

March 30, 2018

**To:** Tim Heider, Clackamas County  
**From:** Anne Buzzini, DHM Research  
**Re:** Clackamas County Community Benchmark Survey, #00669

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Residents in Clackamas County are positive about the direction of their community and they are satisfied with the County's performance in providing services.**

Overall, more than half of Clackamas County residents say things in the county are headed in the right direction (54%). This figure is on par with other communities across Oregon, as many counties are seeing right direction numbers in the mid-50s. This result also continues a trend from the past two community benchmark surveys (57% and 54%).

About eight in ten residents express satisfaction with the County's performance in providing services (79%). Satisfaction is high among most demographic groups, although it is somewhat diminished among residents with incomes of less than \$25,000 per year (66%). Residents with incomes near the median, \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year, are the most satisfied (89%).

### **Quality of life issues like roads, homelessness, and housing are top of mind for residents.**

Clackamas County residents continue to name issues like *road maintenance, safety, and potholes* (16%), *schools* (11%), and *population growth* (9%) when asked about the most important issues facing their community. These issues were among the top issues mentioned in the 2016 survey as well.

However, in 2018, residents express greater concerns about issues like *traffic congestion* (13%), *homelessness* (10%), and *lack of affordable housing* (9%) than they did in years past. For example, concerns about *traffic congestion* are up five percentage points since 2016, and concerns about *affordable housing* and *homelessness* are up a combined 12 percentage points. Some of these results are reflected later in the survey when residents rate the importance of different county services, such as road maintenance and affordable housing options.

### **Top priorities for county services typically relate to the health and safety of Clackamas County residents.**

Services provided by the County that directly relate to residents' well-being tend to top the list of priorities. These services include *helping victims of domestic violence, emergency and natural disaster response, addressing homelessness, and access to healthcare and addiction services.*

Notably, *road maintenance* is also a top-tier issue for residents, ranked fifth of ten in a list of county services. That residents are more likely to consider *road maintenance* an urgent or high priority than, for example, *law enforcement* speaks to the emotional nature of transportation issues and the impact that roads and traffic have on residents' quality of life.

When it comes to the perceived value of these services, residents continue to put health and safety services at the top of the list. The services most likely to earn a very or somewhat valuable rating from residents are *emergency and natural disaster response* (96%), *law enforcement* (94%), *road maintenance* (94%), *helping victims of domestic violence* (93%), and *mental health and addiction services* (92%). In addition to the fact that more than nine in ten residents rated these services as valuable, more than 50% rated each of these services as very valuable.

Overall, 83% of residents said that *affordable housing for low-income residents* was a valuable service, although concerns about housing were higher among both residents under 35 (90%) and those 55 and older (85%).

**Residents continue to enjoy receiving paper newsletters from the County, and they like being able to phone staff when they need more information about services or programs.**

More than half of residents give a moderate or better rating to ClackCo quarterly (54%) in terms of interest. Ratings are higher among residents 55 and older. Most residents want to continue to receive a paper copy of this newsletter at their home (61%). Residents 55 and older are even more likely to prefer a paper copy (71%).

Resident communication preferences are similar to years past. Residents 55 and older continue to drive the preference for phone calls (60%). Other age groups are more likely to prefer online methods, like visiting the County's website or sending an email (48%–54%).

**At least three in ten residents express interest in civic engagement opportunities in Clackamas County, and interest increases as the time commitment decreases.**

Overall, 30% of residents say they would be interested in volunteering to sit on one or more of the County's committees. However, interest is higher for attending public meetings with no set commitment (41%). Nearly half of residents express interest in responding to online surveys about Clackamas County issues (46%).

Interest in these opportunities increases with educational attainment, and residents with college degrees are more likely to express interest in each (36%–51%). Additionally, residents 35 to 54 are the most likely age group to express interest in these opportunities (33%–55%).

# Clackamas County 2018 Community Survey

March 2018



## Research purpose

- Assess resident satisfaction with county services
- Determine resident priorities
- Track changes in attitudes over time
- Determine resident communication preferences

## Methodology

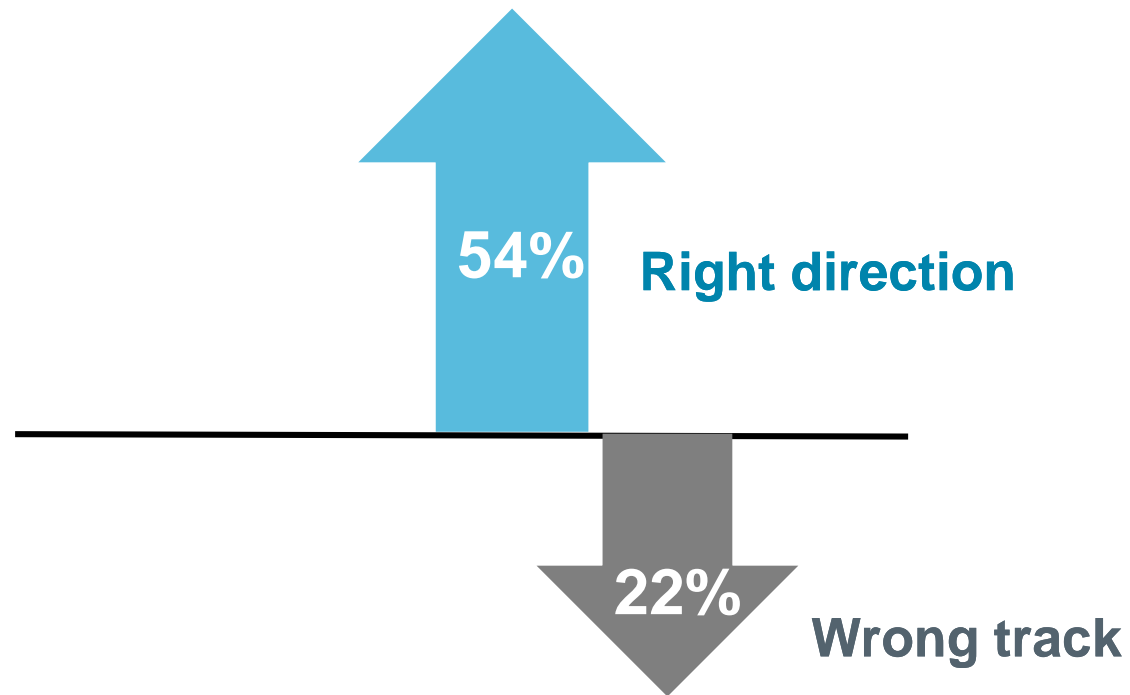
- Telephone survey of 400 Clackamas County residents
- Conducted March 15–25, 2018; 15 minutes to complete
- Quotas set by age, gender, and area of county to ensure representative sample
- Margin of error +/- 4.9%

## Key takeaways

- Residents continue to express satisfaction with county services and view them as valuable
- There is an increased level of concern for homelessness, housing, and traffic in Clackamas County
- Resident communication preferences have not changed much over the past several years; many still prefer receiving a paper newsletter and reaching staff by telephone

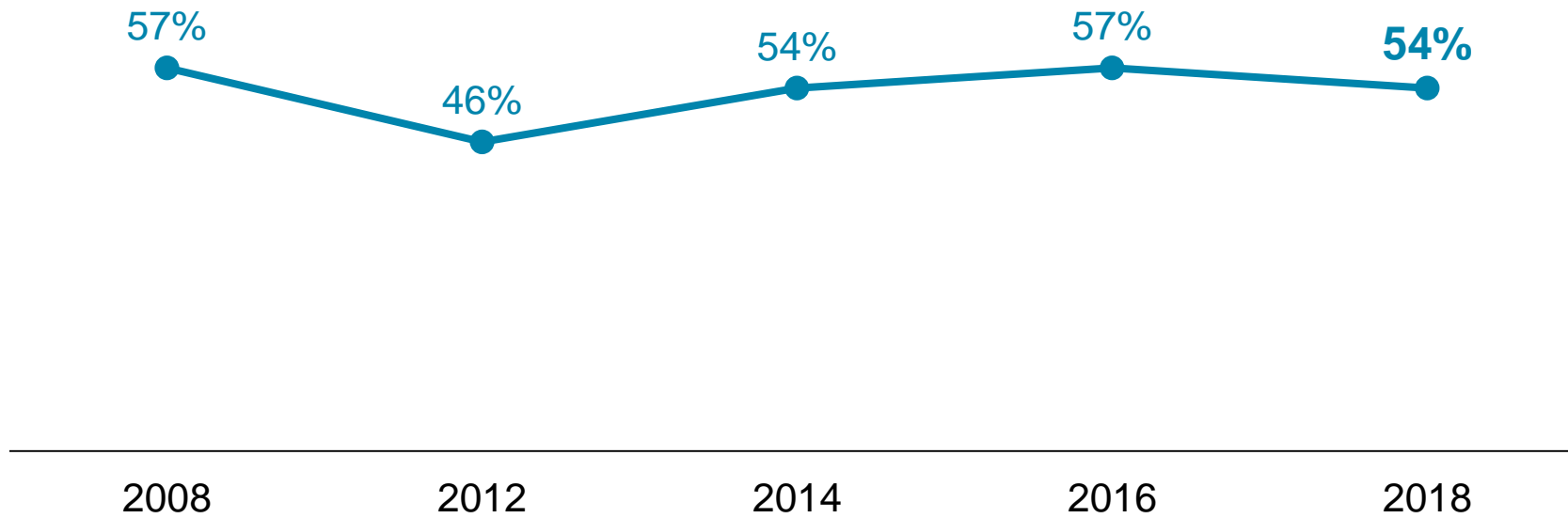
**General mood**

# A majority of Clackamas County residents say things in their community are headed in the right direction.



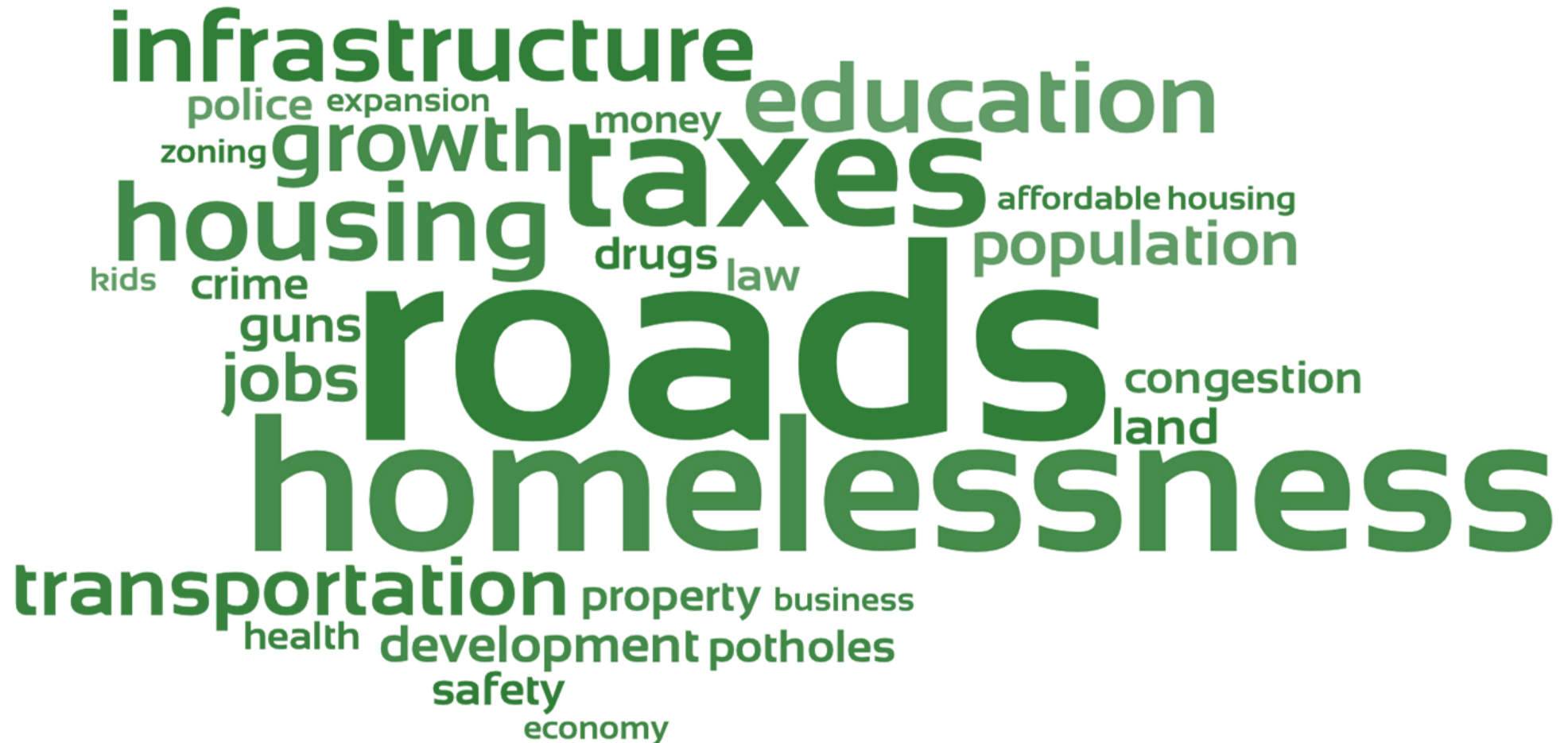


# Positivity about the direction of the county has remained stable over the past few years.

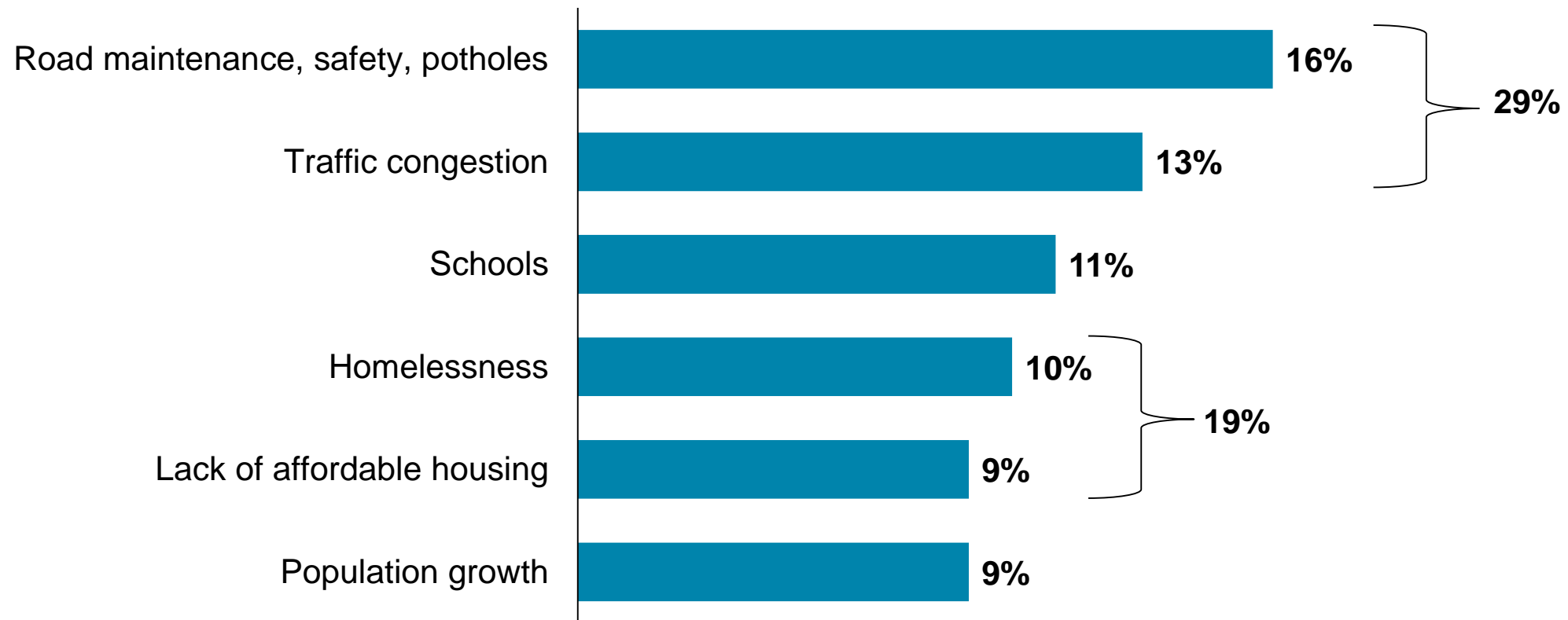


# Clackamas County priorities

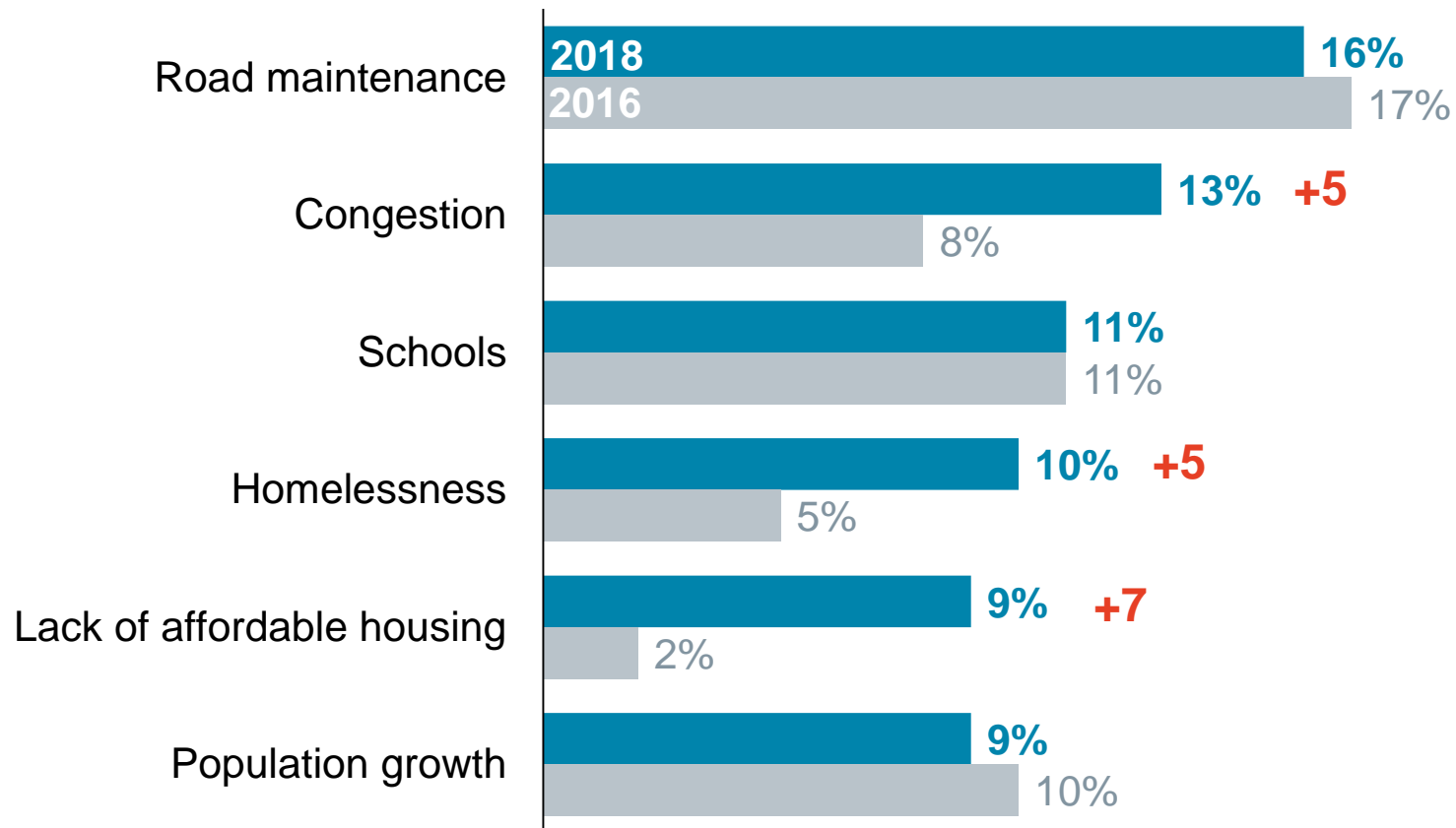
Residents are concerned about quality of life issues like roads, homelessness, housing, and taxes.



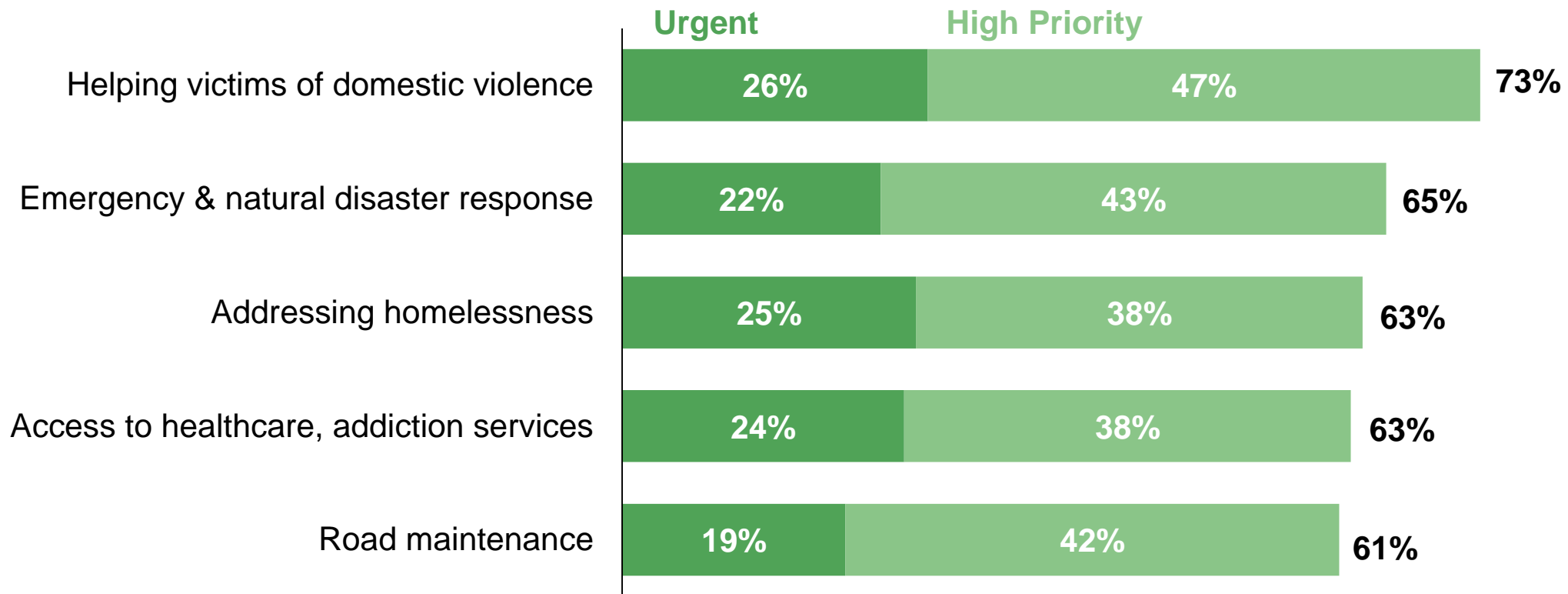
# Road and traffic concerns are a top issues in the county, followed by homelessness and affordable housing.



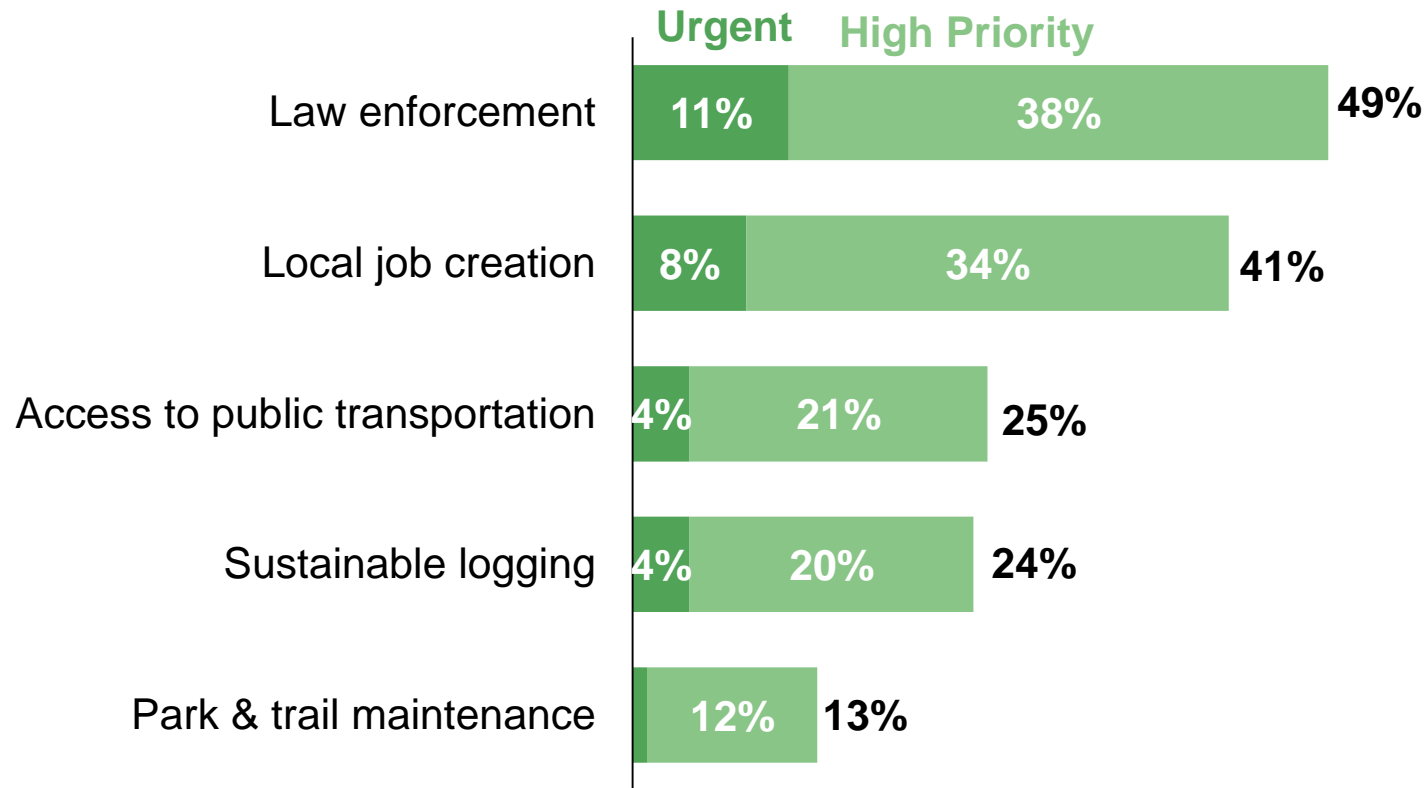
# Concerns about traffic congestion, homelessness, and housing have grown over the past two years.



# Resources for domestic violence victims, emergency response, and housing are top priorities.



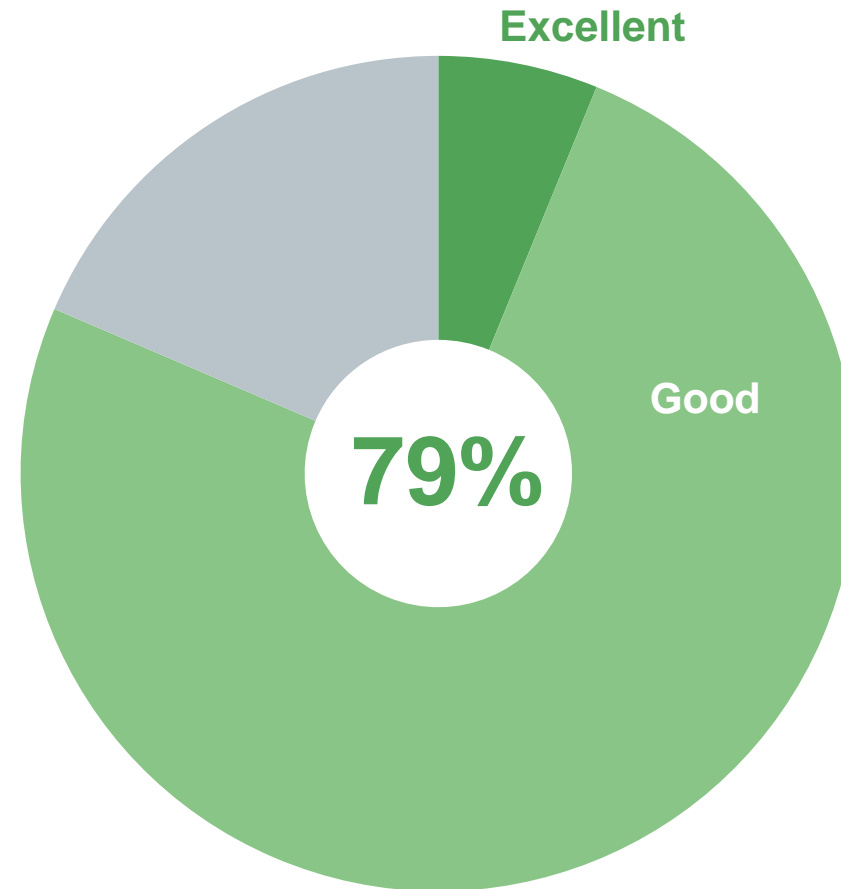
# Other concerns, including law enforcement, are important but residents do not describe them as urgent.



# **Satisfaction and value of services**

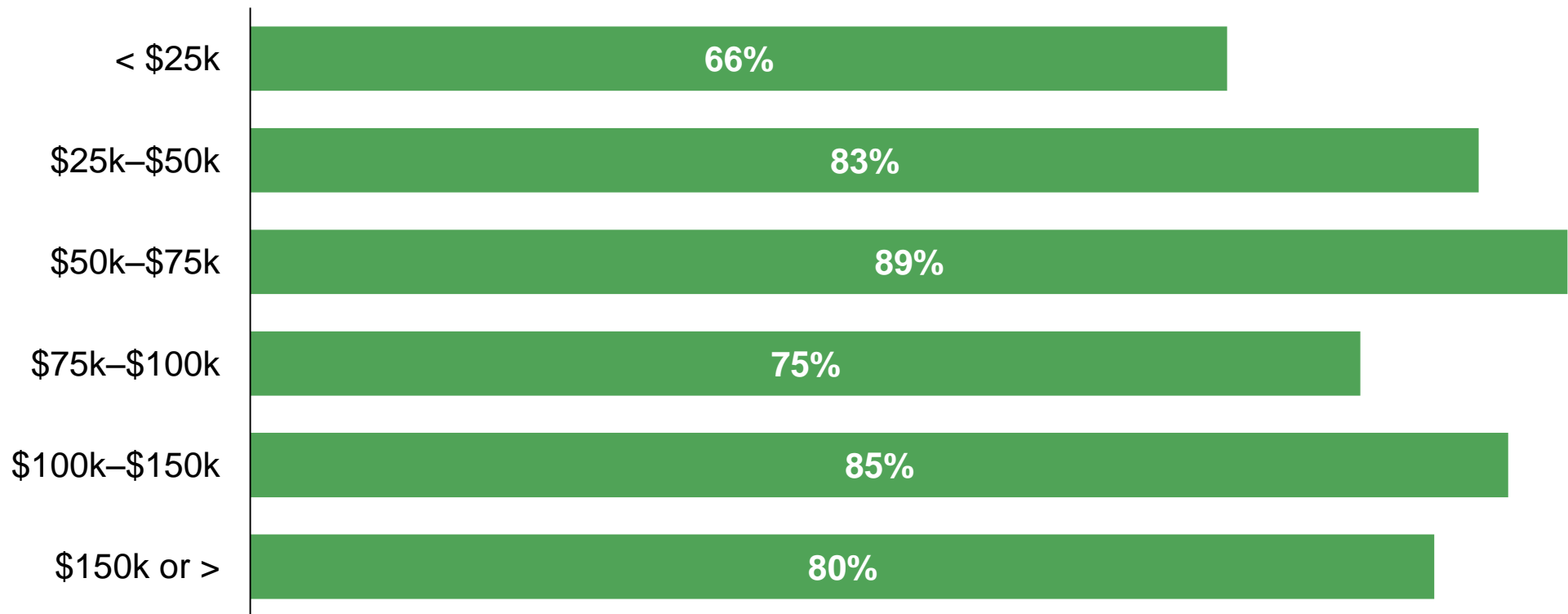


# Residents are satisfied with the County's performance in providing services.

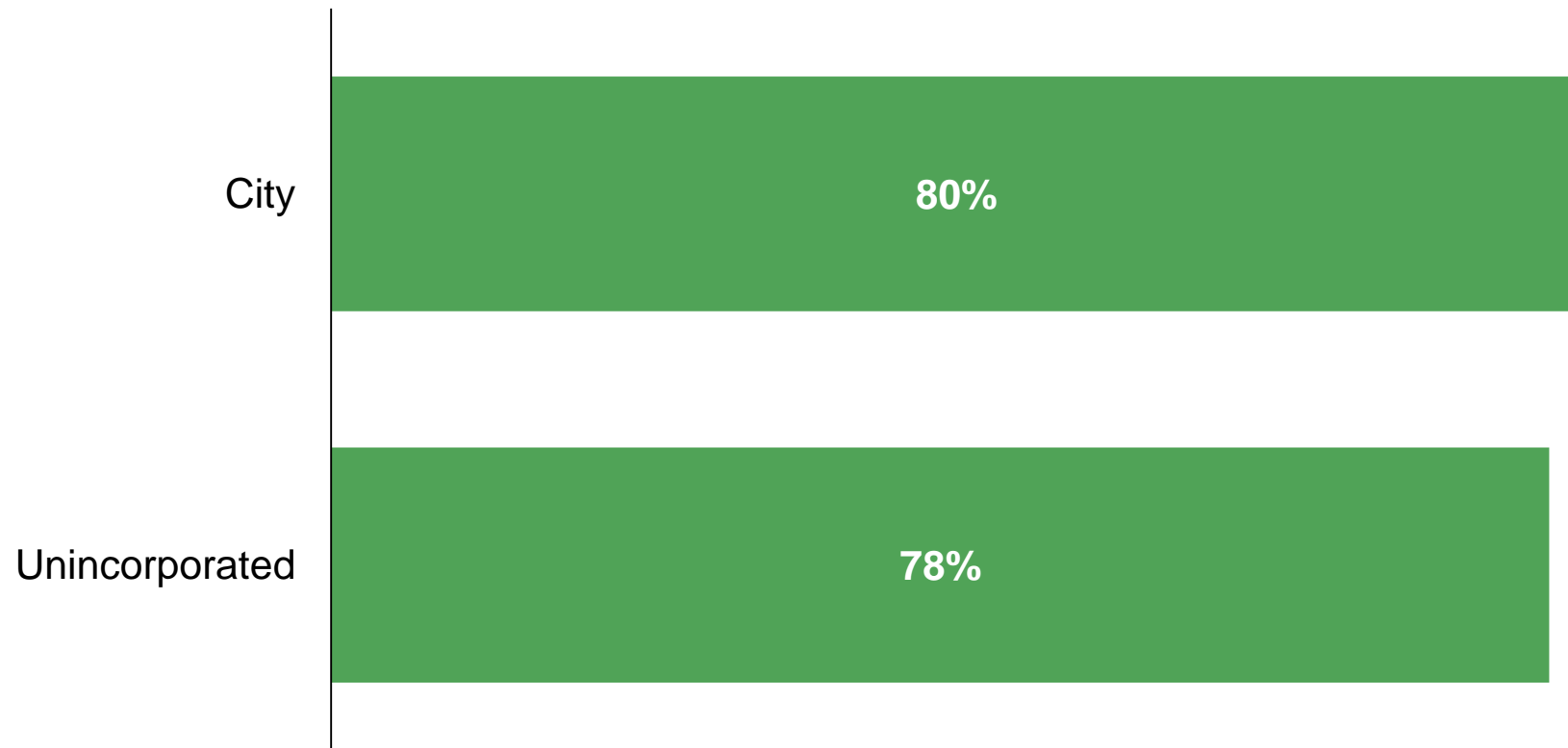


**2016: 77%**  
**2014: 77%**

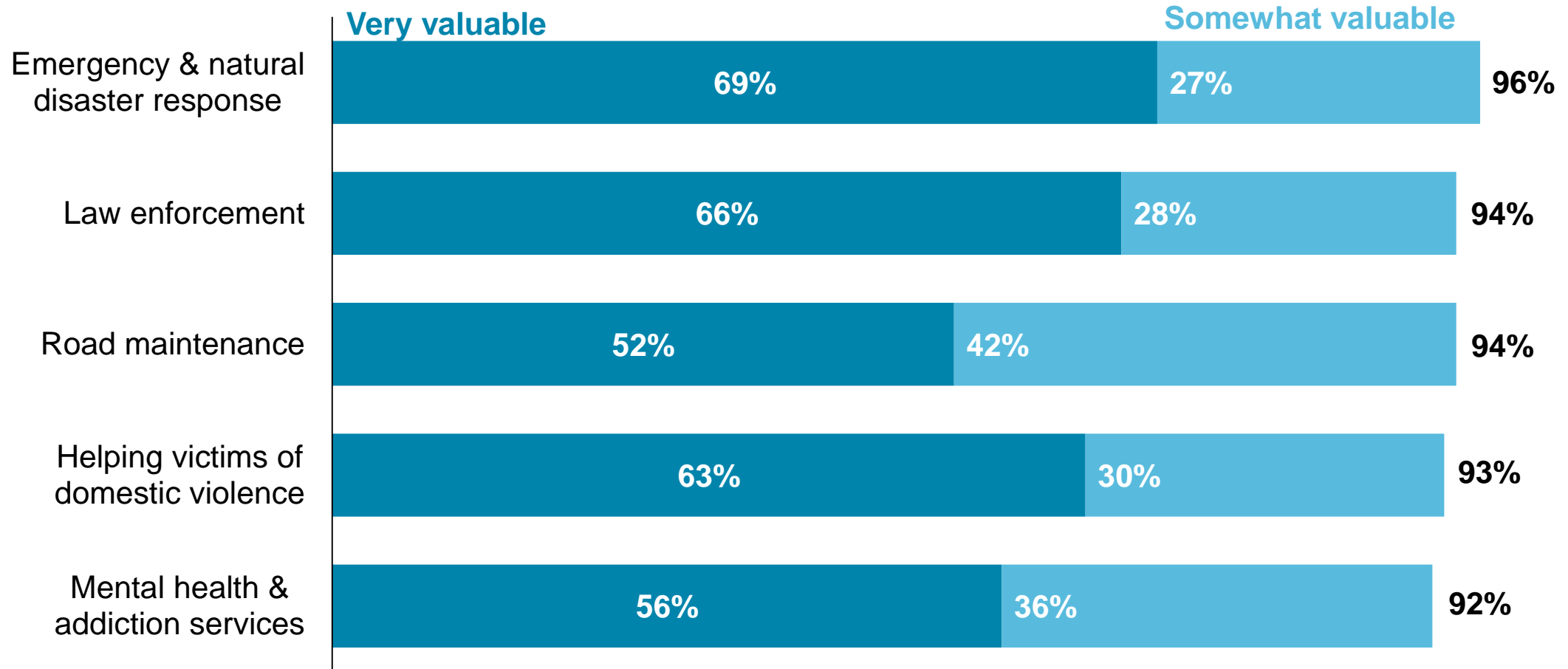
# Low-income residents are the least likely to say the County's performance is good or excellent.



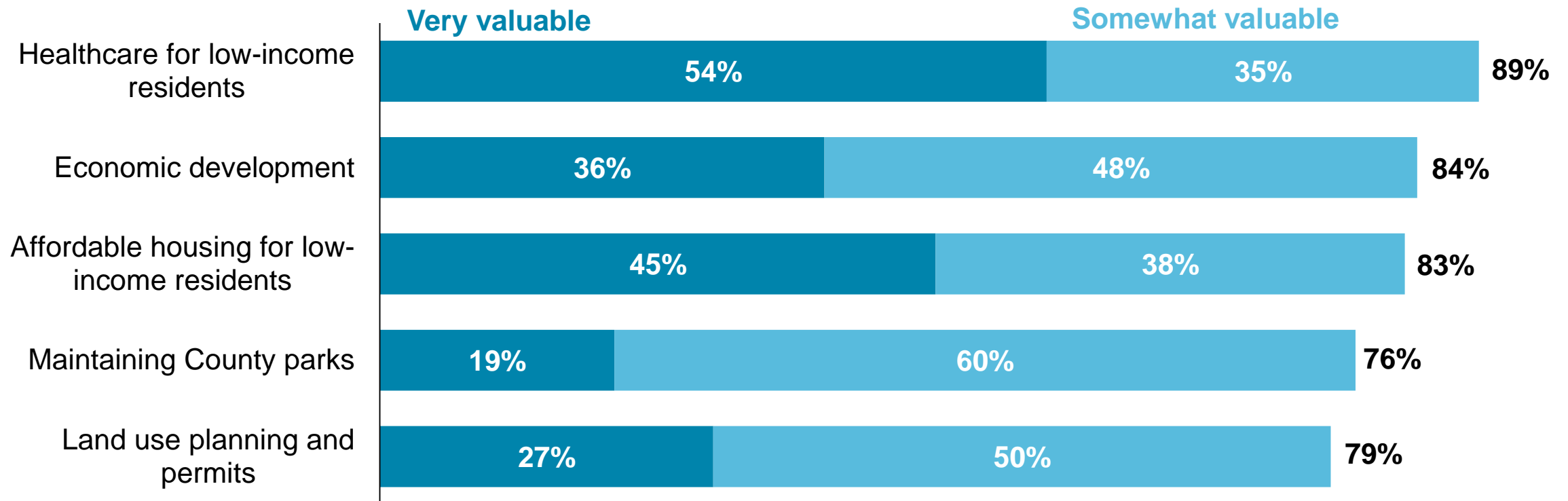
# Satisfaction with services is the same whether residents live in a city or in unincorporated Clackamas County.



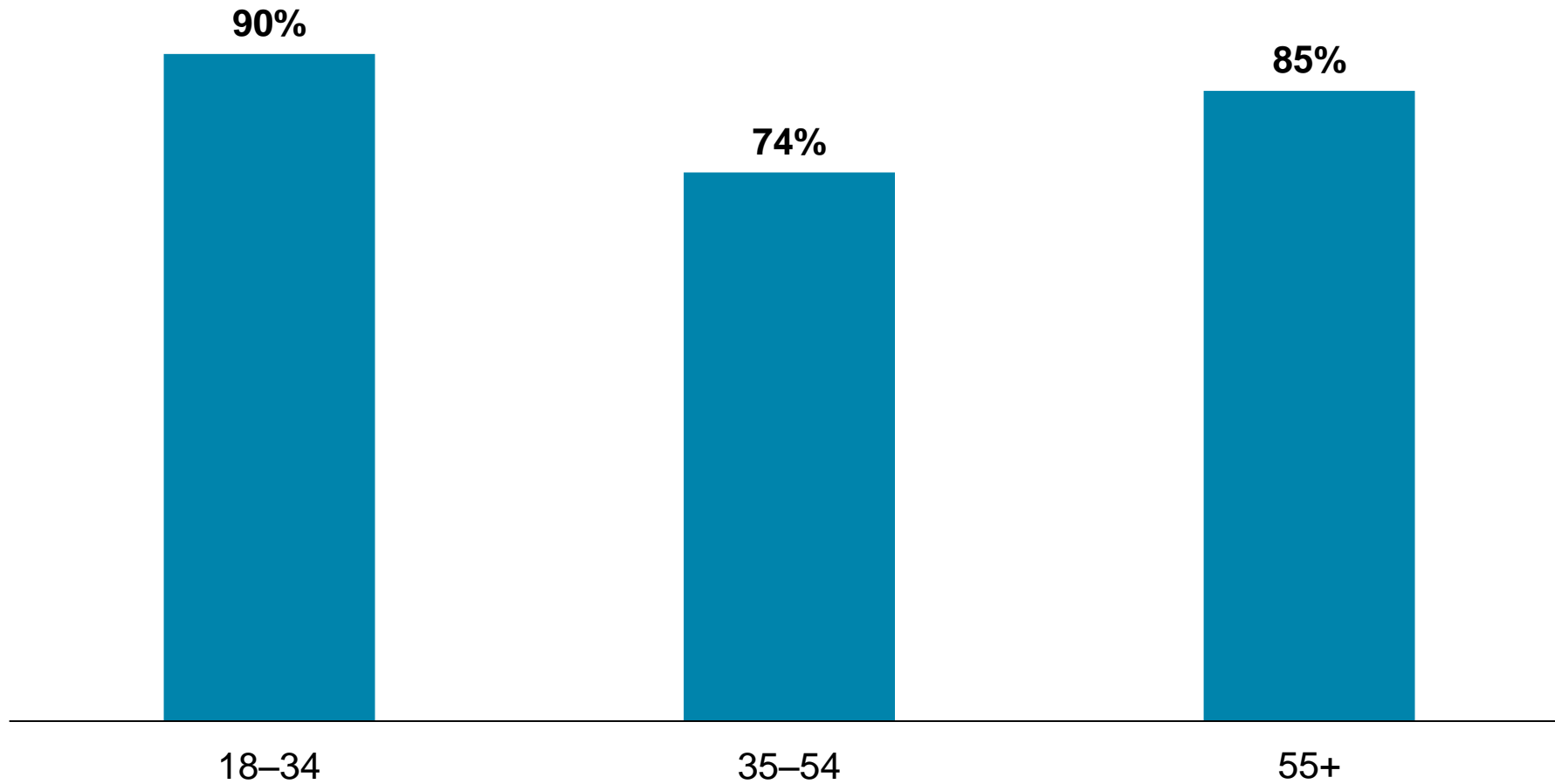
# Public safety, emergency response, and road maintenance issues are the most valuable services to residents.



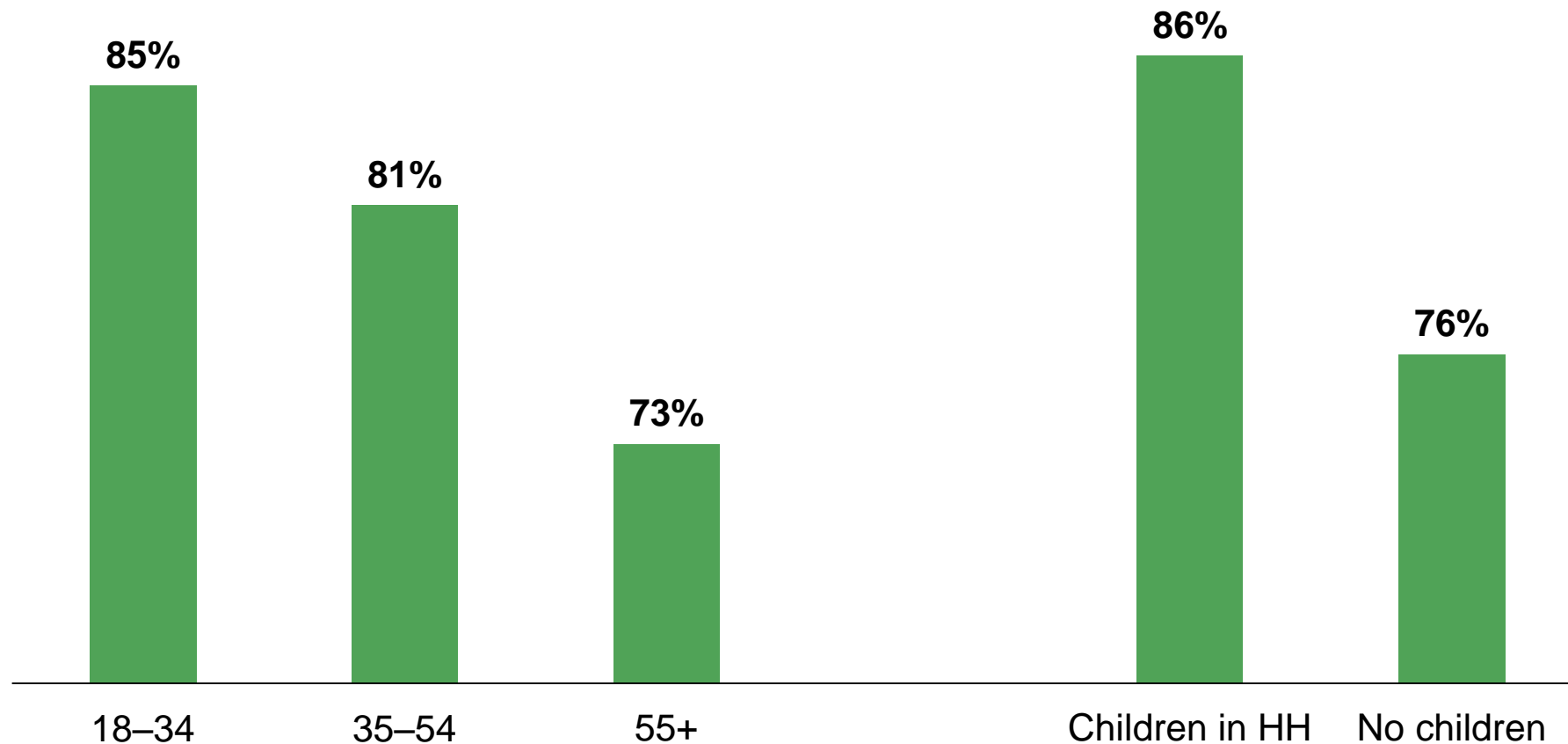
# Other county services are also highly valuable. At least three-quarters of residents give strong ratings.



# Concerns about affordable housing are highest among both younger and older residents.



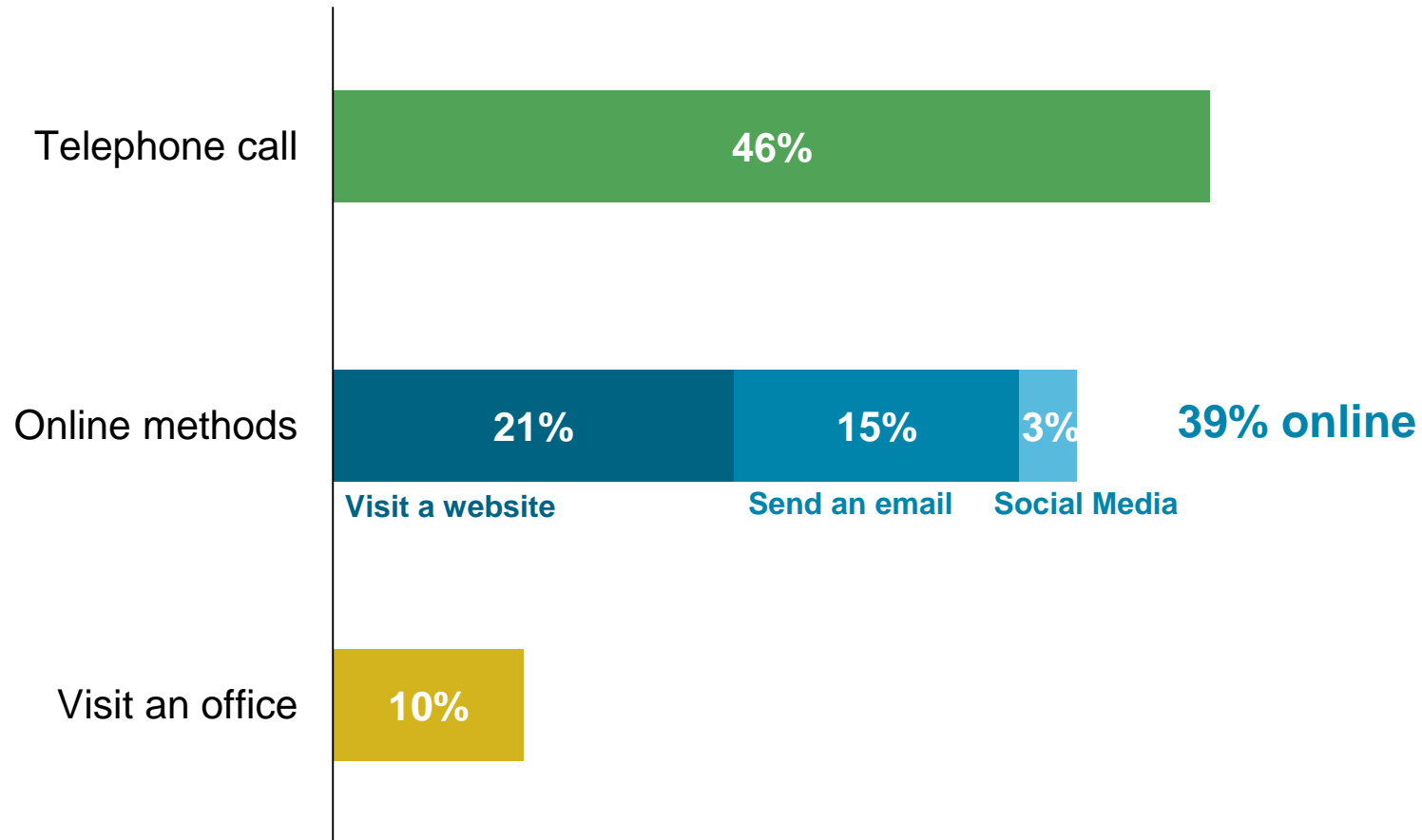
# The perceived value of parks maintenance declines with age. Residents with children say it is highly valuable.



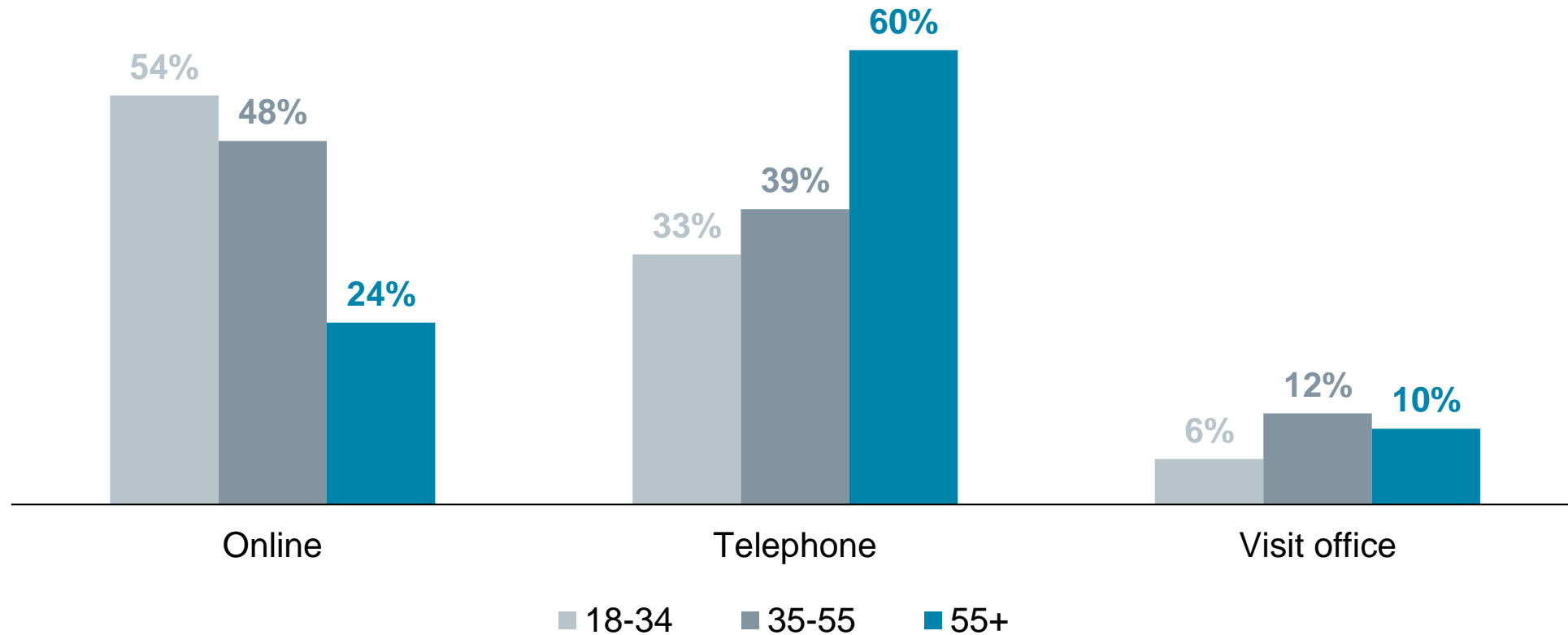
# Communication preferences



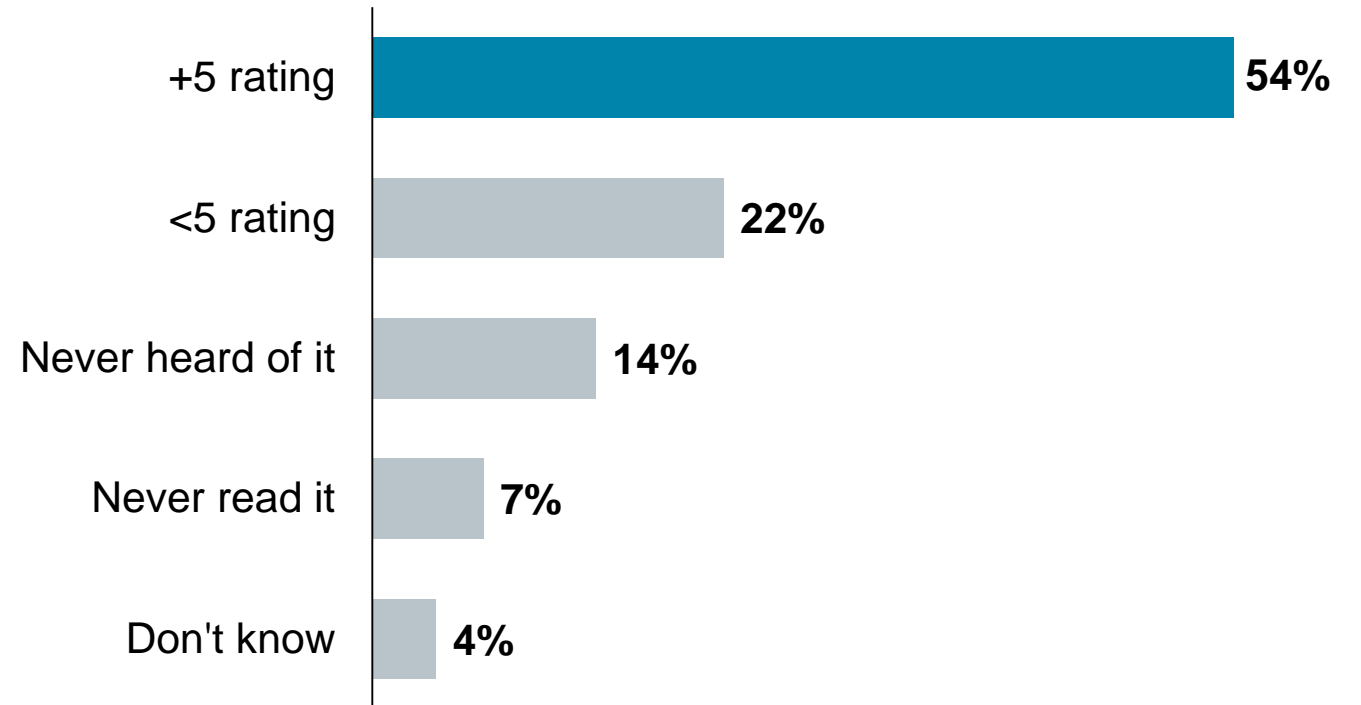
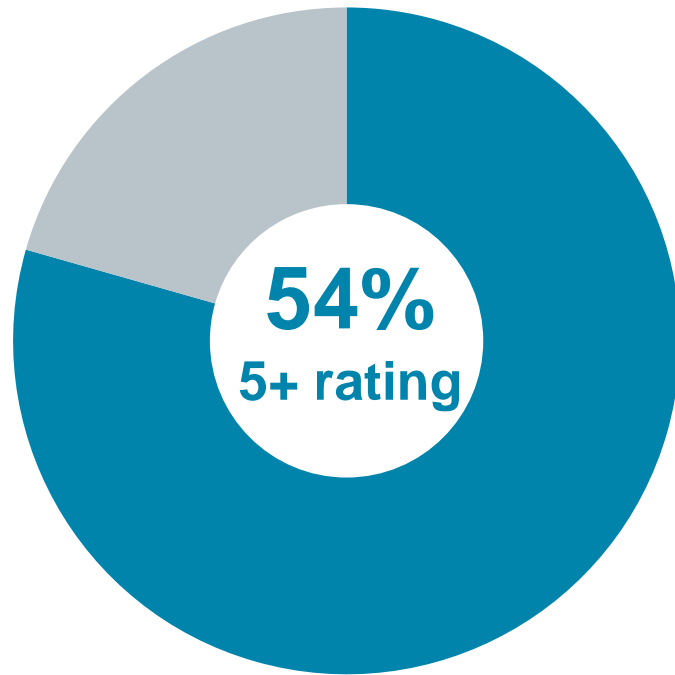
# Many residents still like making a phone call when they need assistance from a county agency.



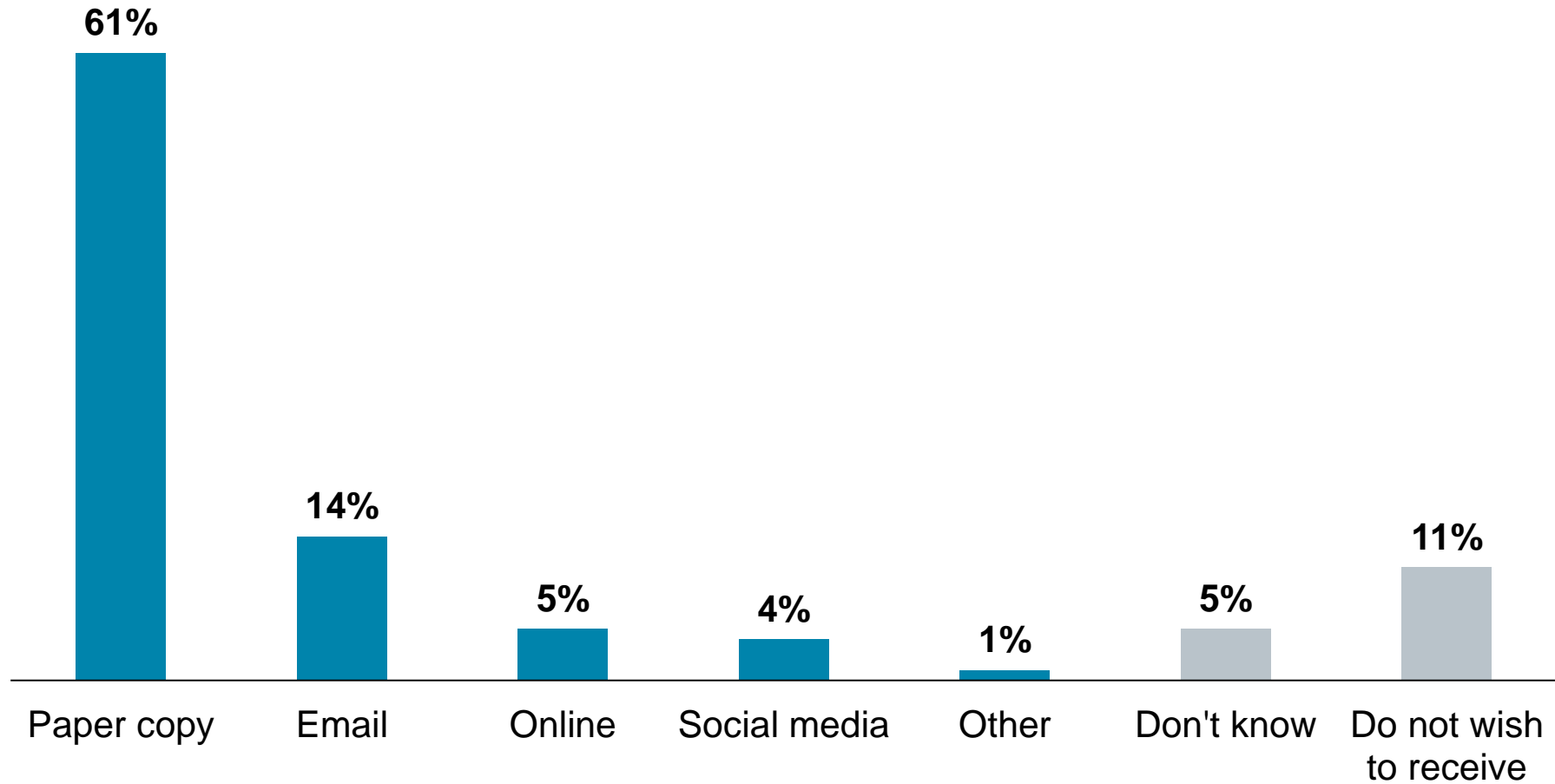
# The preference for telephone calls is driven by residents 55 and older.



# ClackCo Quarterly is of moderate interest to residents.

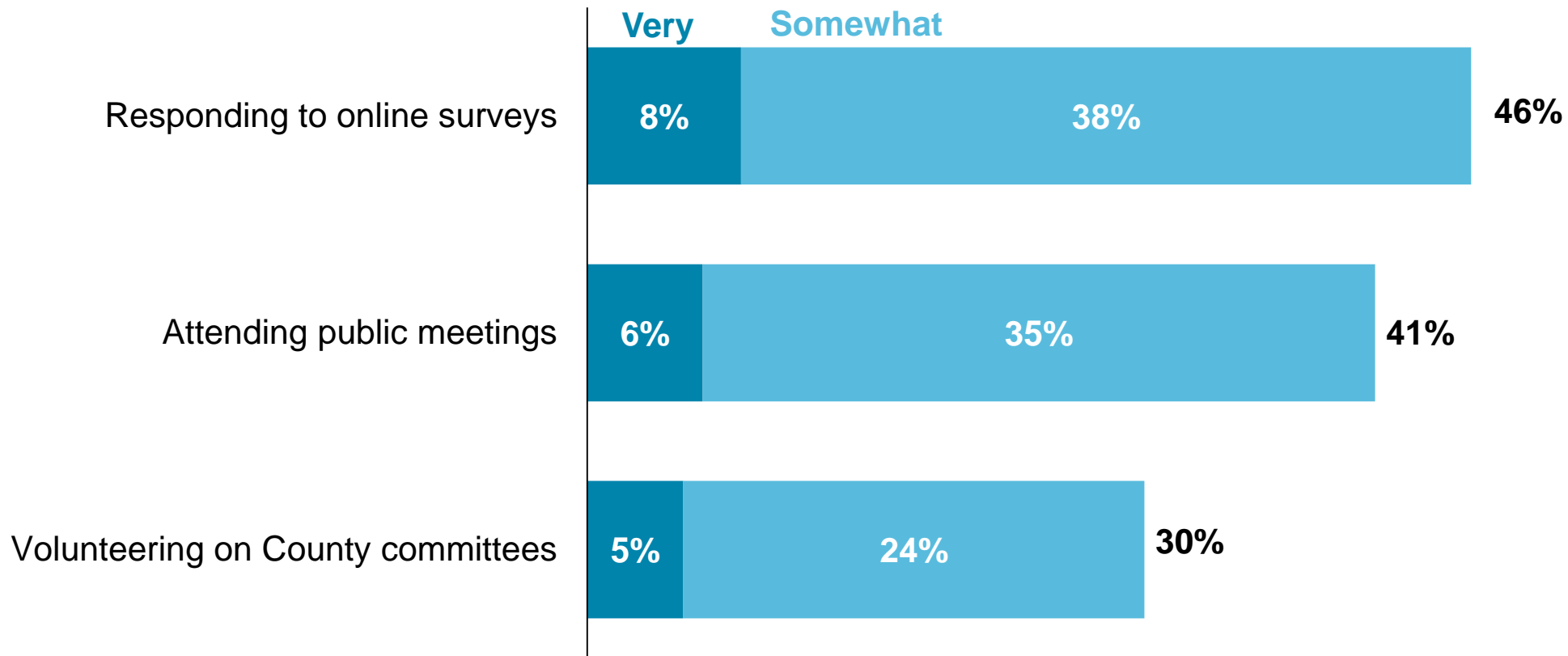


# Most residents want to receive a paper copy of ClackCo Quarterly at home.

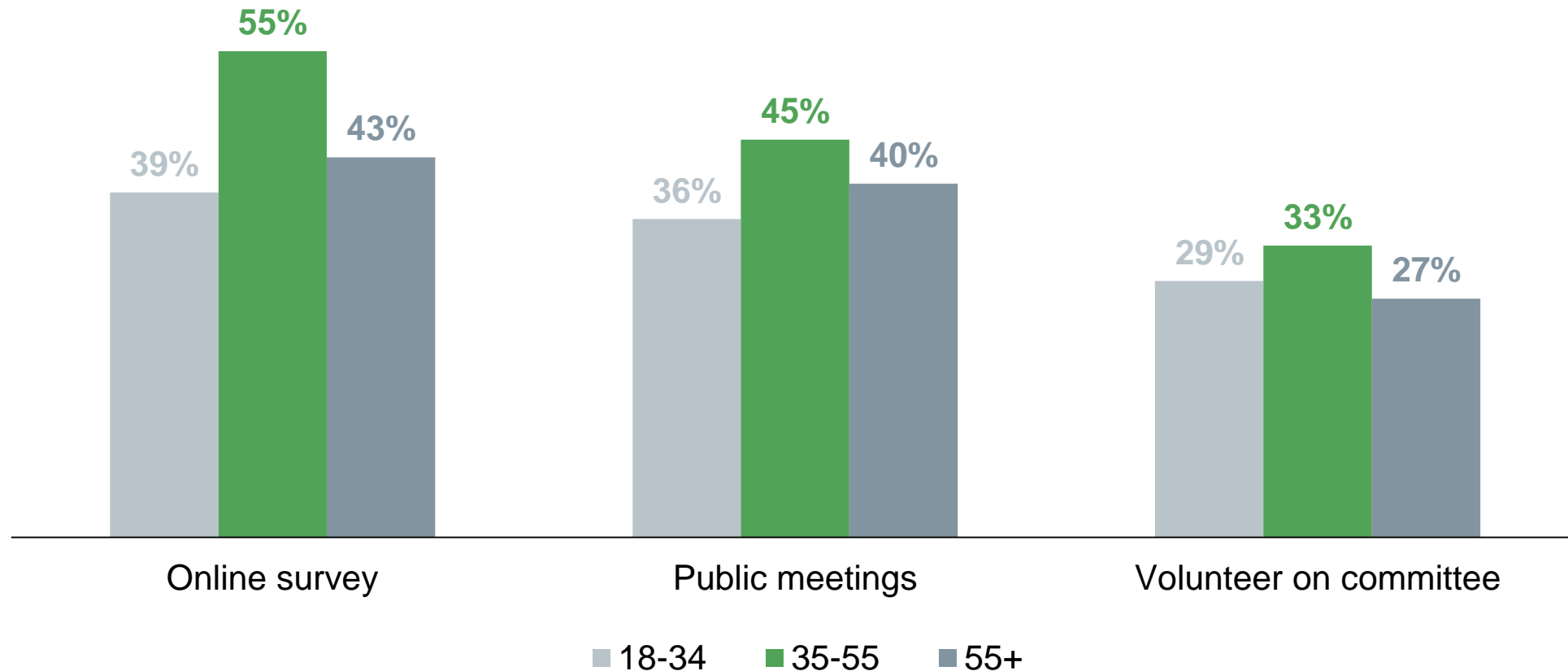


**Civic engagement**

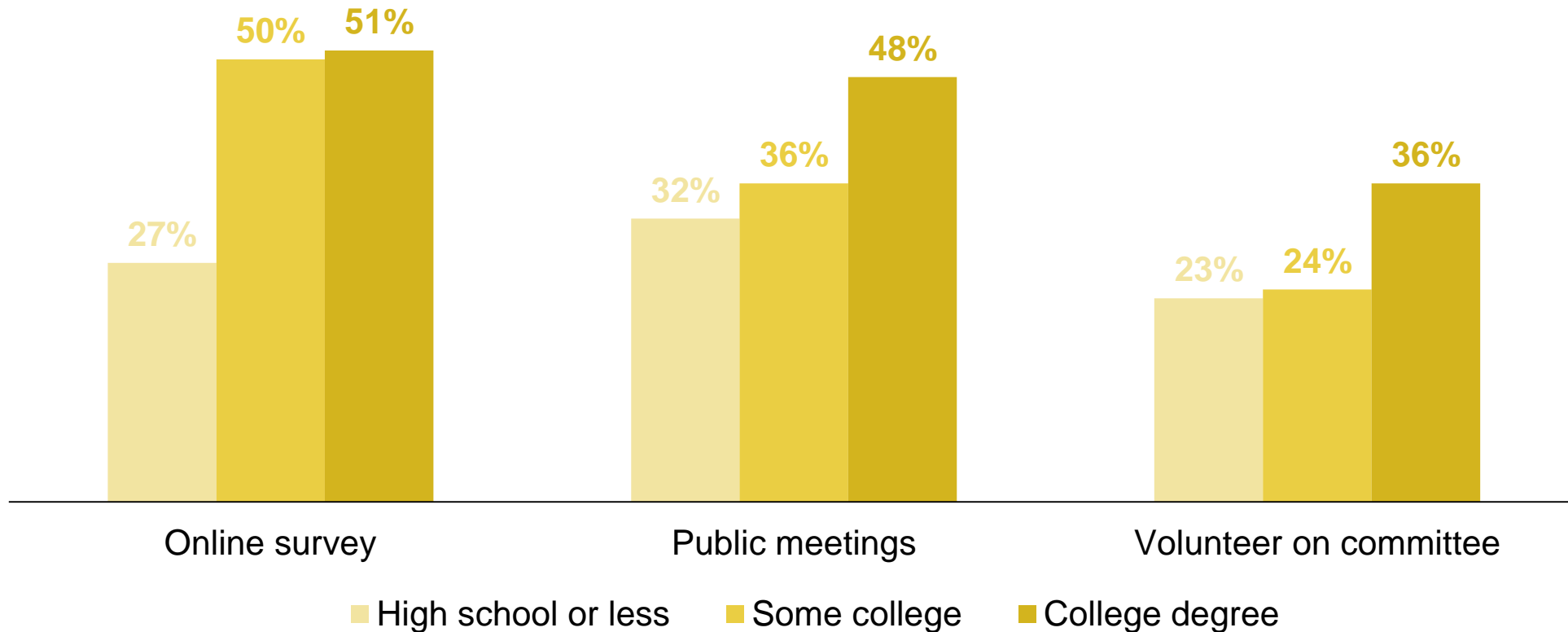
# Three to four out of every ten residents are interested in civic engagement opportunities.



# Residents ages 35–54 are the most likely to express interest in these engagement opportunities.



# Interest in civic engagement increases with educational attainment.







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