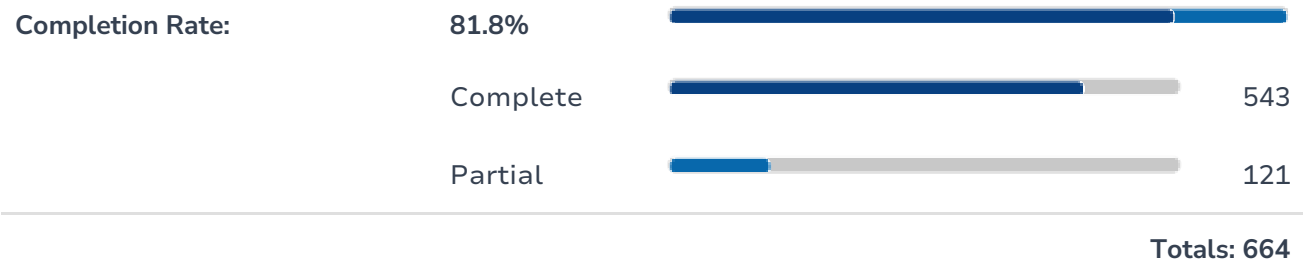


Report for Let’s Talk: 2023 Budget Engagement Survey

Response Counts

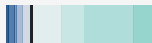


1. Balancing competing priorities can require decisions about service levels. Service levels are defined as the scope or measurement of the service being delivered. The level of service can be increased or decreased by changes, such as reducing operating hours or frequency of service. Service level changes drive changes in your property taxes. As a result, increasing services would likely increase taxes, maintaining service would result in inflationary increases, and decreasing a service level could reduce taxes. For the items below, think of the importance of the services and programs that are provided to you and the community. Please tell us if the City should increase, decrease or maintain its budget investment in the following programs and services:

	Increase	Maintain	Decrease	Responses
Parks and trails (for example, new development, playground rehabilitation) Count Row %	149 24.8%	372 61.8%	81 13.5%	602
Facility maintenance (for example, rehabilitation and repairs to community centres, arenas, and other facilities) Count Row %	117 19.5%	435 72.6%	47 7.8%	599
Sports facilities and fields (for example, Oakes Park, soccer pitches and baseball diamonds) Count Row %	60 10.0%	439 73.2%	101 16.8%	600
Pools and splash pads Count Row %	96 16.1%	437 73.1%	65 10.9%	598
Recreation programming (for example, Older Adults programming and recreation activities offered at MacBain Community Centre) Count Row %	197 32.6%	347 57.4%	61 10.1%	605

	Increase	Maintain	Decrease	Responses
Cultural programs and facilities (for example, Niagara Falls History Museum and The Exchange) Count Row %	98 16.3%	342 56.8%	162 26.9%	602
Libraries Count Row %	156 26.2%	338 56.8%	101 17.0%	595
Economic development (for example, strategic opportunities such as new sector development, enhancement and growth of existing sectors and business support services) Count Row %	167 27.7%	282 46.8%	153 25.4%	602
Road maintenance and replacement (for example, pothole repair, resurfacing) Count Row %	447 73.6%	153 25.2%	7 1.2%	607
Totals Total Responses				607

2. From the list below, please rank your infrastructure/other priorities for the next 5 years:

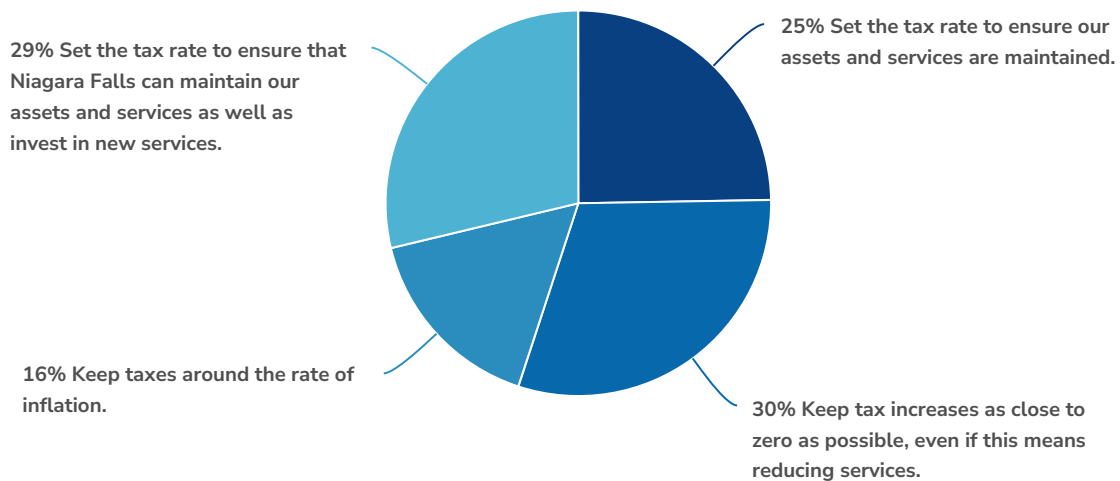
Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score	No. of Rankings
Roads/streets	1		3,667	523
Water, sewer and storm infrastructure	2		3,434	514
Energy efficiency	3		2,866	493
Climate change mitigation and protection	4		2,494	477
Bridges	5		2,445	466
Park and trail development	6		2,185	472
Fire stations	7		2,145	456
Athletic fields	8		1,534	450
Arenas	9		1,464	429



Lowest Rank

Highest Rank

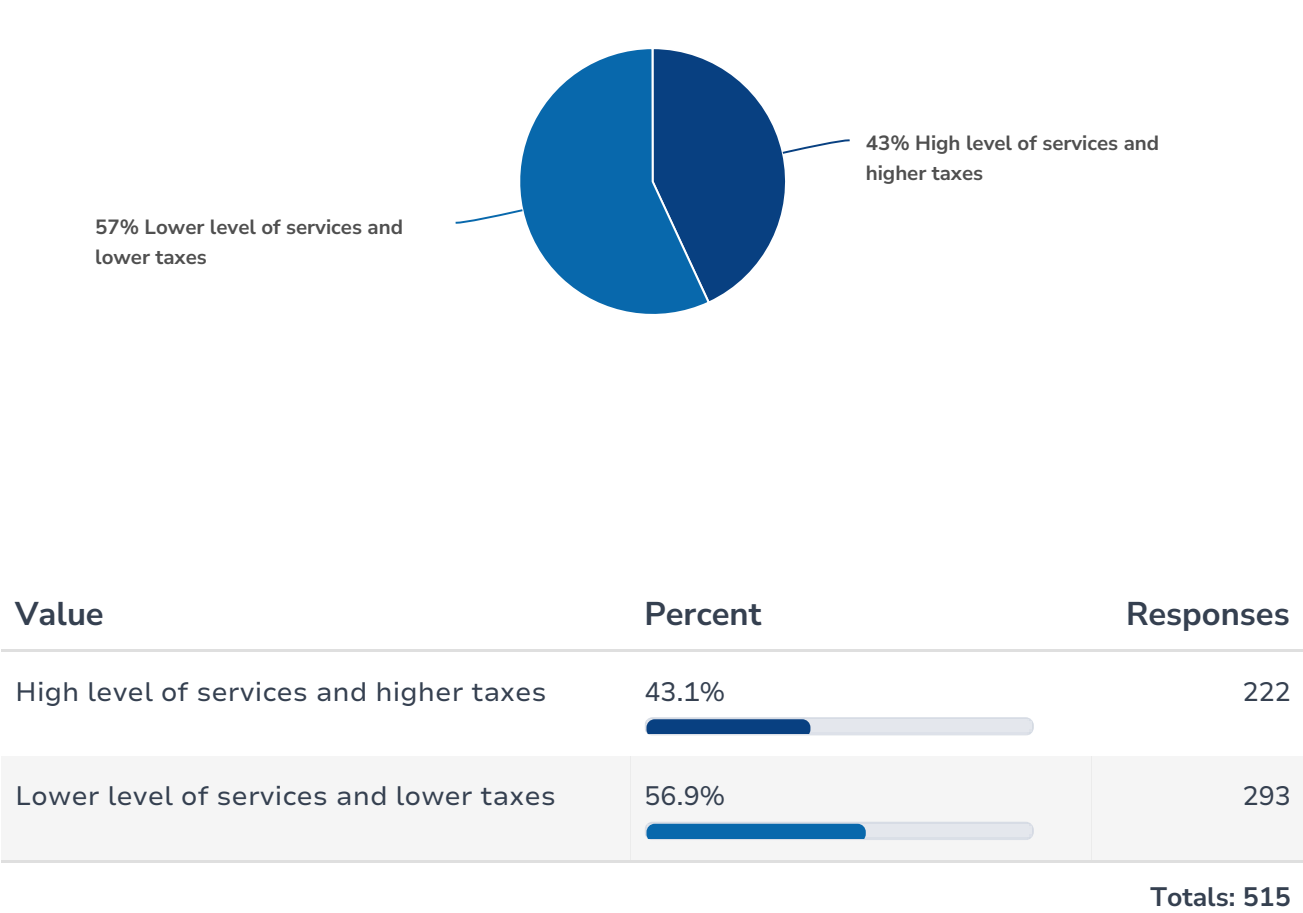
3. Municipal property taxes are the primary way to pay for assets and services provided by the City. How should Niagara Falls set its taxes? Select the statement you most agree with from the list below:



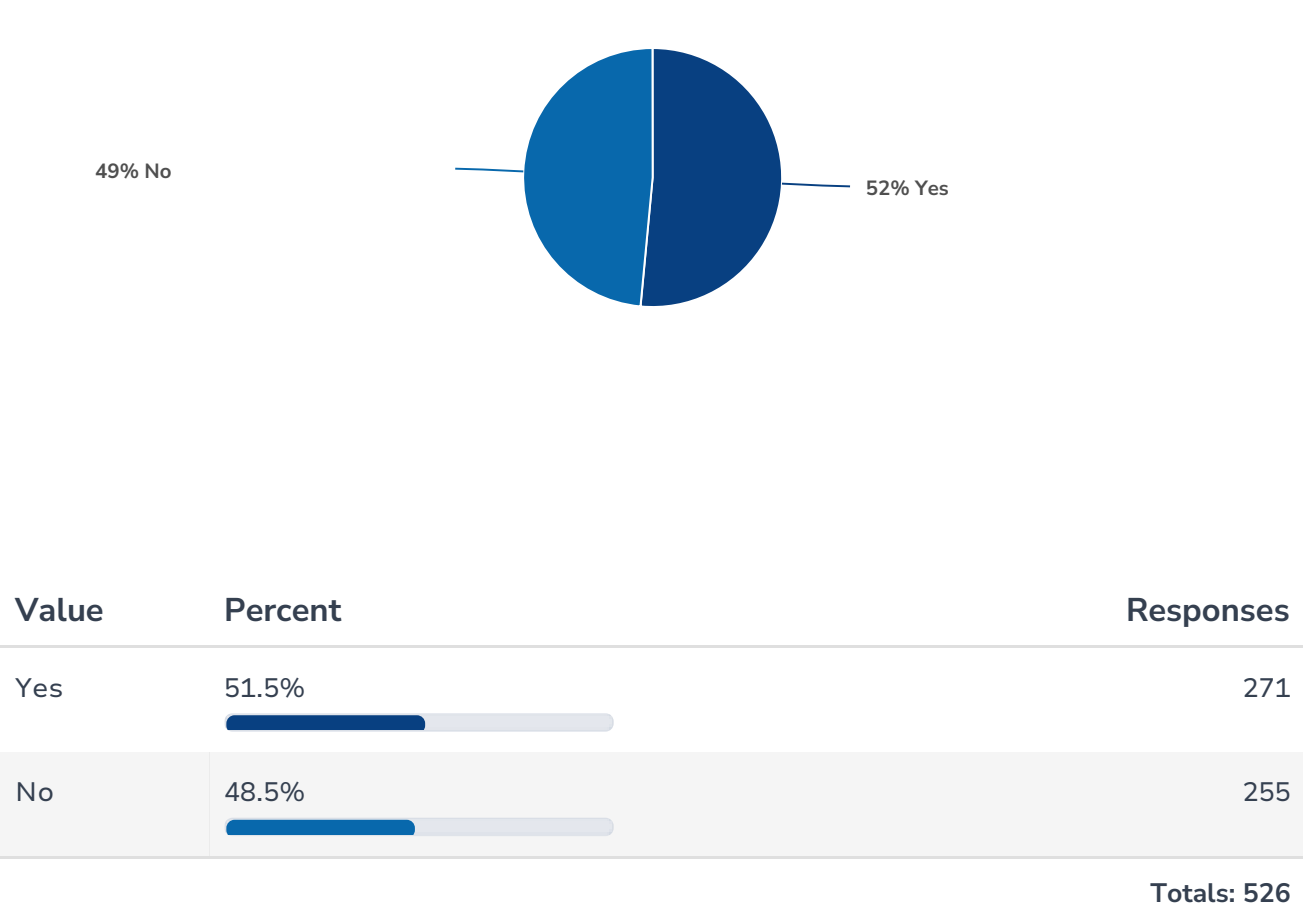
Value	Percent	Responses
Set the tax rate to ensure our assets and services are maintained.	24.7% 	137
Keep tax increases as close to zero as possible, even if this means reducing services.	30.3% 	168
Keep taxes around the rate of inflation.	16.2% 	90
Set the tax rate to ensure that Niagara Falls can maintain our assets and services as well as invest in new services.	28.7% 	159

Totals: 554

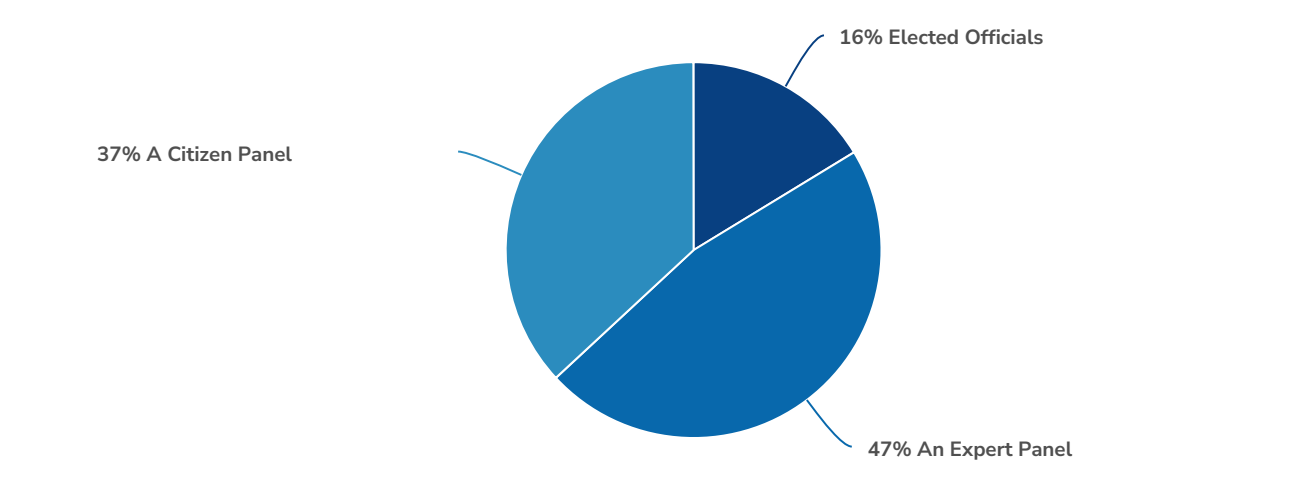
4. In 2022, a \$500,000 house in Niagara Falls is taxed at \$6,730 (\$2,664 – City of Niagara Falls only taxes). In Welland, the taxes for the same value house were \$8,318 (\$4,121 – Welland only taxes) and in St. Catharines \$7,470 (\$3,327 – St. Catharines only taxes). Niagara Falls generally provides a higher level of service and facility provision than the other two municipalities. Where do you think Niagara Falls should sit compared to St. Catharines and Welland?



5. Would you accept fewer services to maintain our position as a lower-tax-cost municipality?

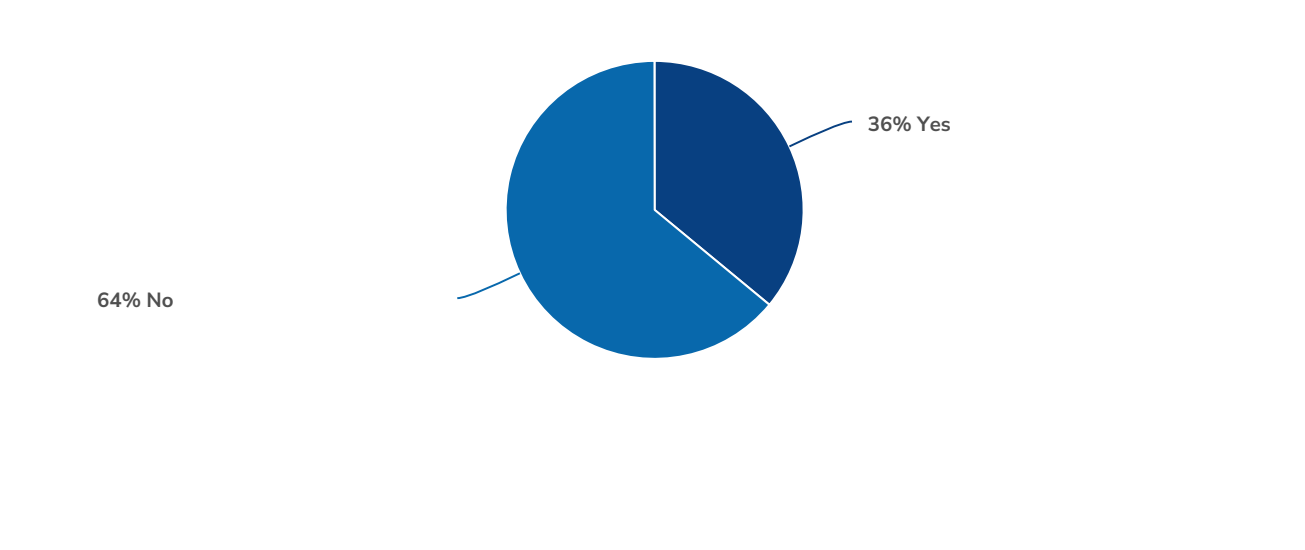


6. Niagara Region, as an upper-tier municipality, has responsibility for social services in our two-tier government structure. Although not a designated role for lower-tier municipalities, homelessness, affordable housing, mental health and poverty are issues that the City of Niagara Falls has spent tax dollars on annually. Noting that the City of Niagara Falls, as a lower-tier municipality, has no staff or departments relating to social services issues, such as health care, homelessness and housing, who do you think should make the decisions to spend tax dollars on for levels of social service-related funding?



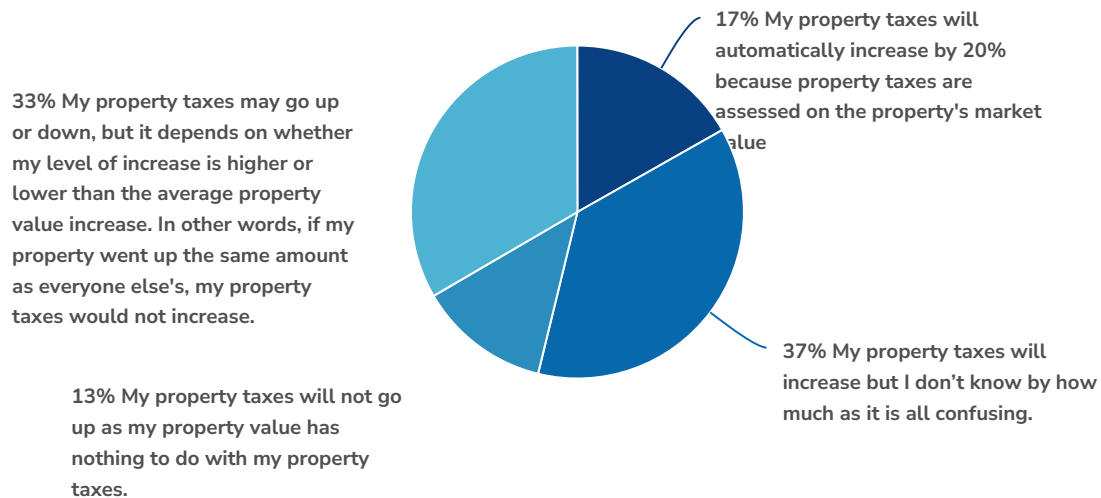
Value	Percent	Responses
Elected Officials	16.3%	88
An Expert Panel	46.8%	252
A Citizen Panel	36.9%	199
Totals: 539		

7. Would you pay more for the City to use and/or pilot more environmentally sustainable practices (i.e., electric vehicles etc.)?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	36.0%	195
No	64.0%	347
Totals: 542		

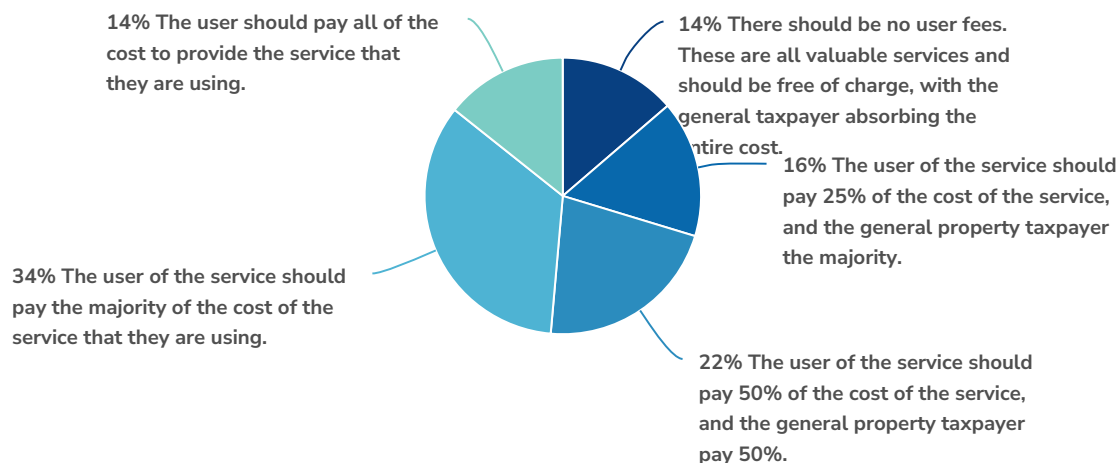
8. The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) will periodically reassess the market value of your property. How do you think this valuation affects your property taxes? For example, if MPAC reassesses your property and the value increases by 20%, which of the following statements are true:

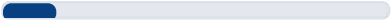
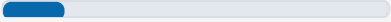
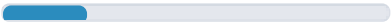
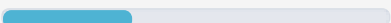
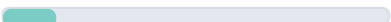


Value	Percent	Responses
My property taxes will automatically increase by 20% because property taxes are assessed on the property's market value	16.8% 	89
My property taxes will increase but I don't know by how much as it is all confusing.	37.0% 	196
My property taxes will not go up as my property value has nothing to do with my property taxes.	12.8% 	68
My property taxes may go up or down, but it depends on whether my level of increase is higher or lower than the average property value increase. In other words, if my property went up the same amount as everyone else's, my property taxes would not increase.	33.4% 	177

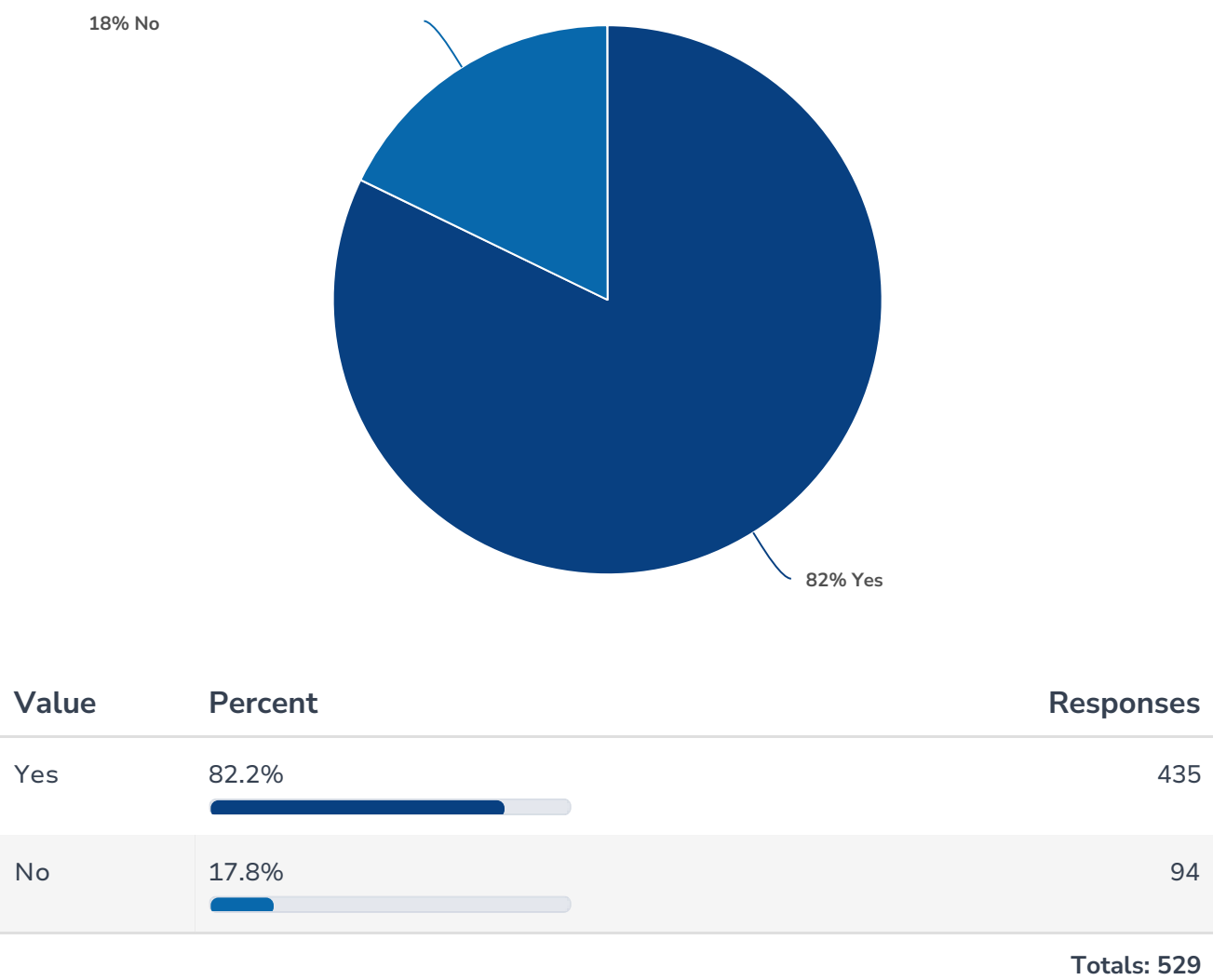
Totals: 530

9. The City of Niagara Falls charges fees for a variety of services. This situation occurs in every municipality, as the provision of these services adds to the resident's quality of life and the city's overall attractiveness to residents and prospective residents. For example, there are fees for riding a bus, using an ice rink and attending a recreation program. In most cases, the cost associated with providing the service is significantly higher than the user fee charged. Due to this, the difference between the cost of providing the service and the user fee charged to the user is borne by all taxpayers through their property taxes. Based on the above, what level of support should be provided by the user and/or the general property taxpayer for these types of services (Select the one that you most agree with):

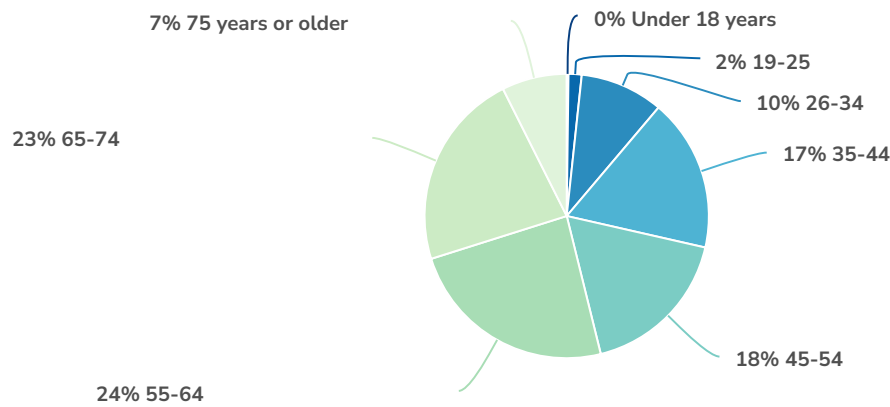


Value	Percent	Responses
There should be no user fees. These are all valuable services and should be free of charge, with the general taxpayer absorbing the entire cost.	13.7% 	72
The user of the service should pay 25% of the cost of the service, and the general property taxpayer the majority.	16.0% 	84
The user of the service should pay 50% of the cost of the service, and the general property taxpayer pay 50%.	21.7% 	114
The user of the service should pay the majority of the cost of the service that they are using.	34.3% 	180
The user should pay all of the cost to provide the service that they are using.	14.3% 	75
		Totals: 525

10. Do you live in, or own a business, in Niagara Falls?



11. What is your age range?



Value	Percent	Responses
Under 18 years	0.2%	1
19-25	1.5%	8
26-34	9.5%	50
35-44	17.4%	92
45-54	17.6%	93
55-64	24.0%	127
65-74	22.5%	119
75 years or older	7.4%	39

Totals: 529

