

Montague Mass in Motion Committee Meeting
Gill Montague Senior Center 62 5th Street Turners Falls, MA
Monday March 27, 2023 3-4:30pm

AGENDA

This meeting will be held in-person at the location provided above. Members of the public are welcome to attend. Topics may start earlier than specified.

1. 3:00 p.m. **Brief overview of Open Meeting Guidelines and meeting facilitation**
2. 3:10 p.m. **Committee members introductions including responses to the following:**
 - Name, relevant background. From your perspective what is a key issue/concern regarding our town becoming (more) “age friendly” for seniors?
3. 3:30 p.m. **Purpose and Main functions of the Mass in Motion Committee**
 - Four main areas of focus. See chart.
4. 3:45 p.m. **Regional Age- and Dementia-friendly Assessment Results and steps moving forward for Mass in Motion Age- and dementia-friendly planning.**
Franklin Regional Council of Government (FRCOG) Guest: *Rachel Stoler*, Community Health Program Manager
5. 4:20 p.m. **Agenda items for next meeting; Tasks before next meeting; Dates and times for next 2 meetings.**



AGE-FRIENDLY

Franklin County & North Quabbin

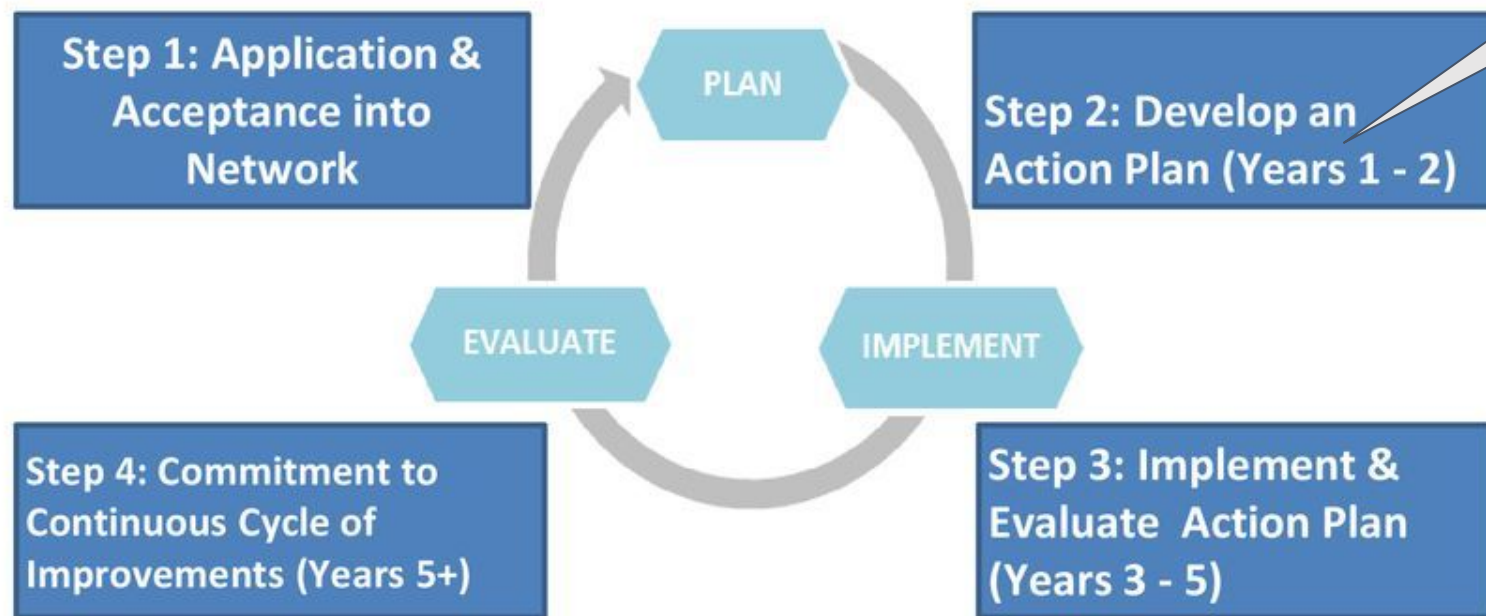
Mass in Motion Age- and
Dementia-Friendly Initiative
In Montague

December, 2022



AARP Age Friendly Process

We are here!

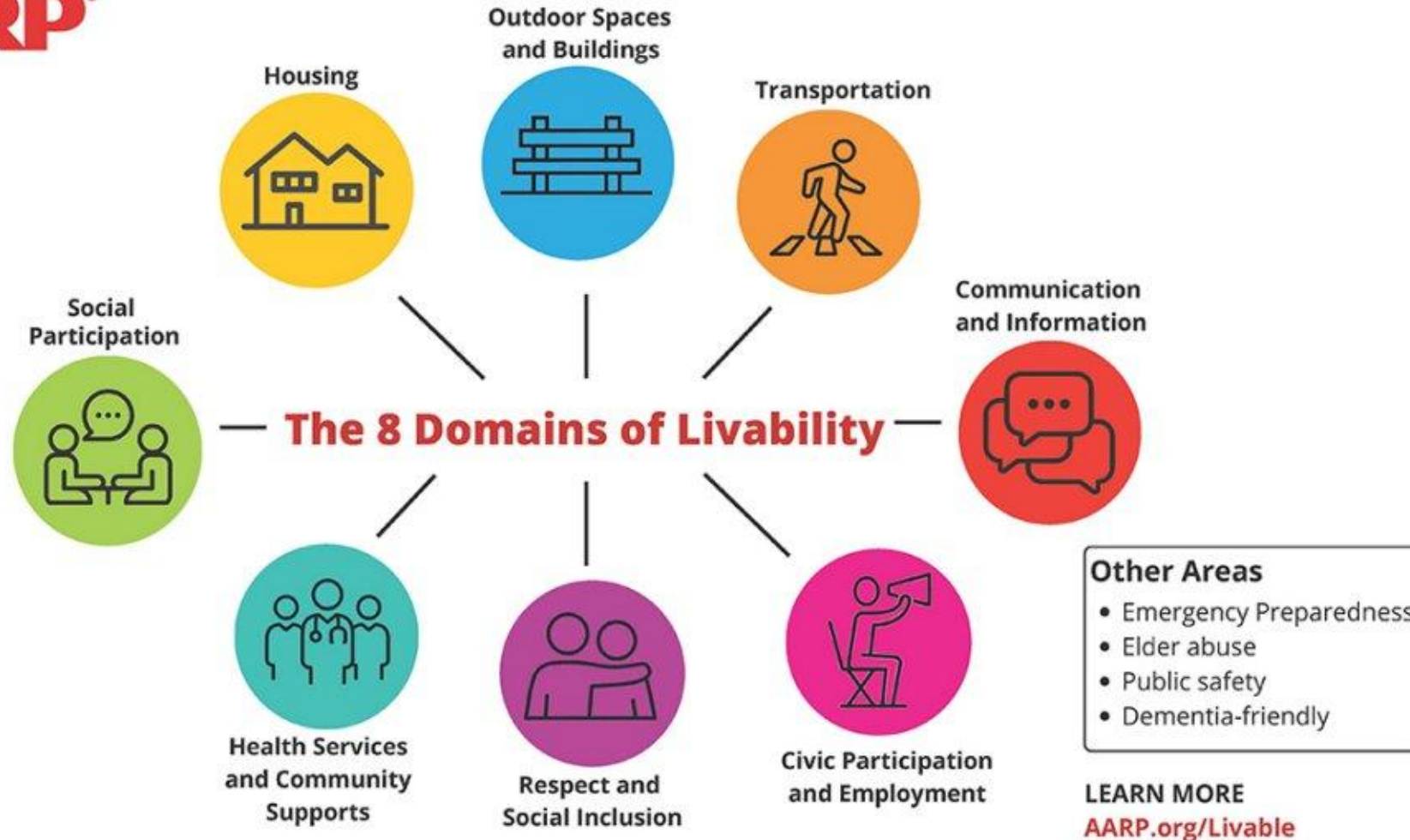


AGE-FRIENDLY
Franklin County & North Quabbin

Livable Communities
Great Places for All Ages



8 Domains of Livability



Mass In Motion

- Statewide movement that promotes opportunities for healthy eating and active living in the places people live, learn, work and play
- Mass In Motion Franklin County's grant is designed to complement LifePath's ongoing Age-Friendly project
- Changes community conditions by looking at long-term solutions to address root causes of problems
- Leading with race explicitly but not exclusively



Age- and Dementia- Friendly Franklin County Needs Survey Responses



Throughout slides:

Region wide info is given first,

Montague-specific info is listed second in red

Demographics of Survey Respondents

- 72% female, 25% male, 2% prefer not to say (66% female, 22% male)
- 25% live alone (45% live alone, 34% w/spouse or partner)
- 72% between ages of 60 and 79 (57% of respondents in Montague are between ages of 60 and 79, 21% 80 and up, 15% are 50-59 or caregiver)



Built Environment:

Housing, Public Buildings and Outdoor Spaces, and Transportation

Housing



- 47% (44%) of respondents own their own home
- 67% (61%) of respondents have lived in their current town for over 15 years (60% (53%) in the same home)
- 90% (83%) reported that it was important for them to stay in their town as they age, and 88% (84%) in their home.
- 33% (36%) reported good or excellent access to affordable housing options for people with their income level
- Motivations for changing housing in the future:
 - cost 52% (45%)
 - need for different type of housing 43% (41%)
 - need for better access to transportation 27% (23%)
 - cost of living in the area 26% region wide (19%)
 - need for better healthcare services 19% (17%)
 - need to be closer to family, social opportunities 29% (29%)
- Maintenance: respondents reported generally good access to home repair services (58%, 51%) and lawn care (53%, 51%), a quarter regionally report it to be unavailable

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:

- 77% (69%) respondents report good access to public buildings for their current needs
- 42% (26%) either don't have access or don't know if they have access to outdoor spaces that are accessible to them and have adequate benches
- 69% (55%) of residents reported need for better lit and accessible streets and roads
- 61% (68%) of respondents report good traffic signs and pedestrian crossings – 38% (31%) report them to be poor or they don't know
- 81% (80%) of respondents report always feeling safe in their home and community

Outdoor Spaces
and Buildings



“Both local
little grocery
stores have
steps to enter.
No handicap
access.”

Transportation

- Need for more access to transportation was the #1 issue mentioned in open responses
- 29% (23%) of older adults identified a potential need to change housing to get better access to transportation
- 90% (75%) drive themselves
- 23% (25%) have others drive them
- 20% (25%) walk or bike
- 2% (5%) report using special transit like Senior Center van
- 23% (30%) of respondents report there is no public transit in their area or it is too hard to get to 14% (30%)

Transportation



“If someone is sick, they have to rely on a friend to take them to the doctor or to run an errand.”



Social Environment:

Communication and Information, Social and Civic Participation,
Health Services and Community Support, Social Activities

Health Services and Community Supports



Health Services
and Community
Supports

Health Services:

- 13% (22%) of respondents receive caregiving support
- 4% (3%) are primary caregivers of children
- 10% (9%) are the primary caregiver for an older adult
- 21% (25%) of respondents report access to adequate caregiver support (respite care, support groups)
- 22% (22%) of respondents say access to home health care providers is poor or unavailable

“As I start to have more health issues I am concerned (including cognitive issues). If anything happened to my husband, I'd be lost.”

Health Services and Community Supports



Health Services
and Community
Supports

Health Services

- 34% (46%) of respondents say access to healthcare professionals is poor, unavailable, or they don't know
- 37% (17%) say health and social services are not conveniently located or they don't know
- 56% (50%) of respondents report access to wellness programs such as nutrition, pain management, etc.
- 79% (79%) of respondents report lack of access or don't know access to mental health supports

“Good healthcare choices are extremely hard to find, and very hard to get anyone within a reasonable distance of travel.”

Health Services and Community Supports



Health Services
and Community
Supports

Community Supports

Village or Neighbor to Neighbor support groups:

- 44% (48%) of respondents are interested in volunteering in a Village support group
- 31% (29%) are interested in receiving support from a Village support group

Information about Services

- 49% (51%) report good access to easy-to-find information about services

Health Services and Communication



Communication
and Information



Telehealth

- 72% (74%) of respondents have used telehealth at least once, 59% (66%) more than once
- Of those who used telehealth at all:
 - 70% (72%) had a good experience
 - 59% (54%) would prefer to see their provider in person
 - 90% (67%) found the technology was not confusing to use
 - 86% (49%) would choose to use it again, even after pandemic

“I would use telehealth again in the future, even after the pandemic.”

Focus Group/Open Response Themes:

- Technical support needed to use telehealth services



Social Participation

- 34% (45%) of older adults live alone, 52% (34%) live with a partner or spouse, and 10% (15%) live with family or friends.
- 77% (74%) of respondents interact with someone outside of their household several times per week or more
- 8% (6%) interact with someone outside of their household less than twice per month
- 83% (80%) sometimes or often feel well supported
- 20% (23%) do not have or are unsure if they have someone they can call for help anytime of day or night
- Sense of community belonging is an unmet need for older adults

“My biggest worry is that I’m alone and I don’t see people every day. I’m going to die in that apartment alone by myself.”

Communication and Information

Communication and Information



- Top sources of information identified were family and friends 52% (53%), social media/internet 54% (52%), COA/Senior Center 52% (44%), newspaper 51% (64%), town newsletter 27% (18%)
- Computer use and Internet access: 89% (89%) have reliable internet at home; 92% (92%) have a computer, tablet or smart phone and 86% (89%) know how to use them; 74% (66%) use Zoom or similar video chat. 31% (30%) want to learn to use new technology better
- Assistance needed for seniors wanting to use digital communication
- Lack of outreach and information leads to further isolation

“Since I don't use a computer, printed listings of services available to elderly that I could reach by phone.”

Civic Participation and Employment



Civic Participation
and Employment

- 56% (47%) of respondents felt they had good or excellent volunteering opportunities
- 66% (40%) felt they had good or excellent opportunity for civic engagement (such as serving on Montague board or committee)
- 69% (61%) had good or excellent access to information about Montague updates
- 83% (84%) were unaware of or thought remote engagement opportunities for homebound older people were poor
- 86% (96%) of respondents were unaware of or thought flexible employment opportunities for older people were poor
- 25% (27%) of respondents report financial insecurity as their biggest problem or worry about getting by each month
- 43% (35%) feel ok financially now but worry about the future

“We need flexibility in the ability to keep working as we age, along with appreciation and respect of the older employee.”

Respect and Social Inclusion

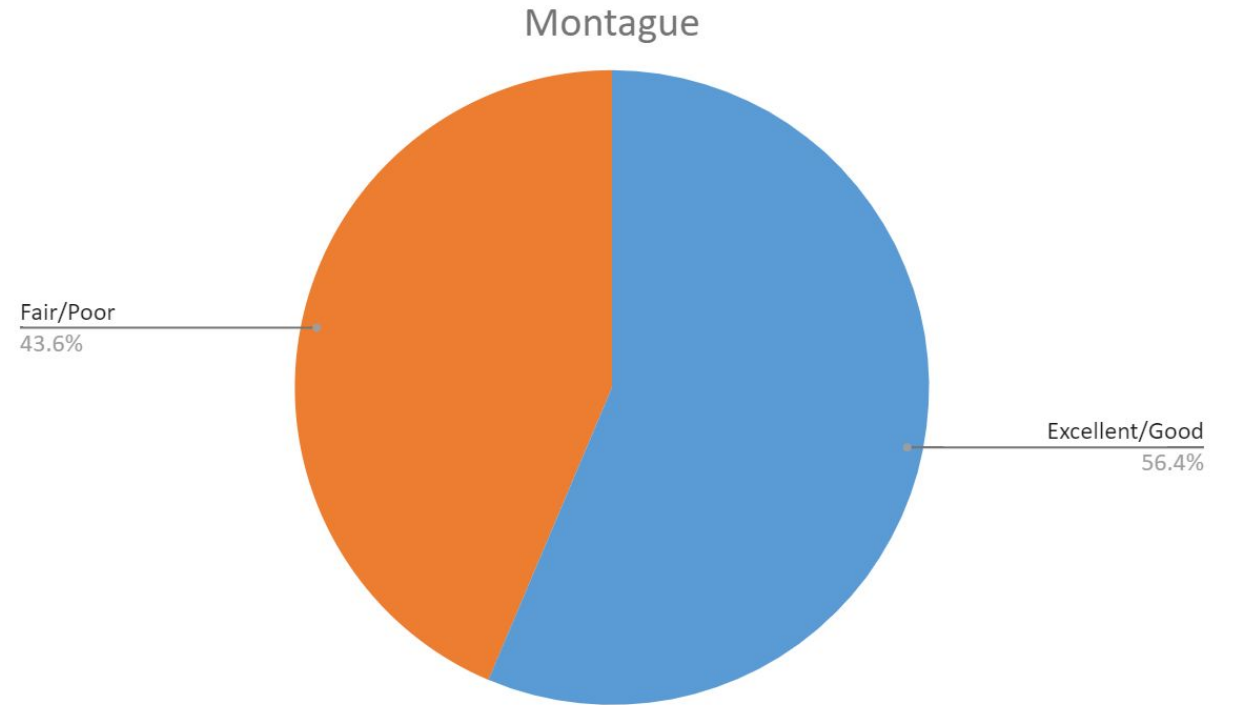
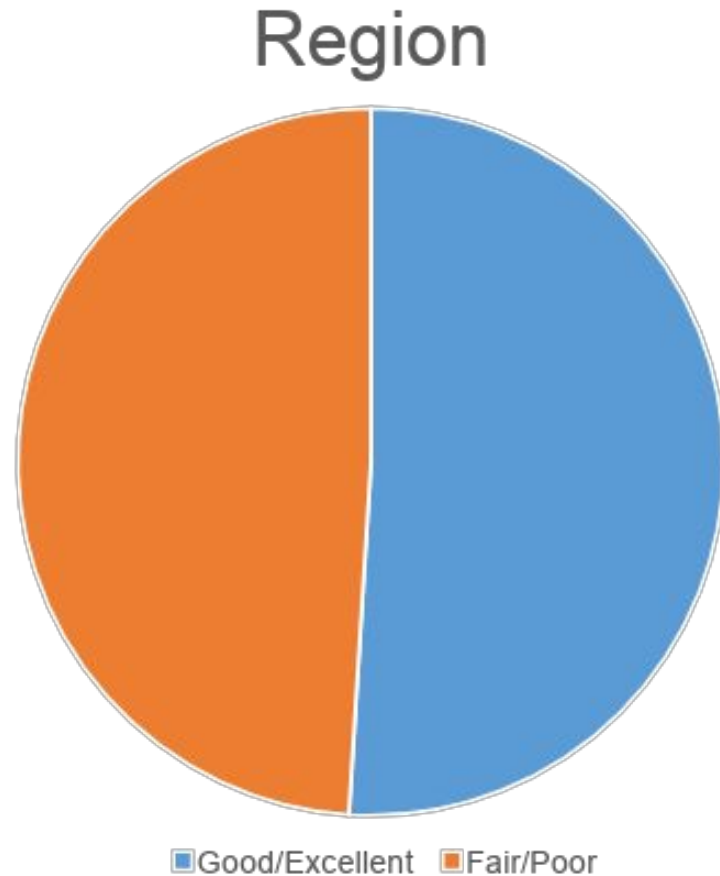
- 54% (52%) of respondents feel they have conveniently located social and cultural activities
- 59% (53%) felt they had access to events that were affordable to them
- 69% (72%) did not have access to or did not know about intergenerational events
- 66% (59%) felt they had social participation opportunities in their language
- 67% (69%) of respondents had good access to fitness and outdoor recreation opportunities



Respect and
Social Inclusion

“I don't want to be separated out as I get older - I want to live with all kinds and ages of people.”

How do you rate Montague as a place to age?



Timeline



Initial meeting with Montague governance & stakeholders – review process, data

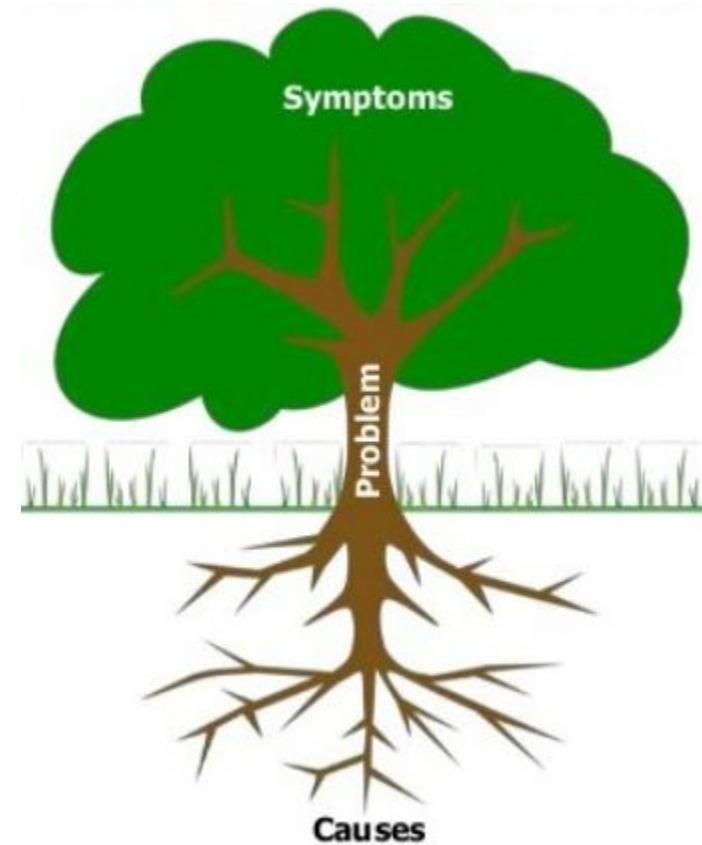
Convene work group to focus on local priorities

Health Equity Training

- Examine data,, answer additional questions about needs in Montague
- Identify priorities, examine root causes
- ID strategies to address priorities
- ID structure moving forward (funding, implementation)

Mass in Motion and Health Equity

- Structural inequities and racism play large role in determining health and opportunities for health and wellbeing
- “Leading with race” important even in a Montague without much diversity
- Use Racial Justice Reframing Questions
 - Who benefits?
 - Who is harmed?
 - Who influences?
 - Who decides?
 - What are the unintended consequences?



Practical Age- and Dementia-Friendly Examples



Housing

Neighbor support for small repairs through Village to Village networks or Senior Center



Social Participation

Specifically include older adults in community-wide events held in accessible venues



Transportation

Ensure people know of the existing resources like FRTA Access



Civic Participation and Employment

Ensure that online town board meetings are always close captioned and that you have adequate microphones and audio boosters for in-person public meetings

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



Install benches along popular town walking routes, formal or informal



Communication and Information

Use your town newsletter to share information on age-specific resources and supports



Health Services and Community Supports

Provide first responders with special training to better serve older adults living with dementia or other age-specific issues when in an emergency



Respect and Social Inclusion

Establish a buddy system in schools to encourage intergenerational interacting and appreciation.



Questions?

Contact Us



Carol Foote
Age- and Dementia-Friendly
Program Manager
LifePath
cfoote@lifepathma.org
www.lifepathma.org

Rachel Stoler
Mass in Motion Program Coordinator
Franklin Regional Council of Gov'ts
rstoler@frcog.org
www.frcog.org



Five Villages: One Future

Montague Comprehensive Plan Survey

Responses collected June - October, 2022

352 fully completed surveys

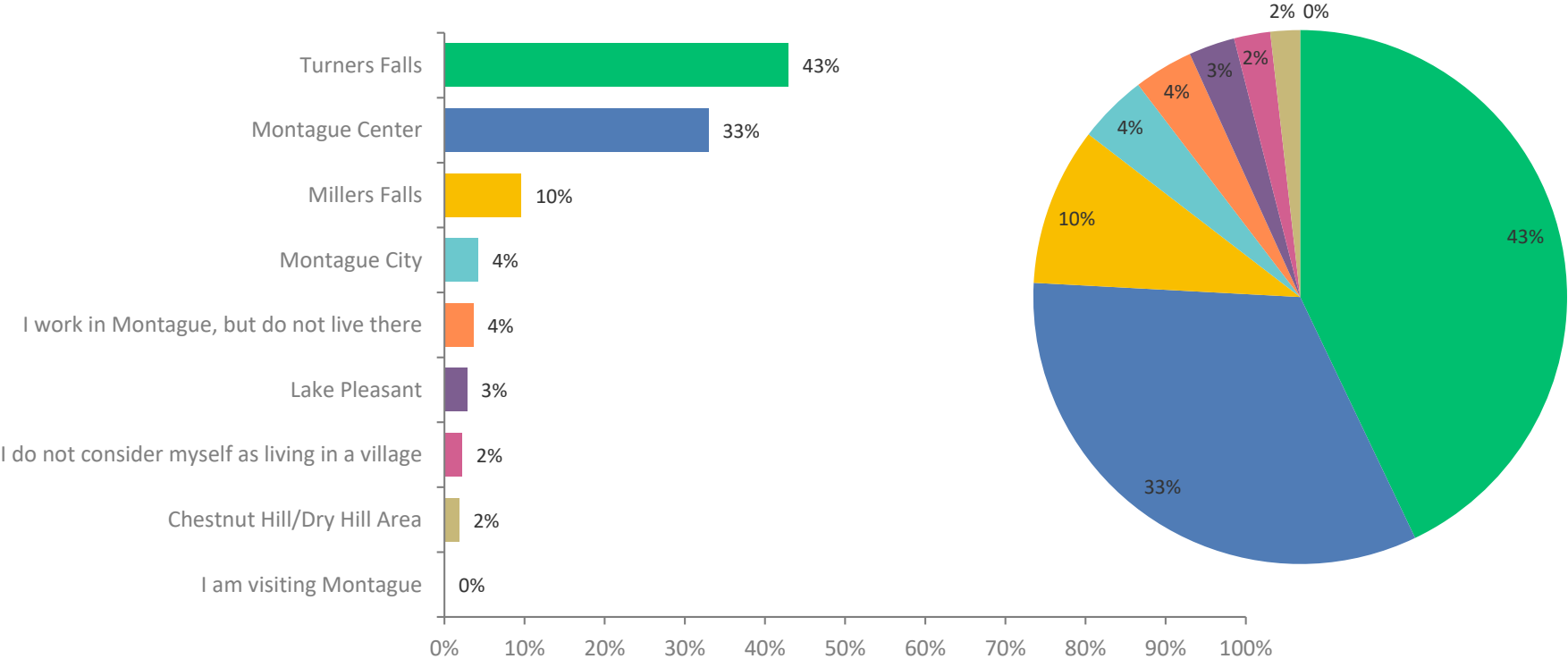
6 in Spanish

346 in English

Demographics of Survey Respondents

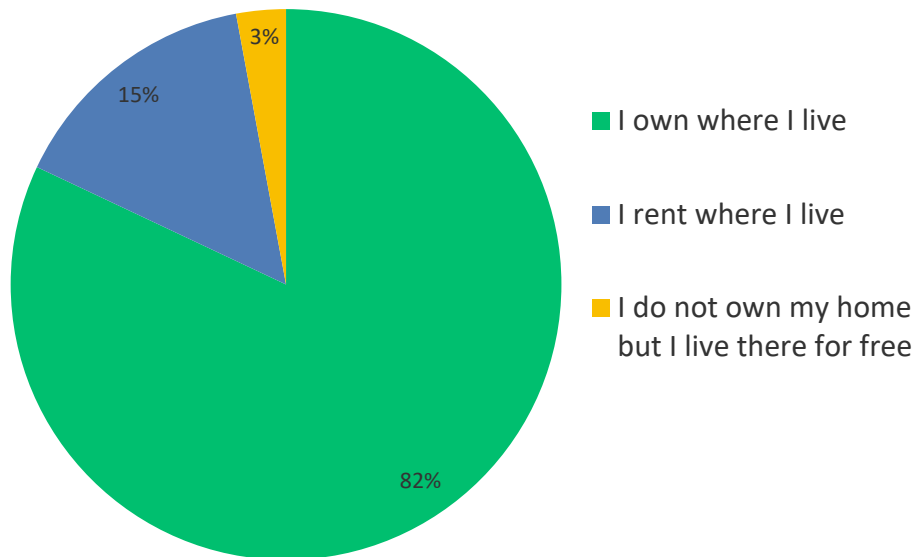
Q1: Where do you live in the Town of Montague? *Select one.*

Answered: 501 Skipped: 5



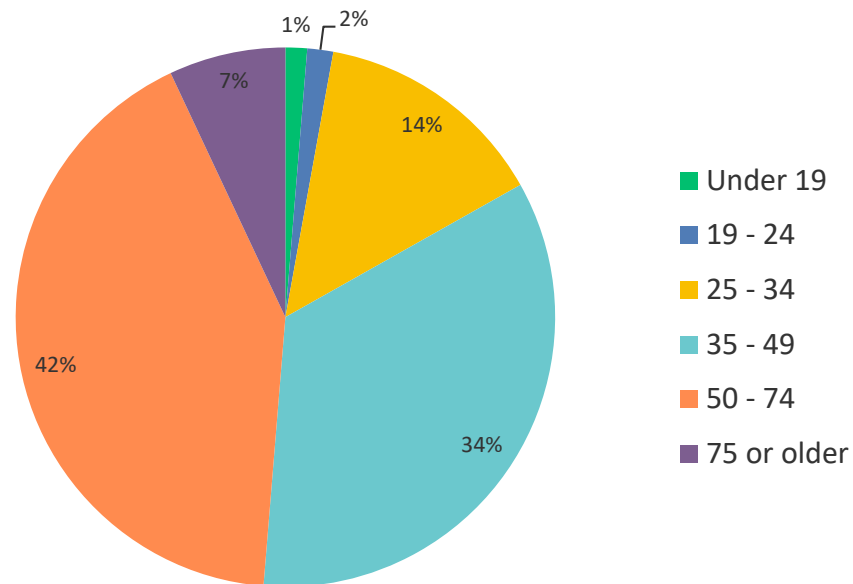
Q16: Select the phrase that best describes your housing. *Select one.*

Answered: 378 Skipped: 121



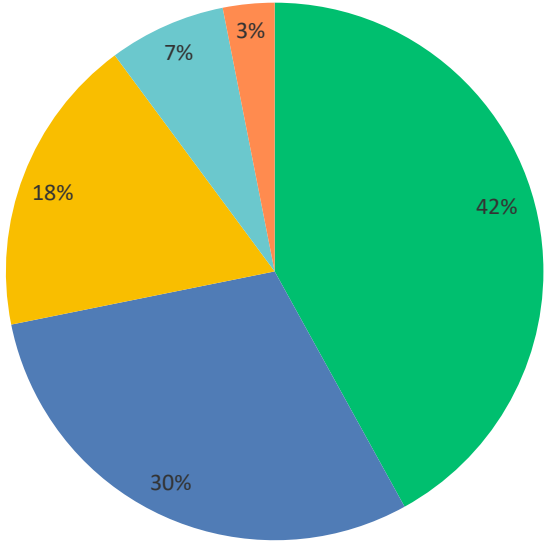
Q17: What is your age? *Select one.*

Answered: 386 Skipped: 120



Q18: What is your current living situation?
Select one.

Answered: 355 Skipped: 151



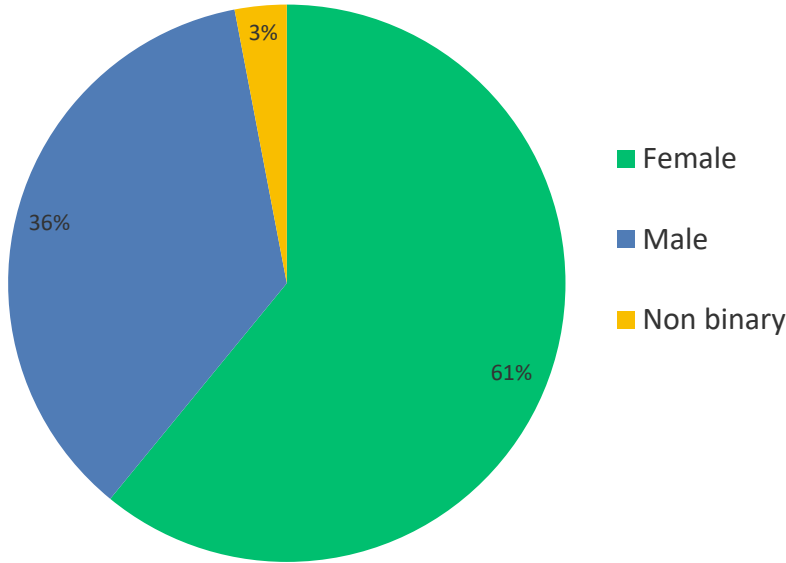
- Couple without children
- Couple with school-age children
- Single adult living alone
- Single adult - shared quarters
- Single parent with school-age children

Q19: Where do your children attend school? *Open ended.*

School	% of respondents with school-age children
Hillcrest Elementary	23%
Elementary out-of-town	17%
Middle/high school out-of-town	16%
Turners Falls High School	13%
Sheffield Elementary	9%
Great Falls Middle School	6%
Gill-Montague Regional School District, unspecified	5%
Homeschool	4%
Gill Elementary	3%
Franklin Technical School	3%
Preschool in Montague	2%

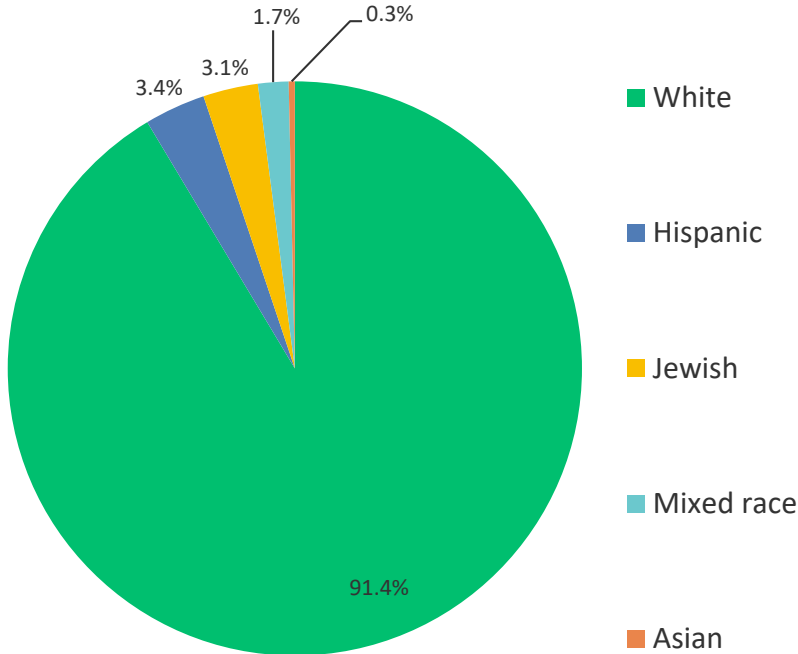
Q20: What is your gender? *Open ended.*

Answered: 334 Skipped: 174



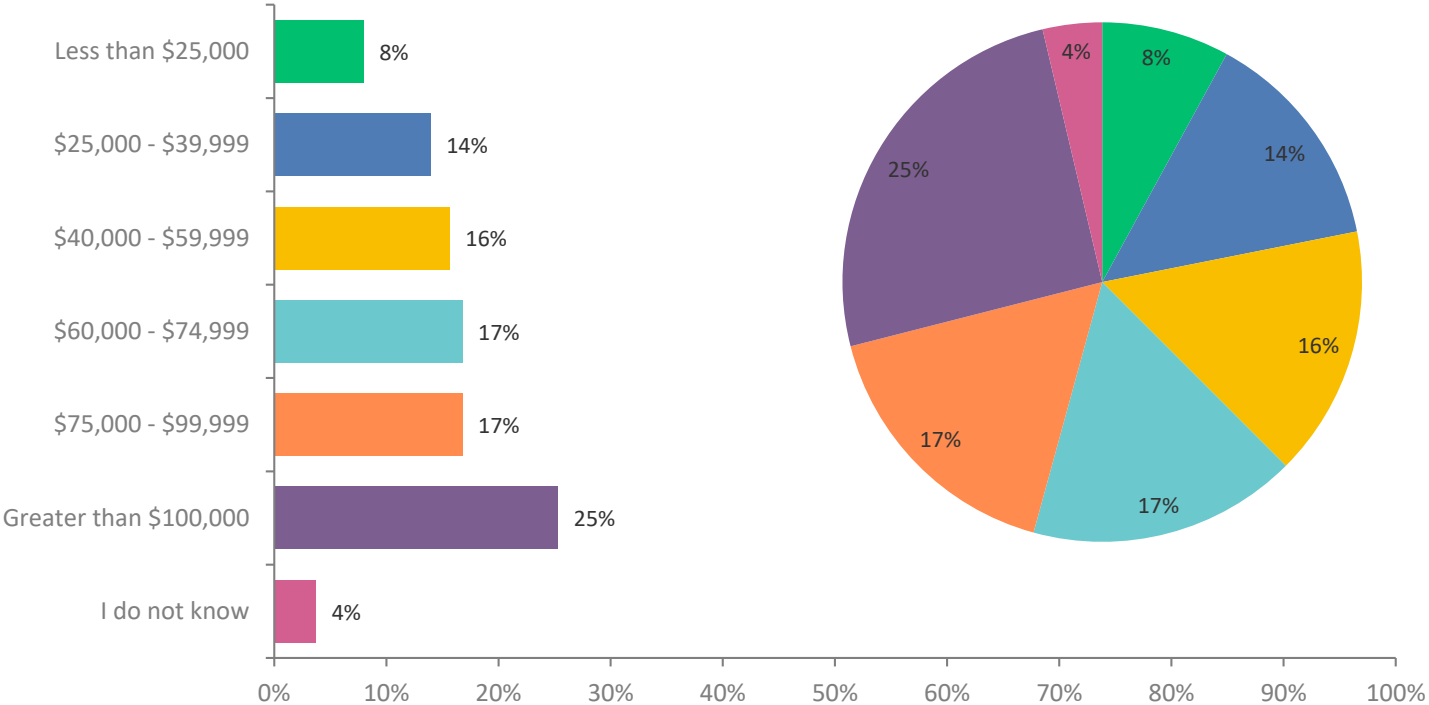
Q21: Which ethnic or racial group do you most closely identify with? *Open ended.*

Answered: 313 Skipped: 186



Q22: What is your approximate annual family income? *Select one.*

Answered: 346 Skipped: 153



Summary of Demographics of Survey Respondents Relative to Montague Population

Villages:

The majority of respondents are from the villages of Turners Falls and Montague Center. Turners Falls residents are slightly underrepresented, and Millers Falls residents are very underrepresented. (Table 1)

Housing:

Homeowners are overrepresented in the survey, at 82% compared to the actual rate of 61%.

Age:

Three-quarters (77%) of survey respondents were between the ages of 35 and 74, while this group represents 54% of the population. This survey was geared towards adults, so it was not expected to have a representative response rate from children and youth.

Table 1. Villages

Village	% of Responses	% of Current Pop.
Turners Falls	43%	45%
Montague Center	33%	
Montague City	4%	
Millers Falls	8%	14%
Lake Pleasant	3%	
*Current population as defined in U.S. Census. The Census only provides statistics for Turners Falls and Millers Falls		

Summary of Demographics of Survey Respondents Relative to Montague Population

Gender:

Nearly 2 times as many female-identifying respondents (60%) took the survey as male-identifying (36%) and non-binary (3%) combined.

Race:

91.5% of survey respondents identified as white, closely matching the current population who is 90% white. Latinx respondents represented 4% of survey takers, closely matching the 4.7% of current residents.

Income:

The ratios of other income groups who responded corresponds fairly closely with current population, although the higher income groups are more represented in the survey, and people who earn less than \$25,000 are not well represented. (Table 2)

Table 2. Income

Income bracket	% of Responses	% of Current Pop.*
Less than \$25,000	8%	22%
\$25,000 - \$39,999	14%	15%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	16%	18%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	17%	6%
\$75,000 or more	42%	38%

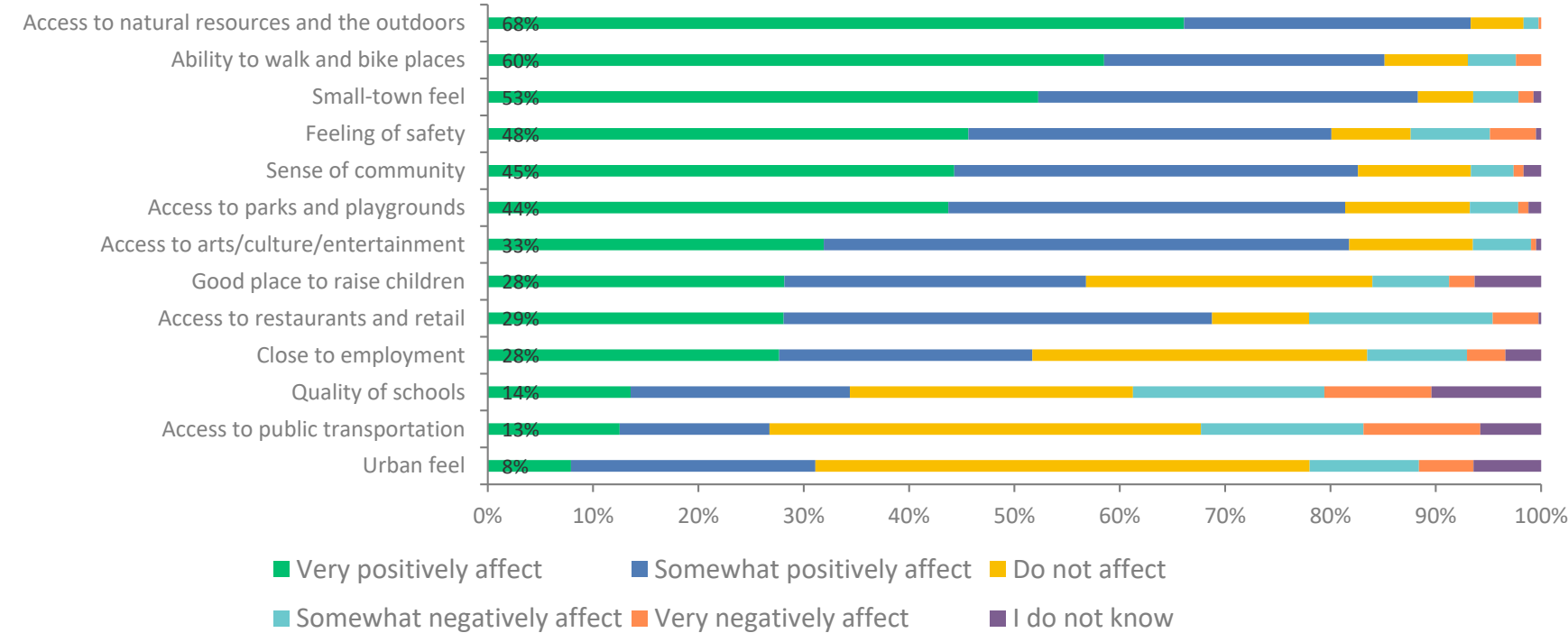
2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census
*% of the current population in brackets \$25,000 - \$39,000 and \$40,000 - \$59,000 had to estimated in order to match the survey question categories.

Quality of Life

Q2: How do the following factors affect your life in the Town of Montague?

Answered: 424 Skipped: 82

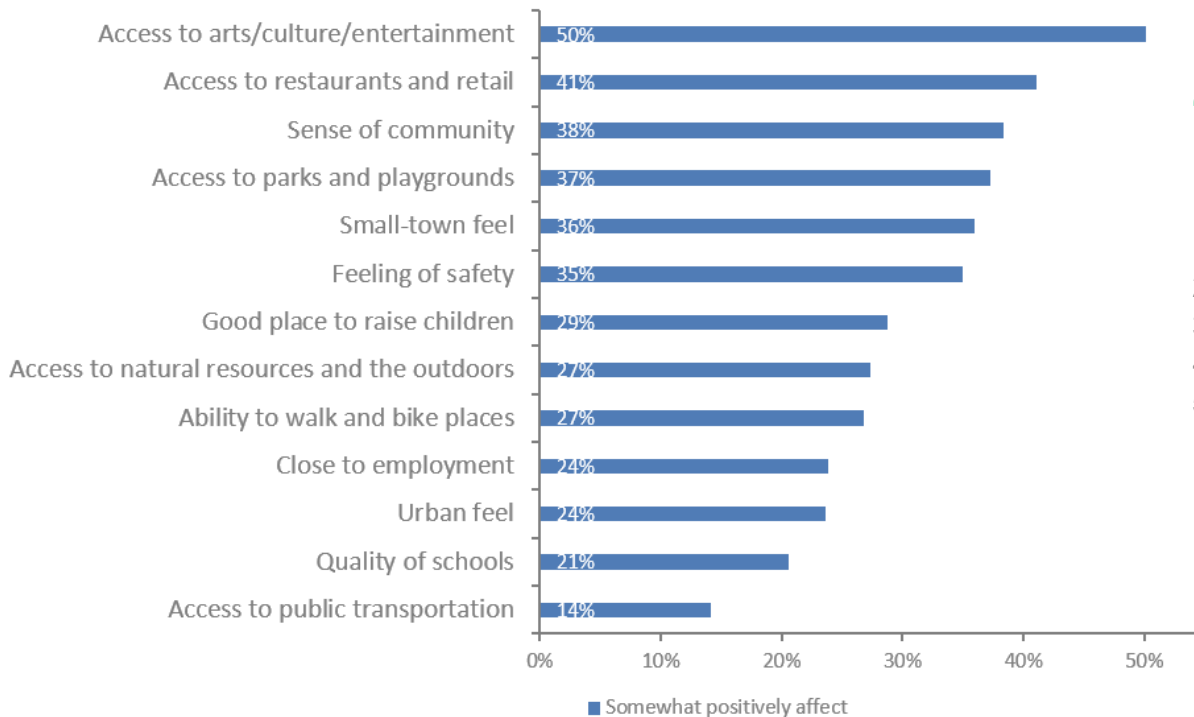
Ranked by those answering “Very positively affect”



Q2: How do the following factors affect your life in the Town of Montague?

Answered: 424 Skipped: 82

Ranked by those answering “Somewhat positively affect”



“Very positively” and “Somewhat positively” combined top 5 ranking:

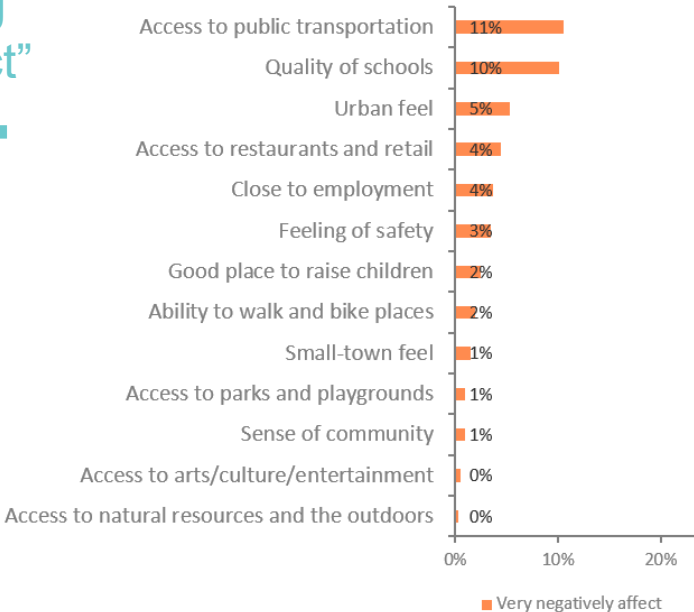
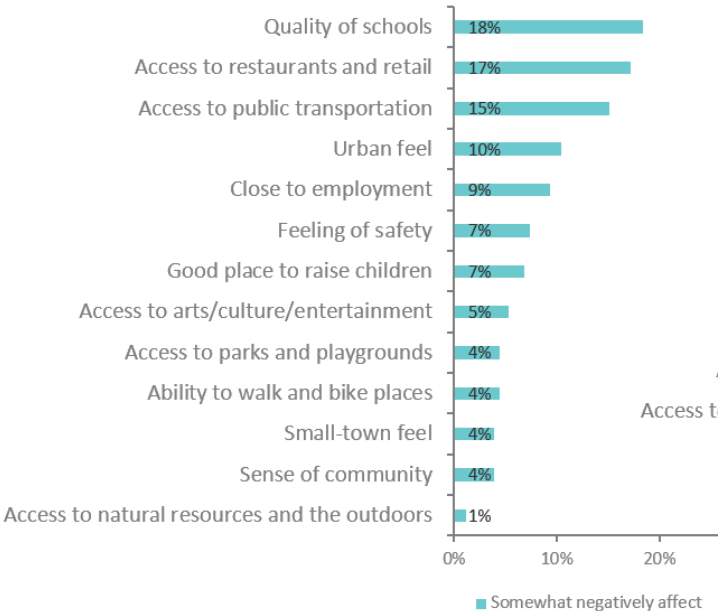
1. Access to outdoors
2. Small-town feel
3. Ability to walk and bike
4. Sense of community
5. Access to arts/culture/entertainment

Q2: How do the following factors affect your life in the Town of Montague?

Answered: 424 Skipped: 82

Ranked by those answering
“Very negatively affect”

Ranked by those answering
“Somewhat negatively affect”



“Somewhat negatively” and
“Very negatively” combined
top 5 ranking:

1. Quality of schools
2. Access to public transportation
3. Access to restaurants and retail
4. Urban feel
5. Close to employment

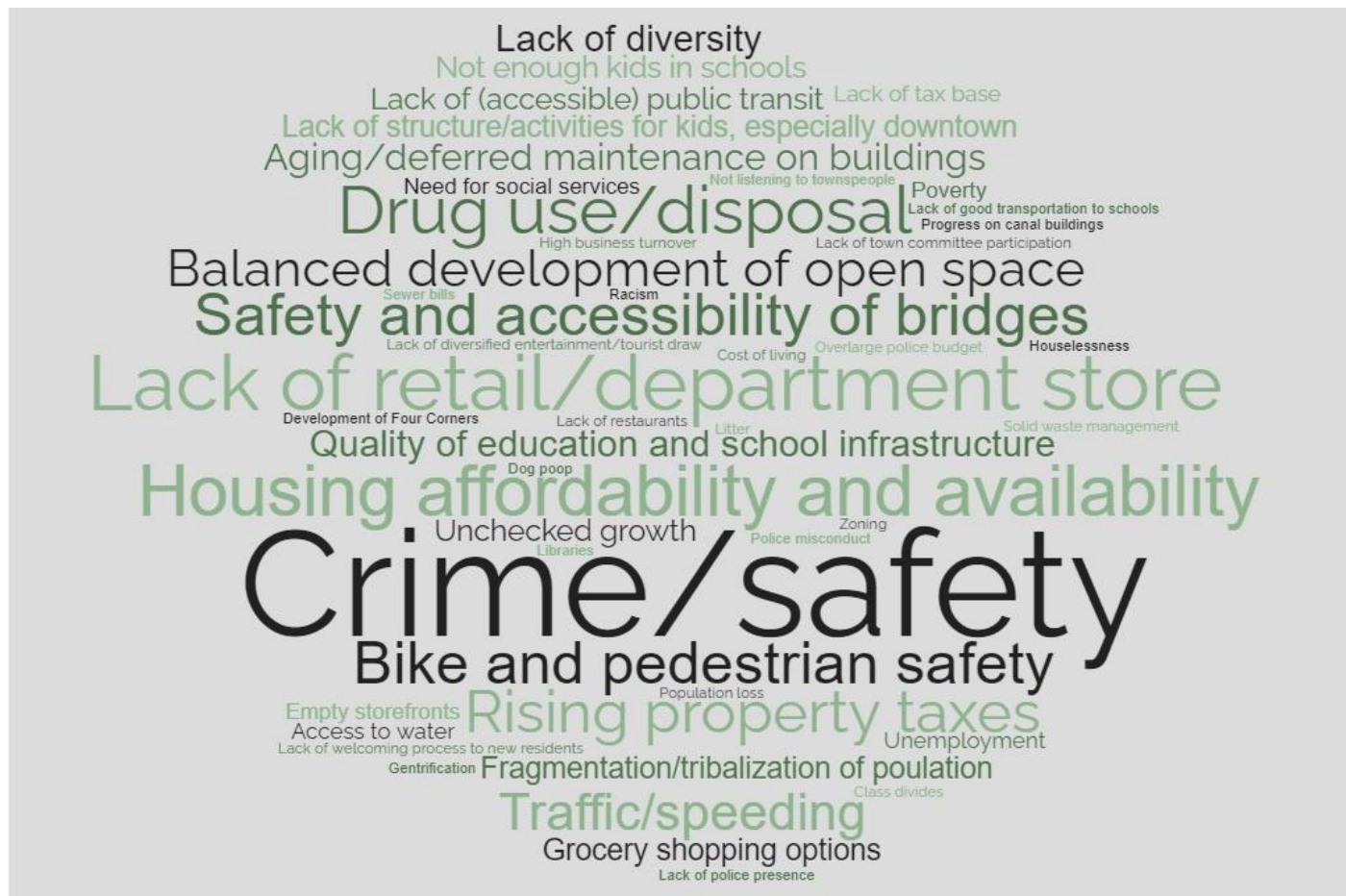
Q3: What is the best thing about our town? *Open ended.*

Answered: 352 Skipped: 154



Q4: What is your biggest concern about our town? *Opened ended.*

Answered: 354 Skipped: 152

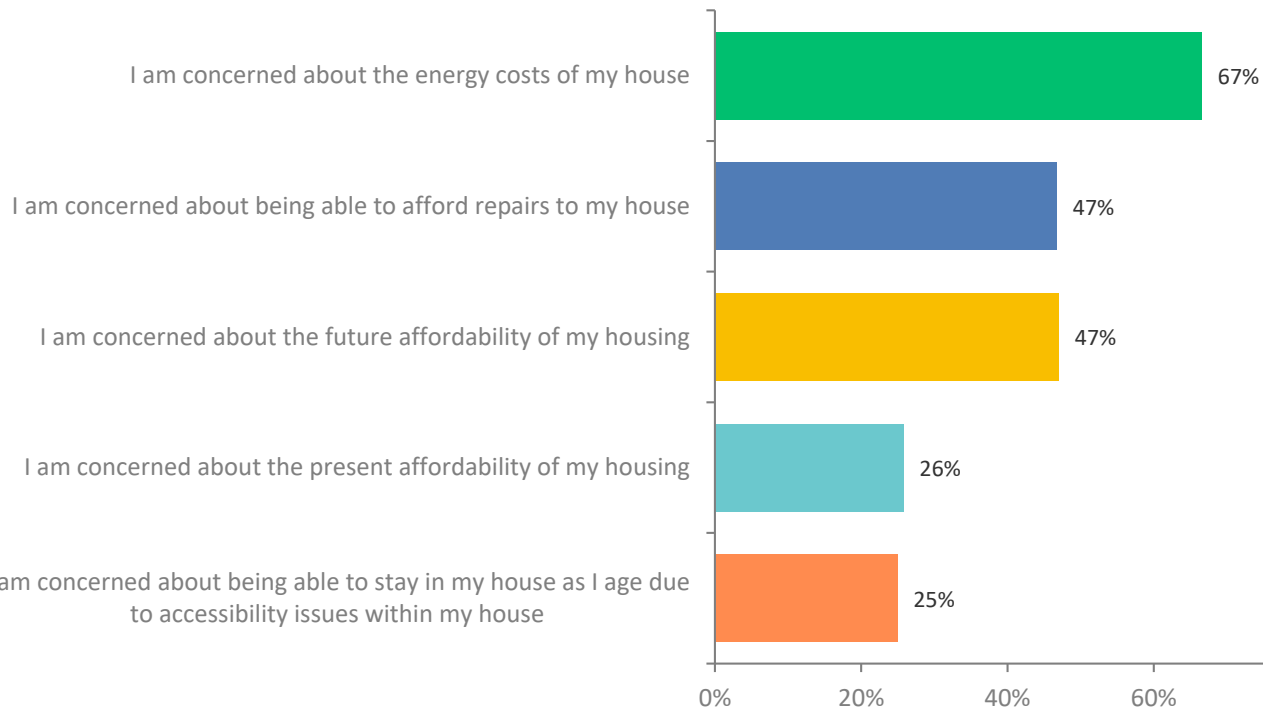


Housing

Q5: Do you agree with the following statements concerning housing in Montague?

Select all.

Answered: 353 Skipped: 153



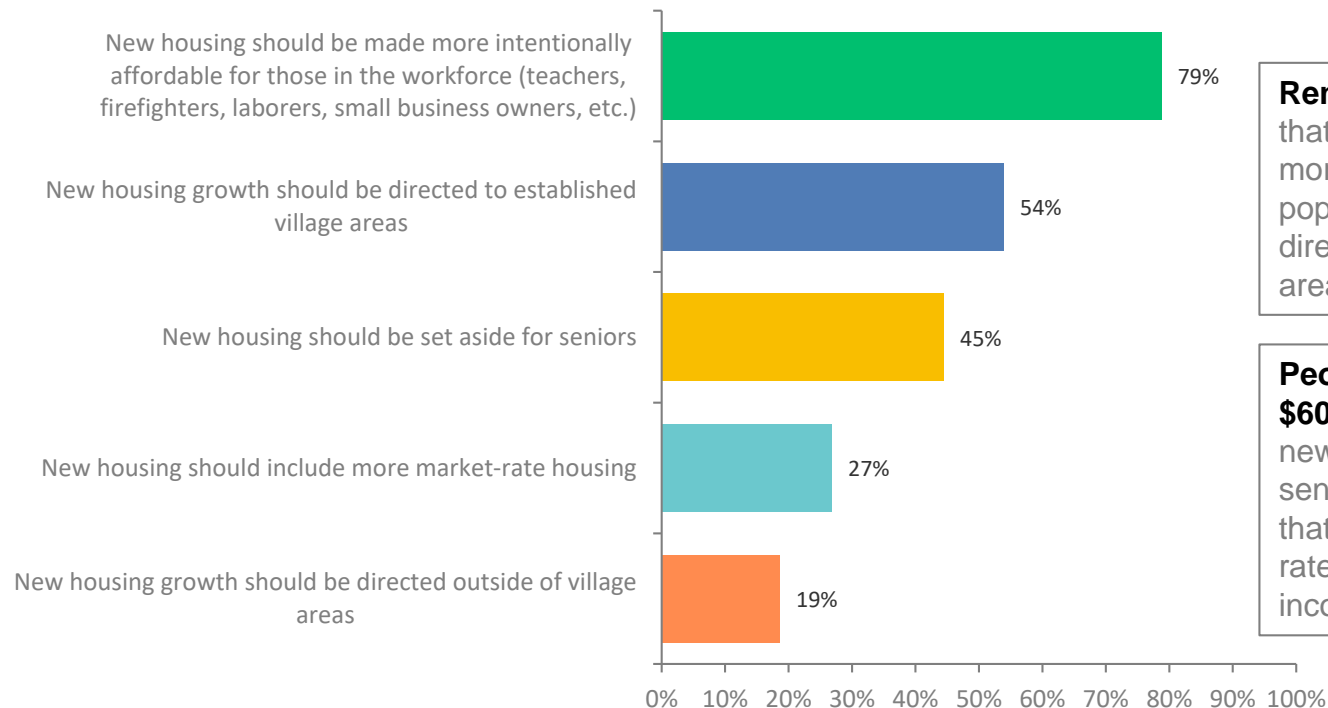
Renters were much more likely to be concerned about the present affordability of their housing (at 56%) and the future affordability of their housing (at 86%).

People with family incomes below \$60,000 were much more concerned about present affordability of their housing (at 40%); and slightly more concerned about the future affordability of their housing (at 56%), being able to afford repairs to their housing (at 54%), and about aging in their home (at 33%).

Q6: How should new housing be prioritized over the next 15 years?

Select all that apply.

Answered: 385 Skipped: 114



Renters were more likely to feel that new housing should be more affordable for workforce populations (85%) and be directed to established village areas (62%).

People with family incomes below \$60,000 are more likely to feel that new housing should be set aside for seniors (55%); and less likely to feel that new housing should be market-rate (21%) as compared to higher income families.

Transportation

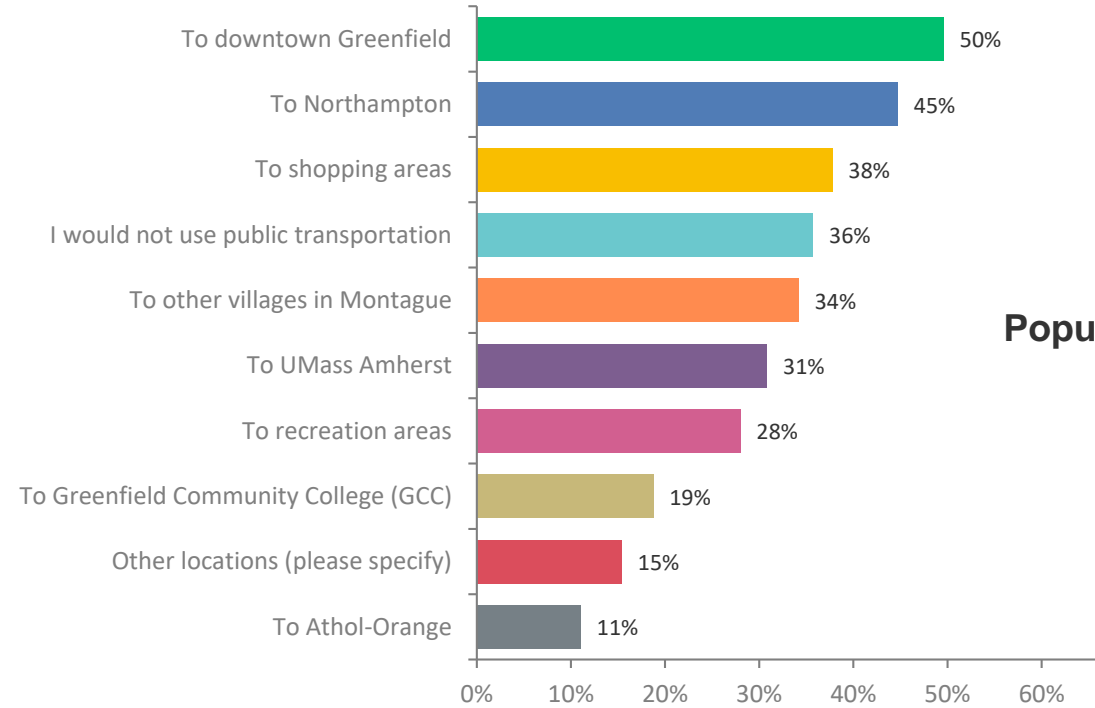
Q7: What could make walking and biking feel safer in town? *Select all that apply.*

Answered: 303 Skipped: 203



Q8: Where would you take public transportation if it were available? *Select all that apply.*

Answered: 389 Skipped: 117

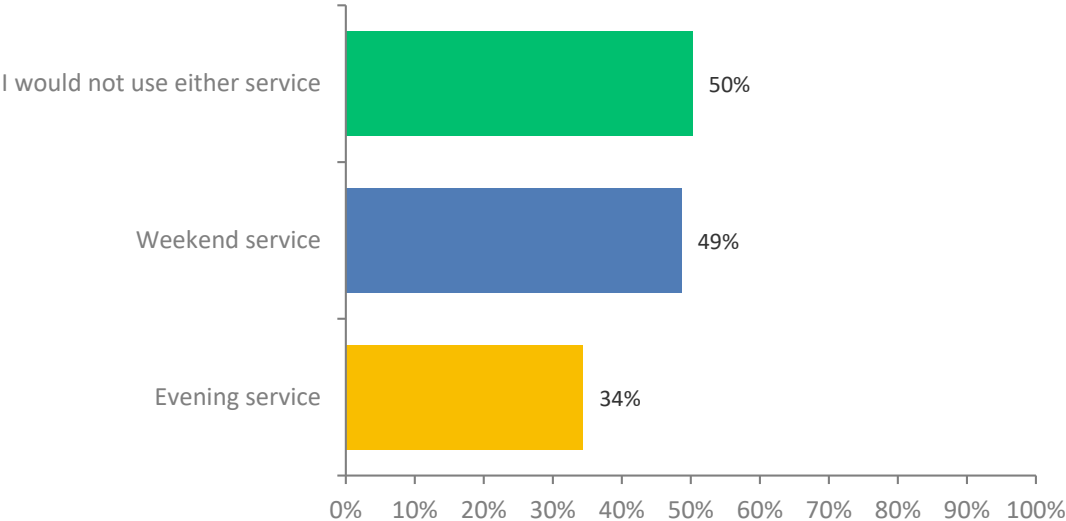


Popular other locations by # of mentions:

boston
northfield
downtown amherst
sunderland

Q9: Would you use the following public bus services if they were available? *Select all that apply.*

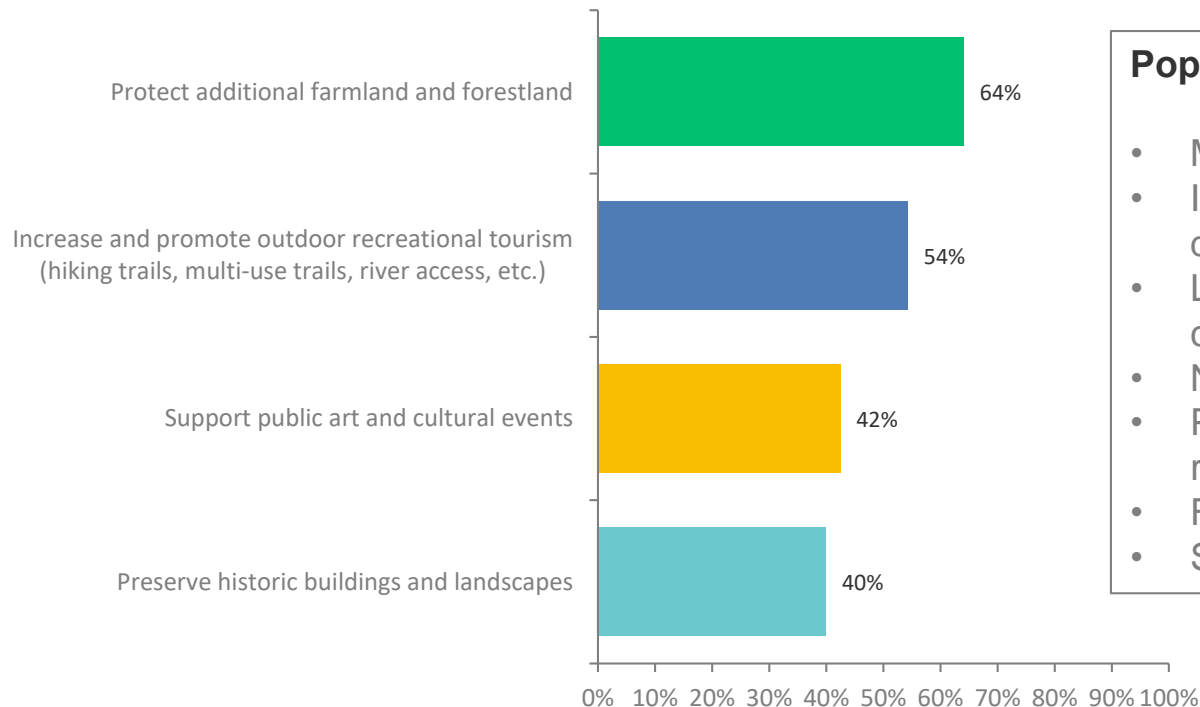
Answered: 367 Skipped: 132



Natural and Cultural Resources

Q10: How should the Town prioritize the following natural and cultural actions? *Select top TWO most important.*

Answered: 398 Skipped: 108



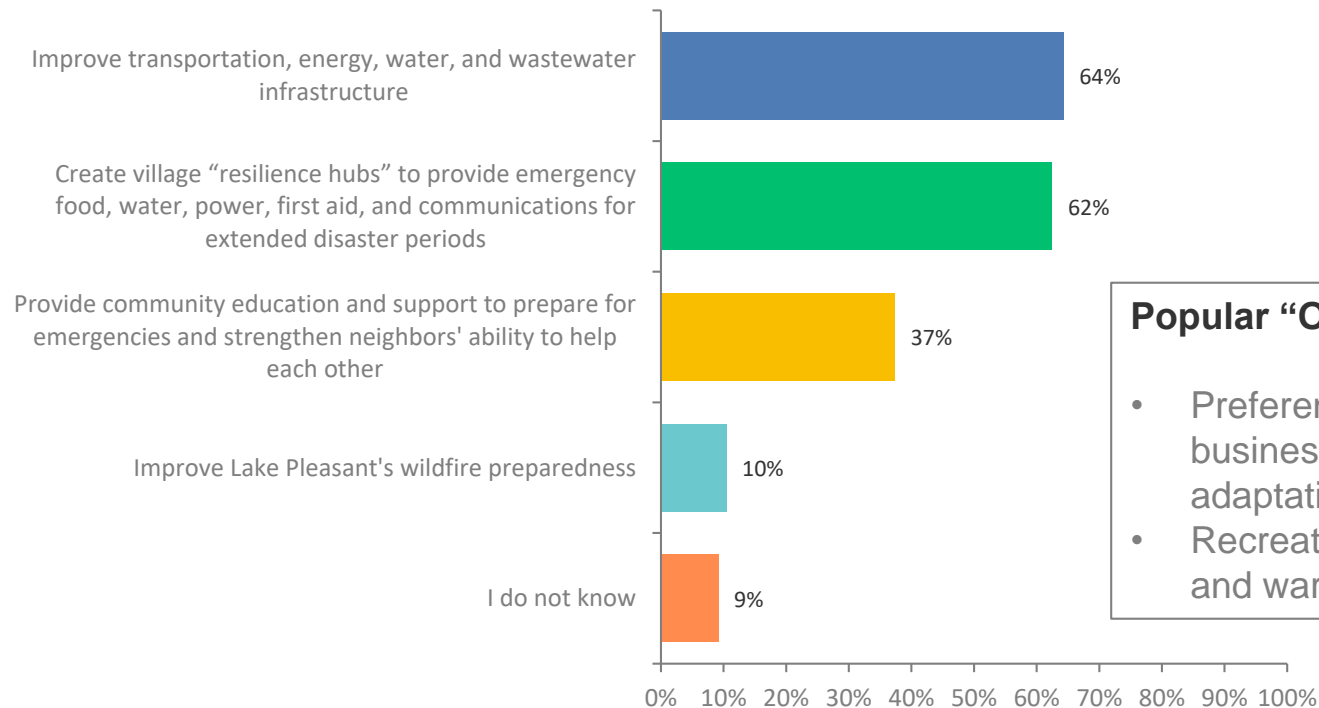
Popular “Other” answers:

- Multicultural activities
- Increase commercial development/reuse
- Land repatriation/support indigenous community
- New library
- Promote ecosystem health and resilience
- Focus on outdoor recreation tourism
- Support small business

Climate, Energy and Sustainability

Q11: Extreme weather and other environmental disasters are increasing due to climate change. Which of these top priorities should Montague focus on?
Select top TWO most important.

Answered: 394 Skipped: 112

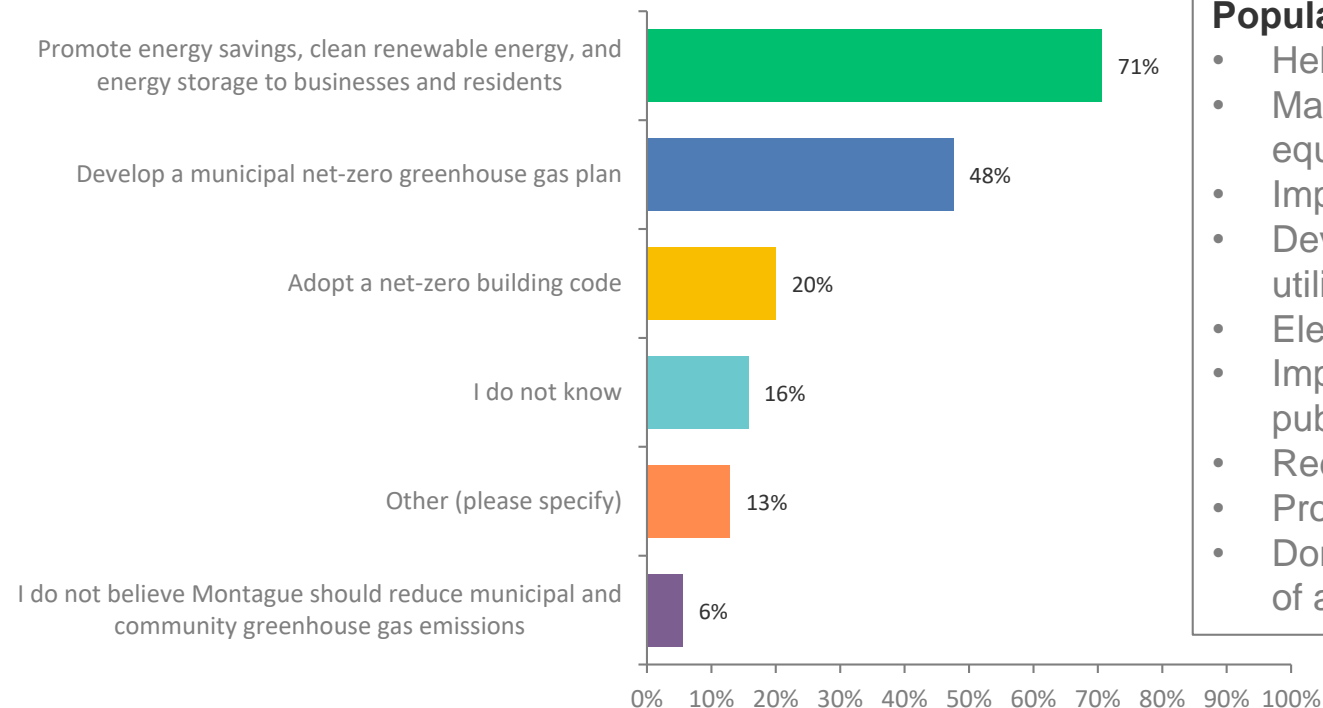


Popular "Other" answers:

- Preference for development and business growth over climate change adaptation
- Recreation center that acts as cooling and warming shelter

Q12: How should Montague reduce its polluting emissions to reduce climate change and protect health? *Select top TWO most important.*

Answered: 395 Skipped: 111



Popular “Other” answers:

- Help with residential energy transition
- Make sure net zero plan/code is equitable and financially sustainable
- Improve solid waste services
- Develop municipal solar/public energy utilities
- Electrify municipal landscaping tools
- Improve pedestrian, ride-share, and public transportation
- Reduce municipal and private mowing
- Promote solar
- Don't believe climate change is enough of a concern

Other ideas related to the environment, climate, energy, and sustainability (Q10 thru Q12)

Support net zero building

Do not need a Montague net-zero plan b/c already moving in that direction

Town's Greenhouse Gas Emissions are too insignificant to put work into

Install LED lighting with "dark sky" glare restrictions

Invest in commercial and business transition/growth

Sustainable building standards

Adaptive re-use of historic buildings with preservation parameters

Put solar on roofs instead of land

No more solar panels

Increase tax base

Lower tax rate for farmers

Lower tax rate for first responders

Allow for smaller houses and communal living

Mix uses so culture, living, work are all together and accessible

Stop spending public funds on land and building preservation

Limit short term rentals

Allow ADUs

Increase supply of market rate housing in Turners Falls village

Protect town from predatory holding companies

Stop gentrification

Home weatherization assistance

Incentivize homeowners to reduce carbon footprint

Create shuttle services to access shopping areas

More EV charging stations

Masks on vehicle tailpipes

Regenerative land management

Keep forests intact

Reforest trees when cut

Community gardens

Pollinator corridors

Return trash cans to The Patch

Reduce water pollution

Reduce pesticide use

Reduce risk of climate-related disasters

Clean up hazardous waste sites vulnerable to climate disasters

Clean stormwater drains

Improve areas of flooding

Decommission FirstLight dam

Stock emergency provisions on a town-wide scale

Improve emergency communication channels

Support skateboarding community

Boat launch ramp for non-motorized boats

Create a town swimming area

Outdoor art

Community Facilities and Services

Q13: Please rank the following actions that the Town could take in order of importance to you.

Answered: 371 Skipped: 128

Average ranking where
1 = most important
4 = least important

- #1 Invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate resilience for all facilities owned by the Town. 1.9
- #2 Invest to make municipal facilities more available for public use, social and cultural events, and/or recreational uses. 2.3
- #3 Improve the quality of municipal facilities and services. 2.7
- #4 Each of the five villages should have a physical space for community gatherings. 2.9

People with family incomes below \$60,000 were slightly more likely to regard improvement of municipal facilities and services and community gathering space at in each village as most important.

Renters and **people with children** were less likely to find each of the four actions as important.

Q14: Is there a municipal service or facility that is not offered that the Town should consider providing? Please describe.

Answered: 162 Skipped: 344



Q15: What municipal improvements or municipal priorities would you like Montague officials to focus on over the next 15 years?

Answered: 221 Skipped: 278



Top 5

1. Libraries
2. Transportation infrastructure
3. Schools
4. Bike and pedestrian infrastructure
5. Affordable housing

General

Q23: Is there anything not addressed in this survey that you believe to be important in planning for the future of our community?

Answered: 166 Skipped: 340

Common topics covered by open-ended responses were also covered in open-ended responses to earlier questions. Specific ideas related to long-term comprehensive planning will be captured in the written plan.

Montague Mass in Motion Worksheet

[illegible]

Montague Mass in Motion Worksheet

[illegible]