



WELCOME
WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Building a Community Based Budget

2026 MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF ST. STEPHEN BUDGET
PUBLIC CONSULTATION SESSION #1—GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Land Acknowledgement

- ▶ The Municipal District of St. Stephen recognizes that the land on which we work, live, and play, is the traditional unceded territory of the Peskotomuhkati people.

Housekeeping.

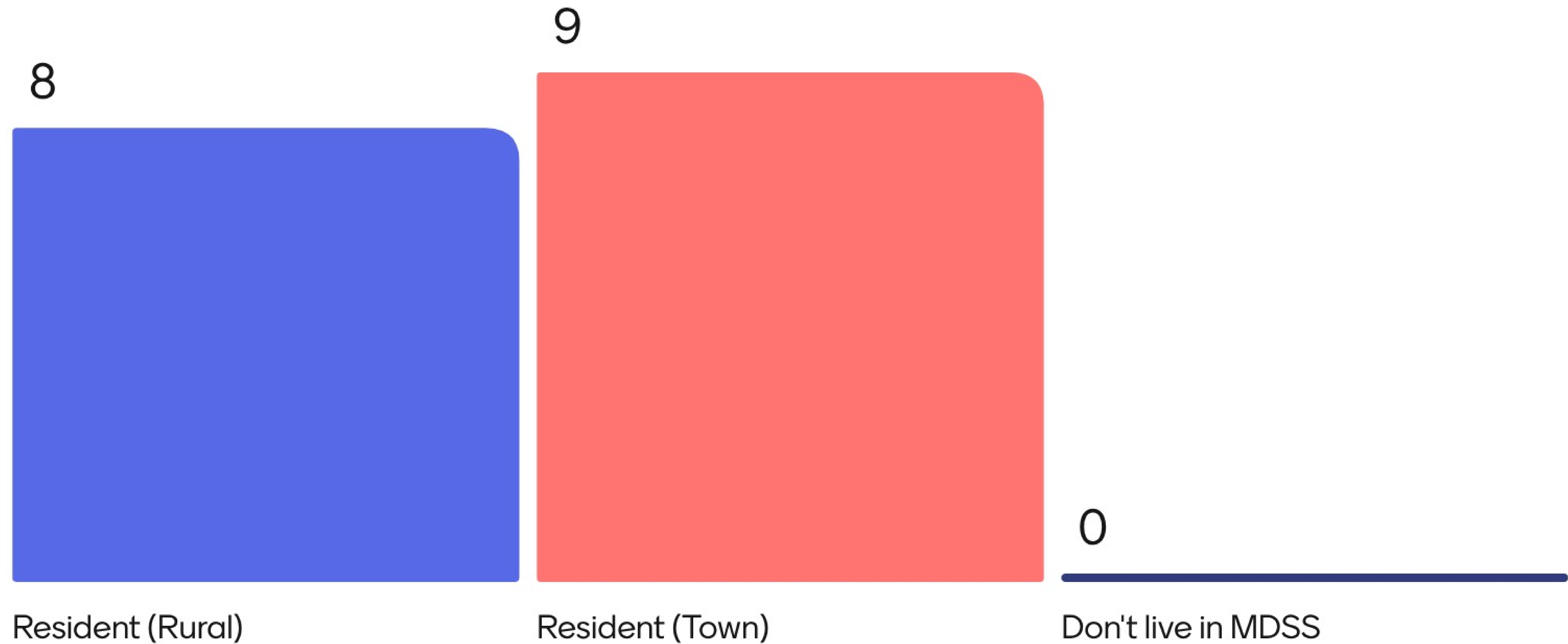
- Washrooms are located just outside the room to the left.
- Emergency Exits

To join the Interactive portion of the meeting:

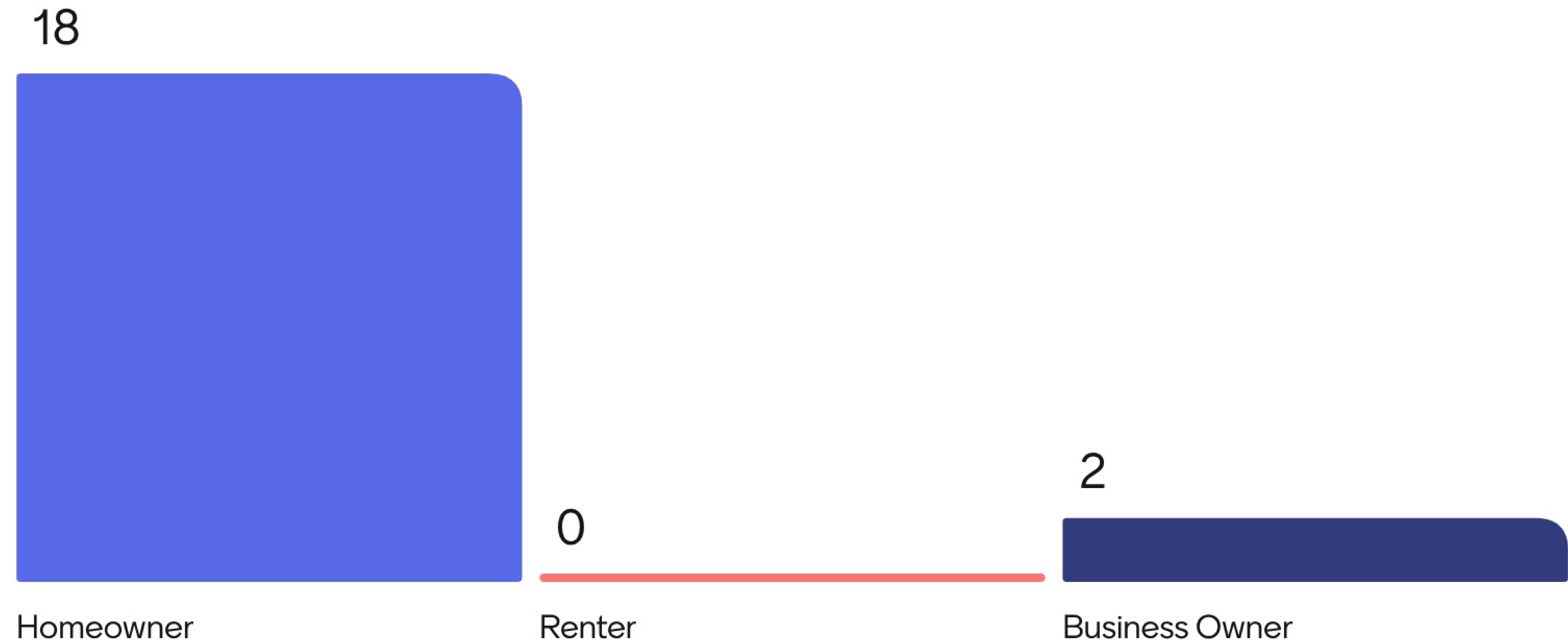
- 1) Wifi Network: Garceleon Civic Center
- 2) Go to www.menti.com
- 3) Enter meeting Code: **83425267**

TIME
FOR
INTRODUCTIONS

Who do we have in the room?



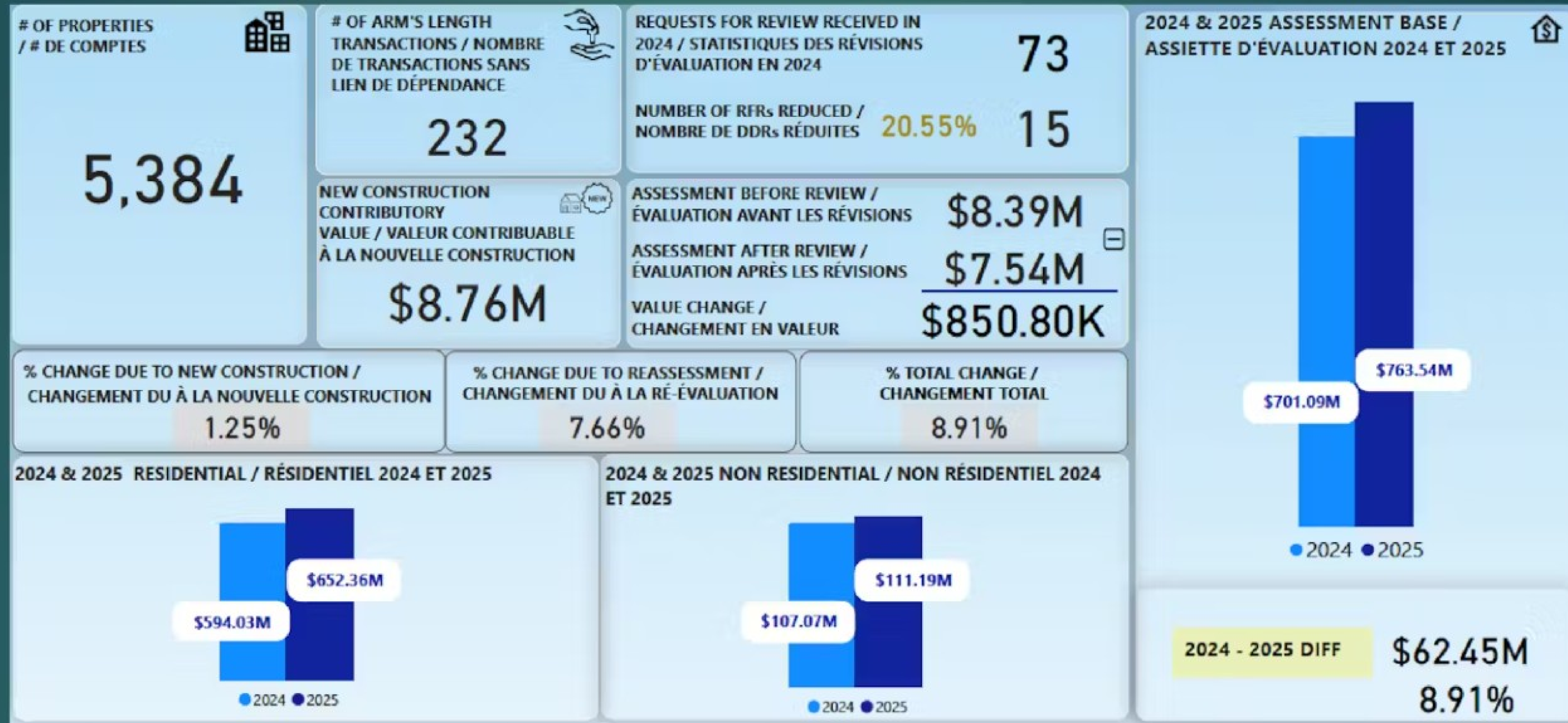
Who do we have in the room? (select all that apply)



THIS EVENING'S AGENDA

- ▶ Context Setting
- ▶ Identifying concerns
- ▶ Prioritizing basic policy options
- ▶ Collect community feedback
- ▶ Have some fun

2024-2025 Assessment



KEY DELIVERABLES

4% reduction in the Residential Tax Rates (both Rural and Urban) Shared Special Projects - Corporate

Mayor and Councillor Stipends held at 2024 rates

\$198,334 reduction to Administrative Staff salaries as part of Corporate restructuring

Services fund of \$237,101 to support technological, equipment, or other investment necessary to implement

Implementation of new budgeting software.

Maintain \$50,000 Community Grants Fund to support community initiatives per

Sidewalk and Road Renewal budgets moved to Capital Plan

Funding for Independent Community Safety Survey

Municipal Re-branding Study

Crack-Sealing preventative maintenance for Airport runway

\$150,000 to support Economic Development work for our municipality

\$65,281 transfer into the General Capital Reserve for future capital needs

\$842,609 transfer to the Capital Fund to support 2025 Capital Plan

2026



2026



What is the Biggest Challenge that the 2026 Budget Needs to Address?

Downtown revitalization to move the town forward.
Strengthen existing businesses while attracting new businesses which leads to more tourists.

5

Popular

Lack of hotel

4

Utility infrastructure maintenance/repairs

4

Lowering tax rates
Ensuring rural areas aren't paying for services they don't need or want

3

Keeping taxes at a standstill.

3

Infrastructure

3

Keeping tax bill as low as possible

3

Affordable housing

3

What is the Biggest Challenge that the 2026 Budget Needs to Address?

Youth activites

2

Not wasting money on incompetence

1

Water lines

1

Soliciting sustainable business and talent to keep those business and community support active and engaged

1

replace aging infrastructure

1

Providing mandatory services at acceptable levels while spending to fix roads

1

Invest in roads, infrastructure, water

1

Ensuring the rural areas are considered when thinking about services offered and required.

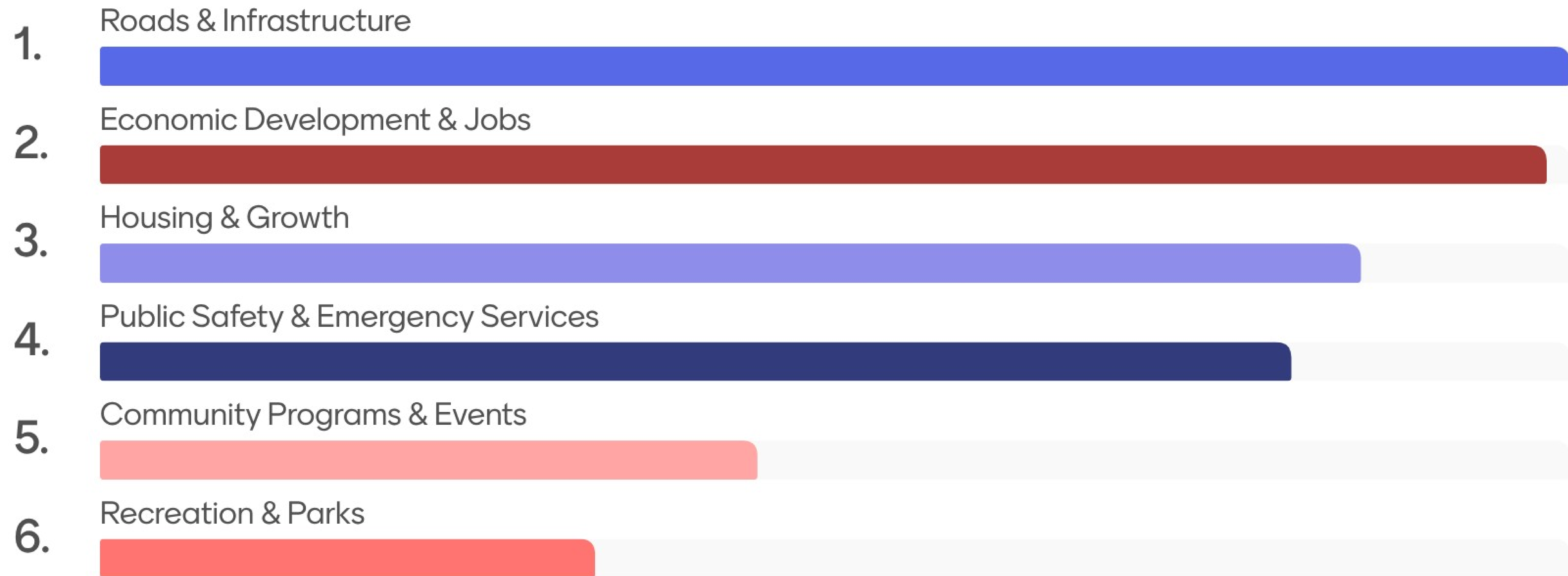
What is the Biggest Challenge that the 2026 Budget Needs to Address?

Town water improvement to ensure safe drinking water for residents.

2026 Challenges

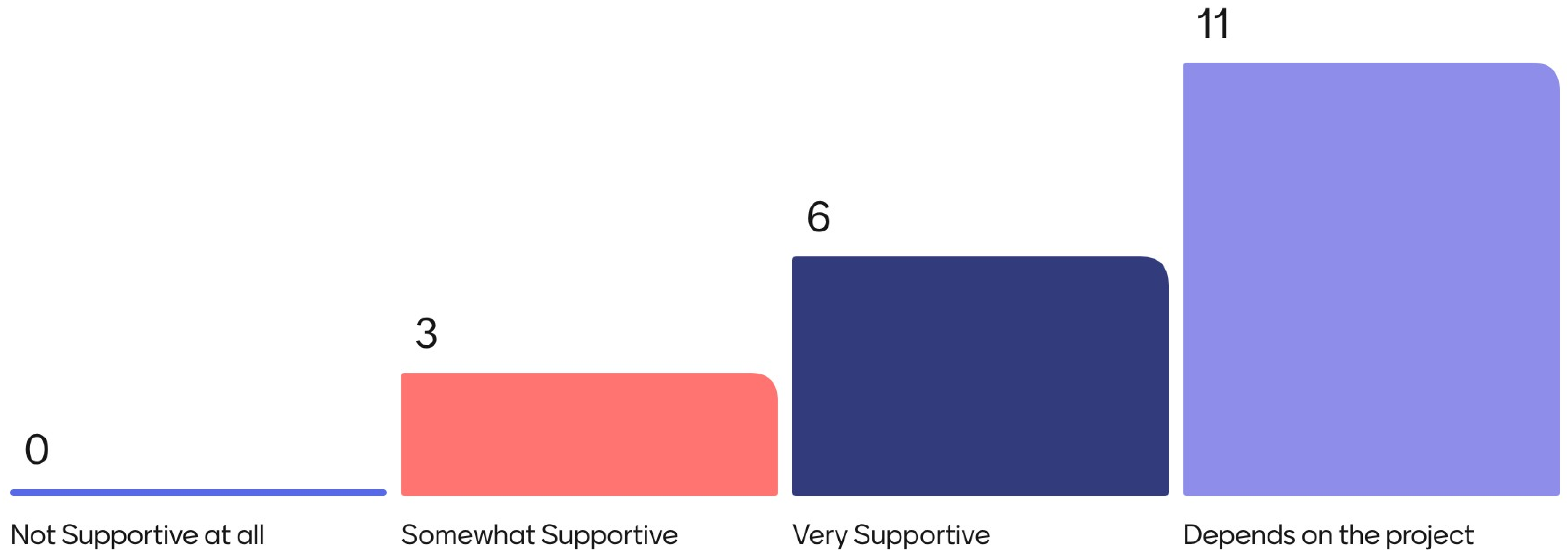
- ▶ General Election in May
- ▶ Assessment Freeze will limit the assessment growth
- ▶ Infrastructure Deficit (Roads, Sidewalks)
- ▶ Housing (all categories)
- ▶ Administration remains too “paper-based”
- ▶ Communications—website, social media, public engagement sessions etc.

Please rank the following areas in order of importance for the 2026 budget (1 = top priority).

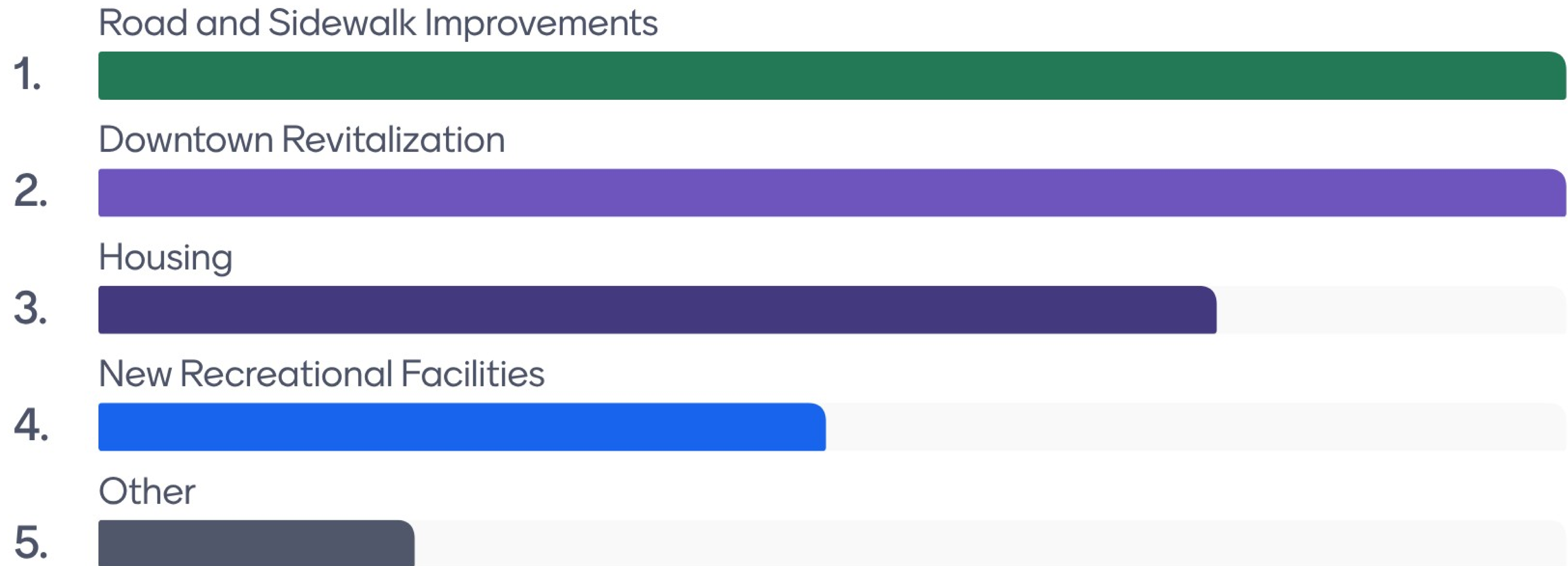




How supportive would you be of the municipality taking on debt to invest in long-term projects?

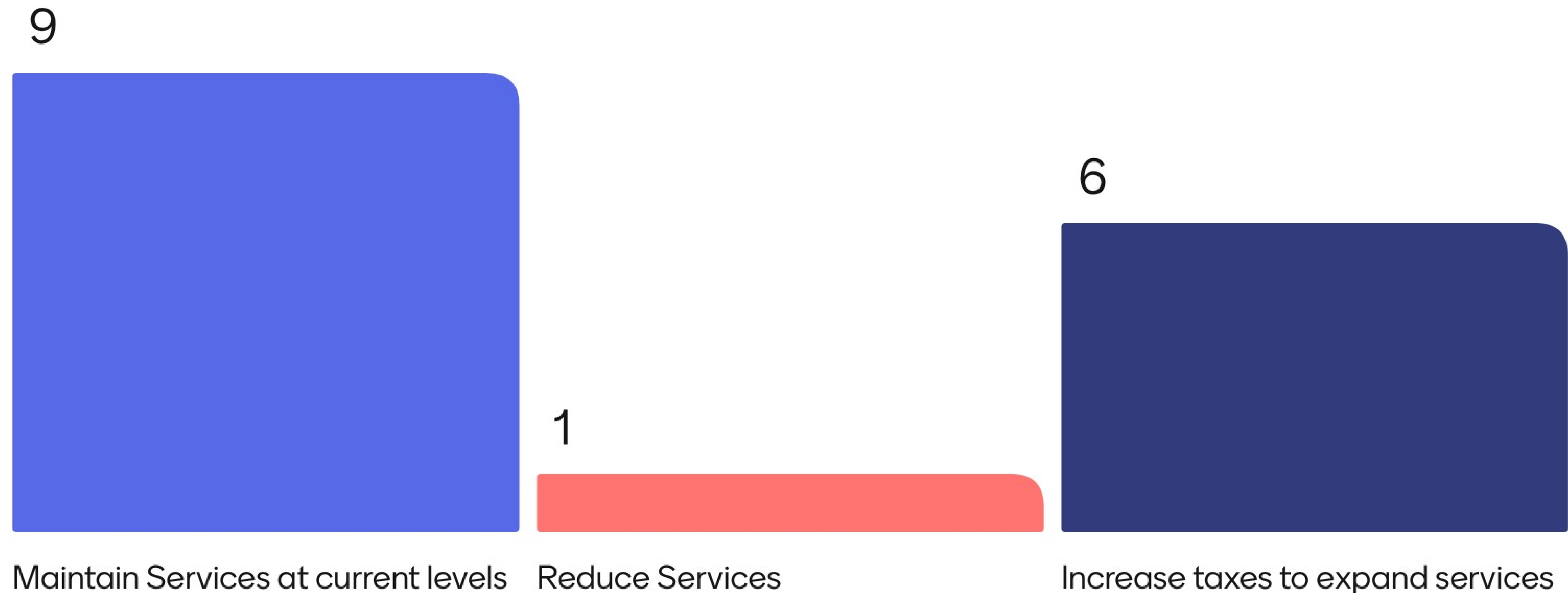


If the municipality could BORROW money for large capital projects, which would you prioritize?" (1 being highest priority)





If resources are limited, which approach do you prefer?



One municipal service or program I would protect at all costs is...

Fire department. RCMP
can go.

Fire Department

Rcmp

Fire department

The Garcelon Center as
the hub

Public works

Fire and police (but
move to municipal police
force some day)

Fire Department

One municipal service or program I would protect at all costs is...

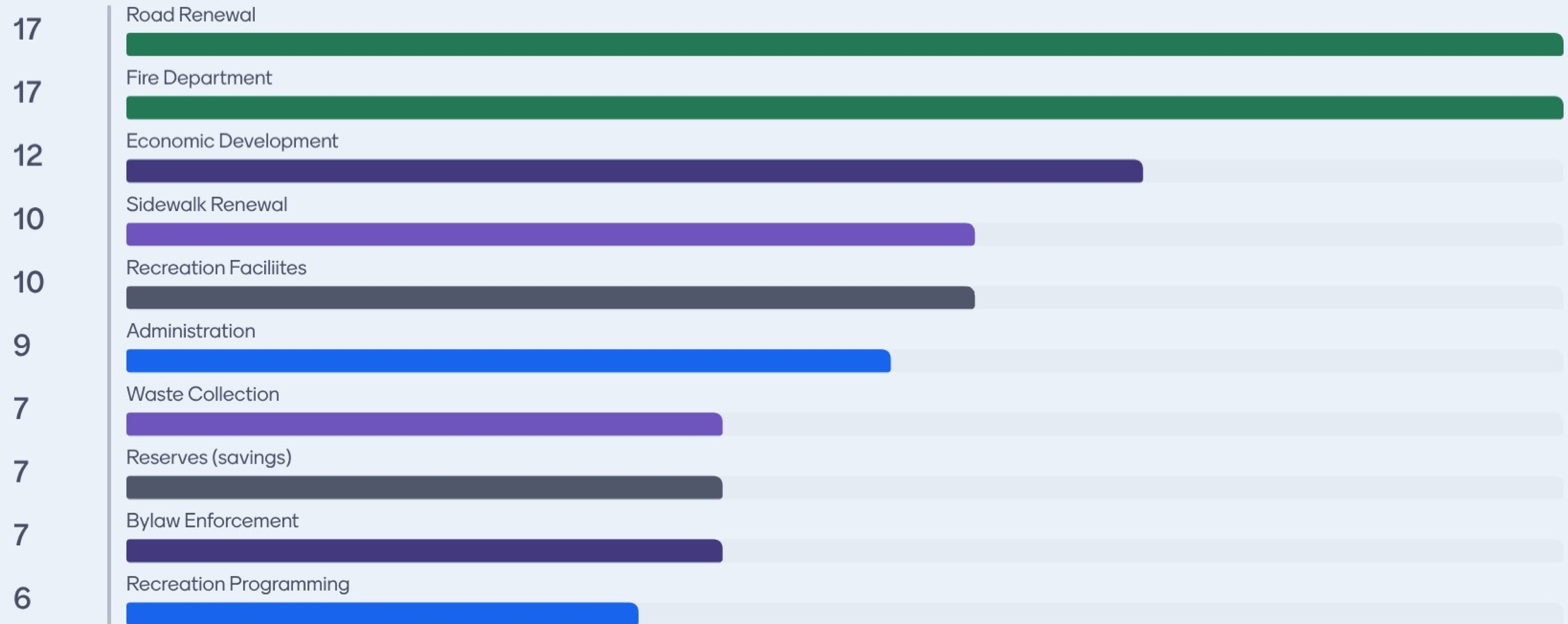
Infrastructure , Fire
protection,RCMP

Fire, policing,

RCMP first then fire
department

RCMP

Budget Allocation Exercise (\$100)



What Investment would make the biggest difference in improving St. Stephen in 2026

Restoring downtown and bringing in tourists. Whether that's a hotel, a bowling alley, or a theatre. Attracting more affordable retailers. Making St.Stephen a place to visit rather than a pass through

10

Popular

Roads,infrastructure

9

Hotel

5

Downtown revitalization

5

Downtown revitalization

5

Hotel and affordable housing

4

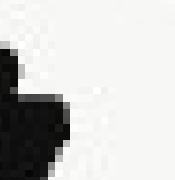
Hotel, more housing

3

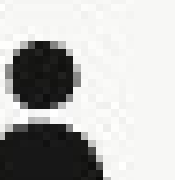
Hotel with long term rentals available

2

1



15



What Investment would make the biggest difference in improving St. Stephen in 2026

Hotel, infrastructure

2

Downtown revitalization,
which includes a hotel, a
motel for hockey players.

2

hotel

1

Hotel & housing

1

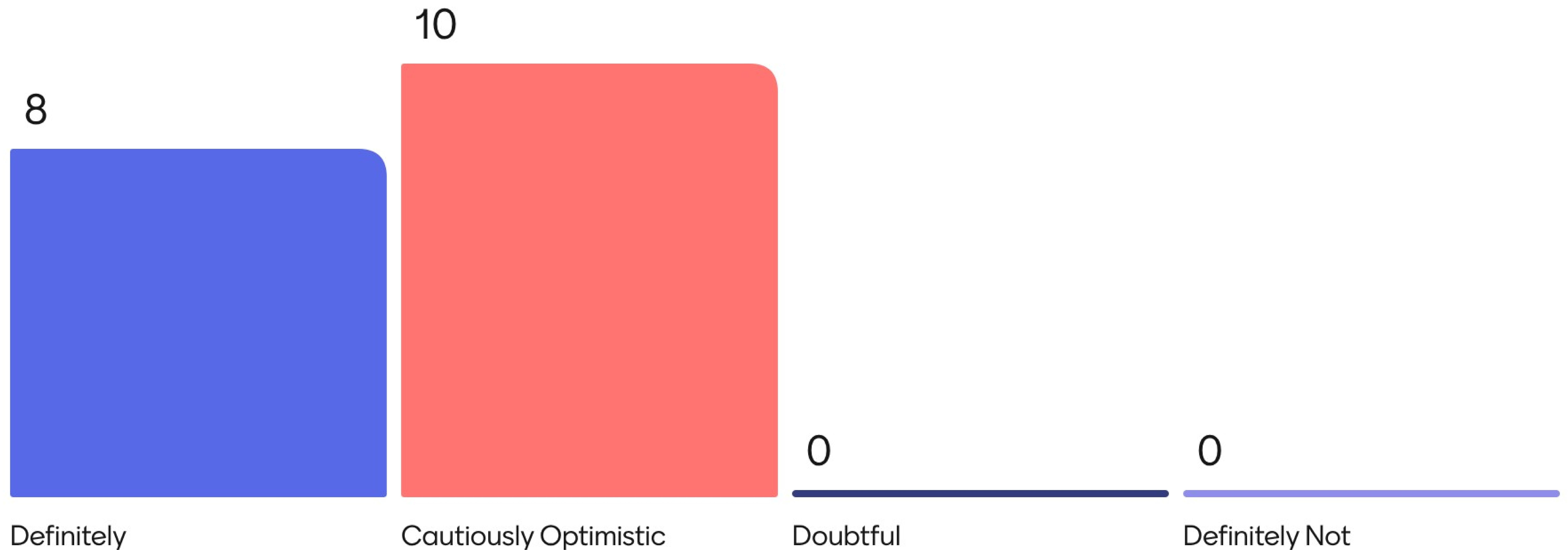
Staff for competency

1

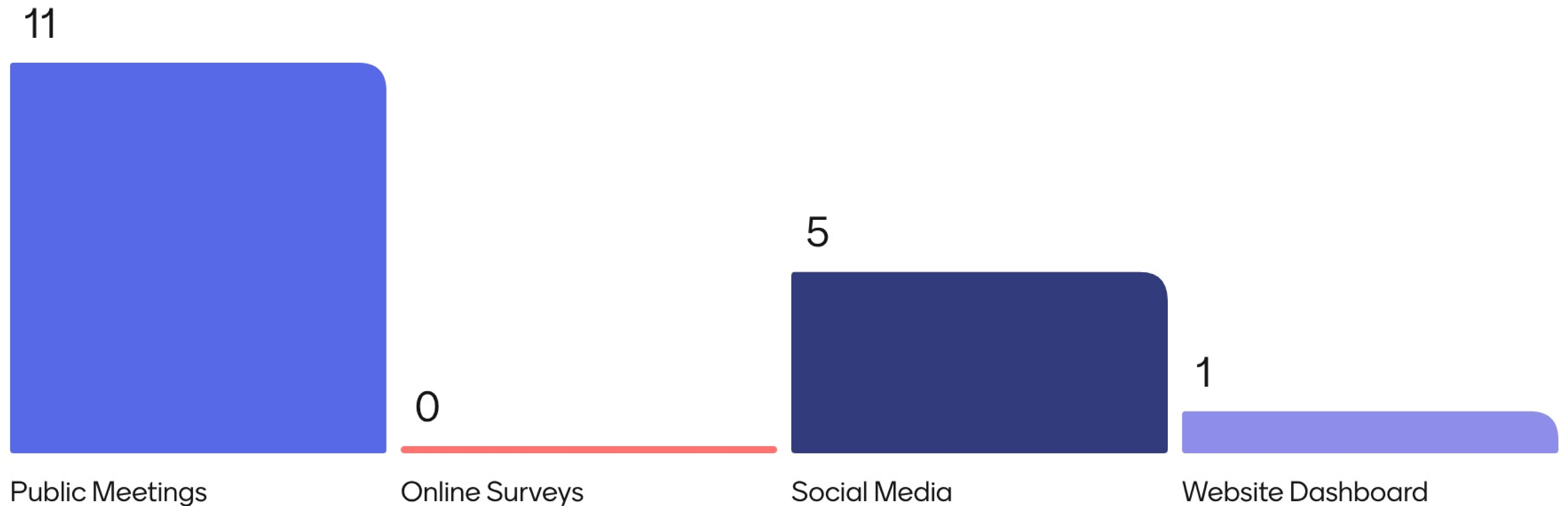
Hotel

Hotel

Do you feel you had a chance to provide meaningful input tonight?



What is the best way for the municipality to share budget information with you?



Have Ideas that you would like considered? Let us know

- How can we resolve the field issues with schools?
- Make it clear to the public in the budget that's circulated which portions are paid by both rural and urban, rural only, or urban only.
- Seriously evaluate the future of policing, and perhaps a regional police force.
- Have we learned from mistakes made with the hotel development and being so behind on road improvement?
- "Do you think if we improve the infrastructure, business and a hotel will come. We need to offer tourists more than a chocolate museum"
- There was a lot of talk regarding communication.. Do you have a strategic plan on how to execute effective communication for all residents of Charlotte County
- Are you looking at new opportunities for regional cost sharing? Or improving service levels for same cost?
- Not sure if this is part of our budget, but what is happening with infrastructure for the upcoming francophone school for Charlotte County?
- Why did the comments get shut off on FB
- Now that the budget timelines are getting on track will you be using 2024 actuals instead of 2024 budget numbers? And will you issue an Annual Report for 2025?
- Crazy idea but a rollerink year round would be fun.
- Can we take a look at how many bylaws the bylaw enforcement officer enforces.
- Hold a public meeting with the youth to see what they would like to see done in the town.
- Look more into accessibility in order to make residents feel more inclusive.
- Are you still planning to establish an Animal control by law review working group?

THANK YOU

The Lines of Life

