

JUNE 23, 2017 VERSION 1.0

PLANNING SURVEY REPORT



THE VILLAGE OF FLOSSMOOR

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INTRODUCTION

In April 2017, Forrest Consulting was engaged by the Village of Flossmoor to facilitate development of an actionable strategic plan for the Village using the firm's Fast Track Strategic Planning process. This process is reliant on stakeholder input for plan development.

Three methods have been used to develop the needed information from the Village's stakeholders:

1. A community survey, for which this document is the report.
2. Community input meetings, which were held on June 12, 2017, and June 14, 2017.
3. Village elected official and staff interviews. The findings from these 16 interviews are the subject of a separate report.

Objectives

Two major objectives drove community survey process:

1. Obtain resident views on the state of and their future aspirations for the Village.
2. Assure survey response from individual stakeholders targeted based their role in the Village and/or their depth of knowledge about the Village.

Process

The Village of Flossmoor community survey process involved:

1. A phone meeting with the Village's planning team to determine the parameters of the survey. It was agreed that Forrest Consulting's proven planning input questions would be the basis of the survey.
2. Drafting the survey, setting it up in Survey Gizmo and editing it based on input from the planning team. A key question on prioritizing Village services was added.
3. Village promotion of the survey link to the community through various communications mechanisms including a mailing. The link went live for input on May 17, 2017.
4. Village distribution of paper copies of the survey to several locations in the Village.
5. Issuing the survey directly by email to the 114 individuals targeted by Village leaders. The first email soliciting responses was issued on May 19, 2017, and reminder emails were issued on May 25, 2017, June 1, 2017, and June 5, 2017.
6. The survey was closed for response on June 6, 2017.

Response Analysis

Overall response. The survey replies total 569, of which 280 are complete replies and 289 are partial replies.

According to recent Census estimates, the Village of Flossmoor has approximately 9,500 residents, of which approximately 65%, 6,175, are adults age 25 or older. Thus, the 569 survey replies represent approximately 10.9% of the adult population 25 or older.

However, only 427 respondents answered the qualifying question to indicate their relationships with the Village of Flossmoor. For this qualified response, the margin of error for the response is a robust 4.58% at a confidence level of 95%.

The number of respondents who answered any given question ranges from 174 to 388. At a confidence level of 95%, the responses reflect the population within the following confidence intervals for each question asked:

Question	Number answering	Margin of error
Strengths	388	4.82%
Weaknesses	383	4.85%
Issues	355	5.05%
Threats	322	5.32%
Do more	277	5.76%
Do less	174	7.32%
Never change	218	6.52%
Service priorities	310	5.42%
Opportunities	198	6.85%
Begin now	201	6.85%
Achieve over five years	197	6.87%

The general congruence of the answers provided to each of the questions offers further evidence that the survey response is a reliable predictor of the views of the residents as a whole.

Targeted response. Of the 114 targeted individuals, 29 responded through the email link provided. However, the results below on respondents' relationships with the Village show that others – an indeterminate number - used the public link to access the survey.

Relationship	Percent	Count
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Village resident	93.0%	397
Elected Village of Flossmoor official (serving or newly elected): Mayor, Village Trustee or Village Clerk	1.4%	6
Village Commission member	3.5%	15
Village staff member	2.3%	10
Elected official or staff member of another local taxing body	2.1%	9
Local business owner or employee	4.7%	20
Other community partner	2.3%	10

When the survey report is run excluding the 29 targeted individuals who responded through the email link, the margin of error for the qualified response is still a desirable 4.75% at a confidence level of 95%. The table below shows respondents' relationships with the Village excluding the targeted respondents who responded through the email link.

Relationship (excludes targeted respondents)	Percent	Count
Village resident	96.7%	376
Elected Village of Flossmoor official (serving or newly elected): Mayor, Village Trustee or Village Clerk	0.3%	1
Village Commission member	0.8%	3
Village staff member	0.8%	3
Elected official or staff member of another local taxing body	1.5%	6
Local business owner or employee	3.6%	14
Other community partner	2.1%	8

Given the added responses in the targeted categories shown, one can speculate that total response from the targeted individuals constitutes approximately 13% of the overall survey response. Even excluding the estimated 56 targeted individuals who responded one way or the other, for the remaining qualified response of 371 people the margin of error remains under 5%: 4.93% at a confidence level of 95%.

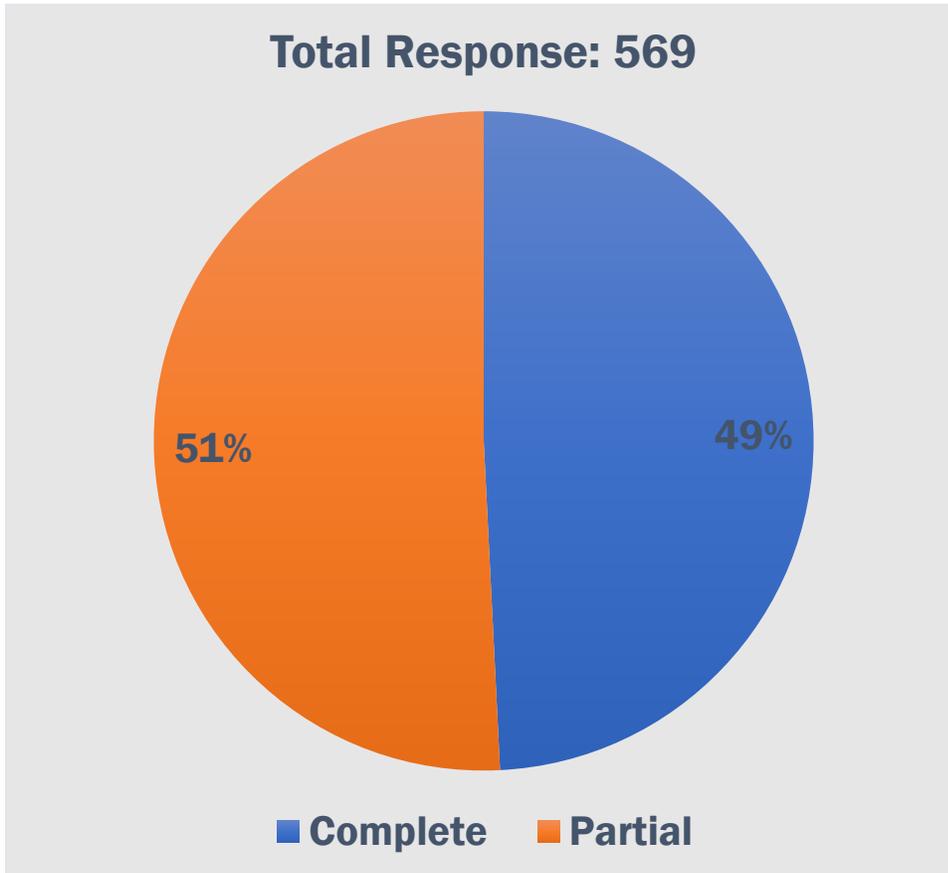
A qualitative inspection of the differences between responses from the general population and those in the targeted response categories shows general congruence in the replies. The significant exceptions appear to be in the priority placed on addressing high property taxes and declining school quality. For the general population, these issues rank higher in priority as issues that the Village can address than they do among the targeted individuals, who include elected officials, Village commission members and Village staff members who are most aware of the Village's limited leverage in addressing property taxes and school quality.

This Report

This report presents the survey results as compiled by Forrest Consulting.

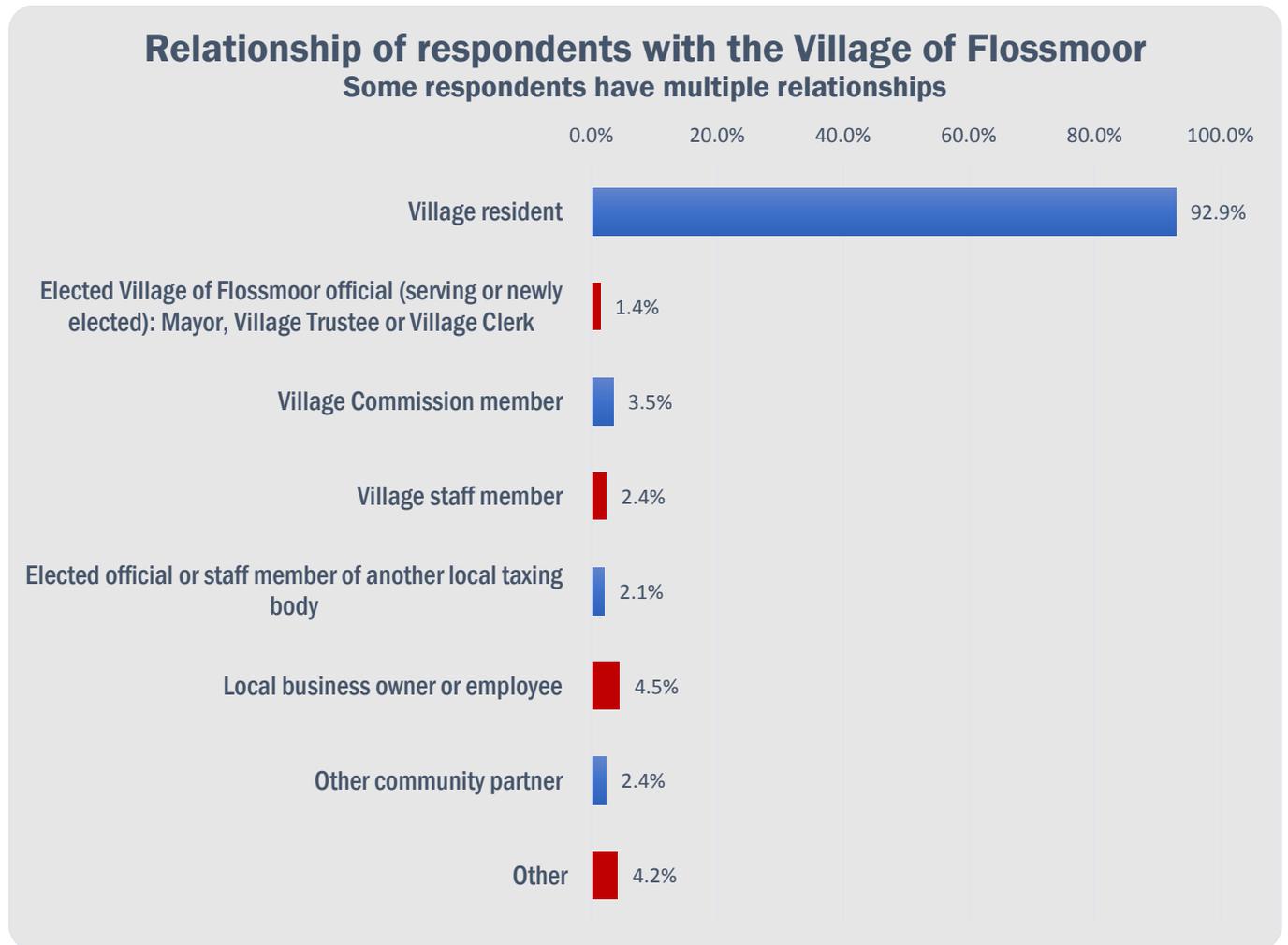
TOTAL RESPONSE TO THE SURVEY

The split between those who completed the full survey and those who opened it but did not complete the full survey is nearly 50-50.



RELATIONSHIP OF RESPONDENTS WITH THE VILLAGE

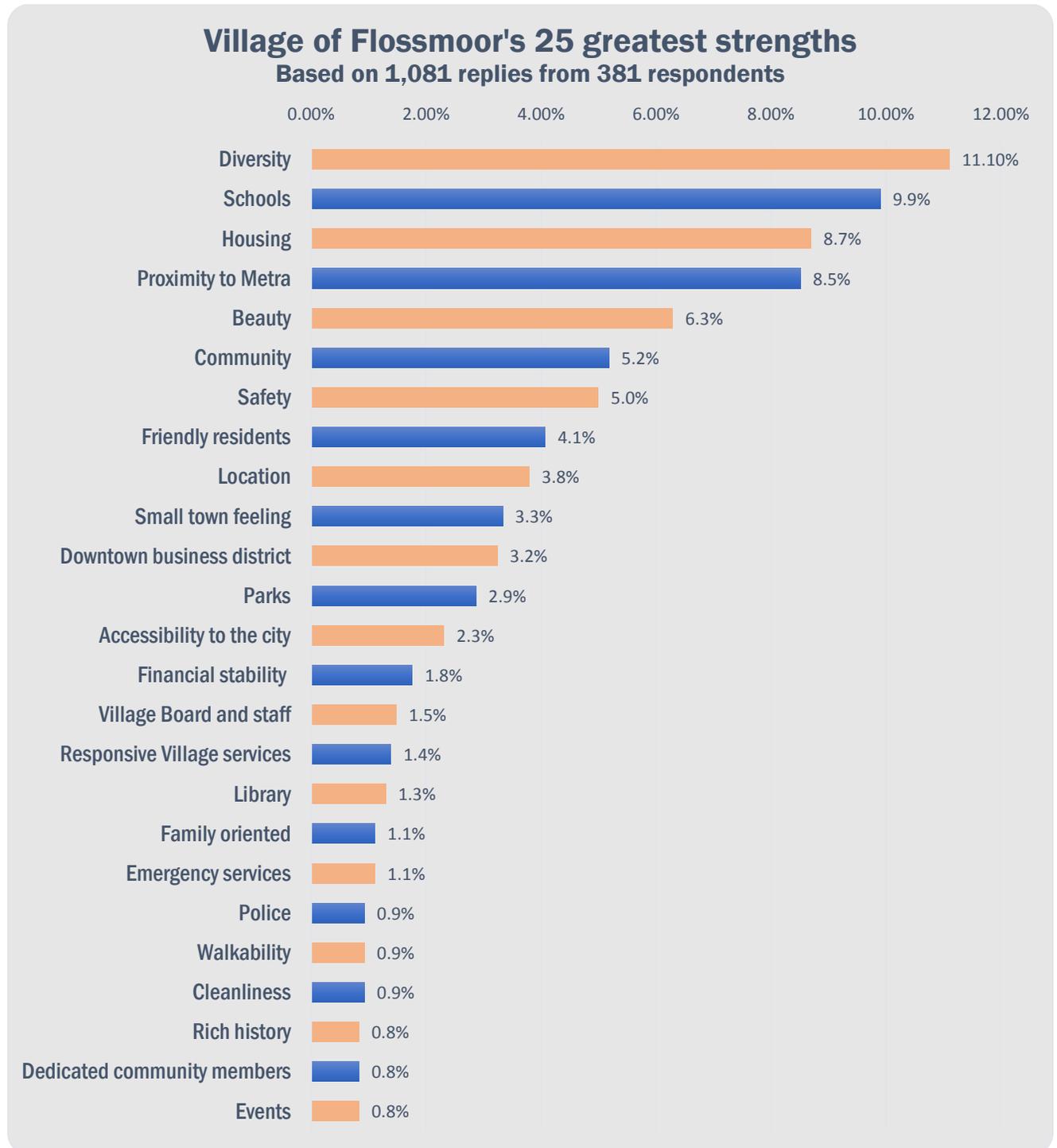
More than 90% of the respondents are Village residents. Upwards of 15% have additional relationships with the Village.



GREATEST STRENGTHS

Question: “What do you think are the Village of Flossmoor's three greatest strengths?”

The five most-cited strengths are: 1) Diversity, 2) Schools, 3) Housing, 4) Proximity to METRA, 5) Beauty.



Other strengths (cited by multiple respondents):

Reputation

Schools and parks

Sculpture in the parks

Good businesses

Golf courses

Public Works

Affluence

Affordability

Convenience

Fire Department

Close to Homewood

Meijer

Village layout

Well maintained streets

Lack of traffic

Village website

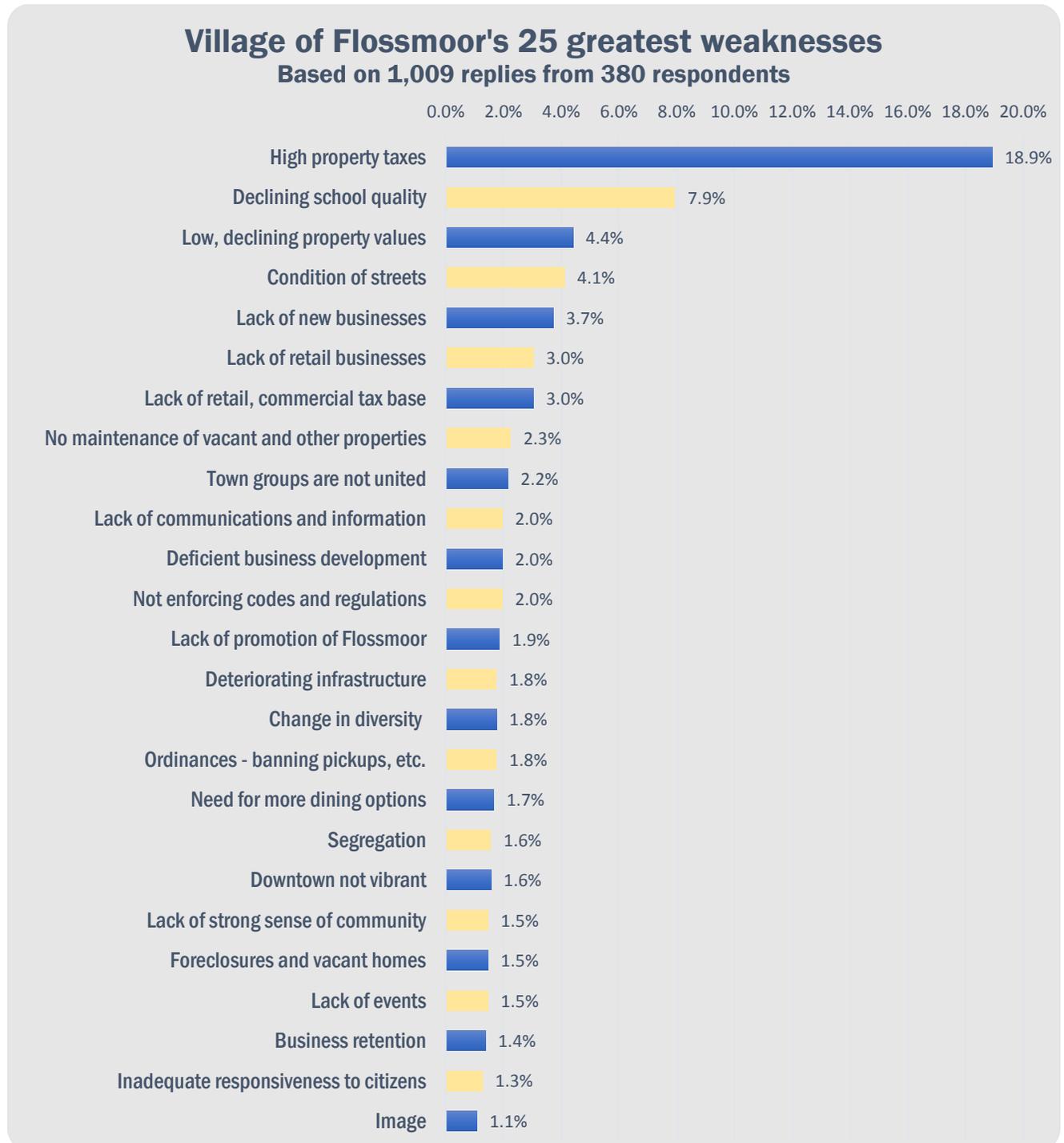
Quality of life

Parks and library

GREATEST WEAKNESSES

Question: “What do you think are the Village of Flossmoor's three greatest weaknesses?”

The five most-cited weaknesses are: 1) High property taxes, 2) Declining school quality, 3) Low, declining property values, 4) Condition of streets, 5) Lack of new businesses.



Other weaknesses (cited by multiple respondents):

Status of some surrounding towns

Street lights

Sewer and water issues

Cost of water

Increased crime, less safe

No clear direction and plan

Snow removal

Lack of growth

Not addressing flooding issues

Crumbling sidewalks

No coordination among government

Parking restrictions, limitations

Budget

Government not open to change

Mayor

Litter

Activities for families and kids

Need for more police

Lack of diversity in government

Lack of walkability, bikeability

Community relations

Zoning deficiencies

Village staff salaries

State of Illinois

Lack of home rule

Out of district students

Not focusing on core services

Park district

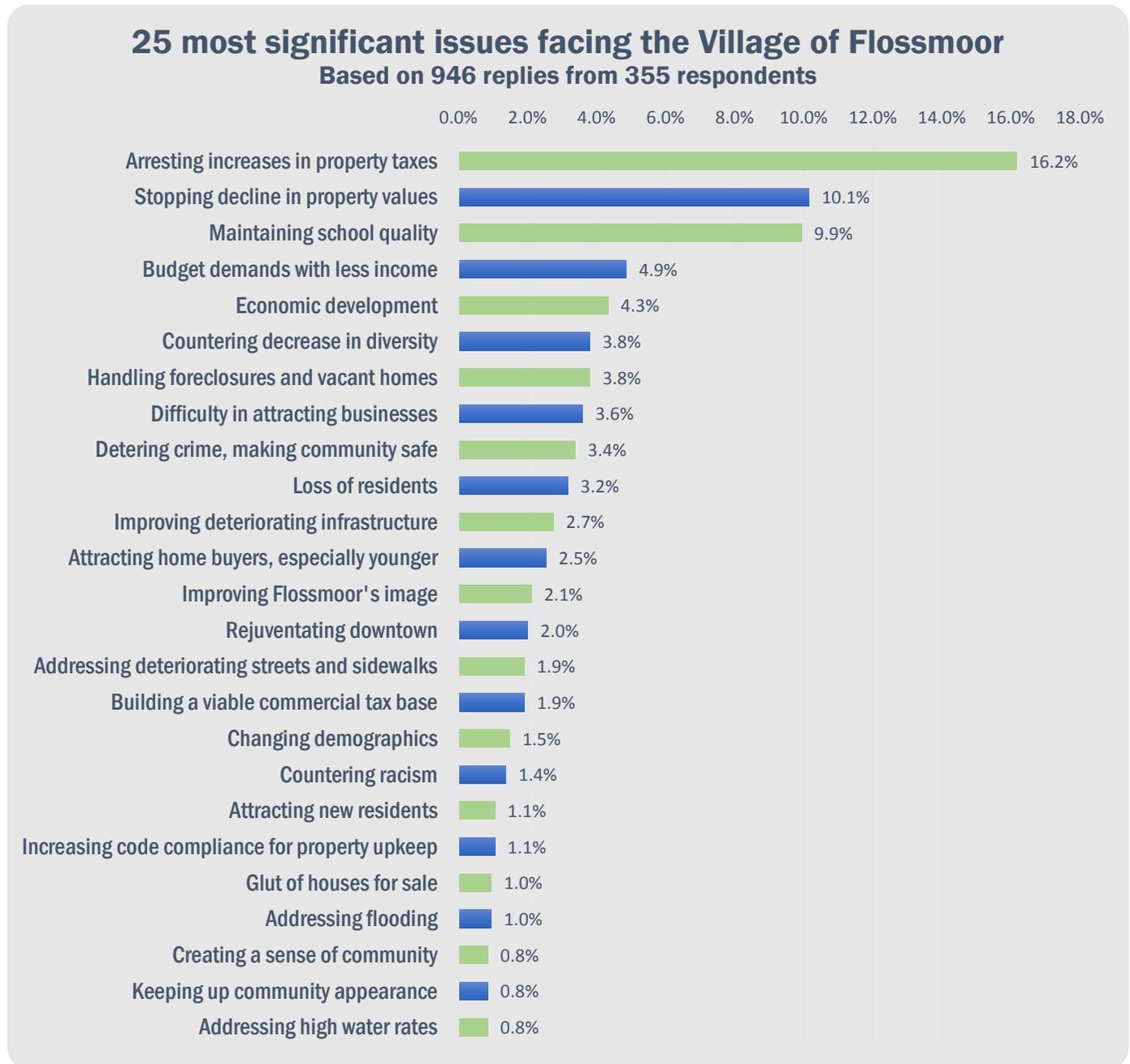
Lack of "green" infrastructure

Noise

MOST SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Question: “What do you think are the three most significant issues that the Village of Flossmoor faces today?”

The five most-cited issues are: 1) arresting increases in property taxes, 2) stopping decline in property values, 3) maintaining school quality, 4) budget demands with less income, 5) economic development.



Other issues (cited by multiple respondents):

Lack of community activities

Bad economy

Handling state lack of budget

Upgrading water and sewer systems

Fostering community unity

Addressing increase in renters

Improving communication

Lack of responsiveness

Maintaining community stability

Handling increasing pension liability

Preserving the unique community

Retaining businesses

Lack credible leadership

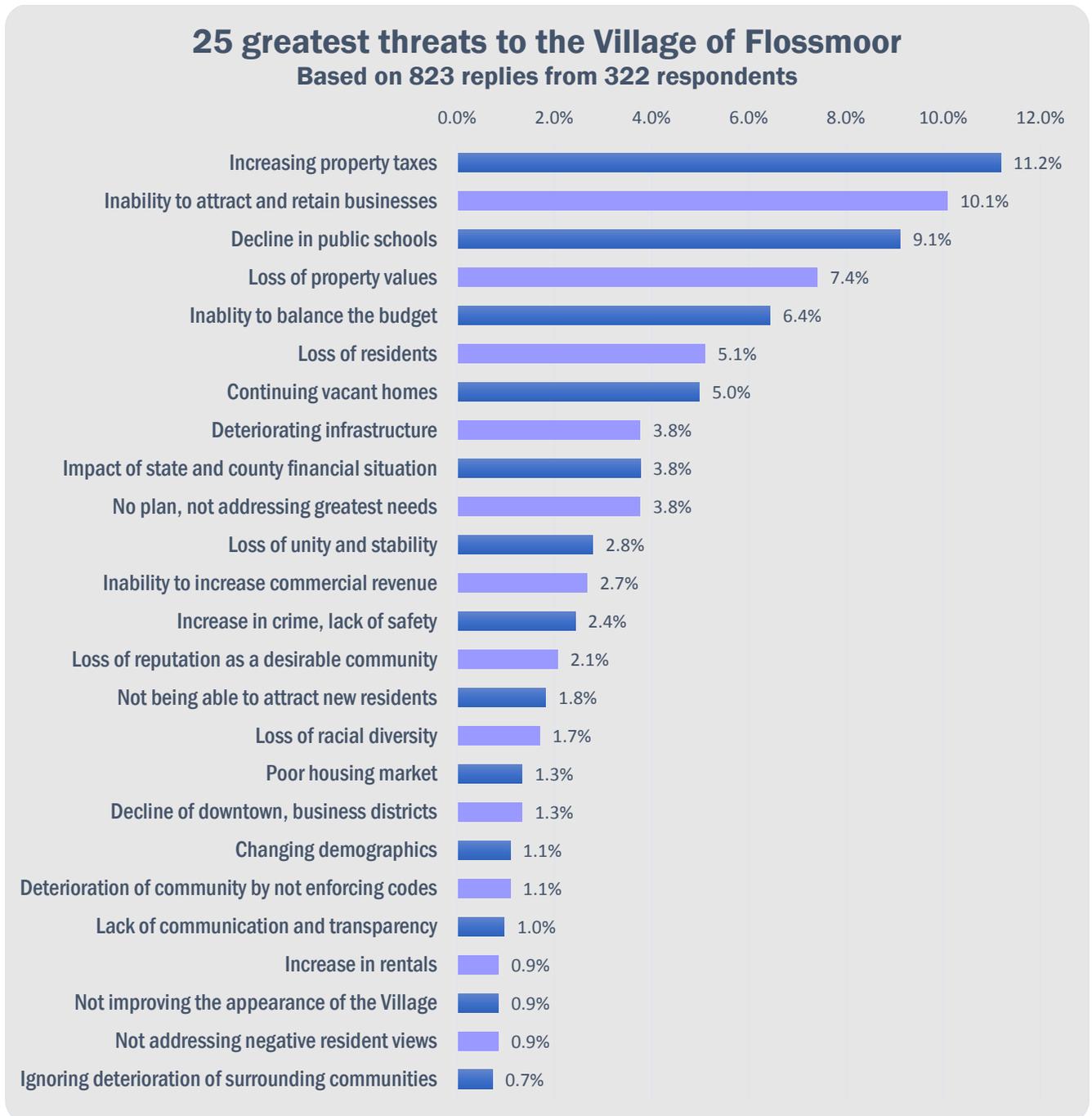
Attracting more retail

Addressing non-residential student population

GREATEST THREATS

Question: “What do you see as the three greatest threats to the Village of Flossmoor's financial integrity, effectiveness, efficiency, service to residents and businesses, stability, reputation and/or overall success over the next five years?”

The five most-cited threats are: 1) increasing property taxes, 2) inability to attract and retain businesses, 3) decline in public schools, 4) loss of property values, 5) inability to balance the budget.



Other threats (cited by multiple respondents):

Increasing pension liabilities

Not improving streets and sidewalks

Not marketing the community

Less community involvement

Burden of non-resident students on schools

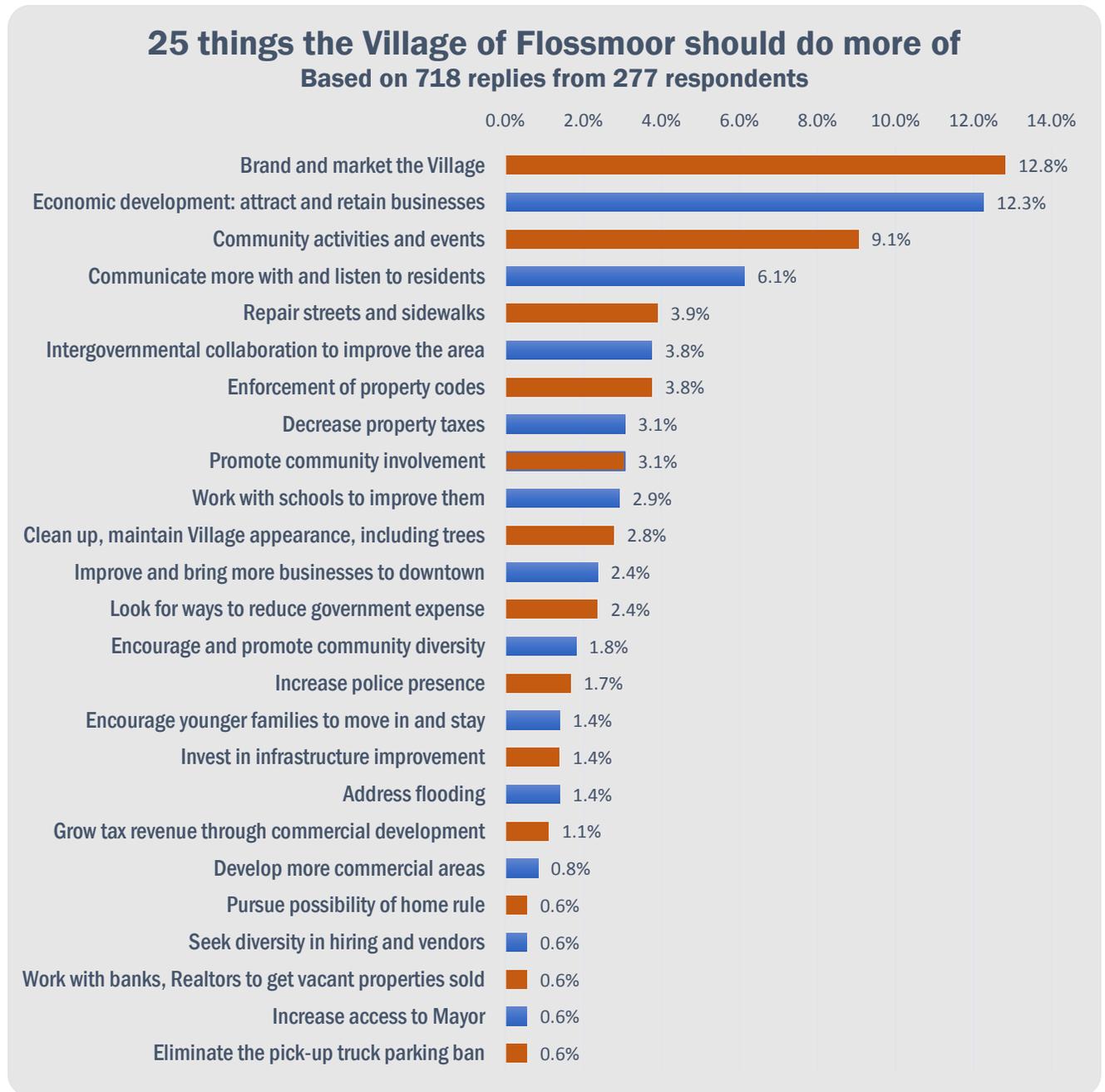
Not addressing water costs

Ignoring racism

WHAT THE VILLAGE SHOULD DO MORE OF

Question: “What significant things do you think the Village of Flossmoor should do more of? (Think both externally and internally.)”

The five most-cited things Village should do more of are: 1) Brand and market the village, 2) Community activities and events, 3) Repair streets and sidewalks, 4) Enforcement of property codes, 5) Promote community involvement.



Other things the Village should do more of (cited by multiple respondents):

Work to eliminate out-of-district students

Improve street lighting

Increase business locations

Pursue strategies to increase home values

Promote home ownership

Have Village leaders be more visible in the community

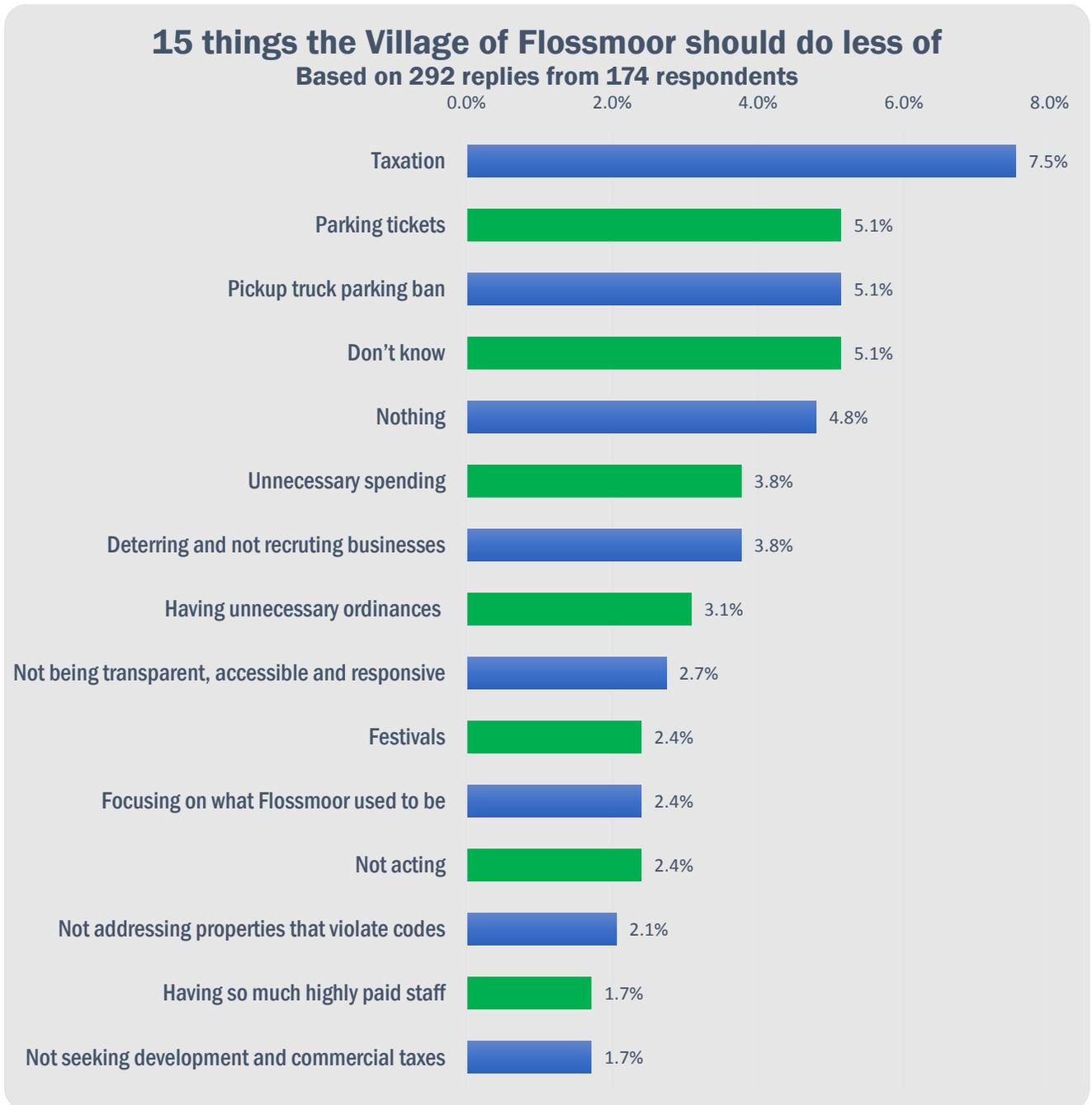
Develop the Vollmer Road corridor

Reduce water, sewerage costs

WHAT THE VILLAGE SHOULD DO LESS OF

Question: “What significant things do you think the Village of Flossmoor should do less of? (Think both externally and internally.)”

The five most-cited things the Village should do less of are: 1) Taxation, 2) Parking tickets, 3) Pickup truck parking ban, 4) Unnecessary spending, 5) Deterring and not recruiting businesses.



Other things the Village should do less of (cited by multiple respondents):

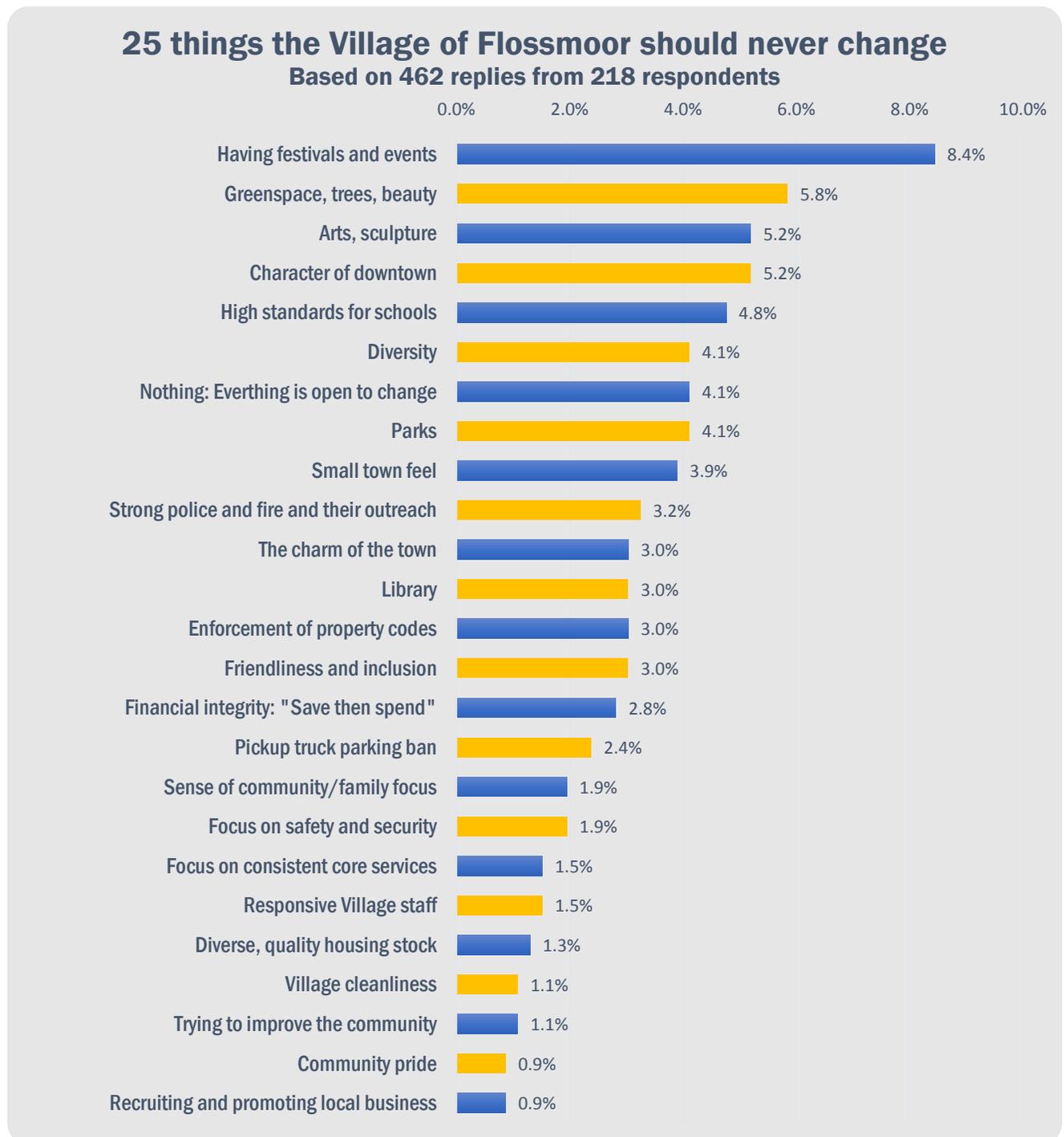
Overzealous code enforcement
Charging fees for dogs, cats, cars
Not being progressive
Charging for vehicle stickers
Restrict parking
Expanding city hall
Planning surveys
Hiring consultants

Bureaucracy
Separating areas of the community
Ignore crime
Unequal code enforcement
Marketing
Public art (paying for it)
Talking about diversity
Not focusing on schools

WHAT THE VILLAGE SHOULD NEVER CHANGE

Question: “What significant things do you think the Village of Flossmoor should never change?”

The five most-cited things the Village should never change are: 1) Having festivals and events, 2) Greenspace, trees, beauty, 3) Arts, sculpture, 4) Character of downtown, 5) High standards for schools.



Other things the Village should never change (cited by multiple respondents):

Streetlights as they are

Not over-commercializing

Good relationships with residents and seeking
feedback

Commitment to community engagement

Peace and quiet of Village

Road maintenance

Communicating and being transparent

Metra stop

Low-cost resident parking for Metra

High taxes

Building commercial opportunities

Growth plan

Snow removal services

IMPORTANCE OF SERVICES

Question: “To help Village leaders set priorities, please indicate how important each of the following services is to you.”

Ratings of listed services

	Not at all important		Slightly important		Moderately important		Very important		Extremely important	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Condition of streets and sidewalks	0	0.0%	7	2.3%	29	9.4%	121	39.2%	152	49.2%
Tree trimming, planting and replacement	0	0.0%	13	4.2%	83	26.9%	117	38.0%	95	30.8%
Building codes, property maintenance codes, inspections and related enforcement	8	2.6%	19	6.1%	49	15.9%	100	32.4%	133	43.0%
Village marketing to attract new residents and businesses	9	2.9%	11	3.5%	34	11.0%	67	21.6%	189	61.0%
Communications to keep residents and business owners informed, such as the newsletter, social media and website	6	1.9%	10	3.2%	52	16.9%	99	32.1%	141	45.8%
Flossmoor Outdoor Sculpture program	47	15.2%	75	24.3%	91	29.4%	59	19.1%	37	12.0%
Police community relations programs, such as DARE, Citizens Police Academy, Bike Rodeo and bicycle patrol	12	3.9%	33	10.7%	85	27.6%	88	28.6%	90	29.2%
Police visibility and patrol	1	0.3%	13	4.2%	37	12.0%	93	30.2%	164	53.2%
Fire and emergency medical response	1	0.3%	2	0.7%	28	9.2%	66	21.6%	209	68.3%
Village special events, such as Flossmoor Fest, Movies in the Park, Winterfest and other community gatherings	12	3.9%	24	7.8%	59	19.3%	108	35.3%	103	33.7%
Infrastructure to mitigate flooding and improve drainage	1	0.3%	9	2.9%	32	10.4%	85	27.6%	181	58.8%
Maintenance (mowing, litter pick up, landscaping) of public areas, including downtown and other village-owned properties)	1	0.3%	5	1.6%	37	12.0%	109	35.4%	156	50.6%
Zoning and comprehensive planning	8	2.6%	17	5.6%	71	23.2%	95	31.0%	115	37.6%

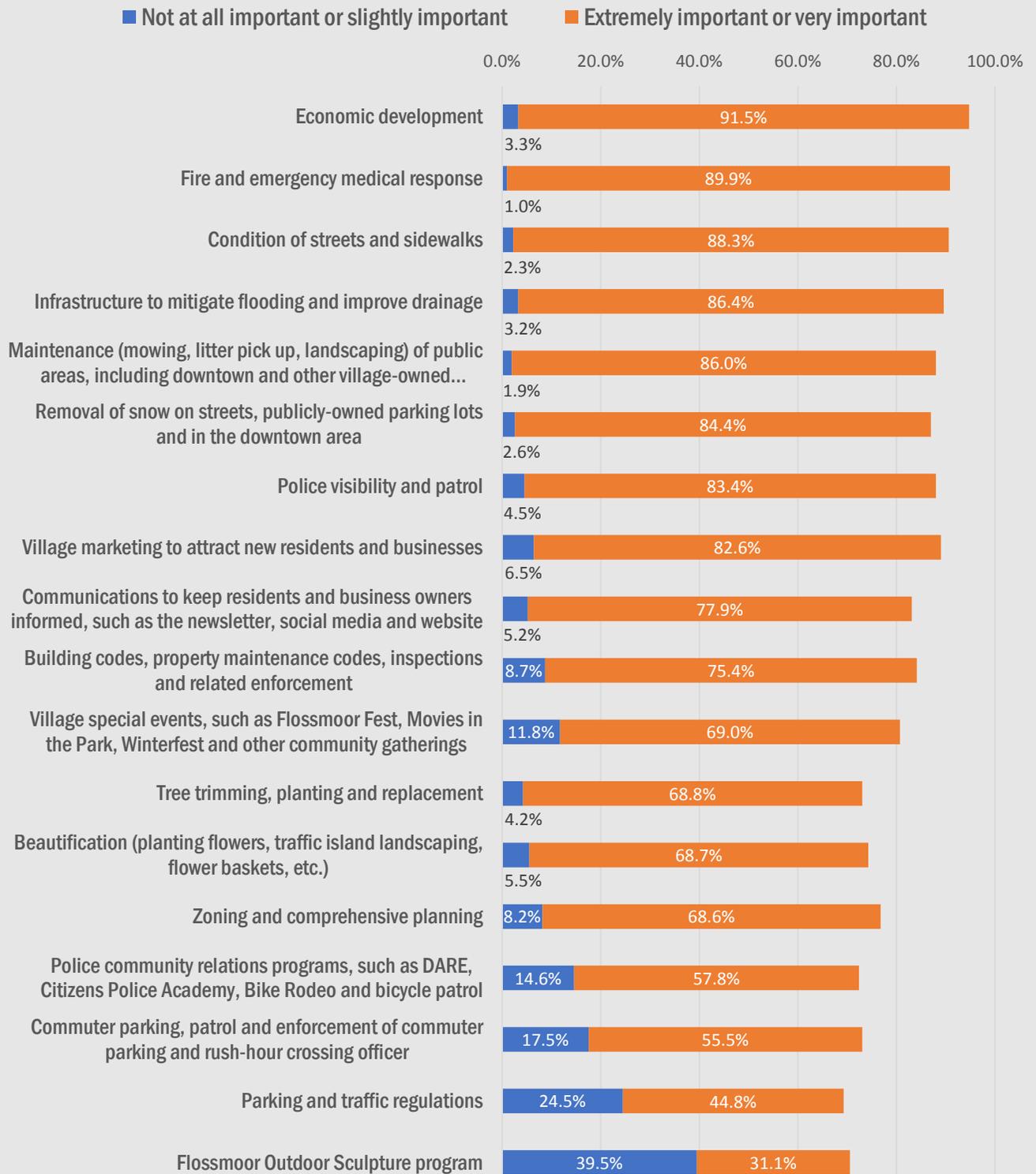
	Not at all important		Slightly important		Moderately important		Very important		Extremely important	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Parking and traffic regulations	15	4.9%	60	19.6%	94	30.7%	79	25.8%	58	19.0%
Economic development	5	1.6%	5	1.6%	16	5.2%	62	20.3%	217	71.1%
Removal of snow on streets, publicly-owned parking lots and in the downtown area	1	0.3%	7	2.3%	40	13.0%	100	32.6%	159	51.8%
Commuter parking, patrol and enforcement of commuter parking and rush-hour crossing officer	15	4.9%	39	12.7%	83	26.9%	102	33.1%	69	22.4%
Beautification (planting flowers, traffic island landscaping, flower baskets, etc.)	3	1.0%	14	4.6%	79	25.7%	118	38.4%	93	30.3%

A useful way to assess importance ratings is to rank the services both by the “strong positives” – the combined total of respondents who rate each service as either extremely important or very important – and by the “strong negatives” – the combined total of respondents who rate each service as either not important at all or slightly important.

- Those services highest in rank on the “strong positives” scale and lowest in rank on the “strong negatives” scale are most meaningful to the respondents. They are likely candidates for retention and even enhancement.
- Those services lowest in rank on the “strong positives” scale and highest in rank on the “strong negatives” scale are likely candidates for reduction or even elimination if feasible.

The following chart shows the services’ ratings on the “not at all important or slightly important” scale contrasted with the services’ ratings on the “extremely important or very important” scale.

Service ratings: Not at all important or slightly important, versus extremely important or very important



IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITIES

Question: “What do you see as the important opportunities for the Village of Flossmoor to be more effective or efficient; provide better service; innovate; be in a better financial position, or otherwise be more successful over the next five years?”

The five most-cited opportunities are: 1) Attracting businesses, 2) Programs to attract new residents, 3) branding and marketing Flossmoor, 4) Promoting good schools, 5) Reducing expenses.



Other opportunities (cited by multiple respondents):

Embracing diversity

Applying for grants

Partnering with local businesses

Improving snow removal

Attracting employers to increase local workers

Focusing on maintaining home values

Offering on-line bill payment

Exploring Village internet

Eliminating overly restrictive codes (e.g. pickups)

Developing strategic plan

Assuring safety

Focusing on retention of residents

Being proactive

Focusing on core services

Adding downtown parking

Increasing police presence

Responding to resident concerns in a timely manner

Increasing property values

MOST IMPORTANT TO BEGIN DOING NOW

Question: “What do you think are the three most important things for the Village of Flossmoor to begin doing now for greater success in the future?”

The five most-cited things to begin doing now are: 1) Begin program to recruit and retain businesses, 2) Help maintain school quality, 3) Address rising property taxes, 4) Market positive aspects of community, 5) Engage in program to attract home buyers.



Other things to begin doing now (cited by multiple respondents):

Give tax breaks to attract businesses

Continue to provide excellent core services

Be "customer friendly"

Seek home rule

Help home buyers and sellers make deals

work

Adopt and execute strategic plan

Add street lighting

Use best practices from other communities

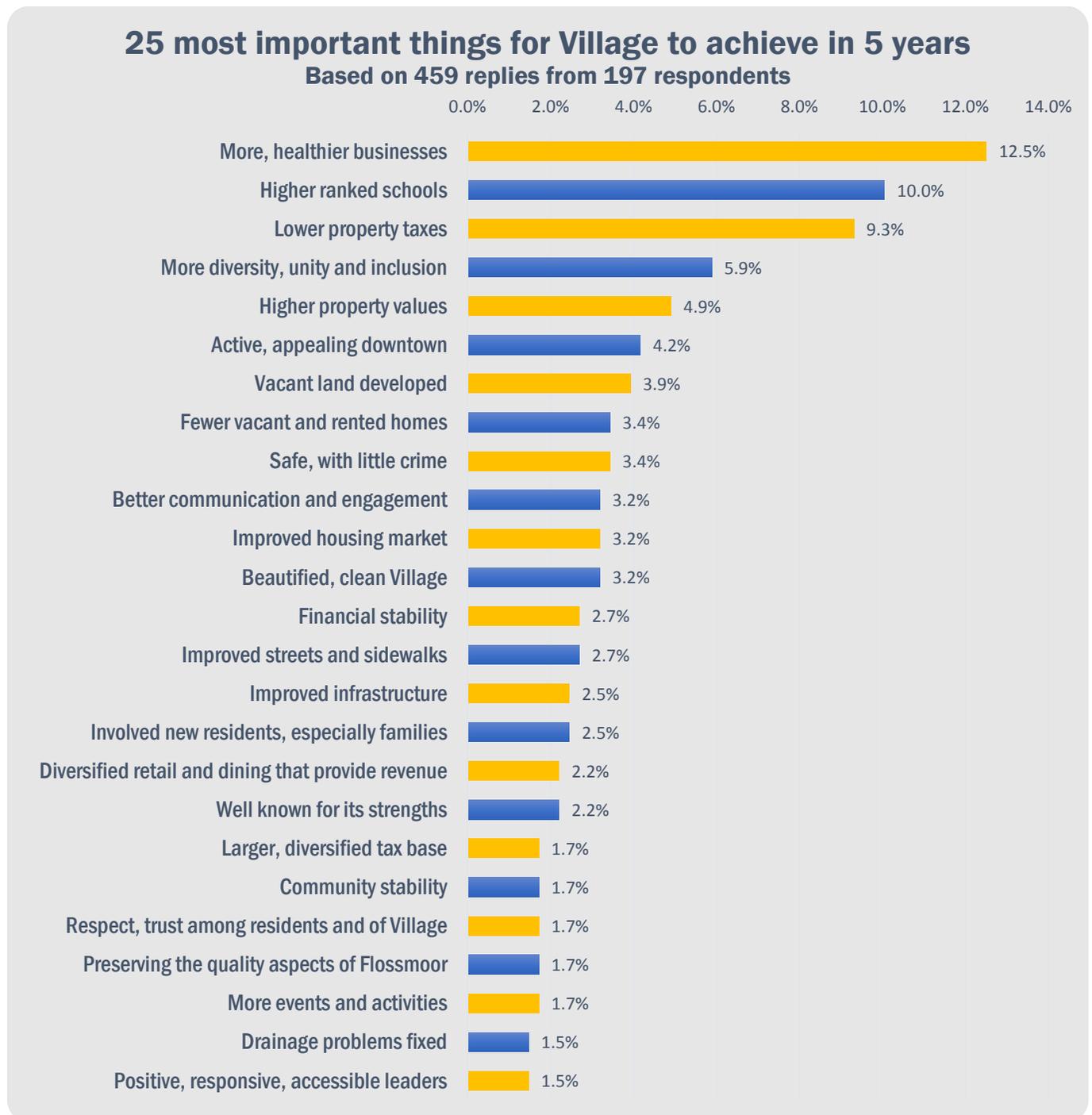
Expand tax base

Improve snow removal

MOST IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVE OVER NEXT FIVE YEARS

Question: “Envision the Village of Flossmoor five years from now. What do you think is most important for the Village to achieve between now and then?”

The five most-cited things to begin doing now are: 1) More, healthier businesses, 2) Higher ranked schools, 3) Lower property taxes, 4) More diversity, unity and inclusion, 5) Higher property values.



Other important things important to achieve (cited by multiple respondents):

Retention of residents

Appearance of vacant homes cleaned up

Continuing small town charm

Effective marketing program

More homeowners who take pride in
community

Sustainable funding for most important
projects

Home rule status

Increased police presence

Better transportation

More commuter parking

Partnerships with other agencies and
municipalities

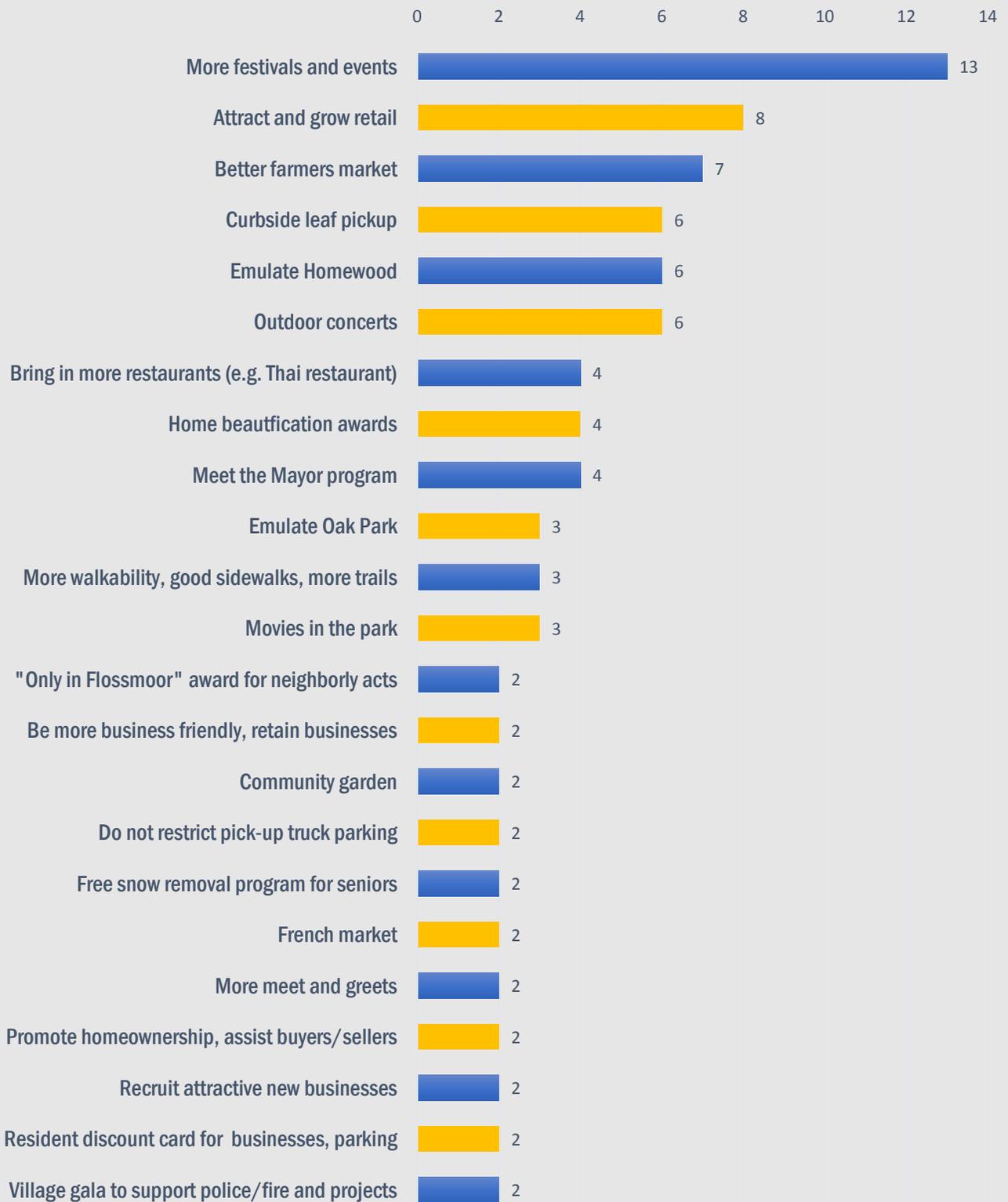
Use of best practices from other municipalities

Maintenance help for struggling homeowners

PROGRAM IDEAS FOR THE VILLAGE TO REPLICATE

Question: “Are there programs that you have seen in other communities that you would like to see the Village of Flossmoor replicate? If so, please describe.”

Programs that residents want the Village to replicate Programs with more than one mention; 128 respondents



Other program ideas cited by residents

Arts

Anything art (graffiti areas, donations, raffles)
Arts center
Craft fair, art fair (perhaps with farmers market)
Create a bench
European type statue/fountain
More arts in community
Performing arts center
Statues of heroic people to inspire us

Beautification

Adopt a planter program
Celebrate the community's beauty
More open green space on Flossmoor road property
Rain gardens
Regular street sweeping

Business

Business districts open in the evenings
Economic development program like Homewood's
Food trucks
Incentives to retain businesses
More entertainment options
Pop-up shops
Silicon Valley Tech Center
Store front facade update program

Children

Better support for kids' sports
Expanded bus service for children
Grade centers
Joint mentoring program with high school
More Library programs for children and adults
Opportunities for children and teens learn about business
Partner with schools to increase academic success
Teen Center
Work with the library and others to provide youth programs
Young arborists
Youth involvement/leadership/recognition initiatives
Youth sports events that involve the greater area

Communications and engagement

Assign Trustees as liaisons to committees
Citizens community academy
Coffee with a cop
Police on bikes
Quarterly Village open house or town meeting
Trustees visible to local business owners
Development
Mixed-use buildings
Pedestrian malls

Diversity

Affirmative marketing program
Diversity dinners

Events

Book fair like Hyde Park 57th Street fair
Cause-related day party
Community garage sale
Events not replicating Homewood
Fireworks on New Year's Eve and/or baseball opening day
First Friday events
Food festivals
Food truck fest
Halloween fest
Historic walking tours
Holiday decorations downtown
Host a Dinner en Blanc to encourage community camaraderie
Jazz fest
Local history fest
Minimal cost after-school programs for children
MLK type events quarterly
Pumpkin carving contest with pumpkin lighting
Ribfest
Taste of Homewood-Flossmoor
Use HF Fieldhouse to host travel sports tournaments to raise money and increase visibility
Veteran's Day and Memorial Day Activities

Promotion of Flossmoor

Billboards showing families moving in
More promotion of community activities
Provide and promote activities and businesses that appeal to diverse residents
Strong marketing of the Village
Update and define Flossmoor's brand
Use events to attract new residents
Village promo materials created by professional volunteers

Village services and programs

Better snow removal
Business license
Community center
Crime-free housing
Fuel efficient vehicles for village services
Full-time marketing director
More recycling
Native plants for village land to reduce maintenance
Noise abatement
Noise abatement
Occupancy certification for new renters
Offer excess Village wood chips to residents
Pay parking
Property tax rebate program
Replace underground pipes
Require residents to shovel their walks
Resident assistance program for high water bills
Solar and wind programs
Street infrastructure program
Street lights
Subsidization for the elderly
Tree ordinance
Tree-branch pickup
Truck sticker fee
Village-owned cable and internet service for residents

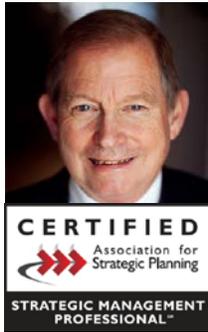
Other

Combine school districts
Dark Sky community designation
Discount days at Library and/or Park District
Emulate Frankfort
Emulate Glen Ellyn
Emulate LaGrange
Emulate Lincoln Square
Emulate Naperville
Emulate Orland Park
Help surrounding communities
More Park District exercise classes
Organized walking groups
Pace bus service for seniors
Trustees donate stipends back to Village
Work with agencies for better bike path access

ABOUT FORREST CONSULTING



Forrest Consulting is a high-level strategy and implementation consulting firm based in Annapolis, Maryland, USA. We deliver planning and implementation leadership and processes, and expert facilitation of Boards, teams and groups. We serve corporate, small and medium sized business, association, government and non-profit leaders and Boards. We have been building success since 1988.



Lee Crumbaugh, SMP, is President and Founder of Forrest Consulting, www.forrestconsult.com. He is Immediate Past President of the Association for Strategic Planning (2014-2016), www.strategyassociation.org.

Lee has delivered management counsel, effective strategy development and implementation leadership, and winning marketing, communications and research programs to companies, associations, government and non-profit organizations in 50 industries and business segments.