Cobalt CommunityResearch

Supporting Decisions | Inspiring Ideas

Oshtemo Township Citizen Engagement and Priority Survey

August 2017

charter township oshtemo est. 1839

2017036

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Background on Cobalt Community Research

- 501c3 not for profit research coalition
- Mission to provide research and education
- Developed to meet the research needs of schools, local governments and nonprofit organizations

Measuring Where You Are: Why Research Matters

- Understanding community values and priorities helps you plan and communicate more effectively about Township decisions
- Perception impacts behaviors you care about
- Understanding community perception helps you improve and promote the Township
- Community engagement improves support for difficult decisions
- Reliable data on community priorities aids in balancing demands of vocal minorities with the reality of limited resources
- Bottom line outcome measurement of service and trust: Good administration requires quality measurement and reporting

Study Goals

- Support budget and strategic planning decisions
- Explore service assumptions to ensure baseline service measures are understood
- Identify which aspects of community provide the greatest leverage on citizens' overall satisfaction
- Discover key outcome behaviors such as recommending the community, remaining in the community, volunteering and encouraging someone to start a business
- Determine support for planning and zoning regulations and future service opportunities

Bottom Line

- Oshtemo Township overall ACSI score = 71 | 2013 = 71
  - Michigan Local Governments = 64 | 2013 = 60
  - Michigan Local Governments (Pop. 10,001-25,000) = 65 | 2013 = 64
  - Michigan County Governments = 59 | 2013 = 56
  - Michigan State Government = 46 | 2013 = 45
- There are several areas where improvement can have significant impact on overall satisfaction:
  - 2017 Drivers:
    - Township government management
    - Economic health
    - Property taxes

2013 Drivers:
Twp government management
Economic Health
Property taxes
Police services
Parks and recreation

- Detailed information by specific demographic groups is available to aid in policy review
  - Detail by: sample or volunteer, years of residency, age, employment status, income, household composition and type of home

Preserving Voice: Looking Into Detail

Sample:

2017 Oshtemo Twp
Citizen Survey
Core Scores (Scale = 1-10)

		Fire & EMS			Police Services			Transportation Infrastructure			Property Taxes		Township Government						
		Fire coverage for the community	Response time to fires	Response time to medical emergencies	Respectful treatment of citizens	Fair and equitable enforcement	Response time to police calls for service	Public transportation options	Street maintenance/repair	Accommodation for bicycle and foot traffic	Fairness of Township property appraisals	Amount/quality of services received for taxes paid	Trustworthy leaders	Efficient and organized operation	Well trained employees	Communicates effectively with the community	Spends dollars wisely	Encourages citizen ideas and involvement	Maintains a website that meets your needs
2013 Overall Satisfaction - Sample		**8.6**	**8.9**	**8.7**	**8.5**	**8.1**	**7.7**	**6.1**	**6.0**	**5.7**	**6.3**	**6.0**	**7.1**	**7.2**	**7.4**	**7.2**	**6.3**	**6.9**	**7.0**
2017 Overall Satisfaction - Sample		**8.9**	**9.0**	**8.9**	**8.8**	**8.7**	**8.2**	**5.9**	**5.3**	**5.7**	**6.1**	**6.0**	**7.0**	**7.2**	**7.5**	**6.9**	**6.4**	**6.8**	**7.5**
Residency	Less than 1 year	8.0	8.3	8.0	9.0	8.5	8.0	6.4	6.0	6.3	6.6	6.5	5.8	7.3	8.8	6.1	6.0	5.9	6.0
	1-5 years	8.9	8.9	8.8	8.6	8.3	8.0	6.4	5.1	5.2	6.2	5.8	7.4	7.2	7.4	6.8	7.1	6.8	7.3
	6-10 years	9.4	9.2	9.2	8.7	9.1	8.2	5.2	5.6	5.8	6.9	7.0	7.3	7.6	8.0	7.3	7.2	7.1	8.0
	11-20 years	9.0	9.0	9.1	8.7	8.7	7.9	5.9	5.3	5.8	6.1	6.3	7.7	7.5	7.4	7.5	6.7	7.5	8.1
	More than 20 years	8.8	9.1	8.7	8.8	8.9	8.6	6.0	5.1	5.8	5.9	5.7	6.4	6.8	7.4	6.5	5.8	6.3	7.2
Age	18 to 24	9.3	9.2	8.8	8.3	8.0	8.6	5.6	3.9	4.3	6.2	5.5	8.0	8.6	8.0	6.3	7.2	7.0	6.2
	25 to 34	8.8	8.7	8.8	8.4	8.3	7.9	5.1	4.7	4.3	5.3	5.3	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.2	6.0	6.4	7.3
	35 to 44	8.8	8.5	8.1	9.2	9.0	7.9	5.8	5.7	5.8	7.0	6.6	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.0	6.8	6.0	7.4
	45 to 54	9.2	9.3	8.9	8.6	8.6	7.6	6.0	4.9	5.6	5.3	5.7	7.0	6.8	7.2	7.0	6.2	6.2	7.3
	55 to 64	8.4	8.6	8.5	8.9	8.6	8.1	6.4	5.0	6.2	5.7	5.6	6.6	6.8	7.0	6.7	6.0	6.7	7.6
	65 or over	9.1	9.2	9.1	8.7	8.9	8.5	6.2	5.6	5.8	6.7	6.4	7.4	7.5	8.1	7.4	6.9	7.3	7.8

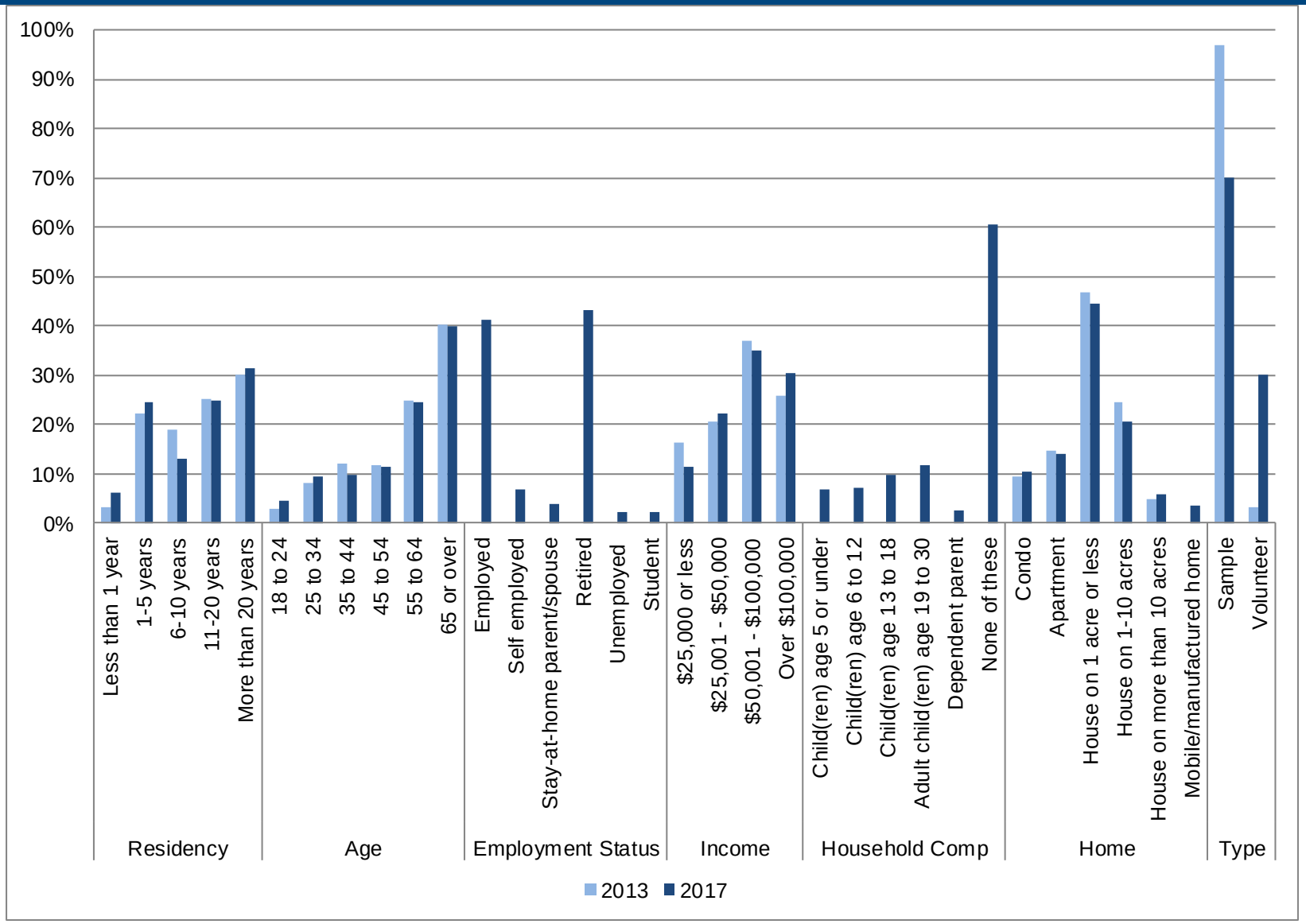
Consistent regardless of demographic

Differences based on demographic

Methodology

- Random sample of 1,500 residents drawn from voter records
- Utilized www.random.org, a well-respected utility used internationally by many universities and researchers to generate true random numbers
- Conducted using two mailings in May and June 2017
- Valid response from 367 residents (25% response rate), providing a conventional margin of error of +/- 5.1 percent in the raw data (95% confidence)
  - 2013 = 308 responses, 10 volunteers; +/- 5.5% at 95%
  - 2017 = 367 responses, 157 volunteers; +/- 5.1% at 95%
  - Note: National surveys with a margin of error +/- 5% require a sample of 384 responses to reflect a population of 330,000,000
- In addition to the random sample, there were 157 responses from volunteer respondents for a total response of 524

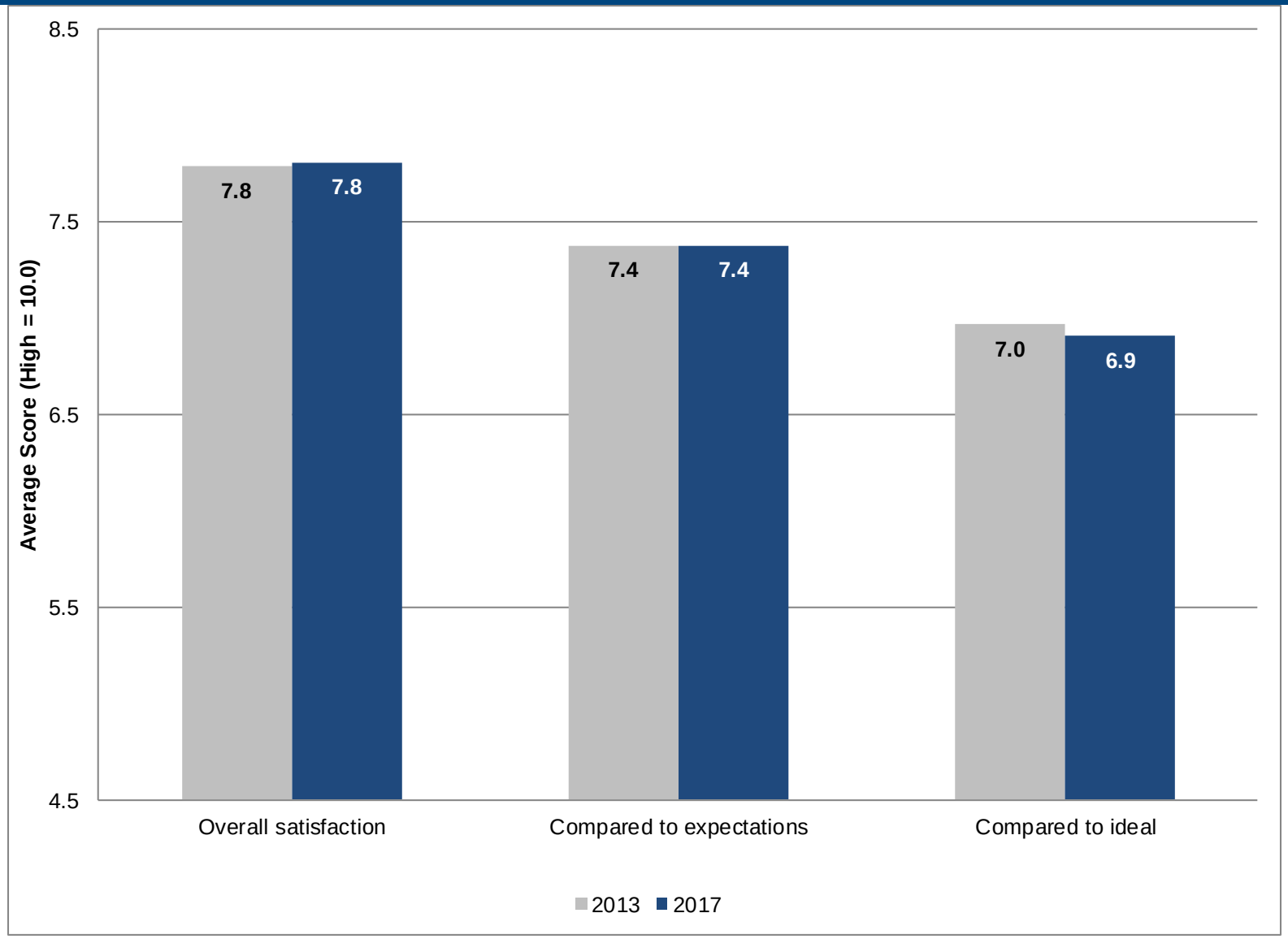
Respondent Profile



Results

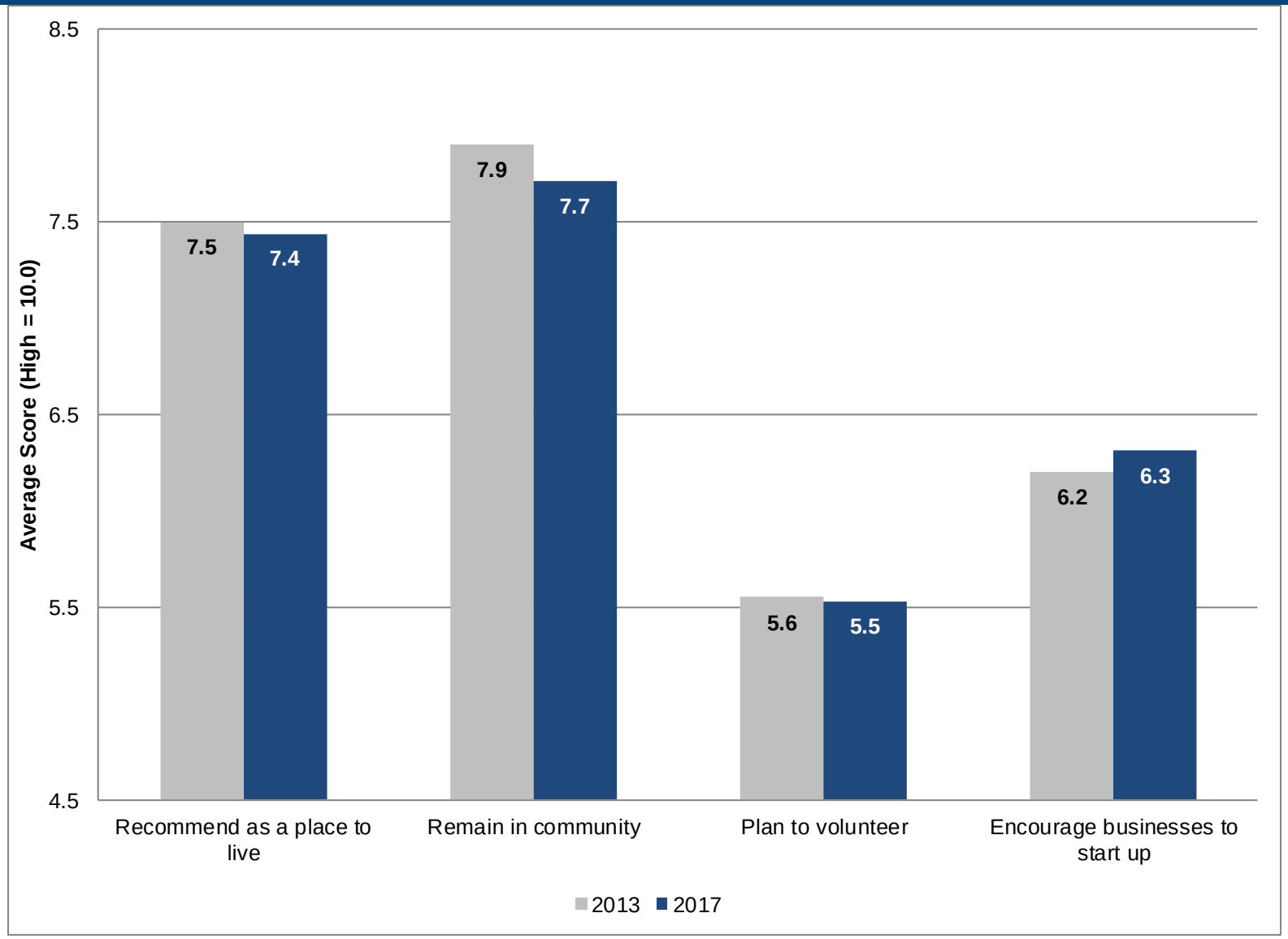
ACSI Dimensions

(High score = 10)



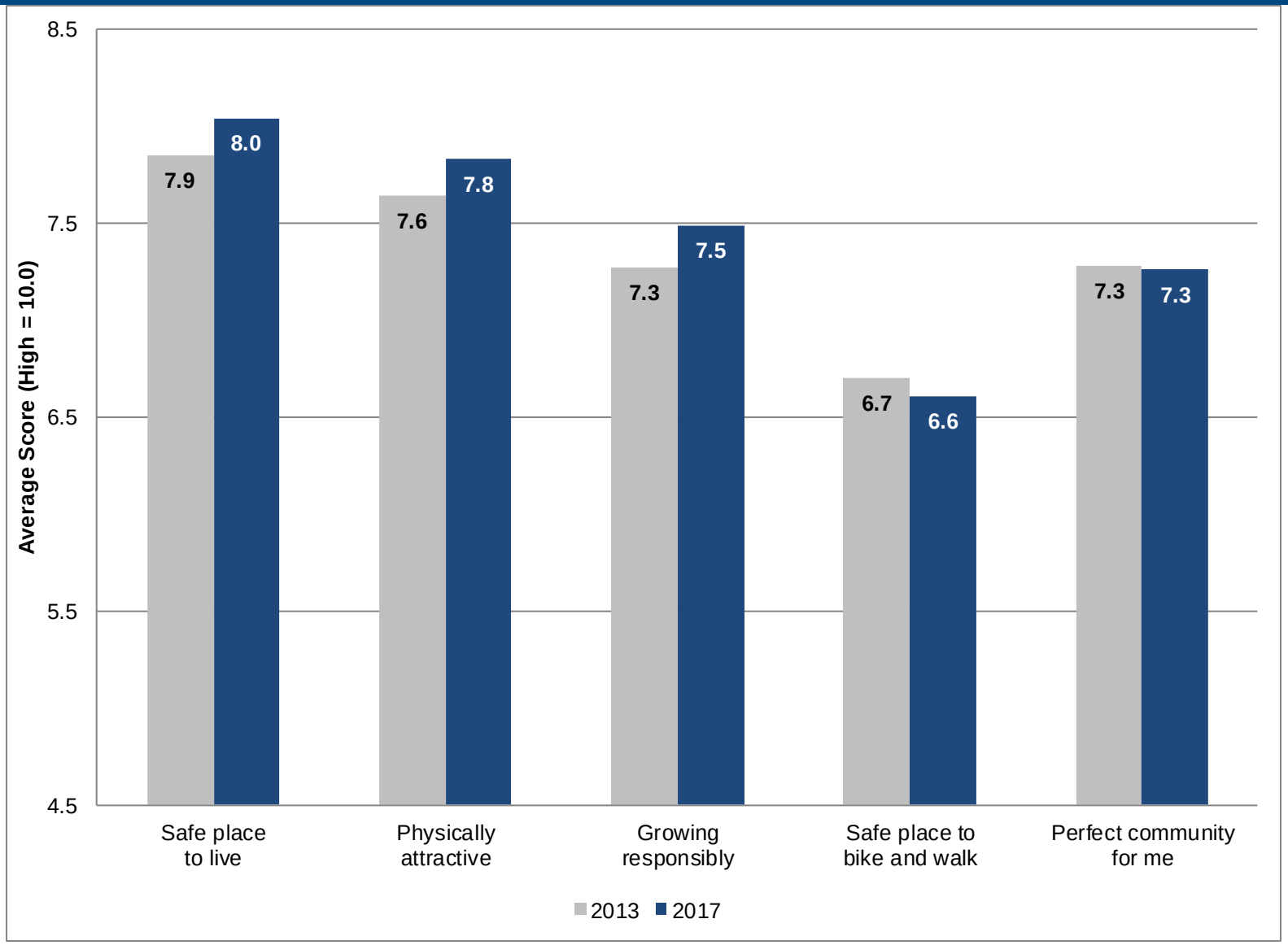
Outcome Behaviors

(High score = 10)

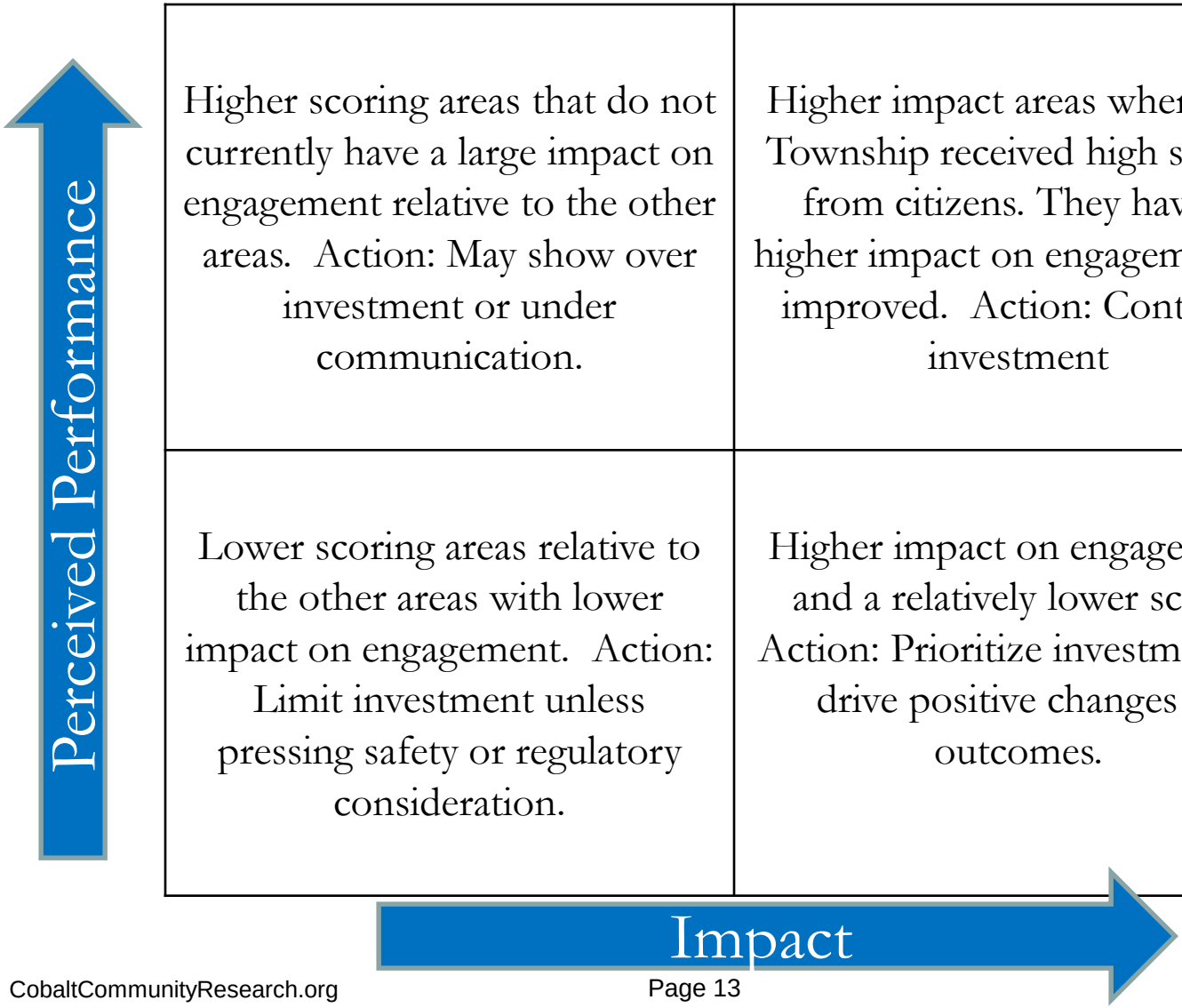


Community Image

(High score = 10)

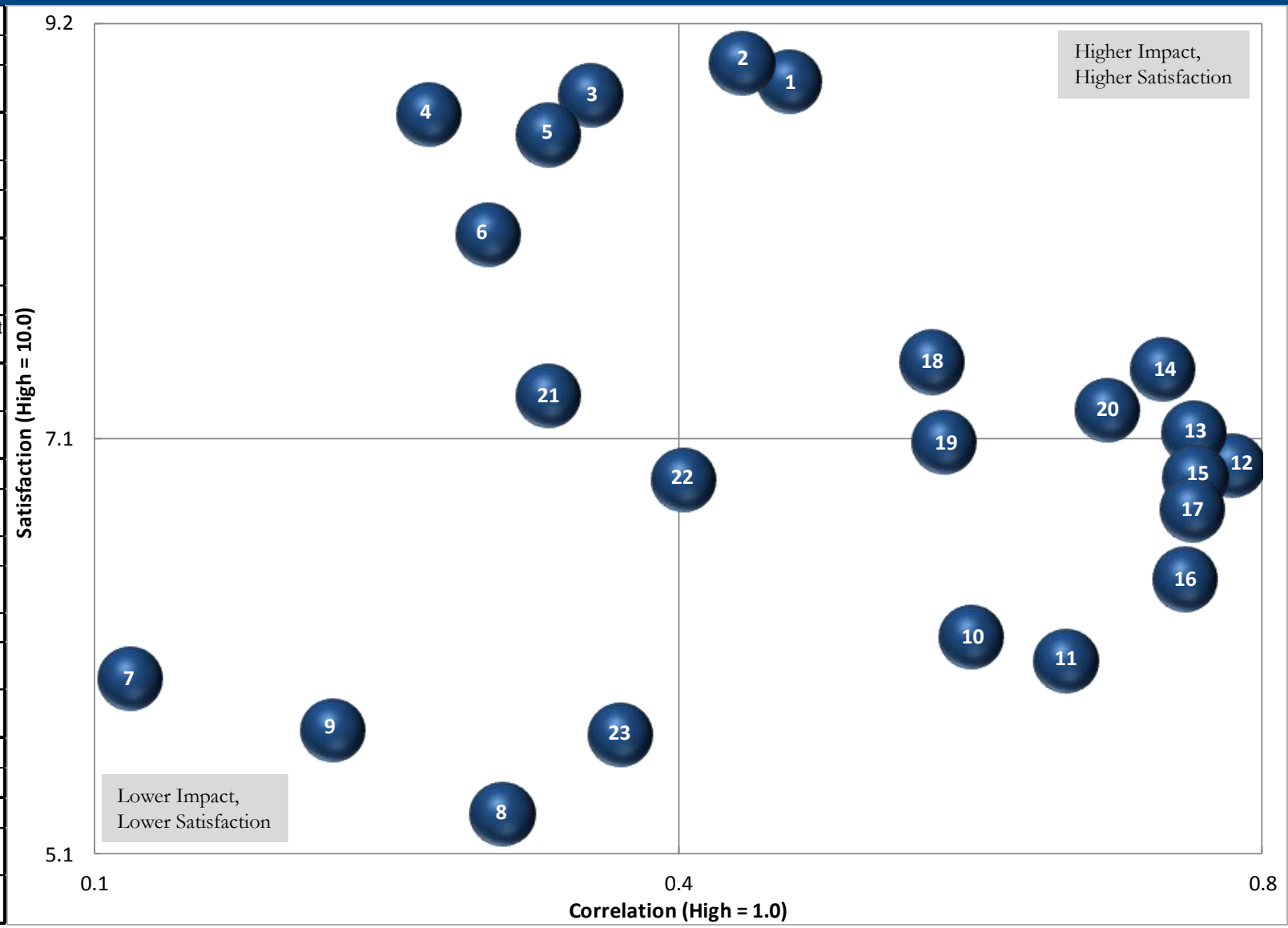


Understanding the Charts:
Community Questions – Long-term Drivers



Drivers of Satisfaction:
Strategic Priorities

Fire & EMS	1. Fire coverage
	2. Response time to fires
	3. Response time to emergencies
Police	4. Respectful treatment of citizens
	5. Fair/equitable enforcement
	6. Response time to calls for service
Infrastructure	7. Public transportation options
	8. Street maintenance/repair
	9. Accommodation for bike/foot traffic
Property Taxes	10. Fairness of property appraisals
	11. Amount/quality of services for taxes paid
Township Government	12. Trustworthy leaders
	13. Efficient and organized operation
	14. Well-trained employees
	15. Communicates effectively with community
	16. Spends dollars wisely
	17. Encourages citizen ideas and involvement
	18. Maintains website that meets needs
Econ-omy	19. Affordability of housing
	20. Stability of property values
Telecomm	21. Cell phone reception
	22. Speed of your internet conneciton
	23. Variety of internet access options



Drivers of Satisfaction:
Strategic Priorities Compared to 2013

Fire & EMS	1. Fire coverage
	2. Response time to fires
	3. Response time to emergencies
Police	4. Respectful treatment of citizens
	5. Fair/equitable enforcement
	6. Response time to calls for service
Infrastructure	7. Public transportation options
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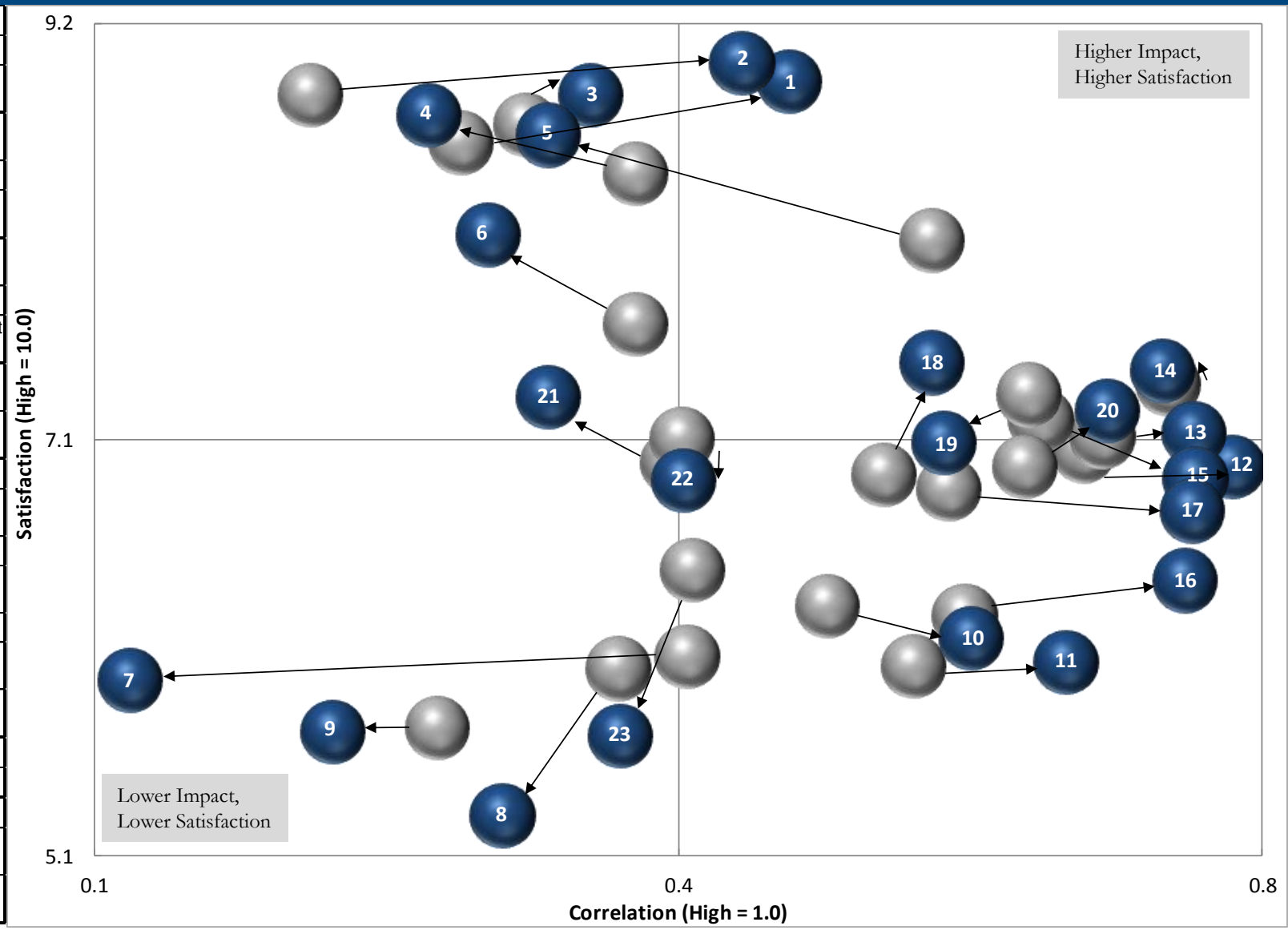
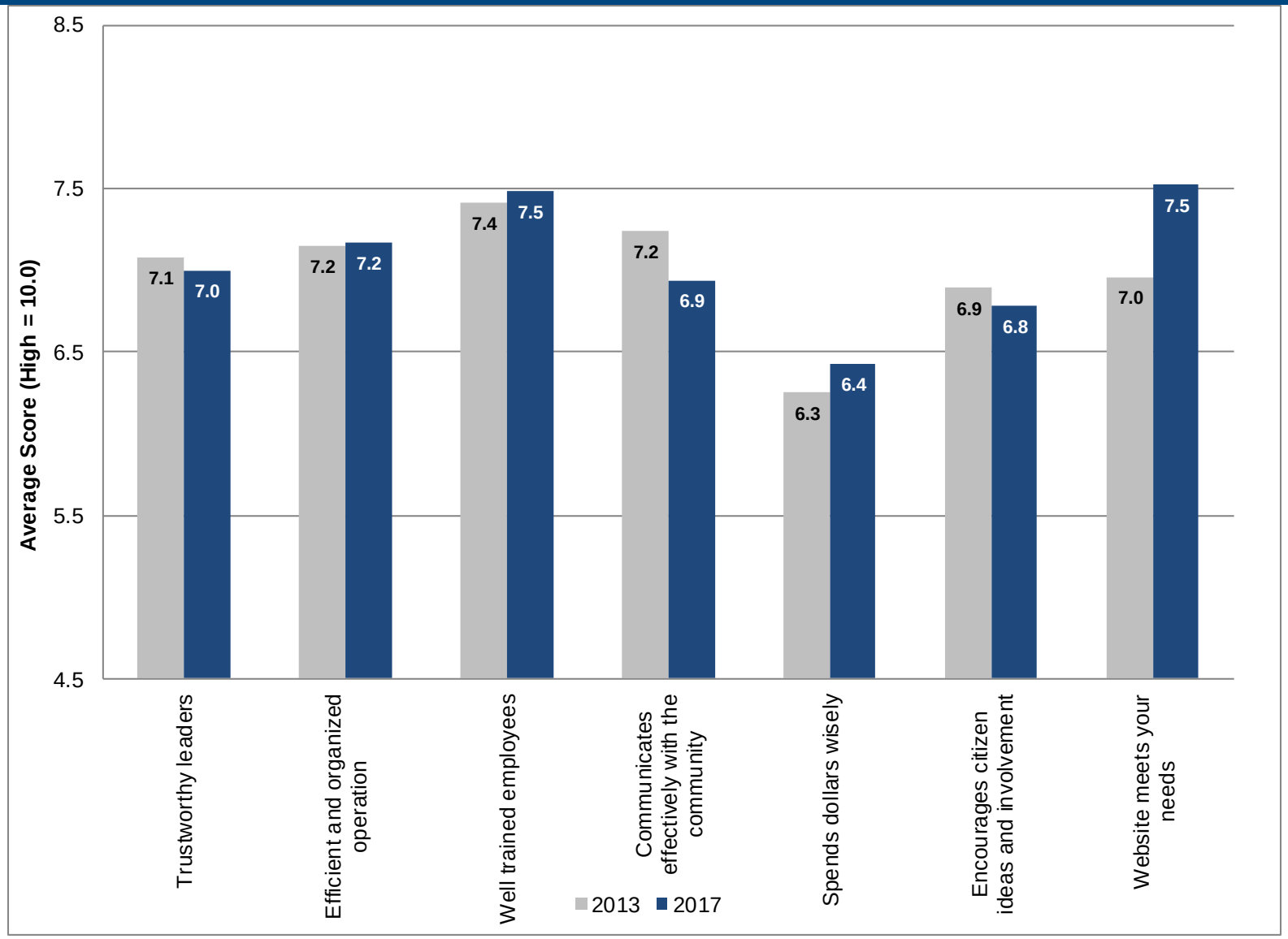
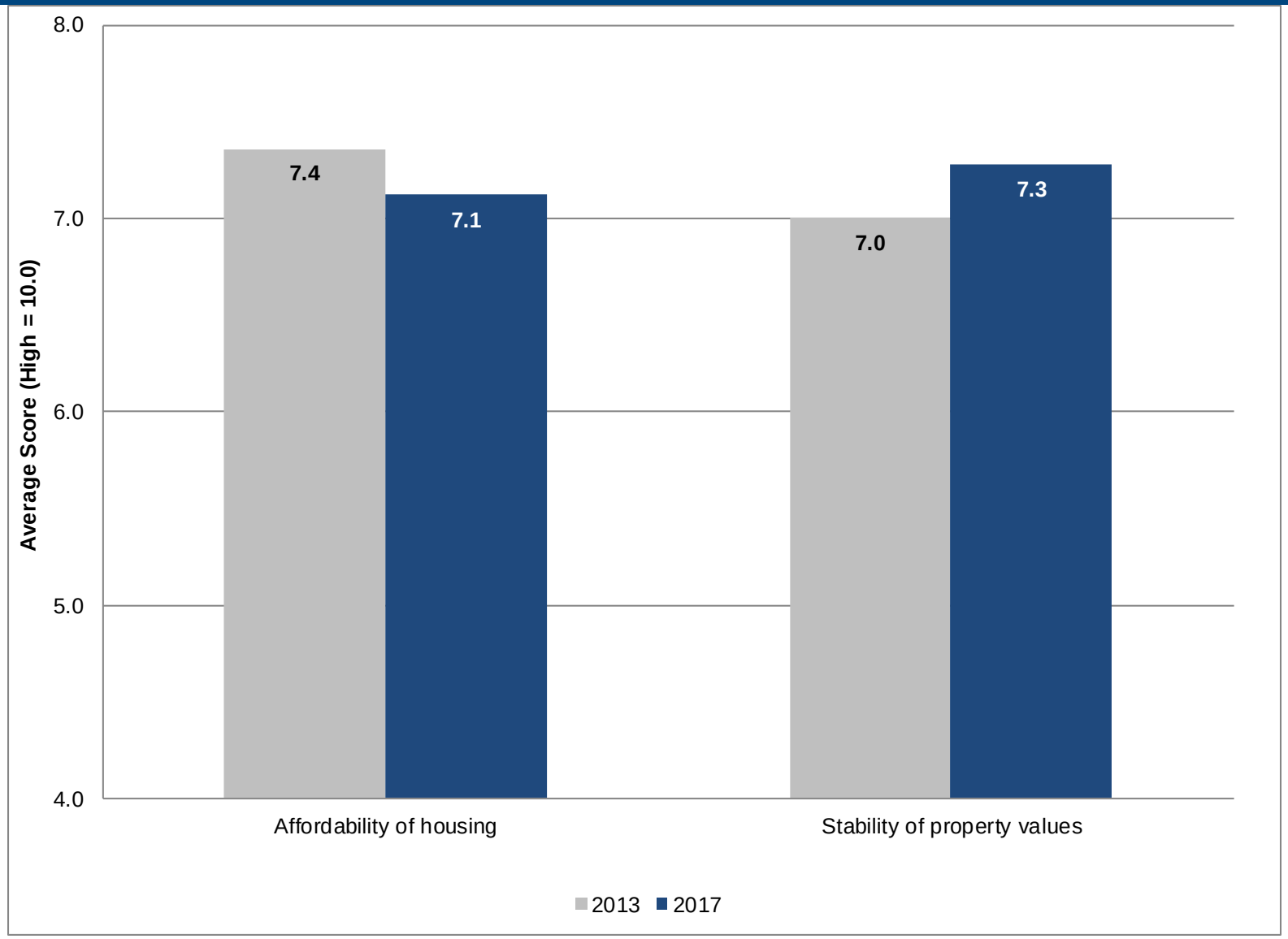


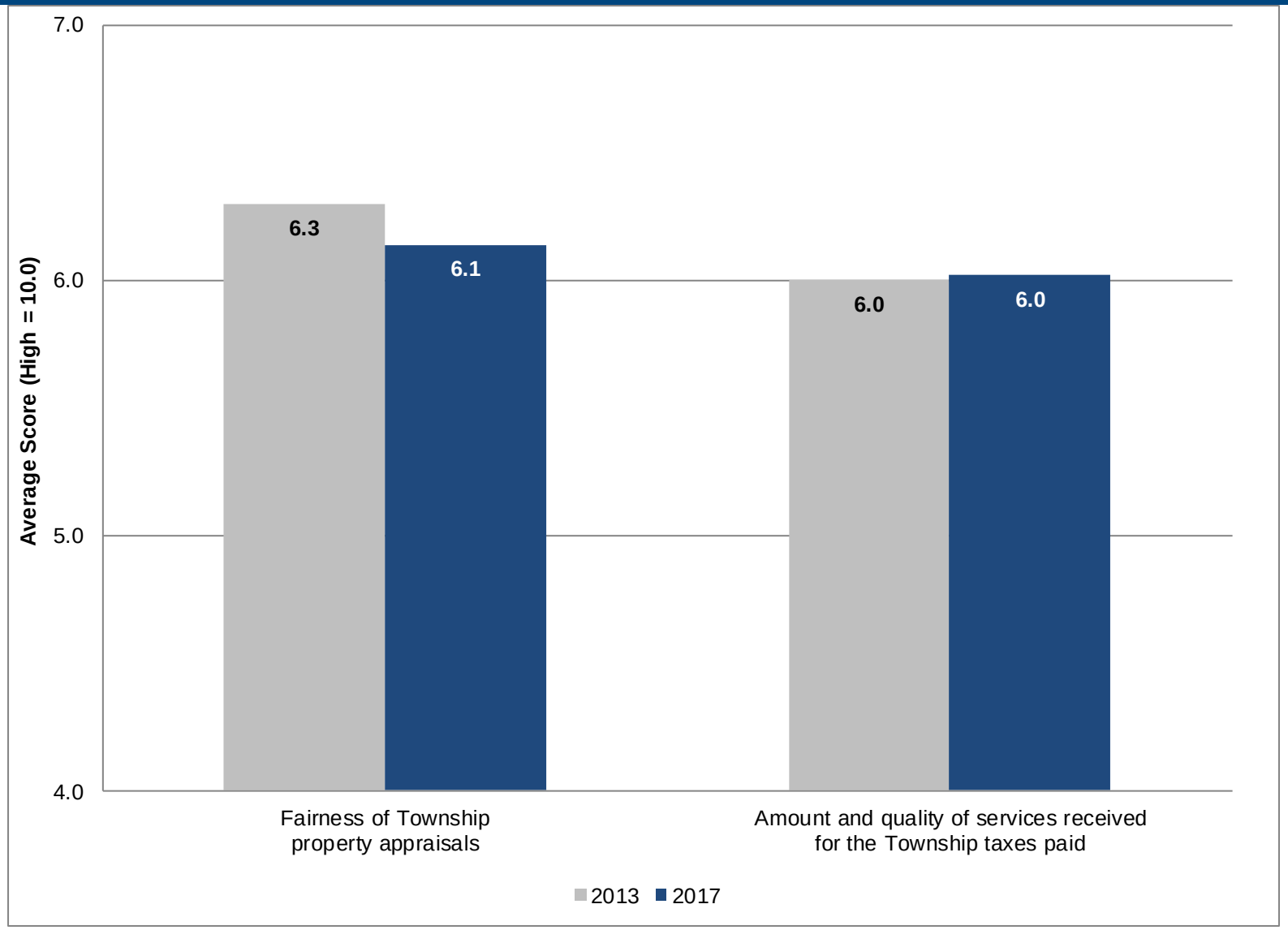
Drivers of Satisfaction:
Township Government Management



Drivers of Satisfaction:
Economic Health

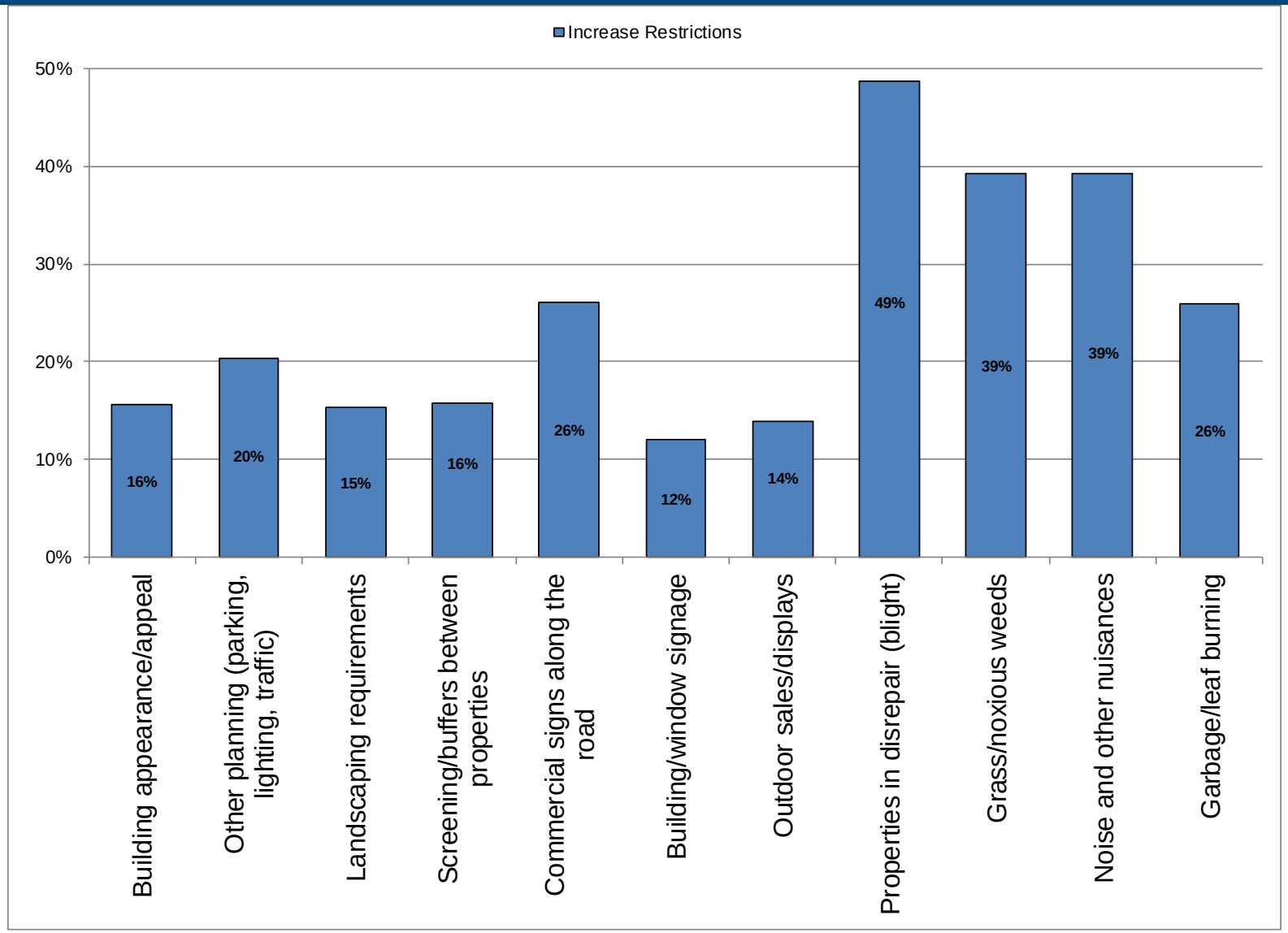


Drivers of Satisfaction:
Property Taxes

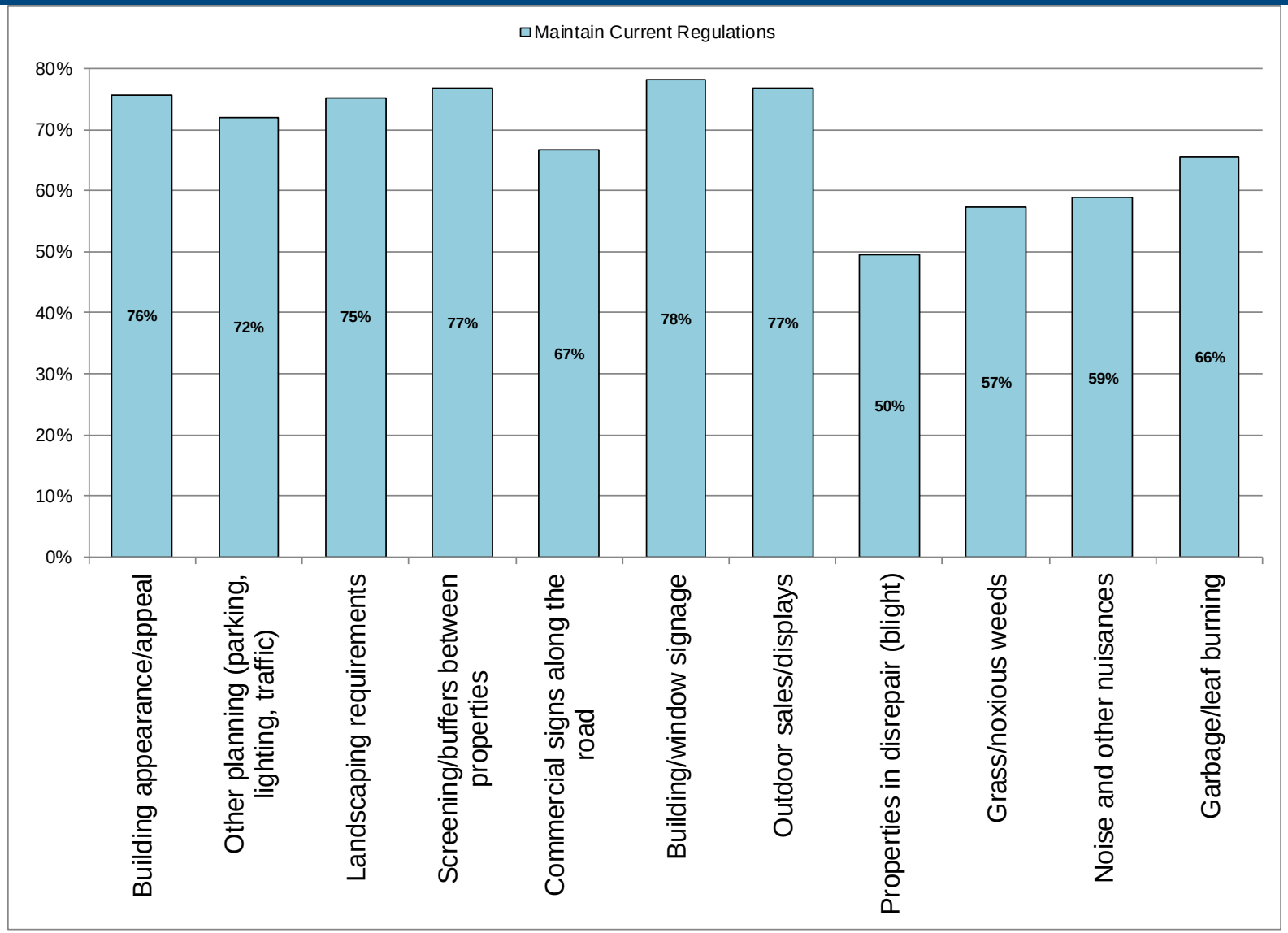


Planning and Zoning

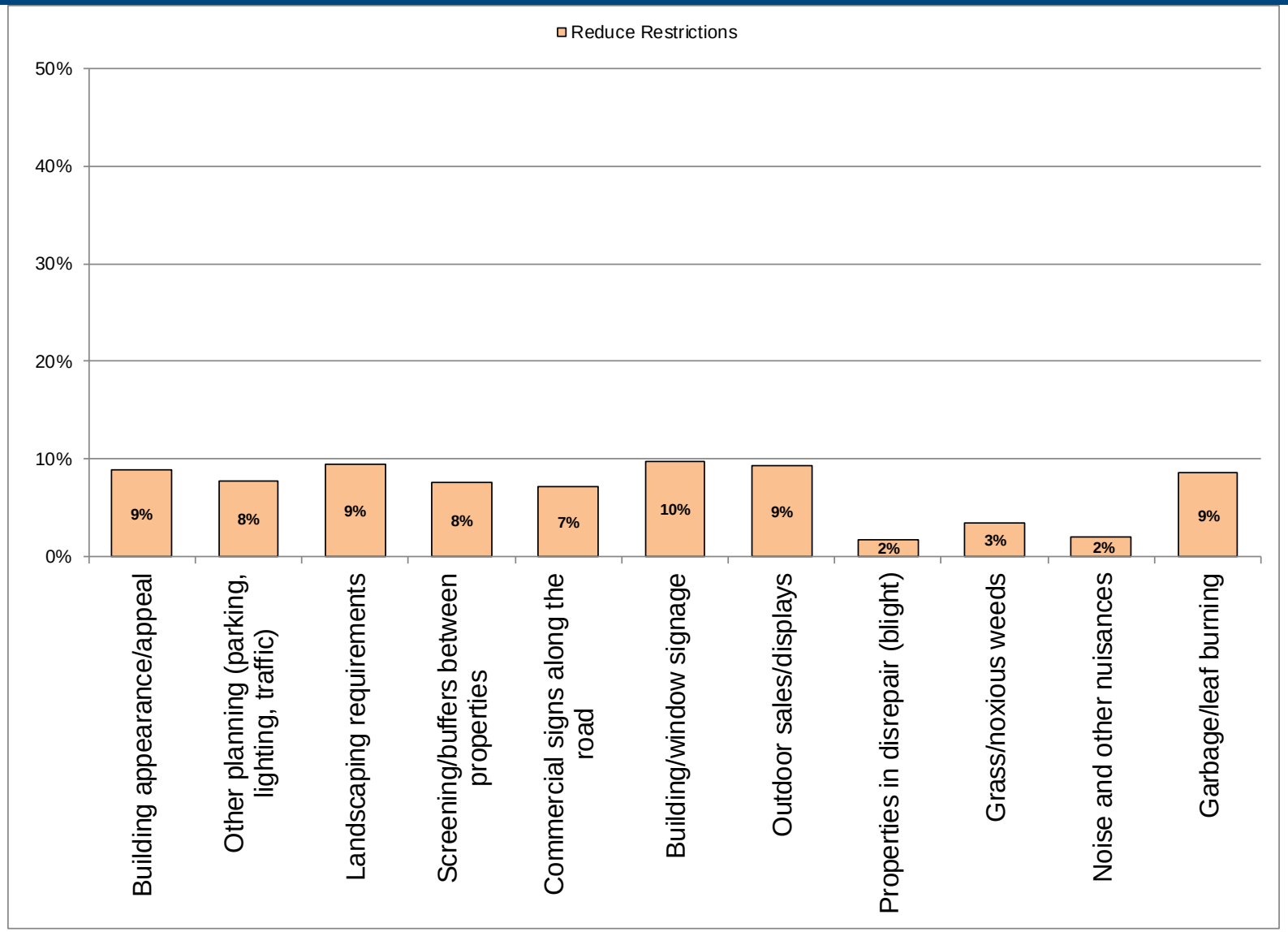
Planning & Zoning: Increase Restrictions



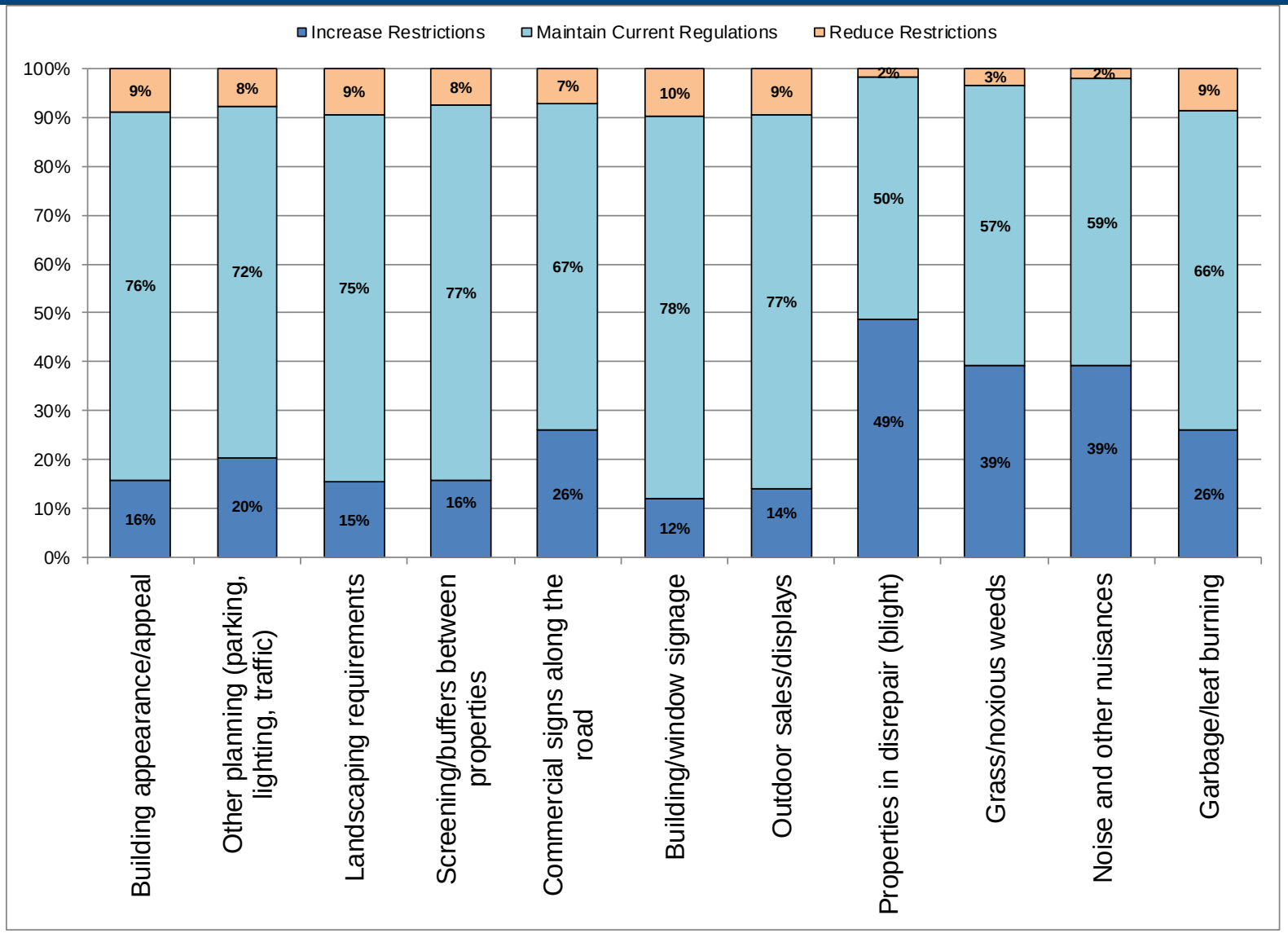
Planning & Zoning: Maintain Current Regulations



Planning & Zoning: Reduce Restrictions



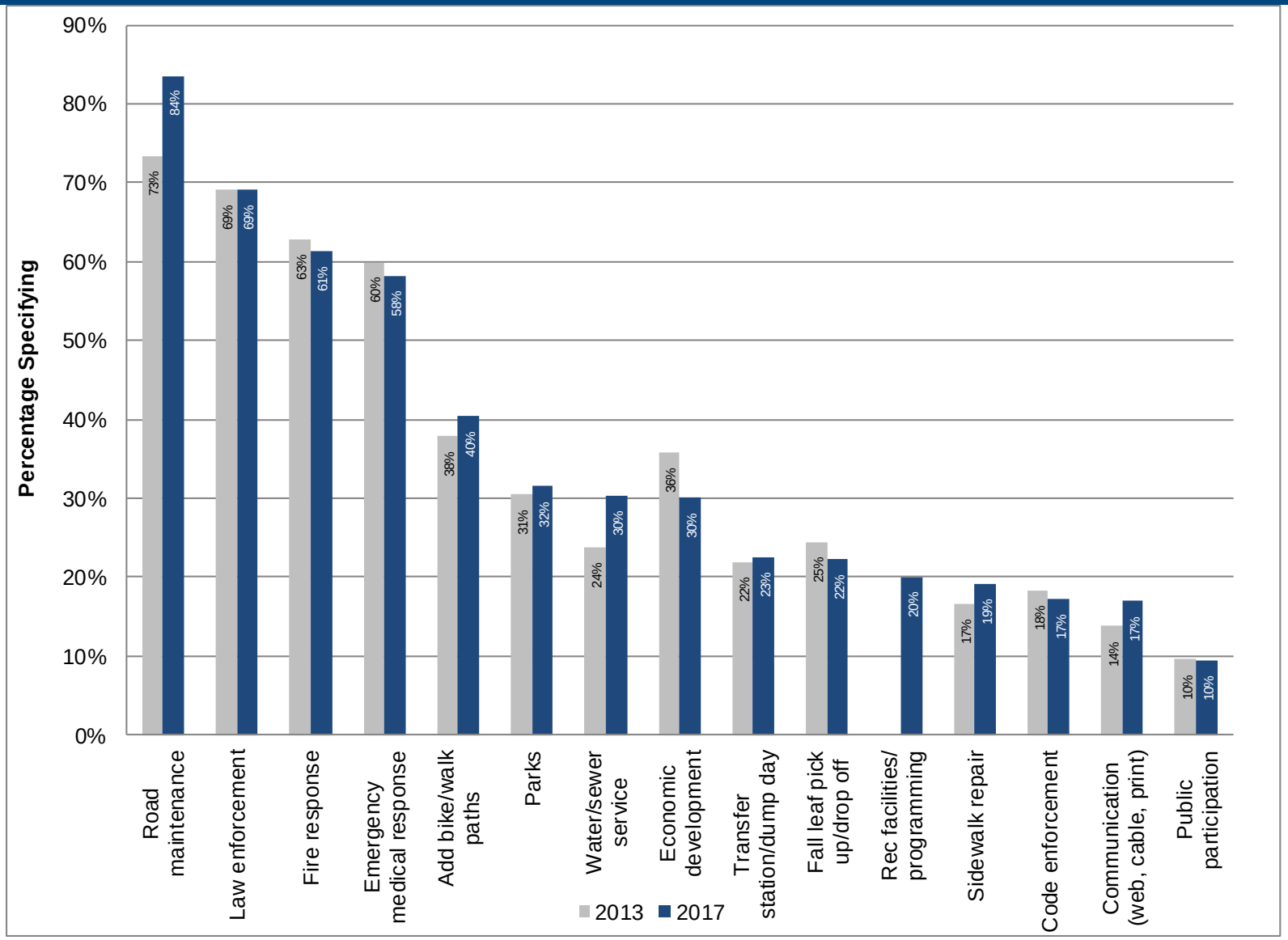
Planning & Zoning: Combined



Budget Priorities and Support

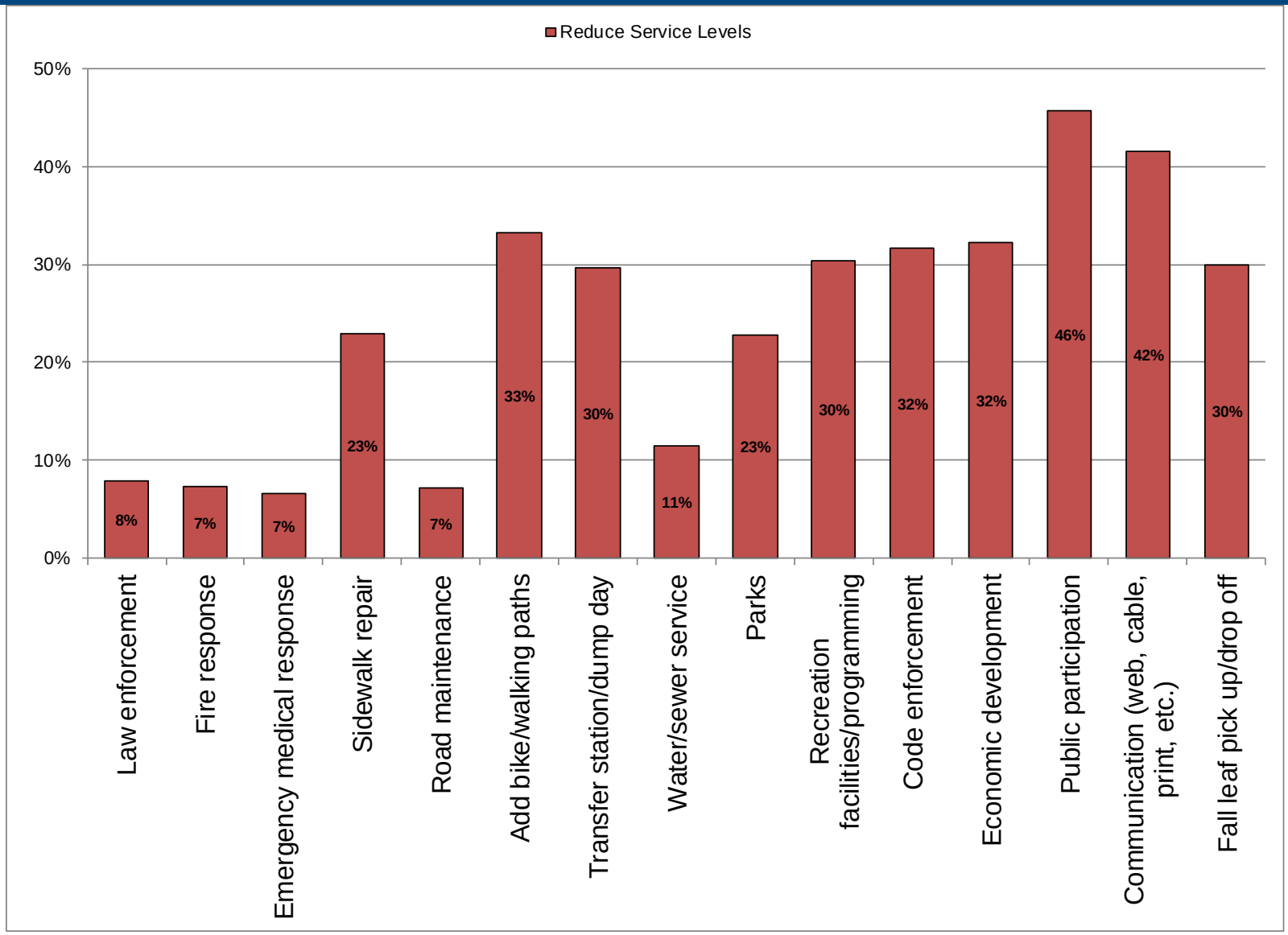
Budget Prioritization

Percent selecting, could select top (7) for prioritization



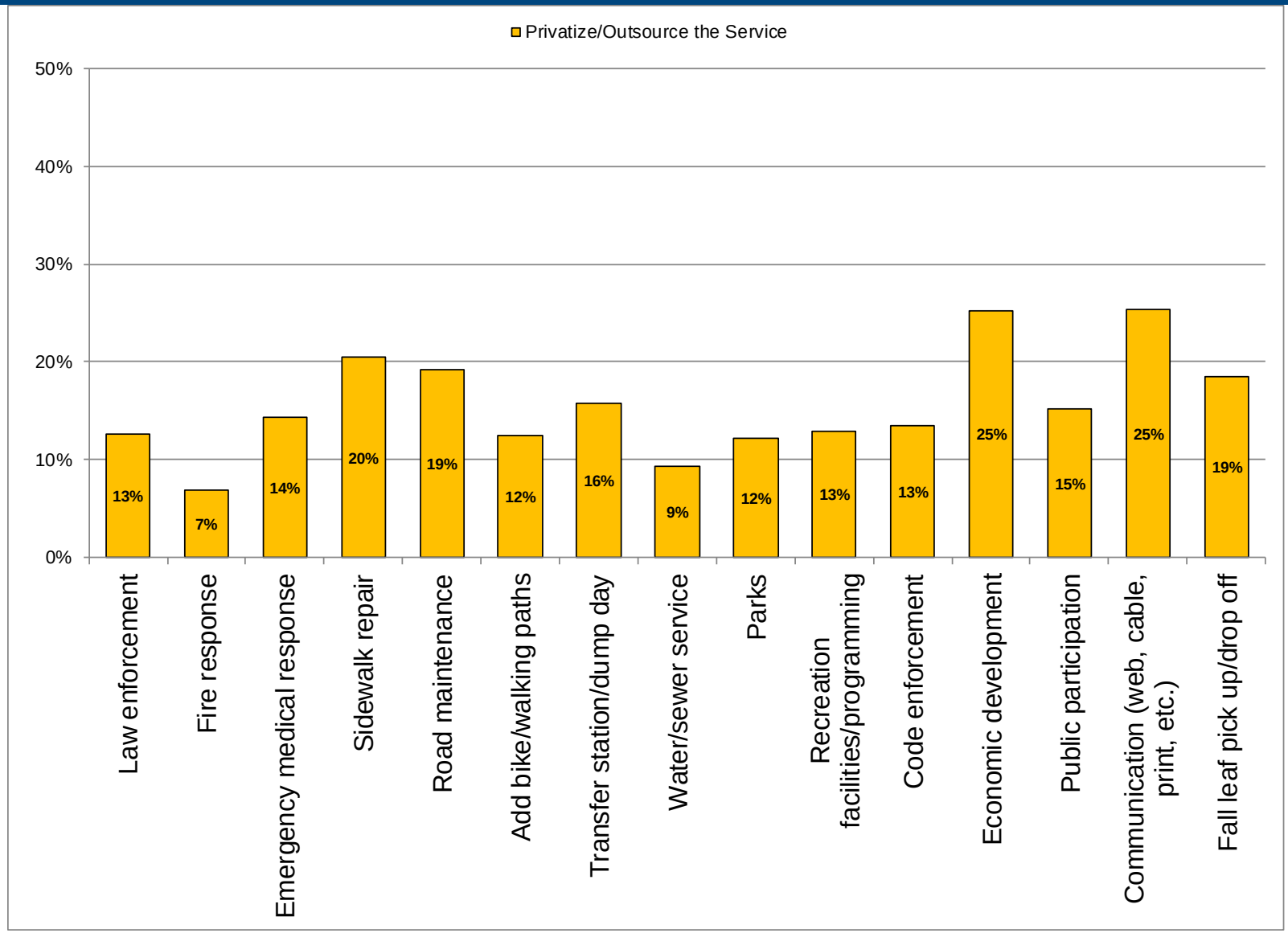
Support for Budget Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Levels:

Reduce Service Levels



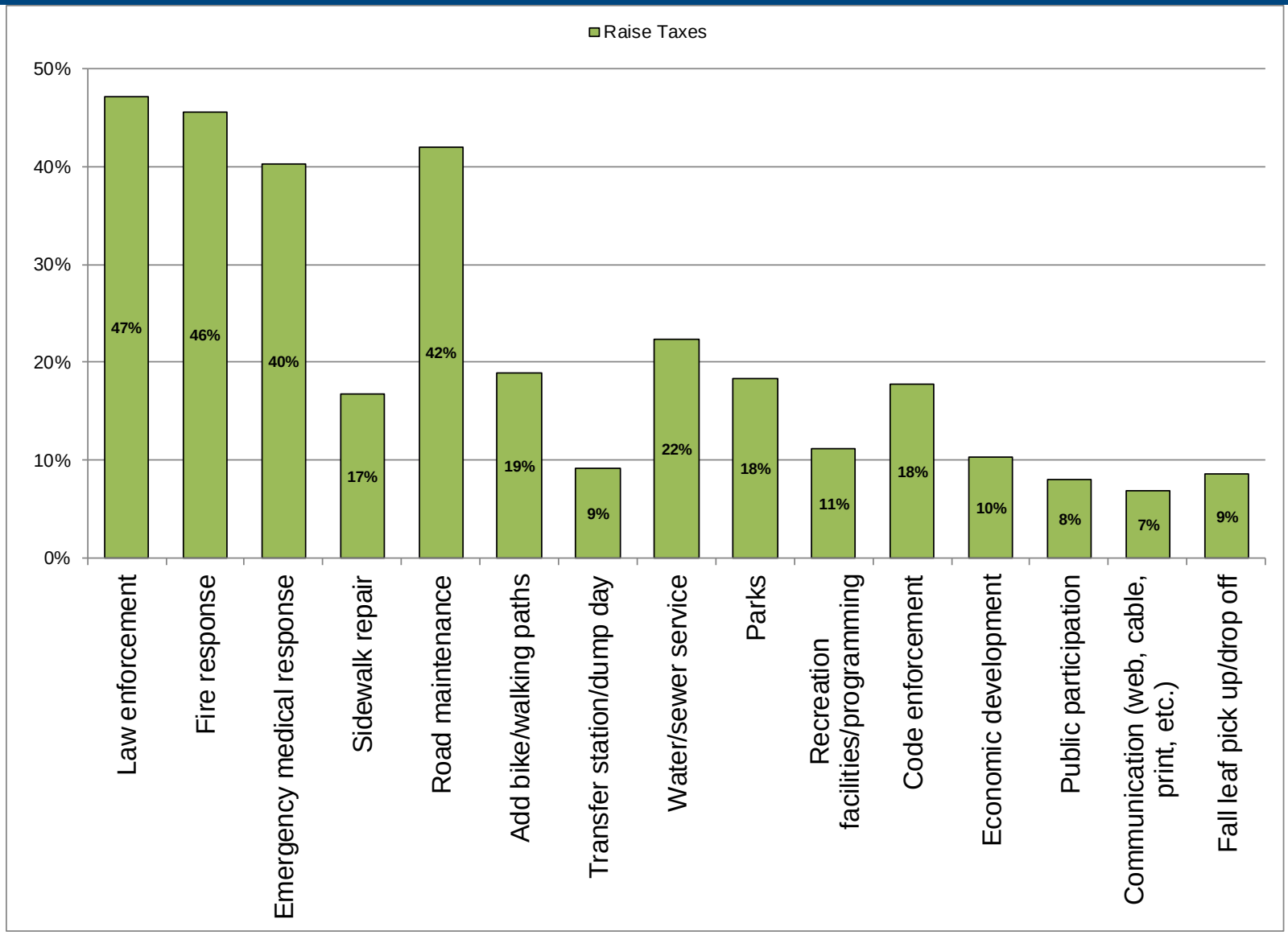
Support for Budget Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Levels:

Privatize/Outsource the Service



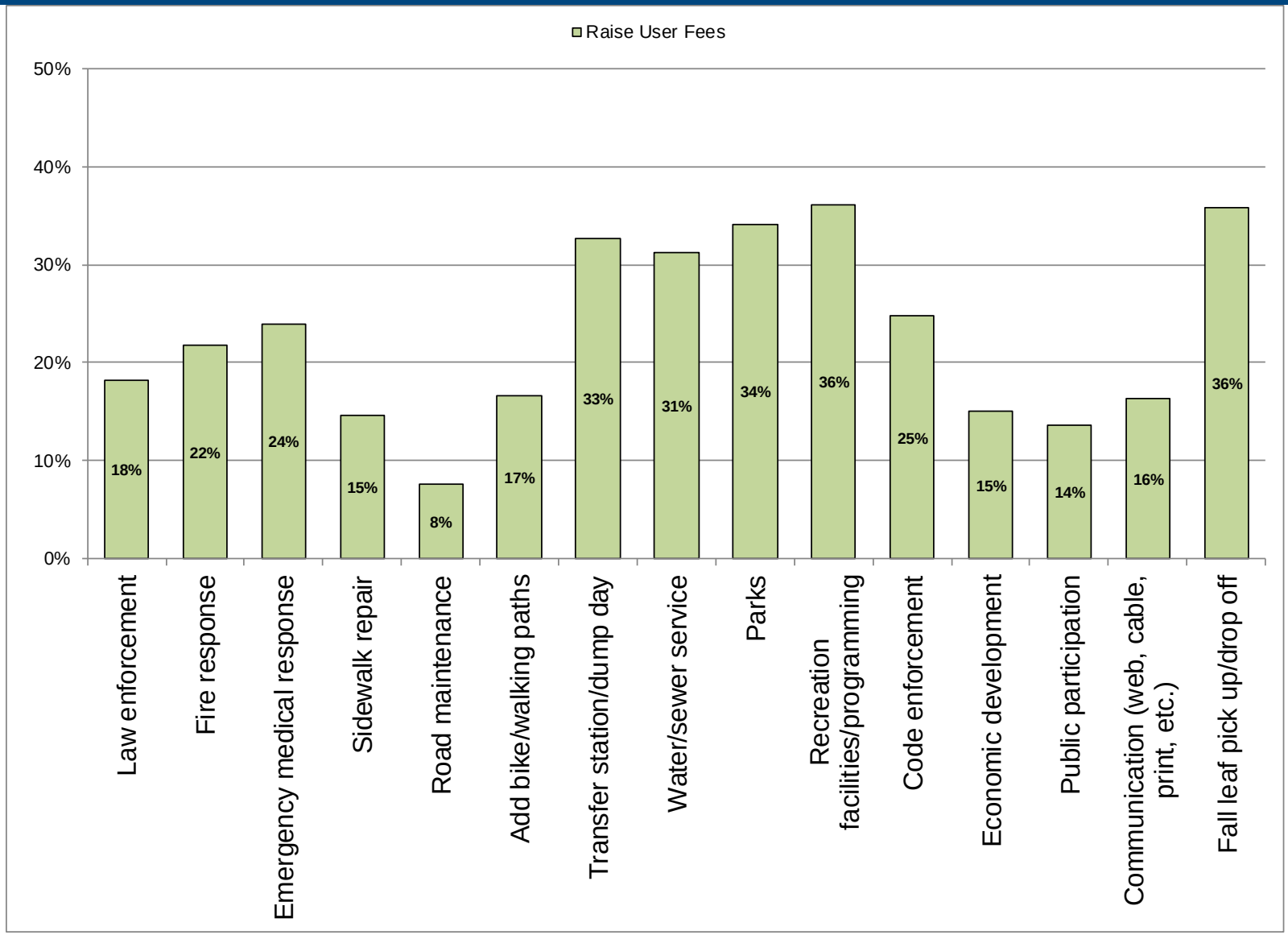
Support for Budget Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Levels:

Raise Taxes



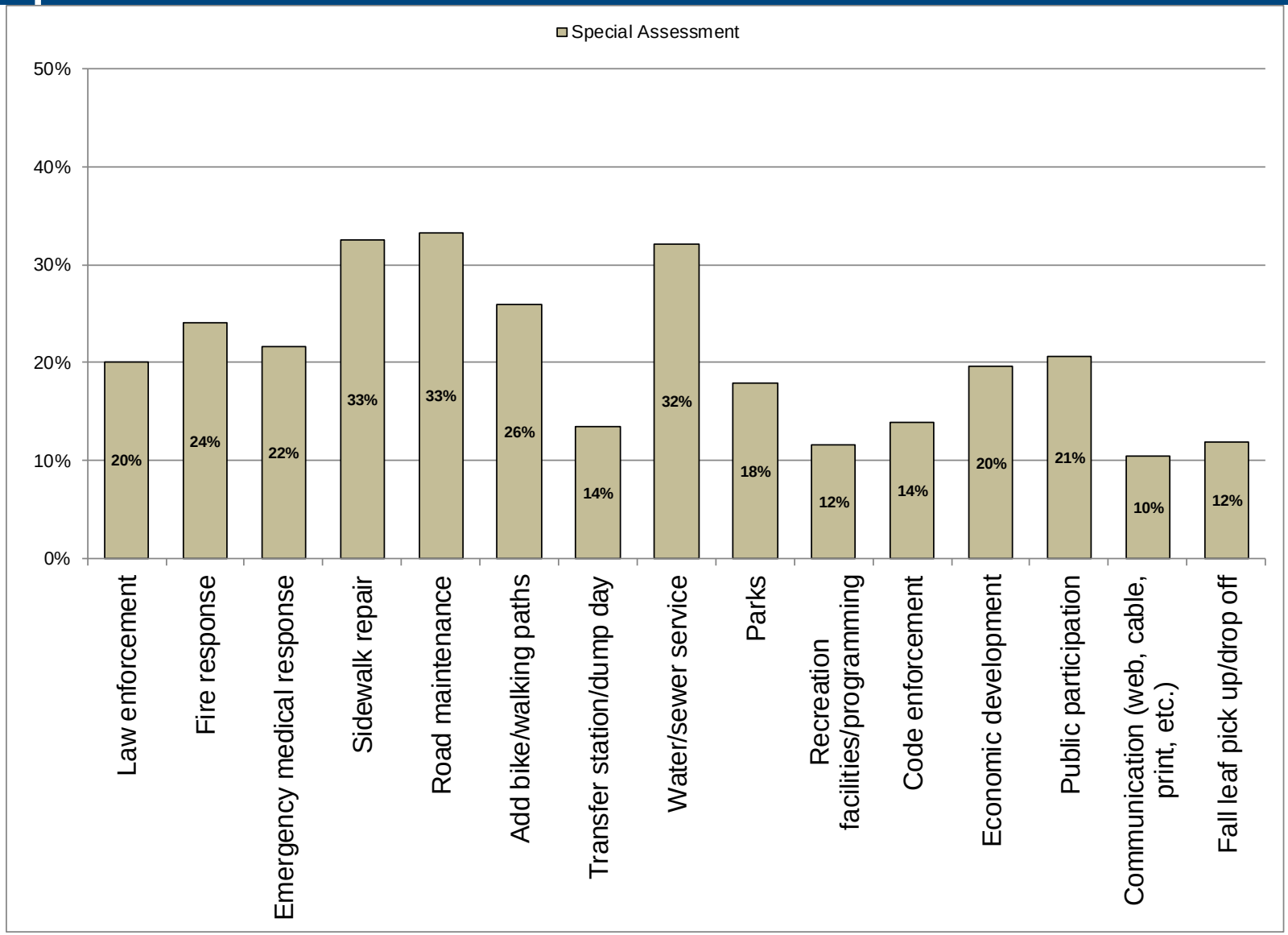
Support for Budget Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Levels:

Raise User Fees



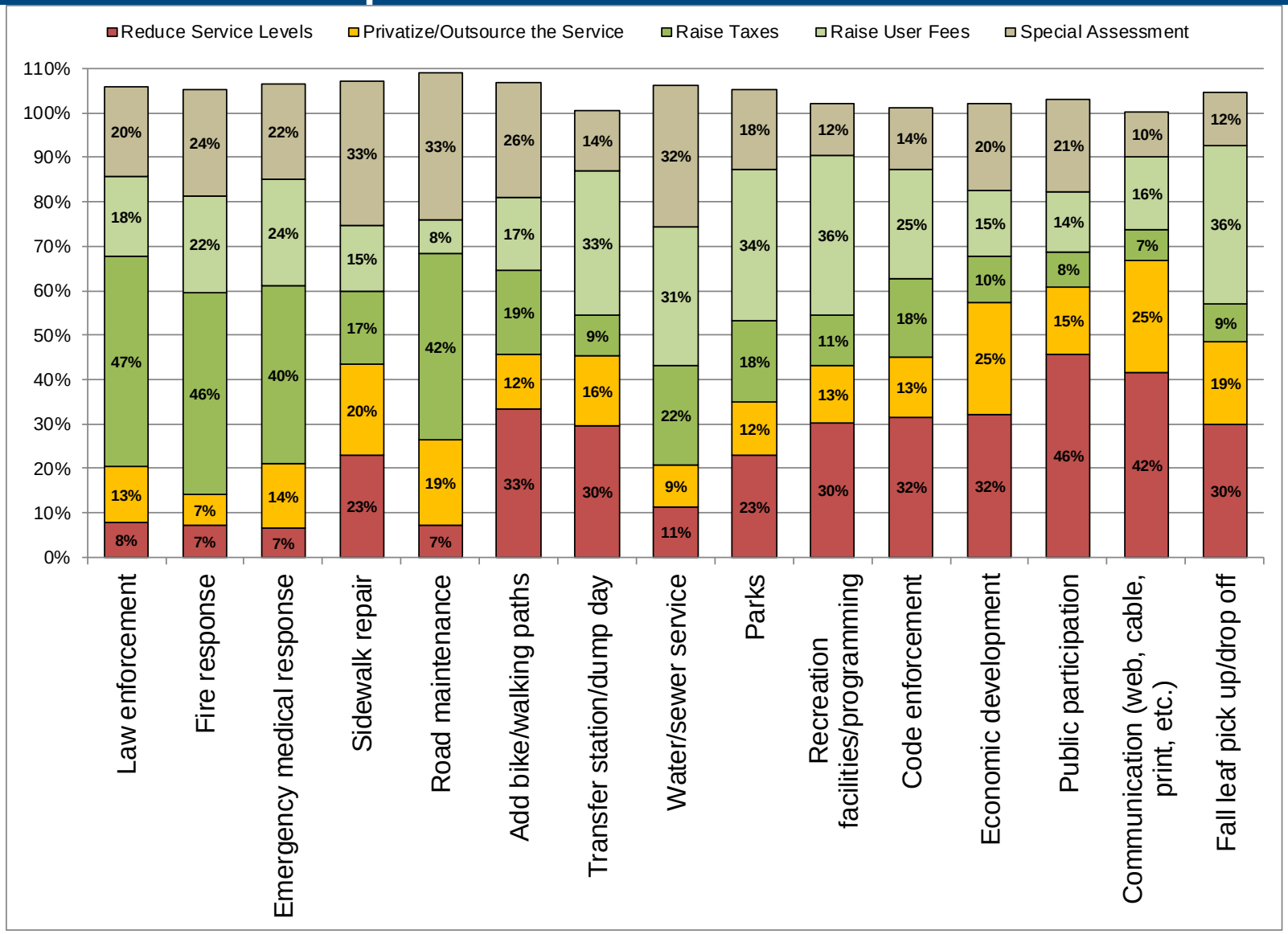
Support for Budget Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Levels:

Special Assessment

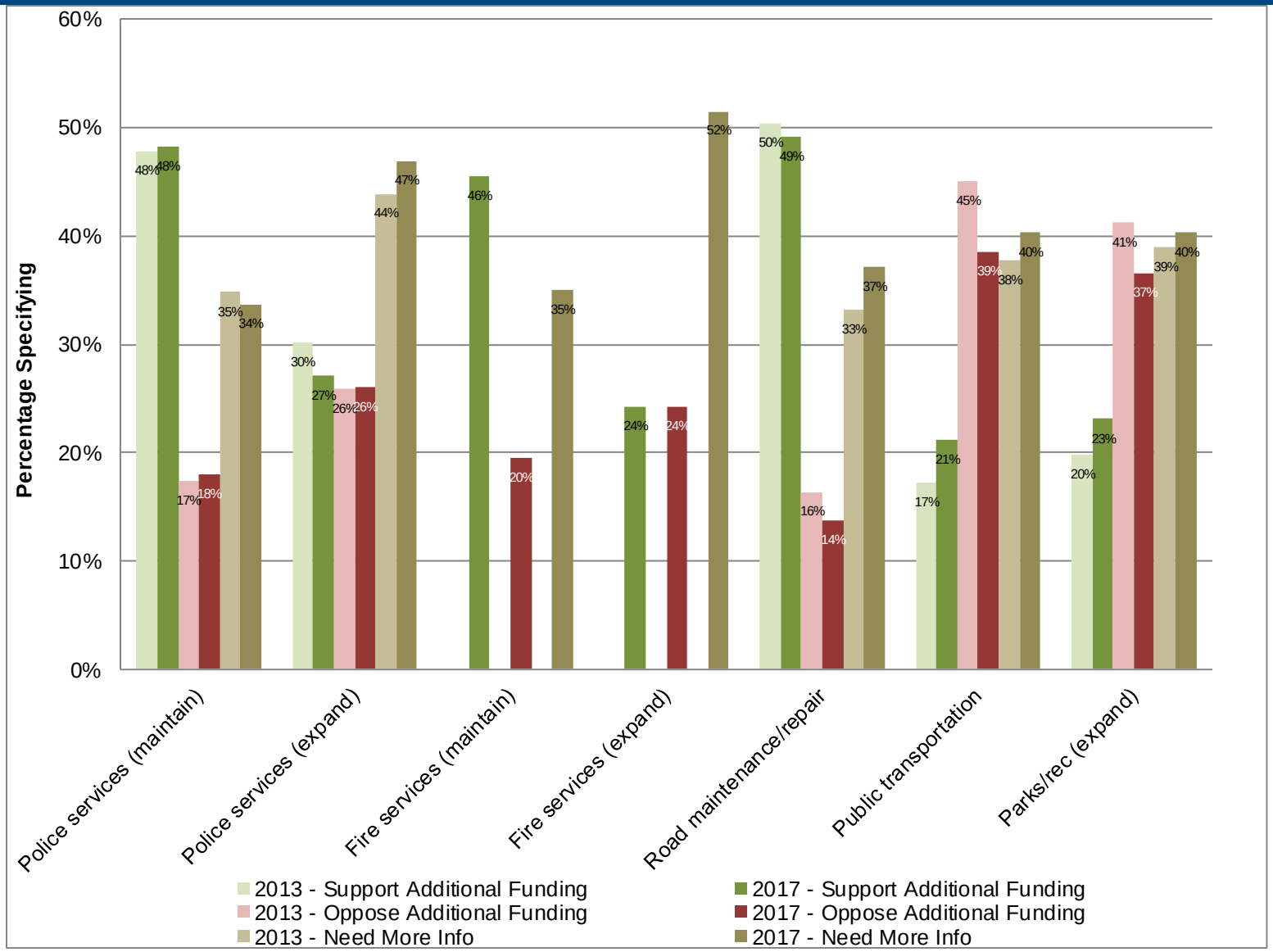


Support for Budget Actions if Revenues Not Adequate to Maintain Current Levels:

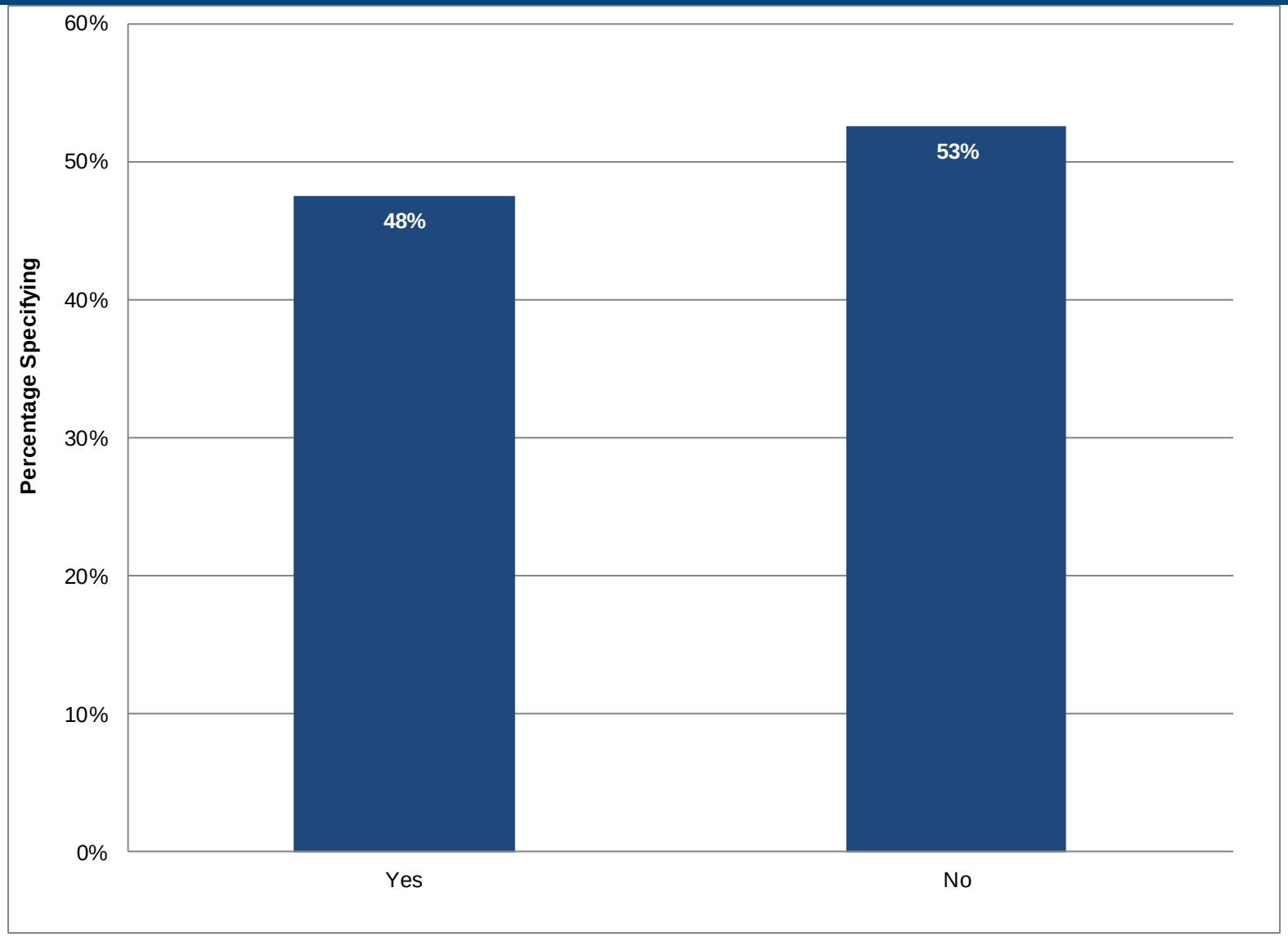
Preferred Options for All Services



Support for future services

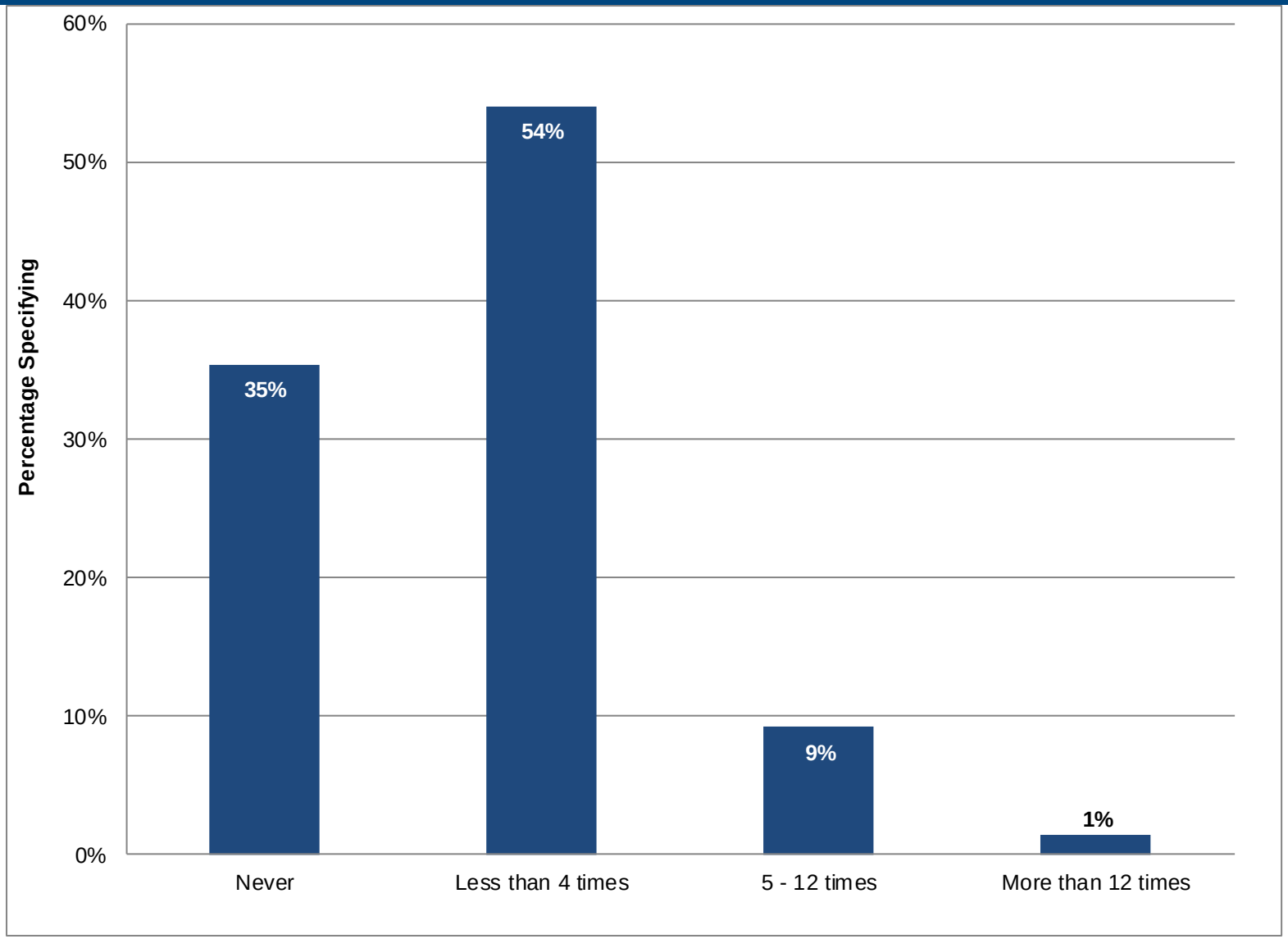


Support for Township-wide contract with 1 company for garbage/recycling

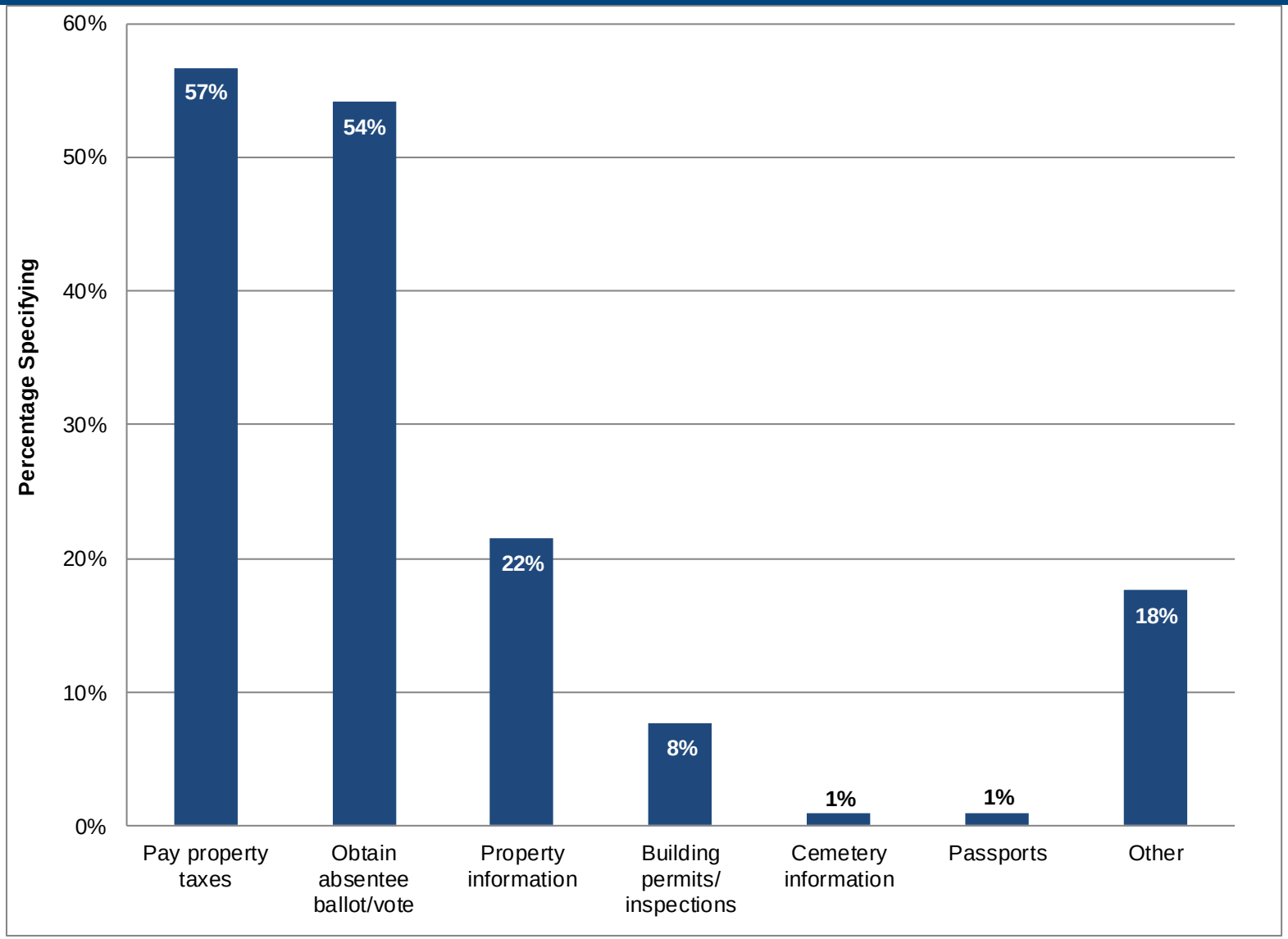


Town Hall

Frequency of visit(s) to Township offices



Reason for visit(s)



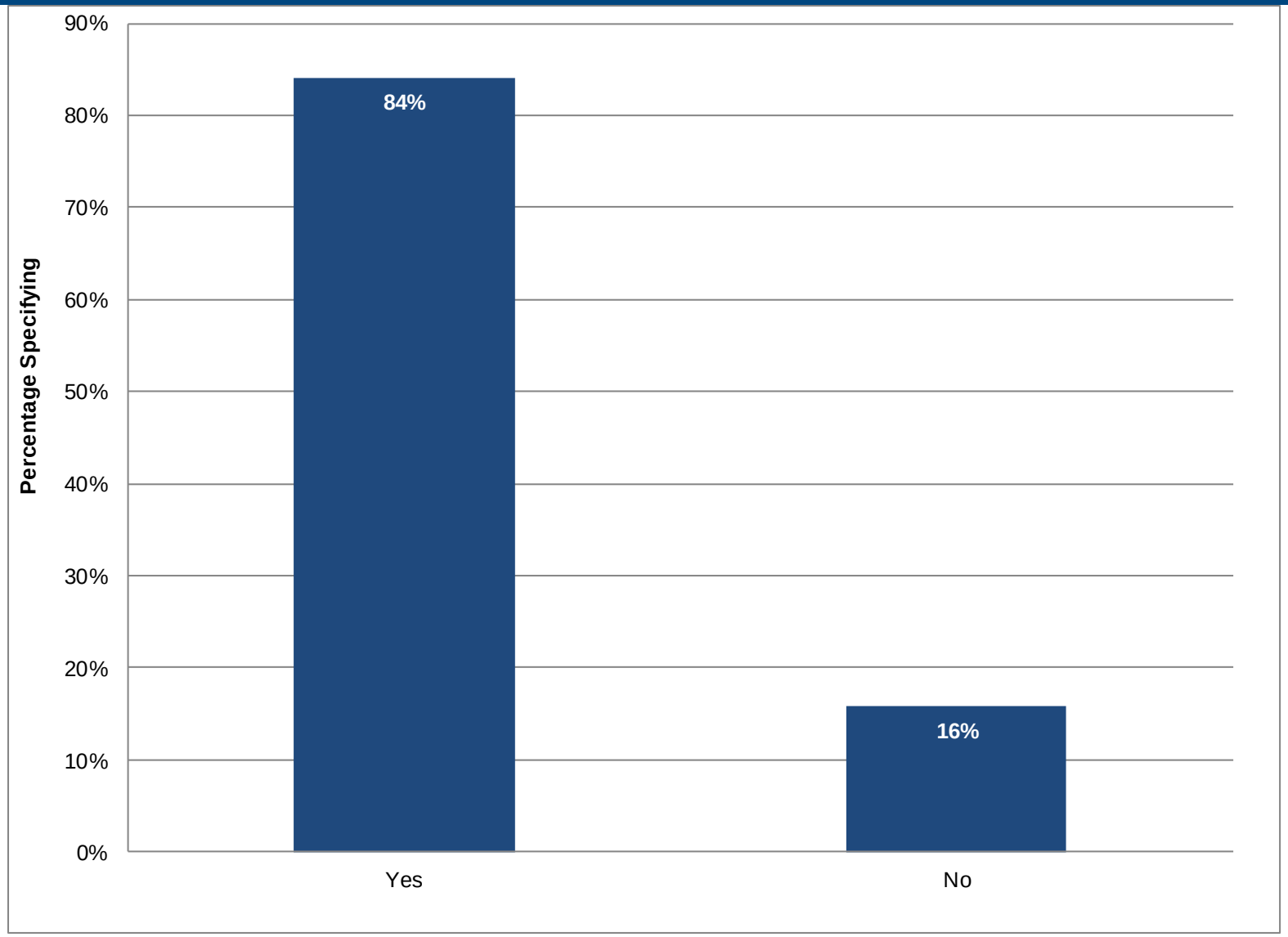
Text Cloud: What other reasons did you have for visiting the Township Office?

Top Themes:

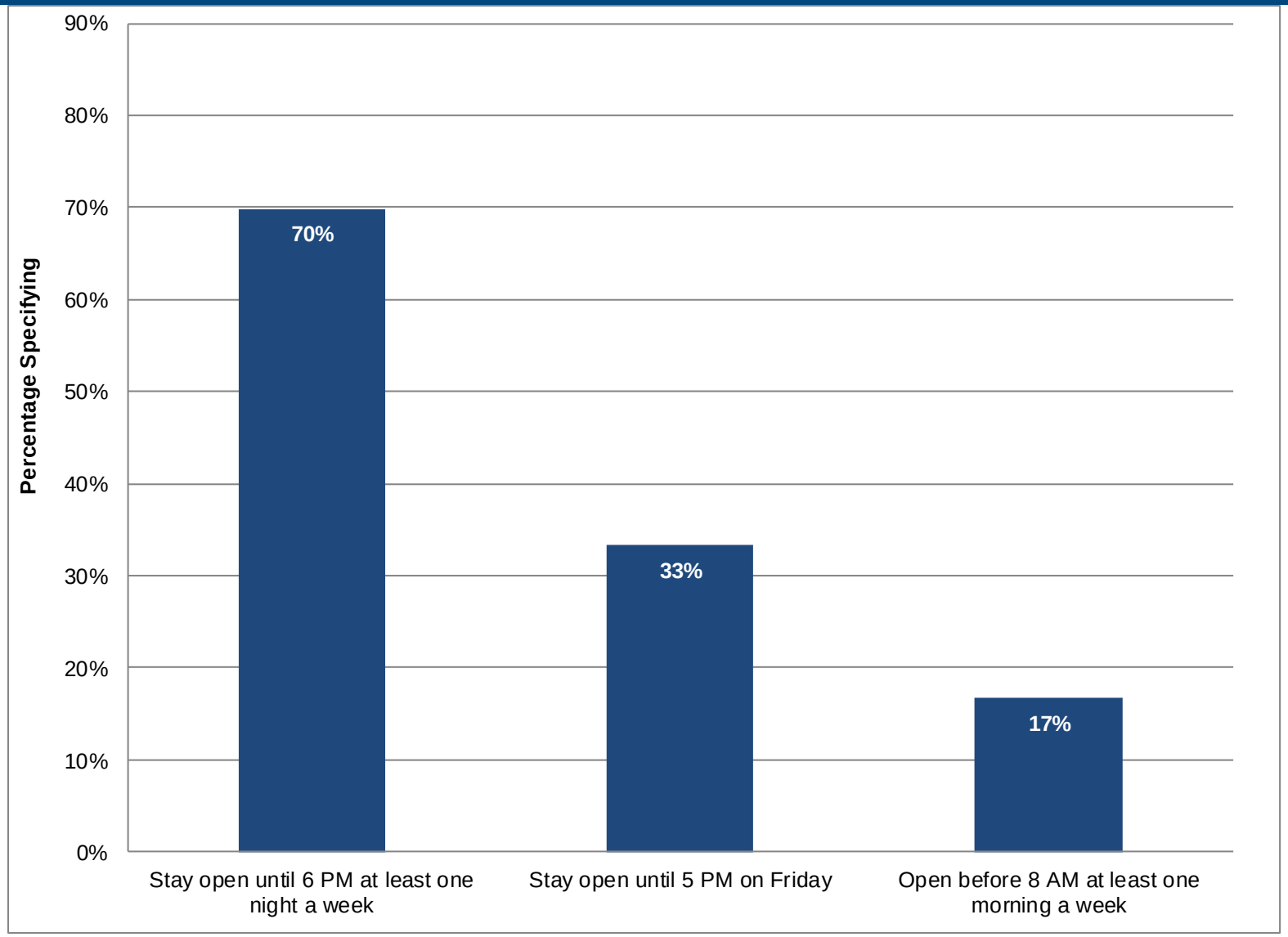
1. **Attend Township meetings**
2. **Property questions –** zoning, property taxes, dog licenses
3. **Dump day**

Note: See full list of comments for context

Do current office hours meet your needs?

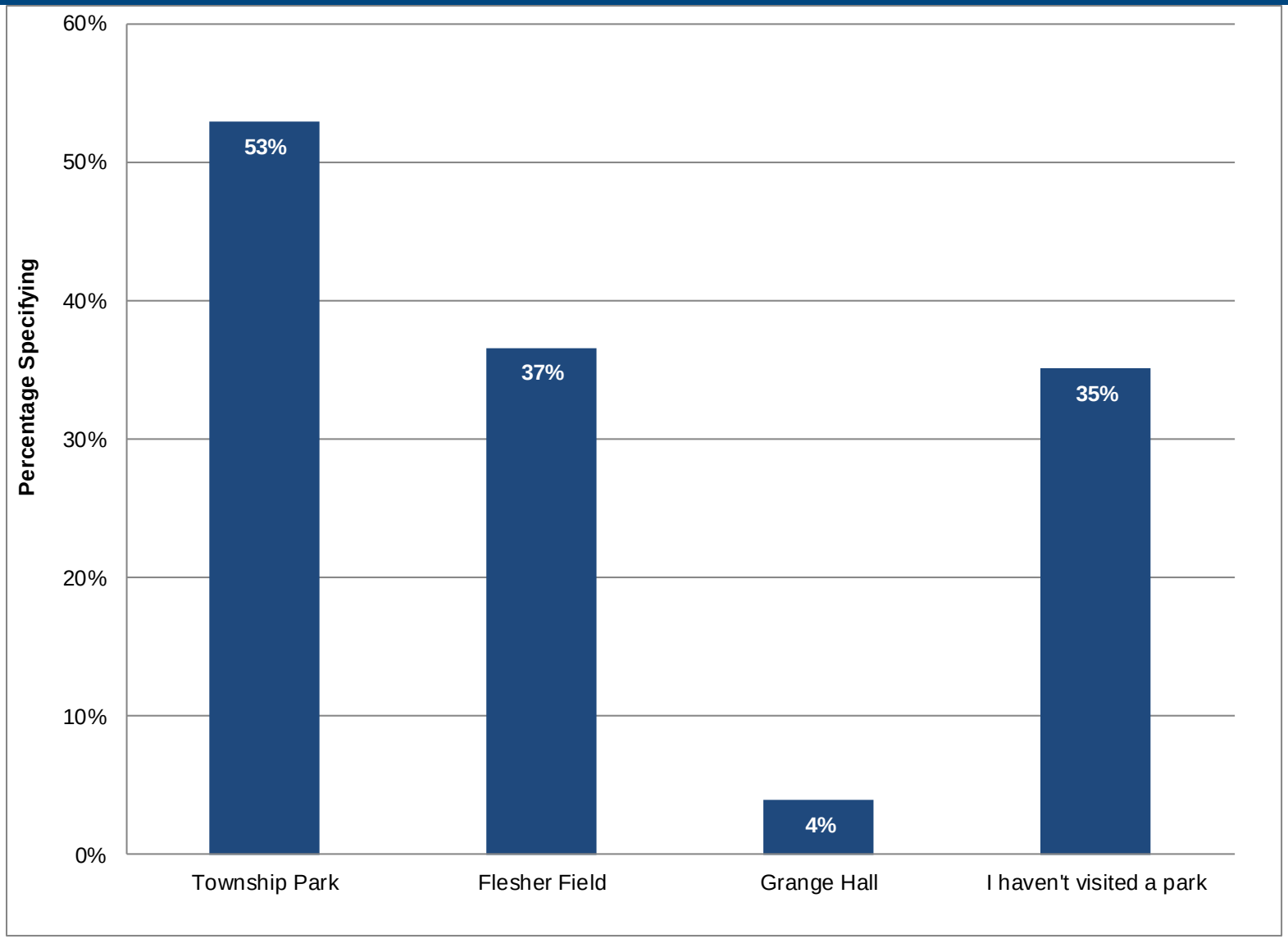


If office hours do not meet needs, which hours would you like see the offices open?

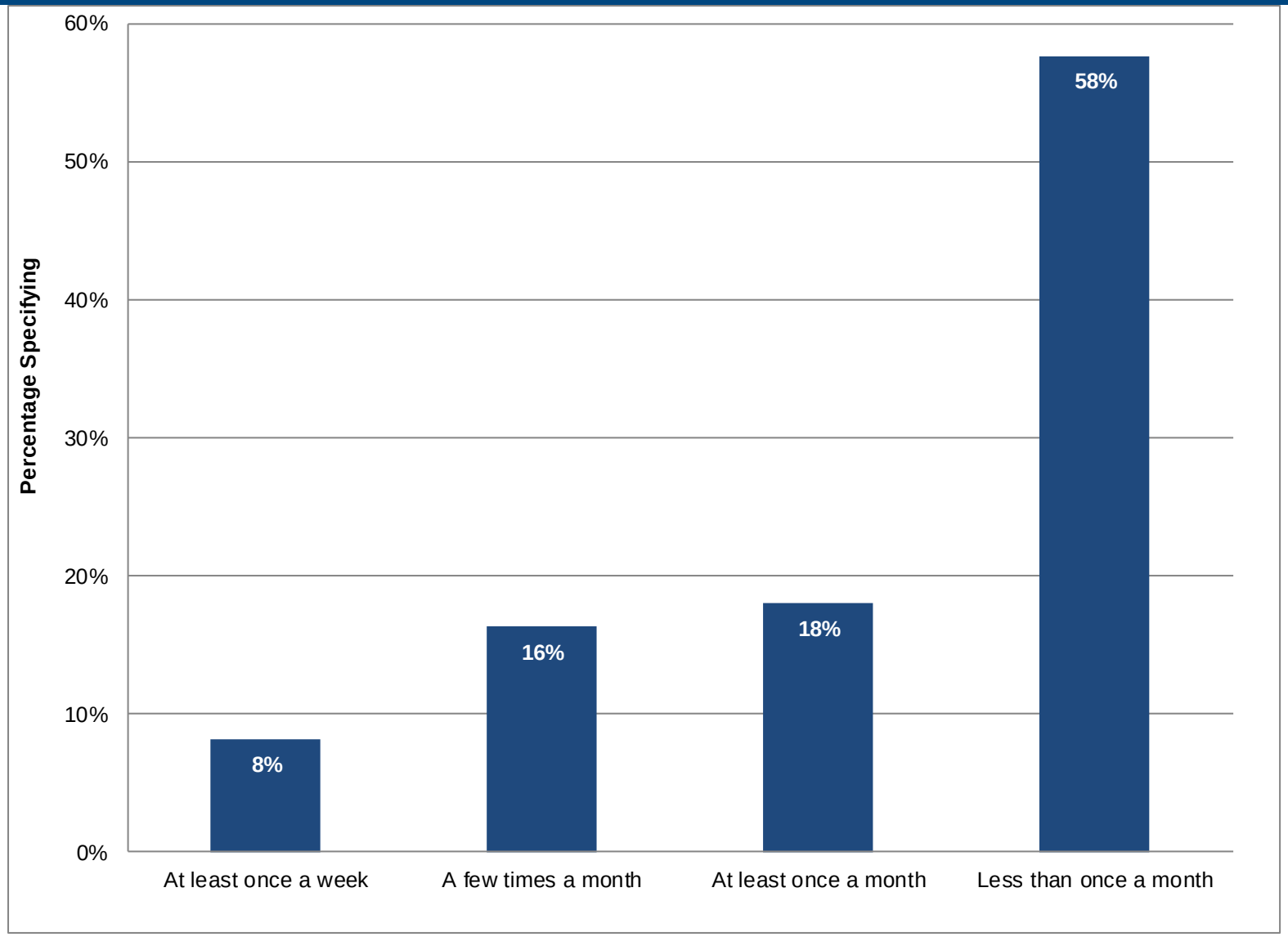


Parks and Recreation

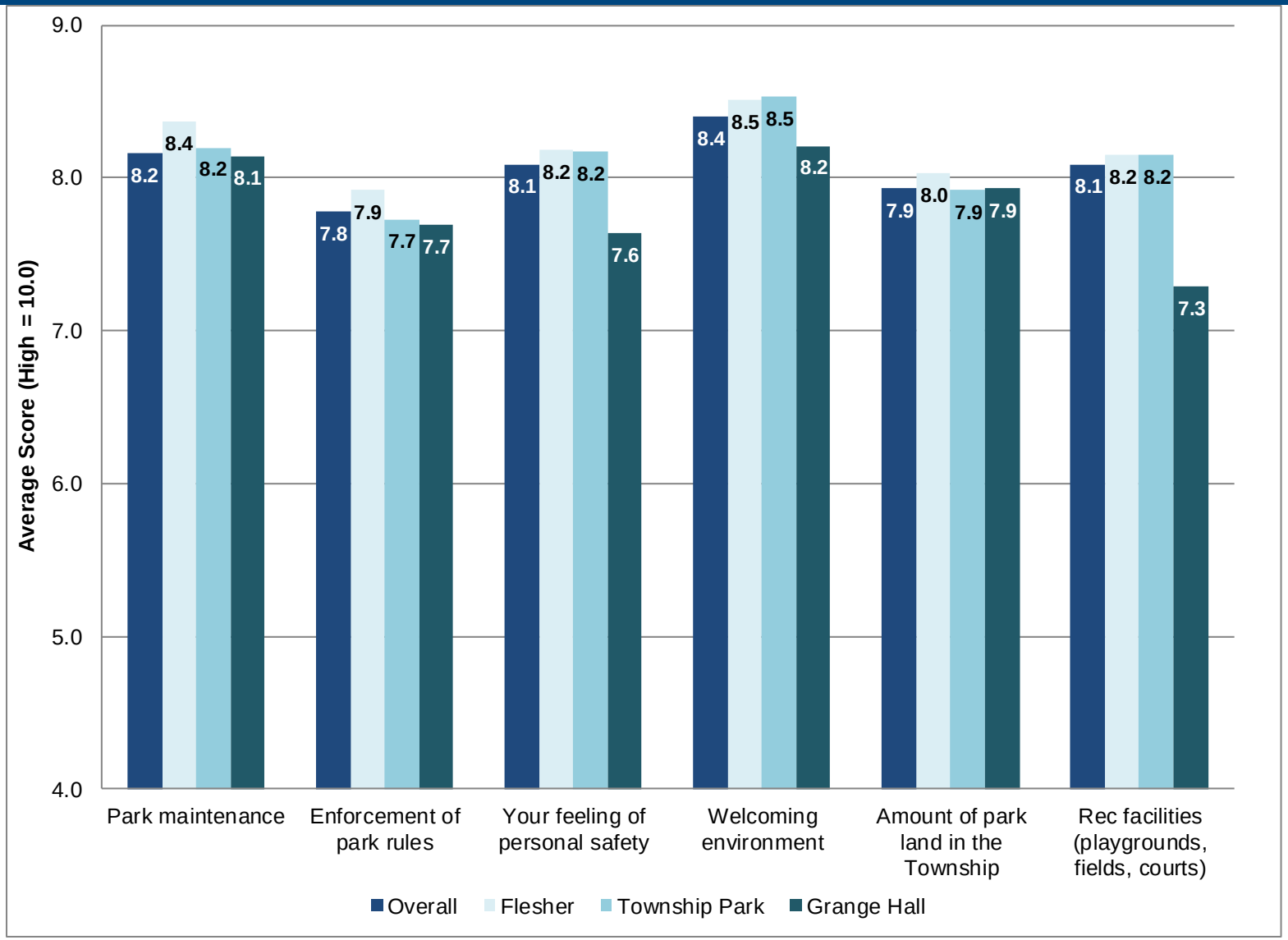
Which parks have you visited in the last 18 months?



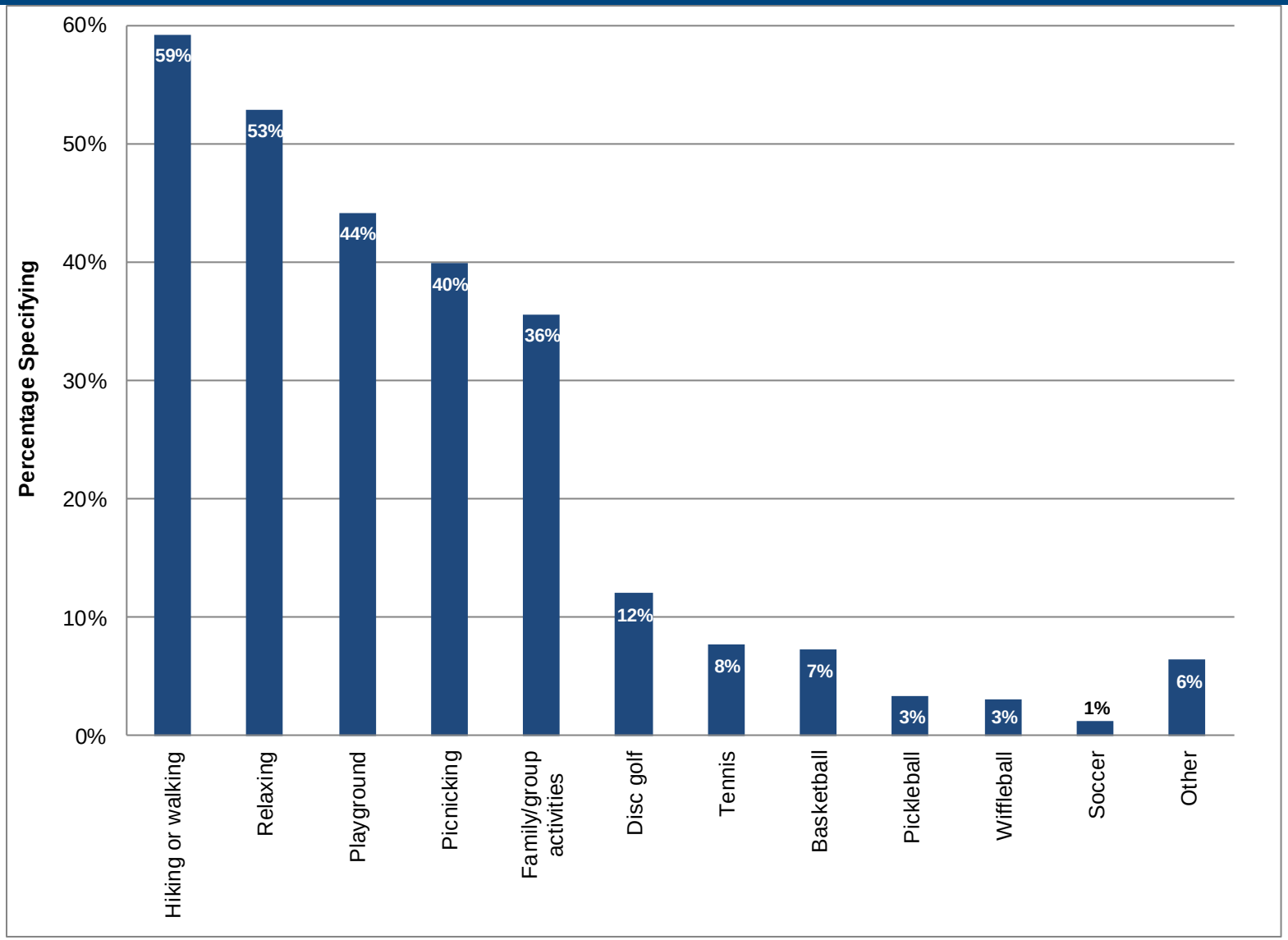
Frequency of visit(s) to parks



Satisfaction with parks



Activities at parks



Text Cloud: What other activities do you participate in while visiting the parks?

Top Themes:

1. **Dog walking**
2. **Events –** concerts, festivals, movies in the park
3. **Trails –** hiking and biking

Note: See full list of comments for context

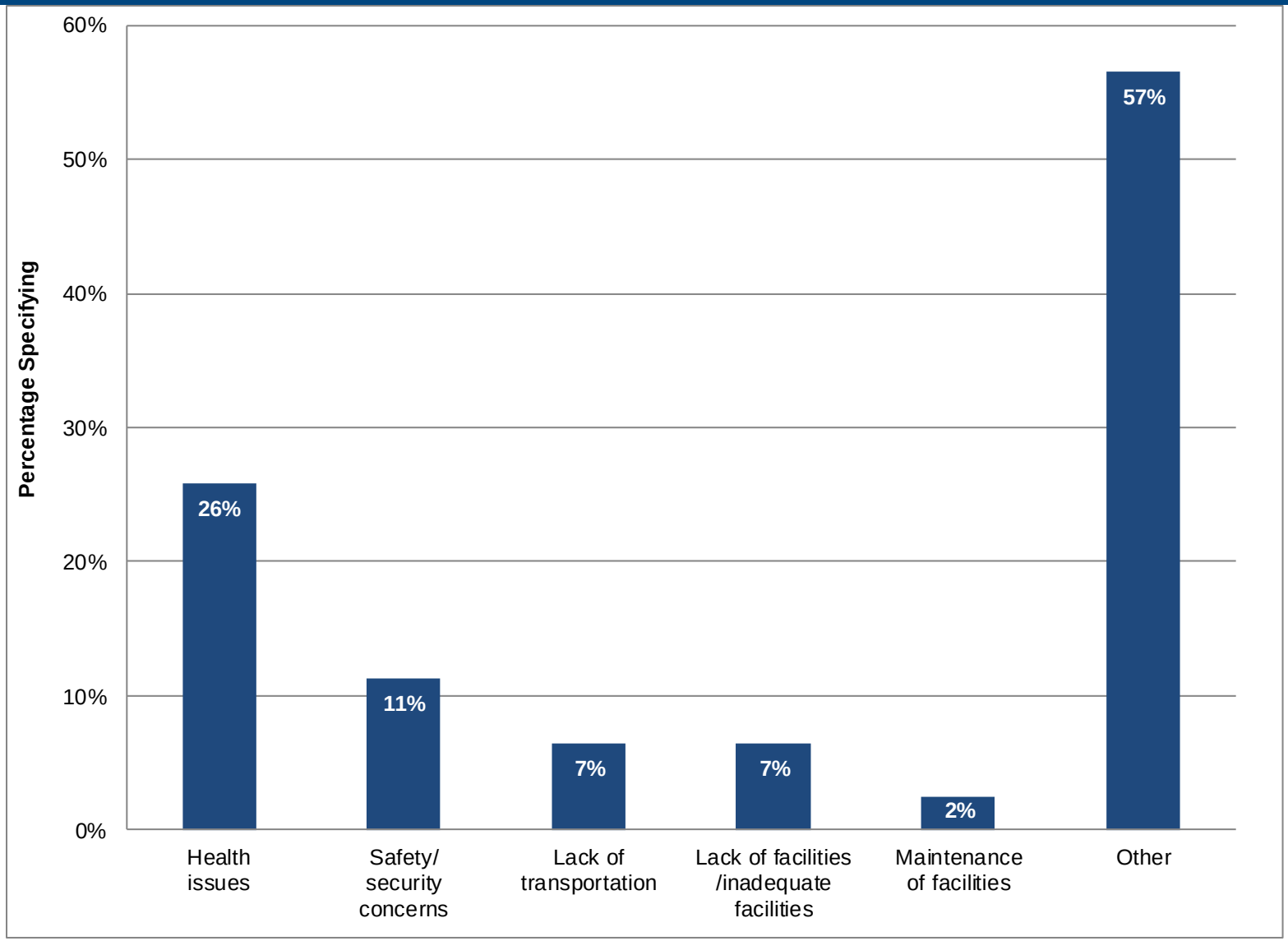
Text Cloud: How can the Township improve the parks to increase your satisfaction or desire to visit?

Top Themes:

1. **Trails** – add more walking and biking paths
2. **Dog park –** off leash dog park in the Township
3. **Enforcement** – enforce rules at parks (especially disc golf course)

Note: See full list of comments for context

Reasons for not visiting parks



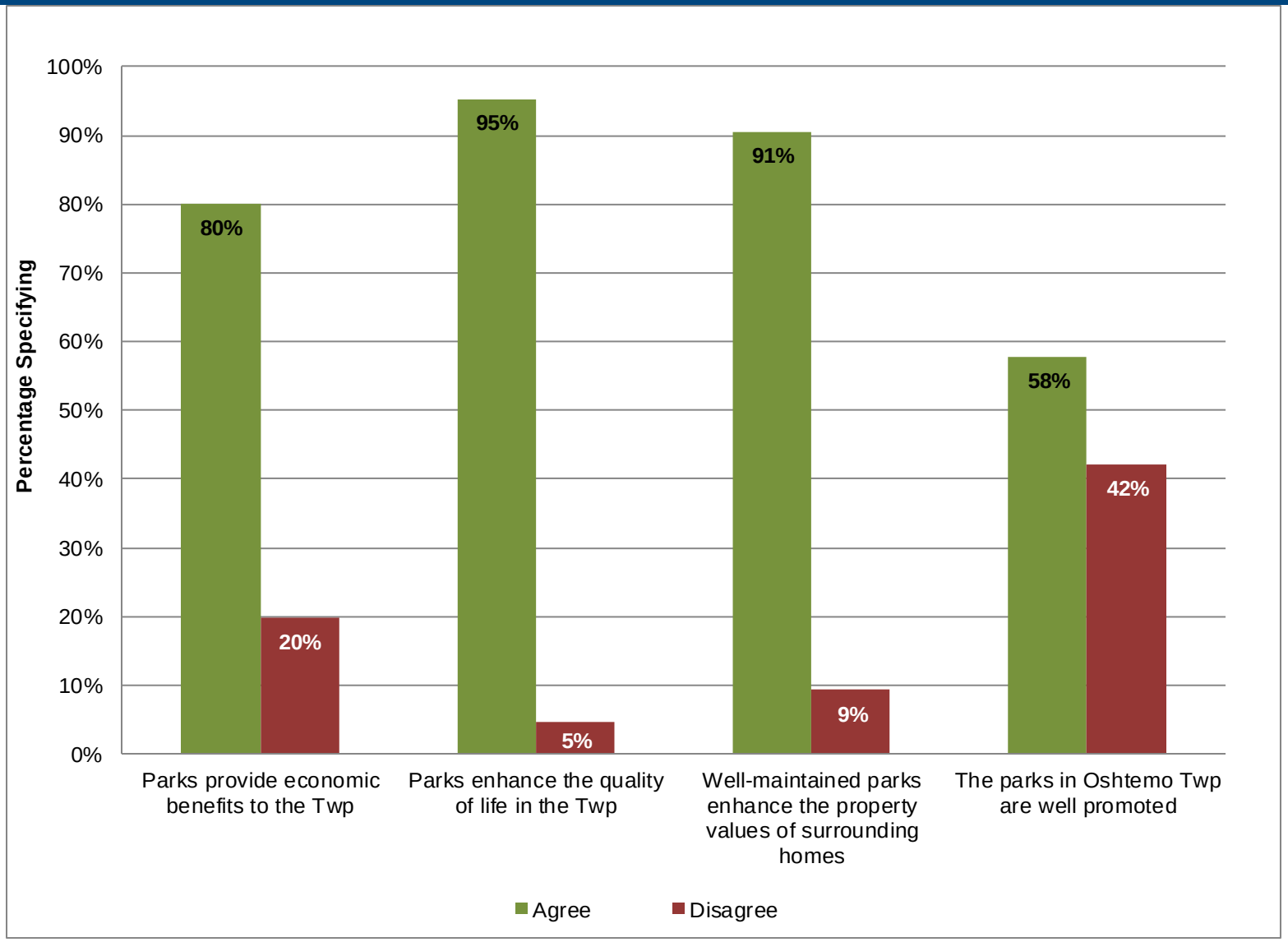
Text Cloud: What other reasons prevent you from visiting the parks?

Top Themes:

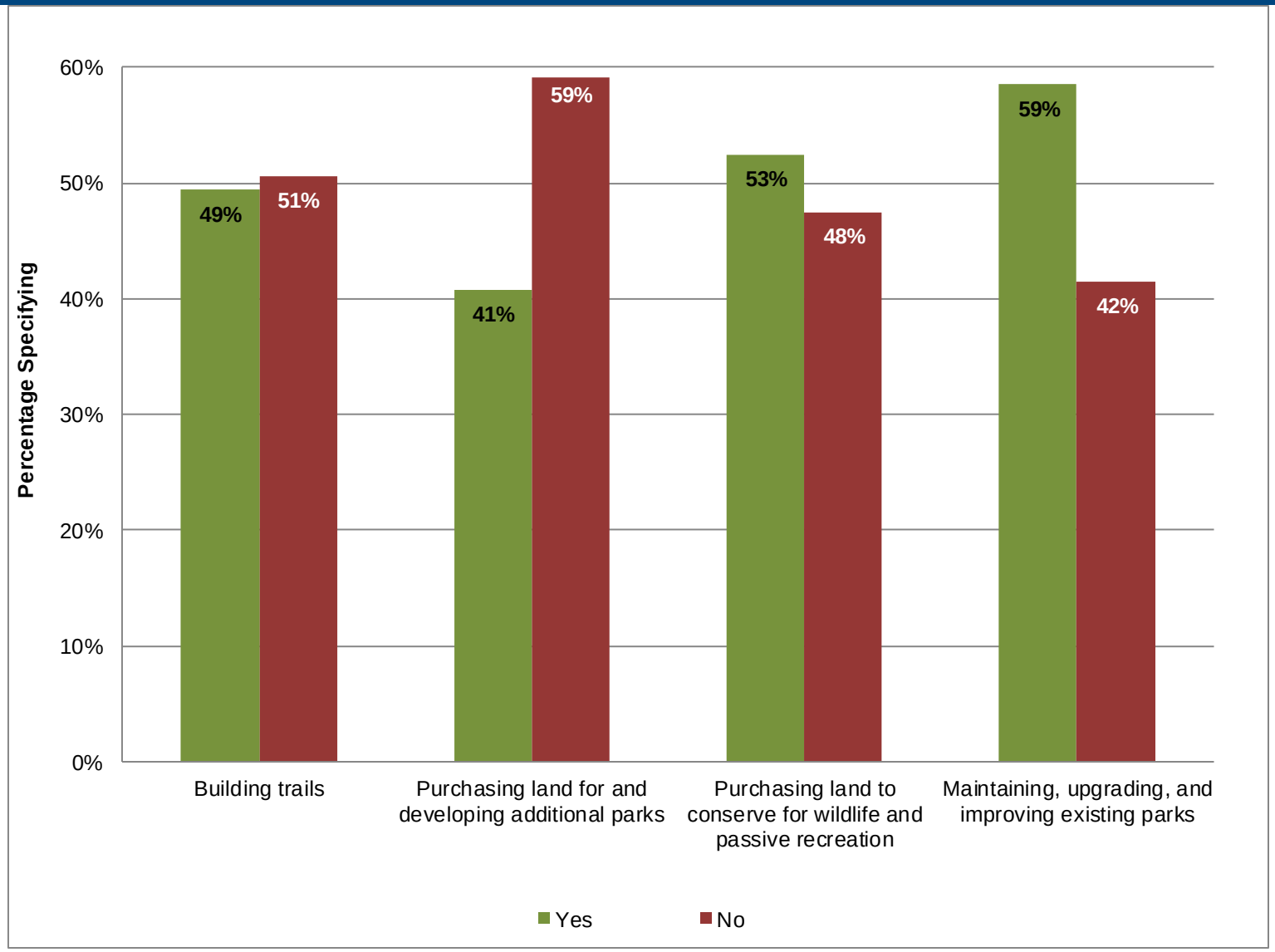
1. **No reason to visit –** use other parks in area or their own property
2. **Time –** no time, too busy to visit, work schedule

Note: See full list of comments for context

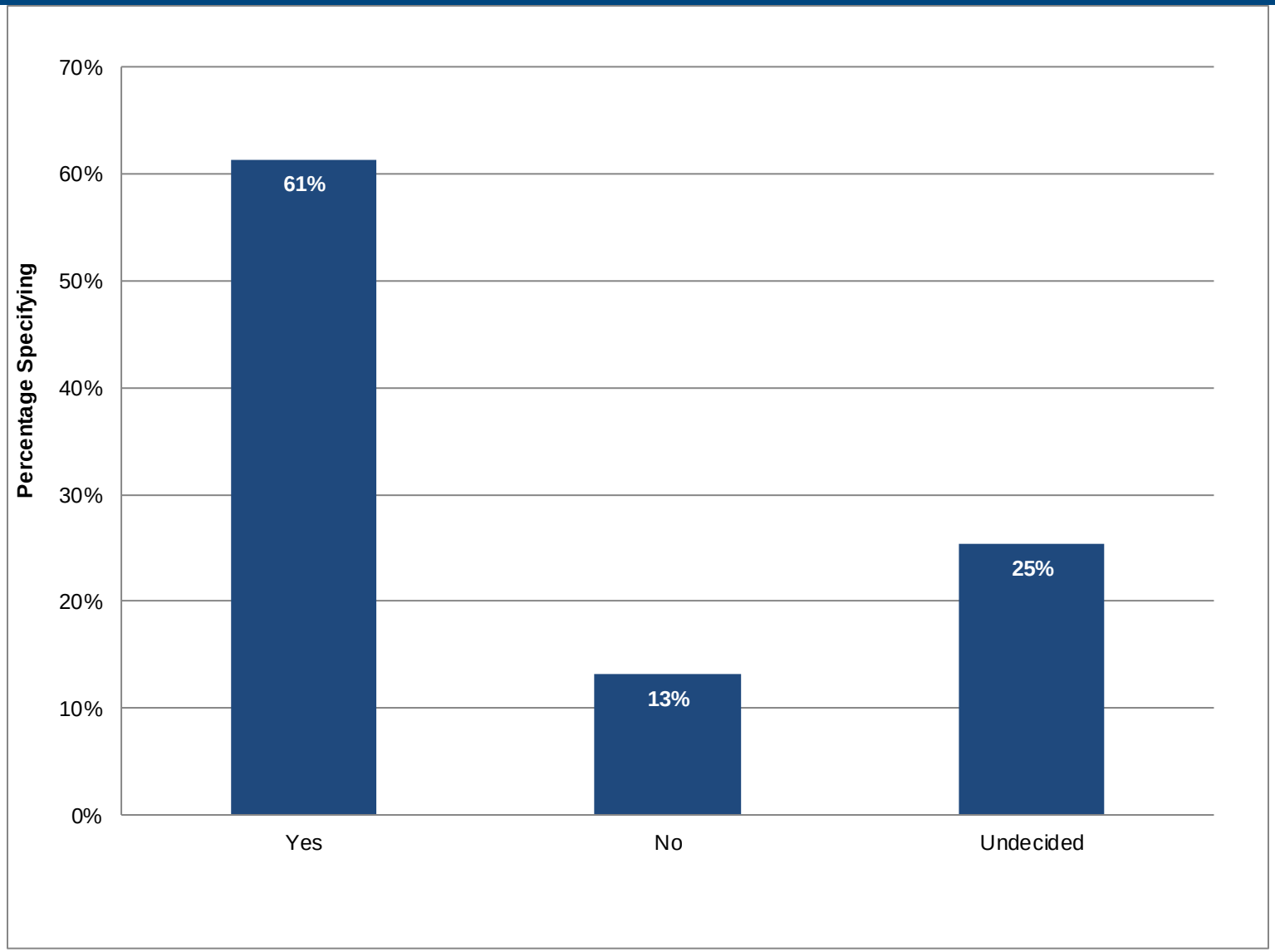
Impact of parks in the Township



Support for 0.5 mills for each project:



Support Twp requiring residential developers to set aside space for parks or open space?



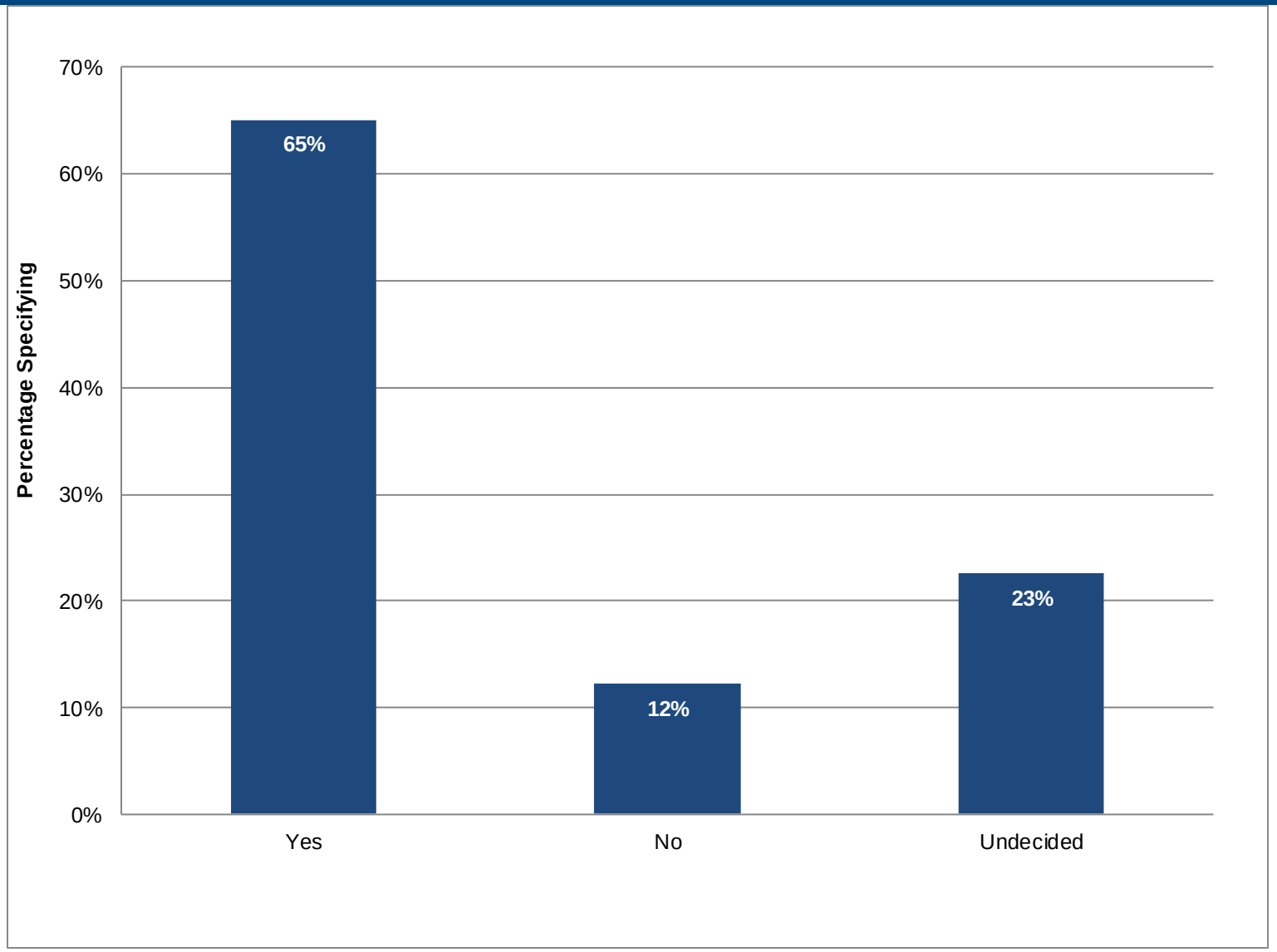
Text Cloud: Where are lands you believe the Township should conserve for parks/open space?

Top Themes:

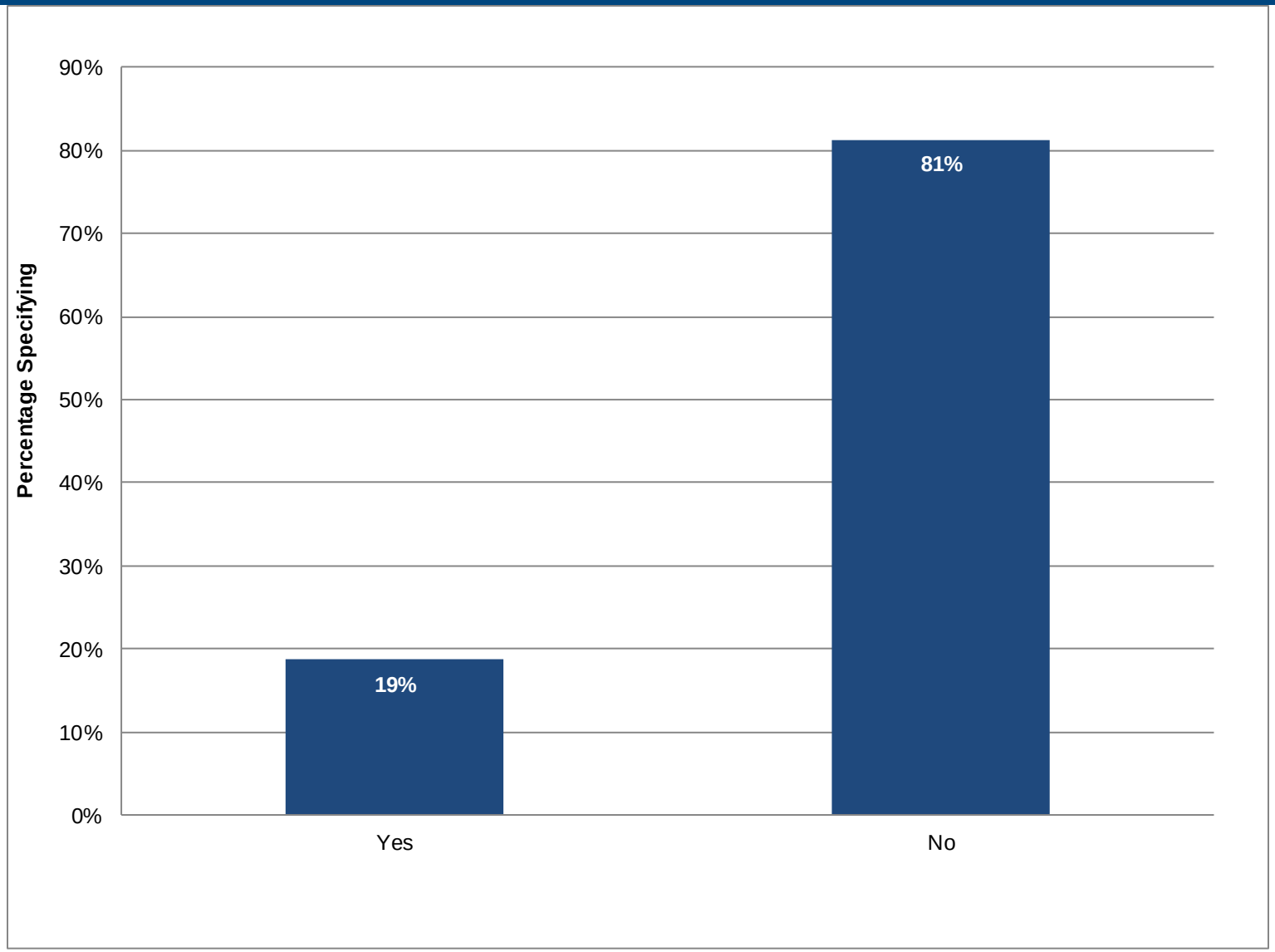
1. **West Main –** near Kal-Haven, 9th Street, Meijer
2. **KL Ave –** near landfill area
3. **Stadium Drive** – 4th Street, 9th Street

Note: See full list of comments for context

Support a program to plant trees and native plants?



Any recreation programs/facilities needed in the Township?



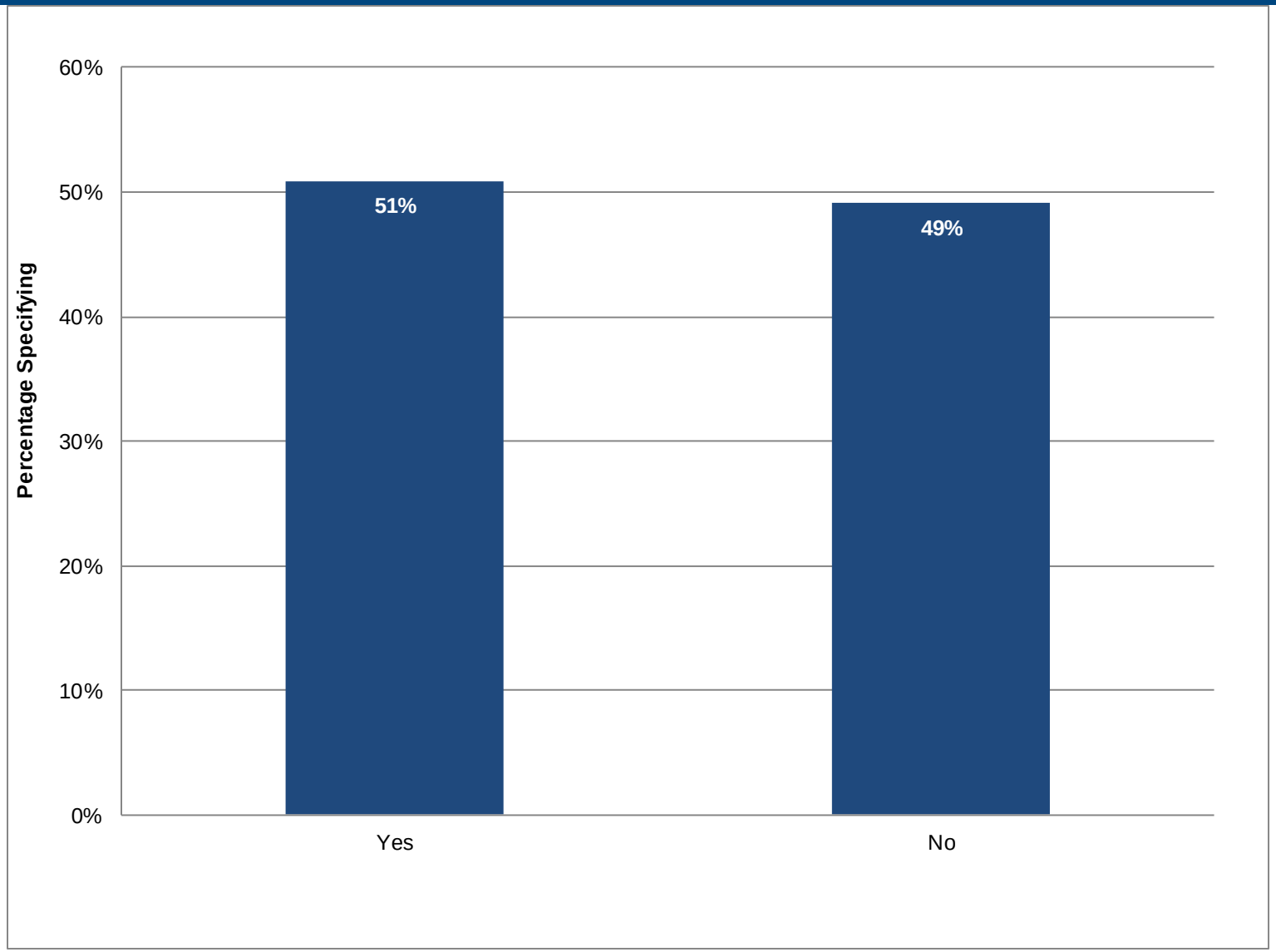
Text Cloud: What rec programs or facilities would you like to see added in the Township?

Top Themes:

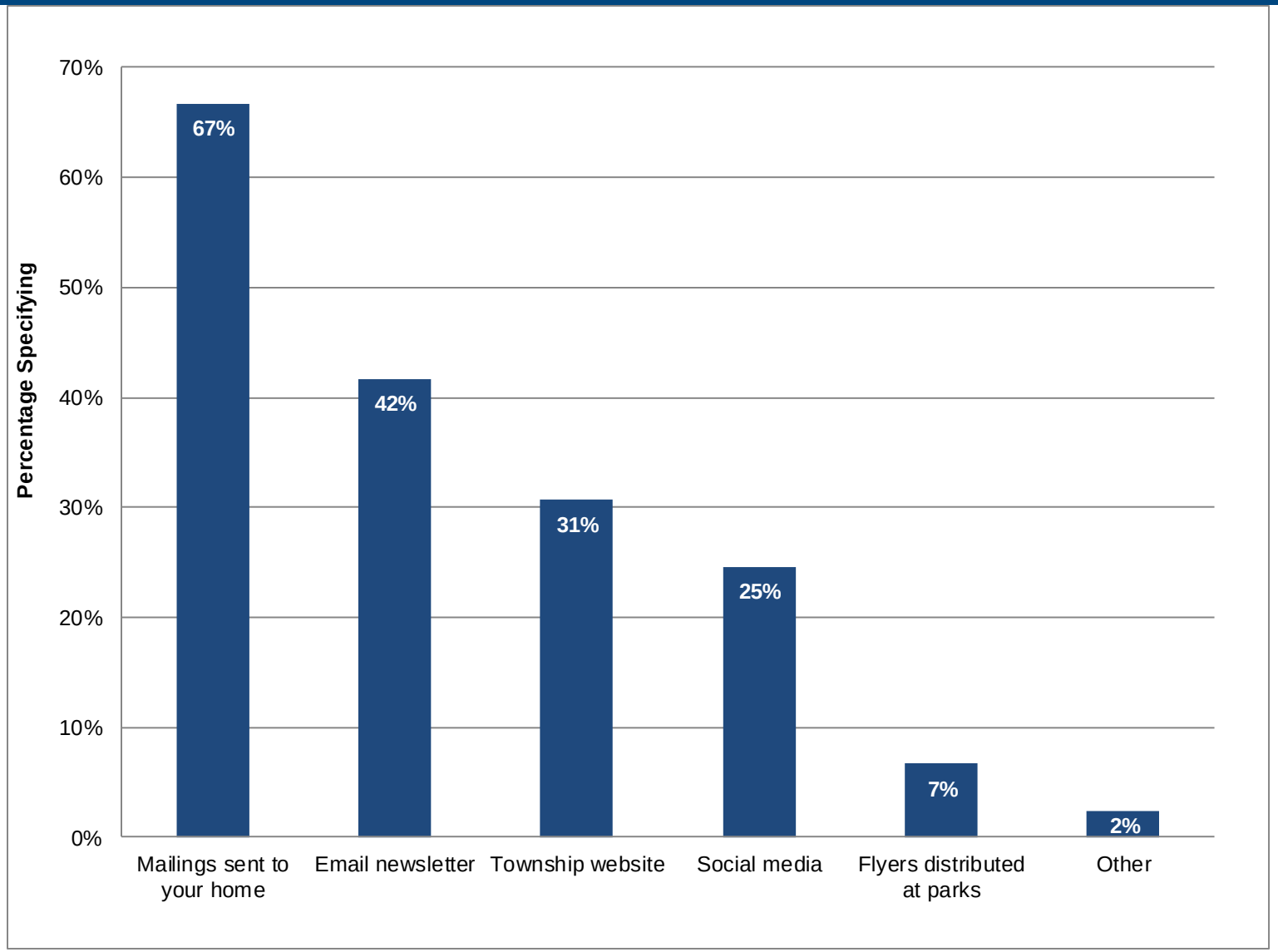
1. **Trails –** bike and walking trails, paths
2. **Community swimming pool**
3. **Dog park**

Note: See full list of comments for context

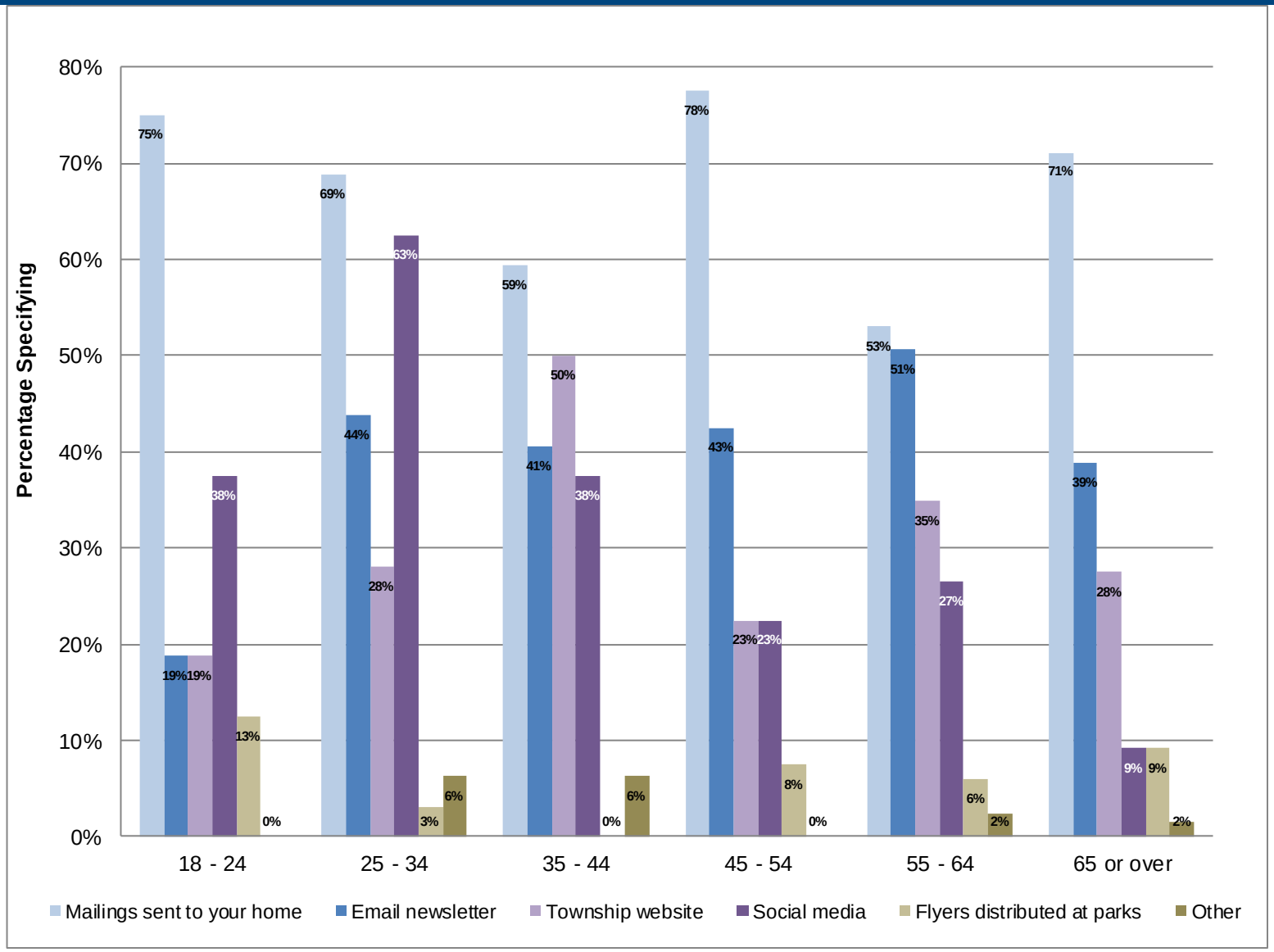
Aware of outdoor movies and concerts at Township Park and Flesher Field?



How to receive information regarding parks, programs, rentals and events:



Preferred communication channels by Age



Text Cloud: What other ways do you prefer to receive information from the Township?

Top Themes:

1. Email
2. Text messages
3. Radio

Note: See full list of comments for context

Text Cloud: Additional comments to share with the Township

Top Themes:

1. **Taxes** – too high, do not raise taxes, difficult for seniors to pay
2. **Roads** – fix and repair roads, improve sidewalks
3. **Parks** – less spending on parks, more on infrastructure

Note: See full list of comments for context

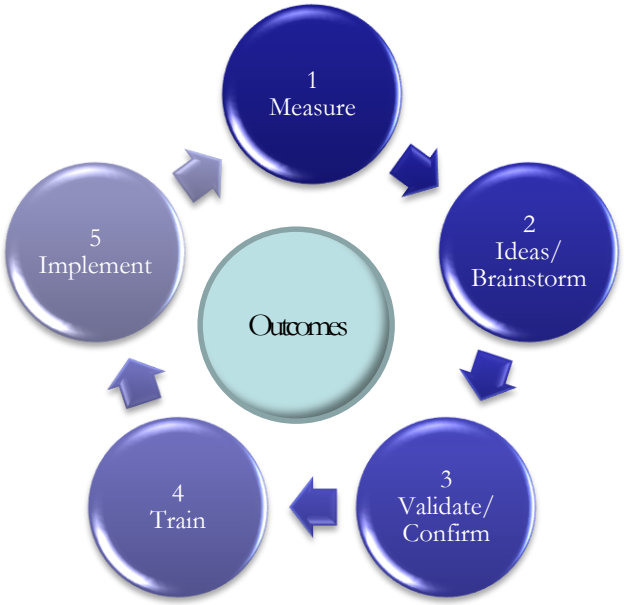
Implementing Results

Perception v Reality: Minimize Distortion or Fix Real Performance Issues

Perception gap:
Respondents rated based on a false idea or understanding. Address with communication strategy to change that perception.

Real performance issue:
Address with an improvement plan. When performance improves, it becomes a perception gap to address with a communication strategy.

Strategy is About Action:
Improve Performance to Improve Outcomes

The diagram at the right provides a framework for following up on this survey.

- The first step (measurement) is complete. This measurement helps prioritize resources and create a baseline against which progress can be measured.
- The second step is to use internal teams to further analyze the results and form ideas about why respondents answered as they did and potential actions in response.
- The third step is to validate ideas and potential actions through conversations with residents and line staff – do the ideas and actions make sense. Focus groups, short special-topic surveys and benchmarking are helpful.
- The fourth step is to provide staff with the skills and tools to effectively implement the actions.
- The fifth step is to execute the actions.
- The final step is to re-measure to ensure progress was made and track changes in resident needs.