

ATP Survey Results

Presented to Metro Streets and Freeways Subcommittee on
February 16, 2017



Metro

Overview

- **What:** a survey conducted by the Strategic Financial Planning and Programming staff at LA Metro to understand the challenges LA County agencies are facing in securing ATP funding and delivering ATP projects
- **When:** November 17 to December 16
- **Who:** reached out to 89 cities and the county and 10 nontraditional ATP applicants via email and presentation at TAC and Streets and Freeways
- Total of 47 agencies submitted responses. Number of responses to each question varies due to:
 - Question skip logic
 - Optional questions
- Survey sections covered in this presentation:
 - ATP Application Process
 - Grant Assistance
 - Project Delivery
 - Metro Successful Applicants Workshops



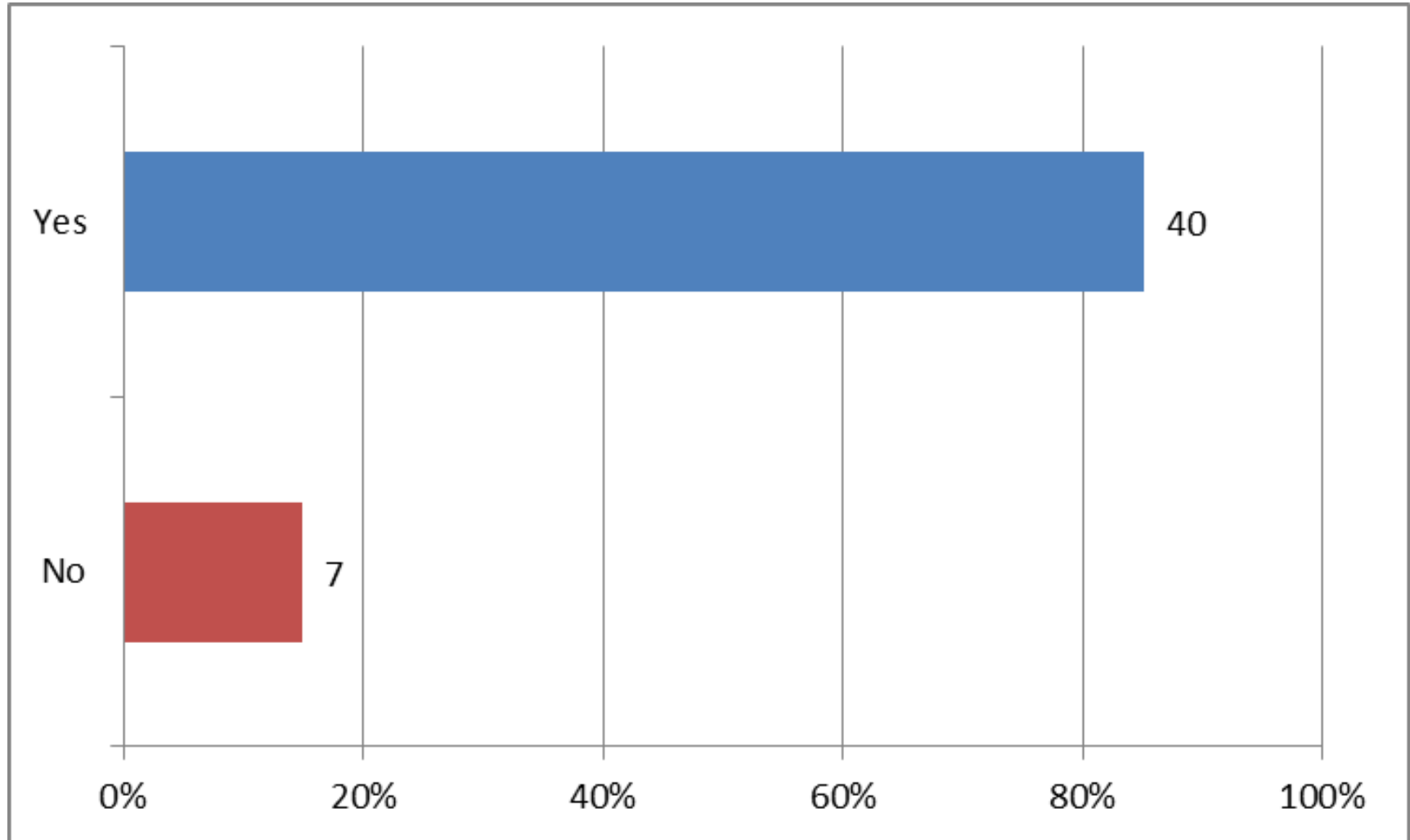
ATP Application Process



Metro

Has your agency ever applied to the ATP?

(47 responses)

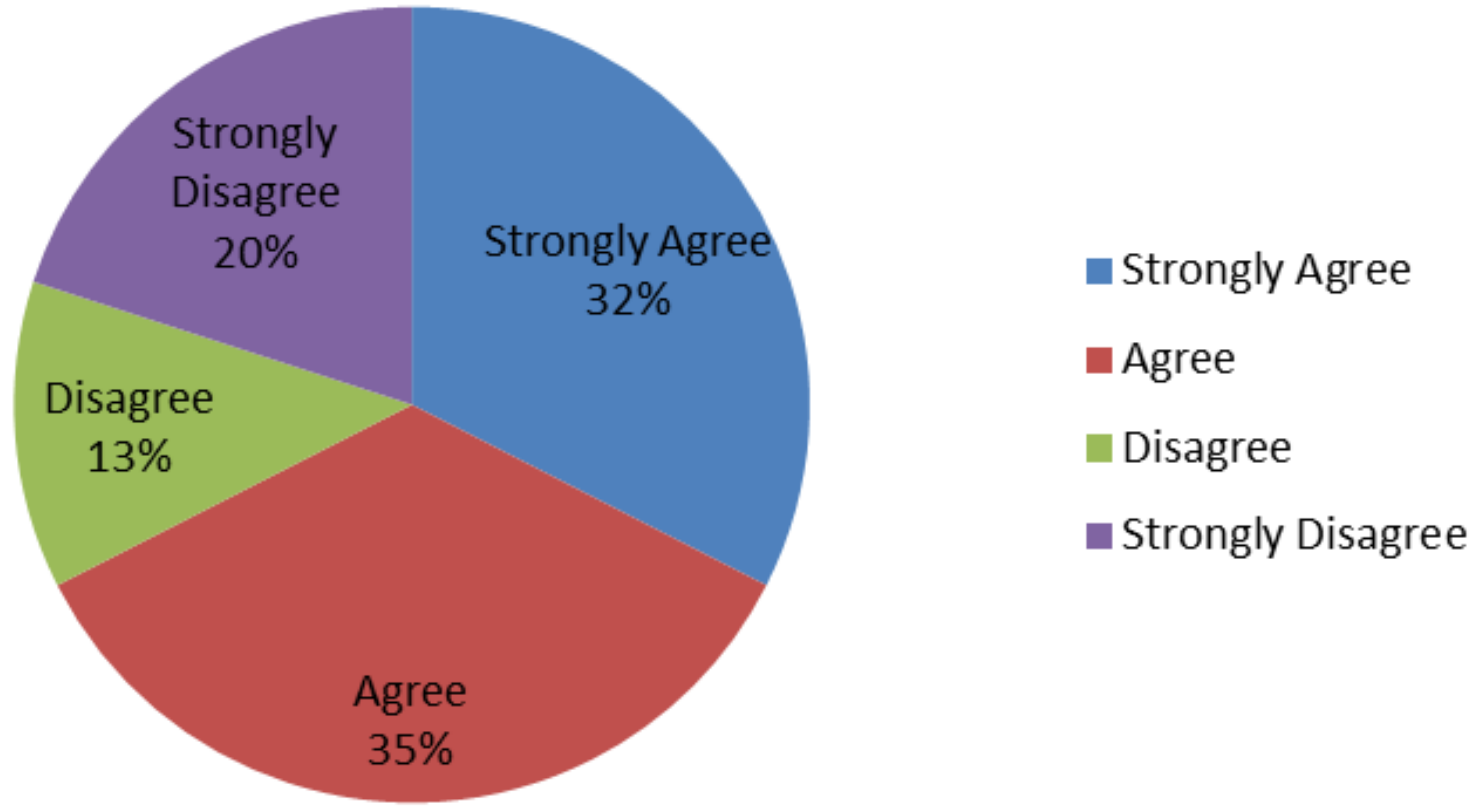


The following slides show responses from both agencies that have applied and agencies that have not applied to the ATP.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with providing additional points for the following application questions.

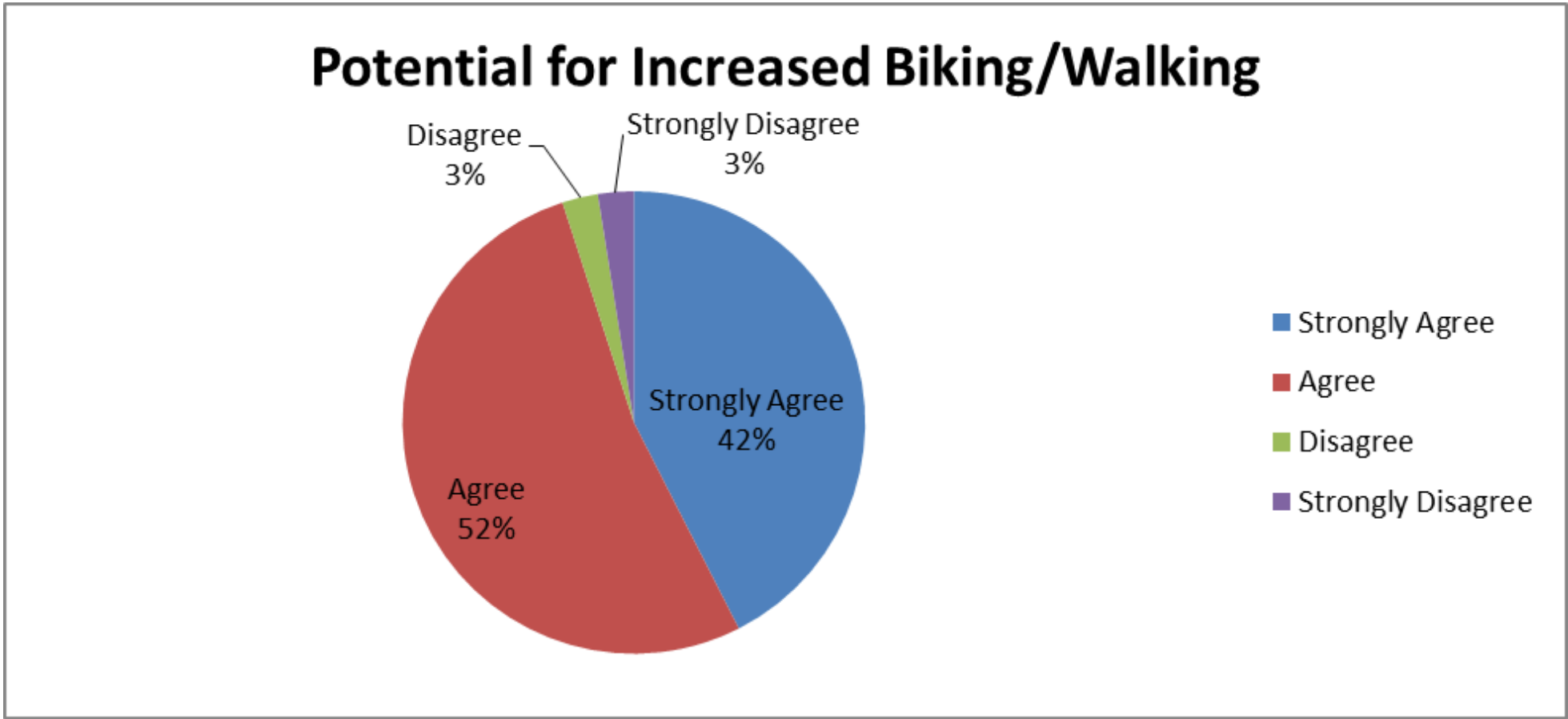
(40 responses)

Disadvantaged Communities



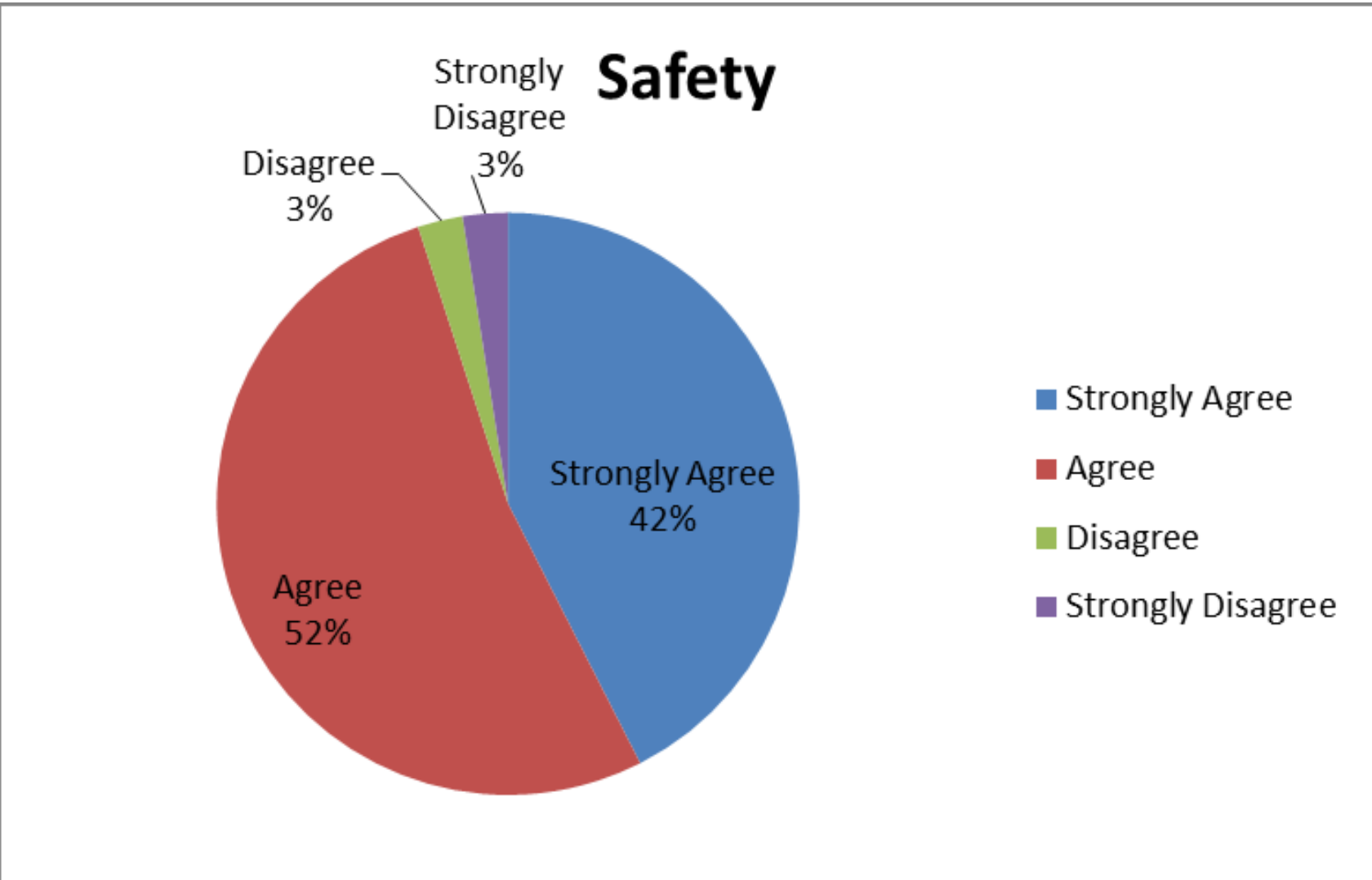
Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with providing additional points for the following application questions.

(40 responses)



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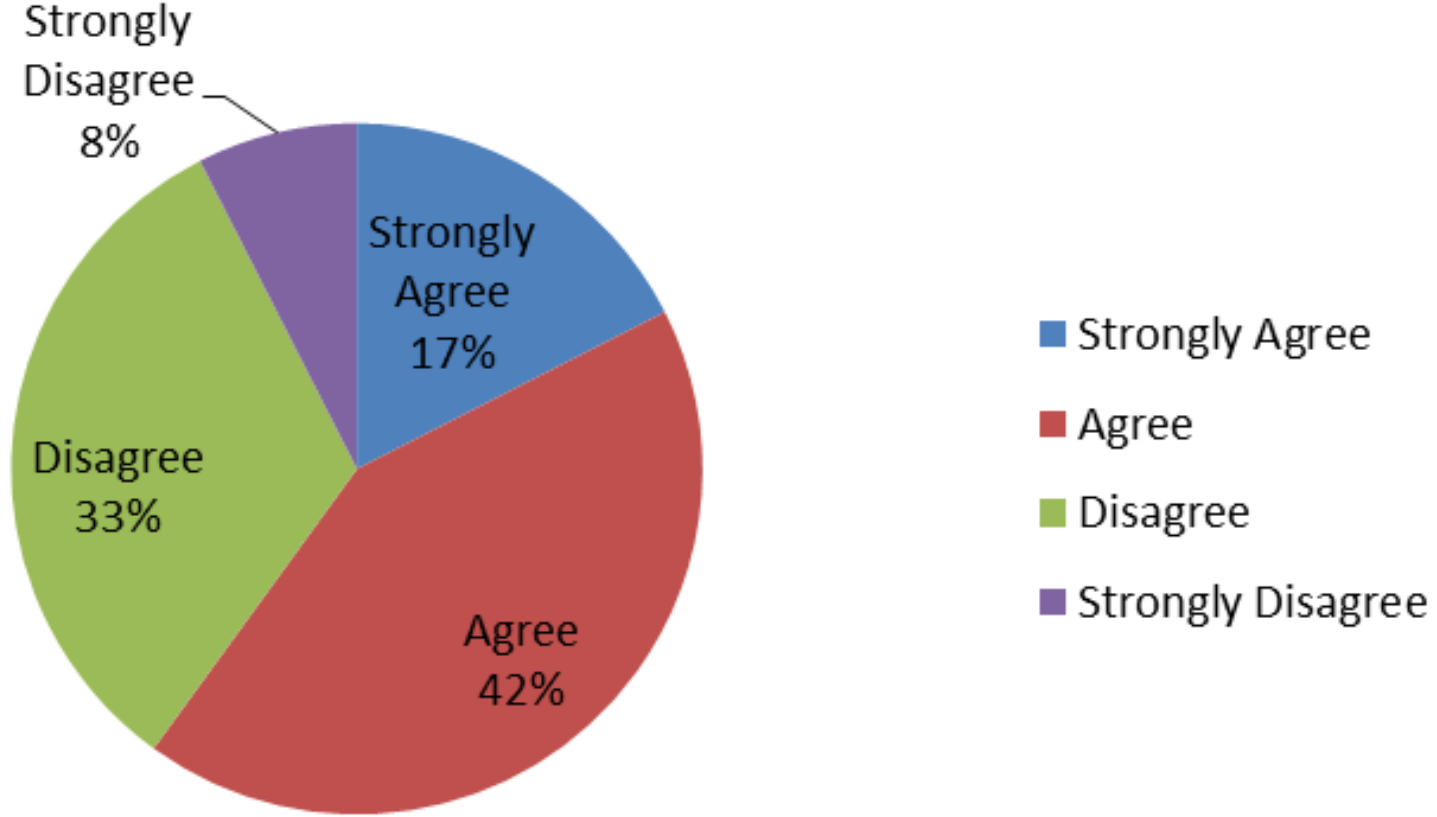
(40 responses)



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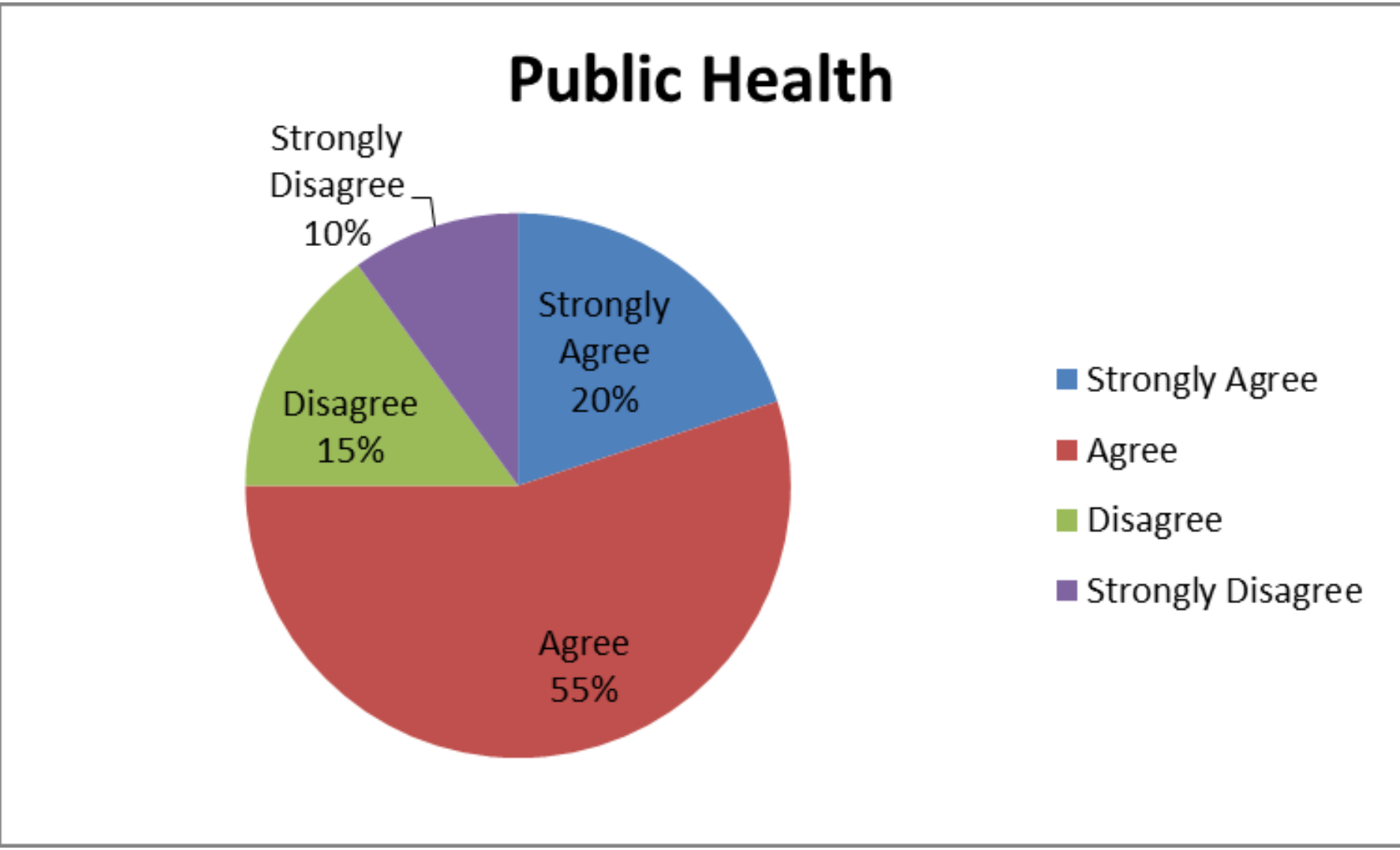
(40 responses)

Public Participation and Planning



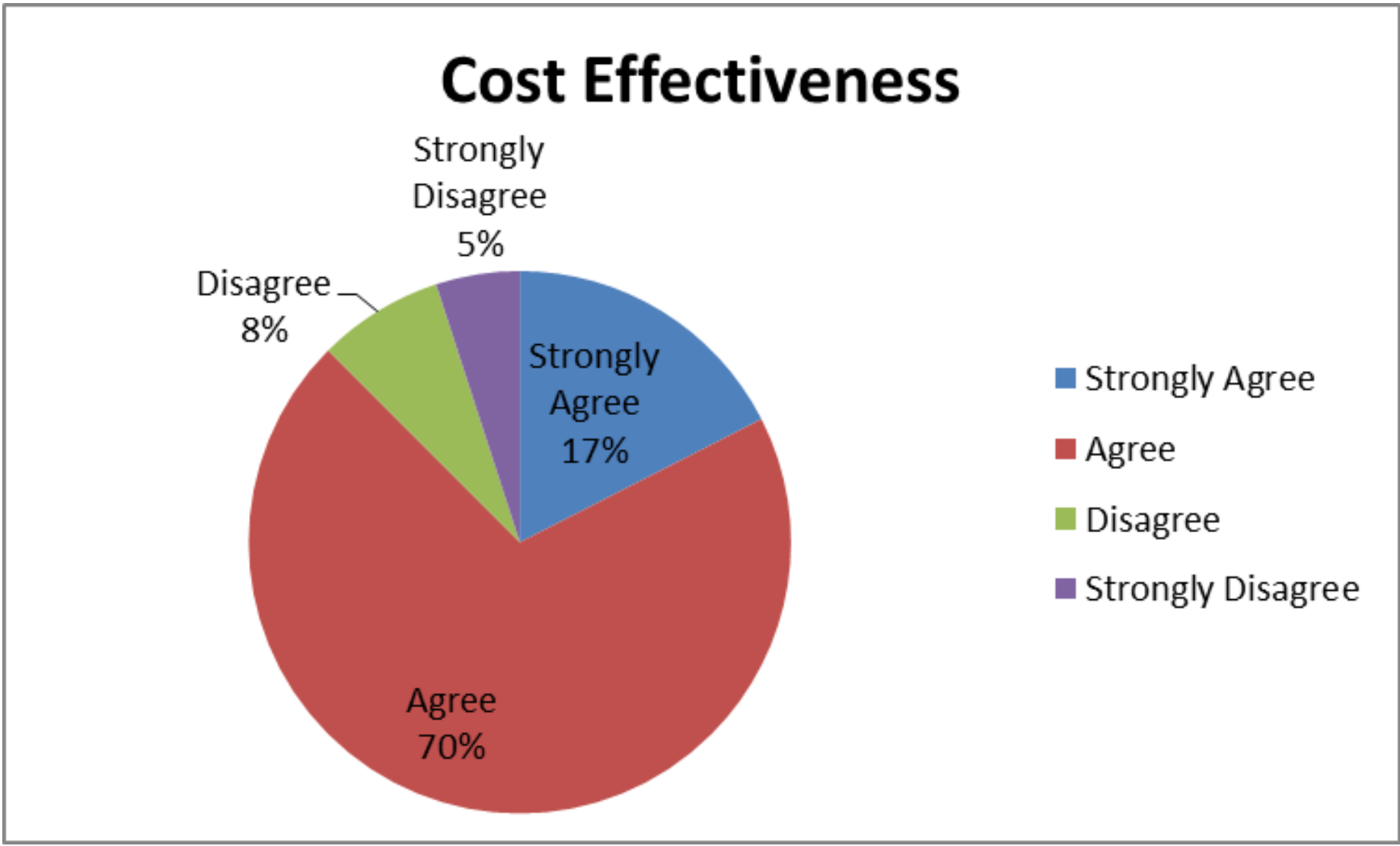
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(40 responses)



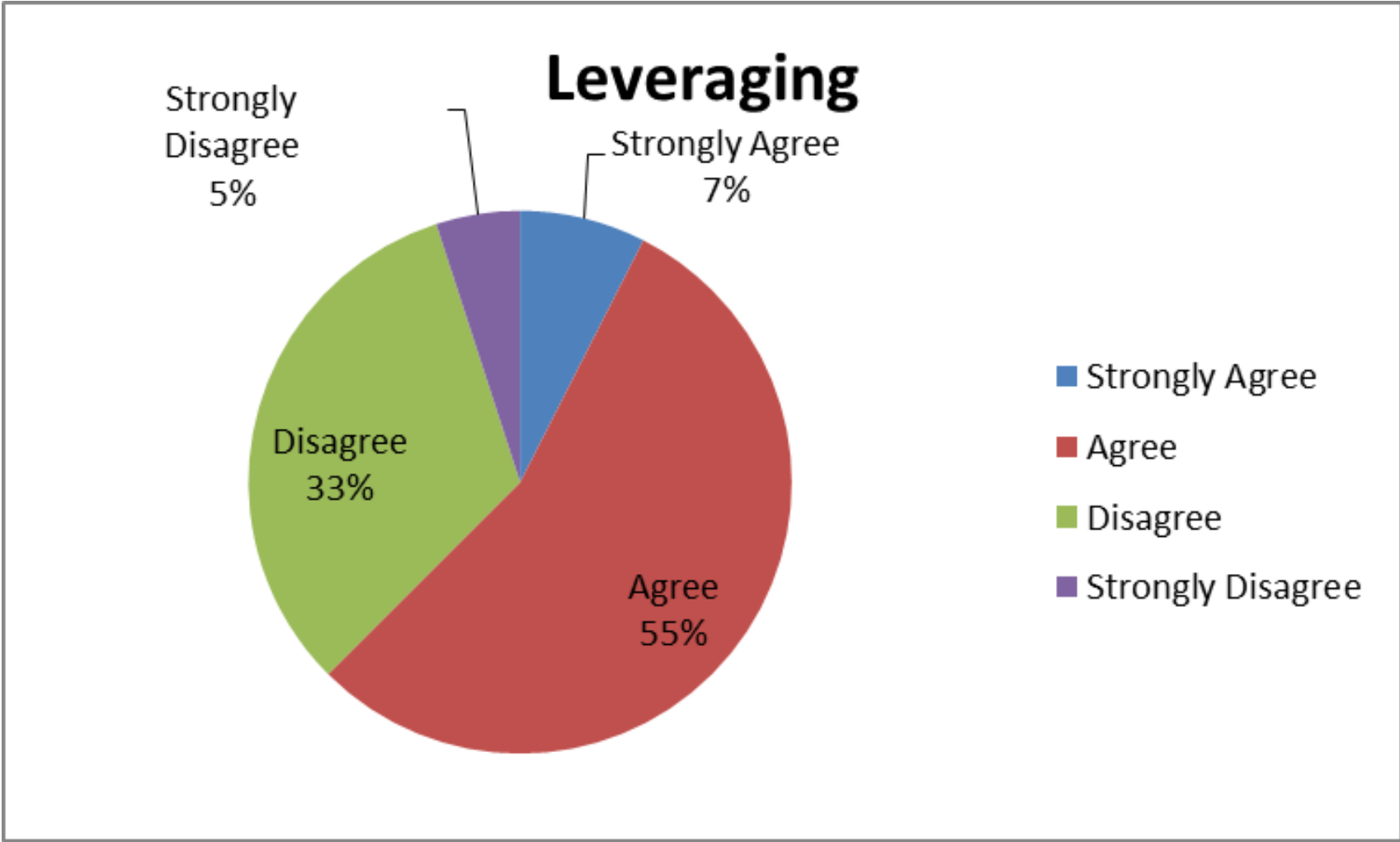
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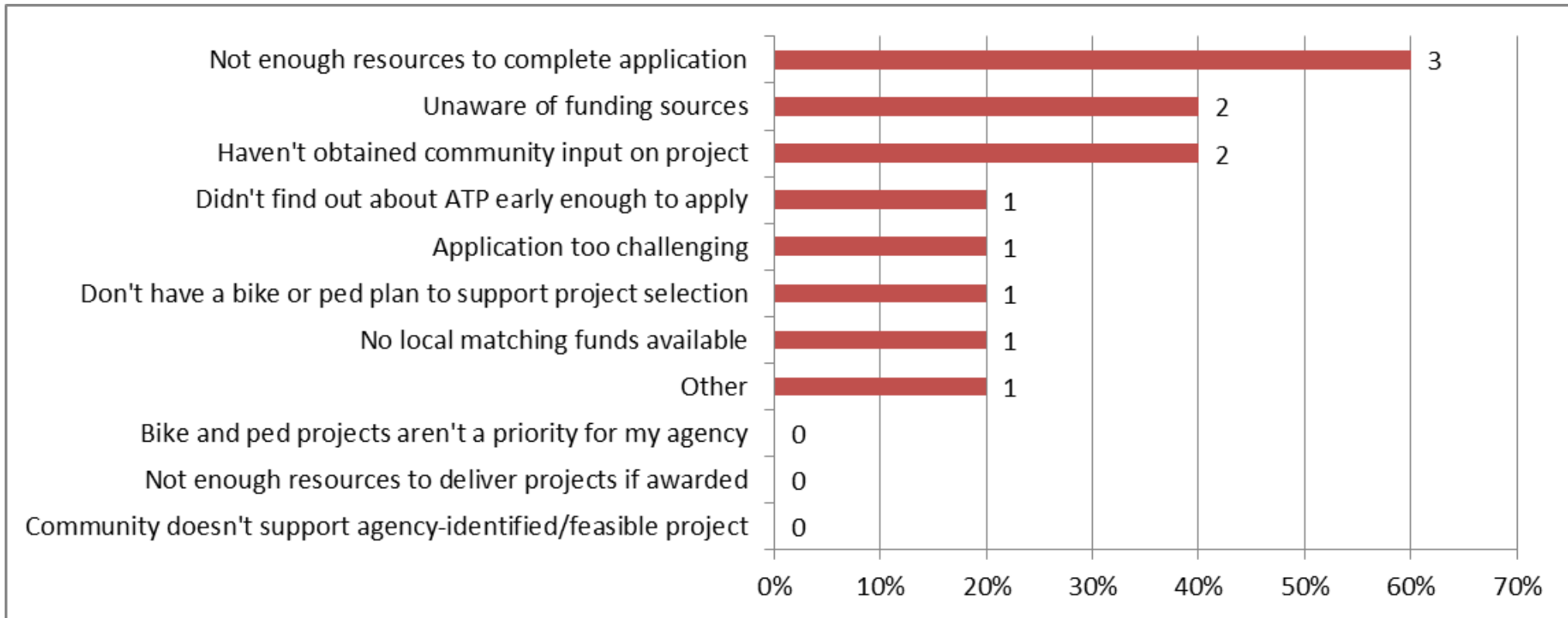
(40 responses)



The following slides show responses from agencies that have not applied to the ATP.

Why has your agency not applied to the ATP?

(5 responses)

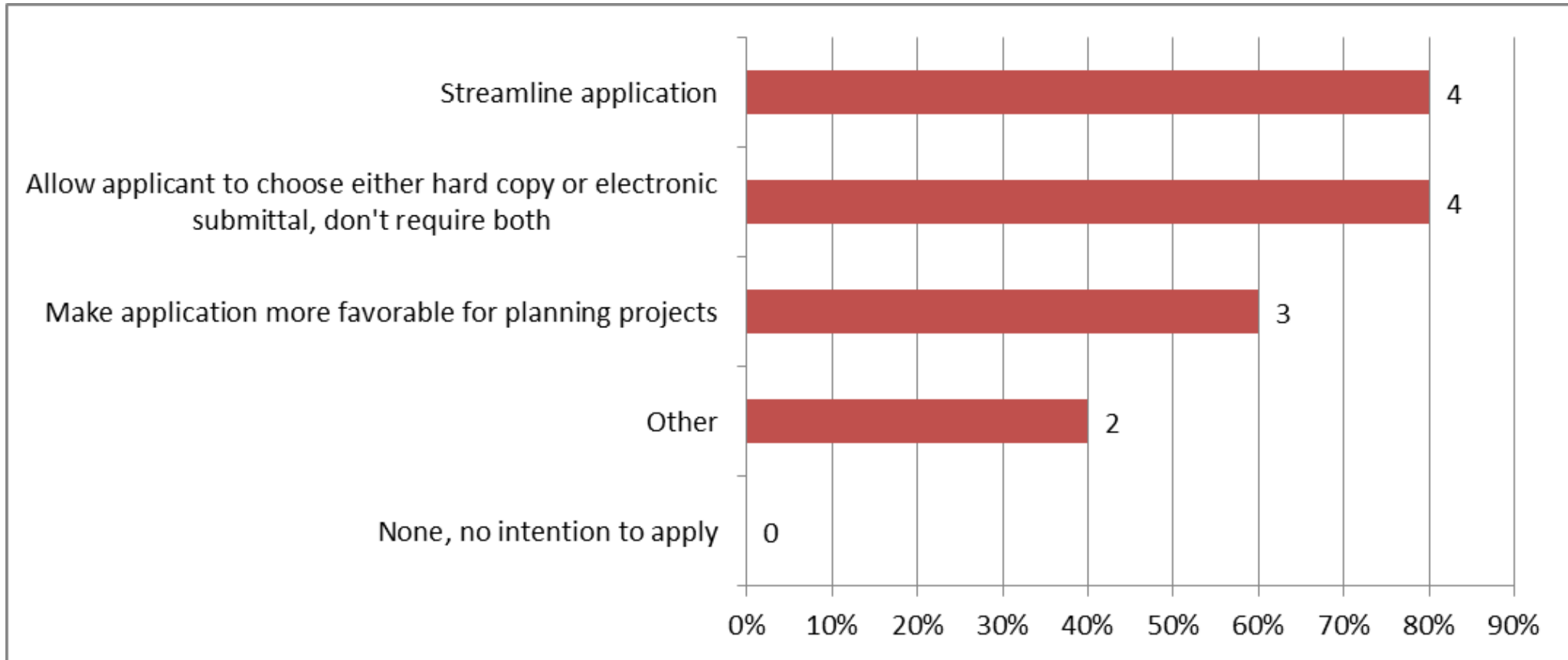


Other:

- Project delivery is not realistic

What changes to the ATP application process would make it easier for your agency to apply?

(5 responses)

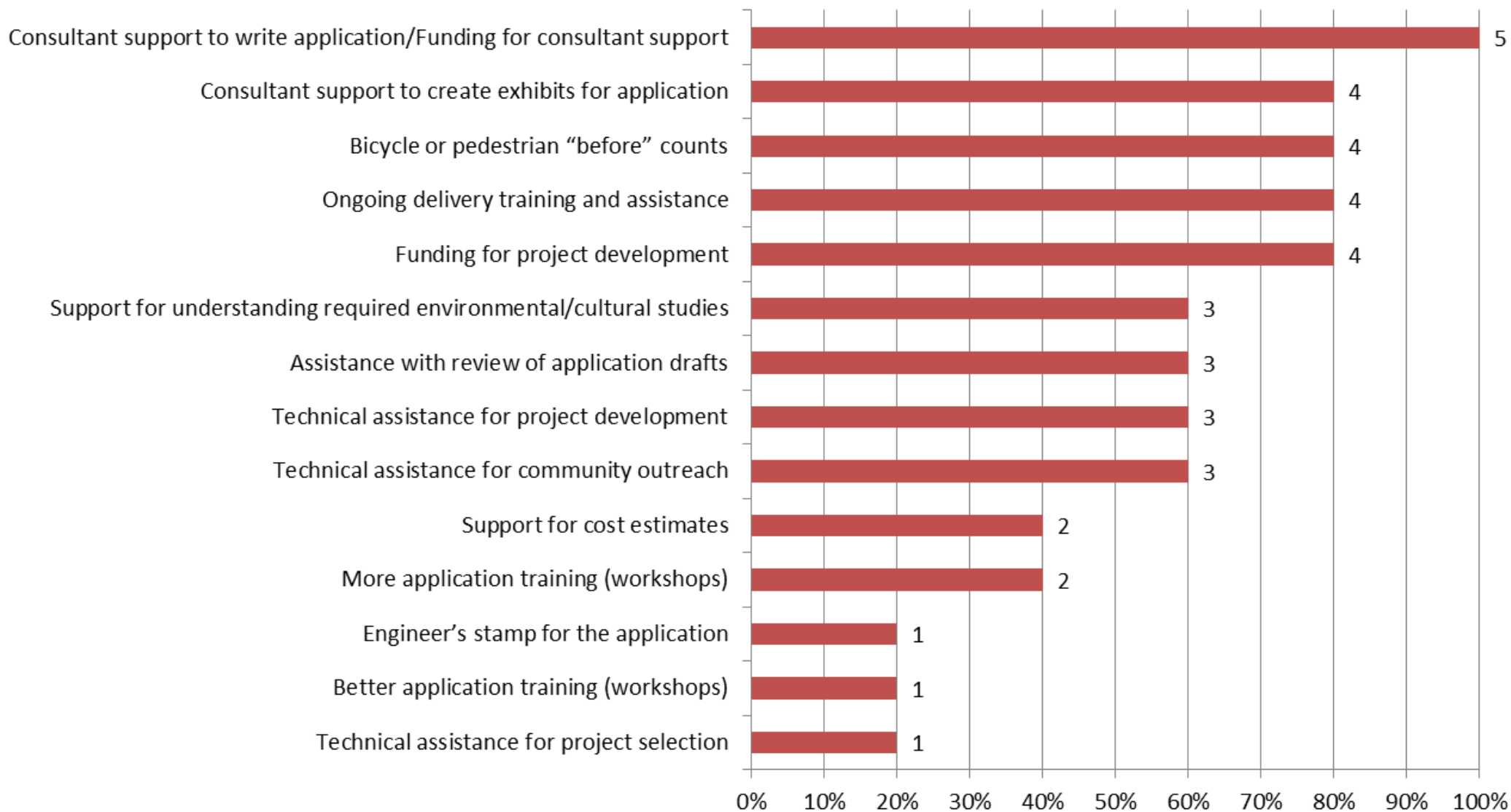


Other:

- Don't make the application so cumbersome and with so many points attributed to disadvantaged communities or make a subcategory with a small funding pool like the dedicated rural funds
- Revise delivery schedule

What resources would your agency need in order to apply for the ATP as it stands?

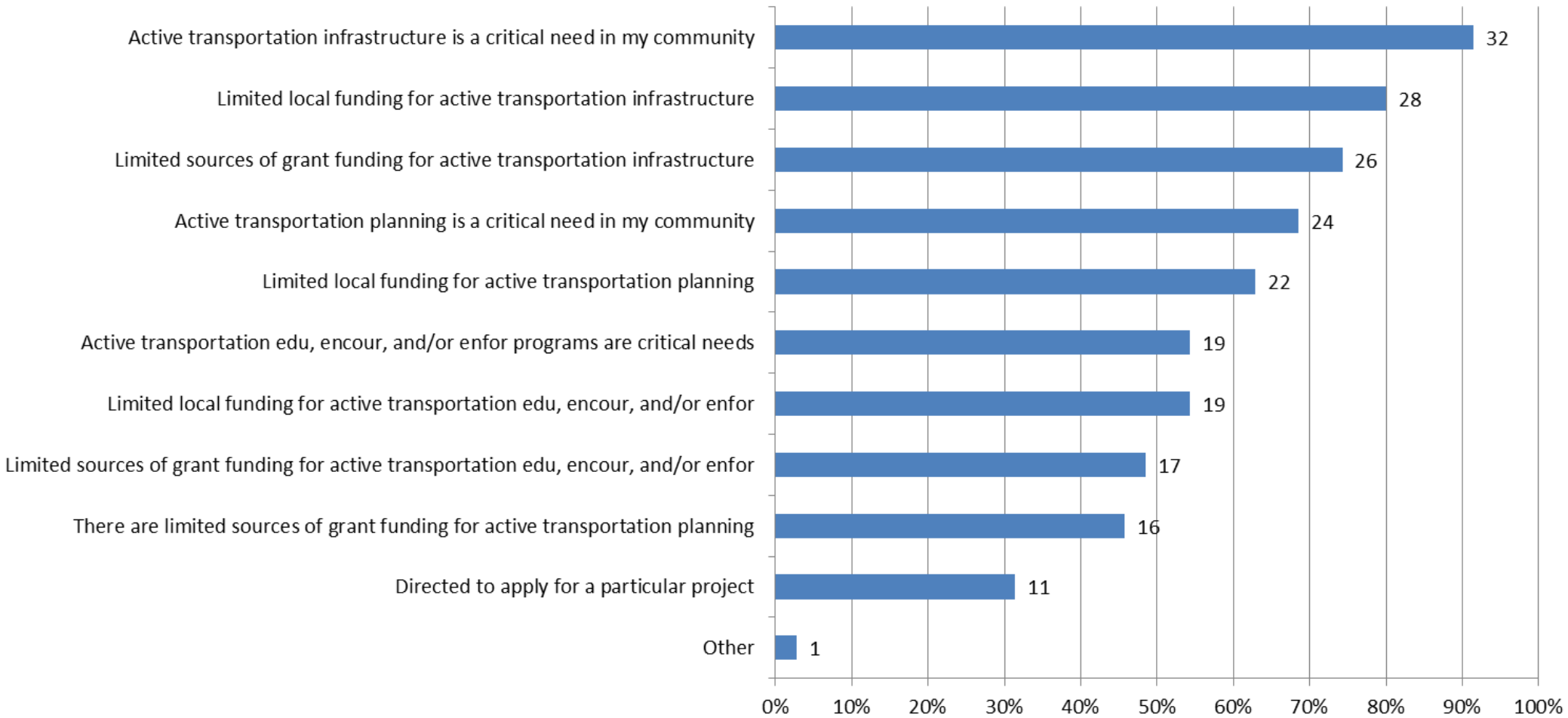
(5 responses)



The following slides show responses from agencies that have applied to the ATP.

Why did you apply for the ATP?

(34 responses)



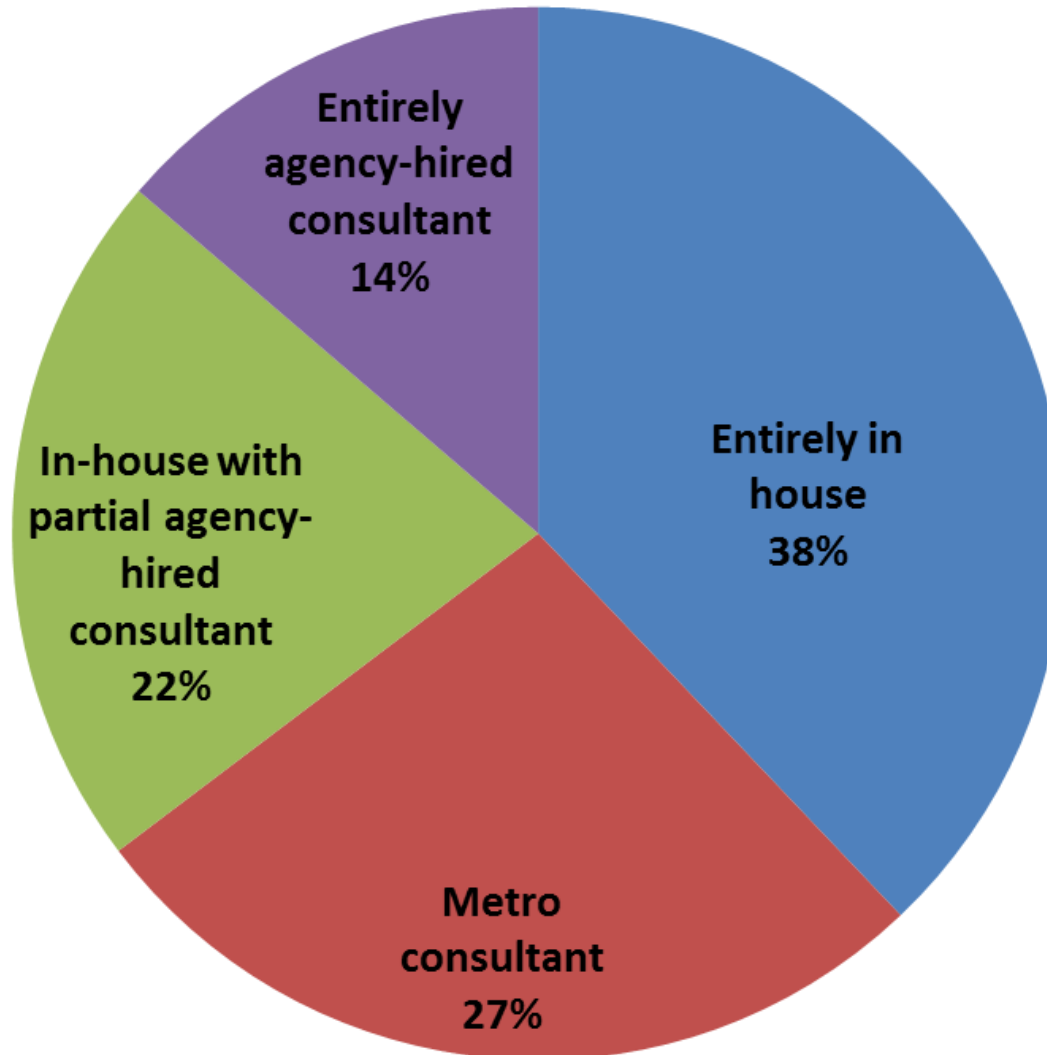
Other:

- No match is required for ATP

How does your agency prepare its ATP applications?

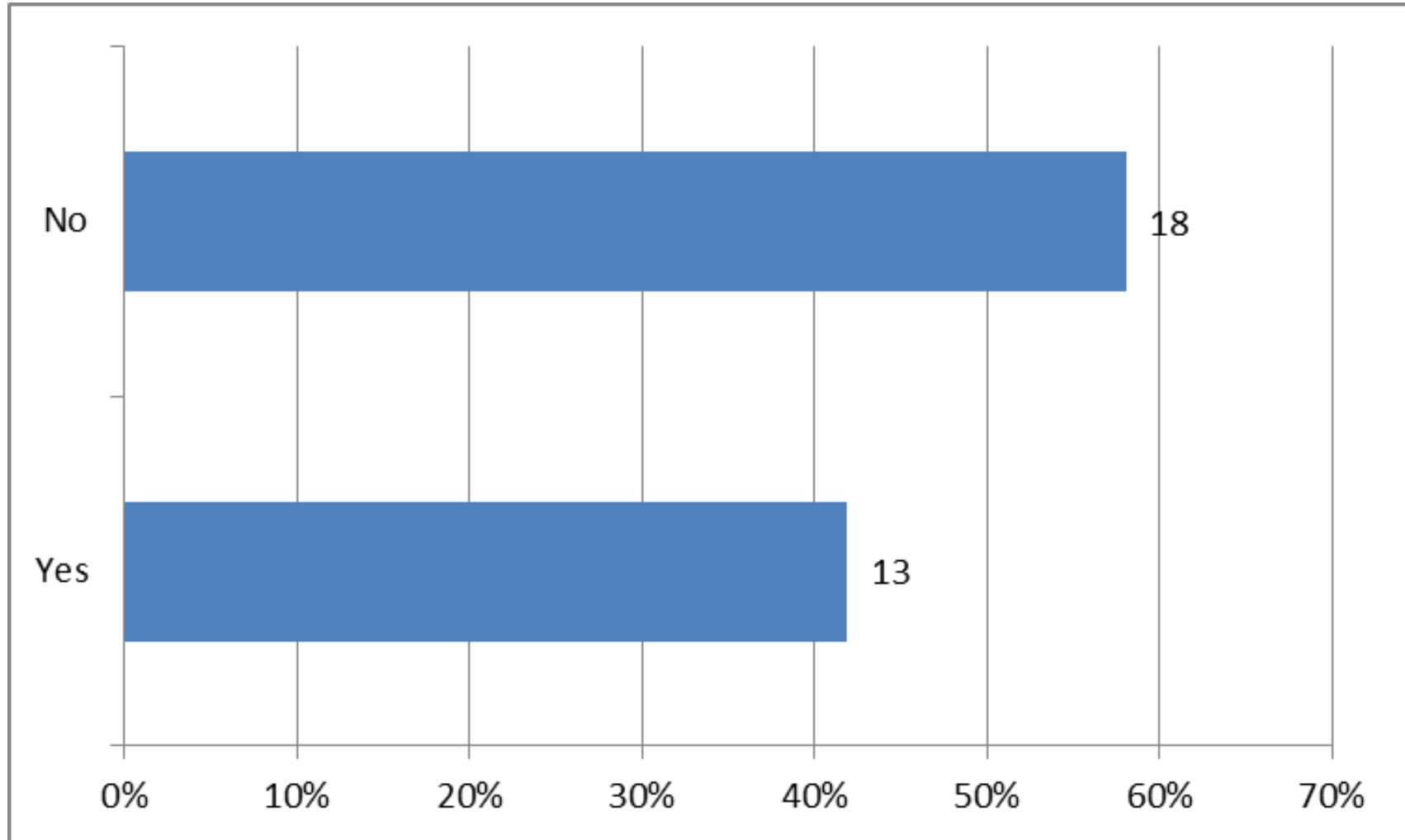
(32 responses)

ATP Cycles 1 to 3



Have you changed your approach over time in applying to the ATP?

(31 responses)



In what way(s) have you changed your approach over time in applying to the ATP?

13 responses

Project Identification

- We collaborate with other community partners to achieve regional and local goals.
- We concentrate on our current projects knowing that CTC has very restricted rules for awarding and completion of the projects.
- The City is now actively seeking and applying for available Grants whenever a solid project is identified.

Application Preparation

- We have transitioned the responsibilities from being shared evenly through an agency-consultant collaboration to mostly consultant.
- Providing more data in the application.
- Got Caltrans assistance

In what way(s) have you changed your approach over time in applying to the ATP? (continued)

13 responses

Number/Size of Applications

- Larger and to complete networks.
- Fewer applications submitted in one cycle. Started preparing much sooner. Grouped work into a program versus single stand alone projects.
- Smaller projects
- The declining gas tax has resulted in applying for less projects.

Planning

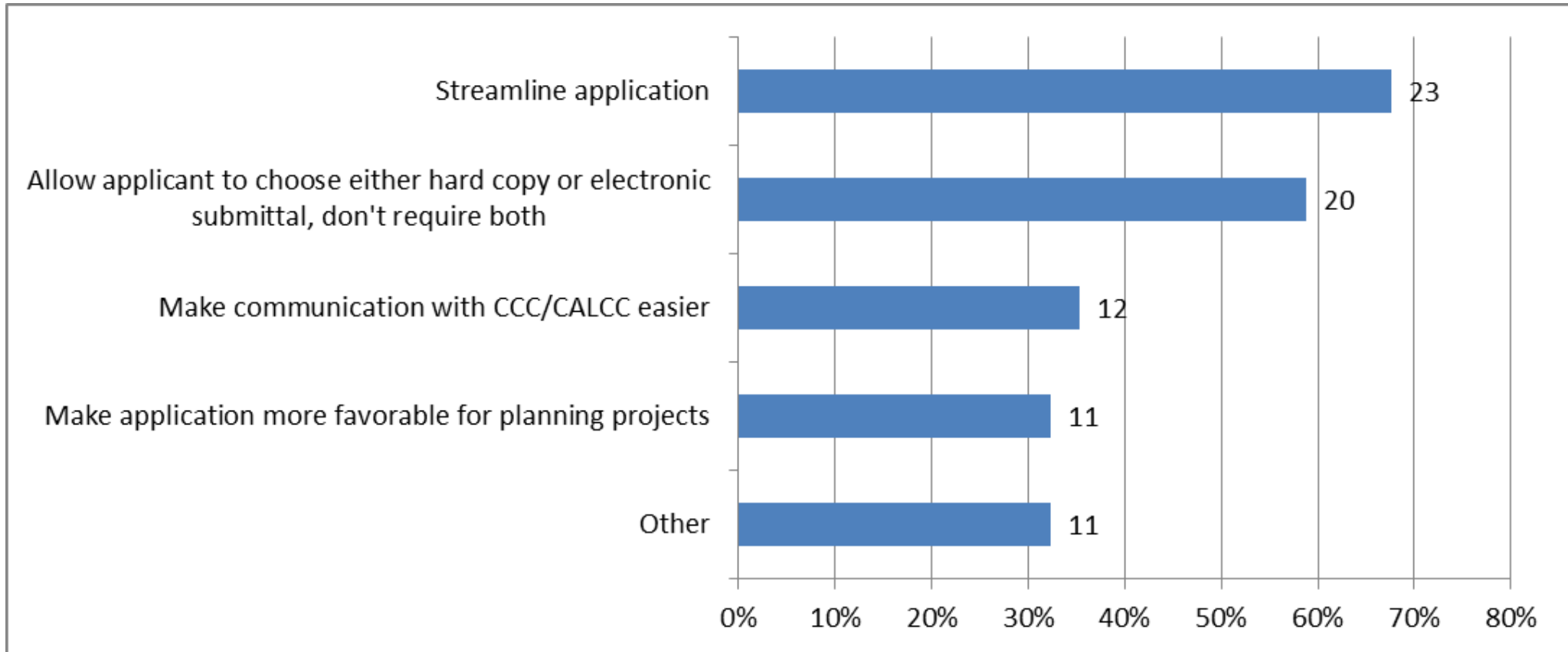
- We used a SRTS Masterplan to apply for ATP Cycle 3 to make it a stronger application
- More planning work completed beforehand.

Miscellaneous

- The only reason we applied the third, and successful time, was that we received a grant for a private grant writer.

What changes to the ATP application would make it easier for your agency to apply?

(35 responses)



The next 2 slides show the responses provided for “Other”

What changes to the ATP application would make it easier for your agency to apply? (continued)

(34 responses)

Application

- Display all questions, no drop downs after clicking on an answer. Provide helpful hints ie. use drop down calendar instead of typing in date.
- Benefit/cost ratio should be more realistic
- Make applications more favorable for cities that used a planning document/master plan
- To confirm with Caltrans on identifying "Eligible" elements to eliminate potential post award conflicts.

Submittal

- Require only electronic submittals
- On-line submittal and upload of files
- Remove requirement for submittal of hard copies. Make it an entirely digital submittal.

What changes to the ATP application would make it easier for your agency to apply? (continued)

(34 responses)

Schedule/Timing

- Allow agencies more time for awarding funded projects. It is very tough to award the contract within six months!!!!
- Allow for more time to prepare the application and lengthen the reversion date for the timely use of funds

Disadvantaged Communities

- Requirement of Disadvantaged Community is too limiting. 100% of ATP awardees at State level were in disadvantaged community. While a portion should go to disadvantaged communities, the purpose of the ATP program is lost as other projects that are really good projects are not selected only due to the fact that it is not in a disadvantaged community.
- Award it to DACs.

If you have any other comments that would help Metro develop resources to apply to the ATP, please write them.

(10 responses)

Project Delivery

- Flexibility when programming Funds. Sometimes Cities program moneys in advance and for valid budget reasons agencies need to use alternative funding (for local match for example). Flexibility to change in the future when project is to be implemented.
- Metro and Caltrans should work corporately to relax the implementation of the projects funded by ATP.
- More assistance and guidance in coordinating with the conservations corps

Project Identification/Development

- We believe that ATP projects should benefit a wide range of local interest and should be backed with studies and planning programs to demonstrate a need for the project. Partnering with local agencies, and community leaders/organizations should be key to delivering a multi-beneficial infrastructure project or planning study to later justify future ATP cycle applications.
- Early concept planning and public outreach help needed.

If you have any other comments that would help Metro develop resources to apply to the ATP, please write them. (continued)

(10 responses)

Application

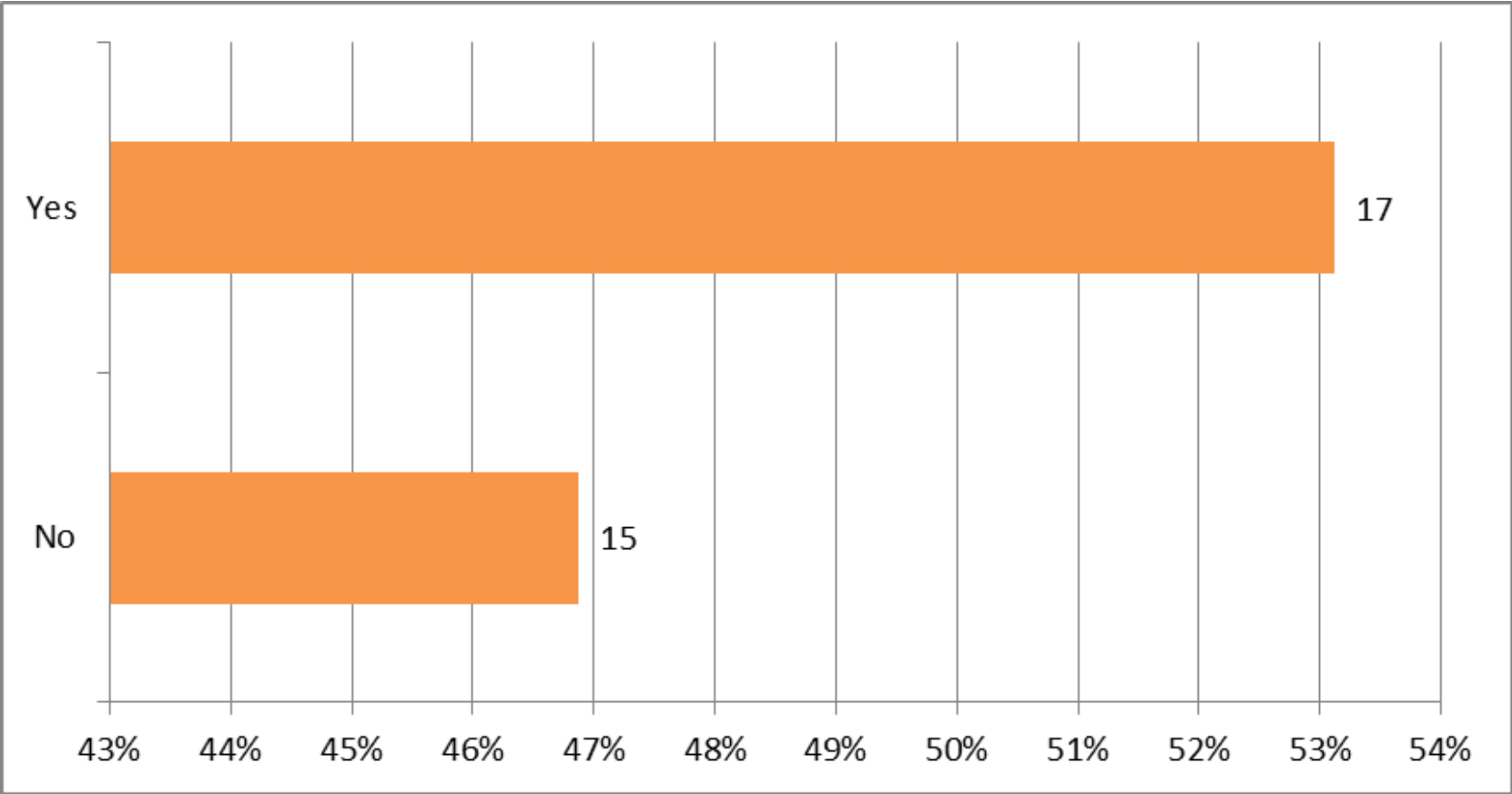
- Streamline the process as much as possible and provide all forms and resources online.
- It would be great if Metro would favor infrastructure applications that were founded and created by using a SRTS/Bike or other masterplan. Our SRTS masterplan took a lot of time and effort from our school district, PTA, Sheriffs, city staff, residents, etc and it covered all the goals under ATP guidelines; yet it was not funded. Extremely disappointed since we felt we had submitted a strong project that met all the ATP requirements and it is much needed in our community. When you notify the community that their work into creating a masterplan will be used to apply for future grants, they put a lot of time and effort into the study/masterplan.
- Provide all past winning applications
- Provide a maximum grant amount per project
- Have more qualified consultants available. Not to overload those are known "better" grant writers...
- Award it to DACs

Grant Assistance



Has your agency prepared an ATP application(s) with Metro consultant assistance?

(32 responses)



How many hours did agency staff devote to ...

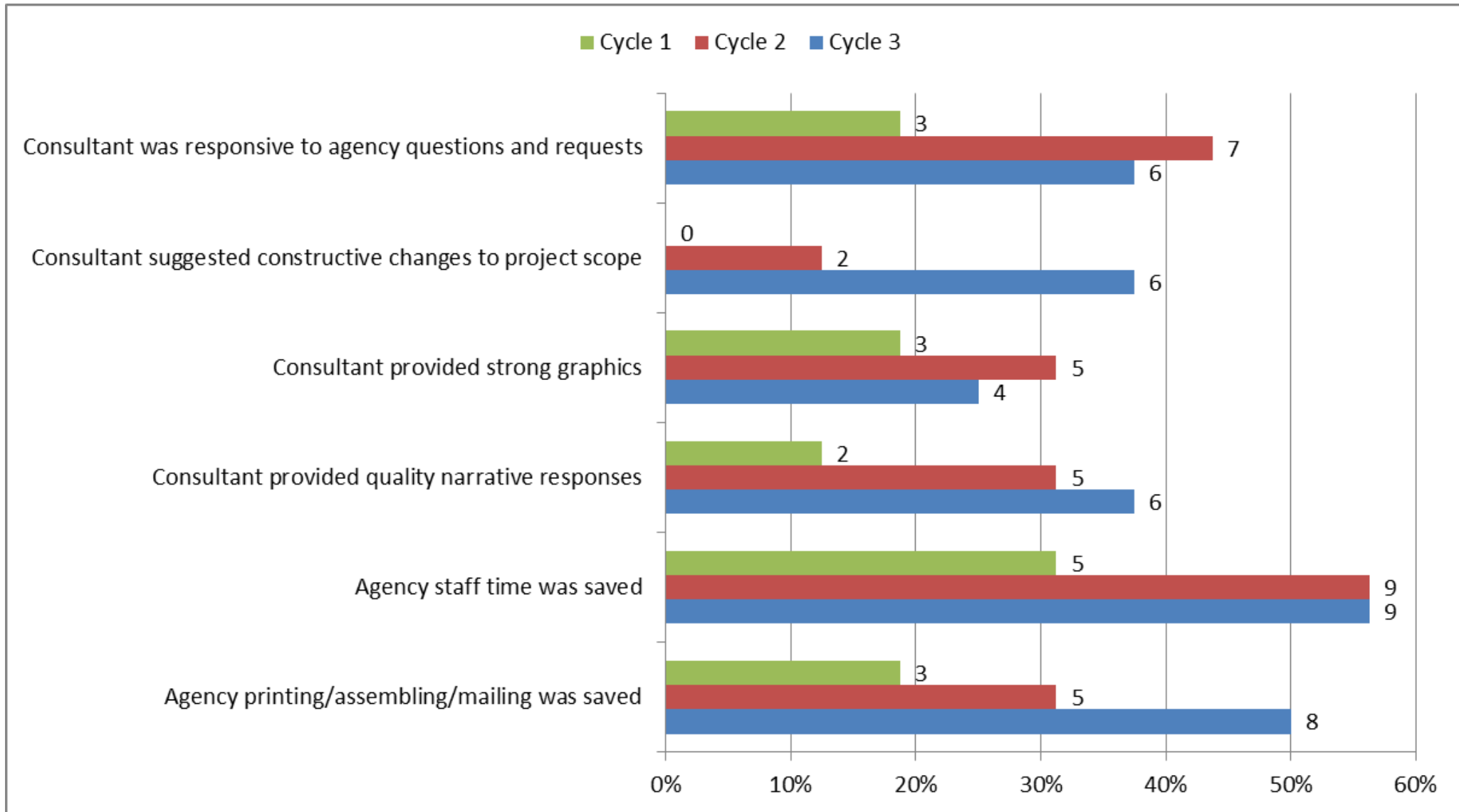
(16 responses)

- **Providing information to the consultants**
 - Average*: 32 hours
- **Reviewing the draft application**
 - Average*: 11 hours

*Excludes outlier response

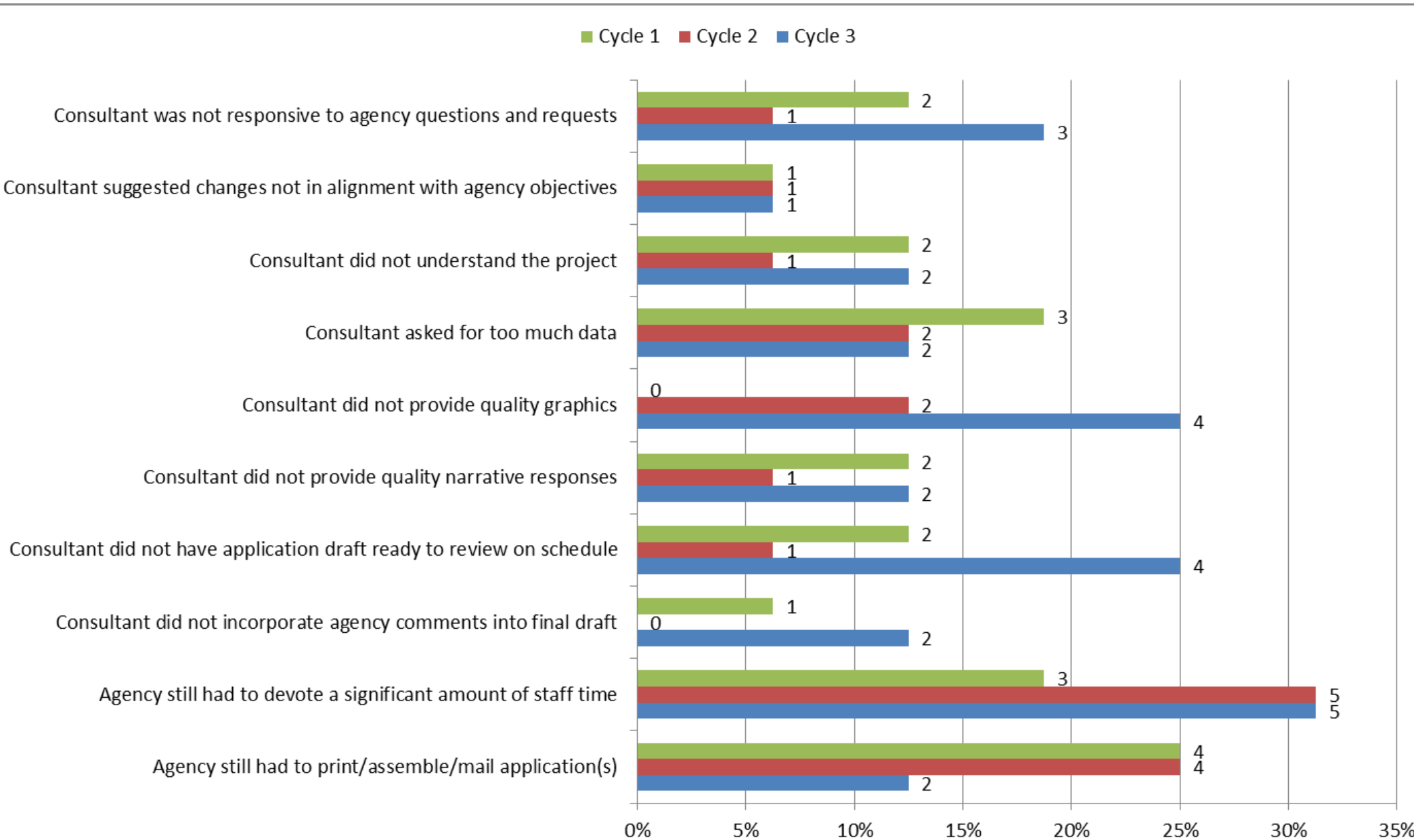
What were the positives of Metro grant assistance?

(16 responses)



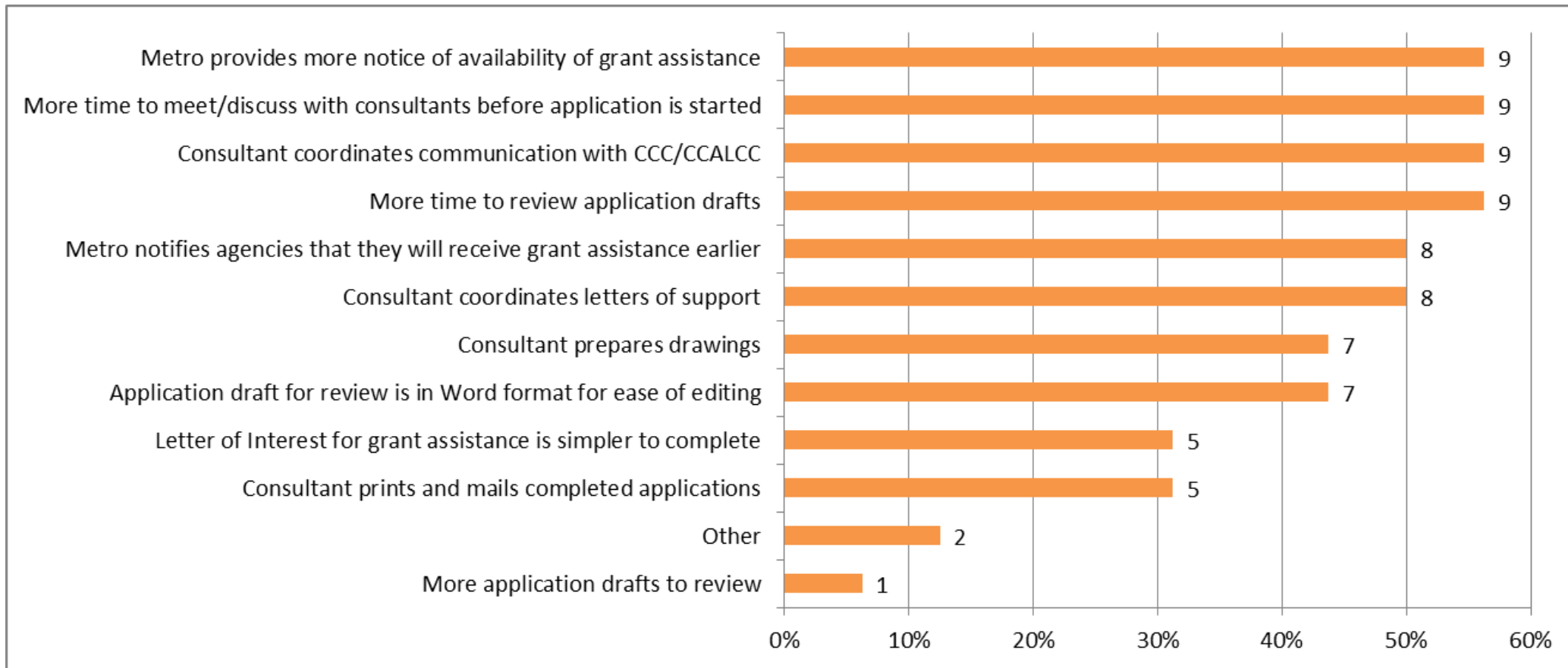
What were the negatives of Metro grant assistance?

(16 responses)



What changes would you like to see in Metro grant assistance?

(16 responses)



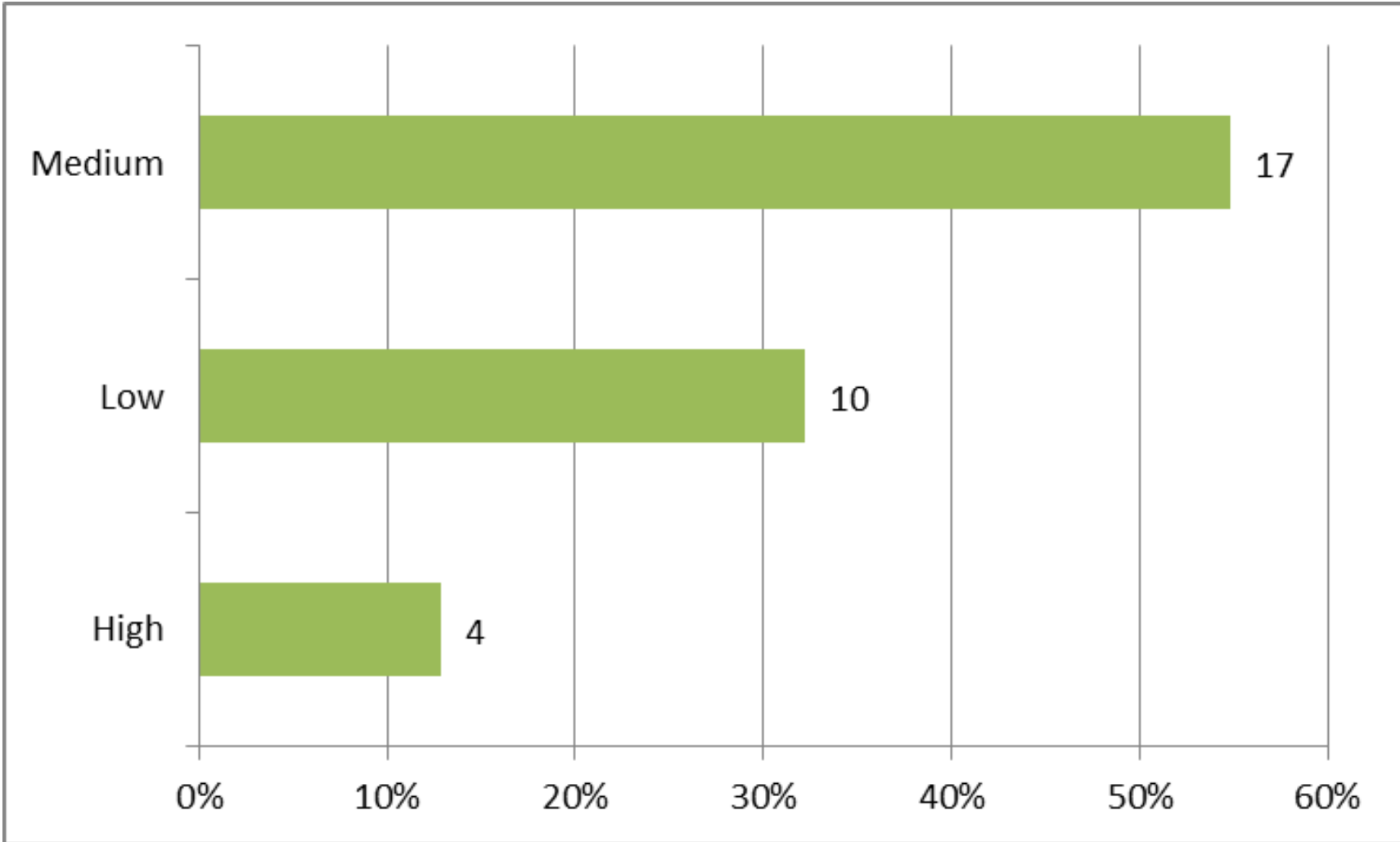
Other:

- The consultant need to be working directly with staff on one application - theirs.
- It would be helpful if the Letter of Interest process would occur prior to the Call For Projects period.

Project Delivery

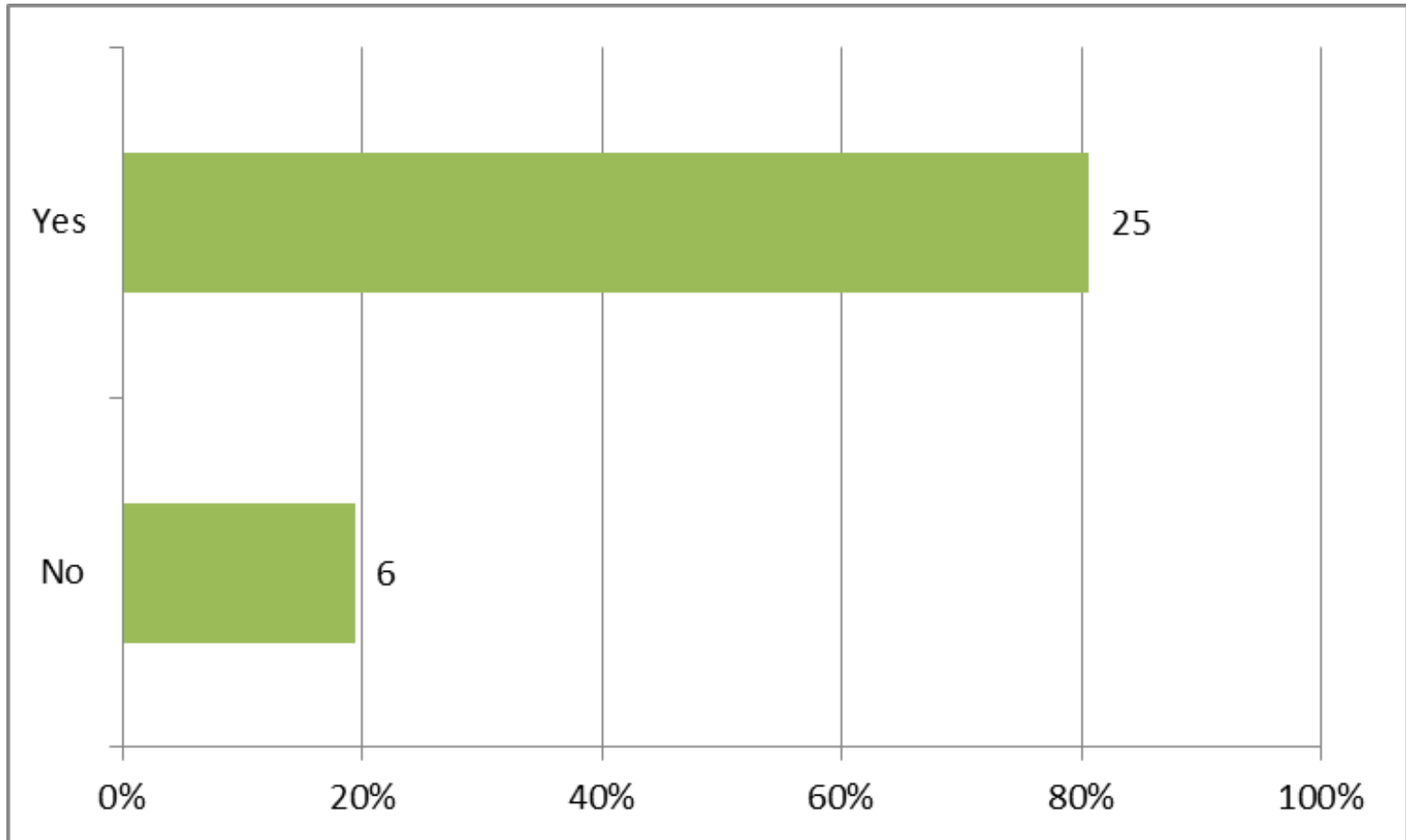
What level of in-house staff resources does your agency have to support ATP project delivery?

(31 responses)



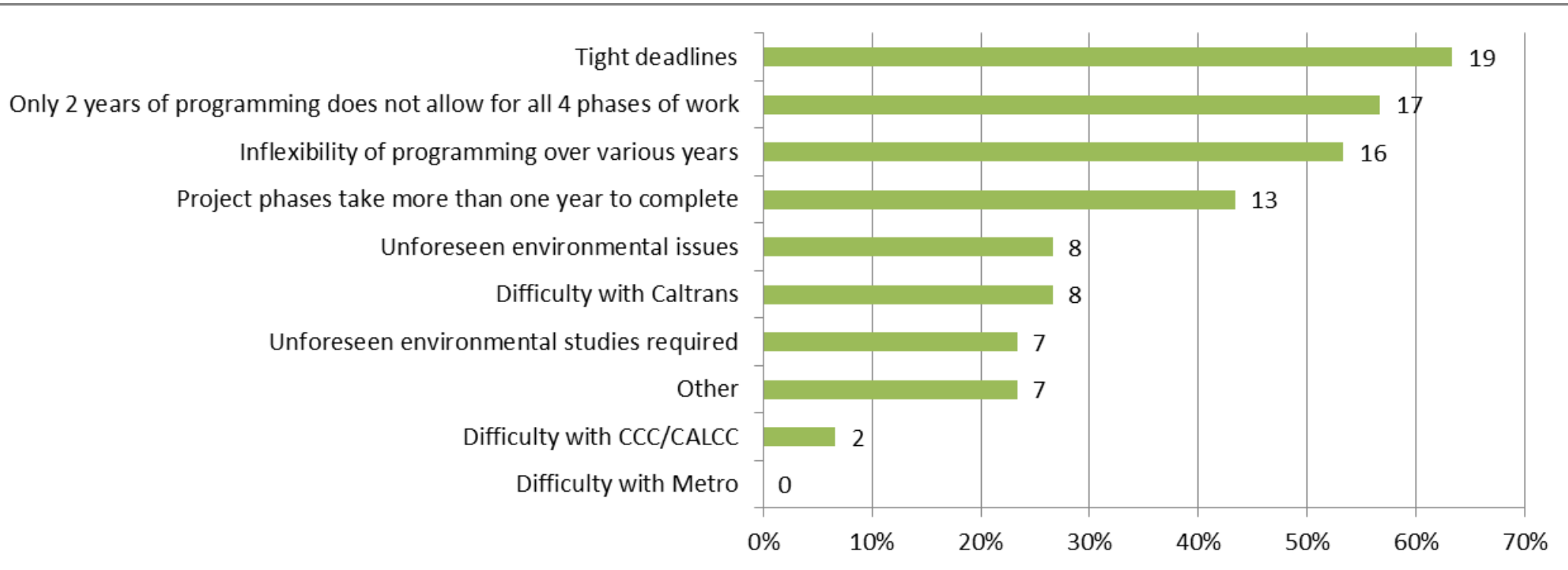
Does your agency use consultant/contract staff?

(31 responses)



What issues are posing a challenge to you in delivering your ATP project?

(30 responses)



The next slide shows the responses provided for “Other”

What issues are posing a challenge to you in delivering your ATP project?

(30 responses)

Other:

- Have not been directly awarded a grant as of yet.
- Coordination between CTC and Metro/Caltrans deadlines.
- Difficulty with the Metro provided grant writer understanding the project and doing a good job on the application.
- Numerous unsuccessful applications.
- Insufficient understanding of the sequential steps/processes to obligate funds/to get Metro/Caltrans approval to move forward. Further training and on-line documents regarding processing and approval would be helpful.
- Inconsistent guidelines

Please elaborate on any difficulty you had with Metro, Caltrans, CCC/CALCC.

(9 responses)

Metro

- For programming, projects are not adopted into the FTIP by the beginning of the first year of funding, resulting in funding authorization delays.

Caltrans

- We have experienced delays in the R/W Certification stage. Local agencies have roads that go over or under Caltrans freeways. Caltrans requires local agencies to certify the R/W following the State On-System R/W Certification process. This is a cumbersome process for a project that has no impact to Caltrans facilities. **Local agencies should be allowed to use the State Off-System R/W Certification** (LAPM Chapter 13).
- We have experienced delays with utility certifications as a part of the R/W Certification. We have been requested to provide email/written confirmation from utilities agreeing to the relocation which is unnecessary and not required per the LAPM. **Notice to Owner letters should be sufficient.** Local agencies should also be allowed to follow their own policies on plotting utilities on the plans and utility coordination as long as it follows State and Federal regulations. If Caltrans wants all local agencies to follow Caltrans procedures/documentations for utility delineation/coordination, then they should make that a requirement in the LAPM.

Please elaborate on any difficulty you had with Metro, Caltrans, CCC/CALCC (continued).

(9 responses)

Caltrans continued

- ROW Clearance with Caltrans takes too long. Caltrans not sensitive to tight deadlines that City has to make to keep ATP project on schedule.
- Additionally, requests for certain technical studies are often unreasonable given the scope of the project, i.e. air quality studies are required for road diet projects.
- Caltrans' interpretation of the need for Air Quality Report results in extensive review/study that is time-sensitive.
- It may also take a long time to secure an encroachment permit from Caltrans. On one occasion, it took several revisions before finally being issued a permit.
- Caltrans is a great organization that has purpose in the process; however, some of the submittal requirement are rigorous and time consuming and approval process is at times slow.
- Timely response from Caltrans.
- Special studies required by Caltrans during environmental review was most challenging.

Please elaborate on any difficulty you had with Metro, Caltrans, CCC/CALCC (continued).

(9 responses)

CTC

- Caltrans staff are doing very good job to help our agency, however, CTC deadlines to award and complete the projects is very challenging.
- They keep changing guidelines on applicants and application process!

CCC/CALCC

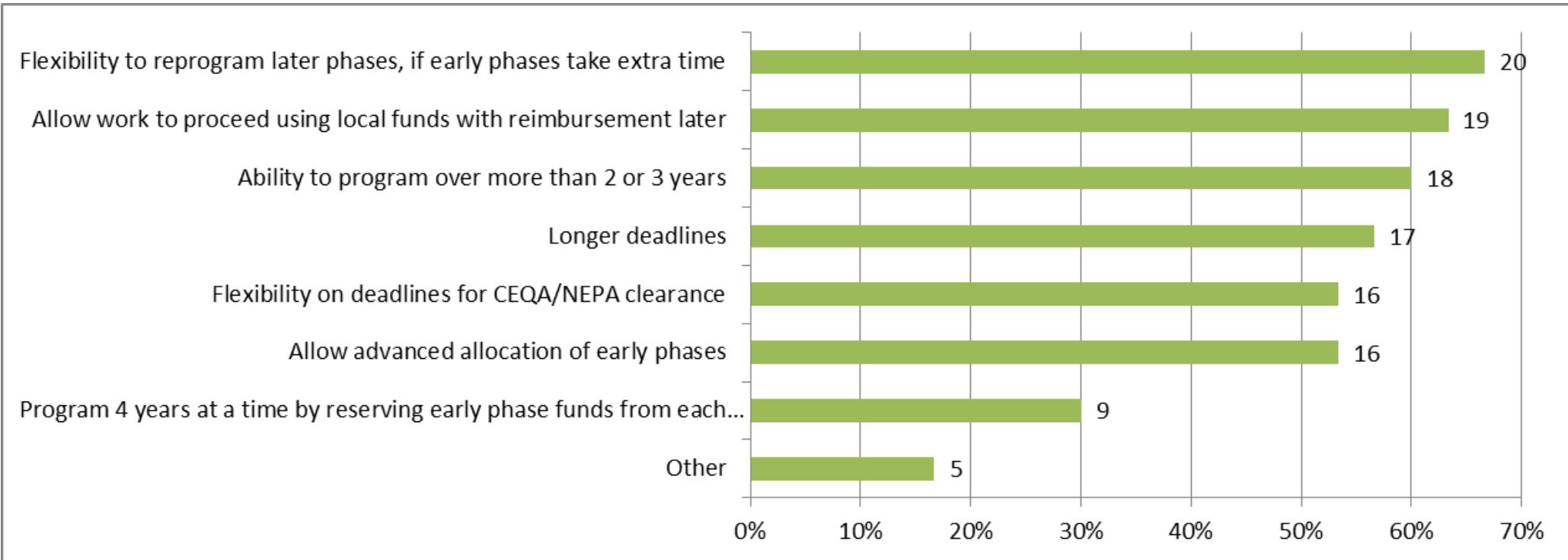
- Difficult communication and coordination with CA Conservation Corps
- We have dealt with the local Corps and found them to be hard working, but closing documentation requests on labor has been difficult to obtain.

Other

- Our ATP Planning Grant is being administered by the Planning Division. We (as opposed to Public Works) have never worked with Caltrans before so the grant administration is all new to us and therefore challenging.
- The first application was submitted by a project partner and part of the application was not transmitted. The second application was not completed correctly.
- Difficulties are also encountered when Engineer's Estimates are lower than the allocation amount for construction phase which can delay Caltrans funding authorization.

How would you change the ATP project delivery guidelines to increase your success?

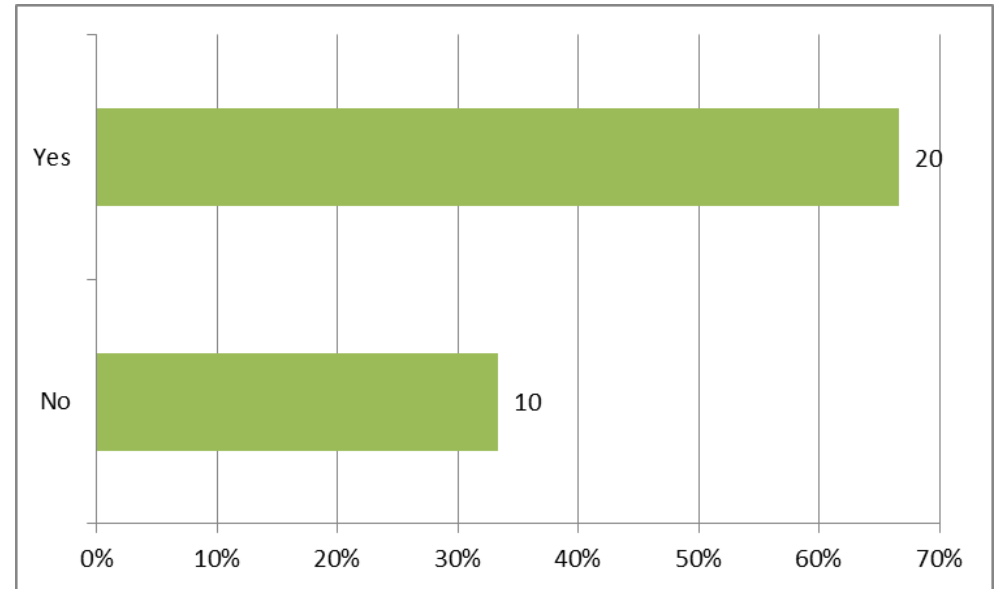
(30 responses)



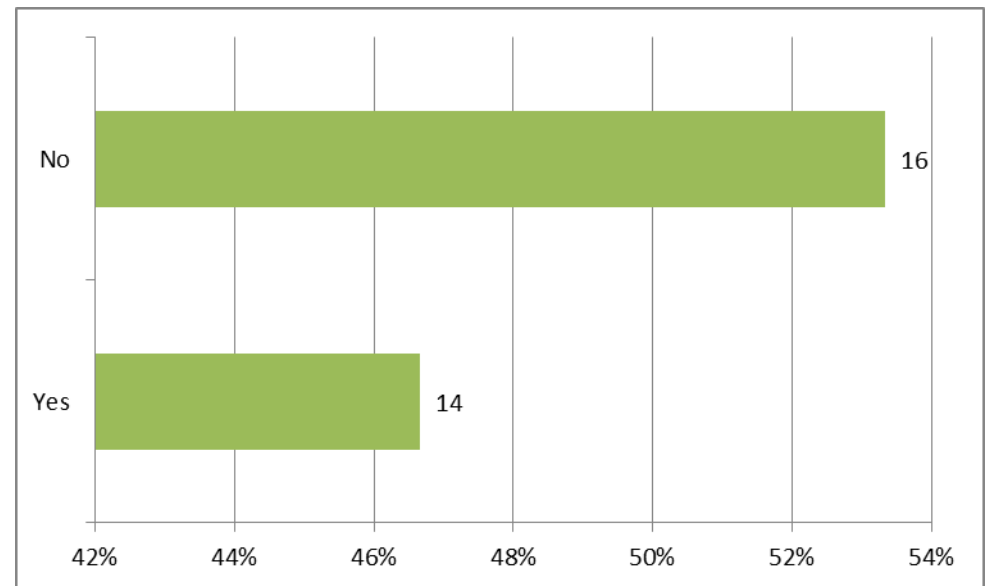
Other:

- Deadline Flexibility for multi-agency projects
- No difficulty with these guidelines
- Keep them the same each cycle.

Does your agency have sufficient funds to conduct environmental clearance?
(30 responses)

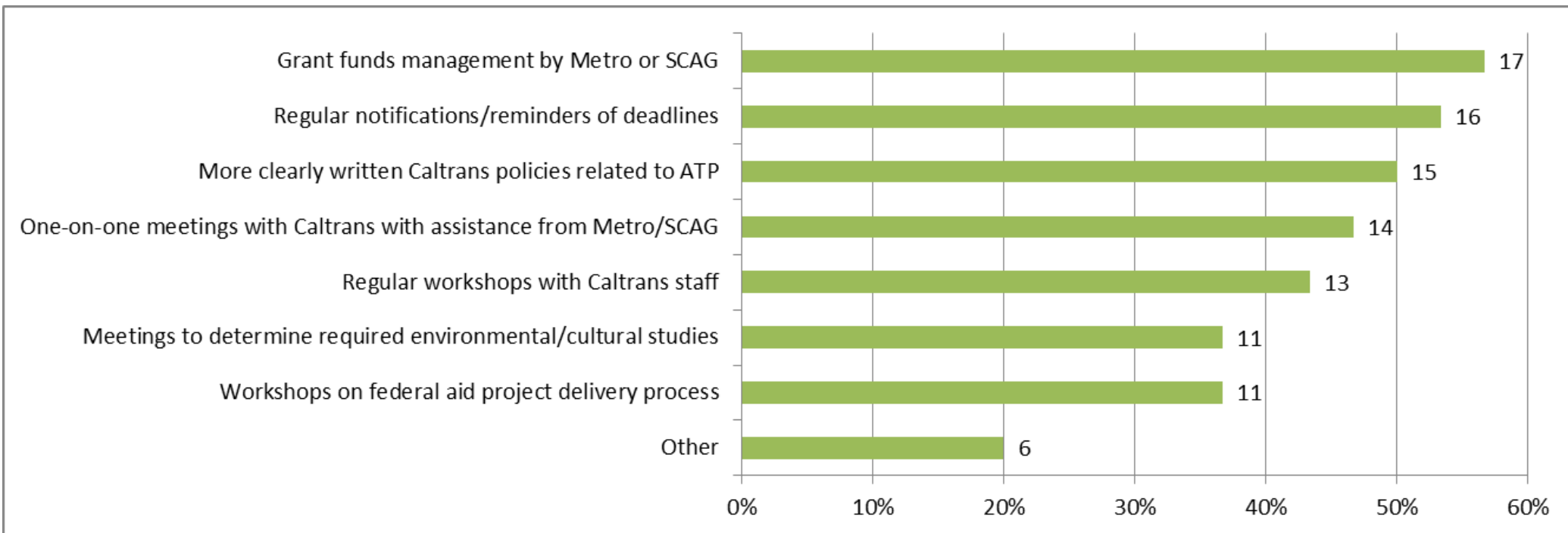


Has your agency ever proceeded with environmental clearance or design (whether funded by agency funds or other funds) prior to commitment of funds for construction?
(30 responses)



What resources would assist your agency to make project delivery easier?

(30 responses)



The next slide shows the responses provided for “Other”

What resources would assist your agency to make project delivery easier?

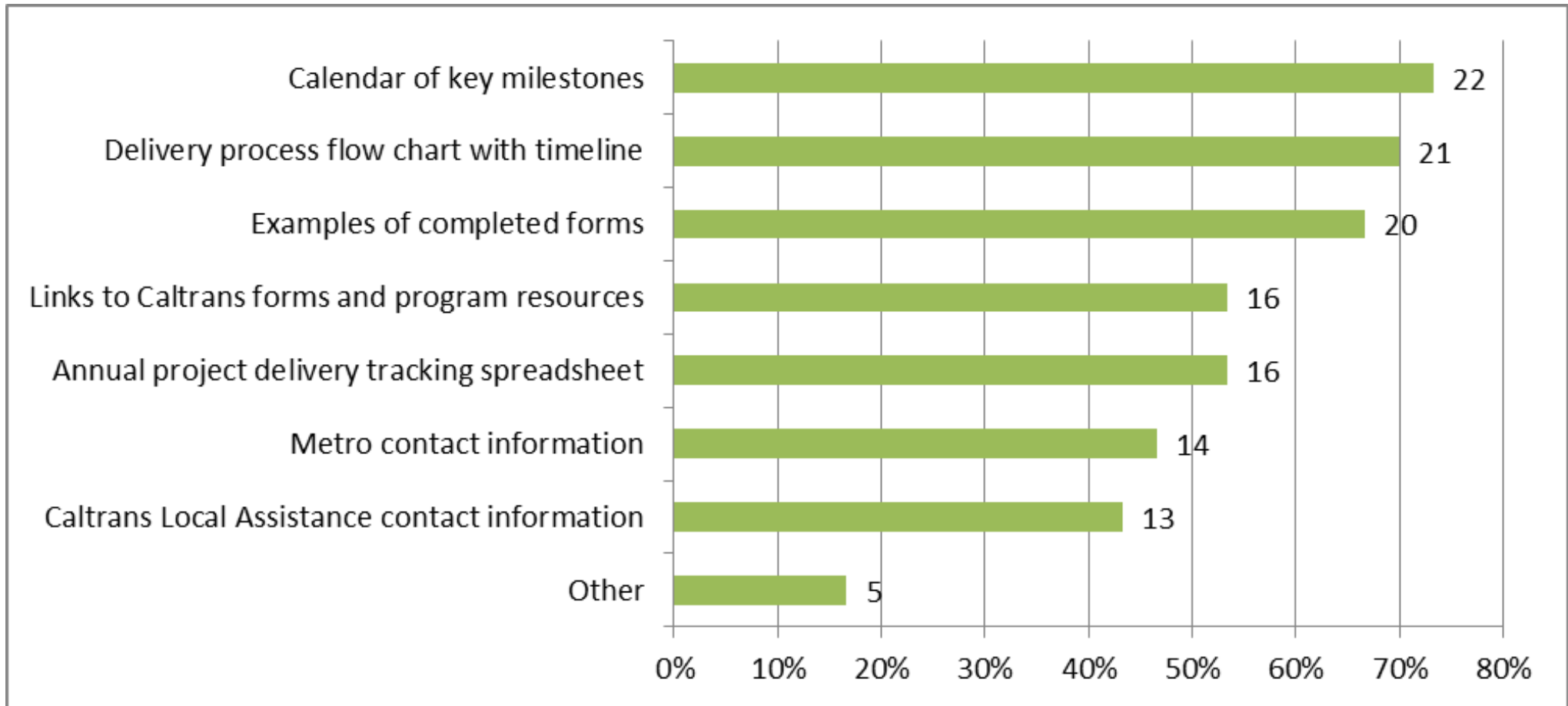
(30 responses)

Other

- Clarification on time need for review/approval by Caltrans/FHWA for environmental clearance, R/W certification, etc.
- ROW Certification process easier and faster
- Too many approvals for each phase CTC, Caltrans, too many deadlines to track
- Increase funding lapsing dates
- Workshops closer to North County.
- Actually getting awarded a grant would be nice for a start

What online resources would be helpful to your agency?

(30 responses)



Other:

- Previously funded applications achieved
- Nothing



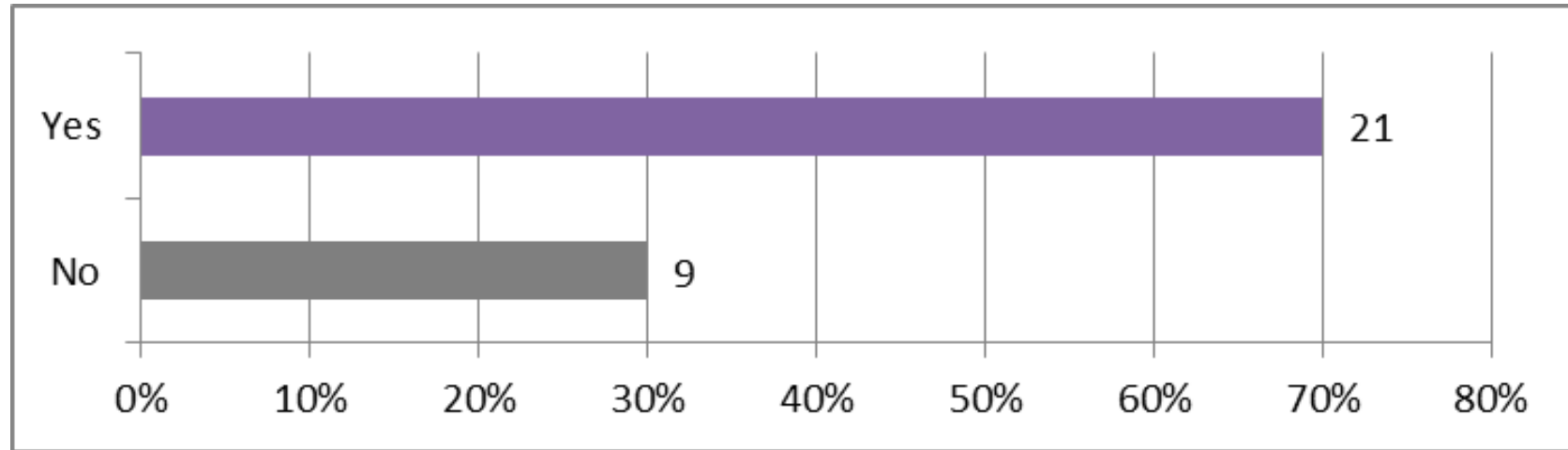
Metro Successful Applicants Workshops



Metro

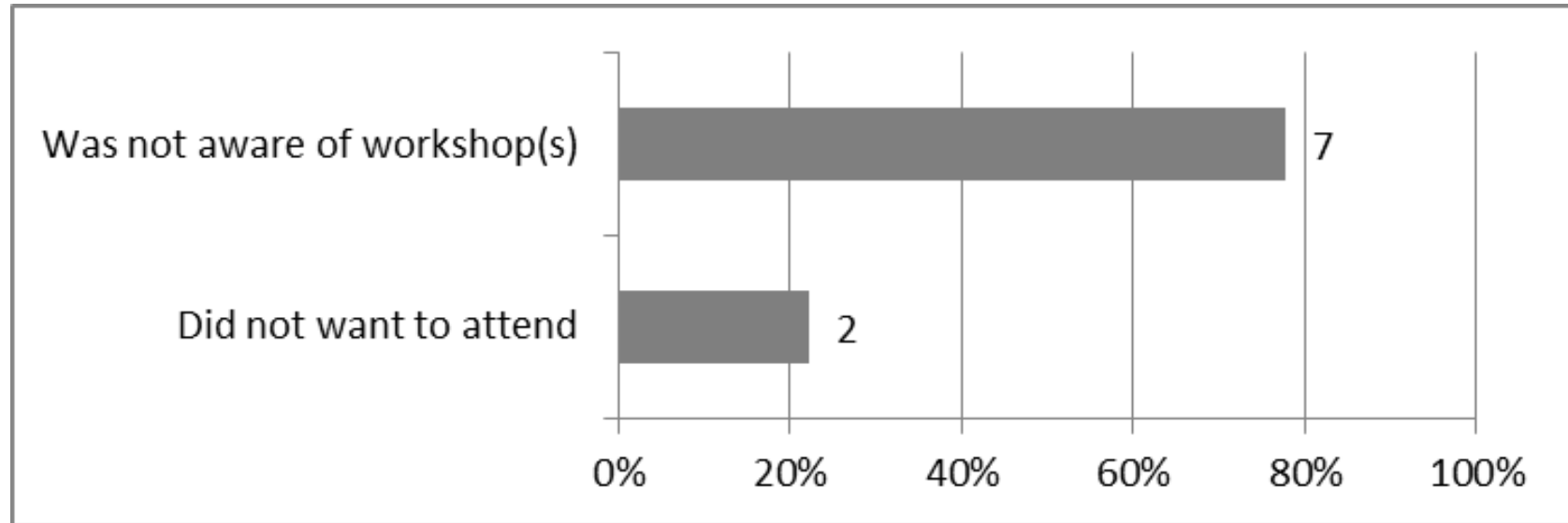
Has your agency ever attended a Metro Successful Applicants Workshop?

(30 responses)



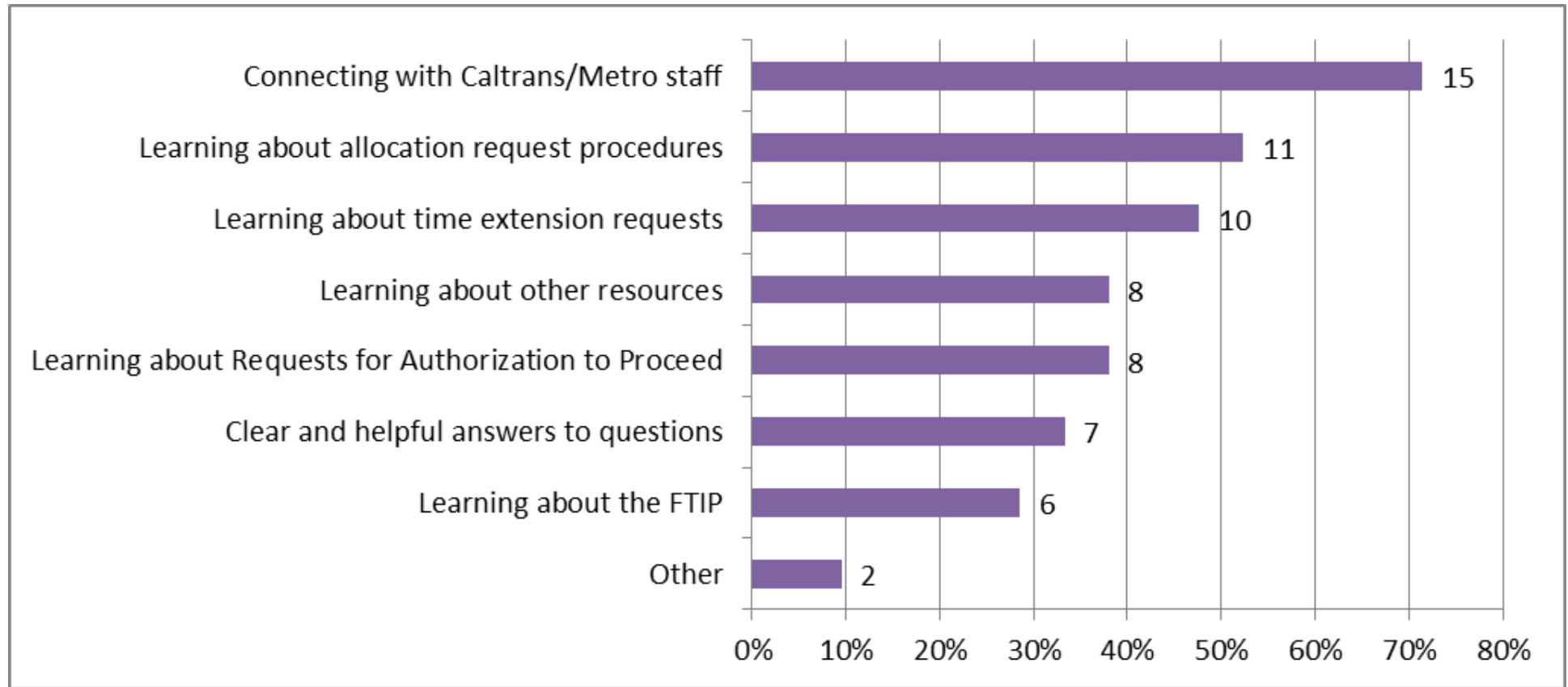
Why did you not attend any Successful Applicants Workshops?

(9 responses)



What were the positives about the Successful Applicants Workshops?

(21 responses)

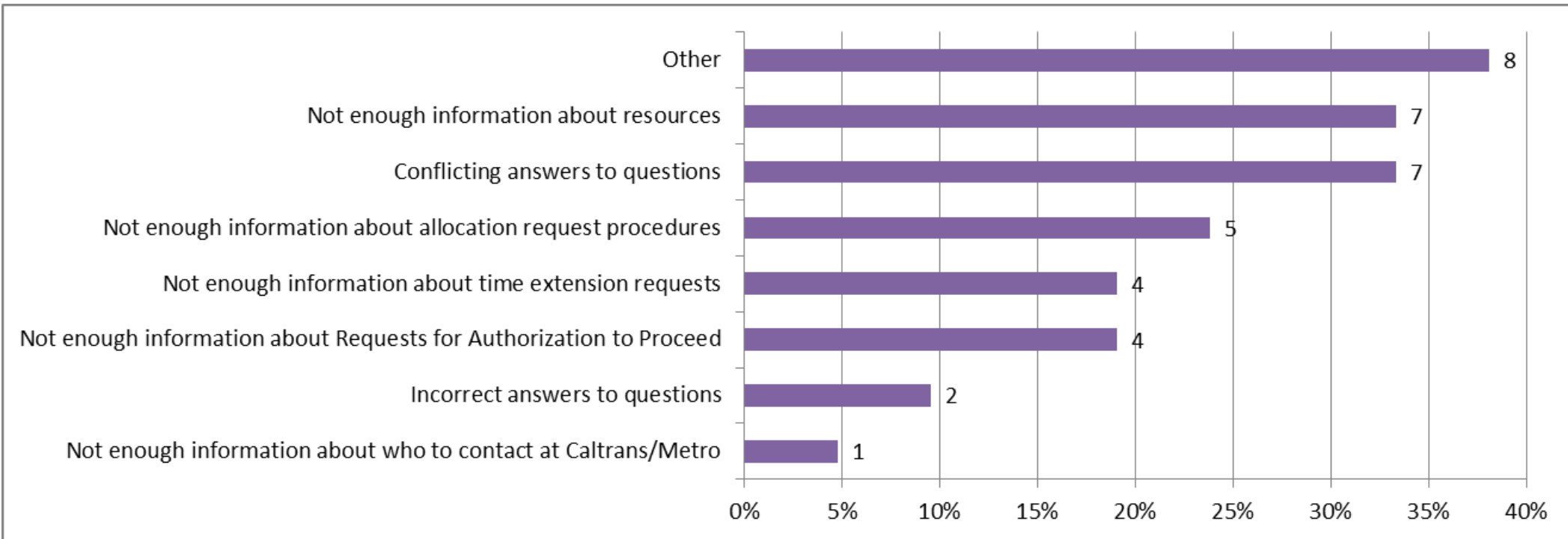


Other:

- Be aware of additional requirements/docs needed
- All of the above were positives, but because this information is not something we deal with on a regular basis, it was not initially apparent as to its meaningfulness for the process.

What were the negatives about the Successful Applicants Workshops?

(21 responses)



Other:

- Not enough info for deadlines to meet for Request for Allocation Packages for different phases (CTC Meetings, etc)
- Not conveniently located or programmed -- more than one location/one date would be great.

Additional thoughts about ATP from agencies that have never applied

(2 responses)

- Need to have pre and post data from other similar projects to ensure project is worthwhile
- There has to be a better way for small affluent communities to have a chance at these funds. With the disadvantaged community points and regional impacts and larger opportunity to change mode it leaves small above middle- class communities at a really disadvantage and the City's do not want to expend the necessary resources for such a massive grant application when we are pretty much behind the ball. The cities play a role in the linkage of the region just not on the same scale with some many of these communities supply the choice riders vs transit dependent – they need higher quality facilities get people to consider changing modes but they are the more costly treatments that cities can't fund out of the general funds budgets.

Additional thoughts about ATP from agencies that have applied

(10 responses)

Application

- If it could be considered favorable to ask/check off whether or not the proposed infrastructure project is requested based on a masterplan/study. Masterplans take a lot of time and effort from the community and city staff. They are the foundation/results of much needed infrastructure work that would increase safety, increase walking/biking, health, etc. It's unfortunate that projects are not rated stronger after so much effort from all involved.
- Application: Public Health question does not really add any value to the application in deciding if it should be funded or not. All bike/ped/active transportation projects have a positive effect on health so it's really a moot question.
- Application is cumbersome
- Having a dedicated grant writer working on on our application made all the difference! The third application rated a score of 98!

Additional thoughts about ATP from agencies that have applied

(continued)

Project Delivery

- The CCC & LA Cons. Corps are both limited in work that they can perform. Neither group is able to supply material and have limited construction capability. To date, we have only included bike rack installation & tree planting to be done by either.
- Provide information or warn agencies when projects are in risk to be in the INACTIVE list or redflag projects due to a missing action/document by Cities.

Program Administration

- We enjoyed working with Metro, they are very helpful; but, there are areas where CTC/Caltrans/Metro are not synching with each other that make project delivery challenging.
- Too many overseeing agencies.... FHWA, Caltrans, SCAG, and Metro....

Summary

Project Delivery Assistance

California Transportation Commission

- More flexibility in program years and deadlines

Caltrans

- Update LAPG and do not request documents it does not require
- Simplify ROW cert requirements for non-SHS improvements
- Provide samples of approved forms
- Provide information on expected processing times

Metro

- Successful Applicants Workshop in multiple locations
- Workshop should include more information regarding deadlines for various phases and types of requests
- Make sure information presented is consistent

Summary

(continued)

Program Guidelines/Application

- Streamline application
- Online submittal only

Consultant/Grant Assistance

- Less applications per grant writer
- Start grant assistance process earlier so there's more time for all steps
- Consultant should continue handling printing/submittal of application
- Process should require less city staff time

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