

URBAN FOREST STRATEGIC PLAN SURVEY #2 + PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY



**HELP US
PLAN(T)
FOR THE
FUTURE**



We heard you, Denver!
Thanks for sharing input about the future of Denver's urban canopy this Spring. You can help us *dig in* a bit more by taking this follow-up 5-minute survey! →



SCAN HERE



**AYÚDANOS
A PLANTAR
UN FUTURO
MÁS VERDE**



¡Te escuchamos, Denver!
Gracias por compartir tu opinión sobre el futuro del arbolado urbano de Denver esta primavera. Puedes ayudarnos a *ahondar* un poco más respondiendo a esta encuesta de seguimiento de 5 minutos. →



ESCANEA AQUÍ



**GIÚP CHÚNG
TÔI TRỒNG
CÂY TRONG
TƯƠNG LAI**



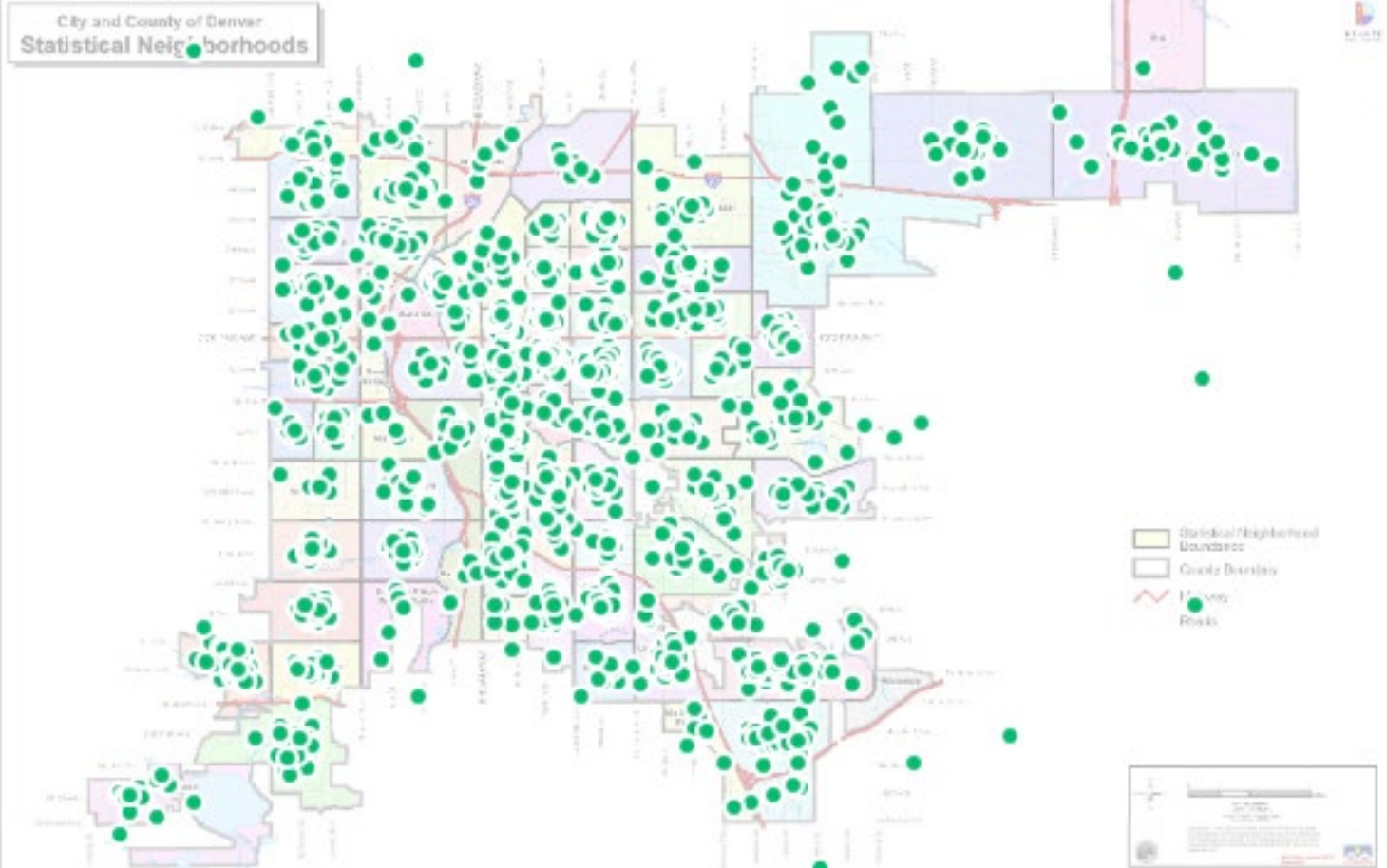
Chúng tôi lắng nghe quý vị, Denver! Cảm ơn quý vị đã chia sẻ ý kiến về tương lai của tán cây đô thị Denver vào mùa xuân này. Quý vị có thể giúp chúng tôi tìm hiểu thêm một chút bằng cách tham gia bản khảo sát dài 5 phút tiếp theo này! →



SURVEY RESULTS: WHO RESPONDED?

Survey open from July 25 – September 11, 2023
2,144 total responses

- 71.5% live in the City of Denver (see map)
 - 76% own a home
 - 17.5% rent a home
- Age of respondents addressed all groups other than youth
 - 42% ages 44 or under
 - 58% ages 45 or older
- Income of respondents skewed towards higher income levels
 - 23.5% reported under \$75,000 annual household income
 - 33.5% reported between 75 and 149,000
 - 27% reported above \$150,000
- Race/ethnicity was self-identified by respondents and skewed higher to those that selected white. Individuals could select 'all that apply'
 - 79.0% White/Caucasian (55%/80.5%)
 - 10% Hispanic/Latino (29.0%)
 - 2.0% Black/African American (9.9%)
 - 1.5% American Indian/Alaskan Native (1.8%)
 - 3% Asian/Asian American (4.1%)
 - 2% Self-describe
 - 9% prefer not to say

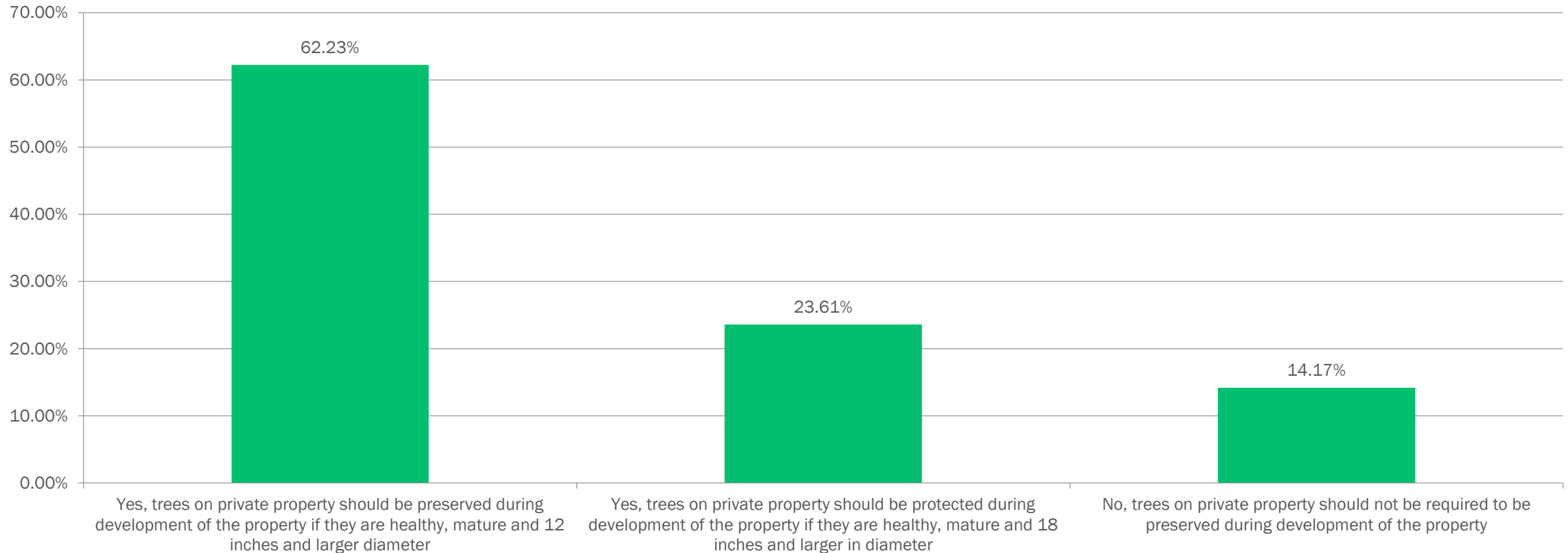


68 surveys taken in Spanish and 3 in Vietnamese

Q1: SHOULD ALL HEALTHY MATURE TREES (OVER 12 INCHES IN DIAMETER) LOCATED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY REQUIRE PRESERVATION DURING DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT? (PICK ONLY ONE) AND CANOPY AND IDEALLY AVOIDS ALL DAMAGE TO THE TREE.

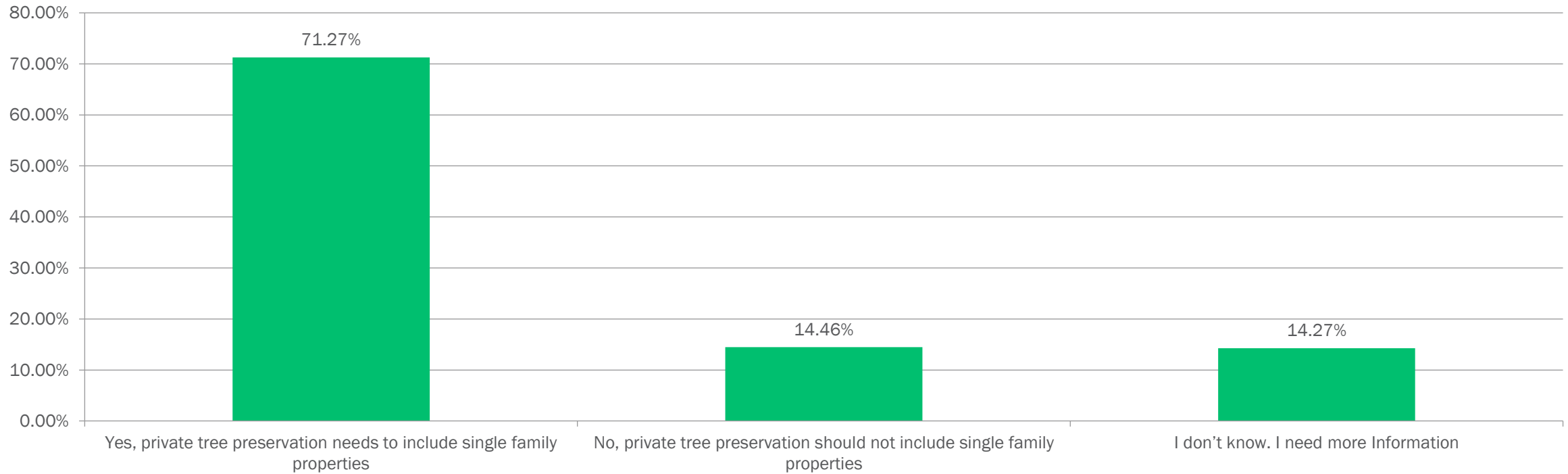
ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN WITH QUESTION - SEE LAST PAGE

2,139 RESPONSES - 22 SKIPPED



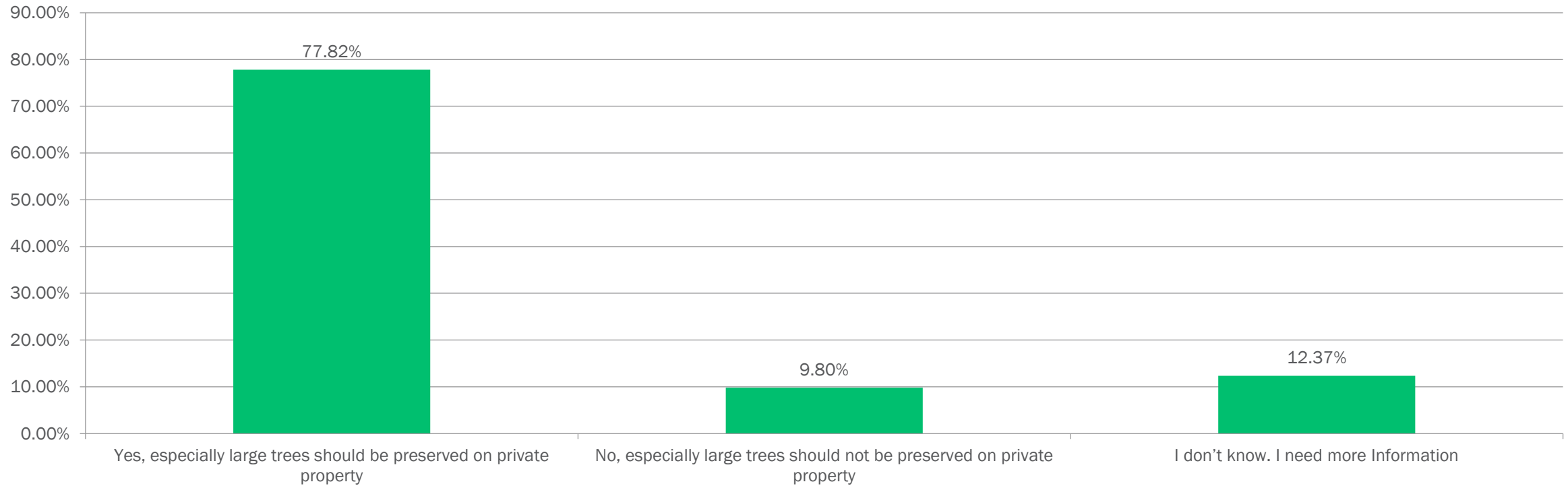
Q2: SHOULD PRIVATE TREE PRESERVATION INCLUDE TREES ON SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES DURING DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT? (PICK ONLY ONE) BACKGROUND INFORMATION: AN ESTIMATED 65% OF ALL TREES IN THE CITY ARE LOCATED ON SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LAND.

2,144 RESPONSES - 17 SKIPPED



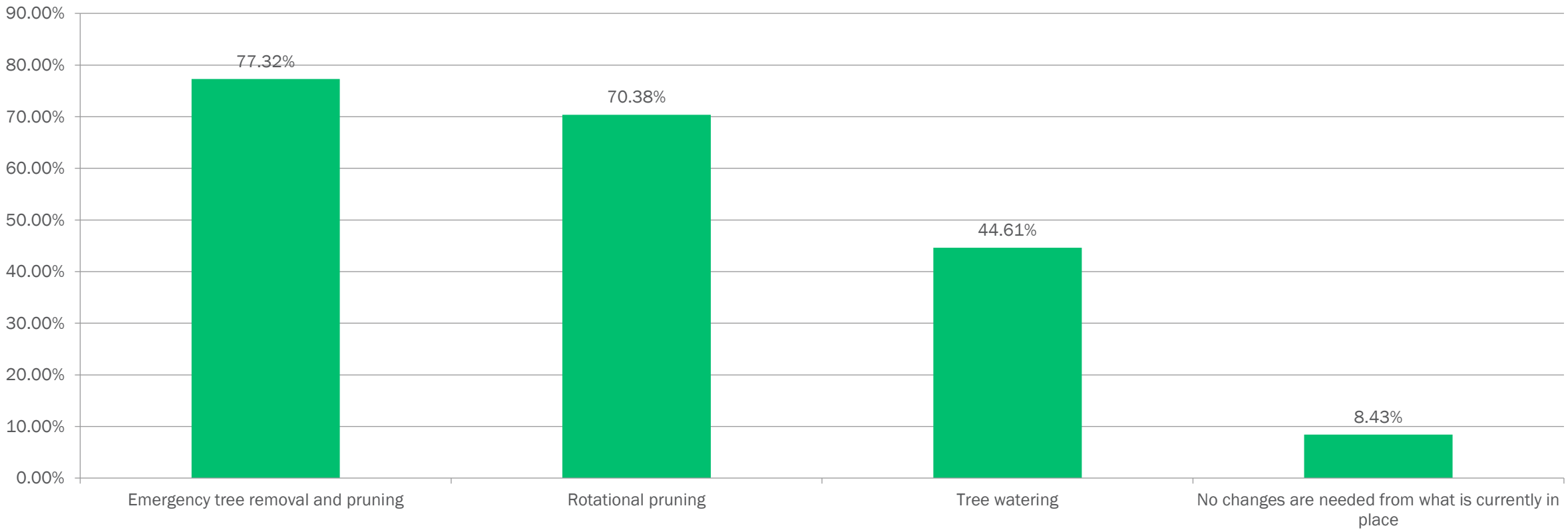
Q3: SHOULD MATURE PRIVATE TREES, GENERALLY OVER 18 INCHES IN DIAMETER, BE PRESERVED FOR THEIR HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE, ECOLOGICAL VALUE AND/OR BEAUTY ON PRIVATE PROPERTY? (PICK ONLY ONE) *ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN WITH QUESTION - SEE LAST PAGE*

RESPONSES 2142 – SKIPPED 19



Q4: IN THE LAST SURVEY, DENVER RESIDENTS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER SHARING SOME RESPONSIBILITY FOR TREE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC STREET TREES. WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT FOR THE CITY TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY) *ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN WITH QUESTION - SEE LAST PAGE*

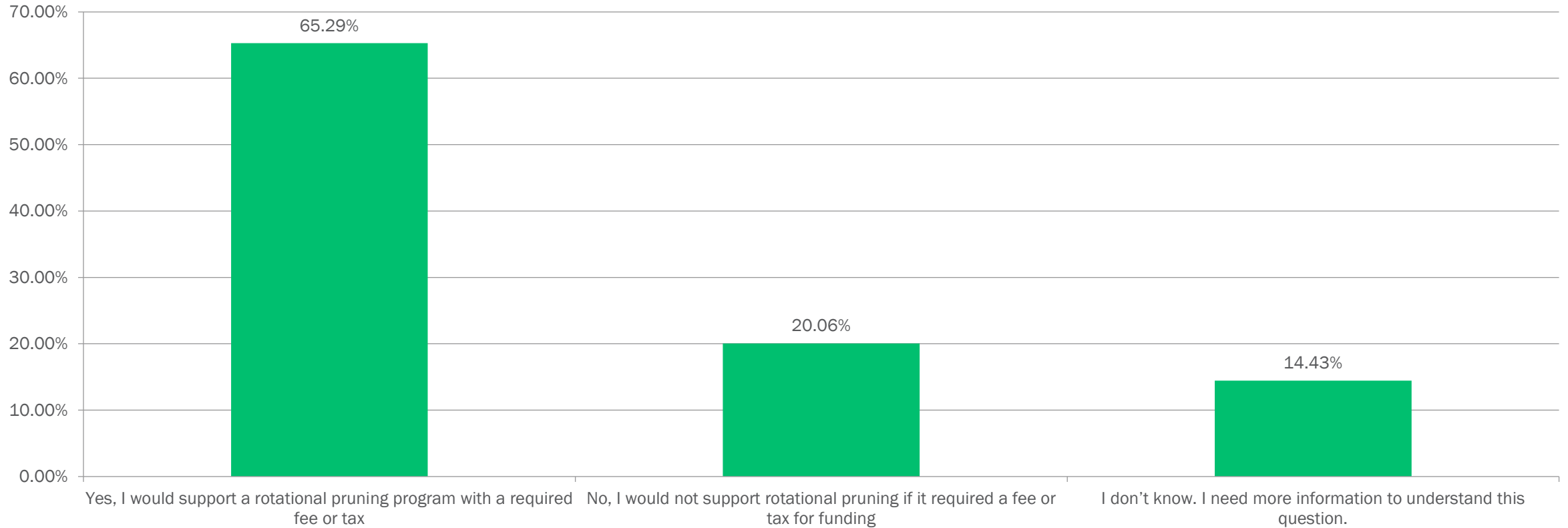
RESPONSES 2134 – SKIPPED 27



Q5: WOULD YOU SUPPORT THE OFFICE OF THE CITY FORESTER DEVELOPING A ROTATIONAL STREET TREE PRUNING PROGRAM FOR ALL STREET TREES, EVEN IF THE ONLY WAY TO FUND THE PROGRAM WAS THROUGH A PROPERTY-RELATED TAX OR FEE? (PICK ONLY ONE)

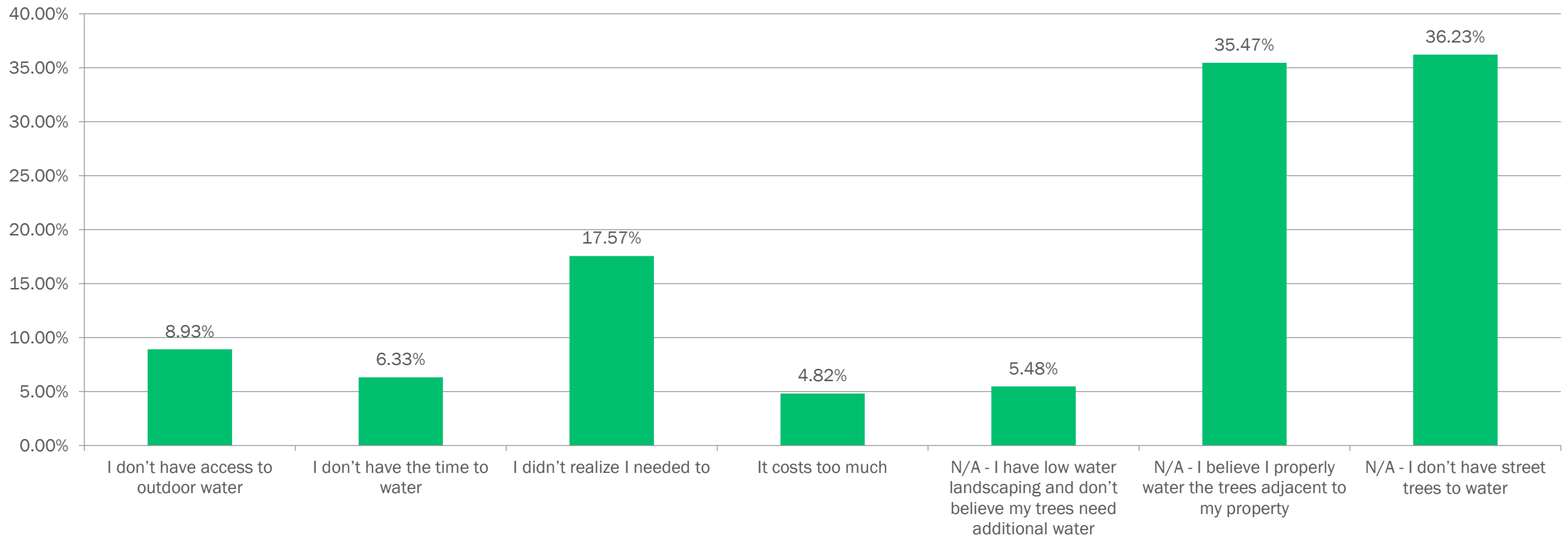
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RESPONSES 2144 – SKIPPED 17



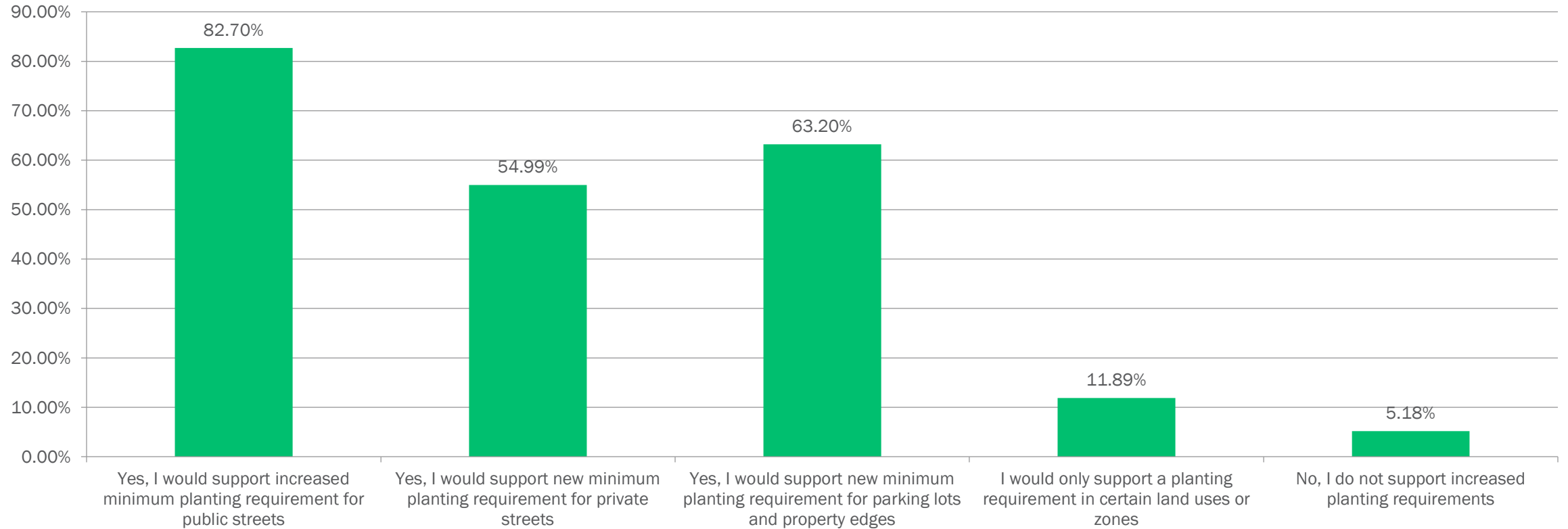
Q6: REGARDING STREET TREE WATERING, WHAT PREVENTS YOU FROM REGULARLY WATERING THE TREES ADJACENT TO YOUR PROPERTY? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY) *ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN WITH QUESTION - SEE LAST PAGE*

RESPONSES 2117 – SKIPPED 44



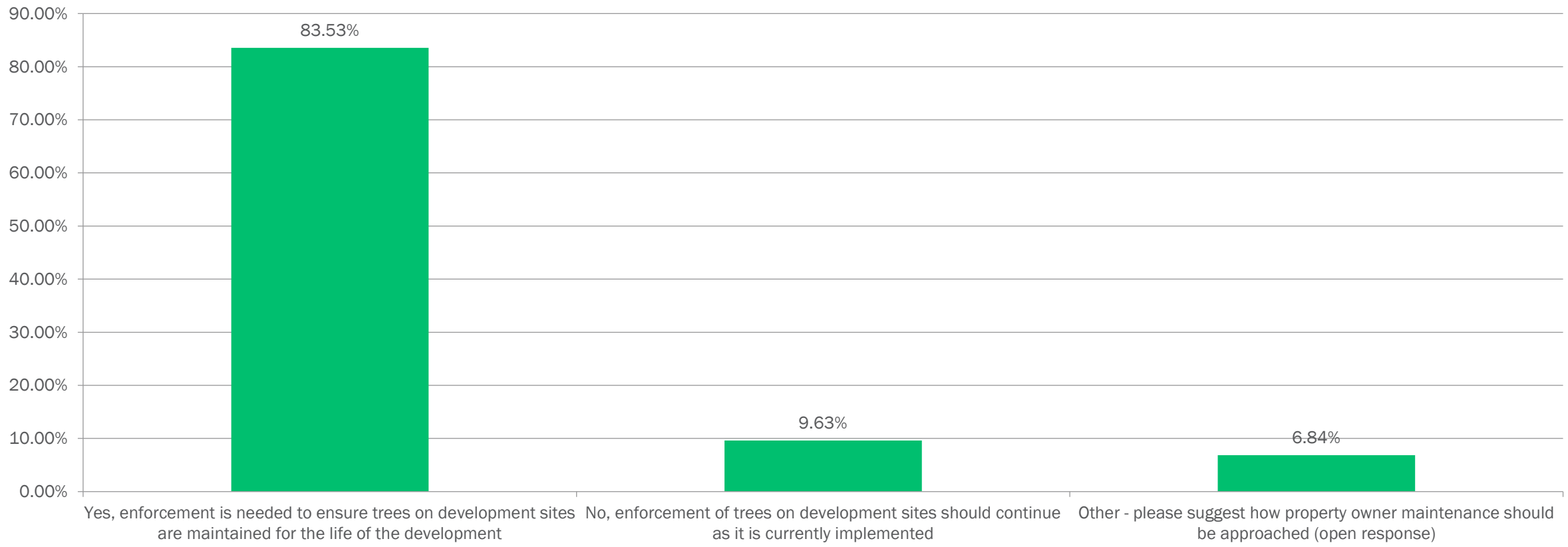
Q7: WOULD YOU SUPPORT MINIMUM TREE CANOPY (SHADE) REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STREETS, PARKING LOTS AND PROPERTY EDGES? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY) *ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN WITH QUESTION - SEE LAST PAGE*

RESPONSES 2133 – SKIPPED 28



Q8: SHOULD PRIVATE TREE MAINTENANCE FOCUSING ON THE REPLACEMENT OF DEAD OR DYING TREES ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BE ENFORCED BY THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER? (PICK ONLY ONE) *ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION GIVEN WITH QUESTION - SEE LAST PAGE*

RESPONSES 2119 – SKIPPED 42



Q10: IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH US ABOUT THE URBAN FOREST IN DENVER?

REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES

“Denver needs to preserve and grow its urban forest, but not at the expense of affordability. A balance must be struck between mandating planting trees and new development, particularly low income housing, upzoned development, infill development, and densification. Both are essential to a healthy, vibrant, and enjoyable urban fabric.”

“Do more to educate about types of trees we have and also allergy-attuned planting. Also, help us get rid of the terrible tree of wisdom trees — how do we eradicate them safely?”

“I support this but not I will not vote for tax increase to pay for additional services”

“In general, large trees should be preserved. However, there are also instances in which areas are overplanted and some trees must be removed because they are competing with others, suffering from disease, and encroaching on important structures. There needs to be some discretion.”

“In regards to questions 1 and 2, I think some level of protection should exist. If a lot is being upzoned, I think there should/could be exemptions to the protection (or a requirement to replant/plant elsewhere). If the density of the lot is remaining the same, particularly on single family lots, there should be strong protections for trees.”

“I’m glad to see that this issue is getting attention. In my neighborhood, we are overrun with scrapes for new development. It is heart wrenching to watch mature trees destroyed for new construction. We need more outreach to plant trees in the right of way area/hell strip. I also think the city needs a more pro-active approach in caring for these trees.”

“Put together a targeted campaign to neighborhoods through their council offices.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Support of private tree protection is strong with a couple of details to take note of:
 - a. Over 85% of all respondents support private tree protection for trees over 18” in diameter.
 - b. Income level and support for private tree protection is inversely proportional; the more affluent someone is, the less likely they are to support private tree protection.
2. There are differences between renters (17.49% or 378 responses) and owners (75.8% or 1638 responses) including that renters are more supportive of the city taking over tree maintenance and for minimum shade requirements. The biggest differences in renter support falls in two areas:
 - a. Support of the city to help with watering (51% of renter and 43% owner support), and
 - b. Support of a fee (75% renter and 62% owner support).
3. There is overall support for a fee to help maintain street trees, which is highest at the \$50-75k income bracket (75%) and is lower for the highest and lowest income brackets (\$150k+ at 67.05% support and <\$25k at 66.67% support). It is important to point out that generally support is relatively high across all demographics. Additional details include:
 - a. Emergency pruning and removal is the most supported aspect of street tree maintenance for the city to consider taking over.
 - b. Rotational pruning was second and support dropped slightly if a fee was required (70.38% to 65.44% support)
4. There is a difference in the perceived cost to water trees between white and nonwhite responses; however, cost as an obstacle to water trees averaged 4.82% across all responses.
5. Respondents strongly support increased tree maintenance enforcement (85.53%).

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE #2

- August 12, 2023 at Lincoln Tech Campus
- Attendance at the Montbello Wellness Fair and Backpack Giveaway hosted by Montbello 20/20
- Approximately 300 community members stopped by the booth to participate in the kid's activity or the "dot voting" activity



Main takeaways:

- Support of minimum shade requirements for public streets and parking lots
- Support of more space allocated from front building setbacks or on-street parking to plant more trees
- Hazard pruning or watering would be most beneficial for the city to provide
- Support of a nominal fee or tax if it remains under a certain threshold
- Belief that trees on private property of a certain size or age should be protected and property owners should obtain a permit to remove any tree (with special mitigation for protected trees).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (PROVIDED WITH SURVEY QUESTIONS)

- Q1: Should all healthy mature trees (over 12 inches in diameter) located on private property require preservation during development or redevelopment? (pick only one)Background Information: Private trees make up an estimated 85% of all trees in the city (this includes trees on commercial, multi-family, mix-use and single-family residential properties). Currently, only public trees and some trees in setbacks are preserved through the municipal code. Tree preservation means designing the proposed project in a way that avoids significant damage to the root system and canopy and ideally avoids all damage to the tree.
- Q3: Should all healthy mature trees (over 12 inches in diameter) located on private property require preservation during development or redevelopment? (pick only one)Background Information: Private trees make up an estimated 85% of all trees in the city (this includes trees on commercial, multi-family, mix-use and single-family residential properties). Currently, only public trees and some trees in setbacks are preserved through the municipal code. Tree preservation means designing the proposed project in a way that avoids significant damage to the root system and canopy and ideally avoids all damage to the tree.
- Q4: In the last survey, Denver residents expressed an interest in the City and County of Denver sharing some responsibility for tree care and maintenance of public street trees. What responsibilities are MOST important for the city to be responsible for? (select all that apply)Background Information: The existing municipal code requires adjacent property owners to maintain street trees including pruning, watering and addressing emergencies.
 - Emergencies: Currently, if the Office of the City Forester must remove or prune a dangerous tree in an emergency scenario, the adjacent property owner is charged for the removal. The property owner may choose to hire and pay a Licensed Arborist to complete the work rather than the city completing the work.
 - Rotational Pruning: Rotational pruning is recognized in the urban forestry industry as one of the best ongoing maintenance practices, reducing storm damage and emergency response and resulting in a healthier forest.
 - Tree Watering: Even drought-tolerant trees need some supplemental water, especially during their first few years of establishment.
- Q5: Would you support the Office of the City Forester developing a rotational street tree pruning program for all street trees, even if the only way to fund the program was through a property-related tax or fee? (pick only one)Background Information: Rotational pruning is recognized in the urban forestry industry as one of the best ongoing maintenance practices, reducing storm damage and emergency response and resulting in a healthier forest. Currently, adjacent property owners are responsible for street tree pruning.
- Q6: Regarding street tree watering, what prevents you from regularly watering the trees adjacent to your property? (select all that apply)Background Information: One of the biggest obstacles to growing the urban forest is the lack of watering new street trees. It costs less than \$11 per year to water a large tree and even less to water a newly planted tree in Denver. It is crucial to water newly planted trees until they establish a strong root system and older trees to maintain their health.
- Q7: Would you support minimum tree canopy (shade) requirements for all public and private streets, parking lots and property edges? (select all that apply)Background Information: Existing tree planting requirements could be strengthened to require specific areas such as streets, parking lots and property edges to meet higher minimum planting requirements than currently mandated. Currently, there is no specific canopy or shade requirement for new developments or redevelopment.
- Q8: Should private tree maintenance focusing on the replacement of dead or dying trees on development projects be enforced by the City and County of Denver? (pick only one)Background Information: In the last survey, Denver residents believed that developers need to do more to maintain trees on and adjacent to their properties. Many trees die and are never replaced. The current regulations require plant material to be continuously maintained. Current enforcement procedures and staffing levels are not in place to follow up on maintenance requirements.