



MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

Listen, Learn, Adjust

Survey Results
February 29, 2024 - March 19, 2024

Total Respondents: 232



Cameron Arial | CEO

MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

Purpose of Survey



- **Inform citizens about:**
 - Current District statistics
 - The impact of community growth on the District
 - The District's plans to address said growth
 - The financial considerations of running the District
- **Gauge support for:**
 - A permanent levy override
 - The District seeking a permanent levy override at the May 2024 election
- **Receive feedback on:**
 - Reasons for not supporting a permanent levy override
 - Preferred communication methods

MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

Survey Development

Discovery

- Discovery
 - Meetings with District leaders
 - Data gathering and determination of priorities and timeline
- Implementation
 - Development of initial questions, feedback & edits, finalize
 - Deployment **February 29, 2024**
- Outreach Methodology: broad distribution with a public education focus
 - District website: survey link, information on About page
 - Email to HOAs
 - Social media
 - Press release: **03.11.24**
 - Idaho Statesman article
 - Flyers for dissemination at events or through partners
- Analysis: check-in meetings, discussion of results, brainstorm future outreach and next steps



OUTREACH Press Release



Middleton Rural Fire District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT INFORMATION

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gtiminsky@midstarfire.org

MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS TO TAKE PART IN SURVEY

Middleton, ID, March 11, 2024 – Middleton Rural Fire District released its first-ever community-wide survey this week. The survey seeks to gather feedback on public safety services, impacts of growth on the District, and funding constraints on the District due to legislative changes made in 2021. The survey is available on the District's website, <https://midstarfire.org/>, or directly at <https://bit.ly/middletonfiresurvey>. The survey takes approximately 5 to 7 minutes to complete.

The survey also informs the community about facilities and District funding realities. The District's population has increased by 25% since 2018 to approximately 28,000 people, and that growth is projected to continue. The number of buildings within the District boundaries has increased by more than 2,000 since 2018 to approximately 9,900 structures. Fire protection and EMS facilities have not increased since 2002. The District's optimal response time for Fire protection/EMS services is 5 minutes to minimize property loss and severe or fatal injury. The District's current response time within the downtown station service area is up to 5 minutes. The response time outside the downtown's Station 53 service area ranges from 5 to 20 minutes.

Funding the District's increasing service demands has been a challenge. With the passage of [HB 389](#) in 2021, the District's budget can only grow by 3% annually with a maximum of 8% depending on the amount of new construction, creating a funding gap between the amount the District receives in property taxes and the actual cost to provide fire protection and EMS services throughout the District's 110-square mile service area. The District has implemented development impact fees, but those fees can only cover the cost of capital facilities due to growth, not the operational and personnel needs to staff and equip a needed fire station in the northwest area of the District. On top of this, the costs associated with fire personal protection equipment and general operational expenses have increased from 30-100% due to inflation since 2020.

The District plans to refurbish Station 54 on Harvey Road to better serve residents in the northwest portion of the District. The plan for refurbishing and staffing the additional facility and adequately serving the Station 53 service area can be found on the District's website <https://midstarfire.org/>. Once complete, Station 54 will reduce response times in that area and minimize service demand on Station 53 downtown, which currently covers the entire 110 square miles, thus improving service coverage throughout the District. The District is asking for the community's feedback on a potential permanent levy override to cover the increased operational costs that cannot be funded by current property taxes. Based on 2023 property values, the estimated cost to a homeowner would be approximately \$60-65 per \$100,000 of assessed value (less homeowner's exemption) annually or \$5-\$5.50 per month. Based on community feedback, the District Board may consider placing an override levy ballot measure for the May 21 primary election date. A permanent levy override requires a 66.7% voter approval to pass.



Middleton Rural Fire District

"Many factors contribute to our budgetary challenges to keep our residents safe, such as inflation, the cost of personnel safety equipment, growth, and the impacts of legislation enacted in 2021," said Chief Greg Timinsky. "Due to the impacts of the legislative changes, it limits our ability to increase our annual budget by the necessary amounts needed to operate, retain and increase staffing, and to equip the District's facilities. For fire districts, more than 97% of funding for operational costs comes from property taxes. When property tax cuts are put into place it directly affects our operating budgets. Impact fees can be used to cover the cost to remodel Station 54, but without a permanent levy override, there won't be any firefighters in that station rolling out to help people in need," he added. "We're exploring ways to keep our public safety service levels on pace with growth. The survey will identify community priorities to guide the District's decisions."

"We encourage residents to invest a few minutes to share their feedback," said MRFD Board Chair, Liz Bolts.

###

About Middleton Rural Fire District:

Led by Chief Greg Timinsky, the Middleton Rural Fire District currently serves 28,000 residents from its one station, Station 53, in downtown Middleton. Middleton Rural Fire District is one of the fastest-growing districts in Idaho. The District provides public safety services, including fire protection, emergency medical services assistance, motor vehicle accidents, public safety education programs, hazardous materials and natural disaster response, building safety inspections, and fire code compliance and plan review. The District is governed by a three-member Board of Commissioners elected by District residents. Current staffing consists of 13 full-time firefighters and four part-time firefighters. The administrative staff is shared with the Star Fire Protection District. This shared administration agreement, often referenced as "Mid/Star Fire," saves EACH District an estimated \$430,000 per year in personnel costs.



STATION 53
302 E. Main St., Middleton, ID 83644

OUTREACH Flyer

MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT

Providing Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services Since 1958



SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

MRFD PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

In an effort to gather community feedback, respond to growth, manage resources, and proactively plan for adequate future fire protection and emergency medical services, MRFD is reaching out to the community. Please take a few minutes to respond to our first-ever community wide Public Safety Survey at www.bit.ly/middletonfiresurvey or scan the QR code.

Help plan for the future.
Take the survey today.



ABOUT US

WHO WE ARE

The Middleton Rural Fire District (MRFD) covers a large 110-square-mile service area that encompasses suburban and rural northeastern Canyon County and a small southwest portion of Gem County. Operating from Station 53 in downtown Middleton, 13 full-time professional firefighters provide 24/7 fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) throughout the large, diverse service area.

SHARING EXPENSES

CONSERVING RESOURCES

In an effort to maximize resources, in 2019 MRFD and Star Fire District entered into an agreement to share administrative leadership positions. This partnership has evolved—the two Districts now share a Fire Chief, District Administrator and Administrative Staff as well as Deputy and Battalion Chiefs that lead and oversee daily operations of both Districts—and has become known as MidStar Fire. This has resulted in significant cost savings for both Districts, allowing more "boots on the ground" to protect our communities 24/7.

MRFD GROWTH 2018 - 2023



Population

2018: 22,400
2023: 28,000 + 25%



Structures

2018: 7,800
2023: 9,900 + 27%

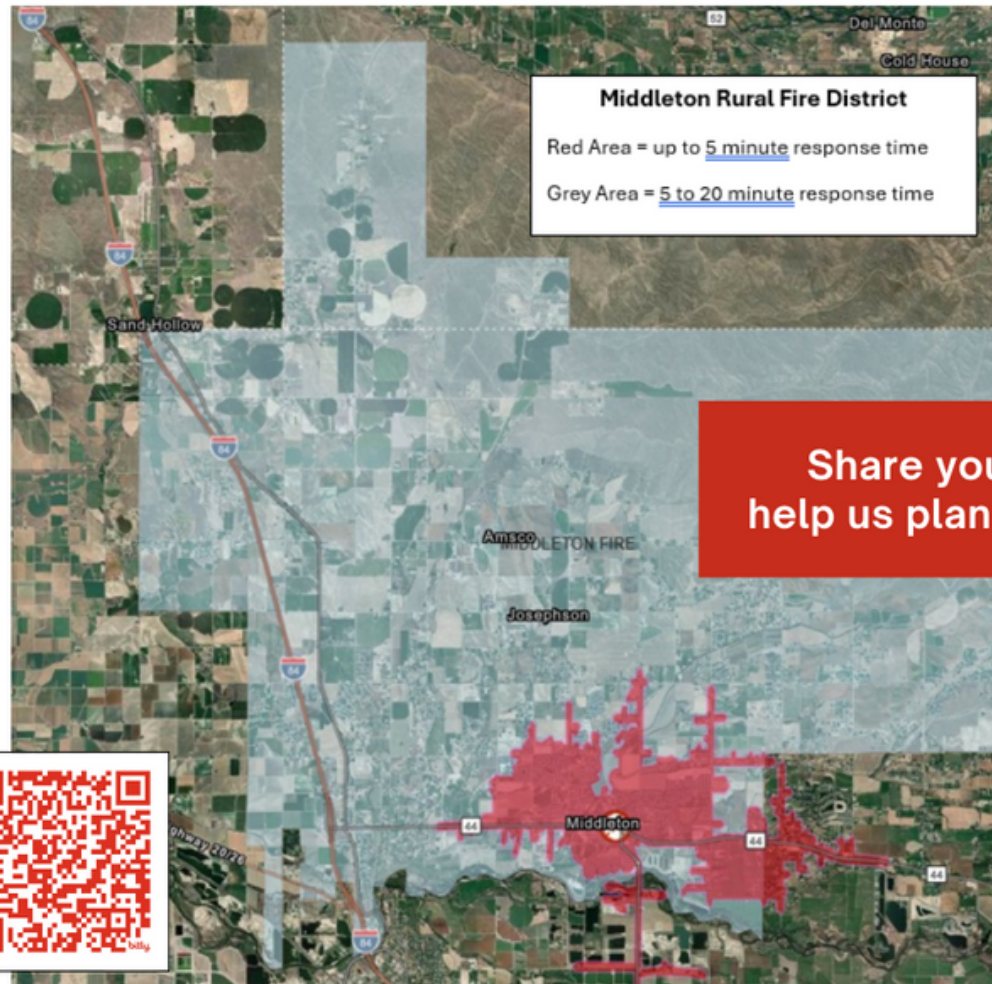
www.midstarfire.org

MIDFireID & midstarfireID

OUTREACH

Social Media

MIDDLETON RESIDENTS: TAKE THE MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY



Scan the QR code or visit:
www.bit.ly/middletonfiresurvey

Share your feedback to
help us plan for the future.

MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY



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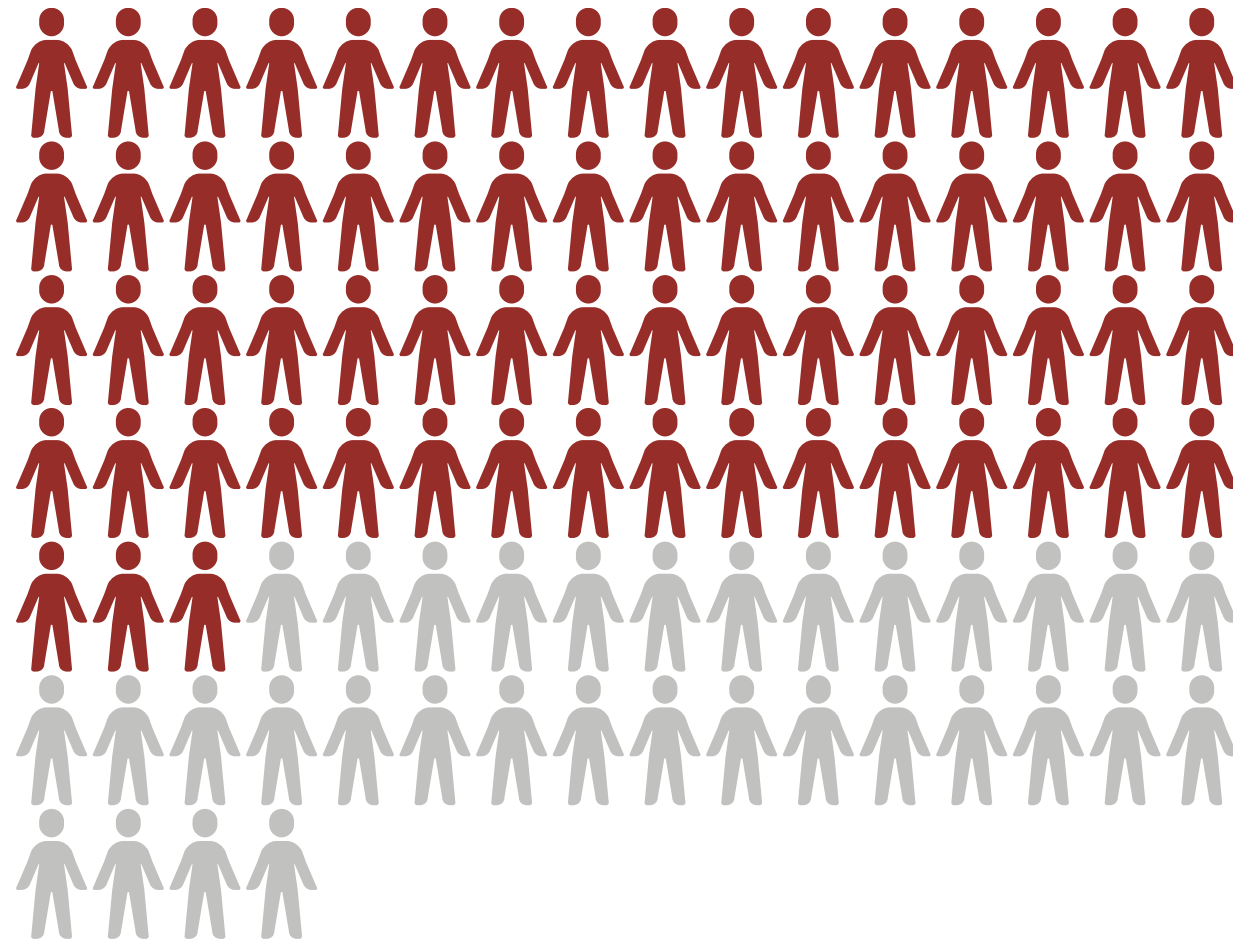
Visit www.midstarfire.org
for more information



CONSIDERATIONS & SUMMARY



CONSIDERATIONS



MRFD Voter Demographic Summary

- Registered voters: **12,144**
- *Estimated voter turnout **22.1%**
 - ***2,687 ballots cast**
- # of votes required to pass permanent levy override
 - Supermajority: **66.67% yes votes**
 - Based on estimated 2,687 ballots cast, approval of override would require **1,792 yes votes**

** Based on past voter participation.*

CONSIDERATIONS

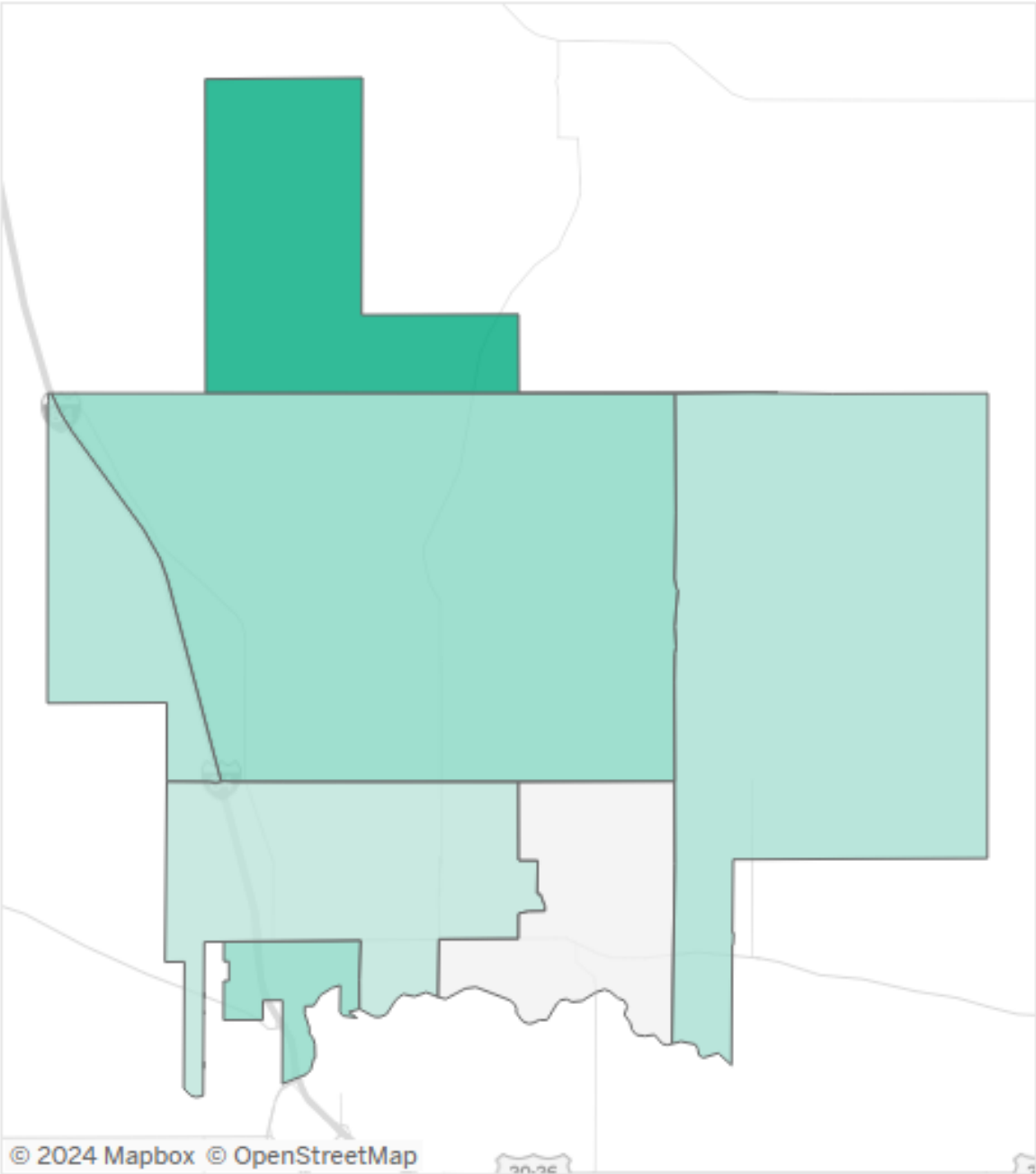
VOTER DATA

Middleton Fire District - May 2024

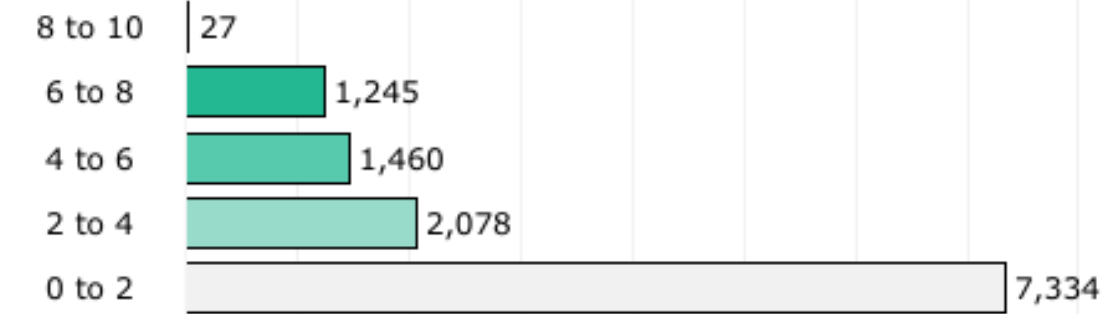
Registered Voters
12,144

Estimated Ballots Cast
2,687

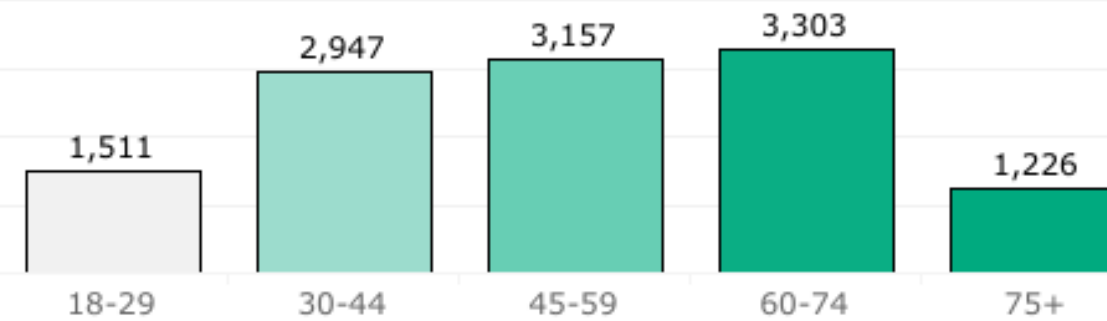
Estimated Turnout
22.1%



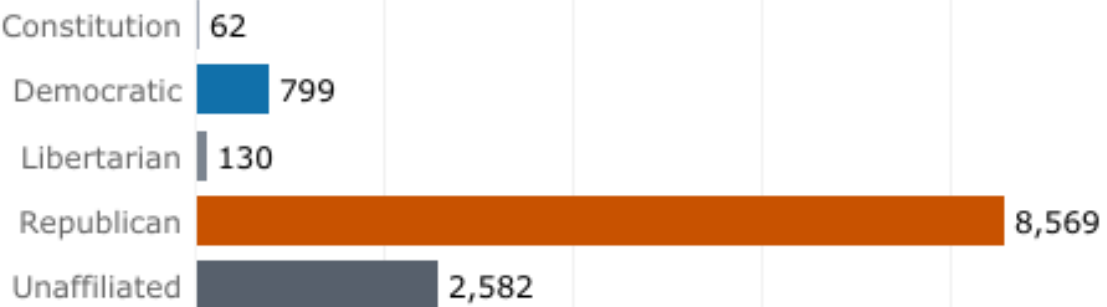
VOTER SCORES



Registered Voters by Age

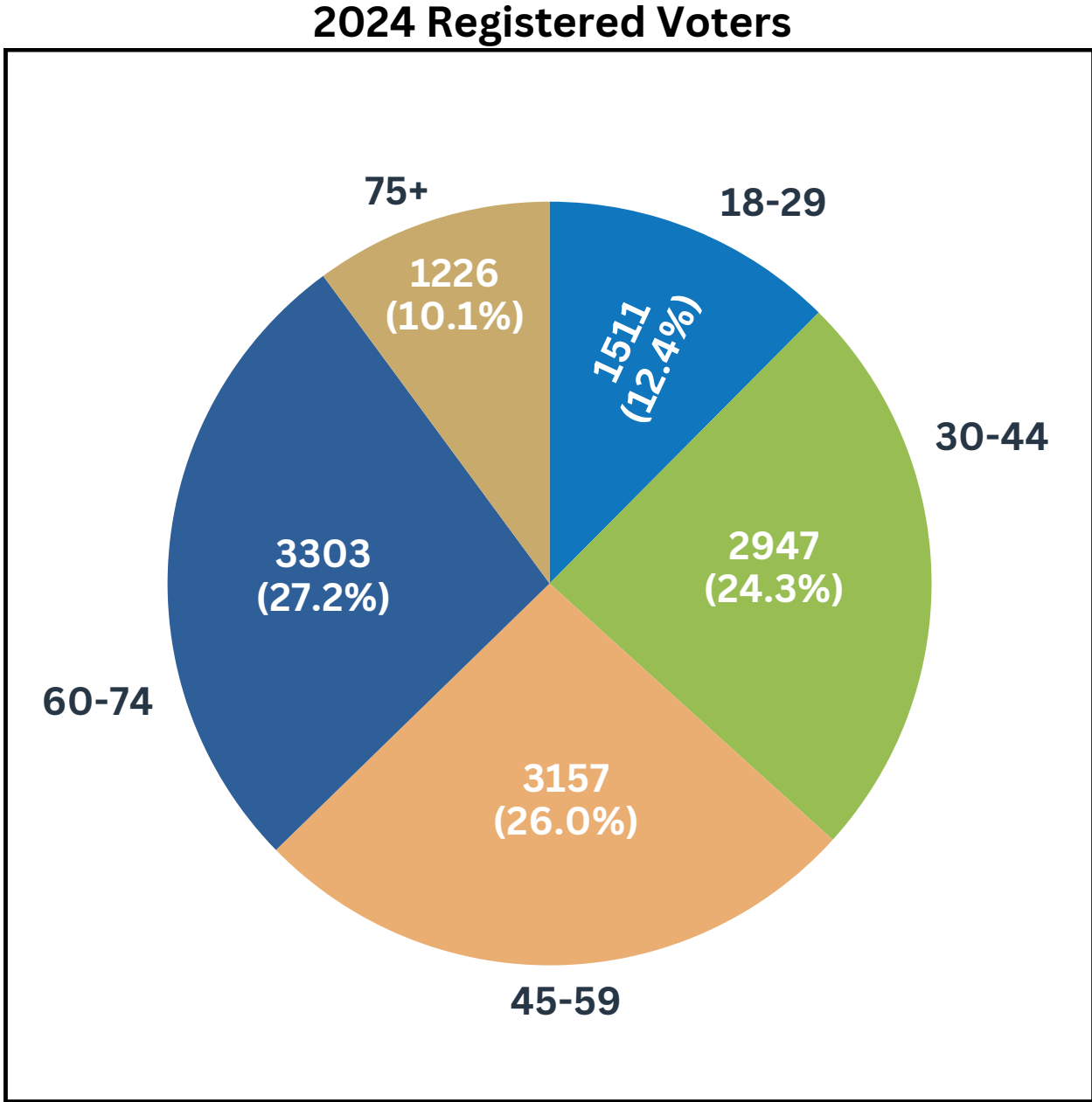
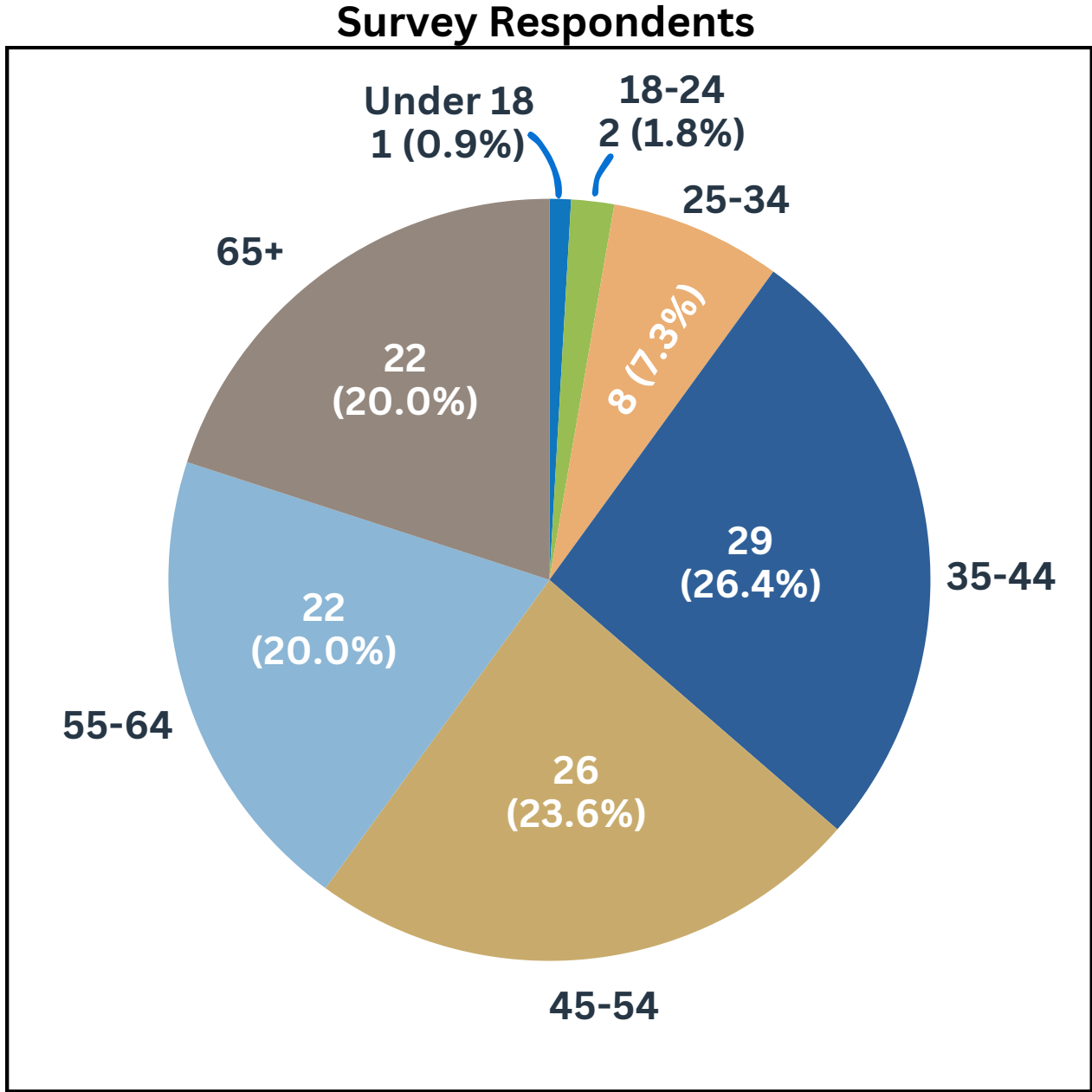


REGISTERED VOTERS BY PARTY



CONSIDERATIONS

CROSSTAB DATA: AGE



Both the 18-44 age group and the 45+ age group seem to be **proportionately represented** in the survey when compared to registered voters.

Estimated turnout (%), estimated ballots cast by age group

- 18-29: 5.8%, 87 ballots cast
- 30-44: 14.3%, 421 ballots cast
- 45-59: 20.4%, 643 ballots cast
- **60-74: 33.5%, 1,107 ballots cast**
- 75+: 35.1%, 430 ballots cast

Estimated Total: turnout 22.1%, 2,687 ballots cast

*Please note: Ages are categorized differently in the two data sets.

CONSIDERATIONS

Potential Levels of Support:

As reported in the survey results

- ***Permanent Levy Override in May 2024 Election***
 - # of Very Supportive and Supportive = **90 (82.6%)**
 - # of Neutral/Unsure = **12 (11.0%)**
 - # of Unsupportive and Very Unsupportive = **7 (6.4%)**



CONSIDERATIONS

Respondent Rates

- Some respondents did not answer all of the questions
- Results for each question should weigh the number of respondents when considering the level of potential community support
- May or may not be registered voters

Timing

- Survey has been open for a relatively short time, February 29 - Present

Number of survey respondents

- 1.9% of registered voters responded: 232 out of 12,144
- 8.6% of the anticipated voter turnout responded: 232 out of 2,687

SURVEY RESULTS



SURVEY QUESTIONS & DATA

The information presented on the following slides indicate:

- Each question asked
- The number of community members providing a specific rating on each question
- The average score for each question

The rating scale for each question was 0-4:

- 0: Very Unsupportive, 1: Unsupportive, 2: Neutral/Unsure, 3: Supportive, 4: Very Supportive

MIDDLETON RURAL FIRE DISTRICT PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

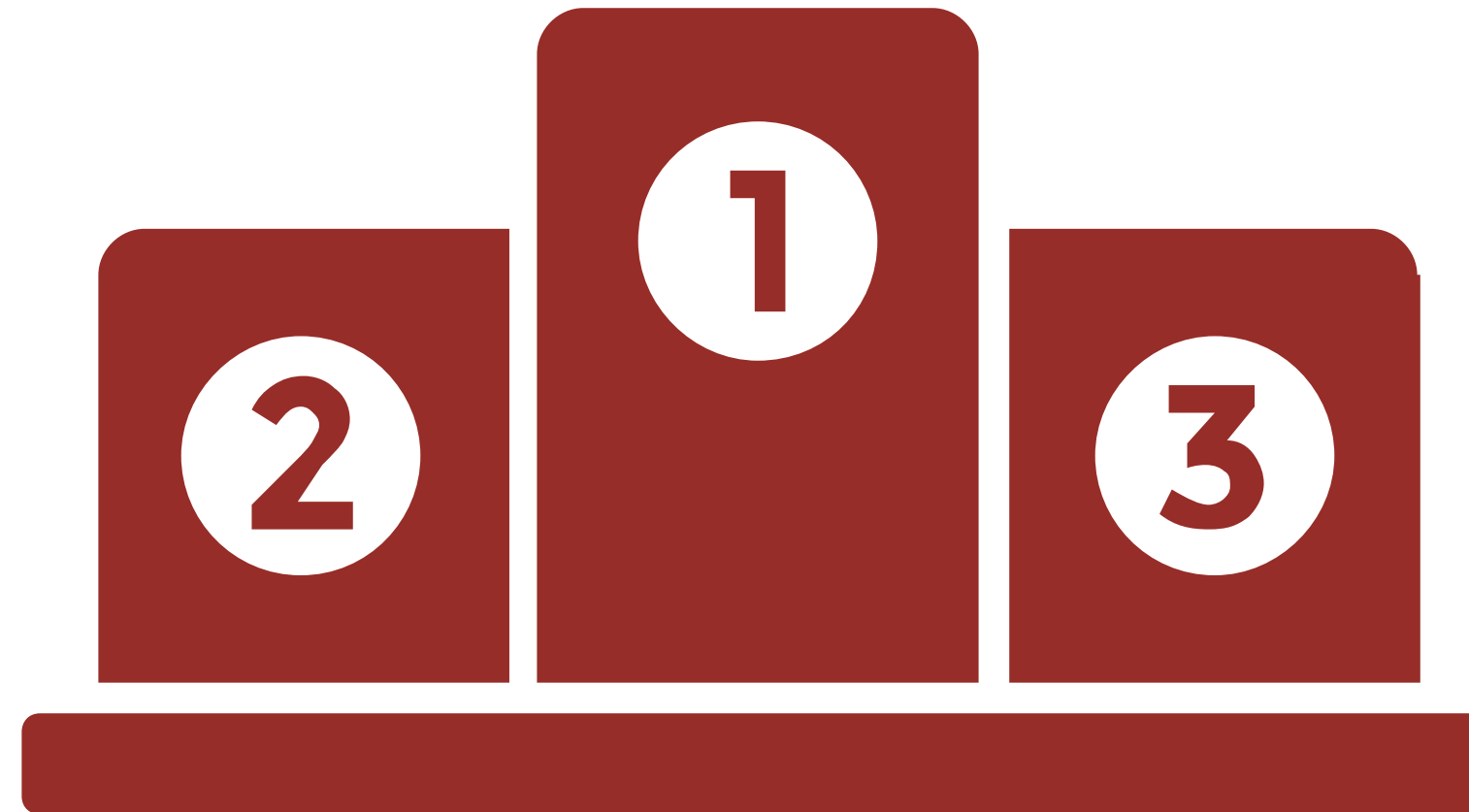


Middleton Rural Fire District Public Safety Survey

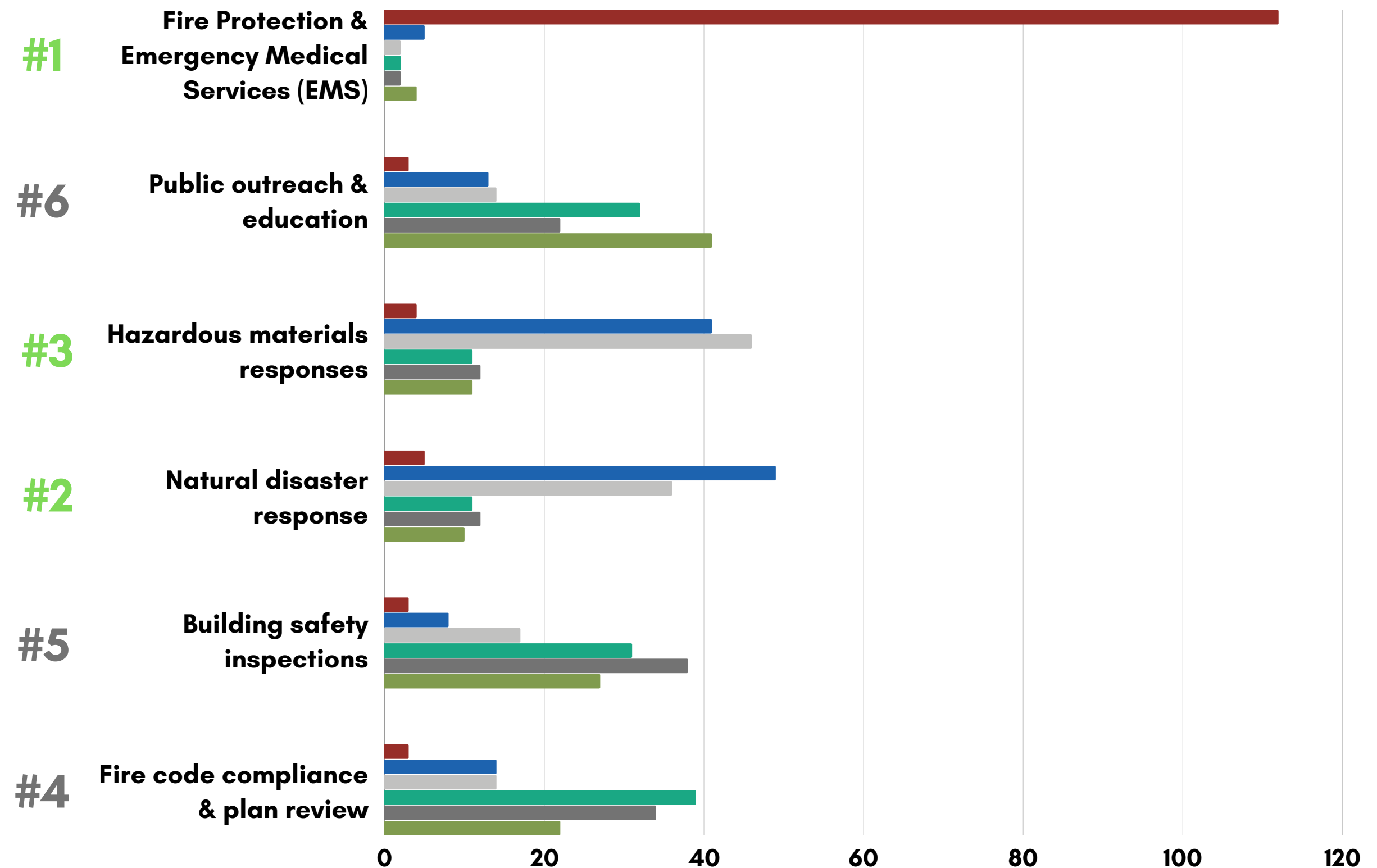
The [Middleton Rural Fire District](#) (MRFD or District) is seeking your feedback as it looks to address fire protection facilities and associated operational needs due to increased demands for emergency services and its inability to increase the budget authority needed to meet these needs due to [legislation](#) approved in 2020. The District will use your feedback to guide its plans to accommodate the community's emergency needs and to maintain quality public safety services. The survey takes 5-7 minutes.

[Begin Survey](#)

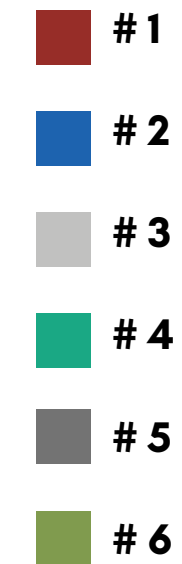
RANKING



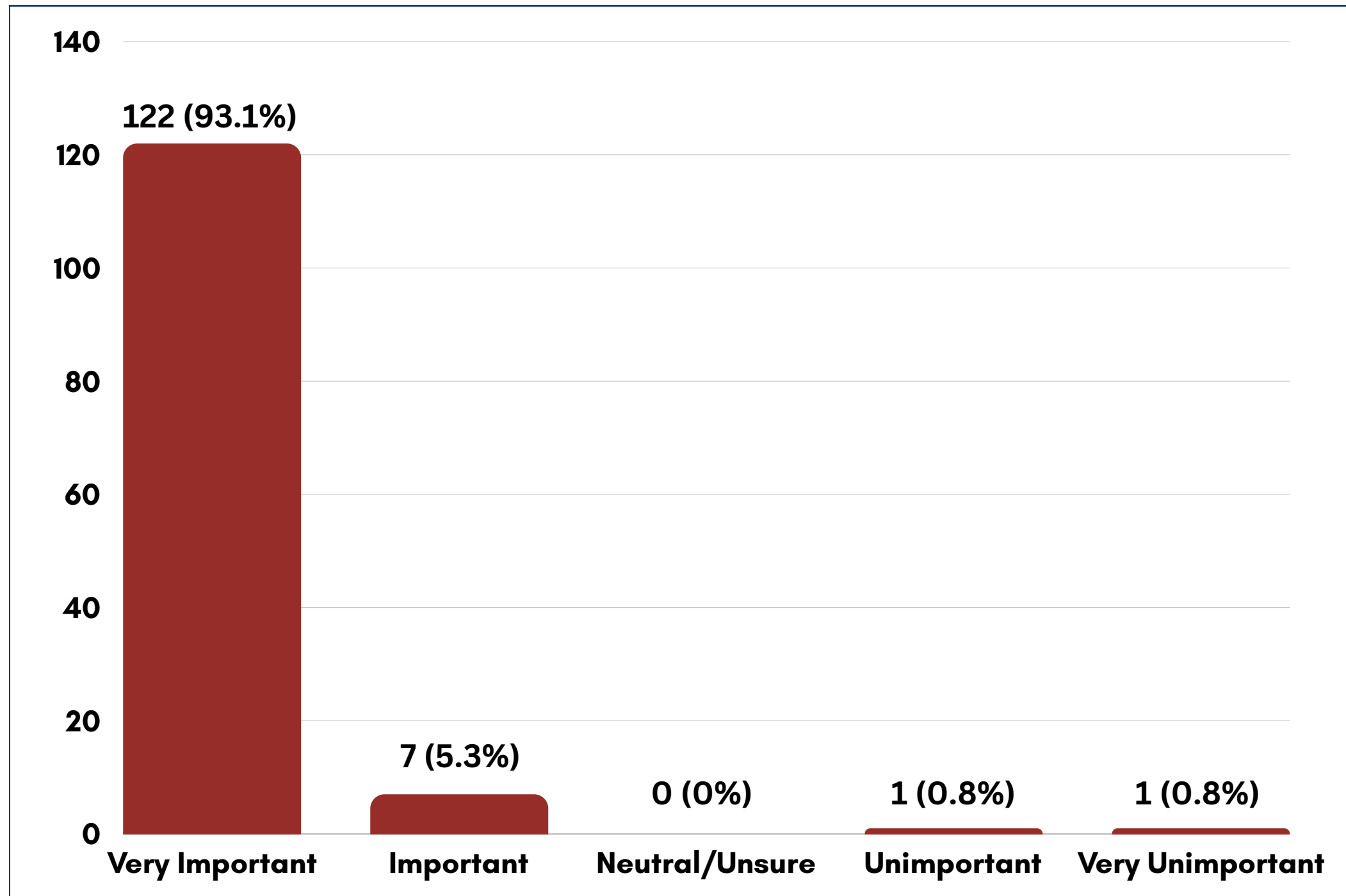
RANKING MIDDLETON FIRE SERVICES



Please rank what you feel are the most important services the Middleton Fire District provides to the community? (1= Most important; 6 = Least important)



How important are Fire Protection and EMS Services to you?



93.1% of respondents view Fire Protection and EMS Services as Very Important

Average Score: 3.89

of Responses: 131

SUPPORT

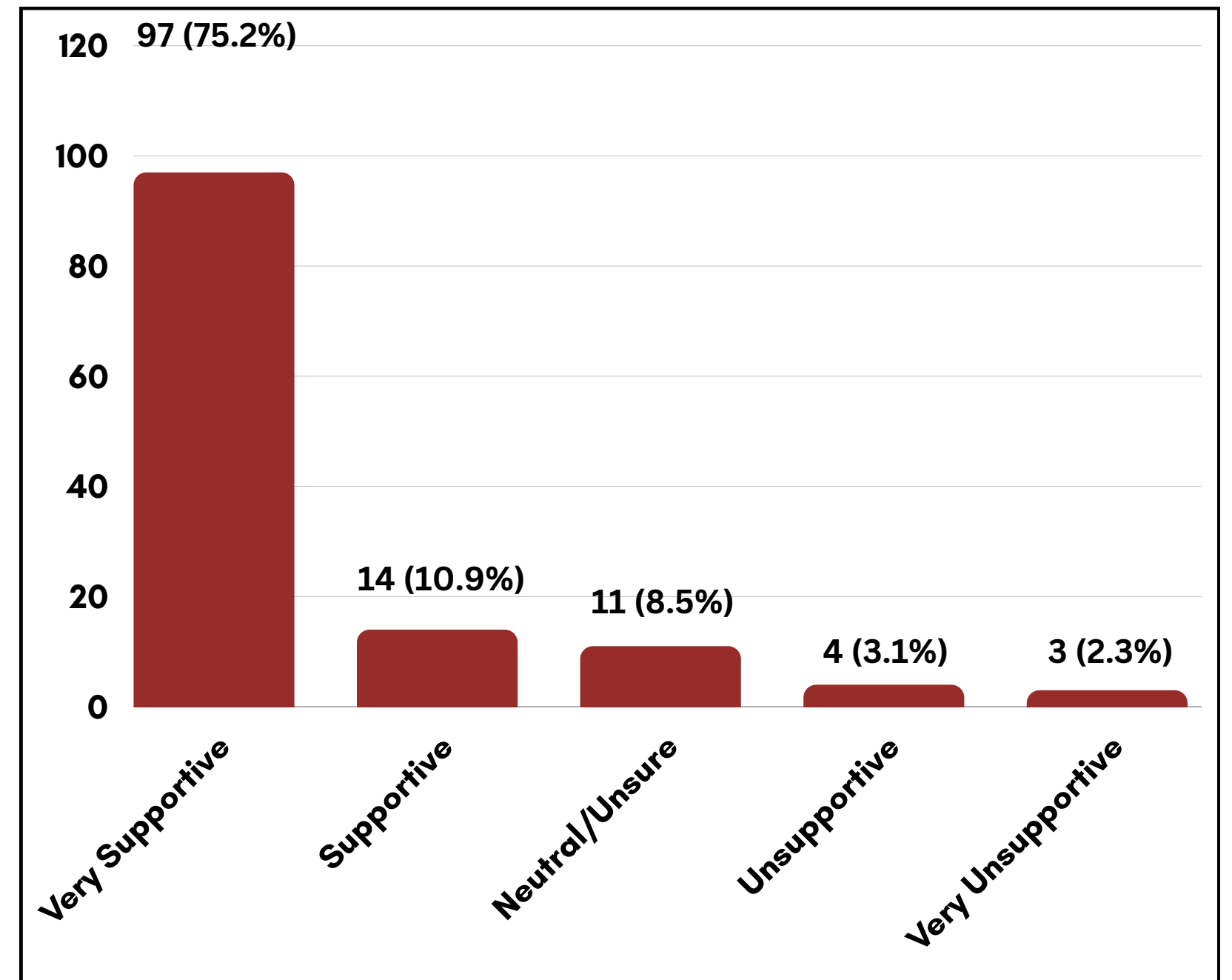
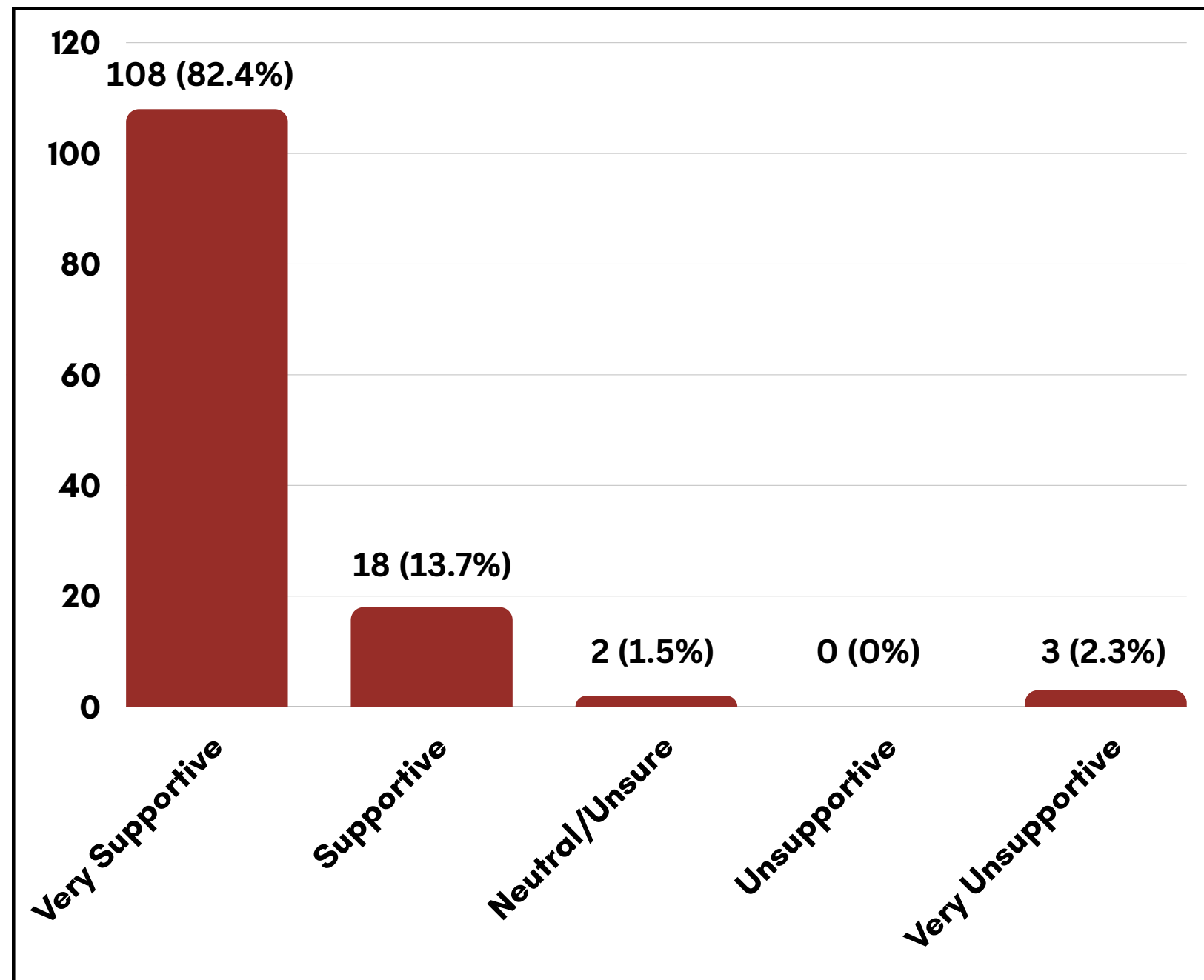


Knowing the following information, how supportive are you of the Middleton Rural Fire District exploring ways to maintain and increase Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) services and facilities?

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

In 2023, Middleton Rural Fire District's downtown Station 53 responded to approximately 1,500 emergency calls for service.

The District's population has increased approximately 25% since 2018 to approximately 28,000 people. Fire Protection and EMS facilities have not increased since 2002.



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.74

of Responses: 131

Average Satisfaction Score: 3.53

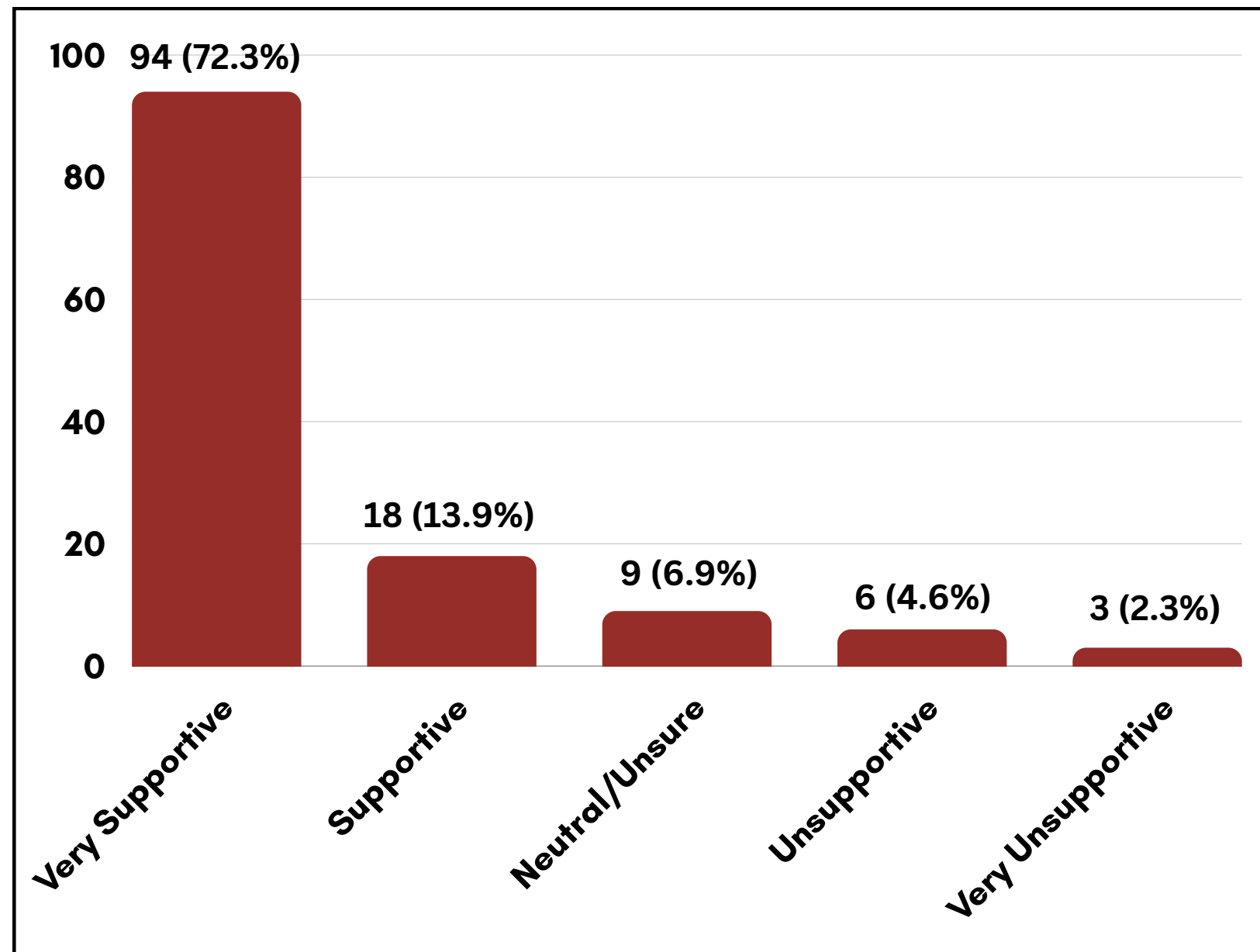
of Responses: 129

Knowing the following information, how supportive are you of the Middleton Rural Fire District exploring ways to maintain and increase Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) services and facilities?

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

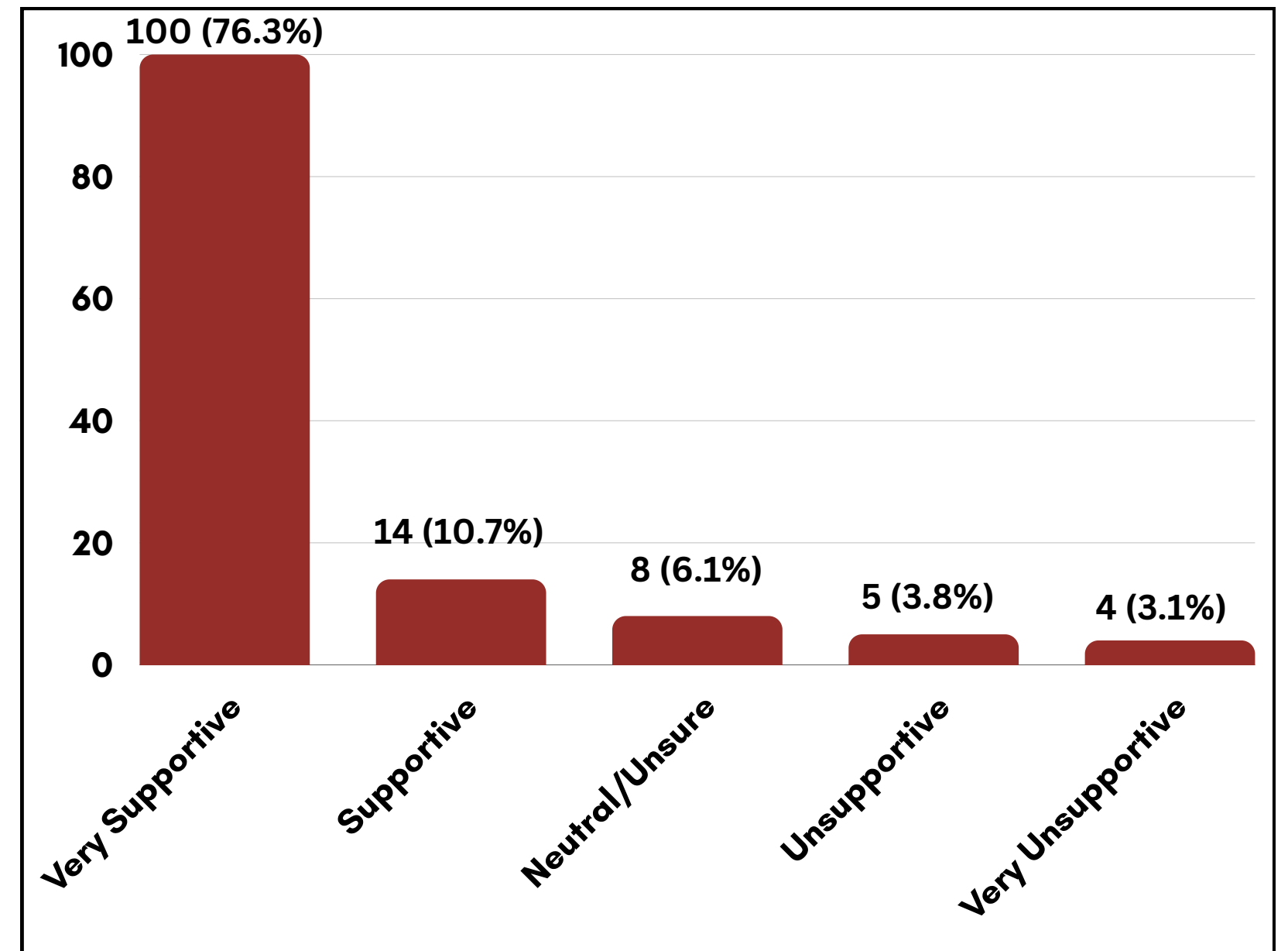
The number of buildings in the District boundaries have increased by more than 2,000 since 2018 to approximately 9,900 structures. Fire Protection and EMS facilities have not increased since 2002.

The District's optimal response time for Fire Protection/EMS services is 5 minutes in order to minimize property loss and serious or fatal injury. The District's current response times within the downtown station service area are up to 5 minutes. Response times outside of the downtown station service area ranges from 5 to 20 minutes.



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.49

of Responses: 130



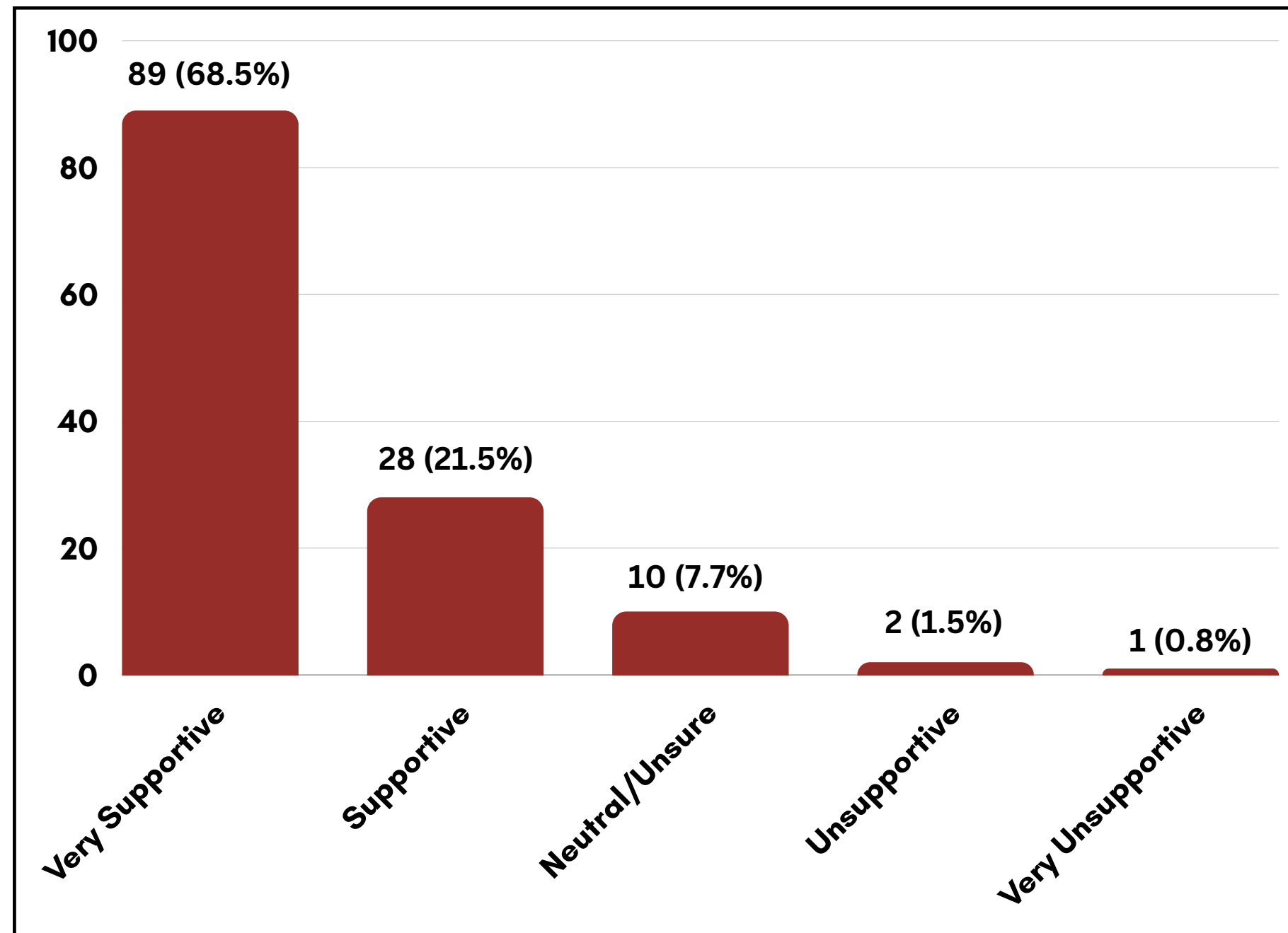
Average Satisfaction Score: 3.53

of Responses: 131

Knowing the following information, how supportive are you of the Middleton Rural Fire District exploring ways to maintain and increase Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) services and facilities?

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

ISO ratings are used in determining the liability insurance costs for homes and businesses. Number of firefighters and equipment available improves the response times which can lower ISO ratings resulting in reduced insurance costs.



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.55

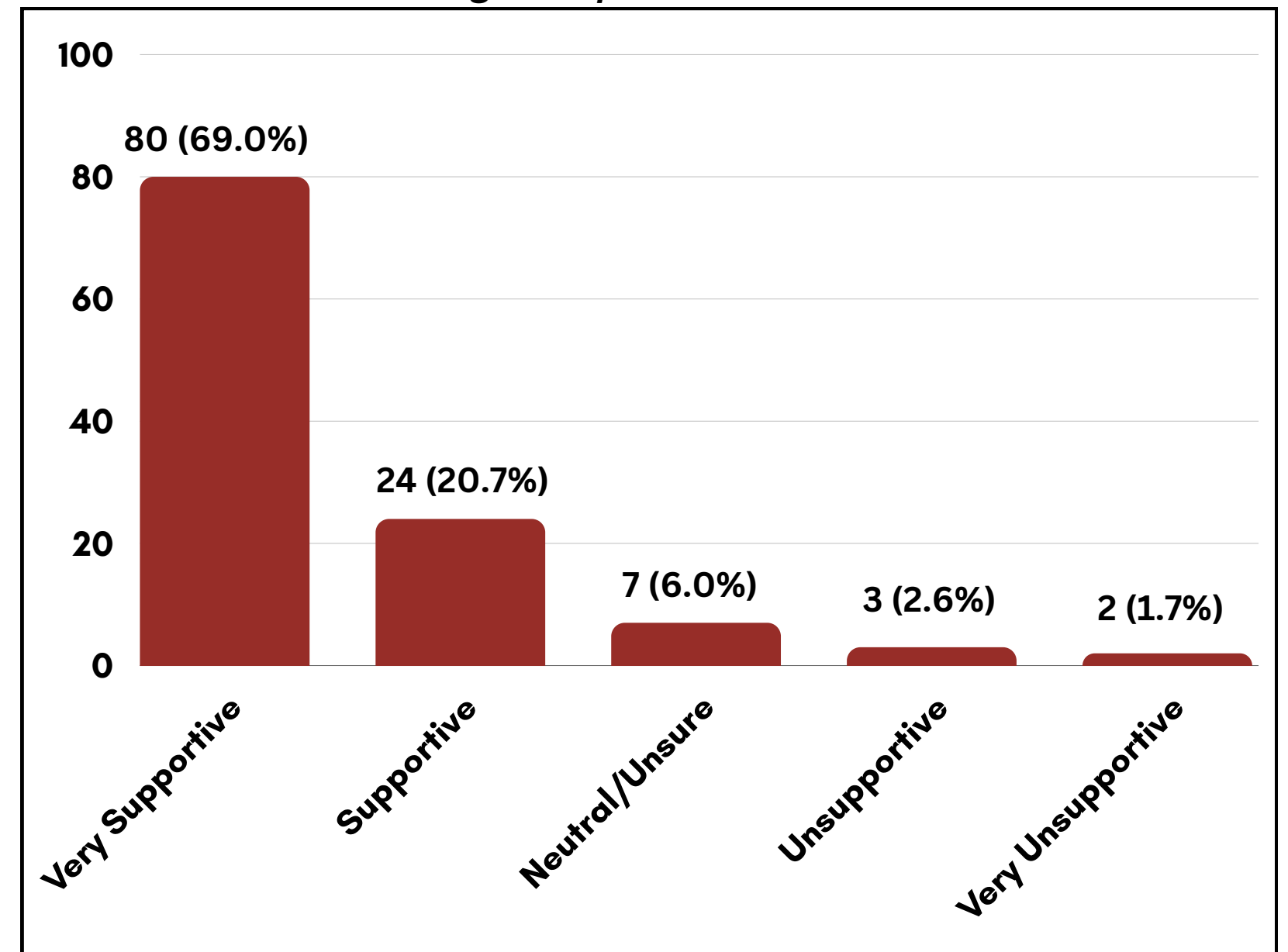
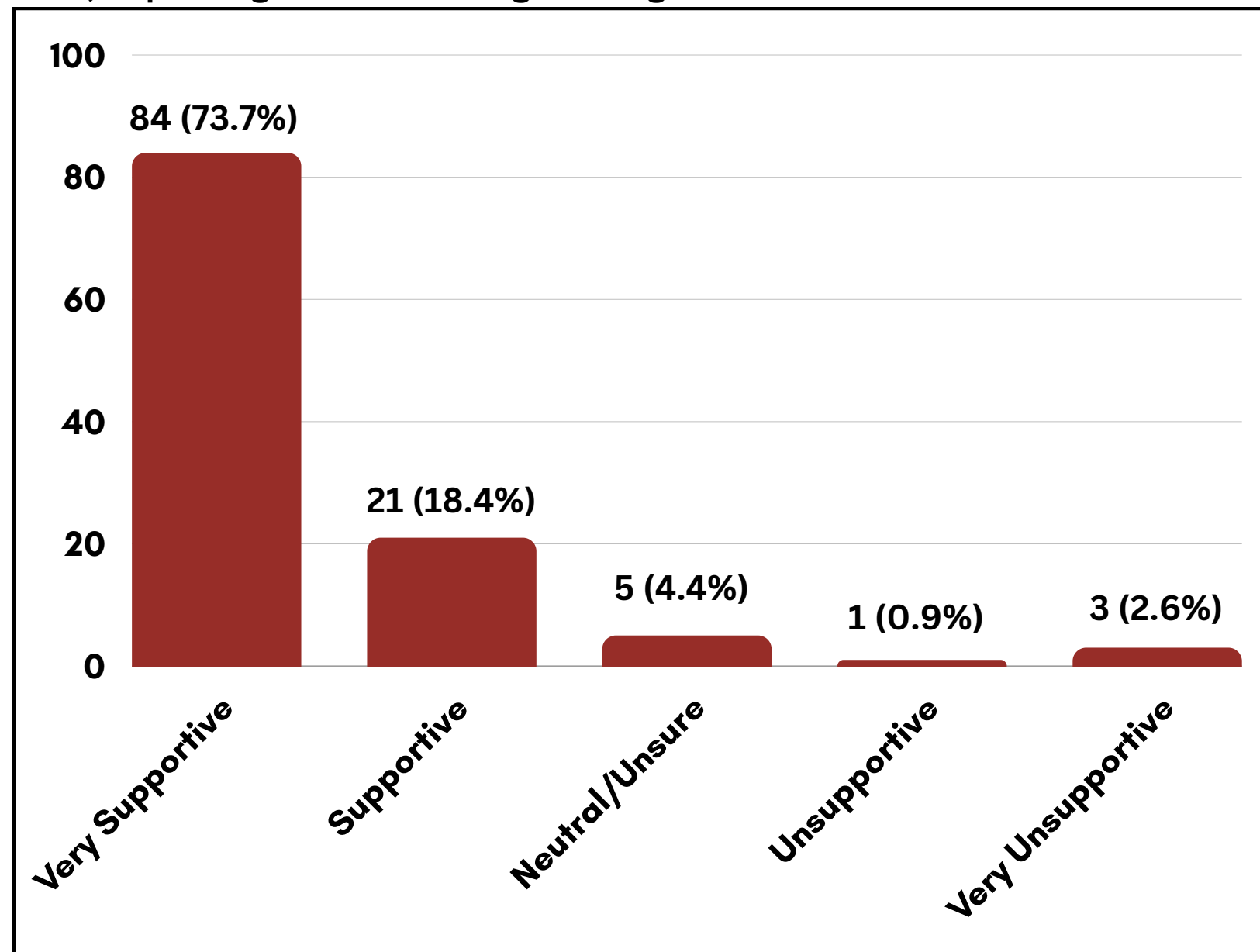
of Responses: 130

Knowing the following information, how supportive are you of the District pursuing a permanent levy override to fund the operational expenses associated with a 2nd fire station (Station 54)?

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

The District is planning to refurbish Station 54 on Harvey Road to better serve residents in the northwest portion of the District. The plan for the additional facility can be found on the District's website midstarfire.org. Once complete, Station 54 will reduce response times in that area and reduce service demand on Station 53 in downtown that currently covers this area; thus, improving service coverage throughout the District.

Development impact fee revenue will fund the refurbishment of Station 54 in 2024. *Impact fees may not be used to cover the cost of annual operational expenses (personnel, equipment, etc.). A levy override is needed to fund the staffing and operations of Station 54.*



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.60

of Responses: 114

Average Satisfaction Score: 3.53

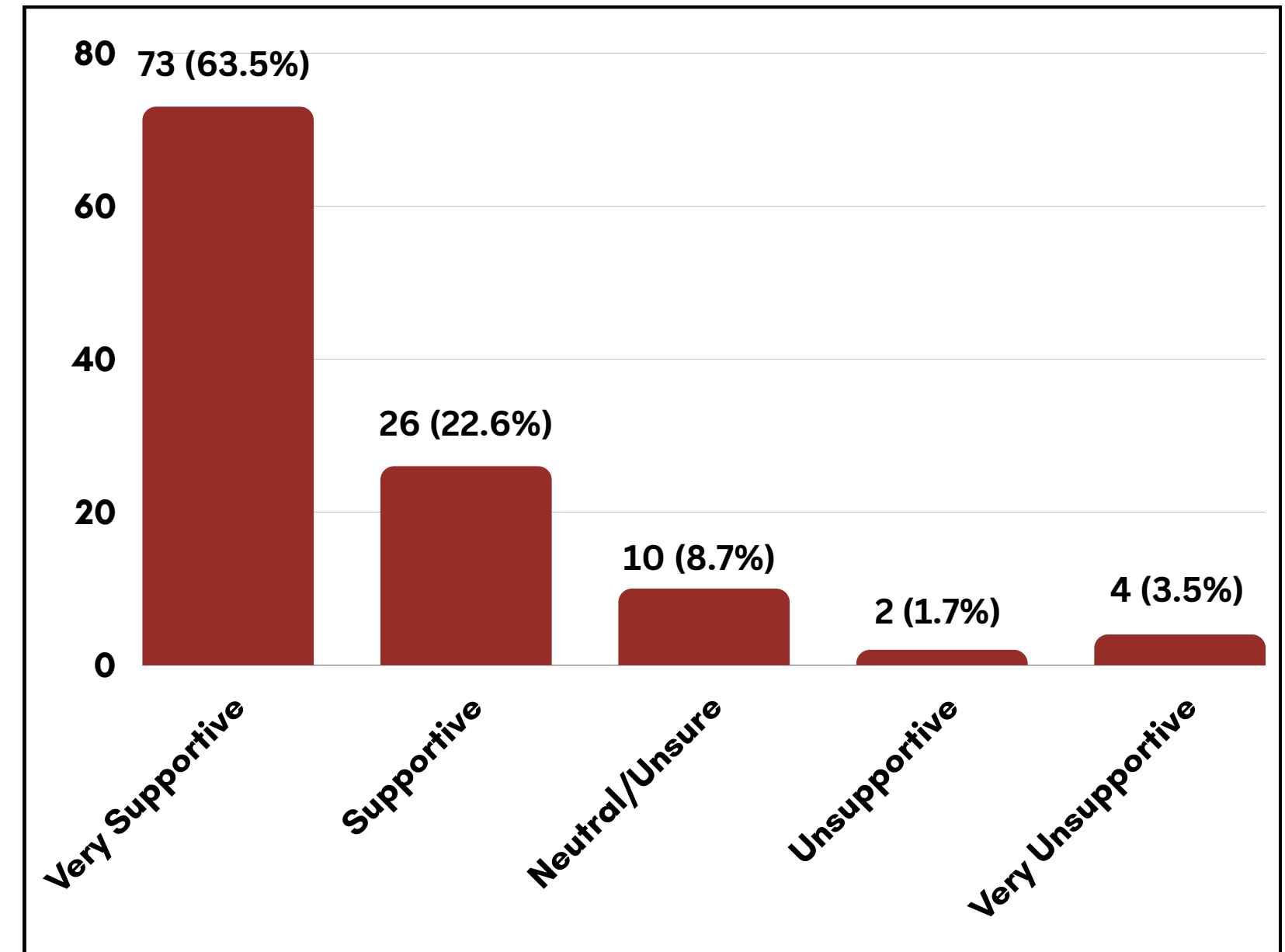
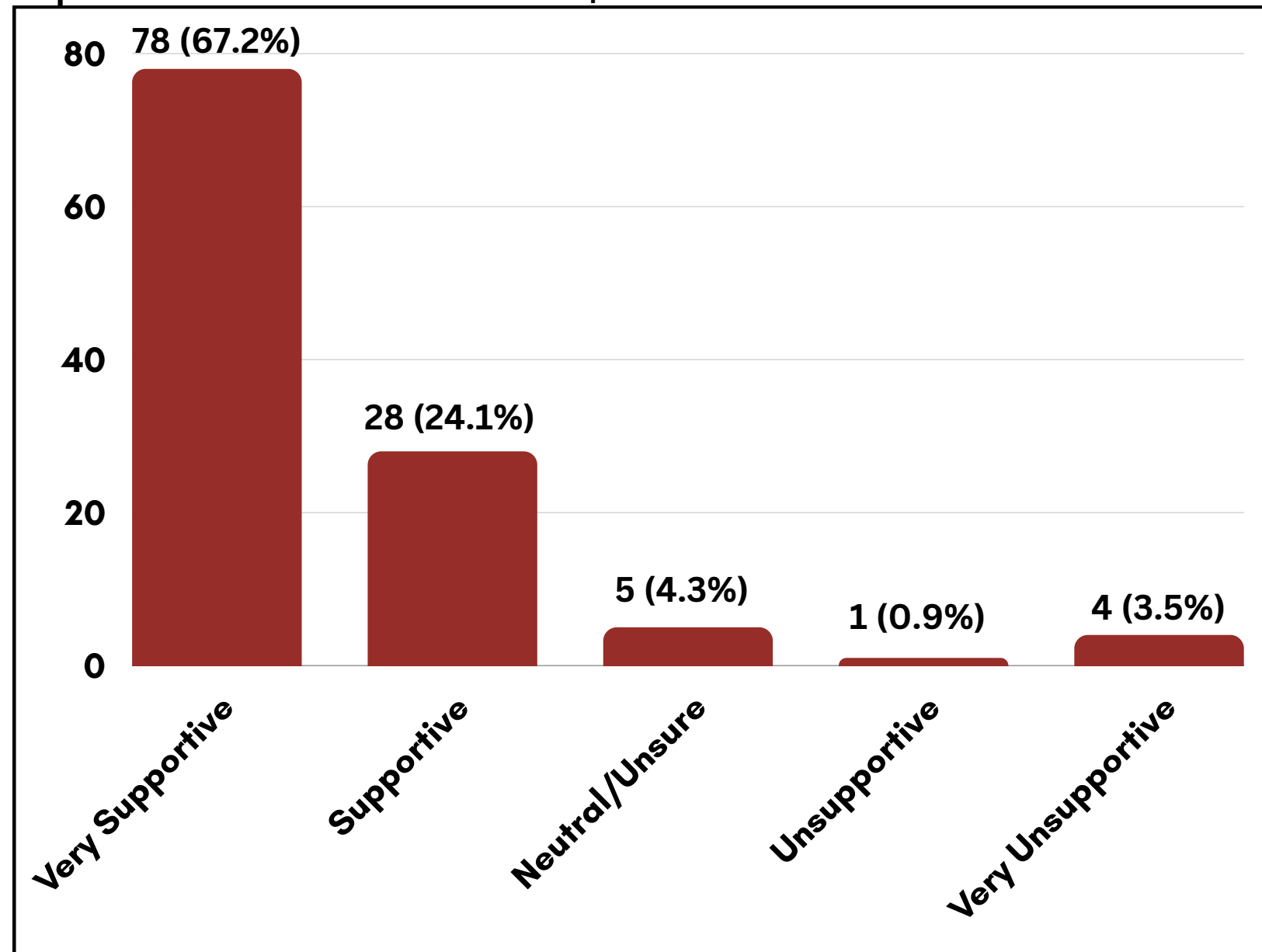
of Responses: 116

Knowing the following information, how supportive are you of the District pursuing a permanent levy override to fund the operational expenses associated with a 2nd fire station (Station 54)?

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

Station 54 in 2024, will require a minimum of nine personnel to be properly staffed. The District needs a total of 12 additional personnel District-wide to achieve optimal response times from Station 53 and 54 service areas. The annual cost of the additional staffing and operating expenses would be an estimated \$2.25 million.

Since 2020, the costs associated with fire personal protection equipment and general operational expenses have increased from 30-100% due to inflation.



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.51

of Responses: 116

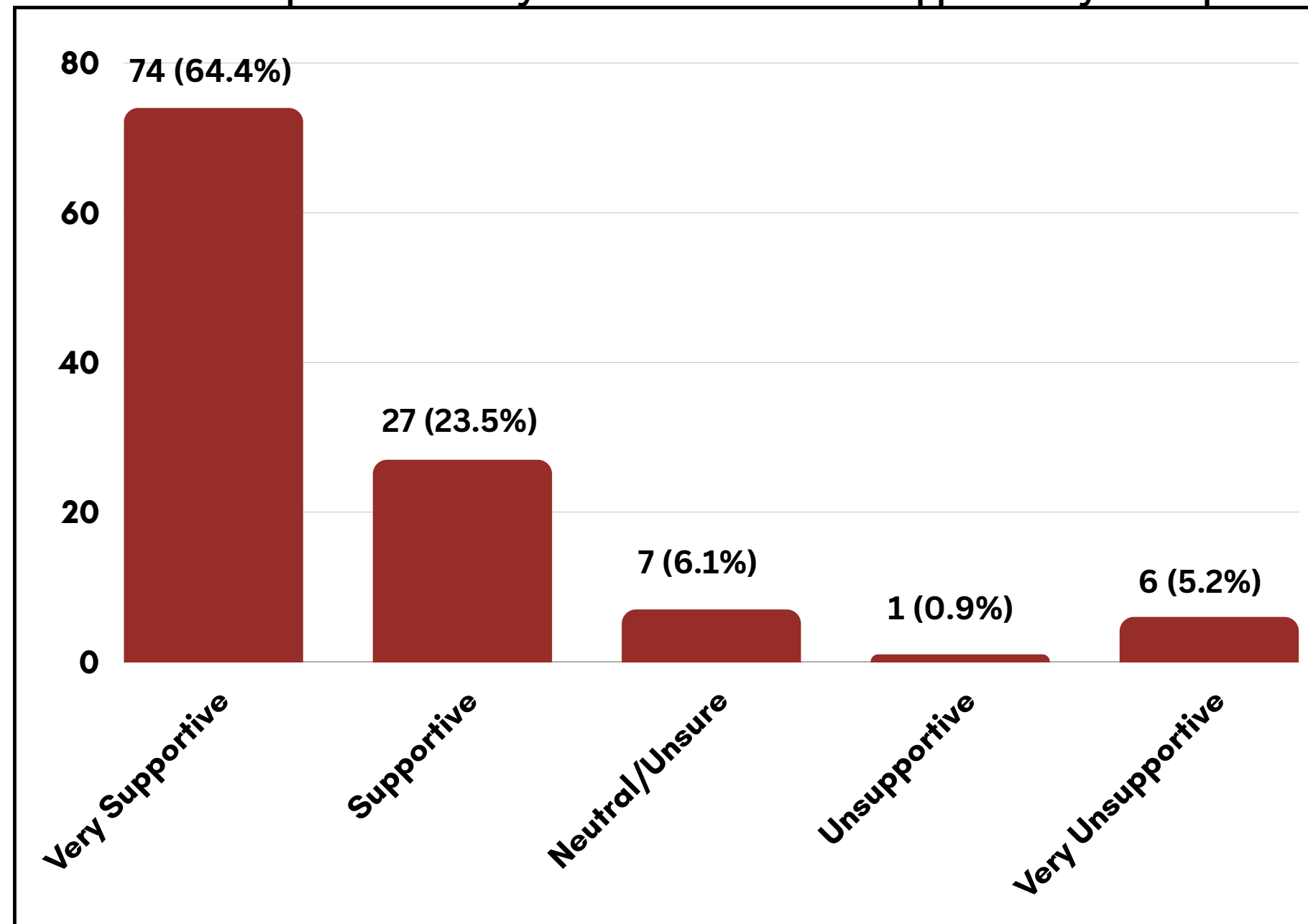
Average Satisfaction Score: 3.41

of Responses: 115

Knowing the following information, how supportive are you of the District pursuing a permanent levy override to fund the operational expenses associated with a 2nd fire station (Station 54)?

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

Current State Statute limits the ability for Fire Districts to adequately increase their annual budget to keep up with current inflation and respond to growth. While impact fees can fund the refurbishment of Station 54, staffing and operating Station 54 is estimated to increase the District's budget by 45-50%. The District's only source of revenue to cover the increased cost is a permanent levy override that must be approved by 66.67 percent of voters.



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.41

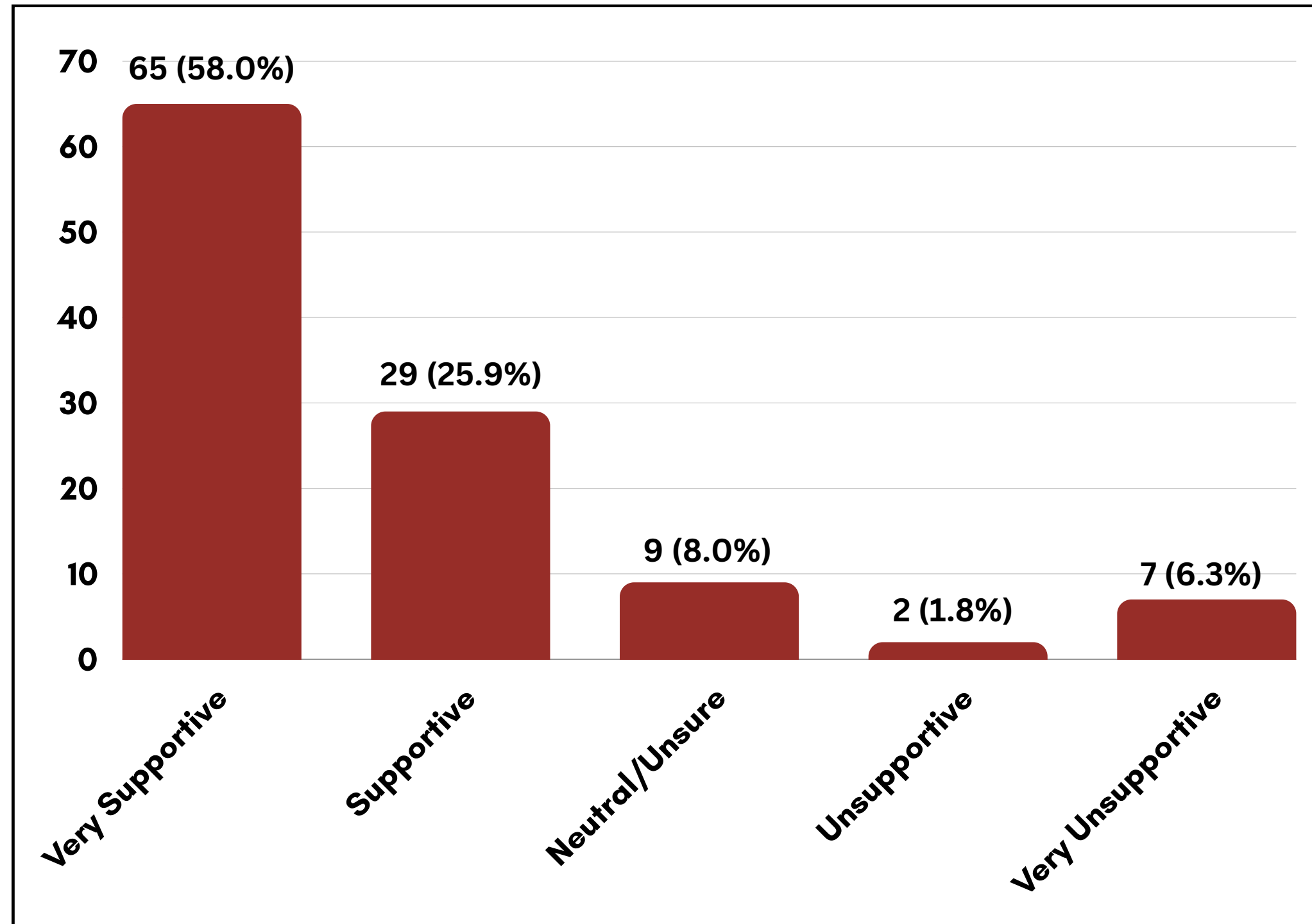
of Responses: 115

LEVY OVERRIDE



If you knew the annual tax impact for a homeowner would cost approximately \$65 or around \$5.50 per month (per \$100,000 of assessed value less homeowner's exemption), **how supportive would you be of a permanent levy override to fund the operational expenses associated with staffing Station 54 and improving response times throughout the District?**

0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive

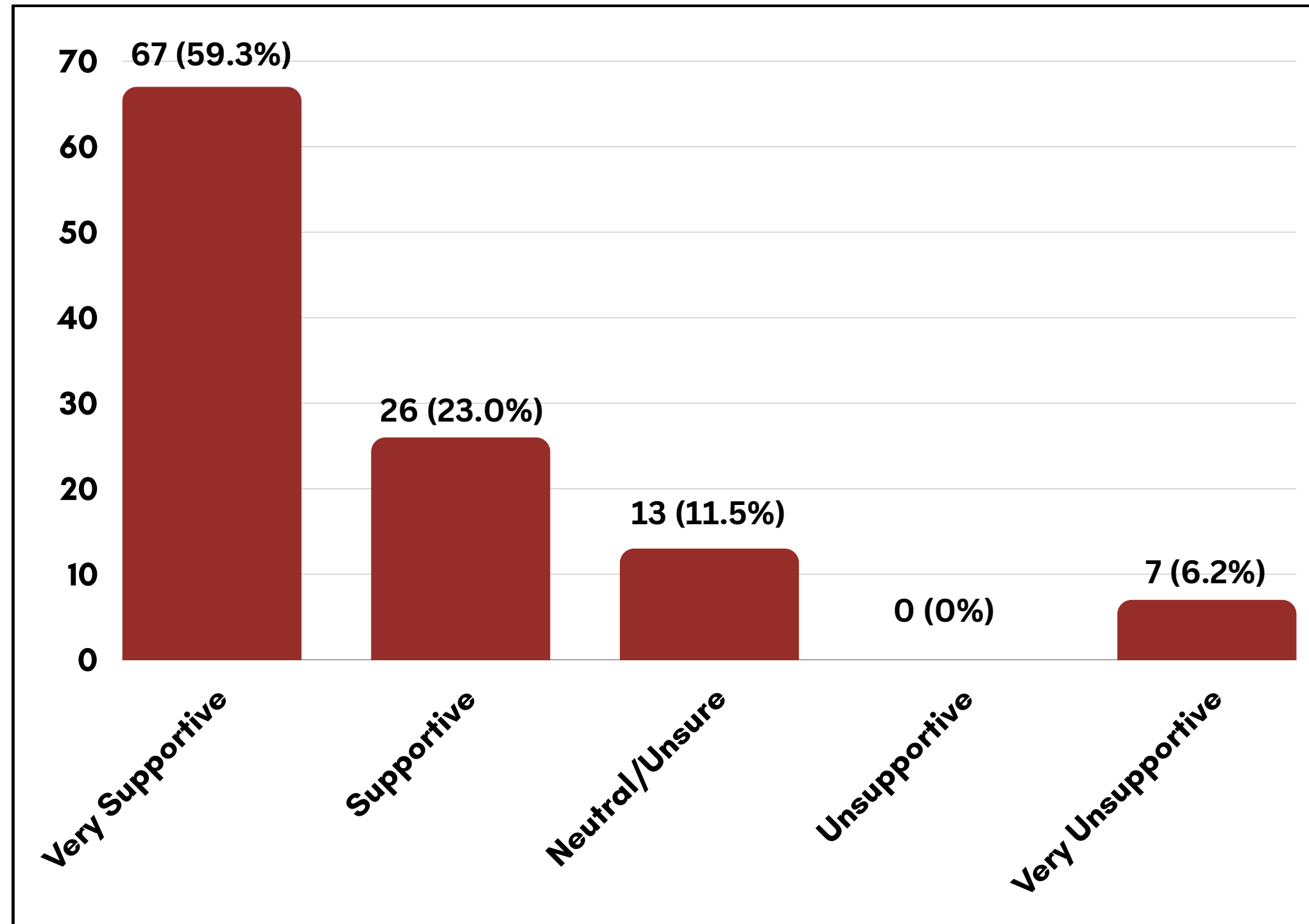


Average Satisfaction Score: 3.28

of Responses: 112

Given the information you have, how supportive are you of the District seeking a permanent levy override to fund the operational expenses associated with this new fire station at an election on May 21st?

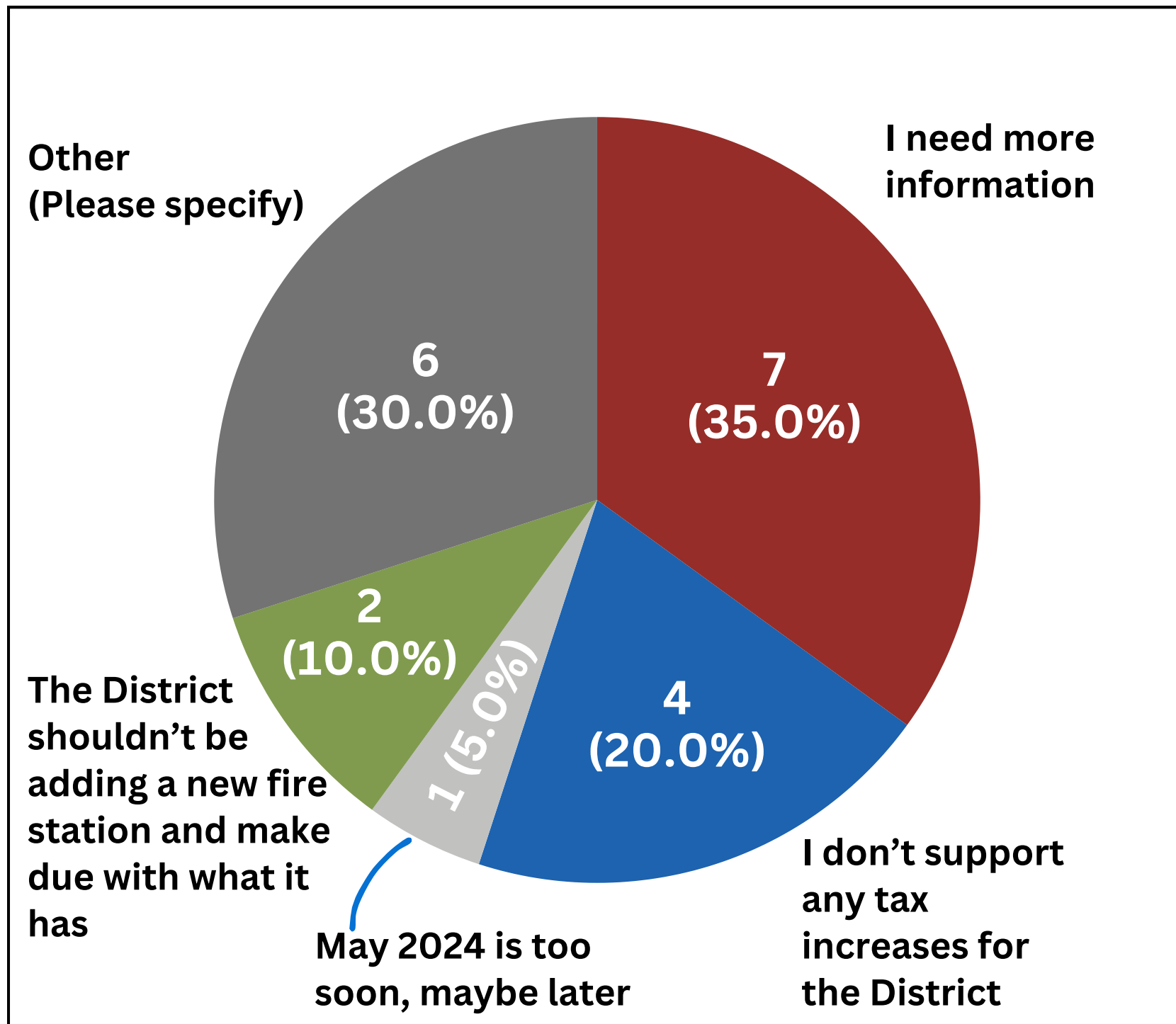
0 = Very Unsupportive; 1 = Unsupportive; 2 = Neutral/Unsure; 3 = Supportive; 4 = Very Supportive



Average Satisfaction Score: 3.29

of Responses: 113

**Respondents who chose Unsure, Unsupportive, or Very Unsupportive on the previous questions were asked:
Please tell us why you are neutral or unsupportive of the District seeking a permanent levy override to fund operational expenses?**



Other (Please Specify)

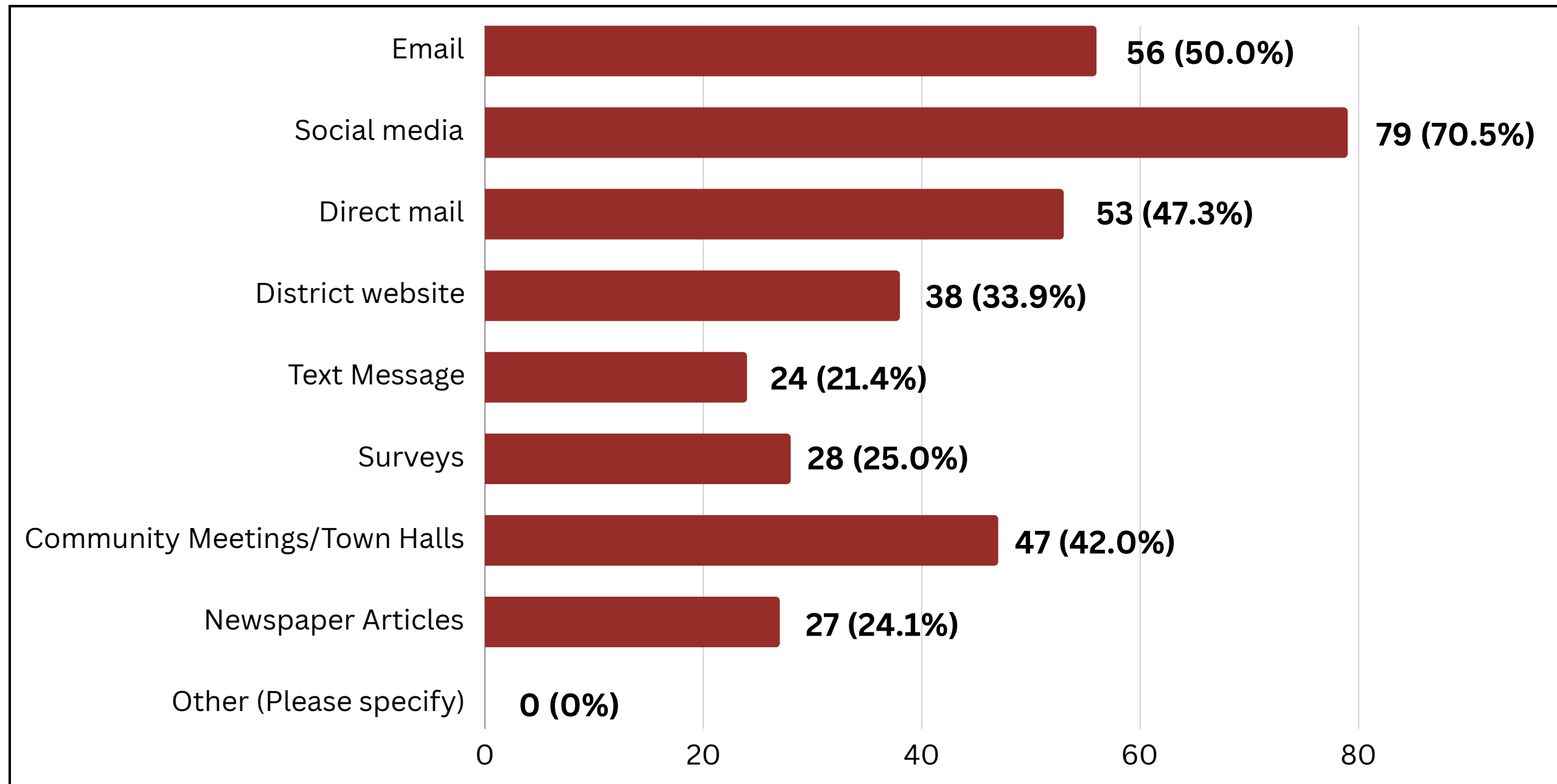
- Paramedics need state funding so they can have more staff and better equipment
- Moved here before population when it was affordable; worried about increasing costs; support levies against developers to slow down the over building
- Why not work to get the House Bill changed?
- Increased homes and people should lead to an increase in revenues and thus budgets; impact fees should be used to increase infrastructure
- Fire District has the capacity to say no to new development; 85M for sewer; now levy for FD; collectively those who approve should pay, not those who have opposed, saying this day of no resources would come
- The information I feel is relevant would be better conveyed to the fire chief

of Responses: 20

COMMUNICATION



If the District moves forward with exploring ways to increase its Fire Protection and EMS services, what communication methods do you prefer to receive information?



of Responses: 112

Top 3 Preferred Methods:

#1 Social Media

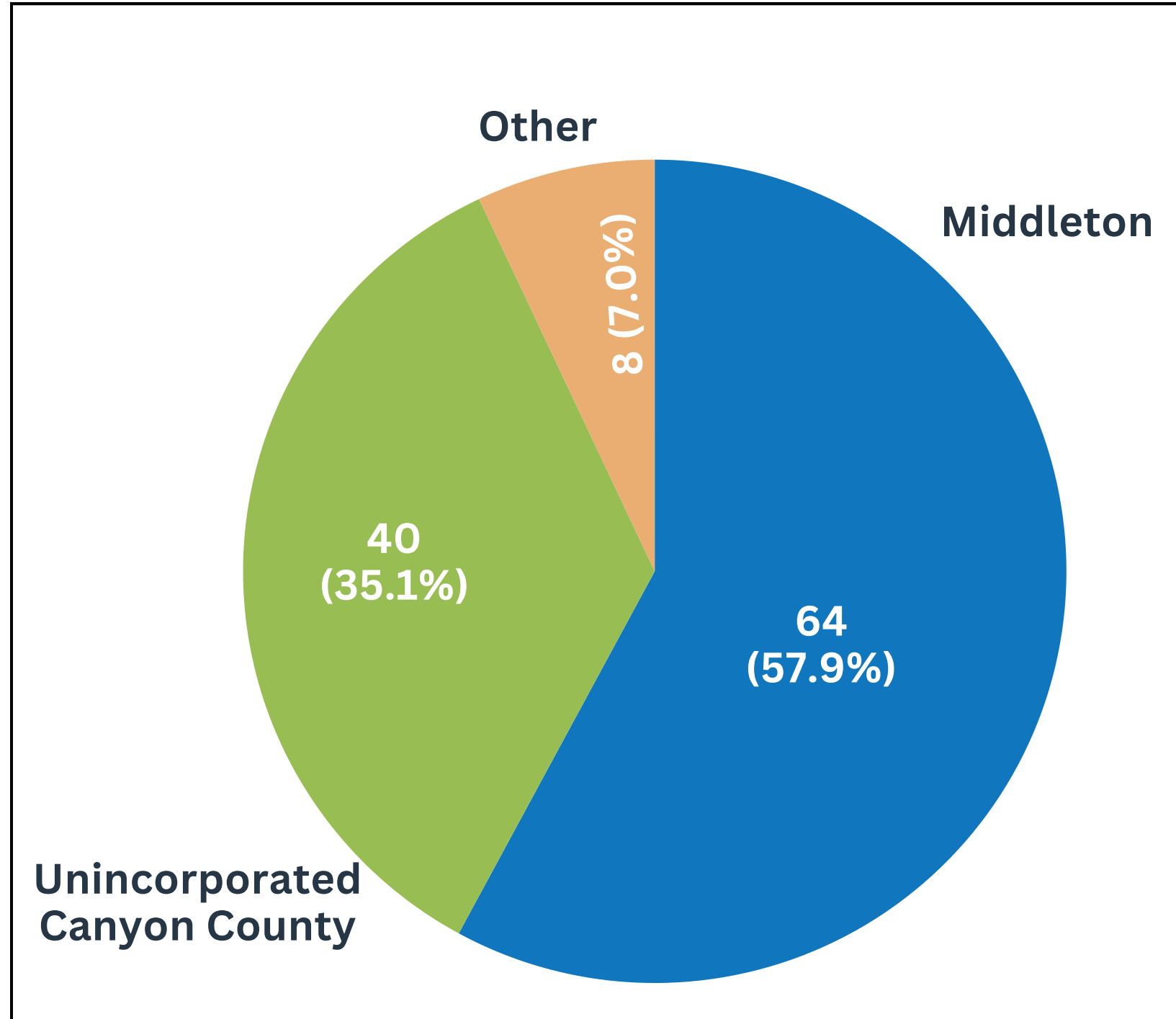
#2 Email

#3 Direct Mail

DEMOGRAPHICS

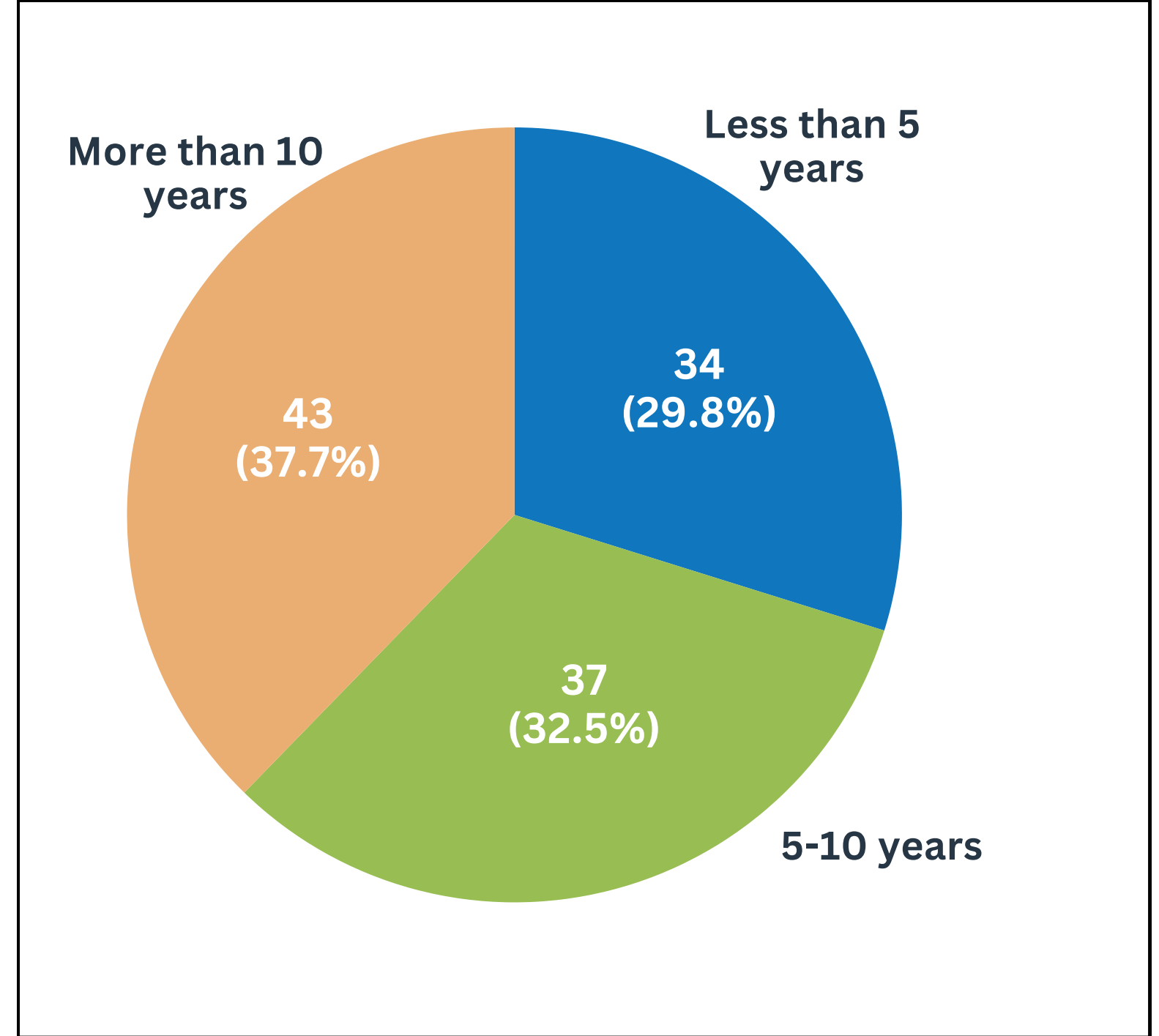


Where do you live?



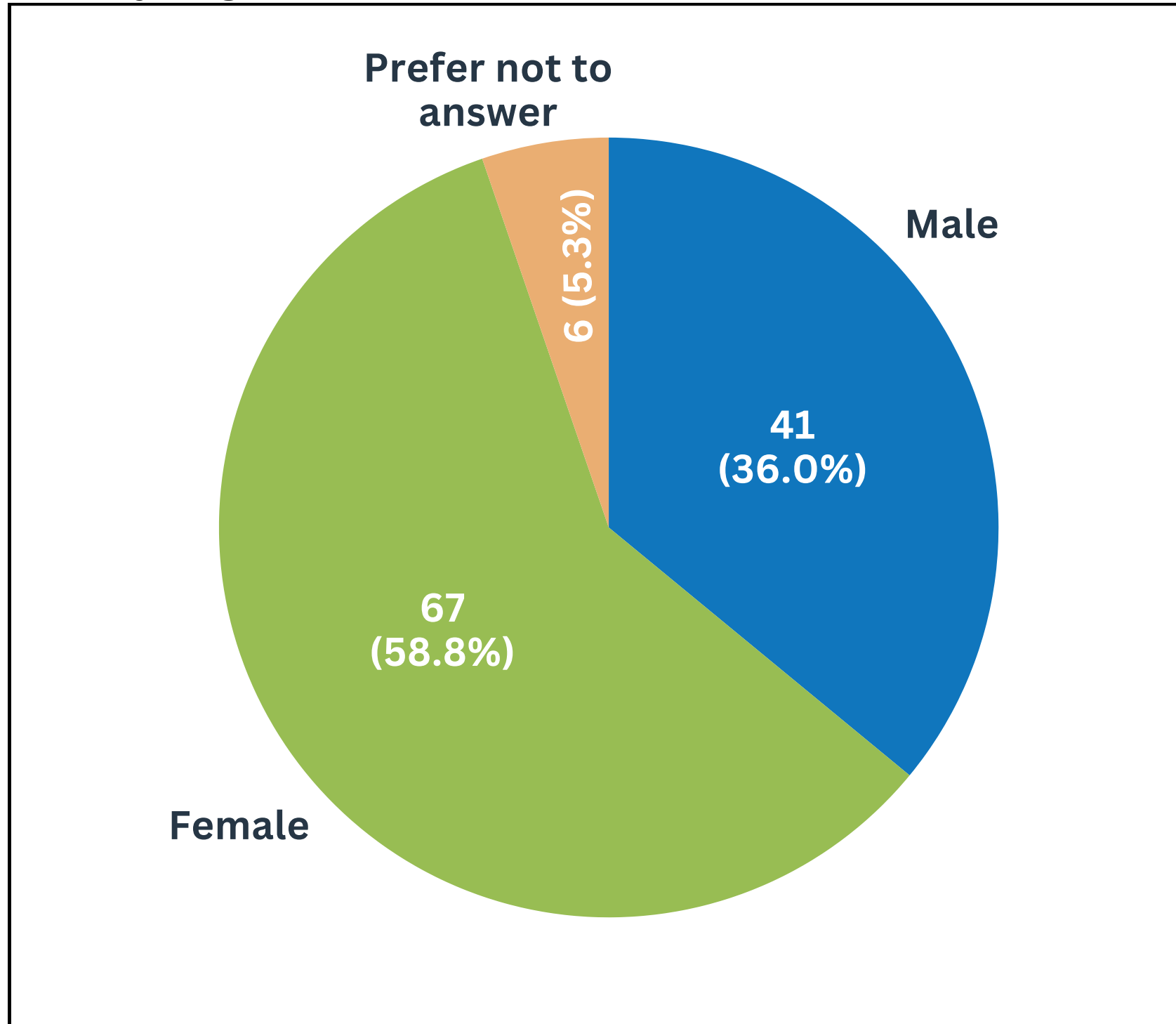
of Responses: 114

How long have you lived in the area?



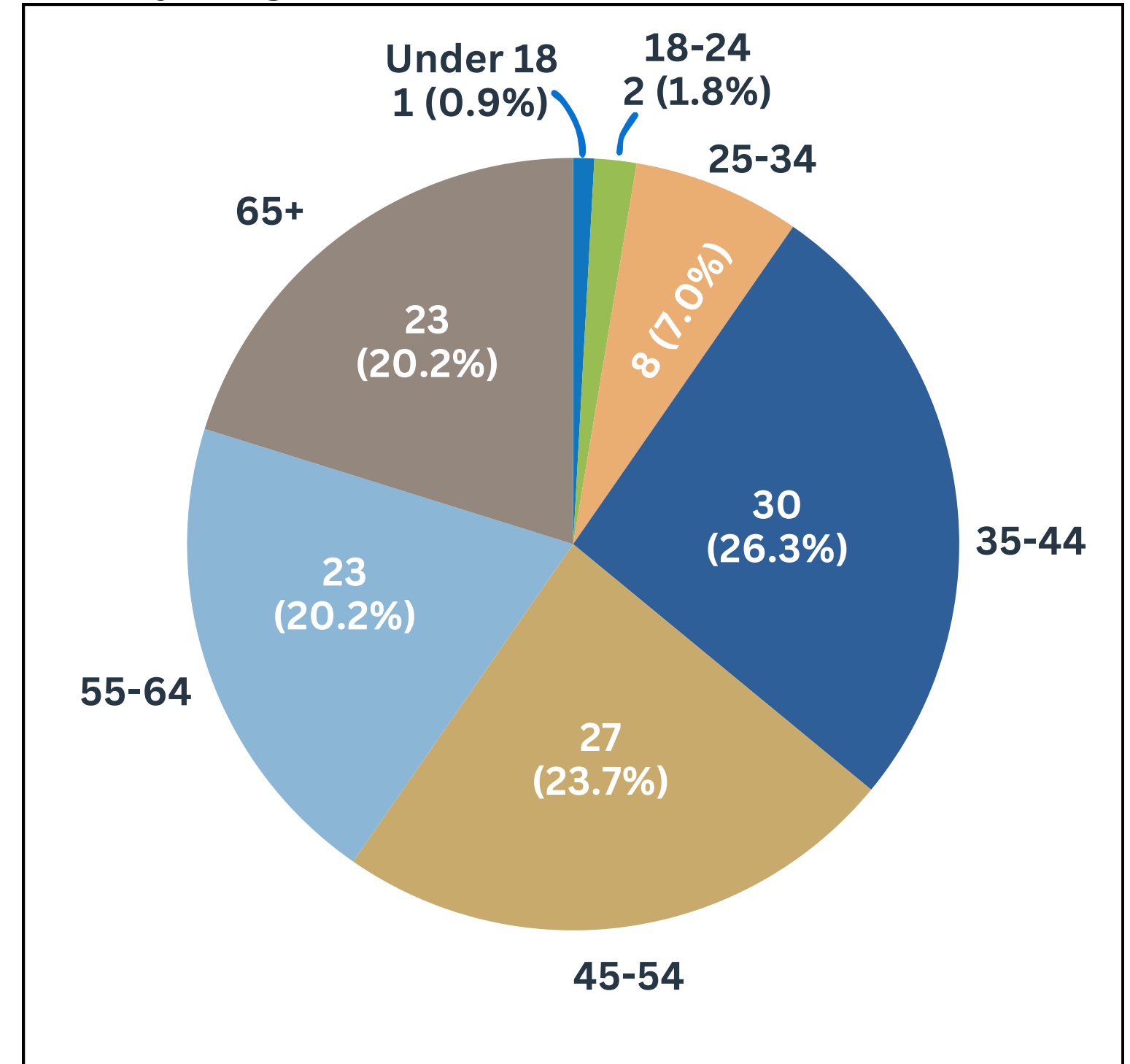
of Responses: 114

What is your gender?



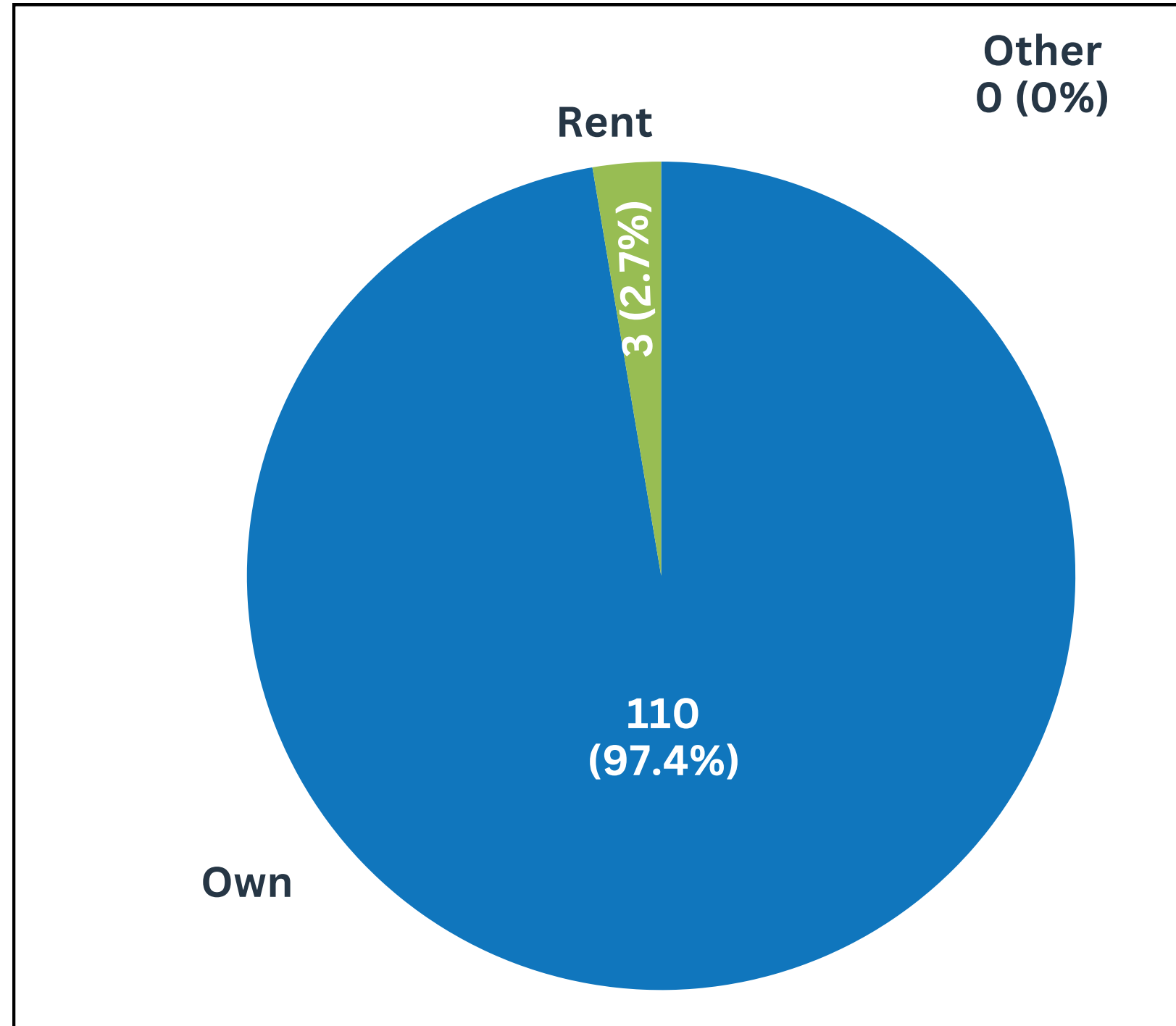
of Responses: 114

What is your age?



of Responses: 114

Do you own or rent your home?



of Responses: 113