

# 2023 PSATC SURVEY FINDINGS



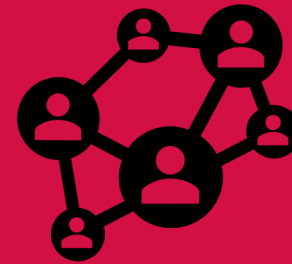
Presented by



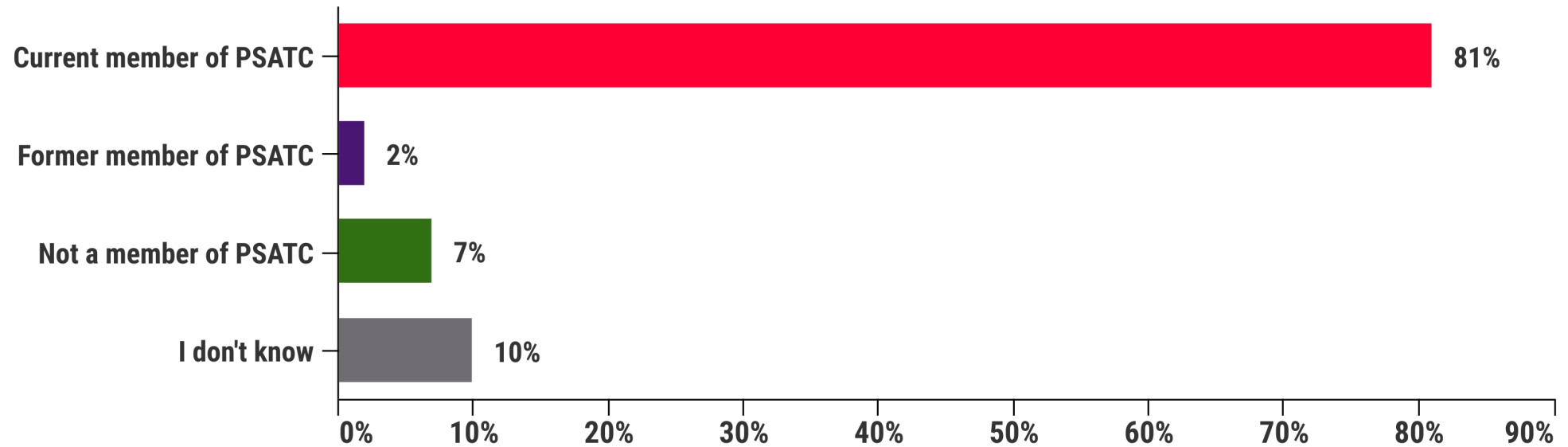
# OUR METHODOLOGY

- Communication Solutions held the Leadership Team Kickoff Meeting to define PSATC's vision and discuss survey priorities
- Electronic survey administered between July 12 – July 26
- Survey promoted via Constant Contact, emails, phone calls, outreach from Executive Committee
- 237 email opens through Constant Contact
  - 99 survey participants
  - 42% participation

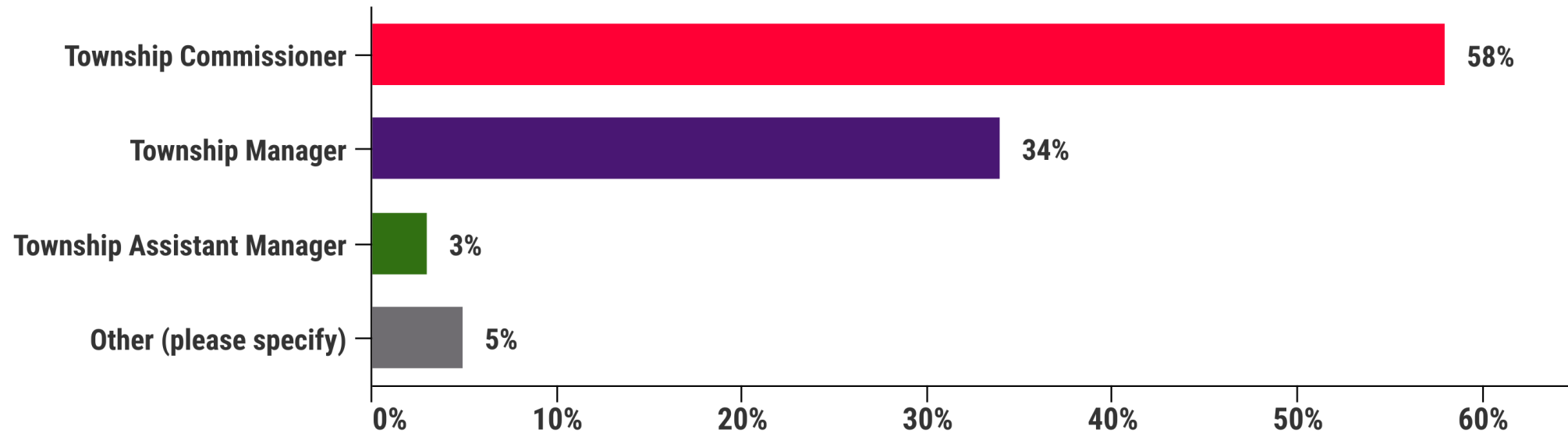
**DEMOGRAPHICS**



# What best describes your township?

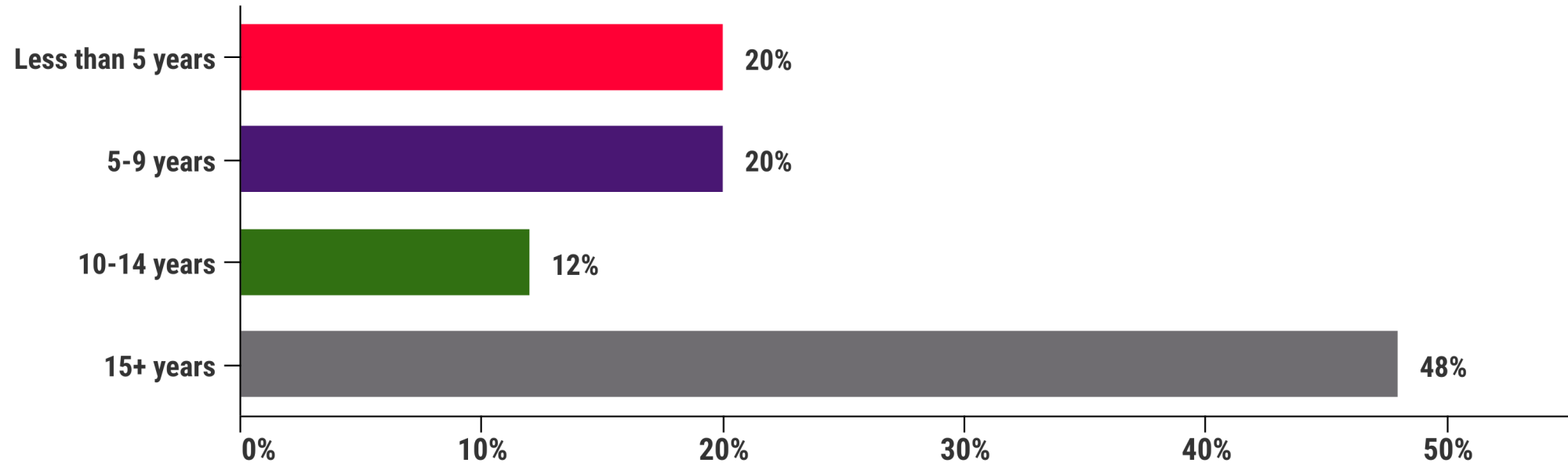


# What role best describes you?



*Other: Admin assistant/secretary, solicitor*

# How many years have you worked in/served in municipal government?



# What organizations are you currently a member of? (OPEN ENDED)



*77 responses*

## **Most common:**

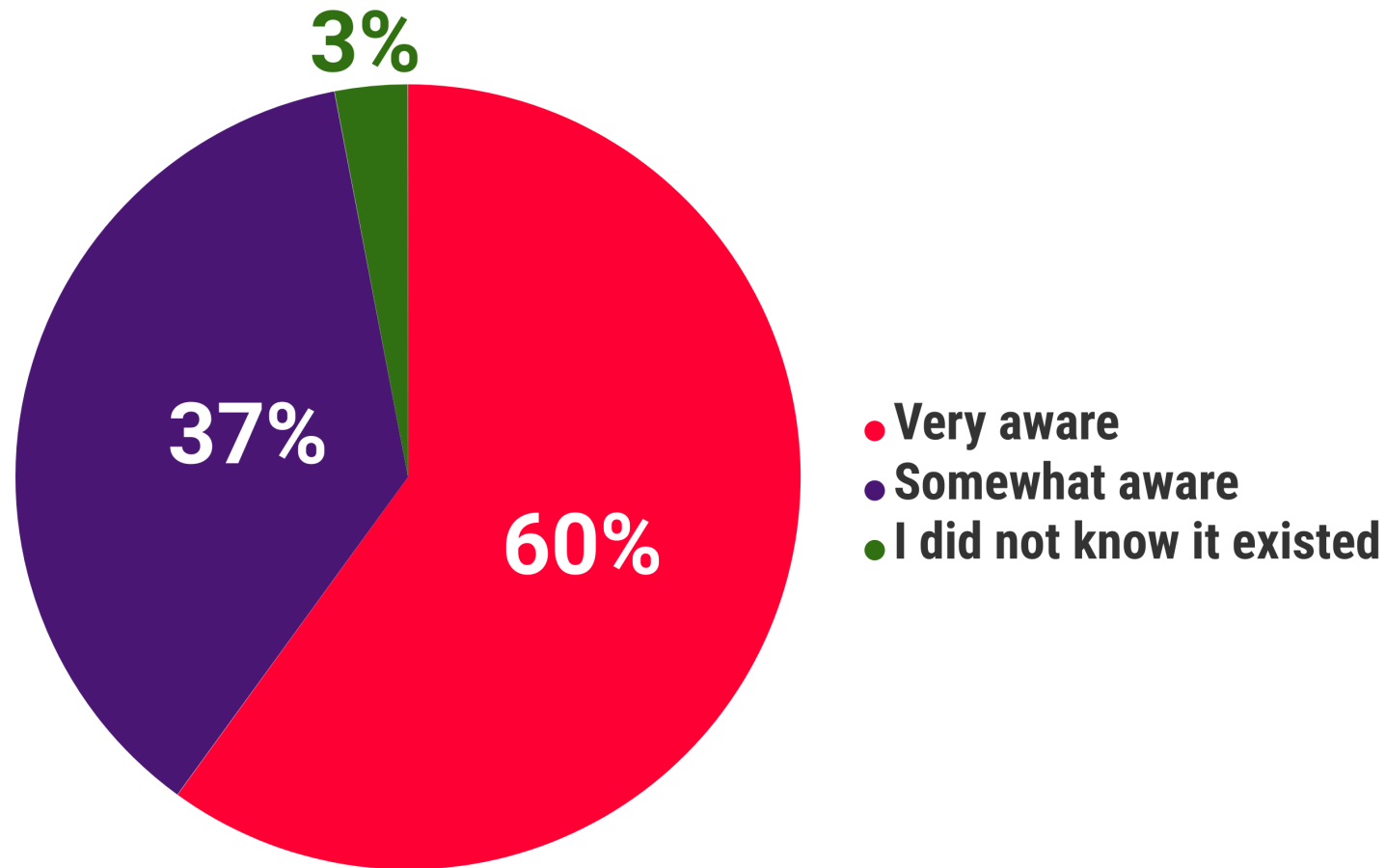
- PSATC
- PML
- APM (Association of Pennsylvania Municipal Managers)
- PSATS
- ALOM (Allegheny League of Municipalities)
- Local chamber of commerce

**AWARENESS**



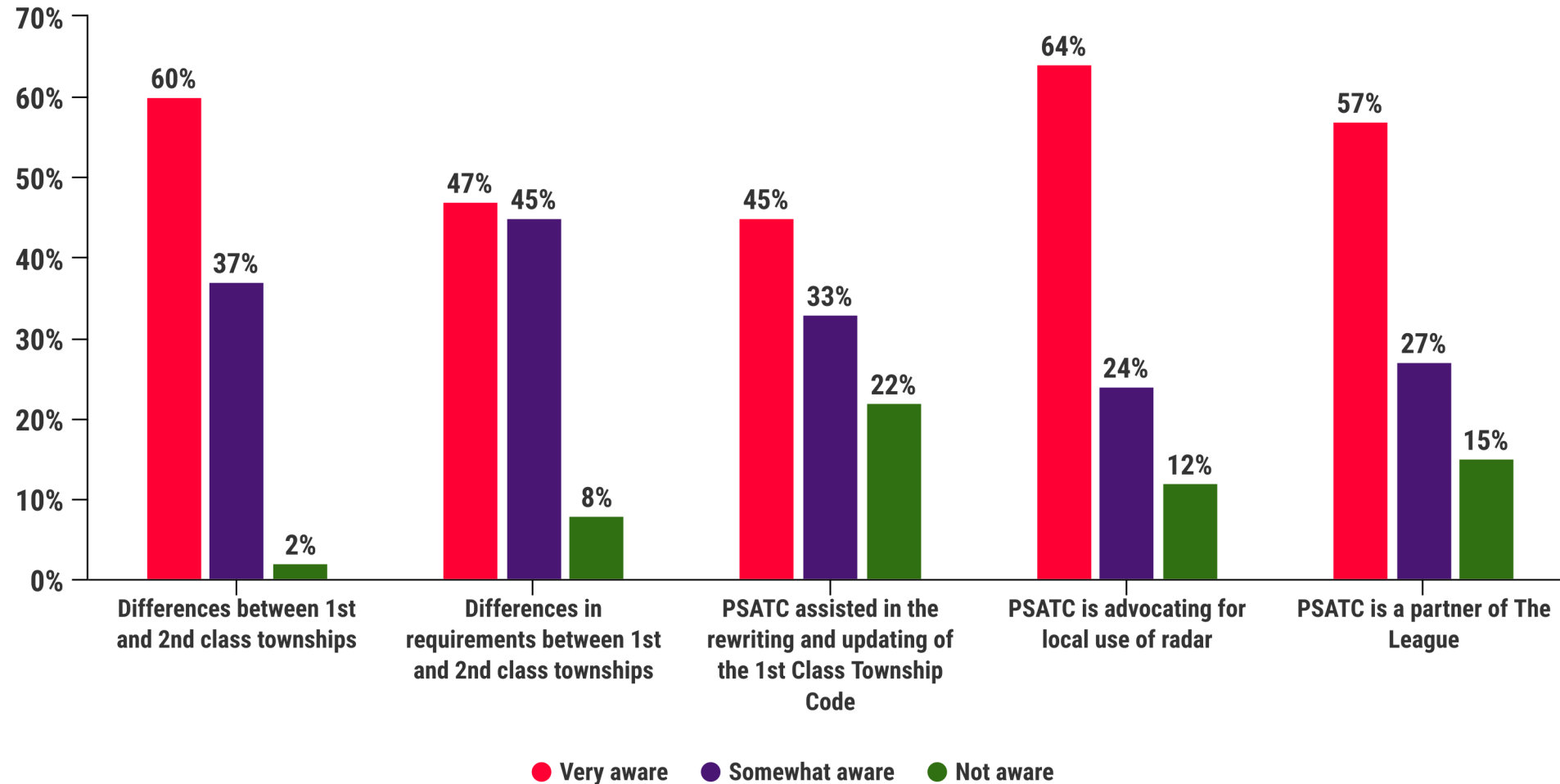


# Overall, how aware are you of PSATC as a state organization?

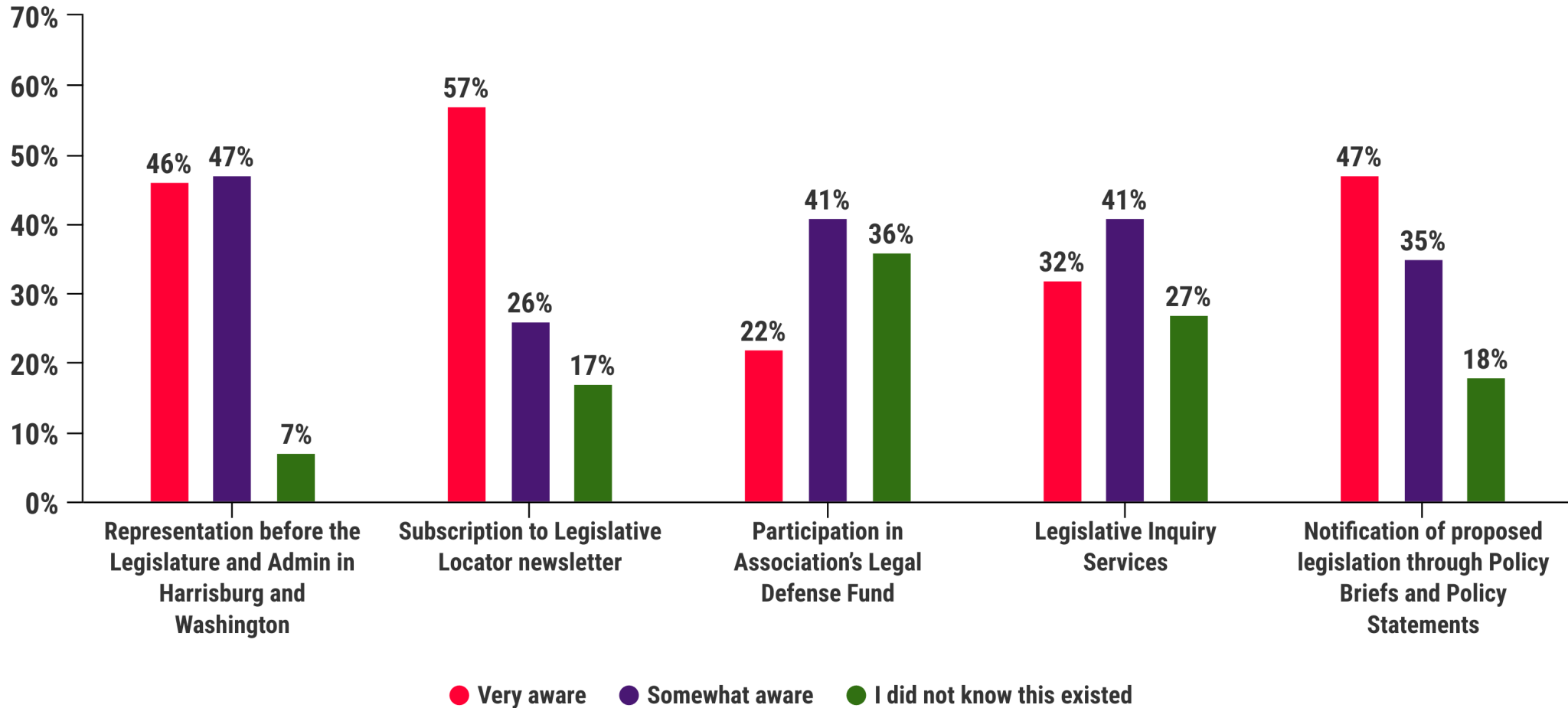


*High awareness could be because 81% of survey respondents are current PSATC members.*

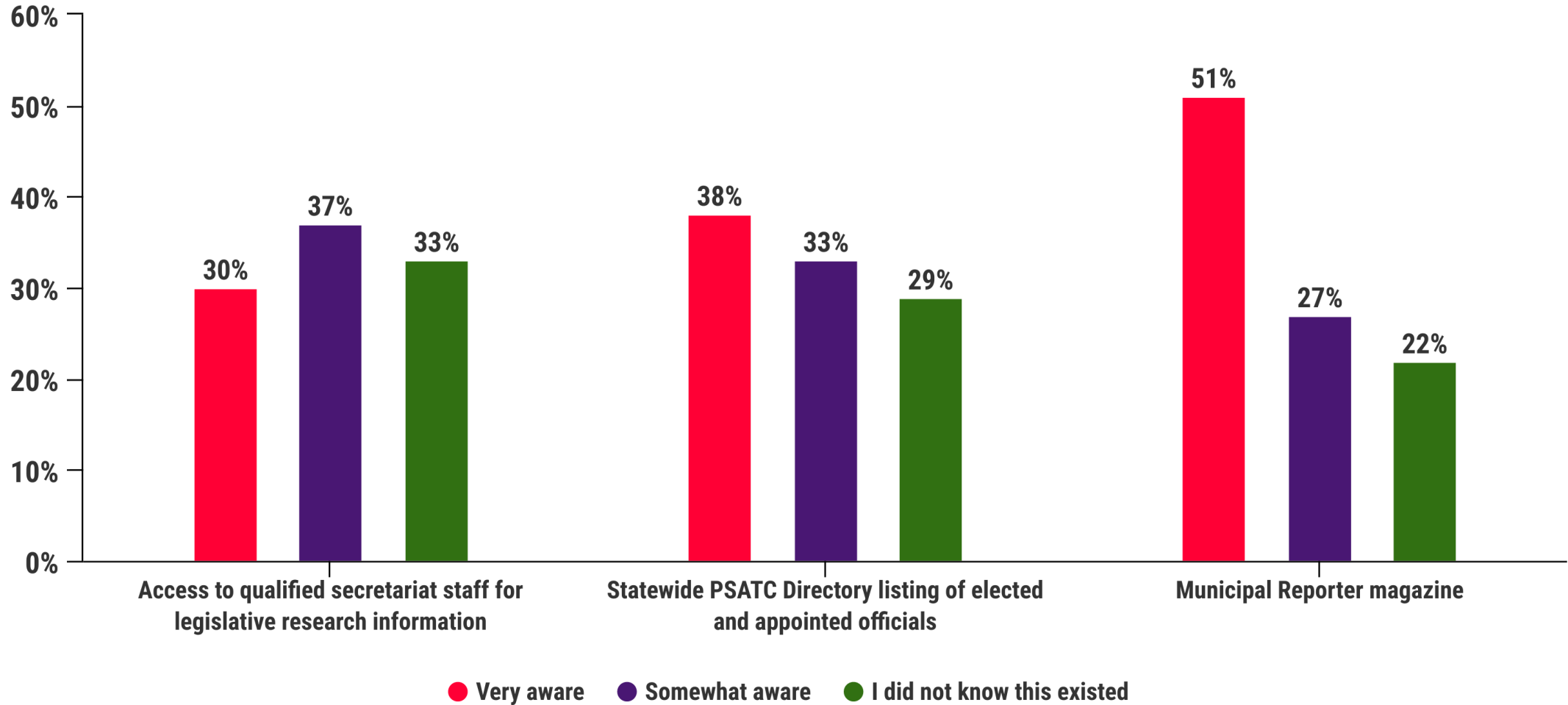
# Please rate your awareness of the following:



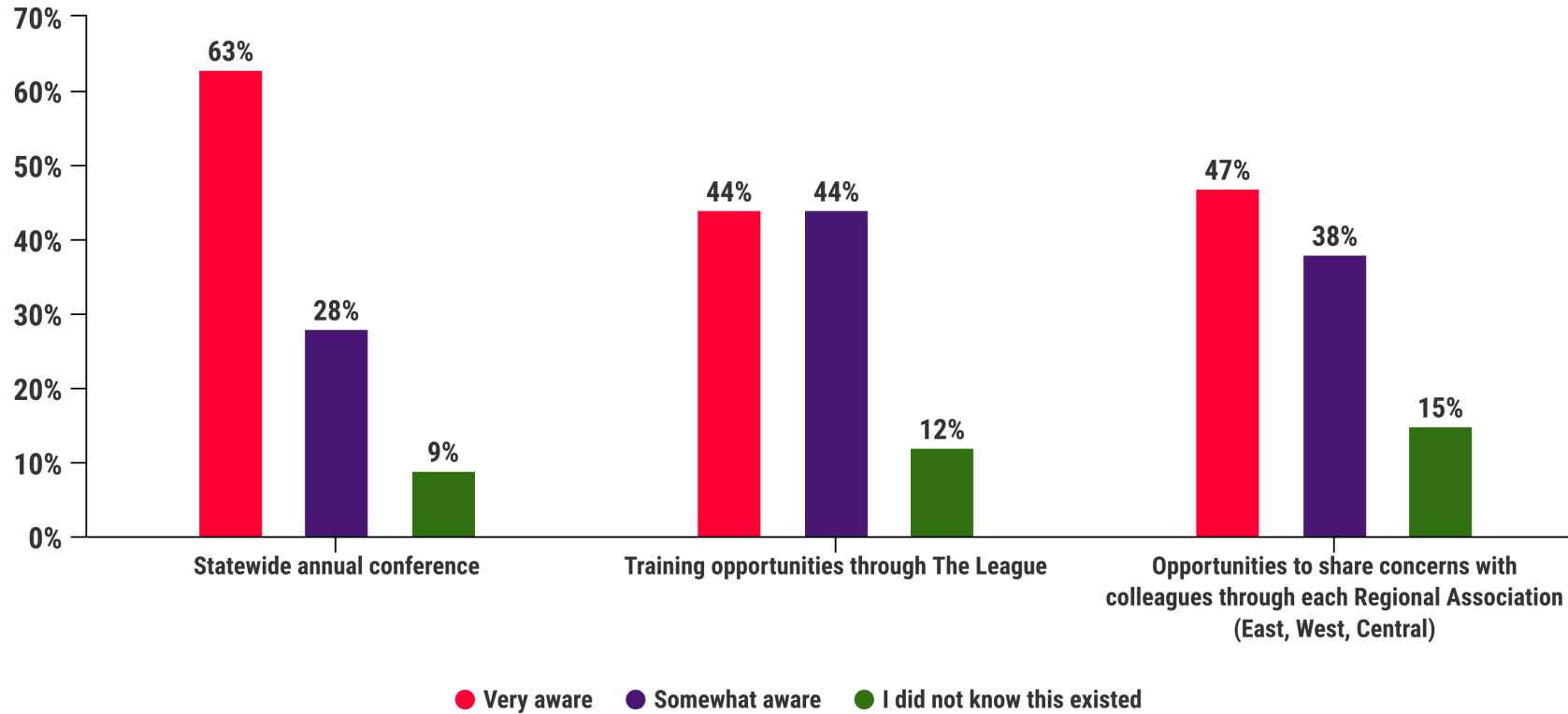
# How aware are you of the legislative advocacy benefits of PSATC?



# How aware are you of the resource benefits of PSATC?



# How aware are you of the networking & educational benefits of PSATC?



# MEMBERSHIP BARRIERS



# What do you think prevents first class townships from joining PSATC? (OPEN ENDED)



*44 responses*

**23 (52%)** – Lack of awareness/knowledge of PSATC and its benefits

**11** – Cost

**9** – Lacking relevance, impact, benefits/value

**7** – Limited time/involved in other organizations

**2** – Small in number (both first class townships and township staff)

**2** – Other (difficult Board members, ignorance)

# PROPOSED INITIATIVES

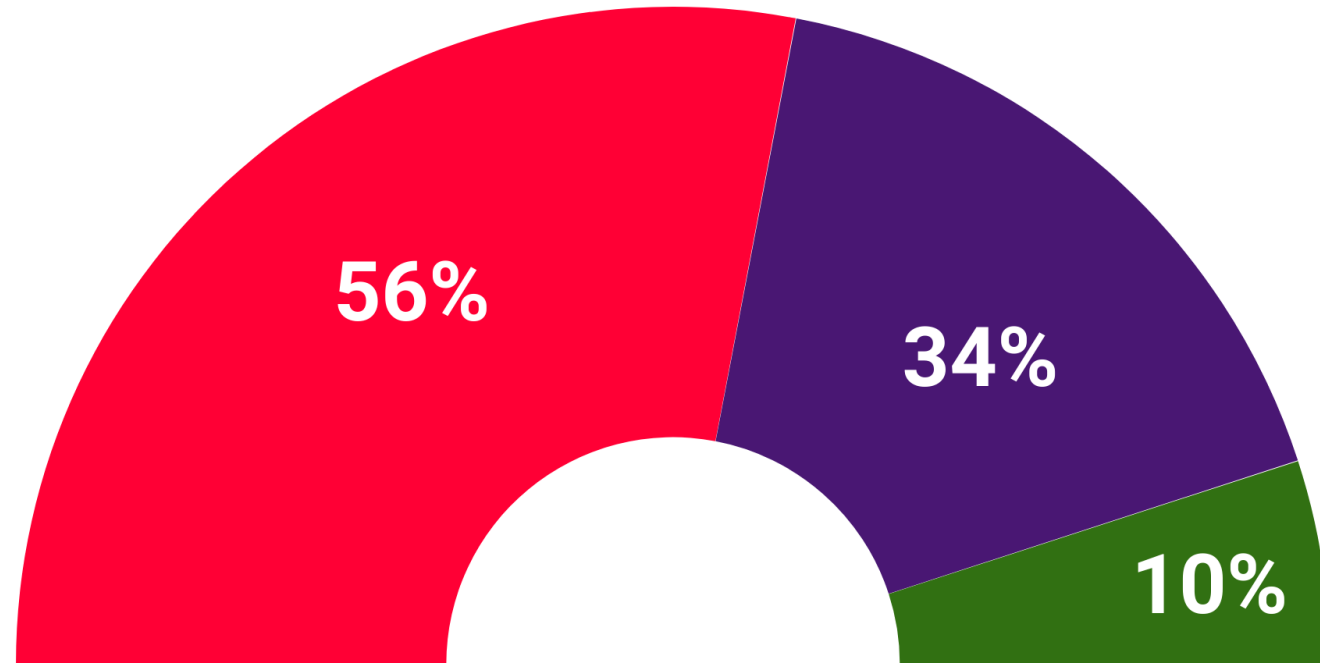




# How beneficial is each proposed initiative?



**PSATC member-only resource portal to access resources essential to first class townships**

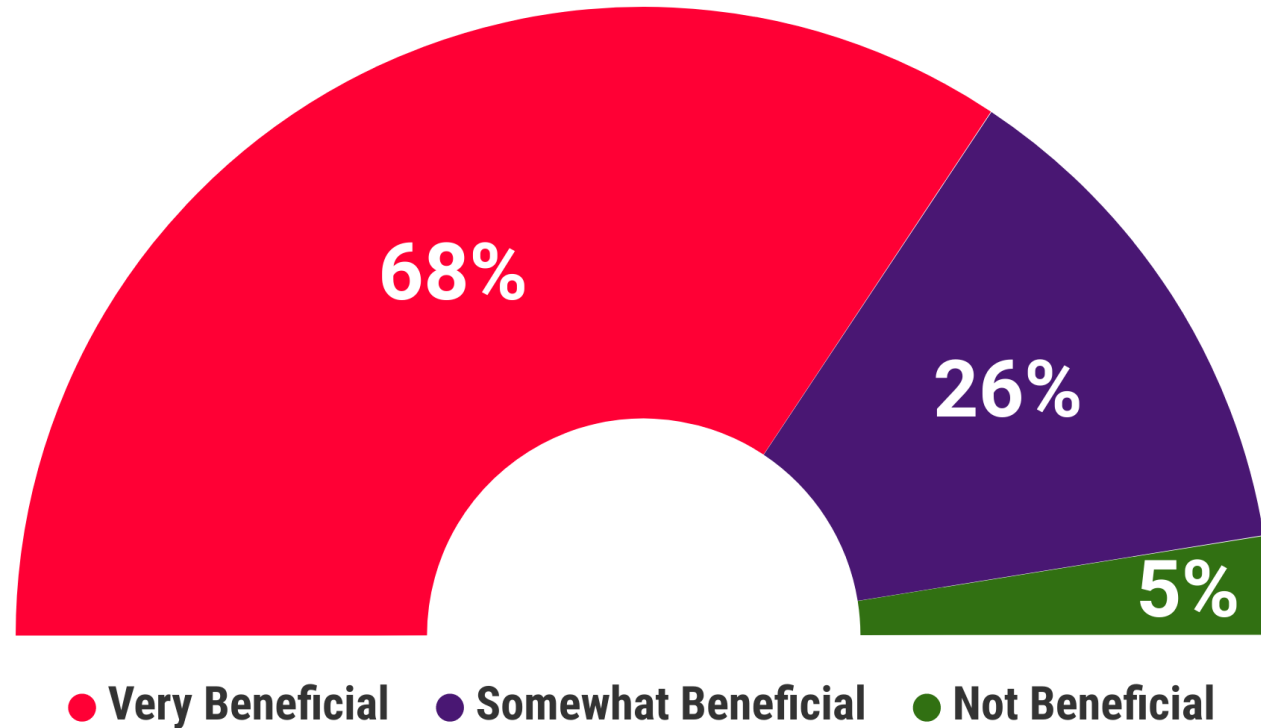


● **Very Beneficial**   ● **Somewhat Beneficial**   ● **Not Beneficial**

# How beneficial is each proposed initiative?



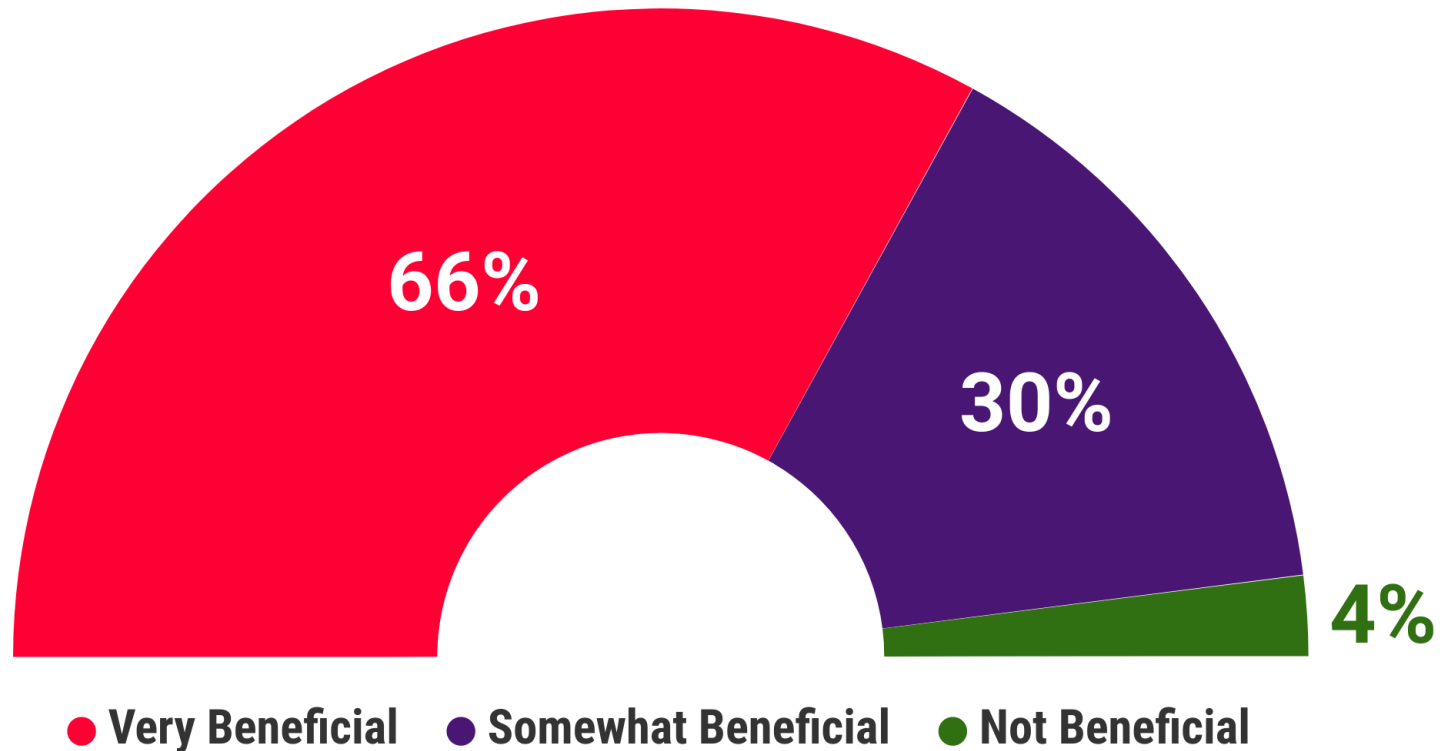
## E-mail updates from PSATC on legislation specific to first class townships



# How beneficial is each proposed initiative?



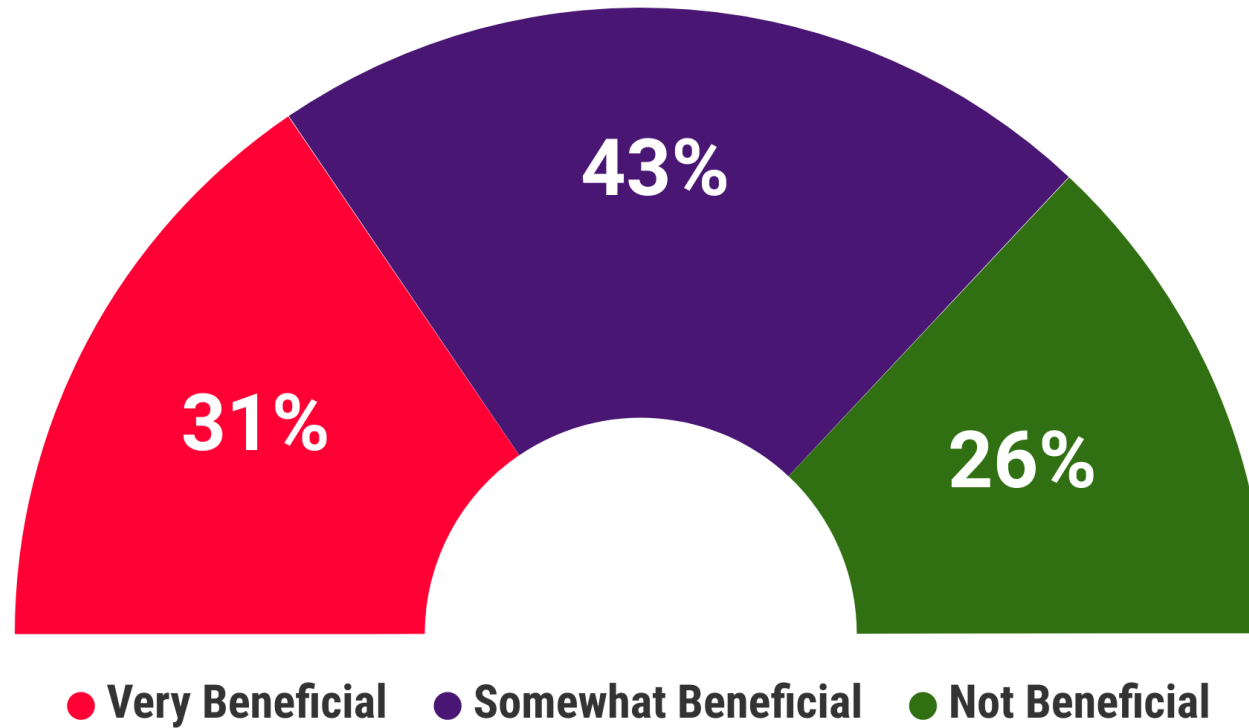
Quarterly e-newsletter from PSATC to keep first class townships informed of its work



# How beneficial is each proposed initiative?



## Creation of an annual Innovative First Class Township Award



**TRAINING**



# Where do you receive the majority of training for your role within the township? (OPENENDED)



*68 responses*

## **Most common:**

- Conferences, seminars, workshops
- On the job experience, from the township
- PSAB (Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs)
- PML
- PSATS

# How can PSATC make itself more valuable and useful to your township? (OPEN ENDED)



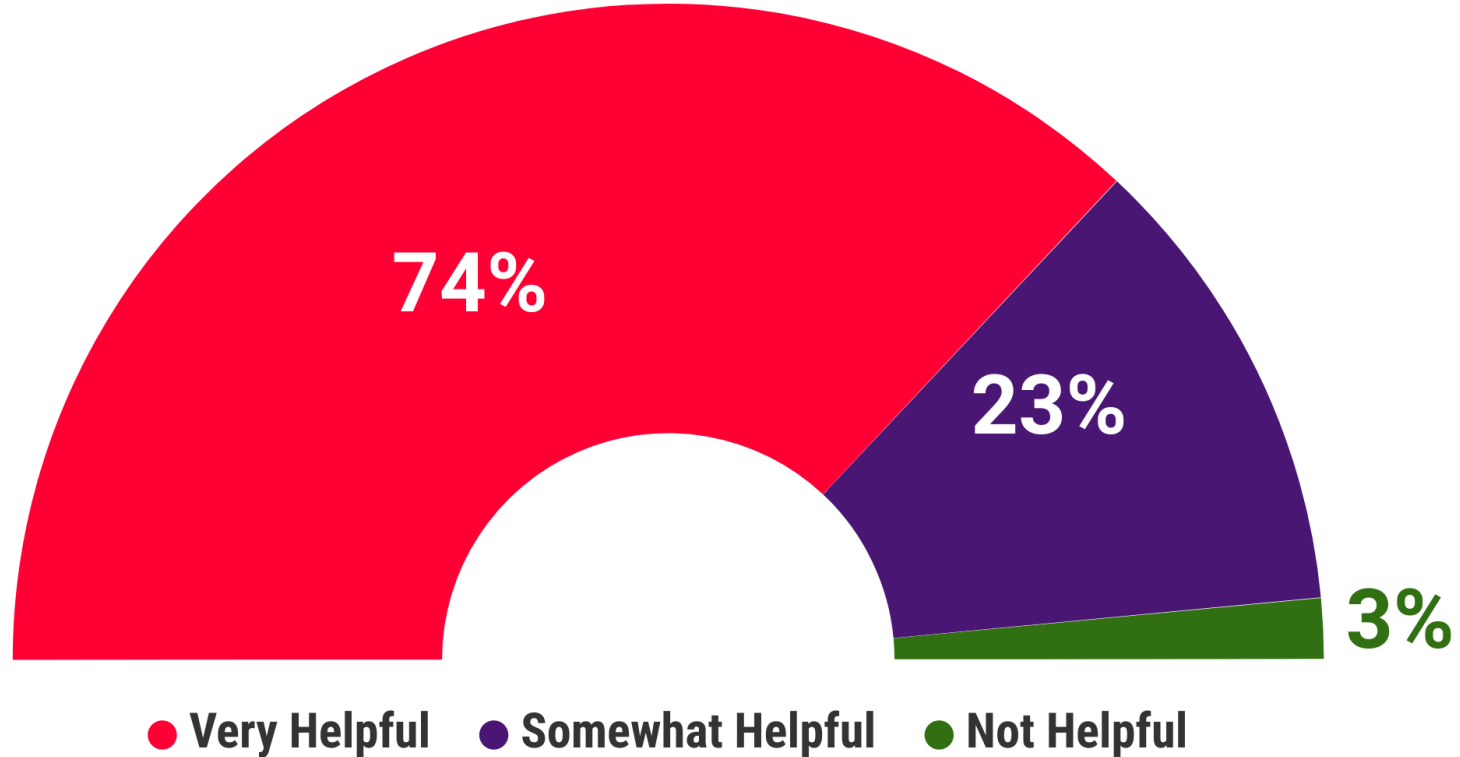
*38 responses*

- 17 (45%) – Training, education, provide more valuable information
- 7 – More awareness, bigger presence
- 7 – In-person engagements, local events, round tables, workshops
- 6 – Communication about what's going in the state and PSATC
- 3 – Lobbying, presence in the Capital
- 4 – Other (revise strategic mission, keep politics out...)

# How helpful would the following training topics be to your township?



## Governance for new township commissioners and key township staff

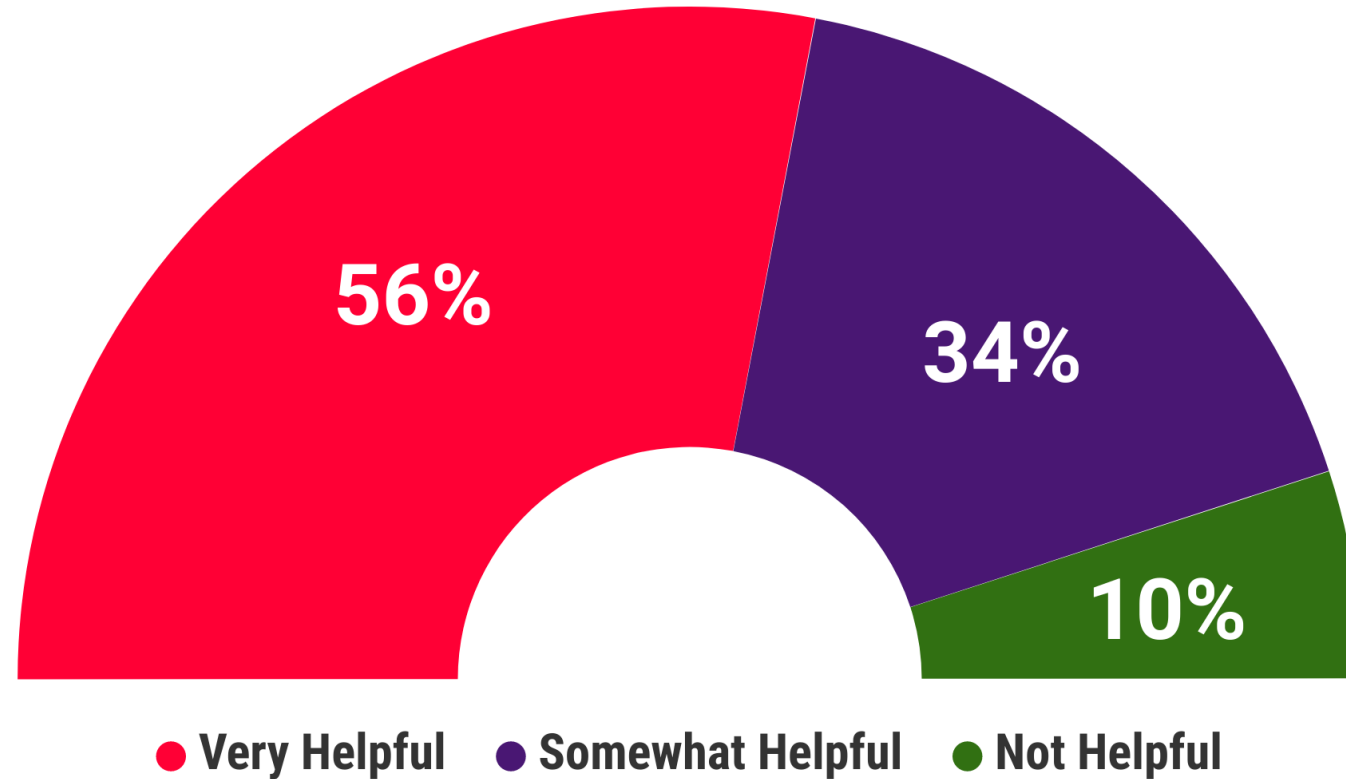




# How helpful would the following training topics be to your township?



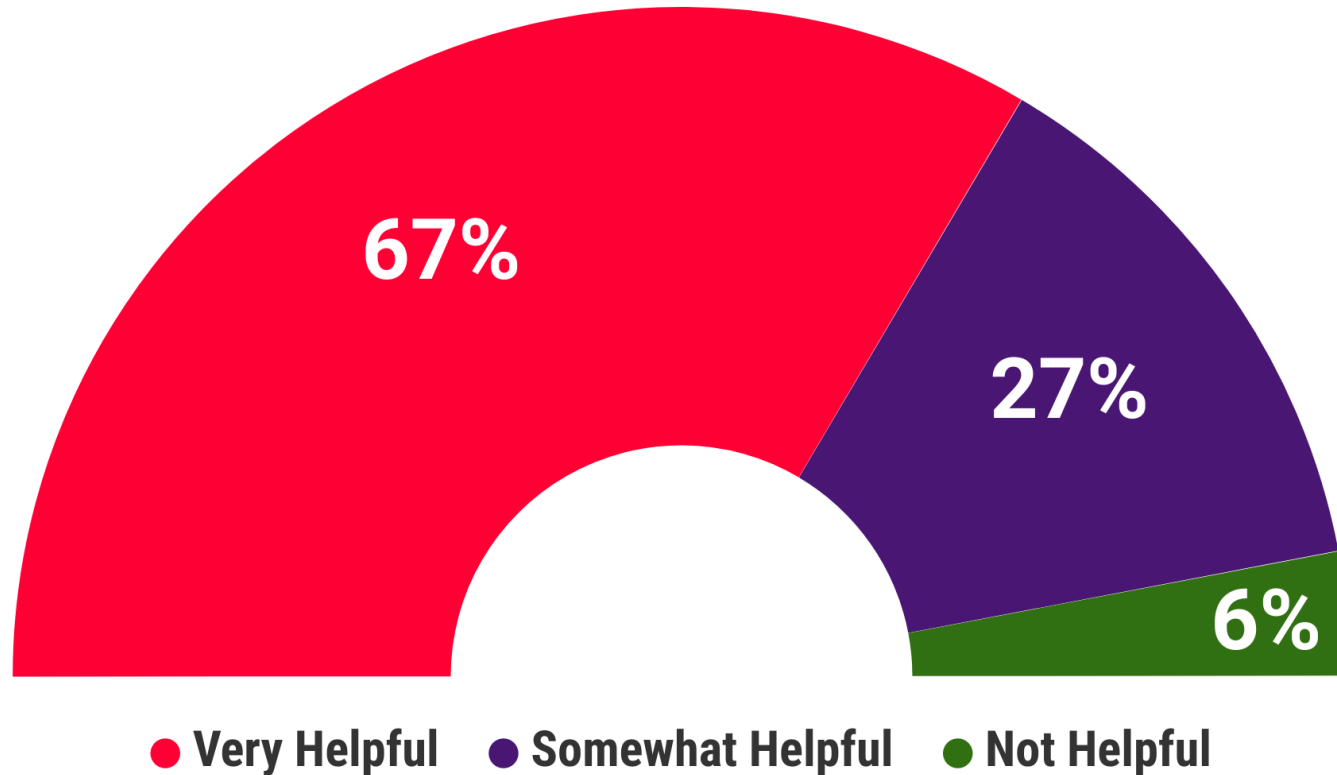
## How to engage with state or local legislators



# How helpful would the following training topics be to your township?



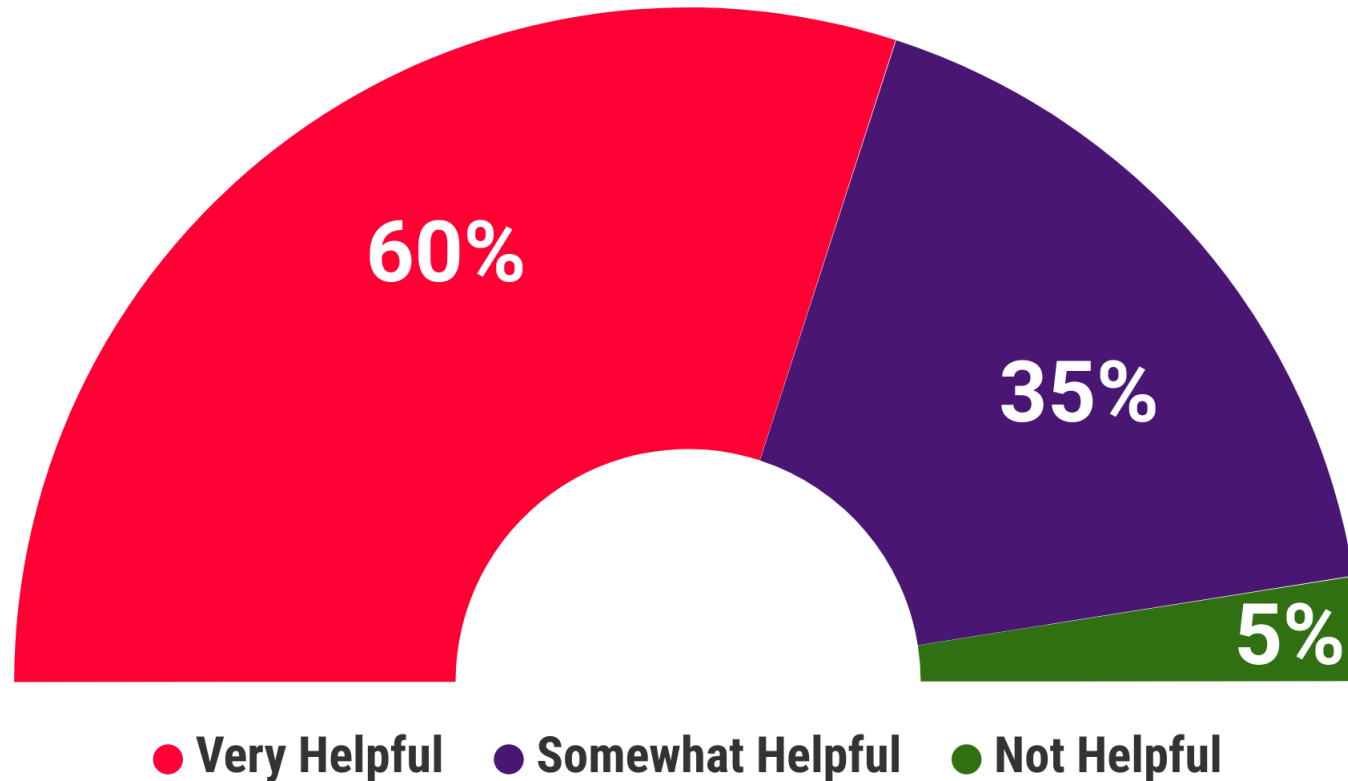
## How to access and obtain grants



# How helpful would the following training topics be to your township?



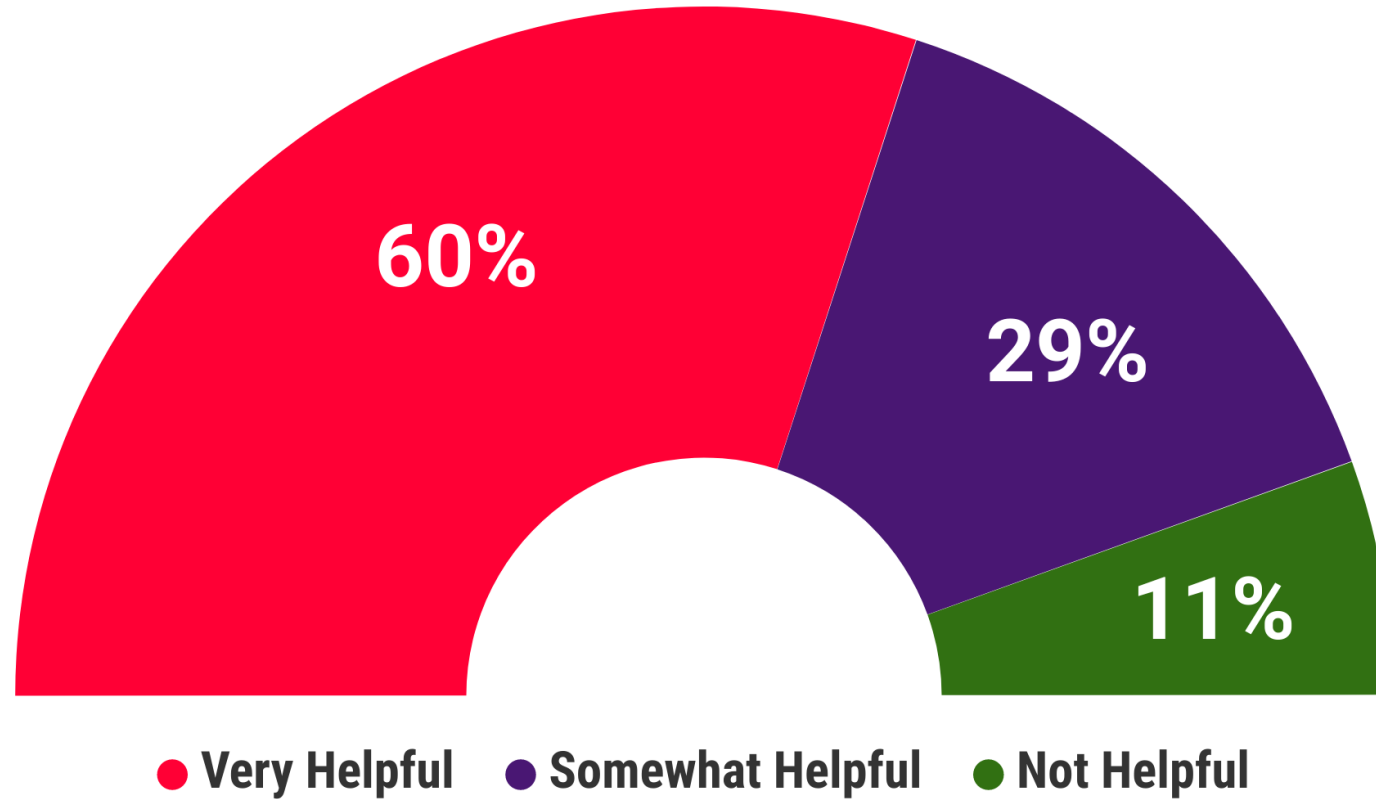
## Stormwater management strategies



# How helpful would the following training topics be to your township?



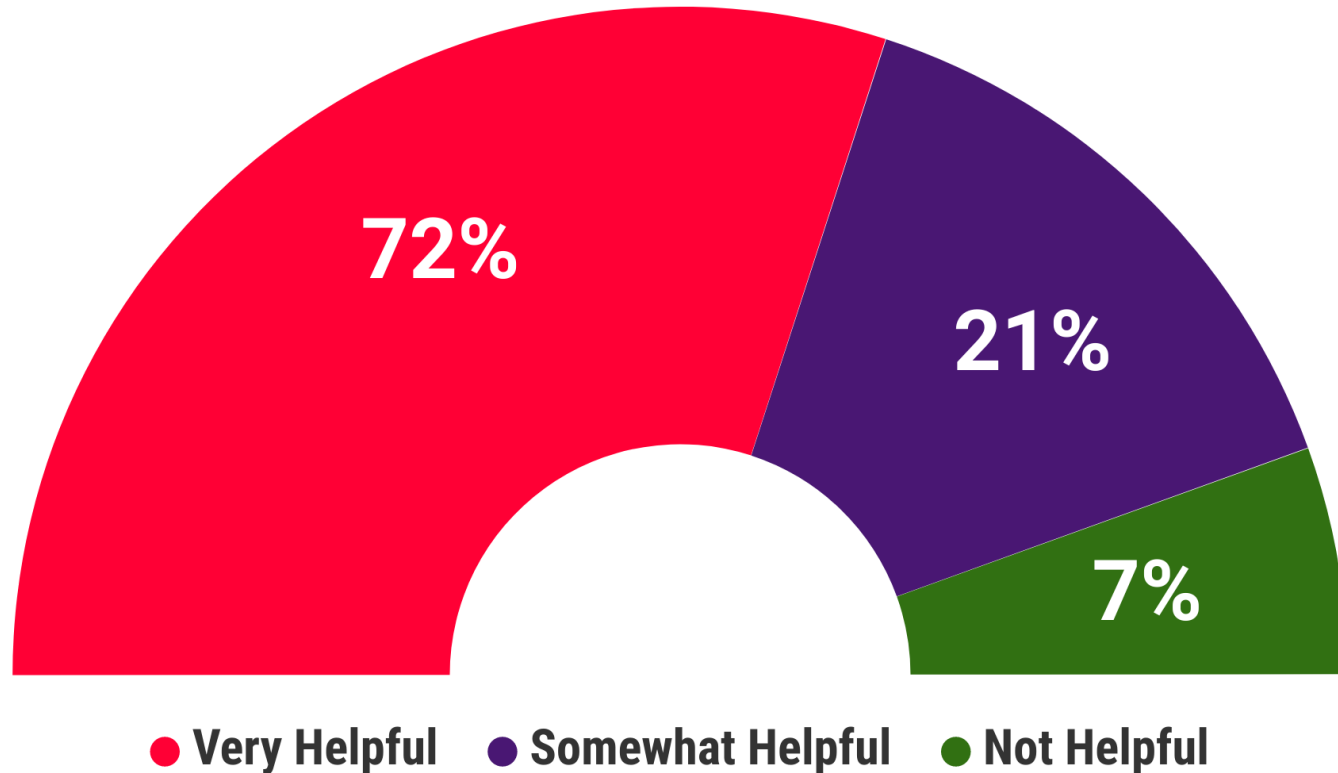
## Police recruitment and retention strategies



# How helpful would the following training topics be to your township?



## Fire recruitment and retention strategies



# What other training topics would benefit you or your township? (OPEN ENDED)



## *29 responses*

7 – Budget/finance

6 – Constituent interaction/community engagement

4 – Township coordination (Coordination between townships, coordination with residents)

3 – Grant writing

3 – Land development/preservation

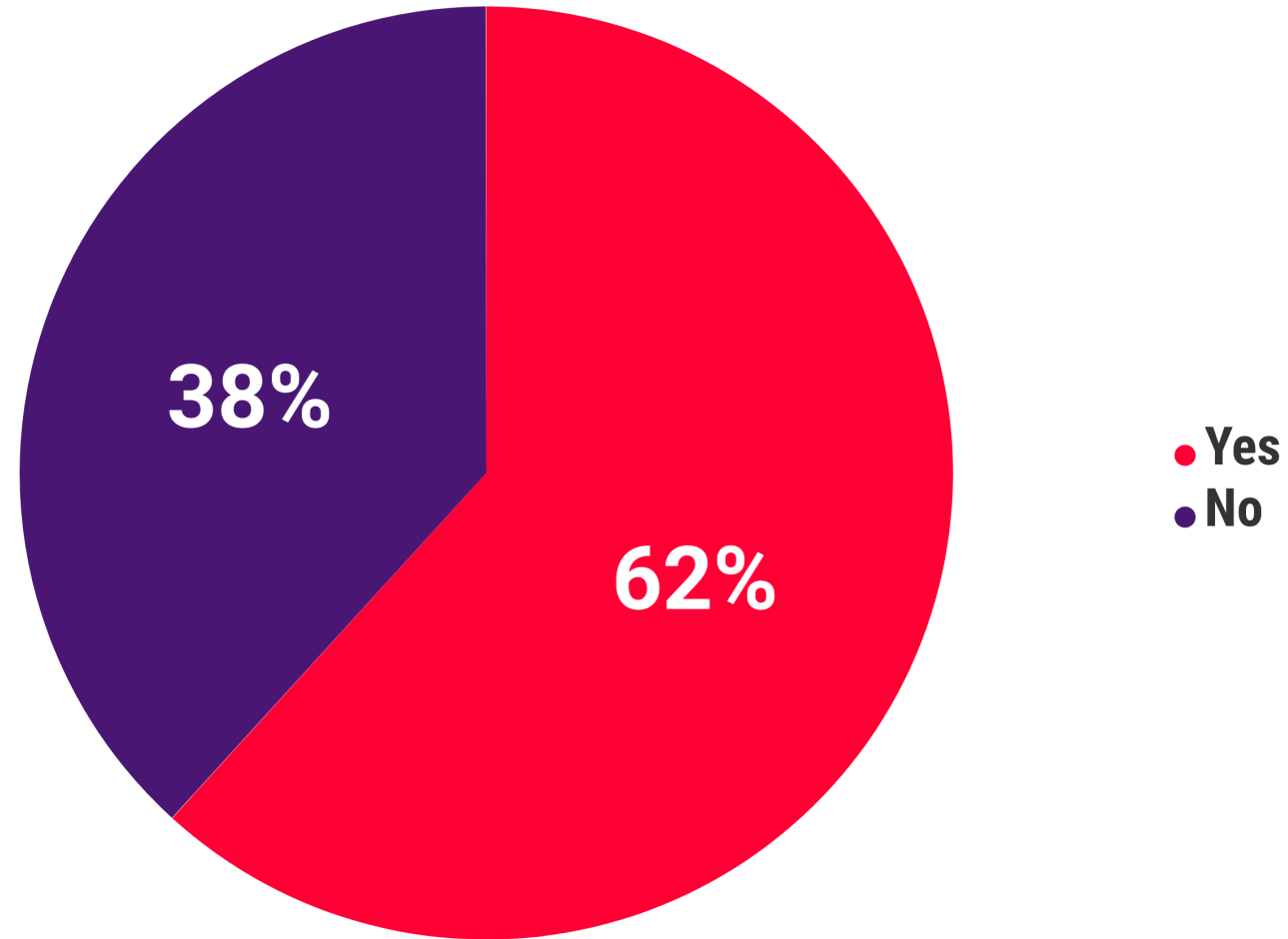
2 – Waste reduction strategies and recycling

2 – Basic management principles

**CONFERENCE FEEDBACK**



# Have you ever attended the PSATC annual conference?





# What would you like to see at the conference in the future or would get you to attend? (OPEN ENDED)



## *34 responses*

- 17 (50%)** – Increased educational value (Better educational classes, legislative updates, first class township success stories, interactive sessions/workshops)
- 7**– Convenience (location, would like weekend events, too much time away from work, cost)
- 5** – More attendees (legislators and state administrators, first class townships)
- 3** – Communication/awareness about the conference and what to expect there
- 2** – Word of mouth, hearing from others it's “the place to be”
- 2** – Combine with PML or another conference

# INSIGHTS & FEEDBACK



# What challenges or issues keep first class townships up at night? (OPEN ENDED)



*53 responses*

**23** – Finding the money for unfunded mandates

**20** – Recruitment & retention (police and firefighters mentioned)

**9** – Public safety

**7** – Stormwater management

**6** – Township planning, communication and engagement

**3** – Taxation

# If you could create the ideal association for first class townships, describe what that would look like. (OPEN ENDED)



## *25 responses*

- 7 – Collaborative, more first class township participation
- 6 – Happy with PSATC as it is now
- 5 – Beneficial educational opportunities/training
- 3 – Presence (can contact PSATC 24/7 through website, advocacy work, overall presence of PSATC)
- 2 – Strong understanding of township needs
- 2 – Modern
- 6 – Other (Be like PSATS, PML and PSATC should merge, low cost)

**OPTIONAL**



## Q20 Participate in a 1-hour focus group on Zoom to assist PSATC in branding



32 responses

## Q21 Joining or volunteering with PSATC

13 responses

2 are currently nonmembers

**KEY ISSUES &  RECOMMENDATIONS**

# Standout Open-Ended Feedback



## DATA WORTH NOTING

- **52%** said lack of awareness/knowledge of PSATC and its benefits prevent others from getting involved
- **45%** said more townships would join if PSATC offered training, education, and more valuable information to first class townships
- **50%** seek more educational value from your annual conference (Better educational classes, legislative updates, first class township success stories, interactive sessions/workshops)
- **32** respondents provided contact info so they can participate in the branding visioning session



# ISSUE #1 – Lack of Awareness RE: PSATC Actions & Benefits



- Although the majority of survey participants are aware of PSATC, they lack awareness of one key initiatives PSATC has been involved in:
  - Updating of the First Class Township Code
- Strong member benefits also suffering from lack of awareness seem to be strong resources for first class townships. Yet respondents did not know they were available through PSATC. They include:
  - Participation in Association's Legal Defense Fund
  - Access to qualified secretariat staff for legislative research information
  - Statewide PSATC Directory listed elected and appointed officials
  - Legislative Inquiry Service

**A communication plan can increase awareness regarding existing and new member benefits.**

# ISSUE #2 – Desire for Education & Training Distinct to First Class Township Needs



Survey data overwhelmingly supported the need for educational programming that addresses the distinct needs of first class townships. **The fact that the majority of respondents get their training from workshops, meetings and conferences opens the door to how PSATC should position itself.**

While all proposed topics scored high, the most in-demand educational topics included:

- Governance training for new commissioners
- How to access grants
- Firefighter recruitment and retention

From the open-ended section of the survey, it appears that any topics focused on funding state or federal mandates would also be of great interest.

Educational offerings should be available throughout the year (as a member benefit) as well as during the annual conference.

# ISSUE #3 – Townships want more consistent communication from PSATC



Both the quantitative questions and the open-ended portions of this survey pointed to the fact that respondents want PSATC to be more consistent and purposeful with its communication.

They seek information on legislation, member benefits, PSATC news updates, and township success stories.

Proposed communication vehicles which garnered the most favorable responses are as follows:

- Email updates on legislation specific to first class townships
- Quarterly e-newsletter from PSATC to first class townships on its activities, offerings and best practices.
- Members Only Portal for access to resources (which would be accessible on PSATC stand alone website)

**A comprehensive communication program should be implemented for PSATC.**

# Questions

