



**St. Mary's 2050: Charting Our Tomorrow  
Comprehensive Plan Update Project**

**April 2026**

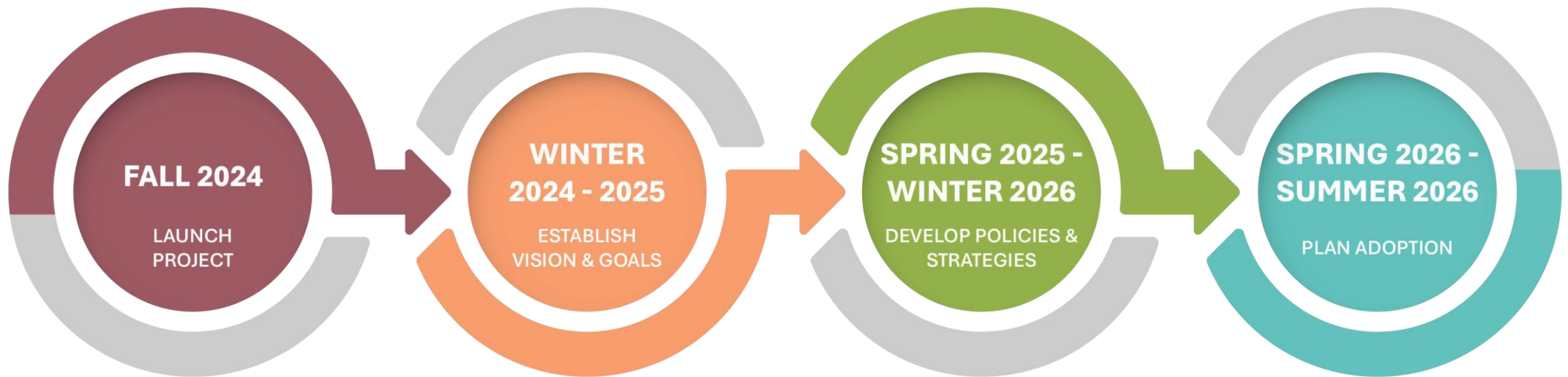
# **Community Engagement Window #3 Report**

# Project Background

- ❖ The St. Mary's 2050 Plan establishes a countywide comprehensive **vision for the future of the community** that **reflects resident input** and considers the needs of the county's future population.
- ❖ This plan is an update to the comprehensive plan that was adopted in 2010 and is required by Title 3 of the Land Use Article for the *Annotated Code of Maryland*.

# Project Timeline

We are here



# Community Engagement Window #3: Draft Plan

**February – March 2026**

Opportunity for residents and business owners to learn more about the policy direction of the plan and provide input on its contents

- **Public Open Houses**
- **Online activities** through project website



# Participation

**170 + 165 = 335**

Participated in the  
online survey

Filled out paper  
surveys

CEW #3  
participants

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**300**

CEW #1  
participants

**1,380**

CEW #2  
participants

**82**

Additional Comment  
Form Responses

# Public Open Houses

Date	Time	Location
Feb. 9	9:00am-12:30pm	Lexington Park Library
Feb. 10	5:00pm-8:00pm	Northern Senior Center
Feb. 11	10:30am-1:00pm	Leonard Hall Recreation Center
Feb. 11	5:00pm-8:00pm	Loffler Senior Center
Mar. 2	10:30am-1:30pm	Lexington Park Library
Mar. 2	5:00pm-8:00pm	St. Mary's College Daughterty-Palmer Commons (DPC)
Mar. 3	5:00pm-8:00pm	Loffler Senior Center
Mar. 4	5:00pm-8:00pm	Northern Senior Center
Mar. 5	5:00pm-8:00pm	Captain Walter Francis Duke Regional Airport
Mar. 7	9:30am-11:30am	Lexington Park Library
Mar. 7	2:00pm-4:00pm	Leonardtown Library

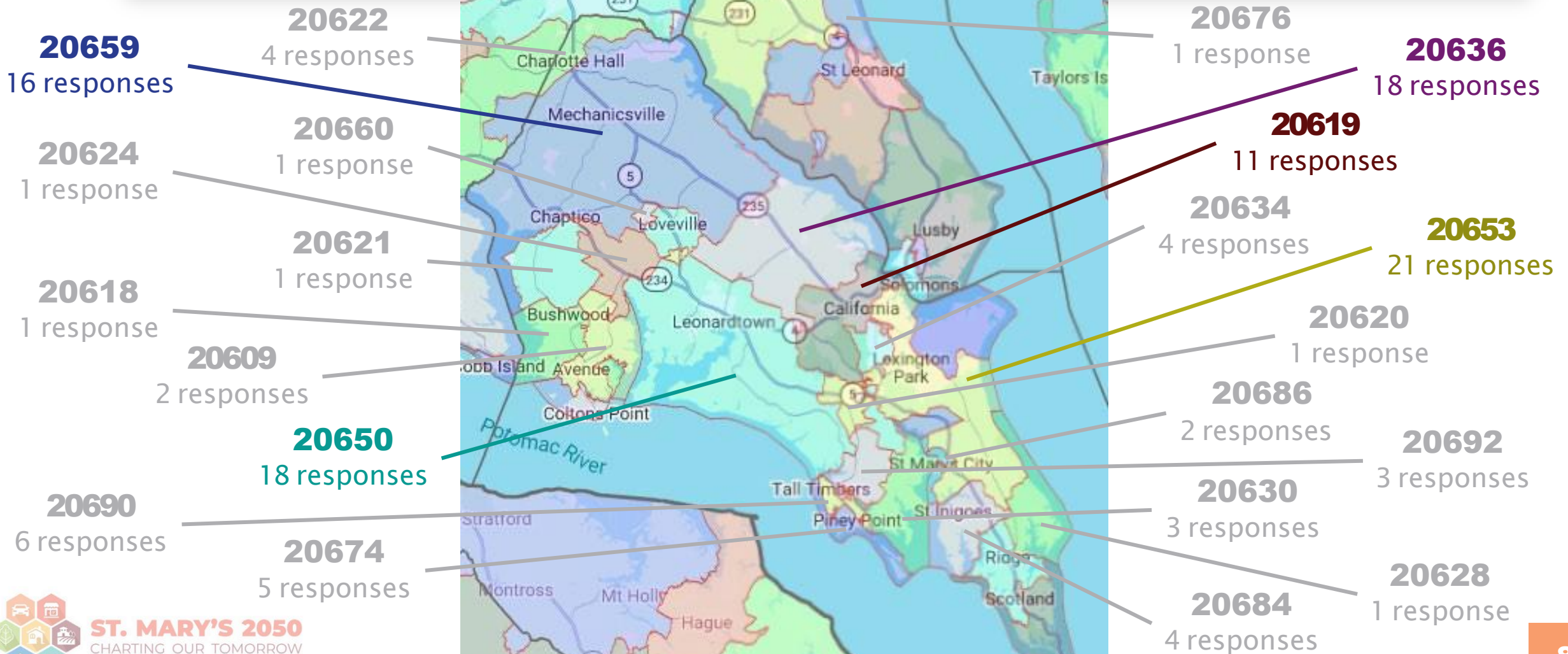
# Public Intercept Outreach

Shared information about CEW #3 in-person events and the online survey

Date	Time	Location
Feb. 25	7:30am-9:30am	St. Inie's Coffee
Feb. 25	10:30am-12:30pm	St. James Deli & Spirits
Feb. 27	2:00pm-3:30pm	Weis Market in Callaway
Feb. 27	2:30pm-4:00pm	Bradfords Neighborhood Market
Feb. 28	10:00am-12:00pm	Weis Market in Charlotte Hall

**Note:** Information about CEW #3 was published on the County's social media platforms, SMCPS Weekly Newsletter and on NAS Pax's social media platforms. Copies of the Draft Plan and copies of the survey were available at the Health Hub, public libraries, and senior centers in the county.

# ZIP Codes of Online Participants



# Survey Questions

- Participants were asked for their **level of support for each goal** in the Public Review Draft
- Opportunity for **open-ended comments**
- All questions **optional**
- Paper version and online version
- Survey materials are included in an appendix to this report

**Growth Management Survey**  
For each goal, please select your level of support by marking the appropriate box.

**Goal 1: Utilize the Land Use Map and Growth Areas to Guide Development**  
Use the Planning Areas and Land Use Map for land development and capital investment decision making to prevent sprawl and protect the County's agricultural and natural resources.  
Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

**Goal 2: Concentrate the Majority of Growth in Development Districts**  
Most of the growth in St. Mary's County should be concentrated in the development districts outlined in the Planning Areas Framework to maximize existing infrastructure, promote sustainable communities, and preserve rural areas.  
Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

**Goal 3: Support Compact Town Centers**  
Support walkable, mixed-use, compact town centers as an alternative to big-box-style development.  
Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

**Goal 4: Encourage Rural Services and Moderate Residential Growth in Village Centers**  
Encourage location and expansion of rural services and moderate residential growth in village centers: Callaway, Chaptico, Clements, Loveville, Ridge, Valley Lee, and St. Inigoes.  
Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

**Goal 5: Support Infill Development and Adaptive Redevelopment**  
Support infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of existing structures, when possible.  
Strongly Agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

Growth Management Survey Page 1  
For Office Use Only: \_\_\_\_\_

## Growth Management Goals

For each goal, please select the option that most closely matches your level of support.

If you want to learn more, the full draft plan is available for review on the project website: [stmaryscountymd.gov/StMarys2050/](http://stmaryscountymd.gov/StMarys2050/)

### Goal 1: Utilize the Land Use Map and Growth Areas to Guide Development

Use the Planning Areas and Land Use Map for land development and capital investment decision making to prevent sprawl and protect the County's agricultural and natural resources.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

# Growth Management

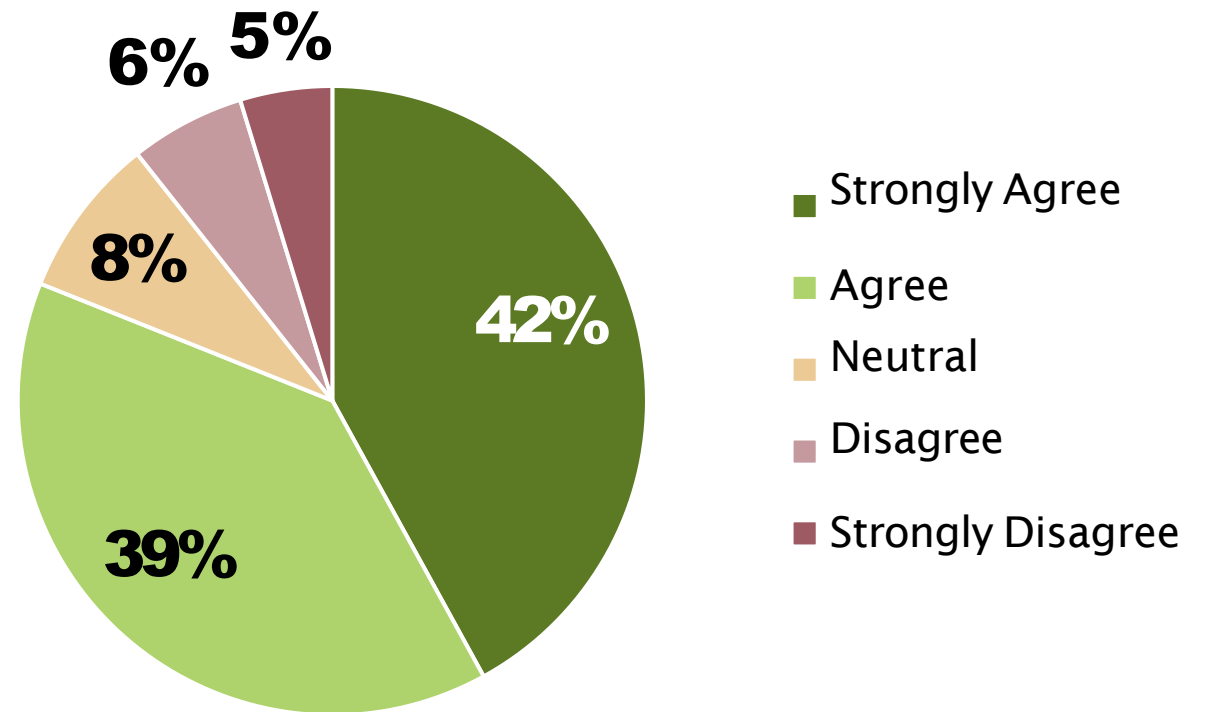


**ST. MARY'S 2050**  
CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

# GOAL 1: UTILIZE THE LAND USE MAP AND GROWTH AREAS TO GUIDE DEVELOPMENT

Use the Planning Areas and Land Use Map for land development and capital investment decision making to prevent sprawl and protect the County's agricultural and natural resources.

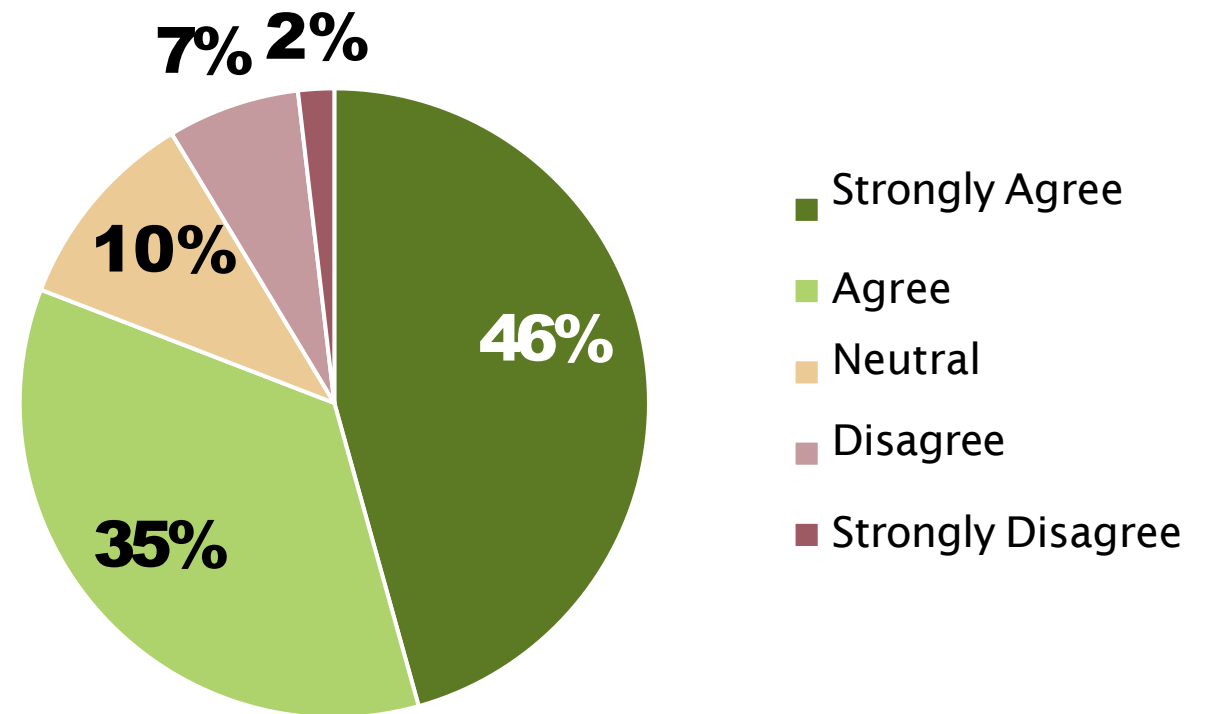
## Growth Management Goal 1



# GOAL 2: CONCENTRATE THE MAJORITY OF GROWTH IN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

Most of the growth in St. Mary's County should be concentrated in the development districts outlined in the Planning Areas Framework to maximize existing infrastructure, promote sustainable communities, and preserve rural areas.

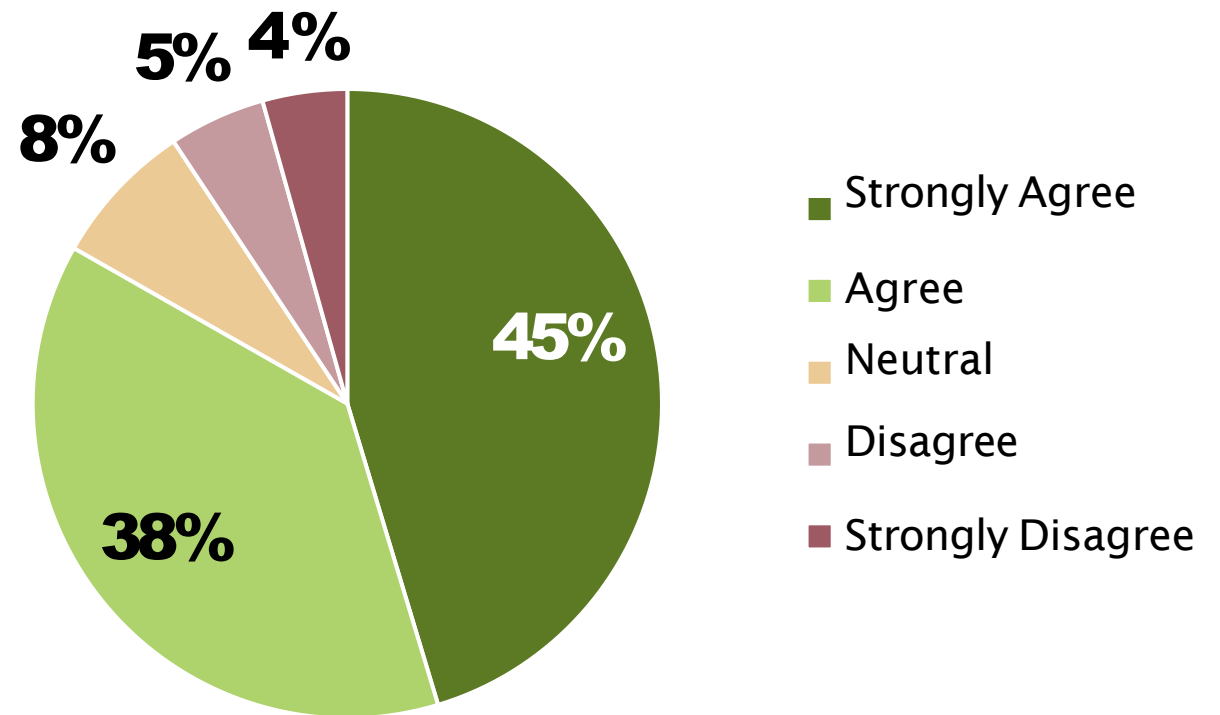
## Growth Management Goal 2



# GOAL 3: SUPPORT COMPACT TOWN CENTERS

Support walkable, mixed-use, compact town centers as an alternative to big-box-style development.

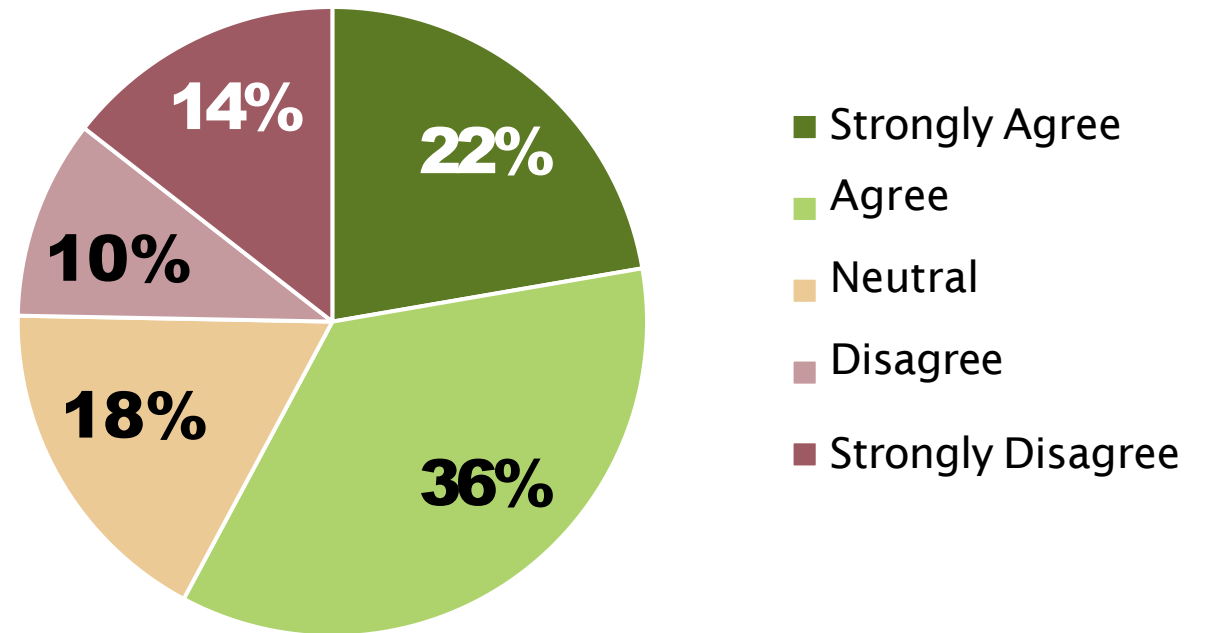
## Growth Management Goal 3



## GOAL 4: ENCOURAGE RURAL SERVICES AND MODERATE RESIDENTIAL GROWTH IN VILLAGE CENTERS

Encourage location and expansion of rural services and moderate residential growth in village centers: Callaway, Chaptico, Clements, Loveville, Ridge, Valley Lee, and St. Inigoes.

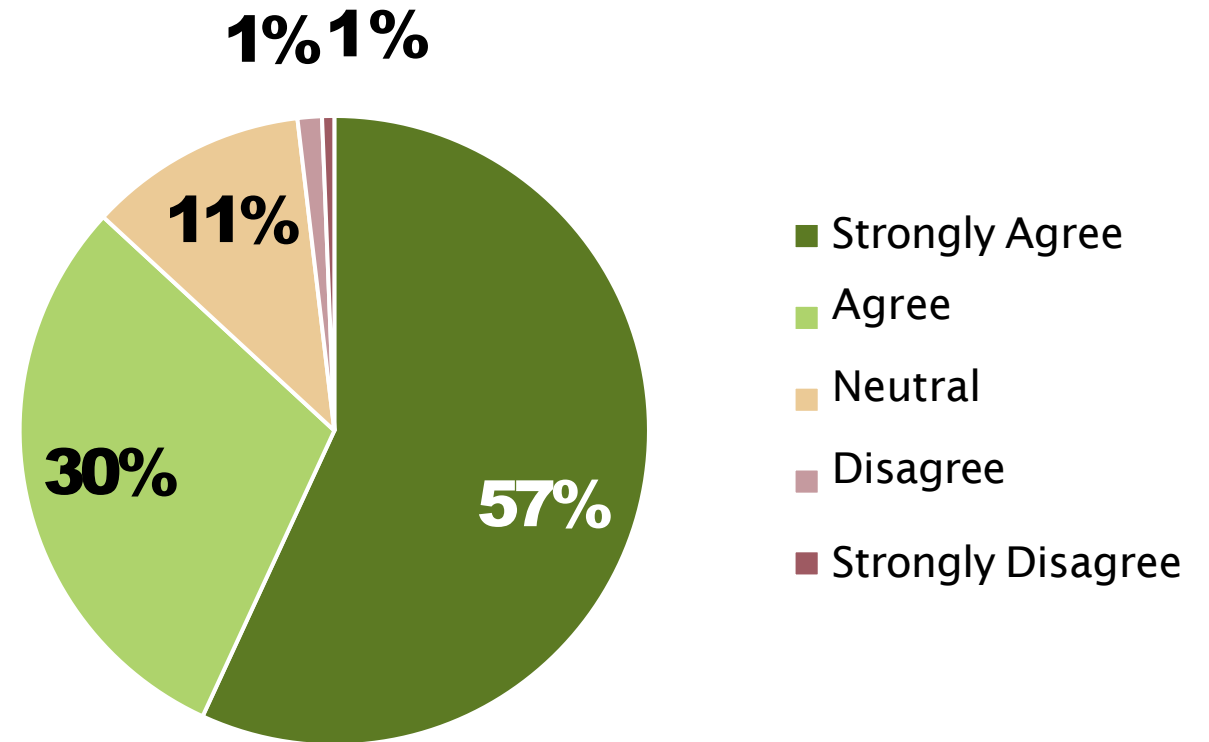
### Growth Management Goal 4



# GOAL 5: SUPPORT INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND ADAPTIVE REDEVELOPMENT

Support infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse of existing structures, when possible.

## Growth Management Goal 5

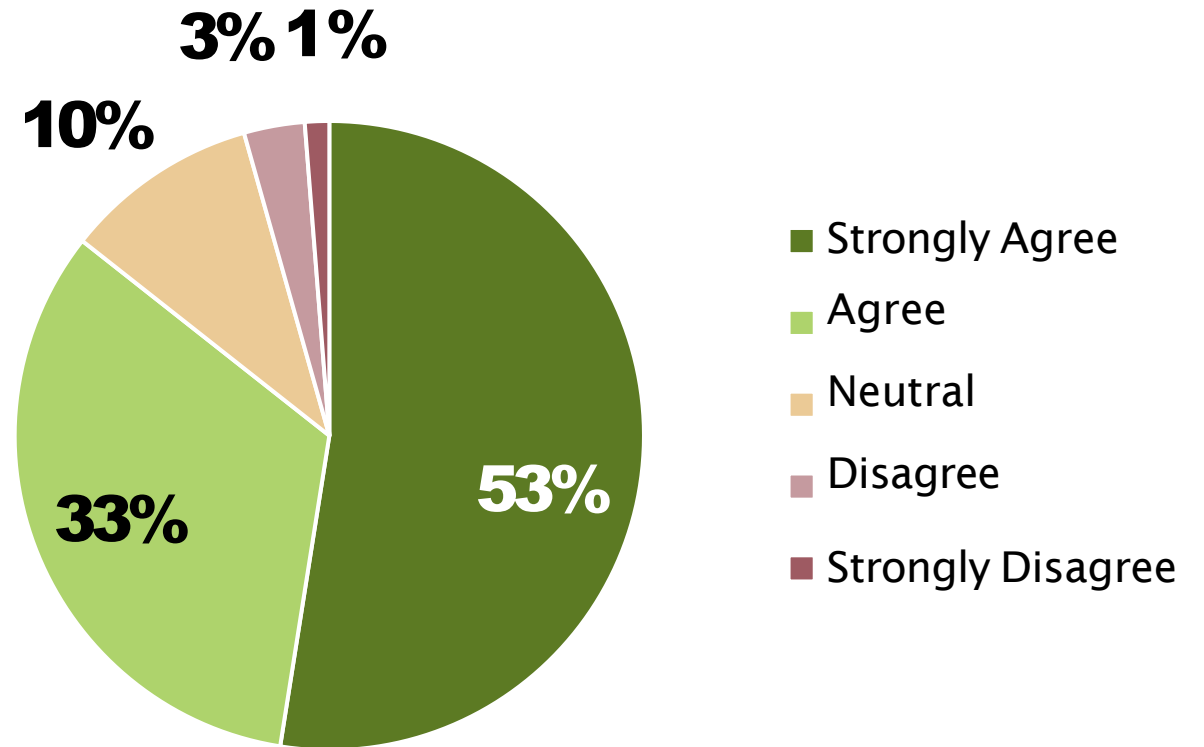


## GOAL 6: MAINTAIN LAND BASE NEEDED FOR AGRICULTURAL AND WORKING LANDS INDUSTRIES

Maintain lands within the Rural planning area and Rural Preservation land use category to support agricultural, equestrian, and other working lands industries.

(See Environment and Natural Resources Element for more information on agriculture and working lands preservation. See the Economic Development Element for more information on agriculture and working lands business support.)

### Growth Management Goal 6

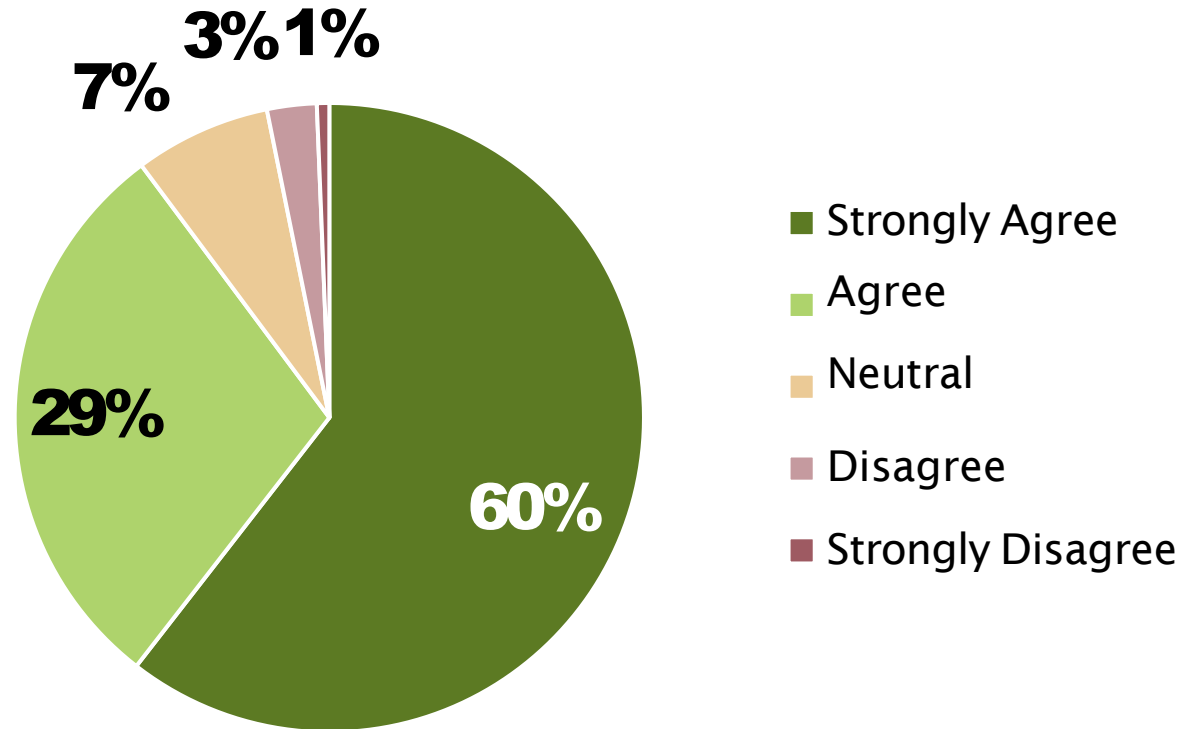


# GOAL 7: MEET THE COUNTY'S WATER SUPPLY NEEDS

Meet the County's long-term water supply needs and ensure that the supply is safe and efficiently provided within defined service areas.

(See Public Facilities and Infrastructure Investments Element for more information on this goal.)

## Growth Management Goal 7

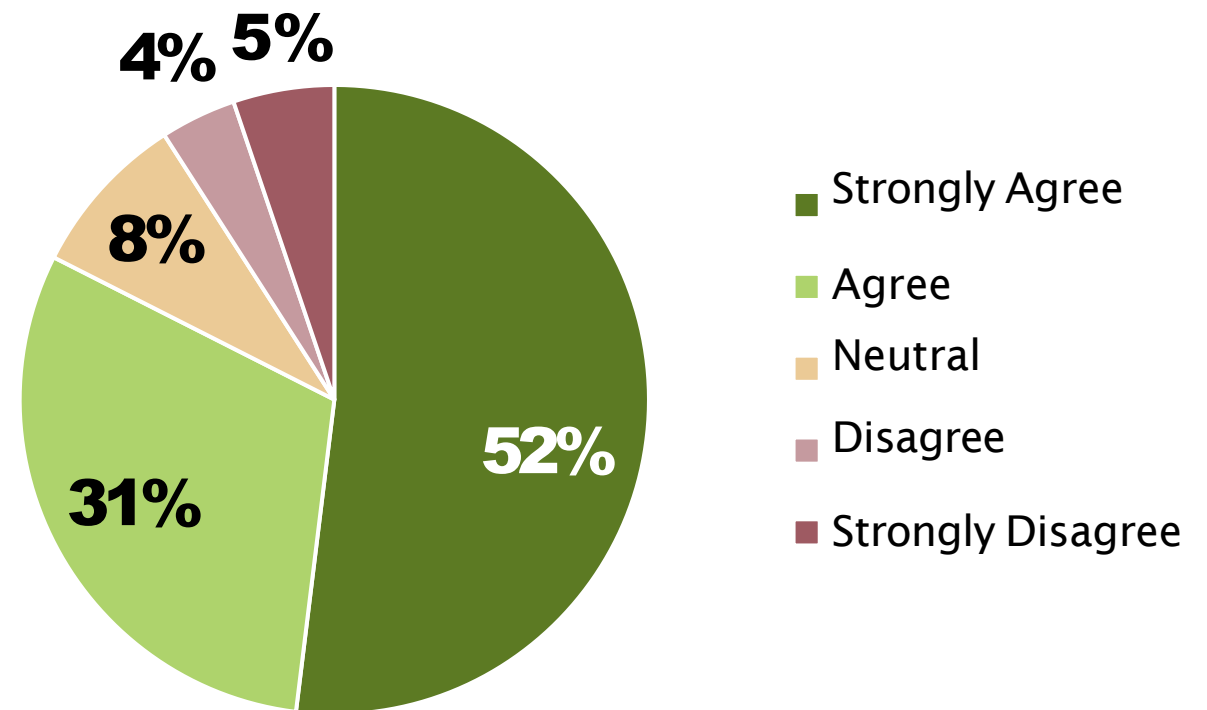


# GOAL 8: DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE TO SERVE WATER AND SEWER NEEDS IN GROWTH AREAS

Provide infrastructure to meet water and sewer service needs in Growth Areas, ensuring adequate capacity to accommodate future development, and address adequate facilities and services outside Growth Areas.

(See Public Facilities and Infrastructure Investments Element for more information on this goal.)

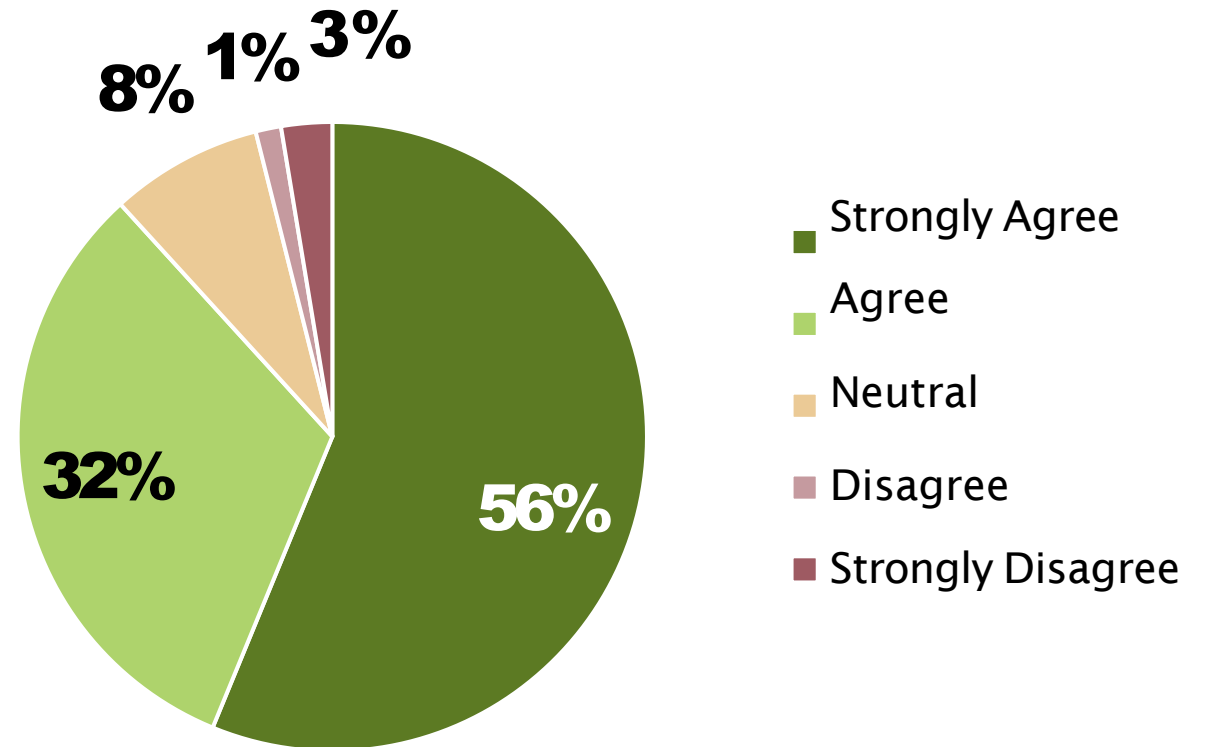
## Growth Management Goal 8



# GOAL 9: SUPPORT COLLABORATION WITH HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND METCOM TO ADDRESS PROBLEM SEWER AREAS OUTSIDE OF PLANNED SERVICE AREAS

The County Health Department will work with MetCom to address problem sewer (septic) areas as identified in the Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan (CWSP) in a way that balances community needs and priorities while protecting the environment.

## Growth Management Goal 9



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Growth Management:

- Keep rural areas rural
  - Expand **agricultural conservation** tools
  - Commit to **preserving existing open space**
  - Avoid fragmentation of agriculture and open space
  - Maintain rural TDR tools
- **Change Piney Point's designation** from Town Center to Village Center due to access, environmental, and water supply constraints
- Thoughtful growth in Growth Areas
  - Ensure growth matches **infrastructure capacity**
    - Roads and traffic
    - Water and sewer
    - Schools
    - Healthcare
    - Public safety
  - **Support redevelopment**, infill, rehabilitating existing buildings, and walkable town centers over sprawl
  - Support for more services in Town Centers and Village Centers
  - Ensure new high-density development is **transit-ready**
  - Some prefer to slow or **limit growth**

# Open-Ended Feedback

More common themes from the open-ended comments on Growth Management:

- **Public water/sewer systems** not appropriate in Village Centers (clarify Goal 8)
- **Stronger design standards** (including native landscaping) and **better buffers**; concern about overuse of big box retail and gas stations
- Address threat of **data centers**
- Additional restrictions on **marijuana farms**
- The phrase "Rural Preservation" is a **misleading term** and its general description should include "low density/rural development" to be more transparent.
- **Clarify allowed densities** (general statements about density in Planning Areas vs general statements about density in land use descriptions)
- **Define** "big-box style" development
- Give **examples** of "rural services"
- **Clarify** meaning of "growth areas" (does it include village centers or not?)

# Individual Text Requests

## Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Page 19: include “and marine” in describing balance between protecting the character of the region and supporting economic and housing development
- Page 39: Include “Public Access” under Infrastructure to Serve Development for Marine Use
- Policy 2.3: Add mixed uses
- Policy 2.4: Add mixed uses
- Policy 2.5: Change “roadway networks” to “roadway and pedestrian networks”
- Policy 2.6: Add mixed uses
- Policy 2.7: Add “with tree lining and complete streets”
- Policy 2.8: Change “central area” to “central town green square area”, add “tree-lined” to describe uses
- Action 2.11.1: Add “Staff should also propose a purchase and retirement program for TDRs for agricultural and forested land preservation”
- Policy 2.14: Add “including walkable town squares integrating pocket park and green plazas”

# Individual Text Requests

More specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Add action under Goal 2: Encourage the installation of Rooftop and Parking Lot Solar Energy Installations on commercial and government buildings
- Add policy under Goal 2: Incentivize the installation of solar panel canopies on existing parking lots with an area over 1 acre
- Add action under Goal 2: Conduct an engineering study to determine feasibility and cost of rooftop and parking lot solar for all public buildings and facilities
- Add policy under Goal 4: Preserve and protect the native ecosystems, including forest and marine ecosystem health
- Add action under Goal 4: Establish a No-Net-Loss Forest Conservation ordinance
- Add action under Goal 4: Establish sustainable programs to Rebuild and expand wildlife corridors connecting forested areas to prevent fragmentation
- Add action under Goal 4: Incentivize increased size and density of riparian buffers along waterways and “green” runoff barriers

# Individual Text Requests

More specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Add policy under Goal 4: Apply environmentally responsible methodology to increase the value of the developed areas in population centers to the support of native ecosystems and community health
- Add action under Goal 4: Establish and maintain a healthy and sustainable urban and suburban tree canopy, especially in the development districts, town centers and village centers
- Add action under Goal 4: Establish a quantitative tree canopy goal for development districts, town centers and village centers and a plan to reach that goal
- Add action under Goal 4: Establish a Tree Board or Commission to oversee efforts and make decisions regarding tree canopy expansion and maintenance
- Add action under Goal 4: Incentivize the maintenance of Tree Lined Streets in existing neighborhoods and mandate tree line streets in new subdivisions
- Add policy under Goal 4: Increase the ecological value of landscaped areas to the local ecosystem

# Individual Text Requests

More specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Add action under Goal 4: Mandate the use of native (Eastern United States at least, preferably MD) plants for all landscaping, forest conservation mitigation planting, and runoff control planting
- Add policy under Goal 6: Preserve and protect the agricultural industries and ecosystems
- Add action under Goal 6: Continue to support collaboration in the agricultural industry, land preservation community, and the soil conservation district
- Add policy under Goal 6: Encourage expansion of agricultural industries and adjacent economic opportunities such as composting, agritourism and agrisolar projects
- Add action under Goal 6: Encourage and incentivize the growth of burgeoning agricultural industries such as composting and agritourism
- Add action under Goal 6: Support a pilot agrisolar project with interested members of the agricultural community

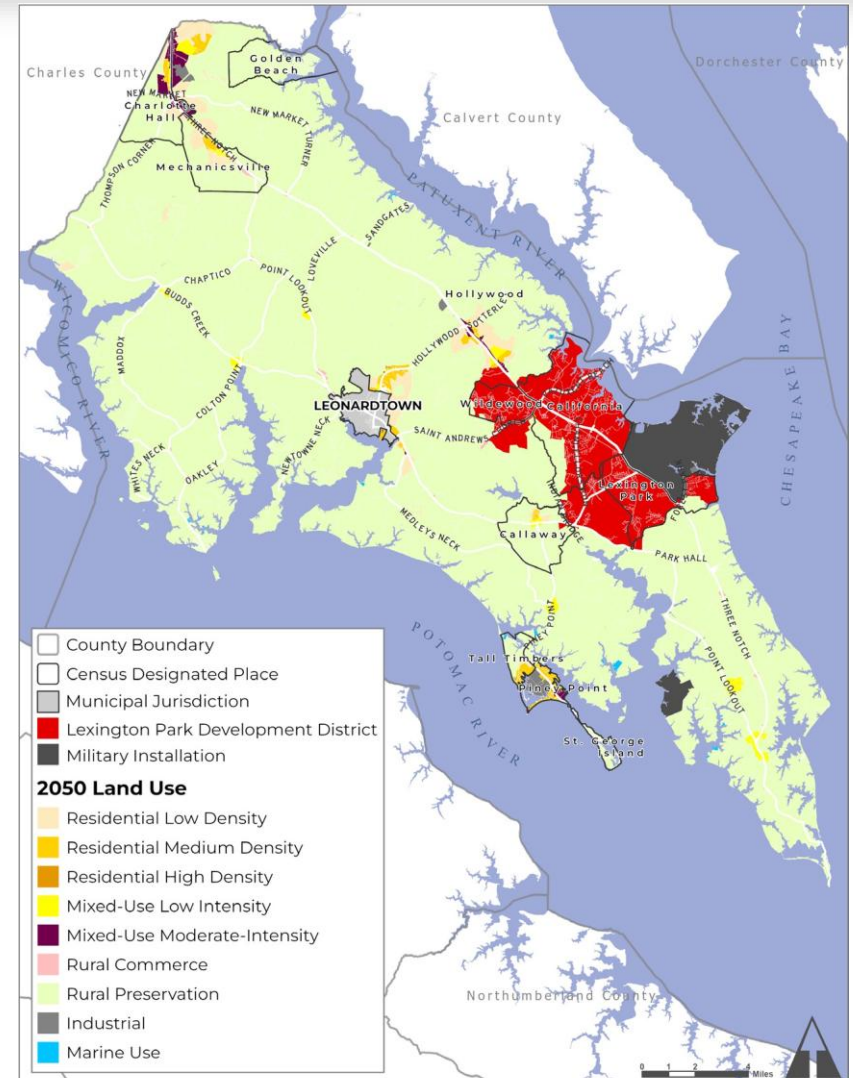
# Land Use Map



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# Proposed Land Use Map

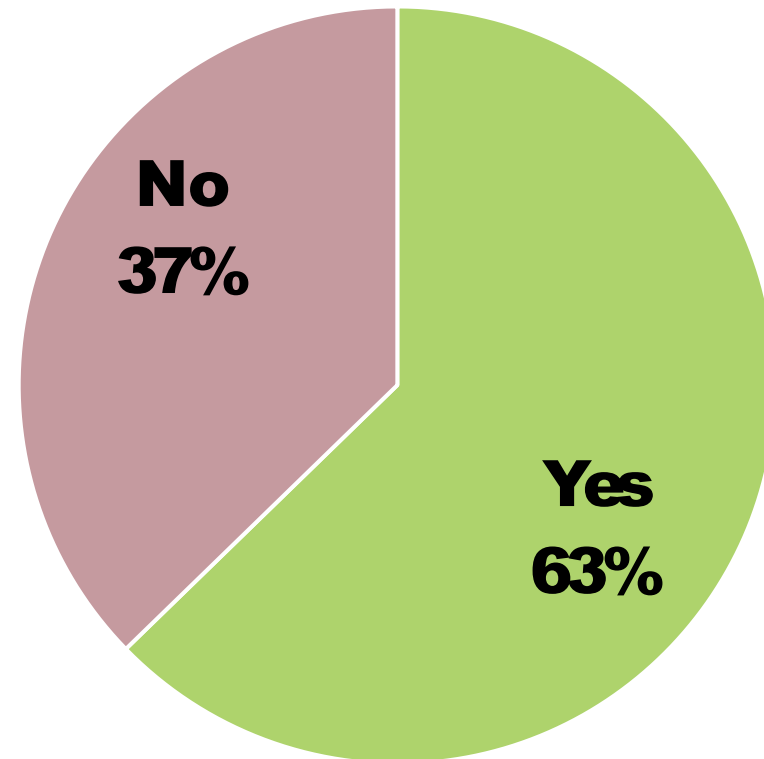
- The proposed Land Use Map is shown on the right
- For a detailed map with the capability to zoom in to see specific parcels, use the Interactive County Map:  
<https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/it/gis/>
  - Under 'Zoning & Regulatory', select 'Land Use (Proposed 2050)'



# Land Use Map Support

Do you support the draft  
Land Use Map as shown?

## Land Use Map



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on the Land Use Map:




- **Change designation of Piney Point** from Town Center to Village Center (access, environmental sensitivity, water supply constraints)
- **Ensure growth is sensitive to infrastructure limitations** (especially roads), environmental sensitivity, and preservation of existing rural character
- Some support for **targeted density or redevelopment**
- Support for rural and coastal areas to be low-density
- In LPDD, **minimize encroachment** of growth toward Hollywood and Leonardtown
- Some want to **loosen restrictions**, like limiting rural preservation areas to make it less expensive to buy or build in the County or expanding rural commerce areas
- Consider **allowing light industrial** (with environmental/noise constraints) in the Mixed-Use Land Use Categories
- **Allow commercial** in areas near airport (not rural preservation)
- In land use transition table, clarify "Protected Open Space Deleted" (i.e., defined in its own map, not suddenly unprotected)

# Location-Specific Feedback

- Participants shared location-specific feedback about the draft Land Use Map
- A large-scale printout of the Land Use Map was used at public engagement events
- Map pins and open-ended comment options were used for the online feedback





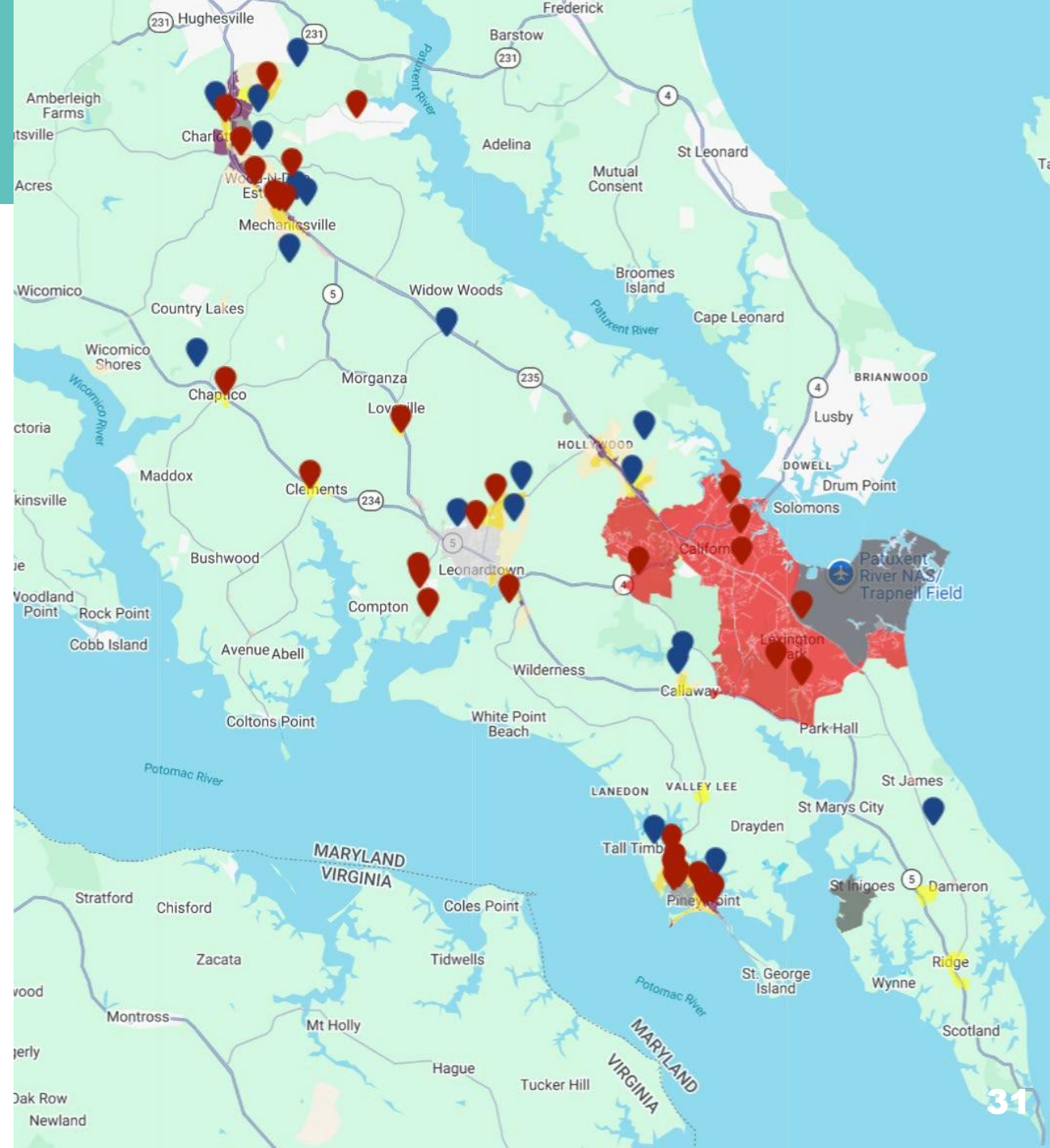
# Online Feedback

-  Municipal Jurisdiction
-  Lexington Park Development District
-  Military Installation

## 2050 Land Use

-  Residential Low Density
-  Residential Medium Density
-  Residential High Density
-  Mixed-Use Low Intensity
-  Mixed-Use Moderate-Intensity
-  Rural Commerce
-  Rural Preservation
-  Industrial
-  Marine Use

-  Less Intensity
-  More Intensity



# Feedback: Potential Locations to Change Land Use Map Intensity

*Summary of both in-person and online feedback      **Bold = 3+ responses***

## Locations for higher or moderate density

- **Charlotte Hall**
- **Mechanicsville**
- Wicomico Shores
- **Leonardtwn**
- Hollywood
- **Lexington Park**
- Piney Point
- **Callaway**
- Great Mills
- Intersection of Routes 235 and 247 (halfway between Hollywood and Mechanicsville)
- Along Route 235, south of Lexington Park
- Rural parts of County (too much rural preservation)

## Locations for less development

- **Charlotte Hall**
- **Mechanicsville**
- Loveville
- **Leonardtwn**
- **Southwest of Leonardtown (off Route 243)**
- **Hollywood**
- **Lexington Park**
- **Piney Point**
- Chaptico
- Clements
- Valley Lee
- Tall Timbers
- Golden Beach
- Along major corridors (Routes 4, 5, 6, and 235)

# Housing

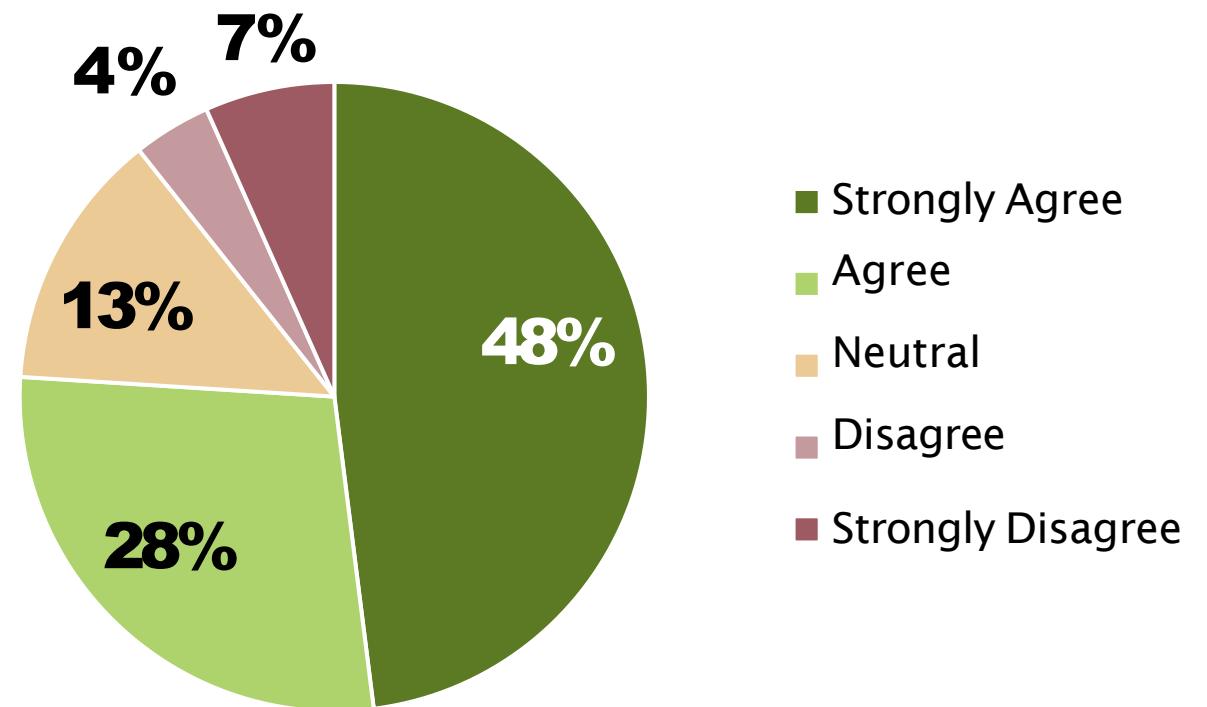


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# GOAL 1: SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN, ATTAINABLE HOUSING CHOICES

Through the policies included in this plan, including the Land Use Map (LUM), support development of housing options that provide a variety of price points, styles of housing, and types of neighborhoods to meet the diverse needs of the County's current and future residents. This should include a special focus on housing for seniors and supporting workforce and missing middle housing options.

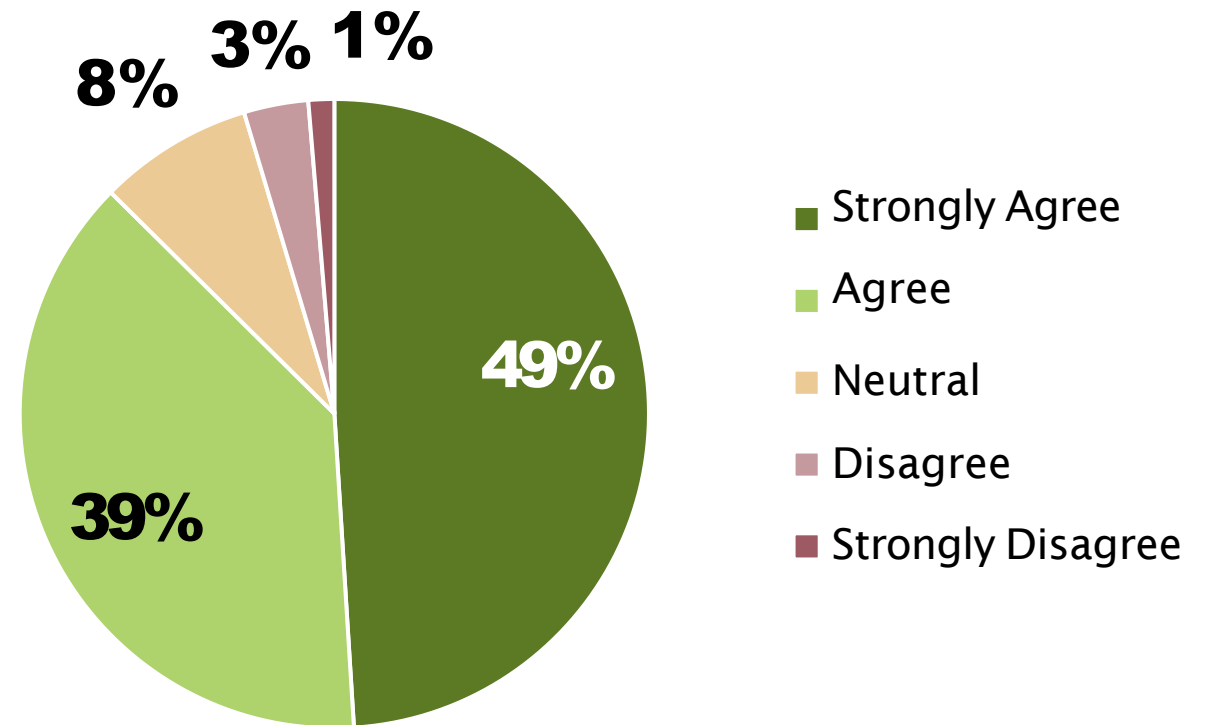
## Housing Goal 1



# GOAL 2: ENCOURAGE THE MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP OF EXISTING HOUSING

Enhance the livability of both existing neighborhoods and new housing developments by encouraging and fostering the maintenance and upkeep of existing housing.

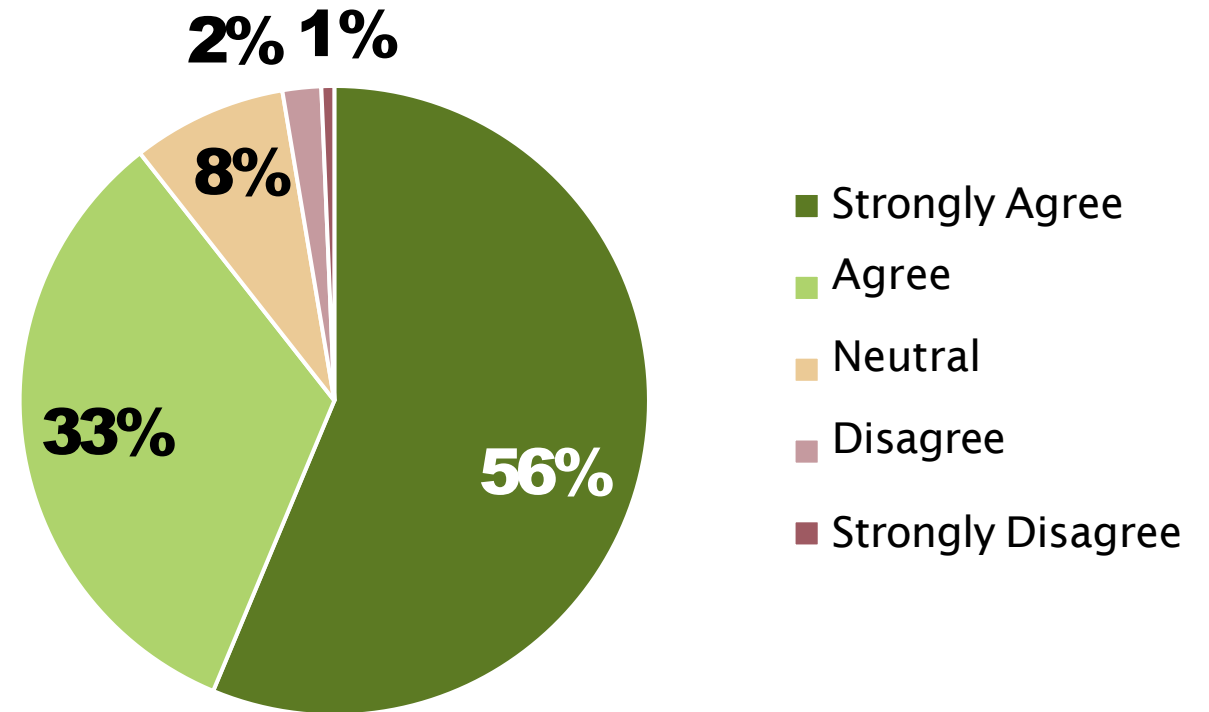
## Housing Goal 2



# GOAL 3: FOSTER RURAL AND NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION

Continue to support the protection of rural lands and neighborhoods that carry economic importance and historic character in St. Mary's County.

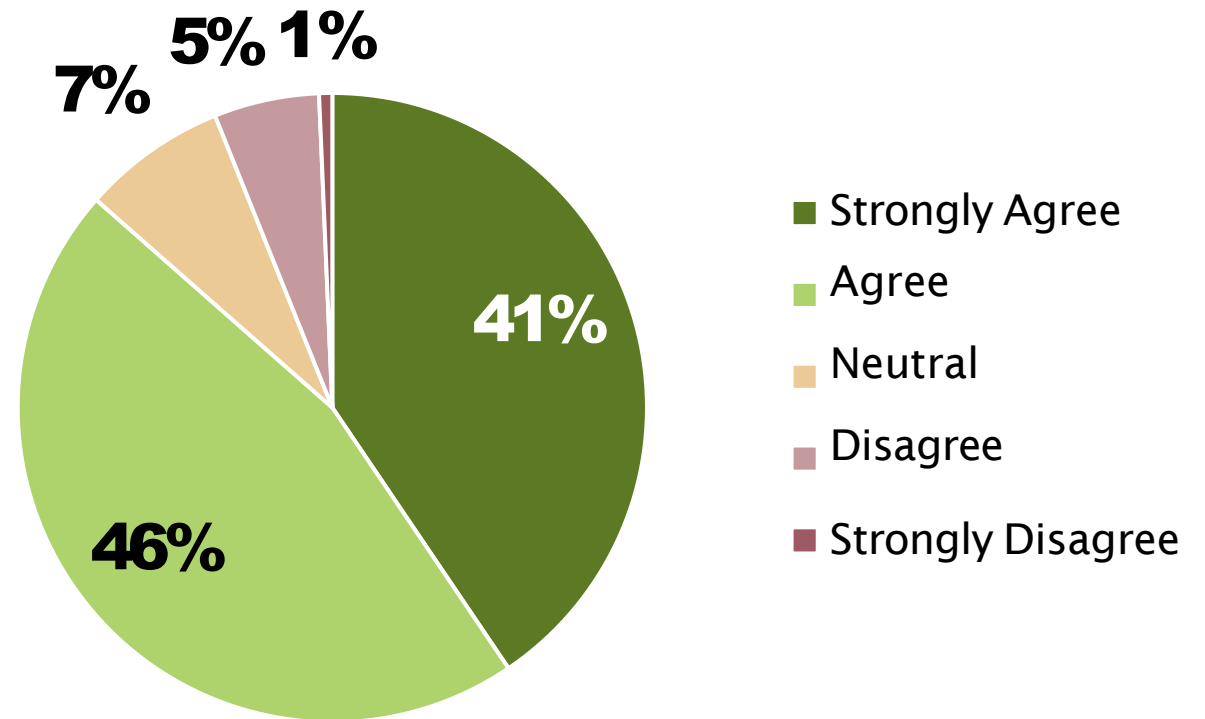
## Housing Goal 3



# GOAL 4: ENHANCE COMMUNITY CHARACTER OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND SUPPORT QUALITY DESIGN OF NEW NEIGHBORHOODS

Foster the protection of neighborhood character by revitalizing existing communities and ensuring new development integrates seamlessly through high-quality design that respects the local context.

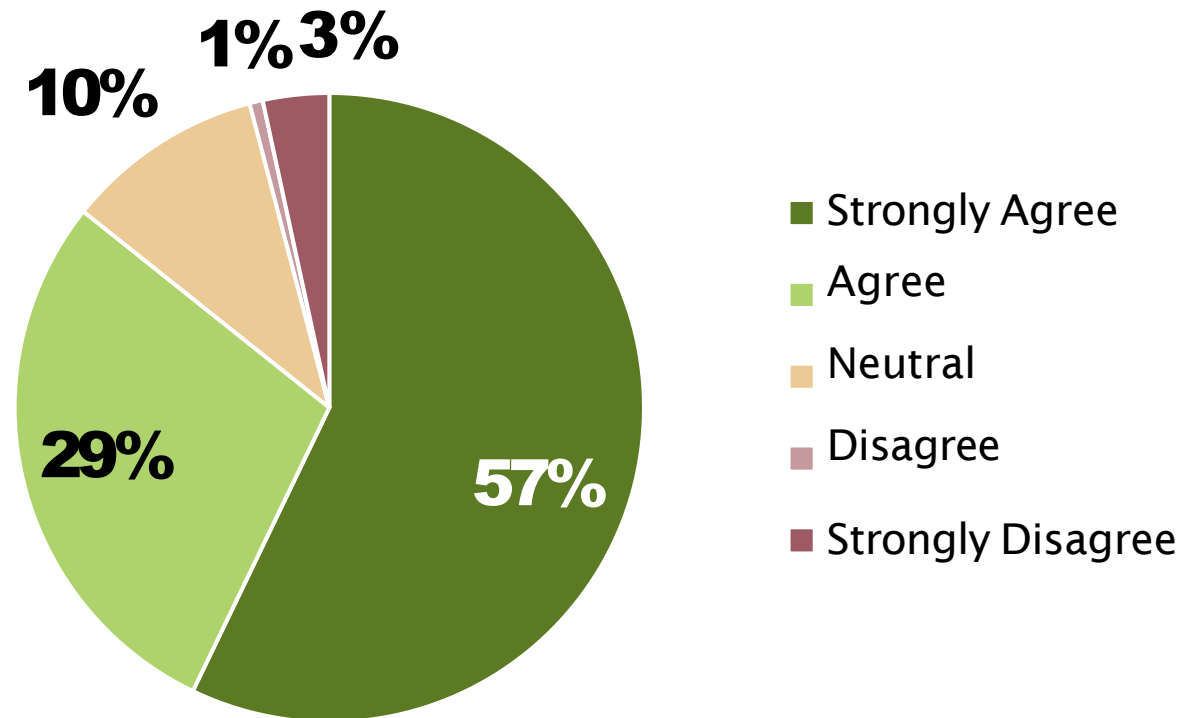
## Housing Goal 4



# GOAL 5: SUPPORT FISCAL EFFICIENCY BY REQUIRING DEVELOPERS TO PROVIDE NEEDED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Require developers to provide essential infrastructure for new development to reduce financial burden on existing residents and support the County's fiscal efficiency.

## Housing Goal 5



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Housing:

- Broad **support for attainable housing**
  - General support for a range of lower-cost housing types, especially starter homes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and tiny homes
  - Opinions on townhomes, apartments, mixed-use residential, and manufactured housing are mixed
  - Reconsider minimum house size rules
- Disagreements about **housing location**
  - Concern about high density housing in rural or established neighborhoods
  - Character should not block well-located infill, mixed use, or transit-accessible housing
- Encourage maintenance and upkeep, but **do not enforce subjective, HOA-like standards**
- Link multifamily housing to **transit** and avoid car-only subdivisions
- Split views on **who should pay for new infrastructure** (developer or County)
- More **transitional/supportive housing** (to address housing insecurity)
- **Streamline review timelines** (minimize cost and uncertainty)
- Do not increase taxes

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Add new policy under Goal 3: Address protection of rural lands in relation to new housing in rural areas. Include ideas like clustering of new homes on small lots that minimize fragmentation and impact of development and roads on agriculture, forests, and sensitive lands
- Policy 4.5: Add “tree lined town squares” to first bullet, “and connected sidewalks” to second bullet”, and “locally and regionally connected” to fourth bullet
- Policy 4.5: Add support for trails between neighborhoods too, not just within

# Economic Development

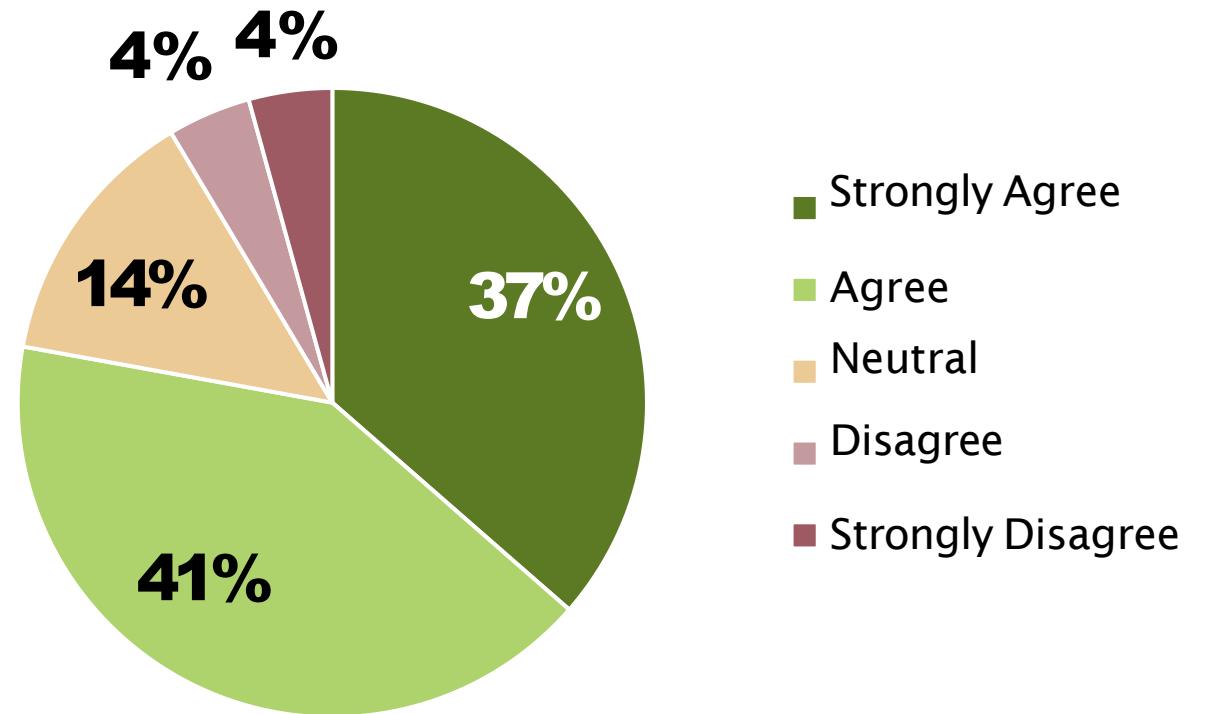


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# GOAL 1: CONTINUE TO PROTECT, ENHANCE, AND DIVERSIFY THE COUNTY'S ECONOMIC BASE

Continue to protect, enhance, and diversify the county's economic base to ensure long-term stability and prosperity, in line with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDDS).

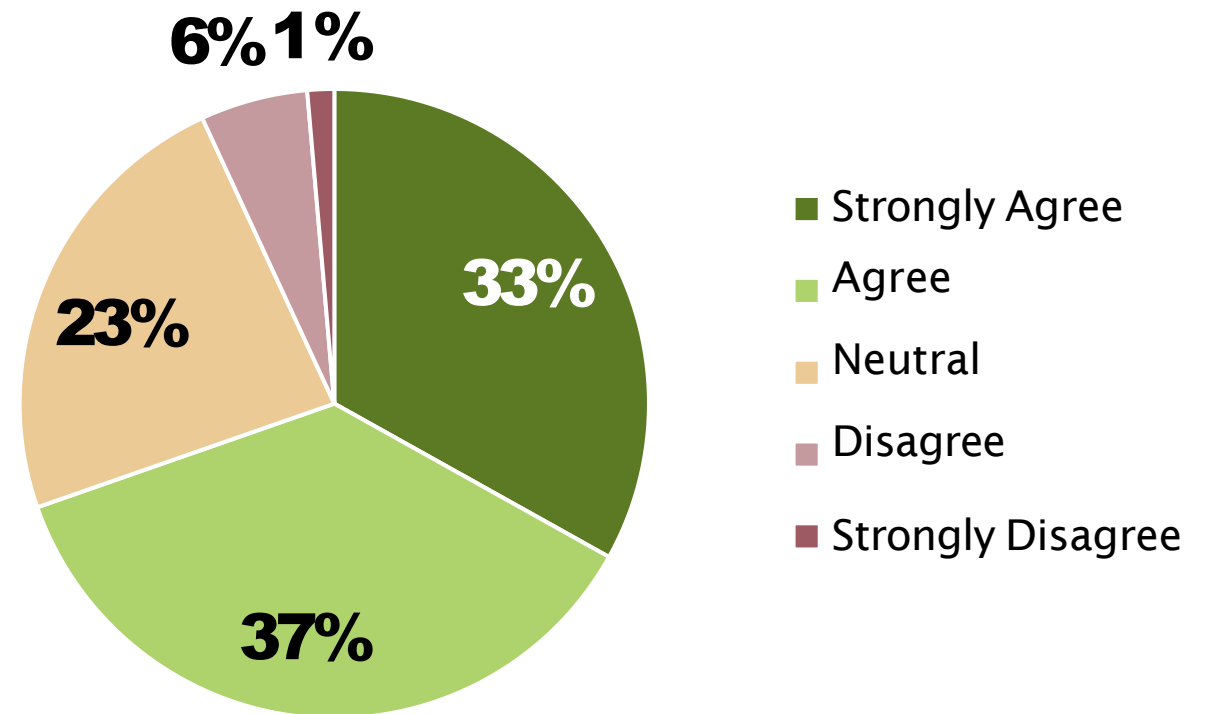
## Economic Development Goal 1



## GOAL 2: CENTER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND TALENT ATTRACTION AS CORE STRATEGIES

Center workforce development and talent attraction as core economic development strategies. Promote the county and region as an emerging employment center of a highly educated and skilled workforce. These efforts will align with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

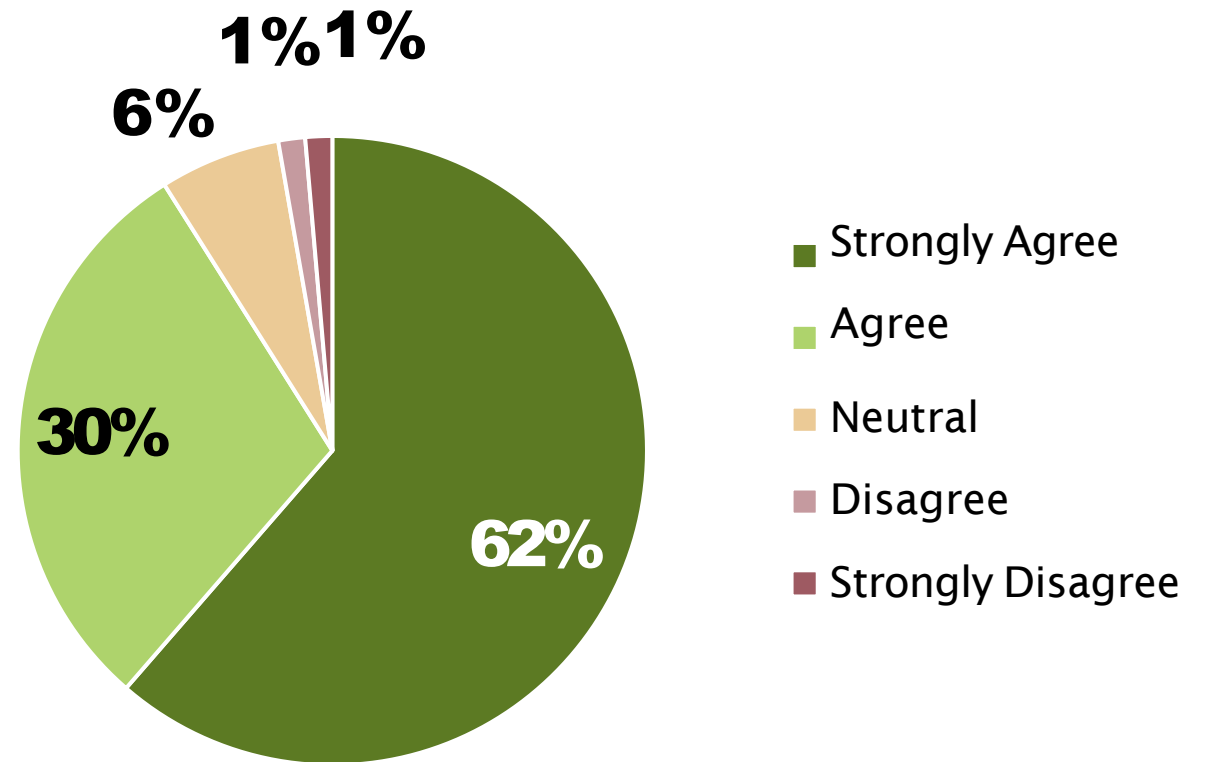
### Economic Development Goal 2



# GOAL 3: RECOGNIZE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SMALL BUSINESSES TO QUALITY OF LIFE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Recognize the contributions of small businesses to both quality of life and economic development, and advance policies that encourage more unique, locally owned businesses to open, in line with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

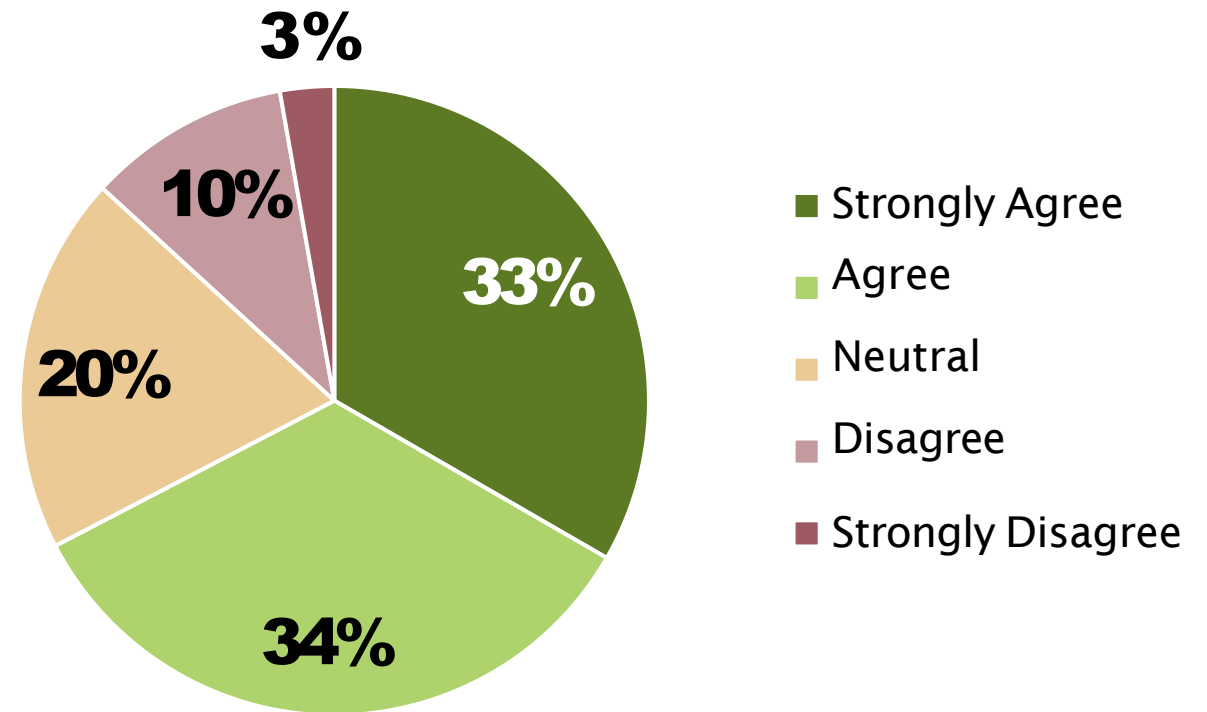
## Economic Development Goal 3



# GOAL 4: SUPPORT AND EXPAND TOURISM

Support and emphasize existing, unique county assets and rural setting to expand tourism and bring more tax revenue into the county, in line with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

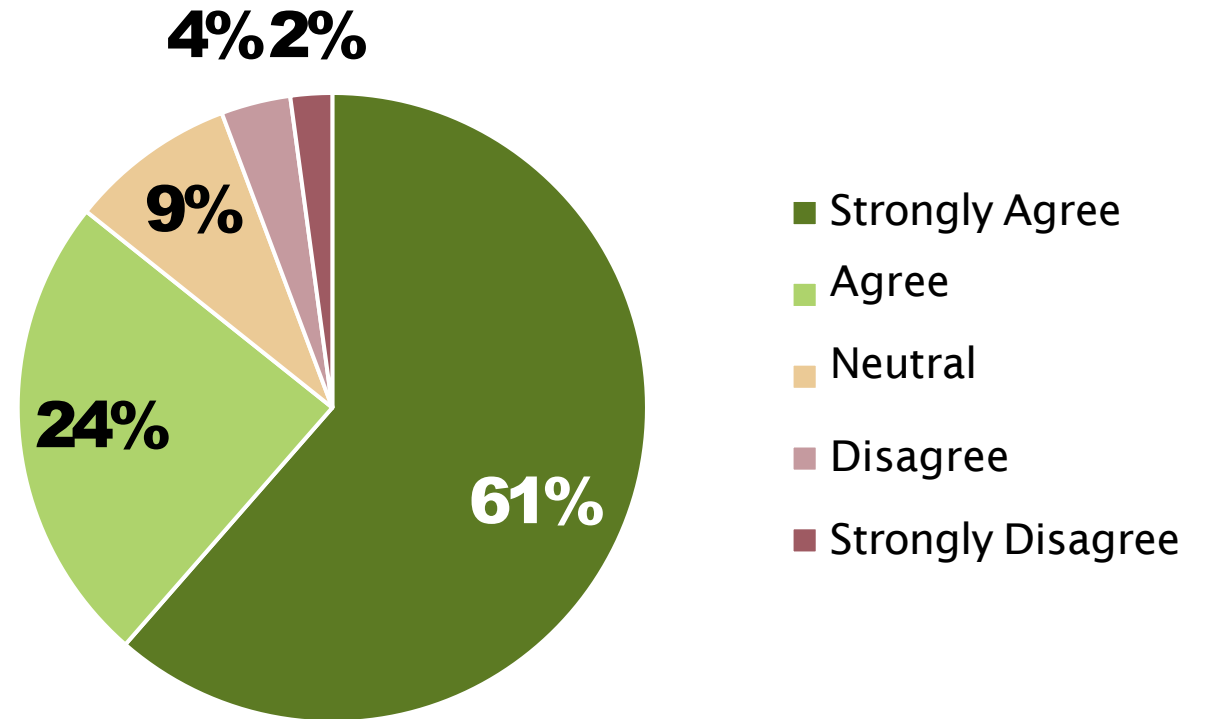
## Economic Development Goal 4



# GOAL 5: PROMOTE A ROBUST, DIVERSE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SECTOR

## Economic Development Goal 5

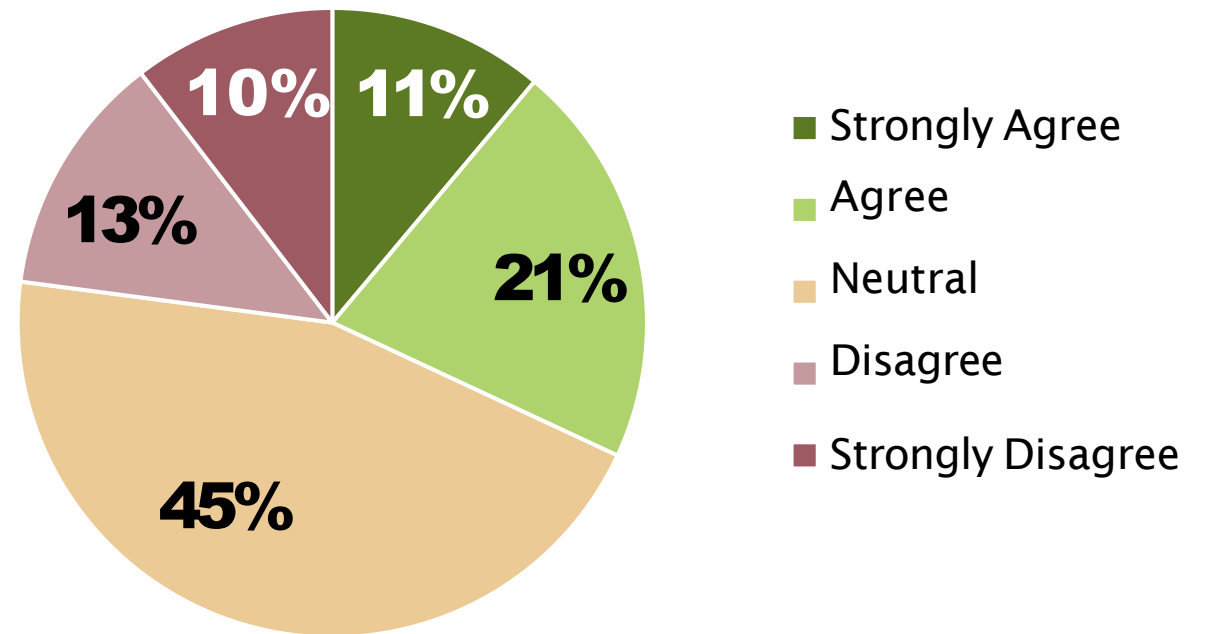
Promote a robust, diverse agriculture, aquaculture, fishing, and forestry sector that preserves open spaces and strengthens traditional farming, in line with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).



# GOAL 6: PROMOTE AND PROTECT APPROPRIATE MINING ACTIVITY

Promote and protect the continued economic viability of the mining industry and mineral resources in St. Mary's County, in line with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

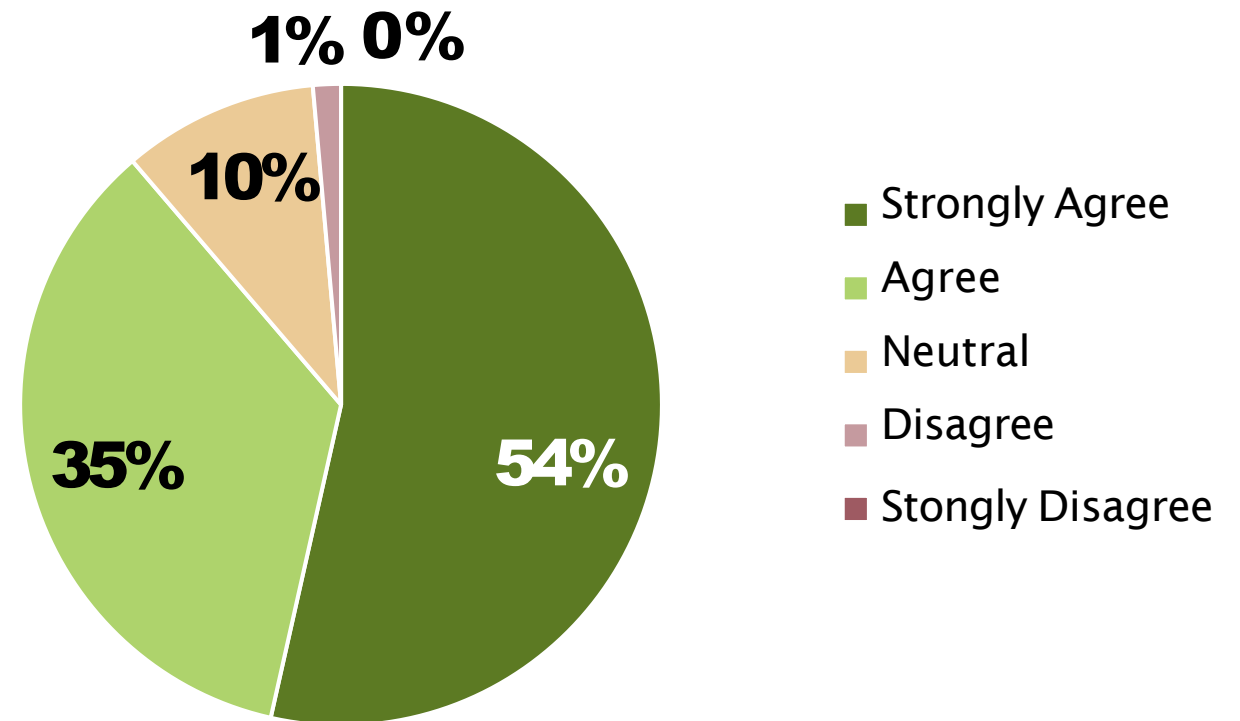
## Economic Development Goal 6



# GOAL 7: SUPPORT FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE ACTIVITIES

Enhance fish stock and markets for local watermen and enhance recreational fishing opportunities by supporting fisheries and aquaculture activities, in line with the County's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

## Economic Development Goal 7



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Economic Development:

- Prioritize **quality of life**
- Support mixed-use redevelopment of existing centers
- Increase support for **St. Mary's Arts Council**
- Address septic and water quality issues to support tourism, aquaculture, and overall livability
- Tighten **oversight of mining impacts** (water quality, trucking); minimize mining and dig sites when possible
- Emphasize preparations for 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Maryland in 2034
- Support for **diversification**; avoid overreliance on NAS while maintaining strong relationship with Navy
- **Local-first economy**
  - Protect and grow locally-owned small businesses
  - Support local and small-scale economic development, rural commerce, and cottage industries
  - Discourage big-box and chain retail
- Support **workforce development**
  - Expand scholarships and credential pathways
  - **Support trades**
  - Address childcare, workforce housing, and transportation so residents can take and keep local jobs

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Page 68: Add “and waterways” to end of last sentence in first paragraph
- Policy 1.6: Strengthen language (provide incentives for redevelopment)
- Goal 2: Explicitly add support for education and helping students
- Goal 5: Add non-traditional farming (not just “traditional farming”)
- Goal 5: Change title to include “Environmentally Sustainable”
- Goal 7: Change “fisheries” to “marine resources”
- Goal 7: Change title to “Support Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Activities”
- Action 7.1.1: Explicitly include local organizations (collaboration to manage aquaculture)
- Add a Policy 7.4 to enhance recreational opportunities

# Environment and Natural Resources

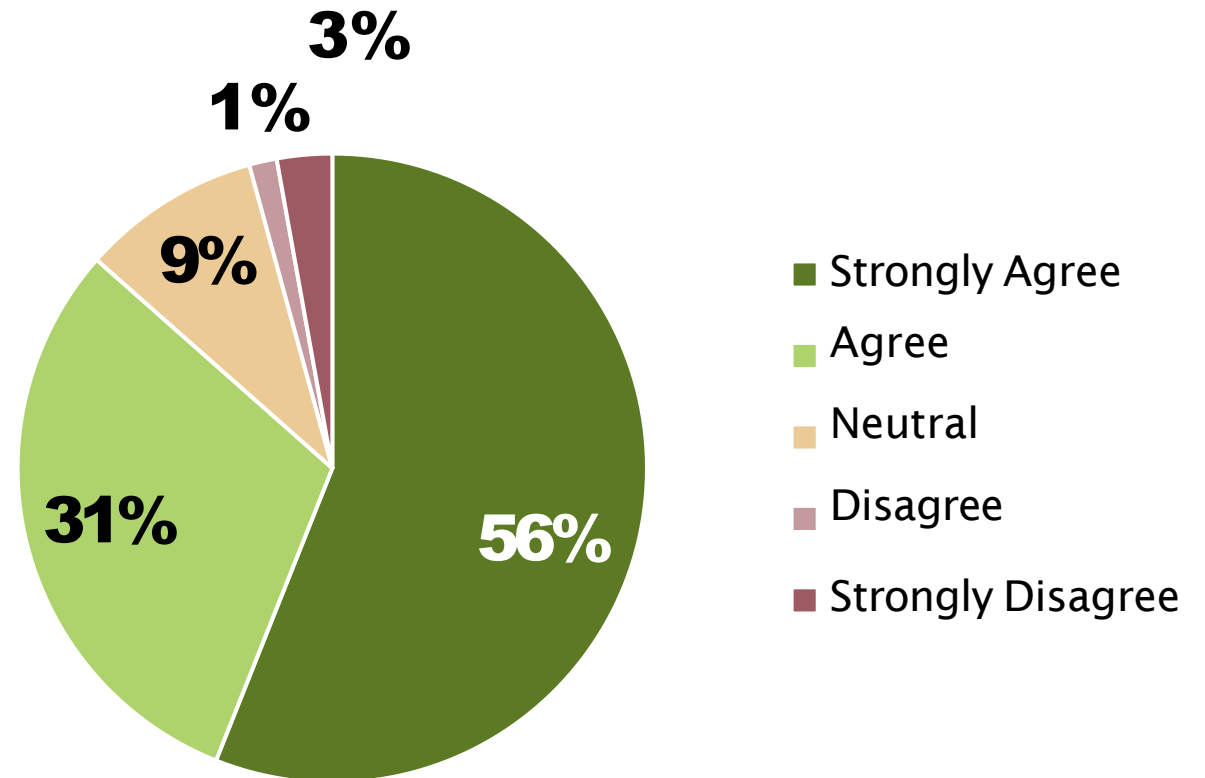


**ST. MARY'S 2050**  
CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

# GOAL 1: PROTECT AND ENHANCE SENSITIVE AREAS AND AREAS OF CRITICAL STATE CONCERN

Protect and enhance Areas of Critical State Concern, including the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, State-designated habitats, and other environmentally sensitive lands, to safeguard ecological functions and ensure compliance with State mandates. Sensitive Areas and Areas of Critical State Concern were intentionally grouped under a shared goal because they function as an integrated resource protection system rather than as distinct, unrelated policy domains. Areas of Critical State Concern fall squarely within the statutory intent of §3-104 of the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This structure strengthens policy clarity, reflects on-the-ground implementation, and supports a coordinated approach to environmental stewardship consistent with both local planning objectives and State mandates.

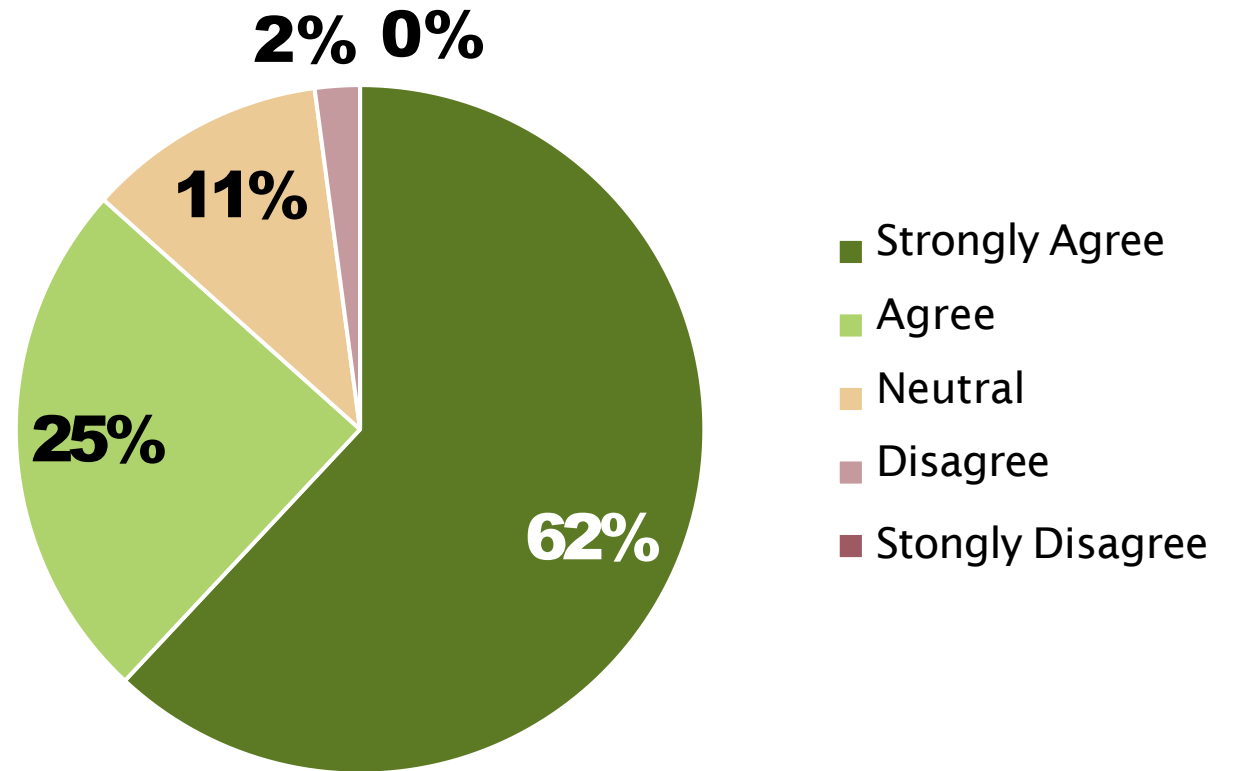
## Environment & Natural Resources Goal 1



# GOAL 2: MAINTAIN FARMING AS A VIABLE ECONOMIC ENGINE

Maintain farming as a viable and resilient industry that supports local food production, strengthens the rural economy, and sustains the working landscapes of St. Mary's County.

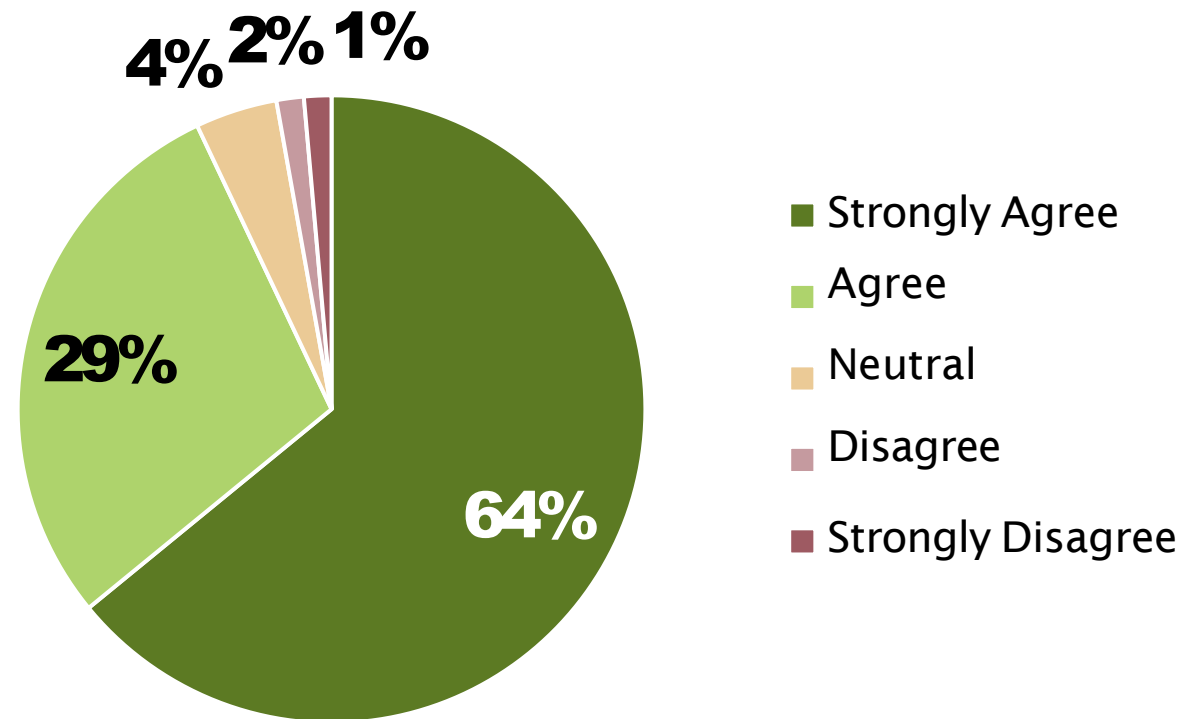
**Environment & Natural Resources Goal 2**



# GOAL 3: PROTECT AND CONSERVE SIGNIFICANT RESOURCE AREAS

Protect and conserve significant resource areas, including locally identified green infrastructure, forests, wetlands, streams, scenic landscapes, cultural and historic resources, mineral lands, and shoreline habitats, to sustain biodiversity, community character, and long-term land productivity.

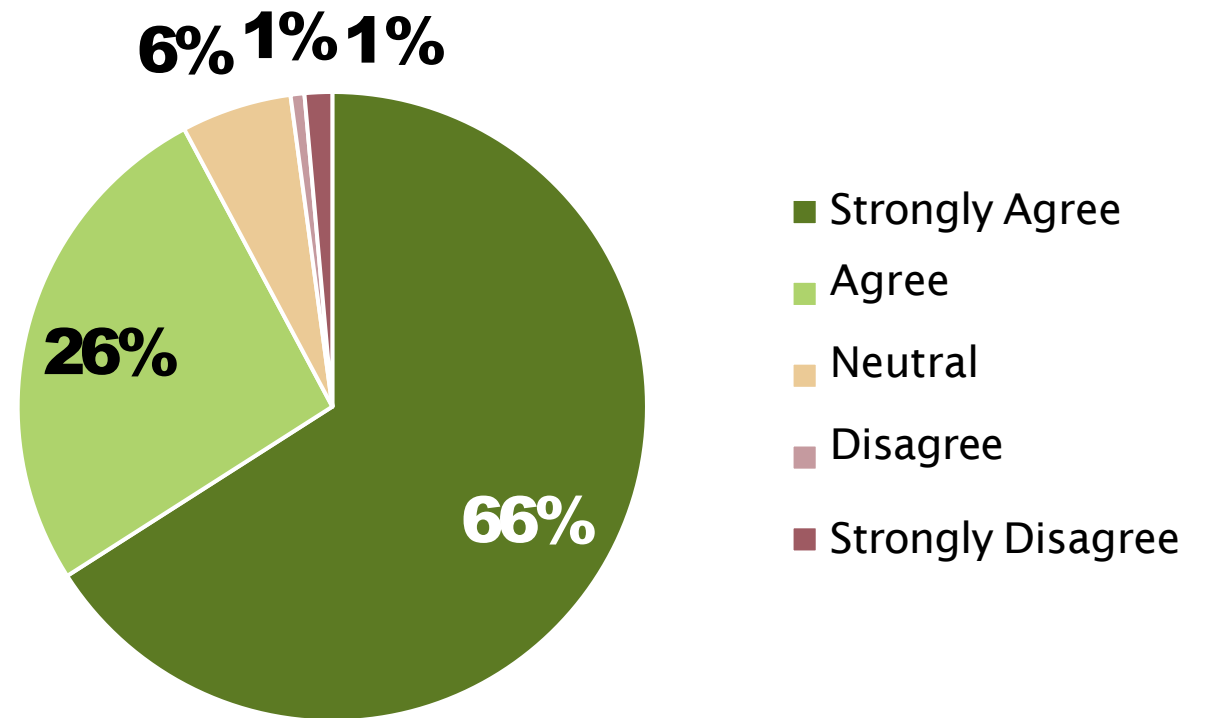
## Environment & Natural Resources Goal 3



# GOAL 4: PROTECT AND ENHANCE WATER RESOURCES

Reduce nutrient and sediment pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries through Tributary Strategies, partnerships, and enforcement of water quality standards.

**Environment & Natural Resources Goal 4**



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Environment and Natural Resources:

- Make **protections** for land, water, and working landscapes **durable** and **consistently enforced**
- Balance protections with allowing **reasonable property use**
- Create/clarify a County environmental management function to coordinate plans, resources, and interagency follow through
- Formalize **partnerships with local organizations** for stewardship and education
- **Protect mature trees** and design around them; support canopy retention
- Support understory plants (bushes and forbs) to provide wildlife habitat
- Support for **bird-safe design**
- Add support for **composing** and sustainable infrastructure
- Consider becoming a **Dark Sky Community**
- Consider becoming a **Quiet Community**
- Strengthen **construction site controls** to address runoff, with consistent enforcement
- Support **microgrids**, locally-produced electric power (ideally renewable to reduce potential disruptions), and power storage
- Some opposition to **solar farms** in rural/scenic settings
- **Work with local organizations** to strengthen stewardship of marine resources and explicitly recognize their roles
- Include a **map of permanently protected lands**

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Policy 1.1. Add “and use updated maps to make project and policy decisions”
- Action 1.1.2: Add “Identify areas in the county without green infrastructure and develop guidance to direct use of tree planting efforts to enhance tree canopy”
- Policy 1.2: Include mention of river “sanctuary” areas where oysters and other marine wildlife are being protected
- Action 1.3.1: Add “and update fee-in-lieu programs in line with inflation and regional norms”
- Action 1.3.2: Replace “and mitigation of unavoidable clearing” with “establishment of wildlife corridors, and replanting plans executed in a timely fashion when there is a need for mitigation of unavoidable clearing”
- Action 1.3.2: Require developers to work around as much existing tree cover as possible (mature trees are worth much more than saplings)

# Individual Text Requests

More specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Action 1.3.3: Add “ preservation” to list
- Action 1.4.4: Mention river “sanctuary” areas
- Policy 1.5: Add description
- Add new policy 1.6: Strengthen Shoreline Protection and Hazard Mitigation— Facilitate shoreline stabilization, hazard mitigation, and land conservation practices that balance property protection with habitat preservation prioritizing nature based solutions such as buffer plantings, submerged aquatic vegetation, and oyster reefs.
- Add new action 1.6.1: Promote Living Shorelines—Promote use of living shoreline designs for erosion control wherever feasible including nature based solutions such as buffer plantings, submerged aquatic vegetation, and oyster reefs.

# Individual Text Requests

More specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Policy 2.3 and Action 2.3.1: Mention “aquaculture” in both places
- Goal 3: Mention “marine resources”
- Action 3.1.1 Include bird-safe infrastructure and architecture
- Add new policy 3.5: Support the Development of Marine Resources — Focus on the development of Marine Resources including commercial fishing, aquaculture, recreation, marinas, and waterfront economic activities
- Policy 4.1 Include role of non-governmental organizations in stewardship of marine resources
- Action 4.2.3: Add graywater use

# Transportation

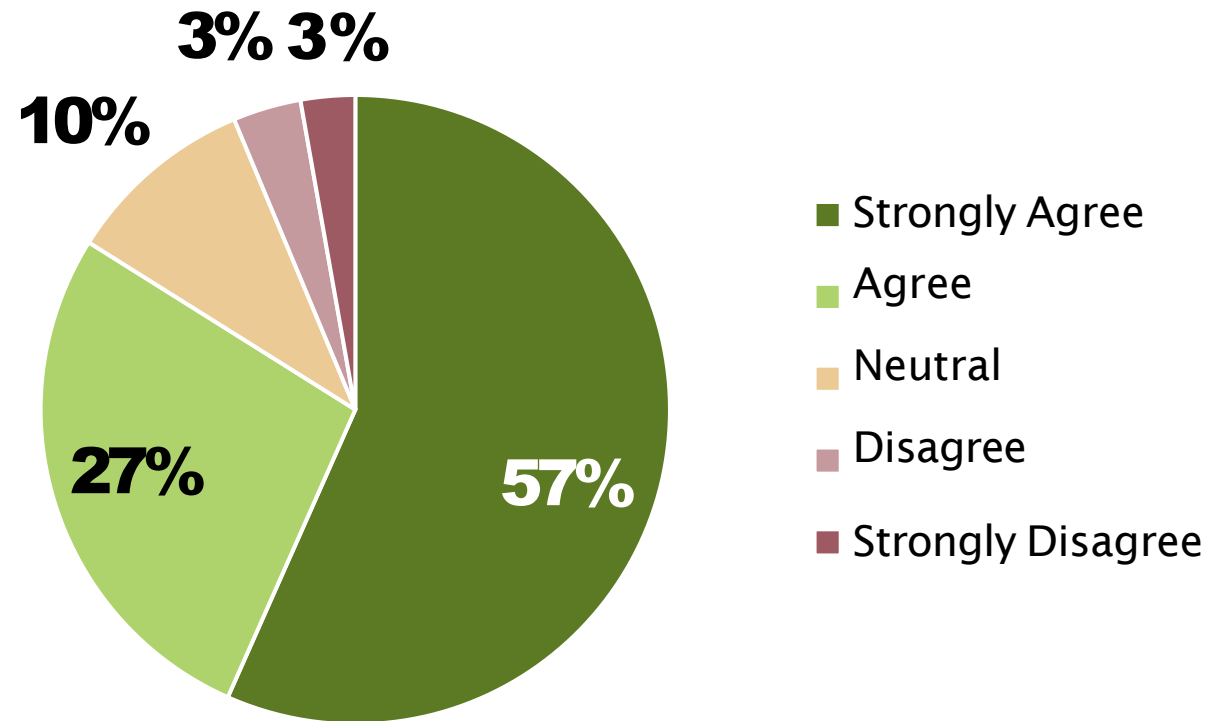


**ST. MARY'S 2050**  
CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

# GOAL 1: ENSURE A SAFE AND COMPLETE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Develop and maintain a continuous and accessible system of sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian pathways that connects the community and ensures safety for all residents.

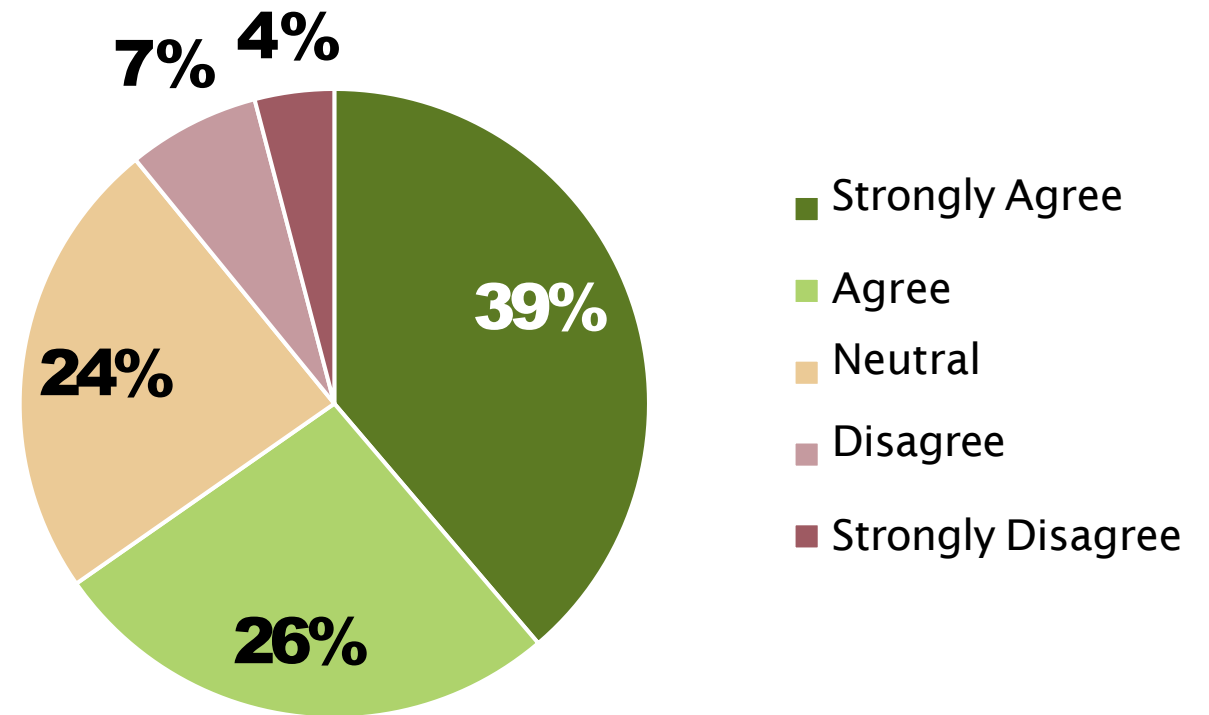
## Transportation Goal 1



## GOAL 2: PROMOTE BICYCLING AS A VIABLE TRANSPORTATION MODE IN THE GROWTH AREAS

Establish a comprehensive bicycle network supported by essential amenities and public awareness, making cycling a safe, convenient, and attractive option for transportation and recreation.

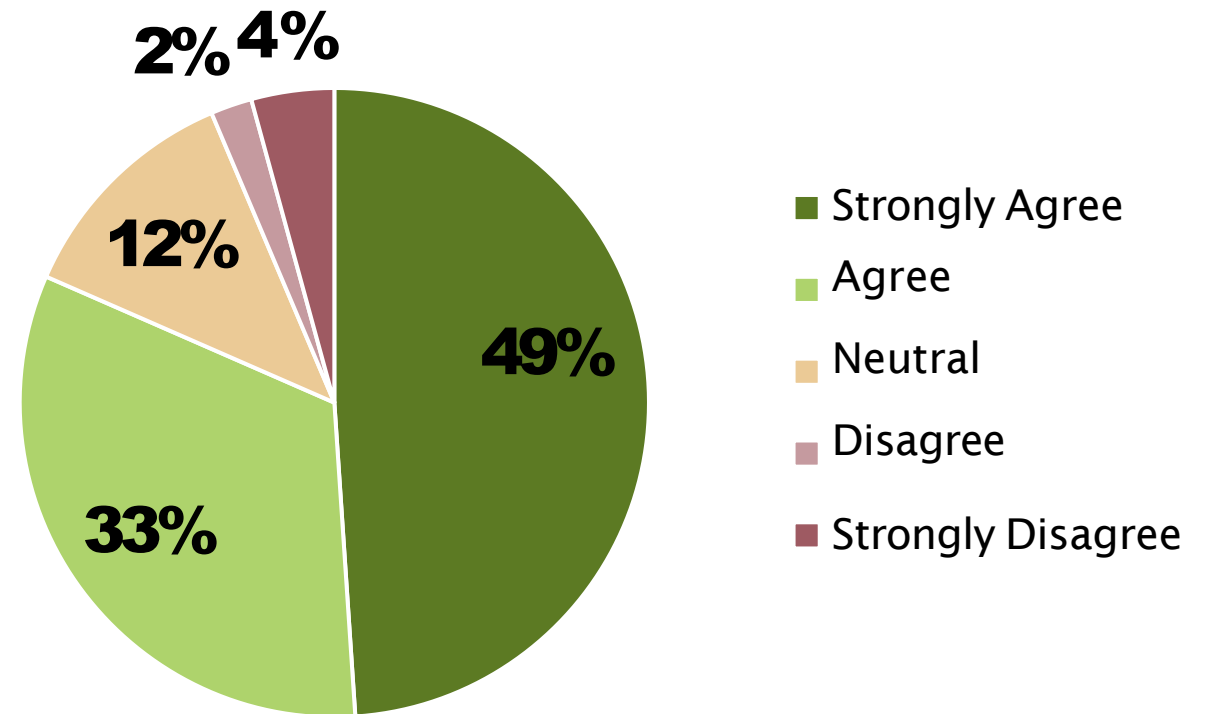
### Transportation Goal 2



# GOAL 3: ACHIEVE FULL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

Create a fully integrated transportation system where developments, travel modes, and key destinations are seamlessly linked, reducing travel distances and improving traffic flow.

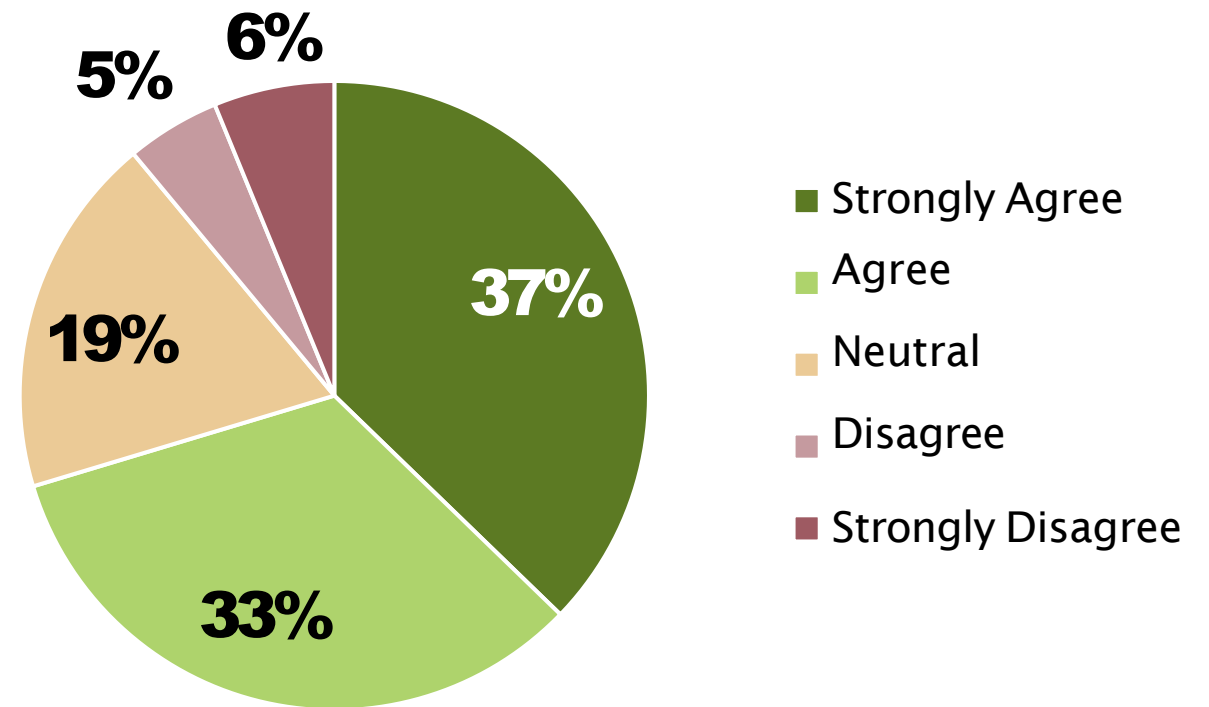
## Transportation Goal 3



# GOAL 4: SECURE LONG-RANGE FUNDING AND MULTI-MODAL SYSTEM VIABILITY

Ensure the long-term success of the multi-modal network through strategic financial planning, support for long-range bicycle and pedestrian projects, preservation of future transit corridors, and expansion of public transportation.

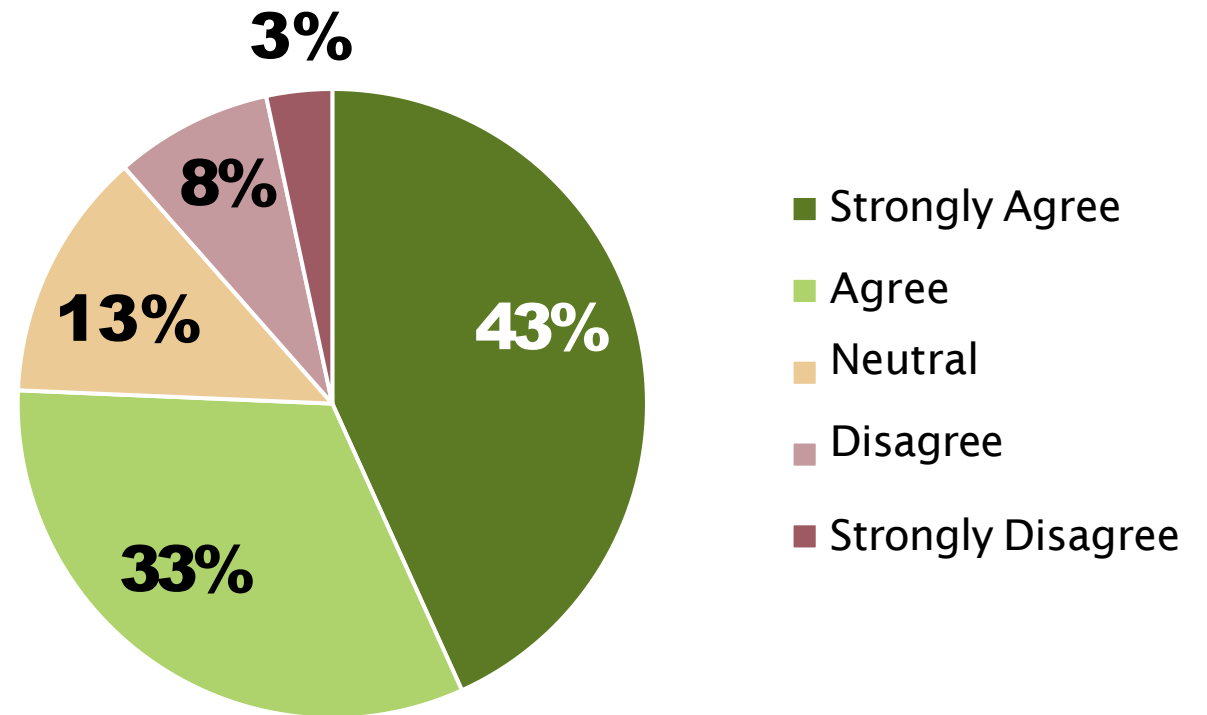
## Transportation Goal 4



# GOAL 5: INTEGRATE TRAILS AND PATHWAYS INTO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Weave a network of recreational and transportation trails into the fabric of the community by incorporating them into all new land use and development projects.

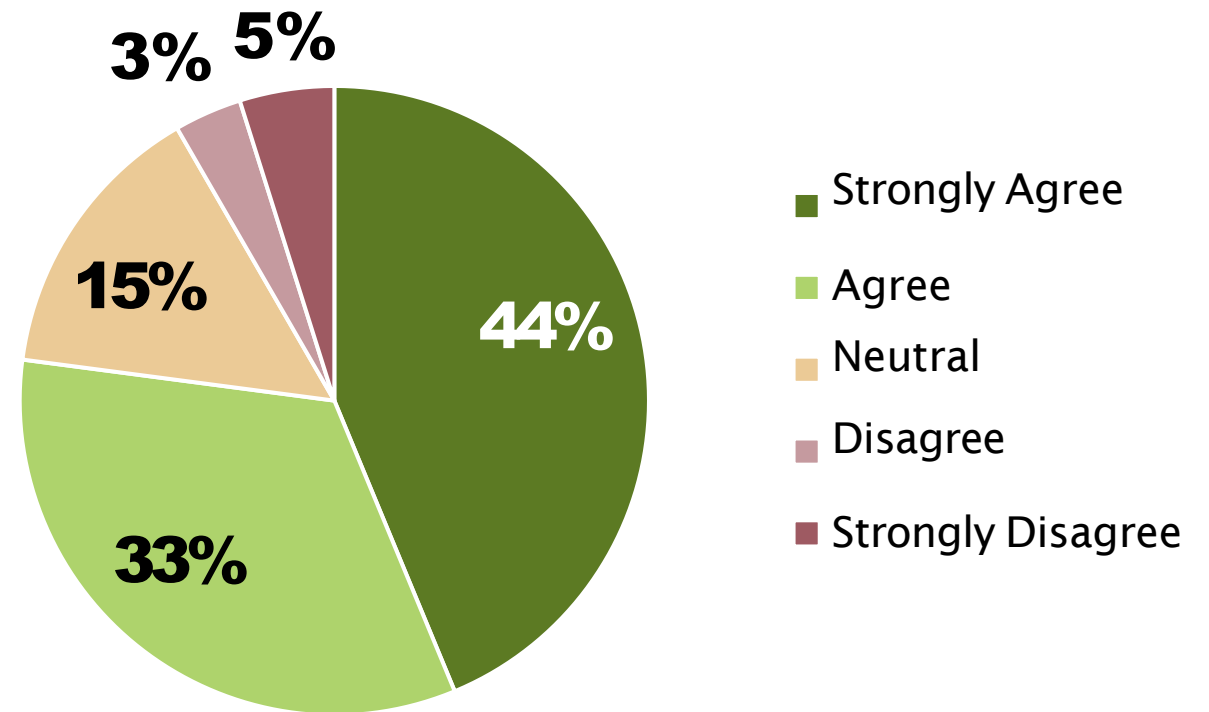
## Transportation Goal 5



# GOAL 6: CONCENTRATE DEVELOPMENT TO PRESERVE REGIONAL HIGHWAY CAPACITY

Strategically guide new development into designated Growth Areas, promoting well-connected local road networks while preserving the capacity and function of state highways for regional and through traffic.

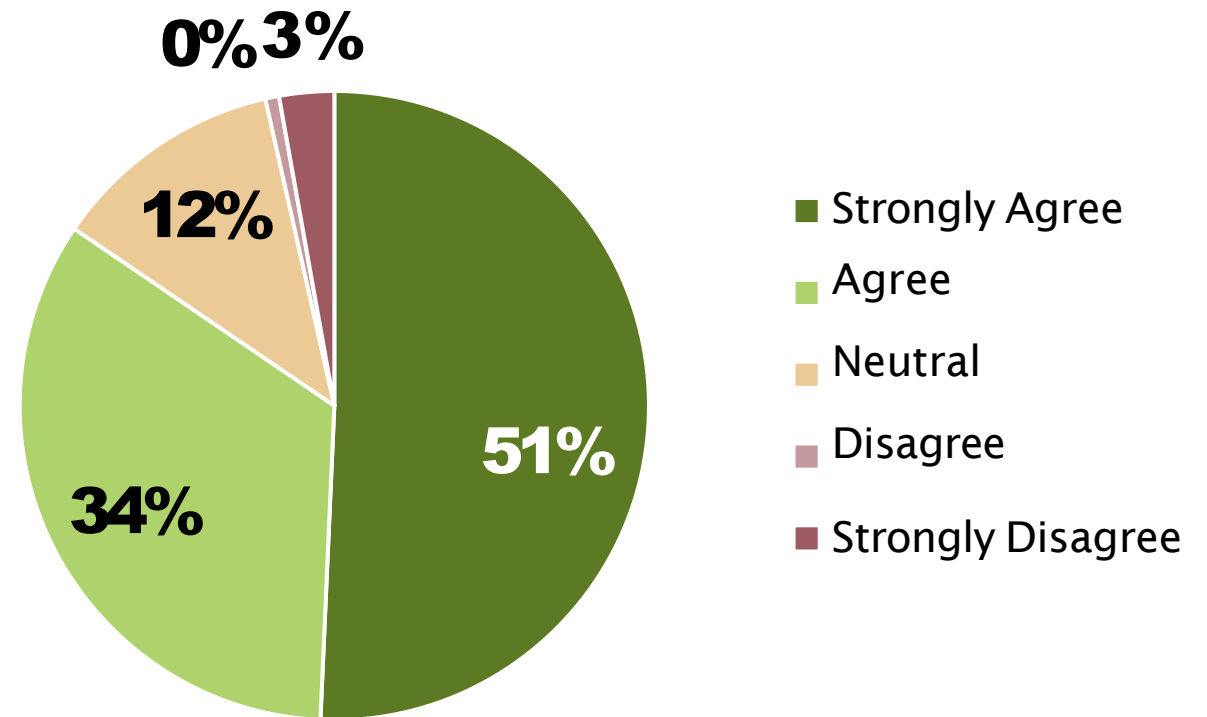
## Transportation Goal 6



# GOAL 7: CREATE A SAFE, EFFICIENT, AND INTEGRATED ROADWAY SYSTEM

Develop and maintain a roadway system that is safe, efficient, and economical for all modes of transportation, supporting community revitalization, economic development, and environmental stewardship.

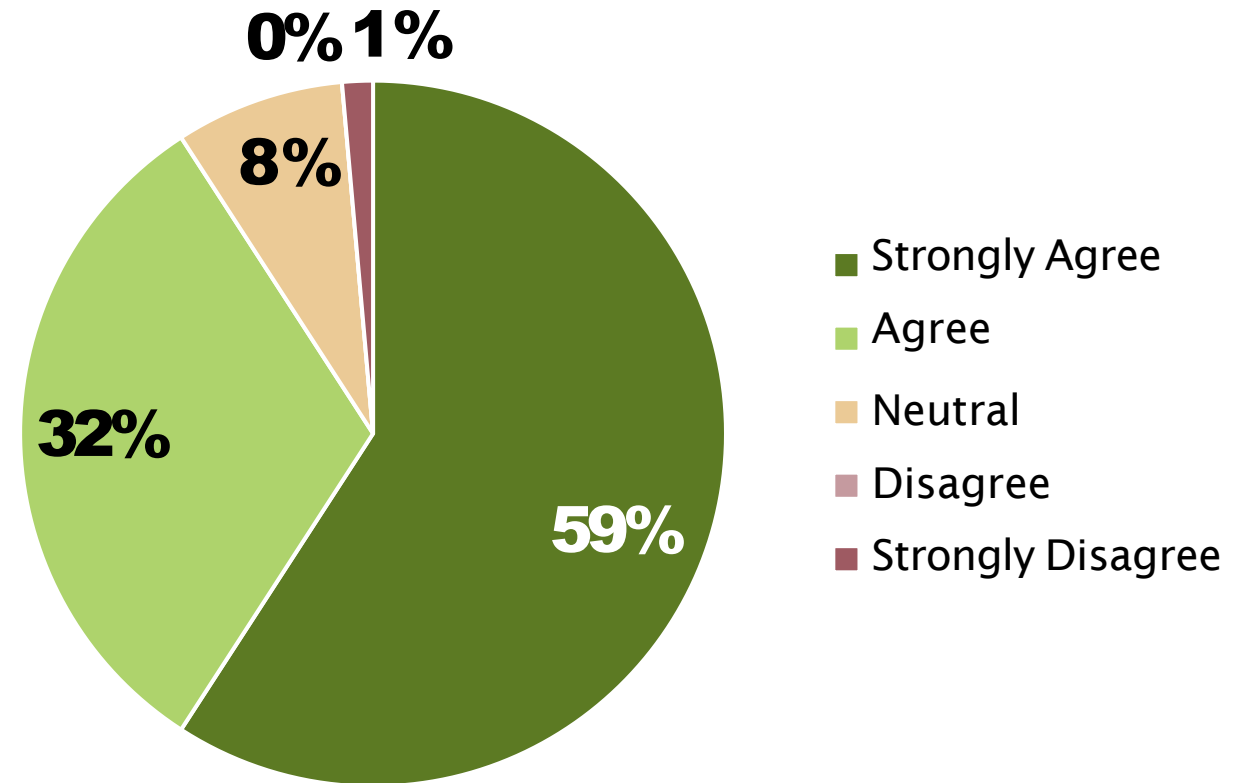
## Transportation Goal 7



# GOAL 8: ENHANCE ROADWAY SAFETY FOR ALL USERS AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Proactively improve roadway safety by reducing conflict locations and integrating the unique cultural needs of all communities, including the Amish and Mennonite populations.

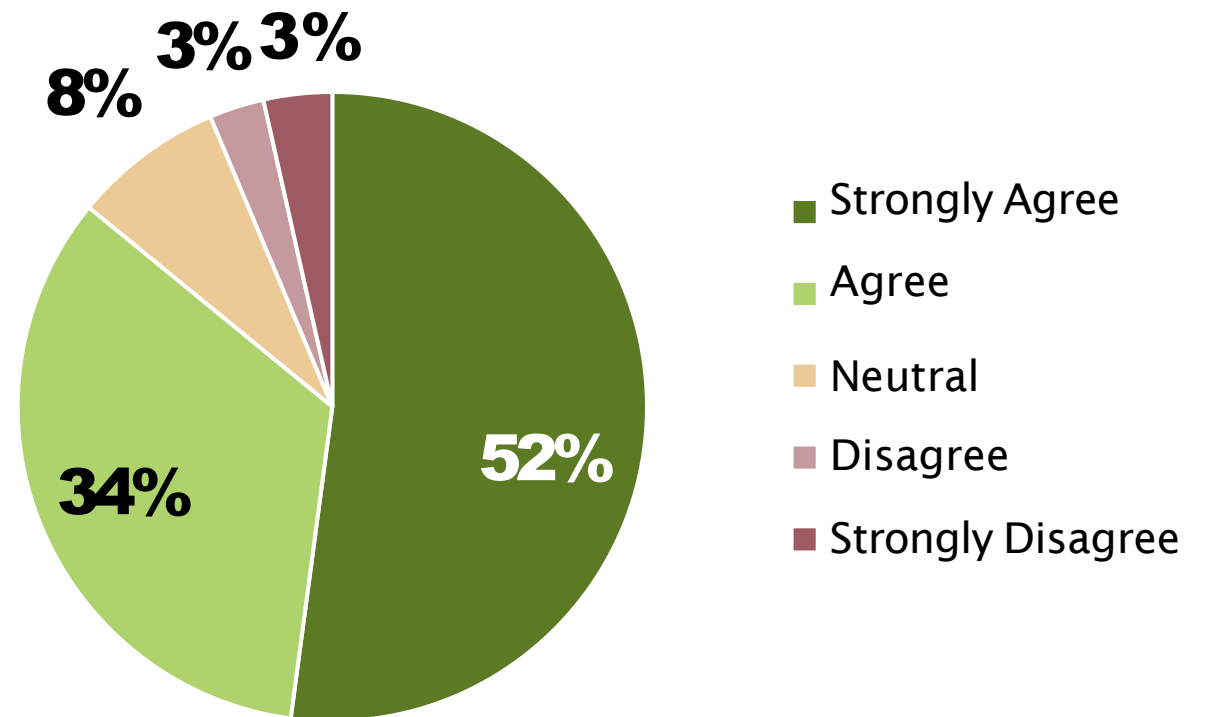
## Transportation Goal 8



# GOAL 9: MANAGE ROADWAY ACCESS TO IMPROVE TRAFFIC FLOW AND SAFETY

Improve the safety and efficiency of major roads by minimizing access points and requiring shared access solutions in new and existing developments.

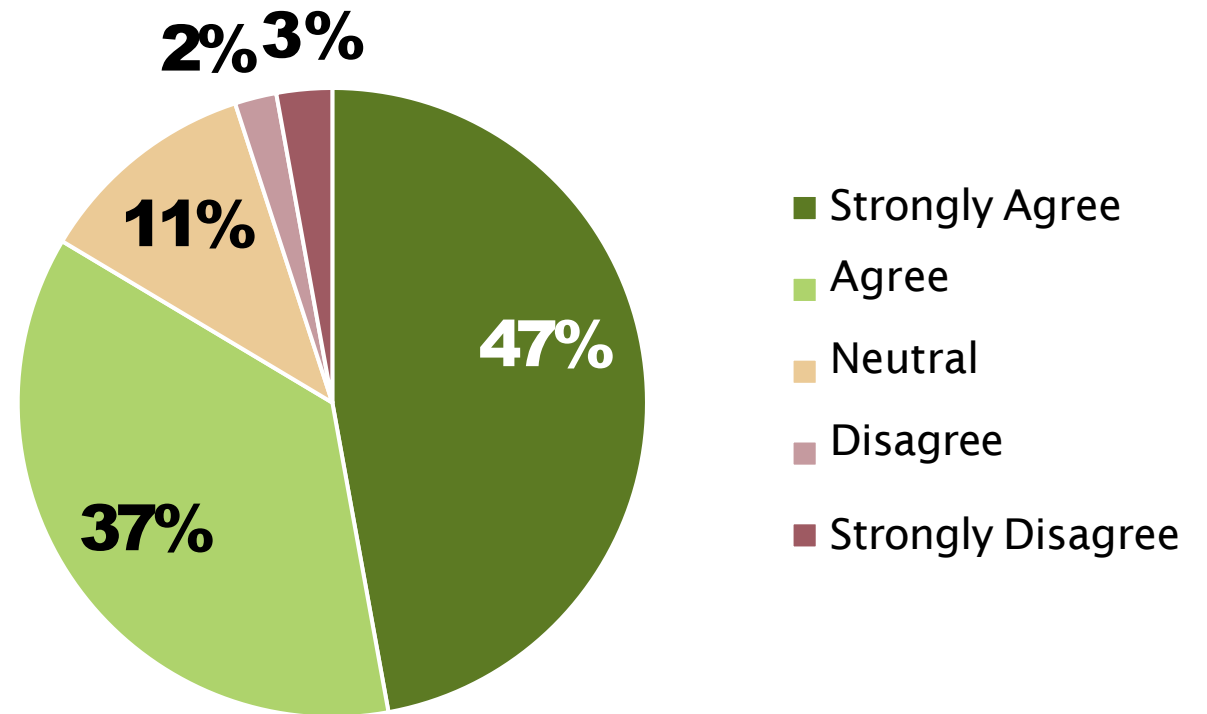
## Transportation Goal 9



# GOAL 10: PROMOTE RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

## Transportation Goal 10

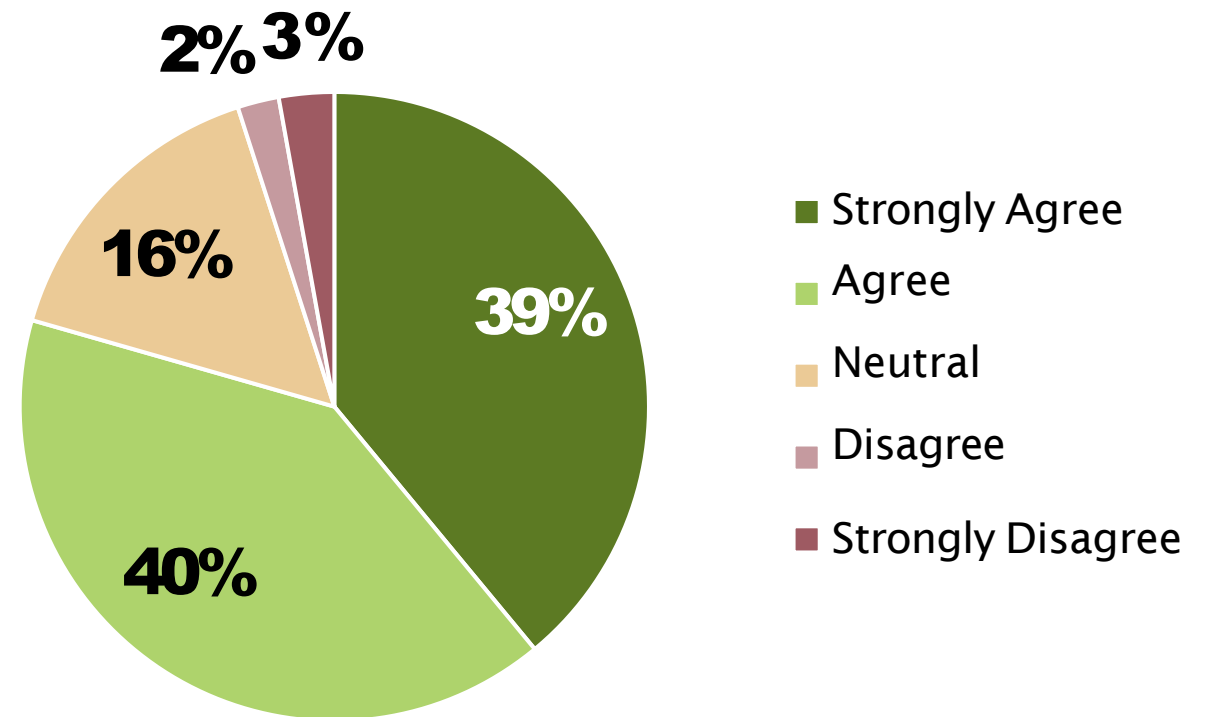
Build and maintain a transportation system that is resilient to environmental risks and actively supports the protection of natural resources and community character.



# GOAL 11: ACHIEVE HIGH-PERFORMING, FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Ensure the County's transit system operates at or above state performance standards while maintaining a financially sound structure through continuous evaluation and strategic management of fares and funding.

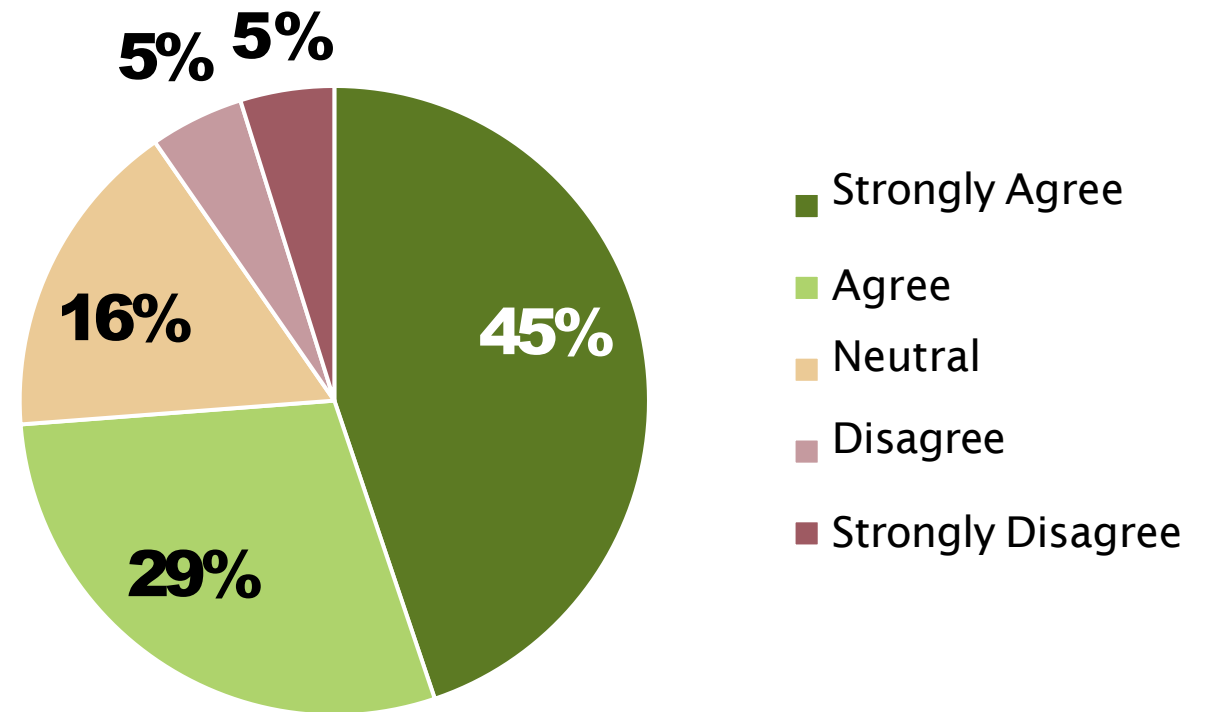
## Transportation Goal 11



# GOAL 12: EXPAND TRANSIT SERVICES TO MEET GROWING REGIONAL DEMAND

Proactively expand transit routes and service opportunities to meet the increasing demand for travel both within and beyond St. Mary's County, fostered by strong regional cooperation.

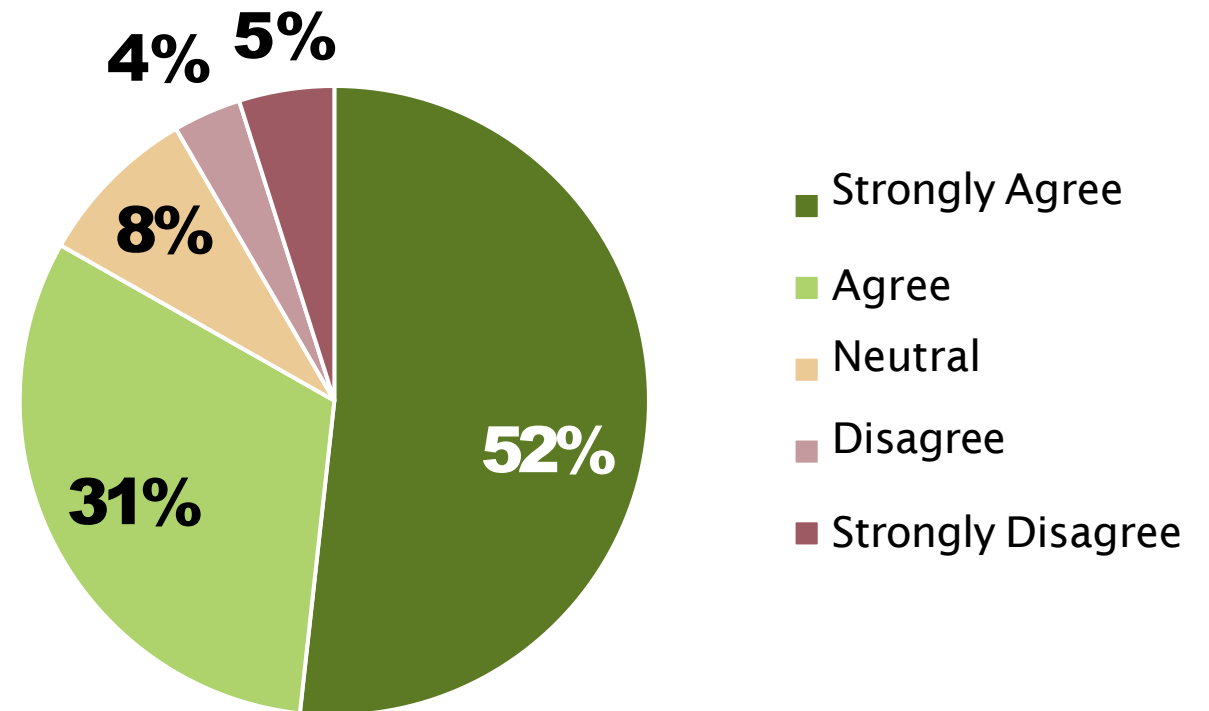
## Transportation Goal 12



# GOAL 13: ENSURE TRANSPORTATION ACCESS FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Create a seamless and accessible transportation system that addresses service deficits for targeted and vulnerable populations, enhancing their quality of life and connection to human services.

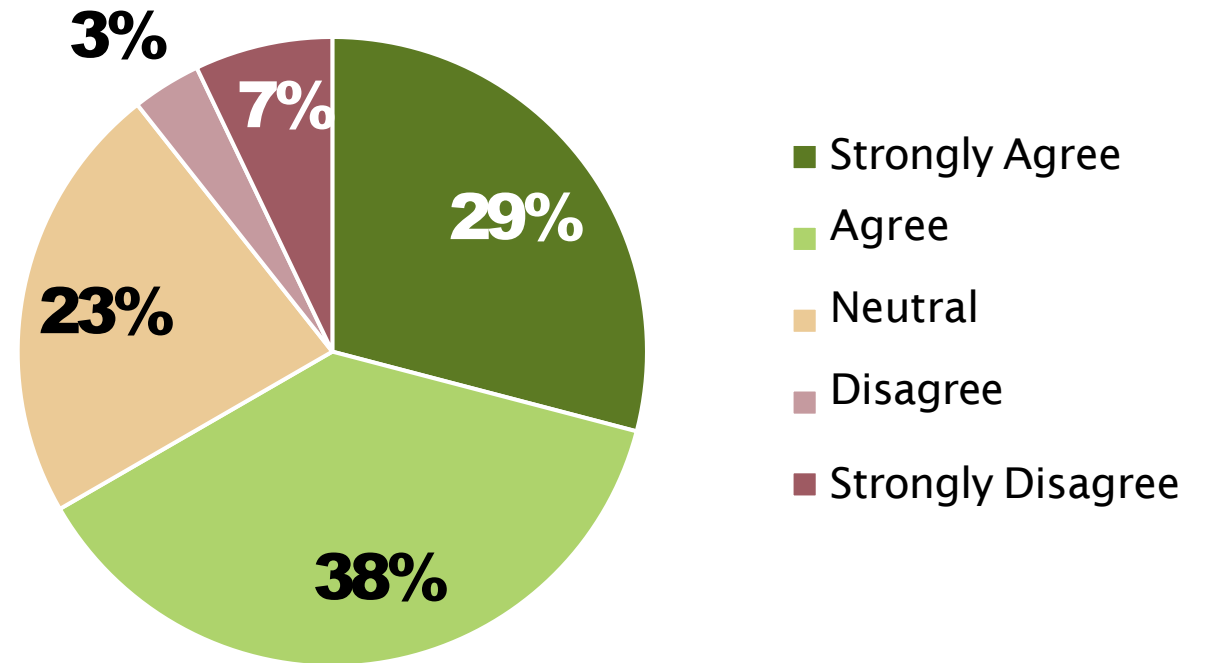
## Transportation Goal 13



# GOAL 14: MAINTAIN AND BUILD UPON THE EFFECTIVE AND COLLABORATIVE TRANSIT MANAGEMENT

Strengthen the administration and planning of the County's transit services by continuing to create dedicated management roles, implementing expert recommendations, and fostering stakeholder collaboration.

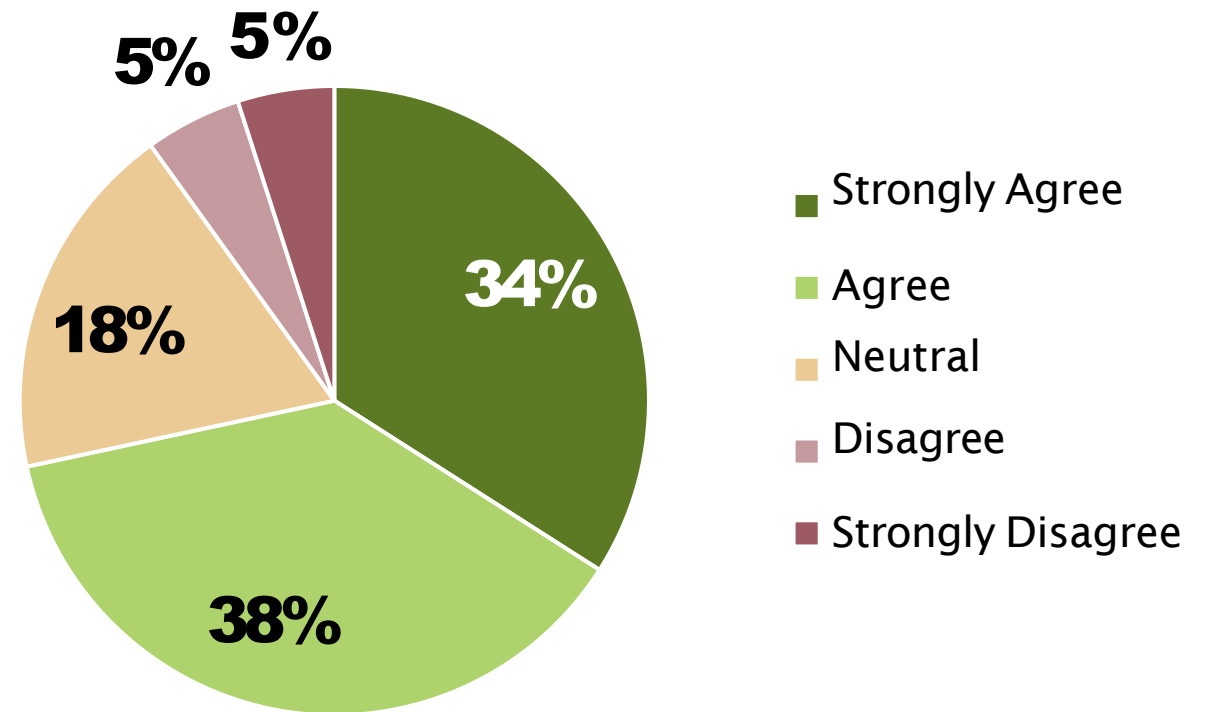
## Transportation Goal 14



# GOAL 15: INCREASE RIDERSHIP THROUGH STRATEGIC OUTREACH AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Grow public transit ridership by better understanding rider needs, actively promoting the benefits of transit, and continuously improving the quality and relevance of the service.

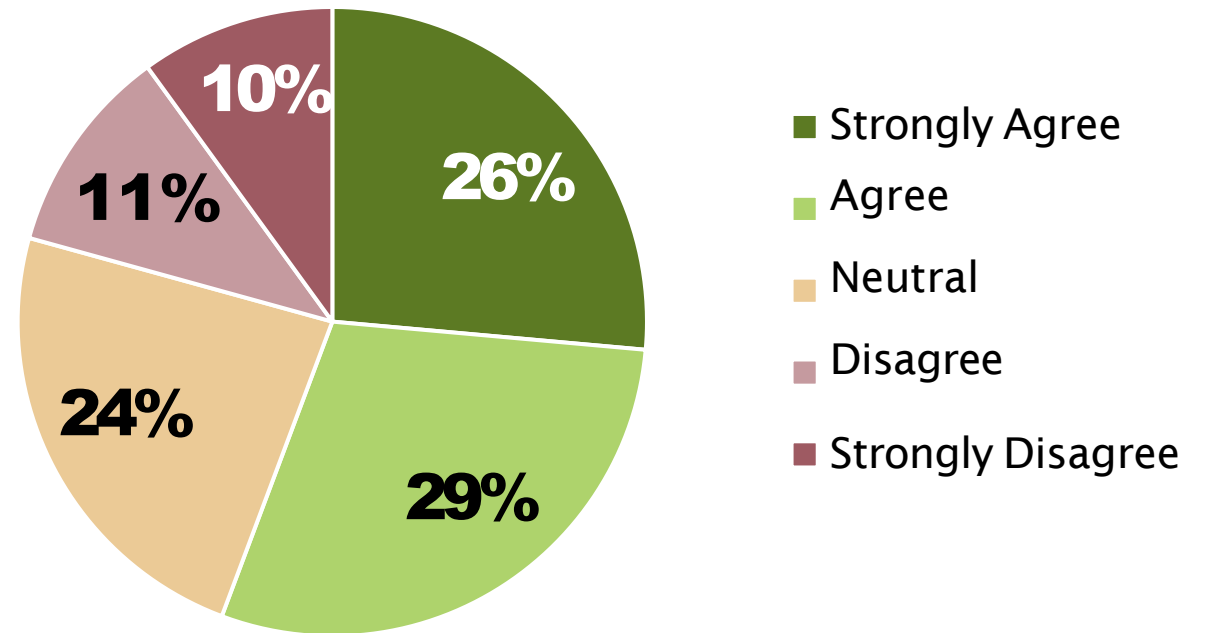
## Transportation Goal 15



# GOAL 16: LEVERAGE POTENTIAL PASSENGER FERRY TO DRIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TOURISM

Establish St. Mary's County as a key destination on the Chesapeake Bay by using a new passenger ferry service to attract tourists, support local businesses, and generate sustainable economic activity.

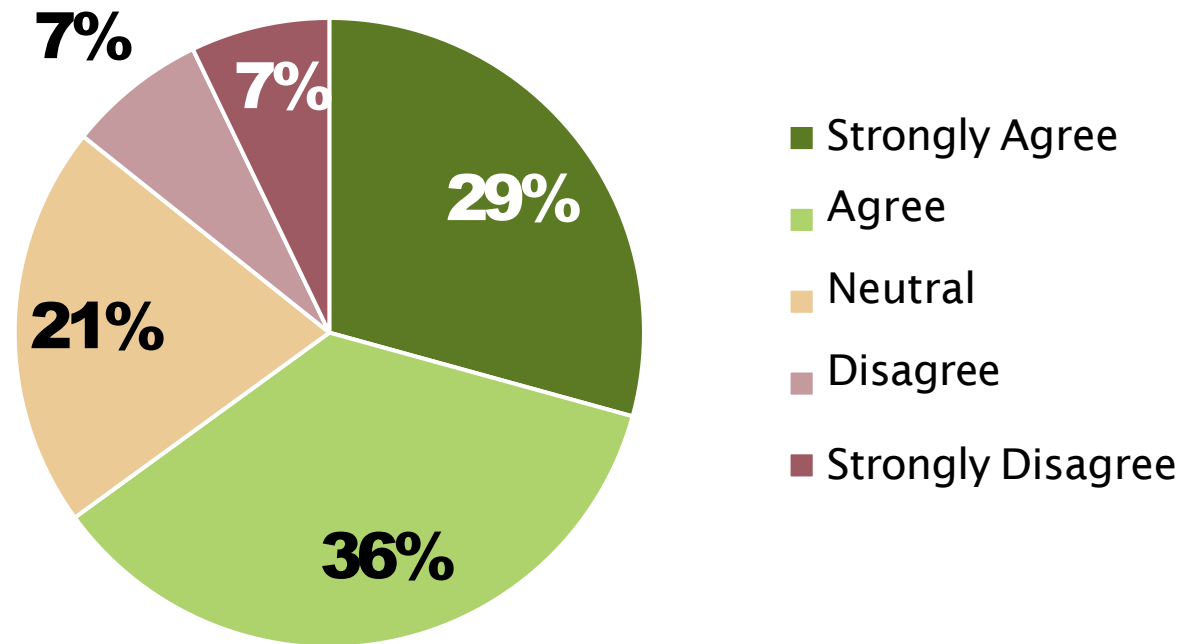
## Transportation Goal 16



# GOAL 17: FOSTER REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY THROUGH INTER-COUNTY COLLABORATION

Strengthen regional partnerships and enhance mobility across the Chesapeake Bay by actively participating in the five-county consortium and ensuring the successful integration of St. Mary's County into a bay-wide ferry network.

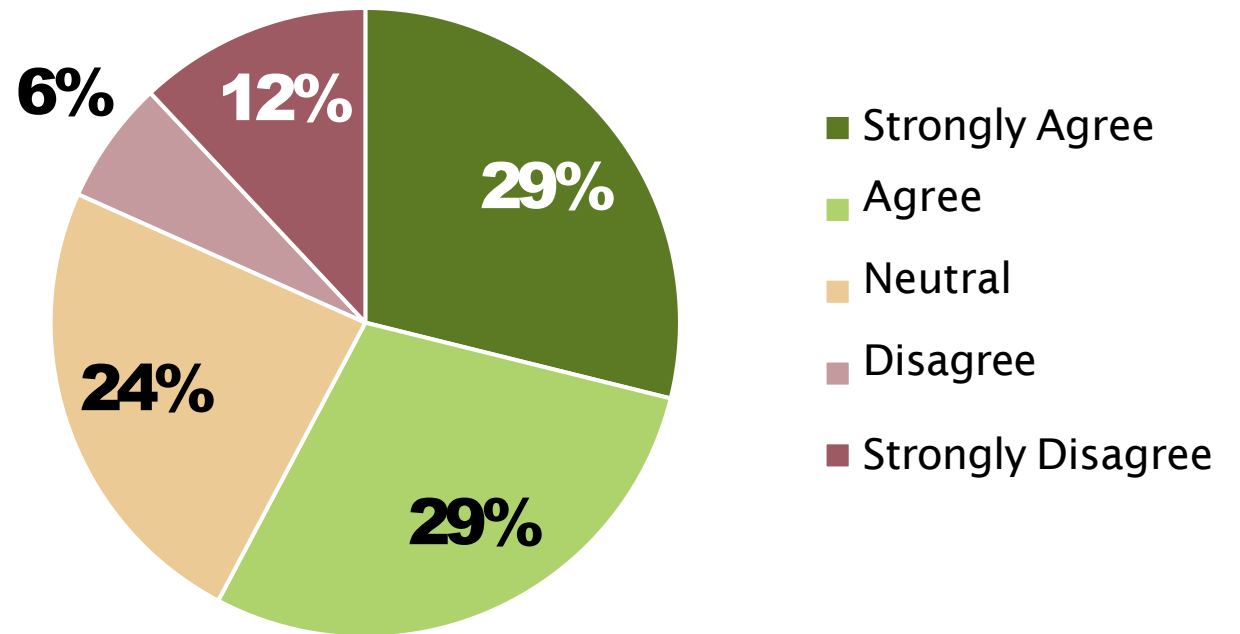
## Transportation Goal 17



# GOAL 18: PROMOTE THE SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF FERRY SERVICE

Develop the necessary infrastructure, secure stable funding, and establish a viable operational plan to launch and maintain a reliable and efficient passenger ferry service in St. Mary's County.

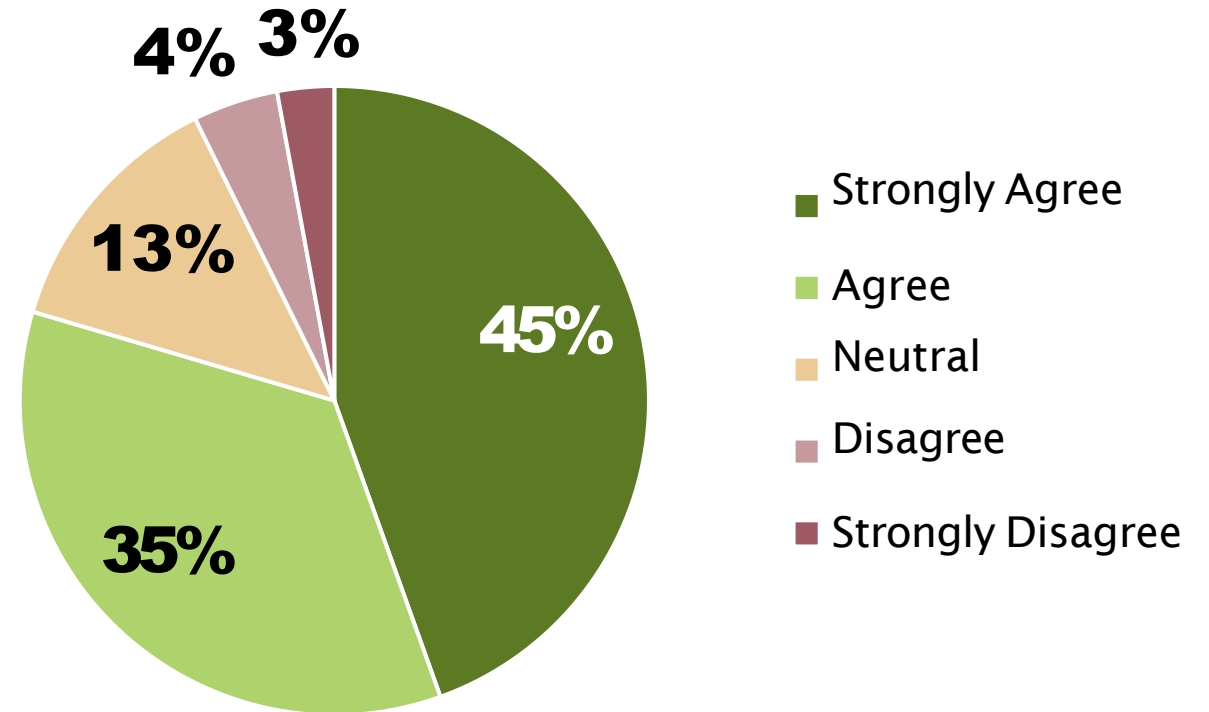
## Transportation Goal 18



# GOAL 19: PROTECT AIRPORT NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY AND AIRSPACE INTEGRITY

Ensure the operational safety and integrity of St. Mary's County Regional Airport by preventing the construction of physical or non-physical obstructions that could interfere with flight paths and approach minimums.

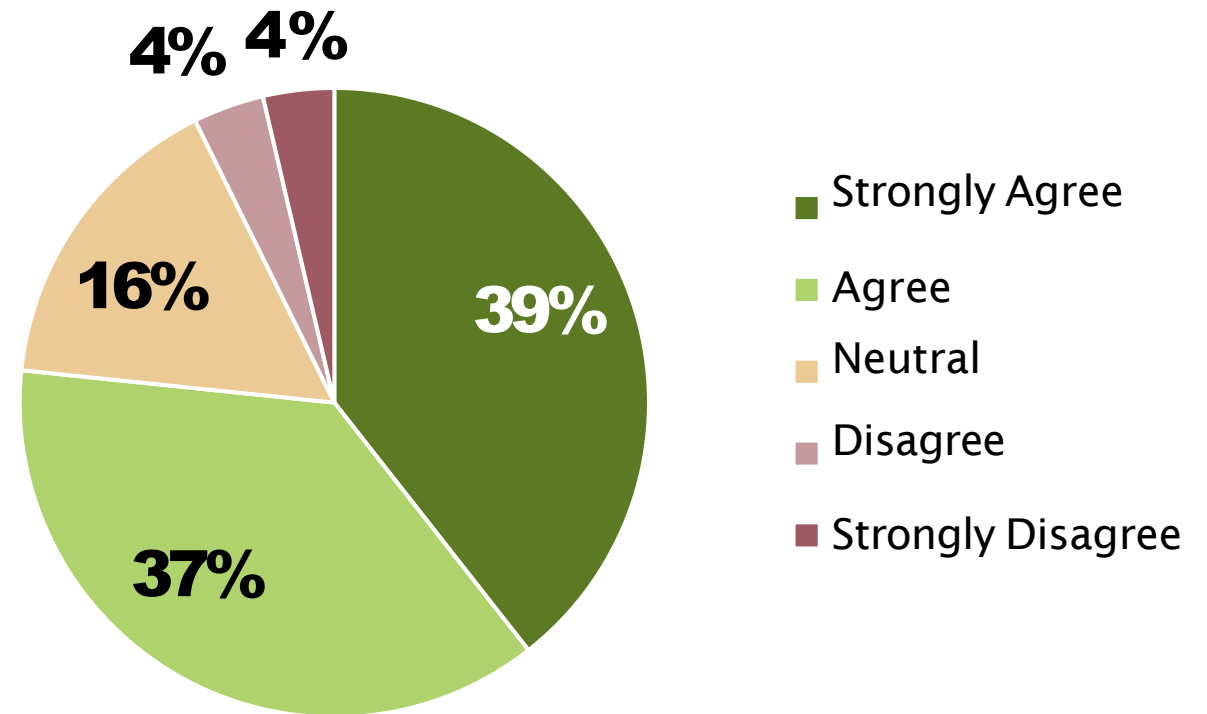
## Transportation Goal 19



# GOAL 20: PROMOTE COMPATIBLE LAND USE THROUGH EFFECTIVE AIRPORT ZONING

Align all county zoning and permitting activities with established Airport Environs to ensure that adjacent land uses are compatible with airport operations and do not create safety or noise conflicts

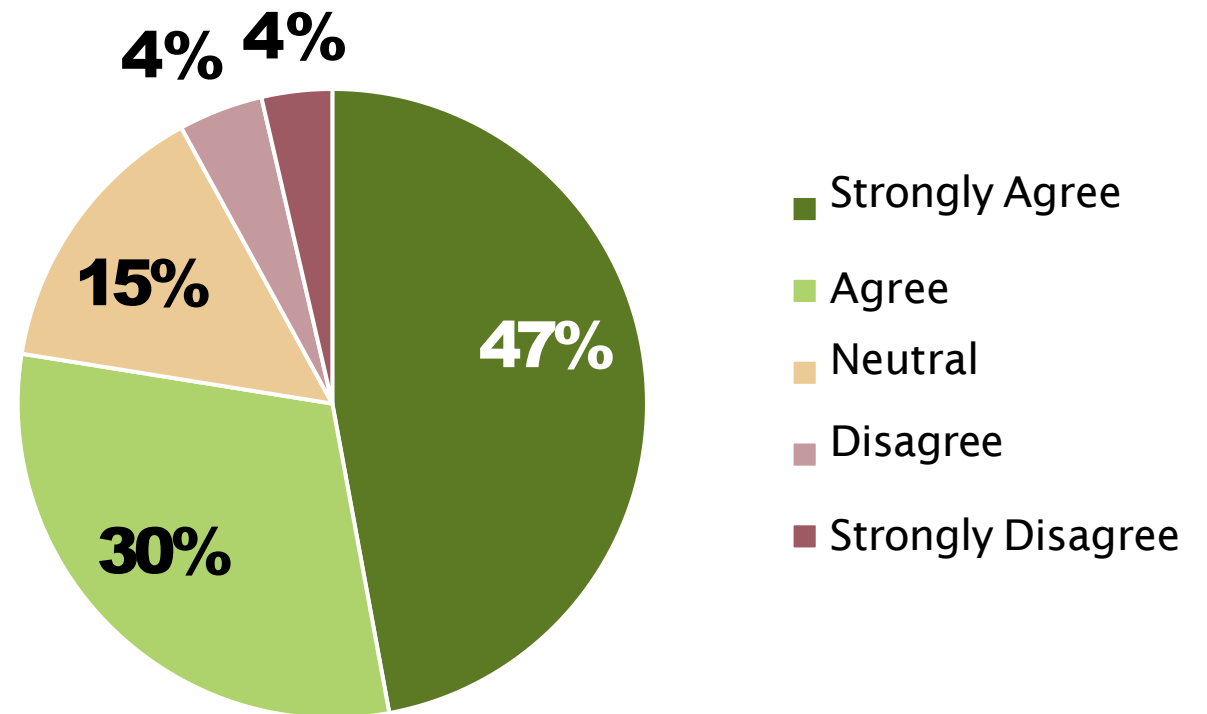
## Transportation Goal 20



# GOAL 21: STRENGTHEN THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR STATION

Foster a strong, cooperative relationship with the Patuxent River Naval Air Station through coordinated airspace management, aligned zoning policies, and support for mutual economic interests.

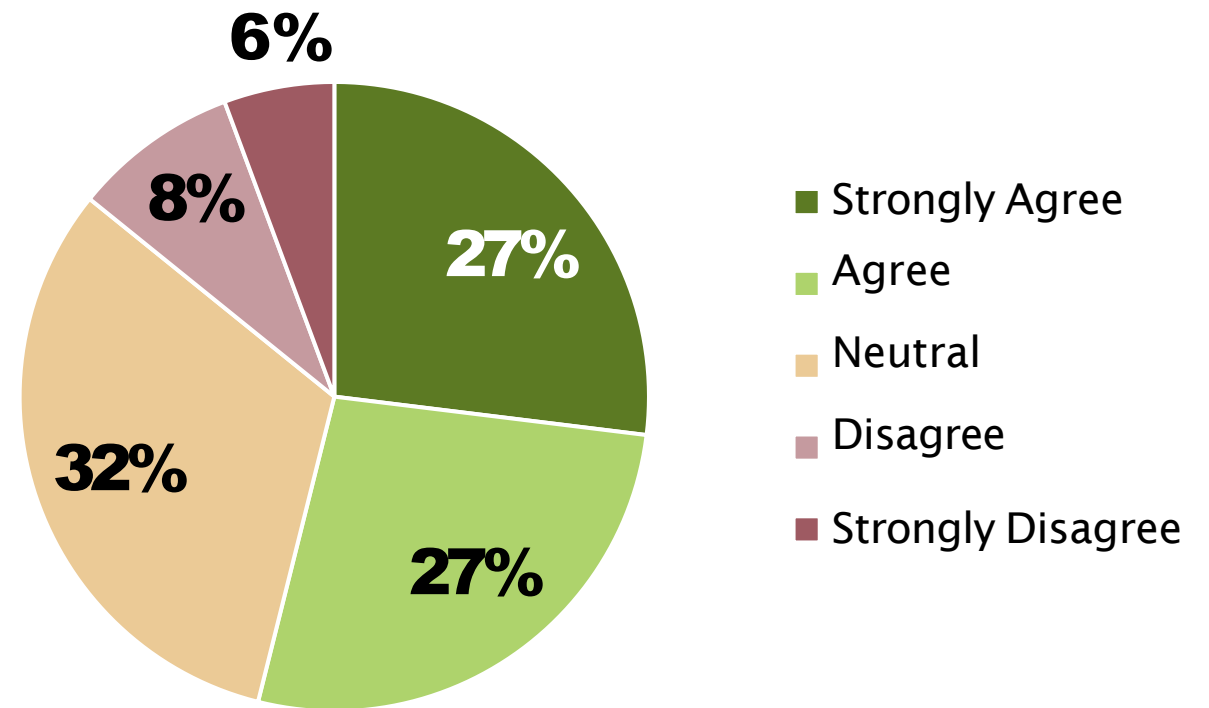
## Transportation Goal 21



# GOAL 22: DRIVE REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH AIRPORT GROWTH

Leverage the St. Mary's County Regional Airport as a primary driver of economic growth by encouraging supportive industries and investing in its continued expansion and modernization.

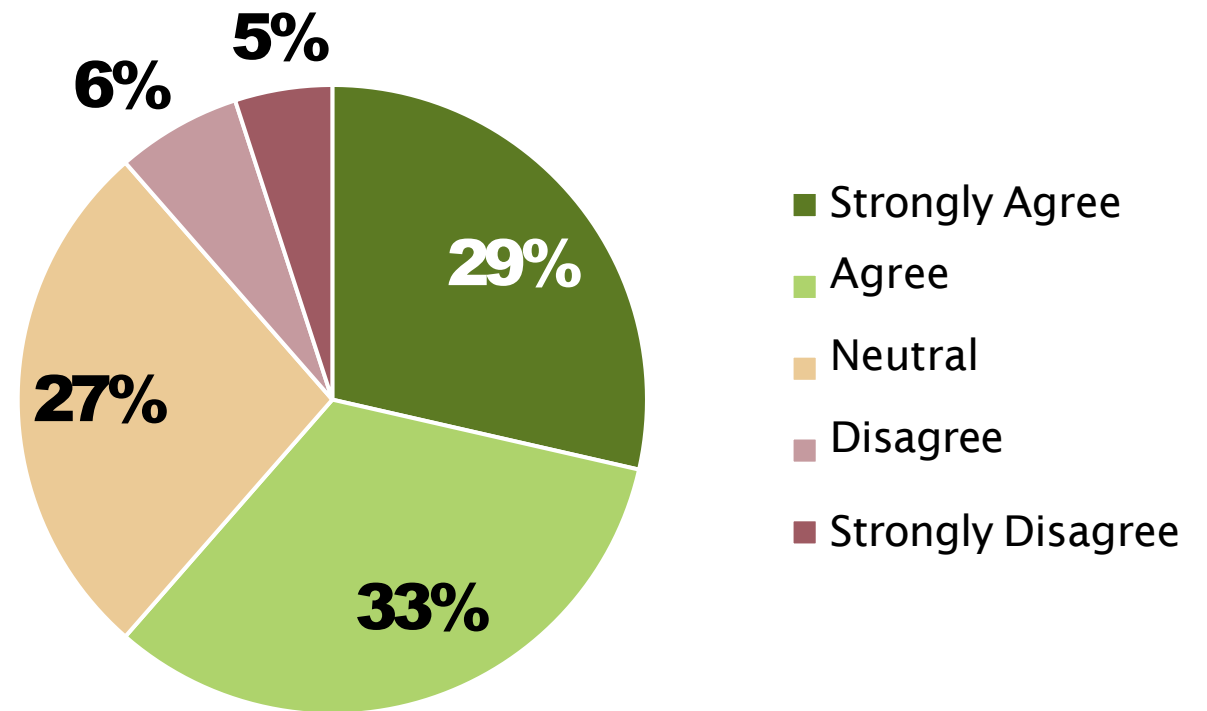
## Transportation Goal 22



# GOAL 23: SECURE LONG-TERM AIRPORT VIABILITY THROUGH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND FUNDING

Ensure the long-term operational and financial health of the St. Mary's County Regional Airport by consistently seeking federal funding and implementing capital improvement projects.

## Transportation Goal 23



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Transportation:

- **Support for sidewalks and trails** — safety, maintenance, and finishing/connecting key links (like Three Notch Trail)
- Maintain space on the roads for **buggies and bicycles** with wider shoulders on rural roads and a buggy/bicycle lane on bridge projects, coordinating with Leonardtown for safe access to the town
- **Behavior management:** yielding at crosswalks, safe movement of motorized devices, etiquette for horse-and-buggy interactions, and roundabout behavior
- Split views on **transit scale and funding**
  - Some want improved services (link to DC, airports, Amtrak, hospitals), free fares, and more connections to employment, local services, recreation, and religious institutions and community centers
  - Reduced scope, privatization, and charging fares
- Connect to County & Tri-County transportation and DED planning initiatives

# Open-Ended Feedback

More common themes from the open-ended comments on Transportation:

- Confusion and caution around **ferry service** — purpose, impacts, seasonality, feasibility
- Clarify public benefits of airport investment
- **Address vehicle transportation bottlenecks**
- Support for more **road connectivity**; require stubs to property lines and inter-parcel connections
- Use **public-private partnerships** for road improvements, when possible
- Add explicit **emergency egress** policy language under Goal 10 (about resilient transportation infrastructure)
- Publish a priority list with funding status and timelines for safety and maintenance hot spots
- Tie projects to demonstrated need, funding, and measurable benefits, with clear explanation of tax impacts

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Policy 1.5: Involve local groups supporting active recreation
- Goal 5: Require developers to provide a network of recreational and transportation trails into the fabric of the community. Incorporate them into all new land use and development projects
- Policy 5.3: Consider working with gas utilities to have the gas pipeline right of way as a potential multipurpose trail corridor
- Connect Goals 16-18 with Chesapeake Bay Passenger Ferry Feasibility Study
- Goal 16: Connect the ferry service to one or more points on the Northern Neck of Virginia to support long-route bicycle tourists
- Combine Goals 22 and 23

# Public Facilities and Infrastructure

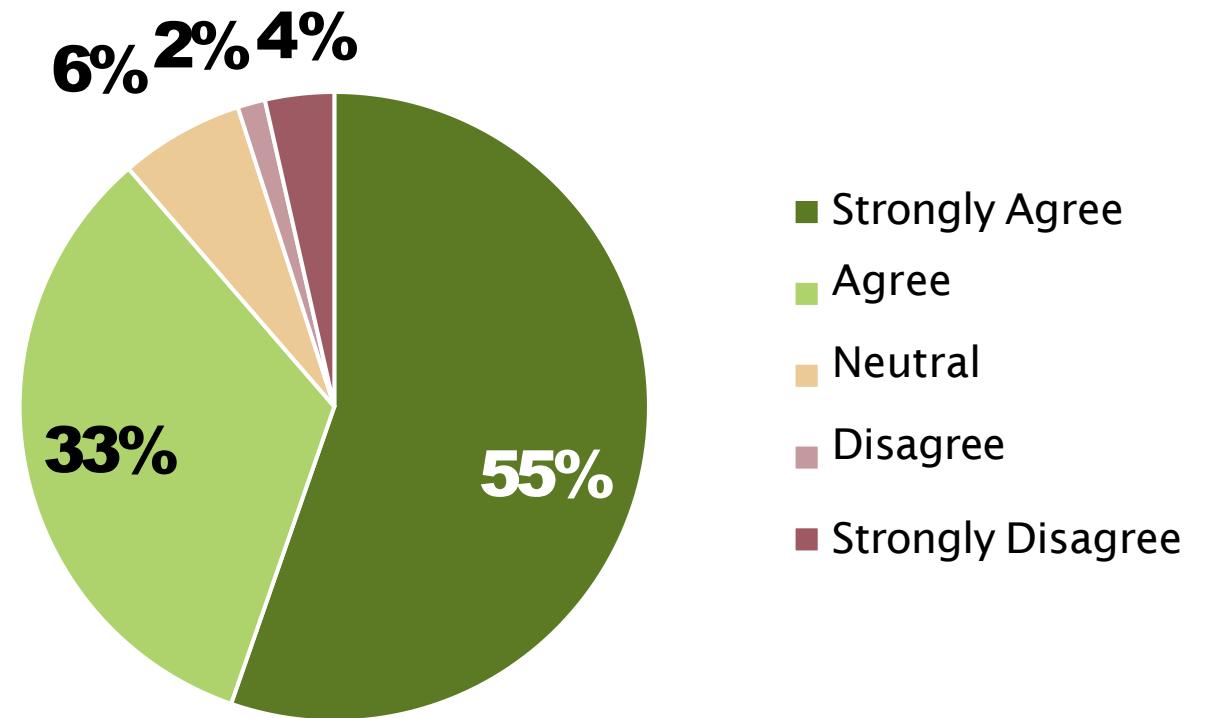


**ST. MARY'S 2050**  
CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

# GOAL 1: PROVIDE PLANNED WATER/SEWER FOR GROWTH AND REDUCE STORMWATER/NUTRIENT IMPACTS

## Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 1

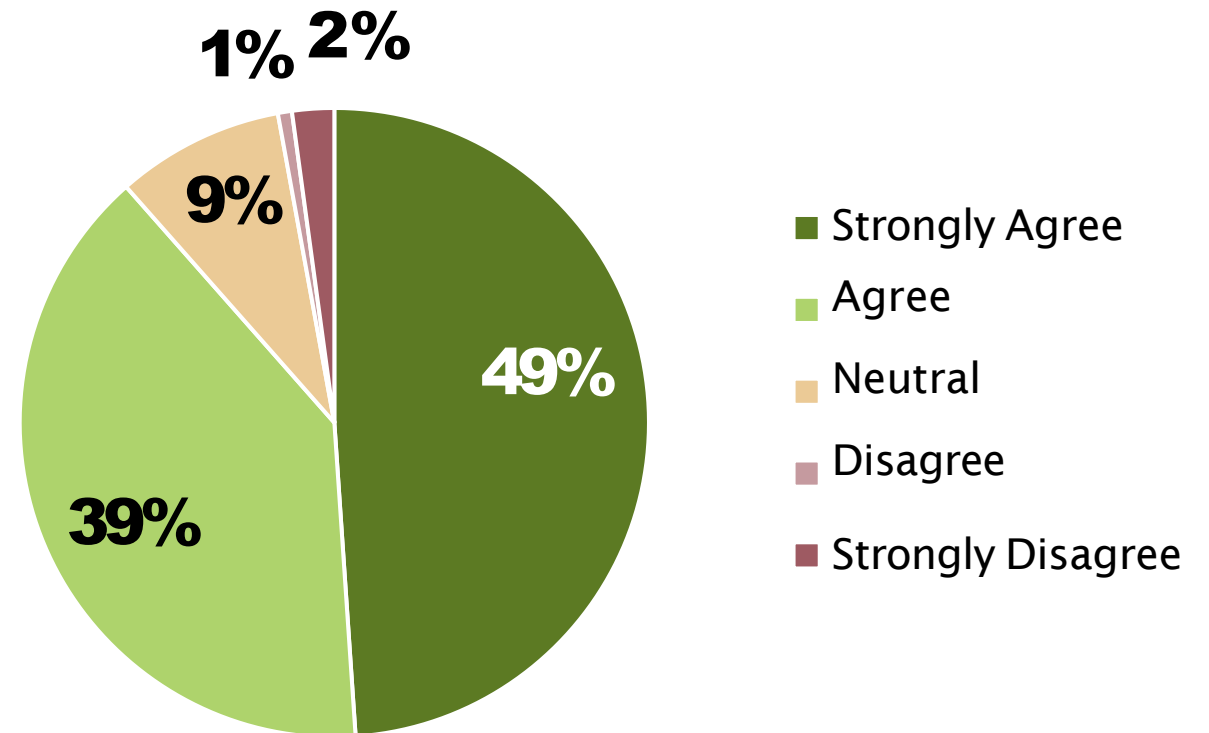
Modernize central service in Growth Areas and reduce pollution from septic and stormwater to protect local waters and the Chesapeake Bay.



# GOAL 2: MAINTAIN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that the County's transportation infrastructure is well-maintained, efficient, and meets the needs of residents of all ages and abilities, as outlined in the most recent St. Mary's County Transportation Plan and in the Transportation Element of this plan.

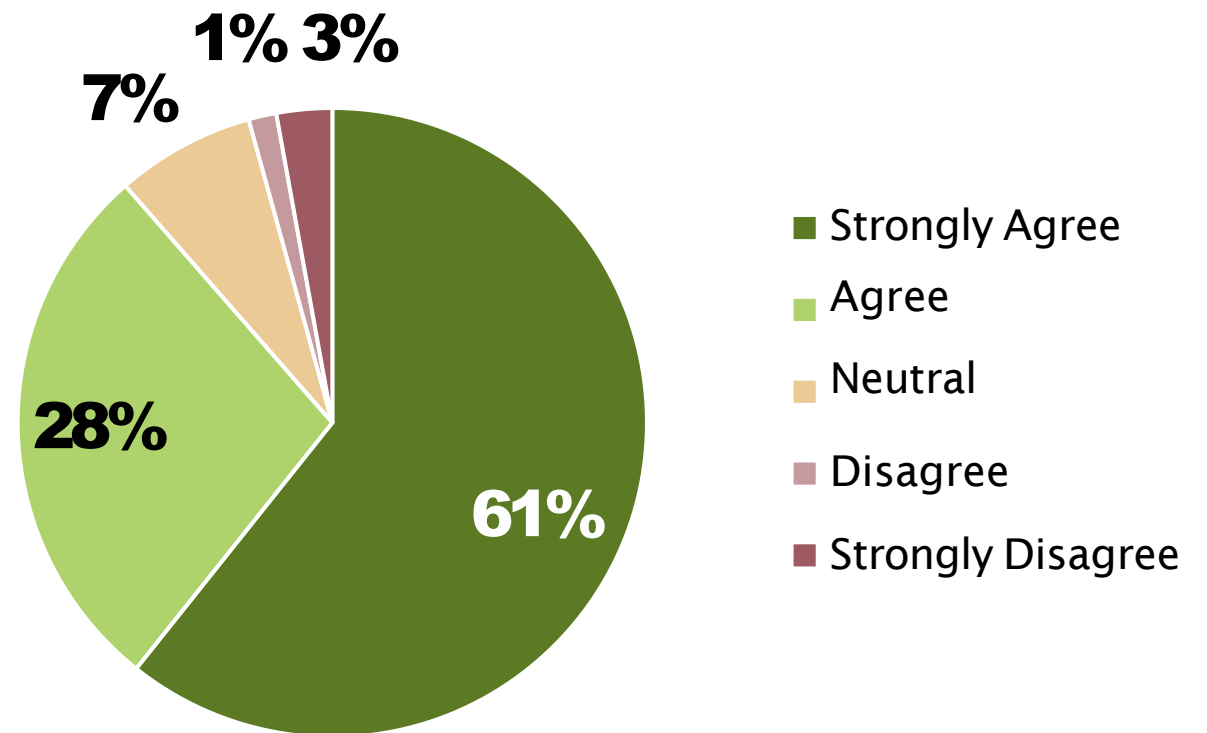
## Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 2



# GOAL 3: MAINTAIN AND INCREASE QUALITY OF LIFE BY INVESTING IN CORE PUBLIC SERVICES

Maintain and increase the overall quality of life for county residents by investing in core public services such as Emergency Medical Services (EMS), public safety, and fire services.

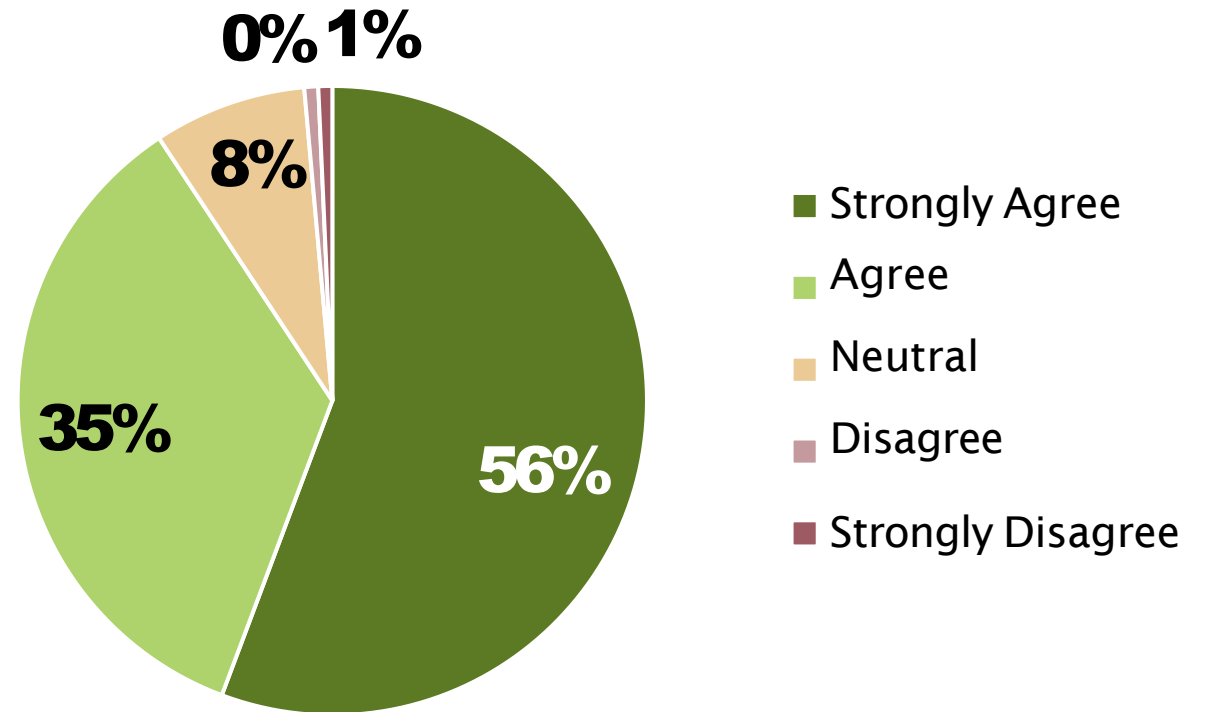
### Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 3



# GOAL 4: EXPAND RELIABLE UTILITIES AND UNIVERSAL BROADBAND ACCESS

Provide reliable electric service and countywide access to high-speed internet to support safety, education, health, and economic competitiveness.

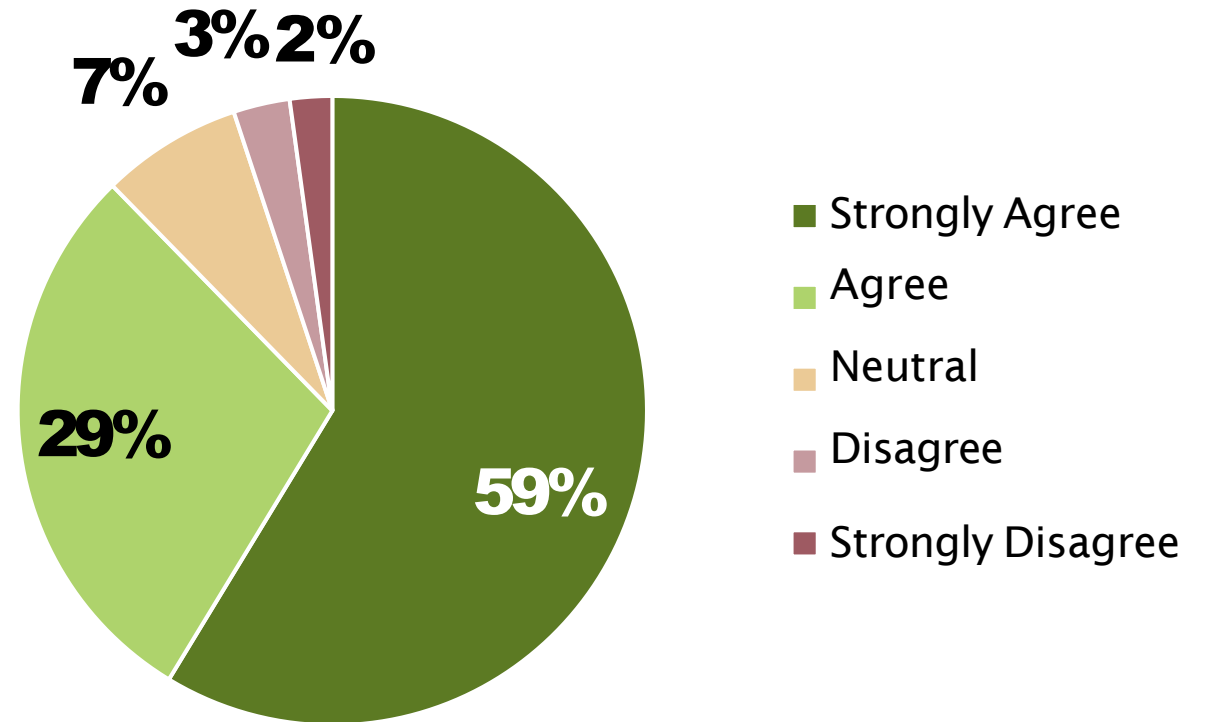
## Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 4



# GOAL 5: KEEP ST. MARY'S COUNTY A DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE THROUGH COMMUNITY AMENITIES INVESTMENT

## Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 5

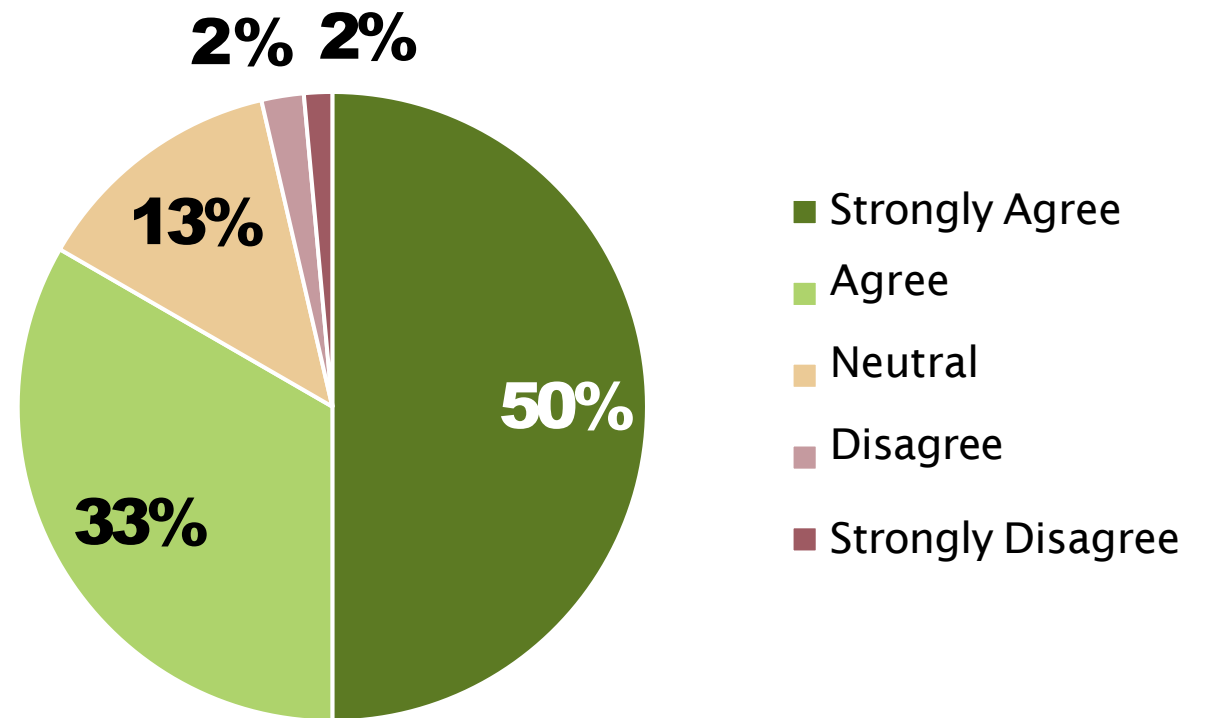
Keep St. Mary's County an attractive and desirable place to live and grow by investing in community sports and recreation facilities, libraries, and other public amenities.



# GOAL 6: EXPAND AND CONNECT PARKS, TRAILS, AND PUBLIC WATER ACCESS

Build an equitable, connected park and waterfront system that supports health, recreation, and tourism, serving users of all ages.

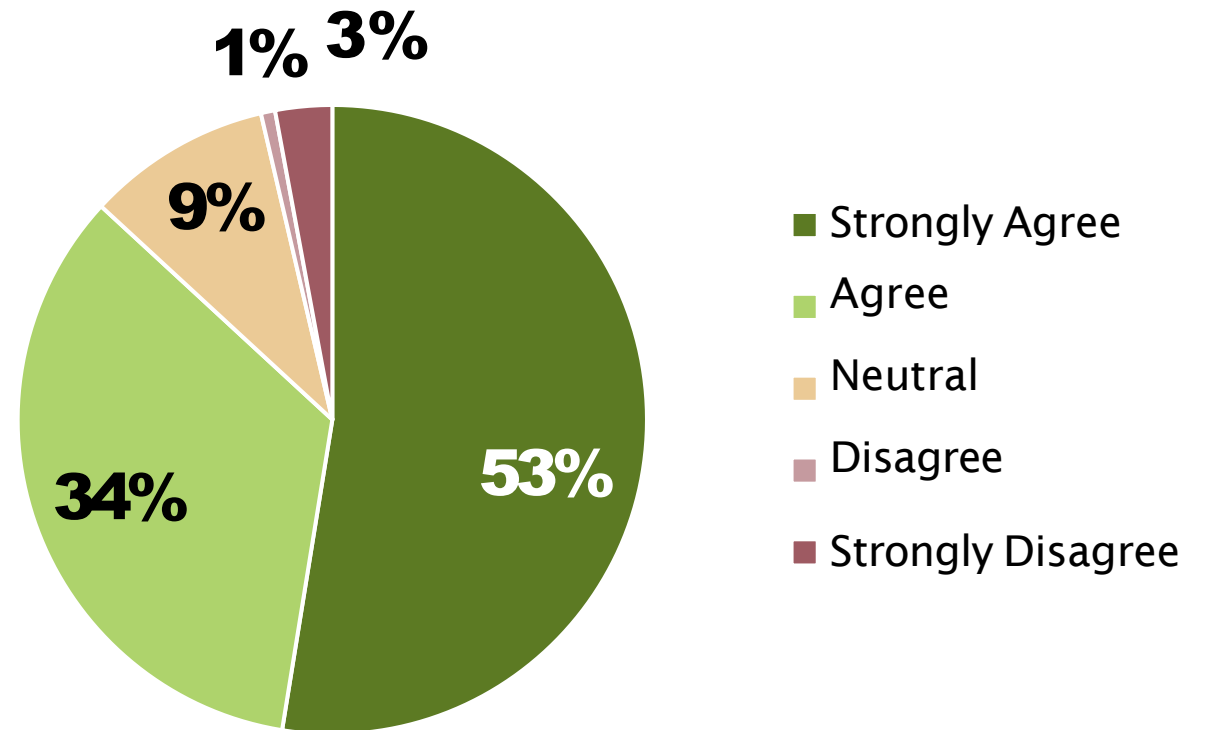
## Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 6



# GOAL 7: ALIGN SCHOOL CAPACITY AND SITES WITH PLANNED GROWTH

Coordinate facilities so seats, sites, and access keep pace with development and educational needs.

**Public Facilities & Infrastructure Goal 7**



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Public Facilities and Infrastructure:

- Concern that development is outpacing capacity
- **Fix existing infrastructure** before encouraging additional growth
- Concern about expanding water/sewer in rural areas
- Support large-scale stormwater mitigation projects
- Support use of pervious surfaces
- Support use of greywater
- Ensure CWSP and Adequate Public Facilities (APF) requirements **tie service extensions to growth areas** and funding, clarifying developer responsibility
- Support **competition in broadband** to improve reliability and costs

# Open-Ended Feedback

More common themes from the open-ended comments on Public Facilities and Infrastructure:

- Ensure developers share in school costs
- Set aside school sites in areas where growth is planned
- Bury utilities (aesthetics and resilience)
- Ensure tax impacts of initiatives are transparent
- Support energy-efficient County buildings
- Diverging views on **libraries**
  - Some advocate for evening hours (safe, alcohol-free spaces)
  - Some oppose additional spending
  - Consider co-located libraries and senior centers
- Diverging views on **recreational facilities**
  - Some advocate for more youth/teen/family amenities, more waterfront parks, and kayak access
  - Some oppose additional spending
  - More facilities in the northern part of the County

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Page 136: Under "Demand for Enhanced Community Facilities": Delete "professional, paid" and substitute "career"
- Goal 3: Add public services such as public transportation and public education
- Goal 3: Re-emphasize importance of volunteer organizations
- Policy 4.1: Add support for microgrids for resilience
- Goal 6: Add action to work toward federal designation of Patuxent and Potomac River Trails

# Public Health and Community Services

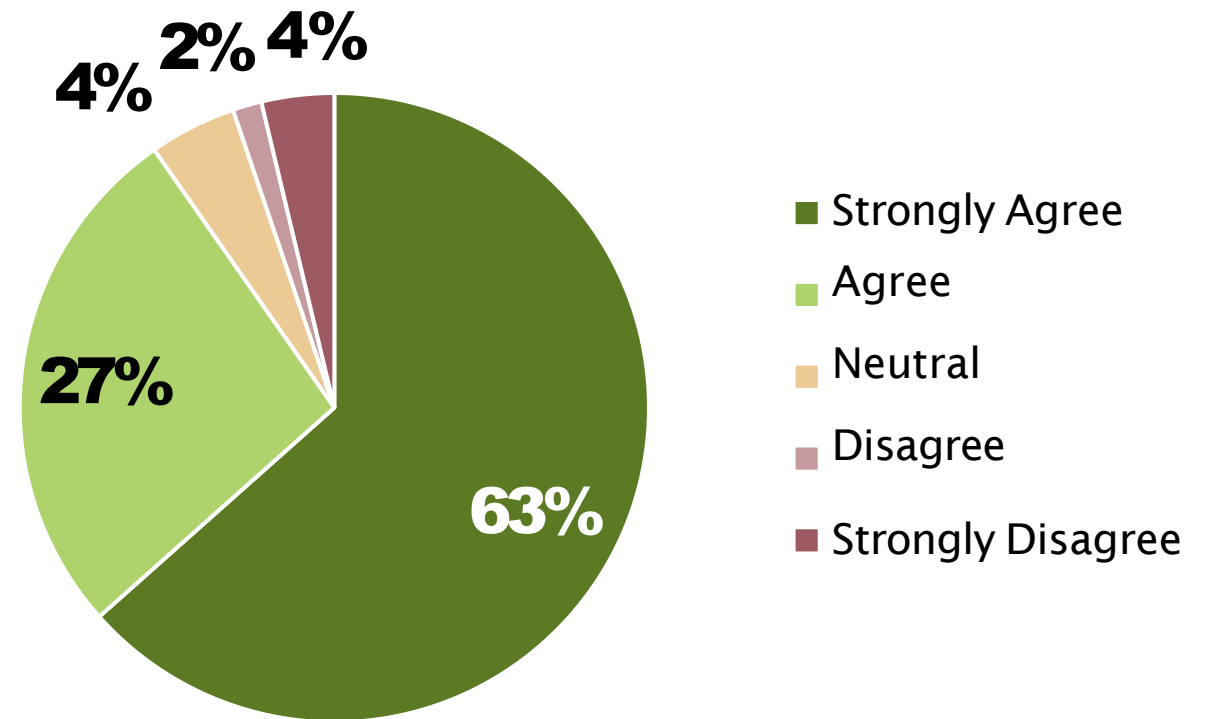


**ST. MARY'S 2050**  
CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

# GOAL 1: MEET THE HEALTH AND SAFETY NEEDS OF THE GROWING POPULATION

Ensure access to healthcare, community services, public health services, and public safety services for all county residents.

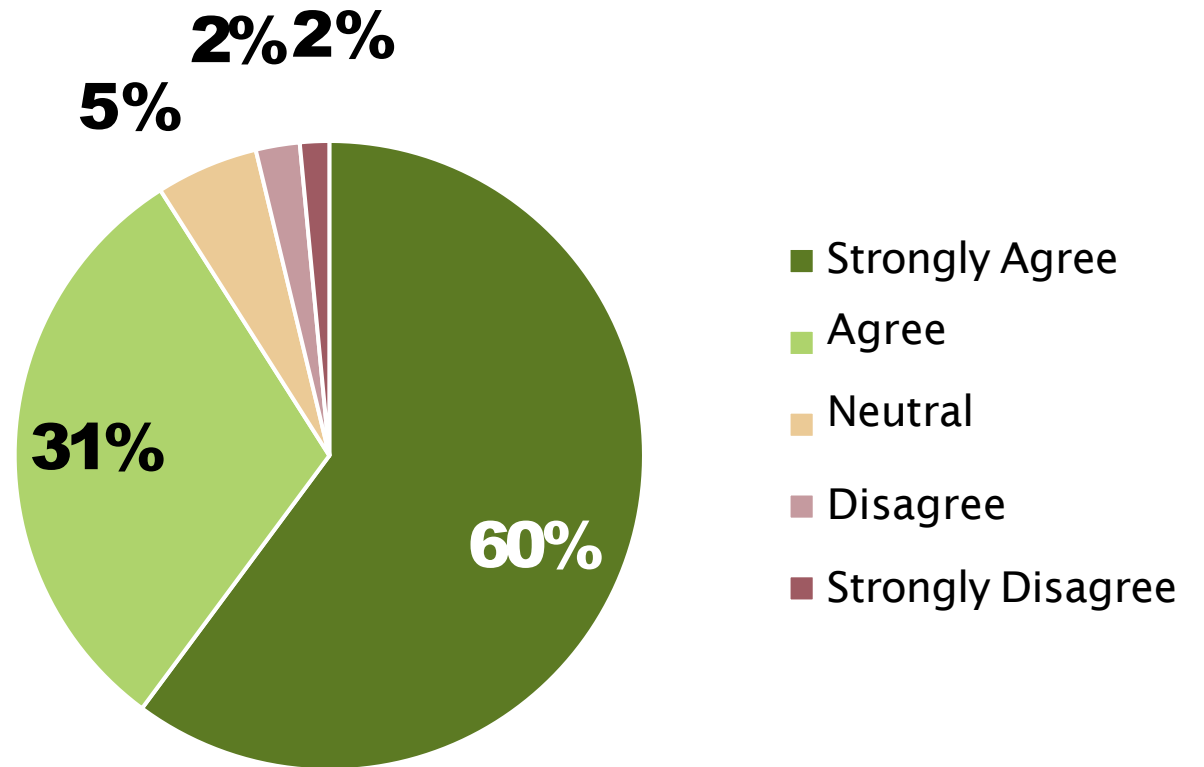
**Public Health & Community Services Goal 1**



# GOAL 2: ENHANCE THE AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES FOR AGING RESIDENTS

Enhance the availability of public services for aging residents to ensure they can live and age well in St. Mary's County.

**Public Health & Community Services Goal 2**



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Public Health and Community Services:

- **Healthcare capacity** is a major pain point and concern, especially if the County continues to grow. Desire for another hospital or expansion of MedStar St. Mary's
- Mixed views on the **County's role in healthcare**
  - Some support County/Health Department leadership
  - Others reject the idea that the government should get involved ("ensure access to healthcare" language too strong)
- Support for expanded **behavioral health access**, such as a local crisis center and embedding mental health staff with law enforcement
- Increase **ventilation standards**, in County buildings and in general building standards, to reduce airborne pathogens and other toxins
- Support **additional EMS/ALS staffing** and sub-stations while supporting and recognizing volunteer organizations

# Open-Ended Feedback

More common themes from the open-ended comments on Public Health and Community Services:

- Support for **community gardens**
- Support **more childcare**
- One commenter notes youth under 18 outnumber seniors, so there should be comparable attention
- Support **digital skills training** at libraries, senior centers, and community hubs
- Support **tax relief for seniors** so they can remain in their homes
- Explicitly **include people with disabilities** in aging-related programs

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Action 1.4.7: replace "standpipes" with "dry hydrants" and add "rivers, lakes, farm ponds, and streams"
- Replace "equitable" and similar words

# Natural Hazards, Vulnerability, and Resiliency

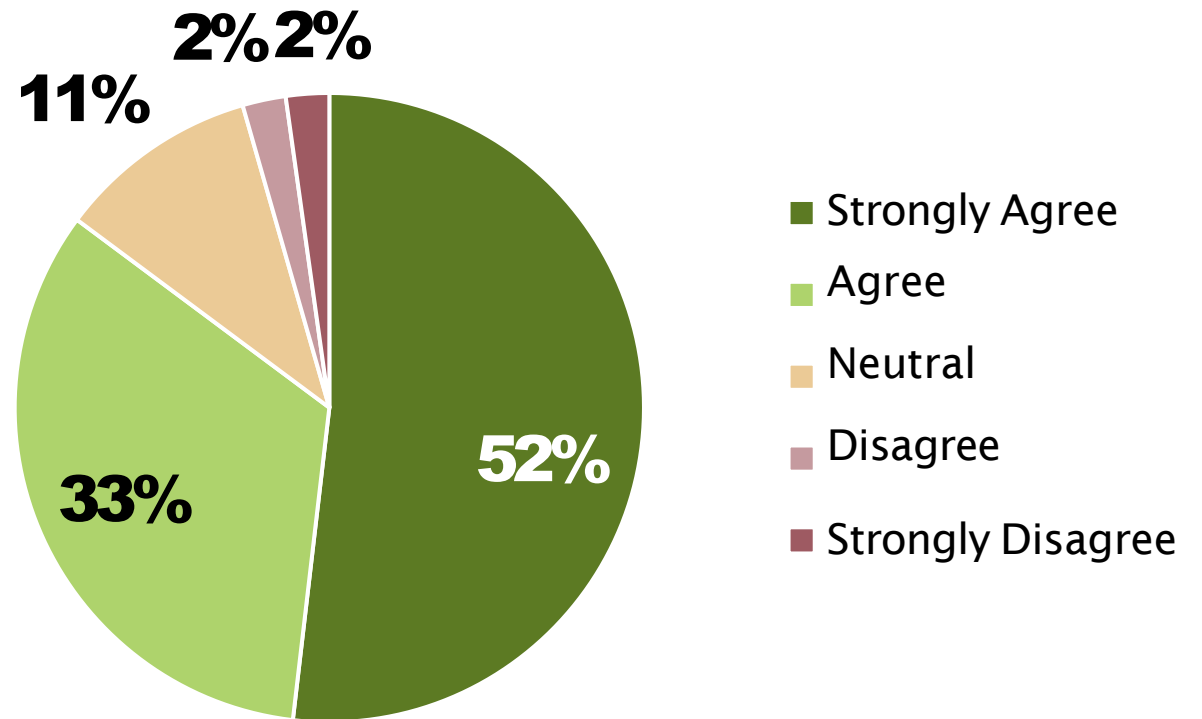


**ST. MARY'S 2050**  
CHARTING OUR TOMORROW

# GOAL 1: INCREASE THE COUNTY'S RESILIENCY BY PREPARING FOR SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

Strengthen the County's ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from severe weather, flooding, sea level rise, and other hazards through proactive planning, regulation, and investment. Resiliency in St. Mary's also means sustaining the County's working farms, forests, and aquaculture - which are key to rural character, heritage, and economic stability - by directing conservation investment to priority landscapes and adapting coastal and agricultural operations to rising water and storm impacts.

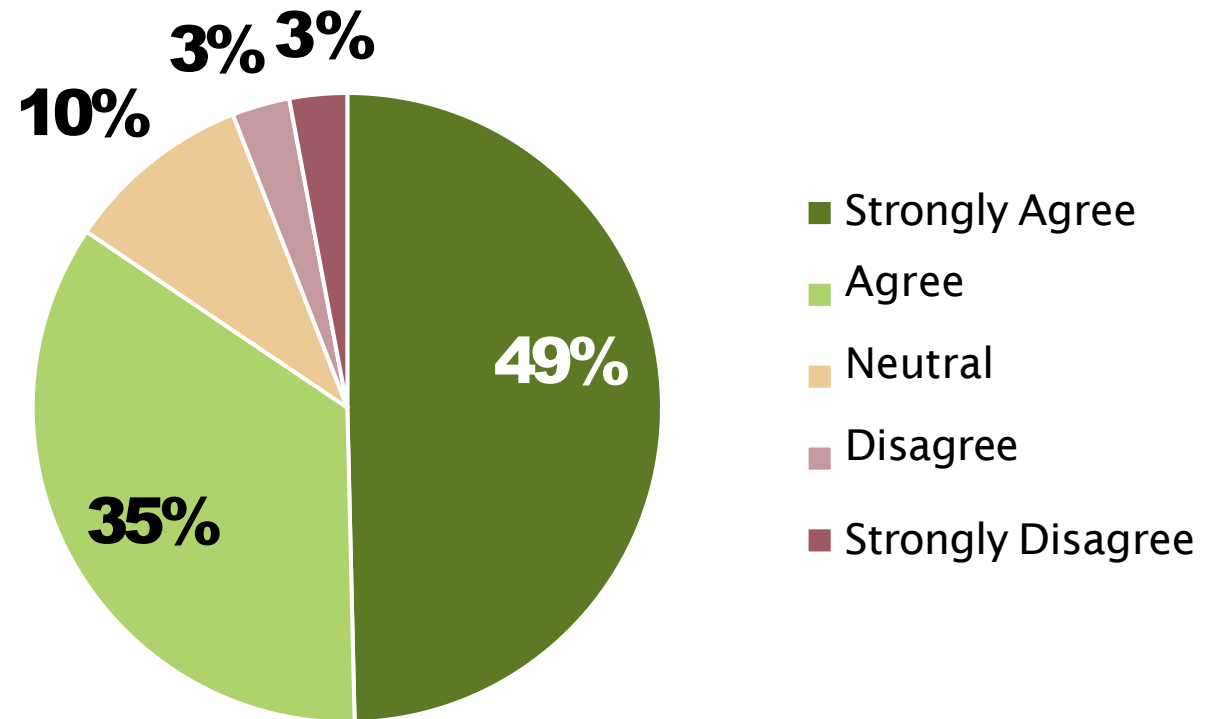
**Natural Hazards, Vulnerability, & Resiliency Goal 1**



## GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATION FOR LONG-TERM RESILIENCY

Prepare the County's residents, ecosystems, and built environment for long-term risks such as sea level rise, storm surge, flooding, and shifting habitats.

**Natural Hazards, Vulnerability, & Resiliency Goal 2**



# Open-Ended Feedback

Some common themes from the open-ended comments on Natural Hazards, Vulnerability, and Resiliency:

- Support **proactive planning**
- Support integrating risk and vulnerability into **siting and design of public facilities**
- Focus growth into compact, walkable town centers and re-examining minimum parking requirements to support **walkability and resilience co-benefits**
- Prioritize **natural systems** (floodplain forests, wetlands, hydric/erodible soils) and living shorelines as first lines of defense
- Create a **Chief Resilience Officer** position to coordinate plans, projects, and funding
- Target **recurrent-loss road segments** and specific shoreline/access pinch points for near-term fixes
- Quantify risk and cost: provide a **comprehensive risk assessment** covering likelihood/impact, "do nothing" costs, action costs/timelines, and expected risk reduction
- **Consider mandatory disclosure** of projected risks in real estate transactions to align awareness and market signals
- Add resilience to extended **power outages** and **cell phone and internet disruptions**
- Some urge **stricter limits** or stopping new building in vulnerable/high-risk areas; others want to continue current approaches or keep local rules **no more restrictive** than state and federal requirements
- Some want to specifically mention **climate change** and address climate mitigation (reducing emissions), while others are **skeptical** of sea level rise and other projected long-term changes

# Individual Text Requests

Specific changes recommended by individual participants:

- Action 1.2.4: change title to “On-Farm Flood and Erosion Mitigation”
- Under Policy 1.5, add Action: Work with Local Organizations to Strengthen Stewardship of Marine Resources — St. Mary’s County benefits greatly from the engagement of local organizations in the stewardship of its marine resources. The significance of the roles these organizations play needs to be recognized and supported in planning for the future.

# For More Information

To learn more about the Comprehensive Plan process and review a full draft of the plan, please visit:

<https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/StMarys2050/>

