

Saratoga Springs Charter Review Commission Presentation of Draft Charter



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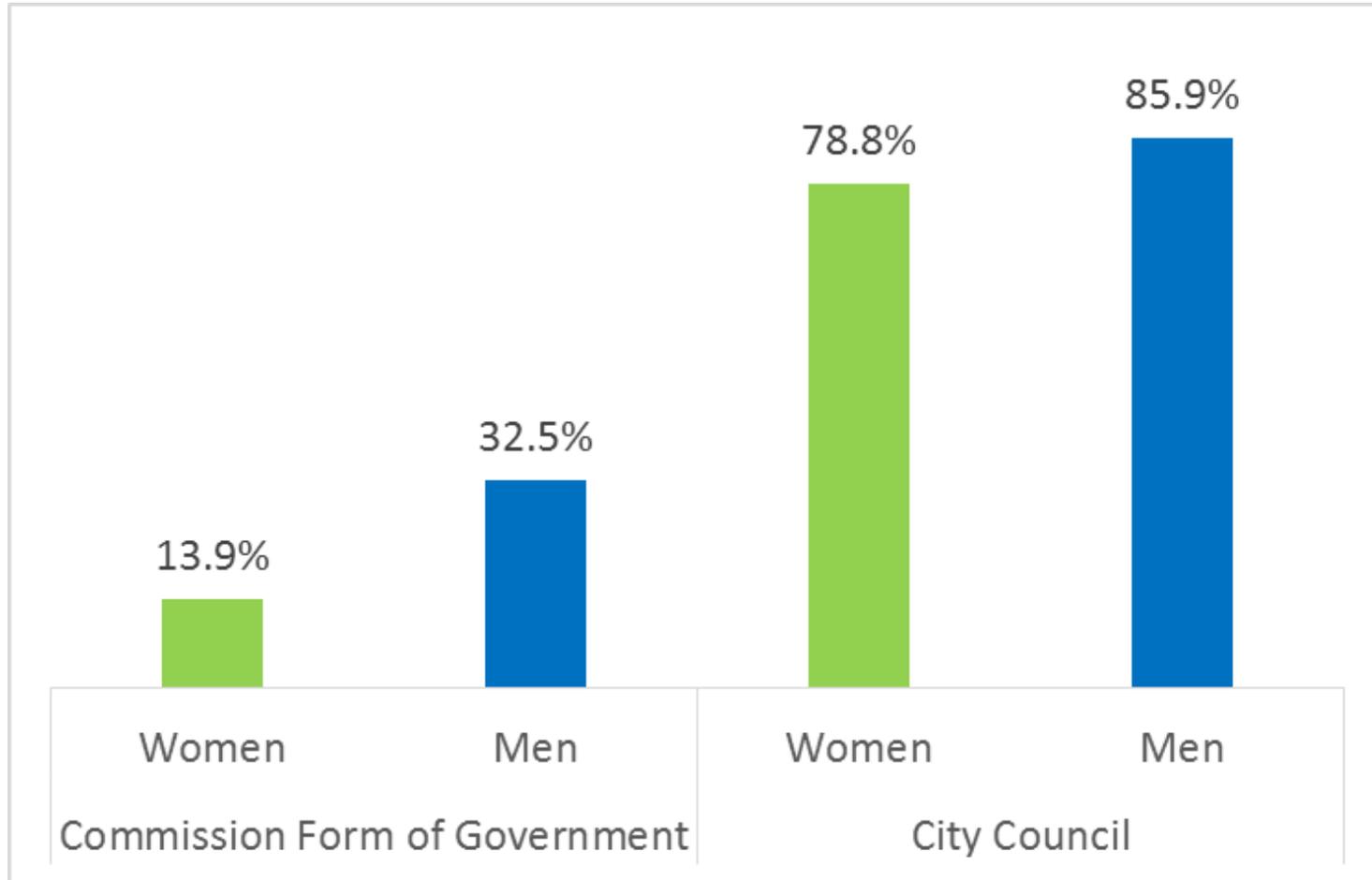
Background

- City Charter requires review of city charter every 10 years
- 15 member volunteer citizen commission
- Timeline
 - Review of existing charter, June-December 2016
 - Drafting new charter, December 2016-March 25
 - Listening and revising phase, March 29-May 30
 - Charter Referendum, November 7
- The draft charter represents the **current thinking** of the Charter Review Commission.

City Council 7 members = 6 council +1 mayor

- Elections (Article 6.01)
 - City wide/at large elections
 - 4 year terms
 - Staggered terms (2019, 2023, 2027); (2019, 2021, 2025)
 - Run in head to head elections (Seat A, B, C)
 - Term limits, three 4 year terms
- Powers (Article 2)
 - Are the legislative and appropriating body of the City
 - Hire and fire city manager by majority vote
 - Confirm mayoral appointments to land use boards, city attorney

More Representative Pool of City Council Candidates



| 1915-present | Men | Women |
|---------------|-----|-------|
| Public Safety | 15 | 0 |
| Accounts | 13 | 0 |
| Public Works | 10 | 1 |
| Finance | 16 | 3 |

- Do you have the professional skills, education, and experience to successfully serve in respective position?
- #s are % of respondents who agree by gender

Mayor

- Role
 - Visible full time leader to “pick up the phone”
 - Represent city to outside constituencies
 - Work with community stakeholders to identify needs and build consensus
- Powers (Section 2.04)
 - Direct election, 4 year terms, 12 year term limits
 - Represent city in intergovernmental relationships
 - Present State of the City address
 - Appoint to boards and committees with consent of City Council
 - Create advisory committees
 - Presiding officer of the Council, voting member of the city council
 - Appoint members and officers of council committees
 - Chair the Finance Committee of the city council
 - ***Does NOT have administrative or budgetary powers

City Manager

- “85 percent of U.S. cities with populations greater than 2,500, have a professional manager in place who’s responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the community.” ICMA
 - Saratoga Springs → \$50 million budget, 400+ employees
- City Manager hired by City Council, “at will employee”
 - Advanced degree in public administration
 - Coursework - public administration, public budgeting, executive leadership, ethics, financial administration, policy analysis, human resource management
 - 5 years municipal experience
- Responsibilities (Article 3)
 - Supervise day to day administration of all departments
 - Prepare and submit annual budget and capital program to City Council
 - Assist council to develop long term plans and economic development plan for the city

Charter Review Commission Finance Goals

1. To bring a highly professional level of qualified management to the City's fiscal life
2. To maintain the very best of what our current charter offers with regard to fiscal management
3. To eliminate the check & balance weakness evident in the finance structure of our current form of government
4. Guarantee a less expensive City government

Example 1: Contract Approval Process

Commission Form of Government

Department requesting product/service on behalf of city

- Submit the RFP, Request Bid Award
- Request budget transfer if necessary
- Request Purchase Order
- Monitor services are delivered
- Track invoices and submit vouchers

Accounts

- Post the RFP, Award Bid
- Reviews vendor for insurance under Risk and Safety
- Archive signed contracts
- Issue Purchase Order
- Receive vouchers for amount of invoice and pay vendor

Finance

- Certify funds are available
- Process budget transfer if requested

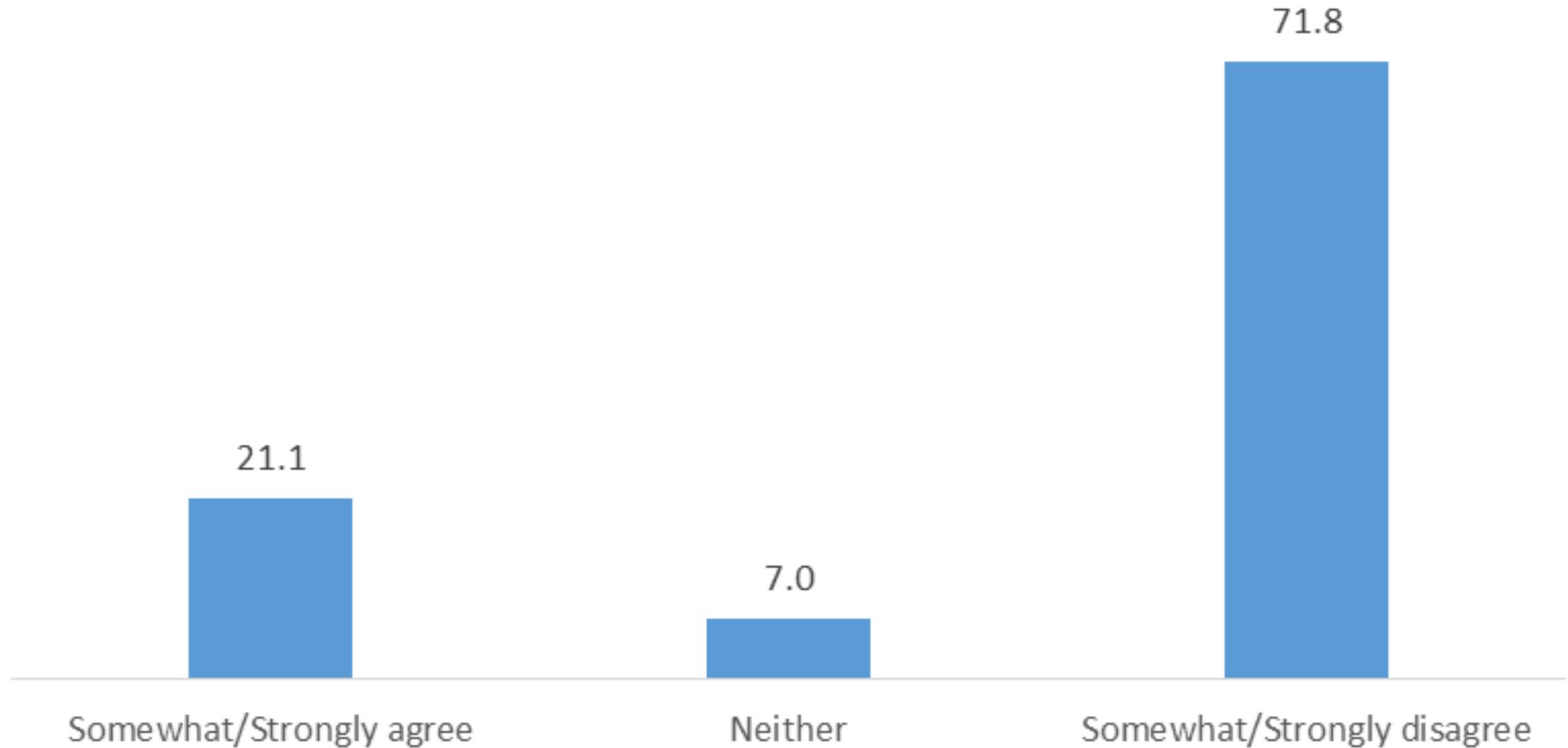
Mayor

- Have city attorney review contract
- Mayor signs contract

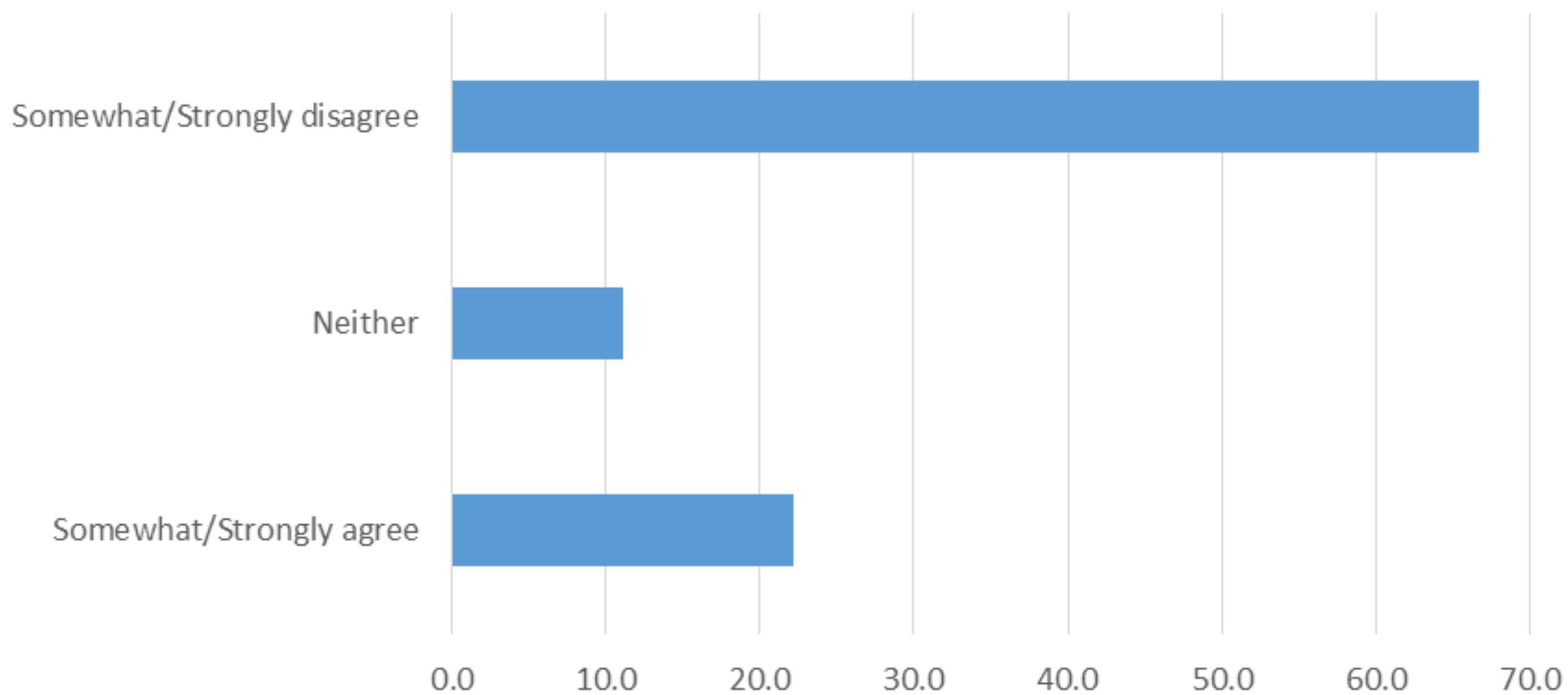
Council-Manager

- City Manager
 - 1 person in charge

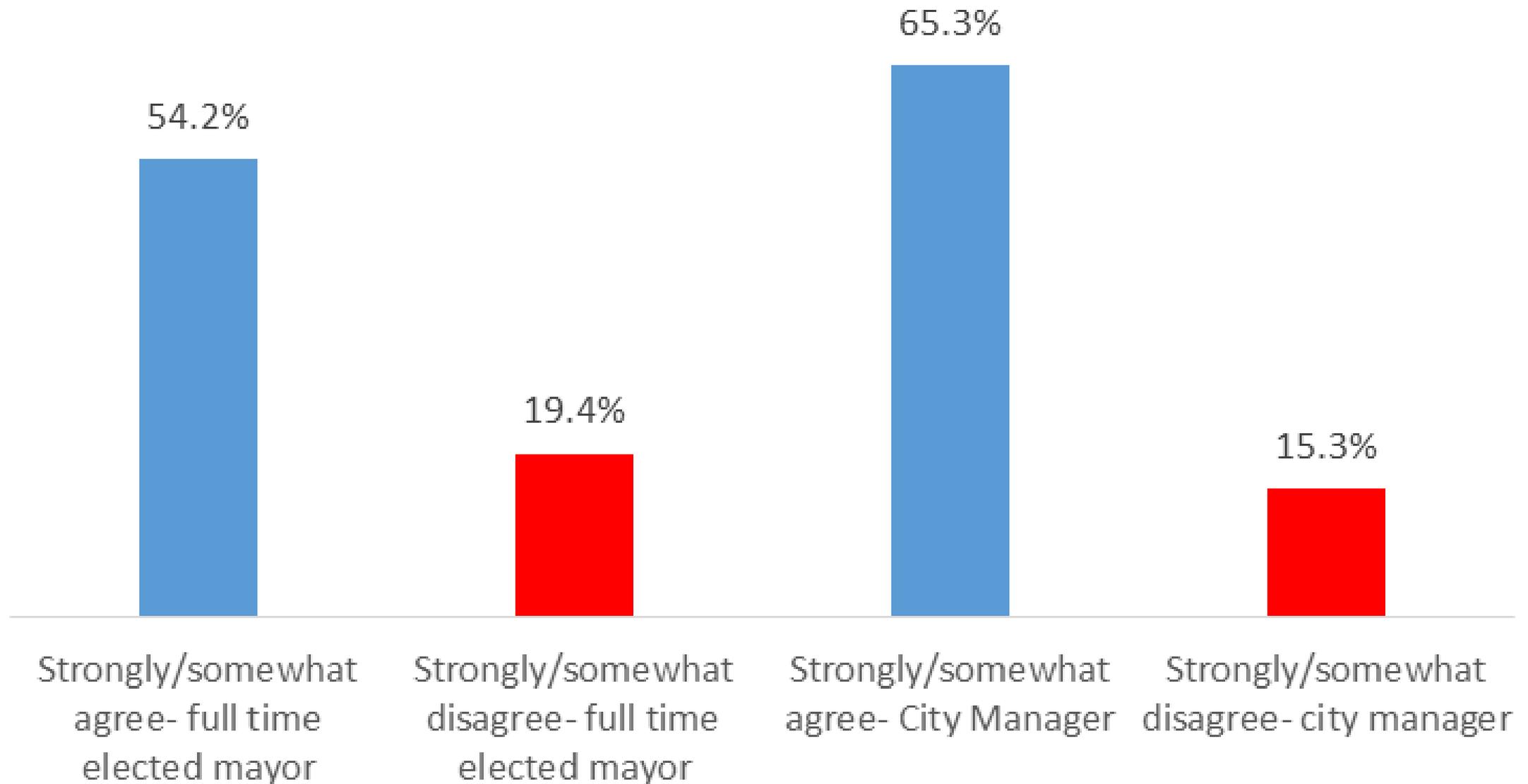
I believe the Commission form of government provides for the effective management of the city.



I believe the Commission form of government prevents wasteful spending and protects the taxpayers.



I believe City Hall would operate better with a:



Citizen Concern- I have an issue

Commission Form of Government

- Citizen must contact:
 - Appropriate commissioner(s) with jurisdiction

Council member interviews

- Mayors- everyone calls the mayor
- Some commissioners- no one knows what I do.

Council Manager

- Citizen can contact
 - Any of 6 city council members
 - Mayor
 - City Manager

What we heard

- Prominent developer
 - Given the level of complexity now required in running the City, I don't know how you can change the existing Charter to avoid the dysfunction that currently infects the respective silos. The impact of a pure legislative body governing the City Government may be far less than we are currently exposed to going forward and given what we have learned, would be much more efficient and harmonious than the political effects the Commissioners and their Deputies can impart in the current form.
- Non profit leader
 - "Every project takes a long time and lots of effort. Most of the time and energy was spent not on the design and process, but in trying to coordinate efforts with a 5 person council. It is a function of the commission form of government. We are losing volunteers who get burnt out. Everything takes so much time and effort. If you could go to 1 decision maker, it would be so much easier. Everything takes 5 meetings, multiplies the time and effort volunteers have to put in."

Questions, comments, concerns?

- We want to hear from you!
 - saratogacharter@gmail.com
 - Twitter @saratogacharter
- Minutes, agenda, video of X meetings on the Saratoga Springs city website <http://www.saratoga-springs.org/2144/Charter-Commission>
- All reports, articles, and data on Saratogacharter.com
 - Interviewed 23 former and present city council members
 - Interviewed municipal experts, mayors and city managers
 - Survey of City Hall Employees and potential city council candidates
 - Interviewed businesses, department heads, non profits, activists
 - 30+ studies, reports, and academic articles on municipal governance
 - 10+ city charters from upstate NY