

# COMMUNITY INPUT

In order to develop a meaningful and community-based plan, citizens need to be engaged throughout the planning process through a variety of opportunities. During the initial phases of the planning process, Mount Pleasant’s residents voiced their ideas through a survey and community workshop.

Some of the opportunities to participate in Mount Pleasant’s Comprehensive included a survey, the Town’s website and Facebook page, and a community workshop. Public engagement activities were kicked off in April 2017 with the launch of a public survey. The survey was publicized through the Town’s Facebook page, notification in utility bills, and flyer distribution to elementary and middle schools. There were over 600 survey responses. Survey questions included a mixture of multiple choice questions and open-ended questions.

Advertising the public workshop began several weeks prior to the meeting date by placing announcements on the Town’s website and Facebook page, engaging the local newspaper *The Independent Tribune*, and distributing flyers throughout the community. The Town also had a booth at the “I Love My City” event on April 29, 2017 to advertise the workshop and allow participants to say why they love Mount Pleasant.

The community workshop was held on May 15, 2017 at the Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church. The format of the workshop was a drop-in style gathering that allowed citizens to vote with poker chips on strategies categorized by the topic areas of the Comprehensive Plan. In order to convey the concept of finite resources and the

need to prioritize goals, the number of chips per person was limited to eight. The approximately 50 participants allocated resources to the strategies that they believe matter most for the Town’s future prosperity. The strategies were derived from previously adopted Town and County plans, as well as emerging community needs.

The following pages provide a summary of the results from both the survey and the community workshop. Responses to open-ended questions comments are located in the Appendix.

► FIGURE 2.1  
WORKSHOP  
FLYER



## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTIONS 1-3

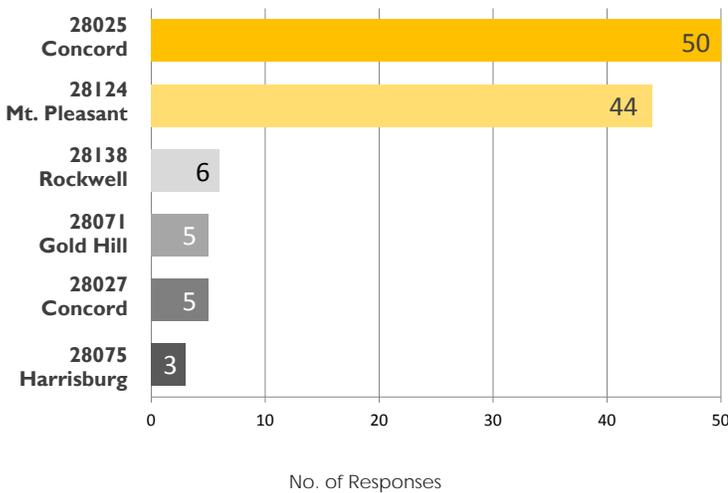
### Who responded to the survey?

▼ TABLE 2.1 SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

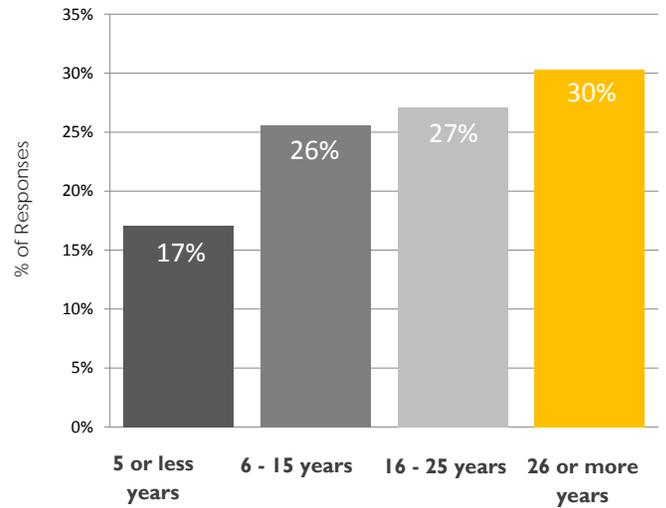
	PERCENT OF RESPONSES*	NUMBER OF RESPONSES*
Resident	93.3%	500
Property Owner (but not a resident)	11.0%	59
Business Owner	6.7%	36
Other		69

\*More than one response allowed.

▼ FIGURE 2.2 NON-RESIDENT ZIP CODES



▼ FIGURE 2.3 LONGEVITY OF RESIDENCE

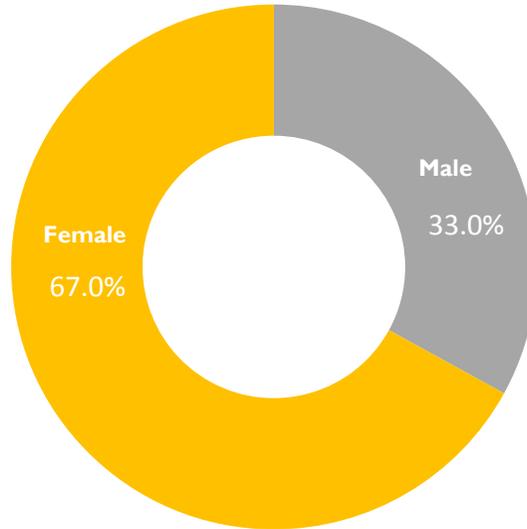


Of the approximately 600 respondents, 500 are residents of the planning area, while 59 are property owners, 36 are business owners, and 69 specified other. The majority of non-resident zip codes were 28025 and 28124. Nearly one-third of respondents have lived in the Mount Pleasant planning area for more than 25 years, while only 17% have lived in the area for five years or less.

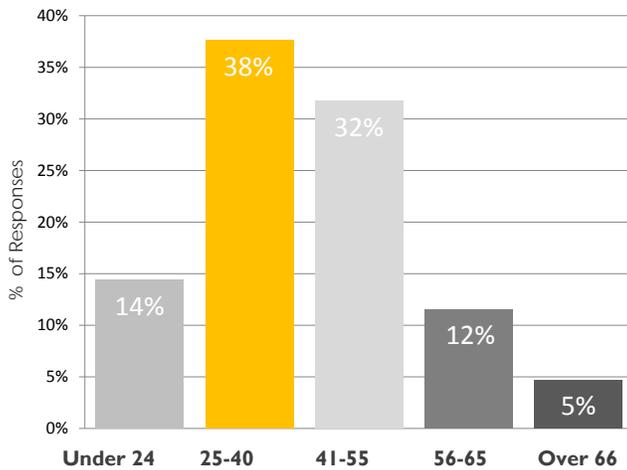
## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTIONS 4-6

Who responded to the survey?

▼ FIGURE 2.4 RESPONDENT GENDER



▼ FIGURE 2.5 RESPONDENT AGE RANGE



▼ TABLE 2.2 RESPONDENT PLACE OF WORK

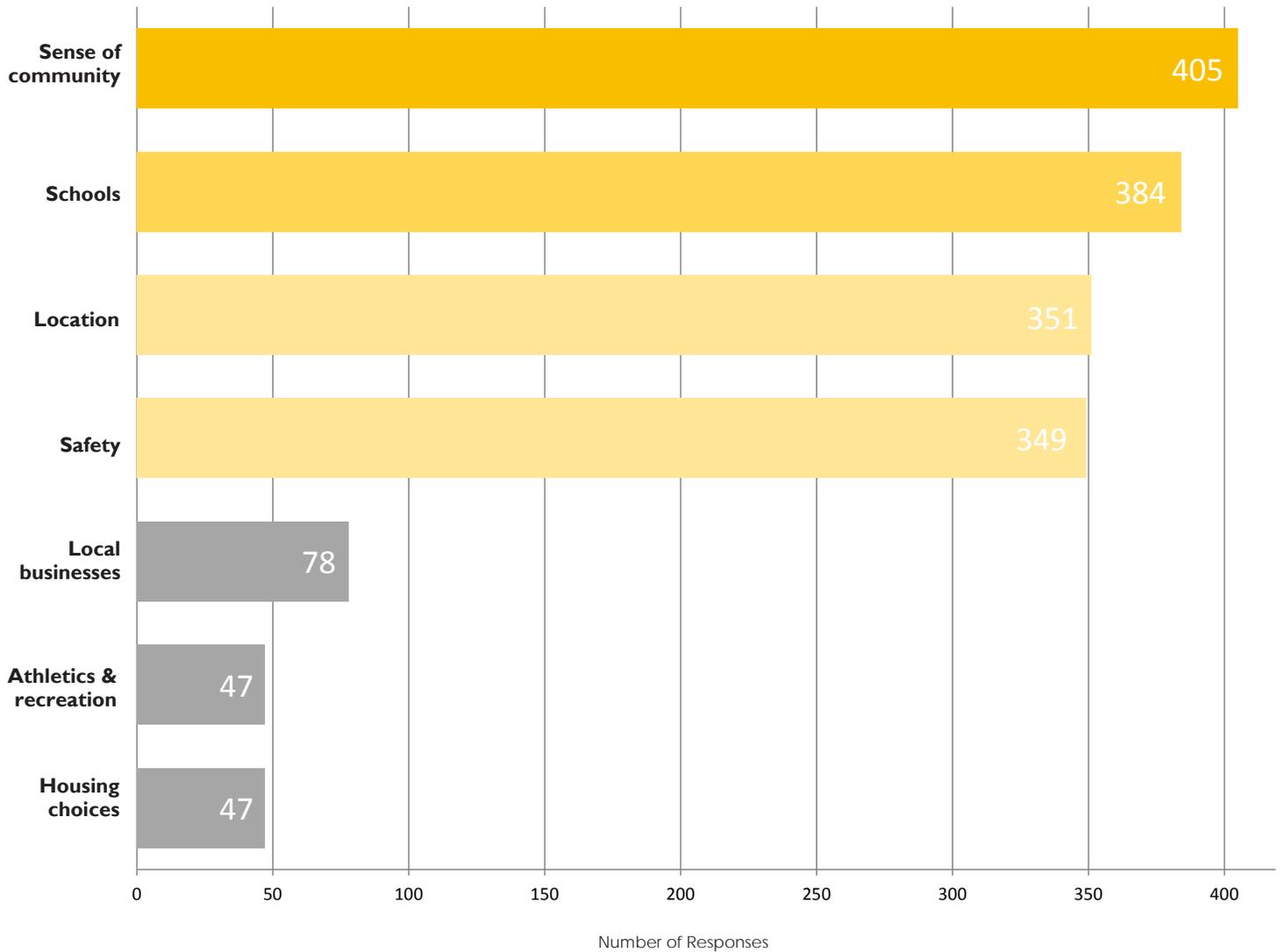
	PERCENT OF RESPONSES
Cabarrus County	39.3%
Mount Pleasant	18.2%
Mecklenburg County	14.4%
I am retired	10.1%
I am a student	6.1%
I am unemployed	4.2%
Stanly County	4.0%
Rowan County	3.1%
Union County	0.7%

Approximately 33% of survey respondents are male, while 67% are female. About 52% of respondents are under the age of 40, while 44% are between 40 and 65, and 5% are over the age of 65. Nearly 10% of respondents are retired, while most employed respondents work in Mount Pleasant or Cabarrus County. The respondents represent a broad cross section of Mount Pleasant constituents.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 7

What do you like about the Town of Mount Pleasant? (Choose top three)

▼ FIGURE 2.6 COMMUNITY ASSETS

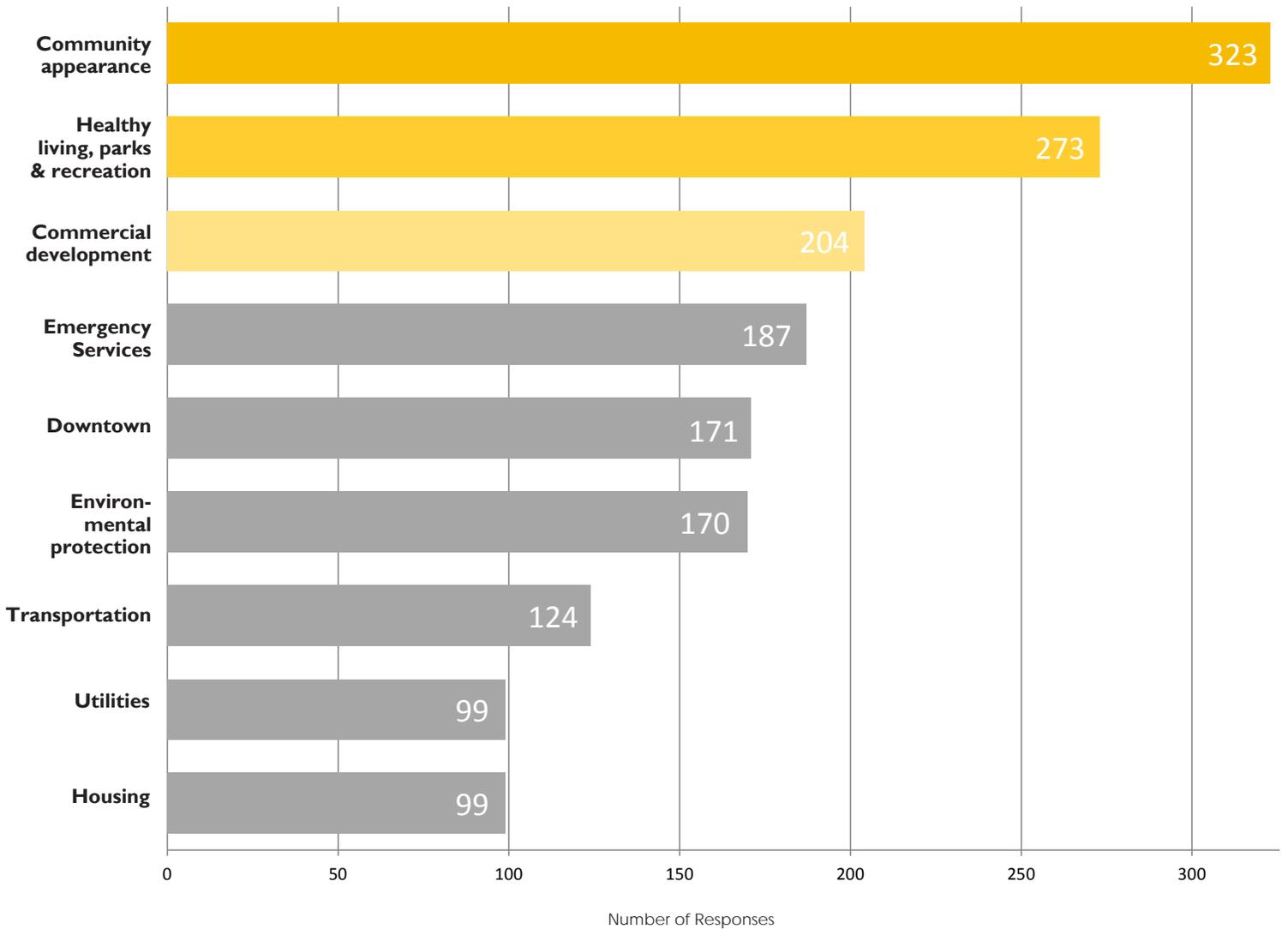


Residents identified with several assets or characteristics of the Town. Sense of community was the highest rated asset, followed closely by schools. The location and safe environment were also important to many respondents. Of the 18 respondents that answered “other”, the small town atmosphere and rural lifestyle were most frequently noted.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 8

Please rank the top three items in order of importance as they relate to the Mount Pleasant’s future.

▼ FIGURE 2.7 PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

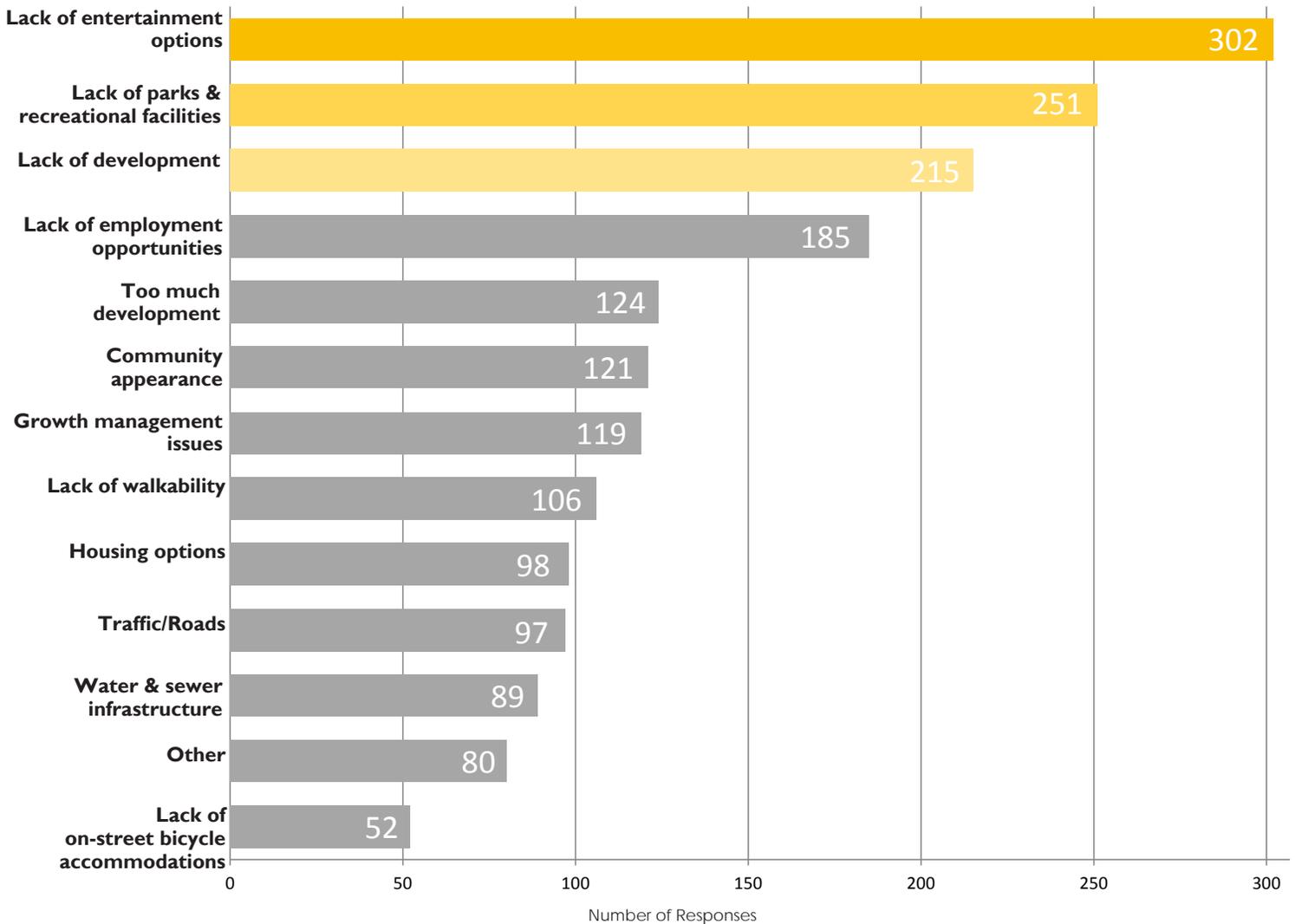


Asked to rank the Town’s priorities for the future, respondents ranked community appearance the highest, followed by healthy living, parks and recreation and then commercial development. Of the 21 respondents that answered “other”, the small town atmosphere was again the most frequently noted attribute.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 9

Every community has its shortcomings. Which of the following do you think apply to Town of Mount Pleasant? (Check all that apply)

▼ FIGURE 2.8 PERCEIVED COMMUNITY SHORTCOMINGS

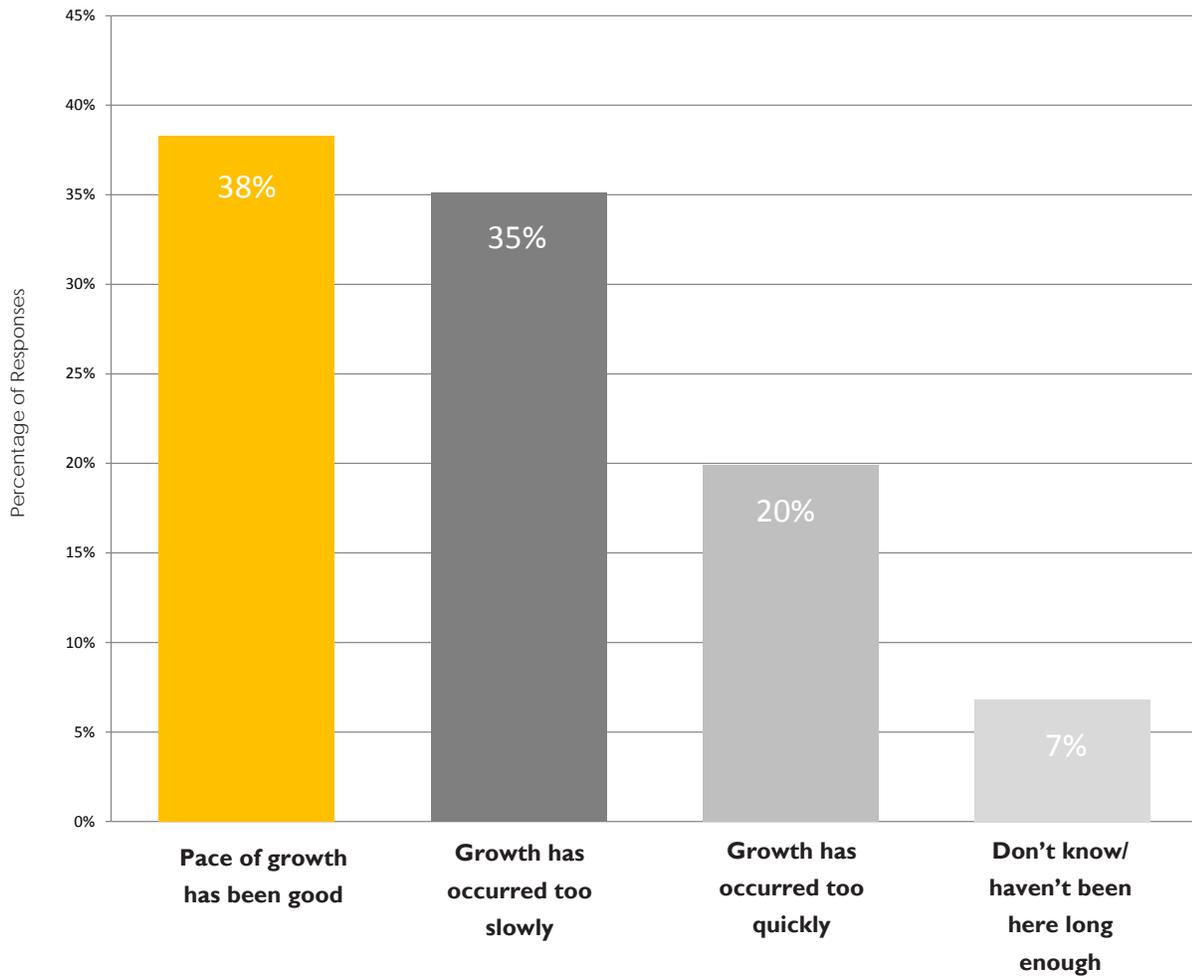


Respondents perceive the Town’s lack of entertainment options as its number one shortcoming. The second highest shortcoming was lack of parks and recreation facilities and third the lack of development. Other shortcomings, noted frequently by the 80 respondents that elaborated, include development pressures, the new apartment complex, a high tax rate, lack of business variety, lack of youth athletic group cohesiveness, aging housing stock, and the intersection of Main Street and Highway 73.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 10

*How do you feel about the pace of growth and development in Mount Pleasant over the past ten (10) years?*

▼ FIGURE 2.9 PERCEIVED PACE OF TOWN GROWTH

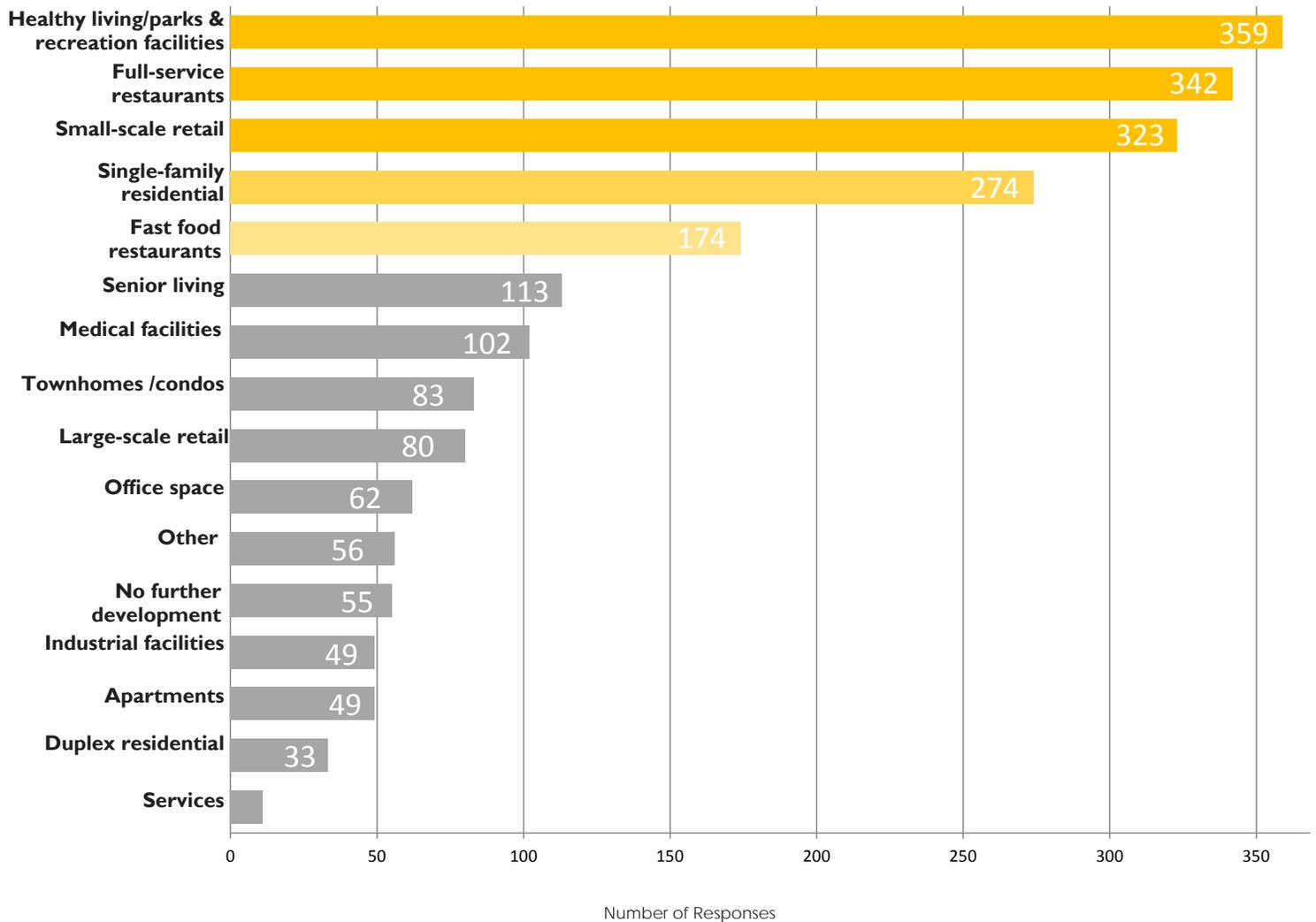


The majority of survey participants perceive the pace of growth as good or too slow. One-fifth of respondents feel that growth has occurred too quickly, while 7% do not know or have not been in the community long enough to have an opinion.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 11

*In the future, what types of development should the Town encourage? (Check all that apply)*

▼ FIGURE 2.10 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO ENCOURAGE

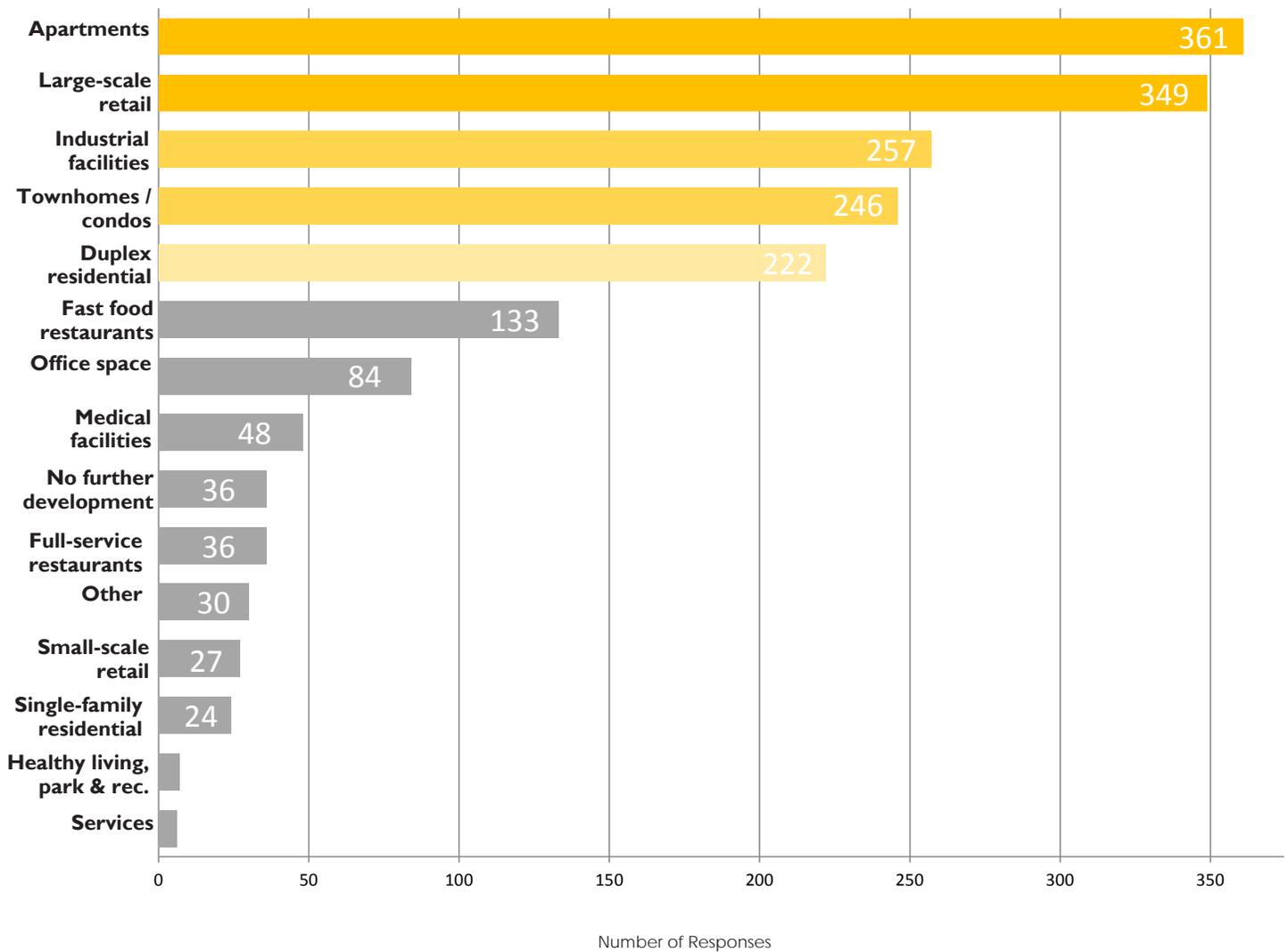


Asked to voice their opinions on which types of development the Town should encourage in the future, respondents ranked healthy living/parks & recreation facilities, full-service restaurants, and small-scale retail as the top three choices. Small-scale retail and single-family residential development were also highly rated. Of the respondents that chose “other”, emphasis was placed on attracting small businesses rather than chain retailers.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 12

*In the future, what types of development should the Town discourage? (Check all that apply)*

▼ FIGURE 2.11 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO DISCOURAGE

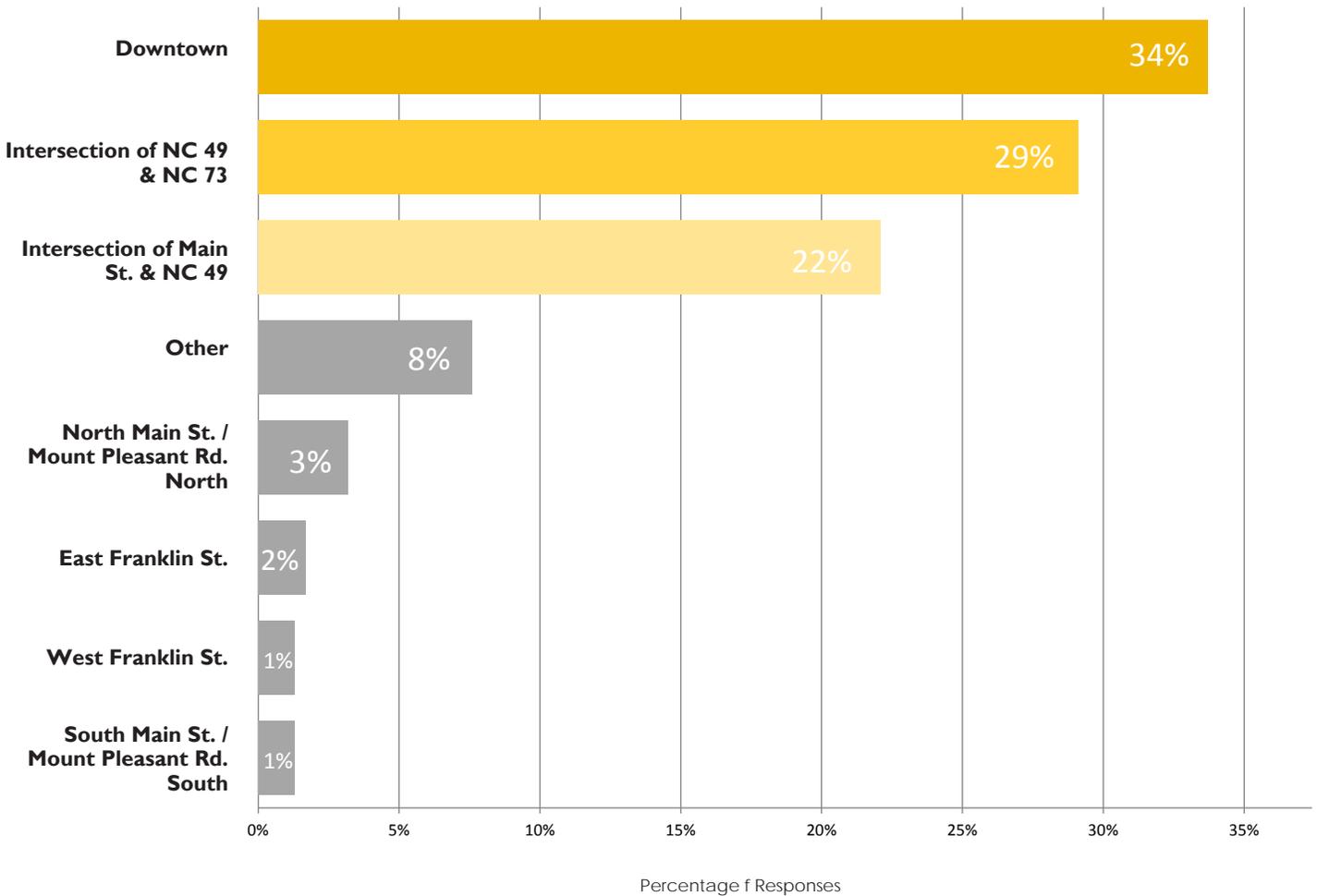


On the opposite side of the spectrum, respondents chose apartments, large-scale retail, and industrial facilities as the top three types of future development for the Town to discourage. Among the 30 respondents that elaborated on their answer, negative emphasis was placed on the new apartment complex built at Highway 73 and Skyland Drive.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 13

What part of the planning area is most important to the progress and future of the Town?

▼ FIGURE 2.12 MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE PLANNING AREA

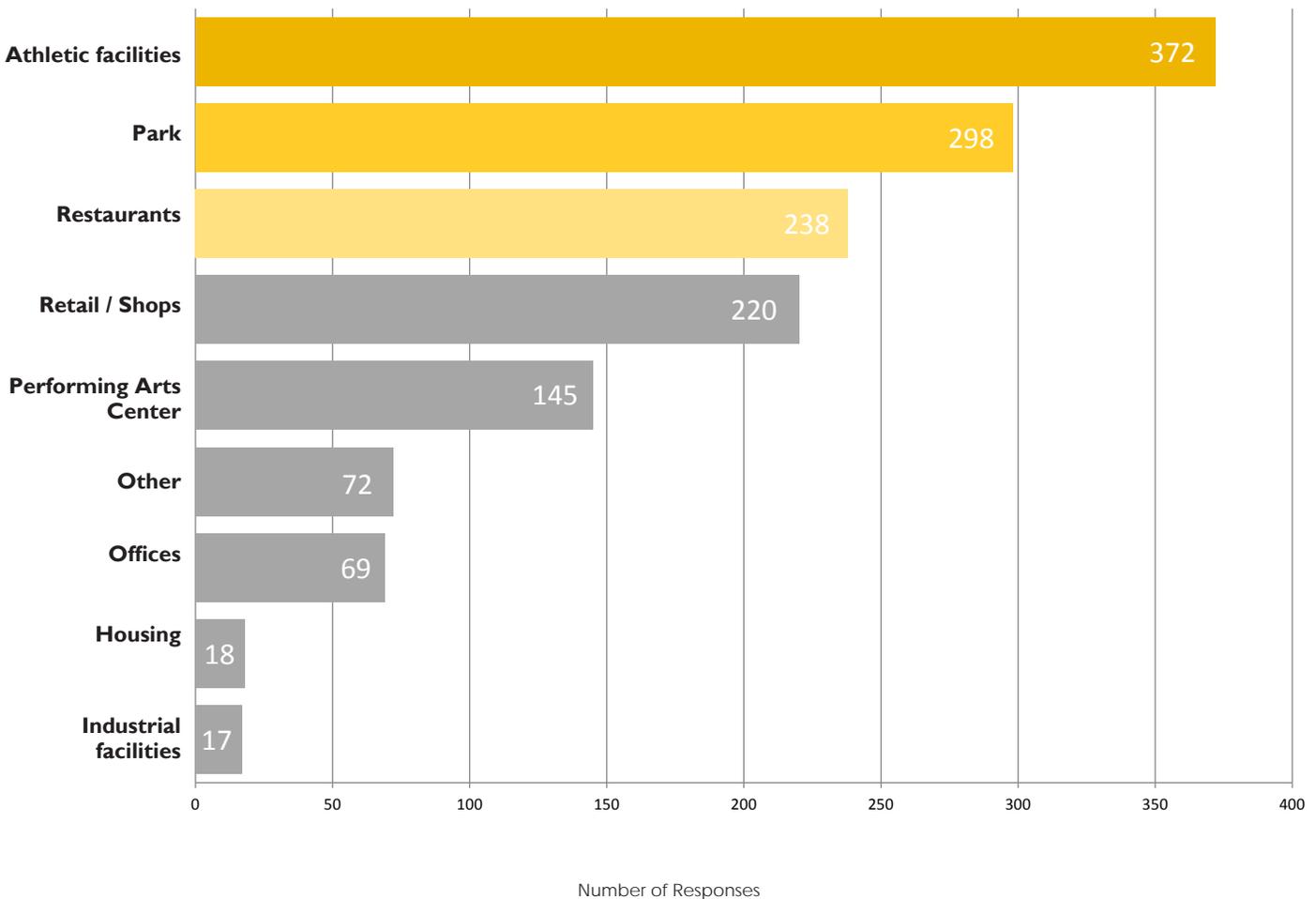


Respondents see Downtown Mount Pleasant as the most important area to the progress and future of the Town. The intersection of NC Highways 49 and 73 was ranked second followed by the intersection of Main Street and NC Highway 49. Among the 40 respondents that elaborated on their answers, emphasis was placed on refreshing downtown or leaving everything exactly as it is.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 14

What types of uses would you like to see at the old Mount Pleasant Middle School site? (check all that apply)

▼ FIGURE 2.13 MIDDLE SCHOOL SITE POTENTIAL FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT



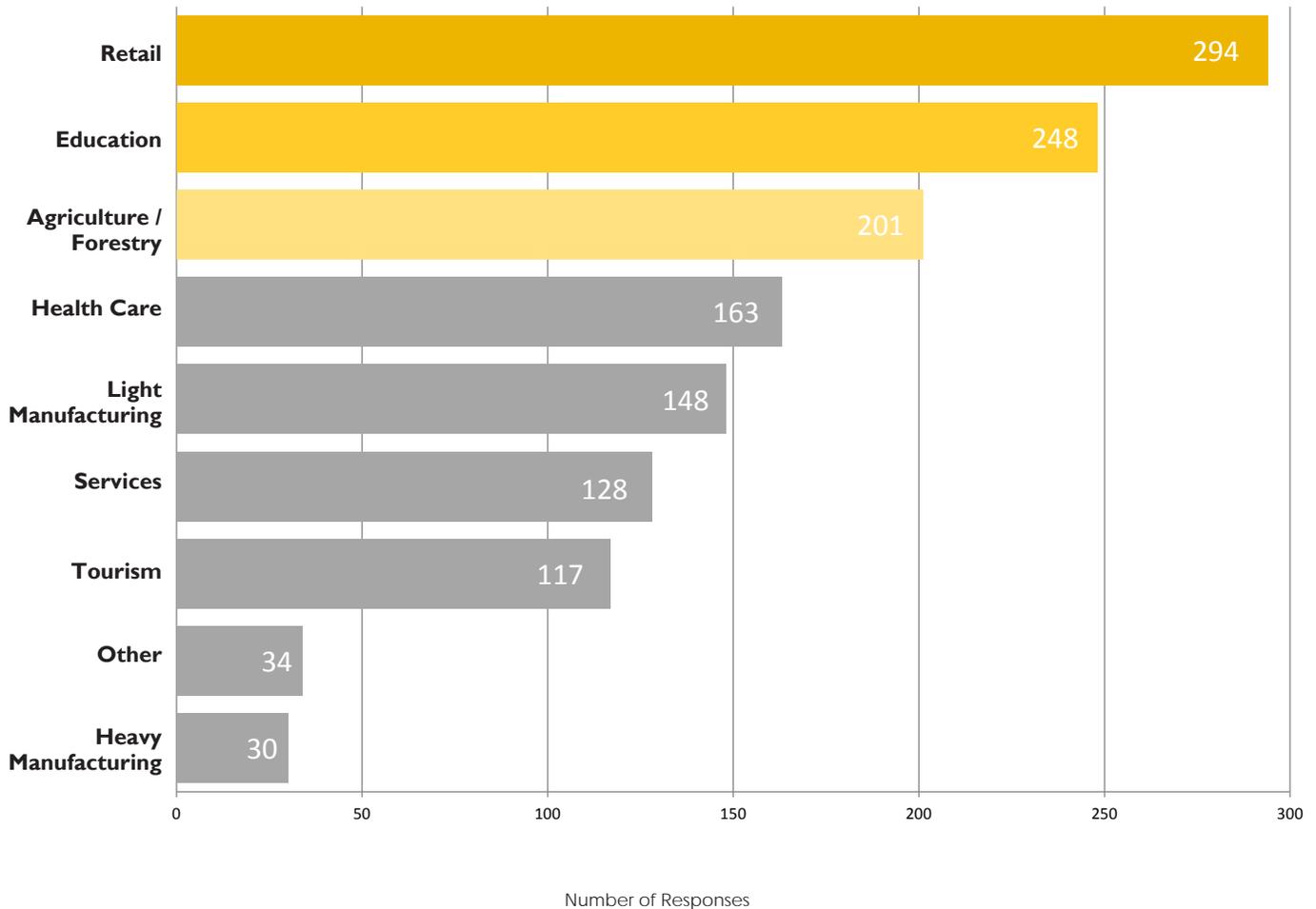
When asked about potential redevelopment of the old Middle School site, the number one response was athletic facilities, followed by a park and restaurants. A large number of the 72 respondents that elaborated on their answers requested a YMCA or similar facility, while many emphasized the need for additional athletic fields and facilities. Others encouraged a mixing of uses on the site to include both athletic/recreational uses and retail.



## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 16

What economic sectors should the Town of Mount Pleasant focus on for its future economic base? (check all that apply)

▼ FIGURE 2.15 DESIRED FUTURE ECONOMIC SECTORS



Respondents are most interested in the Town focusing on retail, education, and agriculture/forestry for the future economic base. Of the 34 respondents that elaborated, several noted the need for a diversified economic base, while others noted the need for improved infrastructure to broaden the economic base.



## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 18

What should Mount Pleasant do to attract new businesses?

▼ FIGURE 2.17 ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES TO TOWN

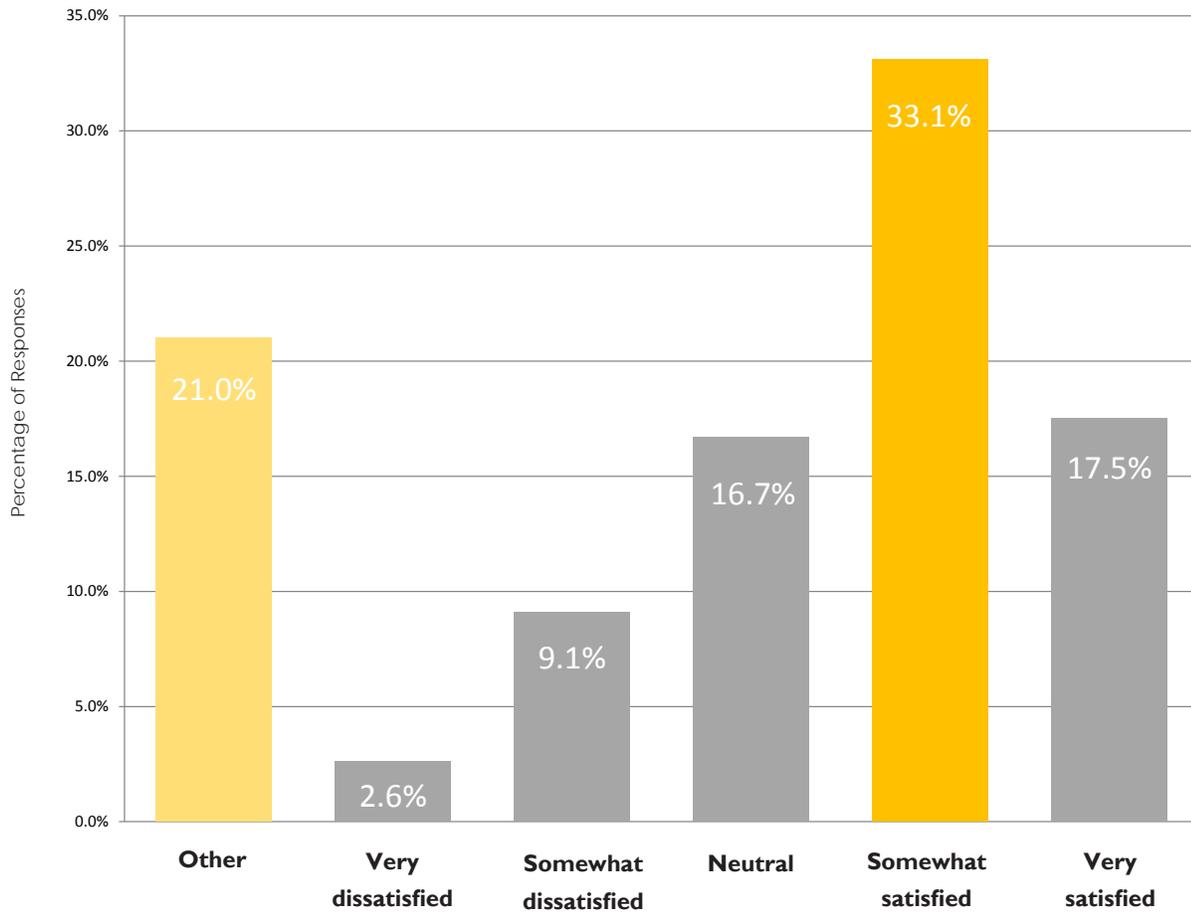


Respondents to this question emphasized the importance of improving the appearance of the Town to attract new business. Many feel that tax incentives and additional marketing would boost business in Mount Pleasant. A large number of respondents also emphasized the importance of staying small, while many preferred the Town to do nothing to attract new businesses. Lack of available property was noted as a major impediment to new businesses looking to move to the area.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 19

*Are you satisfied with the overall appearance of Downtown Mount Pleasant?*

▼ FIGURE 2.18 SATISFACTION WITH DOWNTOWN APPEARANCE

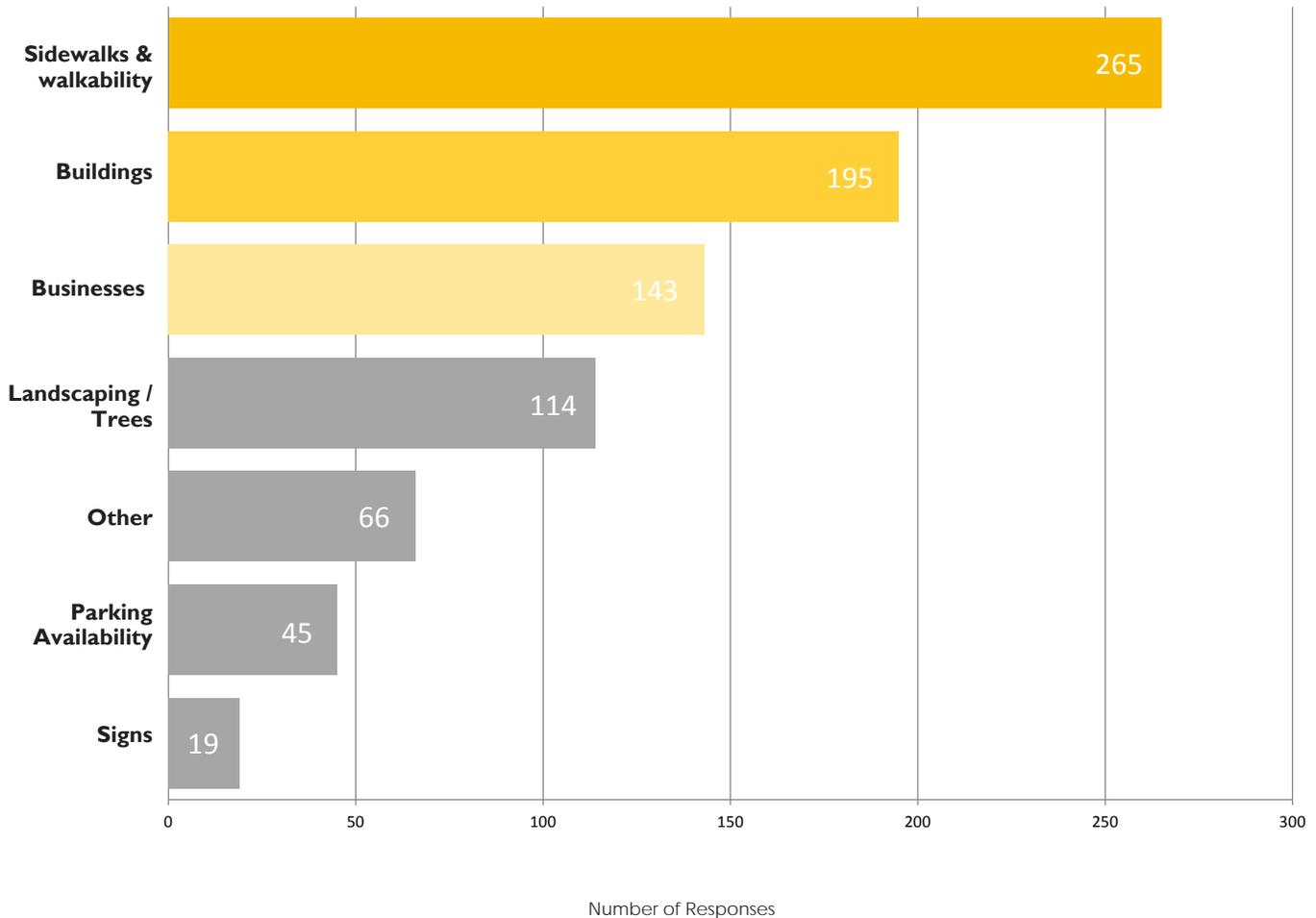


While the majority of respondents are satisfied with the overall appearance of Downtown, 106 respondents took the time to provide additional comments. Most of these expressed concern about building maintenance, nonconforming uses, and empty storefronts. Others expressed the need for additional parking, improved sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 20

What do you like most about Downtown Mount Pleasant? (Check all that apply)

▼ FIGURE 2.19 MOST LIKED DOWNTOWN ATTRIBUTES

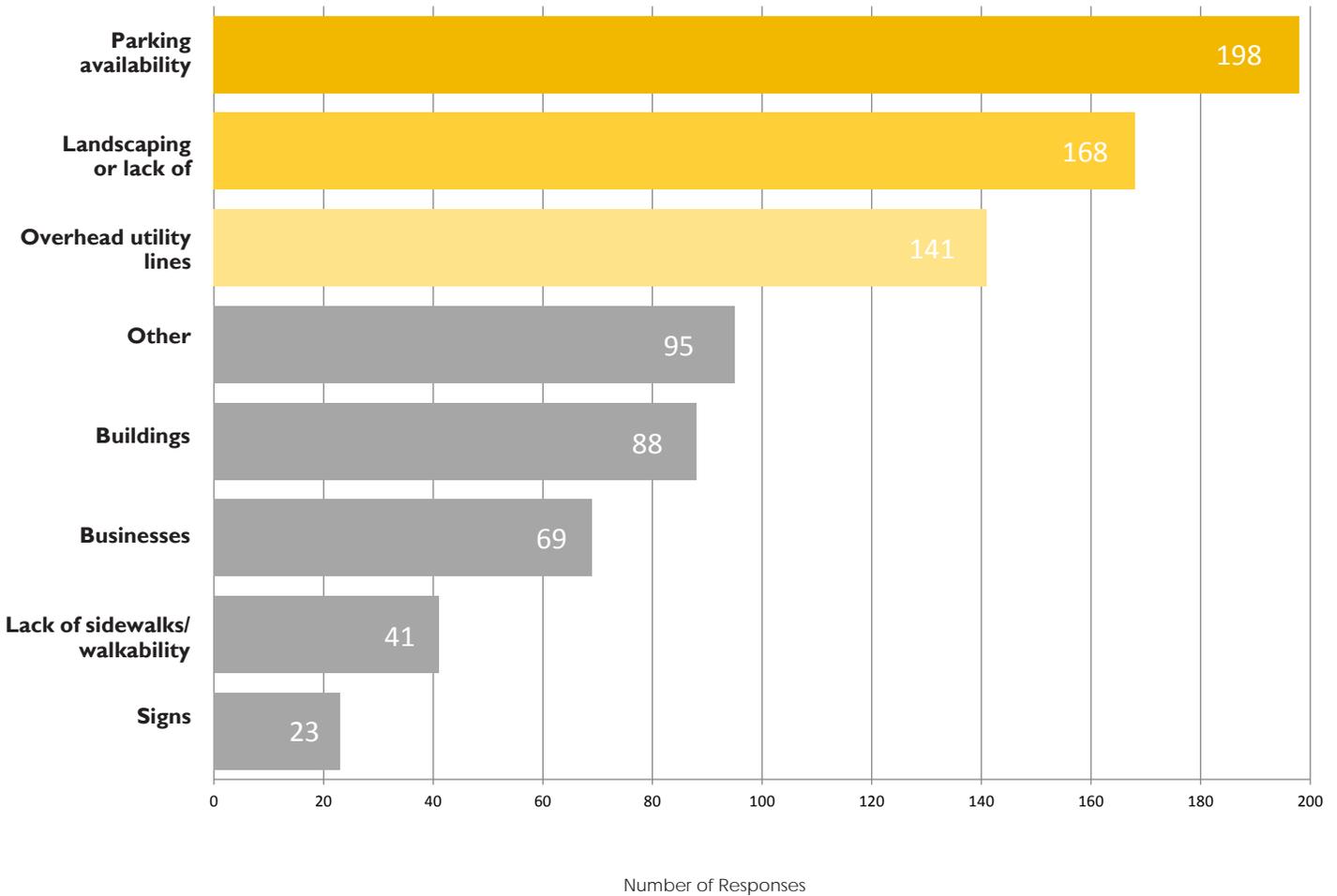


Survey participants like the sidewalks and walkability of Downtown the most. Downtown buildings ranked second, and businesses ranked third. Of the 66 respondents that elaborated on their answers, the historic buildings and small town feel are noted as other favorite aspects, while several stated that there is nothing to like about Downtown.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 21

What do you like least about Downtown Mount Pleasant? (Check all that apply)

▼ FIGURE 2.20 LEAST LIKED DOWNTOWN ATTRIBUTES

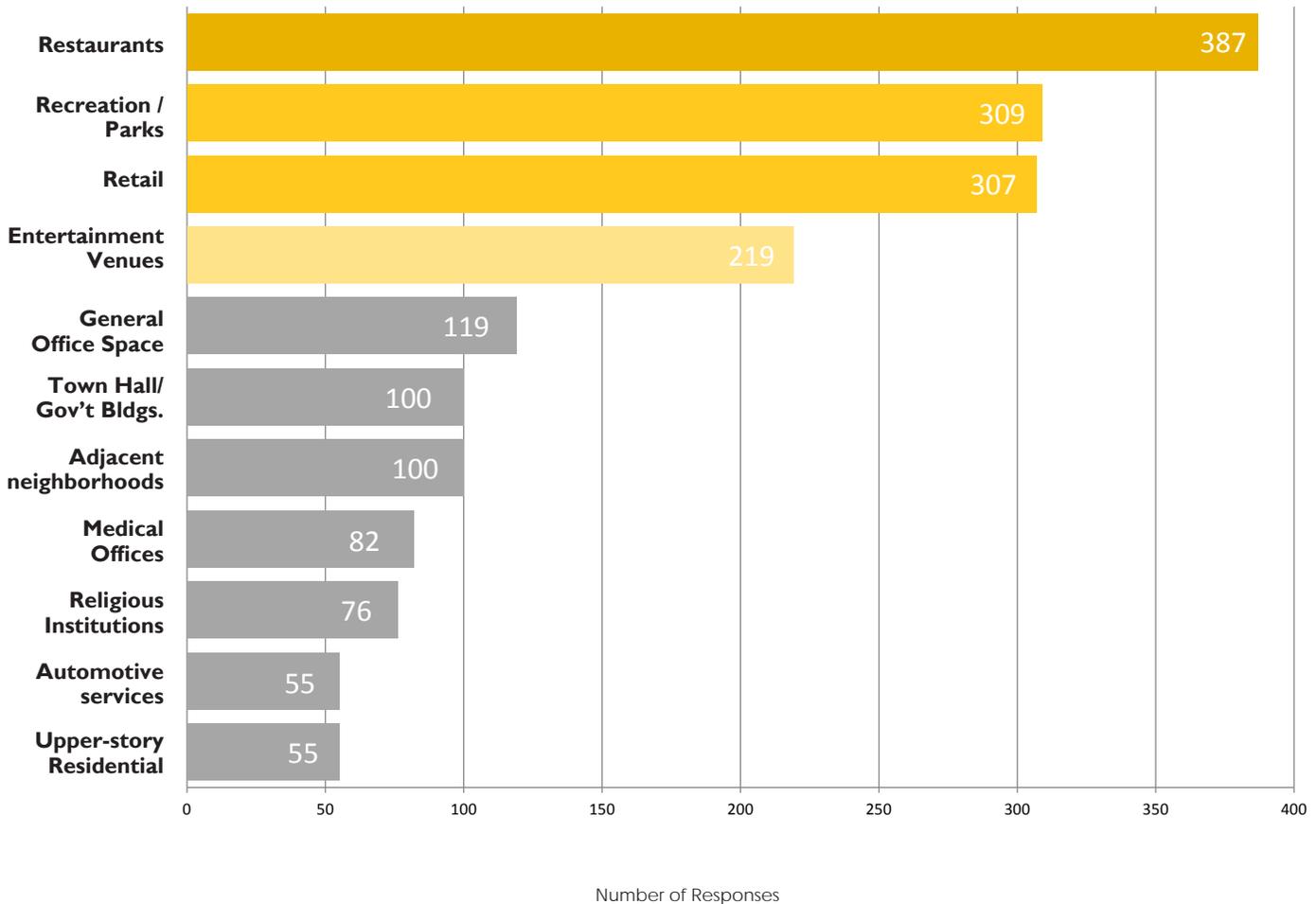


Respondents dislike the lack of parking availability, followed by lack of landscaping and overhead utility lines. Empty storefronts and lack of street lighting are noted frequently among the 95 people that elaborated on their answers. Overall lack of maintenance is also noted as a dislike. Others would like to see a larger and improved park area.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 22

What uses do you think are crucial for a successful Downtown? (Check all that apply)

▼ FIGURE 2.21 CRUCIAL USES FOR A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN



Survey participants perceive restaurants, recreation/parks, and retail as the top three uses crucial to the success of Downtown. Parking and lighting are noted as the biggest needs by the 34 respondents who elaborated on their answers, while a few expressed the desire to leave Downtown exactly the way it is.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 23

*What physical features do you think are crucial for a successful Downtown? (Check all that apply)*

▼ TABLE 2.3 FEATURES CRUCIAL TO DOWNTOWN SUCCESS

	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Well-maintained buildings	392
Occupied storefronts	366
Sidewalks / Walkability	336
Benches / Pedestrian Lighting	301
Street lighting	300
Frequent community events	257
Public off-street parking	244
Enhanced landscaping	236
Public Spaces/Parks	234
Outdoor dining	230
Pet friendly features	186
Distinct landmarks/monuments	153
Underground utilities	111
On-street parking	107
Bicycle accommodations (i.e. bike lanes, bike racks)	83
Unified signage	73
Other	21

While there are many features that are crucial for a successful Downtown, respondents believe that Mount Pleasant's Downtown success will most be impacted by well-maintained buildings, occupied storefronts, sidewalks/walkability, benches/pedestrian lighting, and street lighting. Of the additional 21 answers to this question, approximately one-third requested pet-friendly features such as a dog park.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 24

What would make Downtown a place that you would want to spend time?

▼ FIGURE 2.22 DOWNTOWN AS A DESTINATION



Many of the 317 respondents to this question desired a greater number and/or more diverse restaurants and shops in the Downtown. Multiple respondents also requested a larger and improved park area and more entertainment venues. Several people also wanted a pub, outdoor dining, and improved Downtown appearance with well-maintained historic buildings and occupied storefronts. Lack of parking was noted as an impediment to downtown success.

## PUBLIC SURVEY- QUESTION 25

Describe a vision for the future of the Town of Mount Pleasant or list physical attributes that you want to see.

▼ FIGURE 2.23 TOWN VISION



Respondents desire an attractive, family-oriented, small town that values its history while highlighting its rural and agrarian roots. They wish to balance this with tightly controlled growth with sound infrastructure, allowing some new compatible residential and commercial uses including a variety of restaurants and shops. They also want recreational needs to be met with parks and athletic fields, as well as indoor facilities. Respondents desire a vibrant, revitalized Downtown with an emphasis on small, local businesses.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP - OVERVIEW

There were approximately 50 attendees for the community workshop held on May 15, 2017 at the Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church. Most of the attendees are residents of the planning area with seven attendees from outside the planning area.

Attendees were invited to participate in a resource allocation exercise and provide additional strategies on notecards and comments on post-it notes. Participants were given eight poker chips each. They were given five white poker chips worth one point each, two blue poker chips worth two points each, and one red poker chip worth 3 points. They were invited to place the chips in jars for the strategies that they felt were most important.

The top rated strategy was to work with Cabarrus County to facilitate the redevelopment or reuse of the old Middle School site. The second highest rated strategy was to again, work with Cabarrus County to identify, acquire, and develop a location for a community park. The third highest rated strategy was to make streetscape improvements in Downtown. Overall category rankings, showed Land Use & Growth Management as the highest priority, followed by Downtown and Parks and Recreation.

▼ IMAGE 2.1 COMMUNITY WORKSHOP



## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [COMMUNITY IDENTITY & CHARACTER]

Workshop participants were asked to complete the phrase “I love Mt. Pleasant because. . . ” and/or the phrase “In the future, I want Mt. Pleasant to be. . . “. This was another opportunity to find out what matters most to Mount Pleasant’s citizens and what they think makes the Town a great place.

▼ IMAGE 2.2 COMMUNITY IDENTITY & CHARACTER



## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [COMMUNITY IDENTITY & CHARACTER]

Below are the results from the exercise conducted during the workshop, as well as comments provided:

▼ TABLE 2.4 COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND CHARACTER

	STRATEGY	WHITE CHIPS	BLUE CHIPS	RED CHIPS	SCORE	OVERALL RANK
1	Improve landscaping, signage, and building design standards for new and expanding development to enhance and be compatible with surrounding development.	9	1	1	14	15
2	Adopt building maintenance regulations and allocate additional funding for proactive code enforcement and zoning enforcement.	9	4	0	17	14
3	Work with property owners to preserve and rehabilitate historic structures.	17	4	3	34	4 (tie)
4	Provide attractive landscaped signage at the Town's gateways and wayfinding signage for the Town's attractions.	9	2	0	13	16
<b>TOTAL/CATEGORY RANK</b>		<b>44</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>6</b>

Other strategies / additional thoughts:

- Enforce condemnation and codes on derelict buildings (i.e. Ridenhour property, trailer park on 49 near NAPA)
- Historic district signage needs to be updated. Signage about attractions and city signage also needs updating.
- Town officials should not determine which businesses should stay open. Don't force (them) out of business.
- The beautiful homes, the museum, cute downtown, beautiful farmland
- A destination for antiques and history (including Reed Gold Mine nearby)
- Small town rural farming community. This (is) a family town not entertainment center.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT]

Below are the results from the exercise conducted during the workshop, as well as comments provided:

▼ TABLE 2.5 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

	STRATEGY	WHITE CHIPS	BLUE CHIPS	RED CHIPS	SCORE	OVERALL RANK
1	Work with the Cabarrus Economic Development Commission (EDC) to diversify the economic base with light industrial, retail, and tourism opportunities, drawing visitors from the nearby Cabarrus Events Arena and other nearby attractions.	9	7	3	32	5
2	Conduct a branding and marketing initiative to promote the Town of Mount Pleasant, including logo, motto, website, and social media strategy.	2	0	0	2	20
3	Work with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College and local high schools to provide small business, vocational, and trade education and training to attract industry and encourage entrepreneurship.	14	1	1	19	13
4	Provide economic incentives to attract industry and encourage the reuse of underutilized buildings.	13	7	1	30	5
<b>TOTAL/CATEGORY RANK</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>5</b>

Other strategies / additional thoughts:

- Would like to have more shopping facilities. For example: Target, CVS, Marshall's, Belk, Aldi
- I feel like quaint, small, specialty shops in the downtown area would be nice. It may require having some diversity within one shop area in order to help with rent/costs, etc. Our current parking situation will not work well with any parking growth.
- Open a QT or McDonalds.
- Turn MP into a cultural center by supporting arts, music, businesses/studios. Example: Turn one of the old mill buildings into an incubator for artists' studios.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT]

Below are the results from the exercise conducted during the workshop, as well as comments provided:

▼ TABLE 2.6 LAND USE & GROWTH MANAGEMENT

STRATEGY		WHITE CHIPS	BLUE CHIPS	RED CHIPS	SCORE	OVERALL RANK
1	Encourage the revitalization and reuse of currently unused or underutilized structures and sites.	15	4	2	29	8
2	Work with Cabarrus County to facilitate the redevelopment or reuse of the old middle school site.	21	7	11	68	1
3	Make efforts to preserve open space, forestland, and farmland with minimum open space requirements and conservation development.	13	5	1	26	10
4	Encourage development to occur only where existing infrastructure exists.	3	1	0	5	19 (tie)
<b>TOTAL/CATEGORY RANK</b>		<b>52</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>1</b>

Other strategies / additional thoughts:

- I think Mount Pleasant needs more shops and businesses around 49/73 interchange, such as Chick-Fil-A!
- Find a way to have an indoor pool. Use the old middle school wisely.
- Use the middle school as a community center with an indoor pool. Perfect site to use for community ball games, concerts, special events.
- Add a YMCA.
- Mount Pleasant is a family community. Farmland surrounding Mount Pleasant is essential to the many farmers in the area. Increased development and traffic will make it difficult on farmers.
- Redevelopment of middle school property to a community center would give the Town a park, athletic facilities and an auditorium, and maybe even an indoor pool.
- Use UDO to get middle school property for public or private sports facility! Need an indoor pool!
- Schools are dying, Town is dying. Please do something to keep MP alive.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [DOWNTOWN]

Below are the results from the exercise conducted during the workshop, as well as comments provided:

▼ TABLE 2.7 DOWNTOWN

	STRATEGY	WHITE CHIPS	BLUE CHIPS	RED CHIPS	SCORE	OVERALL RANK
1	Adopt ordinances and policies to improve the appearance of downtown including infill building design standards, building maintenance codes, and active storefront requirements.	5	4	4	25	11
2	Implement a façade grant program to encourage downtown property owners to make improvements to building exteriors.	8	4	2	22	12 (tie)
3	Improve downtown parking availability and quality by constructing a municipal parking lot and working with downtown property owners to make improvements to existing parking.	12	2	2	22	12 (tie)
4	Make streetscape improvements including burying or relocating power lines along Main Street and Franklin Street, updating sidewalks, and adding planters, pedestrian scale lighting, and benches.	13	9	4	43	3
<b>TOTAL/CATEGORY RANK</b>		<b>38</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>2</b>

Other strategies / additional thoughts:

- Move utilities underground. Fix streets and sidewalks. Drop speed limit to 20 mph from downtown to Cook Street. Buildings downtown need to be fixed up.
- A bookstore, coffee shop would be amazing!
- Bookstore - 2
- Movie Theater - 2
- Coffee Shop
- Laundromat
- Light Rail to university
- More restaurants
- Full service restaurant and revitalize appearance
- Get rid of ugly power lines in middle of town.
- Dining options, coffee shop, gathering place
- Sidewalks need improvement.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [PARKS & RECREATION]

Below are the results from the exercise conducted during the workshop, as well as comments provided:

▼ TABLE 2.8 PARKS AND RECREATION

	STRATEGY	WHITE CHIPS	BLUE CHIPS	RED CHIPS	SCORE	OVERALL RANK
1	Work with Cabarrus County to identify, acquire, and develop a location for a community park.	11	11	4	45	2
2	Work with Cabarrus County and local non-profit sports leagues to provide adequate sports facilities and programming to serve the Town of Mount Pleasant and the eastern portion of the County.	7	4	4	27	9
3	Work with the Carolina Thread Trail to expand the trail from the Buffalo Creek Preserve and complete segments identified in the trail master plan.	8	7	0	22	12 (tie)
4	Complete a facility study and master plan for the Town’s property and surrounding property where the Town Hall is located to utilize site to its maximum potential.	5	0	0	5	19 (tie)
<b>TOTAL/CATEGORY RANK</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>3</b>

Other strategies / additional thoughts:

- Encourage and facilitate the expansion of the Mount Pleasant Library to better serve the community and to be a destination for special events and services.
- Extend Dutch Buffalo Preserve trail to downtown greenway.
- Dog Park
- Add a YMCA, Community swimming pool
- Expand Little Free Library
- Formalize the MP Parks and Rec by acquiring and running Mount Pleasant Middle School through a formalized department.
- YMCA, playground equipment at trail off Malibu Road
- Keep the downtown playground
- Fitness gym - 2
- Love downtown playground
- Don’t want to see trees ripped out to make parking lot.
- Expand Little Free Library
- Start a downtown 5k.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP [INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES]

Below are the results from the exercise conducted during the workshop, as well as comments provided:

▼ TABLE 2.9 INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

	STRATEGY	WHITE CHIPS	BLUE CHIPS	RED CHIPS	SCORE	OVERALL RANK
1	Work with NCDOT and the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to implement the adopted Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP).	6	2	0	10	18
2	Repair existing sidewalks and construct new sidewalks to connect to existing sidewalks throughout Town.	8	7	4	34	4 (tie)
3	Put Town-maintained streets on a rotating paving schedule to ensure on-going maintenance.	4	1	2	12	17
4	Update existing utilities infrastructure rather than expanding utilities infrastructure, and only provide utilities infrastructure to properties within the Town limits or those that annex into the Town limits.	21	5	0	31	6
<b>TOTAL/CATEGORY RANK</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>4</b>

Other strategies / additional thoughts:

- Improve 73 and Main traffic flow with left turn lanes at intersection
- No bypass
- Need a street light moved at Highway 73 and South Skyland Drive. The light needs to be moved over one pole as the actual intersection is no lit at night and cannot safely be seen, especially in the rain. Please!
- Light rail to University
- Bring better broadband such as fiber internet to Mount Pleasant.
- Water pressure is low downtown and I think lines need to be repaired or replaced.
- Fix sidewalks and make improvements for walking.
- Update existing water lines and expand for potential growth.
- (Intersection of Main Street and Highway 73 is a) very dangerous intersection.
- Fire department comes out opposite lane during rush hour. Going to kill someone.
- Mount Pleasant cannot afford to put utilities underground. Lee Street has been torn up 5 times for the new houses. When will they repave?



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