

# Lake County 2050 Community Change Survey Results Middletown Area

## Introduction

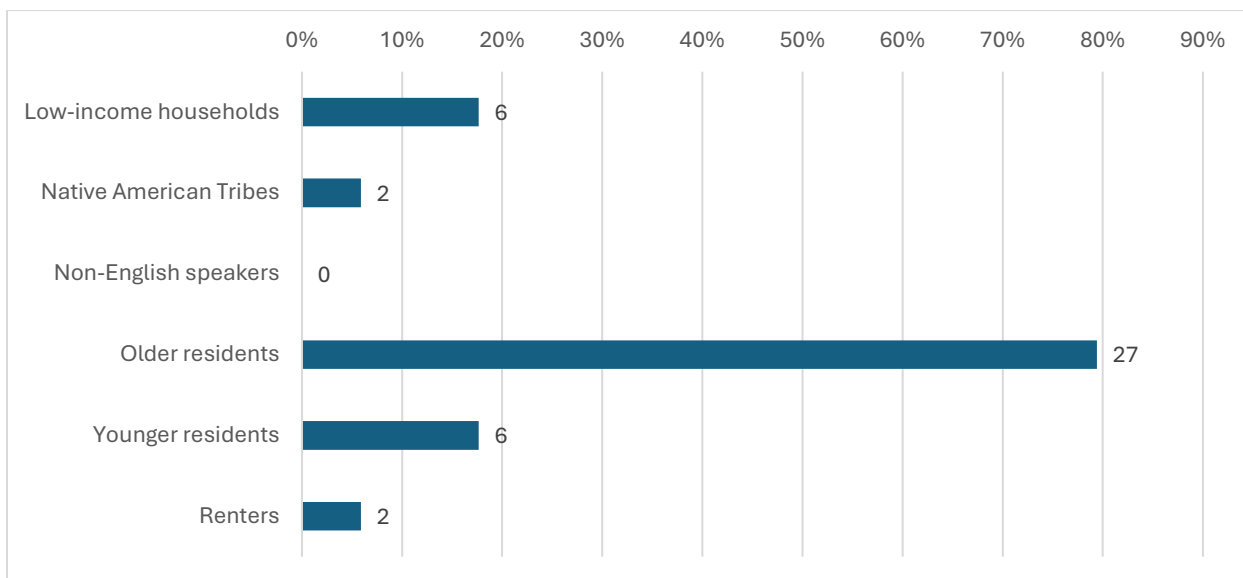
From August 5 through September 13, 2024, a comprehensive survey was conducted in the Middletown Area to inform Lake County 2050, the County’s General Plan Update. The goal of the survey was to gather input on land use, policy, and related changes to the General Plan. There were also questions included to inform the County’s Housing Action and Implementation Plan (HAIP), which are summarized separately here:

[lakecounty2050.org/documents](http://lakecounty2050.org/documents).

The survey was available in English and Spanish and promoted on the Lake County 2050 project website ([LakeCounty2050.org](http://LakeCounty2050.org)), in canvassing activities administered by County staff and AmeriCorps service members, and at public events. A total of 39 community members participated in the survey, though participants did not necessarily respond to each question. Following is a summary of results, including a listing of responses to open-ended and “other” questions.

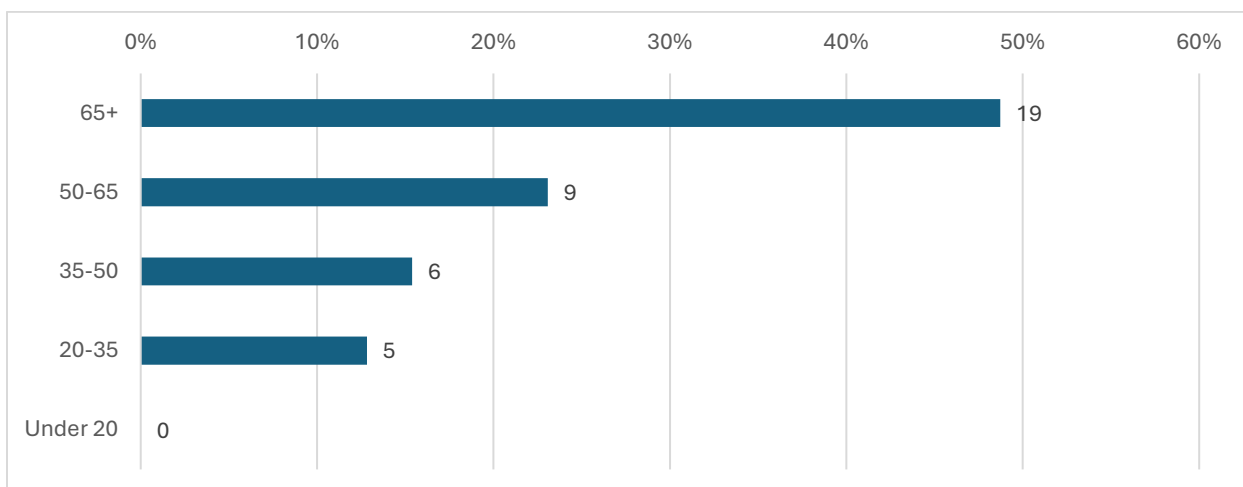
## Part 1. Tell us about yourself

**Question 1:** Do you consider yourself a member of any of the following groups? (Select all that apply)



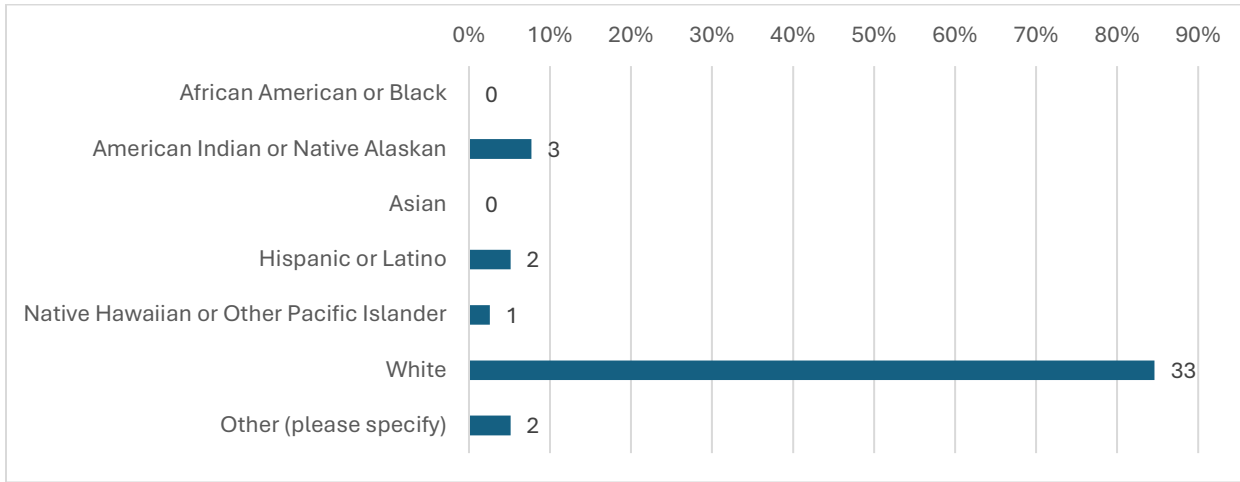
Total number of responses to this question: 34

**Question 2:** How old are you?



Total number of responses to this question: 39

**Question 3: How would you describe your race or ethnicity? (Select all that apply)**



Total number of responses to this question: 39

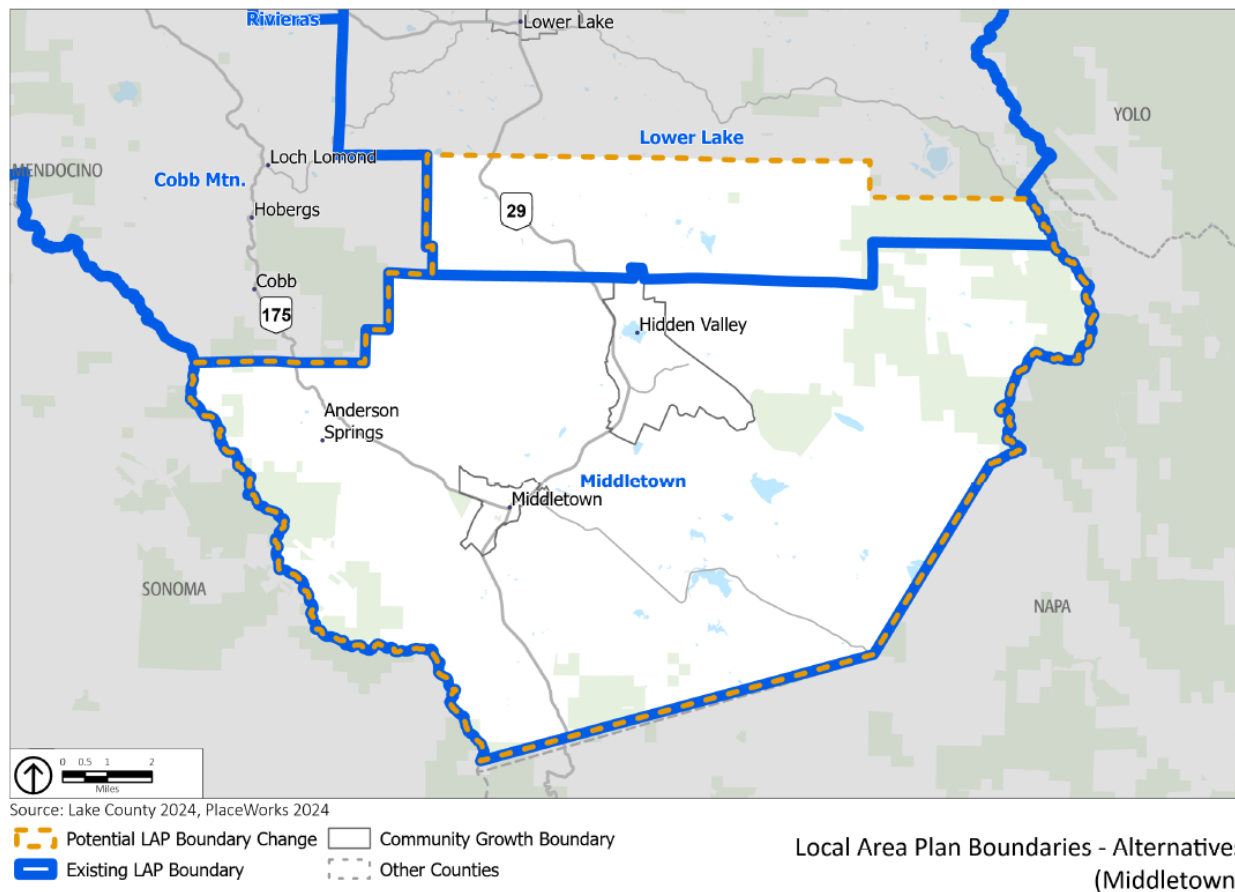
“Other” responses:

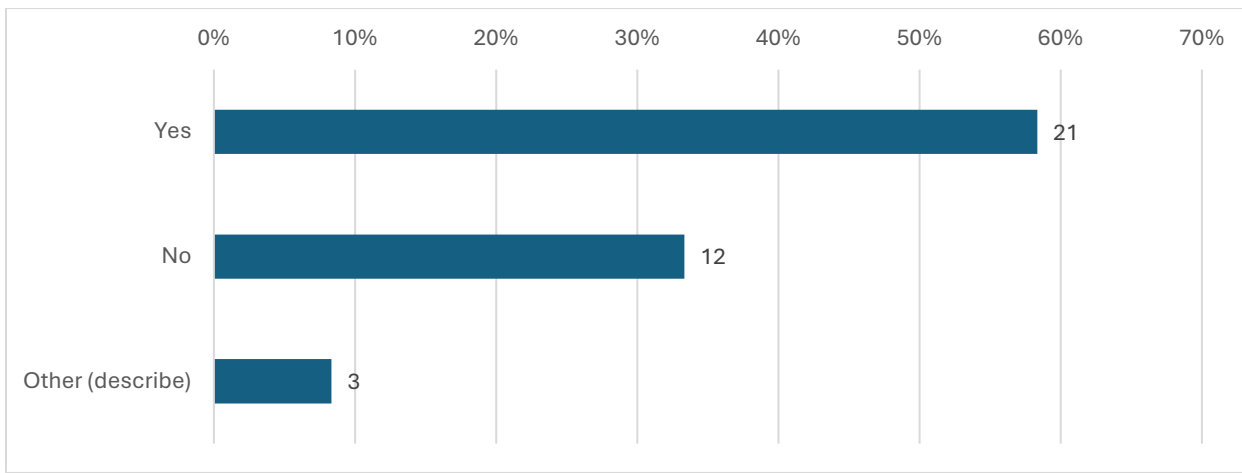
- do not wish to stipulate
- Middletown Rancheria Tribe

**Part 2: Local Area Plan Boundary Changes**

**Question 4: Should the LAP boundary between Middletown and Lower Lake move north, as shown on the map?**

Question 4 refers to the figure below.





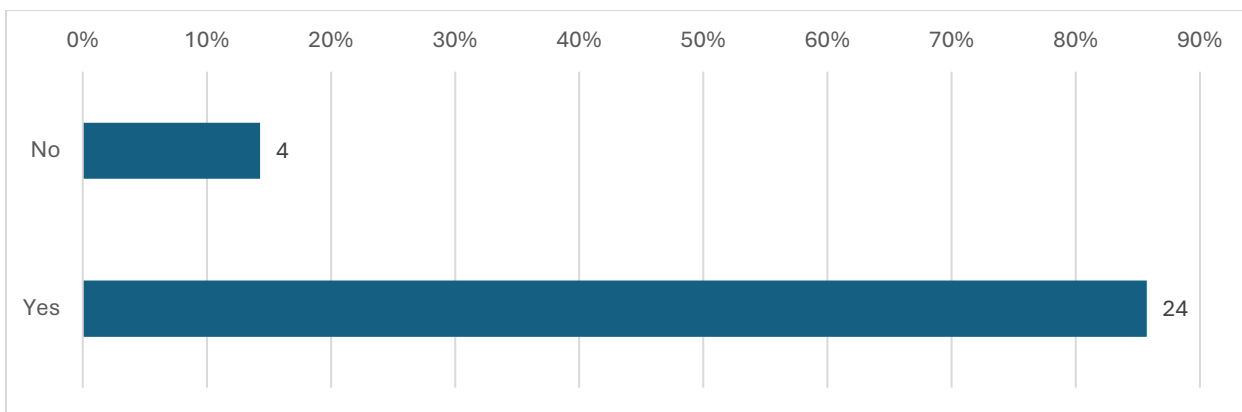
Total number of responses to this question: 36

“Other” responses:

- I am much more concerned about the ramifications of the Maha project being part of the Middletown boundary will tax dollars benefit the school district or will the high income of the Maha residents make it so that the school district is further ineligible monies it needs because not enough children are considered free and reduced
- I have no opinion on this. I do not know why this change is being considered.
- not sure of the value or intent of moving the boundary line north, what is the purpose?

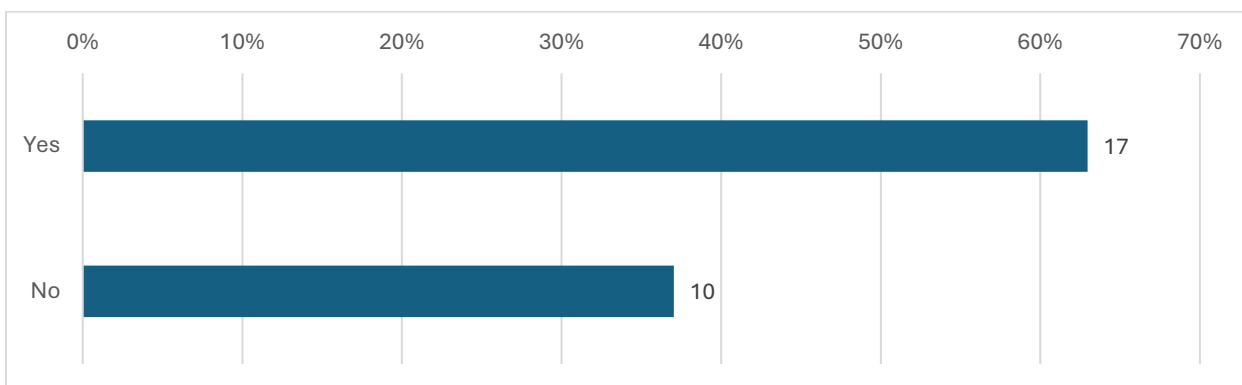
### Part 3: Other Land Use Changes

**Question 5:** Should mixed use development (i.e., development that includes both commercial and residential uses) be allowed in Commercial designations?



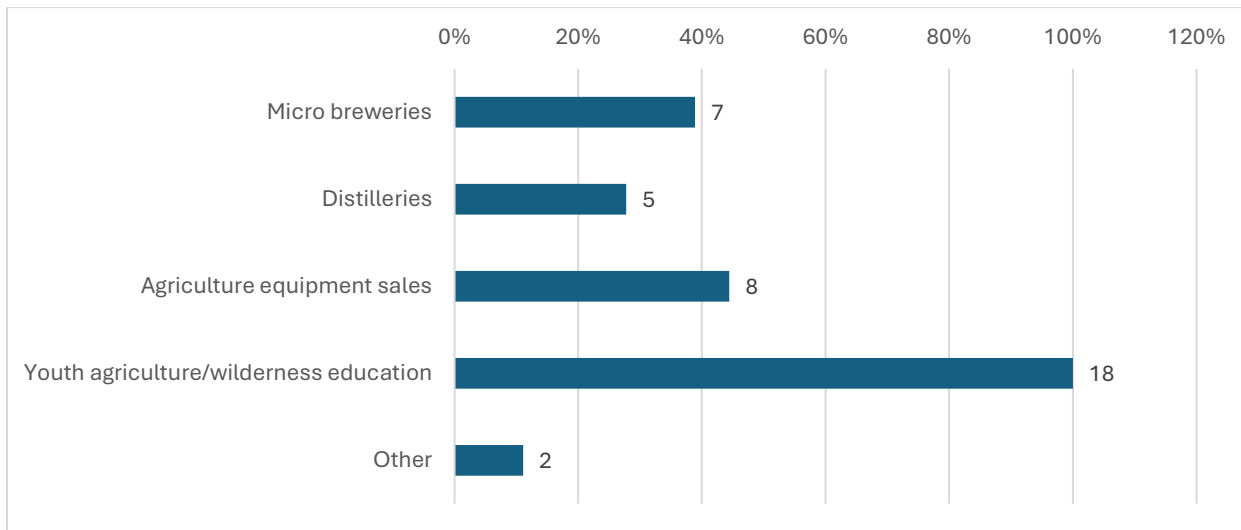
Total number of responses to this question: 28

**Question 6:** Should additional agriculture-supportive uses be allowed in the Agriculture land use designation?



Total number of responses to this question: 27

## If yes, what kind of uses?

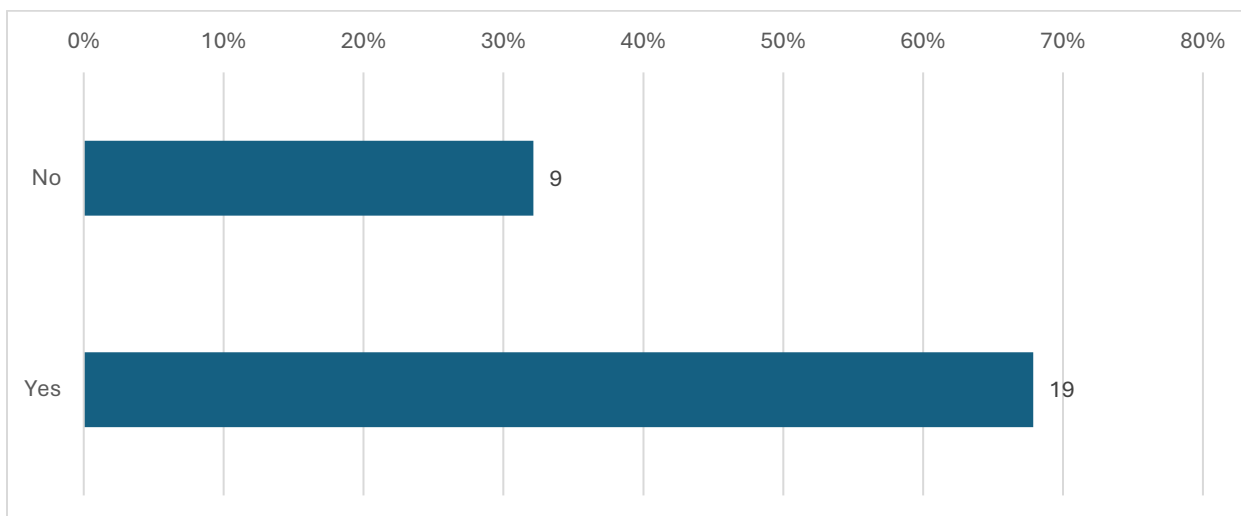


Total number of responses to this question: 18

“Other” responses:

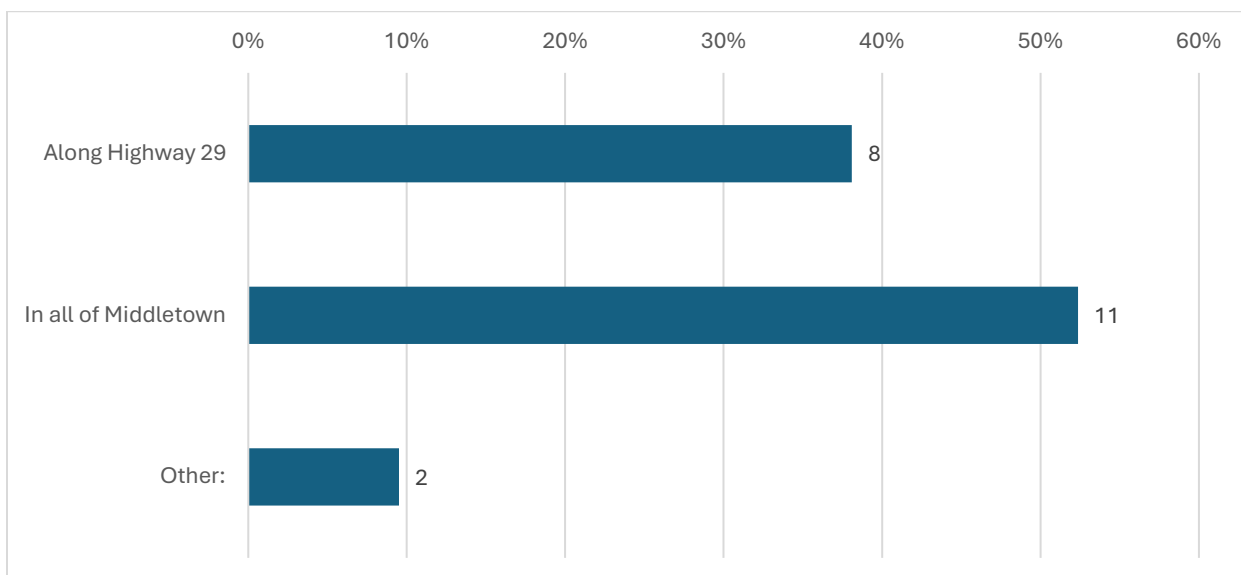
- Vineyards should be allowed to be part of the tourism scene. Host vineyard tours, walks, picnics, maybe a little light music and be able to serve wine and food. A permit for vineyard tour/agri-tourism on a seasonal basis without having to have a tasting room.
- workforce and economics projects and eco agriculture; mini-farms; youth related businesses that include agriculture that is not destructive to the landscape

## Question 7: Should the General Plan encourage food trucks and coffee kiosks to operate in Middletown?



Total number of responses to this question: 28

## If yes, where?

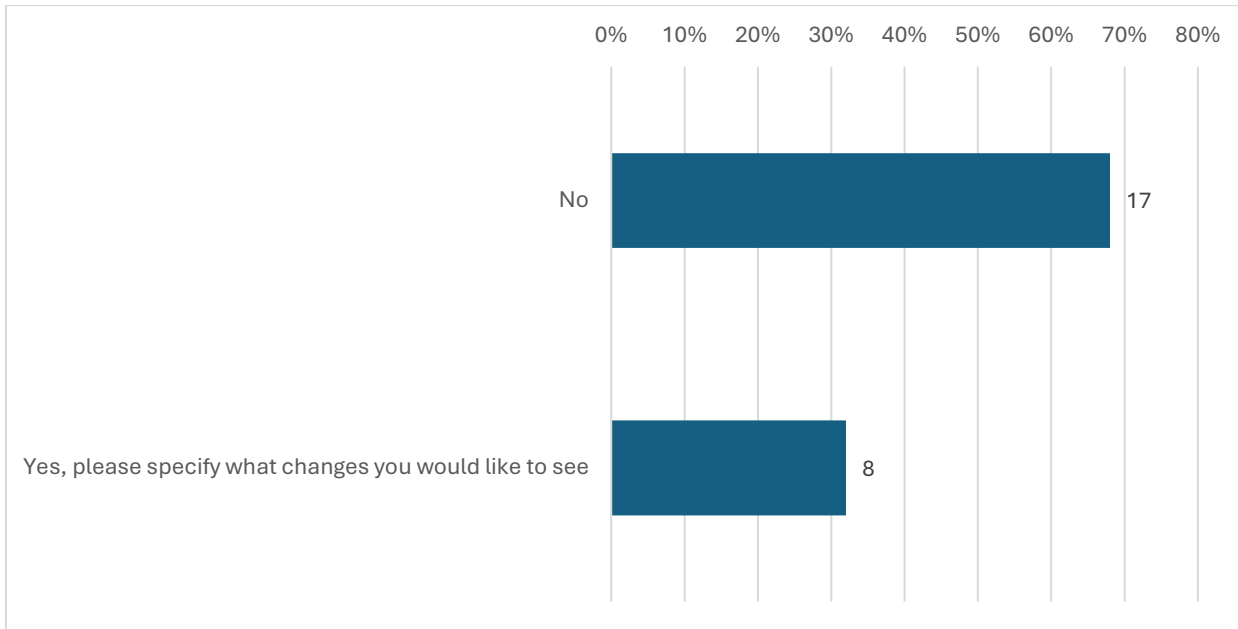


Total number of responses to this question: 28

“Other” responses:

- In one designated area, similar to what the City of Clearlake has created.
- Along 29, along 175 near commercial areas, and by the Lions Club/ Central Park

### Question 8: Should the Design Guidelines be updated?



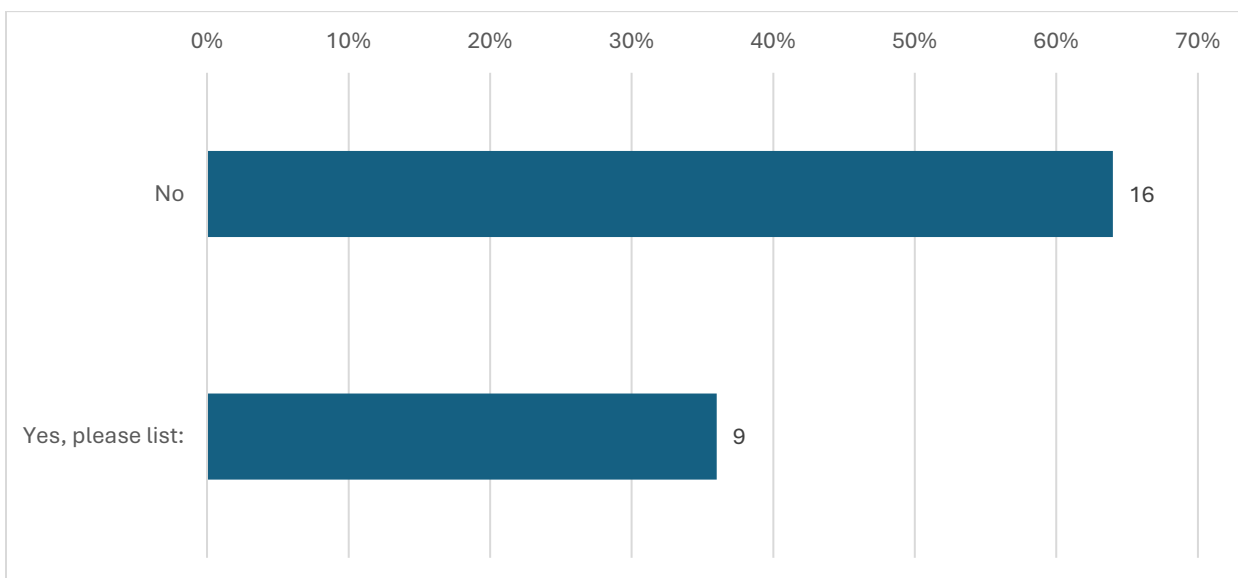
Total number of responses to this question: 25

Responses to “Yes, please specify what changes you would like to see”:

- More emphasis placed on shielded lighting to protect our Dark Night Skies.
- Encourage infill in the central area.
- Development should be encouraged while maintaining community integrity and character.
- I am sure there are a few that could be improved upon.
- Transit hub
- The studies and data are ancient. There needs to be a higher priority placed on wildfire mitigation, evacuation, etc.
- The Middletown Rancheria needs to be part of this plan, especially the Historic section. This section needs to be updated and reflect the actual citizens that live in the MAP. There needs to be more outreach!
- Require roof top solar ( or solar panel covered parking behind building). Add EV charging units

### Part 4: Individual Communities and Neighborhoods

#### Question 9: Are there any communities or neighborhoods that are not well represented in the existing LAP?



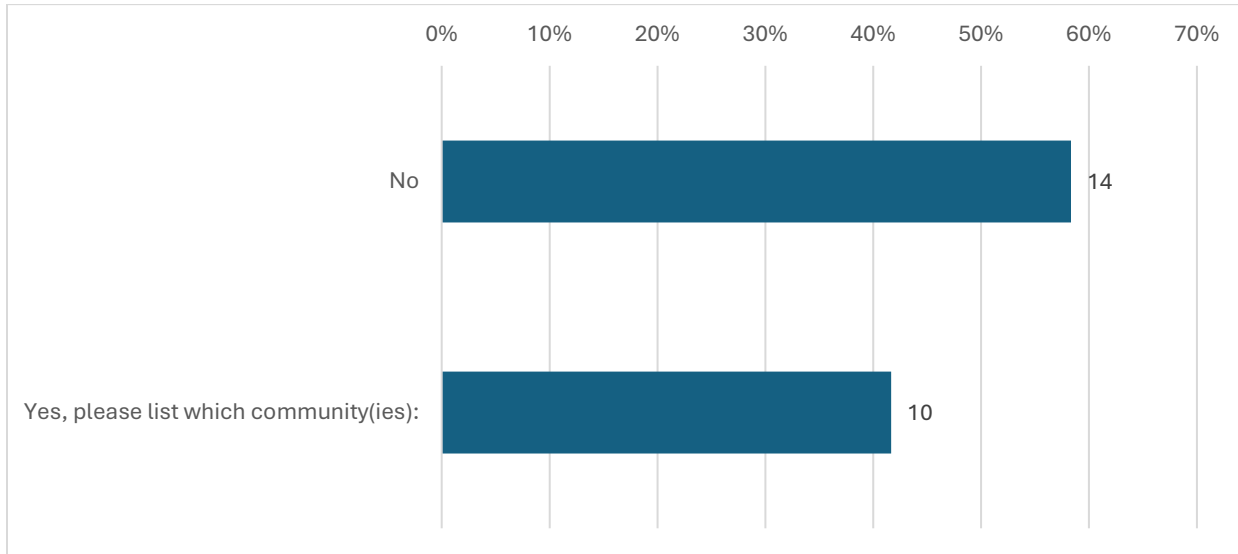
Total number of responses to this question: 25

Responses to “Yes, please list”:

- Anderson Springs
- Make sure to go all the way to the Napa County line.
- Hidden Valley Lake
- no comment

- HVL Ranchos, Anderson Springs, south of Middletown
- Tribal Communities; low income; people with impairments; young people; working families
- Anderson Springs needs to be updated. It has sewer but fewer dwellings since the fire. Growth should be encouraged here
- Southern most area, south of Twin Pine Casino to the Napa County line.
- Ranchos, Spruce Grove rd /Jerusalem Valley

**Question 10:** Are there any communities or neighborhoods that require localized policy guidance?

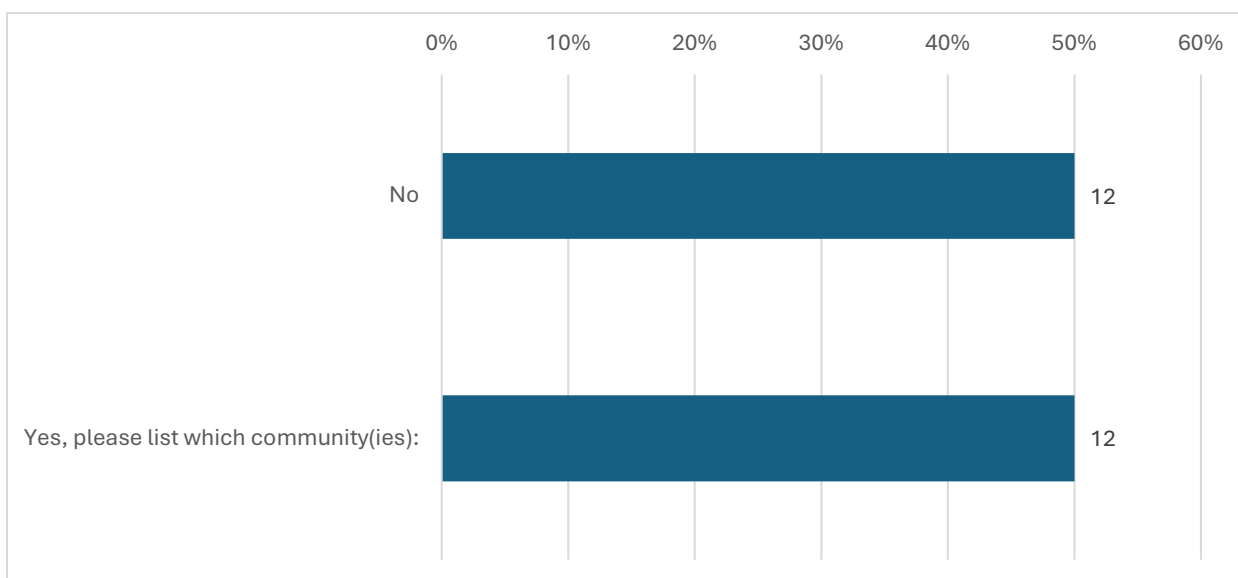


Total number of responses to this question: 24

Responses to “Yes, please list which community(ies)”:

- I'm not sure.
- Perhaps the commercial area along 175 as it starts to grow, as well as the area near Rainbow Ag, south of downtown Middletown and north of the casino.
- HVL, Guenoc
- HVL
- These communities are not the same. They should have customized guidance and planning. Some regional work re: evacuation and mitigation
- Hidden Valley Lake
- Yes, the Valley Oak Development area just outside of Hidden Valley.
- neighborhoods on creeks
- Anderson Springs
- Middletown

**Question 11:** Are there any communities or neighborhoods that require localized guidance for design (e.g., the look and feel of the community)?



Total number of responses to this question: 24

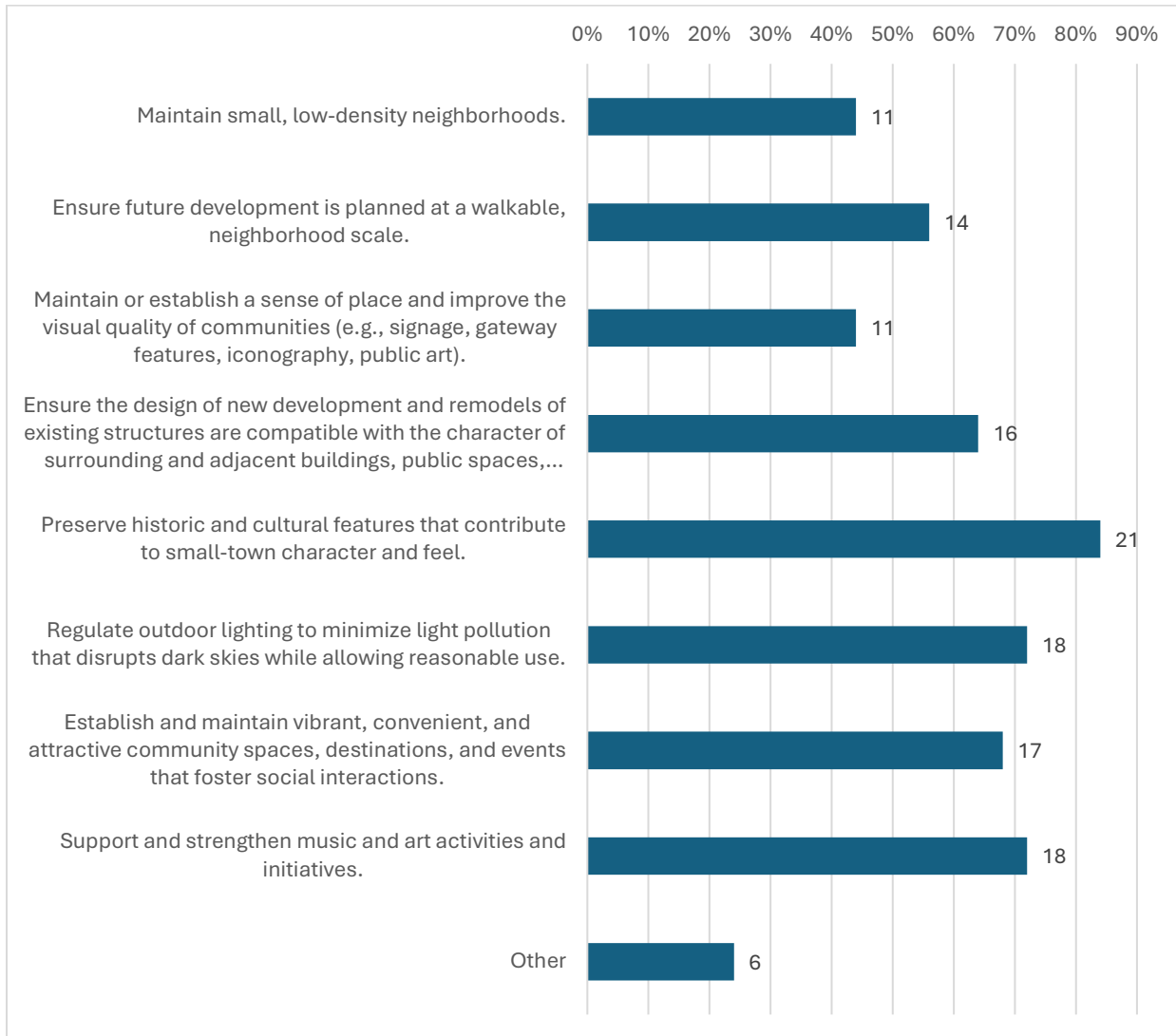
Responses to “Yes, please list which community(ies)”:

- Possibly Anderson Springs
- The main corridor.

- See reponse to question 10
- Hidden Valley Lake
- Individual communities may want to choose their own design
- HVL
- Middletown is very different than HVL. They need separate policies to preserve their cultures
- Hidden Valley Lake
- Valley Oak Development should have some design guidance to be a nice shopping center that complements the area instead of feeling like a cheap, corporate strip mall.
- communities in the downtown area
- Southern Rural Lake County
- Middletown

## Part 5: Policy Options

**Question 12:** How should the County preserve small-town character? (Select all that apply)

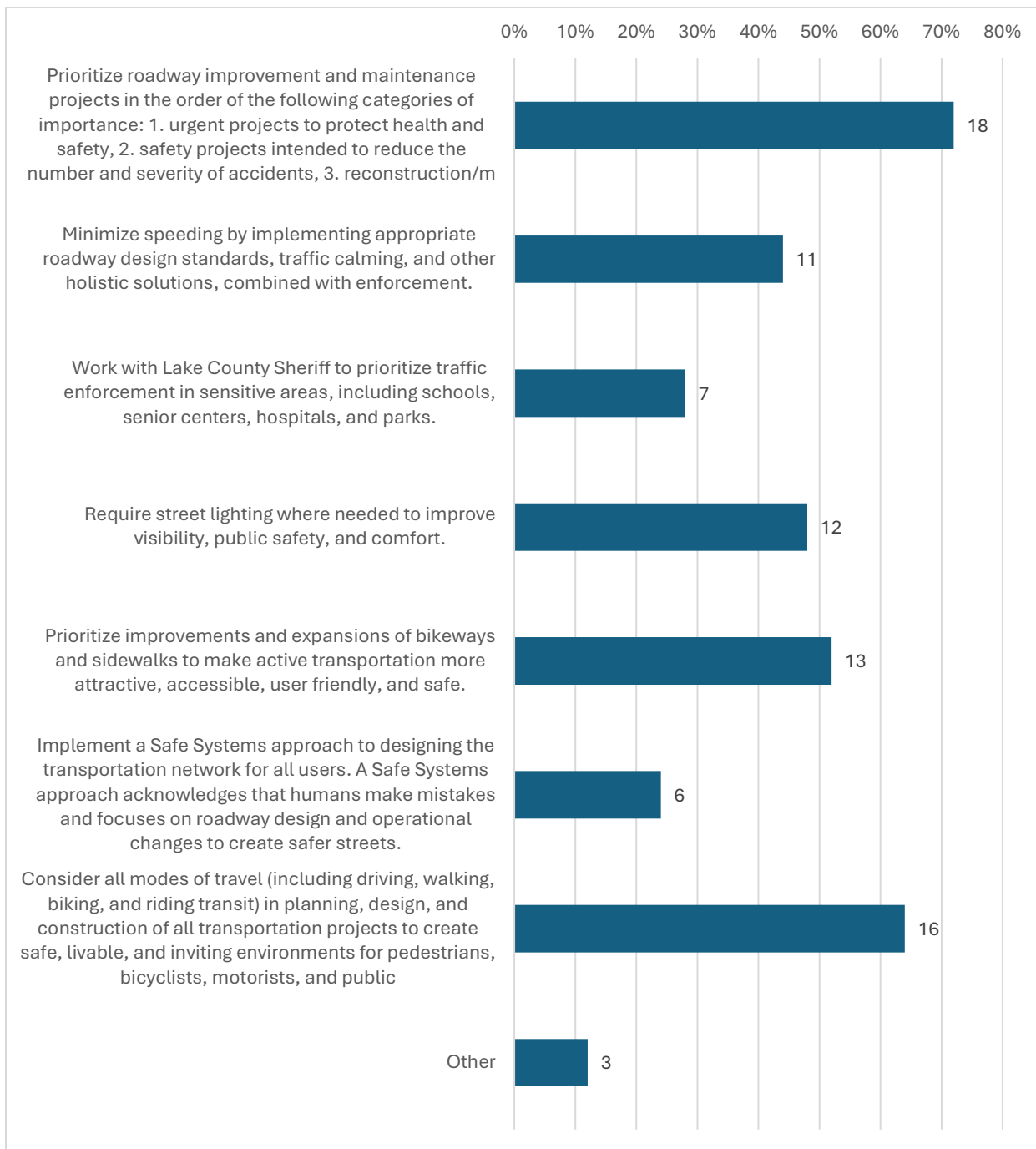


Total number of responses to this question: 25

“Other” responses:

- Encourage recreation and outdoor spaces as part of the community (more sport courts, tennis, pickleball, bocce ball), incorporate fruit trees and possibly signage marking waypoints for natural landmarks and interpretive signage for native vegetation.
- I wish the Casino could minimize light pollution although I know lights provide safety
- Commercial lighting should all be down lighting to protect the nite sky,
- Enforce no homeless on the streets
- reimagine parking spaces along the main streets; roundabouts; walking and bike paths connecting Middletown areas
- Open space along the creeks for public use.

**Question 13: What should the County do to improve roadway safety for all users, including drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians? (Select all that apply)**



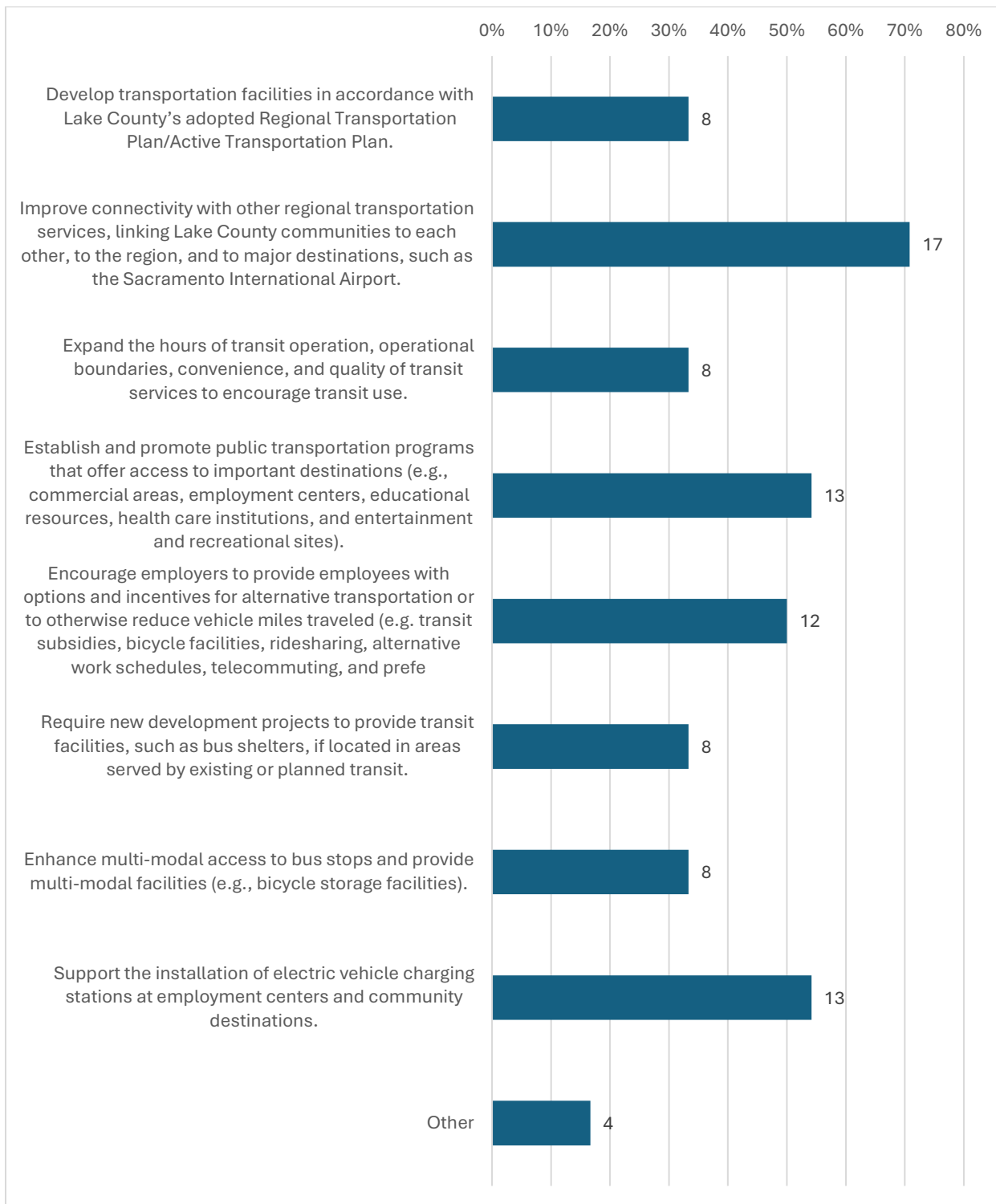
Total number of responses to this question: 25

“Other” responses:

- Middletown could consider shared/ rented bikes or scooters. While in McCall Idaho this summer, we noticed that at many intersections, there are receptacles with brightly colored flags that pedestrians can carry while crossing the street and deposit in the receptacle on the other side.
- Also include horses
- Public transportation, Multi use trails from Middltown to HVL and Trailside Park



**Question 14: How should the County improve the sustainability of the transportation network and support access to transit? (Select all that apply)**

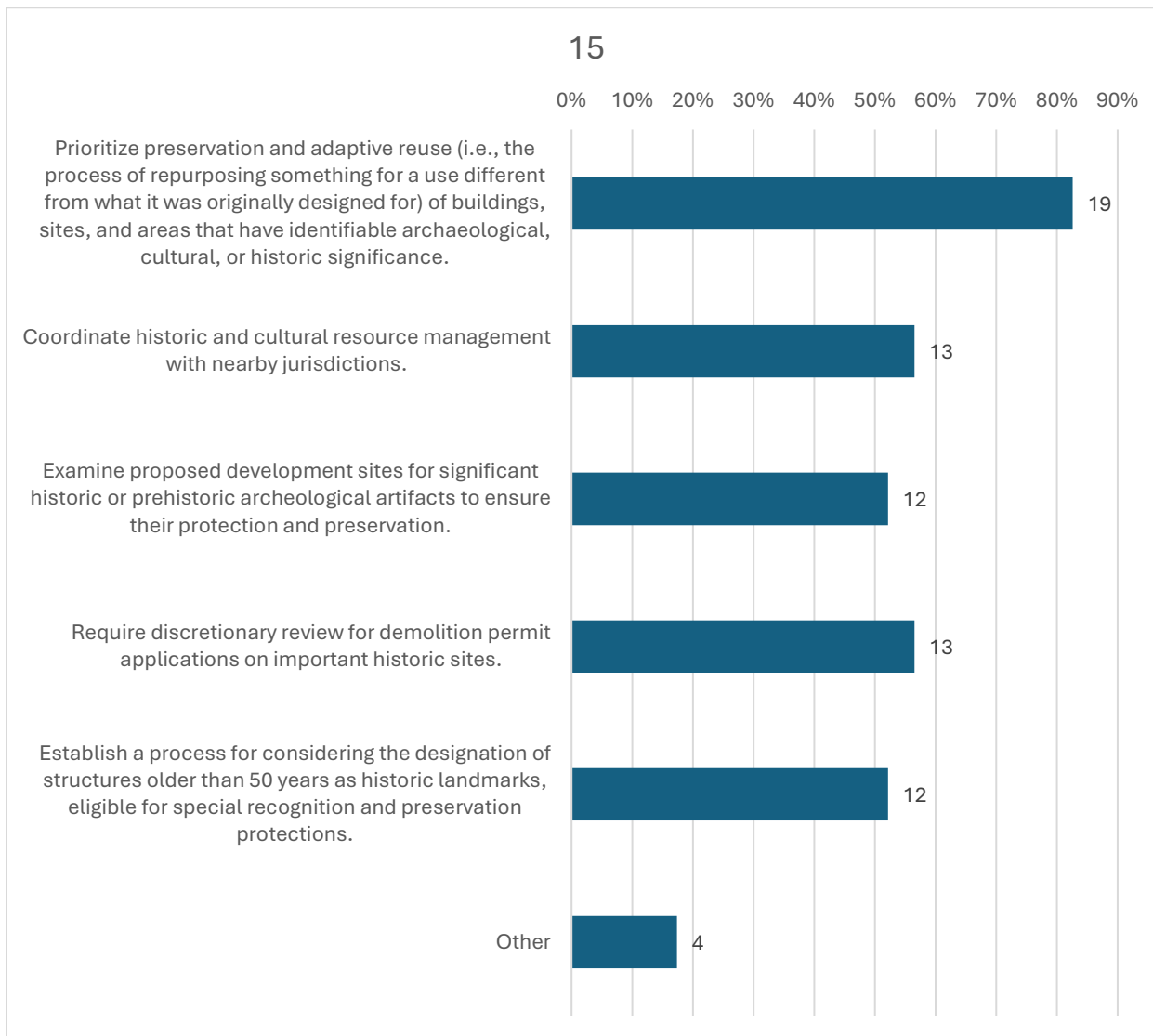


Total number of responses to this question: 24

“Other” responses:

- Better timing for connections with the bus to/from Calistoga
- Develop multi-use pathways set well off the highway that can be used by horseback, cyclists, walkers, etc, that connect our communities within the MAP and to other communities in Lake County. Encourage biking to work or to run errands.
- Reiterate - Development projects should incorporate sidewalks and/or safe paths for pedestrians and we need safe bikes lanes
- I would pay for a road improvement district.

**Question 15: How should the County protect, preserve, and manage historic and cultural resources? (Select all that apply)**

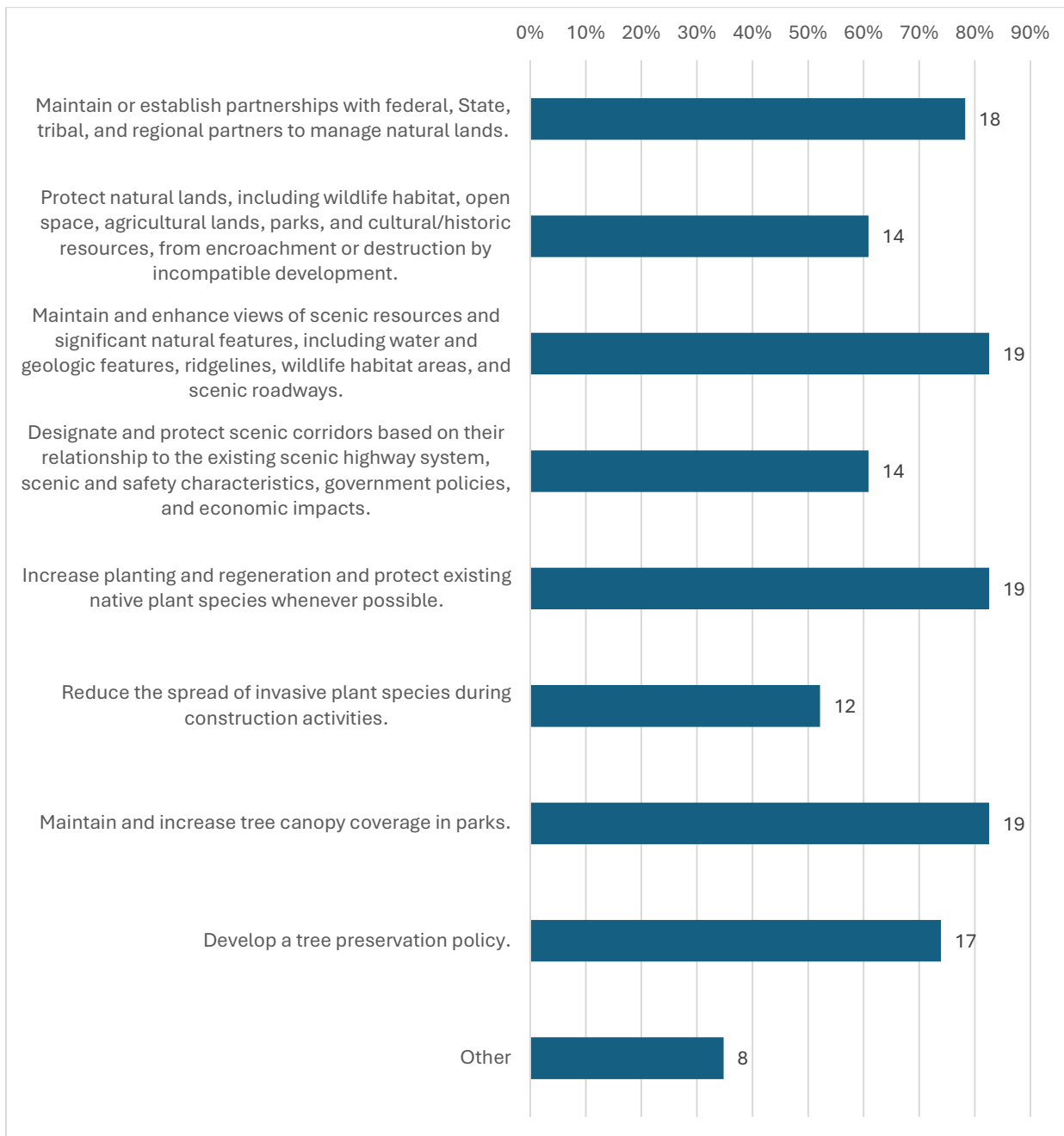


Total number of responses to this question: 23

“Other” responses:

- Remember, older isn't always attractive and worthy of saving.
- Require and enforce collaboration with the local tribe.
- In addition to the ability to designate certain structures historical structures and promote their adaptive reuse, but allow the owners of these properties to qualify for property tax relief under the Mills Act (could also be used as an incentive to bring developers here)
- give culturally and historically tied lands to the Tribes

**Question 16: How should the County protect and manage its open spaces and preserve its natural beauty? (Select all that apply)**

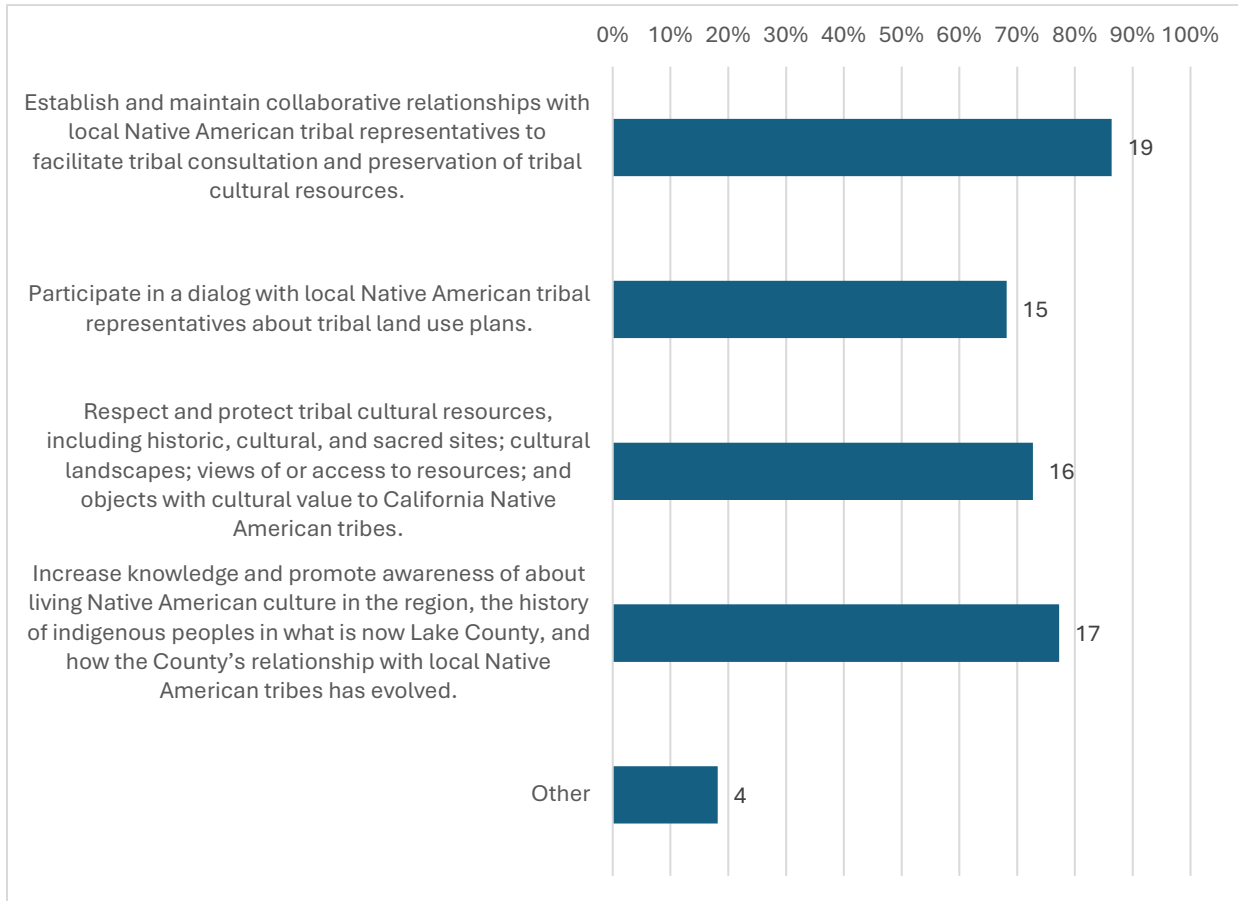


Total number of responses to this question: 23

“Other” responses include:

- Encourage tree planting along streets in a way that won't imping on PG&E
- Collaborate or partner with the Lake County Land Trust at Rabbit Hill and as more land is added. Incorporate interpretive signage of native flora to increase the community's understanding and appreciation for our natural resources.
- Whatever policies are developed they must truly be implemented. We need to take action to preserve the open space and ag lands in particular via zoning, setbacks, etc. and the BOS must stand by these policies.
- We need to work with the state. Insurance companies are requiring removal of trees and vegetation at an astounding rate. This will be detrimental to climate change initiatives
- Not allow low income housing as frequently on open space and lower the limit of acres for agriculture
- protect Oak trees; remove conifers where able
- The last two were violated by the county and CalTrans in removing the oaks on 175
- Maintain dark skies through appropriate building/design codes.

**Question 17:** How should the County amplify the area’s indigenous history, support indigenous traditions, and collaborate with indigenous communities? (Select all that apply)

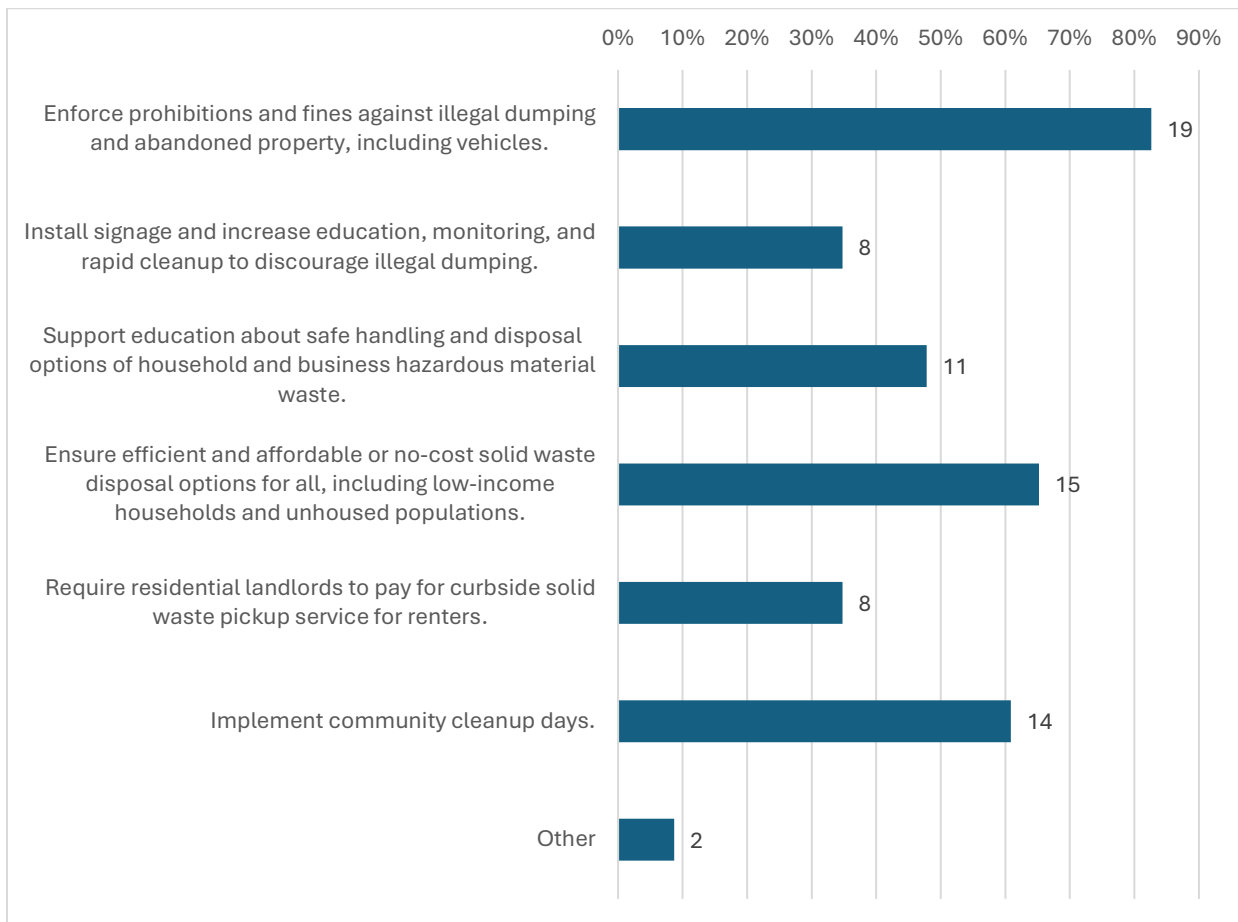


Total number of responses to this question: 22

“Other” responses:

- As mentioned before, I wish casinos would minimize lighting and stop smoking or have designated smoking areas. Beyond that, yes, of course, we all need to work together for the benefit of Lake County and all of its people.
- This is extremely complex. Please consult with tribal experts as needed
- Return land to the Tribes
- No

**Question 18: How should the County mitigate illegal dumping and other nuisance issues?**  
 (Select all that apply)

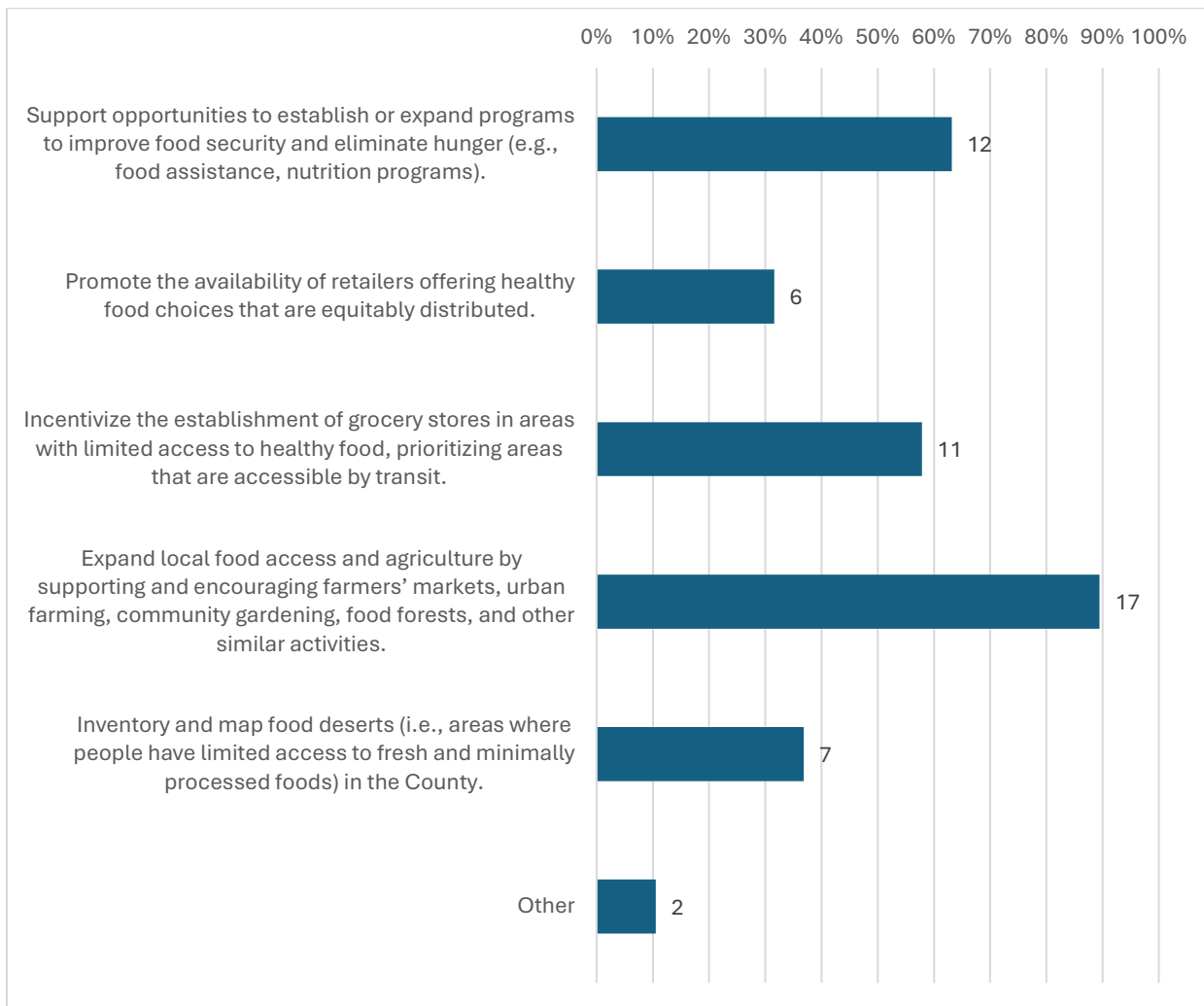


Total number of responses to this question: 23

“Other” responses:

- I think the last two items listed here should be handled by community members or service groups. County government does not need to get involved in the business of a landlord or property manager. While county government should work with and support the community clean up days, a grassroots effort supported by the County would be great. I don't think this needs to be a policy. Or reword it, "support the efforts of community members and organizations to do community cleanup days.
- Enforce stricter code enforcement and hold landlords accountable

**Question 19: How should the County ensure access to healthy food? (Select all that apply)**

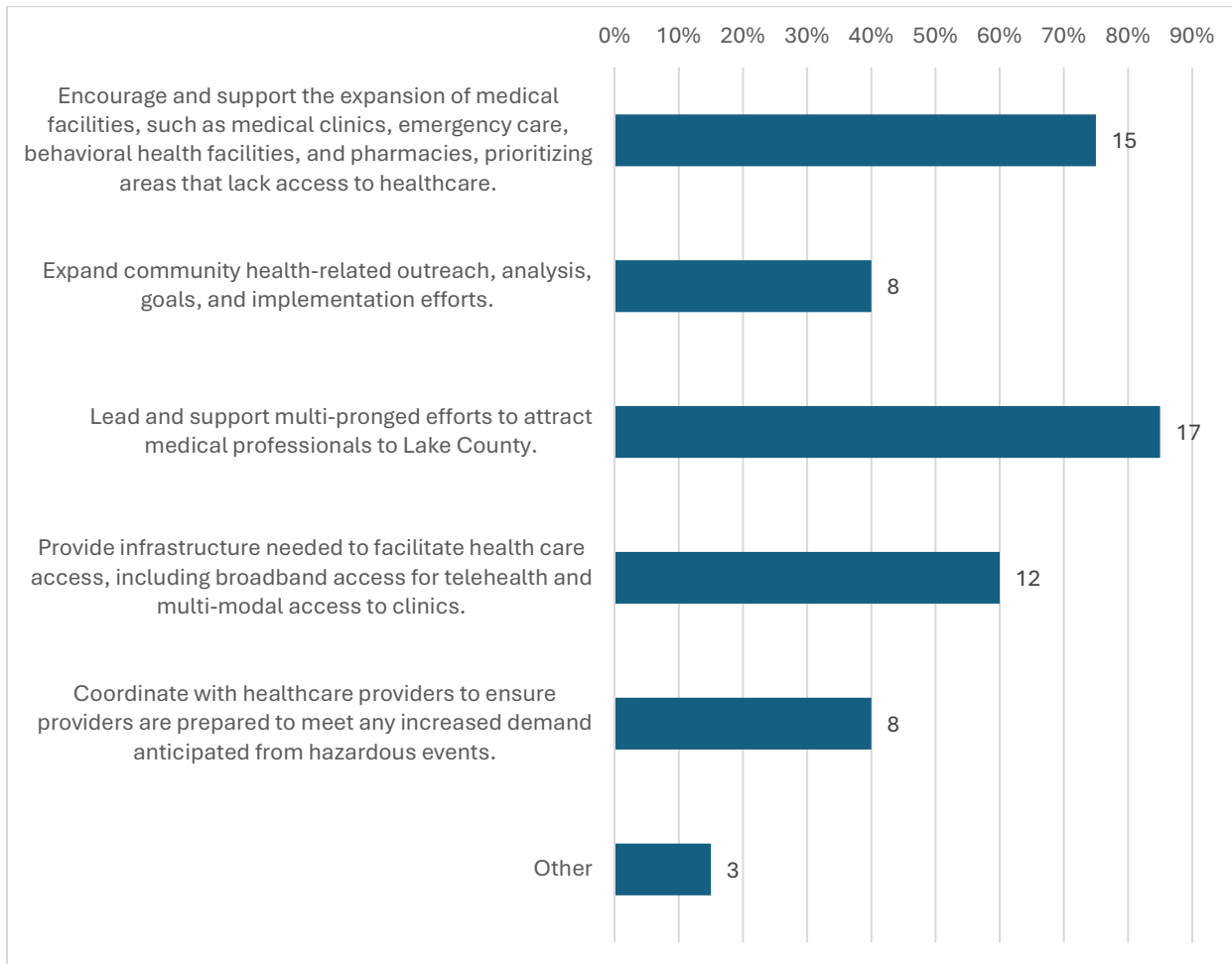


Total number of responses to this question: 19

“Other” responses:

- Plant fruit trees throughout the area like many of the towns in Palm Desert do with citrus trees.
- Healthy food and food scarcity are different. We need real health options like organic markets. Not cheap access to cheap and unhealthy food.

**Question 20: How should the County ensure access to quality health care? (Select all that apply)**

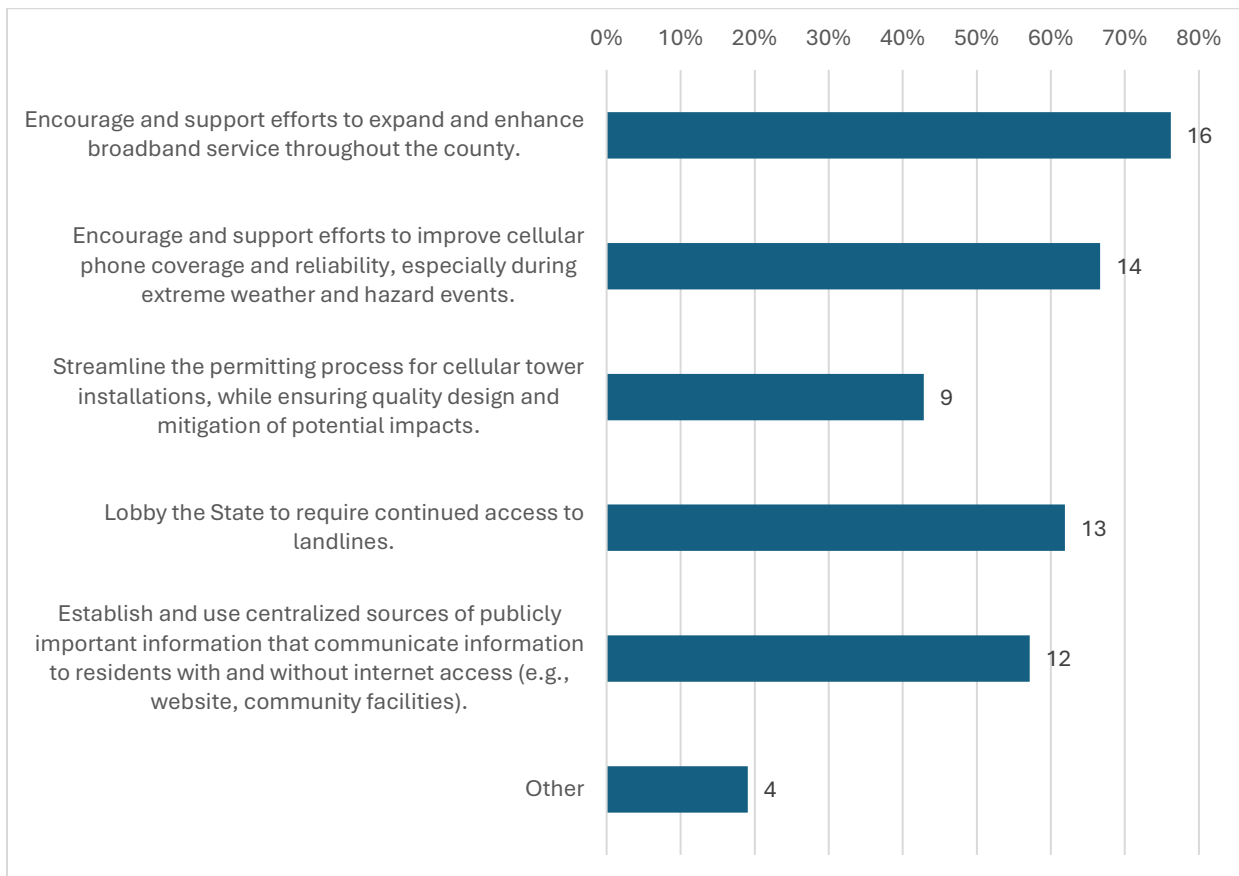


Total number of responses to this question: 20

**“Other” responses:**

- Provide easy to access behavioral health support, provide substance treatment residential services for both men and women, including sober living support for women with children.
- This county has the unique combination of a large, lower-income population as well as a dearth of hospital facilities so many of these lower-income (often uninsured or minimally insured) use the ER as their doctor's office. Adding more urgent care clinics around the lake would be perfect for most of the situations these people use the ER for.
- Better community events focused on real health, not offering cheap alternatives and free programs. We need walking groups and free gardening classes. Things that actually provide health long term. Incentivize naturopathic medicine and not greedy corporate health.

**Question 21: How should the County ensure that residents have access to vital communication services? (Select all that apply)**



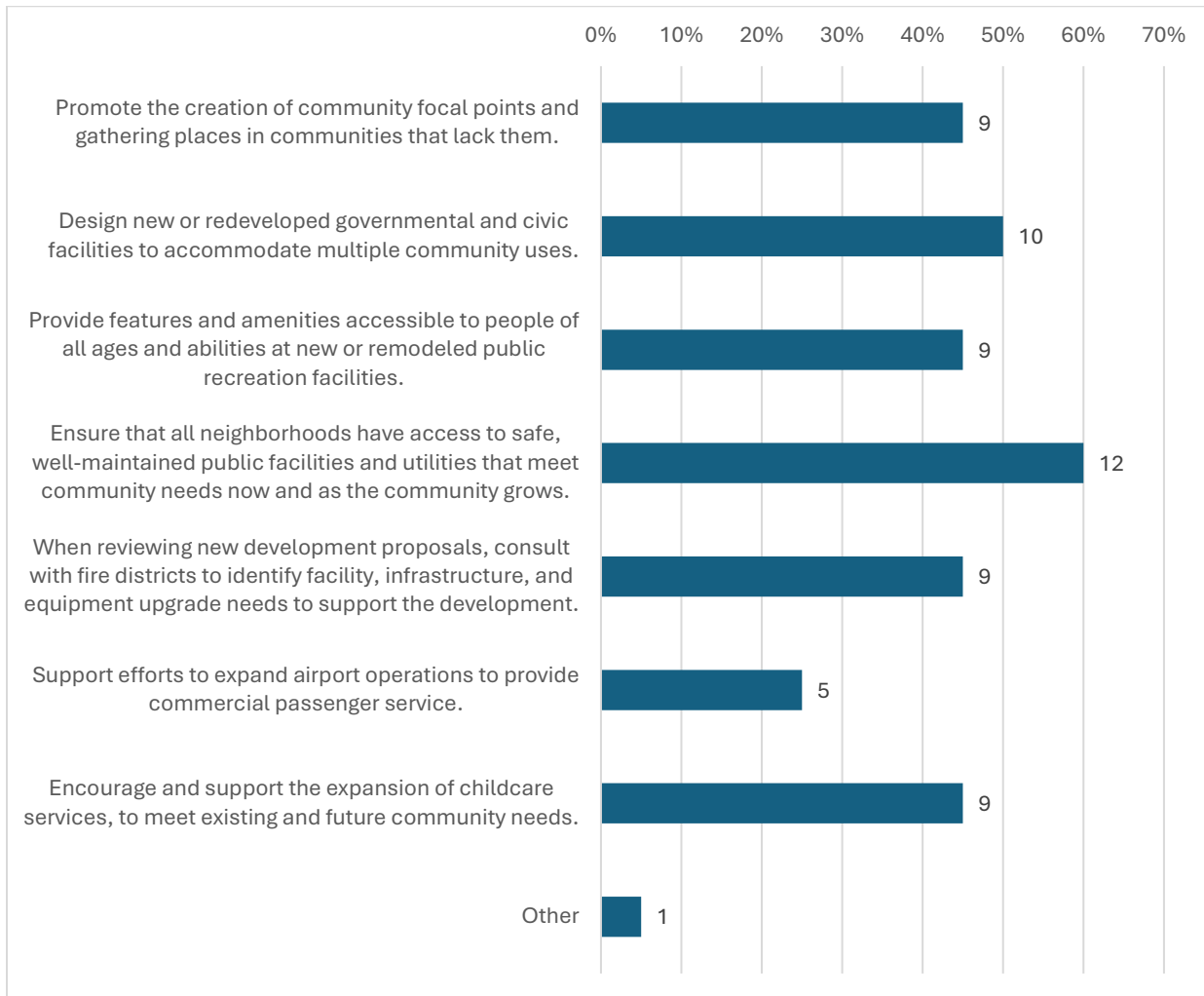
Total number of responses to this question: 21

“Other” responses:

- Educate people that 5G cannot cause Covid/cancer etc
- The landlines thing is really important to our older population
- Our county has fine internet with Mediacom. Give them grants to build in Spring Valley and remote locations. It's not hard or something you need to waste time on. They have the data to use
- Some places still need landlines; get access to satellite internet services.



**Question 22:** How should the County ensure that residents have access to vital community resources and services? (Select all that apply)

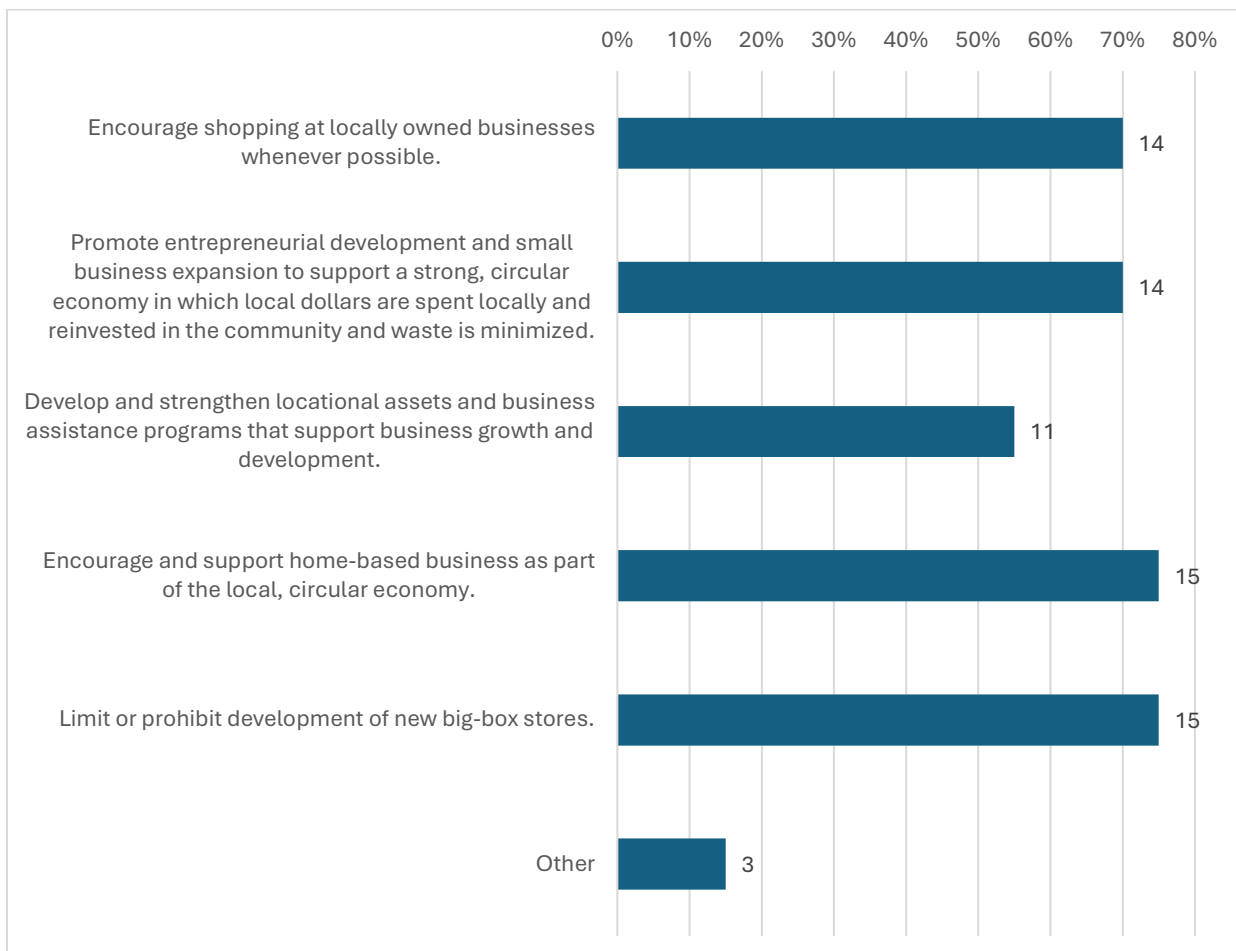


Total number of responses to this question: 20

“Other” responses:

- Adding an airport in south lake county is a terrible idea. But let's find ways to make getting to the Sonoma County Airport easier.

**Question 23:** How should the County support local and small businesses? (Select all that apply)

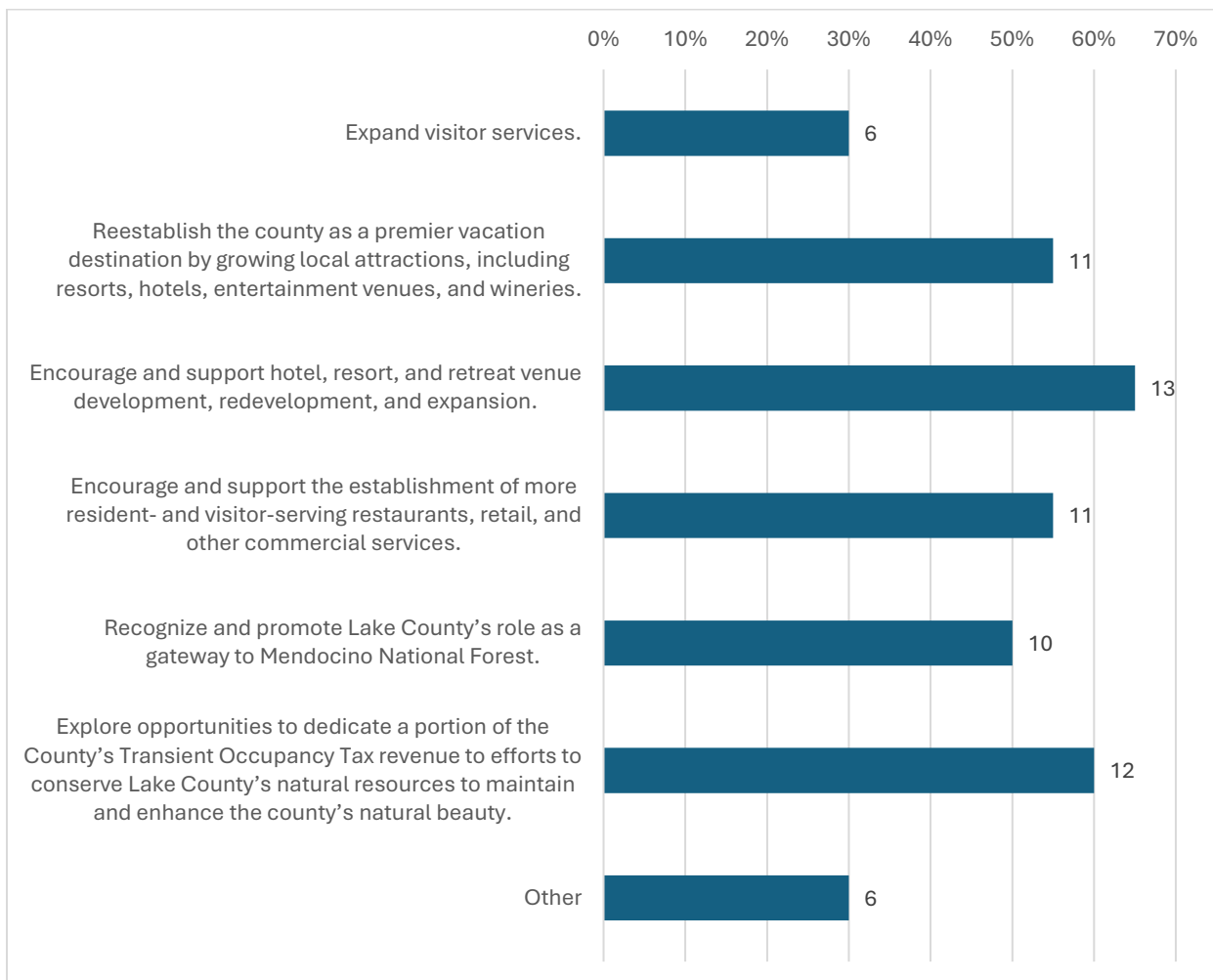


Total number of responses to this question: 20

“Other” responses:

- Actively recruit sustainable development of travel and leisure. Encourage development of "cute stores" surrounding brewery/tasting rooms and restaurants and galleries clustered to form destinations.
- Streamline the permitting/building processes so that it minimizes costs also make sure all planners and building officials are on board and aware
- Big-box stores are okay in certain locations. We also need to encourage and support a business market or mall where several small businesses share space and/or staff, accountant or whatever to offer a new business model to the customer and minimize overhead for the business owner(s). We need to improve tourism to support our local small businesses.

**Question 24: How should the County support the tourism economy? (Select all that apply)**

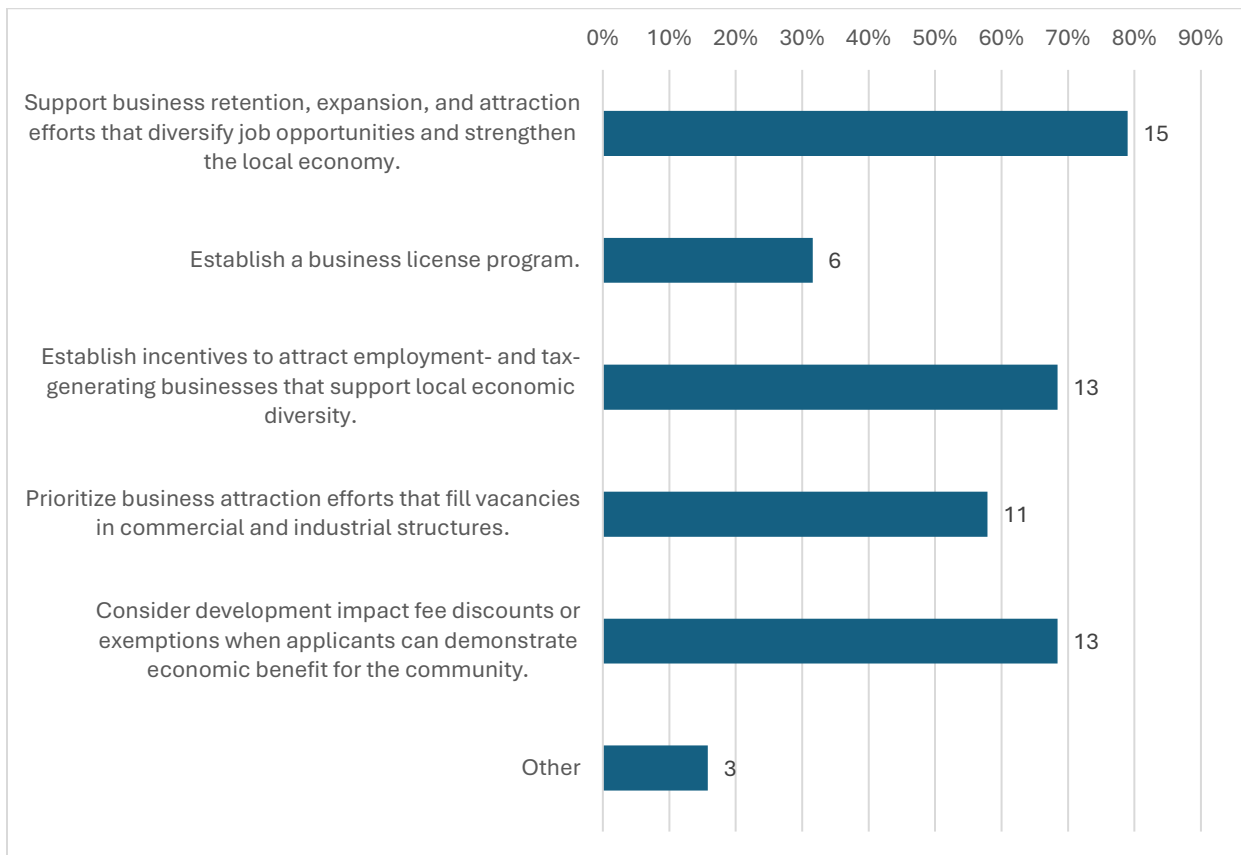


Total number of responses to this question: 20

“Other” responses:

- Lobby the state to improve access roads: expand Butts Canyon Road to be a reliable 4 season entryway.
- 1. Partner with an organization like the Lake County Land Trust, UC Davis, or the Geysers for example to plan and offer Eco Tourism experiences. 2. The county's CTA program could serve as county or area guides.
- Advertise outside the County. Wineries are great, but relatively few and far in between. Visitors need more easy options. Develop a permit process for vineyards to host tourist, enjoy our open space, have a lunch & a glass of wine, then scoot to the next place. WE need more destinations, active destinations. From an early question about food trucks in Middletown... food trucks could be located at various vineyard sites. For those cannabis operations wanting to host visitors onsite, that could work too.
- Aggressively supporting the Guenoc Valley/Lotusland project would be a good start - could bring in an absolute ton of money and jobs into the county.
- Find a way to clean up Clear Lake; stop rec fishing and take invasive fish out if it helps.
- Encourage development of abandoned resorts and hot springs.

**Question 25: How should the County support a healthy local economy? (Select all that apply)**

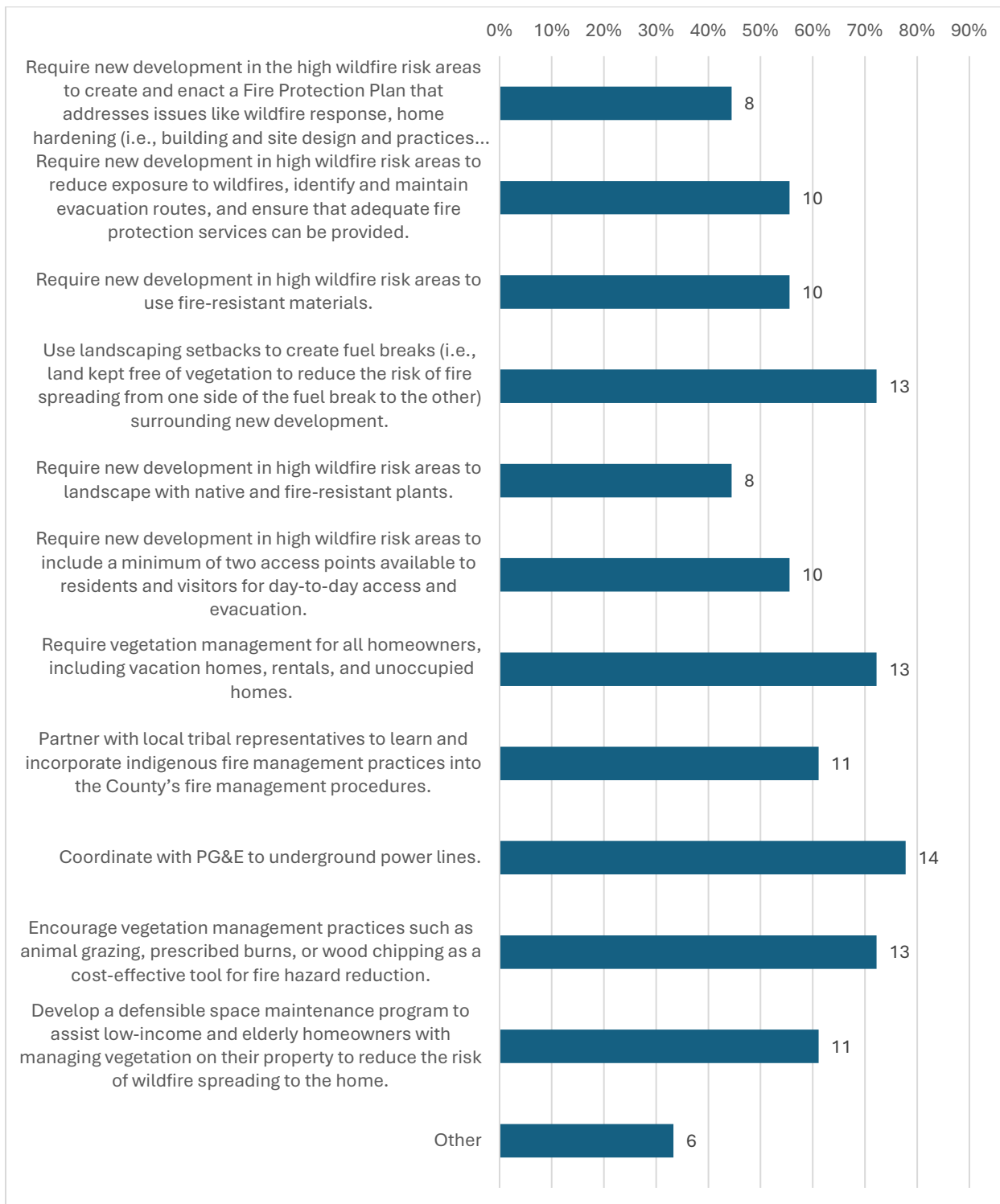


Total number of responses to this question: 19

“Other” responses:

- Make the primary southern entry-way into the county easier. I understand most of Mt. St. Helena is in Napa county but collaborating on either straightening and simplifying the drive (or a massive tunnel but that's probably not a viable solution) would promote more businesses to come here as well as make out of county job opportunities more doable for most people and that money will be spent here by our residents.
- Make it easier for businesses. We need them. Streamline things and lower fees
- Force county department heads to live here.

**Question 26: How should the General Plan work to reduce wildfire risk in the county?**  
 (Select all that apply)

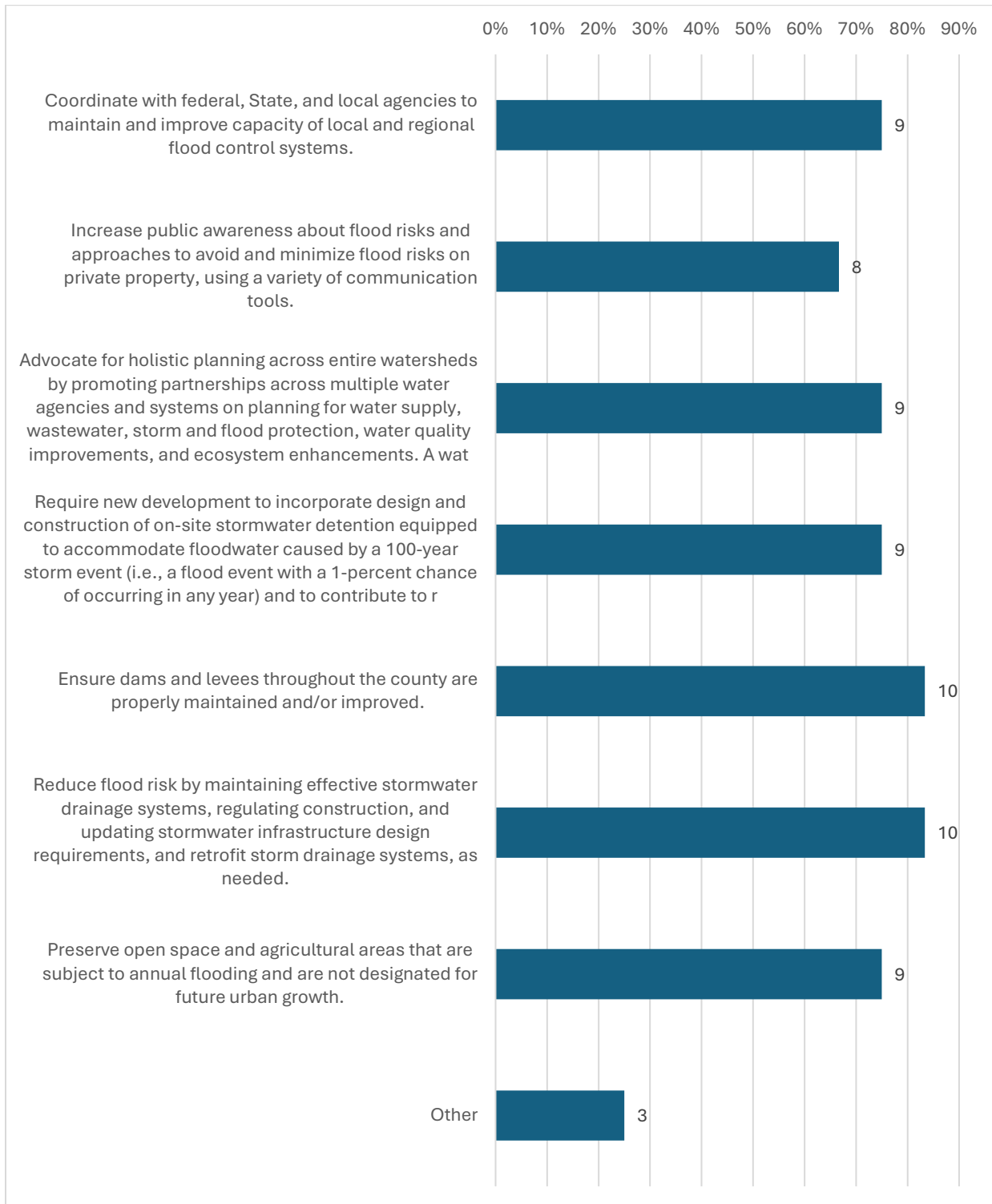


Total number of responses to this question: 18

“Other” responses:

- Require land owners to reasonably maintain their property so as to reduce fire risk, not just home owners. Large sections of land throughout the county is full of weeds and dry brush. They can use goats to mitigate fire risk.
- Develop and use eminent domain as necessary to provide at least two escape routes for every community.
- Look into the introduction of beavers into floodprone areas. In areas where beavers have been introduced, water is more well-dispersed and the land is less dry and susceptible to wildfire.
- County FPD's should work on burns and making firebreaks, etc. in many areas in collaboration with insurance companies, etc. to lower the fire insurance rates in the county. Many young families and older retirees alike would love to move here as it's a prime location to have access to wilderness but be close enough to the big cities if you absolutely need it. Right now the insurance rates (if they're even willing to insure in the first place) are just ridiculously high.
- Absolutely do not give pge any money. If you enforced codes and made citizens clean their lots, it's plenty.
- Enforce lot clearance on vacant lots

**Question 27: How should the General Plan address flood risk in the county? (Select all that apply)**

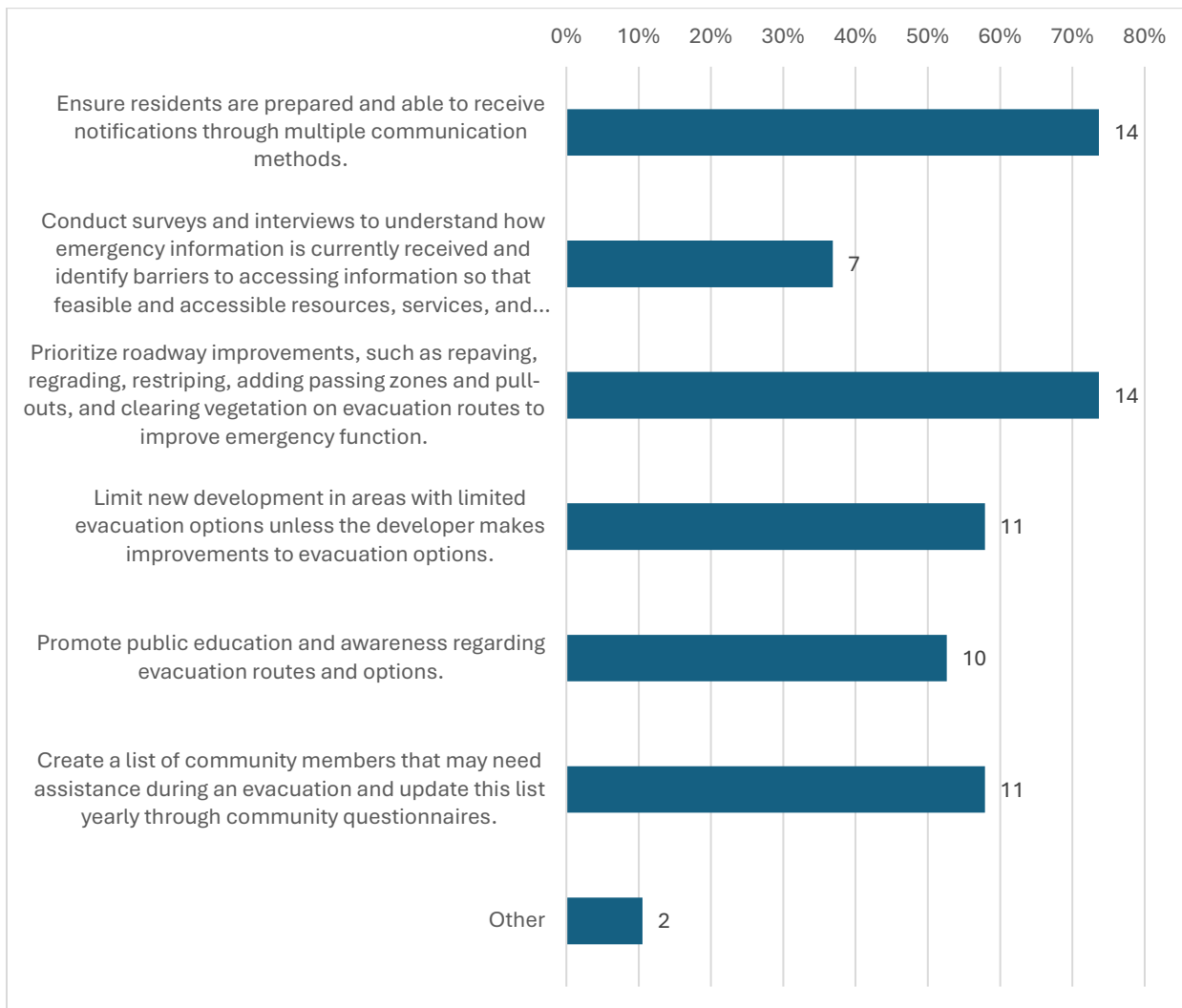


Total number of responses to this question: 12

“Other” responses:

- Look into the introduction of beavers into floodprone areas. In areas where beavers have been introduced, water is more well-dispersed and the land is less dry and susceptible to wildfire.
- Don't build homes in flood zones
- Hidden Valley Levee needs serious work, could be a hazard to hundreds of residents/homes.

**Question 28:** How should the General Plan improve emergency preparedness and response capabilities in the county? (Select all that apply)

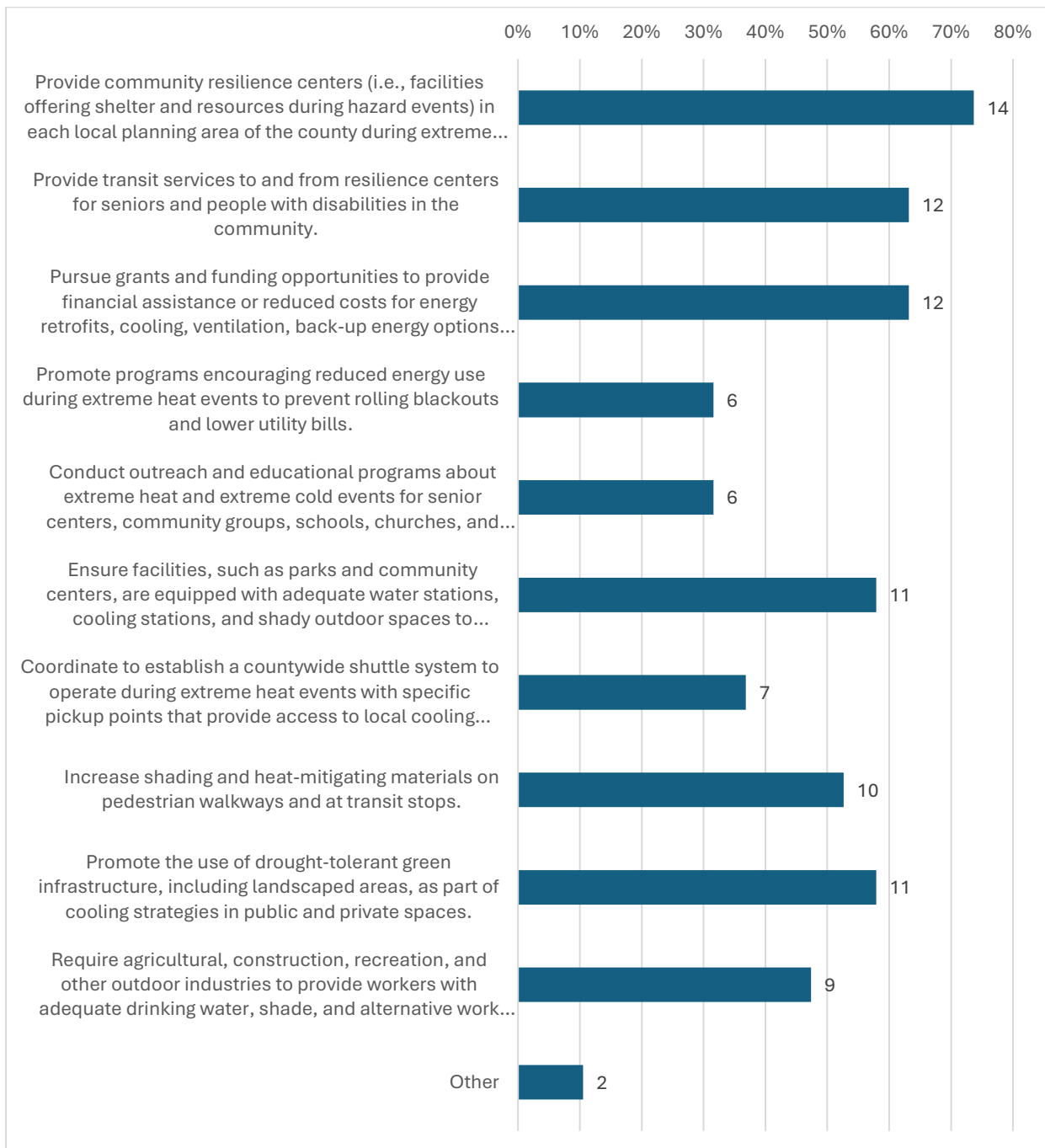


Total number of responses to this question: 19

“Other” responses:

- Designate refuge sites and direct residents toward them
- Encourage people to know their neighbors and be able to offer help to elderly or special needs neighbors.

**Question 29: How should the General Plan best prepare the county for extreme temperatures, including extreme heat and cold temperatures? (Select all that apply)**



Total number of responses to this question: 19

“Other” response:

- Advocate at the state level to stop the pge franchise and change laws to protect consumers
- Encourage replacement of old mobile homes with newer homes

**Part 6: Other Input**

If you have any additional questions or comments, please share them below.

- We need housing for people with middle income who work. Stop focusing on low income. It is creating a situation where nobody can ever get ahead and you are holding marginalized communities down. Give them a chance to succeed and have a home they pay for, not that’s free.
- Create a lessons learned list from the Valley Fire to improve future recovery efforts
- Consider a by-pass around Middletown