



# City of Hudson

Community Survey Report

June 15, 2026





**Our mission is to help community leaders gather, organize, and use data to make strategic decisions.**

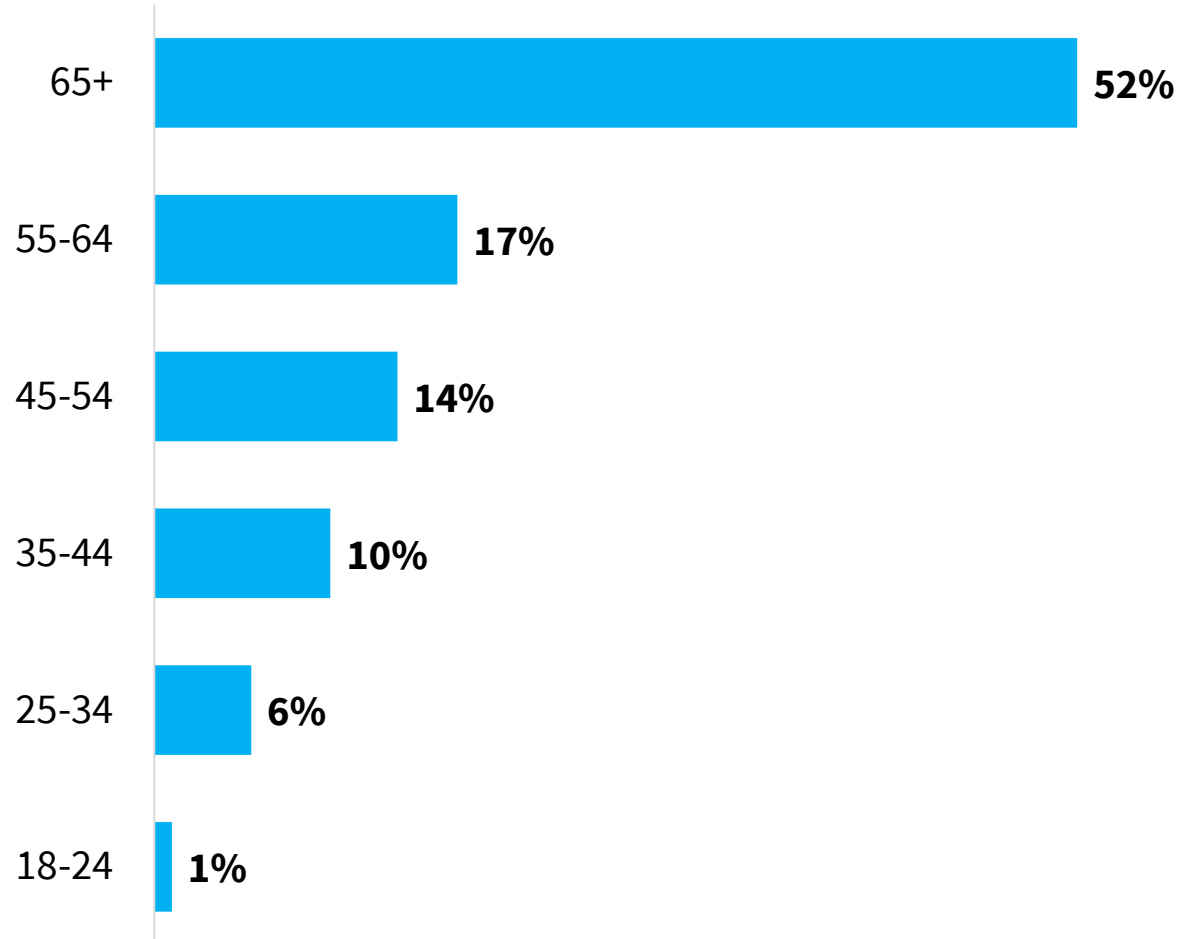
- Founded in **2002** to provide independent research
- Helped more than **1,400** communities navigate the strategic planning and referendum planning process

# Survey Information

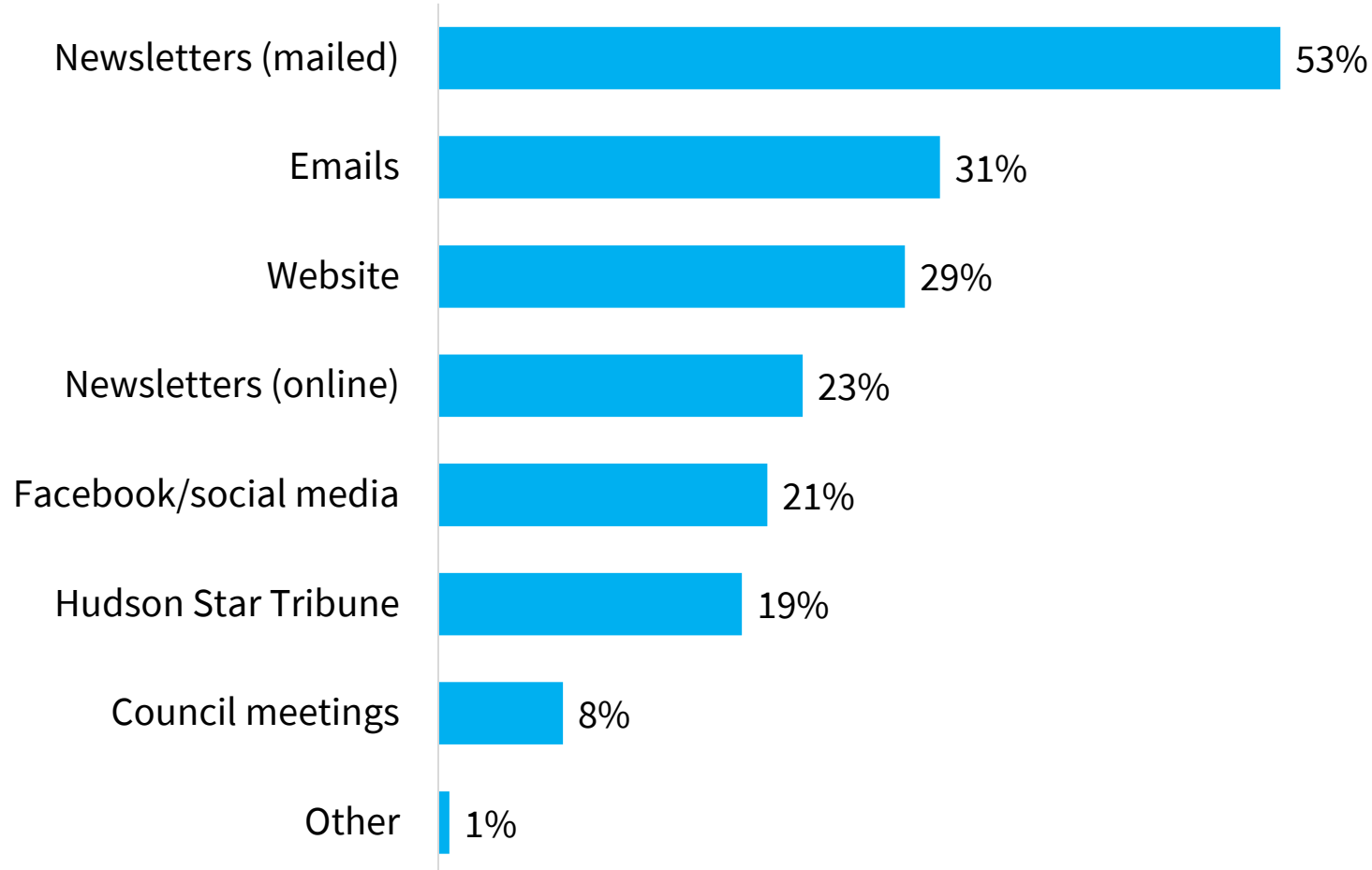
- **June 8, 2026** survey deadline
- **1,475** respondents
- **21.4%** response rate
- **+/- 2.60%** statistical margin of error



# What is your age?



# How would you like to receive information from us?



# Fire Department Background



The Hudson Fire Department (HFD) was established in 1873. We currently serve nearly 33,000 residents in a 49-square-mile area that covers the City of Hudson, Village of North Hudson, Town of Hudson, and a section in the Town of Troy. HFD provides:

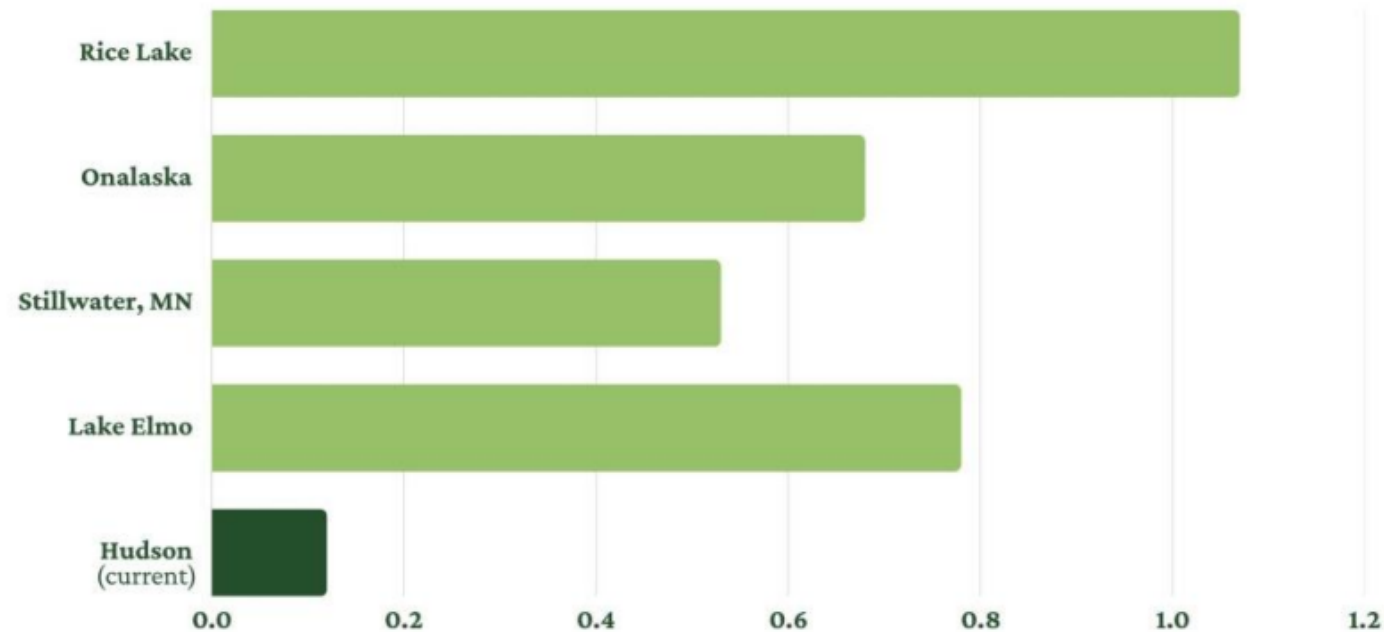
- ✓ Fire suppression
- ✓ Fire inspection
- ✓ Support for emergency medical services
- ✓ Rescue services

# Staffing Challenges



The five full-time staff members include the chief, assistant chief, fire marshal, firefighter/inspector, and administrative assistant (who does not respond to emergency calls). All staff work 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday, which means there is no staff in-station in the evenings, on weekends, and holidays.

Full-Time Staff per 1,000 Residents by Community



**This staffing level is well below similarly sized communities in our region (see chart).**

# Staffing Challenges



HFD relies on on-call firefighters who help cover emergencies. When a call comes in, they are notified and respond from home or work when they are able.

They have to go to the station first to get vehicles and equipment, which increases response times. In addition, the number of responders available for any given call is unpredictable, especially during normal working hours, overnight, on weekends, and on holidays.

This availability challenge is not unique to Hudson. On-call and volunteer firefighter programs across the state and country are finding it increasingly difficult to respond to emergency calls.

In addition, we cannot reliably provide rapid medical response support. HFD is the only department within the Lakeview EMS service area to not provide this coverage.

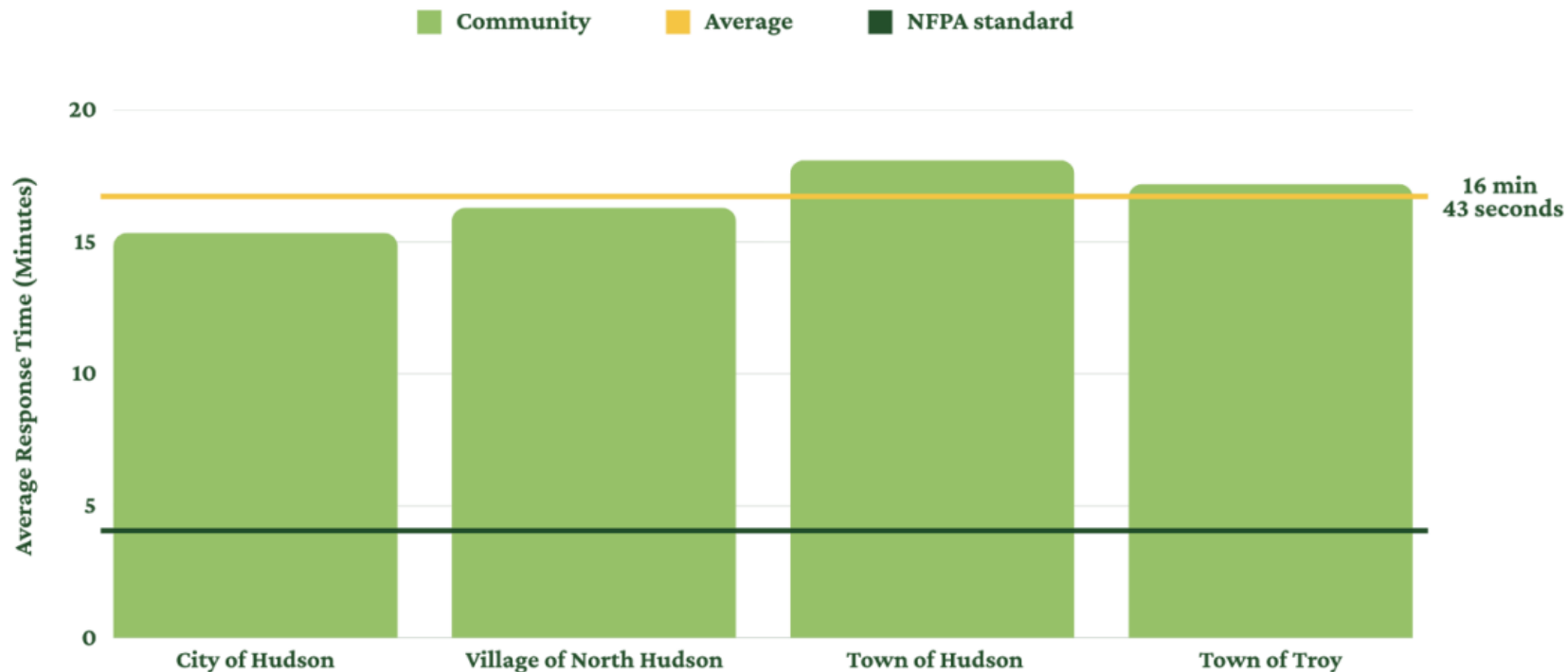
# Increasing Calls and Response Times



The staffing challenges outlined on the previous page make it difficult to respond to the growing number of emergency calls (397 in 2015 to 643 in 2025). Making matters worse, calls are coming in at the same time more often, which places additional strain on available responders. **This problem will get worse as the Hudson-area population grows.**

Consequently, response times are increasing. The average time for the first firetruck to arrive across all four communities is 16 minutes, 43 seconds. **This is well below the 4-minute national standard.**

## Response Times for First Firetruck to Arrive for Emergency Calls



# Increasing Calls and Response Times

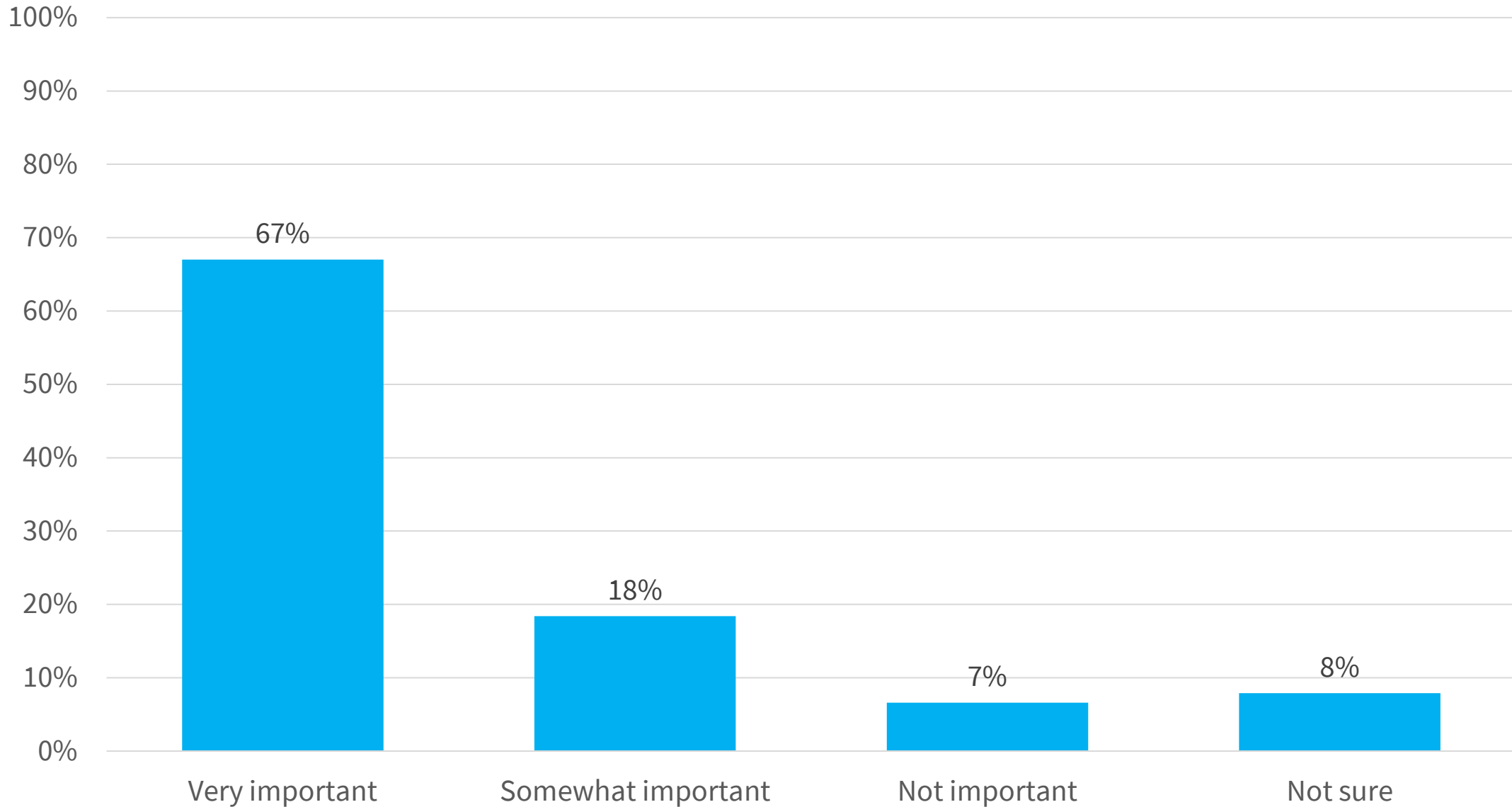


**Without additional full-time staff, these delays are likely to get worse.** Therefore, the Department has created a plan that is expected to reduce response times:

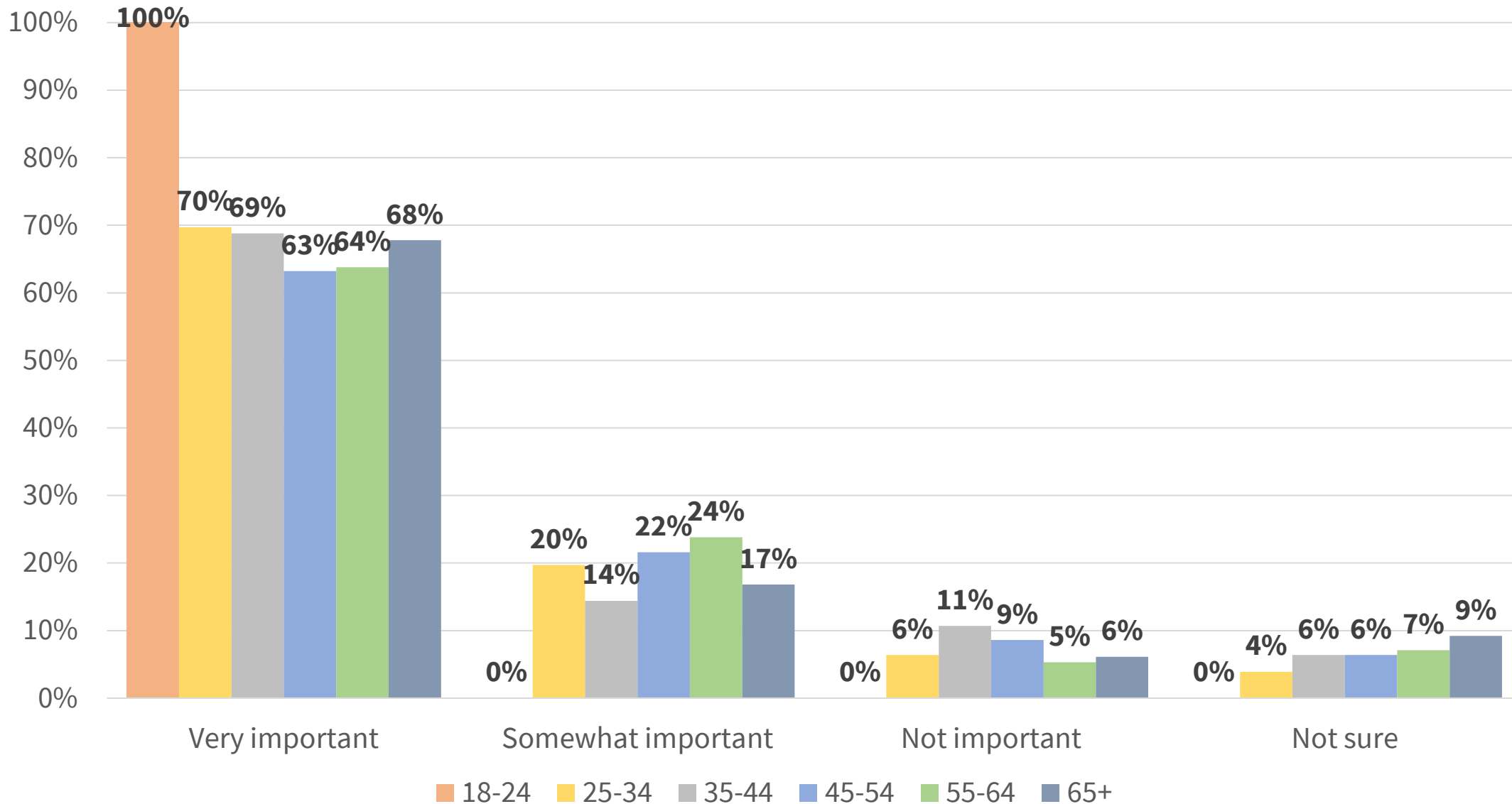
- Add 12 full-time firefighter/EMRs to provide 24/7 coverage (4 per shift).
- Schedule part-time firefighters to cover shifts when full-time staff are in training or out.
- Maintain the paid-on-call program to provide additional staffing for large, complex, or overlapping emergency calls.
- Pay for 1 assistant chief to support administration, training, and rescue efforts.

**This plan would cost \$2.7 million each year. Because the Department's costs are split by all four communities that use it, City of Hudson taxpayers would be responsible for \$1.49 million of that total increase.**

# How important is it to you to improve emergency response times?



# How important is it to you to improve emergency response times? *(by age)*



# Funding Support

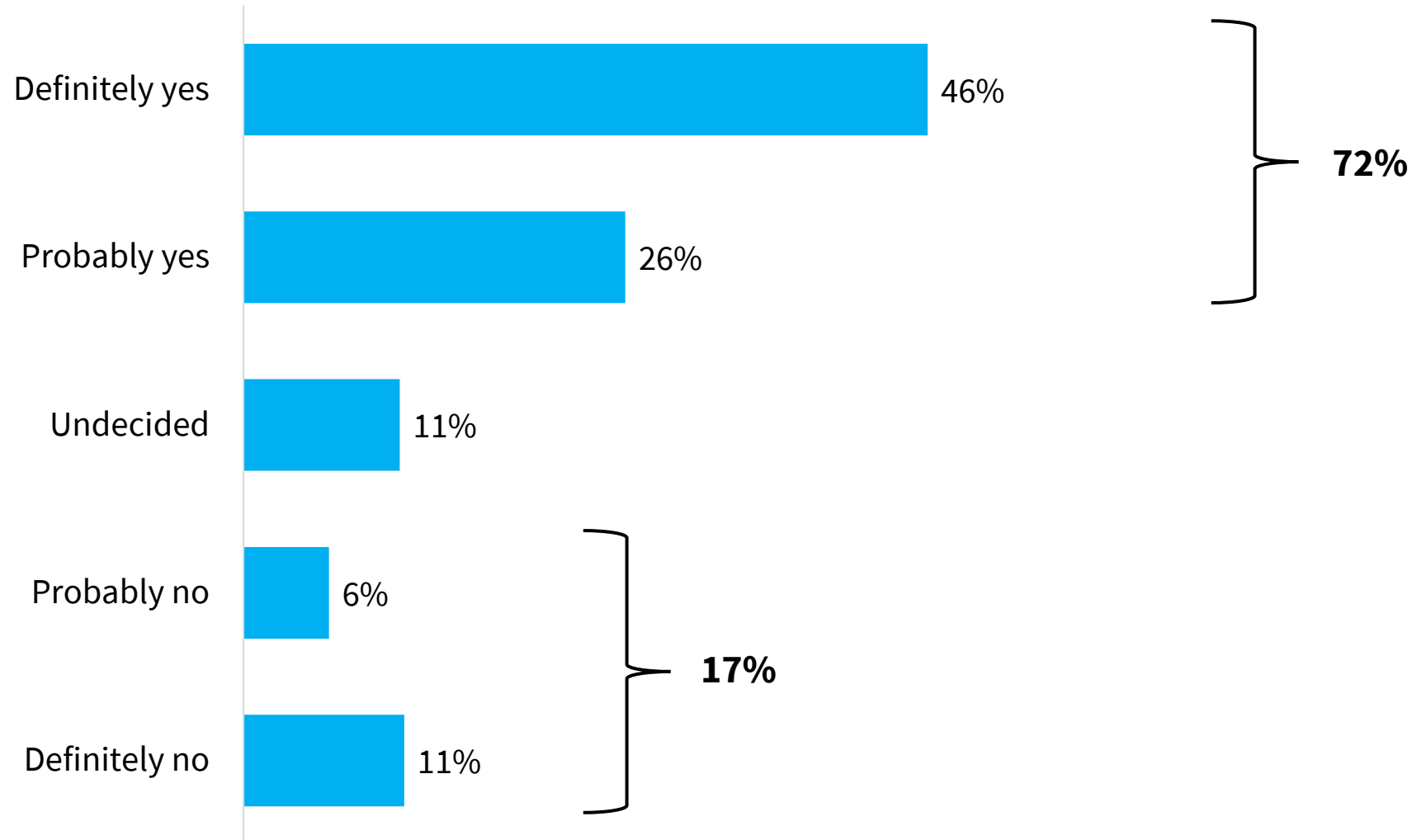


The City explored multiple options to pay for this plan, including a wheel tax and cuts to the annual budget, but determined those are not realistic.

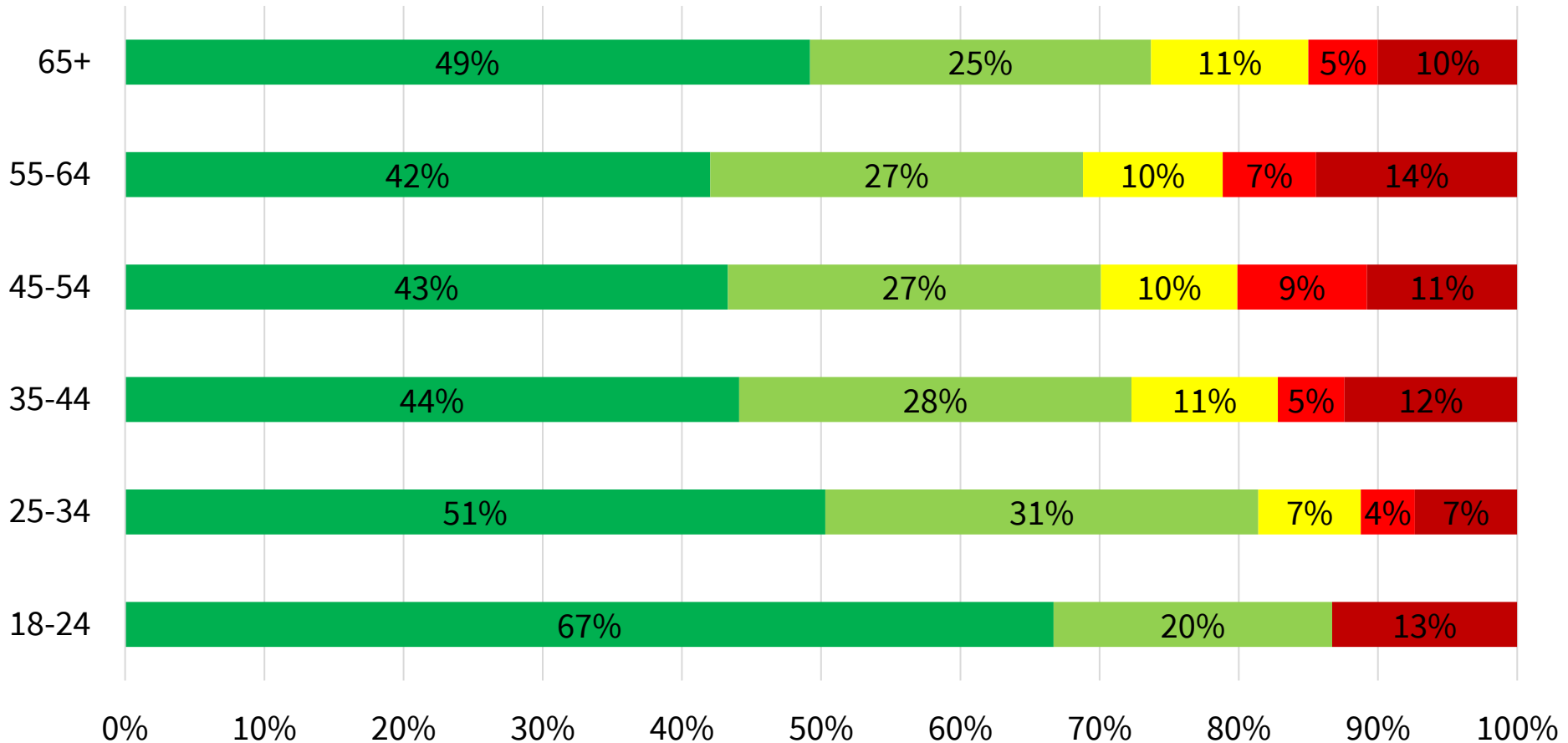
Instead, the most viable long-term solution is to ask City of Hudson voters to consider a referendum. **We are not alone. Over the last 10 years, more than 75 Wisconsin municipalities have pursued a referendum to increase their budget.**

<i>How would this affect my property taxes?</i>		
<b>Amount of Property Value</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Tax Increase</b>	<b>Estimated Monthly Tax Increase</b>
\$100,000	\$40	\$3.33
\$300,000	\$120	\$10
\$500,000*	\$199	\$16.58

# Would you support a \$1.49 million referendum to pay for the Fire Department staffing plan?

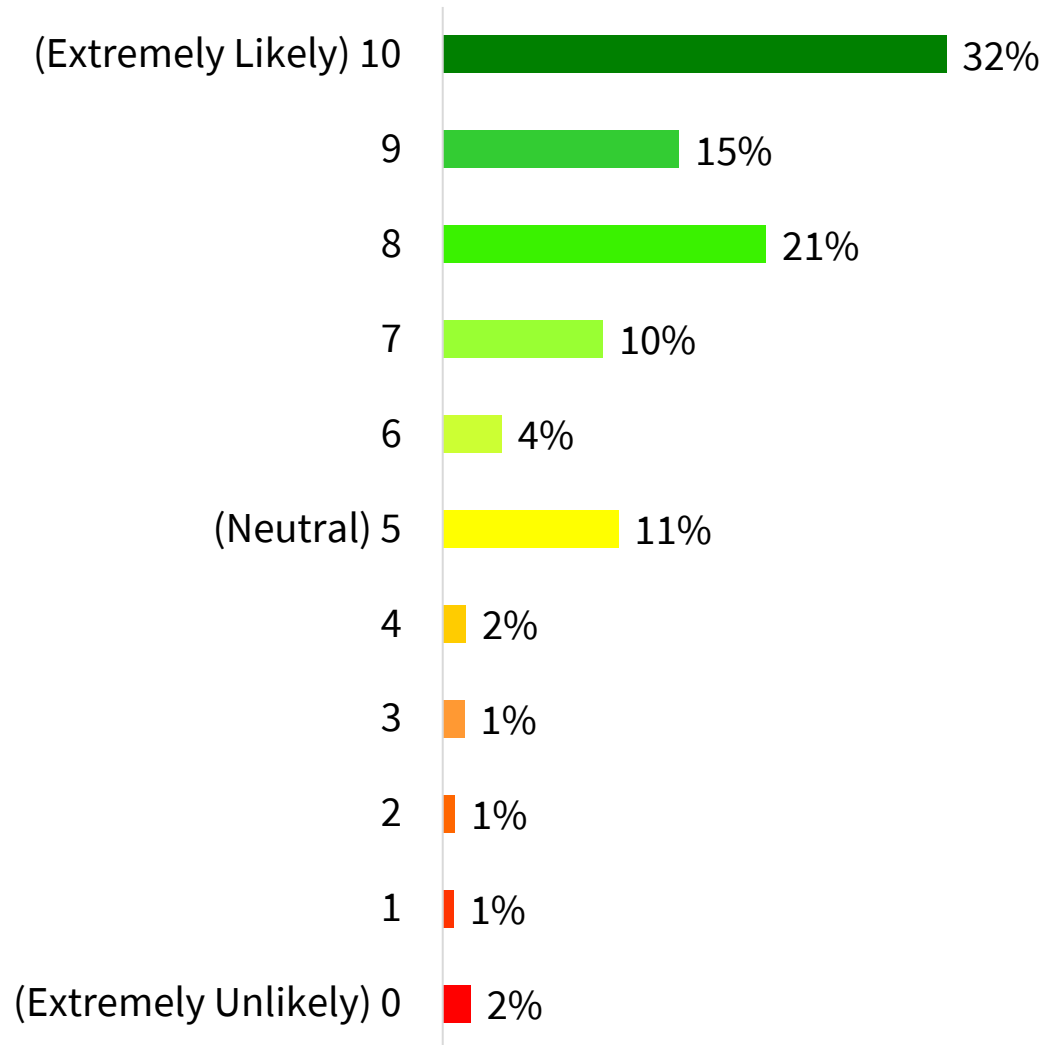


# Would you support a \$1.49 million referendum to pay for the Fire Department staffing plan? *(by age)*



■ Definitely yes   ■ Probably yes   ■ Undecided   ■ Probably no   ■ Definitely no

# On a scale of 0 – 10, how likely would you be to recommend the City of Hudson to a friend or family member?



**City of Hudson Score: 7.90**

**Comparison Score: 7.50**



# Thank you!



COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS