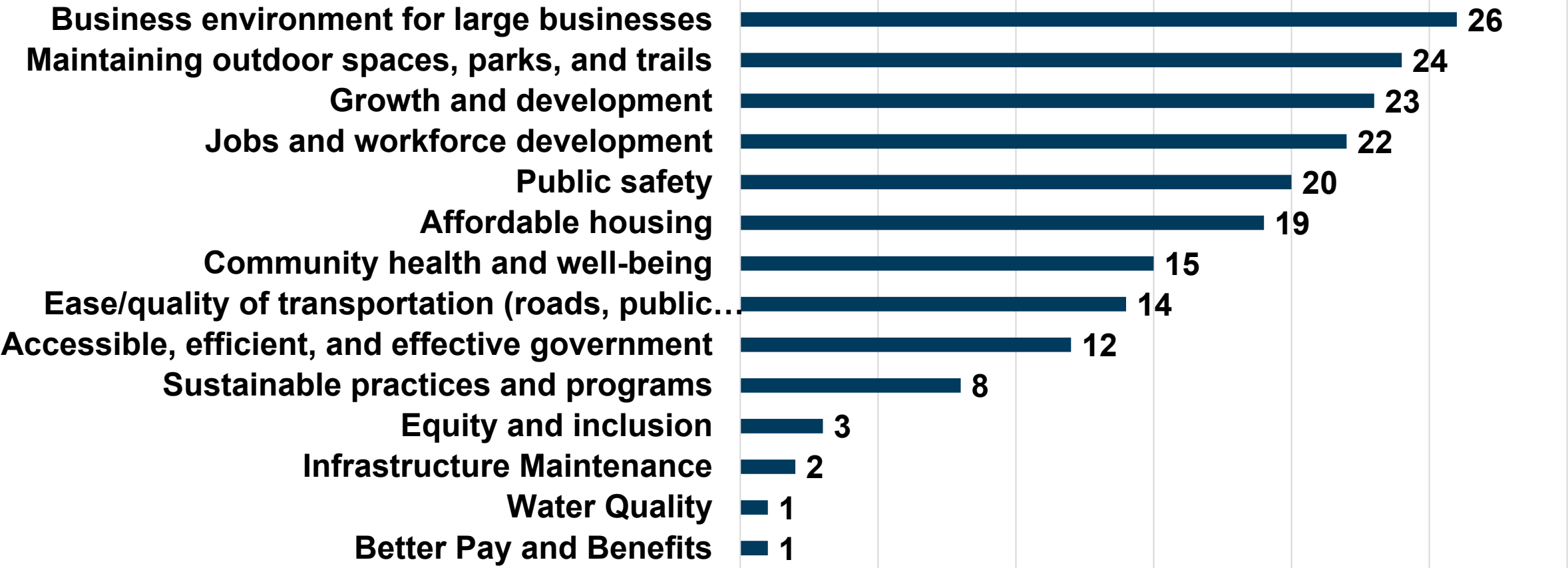


Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

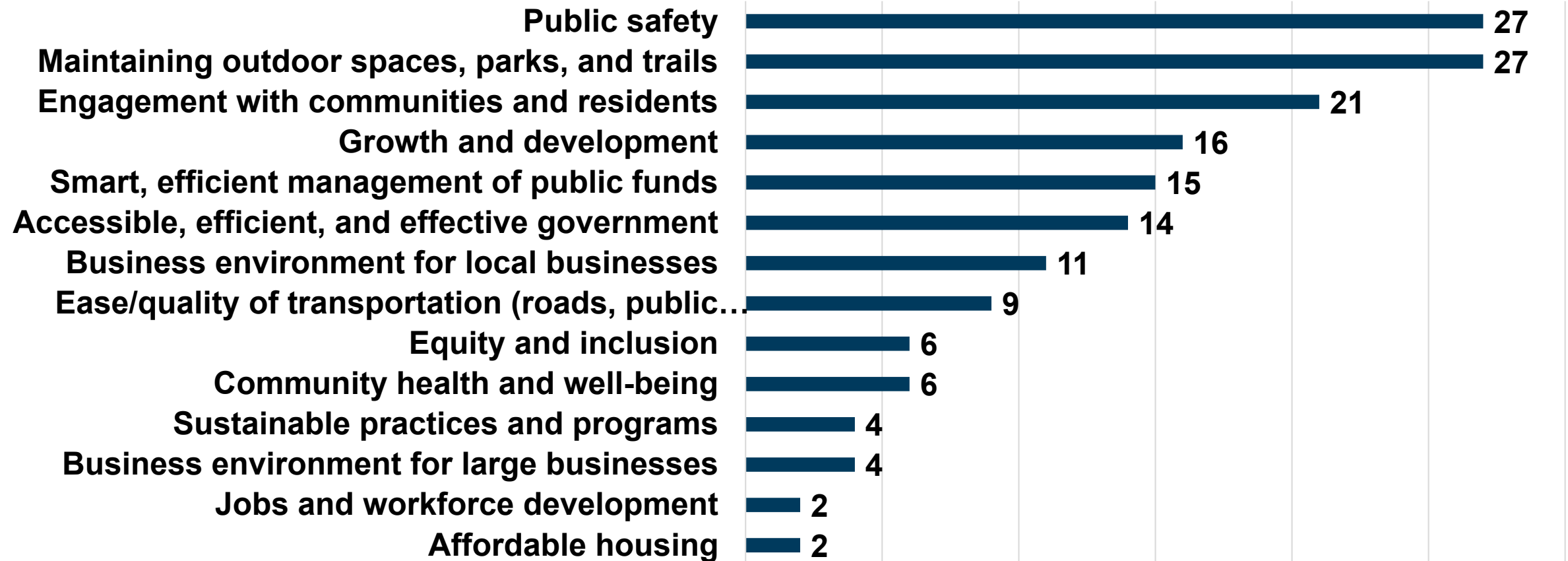
Rate 2019 Strategic Plan Pillars by how Well it Aligns With Your Vision for the City



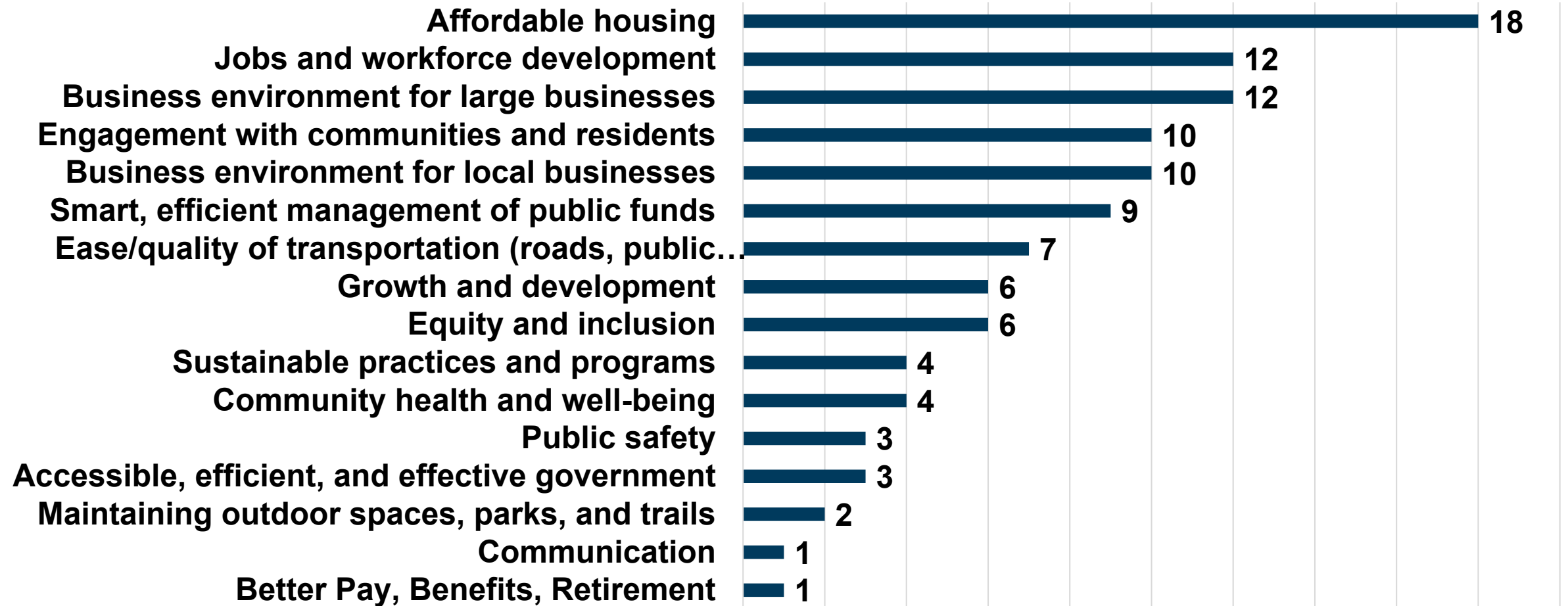
Five Most Important Areas Smithville Should Prioritize in its Next Strategic Plan



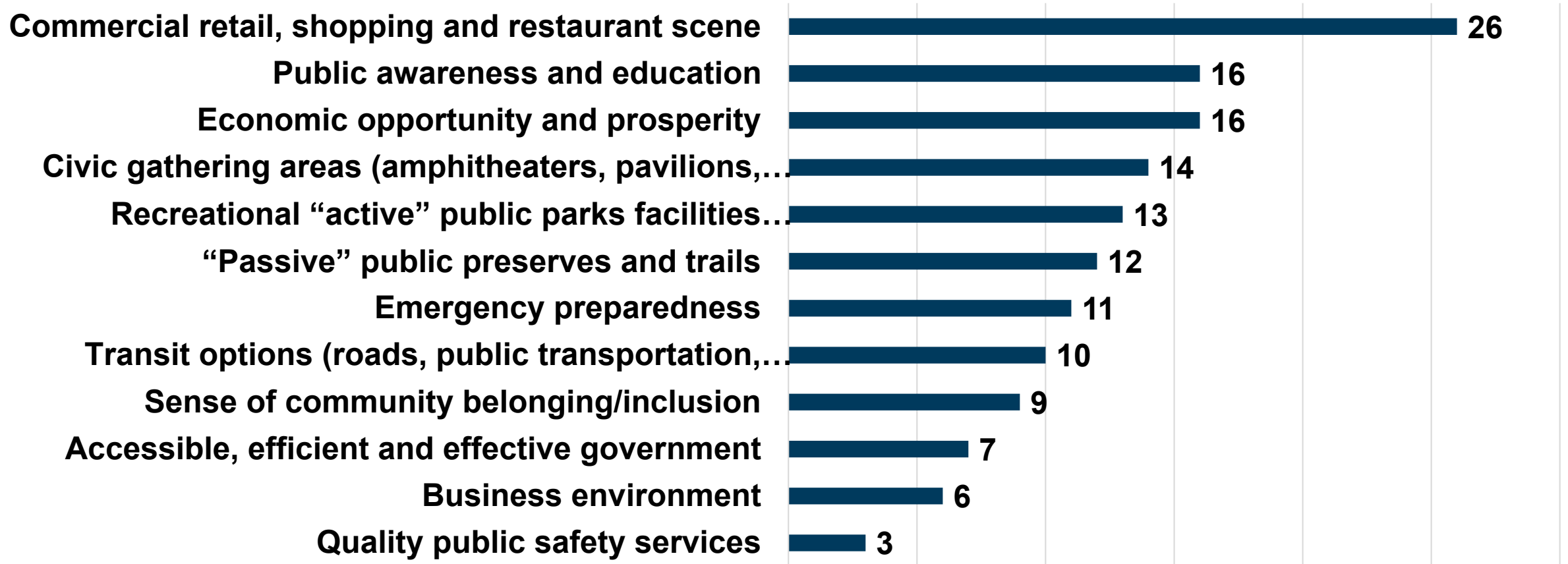
Things the City Government Does Well



Things the City Could Do Better

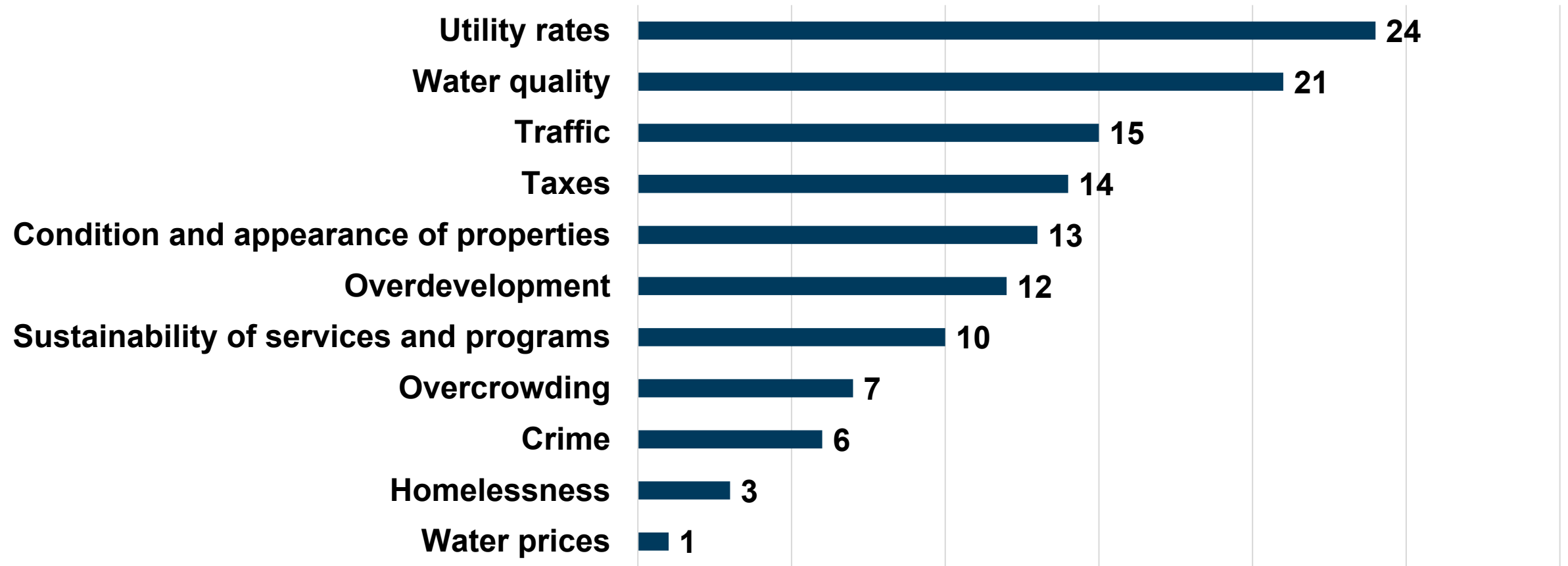


Five Things to See More



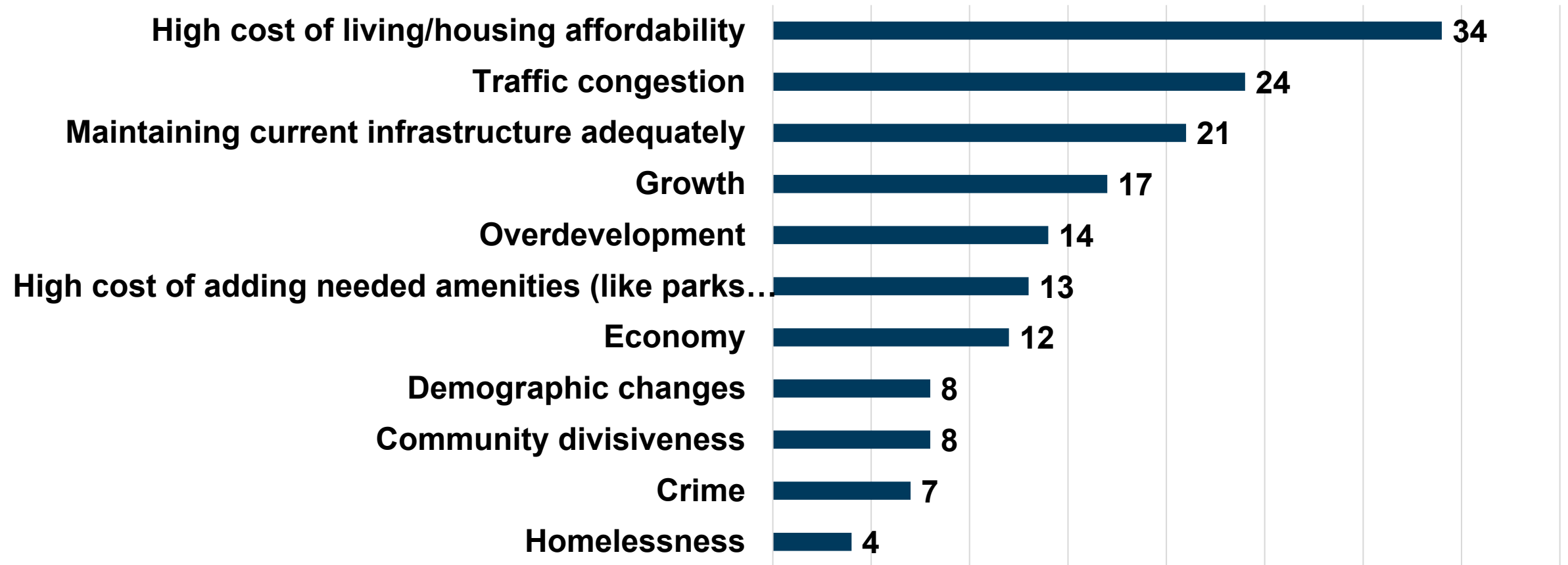
Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Top Five Concerns in the City



Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Top Five Biggest Challenges



Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Rate the Business/Economic Opportunity

Smithville provides good support for new business owners.



Smithville infrastructure makes it a good place to do business.



Smithville attracts high quality employers to the area.



Smithville supports small and local businesses.



Smithville offers good economic opportunity.



■ 1 - Strongly Disagree ■ 2 - Disagree ■ 3 - Neutral ■ 4 - Agree ■ 5 - Strongly Agree ■ 6 - Don't Know

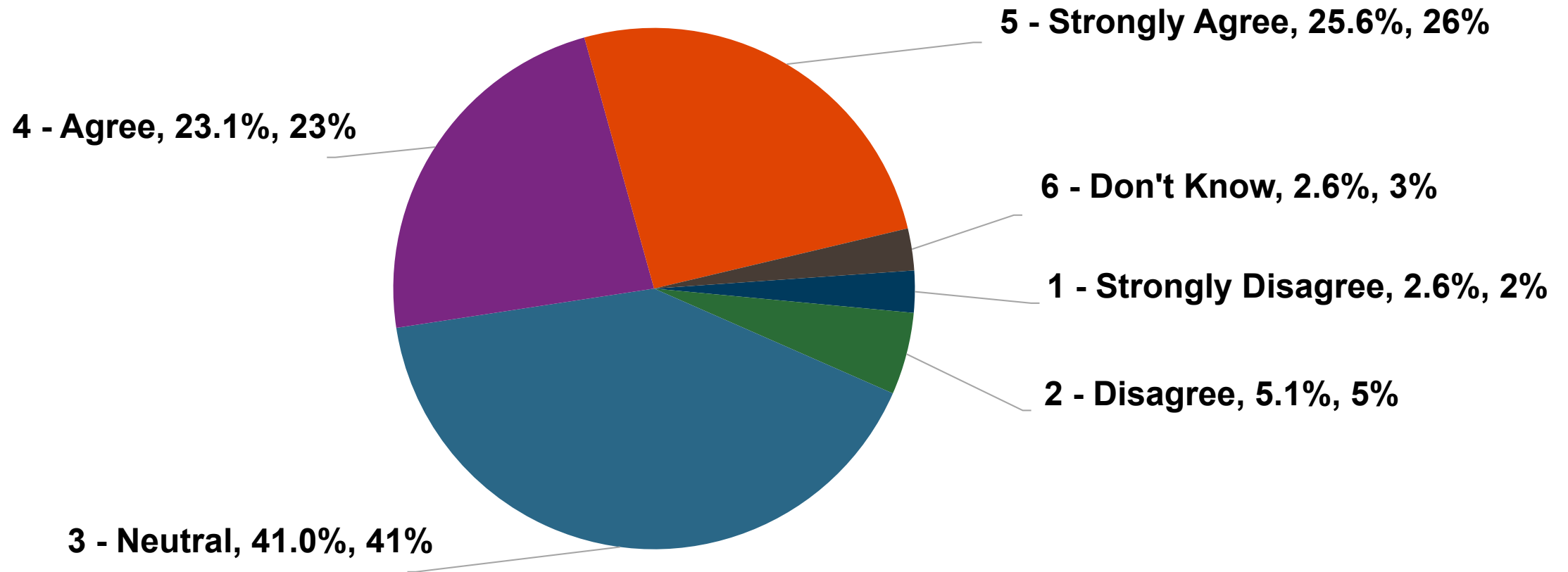
One Thing That Would Improve Quality of Life and Serve Unmet Need

Theme	Count
Increase Retail Options (Retail, Grocery Stores, Restaurants)	7
Build Public Safety Facility	5
Expand Community Facilities (Community Center, Senior Center, Recreation Center, Pool)	4
Maintain Good Water Quality and Utility Costs	3
Preserve Small-Town Character and Manage Growth	2
Increase Diverse Housing Options	2
Expand Infrastructure and Facility Capacity	1
Manage Traffic	1

*Open-ended question
25 responses

Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Is the City Welcoming to Diverse Individuals?



Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Real or Perceived Barriers of Community Members to Engage in the City*

Theme	Count
Housing Affordability and Cost of Living	11
Lack of Retail Opportunities	2
Lack of Diversity and Welcoming to Others	2
Space For Events	1
No Barriers	6

*Open-ended question
21 responses

Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

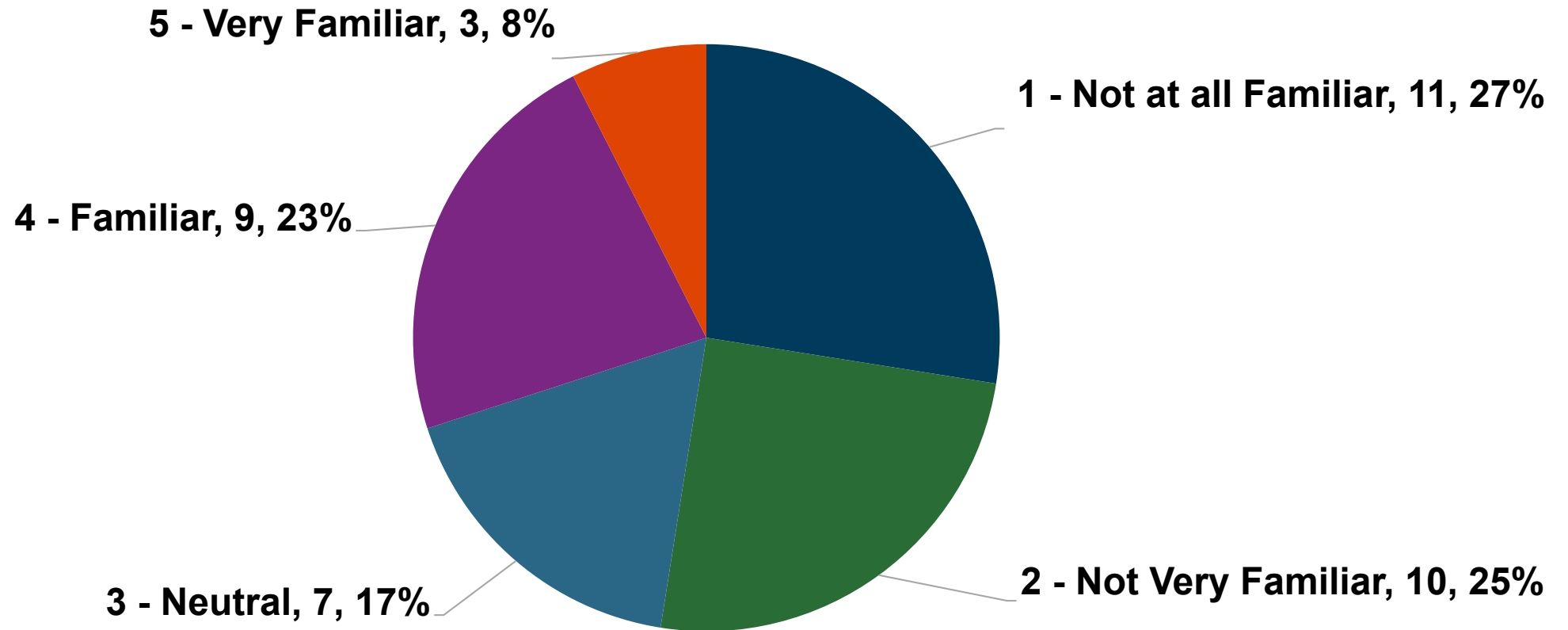
What Makes the City Unique?*

Theme	Count
Small-Town Feel	11
Lake and Recreation Opportunities	10
Proximity to Kansas City	5
Friendly People	4
Has Growth Potential	3
Schools	2
Downtown Charm	1
Nothing Unique	1

*Open-ended question
25 responses

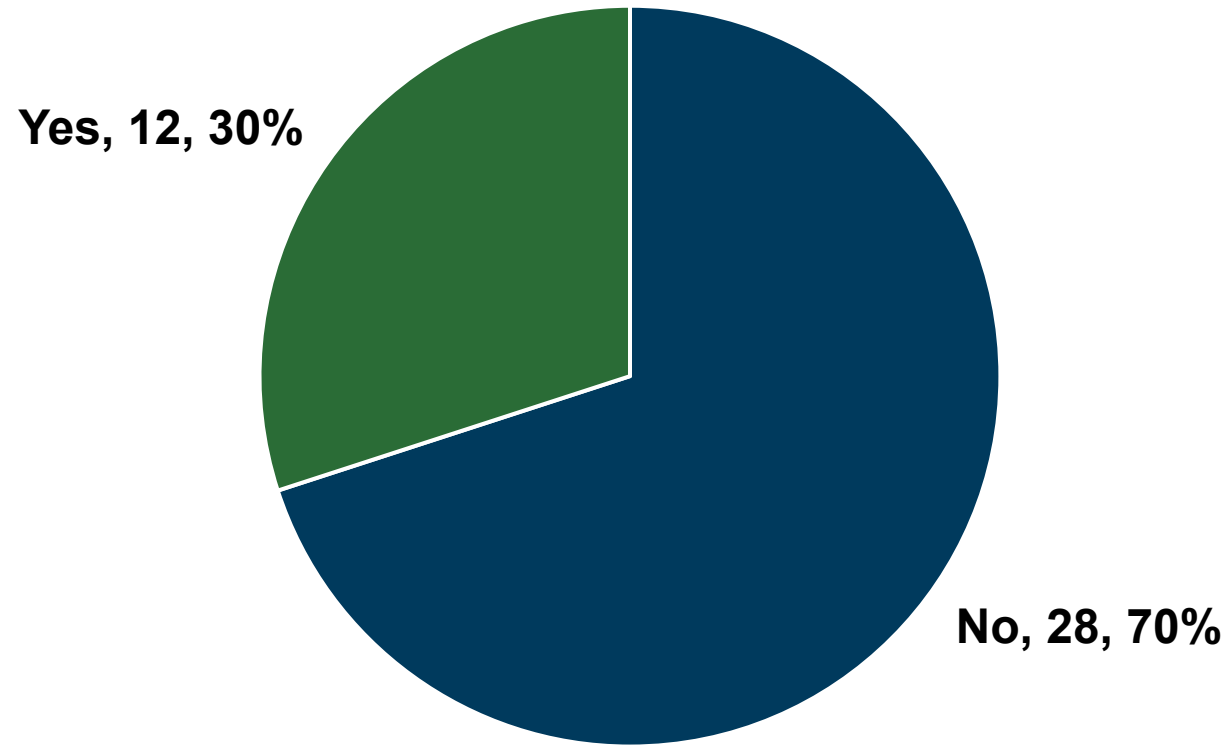
Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Familiarity of 2019 Strategic Plan

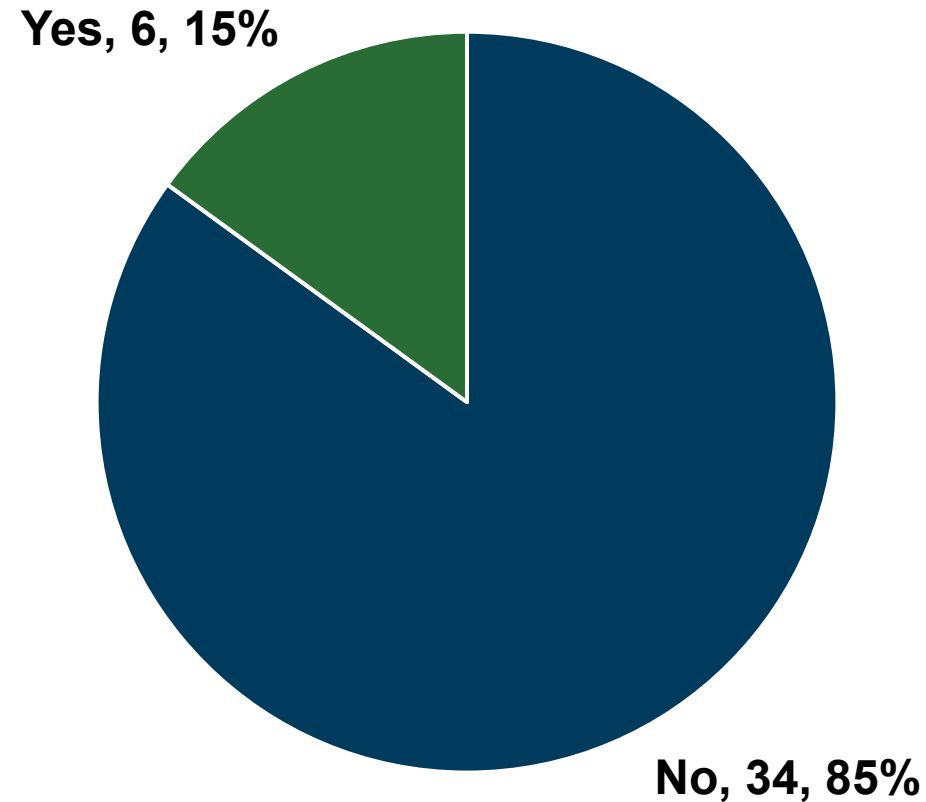


Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Did you work in Smithville during the creation of the 2019 Strategic Plan?

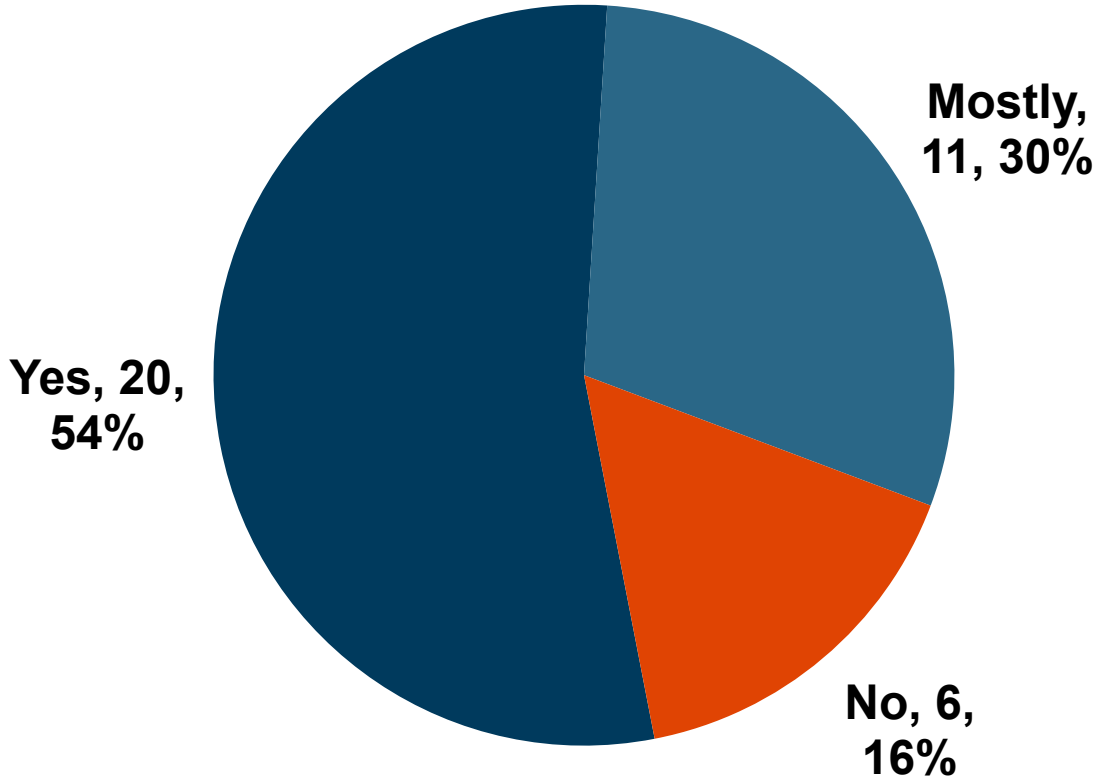


Did you participate in the planning process?



Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

Do you have proper tools and technology to do your work? If not, what should the City invest in?*



Category	Examples
Yes	“Yes” “I do have the proper tools” “Heading in the right direction”
Mostly	“For the most part” “Updated equipment would be helpful” “Want to constantly ensure we are updating”
No	“No, more computers are needed” “Significant radio communication issues”

*Open-ended question

Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

One thing you and your department could accomplish that would serve an unmet need.*

Theme	Count
Public Safety Improvements	6
Technology / Planning / Reporting	3
Facilities and Staffing Capacity	2
Community Engagement	2
Parks, Trails, and Recreation Projects	2
Infrastructure (Roads and Utilities)	2
Transportation / Senior Services	1
Unsure	8

*Open-ended question
26 responses

Source: Strategic Planning Employee Survey 2026

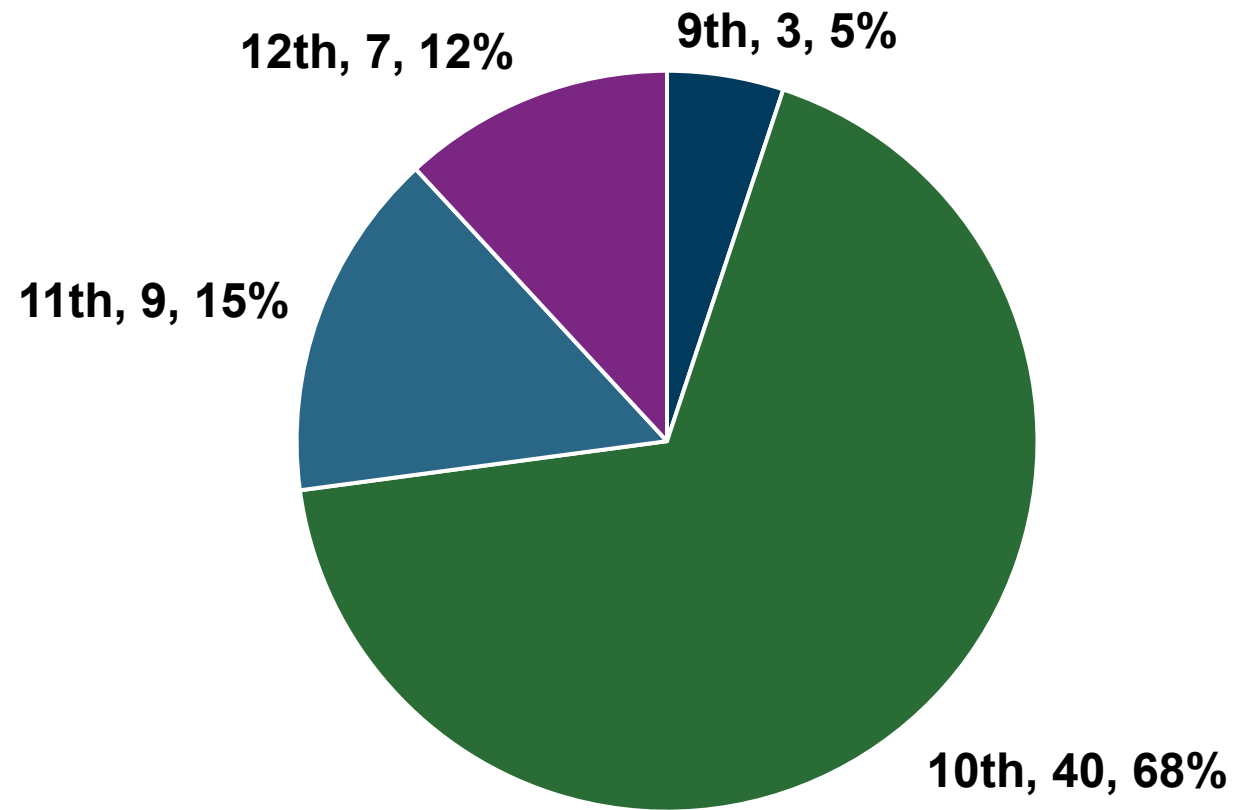
Are there community and/or organizational needs that aren't currently addressed? If yes, what are they?*

Theme	Count
Facility and Space Needs (Police Department, City Hall, and Public Works)	4
Public Safety Staffing and Programs (SRO Program)	4
Staffing and Organizational Capacity for Long-Term Initiatives	2
Community Education and Communication	1
Data Transparency and Public Information	1
Internal Teamwork and Leadership	1

*Open-ended question
24 responses

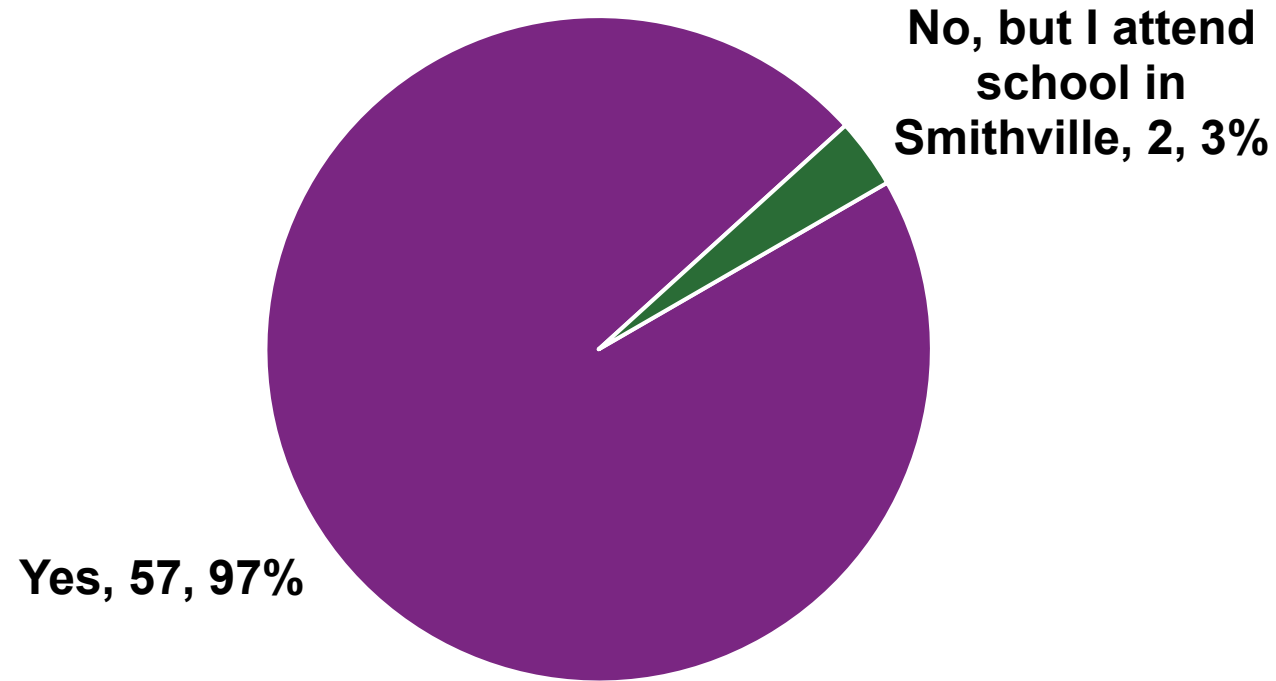
Youth Survey

Grade



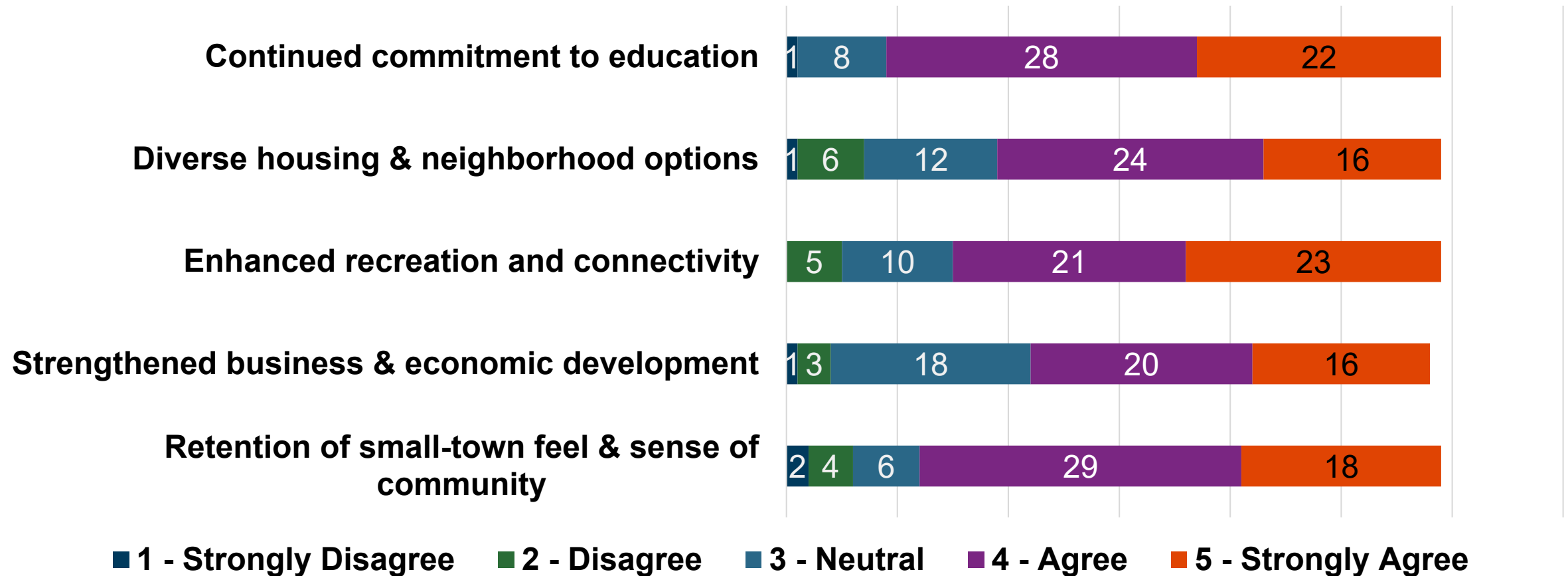
Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

Live In Smithville



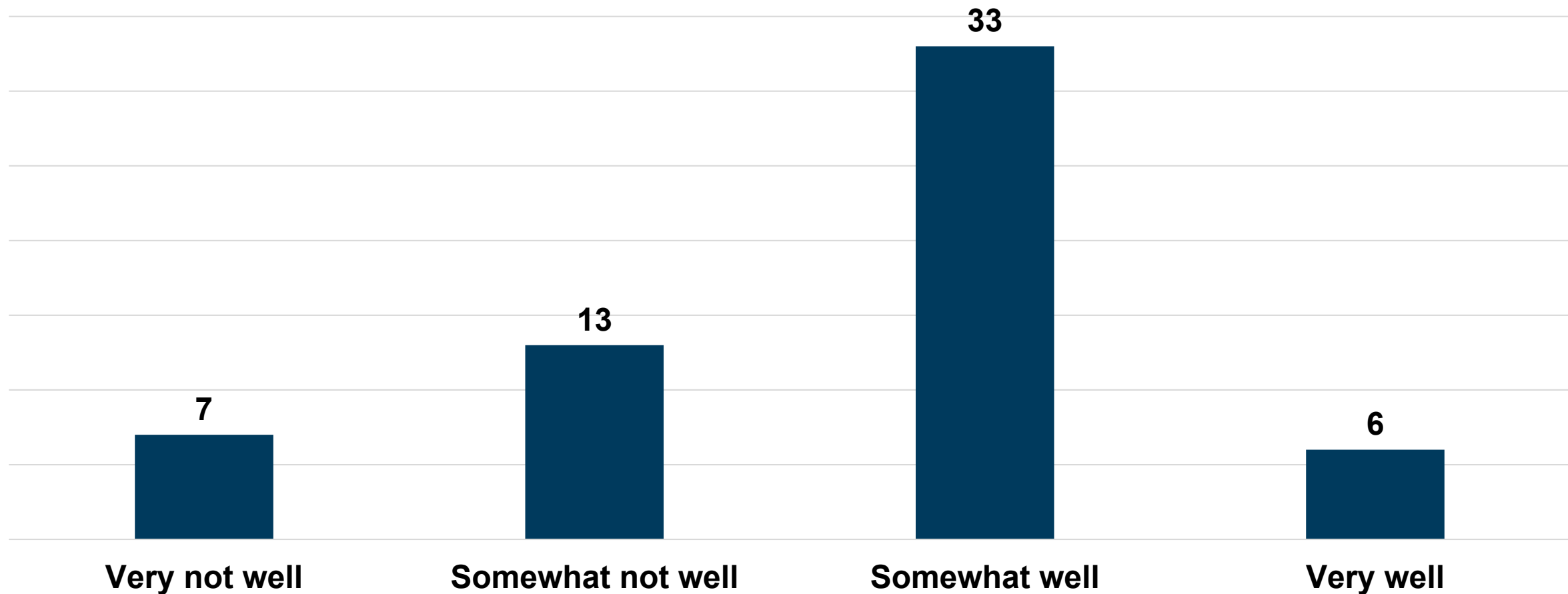
Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

Rate 2019 Strategic Plan Pillars by How Well it Aligns With Your Vision for the City



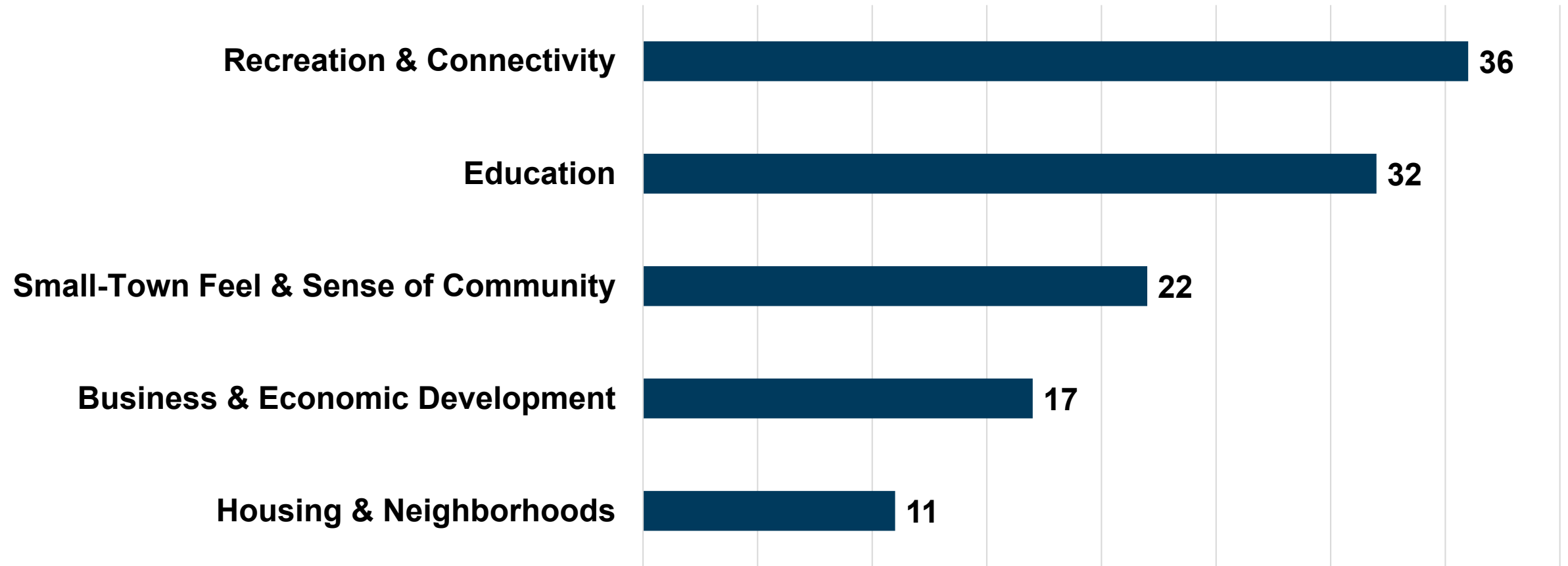
Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

How Well Do Smithville's Current Priorities Reflect What Young People Want?



Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

Top Priorities For Helping Young People Feel Involved in Smithville's Future*

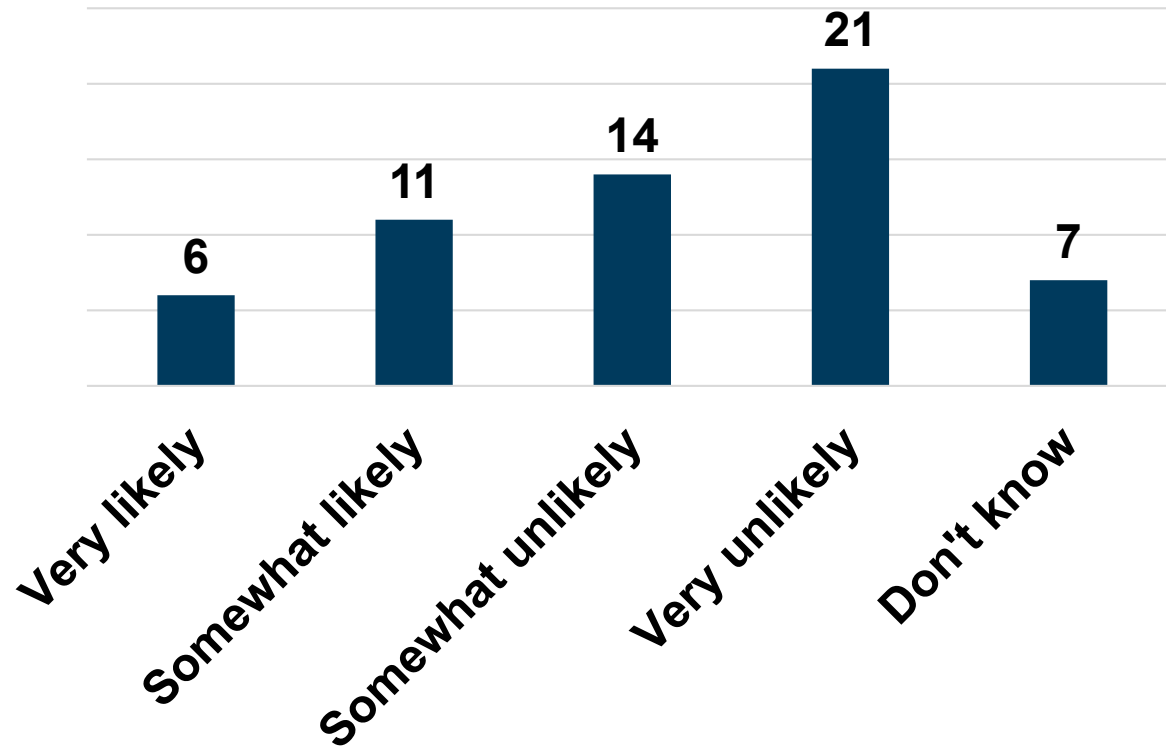


*Respondents selected
top two

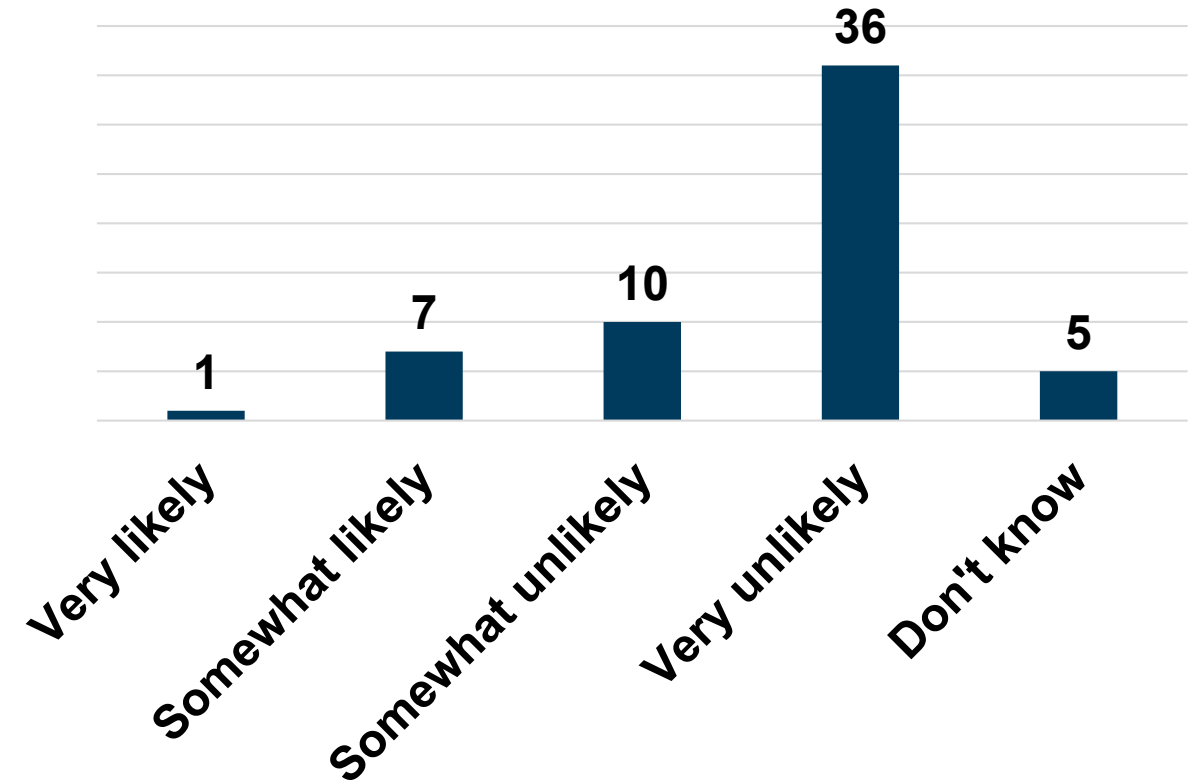
Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

Likelihood of Students to Spend Time After High School...

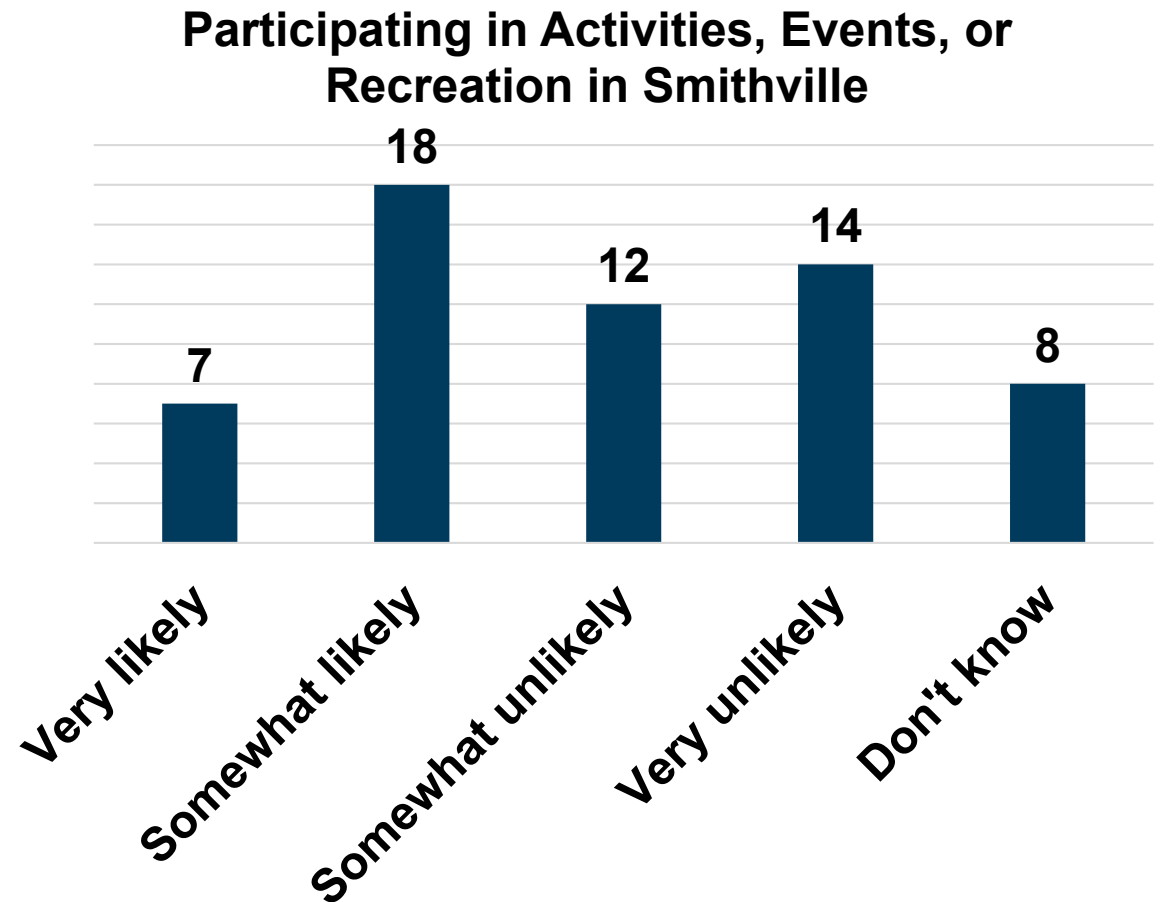
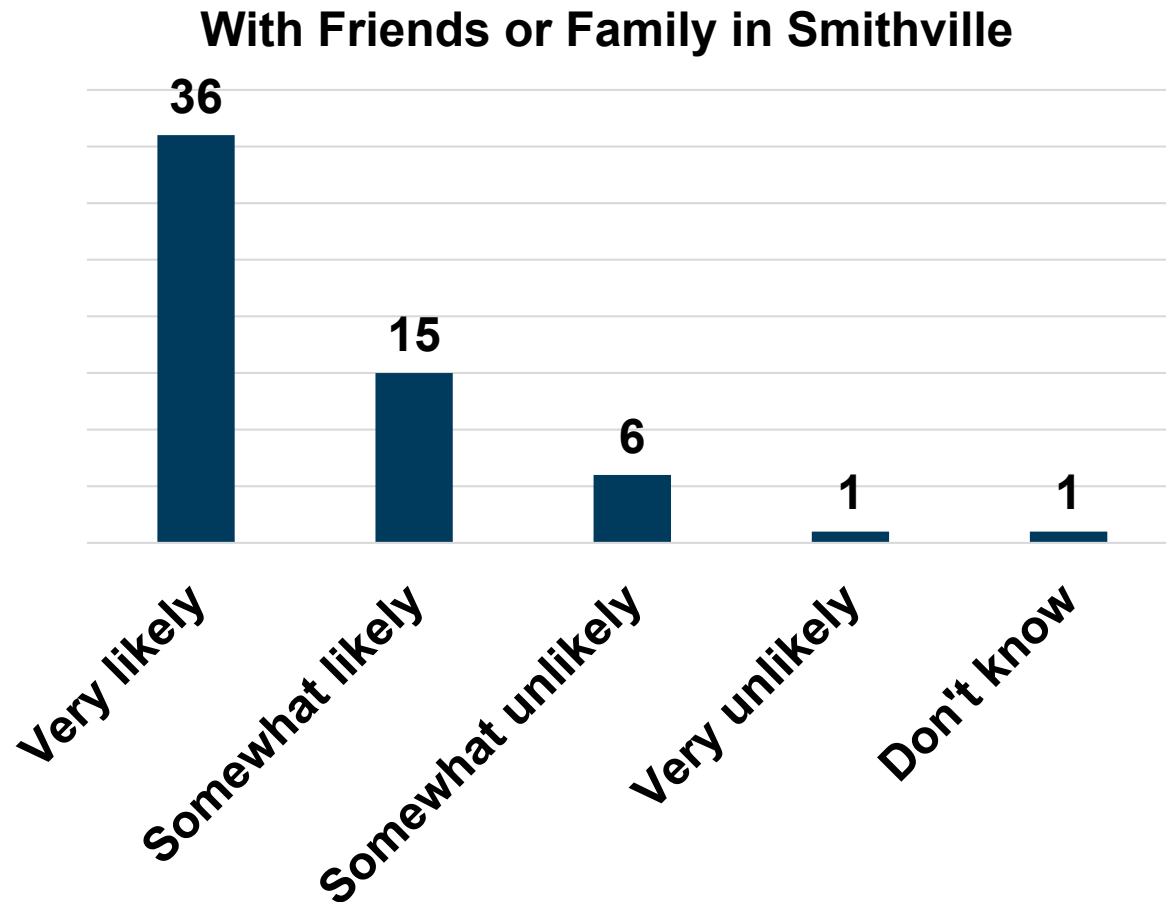
Living in Smithville



Working in Smithville

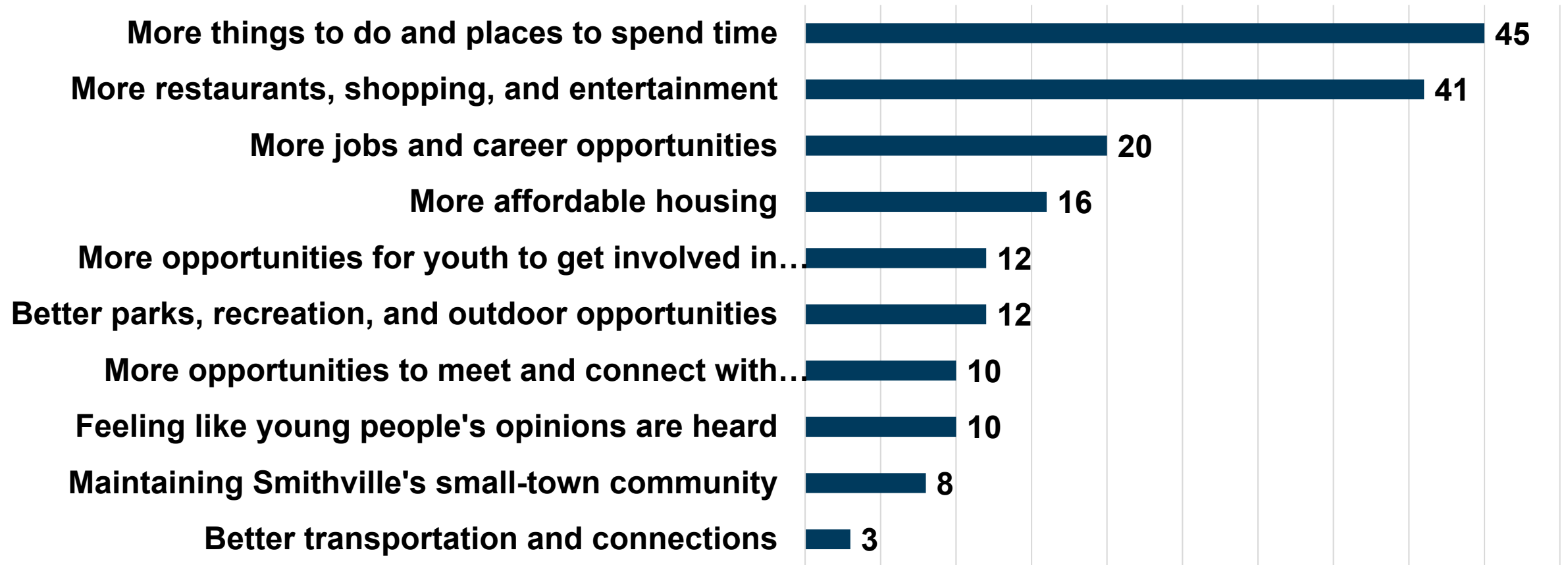


Likelihood of Students to Spend Time After High School... (Cont'd)



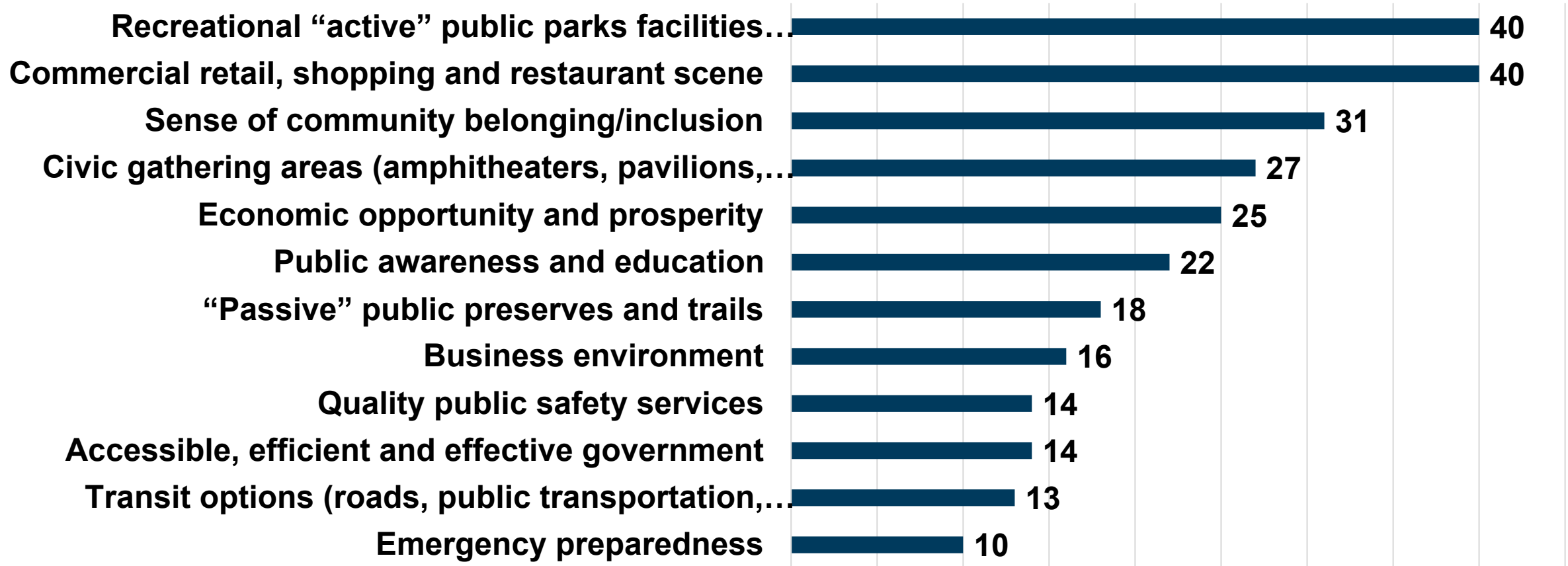
Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

What Does Smithville Need To Do So You Can See Yourself as Part of Its Future?



Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

Five Things to See More of in the City



Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

One Change to Make Young People Feel Like They Belong

Theme	Count
Increase Activities and Things To Do	19
Expand Community Facilities (Teen/Youth Gathering, Recreation/Community Center)	19
Increase Retail Options (Retail, Grocery Stores, Restaurants)	10
Include Youth Voice	4
Increase Diverse Housing Options	1
Expand Diversity and Inclusion Efforts	1

*Open-ended question
55 responses

Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

What Makes You Want To Stay Connected to the Smithville Community?

Theme	Count
Small-Town Feel	14
Friends and Family	14
Sense of Community	10
School, Sports, and Events	6
Lake and Outdoor Recreation	4
Local Amenities (Restaurants and Shops)	2
Unsure	3
Need More Activities to Stay Connected	3

*Open-ended question
55 responses

Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026

Stakeholder Themes



Summary of themes from stakeholder interviews by stakeholder type.



Themes from Board of Alderman

- **Balanced Growth, Preserve Small-Town Character** – There is support for growth with emphasis on maintaining Smithville’s small-town feel, family values, school pride, community identity, and quality of life.
- **Infrastructure, Roads, and Utilities** – Aging water, sewer, streets, and other infrastructure require significant investment, proactive planning, and sustainable funding to meet future needs.
- **Communication, Transparency, and Public Education** – Improve outreach through multiple channels, explain the rationale behind decisions, and help residents better understand growth, infrastructure, and city services.
- **Quality of Life and Community Amenities** – Enhance parks, trails, recreation, downtown activity, healthcare access, entertainment options, and family-oriented amenities that make Smithville an attractive place to live.



Themes from Board of Alderman (Cont'd)

- **Economic Development and Expanding the Tax Base** – Attract commercial development, retail, restaurants, professional jobs, and employers that strengthen revenues and reduce reliance on residential growth.
- **Housing, Workforce, and Future Residents** – Expand housing options, support workforce attraction, retain younger generations, and create opportunities for families, professionals, and seniors to remain in Smithville.
- **Partnerships, Community Engagement, and Civic Participation**– Strengthen relationships with schools, counties, regional partners, businesses, and residents to support growth, secure resources, and build community support.
- **Financial Sustainability, and Long-Term Planning** – Address rising infrastructure costs, utility rates, taxes, budget constraints, and state funding limitations while maintaining essential services.



Themes from External Stakeholders

- **Balanced Growth, Preserve Small-Town Character** – Residents support growth but want Smithville to preserve its small-town identity, community connections, safety, and unique character while thoughtfully managing development.
- **Infrastructure, Roads, and Utilities** – Roads, water, sewer, traffic, trails, and public services must keep pace with growth while addressing aging infrastructure and rising utility concerns.
- **Communication, Transparency, and Public Education**– Improve public engagement, transparency, outreach, and education so residents understand decisions, feel heard, and trust local government.
- **Quality of Life and Community Amenities** – Invest in parks, trails, walkability, bike connectivity, community centers, healthcare access, and recreation opportunities that support an active lifestyle.

Themes from External Stakeholders (Cont'd.)



- **Economic Development and Expanding the Tax Base** – Attract quality employers, healthcare services, grocery stores, restaurants, retail, and entertainment that strengthen the economy and meet resident needs.
- **Housing, Workforce, and Future Residents**– Expand housing choices including rentals, starter homes, workforce housing, senior housing, and affordable options for residents at all life stages.
- **Partnerships, Community Engagement, and Civic Participation** – Foster welcoming environments, engage diverse and newer residents, reduce barriers to participation, and strengthen community involvement in decision-making.
- **Developer Accountability and Quality Growth** – Hold developers accountable for infrastructure, construction quality, long-term maintenance, and responsible projects that add lasting community value.



Themes from Directors and Leadership

- **Balanced Growth, Preserve Small-Town Character** – Balance residential and commercial growth with Smithville’s small-town identity, community values, and quality of life.
- **Infrastructure, Roads, and Utilities** – Prioritize water, wastewater, streets, public facilities, parks, and public safety infrastructure to address aging assets, support growth, and maintain service quality.
- **Communication, Transparency, and Public Education**– Improve public education, outreach, and transparency so residents better understand decisions, projects, costs, and community priorities.
- **Quality of Life and Community Amenities** – Enhance parks, trails, recreation programs, community gathering spaces, and amenities that strengthen community pride and resident well-being.

Themes from Directors and Leadership (Cont'd.)



- **Economic Development and Expanding the Tax Base** – Attract businesses, jobs, and commercial investment that diversify revenue sources and reduce financial pressures on residents.
- **Workforce Attraction, Retention, and Development**– Invest in recruitment, retention, leadership development, facilities, and technology to support employees and improve organizational performance.
- **Financial Sustainability and Long-Term Planning** – Address budget constraints, capital needs, utility costs, and future investments through proactive planning and responsible resource management.
- **Community Safety and Customer Service Excellence** – Maintain high-quality public safety, customer service, and responsive government operations that build trust and support community needs.



Themes from Managers/Supervisors

- **Balanced Growth, Preserve Small-Town Character** – Maintain Smithville’s hometown atmosphere, low crime, strong schools, and community identity while accommodating continued growth and avoiding stagnation.
- **Infrastructure, Roads, and Utilities** – Roads, maintenance needs, and core service delivery remain significant concerns requiring ongoing attention and investment.
- **Quality of Life and Community Amenities** – Parks and recreation are valued community assets that enhance quality of life and contribute to Smithville’s appeal for residents and visitors.
- **Equipment, Facilities, and Operational Capacity** – Outdated equipment, limited resources, and insufficient capacity affect efficiency, highlighting the need for replacement planning and operational investment.

Themes from Managers/Supervisors (Cont'd.)



- **Financial Sustainability and Long-Term Planning** – Limited funding, competing priorities, and reliance on general fund revenue create challenges for maintaining services and supporting future needs.
- **Community Safety and Customer Service Excellence** – Staff take pride in addressing resident concerns, maintaining infrastructure, and providing responsive service that strengthens community trust.
- **Workplace Culture, Employee Support and Engagement** – Positive leadership, open communication, competitive benefits, employee involvement, and work-life balance contribute to a strong organizational culture.
- **Strategic Planning and Asset Management** – Long-term planning for equipment, assets, staffing, and future board transitions is needed to support sustainable operations and growth.



Themes from Employee Focus Groups

- **Balanced Growth, Preserve Small-Town Character** – Staff value Smithville’s small-town atmosphere, community relationships, school pride, and local identity, while expressing concern about development that could diminish these qualities.
- **Infrastructure, Roads, and Utilities** – Aging water, sewer, roads, public facilities, and equipment require investment to support growth, maintain service levels, and address long-standing infrastructure challenges.
- **Communication, Transparency, and Public Education**– Residents often lack information about development, infrastructure, and city decisions, highlighting the need for more proactive communication, education, and engagement.
- **Quality of Life and Community Amenities** – Staff identified demand for parks, trails, sidewalks, recreation programs, community gathering spaces, and amenities that serve residents of all ages.

Themes from Employee Focus Groups (Cont'd.)



- **Community Safety and Customer Service Excellence** – Staff take pride in customer service, public safety, and responsive government operations while emphasizing the need for adequate staffing and modern facilities.
- **Housing, Workforce, and Future Residents** – Affordable housing options are needed so employees, families, young professionals, and long-term residents can continue living in Smithville.
- **Workforce Attraction, Retention, and Development** – Competitive pay, benefits, training, staffing levels, career growth, and modern facilities are viewed as essential for attracting and retaining employees.
- **Workplace Culture, Employee Support and Engagement** – Staff emphasized strong workplace relationships and teamwork, while identifying opportunities to improve employee recognition, communication, transparency, and involvement in decision-making.



Summary of Data and Top Areas of Focus



Manage growth, maintain hometown feel, preserve community character



Maintain and upgrade infrastructure, add equipment, increase operational space



Attract new small, local businesses, increase number of visitors to the City, spur job creation



Increase information, engagement, and partnerships with local entities



Need greater variety and quantity of attainable housing for all ages and life stages



Residents want community amenities, and additional activities in town



Employees enjoy and are proud of the work but seek greater compensation, recognition, involvement



Feeling of increased costs with decreased funding which could mean adapting to constraints

SWOC Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges

SWOC



A SWOC analysis assesses the organization's current position before deciding on any strategies.



Using a SWOC analysis allows the City to make the most of its strengths and reduces the chances of failure by understanding what is lacking and eliminating obstacles that get in the way of effective strategy.

SWOC – Strengths

Strengths

- **Small-Town Feel** – People move to Smithville for the small/hometown feel and connectedness of the community.
- **Employee Pride** – There is a strong workplace culture where staff feel welcome, happy, and proud to work for Smithville residents.
- **Parks and Recreation** – Many individuals and staff speak highly of the recreational opportunities that are available in the City.
- **Public Safety** – Community members and staff agree that they feel safe throughout the community.
- **Schools** – Residents spoke highly of the schools in Smithville and the education they provide to students.
- **Proximity to KC** – Smithville has good and easy access to Kansas City without being a part of the city or one of its suburbs.
- **Government Management** – The City is well-run and managed through good and thoughtful leadership and staff.

SWOC – Weaknesses

Weaknesses

- **Housing** – Many individuals that would like to live in Smithville cannot afford to, including staff. There is also a lack of variety of housing stock for individuals of all ages and life stages.
- **Community Amenities** – Residents want more community amenities, like a community center or pool and activities instead of traveling to other cities. This would also help attract people from neighboring communities. More Parks and Recreation ideas are coming including the development of a river walk.
- **Workplace Compensation and Development** – Salaries and staff recognition are below expectations and other communities. Staff want involvement in decision-making and opportunities for development.
- **Planning and Asset Management** – Long-term planning for physical assets and staff/board transitions is crucial for financial sustainability and smooth continuity of operations.

SWOC – Opportunities

Opportunities

- **Smithville Lake** – Annually there are an estimated 1.3 – 1.5 million visitors that could potentially visit, shop, and dine in Smithville.
- **Economic Development** – Partnering with various organizations and community entities to find ways to attract new businesses and visitors would increase the tax base, job opportunities, and help support established businesses.
- **Community Engagement** – Utilize many channels for communication (online, in-person) to connect with residents, businesses to educate and provide transparency of City policies, decisions.

SWOC – Challenges

Challenges

- **Budgeting** – Increasing costs of goods, services, utilities, and equipment can constrain the City’s balanced budget.
- **Managed Growth** – Community members want more businesses, housing, activities, and gathering places without changing the community character.
- **Traffic** – There is a lot of traffic on specific routes, lack of cross section traveling East and West, and residents are concerned with increases in traffic because of additional growth.
- **Infrastructure and Operational Needs** – Aging water, sewer, roads will need significant investment, including the need to purchase additional machinery and expand space for employees and operations.

SWOC – Discussion

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Challenges

- What are the strengths of the community? Of the City government?
- What are weaknesses that need to be considered? In the Community? In City government?
- What opportunities does the City have that it can capitalize on? For community impact? For City operations, organizational culture, etc.?
- What challenges is the community facing now and for its future? What threats does the City government face to effectively serve the community now and in the future?

Environmental Scan Discussion



What did information in the Environmental Scan and SWOC analysis reveal to you?



What stood out? Did you learn anything new?



Which themes are the most important in shaping your thinking about the future direction of the City?

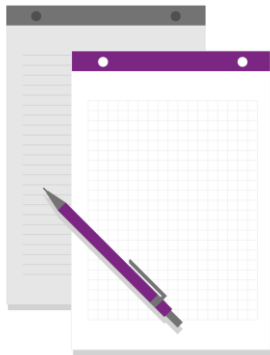
Strategic Planning Session

Day 1 with Board of Alderman

Activity Brainstorm and Build Consensus

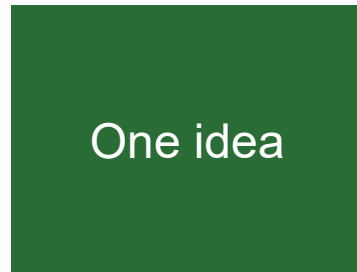
Individually

- Reflect individually on the focused question.
- Write down your initial thoughts.
- Decide on the ideas you want to share with the small group.

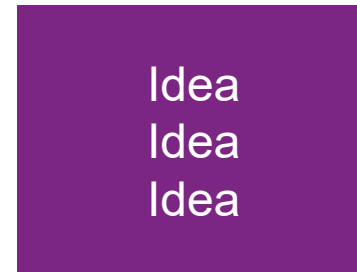


Small Groups

- Discuss individual ideas, check for understanding and meaning of each idea.
- Use a marker to write one idea (3 – 5 words) on each note card.
- Write BIG.



NOT



Large Group

- Affirm understanding of the meaning and focus of each idea.
- Organize ideas into thematic categories.
- Name the categories.



Strategic Priorities



Strategic Priorities are the most important areas your organization needs to focus on.

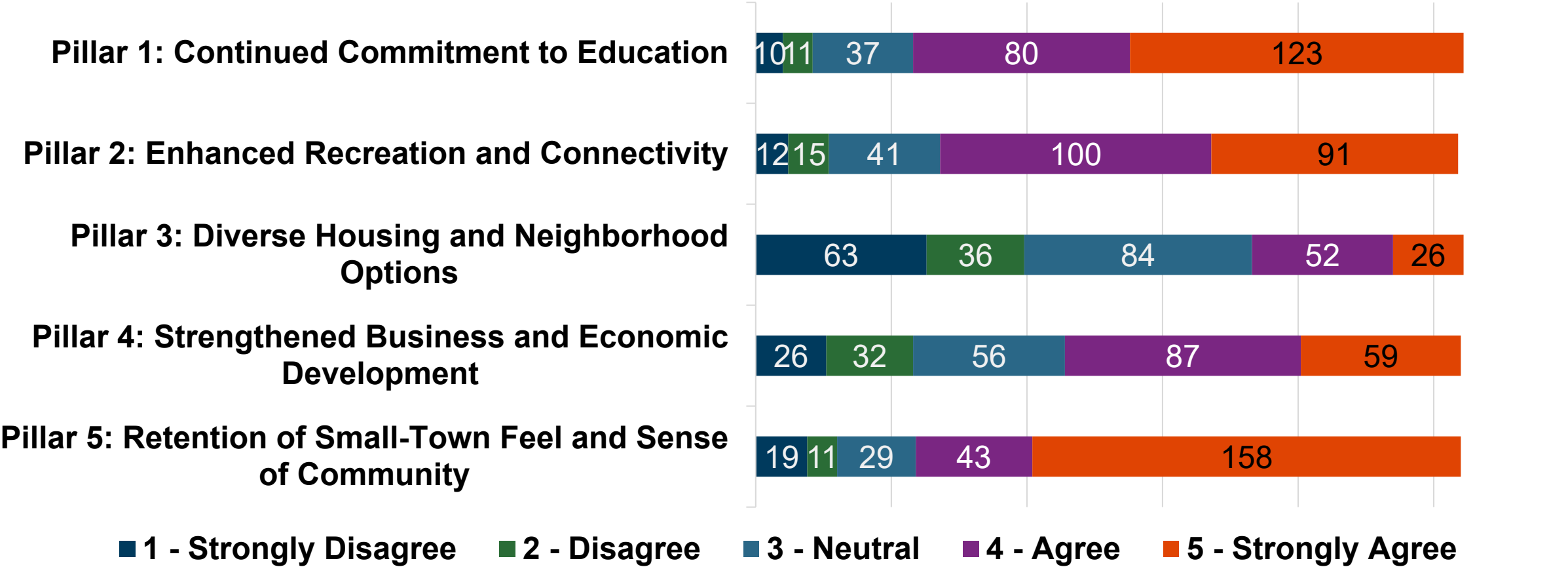
They are the small number of focal points, typically **four to six**, that are critical in achieving your mission and realizing your vision.



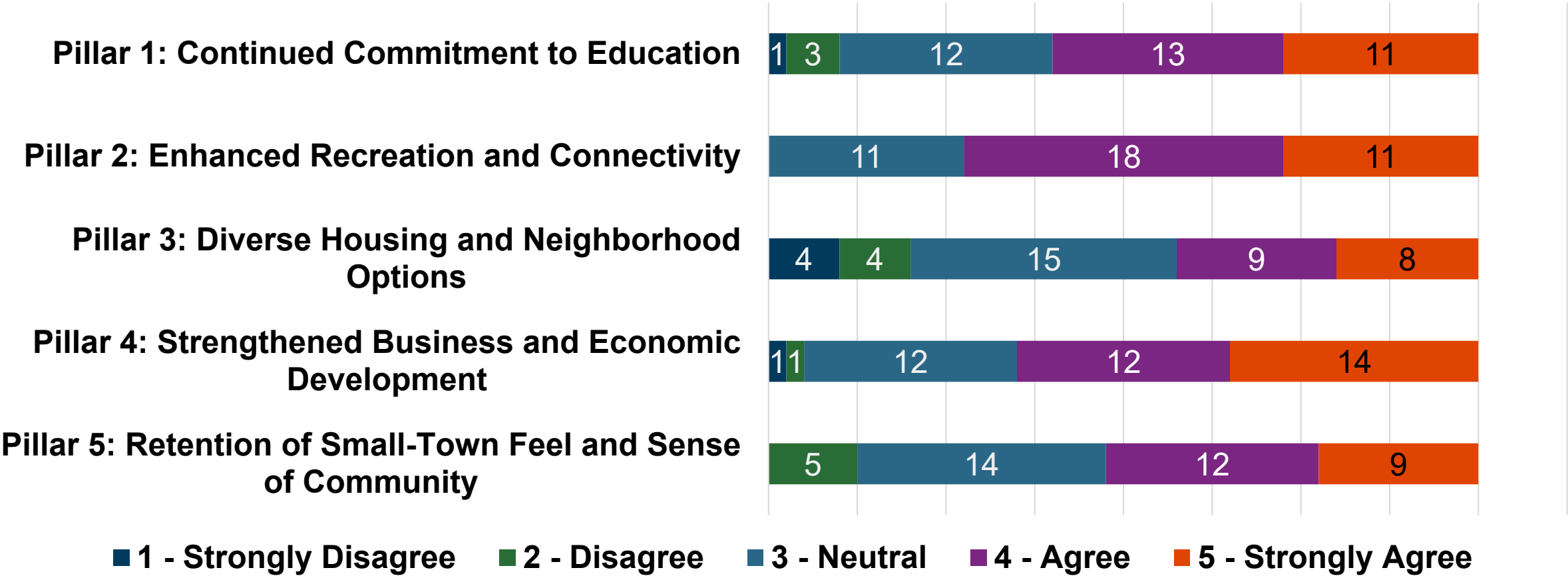
Current Strategic Priorities

- Continued Commitment to Education
- Enhanced Recreation and Connectivity
- Diverse Housing and Neighborhood Options
- Strengthened Business and Economic Development
- Retention of Small-Town Feel and Sense of Community

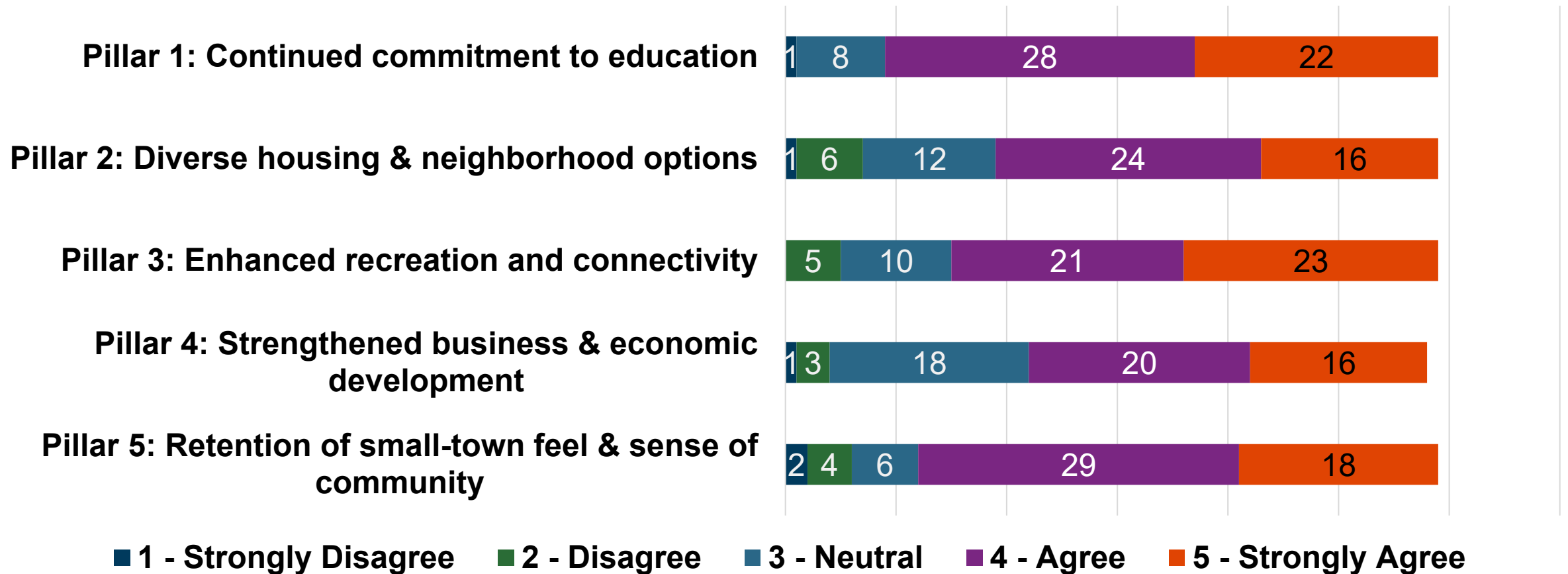
Rate 2019 Strategic Plan Pillars by how Well it Aligns With Your Vision for the City



Rate 2019 Strategic Plan Pillars by how Well it Aligns With Your Vision for the City



Rate 2019 Strategic Plan Pillars by How Well it Aligns With Your Vision for the City



Source: Strategic Planning Youth Survey 2026



Develop Strategic Priorities

Discussion:

- Based on what we learned from the Environmental Scan and what is known about the City, what are the **four to six** strategic priorities that should guide us over the next five years, so we can make progress toward our shared vision?
- How would we define the current and future state of each of these strategic priorities?
- If we make gains in these areas, will we achieve our vision?
- If the answer is no, what should we focus on instead?

Activity Strategic Priorities Conversation



- Collect all Post-It notes and display on wall.
- Organize into groups of similar ideas.
- Discuss the insights, perspectives, and ideas.
- Name/rename each category.
- Are the identified priorities appropriate to make progress toward the vision? If not, what would you add or refine?
- **Outcome:** Identify **four to six** strategic priorities that focus the City's energy and resources toward achieving the long-term vision.

Mission



A **mission statement** describes an organization's purpose or reason for existing.

It is the public statement of the contribution the City promises to make to help accomplish the community vision.



Develop the Mission Statement

Group Discussion:

- As you reflect on the brainstormed information, does it accurately describe the purpose of the City?
- Does it describe what you do?
- If not, what needs to be changed?



Activity Mission Statement Conversation



- Collect all Post-It notes and display on wall.
- Organize into groups of similar ideas.
- Discuss the insights, perspectives, and ideas.
- Synthesize and check for understanding and agreement.
- **Outcome:** Capture necessary ideas and content to produce a short, concise statement that clearly defines the scope of the organization.

Break

Vision



A **vision statement** defines your desired future state and provides directions for where you are going as an organization.



Current Vision Statement

- Smithville builds its future by embracing growth, encouraging commerce and enhancing its natural surroundings.



Develop the Vision Statement

Individual Brainstorm and Group Discussion:

- What will the City look like 5 – 10 years from now?
- What do you want community members to be experiencing?
- How do you want the City of the City to be described?

Current:

- Smithville builds its future by embracing growth, encouraging commerce and enhancing its natural surroundings.



Activity Vision Statement Conversation



- Collect all Post-It notes and display on wall.
- Organize into groups of similar ideas.
- Discuss the insights, perspectives, and ideas.
- Synthesize and check for understanding and agreement.
- **Outcome:** Capture necessary ideas and content to produce a short, concise statement that is a clear picture of the future the Board envisions for the City.

Values



Values are the precepts that guide an organization throughout its life in all circumstances, irrespective of changes in its goals, strategies, type of work, or the top management.

They are expectations for how the City will conduct its business, make decisions, and deliver programs and services to the community.



Value Examples

- **Integrity:** We operate with integrity, holding ourselves to the highest standards of performance, transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct.
- **Service:** We are responsive and respectful to those we serve with an attitude that everything is worth our best effort.
- **Visionary Leadership:** We anticipate needs, look to our community's future, and execute to achieve our goals.
- **Accountable and Faithful Stewards:** We apply best practices to our work, invest wisely, and use City resources responsibly because we value our service to the public and the trust of our community.
- **Solution-Oriented and Innovative:** We challenge the status quo and are unafraid of taking risks to find and create new, efficient solutions that sustain existing services, adapt to new demands, and look toward the future.



Develop Values

Group Discussion:

- What values accurately capture how the Board would like the City to carry out its mission and vision?
- Regardless of what we're working on, how do we work?



Activity Values Conversation



- Collect all Post-It notes and display on wall.
- Organize into groups of similar ideas.
- Discuss the insights, perspectives, and ideas.
- Synthesize and check for understanding and agreement.
- **Outcome:** Capture necessary ideas and content to produce a values list that clearly defines how the organization will carry out its work.

Strategic Outcomes



Strategic Outcomes are the results you want to achieve within each strategic priority in pursuit of your long-term vision.

They define what success looks like and helps to focus strategic objectives, decision-making, and resource allocation.



- What is the result we want to achieve in each strategic priority?
- What are the initial, interim, and long-term outcomes expected?
- What words and phrases will define the desired outcome for each strategic priority?
- What is the result we want to achieve in each strategic priority?
- **Outcome:** Identify the long-term outcomes that defines each strategic priority and provide the framework for the City's plan.

Progress Reporting



Reporting and evaluating the progress on the objectives maintains the strategic plan as a living and actionable document. It also provides insights of successes that can be shared with stakeholders.



Activity Reporting Process Conversation



- How often should the City report progress on the plan? Internally? Externally?
- What criteria should the City use to determine whether to add something to the plan?
- How frequently should the City update the plan? What are the process steps?
- Capture group's thoughts, synthesize, and check for understanding and agreement.
- **Outcome:** Determine how to maintain the City's strategic plan as a living and actionable document.

Reflection and Closure



What worked well today? Is there anything we could have done differently to make the experience better?



Is there any additional guidance you would give the consulting team and the City leadership team for developing objectives, outcomes, and performance measures?



How did this session contribute to your ability to work together collaboratively as a Board to serve the needs of the community?



What are your expectations for monitoring and reporting progress on the plan?

Next Steps



- BerryDunn will:
 - Prepare a first draft of the Strategic Plan document
 - Facilitate follow-up sessions with the Project Team and Directors to refine objectives and performance measures.
 - Facilitate a review of the draft Strategic Plan with the City's Board in a work session.
 - Review Sessions: October 12 – 15, 2026
 - Community Review: November 9 – 10, 2026