

CATSKILL DRI SURVEY #1 INPUT

7/10/25

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

Vision, Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities for Downtown

Summary of All Responses:

**38 surveys
submitted to date**

VISION

- 90% of respondents strongly agree or agree with the draft vision statement.
- Respondents offered support and ideas to enhance the vision related to affordable housing for all, overall affordability, historic character, the village as a tourism destination, Catskill Creek as an asset, walkable streets, economic growth/retail expansion and expanding recreation and opportunities for all ages and youth in particular.

STRENGTHS

- Within the Catskill DRI Area, people currently spend time on Main Street (shops, restaurants) and W. Main, along the Creek/waterfront, at the Farmers Market, at the Library, and outdoor amenities like Park for Paws. Some mentioned West Bridge Street businesses and Thomas Cole (outside DRI area).
- A majority feel that Catskill stands out from other places because of the Catskill Creek (69%), downtown's compact walkability (66%), sense of community, inclusivity and neighbourliness (59%), unique Main Street businesses (59%) and historic character (55%).

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

Vision, Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities for Downtown

CHALLENGES

- Respondents feel the most important issues that need to be addressed downtown include loss of the community center (62%), creek access (55%), vacant and aging buildings (55%), and housing options and affordability (55%). Many also selected lack of public transit (48%) and lack of recreation options (45%).

OPPORTUNITIES

- To improve Catskill's Main Street experience, a majority of respondents support renovating vacant buildings into mixed-use spaces with housing and retail (85%), improving green spaces and playgrounds (63%), increasing recreation opportunities (63%), and encouraging more restaurants, bars and retail shops (52%). Many also support improvements to local businesses (48%), streetscape (44%) and transit options (44%).
- To help the Village make the most of Catskill Creek, survey takers most liked the ideas of creating creek access for pedestrians (69%) and adding a new dock with paddle boats at Cone-e Island (52%). Many also liked the idea of pocket parks along the creek (44%) and expanding access for boaters (41%).

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OPPORTUNITIES

- Survey respondents described what they have enjoyed in other communities that might be successful in Catskill's downtown, including murals and public art; waterfront access with trails, pocket parks, vendors, small craft launch, amenities, and waterside events; Main Street atmosphere; transit options such as trolleys; bike infrastructure designed by artists; etc.

VISION

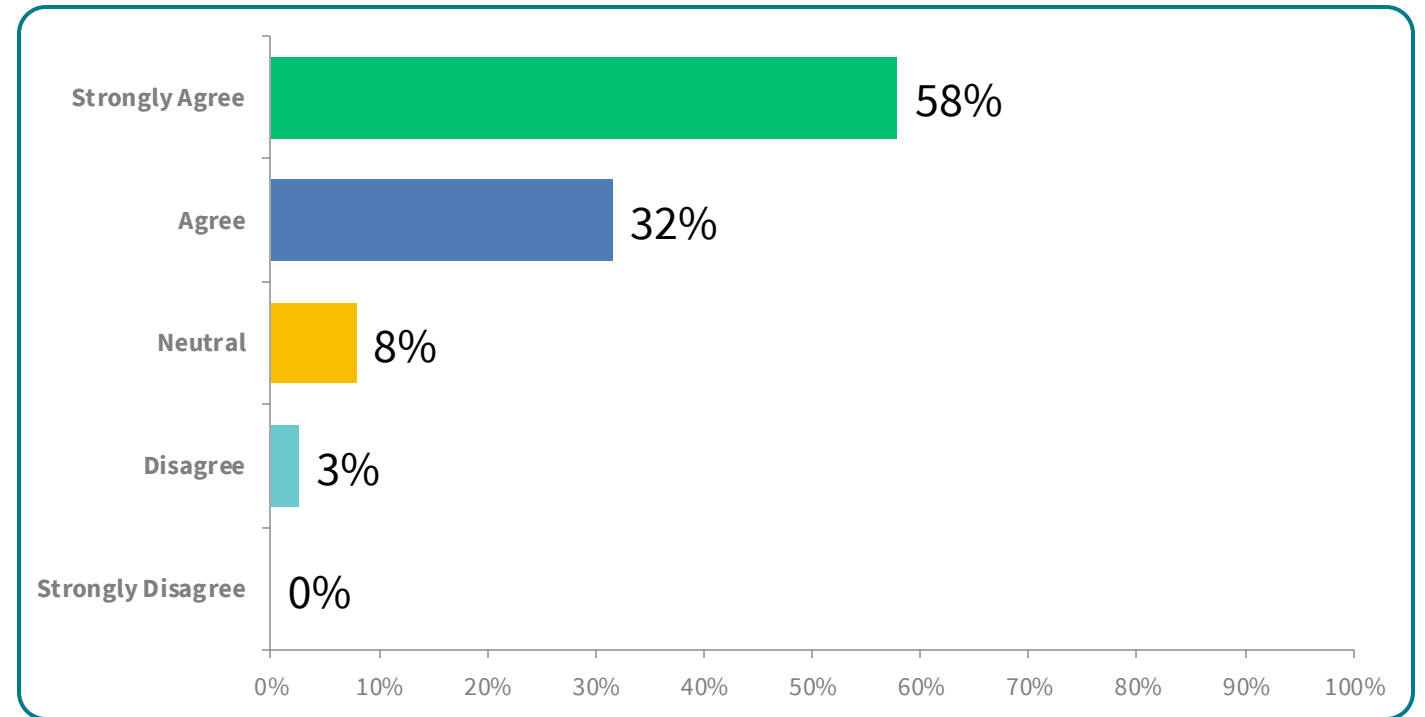
Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

VISION

Q1: The following is a draft vision statement for Catskill's DRI Area.

"Catskill will continue to grow into a more dynamic place to live, work, and visit, while retaining its small-town character and remaining open and affordable to people of all income levels and backgrounds."

Does this vision reflect what you would like to see for Catskill's downtown?



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

VISION

Q2: What's missing that's important to you? What would you add or change?

Housing

- Housing for allAs a senior commissioner of the Catskill Housing Authority we need housing for all...Affordable, senior ,working tenants and homeowners
- Better housing
- Affordable housing that's not government housing
- Catskill needs more housing. It is absolutely not an affordable place for people of all income levels to live any longer
- Housing is not affordable for middle class
- Affordable housing, shops and eateries

Arts, History, Culture

- I think in many conversations we hear the need for preserving history - perhaps adding historical small-town character or something of the like
- More community art spaces

Tourism + Local Events

- The village promoting itself to help more tourism and get locals back to Main Street
- Catskill was a tremendous tourist attraction in the day. Due to cruises and a competitive market, other municipalities took over the tourism. Catskill is perfect for a quick get away from the city and a safe place to live. It is 120 miles away from New York city and other municipalities. It's beautiful. It's in the valley with a mountains are cool and the scenery is incredible. Thank you for this great deserved honor
- It would be nice if we had a firm dedicated to marketing who we are, as a place to come visit, the place where the founder of the Hudson River school chose home
- The village needs more events to help gather the community and tourists alike to Main Street
- We have Catskill Creek running through the center of the village, this could be a destination focus for both tourists and locals

Youth Activities/Opps

- Catskill desperately needs more for the kids....
- Places for our youth to be able to have fun and hang out
- I would add something about including all ages- particularly children
- We need more activities for kids, hopefully when the theater opens that will help, but there is nothing to attract parents with kids to Main Street
- I think this would be a better vision: *"Catskill will continue to grow into a more dynamic place to live, work, and visit, while retaining its small-town character and remaining open and affordable to people of all income levels and backgrounds. The community will prioritize opportunities for youth by creating safe, engaging spaces, expanding access to education, recreation, and career pathways, and ensuring that young people have a voice in shaping Catskill's future"*



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

VISION

Q2: What's missing that's important to you? What would you add or change?

Recreation/Creek/Nature

- Outdoor open space/recreation
- More recreational opportunities aside from going out to eat and drinking
- We have Catskill Creek running through the center of the village, this could be a destination focus for both tourists and locals
- Connections to the unique natural surroundings (immediate: Catskill Creek, and nearby: Catskills, etc.) building on the gateway idea for the thruway exit
- I would like to see the village have more events utilizing our parks
- Make better usage for walking along the waterfront

Retail/Businesses

- More shops....a good general store
- More shops. Maybe a good general store
- Pharmacy, food market, restaurants
- Strategies to keep the area open more hours per week, more weeks per year for locals and visitors
- We need more places for lunch, maybe food trucks by the creek?

Safe Streets & Transit

- I would add more pedestrian assets. Fix and improve the "slides" between the neighborhoods and Main Street to encourage more foot traffic. See if there are more pedestrian connectors that could be added. It would be great to have a path from the Senior Center lot up to Spring St. And add a staircase between the municipal lot and the senior center lot
- Make better usage for walking along the waterfront
- Make a season trolley for transportation downtown to uptown business
- Accessibility

Affordability

- While Main Street has improved overall, much if not most is not for or accessible to local people. Rents, gift shops, yoga classes - The prices are well beyond what most can afford given limited earning potential
- Much of the business along Main, which is a huge improvement, is not for the locals. Pricing is for the affluent, whether gift shops, yoga....
- Affordable housing, shops and eateries
- I think you will have trouble adding the statement "remaining affordable" - it is a nice sentiment but gathering from conversations in the community many people do not agree on what affordable is



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

VISION

Q2: What's missing that's important to you? What would you add or change?

Affordability con.

- I would like to understand how projects will be held to these standards, specifically, Catskill "...remaining open and affordable to people of all income levels and backgrounds." What are the criteria for applications to stay true to this sentiment? What will be contained in the contracts for the project proposals that will make sure this will be the outcome and use of the grant money? For example: if there is a proposal to renovate apartments, what is the plan for those being displaced from their apartments? Will people be guaranteed the same rent cost after the renovations? Will they be guaranteed the same apartment they left and call home? How will housing be guaranteed as "affordable" 5, 10 or 15 years from now if the property values rise in this area? Will these affordable apartments be concentrated or spread across the downtown area to give more space and access to people of lower incomes in different areas in the village? How does the LPC plan to build requirements and standards into contracts to assure, "...remaining open and affordable to people of all income levels and backgrounds."" (which is AWESOME!) will be realized for the village of Catskill? The DRI initiative seems to have some structural components that discriminate, cause displacement, and gentrification of an area, how will Catskill fight this fact?
<https://www.urbandisplacement.org/maps/new-york-gentrification-and-displacement>

Misc.

- I would add - how these "goals and visions" for Catskill Village is possible? How will this be implemented? One way might be to put a cap on the income bracket and the owners of properties in the DRI area in Catskill Village [*to focus on the local small business owners and their struggles with renovations and property management.*]
- I would add something about including all ages- particularly children
- I am a happy resident of the village, but I am also a business owner who knows a lot more can be done to help boost our economic growth
- The grant is to "improve" not necessarily "grow". I view these as two different visions

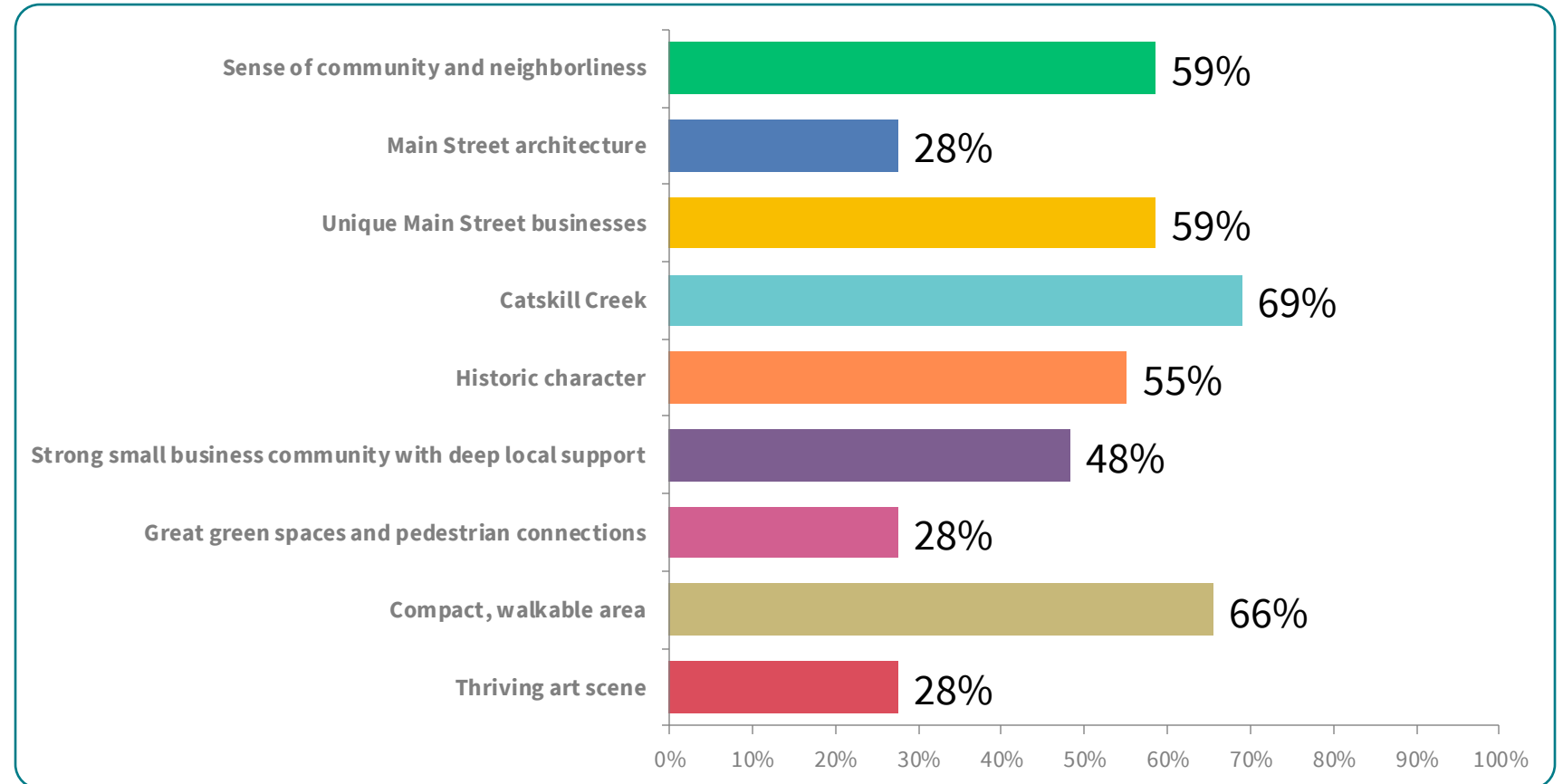


STRENGTHS

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

STRENGTHS

Q3: What makes downtown Catskill stand out from other places? What attracts residents and/or visitors? Please select your top 5 from the following:



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

STRENGTHS

Q3: What makes downtown Catskill stand out from other places? What attracts residents and/or visitors?

Additional Comments

- When I came to Catskill Village for the first time over 13 years ago - I was attracted by the vibrant art scene of Catskill Village that was different from Hudson's Warren Street art crawls. Catskill Village also had some very strong presence of local craft artisans as well as artists working in their studios - which were storefronts back then - the stores were unique and offered original and highly creative wares. I also got the feeling that the local community had been here awhile and this added to the authenticity of the village. People from the city or tourists - "citiots" are attracted to authenticity not another cookie-cutter generic tourist trap that looks like every other cut-out fake village along the Hudson Valley. Let us please keep Catskill Village affordable.
- My house I live in is 123 years old, I restored it almost to its natural state, a wonderful family lived here, Italian immigrants from Italy next to a black church. They were friends and they were neighbors. A rose garden was planted on the side of the yard and the first rose was given to the Baptist Church next door. The second rose was given to St. Patrick's Church. The people that lived in there loved Catskill, love their neighbors and they didn't care what color they were where or where they came from. We were all neighbors till this day.

“People...are attracted to the authenticity of the village.”

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

STRENGTHS

Q4: Where do you spend time in downtown Catskill?

Creek/River

- Riverfront
- Main Street waterfront
- Catskill Creek
- As a kid we spent many days on the creek fishing...
- Water Street near the water

Parks/Outdoors

- Park for Paws
- Dog Park at the Point / The Point
- I use Black Bridge everyday - the best renovation of infrastructure so far – this walking bridge has changed the tone of the village - very walkable and scenic
- In the village on the west side and local parks
- High school athletic fields
- Dutchman's Landing (more walkable sidewalks from DRI area to Dutchman's would be great)

Main Street Retail/Food/Bev

- Main Street
- Main Street shops
- Primarily on Main Street and the businesses on the creek between Bridge St. and Black Bridge
- Restaurants on Main Street
- Brewery
- Along the creek restaurants
- Live and work on Main Street
- I live on North Street so I'm always in the area
- Walking Main Street District
- As a kid we spent many days on the creek fishing... and walking the black bridge to hang out in the Main Street shops even on the west side after school getting a slice of pizza with friends and family
- We walk on Main Street a lot
- My shop at 386 Main St.
- Mostly Main Street until Bridge St.

Community Orgs.

- Library
- We go to the Library frequently
- The public library - an invaluable resource - the upgrade to the computer hub is amazing! Thank you



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 **STRENGTHS**

Q4: Where do you spend time in downtown Catskill?

Arts/Culture/Event Venues

- Farmers Market
- I want to applaud the Farmer's Market and their new, regular, predictable hours during the summer. It is again a great social moment- esp. when I have out of town visitors - we used to have to drive across the river to Hudson for a Farmer's Market but Catskill Village has a farmer's market that is walkable and with bragging rights. It's an amazing way to show off the village and meet and greet some local artists and crafts-folks and feature their beautiful handicrafts
- Thomas Cole
- When people from out of town show - we walk to Thomas Cole House - most seasons they have innovative contemporary curation of new work that is installed in different areas of the space. I hope they continue this programming - worthy of international audiences
- CREATE and Greene County Council on the Arts

Misc./Other Places

- West Bridge St. Businesses, not in DRI area
- W. Main Street
- These are also some great examples of renovations and infrastructure improvements that have made me proud of Catskill Village and given me the opportunity to show off my home
- I would not be able to travel if not for Greene County Offices - I got my passport renewed there as well as DMV might be one of the fastest and nicest department ever known to mankind. They all deserve special medals of recognition for an exceptional job at one of the most stressful departments in the state
- Water Street almost in the middle of the village across the street from the police station into the side of the county building and the front of a brewery and next to the nightclub that my beloved Michael and I built
- Now I spend my time in the village on the west side and local parks
- The entire DRI area
- My work and home are just outside the boundaries

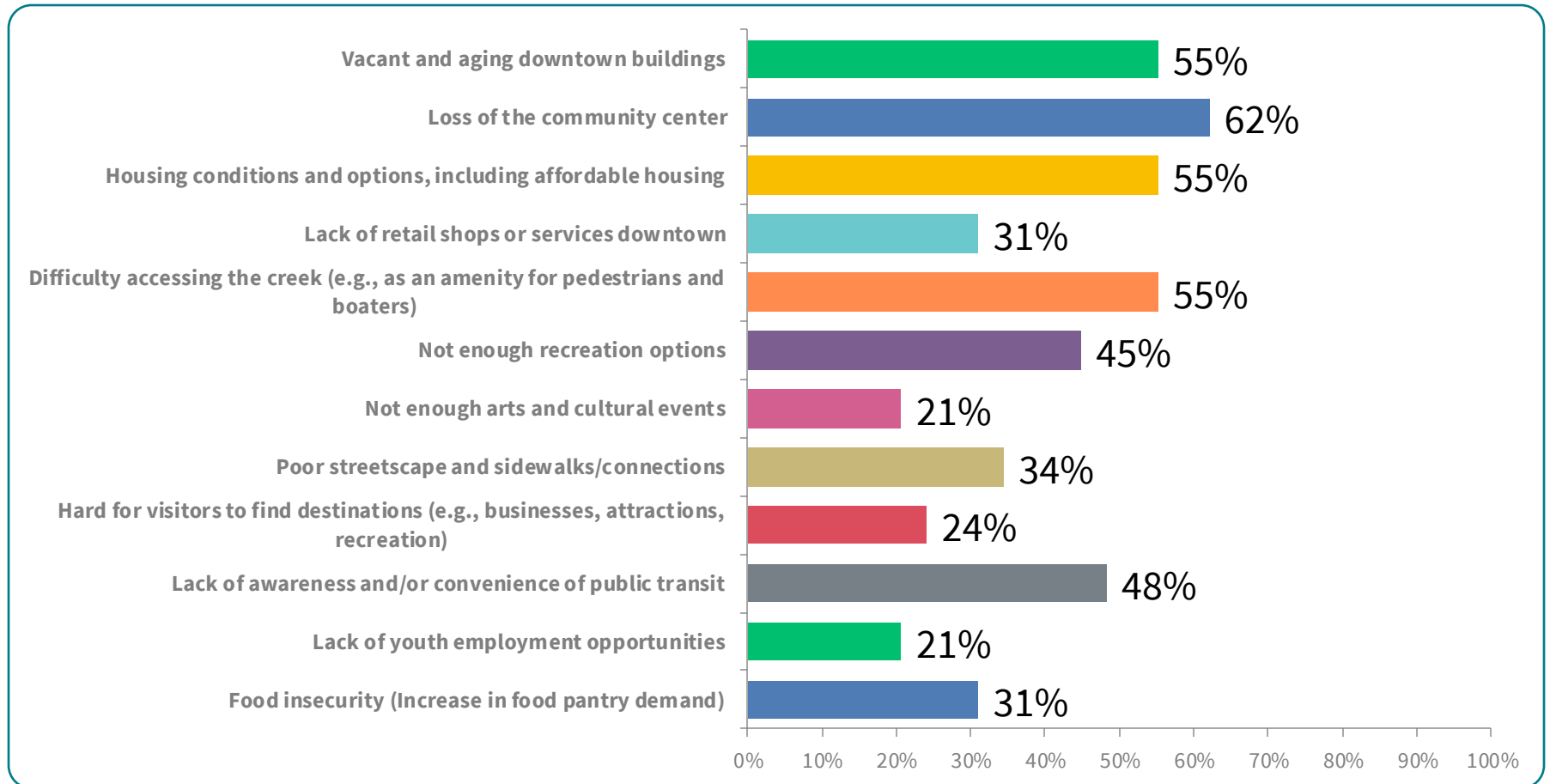


CHALLENGES

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

CHALLENGES

Q5: What specific issues in downtown Catskill need to be addressed? Please select your top 5 from the following:



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1

CHALLENGES

Q5: What specific issues in downtown Catskill need to be addressed?

Small Businesses

- We can use a strong merchant group, what exists now is not productive.

Food + Beverage

- Develop an elevated Food Hall (Inspired by Europe's sprawling food markets such as <https://www.hlemmurmatholl.is/english>) with indoor/outdoor seating. There are barely any sit-down restaurants in Catskill to keep locals and visitors here for more than an hour walk along Main Street. We need more restaurants!! People are leaving Catskill by evening to eat in Hudson, Leeds or beyond. A food hall could be an incubator for small businesses to eventually open up their own restaurant space.

Recreation/Activities

- Most important is to develop community access to the Catskill Creek/Hudson River via green space. Remove the county parking lots, build a parking garage for parking instead. Turn the parking lots located from Crossroads to Foreland into a sprawling green space/park area. Troy's Riverfront Park is similarly sited (https://maps.app.goo.gl/qgmN1rynmT6Scve4A?g_st=ic) and has contributed greater to the influx of paying visitors as well as providing important space and events to the community. Opening access to the waterfront wonder has been a consistent effort by many cities and city planning officials, as many Comprehensive Waterfront Plans. Catskill is uniquely positioned to transform this space, and could do so without displacing ANY residents.

Safe Streets & Transit

- Would love to see bike lanes

Social Supports

- Please include Community Action into the DRI grants. Food insecurity and other programs they oversee are so important to keep in the community.

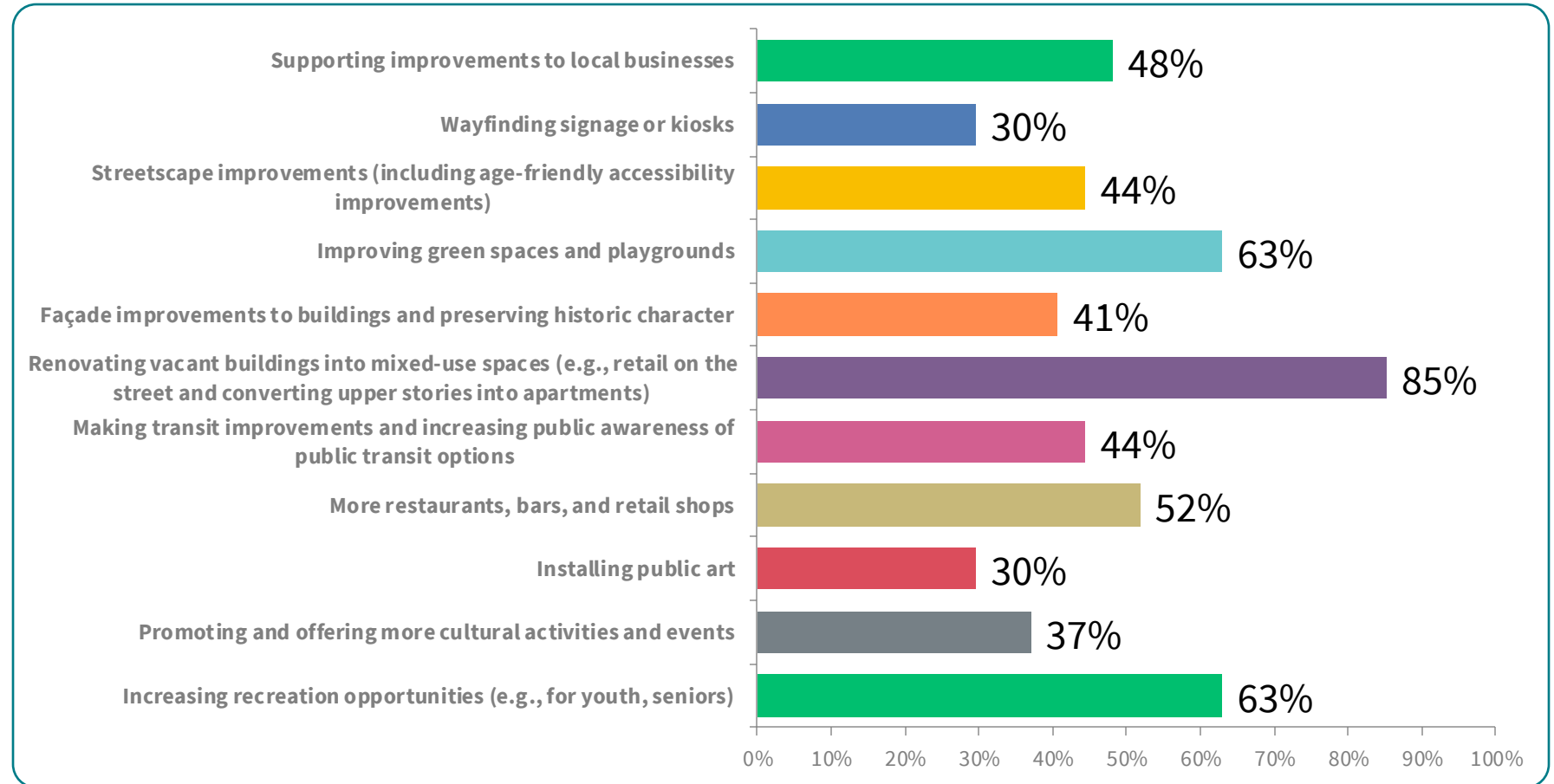
Note: Many of these comments also suggest opportunities for downtown.



OPPORTUNITIES

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 OPPORTUNITIES

Q6: What would improve Catskill's Main Street experience? Please select your top 5 from the following:



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 OPPORTUNITIES

Q6: What would improve Catskill's Main Street experience?

Housing

- More condo/co-op style apartments (for younger or single people who don't want to buy a whole house or building, there's not a lot of opportunity to buy an apartment)
- Diversity in housing for both renters and buyers
- Housing is most important
- Buildings need to be opened for businesses. Hotels need to be put into place vacant buildings do no good for the Village of Catskill

Main Street/Streetscape

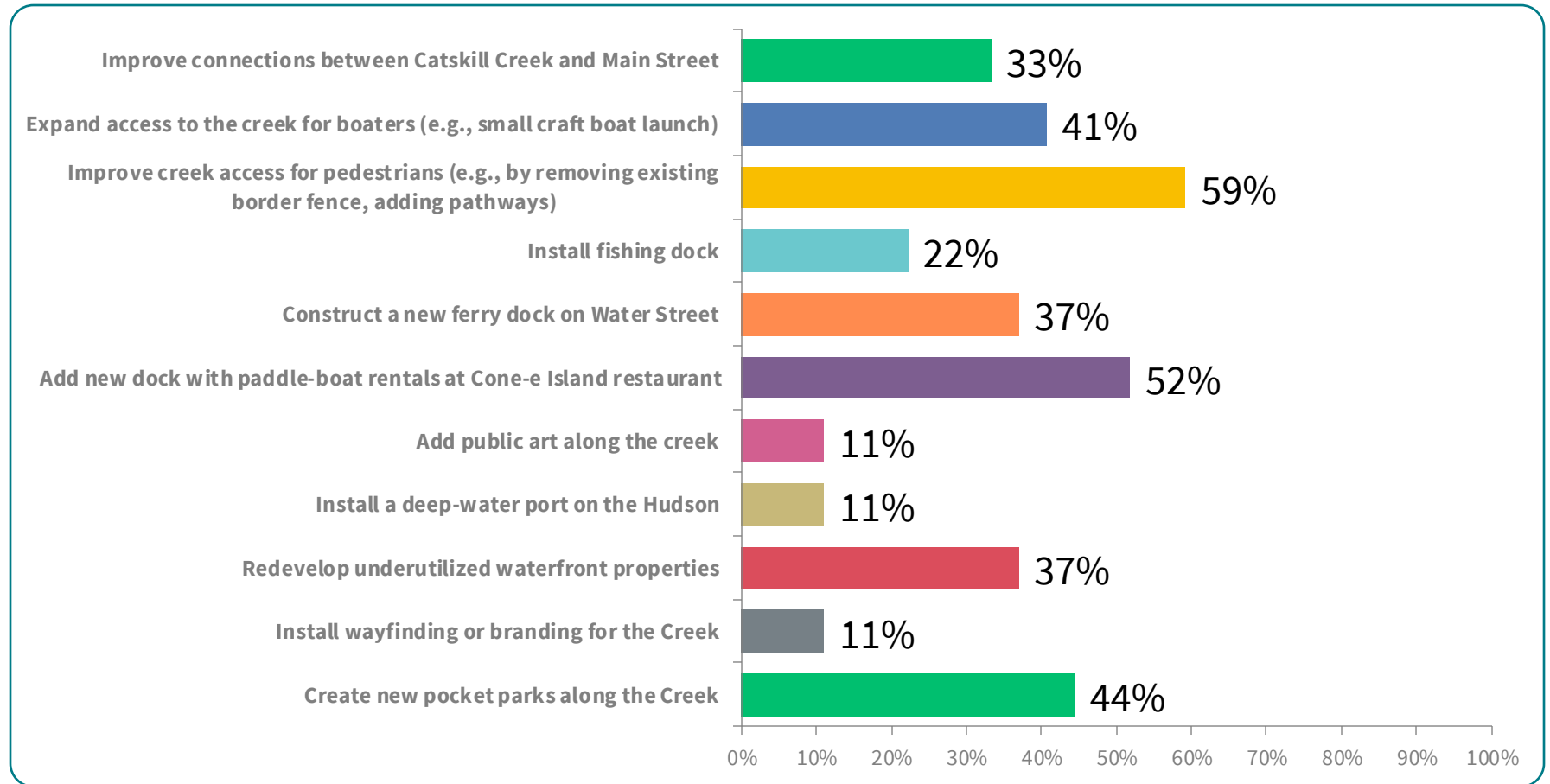
- Beautify Main Street (tree plantings in sidewalks, retaining hanging baskets, Central Hudson changing lights to historic looking lights, providing grants to vacant business fronts to improve facades)
- Provide micro or small grants to start up businesses to inhabit and develop vacant storefronts. Provide tax incentives for landlords to offer reduced rent. The aim is to decrease vacancy, provide locals and others to start a business less expensively

Youth Recreation

- The Community Center has been a long-standing topic, however Catskill used to have a Community Center and when municipalities were not willing to fund the center at the same level, they could no longer stay open. No matter who opens a Community Center now they will face the same issues. We also have not engaged any children in asking them what they would like or if they would use a Community Center. The senior center is used perhaps there could be a mixed use, but I don't know that it needs to be an entire Community Center. That just doesn't seem sustainable for this community

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 OPPORTUNITIES

Q7: What would help the Village make the most of Catskill Creek? Please select your top 3 from the following:



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 OPPORTUNITIES

Q7: What would help the Village make the most of Catskill Creek?

Creek Amenities

- Create a walking path/trail along the creek, area of kayak rentals, make use of the vacant space down by the Hudson
- We have the most beautiful inlet to the Catskill Creek on the Hudson River. This needs to be developed. We need to have docks inland right into Main Street. We have bulkhead ready to go and to be developed
- Kayak rentals
- In the County Office Building parking lot-- turn the benches around so they look at the creek instead of the parking lot. I'm sure there are great recommendations in the Catskill Creek Watershed Management Plan if you haven't looked at that
- With expanding access to the creek also comes expanded liability concerns

Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 OPPORTUNITIES

Q8: What have you seen when visiting other places that you enjoyed? Can you think of any trends or innovative ideas that could be implemented to benefit downtown Catskill?

Waterfront + Outdoor Amenities

- San Antonio waterfront on man made canals. They use boats to ferry people from locations. Catskill to Athens to Hudson. Oklahoma City has similar setup in brick town
- Dedicated swimming spot to help with climate-induced heat increases
- Floating community pavilion -- see Rotterdam example
- Outdoor seating and picnic areas along the waterfront, monthly block parties with downtown streets closed to cars (walkable from a nearby free parking lot) with ample tables and chairs for outdoor dining; walking tours
- Riverside trail with either businesses or seasonal vendors, art, etc
- move the county office building parking lot and build a park
- Dance kayaking, launches are most important to incorporate the village with the Hudson River
- Waterfront parks and cafes/restaurants
- Fenced in Park for Paws
- Concert venue near the water - music in the park seems to hit this pretty well currently, but perhaps another space could be cool
- Buffalo, NY has some great cultural spots (Canal Side) that have events that are fun to attend
- Also in Buffalo, there is a place called River Works that does everything from curling to high ropes courses: <https://buffaloriverworks.com/things-to-do/year-round/> It's a Mecca of things to do year round and brings both jobs and massive community involvement

Safe Streets + Transit

- Trolley! We were just on vacation in a small beach town and they had a free trolley running every 15 minutes, that made it very easy and accessible to explore all different parts of the town
- Transit lines to and from the Catskill park (north south lake/kaaterskill falls)
- Wheel-chair accessible sidewalks/business fronts
- I think a feature that improves a main street is switching to the older style of "angle in" parking along one or both sides of the street. It's easier for people to park and the cars don't visually block the sidewalks as much somehow. It also gives the street a ""retro"" look that fits the architecture. Even trying it out for a section of Main Street would be interesting
- Bike racks, and other infrastructure designed by artists as a works project; bike valets
- e-bike rentals



Catskill DRI Community Survey #1 OPPORTUNITIES

Q8: What have you seen when visiting other places that you enjoyed? Can you think of any trends or innovative ideas that could be implemented to benefit downtown Catskill?

Main Street/Streetscape

- Main Street should have enough charm, retail and art space, and dining to keep people here all day and night. "Build it and they will come"
- Overhead string lighting across alleyways and portions of Main Street

MISC.

- Put a usgs gage in for real time and forecast conditions; Community science - partner with local orgs (riverkeeper, nerrs, dec) and increase citizen science, install river conditions monitor
- Museums, independent movie theaters, accessible maps and guides
- Public bathrooms at farmers market space
- Indoor farmers markets over wintertime
- Inclusion/advertising in tourist magazines or articles
- Community centers
- Another cool thing in Buffalo is Central Rock Gym:
<https://centralrockgym.com/buffalo/>
- I think Catskill has come along way in the last ten years but we need to remember what we had and why we lost it. So we don't repeat past mistakes. Our community, lifelong residents and future residents. Catskill used to be where people came from all over to visit and shop. And were we all new one another and willing to help and support each other

Public Art

- Murals on buildings or structures
- I do like seeing murals and attractive art when I am visiting other places. Sometimes those specifically will attract people for photo opportunities, especially nowadays with social media. For example, in Nashville, everyone wants to go and take their picture in front of the mural with the giant wings. As a trend, we also see people gravitating towards positive or cheeky quotes. Again for photo opportunities. To me that's something that is small probably not too costly but could get people here and then depending on what's left for them keep them looking around
- I like how other towns and villages in the Hudson Valley have commissioned murals for their downtown area. Catskill is the supposed birthplace of American Painting with the Hudson Valley School, Thomas Cole and Frederick Church - but there is little physical evidence of "great art" represented in the village. How about commissioning some local artists who have a track record of producing good community based art to create a mural that represents the true history of Catskill Village? The process should engage the community but the outcome should be a professional and great work of art that properly represents the artistic legacy of the village

