

ETHELO



Town of Drumheller Citizen Budget

Introduction

From January 26 to February 10 2021, the Town of Dumheller used a budget simulation exercise called Citizen Budget to gather public feedback on their annual budget. The purpose of this program was to show residents where their tax dollars are being spent and allow them to increase or decrease the levels of service provided by the Town. In addition, the program allowed residents to see how these changes in service levels would raise or lower their taxes.

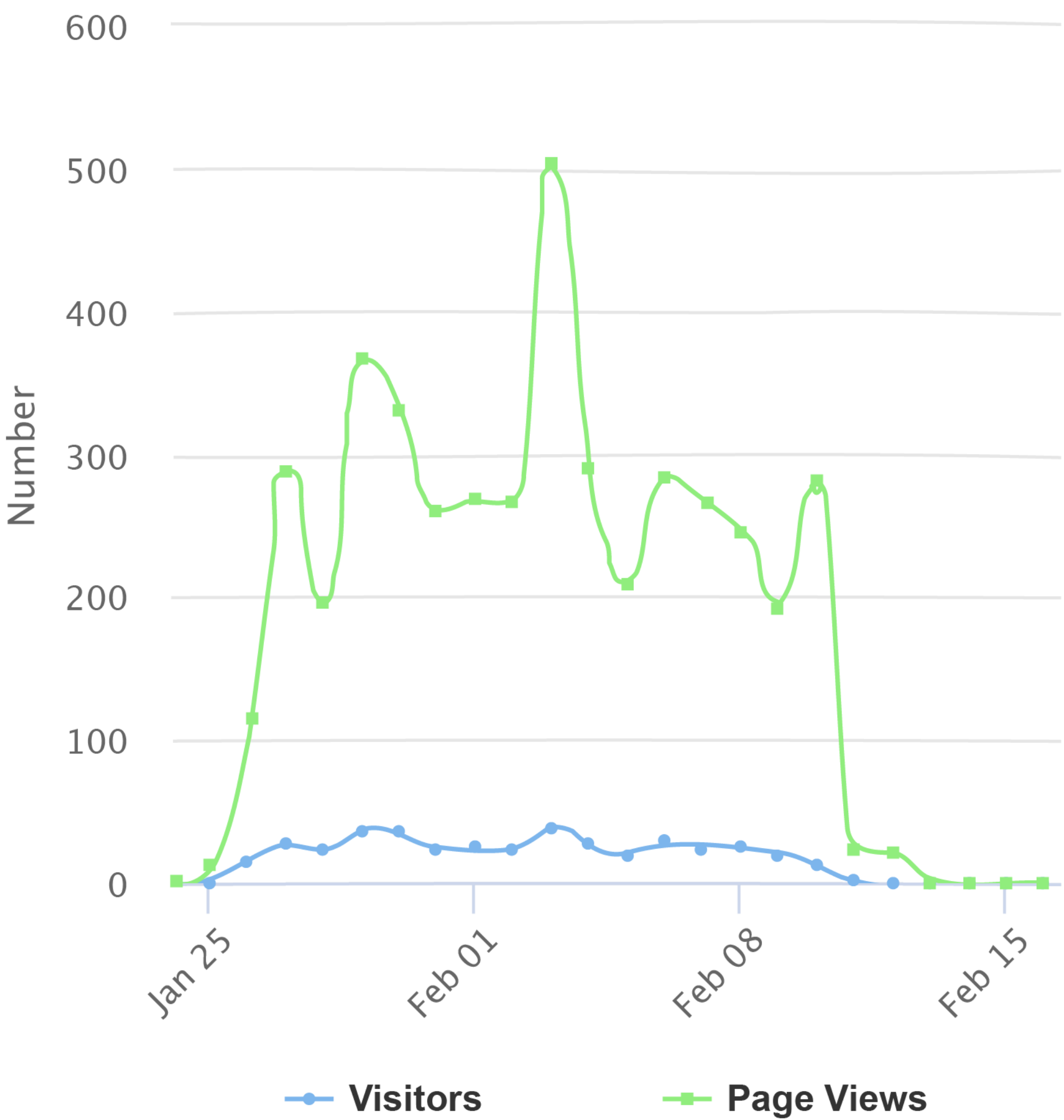
- The process educated residents on the Town's various services, while asking them to provide feedback based on the Town's current service levels and budget.
- Ethelo used the results to generate a particular set of funding changes that are predicted to have the most community support.



Participation

Participation

- Number of visitors: **370**
- Number of respondents: **134**
- Page views: **4623**
- Average time on platform: **7 minutes**



Building Consensus

The Ethelo recommended scenario doesn't detail the popular vote for funding levels in each department, but instead sifts through all budgeting scenarios, and identifies the one with the most community support, and the least polarization. For the Ethelo recommended scenario, the platform takes into account not only participant's likes, but also their dislikes, and uses these to calculate what adjustments can be made to departmental spending to optimize community buy-in.

Predicted Budget Support: 96%



Totally Oppose

Neutral

Totally Support

Building Consensus

Funding Area	Percent Change	% Approval*
Funding Public Works & Transportation Services	Keep the same	85%
Funding Garbage Collection & Disposal	Keep the same	81%
Funding Community Services & Economic Stimulus	Keep the same	79%
Funding Family Community Support Services	Keep the same	66%
Funding Recreation & Cultural Services	Keep the same	74%
Funding Protective Services	Keep the same	81%
Funding General Government	15% Decrease	87%

* Approval is the percentage of participants who gave a positive vote, rather than a neutral or negative vote. Approval above 50% is a traditional majority



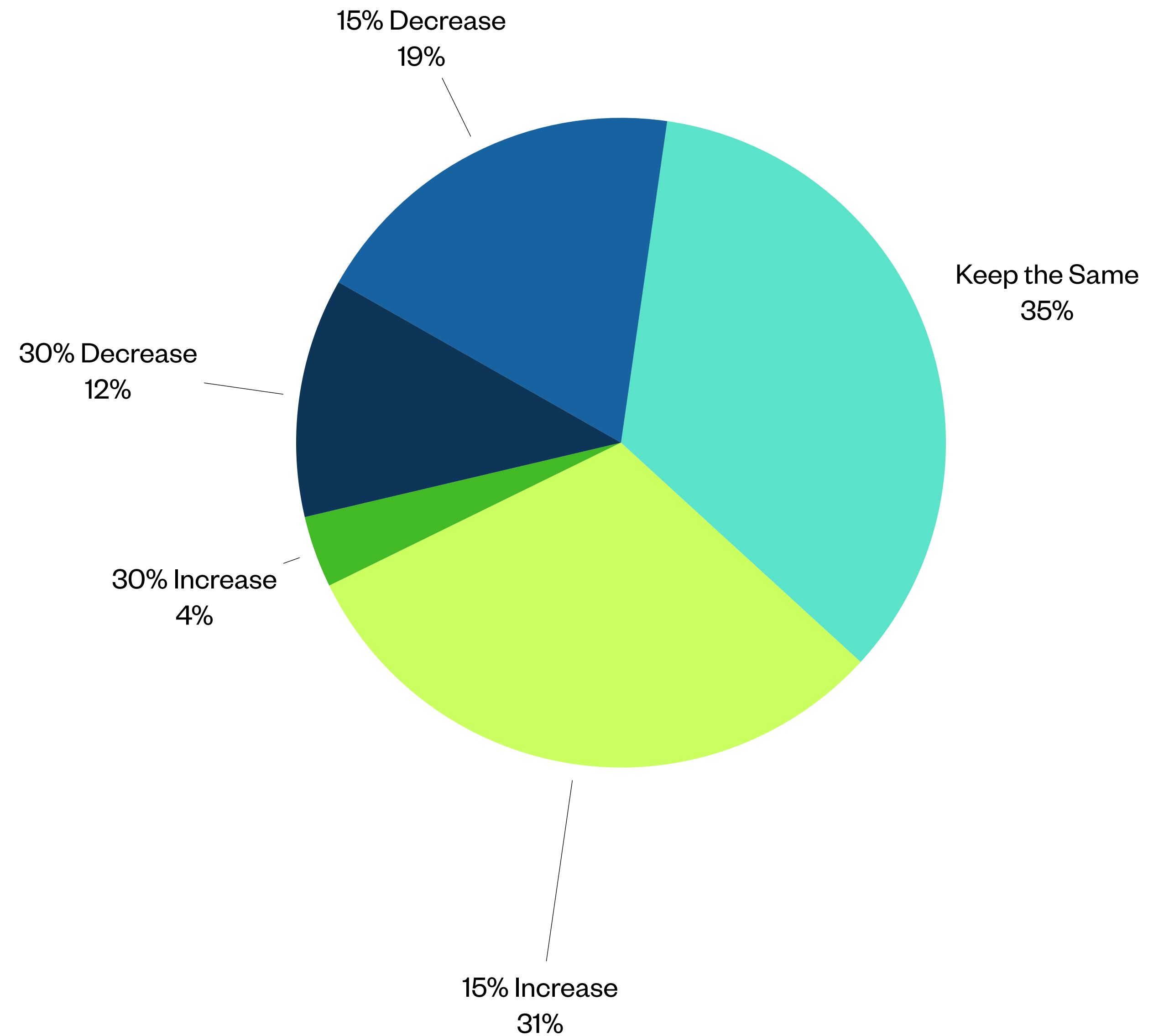
Public Works and Transportation Services

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding Public works & Transportation services

- Decrease: 31%
- **Keep the Same: 35%**
- **Increase: 35%**



Voting Results

Comments

“I would like to see **more focus on walking trails and bike paths**. A healthy community is a happy community.”

“The **roads are important** for tourists and for the people of Drumheller.”

“I would choose to increase this budget line but again I’d suggest **setting priorities within this area**. The town needs to look beautiful and those jobs are important to for sustainable.”

“Wondering about **reduction for airport** - not convinced of its value..”

“I would like to see more **pay to play options** that assist in maintaining specific town infrastructure.”

“I'd like to see investment in a **public transit system**.”



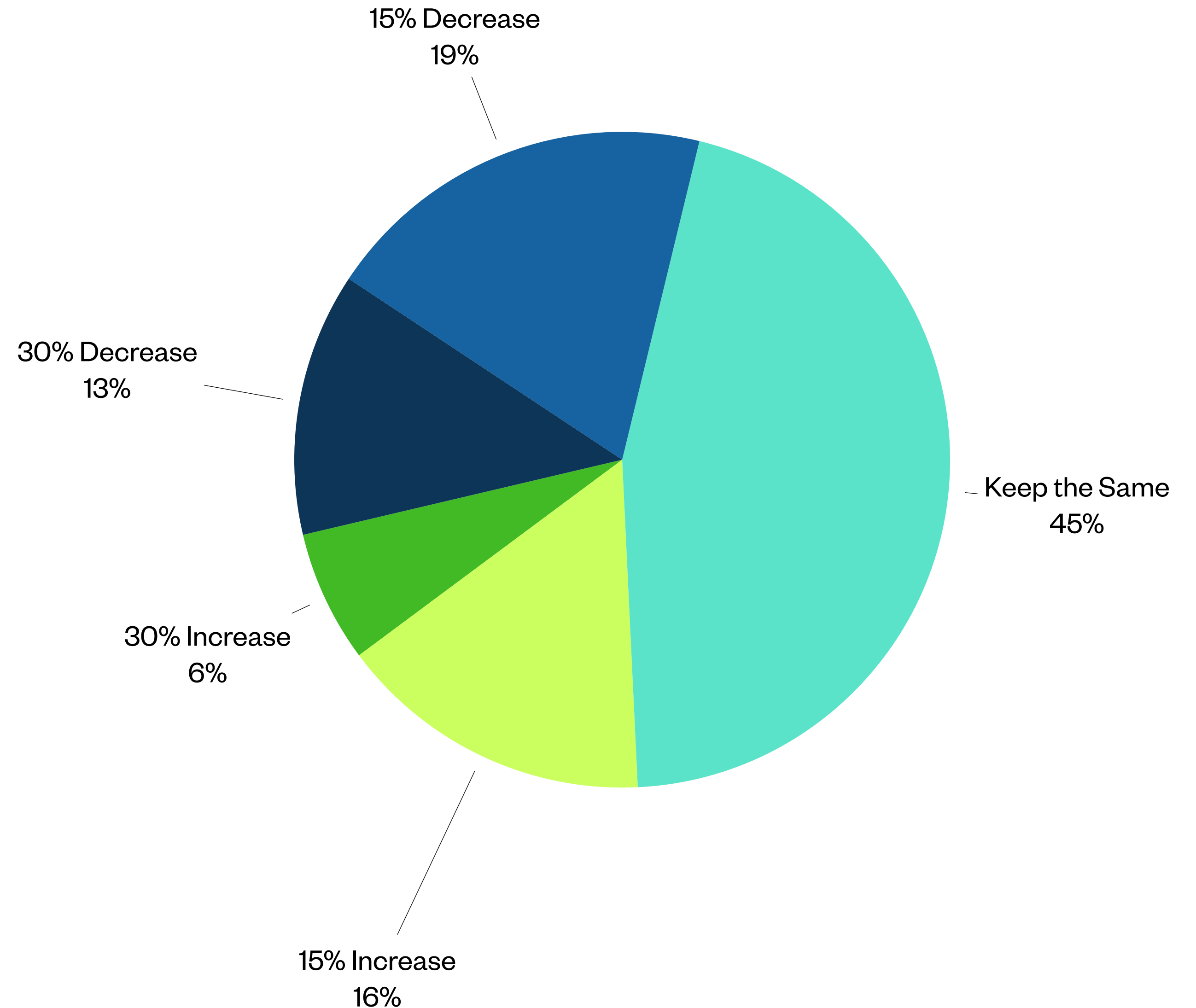
Garbage Collection and Disposal

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding Garbage Collection & Disposal

- Decrease: 32%
- **Keep the Same: 45%**
- Increase: 22%



Voting Results

Comments

“We need to **educate the community about what is actually being recycled**. Just because we drop it off at the recycling bin doesn't mean it will be recycled. Education regarding waste reduction will help with collection and disposal.”

“I would increase this budget if it involved a **curbside recycling program** for the Town residents.”

“Alternate between recycling and garbage for weekly collection. It **discourages waste and encourages recycling**. Most municipalities do this and it works great.”

“Garbage pickup could easily be **reduced to every two weeks**. No one can/should produce that much garbage, and if they do they can pay for it themselves.”

“I would gladly pay for **curbside recycling and composting**.”

“We need to **reduce this expense**. Roll back wages and simplify.”

* The above are direct, unedited quotes from participants. These have been selected to highlight because they are indicative of larger comment themes, and are generally constructive in nature. For a full list of all comments, please see the direct download from the engagement platform.



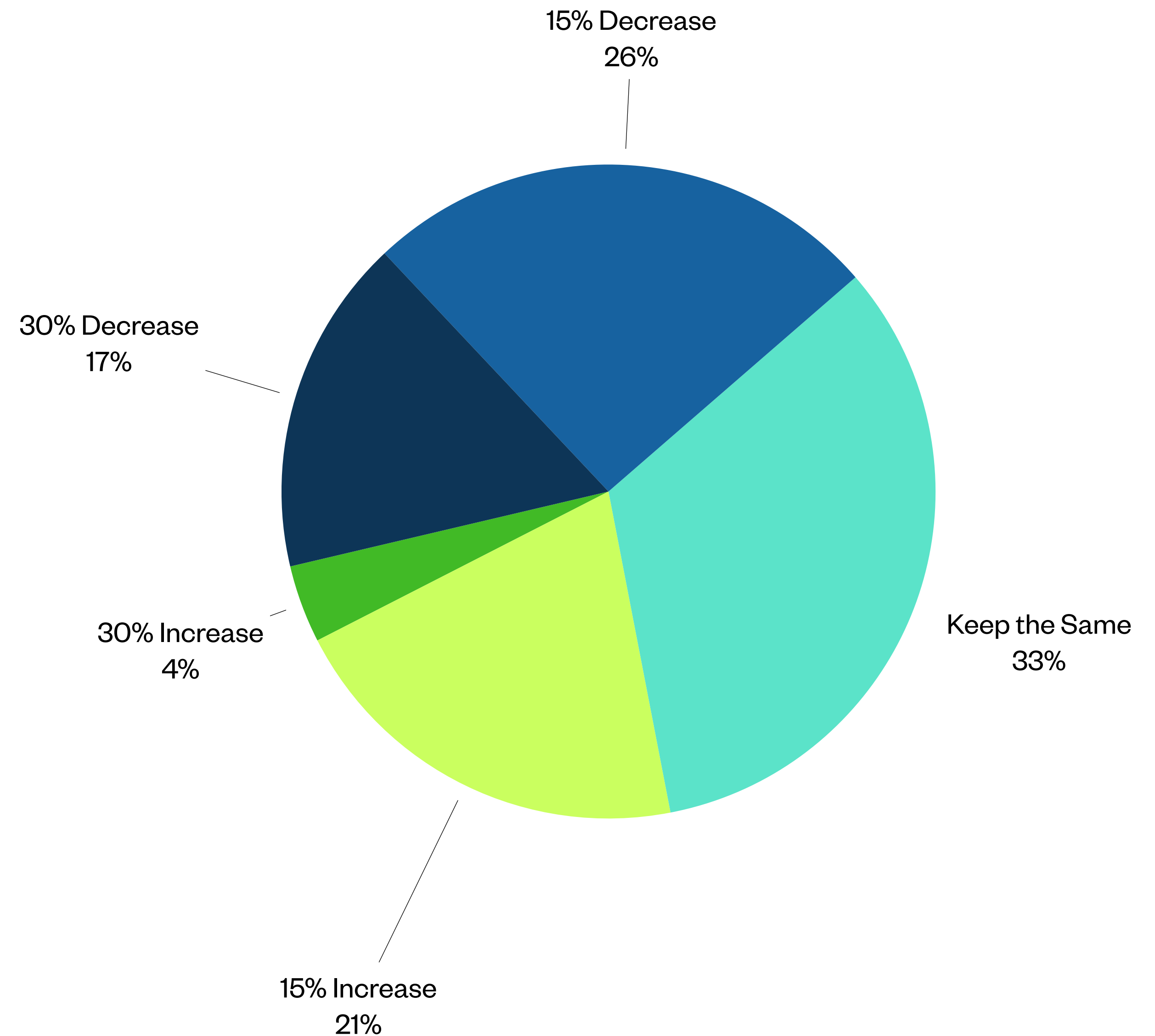
Community Services & Economic Stimulus

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding Community Services & Economic Stimulus

- **Decrease: 43%**
- Keep the Same: 33%
- Increase: 25%



Voting Results

Comments

“We need **ecotourism**. We have a beautiful valley begging to be explored. The community needs more than a berm with a walking trail.”

“**This is keeping Drumheller businesses alive.** Develop these areas equitably.”

“Time to **increase taxes on the rich.**”

“**Cut backs are needed** during these times of uncertainty.”

“Drumheller is AB's 3rd largest tourism destination. We are a tourist town... Let's tap into a **tourism levy** like every other town in AB does.”



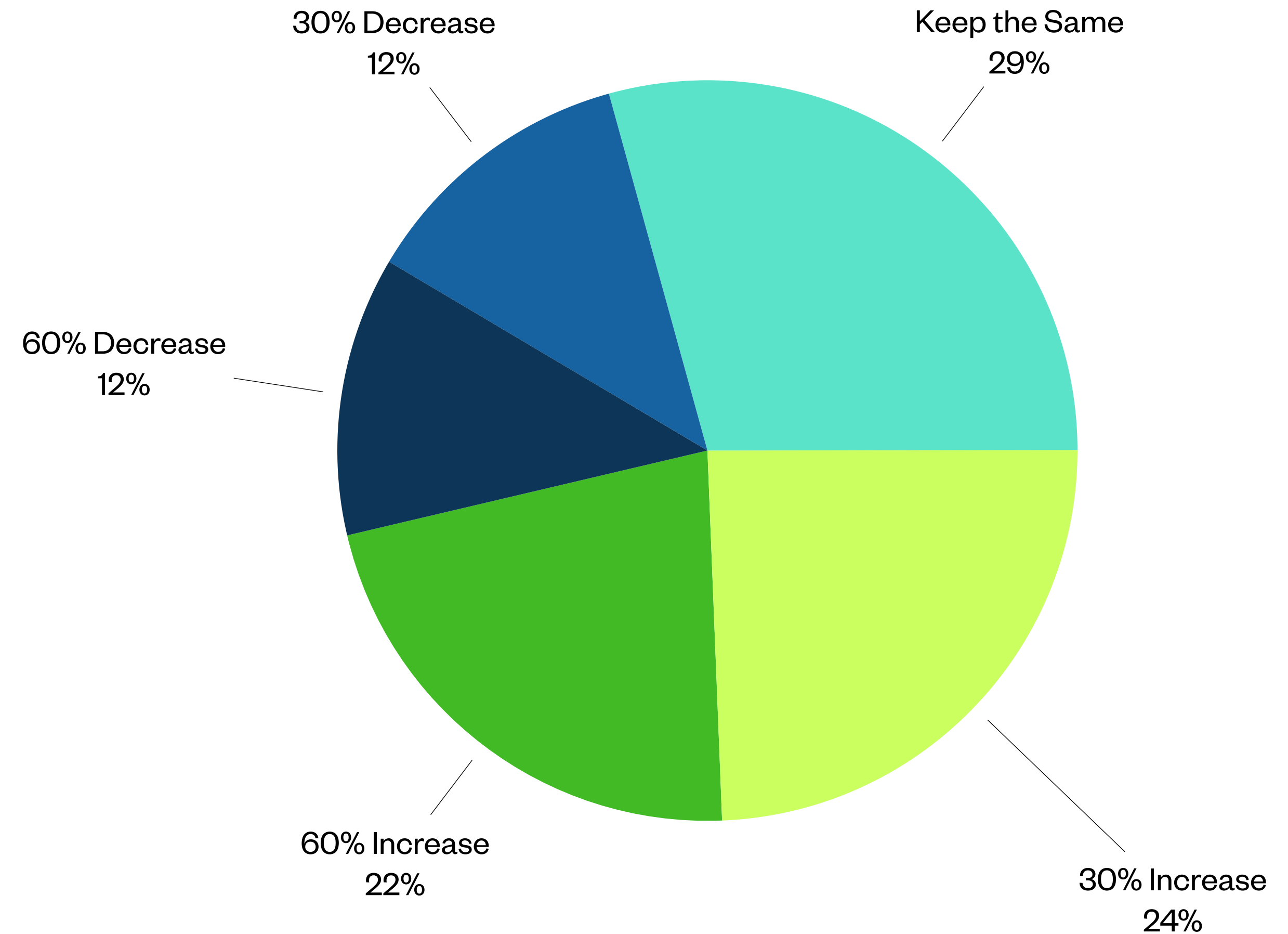
Family Community Support Services

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding Family Community Support Services

- Decrease: 24%
- Keep the Same: 29%
- **Increase: 46%**



Voting Results

Comments

“These services should be **privatized**. The Town receives significant grants for these operations and still the residents have to subsidize these programs.”

“We need to look towards our communities and look after some of our most vulnerable. As we come out of the pandemic, **the community will need more support.**”

“There’s very **little programs for families** with young children.”

“We're going to need **more leadership** in this area in 2021 as we recover socially from isolation.”

“We need **more supports than ever** as people are struggling during the pandemic and it will be tough for a long time after.”

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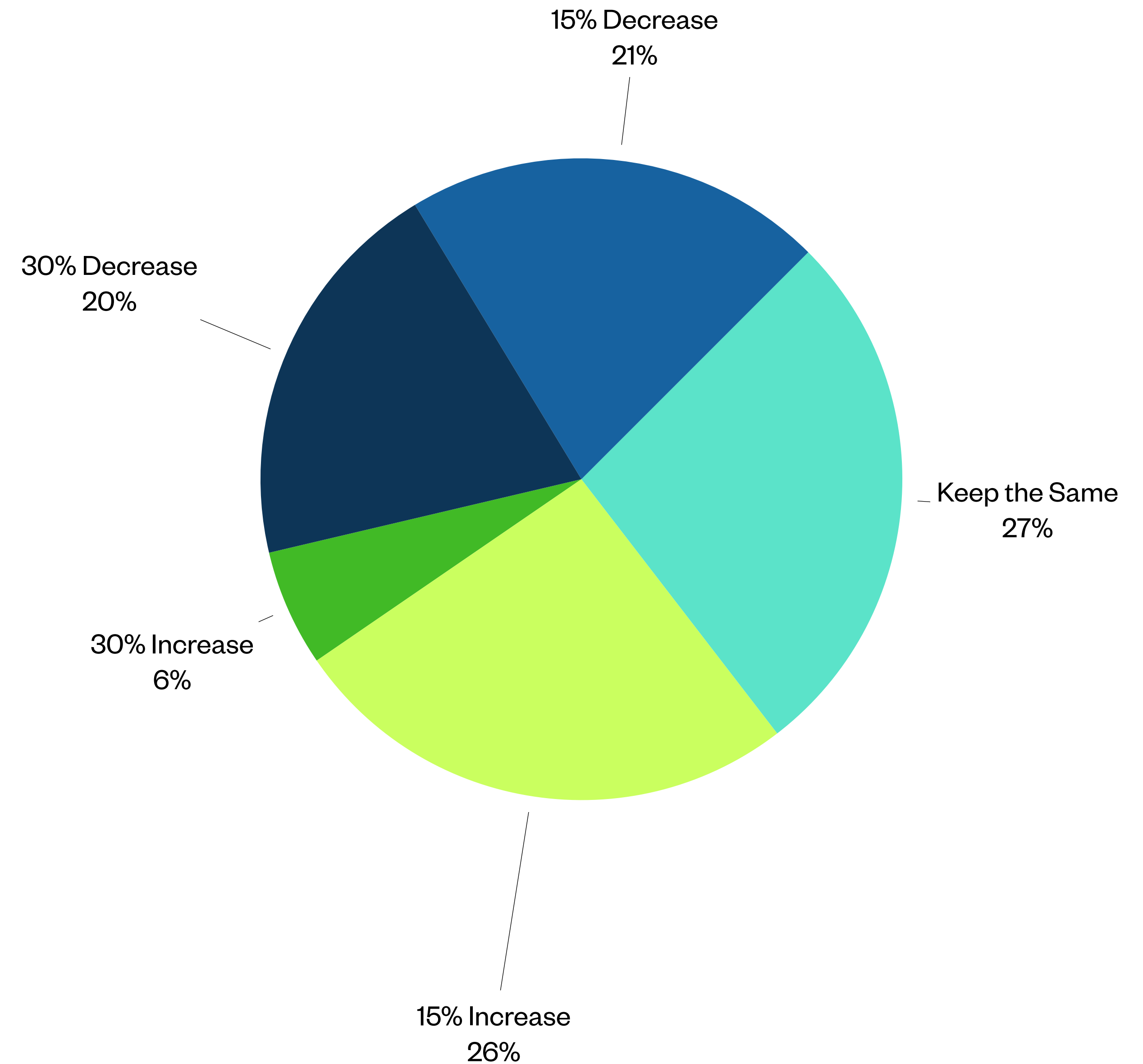
Recreation & Cultural Services

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding Recreation & Cultural Services

- **Decrease: 41%**
- Keep the Same: 27%
- Increase: 32%



Voting Results

Comments

“More and more communities have turned recreation over to **non-profit management teams** with cost recovery plans that have been working without increasing rates. My last two communities did at least 60% cost recovery by doing large events, organizing provincial tournaments, getting sponsorships, etc and **we are the perfect location to do that.**”

“**Excellent investment in the community.** I use many of these services. Sure money can be spent smarter, but cutting during the the economic downturn and post pandemic is a colossally bad idea.”

“**Glad to have these services available.** Not sure we ought to sustain a curling club though for such a small demographic.”

“These facilities are getting run down. Maintenance is minimal at best. **Need to change engineering and management involved.**”

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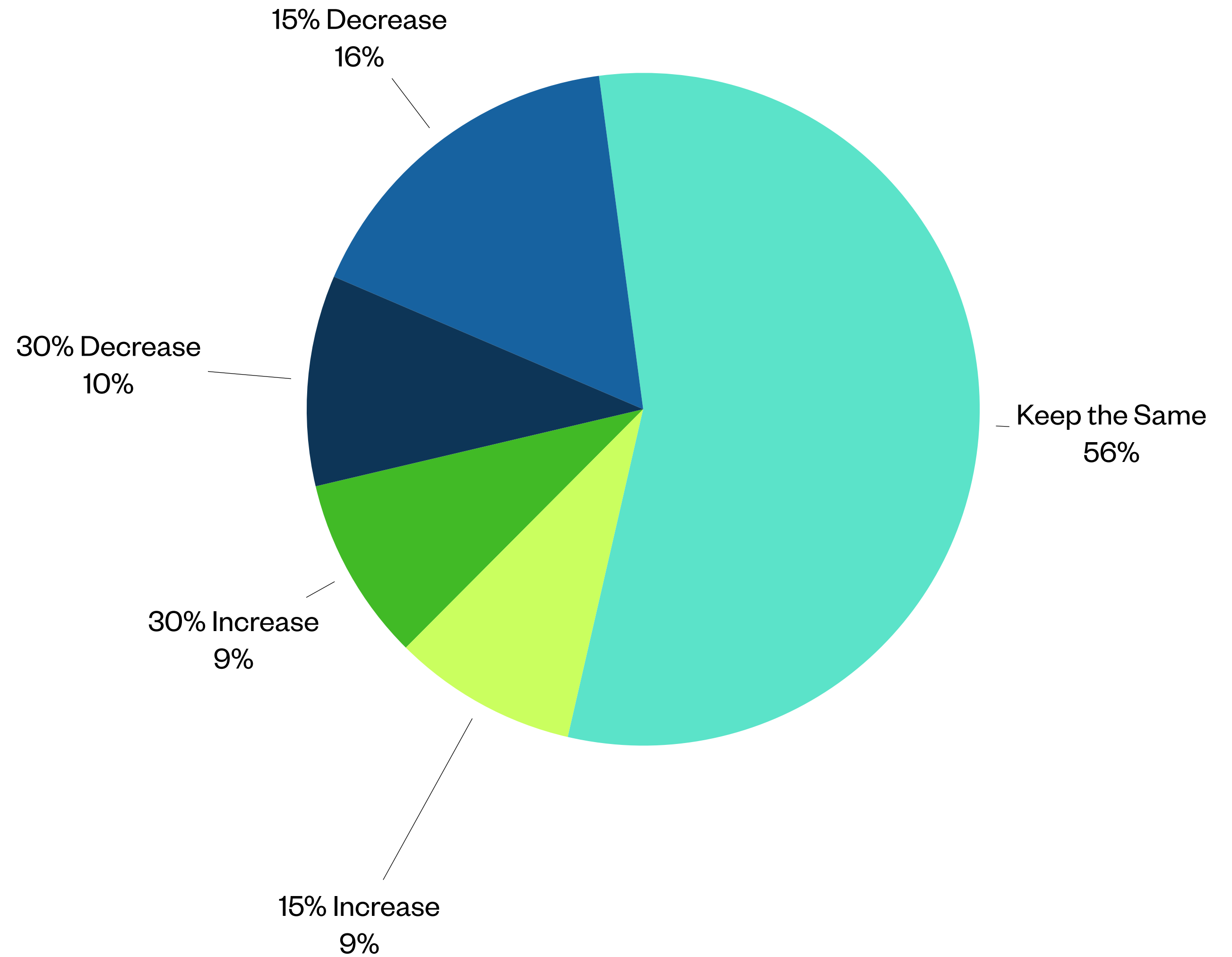
Protective Services

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding Protective Services

- Decrease: 26%
- **Keep the Same: 56%**
- Increase: 18%



Voting Results

Comments

“I’d like to see the current and past five year allocations of this.”

“We need to **reprioritize.**”

“RCMP doing great job.”

“I would actually like to see by-law people actually doing there job ... I see many sidewalks not shovelled.”



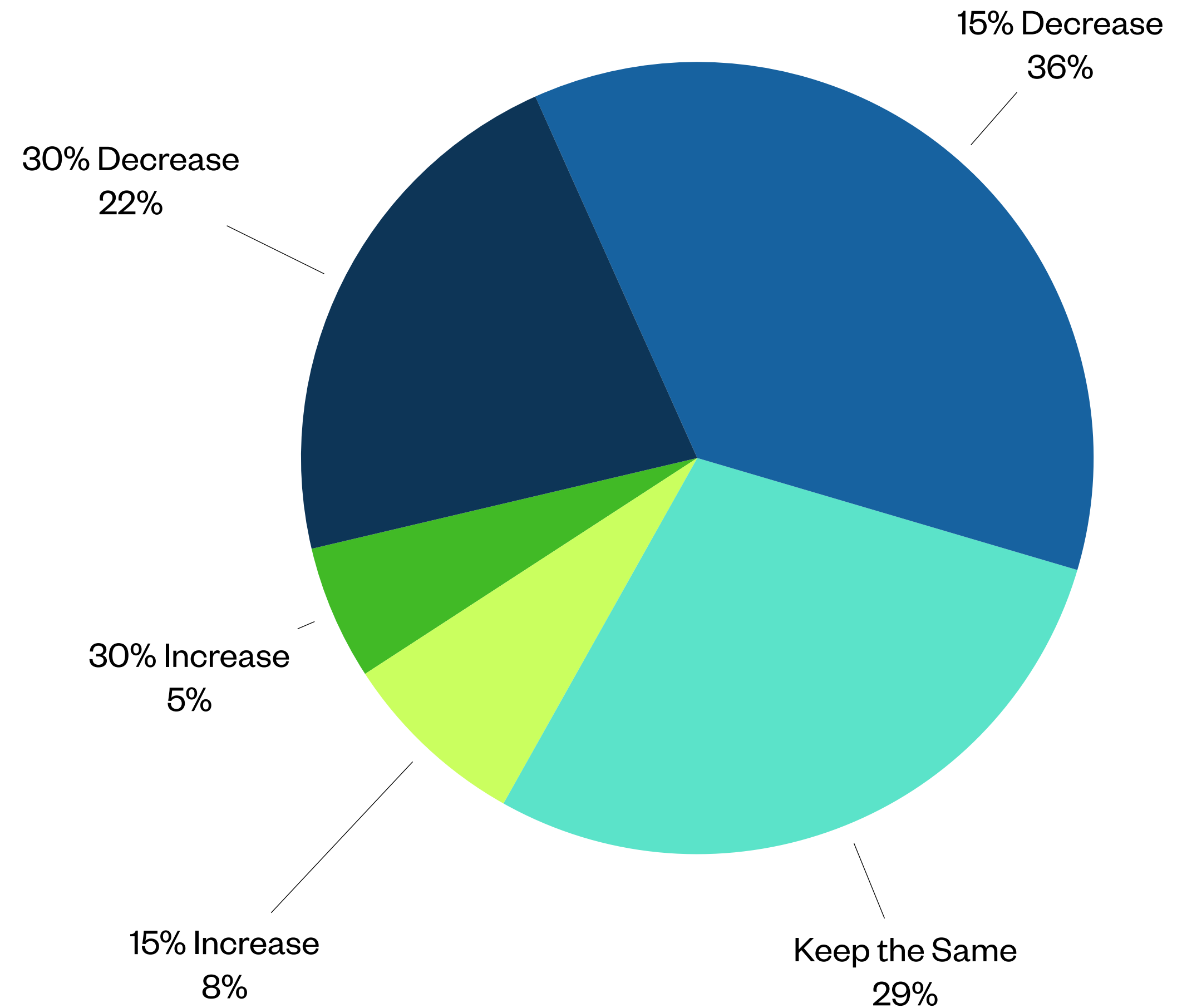
General Government

Participants were asked to indicate whether they would like to increase, decrease or keep funding the same for each area of funding, based on their overall satisfaction with the service and its importance to their household.

Voting Results

Funding General Government

- **Decrease: 58%**
- Keep the Same: 29%
- Increase: 13%



Voting Results

Comments

“Our property tax is really high, I think. I wish something can be done with our road.”

“In this economic environment spending should be limited. **Cutbacks need to be considered.**”

“I’m sure a **15% decrease** can be found by doing things more efficiently. If I could see the break down I could make pointed remarks.”

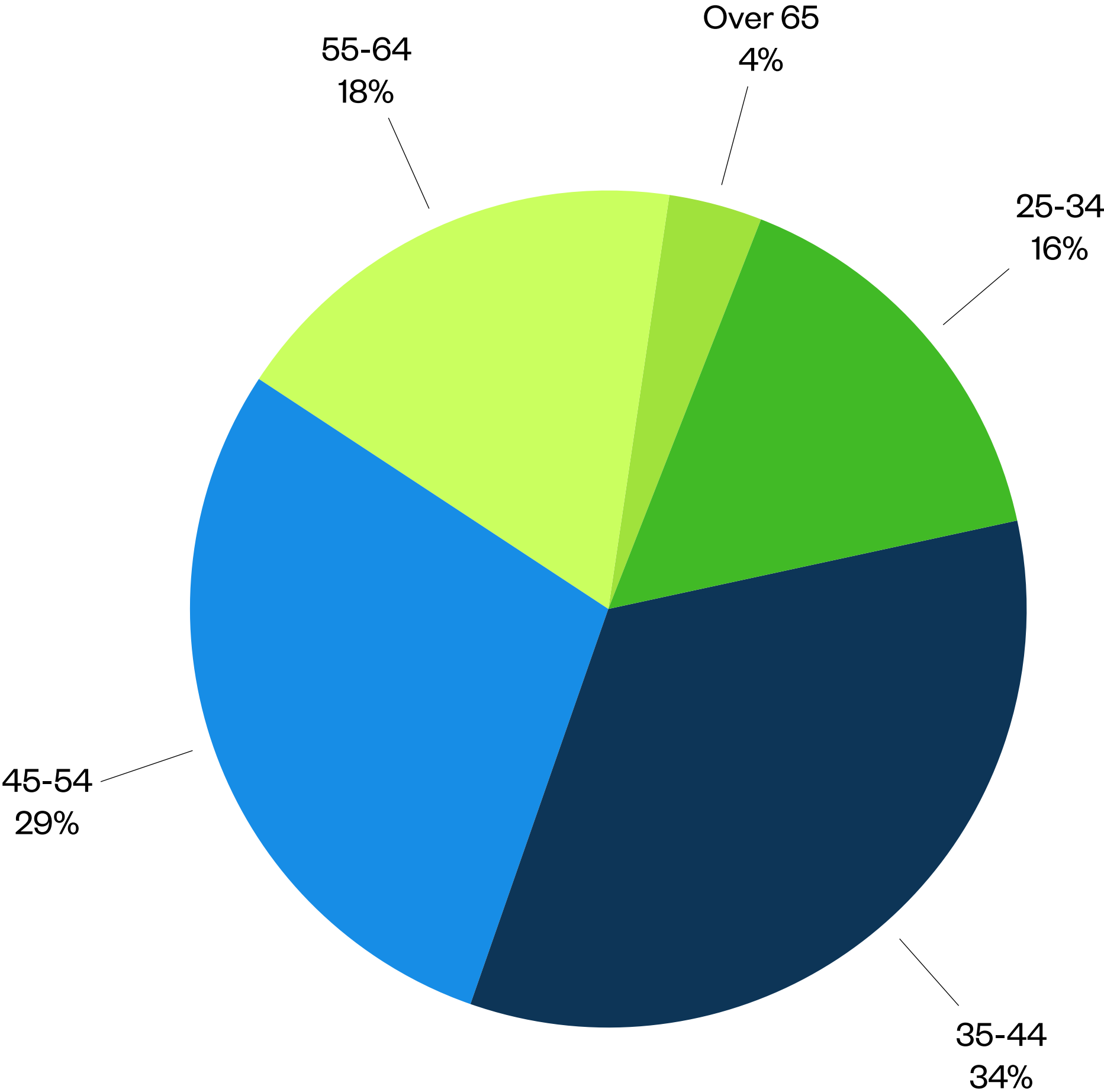
“The town needs to **reduce expenses**. Rollback wages and reduce management.”



Demographic Information

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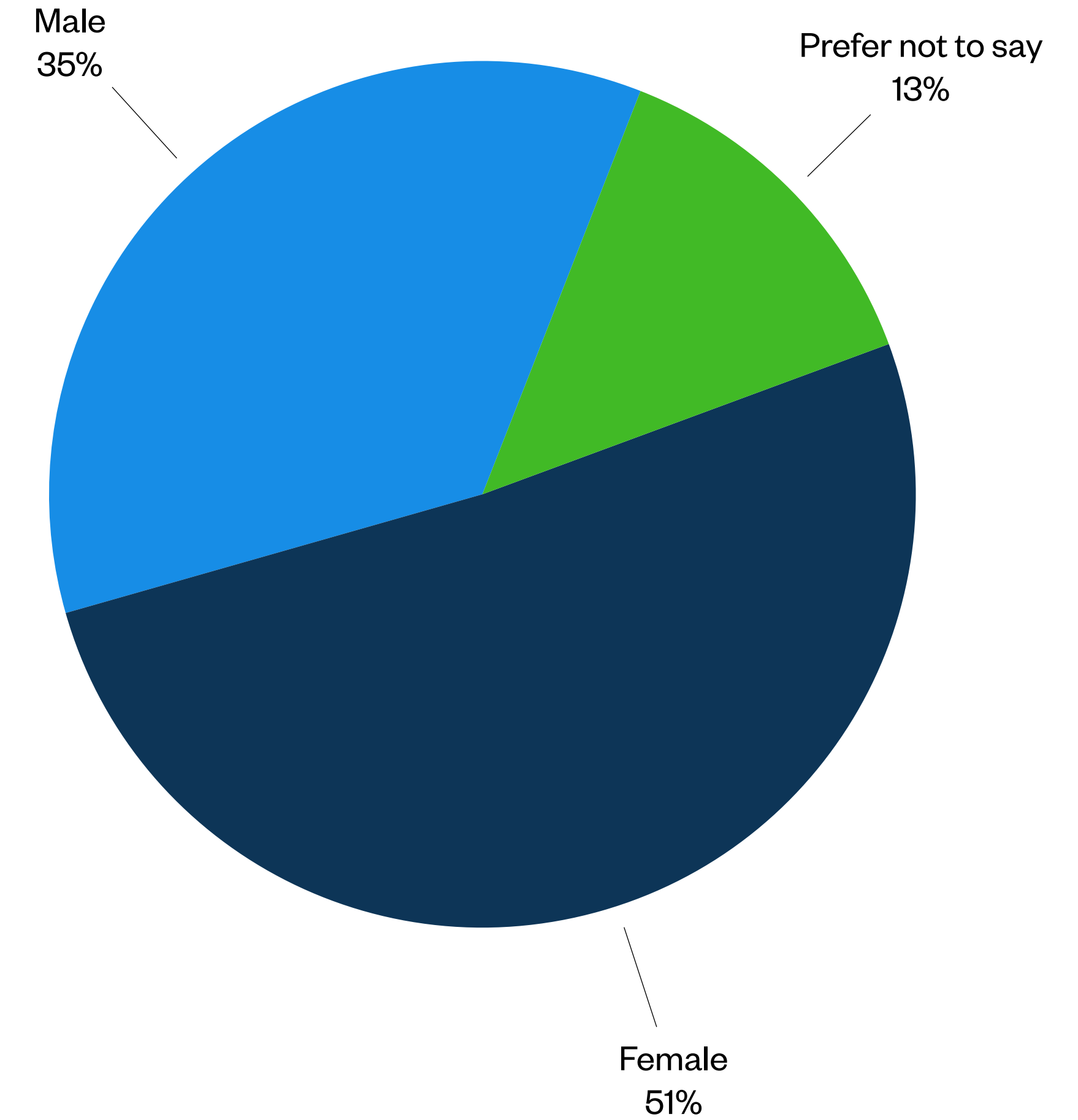
Age*



* Not included: Under 18-24 (< 1%)

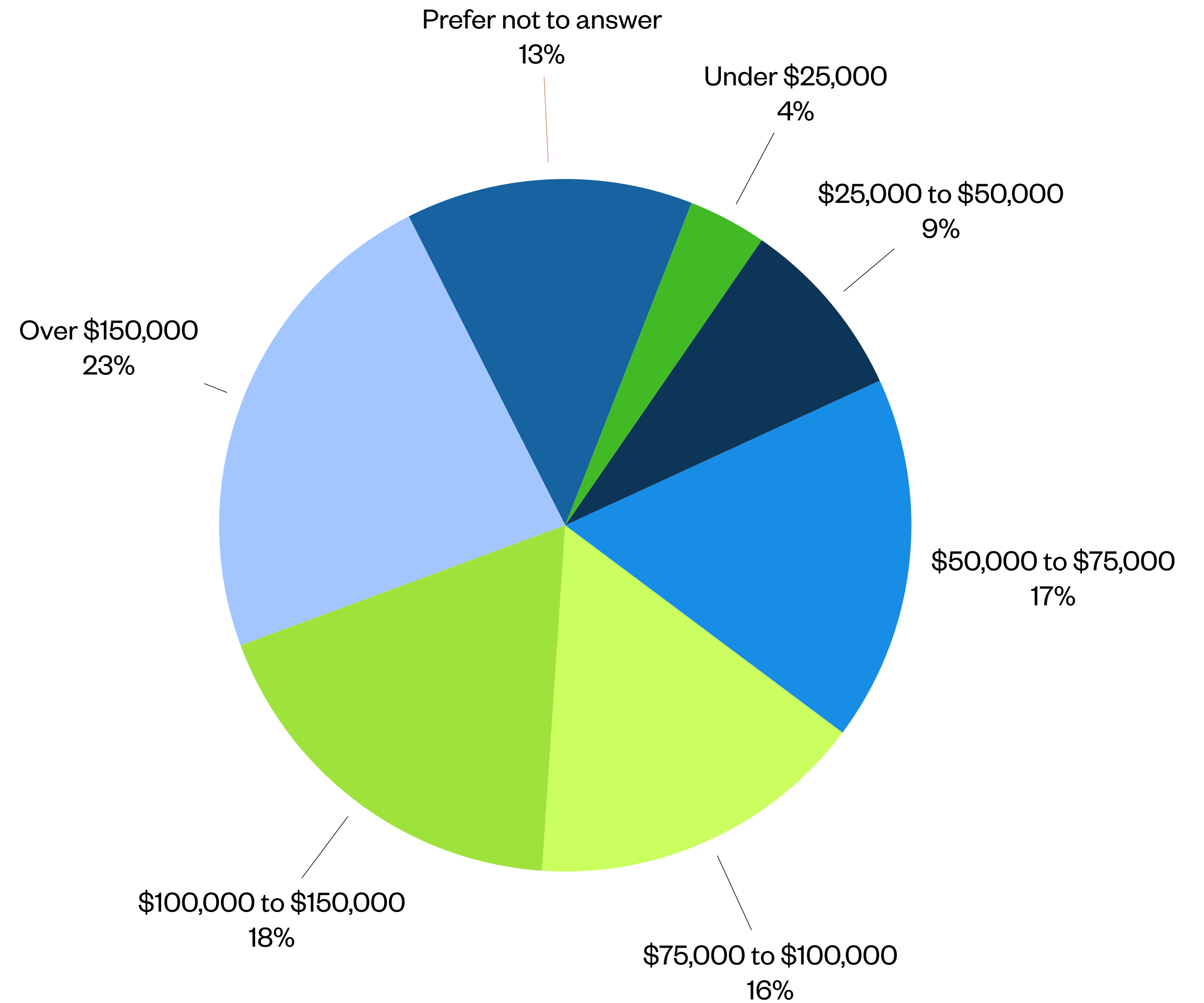
Demographic Information

Gender



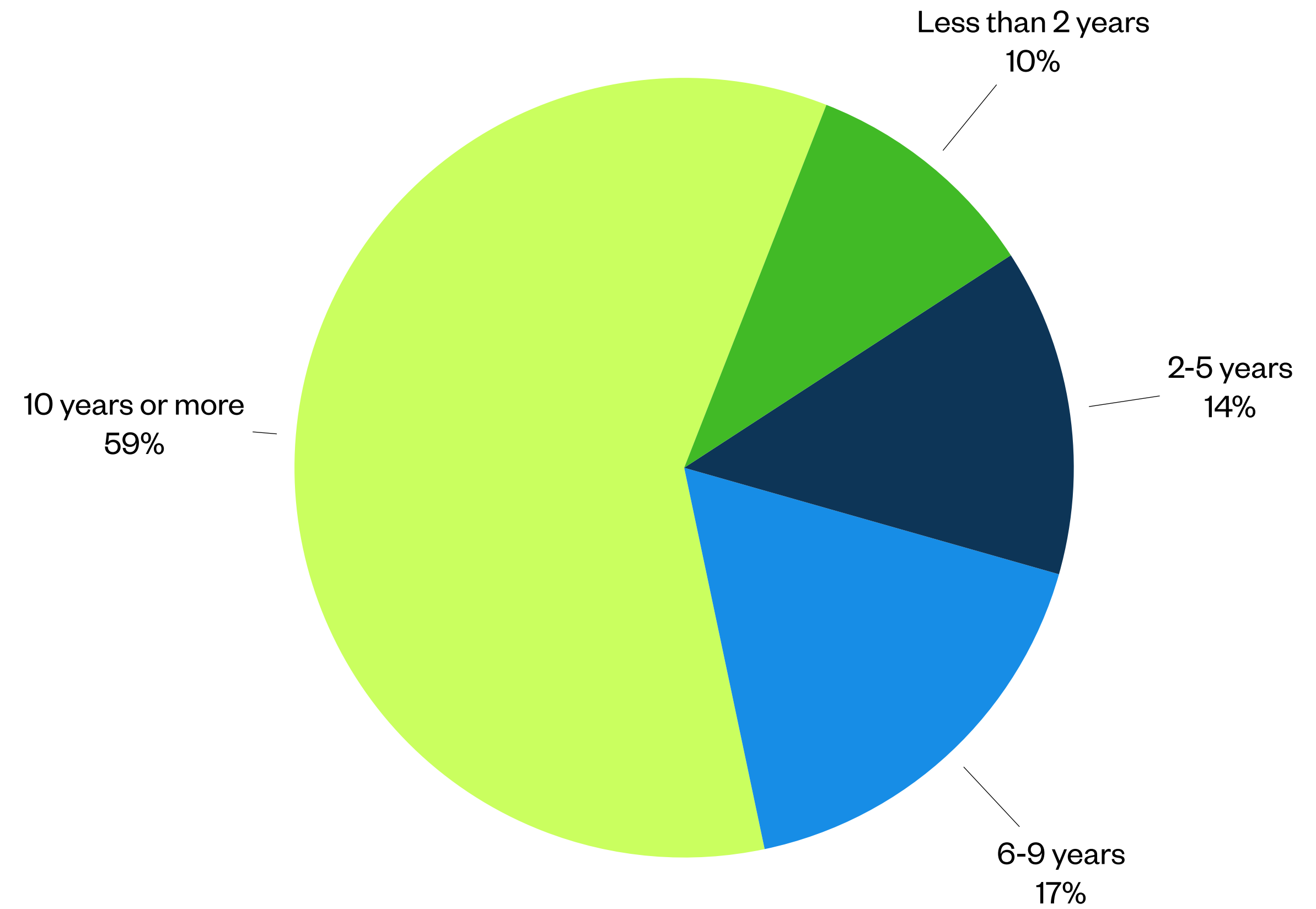
Demographic Information

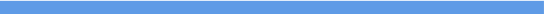
Household Income



Demographic Information

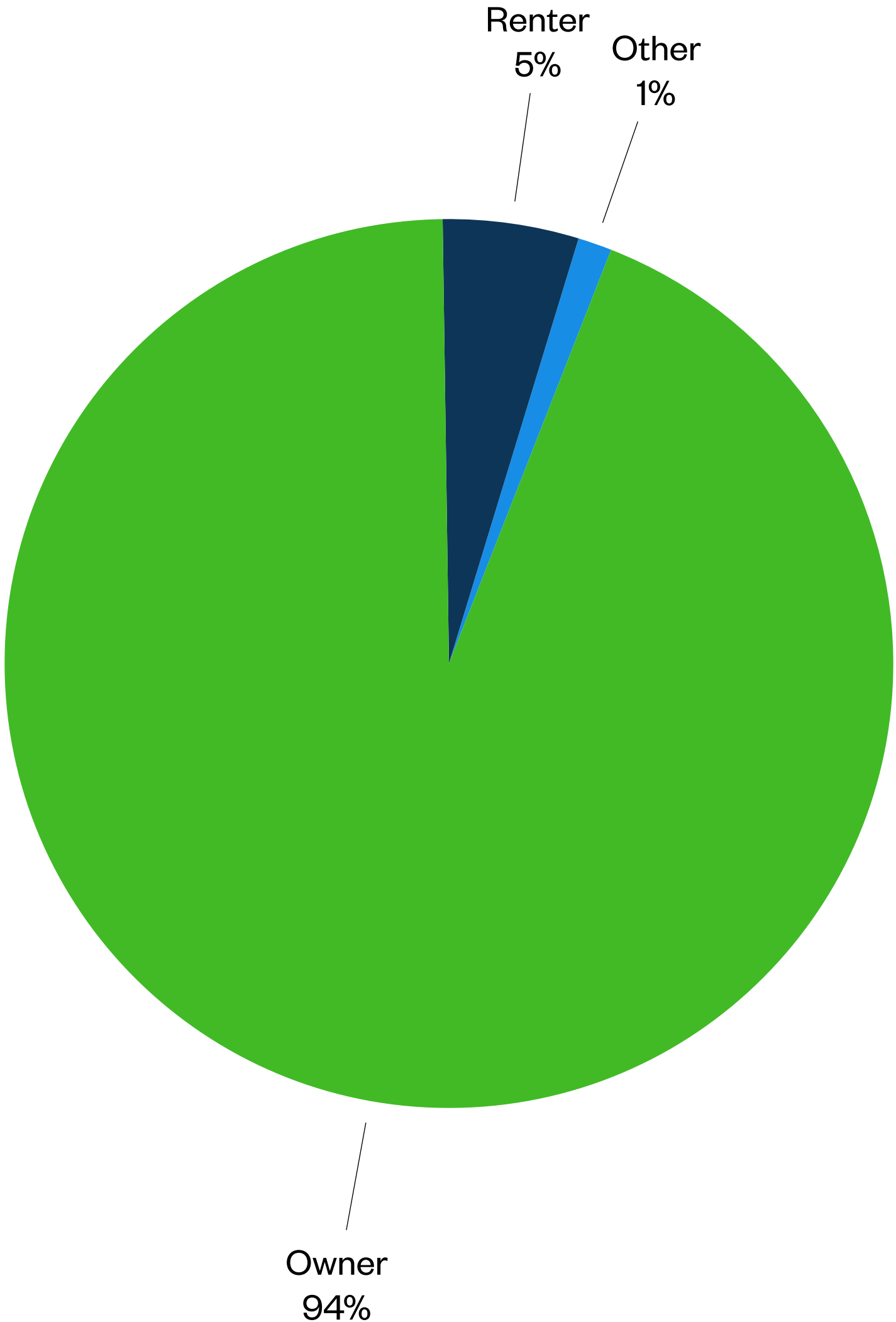
Residency





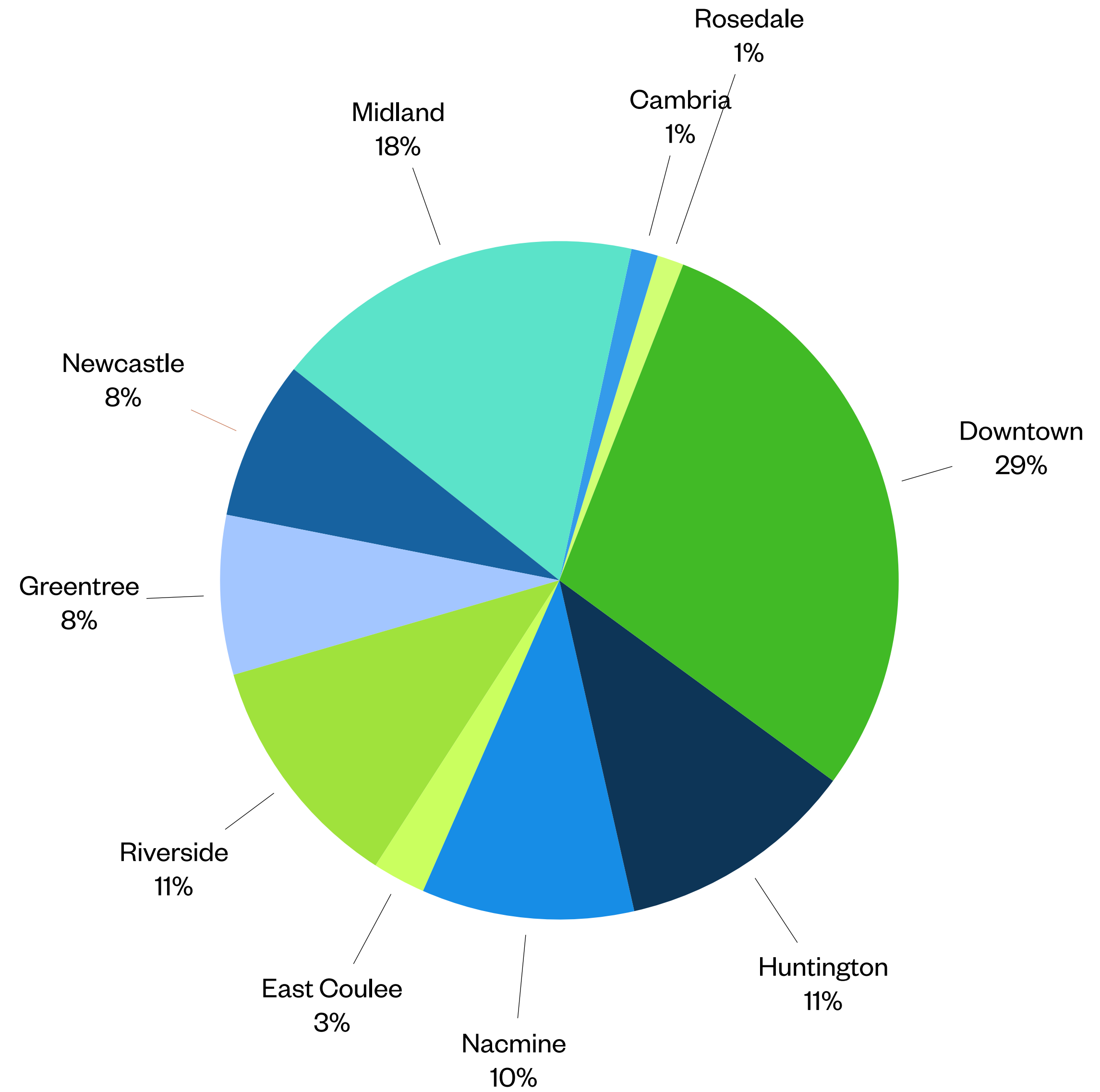
Demographic Information

Status



Demographic Information

Area*



* Not included: Wayne and Lehigh (< 1%)

ETHELO



Thank you!