



E̱THELO

City of Prince George Citizen Budget

Introduction

From October 21 to November 8, 2020, the City of Prince George used a budget simulation exercise called Citizen Budget for their 2021 budget consultation. The purpose was to learn about the priorities of local residents and to give them a say on which services they believed merited more or less funding, especially during COVID-19. Participants also voted on a sliding scale how important or unimportant each service was to them.

- Participants were tasked with increasing, decreasing or maintaining their property tax funding for different budget categories, with the added constraint of staying within a balanced budget, in the same way that a city official would.
- The process educated residents on the City's various services, while asking them to provide feedback based on the City'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: **1515**

Number Respondents: **1020**

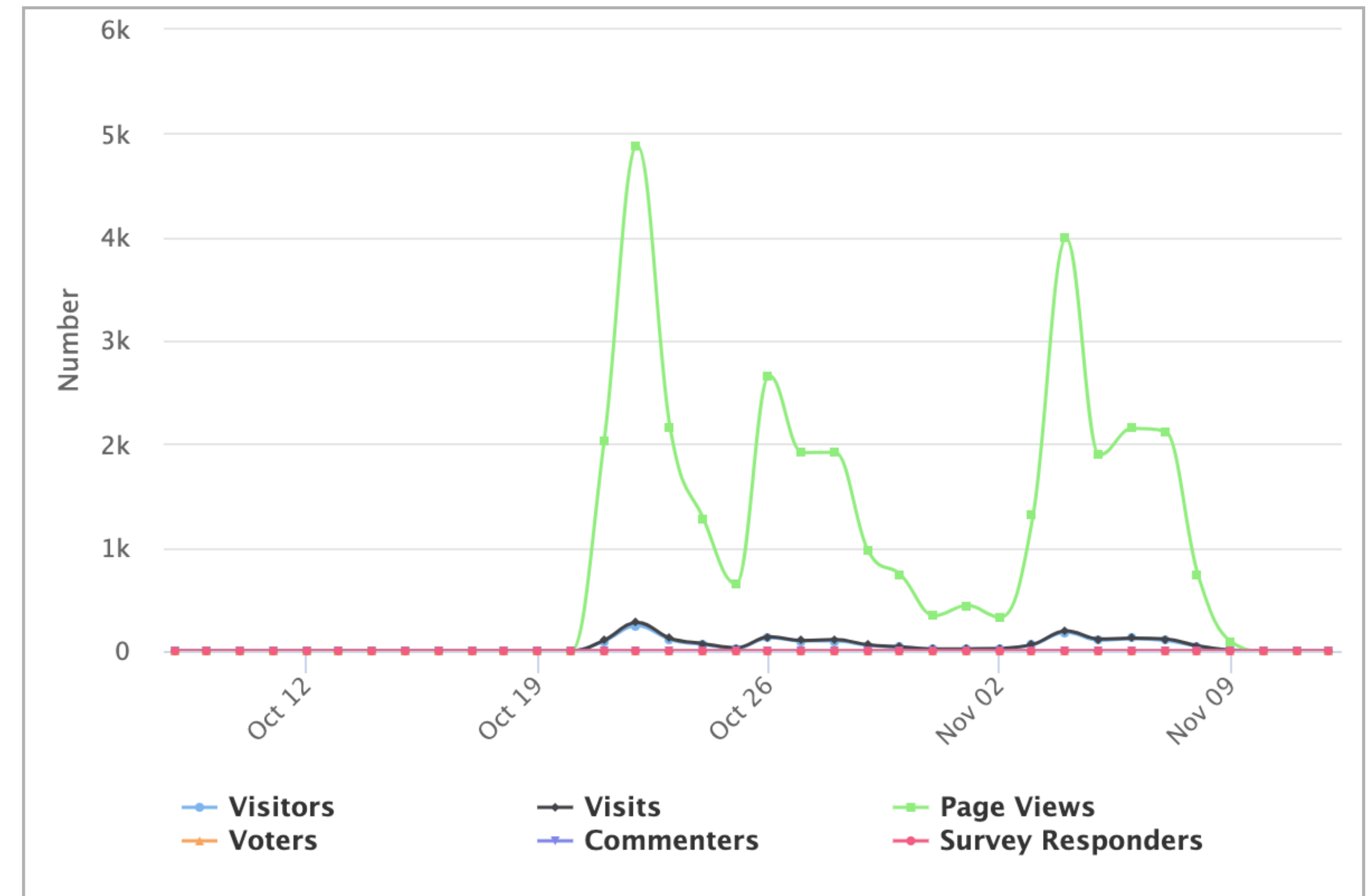
Page views: **32,577**

Average time on platform: **12 minutes**

Residential Voters: **58%**

Commercial Voters: **3%**

Not Stated: **39%**



Building Consensus

Funding Area	Percent Change	% Approval
Fire Protection Services	Keep the Same	74%
Bylaw Enforcement Services	Keep the Same	63%
Public Transit Services	Keep the Same	61%
Recreation and Community Services	Keep the Same	65%
Community Support Services	Keep the Same	57%
Community Planning and Infrastructure	Keep the Same	66%
Police Services	5% Increase	56%
Snow and Ice	5% Increase	70%
Roads and Sidewalks	5% Increase	68%
Parks, Trails, and Beautification	5% Increase	49%
Services That Attract and Retain...*	5% Decrease	50%
Environmental Management and Climate Action	5% Decrease	35%
Corporate Services	10% Decrease	87%

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, our system 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.

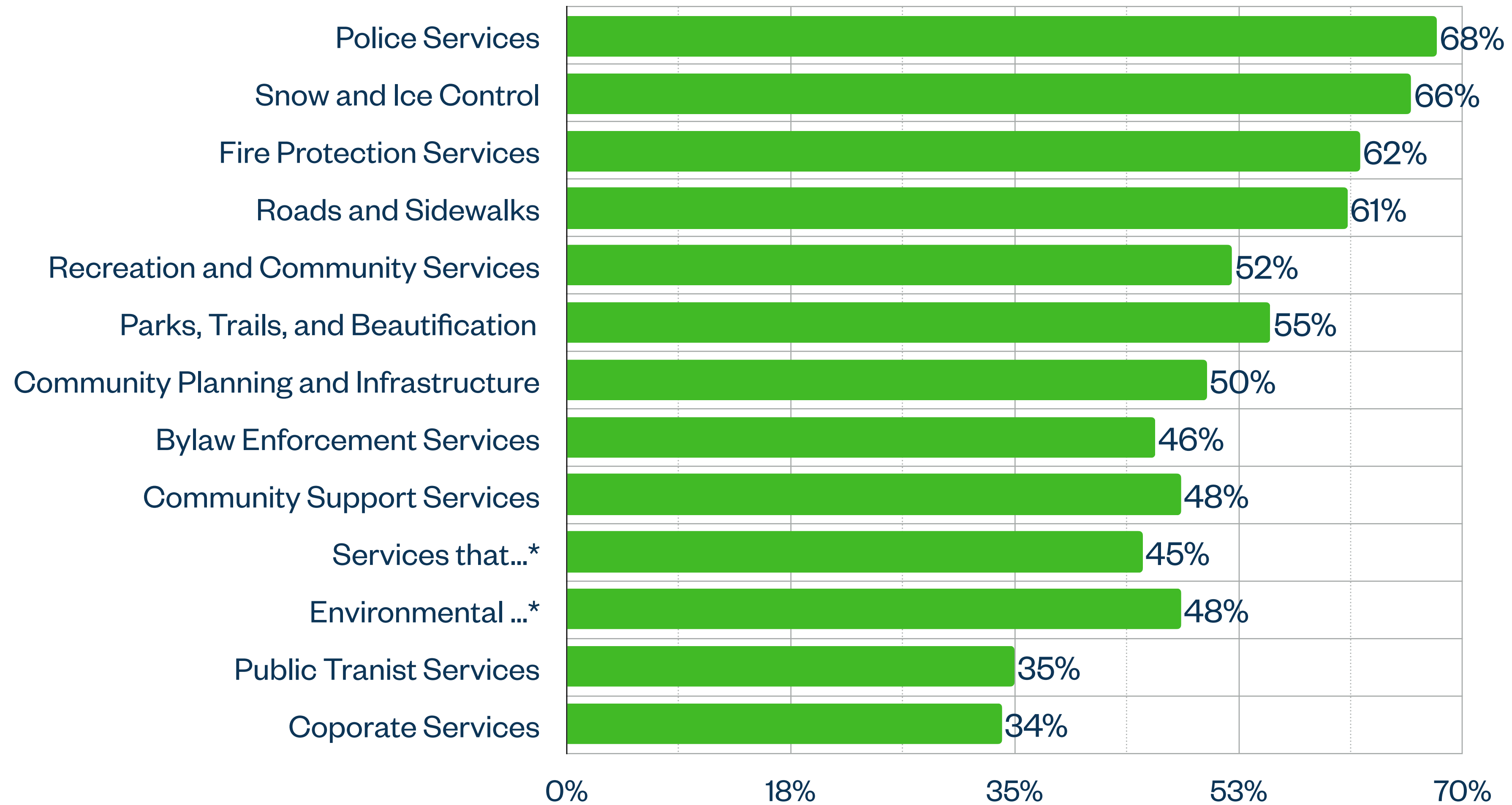
Average Budget Increase/Decrease: **-2.4%**

Average Budget Increase/Decrease, Excluding Corporate Services: **-0.7%**

Predicted Budget Support: 95%

*Full Title: Services That Attract and Retain Business And Facilitate Development

Importance of Services



What do you feel are key topics the City should consider as it establishes its 2021 budget?

"Citizen wellness and social issues like **homelessness** and **drug addiction**."

"**Climate change** mitigation and adaptation..."

"Decrease **wages of management** who make more than \$175,000 by 10-15%..."

"**Defund police**. Find social service response."

"... **Increase property taxes to help cover costs especially for home owners that have multiple properties**. Save money on police by providing subsidized housing, police are expensive while housing isn't in comparison plus reduced crime only leads to more savings..."

"Encourage **small business and infrastructure development** by keeping license fees the same or lower, and building permit fees low/reasonable..."

"How do we keep PG livable? **Sports arenas, city fields for soccer and baseball and other sports, swimming facilities, libraries, tourism** (so residents know how to use our area) all need to be made a priority as people stay closer to home. We need to make sure our streets are clean and our homeless have somewhere warm to stay and hang out as well..."

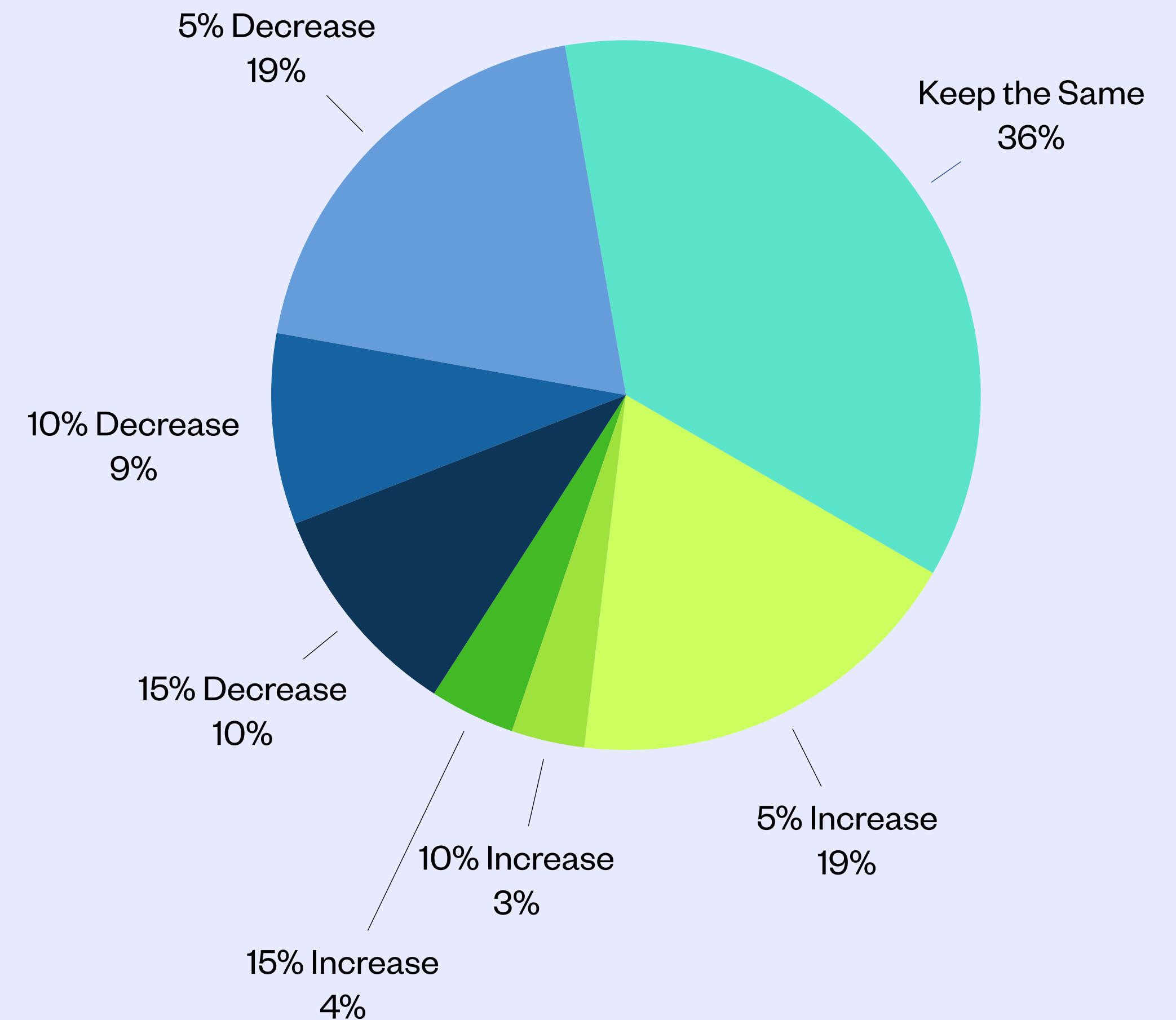
Voting Results



Fire Protection Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Fire Protection Services?”

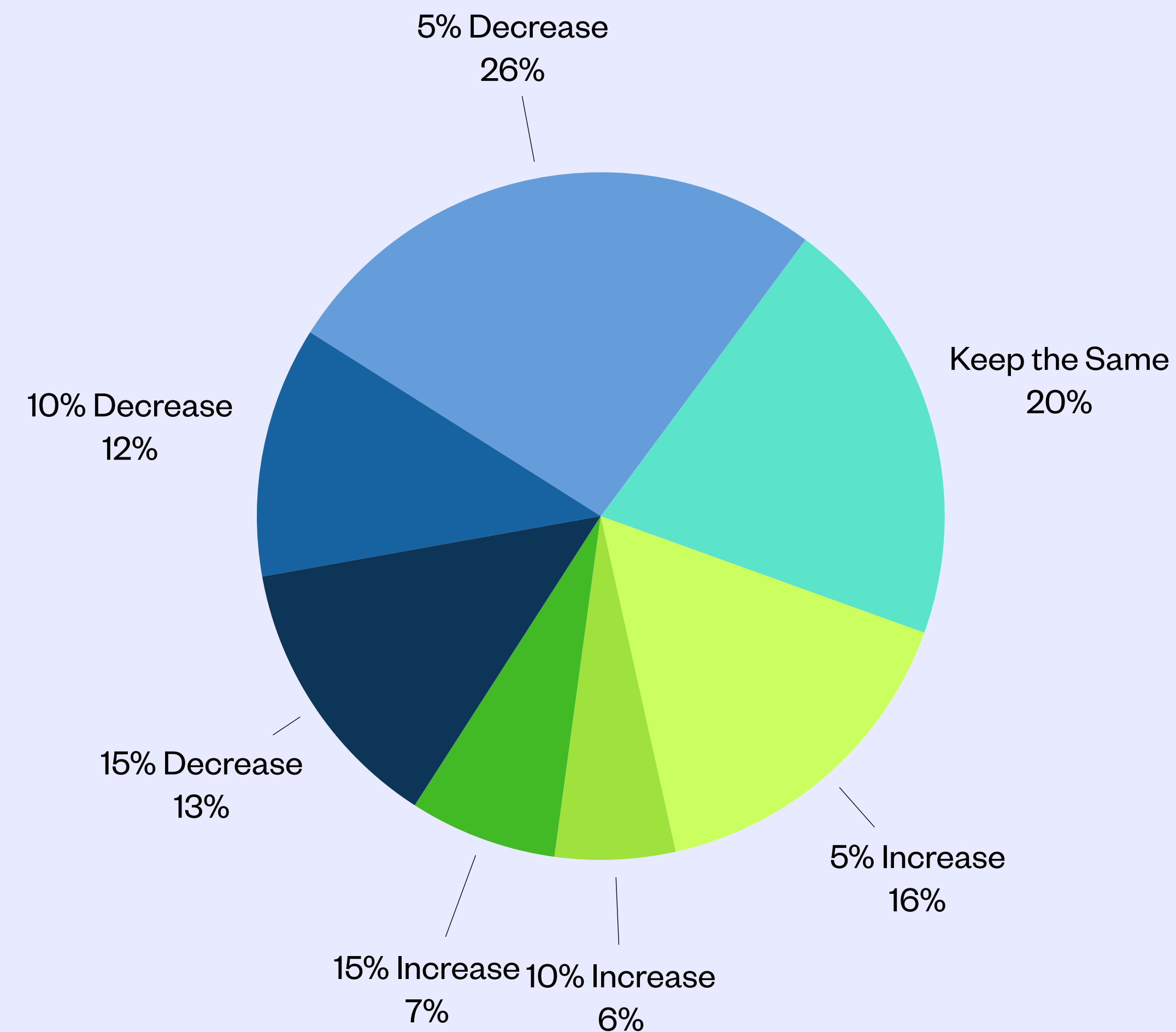
- Increase: 26%
- **Decrease: 38%**
- Keep the Same: 36%



Bylaw Enforcement Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Bylaw Enforcement Services?”

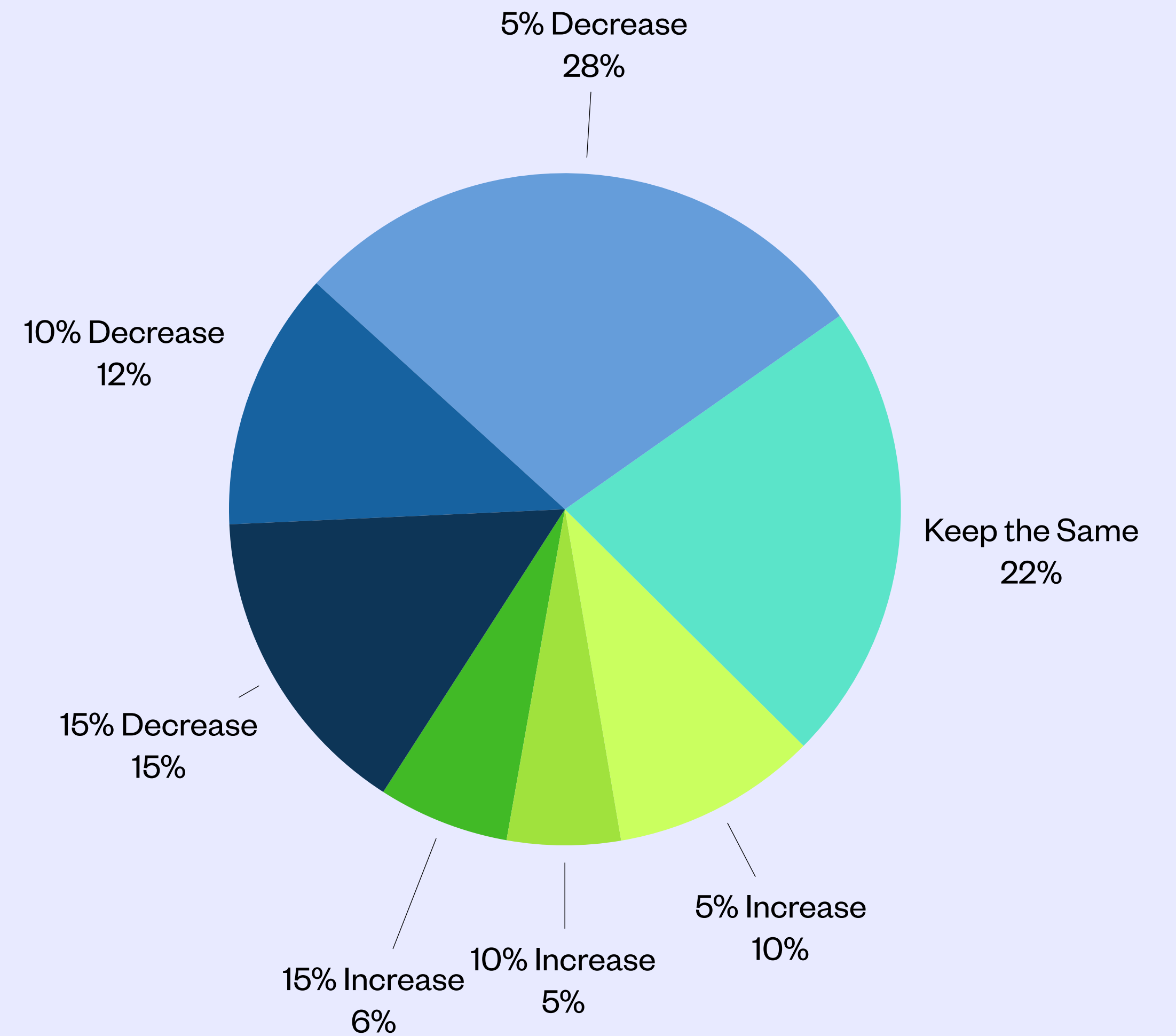
- Increase: 29%
- **Decrease: 51%**
- Keep the Same: 20%



Public Transit Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Public Transit Services?”*

- Increase: 21%
- **Decrease: 55%**
- Keep the Same: 22%

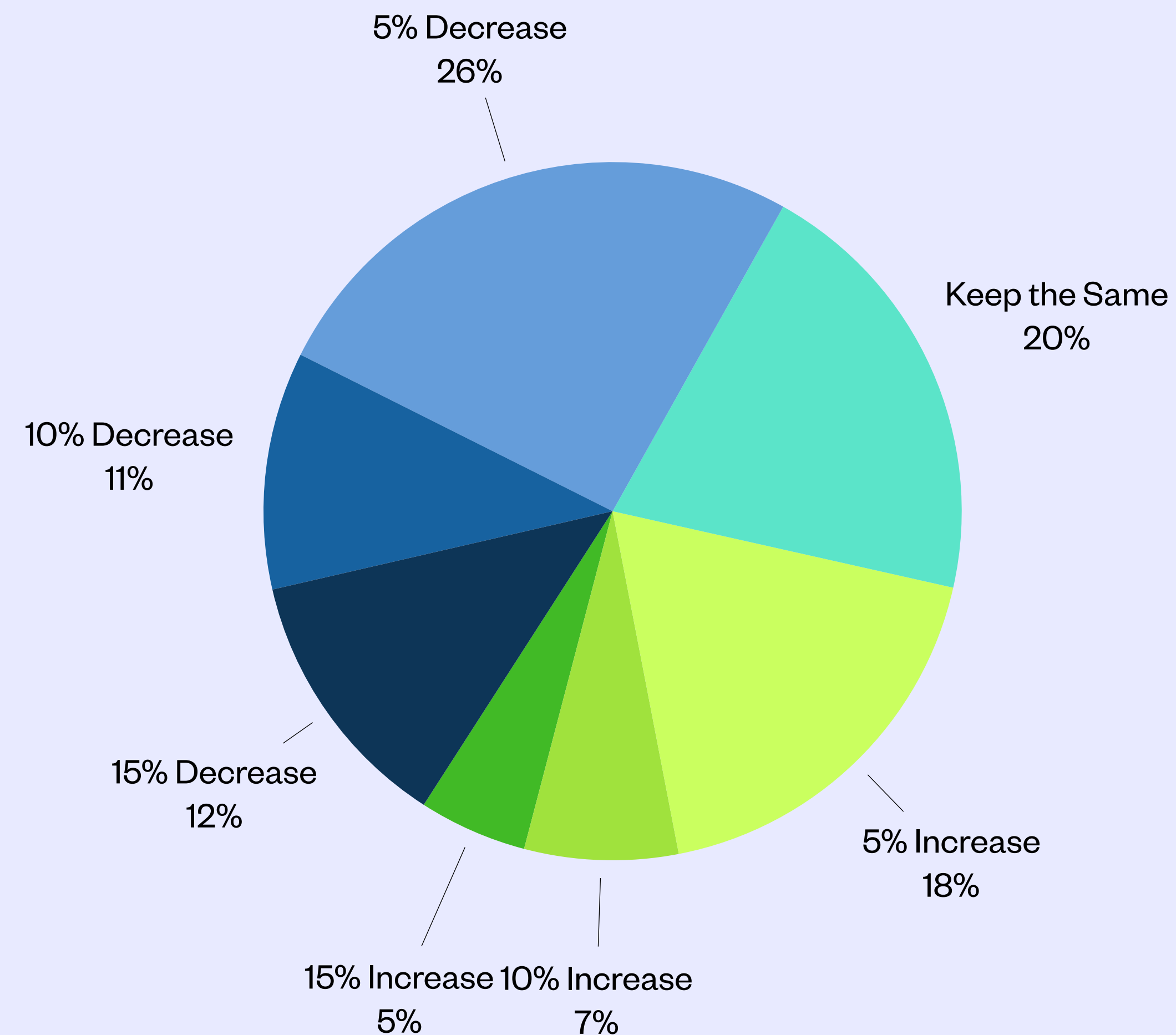


*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Recreation and Community Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Recreation and Community Facilities?”*

- Increase: 30%
- **Decrease: 49%**
- Keep the Same: 20%

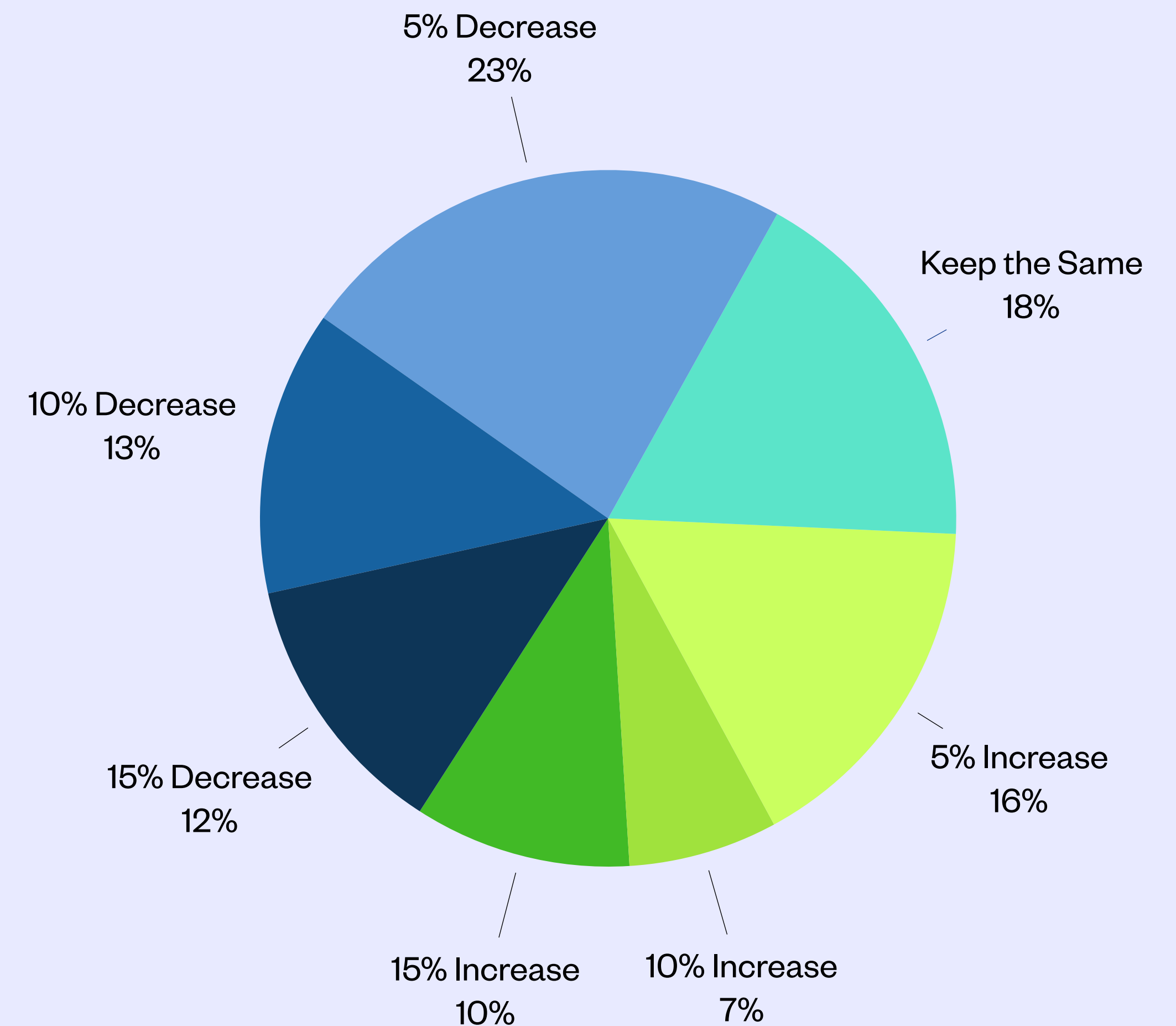


*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Community Support Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Community Support services?”*

- Increase: 33%
- **Decrease: 48%**
- Keep the Same: 18%

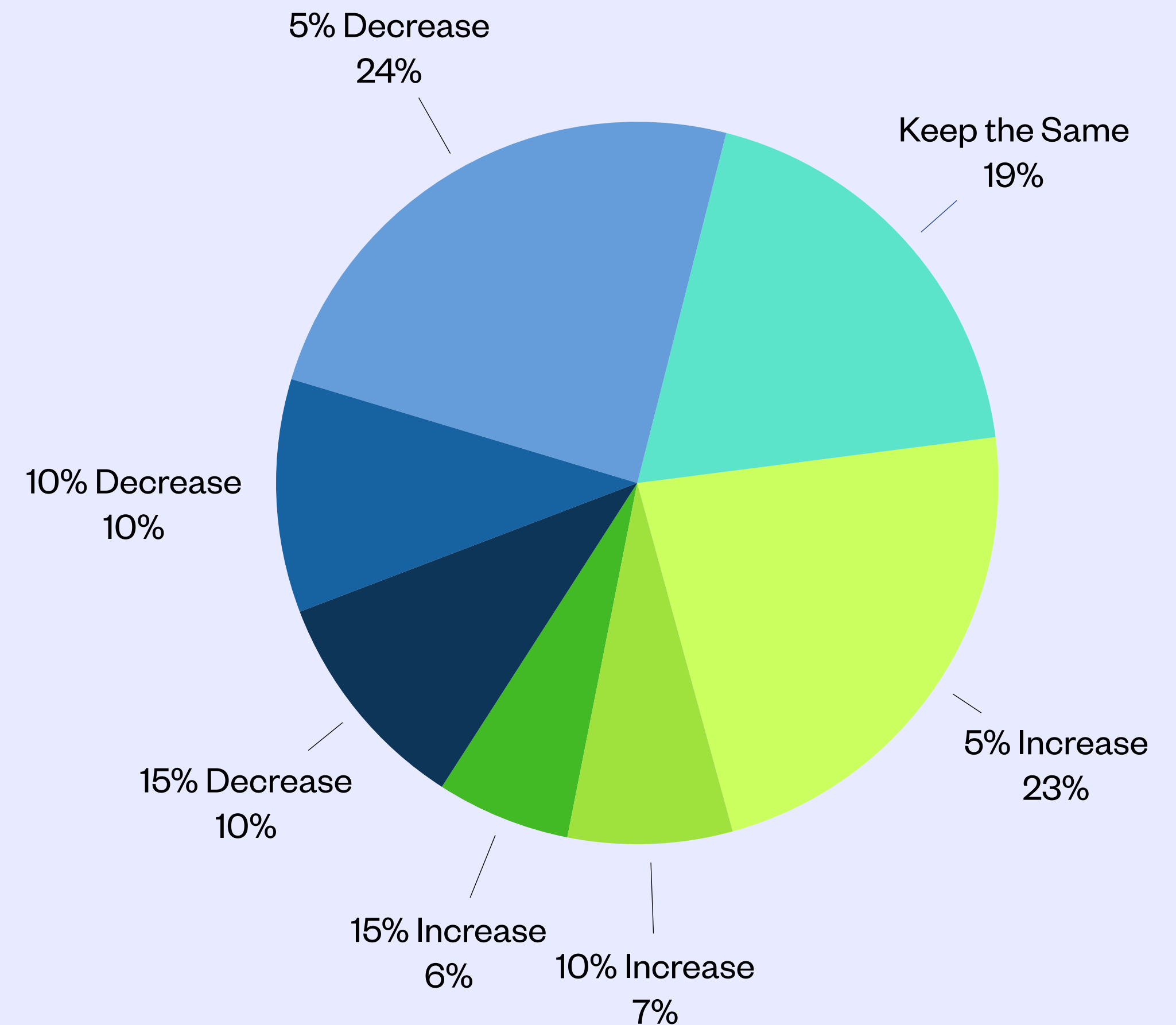


*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Community Planning and Infrastructure

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Community Planning and Infrastructure?”*

- Increase: 36%
- **Decrease: 44%**
- Keep the Same: 19%

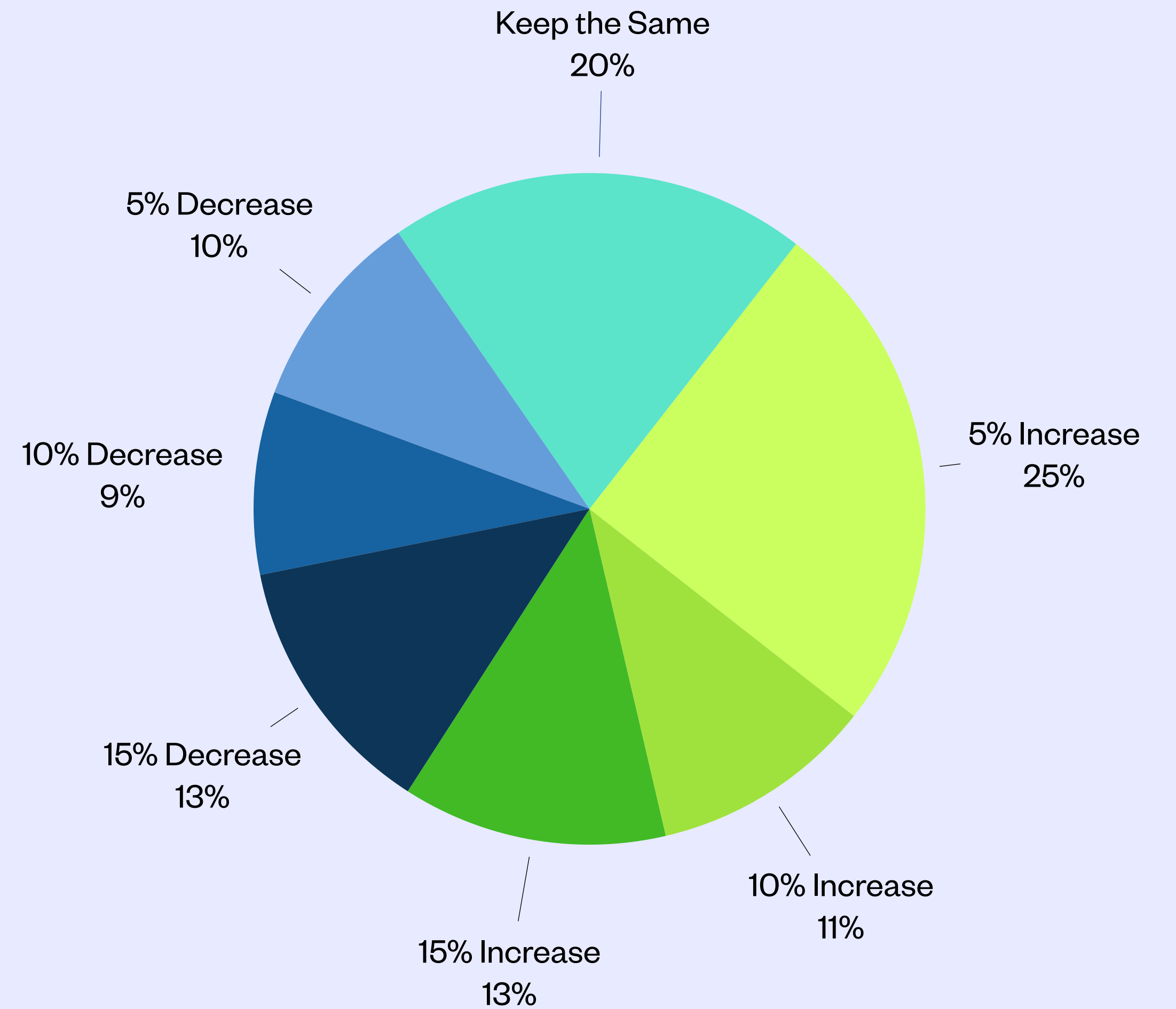


*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Police Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Police Services?”*

- **Increase: 49%**
- Decrease: 32%
- Keep the Same: 20%

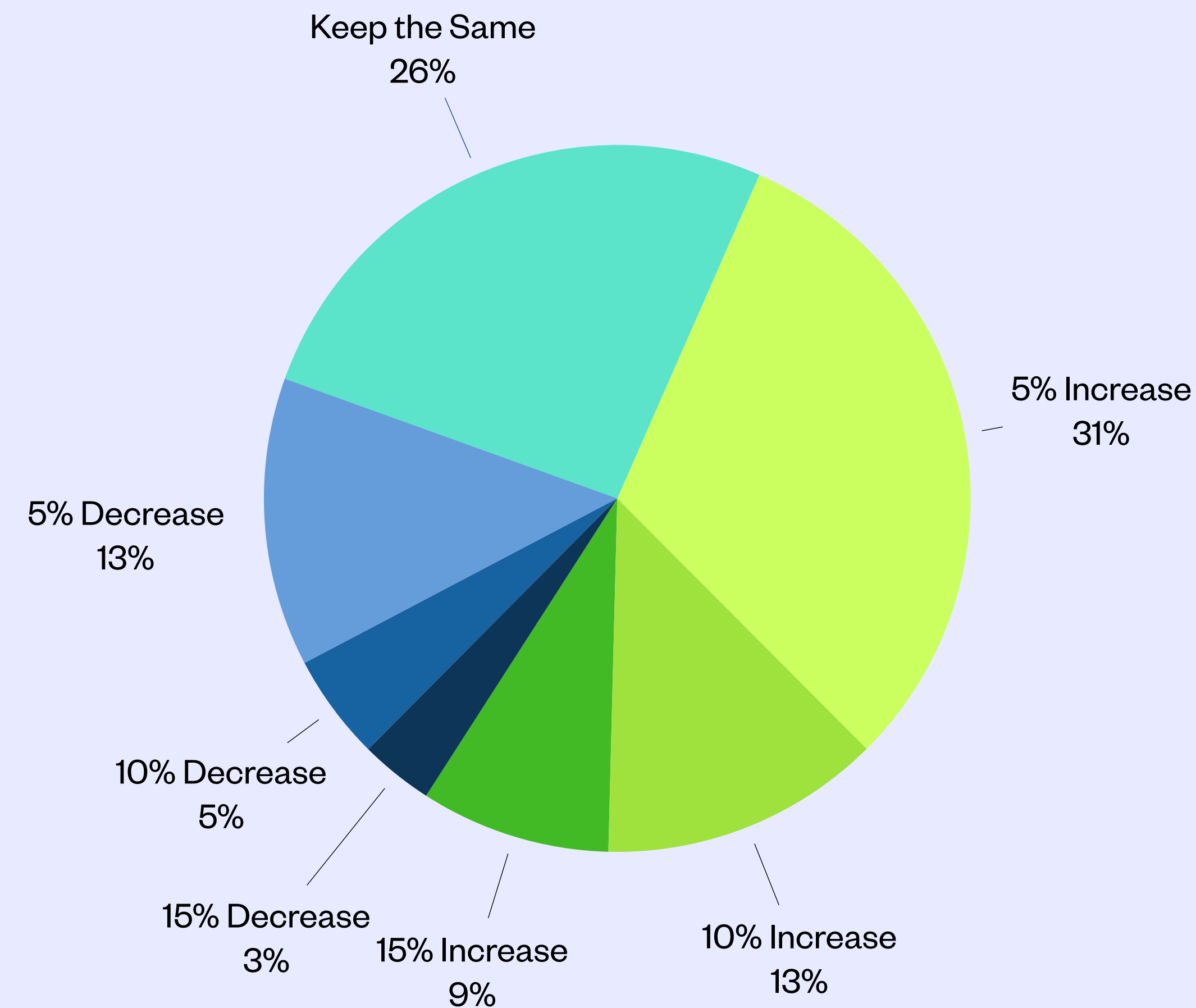


*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Snow and Ice Control

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Snow and Ice Control?”

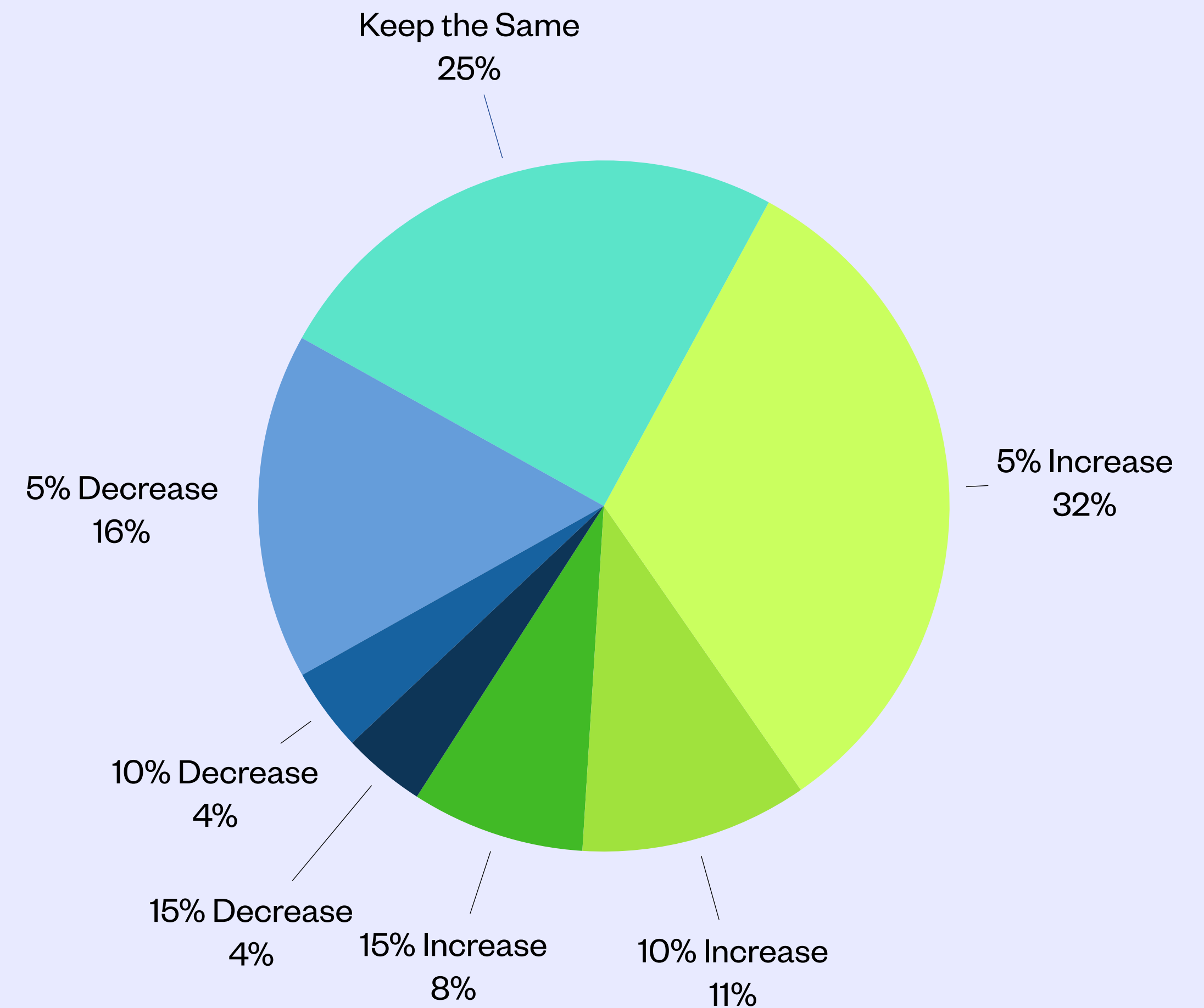
- **Increase: 53%**
- Decrease: 21%
- Keep the Same: 26%



Roads and Sidewalks

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Roads and Sidewalks?”

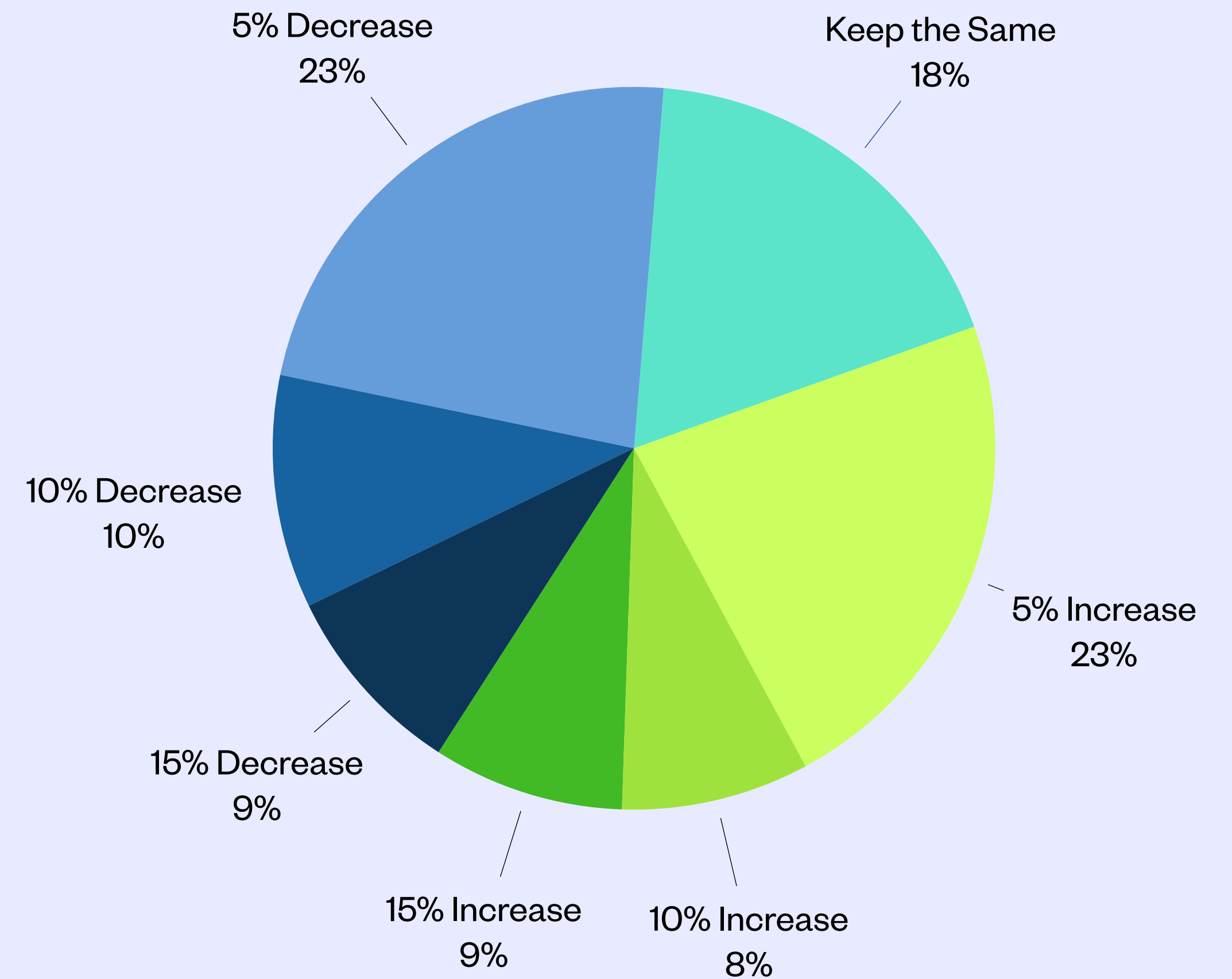
- **Increase: 51%**
- Decrease: 24%
- Keep the Same: 25%



Parks, Trails, and Beautification

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Parks, Trails, and Beautification?”

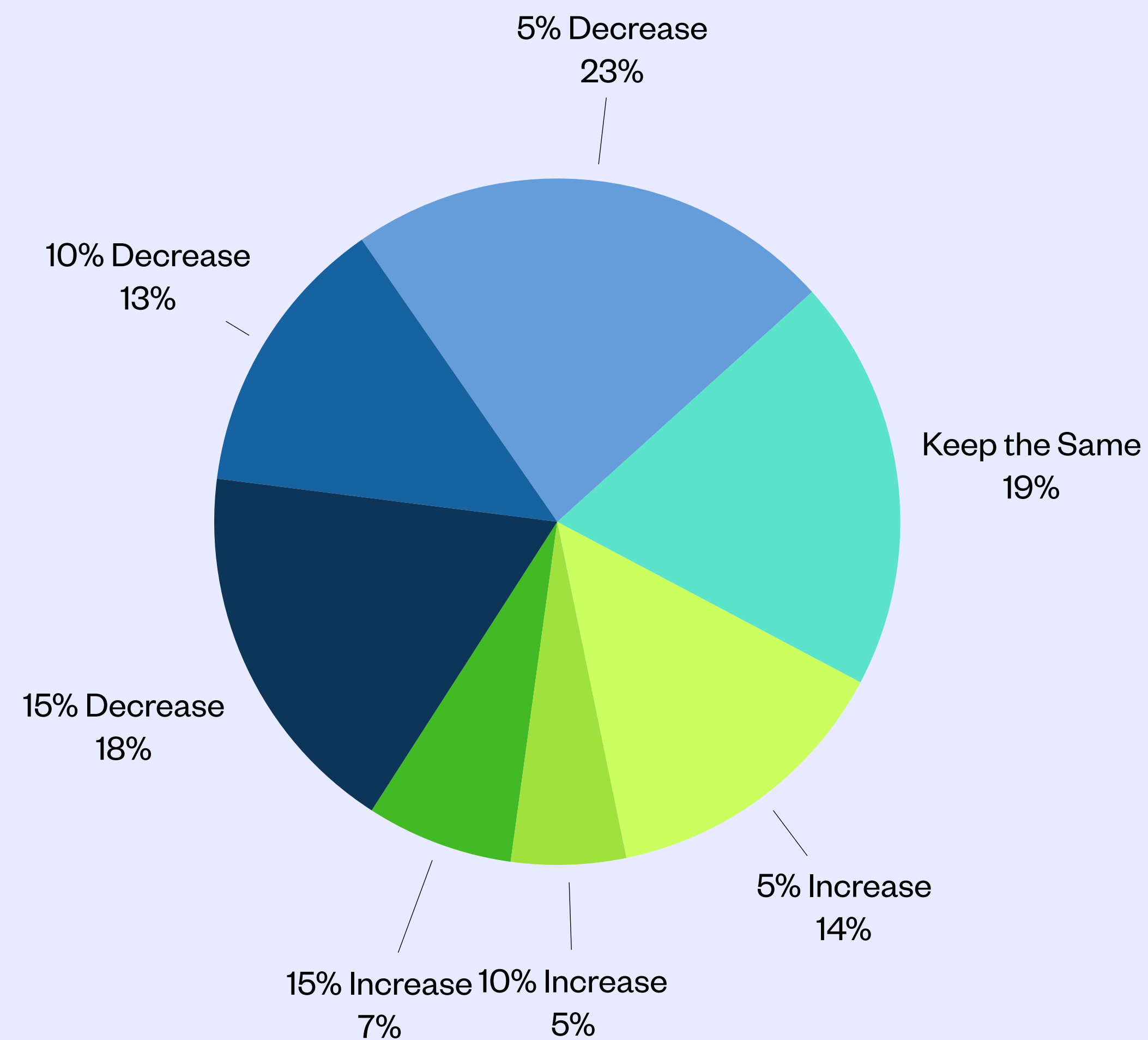
- Increase: 40%
- **Decrease: 42%**
- Keep the Same: 18%



Services that attract and retain business and facilitate development

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for attracting/retaining business and facilitating development?”*

- Increase: 26%
- **Decrease: 54%**
- Keep the Same: 19%

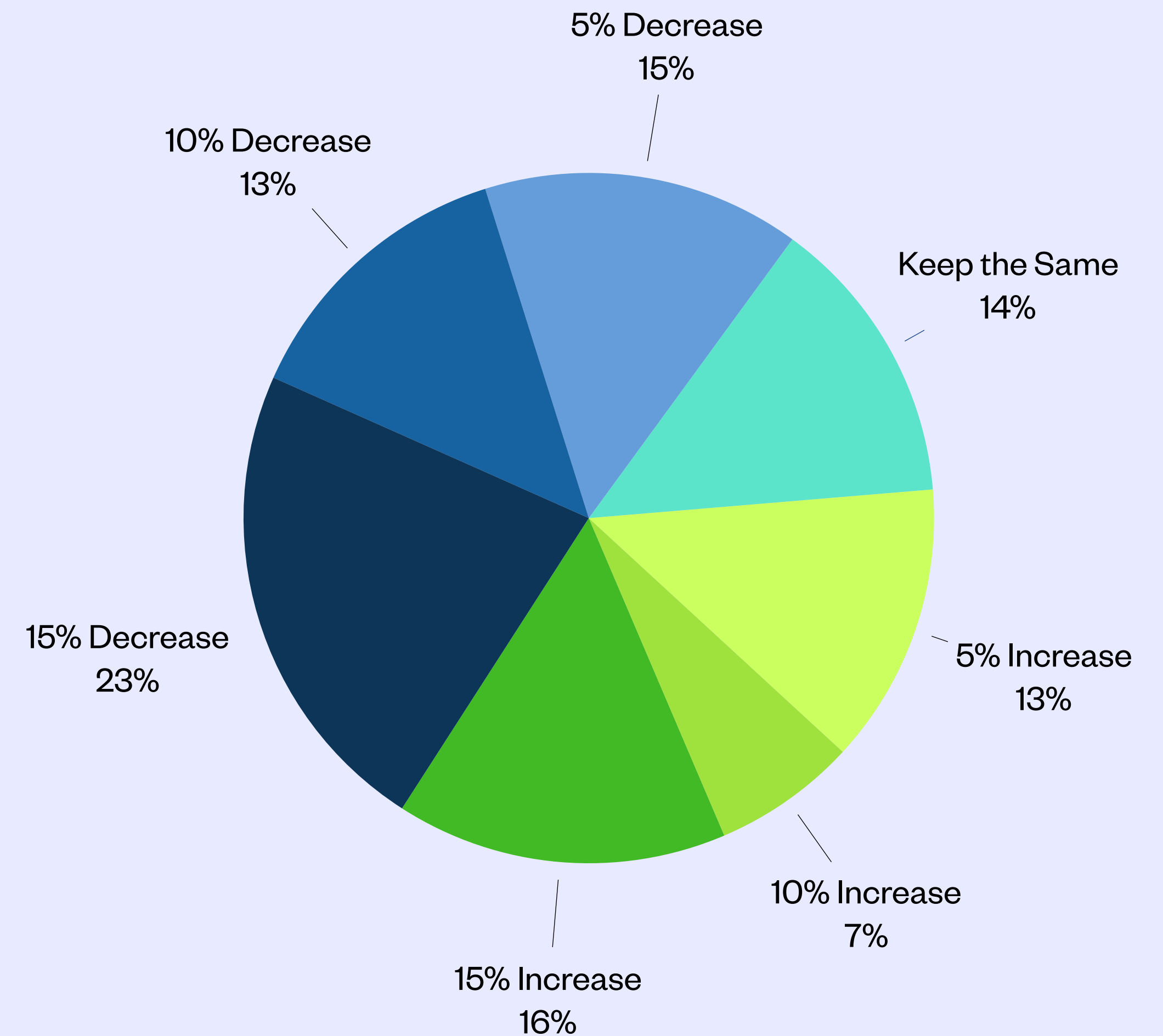


*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Environmental Management and Climate Action

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Environmental Management and Climate Action?”*

- Increase: 36%
- **Decrease: 51%**
- Keep the Same: 14%



*Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

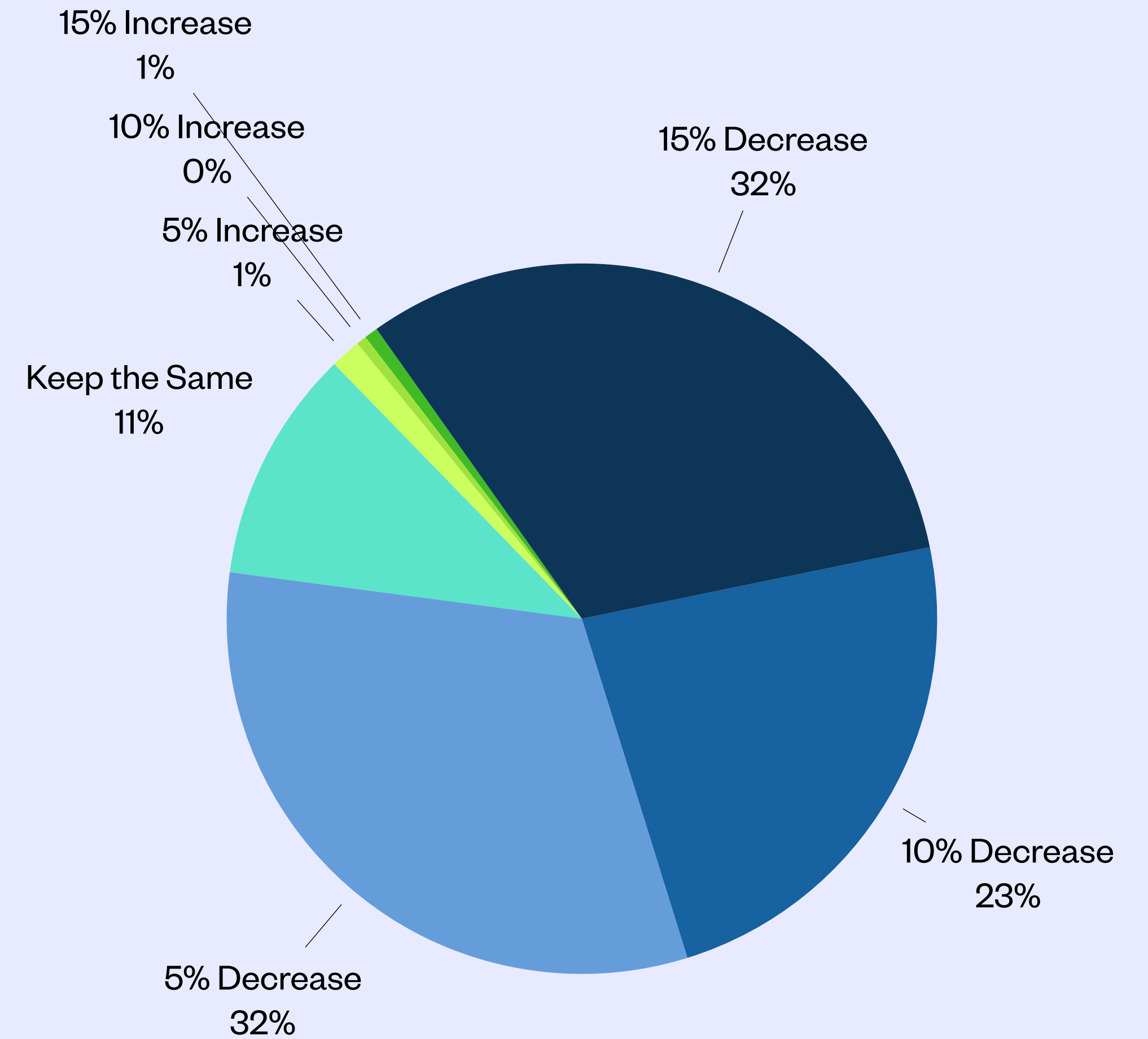
Corporate Services



Corporate Services

“Would you choose to increase, decrease, or maintain the current level of funding for Corporate Services?”

- Increase: 2%
- **Decrease: 87%**
- Keep the Same: 11%

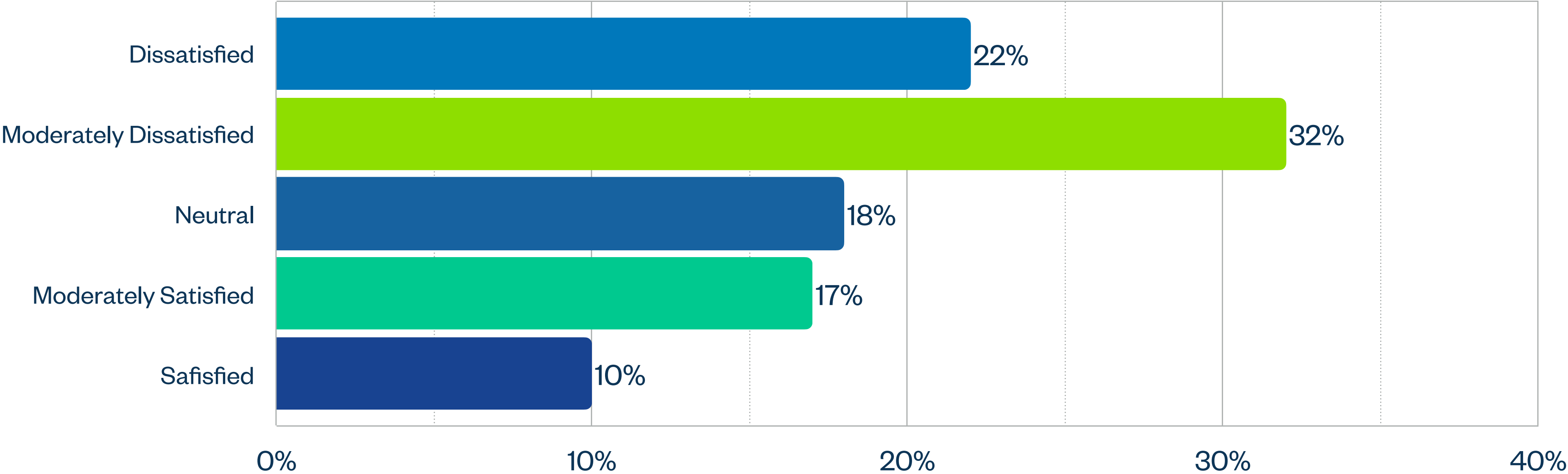


Corporate Services and Budgeting*

Respondents, on average, voted to **reduce Corporate Services budget by 10%**. With this sizeable reduction included, the current budget would face an **overall decrease of 2.4%**.

Though this is the case, Corporate Services plays a key role in the effective running and maintenance of all City Services.

Excluding Corporate Services from the key service areas, the current budget would face an **overall decrease of 0.7%**.



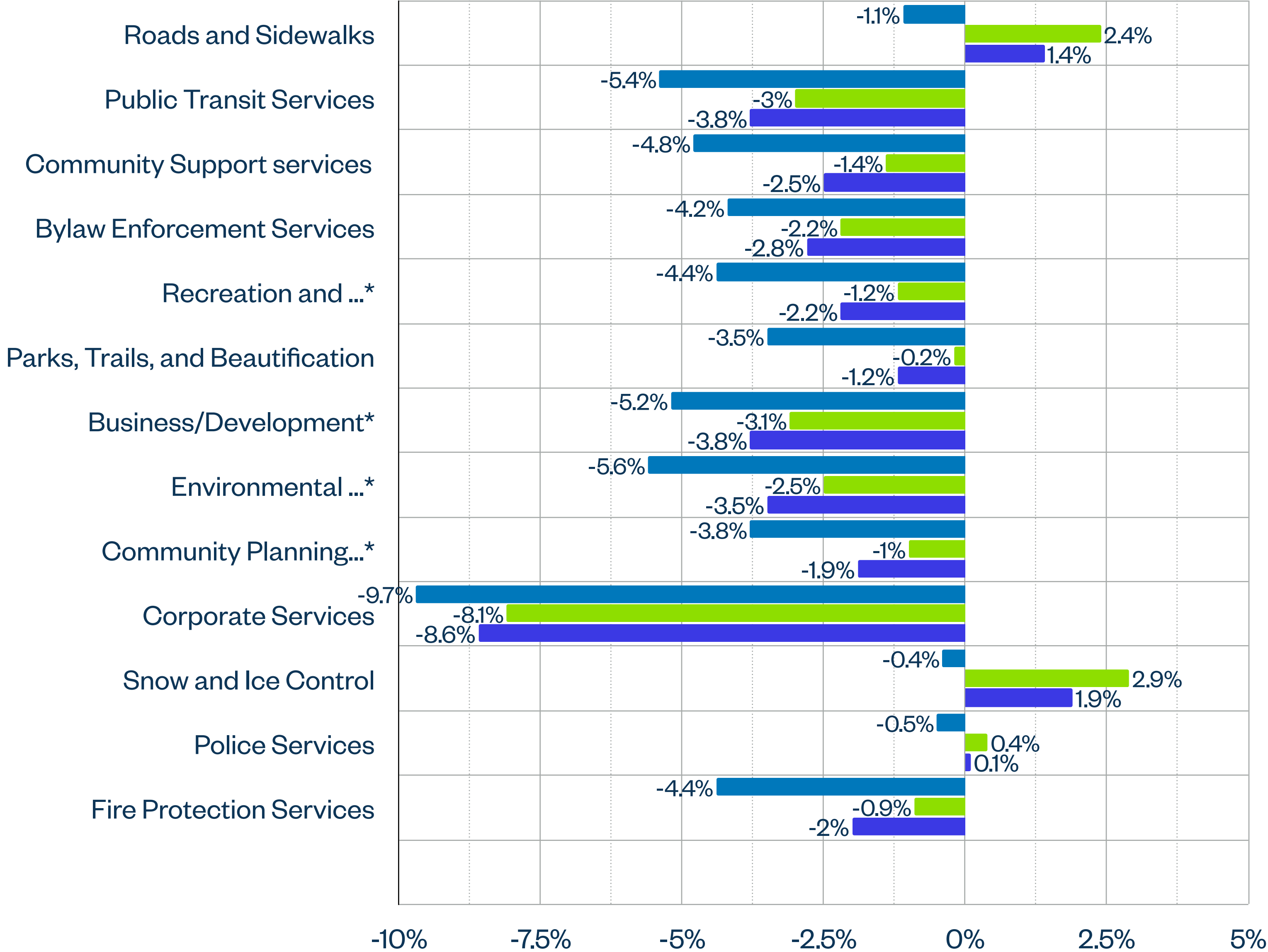
*Excluded: Didn't choose service reduction: 73%

** (8.5% of \$441)

Service Reduction*

27% of participants voted for service reduction*. Of the service reduction options, Corporate Services was the most popular choice, while Snow and Ice Control was the least popular choice selected by participants.

The overall desired budget outcome results in a \$90.45 reduction in budget. Conversely, those that didn't choose "service reduction" had the effect of a \$37.54 reduction in budget. **\$54.13 reduction is the desired reduction for all participants.**



- Choose "Service Reduction"
- Didn't chose the above
- All

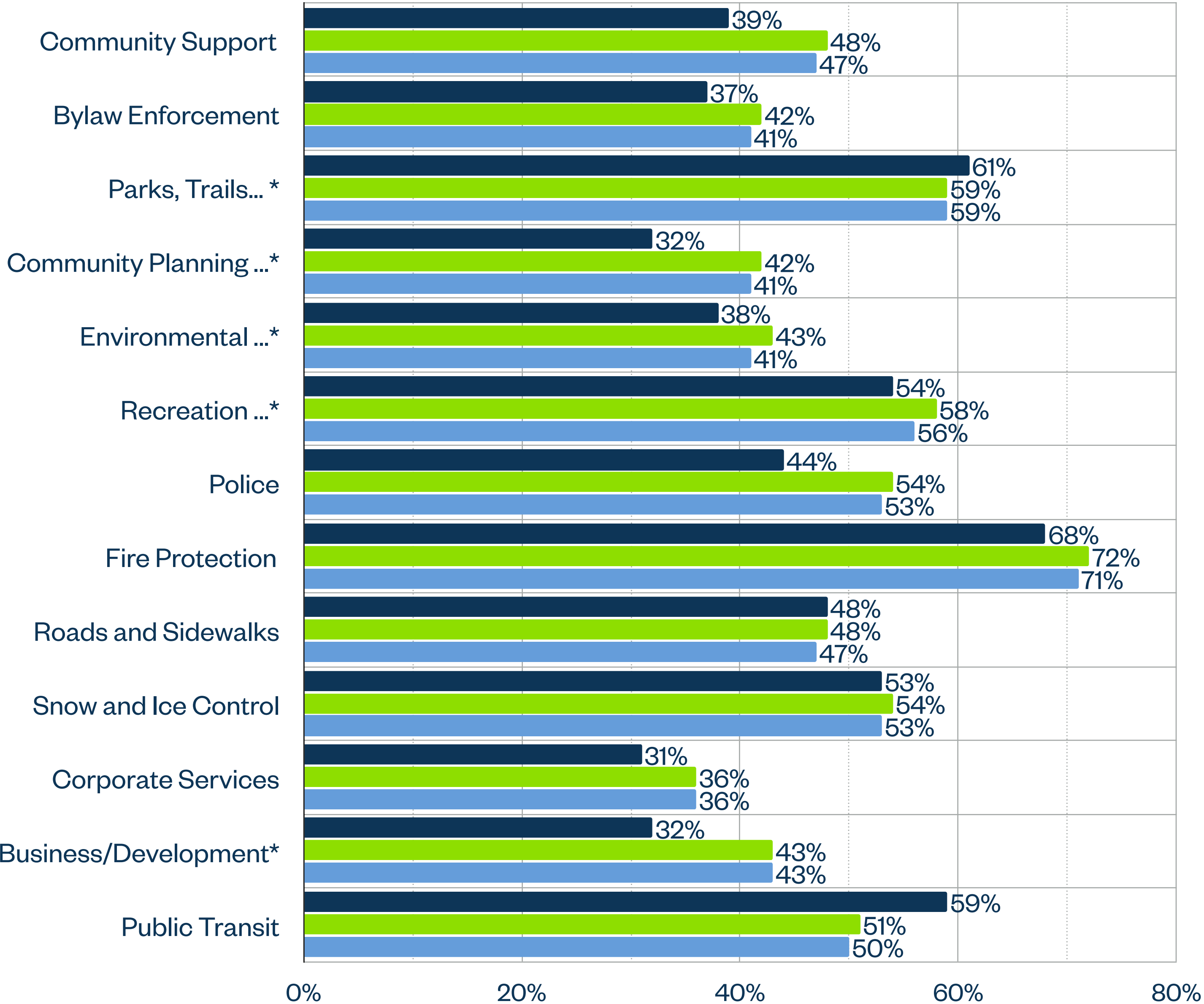
*Excluded: Didn't choose service reduction: 73%



Comparative Analysis: Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Services*

These metrics explore how each voter set, **Commercial tax voters** and **Residential tax votes**, rated their satisfaction with each City Service.

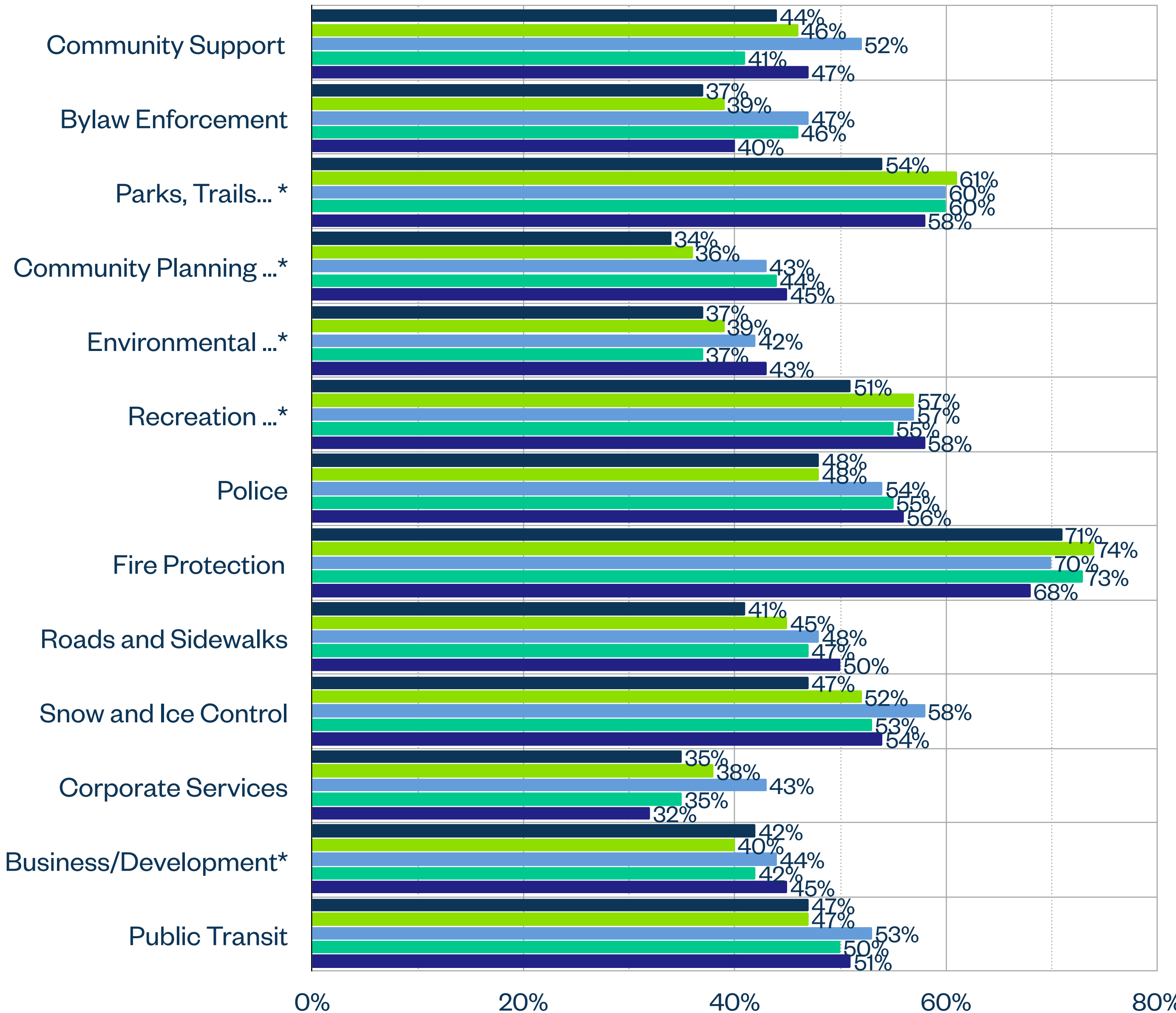


- Commercial
- Residential
- Overall Vote

*Full titles: (1) Parks, Trails and Beautification, (2) Community Planning and Infrastructure, (3) Environmental Management and Climate Action, (4) Recreation and Community, (5) Services that attract and retain business and facilitate development

Satisfaction with Services*

These metrics explore voter satisfaction with services, broken out by the impact of **COVID-19 on their household/business income.**

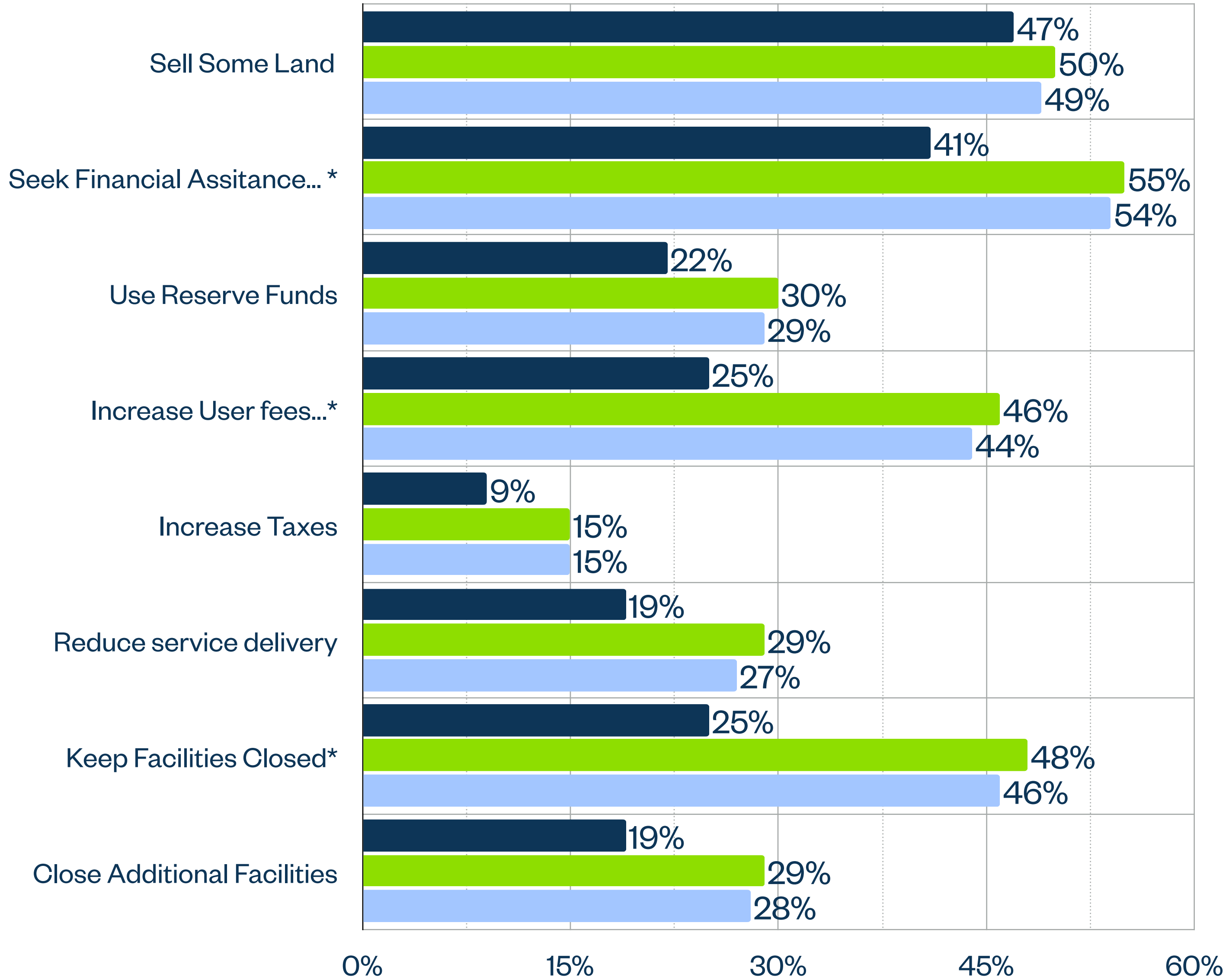


- Significantly Decreased
- Somewhat Decreased
- Somewhat Increased
- Significantly Increased
- Not stated

*Full titles: (1) Parks, Trails and Beautification, (2) Community Planning and Infrastructure, (3) Environmental Management and Climate Action, (4) Recreation and Community, (5) Services that attract and retain business and facilitate development

**Comparative Analysis:
attracting additional
revenues or reducing costs**



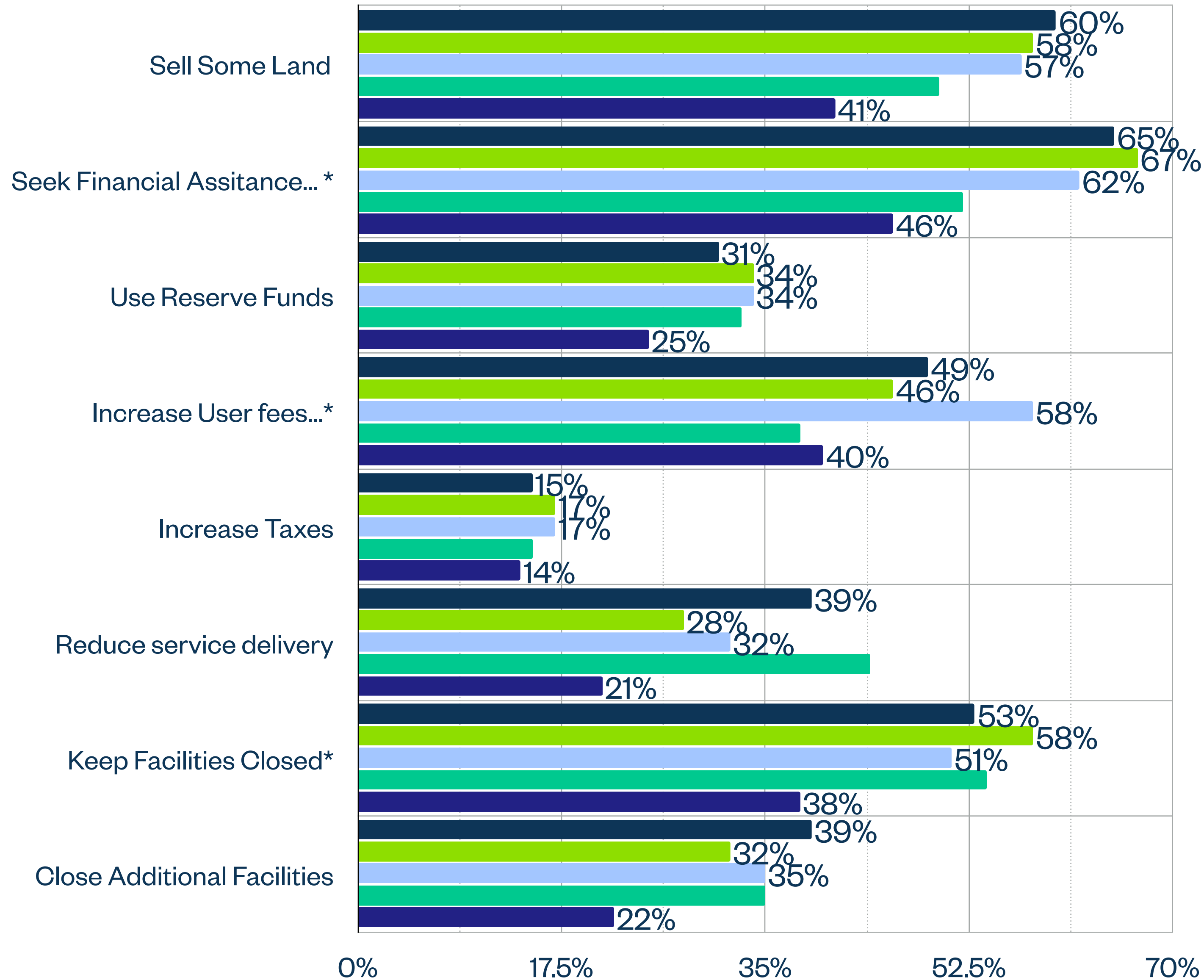


What are some things we should do in Prince George to help attract additional revenues or reduce costs?*

These metrics explore which methods each voter set, **Commercial tax voters** and **Residential tax voters**, has recommended for attracting additional revenue or reducing costs.

- Commercial
- Residential
- Overall

*Full titles: (1) Seek financial assistance from senior levels of government, (2) Increase user fees for specific services, (3) Keep facilities such as some arenas and the Four Seasons Pool closed



What are some things we should do in Prince George to help attract additional revenues or reduce costs?*

These metrics show voter selections for attracting additional revenue or reducing costs, broken out by the impact of **COVID-19 on their household/business income.**

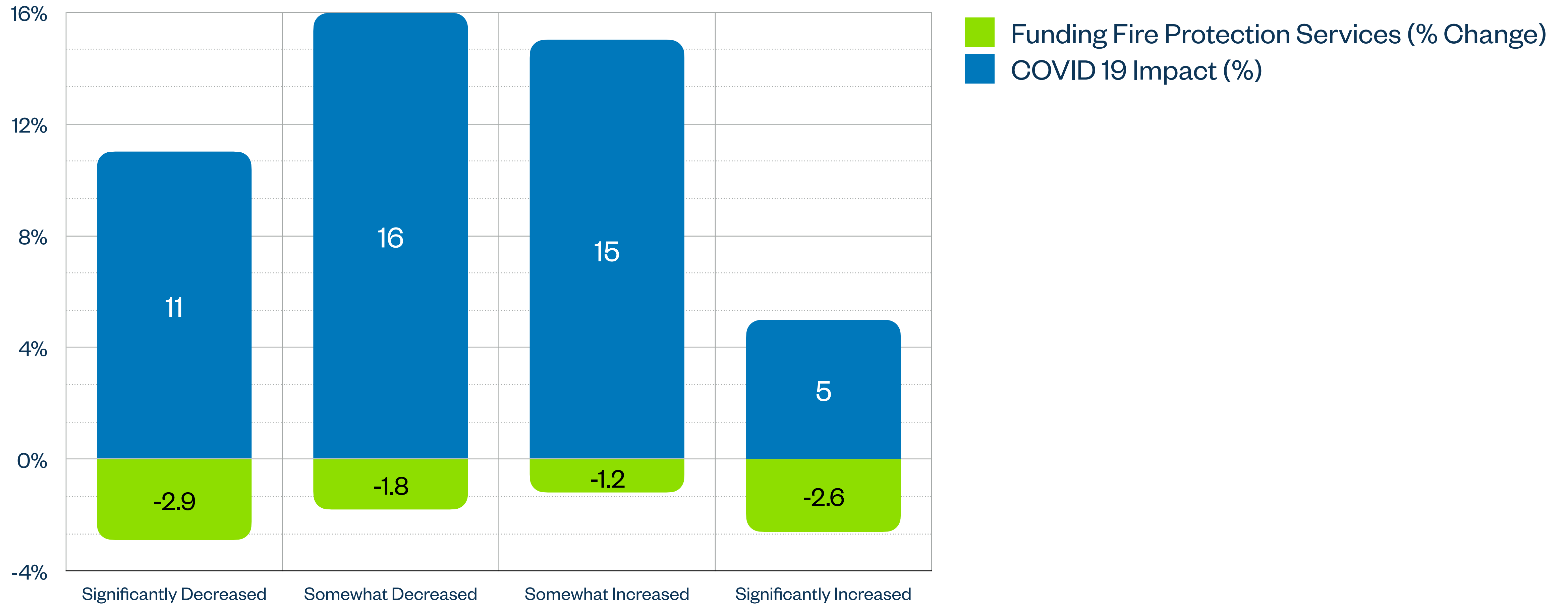
- Significantly Decreased
- Somewhat decreased
- Somewhat increased
- Significantly Increased
- Not stated

*Full titles: (1) Seek financial assistance from senior levels of government, (2) Increase user fees for specific services, (3) Keep facilities such as some arenas and the Four Seasons Pool closed



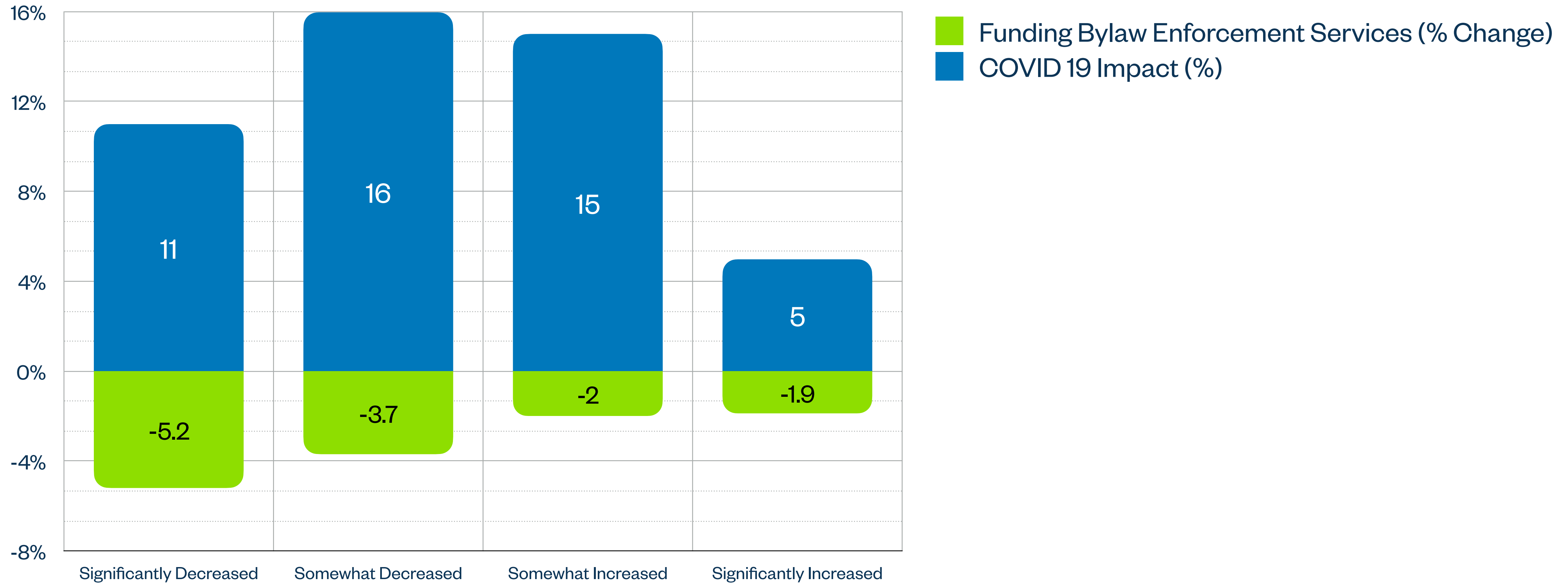
Comparative Analysis: COVID-19 Impact & Service Funding

Funding Fire Protection Services*



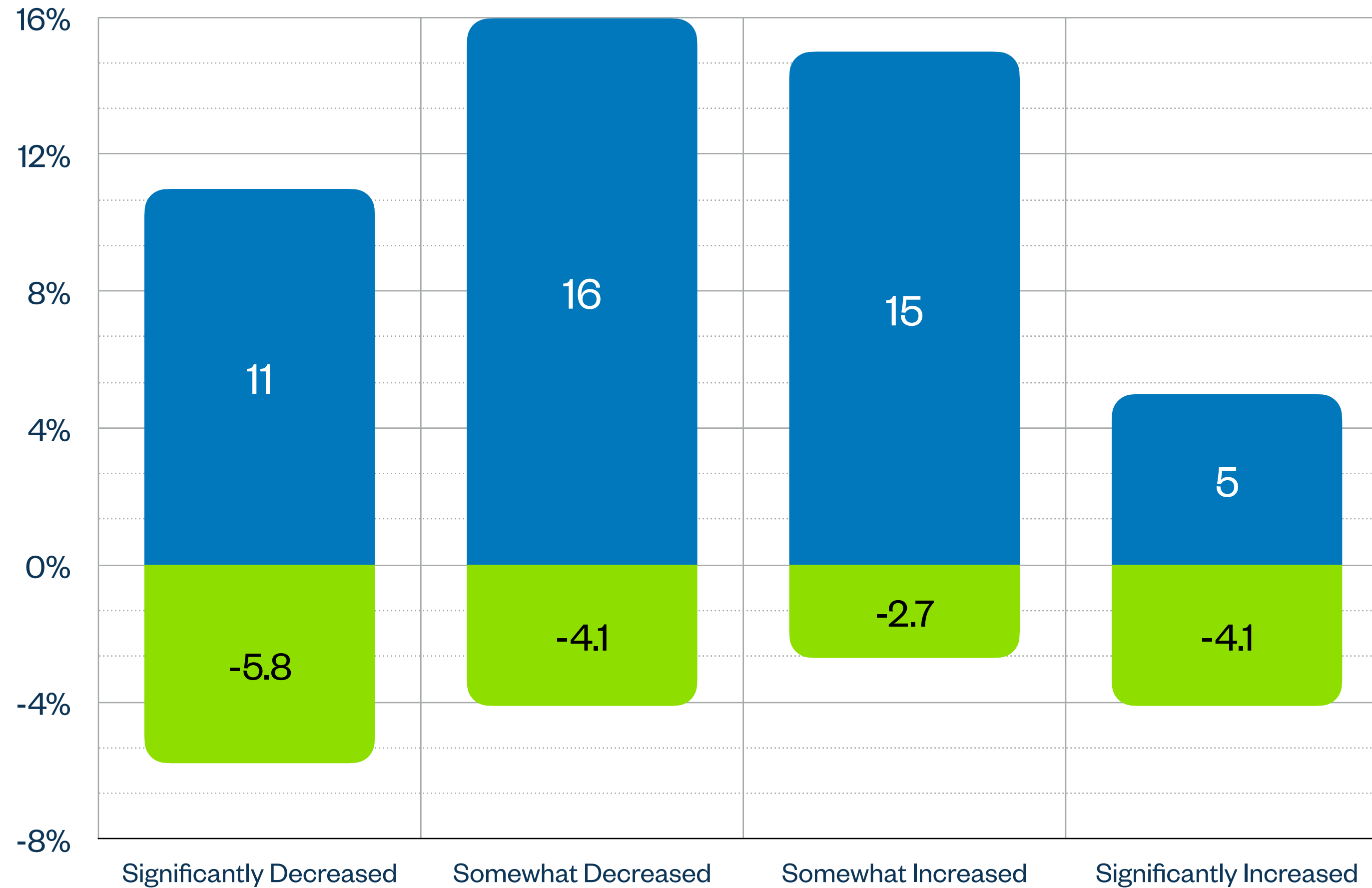
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Bylaw Enforcement Services*



*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Public Transit Services*

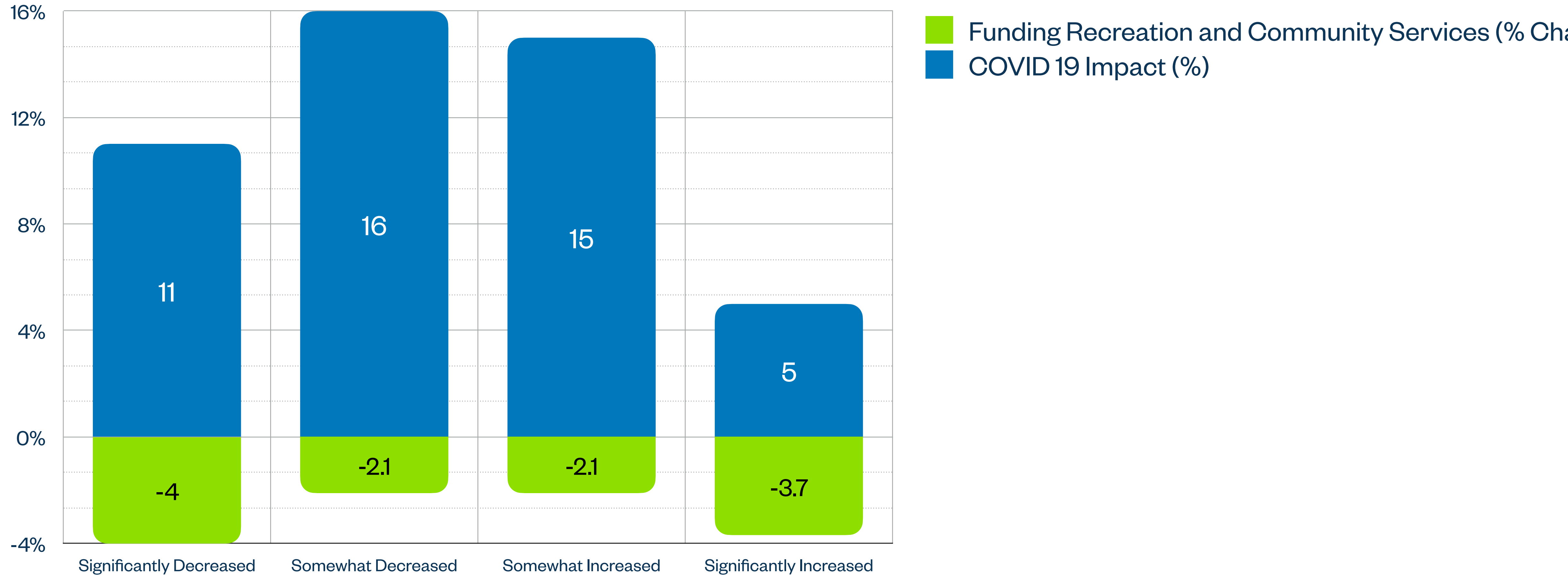


This chart compares the funding distribution selected by each voter, compared to the impact of COVID-19 on each voter's household/business.

- Funding Public Transit Services (% Change)
- COVID 19 Impact (%)

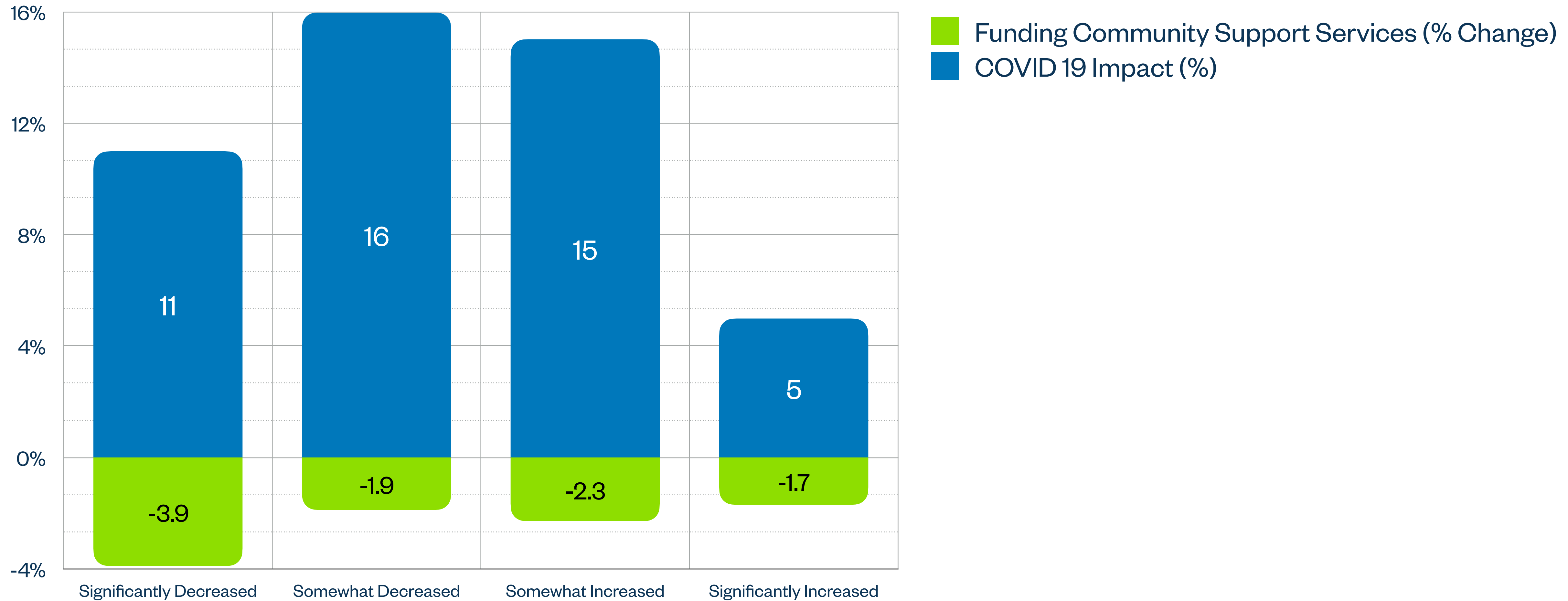
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Recreation and Community Services*



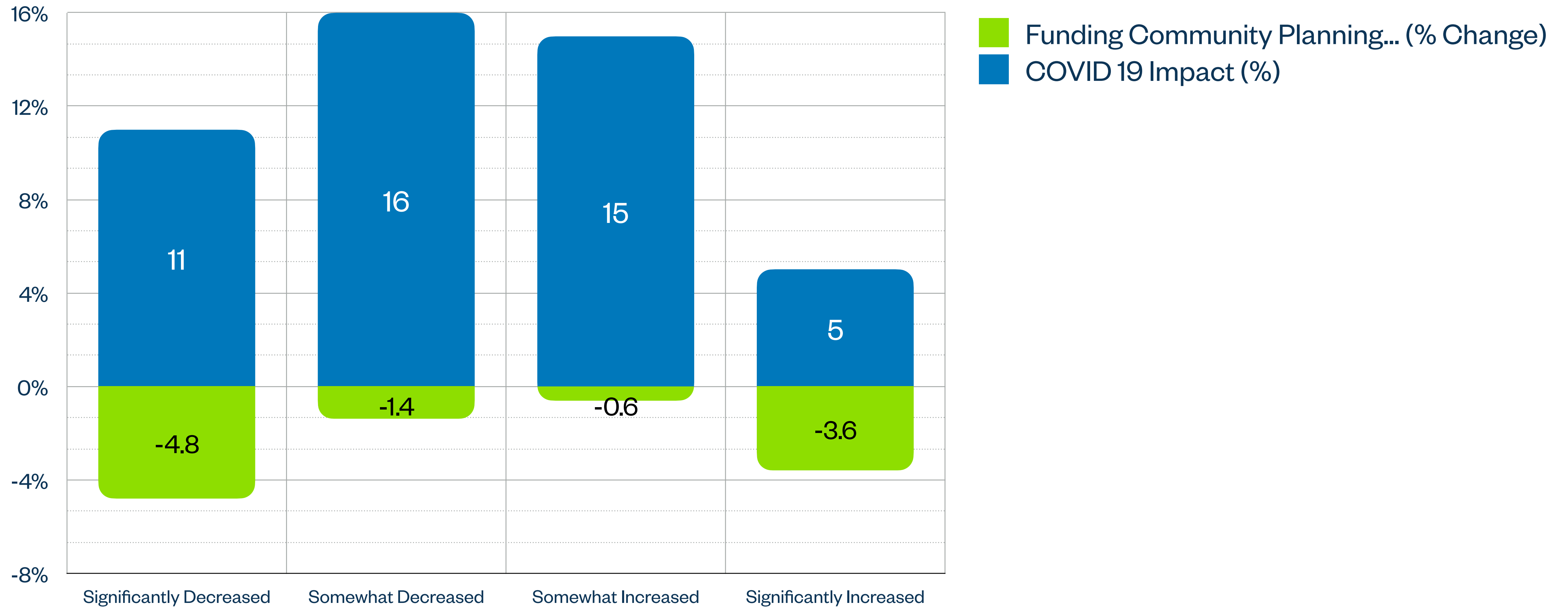
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Community Support Services*



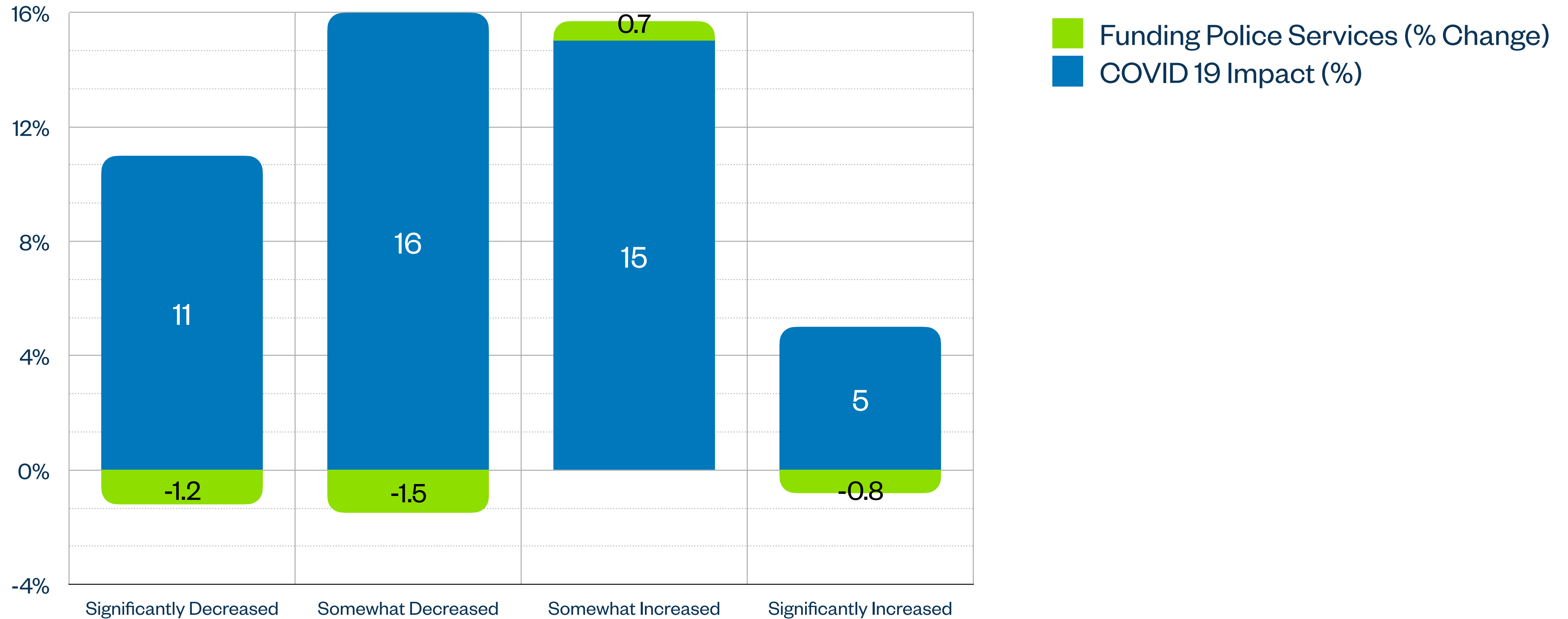
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Community Planning and Infrastructure*



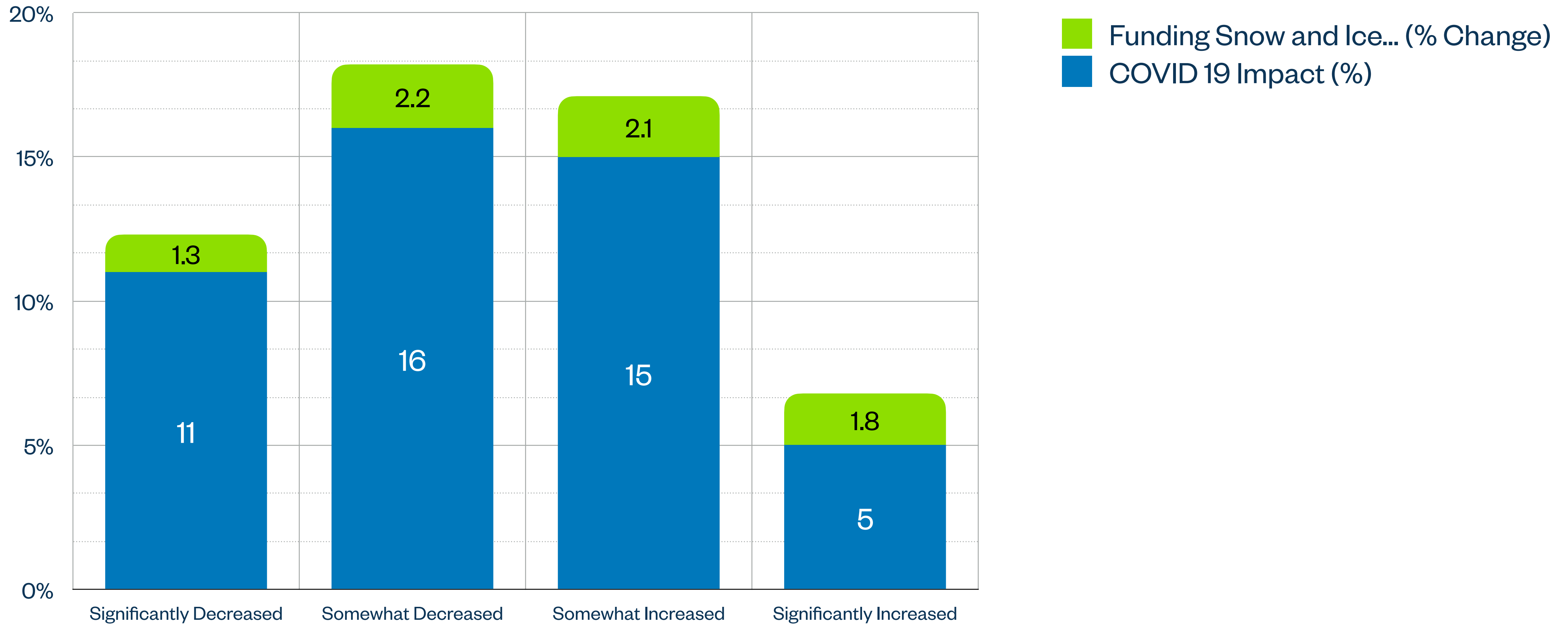
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Police Services*



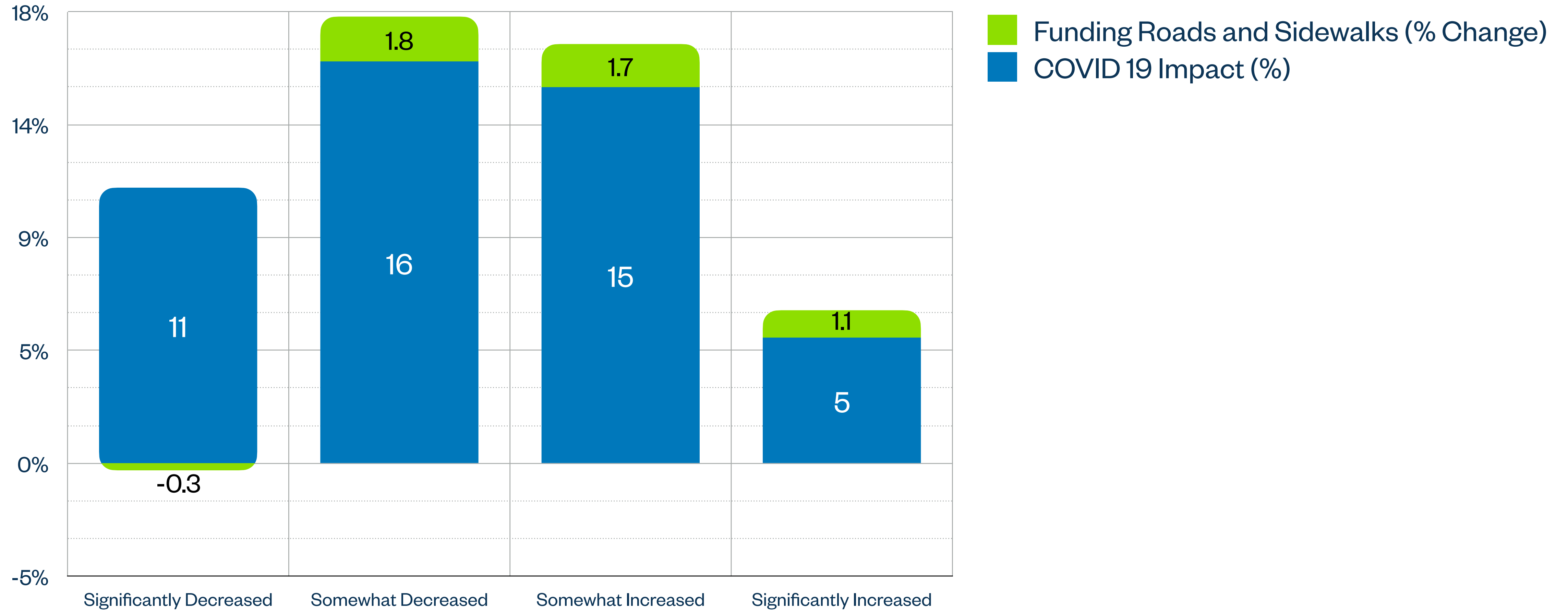
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Snow and Ice Control*



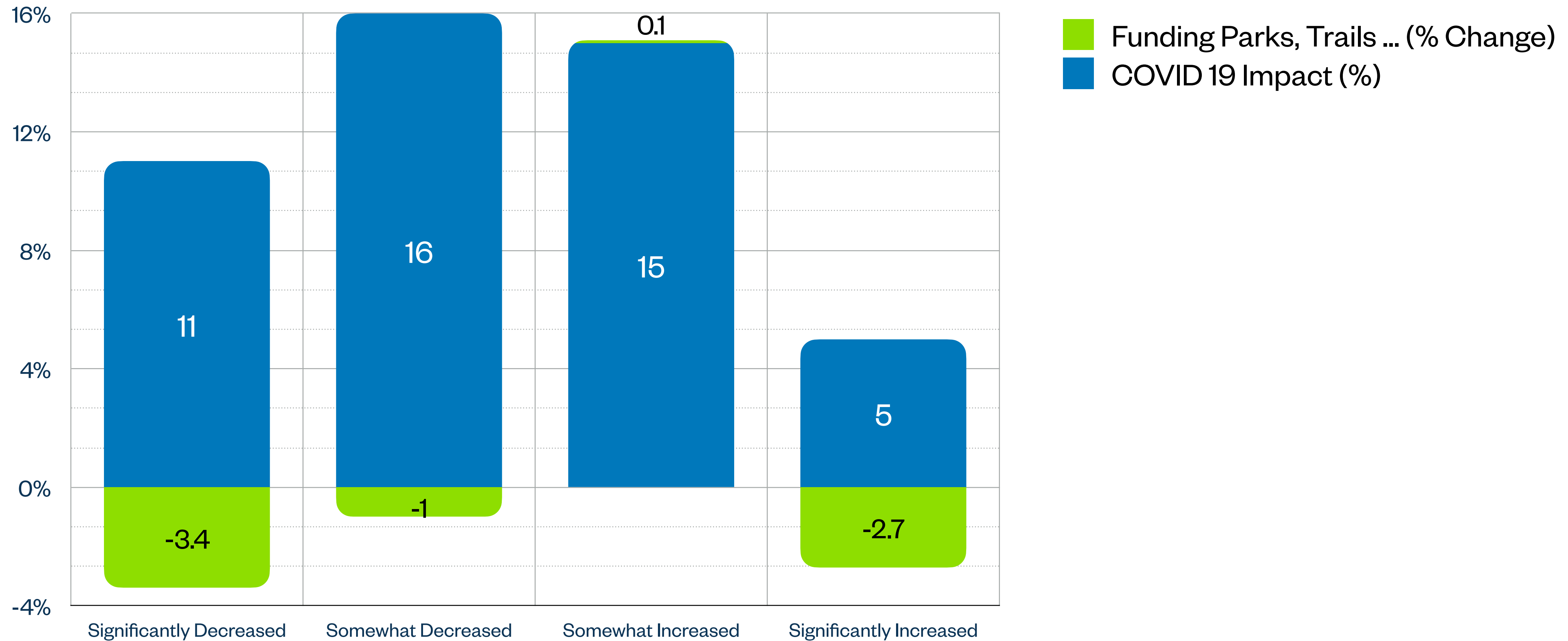
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Roads and Sidewalks*



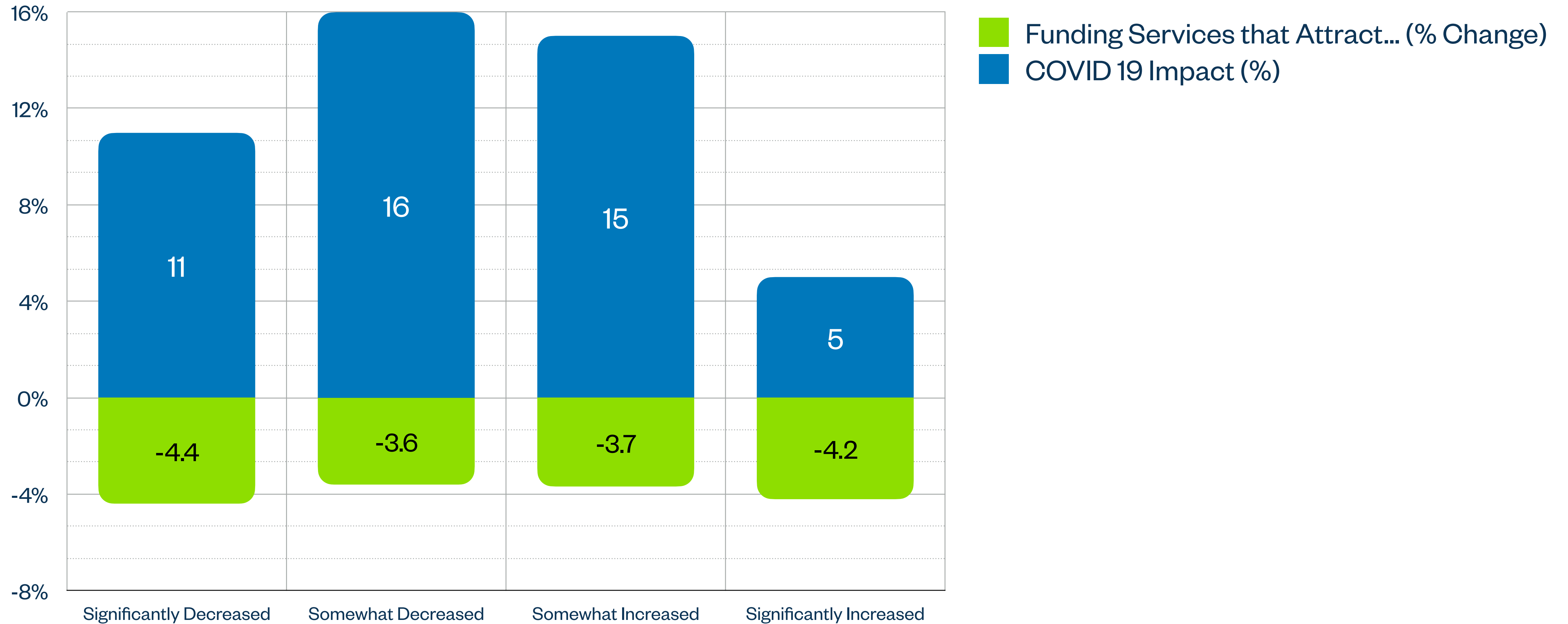
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Parks, Trails, and Beautification*



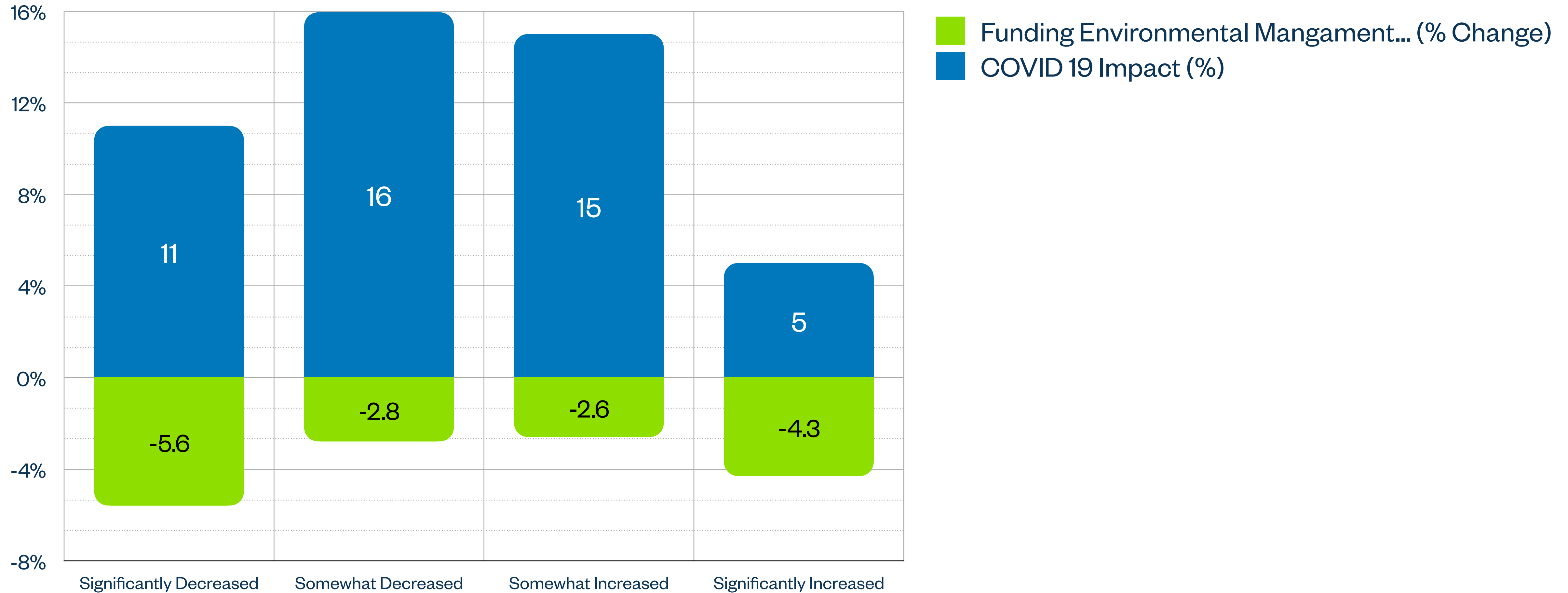
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Services that Attract and Retain Business and Facilitate Development *



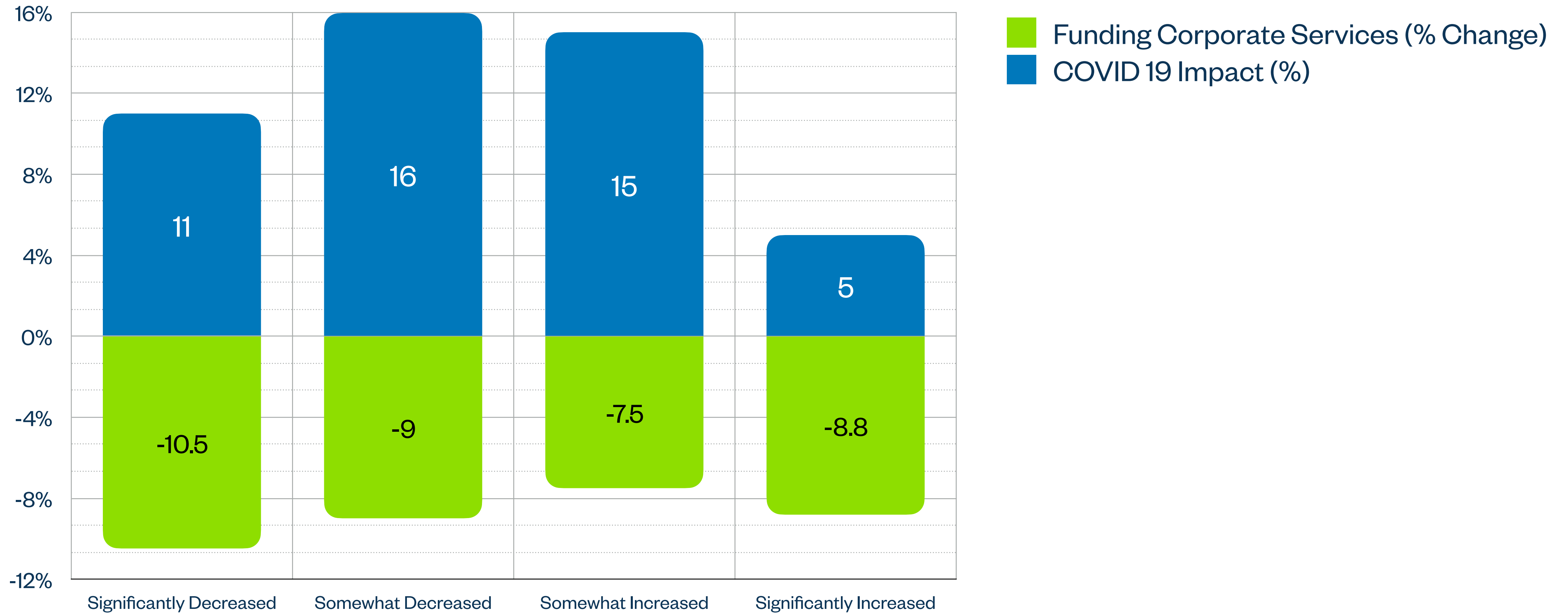
*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Funding Environmental Management and Climate Action*



*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

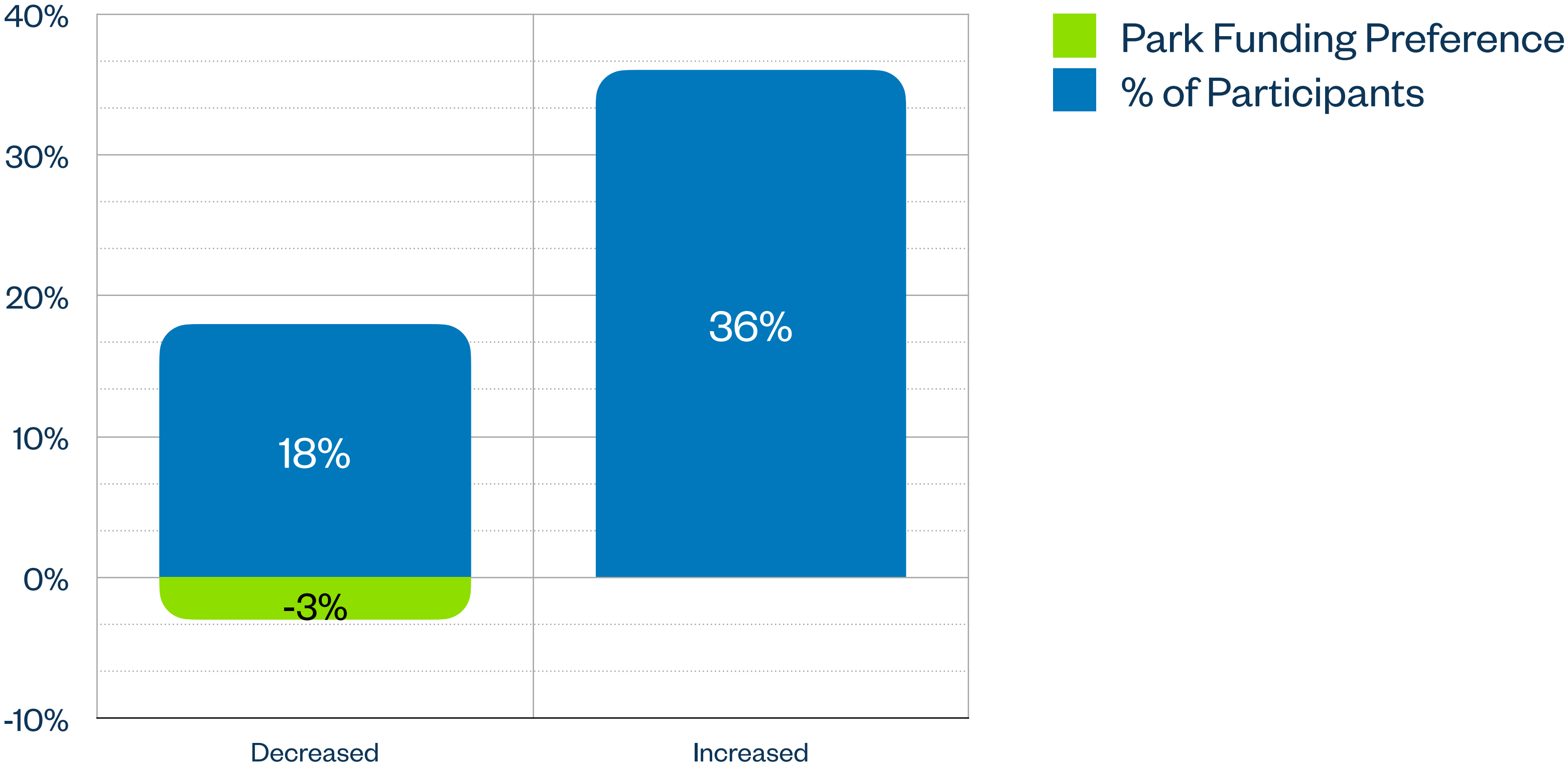
Funding Corporate Services*



*Excluded: Not Answered: 53%

Outdoor Use and Funding for Parks and Recreation*

Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your use of outdoor areas?*

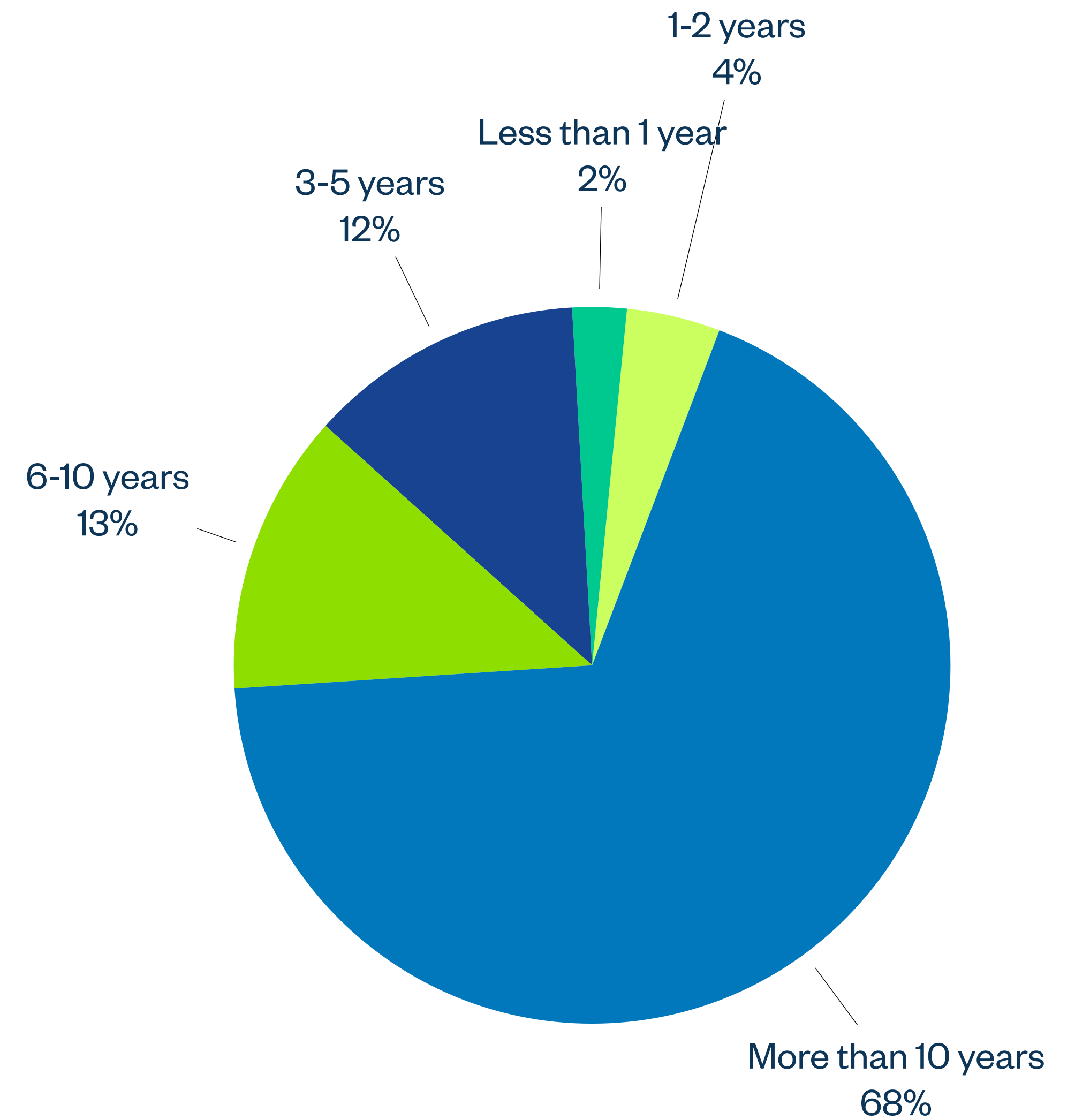


*Excluded: Not Answered: 46%, Park Funding Preference for Increased = 0%

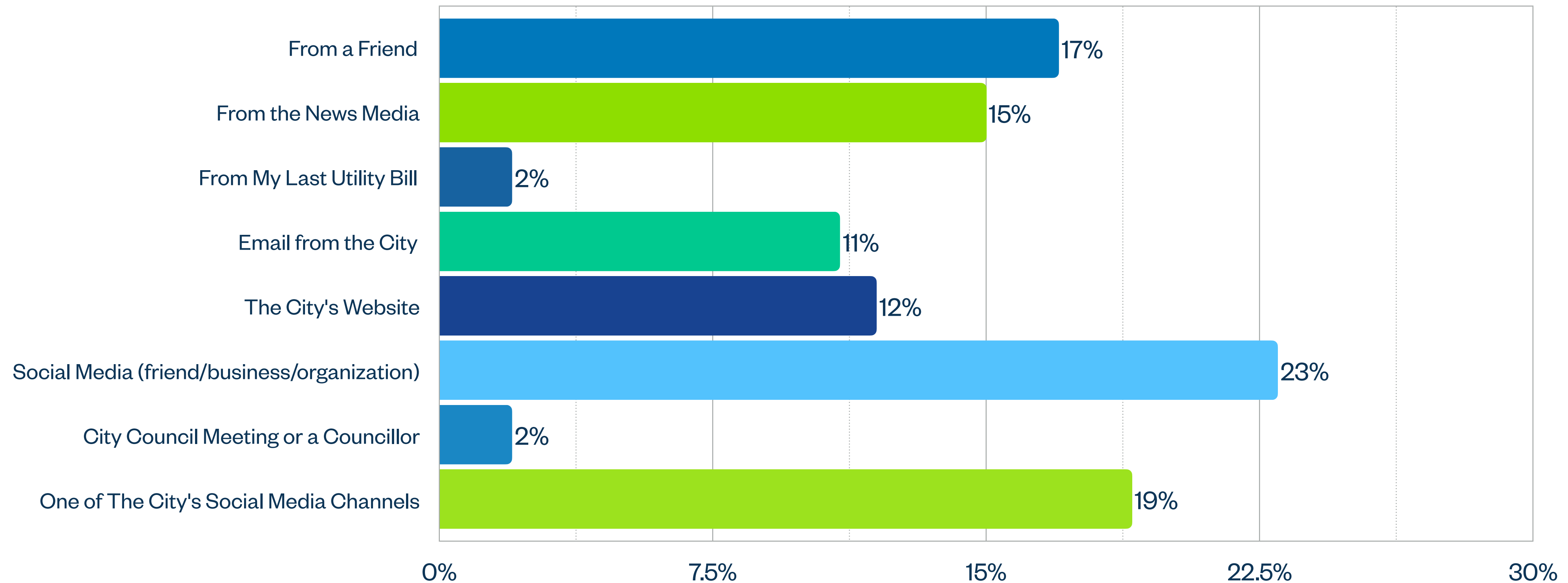


Tell Us About Yourself

How long have you been living in Prince George?

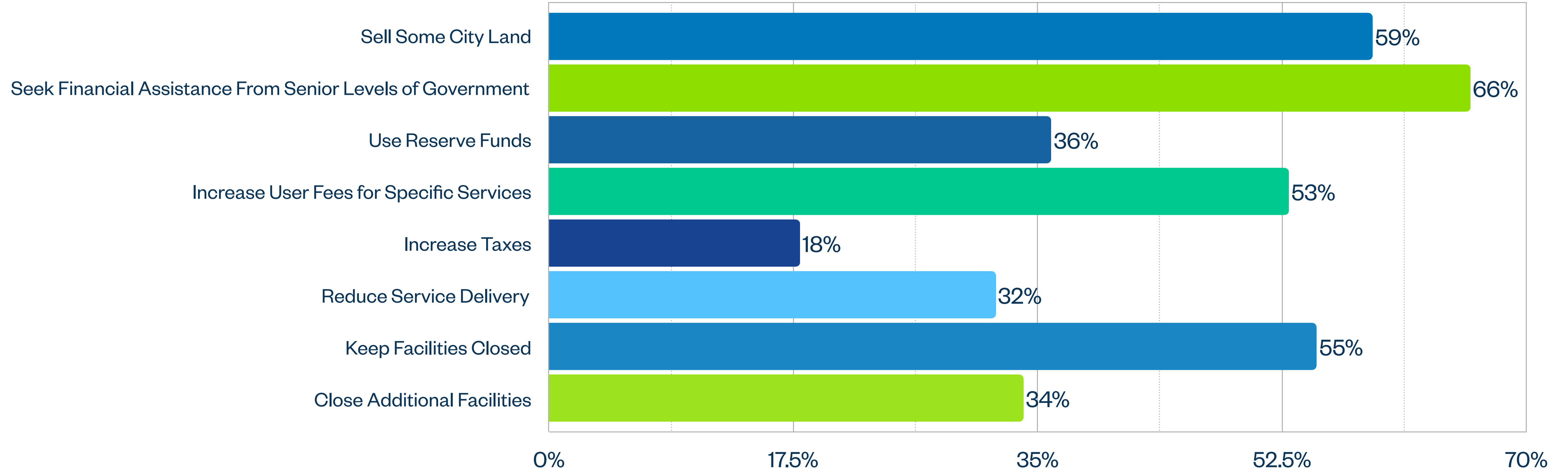


How did you hear about this survey?



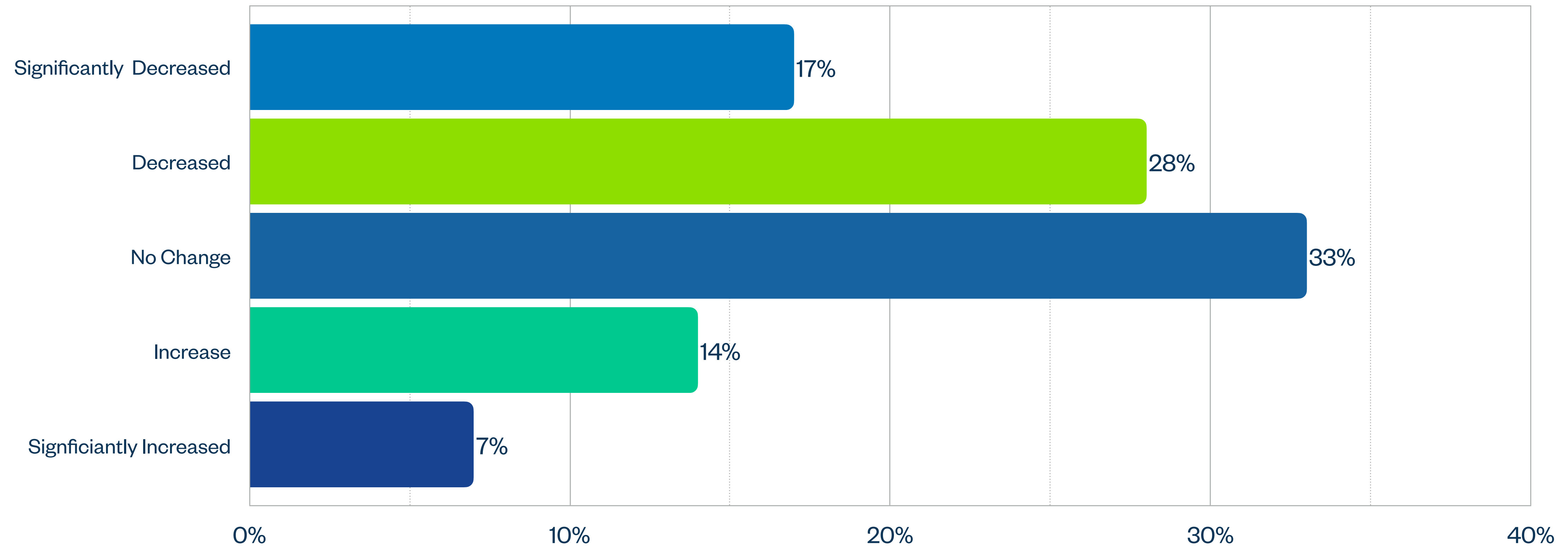
What Are Some Things We Should Do in Prince George to Help Attract Additional Revenues or Reduce Costs?*

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly reduced revenues coming into the City from such things as user fees, facility rentals, gaming, and transit ridership. Together with other sources of revenue such as property taxes, these fund services to residents of Prince George.



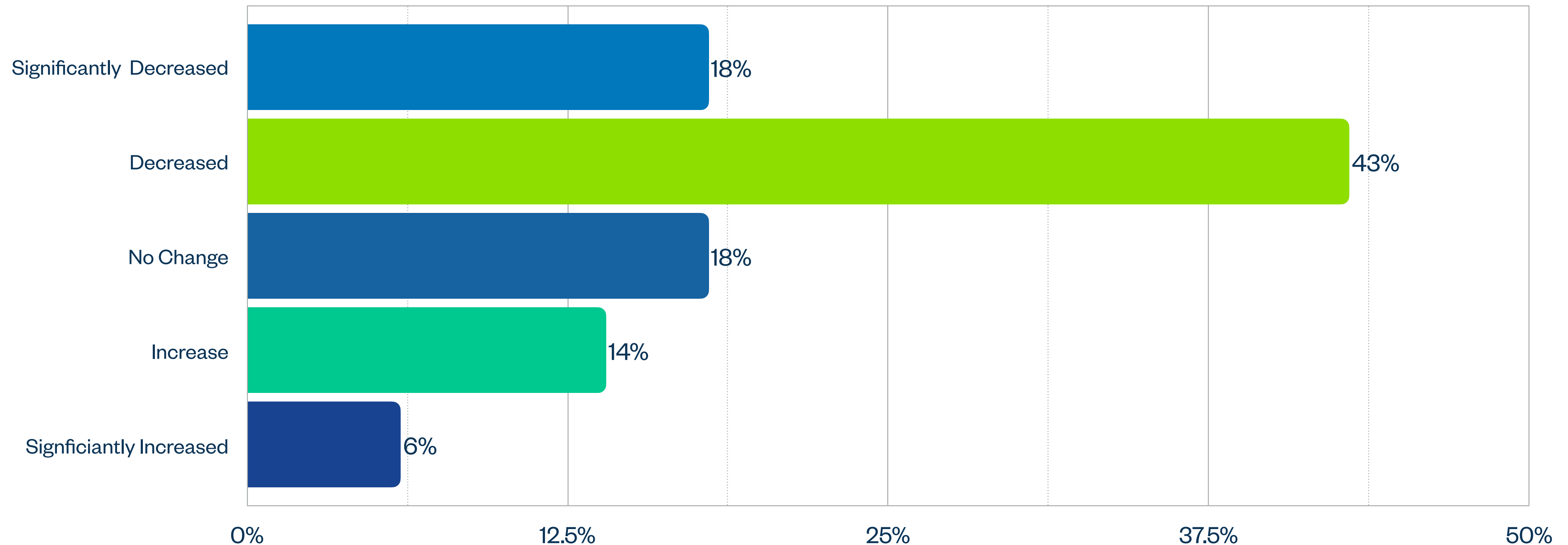
*This chart represents the following quantitative data: Significantly Decreased = 0-20, Decreased = 21-40, No Change = 41-60, Increased = 61-80, Significantly Increased = 81-100
Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected Income Levels in Your Home/Business?*



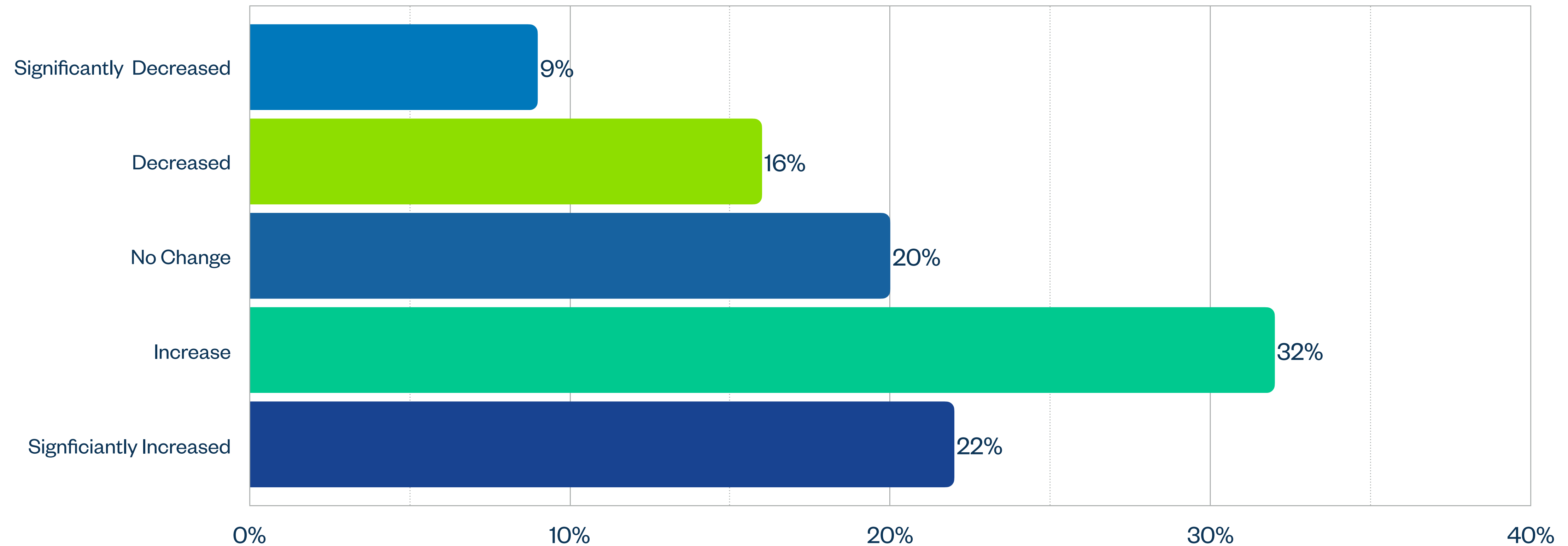
*This chart represents the following quantitative data: Significantly Decreased = 0-20, Decreased = 21-40, No Change= 41-60, Increased = 61-80, Significantly Increased = 81-100
Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected the Confidence You Feel in Prince George And its Economy?*



*This chart represents the following quantitative data: Significantly Decreased = 0-20, Decreased = 21-40, No Change= 41-60, Increased = 61-80, Significantly Increased = 81-100
Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding

Has the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected Your Use of the Outdoor Areas?



*This chart represents the following quantitative data: Significantly Decreased = 0-20, Decreased = 21-40, No Change = 41-60, Increased = 61-80, Significantly Increased = 81-100
Chart values (%) add up to ~100 due to rounding



E'THELO

Thank you!
