Youth Engagement Strategy

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Youth Engagement Strategist
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Background

- This summer, the Municipality of South Huron received a grant from the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) to hire a Youth Engagement Strategist to conduct a youth engagement strategy to:
    1) Identify gaps to make South Huron a more youth friendly community to attract and retain youth
    2) Build civic engagement among youth to ensure they feel their voice in being heard
    3) Highlight young people working in the municipal sector to get more youth interested in working in the municipal sector.
- Youth is defined as between the ages of 15 to 29
- South Huron is one of 10 communities across the province taking on this project.

About the Project

- We named it “Thrive South Huron” as we want to make South Huron a place where youth feel they can thrive here. Everything they need is right here in the municipality and they should not feel they need to go into “the city” to have their needs met.
- Social media was a key part of this project (we launched a municipal Instagram account)

Thrive
South Huron
Youth Engagement Initiative

Community Engagement Methods

Met with 8 community groups

Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram @SouthHuron #SouthHuronYouth)

Media Coverage

Survey

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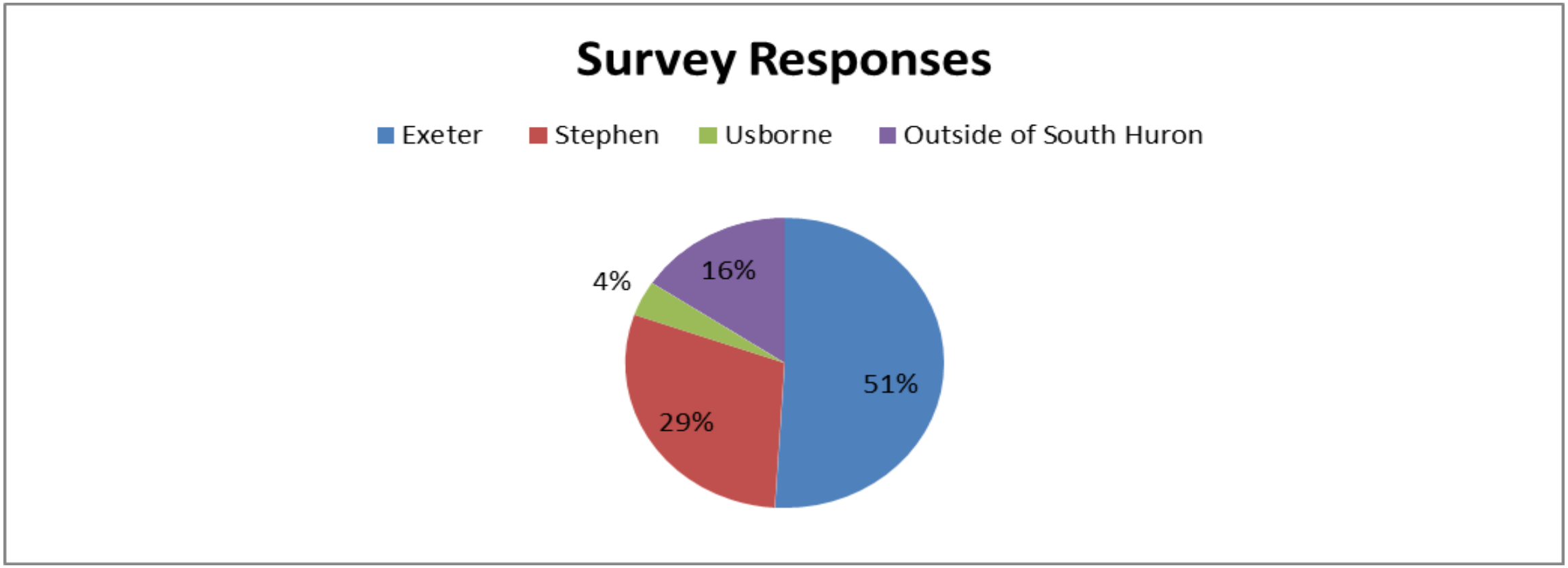
Community groups

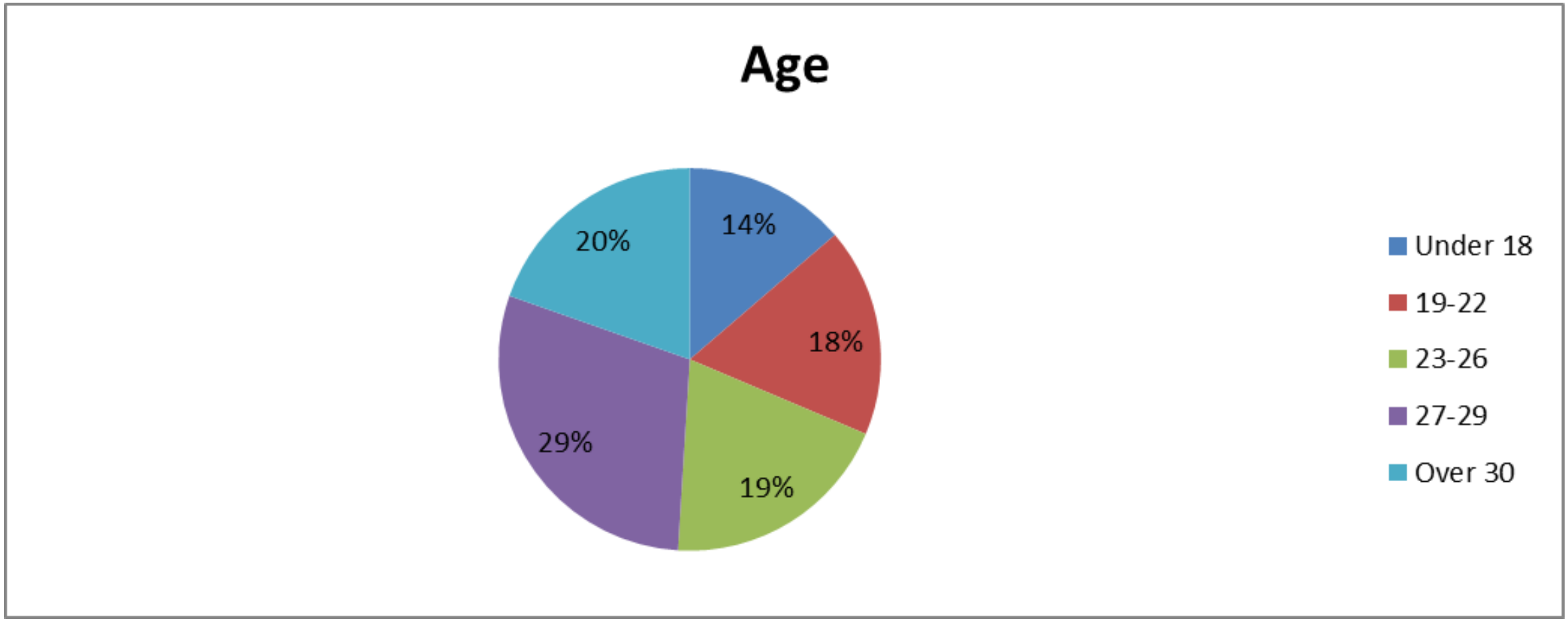
- These meetings were to find out what gaps youth feel are in the community. Along with letting them know about the project we discussed ways they could help spread the word about the project.
- The main gaps identified from face-to-face meetings:
  - Housing
  - Job opportunities (especially for beginners)
  - Activities geared towards older youth
  - Professional networking opportunities
  - Recreation
  - Activities (movie theatre, bowling alley, mall)
  - More restaurants
  - Youth council

Survey

- Our Survey was available June 7th until July 14th at SouthHuron.ca
- **While the survey focused on the youth perspective, it was open to everyone.**
- 51 people took part in the survey

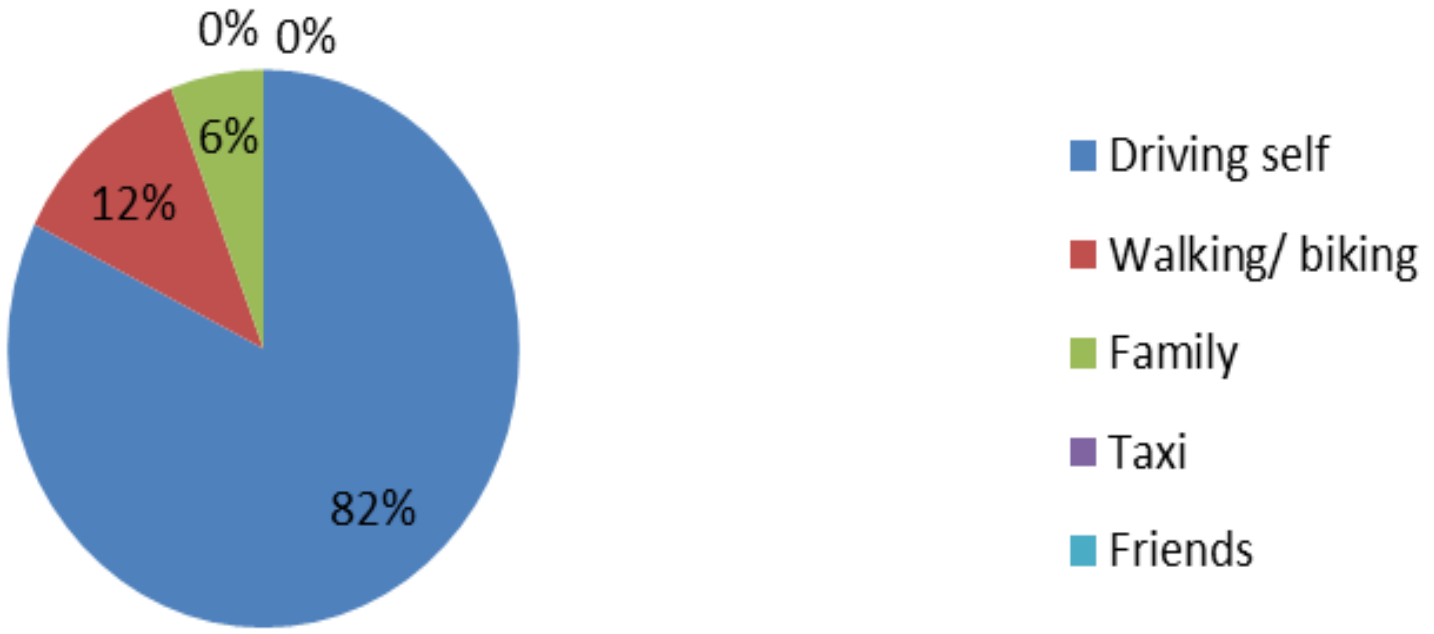


*Those from outside of South Huron still had a current or previous connection to the community (i.e., former residents)

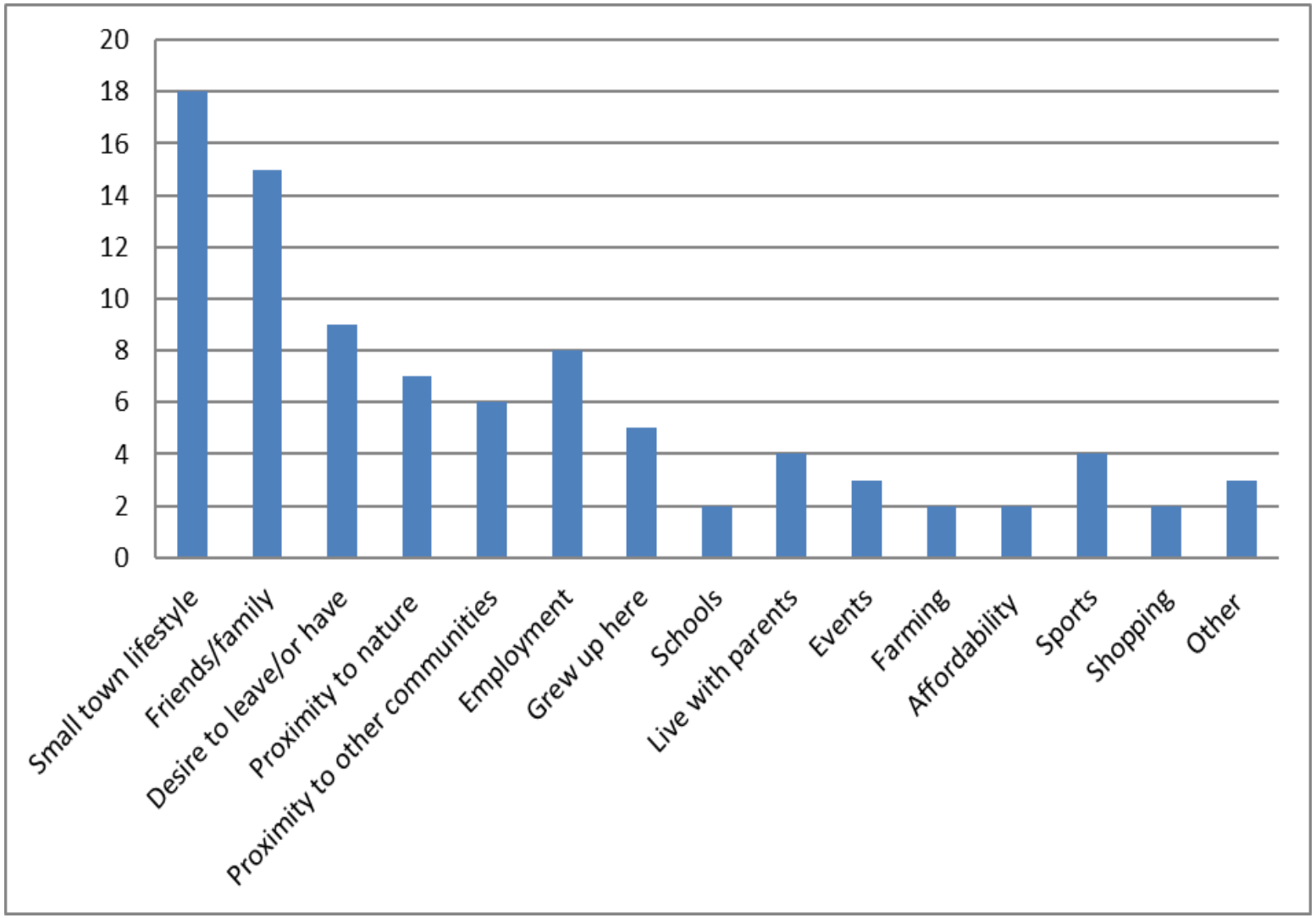


*Those over the age of 30 had the same answers as those in our target age range

Primary Mode of Transportation



What makes you want to live in South Huron?



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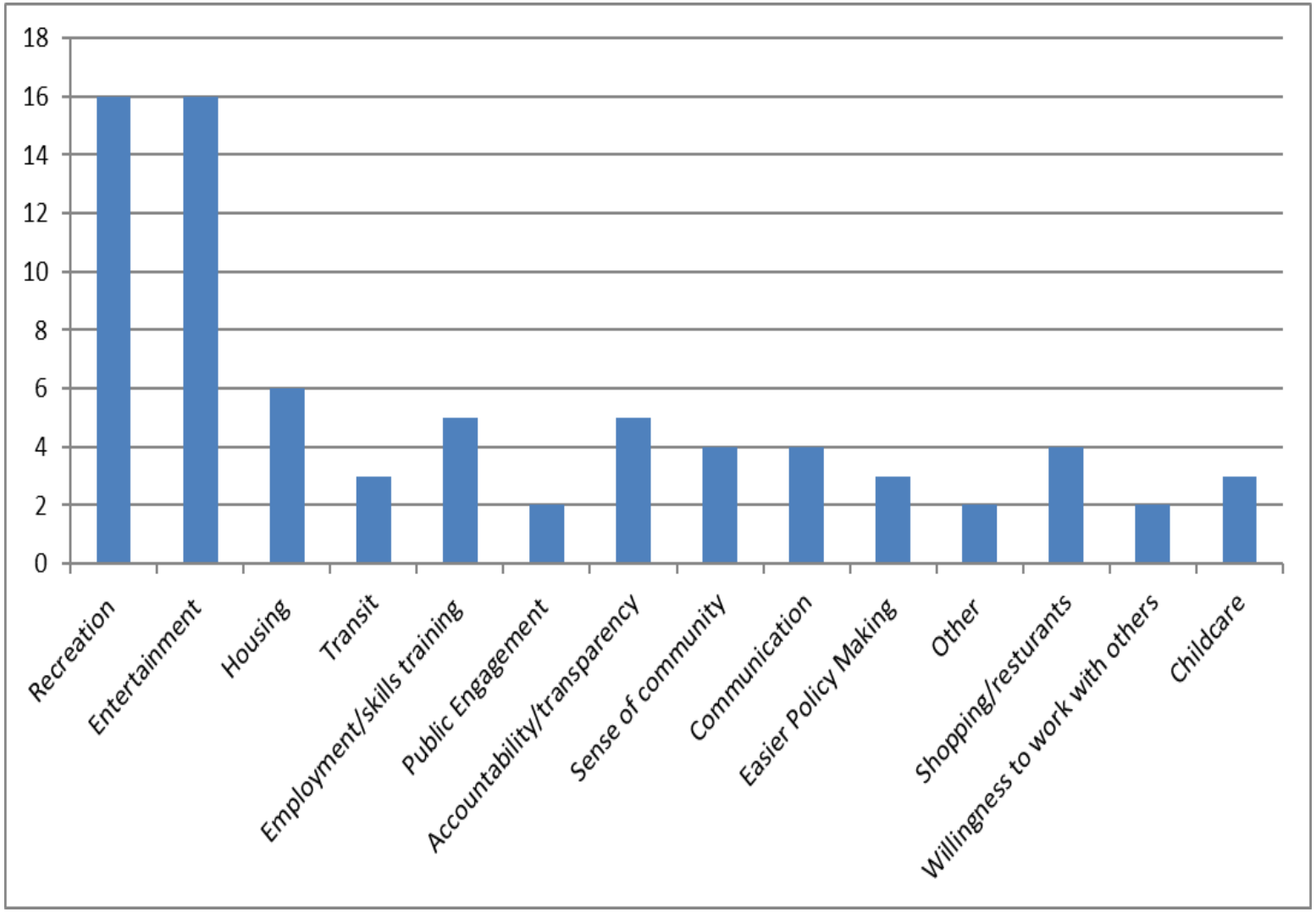
What's missing in South Huron and how would you fill the gap(s)?



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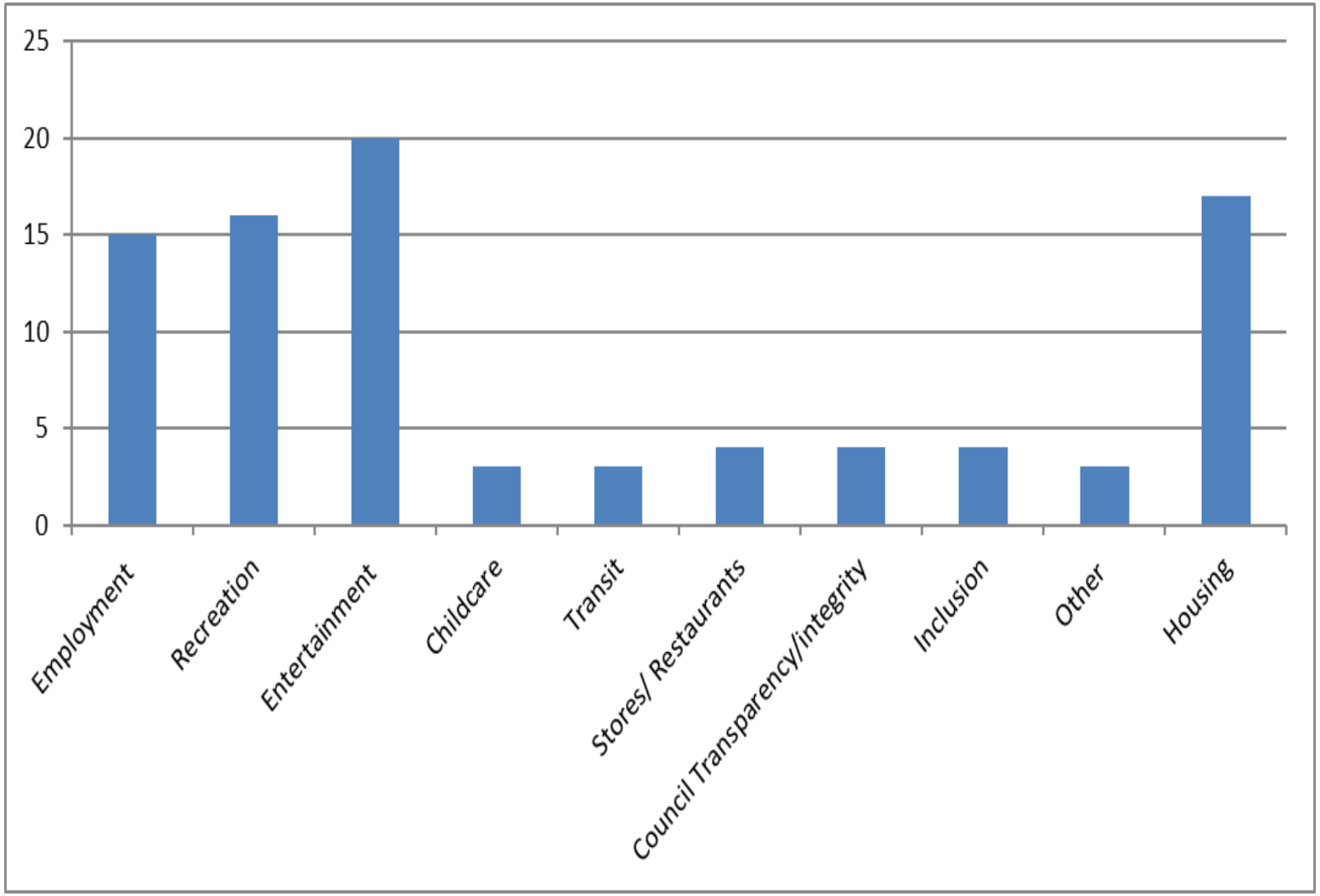
What does South Huron need to attract or retain young people to live here?



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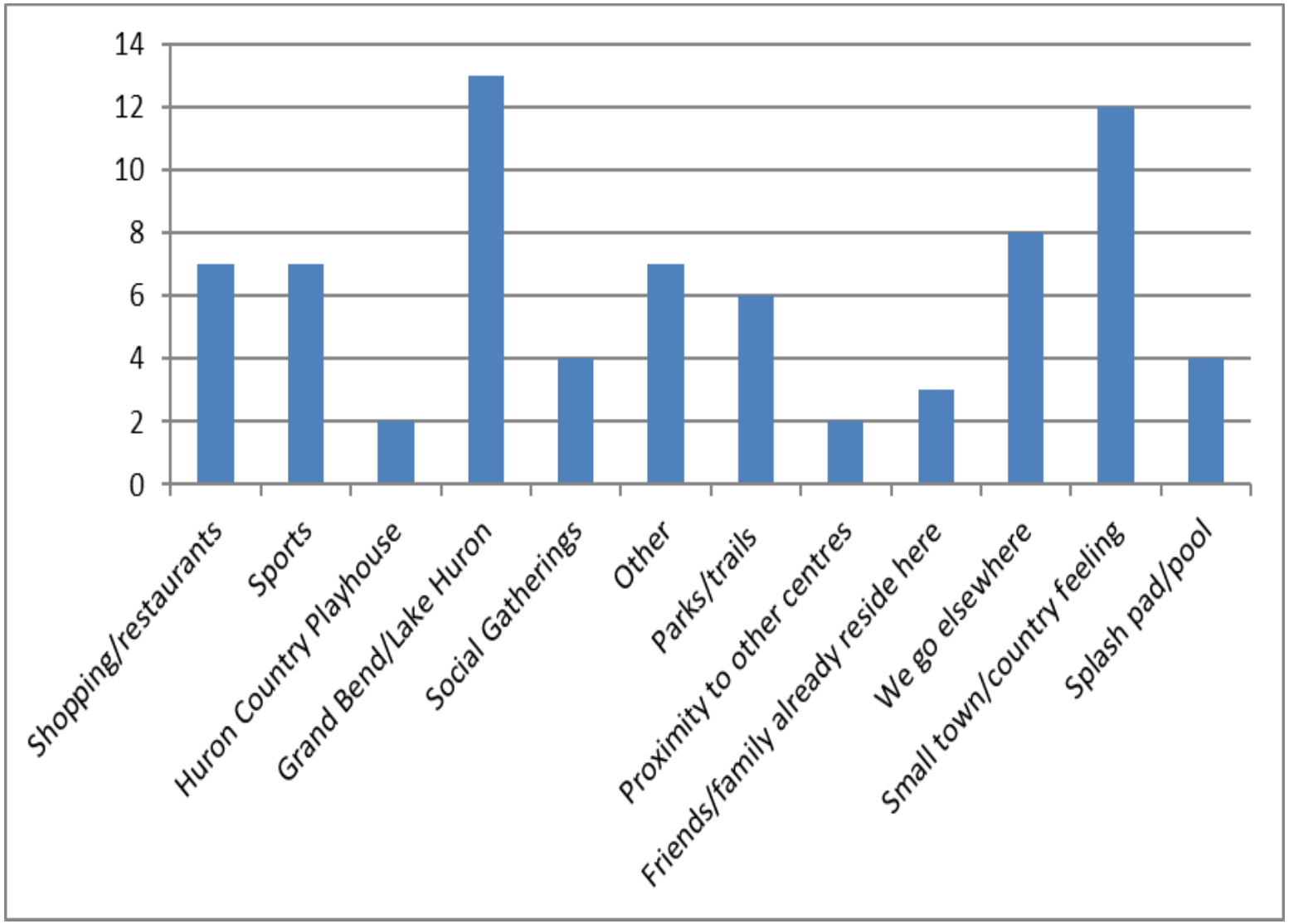
What about South Huron makes you want to invite friends or family to visit?



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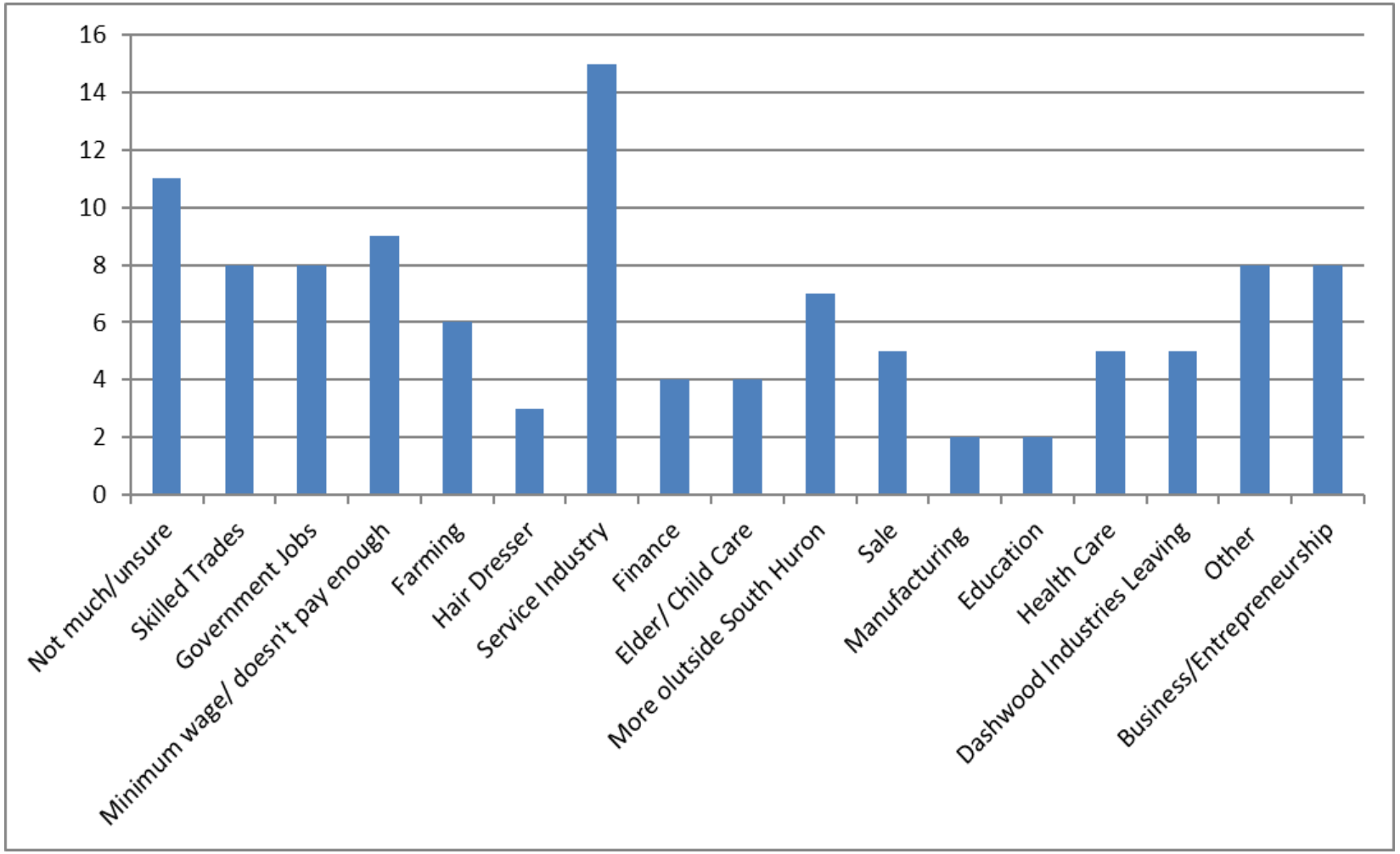
Do you agree/disagree the following are barriers to inclusion in South Huron?

Barriers to inclusion	Agree	Disagree
Public Transit	58%	31%
High Speed Internet	35%	41%
Housing	56%	19%
Awareness of services or resources available	56%	21%
Personal development opportunities	50%	23%
Training opportunities (professional development, post-secondary etc.)	50%	23%
Recreational opportunities	80%	13%

What career opportunities do you see in South Huron?



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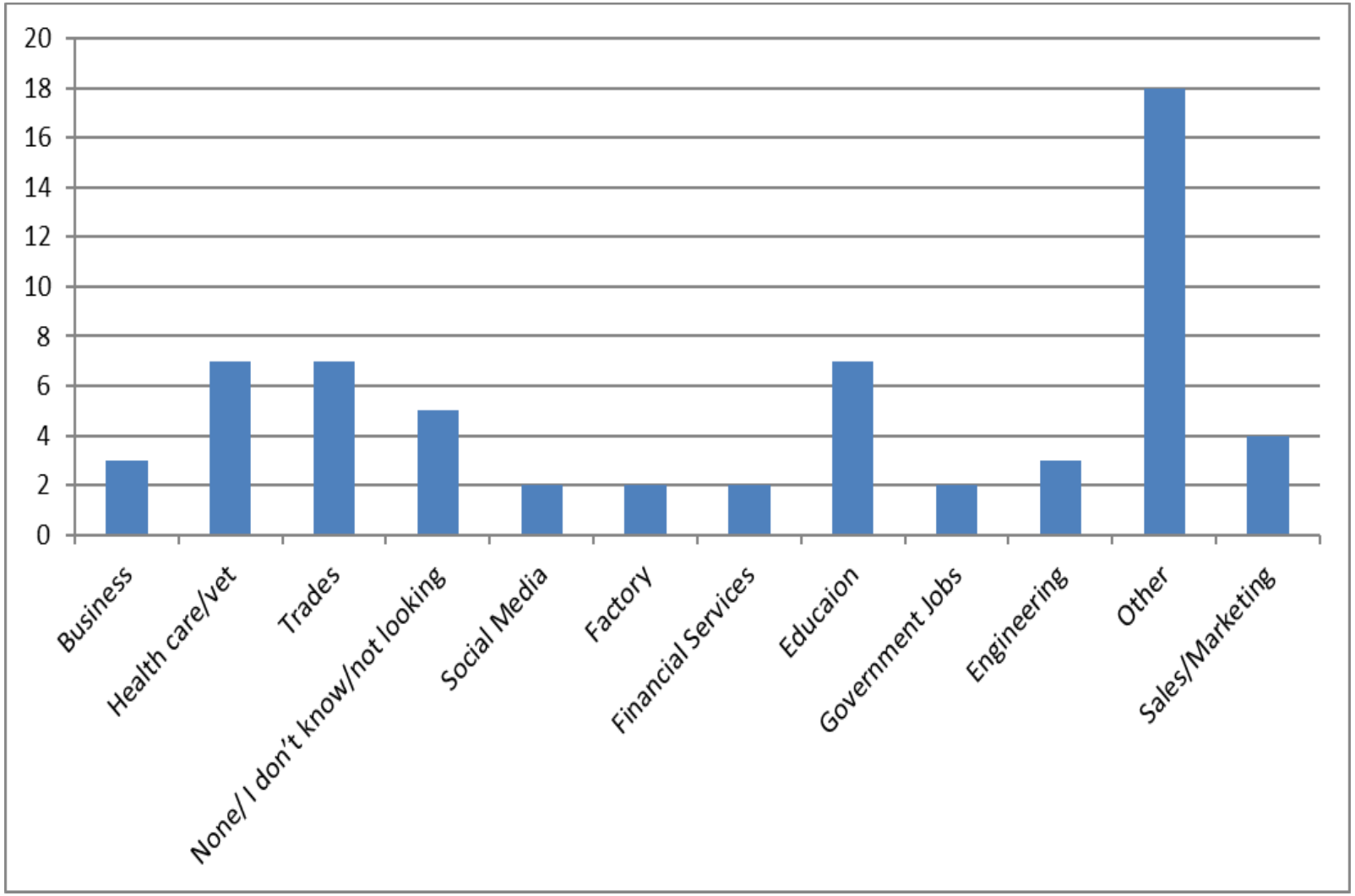
What kind of job are you training for/ interested in?



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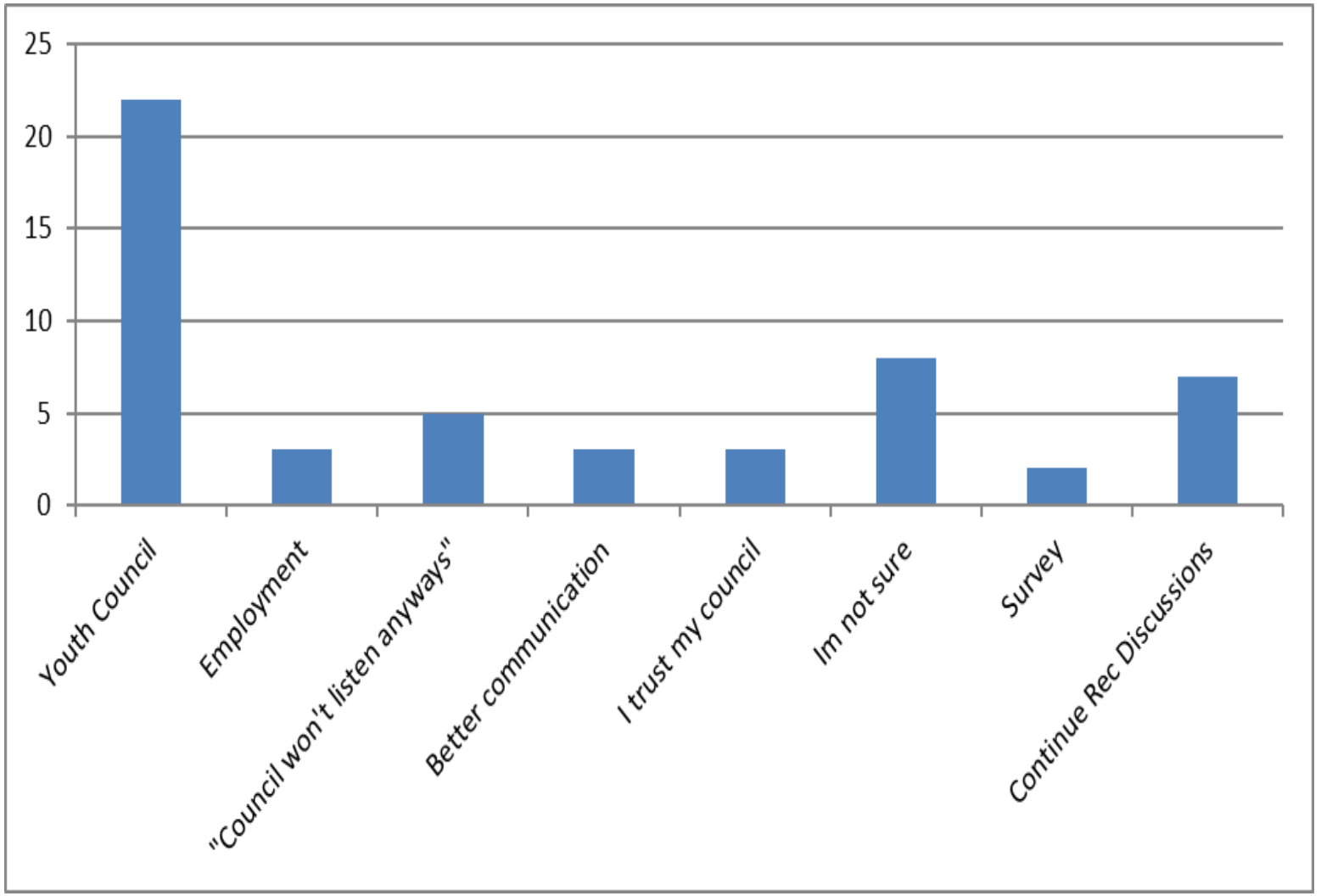
What do you propose to ensure that the youth perspective is represented in municipal decisions?



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Do you have any other feedback that you would like to share?

A “word cloud” highlights words that were used the most often in responses

Youth
Council
Need
More
Pool
Go
Community
Down
Gets
Exeter
Huron
Strategy
Listen
See
Survey
Vision
Much
Make
Public
Want
Group
South
Shut
Indoor
Rec
New
Being
Support
Age
People
Think
Take
Plan
Meeting
Thank
Look
Present
Share
Ymca
Shop
Lot
Uses
Hire
Very
Area
Real
Swim
Half
Give
Idea
Voice
Up
Work
Try
Call
Engage
Success
Home
Children
Keep
Municipality
Staff
Fundraising
Committee
Ask
Further
Safety
Complete
Rally
Happen
Confident
Again
Left
Build
School
Based
Instead
Owner
Outdoor
Culture
Last
Teamwork
Manage
Ele
Auditor
Attempt
Employed
Uncomfortable
Centralia
Inclusive
Stay
Now
Past
Time
Red
Tape
Effect
Next
Food
Self
Seniors
Less
Nothing
Paved
Update
Can
Month
Dollars
Biased
Pulling
Fall
Clerk
Point
Well
Back
Government
Impressed
Facebook
Without
Mindset
Align
Forward
Answer
Offer
Years
Else's
Hop
Cost
East
Hotel
Already
Letter
Operate
Gear
Business
Arena
Interest
Random
Here
Done
Opinion
Capital
Place
Adults
Don
Follow
Website
Saving
House
Afford
Reports
Team
Win
Fit
Tax
Act
Feedback
Money
Encourage
Town
Feel
Heard
Involve
Program
Leave
Centre
Decide
Decision
Budget
Recreation
Information
Hope
Over
One
Another
Info
Side
Focus
Small
Sit
Study
Sentence
Attended
Resources
Officers
Led
Out
Vs
Speak
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Perspective
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Call
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Play
Fire
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Real
Swim
Half
Give
Idea
Voice
Up
Whole
Food
Self
Less
Next
Time
Red
Tape
Past
Effect
Dollars
Biased
Pulling

Other towns doing youth engagement

- Hanover- Launch Pad Youth Activity & Technology Centre.
- Ingersoll - Fusion Youth Centre
- Town of Aurora- Youth Engagement Committee
- Town of Goderich – Engage Goderich and a previous Youth Council
- Grey County- Young Professional Mixers
- Perth4Youth, Prosper In Perth (Perth County)

Recommendations

- Enact a Youth Council
- Youth Volunteer of the year award (some sort of recognition)
- Explore entertainment opportunities
- Explore more recreation opportunities
- Improve communications
- More public engagement
- Carry on youth engagement
- Employment campaign