



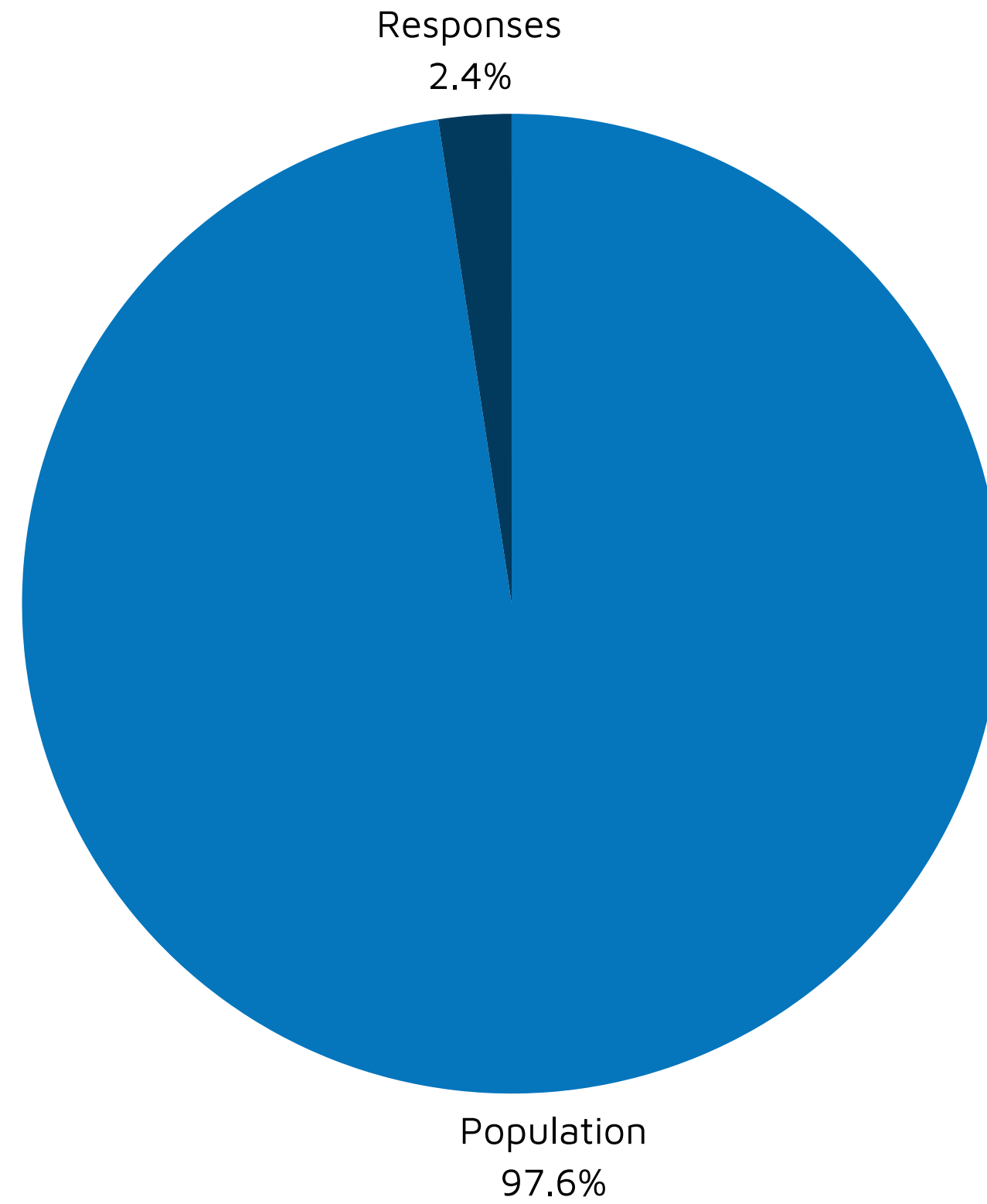
2025 Budget Survey Results

273 Responses

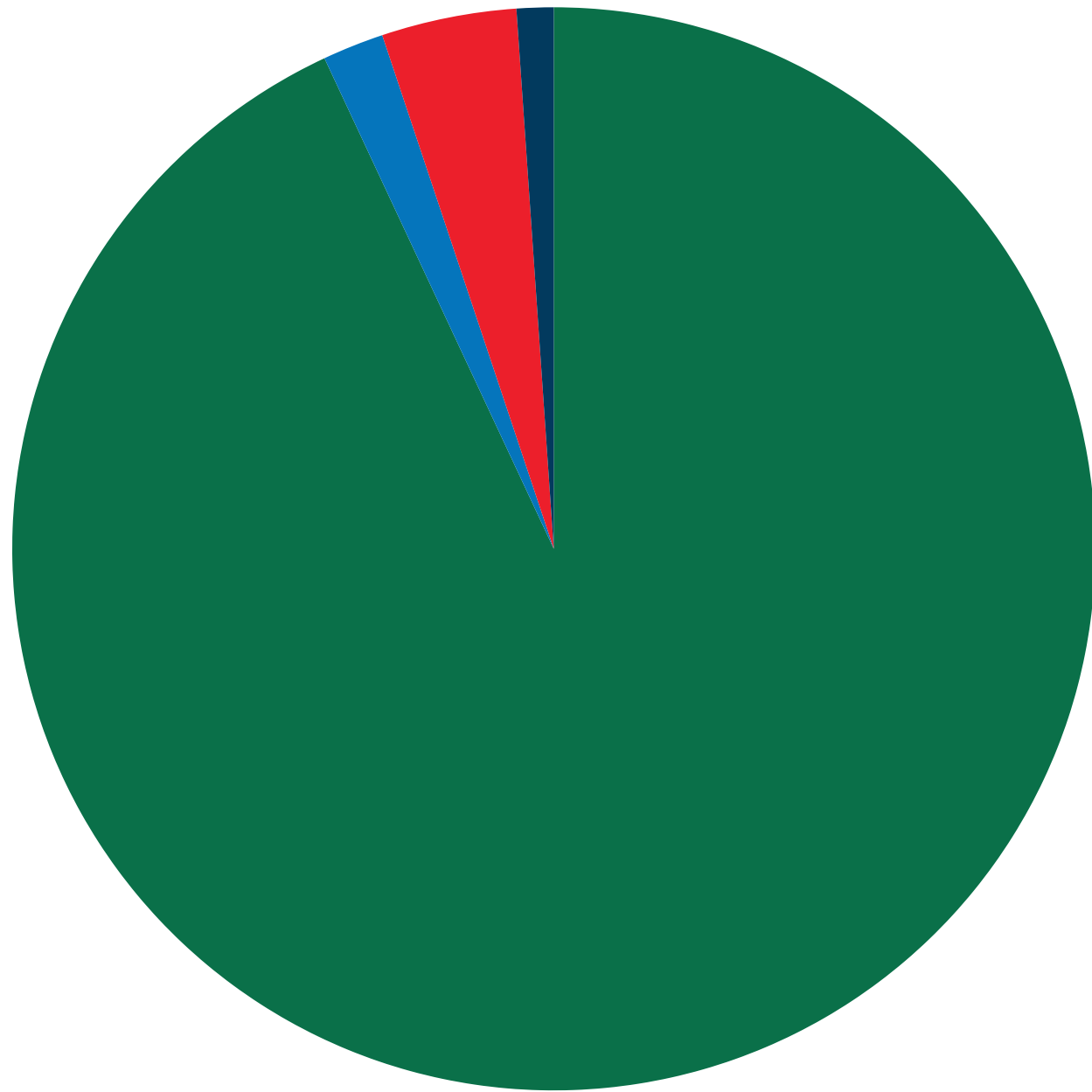
From August 19 – September 15



273 Responses
From August 19 - September 15



Q1: Which of the following statements describes your connection to the Municipality of Meaford?



Key Takeaway:
The majority of respondents are residents

93.04% Resident

1.83% Operates a Business

4.03% Works in Meaford

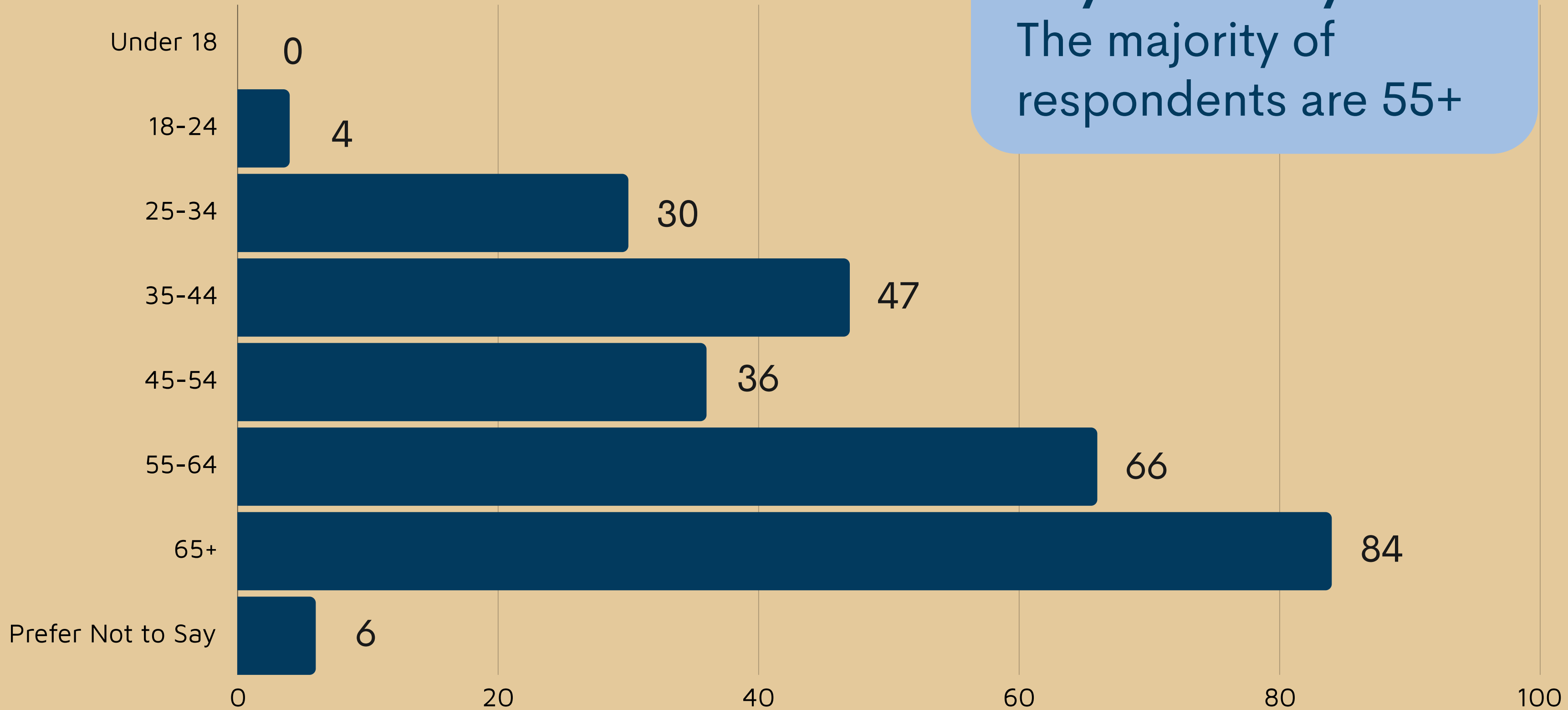
1.10% Lives Nearby and Uses Services

273 responses

Q2: What is your age?



Key Takeaway:
The majority of
respondents are 55+



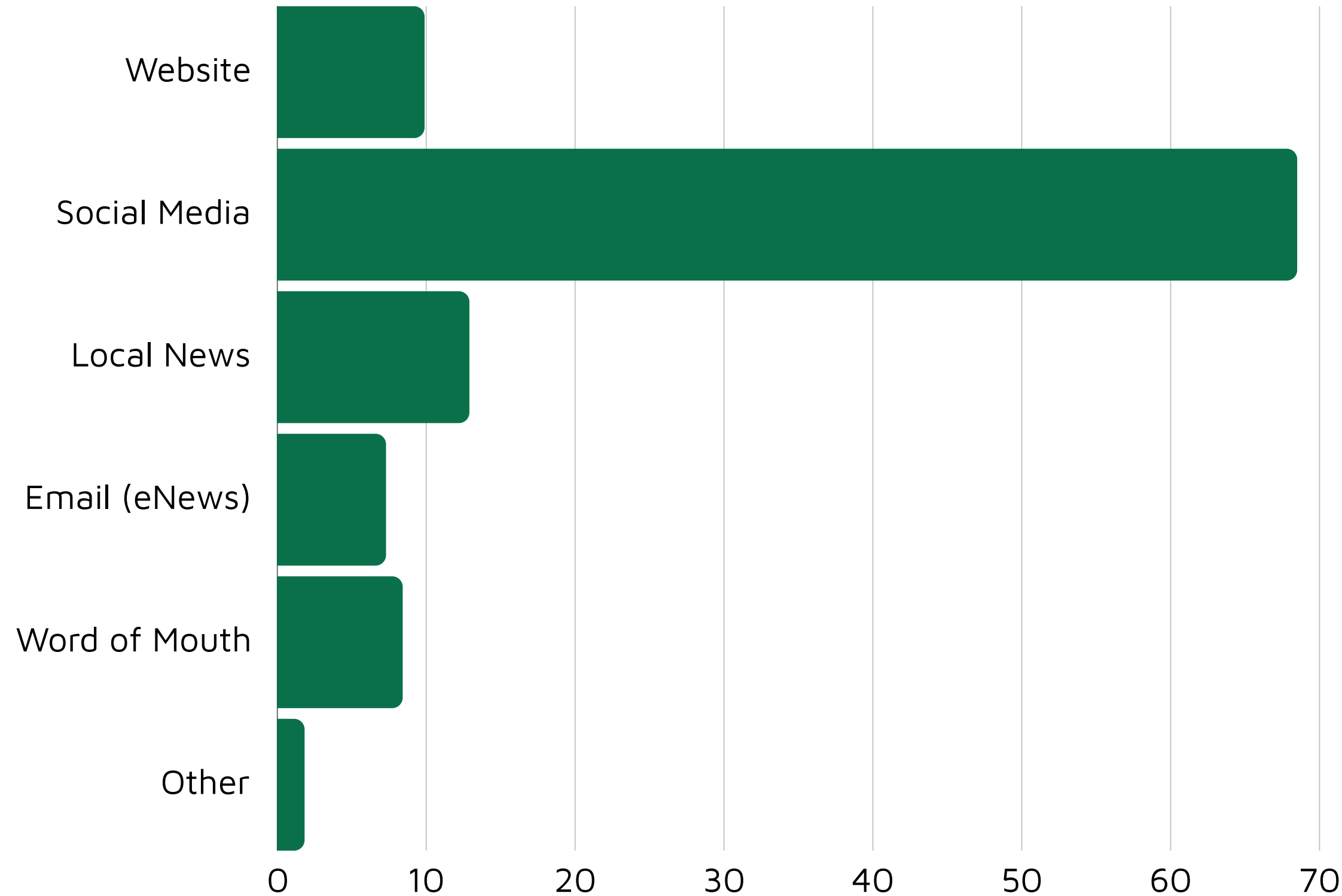
273 responses

Q3: How did you hear about this survey? Select all that apply:



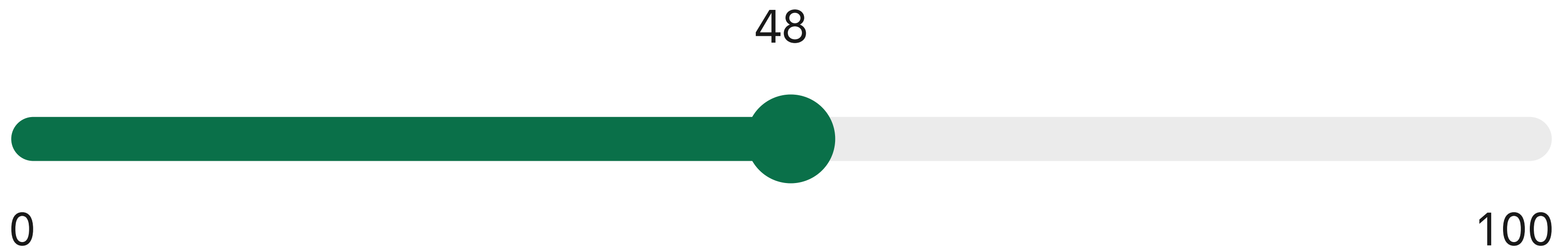
Key Takeaway:
Social media is an effective channel for engaging with the community

Note that paid and organic socials were live for this campaign



273 responses

Q4: How familiar are you with the municipality's budget and how tax dollars are spent in Meaford?

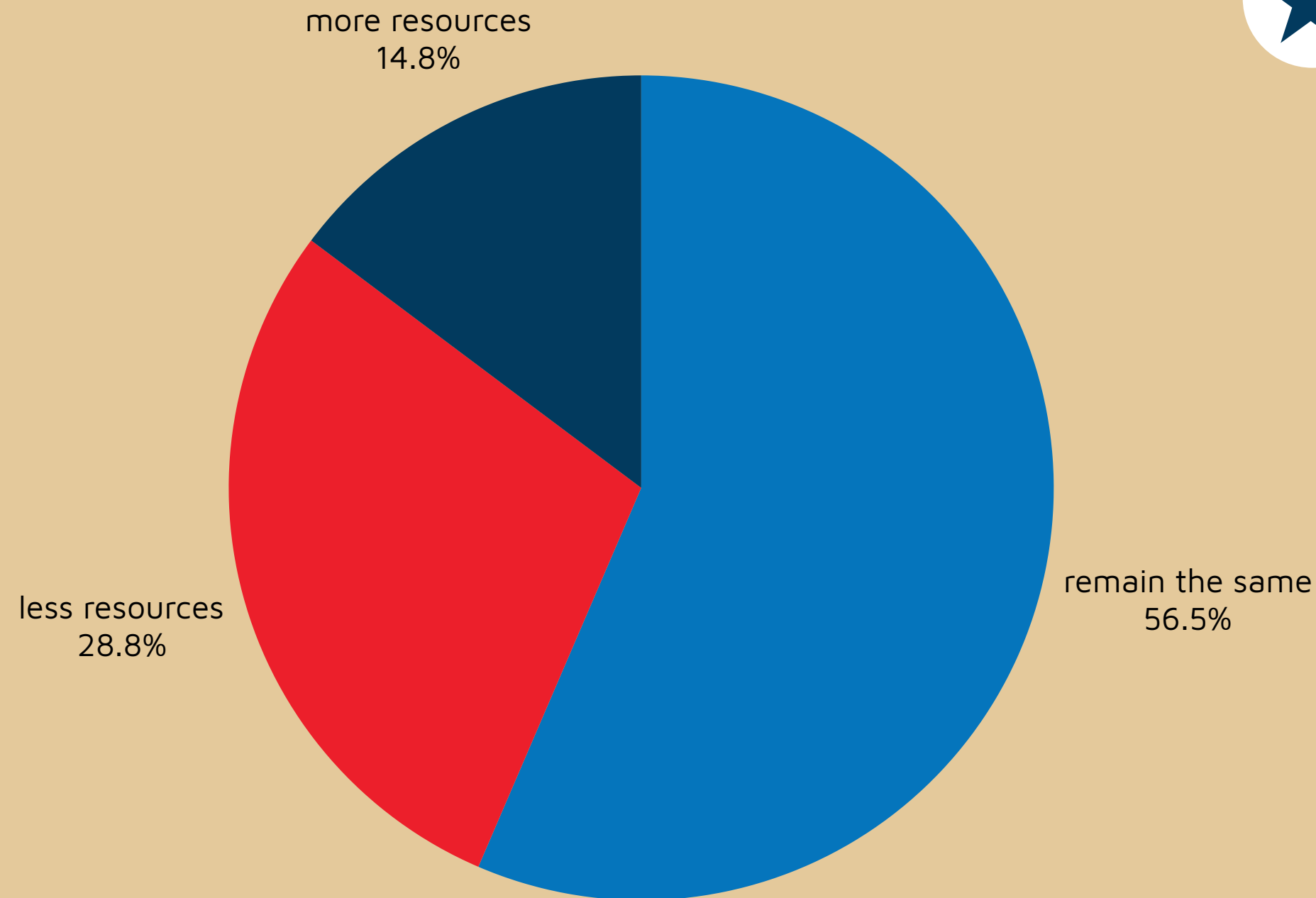


Key Takeaway:

There is an opportunity to further educate the community throughout the year on how tax dollars are spent.

272 responses

Q5: How would you prefer our resources to be allocated to the below services in the upcoming budget?



Key Takeaway:

- The majority of respondents would generally prefer resources **remain the same**

Q5: How would you prefer our resources to be allocated to the below services in the upcoming budget?

remain
the same



remain the same or



increase



increase
resources



- Planning services
- Building services
- Transportation
- Municipal enforcement
- Fire services
- Parks and recreation
- Cultural services
- Library
- Customer service
- Environmental services
- Legislative services

- Economic development

- OPP
- Capital projects



Key Takeaways:

- When analyzed individually, most respondents would prefer **service resources to remain the same**
- **OPP and Capital projects** were areas in which respondents would prefer **more resources** allocated
- 75% of respondents would **prefer the same or more resources for economic development**

273 responses

Q5: How would you prefer our resources to be allocated to the below services in the upcoming budget?

	Less resources	Remain the same	More resources
Planning services	25.09%	50.92%	23.99%
Building services	18.52%	57.04%	24.44%
Capital projects	7.09%	40.30%	52.61%
Transportation	8.89%	51.48%	39.63%
Municipal enforcement	25.46%	50.55%	23.99%
Fire services	10.70%	71.96%	17.34%
OPP	13.65%	40.96%	45.39%
Parks and recreation	8.86%	56.46%	34.69%
Cultural services	35.93%	52.22%	11.85%
Library	28.78%	56.46%	14.76%
Customer service	20.22%	65.44%	14.34%
Environmental services	7.72%	62.13%	30.15%
Economic development	24.26%	38.97%	36.76%
Legislative services	30.26%	61.25%	8.49%



Key Takeaways:

- The consensus is that **no department** should **decrease resources**
- **High votes (60%+)** for resources to remain the same can **imply satisfaction with services**
 - Fire services
 - Customer service
 - Environmental services
 - Legislative services

273 responses

Q6: How would you prefer our resources to be allocated to the below services in the upcoming budget?

Variable:

- Increase/Decrease Taxes
- Increase/Decrease User Fees

8 OPTIONS

Result:

- Improved service levels
- Maintained service levels
- Reduced service levels



Key Takeaways:

- **A small increase in taxes and user fees** is the preferred option
- Service levels **should not decrease**

Q.7: From your perspective, what are the most important local issues facing the Municipality of Meaford currently?

Top 3 Areas of Concern

1. Taxes & Financial Management
2. Policing & Crime
3. Roads & Infrastructure

Other Areas

- Municipal Governance & Efficiency
- Development & Growth
- Public Services & Community Amenities
- Economic Development
- Housing & Affordability

Open text response - 241 responses

Q.7: From your perspective, what are the most important local issues facing the Municipality of Meaford currently?

Roads & Infrastructure (38%)

- Poor road conditions, including crumbling roads and shoulders.
- Aging underground piping and wastewater treatment plant upgrades.
- Road repair prioritization, with concerns over repaving unnecessary roads instead of fixing those in terrible shape.
- Maintenance issues with rural roads, ditches, and public parks.
- Excessive bureaucracy hindering development and costing taxpayers.
- Calls to create and maintain green spaces.
- Concerns over the distance of residences from town services affecting accessibility.
- Need for infrastructure that supports population growth, including water and wastewater treatment.

Taxes & Financial Management (20%)

- High taxes relative to services provided, especially policing and infrastructure.
- Complaints about spending practices, including excessive allocation to consultants.
- Calls for reduced taxes and more accountability in spending.
- Concerns over the municipality's financial direction, transparency, and management efficiency.
- High water and sewer rates compared to surrounding areas.

Policing & Crime (20%)

- Increasing crime rates and lack of police presence.
- Need for more policing, especially OPP presence in town.
- Concerns over rising petty crime and issues related to drug use.
- Perception that larger police budgets won't solve underlying issues of addiction leading to theft.
- Public concerns about transparency and the effectiveness of law enforcement.

Open text response – 241 responses

Q.7: From your perspective, what are the most important local issues facing the Municipality of Meaford currently?

Municipal Governance & Efficiency (15%)

- Inefficient management of municipal staff and resources.
- Criticism of staffing decisions and lack of council oversight in administrative changes.
- Calls to streamline operations and reduce unnecessary spending.
- Trust-building efforts needed within public officials.
- Need for experienced staff to effectively manage resources.

Development & Growth (15%)

- Concerns over poorly planned developments and the push for residential housing without sufficient services.
- Calls to attract new businesses and create jobs to diversify the tax base.
- Criticism of the local economy's reliance on tourism without adequate infrastructure to support it.
- Requests for more commercial development and attention to infrastructure to accommodate growth.

Public Services & Community Amenities (10%)

- Requests for updated recreational programs for adults and children.
- Concerns about the library's cost versus other needed services.
- Calls for better public transit in rural areas, especially weekend service to Owen Sound.
- Shortage of recreational facilities, including public soccer fields and hockey rinks.
- Criticism of the condition of parks and public restrooms.

Q.7: From your perspective, what are the most important local issues facing the Municipality of Meaford currently?

Economic Development (10%)

- Calls to promote prospective employers/businesses to build a vibrant community.
- Concerns over the lack of industry and job opportunities, particularly for younger residents.
- Focus on supporting low-income families and maintaining affordable housing options.
- Criticism of Council's responsiveness to residents' concerns and the influence of developers.

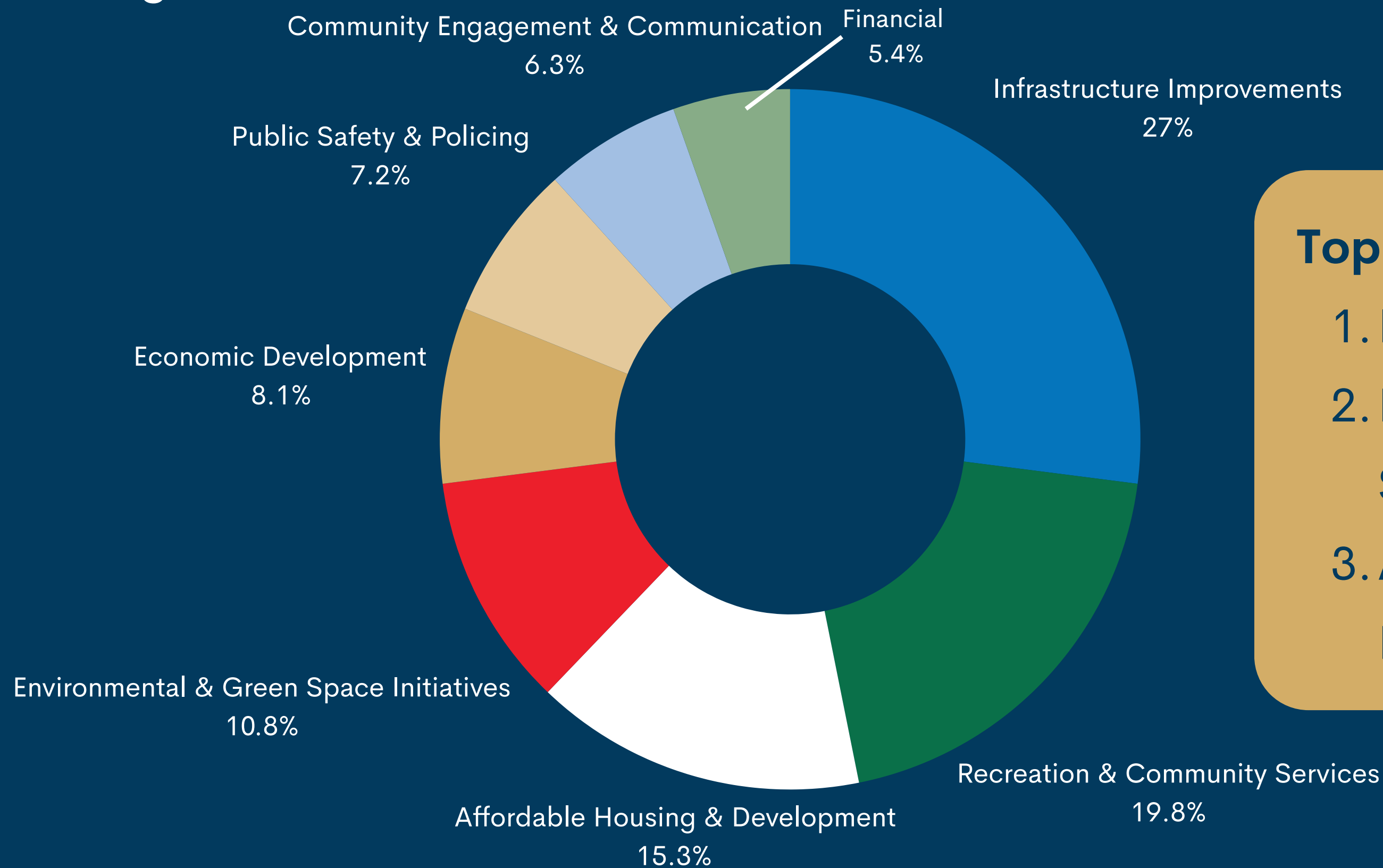
Housing & Affordability (10%)

- Affordable housing for seniors, low-income residents, and new families.
- Calls for off-market housing, not just luxury developments.
- Concerns that new housing developments do not account for the availability of services such as healthcare.
- Short-term rentals affect the local housing market.

Environmental & Community Concerns (5%)

- Concerns over the environmental impact of new developments.
- Calls for protection of green spaces amidst development pressures.
- Criticism of TCE pumped storage projects and their potential damage to the community.

Q8: Do you have a project or idea that could positively impact your neighbourhood?



Top 3 Themes

1. Infrastructure Improvements
2. Recreation & Community Services
3. Affordable Housing & Developments

Open text response - 174 responses

Q8: Do you have a project or idea that could positively impact your neighbourhood?

1. Infrastructure Improvements (30%)

- Road repair and maintenance (e.g., paving gravel roads, Nelson Street).
- Traffic calming measures on residential roads (e.g., Cook Street, Edwin and Sykes St).
- Installation of sidewalks for safety (e.g., Augusta and Coleman, Ridge Road, Pearson).
- Rerouting Highway 26 to alleviate traffic congestion.
- Improved maintenance of roads to handle increased traffic (e.g., from new developments and tourism).
- Speed reduction initiatives (e.g., reducing speed limits to 60 km/h on certain roads).
- Request for improved communication regarding road closures and municipal decisions.

2. Recreation & Community Services (22%)

- Need for a year-round indoor recreation center (gym/pool).
- Upgrades to playground equipment at local parks.
- Support for the Meaford Pickleball Club in terms of court availability.
- Suggestions for outdoor activities (e.g., outdoor rinks, mini golf).
- Development of cultural conversation groups and recreational options for seniors.
- More community events at Market Square and improvements to the splash pad.

Q8: Do you have a project or idea that could positively impact your neighbourhood?

3. Affordable Housing & Development (17%)

- Mixed housing requirements in new developments (at least 30%).
- Concerns over low-income housing complexes like Victoria Village.
- Suggestions for limiting hotel/condo developments to promote single-family homes.
- Advocacy for tiny homes and more affordable housing options.

4. Environmental & Green Space Initiatives (12%)

- Letting grass grow and reducing chemical use in ditches.
- Keeping beaches public for community enjoyment.
- More protection of wildlife habitat.
- Increased focus on expanding the municipality's tree canopy.

5. Economic Development (9%)

- Support for local businesses and enhanced focus on the harbour.
- Developments should pay residential tax rates to encourage growth.
- Suggestions for attracting new businesses, including a low-cost grocery store.
- Hosting more events to promote tourism.

Open text response – 174 responses

Q8: Do you have a project or idea that could positively impact your neighbourhood?

6. Public Safety & Policing (8%)

- Increase OPP presence for community safety, especially in high-traffic areas.
- Neighborhood watch programs and suggestions for CCTV in downtown areas.
- Concerns regarding policing and road safety, particularly in the Stone Tree complex.

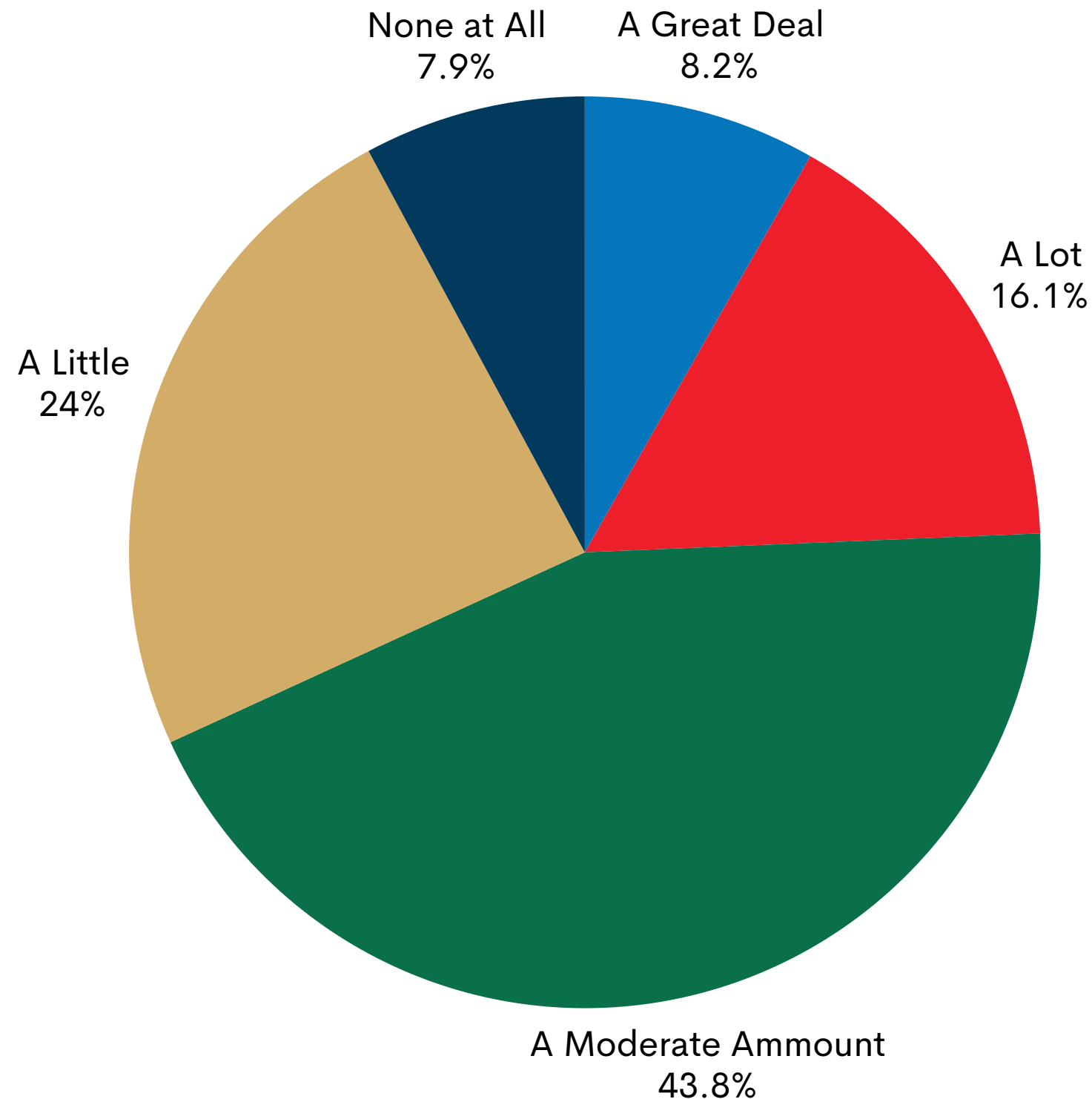
7. Community Engagement & Communication (7%)

- Timely responses from staff to residents and associations.
- Opportunities for youth involvement in community projects (e.g., parks and gardens).
- Increased opportunities for public engagement in a less formal setting.

8. Financial Concerns (6%)

- Calls for tax reductions and rationalizing services that cannot be funded.
- Concerns over perceived inequalities in budget allocations across the municipality.
- Requests for careful spending and prioritizing necessities during tough economic times.

Q9: How do you feel that the Municipality of Meaford does in engaging the public on the budget each year?

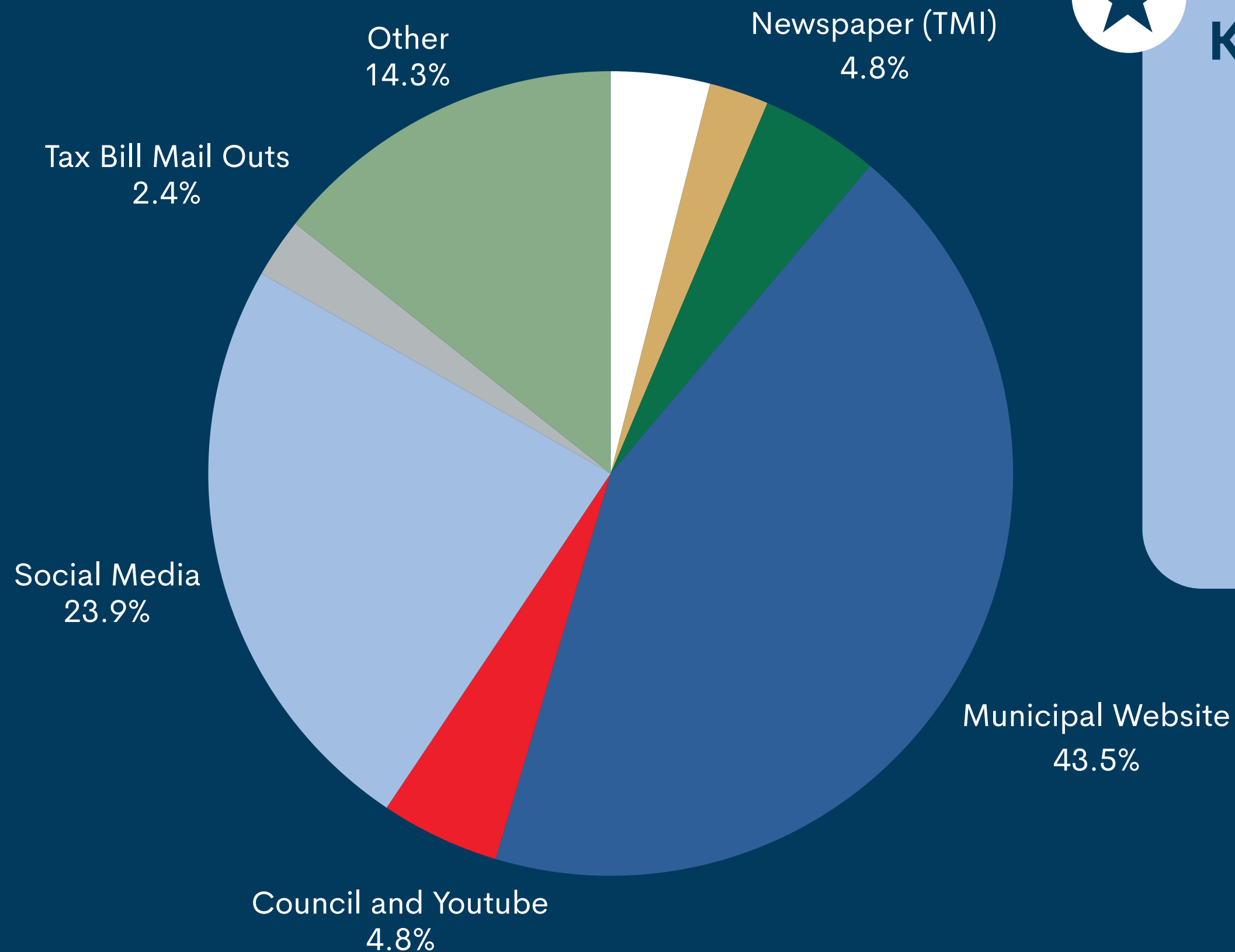


Key Takeaways:

- There is an **opportunity to improve** the budget engagements
- **32%** of respondents feel there is **little to no engagement on the budget**
- **Most** respondents note a moderate amount of engagement

267 responses

Q10: Where do you currently go to receive information about the Municipality's budget?

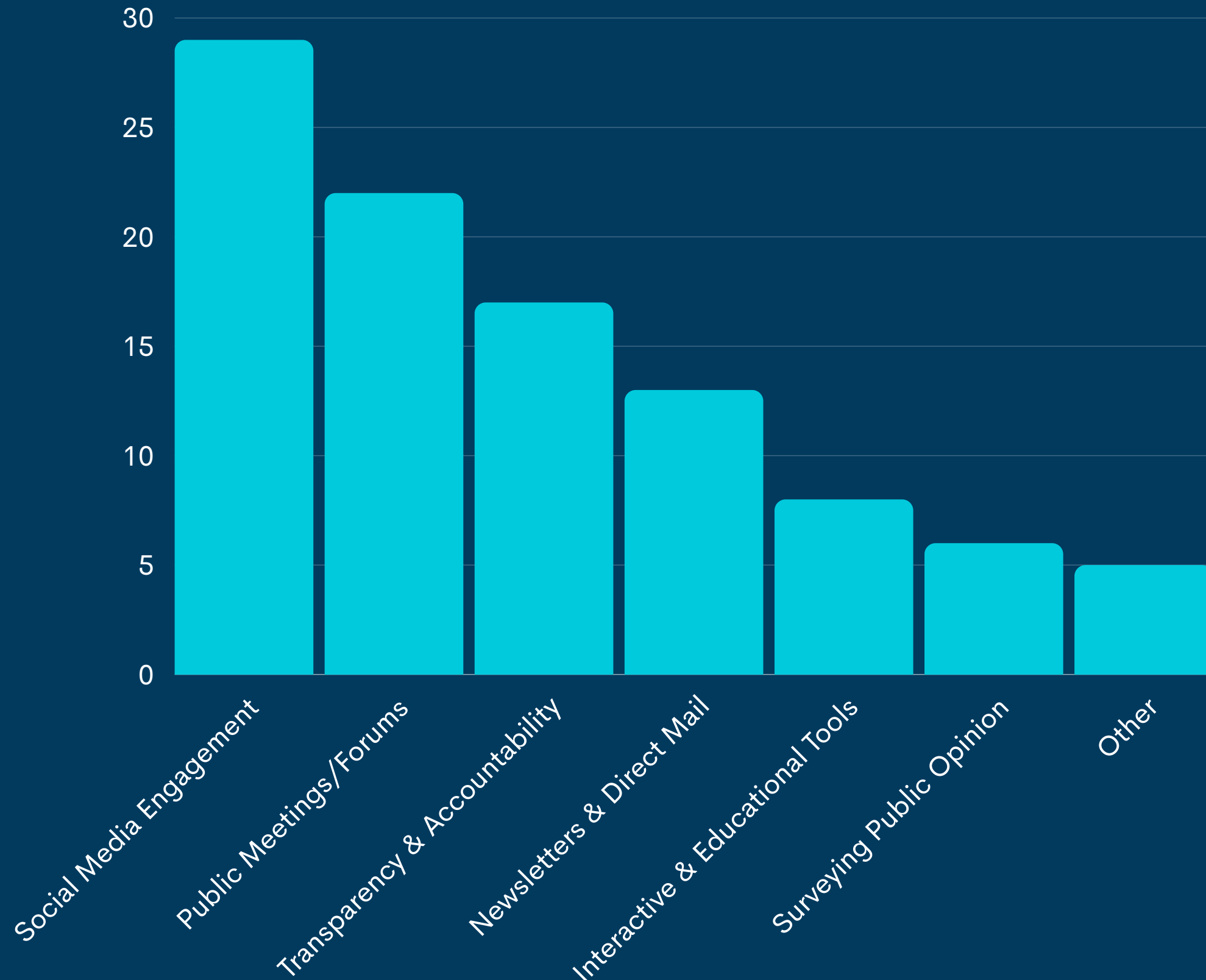


Key Takeaways:

- The **Municipal website** (44%) is the most popular source of information followed by **social media** (15%)
- There are some concerns about the **accessibility of information**

Open text response - 245 responses

Q11: How can the municipality better engage the public on the budget?



Key Takeaways:

- A **mix** of digital and **in-person discussions** will improve engagement
 - Consider timing for working professionals
- There is a call for greater **transparency**
 - The website is noted as a limitation as it is hard to find information

Open text response - 186 responses