

Fairhaven Cultural Council meeting
August 19, 2026

Call to Order & Chairperson's Welcome

A motion to call the meeting to order at 6:37 pm was unanimously accepted.

Roll Call

Present: Katharine MacPhail (Secretary), John Walker (Vice Chair), Brian Cass (Member), Beth Ann Gallagher (Chair), Jen Paulino (Member), Donna Criscione (Member), Jen Frasier (Treasurer), Denise Barr (Member)

Absent: Serina Gundersen (Member), Nicole Aruda (Member)

A motion to take agenda item #15 out of order is unanimously accepted.

Other Business (not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting)

Introduction of new member Brian Cass

Brian Cass has been a Fairhaven resident since 2021, although he has spent many years in Fairhaven. He is a music technology professor at Berklee College of Music. He learned about the opportunity to get involved from chair Beth Ann Gallagher.

Minutes Review & Approval

The motion to accept the minutes with the correction to the date of appointments of Jen Frasier, Beth Ann Gallagher and John Walker to September 14th is passed with 7 ayes and one abstention.

Chair's Report

Open Meeting Law and Emails

Beth Ann reviewed the open meeting law regarding email. All emails to more than one member should be sent BCC to avoid achieving a virtual quorum.

Reappointment update

The appointments and reappointments of FCC members will be taking place in the near future. Beth Ann, John and Jen F will be reappointed at a hearing on September 14 and the newest members will be reappointed on September 30. The Select Board is going to ask for attendance records which Beth Ann has compiled.

The Select Board plans to meet and interview all reappointed candidates. Because the Select Board takes office in June after the local election, they are going to change committee and board service year start and end months. A revised Boards and Committees Handbook is forthcoming.

Catherine Teves resigning

Catherine will be resigning because she hadn't been aware of what would be involved with being a member of the Fairhaven Cultural Council.

Treasurer's Report

Jen Frasier has grantee updates but nothing to report as treasurer.

Allie Thiel of Millicent Library has leftover money from her grant award for the puppet show.

Beth Ann checked with MCC liaison Jay Wong and they agreed that there is no verbiage in the contract about returning awarded money that is not spent. The library had budgeted for use of the town hall auditorium but it was not needed because the weather was favorable for an outdoor show. The library received the funds ahead of their event because the FCC is a direct grantor, which means that the full amount of the grant goes to the grantee rather than the grantee asking for reimbursement.

Seven grantees reports are complete. 11 are outstanding but there are events that have not yet happened and won't until the end of the year.

Previous Cycle Grantee Updates

Jen has received a few reports: she is waiting for the final report for the library puppet show, the Children's Art Lab and Concert Under the Stars reports are complete. Ann Richard of Green Lanterns sent a report but one page was blank. Jen has emails out to the other grantees whose reports are outstanding.

The Rec Center has an issue. FCC approved a pollinator garden on the traffic islands in the parking lot. The town is now planning to renovate the parking lot in the near future, which would destroy the pollinator garden if they plant it before the work is done. Given the final design of the parking lot they may need to alter their project. If any aspect of a project has to be changed then the grantee has to formally request approval of those changes. A substantial change would be, for example, charging for an event that was presented as free or a change of location.

The Old Time Radio Play was having trouble nailing down a date and terms with the Shepard Center for the Arts due to change in personnel at the Shepard Center. Beth Ann told the grantee that FCC is flexible on change of venue.

Ron Fortier had gotten grants for two podcasts and a triptych. The triptych is on display but the final report has not been submitted. The podcasts as of the present moment are still in flux and the funded podcast episodes are still not done, and Beth Ann will contact Ron about his future plans.

2026 Community Survey Results

Beth Ann created an in depth presentation of the survey responses. The survey opened early this summer and closed on August 1. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

Finalize Fiscal Year 2027 Priorities & Guidelines

The FCC looked at last year's priorities and guidelines and discussed some changes, see attachment to these minutes.

A motion to accept the 2027 local priorities as discussed was accepted unanimously.

A motion to continue to offer direct grants was unanimously accepted.

Grants Info Session 2026

Beth Ann will send out emails organizing who will be able to attend this meeting for prospective grantees, taking place on September 9.

Fundraising

Grant Reception / Gala

A motion to move forward with Fairhaven Cultural Council gala on January 29, 2027 from 7 to 10 was unanimously accepted.

The cost for the Century House would be \$5460 for 130 people (minimum) and then \$42 for each additional ticket.

A motion to form an ad-hoc gala planning committee was unanimously accepted.

A motion to table special project and to do reviews was unanimously accepted

Set Next Meeting Date(s)

The next meeting of Fairhaven Cultural Council will be Wednesday, September 16, 2026

Adjourn

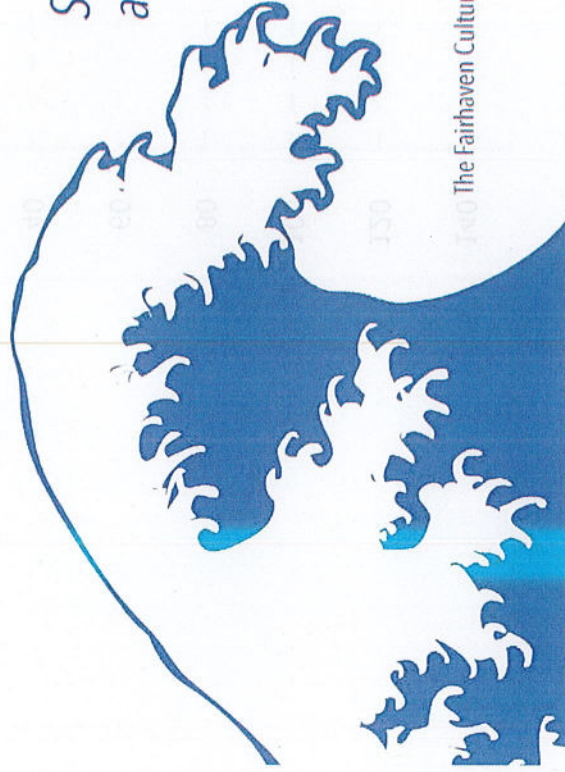
A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 PM was unanimously accepted

Respectfully submitted

Katharine MacPhail, Secretary

2026 Community Survey Results

FAIRHAVEN CULTURAL COUNCIL

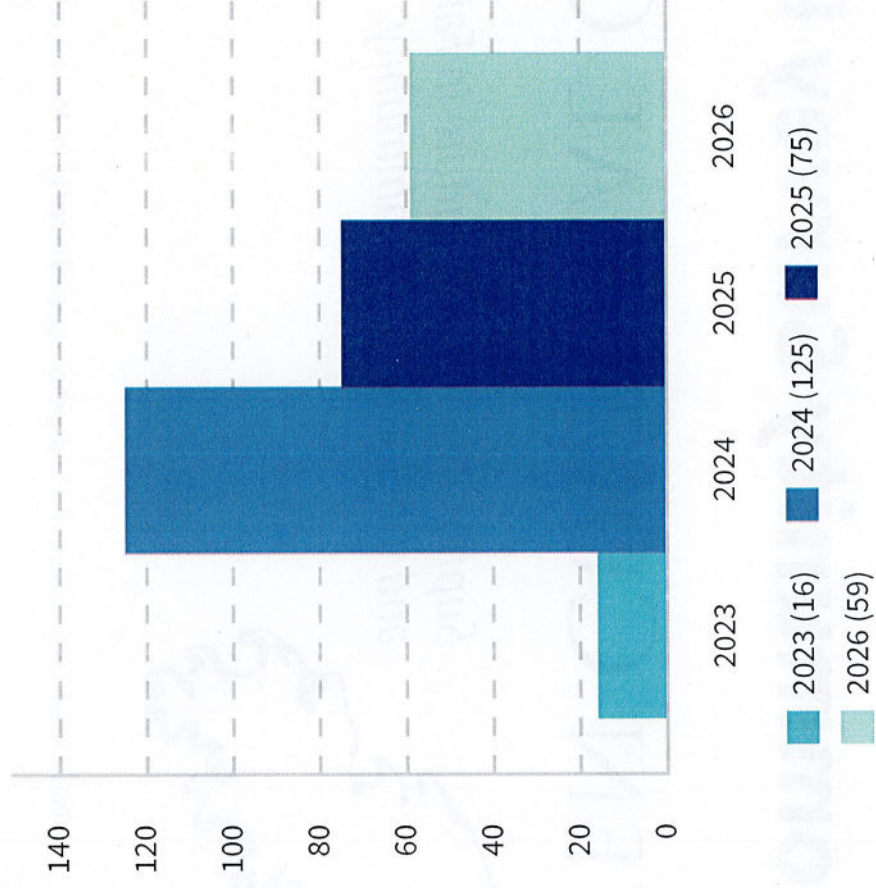


*Supporting arts and culture in Fairhaven, Massachusetts
and the South Coast community.*

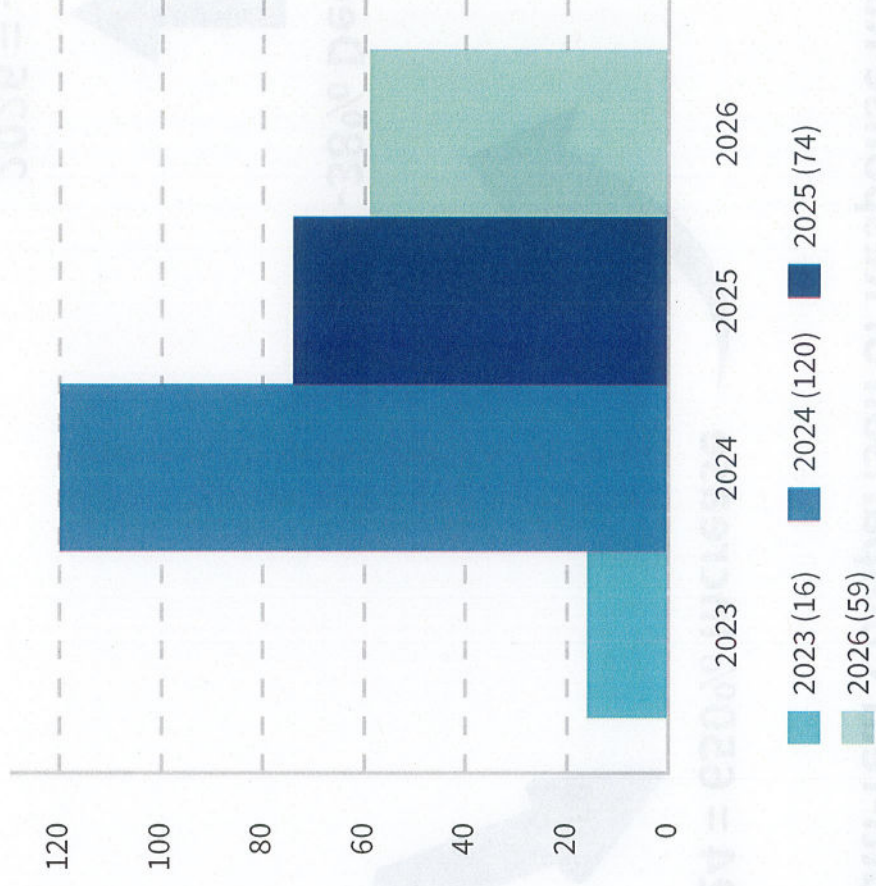


The Fairhaven Cultural Council is a local agency supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

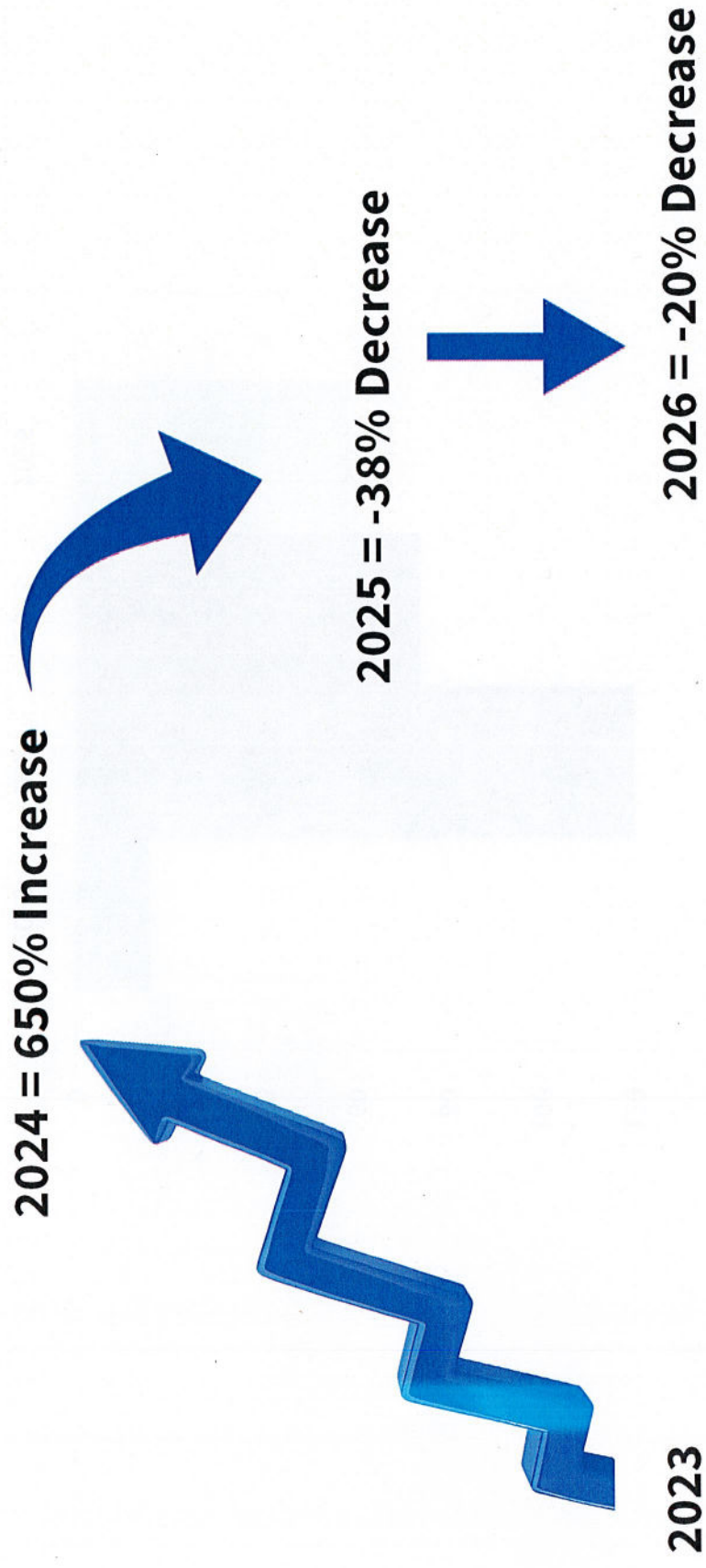
Total Number of Respondents: Multi-Year Comparison



Total Number of Fairhaven Respondents: Multi-Year Comparison

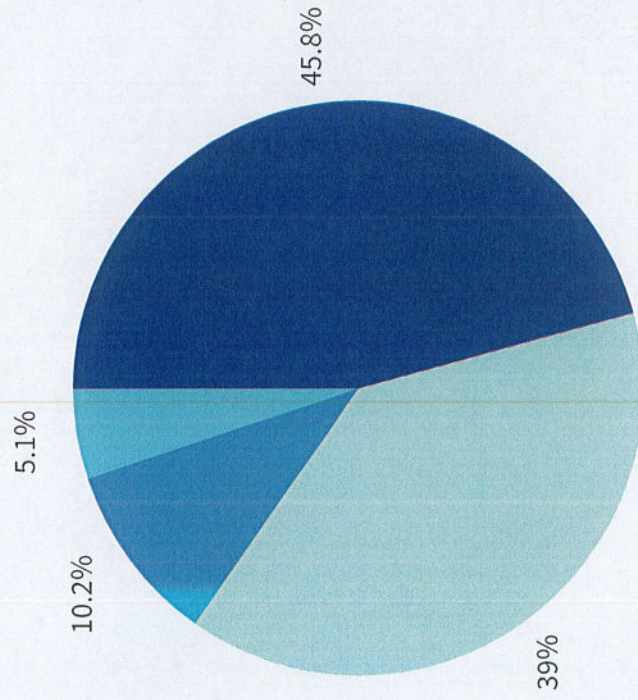


Multi-Year Comparison of Response Rates

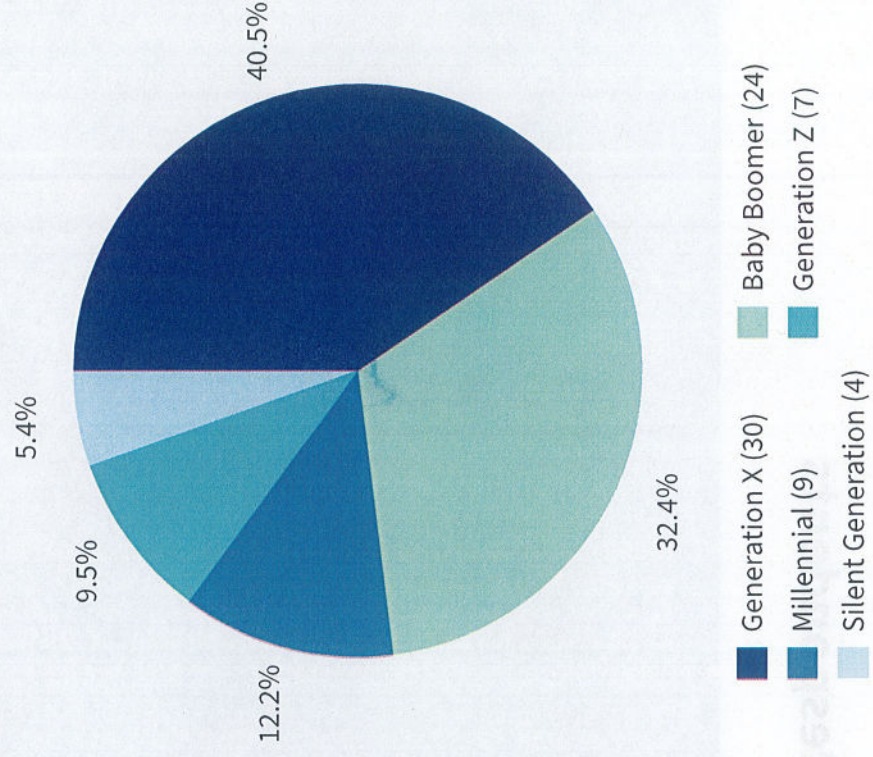


Generational Breakdown of Respondents

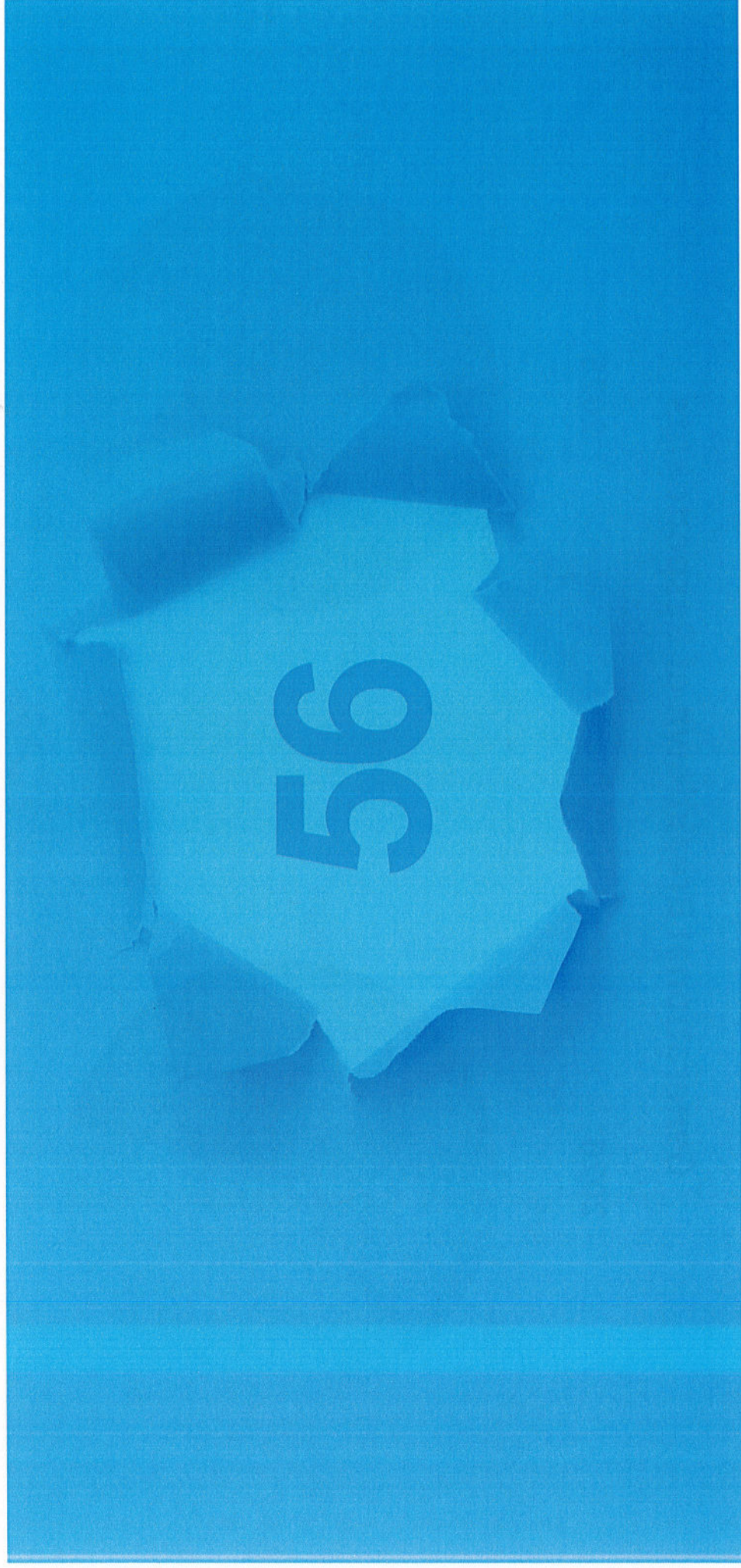
2026



2025

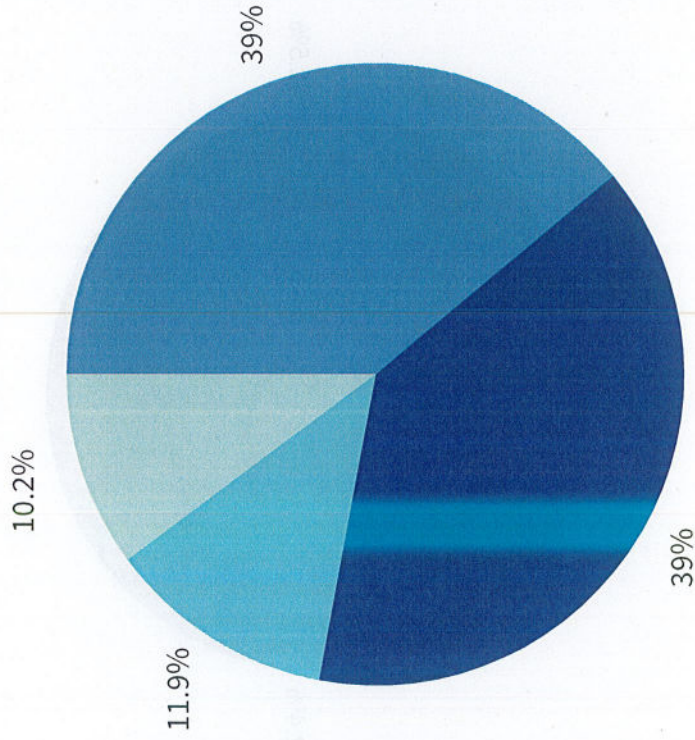


Average Age of 2026 Respondents

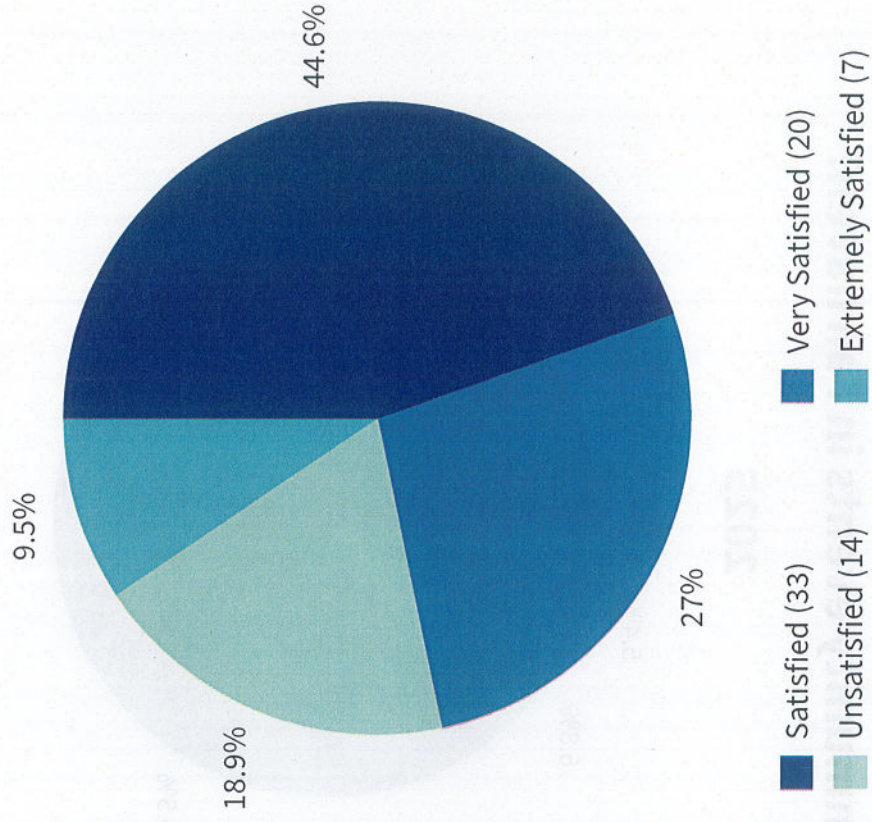


Current Cultural Opportunities Satisfaction

2026

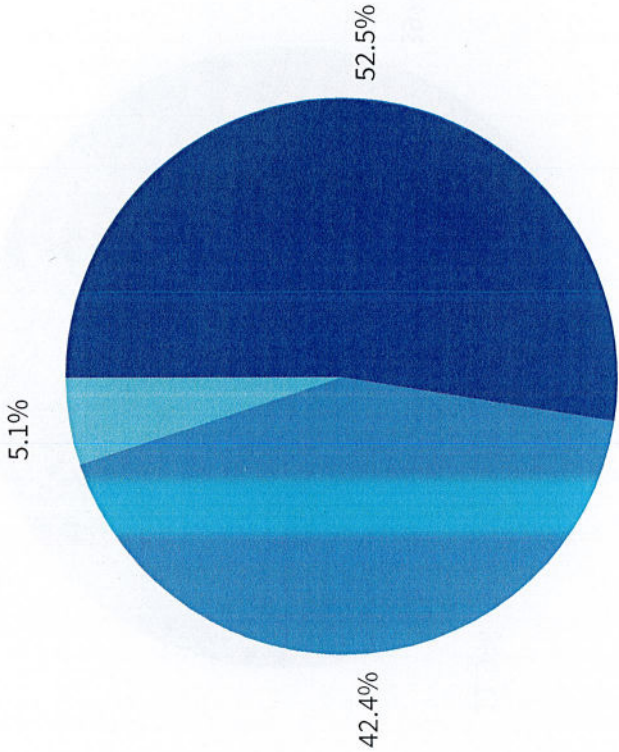


2025



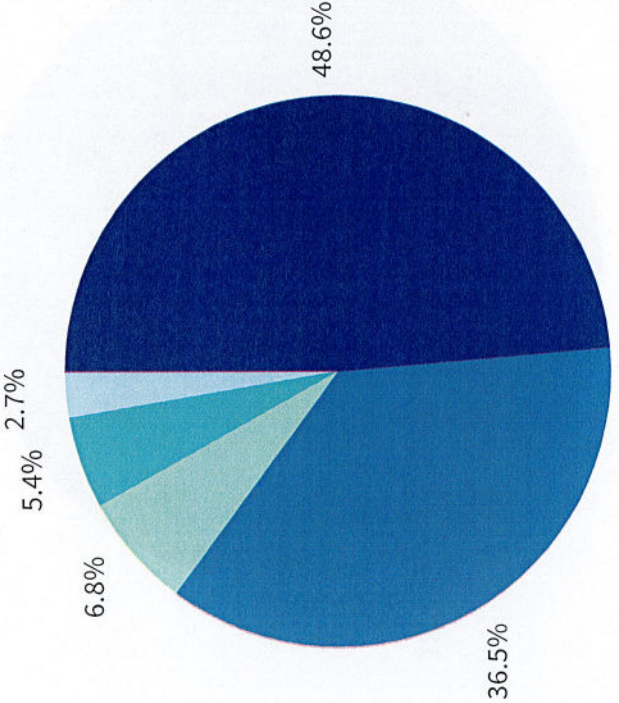
How often do you participate in or attend community events in Fairhaven?

2026



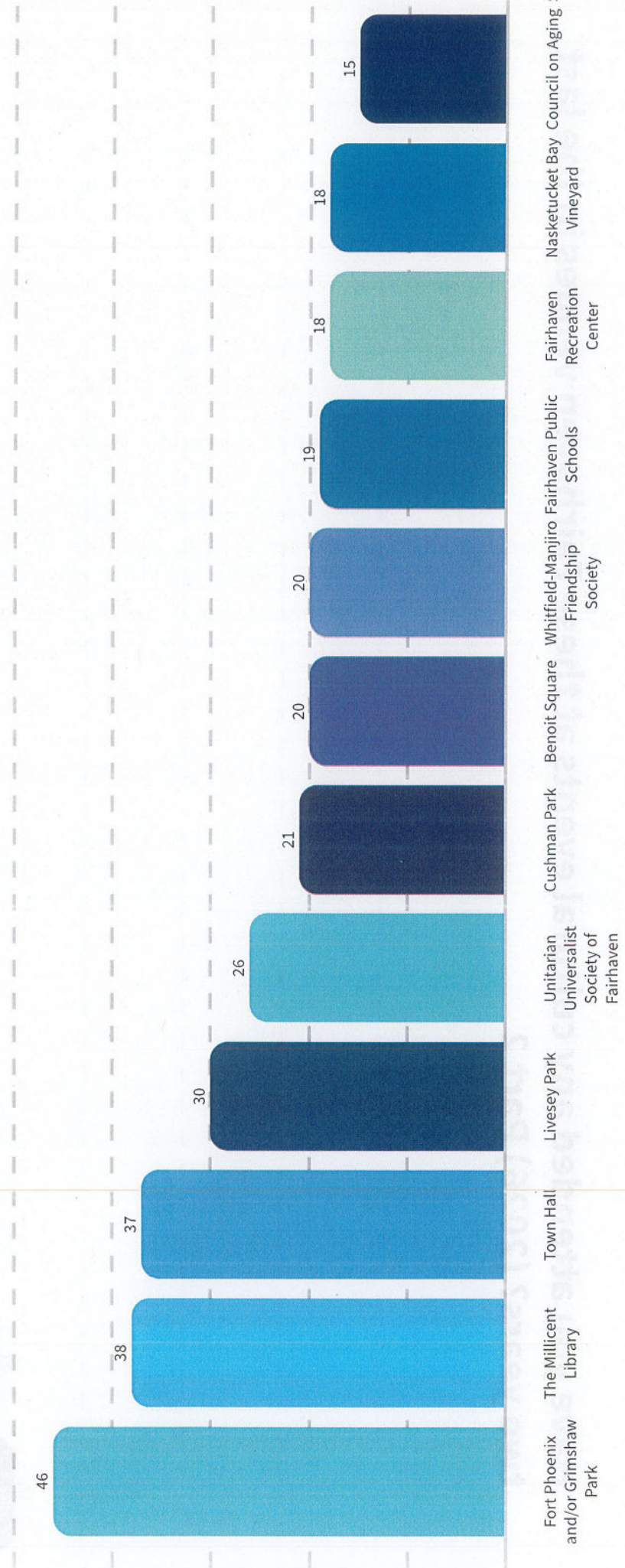
- Occasionally-a few times per year (31)
- Frequently-monthly or more (25)
- Very Frequently-weekly (3)

2025



- Occasionally-a few times per year (36)
- Frequently-monthly or more (27)
- Rarely-once a year or less (5)
- Never (2)
- Very Frequently-weekly (4)

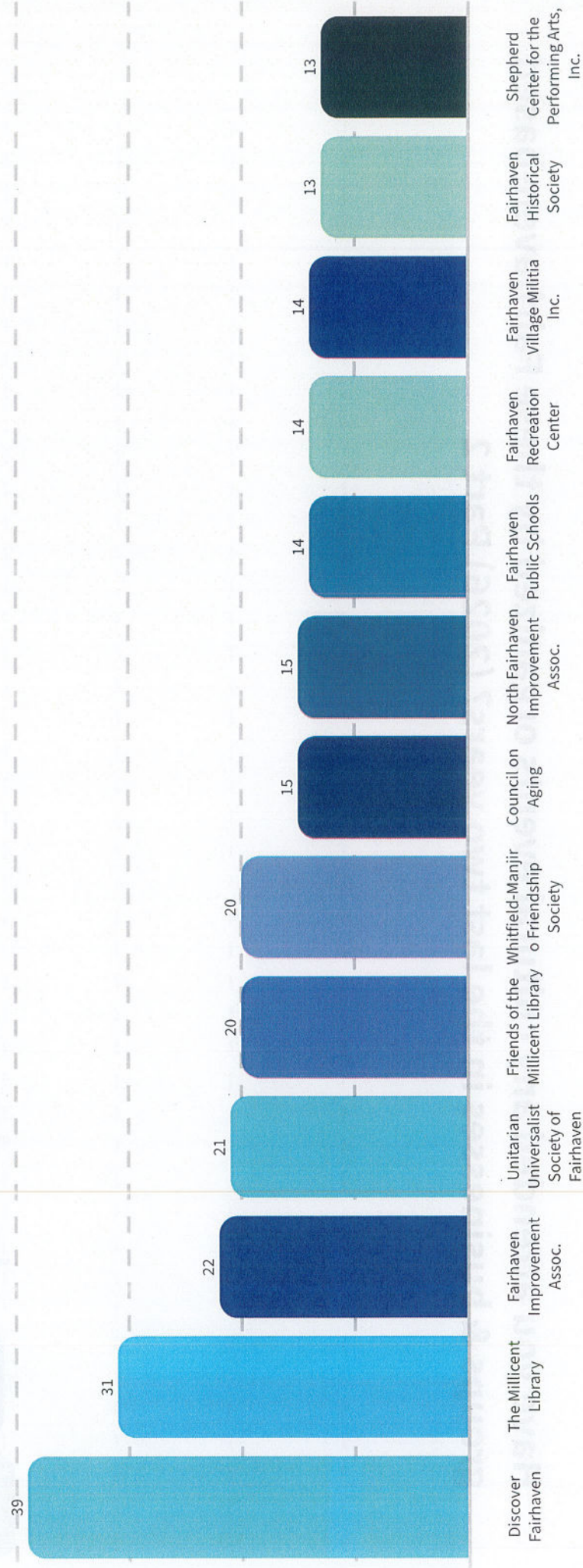
Have you attended any cultural events at these Fairhaven venues in the last two years? (2026) Part 1



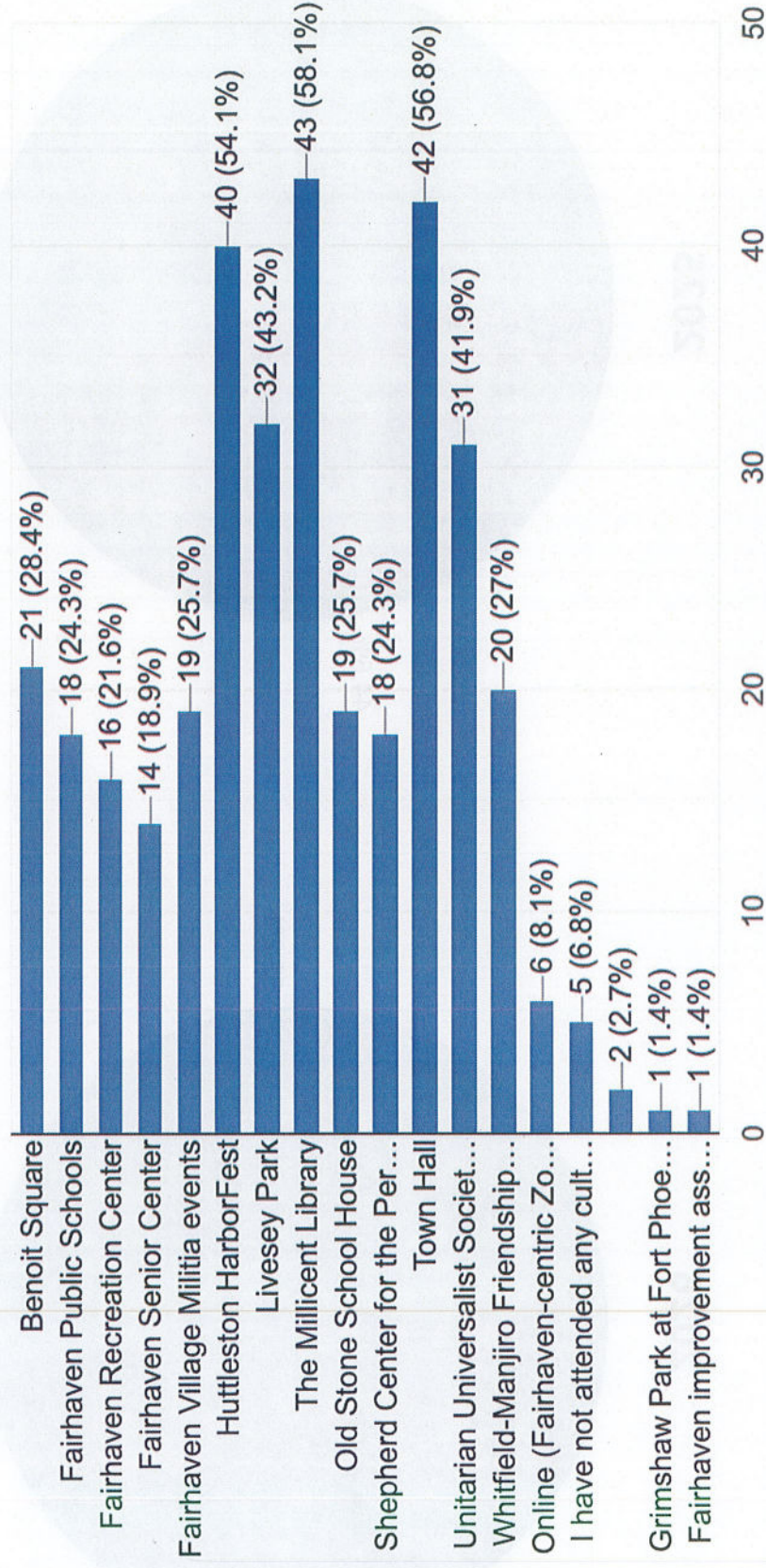
Have you attended any cultural events at these Fairhaven venues in the last two years? (2026) Part 2



Have you attended any cultural events organized by these Fairhaven-based groups & businesses in the last two years? (2026) Part 1

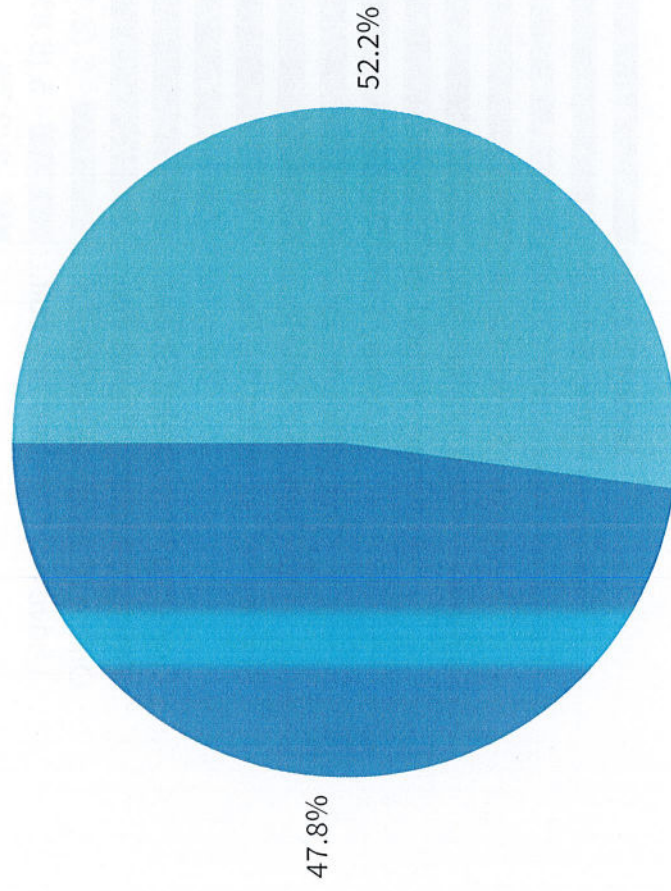


Have you attended any cultural events at these Fairhaven organizations / venues in the last two years? (2025)

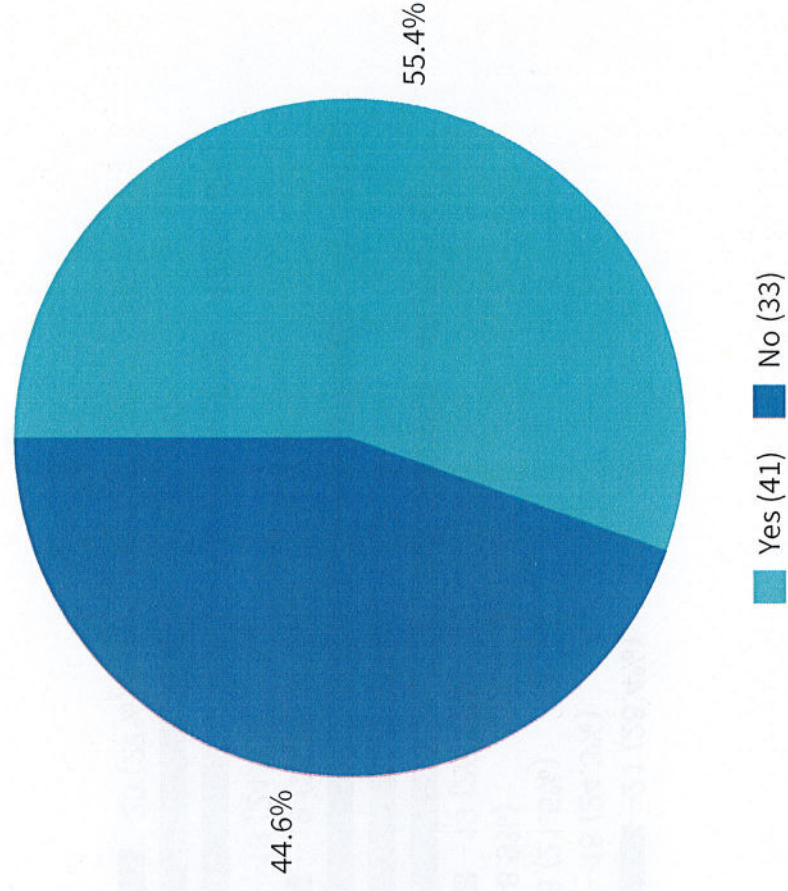


Have you attended any cultural events outside of Fairhaven in the last 2 years?

2026

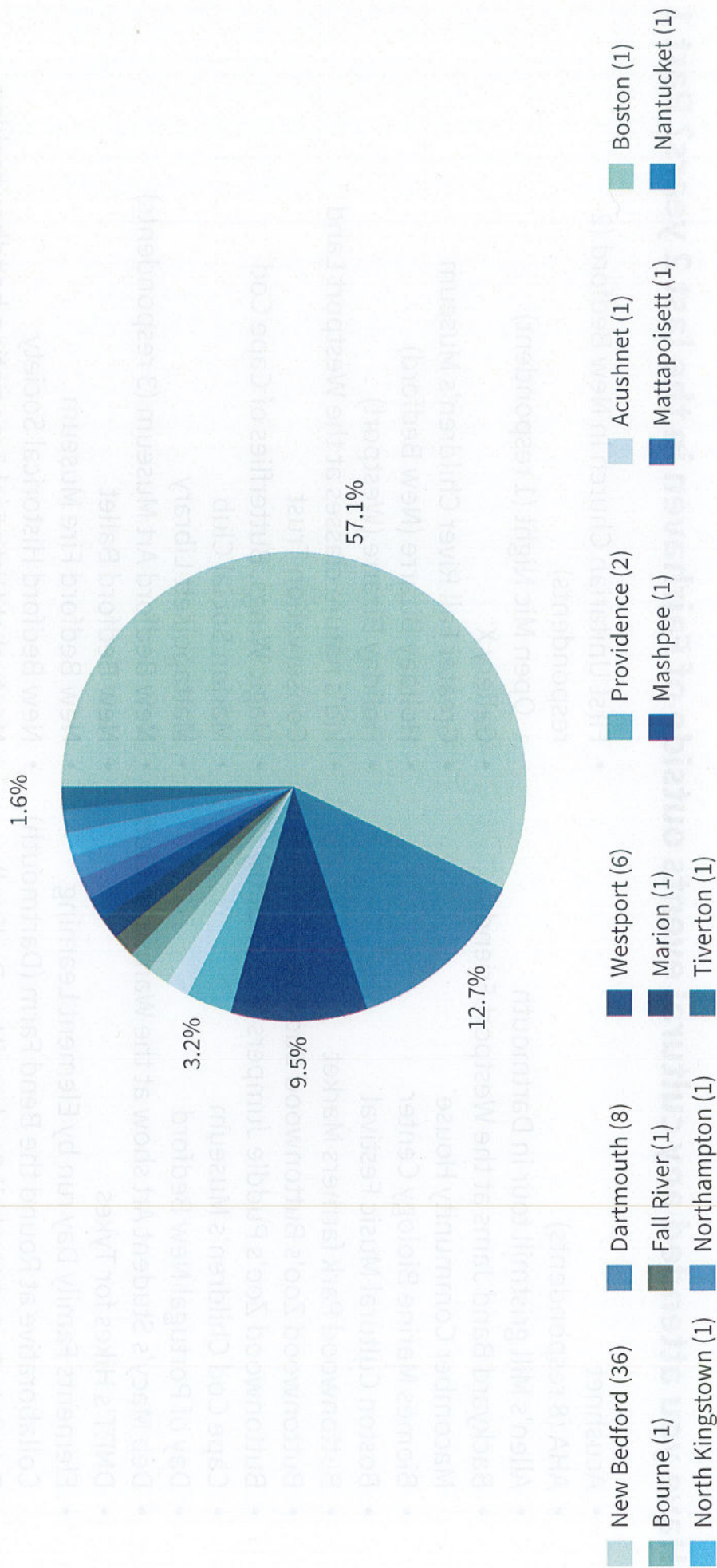


2025



Have you attended any cultural events outside of Fairhaven in the last 2 years?

Towns & Cities



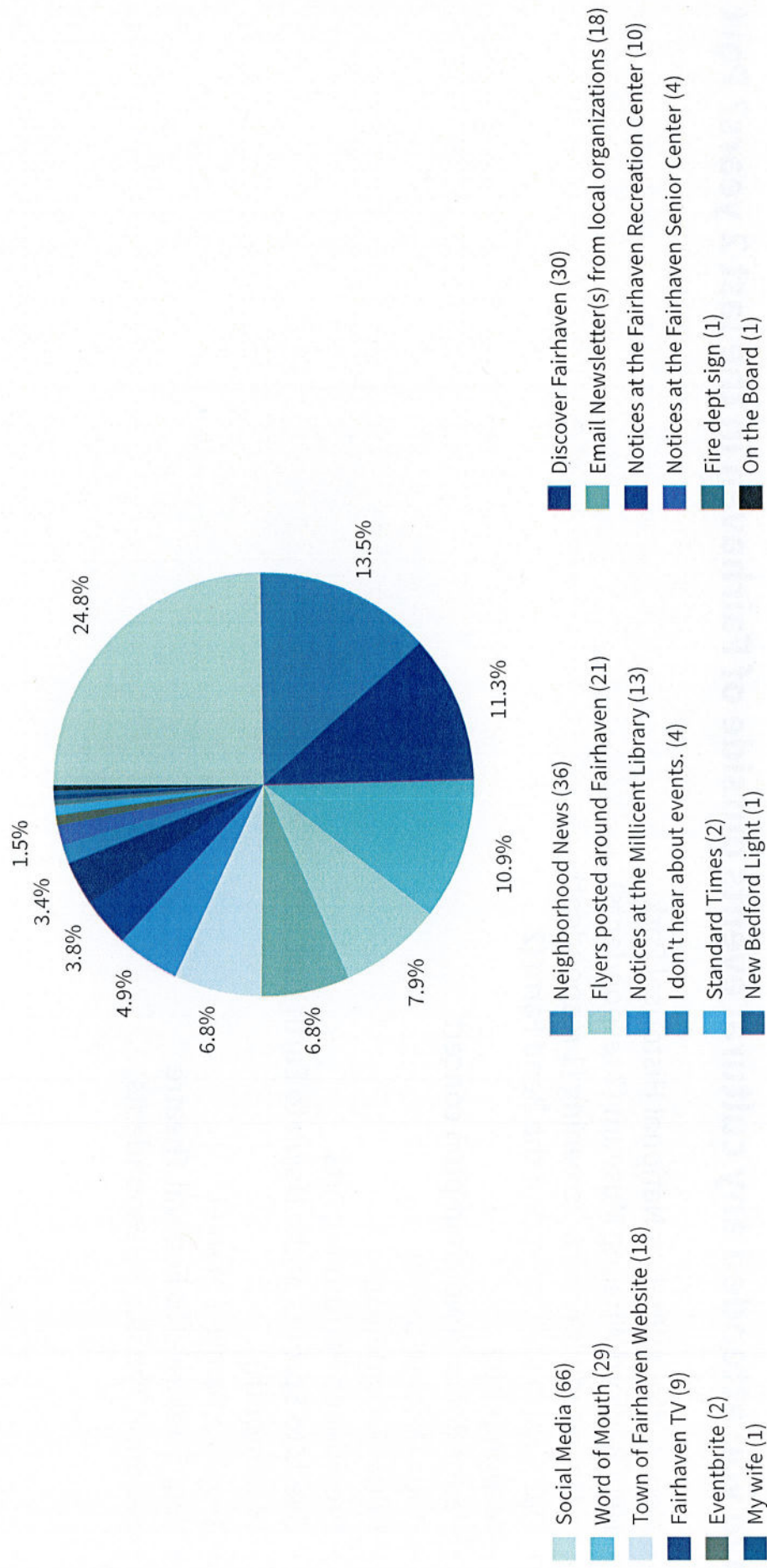
Have you attended any cultural events outside of Fairhaven in the last 2 years? Part 1

- Acushnet
- AHA (8 respondents)
- Allen's Mill gristmill tour in Dartmouth
- Backyard Band Jams at the Westport Friends' Macomber Community House
- Biomes Marine Biology Center
- Boston Cultural Music Festival
- Buttonwood Park farmers Market
- Buttonwood Zoo's Buttonwood Buddies
- Buttonwood Zoo's Puddle Jumpers (Dartmouth)
- Cape Cod Children's Museum
- Day of Portugal New Bedford
- Deb Macy's Student Art show at the Wamsutta Club
- DNRT's Hikes for Tykes
- Elements Family Day run by Element Learning Collaborative at Round the Bend Farm (Dartmouth)
- Fairytale Fest at Haskell Gardens (New Bedford)
- Family Concerts at the Westport Land Conservation Trust
- First Unitarian Church In New Bedford (2 respondents)
 - Open Mic Night (1 respondent)
- Gallery X
- Greater Fall River Children's Museum
- Holiday Bizarre (New Bedford)
- Holiday Bizarre (Westport)
- kid's nature classes at the Westport Land Conservation Trust
- Magic Wings, Butterflies of Cape Cod
- Marion Social Club
- Mattapoissett Library
- New Bedford Art Museum (3 respondents)
- New Bedford Ballet
- New Bedford Fire Museum
- New Bedford Historical Society
- Nantucket Historical Association bandbox making event
- NB Roots and Branches (2 respondents)

Have you attended any cultural events outside of Fairhaven in the last 2 years? Part 2

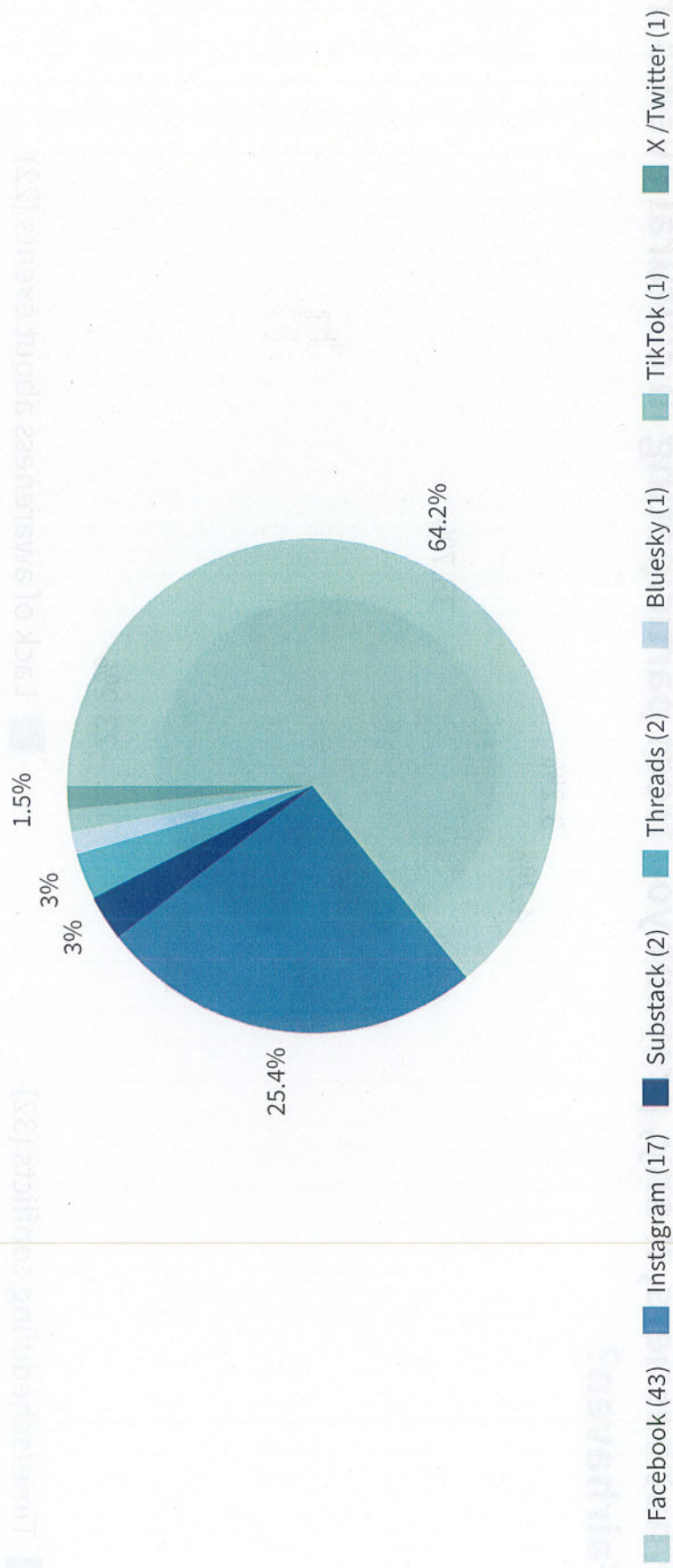
- New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- New Bedford Whaling Museum (7 respondents)
 - Malassada Day Film Screening (1 respondent)
- Open Farm Days at Round the Bend Farm (2 respondents)
- Parlor Room in Northampton concert
- Pride (New Bedford)
- Pride (Providence)
- Providence Performing Arts
- Seeds to Sprouts at the Down to Earth Yurt (Dartmouth)
- Tiverton Farmers Market
- Your Theatre - NB Festival Theatre
- Zeiterion Theater (4 respondents)

How do you hear about cultural activities & other events in Fairhaven?

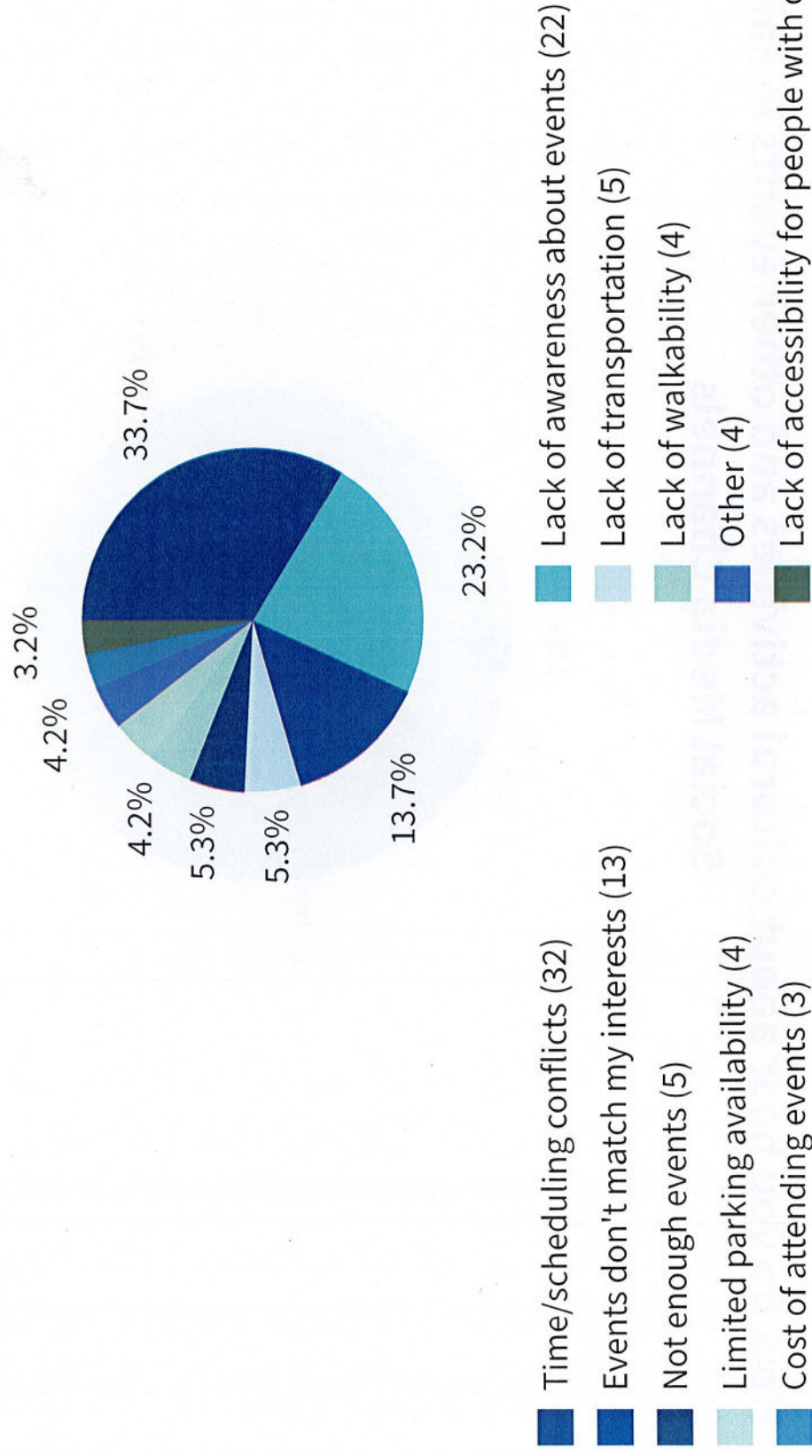


How do you hear about cultural activities and other events in Fairhaven?

Social Media Channels



What barriers, if any, prevent you from participating in cultural events in Fairhaven?

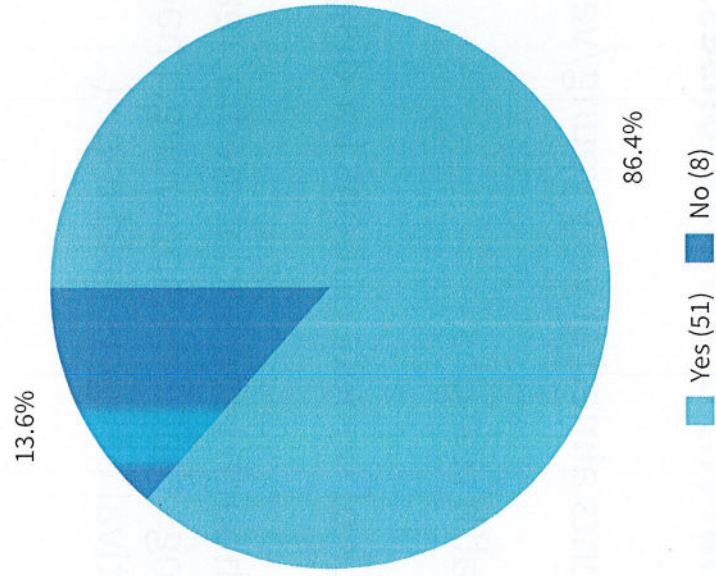


What barriers, if any, prevent you from participating in cultural events in Fairhaven? Other Responses.

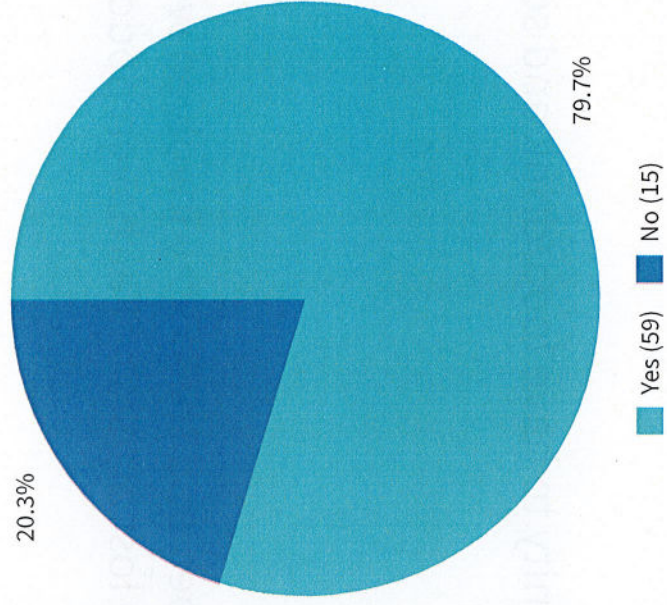
- Events aimed at very young/very old; little opportunity to have food/drink and socialize
- Health reasons
- Lack of remote options for disabled individuals
- Although I see social media, read the local newspaper, and try to stay involved with local things that are happening, i hadn't heard about the lost artists of Fairhaven podcast or The festival of lights field trip : (

Before taking this survey, did you know that Fairhaven has a Cultural Council?

2026

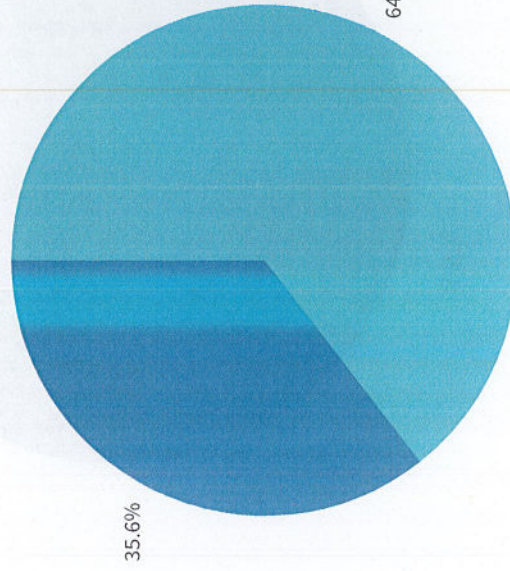


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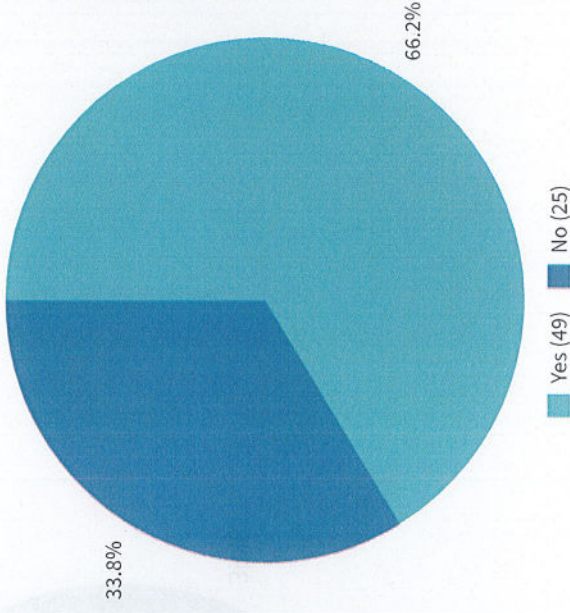


Before taking this survey, were you aware that individuals & community groups can apply for Fairhaven Cultural Council grants?

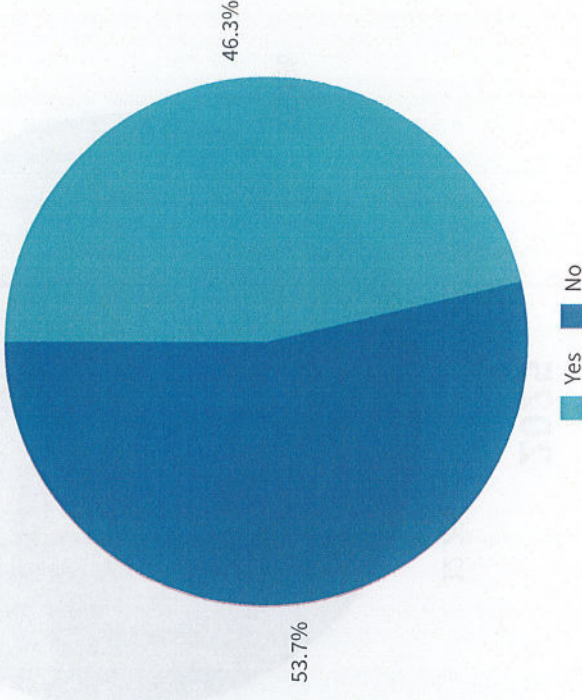
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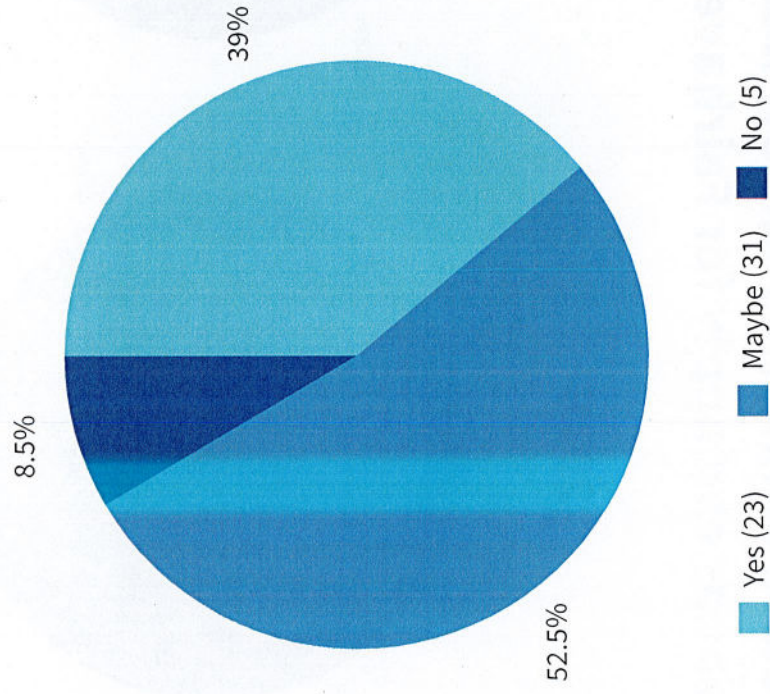


2024

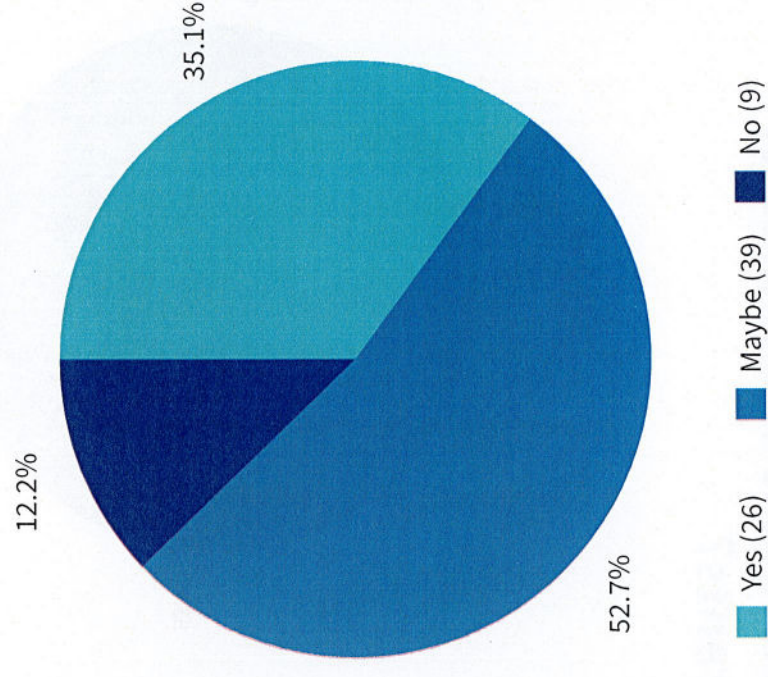


Have you attended programs, performances, classes, or exhibits supported by the Fairhaven Cultural Council?

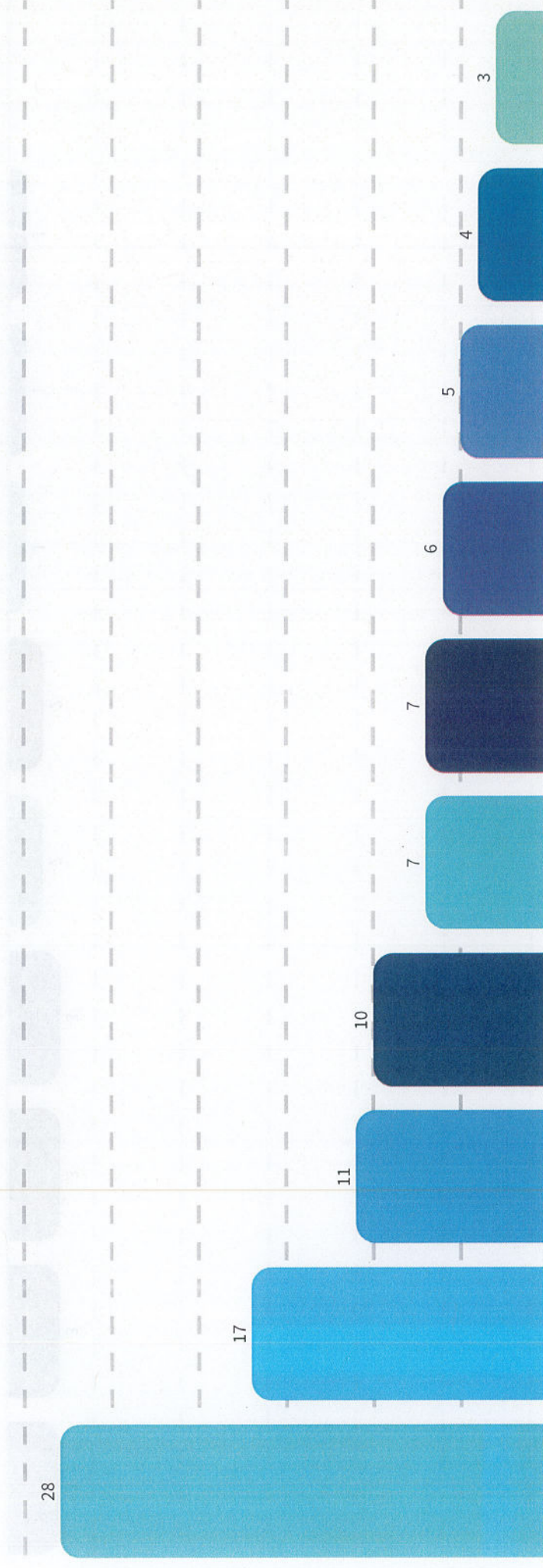
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2025

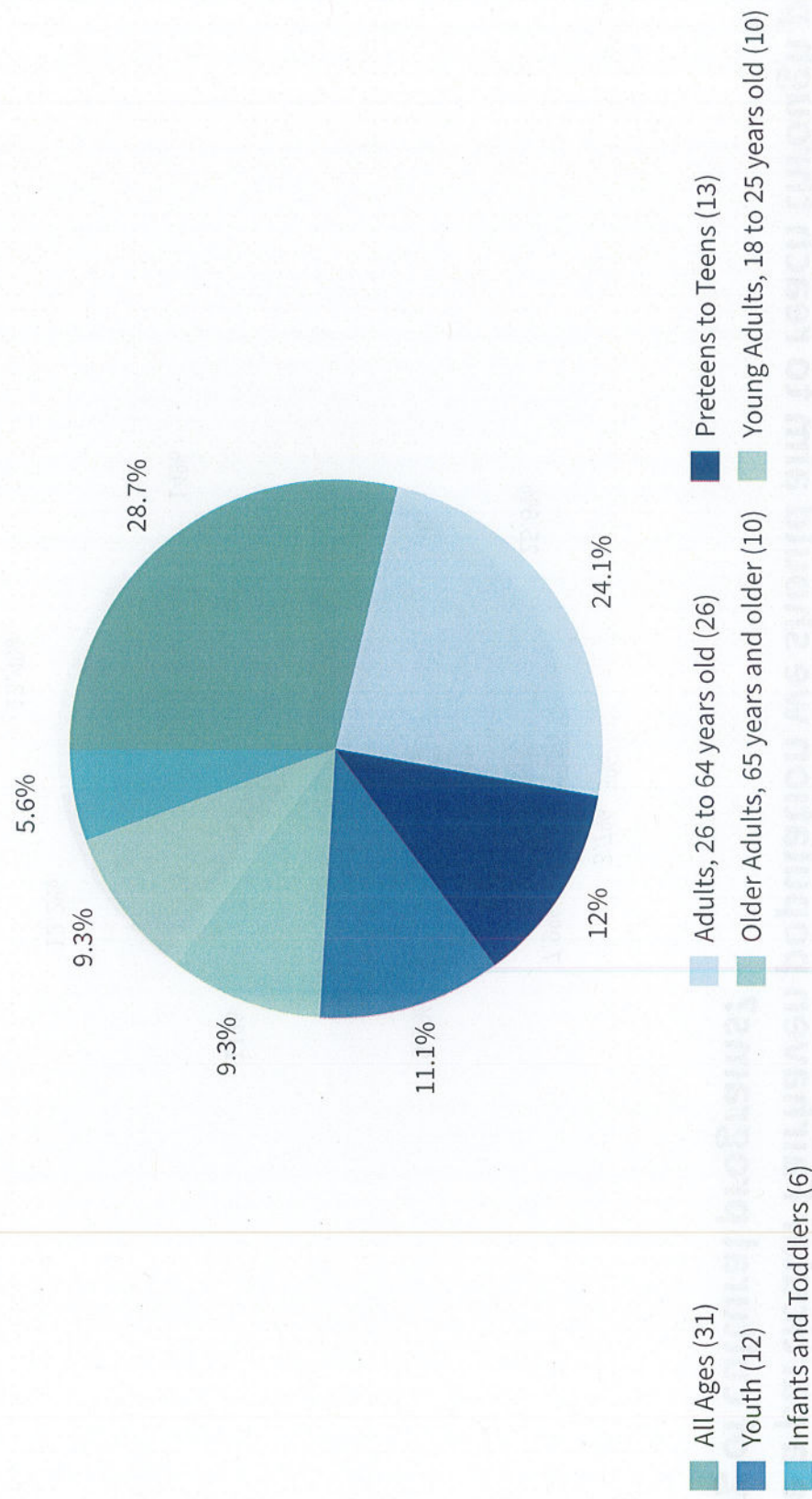


Have you attended any of the events below? (Select all that apply) All of these programs were supported by Fairhaven Cultural Council grants. Part 1

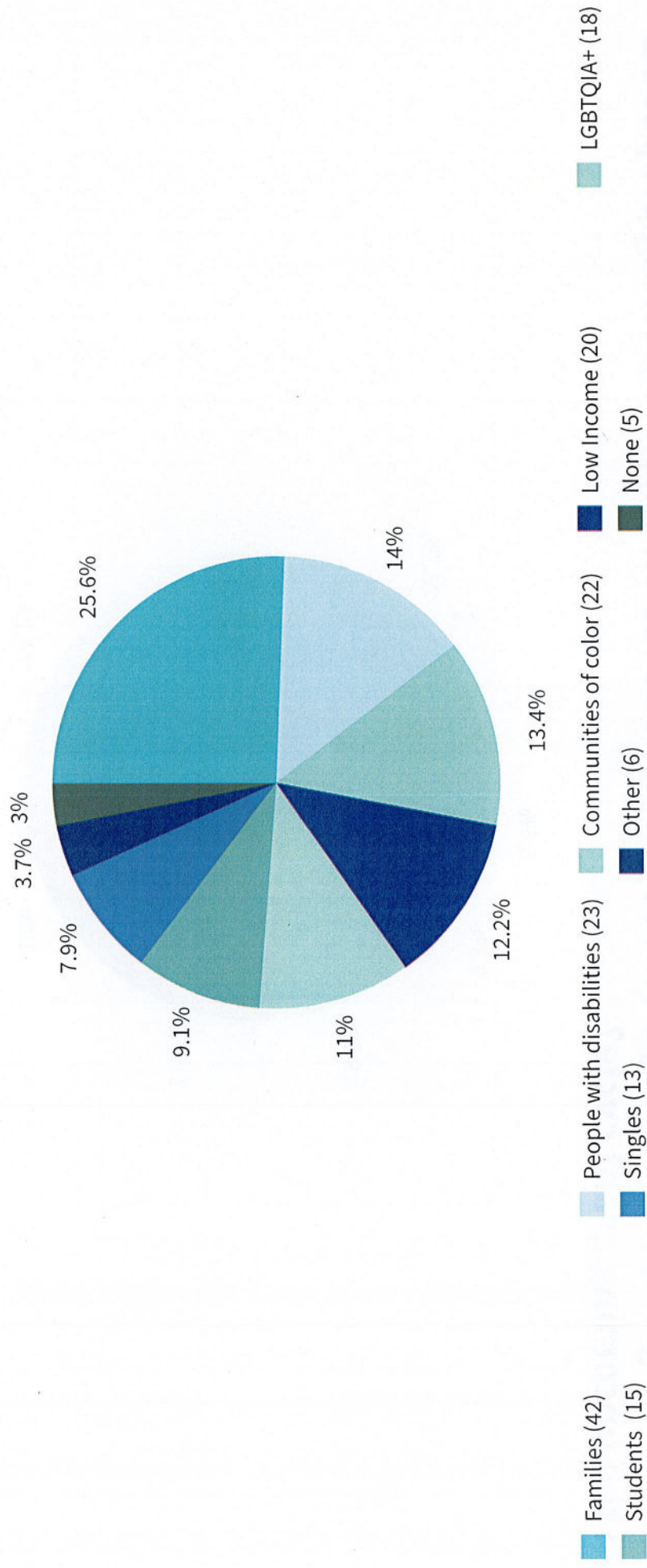


Concerts Under the Stars 2025
 I have not attended any of the above events.
 Harbor of Courage by the Fairhaven Village Militia
 Music Night in the Gazebo 2025
 Old Time Fiddle Session & Community Gathering
 Seaglass Theater Company's Music in the Library
 The Artists Index's Fairhaven Performing Artists Podcast Series
 Natural Heritage of Fairhaven Speaker Series
 Fairhaven High School's Festival of Lights Field Trip
 The Artists Index's Lost Artists of Fairhaven Podcast Series

Which age group(s) would you most like us to focus on when reviewing proposals in the upcoming grant cycle?



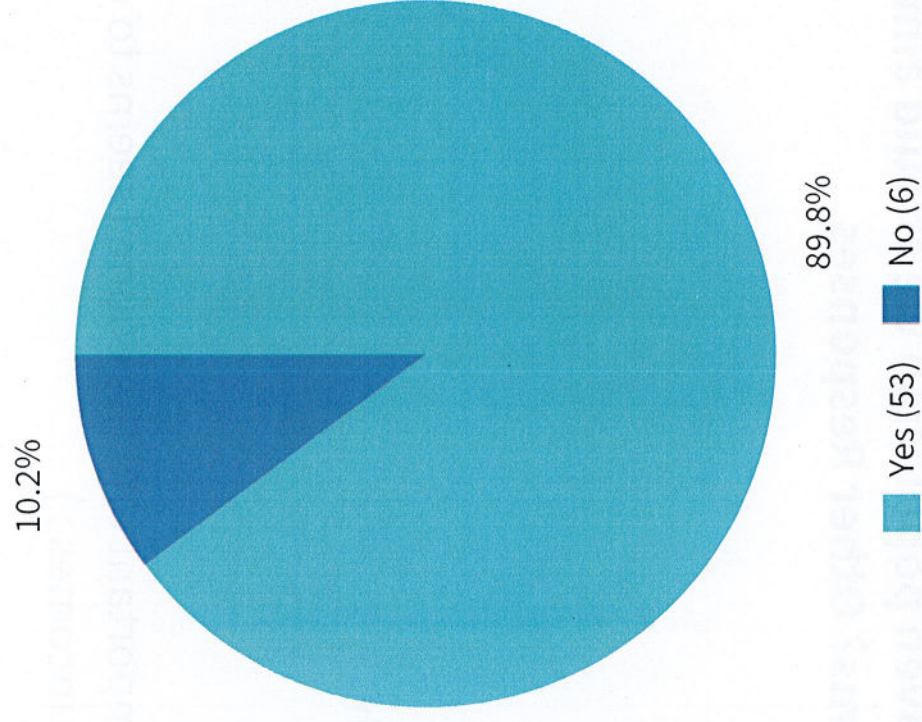
Is there a particular Fairhaven population we should aim to reach through public funding of cultural programs?



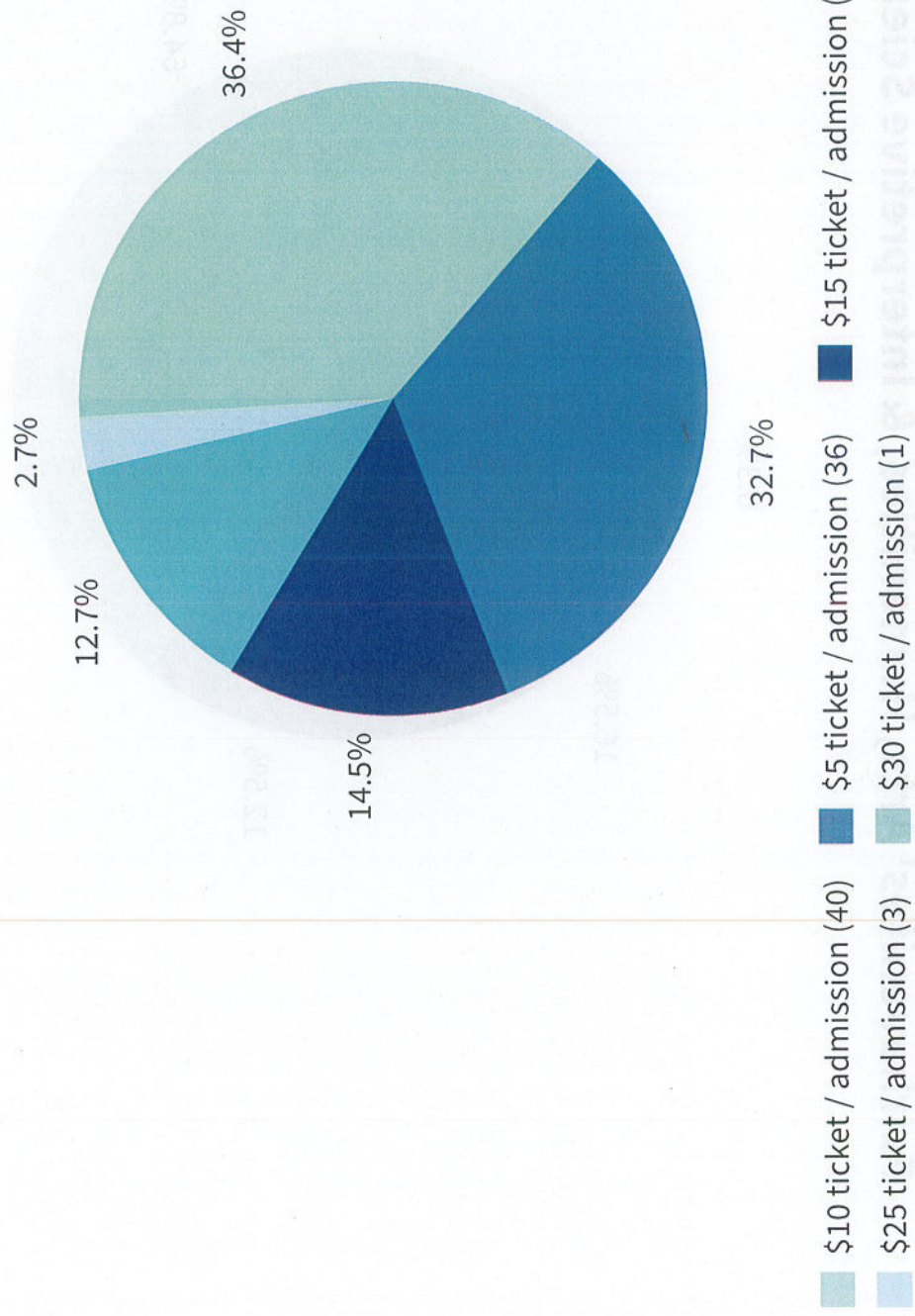
Is there a particular Fairhaven population we should aim to reach through public funding of cultural programs? Other Responses.

- All (2 respondents)
- Maybe lower income
- Life-long learners
- Not sure who to aim to reach.
- Youth and teens
- I think all of the above are important and the council seems to do a good job with engaging a variety of ages, abilities and incomes :)

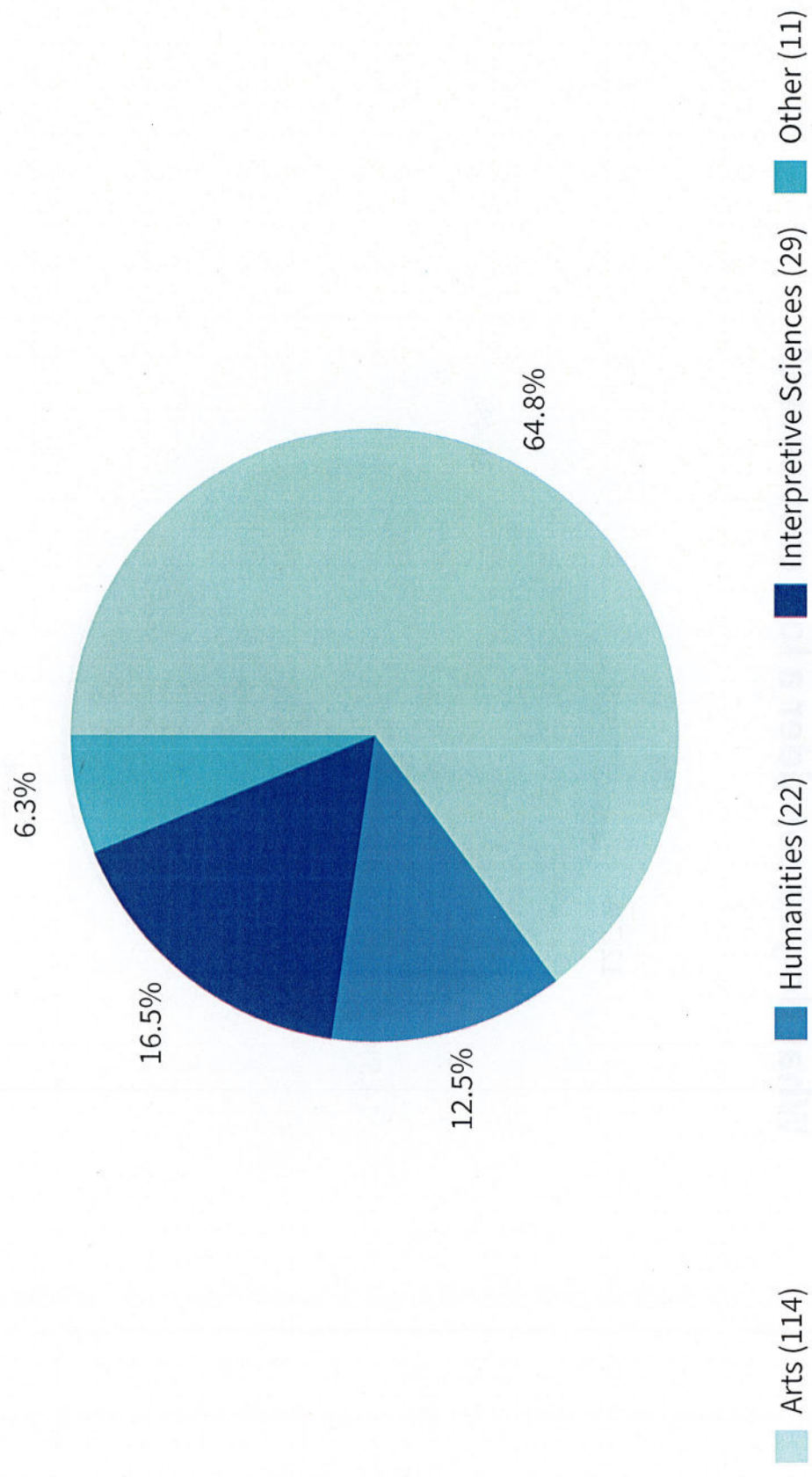
Would you like the Fairhaven Cultural Council to prioritize awarding grants to free & low cost events?



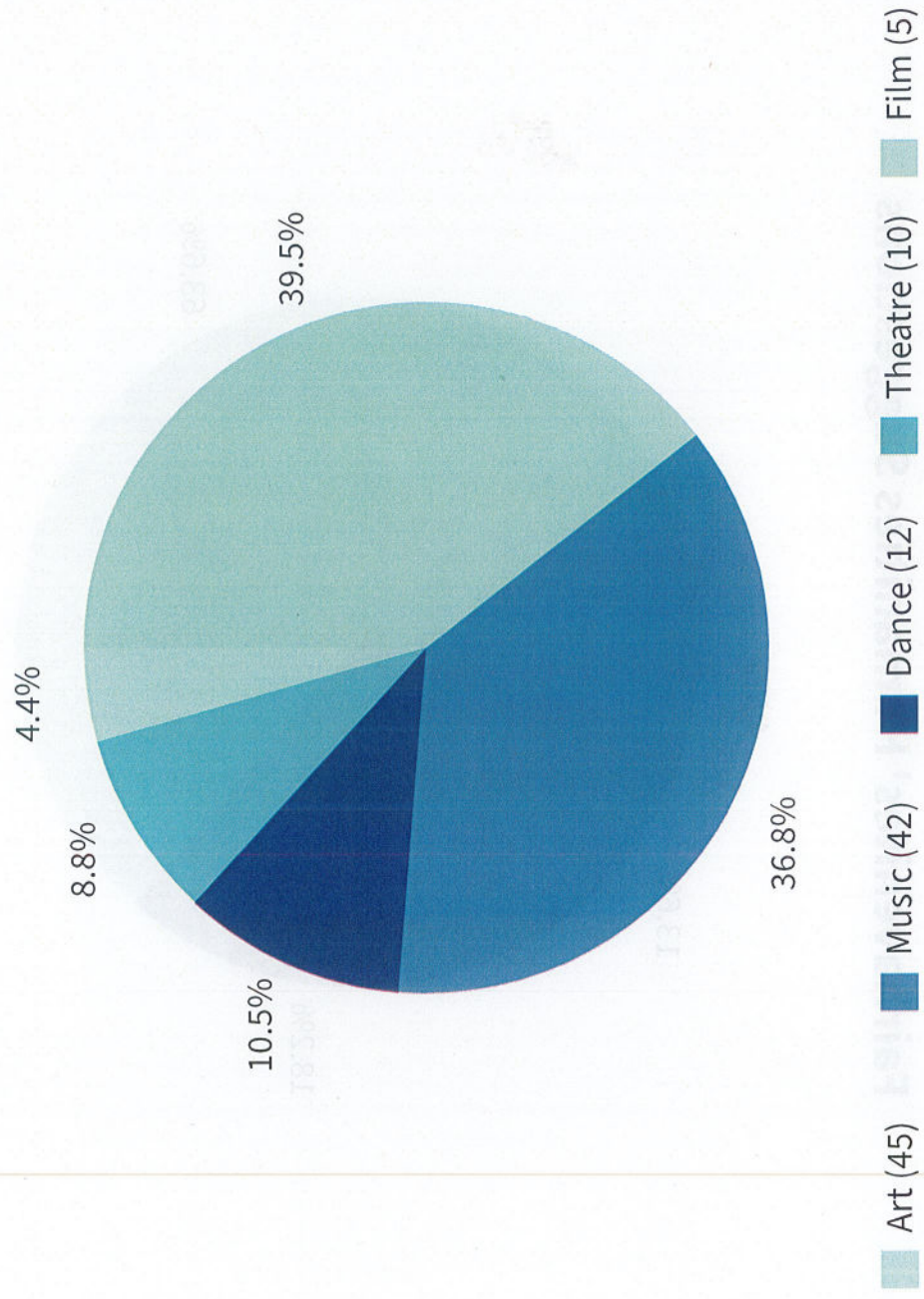
What do you consider a low cost event?



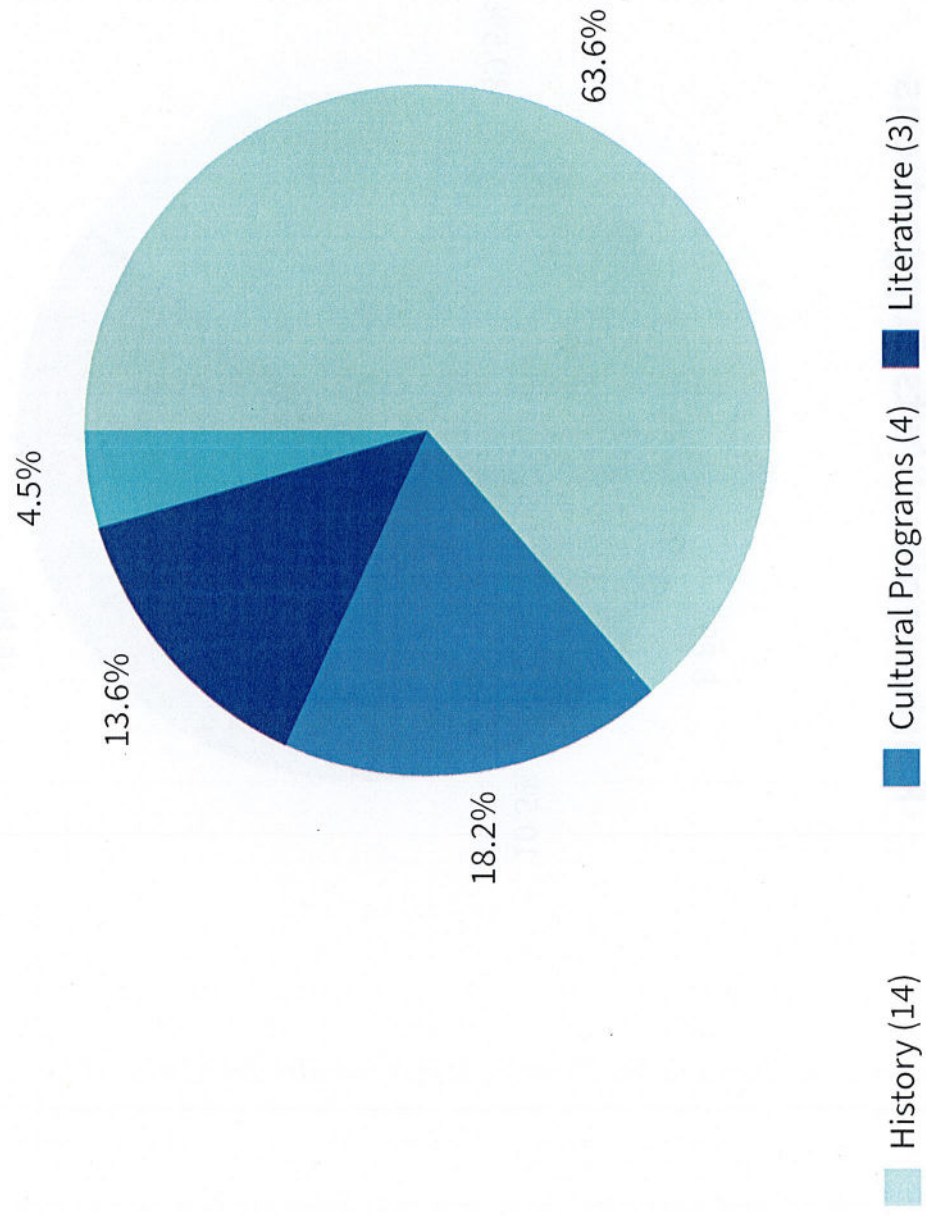
Fairhavenites' Arts, Humanities, & Interpretive Sciences Suggestions



Fairhavenites' Arts Suggestions

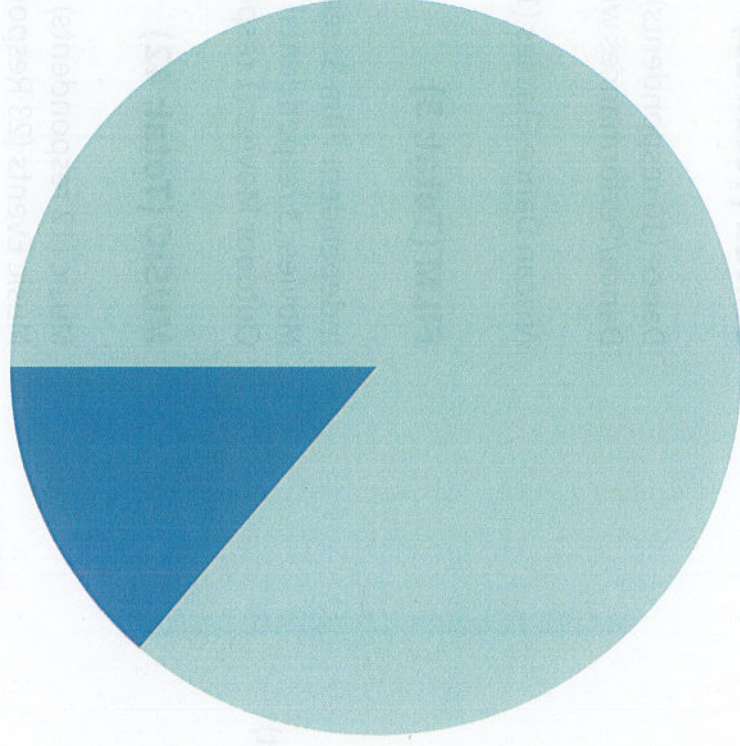


Fairhavenites' Humanities Suggestions



Fairhavenites' Interpretive Sciences Suggestions

13.8%



86.2%

■ Natural Sciences (25)

■ Agricultural Sciences (4)

What programs in the arts, humanities, & interpretive sciences would you attend?

ARTS (Total: 114)

ART (Total: 45)

Art (6 respondents)
Art Classes (1 respondent)
Art Shows (1 respondent)
Arts (1 respondent)
Artisan Workshop (1 respondent)
Fine Arts (13 respondents)
Interactive Art Classes (1 respondent)
Outdoor Art (1 respondent)
Public Art (15 respondent)

Kid's Art Events (1 respondent)

Crafts (1 respondent)
Crafting and Fiber Arts (1 respondent)
Traditional Craft Workshops (1 respondent)

Creative Events (1 respondent)

DANCE (Total: 12)

Dance (10 respondents)
Dance/Performances with Children in Mind (1 respondent)

African Dance Classes (1 respondent)

FILM (Total: 5)

Independent Film Screenings (1 respondent)
Movies (3 respondents)
Outdoor Movies (1 respondent)

MUSIC (Total: 42)

Music (12 respondents)
Music Events (23 Respondents)
Music Lessons (1 respondent)
Musical Performances (1 respondent)
Outdoor Music (1 respondent)

Children's Music and Movement Experiences (1 respondent)

What programs Continued...

Folk and Americana Music Events (1 respondent)
Irish Traditional Music Sessions (1 respondent)
Sea Chanty Music (1 respondent)

THEATRE (Total: 10)

Circus Arts Performances (1 respondent)
Drama Performances (1 respondent)
Local Theater (1 respondent)
Plays (1 respondent)
Playwright Works-in-Progress Readings (1 respondent)
Puppet Shows (1 respondent)
Storytelling Events (1 respondent)
Theater Events (1 respondent)
Theatre (2 respondents)

HUMANITIES (Total: 22)

Architectural Walking Tours (1 respondent)
Culture (1 respondent)

Pop Culture (1 respondent)
Irish or Portuguese Cultural Events (1 respondent)
Tea Ceremony Demonstrations (1 respondent)

HISTORY (Total: 14)

Genealogy (1 respondent)
History (1 respondent)
Historical Information (1 respondent)
Historical Lectures (1 respondent)
History Lectures (1 respondent)
Local History (2 respondents)
Anything connected to Local History (1 respondent)
Ghost Tours or Paranormal Talks (1 respondent)
Guided History Walks (1 respondent)
Historical Walks (1 respondent)
Historical Reenactments (2 respondents)
New England Colonial Cookery Demonstrations & Tastings (1 respondent)

What programs Continued...

LITERATURE (Total: 3)

Authors Talks (1 respondent)

Authors Visits (1 respondent)

Writing Workshops (1 respondent)

INTERPRETIVE SCIENCES (Total: 29)

NATURAL SCIENCES (Total: 25)

Nature (5 respondents)

Nature Activities (1 respondent)

Nature Talks (13 respondents)

Nature Talks: Bird Watching (1 respondent)

Nature Walks (2 respondents)

Guided Nature Hikes (1 respondent)

Kid's Nature Events and Classes (1 respondent)

Anything connected to ocean/coast/beach, etc (1 respondent)

AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES (Total: 4)

Beekeeping and Honey-Tasting Events (1 respondent)

Farm-to-Table Harvest Events (1 respondent)

Fermentation and Food Preservation Demonstrations (1 respondent)

Local Wild Foods Foraging Walks (1 respondent)

What programs Continued...

OTHER RESPONSES (Total: 11)

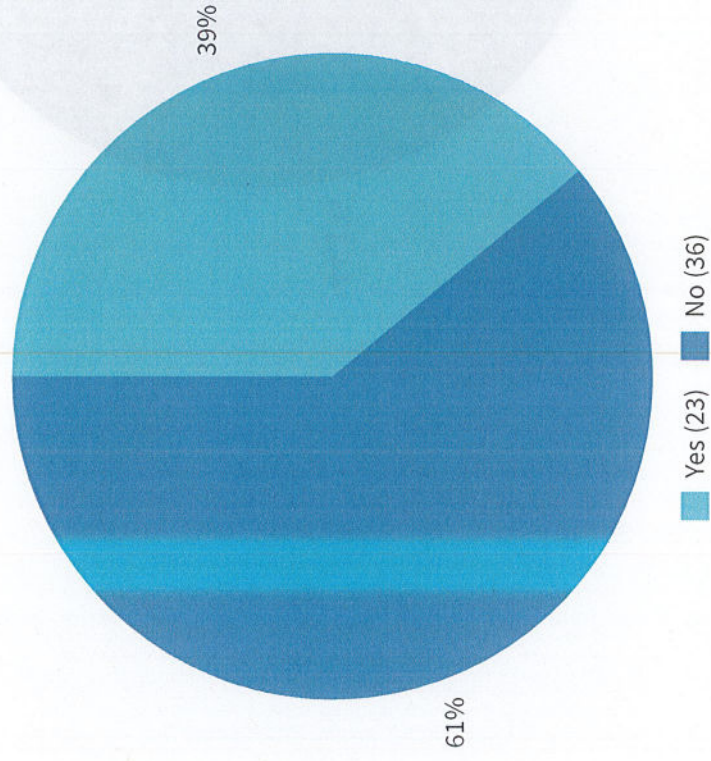
- Community DEI Gathering Events (Social Sciences; 1 respondent)
- Community Interfaith Outdoor Sunrise Services or Interfaith Nature/Creation Care Events (Religious; 1 respondent)
- Education (Social Sciences; 1 respondent)
- Food (Category Varies by Approach; 1 respondent)
- Culinary Tasting Events (Category Varies by Approach; 1 respondent)
- Informational Talks (Category Varies by Topic; 1 respondent)
- ma (?; 1 respondent)
- More community discussions - how does this apply to Fairhaven? (Category Varies by Topic; 1 respondent)
- More kid friendly events (Category Varies by activity; 1 respondent)
- Podcasts (Category Varies by Topic; 8 respondents)
- Speakers (Category Varies by Topic; 1 respondent)

Do you work or volunteer for a Fairhaven cultural organization? If yes, what is the top challenge your organization faces?

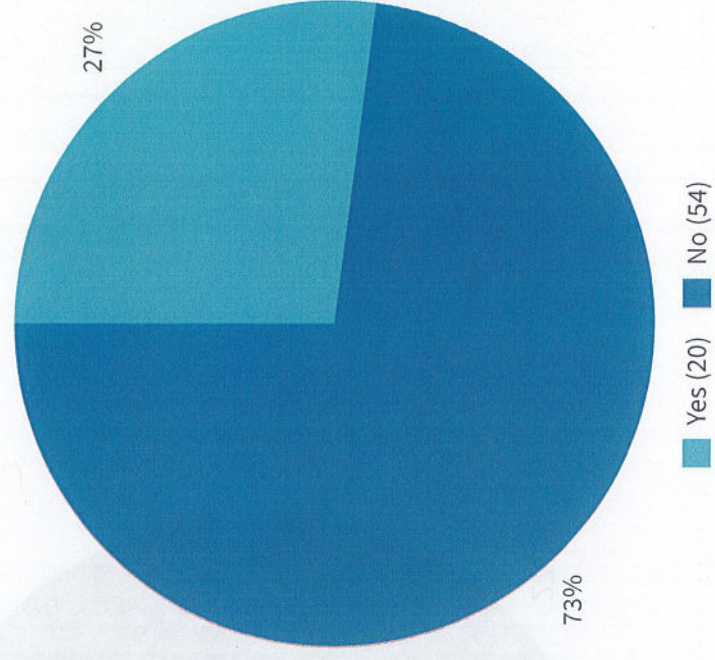
- Funding (2 respondents)
- Yes
- Operating Costs
- I volunteer in town for more than one 501c3 and the biggest challenge is always getting new members
- I just was appointed as a member and still looking to gain a better understanding of the challenges that organization might be facing
- Yes, for the Fairhaven Cultural Council. Raising public awareness. Decreasing public engagement with our survey. Our limited funds vs the amount of grant requests we receive.
- Volunteer NFIA, lack of volunteers
- Fairhaven Association Music for Education (FAME)
- Making enough money to fund not for profit organizations.
- Getting volunteers to continue to help and participate
- I help with events at the Manjiro Society ~~ we are glad that many events are well attended but there are still some which we offer that don't get much traction
- Lack of ways to communicate events are happening and the lack of support of the town for organized events.
- NFIA

Did you know that individuals & businesses can to donate to the Council?

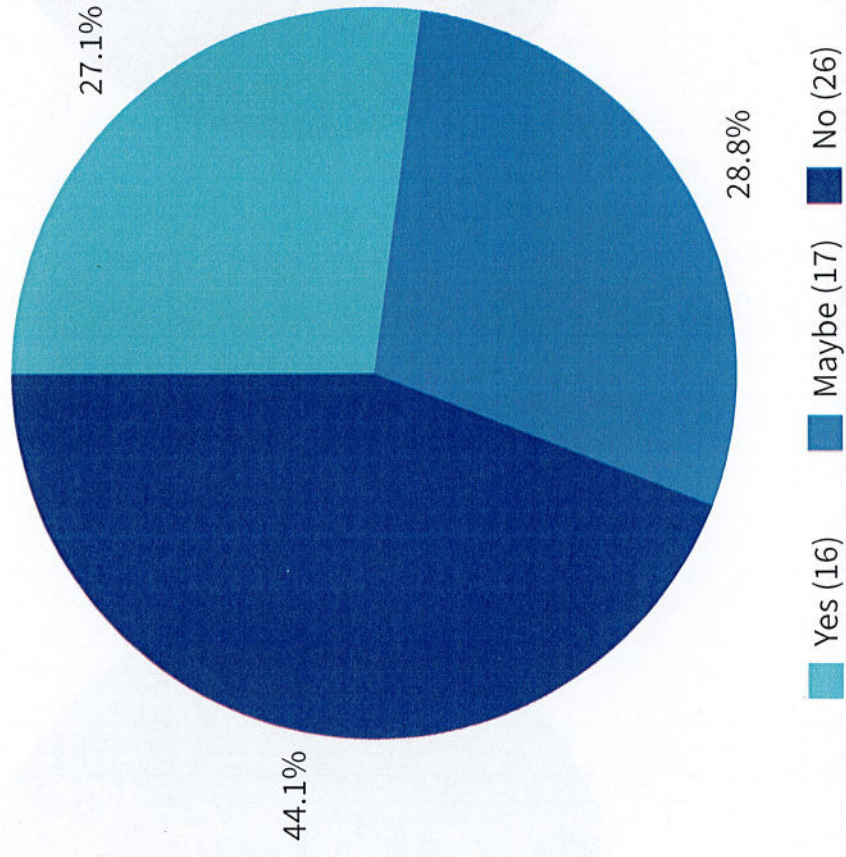
2026



2025



Did you answer our Community Survey last year?

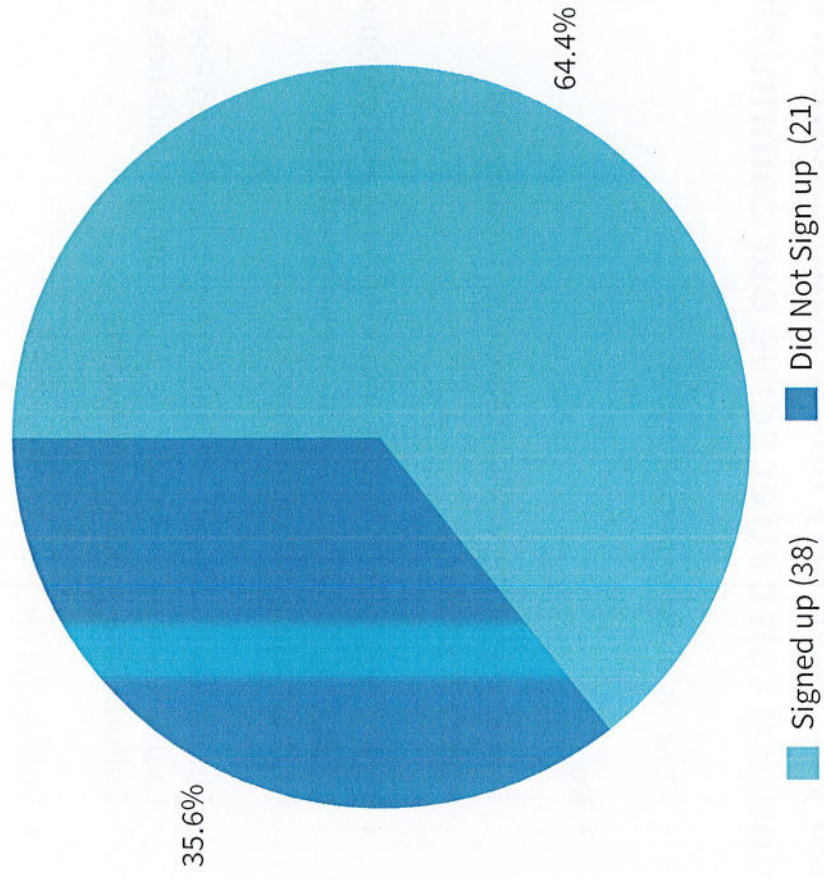


Do you have any additional feedback or suggestions for how the Fairhaven Cultural Council can better serve our community?

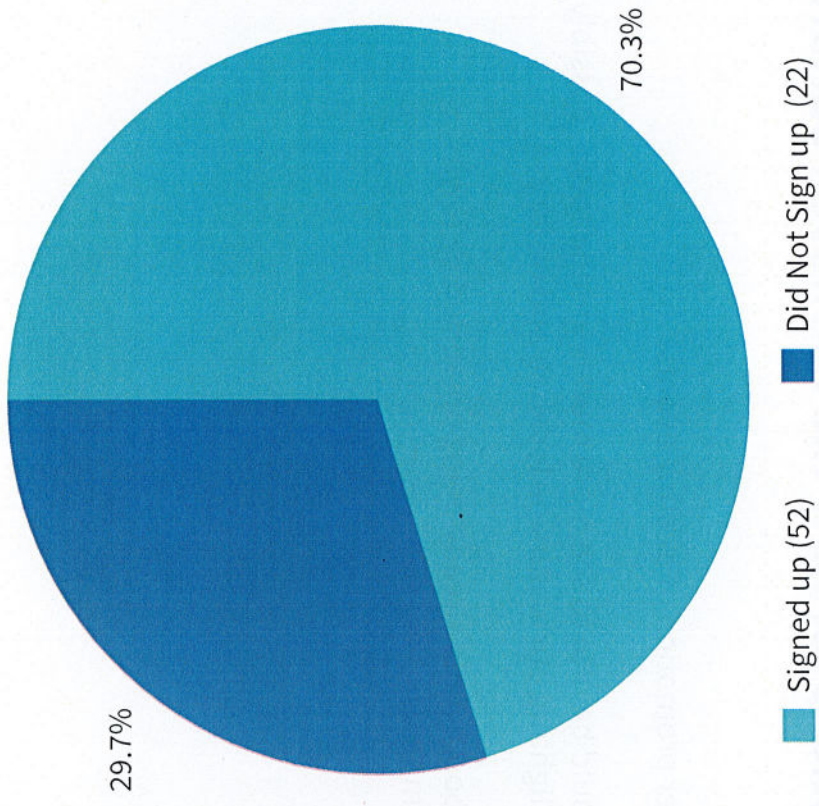
- More visibility, especially now
- No
- Thank you for the work researching, funding and advertising events.
- This survey is definitely an important step and continued collaboration with organizations and businesses in Fairhaven to get their feedback glean
- Thank you for all you do! Help create a Fairhaven Poet Laureate, Artist-in-Residence, Musician-in-Residence, & Cultural Shaker positions/awards
- Thank you for everything you do.
- Finding better ways to advertise events cause I had never heard of the vast majority of them listed above
- Better promotion of existing events.
- It would be nice to see more murals around town , possibly highlighting our waterside location and history :)
- Support events already being organized by town committees

Percentage of Respondents that Signed up for our Future Newsletter

2026



2025





Fairhaven Cultural Council

The Fairhaven Cultural Council serves all of Fairhaven. It is our goal to honor the breadth and diversity of its people and their cultural expressions. We fairly and equitably allocate our grants. We do not fund projects that discriminate based on age, ability, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, nationality, geographic origin, or immigration, military, or socio-economic status. We encourage all Fairhaven residents to participate in our activities—applying to serve on the council, seeking grant funding, and attending grant-winning programs. Together we make Fairhaven a better place and expand its potential!

Contact

Beth Ann Gallagher

culturalcouncil@fairhaven-ma.gov

508-979-4023

<https://massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/Fairhaven>

Address

40 Center St

Fairhaven, MA 02719-2995

Connect on Social

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

Application Information

FY27 Allocation

\$12,200

FY27 Local Priorities

This year 2026/2027 the Fairhaven Cultural Council (FCC) will give priority to:

- Projects that promote excellence, access, education, and diversity in the Arts, Humanities, and Interpretive Sciences.
- Projects that demonstrate a measurable benefit to the Town of Fairhaven and its residents.
- Projects or programs that take place in Fairhaven.
- Applications that contain a letter of support from the sponsoring organization(s) or proof of the ability to book a venue.
- Projects that encompass the culture and history of Fairhaven.
- Projects that provide free or low-cost events and programming.

FY27 Local Guidelines

- Fairhaven participates in the Direct Grant System. The FCC makes grant money available in full to grantees once their projects have been voted on as approved (January), the FCC has received all required paperwork from the grantee, and the Town of Fairhaven processes the paperwork.
- FCC awards grants in part or in full, as funding is available. The FCC funds as many grants as possible during the grant cycle, provided applicants meet the criteria as outlined in the FCC Priorities.

- Total grant requests per applicant are capped at \$1,000.
- This FCC funds projects taking place during an 18-month window of eligibility beginning July 1, preceding the application deadline in October, through December 31 of the following year.
- A specified project date (or range) and location for the project, event, or performance is required.
- A letter of support from the sponsoring organization(s) or proof of the ability to book a venue is required at the time of application. The FCC does not book for area organizations and venues through grant awards.
- If the project culminates in an educational session, event, or performance outside of Fairhaven, an estimation of participation by Fairhaven residents is required.
- We encourage first time applicants, individual artists, and performers to apply. Returning grantees should demonstrate the ability to host a successful and well-received program, as well as the ability to complete and submit all FCC required paperwork within the stated timeline.
- Ideally projects should be accessible for persons with disabilities, including facility or event location, as well as the contents of the program.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit any additional materials that strengthen their applications. Besides letters of support, additional materials may include: publicity, reviews, photos, resumes, press kits, etc.

QUESTIONS?

- Any questions may be directed to chairperson Beth Ann Gallagher at culturalcouncil@fairhaven-ma.org.

How Grant Recipients Are Paid

Direct Grants