

2016

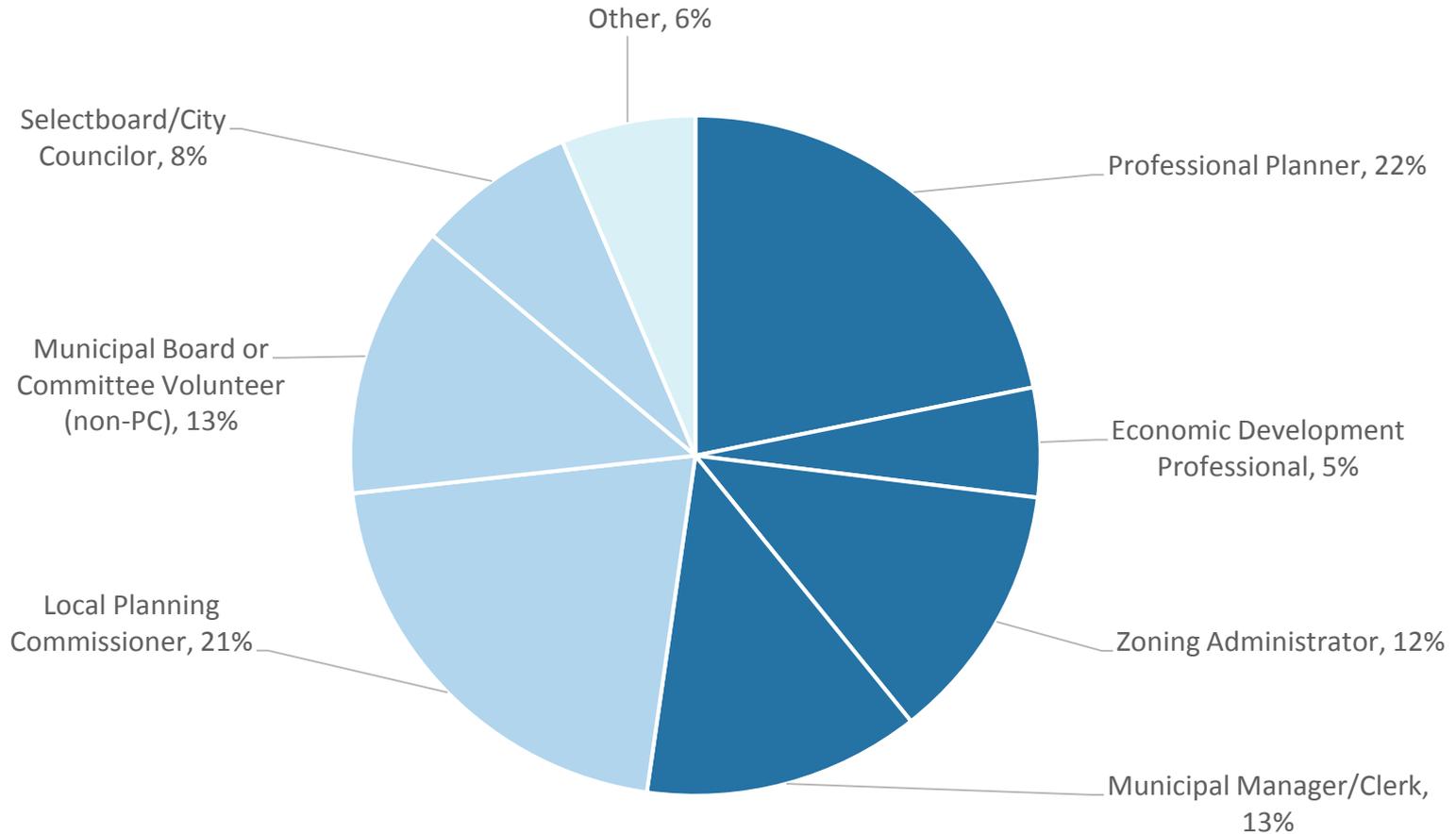
# Municipal Planning Grant Survey



# Q1. Please identify yourself.

(Select all that apply.)

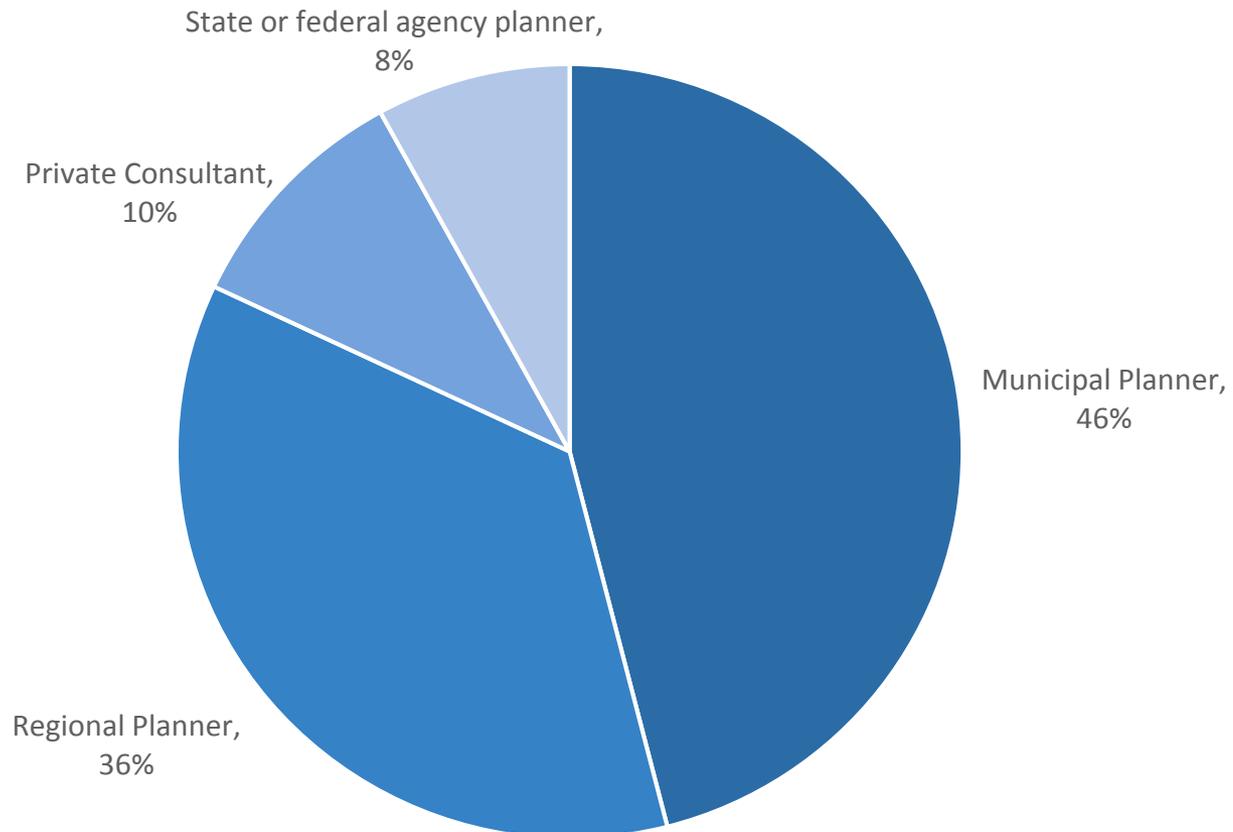
Number of Respondents(N) 202



*Municipal volunteers accounted for almost half of respondents.*

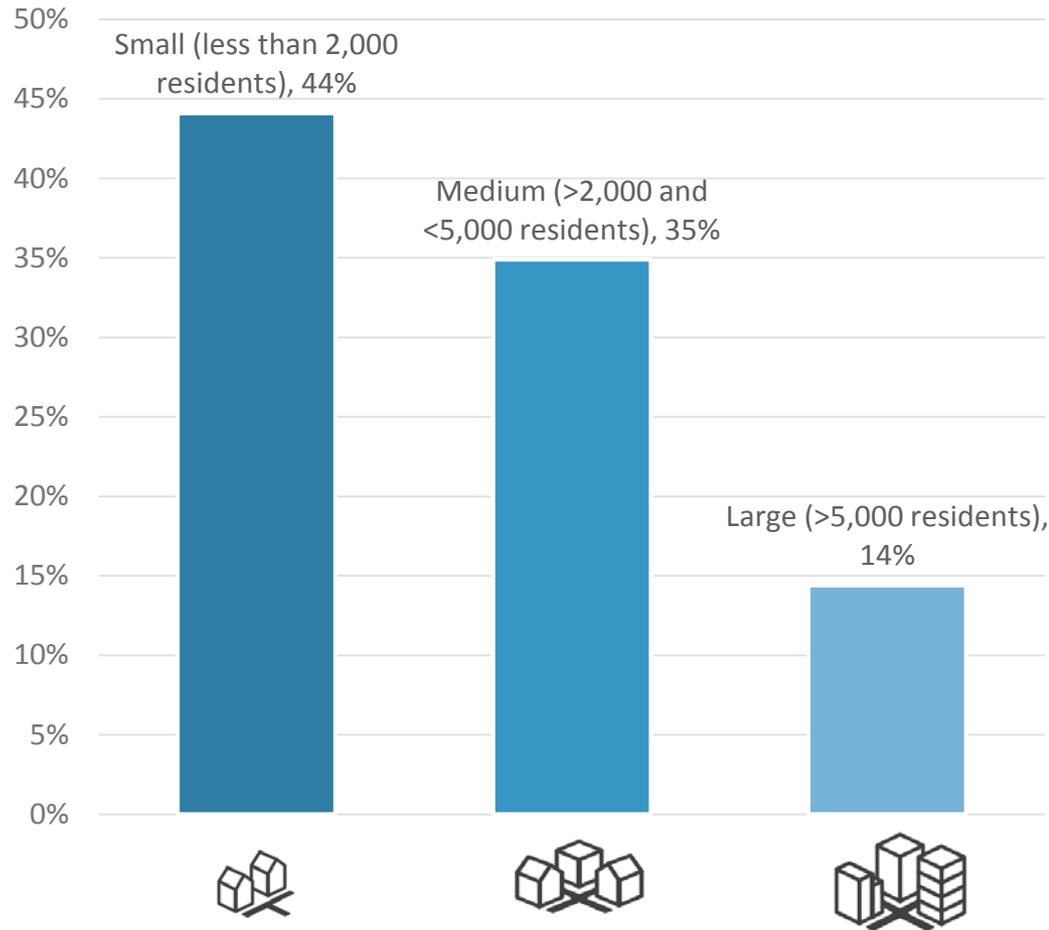
## Q2. If you are a professional planner what is your role?

N. 60



*Most planners who responded work directly with municipalities.*

### Q3. If you work for or serve in a municipality, what is its size? If you work for multiple municipalities, what is the most common size of the municipalities? N. 195

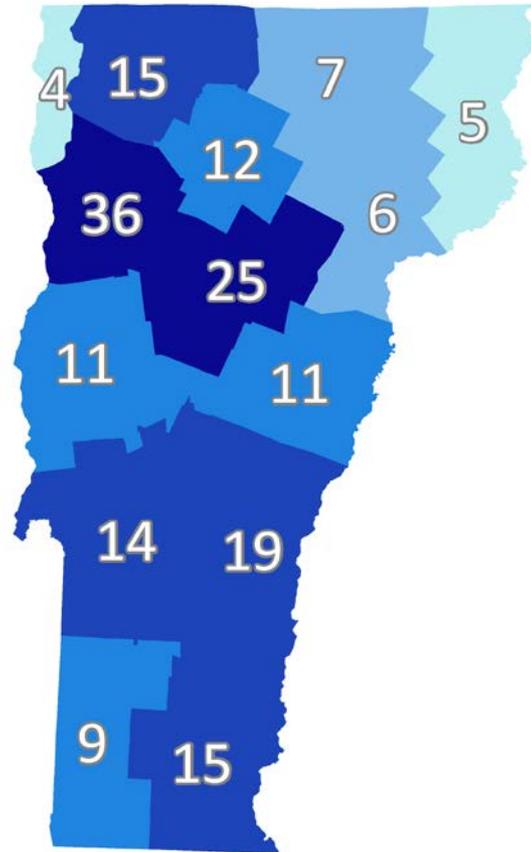


*Responses primarily reflect the viewpoints of towns with less than 5,000 residents.*

## Q4. What county is your municipality located in?

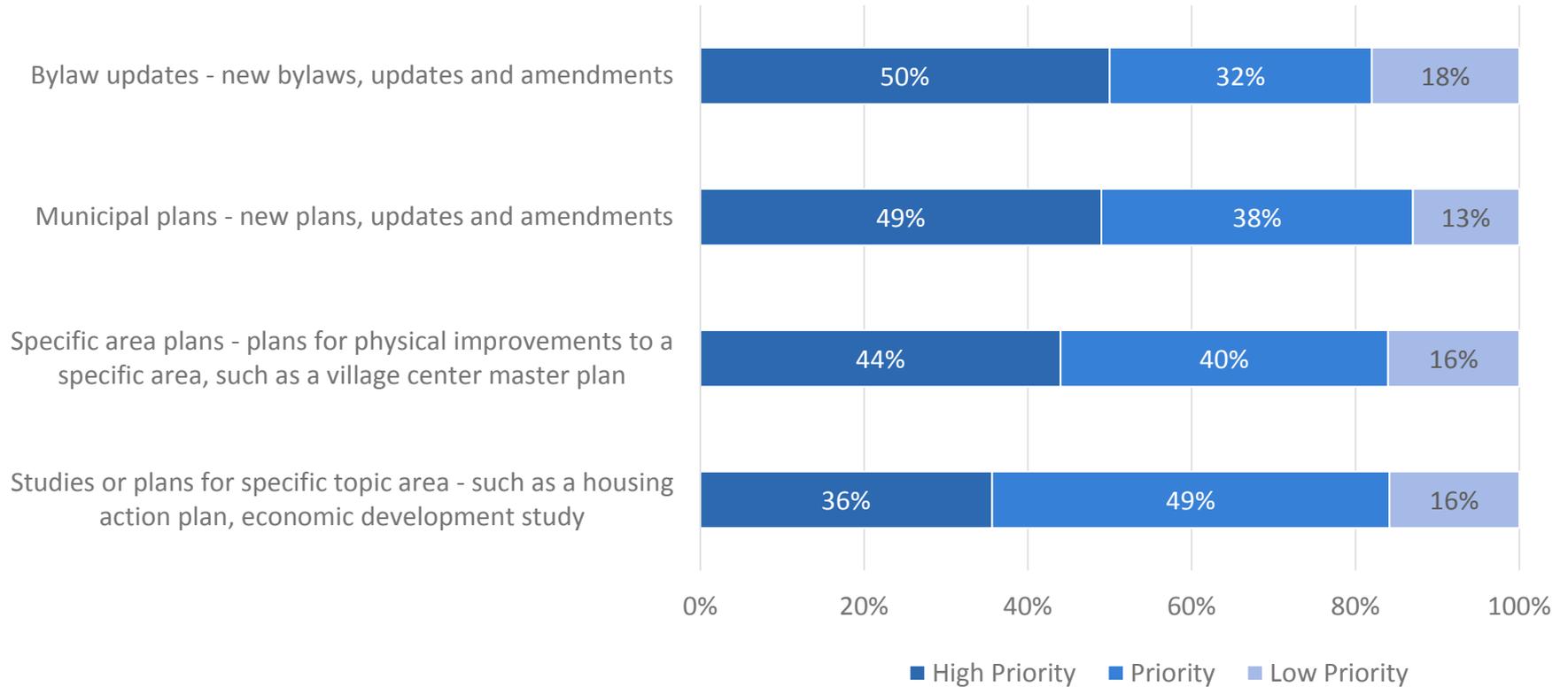
(If you serve multiple municipalities, where are the majority of those municipalities located?)

N. 189



*Good geographic distribution with responses from every county.*

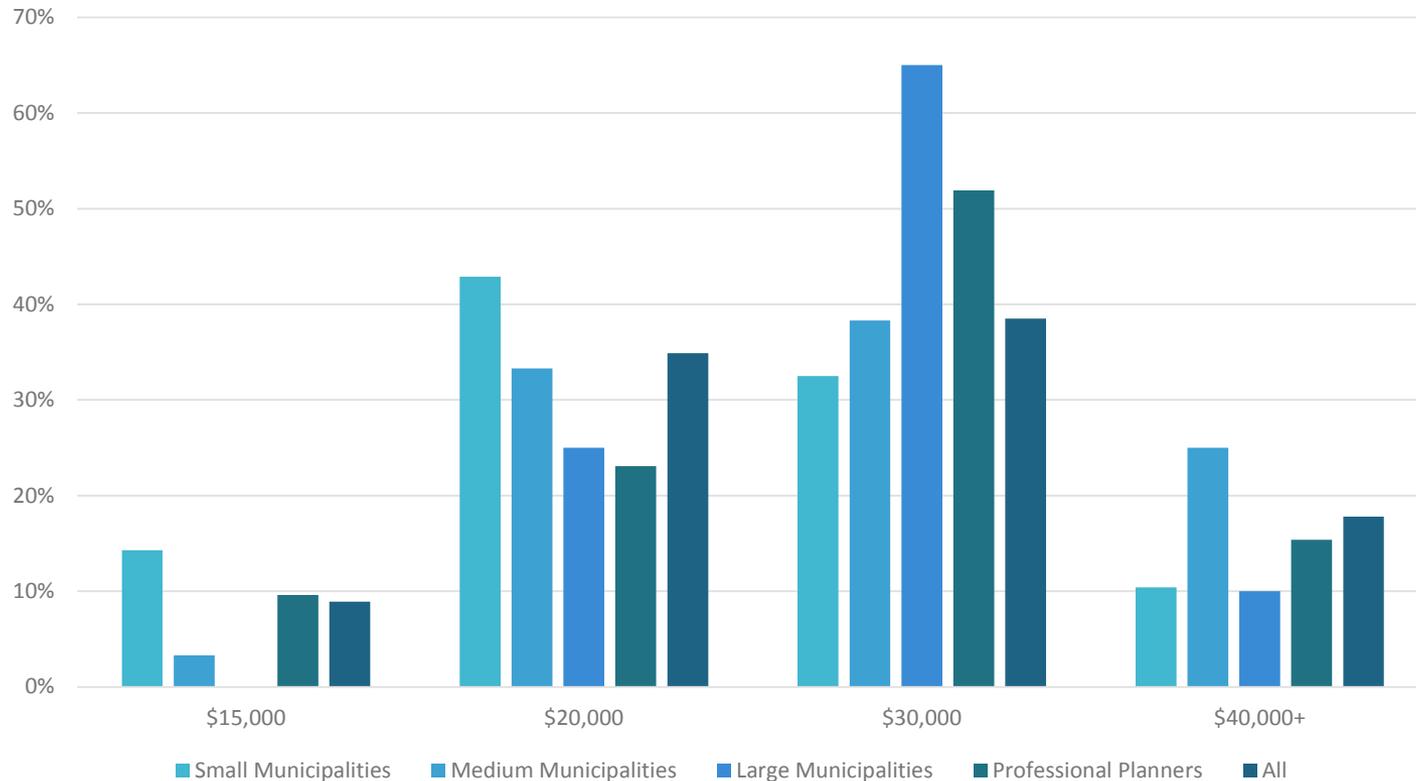
# Q5. What types of projects should be priorities for MPG funding? N. 173



*Respondents confirmed the program's existing priorities.*

## Q6. If there was a change to the maximum grant amount allowed, what would an acceptable maximum be?

N. 169

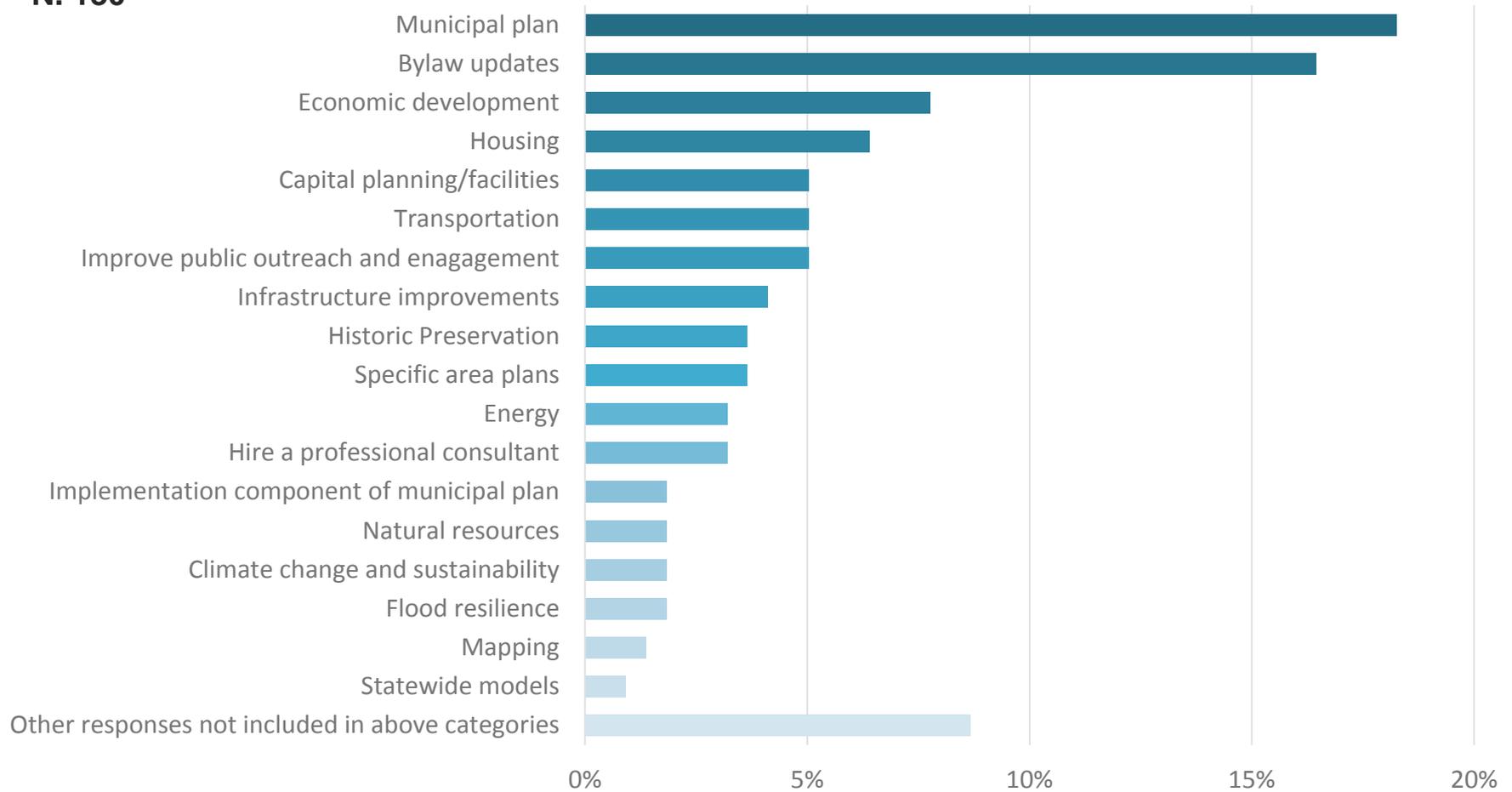


*Maximum grants of \$20,000 - \$30,000 are preferred.*

# Q7. What types of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

(Open ended.)

N. 130

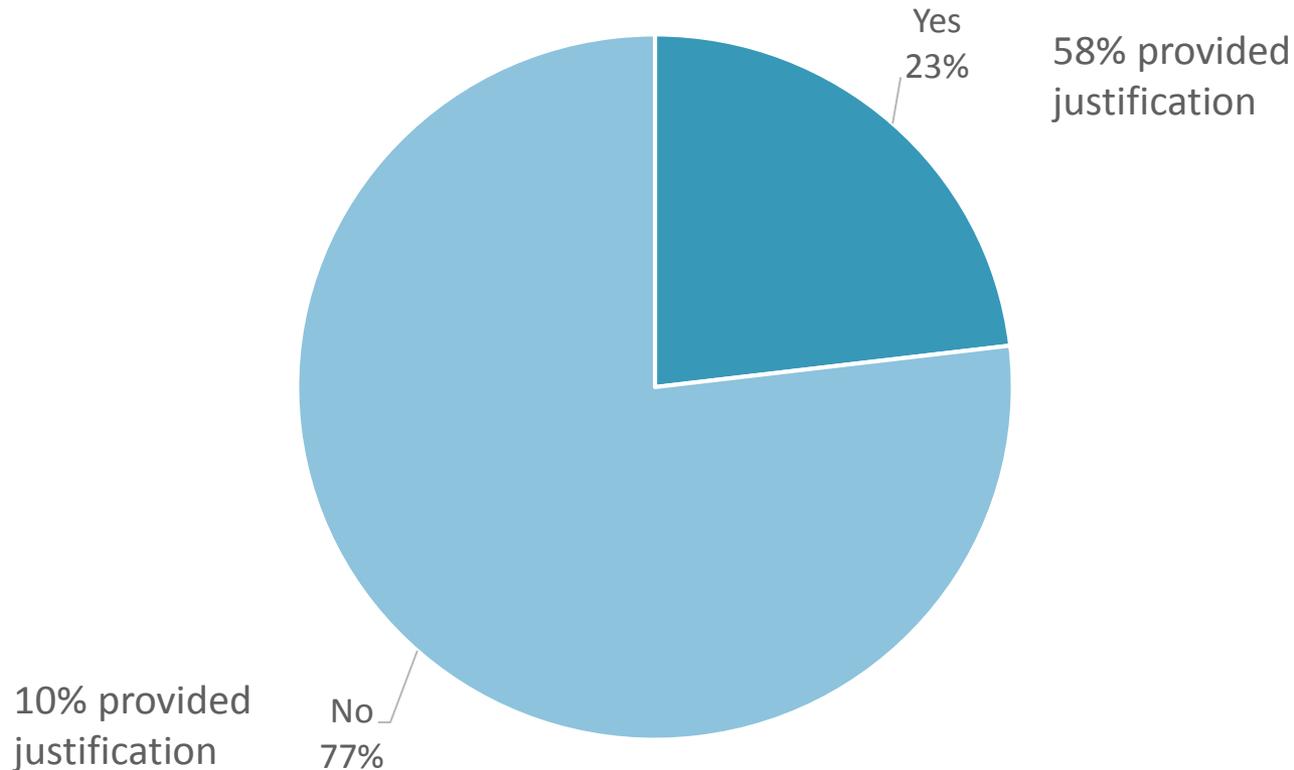


*Plans and bylaws topped the chart.*

## Q8. Should grants under \$8,000 be required to provide a match?

(Currently no match is required for grants under \$8,000.)

N. 176

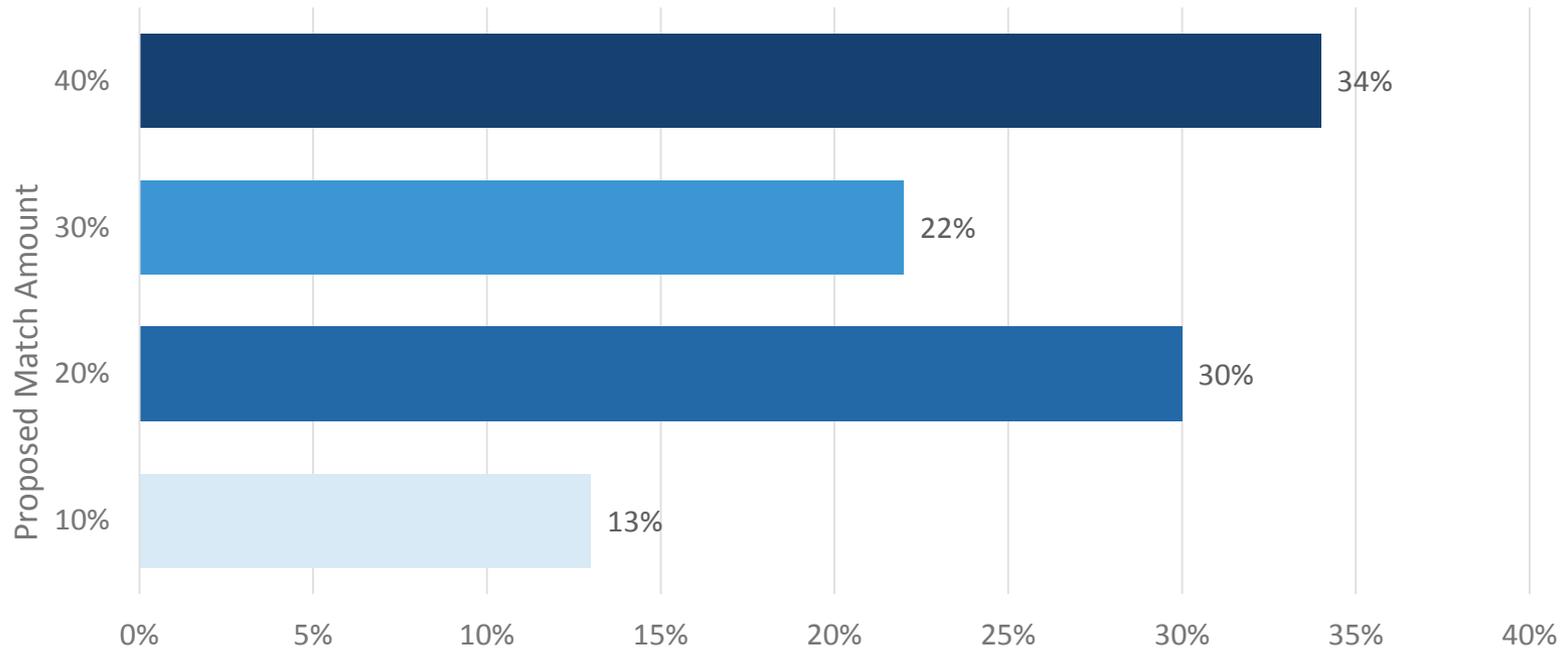


*Most do not want a required match, although they do not provide much reasoning as to why. Those who preferred a required match generally mentioned the need to have 'skin in the game.'*

# Q9. If all grants were subject to a cash match for the full grant amount, what level of match would discourage you from applying for an MPG?

(Currently 33% cash match for amount requested over \$8,000.)

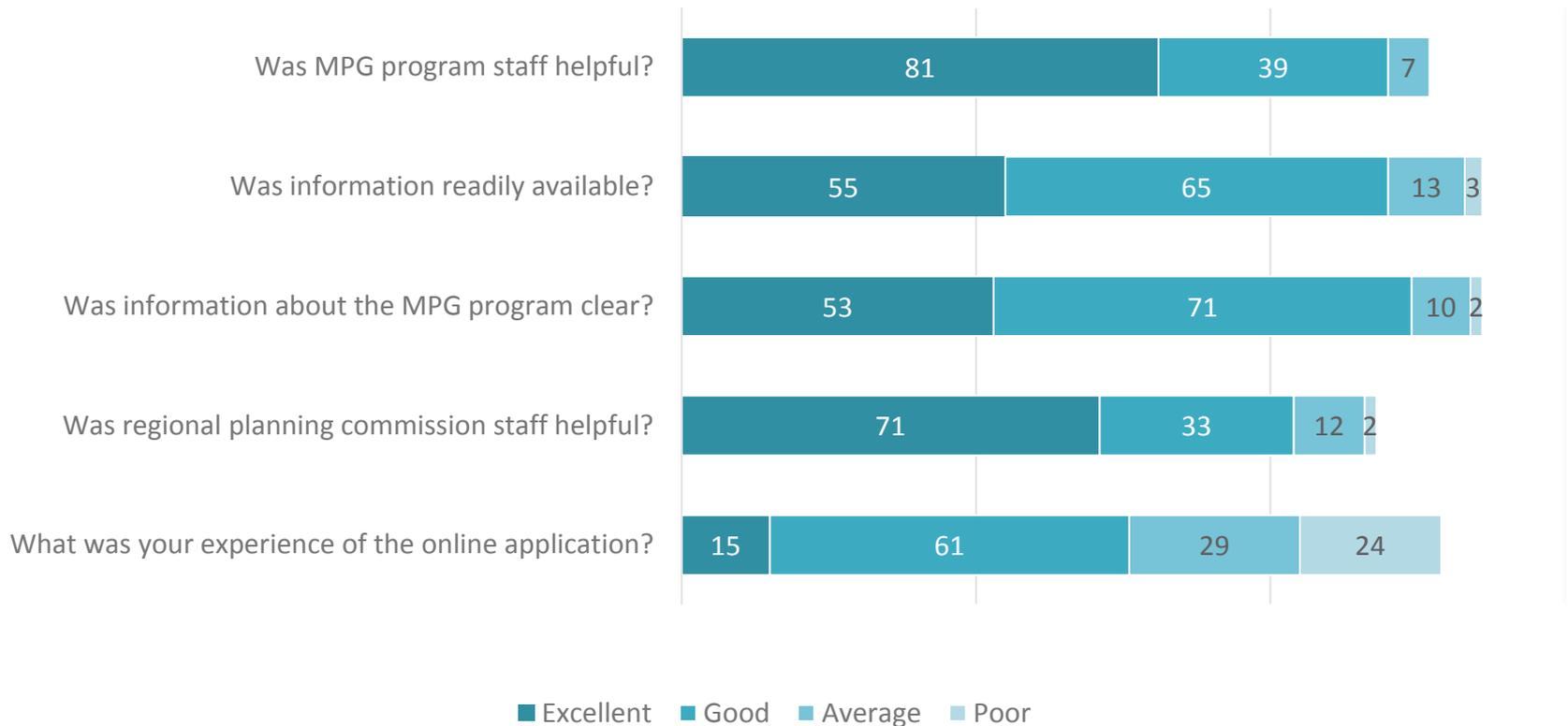
N. 165



*87% of towns would not be discouraged by a 10% match requirement.*

# Q10. If you have recently applied for a Municipal Planning Grant, please rate the program materials and staff?

N. 159



*Favorable reviews for RPC and state staff; mixed reviews of the online application.*

## **Q11. Please offer any other MPG program feedback. (optional.)**

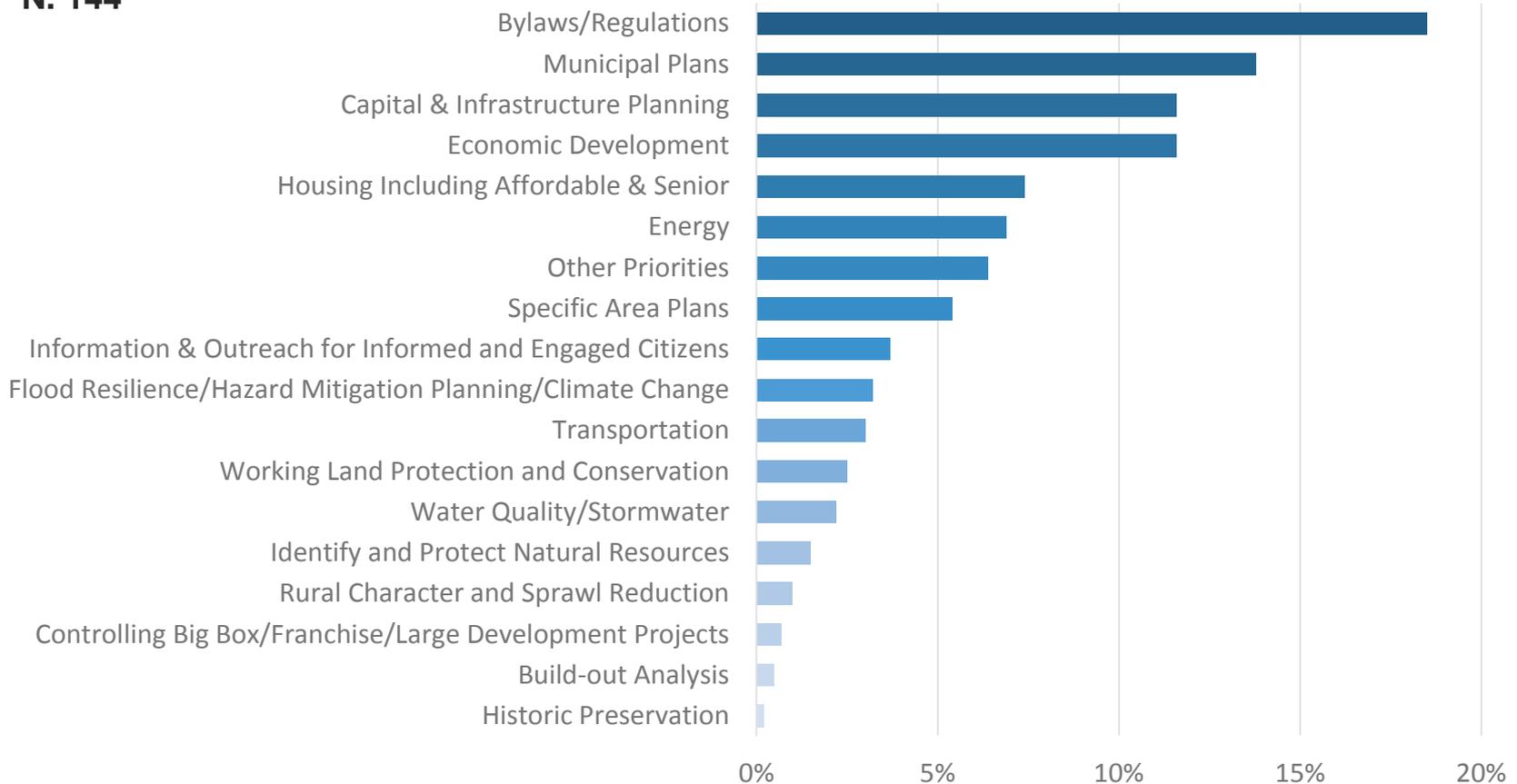
N. 59

*Excerpts (see attachment for all responses):*

- *“These grants and the Regional Planning Commission have enabled us to meet state requirements that would have been very difficult to achieve without them.”*
- *“Staff have been wonderful, but the Intelligrants System created more headaches than it should!”*
- *Thanks for running this excellent program. Small communities need all the help we can get!”*
- *“Please restore the MPG funding to full amounts. It also makes sense to require a match for all grants and have larger grant amounts.”*
- *“Funds to promote community planning and sustainable development (including local matching funds) are crucial to Vermont’s future.”*
- *“Lets concentrate on plan implementation for a while.”*

# Q12. Please list the highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve? (Open ended.)

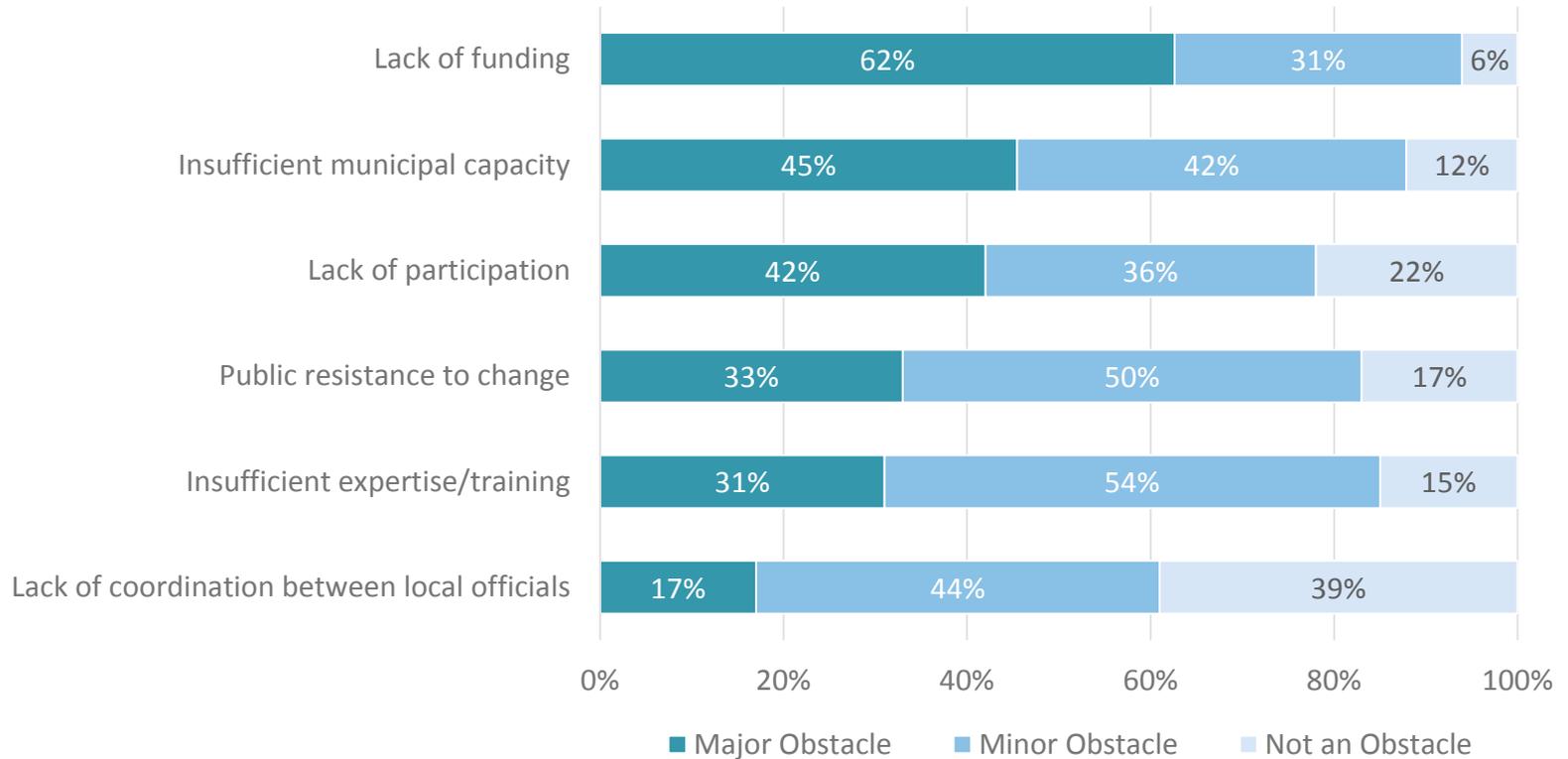
N. 144



*Bylaws and municipal plans are the highest planning priorities.*

# Q13. Please tell us about obstacles to meeting your planning priorities?

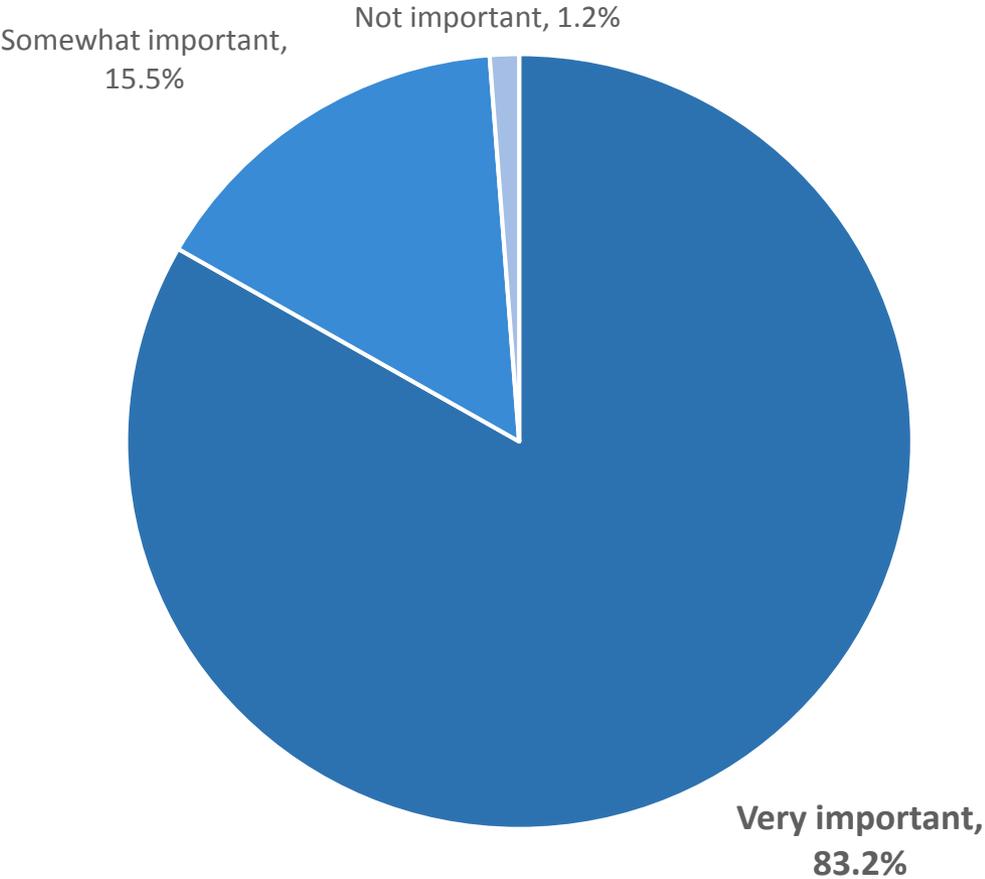
N. 160



*Lack of funding and insufficient municipal capacity are the greatest planning obstacles.*

**Q14. How important are municipal planning grants in helping your community or communities achieve their planning priorities?**

N. 161



*Respondents indicated that the program is needed to achieve their priorities.*

## Methodology

*The 2016 Municipal Planning Grant survey was designed to gather feedback from program users and to establish baseline data for the State of Vermont's Results-Based Accountability initiative. The survey was developed by DHCD staff in consultation with Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs).*

*The survey was distributed via DHCD's Strong Communities Quarterly newsletter, sent to municipal account owners in the grants management system, posted on listservs of the Vermont Planners Association and Zoning Administrators, and the RPCs sent the survey to their municipal lists.*

*All responses were anonymous and collected in Survey Monkey. DHCD staff conducted the analysis and developed the summary report. Open ended responses were categorized by staff and tallied for analysis.*

## 2016 Municipal Planning Grant Survey – Open Ended Responses:

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

1.	Projects that are adequately funded--through grant (and match); though many could come in under this depending on SOW. Special projects that are transferrable (good examples, models)
2.	update town plan; conduct an open space inventory
3.	new plans, updates and amendments
4.	Follow up on a completed economic development plan
5.	Economic development planning Infrastructure planning needs for attracting business Housing improvement planning /development
6.	Town Plan, Long Range plans, Flood mitigation
7.	Revise municipal plan
8.	Sustainable energy projects/planning. Citizen empowerment and participation and improved civic education.
9.	Rehabilitation of municipal owned properties and Village Center beautification projects to historic sites.
10.	Predevelopment costs for affordable housing/ sustainable agriculture and/ or related infrastructure initiatives.
11.	Plan to renovate a town landmark that will cost more than \$1 million to renovate.
12.	Similar to those pursued at present.
13.	Feasibility studies for significant, vacant properties
14.	Don't have much experience in this area yet to answer at this time
15.	It would be a start for a study on the Town's infrastructure and a plan on the go forward to construct or update and expand.
16.	Professional assistance with preparing/updating critical items such as the town plan and zoning bylaws. I would also like to see assistance for developing a long term capital plan that is consistent with the goals as established in the town plan.
17.	Municipal Plans and Bylaw/ordinance development from the new municipal plans. Anything beyond exploring development areas need to find financing in other places and possibly from tax payer dollars.
18.	Housing studies Town Plan period updates Density based Zoning studies
19.	Through review and update of town plans, not just the basic demographic and new state requirement updates.
20.	Infrastructure improvements; emergency planning; climate change planning

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

21.	we need them mostly for required town plan updates
22.	Complete update/rewrite of all plans/policies/bylaws. It is so important that towns have solid, enforceable documents that are in congruence with state laws.
23.	Redevelop Village District, Renovate Historic Grange Hall
24.	inventory of natural resources in order to guide conservation, development, and effects of climate change and warming.
25.	Rewrite of town plan and update of zoning bylaws
26.	Medium
27.	Economic development reviews, working with the downtown, and housing studies.
28.	Transportation Planning
29.	Consultation for flood proofing town critical infrastructure, developing a recreational trail system, cell service coverage
30.	Zoning and subdivision regulation over haul
31.	capital planning - going in depth, researching estimating trade-in values, optimal trade-in schedules for all equipment, understanding the details, presenting it to the public, surveys, outreach, campaigning
32.	Larger plans that include an inventory component, with a public input component that leads to a list of long term recommendations. Something to reference in the town plan and use for LT planning efforts, e.g. transportation plan, downtown plan, open space plan
33.	Bylaw updates and Municipal Plan updates
34.	I would hope to accomplish projects that include multiple different components, for example looking at a beautification, economic development, and alternative transportation project through a village center.
35.	town plans, zoning, flood plain management
36.	Those listed. Consulting services are expensive.
37.	Targeted plans, with or without regulatory update components, are such a positive element of this program. Such assistance is tough to find elsewhere.
38.	Form based code development
39.	All are a waste.
40.	by law up dates, mapping
41.	housing study historic preservation
42.	Anything to do with Sidewalks and infrastructure.

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

43.	traffic studies; architectural plans; site plans; viability of project plans
44.	The beginning phase of a downtown revitalization plan for our Village designated area.
45.	Updated Town Plan and Bylaws
46.	town center
47.	Zoning Bylaw updating
48.	It would allow us to do the big plans that lead to smaller positive initiatives. Plans that include an inventory & mapping component along with some public process to produce recommendations. E.g. transportation plan, downtown plan, open space plan. From there, the local planner can take it the rest of the way to create bylaws, town plan language, implementation projects.
49.	Village improvements
50.	Involve more of the Town / Village residents in Town Planning: Create a social media outreach with a website, Facebook page, Front Porch Forum business and mailers for folks without internet. that would be used for each 5 year plan update.
51.	Zoning, Subdivision bylaw updates; master plans, zoning maps
52.	working on one now for zoning update-don't think it's going to cover it. Will need in future for plan and zoning updates and whatever S230 requires.
53.	See question #5
54.	Economic development or village center development grants
55.	Plans should be sufficiently developed to produce reasonable estimates, identify financial resources that might be available and apply for loans and grants or local funding.
56.	Fixing the upstairs of the Town Hall (replacing windows, updating lighting, etc.)
57.	current level is adequate
58.	Planning Assistance-Mapping
59.	Refocus on water and wetlands and impact of developments on these precious resources
60.	Market studies, economic development action plans, establishing local conservation commissions, housing commissions, economic business advisory councils
61.	Establish scenic corridor through town along state highway with updated stricter regulations that encourage specific types of development and prohibit other types.
62.	Rewriting plans should not cost more than \$20K

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

63.	Historic preservation planning to enable old buildings to provide new functions to a community while preserving their past.
64.	Really need to increase cap if collaborative applications are going to be viable especially between communities
65.	Master Plans for specific areas of town like designated Village Centers
66.	Planning, education seminars, public outreach
67.	Educating the public not just municipal volunteers in the interconnectedness of landscape/environment with healthy living and long term property values and attracting viberant new citizens.
68.	major reworking of plans (or authoring plans where none existed)
69.	Non motorized facilities
70.	To move beyond the planning phase and start implementing projects. For instance, transportation assessments moving into creating projects like park and rides.
71.	Maintain grants for regular town plan and by-laws updates. Create a "special projects" grant that is geared more towards and specific to needs of smaller towns. Currently there are grants available that do not "fit" into the planning needs or wishes for small towns. Let the small towns self-identify their projects and then apply for funding.
72.	The basics of what Act 200 was originally intended to do -- foster good planning throughout the state. You have to keep Town Plan applications a high priority rather than secondary. That's the taproot to decision-making and implementation plans.
73.	Since the state mandates that Town Plans be updated every 5 years that is where the most urgent need is.
74.	Updating town plan, making sure town plan and zoning rules agree with each other, making sure zoning is fair and equitable across districts.
75.	Town plan and energy plan development
76.	Town natural resource inventory to identify sensitive area prior to revising town plan , zoning or by laws
77.	Historic renovation and concept plans for town revitalization efforts.
78.	smaller projects for the smaller towns
79.	We are working to update our zoning bylaws, continue to focus on business development, and seek opportunities to encourage community involvement and support.
80.	Establishing 2 park and rides, funding for energy efficiency auditing for low income home owners.
81.	Technical Assistance and facilitation for major changes to zoning districts and regulations
82.	We would probably not apply for a high level of funding given the size of our town.

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

83.	Any of the types of projects mentioned in #5 above would be suitable projects. The intent of the program should not be to provide full funding, but to be one resource available to communities.
84.	Review and condense current TP and making sure zoning regs match - help with professional wording for identifying sites for solar, wind & telecomm towers
85.	The key benefit of MPG funding is motivating and assisting a community to focus on the future, to really think about what's important to preserve, protect, advance, or what barriers or threats need to be lessened. MPG funding allows smaller communities without professional staff and planners to hire talented regional planners that not only know their stuff, but have a wider knowledge and perspective. Our new Town Plan has 35+ action items that now need to be worked on--the other key result of the planning process--to get important things done.
86.	Hire a professional planner as a consultant to re-write the Town Plan.
87.	hiring architects and engineers for planning affordable senior housing
88.	Town Plans, bylaws, physical Town improvements, housing plan, economic development
89.	Help writing plans, regs, and other documents that have become far too complicated for volunteers to write. Professional help is NECESSARY but no budget to pay for it.
90.	housing improvements and encouragement of business development/attraction through marketing initiatives
91.	Help upgrade water system
92.	To properly write a comprehensive plan or overhaul zoning for a larger municipality you will need \$30,000+. The issue is that will take away from smaller municipalities. The larger communities will use up even more (which is me). If we increase the pool back to \$800k or better yet expand to \$1M then MPG should increase the grant amount. If the grant pool remains at the \$400k then you should not increase the grant amount because fewer communities will be helped.
93.	sustainable downtown development
94.	Town Plan Updates Zoning/Subdivision Regulations Updates Specific Town Projects
95.	Sidewalks, bridge and road updates, affordable housing solutions.
96.	Bylaw revisions, plan updates
97.	Any and all. Planning project funds typically pay for consultant hours and public outreach. Consultants aren't cheap. Specific kinds of projects: bylaw revision/overhaul, village/downtown master plans, housing needs assessments
98.	Amend Bylaws, Downtown Parking Garage Feasibility and Development Plan

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

99.	That is more than Reading would ever need. I don't think you need to change it. It is better to give more communities a chance to get funding.
100.	We believe we would get better service if we could afford to hire outside our RPC
101.	Expanded studies of all types. Energy siting. stormwater studies.
102.	Projects that require professional consultants.
103.	Change of any kind is a struggle for many people and planning for physical improvements usually requires extensive public outreach - to introduce/explain/remind the public of the genesis/need/benefits of the project. Resources expended are the key to a successful public process and good project outcomes, but mean fewer resources to develop the plan itself or to design/implement a specific physical improvement. Lack of resources for follow-through contributes to many great proposals sitting on office shelves. More funding to fewer projects to account for public outreach/project presentation needs would achieve more tangible results in communities.
104.	Specific area plan, a discrete zoning amendment project, or match to a larger project
105.	Basic studies, etc. required to implement plan objectives
106.	Would go toward any type of project, regardless of whether it covers full amount.
107.	This would allow doing a better job with existing types of projects that are now generally under-funded. The existing funding levels are appreciated, but not generally sufficient to bring plans and bylaws up to a level that is desired.
108.	Update of Municipal Plan and Land Development Code.
109.	Creation/planning/action for implementing a light industrial park/area in Johnson; or a plan to move forward with procuring and designing our solar energy array
110.	see above
111.	Comprehensive Bylaw Updates, Wastewater and stormwater master planning initiatives for rural villages

Q7. What kinds of projects do you hope to accomplish with that level of funding?

112.	I worry that more than \$40,000 will start to exclude smaller communities that really rely on MPG funding for municipal plan updates (or development of a first plan) or basic bylaw updates, pushing out those necessary planning efforts in favor of hiring private consultants to do specific topic studies in urban areas that have a match. I appreciate greater funding available but the focus really should stay with those communities that most need the planning grants. As it is, with "bonus points" awarded for certain buzz topics, some communities are inherently excluded. But there needs to be building blocks for many projects. The rub also comes when you think about projects that don't get funded that aim to protect the working landscape; we need to reframe how we think about "compact village center developments". Would increased maximum grant amounts reduce the number of grants awarded or is the pot of funding increasing? If funding levels for the program stay the same, I would not support raising the maximum grant amount.
113.	Comprehensive Bylaw Updates, renewable energy siting in Town Plans, Capital Budgeting,
114.	Smarter, tech saavy public outreach.
115.	Connectivity plans Economic development plans
116.	transportation planning, sustainability planning, master planning
117.	I would prefer to use Phases for a major project. Two phases at 15 K total over 3 years of 30K.
118.	We would like to do projects that require high quality professional consultants, which we can't really do for less than \$50,000.
119.	Specific area plans that require a little more detail in the master plan/action plans.
120.	Actionable bike/ped programs, economic development.
121.	Municipal roads general permit development and implementation
122.	Update Town Plans, create bylaws/subdivision
123.	More model projects
124.	Municipal plan overhauls, zoning rewrites, targeted projects such as housing studies, historic preservation guideline development, etc.
125.	Town Plans and Bylaws
126.	commercial and housing market studies, design workshops, investment in equipment
127.	work force housing research and study
128.	Infrastructure planning such as wastewater, sidewalk, etc.
129.	help in bylaw update
130.	Planning for new affordable housing developments

Q8. Should grants under \$8,000 be required to provide a match? (Currently no match is required for grants under \$8,000.)  
Please explain (optional)

1.	All should include buy-in from community, including monetary contribution--planning should be regular line item in local budgets.
2.	small towns cannot afford matching grants
3.	Yes. Requiring a match requires more attention to involving the community and broader participation in the project..
4.	Yes, but only an amount sufficient for town to feel it has a financial stake in the project and outcome.
5.	I like the required match for communities as it demonstrates a commitment on the part of the Town
6.	10%, just so the muni has some skin in the game.
7.	The State poses a lot of requirements on municipalities when it comes to planning. In recent years, the volume of those requirements increased substantially. If the municipalities are asked to comply with the State requirements, it seems like a good idea to provide resources for them at the best financial terms possible.
8.	No, that's a lot of money for a small town....
9.	Match should be required, but is should be MHI related.
10.	Yes. If there is not a match for small grants then communities are less likely to look at multi-faceted projects. Instead small "one off" projects are more likely planned for.
11.	Tough to do much with \$8,000 -- you tend to add in town funds regardless. Plus, the math would be easier if the match was on all awards and the same for all amounts!
12.	Everybody needs to have some skin in the game.
13.	maybe, base it on a percentage of the overall town budget. \$8,000 for Burlington is far different that \$8,000 for a small town like my town of Norton.
14.	Skin in the game.
15.	All grants should require at least a small match (local buy-in/support)
16.	Seems superfluous to force towns through process of approving match.
17.	A match shows a community's commitment/investment to the project for which it is applying. This commitment ensures better odds of reaching desired outcomes learned in the process.
18.	Any form of grant amount needs to leverage a match regardless of request size. It shows some level of commitment by the municipality affected.
19.	Small towns like ours can't afford to match funds

Q8. Should grants under \$8,000 be required to provide a match? (Currently no match is required for grants under \$8,000.)  
Please explain (optional)

20.	Require match for all projects - town would have some of its own money in the project, not just "free" MPG funds; would allow at least a few more projects to receive funding
21.	OK, but should allow at least some inkind match
22.	A 10 - 20% local cash match should be required for grants under \$8000..
23.	Most small towns have NO money but still need to have help
24.	Smaller communities may use the cost as an excuse not to plan ahead. Such thinking is far more expensive in the long run than the match amount.
25.	I think some financial responsibility should be required by the entity applying for a grant.
26.	Perhaps match should be by community size? Either way smaller and poorer communities should have access to grants with less or no match.
27.	My answer is "yes." Any town requesting a grant should be willing to provide some matching funds.
28.	No, Small Towns are encouraged by having no match.
29.	NO! In skilled hands, the \$8K is a great way to inspire, to "whet" community appetite to do more!
30.	NO! Rural communities rely on MPGs for Plan and Bylaw Updates. These communities are already making a significant contribution by directing limited volunteer resources toward planning. Requiring a match for small grants (less than \$8,000) would have an extremely detrimental impact on rural communities, natural resources, and Vermont's working landscape.
31.	Have you found worthwhile projects completed with such grants?
32.	No; But I believe this amount should be raised, especially if there was a change to the maximum grant amount allowed.
33.	Generally, I think it helpful for those receiving grants to have some of their own resources involved. That said, many small towns might not be able to do this, and the politics and pragmatics of budget, funding, and grant cycles do not align neatly. So no, in deference to smaller towns.
34.	Yes, it will mean the SLB has skin in the game, but keep it small for wide access.
35.	Small towns are less apt to budget planning funds.
36.	I believe that all grants should have a match, to extend the available pool of funds and demonstrate community buy in and "planning for planning". Otherwise this becomes a circumstance when it is only addressed if there is money and never thought about otherwise.

Q8. Should grants under \$8,000 be required to provide a match? (Currently no match is required for grants under \$8,000.)  
Please explain (optional)

---

37. | No. Some communities are resistant to paying any match. By maintaining the \$8000 threshold, we can get those communities to engage in planning.

Q11. Please offer any other MPG program feedback. (optional)

- 
1. Online application process still difficult for towns without administrative staff

---

  2. Make the online application process simpler (this will assist older applicants with few computer skills)

---

  3. OMG, website navigation was terrible and very difficult for part-time (one-time) user. Directions were cumbersome and confusing and several back and forth between pages and information were needed to figure out what to do.

---

  4. Overall and excellent program.

---

  5. Am a new SB member so don't have feedback at this time

---

  6. I had a very good experience with the program.

---

  7. Grant applications are usually prepared by our zoning administrator, so my experience is somewhat limited. Every time I've had a question, or wanted to get advice, the assistance from ACRPC and the MPG program staff has been excellent.

---

  8. A workshop, possibly a mandatory on-line webinar, regarding the full MPG process from start to finish. I would also like to see a high level webinar on the Intelligrants system.

---

  9. on-line application was not fully functional

---

  10. I was not a direct participant in the application progress. I believe the RPC did all the heavy lifting.

---

  11. thanks for all you do; these programs are important to us all - large and small

---

  12. The online grants management process needs to be redesigned--I could not have successfully navigated it without help from NVDA staff planner

---

  13. An explanation of why an application was not funded would be very helpful, especially if the town plans to resubmit.

---

  14. The online grant process is difficult if it isn't used often.

---

  15. Revise the online application process. A more linear process, i.e. complete one step , then move to the next. No moving back and forth in the application.

---

  16. really great program that works well when utilized with regional planning commission.

Q11. Please offer any other MPG program feedback. (optional)

- 
17. Please continue to make the funding priorities for "true" planning projects. Scoping and implementation projects are popular with decision makers, because they are exciting and could be completed within a political term.. the MPG program helps me as planner pitch long-range planning and vision projects, which often have less tangible outcomes but are no less important. There are enough other types of funding that can get corralled into scoping and implementation-type projects.
- 
18. This survey assumes a current familiarity with the planning grant process. Because we interact with MPG once a year at most, we essentially have to re-learn the process every time. This makes it difficult to respond in detail a general survey like this for a municipality like ours.
- 
19. Please make sure that the online guides are clear, especially for the specific technical components of the grant process. Intelligrants is sometimes a bit confusing.
- 
20. Waste of money.
- 
21. More areas and projects for available money
- 
22. With the grants our town has received, we felt we received a great deal of support from program staff and CCRPC staff.
- 
23. Selectboards seem to love scoping studies & implementation projects. They are flashy and can be completed in a political term with a tangible result. I look forward to this grant every year because it gives me a chance to propose actual planning projects. Please continue your good work keeping the funding priorities focused on "pure" planning, so these funds don't get robbed for scoping studies and implementation... there's enough other funding opportunities that cater to that type of thing, and half of these implementation projects are just something that seems like a good idea at the time, rather than an integral piece of an overall vision. Need the money to work on the big picture. Thank goodness for the MPG program xoxo.
- 
24. Good program.
- 
25. It is difficult to track down all of the information needed to apply for a MPG. The path wasn't clear on what we needed to do to amend the plan then apply for Village Center Designation. We finally figured out what was required by going to the statues.
- 
26. curious about new implications of new bill, S230.
- 
27. More funding
- 
28. Highest priority should be given to proposals that lead to a specific action--or project. For example, a housing action plan is not so compelling as a proposal to identify sites for new affordable housing and/or buildings that might be re-purposed plus a strategy for attracting developers (private or regional non-profit).

Q11. Please offer any other MPG program feedback. (optional)

- 
29. Please consider changing the procurement process/requirements to allow use of RFQs/RFPs in advance of application, local procurement procedures under the MPG.
- 
30. A recent grant enabled us to move forward with a project. It was essential to have the \$\$ support and the "political" support - a 3rd party deemed our project worthwhile and important.
- 
31. The application program was confusing -- it is like a maze trying to find the right spot in the program. And it just should be that difficult -- use simple names, eliminate acronyms, and have transparent "mapping" of the site (so it is EASY to drill down to where you want to be).
- 
32. The online experience was confusing. I liked it better when the RPC could provide the administrative services, they deal with it daily and it is a bit overwhelming when rarely dealt with.
- 
33. Keep up the good work!
- 
34. Navigating through the MPG website was very awkward and arcane. I had to rely on regional planning staff to find the way and fulfill requirements.
- 
35. These grants and the Regional Planning Commission have enabled us to meet state requirements that would have been very difficult to achieve without them.
- 
36. Perhaps review and revise/update grant administration instructions
- 
37. We struggled with finalizing our grant due to technical issues with the online system finalization process. Even though we thought we had completed everything, we had not and had to seek additional assistance.
- 
38. I believe well-crafted surveys can be a very valuable management tool. (I've done dozens over the years.) This one is good, and it demonstrates the department is focusing on how to improve this important program
- 
39. too many delays
- 
40. all DHCD guidance should be stating that town plan updates are town responsibility, and they should annual be putting funds into a reserve account to help pay for next plan update. But MPG funding for plan updates remains important, particularly with new language strengthening requirements for update
- 
41. For a grant application, it was straight forward and relatively easy. Everyone I dealt with was very helpful.

Q11. Please offer any other MPG program feedback. (optional)

- 
42. regarding #9. I work for a municipality with the resources to match cash grants so even a 50% match would not discourage us from applying. Not all municipalities have that. A comprehensive plan for Belvidere will cost only a little less than a community 10 times bigger in population. I think the factor on match should be tied to ability to pay not amount borrowed. At least he should have the discussion on an alternative metric.
- 
43. Funds to promote community planning and sustainable development (including local matching funds) are crucial to Vermont's future.
- 
44. mini grants of 1-2000 should be added that have no match for surgical revisions to bylaws or adding a chapter to a plan.
- 
45. Staff have been wonderful, but the Intelligrants System creates more headaches than it should!
- 
46. Please restore the MPG funding to full amounts. It also makes sense to require a match for all grants and have larger grant amounts.
- 
47. Studies for specific topic areas - housing, economic development - should consider how town plan and bylaws support or hinder these objectives.
- 
48. The website isn't intuitive.
- 
49. Lets concentrate on plan implementation for a while.
- 
50. Thanks for running this excellent program. Small communities need all the help we can get!
- 
51. Replying as a local PC member in regards to helpfulness of RPC staff. CCRPC and their staff are awesome and we wouldn't have accomplished what we have without the.
- 
52. Some years it seems there is a particular focus for grants that are awarded, e.g. growth center planning, and this hasn't always been communicated well in the application.
- 
53. The Intelligrants system is horrible!!! There MUST be a better way! For some municipal staff/ volunteers it is very unintelligible and unnecessarily overcomplicated.
- 
54. Prior experience with the online system was frustrating at best, and I'm quite experienced with these things. Applying online for a mortgage was far, far clearer and easier! I had to contact state staff many times; you were always helpful, but if it's that hard for me, it must be really hard for those less agile on computer systems.
- 
55. Competition for these resources in Chittenden County is very rigorous. Perhaps too much so -- given our planning needs to manage growth.

Q11. Please offer any other MPG program feedback. (optional)

- 
56. Please offer larger grants and require a match for all grants. Otherwise, it's too easy for the selectboard to simply choose to go with an \$8000 grant and hire the rpc to cut and paste language to update our 1986 plan with whatever the new element of the day is. If a match is required and the cap is higher it will result in deliberate higher quality work.
- 
57. The intelligrants system is still pretty bad. In some ways it is worse than it was before the update. Program staff, however, are excellent.
- 
58. The on-line grant system is difficult to navigate in general and extremely difficult to navigate for volunteer board members such as Selectboard members.
- 
59. The emphasis on growth centers doesn't help small towns without a village. We didn't get funded, but were told we had an excellent application, but having no growth center penalized us. We use the neighboring town's village as our growth center, which our Plan reflects.

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

Priority #1	
1.	Inability to fund/provide needed services and facilities (particularly public safety)--rising costs in relation to limited tax base
2.	Development of green space and downtown park/parklet
3.	Develop renewable energy project siting standards.
4.	Get a first town plan passed by local voters.
5.	Updating zoning regulations
6.	Economic development
7.	Clarifying town by-laws with updates to state laws
8.	Rewrite municipal plan
9.	Keeping people informed and included.
10.	Completing capital budget and capital planning.
11.	Village economic development, including
12.	Bylaw revisions
13.	Town plan
14.	River corridor planning/incorporation into town plans.
15.	Economic Development
16.	Infrastructure repairs and expansion
17.	Complete the process of updating our zoning bylaws.
18.	Workforce Development- Recruitment outside of VT is happening/ How do we train the people that live here
19.	Helping with update our new town plan
20.	Water quality
21.	Economic development
22.	town plan updates required by statute
23.	Town Plan
24.	Economic Development
25.	Actionable Town Plans

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

26.	To make our town a destination
27.	Town Plan
28.	Town office space
29.	Updating the town plan
30.	Economic development and downtown
31.	transportation
32.	Develop a recreational trail system in newly acquired town property in the center of town
33.	complete the new town plan
34.	updates to existing plans and ordinances
35.	Inventory and asset management related to town infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater, stormwater)
36.	Updating zoning and subdivision bylaws
37.	Town Plan
38.	Downtown revitalization
39.	town plan
40.	Solar siting bylaw
41.	Update of development regulations.
42.	Wastewater capacity, flexibility, etc. for even minor growth in village areas
43.	Bylaw development for intensive development
44.	By laws
45.	improove village center
46.	Town Plan
47.	Sidewalks, we need a safe place for pedestrians to travel throughout the village area.
48.	Visionary planning that goes beyond the present and into the future.
49.	Rewriting the Village of Enosburg Zoning Regulations
50.	Flood resilience
51.	zoning

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

52.	Town Plan
53.	re-write zoning by-law
54.	Buildout/development of our future land use goals
55.	Maintain current quality of life of our rural community,
56.	Meeting new requirements for energy siting.
57.	Flood Resilience
58.	Finish the current redevelopment projects
59.	providing protection of our forest districts for many enviroental reasons,concerns.
60.	Rewrite Zoning Regulations
61.	Infrastructure
62.	Renewable Energy Siting, and integration of renewable energy assetts into the town landscape
63.	Replace windows in upstairs of Town Office.
64.	floodplain planning
65.	Town Plan
66.	Solar engery alternatives and impact on local government, scenic apeal of the town, potential conflicts with property owners
67.	Village revitalization
68.	Revukations which protect our rural character
69.	Town Plan
70.	Determining if form- based code is compatible within our two extended Village areas in order to encourage infill.
71.	Updating town plans
72.	Bylaw update for a specific area
73.	Educating other municipal officials and the public.
74.	Getting the average citizen to show up to PC and Select Board Meetings
75.	Updating Town Plan to include recent state mandates and to add designated centers
76.	pedestrian mobility
77.	Zoning Bylaw updates

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

78.	Since it has expired, everything
79.	infrastructure planning
80.	Bylaw revisions for our village center
81.	Staying current with new and changing legislative requirements/mandates.
82.	Town Plan Adoption
83.	Meeting state requirement that plans be renewed every five years
84.	Having a say in renewable energy siting.
85.	River corridor planning
86.	Identifying sensitive resources in towm
87.	Historic Revitalization
88.	Editing zoning rgs to incorporate newly passed Flood Regs
89.	Finalizing Hazard Mitigation plan.
90.	Implementing storm mgt systems
91.	Updated regulations to better support town vision & protect assets
92.	Village Center Development
93.	Effective budgeting for future projects
94.	Brownfields redevelopment
95.	appropriate siting of solar, wind & telecomm towers to be upheld in the state process
96.	Getting our Zoning Bylaws in sync with our new Town Plan.
97.	Town Plan
98.	Affordable senior housing
99.	Engineering Projects
100.	How/where to develop given the limits on development in Bolton?
101.	Affordable Housing
102.	Update water system for village
103.	Current MPG is to rewrite comprehensive plan to make more strategic

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

104.	Expanding tax base is crucial, as a result of very high % of tax exempt property in town.
105.	Economic Development
106.	Affordable Housing
107.	capital planning in larger towns, backed by a good utility and facility and transportation section
108.	Municipal wastewater system planning - capacity increases and phosphorous treatment upgrades.
109.	Downtown Mater Plan, including Economic development (marketing) and parking
110.	Town Plan Updates
111.	Solar Siting Regulations
112.	Capital budgeting
113.	Complete street issues
114.	Need more housing within walking distance to downtown.
115.	Economic development to provide for more community prosperity and shift tax burden from residences
116.	Planning tools for larger development projects
117.	Master plans for specific areas
118.	affordable housing
119.	Encouraging redevelopment in a historic center
120.	economic development
121.	Visioning future public and private developments in the municipal core.
122.	complete and pass through public process our Joint Village and Town Municipal Plan
123.	Plan/Bylaw modernization
124.	Determining how to address water/wastewater/stormwater issues in very small villages in an affordable way.
125.	Energy planning
126.	Renewable Energy Siting
127.	Non regulatory strategies to implement plans -- planning is not synonymous with zoning!
128.	Economic Development/Grand List Growth
129.	capital planning

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

130.	Establishing a higher density mixed use district in a specific area originally identified 20 years ago
131.	Organizing our plan so that it presents a clear path to action.
132.	Adaptive re-use of existing town and school facilities
133.	water quality
134.	Municipal Plan updates
135.	Energy planning
136.	Municipal roads general permit
137.	Bringing older plans into conformance with state planning goals
138.	Bringing older plans into conformance with state planning goals. (Flood resiliency, village/downtown designation, etc)
139.	all issues related to Town Plans
140.	village revitalization
141.	work force housing
142.	community wastewater
143.	Affordable Housing
144.	Water quality related issues in plans and regulations
Priority #2	
1.	Lack of needed water, wastewater infrastructure to support higher density village, mixed use development
2.	Planning for a possible community center and maker's space. Multi-generational uses.
3.	Conduct an open space inventory to assist the town prioritize conservation lands.
4.	Get our town owned buildings structurally updated.
5.	Follow up on current economic development plan
6.	Housing
7.	up-dating town plan
8.	Finding and connecting with experts who are able to translate their expertise to the public.
9.	Addressing uses of currently unused municipal properties.
10.	Senior living initiative, and

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

11.	Energy siting policies
12.	Zoning and Sub-divisions
13.	Understanding smaller town roles in promoting community and economic development.
14.	Community Development
15.	Economic plan for suitable employment opportunities
16.	Prepare a capital budget that incorporates the goals set forth in the town plan.
17.	Community Development Planning (Residents and their needs vs wealthy 2nd homeowners & visitors)
18.	Hazard Mitigation Planning
19.	Focused growth, consistent with rural character
20.	creation of master plan for 75-acre town center
21.	Zoning Bylaw
22.	Housing Development
23.	Updated unified zoning/subdivision bylaws
24.	Broaden the tax base by encouraging new business in town;
25.	Mitigation
26.	Recreation facilities
27.	adopting non restrictive land use bylaws
28.	Bylaw updates
29.	village / commercial center planning
30.	Consultation on ways to flood proof critical infrastructure in the flood plain
31.	secure funding for zoning and subdivision over haul
32.	understanding sensitive slopes/ landslide prone areas
33.	Build-out/ identifying growth trends. Re-evaluating our land use goals and map
34.	Design Review for downtown district
35.	Town Bylaw changes
36.	Bike & pedestrian infrastructure

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

37.	zoning bylaw
38.	Zoning must be re-done this year; this is a massive undertaking and a real stretch for a volunteer planning commission
39.	Codifying municipal ordinances.
40.	Development of more effective zoning districts to improve housing options while continuing to support agriculture
41.	Affordable housing
42.	Town Plan
43.	Zoning ordinance amendments & updates
44.	Reduce sprawl.
45.	Communication to the community, so that the residents are engaged and educated.
46.	Encouraging business and controlled development
47.	Solar/wind farm regulations
48.	grandfathered properties
49.	Zoning
50.	update Town plan
51.	Inventory and asset management around public infrastructure- water, sewer, roads
52.	Provide services required by residents without raising tax rate.
53.	Update town plan & zoning
54.	Village Center Designation
55.	Begin the new major undertaking of another redevelopment project
56.	maintaining the rural characteristics of our small town while seeking employment opportunities.
57.	Rewrite Subdivision Regulations
58.	Capital Planning
59.	Development of a village center town center distric
60.	Fix electrical wiring in upstairs of Town Office.
61.	Land Use Ordinance
62.	Growth and development impact on streams and wetland protections

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

63.	economic development and diversification
64.	Regulations and policies which attract young families
65.	Zoning Regulations
66.	5 year plan for maintenance of Town properties.
67.	Updating zoning-subdivision-flood bylaws
68.	Energy Plan
69.	Preserving local natural resources
70.	Educating about how to preserve the unique value that Vermont's working landscape has
71.	Updating Bylaws to match Plan and to be more accessible to citizens
72.	energy standards
73.	Town Plan updates
74.	innovative bylaws
75.	Clean water planning.
76.	Trying to maintain/retain local control of municipal planning, e.g. Act 248, Shoreland Protection, Flood Resiliency.
77.	Village/Downtown Center Designation
78.	Incorporating all the new requirements the legislature has enacted
79.	Discouraging "big box" stores without limiting expansion of small business.
80.	Energy plan
81.	Revising zoning obylaws to protect these
82.	Riverfront Redevelopment
83.	new permit application forms
84.	Updating zoning bylaws.
85.	Historical preservation repair of town hall
86.	Pedestrian linkages
87.	Natural Resources Planning
88.	Developing mechanisms to ensure that building maintenance funds are used for that purpose.

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

89.	Economic development
90.	shoreland zoning
91.	Getting organized (PC and Selectboard) to accomplish the specific goals and recommendations contained in the Town Plan.
92.	Re-write of Sign Ordinance
93.	transportation
94.	Town Plan, Bylaws, etc.
95.	Flood resiliency
96.	Business Development
97.	Develop sewer system for village
98.	Looking to complete a downtown master plan for streetscape and related improvements
99.	Improved housing is crucial for the well-being of low income residents.
100.	Public Infrastructure
101.	Bridge and Road updates
102.	rural lands planning in smaller towns to protect working lands, mainly through subdivision
103.	Village growth area planning - design standards, impact assessment (traffic, infrastructure, etc.)
104.	Amend Bylaws - zoning and subdivision
105.	Zoning Regulations
106.	Road maintenance guidelines
107.	energy siting
108.	Resistance to change and dealing with NIMBYism.
109.	Traffic calming and dealing with impacts of traffic to quality of life, investment in the community
110.	Resource conservation (views, wildlife, site-specific resources)
111.	Housing study
112.	protection of agriculture
113.	Neighborhood quality of life
114.	infrastructure planning

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

115.	Keeping local regulations in step with Regional and State goals.
116.	Complete and pass Form Based Code (hopefully through town vote as well)
117.	Infrastructure planning and maintenance (including adaptation of infrastructure/resiliency)
118.	Addressing housing affordability in a small scale, integrated way.
119.	Meeting basic plan updates and changing statutory requirements
120.	Water Quality
121.	Breaking out of old patterns and ways of doing things - hyper regulation...
122.	Public Infrastructure Planning esp. Streetscape
123.	deferred maintenance
124.	Updating river corridor & flood regulations
125.	Increasing housing within walking distance to downtown.
126.	Consolidation of emergency services
127.	jobs, commercial tax base
128.	Specific Master Plans for villages
129.	Village center
130.	Local Opposition to planning mechanisms
131.	making old zoning consistent with a new plan
132.	Making old zoning consistent with a new plan.
133.	capital budgeting
134.	economic development and diversification
135.	density in the core
136.	affordable, diverse housing options
137.	Economic Development
138.	Renewable energy siting
Priority #3	
1.	Hazards mitigation--especially stormwater management

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

2.	Economic development that will attract younger workers and families
3.	Reduce the spread of invasive plant species along the roadways.
4.	Maintain an active planning commission.
5.	Up grade municial office and public works facilities
6.	Town plan
7.	flood and other hazard plans and reugulations
8.	Creating projects that expand local economic development opportunities.
9.	Addressing issues for beautificaiton of the Village Center.
10.	village infrastructure--water, septic, etc.
11.	Environmental regulation conformance
12.	Planning for stable or declining population and aging population.
13.	Property Development and Redevelopment
14.	Affordable housing
15.	Update the town plan on a more timely basis than we have in the past.
16.	Business Development- How to handle corporate franchises developing in our municipality.
17.	Working Landscapes
18.	Climate change planning
19.	Village Designation
20.	Renewable Energy
21.	Municipal ordinances--pets, junk, speed on town roads/state aid roads.
22.	To accomplish the above while retaining the small town character
23.	Bylaws
24.	Healthy environment
25.	Community development and housing studies
26.	infrastructure
27.	Increase cell phone coverage

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

28.	educate planning commissioners on planning principles
29.	road inventories, evaluation of assessment for capital planning, long range pedestrian improvements
30.	Inventory, prioritization, mapping of natural resources, viewsheds and open space
31.	Exploring housing needs
32.	Capital Budget
33.	economic development
34.	flood ordinance
35.	Solar siting standards
36.	Paying for infrastructure
37.	Mapping
38.	We are a growing community. I think that we could use a professional planner to help with development.
39.	In town training for town volunteers who serve on the Pkanning Commission.
40.	Revitalization of our downtown center to encourage business and to attract investors
41.	Economic development
42.	lakefront
43.	bylaws
44.	Creation of workforce housing- mid-range affordable sf homes and townhouses, and decent rental housing
45.	Maintain and improve infrastructure without financial burden to town or residents
46.	Downtown improvement
47.	Town Office expansion
48.	Get the bylaw updates done from the lag time between planners
49.	seeking more input from our residents throughout the planning process.
50.	Zoning/Town Plan Visions
51.	Working on fixing all town class 4 roads.
52.	Revised Mapping
53.	Town plan interpretation (and zoning) and potential conflicts with individual property owners

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

54.	housing development
55.	Regulations to enable aging in place
56.	Subdivision Regulations
57.	How to over come such high property taxes that have strapped us financially.
58.	Subdivision Regulation overhaul needed
59.	Lack of public input.
60.	The importance of planning for a whole community - not just a few land owners that want to sell the highest bidder and therefore are riding roughshod over the PC and SB agendas
61.	Economic planning/redevelopment
62.	Hazard Mitigation Plan creation
63.	Flood management, river resiliency
64.	Affordable housing.
65.	Bylaw Update (Zoning Ordinance & Capital Budget)
66.	Updating statistics and maps
67.	Reasonable, yet responsible flood hazard zoning regulations.
68.	Housing stock assessment and renovation
69.	town garage/ recreation parcel
70.	Seeking ways to encourage business development and housing improvements in our community.
71.	Developing local jobs in homes
72.	Regulations that prevent sprawl
73.	Controlling Sprawl development
74.	Develop a list of priorities for upgrading municipal properties.
75.	Public infrastructure - water, sewer, and electric
76.	attracting business
77.	Using the planning process and goals as a tool to attract talented and interested citizens to get involved.
78.	Village designations

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

79.	social services for seniors on local level
80.	Housing
81.	Sustainable tax base.
82.	High-Speed Internet and Cell Service
83.	Senior housing
84.	Translating tasks from comp plan to committee assignments and work plans (then educating committees)
85.	Preserving and reinvigorating our historic downtown area also qualifies as crucial.
86.	Regulation Updates
87.	bike and walk routes through town
88.	energy planning incorporated into land use
89.	Stormwater planning - necessary municipal infrastructure, public outreach and education
90.	River corridor plan and regulations
91.	Town Plan update
92.	Shorter town plan
93.	keeping bylaws and town plan current
94.	Balance SW mitigation and flood prevention with goals to achieve compact walkable with economic development.
95.	Tools to assure high quality, site-by-site development
96.	Energy stuff
97.	modern bylaws
98.	Complying with the absurdly growing amount of regulations riding the Chapter 117 coat-tails.
99.	improving the basics (i.e. better plans and bylaws)
100.	Finding layers of incentives that will attract investment in our community.
101.	support boards in their vision of moving Johnson forward (branding, housing inequalities, etc.)
102.	Village Revitalization/Economic Development with limited resources (esp. antiquated water/wastewater infrastructure and outdated State rules that limit innovative options)
103.	Being able to think outside the box... do a plan/ study that doesn't fall neatly into any one category or current funding stream

Q12. Please list the three highest planning priorities for the municipality/municipalities or organization(s) that you serve.

104.	Housing
105.	Clarifying actual goals and priorities - hundreds of goals in a plan don't get us anywhere!
106.	Bylaw Functionality
107.	master planning
108.	Affordable and workforce housing
109.	Creating better bylaws that lead to more development downtown and less sprawl.
110.	Development of bike/ped infrastructure and expansion of walk-able downtown area.
111.	housing
112.	Bike/ped
113.	Unfunded mandates
114.	improving flood hazard regulations to include river corridor protection
115.	Improving flood hazard regulations to include river corridor protection.
116.	housing development
117.	Need for industrial space for low impact projects
118.	natural resource and working lands conservation
119.	Resource protection in the face of incremental development / small subdivisions

Q13. Other major obstacles to meeting your planning priorities? (optional.)

1.	Lack of adequate and consistent technical support, data
2.	The above list is enough.
3.	Confusion over future Vermont State sustainable energy incentives and support.
4.	Town focus on one area leave another village center ignored
5.	not sure what municipal capacity means!
6.	I know it is above but lack of participation is a huge problem
7.	Too much to do and not enough staff. This is a small town with two enterprise funds and a lot of roads, so there are regulations and requirements that keep us occupied.
8.	Public works currently lacks the technical expertise to use asset management software, adding a staff person to planning dept to increase capacity
9.	keeping up with state planning law changes and seeming unfunded mandates
10.	Planners are amateurs/the process is fundamentally flawed
11.	We still do a terrible job at rational regional (even two towns) planning -- to say nothing of regulating the resultant "regional" scheme
12.	Our community is way behind in terms of inventory, mapping and long-range planning. Public works not computer literate...lots of paper maps and reliance on institutional knowledge. Zoning and plan out of date. Boards need training.
13.	Vision
14.	Changin Selectboard members that are either pro or against change.
15.	trying to get public involved and educated to the issues.
16.	Vision and Goal Setting as a priority
17.	Planners always want buildouts, please tell me this isnt' about more buildouts - they conflict with rural nature of our town
18.	General feeling of hopelessness among townspeople regarding the burden of property tax!
19.	Lack of civic outlook from the old leaders (old literal and in time served)
20.	Lack of options for economic development
21.	MPG program has shifted from ability to get funding for municipal plan to projects that are "post" plan adoption
22.	changes to the TP and zoning are often contentious and strking a balance between conservation and development is extremely challenging
23.	town planning is seen as land use planning, and the full spectrum of a town plan is not embraced

Q13. Other major obstacles to meeting your planning priorities? (optional.)

24.	State and Federal regulatory constraints
25.	VTRANS auto prioritization
26.	no control to implement our priorities
27.	communication within town (residents)
28.	Lack of professional staff at the local level.
29.	Outdated State rules that limit innovative sanitation options. One-size-fits all policies that do not recognize unique character of rural communities
30.	Misconceptions about the intention and use of the priority
31.	If we do our jobs, coordination should not be an issue...presuming folks want to be coordinated and consider new ideas!
32.	Lack of waste water capacity
33.	Drafting a plan every 5 years for our small municipality is absurd. We probably need to think of working at a regional scale every 10 years or so. The current planning framework is set up for affluent, older, white households that object to any development close to them.
34.	Volunteers (from Select Board and Planning commission level) wanting to do things by committee, without a timeline and without a plan--which leads to having the same conversation for year(s) without any action.