



# **The Board of Douglas County Commissioners**

**Welcomes you to the**

**2011 Economic  
Development Forum**

# **Welcome, from The Board**

- **Commissioner Jill E. Repella, Chair**
- **Commissioner Jack A. Hilbert**
- **Commissioner Steven A. Boand**

# Facilitator and Panelists

- **Chris Adams, Facilitator**
  - ▣ **Engaged Public**
  
- **Dr. David Hill**
  - ▣ **Hill Research Consultants, Inc.**
  
- **Richard Albair**
  - ▣ **Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade**

# Today's Objectives:

## 1. Public input on the County's Economic Foundations

Goal, stating: **“Conditions exist that enable citizens, taxpayers and businesses the opportunity to prosper.”**

- Discussions will probe Douglas County's:
  - Tax and fee structure
  - Regulatory process
  - Role as an effective partner in creating a strong economic foundation

## 2. Input to inform the county's Economic Development Plan for Governor Hickenlooper's, "Bottom Up" planning initiative

- Discussions will probe:
  - What are the Top Five Economic Goals for Douglas County?

# Agenda

- **Overview of fresh data**
- **Interactive dialogue on four key issues:**
  - ▣ **What are the top five Economic Goals for Douglas County?**
  - ▣ **What business climate conditions must exist for a thriving economy?**
  - ▣ **What is the appropriate relationship between government and business?**
  - ▣ **What are the specific actions county government should take to create a business climate supportive of a thriving economy?**

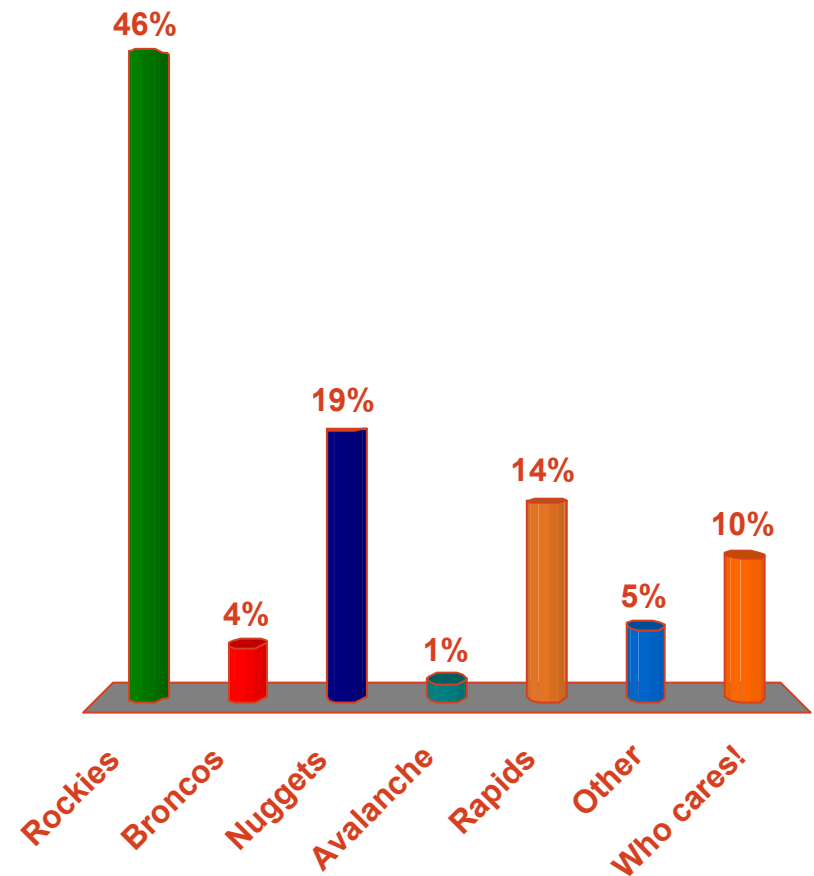
# Key Pad Polling

- Keypad polling is a tool for dialogue and interaction
  - Quantitative results
  - Qualitative results is the polling questions are a start to a dialogue, not an end!



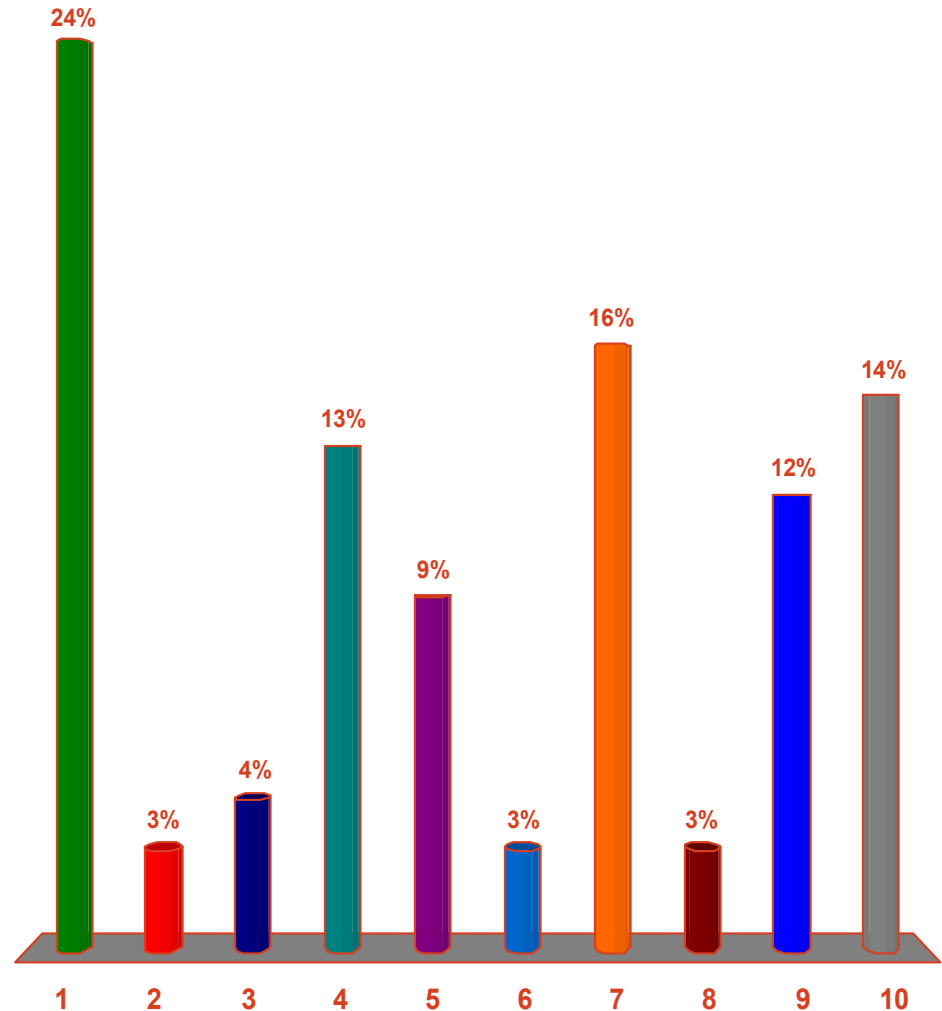
**Practice:** Which sports team has the highest likelihood of winning a championship in the next year?

1. Rockies
2. Broncos
3. Nuggets
4. Avalanche
5. Rapids
6. Other
7. Who cares!



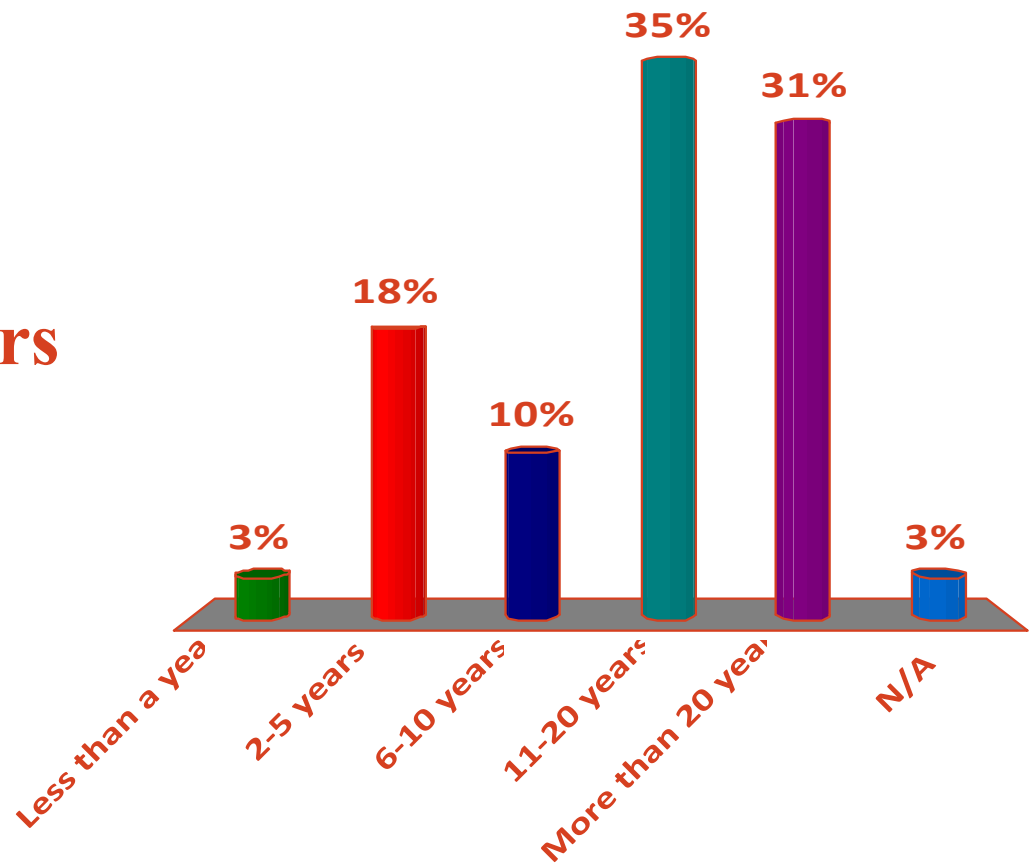
# What point of view are you primarily representing today?

1. Real estate
2. Retail
3. Financial services
4. Professional consultant
5. Construction
6. Hospitality
7. Economic Development/Chamber reps
8. Health Care
9. Non-profit
10. Other



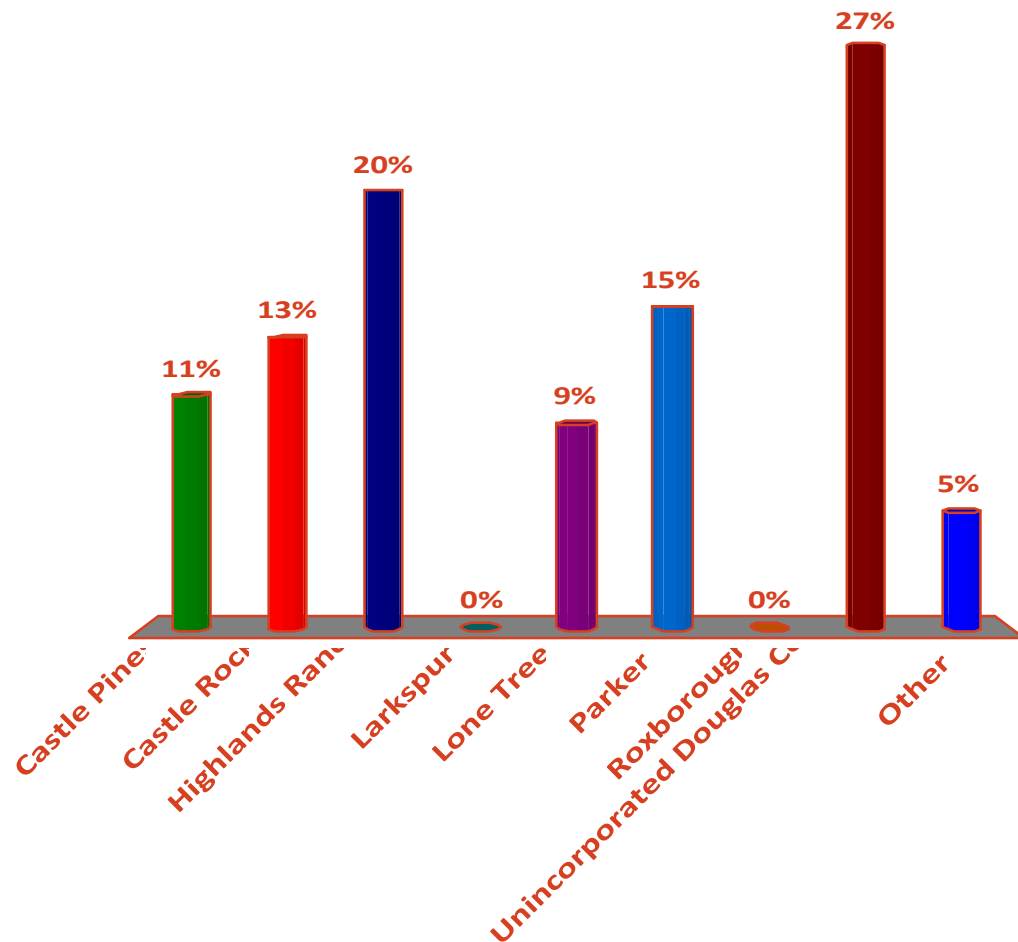
# What long have you done business in Douglas County?

1. Less than a year
2. 2-5 years
3. 6-10 years
4. 11-20 years
5. More than 20 years
6. N/A



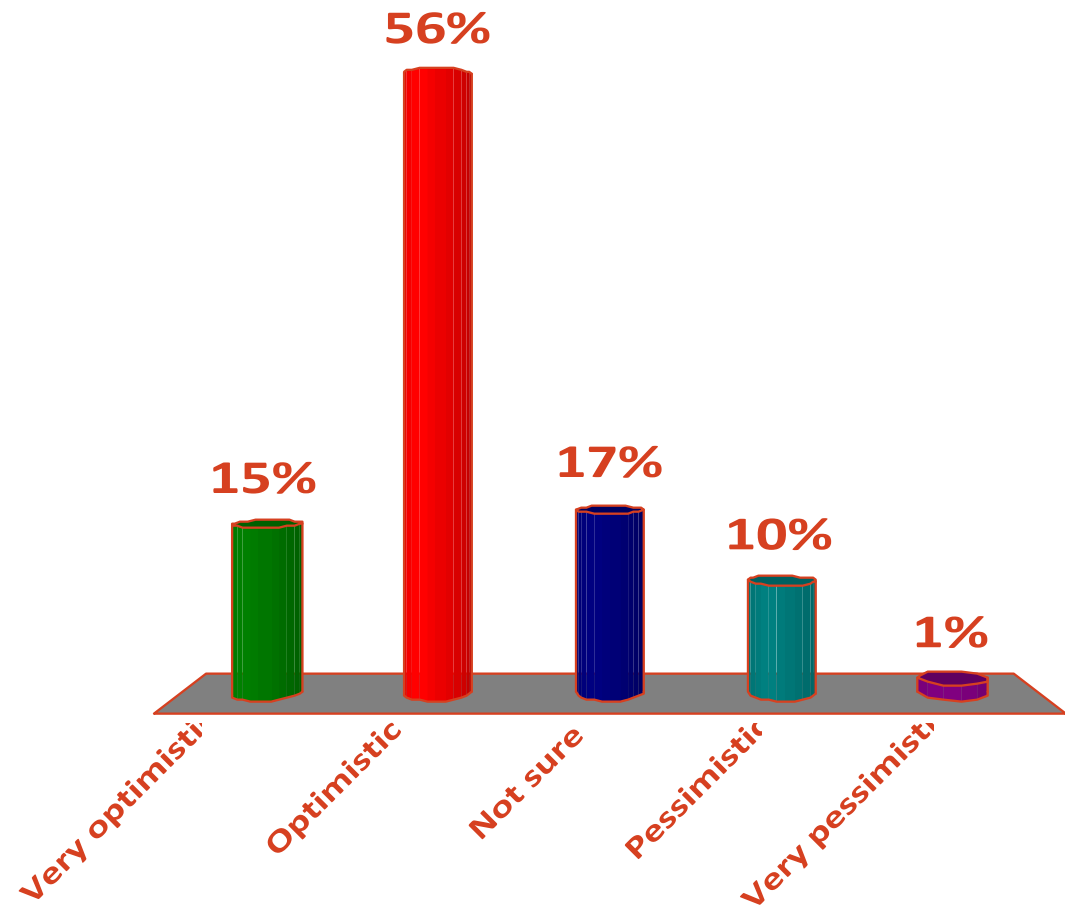
# Your primary location?

1. **Castle Pines**
2. **Castle Rock**
3. **Highlands Ranch**
4. **Larkspur**
5. **Lone Tree**
6. **Parker**
7. **Roxborough**
8. **Unincorporated Douglas County**
9. **Other**



## How optimistic are you that economic conditions in Douglas County will significantly improve over the next five years?

1. **Very optimistic**
2. **Optimistic**
3. **Not sure**
4. **Pessimistic**
5. **Very pessimistic**





# **Douglas County Business Survey**

**February 7-17, 2011**

# Business Survey Methodology

- Countywide stratified random sample of 204 business owners & managers
  - Sample drawn from Hoover's database
  - Strata quotas maintained for size, location and SIC codes
- Interviews conducted February 7-17, 2011
- Margin of error of  $\pm 6.9\%$  for 204 cases
- Typical interview was about 15 minutes

# Evaluating the business climate



- Many business executives are satisfied with the status quo and ask for few changes
- The economy is still the biggest challenge, but most think the worst is over; yet there is still considerable focus on the toll that recession has had on people and businesses
- Taxes are on a lot of minds
- Quality of life factors— safety, schools, affluence and open space—are the county's strongest suit for business; transportation and housing are biggest challenges



## **Dr. Hill's Business Survey Key Results:**

- 91% say: Douglas County is a good place to do business.**
- 96% say: Douglas County is a safe and secure place to run a business without fear of crime.**
- 73% say: Douglas County residents believe the business environment in the County is either improving or staying the same.**

# Governor's "Bottom Up" Planning Initiative

- Overview of County's Role in Governor Hickenlooper's "Bottom Up" Economic Development Planning Initiative
- Results from Douglas County State online survey ó still time to participate through April 30<sup>th</sup>
- Process:
  - 64 County Economic Development Plans
  - 14 Regional Economic Development Plans
  - 1 Overall State Economic Development Plan

For more information, visit

[www.advancecolorado.com/bottomup](http://www.advancecolorado.com/bottomup)

## **And now to address the first of our four key questions:**

- 1. What are the top five Economic Goals for Douglas County?**
2. What business climate conditions must exist for a thriving economy?
3. What is the appropriate relationship between government and business?
4. What are the specific actions county government should take to create a business climate supportive of a thriving economy?

# **Top Five Economic Goals from State's Survey of Douglas County Online Survey** (responses to date)

1. Encourage the growth of existing businesses/industries
2. Create new jobs
3. Create a strong entrepreneurial climate
4. Diversify the economic base
5. Improve transportation infrastructure

# Process:

- Table discussion
  - Identify up to three goals per table for Douglas County, write them on pink sheets
- Open mic
  - What's critically important?
  - What's missing from the usual discussion?
- Staff will use results to create a polling slide for later.

# Table Discussion

- Brief introductions
- Identify your table's top three economic development goals for Douglas County
  - Possible conversation starter: What will invigorate the County's economy?
- Write goals on pink sheet and give to a staff member

# Top Five Economic Goals from State's Online Survey

1. Encourage the growth of existing businesses/industries
2. Create new jobs
3. Create a strong entrepreneurial climate
4. Diversify the economic base
5. Improve transportation infrastructure

# Open mic

- What is critically important to include in the top five Economic Goals?
- What's missing from the usual discussion of this topic?
- Ground Rules:
  - Stay focused on the issue
  - Max of two minutes (less if there are many people waiting)

## And now to the second of our four key questions:

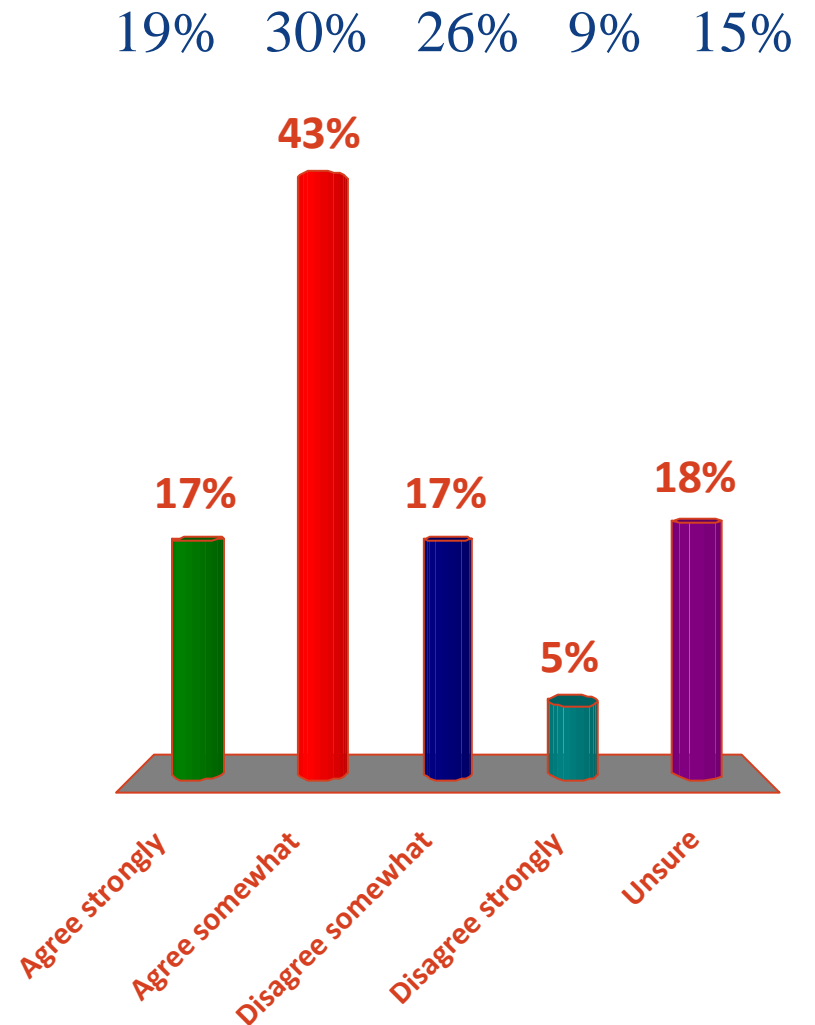
1. What are the top five Economic Goals for Douglas County?
2. **What business climate conditions must exist for a thriving economy?**
3. What is the appropriate relationship between government and business?
4. What are the specific actions county government should take to create a business climate supportive of a thriving economy?

# Process:

- Answer a few baseline questions using keypads
  - ▣ Compare your results to scientific poll
- Table discussions
- ðOpen micö
  - ▣ What's critically important?
  - ▣ What's missing from the usual discussion?

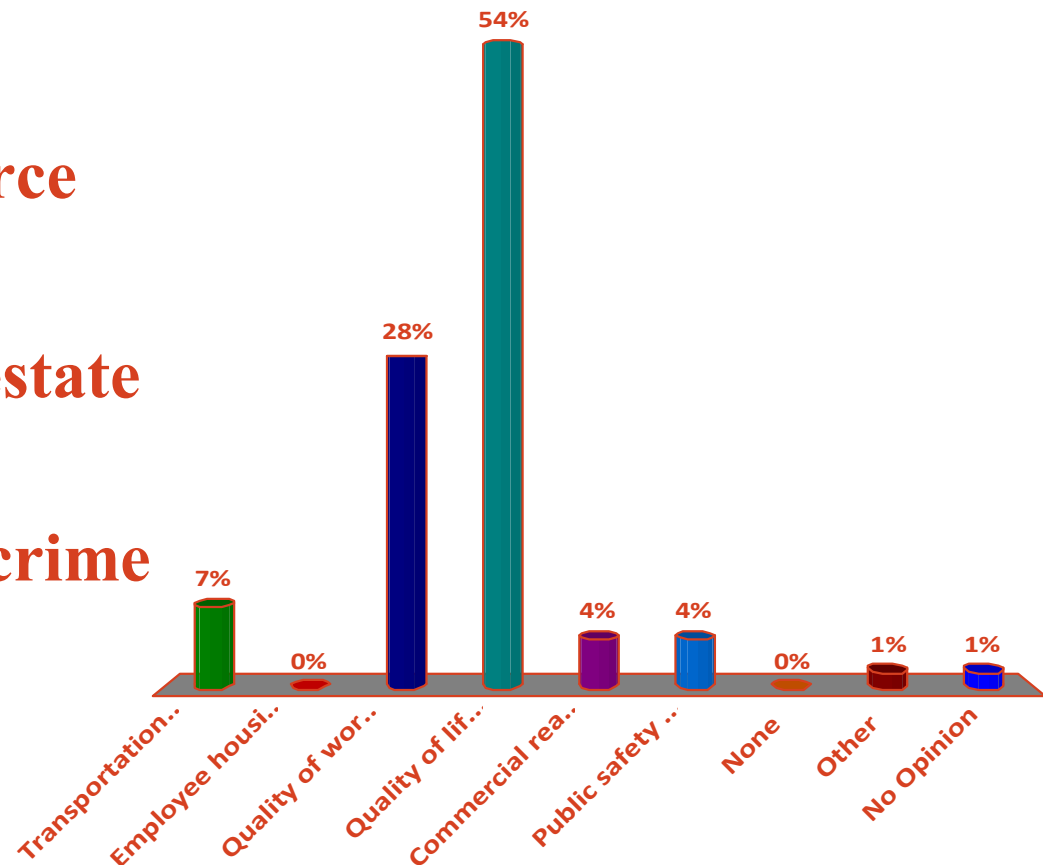
# Douglas County's tax & fee structure is not balanced & is unfair for business.

1. **Agree strongly**
2. **Agree somewhat**
3. **Disagree somewhat**
4. **Disagree strongly**
5. **Unsure**



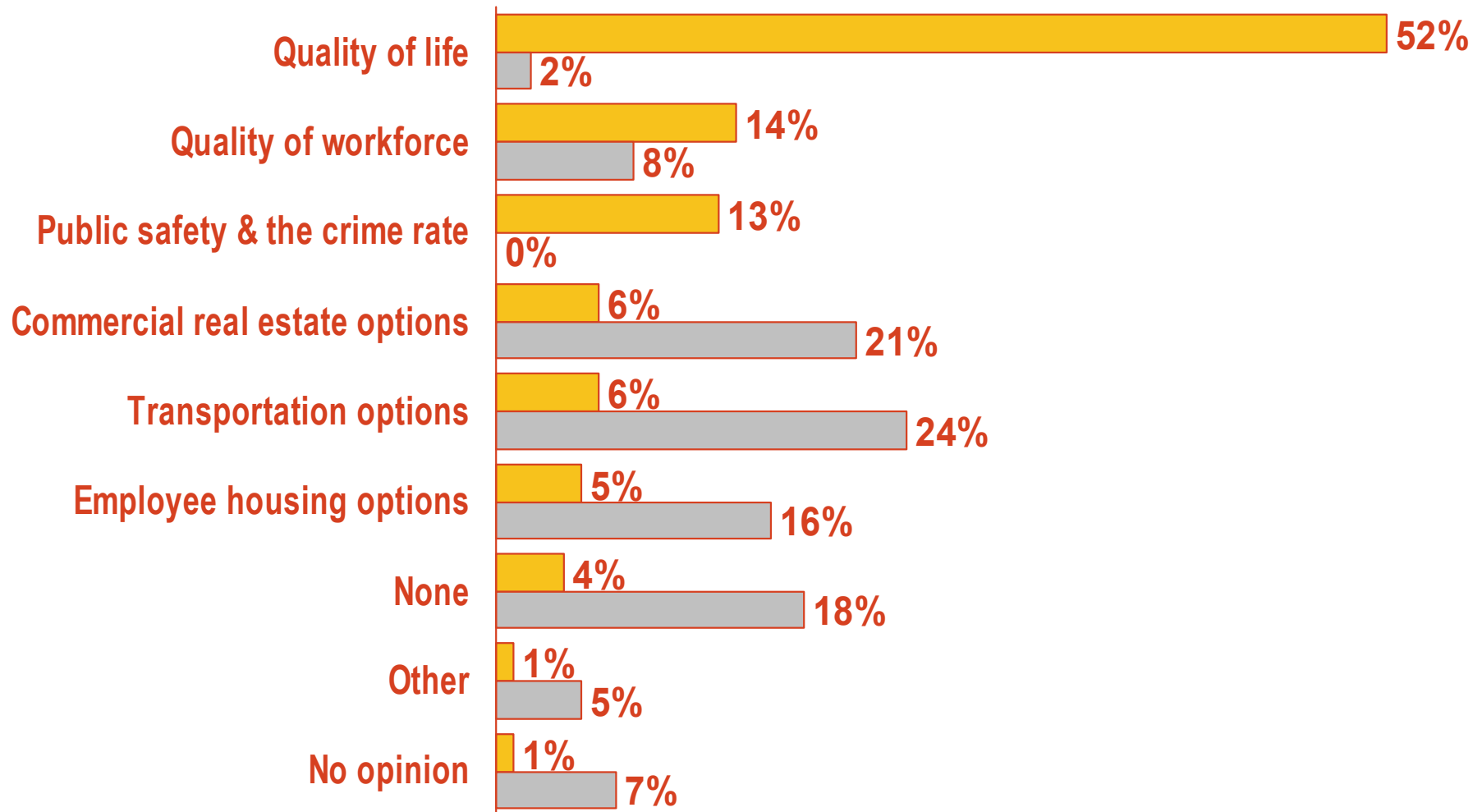
# What is the biggest plus or positive for businesses operating in Douglas County?

1. **Transportation options**
2. **Employee housing options**
3. **Quality of workforce**
4. **Quality of life**
5. **Commercial real estate options**
6. **Public safety and crime rate**
7. **None**
8. **Other**
9. **No Opinion**



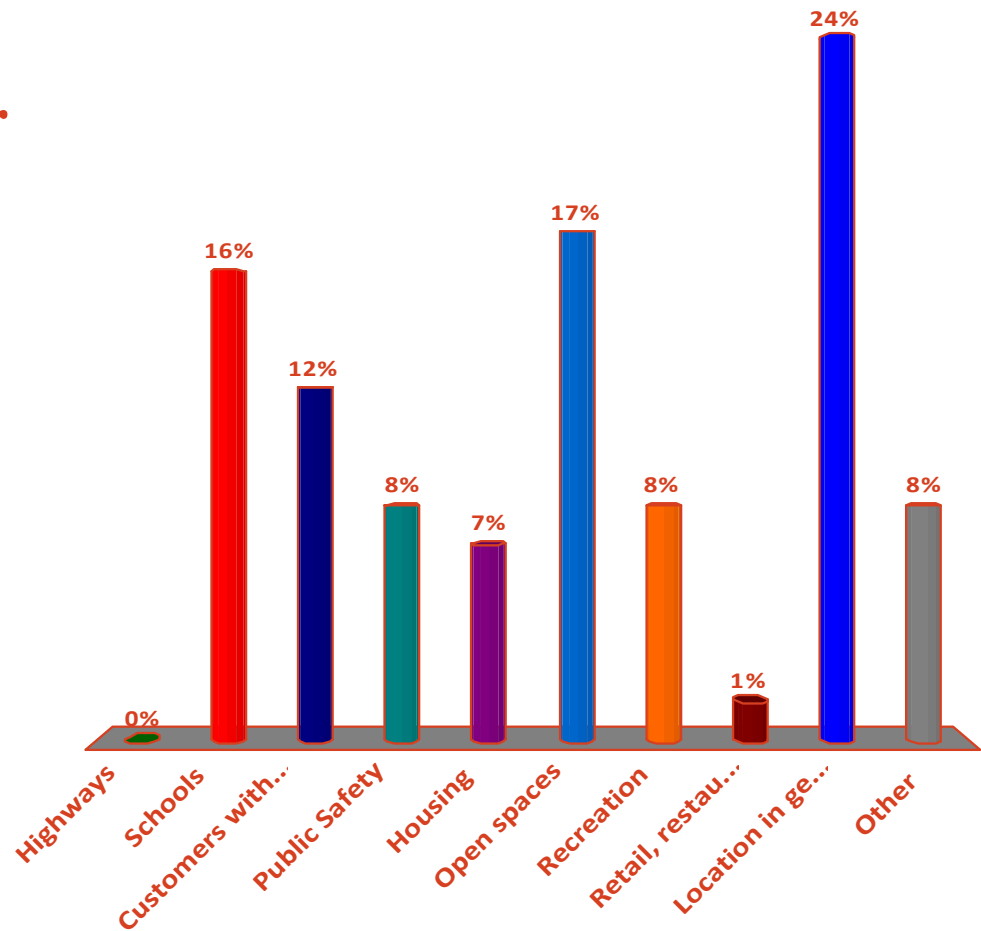
# Hill Business Survey Results

■ Plus or positive ■ Drawback or negative



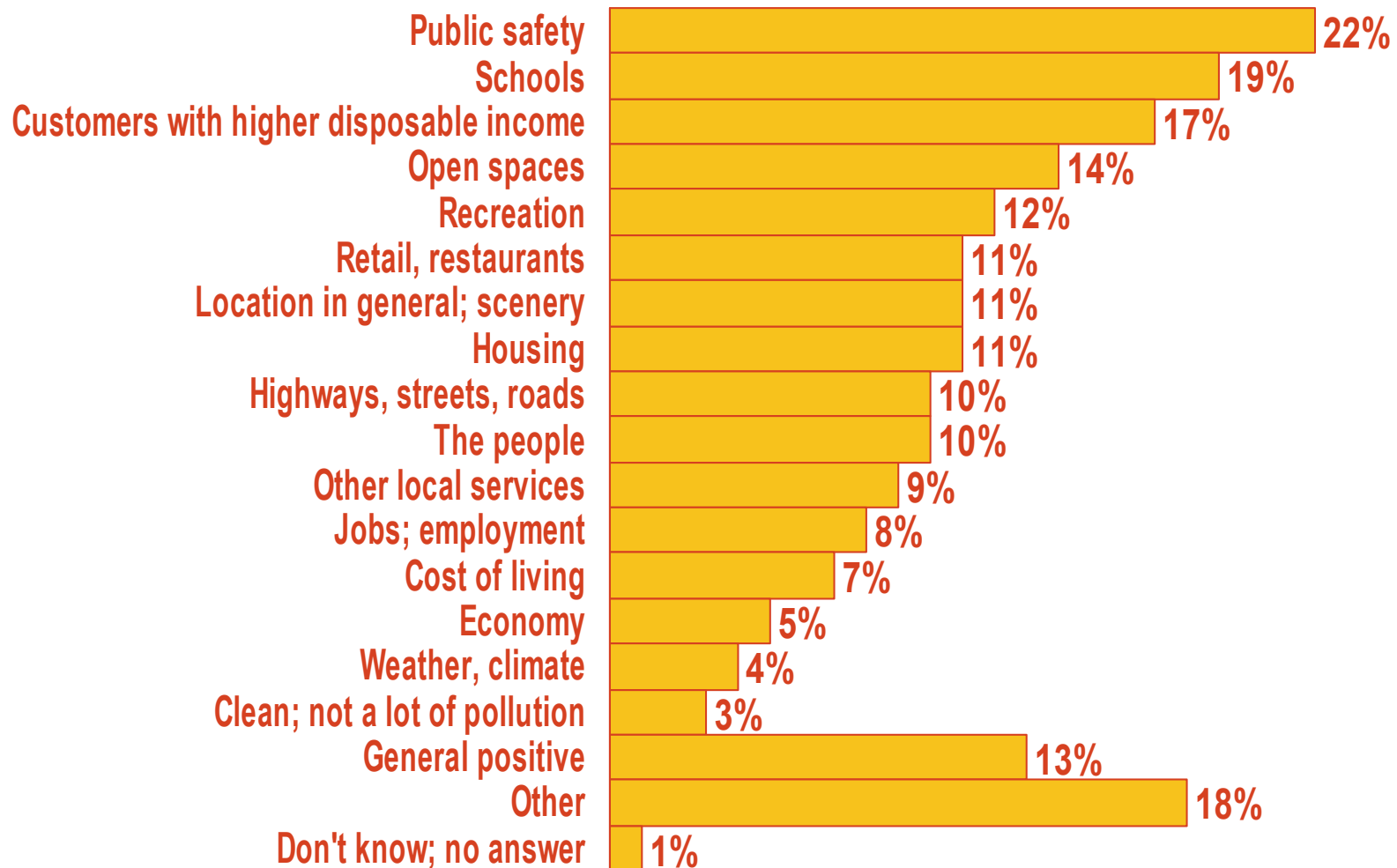
# What comes to mind when you think of quality of life?

1. **Highways**
2. **Schools**
3. **Customers with higher disposable income**
4. **Public Safety**
5. **Housing**
6. **Open spaces**
7. **Recreation**
8. **Retail, restaurants**
9. **Location in general, scenery**
10. **Other**



# What comes to mind when you think of quality of life?

## Dr. Hill survey results:



# Top Factors Very Important to a Healthy Business Climate:

## Dr. Hill survey of Douglas County

- A friendly, welcoming overall business climate.
- Availability of qualified workforce.
- Full range of housing options at all price levels.
- Accessibility of local govt. elected officials.
- Proximity to other well-known businesses and industries.

## State survey of Douglas County

- Attractive livable communities
- Quality local/regional school system
- A well-trained workforce
- Local health care facilities
- Access/proximity to markets

# State Survey of Douglas County continued – top five weaknesses and threats

## Top five weaknesses

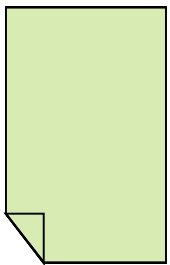
1. Transportation network
2. Local resources for capital ó business loan funds, etc.
3. Effective economic development organization
4. Tourism Assets
5. Raw materials/natural resources

## Top five threats

1. Limited water resources
2. Volatility of business cycle
3. Lack of affordable housing
4. Ineffective existing government (local, state, federal)
5. Excessive permitting fees & hostile regulatory environment

# Table Discussion

- Did the results of the state and/or Hill survey surprise you?
- What would you add?



Please use the blue sheet at your table to write any questions you and your group may have during discussion. Time permitting, we will collect sheets and pose your questions to the audience.

# Open mic

- What business conditions are critically important to a thriving economy in Douglas County?
- What's missing from the usual discussion of this topic?
- Ground Rules:
  - Stay focused on the issue
  - Max of two minutes (less if there are many people waiting)

## And now to the third of our four key questions:

1. What are the top five Economic Goals for Douglas County?
2. What business climate conditions must exist for a thriving economy?
3. **What is the appropriate relationship between government and business?**
4. What are the specific actions county government should take to support a thriving economy?

## Which of these views is closest to your own?

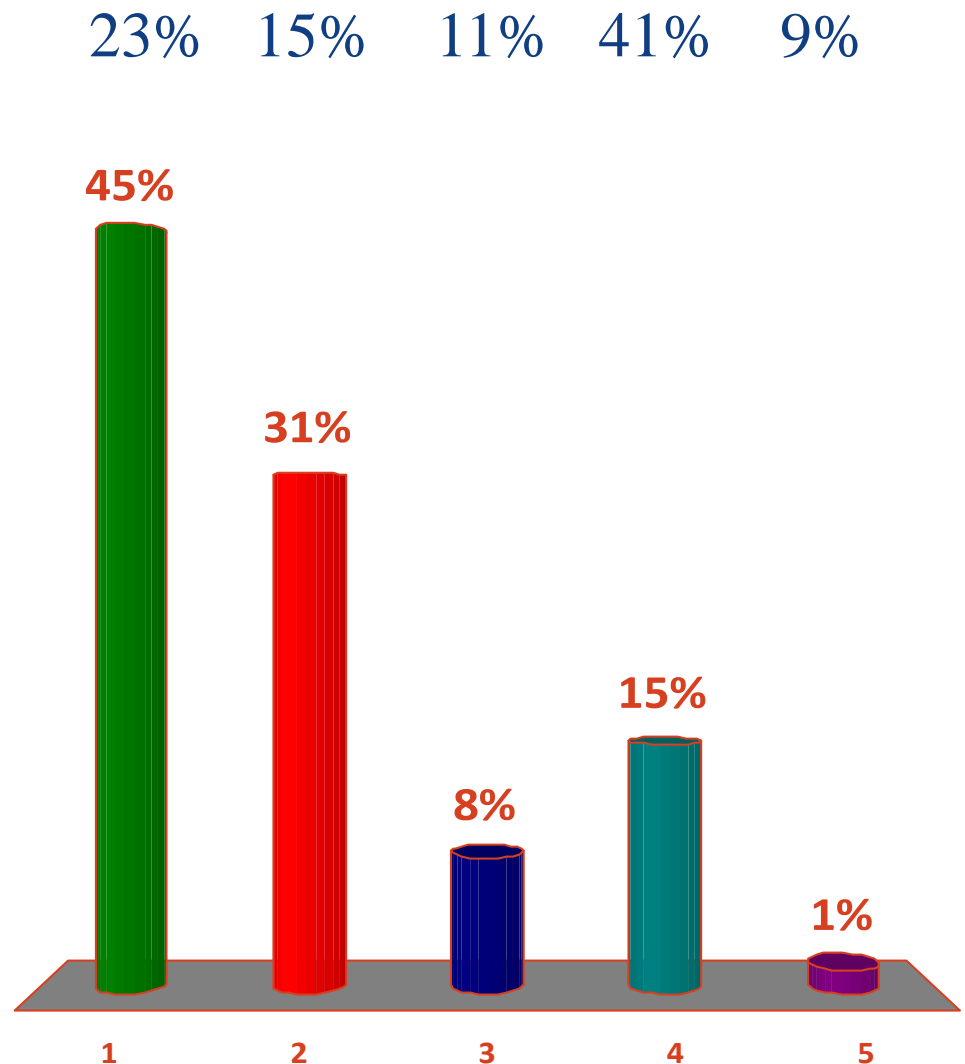
Government should seek to enact policies that improve the business climate while maintaining fair & balanced tax & regulatory policies.

~OR~

Government should **not** be involved in business climate improvement & economic development. These matters are best left to businesses & the free market process.

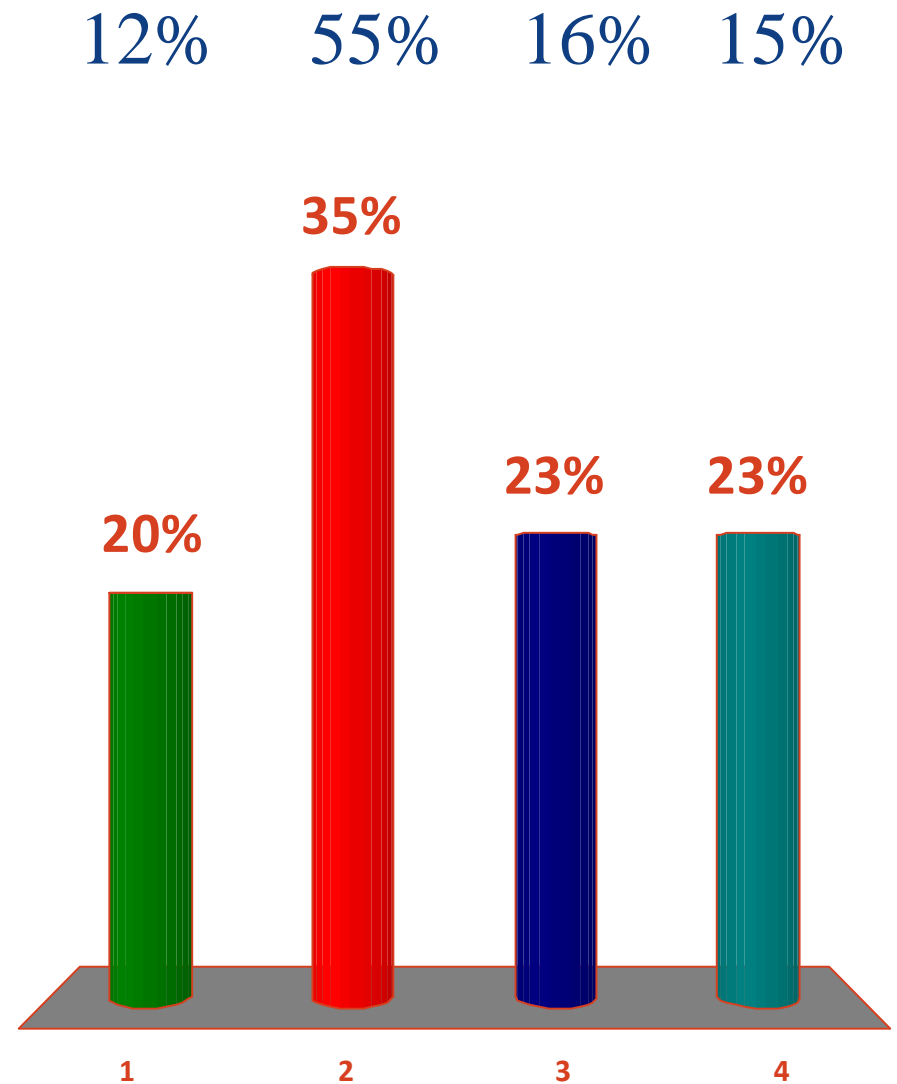
# Point of view closest to your own on the role of government:

1. Government should enact pro-business policies **STRONGLY**
2. Gov. should enact pro-business policies **NOT STRONGLY**
3. Best left to business, free market **NOT STRONGLY**
4. Best left to business, free market **STRONGLY**
5. Unsure



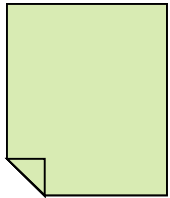
# Involvement of Douglas County government in business climate improvement is...

1. Too involved
2. Involved the right amount
3. Not involved enough
4. Unsure



# Table Discussion

- Did the results surprise you?
- What could county government do to help create a better business climate?
- How could Douglas County's role be improved?



Please use the blue sheet to write any questions you and your group may have during discussion. Time permitting, we will collect sheets and pose your questions to the audience.

# Open mic

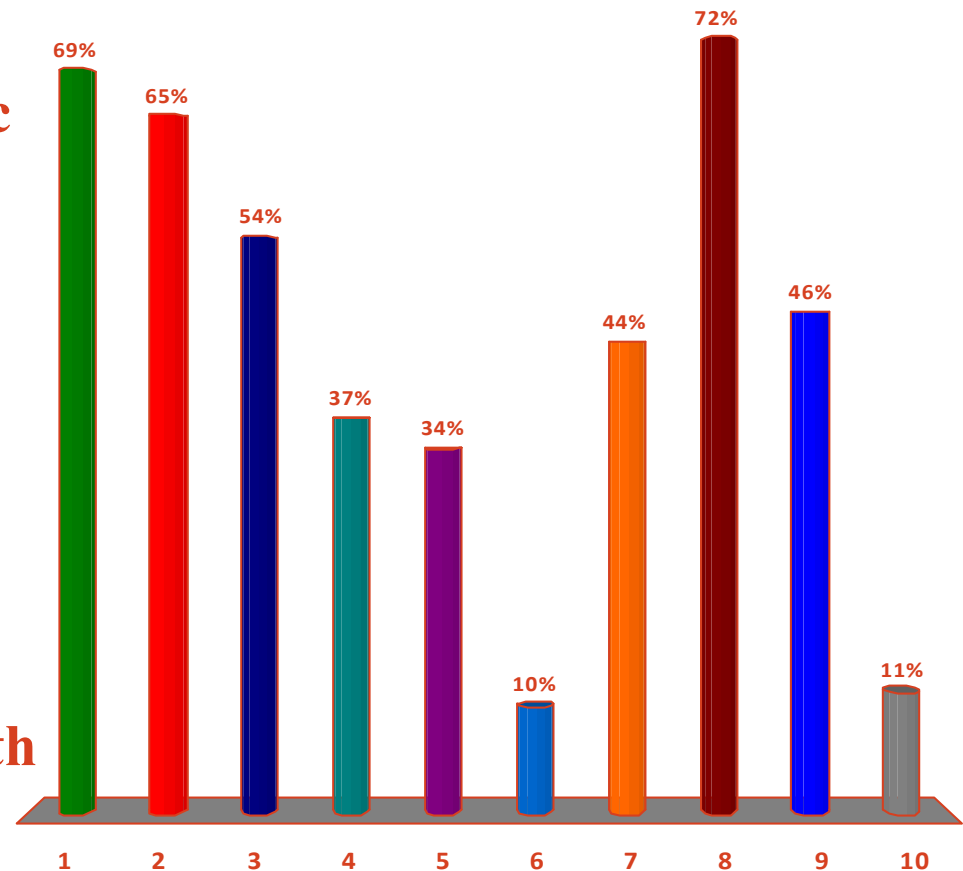
- What is critically important about the relationship between government and business?
  
- What's missing from the usual discussion of this topic?
  
- Ground Rules:
  - Stay focused on the issue
  - Max of two minutes (less if there are people waiting)

## And now to the fourth of our four key questions

1. What are the top five Economic Goals for Douglas County?
2. What business climate conditions must exist for a thriving economy?
3. What is the appropriate relationship between government and business?
4. **What are the specific actions county government should take to support a thriving economy?**

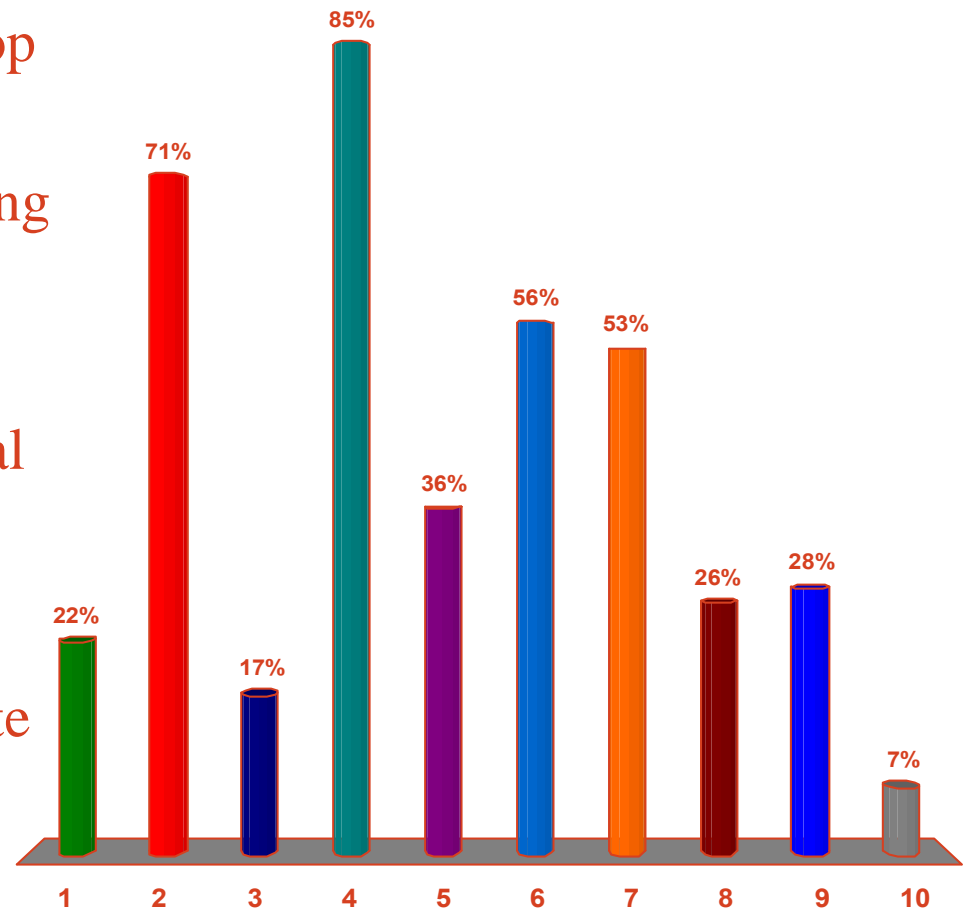
# Which of the following actions should county government undertake to support a thriving local economy?

1. Ensure a stable water supply
2. Maintain public safety
3. Improve road maintenance, new roads
4. Increase availability of public transportation
5. Develop workforce
6. Reduce traffic
7. Offer support for small business
8. Streamline regulatory environment
9. Improve communications with business community
10. Other



# What resources/actions from the State of CO would be most helpful to Douglas County in order to implement its plan?

1. More worker training programs
2. Tax credits for job growth
3. Technical assistance to develop local action plans
4. Streamlined regs and permitting
5. Grants for economic development
6. Loans/Funds/Access to Capital
7. Incentives for job growth
8. Entrepreneurial programs
9. Better info. about existing state programs
10. Other



# Table Discussion

- What are the specific actions that county government could undertake to create a thriving economy?
- In consideration of what government does well and not well, what makes you uncertain about government actions?
  - ▣ How might these be addressed?
- What specific actions are best suited for Douglas County government?



Please use the blue sheet to write any questions you and your group may have during discussion.

# Open mic

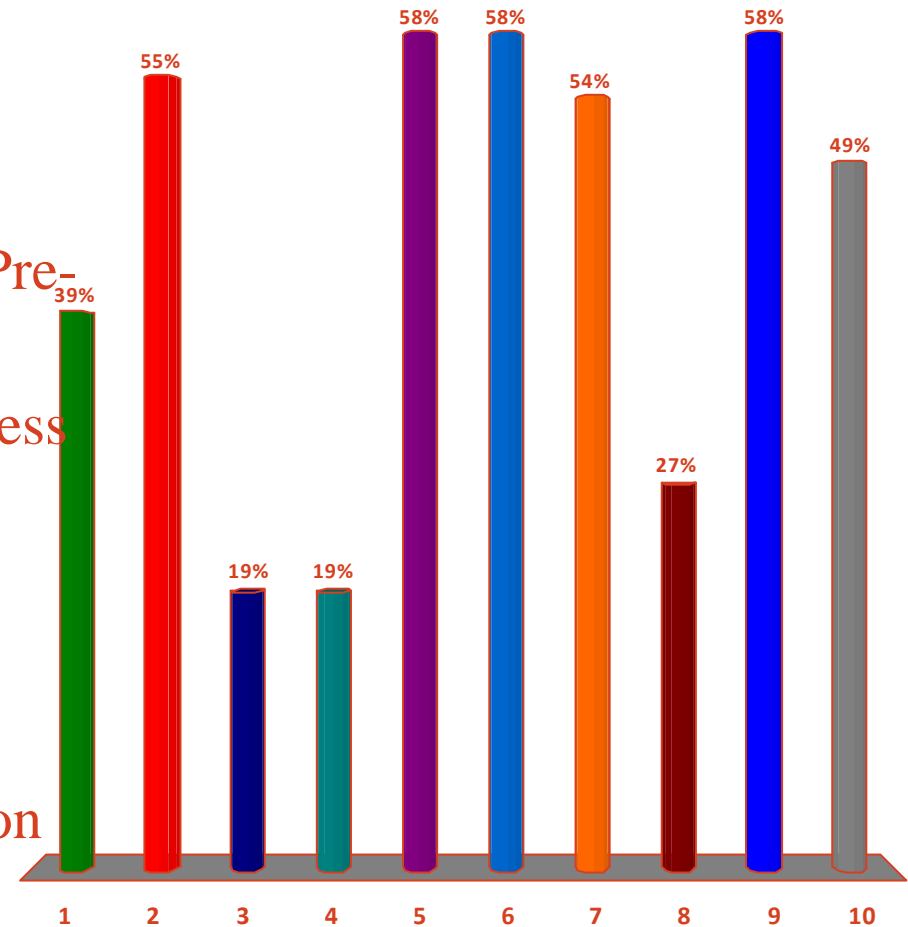
- What are critical actions that county government and economic development organizations can undertake to support a thriving economy in Douglas County?
- What's missing from the usual discussion of this topic?

# Comments on today's forum

- **Commissioner Jill E. Repella, Chair**
- **Commissioner Steven A. Boand**
- **Commissioner Jack A. Hilbert**

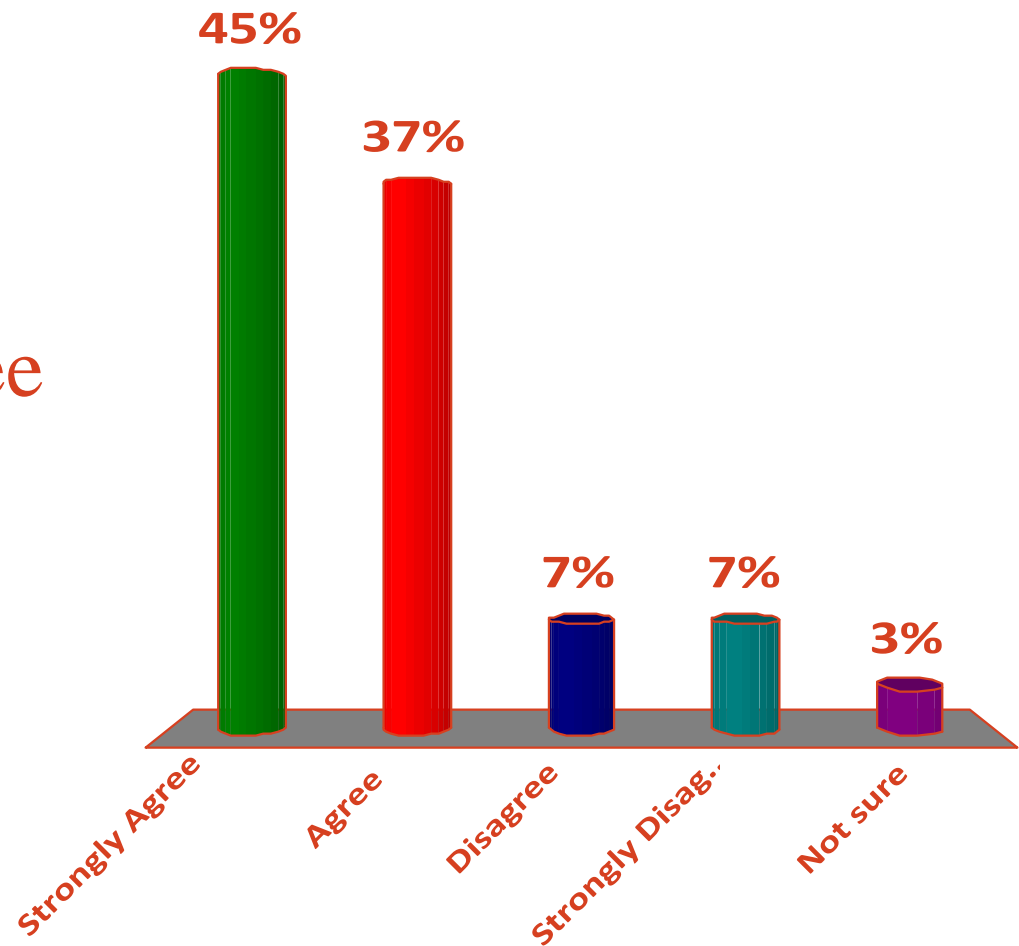
# What are the top five economic development goals?

1. Improve Transportation Infrastructure
2. Sustainable Water Supply
3. Diverse workforce and employment opportunities
4. Diverse housing options
5. Quality Public Education (including Pre-school and higher education)
6. Commercial property taxes and business personal property taxes are a disincentive to growth (too high)
7. Attract and retain primary employers
8. IT infrastructure ó fiber to curb
9. Streamline government/Less regulation
10. Support business growth and development



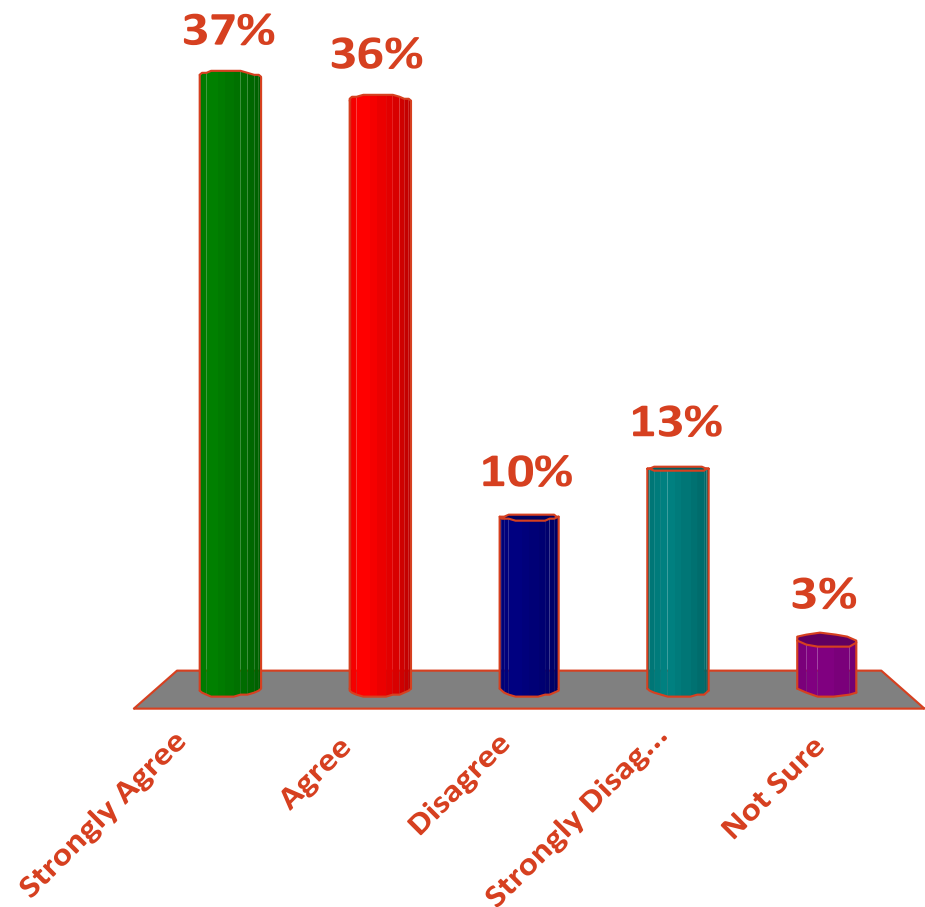
# Should Douglas County Government play a role in acquiring renewable water and water infrastructure as part of its economic development strategy?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Not sure



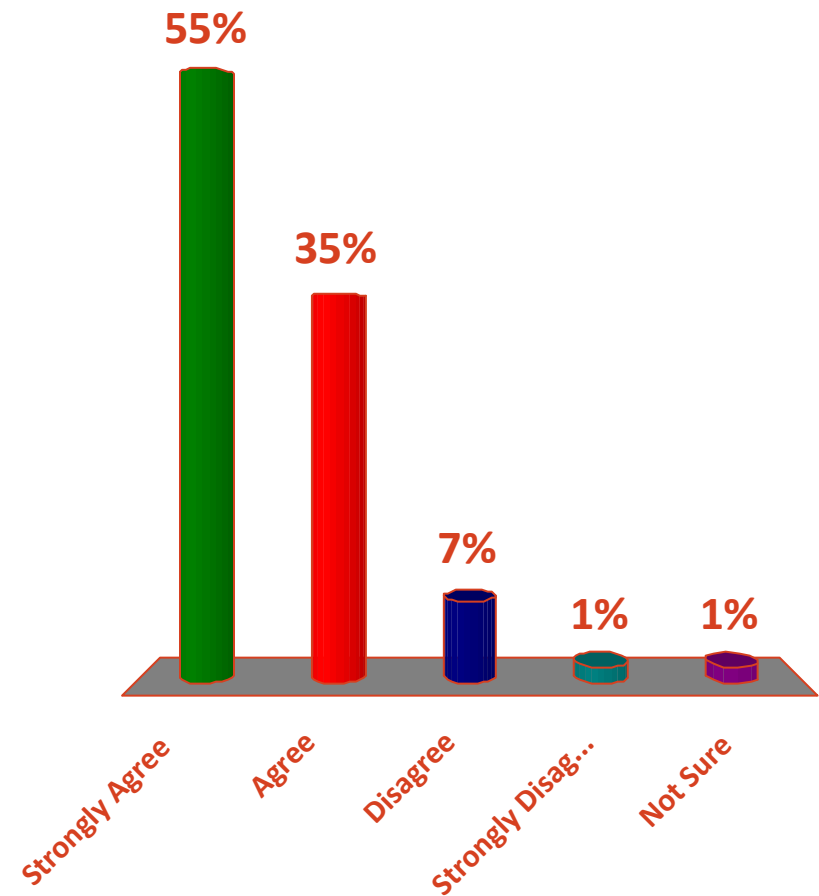
## Should we define what kind of industries locate in Douglas County part of the economic development strategy?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Not Sure



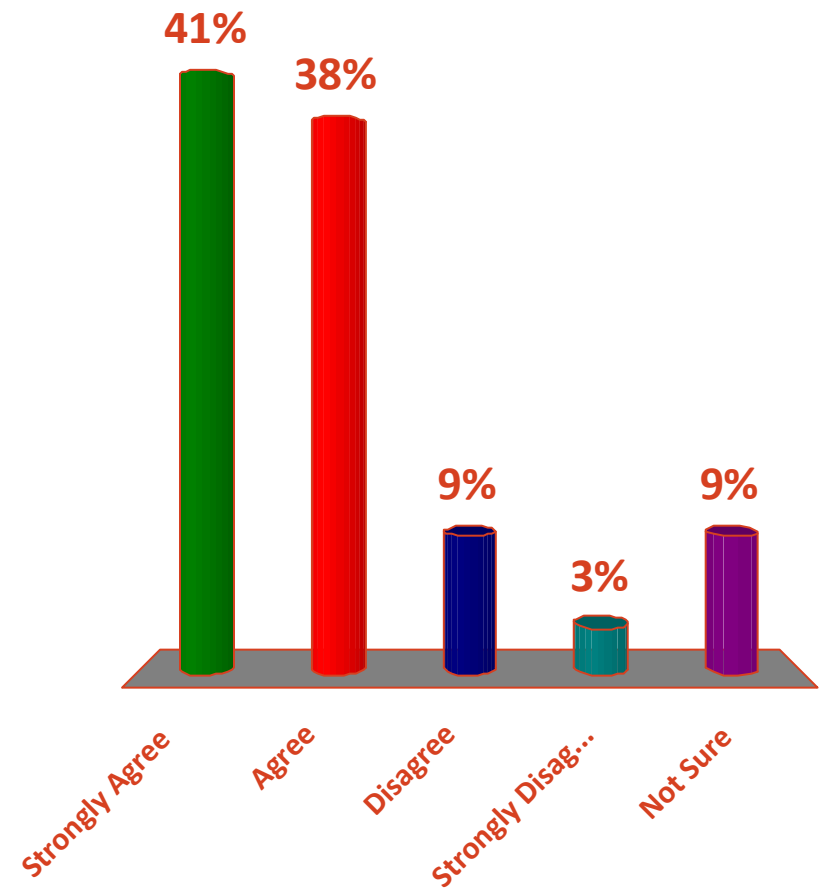
# Should public/private partnerships be part of the economic development plan?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Not Sure



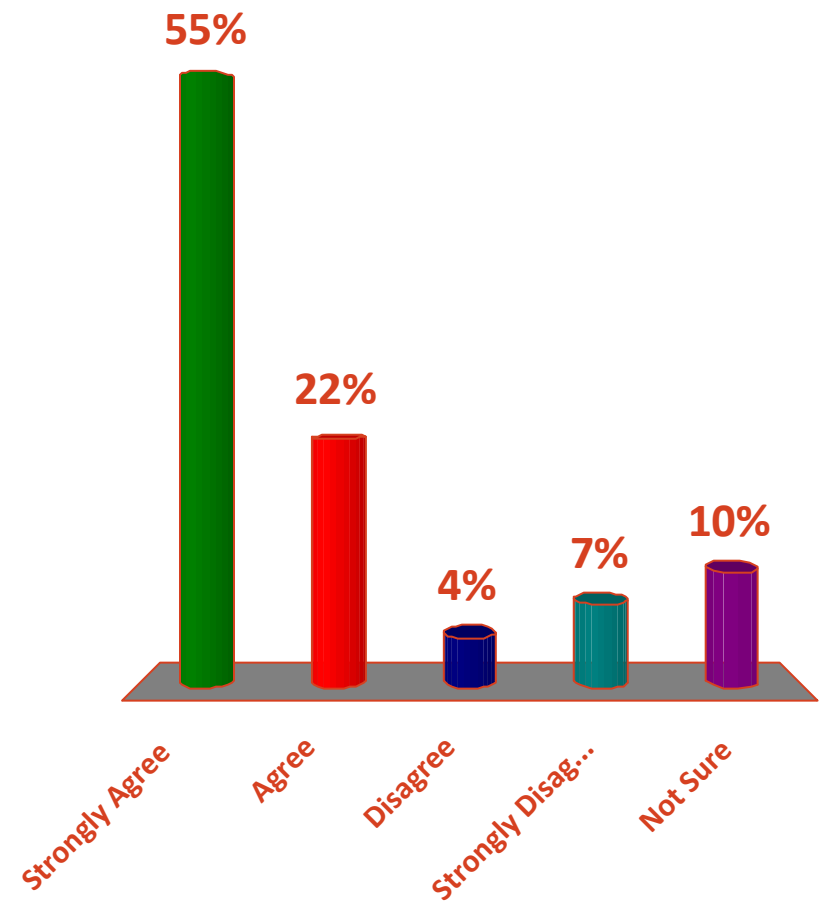
# Should government provide more support for small business?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Not Sure



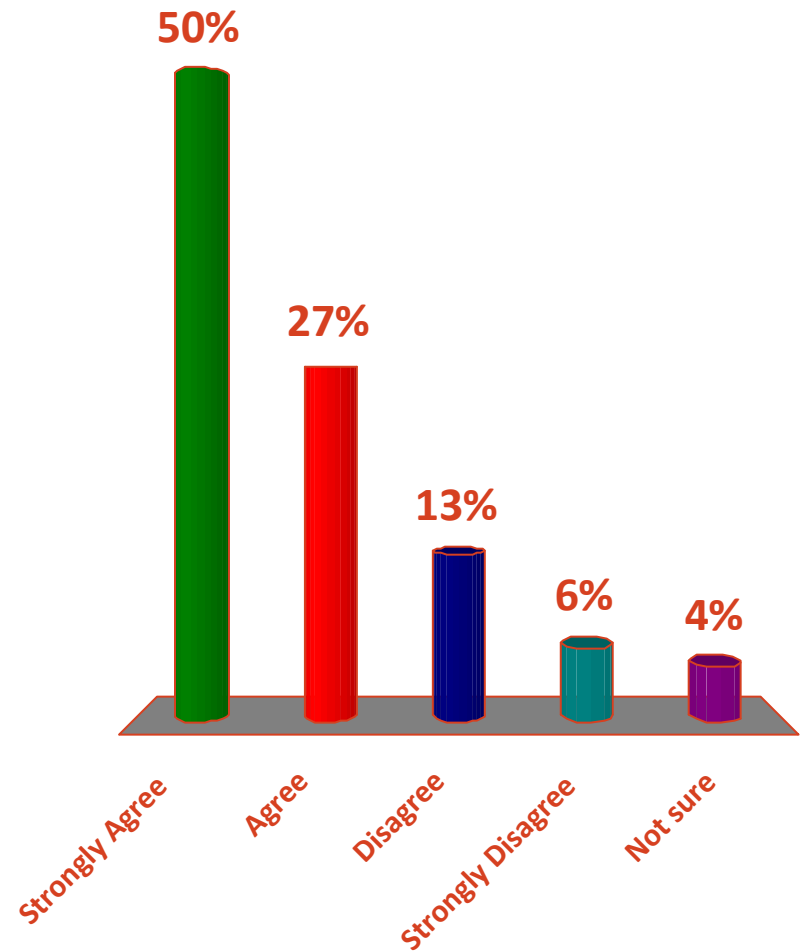
# Should the County be more competitive with property taxes?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Not Sure



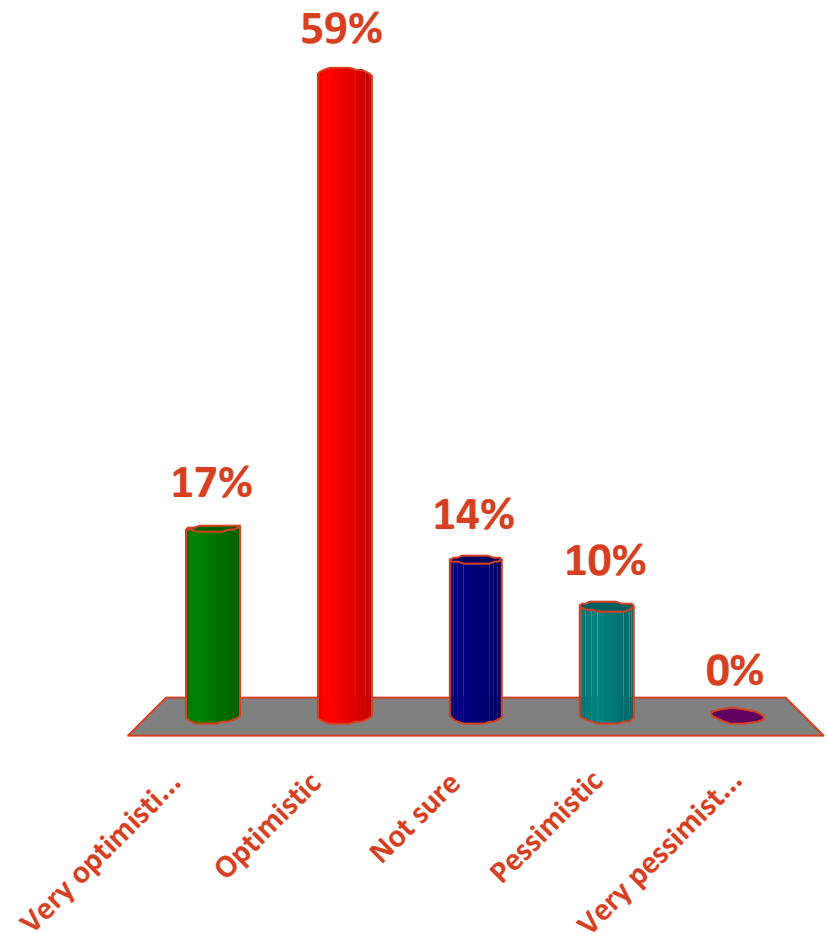
# Should Douglas County partner with the state on the generation of business?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree
5. Not sure

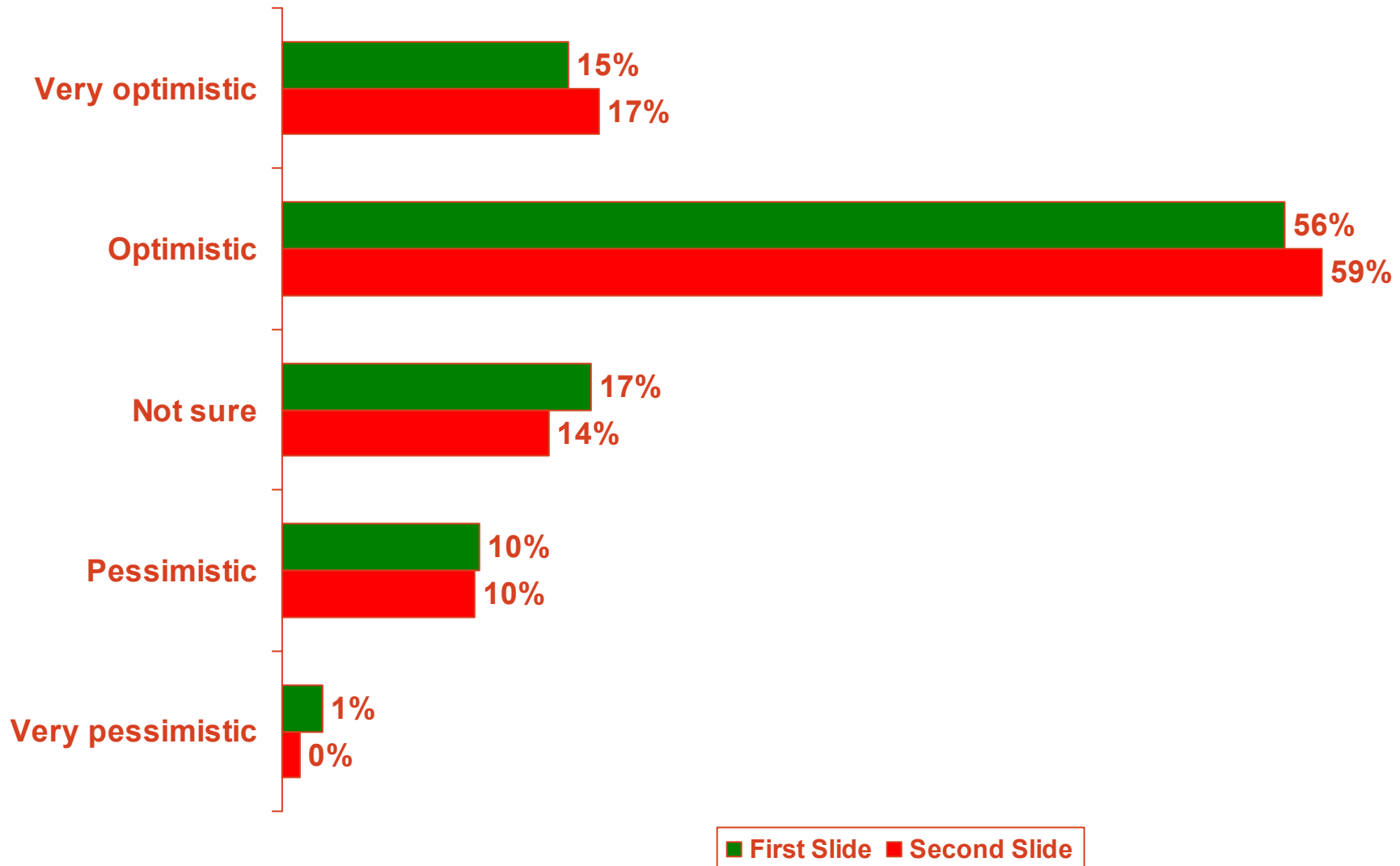


# How optimistic are you that economic conditions in Douglas County will significantly improve over the next five years?

1. Very optimistic
2. Optimistic
3. Not sure
4. Pessimistic
5. Very pessimistic



# How optimistic are you that economic conditions in Douglas County will significantly improve over...



# Thanks for participating!



Please leave  
your keypads  
on table



engaged  
public

# Economic Development Forum Feedback

Visit [www.BusinessDouglasCounty.com](http://www.BusinessDouglasCounty.com)

- ▣ Submit additional comments
- ▣ Ask questions
- ▣ Keep the conversation alive

**THANK YOU!**

# Thank you!!

- As a courtesy to Cornerstone Award Luncheon Attendees and Volunteers, a private area, upstairs in the Globology mezzanine, has been reserved today as a Business Center with access to free wireless Internet and a comfortable area for making/returning phone calls.
- Beverages (water, coffee, decaf, and tea) will also be available as a courtesy.