

Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission 2024 Scientific Survey Executive Results Presentation

April 2024



**Opinion Research on
Elections and Public Policy**



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Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission – 2024 Scientific Survey

Survey Methodology*

	Survey Details
Mode	Phone (landline and mobile) Online (email and text-to-web)
Language	English and Spanish
Length	16 minutes
Target Respondents	Ottawa County voters and non-voters
Survey Fielding	March 6 – 11, 2024
Survey Participants	400
Margin of Error	+/-5%

Sample

The sample was secured through voter files originally compiled by the Elections Division of the Ottawa County Clerk/Register of Deeds Office and enhanced with consumer data. We called, emailed, and texted voters and non-voters. We matched the demographics of Ottawa County voters and non-voters.

Data Collection Explained

Interviews were conducted by phone (33%) and online (67%) modes. Phone interviews were conducted via landline (34%) or mobile (66%). Online participants were invited by email (50%) and text message (50%).

Respondents in all modes chose their preferred language, English (98%) and Spanish (2%).

The online survey was accessible by computer, tablet, and smart phone.

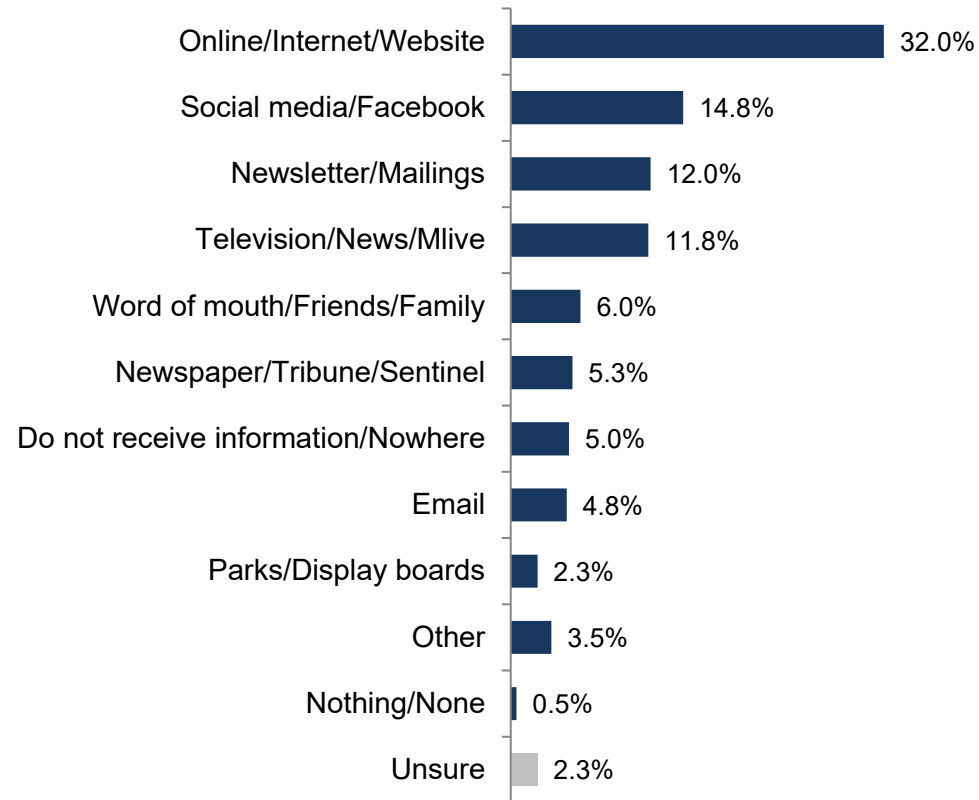
Security measures precluded individuals from completing the survey more than once.

Probolsky Research is a Latina- and woman-owned market and opinion research firm with corporate, election, government, and non-profit clients.

**Due to rounding, totals shown on charts may not add up to 100%*

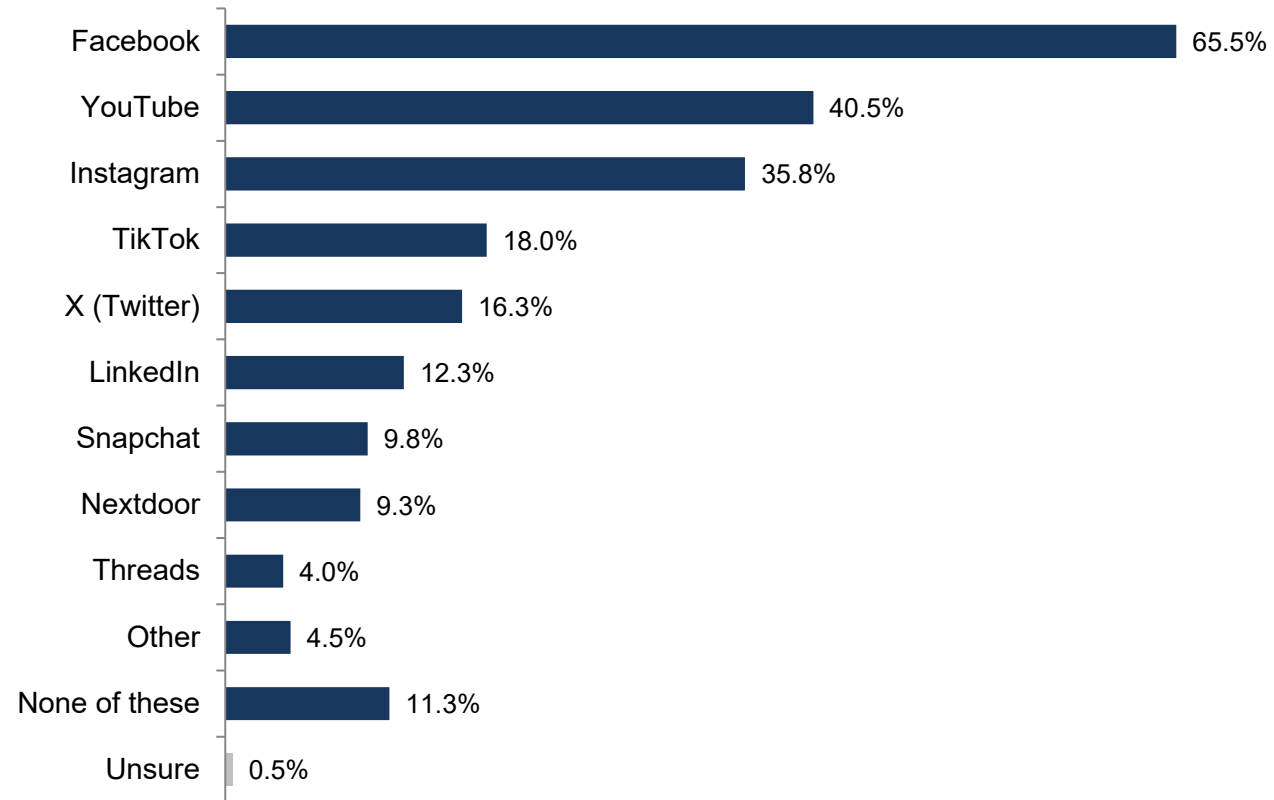
32% get most of their information about Ottawa County Parks online

Question 1: Where would you say you get most of your information about the activities of Ottawa County Parks?
[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]



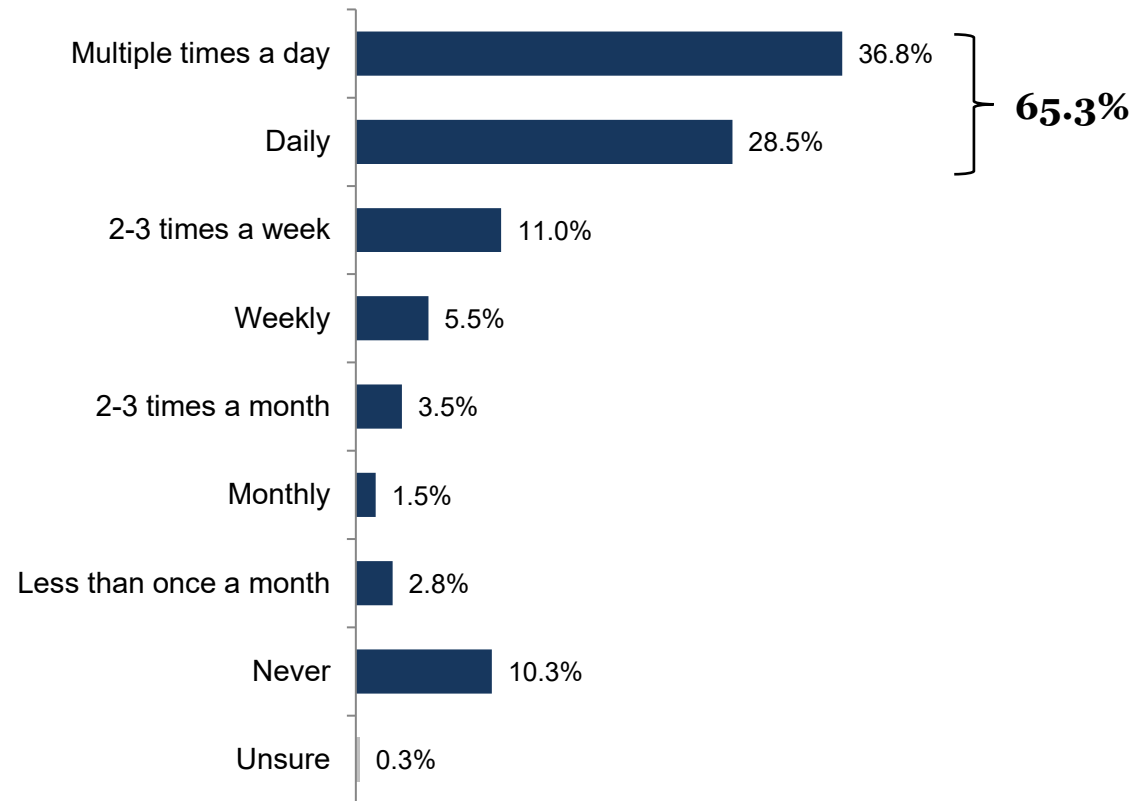
66% use Facebook regularly

Question 2: Please indicate which, if any, of these social apps and websites you use regularly. Select all that apply.



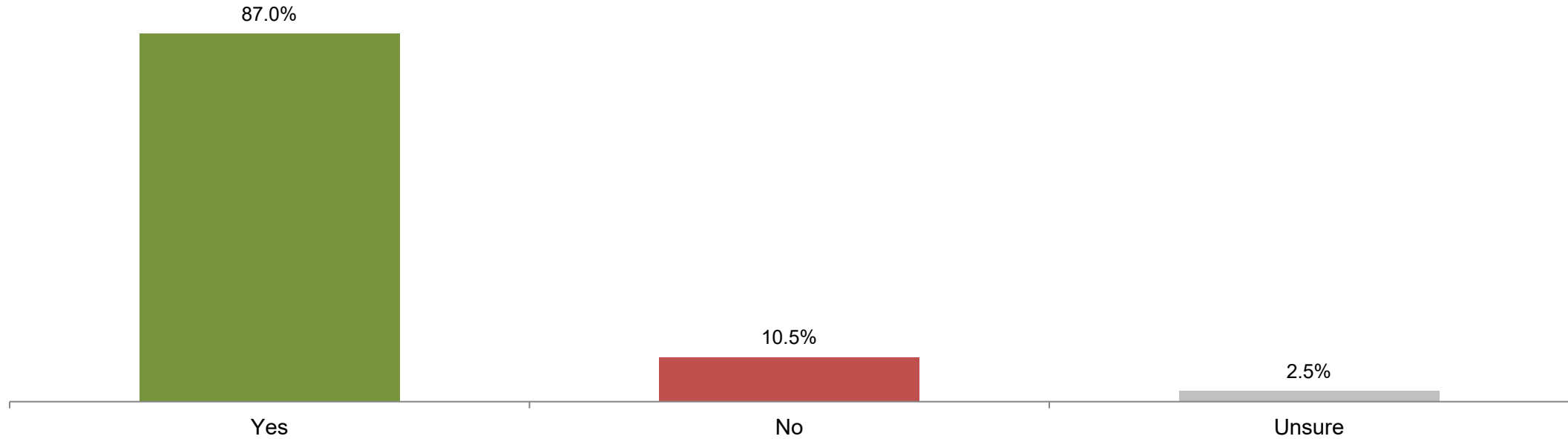
65% use social media apps or websites at least once a day

Question 3: How often do you use social media apps or websites such as Facebook, Instagram, or X (Twitter)?



87% have visited Ottawa County parks or open spaces in the past year

Question 4: In the past year, have you or anyone else in your household visited any Ottawa County parks or open spaces?

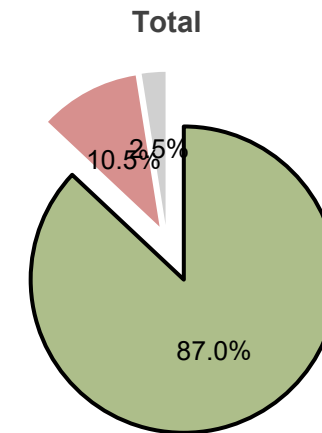
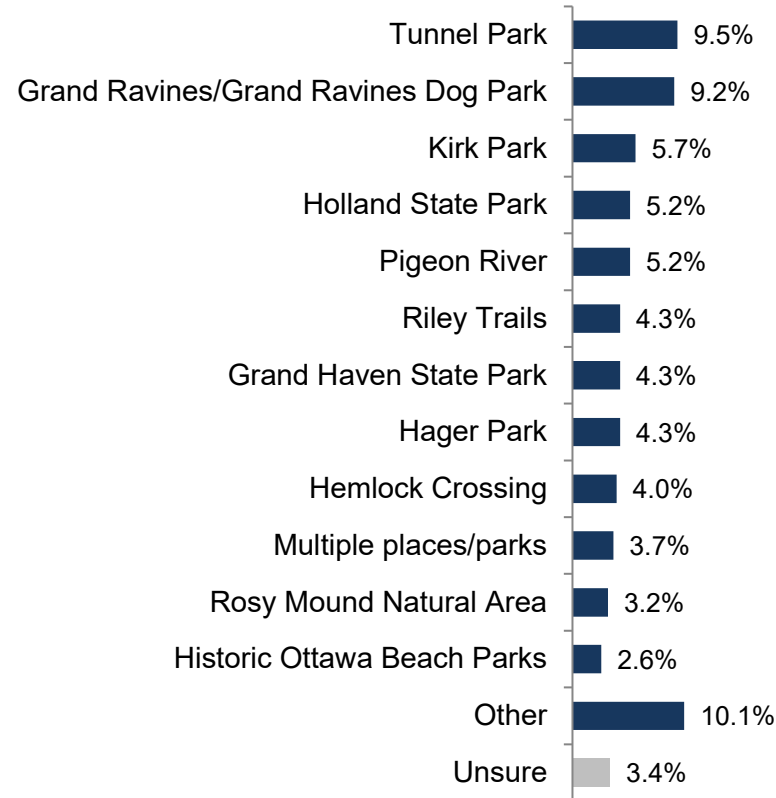


Among those who visited a park or open space in Ottawa County within the past year, 10% visited Tunnel Park

Question 5: What is the name of the park(s) or open space(s) you visited in Ottawa County?

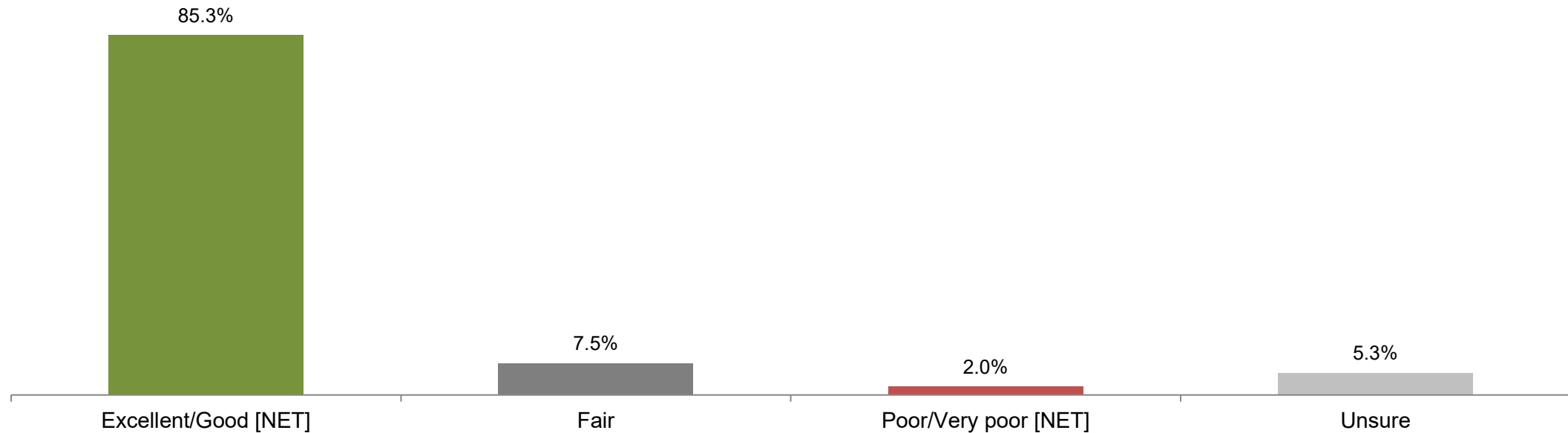
[IF ANSWERED 'YES' TO Q4]

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]



85% rate the job being done by the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission as excellent/good

Question 6: Keeping in mind what you may know or have heard or read about parks and other recreational opportunities provided in other nearby counties, how would you rate the job being done by the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission in conserving natural lands, providing recreational opportunities and programs to the citizens of Ottawa County -- would you give a positive rating of excellent or good, a fair rating, or a negative rating of poor or very poor?

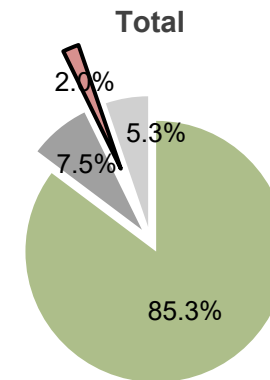
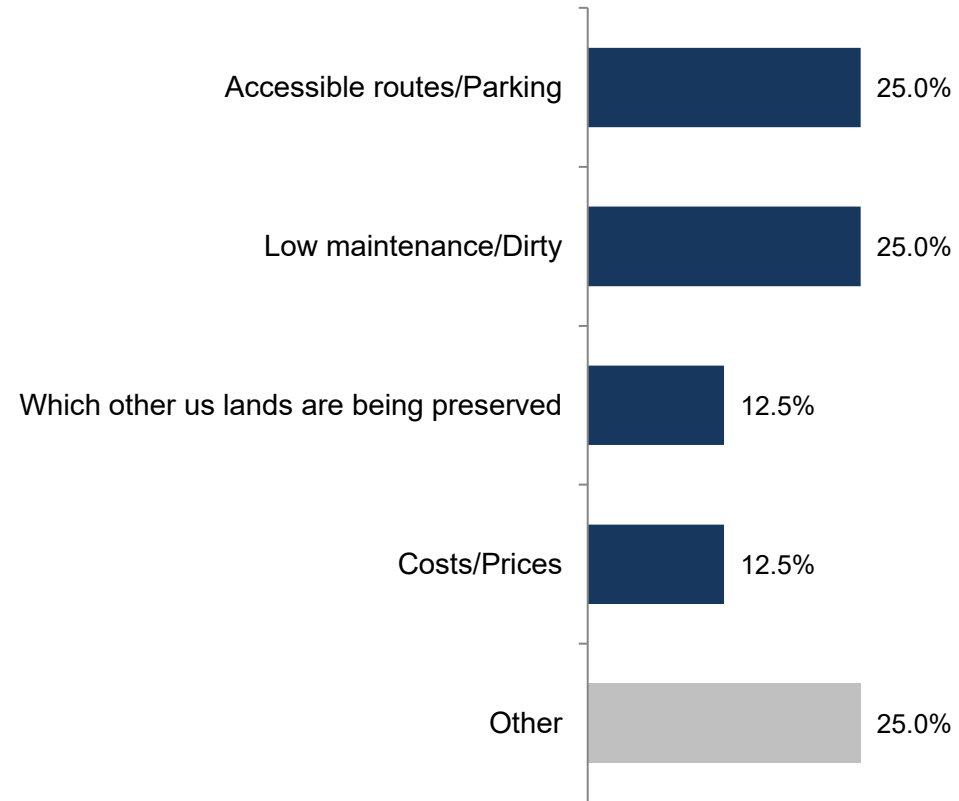


Among those rating the job being done by the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission as poor/very poor, half cite accessibility or maintenance issues

Question 7: What stands out for you as the main reason why you offered a rating of poor?

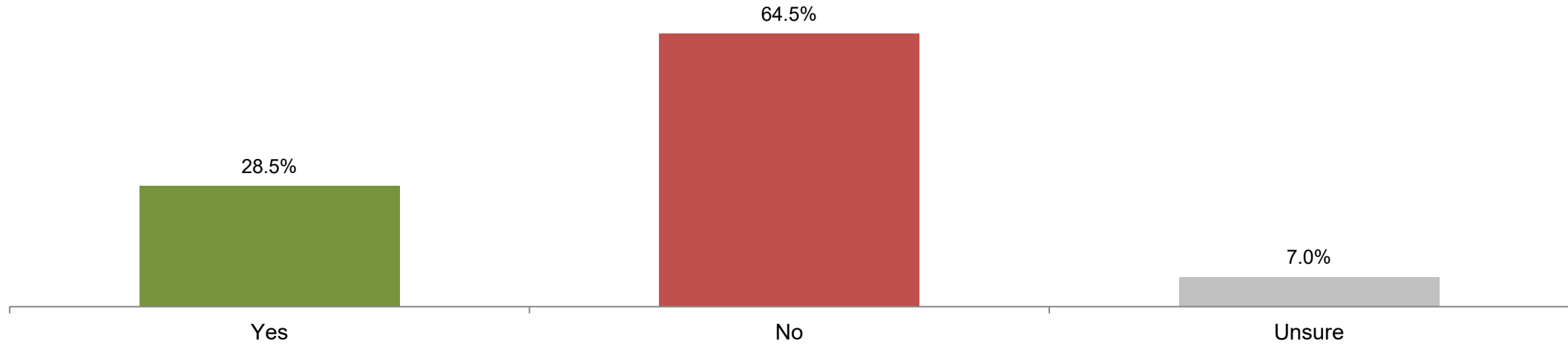
[IF ANSWERED 'POOR/VERY POOR' TO Q6]

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]



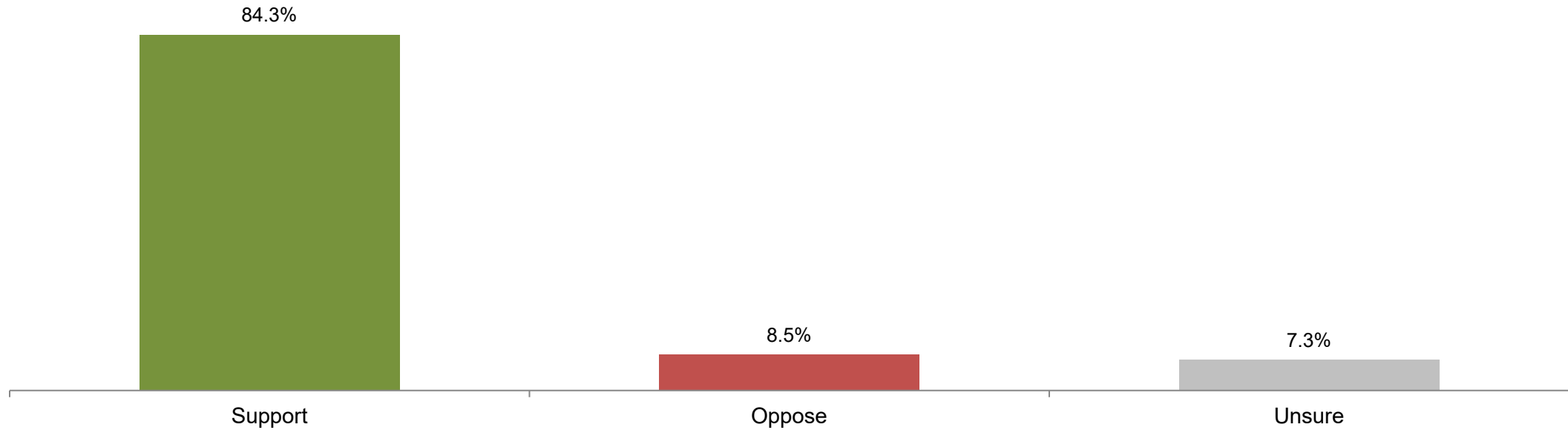
65% were not aware that there is currently a special millage dedicated specifically to help fund Ottawa County parks

Question 8: Were you aware that there is currently a special millage, renewed in 2016, in the amount of 1/3 of a mill, that is dedicated specifically to help fund Ottawa County parks?



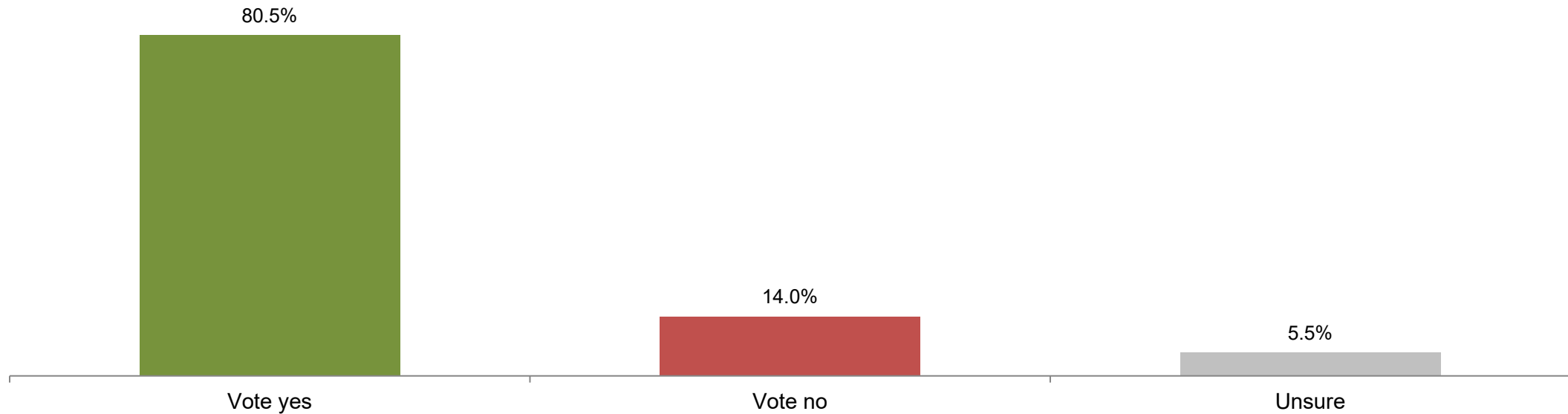
84% support the current parks millage

Question 9: The 1/3 of a mill amounts to \$25 per year for a house valued at \$150,000 with a taxable value of \$75,000. Generally speaking, do you support or oppose the current parks millage?



Initial vote: 81% vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage

Question 10: If Ottawa County placed a renewal of the 1/3 of a mill on a future election ballot, which amounts to \$25 per year for a house valued at \$150,000 with a taxable value of \$75,000, and the election were being held today, would you vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage, or would you vote no to oppose it?

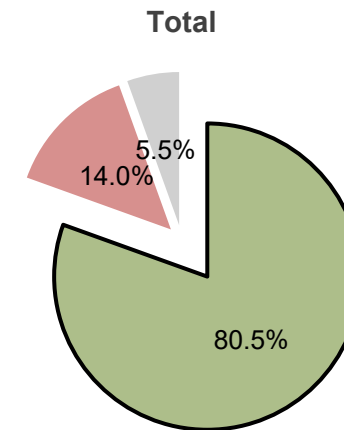
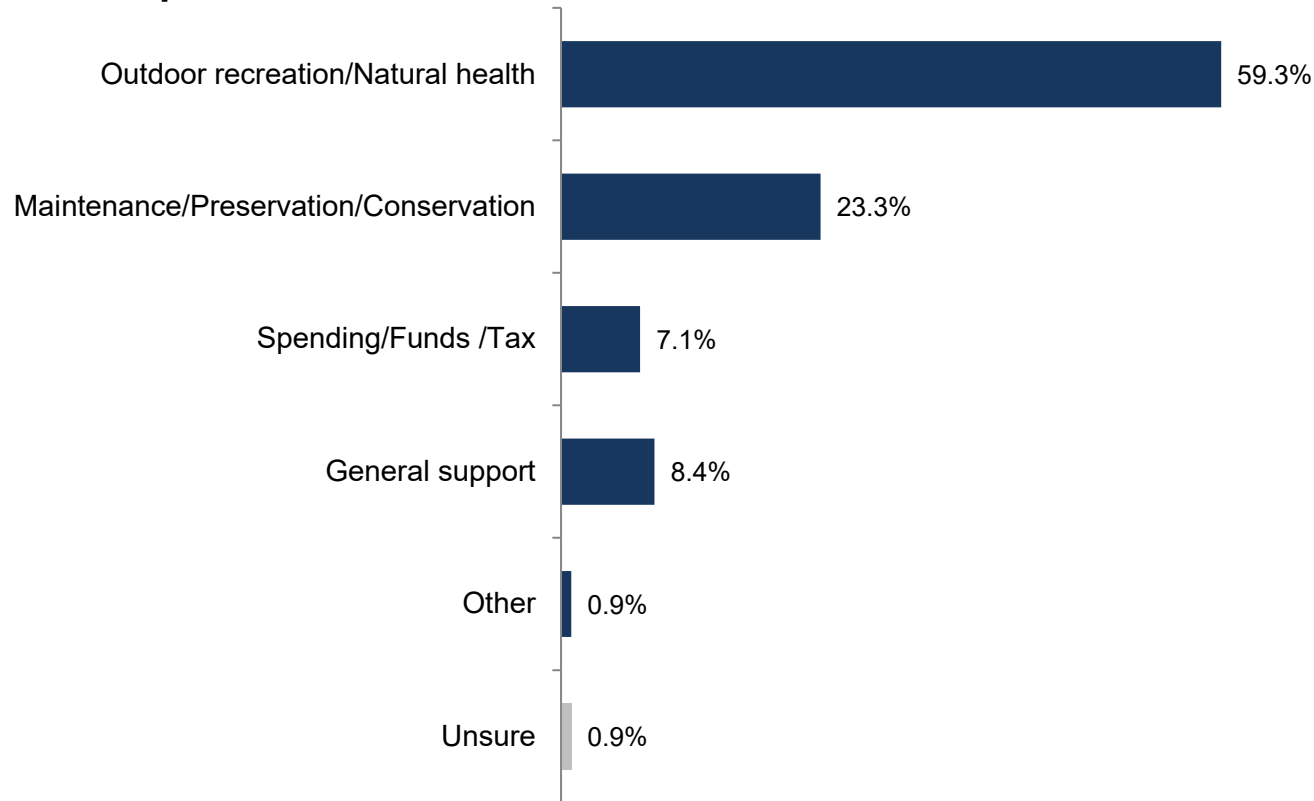


Among those who would vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage, 59% cite the need for outdoor recreation

Question 11: Why would you vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage?

[IF ANSWERED 'VOTE YES' TO Q10]

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]

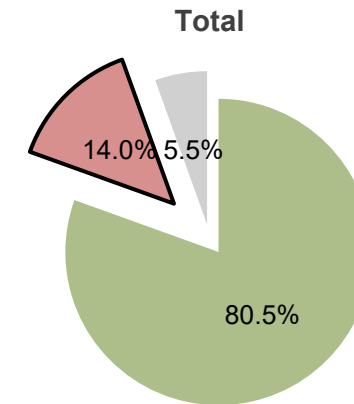
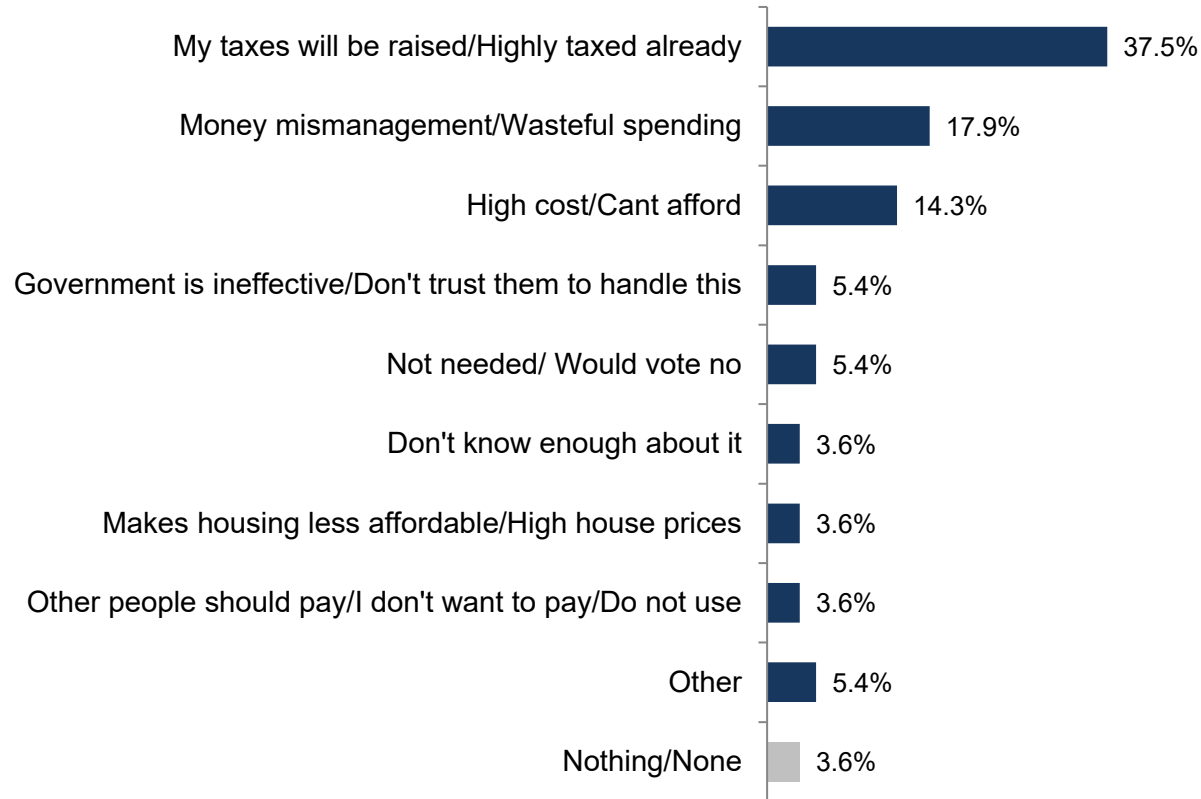


Among those who would vote no to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage, 38% cite tax concerns

Question 12: Why would you vote no to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage?

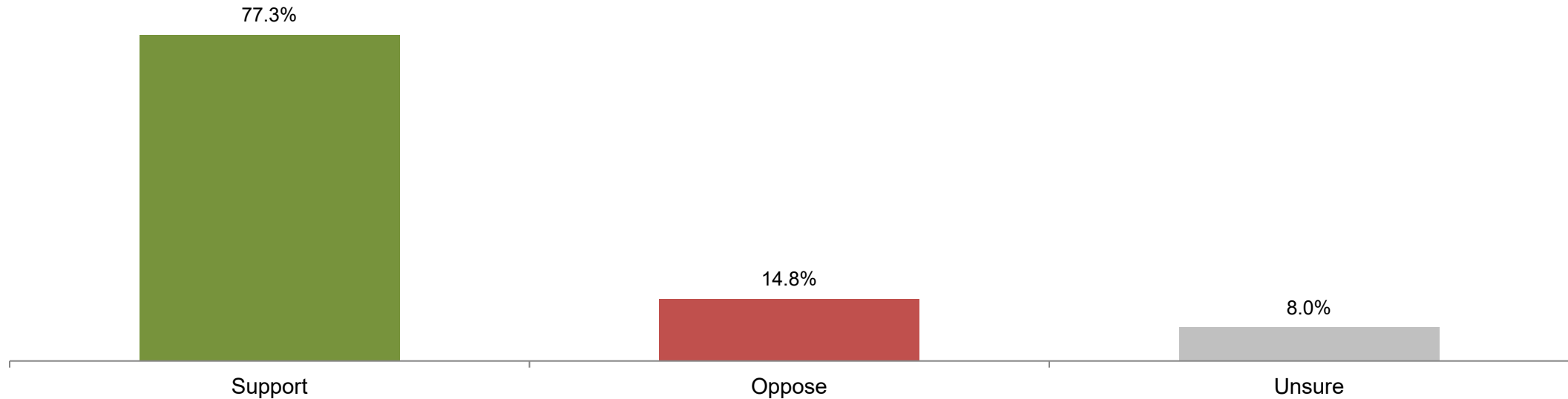
[IF ANSWERED 'VOTE NO' TO Q10]

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]



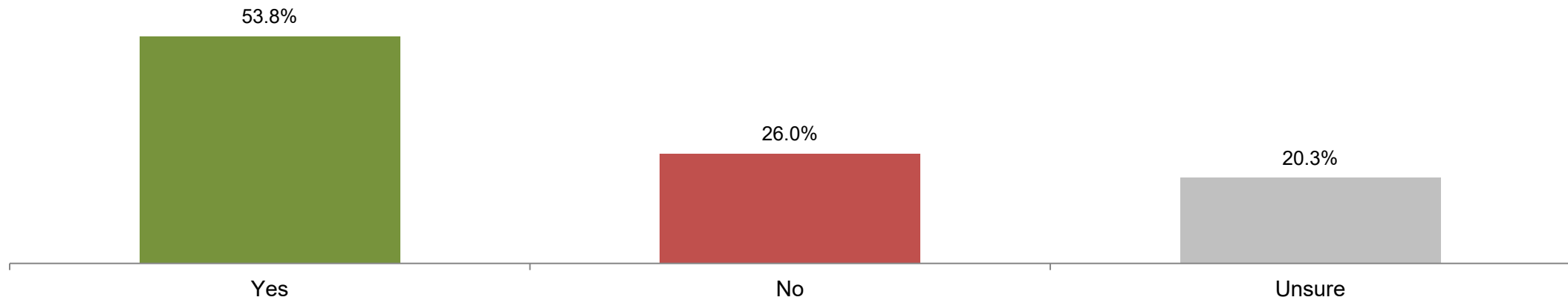
77% support an increased millage focused on the protection and management of the County's most sensitive natural resources

Question 13: Would you support or oppose an increased millage that would focus on the protection and management of the County's most sensitive natural resources, expanded outdoor education, and development of new natural resources-based recreation facilities and trails?



54% support a cost recovery initiative to fund the operations and maintenance of special facilities

Question 14: There are parks that cost more to operate due to special features offered at the park such as groomed cross-country ski trails, dog parks, or mountain biking trails. Would you support a cost recovery initiative such as a user fee to fund the operations and maintenance of these special facilities?

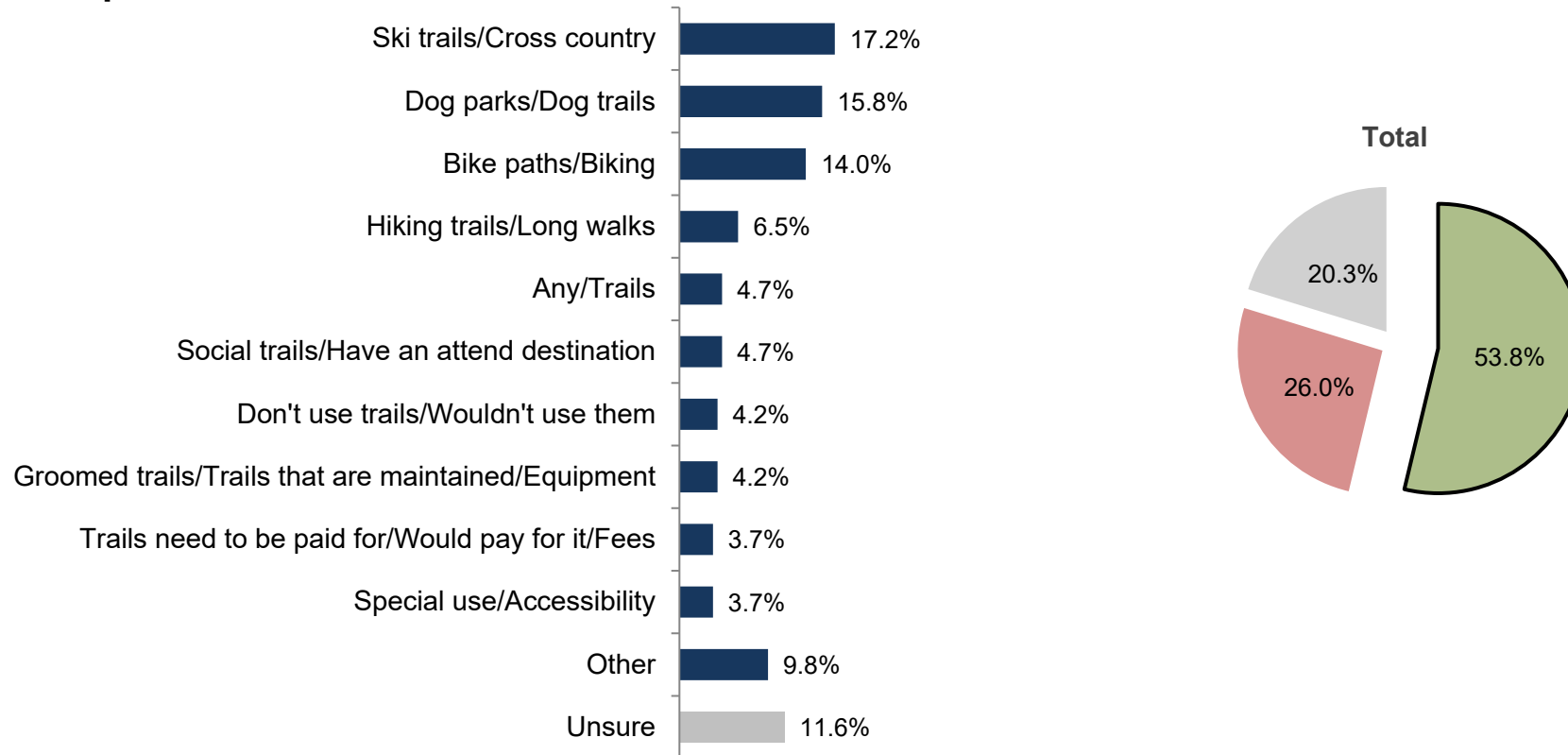


Among those who support a cost recovery initiative, 17% would consider paying a user fee to help fund ski maintenance/operations costs

Question 15: What type of trail/facility would you consider paying a user fee to help cover the operations and maintenance costs?

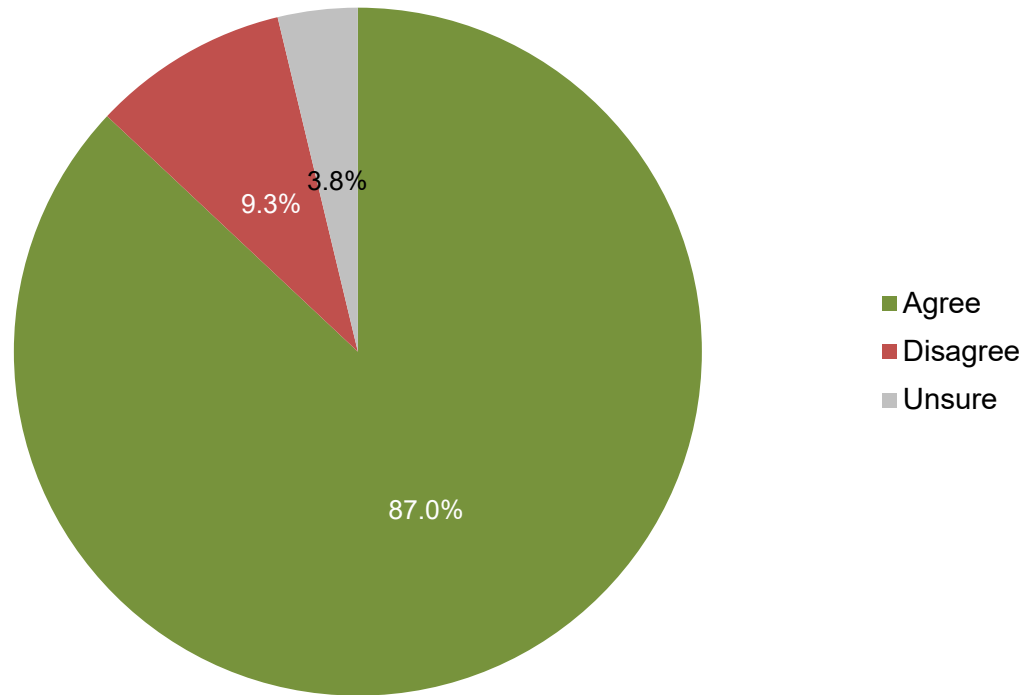
[[IF ANSWERED 'YES' TO Q14]

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]

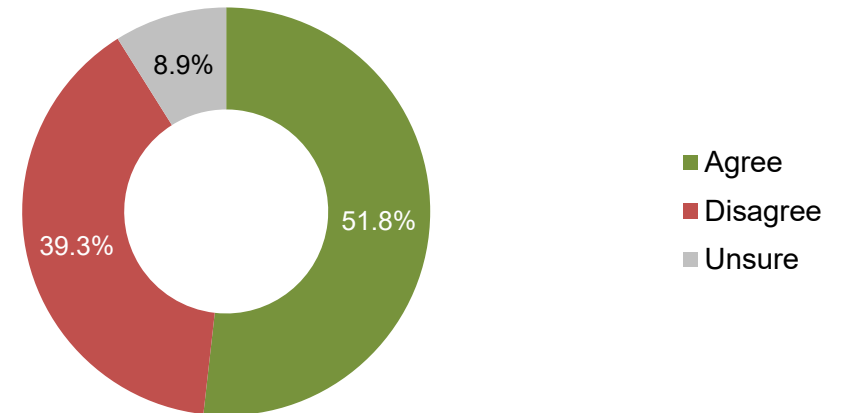


87% agree that the Parks Commission should protect additional land and natural spaces

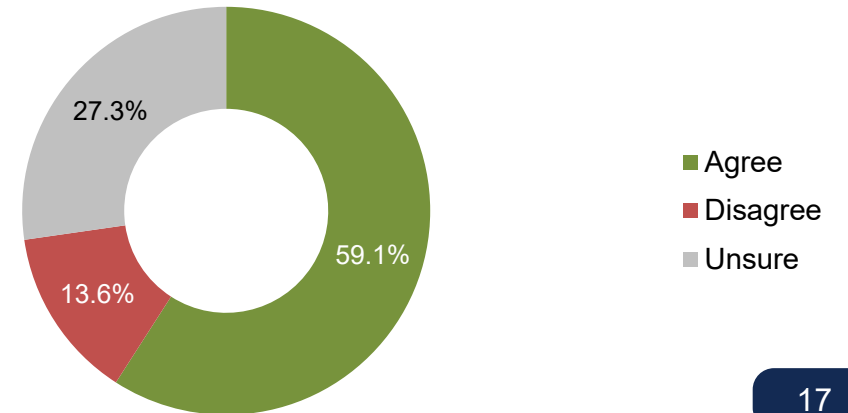
Question 16: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should protect additional land and natural spaces for conservation of key natural features, habitat, natural communities as well as future public access.



Among those who initially voted “no”

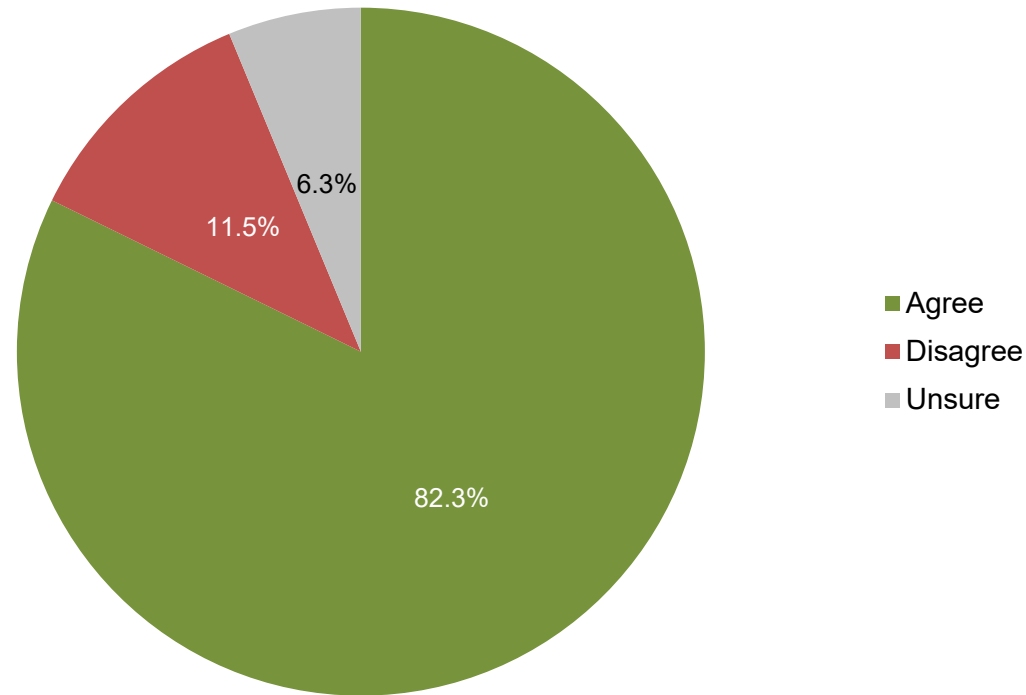


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

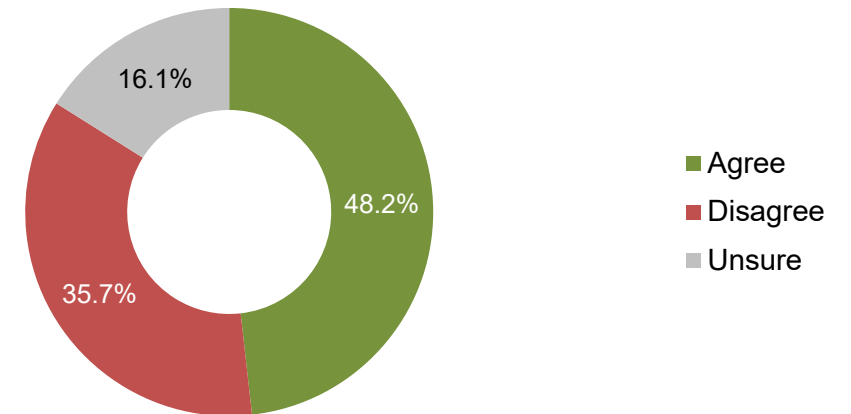


82% agree that the Parks Commission should provide leadership in completing a County-wide regional multi-use trail system

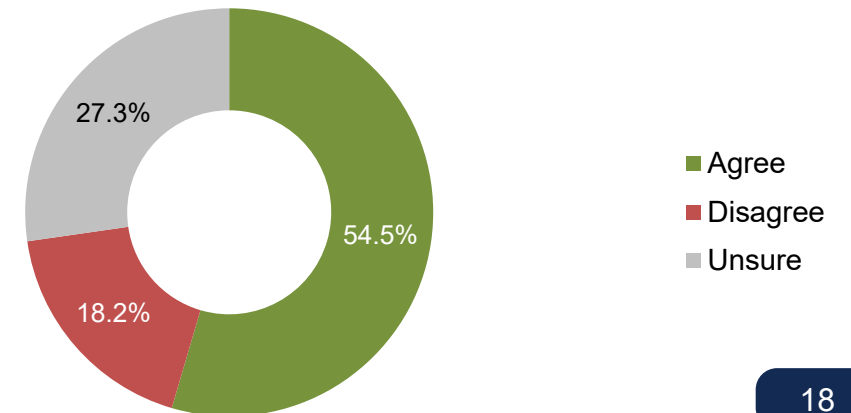
Question 17: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide leadership in completing a County-wide regional multi-use trail system linking different communities.



Among those who initially voted “no”

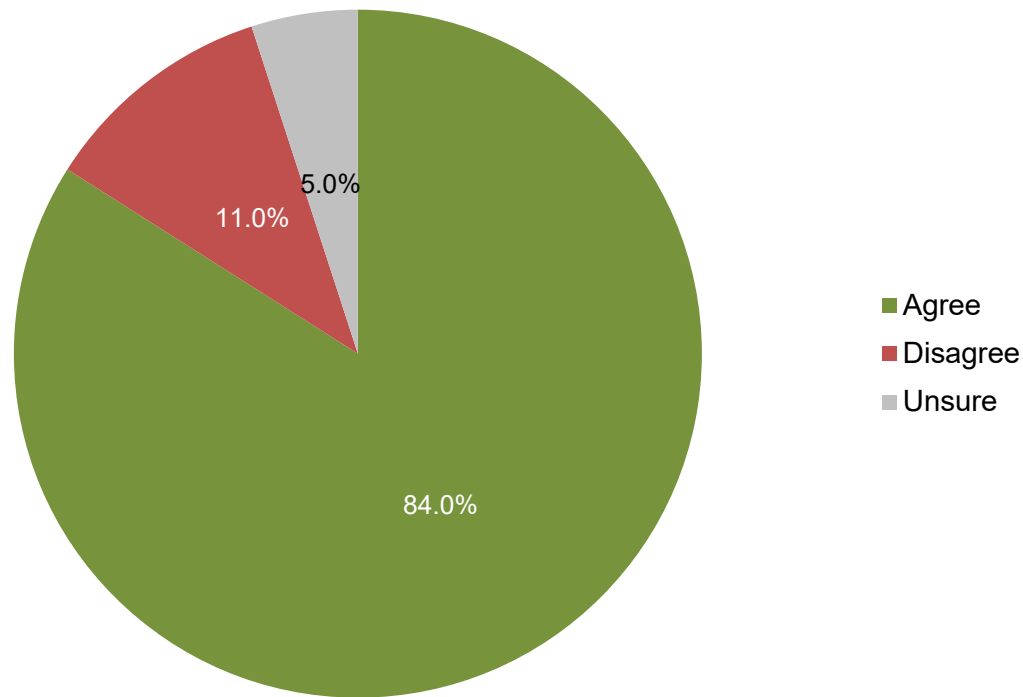


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

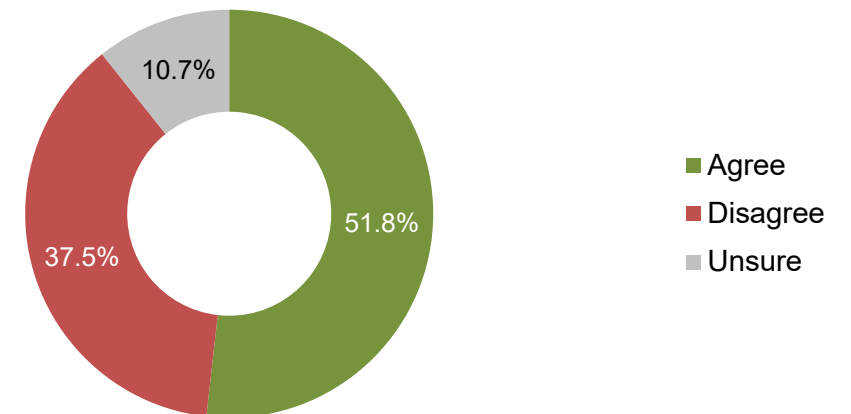


84% agree that the Parks Commission should provide leadership in dedicating resources for significant habitat restoration and green infrastructure projects

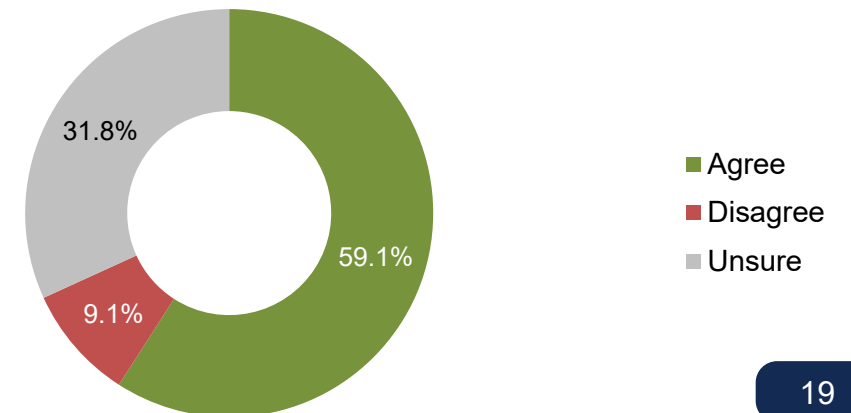
Question 18: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide leadership in dedicating resources to undertake significant habitat restoration and green infrastructure projects to improve water quality, increase native species, and increase and protect native plant and animal biodiversity.



Among those who initially voted “no”

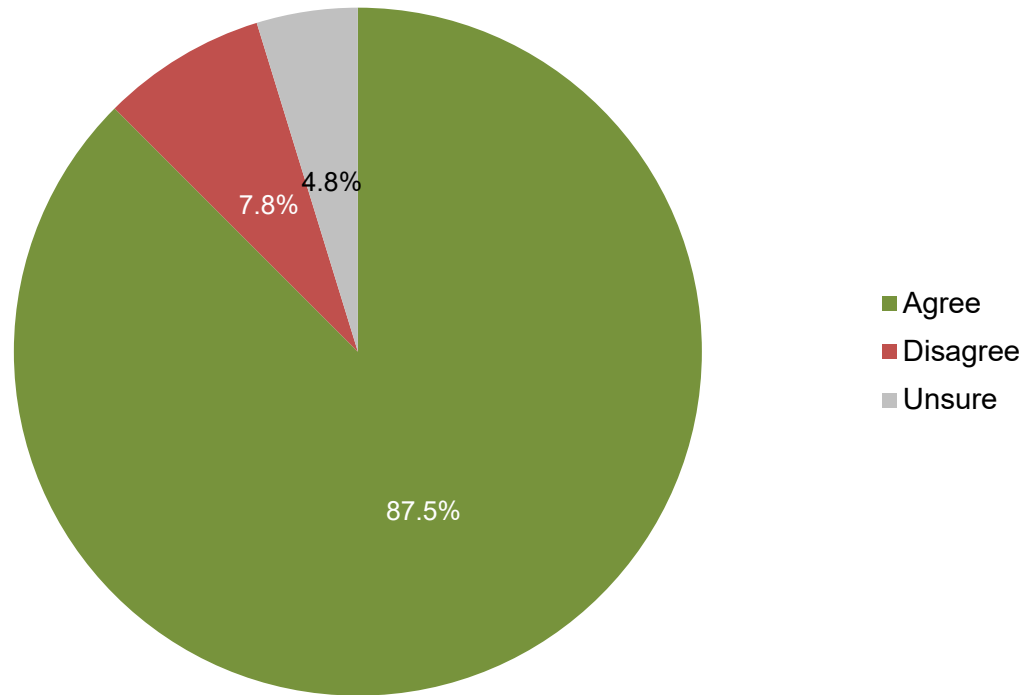


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

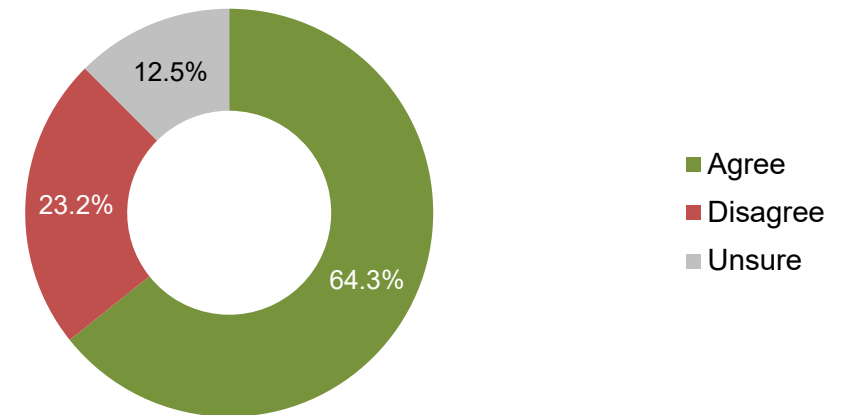


88% agree that the Parks Commission should provide leadership in management of natural lands in Ottawa County to control invasive species and/or overpopulated species

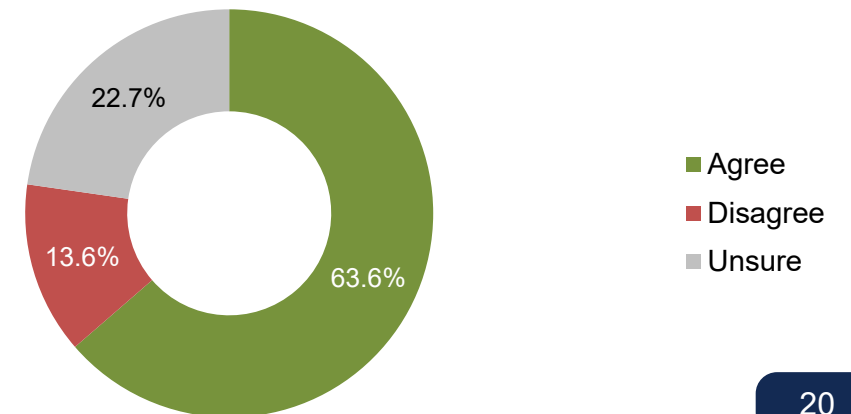
Question 19: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide leadership in management of natural lands in Ottawa County to control invasive species and/or overpopulated species (such as deer) or to address other factors negatively affecting natural lands.



Among those who initially voted “no”

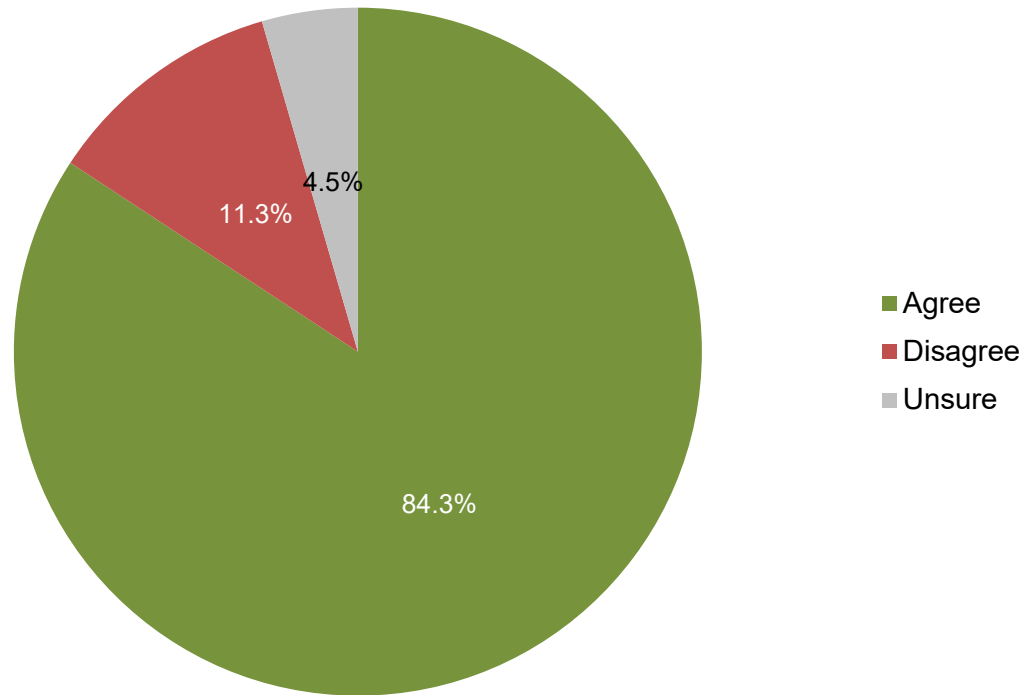


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

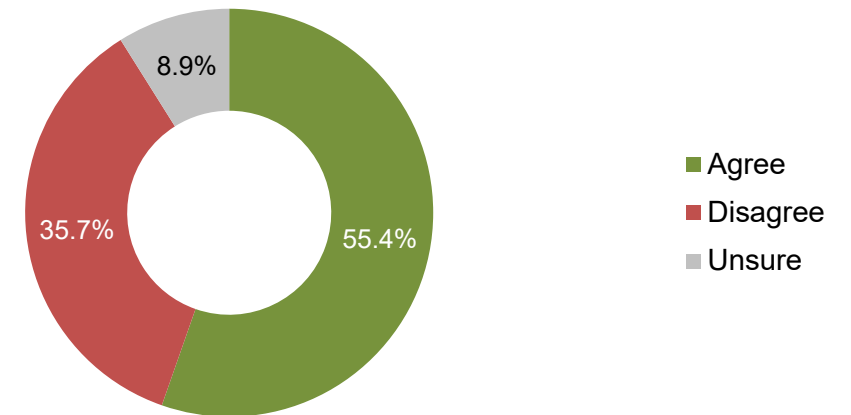


84% agree that the Parks Commission should provide community-wide leadership in engaging the public to experience nature

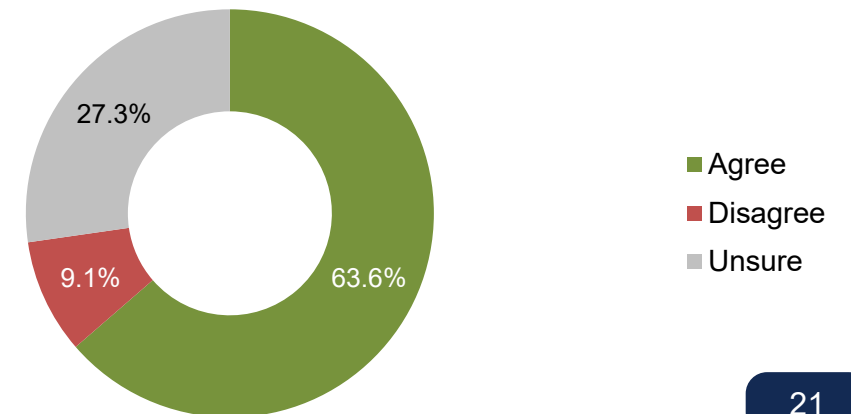
Question 20: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide community-wide leadership in engaging the public to experience nature through outdoor education, recreational programs, and volunteer opportunities.



Among those who initially voted “no”

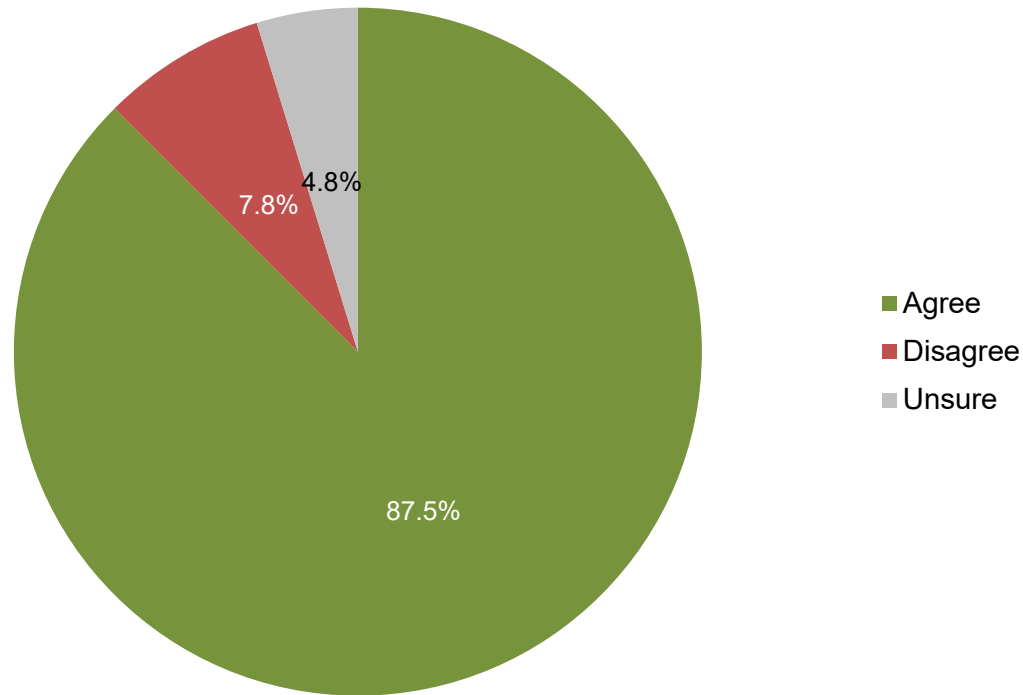


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

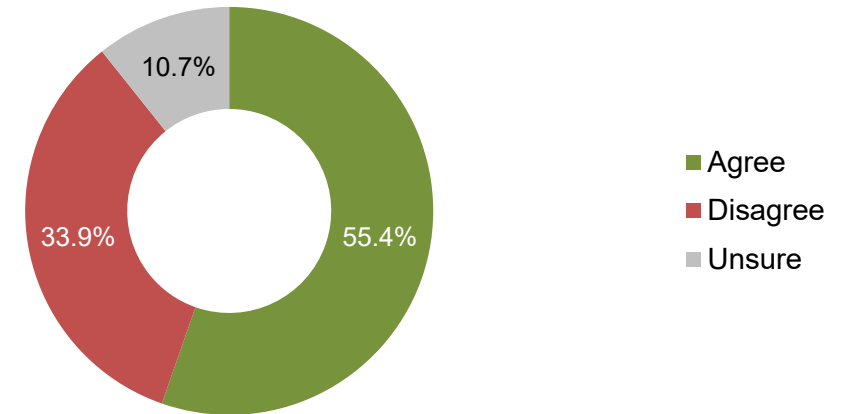


88% agree that the Parks Commission should provide community-wide leadership in ensuring that students get exposure to the outdoors

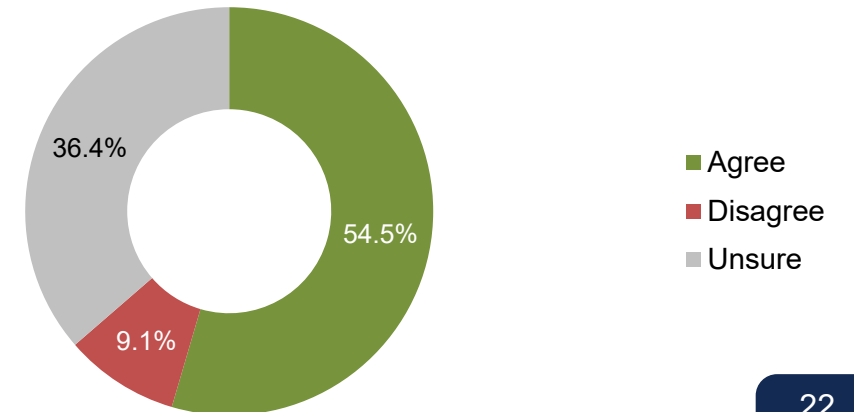
Question 21: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide community-wide leadership in ensuring that students get exposure to the outdoors through curriculum-based field trips and service-based learning opportunities.



Among those who initially voted “no”

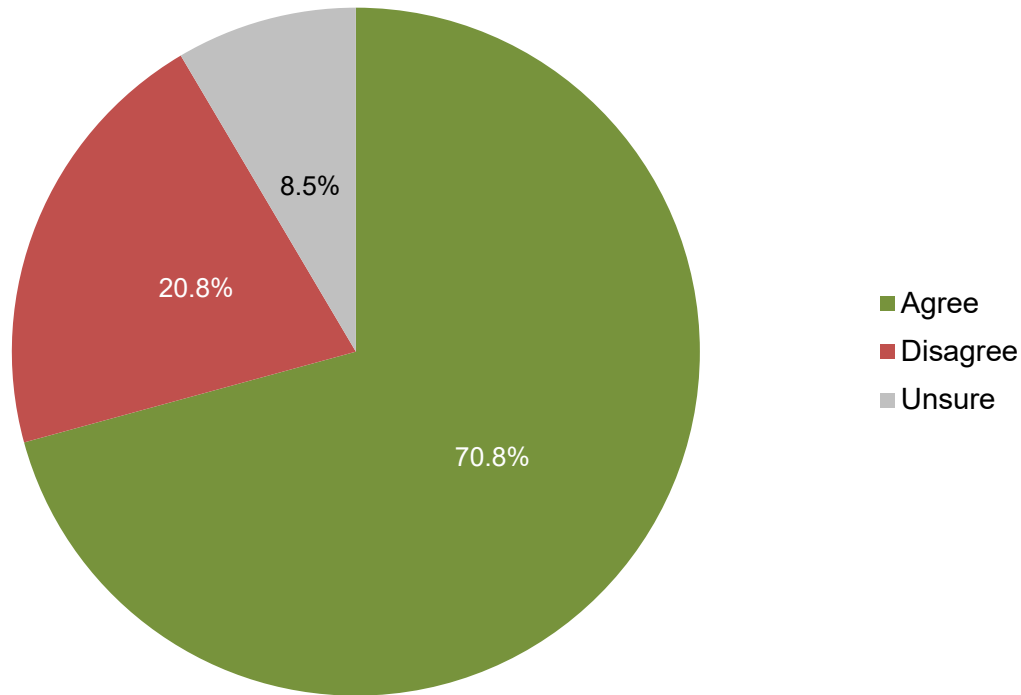


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

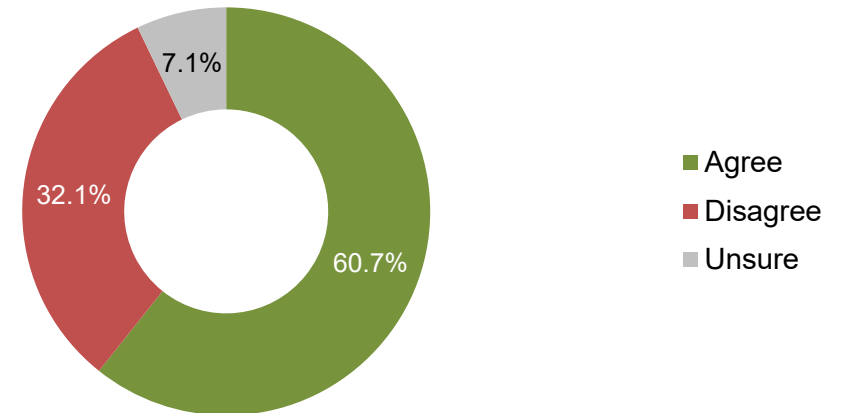


71% agree that the Parks Commission should help finance the parks systems by providing revenue-generating facilities

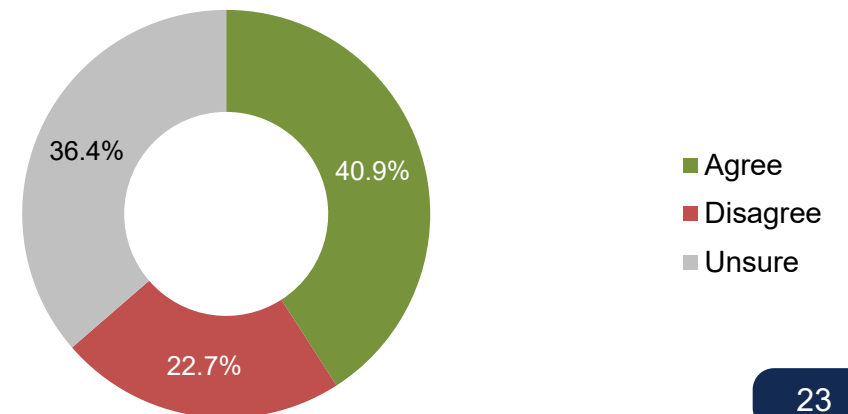
Question 22: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should help finance the parks systems by providing revenue-generating facilities such as large event facilities, picnic shelters, campgrounds, and marinas.



Among those who initially voted “no”

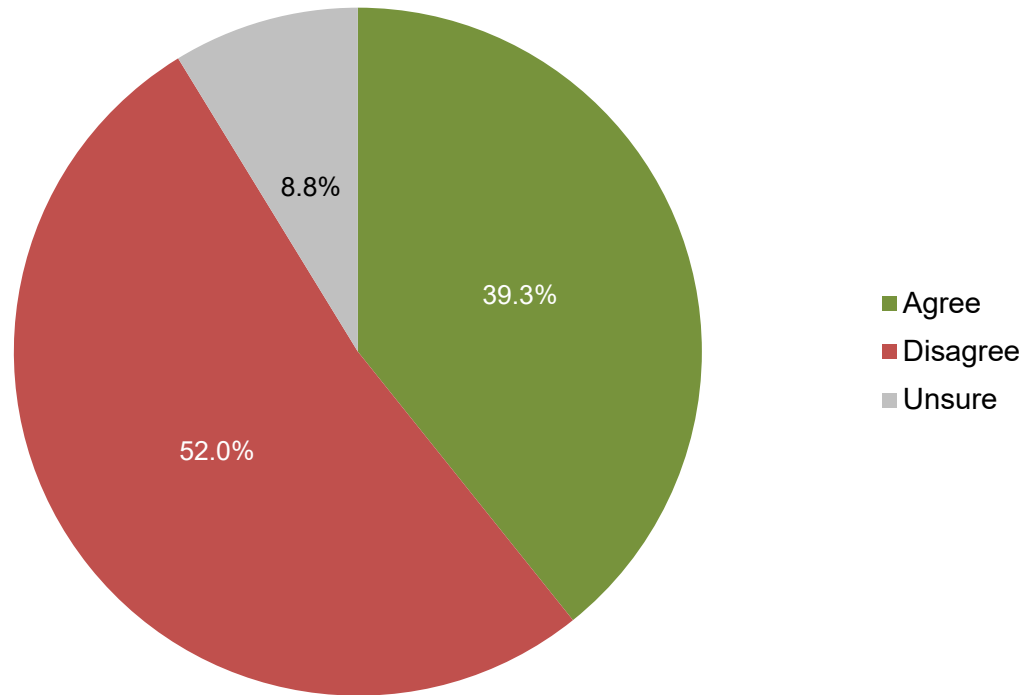


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

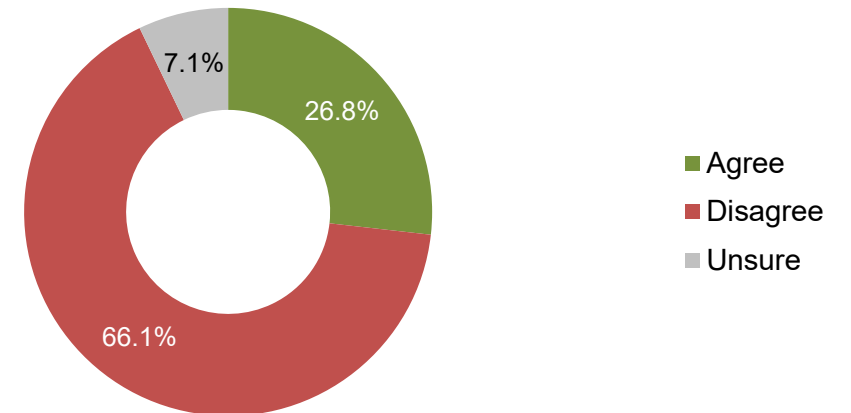


52% disagree that the Parks Commission should dedicate resources to provide high quality venues suitable for weddings or other formal events

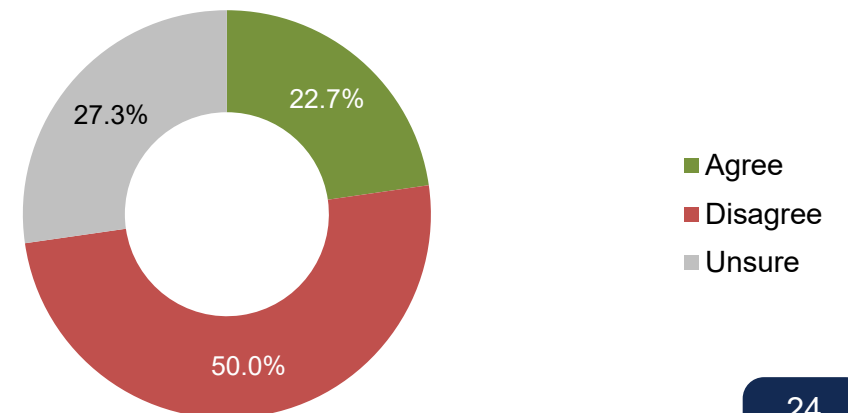
Question 23: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should dedicate resources to provide high quality venues suitable for weddings or other formal events, even if these events and venues are more costly and labor-intensive.



Among those who initially voted “no”

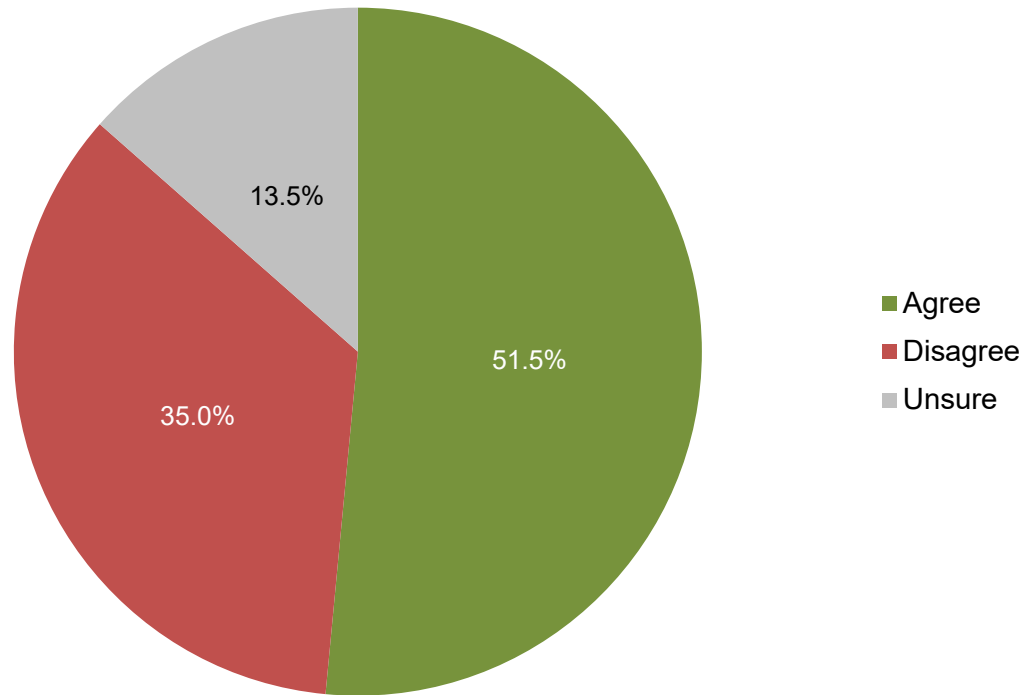


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

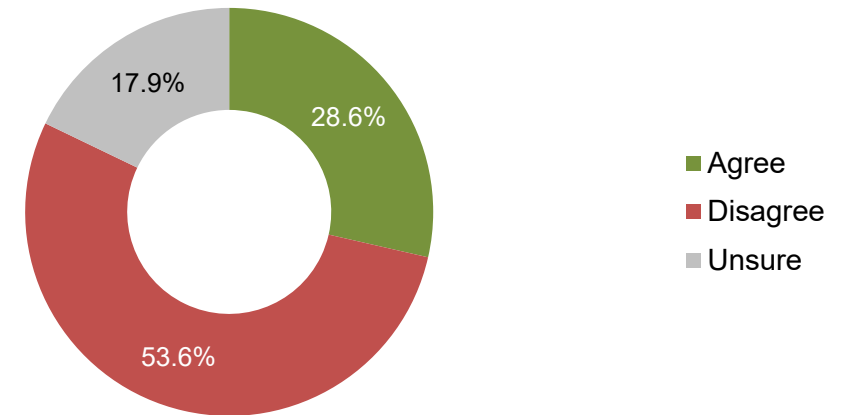


52% agree with the statement that Parks Commission should provide overnight camping facilities that can accommodate RV's

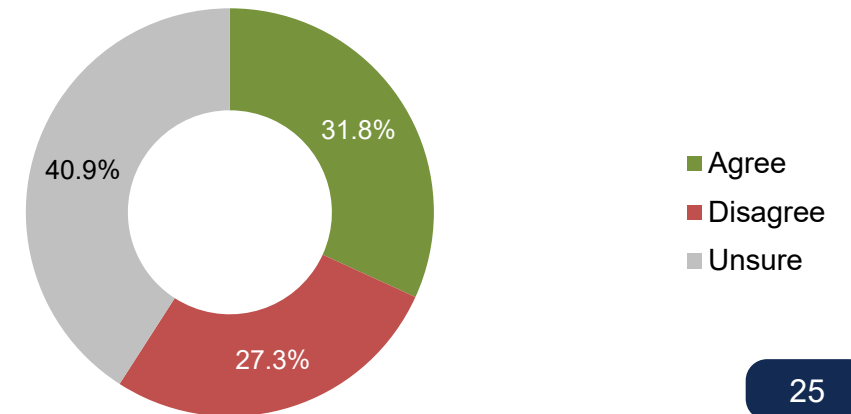
Question 24: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide overnight camping facilities that can accommodate RV's.



Among those who initially voted "no"

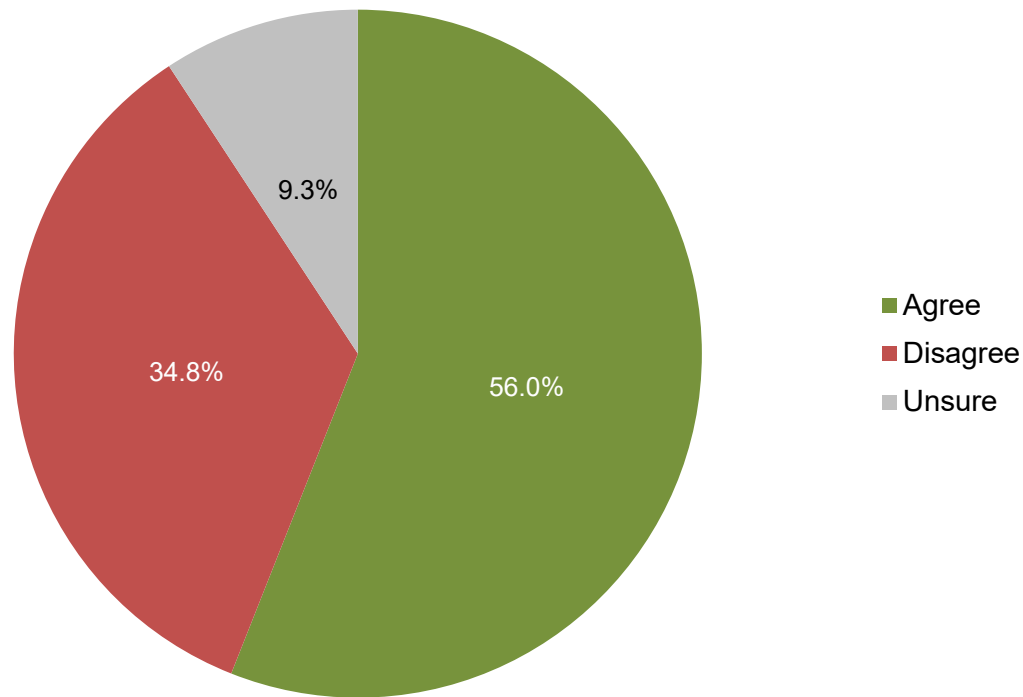


Among those who initially voted "unsure"

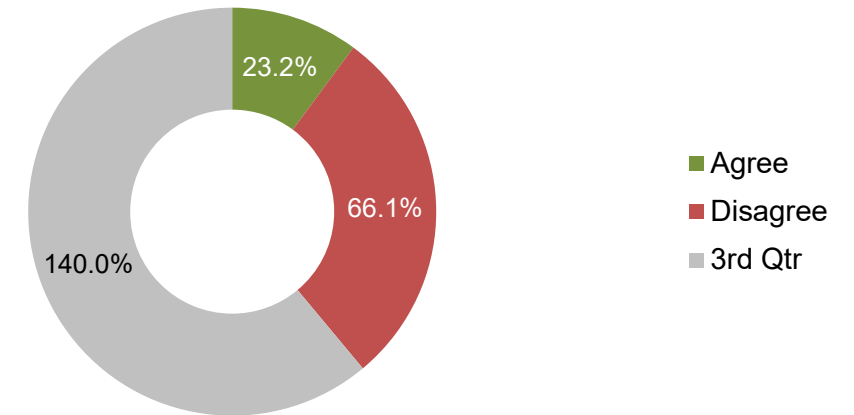


56% agree that Parks Commission should provide additional unique "experience-based" camping that include facilities such as yurts, treehouses, and walk-in tent sites that are being constructed at Ottawa Sands

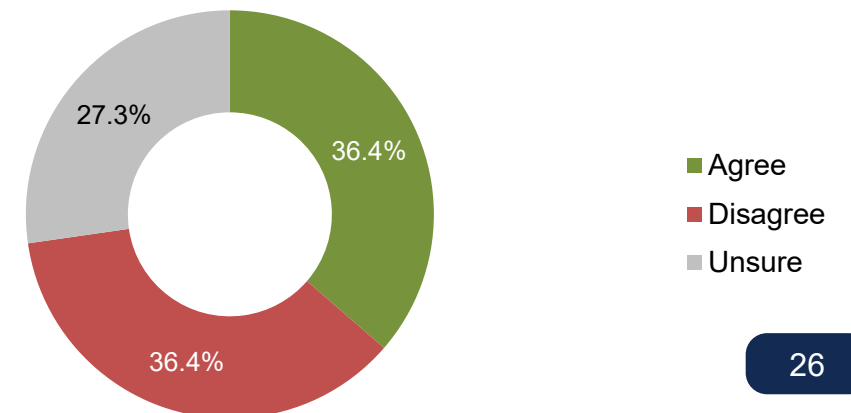
Question 25: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement. The Parks Commission should provide additional unique "experience-based" camping that include facilities such as yurts, treehouses, and walk-in tent sites that are being constructed at Ottawa Sands.



Among those who initially voted "no"

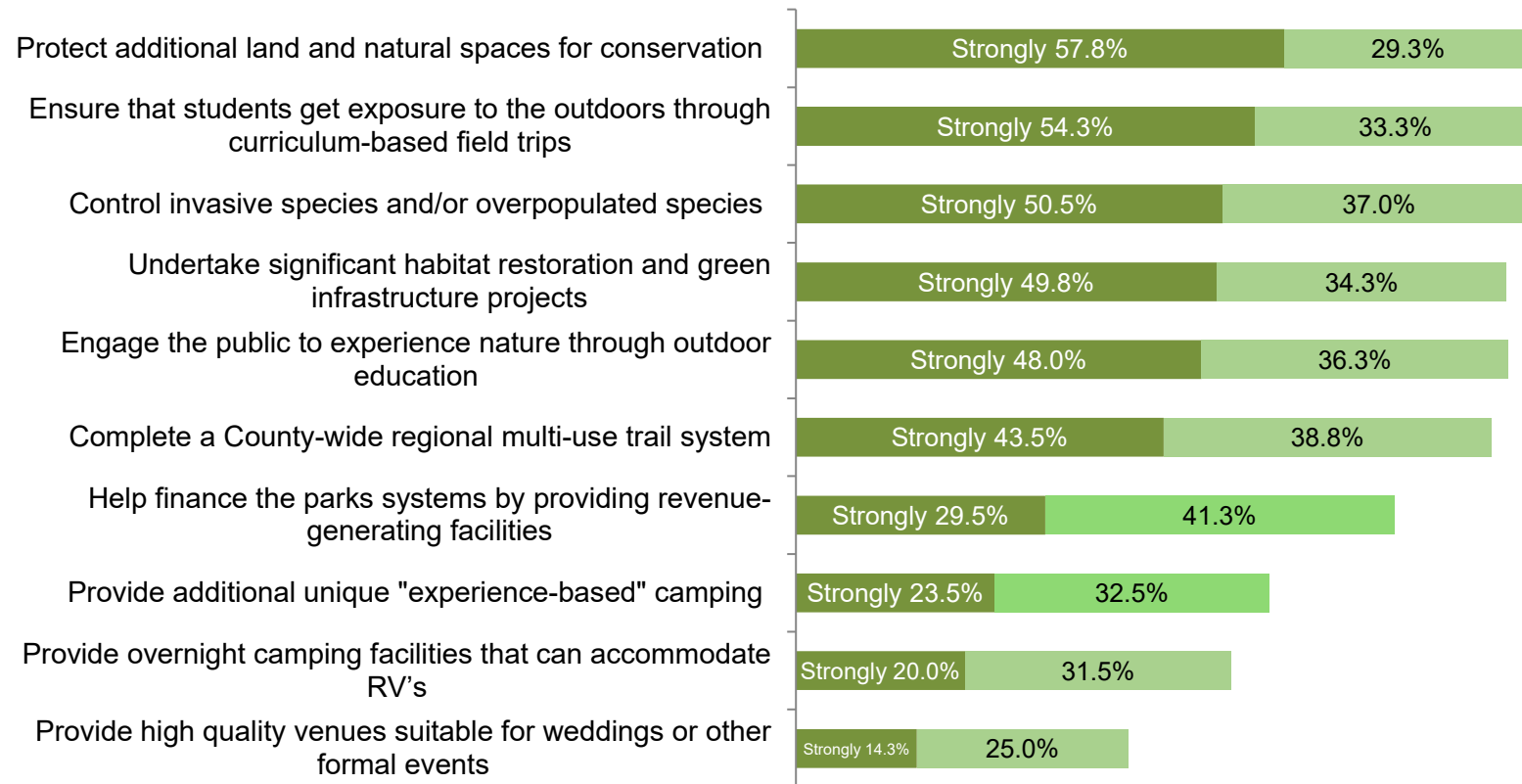


Among those who initially voted "unsure"



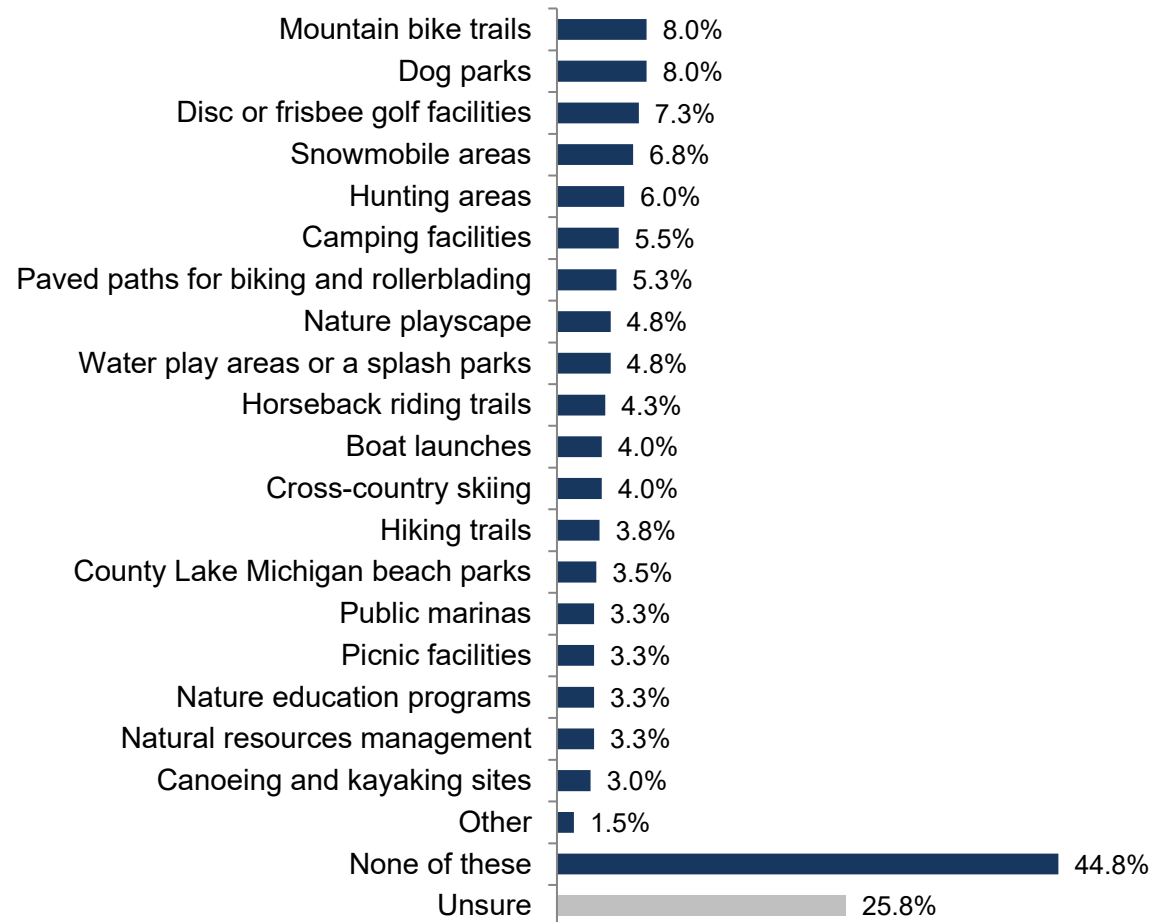
Protecting additional land and natural spaces for conservation is the initiative with the highest intensity

Question 16-25: Here is a list of initiatives being considered by the Ottawa County Parks Commission. For each one, please indicate if you agree or disagree with that statement.



Mountain bike trails and dog parks are the top recreational programming opportunities that the Commission currently provides too many of

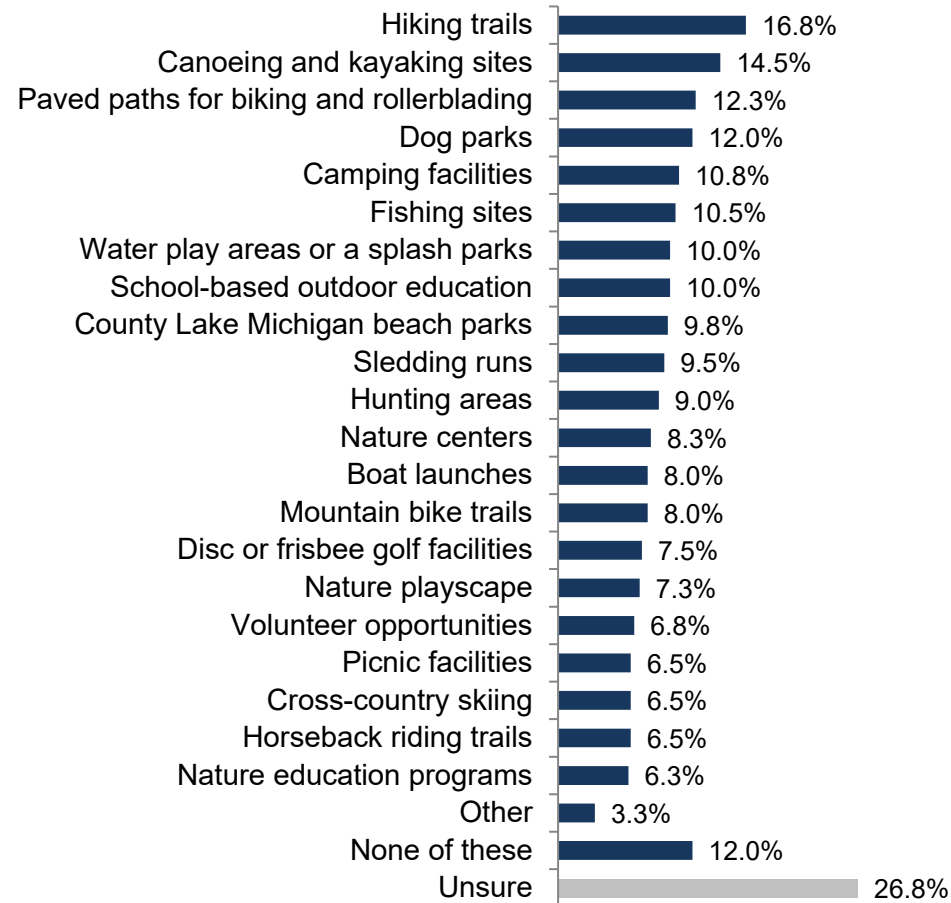
Question 26: Which of the following park facilities and recreational programming opportunities would you say the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission currently provides too many of? Select all that apply.



Hiking trails and canoeing/kayaking sites are the recreational programming opportunities that the Commission provides too few of

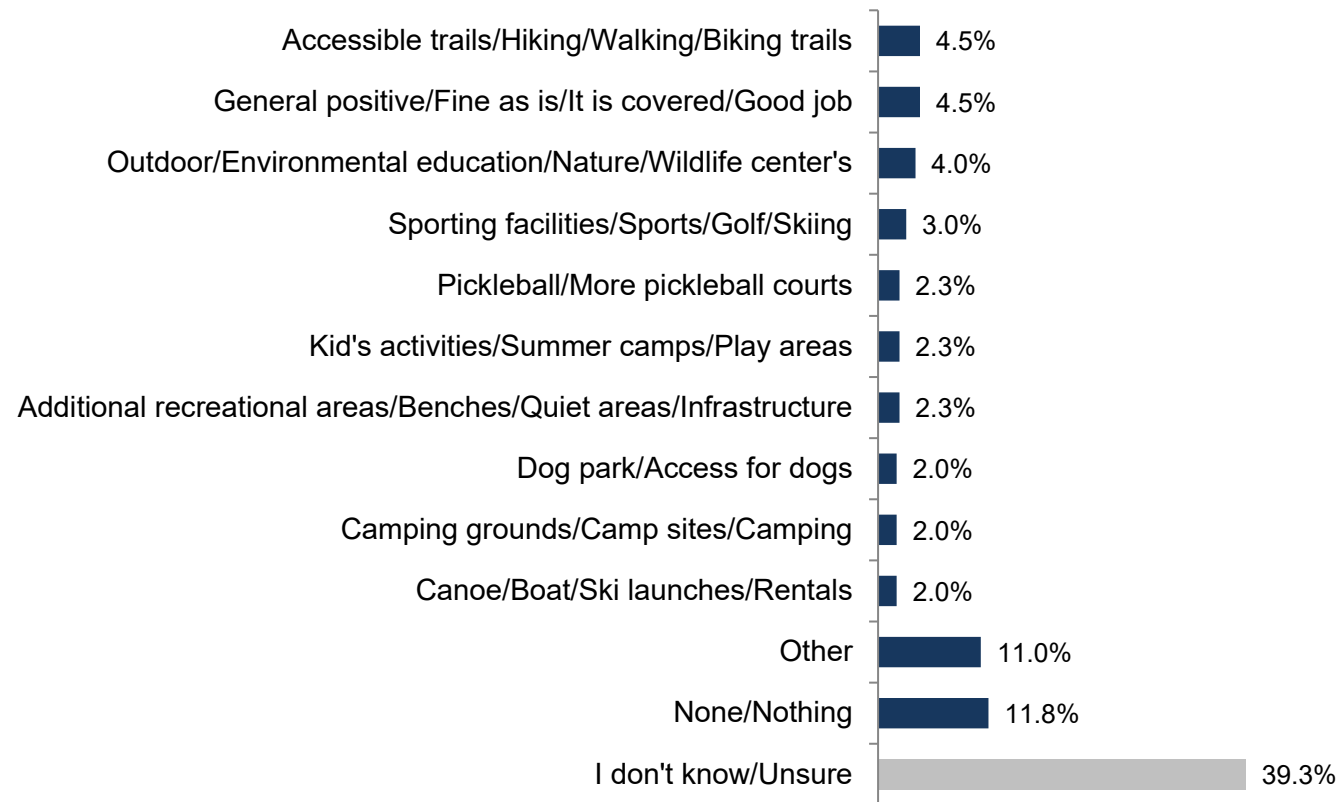
Question 27: Which of the following park facilities and recreational programming opportunities would you say the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission currently provides too few of? Select all that apply.

[OPTIONS SELECTED IN Q26 ELIMINATED]



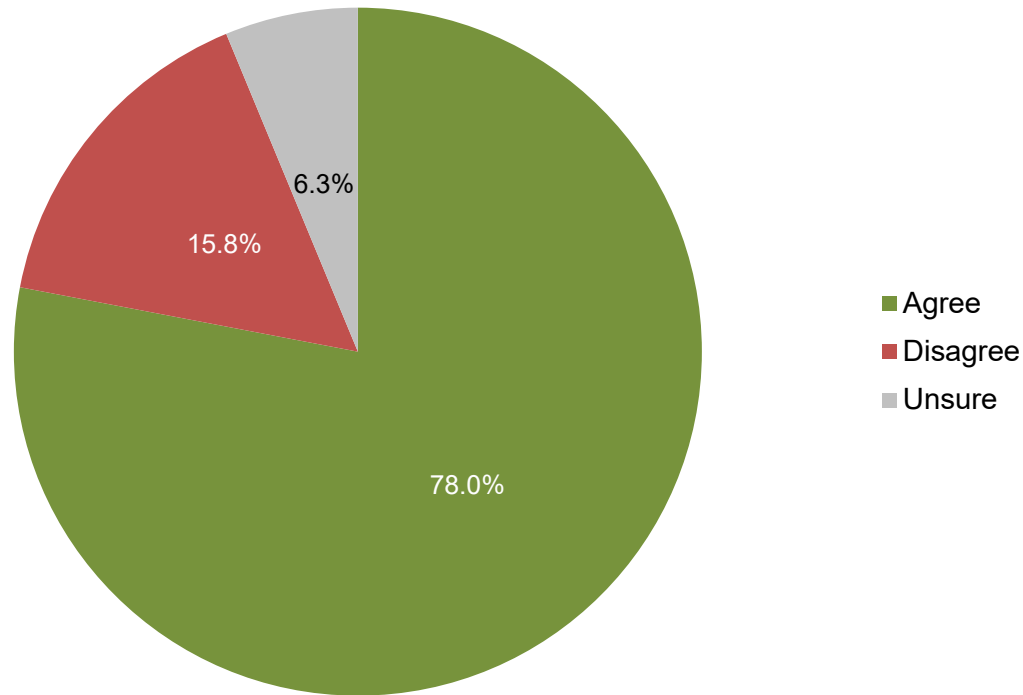
Accessible trails top the list of suggestions

Question 28: What other park facilities or recreational programming opportunities do you believe Ottawa County should offer?
[OPEN ENDED RESPONSE]

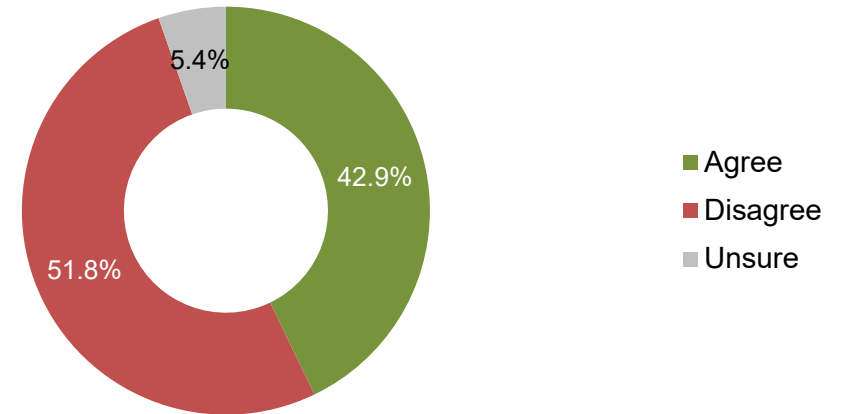


78% agree with the statement that the Parks Commission should acquire land or easements for trails and bike paths

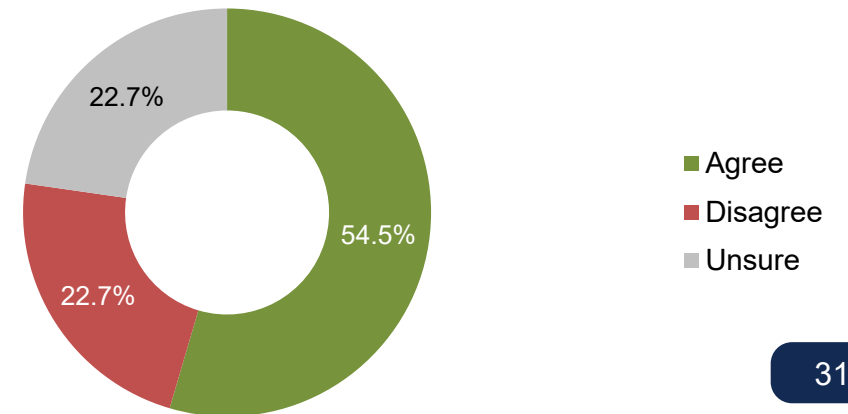
Question 29: Here is a list of ways Ottawa County could expand its park system by acquiring land in the region. For each situation, please indicate if you would agree or disagree with Ottawa County acquiring that type of land. The Parks Commission should acquire land or easements for trails and bike paths



Among those who initially voted “no”

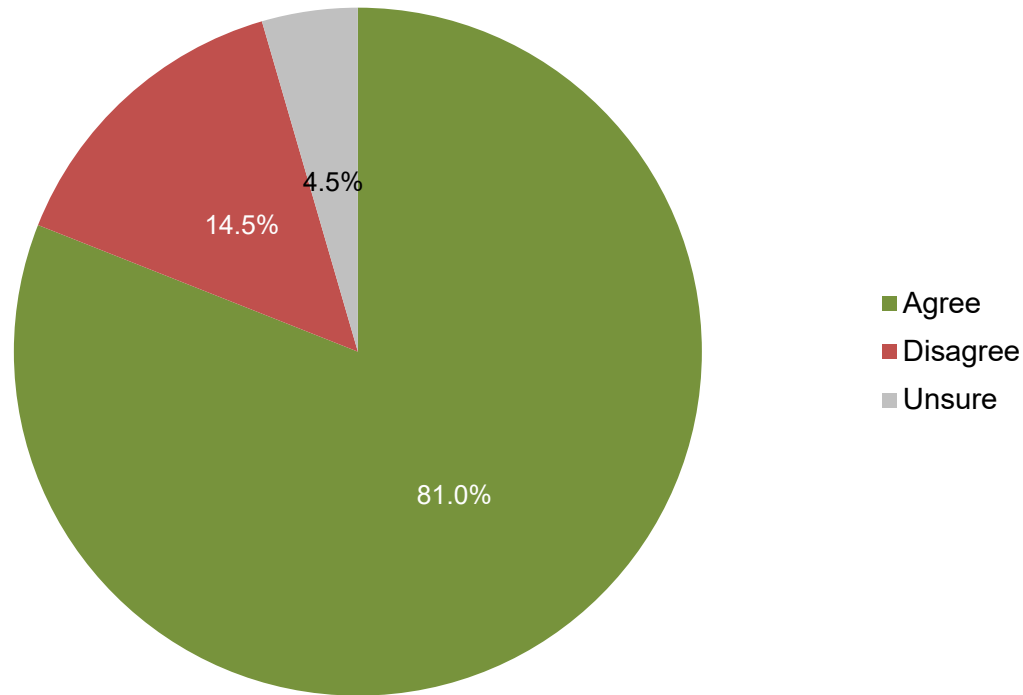


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

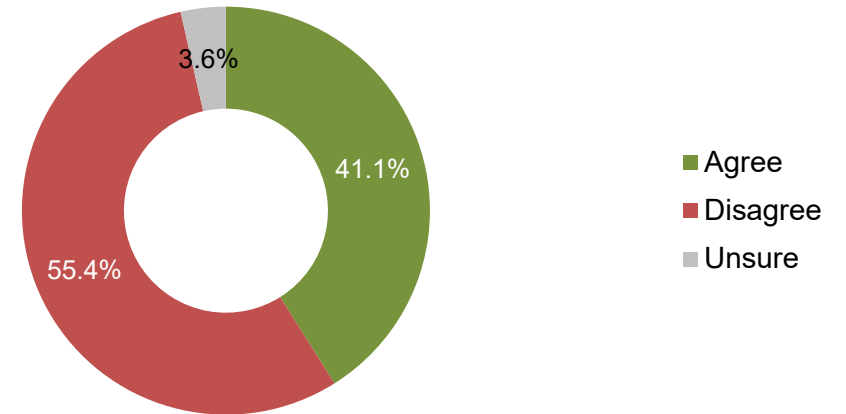


81% agree that the Parks Commission should acquire land or easements to protect unique environmental areas such as wetlands, sand dunes, mature woodlands, and wildlife areas

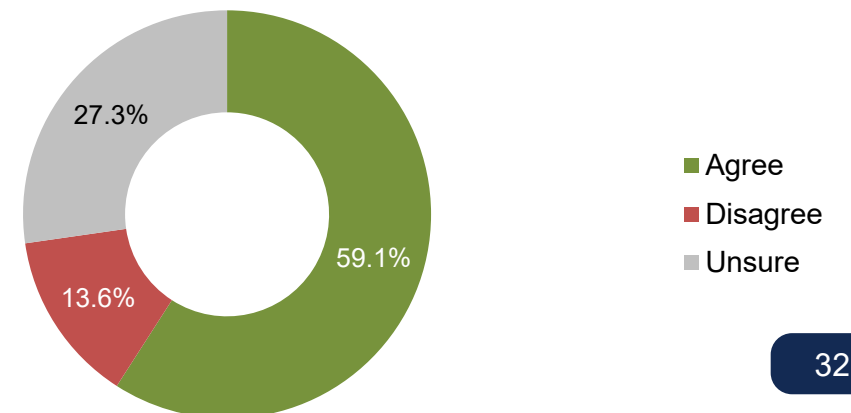
Question 30: Here is a list of ways Ottawa County could expand its park system by acquiring land in the region. For each situation, please indicate if you would agree or disagree with Ottawa County acquiring that type of land. The Parks Commission should acquire land or easements to protect unique environmental areas such as wetlands, sand dunes, mature woodlands, and wildlife areas



Among those who initially voted “no”

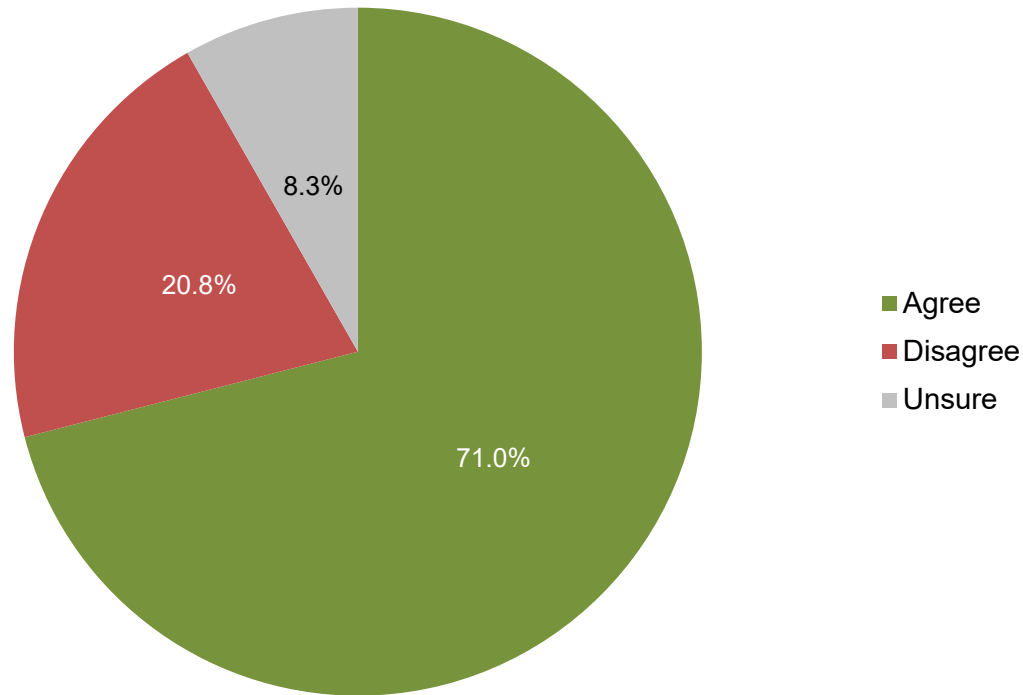


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

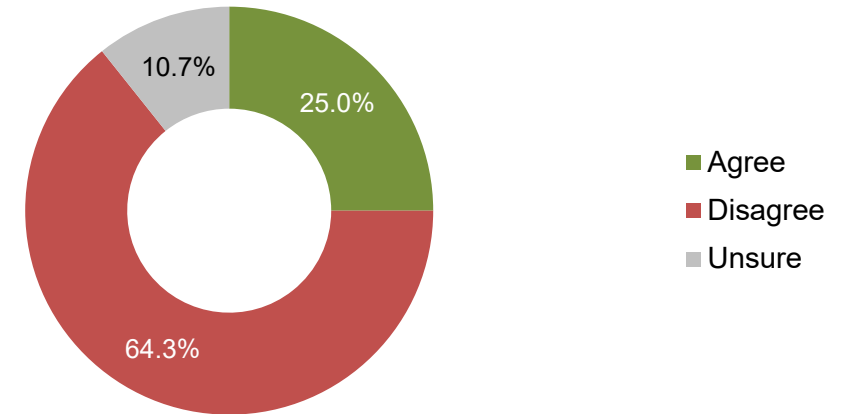


71% agree that the Parks Commission should acquire property for habitat restoration or green infrastructure

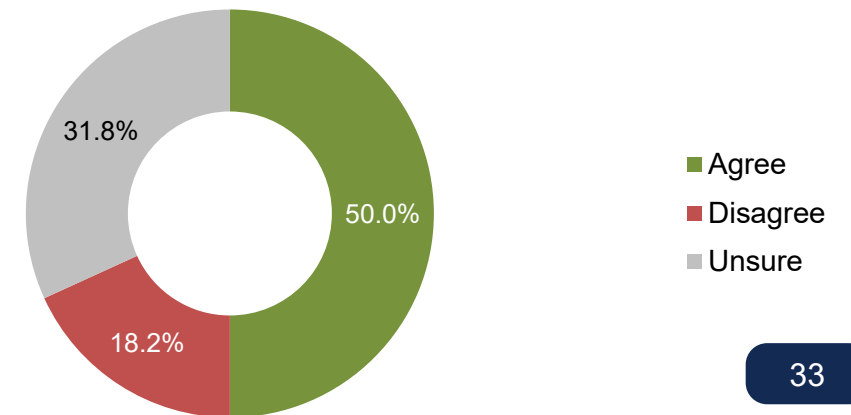
Question 31: Here is a list of ways Ottawa County could expand its park system by acquiring land in the region. For each situation, please indicate if you would agree or disagree with Ottawa County acquiring that type of land. The Parks Commission should acquire property for habitat restoration or green infrastructure



Among those who initially voted “no”

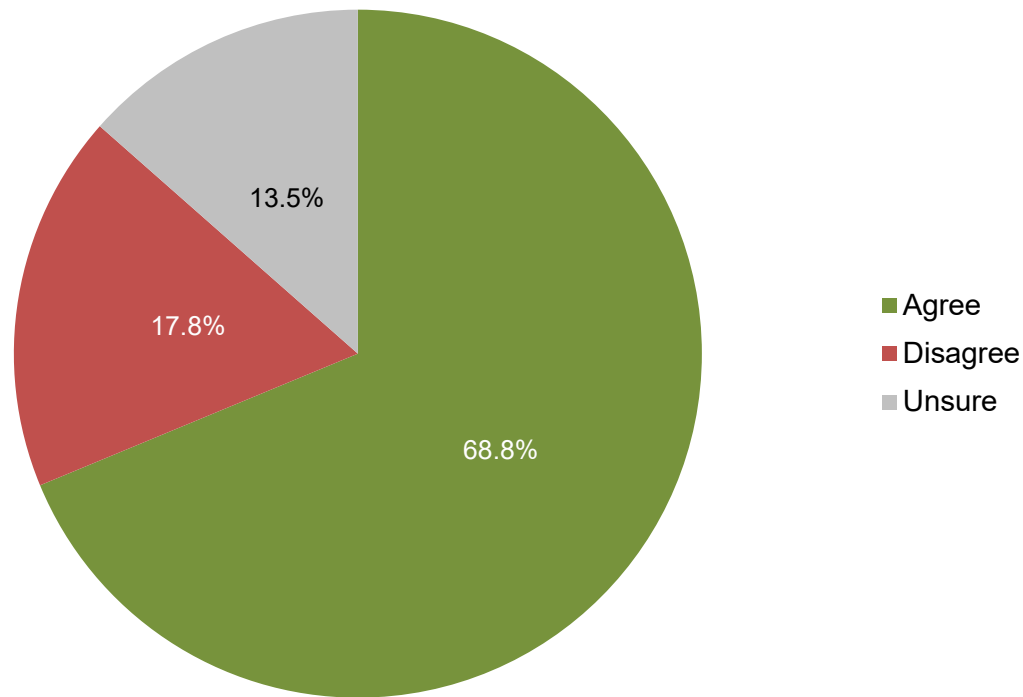


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

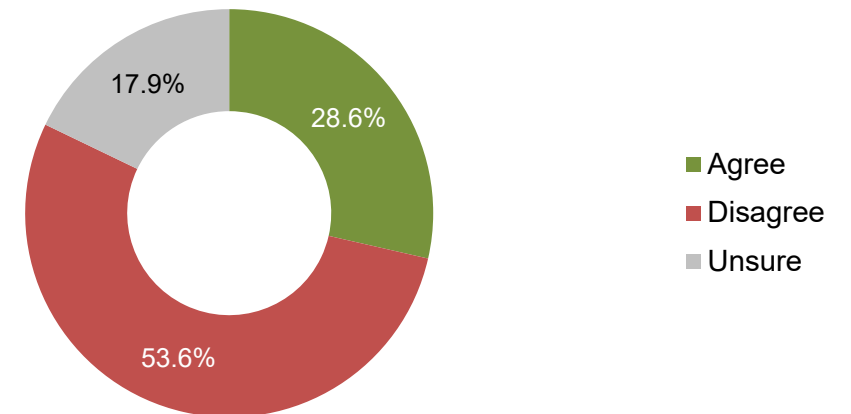


69% agree that the Parks Commission should acquire property in areas of the County with few natural resources-based parks or recreation facilities

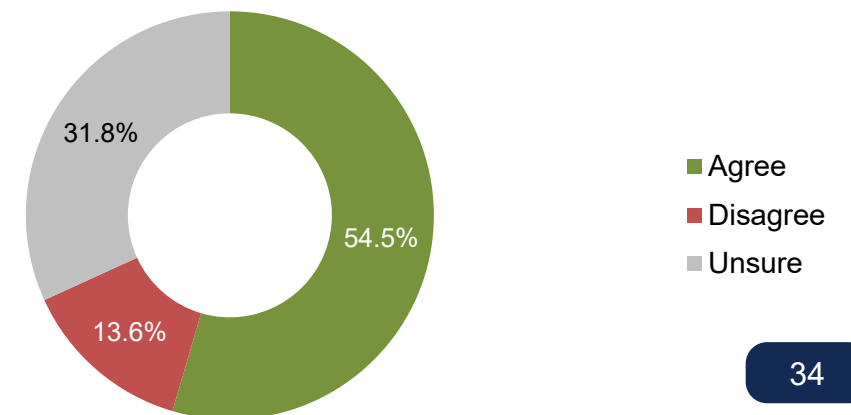
Question 32: Here is a list of ways Ottawa County could expand its park system by acquiring land in the region. For each situation, please indicate if you would agree or disagree with Ottawa County acquiring that type of land. The Parks Commission should acquire property in areas of the County currently with few natural resources-based parks or recreation facilities



Among those who initially voted “no”

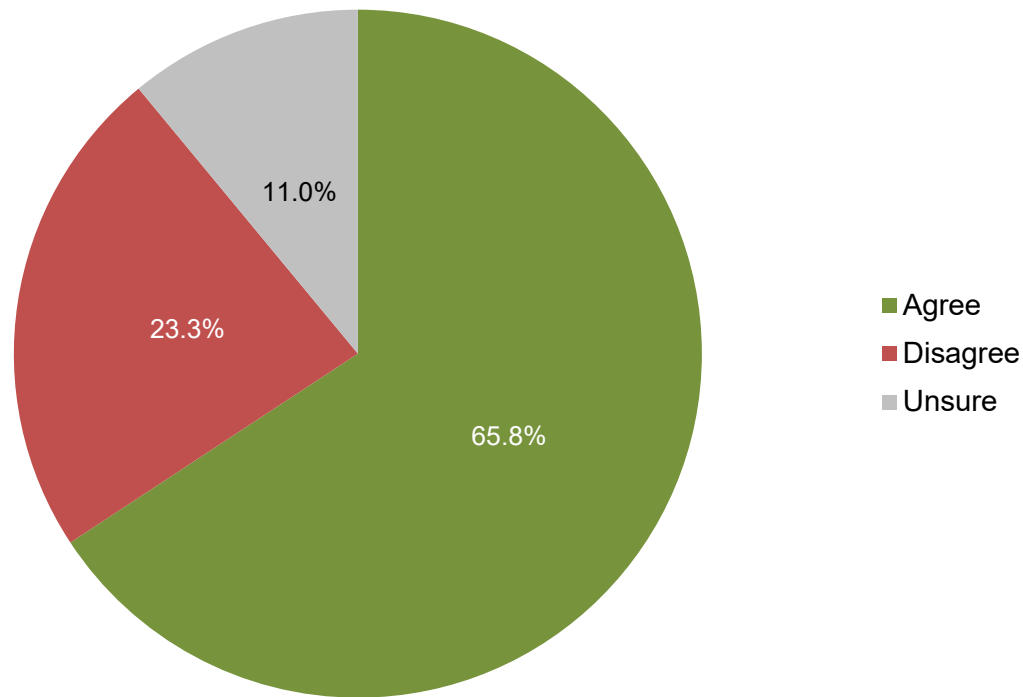


Among those who initially voted “unsure”

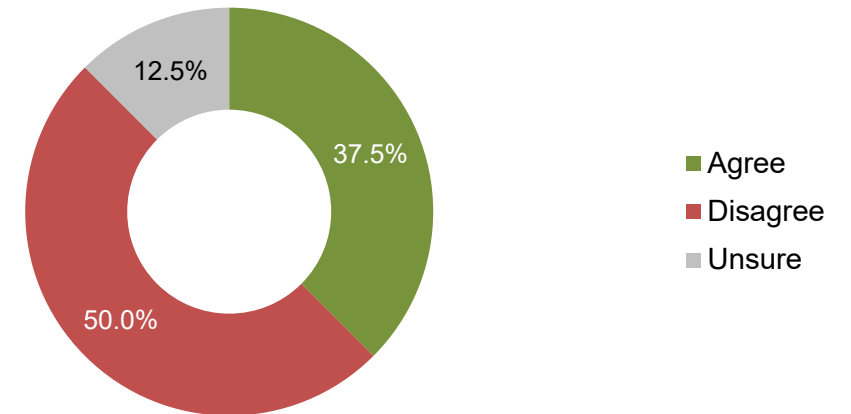


66% agree that the Parks Commission should acquire historic sites

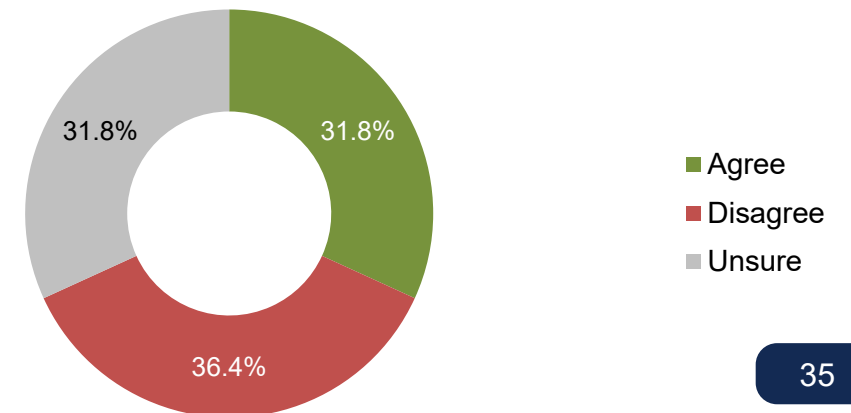
Question 33: Here is a list of ways Ottawa County could expand its park system by acquiring land in the region. For each situation, please indicate if you would agree or disagree with Ottawa County acquiring that type of land. The Parks Commission should acquire historic sites



Among those who initially voted "no"

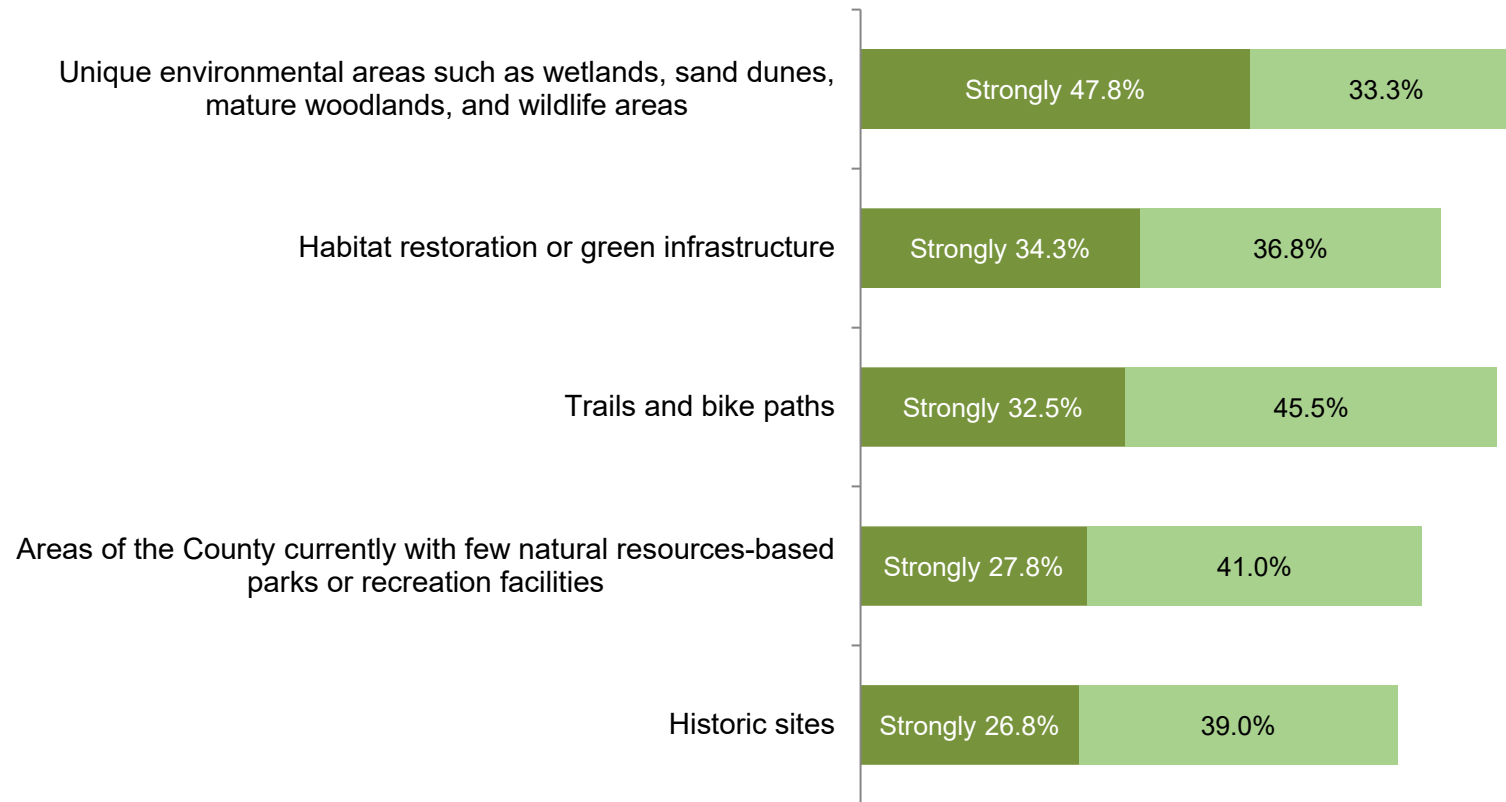


Among those who initially voted "unsure"



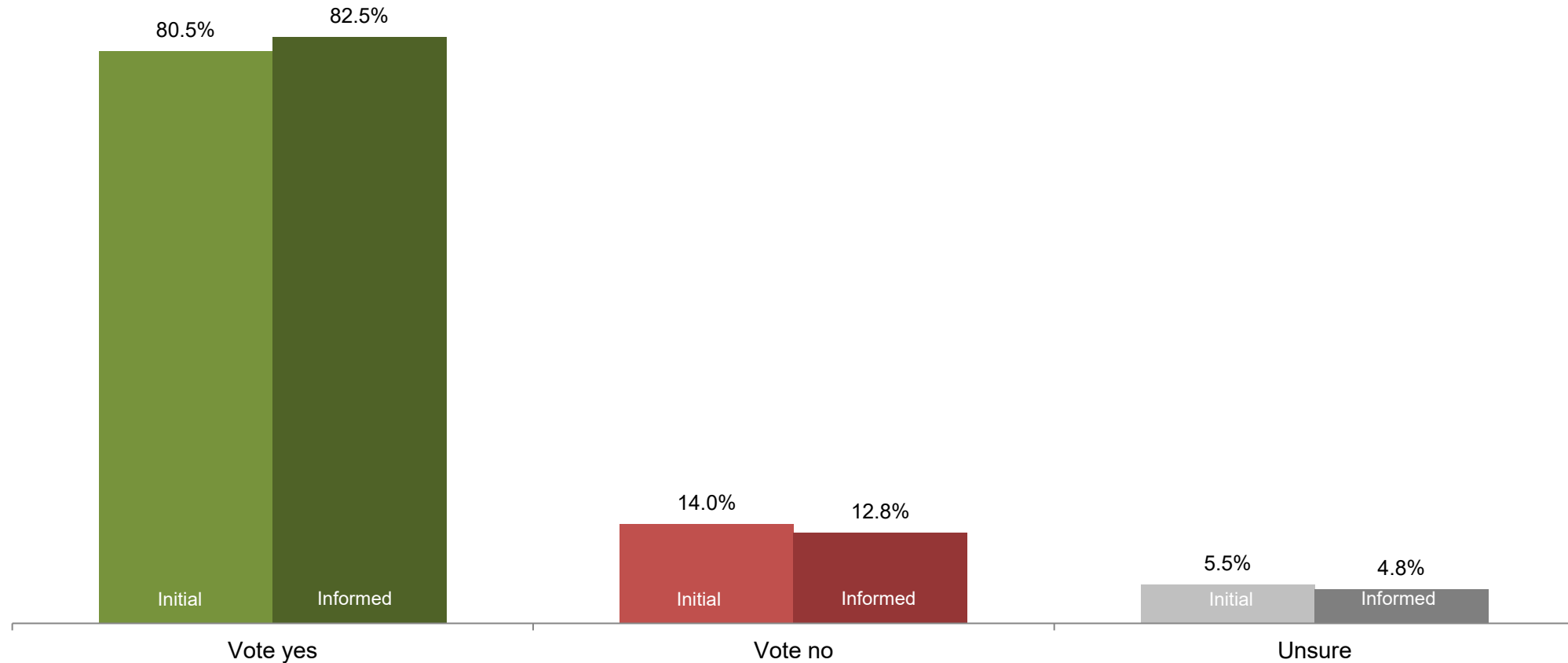
Unique environmental areas such as wetlands is the type of acquired land with the highest intensity

Question 29-33: Here is a list of ways Ottawa County could expand its park system by acquiring land in the region. For each situation, please indicate if you would agree or disagree with Ottawa County acquiring that type of land.



Informed vote: 83% vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage

Question 34: Knowing what you know now, if Ottawa County placed a renewal of the 1/3 of a mill on a future election ballot, which amounts to \$25 per year for a house valued at \$150,000 with a taxable value of \$75,000, and the election were being held today, would you vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage, or would you vote no to oppose it?

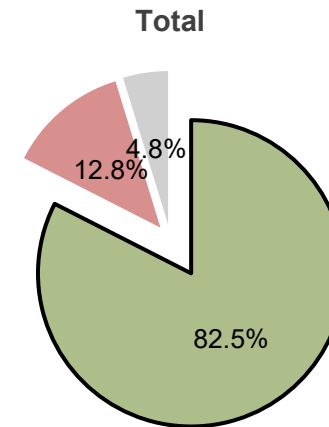
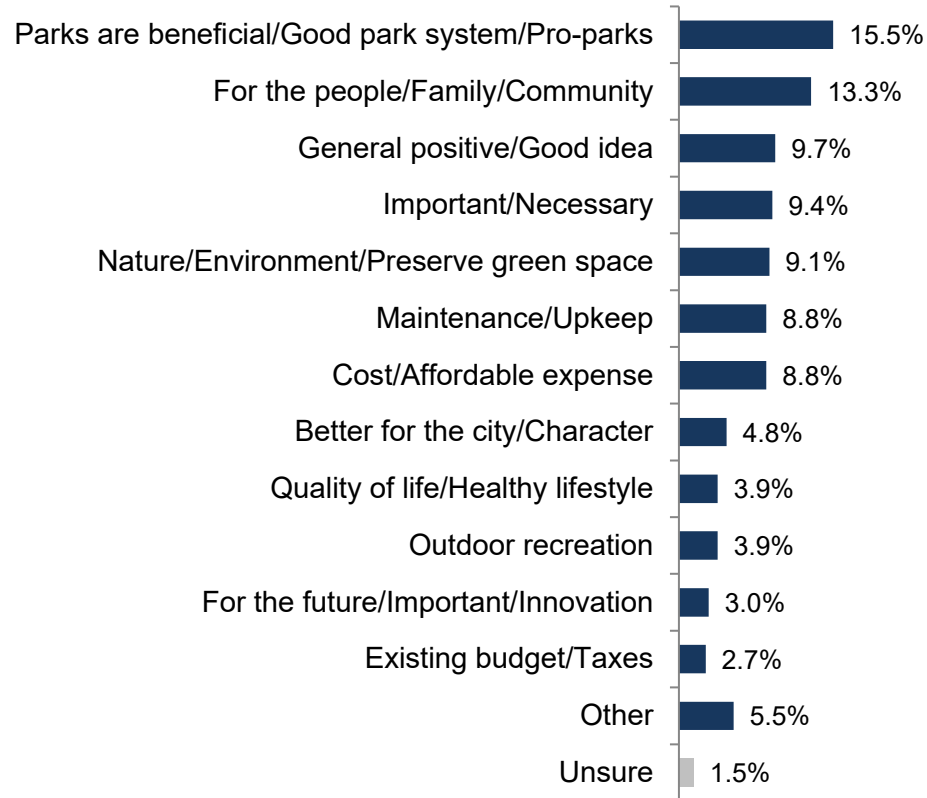


Parks are beneficial/Good park system/Pro-parks were the top reasons for voting yes on the millage renewal

Question 35: Why would you vote yes to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage?

[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]

[IF ANSWERED 'VOTE YES' TO Q34]

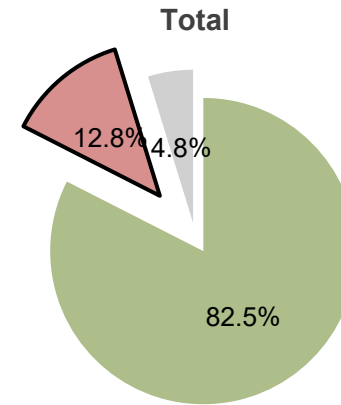
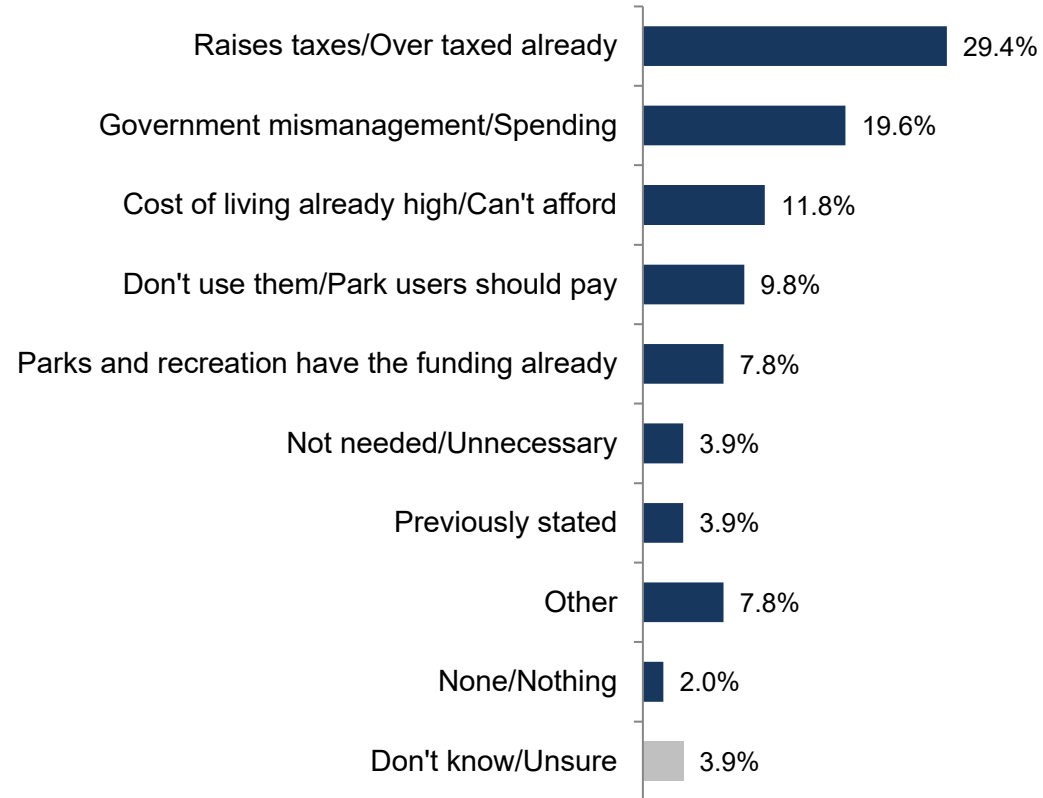


Raises taxes/over-taxed already were the top reasons for voting no on the millage renewal

Question 36: Why would you vote no to renew the dedicated Parks and Recreation millage?

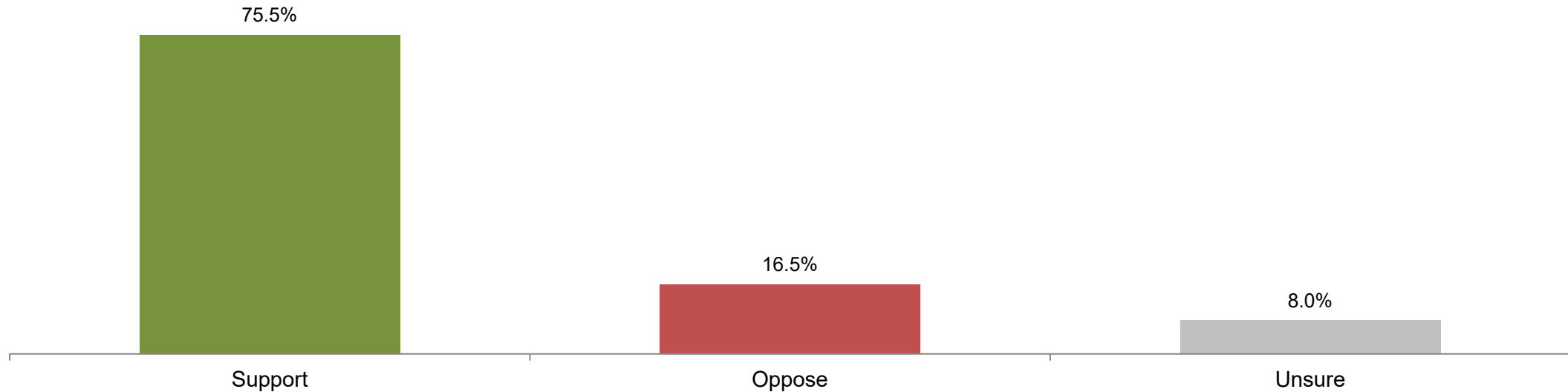
[OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]

[IF ANSWERED 'VOTE NO' TO Q34]



76% support an increased millage that would focus on the protection and management of the County's most sensitive natural resources

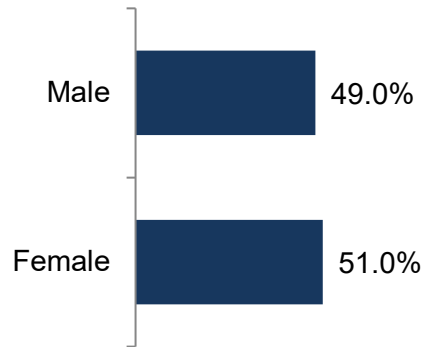
Question 37: Knowing what you know now, would you support or oppose an increased millage that would focus on the protection and management of the County's most sensitive natural resources, expanded outdoor education, and development of new natural resources-based recreation facilities and trails?



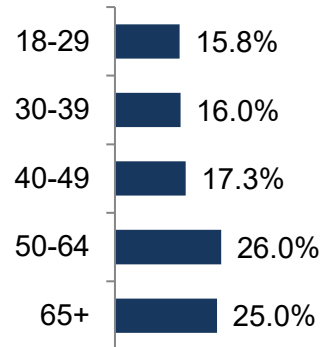
Demographics

Respondent demographics by gender, age group, ethnicity, party preference, home type, children in home, household size, and years of residency

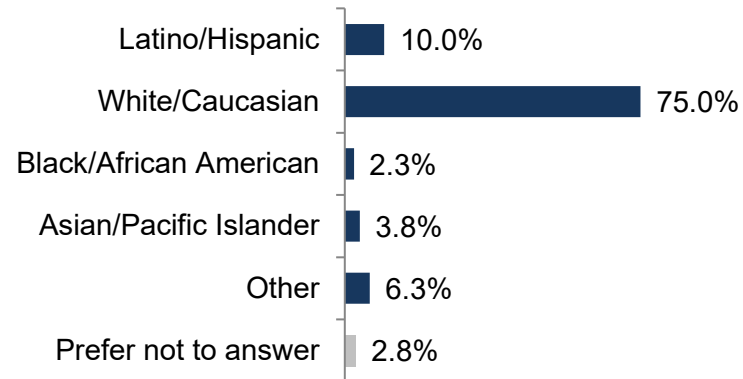
Gender



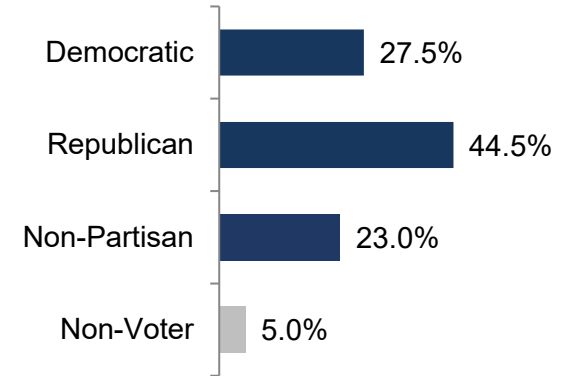
Age Group



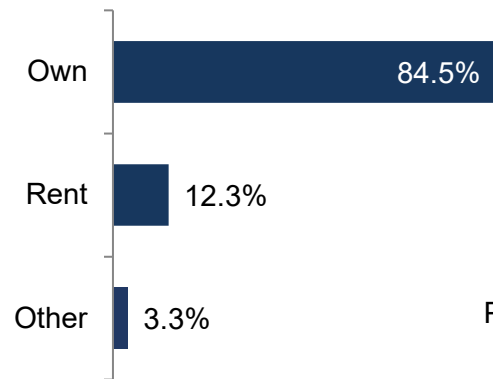
Ethnicity



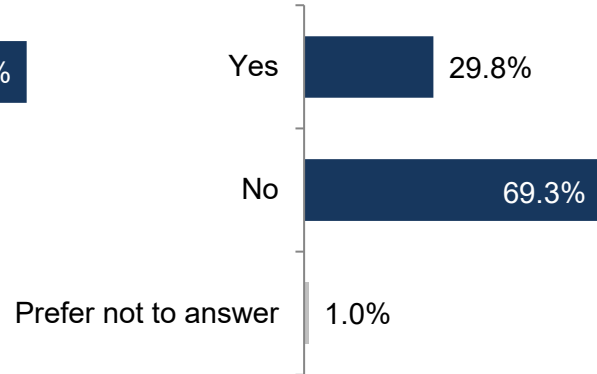
Party Preference



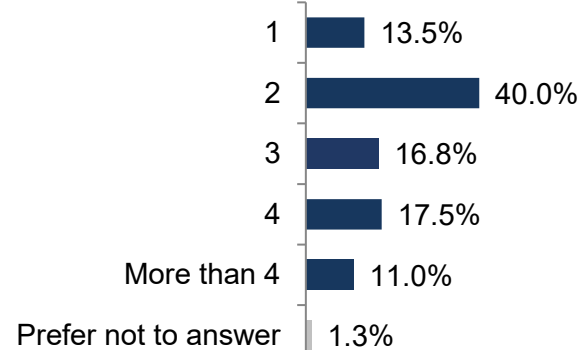
Home Type



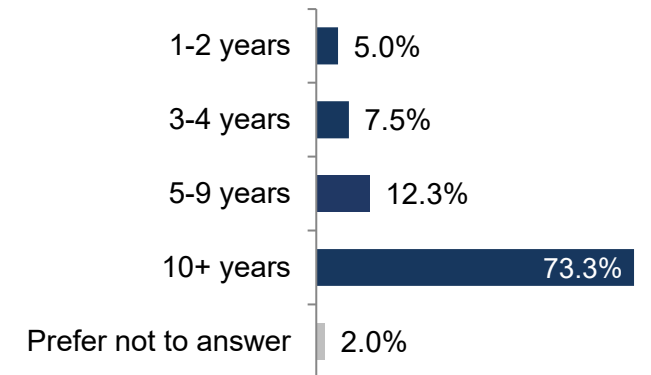
Children in Home



Household Size

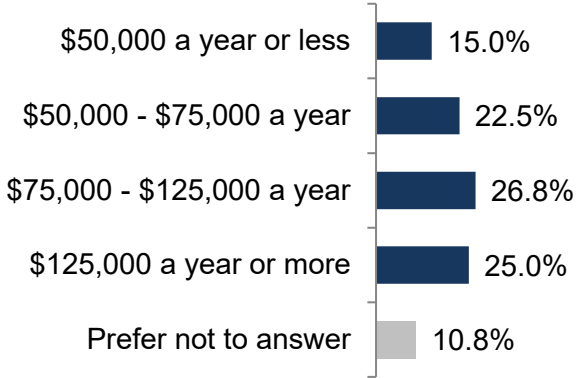


Years of Residency

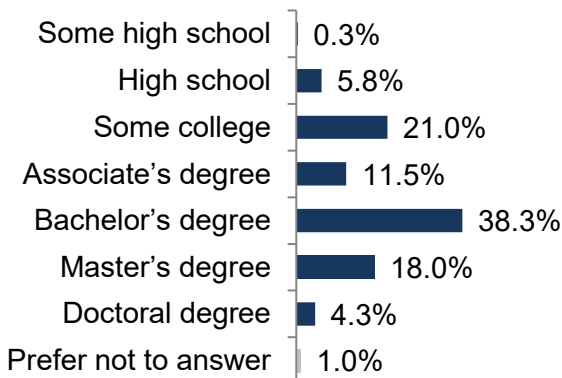


Respondent demographics by household income, education level, municipality, Michigan Hunting/Fishing license holder, and County Commissioner District

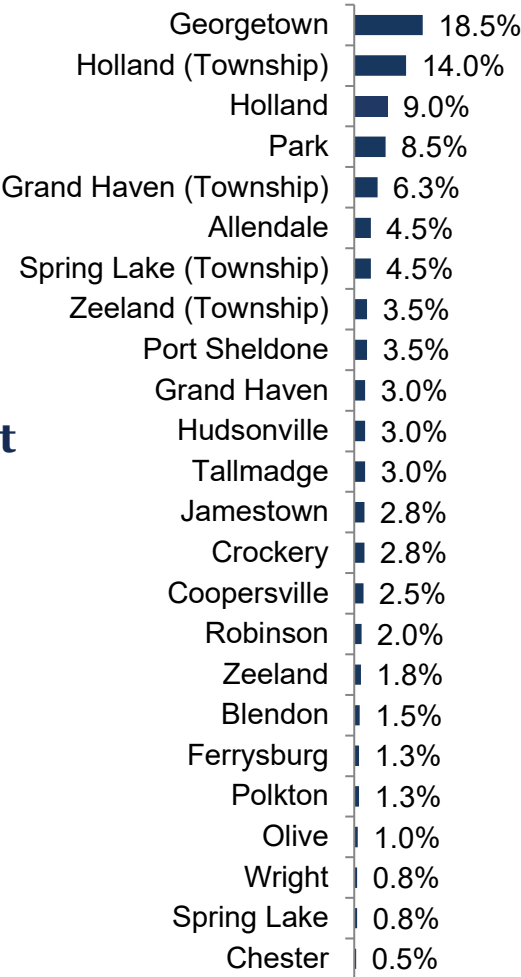
Household Income



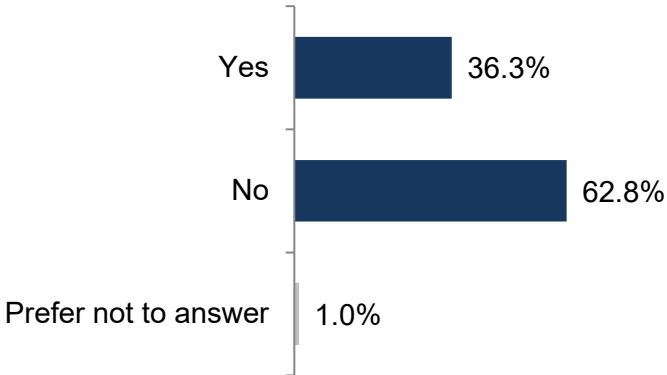
Education Level



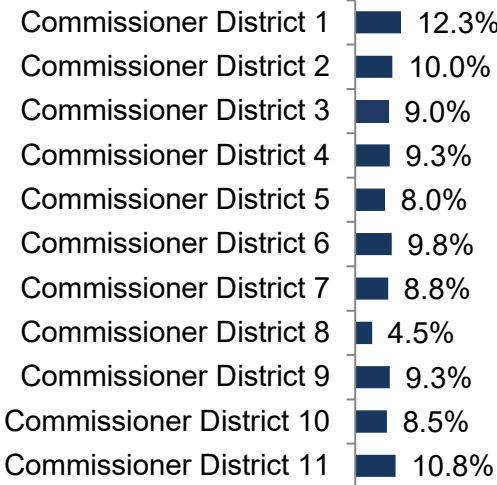
Municipality



Hunting/Fishing License Holder



County Commissioner District



Questions?

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