

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A winding road, possibly a dirt or gravel road, curves through the center of the image. The surrounding area is a mix of green fields, some of which appear to be agricultural, and brownish, possibly wooded or undeveloped land. The overall tone is somewhat muted, with a dark overlay on the left side.

# Town of Egremont

**Joint Committee Meeting #4**

**Comprehensive Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan**

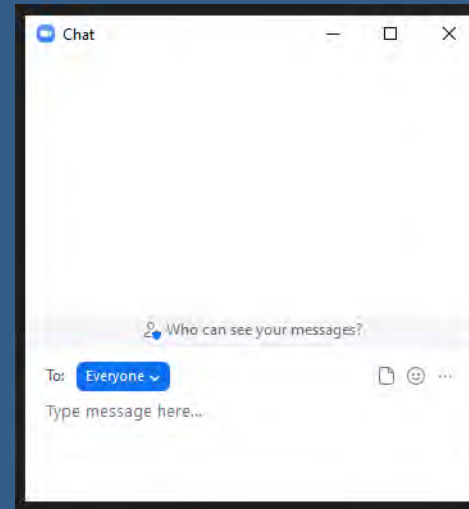
**February 15, 2023**

Choose Gallery to see everyone!

# How to use Zoom

Don't forget to mute when you aren't talking!

Use chat to ask questions.



Unmute



Start Video



Security



Participants



Polls



Chat



Share Screen



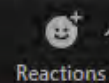
Record



Closed Caption



Breakout Rooms



Reactions



Apps



Whiteboards

End

# AGENDA

1. Debrief from first workshop and survey results
2. Format for second workshop
3. Narrow themes to 5 for 5 stations.

## Rules!

**Be open to many and different ideas.**

**Respect the thoughts and opinions of others.**

**Be ready to participate fully – in and out of the meeting.**

**Remember we are talking about the needs of the whole town.**

# TIMELINE



# PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND SURVEY

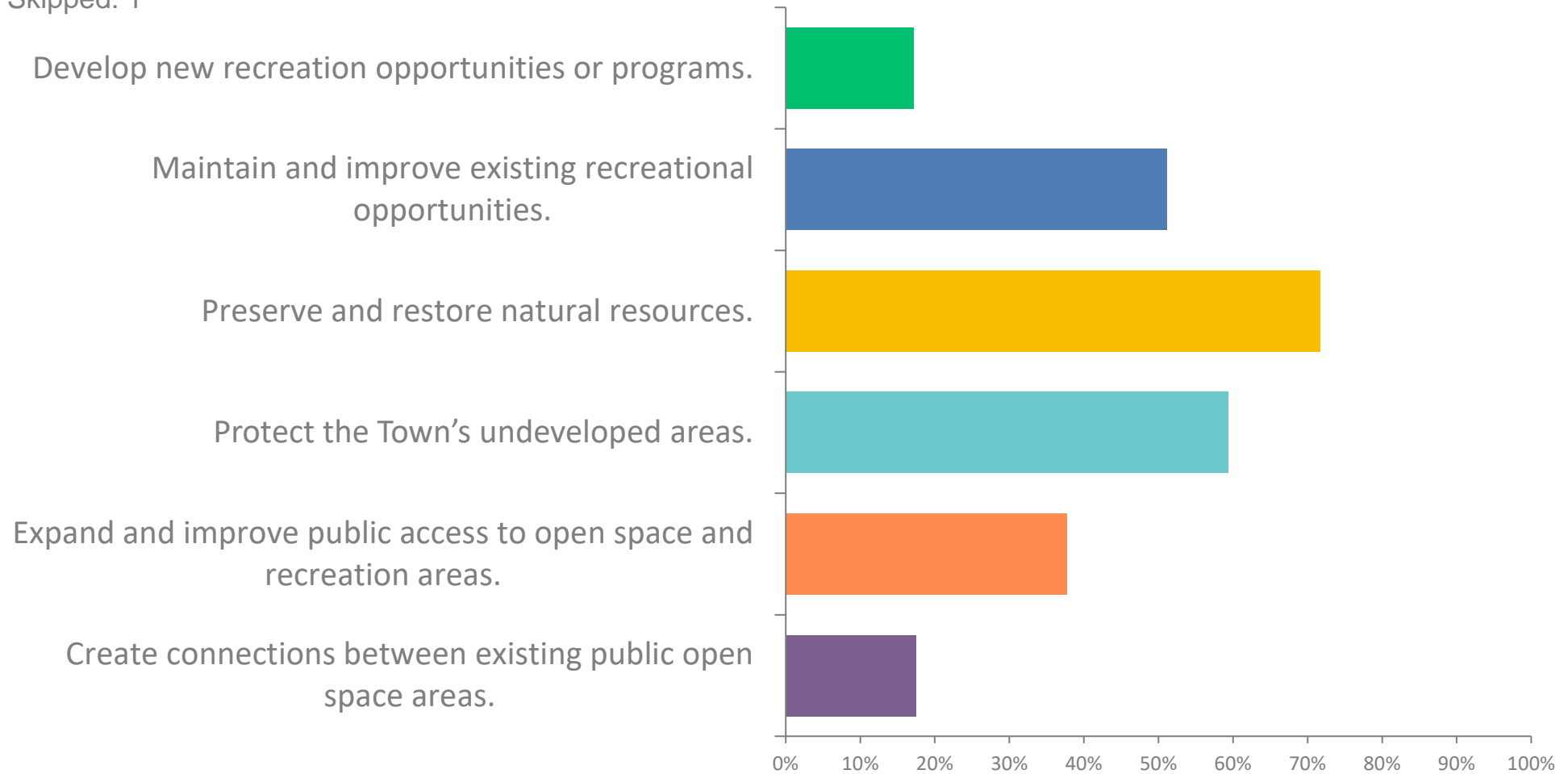
Discussion

Format: What worked/what didn't?

Input: What surprised you? What confirmed what you had known?

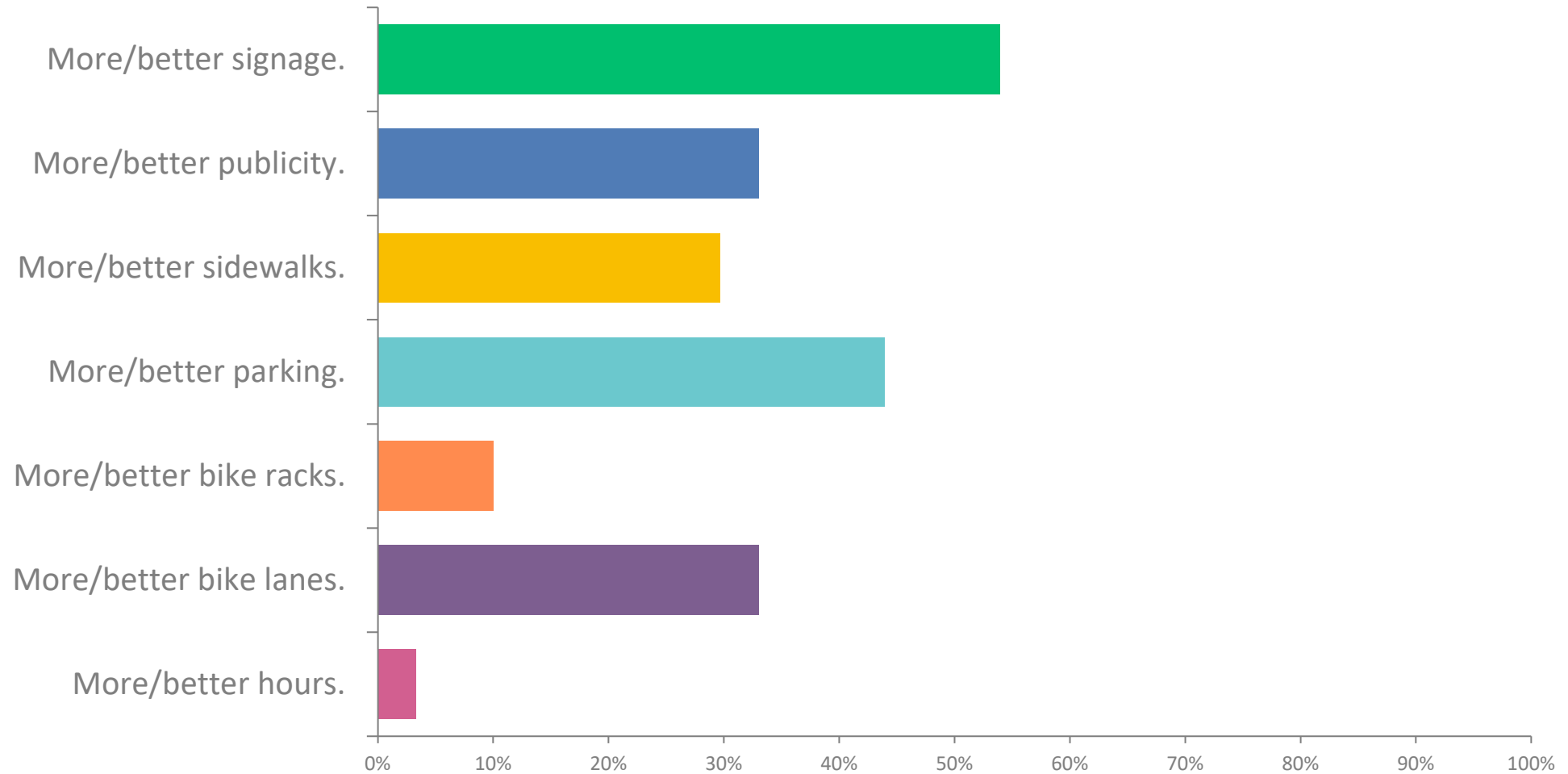
**Q1: Of the goals below, which do you think are the most important related to the Town's open space? (Pick up to three which have the highest priority for the next 5-10 years.) Note: This question requires an answer.**

Answered: 267 Skipped: 1



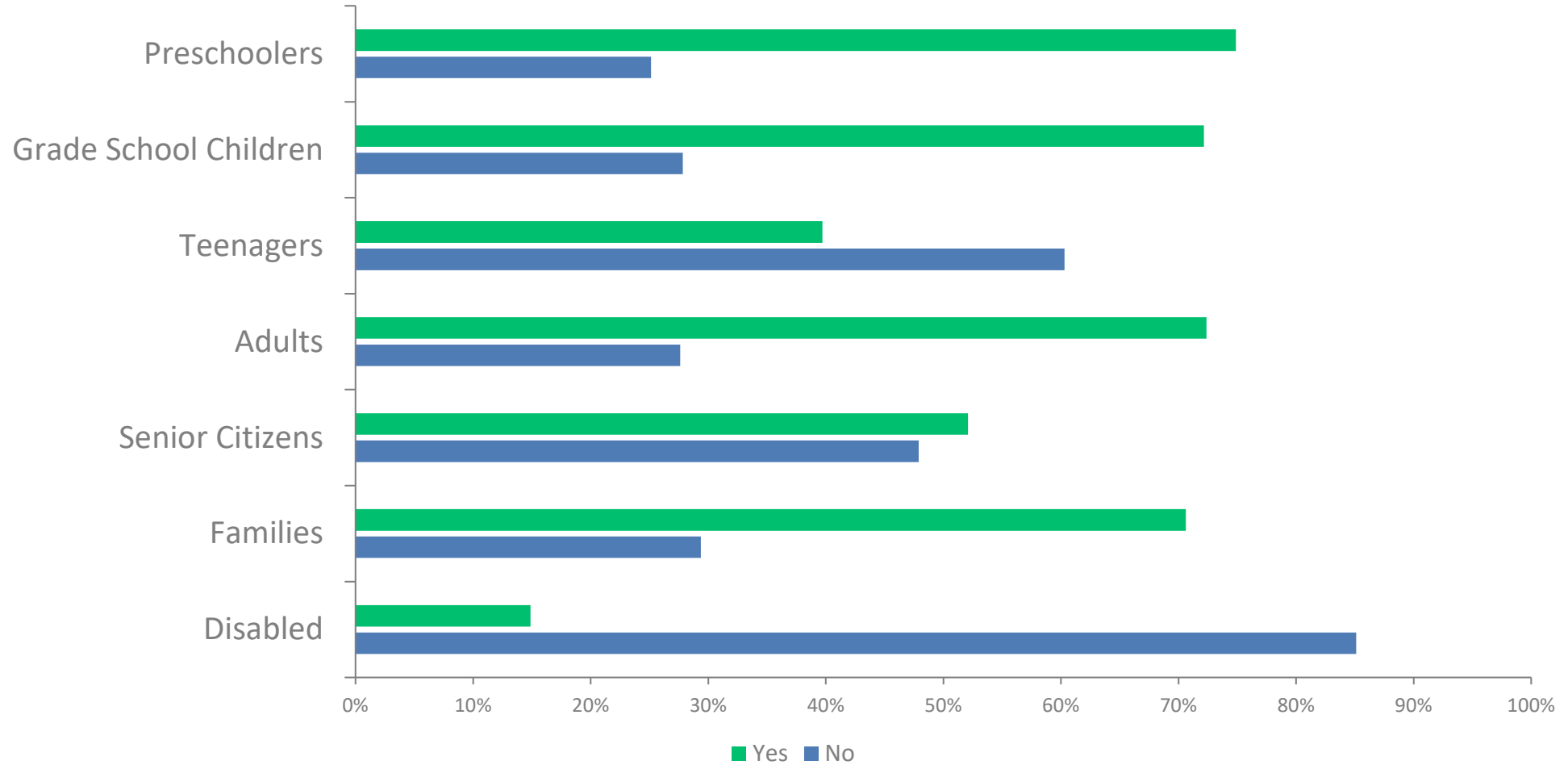
## Q2: What kinds of improvements are necessary to improve/increase your access to existing Town open space facilities? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 223 Skipped: 45



# Q3: Do you think the following groups have sufficient recreational opportunities? (Y/N)

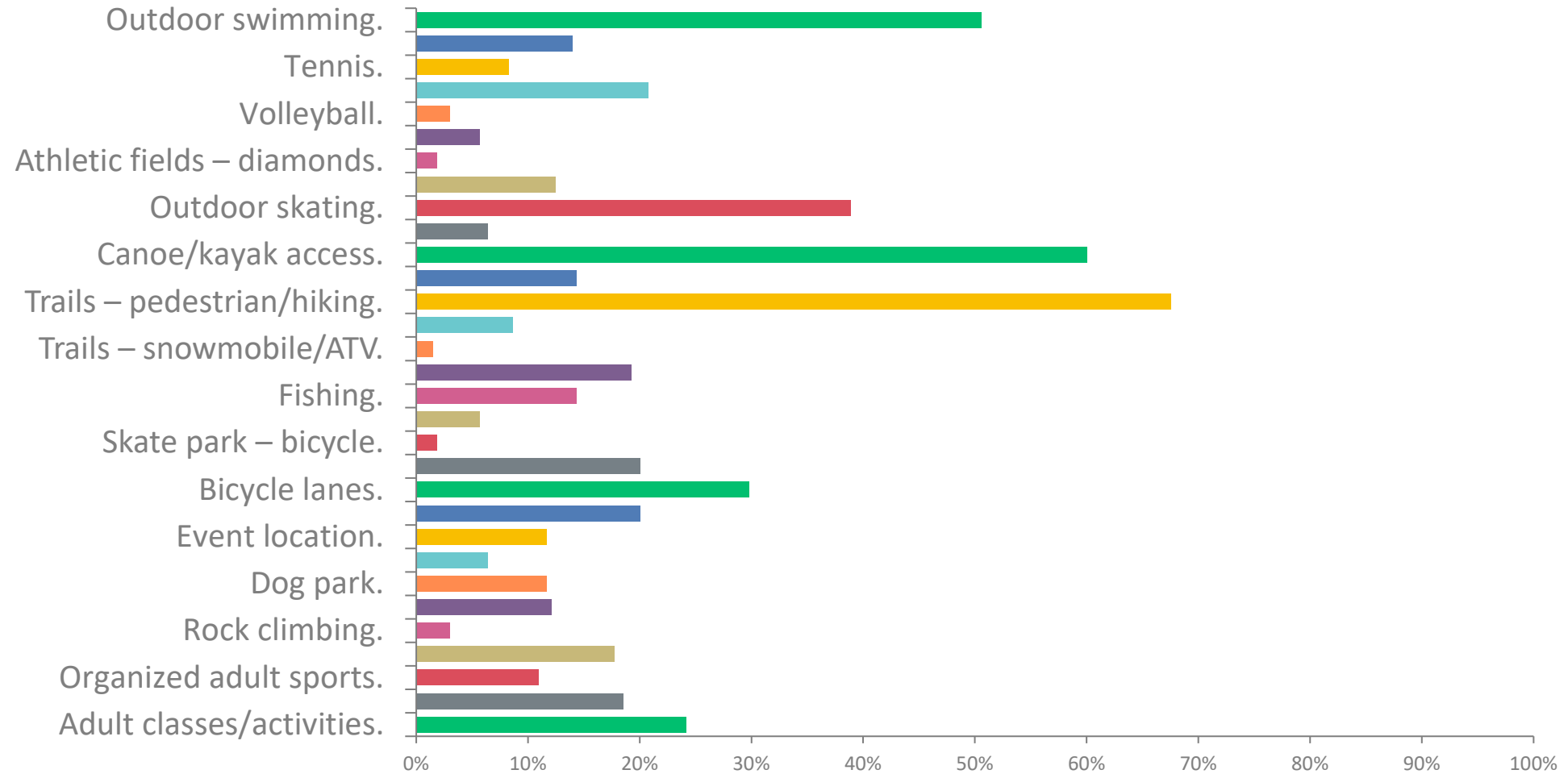
Answered: 229 Skipped: 39





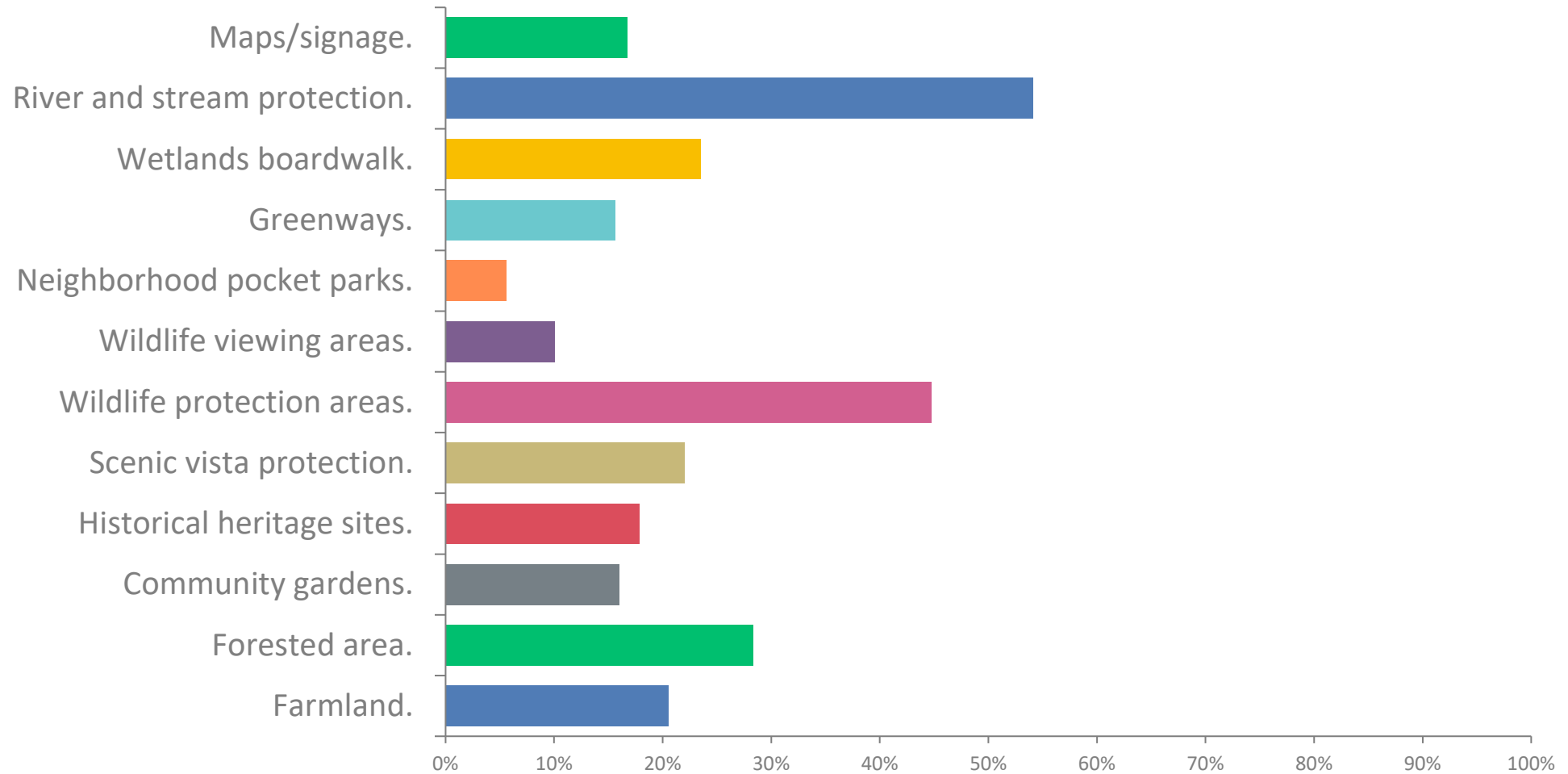
# Q4: What would you most like to see additional public dollars spent on for recreation? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 262 Skipped: 6



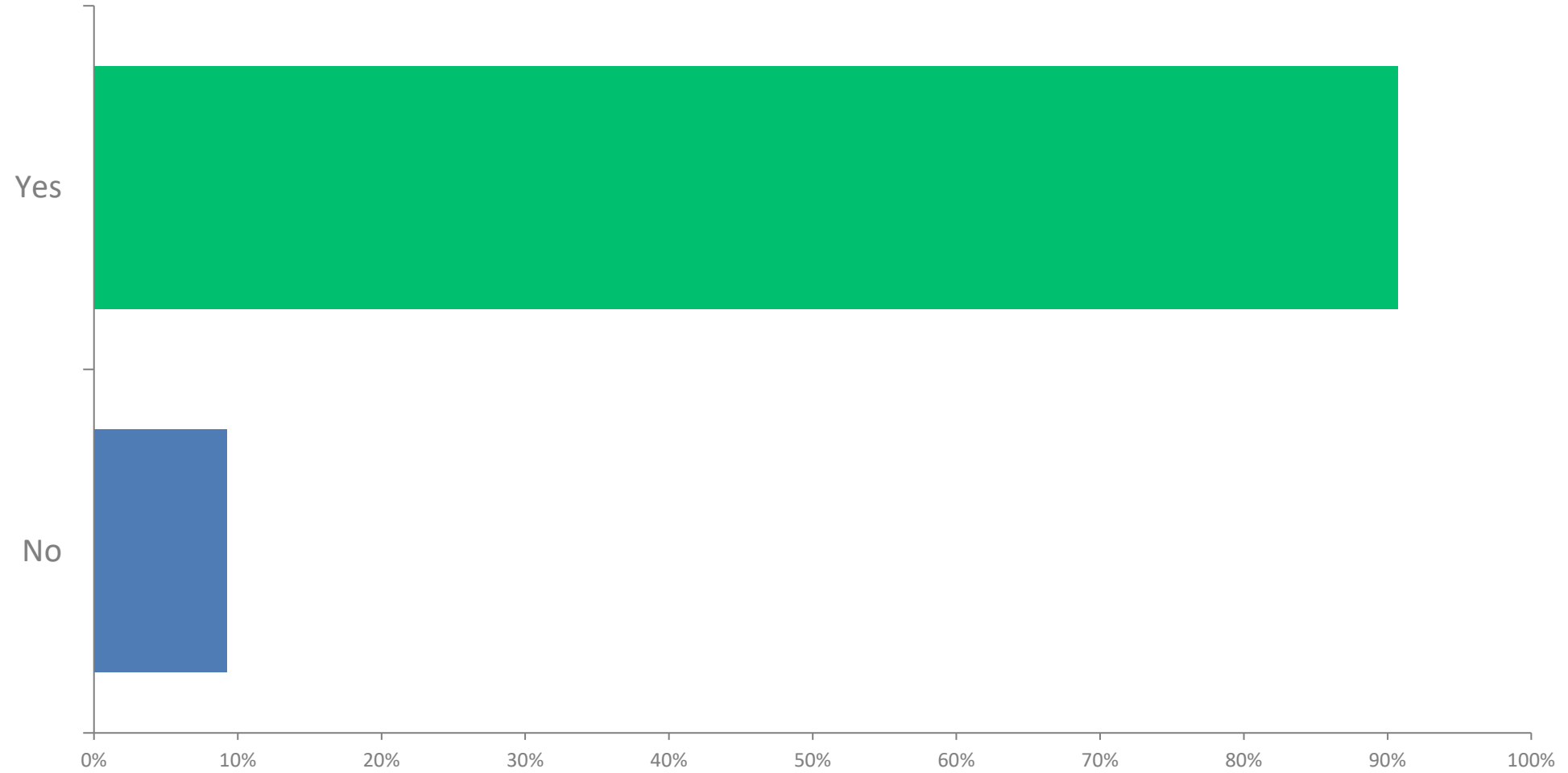
# conservation areas? Please choose your top three priorities. Note: this question requires an answer.

Answered: 266 Skipped: 2



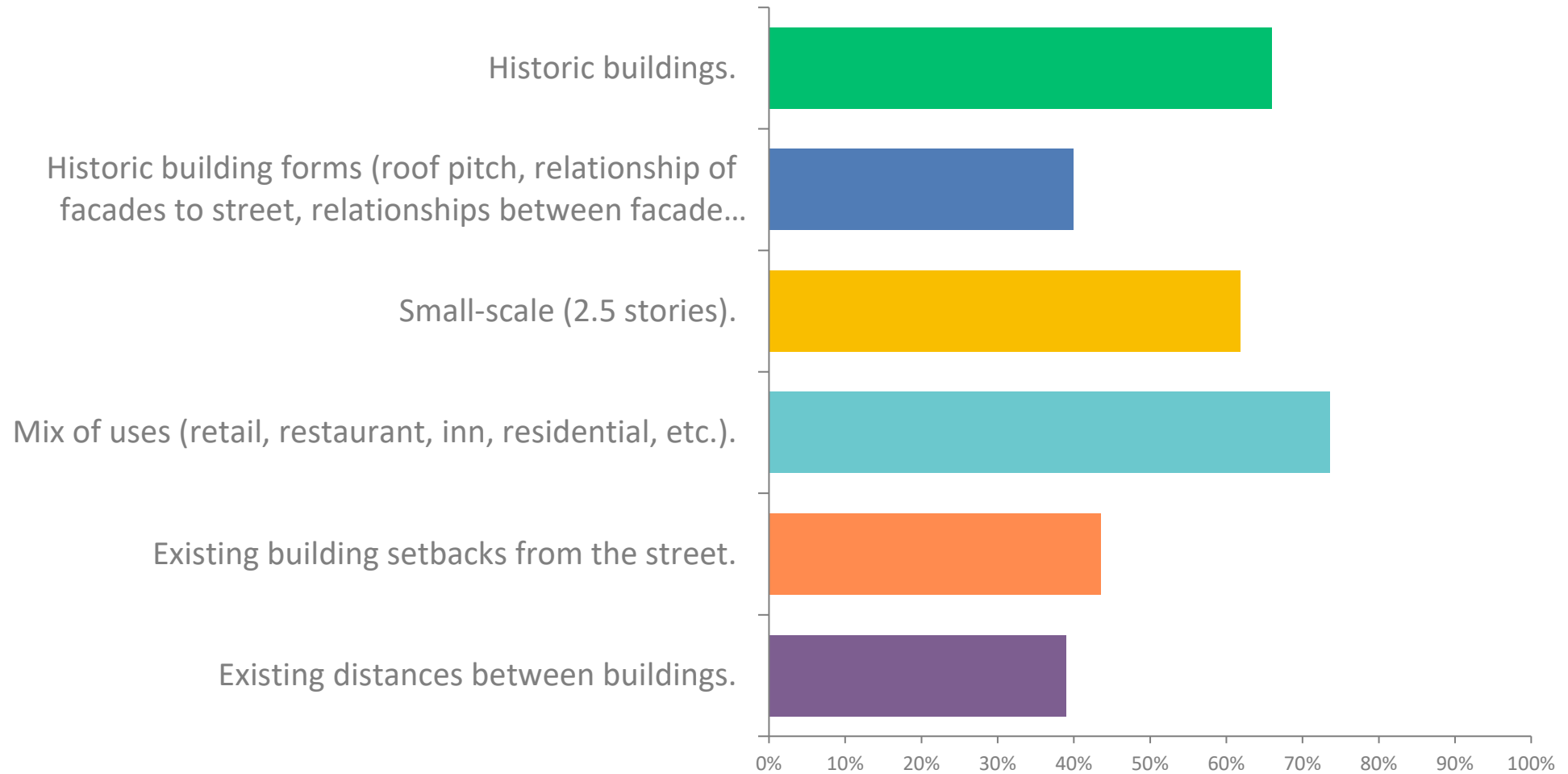
# Q9: Is having thriving village centers (North Egremont and South Egremont) important to you?

Answered: 227 Skipped: 41



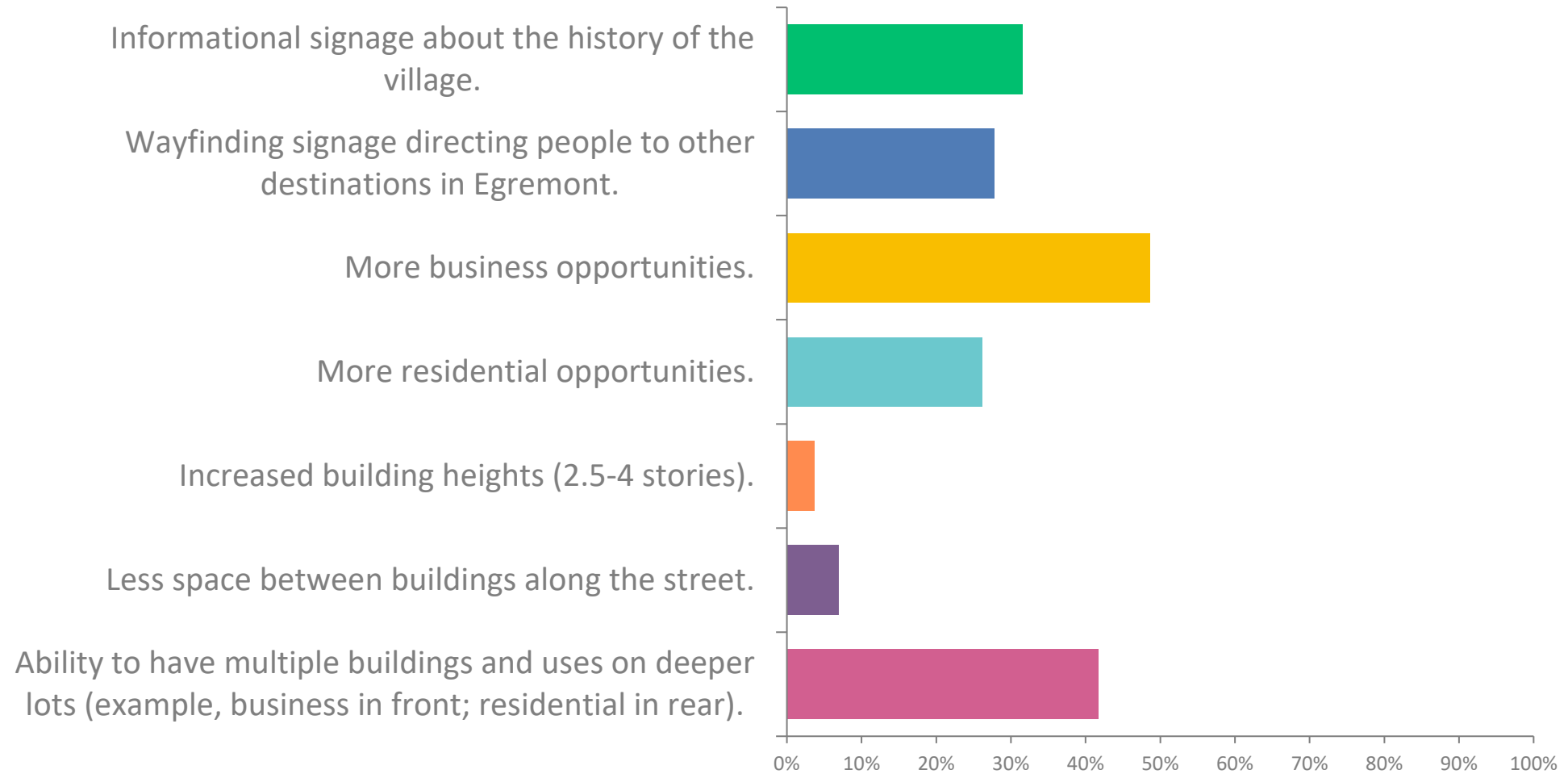
# Q10: What would you like to preserve in the village of North Egremont? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 216 Skipped: 52



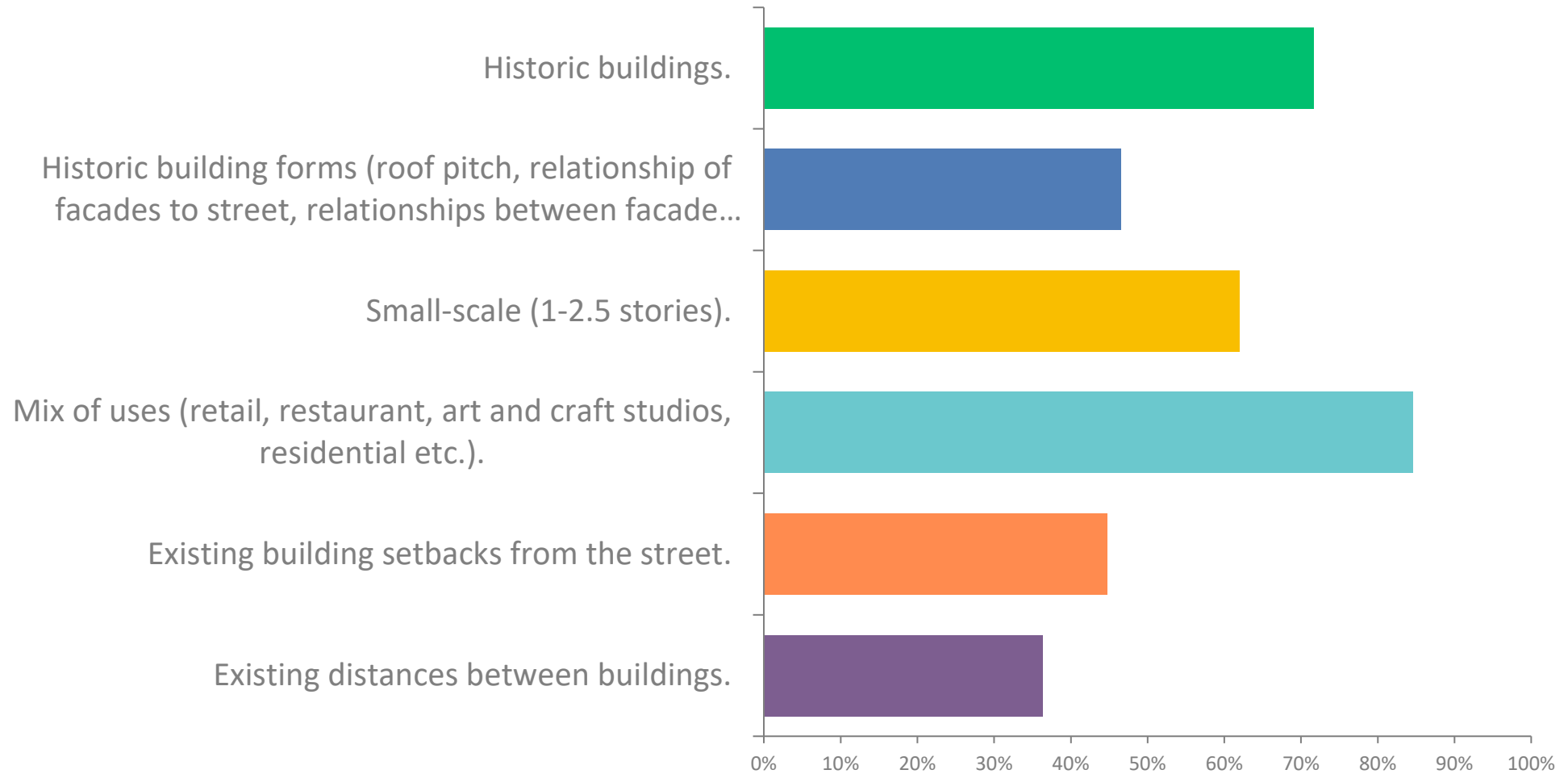
# Q11: What would you like to change in the village of North Egremont? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 163 Skipped: 105



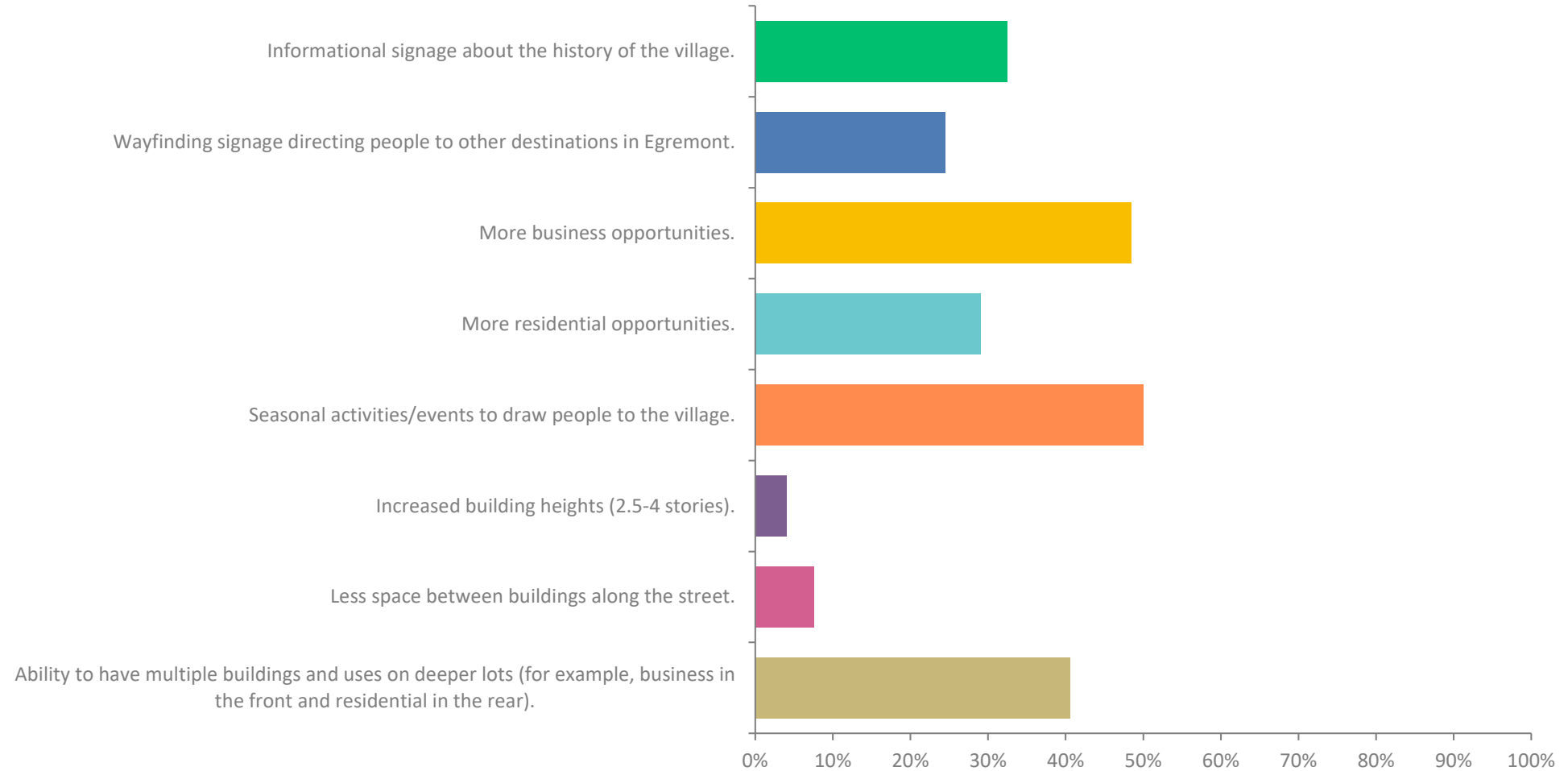
# Q12: What would you like to preserve in the village of South Egremont?

Answered: 223 Skipped: 45



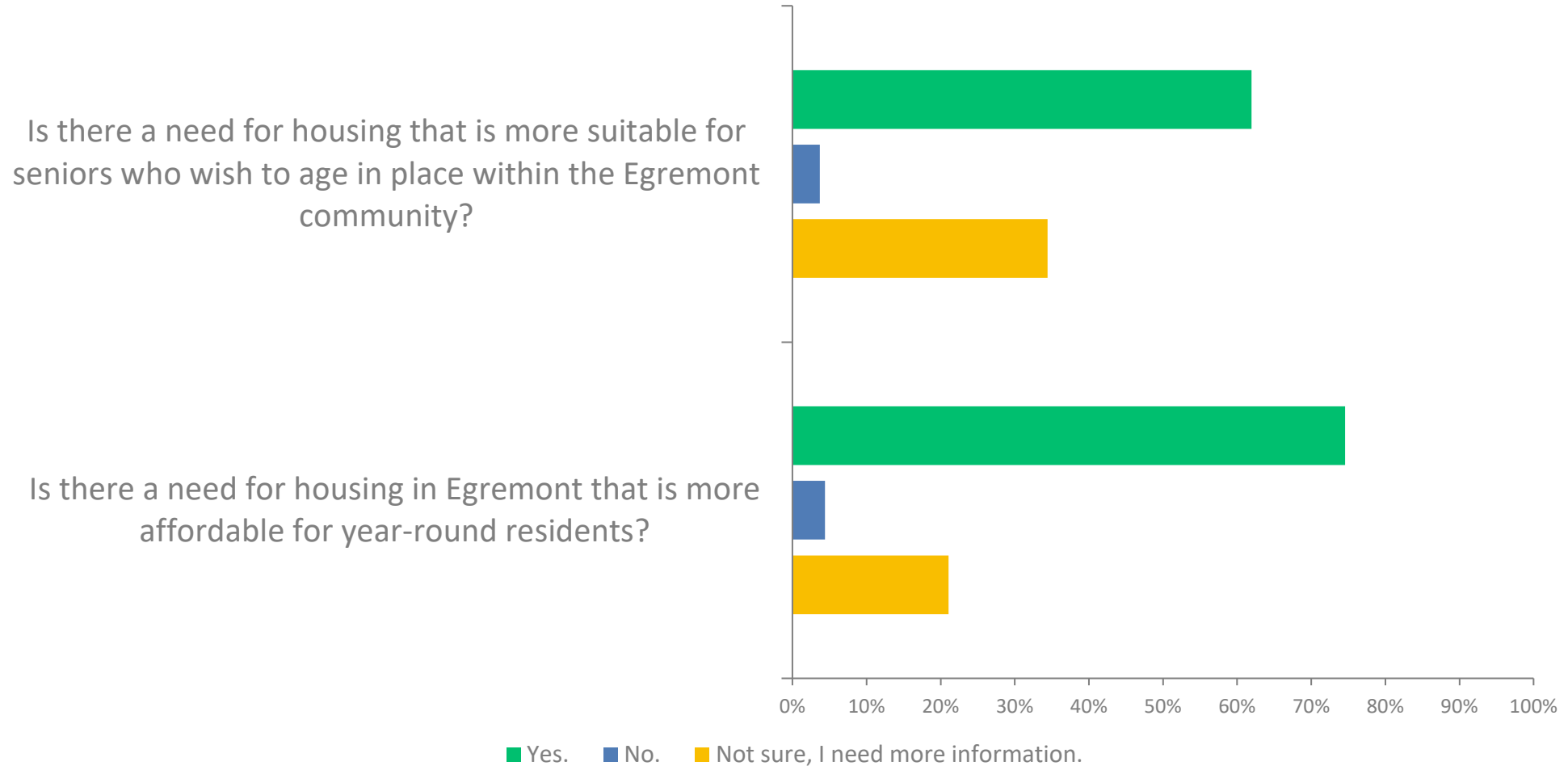
# Q13: What would you like to change in the village of South Egremont? (Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 175 Skipped: 93



# Berkshire County, and especially in areas with seasonal residents. What are your answers to the following questions?

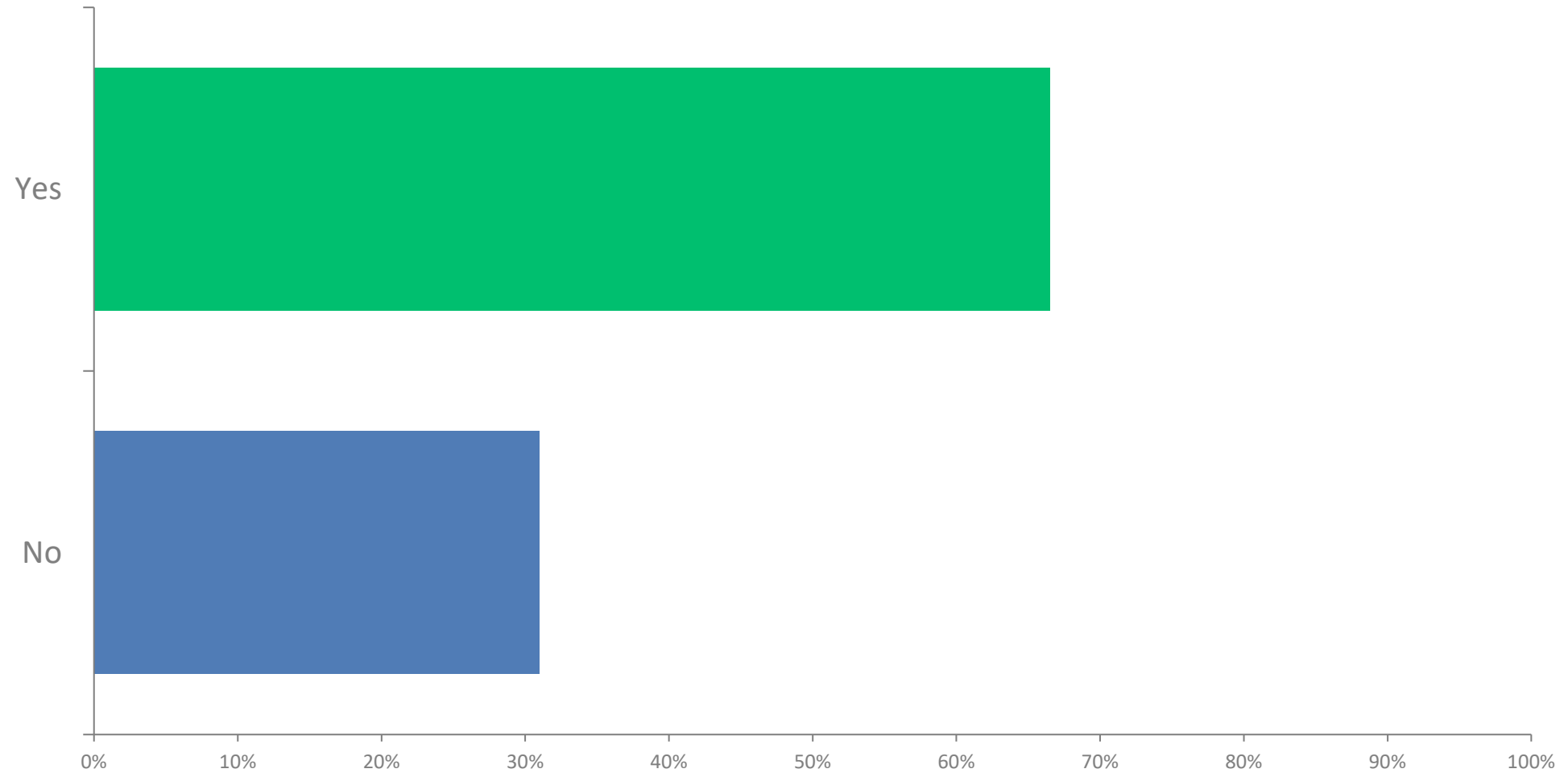
Answered: 232 Skipped: 36





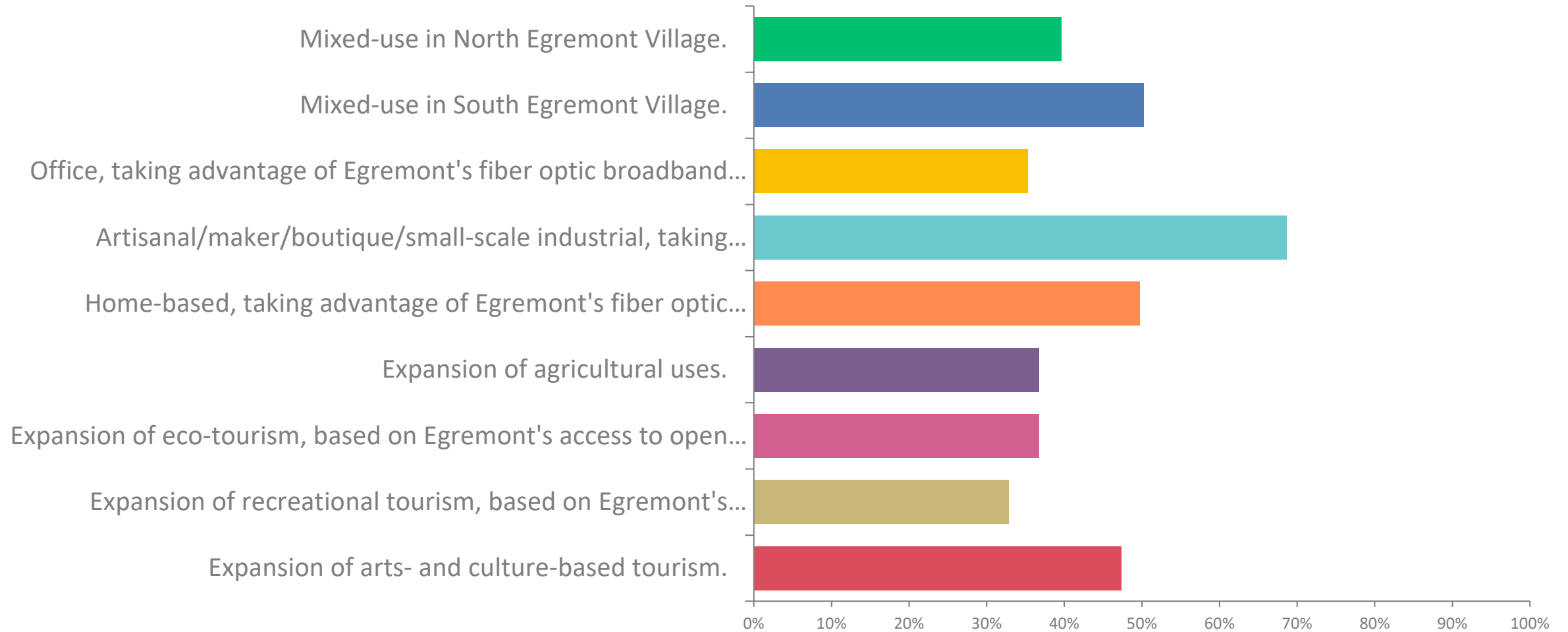
# Q16: Would you like to see more options for economic development in Egremont?

Answered: 192 Skipped: 76



# Q17: Which economic development options do you think are worth exploring in this planning process? Choose all that apply.

Answered: 201 Skipped: 67



# SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: FORMAT

9:00: Welcome and Introductions

9:10: Presentation: Implementation

- What can a Town do?
- How can actions be funded?

9:30: Station 1

10:10: Station 2

10:50: Station 3

11:30: Wrap-up and next steps

# SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: FORMAT

- 5 stations with a paired themes at each.
- At each station
  - One facilitator and one note-taker.
  - Map(s) relevant to the paired themes.
  - Data relevant to the paired themes.
  - Questions to answer.

# SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: FORMAT

- 5 stations with a paired themes at each.
- At each station:
  - One facilitator and one note-taker.
  - Map(s) relevant to the paired themes.
  - Data and precedents relevant to the paired themes.
  - Questions to answer.

# SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: SAMPLE THEMATIC PAIRS

- Housing: Affordable housing options vs. preference for no additional development.
- Economic development: Concentration in the Villages vs. spread into residential/rural areas.
- Economic development: Supporting active farming operations vs. concern about impact on environment
- Physical connections: Linking open space with wildlife corridors vs. linking built areas with bike paths/sidewalks.
- Community Connections: New facilities vs. maintaining/enhancing/programming existing facilities.
- Land Protection: Private protected land vs. Publicly protected land with public access.
- Environmental Protection: Responsibility of Town vs. role of private efforts (landowners, volunteers, organizations).
- Municipal Resources: Community desires vs. ability to fund, manage, and maintain.

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

More business development, demographic shift away from aging population, affordable and workforce housing.

### POTENTIAL THEME:

How does the community manage a demographic shift to an aging population?

Area needs more low income housing for young persons.

More opportunities for working people to live in Egremont.

More business so that young people have a reason to stay and make this their home.

For a local person to be able to exist and survive in this small town.

THE most important issue is affordable and senior housing.

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

More affordable housing is needed but should be done w/o rezoning for “development” and no multilevel units and with maintaining rural character.

### POTENTIAL THEME:

How does Egremont balance the development of housing with a preference for the existing rural development pattern?

This (affordable housing) should be very high on the list of town’s priorities.

Limit building of ALL new homes: Egremont has enough housing.

Egremont is not unique in our need for affordable housing but I strongly believe that without much more of it, our town, as beautiful as it is, will wither.

The natural beauty and rural nature of the town; prevent development that is not in line with these values.



## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

Preserve the historical character of Egremont. And the small-town vibe – don't allow too many businesses/commerce to enter and lost the cozy feel of the village.

### POTENTIAL THEME:

How does the community balance the desire for economic activity with a preference for the existing rural development pattern?

Preservation of natural areas in perpetuity. No further construction.

Create business zones to encourage small commerce; provide funds to support vibrant village centers.

We already have too many economic development options because of the special permit process which allows businesses interspersed in residential areas. Home occupations with no outward impacts should be the only economic uses in residential areas. Other needs are well-provided by neighboring towns, and all towns don't have to look alike. Keep Egremont mainly residential.

Just make economic development easy and let it happen without interference.

# SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

While we should preserve the rural character of the outer areas of the town, the villages need development. Commercial businesses should be encouraged in the two villages, especially south village. The re-build of 23 will help that with new sidewalks, but we need more parking and ability for business to come into the existing buildings without the special permit hoops everyone is forced to go through.

## POTENTIAL THEME:

What is the balance of development in the two villages? Is there a role for economic development outside the villages (farming, recreation, other)?

Make villages denser & more lively. More housing in N. Eg. Village & S. Eg. Village.

Avoid commercialism keep Egremont SMALL + BEAUTIFUL.

Make an effort to stop speeding in N. Egremont village. Limit commercialism in both villages.

Years ago, we knew everyone in the town & the business owners etc. were your neighbors. The local businesses supported the local community and visa versa. We need to support local businesses who want to come into our towns and encourage the town to make it easier for these opportunities to happen.

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

I don't think we need a thriving village center in North Egremont. I believe the focus should be South Egremont.

### POTENTIAL THEME:

What should the identity of each village be and how much change is the community willing to accept?

It would be nice if the center of North Egremont had more than one inn and a general store with a place for people to come together.

North Egremont:  
Sidewalk from village to town hall.

South Egremont:  
It's fine the way it is. Meaning no additional structures are needed.

South Egremont:  
A town hall where meetings could be held, an art or music school, a bakery, a book store

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

What would happen if so many people put their land in Chapter 61, 61A, 61B that our tax base would be compromised? Who'd be left to pay the taxes?

### POTENTIAL THEME:

How does Egremont balance the desire to preserve and protect land with the need to meet its obligations as a municipality?

Too much land has become Land Trust (i.e. buildable land).

Support and donate to Eg. Land Trust – working on the [wildlife] corridor!

A community that balances the needs and wants of all under a well balanced budget.

My vote is to maintain what we have and preserve as much as possible.

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

Is the community aware of the amt. of chemical fertilizers being use agriculturally + also on private lands. Shouldn't we look at preservation of resources in terms of use of chemicals?

### POTENTIAL THEME:

What responsibility does the Town have for privately owned resources?  
What is the balance between volunteer efforts and local regulations?

Would love Prospect Lake access. Used to do day passes – no longer available.

Can funds be secured to help inoculate the Baldwin Hill Elm? Too precious to lose!

Private open land, such as already protected farm and wood land, must be acknowledged as private property.

I'd like to have a policy in place where horse riders realize that faming is a business and they don't have carte blanche to ride where they want.

Address major issue of invasive plant species and educate community about natives.

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

Why do you assume we need “MORE/BETTER”? How about maintain what we have.

### POTENTIAL THEME:

What is the balance between maintaining existing infrastructure and adding new recreation options? How do we connect these resources?

Provide better access for those with physical limitations.

Cross country skiing / ping pong / bocce / potable water in French Park.

For fire safety, education and recreation: a tower/lookout at the highest point in French Park.

Sidewalks, ways to move around safely on bike and foot.

Keep ahead of any maintenance issues.

## SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

I have been part of Egremont since I was born in 1934. From 1934 to 1954 Egremont was an Eden. I was a farmhand on Baldwin Hill Farm until I left for other job opportunities in 1958. I have lived by the old time values that I learned on the farm throughout my life. I would like those values understood and valued by people new to the community.

### POTENTIAL THEME:

How can the Town support community-building among long-term and newer residents?

I want to preserve the sense of community by creating a center where people can meet, play, get together. We should have bought the golf course or church!

Create a community center so there is a place for the community to meet and host activities for people of all ages.

Would like to have more community events that are open to all age groups and people are more inclusive and inviting to second home owners.

People who move here need to be given a pamphlet describing how best to fit in with the town and the natural environment. So many people are not aware how different country life is.

# SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP: THEMES

Make the roads more safe for bikers and pedestrians. Add bike lanes on Jug End Road, Creamery Rd. and Rte. 71. Create a shared space for music and festivals like a band stand or gazebo at French Park. Add more benches and a gazebo to the town green in So. Egremont for celebrations like Memorial Day, July 4, Town's anniversary and Veterans Day.

## POTENTIAL THEME:

What responsibility does the Town have/ should the Town have for programming/ facilities? Could partners take on these roles?

Re-establish the French Park Committee, Add swings + equipment for adults to enjoy.

Let's host/enable "Music in the Park" events, please and maybe a holiday or winter festival in the Villages or at French Park.

Love French Park and Jug End reserve. Wish we had a town beach + more organized activities i.e. softball teams + tennis leagues.

More facilities for older kids, more sports programs & maybe wildlife workshops where kids can learn about conservation.



# NEXT STEPS



Present results of the workshop and survey to joint committees.  
Discuss draft recommendations for March workshop.



Discuss draft recommendations and implementation plan components. Includes what, who, when, and in some cases, financing sources.  
Second community survey to test draft recommendations.



Present results of workshop and survey to the committees (separate meetings).  
Prepare, present, and discuss draft plans.



Revise plans for separate approval processes.

Note: project must finish by June 30.

**Thank you!**



Innes Associates Ltd.

