



VILLAGE OF STIRLING

Municipal Development Plan Community Survey

Summary Results
August 2021



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the first stage of community consultation for the new Municipal Development Plan, the 24-question Community Survey was designed to identify general trends and attitudes, and determine municipal priorities.

The information provided in this summary present the findings from the Community Survey and provides insights into community attitudes and trends that will help form MDP policy moving forward.

About the Survey:

The Village of Stirling Community Survey was launched during the month of June, 2021. Notice of the Community Survey was sent to residents with their water bill, and posted on Village website and associated social media. To improve accessibility, the survey was delivered through three platforms: online through Survey Monkey, as a fillable form for download, and hard (printed) copies were made available at the Village Office.

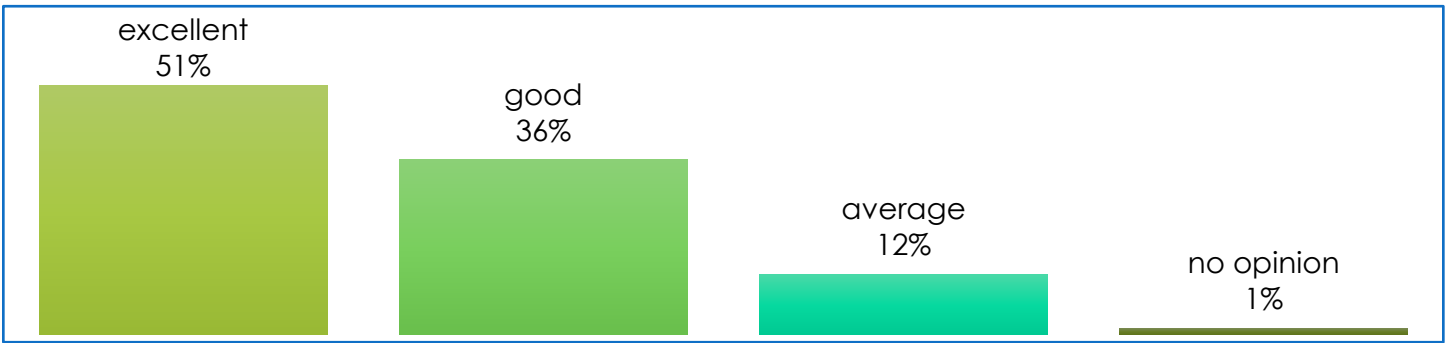
In total:

- **392** notices were sent out to residents via mail and email;
- **74** responses were received: 68 through Survey Monkey (online), 2 fillable forms, and 4 hard copies.
- **The Village of Stirling Community Survey had a participation rate of 19%.**

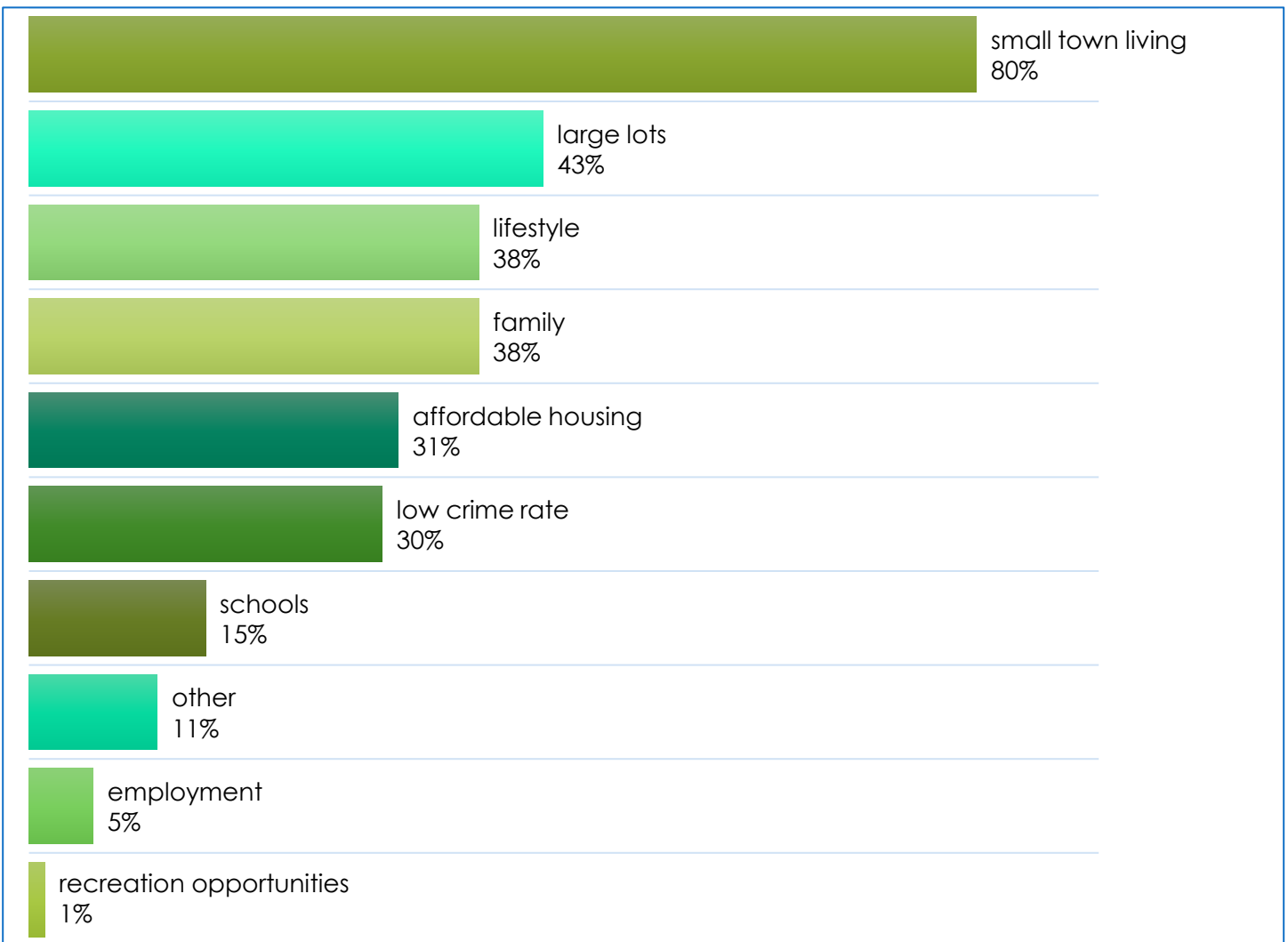
Initial Insights:

- While 35% of respondents have moved to Stirling within the last 10 years; one quarter (25%) of respondents have lived in Stirling for more than 30 years.
- 6% of respondents have lived in Stirling their whole lives, and the remaining 94% of respondents moved to Stirling.
 - Of those respondents who moved to Stirling, 56% moved from within the region.
- The majority (51%) of respondents rate Stirling as an excellent place to live, and no one rated Stirling poorly.
- Top 5 reasons for living in Stirling are "small-town living" (80%), "large lots" (43%), "lifestyle" (38%); "family" (38%), and "affordable housing" (31%).
- The majority (70%) of respondents agree that more business and industry in Stirling is essential, and 60% believe that future commercial activity should be located within the Village boundaries.
- Most respondents (52%) want to see Stirling "grow moderately (2% annually)". An additional 31% of respondents want to see Stirling "grow slowly (>2% annually)".
- "Seniors services", "youth activities", "economic development", "minimal commercial development", "municipal infrastructure", "community appearance", "bylaw enforcement" and "municipal taxes" were identified as issues (50% or more identified as either a major or a minor issue).
- Over the next decade, most respondents (53%) indicated that "there likely wont be a change" in their housing needs; while 22% will "likely require less space" and "likely need a home that requires less maintenance".
- Respondents indicated that the "Village website" (34%), "newsletter" (32%) and "social media" (26%) are the best methods of communication between the Village and residents.

1 OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE STIRLING AS A PLACE TO LIVE?



2 WHAT ARE YOUR TOP THREE REASONS FOR LIVING IN STIRLING?




OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):

- Quiet
- I'm allowed to have livestock in town
- none
- Agricultural opportunity
- Close to Lethbridge
- Pool
- Connecting to the states.

3 WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT STIRLING, OR DO NOT WANT TO SEE CHANGED?

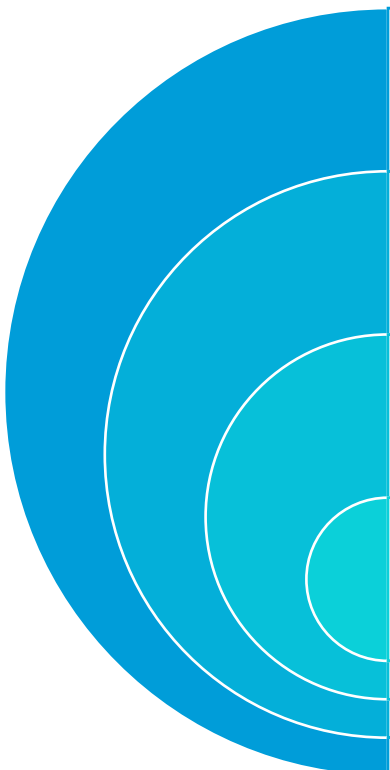
*Written responses for question 5 were categorized into these themes. *Italics represent the most common responses.*



Atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Small town community' (18) •'Quiet' (15) •'Safe' (6)
Freedoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Space' & 'Lot Size' (6) •'Livestock' (5) •'Independence' (3)
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Friendly' (7) •'Events' (4)
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Pool' (4) •'Historic sites/features' (4)

4 WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT STIRLING, OR WOULD LIKE TO SEE CHANGED?

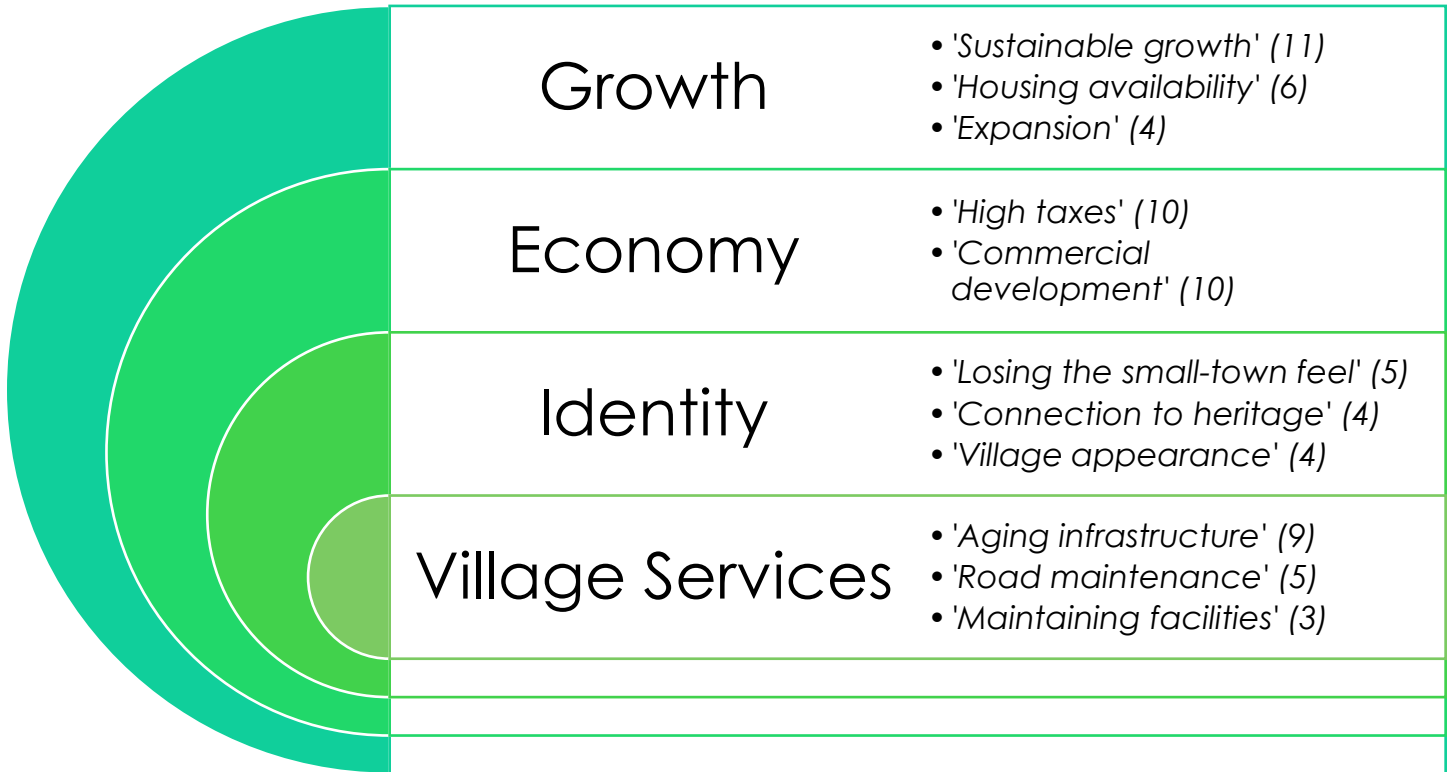
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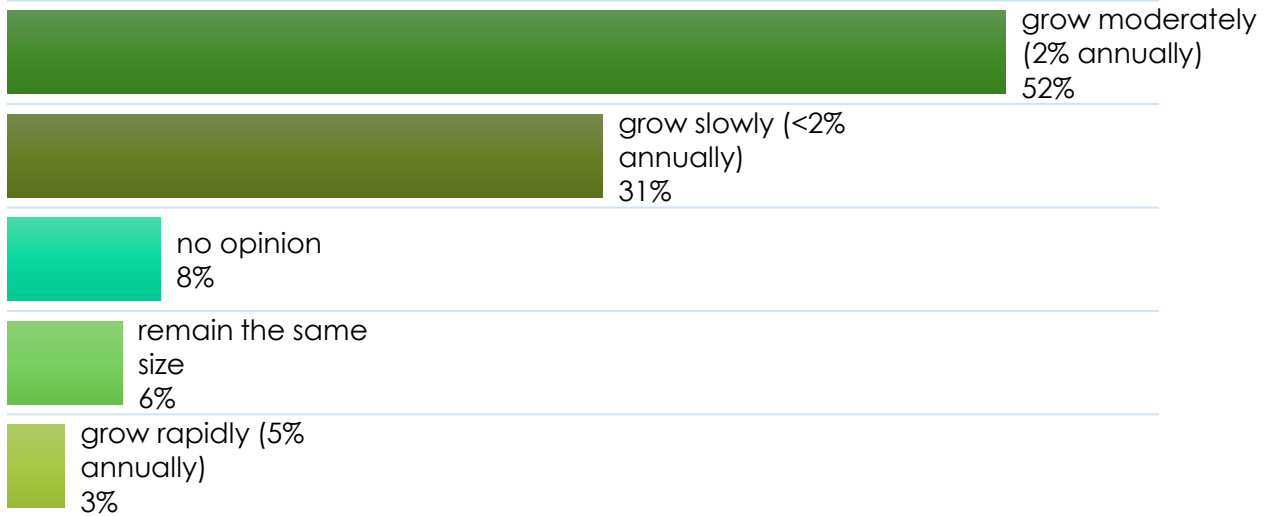
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Gravel roads' (15) •'Sidewalks' (4) •'Aging infrastructure' (2)
Bylaw Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Bylaw Enforcement' (10) •'Animal control' (5)
Community Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Taxes' (10) •'Smell/odour' (5)
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •'Commercial activities' (6) •'More trails' (4) •'Youth activities' (4)

5 WHAT DO YOU FEEL IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FACING STIRLING IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS?

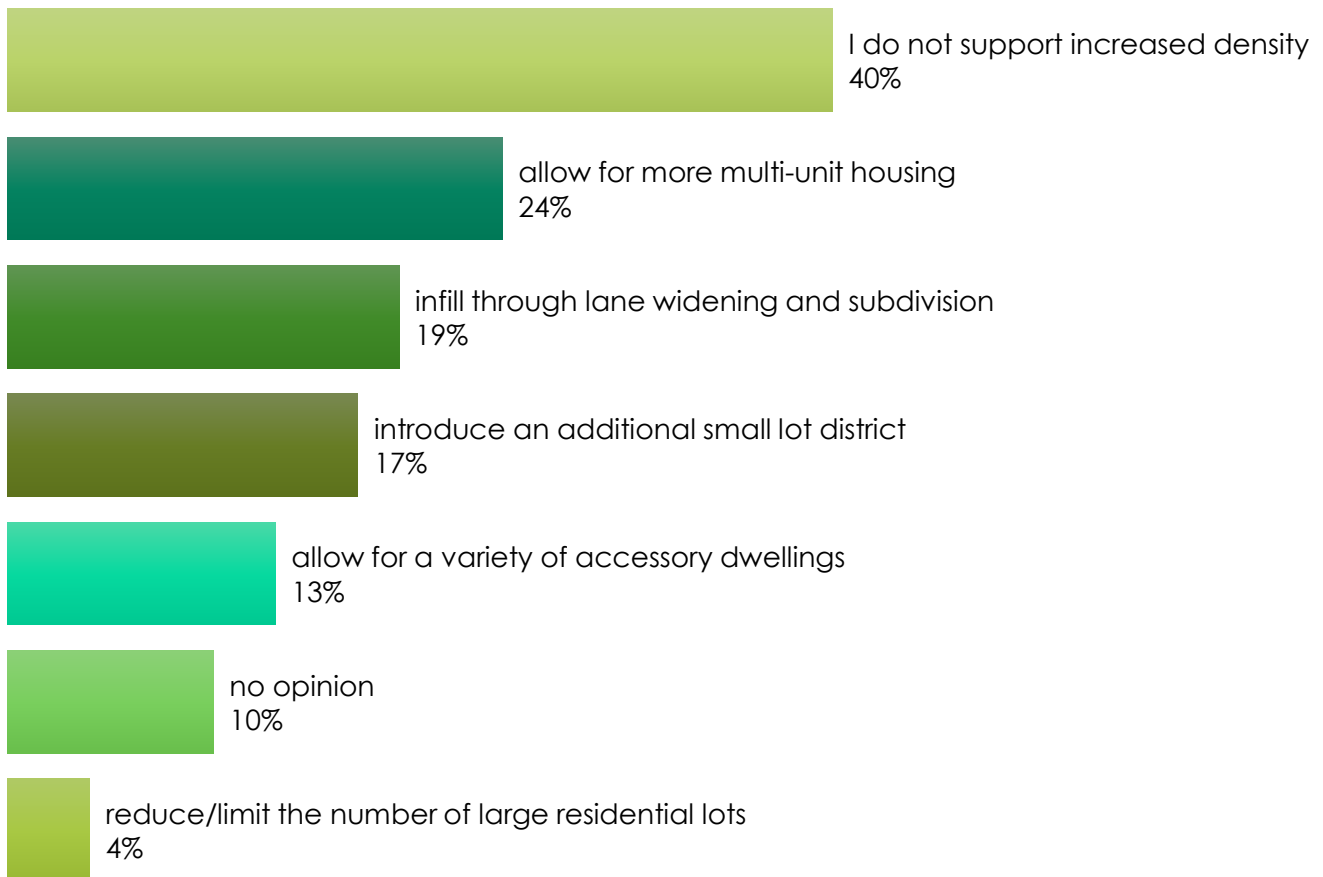
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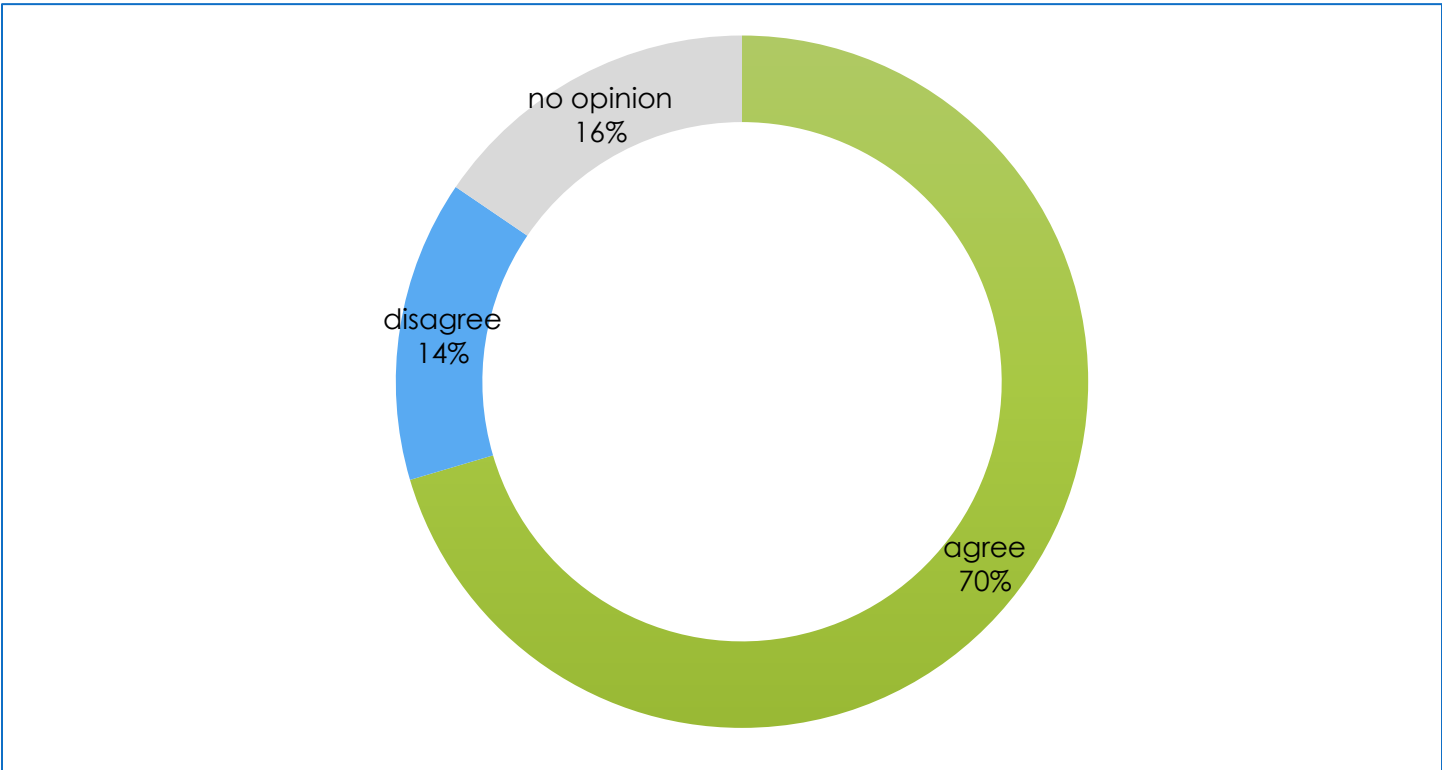
6 IN THE FUTURE, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE VILLAGE:



7 THE PROVINCE HAS STATED THAT MUNICIPALITIES NEED TO USE LAND MORE EFFICIENTLY. WHICH ARE THE BEST WAYS THAT THE VILLAGE CAN DO THIS?



8 DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE THAT MORE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IN STIRLING IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE COMMUNITY TO BE SUSTAINABLE INTO THE FUTURE?

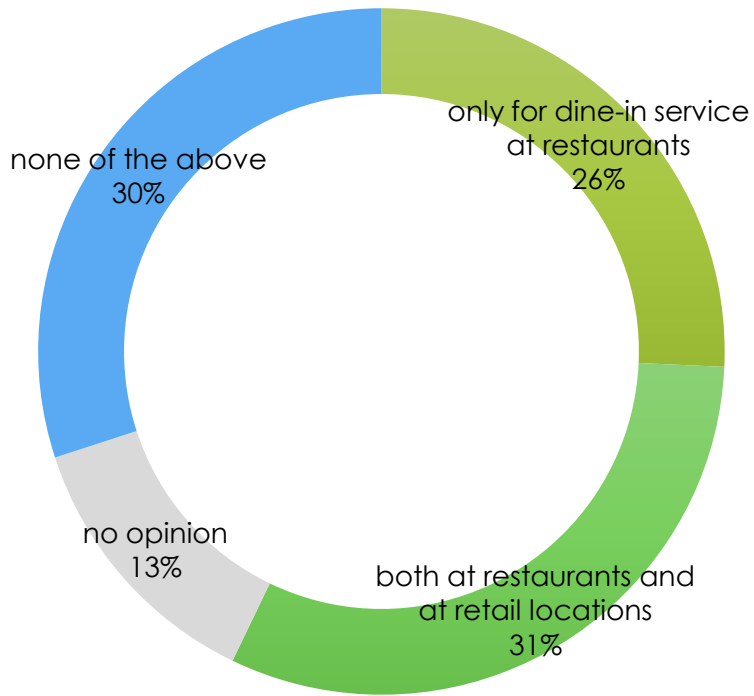


9 IF YES, WHICH FACILITIES, SERVICES, BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES WOULD BE MOST BENEFICIAL FOR THE VILLAGE?

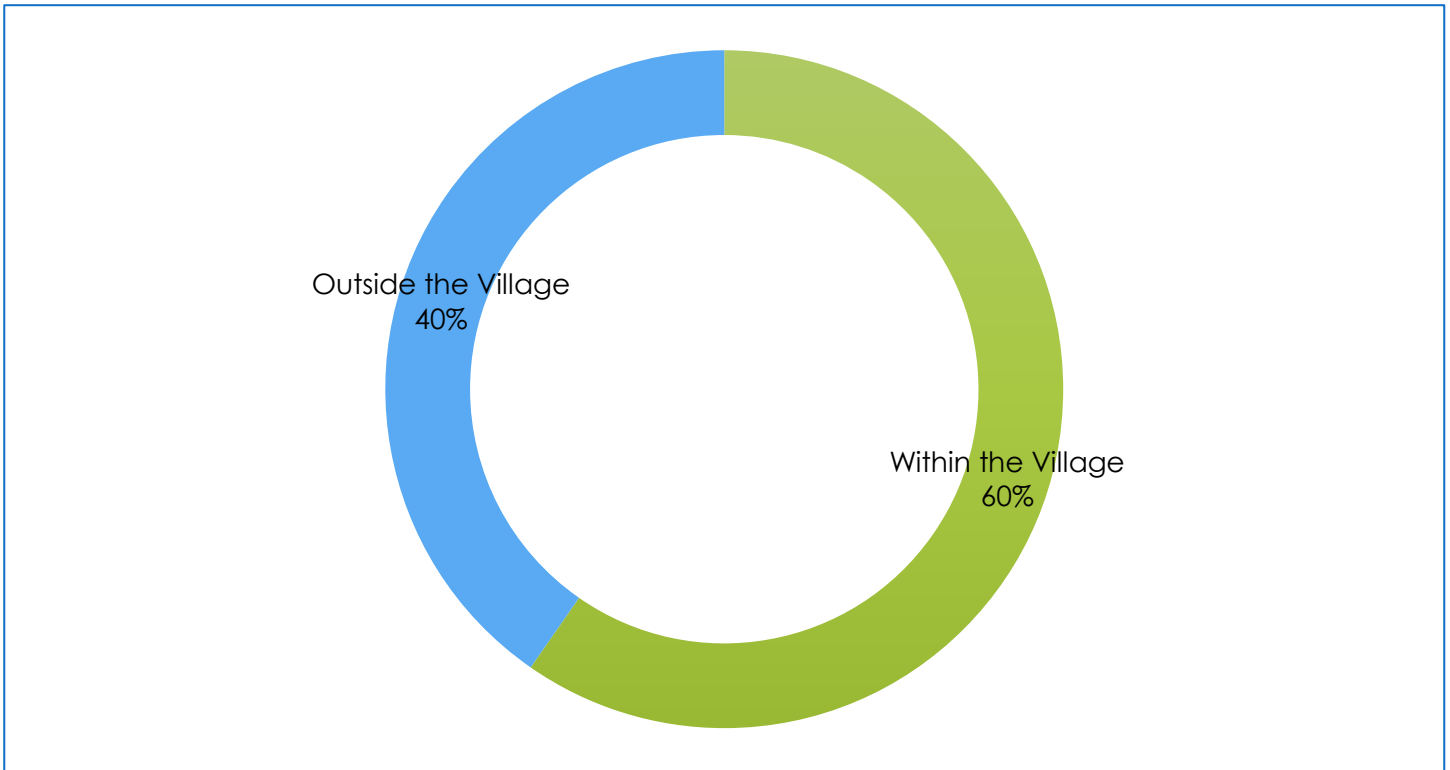
**Written responses for question 5 were categorized into these themes. Italics represent the most common responses.*

Basic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grocery store (14)</i> • <i>Daycare & youth activities (5)</i> • <i>Seniors facilities & improved amenities (7)</i>
General Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Retail & supplies (11)</i> • <i>Dining (11)</i> • <i>Tourism (4)</i>
Highway-Related Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Service station (7)</i> • <i>Autobody, auto-repair (5)</i> • <i>Truck-stop (2)</i>
Medical, Para-medical & Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More physicians, dentists (5)</i> • <i>Pharmacy (2)</i>

10 IF THE VILLAGE WAS TO ALLOW FOR LIMITED ALCOHOL SALES, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE YOUR PREFERENCE:



**11 THE VILLAGE CURRENTLY HAS LIMITED COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY.
WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT?**



OUTSIDE OF THE VILLAGE:

- Along Highway 4 (8);
- unsure (1)

WITHIN THE VILLAGE:

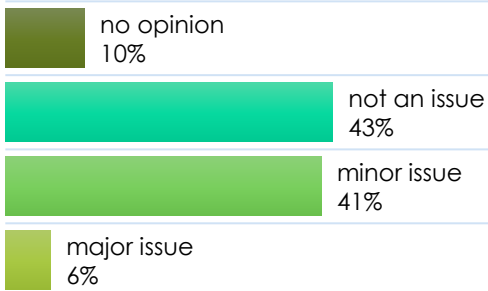
- Main Street/4th Avenue (9)
- Edges of Village (5)
- Any available vacant land (4)

OTHER:

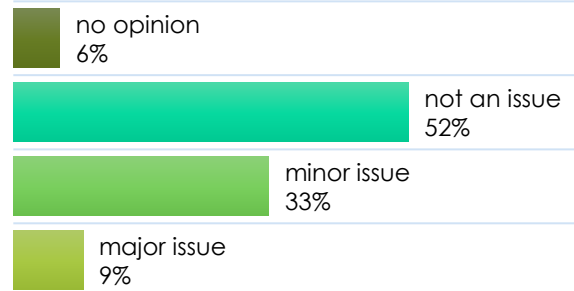
- Either (2)
- Both (1)
- No opinion (1)

12 DO YOU THINK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ARE AN ISSUE IN STIRLING?

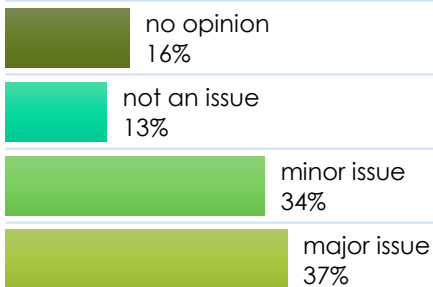
housing costs



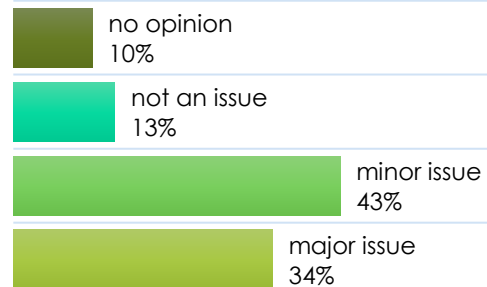
housing variety



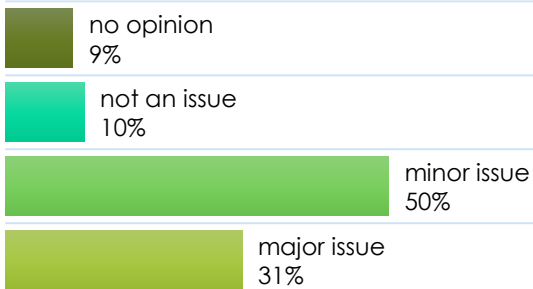
seniors' services



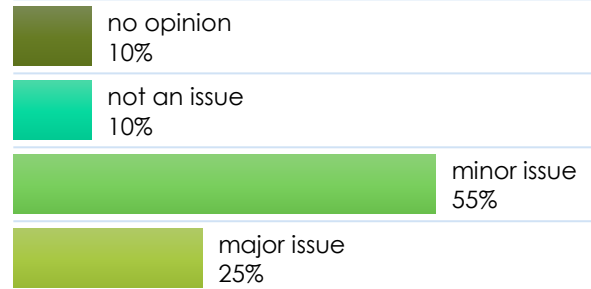
youth activities



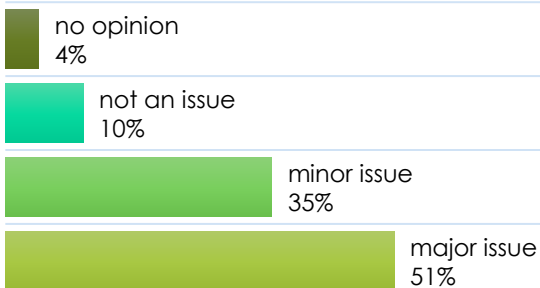
economic development



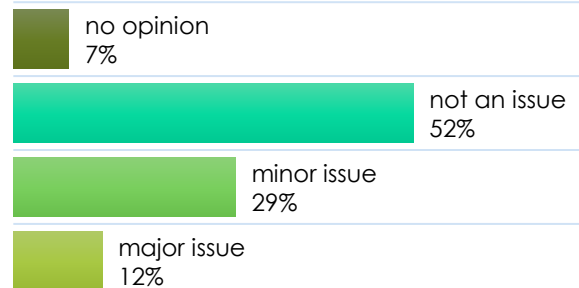
minimal commercial development



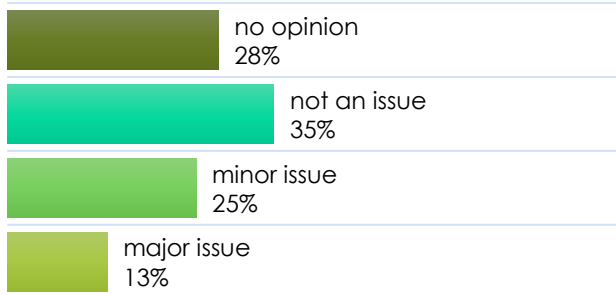
municipal infrastructure



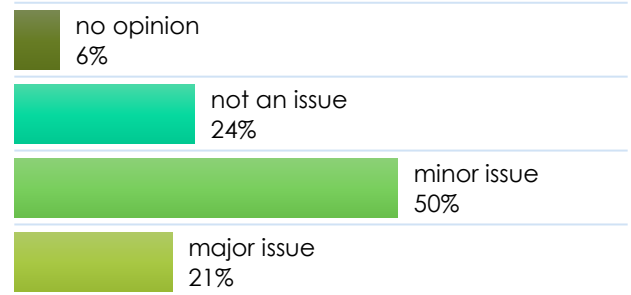
education



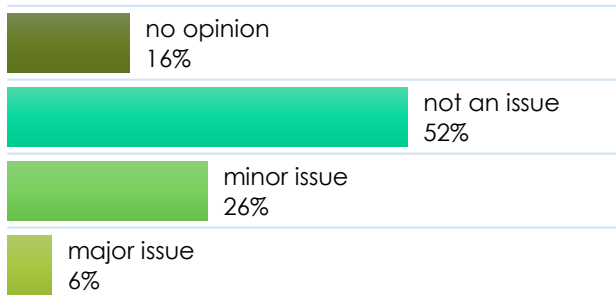
childcare availability



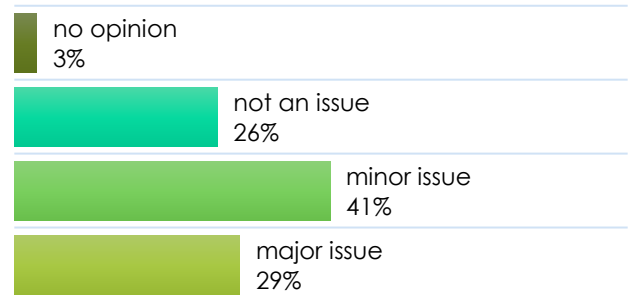
community appearance



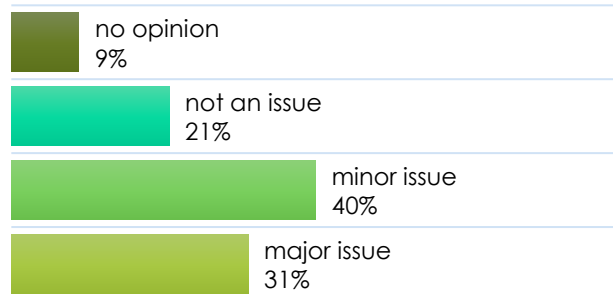
access to local government



bylaw enforcement



municipal taxes



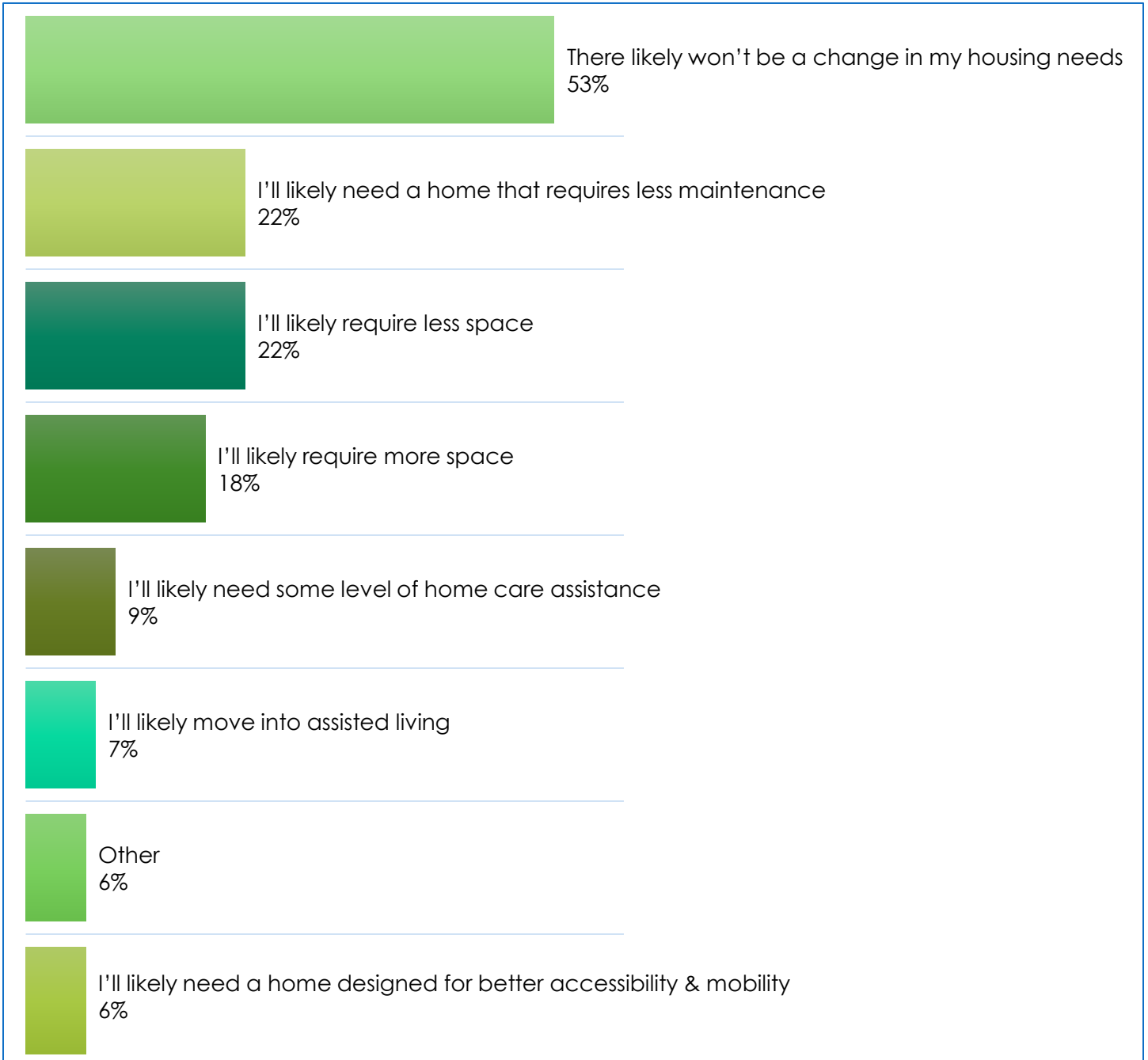
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):

- Property taxes (3)
 - "Property Taxes are too high - I believe our house would have way less property taxes in Lethbridge and even Calgary!. Need more support of business and industry - with these being developed property taxes can be lowered"
 - "taxes on vacant lots way to high"
 - "Seem to be going higher all the time even without fix ups and changes?"
- Too much land use regulation (1)
 - "Need to be able to use more of our land without have to get overage permits after all we own our land and pay the taxes so no one should be able to tell us how much land we have to leave open"
- Misc.
 - "You do not provide a place to check "don't know". There's a difference between "No opinion" and not knowing enough to provide an opinion."

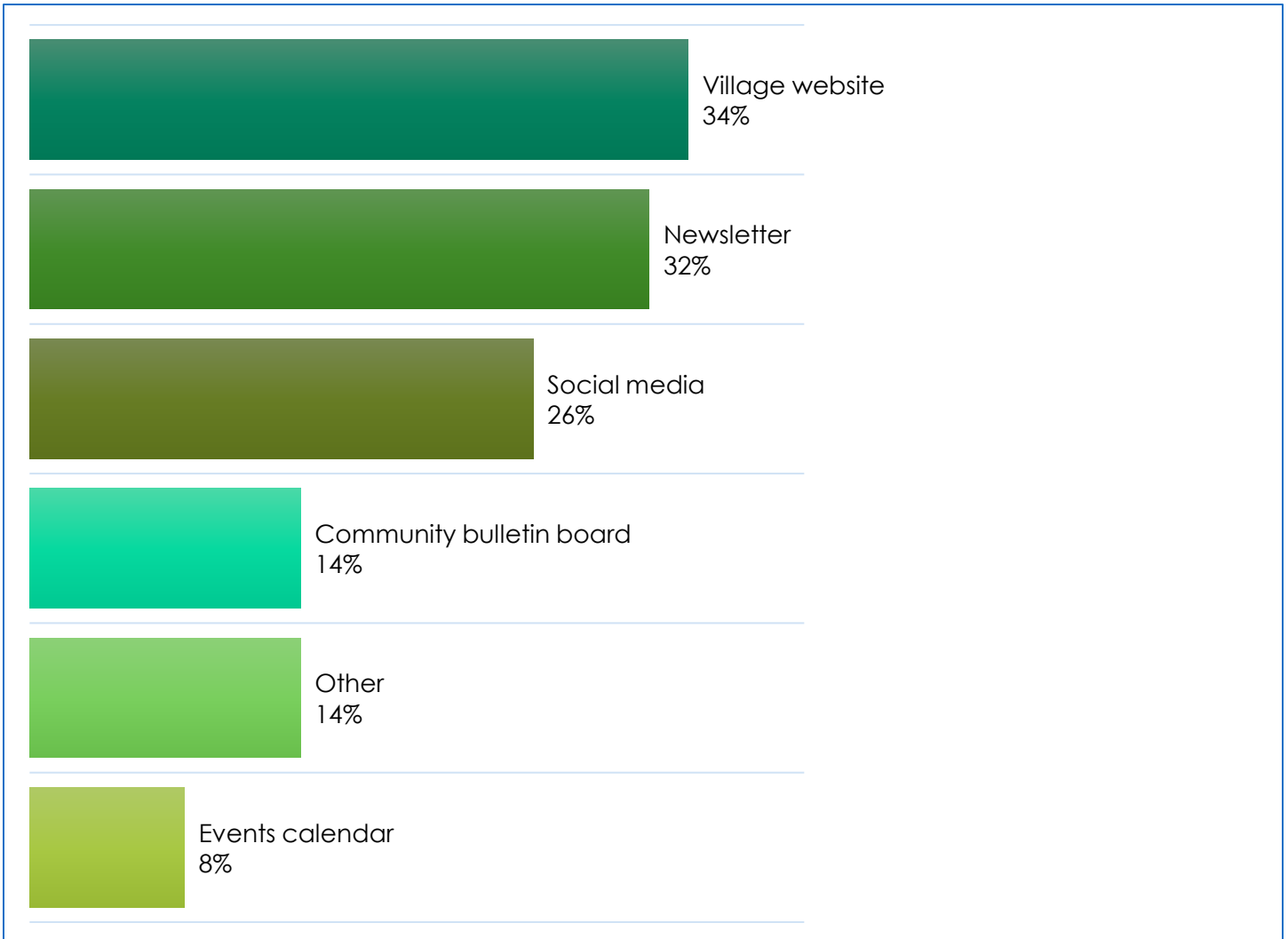
13 HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES?

An error occurred with the Survey Monkey version of this question. Therefore, the results are invalid.

14 HOW DO YOU EXPECT YOUR HOUSING NEEDS TO CHANGE OVER THE NEXT DECADE?



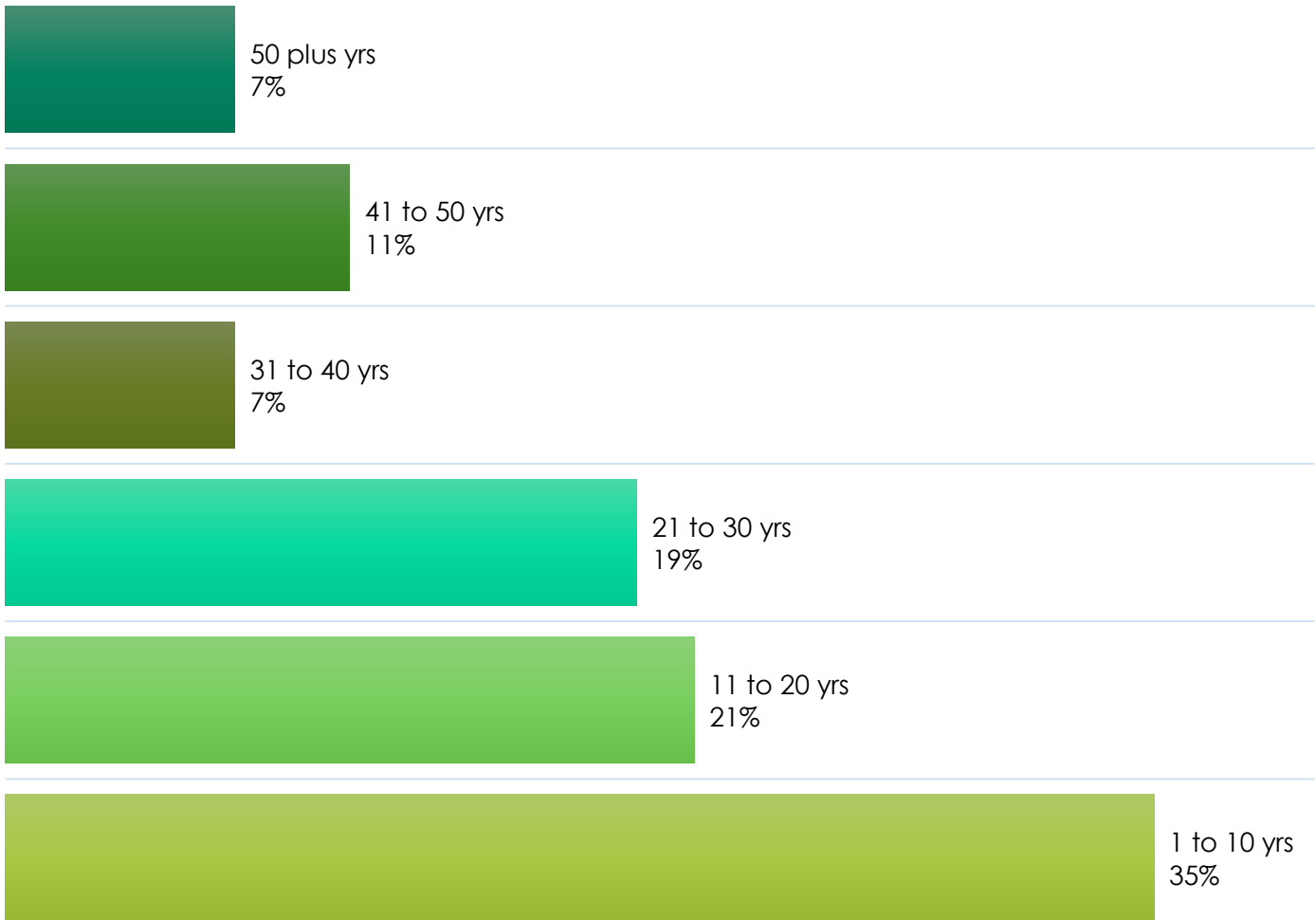
15 WHAT IS THE BEST METHOD FOR VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION TO COMMUNICATE WITH RESIDENTS?



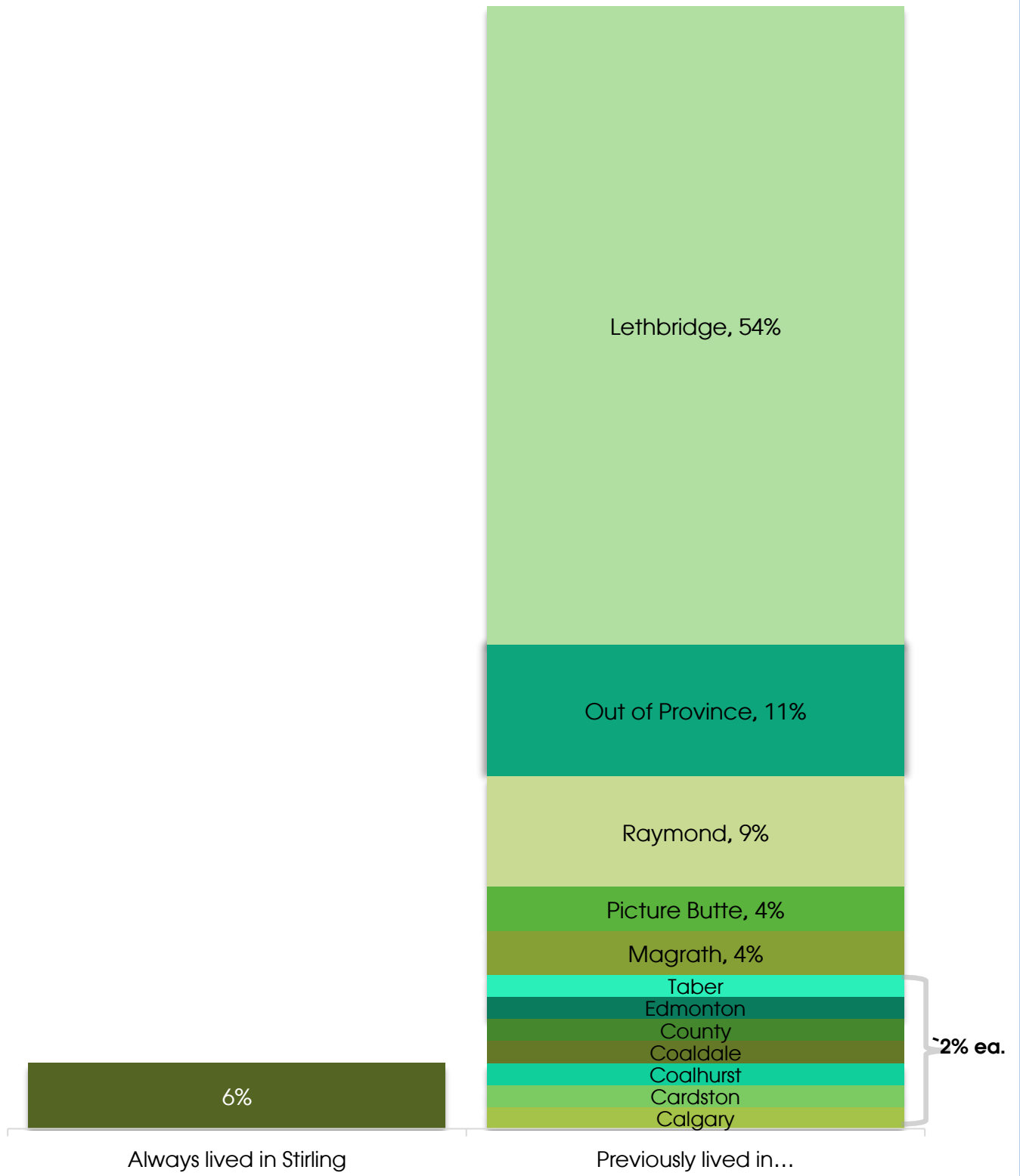
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):

- Email (4)
- Text (2)

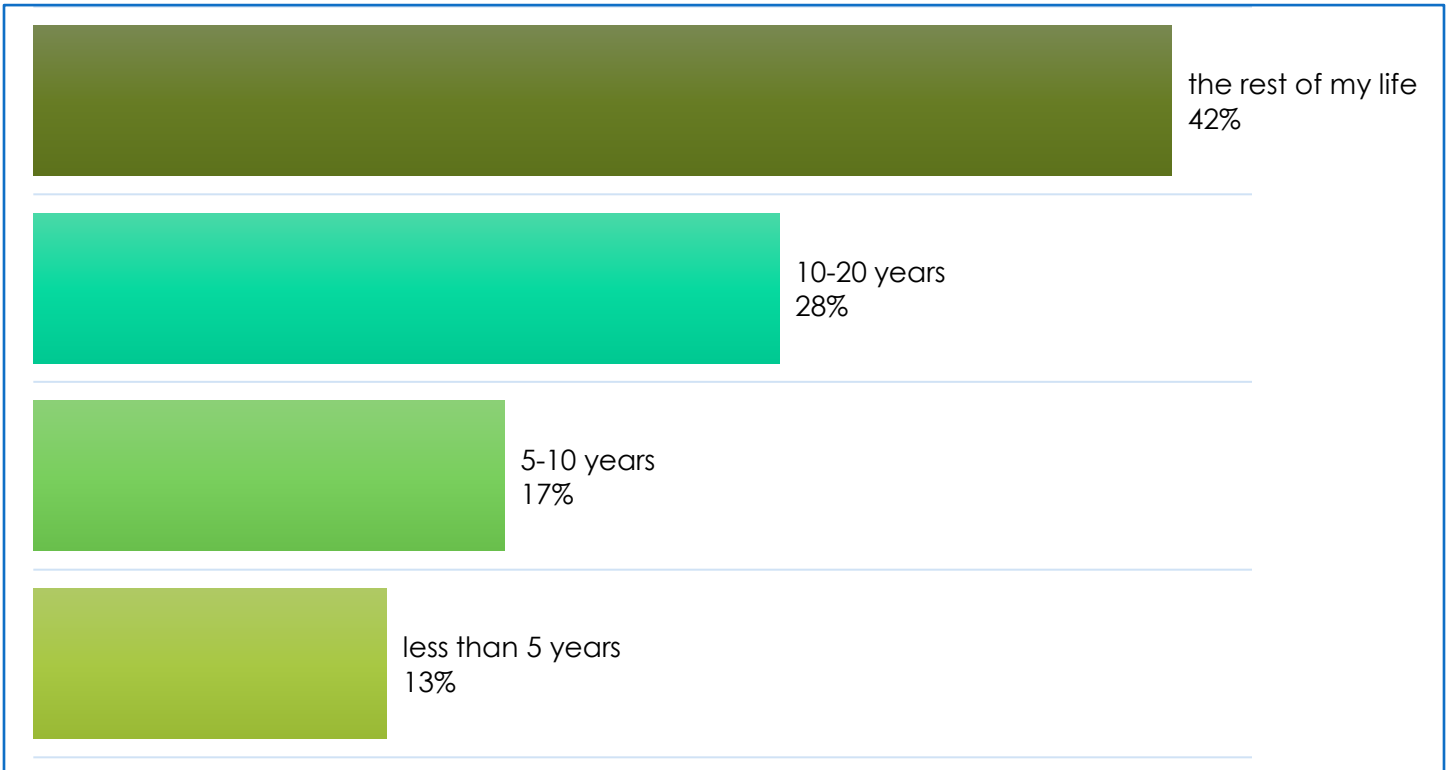
16 HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU LIVED IN STIRLING?



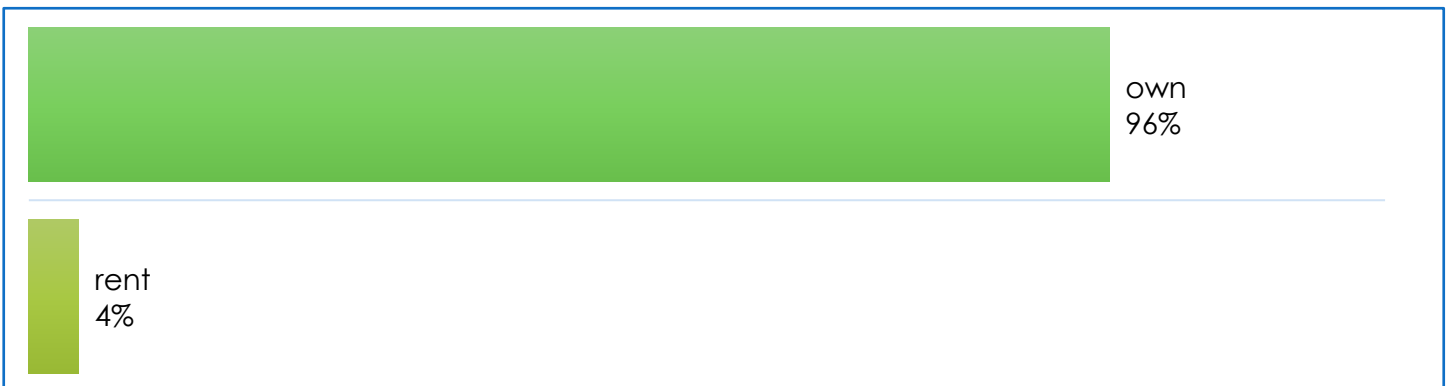
17 WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE YOU MOVED TO STIRLING?



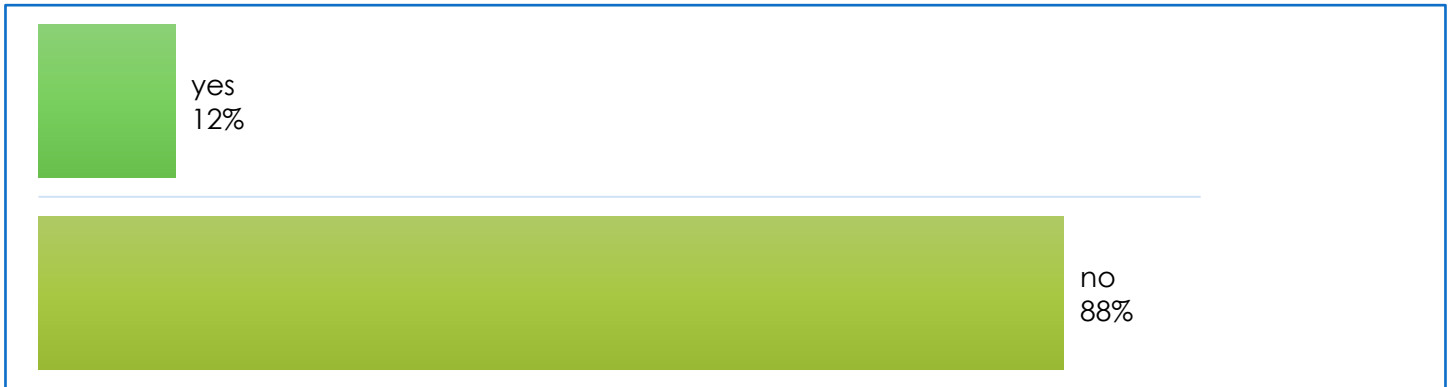
18 HOW LONG DO YOU ENVISION YOURSELF LIVING IN STIRLING?



19 DO YOU RENT OR OWN YOUR HOME?



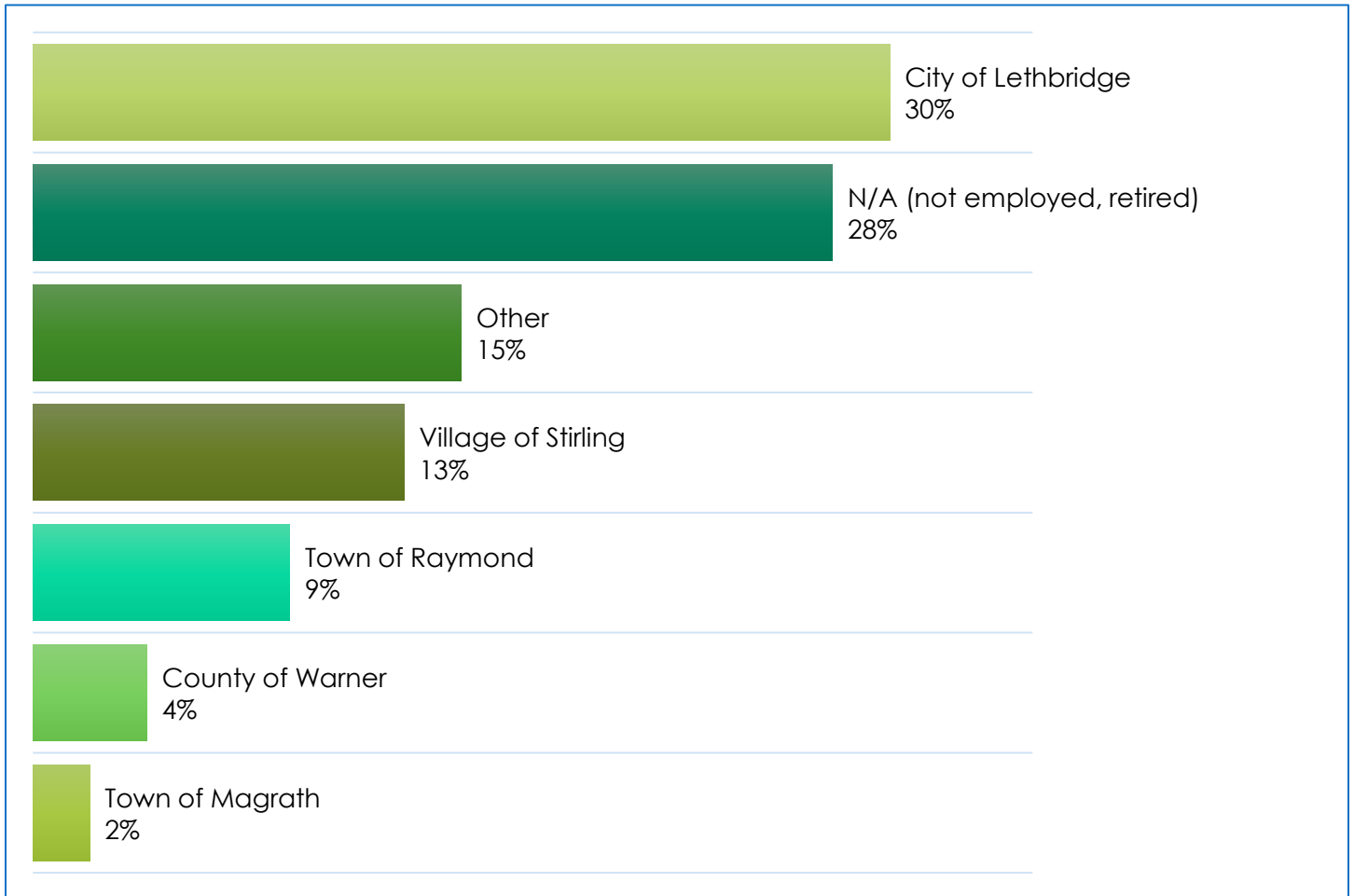
20 DO YOU OWN A BUSINESS IN STIRLING?



'IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY':

- small home based business
- Construction
- Hickory Street
- Sole proprietorship (electrical contractor)
- Tri-Tec Electrical Systems
- Ceramic Supply

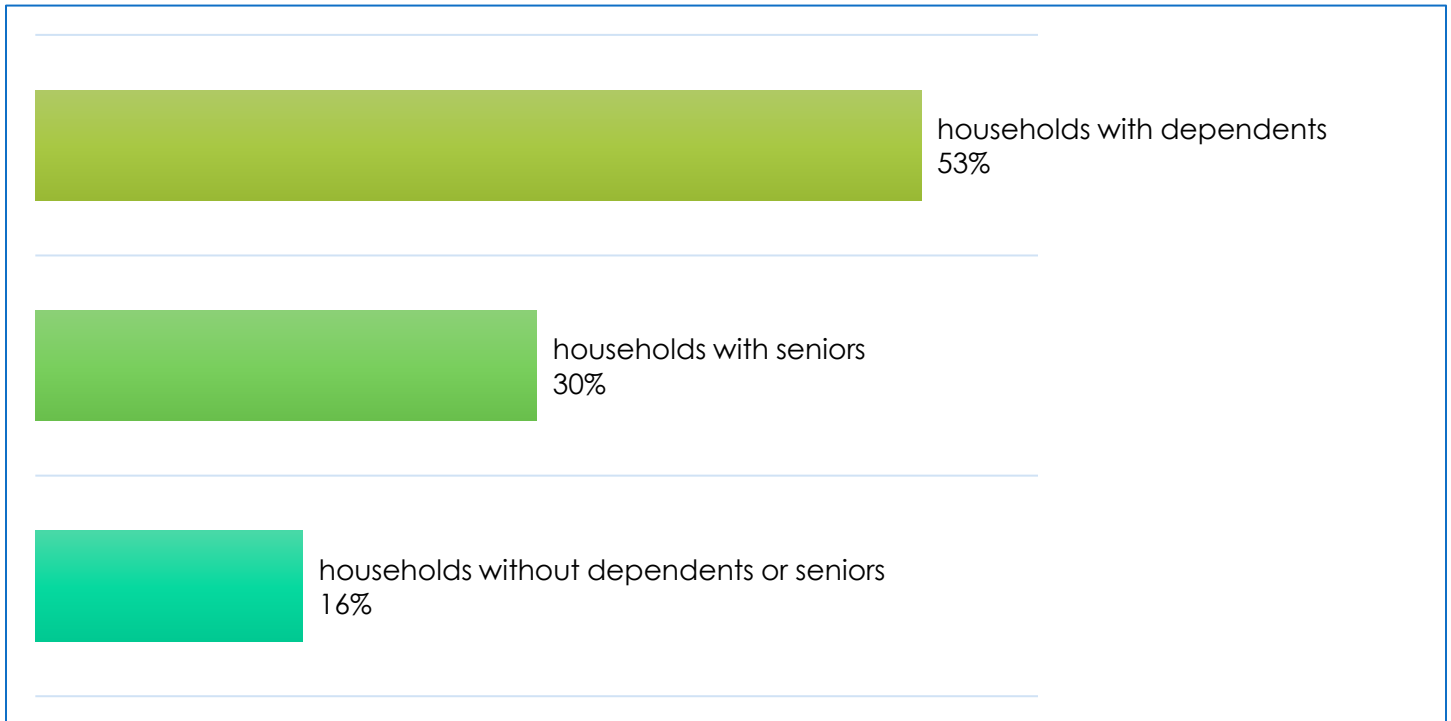
21 WHERE DO YOU WORK?



OTHER:

- Don't want to provide the information.
- None of the above
- Within a 50k range of Stirling
- On AISH
- Coaldale
- Electrical Contractor
- Oil
- Truck driver

22 IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD, HOW MANY INDIVIDUALS FIT INTO EACH AGE GROUP?



Trends per Household Composition

Households with Dependents (0-19)

- 53% of respondents fall into this category
- Main concerns: how to accommodate growth
- Facilities which would be most beneficial: grocery, hardware, small business

Households with Seniors (60+)

- 30% of respondents fall into this category
- Main concerns: Aging infrastructure and a loss of community spirit
- Facilities which would be most beneficial: medical services, seniors home

Households without dependents or Seniors

- 16% of respondents fall into this category
- Main concerns: high taxes, bylaw enforcement and crime
- Facilities which would be most beneficial: retail opportunities, restaurants, trades

23 PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU THINK WOULD BE USEFUL TO COUNCIL IN CONSIDERING THE FUTURE OF STIRLING.

**Written responses for question 5 were categorized into these themes.*

Aesthetics/Appearance

- Would like it see the village more maintained: cleaner properties and better roads.
- The kiosk needs to have a "Welcome To Stirling" sign or similar sign facing the intersection. When a stranger comes to Stirling, there is nothing to indicate they should stop there. Yes, there is a Stirling sign there but it isn't really visible until they are past it.

Accessibility/Inclusivity

- There are a number of seniors still living in their own homes at the moment but I could see a retirement residence or assisted living accommodations being useful here in the not too distant future. I approve of the dental & medical services available to Stirling - very convenient for seniors.
- They need to think of all the residents not just a select few

Bylaw Enforcement

- Across the street from the store is an eyesore. Turning into this town is an eyesore. It has needed bylaw attention for years. Its disgraceful and embarasing. " yeah just drive until you see a big junkyard full of cars that kind of looks like a decrepate old gas station and turn right to get to stirling" thats the directions to our town. Just horrible.
- Allow the people to use more of their land without overage permits cause 33% is not enough and Force the people whos trees are falling on to their neighbors land to trim them or be fined
- Some houses dont really look like they belong in town. The big brick house north of town and the duplexes on the southside dont really look nice in town. Dont make too many rules for new developments, but keep all new developments kinda looking the same. Some houses and yards look really junky, after years still wrapped only in house wrap and old junk cars standing around. Those people should be encouraged to clean up and meet certain town standards.

Growth/Economic Development

- Need to develop and support - agricultural business, tourism business and just general business development in Lethbridge.
- Keeping the fragile balance between growth and conservation.
- Growth is inevitable once Lethbridge went over 100000 people, we need to actively plan for what a Stirling of 1400 or 1500 people looks like
- Please bring in more businesses! Would love to see a walkable downtown area inside the village. Our main street is so trashy! Play off of the historic agricultural aspect. Enforce architectural controls for historic facades for businesses. We need to bring people off the highway!
- I think moving forward is important but also keeping in mind lot for live here for the small town privileges so if there is some way to work with both that would be great but I am also her to support what is best for the town as well

Infrastructure

- Resurfacing roads was done extremely poorly. Roads only 1-2 years old are crumbling and have giant pot holes or leak oil. All roads and sidewalks need to be completed. Taxes are very high out here especially for the little services that are provided.
- A bike park and walking trail would be amazing. I love Stirling days.

General Comments

- I love our community! Try to keep it charming and family friendly if you can! We'd love to see our grandkids grow up in a place like this!
- Thanks to town workers and council for all the hard work. Stirling is a great community to be part of and people will always complain about something - just ignore them and carry on!

- Continue to provide amazing support to our volunteer fire department, they are amazing individuals
- Appreciate the opportunity to have input. I think Stirling does a lot with limited resources. Appreciate the work of Council and the Village staff.
- I understand the need for development of residential. But it is sad to see big lots being subdivided just to get another house or two in, lots that have been here for as long as I have should be left alone and sold as acreages. I would rather look out my window and see horses than see my neighbour's kitchen.
- No complaints – enjoy living here. nice people.