

* 2025-2026 Acton Spending Survey

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Actonian Since 1995

Survey Intro

- On 2025-06-16, the Town of Acton Select Board adopted 13 goals (<https://actonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10728/Select-Board-Goals-Adopted-June-16-2025?bidId=>) for the coming fiscal year: 5 short-term goals and 8 long-term goals.
- **Please complete the following survey to see how closely the Select Board's goals line up with your goals for Acton.**
- I will summarize the results and present them to the Select Board.
- Your email address will not be shared.
- DISCLAIMER: This is an independent survey conducted by me and not endorsed by the Town of Acton or any of its boards or committees. Thank you!

Rating Scale

- 0 = strongly disagree (with this Select Board priority)
- 1 = disagree (with this Select Board priority)
- 2 = neutral (on this Select Board priority)
- 3 = agree (with this Select Board priority)
- 4 = strongly agree (with this Select Board priority)

Survey Stats

- Start: 2025-08-22, End: 2025-09-21
- 4,035 emails sent (about 200/day)
- 1,798 emails *opened (44.6%)
- 236 emails *clicked (5.8%)
- 86 surveys *completed (2.1%)
- *These are about 2x industry average and would likely be higher had this been an official survey

Margin of Error

Survey This Many People	To Get This Margin Of Error	Plus or Minus	Notes	2.0 Min	2.0 Max
86	10.6%	0.42	surveys completed	1.58	2.42
100	9.8%	0.39		1.61	2.39
400	4.9%	0.20	national polls	1.80	2.20
625	3.9%	0.16		1.84	2.16
1,111	2.9%	0.12		1.88	2.12
1,798	2.3%	0.09	surveys opened	1.91	2.09
2,500	2.0%	0.08		1.92	2.08
4,035	1.5%	0.06	surveys sent	1.94	2.06
10,000	1.0%	0.04		1.96	2.04

Margin Of Error (MOE) = $z * \sqrt{(p * (1-p)) / n}$

Where "z" = 1.96 (for 95% confidence level).

Where "p" = 50% (for most conservative result).

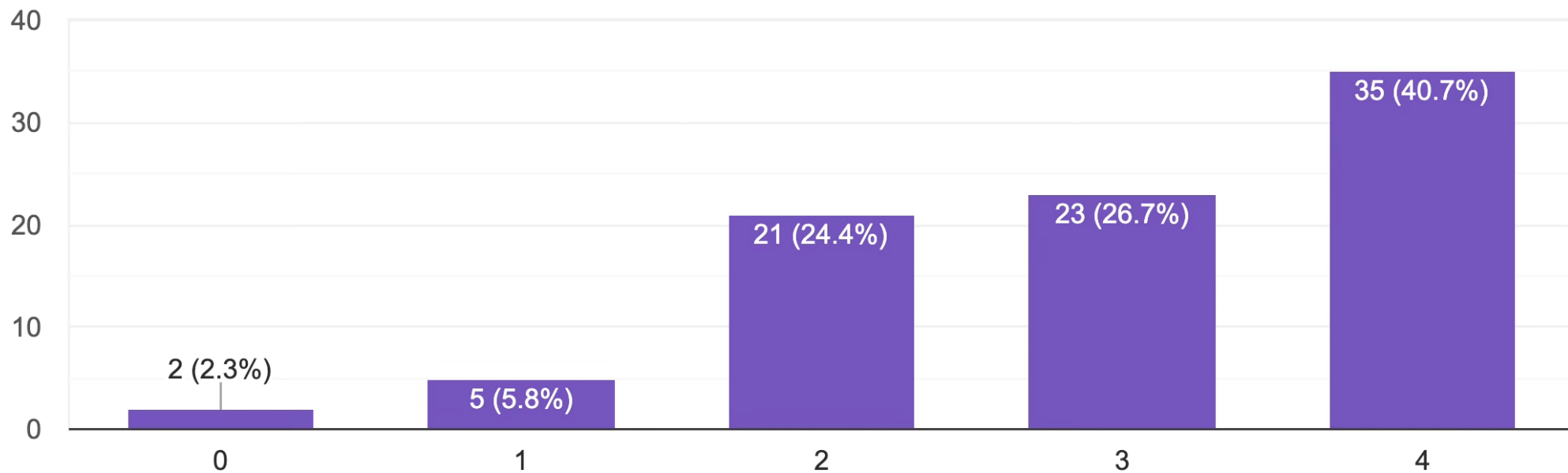
2.42 is the "break even" point where more voters support than oppose an issue.

Survey results are sorted from most to least support (i.e. from highest to lowest grade)

Q2: 2.98 (B-)

2. SHORT-TERM: Advance Town Meeting participation/access/education improvements, including early communication of warrant items to the public.

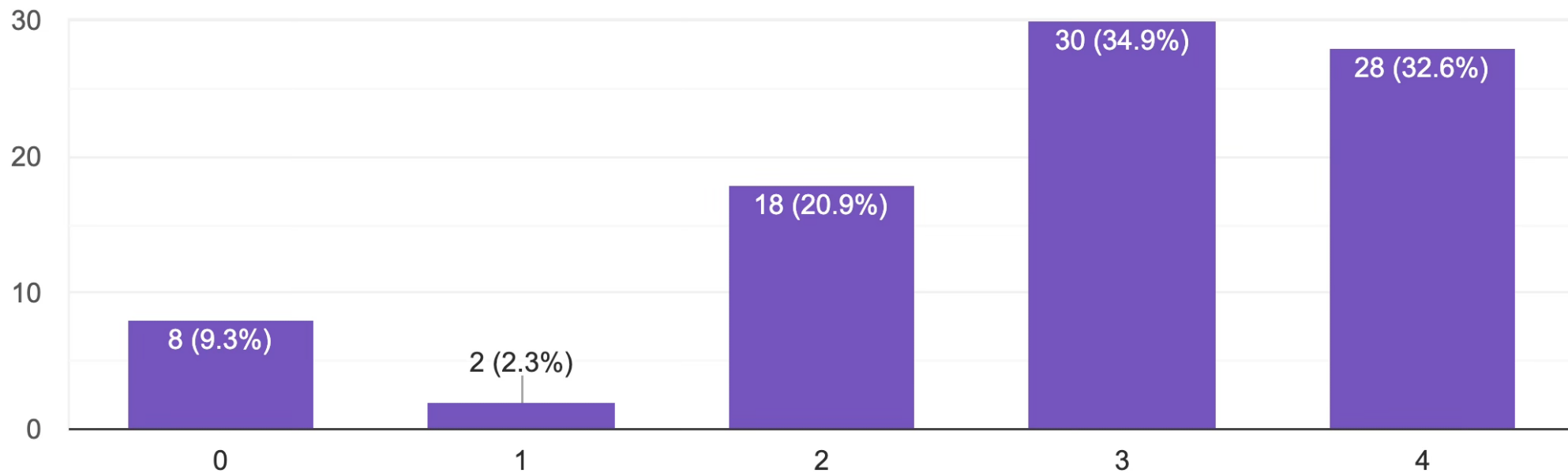
86 responses



Q8: 2.79 (B-)

8. LONG-TERM: Continue Main Street intersection and complete streets improvements, i.e. Hayward, plus Central, High, Maple, Nylander, Railroad, School.

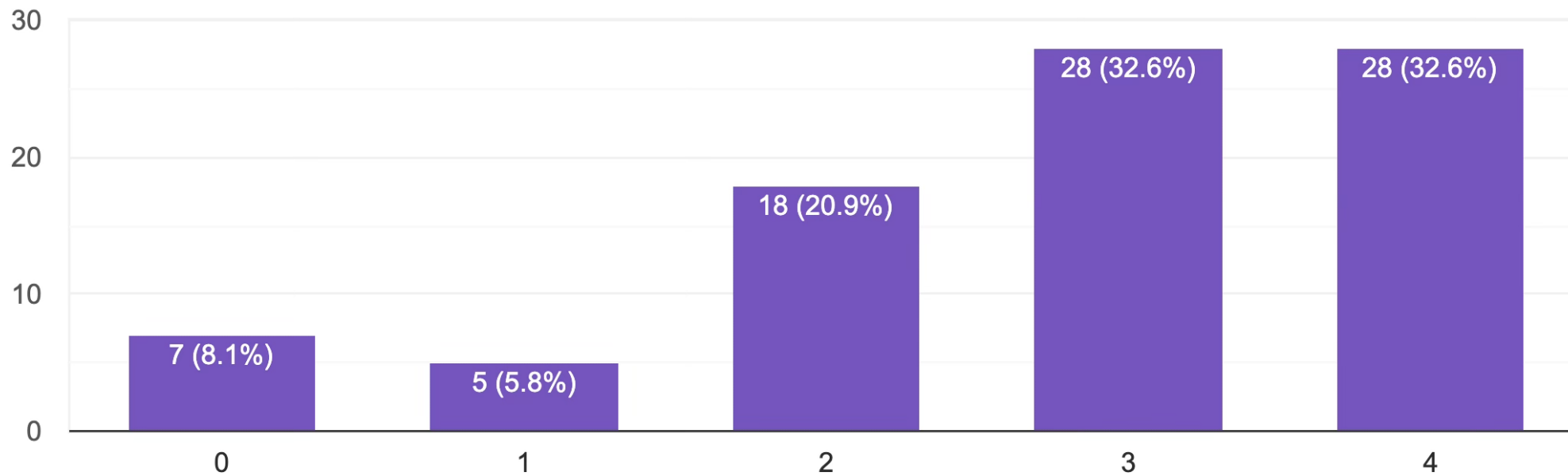
86 responses



Q11: 2.76 (B-)

11. LONG-TERM: Approve the final Stormwater Infrastructure Plan and begin implementation.

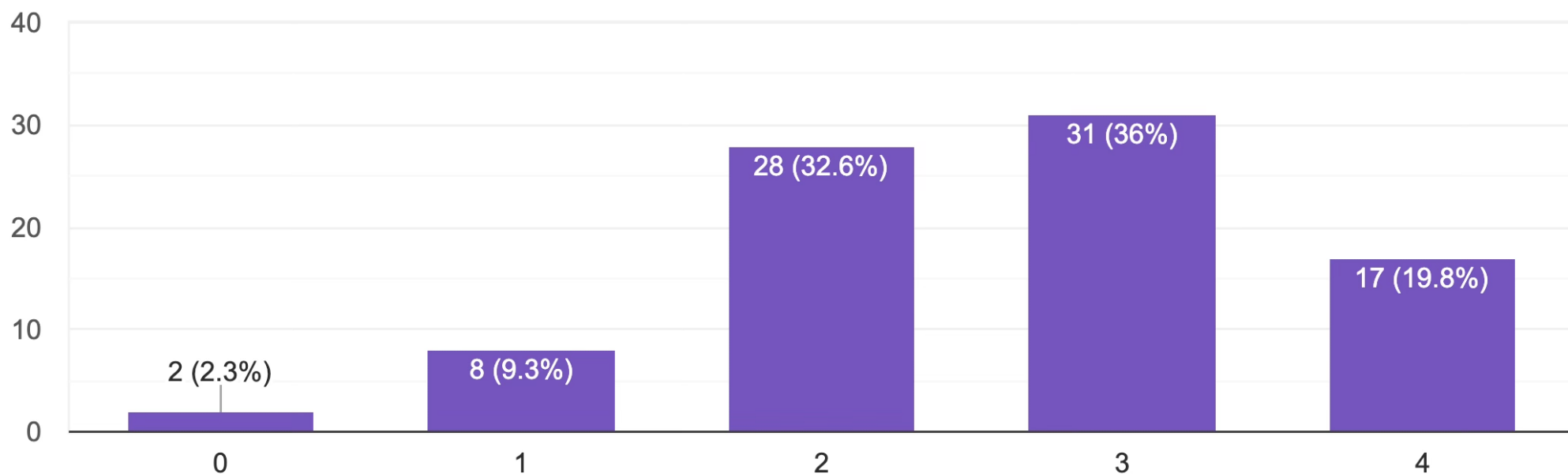
86 responses



Q9: 2.62 (C+)

9. LONG-TERM: Work with Volunteer Coordinating Committee to create a plan for the future of volunteer recruitment and onboarding that include...rientation and streamlined reappointment process.

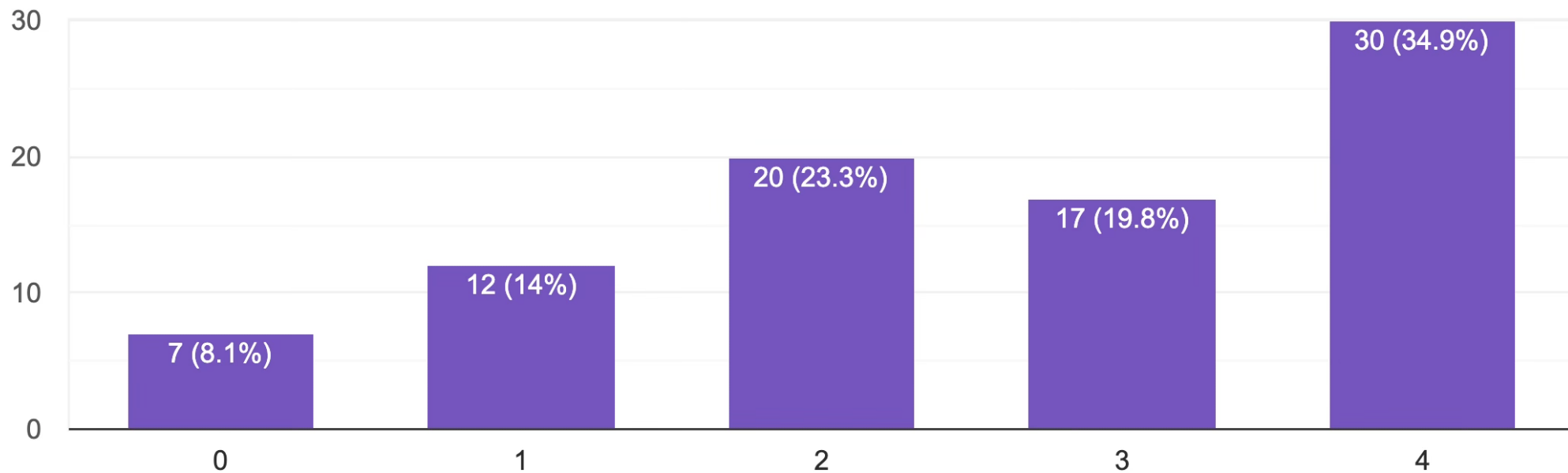
86 responses



Q13: 2.59 (C+)

13. LONG-TERM: Research and develop a proactive strategy for gas line replacement, repair, and non-pipeline alternatives.

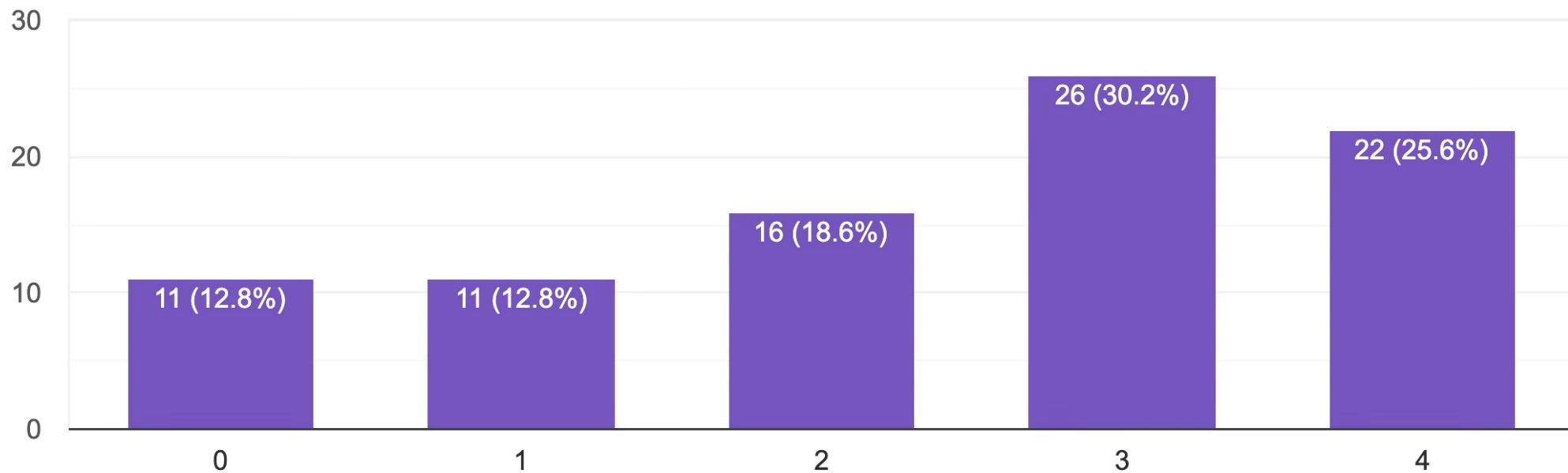
86 responses



Q5: 2.43 (C+)

5. SHORT-TERM: Complete study and begin implementation of Fire/EMS deployment and staffing study, including a capital plan for Fire Stations upgrades or replacement.

86 responses

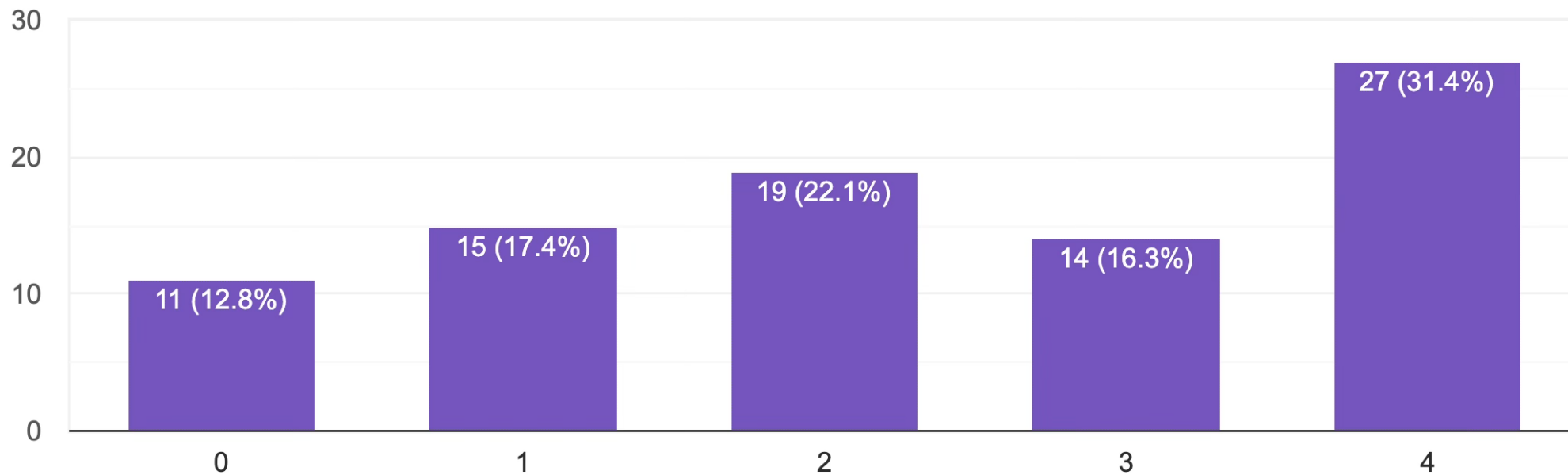


2.42 (C+) is the "break even" point where more voters support than oppose an issue

Q6: 2.36 (C+)

6. LONG-TERM: Explore additional tax relief programs for low income taxpayers.

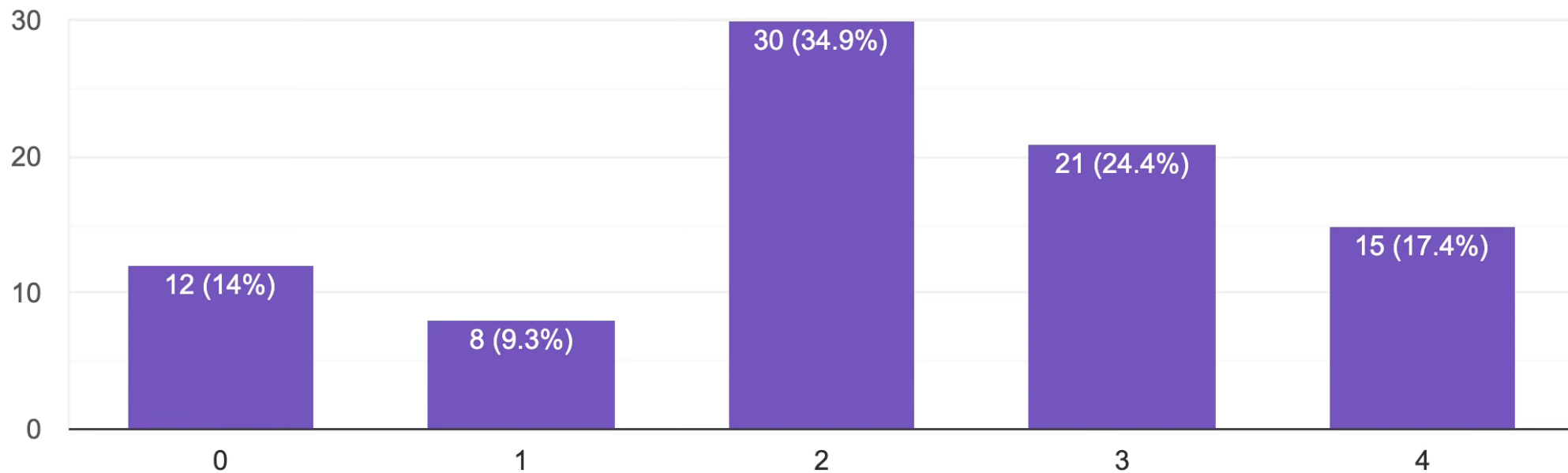
86 responses



Q1: 2.22 (C)

1. SHORT-TERM: Finalize Design and Secure Funding to Complete Town Hall HVAC and Emergency Power Replacement Project and Related Building Accessibility Improvements.

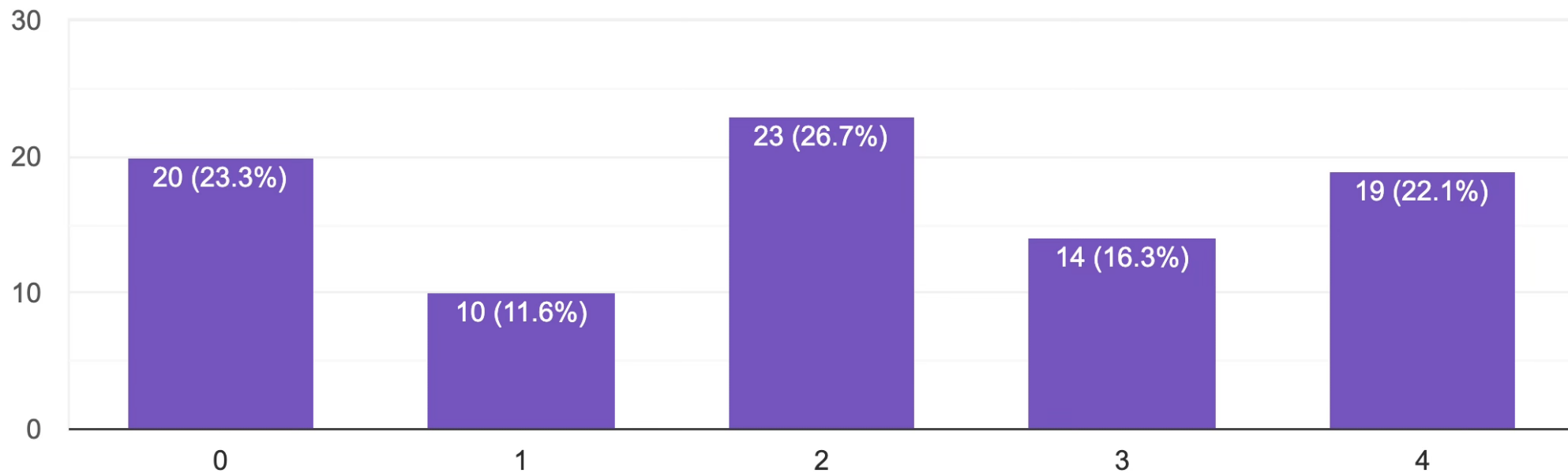
86 responses



Q4: 2.02 (C)

4. SHORT-TERM: Bring DPW facility project to Town Meeting. Work with Finance Committee, and other Town Committees to move project forward.

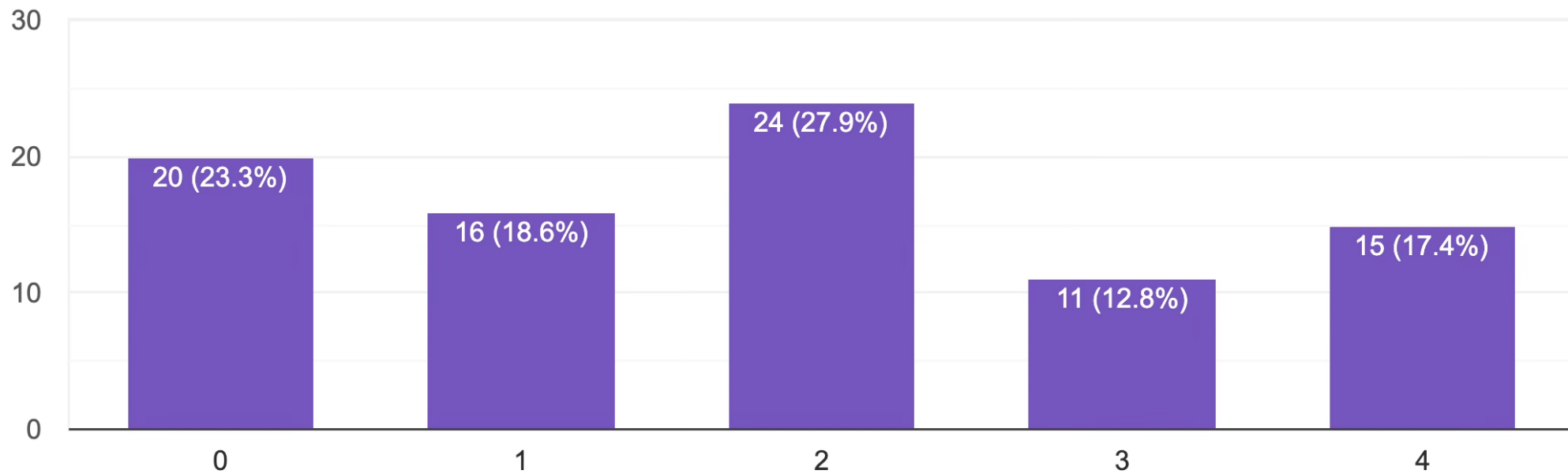
86 responses



Q3: 1.83 (C-)

3. SHORT-TERM: Create a communications position to improve community engagement.

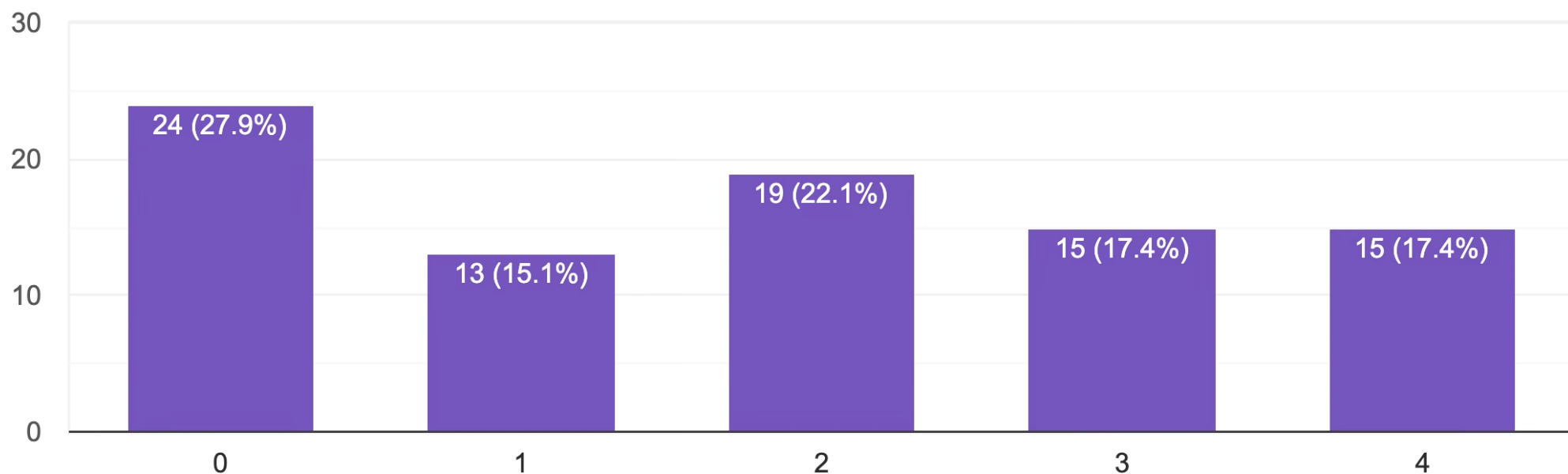
86 responses



Q12: 1.81 (C-)

12. LONG-TERM: Facilitate low-income Community Solar and research the potential of including this option as part of a lower tier in the Acton Power Choice program.

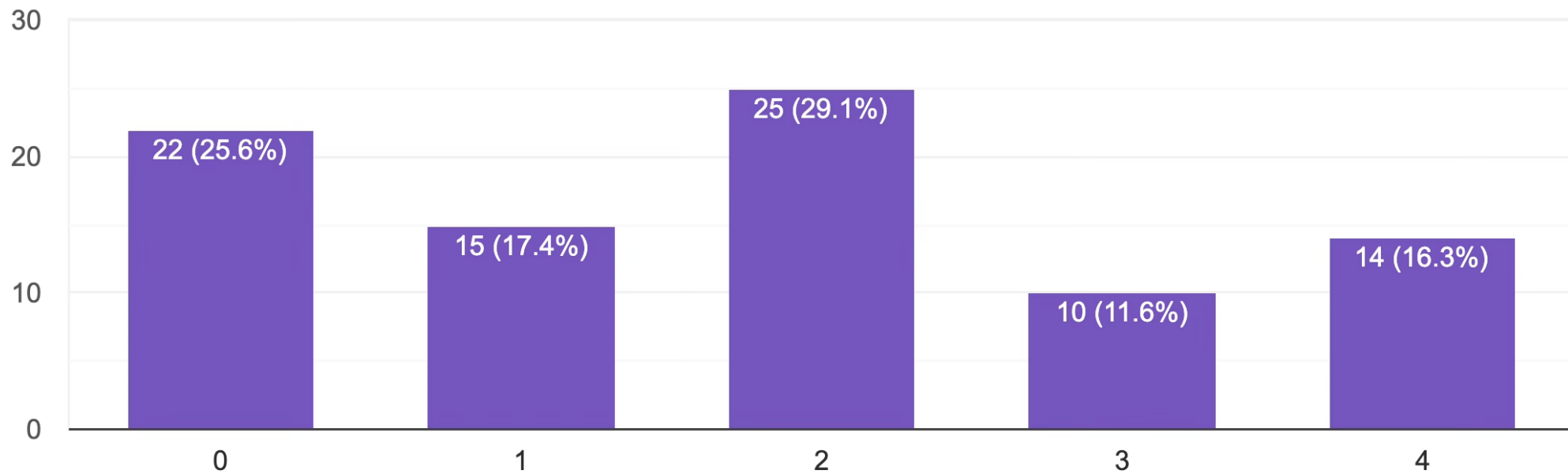
86 responses



Q7: 1.76 (C-)

7. LONG-TERM: Start a yearly Porchfest Concert Series for West Acton.

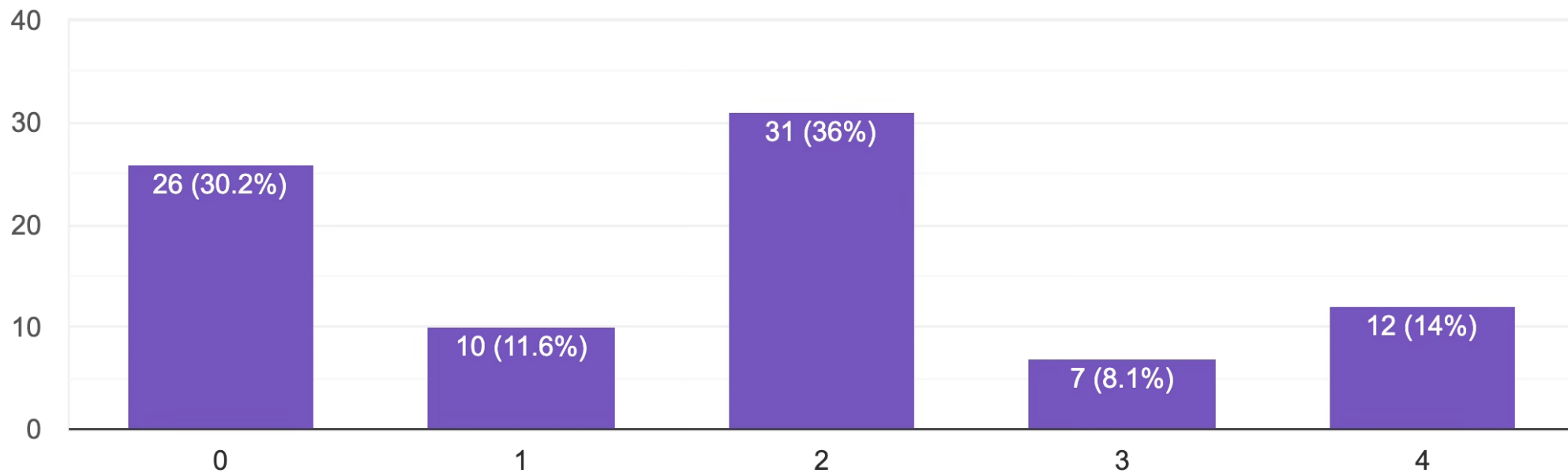
86 responses



Q10: 1.64 (D+)

10. LONG-TERM: Advance efforts to establish a public art plan and initiatives that utilize the arts to improve outcomes for economic development and public health.

86 responses



Comments Summary

- "A" graders made 2 comments
- "B" graders made 2 comments
- "C" graders made 10 comments
- "D" graders made 9 comments
- "F" graders made ZERO comments
- To keep this brief, I will not review the comments in detail (but encourage you to do so)

Comments From "A" Graders

- I would like to see if a committee can be formed to optimize and lower real estate taxes.
- Please make sure that any communication to this list is factually correct and doesn't cherry-pick.

Comments From "B" Graders

- Go MCATS!
- Good luck to you & the Select Board. REALLY appreciate all of the work. Also, thank you for your service to our country.

Comments From "C" Graders (1/6)

- This town has never seen a proposal it didn't like. Money, apparently, is no object. Taxes just keep going up. Do we really need a new DPW building? Probably not, but we have a proposal, so lets do it. After Kelly's corner, I give up.
- That's all they came up with?? I'm underwhelmed.

Comments From "C" Graders (2/6)

- There is a website called Clear.gov that tracks town spending and breaks it down per category using pie charts that would provide the majority of transparency tax payers expect to see from their town officials. Many towns in the commonwealth use clear.gov already and Acton used to use it up until around 2020 when it stopped using it. Also, Deepseek, ChatGPT can quickly and concisely put together announcements on plans, upcoming projects etc any existing employee can simply manage communications in minutes using these tools

Comments From "C" Graders (3/6)

- Seems to me there must be more important items such as staff retention.
- Answer in detail as to how you were able to send me an email? How do i make you responsible of my feelings here?
- We need to stop spending over 2 1/2 and encourage more restaurants and business in town to off set taxes. We can't keep paying this much.
- Get rid of the DEI staff positions in both the Town and Schools.

Comments From "C" Graders (4/6)

- The key items are too low on priority list.
- We spend too much on things that don't matter. I'd prefer projects that would move wires underground, town sewer, allow drive through options for businesses, increase sidewalks to get pedestrians out of the road, etc

Comments From "C" Graders (5/6)

- Being a solar and EV user/consumer myself, I know the generation benefits that Mass solar infrastructure vs other states produces for an ROI. This is a horrible use of community time and funding. The return is calculably low. Solar in New England should be a consumer driven option. If I want to spend my money on my own tree hugging desires, it's my money to throw at it. More than half the year in NE, solar is not producing daily effective output to warrant the spend. (answer continues on next slide)

Comments From "C" Graders (6/6)

- Public Art - Let other private led groups who have this passion drive this initiative I don't see this as a goal the vast majority of the community would be aggressively interested in pursuing. I feel that any Town Select objectives should have 66% of the community behind them.

Comments From "D" Graders (1/5)

- The BoS should focus on services everyone expects when they pay local taxes — required infrastructure & public safety. Things like a porch fest and public art are nice, but seems like things that don't require any BoS involvement. And stop pushing the progressive agenda (green and DEI). It's expensive and divisive.
- Improve and add sidewalks!!!!

Comments From "D" Graders (2/5)

- Continuing to waste money and honor supporting the anti democratic DEI should have been a question. Imagine hiring a DEIO who, when asked "What is equity?" responds "It is being equitable."
- A looming expense that is technically outside of the town budget is "what to do with the Conant building now that enrollment is down." No need to come up with a bunch of other ways to spend money while we have that looming over our tax bill.

Comments From "D" Graders (3/5)

- We cook with gas. Don't waste money on replacing gas pipes
- The town of Acton spends way too much money beyond its revenue and keeps increasing taxes on the residents...this town is becoming a socialist town and unlivable!

Comments From "D" Graders (4/5)

- We should eliminate anything that is absolutely optional (like ART PROJECTS) and/or put other projects on hold until we can actually BALANCE A BUDGET....without overrides. We also should NOT levy a tax for storm water repair on the tax bills by using a "different fund." You are just skirting overrides and it lowers any type of confidence in the town managing anything.

Comments From "D" Graders (5/5)

- We know the difference between WANTS and NEEDS. My spouse and I WANT central air conditioning, but our window AC units work fine, so we don't NEED central air. The Select Board MUST focus its spending priorities on NEEDS, not WANTS.
- Thank you for doing this

Thank you for your time today!