

M E E T I N G N O T I C E
BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD
Monday, November 22, 2021
Bennington Fire Facility
Multi-Purpose Room - 3rd Floor
130 River Street
Bennington, VT 05201
A G E N D A
6:00 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Vision Statement
3. Consent Agenda 6:00 PM - 6:05 PM
 - A. Minutes of November 1, 8, 2021
 - B. Warrants
 - C. Proclamation on Human Rights Day
4. Public Comment 6:05 PM - 6:20 PM
5. Upcoming Mask Mandate 6:20 PM - 6:25 PM
6. VCRD Community Visit 6:25 PM - 6:50 PM
 - 10 Year Anniversary Update
 - A. Vision/Image
 - B. Downtown as a destination
7. Citizen Survey Presentation 6:50 PM - 7:05 PM
8. Implementing the Town Vision 7:05 PM - 7:20 PM
9. Manager's Report 7:20 PM - 7:30 PM
10. Upcoming Agendas 7:30 PM - 7:35 PM
11. Other Business 7:35 PM - 7:45 PM

1 VIOIOUS DOG COMPLAINT HEARING

2 130 RIVER STREET

3 BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201

4 NOVEMBER 1, 2021

5 MINUTES

6 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeannie Jenkins-Chair; Jeanne Conner-Vice Chair; Bruce
7 Lee-Clark; Jim Carroll; Tom Haley; Sarah Perrin and Gary Corey.

8 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

9 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Kimberly Krawczyk-Animal Control Officer; Leslie
10 Kelley-Plaintiff; Marcia Rogers; Bill Rogers; Carroll Church; Linda Masten; Jackie Kelly; Donna
11 Wagner; Jim Therrien-Bennington Banner; and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

12 At 6:00pm, Ms. Jenkins called the Special Hearing to order.

13 Ms. Jenkins: "This is a Special Hearing on a vicious dog complaint. We will follow Bennington's
14 Ordinance on the Care and Control of Animals. This is an ordinance to protect the safety and
15 welfare of the citizens of the Town of Bennington and others."

16 The Board members introduced themselves.

17 Ms. Jenkins: "Due to COVID precautions, masks are required as is social distancing. Anyone that
18 wishes to speak should sign up on the sign in sheet."

19 Mr. Hurd: Mr. Hurd administered the oath to those that will be speaking. They are Marcia
20 Rogers, Bill Rogers, Carroll Church, Linda Masten, Jackie Kelly, Donna Wagner, Kimberly
21 Krawczyk, and Leslie Kelly. All raised their hands and said "I do".

22 Ms. Jenkins: "Anyone else who would like to speak will be sworn in, as well. The Select Board
23 has received a copy of the complaint dated August 18, 2021. The order of action this evening
24 will be for people to read the complaint by Ms. Kelley. After speaking, Ms. Kelley can invite
25 other witnesses that she would like or share other evidence that she has. Then the Select
26 Board can ask questions. Next we'll hear from the Animal Control Officer and the Select Board
27 can ask any questions of her. Then we will hear from the defendant, if they are here, and they
28 will have the same right to bring witnesses and evidence, and to answer questions. Then if
29 anyone else in the audience would like to speak, then they will do so. Following the testimony,
30 the Select Board will close the Hearing, we will excuse the audience, and we will go into
31 Deliberative Session. Following the Deliberative Session, we will send a written decision to the
32 parties. Our intention is to do that within a few days so that we don't delay this any longer.
33 Because this is a quasi-judicial hearing, the following rules apply: Parties can choose to be
34 represented by legal counsel; Parties may provide confident and material evidence to support

35 their position including witnesses, photographs, and reports; Parties may consent to cross
36 examination of a witness subject to the consent of the Board. If that should come up, we ask
37 that all questions come through the Board rather than directly to the other party. Witness shall
38 be sworn by oath and a disorderly or disruptive person will be asked to leave to ensure a fair
39 and orderly conduct of the Hearing. A record of the Hearing will be kept by the Select Board.
40 The complaining party shall have the burden of proving by preponderance of the evidence that
41 the pet is aggressive or vicious and should be subject to restrictions pertaining to aggressive
42 and vicious pets. After all evidence is taken, the Select Board will issue finding fact, level of
43 offense, and actions to be taken. Any party may choose to appeal the decision of the Select
44 Board to the appropriate Town reporter. It shall be a permanent defense against a vicious dog
45 complaint that the complaining party was trespassing on the property."

46 Ms. Jenkins opened the Hearing and turned it over to Leslie Kelley, the plaintiff.

47 Leslie Kelley: "Thanked the Board for the Hearing and acknowledged that the Board had read
48 her letter of complaint." The reason that I decided to move forward with this Hearing is
49 threefold. The defendant has lived in the neighborhood for over three years with these two
50 dogs. In that three years, there have been several aggressive attacks on other animals. The
51 owners of the dogs have shown no remorse. They have not reached out to one single person
52 who their dog has attacked to say 'I'm sorry' or shown any kind of remorse. Another is that
53 many of the neighbors don't even feel comfortable walking by their home anymore. It's a
54 lovely street, it loops. I walk my dog every single day around the loop. It's just not right. It's a
55 public street. We pay an exorbitant amount of property taxes on that street and feel that we
56 should feel safe walking either by ourselves or with our dogs or children and dogs on the street.
57 Lastly, I just wanted to make sure there was an additional paper trail in that if another incident
58 occurred, that the Town and the neighborhood are aware that we are taking this very seriously.
59 Also, there's a woman on the street, Barb Taylor, who's dog was bitten and attacked worse
60 than my dog and she could not make it tonight. May I read a letter that she wrote?"

61 The Board allowed the letter and this is the letter written by Barbara Taylor, 655 Fox Hill Road,
62 Bennington, VT 05201 read by Leslie Kelley: The yellow highlighted verbiage was not in the
63 letter.

64 "I regret that I cannot attend tonight's meeting but I would like to respond with this letter that I
65 have sent to my neighbor, Leslie Kelley. Our dog, a 25 pound Scottish Terrier, was attacked on
66 August 5, 2018 while I was walking him on a leash opposite the Carubia's home. Carubia's dog,
67 a dark brown Pit Bull mix, ran out unleashed and pinned our dog to the ground. I could not
68 remove their dog who was biting and viciously attacking our dog. The owner, Mr. Carubia, had
69 removed their dog from mine. Our dog was brought to the vet where he had four bleeding
70 puncture holes attended to. Mr. Carubia yelled out as I was running away that I could send him
71 the bill. I was hesitant to do so as there was a woman screaming inside. Since that time our
72 dog will not go on walks like he used to." (Leslie Kelley added that 'she (Ms. Taylor) did file a
73 police report'.) "The police were very supportive and said they would follow up with the

74 Carubia's. Unfortunately, three years later this dog is still a problem." (Leslie Kelley added 'and
75 I say dogs because both of them attacked my dog - a large one and a small one'.) "We're told
76 the dog is some kind of service support animal but this does not give the owners the right to
77 have a dog that is attacking the entire neighborhood. I ask the Town to take into consideration
78 the responsible dog owners in the neighborhood and protect them and their animals.
79 Sincerely, Barbara Taylor"

80 Leslie Kelley: "In summary, best case scenario, I would really like to see the dogs removed from
81 the home. I know he's said they're support dogs. I doubt that. I can't imagine that any
82 company would give vicious dogs to someone as support dogs. And, this problem goes back
83 eight years ago in their old neighborhood. There also was another police report where another
84 dog had been attacked by these dogs, the large one, and really seriously hurt. This is nothing
85 new. This has been going on for eight years."

86 Mr. Carroll: "Would you briefly describe the incident that brought you hear? Everybody here
87 may not be aware of the facts."

88 Leslie Kelley: "Sure. On August 7th, a Saturday, I was walking my dog, Jasper, by the pond on
89 Fox Hill Road, and I looked up and saw Carubia's two dogs on the street by some brush, not on
90 their property. I immediately thought, 'Oh, my God, what now?'. The large dog came after my
91 dog and I yelled, and thankfully, it went away. While the large one was running away, the small
92 dog didn't come and sniff my dog like all dogs do, it came around and bit my dog on the hind
93 quarter. Again, I was screaming, I had a stupid retractable leash and ended up with rope burns
94 and a broken finger. Anyway, the dogs finally ran away and I went home - very shaken, very
95 upset. And, went up to my neighbor's house, the Rogers, to see if I could get a phone number
96 for the Carubia's to call them and let them know what happened. They didn't have a phone
97 number but encouraged me and said that I probably should call the police and file a police
98 report, which is what I did."

99 Mr. Carroll: "What kind of dog do you own?"

100 Leslie Kelley: "He's a mixed breed - Border Collie and English Setter. He's a rescue from Second
101 Chance."

102 Mr. Carroll: "How would you describe his size?"

103 Leslie Kelley: "Medium size. About 65 pounds."

104 Mr. Carroll: "Non aggressive?"

105 Leslie Kelley: "Oh, God no. He's a sweetheart."

106 Leslie Kelley: "My first request is that these dogs be rehomed with someone who can handle
107 them and train them out in the country and out of the neighborhood so this can't happen
108 again. Worst case scenario would be that, if you allow them to stay in the home, that they're

109 not allowed outside unless they're on a leash and muzzled. I did see the larger dog out in the
110 yard, loose, two weeks ago."

111 Mr. Carroll: "Is there any fencing in the area?"

112 Leslie Kelley: "No, they don't have fence. I have fence in the backyard so my dog can only be
113 out by himself in the backyard. I always have him on a leash when he's out with me as does
114 everyone else in the neighborhood. Most of the neighbors have dogs and when they're walking
115 them, they're on a leash."

116 Mr. Lee-Clark: "When the dog was bitten did you take the dog to a vet?"

117 Leslie Kelley: "I called the vet and explained what happened. It was one puncture wound and
118 they just said to clean it out. He's up to date on his shots."

119 Mr. Lee-Clark: "What vet was that?"

120 Leslie Kelley: "Mt. Anthony."

121 Mr. Lee-Clark: "But you don't have a record of that phone call?"

122 Leslie Kelley: "No, I don't. I do have a photo on my phone of the dog bite. I did clean and wrap
123 it. I'm a first responder. The vet did say that he didn't need to be seen to just keep an eye on
124 it."

125 Mr. Lee-Clark: "I'm not sure how to get a photo on your phone to us, but I'm sure there's a
126 photo somewhere." (Other Board members said that it was in the report and the Animal
127 Control Office and police did take photos.)

128 Mr. Corey: "In your letter you said that they were loose and not muzzled. Was there a previous
129 order for them to be muzzled?"

130 Leslie Kelley: "My next door neighbor said that to me. I don't have positive proof. He said that
131 he had the understanding that after (another) incident, that they were to be muzzled."

132 Ms. Jenkins: "Again, we can follow up on that. We have the report from the August 5th incident
133 in our packet."

134 Leslie Kelley: "I commend both the Animal Control Officer and Police Officer on extremely
135 thorough written reports. Everything that happened, they were very accurate. The last
136 comment that I would make is that Stuart Hurd sent me a copy of the thing and I noticed the
137 different levels. Level 3 to me is 'a pet who has been unprovoked has bitten a human or
138 physically harmed or killed a domestic animal'. These dogs have physically harmed my dog and
139 Barbara Taylor's dog, so to me, this does qualify as a Level 3 offense."

140 *Testimony by others that have signed up and were sworn in:*

141 Marcia Rogers: "My name is Marcia Rogers and my husband and I have property that abuts the
142 Carubians in the back. There's no fence, just some bushes. So, the dogs when they're loose,
143 could come right through the property into our backyard. On the night of the incident with
144 Leslie, she did come to the house like she said, and we had our grandchildren here from
145 Colorado and we were planning on taking a walk. So instead of walking around where the
146 Carubians live, we just went down the main road and we encountered the dog sniffing around
147 by Camelot Village. I recognized him and immediately turned the whole tribe around and
148 headed for home as quickly as we could because we had little kids with us. To my knowledge,
149 they have never attacked children, but they're small like dogs and we didn't want to see that
150 happen. I wasn't going to say anything, but I do want to say that it's pretty frightening to live
151 there. When our grandkids were here, there was a swing from here to there to the edge of his
152 property and we didn't even let them out of the backyard without someone being there
153 because we were so worried. And, they don't respond to rational talking, those neighbors. You
154 can't talk to them about the dogs. Actually, he ended up on our spare lot with the officer trying
155 to get him under control. We took the kids in and it's just pretty scary. And I love dogs. We
156 had a Lab for 14 years and I have no problem with anybody's dogs. But these dogs, I'm sorry
157 for them, but they're scary. That's all I have to say."

158 Leslie Kelley: "I just want to add to the incident that night that the police officer had gone over
159 to the house and she was not home. At the time, Abigail was living at the home and he
160 discovered that she had left that door open and the dogs had busted out that door to get out.
161 That's how they got out. The officer was able to get the larger dog back into the house but the
162 smaller dog - the one that bit my dog - was still wondering the neighborhood. The police
163 officer, myself, and Bill Rogers were out and he was wandering in a lot that was behind the
164 Carubia property and I think the Rogers actually own the lot. And, as the police officer was
165 trying to corral it, he was growling at him. She came home and between the police officer and
166 Abigail, they were able to get the smaller dog back into the house."

167 Ms. Conner: "I just want clarification on the door being open, was it wide open?"

168 Leslie Kelley: "It was a screen door that the dogs busted through."

169 Donna Wagner: "I'm Donna Wagner and I live on Fox Hill Road. I don't have any dogs, I have
170 small children, and my concern is the small children in the neighborhood, and the dogs, too.
171 People are walking the dogs with small children and I'm afraid that the children could get
172 between the dogs, and the dog wouldn't go after them purposely, but it could happen. So,
173 that's a very big concern for me as being just a resident in the neighborhood. That's really all I
174 wanted to say, and I know Jasper and I know Donovan, and they're the sweetest dogs. Jasper I
175 don't think I've ever heard him bark. They're just really sweet dogs."

176 Mr. Carroll: "Did you witness any of this?"

177 Donna Wagner: "I did not witness anything."

178 Mr. Carroll: "Ever?"

179 Donna Wagner: "I did witness Barbara running back, and I witnessed Donovan, Barbara Taylor's
180 dog, running up towards the house which was very unusual, and I saw Barbara running behind
181 Donovan. I went to see what was going on and she said her dog was bitten but I didn't see the
182 altercation."

183 Mr. Carroll: "I meant, in general, with these two dogs?"

184 Donna Wagner: "I had some mail delivered accidentally to our home for those people and I had
185 to go down to the house because they were big boxes they left them on the front porch, and I
186 went down to the house to just tell them to come up and get them, and those dogs - I was
187 petrified because they were barking so loudly and they were going to the windows and the
188 blinds on the windows and I just rang the doorbell. I did witness that and it is frightening. Like I
189 said, I'm really afraid of the small children walking with their parents. They have every right to
190 do that but if they get in the middle of those dogs, it could cause children a lot of harm. And I
191 don't think it's fair for anybody to have to deal with that. They have the right to walk that
192 neighborhood, it's a public street. That's all I wanted to say."

193 Mr. Carroll: "I asked that any witness that comes up to site any bad behavior with this dog."

194 Linda Masten: "I stopped walking around a lot probably for the last three years. I walk half way
195 down the street, petrified to make sure the dogs aren't out, or his car's not there, and I hurry
196 up and walk back up the hill so the dog doesn't see me if he is out. Now, I like to take a walk,
197 but it stopped, because for me to walk all the way down to the end of the road and back to the
198 top of the hill is a long walk. And, that was a nice easy walk around the loop but my walks are
199 limited to 10 minutes. I walk my little Pug, God forbid he should attack my dog, and I don't
200 worry just about the dog, I just think that the day is gonna come when those dogs are in the
201 middle of a fight and they're going to bite a human being, or a little kid. We have a lot of young
202 families on the street now that walk their children in strollers. I'm surprised they're even
203 walking around. I, personally, wouldn't but I have never had any problem with the dogs. I think
204 I've only seen the Pit Bull type once and he wasn't on a leash, but like I said, I've got 10 minute
205 walks now unless I'm not with my dog. I won't walk my dog by that house. That's all I have to
206 say."

207 Jackie Kelley: "Jackie Kelley. I'm here to testify on behalf of Jasper. My dog is out frequently,
208 she likes to be out, and I have an electric fence so she can't go beyond the property. She greets
209 every dog that passes by, and I have to tell you, and Jasper isn't the kind of dog that even looks
210 at her when she barks. He just walks by like she's invisible. Jasper is not an aggressive dog and
211 he's a mid-sized dog just like my dog and just keeps on going. I was shocked that this happened
212 twice in our neighborhood. On Halloween I counted the children that came to our house and
213 there were at least 7 children under 5 years old. They walk frequently as do the dogs and their
214 owners and it's a danger in our neighborhood now. Thank you."

215 Leslie Kelley: "I just wanted to say, too, that there have been four incidents on our street.
216 Marie O'Dell could not make it tonight, too, was walking her dogs. She never filed a police
217 report. I wish she had but they came after her dogs, also, and an older woman was walking her
218 dog. Same thing, the dogs came out after it but with her cane, or whatever, was able to get rid
219 of them. She also did not file a police report. Not too long after Barbara Taylor, probably
220 around 2019."

221 Ms. Jenkins: "I don't think we'll need to follow up with them. Just trying to get a sense."

222 Bill Rogers: "My name is Bill Rogers, husband of Marcia. Our property is adjacent to the
223 Carubia's. I was thankful that someone brought up that this family and these dogs had very
224 similar incidents at their last residence, and I was glad that that was brought up. That should
225 tell you that there's a pattern going on here. And, I can tell you that when my grandchildren
226 were at my house, I was afraid for my grandkids. And, I wouldn't have known what to do,
227 except to try and strangle one of those dogs. And the one that seems to be the one that
228 they're always yelling to, his name is Apollo. And that would strongly stress that that dog is not
229 hooked to a leash. They're yelling to get it back so the dogs are free to go whenever the family
230 decides to do whatever they do and I don't believe that I should be at risk, that my grandkids
231 should be at risk, or anyone else in the neighborhood. People used to always walk up and go
232 around. We'd see them all the time. And, there's a sweet, little, old lady who walks her little
233 dog in a carriage, and I'm just waiting for the day when that poor lady and that dog are
234 attacked by these vicious dogs. I hope you folks can understand that we have a neighborhood
235 that's scared to death and we shouldn't have to live like that. Thank you very much."

236 Ms. Conner: "It seems to be unclear, or it shifts, who's actually living in the home, the Carubia's
237 home?"

238 Leslie Kelley: "It has changed."

239 Ms. Conner: "And whose dogs are they? Do they stay there and the people move in and out? So
240 whoever is living in the house should be responsible for the dogs."

241 Leslie Kelley: "I've talked to Stuart Hurd several times on the phone. So, they both were living
242 in the home when they moved in, and it was only recently, within the last several months that
243 he was removed from the home - domestic separation. He was removed from the home and
244 she was left there with the dogs. When she received my complaint, she went into Mr. Hurd's
245 office and said they're not my dogs, they're my husband's dogs. In the interim, he has moved
246 back into the house with a girlfriend and she is now not living there. There are two little girls
247 involved, too, and I don't know if they're there or not. He's now in the home and she's not.
248 That's what's transpired."

249 Ms. Conner: "It's just depending on what we decide, it's who would be responsible."

250 Ms. Jenkins: "We can get this from the Animal Control Officer."

251 Kimberly Krawczyk-Animal Control Officer: "I'm Kimberly Krawczyk, the Animal Control Officer,
252 for the Town of Bennington. I have been part time, non-sworn, since 2019. When the incident
253 occurred, Abigail Carubia was responsible for the dogs. Antonio Carubia was not living there. I
254 was actually dispatching because I dispatch for the Police Department, as well, so I was
255 dispatching when the incident occurred and took the call. I called Abigail myself and let her
256 know the situation and she came from work when she was able to and helped Officer
257 Cassavaugh corral the dog onto the residence. I then followed up with Abigail that Monday -
258 met with her on Saturday and followed up with her on Monday in person - provided her with a
259 14 letter on every dog that bites another dog or a human has to be quarantined. She was given
260 a time frame to provide us copies of the rabies vaccinations and Town of Bennington licenses.
261 They were not licensed. On August 11th she was mailed a Municipal Complaint Violation for her
262 dogs running at large and attacking Leslie's dog. On August 12th, I received copies of the rabies
263 vaccinations from Abigail so both dogs had been vaccinated at Mt. Anthony prior to the bites. I
264 called Abigail again on August 17th to advise her that the dogs still need to be licensed with the
265 Town and that she had until August 20th to do so. She did license them on the 20th and there
266 was a little mix-up as to who was still living there and what the situation was. I went back to
267 the residence and spoke to Antonio and he said that Abigail was no longer living at the
268 residence that he was. I asked him who the owner of the dogs was and he said that he was.
269 The vaccination information is under his name. The owner is still him under the vaccination and
270 then the license was switched back to Antonio. He advised me that he was taking full
271 responsibility for the dogs. Last year they were licensed to Antonio, they were licensed this
272 year to Abigail because she was there at the time of the incident, and then switched back to
273 Antonio when she left. I met the dog who was the aggressor. He is an 11 year old brindle Pit
274 Bull. The dog did bark at me and I didn't go up to the dog and she had the dog held back. He
275 was barking and definitely not happy that I was there. But, from my understanding, I haven't
276 had any incident of the dog biting a human. And the only incident that I have had since I've
277 been Animal Control was the one in August. I've driven the neighborhood on multiple
278 occasions and I have not seen the dogs out. I did advise Antonio that maybe he should have a
279 muzzle on his dogs when they're outside with him, as well as, keep them on a lead within his
280 sights. But, then again, I haven't seen them out since then.

281 Leslie Kelley: "I saw him out two weeks ago."

282 Kimberly Krawczyk: "In his yard?"

283 Leslie Kelley: "Yes. Did you recommend muzzles for both dogs?"

284 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Yes, I did. He wasn't sure if the other one might ever be aggressive so I
285 just suggested that both dogs be muzzled. That way it's safer, or on a lead if he's walking them
286 and make sure they're not out alone. And I provided him with a copy of the Ordinance so he
287 could read it himself and know what he is supposed to do as a responsible dog owner."

288 Mr. Lee-Clark: "Pictures?"

289 Kimberly Krawczyk: "I do have pictures, unfortunately they are in black and white but I can
290 provide them to you."

291 Mr. Lee-Clark: "Hold up the one you think is the most important picture and describe for me
292 what it is we're going to be looking at. And I will ask you to do that with each of these."

293 Kimberly Krawczyk: "This is a picture of Leslie's dog, Jasper, and where it's circled, the dark
294 spots are where the dog bites happened on the back hind quarters."

295 Mr. Lee-Clark: "The officer took that picture on the day of the incident?"

296 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Correct, and he sent them to me."

297 Mr. Lee-Clark: "Can you put a #1 on that?"

298 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Sure. #2 is just a closer picture of the bite on the hind quarters. The other
299 dark spot is the dog's black fur. #3 is a closer up of #1 and #4 is the proof of vaccination of
300 Leslie's dog."

301 Ms. Perrin: "Do you feel that Mr. Carubia had the dogs' attention and control of the dog the
302 time you met him?"

303 Kimberly Krawczyk: "The dogs were barking, he advised them to stop barking and they pretty
304 much did. He had better control and verbal command over them than Abigail did."

305 Mr. Carroll: "Does the man that owns the dogs own the property?"

306 Kimberly Krawczyk: "I believe he is the owner of the property but I can't be certain."

307 Leslie Kelley: "He has owned it for 3 to 3.5 years."

308 Mr. Carroll: "His homeowners insurance would cover this."

309 Leslie Kelley: "That's a huge liability for whoever is carrying that homeowners insurance."

310 Ms. Conner: "Were all of the pictures taken by the police officer on August 7th?"

311 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Yes."

312 Ms. Conner: "In your experience, do dogs that bite/attack other dogs progress to biting
313 humans, to address the concerns of the children?"

314 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Since I've been doing this, I can't think of an incident where I've had,
315 actually, I've had one incident where I've had a dog bite a dog and end up biting a human.
316 Since I've been Animal Control, that's only happened to me once."

317 Mr. Lee-Clark: "I'm going back to your report. I believe you said you cited the owner for a first
318 offense under the dog who was running at large?"

319 Kimberly Krawczyk: "It was, for a first offense, a fine of \$25.00."

320 Mr. Lee-Clark: "Was that fine paid?"

321 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Honestly, I'm not sure if it was paid. I sent it certified mail to Abigail. I
322 have not received anything saying that she did not accept it or anything like that. I have not
323 seen whether it has been paid or not."

324 Ms. Jenkins: "Stuart, who would know that?"

325 Mr. Hurd: "I believe that would be the Collections Office but we should have received
326 something from the Post Office if it had been accepted or not. The Collections Office would
327 need to be contacted for payment."

328 Mr. Hurd: "Was there a second violation for the unlicensed dogs?"

329 Kimberly Krawczyk: "No, I told her that if she didn't license them by August 20th that she would
330 be cited for not licensing her dogs but she did license them that day. At the time she was
331 responsible for the dogs because she was living in the home and the dogs were her
332 responsibility. And, in September, when I went to see Antonio, the license was switched over
333 to him."

334 Ms. Jenkins: "Is there anything else that we should be thinking about with this particular case?"

335 Kimberly Krawczyk: "I know the dogs have been loose before but nothing has been reported to
336 me and I do live in the neighborhood. I've had one incident when I've left for work before
337 midnight and I walked around the corner of their house and one of the dogs was there on my
338 property. He just barking and stared. This was a few years ago. There has been nothing
339 recent."

340 Ms. Conner: "Are the dogs out in daylight and at night?"

341 Leslie Kelley: "I live around the corner and I've only seen them during the day."

342 Marcia Rogers: "Our property is on the front side of Fox Hill Road and the Carubia's live on the
343 loop right behind us. There are woods that are not owned by the Carubia's and I have twice
344 looked out and seen that brindle loose a stone's throw from our backyard and him calling the
345 dog back and the dog not coming back. And it is Apollo and I don't know the other dog's name.
346 Just to let you know, they are loose and not in his yard. They wander from his yard, and as far
347 as him having control over the dogs, he might have a little more control than Abigail. As far as I
348 know the day that Barb Taylor's little dog was bitten, he was in control of that dog when that
349 dog ran out into the street and attacked Barbara's dog, not Abby. Just so you get a little bit of a
350 picture - the barking is daily, but that is OK, they're not going anywhere, but I have seen him in
351 the woods, not the other dog."

352 Ms. Perrin: "Is barking longer than 10 minutes, would you say?"

353 Marcia Rogers: "Definitely more than 10 minutes but they're not always out when they're
354 barking. You can hear them barking in the house. They bark at the school bus - that's no big
355 deal - they bark when anybody comes to the door, but they bark incessantly on some days. I
356 don't know if it's because they're alone. I don't see that. Does the barking annoy us? Yeah, but
357 the biting is what bothers me. I don't think that Bill and I are the only ones that can hear the
358 barking."

359 Bill Rogers: "I can hear it big time."

360 Carroll Church: "My name is Carroll Church and I am neighbors with each and every one of
361 these people. Many of them have dogs, and as far as I'm concerned, they're very well-
362 mannered dogs. Most of them are just pets that will come to you and lick your hands and
363 everything. But this problem with these dogs here has gone on for three years and everybody
364 sits on their hands and not done nothing. And I would just like to know when it's gonna get
365 straightened out. That's all I have to say. Thank you."

366 Mr. Carroll: "I'd just like to point out that when a dog barks for more than 10 minutes, that's
367 intense."

368 Marcia Rogers: "I'm under the impression that it's up to us to get on our phone and report it if
369 it's more than 10 minutes. So what do we do, call the police?"

370 Ms. Jenkins: "I think that Animal Control Officer can help on that one."

371 Kimberly Krawczyk: "Anytime I get complaints about barking dogs, I do ask that people report it
372 because if I go to that particular residence and the dogs are not barking I have to have proof
373 that there was a time they were barking. You have to show them, yes, your dogs were barking
374 and I have a report in so that they know. It's helpful for me so that I have that for my
375 documentation, as well."

376 Leslie Kelley: "Thank you so much for having this Hearing. I hope as you go Deliberate and
377 come up with solutions to this problem that you take in everything that everyone has said. And
378 the biggest thing for me is that there's a pattern here. This isn't just my incident. This has
379 happened multiple times in the old neighborhood and in this neighborhood. You can ask him to
380 control his dogs but there's got to be something more definitive. I just don't trust that he's
381 going to do that. To have all the other neighbors who came up here tonight let you know that
382 they're very uncomfortable walking their own street where we pay taxes, we love the town,
383 and I hope that it's very evident that the defendant did not show tonight. And, to me, that says
384 a lot about his lack of concern. And when the police officer told Abigail that my dog had been
385 bitten, her reply was 'shit happens'. They just don't seem to really care. And that goes back to
386 there's no remorse, there's no concern for the neighbors in the neighborhood that they live in
387 and it's a pattern. Thank you."

388

389 *The Board declared that the respondent is not present.*

390 *At 6:53pm, the Hearing was closed and Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Sarah Perrin*

391 *seconded to go into Deliberative Session. The motion carried unanimously.*

392 When the Board has reached a decision, a written response will be sent to both parties.

393

394 Respectfully submitted,

395 Nancy H. Lively

396 Secretary

397

398

399

400

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**

2 **130 RIVER STREET**

3 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

4 **NOVEMBER 8, 2021**

5 **MINUTES**

6 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeannie Jenkins-Chair; Jeanne Conner-Vice Chair; Bruce
7 Lee-Clark; Jim Carroll; Sarah Perrin and Gary Corey.

8 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tom Haley.

9 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Dan Monks-Assistant Town Manager; Shannon
10 Barsotti-Community Development Director; Jonah Spivak-Communications Coordinator;
11 Representative Mary Morrissey; Norman LeBlanc-VFW Commander; Rick Zadle; Joseph
12 Krawczyk, Jr.; Gary Martin; Phil Young; Dr. Trey Dobson-SVMC Medical Director; Alexina Jones;
13 Jennifer Jasper; Nancy White; Jim Vires-CAT-TV; Jim Therrien-Bennington Banner and Nancy H.
14 Lively-Secretary.

15 At 6:00pm, Ms. Jenkins called the meeting to order and asked those not vaccinated to
16 wear a mask and social distance. There are wipes to wipe down the microphone if you wish to
17 speak.

18 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

19 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

20 **2. VISION STATEMENT**

21 Ms. Conner read the Town's Vision Statement that was adopted by the Select Board on
22 August 24, 2020:

23 "Bennington is a welcoming, engaged, inclusive, resilient community where everyone
24 regardless of identity shares in our vitality and benefits from an outstanding quality of life."

25 **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

26 **A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 25, 2021**

27 **B. WARRANTS**

28 *Jim Carroll moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded to approve the Consent Agenda with*
29 *the Minutes of October 25, 2021 amended as follows:*

30 *Line 245, Change "The Town of Bennington received" to "The Bennington Police*
31 *Department received"*

The motion carried with Tom Haley absent.

4. PROCLAMATION-PURPLE HEART COMMUNITY-VFW

Mr. Carroll read the Town of Bennington Proclamation Purple Heart Community as presented.

Representative Mary Morrissey cited the many people and organizations involved with the Purple Heart award and the four recipients that were present for the sacrifices they have made for our country during their military service. They are Rick Zadle, Joseph Krawczyk, Jr., Gary Martin and Phil Young.

Norman LeBlanc, VFW Commander, explained that the Purple Heart is the oldest award still given to all ranks of military service to those that were wounded or died in the line of duty, and thanked the Town for supporting our Purple Heart recipients.

The Select Board signed the Town of Bennington Proclamation Purple Heart Community recognizing August 7th of a given year as Purple Heart Day in Bennington.

5. COVID UPDATE

Dr. Trey Dobson, SVMC Medical Director, did the following COVID update:

- Even though COVID cases had increased last week, those in the hospital have not.
- 25%-30% of the positive cases are coming from the under 12 age group who are not eligible to be vaccinated with the rest from the elderly with underlying conditions.
- Several thousands in the 5-11 age group have already signed up for the vaccine when it becomes available.
- We should be vigilant about this but it is not as dire as it would seem.
- The areas with more cases rotates throughout the State.
- IV treatment of COVID is expensive but prevents people from being hospitalized. Oral treatments are expected to be available in early 2022.

Board questions/comments answered by Dr. Dobson:

Mr. Carroll: Are those getting COVID primarily the unvaccinated? Yes, about 5:1 unvaccinated to vaccinated with 100% of the ICU admissions unvaccinated.

Ms. Conner: We're not hearing much about new variants. Is that still the case? Yes.

Ms. Conner: Do you have any advice for our holiday plans? Vaccinated people spreading COVID to vaccinated people is extremely rare, however, unvaccinated transmitting to vaccinated is where the risk lies.

Ms. Perrin: Has the hospital reached their goal of 100% vaccinated by November 1st? We will be 100% compliant with a small group of people that are unvaccinated because of exemptions for medical or religious reasons.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following Public Comment Practices to make the experience for all involved a productive and informative use of the Public Comment period at Select Board meetings was placed on the podium for those that wish to make Public Comments to reference:

1. Public Comment is to allow residents an opportunity to share information or make announcements that benefit the community at large.
2. The topic should **not** be related to an agenda item. If a member of the public wants to comment on an agenda item they can do so during the discussion of that item.
3. Comments should be 3 minutes or less.
4. You are required to state your real name and town of residence.
5. Sharing comments, announcements and concerns are encouraged rather than asking questions. Public Comment is not a time for discussion. If you have specific questions it is best to call the Town Manager to get a full explanation and accurate information.
6. If the topic requires much discussion the item will be considered as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Alexina Jones, Bennington Museum Director of Advancement, described the Soul Steps performing group from New York City noting their performances all over the world. The New York Times stated their performances were "electric and joyeous" as it was when they performed in Bennington in June. We have received grants to support diversity in Bennington and Soul Steps has begun a Go Fund Me campaign, as well.

Jennifer Jasper, Bennington Performing Arts Center Executive Director, added that on December 11th at 7:30pm the Bennington Performing Arts Center will have a Public Reading of Excerpts of Their Municipal Work in Progress - tickets are \$15/adults and \$10/students - as well as, two free workshops on December 12th from 11:00am-Noon and 2:00pm-3:00pm. Also, free on November 14th at 2:00pm the AAUW Bennington Chapter will present Bennington-World War II- The Women and Men Who Served, and Community Theatre, Voices from the Grave on November 20th at 2:00pm and 7:00pm, and on December 14th we have Jingle Jangle Jingle-eve at 1:00pm and 4:00pm for \$10/adults and free for children under 10. Masks are still required in the theatre.

7. PUBLIC HEARING - NINJA TRAIL GRANT APPLICATION

Mr. Monks did the following presentation:

- We are requesting approval of a \$200,000 grant application to the VTrans Transportation Alternatives Grant Program for additional funds for the Ninja Path Project.

- The funds will allow completion of Phase 1 - a link to Morse Road, a bridge across Furnace Brook, and a bridge across the drainage way behind Hannaford.
- The hope is to get the permits for the Phase 1 work this winter for the construction to begin during the next construction season. We will pursue getting the permits for the entire project regardless of whether or not we are awarded the grant.
- He is giving us a 50% chance of getting the grant. The State often looks favorably on a project that is ready to go and we are ready to go.
- The application is due by the end of November and it will be anywhere from 60 days to 6 months before we know if we will get the money.
- Phase 1 includes all project elements that cannot be done by the Town Highway Department.
- Phases 2 and 3 will be to pave the trail that is currently dirt to what is paved by Bennington College.
- The Ninja Trail runs behind Walmart (is complete), between the river and Morse Road, underneath Route 279, behind Hannaford to the entrance of Bennington College, through Bennington College to North Bennington, and connect to the Rail Trail.
- This would ultimately be a 1.5 to 2 mile pedestrian trail from Bennington to North Bennington.
- The Board will decide what modes of transportation will be allowed on the trail.
- Ninja = method of doing work, so based on the method by which work began on the path ~25 years ago, several volunteers lead by Joanne Erinhouse began constructing the Ninja Path.
- The map shared with the Board will be put on the Town's website.

Gary Corey moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded to approve applying for a \$200,000 VTrans Transportation Alternatives Grant as presented. The motion carried with Tom Haley absent.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS HIGHWAY DISCONTINUANCE

A. BROOKSIDE DRIVE

B. THE FOOTHILLS (TH29)

Mr. Hurd stated that the Board did site visits on Brookside Drive at the entrance to Brookside Apartments on South Street and on The Foothills (TH29) driveway south of Corey Lane on Monument Avenue prior to tonight's meeting. The State of Vermont has identified them as "not real highways" and the Town hasn't serviced them in years. Both will go back to the property owners.

Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Jim Carroll seconded to discontinue Brookside Drive and The Foothills (TH29) as highways. The motion carried with Tom Haley absent.

9. DOWNTOWN FUNDING STRUCTURE

Ms. Jenkins stated that the Board will further discuss the Downtown Funding Structure and bring it back as an agenda item at a later date.

Public questions/comments:

Nancy White: Maintains that local approval is needed to change the Downtown Funding Structure.

10. COMMUNITY POLICING UPDATE

Ms. Jenkins reported as follows:

- The public review of procedures is ongoing until 5:00pm on November 17th.
- Thank you to Jonah Spivak for keeping the Task Force up-to-date and giving them what they are asking for.
- She and Mr. Haley are reaching out to a long list of towns, organizations and individuals to move the Declaration of Inclusion into action steps. We expect this process to take at least a couple of more weeks and then to bring some entry point recommendations to the Board for consideration.

11. EQUIPMENT BORROWING

Mr. Hurd noted that this year we are borrowing \$301,953.00 to purchase several pieces of highway equipment all approved within the recently approved budget. Included in this Note are a Kubota Tractor with Boom Mower, a Western Star Dump Truck and a 1 Ton Pickup Truck.

Sarah Perrin moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded to waive the reading of the Resolution, accept the Note for \$301,953.00, sign the Note, Resolution, and Tax Certificate to then forward onto the Treasurer and Clerk for their signatures where appropriate as presented. The motion carried with Tom Haley absent.

12. MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Hurd reported the following:

- ✓ EPA Action - JARD Site, Bowen Road - The EPA will be installing monitoring wells at the JARD site to gather groundwater to further determine the impact on the surrounding environment. They had capped the site 3 years ago but there are still PCB's in the water. We don't expect them to find any hazards - such as on the baseball field. The work is expected to take 3 weeks.
- ✓ Franklin Lane Update - The design plans are completed and a formal bid process has been delayed due to the unavailability of contractors in our region until Spring 2022.
- ✓ Town Website Redesign - The plans to redesign the Town's website is slowly forming and hope to be ready to send out a request for proposals by January 2022. We have

~\$24,000 in this fiscal year for this project and will have a better idea of the cost by the next meeting. This will be an agenda item for the November 22nd meeting.

- ✓ Citizen Survey - The Citizen Survey, begun in October, was closed on November 5, 2021. The process of consolidating and tallying the results will now begin. We currently have 640 responses in with an additional 180 anticipated by the end of the week.

13. UPCOMING AGENDA

November 22, 2021 - Website Update

November 22, 2021 - Look At Our Progress Since the Vermont Housing and Rural Development Community Visit in 2012. (The report that was produced is on the Town's website under Government/Documents.) Ms. Jenkins read some of the comments that were made in that report from 2012, such as our leadership, concern for youth and their lack of engagement, non-residents think more highly of Bennington than residents do, and Bennington is a town "lined up to succeed".

November 22, 2021 - 1. Develop a Bennington Vision Statement, Developing Community Connections and a Positive Town Image. 2. Making Downtown Bennington a Destination and Building a New Bennington Town Green.

December 13, 2021 - Advancing a Bennington Community Center and Improving Recreation and Collaborating to Address Poverty and Building a Working Group.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Corey: The Vermont Business Magazine announced their 40 winners under 40 years old. Congratulations to Beth Wallace and Mikaela Lewis.

Ms. Conner: Congratulations to everyone involved in the 10-year project to complete the safe and beautiful Orchard Village Path to Willowbrook and to Molly Stark School. There were several in attendance at the ribbon cutting last week.

Ms. Perrin: Volunteers are needed for families in need of gifts this year through the Spirit of Sharing put on by the Agency of Human Services partnered with the Rotary Club. Last year they served 473 children. If interested, please contact www.gettoknowrotary@gmail.com.

At 7:16pm, Bruce Lee-Clark and Jeanne Conner seconded the adjournment of the meeting. The motion carried with Tom Haley absent.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy H. Lively, Secretary



TOWN OF BENNINGTON

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY PROCLAMATION 2021

Celebrating the UN Declaration of Human Rights

Whereas, the United Nations, founded in 1945, observes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10 each year since its adoption in 1948 following its development by the Human Rights Commission chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt; and

Whereas, the United Nations promotes peace and security, development, democracy, economic prosperity, global health, and human rights around the world, and is vital now more than ever; and

Whereas, the United States has a long tradition of international leadership on human rights and has shown bipartisan commitment to advancing human rights through ratification of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention Against Torture; the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination; and pursuing membership on the UN Human Rights Council; and

Whereas, a 2020 bipartisan poll revealed that more than eight out of ten voters say it is important that the United States maintain an active role within the UN; and

Whereas, the United Nations has strived to promote the "Stand Up for Someone's Human Rights" campaign through the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; and

Whereas, the Town of Bennington, Vermont is committed to educating and mobilizing our local communities to build a stronger network of global citizens and leaders to create a more prosperous, safe, just, and sustainable world for all.

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Bennington Select Board, proclaim December 10, 2021 as **HUMAN RIGHTS DAY** in Bennington, Vermont and encourage our citizens to celebrate human rights for all peoples.

Dated at Bennington, Vermont this 22nd day of November 2021.

Select Board, Town of Bennington, Vermont

Jeannie Jenkins, Chair

James Carroll

Gary Corey

Bruce C. Lee-Clark



Jeanne Conner, Vice Chair

Tom Haley

Sarah Perrin



2021 Bennington Citizen Survey

NOTES ON THE SURVEY RESULTS:

1. Due to formatting limitations, the longer names on graphs are abbreviated; in all cases the full names are reiterated along with the numerical data in table form and are shown below the graphs.
2. Questions 14, 17, and 20 are open ended requests for input and as a result do not generate quantifiable data. A spreadsheet is provided with all the comments provided for each of those questions and are attached separately. The three questions are:
 14. What improvements at the Bennington Community Center (Rec. Center) would you like to see?
 17. Please list, in order of preference, three streets that you would like to see improved for the community.
 20. Over the past year the Bennington Police Department has made numerous changes to its policies and procedures as part of its effort to move towards a community policing model. What suggestions would you like to share to help us further this effort?

A total of 840 people started the survey in 2021. 638 were completed for a completion rate of 76%. An average of 14 minutes and 26 seconds was spent by people taking the survey.

Question #14 (above) was the most skipped question (393 out of 638 skipped it).

In 2016 there were 530 respondents, in 2018 there were 984 respondents.

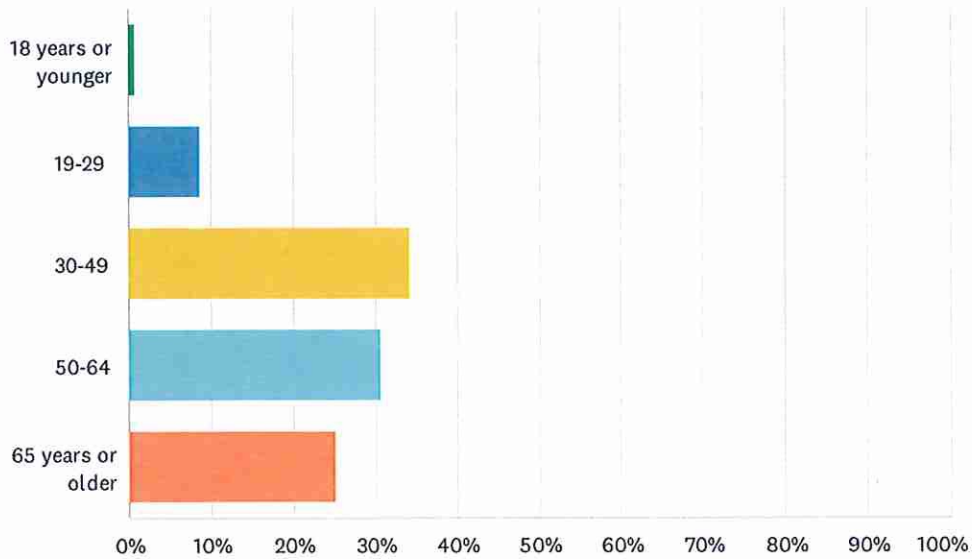
The survey in 2021 lasted for three weeks. In 2018 it was four weeks.

The survey in 2021 was promoted several times on facebook, including a boost, purchased print ad and digital ads in the Bennington Banner, press release to local media, and posted on the towns webpage, and front porch forum.

Printed copies of the survey were available at the Town offices, Senior Center, and Community Center, along with signage with QR code direct link to the online survey, and copies were available to be mailed to anyone who requested it. Thirty-four printed copies were received and manually entered.

Q1 What is your age?

Answered: 634 Skipped: 4

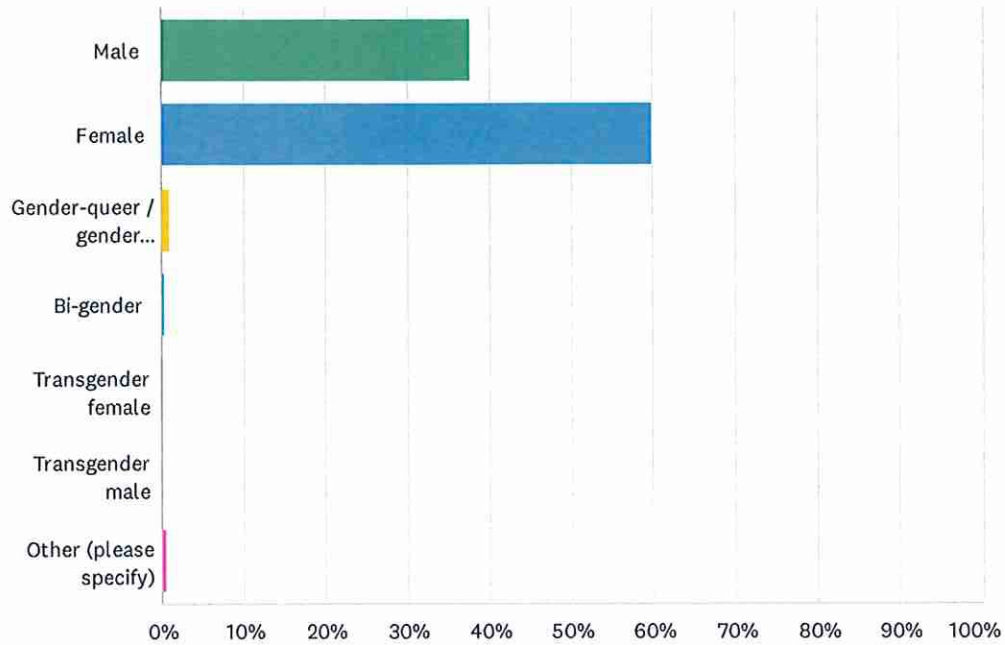


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
18 years or younger	0.95%	6
19-29	8.83%	56
30-49	34.38%	218
50-64	30.76%	195
65 years or older	25.08%	159
TOTAL		634

Q2 With which gender identity do you most identify?

Answered: 632 Skipped: 6

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

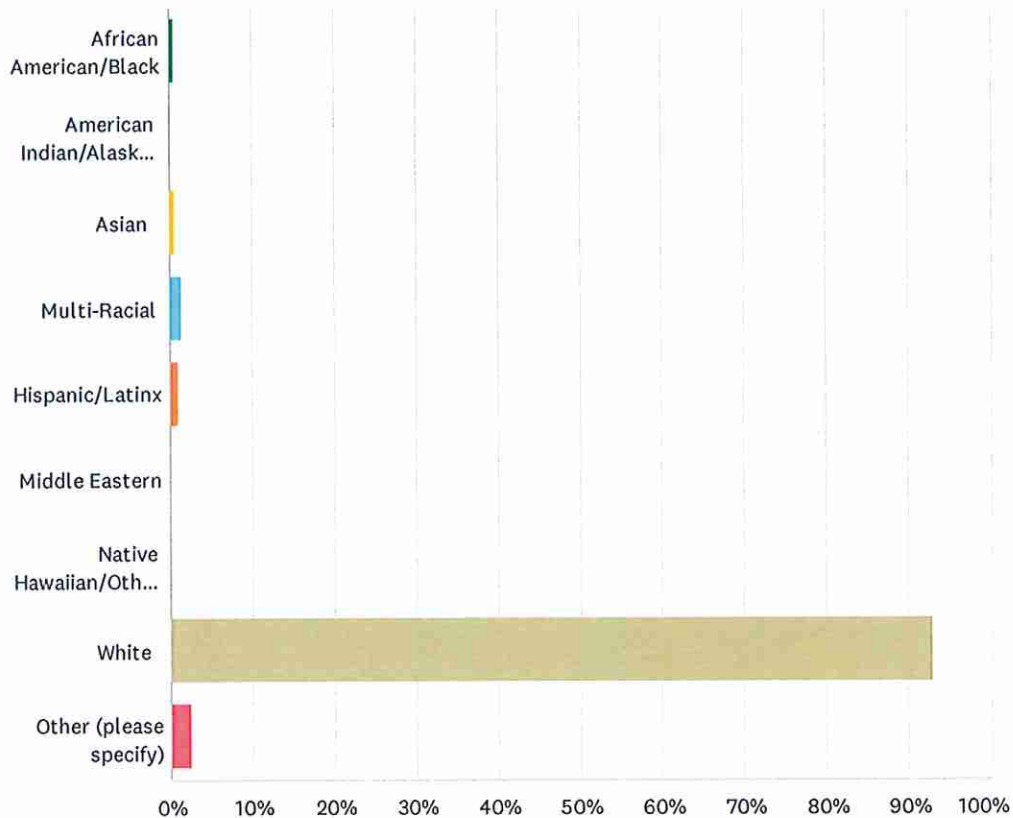


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	37.66%	238
Female	59.97%	379
Gender-queer / gender non-conforming	1.11%	7
Bi-gender	0.47%	3
Transgender female	0.16%	1
Transgender male	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.63%	4
TOTAL		632

Q3 What is your racial background?

Answered: 633 Skipped: 5

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

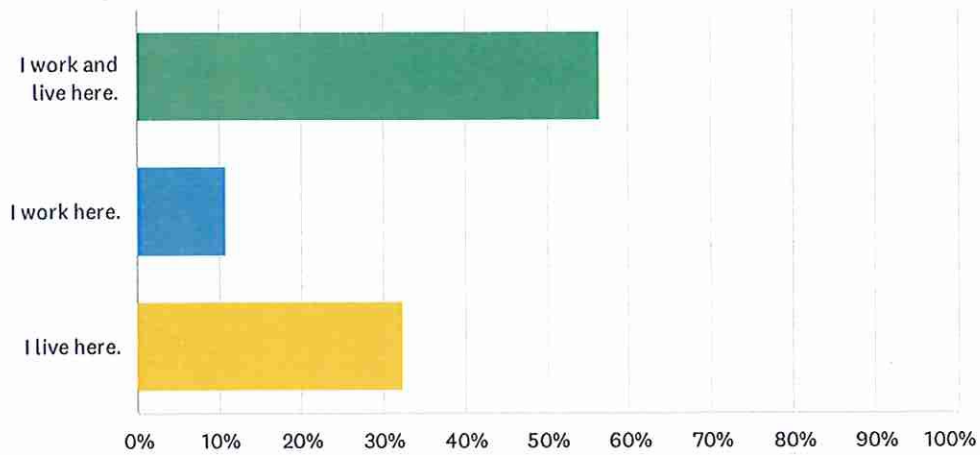


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
African American/Black	0.63%	4
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.32%	2
Asian	0.63%	4
Multi-Racial	1.42%	9
Hispanic/Latinx	1.11%	7
Middle Eastern	0.00%	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.32%	2
White	93.05%	589
Other (please specify)	2.53%	16
TOTAL		633

Q4 What is your relationship to Bennington?

Answered: 631 Skipped: 7

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



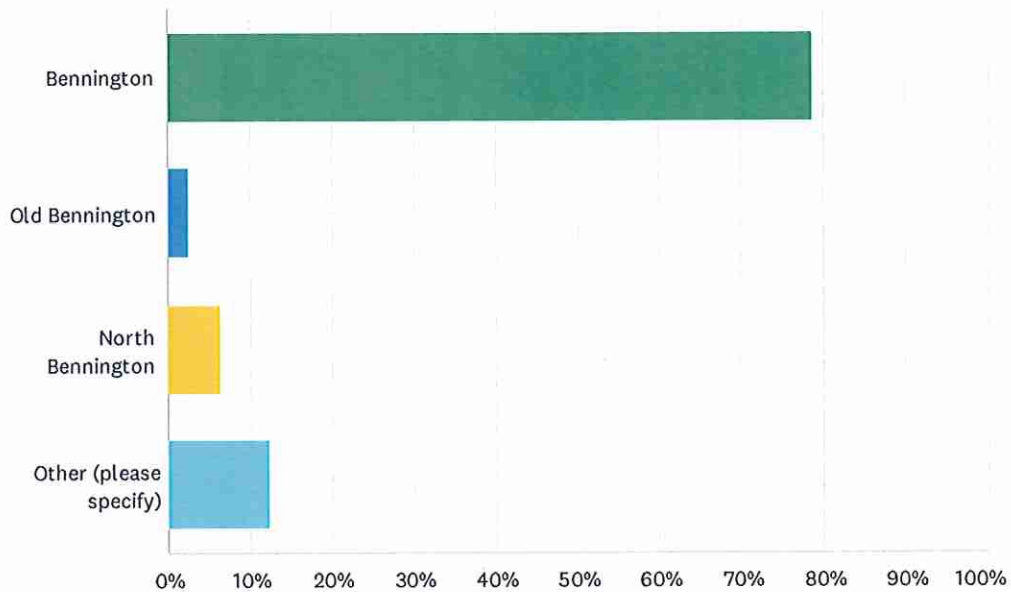
ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

I work and live here.	56.58%	357
I work here.	10.94%	69
I live here.	32.49%	205
TOTAL		631

Q5 Please select the town/village in which you live.

Answered: 634 Skipped: 4

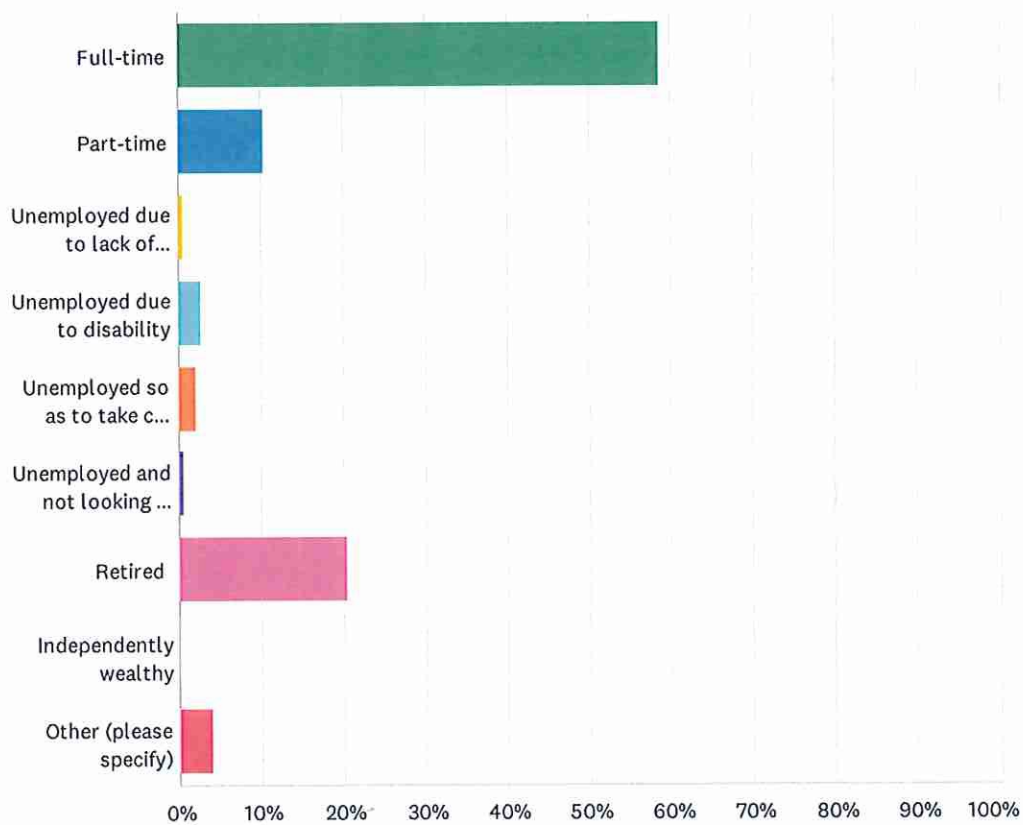


Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bennington	78.71%	499
Old Bennington	2.52%	16
North Bennington	6.31%	40
Other (please specify)	12.46%	79
TOTAL		634

Q6 Please indicate your employment status.

Answered: 633 Skipped: 5

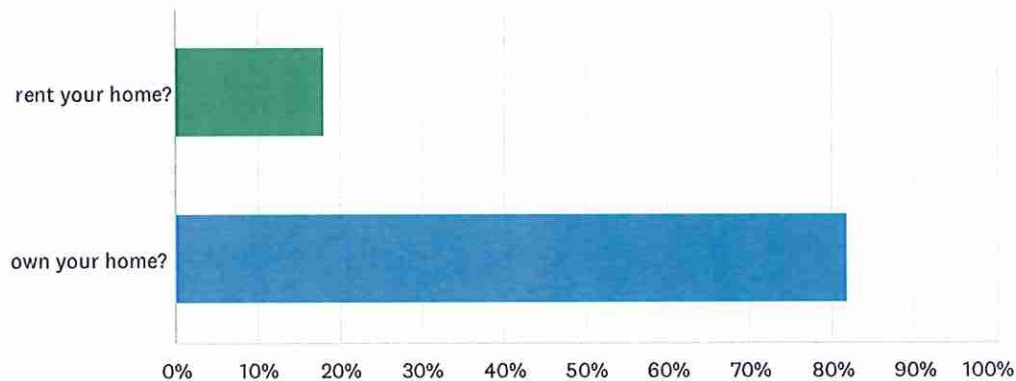


Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Full-time	58.61%	371
Part-time	10.43%	66
Unemployed due to lack of training or education	0.63%	4
Unemployed due to disability	2.84%	18
Unemployed so as to take care of family	2.05%	13
Unemployed and not looking for employment	0.63%	4
Retired	20.54%	130
Independently wealthy	0.32%	2
Other (please specify)	3.95%	25
TOTAL		633

Q7 Do you:

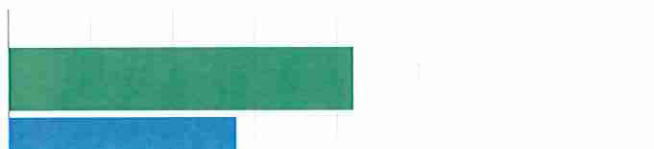
Answered: 626 Skipped: 12



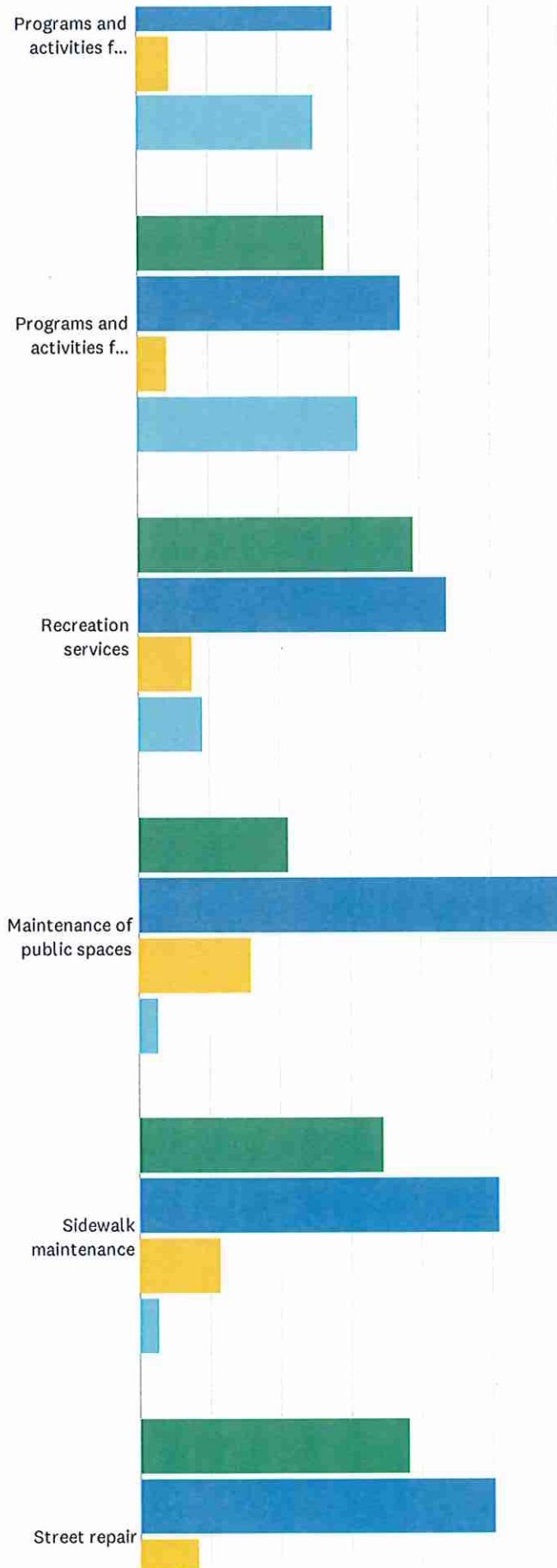
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
rent your home?	18.05%	113
own your home?	81.95%	513
TOTAL		626

Q8 Please rate each of the following services offered by the Town

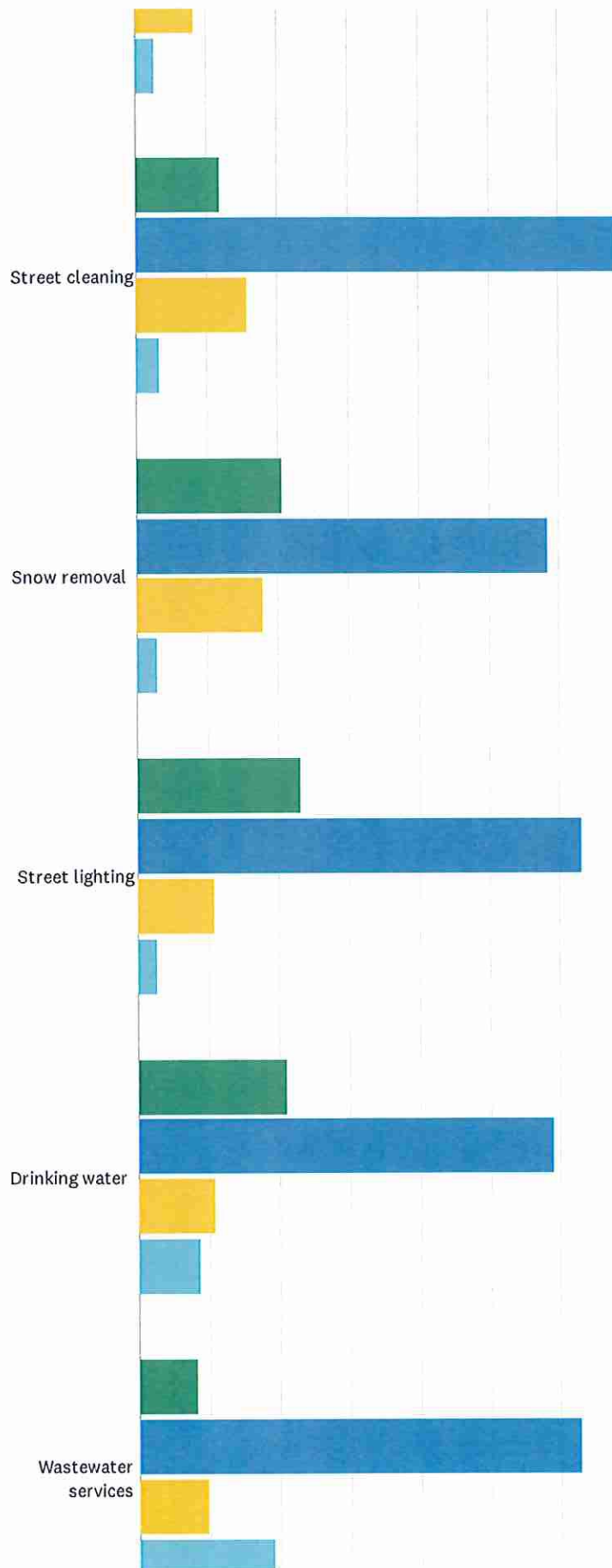
Answered: 602 Skipped: 36



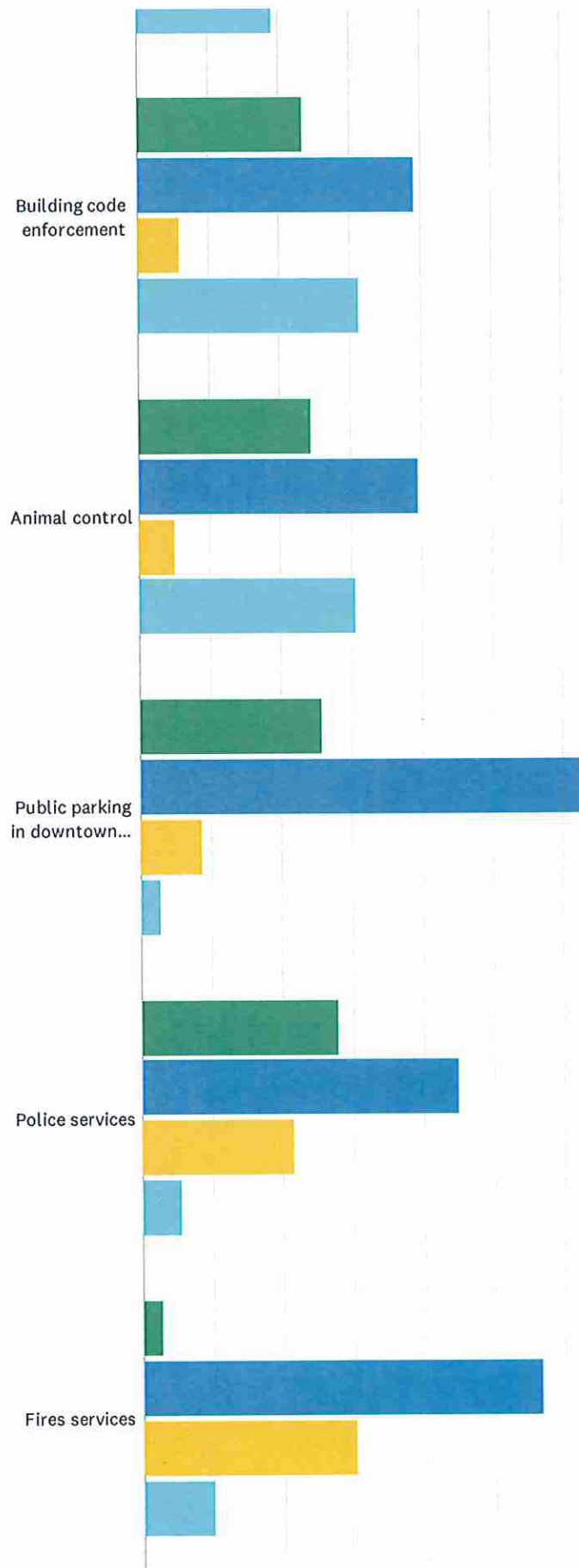
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



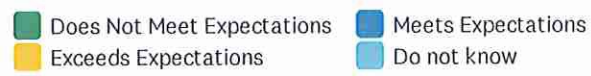
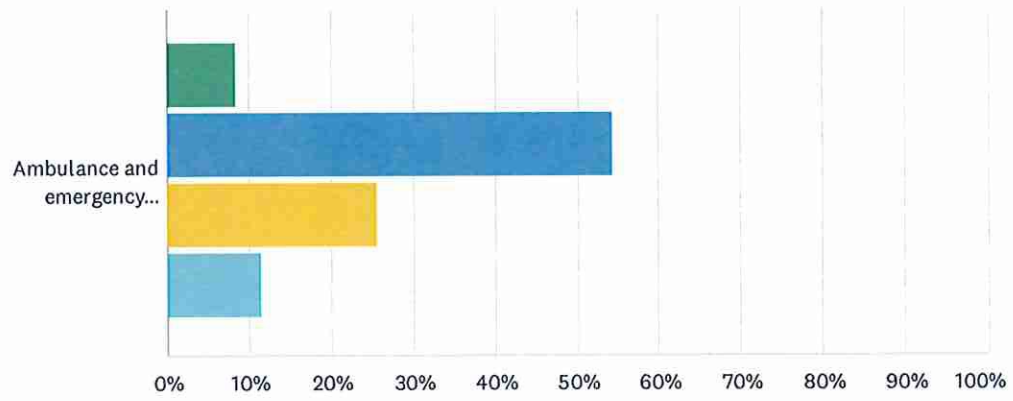
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

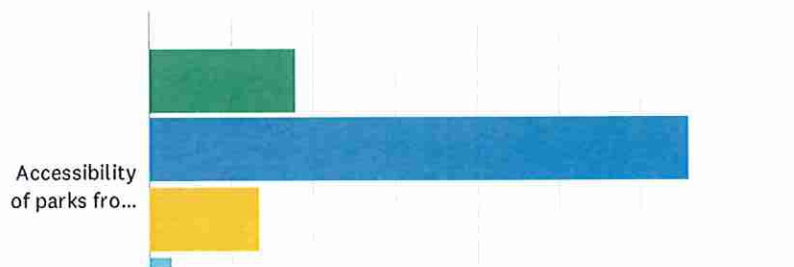


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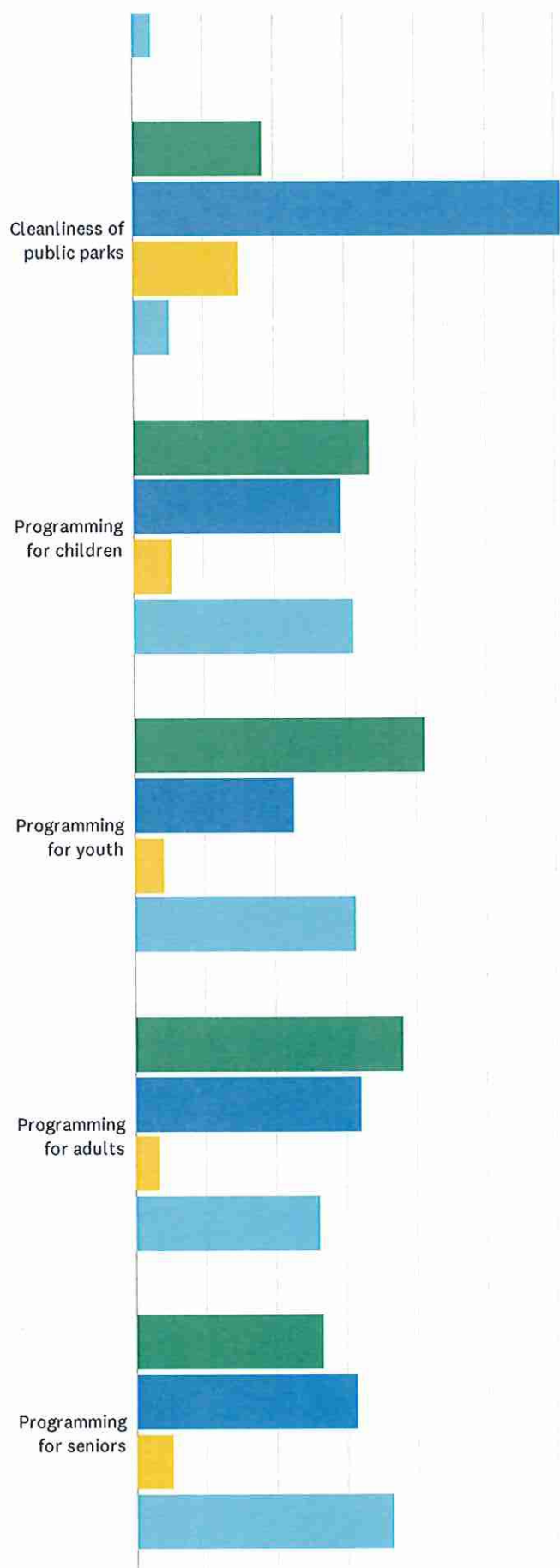
	DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Programs and activities for youth	42.21% 252	27.97% 167	4.69% 28	25.13% 150	597	2.13
Programs and activities for seniors	26.72% 159	37.48% 223	4.37% 26	31.43% 187	595	2.41
Recreation services	39.29% 233	43.84% 260	7.76% 46	9.11% 54	593	1.87
Maintenance of public spaces	21.37% 128	59.93% 359	16.03% 96	2.67% 16	599	2.00
Sidewalk maintenance	34.72% 208	51.09% 306	11.52% 69	2.67% 16	599	1.82
Street repair	38.46% 230	50.50% 302	8.36% 50	2.68% 16	598	1.75
Street cleaning	12.04% 72	68.73% 411	15.72% 94	3.51% 21	598	2.11
Snow removal	20.74% 124	58.36% 349	17.89% 107	3.01% 18	598	2.03
Street lighting	23.15% 138	63.09% 376	10.91% 65	2.85% 17	596	1.93
Drinking water	21.18% 126	59.16% 352	10.92% 65	8.74% 52	595	2.07
Wastewater services	8.22% 49	62.92% 375	9.73% 58	19.13% 114	596	2.40
Building code enforcement	23.45% 140	39.20% 234	6.03% 36	31.32% 187	597	2.45
Animal control	24.50% 146	39.60% 236	5.20% 31	30.70% 183	596	2.42
Public parking in downtown Bennington	25.88% 155	62.60% 375	8.68% 52	2.84% 17	599	1.88
Police services	27.97% 167	44.89% 268	21.61% 129	5.53% 33	597	2.05
Fires services	2.85% 17	56.78% 339	30.32% 181	10.05% 60	597	2.48
Ambulance and emergency services	8.51% 51	54.42% 326	25.54% 153	11.52% 69	599	2.40

Q9 Please rate the parks and recreational opportunities in Bennington:

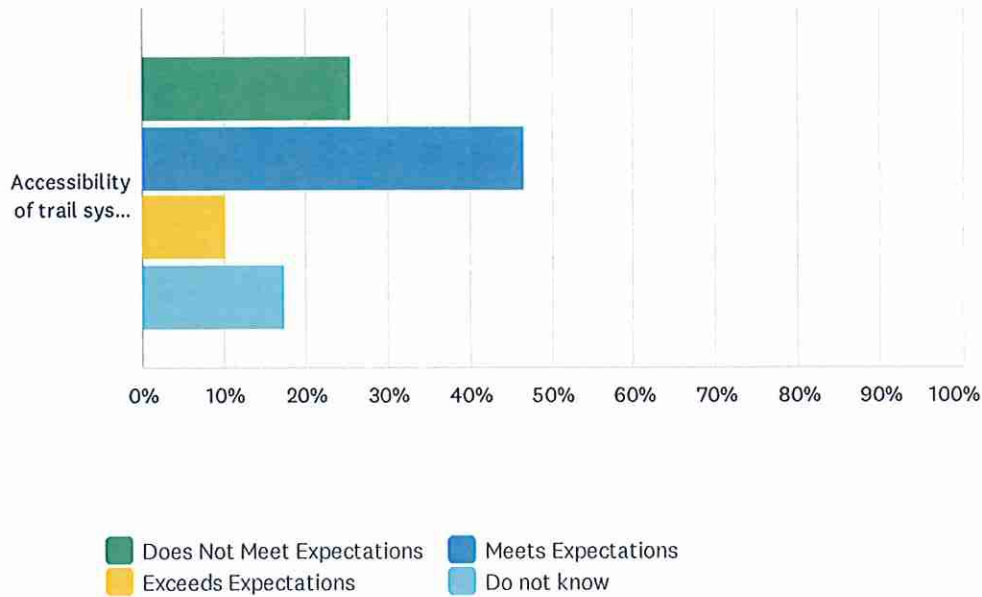
Answered: 553 Skipped: 85



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



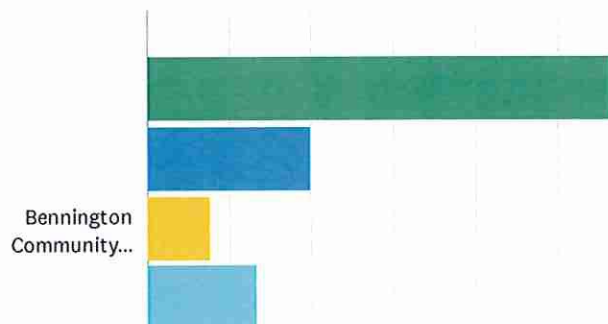
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



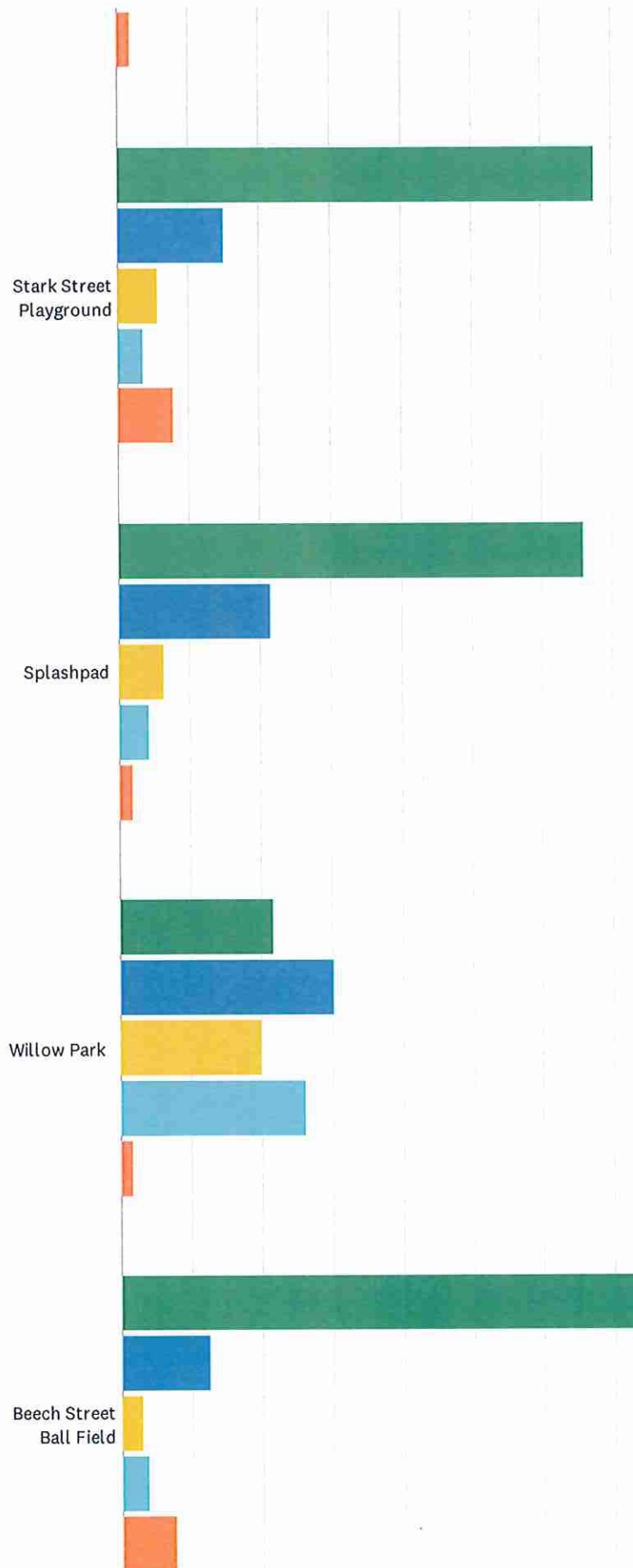
	DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Accessibility of parks from where you live or work	17.93% 99	65.94% 364	13.41% 74	2.72% 15	552	2.01
Cleanliness of public parks	18.48% 102	61.05% 337	15.22% 84	5.25% 29	552	2.07
Programming for children	33.64% 185	29.64% 163	5.45% 30	31.27% 172	550	2.34
Programming for youth	41.27% 227	22.91% 126	4.36% 24	31.45% 173	550	2.26
Programming for adults	38.14% 209	32.12% 176	3.47% 19	26.28% 144	548	2.18
Programming for seniors	26.63% 147	31.52% 174	5.25% 29	36.59% 202	552	2.52
Accessibility of trail system in town	25.54% 141	46.74% 258	10.33% 57	17.39% 96	552	2.20

Q10 How many times have you visited the following facilities/parks in the past 6 months? If need be, please feel free to provide a rough estimate.

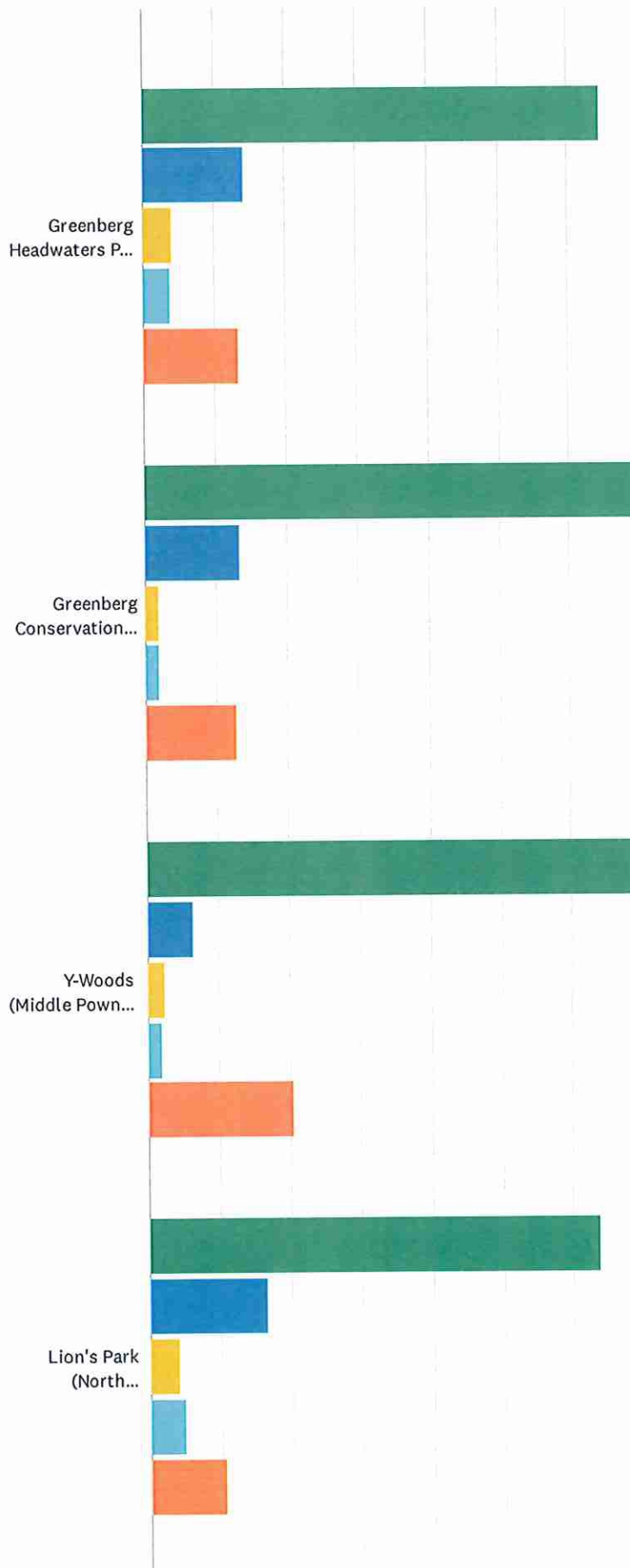
Answered: 552 Skipped: 86



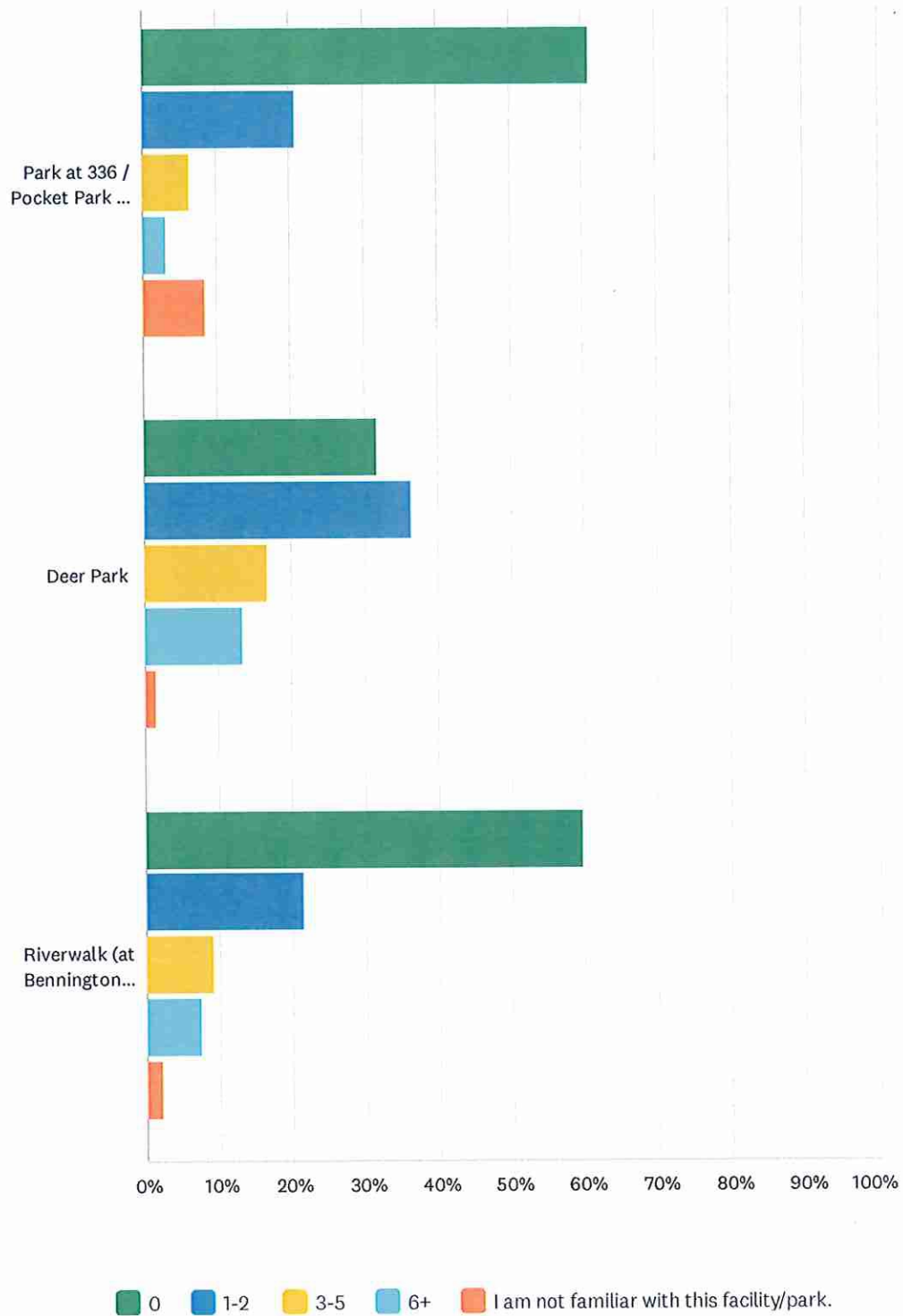
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



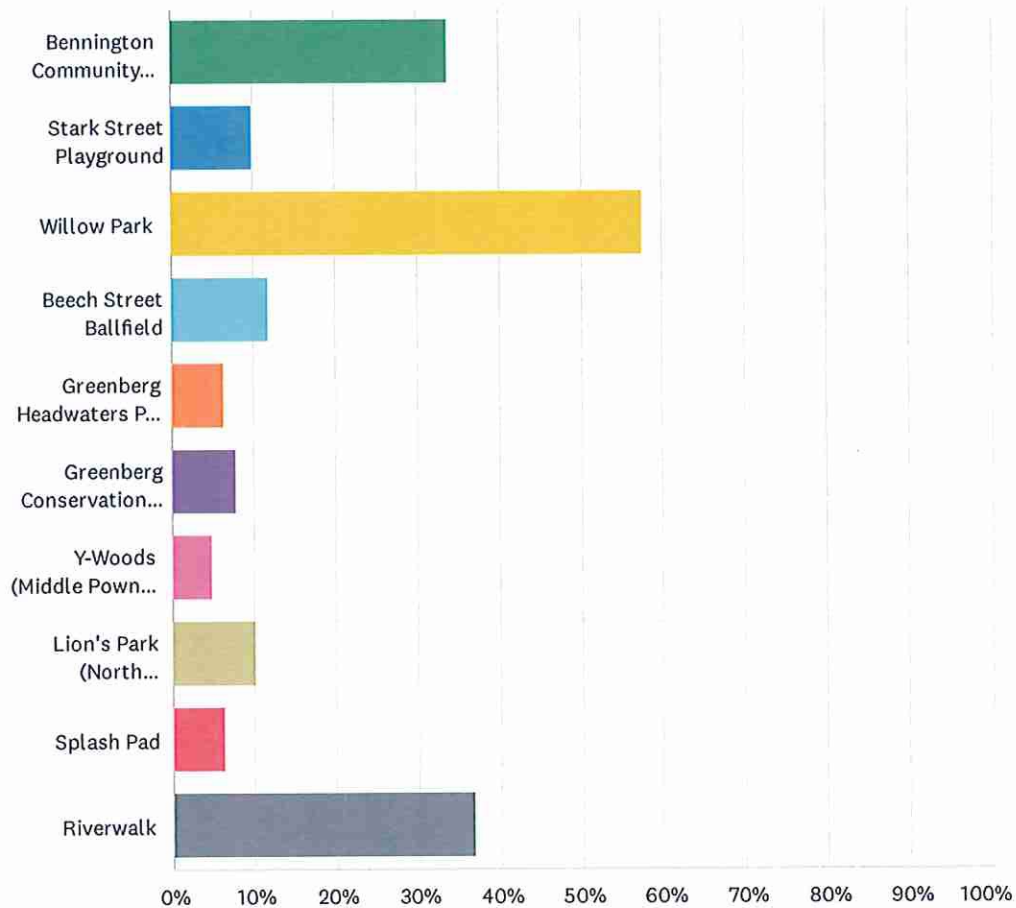
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

	0	1-2	3-5	6+	I AM NOT FAMILIAR WITH THIS FACILITY/PARK.	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Bennington Community Center (Rec Center)	56.99% 314	20.15% 111	7.62% 42	13.43% 74	1.81% 10	551	1.83
Stark Street Playground	67.58% 371	15.12% 83	5.83% 32	3.64% 20	7.83% 43	549	1.69
Splashpad	65.82% 362	21.64% 119	6.36% 35	4.18% 23	2.00% 11	550	1.55
Willow Park	21.83% 119	30.28% 165	20.00% 109	26.24% 143	1.65% 9	545	2.56
Beech Street Ball Field	73.04% 401	12.57% 69	2.91% 16	3.83% 21	7.65% 42	549	1.60
Greenberg Headwaters Park (Morgan St.)	64.53% 353	14.26% 78	4.02% 22	3.84% 21	13.35% 73	547	1.87
Greenberg Conservation Reserve (Route 7)	69.65% 381	13.53% 74	2.01% 11	2.01% 11	12.80% 70	547	1.75
Y-Woods (Middle Pownal Rd. / Park Lawn Cemetery)	68.85% 378	6.38% 35	2.37% 13	2.00% 11	20.40% 112	549	1.99
Lion's Park (North Bennington)	63.75% 350	16.58% 91	4.01% 22	4.92% 27	10.75% 59	549	1.82
Park at 336 / Pocket Park on Main Street	60.95% 334	20.99% 115	6.39% 35	3.10% 17	8.58% 47	548	1.77
Deer Park	31.68% 172	36.46% 198	16.94% 92	13.44% 73	1.47% 8	543	2.17
Riverwalk (at Bennington Station)	59.74% 328	21.49% 118	9.11% 50	7.47% 41	2.19% 12	549	1.71

Q11 Please select which two parks or recreational facility the Town should prioritize for improvement in the upcoming budget session?

Answered: 494 Skipped: 144

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

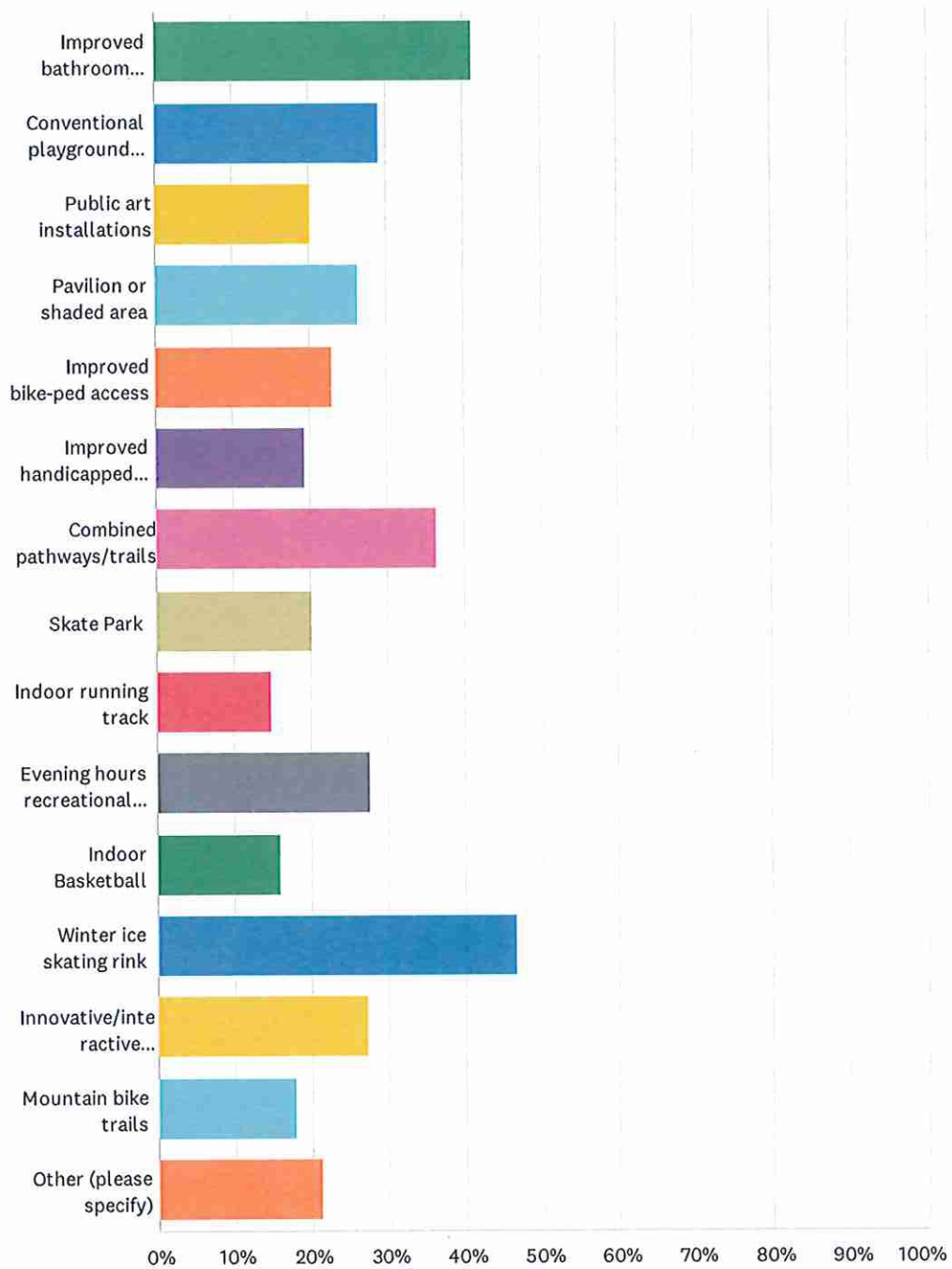


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bennington Community Center (Rec Center)	33.81%	167
Stark Street Playground	10.12%	50
Willow Park	57.49%	284
Beech Street Ballfield	11.94%	59
Greenberg Headwaters Park (Morgan St.)	6.48%	32
Greenberg Conservation Reserve (Route 7)	7.89%	39
Y-Woods (Middle Pownal Road/Park Lawn Cemetery)	4.86%	24
Lion's Park (North Bennington)	10.32%	51
Splash Pad	6.48%	32
Riverwalk	36.84%	182
Total Respondents: 494		

Q12 What improvements would you like to see at your selected park or facility? (Please check all that apply.)

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

Answered: 533 Skipped: 105



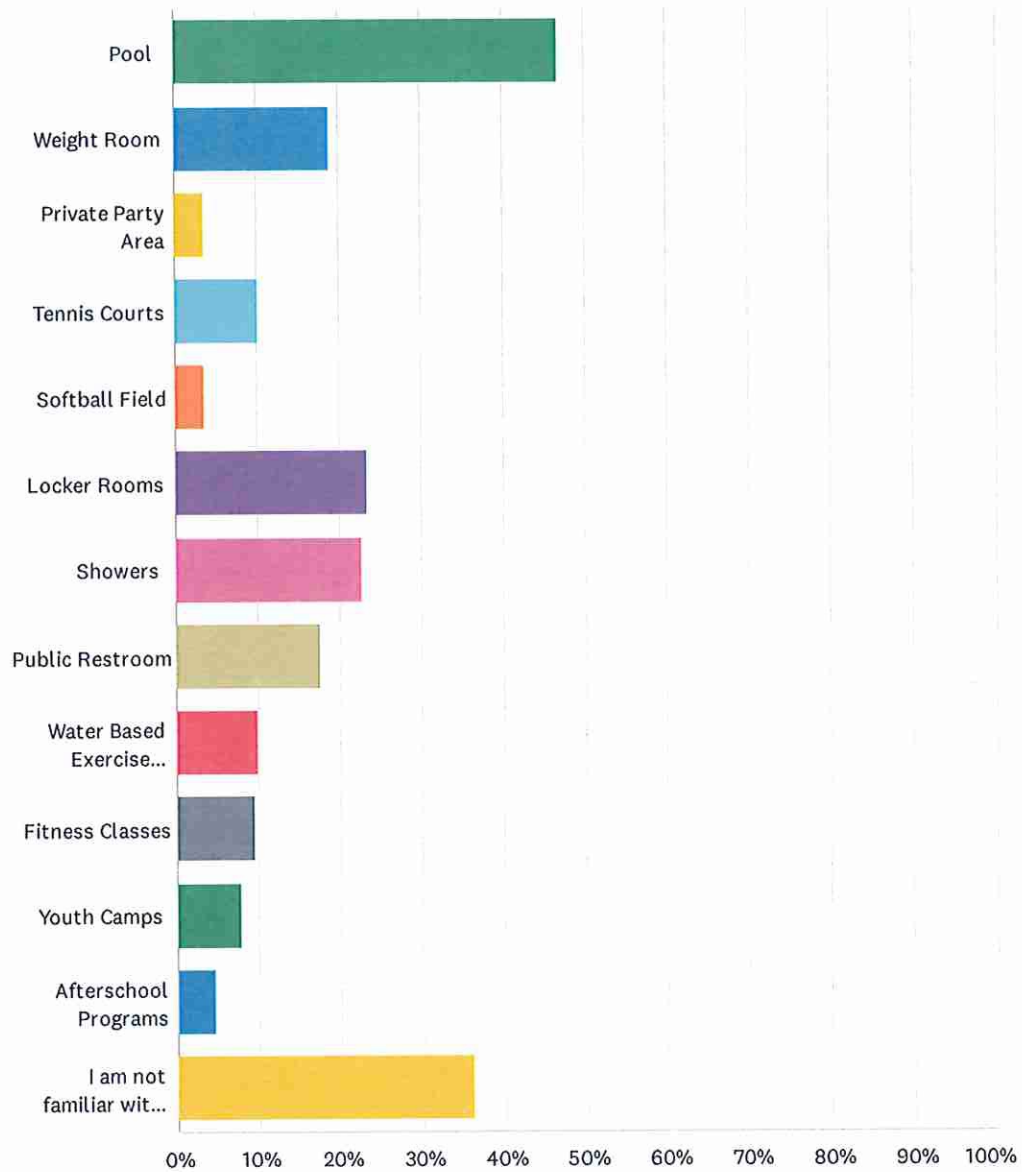
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improved bathroom facilities	41.28%	220
Conventional playground equipment	29.27%	156
Public art installations	20.26%	108
Pavilion or shaded area	26.45%	141
Improved bike-ped access	23.08%	123
Improved handicapped access	19.32%	103
Combined pathways/trails	36.40%	194
Skate Park	20.26%	108
Indoor running track	15.01%	80
Evening hours recreational activities	27.77%	148
Indoor Basketball	15.95%	85
Winter ice skating rink	46.72%	249
Innovative/interactive playground structures	27.20%	145
Mountain bike trails	17.82%	95
Other (please specify)	21.39%	114
Total Respondents: 533		

Q13 What aspects of the Bennington Community Center (Rec. Center) do you use?

Answered: 473 Skipped: 165

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Pool	46.93%	222
Weight Room	19.03%	90
Private Party Area	3.59%	17
Tennis Courts	10.15%	48
Softball Field	3.59%	17
Locker Rooms	23.47%	111
Showers	22.83%	108
Public Restroom	17.76%	84
Water Based Exercise Programs	9.94%	47
Fitness Classes	9.51%	45
Youth Camps	7.82%	37
Afterschool Programs	4.65%	22
I am not familiar with the Bennington Community Center (Rec. Center)	36.15%	171
Total Respondents: 473		

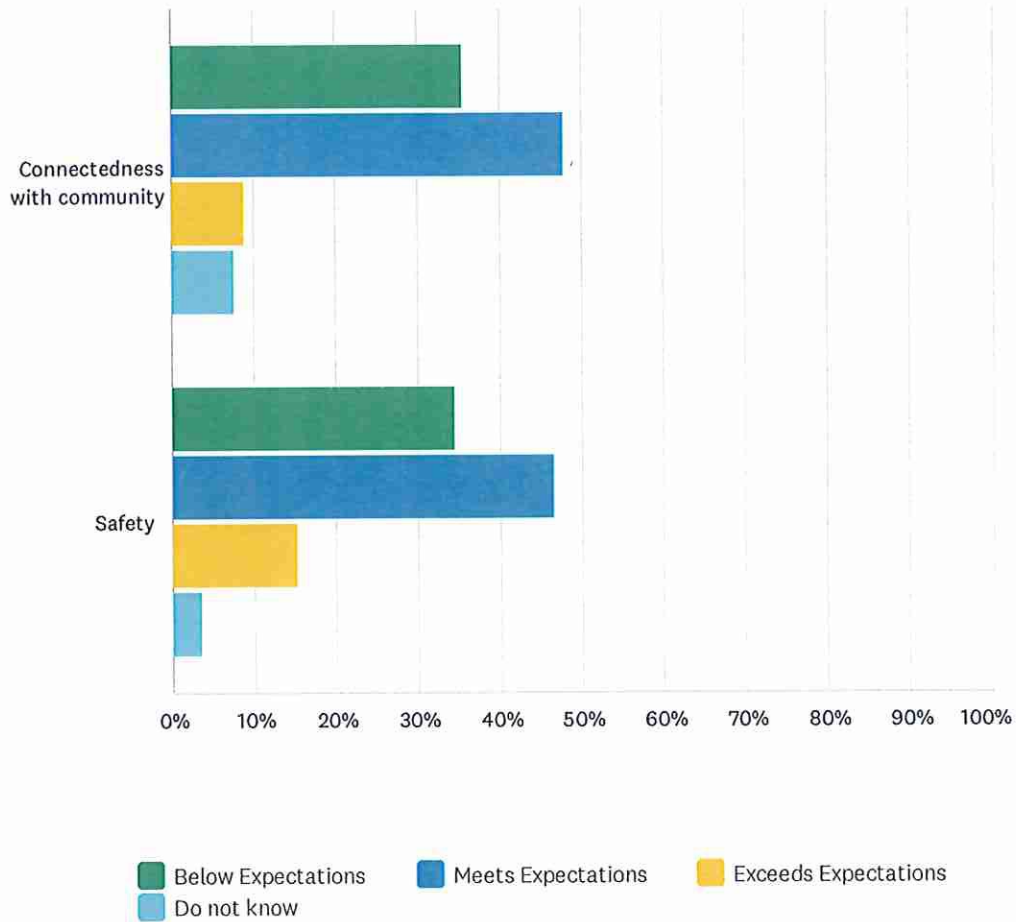
Q14 What improvements at the Bennington Community Center (Rec. Center) would you like to see?

Answered: 246 Skipped: 392

Q15 Please rate each of the following aspects of your neighborhood.

Answered: 533 Skipped: 105

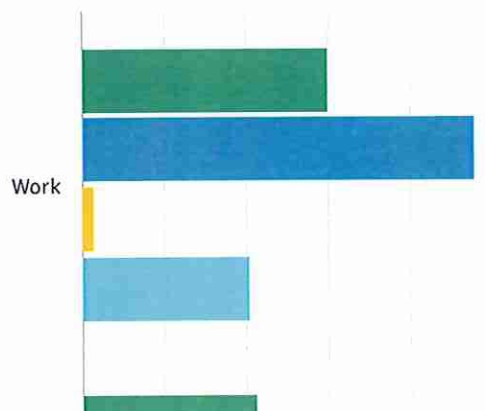
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



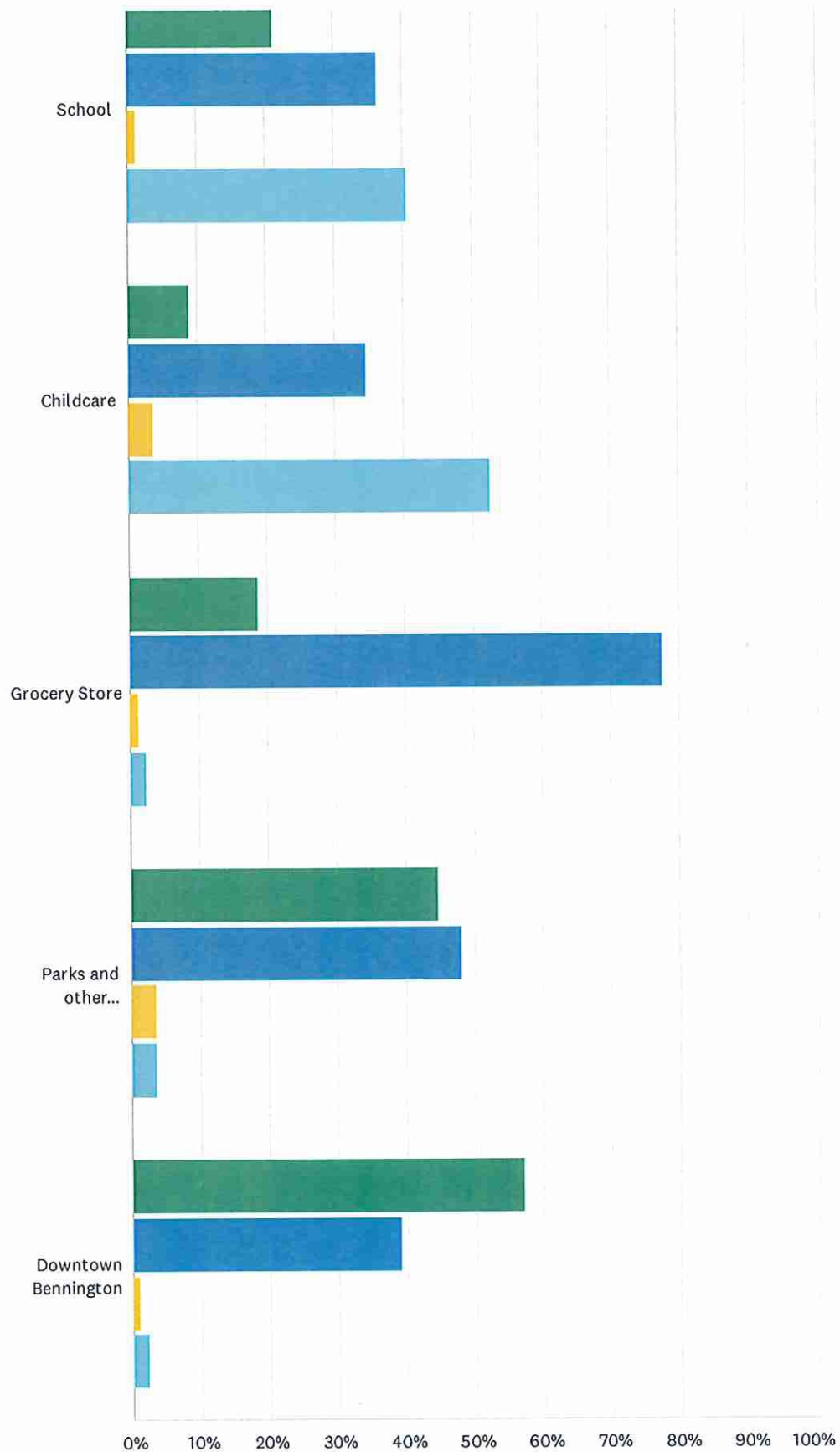
	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Connectedness with community	35.61% 188	47.92% 253	8.90% 47	7.58% 40	528	1.88
Safety	34.47% 182	46.59% 246	15.34% 81	3.60% 19	528	1.88

Q16 Would you be able to access the following without a car?

Answered: 543 Skipped: 95



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

■ Yes
 ■ No
 ■ Do not know
 ■ N/A

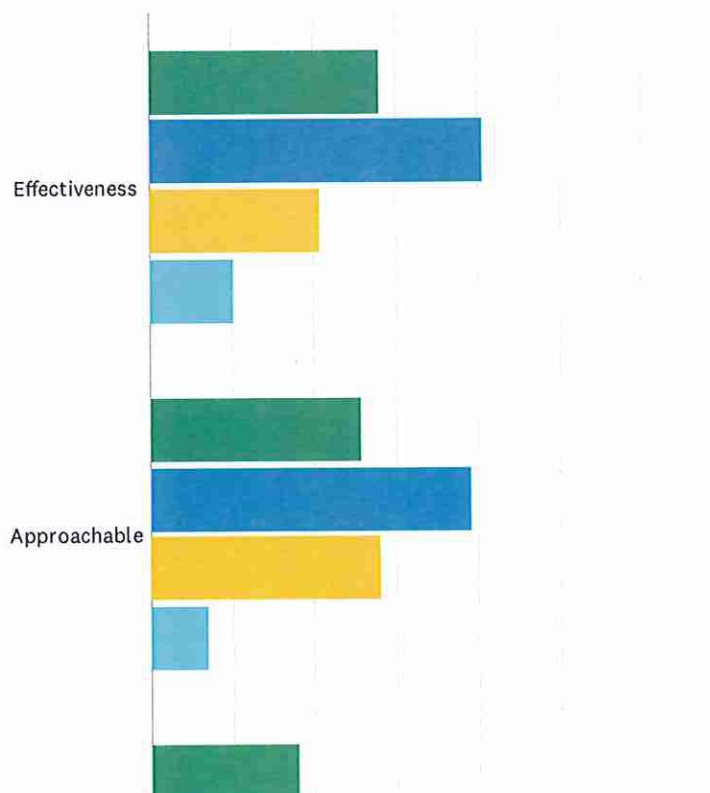
	YES	NO	DO NOT KNOW	N/A	TOTAL
Work	30.15% 161	47.94% 256	1.50% 8	20.41% 109	534
School	21.35% 114	36.52% 195	1.31% 7	40.82% 218	534
Childcare	8.95% 47	34.86% 183	3.62% 19	52.57% 276	525
Grocery Store	18.77% 101	77.51% 417	1.30% 7	2.42% 13	538
Parks and other recreational opportunities	44.71% 241	48.24% 260	3.53% 19	3.53% 19	539
Downtown Bennington	57.22% 309	39.26% 212	1.11% 6	2.41% 13	540

Q17 Please list, in order of preference, three streets that you would like to see improved for the community.

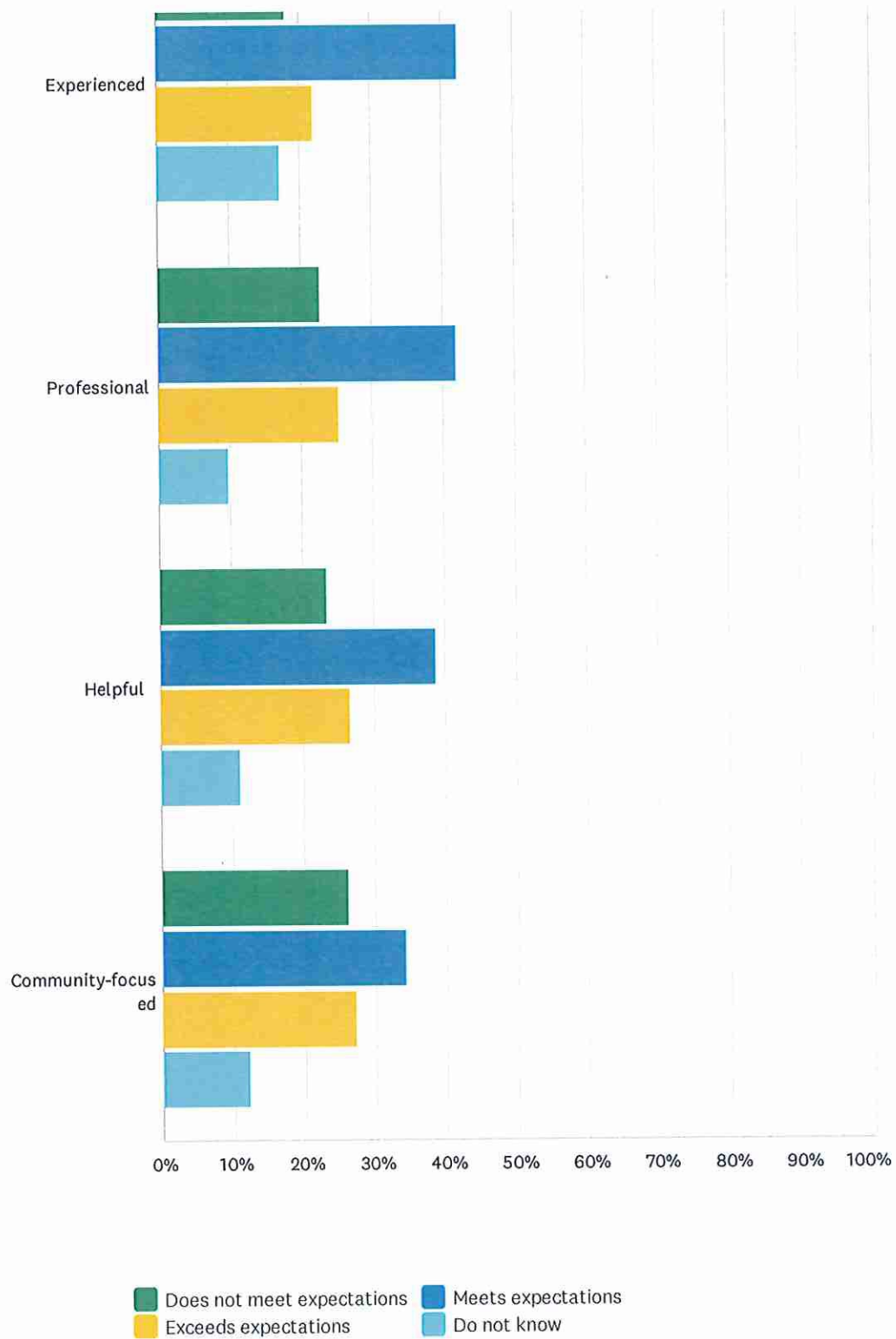
Answered: 378 Skipped: 260

Q18 Please rate the performance of the Bennington Police Department:

Answered: 531 Skipped: 107



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

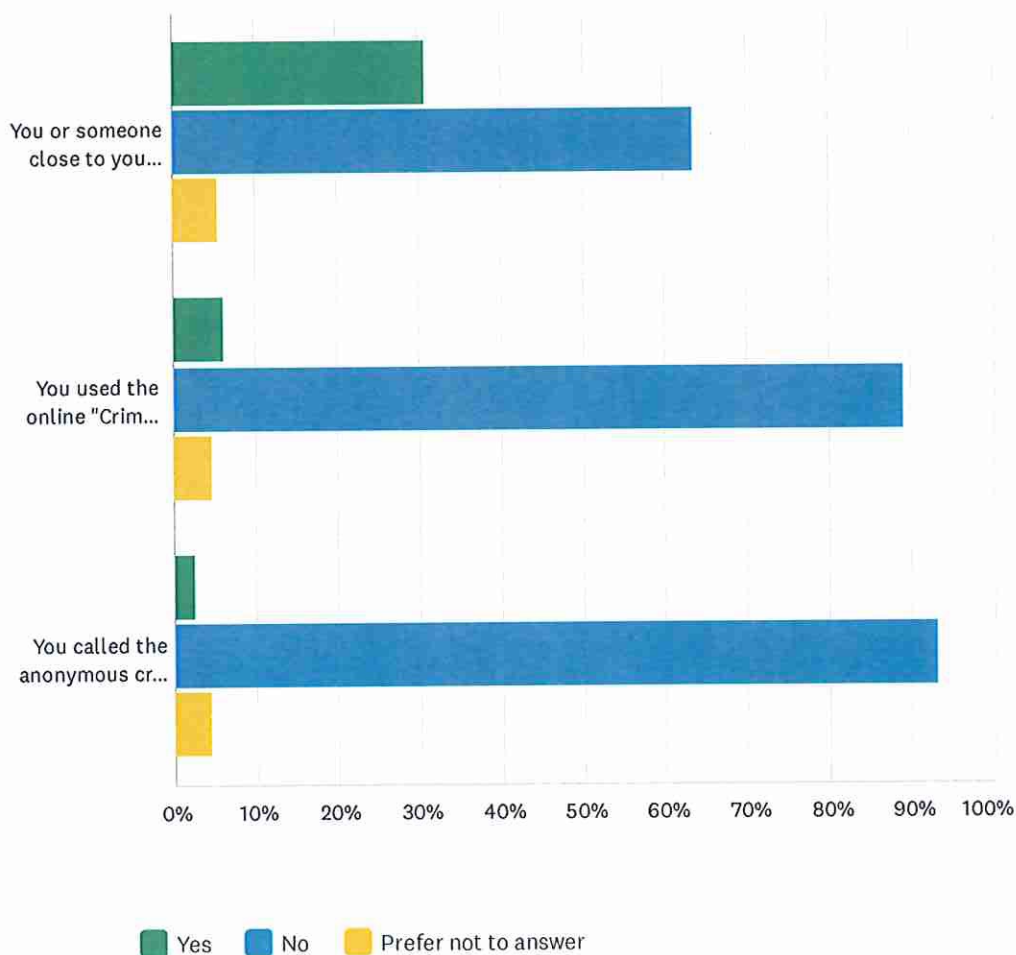


Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

	DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Effectiveness	28.25% 150	40.68% 216	20.90% 111	10.17% 54	531	2.13
Approachable	25.80% 137	39.17% 208	28.06% 149	6.97% 37	531	2.16
Experienced	18.22% 96	42.50% 224	22.01% 116	17.27% 91	527	2.38
Professional	22.79% 121	42.00% 223	25.42% 135	9.79% 52	531	2.22
Helpful	23.54% 125	38.79% 206	26.55% 141	11.11% 59	531	2.25
Community- focused	26.33% 139	34.28% 181	27.27% 144	12.12% 64	528	2.25

Q19 Please indicate if any of the following apply to you:

Answered: 529 Skipped: 109



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

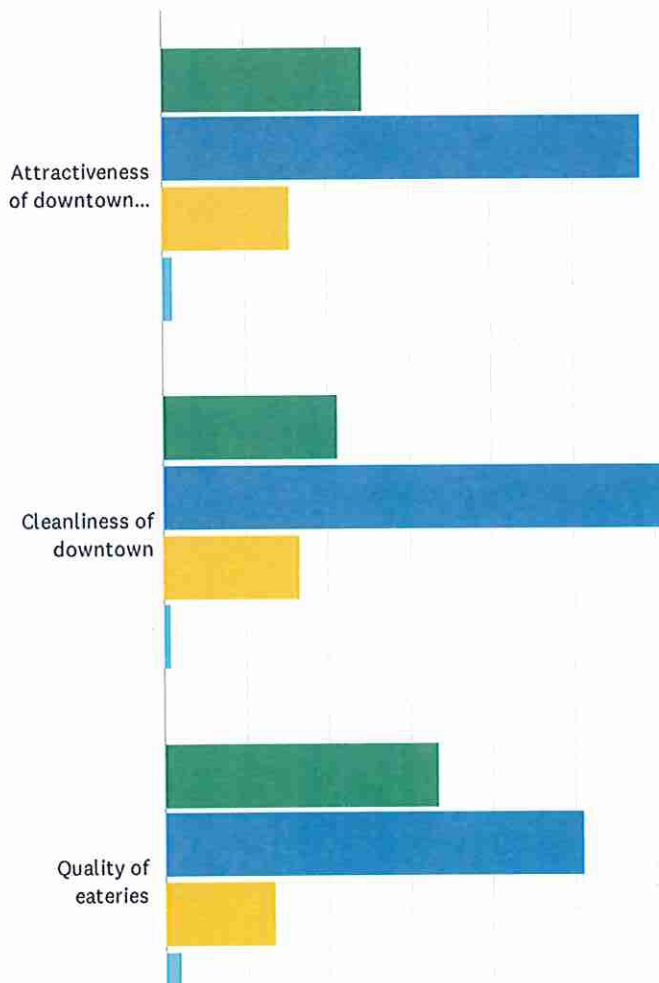
	YES	NO	PREFER NOT TO ANSWER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
You or someone close to you was a victim of a crime in Bennington	30.93% 163	63.57% 335	5.50% 29	527	1.75
You used the online "Crime Tip Line" through the Bennington Police Department's website	6.08% 32	89.16% 469	4.75% 25	526	1.99
You called the anonymous crime tip line (802-445-3937)	2.48% 13	93.14% 489	4.38% 23	525	2.02

Q20 Over the past year the Bennington Police Department has made numerous changes to its policies and procedures as part of its effort to move towards a community policing model. What suggestions would you like to share to help us further this effort?

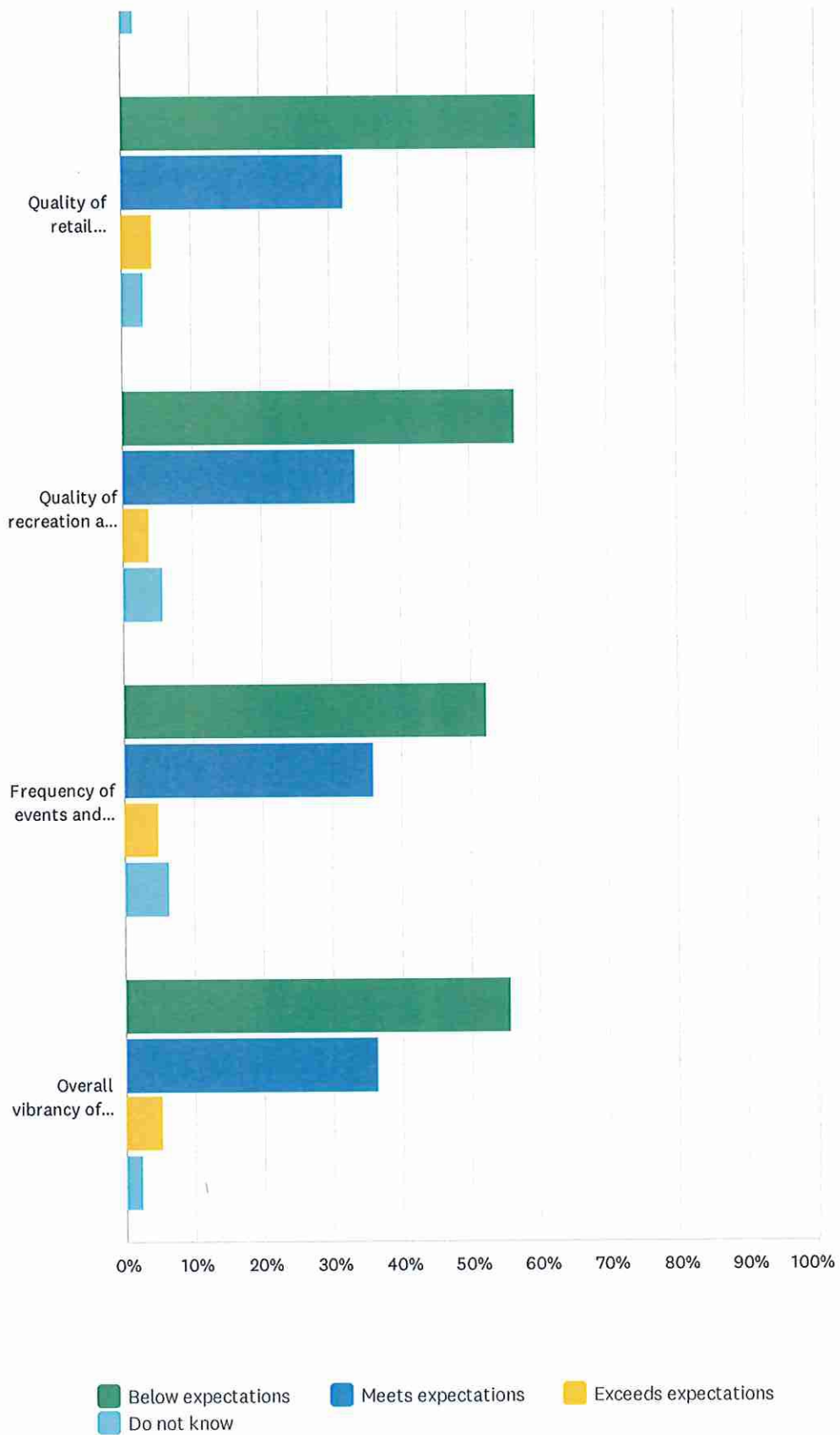
Answered: 325 Skipped: 313

Q21 Please review the following aspects of downtown Bennington:

Answered: 512 Skipped: 126



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

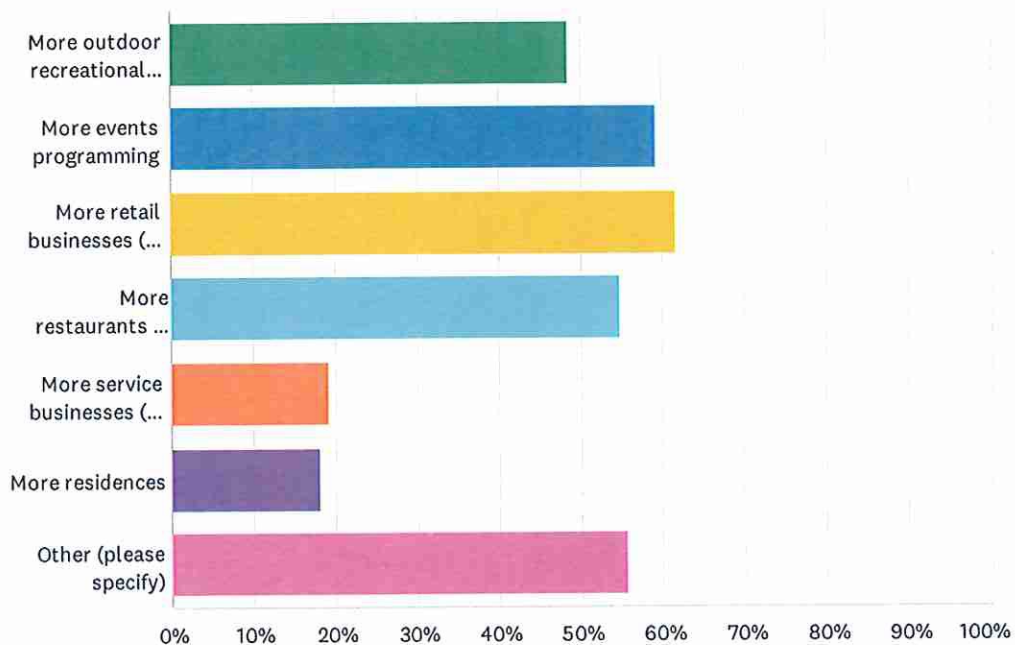


Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Attractiveness of downtown streetscape	24.61% 126	58.40% 299	15.63% 80	1.37% 7	512	1.94
Cleanliness of downtown	21.29% 109	61.33% 314	16.60% 85	0.78% 4	512	1.97
Quality of eateries	33.46% 171	51.08% 261	13.50% 69	1.96% 10	511	1.84
Quality of retail experience	60.08% 307	32.29% 165	4.50% 23	3.13% 16	511	1.51
Quality of recreation and entertainment	56.64% 290	33.59% 172	3.91% 20	5.86% 30	512	1.59
Frequency of events and programs	52.55% 268	36.08% 184	4.90% 25	6.47% 33	510	1.65
Overall vibrancy of downtown	55.73% 282	36.56% 185	5.34% 27	2.37% 12	506	1.54

Q22 What features would improve the vibrancy of downtown Bennington? Please check all that apply.

Answered: 505 Skipped: 133



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More outdoor recreational/gathering space for the community	48.51%	245
More events programming	59.21%	299
More retail businesses (if so, please indicate what kind in the "other" section)	61.58%	311
More restaurants (if so, please indicate what kind in the "other" section)	54.85%	277
More service businesses (if so, please indicate what kind in the "other" section)	19.21%	97
More residences	18.02%	91
Other (please specify)	55.64%	281
Total Respondents: 505		

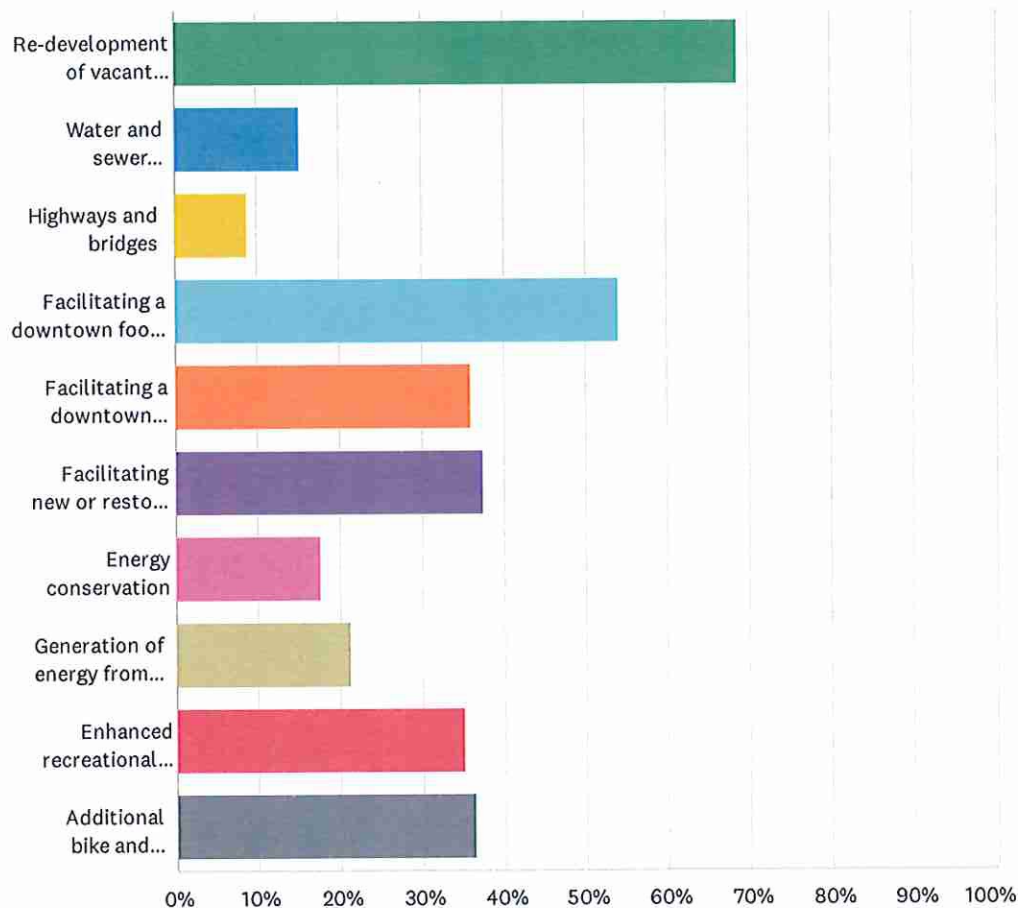
Q23 What kind of retail business that we don't currently have is most needed in our downtown?

Answered: 393 Skipped: 245

Q24 What municipal investment would have the greatest impact on the community?

Answered: 481 Skipped: 157

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

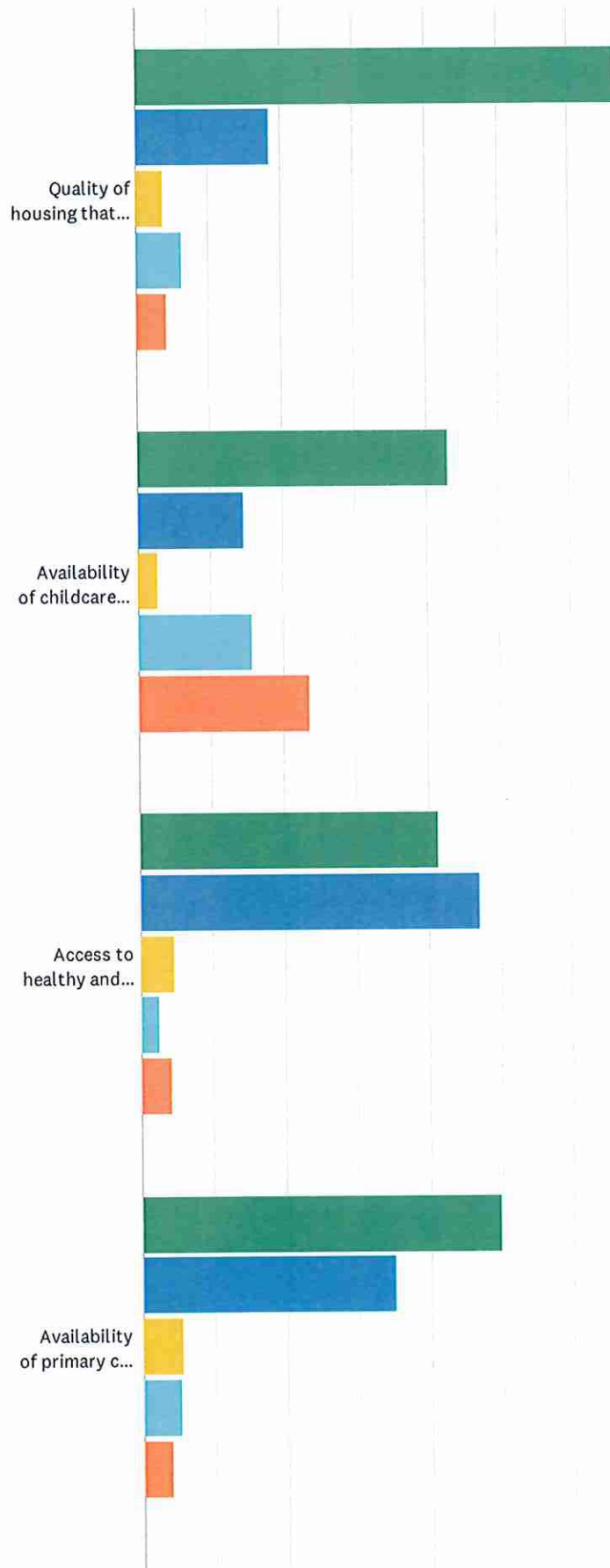


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Re-development of vacant and/or blighted properties	68.61%	330
Water and sewer infrastructure	15.38%	74
Highways and bridges	8.94%	43
Facilitating a downtown food market	54.05%	260
Facilitating a downtown hardware store	35.97%	173
Facilitating new or restored housing	37.63%	181
Energy conservation	17.67%	85
Generation of energy from renewable sources	21.41%	103
Enhanced recreational activities	35.14%	169
Additional bike and pedestrian paths and right-of-ways	36.38%	175
Total Respondents: 481		

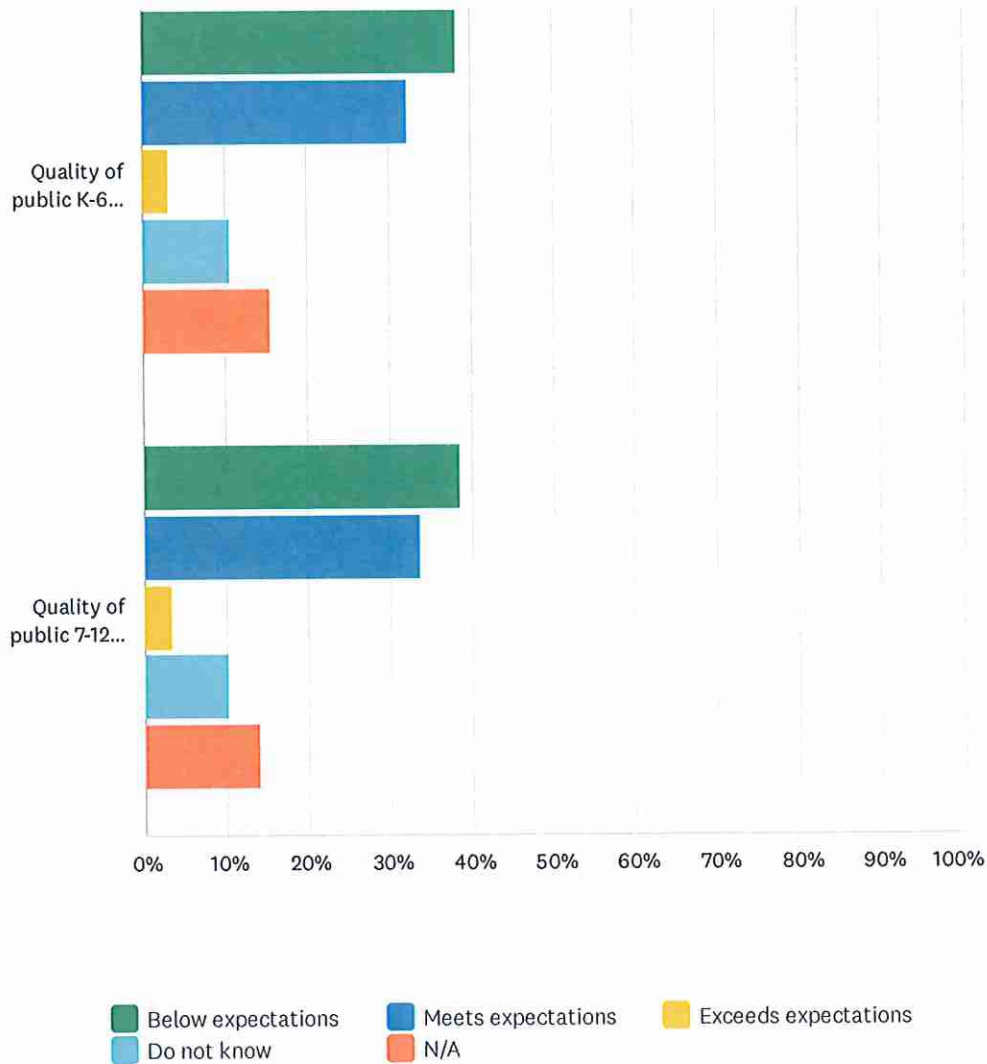
Q25 Please rate each of the non-municipal assets:

Answered: 511 Skipped: 127

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

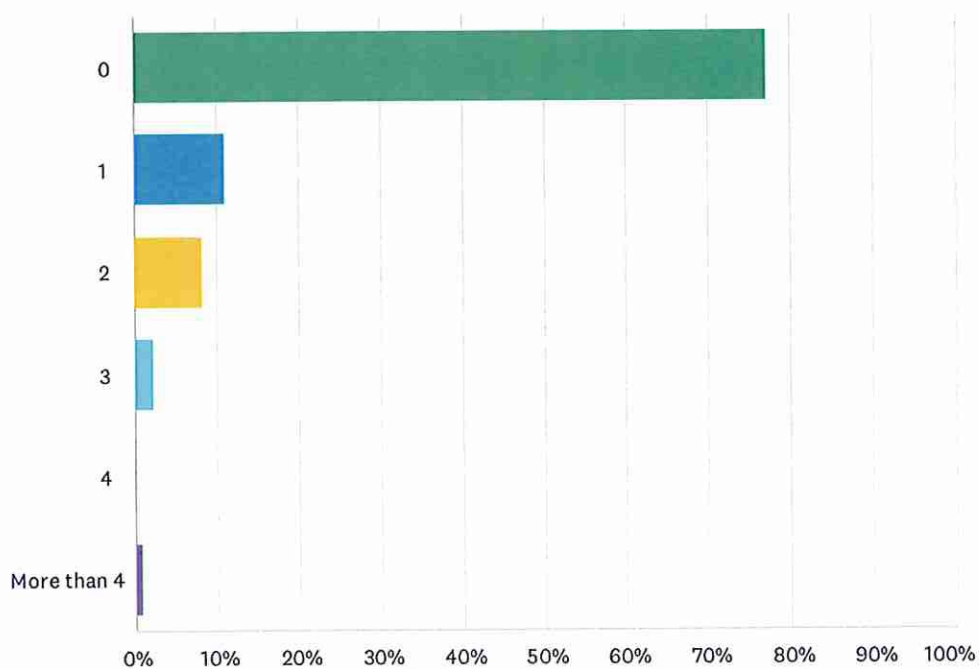


	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Quality of housing that is affordable	66.80% 340	18.47% 94	3.93% 20	6.48% 33	4.32% 22	509	1.63
Availability of childcare services	43.14% 220	14.71% 75	2.75% 14	15.69% 80	23.73% 121	510	2.62
Access to healthy and affordable food	41.34% 210	47.05% 239	4.72% 24	2.56% 13	4.33% 22	508	1.81
Availability of primary care services	49.80% 253	35.24% 179	5.51% 28	5.31% 27	4.13% 21	508	1.79
Quality of public K-6 education	38.43% 196	32.35% 165	3.14% 16	10.59% 54	15.49% 79	510	2.32
Quality of public 7-12 education	38.63% 197	33.73% 172	3.33% 17	10.20% 52	14.12% 72	510	2.27

Q26 Do you have any children currently enrolled in the Bennington public schools? If so, how many?

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

Answered: 506 Skipped: 132

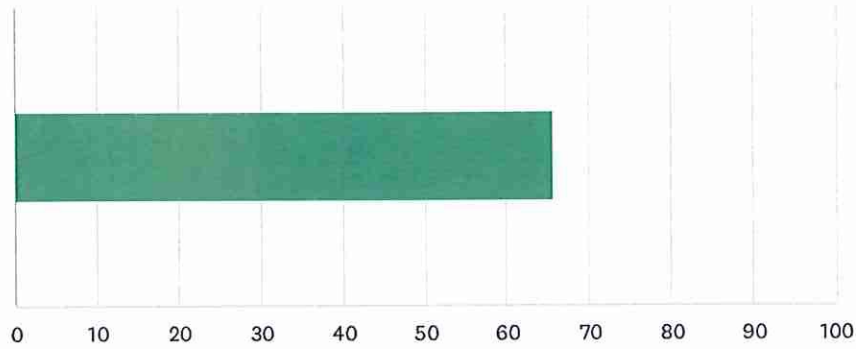


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	77.27%	391
1	11.07%	56
2	8.30%	42
3	2.37%	12
4	0.20%	1
More than 4	0.79%	4
TOTAL		506

Q27 Please rate your overall quality of life in Bennington, with 100 being the highest score.

Answered: 507 Skipped: 131

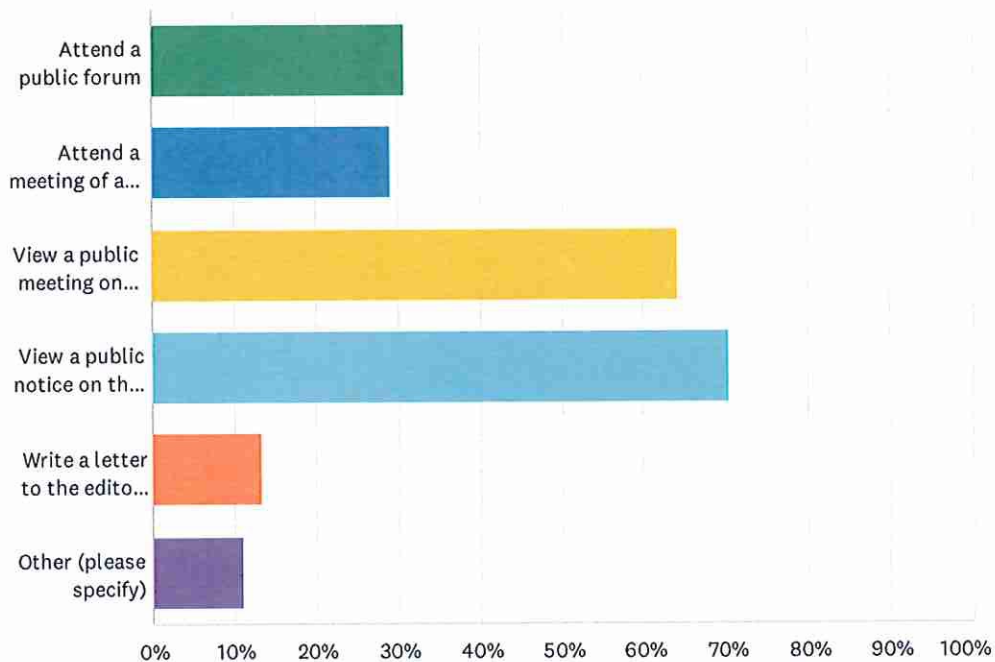
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	66	33,328	507
Total Respondents: 507			

Q28 In the past 6 months were you able to do any of the following? Please check all that apply.

Answered: 427 Skipped: 211

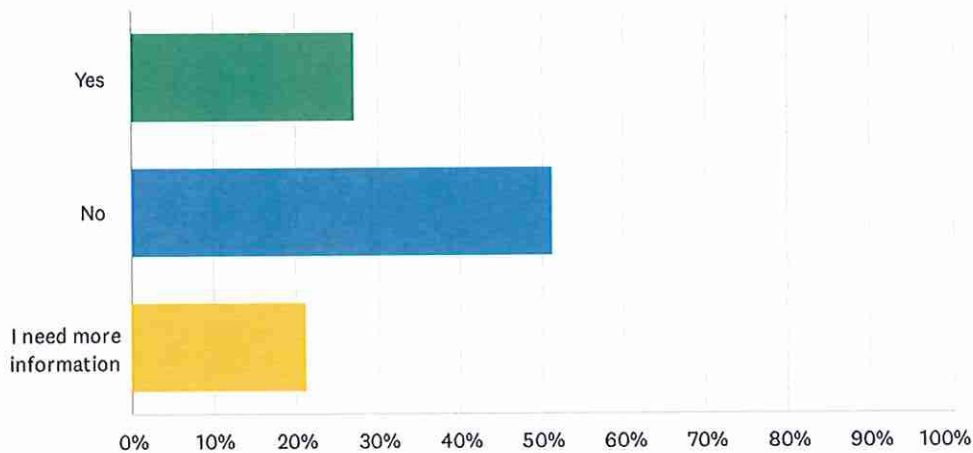


Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Attend a public forum	30.91%	132
Attend a meeting of a local board or commission	29.27%	125
View a public meeting on public access television	64.17%	274
View a public notice on the Town of Bennington's website or facebook page	70.26%	300
Write a letter to the editor of the newspaper	13.35%	57
Other (please specify)	11.01%	47
Total Respondents: 427		

Q29 Are you satisfied with the overall performance of Town Government?

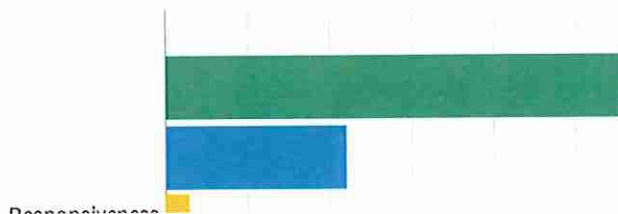
Answered: 501 Skipped: 137



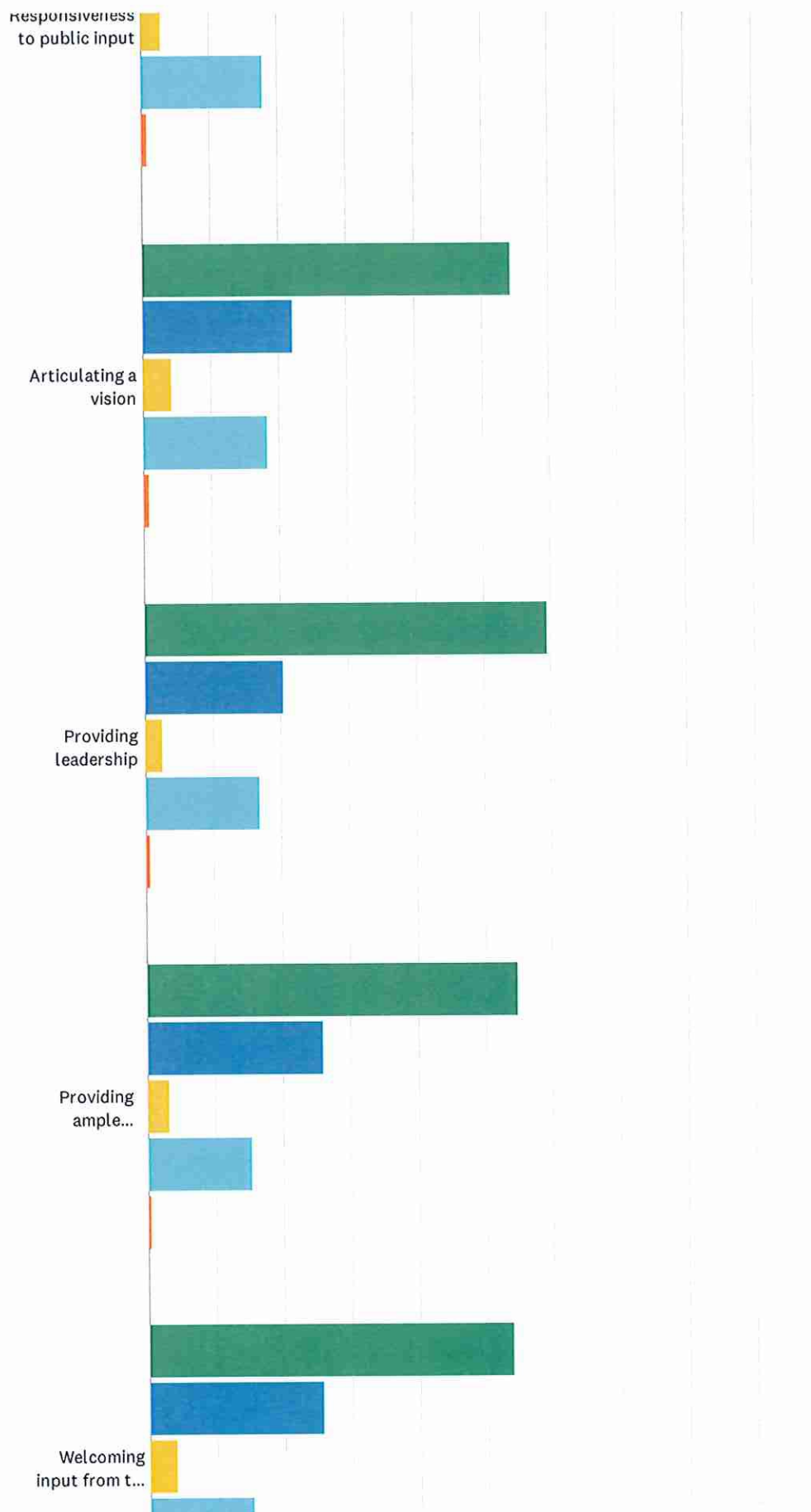
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.35%	137
No	51.30%	257
I need more information	21.36%	107
TOTAL		501

Q30 Please rate the performance of the Bennington Select Board

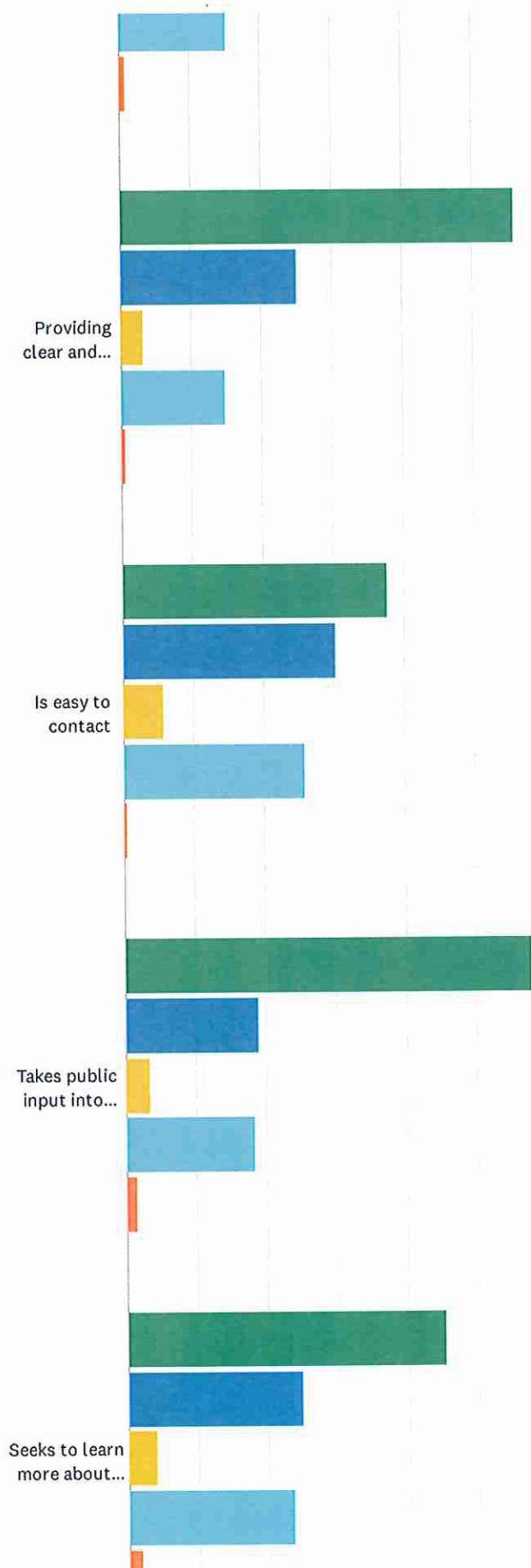
Answered: 495 Skipped: 143



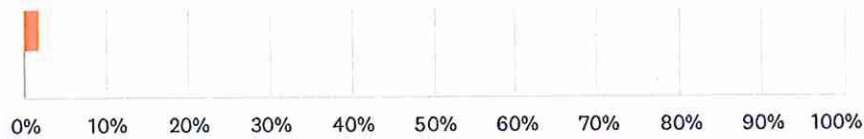
Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



Bennington Citizen Survey 2021



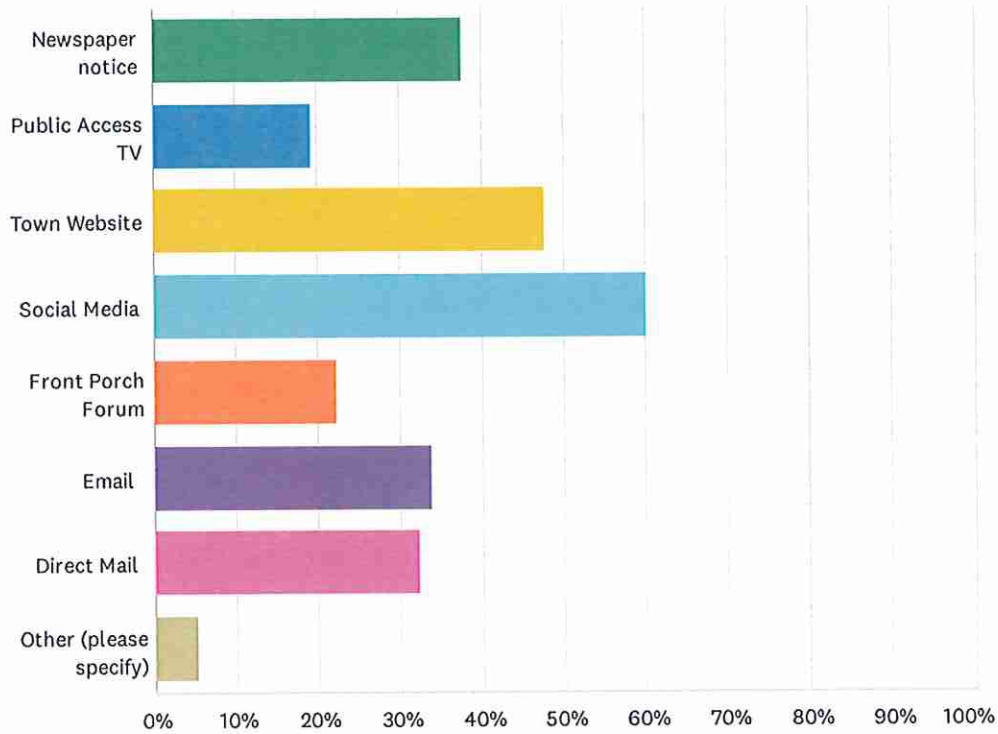
■ Below expectations ■ Meets expectations ■ Exceeds expectations
■ Do not know ■ (no label)

	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	DO NOT KNOW	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Responsiveness to public input	56.07% 277	22.27% 110	3.04% 15	17.81% 88	0.81% 4	494	1.85
Articulating a vision	54.47% 268	22.15% 109	4.27% 21	18.29% 90	0.81% 4	492	1.89
Providing leadership	59.39% 291	20.41% 100	2.65% 13	16.94% 83	0.61% 3	490	1.79
Providing ample opportunity to discuss issues in a public setting before making a decision	54.88% 270	26.02% 128	3.25% 16	15.45% 76	0.41% 2	492	1.80
Welcoming input from the public	54.05% 267	25.71% 127	4.05% 20	15.38% 76	0.81% 4	494	1.83
Providing clear and concise information	56.01% 275	25.25% 124	3.26% 16	14.87% 73	0.61% 3	491	1.79
Is easy to contact	37.70% 184	30.33% 148	5.74% 28	25.82% 126	0.41% 2	488	2.21
Takes public input into account when making decisions	57.93% 285	18.90% 93	3.46% 17	18.29% 90	1.42% 7	492	1.86
Seeks to learn more about topics before them	45.42% 223	25.05% 123	4.07% 20	23.63% 116	1.83% 9	491	2.11

Q31 What is the best way for the Town of Bennington to share information with you?

Answered: 500 Skipped: 138

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

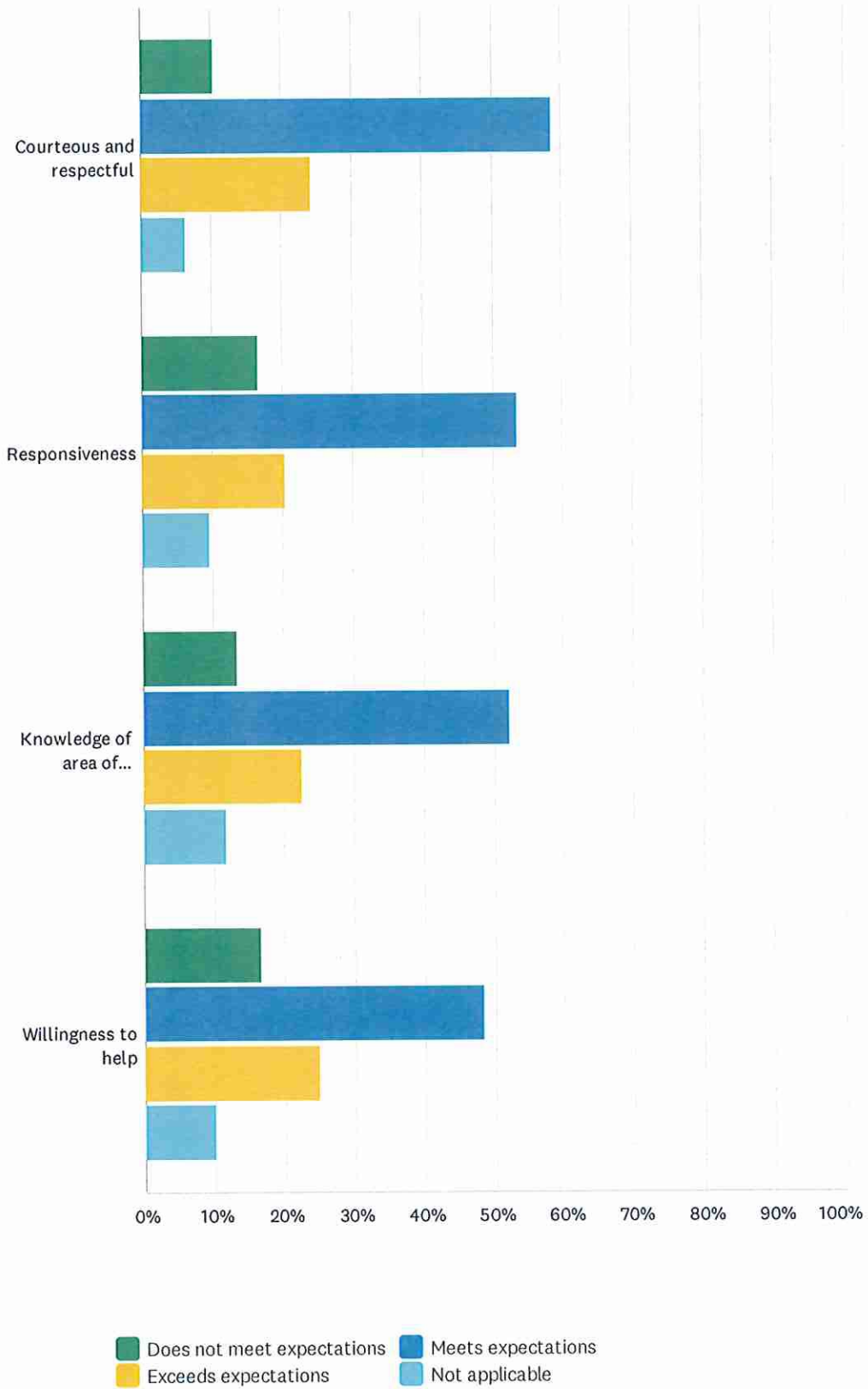


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Newspaper notice	37.80%	189
Public Access TV	19.40%	97
Town Website	47.80%	239
Social Media	60.20%	301
Front Porch Forum	22.40%	112
Email	33.80%	169
Direct Mail	32.40%	162
Other (please specify)	5.40%	27
Total Respondents: 500		

Q32 Please rate the following aspects of the Town of Bennington Staff.

Answered: 494 Skipped: 144

Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

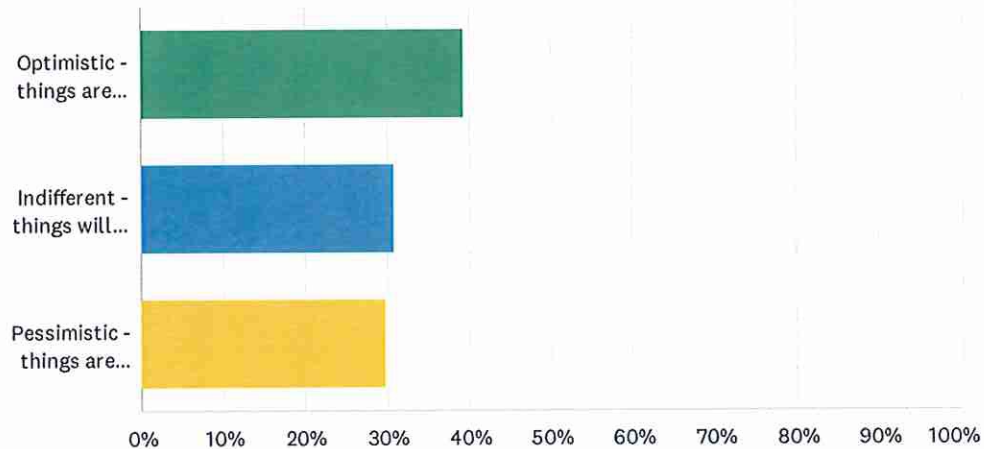


Bennington Citizen Survey 2021

	DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	NOT APPLICABLE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Courteous and respectful	10.55% 52	58.62% 289	24.34% 120	6.49% 32	493	2.27
Responsiveness	16.53% 81	53.47% 262	20.41% 100	9.59% 47	490	2.23
Knowledge of area of expertise	13.50% 66	52.15% 255	22.70% 111	11.66% 57	489	2.33
Willingness to help	16.70% 82	48.47% 238	24.85% 122	9.98% 49	491	2.28

Q33 Thinking broadly, how do you feel about the future of the Town in general over the next couple of years?

Answered: 503 Skipped: 135



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Optimistic - things are getting better	39.36%	198
Indifferent - things will stay pretty much the same	30.82%	155
Pessimistic - things are getting worse	29.82%	150
TOTAL		503

MANAGER'S REPORT
November 22, 2021

ACTION

Nothing at this time.

INFORMATIONAL

Economic Development Strategy Update We understand the report and recommendations of White and Burke, the firm contracted to analyze the projects provided by Town departments, BCRC staff, BBC staff, and the Select Board's Economic Development and Infrastructure sub-committee, is nearly ready. Available funding sources may be the \$3.9 million ARPA funds, the TIF, CDBG funds, and perhaps funds from the recently approved \$1 trillion infrastructure bill. Once this work is completed, public input will be sought.

FOLLOW-UP

The Bennington Police Department and the Communications Coordinator's Reports are attached.

The Bike/Ped Monthly Report is attached.

This remains an action item for a future agenda

Stormwater Permits and Homeowners Associations Three existing stormwater permits now facing renewal require some changes due to regulatory action. We have been maintaining the stormwater in municipal rights of way. However, private residences with paved driveways and other spaces generate stormwater that must be managed under the law. We can comply by controlling what residents do on their properties (not an ideal situation) or we can, with the State's assistance, seek to have these developments form Homeowners Associations and through that authority manage their own stormwater. I've attached a letter of explanation.

The owner of the vicious dogs received the Board's Order on November 11, 2021. The 10 business days clock has started. We have not heard from the owner as of this writing.

Town Manager Report to the Select Board November 2021

Chief Paul Doucette and Lt. Camillo Grande attended the FBI-LEEDA Executive Leadership 5-day training program in Hampton, New Hampshire earlier this month. The training was attended by law enforcement leaders from Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire. This completes week one of a three-part training series.

We achieved a milestone with our community partners at Southwestern Vermont Health Care. Our partnership with the hospital with drug take back is amazing. This month we collected 58 pounds of unused medications and are now OVER 2,000 pounds collected since the inception of our partnership in this program.

Three of our recruits are attending the Level III training at the Vermont Police Academy. They are currently in week four with an anticipated graduation date in February 2022. We will begin interviewing applicants for vacant positions within the patrol division at the police department. We hope to be able to send at least two people to the next full-time academy class beginning in March or April 2022.

Zoe Nixon accepted a position as a dispatcher at the Bennington Police Department and will begin training this month. She will be participating in training on all three shifts. Upon successful completion of training, she will be assigned to the evening shift. Zoe is a graduate of Southern Vermont College and Southern New Hampshire University.

The fiscal year 2023 police department budget request is almost complete. We have been looking at some new programs and some equipment for existing programs. We have looked at increasing our training in different areas as well. We look forward to our budget presentation with the select board in January 2022.



Town of Bennington

Communications Coordinator Report — November 21, 2021

After two months on the job,

I am starting to get much more comfortable as part of the town team. I've now met with all department heads and have developed a working relationship that is still evolving in a productive way. I have toured the town's facilities and now have a much greater understanding of the amazing infrastructure and systems that underlay our town of just over 16,000 people.

Citizen Outreach:

I've met with, emailed, messaged, or spoken with 15 citizens on a wide variety of concerns or questions. While seemingly granular, these individual connections can have long term benefits as we attempt to win over the hearts and minds of our citizens one at a time. For example, a recent complaint via facebook ended with the citizen becoming involved with our ongoing website development and the suggestion of a "fix it and Comment" form at benningtonvt.org/fix-it/.

Business Outreach:

I've stopped by or emailed with the following businesses to hear their concerns or ideas: Knapps, Main Street Antiques, and The Beyond Gallery.

Non-Profits and Community Groups:

I've met or communicated with the BPD, Bennington Rotary, SVSU, the Shires of VT DMO, and the BBC this past month. The ribbon cutting for the Orchard Village – Willowbrook Pathway was a success and enjoyed lovely weather. I am currently planning another Unveiling Ceremony with 219 Pleasant St. LLC that will occur in December.

Facebook and Social Media:

We continue to work hard on providing timely information to the public via our social media account on Facebook. In the past month, we have had a post reach of 20,289, and post engagement of 5,919. The number of people "liking" our page continues to slowly grow with another 31 added this past month. A positive example of being proactive with information was during the MAUHS lockdown, where timely information from Chief Doucette allowed us to post info quickly to the community and head off some exaggerated claims that had already begun to circulate.

Riverwalk:

Following the tragic murder of Emily Hamann, a collaborative group has been meeting to address issues around the riverwalk. I was invited to the last Riverwalk Interfaith meeting on November 1st by Michael Wajda, who worked with me on the A.T. Community designation effort.

At that meeting I offered to help with a press release. Doing the background on that release drew me into conversations with Michael McDonough, who mentioned the BBC Design Committee's long range planning work they were doing on the pathway, much of which was informed by initial meetings of the walkway that the BBC was involved in.

Further, conversation with Dan alerted me to discussions regarding towns plans for work on the pathway. It was also at that meeting that Susan Armstrong attended, with a neighbors perspective.

Add to the mix, there is activity at the bank of Bennington regarding lighting, cameras, etc., and folks would like an update on where that stands and what future plans there might be.

And finally, at the town Manager's meeting when I mentioned that I had attended the Riverwalk meeting and was seeing numerous threads of different efforts, Chief Doucette said that he had input and would like to loop back into the discussion.

As a result of all that it seemed that with so many threads out there the timing was right to get everyone back on the same page to sit together again to review where everything stands and what future plans are being developed in order to coordinate our efforts. Thus the initial idea of simply writing a press release morphed into a push for the group to gather everyone together again for this conversation which will occur on December 6.

2021 Bennington Survey:

The survey results are being tabulated now and will be shared as a presentation at the Select Board meeting. A PDF of the presentation will be made available to the public after the presentation, and a copy will be included in your packet if timing allows.

Website Update:

Work continues on planning for the town website update. The scope of this work is large, and the development of the plan for the redesign is the first step for preparing an RFP for the work to be done.

While we will be using a vendor for much of the work, I feel strongly that I need to use my 20+ years of website development to take the lead on key changes around how the navigation system should work, how to reorganize information into "buckets" that correspond with what we know about user behavior on the website, by providing guidance on overall design, and by doing research into best practices by other municipal websites.

Likewise how well we prepare our materials for the vendor makes a big difference on the final cost of the project. I believe I will be able to reduce costs on the front end as a result.

Improving the websites ADA compatibility is a primary issue and will be one of the larger tasks for the final vendor in addition to a widespread update of content across all departments.

While it's premature to discuss final costs for the redevelopment, I am confident that those costs will be well below the budgeted amount as many of the aforementioned efforts will result in efficiencies that will keep the website development costs down.

I will provide additional information on progress in my December report.

Community Newsletter:

We are implementing a partnership with the Bennington Banner to create a more robust Community Newsletter. I meet with Susan Plaisance and Susan Allen from the Banner, and Carrie Fabricius from the Senior Center about doing a revamped version of the Community NL both digitally and in print to the entire Banner readership, with inclusion of Bennington Community Center (Rec. center) info, and a services directory that would not be limited by endorsement issues that the Town must abide by to create the sort of expanded Community news that will be useful to seniors as well as adult citizens in general, with a targeted start date of this coming January.

This will save work for Carrie, expand exposure, fill that need for service listings that we can't promote ourselves, and include a larger part of the adult community, and hopefully be useful for new residents as well as I often hear about that as an issue. A list of services created by Beth Wallace and used by the Welcome Wagon has been included in this, along

with the town services list we currently show.

In addition to being in print, with an overrun of 500 to start to be placed at the senior center and Community Center (rec center), there will be a digital versions that we can deploy using our community email list that has about 500 folks on it. This will also replace the cost of us having to mail as many copies as many people will now get them via the newspaper. Or at least we think so!

As a next step, we will be reviewing some design samples from the banner in the next few weeks.

Cyber Security / IT:

The town has seen an increasing number of phishing attempts over the past month. We have instituted an internal educational campaign on how to spot and avoid phishing attacks with a series of weekly emails that show the current techniques being used against us to increase awareness and hopefully avoid a successful attack.

I was also part of an ongoing effort with Skip and Melissa to continue to work on our overall cyber security. A recent security audit by a Dominion, a cyber security consulting firm, was reviewed by our team and with our primary IT firm RCS consulting. A number of suggestions are being followed up on, and overall we are doing OK with our security. Having said that... cyber security is an ongoing and ever-changing landscape that requires constant attention and due diligence.

250th Planning:

I have been active on both the state, federal, and regional 250th commemoration teams. At the state level we are primarily focused on crafting the vision and mission of the commission, and planning a first round of outreach to regions in the state. I would like Bennington County to be the model on which outreaches statewide are based. A tentative date of January 2022 has been identified as a possible start for a Bennington 250th Committee to be created to interface with the state and federal commissions.

Outreach by the numbers:

Looking at my calendar and email for the last month, here are some stats for you...

Number of FB Posts - 36

Number of emails sent - 530+/-

Number of meetings attended - 21

Town of Bennington Bike/Ped Projects Update November 2021

Orchard Village (formerly Applegate) to Willowbrook Path

Project Description: Pathway to connect Orchard Village, Willowbrook Apartments, and Molly Stark Elementary School.

Status: Construction of the pathway is complete. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held last month.

Ninja Trail

Project Description: The proposed path is 2.12 miles. It begins on Hicks Avenue at the existing pedestrian bridge and ends at the intersection of VT Route 67A/College Drive/Silk Road/Matteson Road. From there, pedestrians and cyclists can reach the Village of North Bennington via Bennington College's paths and low-speed roads. The path varies between wooded areas, open fields, and roadside facilities. It crosses streams, goes under an overpass, and crosses a highway.

Status: \$1 Million in State/Federal Grants have been secured. An update of the cost estimate using current pricing indicates that significant additional funding will need to be secured to complete the entire project, but it is hoped that by splitting the project into phases construction may commence before all of the funding is secured. An application for a \$200,000 Transportation Alternatives Grant will be submitted soon. If this grant is awarded to the Town, there will be sufficient funding to construct Phase 1 of the project. Phase 1 includes a large bridge over the Furnace Brook, a small bridge over a drainageway behind Hannaford, and a paved pathway from the Furnace Brook Bridge to Morse Road. Additional grant opportunities are being explored to fund future phases. Segments of paved path between Hicks Avenue and Harmon Road (behind Walmart) and between Bennington College entrance and the Hampton Inn have already been constructed. An interim path (dirt and gravel) between the two completed segments had been open for use, but the temporary bridge over the Furnace Brook has been closed due to rotting supports. The Dept. of Buildings and Grounds is considering options for repairs to the temporary bridge as we await construction of the permanent bridge. Preliminary plans for the construction of the remainder of the paved path have been approved by the State. The Town has now obtained all of the easements required for the project. Construction of the first phase of the project is scheduled for 2022 subject to State permits being issued in a timely fashion.

Bennington Pathway – Rail/Trail

Project Description: Shared use path (bike path) along Railroad Right-of-Way from Bennington Station to Emma Street (off of Northside Drive). The portion of the path from Bennington Station to Orchard Road will be paved. The remainder of the path will be gravel.

Status: State/Federal Grant for 90% of cost has been secured. A local match of \$100,000 is being held in a reserve account. An additional \$80,000 match is necessary and will impact the FY 22 and/or FY23 budgets. The Town has contracted with Markowski Excavating to construct the project. Clearing of vegetation has been completed and removal of the rails and excavation of stumps is well underway. The contractor plans to work until December 1st of this year and resume work in March of 2022. Construction will likely conclude in September of 2022.

Benmont Avenue Bike/Ped Improvements

Project Description: Improvements to make Benmont Avenue safer and more attractive for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers, including significant changes to the Hunt Street intersection. The improvements will function as an extension of the Ninja Trail into Downtown Bennington.

Status: A total of \$559,000 in State/Federal Grants have been awarded. The Town match will be approximately \$140,000. All easements have been obtained. Additional funds may need to be sought. The Town DPW will likely construct the planned improvements to the Hunt Street intersection to keep costs down. Grant funds will be used to construct the remainder of the project. Final plans are complete and will be submitted to the State for review and approval this month or next month. The project scheduled to be put out to bid in Spring of 22. Construction is scheduled for 2022-23.