

# FY26 Budget Planning Survey Results

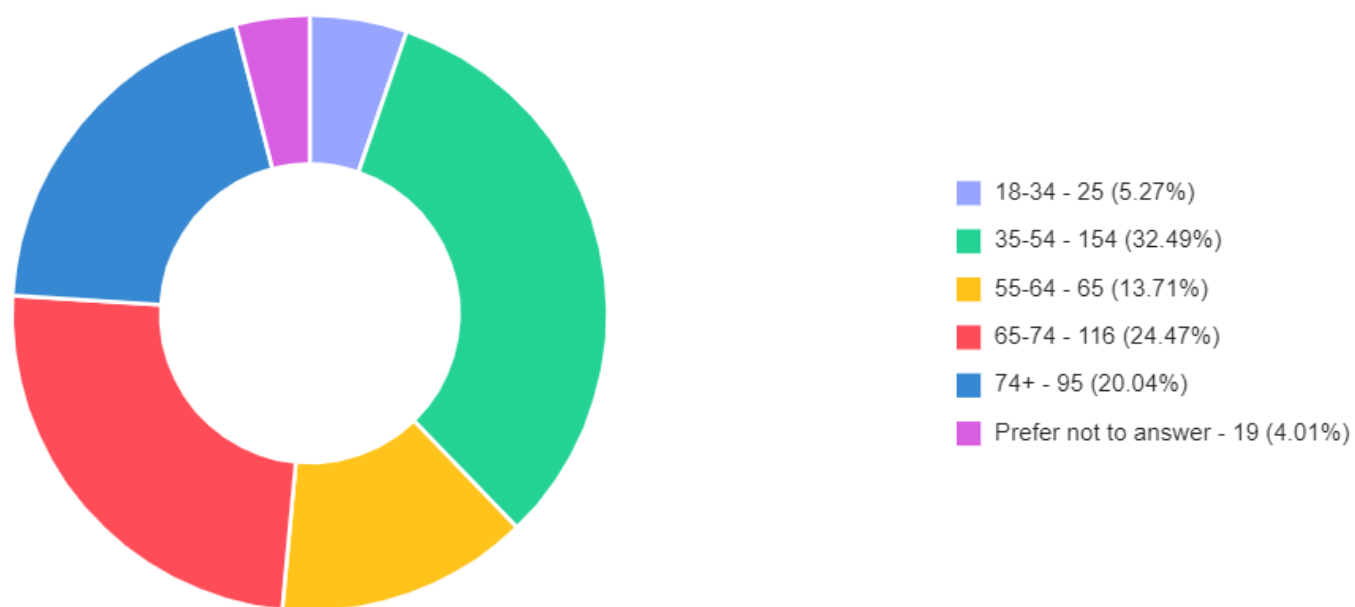
## FY26 Budget Planning Survey

Date range: Nov 22, 2024-Dec 10, 2024

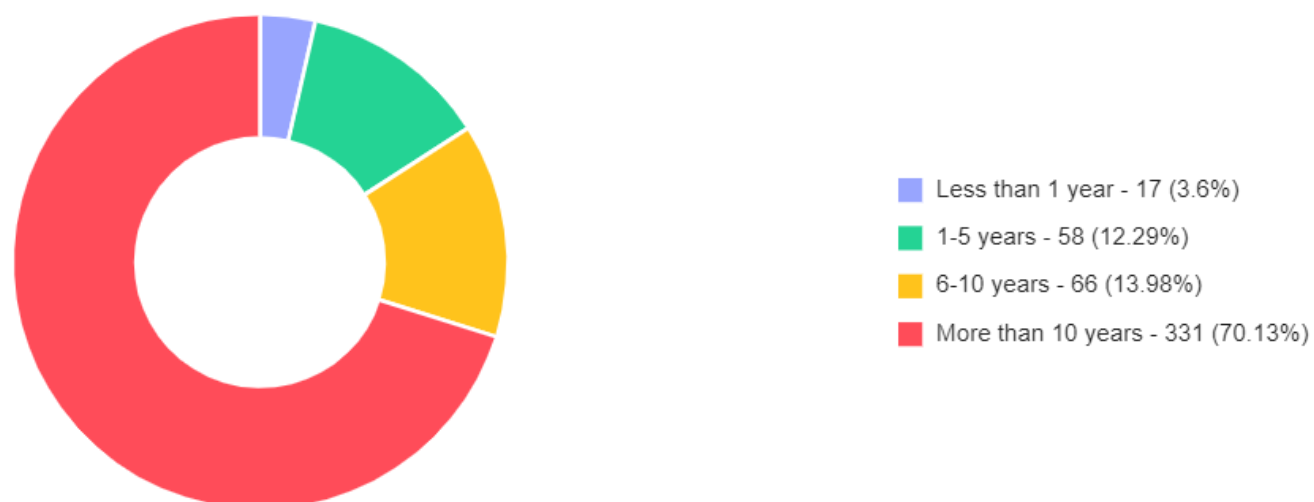
Total submissions: **576**

Total responses: **14479**

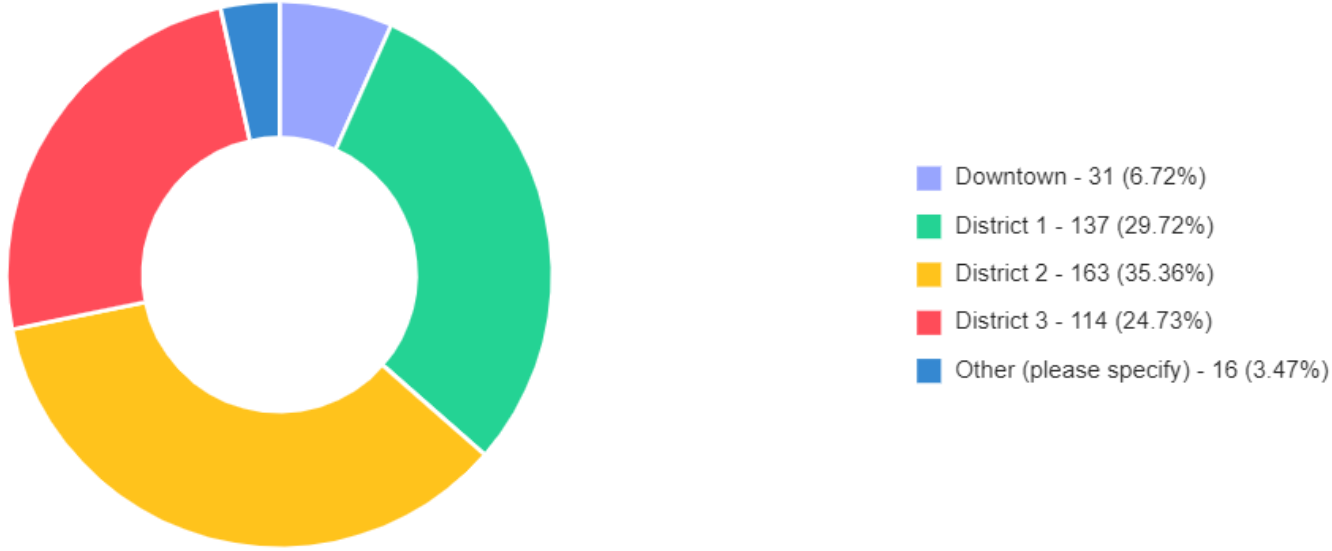
### What is your age?



### How long have you lived in Montpelier?



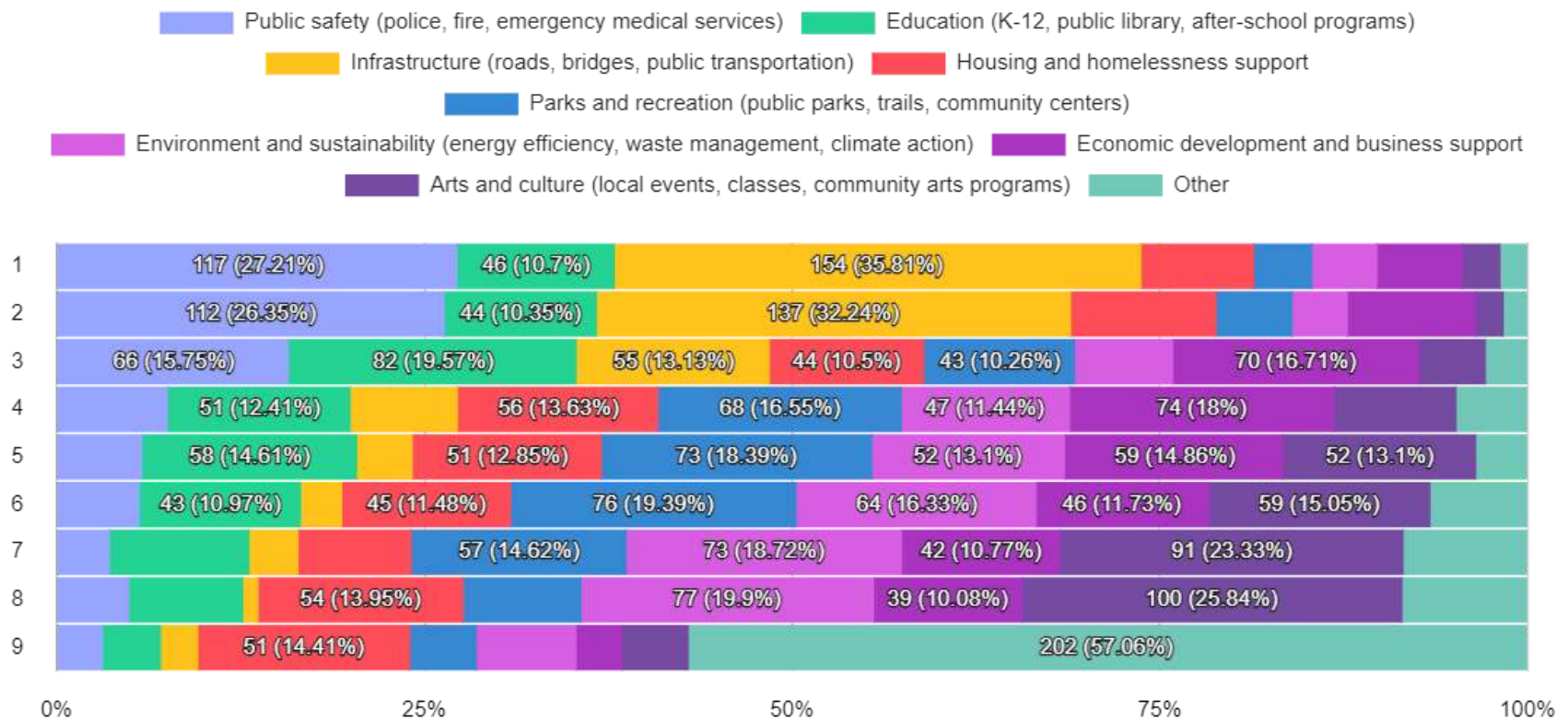
Which neighborhood/District or area of Montpelier do you live in?



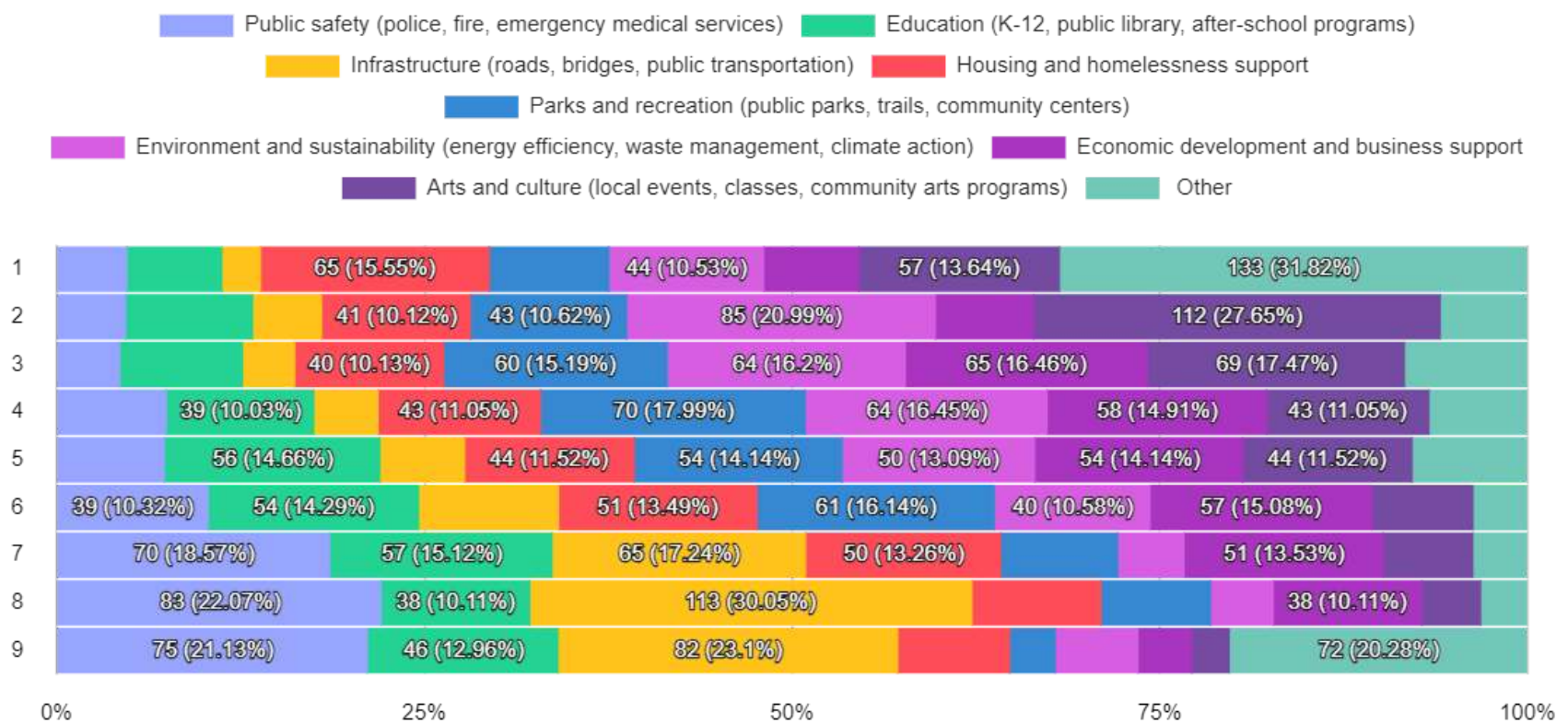
How would you rate the overall quality of services provided by the City of Montpelier?



**What areas of local government spending do you feel should receive the most funding in FY2026? (Please rank your priorities)**



**What areas of local government spending do you feel should receive the least funding in FY2026? Please rank your priorities)**



## Are there any services or programs that you think should receive less funding or be reduced in FY2026?

1. No
2. Homelessness Taskforc
3. Library, senior center and any services beyond the core of Police, Fire, DPW and infrastructure. In a financial crisis, as it has been presented you do not invest in feel good directives. Residents and visitors will not ans cannot stay in a Montpelier filled with crime, fires, broken and snow covered roads... everything else does not matter at this time. Once the core is fully funded and operating without threat then you can add back in the other luxuries.
4. The Parks Dept is beloved, but we can live without expanding the parks for a couple of years. Same with the Arts. We already have so much public art that feels like an area that can be put on pause.
5. Montpelier has a high concentration of expenses around many administrative functions such as planning, city managers office, and highly paid heads of various functions. While I appreciate the folks that work for the City, at some point we are burdening out tax payers by both supporting local providers and not holding folks accountable and also requiring more services for those folks. Springfield Vermont has more folks than Montpelier does, and half the police budget.
6. Public library Homeless funding cuts within city hall
7. citywide events, emergency watermain and road repair - fix these items well the first time
8. City Hall Budget
9. Parks
10. Administration
11. Montpelier Alive--this much influence and control should not be in private hands.
12. I'm not educated enough to comment. I just know the roads are falling apart and we still haven't developed two parcels of lands we purchased to build affordable housing on.
13. Cut 10 staff, ask for greater employee contributions to health insurance and/or switch to a cheaper alternative.
14. The city council and 2026 priorities should be focused on how to grow Montpelier, expand its tax base and increase our economic competitiveness. Figuring out how more people can affordably live here is key
15. My belief is that local municipal governments should not be FUNDING housing projects. Housing should be FUNDED by the private sector.
16. Administration/Finance
17. We should amiantian current levels for public safety, do the necessary for infrastructure and water, then make significant cuts to the rest.
18. Acquistion of rec land.
19. Cultural, social support
20. Administrative personnel
21. Arts and Culture, Parks and recreation. These are nice to have; not must haves.
22. Until we get back on our feet, the bike paths and other non-essential programs need to take a back seat.
23. Environment and sustainability
24. Administration
25. Public transportation cost way too much for the few users. Forget it. give it up. up
26. Look at the top wage earners, freeze or reduce salaries, no increases. Maybe eliminate high wage positions that can be cut.

27. I've ranked school support low, since we have an outsized budget/tax bill allocated to schools. Basic city services should be our top priority. We cannot afford aspirational projects and the infrastructure needs and CONTRACT SERVICES that come with those aspirations.
28. City Hall administration; fire department equipment
29. Recreation/parks
30. Education-too much per real students; keep on property tax; too many adults in entire school system.
31. Education and Housing
32. Administration, no new parks, education costs are way too high - combine with U-32
33. Homelessness and housing. In a free market, housing should take care of itself. VT is too over regulated and bloated with government. Consolidate departments. No funding for bike trails and Downtown parks until you clear out the homeless people who make it so the rest of us cannot use the spaces and degrade the community in the process. Support business development and your tax revenue will naturally increase without having to cut programs or threaten to increase the tax rates. It is becoming increasingly unaffordable for middle class folks to live in Montpelier.
34. Meals on Wheels should be transitioned to another provider
35. The city is not in the housing business. And the more you give true homeless people, the more people will come to this area.
36. City hall
37. Education - the schools are already receiving our tax money
38. Administration, senior center
39. The bike paths
40. Environment, Arts, Parks & Recreation, Homelessness
41. Administration at City Level
42. Admin costs for the city are too high
43. I think infrastructure has to be the priority right now.
44. 1. Re: "housing and homelessness support" I rank that as a top priority bc I think the city should prioritize investments in housing, which is a longterm solution to homelessness. I do not think the city budget is an appropriate way to fund ever-increasing costs of providing immediate direct service to the unhoused - we need to advocate to the state and the feds to increase their funding there. Re: "education" I ranked it low as pertains to afterschool programming. The public prek-12 school budget is not really under local control / within the purview of the City Council. Including that in the list of priorities is misleading. My responses above do not mean I think our MRPS budget is a low priority.
45. Housing and Environment and sustainability
46. Eliminate the community justice center. Use the diversion program instead. Eliminate the idiotic net zero positions, this is total B.S. Eliminate the communications positions. Ridiculous waste of money. Sell off the golf course, put it on the tax rolls. Don't waste resources on the bums that stay drunk and high all day every day. SPEND LESS . THE TAXES ARE DRIVING ME OUT OF MY HOME!
47. ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING, HOUSING
48. No
49. Homelessness, k-12 school, climate action, lost nation cost and not paying rent
50. Police and Fire
51. Parks
52. POLICE, NOT "DEFUND THE POLICE", JUST LESS MONEY
53. City Hall

54. Recreation Dept. seems to provide services to a very small segment of the population. Kids programs are already supported by the schools.
55. Schools, the Homeless, environmental, Parks, economic development
56. Some of the committees have not had an impact, homeless committee would be one.
57. 6th, 7th 8th and 9th above
58. school budget
59. Any extra item asked for by the public. KHL, Montpelier alive, any ballot item added by petition.
60. Senior center
61. Look for extras and duplications.
62. There must be a way to consolidate educational resources. Educational expenses for the number of students have long been too high. I am in favor of reducing administrative costs.
63. Anything to do with the Country Club property. NO new initiatives that only serve a part of the population
64. Review of all contracts and consulting.
65. Anything to do with Housing the unhoused and all programs related to it
66. See above priorities
67. All of them except public safety and infrastructure
68. City staffing levels should be cut and police and fire salaries should be reduced. Dispatchers should be eliminated and contracted by the state or consolidated with Barre/Berlin. We are a town of 8000 people, we don't need a city manager, an assistant city manager and a city council. Cut the fat. Why do we need all these positions. A communications director??? That should be the city managers job. He makes a \$160K a year. Save some money and have him write his own messages. The planning and zoning department. These people have been trying to generate income and annoying taxpayers for years. Do we really need the overhead? All departments should be force to cut 30% and they will still be over staffed.
69. Something a bit confusing about this survey is the way the categories of housing investment and homelessness support are grouped. It seems investment in housing (which the city can impact through regulations, zoning, tax incentives, and permitting) is a very different thing from homelessness support (which has more to do with direct social services). Personally, I think the city should do everything it can to facilitate the development of more market rate housing. There is clearly high demand here and not just for affordable housing. And of course, when more housing opens up and local people move, it opens up another local house in turn. I think direct social services to unhoused people is a short term solution and does not address the real problems that lead to people being unhoused, which are the combination of a lack of housing and substance abuse.
70. As much as i love our arts culture, recreation opportunities, i feel we are not in a good place right now to fully fund them.
71. Fire trucks
72. Please reduce everything else and fix all infrastructure.. the property taxes are out of control and if they are to remain this high I demand to see my money going to improve the daily way of life for the people like me that carry this town on its back in taxes
73. City Hall Admin
74. Tax free property should help us out by paying in there Shair. they have gotten a free ride on us and now we need help. They use our services and this could help out ALL of montp.
75. Community Justice and planning and zoning
76. The City Managers office. Maybe they should stop taking raises whilst no one else in the city receives them
77. This survey is confusing Arts and Culture. They can fundraise on their own.
78. Planning office and elimination of assistant city manager. Both are excessive for a city of 8000.

79. Yes , and stop stifling development with ridiculous zoning reps, review boards - City doesn't have to have in everything, '
80. City hall staff
81. Housing improvements outside of walking distance to downtown
82. Schools ,arts and recreation
83. bike lanes. parking bans that are confusing and actually take away from residents and the businesses in downtown
84. Housing and supporting the homeless with drug addiction, DO NOT BUILD places for them to stay on the old golf course! The more support you give them the more they come to stay and use drugs on our streets and in our public space (parks etc) LOOK at Burlington! or Portland Oregon, or San francisco... supporting people with drug problems backfires everytime, we cannot pay for them to stay in our city.. The back door deals that have been made are so frustrating to hear about.
85. We need to recognize our small town's limitations and priorities. A tax base our size can't be asked to solve homelessness, and we make it worse by attracting new persons interested in our generous social services. We also cannot solve climate change, and probably have made our air quality worse by encouraging burning of wood instead of more efficient sources of heat. We need to be pragmatic and responsible with the limited funds we have.
86. Legislation giving themselves raises Making cities look pretty for tourists as the infrastructure fails
87. Until the state and municipalities reduce the tax burden for the residents and and all services need to be adjusted.
88. Yes. Everything except Public Safety. In particular, Planning, Environment and Sustainability, and Arts and Culture
89. The Tennis Build out of the old golf course. This is a scenic part of Montpelier, the master plan will throw it all away.
90. Any program that pulls resources from the core functions of city government, which are infrastructure, safety, and economic development.
91. middle management throughout city government; Fire and police staffing
92. None in particular, I just want the money to be used efficiently. More for long term solutions rather than repetitive band aiding,
93. Salaries. City Hall as with most organizations are top heavy and need to be reduced.
94. Too much time and focus is being devoted to the homelessness issue which should be tackled by the state
95. Merge high school with U-32 and stop building maintenance
96. Community Center- specifically the former golf club property
97. Schools
98. sell the country club property to a developer that will develop it. the city has no business being in housing development.
99. All grants assuming the funds come from taxpayers and are not pass through grants. I think that many business processes could likely be made more efficient by investing in modern technology systems like Microsoft and less on manual administrators. It's a longer term strategy but strive to eliminate all paper and all PDFs. Platforms like Microsoft power platform can make a big dent in manual steps.
100. DEI and spending on homelessness.
101. We should reduce the city hall workforce back to where it was 15 years ago
102. I don't think we should fund infrastructure development for private land owners. We should just focus on basic needs and not wants.
103. Reduce recreation / trails. We have enough rec opportunities. Keep, support, promote, support MSAC
104. We are consistently among the top states for environmental quality and I think our residents will continue to do the right things and keep helping the environment, as we already are. Therefore, I don't think we need to spend any

additional money on this matter. We MUST get downtown up and running again, making it vibrant, safe and clean. I do not want to go downtown and get approached by panhandlers. I will not go near the bike path simply based on all the trouble I have heard about. There are plenty of arts and cultural events happening all over the state, so I would recommend cutting in this area. Get the stores open again, get the state workers back, get the state to fully fund PILOt and we could be able to repair the roads and bridges, attract more people, and get ourselves into an upward spiral instead of the current downward spiral we're experiencing.

105. Parks and Recreation

106. Eliminate jobs from the top down

107. no

108. Yes, the police!!!! Their piece of the budget pie is way too fat! And I think grouping them with fire and EMS for this survey is deceptive.

109. Reduce number of employees. No spending on wants, only needs.

110. Montpelier High School needs to merge with U32. The building can be used for special needs education, which is sorely needed.

111. reduce the number of employees in town manager's office and in city hall

112. Arts and culture

113. Tennis Courts

114. Parks and recreation

115. education funding MUST be reigned in

116. Schools and police. I wish you'd separate police from emergency/fire responses, and library from schools.

117. Reduce or eliminate Country Club project

118. Maintaining the elks lodge, tear it down. Paying for the Roxbury school. Repair the fire truck instead of replace.

119. Yes, because development initiatives, there isn't enough money.

120. Cut administration costs at City Hall. ALSO: This survey is flawed! Housing and Homelessness support should not be paired. Homeless support includes housing, long and short term, as well as food, mental health access, and much more. Housing, as in facilitating the construction of more dwelling units, re-assessing zoning, and public incentivization of rehab or new construction, is different.s

121. Funding "the recreation economy" in Hubbard Park

122. Love our parks but I am not convinced we need more trails, more land, more infrastructure related to our parks.

123. Homelessness support

124. Anything that does not encourage economic development or add affordable housing should be a lower priority. Montpelier needs middle-class housing and more taxpayers to stabilize the budget. Since you insist on placing "Addressing affordable housing and homelessness" as a singular item, when they are not the same issues, I can only rank them last. However, it doesn't seem like any of our local government gets it.

125. SEL and DEI for public schools

126. Homelessness support

127. review of recipients of tax abatement funding

128. Homelessness support. Focus on our downtown, infrastructure, and our children. The state needs to handle homelessness - not the city.

129. Schools

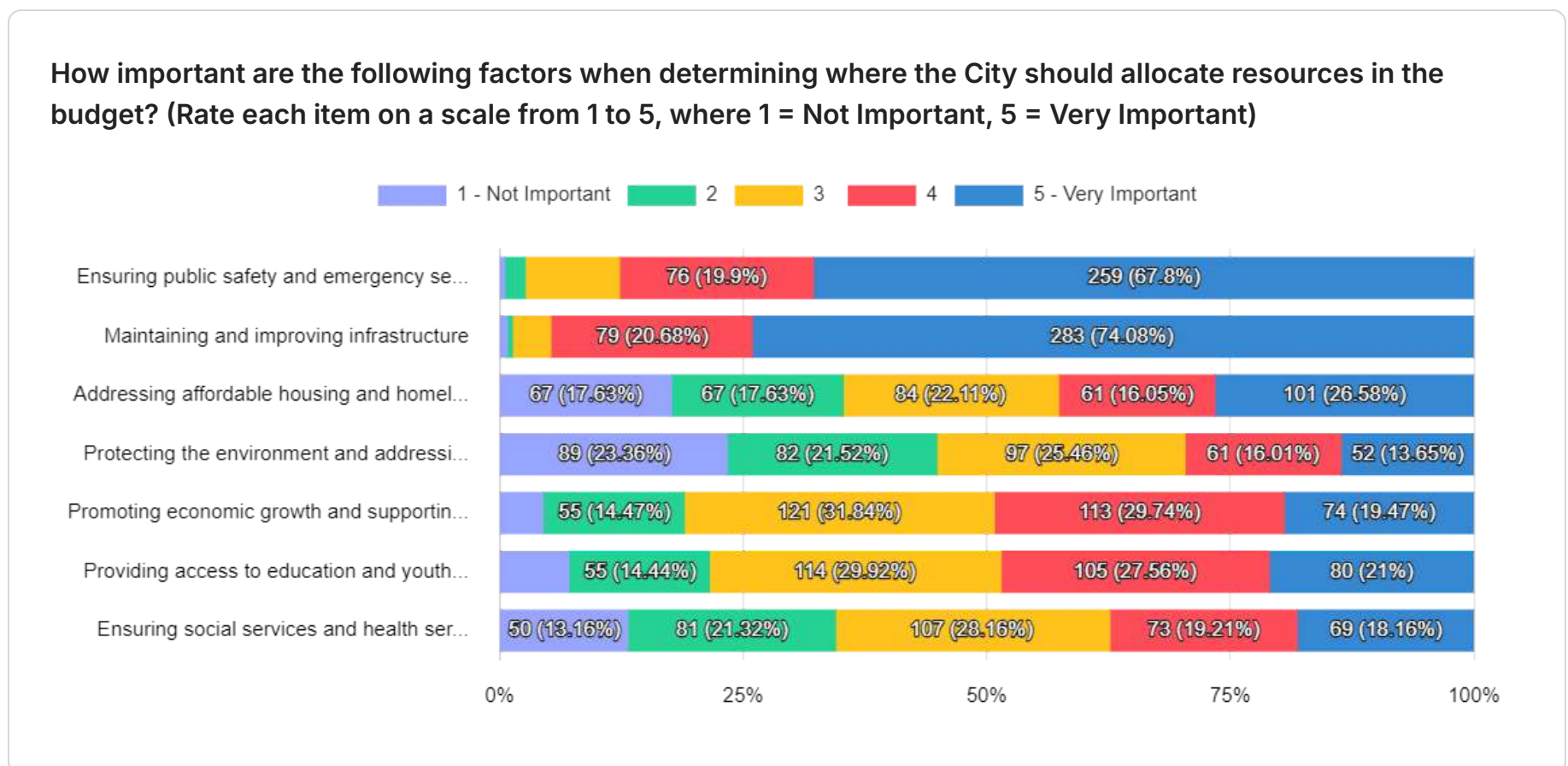
130. DEI

131. The first questions are VERY CONFUSING.....most funding...least fundng...Are you trying make it so ambiguous that the survey doesn't make sense?

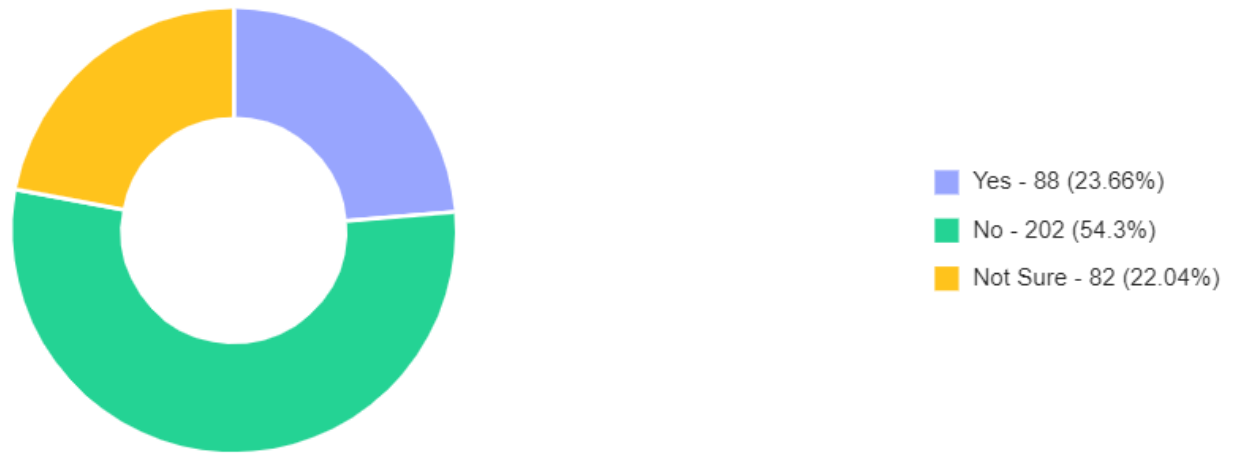
132. MRPS should merge with U-32 and move to higher ground, or the budget for the old MPHS should reduce.

133. Revise the question. Housing over homelessness
134. Please ignore the 'other' field in my response. Jumping housing affordability and homelessness together is a bad idea since they are two separate issues. Similarly to police and fire (I would rank fire much higher than police).
135. Sell the Elks club property - dumb investment for a city - Remove road blocks to more housing projects
136. City staff. The City Managers office continues to receive raises every year. While I understand raises are needed to retain, it is reasonable that when budgets get tight that government employees don't continue to get raises. The average state employee makes ~62k to serve all Vermonters. Our City staff serve just a small contingent yet are making far greater than this - especially in the City Managers Office.
137. Environmental initiative belongs at the state and federal level, unless you mean flood resilience
138. Ditch confluence park idea
139. I ranked these based on how much the cost to operate, not by importance. They are all essential.
140. Additional committees/commissions - streamline work since we are already such a small city
141. Administrative overhead
142. City hall personnel
143. Housing
144. Eliminate the Sustainability and Facilities Coordinator; end support of the Senior Center
145. Anything giving free money to low income
146. administrative staff
147. Anything that raises property taxes. My mortgage payment increased \$500 this year, largely due to property taxes. My salary did not increase at all. This city is becoming completely unaffordable.
148. Parks, Paths & recreation
149. Recreation Department, Senior Center, Administrative staff
150. medical insurance must be cut down
151. Staffing esp. in Administration
152. Admin staff
153. the golf course land
154. administration
155. Start with 0 increase from Fy2025, not with an automatic inflation adjustment, our income will not automatically rise enough to cover Medicare, insurance increases and tax increases for fy2026. If you have to reduce staffing to keep 0 increase budget then reduce staffing by rethinking how you provide services.
156. I think the city is absolutely powerless to address "social" problems and I wish you would stop blowing funds on costly virtue signaling.
157. City manager's salary, Elk land should be sold, except building for homeless shelter and some nearby land
158. The local school budget is far too expensive given the steady decline in enrollment
159. We need a new city manager before we should be making any significant budget changes
160. Parks services
161. Not sure
162. Do not spend any more of our money on the Elks club property.
163. Sadly, I believe public recreation, like the pool, would be my choice for cutting back. The parks are vital, but could maybe be cut back to basic maintenance for a few years.
164. the many administrative positions should be carefully examined for cost savings
165. we need them all and I understand these are very hard choices
166. Take a look at travel, conferences, etc. City Manager travel, conferences . Planning and Zoning look at number of employees. Designated position of communications - this can be handled by each department.

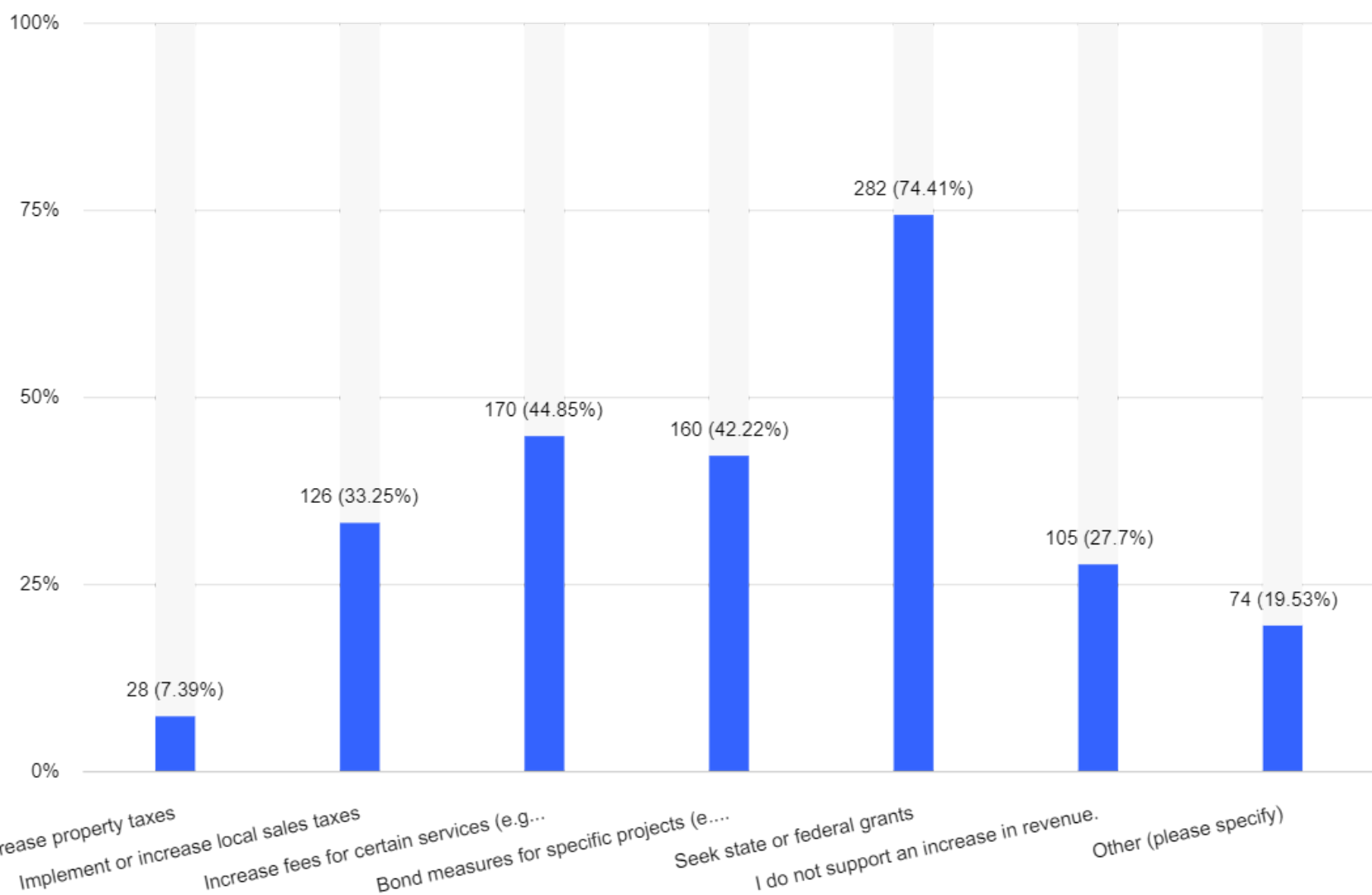
- 167. Delete the Elks Club purchase. Sell it and use proceeds with the Confluence Park money to pay for infrastructure repairs
- 168. Most everything
- 169. Impossible to prioritize, but the two top issues are affordable housing and infrastructure
- 170. Education, Housing, City Employees
- 171. Parks and development
- 172. Eliminate the "wants" and focus solely on the deteriorating infrastructure
- 173. The city could be much more judicious in its use of salt on the sidewalks and roads and winter road maintenance in general. Folks should expect difficult conditions during a storm and anticipate that streets will be cleared in a day or so but not immediately. I think the City could also consider slightly reducing the number of employees in the police department.
- 174. providing housing to those who do not want to work
- 175. housing and homelessness
- 176. non-essential department heads
- 177. School budget
- 178. too many city employees per capita
- 179. Economic development
- 180. Homeless outreach



Do you support the current tax rate in Montpelier to fund city services?



If the City needs to raise additional revenue, which of the following methods would you prefer? (Select up to 5 options)



If you selected "other" above, please explain your answer here.

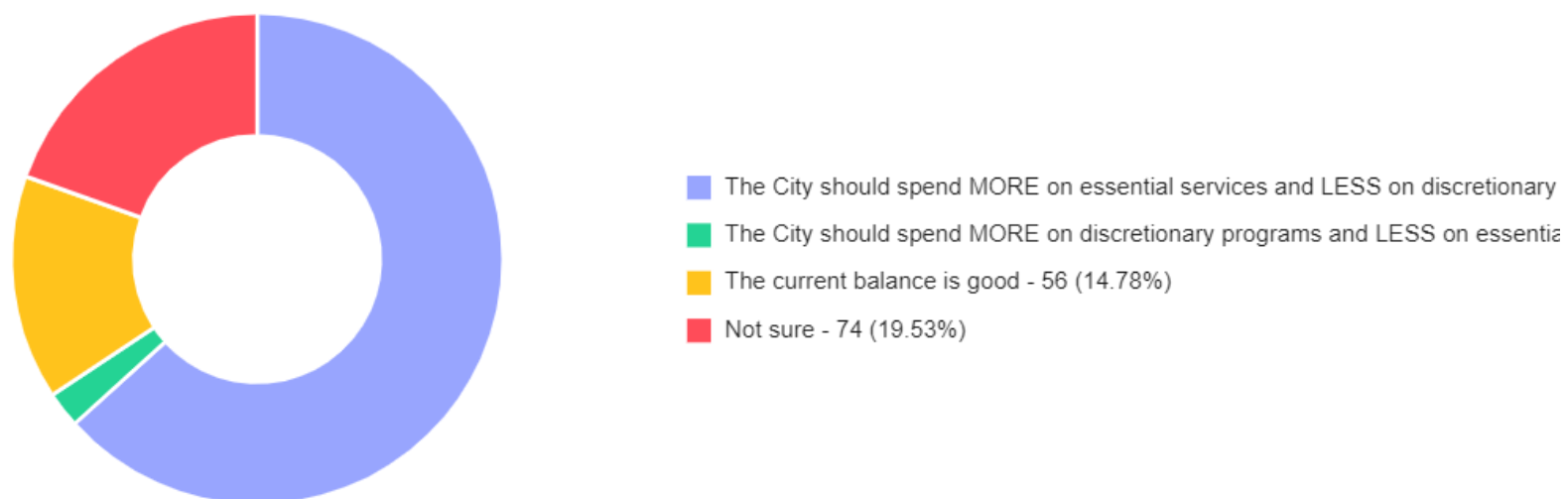
1. Eliminate top heavy positions within the city departments. 6 accountants? 2 directors of dpw? An office full of zoning and planning in a rented space (and there is minimal zoning and planning happening)?
2. WHY haven't we implemented a local options tax yet? It's crazy that we're bypassing that revenue source.
3. A spending problem and a revenue problem are two sides to a discussion. Montpelier is heavily staffed (>200 people) for a small Municipality of 7800.
4. Income tax on super-rich people, if that's allowed
5. Income tax based upon income
6. I support bonding out projects if they're actionable and shovel ready. I worry bonds will become a financial burden while the city "studies a project". I'm not sure this could raise significant revenue. But enforcing the parking laws and fining illegally parked cars would be nice.
7. I sense the current fiscal situation is approaching doom loop where if we continue to raise taxes and fees we will only reduce our ability to solve long term. We must grow.
8. The most important "investment" the City needs to make is in a "Grants" or "Alternative Funding" position. Just as colleges can no longer support themselves on enrollment alone, the City cannot continue to rely on an antiquated funding model. The City needs to prioritize innovative sources including an expanded number and type of annual grant submissions, public-private partnerships, block grants, "sustainability" or "green" bonds, Pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) systems, Federal partnerships etc. The City needs to prioritize building its capacity to build alternative revenue sources.
9. Work with other cities to get legislature to raise taxes on corporately owned houses
10. Change our government structure to strong Mayor. Our system has failed.
11. reduce expenses-listen to city counselor, Tim Heney.
12. Stop increasing taxes, fees, or issuing bonds to support a budget we can't afford!
13. Cut expenses by removing funding from homelessness and housing development and support business growth to grow revenue. Consolidate departments and positions. Stop thinking the solution is more taxation! It is not. We are not a communist country.
14. The city needs more housing, especially within walking distance of city center. This means allowing/encouraging more construction of higher density housing throughout the city. Thus, the city needs to revisit/relax regulations restricting zoning (density) and environmental restrictions. This is a long term strategy, but is required to increase the tax base and thus revenue.
15. Do away with property tax rebates. If people are shielded from the costs, they vote for everything believing someone else will pay for it.
16. might want to look at personal, are we admin. heavy? Sub-contract out some public works projects, might be cheaper
17. submitting applications for grants ON TIME would be a great start.
18. I support tax increases no more than inflation. Property taxes are already quite high
19. Income based taxes
20. staff
21. Income Tax on high earners. Charge for Saturday parking
22. Take action to require people who use city resources, but do not live here, to pay for their use
23. Imagination and creativity
24. Cut city positions - police and fire - communications director- consolidate building departments
25. Reduce staff and overhead. Consolidate departments. Share police/fire/EMS with neighbor towns. Reduce senior positions in police department that eats up a majority of a budget. You should be able to get two young officers for

- the yearly salary of the senior cops. Reduce fire department and take on volunteers. Get the state and non-profits to pay more for emergency services.
26. I've heard district heat isn't profitable, yet there are inefficient state buildings. BGS should be incentivized to "button up" so the plant can provide more heat with less work
  27. Get tax exempt properties to start paying their share all of Montpelier. Need their help we have paid for their share for decades
  28. Hire a cheaper city manager.
  29. Cut services and look at wasteful spending.
  30. Something associated with income rather than property value...
  31. The city needs to work with what it has. Treat itself like a business and stay within the funds available.
  32. Tax the Weed stores, Get more from the state whose employees use our infrastructure and the state that takes most of our precious downtown potential. Allow food trucks for a fee. Tax the Landlords that are not making it easy to own or run a business (we know who they are)
  33. For the love of god, no more property tax increases
  34. City Income tax for those that work in Montpelier (and benefit from all the services provided), but do not pay any taxes to support those services
  35. TAX AirBnBs to the hilt (unless they are owner occupied units)
  36. The city should drop the 1% sales tax to .07%. The .03% will not be missed.
  37. The city should be discussing ways to reduce unnecessary spending on tangential programs and services. It should also consider moving from a full-time paid fire department, to a volunteer department and a private ambulance service provider.
  38. Sell off individual building lots at Golf Course with recapture provisions if new homes aren't built quickly.
  39. Sell assets such as Elk Road property to developer
  40. Sell the country club road property. The city does not need a new recreation center.
  41. Charge a vacancy tax
  42. Currently I feel that the city is overweight in administrative personnel. Also we have someone focusing on community and economic development whose position should be converted to a full-time grants specialist. The city is not likely to attract a large employer and has only grown by less than 2% in terms of population in 24 years. Let's better allocate our limited resources.
  43. Reduce workforce, work on efficiency
  44. Second homes and out-of-state landlords
  45. Sell Elks Club property. City should NOT fund building.
  46. CUT ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS
  47. There are so few taxpayers paying the full tax burden. Examine and decrease number and amount of taxpayers getting tax breaks
  48. You need to start some sort of a donation project. Some people are supremely squeezed, they have no more to give. Some have some they can give and would. Just increasing something like property taxes doesn't deal with this because then the most poor still have to pay a little more of something.
  49. Cut the budget
  50. Rethink Country Club property, it belongs in the future; look at the 600K money from Confluence Park; look at benefits as well as salaries of City employees
  51. Tax State buildings or make the State pay maintenance fees to the city. There is no right answer above, an increase will need to be a combination of many. Small property tax increase, small sales tax, etc.. We should have an income tax so the more affluent contribute more.

52. Keep state workforce dollars in town
53. 1. Renegotiating the State's PILOT; 2) Property tax differential for occasional-use or short-term home rental; 3) Seek philanthropic grants for arts, education, and recreational programs.
54. Re: the balance question below: there is no option to suggest the city spend LESS on both essential services and discretionary or SAME on essential and LESS on discretionary. IF there were, I would pick the latter.
55. Increase taxes on second homes and the highest income residents. Support law suits against fossil fuel companies (climate superfund) and Monsanto for PCB contamination.
56. Sell Elks club to highest bidder (not give it away to one party for a cheap price, as currently seems to be the plan)
57. I don't support and increase in revenue above infation rate. State and federal grants should be applied for to fund additional programs
58. I really don't have a suggestion at this point, but I think citizen input for other options should be explored. I'm sure there is very creative thinking going on somewhere to figure out how to boost city revenues - look to Europe perhaps.
59. Improve the survey, dont conflate housing and homelessness
60. income tax
61. The first filter should be whether or not an increase is necessary. I do not think it should increase the rate of inflation. If it does, that is an indicator you are doing something wrong.
62. Tax increases should be held to the inflation rate
63. If we are going to seek additional grant opportunities it is critical to provide the various commissions and committees some amount of funding in order to provide matching funds. Matching funds make grant applications more competitive.
64. Surcharge on short term rentals.
65. an income tax.
66. lobby the state to provide additional pilot funding in recognition of the fact that Montpelier is built for a large daily workforce, and that workforce is no longer there but the state is sitting on land/buildings
67. Sell the county club property.
68. Stop giving money to deadbeats
69. Affordable housing absolutely needs to be addressed. Homelessness, less so. People travel from other states and land here for the social program availability. We aren't helping Vermonters by creating more social programming, we are making the problem worse by creating such a welcoming environment that Vermont has become a transient destination.
70. 1. Expand cost-sharing for services with surrounding towns (e.g., website management, emergency services, recreational activities, etc, ) 2. Initiate PILOT arrangements with non-profits that are not focused on Montpelier 3. Institute a lodging tax on short-term rentals 4. Enforce building codes and permit requirements (and fees), esp. for rental buildings 5. Institute a rental registry and fee to support it like Barre does
71. Local alcohol and rooms taxes; PILOT; explore ways to raise revenue from high earners or buyers of high-value properties
72. Without a new city manager, our budget will not be effectively implemented, and the cities goals and vision will not be correctly implemented
73. Sell off former Elks Club property that city should never have purchased in first place
74. This survey is poorly written. The appropriate question is not which area of service should receive the "the most funding"
75. Increase PILOT payments
76. Income tax on higher income people, property transfer tax on higher priced properties

77. budget cuts and increased revenues are both important. Montpelier provides services that are out of proportion to our taxpaying population. The PILOT program is inadequate for the services we provide the state, and needs to be increased. We must also look at raising revenues from sources/residents who have not paid in the past, e.g. a tax on non-profits, which we have an abundance of.
78. Find areas to cut or reduce funding
79. All? I am concerned about affordability for folks. But we can't magically make the money appear from non-existent grants...
80. Lobby for higher PILOT from the state - take a look at if there are "non profits" who are currently tax exempt that maybe should be taxed in part or whole.
81. Cuts in staffing beginning with the city manager's position (Bill Frasier may be a nice guy, but this is not a popularity contest. We need someone more skilled and stop paying for others to do his work, including in-house and outside hires. He was not hired to staff an employment agency. Admin. is top-heavy. State, Federal, and Private grants
82. Eliminate current City Manager for mismanagement
83. Montpelier and East Montpelier should consolidate, the city's tax base is too small to support all the services it provides.
84. Reiterating support for utilizing the local option sales tax. Many people from the surrounding communities utilize the City services in Montpelier and this is a reasonable way to capture revenue support from this population.

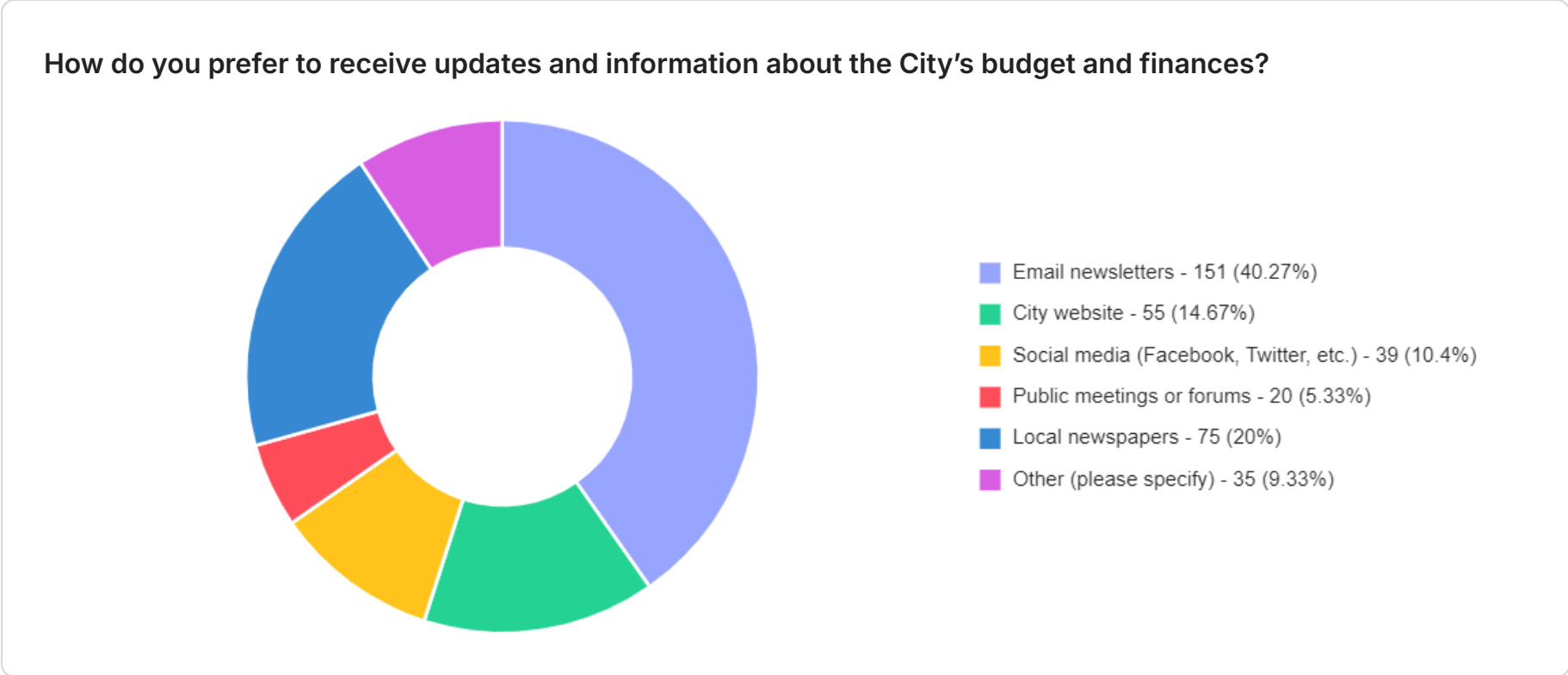
What is your opinion on the balance between city spending on essential services (e.g., public safety, infrastructure) and discretionary programs (e.g., arts, recreation)?



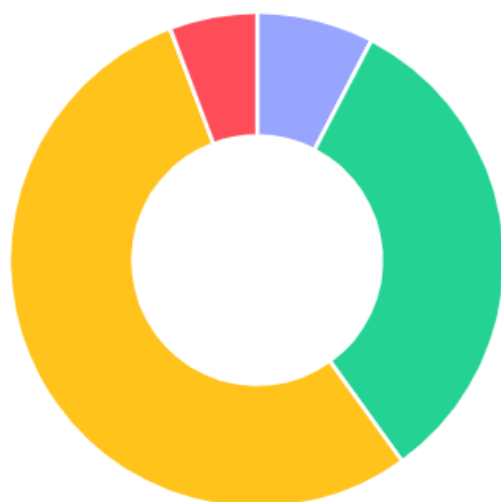
If you selected "other" above, please describe your preferred method of communication about the City's budget and finances.

1. Email, Social Media, Public Meetings.
2. The Bridge and Front Porch Forum
3. Multiple sources. FPF & email at the least. City-wide opt-in text updates etc. Frequent communication and transparency are key.
4. Front Porch Forum
5. All of the Above
6. The bridge was an excellent format for long or complicated messages. Front Porch Forum is too fragmented. The local newspaper, i.e. the times Argus is not worth buying.
7. Montpelier FPF
8. Front Porch Forum
9. I think email and local newspapers are best for me.
10. Front Porch Forum
11. FPF The Bridge ( I miss the city report in the Bridge)
12. Front porch forum
13. Front porch forum
14. Facebook is not an appropriate medium for timely updates. Use the website
15. It should be all of the above, but with the city website as the primary source of information that the others direct residents to.
16. fpf
17. Front porch forum
18. all
19. all of the above. It is imperative that the city actually communicate with its citizens. The burden of communication is on the communicator not the receiver of the message.
20. email!
21. The Bridge
22. FPF
23. Email is the best. I do not have social media and I cannot always attend a public meeting.
24. The BRIDGE City Page was the best and easiest way
25. front porch forum
26. I dislike Front Porch Forum. The website is clunky and not easily navigatable. The newspaper is good, but can be hit or miss to finding it. I find that summaries/newsletters (available on the website also) are a good resource.
27. The Bridge also has intermittent reports between Newspaper editions
28. I would like instructional classes where the City Clerk, for instance, explains how the City works, how a Mgr-type systems is supposed to work, what Open Law meetings are all about: basically in-person learning
29. Local Newspaper and email
30. All would be great (no option for that). With only one choice, it would be email newsletters if they are easily accessible (ie not just a link to a pdf that is hard to read but something more direct a la Montpelier Alive email.)
31. All of the above
32. The bridge
33. Front Porch Forum please!
34. Front Porch Forum
35. All of the above
36. The World or The Bridge

- 37. Direct written communications from our district City Council rep by email (or print to those who ask for alternative to email.) newsletter
- 38. Front Porch Forum
- 39. Mailings
- 40. I recognize council members work hard, which is appreciated. It would be nice to have quarterly district meetings, especially for those who do not feel heard at council meetings or are intimidated by the sheer # of people in attendance.
- 41. Several methods but no to public meetings
- 42. Front Porch Forum



### How involved would you like to be in the budgeting process for FY2026?



- I'd like to be very involved (attend meetings, provide regular feedback) - 28 (7.6)
- I'd like to be somewhat involved (attend occasional meetings, share opinions) - 25 (15.72%)
- I'd like to be informed but not actively involved - 199 (54.22%)
- I'm not interested in being involved - 21 (5.72%)

### Do you have any additional comments or suggestions regarding the City of Montpelier's budget for FY2026?

1. It's time to reduce some non-essential staff.
2. Less administrative staff and less Parks and Rec staff. More emphasis on infrastructure, development, safety.
3. After 20+ years and a contract that any manager would die for, it's time to move on from Bill Fraser. Start fresh with someone who will cost the city far less and won't continue the same repetitive mistakes and will hold department heads accountable. He has done a fabulous job for the City, but undoubtedly there will be devastating cuts in this budget followed by him negotiating a hefty raise or deposit into his retirement account.
4. This needs to be the most austere budget the city have created yet. It's not OK to harm taxpayers to continue to provide programming beyond essential services, regardless that we all love and appreciate it.
5. Montpelier cannot continue to both tactically plan (year over year) without a clear long term strategy around staffing, infrastructure, paving, or expansion.
6. Again , focus on core services. These studies and emails go unheard. Cut the fluff in city hall cut money on homelessness-get a job
7. Focus on keeping essential services, eliminate, discretionary spending, and reduce the budget for City Hall
8. I hate that this problem exists.
9. Good luck... I'll support what you come up with. Thank you for your work.
10. The roads are shit. They should be prioritized. The downtown is stagnant and MUST be revitalized. Homelessness is not a crime and ample resources should be provided for helping the unhoused. The city is turning into an old-age home. Something must be done to attract and interest young people in living here. All prime but unused land that is just sitting there, should be taken by eminent domain for affordable housing. The city council should arguably resign for poor performance and being stuck in their ways. They are an impediment, not the solution. This city used to be FUN. There is no fun, few gathering places, and hundreds of lonely isolated people living here. This is a community, put some effort into making things "communal", like Waterbury and other towns that actually try. Stop outsourcing this responsibility to Montpelier Alive. That's a closed group that represents an incredibly narrow set of interests. They speak on behalf of Montpelier more often than Montpelier does. Get this straightened out.

More police presence downtown at all times, please! Things are becoming dangerous. Don't be Rutland, don't be Burlington.

11. For god sakes, cut city spending on non essential needs. You have really failed the city. We need new leadership desperately. The golf course was a disaster, the roads are deplorable. Focus on the real issues at hand and stop wasting time.
12. Since education funding is not really part of the city budget it should not be included in this survey. You are confusing tax payers
13. Sell the land recently purchased.
14. We need to upgrade the infrastructure and support essential services and that should cost more and we should all pay more.
15. Focus on needs, not wants
16. Not every city staffer does a great job. Identify those who don't and get rid of them.
17. Can the city explain in a publicly accessible way the order of street improvements it plans to complete?
18. I recognize this is a difficult situation, but we require fresh thinking to disrupt the ongoing stagnation
19. The goals of net zero and becoming a regional hub of recreation while admirable are not foundational to a healthy economy and tax base in Montpelier.
20. In regards to housing and homelessness, I believe local governments role is to "govern" and provide guidance on housing via committees, ordinances, public meetings. No money from the City of Montpelier's budget should be used to build housing. The private sector, individuals, or other local non-profits should fund housing.
21. Cut Communications Staff - no need for 2 or more
22. As hard as it is, it might be time for city employees to pay part of their health insurance costs -- as most folks do.e
23. Please don't cut so far to the bone that we aren't attracting more young families
24. Less focus on arts and leisure. More focus on housing and homelessness.
25. force school board to merge with Washington Central NOW
26. Lower property taxes, address dangerous and unacceptable behavior, improve public safety. Montpelier is becoming as bad as Burlington.
27. Costs are only going to increase. In order to keep pace we need to do things differently then we have. We need proactive, transparent, and widely amplified exploration of generating alternative and innovative revenue sources.
28. Forget about virtue signaling and get back to basics.
29. Do not raise taxes to support Isabelle Circle development
30. Clean up the increased homeless problem and make it safer and cleaner for residents and visitors. Place well located public restrooms downtown.
31. It's a very difficult job and we appreciate what the City staff is doing.
32. Use 3 million allotted for Confluence Park and take the 10 million plus allotted for rec center. How many towns of under 10 thousand have over 10 police, 2 communication positions and an energy position?
33. Find a way to charge visitors more money when they visit Montpelier. Venice, Italy and other tourist attractions are charging an entrance fee. Consider this.
34. We are maxed out on our budget AND bonding. Private developers cannot be subsidized in such a small city with such a small tax base.
35. This survey misses the mark. Traditionally the city has had close to zero involvement, monetarily or otherwise in education and in health delivery. It is ridiculous and misleading to have both on this survey. Why? To distract? To confuse?
36. Strongly consider personnel cuts
37. Having the City say that the rate could be 24% is adverstising-stop at COLA!

38. Increase the tax base by allowing for more flexibility in the housing permitting process. Start changing the culture of city employees and community volunteers to that they approach a request with a yes we can mentality. The current permitting process is so restrictive that it doesn't encourage development. If you want to increase the budget start by brainstorming ideas on how to increase revenue without resorting to new taxes and fees. Stop spending time and money attempting to create city led housing initiatives, focus on making it more appealing for the housing experts to invest in growing housing. Focus on infrastructure and safety firms!
39. firstWe need to concentrate on the necessary services ie: infrastructure and public safety, admin salaries need cutting for the top level staff
40. Provide a detailed description of the function of each of the positions in City Hall. I have been underwhelmed by the performance of several of these positions. The country club should be called out for special attention. It has been a boondoggle and a waste of money from the start. And the city Send address the cost of waste. What is the cost of the city of having a closed stump dump? Why have the dog river fields not been repaired?
41. Thanks for soliciting feedback. Vermont is at a precipice and we hope it moves in the direction of innovation and efficiency as opposed to communism, which will undoubtedly lead to worsening economic conditions
42. Stick to the essentials which only the City can provide: Police, Fire, EMS and Infrastructure. There are other agencies and others who can deliver additional services. The City is completely inept at many things including developing housing - leave that to entities that can actually succeed. By reducing the City burden and staff, perhaps you will do a better job.
43. Just count your nickels and dimes just as most residents are forced to do.
44. It sounds bad. Job cuts sound necessary, unfortunately. We have to rightsize for future years.
45. Address administrative overstaffing and high salaries
46. I don't believe it's effective to rely on resident's opinions of what the City's budget should be. We have elected representatives and hired experts that need to be empowered to make decisions without a lot of static from an underinformed and non-qualified public that is not able to separate personal desires from public good.
47. what the city needs not what the city wants
48. Our roads and water pipes are in a mess. All of the city's effort should go into fixing the pipes under the roads and then repaving the roads. Before you ask departments of the city to cut staff, city hall staff should be cut by several people.
49. A 24% increase will be a huge hardship on our retired-fixed income people
50. the bottom has fallen out of Montpelier and this town has been going downhill for over a decade, replacing Fraser would be the best thing to happen to Montpelier on a very long time.
51. Re communications, in addition to enewsletters, use Front Porch Forum and The Bridge.
52. Make Montpelier great again!
53. Best of luck. This is a tough problem. Thanks for the survey.
54. You need to CUT property taxes and live on a level funded budget for a few years.
55. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE BUDGET BE REDUCED SO THERE IS NO INCREASE IN PROPERTY TAXES
56. Property tax increases are not affordable
57. No thank you
58. The current tax rates are about to sink us, i.e., possibly make it necessary for us to leave the city. We love our home and Montpelier but the current municipal financial environment is unsustainable and untenable. You have major, HARD decisions to make - for the sake of our financial stability, MAKE THEM!
59. montpelier needs to RETURN to its real roots before the transplants took over 2,000 on. I am a lifelong resident. TOURISM was what Montpelier was. I worked at the State tourism office which also served the tourist walkins. The sign is lousy, The comments were always how quaint and historical and friendly it was. Now the city is overrun by

businesses like you find in BIG cities in the country and the painted murals and graffiti. They have DESTROYED what tourists enjoyed and admired the most.

60. Keep taxes down
61. The Public Arts Commission needs more funding
62. You've got a tough road but we can't do it all and if people don't feel safe or the streets/sidewalks don't appear safe or attractive the problems we're facing will steamroll. The water system (broken pipes) and making the disruptive, criminal element homeless not feel at home in our city have to be the priorities.
63. emphasis should be more help for the "ordinary" citizen instead of for select groups
64. Focus on the core services needed
65. I love the arts and I love our parks. However I need public safety & I need streets and sidewalks that aren't crumbling..
66. This survey's timing was poor, being sent the week of Thanksgiving and should've been posted Nov. 1st -15th.
67. You're taxing us to death and it has to stop. Eliminate some positions and stop spending money until this gets under control For example we didn't need to purchase the old Elks lodge; we don't need any more parks and how about eliminating the school Tax for those that have been paying it for over 40 years and haven't had children in the school system for thirty years.
68. cut the number of employes by at least 10 and make the rest work harder for their very good compensation packages
69. Fix the ROADS, people hate driving into and in Montpelier. It's embarrassing!!
70. All non essential programs should be cut.
71. Fix the water system first so we don't need to keep digging up the roads forever
72. cut spending
73. city government should not assume responsibility for matters that are of state concern
74. As a senior on a fixed income (you have heard this before, I know), I am finding it increasingly difficult to afford to live here.
75. The question on "least funding" is very confusing and I predict you get invalid responses. Was this just a test to compare our responses to the previous question so you could just interpret things the way you want to? I don't understand.
76. Consideration for position sharing amongst towns, add a 1% sales tax, freeze salaries of all management employees.
77. no
78. Stop all the discretionary spending
79. Cut the fat and don't spend money that you do not have. We all want feel good programs but it is not a small towns job to provide them. I also think that the town has a lot of wealthy people that the town should capitalize on. We should see if we can solicit local philanthropists to fund discretionary programs and the arts.
80. I love Montpelier. It is truly a special place that has amazing natural beauty and charm, but is also a bit clumsy and foolhearty at times. The parks around Montpelier are a treasure and I hope the city continues to value them as much as I do. In my time here I've been moderately impressed with the quality of the roads and infrastructure given the terrain and climate, and the city deserves a hand for that. The areas I feel are most lacking are around business development and housing development - more housing and higher paying jobs would help many people directly and relieve other problems indirectly. I also believe the city could benefit from being more disciplined and truly enforce the laws in place that prevent unsafe and unhealthy behaviors in public places.
81. Re-negotiate health insurance bargaining employee unions. We've been kicking the can far too long

82. Contain the property tax. Any increase should be no more than CPI. Why \$2m+ for a fire tower truck? They should cost ~\$1m.
83. Continually increasing property taxes is unsustainable .. I have lived many places in my time and I have never seen anything like this ever .. it's a fool's errand in the long run that only exacerbates the problem .. Montpelier has almost no 18 - 35 year olds because it's impossible to raise a family here until you are established .. you cannot expect tax increases on the people who are already paying through the roof to solve all budgetary issues .. decisive action and leadership combined with hard decisions is needed but all I see is endless studies that go nowhere and paralysis by analysis of study after study is questioned, paid for, and then dismissed after one non taxpayer objects ( yes I'm looking at you Stephen Whitaker). Travel outside this bubble and you will see progress everywhere you go, but ironically in a place that sees itself as progressive I see this area continuously falling behind where we should be due to whatever brain rot infects the ability of the populace to get out of their self righteous shadow and actually make something happen. We can do better but in the 6 years I have been a homeowner I have seen almost zero political will for visionary growth so I'm not holding my breath
84. Build a stronger, broader economic base. Eliminate the community justice program. Reduce planning and zoning development. Why do you need an assistant police Chief making \$100,000 with little to do and mainly answering requests for public information.
85. we may need to subcontract more services/ and sometimes just say NO
86. Maybe if the city stopped finding surveys and studies all the time and the city manager stopped taking raises every year we'd be in a better place financially. Stop doing needless studies how many different times will we spend money on studies of things we already know the answer to.
87. Taxes are driving people out of Montpelier. We should look to contain costs so we don't have a mass exodus of taxpayers from the City.
88. We need to fund the essentials and stay out of development. City does not have the expertise or proven history of being a capable developer (Elks Club)
89. Get a grip on yourselves, fix your priorities, there are only 8k people living here, property taxes are unsustainably high, streets and sewers are crumbling
90. Please keep increase at 5% or less. Boost paving budget more.
91. Stop spending for non essentials
92. I would like us to spend as little money as possible on third party services like consultants.
93. The City Roads crew and management needs an audit and an overhaul - they are terribly managed and seem to waste a lot of time and funds, always doing things backwards, especially when it comes to underground work, they seem to make things worse, can't fill a ditch properly and they waste so much time and money filling holes in the winter - its like watching a game of whack a mole. Please do not offer housing to homeless drug addicts, it is a losing proposition, the more free "services" we give the more people flock here for the "services" I feel for some of them but a lot of those folks don't care about the city, only free housing and where to get another hit. Burlington is a mess! lets stop the help!
94. Please make the legislature and the state responsible for the education decisions. And increase the amount for the Homestead amount . ad
95. I wish the survey would have asked about the level/quality of services provided. It is one thing to say Infrastructure is important and should be a primary investment for the City, it is another to then provide leadership and QUALITY of service. I think we are paying premium prices right now for below average services. This is a direct result of poor leadership. Staff cuts should be made at the top of the departments, not at the worker levels.
96. Shit happens, move forward.

97. Given the size and scale of Montpelier, the city has done a horrible job maintaining its roads and other infrastructure. The roads in the city are in such disrepair, that they damage vehicles and sidewalks are not consistently maintained. I have lived in other towns and cities in Vermont, which are far and away better at ensuring public infrastructure meets the minimum needs of the community. I can't say the same for Montpelier. Additionally, the streets are very dirty and they are not well maintained in the winter (plowing and salting). Somewhere along the way, the city lost sight of its core responsibilities. Above all else, a municipality must provide satisfactory facilities and infrastructure, safe neighborhoods, and quality schools that challenge students. Montpelier is failing in all of these areas.
98. A priority needs to be set for the water system to many breaks needing fixing causes many impacts on other items - roads etcther items - streets rtc
99. I think it's really important that we have our basics covered, I feel as if there has been a lot of stagnation in our town since the flood. I know people are working very hard though, I don't have the answer but I think there must be a more efficient way to get our infrastructure back online fully, then we can build from there.
100. You need to run the city budget like it was your home budget. And you need to sell the Elks "Club. Should have never been involved in that
101. Stop wasteful boondoggles like bus station fiasco. Cut back on subsidies.
102. Not supportable
103. We can't sustain another double digit tax increase. Keep spending within the current rate!
104. sell the country club road property. the city should have never purchased that property to begin with. sell it to a private developer to build houses.
105. I compare city services to responsibilities I would give my students. Students need to be able to demonstrate managing basic responsibilities before I give them more. The same should apply to how we run our city. If the city cannot keep our citizens safe, keep our infrastructure maintained, and provide a quality education for our kids, how can we expect them to do more?!? Focus on the essentials first. The only thing I think the city should focus on that one could say is not essential is supporting businesses and development, but I believe greater development will better enable the city to address those basic, essential needs.
106. This is tough work. And there are no obvious quick solutions. The focus must be on doing more with the same or fewer positions. That is achieved through modernizing how you do business. If you still actively use file cabinets, paper and wet signatures or operate most business through email, then there is ample opportunity to modernize your processes with software./hardware!
107. I was unaware that the city provided social services or health care. I am terribly disappointed that the City did not enter an agreement with The Hub for recreational services at the Country Club property. The City's handling of the purchase, the Burke & White evaluation of best uses, and the current plans are not what I had in mind when I approved the bond several years ago.
108. It is time to cut the fluff - DEI specifically, and focus on public safety and returning Montpelier to a safe and nice place to live and work.
109. We have to reduce the city hall workforce. We should roll back the number of city hall employees to 2010 levels. We can't afford a communication specialist. We need to look at barre and st johnsbury and not have a more coy hall employees than they do.
110. We are facing a very challenging budget. I'm still upset that the city manager is still focused on spending more money and staff time and salaries to submit a complete growth center application. This is a want, not a need. We have to focus on essentials not something that is not likely to have any significant benefit to the people living here.
111. Cut the city budget by 10%

112. Help negotiate more affordable health insurance rates for employers like the City of Montpelier, Have businesses stay open later. This city is dead after 8pm, maybe earlier.
113. Reduce or eliminate staffing for discretionary services and cultural programs.
114. I would like the services to reflect levels of the night time population of Montpelier
115. I think the question about 'essential' vs 'discretionary' balance is too simplistic. My true answer would be to cut some of what you term essential, like a chunk of the police budget, but keep funding for infrastructure, Fire, and EMS. Also, I think that things deemed discretionary, like public spaces and parks, are actually essential for people's mental well being..
116. The number one thing we have noticed since we moved here 5 years ago is the inability to move forward on any given project. From what we have observed there is this incessant need to hear every voice, go over every possible outcome, nitpick every project to death, literally. Rather than move forward with a plan that seems to be %85 good the city would rather do study after study trying to get to %100, which then leads to the project/idea getting cancelled and we end up where we started. Vermont looooves to let perfect be the enemy of good. This needs to stop. Also, every pet project can't be addressed in a given budget year. Pick something, like redoing the roads, and aggressively pursue it so the citizens who are paying always increasing, crushing property taxes can actually see something get completed so at least we feel like we are getting something for our money. Hammering property taxes relentlessly cannot continue at the pace it has the last 5 years. Hard decisions need to be made, particularly in the school system which is a major driver of the cost increases.
117. LEVEL FUNDING! After the huge increase last year make cuts in nonessentials and excess employees.
118. Please know that we are supportive of the hard work the city employees are putting in to make the budget work. Overall we are very please with our local schools and programs and are hopeful to watch our city grow and thrive!
119. Cut staff and costs due to health insurance increases. Fix roads.
120. need to reduce the nonessential workforce Agree with tim Heney -budget increase should be capped at 3.5%
121. CUT ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES
122. I'd recommend Tim Heney's idea of limiting the tax increase to about 3.5%, and also prioritizing needs over wants.
123. health insurance is a big expenditure. lets look at what plan we are offering as there is a very wide range. Can savings be found with higher deductibles and/or copays? Would like to see insurance plans in line with what taxpayers have if it is a cadillac plan. I think this definately needs to be addressed with teachers insurance plans.
124. It seems counterintuitive, but the way out of this is to increase culture/arts/activities. These are the draw to Montpelier, which will increase revenue. It can't just be 'come here and buy stuff from stores and buy food from restaurants, also we have no real public bathrooms'. And you really need to start doing it with an eye to airborne infection. No one wants to mention Sars2 (Covid) any more but it is taking a toll and eating away beneath the surface. People are getting sick, getting chronic conditions, and dropping out of active participation in society. Why don't I shop more downtown? Unsafe stores. Sometmes I buy take out but never eat indoors. Wy do we need so many bus drivers and substitute teachers? The air in the schools isn't cleaned enough. Test scores dropping because Covid affects students that way, and impacts the immune system so even if people aren't catching Covid, they're more susceptible to other things. It is eroding everything, pulling everything down. Highly unpopular to admit it, but this is true whether we do something about it or not, so we should do something about it. Preserving our health and keeping everyone safer will at least keep Montpelier more afloat than places that don't. Video meetings are nice, but people can't participate in person because those meeting spaces are made unsafe (one way masking is insufficient, although its a pretty lie that is easy to believe). Make arts and culture available, and safe, and people will come and things will thrive.
125. Cut the budget
126. Cut the budget

127. It is our elected CC members who know the details; we can only give principles, which aren't very useful
128. The city is stifling it's businesses by the lack of support which will draw in outside dollars and relieve some of the tax payer burden. Outdoor recreation is a great example, the Parks Commission is so unsupportive of expanding outdoor rec, particularly biking. We need to follow Waterbury or Stowe's examples and find ways to bring in outside dollars. This will support businesses and growth, which will lighten the tax burden. We need to encourage instead of actively discouraging expansion or skiing, mountain biking, hiking, etc.. Montpelier should be a central stop for launching all these activities.
129. Again, please build a better survey instrument. This one is pretty much invalid due to 1) The inability to define "other" in the first two questions; 2) The pairing of housing and homeless support; while access to housing is a central factor in homelessness, the development of more residential units bears upon many more factors, such as workforce population (people don't stay or move here because they can't find affordable housing); ageing population (can't afford to live in own homes due to taxes/tax base issues); etc.
130. This survey is extremely poorly designed in every aspect. Results of this survey will be statistically and informationally meaningless.
131. Overall, we need to focus on core services and not stray into seductive but time consuming and expensive projects. To wit, we should sell the Elks Club (or a part of it) to an entity who can do something productive with it). The council recently saved us, after they recieved considerable feedback, from a wasteful vanity project (Confluence Park). We must NOT bond beyond our debt policy, and perhaps should tighten our acceptable debt level. I fear that part of the reason we are in the current situation is that we have over committed in various areas in recent years and have been unprepared for natural disasters such as (pandemic, maybe not predictable to us as a city) and flooding (absolutely predictable as a city).
132. Build middle-class housing and grow the taxpayer base. We cannot afford double-digit tax increases year over year.
133. The city should be focusing on core services and stop spending on "pie in the sky purchases like the golf course" and concentrate on maintaining what we already have. This fixation on the homeless problem needs to stop. In every instance no matter how much you try to help they either destroy what is given to them, or they don't appreciate it.
134. Support long-term housing solution, like Elks Club project and Northfield St. Habitat for Humanity project;also fund incentives for occupants of offices in houses to relocate to empty office space in downtown to supply more housing
135. This survey combines housing and homelessness support. Those are two much different things. Support housing but STOP throwing money at homelessness, a problem the state needs to solve, not the city
136. When I ride through the City of Montpelier (which I dearly love) I wonder how our streets got so bad and if there have been years of waste and bad decisions from city government. It seems a shame that the Capital City is in this state of disrepair.
137. One of the biggest topics under discussion lately is the excessive school taxes paired with the unfortunate location of the Montpelier High School (i.e., the flood plain problem for an essential facility). I don't mind paying higher taxes for decisions that make sense, such as integrating the MPHS services with U-32 and relocating to the larger, newer, and safer school facility on Gallison Hill Rd. I think this shift is inevitable and should happen sooner than later.
138. This is going to be tough. Wait for the next flood or pandemic (H5N1 anyone?)
139. It many times feel like we have bandaids on our infrastructure and I wish for some repairs that it was just done well and thoroughly the first time to save time and multiple repairs. If DPW is understaffed, that is where maybe we need to spend more.

140. Answering the questions in the survey would have been easier if information about the topics had been presented alongside the questions. It was also an odd choice to include the second question when we had already shared our ranked priorities (the 2nd question was just the same answer in reverse). Finally, without more context about the relative amount of spending currently in each budget area, ranking priorities as if they each cost the same amount may not yield meaningful results.
141. Please do not increase the tax rate. People are feeling really squeezed and that they're only getting excuses, not solutions.
142. We have been retired for 17 years on a fixed income. We can't afford much more.
143. Yes, separate housing and homelessness issues, both of which are very important.very i important.
144. Set housing goals and follow through. Other towns and cities are making significant headway and we have been standing still and spending money on studies and have no will to move forward for fear of criticism. Change is scary and people like to disagree or find a platform to express themselves but it the people have agreed to increasing housing units by X and then there are development projects that advance on this goal then do it. We've been wringing our hands for too long and the golf course situation highlights the inertia and fear of progress. Barre and Plainfield and Morrisville and Wolcott are but a few examples of communities making progress with housing and community cohesion and commitment to progress.
145. We should focus our funding on our essential services and buildings (Police, Fire, EMS); they keep us safe and healthy. Our roads are awful and DPW is stretched thin. Something needs to change with the homeless population
146. There are potentially many areas of spending that are important but the city should prioritize spending on areas and issues where the taxpayers money but the city should prioritize spending on issues where the city has the more control like public safety and education and not on issues like homelessness which is important but the issue goes beyond the realm of what municipal spending can effectively address.
147. Please get East State rebuilt. I am not in favor of a local option sales tax at this time unless the funds would be used for flood mitigation measures downtown. Push the State for more funding or to sell land and buildings. Don't succumb to pressure to sell the Country Club Road property. Don't offload parks department positions. Good luck!
148. It will soon be impossible to afford to live in Montpelier.
149. Time for an adjustment - fiscal conservatism and efficiency in services - back to the basics
150. People need to acknowledge that residents demand more of our city services and they cost more to deliver so revenue is going to have to go up.
151. I think we need to bring in more businesses to replace the decrease in state employees. We need people working downtown who will eat and buy things at local stores. If the downtown is not thriving, everything else will fall apart. Note: this survey was poorly designed so it was difficult to answer; I ignored school funding in responses because it's not part of city budget
152. Sell Roxbury school and the Country Club property.
153. I am surprised to be saying this as a long-time educator and social service provider, but I am concerned we're losing sight of how important an active, fully staffed & skilled police force is. I LOVE the walkability of Montpelier, and that our teens can get to school and around town independently (one reason we moved from a neighboring rural town), but public safety has been compromised over the past several years. It seems that a small, but vocal minority drove out our skilled & compassionate police chief based on ungrounded fears of police in uniform. It will be hard to attract families who want safe schools and streets, and a competent police force unless we support law enforcement.
154. This survey didn't address positions/salary
155. Too Old, been there, done that

156. Montpelier needs to right size it's overhead. The attitude in City Hall appears to be that the voters will vote yes, so lets put everything on the ballot. Voters trust City leaders to provide a responsible budget and to be knowledgeable about what it takes to operate our City.
157. Lower the 24% increase considerably. Cannot afford to live in the city I was born in!!!
158. 1. This survey appears to be a generic survey that does not reflect the realities of VT town/city budgets; e.g. in VT K-12 is NOT included in municipal budgets; public transportation is a minor aspect of infrastructure spending in municipal budgets; waste-management is not a part of Montpelier municipal budget; the Library is only partially supported by the Montpelier municipal budget; and I don't think after-school programs are in the municipal budget at all. 2. The survey is problematic in a number of other ways; e.g. although homelessness and housing are related, they should not be lumped together; the same is true of K-12, library, after school programs, and library. 3. The entire budget process is flawed; despite a question about ways to raise revenues other than through municipal taxes, the entire process seems to view the budget through a zero-sum lens---either increase the property tax rate or cut programs/service. The alternative would be a line-item analysis of budgets to try finding ways to reduce costs of each service or program (e.g. hire new, younger administrators whose salaries & benefits would cost far less than those of people who have been Montpelier employees for a long time; use contract services to reduce # of employees so we would qualify for less expensive state employee health insurance. Also employ thinking outside the box about revenue generation like greater sharing of our programs and services with surrounding towns at a charge.
159. Please stop trying to have a "vision" on behalf of the city.
160. We need to find ways to use the money smarter. For instance, thinking about the finances holistically, not as separate projects. Too often the projects are fragmented. Can we find a way to make our streets more pedestrian and bicycle friendly while paving? How many times has lower state street been repaved without thinking about flooding or traffic flow? Can we think about elm street and berlin street similarly to make them more human friendly and reduce the work workload for our police officers by designing the spaces smarter from the beginning?
161. We need to budget for the transition to a new city manager
162. Learn how to budget better and work towards cutting city budget instead of constantly looking to keep things as is and raising taxes I
163. Have State employees return to their offices to increase business downtown.
164. We need to prioritize getting people housed and supporting them to stay housed.
165. The high cost of salaries and benefits for top level positions should be reduced. The salary of the city manager is out of line with their duties. Either cut the assistant positions or the city manager's and reallocate those funds.T
166. he survey seems more directed to try and lean responses toward possible cuts Recreation and Senior programs. There are few if any questions pertaining to the administration and looking at some of those areas.
167. I stopped attending council meetings because I never felt heard or taken seriously by the city manager.
168. Leave the business of creating housing to the experts. City government role should be to facilitate opportunities for housing developers whether private or non profits, but do not spend tax payer funds in doing so.
169. Stop spending taxpayer money to build parks and try to be developers. Make downtown accessible. Parking. Clean sidewalks. Fix what's broken
170. Stop pushing back the solutions for our aging road, water and sewer issues and implement a maximum 10 year timeline for completion.
171. I found it confusing that k-12 Education was listed as a municipal budget priority. I don't think that additional spending above and beyond the education property tax should added to the municipal budget to support k-12 education. I do think that the City should continue to support the public library is this is an extremely important community resource and hub.

172. I understand the Senior Center may have to make cuts. There are a few staff members and they are working to capacity. There overall budget is modest and since the center is only minimally funded by the city, it should be looked at only for a proportionate (if any) reduction.
173. Serious lack of strategic planning and poor performance by city manager
174. This survey is poorly designed. First, the most important question is asked in two opposite ways - rank the most important then rank the least important - with all of the same options. What purpose could this serve other than trying to trip up respondents into answering slightly differently? Second, the other central question (If the city needs to raise more revenue....) offers five specific options and allows us to choose up to five options. In other words, we can check them all. How can this guide decision making?
175. Fund only the basic, essential services required to operate city operations..
176. If you wish to increase the tax base, we need to attract more young families. We need good recreation opportunities and a community center for all.I.
177. This survey fails to capture the concerns I have. In a forced choice, it seems there are always losers. A more open discussion about what is provided, what else is needed, and what is not longer needed ,might be more helpful.
178. I strongly support the City pursuing affordable housing development. This survey linked that with homelessness support, which is a totally