Long-Term Advisory Council Business Cluster

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Survey Process

- June 2017, Chamber sent an open-ended survey to 2,600 businesses via email, asking them to list their top 3 issues for the Business Community in the next 30 years in Carroll.

- August 2017, Mike McMullin brainstormed with Launch Carroll (Young Professionals 21-45 years old) members about how to best attract millennials to Carroll County downtowns.

- February 2018, using results from the previous two surveys, the current survey was designed by McDaniel College students and Mike McMullin.

- March 2018, survey distributed to 2,600 Carroll County businesses via email.

- April 2018, survey data analyzed by McDaniel students.

- May 2018, survey report prepared by McDaniel students.

Carroll County est. 1837

Westminster Chamber est. 1924
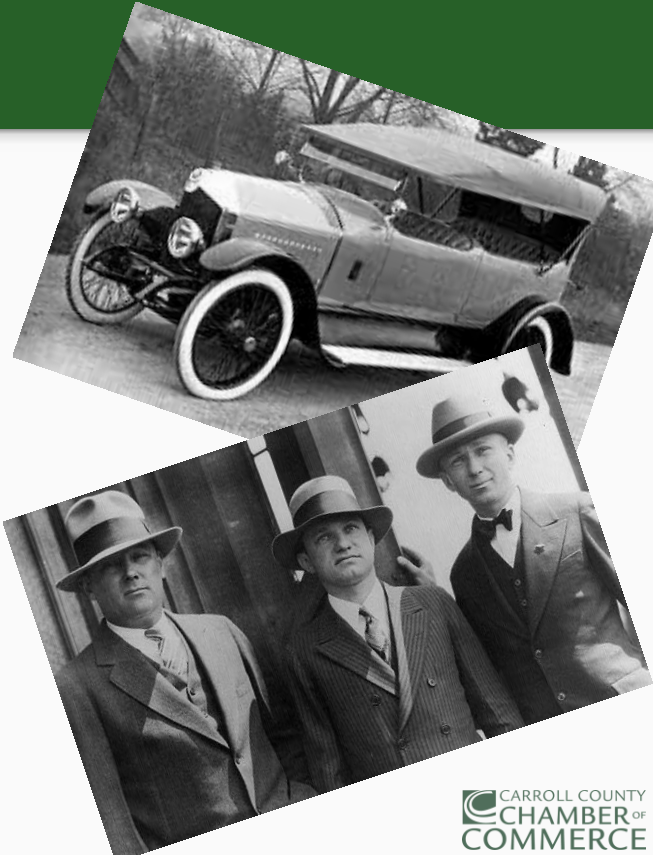
Where will Carroll County be in 2047?

"The Journey of 1,000 miles begins with one step"

- Lao Tzu

1. What town is your business located in?

City	Frequency
Baltimore	1
Eldersburg	4
Finksburg	2
Hampstead	4
Manchester	1
Marriottsville	1
Mount Airy	1
Several Locations	4
Sykesville	3
Taneytown	2
Union Bridge	2
Uniontown	1
Westminster	58

N=84

2. How many employees does your business employ?

Minimum	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Median**
1	325	44	10

N=86

Note: Median statistic is included because of a large business that over-represents the sample.

3. How many years have you been in business in Carroll County?

<u>Minimum</u>   **<u>Maximum</u>**   **<u>Mean</u>**   **<u>Median</u>**
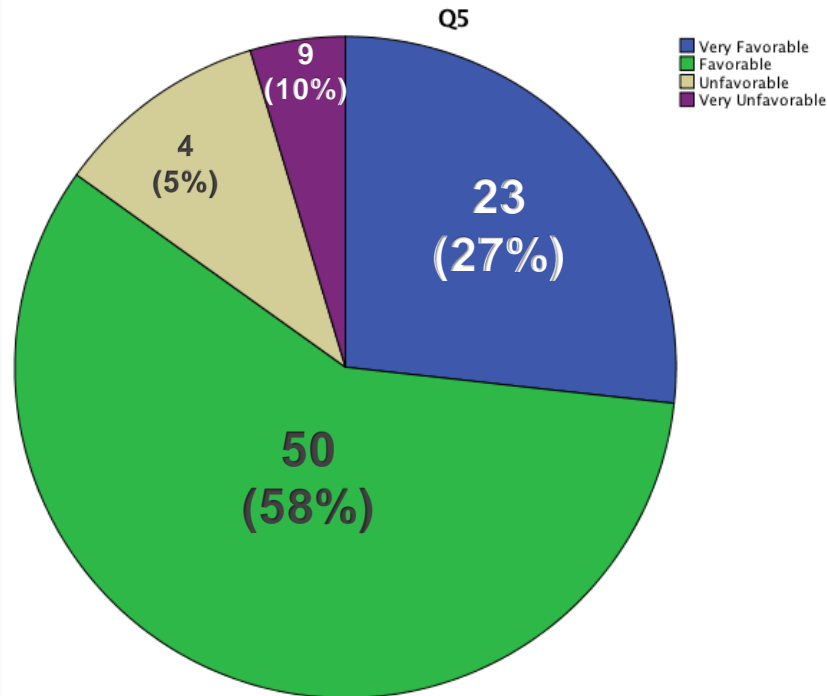1   150   32.5   20

N=86

Note: Median statistic is included because of an older business that over-represents the sample.

4. Do you anticipate remaining in CC for the next 10 years?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	82	96.5
No	3	3.5

N=85

5. How would you assess the long-term business opportunities in the County?

N=86

6. What is CC's single greatest business strength?

-The People: "The quality and the character of the people who live and work in Carroll County."

-Community: "Strong sense of community and local support."

-Location: "Proximity to Baltimore, Howard, and Montgomery County," "It's easy for us to have clients in Baltimore, D.C. and Hanover."

7. What is CC's single greatest business weakness?

-Lack of Growth: "Lack of growth, particularly residential right now, and the lack of initiative development. Also, more needs to be done to strengthen the downtown areas," "I don't necessarily want Westminster to be Frederick, but it would be nice to move somewhat in that direction."

-Pay: "Not enough local well-paying jobs."

-Infrastructure: "Lack of residential growth, creating relatively high cost of living."

8. How do you believe CC is perceived by the rest of Maryland?

-Rural Farming Community: "Rural Farming Community," "Carroll County is known as a sleepy, rural, agricultural community," "Agricultural and rural."

-People think we are …: "Country hicks," "Rural, middle of nowhere, somewhat behind, and to some degree as you head towards DC and Montgomery county – "rednecks" or "hicks," "Redneck and bigoted."

-They are politically more conservative: "Right wing conservative," "A great place to live but very conservative. Also, a place where it's difficult to navigate the permit process," "Politically conservative," "Bit of a conservative backwater, little diversity."

9. What single idea do you have for marketing CC to the rest of Maryland and surrounding areas?

-Promoting the prime business atmosphere: "Emphasizing it as a business-friendly compromise between urban/rural," "Local business is well-supported," "Small town feel with big business potential."

-Promoting high-quality education: "Great education," "Some of the best public schools in the state," "McDaniel."
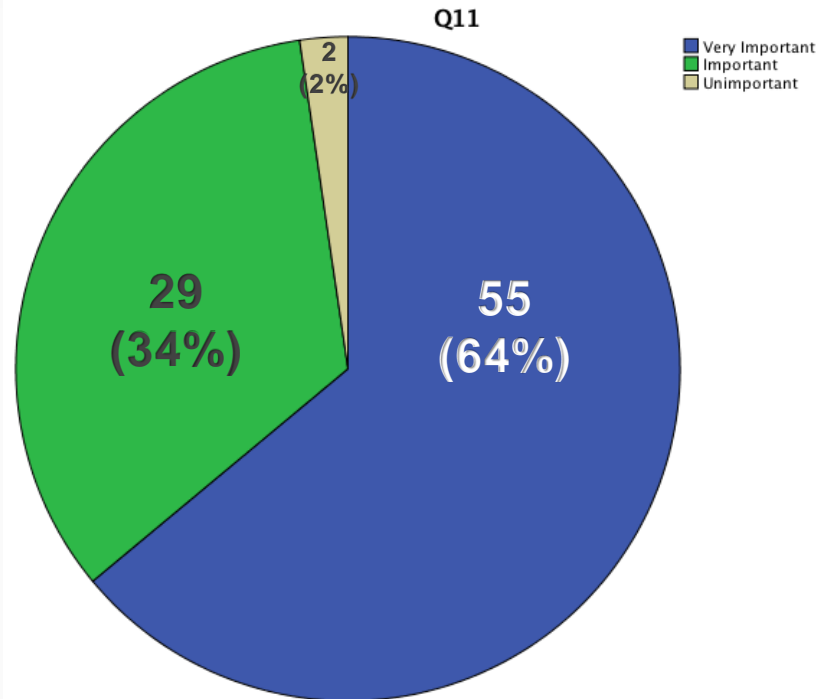
-Promoting the convenient location: "Close to Balt/DC and easily accessible," "Close to DC, Balt, and Frederick but lower taxes and a community feel," "It's a lovely place to work and still be close to bigger cities."

10. How important is it to offer incentives to attract small businesses?
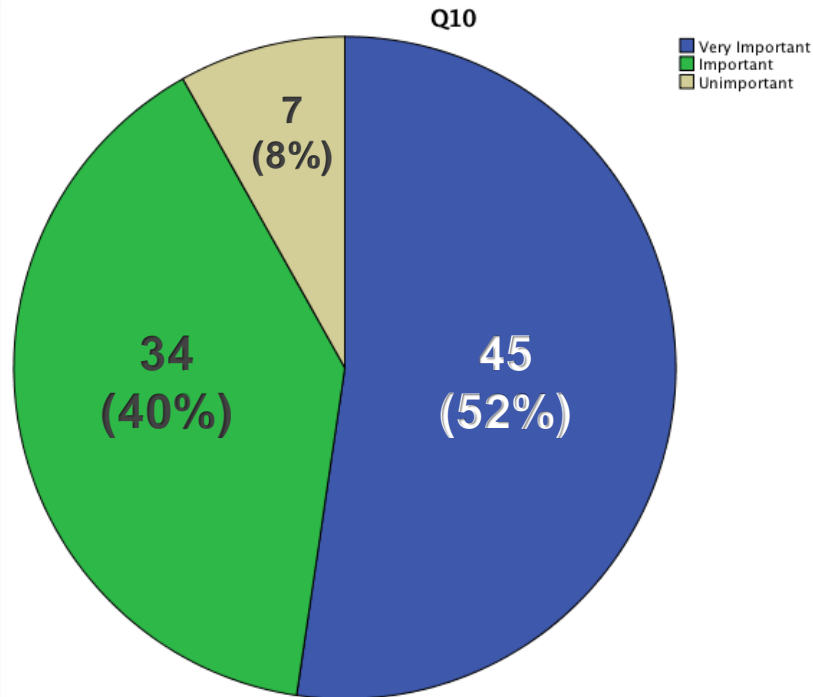
N=86

# 11. How important is the revitalization of the County's main streets?

N=86

12. What single idea do you have to revitalize the County's main streets?

-Appearance Improvements/Remodel/Community Improvement: "I believe it would be nice to see the old buildings renovated and brought back to their historical glory. I would also like to see more shops move into those old buildings," "Reduce riffraff, offer incentives to renovate, more events downtown, etc.," "Incentive property owners to fix up properties, strong code enforcement, inspection policies and guidelines."

-Homelessness/Safety: "Consistent availability of law enforcement," "Take care of the people who don't have homes and then clean up the storefronts to entice businesses," "Find a way to keep homeless and alcoholics from begging for money in front of stores."

-Partnership: "Work with the landlords and be sure they are all invested in the future of our Main Streets," "Get county and city to work together," "Create partnerships and awareness - shop local - buy local - bring back the neighborhood."

CARROLL COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

13. How important is it to prioritize County spending/budget for high speed internet connectivity for all of CC?

Q13

- Very Important
- Important
- Unimportant
- Very Unimportant

1 (1%)

11 (13%)
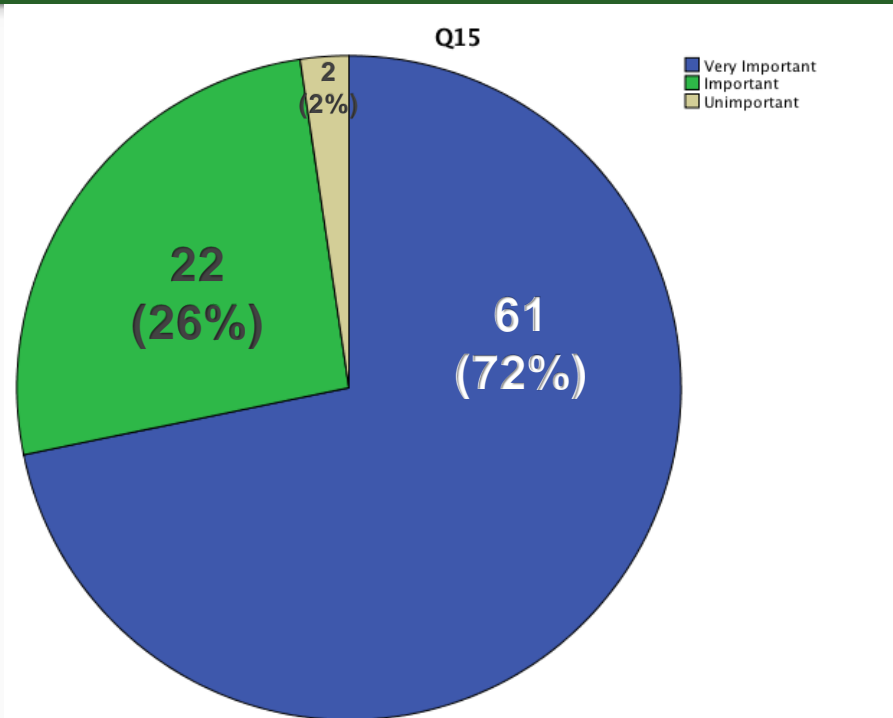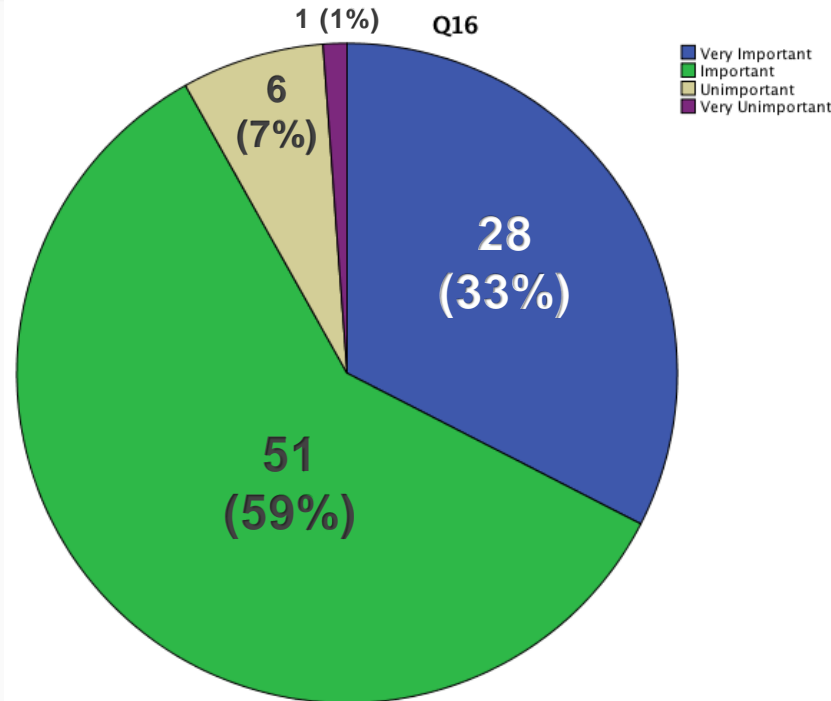
43 (50%)

31 (36%)
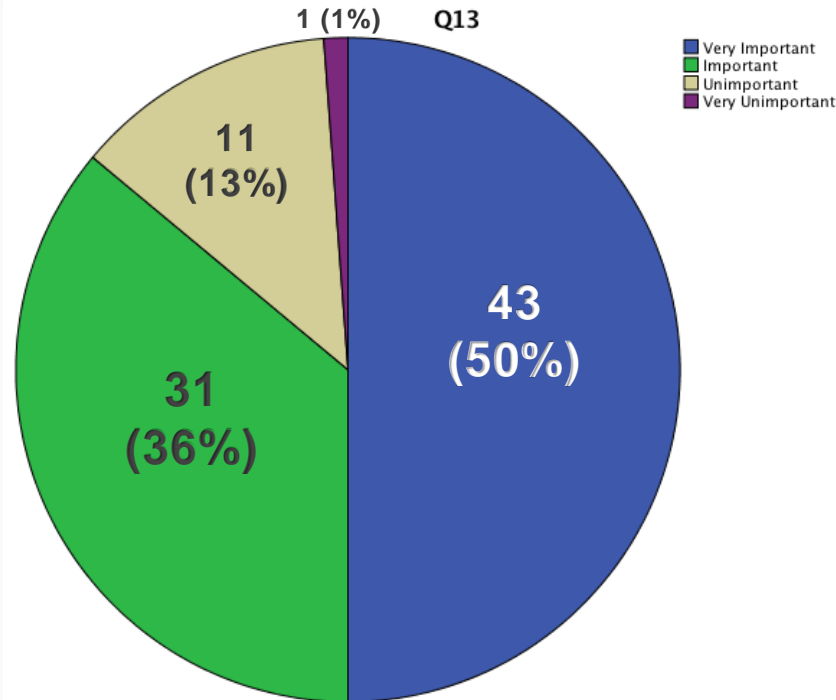
N≡86

14. How important is it to prioritize County spending/budget for K-12 public education?
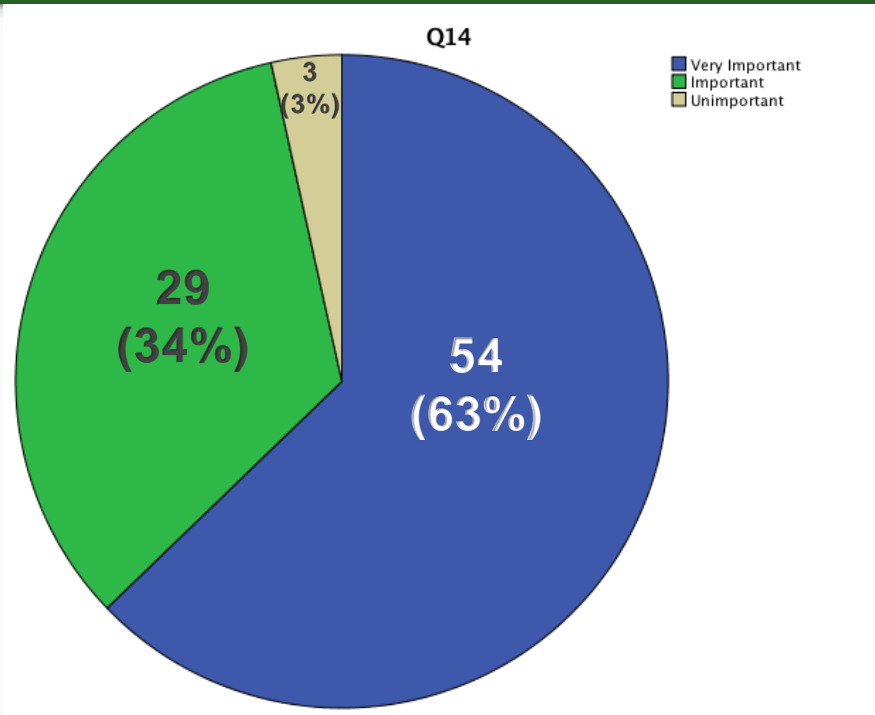
N=86

15.How important is it to prioritize County spending/budget for career and tech education?

Q15

- 61 (72%)
- 22 (26%)
- 2 (2%)

Legend:
- Very Important
- Important
- Unimportant

N=85

16. How important is it to prioritize County spending/budget for safety & security?


N≡86

17. What single idea do you have to enhance the safety & security?

- Law Enforcement: "Increase Law Enforcement salaries/benefits - make competitive," "Consolidate law enforcement," "Continue community policing and assure police are highly visible."

-Drug Prevention: "Construct an aggressive task force to eliminate the drug epidemic - instill stiff penalties/zero tolerance." "Increased attention and programs for drug problems, specifically opioids," "Eliminate illicit drug trade."

-Security cameras/lights: "Community security cameras in high crime areas," "Street cameras around the McDaniel campus down through main street," "Concerning Main Streets: More lighting and making sure space by McDaniel does not stay vacant."

# 18. How important is it to reduce the County's drug issue?
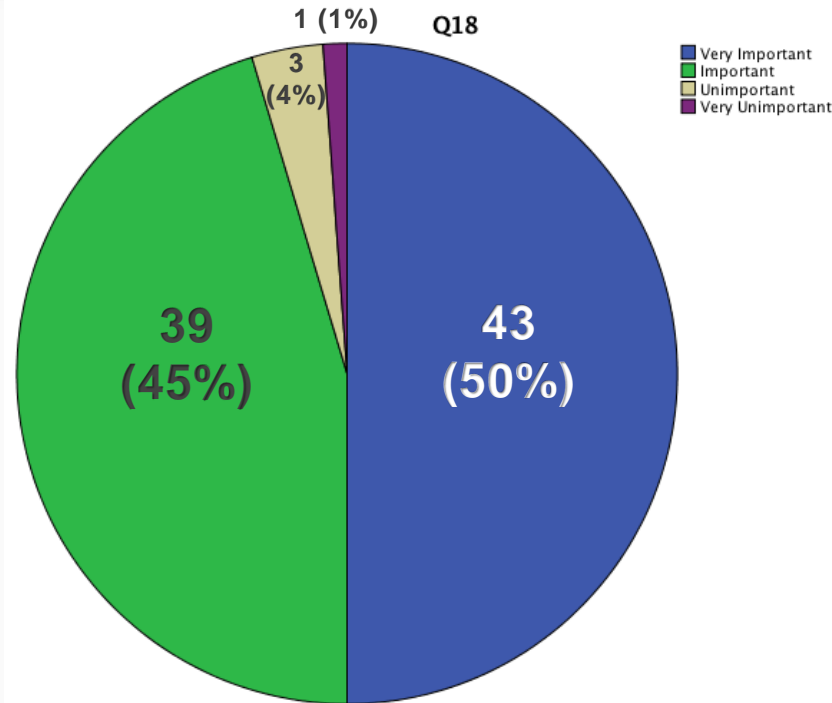
N≡86

19. What single idea do you have to address the drug issue?

-Education: "Educational efforts starting very young in schools and elsewhere," "Education at all levels," "Our youth population has tremendous pressure on them to be perfect and we are seeing anxiety issues at the elementary level," "We need to develop more life and problem-solving programs and move away from zero tolerance policies that leave our teens unprepared to overcome obstacles."

-Services: "Available in county treatment facility," "Partner with local organizations addressing this issue. In other words, work together," "Increase funding for treatment that works."

-Enforcing Law: "Keep them in jail or rehab," "Ensure law breaking enforcement and incarceration," "Shine light on the rats. Throw the book at the dealers."

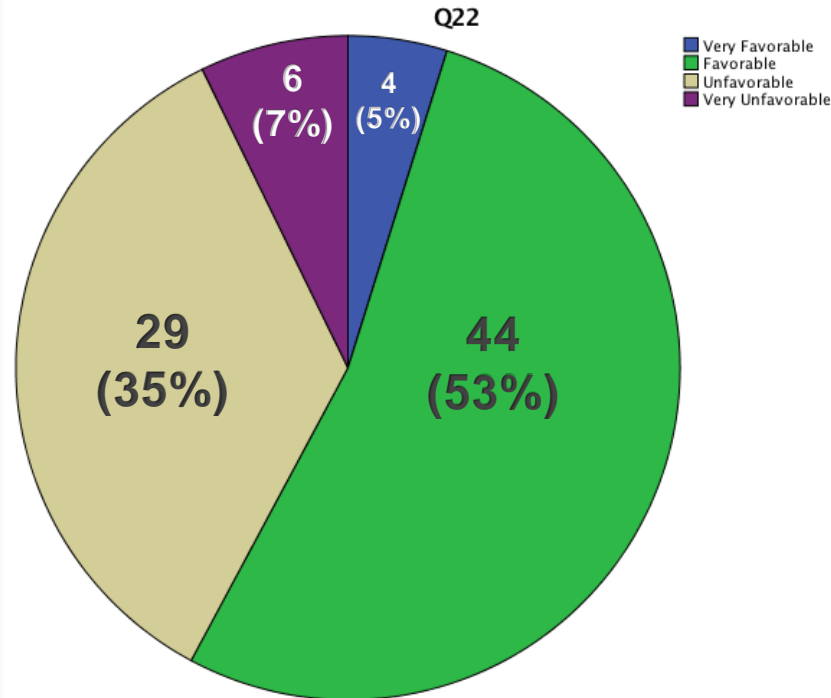# 20. How important is it to manage the County's homeless issue?
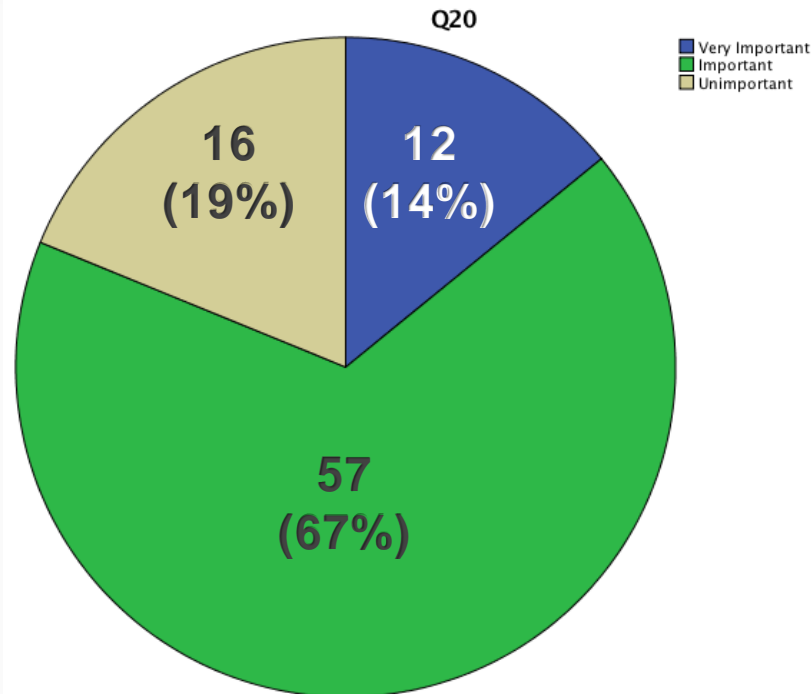
N≡85

21. What single idea do you have that would help rectify the homeless issue?

-Job Training: "Occupational training," "Get people back to the workforce."

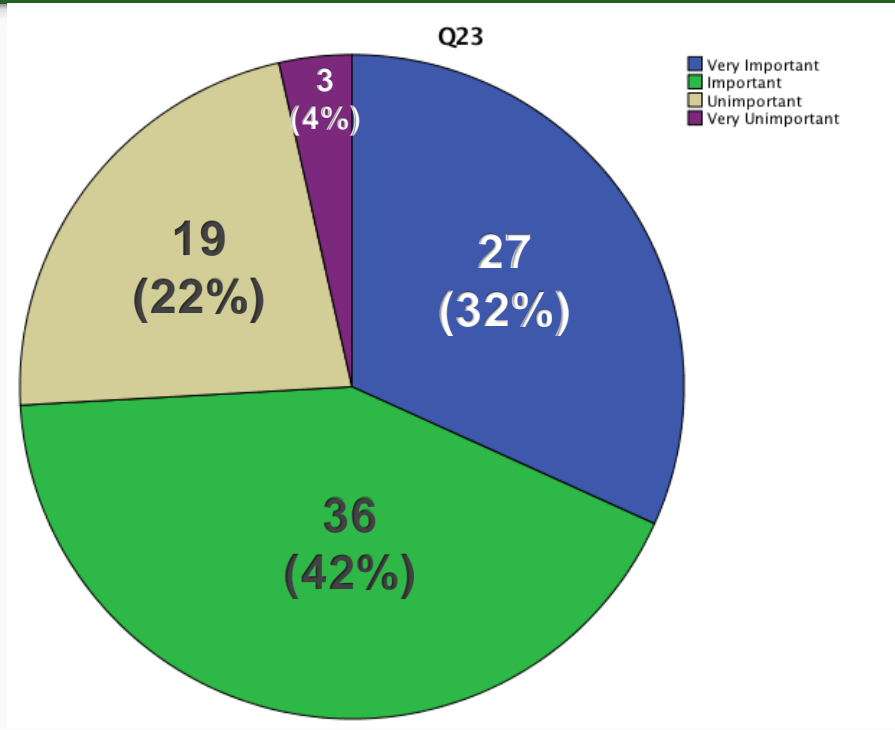**-More Resources:** "Drug Recovery Options," "More shelters."

-Affordable Housing: "Human Service programs," "Mental health services," "More affordable rent," "Offer affordable housing."

22. How favorable are the County's licensing/permitting/regulation policies?

Q22

- Very Favorable
- Favorable
- Unfavorable
- Very Unfavorable

6 (7%)
4 (5%)
29 (35%)
44 (53%)

N=83

CARROLL COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

23. How important is it to keep tax rates lower than average?

Q23

- Very Important
- Important
- Unimportant
- Very Unimportant

27 (32%)
36 (42%)
19 (22%)
3 (4%)

N=86

24. What is CC's single biggest infrastructure concern?

-Roads/Traffic/Transportation: "Roads. Both the condition of roads need to improve and, if possible, design of roads to reduce the traffic and congestion problems," "Main roads such as 140/26 with significant commercial activity have poor turn lanes, access points, and timing of traffic lights. Also road construction project time lengths. Portions of 26 between 32 and 97 have been paved, demolished, repaved, seeded, unseeded, partially regraded, etc. over and over for a year. This cannot be cost effective and the traffic it has created is awful," "No public transportation."

-Water: "Water availability," "Water. We need to ensure we have safe water piping and drainage," "Need to expand public water and sewer infrastructure for both residential and commercial uses."

-Internet: "Technology/hi-speed internet," "Lack of good, fast, reliable Internet service to rural areas," "Internet, power, mail services."

25. How important is it to prioritize County spending/budgeting for traffic management and congestion mitigation?


Q25

- Very Important
- Important
- Unimportant

16 (20%)

17 (20%)

50 (60%)
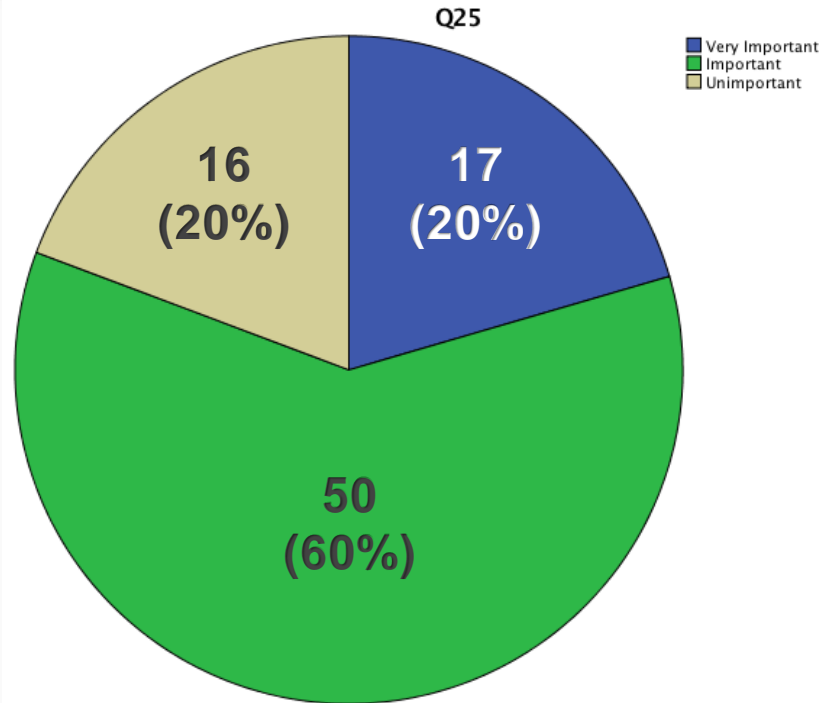
N=83

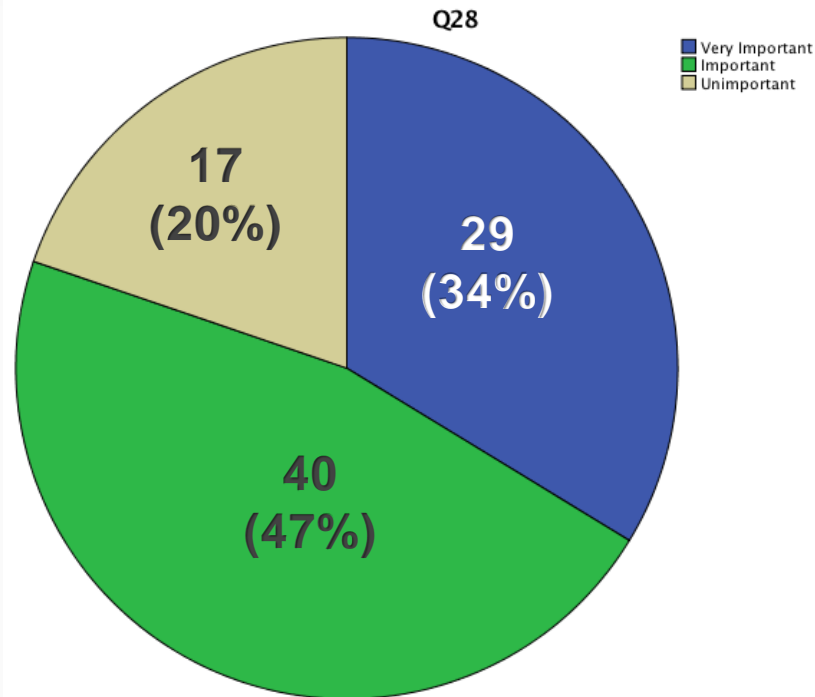# 26. What form of mass transit should CC pursue, if any?

-Forms of mass transportation: "Local mass transit is needed for people who don't have cars," "Seniors shouldn't have to wait for 2 hours on a bus to go shopping."

-Uber: "Increased number of drivers would help, especially with police patrolling all bars to give DUIs at the first hint of smelling alcohol."

-The people of Carroll County believe there should be none: "None," "The county lacks the will and adequate infrastructure to make mass transit work."

27.How important is it to prioritize County spending/budgeting on improved walking and bike paths?

Q27

- Very Important
- Important
- Unimportant
- Very Unimportant

6 (7%)

16 (19%)

25 (29%)

38 (45%)
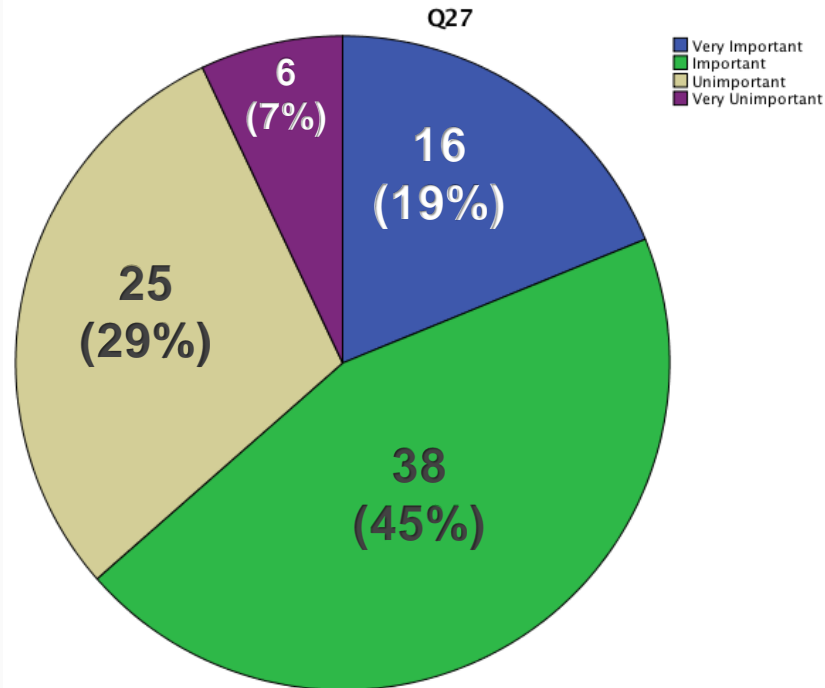
N≡85

28. How important is tourism promotion in CC?

Q28

- ■ Very Important
- ■ Important
- ■ Unimportant

17 (20%)

29 (34%)

40 (47%)

N≡86

29. What single tourism idea do you have?

-Agritourism: "Prudential agritourism to highlight this special character of our county," "Promote agritourism and loosen up rules to allow local farmers to make themselves destinations for families locally and out of the area," "Promote the agricultural history of Carroll County through currently popular industries/products. For example, wineries, breweries, and organically grown food are very popular at the moment."

-Hold more events: "Additional festivals to market winery, agitourism, small town charm," "Create marathon runs or long bike rides," "More community events."

-Create facilities: "Create a very large sports facility with indoor fields, basketball courts, outdoor fields etc.," "Family entertainment center with bowling, mini golf, escape room, etc.," "Bed and breakfasts - diverse restaurants; we are in close proximity to Frederick, Gettysburg and other tourist attractions."

30. What single idea do you have to attract more businesses to CC?

-Financial Incentives: "Tax breaks," "Lower rent," "New affordable housing."

-Improved Workforce: "Keep young professionals local," "Improve the job pool," "Need a larger [local] workforce."

-Marketing/Promotion: "Market our downtowns," "Promotion of quality of life," "Market [CC] in other parts of Maryland."

31. What single idea do you have to attract more families to CC?

-Education: "Strong school administrator that care and support the community," "Promote our schools and recreation more," "Allow residents to apply to schools like Baltimore city."

-Housing: "Create a community and housing that is attractive and affordable for young families," "Allow more homes to be built, reduce fees," "First time home buyer incentives."

-Entertainment: "Most families travel outside of Carroll County for things to do with their family. Build a child friendly museum, and showcase the child friendly region of the county (the more north seems to not be recognized very often)," "Promote (advertise) events all 12 months of the year, to a young demographic, outside the county," "Create a downtown Frederick feel and people will want to live and work here."

32. What single idea do you have to attract more millennials to CC?

-Entertainment: "Activities that challenge and excite the young generation," "Developments with school, tennis, pool, shopping and restaurants all included," "Improve Main Street and bring more business and activities to the county."

-Housing: "Increased options for housing especially in main street areas," "Promote and encourage local events to make people feel part of the community and want to live here," "Upscale apartments with all amenities," "Places to live that are within walking distance to shops/restaurants/bars/entertainment."

-Jobs/Wages: "We need more competitive jobs, creative jobs, and maybe encouragement to go into special trades (plumbing/electrical/construction/HVAC)," "Higher paying jobs," "Increased job opportunities."

33. What qualities are important to you when evaluating a business location (list up to three qualities)?

-For Carroll County business owners **Location, Price, Parking, and Access to the Community** are extremely important qualities for business locations. Those who answered the survey indicated that the location of the business is a top priority. Owners are looking for a business location with access to many people and convenient parking, all for the right price.

Additional Results

-The survey was designed on a 1-4 scale, with 1 indicating very favorable/very important and 4 indicating very unfavorable/very unimportant.

-The most favorable/most important was Q15*: How important is it to prioritize county spending/budget for career and tech education?,* with a mean of 1.31

-Next was Q11: *How important is the revitalization of the County's main streets?*, with a mean of 1.38

-The least favorable/very unimportant was Q22*: How favorable are the County's licensing/permitting/regulation policies?*, with a mean of 2.45.

Thank You