

# Town of Leeds Internet Improvement Options

Public Informational Meeting  
July 14, 2021

Presented by  
Leeds Broadband Committee

# Leeds Broadband Committee

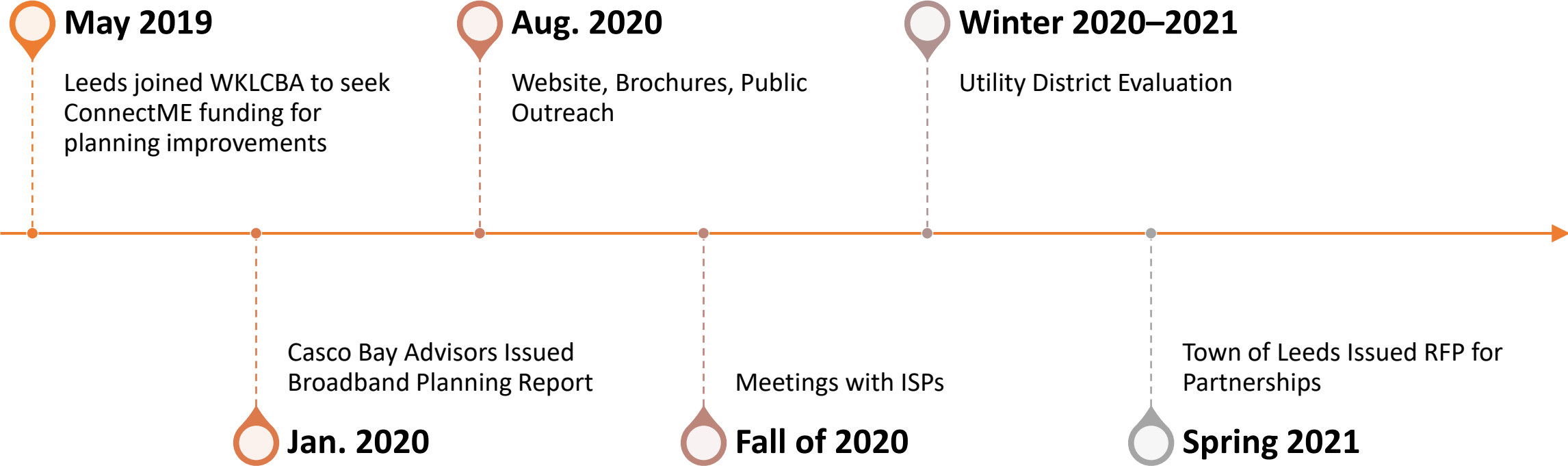
- Joseph McLean
- Larry Grant
- Liam Wallace

# Western Kennebec Lakes Community Broadband Association (WKLCBA)

- Town of Fayette
- Town of Wayne
- Town of Vienna
- Town of Readfield
- Town of Mount Vernon



# Timeline



# What is Broadband?

## FEDERAL (FCC) DEFINITION

1996 – 200 Kbps Down/200 Kbps Up (200 Kbps = 0.2Mbps)

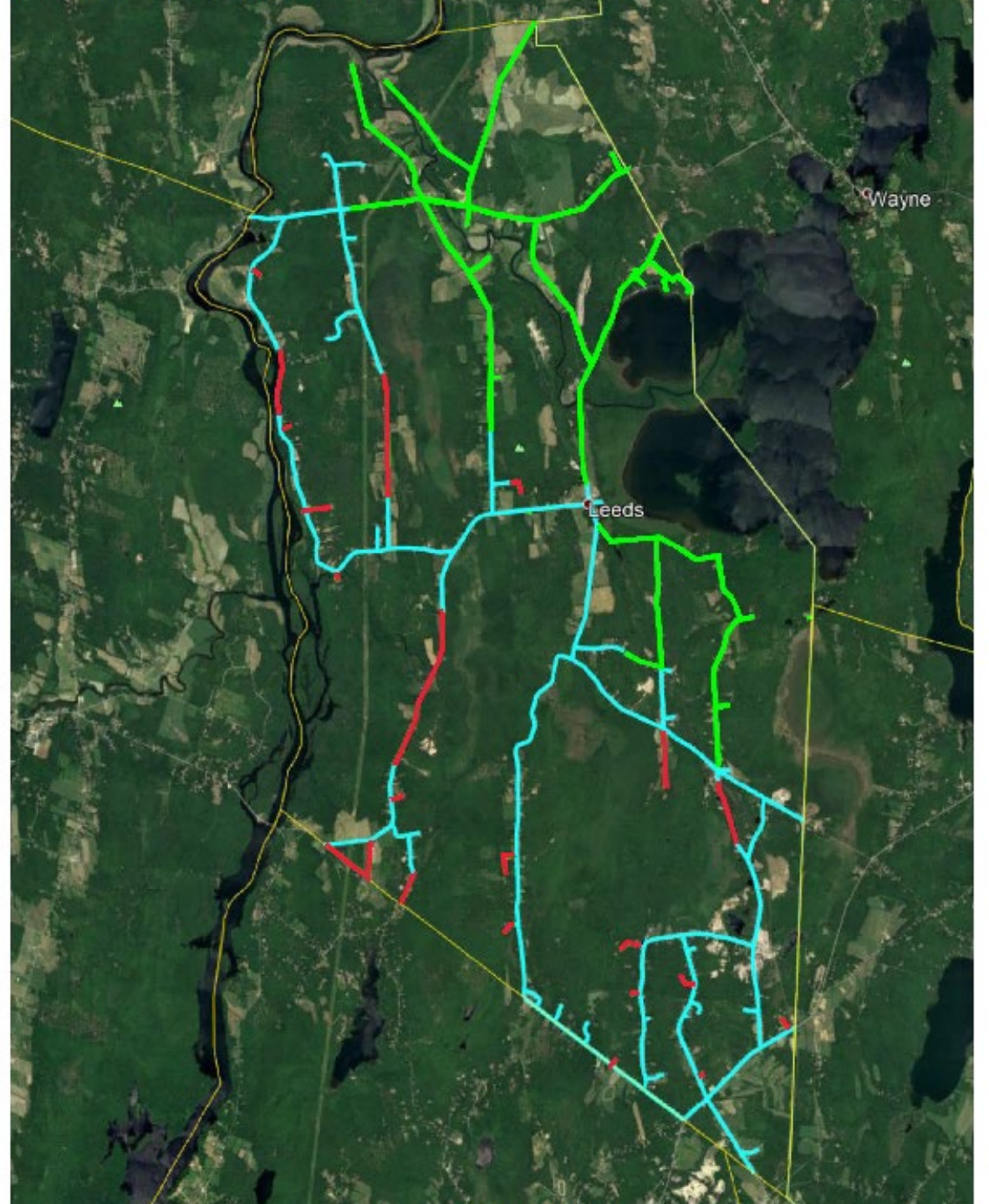
2010 – 4 Mbps Down/ 1 Mbps Up

2015 – 25 Mbps Down/ 3 Mbps Up

Near Future – 100 Mbps Down/ 100 Mbps Up (symmetrical)?

# Leeds Service Map

- **Cable (Spectrum) Area**
  - 793 Potential Subscribers
  - 20.7 per mile
- **Unserved Area 'A'**
  - 88 Potential Subscribers
  - 11.0 per mile
- **Unserved Area 'B'**
  - 241 Potential Subscribers
  - 11.2 per mile





# How did we get here?

- The Public Utilities Commission
  - Regulates Electricity and Telephone Service
- There are no regulations/requirements for internet service
  - Cable Franchise Agreement applies to Television Service
- Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are for profit businesses
  - Seeking greatest income at lowest investment
  - No competition

# Internet Service Technologies

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- Wireless (fixed and cellular)
- Satellite (HughesNet/Starlink)
- DSL (over existing phone lines)
- Coaxial Cable (over existing cable service)
- Fiber-Optic Cables



# Public Survey Data

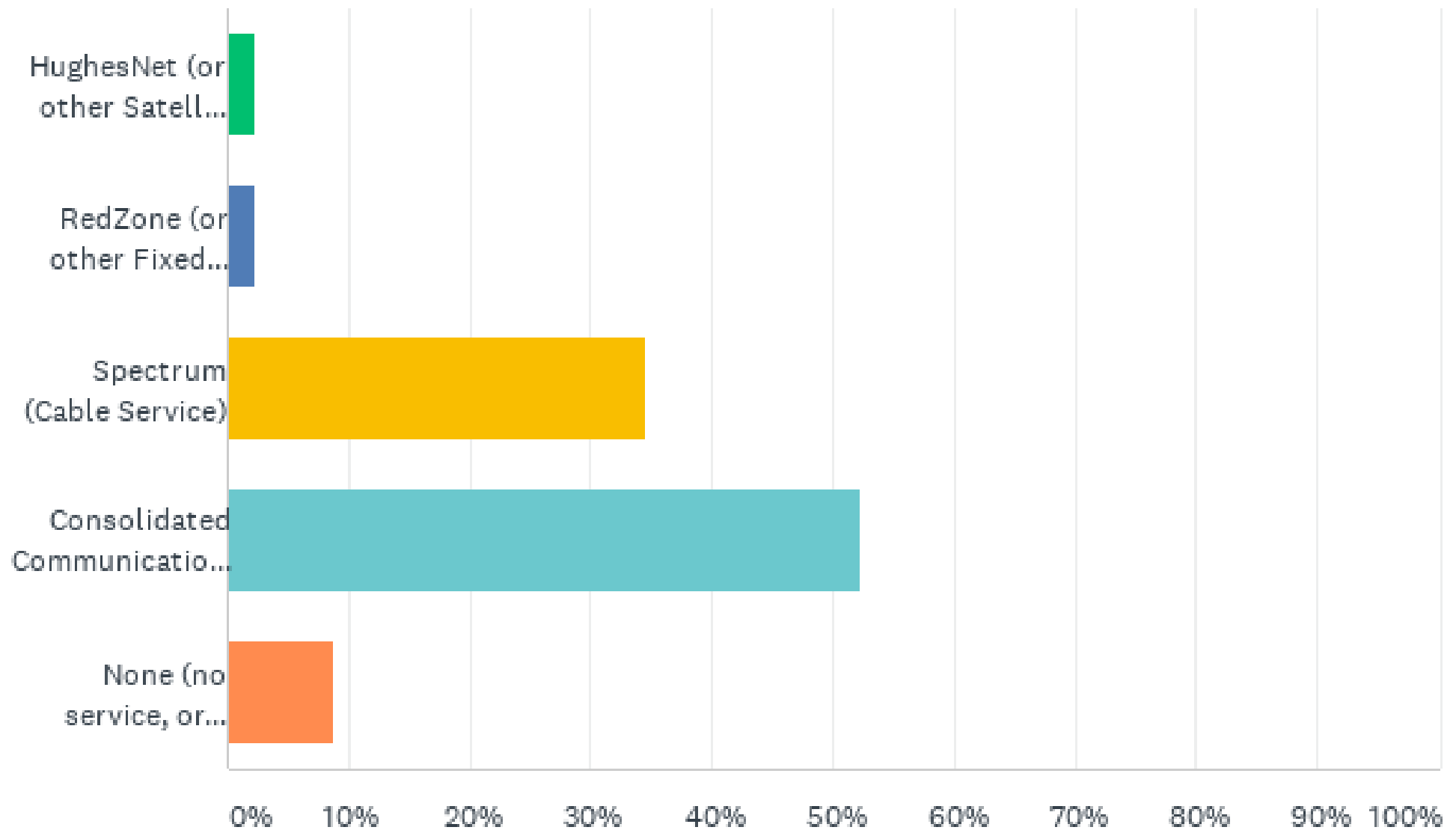
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- Survey Data collected as part of Public Outreach with WKLCBA
  - Special Thanks to Stan Davis (Town of Wayne)
- Town of Leeds had 93 total responses (approx. 8%)
  - 85 year round residents
  - 8 Seasonal residents

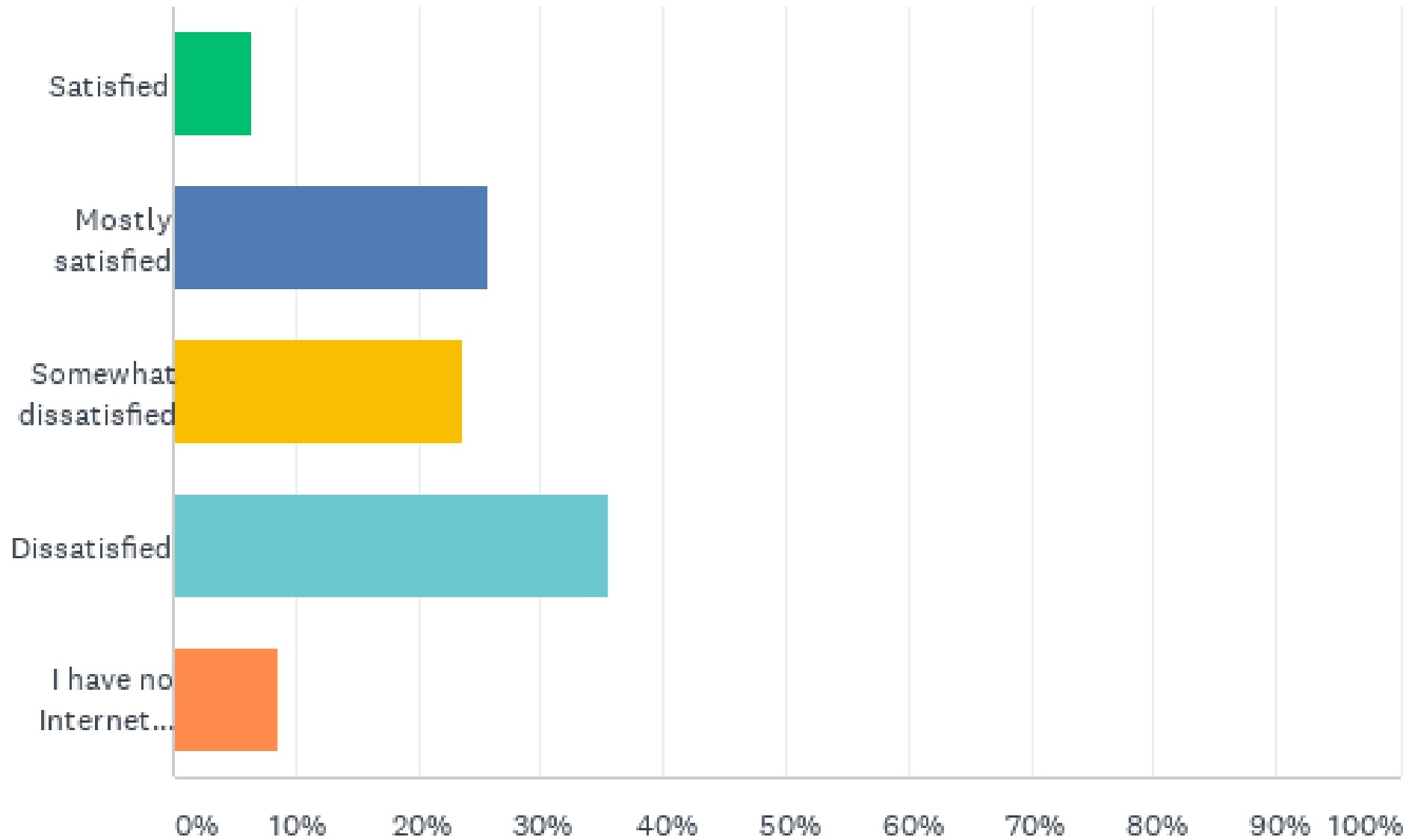




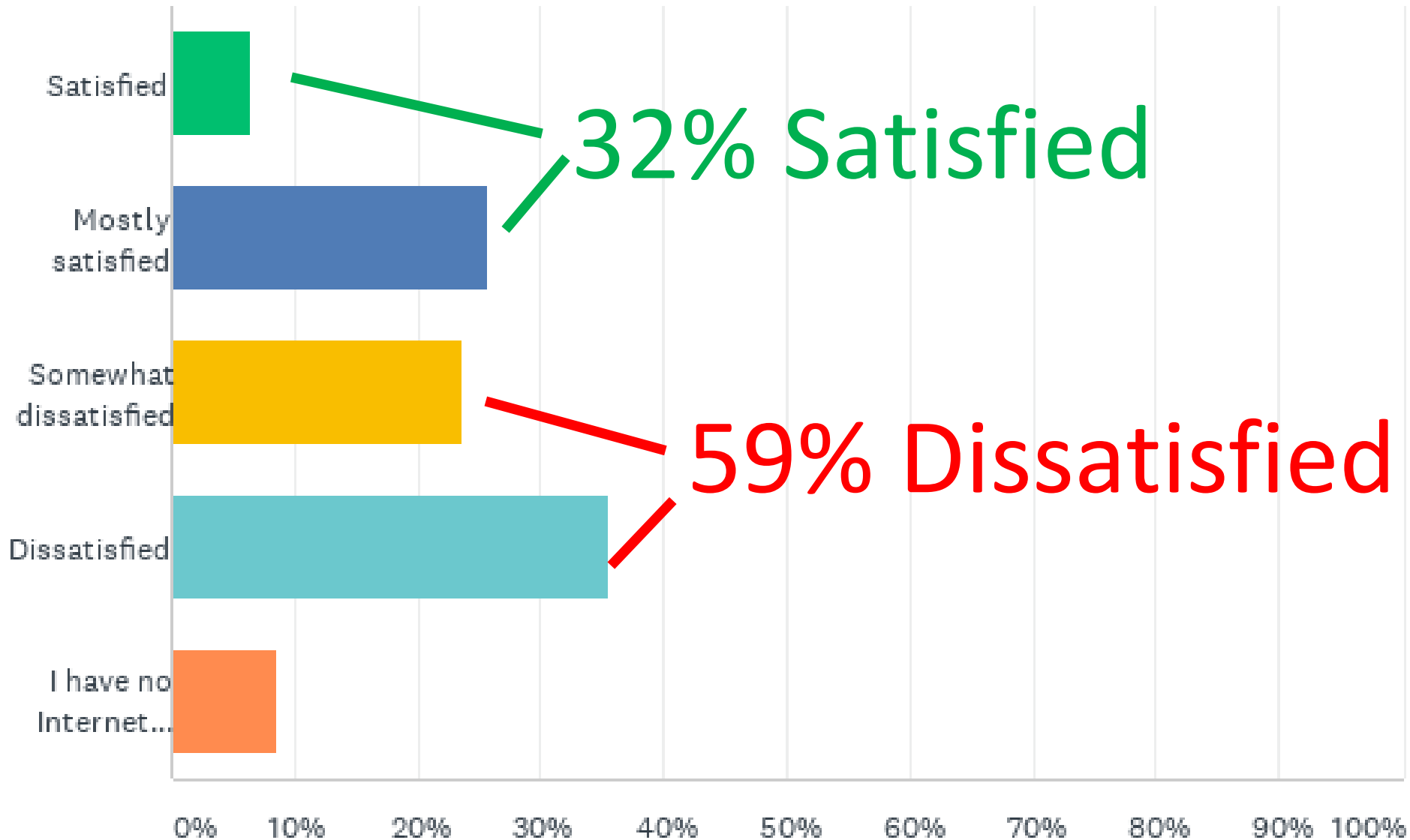
If you use the internet in Leeds, how do you connect to it? Please choose the one option that you use most of the time, if you use more than one.



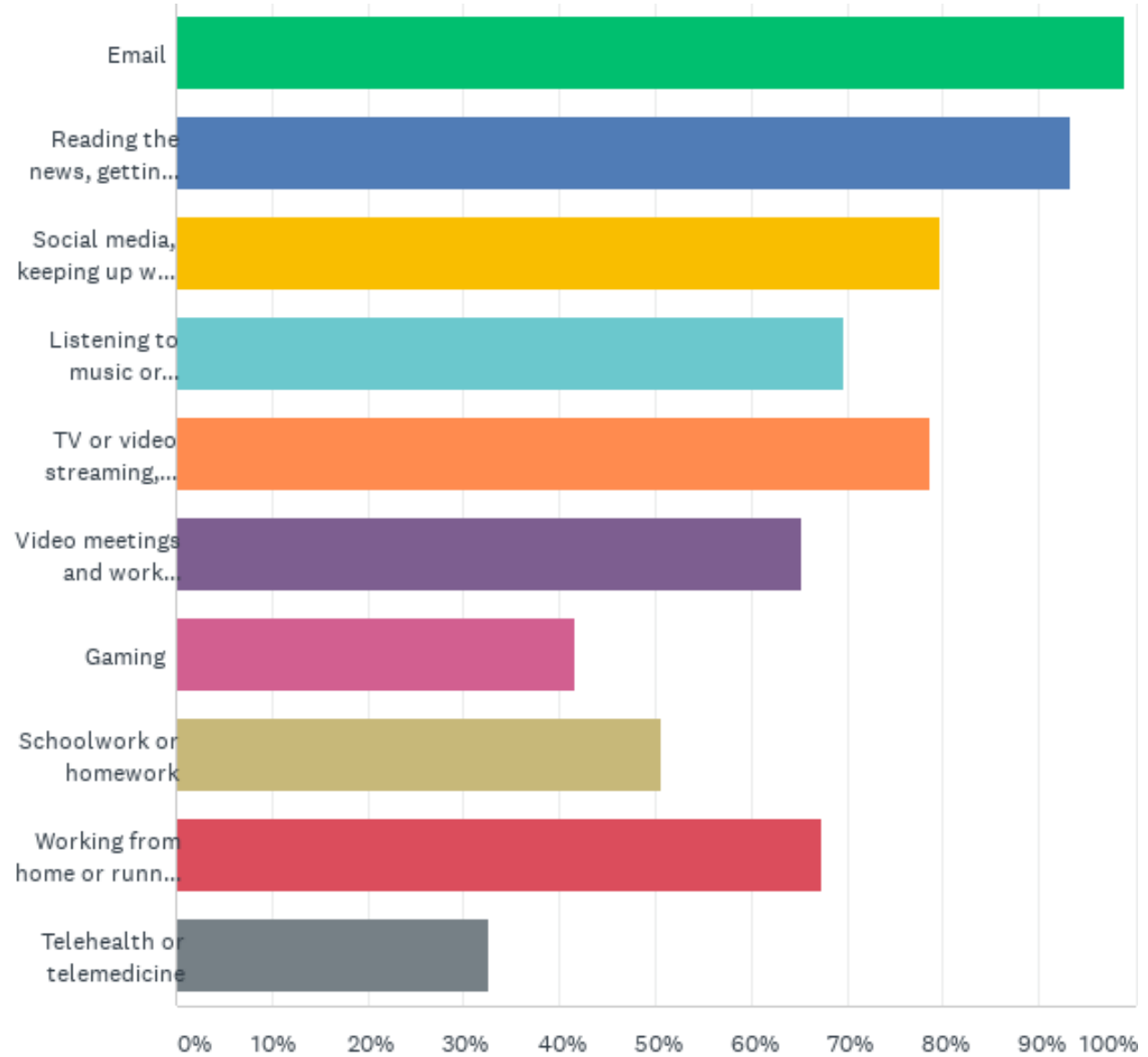
If you have Internet service in Leeds, are you satisfied with it?



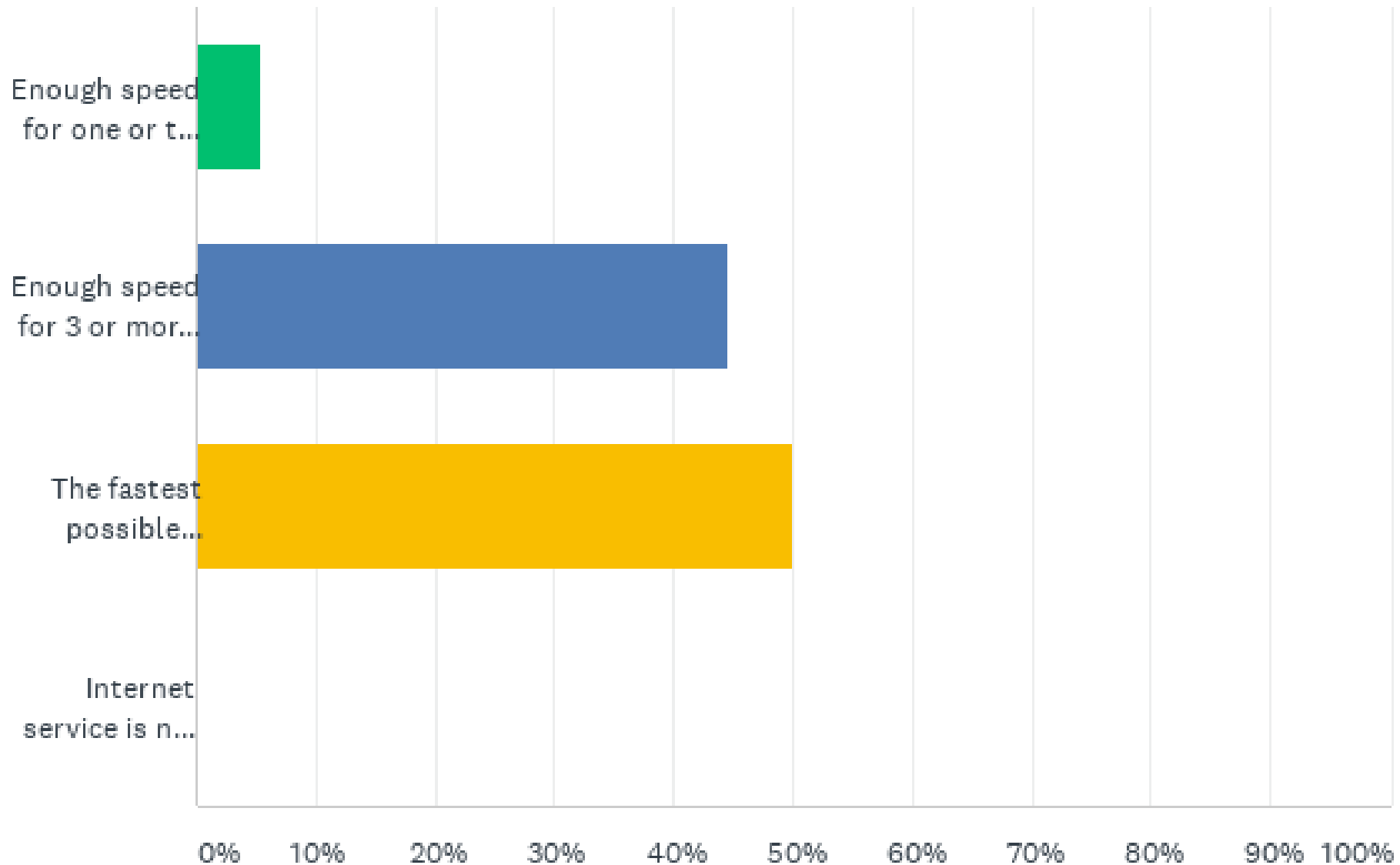
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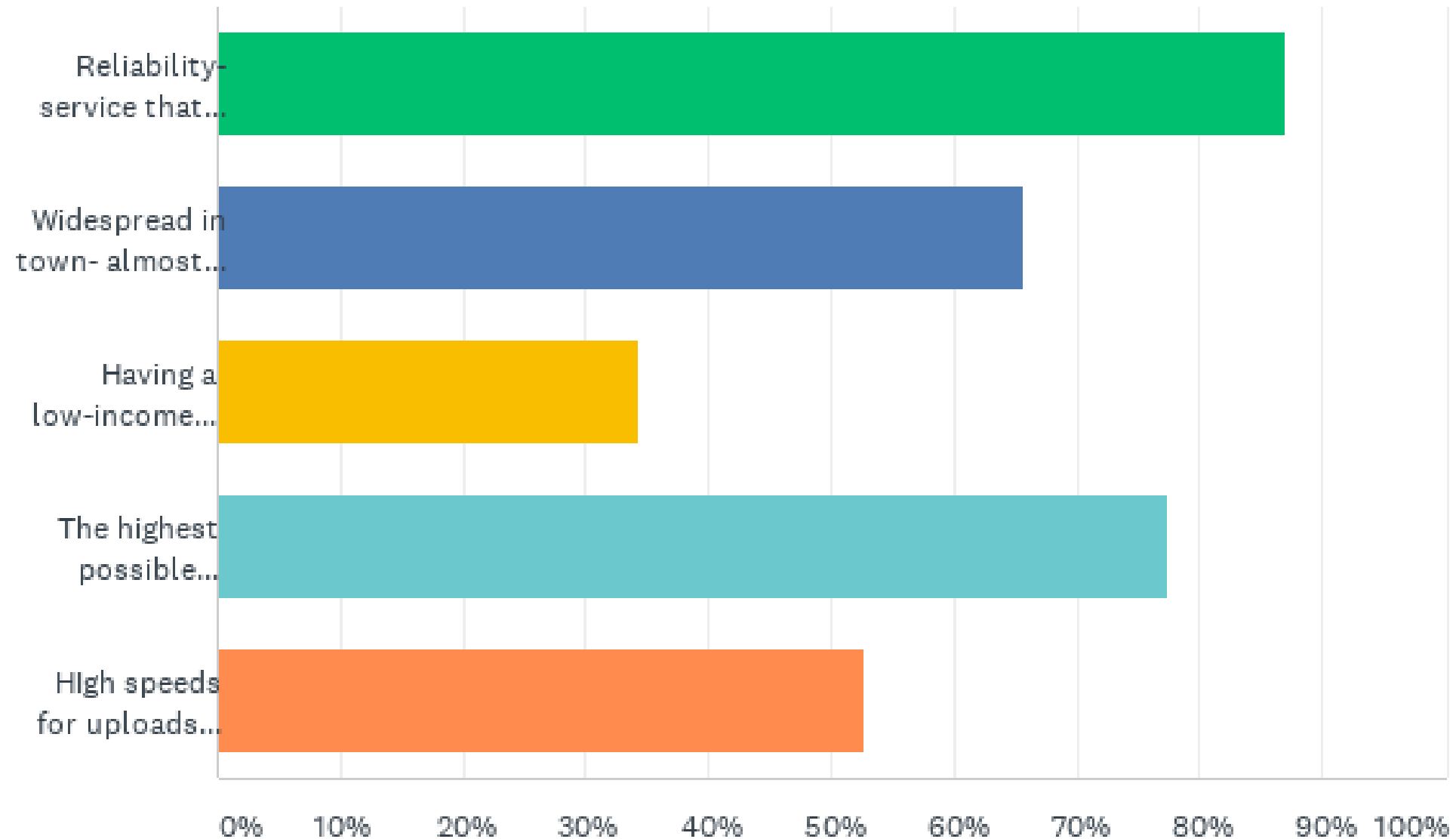
What do you use the internet for? Check as many as you want. If you don't use the internet, you can skip this question.



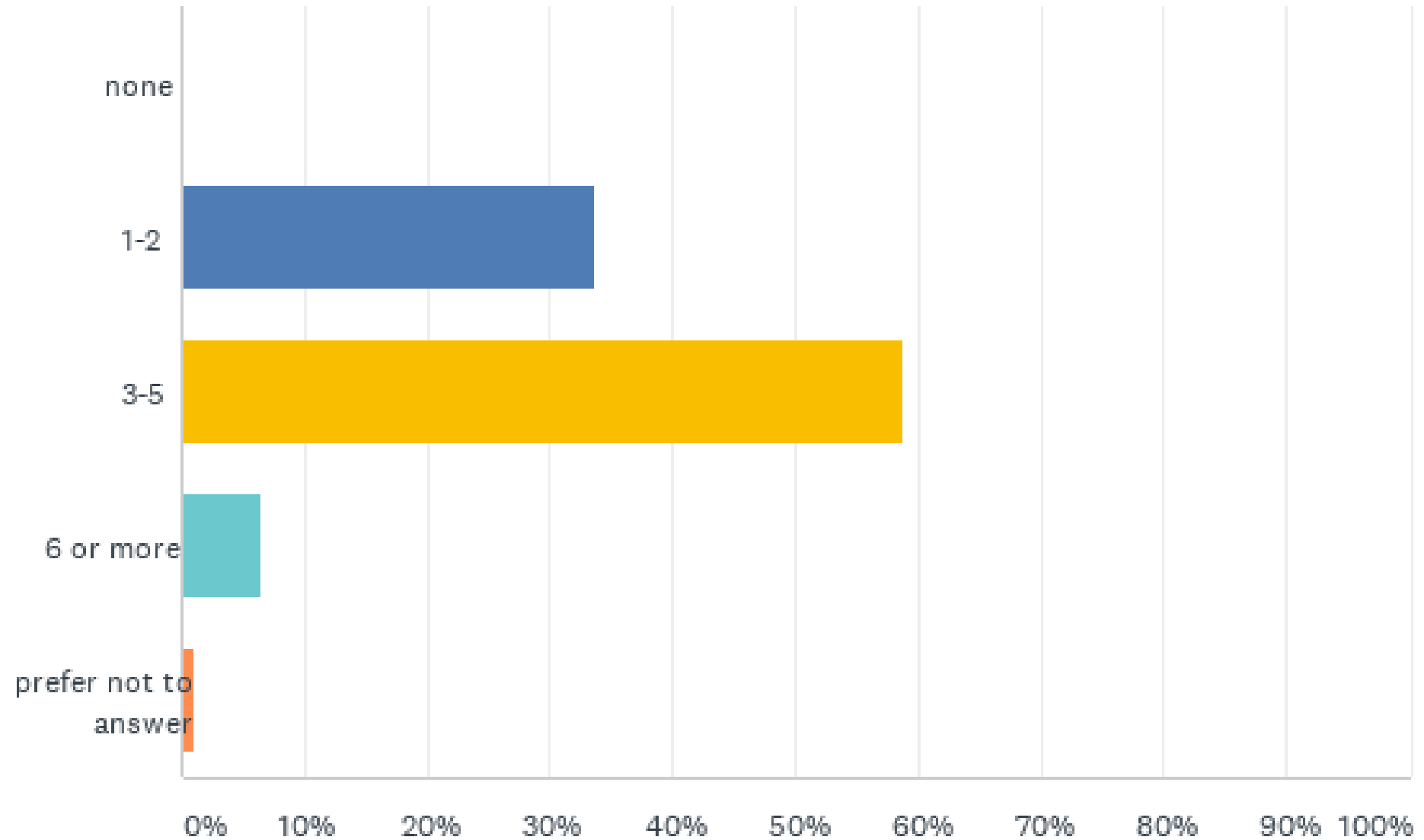
Which speed of reliable internet service is important to you for your own and your family's use?



Which of these elements of Internet service in Leeds are important to you for your own household use? Please check as many boxes as you wish.

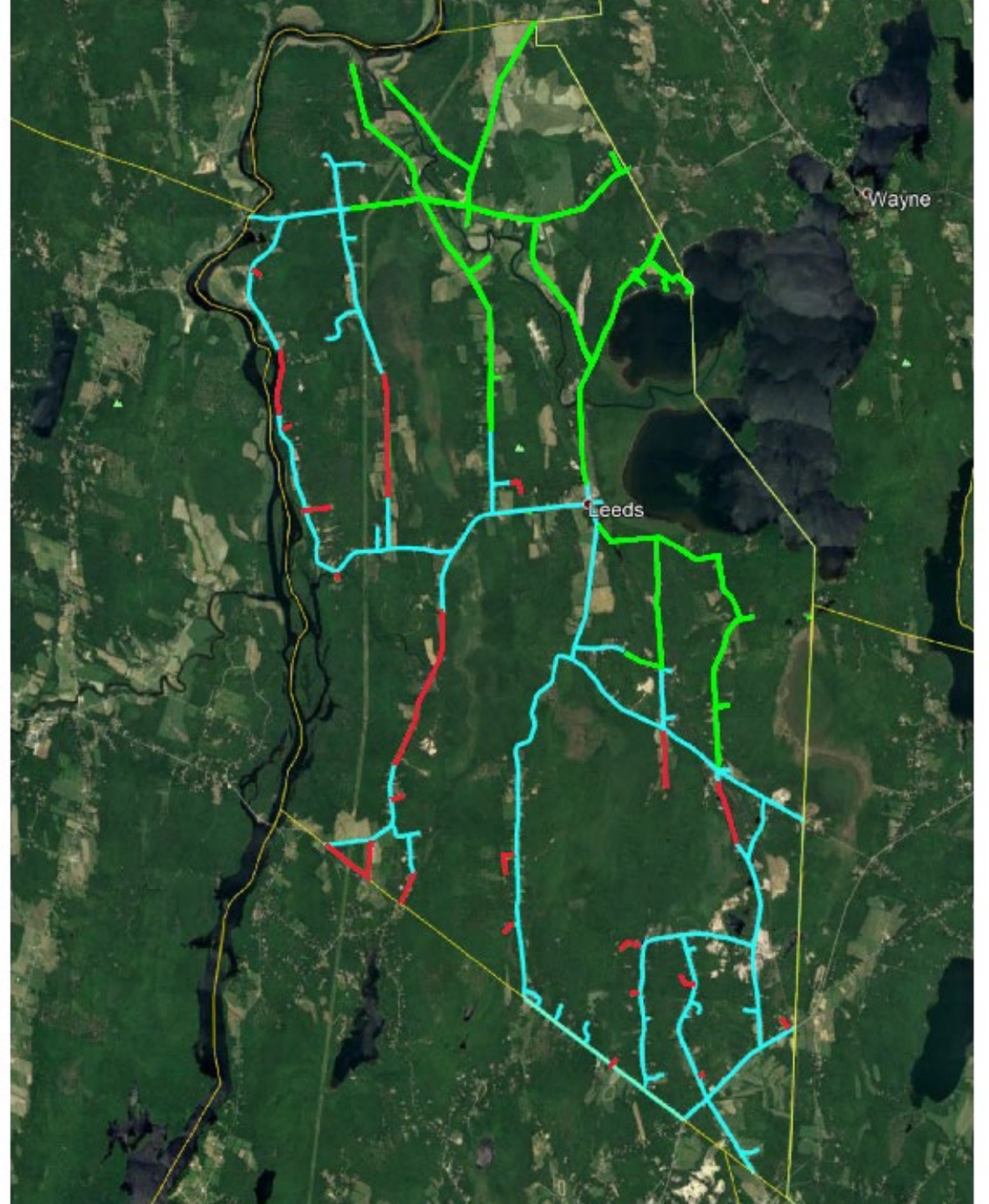


## How many people in your household use the internet?



# What can we do about it?

- WKLCBA
  - Regional Utility District
  - Fiber-to-the-Home
  - Essentially a publicly owned utility
- Leeds Partnership RFP
  - Charter/Spectrum Proposal
    - Cable/Fiber Hybrid (Town-wide)
    - Bulk Rate Pricing
  - Axiom Proposal
    - New Fiber Network (to Unserved)
    - Operated by Axiom/Owned by Town





# WKLCBA Utility District Highlights



- Advantages

- World Class Service with Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) to all residents
- Competitive Service Fee (approx. \$60 to \$65 per month)
- Municipally Owned, Operated, and Maintained by Utility District
- Will not require taxes to operate

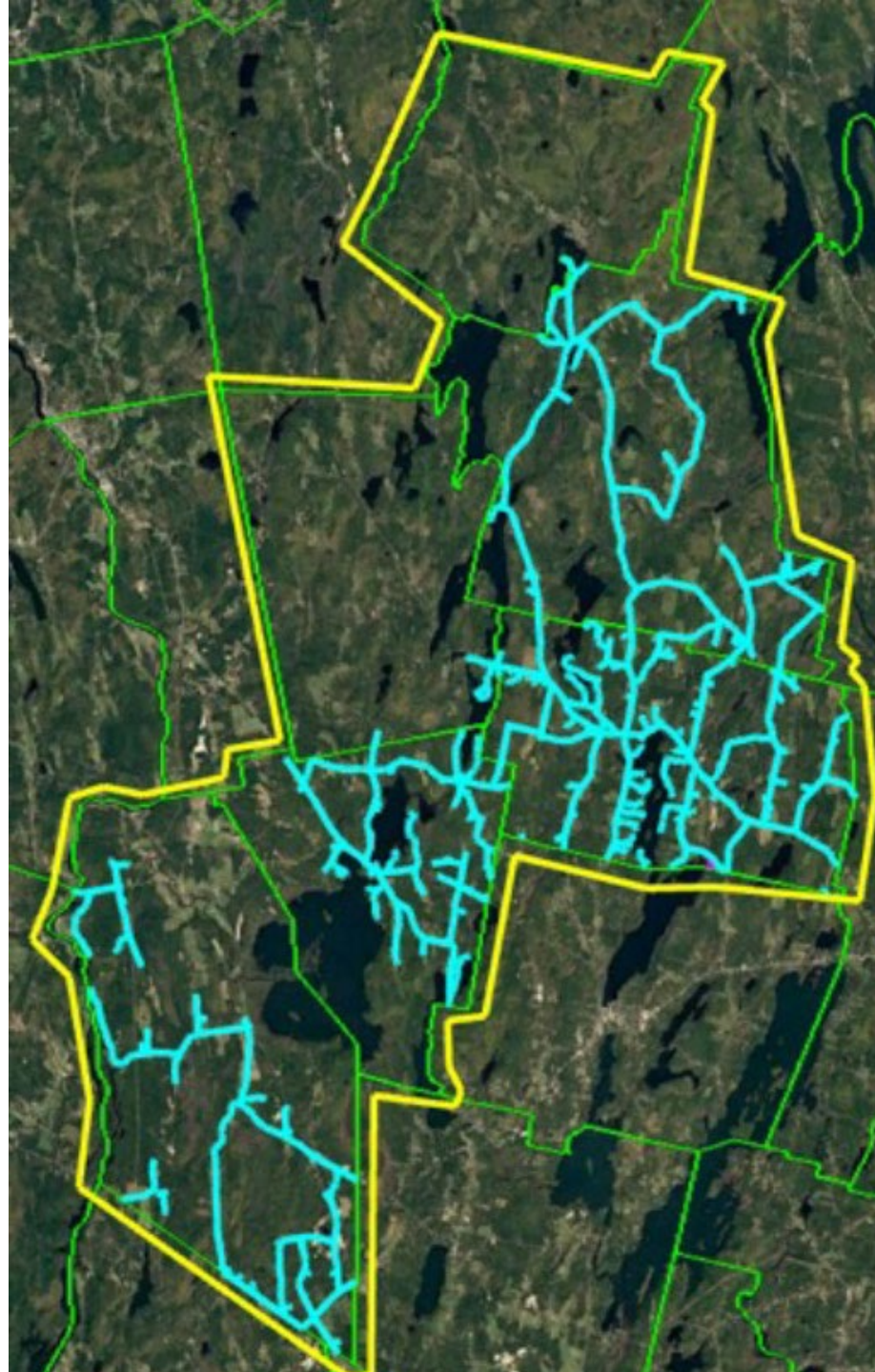
- Disadvantages

- Significant Investment Required for Construction (approx. \$3,000,000)
- Bonded over 20 years will be approx. \$99 per year per \$100,000 property valuation
- Will “over-build” the existing cable infrastructure
- Construction in 2023 or 2024

**FAYETTE**

**WAYNE**

**LEEDS**



**VIENNA**

**MOUNT  
VERNON**

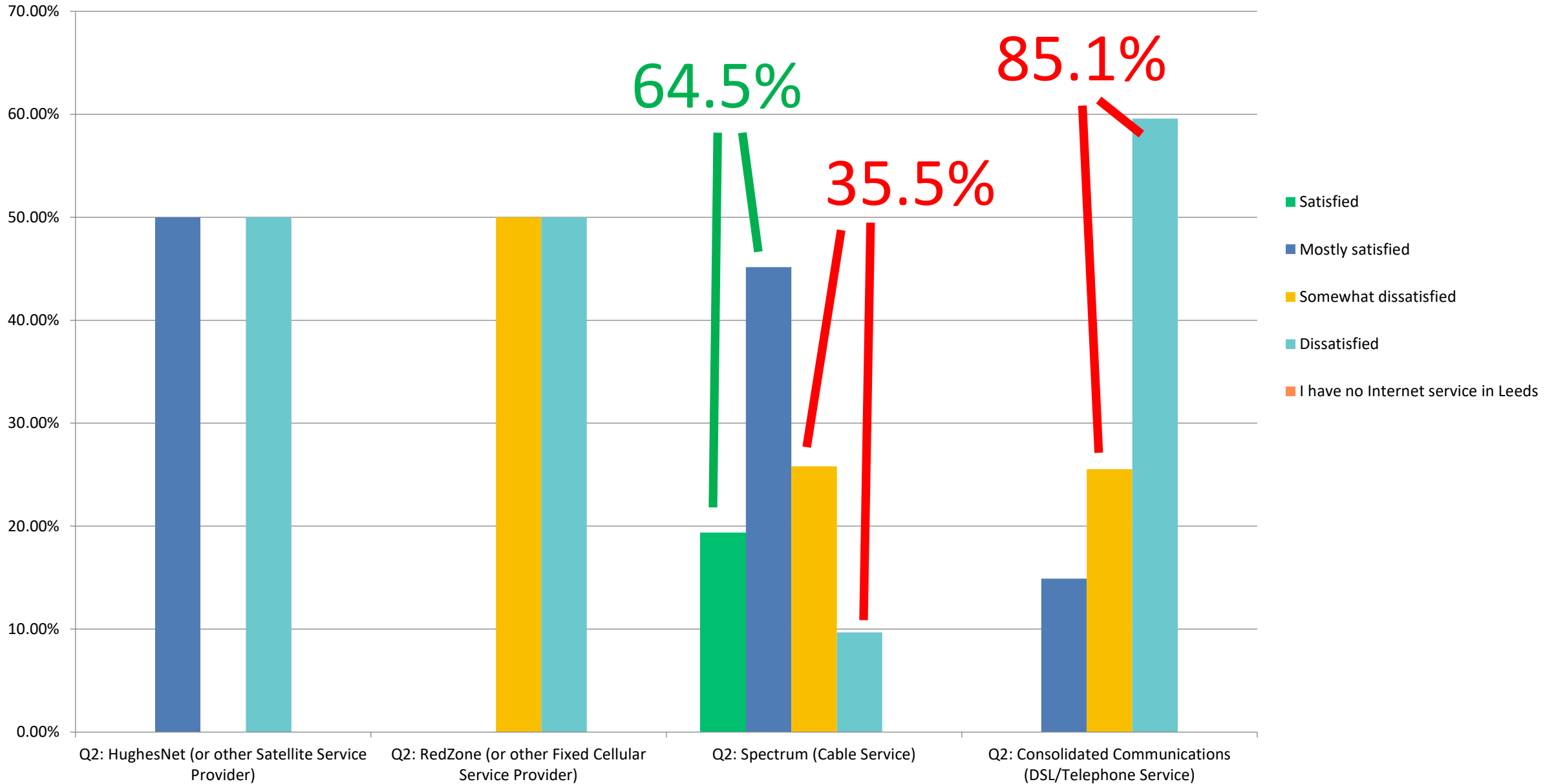
**READFIELD**

# Charter/Spectrum Proposal



- Advantages
  - Improvement of current infrastructure to provide (1G Sym.)
  - Expansion of Fiber-to-the-Home in unserved areas (1G Sym.)
  - Low-cost bulk rate of \$25 per potential subscriber
  - Town-wide coverage
  - No Increase in Taxes
  - Can be implemented immediately (this year).
- Disadvantages
  - Town administers invoicing
  - 10 to 15-year commitment
  - Monopoly of service by unregulated private company
  - What happens after the agreement expires?
  - Are people happy with Spectrum?

# If you have Internet service in Leeds, are you satisfied with it?



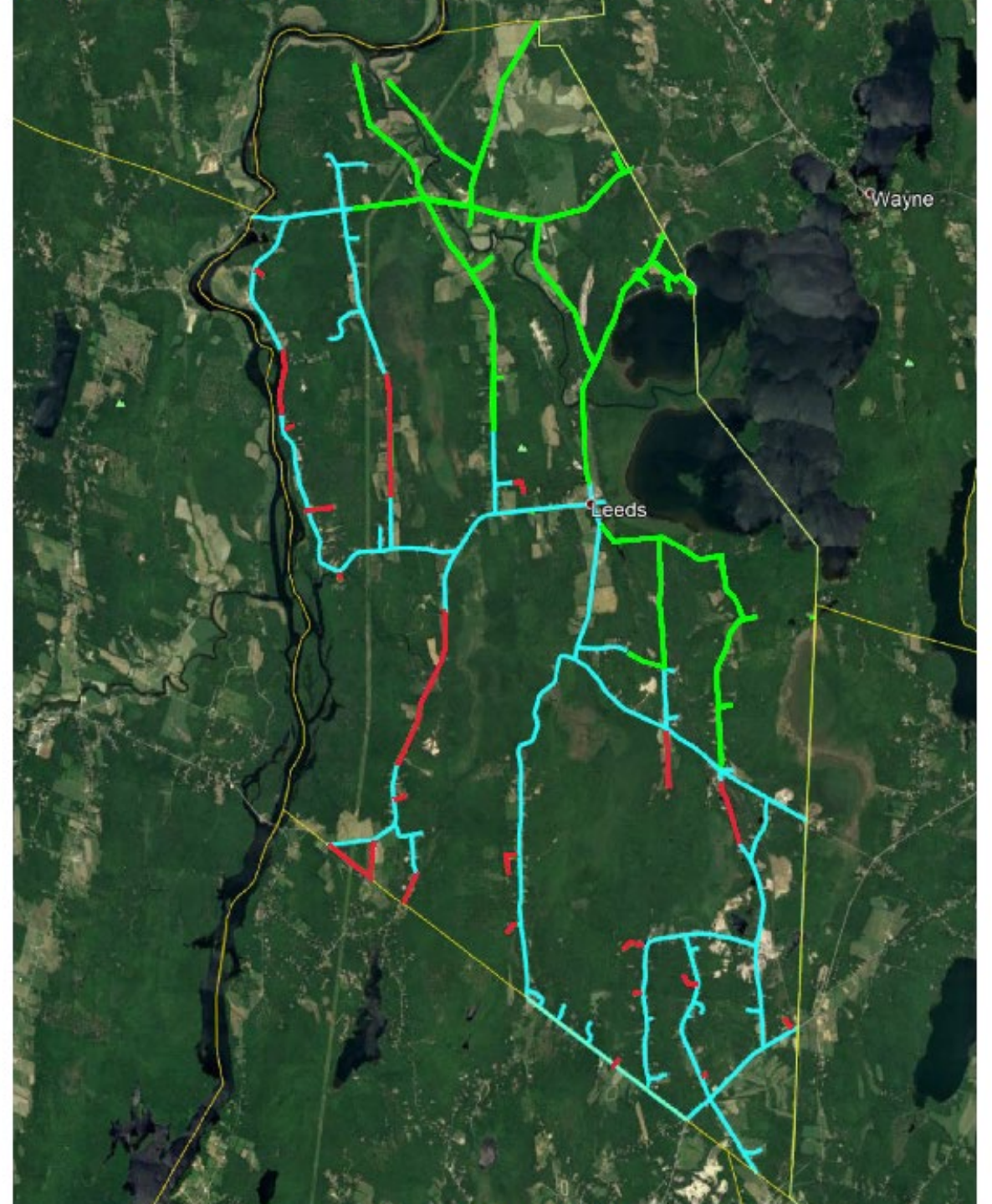
# Axiom Proposal



- Advantages
  - Fiber-to-the-home network construction in Unserved Area 'B',
  - Competitive Service Fee (base rate \$59 per month)
  - Owned by the Town of Leeds and Operated by Axiom
  - Will be built and operated by service fees (no tax increases)
  - Construction can begin in 2022
- Disadvantages
  - Will not serve portions of Unserved Area 'A'
  - Maintains the status quo for existing cable customers
  - Is (perhaps) a short-term solution

# Axiom Service Area

- All of Unserved **Area 'B'**
- Larger Portions of **Area 'A'**
- Some small portions of Area 'A' are effectively blocked by cable



# Some Big Questions

- Should Internet be a public utility?
- Are we comfortable with an unregulated private monopoly?
- Should tax dollars be invested for these improvements?
- Does everyone in Town require improvements or just the unserved?
- Is it important to have competition (service options)?
- How quickly should improvements be made?
- What is the best long-term solution?



