



2024 Community Budget Study



Report of Findings

1 August 2024

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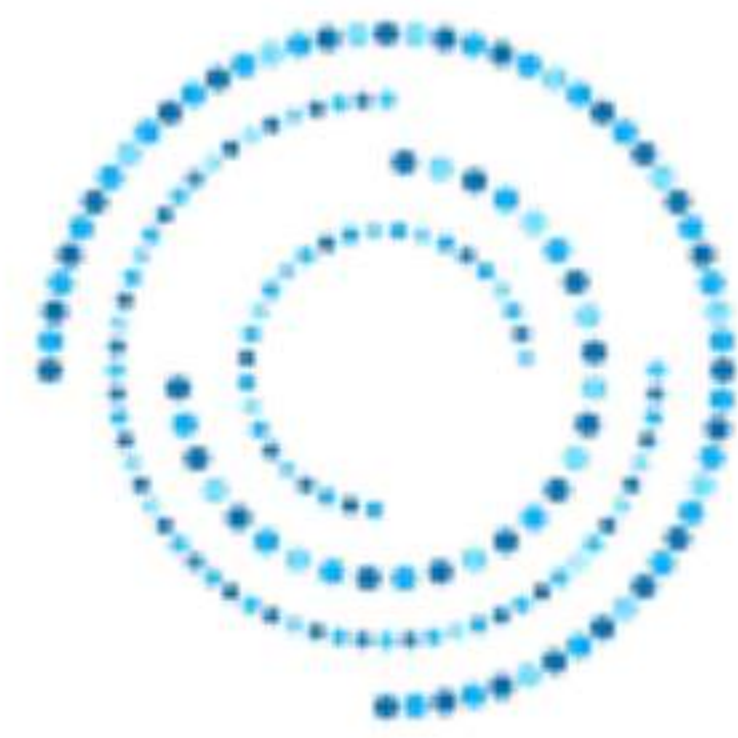
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Harnessing the Power of Data

...to help clients achieve organizational goals.

 **Data** supporting strategic decisions to improve products and services. Since 1979, our experience with study and instrument design, data collection, analysis, and formal presentation assists our clients in identifying the “why” and “what’s next.”

 **Talent** with a knowledge base in a wide range of industries and methodologies ensures a 360° view of the challenges faced and the expertise to address them.

 **Solutions** that are customized to provide a personalized approach to understanding organizational, employee, and customer needs, allowing for more informed decisions.

Methodologies:



Digital Surveys



Focus Groups



In-Depth Interviews

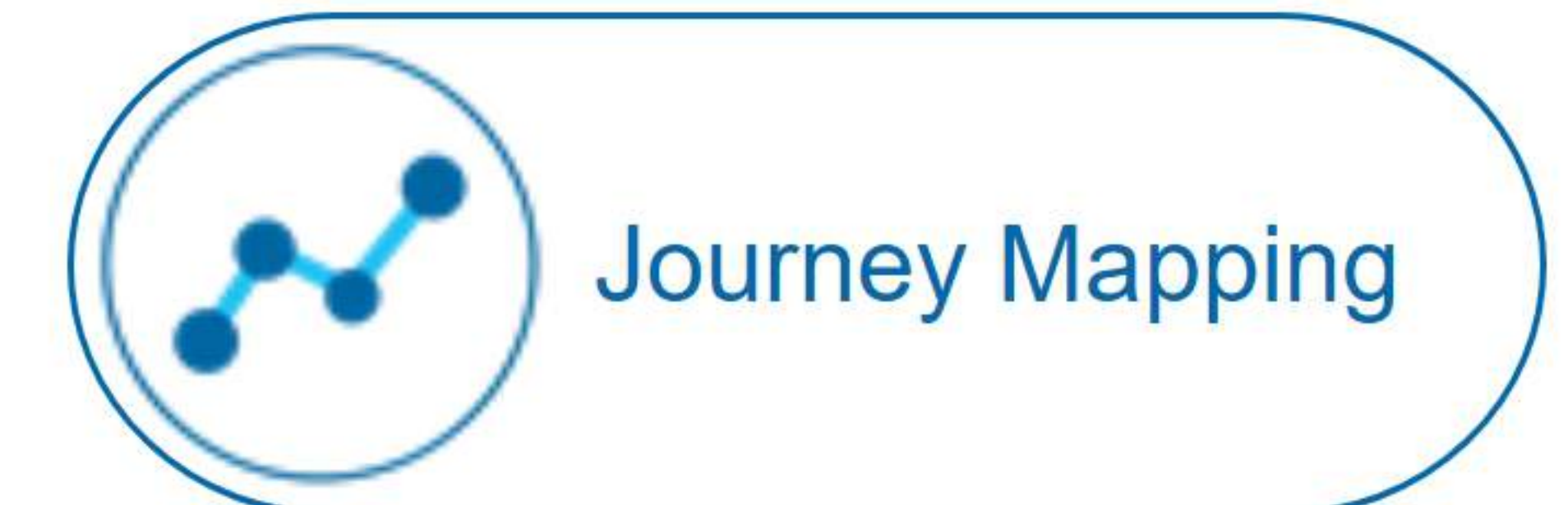
Studies:



Awareness and Perception Studies



Customer and Employee Satisfaction Studies



Journey Mapping



Creative and New Concept Testing

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Project Overview

Research Objectives

- GreatBlue Research was commissioned by the City of Sumner, WA to conduct comprehensive research among its residents to gain a deeper understanding into their preferred priorities for the future of the city and how city representatives should budget available funding and resources.
- The primary goals of this research study were to assess the quality of life among Sumner's residents as well as isolate areas of improvement.
- The outcome of this research will enable Sumner to a) more clearly understand resident expectations, b) act on near term opportunities for improvement, and c) develop a strategic roadmap to create a budget that reflects the community's needs.

Areas of Investigation in 2024

The City of Sumner Budget Study leveraged a digital research methodology to address the following areas of investigation:

- Sumner residents' quality of life
- Perceptions of Sumner
- Residential concerns with the city
- Assessment of safety
- Perceptions of future town projects
- Inputs on funding / allocating resources
- Demographic profiles of respondents



Research Methodology | Snapshot

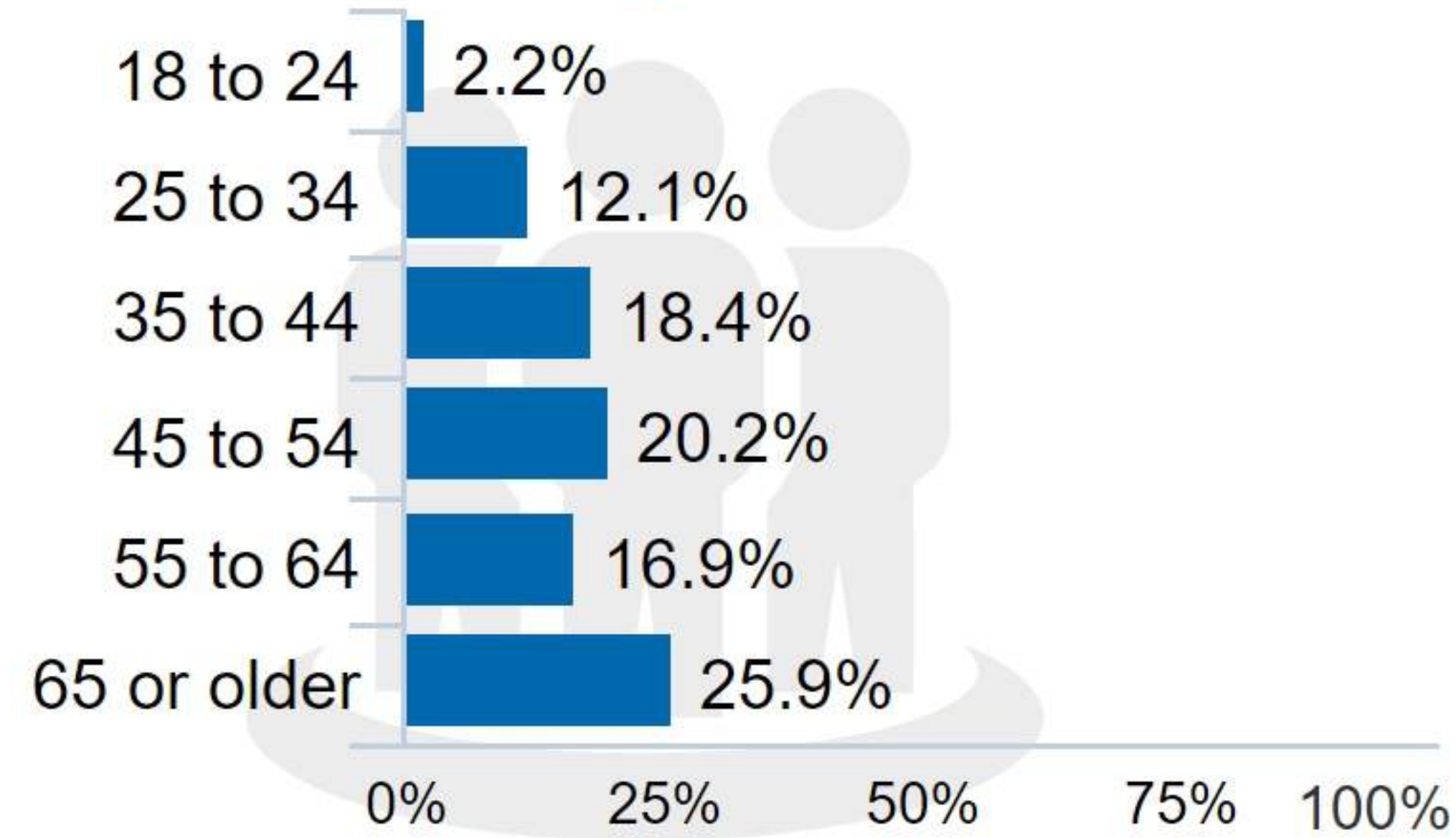
Methodology Digital (with postcard distribution)	No. of Completes 734	No. of Questions 38*	Incentive None	Sample Residential List
Target Residents & Businesses	Quality Assurance Dual-level**	Margin of Error +/- 3.49%	Confidence Level 95%	Research Dates June 20 - July 15, 2024

* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias.

** Data quality personnel, in addition to a computer-aided interviewing platform, ensure the integrity of the data is accurate.

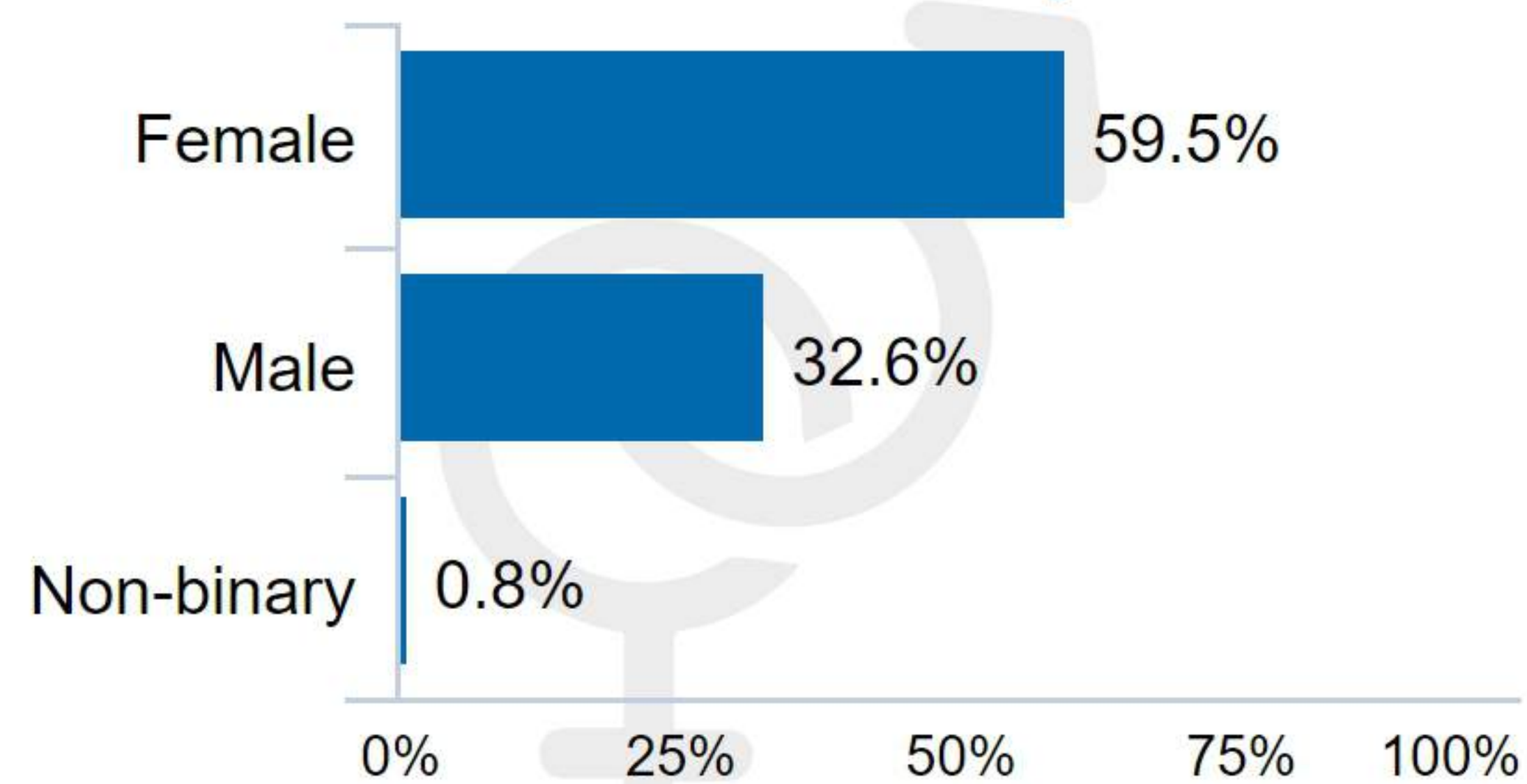
Respondent Snapshot

Age



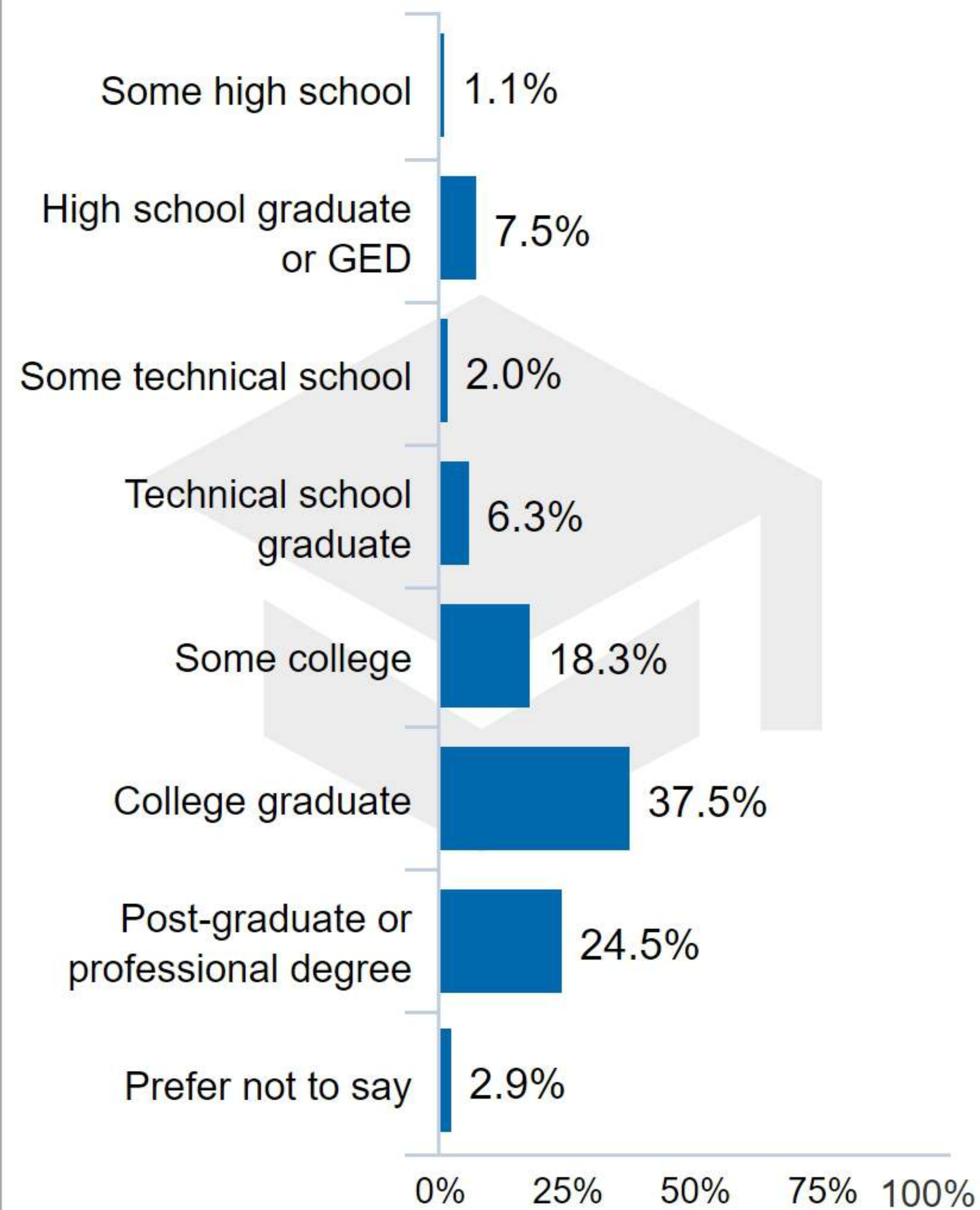
4.4% provided responses of "Prefer not to say."

Gender Identity

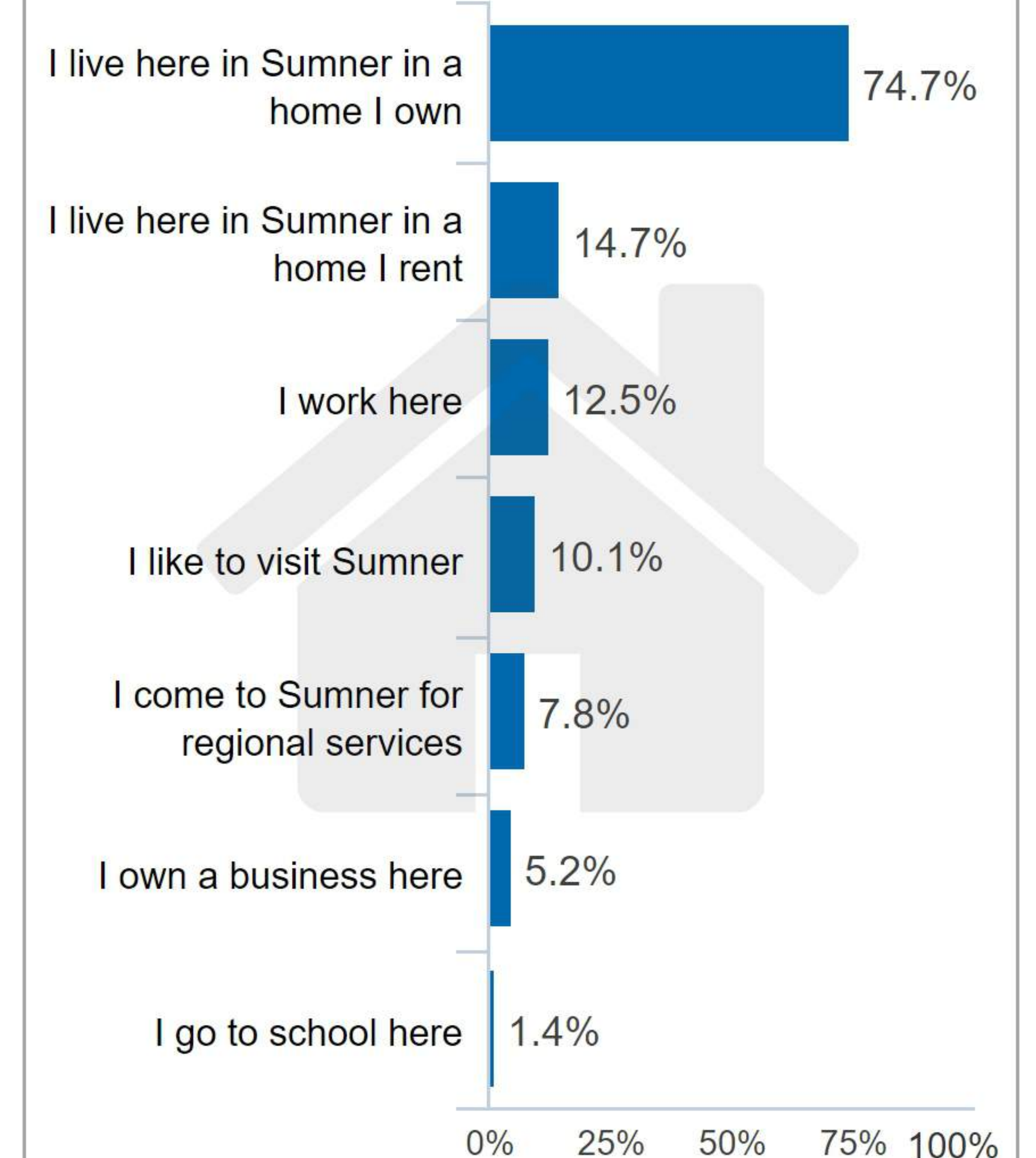


7.1% provided responses of "Prefer not to say / Refused."

Highest Education



Relationship with Sumner



Multiple responses allowed.

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Key Study Findings



Quality of Life

- 87.8% of respondents rated their overall quality of life in Sumner as either “excellent” (33.0%) or “good” (54.8%).
- Respondents ranked “Small-town atmosphere” (78.6%), “walkable (sidewalk system)” (61.2%), and “safe feeling” (48.2%) within their top 3 favorite aspects of Sumner.
- One-half of respondents reported that “location/proximity to major cities, beaches, mountains, attractions” (51.4%) and “family / friends are nearby” (50.5%) are among the main reasons for living in Sumner.
- Of the 14.9% who anticipate relocating to a new address outside of Sumner in the next five (5) years, 47.7% reported this is due to “crime concerns.”
- Respondents ranked “traffic” (80.2%), “growth and development” (77.2%), and “crime” (74.0%) as their top three greatest concerns about Sumner.



Perceptions of Sumner

- Nearly nine out of ten respondents reported being either very or somewhat satisfied with the “Senior Center” (89.0%), “quality of Sumner’s parks & trails” (88.9%), and “type & variety of community programs and events” (87.4%).
- Almost all of respondents (98.1%) reported being either “very satisfied” (73.4%) or “somewhat satisfied” (24.7%) with “Fire services by East Pierce Fire & Rescue.”
- 91.1% of respondents feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day, while 65.3% feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood at night.



Moving Forward

- Respondents provided an average of 55.9% on a scale from 0 to 100 when rating if things in Sumner are generally going in the right direction; suggesting a near-equal split on opinions.
- Respondents ranked “ensuring prompt police response” (65.3%) and “managing growth” (61.9%) as their top two (2) city project priorities.
- 52.0% of respondents prefer Sumner “stay with current options to fund even if it takes approximately 20 years to build” when considering park development.
- Nearly one-half of respondents (46.2%) reported they would prefer Sumner use one-time revenue to fund “sidewalks-repair existing / add missing segments.”
- Nearly one-third of respondents reported that “events (Daffodil Festival, Rhubarb Days, Music Off Main, etc)” are their preferred non-profit effort for funding.

Key Study Findings | Progress over Time



- When comparing the percentage of respondents who feel safe walking in their neighborhood during the day, 91.1% reported feeling safe in 2024, which is on par with the 90.0% who reported the same in 2022.
- Additionally, 65.3% of respondents reported feeling safe walking in their neighborhood at night, which is 11.1 percentage points higher than in 2022.
- Similar to 2022, respondents ranked "ensuring prompt police response time" as their number one priority. Notably, "managing growth" moved up to number two (2) in priority, supplanting "maintaining streets" since 2022.
- Respondents ranked "traffic" as their number one concern in Sumner, while "crime" and "homelessness" moved down in rank order.

Safety when walking during the day

2022*

90.0%

Safety when walking at night

54.2%

Going in the right direction

54.0%

Priorities rank order (Top 5)

1. Ensuring prompt police response time
2. Maintaining Streets
3. Managing growth
4. Maintaining parks, trails & open space
5. Protecting the environment

Concerns rank order (Top 5)

1. Crime
2. Traffic
3. Homelessness
4. Condition of roads
5. Damaged/missing sidewalks

2024

91.1%

65.3%

55.9%

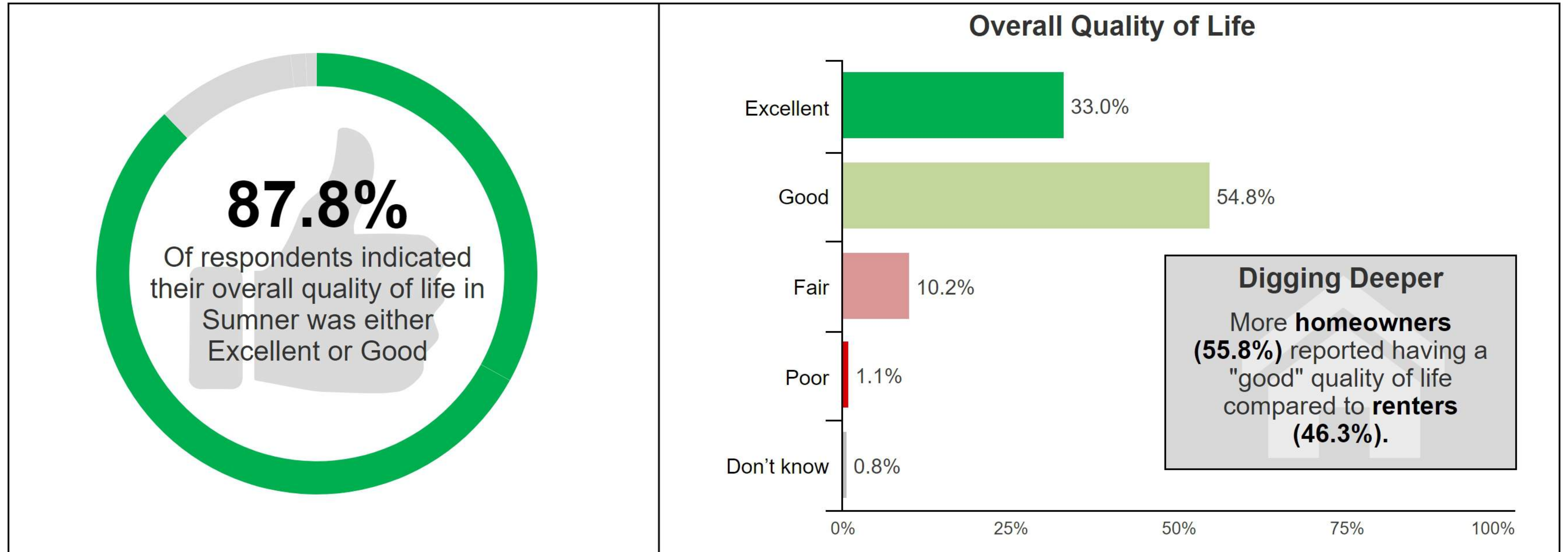
1. Ensuring prompt police response time
2. **Managing growth** ↑
3. **Maintaining streets** ↓
4. Updating utility infrastructure
5. **Promoting traffic, bike, & pedestrian safety** ↑

1. **Traffic** ↑
2. Growth and development
3. **Crime** ↓
4. **Homelessness** ↓
5. **Availability of affordable housing** ↑

* 2022 Budget Survey Report (June 17, 2022).

Quality of Life | Overall Quality Rating

Over eight out of ten respondents reported that their overall quality of life in Sumner is either "excellent" or "good," with one-third of respondents having an "excellent" quality of life. Of note, more homeowners (55.8%) reported having a "good" quality of life compared to renters (46.3%).

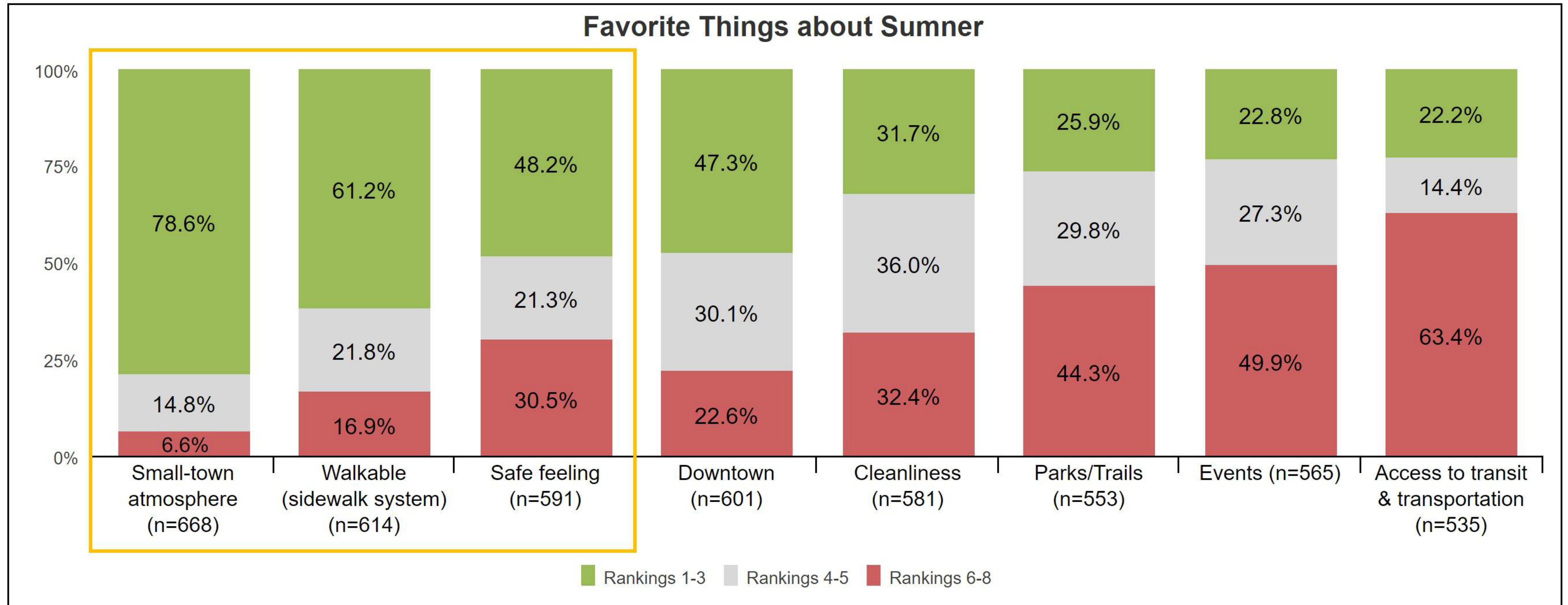


n=734

Q1: How would you rate your overall quality of life in Sumner? Would you say...

Quality of Life | Favorite Aspects of Sumner

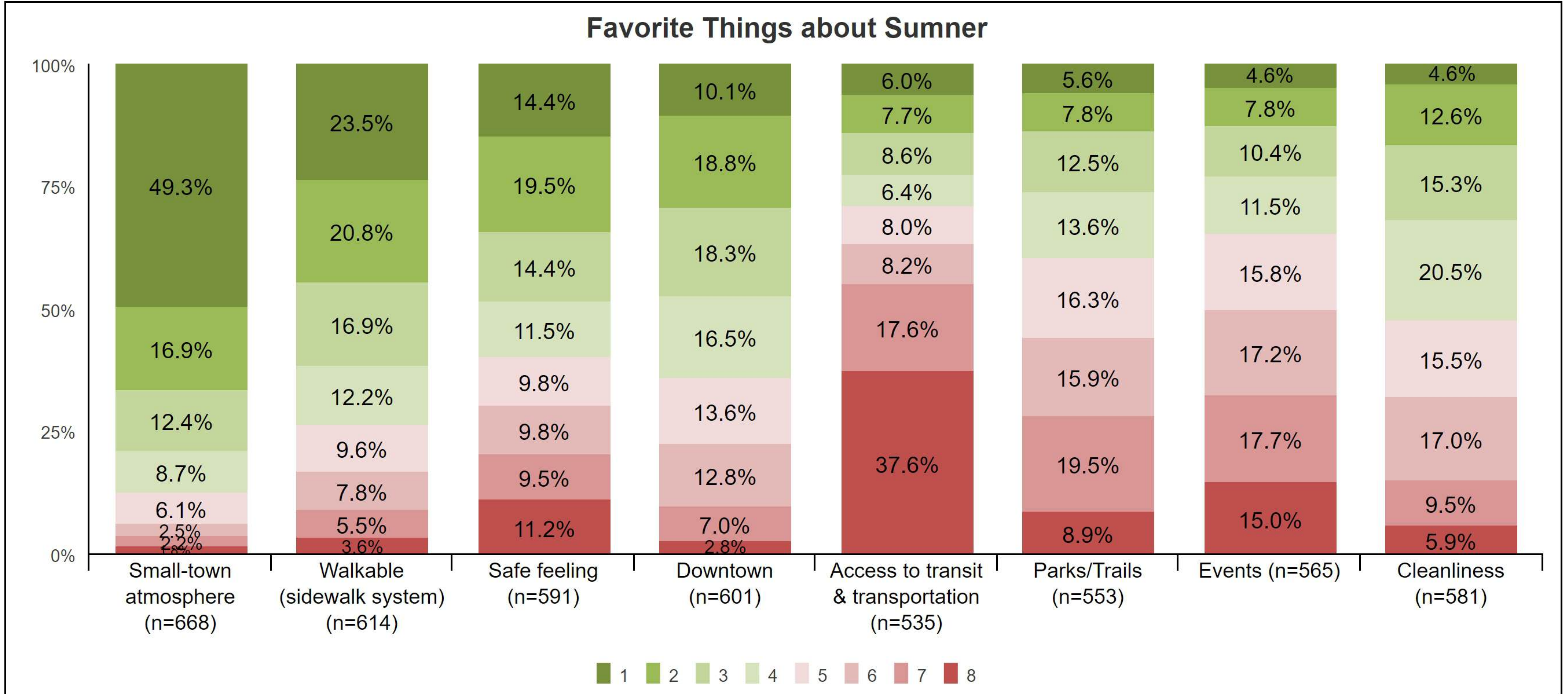
Over three-quarters of respondents ranked "small-town atmosphere" among their top three favorite things about Sumner, followed by three-fifths who ranked "walkable (sidewalk system)" in their top three. However, nearly two-thirds of all respondents ranked "access to transit & transportation" in their bottom three rankings. See full details on the rank order on the next slides.



Q2: What is your favorite thing about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your favorite.

Quality of Life | Favorite Aspects of Sumner

Favorite Things about Sumner



Q2: What is your favorite thing about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your favorite.

Quality of Life | Favorite Aspects of Sumner

Residents completing the survey via the postcard mailer ranked the "walkability" within Sumner more highly than respondents from the other distribution methods (68.8% ranked it in the top 3, compared to 55.0%). They also ranked "access to transit & transportation" slightly higher than others (26.5% ranked it in the top 3, compared to 18.9%).

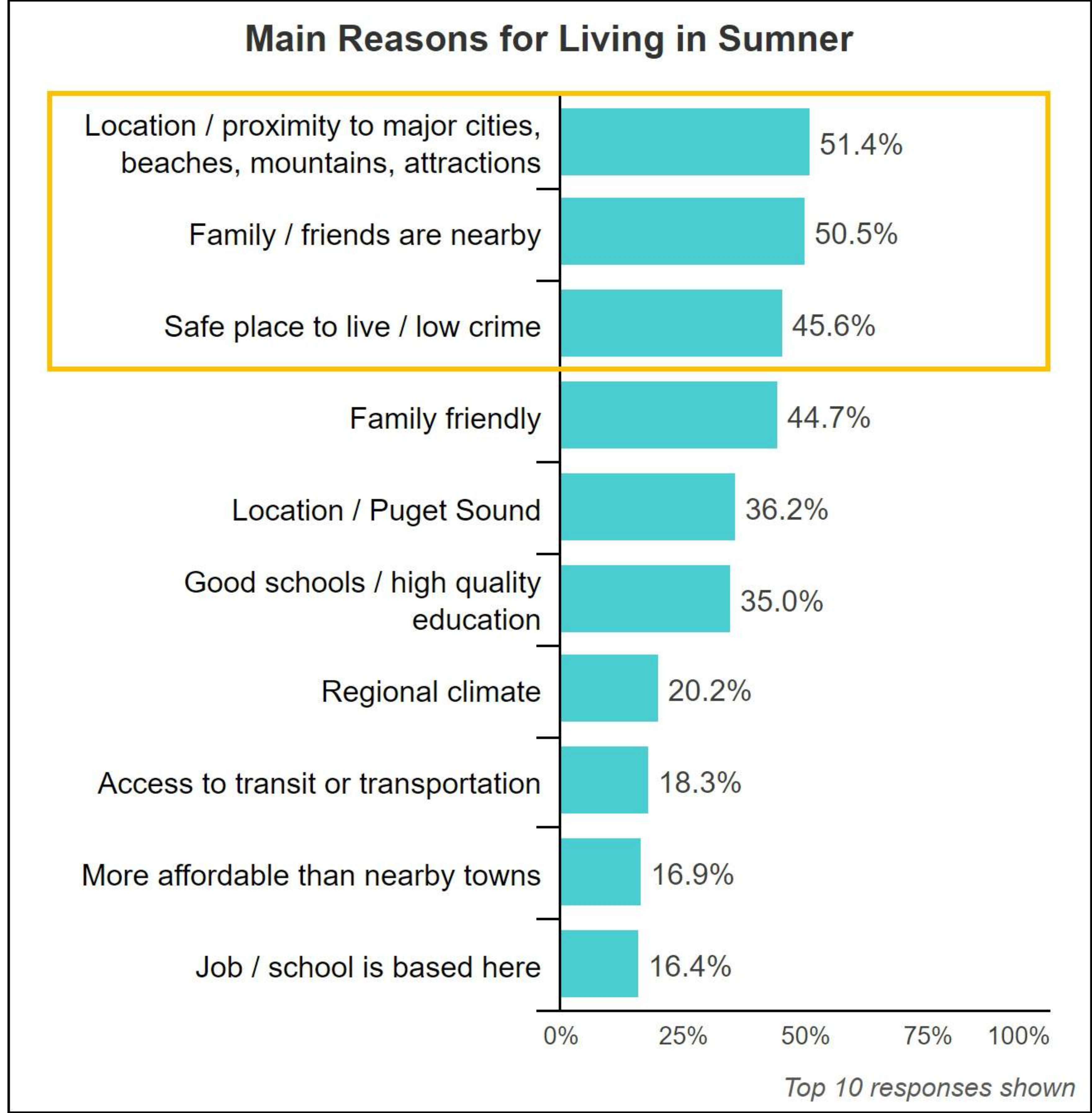
Favorite Things about Sumner

	Rankings 1-3		
	Aggregate 2024	Other Distributions	Postcard Mailer
Small-town atmosphere	78.6%	78.3%	79.0%
Walkable (sidewalk system)	61.2%	55.0%	68.8%
Safe feeling	48.2%	50.5%	45.5%
Downtown	47.3%	49.1%	44.9%
Cleanliness	31.7%	33.5%	29.4%
Parks/Trails	25.9%	23.5%	28.9%
Events	22.8%	25.3%	19.6%
Access to transit & transportation	22.2%	18.9%	26.5%

Q2: What is your favorite thing about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your favorite.

Quality of Life | Reasons for Living in Sumner

Beyond the previously ranked aspects, one-half of respondents reported that "location/proximity to major cities, beaches, mountains, and attractions" and "family/friends are nearby" are among the main reasons for living in Sumner. Additionally, nearly one-half of respondents ranked "safe place to live/low crime" as the main reason to live in Sumner.

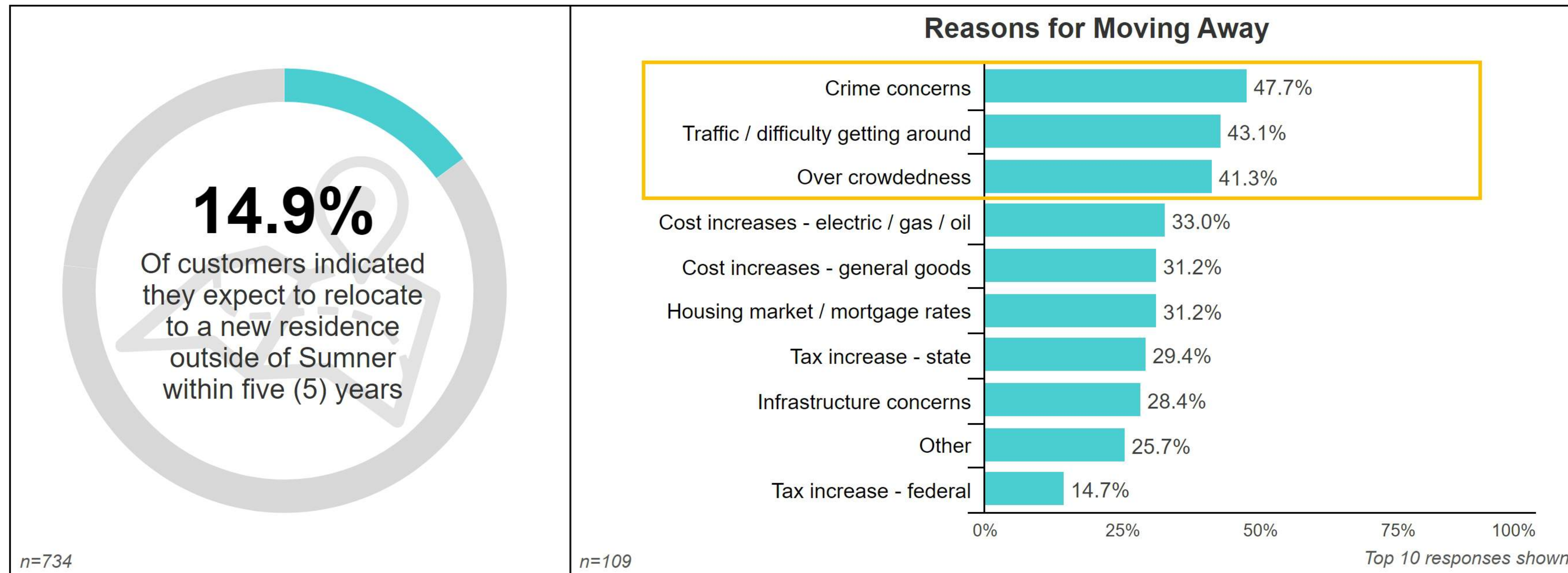


n=732

Q6: Beyond what you just ranked, which, if any, of the following are also among your main reasons for living in Sumner? Please select all that apply.

Quality of Life | Plans to Relocate Within Five Years

Nearly one-fifth of respondents plan to relocate to a new residence outside of Sumner within five (5) years. Of these respondents, roughly one-half cited their reason for wanting to relocate as "crime concerns," followed by over two-fifths who cited "traffic/difficulty getting around" or "over crowdedness" as their reason.

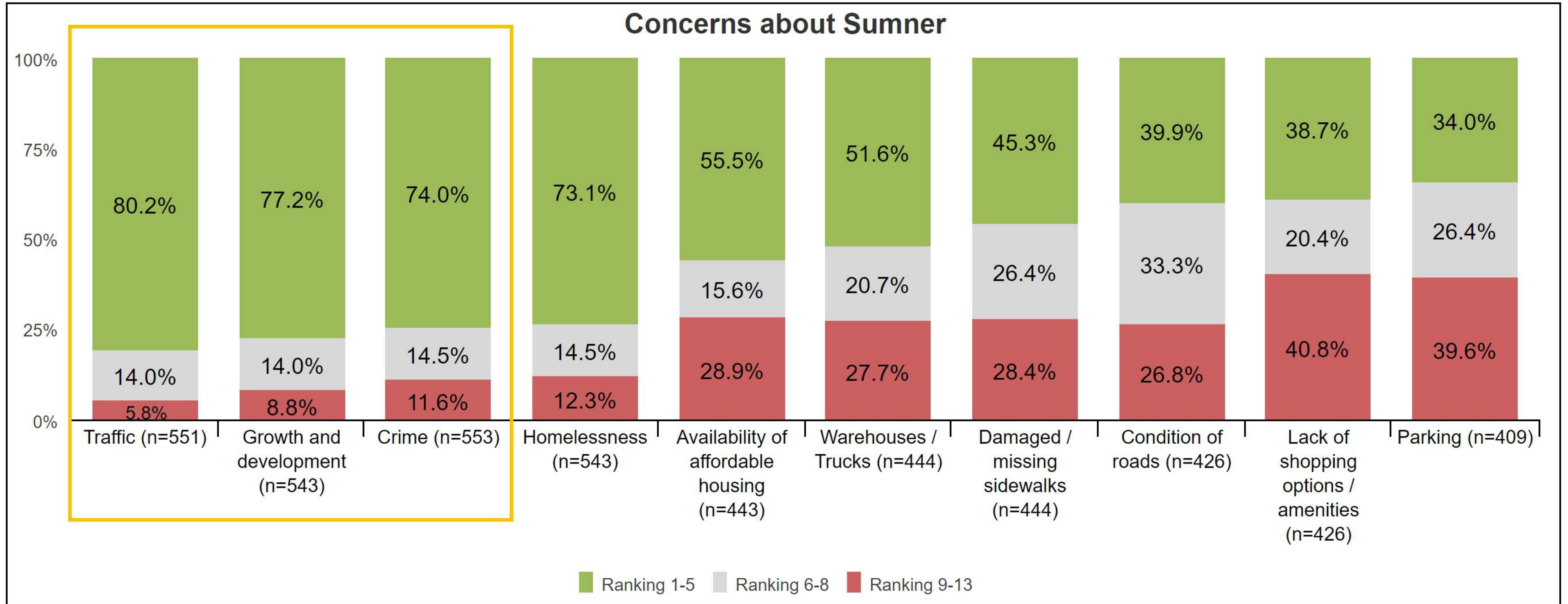


Q4: Do you anticipate relocating to a new permanent address outside of Sumner in the next five (5) years?

Q5: Please explain why. Please select all that apply.

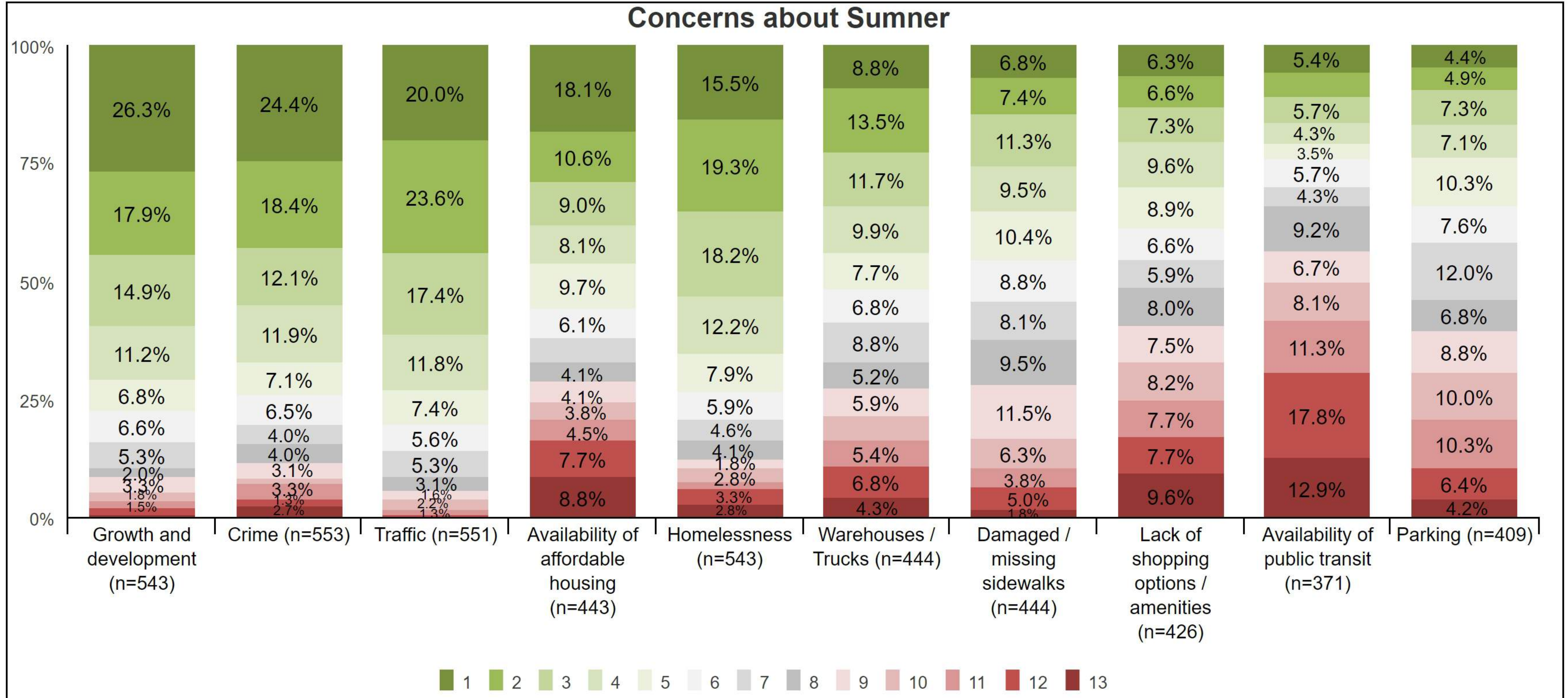
Quality of Life | Concerns About Sumner

Eight out of ten respondents ranked "traffic" among their top three concerns about Sumner, followed by "growth and development," and "crime." However, two-fifths of respondents ranked "parking" in the bottom four rankings of 9-13. See the full details on the rank order on the next slide.



Q6: Overall, what are your greatest concerns about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your greatest concern.

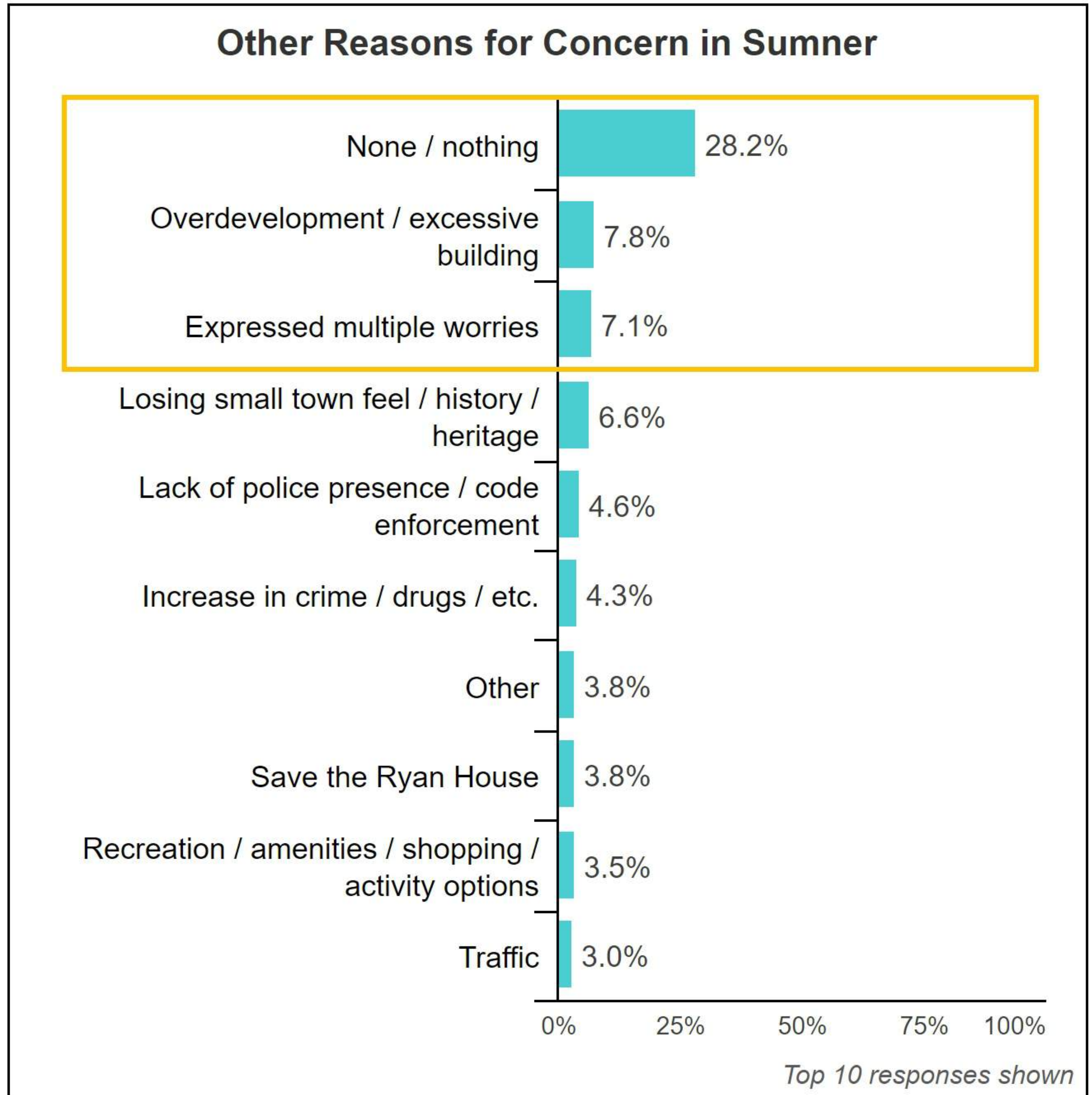
Quality of Life | Concerns About Sumner



Q6: Overall, what are your greatest concerns about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your greatest concern.

Quality of Life | Other Reasons for Concern

Over one-quarter of respondents reported that there is "nothing" else they are worried about in Sumner at the time, followed by 7.8% of respondents who cited "overdevelopment / excessive building" as a concern.




n=603

Q7: Is there anything else you're worried about that's not already on the list above? If so, please specify.

Perceptions of Sumner | Satisfaction

Of the services provided by the City of Sumner, nearly nine-out-of-ten respondents reported being either somewhat or very satisfied with the "Senior Center," the "quality of Sumner's parks & trails" and the "type & variety of community programs and events."

Also of note, more residents completing the survey via the postcard mailer were "satisfied" with the ability to get around in Sumner (+10.4 percentage points) and get to other places from Sumner (+15.1 percentage points) during commute times.



Of the 411 respondents who were either "somewhat" or "very dissatisfied" with any of the services, 31.9% cited **"traffic issues"** as the reason.

Q8-18: Overall, how satisfied are you with the following services provided by the City of Sumner? Please use a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, very dissatisfied.

Q19: If you selected somewhat or very dissatisfied for any of the above items, would you please share more with us about why you feel that way? This will help us work to understand and hopefully address the issue(s).

Aggregate of "very satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied" without "don't know / unsure" responses

	Total "Satisfied"		
	Aggregate 2024	Other Distributions	Postcard Mailer
Senior Center	89.0%	88.6%	89.9%
Quality of Sumner's parks & trails	88.9%	88.0%	90.0%
Type & variety of community programs and events	87.4%	86.6%	88.4%
Quality & taste of the drinking water	82.9%	84.1%	81.4%
Your ability to get to other places from Sumner (non-commute times)	79.9%	77.4%	82.9%
Type & variety of employers in Sumner	79.8%	80.8%	78.5%
Police services	79.3%	77.7%	81.4%
Condition of roads & streets	69.5%	68.2%	71.1%
Type & variety of restaurants, shops & services	67.8%	67.6%	68.1%
Your ability to get around Sumner (commute times)	67.5%	62.8%	73.2%
Your ability to get to other places from Sumner (commute times)	61.8%	55.0%	70.1%

Perceptions of Sumner | Satisfaction

A key theme among the highest levels of dissatisfaction was the ability to get around and the quality of roads and streets. Nearly two-fifths of respondents were "somewhat" or "very dissatisfied" with commute times from Sumner, followed by nearly one-third dissatisfied with commute times within Sumner and the condition of roads and streets.

	<i>Base size</i>	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Quality & taste of the drinking water	690	49.0%	33.9%	10.4%	6.7%
Senior Center	245	43.7%	45.3%	7.3%	3.7%
Quality of Sumner's parks & trails	694	42.7%	46.3%	8.4%	2.7%
Type & variety of community programs and events	657	38.5%	48.9%	9.9%	2.7%
Police services	672	35.3%	44.0%	14.0%	6.7%
Your ability to get to other places from Sumner (non-commute times)	711	33.2%	46.7%	15.3%	4.8%
Your ability to get around Sumner (commute times)	719	27.0%	40.5%	20.3%	12.2%
Type & variety of employers in Sumner	516	25.0%	54.8%	17.2%	2.9%
Your ability to get to other places from Sumner (commute times)	710	21.3%	40.6%	25.8%	12.4%
Type & variety of restaurants, shops & services	724	19.9%	47.9%	24.4%	7.7%
Condition of roads & streets	724	17.5%	51.9%	22.9%	7.6%

Without "don't know / unsure" responses

Q8-18: Overall, how satisfied are you with the following services provided by the City of Sumner? Please use a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, very dissatisfied.

Perceptions of Sumner | Satisfaction

Nearly all of respondents reported they are either "very" or "somewhat satisfied" with "fire services by East Pierce Fire & Rescue," followed by eight out of ten respondents who were satisfied with "schools by Sumner-Bonney Lake School District & others," and "recreation [provided] by multiple organizations."

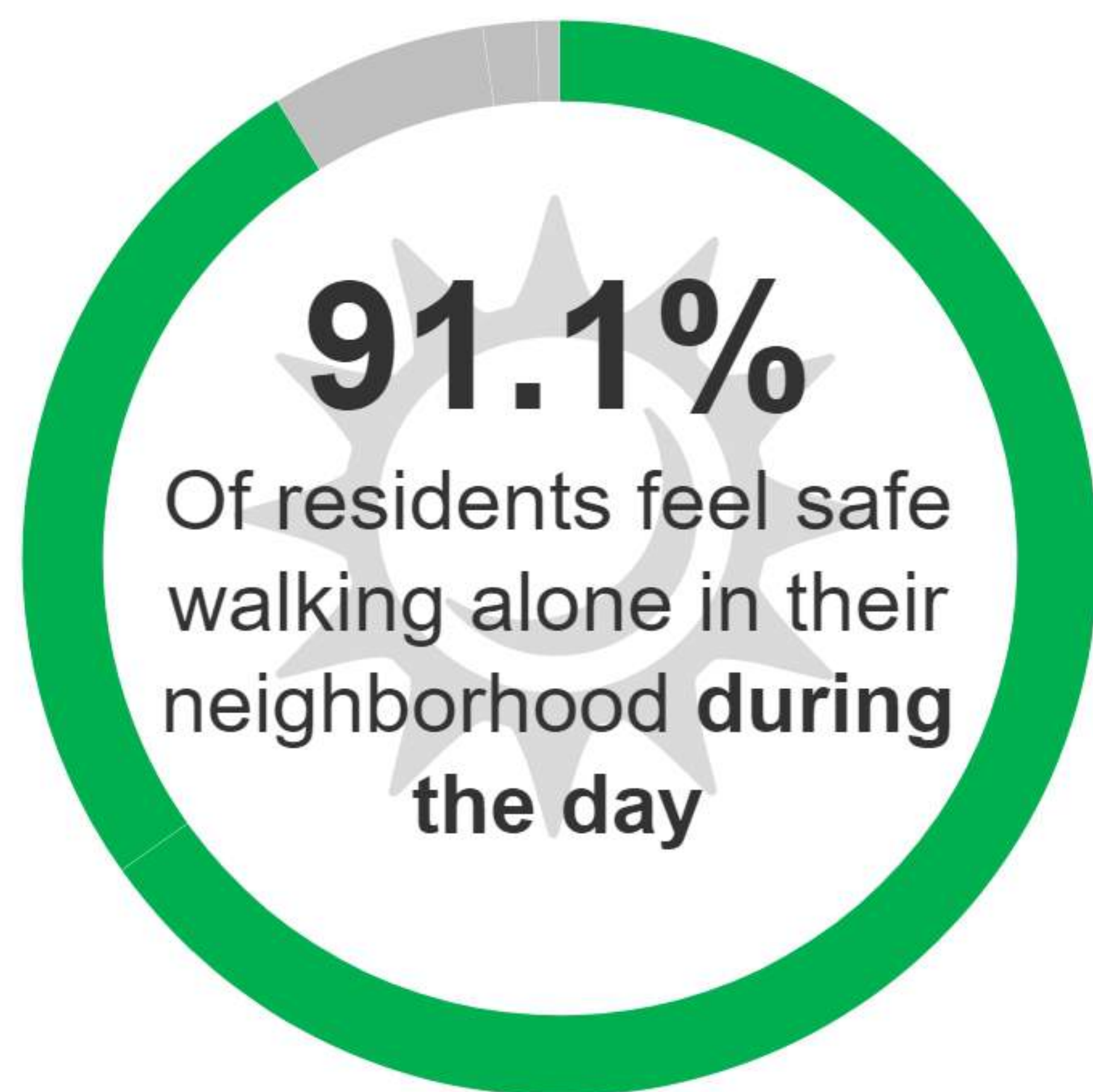
	<i>Base size</i>	Total "Satisfied"	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Fire services by East Pierce Fire & Rescue	643	98.1%	73.4%	24.7%	1.2%	0.6%
Schools by Sumner-Bonney Lake School District & others	528	83.3%	47.2%	36.2%	11.2%	5.5%
Recreation by multiple organizations	503	83.1%	31.6%	51.5%	13.1%	3.8%
Public Health services by multiple organizations	399	81.5%	25.8%	55.6%	15.0%	3.5%
Social services by multiple organizations	297	78.5%	23.2%	55.2%	15.2%	6.4%

Without "don't know / unsure" responses

Q20-24: Now, please read each of the following services available within Sumner and tell me how satisfied you are with these services provided by other organizations than the City of Sumner. Again, please use a scale of very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, very dissatisfied.

Perceptions of Sumner | Safety

In general, nine out of ten respondents reported they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the **day**. Conversely, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported that they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood at **night**. When asked to identify what makes them feel unsafe, nearly one-third cited an "increase in crime / drugs / etc.," as the main reason. However, it should also be noted that 31.0% of residents completing the survey via the postcard mailer identified the "increase in the homeless population" as a reason to feel unsafe, compared to 23.1% of respondents from the other distribution methods.



Reasons for Feeling Unsafe

	Aggregate 2024	Other Distributions	Postcard Mailer
<i>Base size</i>	204	117	87
Increase in crime / drugs / etc.	29.4%	28.2%	31.0%
Increase in homeless population	26.5%	23.1%	31.0%
Expressed multiple reasons	11.3%	11.1%	11.5%
Overall safety issue / can't walk at night / fear of the unknown	9.3%	11.1%	6.9%
Unsavory people roaming streets	8.8%	11.1%	5.7%

n=734

Q25: In general, how safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood during the day?

Q26: In general, how safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood at night?

Q27: If you can identify what makes you feel unsafe, would you please share a little more about it here?

Moving Forward | Direction of Sumner

When asked if things in Sumner are going in the right or wrong direction, respondents provided an average score of 55.9% on a 0 to 100 scale; meaning slightly more than half felt things were progressing in the "right" direction. When asked for their reasoning, one-in-ten reported that the "city is being maintained, growth managed and doing a good job."

Reasons for Slider Direction

<i>Base size</i>	651
Expressed multiple reasons	16.4%
City is being maintained, growth managed and doing a good job	10.6%
Overdevelopment / excessive building	9.8%



Standard Deviation	Median Score
25.9%	58.0%

Wrong Direction

0



Right Direction

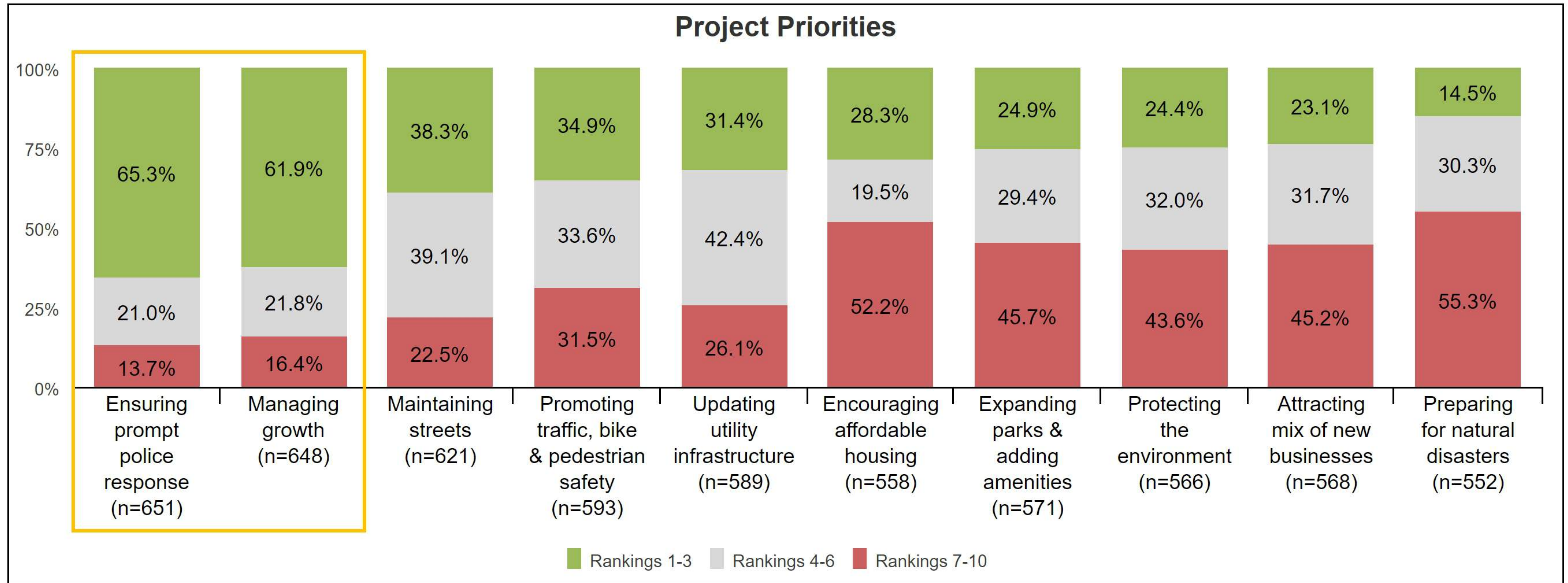
100

n=715

Q28: Do you feel things in Sumner are generally going in the right direction or wrong? Please use the slider scale below to indicate your level of agreement toward either of the options below. Placing the slider directly in the middle will indicate that you are neutral or unsure at this time.

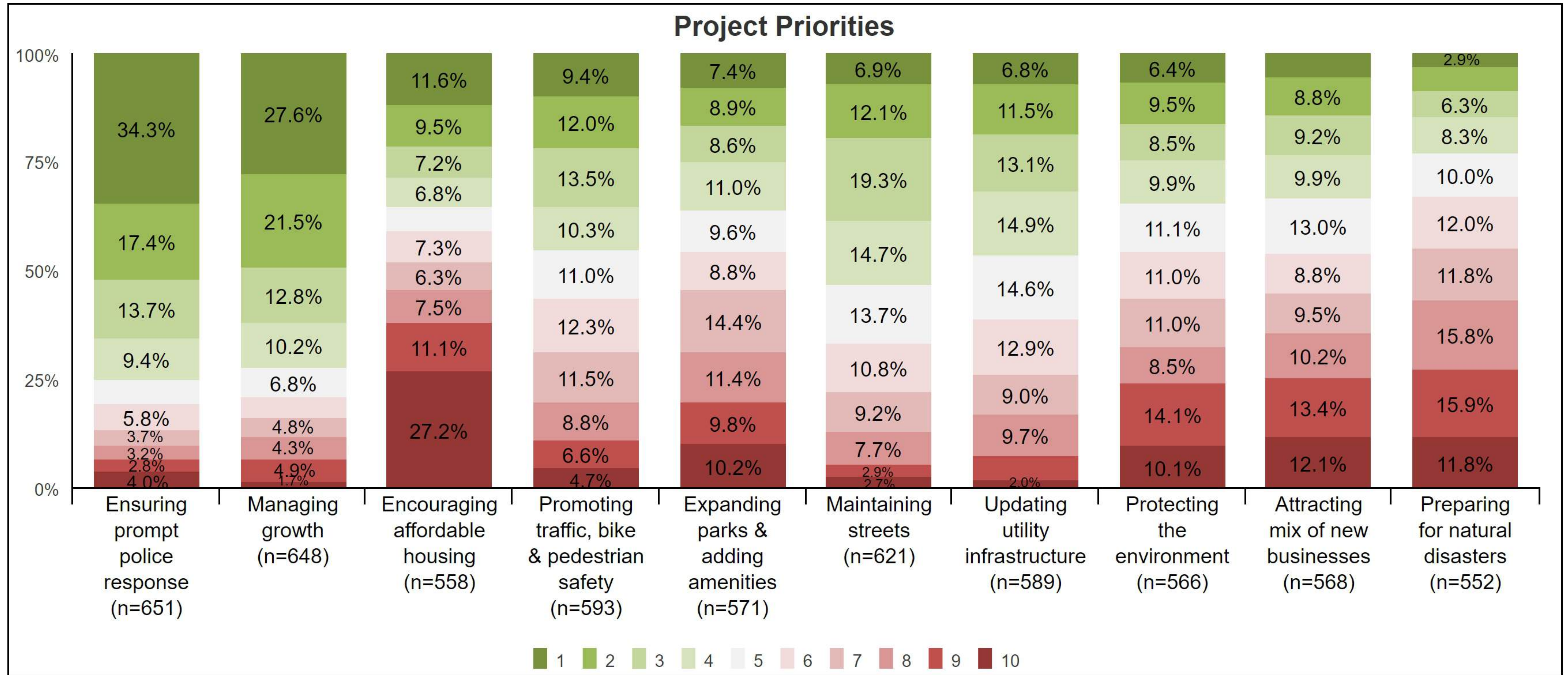
Moving Forward | City Project Priorities

Nearly two-thirds of respondents ranked "ensuring prompt police response" among their top three preferred projects, followed by three-fifths citing "managing growth." Of note, over one-half of respondents ranked "preparing for natural disasters" within the bottom four rankings of 7-10. See the full details on rank order on the next slide.



Q30: A city faces numerous priorities at once, but funding is limited. Please rank the following priorities with 1 being your top priority.

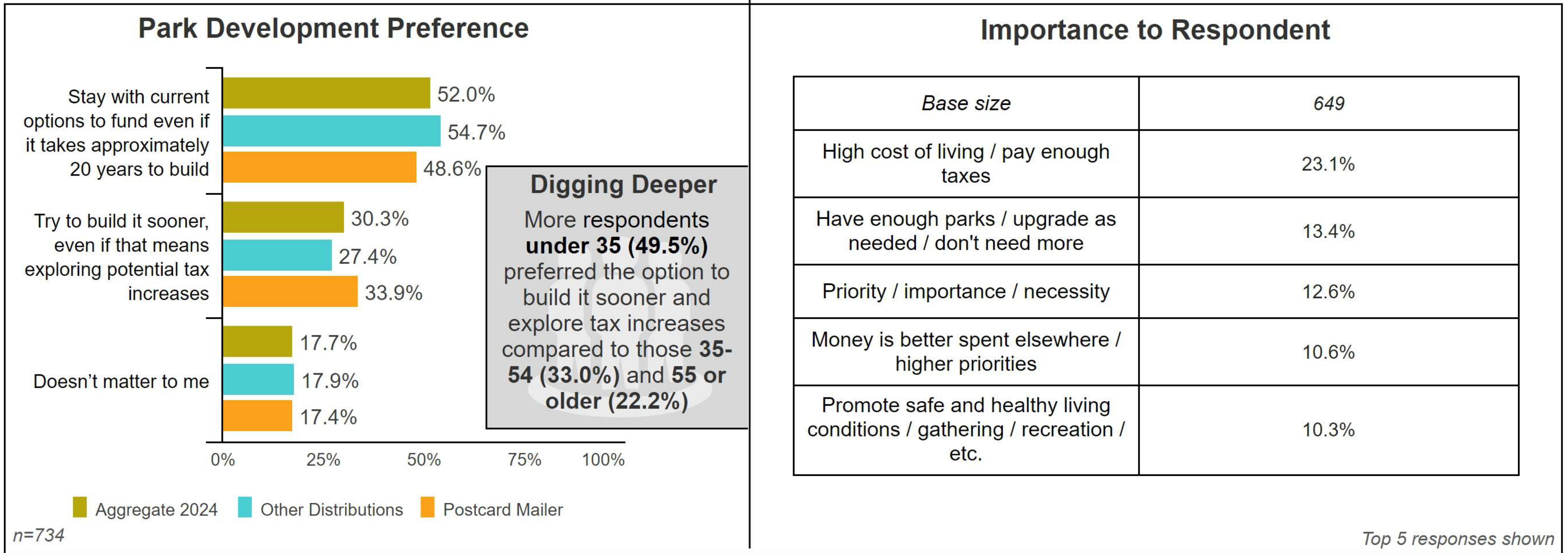
Moving Forward | City Project Priorities



Q30: A city faces numerous priorities at once, but funding is limited. Please rank the following priorities with 1 being your top priority.

Moving Forward | Park Development Timeline

When asked about new park plans, one-half of respondents reported that Sumner should "stay with current options to fund [these parks] even if it takes approximately 20 years to build." When asked why this choice is important to them, nearly one-quarter of respondents cited the current "high cost of living / pay enough taxes." However, residents completing the survey via the postcard mailer were more likely than others to want to build the parks sooner even if it meant exploring tax increases (+6.5 percentage points).



Q31: We have plans in place to develop new parks & redevelop existing parks. While these plans are exciting, they do require significant capital investment. What are your thoughts for how to proceed?

Q32: Why is this choice important to you?

Moving Forward | One-Time Revenue Project

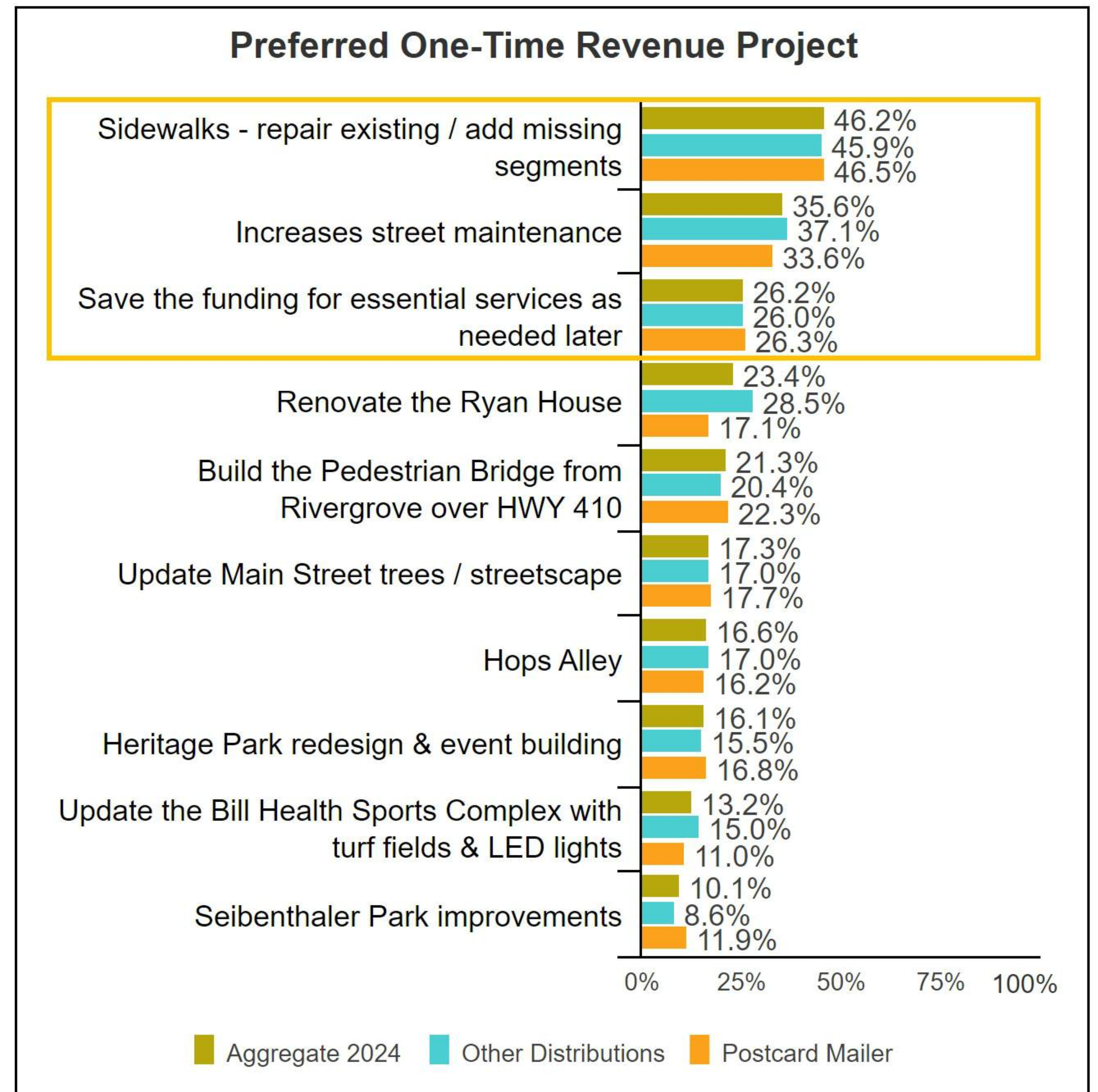
Nearly one-half of respondents would prefer Sumner uses one-time revenue to fund "sidewalks - repair existing / add missing segments," followed by over one-third who preferred "increased street maintenance." However, another one-quarter recommended that Sumner "save the funding for essential services as needed later."

Further, residents completing the survey via the postcard mailer were less likely to support renovating the Ryan House if a one-time revenue became available compared to respondents from the other distribution methods (17.1%, compared to 28.5%).



n=732

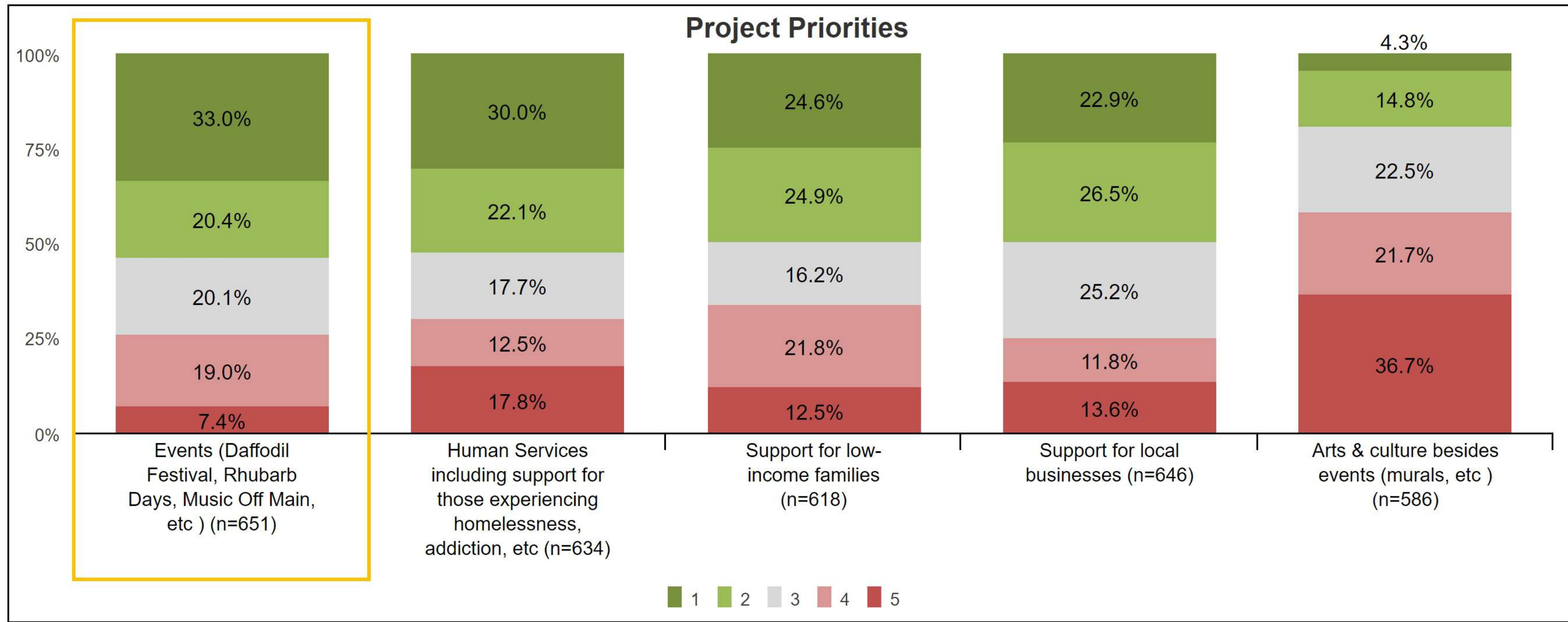
Q33: The City uses one-time revenue to fund one-time projects. If the City received one-time revenue, which of the following unfunded projects would be your preference for its use? Pick your top 3 choices.



Top 10 responses shown

Moving Forward | Non-Profit Partners

Nearly one-third of respondents ranked "events (Daffodil Festival, Rhubarb Days, Music Off Main, etc)" as their preferred priorities for funding, followed by "human services including support for those experiencing homelessness, addiction, etc."



Q34: The City supports a number of non-profit partners who offer a wide array of services, but funding is limited. In general, what's your priority for funding the following kinds of efforts? Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important.

Moving Forward | Non-Profit Partners

Residents completing the survey via the postcard mailer ranked non-profit “events” (Daffodil Festival, Rhubarb Days, etc.) lower than respondents from the other distribution methods (28.6% ranked it #1, compared to 36.4%). However, they ranked non-profit “human services” higher in their priorities than other respondents (34.5% ranked it #1, compared to 26.3%).

Project Priorities

	Ranked #1 Priority		
	Aggregate 2024	Other Distributions	Postcard Mailer
Events (Daffodil Festival, Rhubarb Days, Music Off Main, etc)	33.0%	36.4%	28.6%
Human Services including support for those experiencing homelessness, addiction, etc	30.0%	26.3%	34.5%
Support for low-income families	24.6%	24.8%	24.4%
Support for local businesses	22.9%	21.5%	24.7%
Arts & culture besides events (murals, etc)	4.3%	4.9%	3.5%

Q34: The City supports a number of non-profit partners who offer a wide array of services, but funding is limited. In general, what's your priority for funding the following kinds of efforts? Please rank in order of importance with 1 being the most important.

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Priorities for Future Budget Allocation

Traffic emerged as the top concern, with eight out of ten respondents ranking it among their top three issues, and nearly one-third expressing dissatisfaction with the condition of roads and streets. To address these concerns, budget allocation should focus on traffic management solutions, regular road maintenance, and side-walk repairs should one-time funding becomes available. Additionally, safety concerns, particularly at night, and concerns with the perceived increase in the homeless population were also prominent. Increasing funding for public safety measures—such as enhancing police presence, improving emergency response times, and supporting human services for those experiencing homelessness—could help address these issues and improve residents' overall sense of safety.

Reinforcing Strengths in Areas of High Satisfaction

Over eight out of ten respondents expressed satisfaction with the "Senior Center," "quality of parks & trails," "water quality," and "variety of community programs and events." To build on these strengths, Sumner should develop a budget to maintain and improve these valued services, resources, and amenities. This includes investing in the upkeep and enhancement of parks and trails, water quality testing, and expanding recreational programs and community events. By focusing on these areas, Sumner can reinforce strengths that contribute to residents' high quality of life and ensure continued community satisfaction.

In addition, although not controlled directly by the City of Sumner, the community also placed high value on fire services, schools, and recreational facilities. This emphasizes the importance of ongoing partnerships between these organizations and the City of Sumner to leverage each other's combined strengths. Schools and recreation facilities are great places to promote Sumner's parks, trails, and community programs/events and vice versa. This cross-promotion may also highlight all the different groups that contribute to Sumner's quality of life.

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