

# Downtown Eatonton General Public Survey Results

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END OF 2020

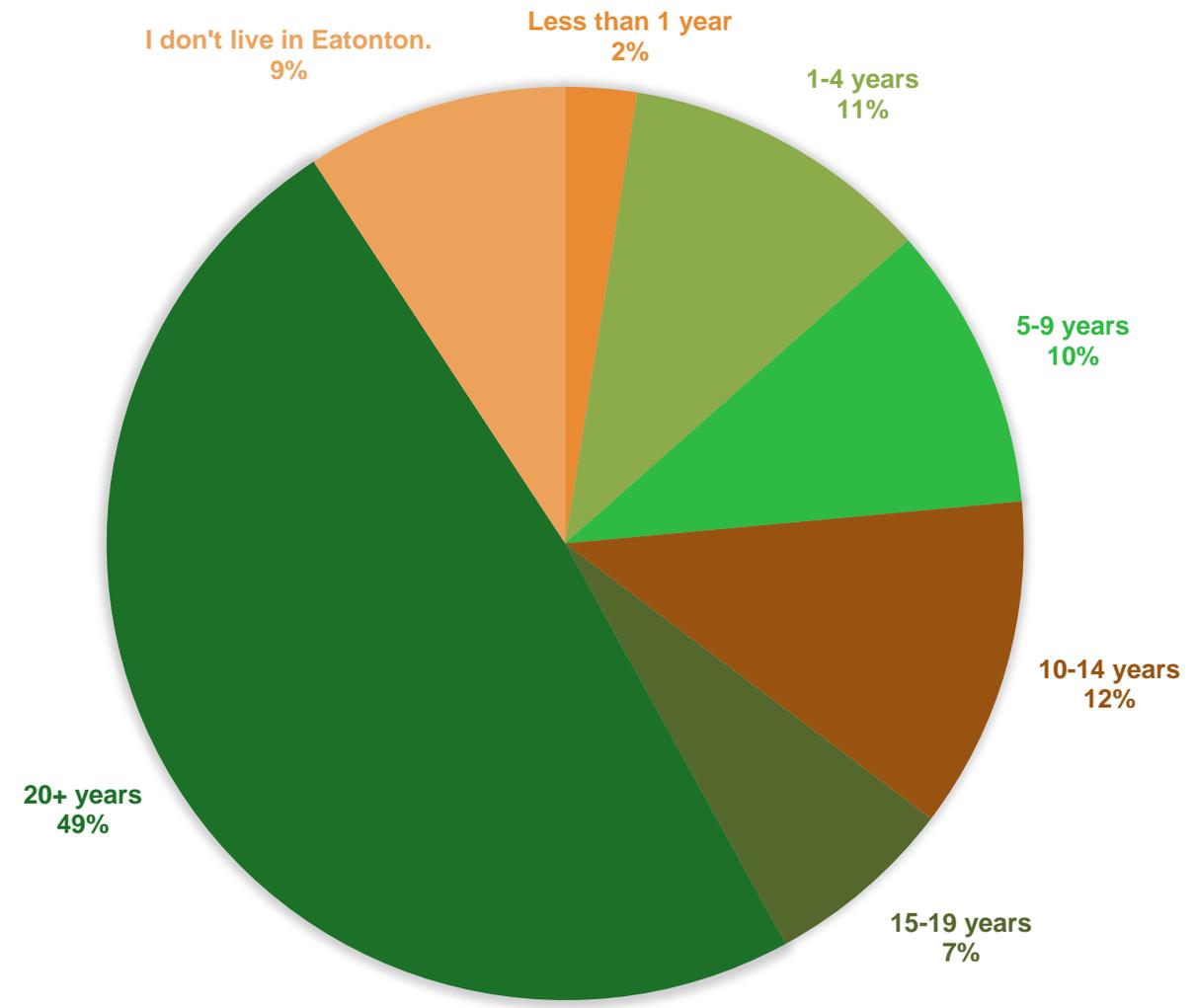


# Survey Background

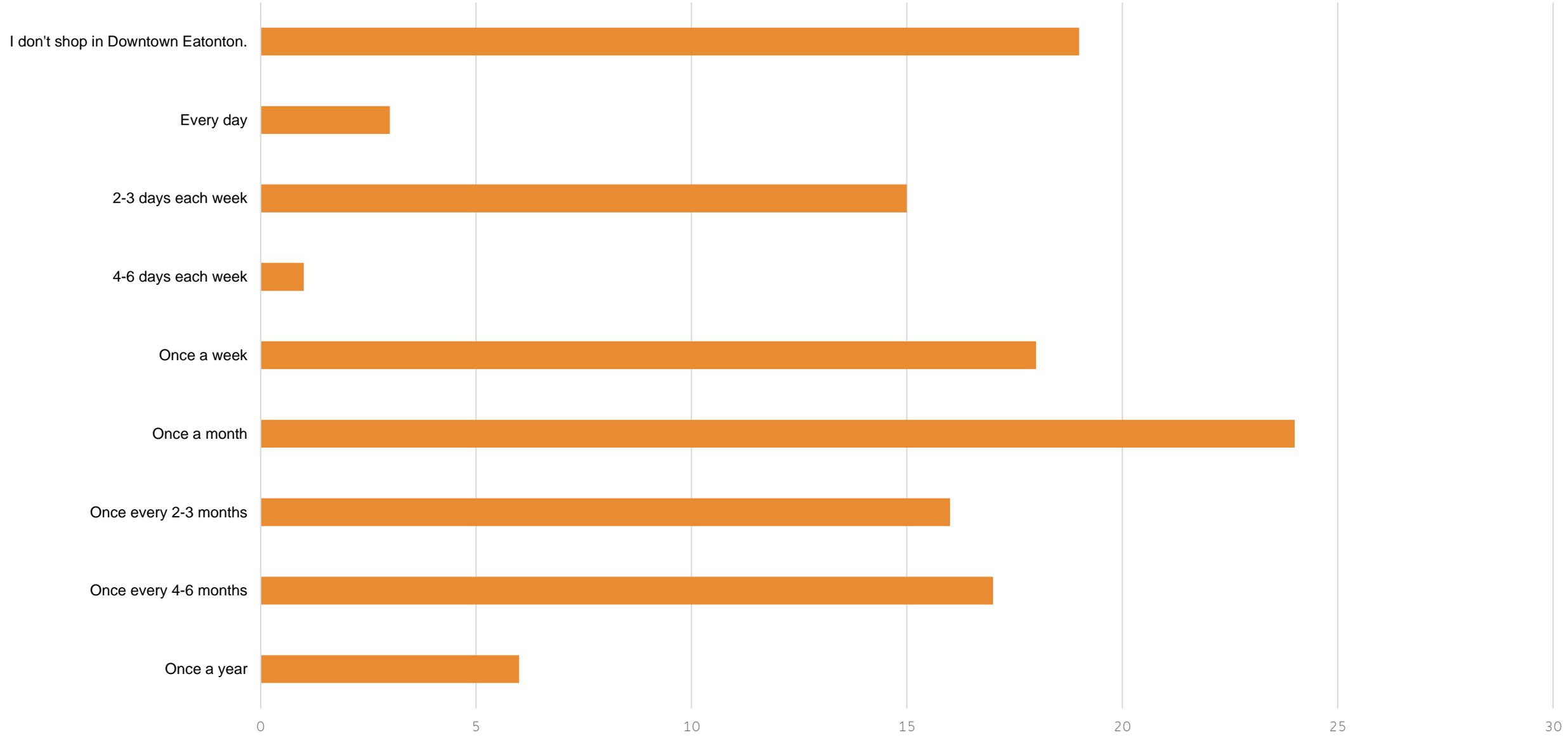
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- The survey questions were created by Eatonton Main Street.
- The survey responses will assist the Eatonton Main Street Advisory Board in setting their priorities for 2021.
- The survey was distributed to the public via email and social media from December 22, 2020 through January 6, 2021.
- 119 responses were received during this time period.
- This is the first time that a survey like this was sent out to the public regarding Downtown Eatonton.

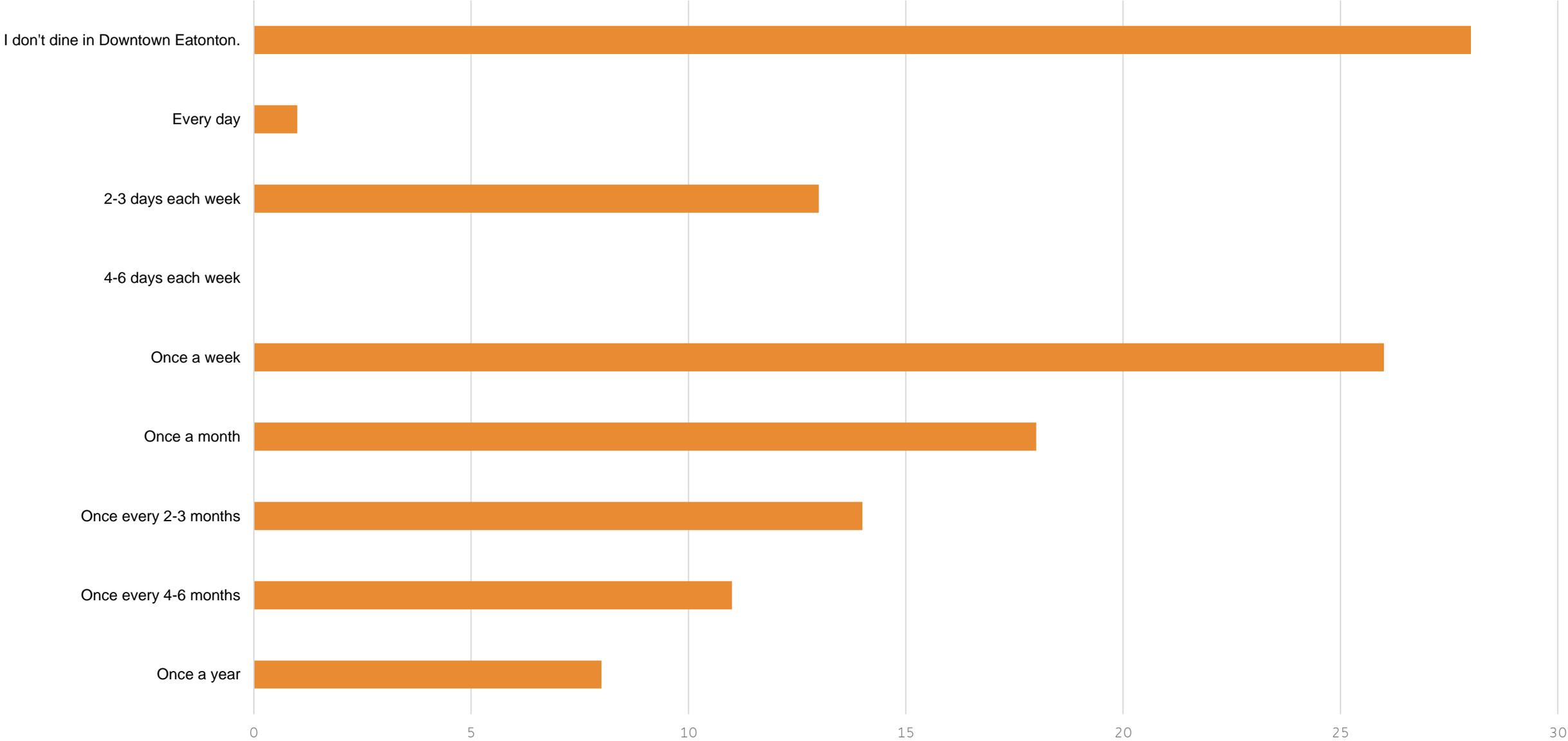
# HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN EATONTON?



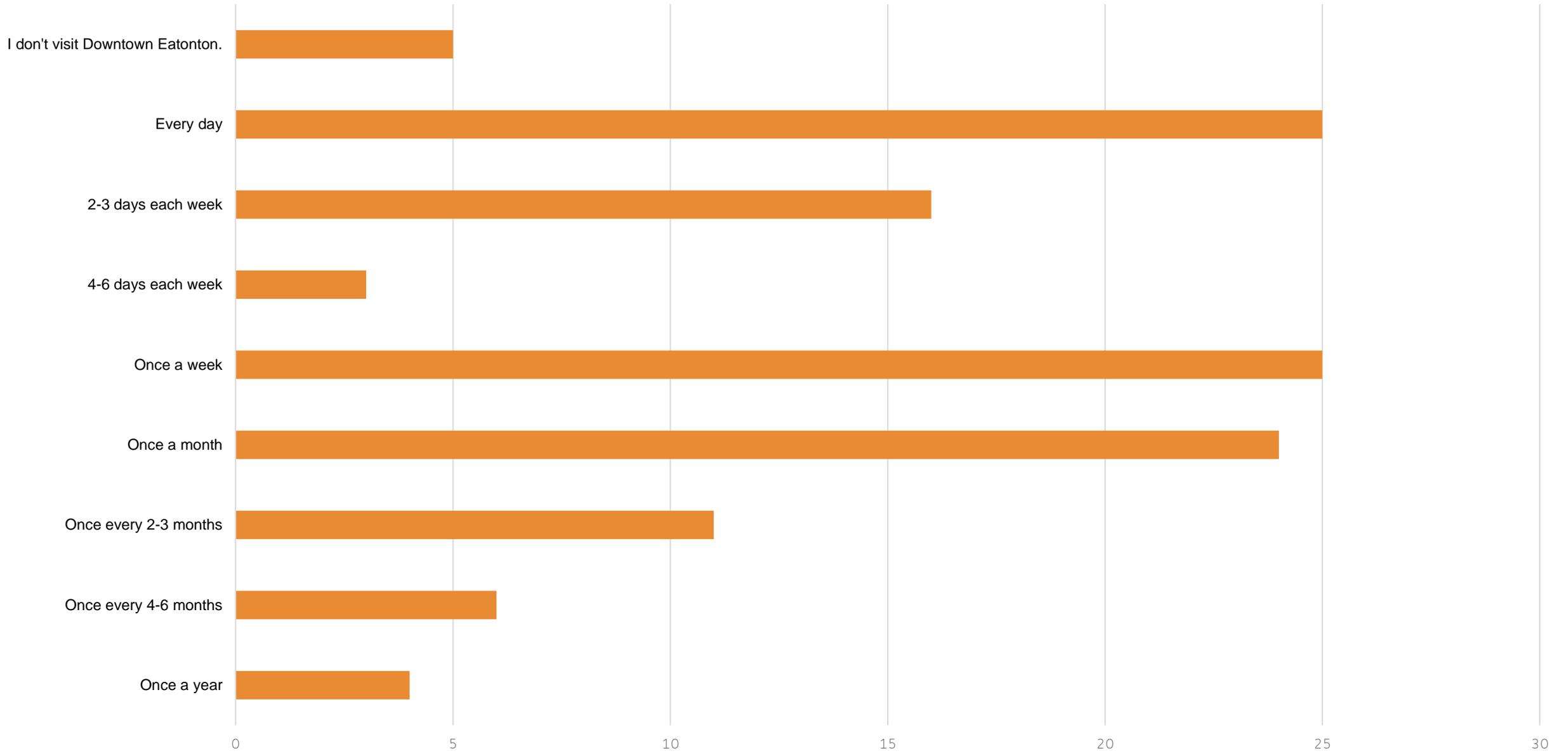
# How often do you SHOP in Downtown Eatonton?



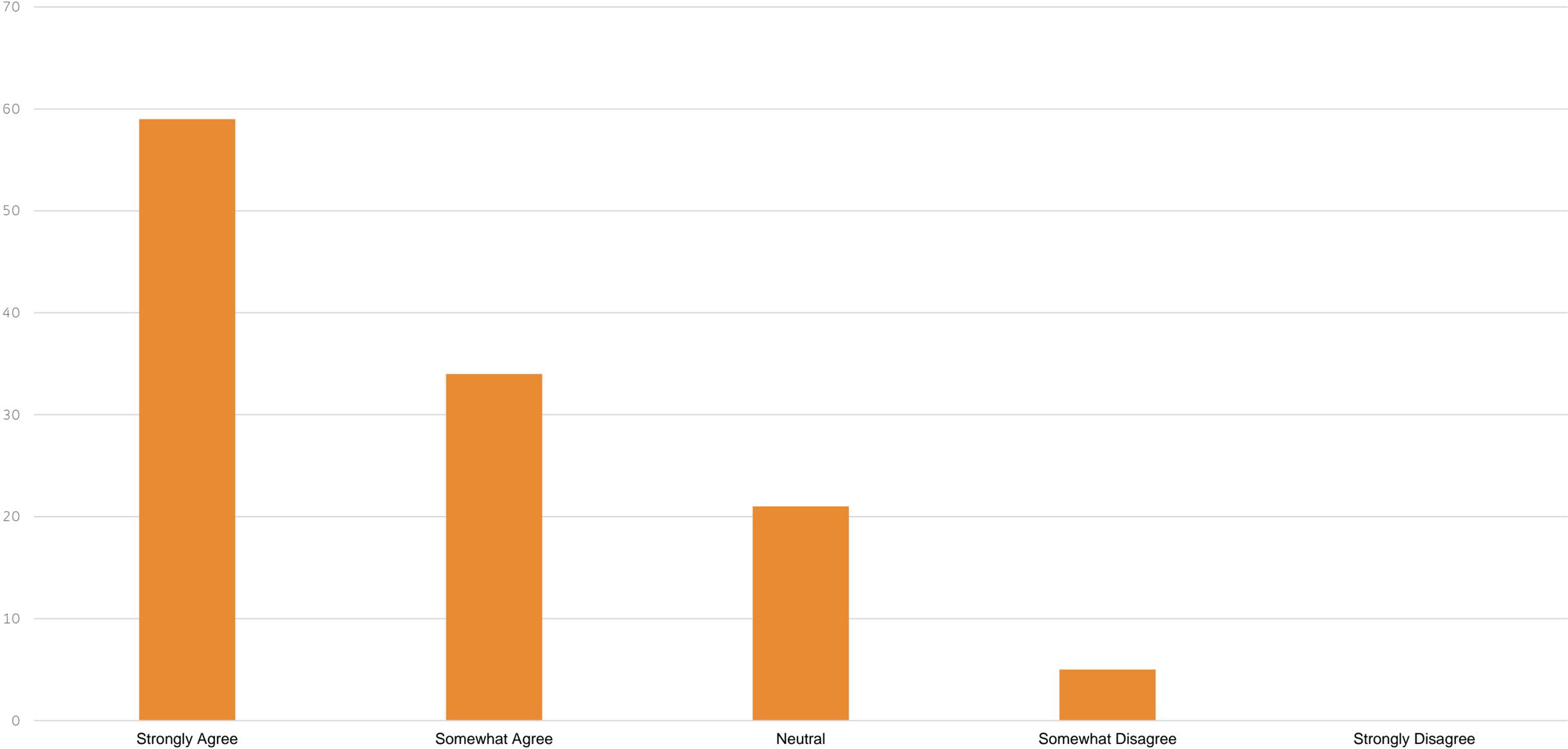
# How often do you DINE in Downtown Eatonton?



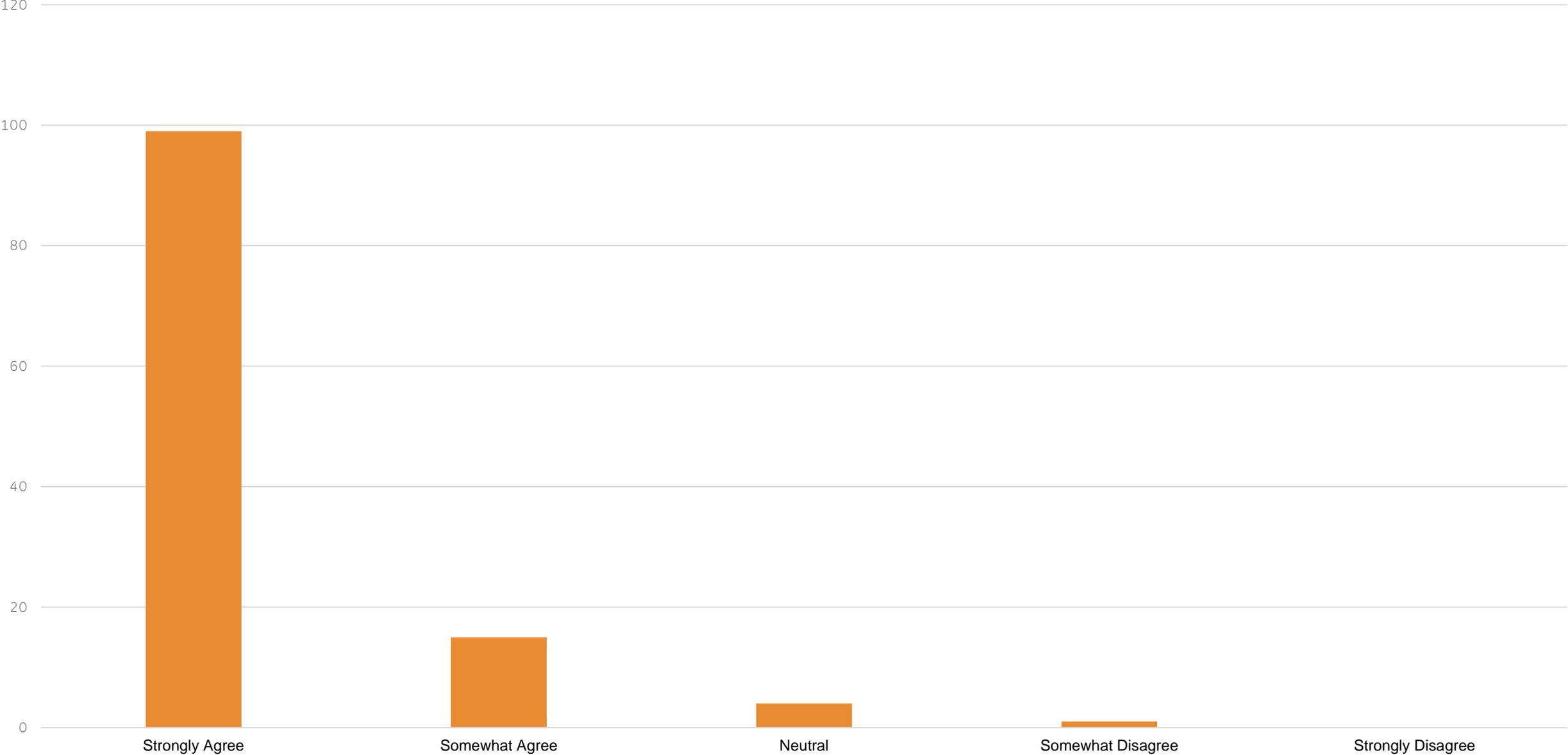
# How often do you VISIT Downtown Eatonton?



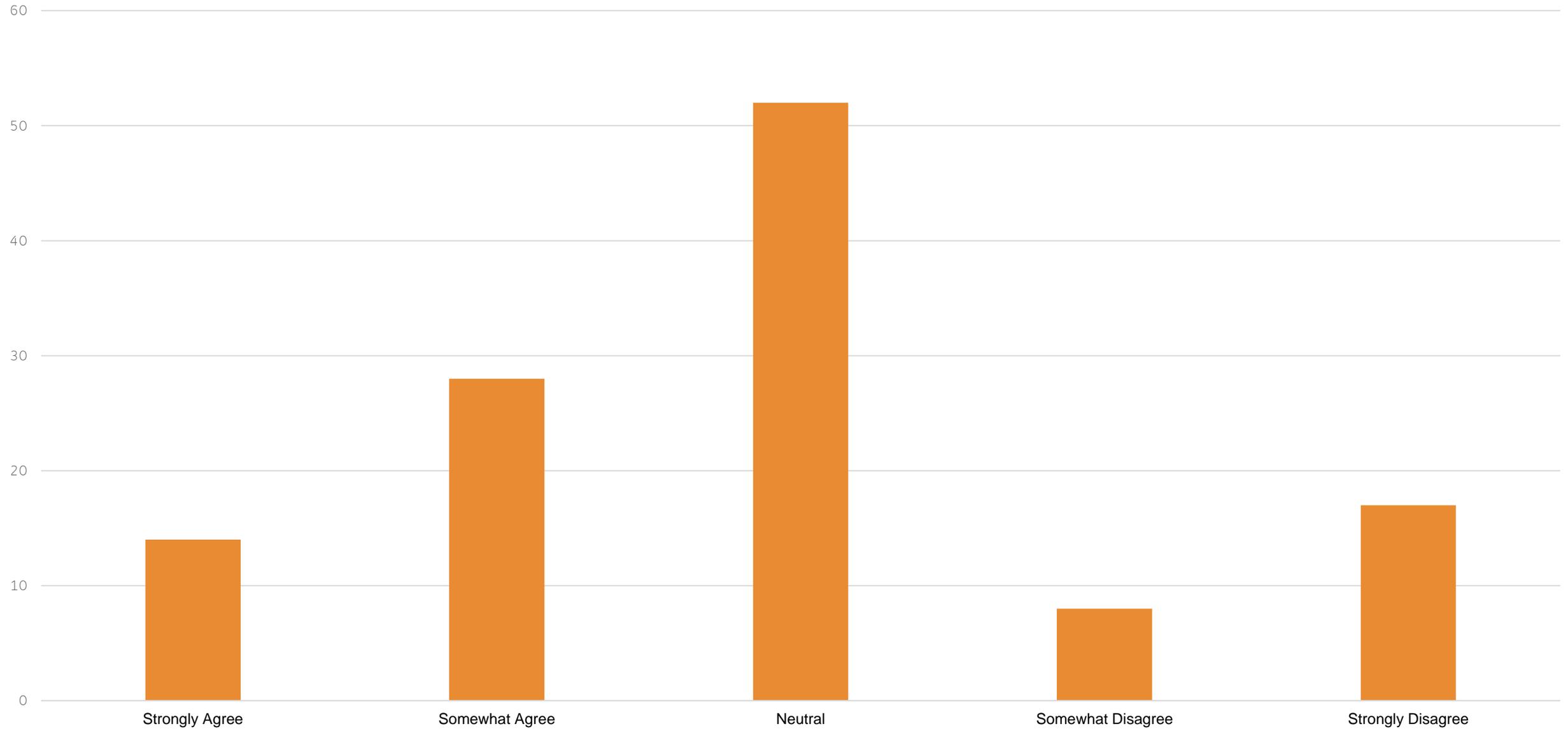
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "There are not enough events in Downtown Eatonton."



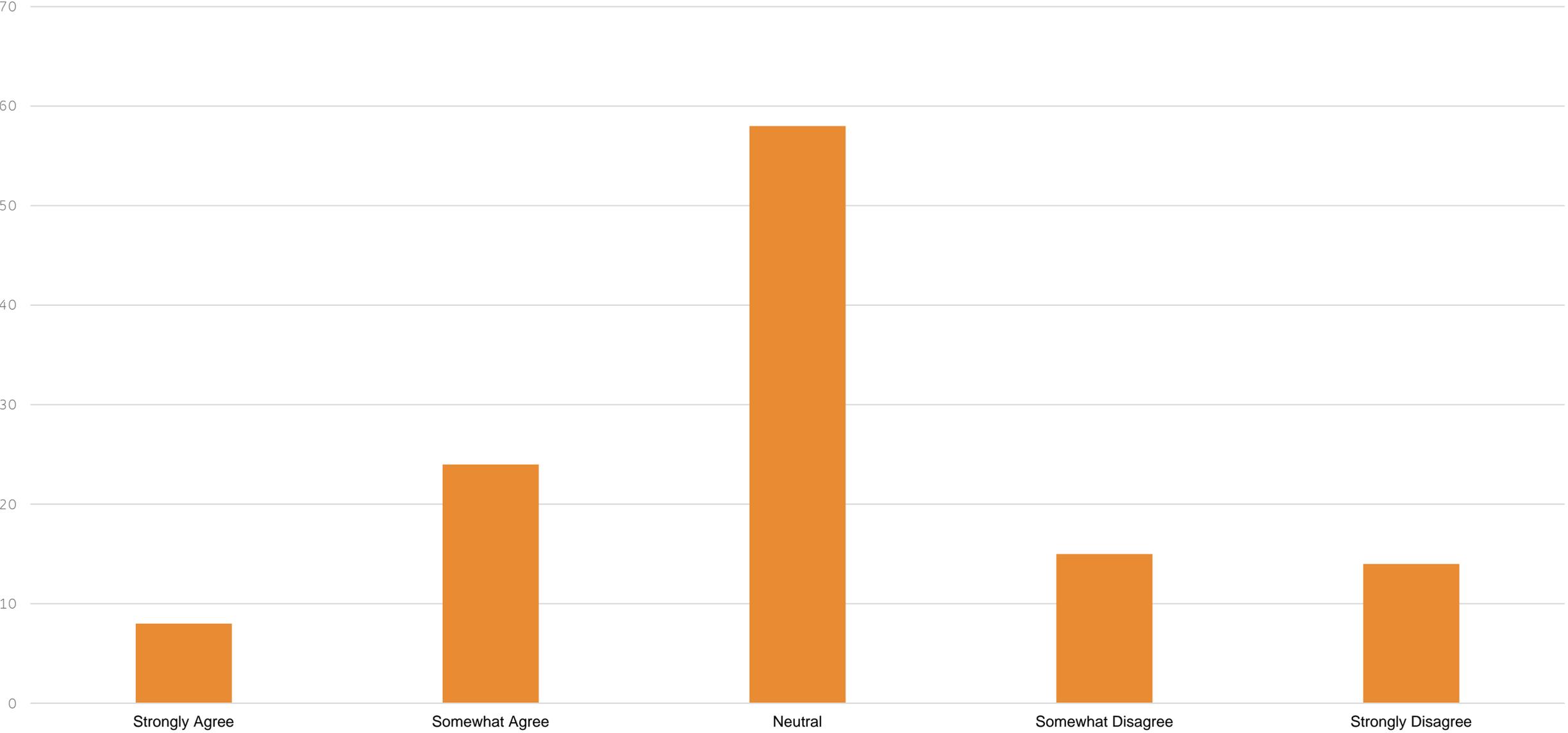
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "There needs to be more businesses in downtown."



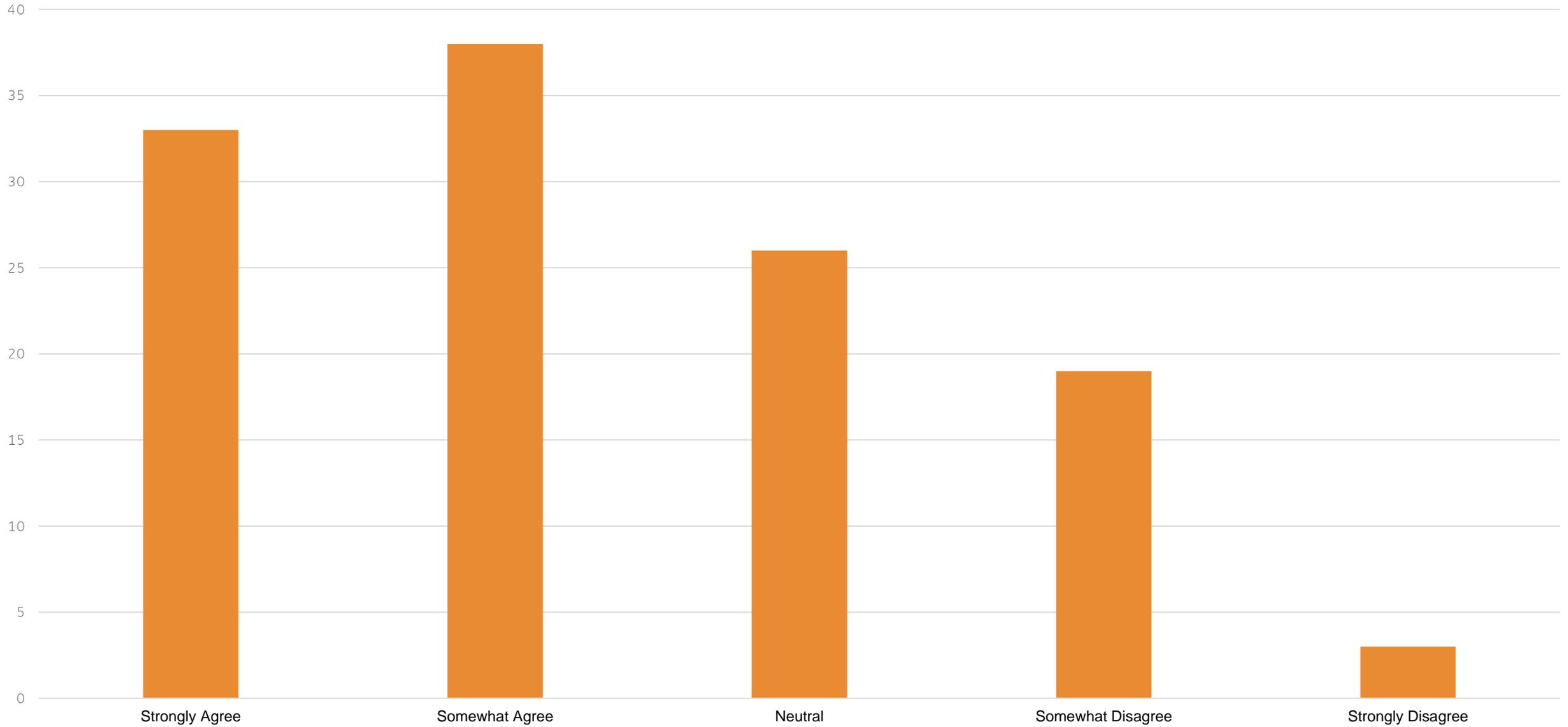
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I'm not sure what the Main Street program is about, and I would like to learn more about it."



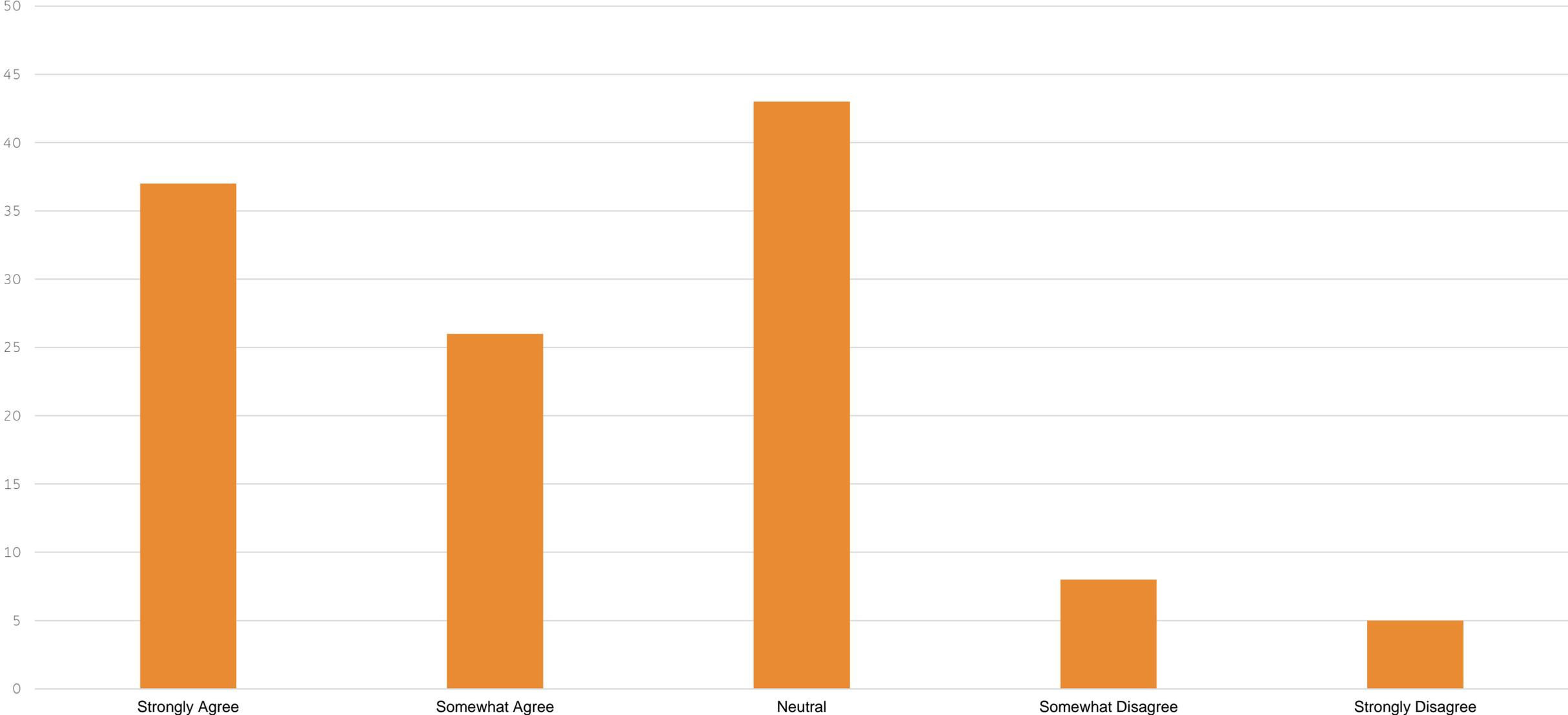
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "I would like to be more involved and volunteer with Eatonton Main Street at events or on downtown related projects."



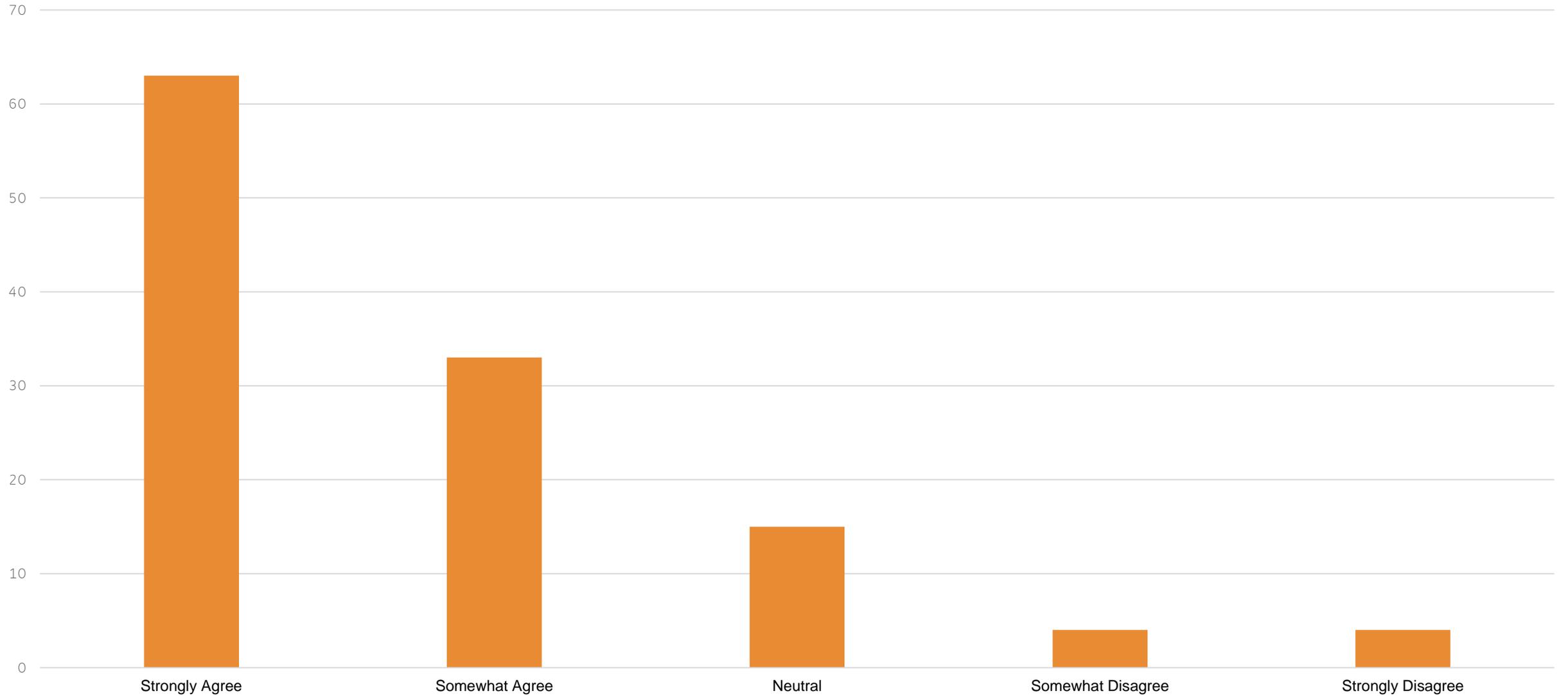
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Eatonton Main Street does a great job of keeping me informed of what's going on in Downtown Eatonton."



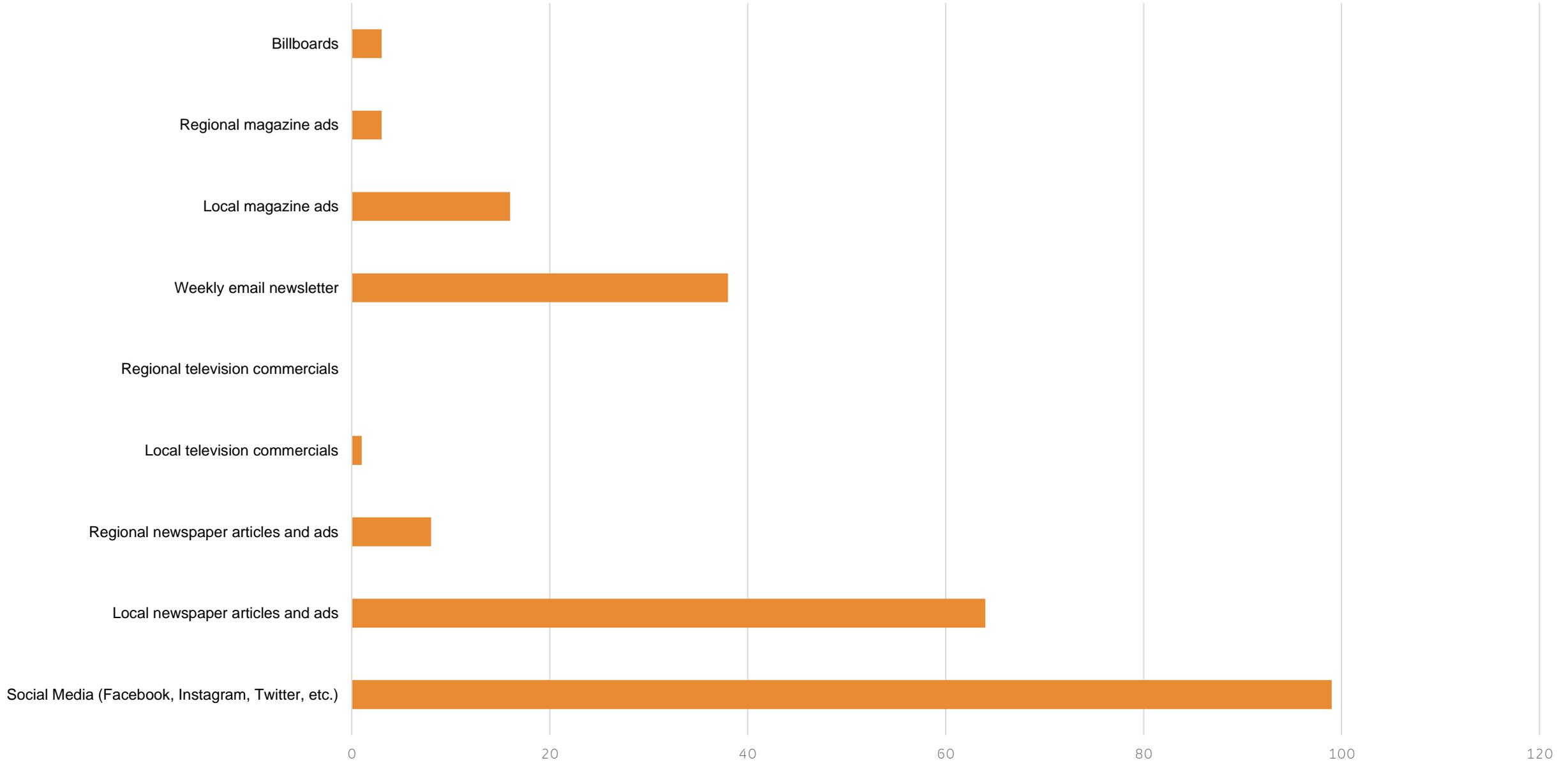
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "The weekly email newsletters help me stay informed about what's going in Downtown Eatonton."



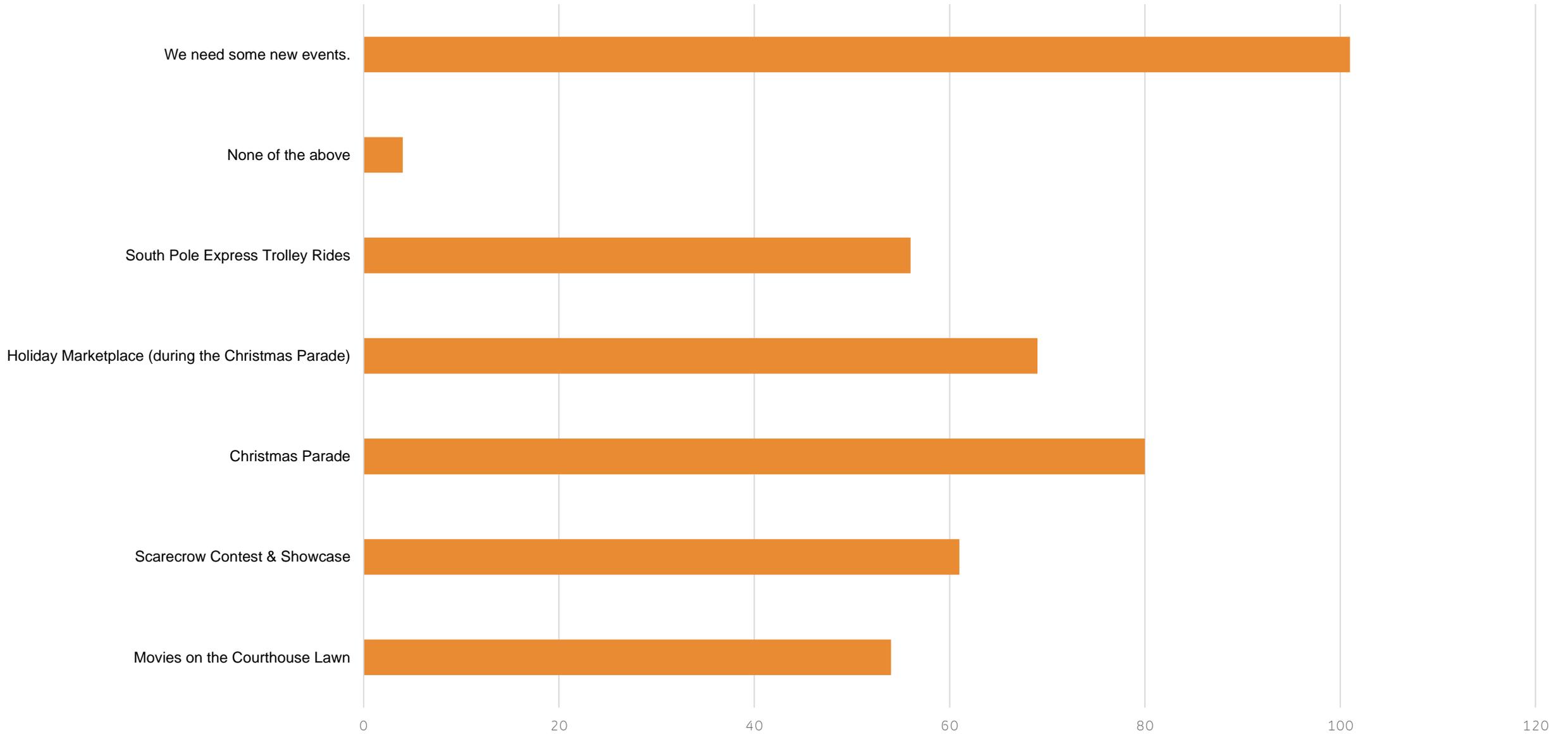
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Eatonton Main Street should invest more money into making Downtown Eatonton more aesthetically pleasing (i.e. regularly pressure washing sidewalks, more Christmas lights during Christmas, more flowers, etc.)?"



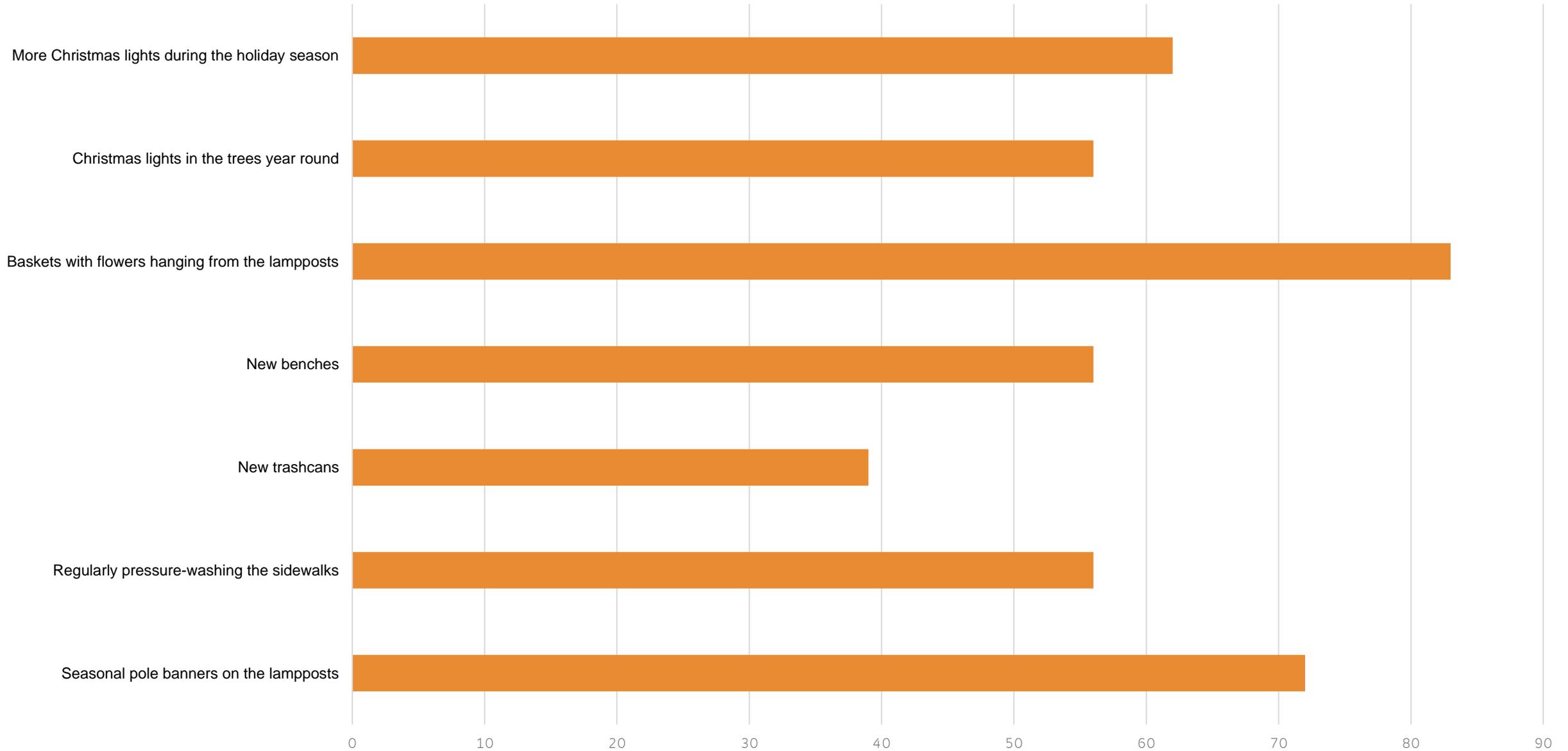
# How do you learn about what's going on in Downtown Eatonton? (Check all that apply.)



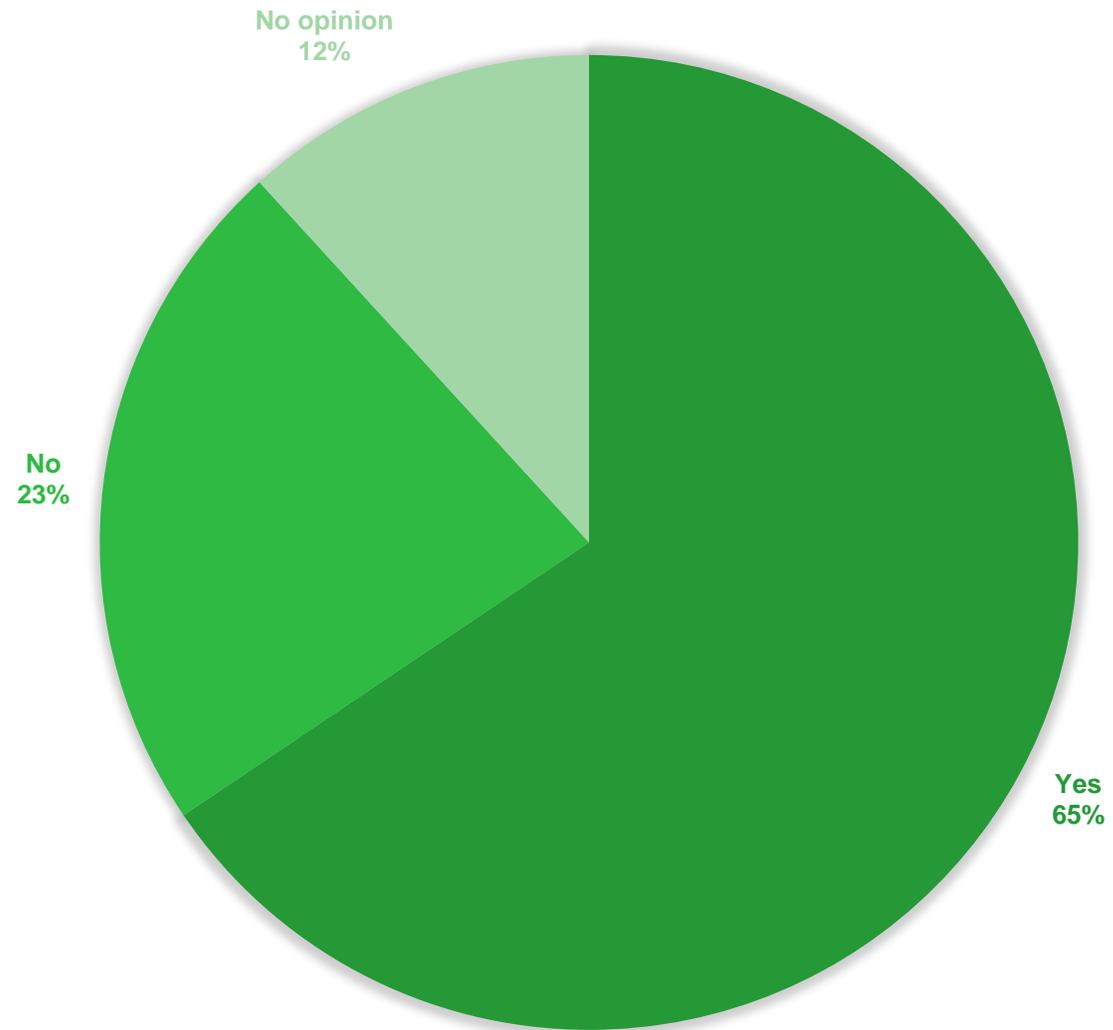
# Which Main Street sponsored events would you like to see like to take place in 2021? (Check all that apply.)



# What would make Downtown Eatonton visually more appealing? (Check all that apply.)



# IN YOUR OPINION, IS DOWNTOWN EATONTON "PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY?"



# Additional Comments

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- The buildings need severe “facelift”. They are very full and depressing! The courthouse is very attractive, but could use to additional seasonal plants.
- To get more people there must be more businesses! Beautifying the emptiness is pointless! Where’s the Mexican restaurant? We need a Chinese restaurant again. What’s with Brickhouse? Is it inviting people to come? The arts just don’t get it for the masses; the persons who live in the city limits. Diversity and inclusion are not thought of when EPTAH and The Plaza host functions. They need to stop telling people what they want and ask them!
- Please clean up the blighted houses/buildings coming into downtown Eatonton on Sumter Street as well as the oil company property. For blighted building property owners should be fined and required to clean up their buildings. This stretch of roadway is the first impression of downtown Eatonton, it needs to be cleaned up. Also, the auto repair/tire businesses in downtown need to be cleaned up or relocated.
- I do not shop in downtown Eatonton because the stores are closed when I get off work, so essentially I would have to take a day off work to go shopping and there are too many other things I'd rather do on my day off. My job takes me there several times a month, and if I have time, I like to quickly run in a boutique, but usually there's no time because I have other work-related tasks in other towns.
- We need more signage directing visitors to downtown businesses. Property owners of vacant downtown buildings should be required to keep the exterior of their properties clean and maintained, if not they should be given a citation/fined under the blight ordinance. More trees and improved landscaping is needed throughout downtown. Something needs to be done to the water tower in downtown Eatonton, it’s not pleasing to the atmosphere of downtown. It would be nice to see something happen to the PEX.
- It's getting there but not yet

# Additional Comments (continued)

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- Flowers, I also think having more visual art, as a hashtag, place to stop for a photo op is a great idea. We have stopped in multiple cities to have photo ops they have flags, angel wings, and the hashtags to tag in them. And I think it would be great.
- traffic lights are unreliable. the new sidewalks have been great...can't wait until all of them are redone. right now the old ones especially on south jefferson where maggie lanes is are slanted and hard for older folks and wheelchairs to manage.
- We especially need to encourage downtown businesses. Hopefully more community and private events and dining will be possible in 2021.
- I did not know there was a weekly newsletter. I would like to see more kid friendly events for Eatonton. I believe this would draw more people from out of town. Their needs to be more businesses other than restaurants in the downtown area. We only have one clothing boutique and there should be more. I have heard the rent is too much on the old buildings and the owners doesn't want to do the maintenance for the tenants. If that's the case...lower the rent so the tenants can maintain...
- We badly need a community space, a park in the center of town or a pedestrianized spot in front of the court house. We need more restaurants, coffee shops, retail etc. We do not have an infrastructure in place that accommodates visitors; the historic houses, the GWM and the Uncle Remus museum are a draw but without shops, restaurants, coffee shops, places to sit - we lose our visitors to nearby towns that boast more facilities. Eatonton needs to become a destination, not just a cut-through.
- Much work needs to be done-

# Additional Comments (continued)

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- Eatonton desperately needs the entrances (ALL OF THEM) spruced up - it's very depressing to drive in to the city which is wonderful. More restaurants to bring people in. Better advertising. Get the Pec Theatre up and running with shows. Spring/Fall Marketplace events. I don't get a newsletter! How do I do that? Fix the wording in some of these questions.
- To make downtown more visually appealing:....PLANT TREES! Its cheap, permanent and needs little maintenance. And, PLANT TREES all along the highways coming in and out of town. Its cheap, permanent and needs little maintenance, unlike some of the suggestions listed above. Choose a variety that is tough and needs little maintenance. It would be a HUGE improvement and help cover the eye sores currently along the roads coming in and out of town. If you need an example, look at Madison, GA.!
- We need to "install" many more high class establishments, including two first class restaurants and a top notch motel in the old hotel; in the area between the Pex Theatre, the Veterans Wall of Honor Park, Barrel 118, and the street behind the Courthouse (which needs to be cleared of all the structures there)
- I feel the key to getting more traffic downtown is variety of businesses and marketing the area
- Would be great to have more restaurants downtown. Used to go to Smith's frequently.
- Things long needed. Public restrooms and coffee shop
- Not pedestrian friendly right now due to the renovation of the sidewalk.
- This year is tough to gauge anything by, but y'all did a wonderful job with the Christmas lights this year. I'm sad to see them go!

# Additional Comments (continued)

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- The green space in front and around the city event stage needs more trees and landscaping to enhance the area. The planters in town need to be repainted and repaired. New signage is needed downtown at street corners pointing and identifying locations of downtown businesses, etc.
- You need to have a plan for what you want downtown to look like. Adding more is starting to make things look tacky. Benches, trash cans, the plant bins on the sidewalk, lights at Christmas on the lampposts, consistent signage, good building maintenance and maintenance of the above are all we need. You need to add word of mouth to the list of event sources and info. We are not all glued to technology. The sidewalk project is a good one.
- Hopefully, the 2021 Christmas Parade will not have to be cancelled because of either weather or COVID-19. If for the virus, however, consider having a "walking tour parade." This means that the various entries, whether floats or vehicles, bands or displays are assigned a stationary position along the "parade route," and patrons walk to them - at their own pace, properly masked and socially distanced. Several other communities used this approach successfully.
- Downtown Eatonton should try to mirror Downtown Covington. My wife and I were in Covington a couple of weeks ago and there is a huge difference. Eatonton should mandate that all shops, retail spaces, and restaurants have big clear street-facing windows where anyone can walk or ride by and clearly SEE what is for sale. Signage should be uniform as well as the color scheme of the buildings. We have got to make the downtown area attractive. We need to set the standard higher. We need a coffee shop.
- To make downtown Eatonton more pedestrian friendly you need to deal with the truck traffic, too many and too fast running through town. Crosswalk walks with mandatory traffic to stop for pedestrians crossings on Jefferson Ave. and other downtown streets. Monroe, Madison and Greensboro all have safe pedestrian crossings on state routes running through their downtown streets, it makes town more engaging and friendly. More trees please in downtown! Commissioner Webster is doing a great job.

# Additional Comments (continued)

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- I have lived here > 25 years, and while I can't put my finger on why, downtown Eatonton has never appealed to me the way downtown Greensboro does. I've seen so many businesses struggle to stay in business.
- While on the design committee, we bought seasonal banners. Where are they? We bought baskets for flowers on the lampposts, but they are flimsy lampposts and they can't hold them up. FYI, I worked very hard on a historic downtown walking tour brochure and my husband made matching signs on the buildings. Andrew wanted an app but never did one. What a waste of my time! Make lg trucks take a detour to make Eatonton pedestrian friendly.
- In response to the question above asking if Eatonton is “pedestrian friendly”, new sidewalks have and will greatly improve the look of downtown. W Marion Street is a great walking street because of how wide the sidewalks are, the main draw back on W Marion Street is the placement of trash bids, they should all be required to be placed behind the buildings on W Marion Street in the alleyway. Crosswalks requiring cars to stop for pedestrians on S/N Jefferson Ave would slow down traffic.
- I think speeding traffic on Jefferson dissuades pedestrians. How about speed bumps?
- I don't get the newsletter, how do I sign up?
- I was Chair of Main Street for about 8 years so my responses may not be typical. You may not know but we spent several thousand dollars on cast iron planters for the light poles. They looked fantastic for several years. Then the City & Georgia Power made us take them down as the poles were too flimsy to support them. The City have stashed them away somewhere and may be able to find them. Last time I checked they had no idea where they were. Also had 4 parking signs w/Brer Rabbit. 2 lost by City.

# Additional Comments (continued)

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- 1) Rundown storefronts need to be repaired to look more appealing. 2) Dirty, Tattered & Torn Awnings need to be repaired or replaced 3) Empty Storefronts need to have Windows covered with some sort of decoration or filled with some sort of merchandise to show how this business space could look if “you” owned it.
- Downtown Eatonton is beautiful and has the same potential as downtown Madison and Covington, in my opinion. I would love to see Eatonton become a foodie and shopping destination, with activity on nights and weekends. Outdoor dining on the sidewalks, enhanced lighting (Christmas lights in trees all year is a great idea in the survey), concerts on the courthouse lawn. Even a service like the Freeloader in Aiken, SC (Google it). Thank you!
- I think you guys are doing a great job especially with all the challenges you've faced this year with the virus! I can't wait to see what you all have in store for the future of Downtown Eatonton!
- Need to advertise events better!
- I'm a part-time resident/visitor of Lake Sinclair. Eatonton needs more shopping & dining on the square and in the area. We don't dine or shop on main street because there's nothing there to visit!!! Even the 2 museums are very lame (especially for the price) (Writers Museum and Brer Rabbit Museum). Eatonton is a lovely town but needs more shops & restaurants and things to do.
- I know you do the best you can with the budget you have.
- I feel much has been accomplished on the 3 years I have lived on the lake. Downtown has improved. More events to involve everyone. Love the taste of eatonton, dairy festival, juneteenth and Halloween and Christmas events.

# Additional Comments (continued)

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- I think the sidewalk projects are an eyesore & need to be completed quickly.
- No parking. Courthouse workers need to park in the back parking lot behind Eatonton Messenger. More retail stores and antique stores. Stores that will draw in tourist. We need more industry here. If you work out of town you stop and buy there.
- Car shows, flea market day, art/craft day, plant swaps, pet/show parade. Perhaps window boxes of flowers or decorative displays and drawings in windows of vacant buildings on square.
- Downtown Eatonton needs a few things. The first is a mandate where all businesses must have no awnings and clear big windows. The also needs to have uniform signage of the business as well as the outside of the building need to be basically the same color scheme. You need to be able to drive by and see what is for sale and that will help traffic. The other is a coffee shop. A coffee shop will bring more traffic to downtown Eatonton. Joseph Rainey 478.696.6007