




Resident Survey for Charter Review Commission Findings



Data Collected October 27th to
December 8th, 2023



Resident Survey Background/Process

Developed by subgroup of CRC (Sarah O'Brien, Dan O'Mahony, Cynthia Rosengard, & Magnus Thorsson)

Nine quantitative (multiple choice) questions and three qualitative (open ended) questions

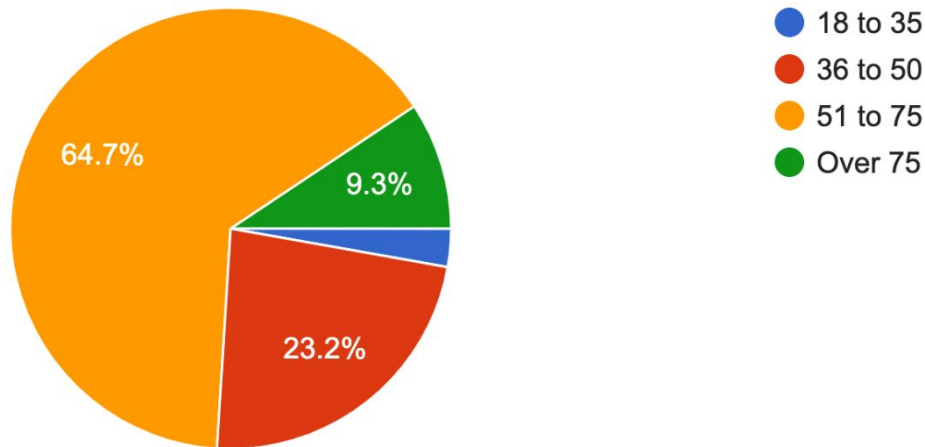
Data collection between October 27 and December 8, 2023

All qualitative data were double-coded by DO and CR

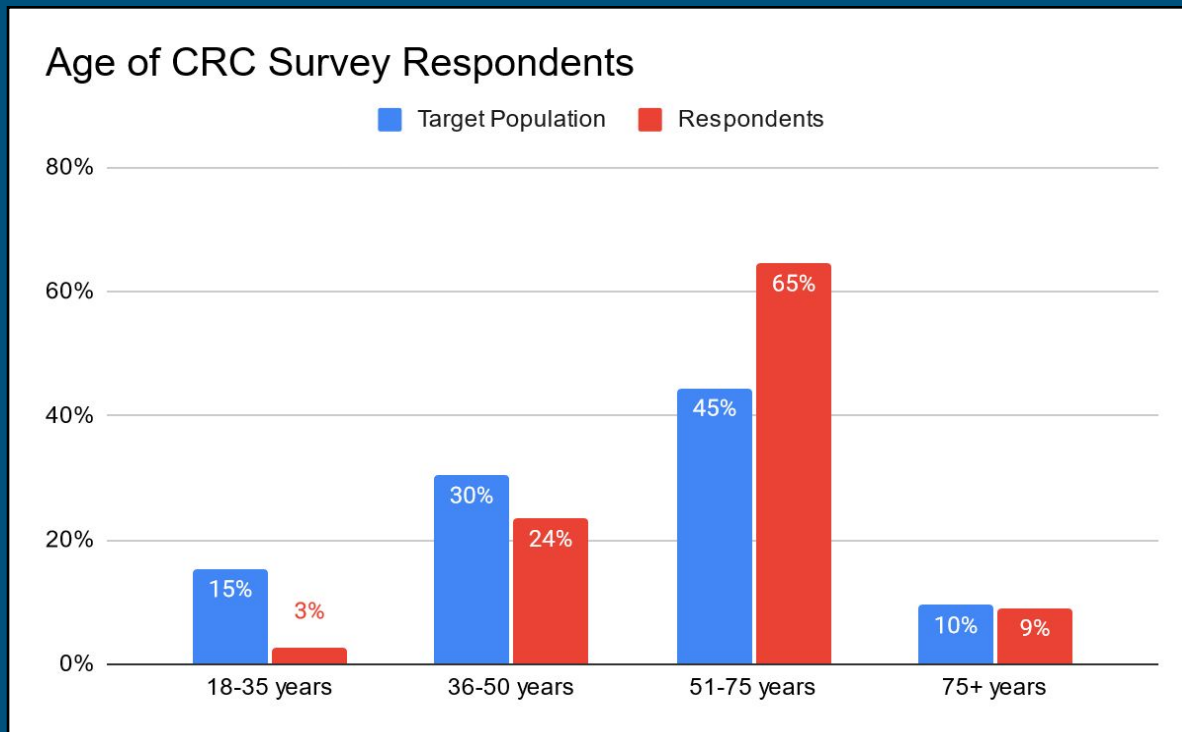
Who Completed the Survey? (age)

What age group do you fit into?

535 responses



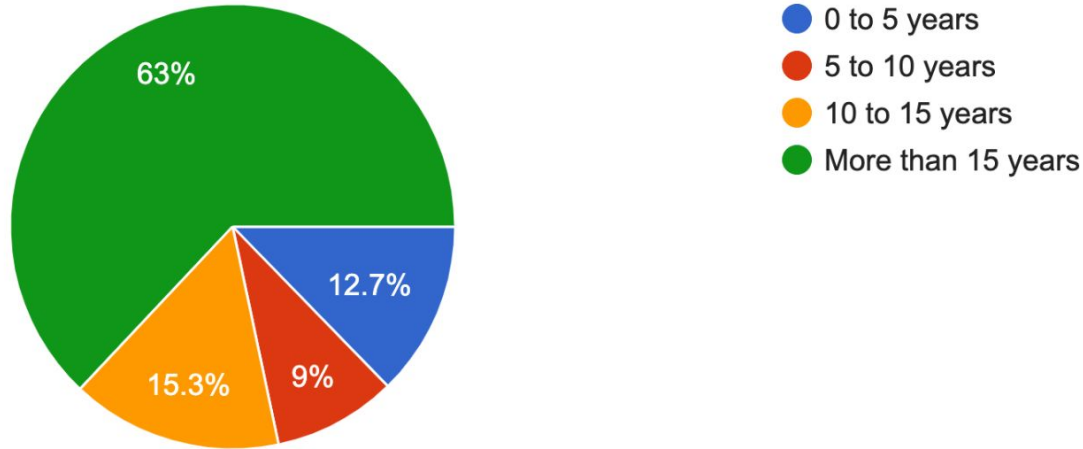
Comparisons Between Respondents & Population



Who Completed the Survey? (residency length)

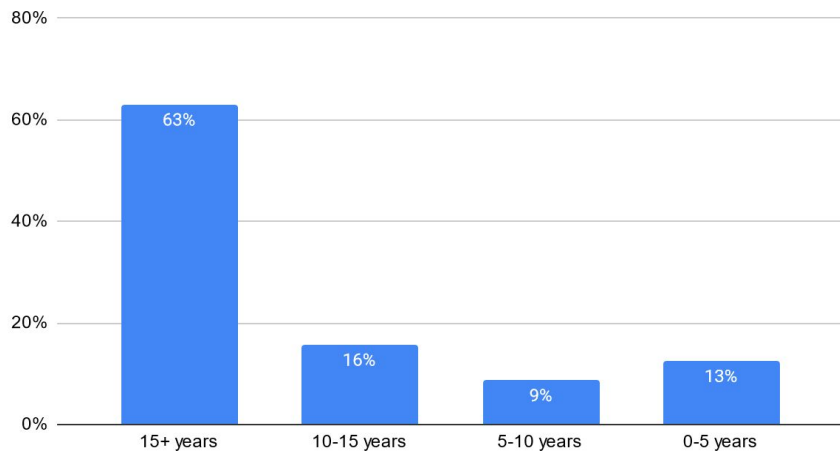
How long have you lived in Barrington?

535 responses

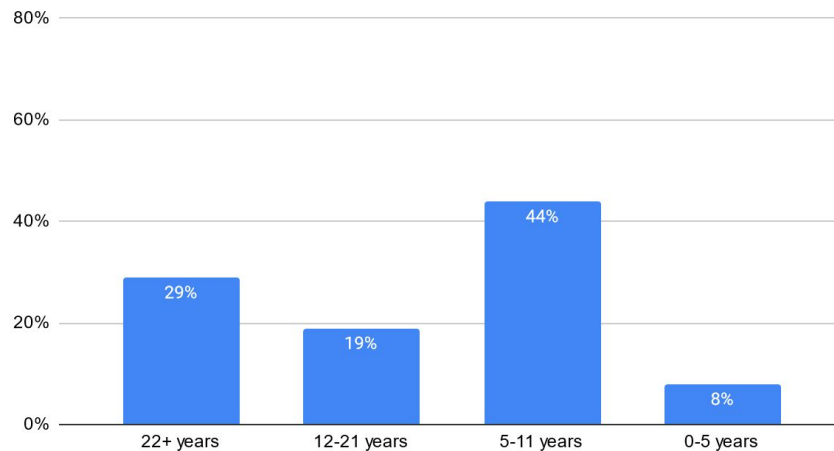


Comparisons Between Respondents & Population

Years Lived in Barrington: Respondents



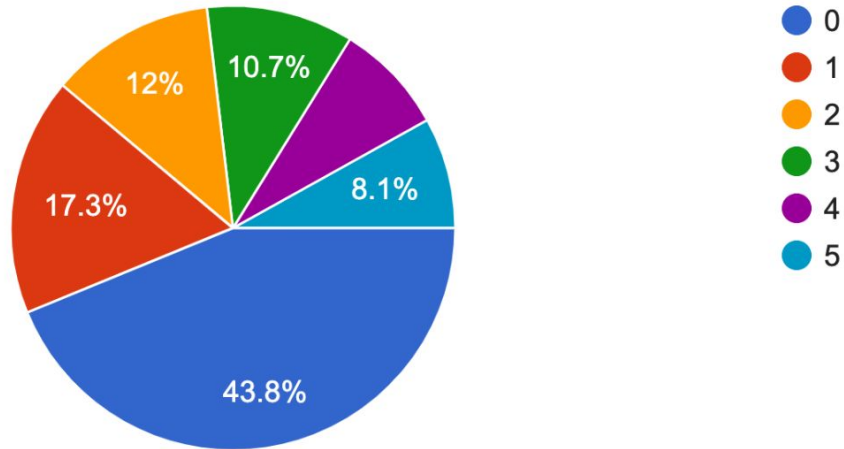
Years Lived in Barrington: Target Population



What are Residents' Experiences with FTM?

In the past five years, how many Financial Town Meetings did you attend?

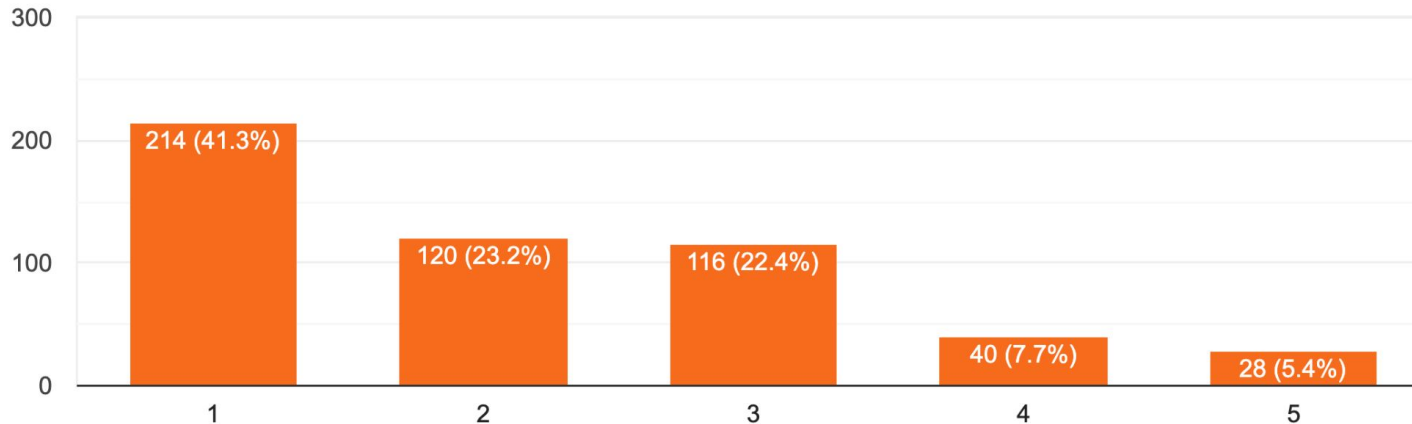
532 responses



How Satisfied are Residents with FTM?

Please rate your level of satisfaction with the current Financial Town Meeting (FTM) process for approving the Town Budget.

518 responses



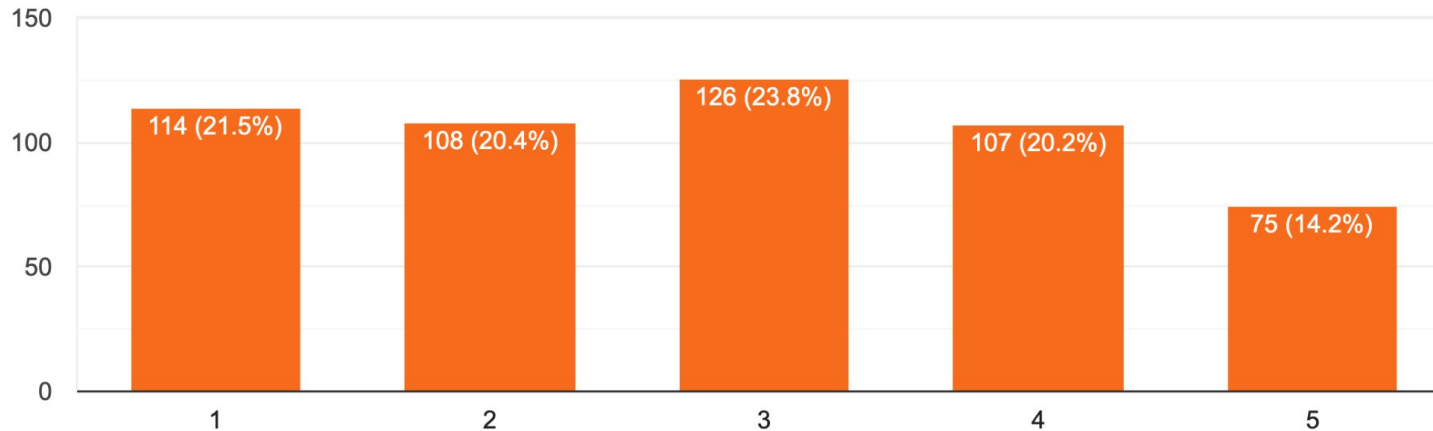
1 = Not at all
satisfied

5 = Completely
satisfied

How Informed do Residents Feel About FTM?

How informed do you feel about the purpose and procedures of the Financial Town Meeting (FTM)?

530 responses

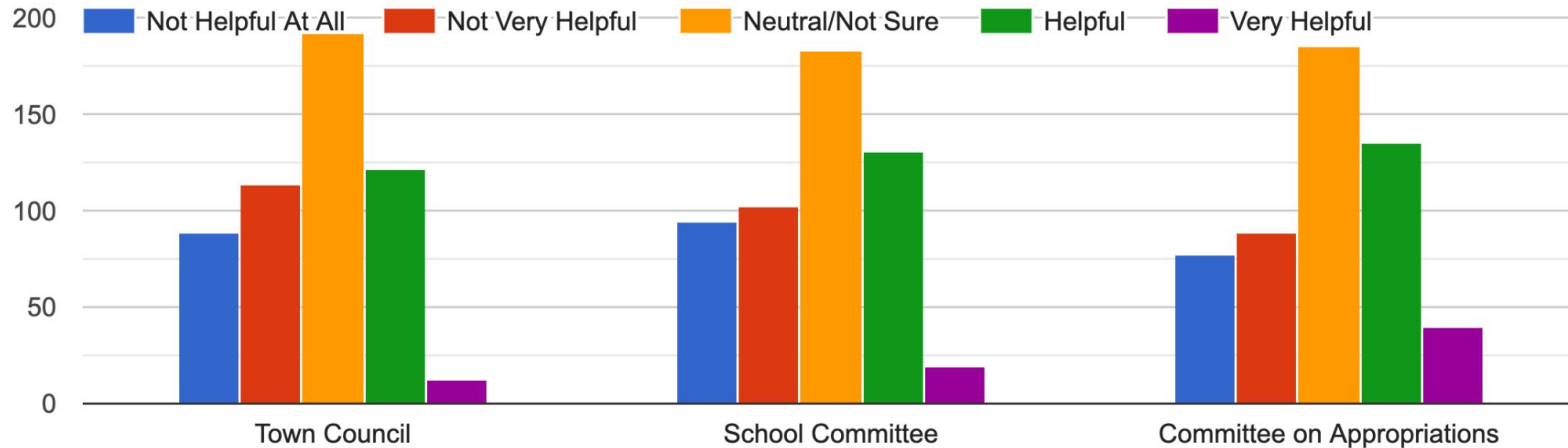


1 = Not at
all informed

5 =
Completely
informed

How Helpful Do Residents Find Sources of Information About the Budget Process?

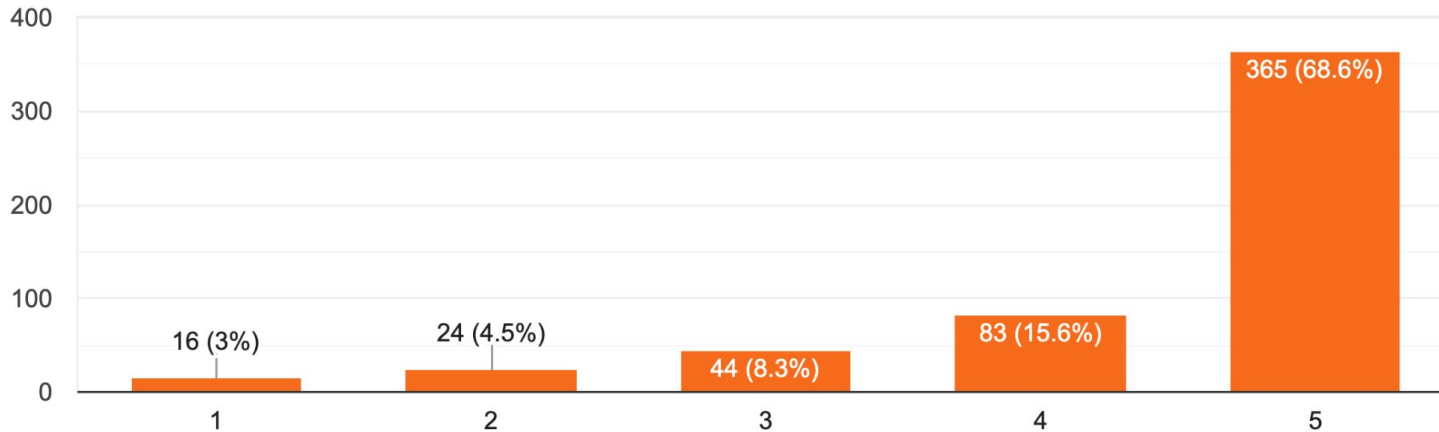
In a typical year, how helpful do you find the information from the following sources about the annual budget:



Importance of Residents Voting to Approve Budget

How important is it to you that residents vote to approve the budget?

532 responses



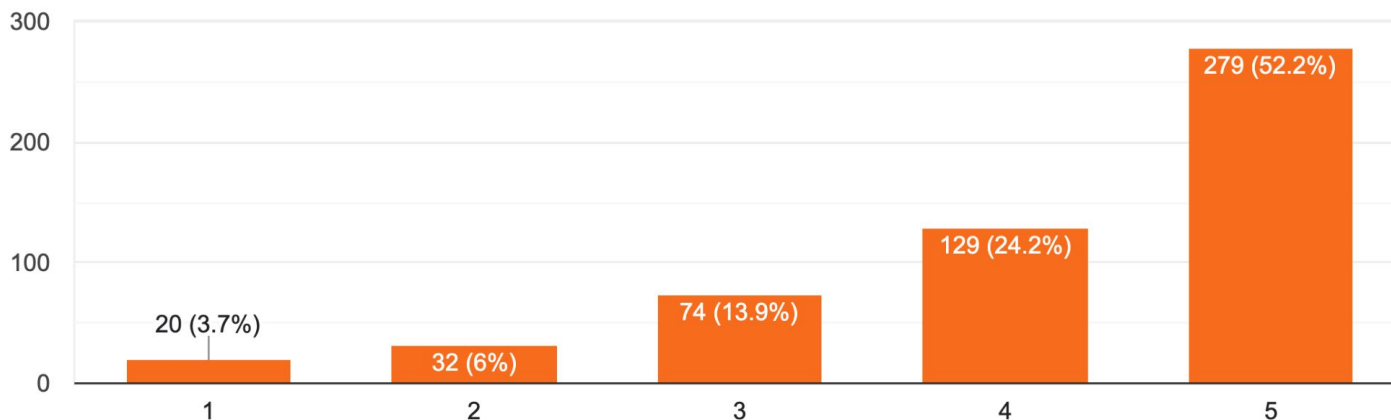
1 = Not at
all
important

5 =
Extremely
important

Importance of Residents Making Changes to Budget Before Approval

How important is it to you that residents be able to propose changes to the budget before it is approved?

534 responses



1 = Not at all important

5 = Extremely important

What are the best features of the budget review and FTM?

- Residents are able to provide input
- Residents are able to vote on the budget
- Residents get transparent information
- Community interactions (hearing from others)

Sample Qualitative Responses

Importance of Resident Input and Voting

“The best feature is the residents get a say in it and an opportunity to vote.”

“Being able to speak and comment on issues.”

“The concept of town residents approving the budget is good.”

“...people have the opportunity to vote at the meeting and have their voice heard by voting.”

Importance of Transparent Information and Community

“Keeping the citizens/taxpayers informed.”

“The depth to which the budget is discussed is helpful.”

“The documentation provided is very thorough.”

“The community coming together socially.”

“The public comment period is useful and informative.”

What aspects of the budget review and FTM should be changed/improved?

- Current FTM format limits participation
- Voting should take place at different time with different format
- Virtual participation ought to be available (tuning in, providing input, and voting)
- Openness to changing the format of budget review and approval

Sample Qualitative Responses

Limits Participation and Vote At Another Time

“Very few people can/are willing to participate in person.”

“FTM does not work well since so few residents attend.”

“Change budget approval to a formal voting process.”

“We need a full day of voting or another way besides in person at the FTM.”

Virtual Participation and Change in Format

“It would be nice to have an on-line option when I cannot attend in person.”

“It should be virtual and allow anonymous drop-off or on-line voting.”

“Elected officials should approve the budget.”

“No more FTM, we should let elected officials run the budgetary plans.”

“COA positions should not be voted on at lightly-attended FTM.”

What other aspects of the Charter would you like to see changed?

- Senior Tax Relief
- School Committee Non-Partisan
- Voting for Budget in an Election
- Shift to elected Town Manager or Mayor
- Recall Process for Elected Officials
- Term Limits for Elected Officials
- Flag Restrictions
- Town Manager Oversees School Department
- Sidewalks