

March 2024

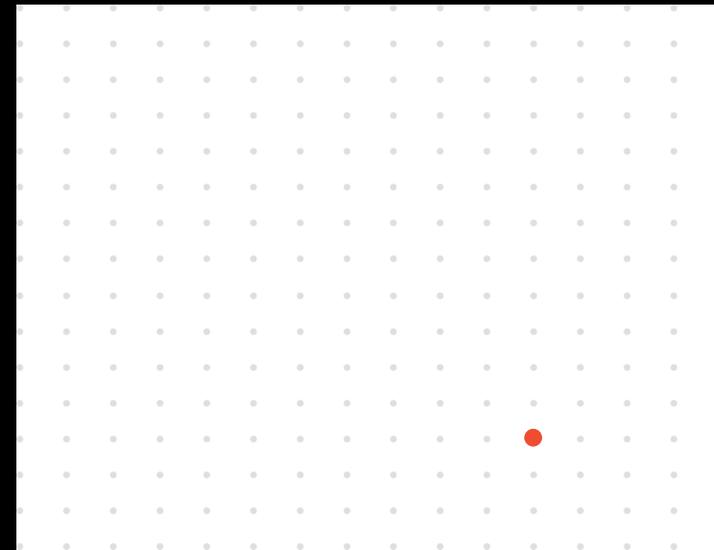
Explore Asheville

Resident Perspectives on Tourism

Better insights. **SMARTER STRATEGY.**

MMGY Travel Intelligence specializes in syndicated and custom market research exclusively for the travel and tourism industry. We boast the industry's most expansive and richest historical data, and we are dedicated to providing the highest-quality travel and traveler research.

Our mission is to provide clients with valuable insights they can apply to improve their results. Our portfolio of products and services is designed to power travel industry decision-makers through consumer insights, travel performance data, and audience modeling and segmentation.



MMGY Travel Intelligence built upon a 2019 and subsequent 2022 and 2023 studies that surveyed Buncombe County residents about their awareness and perceptions of destination tourism and its impact on the community. Several online panel companies were engaged to reach a random sample of residents of Buncombe County (Asheville and the surrounding areas). The survey was live from February 15th through March 7th and a total of 444 surveys were completed. This sample size yields an error range of +/- 4 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

Additional questions were added or changed for this survey. In those cases, comparisons to 2019, 2022 or 2023 results are not applicable.

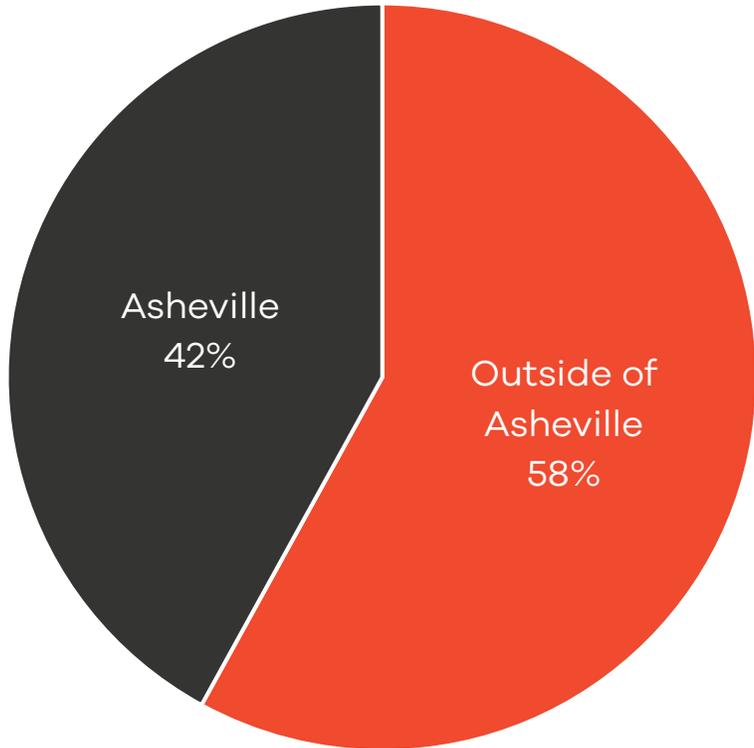
Comparisons were made if there was little or no change to the question/answers. If there was a slight change, the original question text is included in a footnote for reference.

The following zip codes were used to ensure the respondent was a resident of Buncombe County.

28701	28730	28787	28810
28704	28732	28801	28813
28709	28748	28802	28814
28711	28757	28803	28815
28715	28770	28804	28816
28716	28776	28805	
28728	28778	28806	

RESPONDENT PROFILE

- More than half of the respondents reside in Buncombe County but outside of Asheville (n=256).
- 188 respondents reside in the City of Asheville.



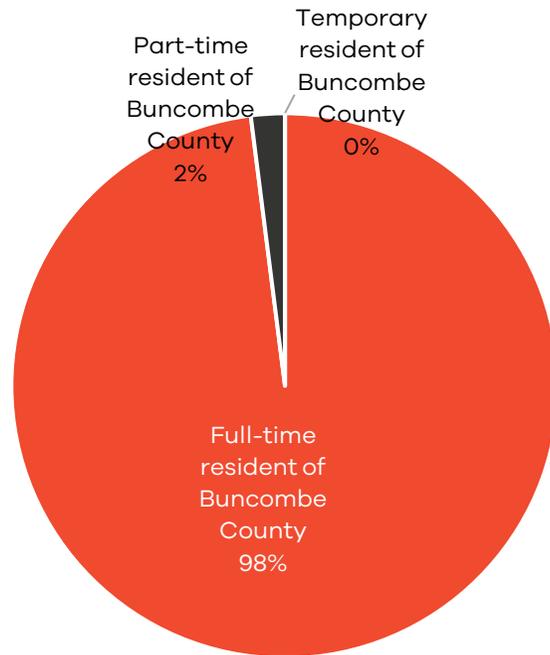
Outside of Asheville Neighborhood	n=256
Western Buncombe County	21%
Southern Buncombe County	18%
Eastern Buncombe County	16%
Northern Buncombe County	16%
Within the Town of Weaverville	10%
Within the Town of Black Mountain	8%
Within the Town of Woodfin	6%
Within the Town of Biltmore Forest	2%
Within the Town of Montreat	2%

Asheville Neighborhood	n=188
West Asheville	28%
South Asheville	18%
North Asheville	17%
East Asheville	16%
Downtown Asheville	14%
Central Asheville (outside Downtown)	7%

RESPONDENT PROFILE

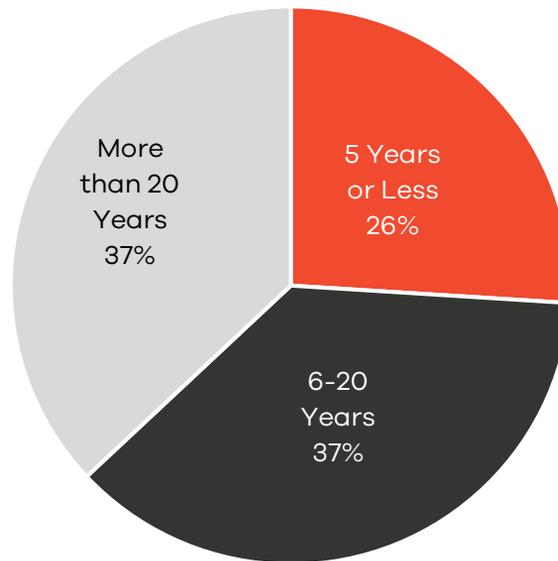
- The majority of respondents are full-time residents of Buncombe County. The average length of residency is 19.5 years and among those who are employed, four in 10 indicate that their job doesn't receive any benefit from tourism while more than one-third (36%) indicate they receive a great deal of benefit from tourism.

Residency Status

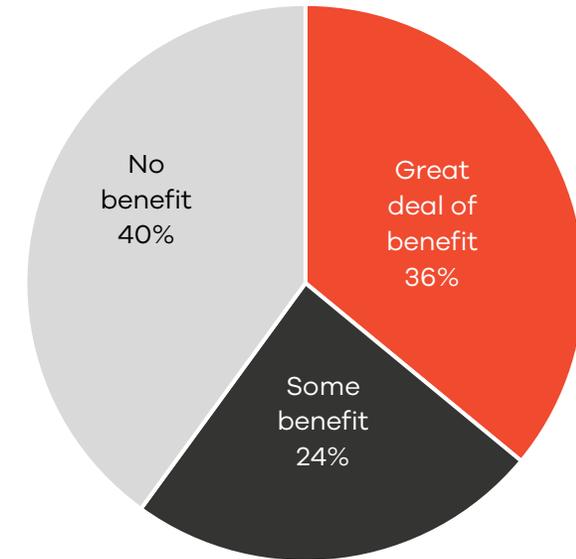


Length of Residency

Avg.: 19.5 years



Job Benefits from Tourism



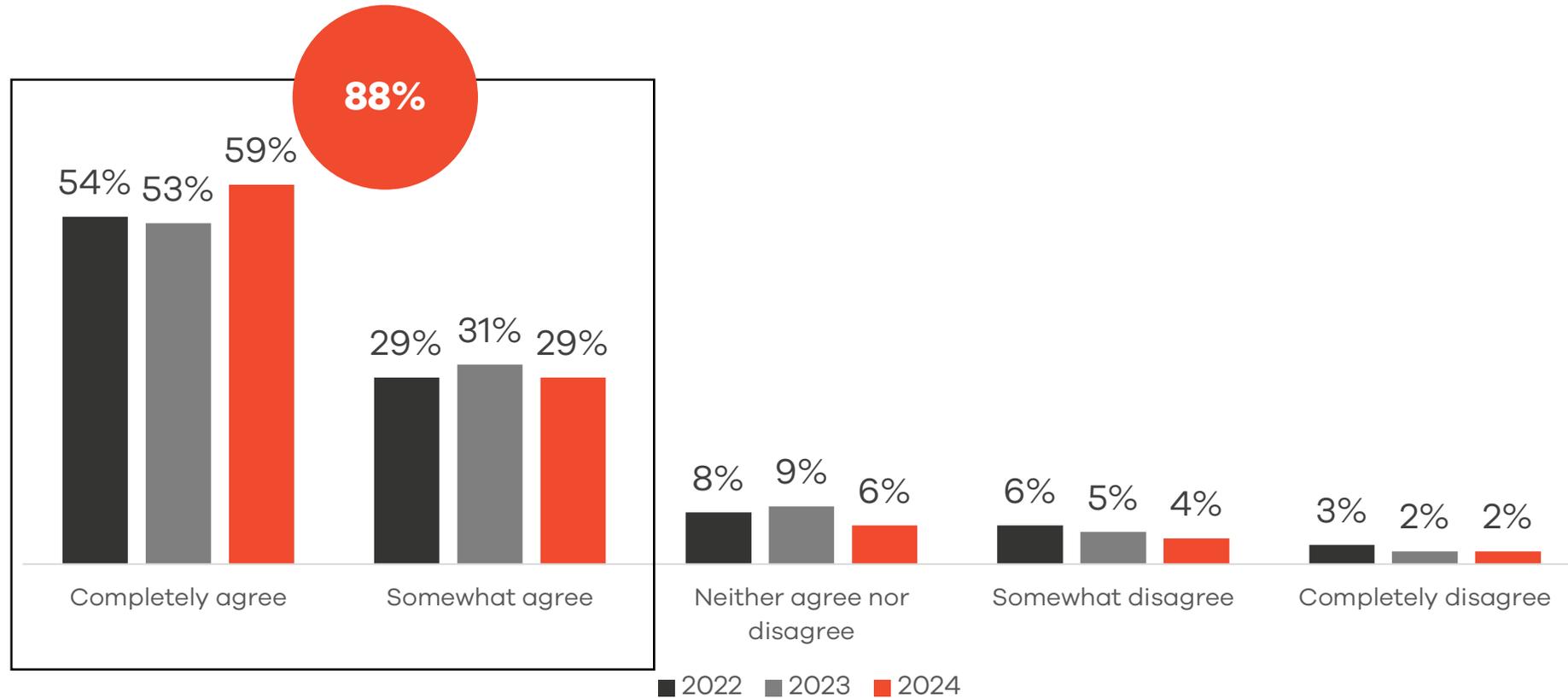
Among those who are employed: n=302

Key Insight ^{no.1}

Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

Key Insight ^{no}. 1: Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

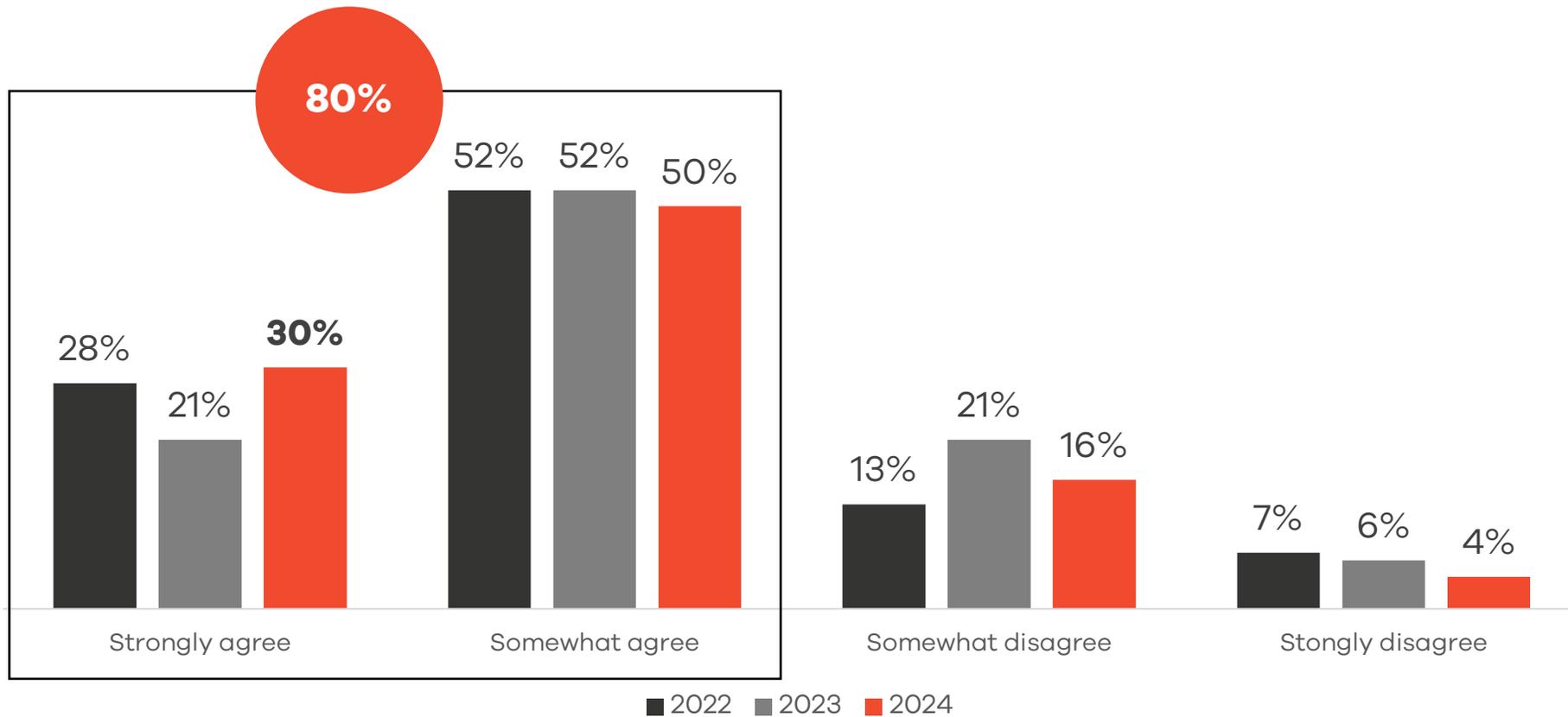
Tourism is beneficial to my community.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement:
Tourism is beneficial to my community.

Key Insight ^{no}. 1: Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

Investment in tourism promotion via lodging tax collected from overnight visitors fuels the local economy.



2019/2022 Question Wording

¹ The money my community invests in tourism promotion fuels the local economy

Q. For each of the following statements concerning tourism and your community, please indicate whether you agree or disagree.

Key Insight ^{no.} 1: Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

- Residents have a very positive view of the economic impact of tourism, showing significant increases from 2023.

Positive Statements Related to Economic Impact % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	2024	Change
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, entertainment opportunities. ¹	88%	89%	88%	94%	+6 ▲
The number of visitors to our area helps attract and support more airlines and direct flights for residents. ²	89%	84%	80%	92%	+12 ▲
Tourism is an economic driver for Buncombe County and provides an important part of the tax base.	NA	89%	85%	92%	+7 ▲
Visitors coming to Asheville for vacation or conferences may be inspired to move or start a business here. ⁴	NA	88%	85%	91%	+6 ▲
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community. ³	79%	89%	80%	88%	+8 ▲

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2023.

2019 Question Wording

- ¹ Tourism helps small businesses in my community.
- ² Tourism supports jobs that people in my community need.
- ³ Because of tourism in the area, Asheville has been able to attract more airline options and flights.

2022 Question Wording

³ I believe tourism supports jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities that people in my community need.

2023 Question Wording

⁴ Tourism and conferences introduce visitors to my community who could potentially move their business or start a new business here.

Note: Prior to 2023 all statements began with "I believe..."

Key Insight ^{no.} 1: Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

- Significantly more residents view tourism as something that positively impacts their quality of life, with the most significant increases in that residents who have vacation rentals can earn supplemental income and tourism positively impacts themselves and their family.

Positive Statements Related to Quality of Life % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2022	2023	2024	Change
Visitors help make festivals and sports events in my community more successful. ¹	79%	82%	89%	+7 ▲
Residents who have vacation rentals in my community earn supplemental income that helps their quality of life.	86%	76%	88%	+12 ▲
Our visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities such as parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy. ²	82%	79%	83%	+4
Tourism positively impacts me and my family.	72%	52%	63%	+11 ▲

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2023.

2022 Question Wording

¹ I believe there are more cultural festivals and sports events because of people visiting the area.

² I believe tourism to our community helps support natural and cultural resources like parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy.

Note: Prior to 2023 all statements began with “I believe...”

Key Insight ^{no} 1: Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

Positive Statements Related to Tourism Promotion % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	2024	Change
Tourism promotion has helped build Asheville’s competitiveness and attracted new businesses to our community. ²	NA	86%	85%	87%	+2
Investment in tourism promotion via lodging tax collected from overnight visitors fuels the local economy. ³	82%	80%	73%	80%	+7 ▲
The lodging taxes visitors pay cover the cost for marketing done by my community. ¹	66%	60%	66%	65%	-1

Negative Statements Related to Tourism Promotion % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	2024	Change
Enough visitors to support local businesses will continue to come to my community even if destination promotion stops. ⁴	73%	80%	74%	78%	+4
I don’t want other people to know about the experiences and amenities here in Asheville and Buncombe County.	NA	NA	24%	27%	+3

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2023.

2019 Question Wording.

- ¹ The taxes visitors pay cover the cost for any marketing done by my community.
- ³ The money my community invests in tourism promotion fuels the local economy.
- ⁴ Visitors will continue to come to my community even if we stopped all tourism.

2022 Question Wording

- ¹ I believe the taxes visitors pay cover the cost for any marketing done by my community
- ² I believe tourism promotion has helped build Asheville’s brand and attracted new businesses to our community. .
- ³ I believe the money my community invests in tourism promotion fuels the local economy.
- ⁴ I believe visitors will continue to come to my community even if it stopped all tourism advertising.

Key Insight ^{no.} **2**

Asheville residents take great pride in their community, emphasizing diversity and inclusion, how the community rallies together and the culture and character of Asheville.

Key Insight no. 2: Asheville residents take great pride in their community, emphasizing diversity and inclusion, how the community rallies together and the culture and character of Asheville.

- The people of Buncombe County—their friendliness, willingness to help others, and accepting nature—are one of the most loved parts of the community.

Why are you proud of your community?

"Diverse, social, community oriented"

"There's a strong sense of caring for nature, huge supporter of art and especially music, and people are generally nice."

"Welcome to all sort of visitors"

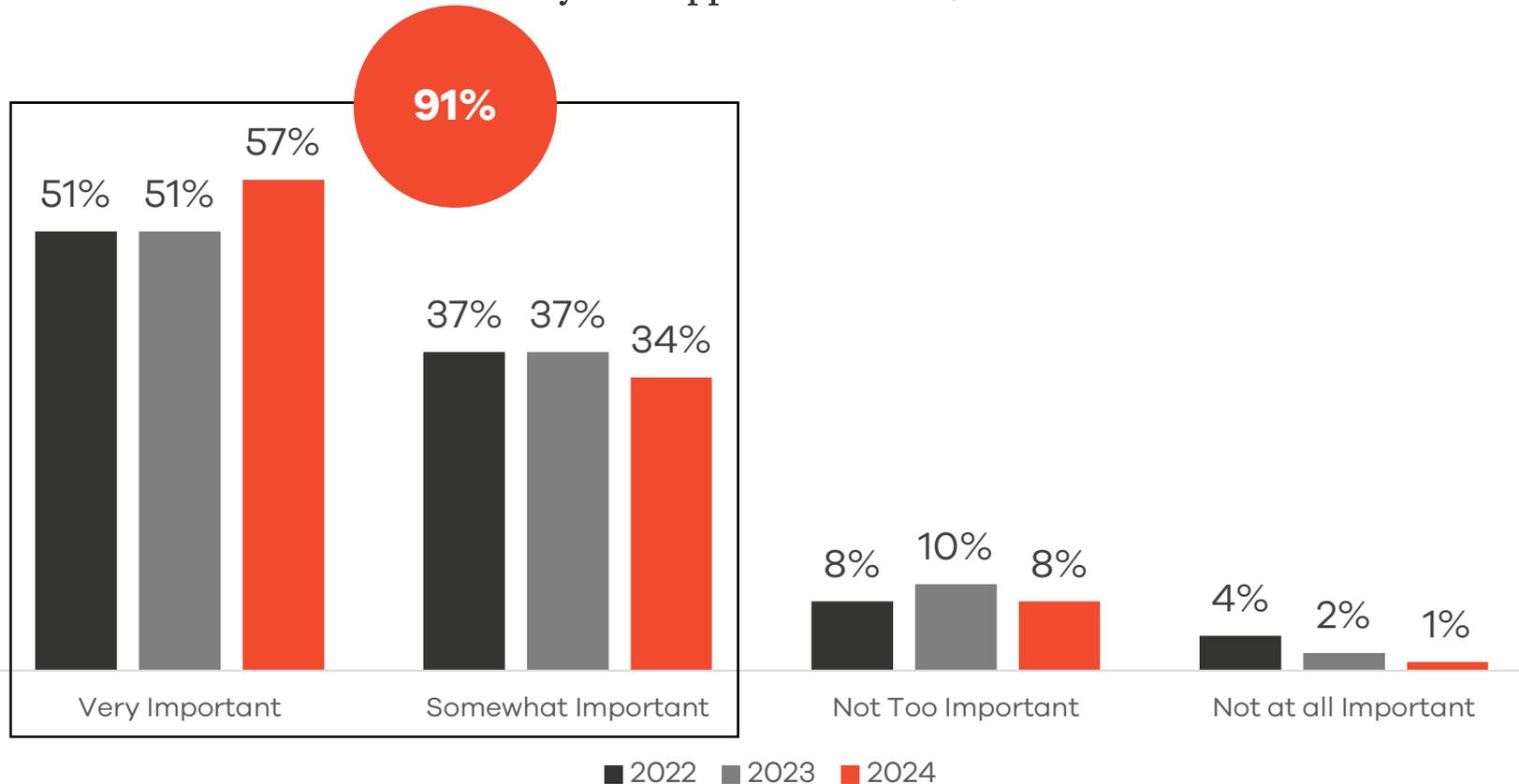
"Our community consistently rallies together to support those in need, showcasing unparalleled compassion and empathy. That's why I am proud of my community."

"The sights, the people, the food and entertainment"

"It's a community that strives to make a better living environment for all people especially those that are not in wealthier classes. It's a very creative community that seeks to support others."

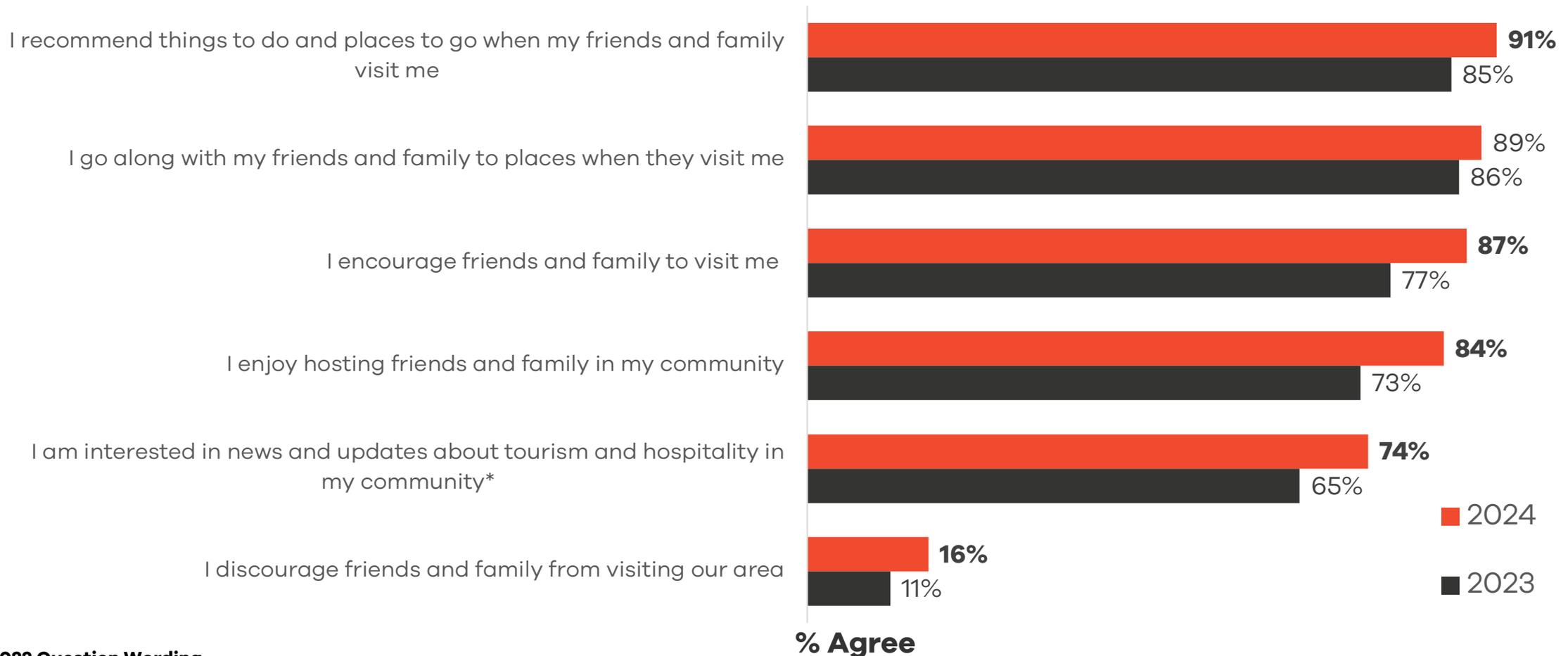
Nine in 10 residents indicate that sharing stories of Asheville’s creative spirit is an important initiative for managing visitors.

Importance of: promoting and sharing stories of Asheville’s creative spirit to help maintain the character of the community and support our artists, creators and makers.



Q. How important do you believe each of the following initiatives are for managing visitors to and in your community:

Nine in 10 residents indicate they recommend things to do and places to go when friends and family visit.



2022 Question Wording

* When I come across local tourism news, I enjoy finding out what's happening

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Key Insight ^{no.} **3**

While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

Key Insight ^{no. 3}: While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

- Traffic and parking problems are a common pain point among residents.
- However, even with slight rises this year, fewer residents believe that traffic and parking are problems than in 2019.

Negative Statements Related to Quality of Life % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	2024	Change
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area. ¹	85%	74%	79%	84%	+5
There are parking supply problems because of people visiting the community. ²	88%	76%	77%	80%	+3
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer options for year-round residents.	NA	68%	72%	77%	+5
Buncombe County's economy is too dependent upon tourism.	NA	68%	67%	68%	+1
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community. ³	NA	53%	48%	52%	+4
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment.	NA	NA	46%	50%	+4
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions. ⁴	63%	45%	42%	46%	+4
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community.	NA	32%	38%	43%	+5
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources. ⁵	52%	37%	41%	43%	+2

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2023.

2019 Question Wording

- ¹ Because we have too many people visiting the area, we have traffic problems.
- ² There are problems with parking because of people visiting the community.
- ⁴ Locals can't enjoy my community because of all the people visiting.
- ⁵ People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources.

2022 Question Wording

- ¹ I believe we have traffic problems due to the number of people visiting the area.
- ² I believe there are parking problems because of people visiting the community.
- ³ I believe that tourism contributes to the loss of green space and damages the environment.
- ⁴ I believe residents can't enjoy my community and amenities because of the number of people visiting.

Note: Prior to 2023 all statements began with "I believe..."



Key Insight ^{no.} 3: While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

- Respondents who agreed to each of the following statements were asked to rank by impact, with 1= strongest impact to 9= least impact
- The highest impact according to average rankings were for traffic congestion and short term/vacation rentals.

Negative Statements Related to Quality of Life	Mean
Mean rank of impact, where 1= strongest impact and 9= least impact	
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area. ¹ (n=363)	2.63
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer options for year-round residents. (n=320)	2.99
There are parking supply problems because of people visiting the community. ² (n=340)	3.08
Buncombe County's economy is too dependent upon tourism. (n=281)	4.00
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources. ⁵ (n=177)	4.07
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions. ⁴ (n=198)	4.44
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community. ³ (n=204)	5.07
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment. (n=207)	5.08
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community. (n=180)	5.18

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2023.

2019 Question Wording

- ¹ Because we have too many people visiting the area, we have traffic problems.
- ² There are problems with parking because of people visiting the community.
- ⁴ Locals can't enjoy my community because of all the people visiting.
- ⁵ People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources.

2022 Question Wording

- ¹ I believe we have traffic problems due to the number of people visiting the area.
- ² I believe there are parking problems because of people visiting the community.
- ³ I believe that tourism contributes to the loss of green space and damages the environment.
- ⁴ I believe residents can't enjoy my community and amenities because of the number of people visiting.

Note: Prior to 2023 all statements began with "I believe..."

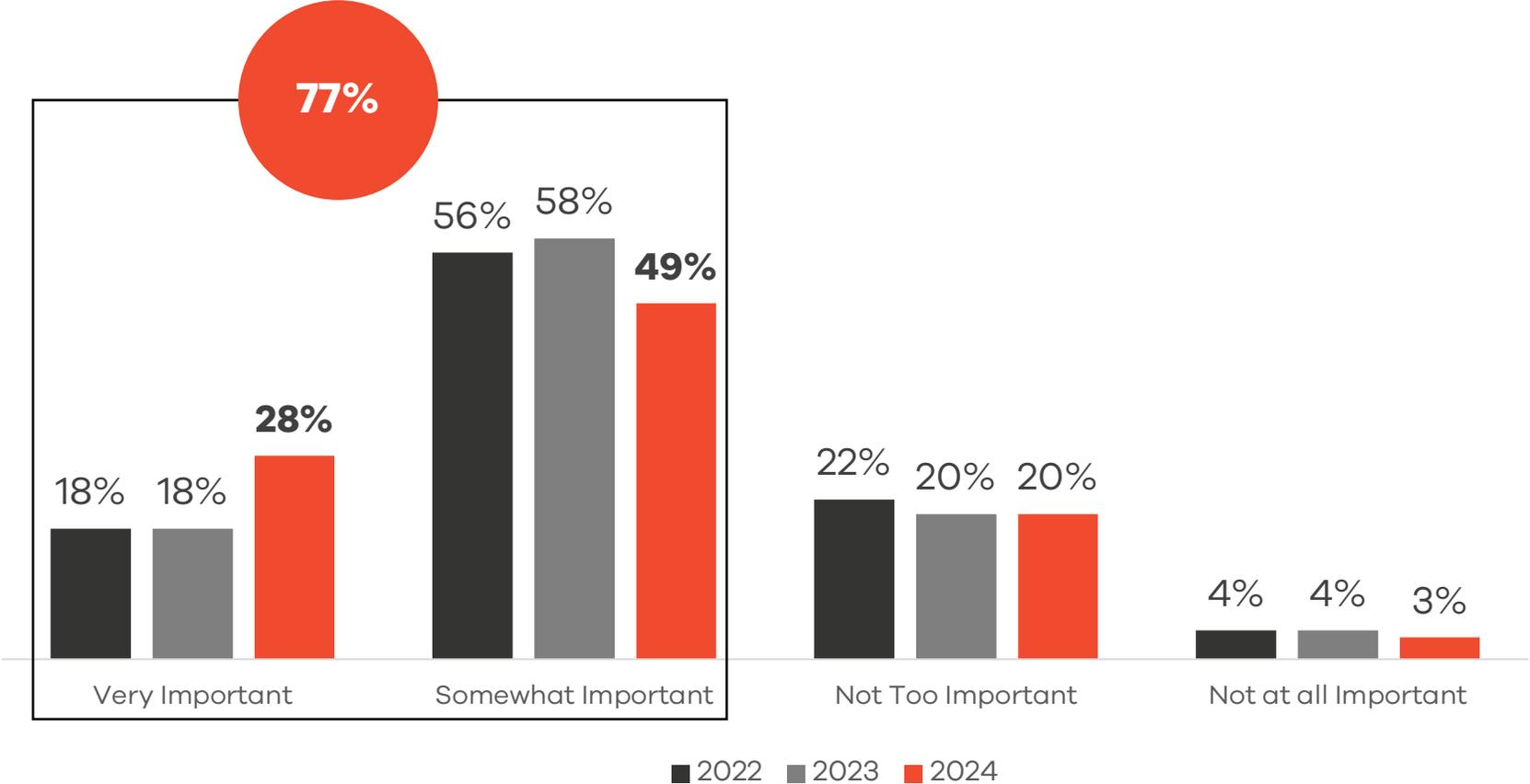
Q. Please rank these in order of how much they impact your views on tourism. For each item, assign a value, ranking the item that has the strongest impact with a value of 1, and numbering sequentially.

Key Insight ^{no.} 3: While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of six different initiatives that would help manage visitors to and in the community.

- Three-quarters of residents indicate that encouraging visitors to visit during the off-season is an important initiative.
- More residents find encouraging visitors to visit during the off-season as very important than did so last year.

Importance of: Shifting concentration of visitors from peak season to other times of the year.



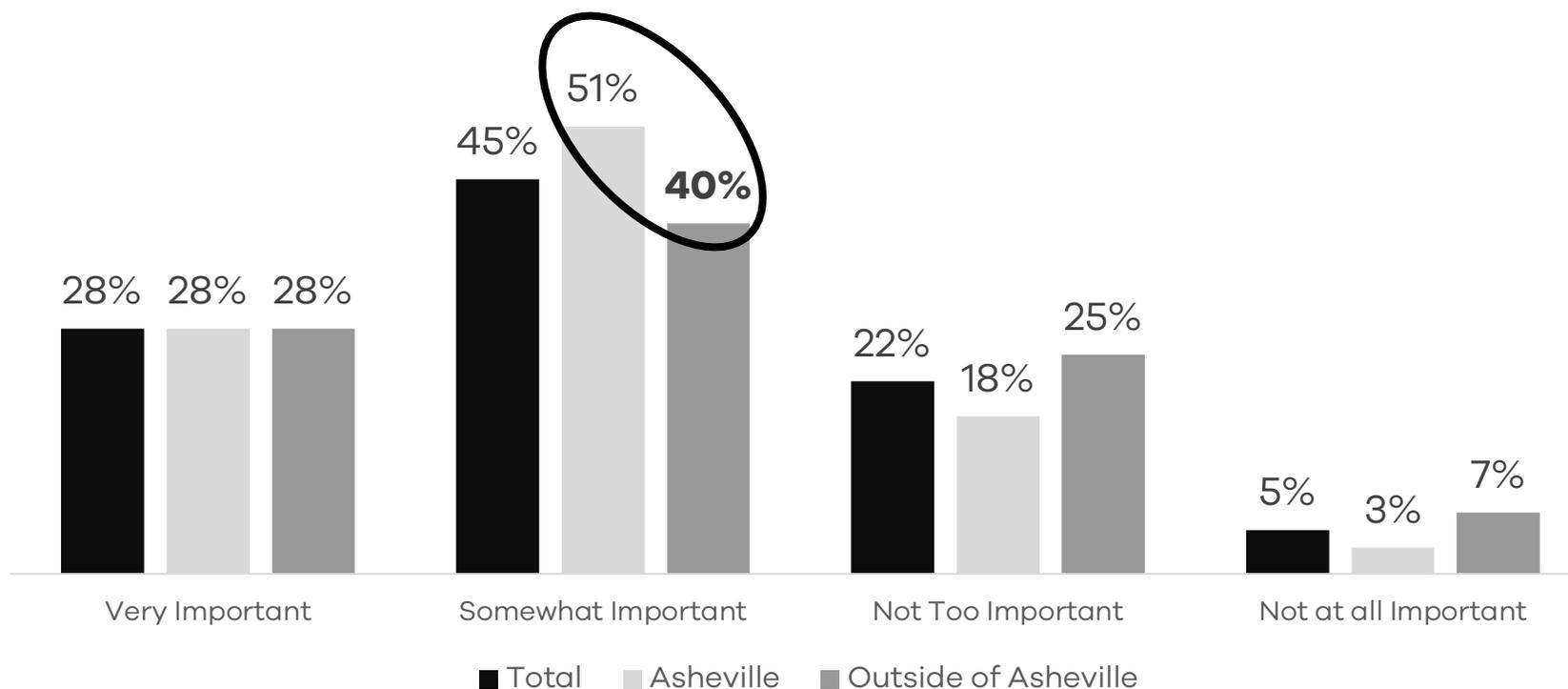
Q. How important do you believe each of the following initiatives are for managing visitors to and in your community:

Key Insight ^{no.} 3: While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of six different initiatives that would help manage visitors to and in the community.

- 72% of residents indicate that dispersing visitors throughout the county is an important initiative.
- Significantly more Asheville residents consider this to be an important initiative than residents outside of Asheville.

Importance of: Dispersing visitors from downtown Asheville to other areas of the county.



Q. How important do you believe each of the following initiatives are for managing visitors to and in your community:

Key Insight ^{no.} **4**

Natural greenspaces and protecting the environment are important aspects for Asheville for residents, and eight in 10 agree the visitor economy helps supports these natural and cultural amenities.

Key Insight ^{no.} 4: Natural greenspaces and protecting the environment are important aspects of Asheville for residents, and 8 in 10 agree the visitor economy helps supports these natural and cultural amenities.

Residents of Buncombe County deeply care about the environment and value and appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds their community.

Why are you proud of your community?

"Of course I love living in the mountains along with others who appreciate the landscapes and nature. I'm proud of my fellow citizens who strive to preserve our habitat and that of the wildlife."

"People seem to take pride in neighborhood watch, keeping the streets clean, recycling, and overall caring for the environment."

"Inclusivity, care for environment, care for unhoused, welcoming people."

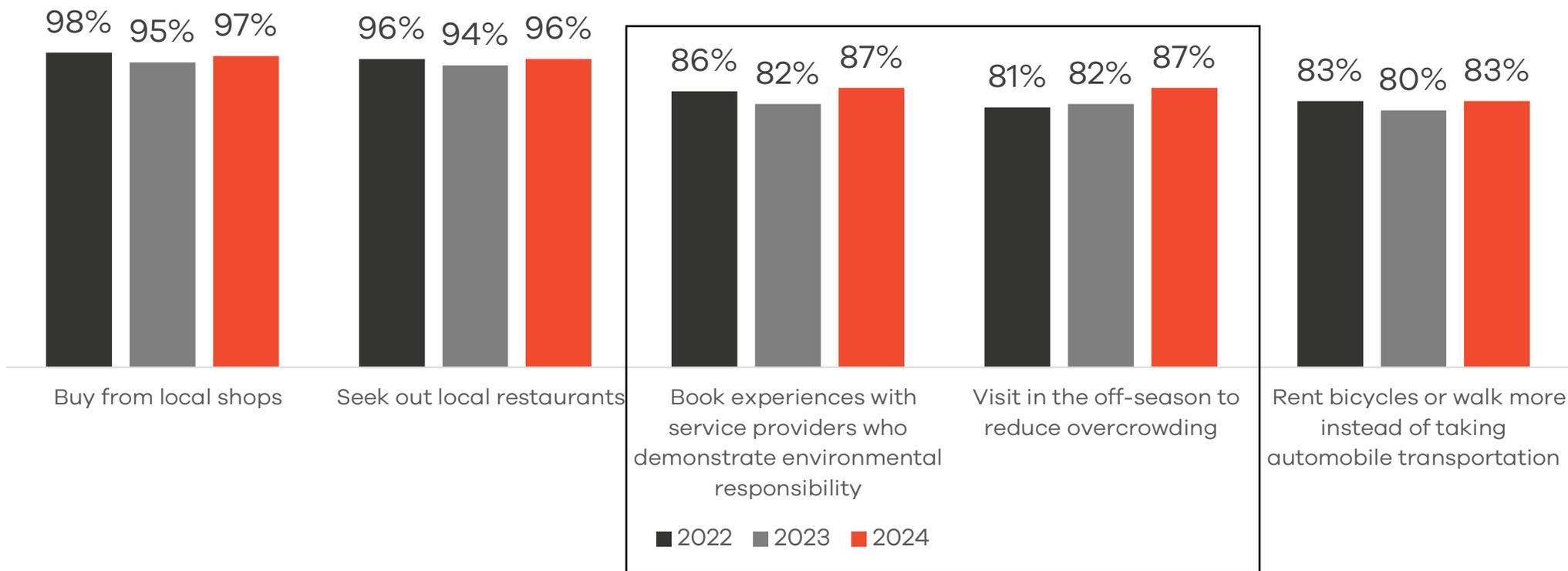
"They care about the environment."

"I'm most proud of my community for the landscape. The mountains streams and hiking trails are spectacular. I'm also proud to have the largest privately owned mansion in the world."

Key Insight ^{no.} 4: Natural greenspaces and protecting the environment are important aspects of Asheville for residents, and 8 in 10 agree the visitor economy helps supports these natural and cultural amenities.

Nearly nine in 10 of residents think it is important for visitors to practice behaviors that help to protect the environment and sustain the local community.

% Consider to be Somewhat/Very Important Behavior from Visitors

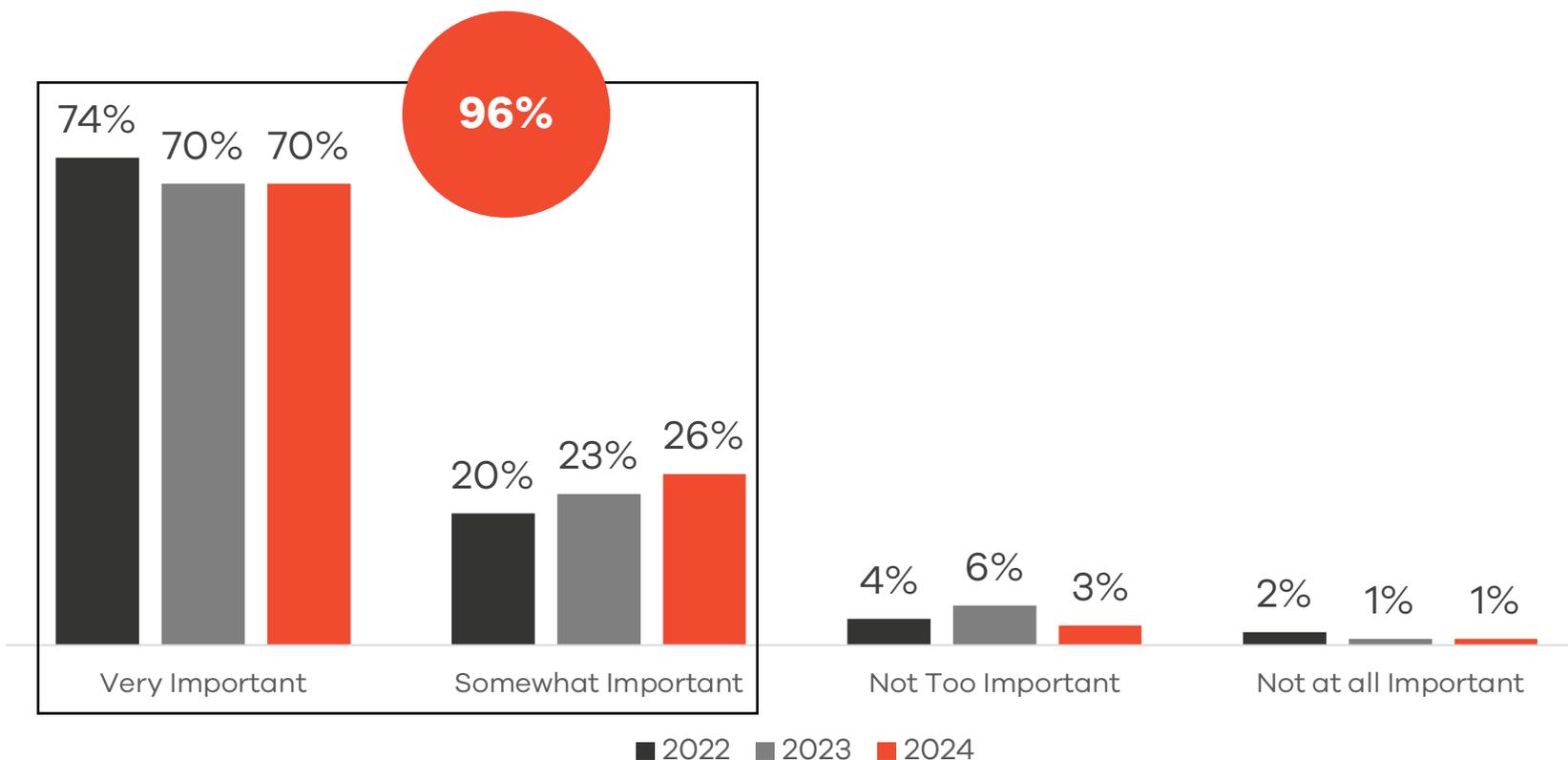


Q. How important do you believe it is for visitors to Buncombe County to do the following when in your community?

Key Insight ^{no.} 4: Natural greenspaces and protecting the environment are important aspects of Asheville for residents, and 8 in 10 agree the visitor economy helps supports these natural and cultural amenities.

Encouraging visitors to practice responsible tourism was deemed to be most important in helping to manage visitors and the community, at a similar rate to 2023.

Importance of: encouraging visitors to practice responsible tourism, respect and protect cultural and natural assets.



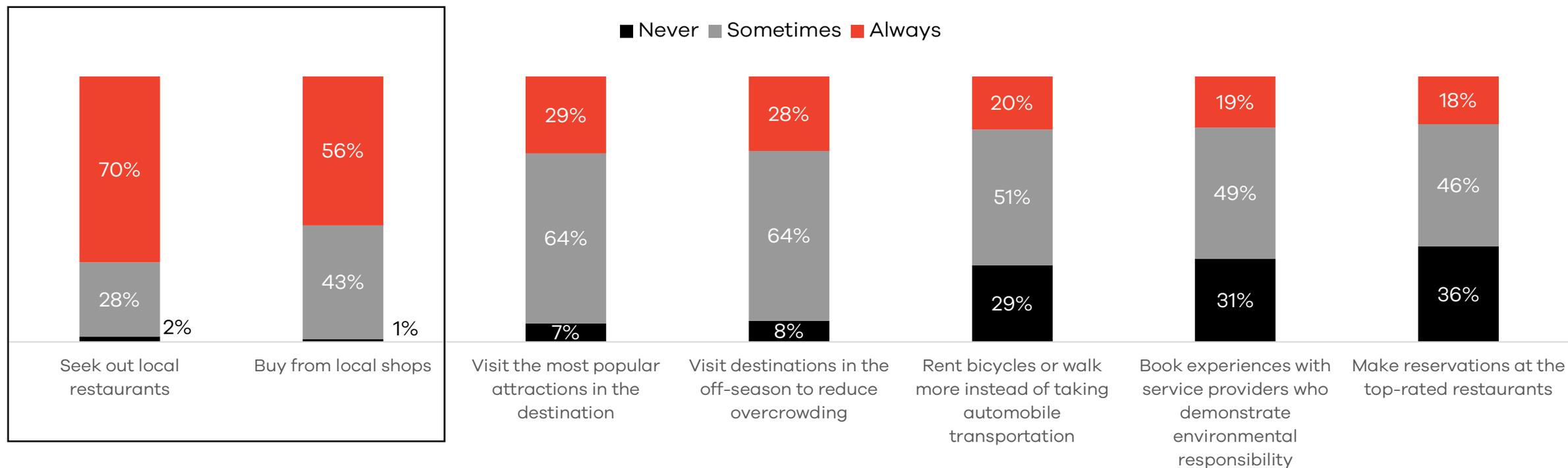
Q. How important do you believe each of the following initiatives are for managing visitors to and in your community:

Key Insight ^{no.} **5**

Supporting local businesses is important to Asheville residents, and most expect the same of visitors to Asheville.

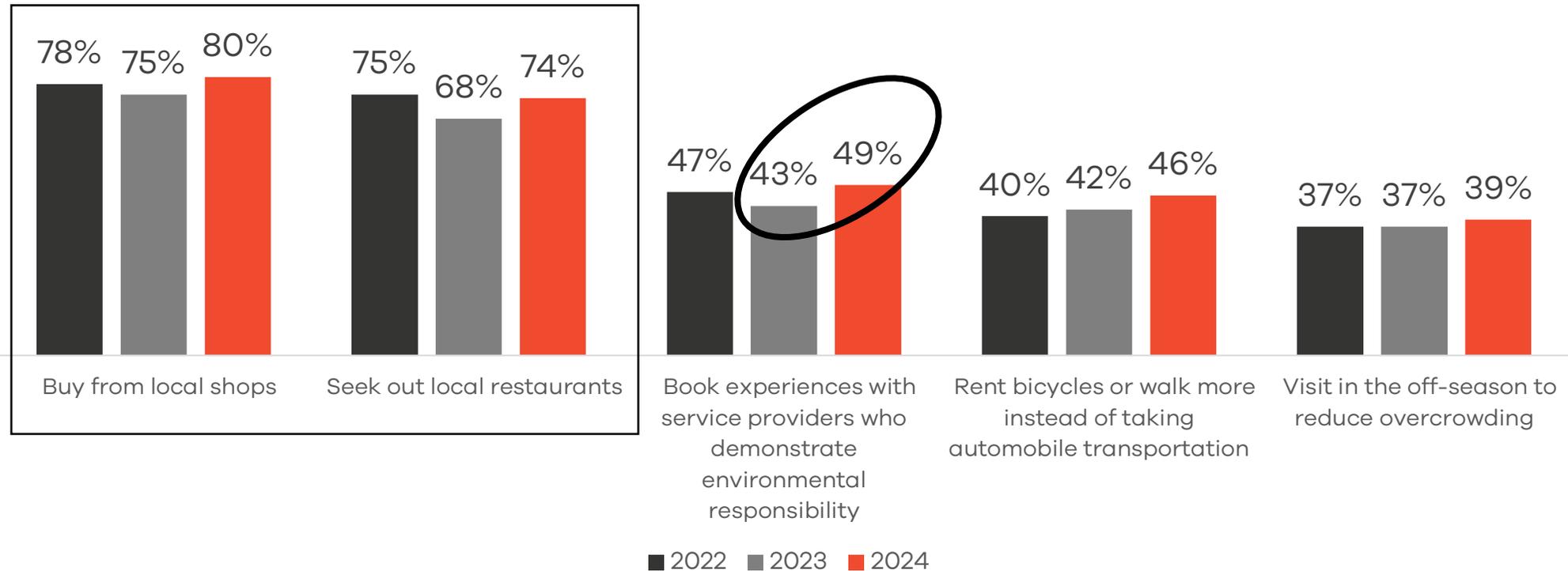
Nearly all respondents indicate they either sometimes or always seek out local restaurants or buy from local shops while on vacation.

Q. When traveling for vacation, how often do you do the following?

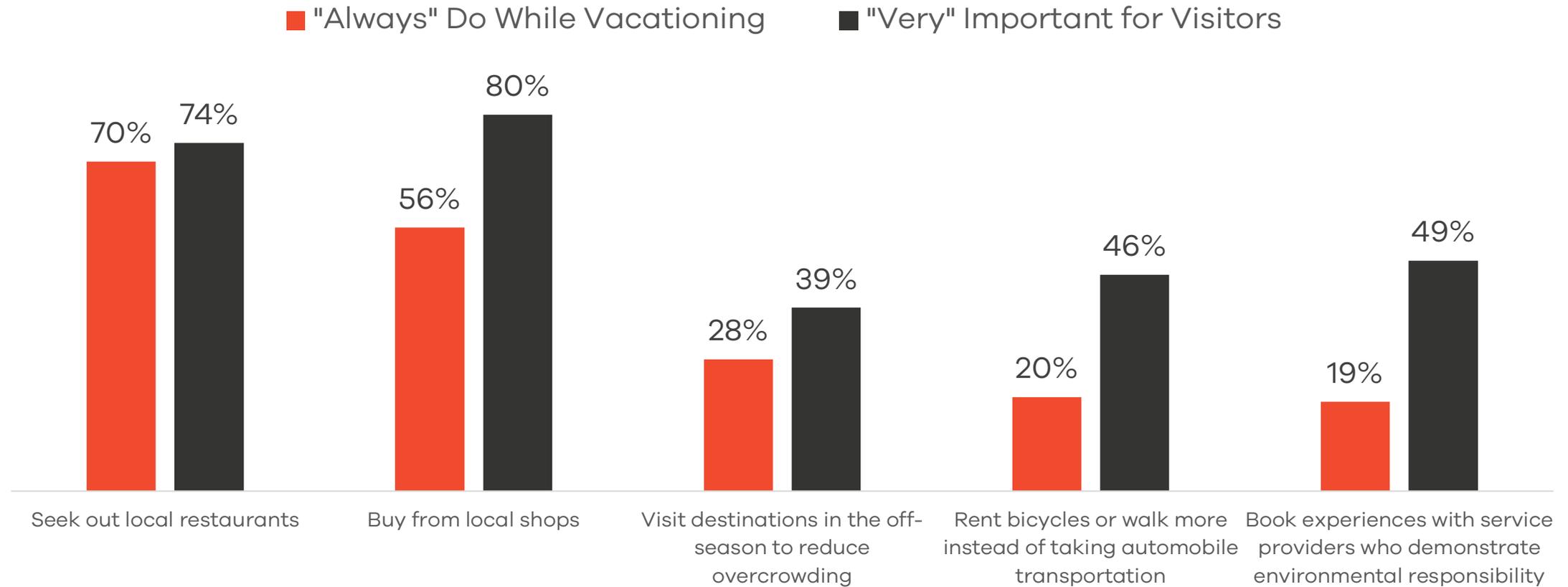


Residents consider buying and eating local to be the most important behaviors from travelers who are visiting Buncombe County, though booking experiences with service providers who demonstrate environmental responsibility rose significantly from 2023.

Q. How important do you believe it is for visitors to Buncombe County to do the following when in your community?
(% Very Important)



Gaps exist between what residents indicate they always do on vacation versus what they consider to be very important behavior for visitors to Buncombe County.



Q. When traveling for vacation, how often do you do the following?

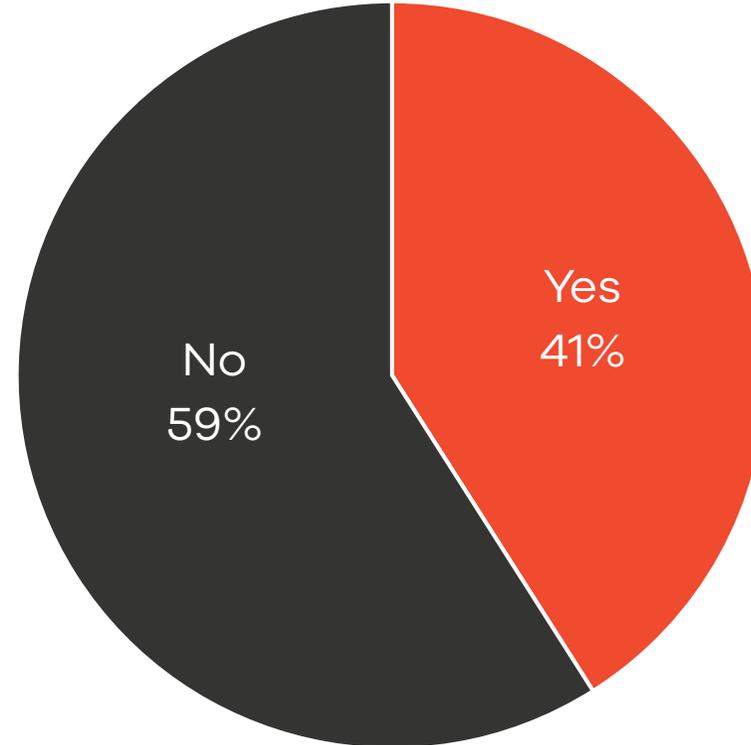
Q. How important do you believe it is for visitors to Buncombe County to do the following when in your community?

Key Insight ^{no.} **6**

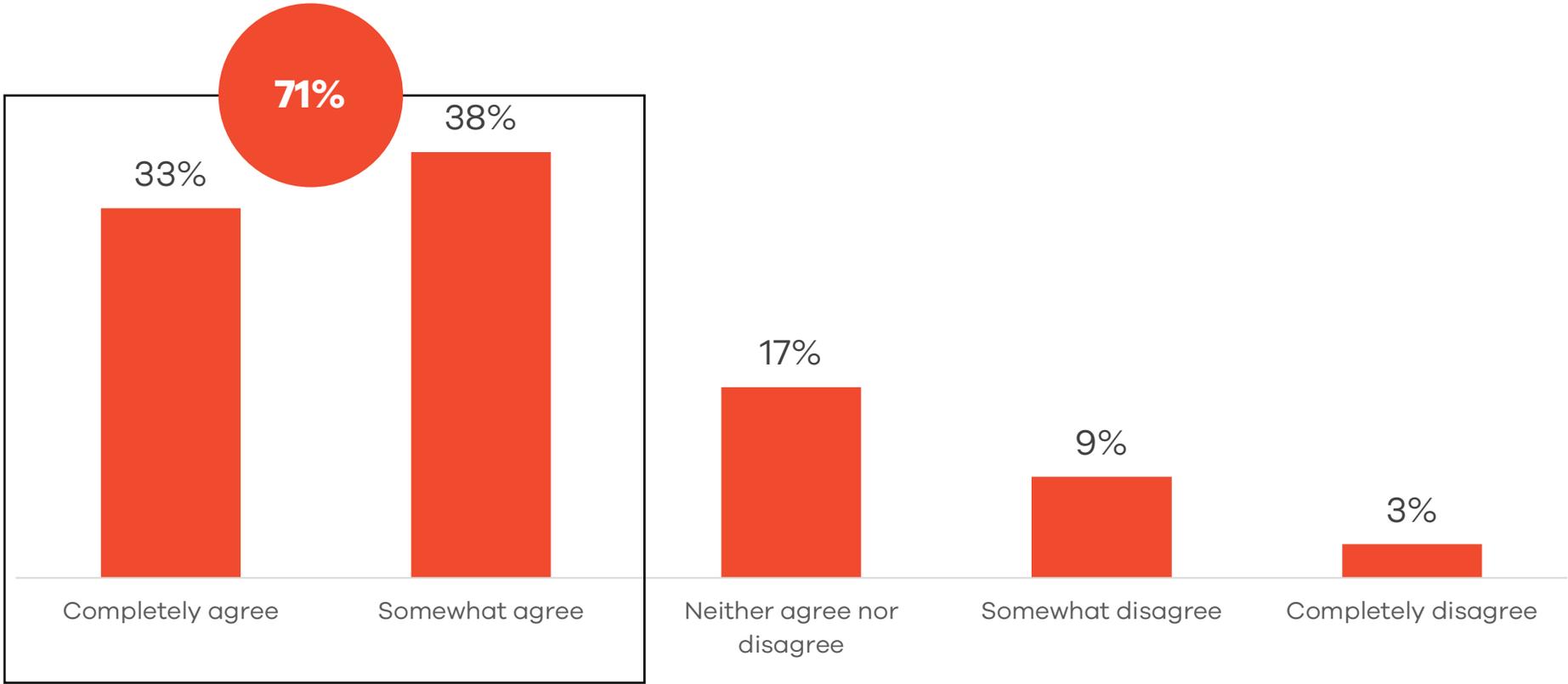
There is continued opportunity to educate residents about how taxes paid by visitors are used to benefit residents.

The majority of residents are not aware that county lodging tax investments and usage are legislated by the North Carolina general assembly.

Q. Were you aware that in North Carolina, each county's lodging tax investment and usage, including Buncombe County's, is legislated by the North Carolina general assembly?



The benefits of travel and tourism to our community outweigh the potential challenges.

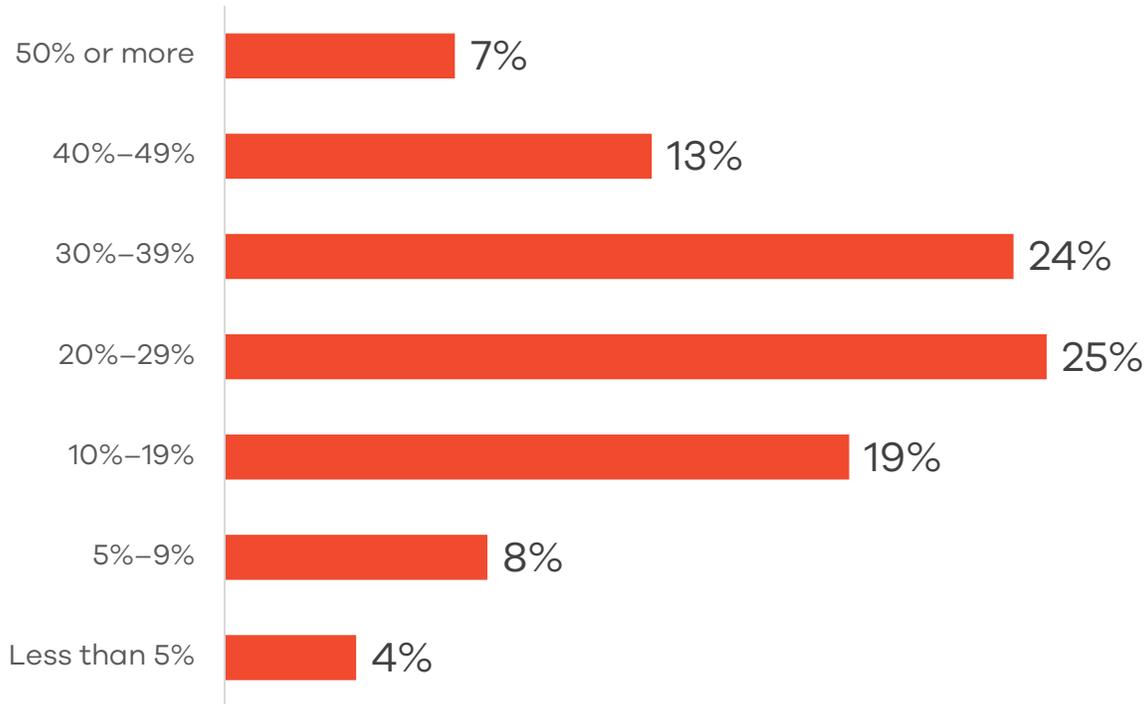


Q9. In 2022, visitors spent nearly \$3 billion in local Buncombe County businesses, supported nearly \$915 million in wages and produced \$238 million in tax revenues to support local services and programs. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The benefits of travel and tourism to our community outweigh the potential challenges.

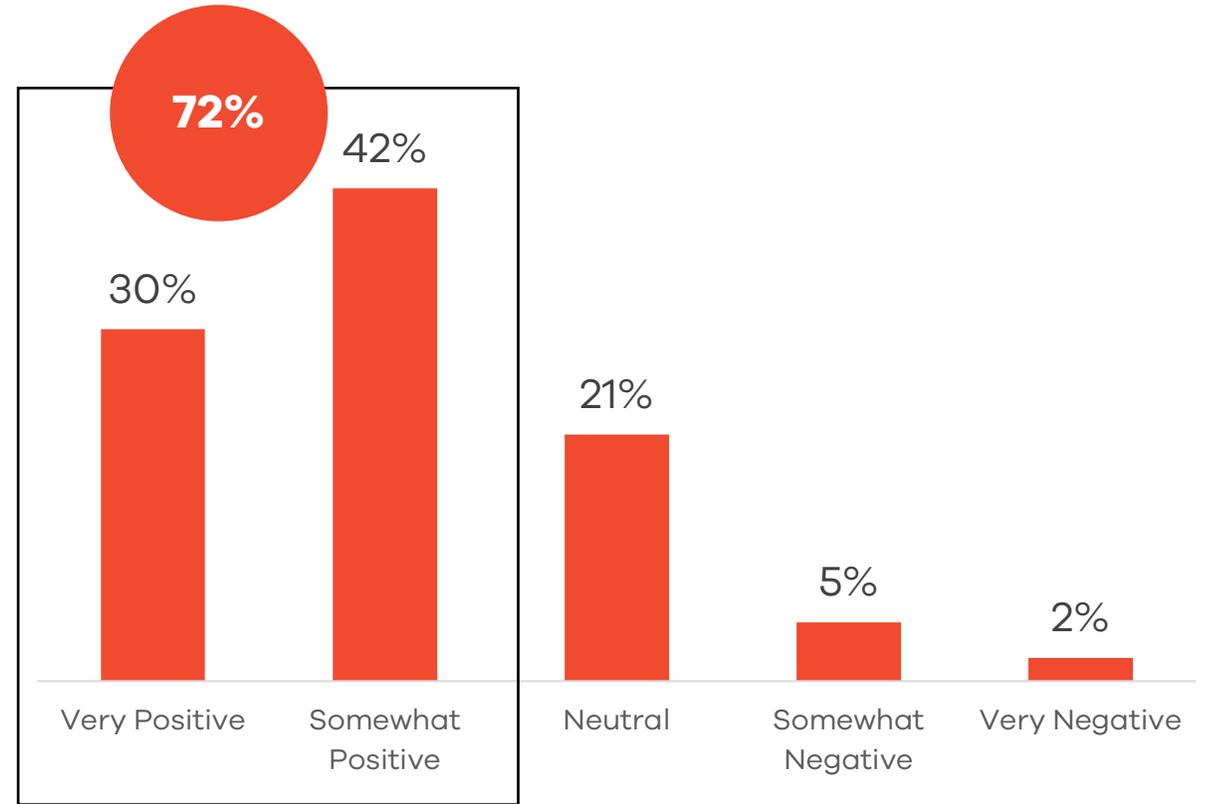
Key Insight ^{no.} 6: There is continued opportunity to educate residents about how taxes paid by visitors are used to benefit residents.

- Three-quarters of residents agree that tourism spending has an overall positive impact on the economy of Buncombe County.

Resident Perception of Tax Revenue from Visitor Spending



Impact Tourism Spending has on the Economy

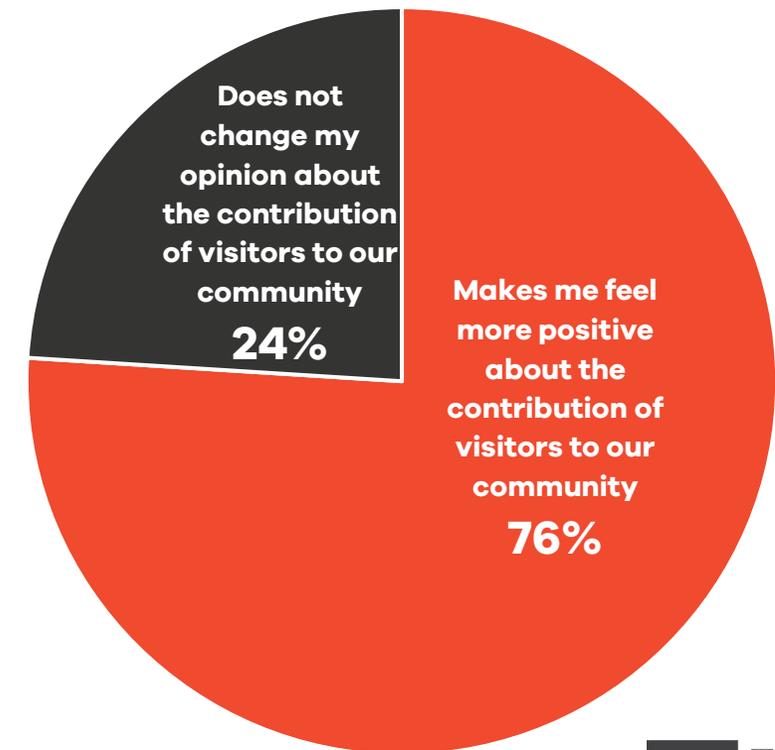


Q. In 2022, visitors spent \$2.6 billion in Buncombe County to support local businesses and jobs for residents and produced \$238 million in tax revenues to support local services and programs. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The investments, amenities, and capital tourism brings outweigh its impacts.

Learning that taxes paid by visitors helped fund community amenities has a positive impact on the perception of visitors.

Community Amenities Visited or Plan to Visit	
WNC Farmers Market	74%
NC Arboretum	70%
Western North Carolina Nature Center	66%
Pack Square Park	65%
Grove Arcade	65%
River Arts District Greenways	64%
Harrah's Cherokee Center- Asheville	56%
McCormick Field	49%
Asheville Community Theatre	47%
Asheville Art Museum	44%
Asheville Museum of Science	34%
Wortham Center	33%
Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center	24%
JBL Soccer Complex at Azalea Park	20%
Enka Recreation Destination & Bob Lewis Ballpark	19%
Center for Craft	17%
Western North Carolina Heritage Center	16%
LEAF Global Arts Center	15%
Black Cultural Heritage Trail	12%
None of these	3%

Q. Does knowing that taxes paid by visitors helped fund all these amenities...?

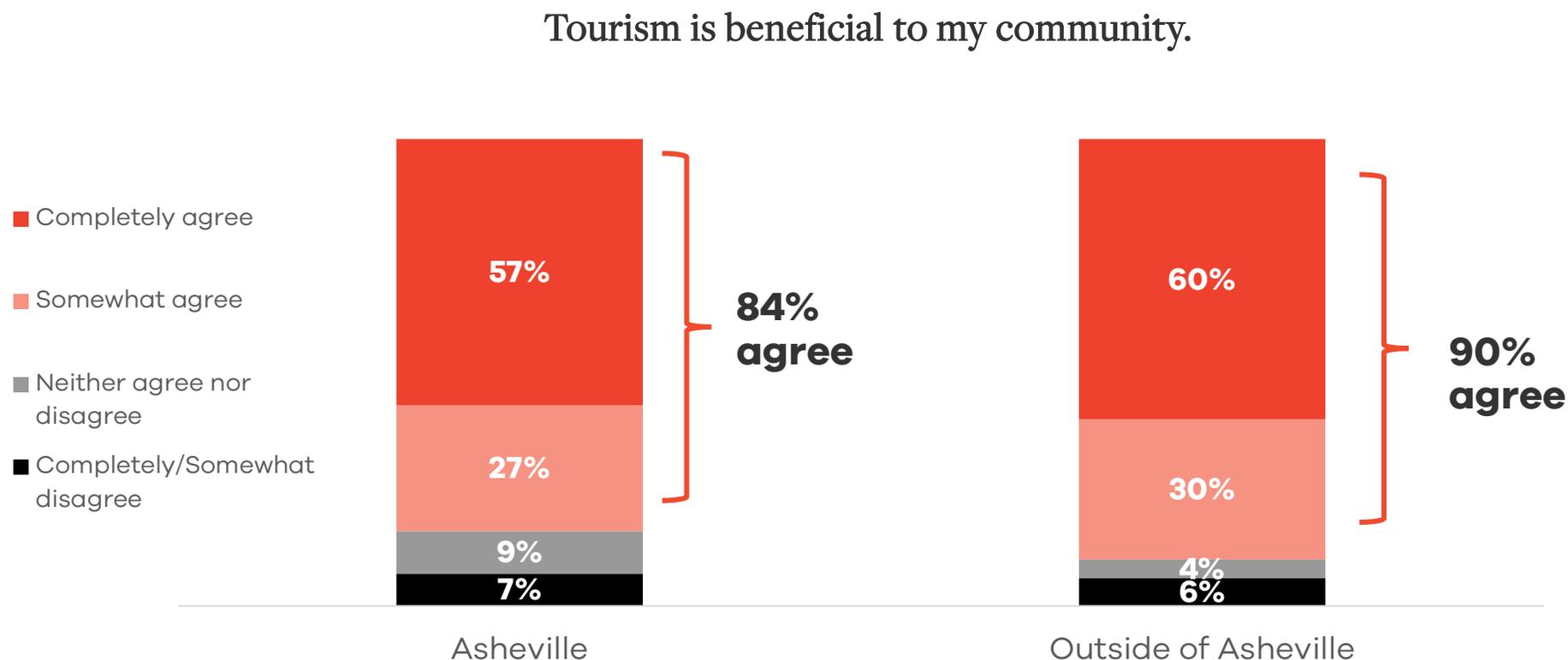


Key Insight ^{no.} **7**

While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

Key Insight ^{no.} 7: While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

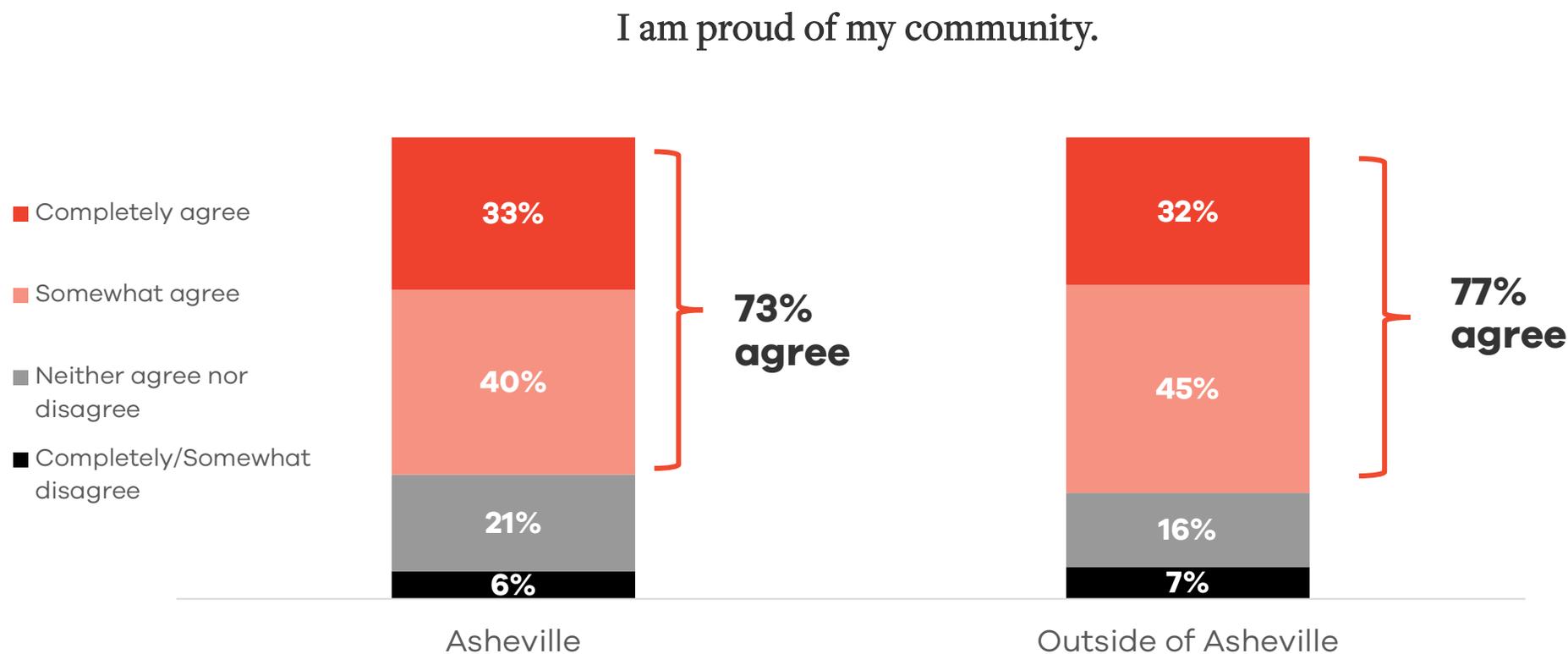
More than half of residents in Asheville and those outside of Asheville completely agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement:
"Tourism is beneficial to my community"

Key Insight ^{no.} 7: While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

More residents outside of Asheville than those within Asheville completely or somewhat agree that they are proud of their community.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement:
“I am proud of my community”

Key Insight ^{no.} 7: While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

- Residents of Asheville agree that tourism is an economic driver for Buncombe County, that tourism and conferences introduce visitors to the community, and the visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities more so than residents outside of Asheville.

Positive Statements Related to Economic Impact % Completely/Somewhat Agree	Asheville	Outside of Asheville
Tourism is an economic driver for Buncombe County and provides an important part of the tax base.	93%	92%
Visitors coming to Asheville for vacation or conferences may be inspired to move or start a business here.	90%	93%
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, entertainment opportunities.	96%	92%
The number of visitors to our area helps attract and support more airlines and direct flights for residents.	93%	91%
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community.	84%	91%

Positive Statements Related to Quality of Life % Completely/Somewhat Agree	Asheville	Outside of Asheville
Visitors help make festivals and sports events in my community more successful.	90%	88%
Our visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities such as parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy.	83%	83%
Residents who have vacation rentals in my community earn supplemental income that helps their quality of life.	84%	90%
Tourism positively impacts me and my family.	65%	62%

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from City of Asheville Residents.

Key Insight ^{no.} 7: While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

- Traffic congestion and parking supply problems continue to be leading concerns for Asheville residents, more so than those who reside outside of Asheville.

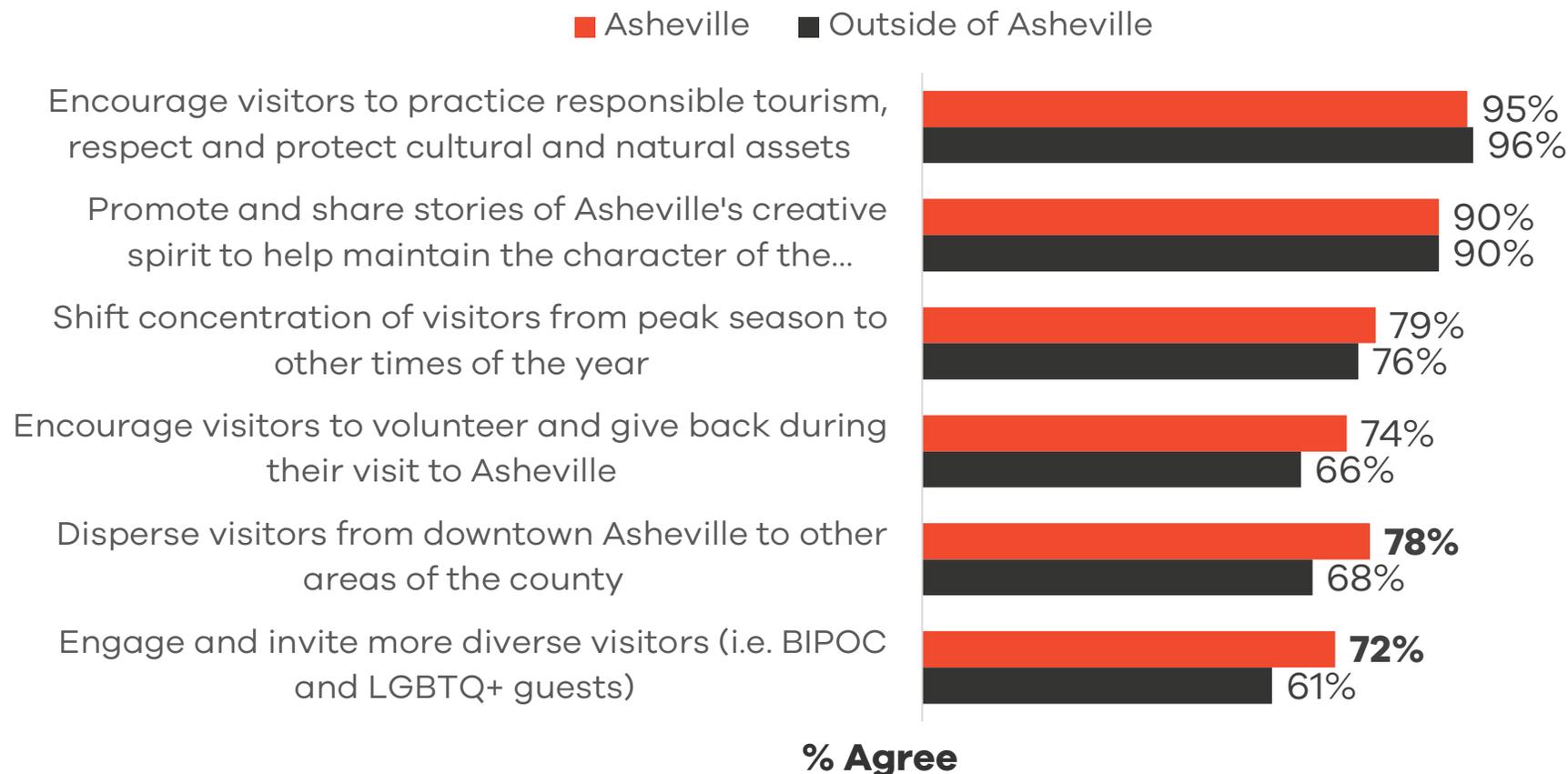
Negative Statements Related to Quality of Life <i>% Completely/Somewhat Agree</i>	Asheville	Outside of Asheville
There are parking supply problems because of people visiting the community.	87%	75%
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area.	90%	80%
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer housing options for year-round residents.	82%	73%
Buncombe County's economy is too dependent upon tourism.	74%	64%
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community.	60%	46%
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment.	57%	46%
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions.	50%	43%
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources.	51%	37%
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community.	53%	35%

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from City of Asheville Residents.

Key Insight ^{no.} 7: While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

Significantly more Asheville residents believe it is important to encourage visitors to volunteer, disperse visitors from downtown Asheville to other areas of the county and to engage and invite more diverse visitors.

Q. How important do you believe each of the following initiatives are for managing visitors to and in your community?



Data in bold indicate a significant difference from City of Asheville Residents.

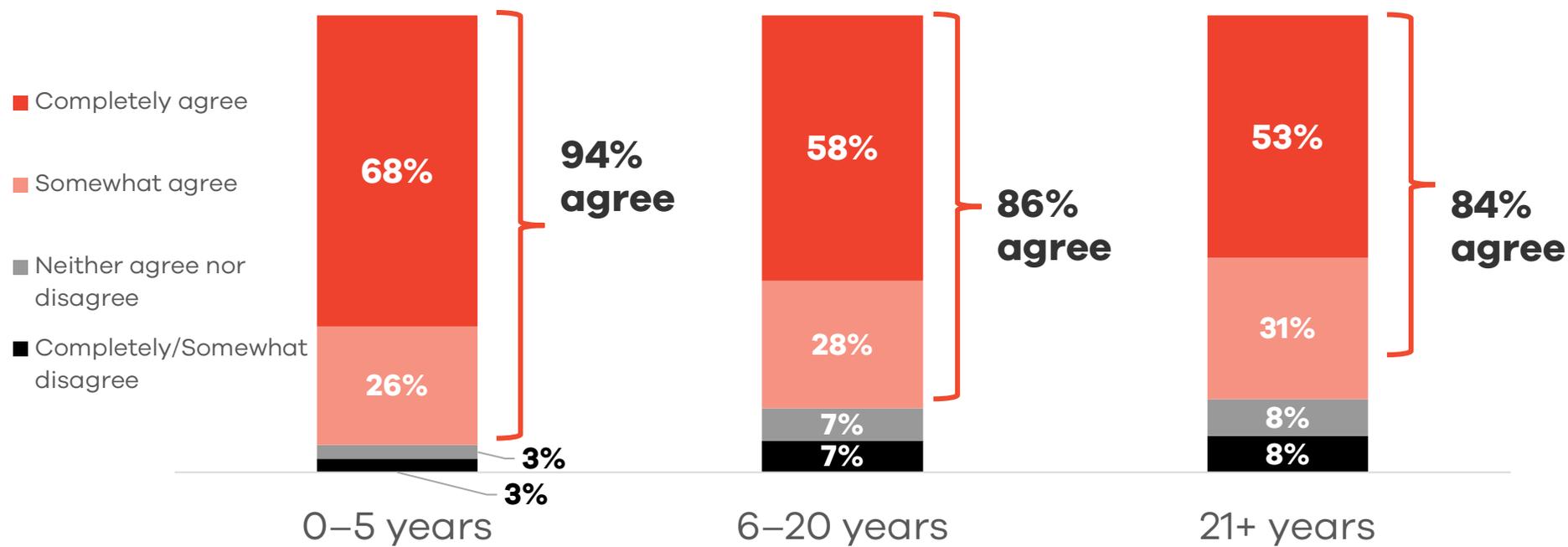
Key Insight ^{no.} **8**

Length of residency has an impact on the view of tourism, with newer residents more likely to see tourism as beneficial to the community.

Key Insight ^{no.} 8: Length of residency has an impact on the view of tourism, with newer residents more likely to see tourism as beneficial to the community.

- 84% of Asheville residents who have resided in Asheville for more than 20 years agree that tourism is beneficial to their community, compared to 94% of new residents.

Tourism is beneficial to my community.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement:
"Tourism is beneficial to my community"

Key Insight ^{no.} 8: Length of residency has an impact on the view of tourism, with newer residents more likely to see tourism as beneficial to the community.

- Half of long-term (21+ years) residents of Asheville believe tourism positively impacts their family, compared to seven in 10 of new residents (0–5 years).

Positive Statements Related to Economic Impact % Completely/Somewhat Agree	0–5 years	6–20 years	21+ years
Tourism is an economic driver for Buncombe County and provides an important part of the tax base.	94%	92%	90%
Visitors coming to Asheville for vacation or conferences may be inspired to move or start a business here.	93%	90%	91%
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, entertainment opportunities.	97%	92%	93%
The number of visitors to our area helps attract and support more airlines and direct flights for residents.	96%	90%	91%
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community.	91%	87%	87%

Positive Statements Related to Quality of Life % Completely/Somewhat Agree	0–5 years	6–20 years	21+ years
Our visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities such as parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy.	91%	81%	79%
Visitors help make festivals and sports events in my community more successful.	92%	86%	91%
Residents who have vacation rentals in my community earn supplemental income that helps their quality of life.	89%	86%	88%
Tourism positively impacts me and my family.	70%	66%	55%

Key Insight ^{no.} 8: Length of residency has an impact on the view of tourism, with newer residents more likely to see tourism as beneficial to the community.

- Mid-term (6-20 years) residents of Asheville are particularly concerned about traffic congestion associated with tourism, as well as short-term rentals leaving fewer housing options for year-round residents.

Negative Statements Related to Quality of Life <i>% Completely/Somewhat Agree</i>	0–5 years	6–20 years	21+ years
There are parking supply problems because of people visiting the community.	80%	82%	79%
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area.	76%	90%	84%
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer housing options for year-round residents.	73%	83%	74%
Buncombe County's economy is too dependent upon tourism.	61%	71%	70%
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community.	45%	57%	51%
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment.	44%	59%	46%
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions.	35%	57%	43%
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources.	36%	53%	37%
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community.	36%	50%	40%

Key Insights Summary and Additional Findings

Key Insight ^{no.} 1

Residents agree even more so than previous years that tourism is beneficial to community. Nearly nine in 10 residents believe tourism has a positive economic impact including creating entrepreneurial opportunities and support for independent businesses.

Key Insight ^{no.} 2

Asheville residents take great pride in their community, emphasizing diversity and inclusion, how the community rallies together and the culture and character of Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 3

While parking and traffic congestion problems remain the primary concerns for Asheville residents, the impact of short-term rentals on housing options for year-round residents has increased.

Key Insight ^{no.} 4

Natural greenspaces and protecting the environment are important aspects of Asheville for residents, and 8 in 10 agree the visitor economy helps supports these natural and cultural amenities.

Key Insight ^{no.} 5

Supporting local businesses is important to Asheville residents, and most expect the same of visitors to Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 6

There is continued opportunity to educate residents about how taxes paid by visitors are used to benefit residents.

Key Insight ^{no.} 7

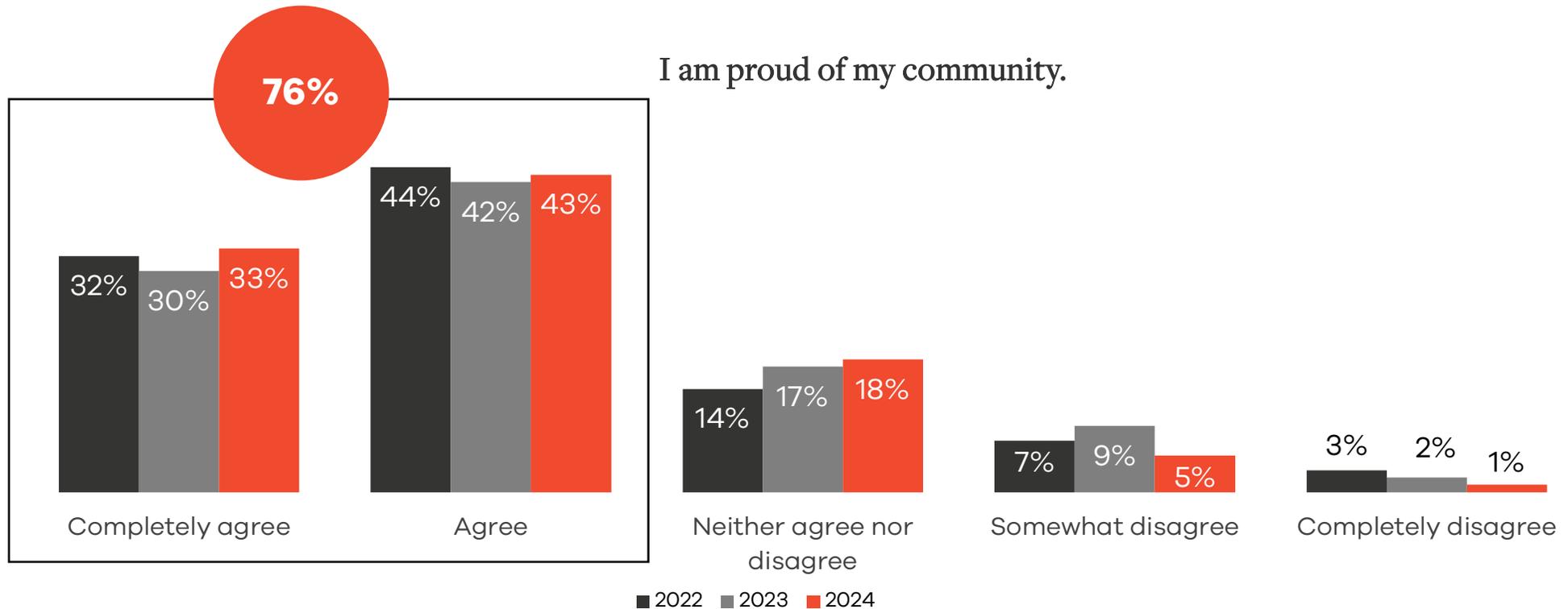
While Asheville city residents agree that tourism has an overall positive economic impact, they also are more likely to highlight the challenges that impact their day-to-day life, such as parking supply problems and traffic congestion.

Key Insight ^{no.} 8

Length of residency has an impact on the view of tourism, with newer residents more likely to see tourism as beneficial to the community.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

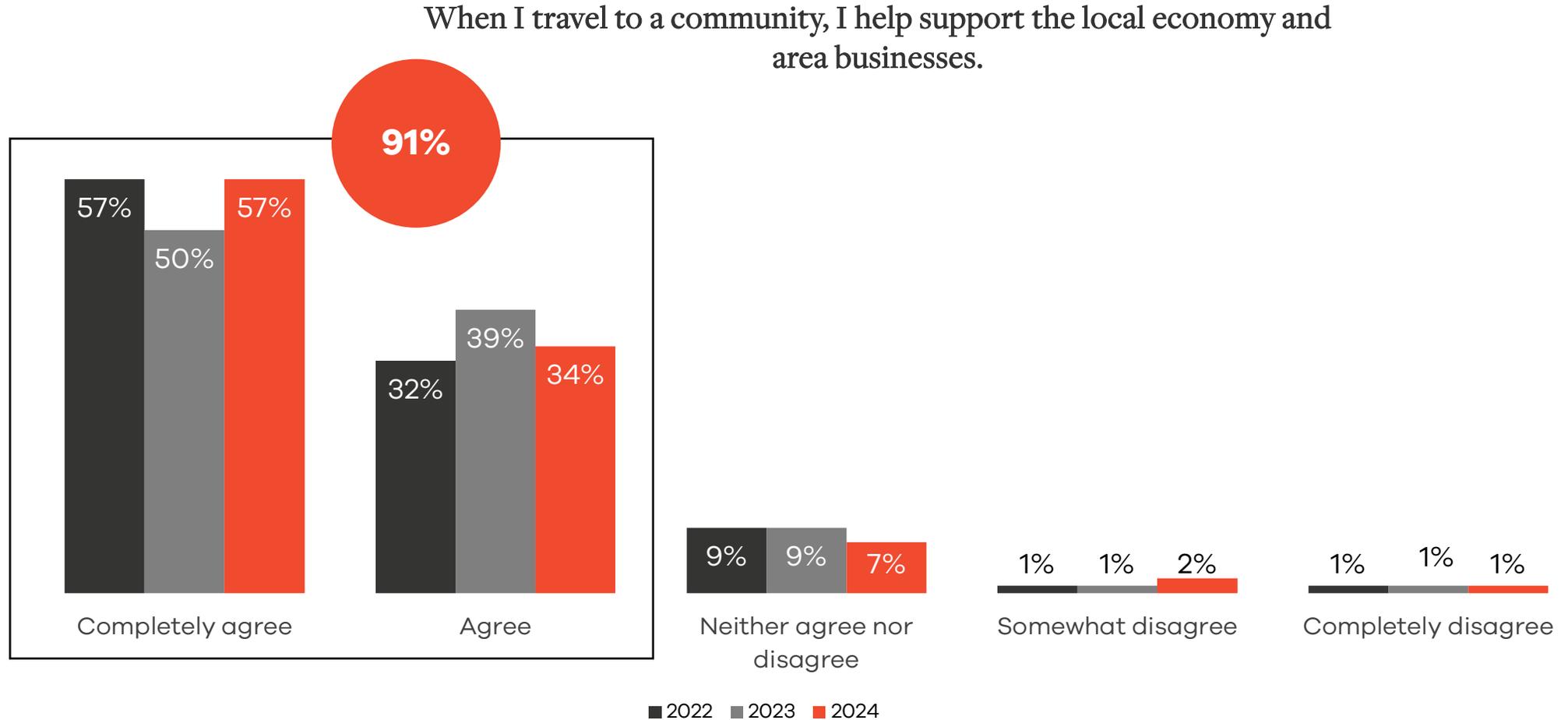
- Three-quarters of residents agree that they are proud of their community.
- Respondents were asked on an open-ended basis, why they were or were not proud of their community.
 - The responses for why they are proud primarily fit in the following categories: the people and the community, progressive politics, the natural beauty, safety and diversity and inclusion.
 - The responses from those who indicated they were not proud of their community are focused around homelessness, increased costs, over-development and crime.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? *I am proud of my community*
 Verbatim open-end responses will be delivered as a separate document.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Nine in 10 of Asheville residents agree that when they travel to a community, they help support the local economy and area businesses.

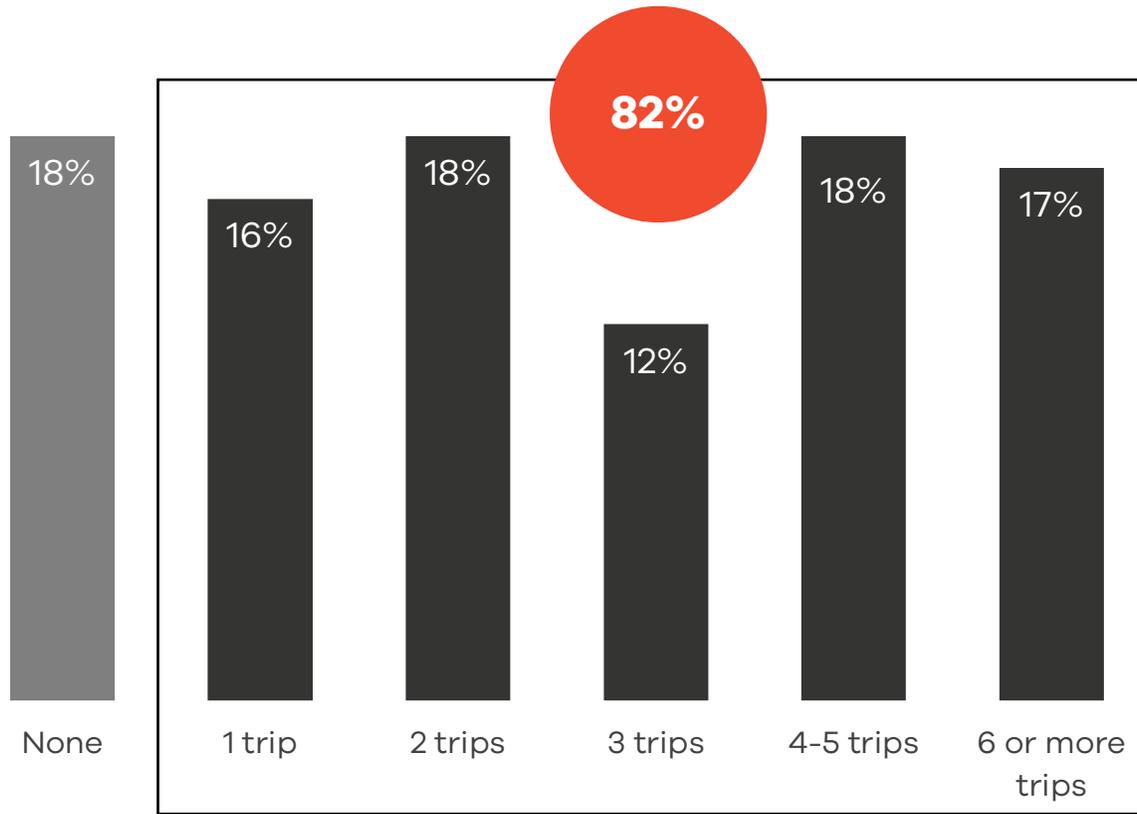


Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that when you travel to a community, you help support the local economy and area businesses?

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Eight in 10 residents have taken a leisure trip within the past 12 months.
- The rate of trips is higher for those who have lived in Asheville for 6–20 years, with a quarter taking more than six trips within the past 12 months.

Number of leisure trips



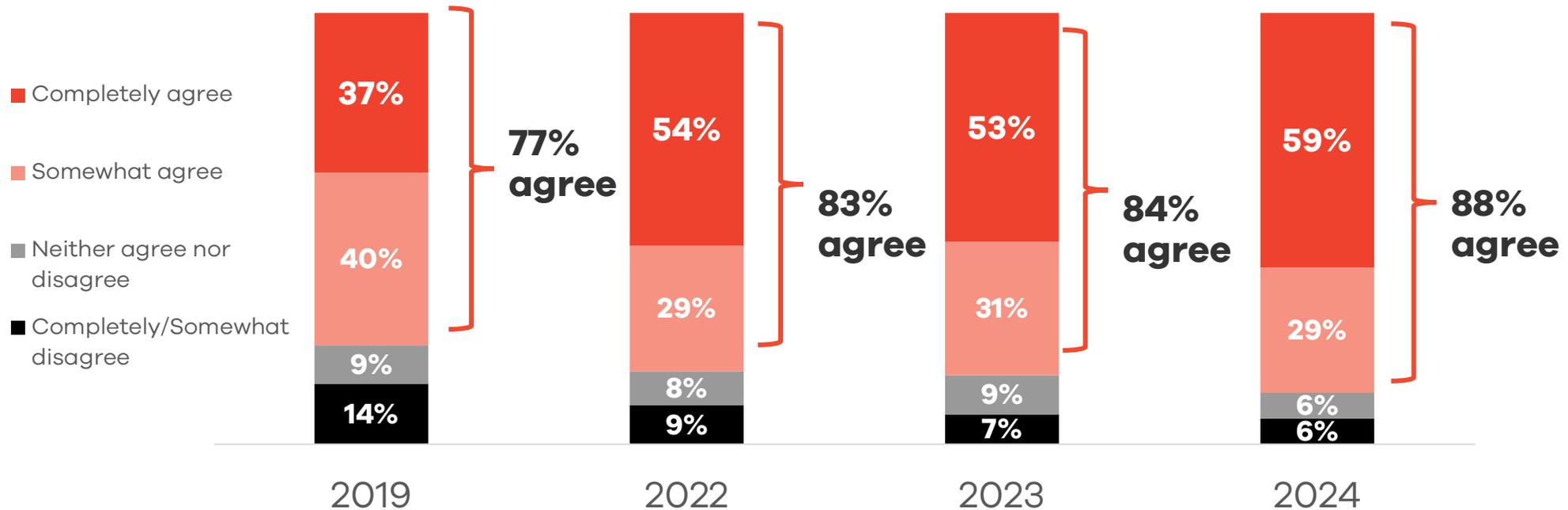
	Average Number of trips
Live within the city of Asheville	3.73
Live outside the city of Asheville	3.45
Resident for 0–5 years	3.06
Resident for 6–20 years	4.74
Resident for 21+ years	2.75
Tourism is at least somewhat beneficial to job	4.04
Tourism has no benefit to job	3.32

Q. How many leisure trips or vacations have you taken in the last 12 months? A leisure trip or vacation is any trip for enjoyment that included an overnight stay or a day trip that was more than 50 miles from home.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- In 2019, the statement was worded slightly differently– “Tourism is **good** for the community.” If comparing to 2019, the percentage who agree with this statement increased significantly.
- The initial increase could be in response to experiencing significant loss of tourism and hospitality jobs during the pandemic. However, the response has continued to increase, indicating residents still believe tourism is beneficial at a significantly higher rate than they did in 2019.

Tourism is beneficial to my community.



Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement:
“Tourism is beneficial to my community”

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Significantly more residents agree that tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and visitors help support independent businesses than did so in 2019.

Positive Statements Related to Economic Impact

% Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	2024	Change
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community. ¹	79%	89%	80%	88%	+8 ▲
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, and entertainment opportunities.	88%	89%	88%	94%	+6 ▲

Negative Statements Related to Quality of Life

% Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	2024	Change
We have traffic congestion problems due to the number of people visiting the area. ²	85%	74%	79%	84%	+5 ▲
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions. ⁴	63%	45%	42%	46%	+4
There are parking problems because of people visiting the community. ³	88%	76%	77%	80%	+3
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources. ⁵	52%	37%	41%	43%	+2

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2023.

2019 Question Wording

- ¹ Tourism helps small businesses in my community
- ² Because we have too many people visiting the area, we have traffic problems.
- ³ There are problems with parking because of people visiting the community
- ⁴ Locals can't enjoy my community because of all the people visiting
- ⁵ People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources

2022 Question Wording

- ¹ I believe tourism supports jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities that people in my community need.
- ² I believe we have traffic problems due to the number of people visiting the area.
- ³ I believe there are parking problems because of people visiting the community.
- ⁴ I believe residents can't enjoy my community and amenities because of the number of people visiting.

Note: Prior to 2023 all statements began with "I believe..."

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Sources Regularly Relied on for Local News	Total	Asheville	Outside of Asheville
WLOS-TV	65%	56%	71%
Citizen-Times	47%	50%	44%
Facebook	44%	48%	41%
Mountain Xpress	40%	43%	37%
AVLtoday	19%	23%	16%
Nextdoor App	19%	20%	18%
Online source such as Google News	19%	21%	17%
Blue Ridge Public Radio	16%	18%	15%
Asheville Politics or other local Facebook groups	16%	20%	12%
Asheville Watchdog	15%	18%	13%
Other Asheville area radio station	12%	12%	12%
WWNC Radio/570	11%	7%	14%
Ashvegas	10%	12%	9%
The Laurel of Asheville	9%	7%	9%
Asheville Blade	6%	7%	5%
The Urban News	6%	11%	2%
WPVM/103.5	5%	8%	4%
Carolina Public Press	5%	7%	3%
The Tribune Papers	4%	4%	4%
Other	5%	7%	4%
I don't follow local news	5%	4%	5%

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from City of Asheville Residents.

Q. Which sources do you regularly rely on for local news?

Consider each source to be inclusive of its digital version.

Demographics

DEMOGRAPHICS

	Total
Identify As:	
Female	55%
Male	43%
Other/prefer not to answer	1%
Age	
18 – 24 years old	7%
25 – 34 years old	18%
35 – 44 years old	24%
45 – 54 years old	18%
55 – 64 years old	16%
65+ years old	17%
Children under 18 in household	47%

	Total
Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian/White	90%
African American/Black	4%
Latino/Hispanic	4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2%
Asian	2%
Other/prefer not to answer	3%
Household Income	
Less than \$35,000	21%
\$35,000 – \$49,999	20%
\$50,000 – \$74,999	17%
\$75,000 – \$99,999	15%
\$100,000 – \$149,999	15%
\$150,000 or more	8%
Prefer not to answer	5%

DEMOGRAPHICS

	Total
Political Affiliation	
Independent	36%
Democrat	29%
Republican	22%
Other/None of these	9%
Prefer not to answer	5%
Education	
High school or less	18%
Some college	27%
College graduate	34%
Post-graduate	20%
People Living in Household	
1 person	20%
2 people	35%
3 people	17%
4 people	16%
5+ people	11%

	Total
Employment	
Full-time, office	45%
Part-time, office	9%
Full-time, work from home	10%
Part-time, work from home	4%
Retired	20%
Student	2%
Marital Status	
Married/committed relationship	55%
Single/never married	23%
Divorced/separated	17%
Widowed	5%



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