



Current Sustainability Efforts Across the State DOTs

Hosted by AASHTO's Sustainability Working Group
May 26, 2021

Webinar Agenda

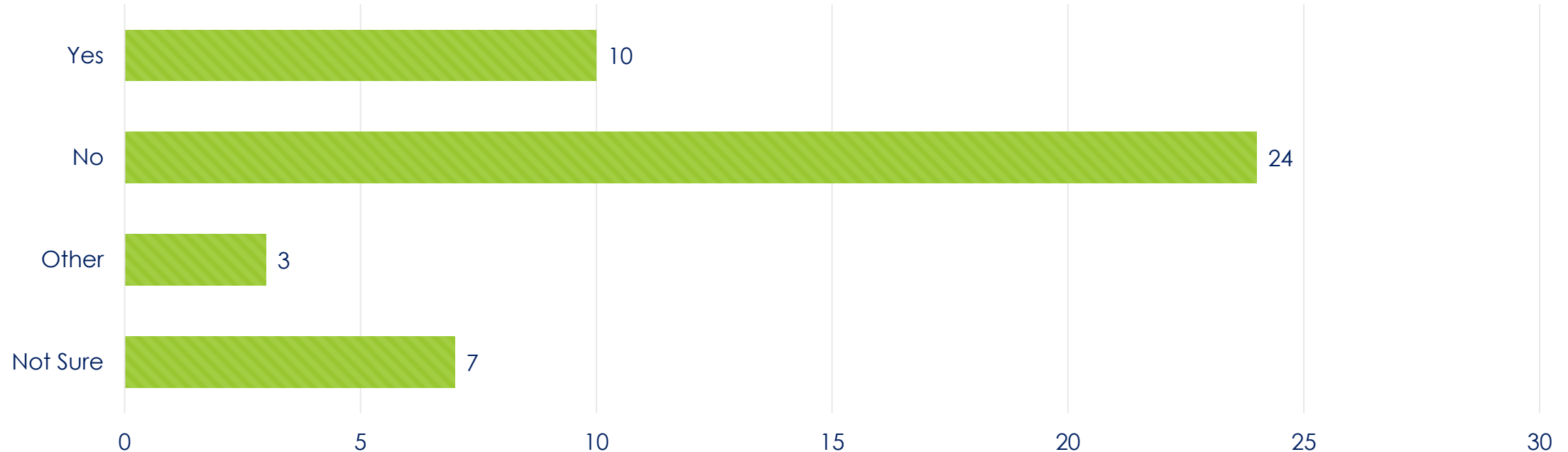
- Introduction to Working Group – Madeline Schmitt, Iowa DOT
- Overview of Survey Results – Phillip Burgoyne-Allen, AASHTO
- Three Models for Advancing Sustainability at State DOTs
 - Jeff Meek, Minnesota DOT
 - Kevin Bartoy, Washington State DOT
 - Steve Olmsted, Arizona DOT
- Audience Q&A

Introduction to Working Group

- **2016:** AASHTO adopted a new committee structure and created the Committee on Environment and Sustainability.
- **2020:** The Committee established the Sustainability Working Group to further integrate sustainability into its work.
- **2021:** The Working Group conducted a survey of state DOT staff to learn more about their work on sustainability.

Has your state DOT adopted a definition of "sustainability"?

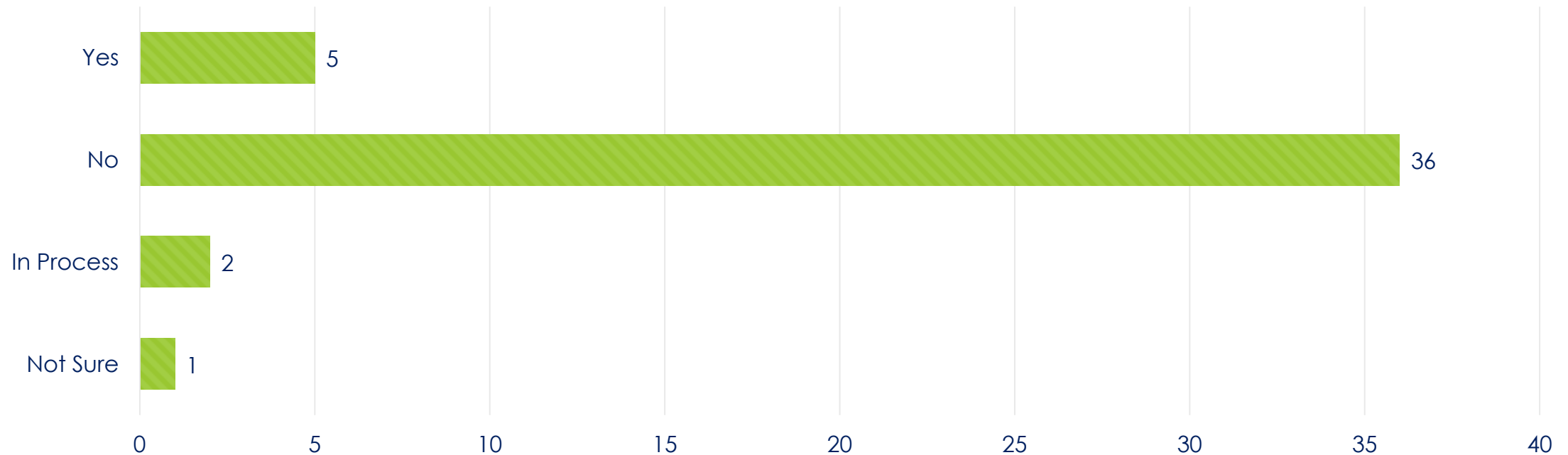
N = 44 states



Only 10 states have adopted definitions, but others still consider sustainability as a factor in their strategic and project planning.

Does your state DOT have a standalone sustainability office or department?

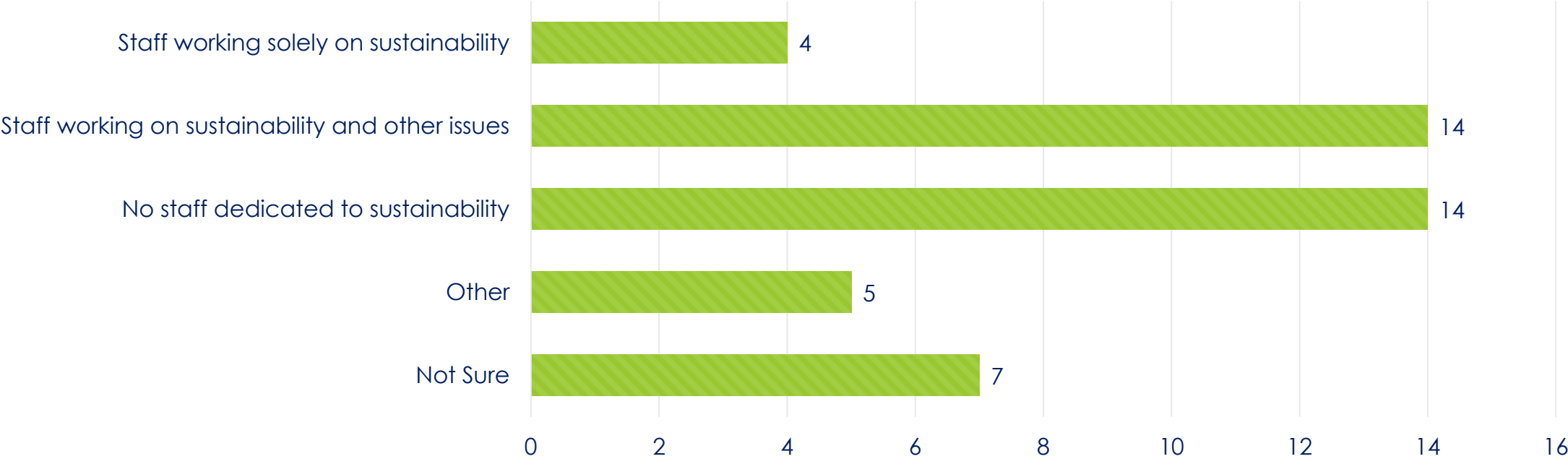
N = 44 states



The vast majority of states do not have a standalone sustainability office, but they often house related initiatives and staff in other departments.

Which of the following best describes your state DOT's staffing as it relates to sustainability?

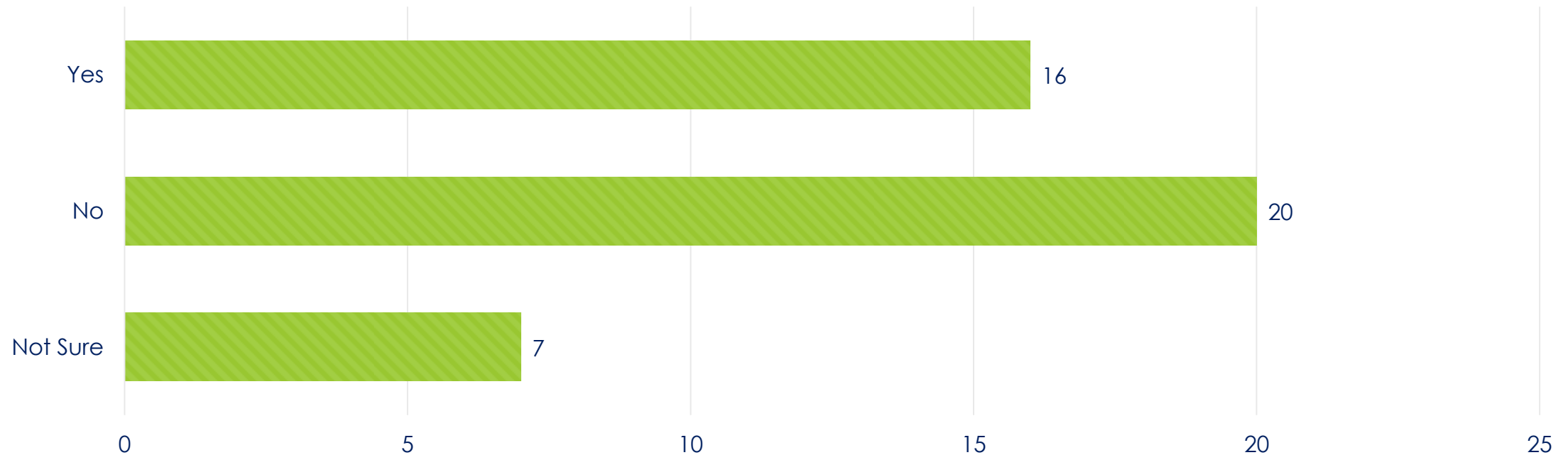
N = 44 states



At least 18 states have staff dedicated to sustainability, based in sustainability offices or other departments like planning, design, construction, or operations.

Does your state DOT have a directive or requirement to address sustainability?

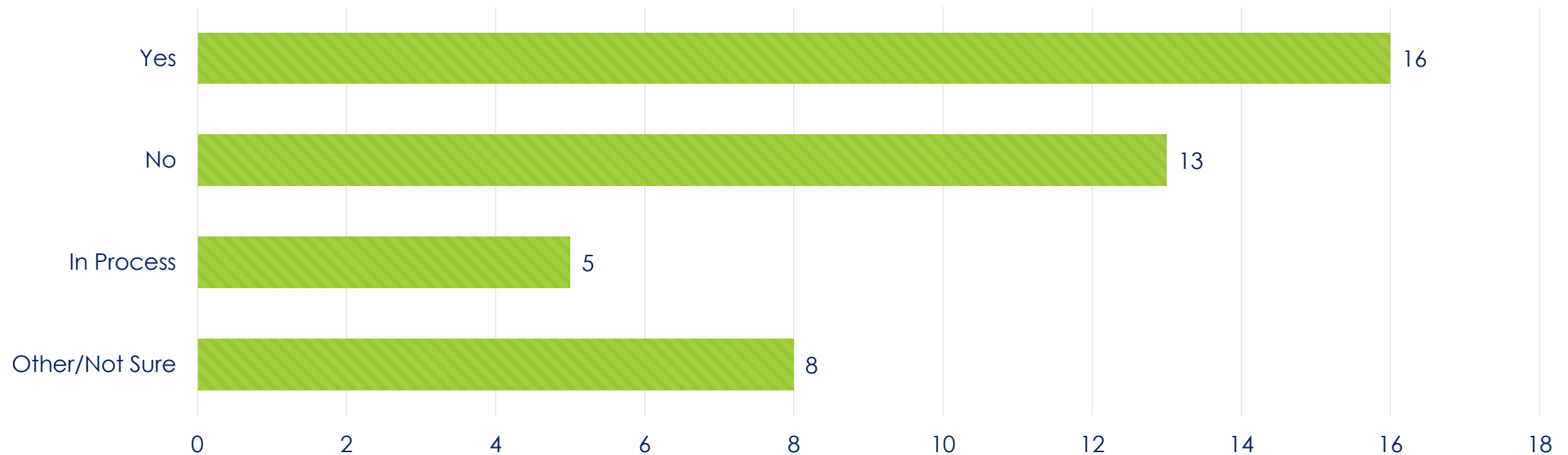
N = 43 states



Sixteen states have sustainability directives, which may come from their governors, legislatures, or state bodies.

Has your state DOT implemented any formal programs related to sustainability?

N = 42 states

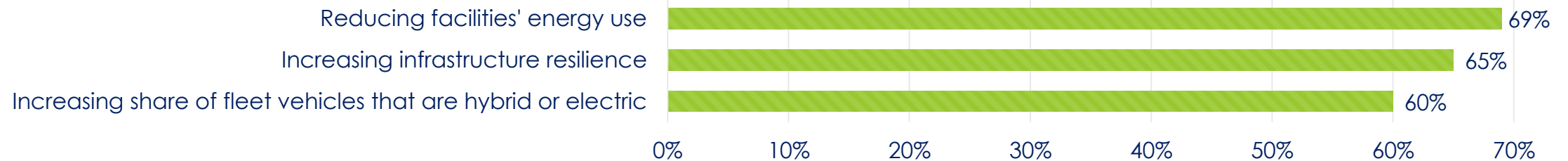


A total of 21 states have implemented formal programs or are in the process of doing so. Other states may address sustainability through related programs or informal initiatives.

Which of the following activities related to sustainability is your state DOT...

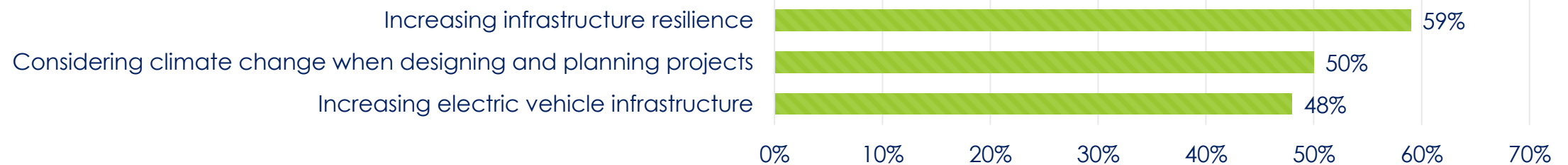
...currently conducting? (top 3 selections)

N = 55 respondents



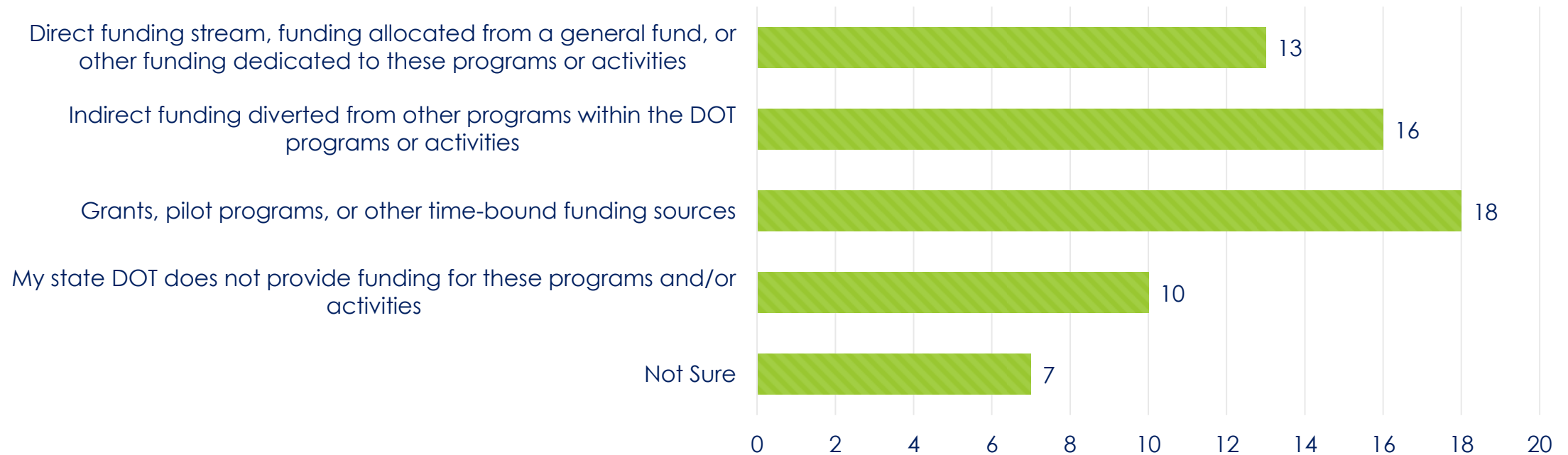
...planning to conduct within the next 3-5 years? (top 3 selections)

N = 56 respondents



How does your state DOT provide funding for its programs and/or activities related to sustainability?

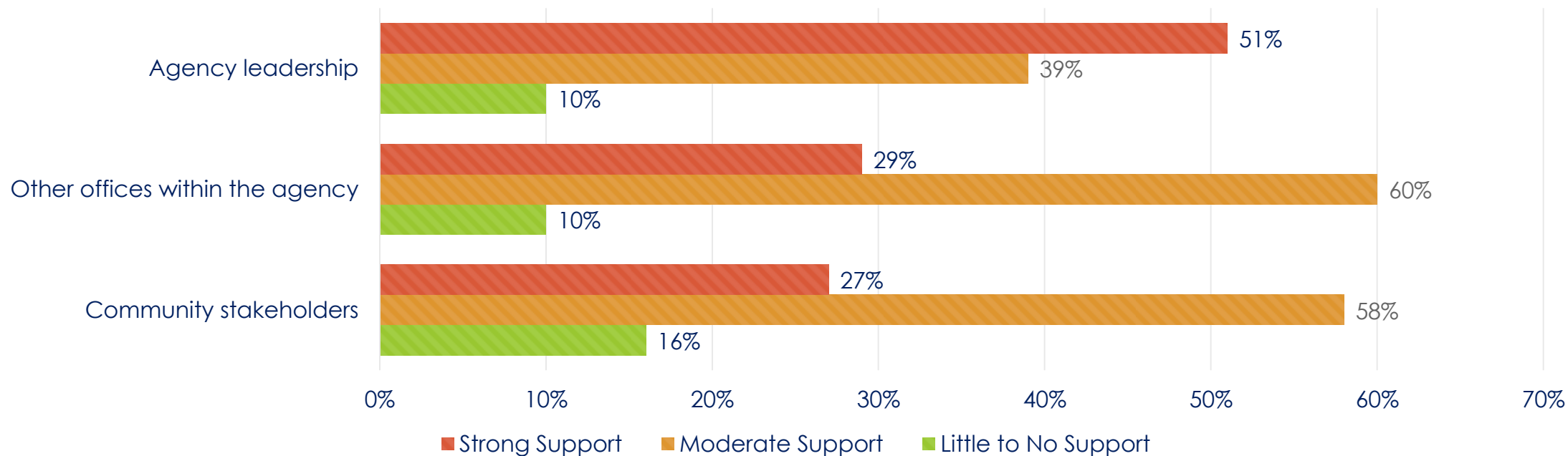
N = 42 states



States support their sustainability efforts in a variety of ways using funds from the state level, federal level, or both.

Please indicate the level of support your state DOT's work related to sustainability has from each of the groups below.

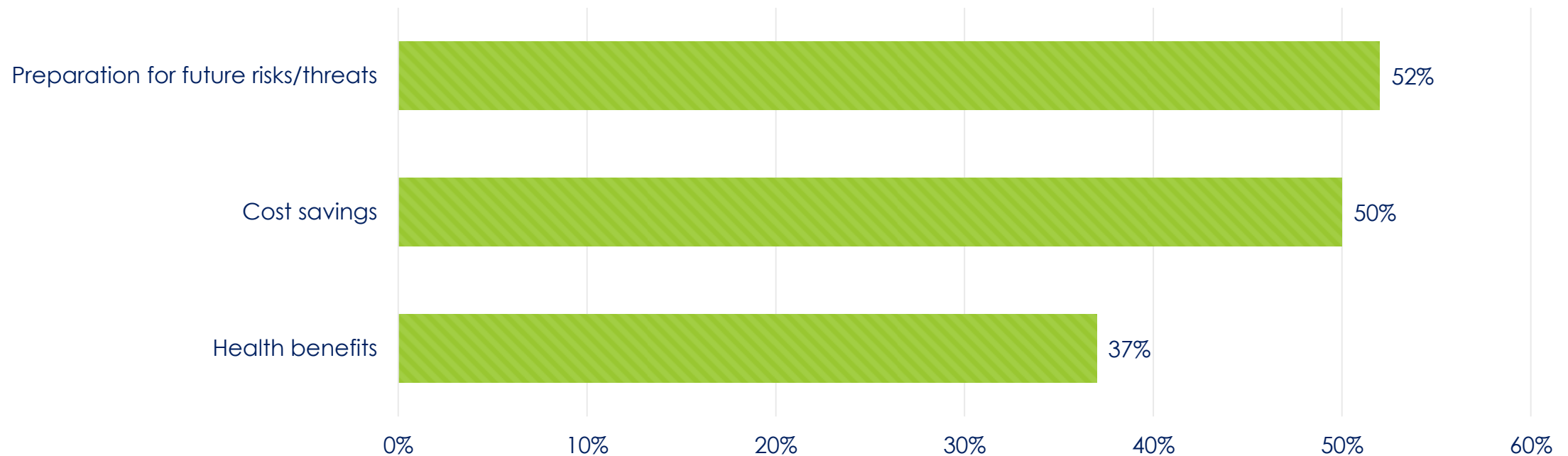
N = 49 respondents



Roughly half of respondents report having strong support from agency leadership, but lower levels of support from their colleagues and communities.

What messaging has your state DOT utilized to obtain support from these groups? (top 3 selections)

N = 52 respondents



Less commonly cited messaging strategies include climate-related emergencies (35%) and political and community support (33% each).

Which resources or tools has your state DOT found helpful to conducting work related to sustainability?

- ENVISION from the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI)
- Greenroads Rating System
- Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST) from FHWA
- LEED Rating System
- State-level tools like MassDOT's Energy and Emissions Reduction Policy Analysis Tool (EERPAT) and NYSDOT's GreenLITES (Green Leadership in Transportation Environmental Sustainability) rating program
- Sustainable Ways to Integrate Future Transportation (SWIFT) Scenario Planning Model
- Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Research Report 197: Tools for a Sustainable Transit Agency
- Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Capability Maturity Frameworks from FHWA
- VisionEval Framework
- Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Framework and Scoring Tool from FHWA

What resources, tools, or other support does your state DOT need to advance its sustainability work?

- Access to in-house or outside expertise to support implementation of programs and projects
- Collaboration, coordinated planning, and information exchanges with state DOT peers through AASHTO, TRB, etc.
- Communications resources like flyers, brochures, and briefing materials for senior management
- Comprehensive “business case” for why state DOTs should prioritize sustainability and related research on measuring ROI
- Demonstration or pilot projects
- Development of national-level sustainability metrics or tools and related technical assistance
- Funding, guidance, and tools to evaluate the multimodal impact of various types of transportation projects
- Research on effective measures for reducing GHG emissions and VMT
- Resources to support and improve stakeholder engagement
- Wildlife connectivity mapping

Three Models for Advancing Sustainability

1. Top-Down Model

- Priorities advanced by state legislatures, governors, or DOT CEOs
- Top-down approach from “assigned” leaders within an agency

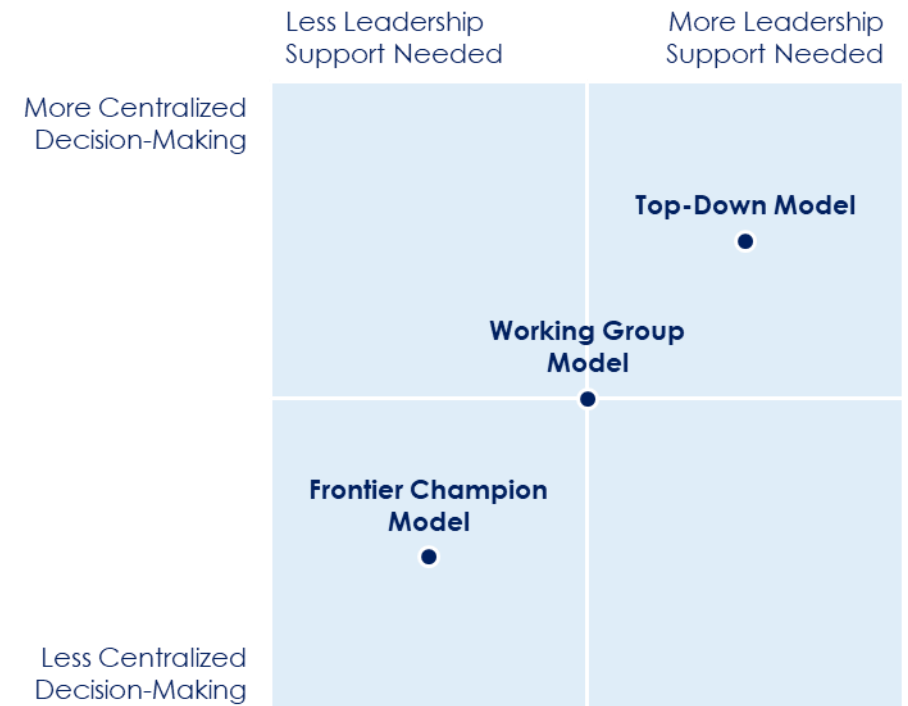
2. Working Group Model

- Priorities advanced by bringing together various offices and departments around a common goal
- Grassroots-driven approach, but still requires some level of top-down support and/or approval

3. Frontier Champion Model

- Priorities advanced by individuals who can connect with and learn from other “champions” in different agencies or states
- Grassroots-driven approach that can “plant a seed” to grow support within an agency

Three Models for Advancing Sustainability



Thanks for joining us!

Please take our three-question survey to help ensure that the Sustainability Working Group's future work is both useful and relevant for our members.

If you have any questions, please contact Phillip Burgoyne-Allen at pballen@aaashto.org.