

Town of Harvard Planning Board

**2020 Senior Housing Survey Results
January 2021**

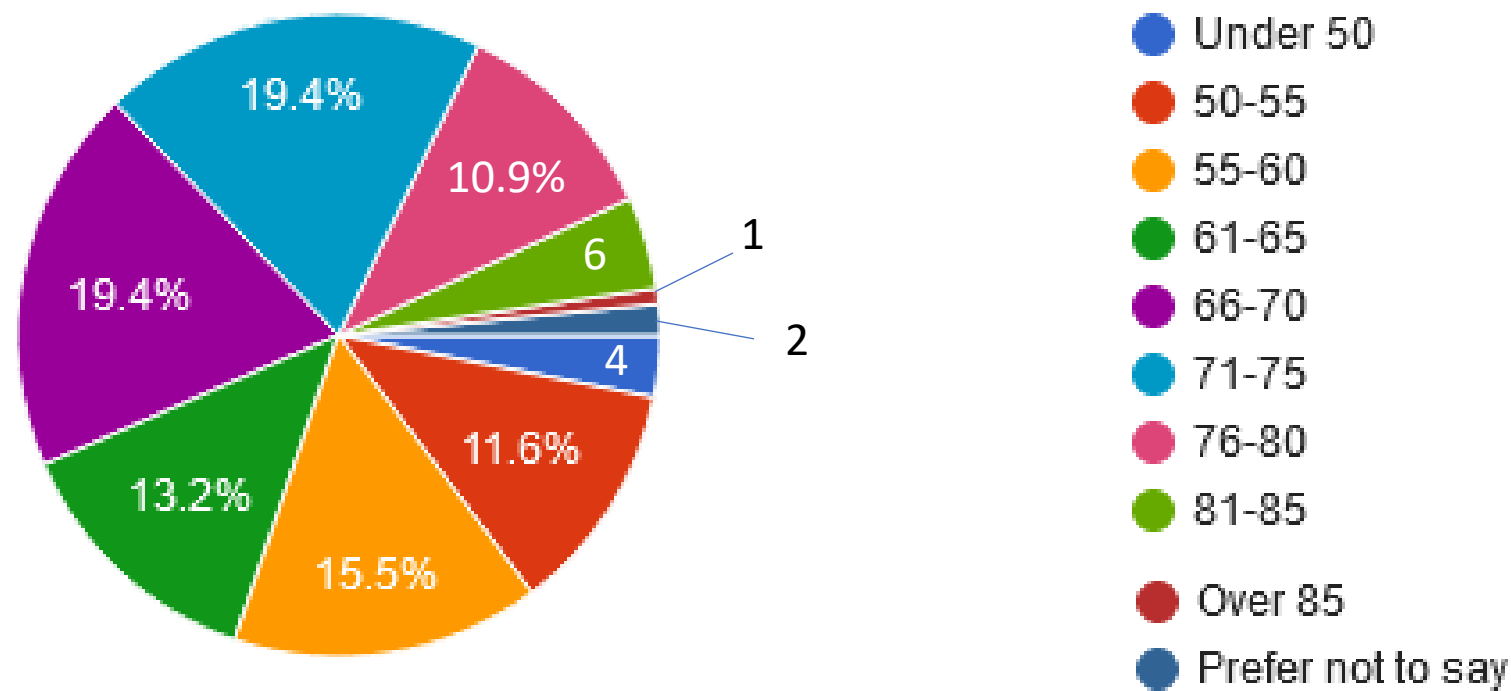


Basic Survey Facts

- Survey instrument developed by Planning Board Working Group and Staff and Evaluated by Board and COA Reps
- Survey open between November 9 and November 22.
- Total of 130 Responses – good mix of Harvard's seniors
- Roughly balanced by gender and across age categories. They live all over Harvard – no one neighborhood dominates.
- Most live with a spouse, partner, or at least one family member. Only about 15% live alone
- An overwhelming majority (95%+) own their own home. For the vast majority (95%), that home is a single-family home.
- Given that the survey's target was residents over the age of 50, it is not surprising that most respondents have lived in town for many years. More than 70% have lived here for over 20 years. Another 12% have lived here between 10 and 20 years.

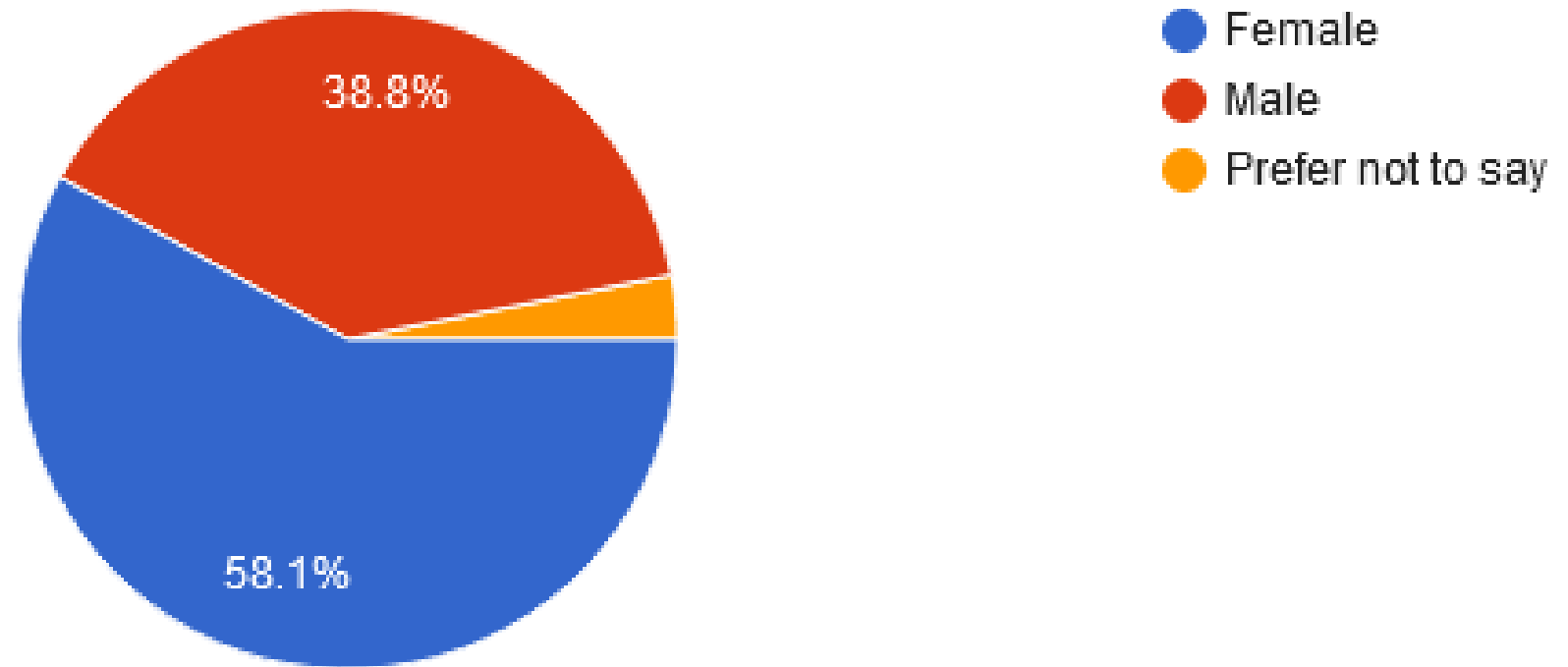
What is your age?

129 responses



What is your gender?

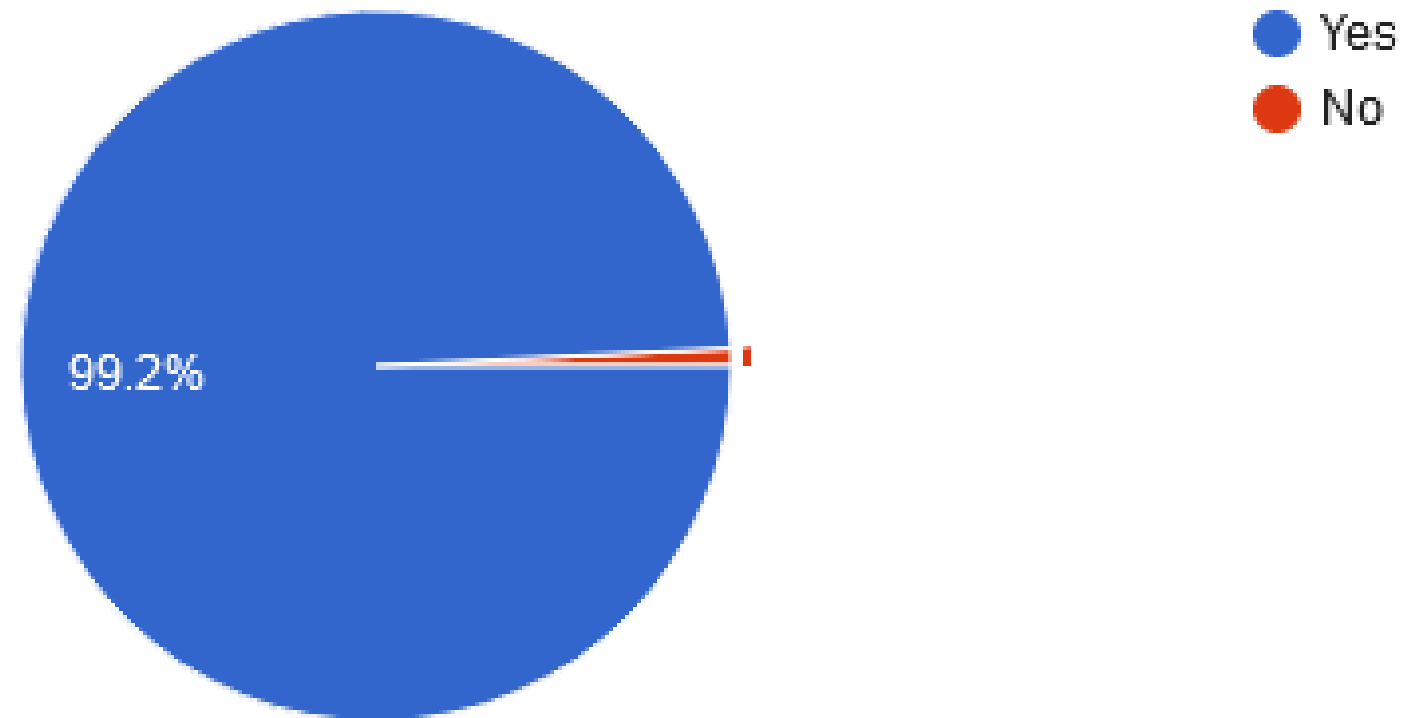
129 responses



Question 2

Are you a Harvard resident?

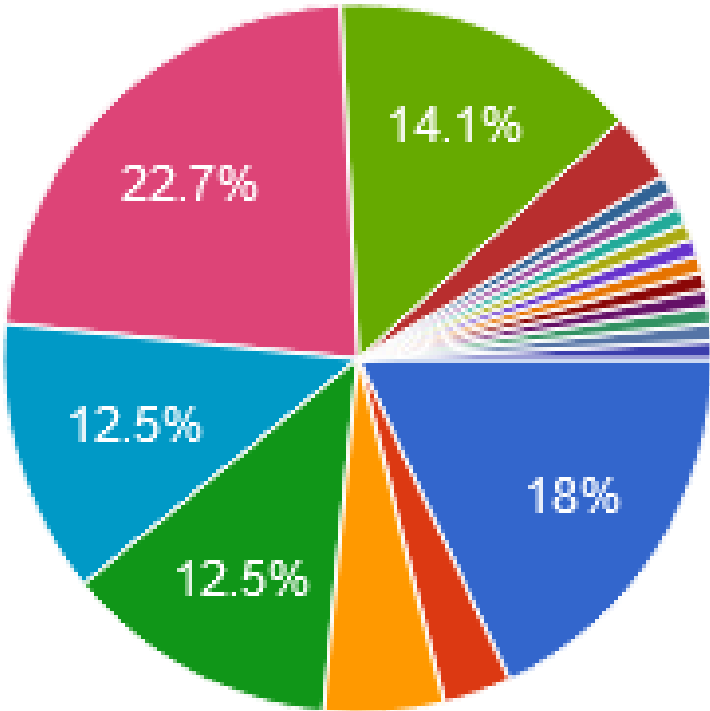
128 responses



Question 3

What part of Harvard do you live in? Please select one geographic area of town that you live in. While there may be more than one choice that seems to apply, pick one that is the best fit in your view.

128 responses

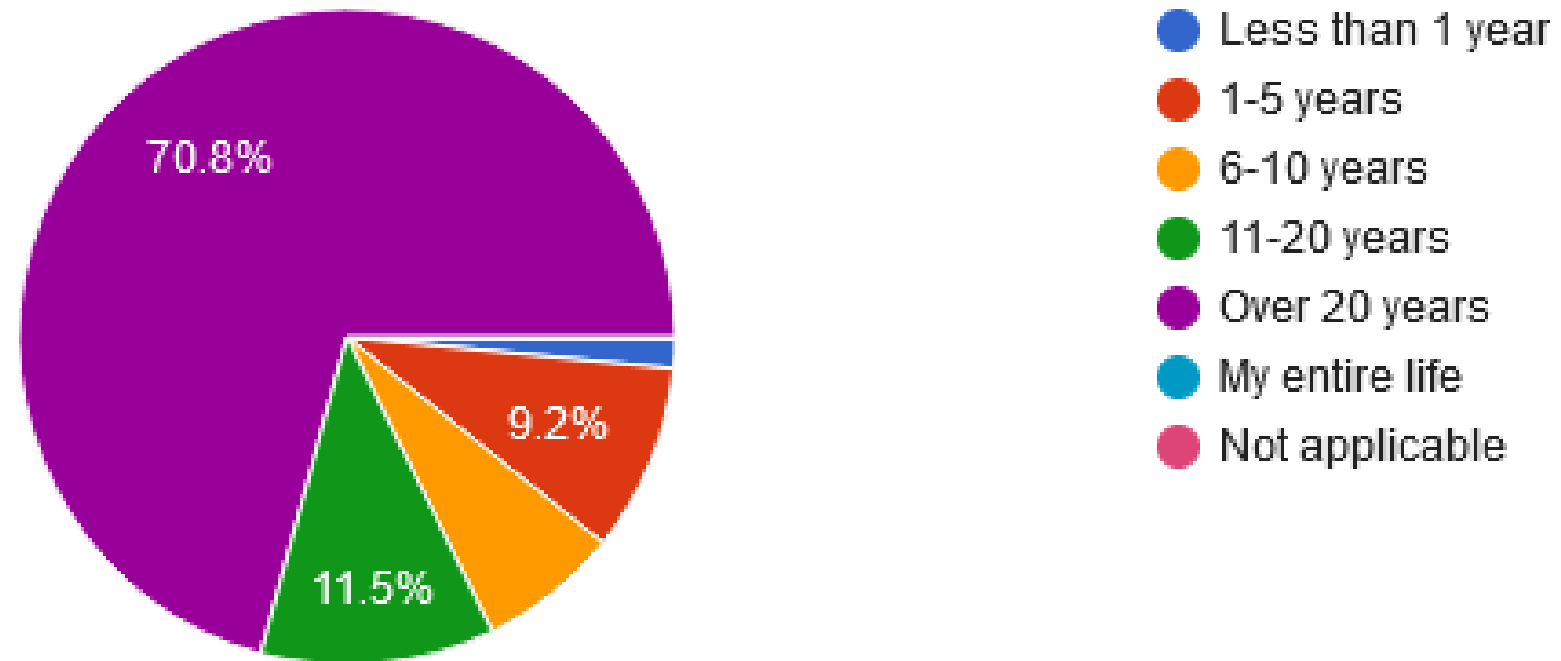


- Harvard Center (generally the historic...
- Still River area
- Shaker Village Area (generally histori...
- North Harvard (generally north of Rou...
- Devens
- East - (east of Ayer Road from Mass...
- Southeast - (east of Mass Ave/Bolton...
- Southwest - (west of Mass Ave/Bolton...
- West (west of Ayer Road from Still Riv...
- Not applicable
- not sure of your definitions
- barehill pond
- Littleton County Road
- Metacomet Path
- Old Littleton Rd
- Stow RD
- Stow Rd 1 mile over Bolton town line
- Littleton County Rd.
- 1/2 mile from town center
- I don't know - from above list

Question 4

How long have you lived in Harvard?

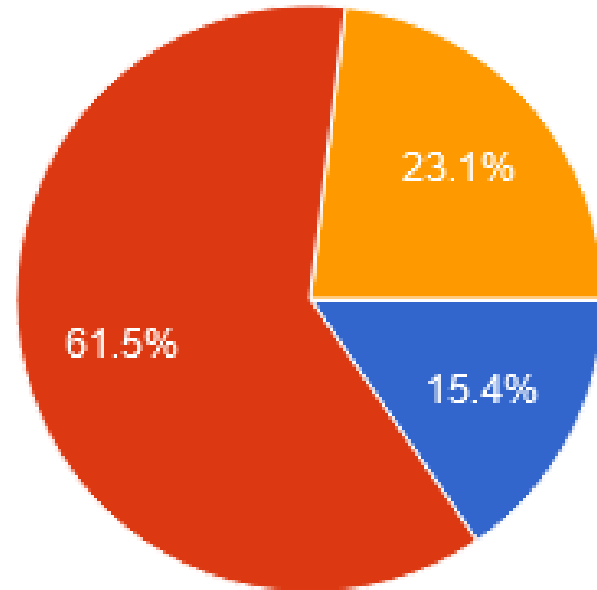
130 responses



Question 5

I currently live...

130 responses



- Alone
- With a spouse or partner
- With one or more family members
- With a friend or roommate
- With a caretaker
- In a senior living center (independent living, assisted living, nursing, or continuing care community)

Question 6

Question 7 What do you enjoy about living in Harvard?

Three (3) most common responses:

1. **Rural Environment** (keywords include rural natural, green, farmland...)
2. **Engaged Community** (keywords town spirit, community engagement, kind, generous...)
3. **Small Town Atmosphere** (keywords quaint, limited traffic, distance from big cities, lack of commercial development...)

Other Responses: Friends and Family, Institutions and Organizations, Culture and History, Everything or Almost Everything, Large House Lots, and Other/Miscellaneous.

Please refer to Senior Housing Survey – Summary of Findings for additional detail on this question.

Question 8 – What They Do Not Like About Harvard

Eleven (11) primary areas of response:

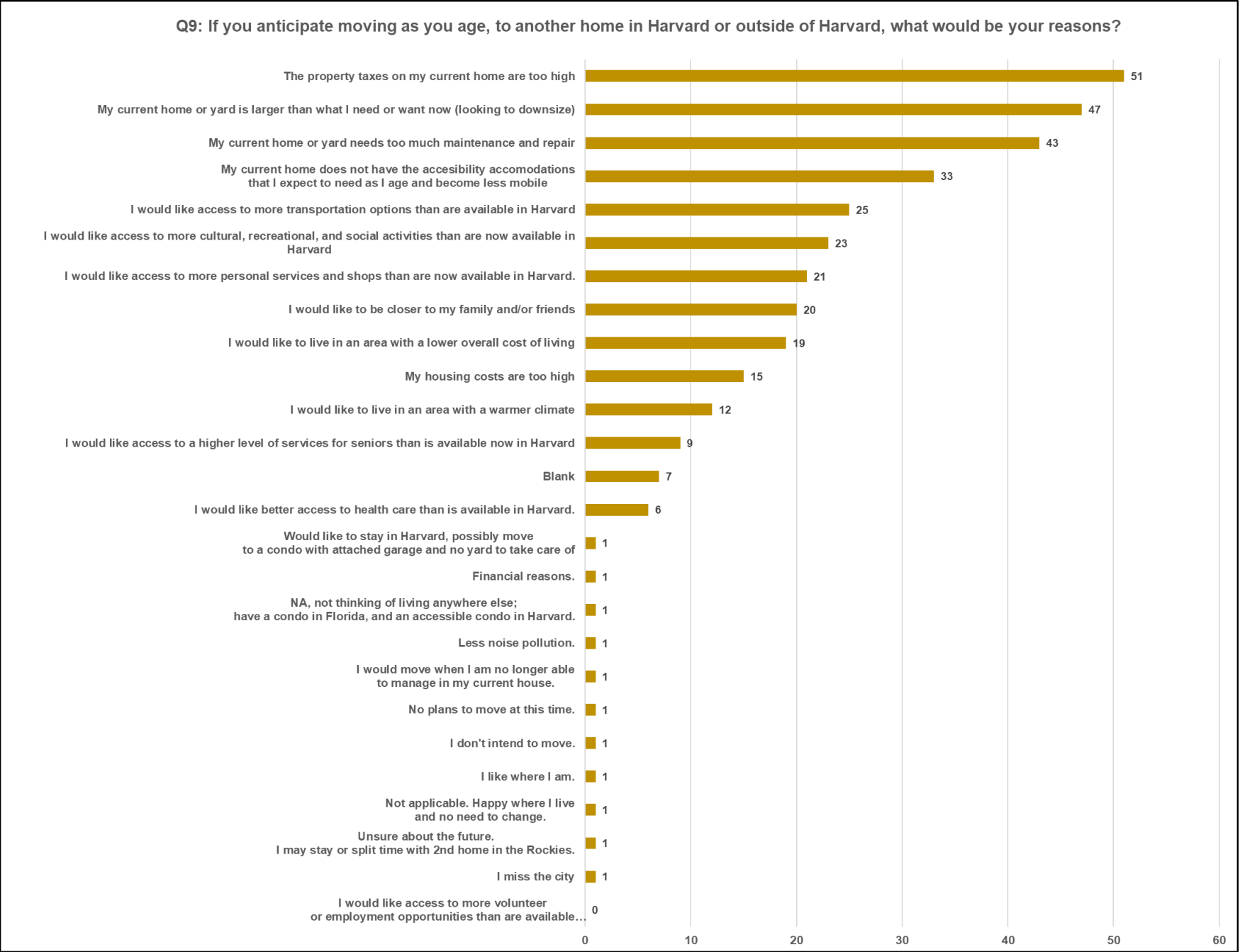
1. Local Government and Services (24 responses)
2. Cost of Living, Housing Costs, Taxes (22 responses)
3. Commuting and Access to Shopping/Services (22 responses)
4. Homogeneity, Culture, and Social (20 responses)
5. Noise, Traffic, Safety, and Other Nuisances (16 responses)
6. Growth, Progress, or Change (14 responses)
7. Commercial or Business (13 Responses)
8. Residential Options for Seniors (6 responses)
9. Municipal Fiscal Issues (6 responses)
10. Sidewalks and Pedestrian Environment (4 responses)
11. Senior-Friendly Community (2 responses)

Please refer to Senior Housing Survey – Summary of Findings for additional detail on this question.

Question 9

(123 Responses)

“Taxes, need to
downsize,
maintenance, and
accessibility
challenges are the
primary reasons
cited.”



Do you own or rent your current residence?

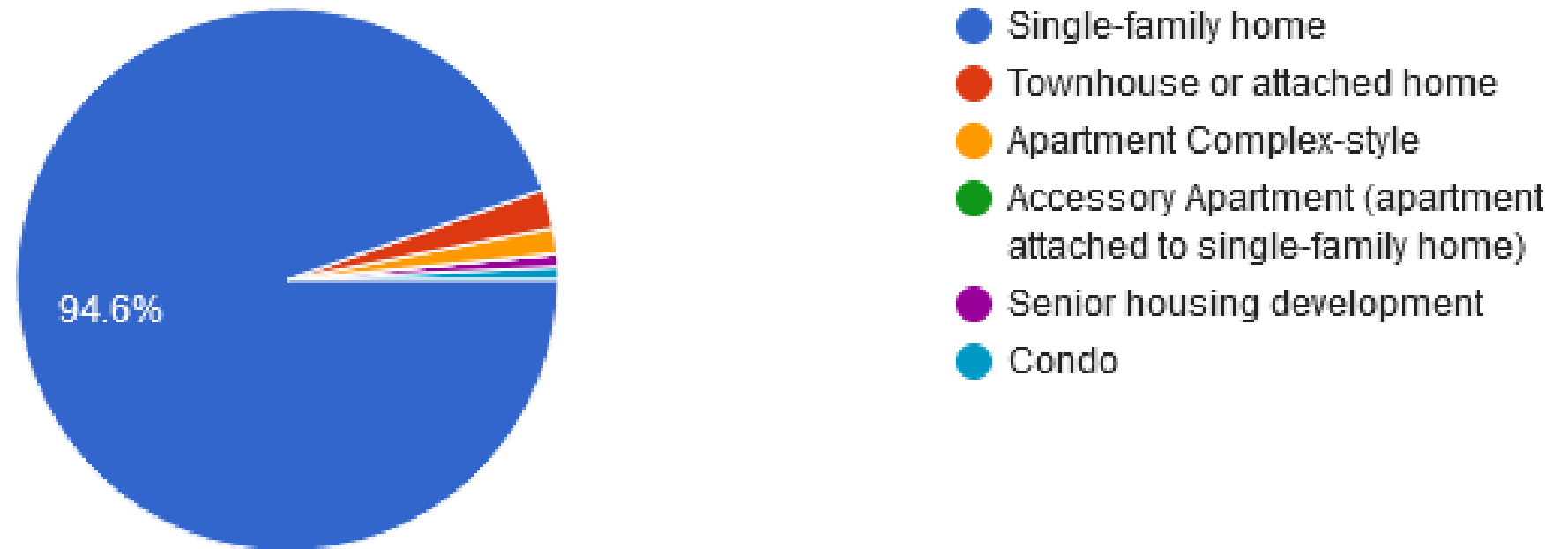
130 responses



Question 10

What type of structure best describes your home, regardless of whether you rent or own.

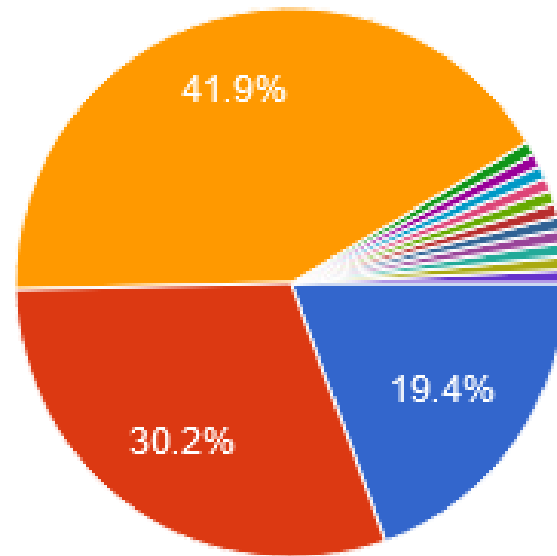
130 responses



Question 11

Do you anticipate moving as you age?

129 responses

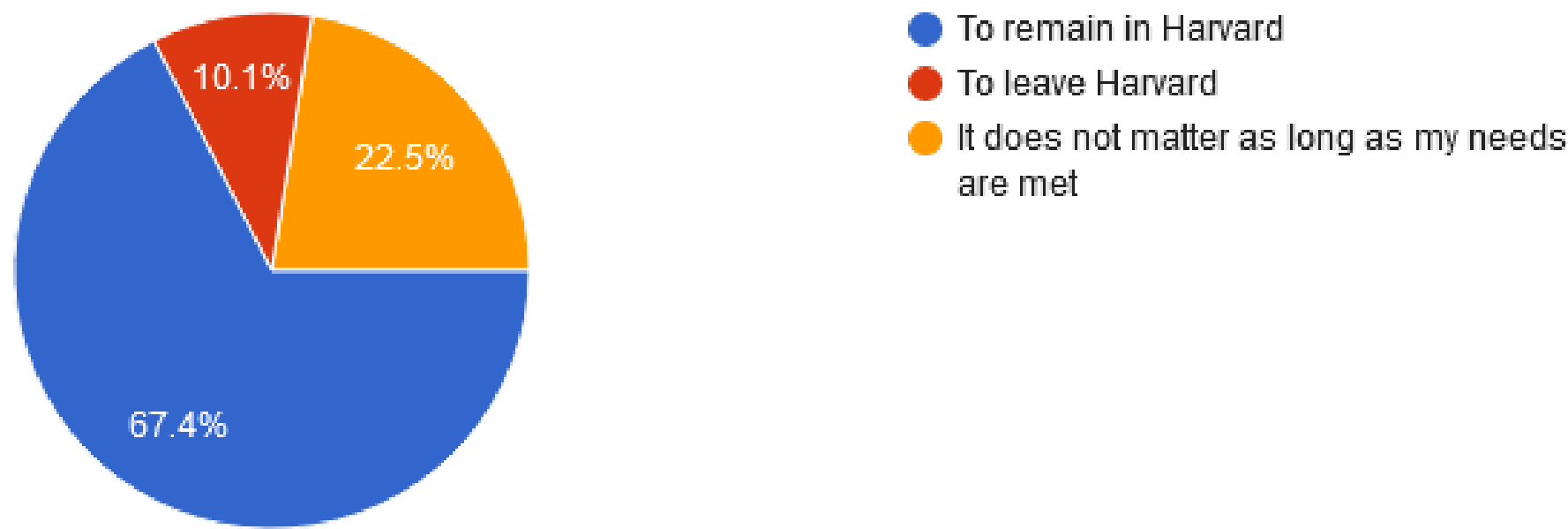


- Yes, sooner than 5 years
- Yes, beyond 5 years
- No, I do not anticipate moving in the n...
- I hope not to move unless forced by c...
- I think so but don't know. Very few opti...
- uncertain
- Not sure - if there was more reasona...
- not sure
- I'm waiting to see if harvard continues to devolve, increasing taxes and fewe...
- I'd prefer not to
- Maybe..maybe not.....hopefully beyond 5 years
- Taxes/affordability and ability to age in place will determine if/when I move.
- We spend part of the year in another...
- When I cannot afford the taxes

Question 12

If you already live in Harvard, would you prefer...?

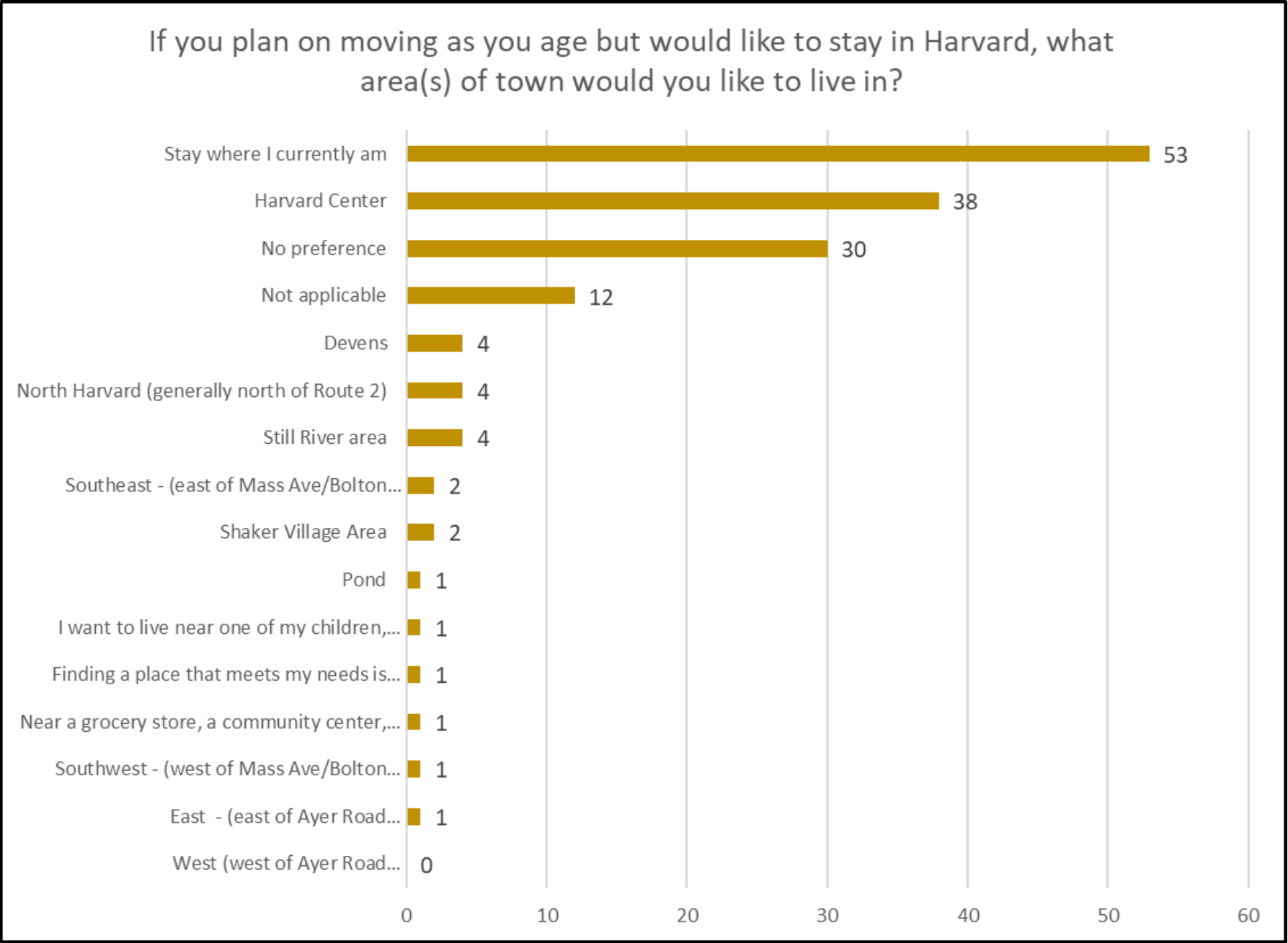
129 responses



Question 14

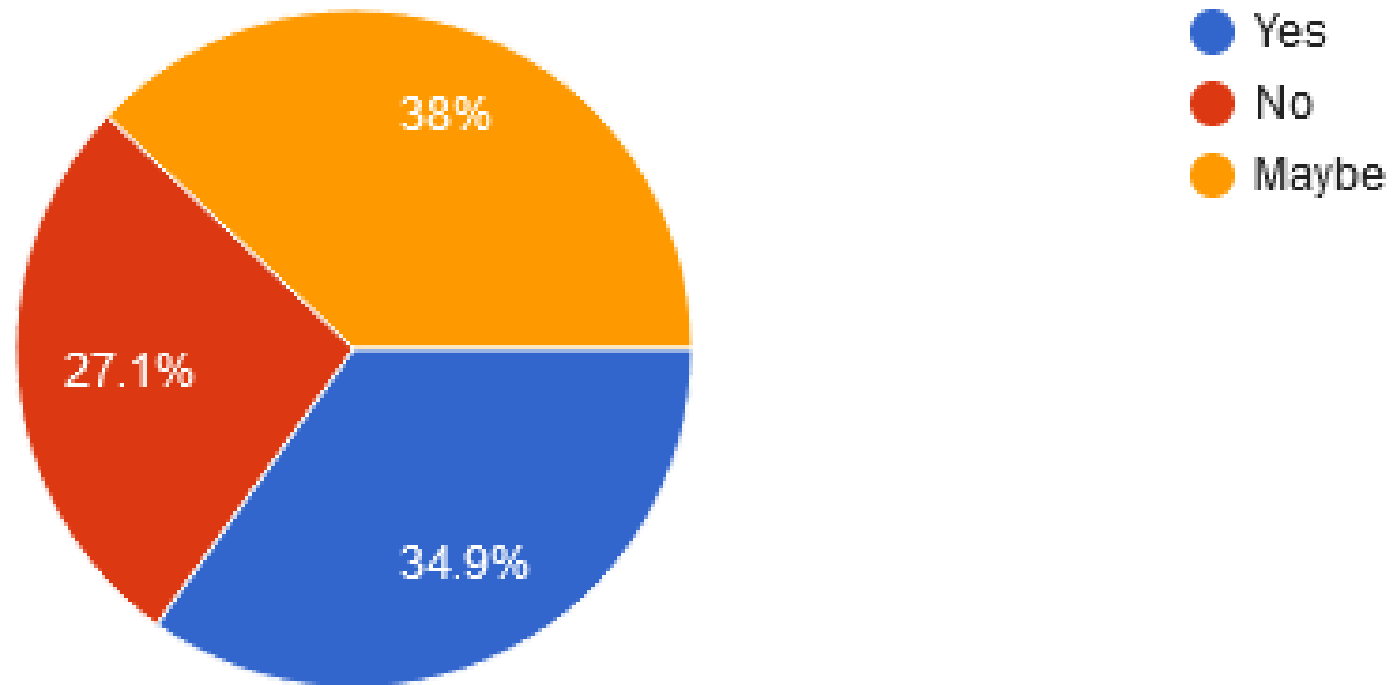
(126 Responses)

“Overwhelming preference for Harvard Center among specific choices.”



Are you interested in considering some type of senior housing in Harvard as you age?

129 responses

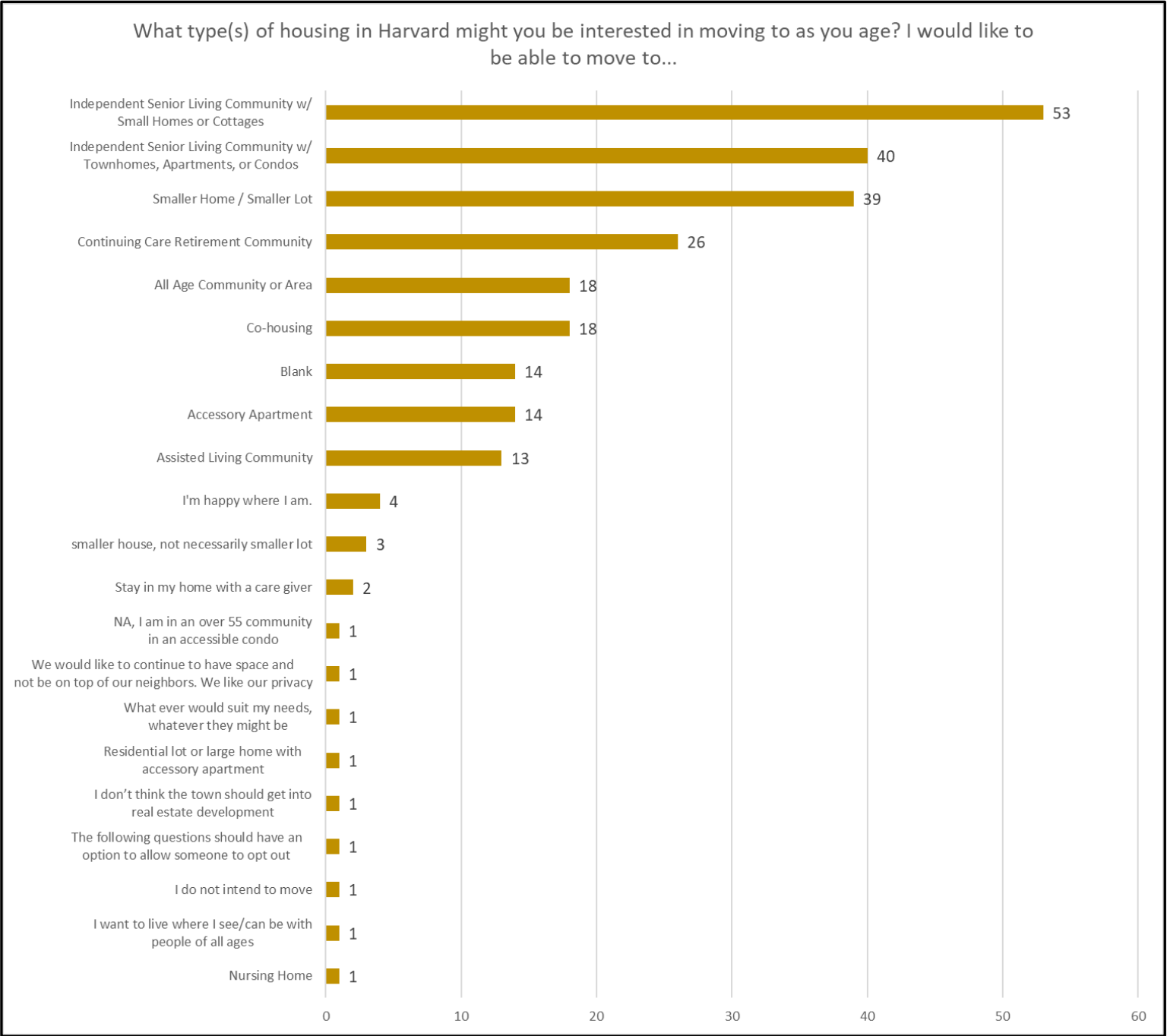


Question 15

Question 16

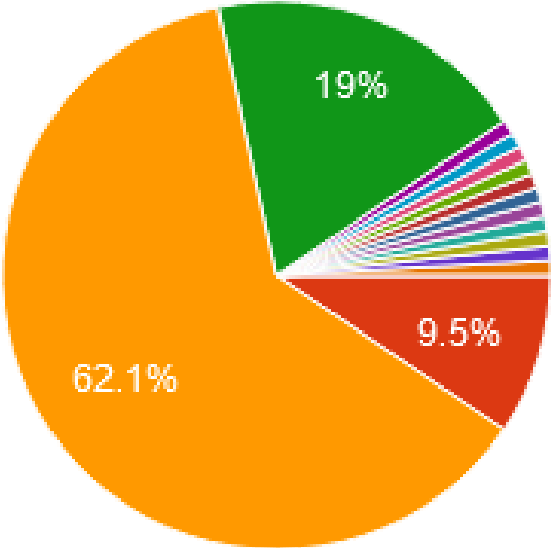
(116 Responses)

“Preference for Independent living of various types followed by small homes on small lots and strong interest in CCRCs.”



How many bedrooms would you prefer?

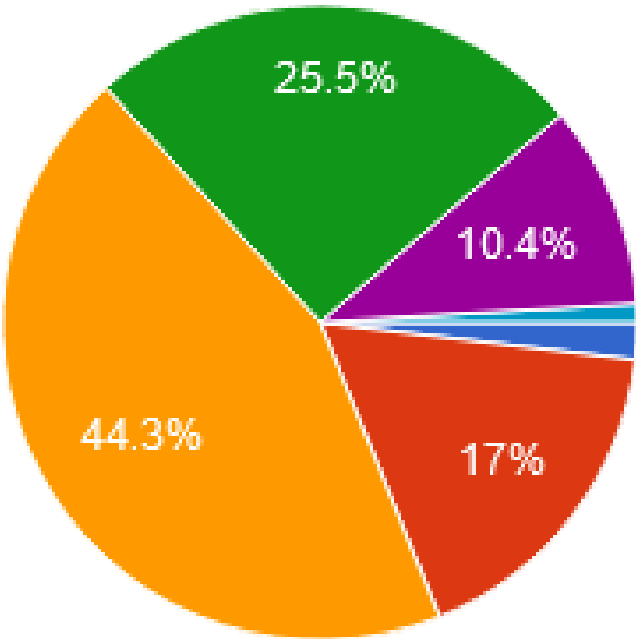
116 responses



- Studio unit
- One bedroom
- Two bedroom
- Three or more bedrooms
- Not sure
- NA
- I like where i am.
- Will depend on future family needs
- 1-2 bedroom, w/simple space for office/ guest, & decent storage.
- What i have
- Where i am
- Two or more bedrooms
- I do not intend to move.
- Not applicable
- Depends on square footage. Three/f...

What size of unit (amount of space) would you prefer?

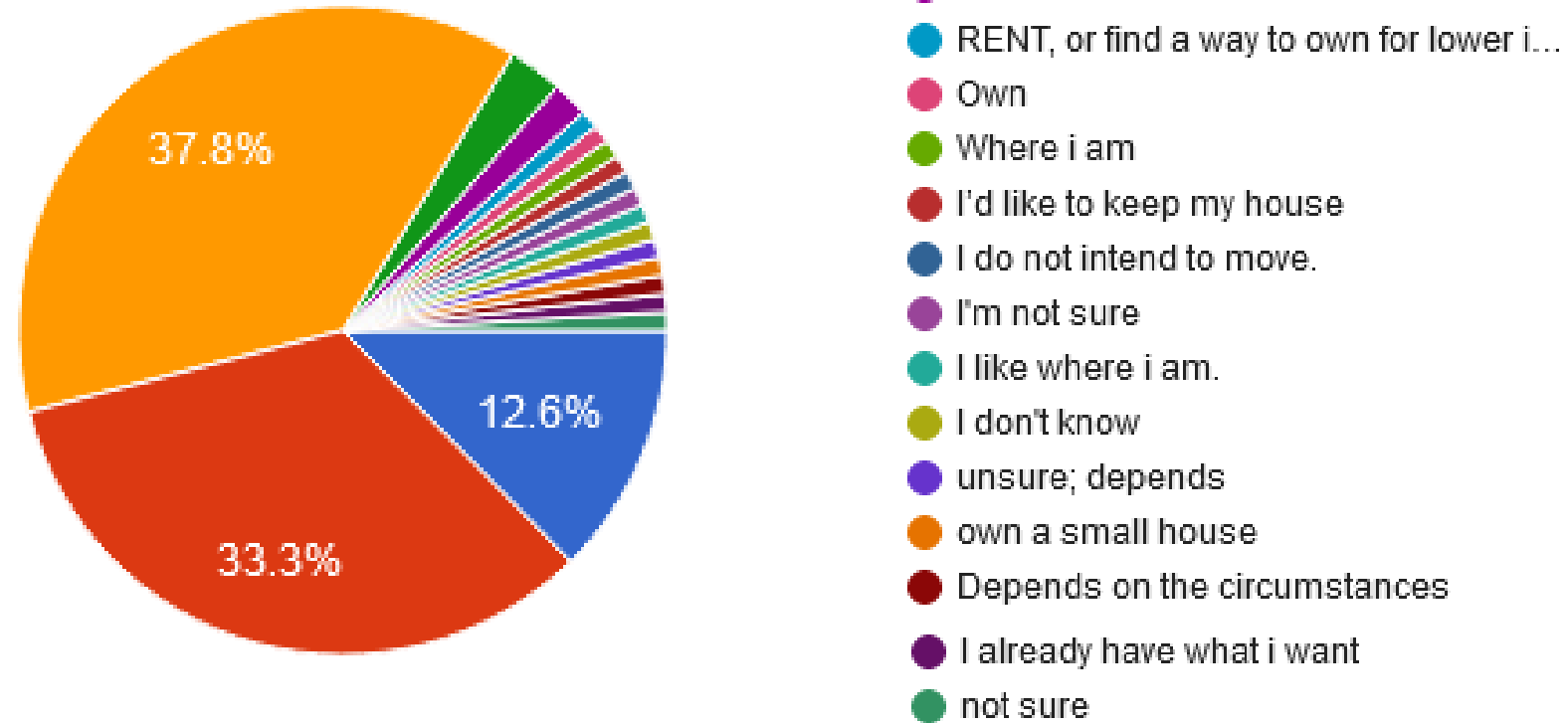
106 responses



- Less than 750 square feet
- 750 to 1000 square feet
- 1000 to 1500 square feet
- 1500 to 2000 square feet
- 2000 to 3000 square feet
- Over 3000 square feet

Would you prefer to rent or own?

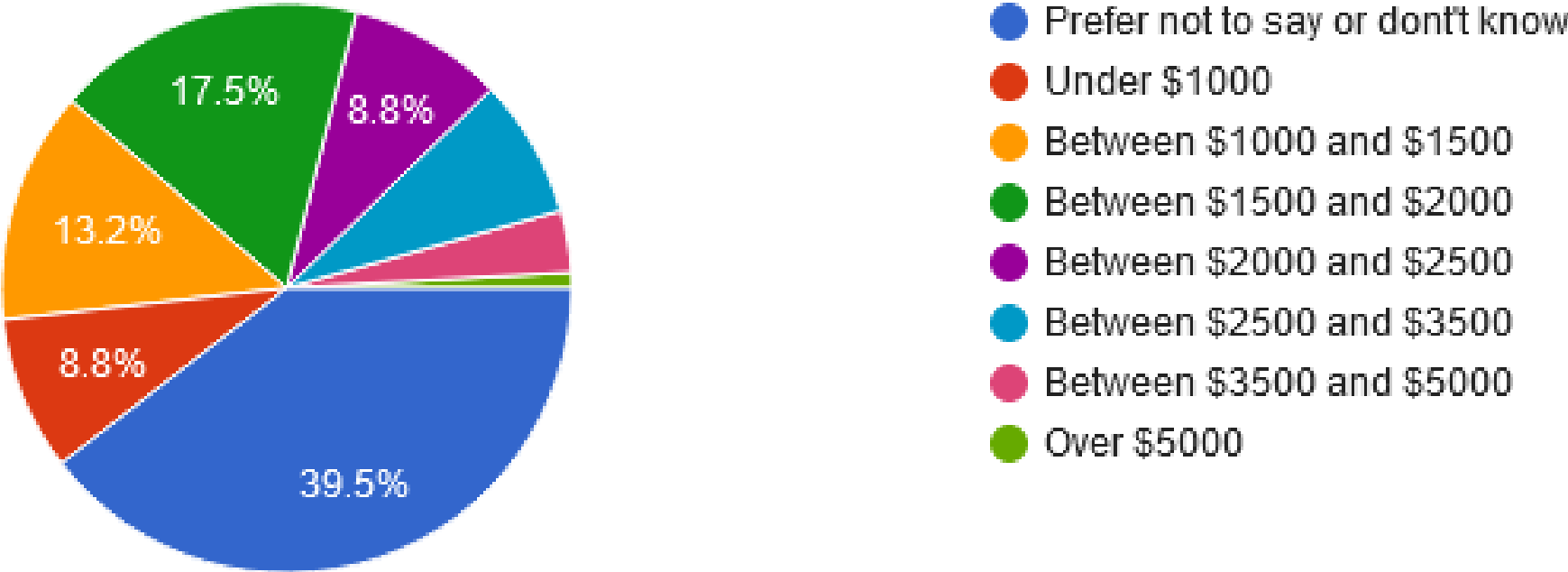
111 responses



Question 19

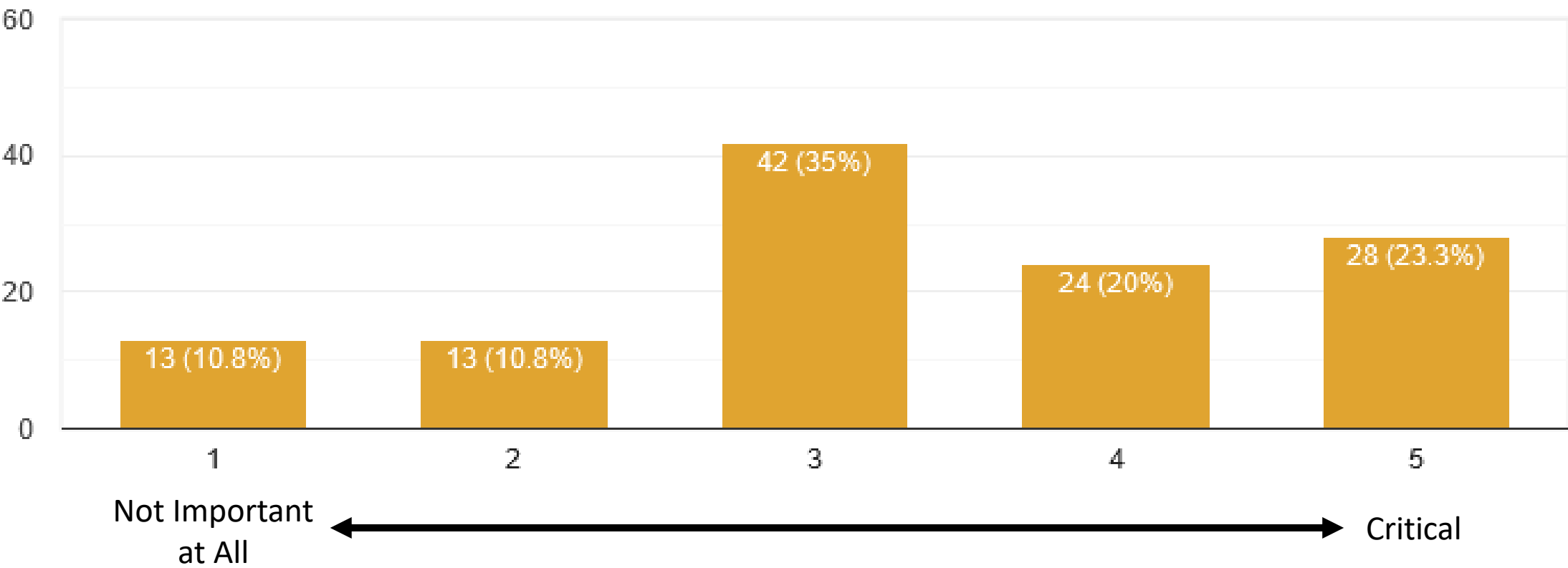
How much are you willing to pay for housing on a monthly basis? (total monthly housing costs including mortgage/rent, utilities, insurance, condo fees)

114 responses



How important is housing affordability to you?

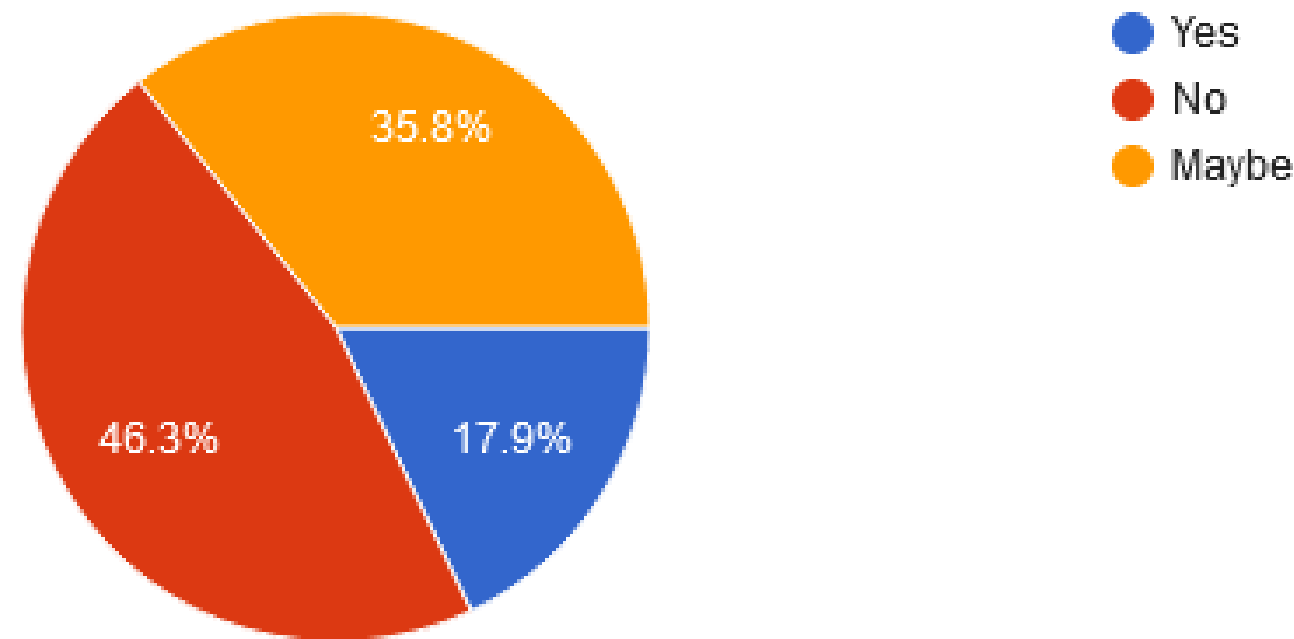
120 responses



“43.3% of respondents responded that it was critical or important.”

Would you be interested in additional information about available affordable housing programs?

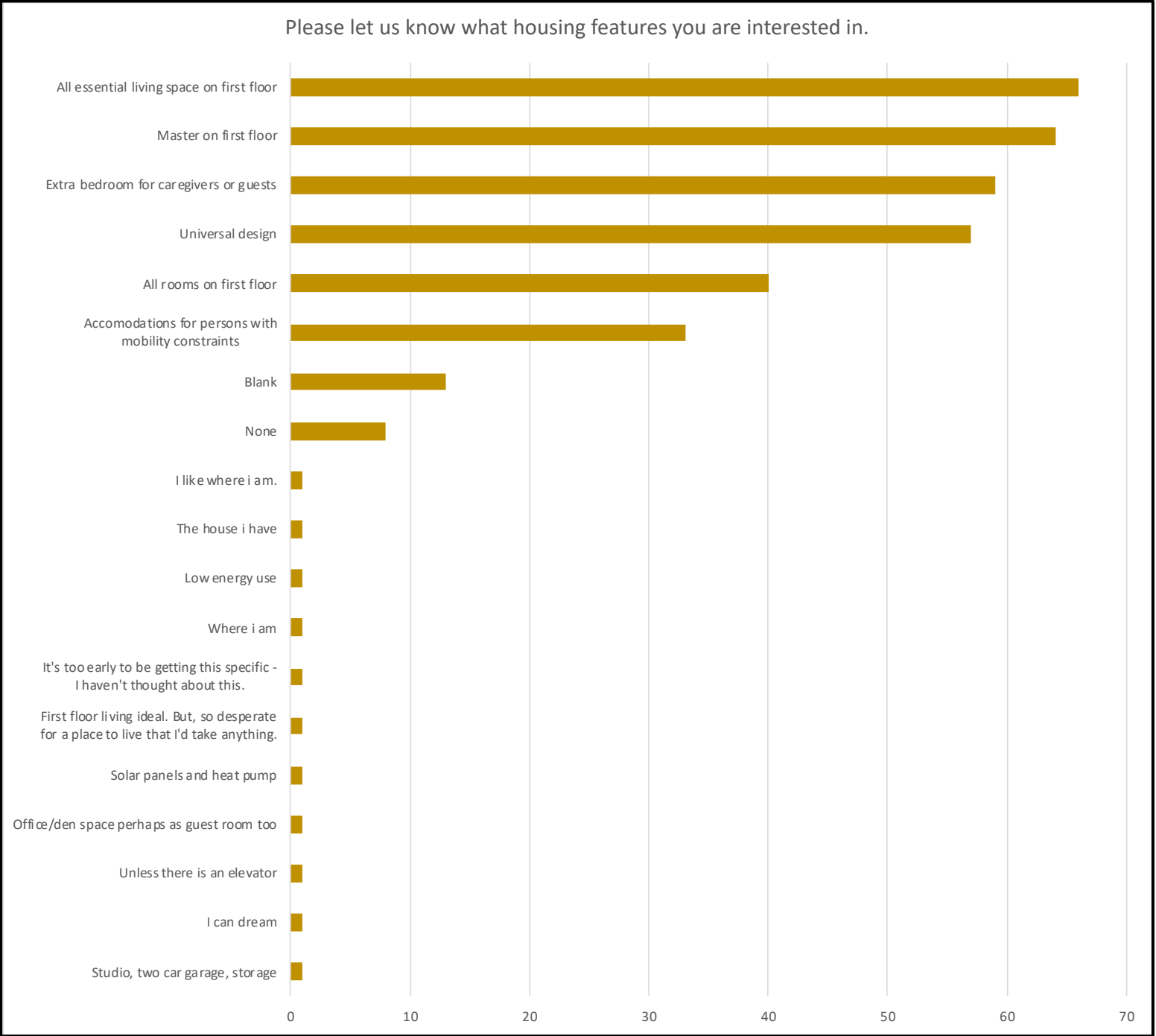
123 responses



Question 23

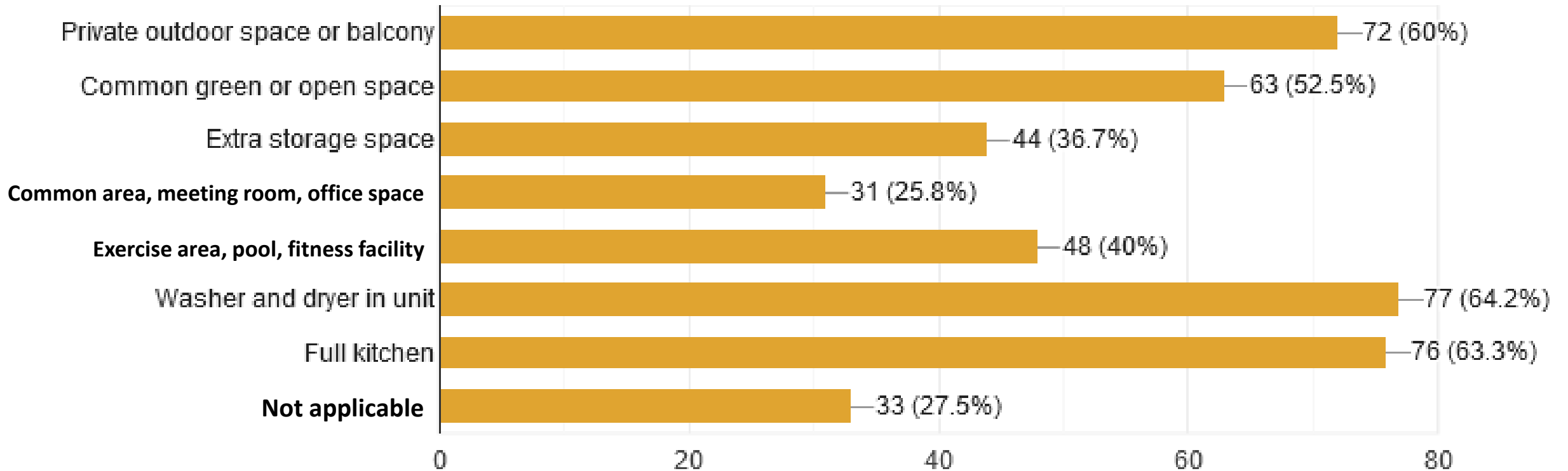
(116 Responses)

“Strong preference for first floor living or essential space.”



If you might have interest in moving to a multi-unit residential complex, please select which of the following features that you would want.

120 responses

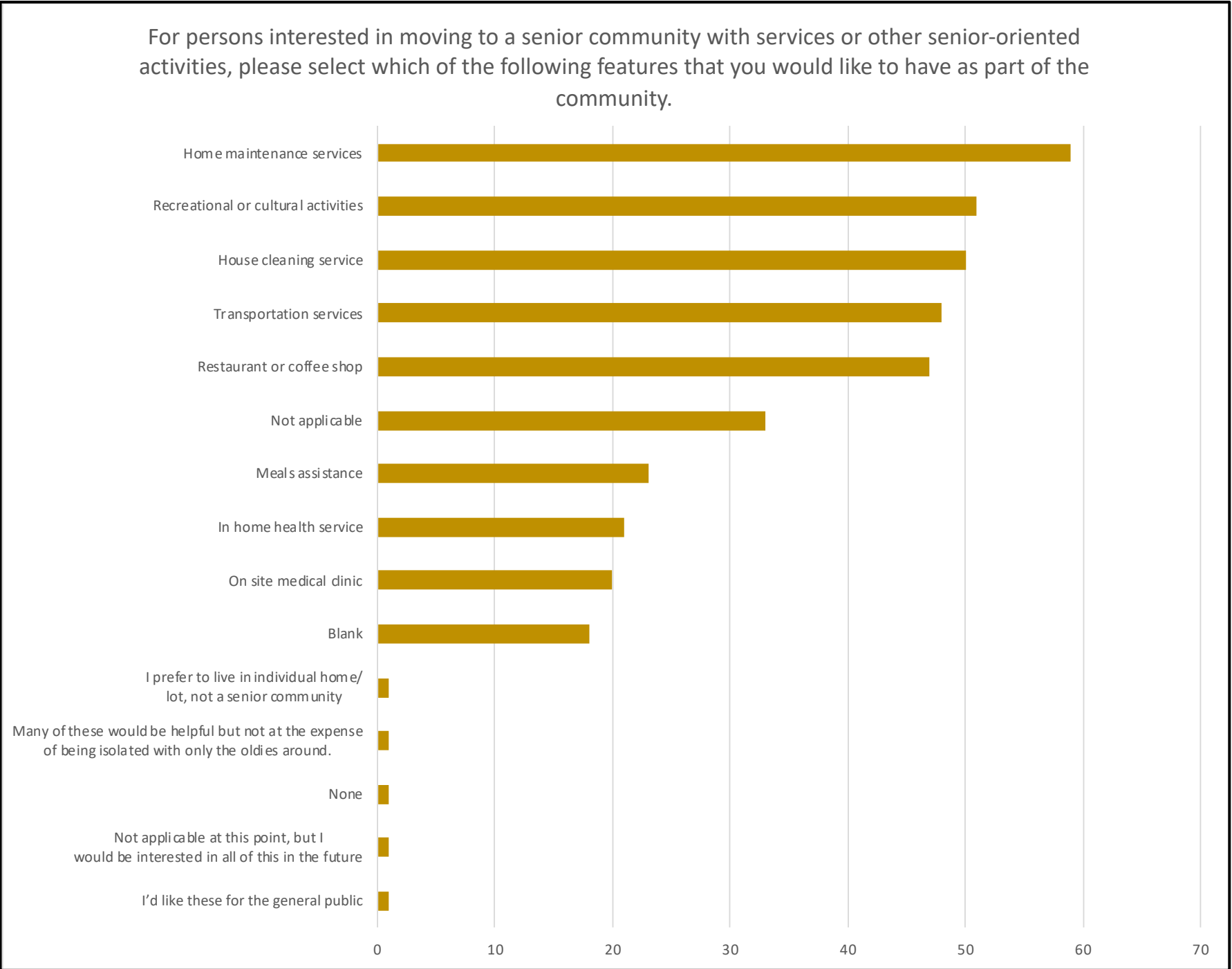


Question 24

Question 25

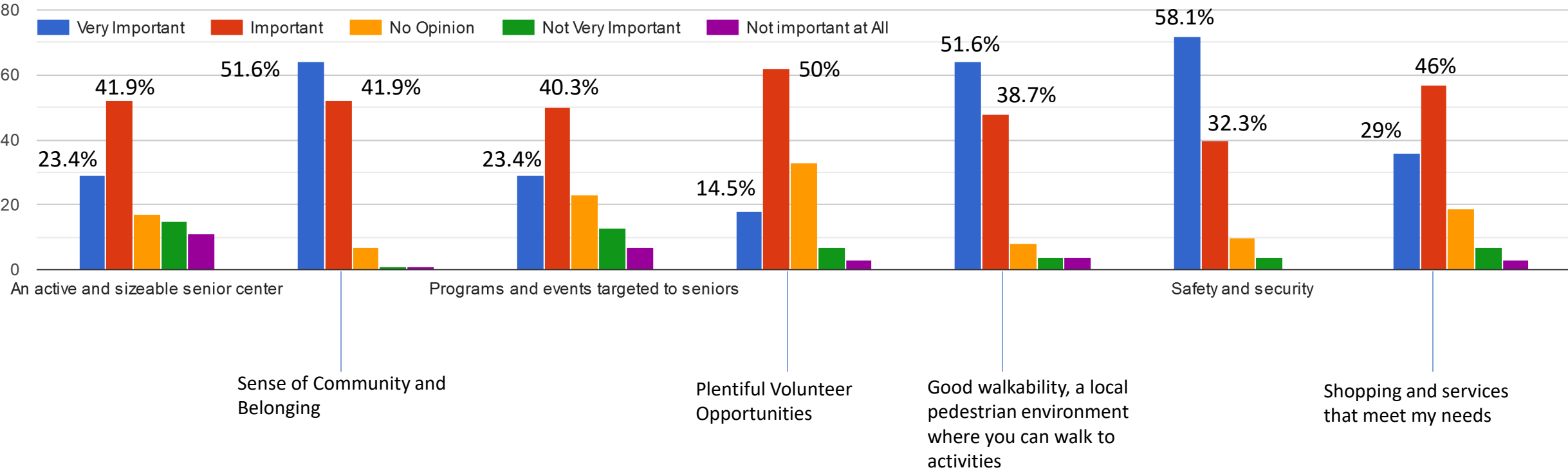
(112 Responses)

“Wide range of features of interest led by home maintenance services. Health and medical services scored lower.”



Regardless of where you anticipate living as you age, note how important the following senior-related benefits are for you.

124 Responses



Question 27 - Harvard has been designated as an AARP age-friendly community. Please share with us any ideas you have that would make Harvard a more age-friendly community.

Eleven (11) primary areas of response:

1. Want sidewalks or paths
2. Want better transportation access or availability
3. Want housing alternatives to large single-family homes on large lots

Other Responses: Want a larger senior center and more integrated activities, stated taxes and cost of living were a problem, and want shopping and restaurants

Please refer to Senior Housing Survey – Summary of Findings for additional detail on this question.

Question 28 - How should Harvard balance the need for senior housing with the desire to preserve the town's rural New England character? (For example: Achieve balance by where we put it? By what types of buildings we allow? By how many buildings we allow?)

80 respondents gave substantive answers to this question had much to say on this topic. Several messages come across loudly and clearly:

1. A small percentage of respondents suggest we should not or cannot achieve such a balance, and therefore should do nothing while an equally small group apparently take the opposing view.
2. The vast majority of respondents (69) provide thoughtful opinions on how to add the housing but not lose the character. They want housing alternatives to large single-family homes on large lots.
3. Those 69 suggest there are many ways the balance between senior housing and rural environment can be struck.

Other Key Response Areas: Specifying what the senior housing can/should look like, where we put senior housing , defining the types of buildings we allow, limiting the number of buildings we allow, with many advocating combinations of these areas of focus.

Please refer to Senior Housing Survey – Summary of Findings for additional detail on this question.

Q29: Please share any other comments, suggestions, or concerns that you might have as they relate to your current or future housing needs.

This question elicited a wide range of responses that were classified into seven (7) categories including:

1. Specific housing needs
2. Challenges to finding housing
3. Possible impacts of development
4. The need or lack thereof of senior housing
5. Projects the Town should look at as models
6. General unclassifiable comments, and
7. Specific ideas for the provision of senior housing.

These categories and their summary of responses are noted in the next eight slides below.