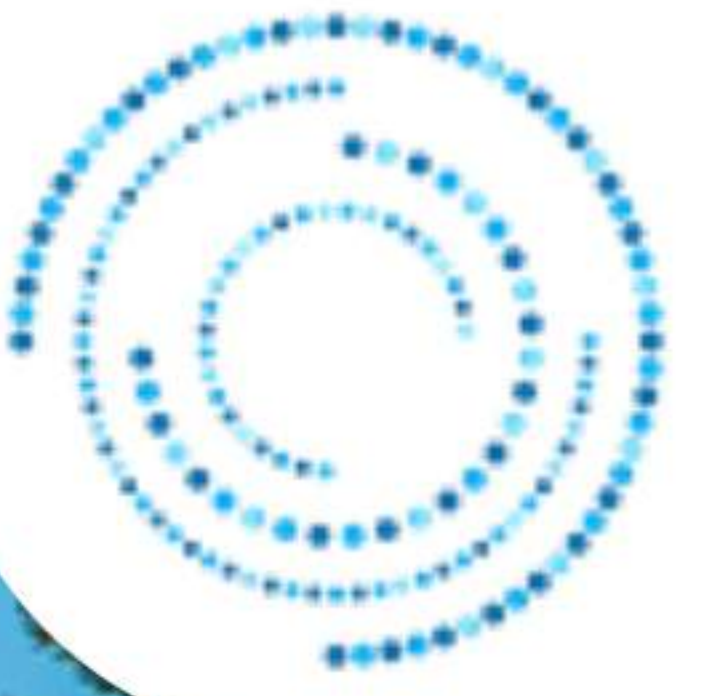




Report of Findings

2026 Community Budget Study

Table of Contents

Section One

Project Overview

Section Two

Key Study Findings

Section Three

Considerations

Section Four

About GreatBlue





Research Objectives

- GreatBlue Research was commissioned by the City of Sumner, WA, to conduct a second wave of its resident research study, designed to understand residents' priorities for the future of the city and how city representatives should allocate available funding and resources.
- Building on the 2024 baseline study, the 2026 research provides an opportunity to track changes in residents' perceptions, priorities, and concerns over time, while continuing to assess overall quality of life and identify areas for improvement.
- The findings will enable Sumner to a) monitor progress against the 2024 benchmark, b) identify emerging or shifting community needs, and c) inform near- and longer-term planning and budget decisions.

Areas of Investigation in 2026

The 2026 City of Sumner Budget Study leveraged a digital research methodology consistent with the prior wave, allowing the City to track key measures over time while exploring current resident priorities across the following areas:

- Sumner residents' quality of life
- Perceptions of Sumner
- Residential concerns with the city
- Assessment of safety
- Perceptions of future town projects
- Views on non-profit initiatives within Sumner
- Demographic profiles of respondents



Research Methodology | Snapshot

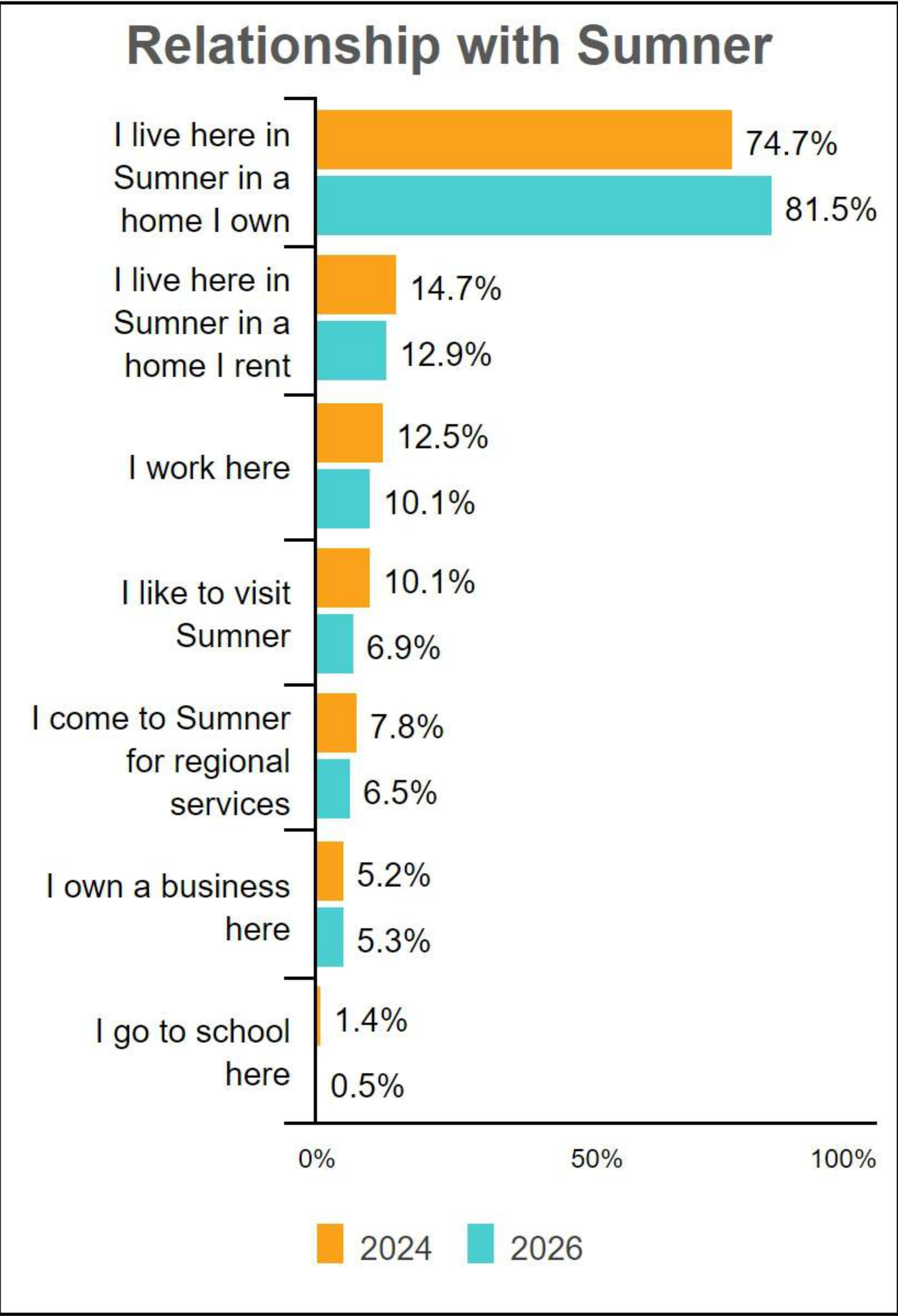
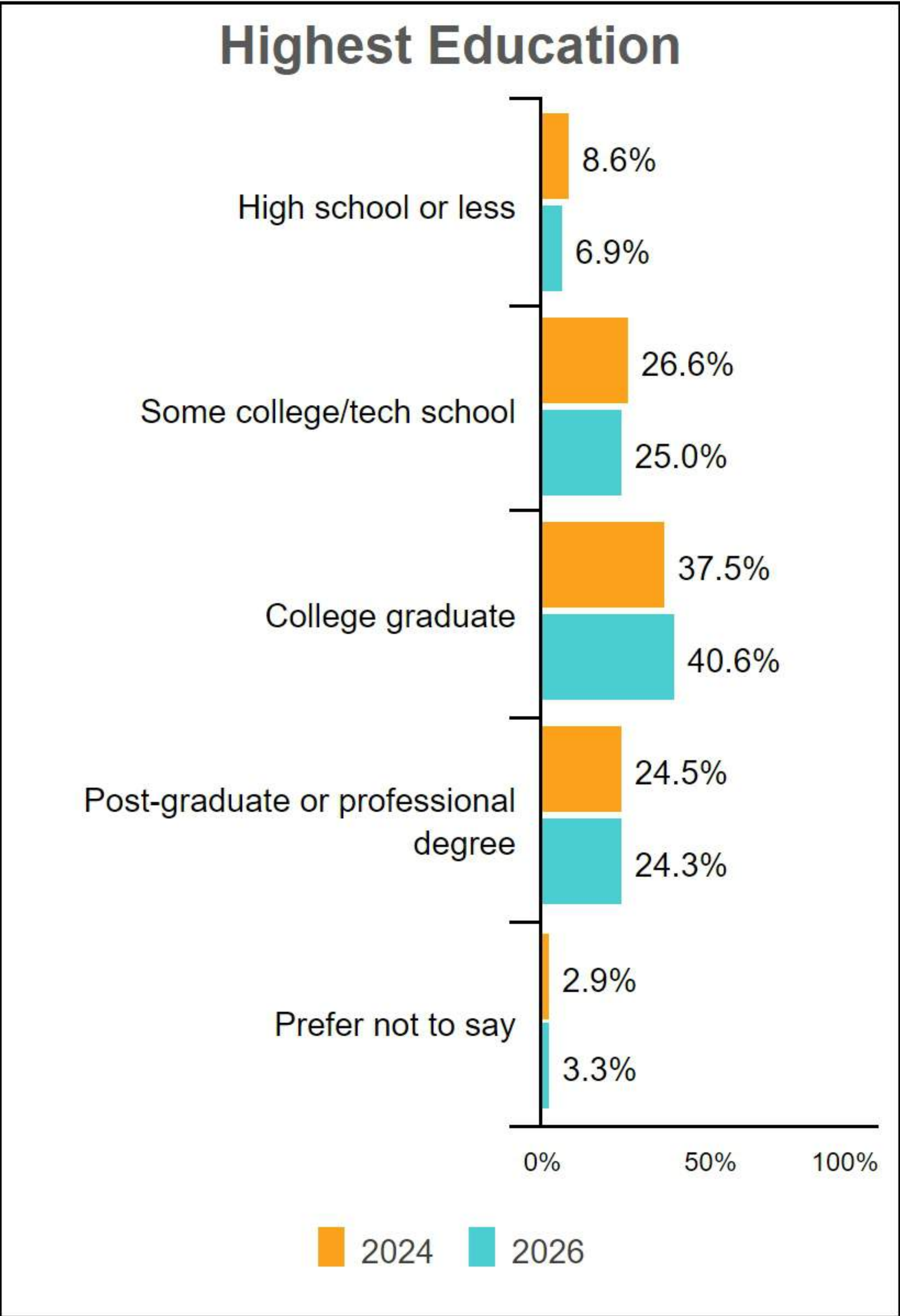
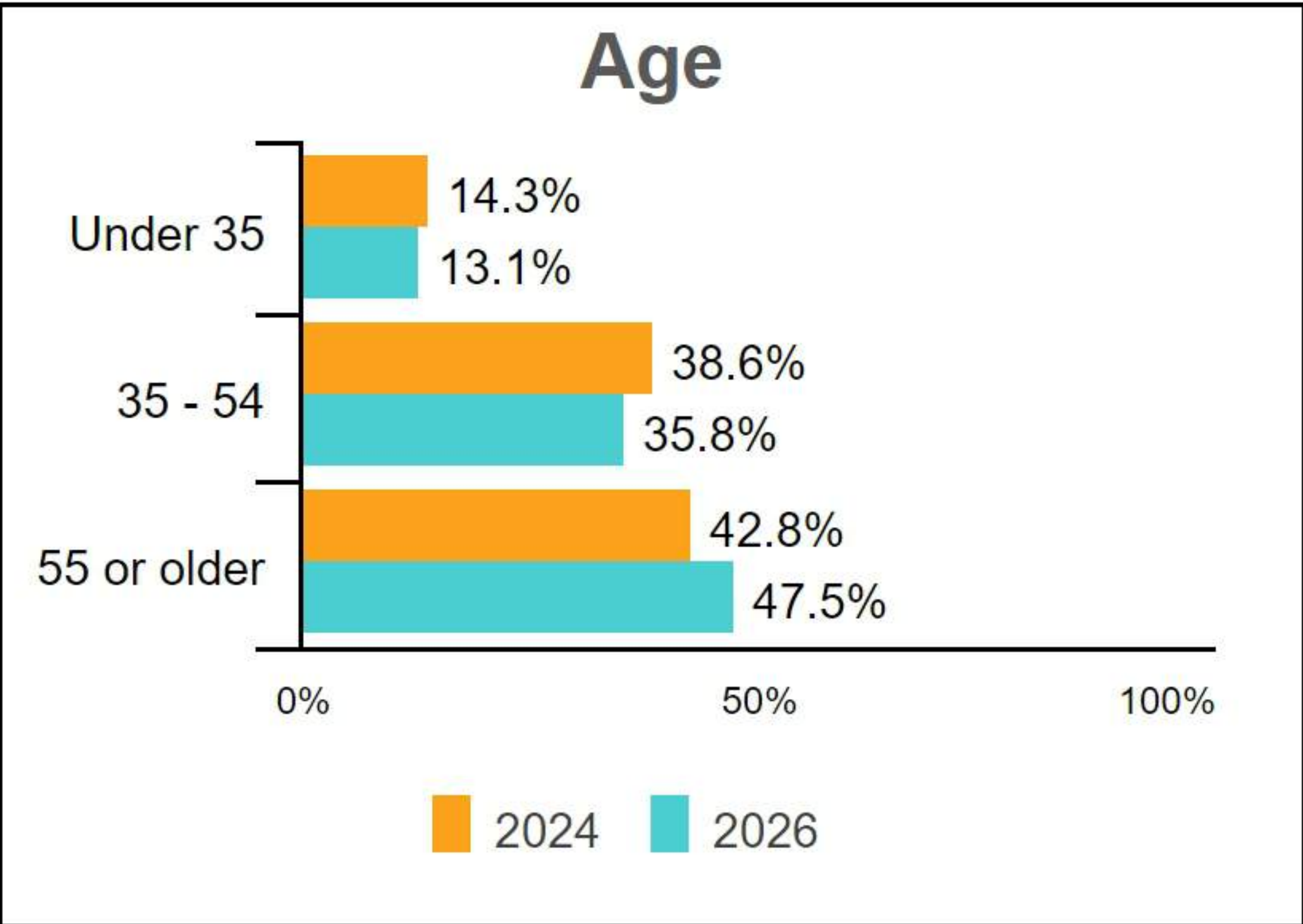
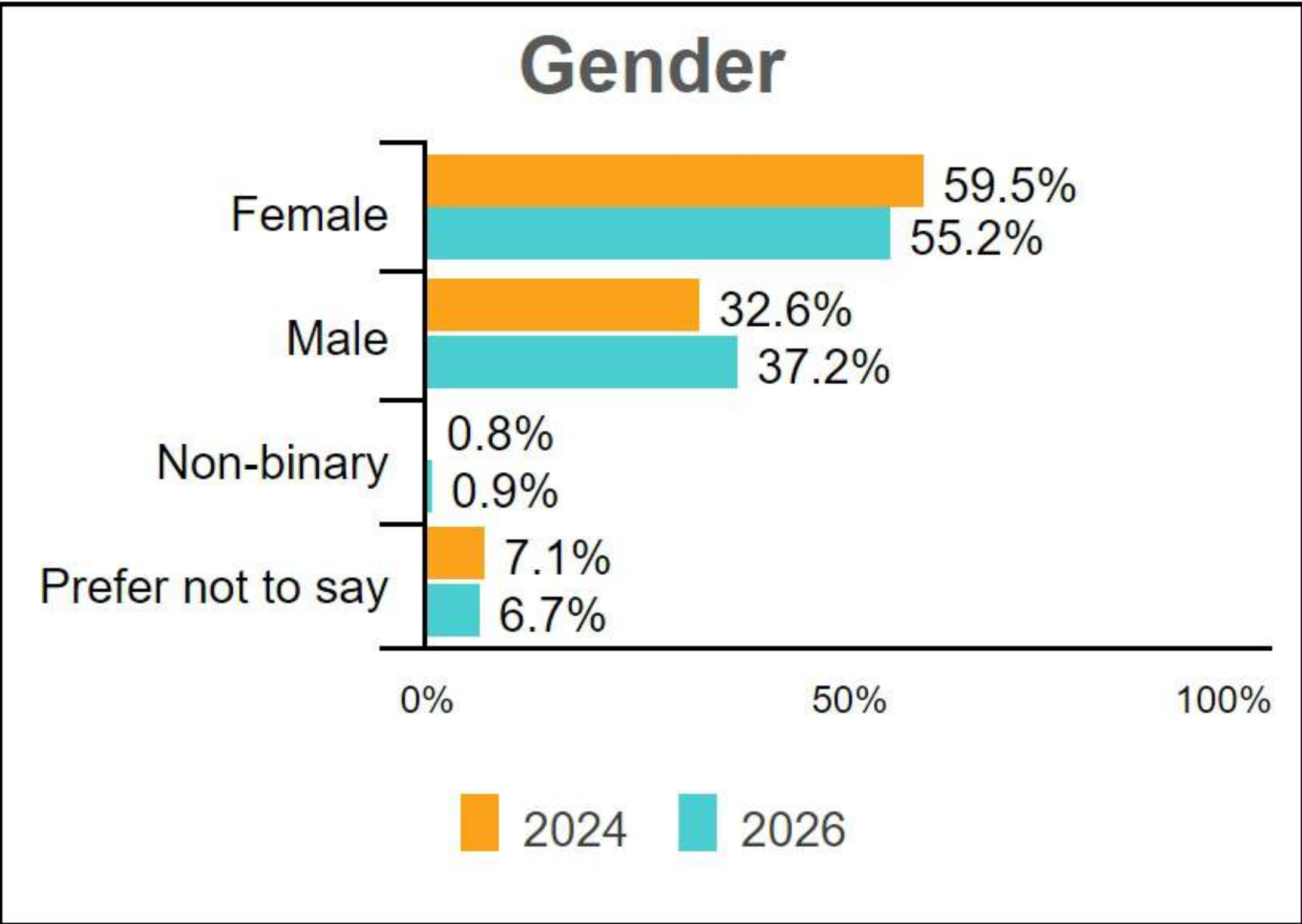


Methodology Digital (with postcard distribution)	No. of Completes 583	No. of Questions 36*	Incentive None	Sample Residential List
Target Residents & Businesses	Quality Assurance Dual-level**	Margin of Error +/- 3.95%	Confidence Level 95%	Research Dates June 25 - August 21, 2026

* This represents the total possible number of questions; not all respondents will answer all questions based on skip patterns and other instrument bias. Survey questions were "soft required," allowing participants to skip a question if they desired.

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

Respondent Profile | Demographics



Key Study Findings

Key Study Findings | Executive Summary



Quality of Life: Residents' quality of life strengthened, with safety emerging as a particularly notable community strength.

- 91.9% rated their quality of life as "excellent"/"good," a significant improvement from 87.9% in 2024; "excellent" alone increased to 40.3% (from 33.0%).
- Safety became increasingly central to Sumner's appeal: feeling safe rose +12.2 points as a favorite aspect, while safe/low crime became the #1 reason for living in Sumner (59.2%).
- At the same time, residents' concerns shifted toward growth and development (67.3%; +8.2 percentage points) and traffic (62.8%), while crime (35.2%; -19.8 percentage points) and homelessness (40.2%; -12.8 percentage points) became significantly less prominent; housing market/mortgage concerns as a reason for potentially leaving Sumner also declined (-11.4 percentage points).



Perceptions & Satisfaction: Positive perceptions extended across City and community services, with particularly strong gains related to safety and police services.

- Satisfaction remained high across most aspects of Sumner, with significant gains for police services (+8.3 percentage points), drinking water (+5.2 percentage points), and community programs/events (+4.0 percentage points).
- Safety improvements were broad: 94.7% felt safe walking alone during the day and 75.9% at night, with nighttime safety increasing +10.6 percentage points.
- While total satisfaction was generally strong, roads, employers, restaurants/shops/services, recreation, public health, and social services had sizable shares who were only "somewhat satisfied," highlighting opportunities to strengthen sentiment.



Moving Forward: Residents were increasingly positive about Sumner's direction, while future priorities centered on managing continued growth.

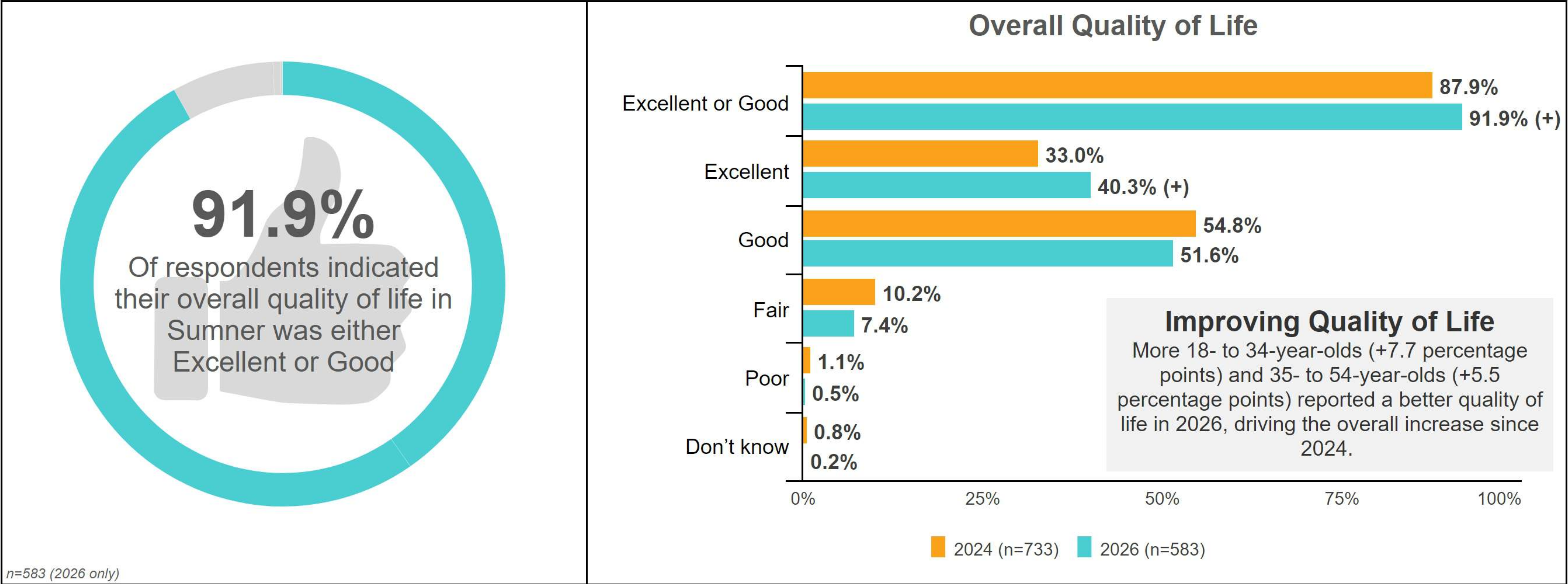
- The mean directional "right track/wrong track" score increased from 55.9 to 59.9, while the median rose from 57.6 to 63.1, indicating stronger perceptions that Sumner was moving in the right direction.
- Managing growth (63.5%) remained the leading future priority. Police response declined as a priority, but alongside significantly higher police satisfaction and safety ratings, suggesting it was increasingly viewed as a strength rather than an unmet need.
- Environmental protection and natural-disaster preparedness gained modest traction, while arts and culture increased significantly (+8.2 percentage points) as a priority for non-profit partnerships.

Quality of Life

Resident Life | Overall Quality



Residents continued to report a strong quality of life in Sumner, with ratings improving significantly since 2024 (+4.0 percentage points). Improvement was particularly pronounced among younger and middle-aged residents, with "excellent"/"good" ratings increasing +7.7 percentage points among 18- to 34-year-olds and +5.5 points among 35- to 54-year-olds since 2024.

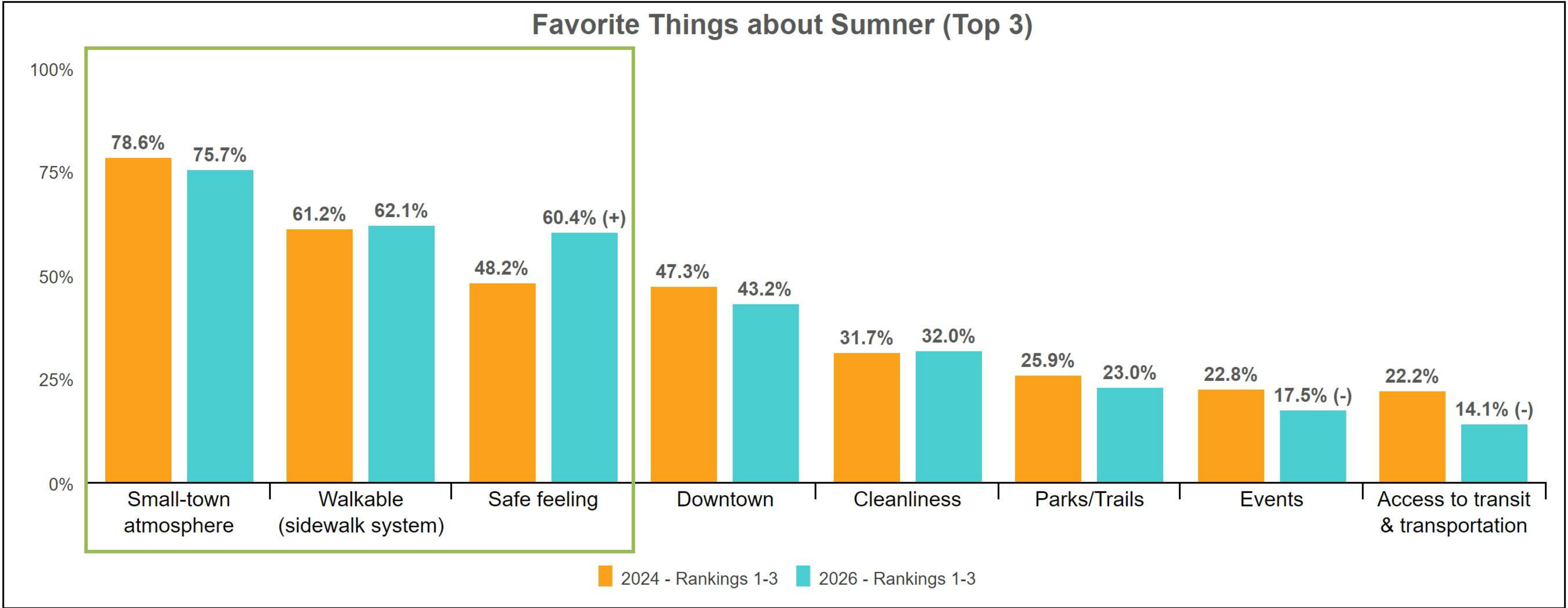


Q: How would you rate your overall quality of life in Sumner? Would you say...
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year

Quality of Life | Favorite Aspects of Sumner

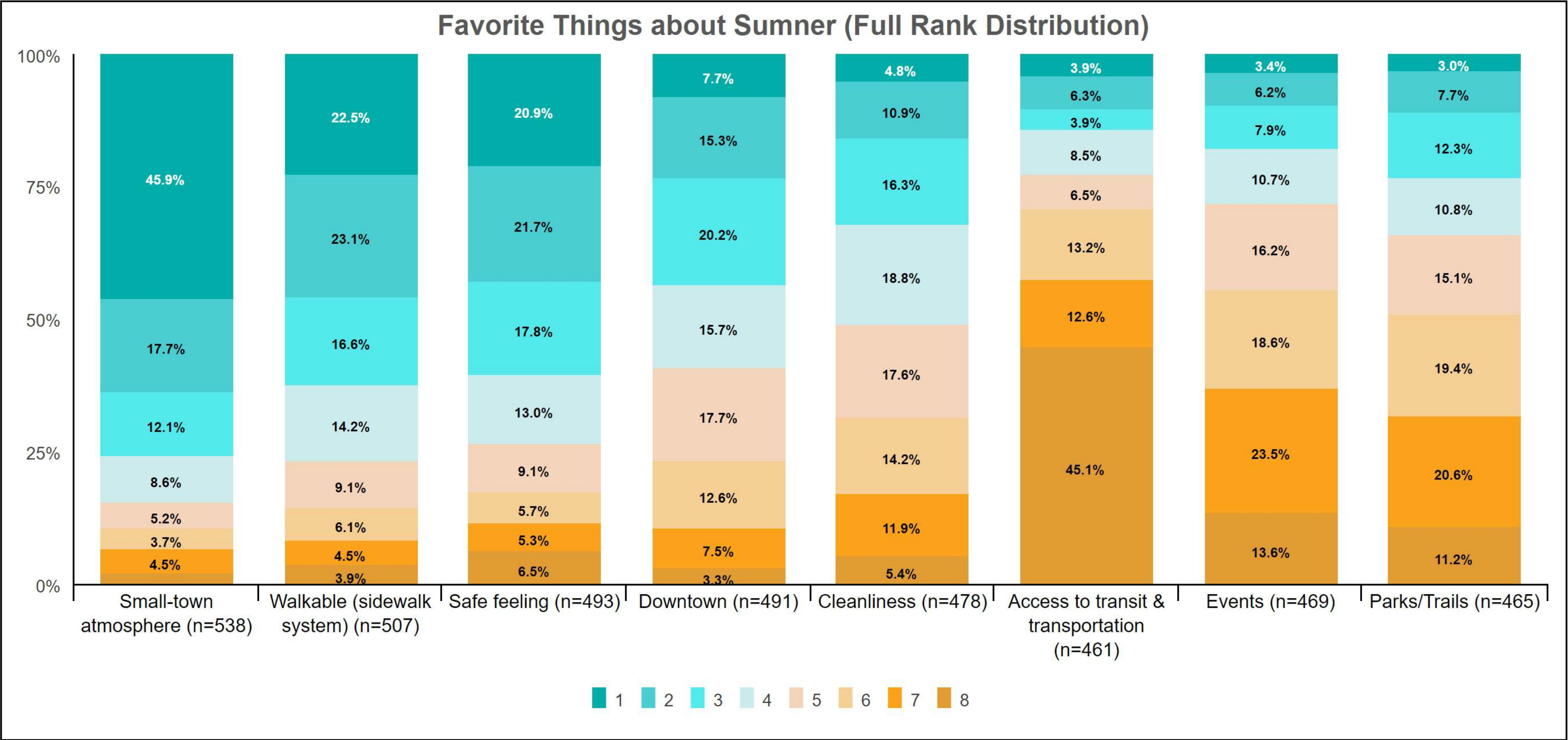


Sumner’s small-town atmosphere (75.7%) and walkability (62.1%) remained residents’ favorite aspects of the city, while feeling safe increased significantly (+12.2 percentage points) since 2024. Conversely, events (-5.3 points) and access to transit and transportation (-8.1 points) declined significantly, in terms of being ranked among residents’ top three favorite aspects of Sumner.



Q: What is your favorite thing about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your favorite.
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year
*Full 2026 ranking on the subsequent slide, including N-values

Quality of Life | Favorite Aspects Breakdown



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

Quality of Life | Reasons to Live in Sumner



Safety emerged as an increasingly important part of Sumner’s appeal, with “safe place to live/low crime” increasing significantly (+13.6 percentage points) to become residents’ top reason for living in the city.

Conversely, access to transit and transportation remained a less prominent aspect of Sumner’s appeal. While it declined significantly as a top-three favorite aspect of Sumner (-8.1 percentage points), it remained relatively low and unchanged as a reason for living in the city (19.6%).

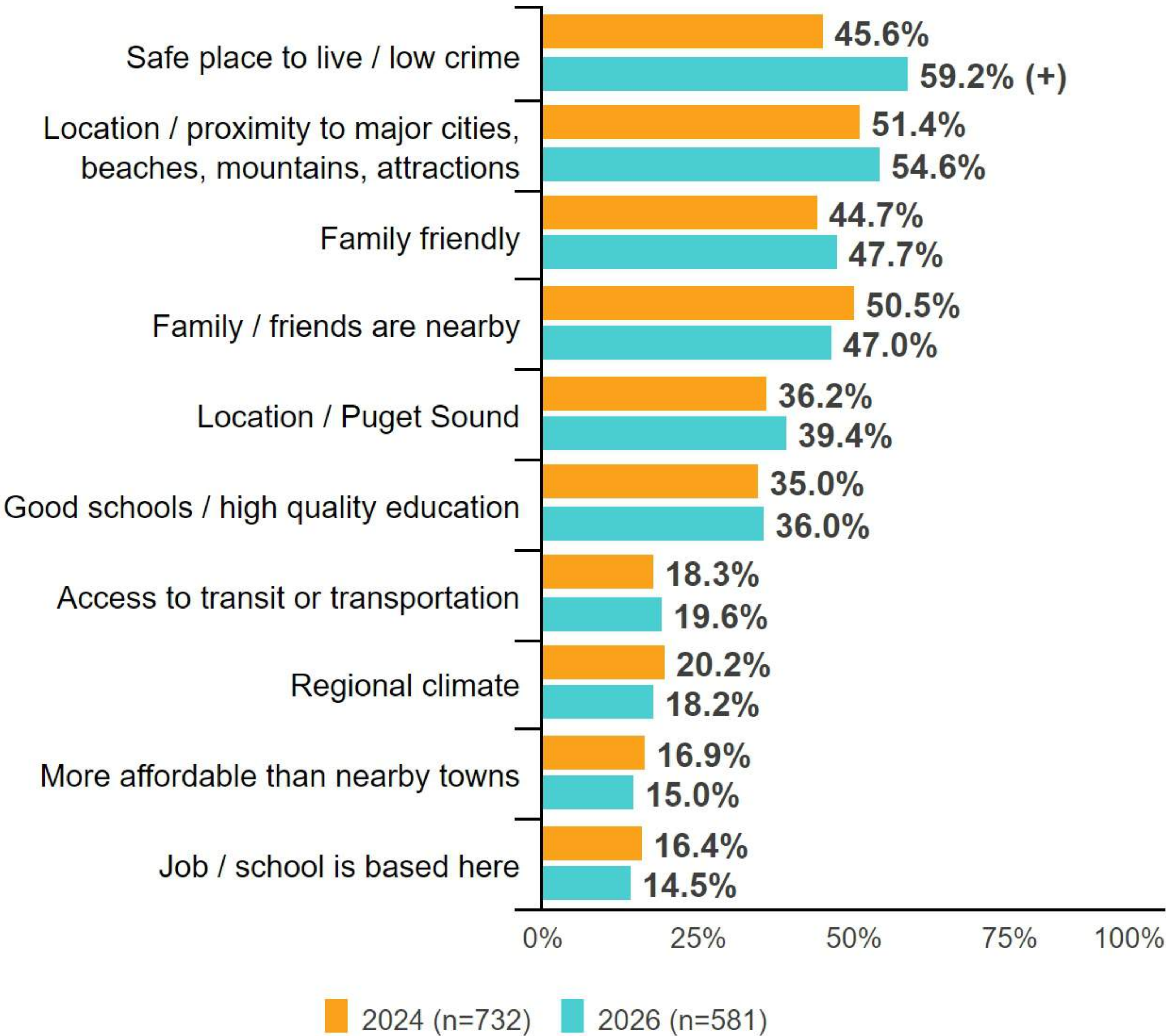
Family-oriented City

In 2026, significantly more 35- to 54-year-olds felt Sumner was either "family friendly" (+10.8 percentage points) or had "access to transit or transportation" (+7.5 percentage points) compared to 2024; building a reputation as a place for young working families.

Safety

In addition, significantly more respondents, across all age cohorts, had positive perceptions of Sumner as a "safe place to live" with "low crime," equally driving the overall increase in positive perceptions in this area.

Main Reasons for Living in Sumner



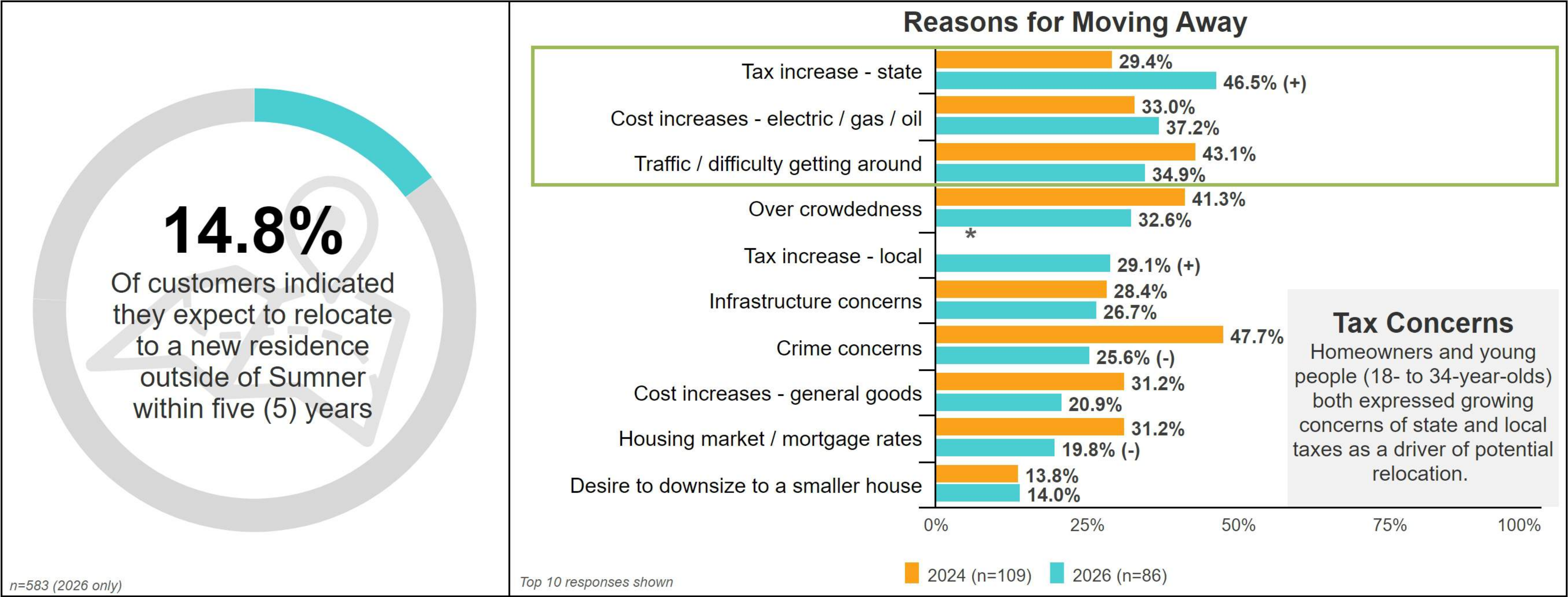
Top 10 responses shown

Q: 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.
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year

Quality of Life | Relocation in The Next 5 Years



Just 14.8% of residents anticipated relocating outside of Sumner within the next five years. Among those considering a move, state tax concerns increased significantly (+17.1 percentage points), while local taxes emerged as a notable consideration (29.1%). Conversely, crime (-22.1 percentage points) and housing market/mortgage concerns (-11.4 percentage points) diminished significantly since 2024.



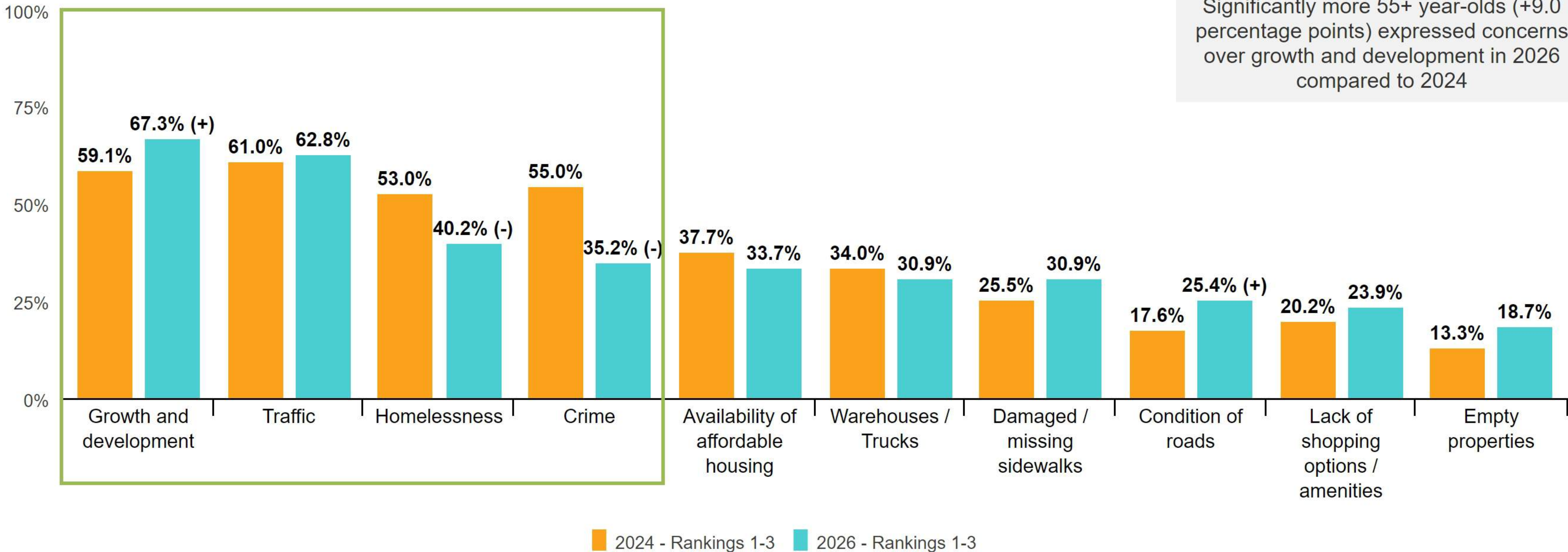
Q: Do you anticipate relocating to a new permanent address outside of Sumner in the next five (5) years?
Q: Please explain why. Please select all that apply.
"Tax increases - local" was a new option in 2026
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year

Quality of Life | Top Residential Concerns



Growth and development emerged as residents' leading concern (67.3%; +8.2 percentage points), followed closely by traffic (62.8%). Conversely, homelessness (-12.8 percentage points) and crime (-19.8 percentage points) declined significantly as top-three concerns since 2024. While still lower in rank order, road conditions (+7.8 percentage points, significant) and damaged sidewalks (+5.4 percentage points) emerged as concerns in 2026.

Concerns about Sumner (Top 3)



Top 10 responses shown

Q: Overall, what are your greatest concerns about Sumner? Please rank the following with 1 being your greatest concern.
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year
*Full 2026 ranking on the subsequent slide, including N-values

Quality of Life | All Concerns About Sumner

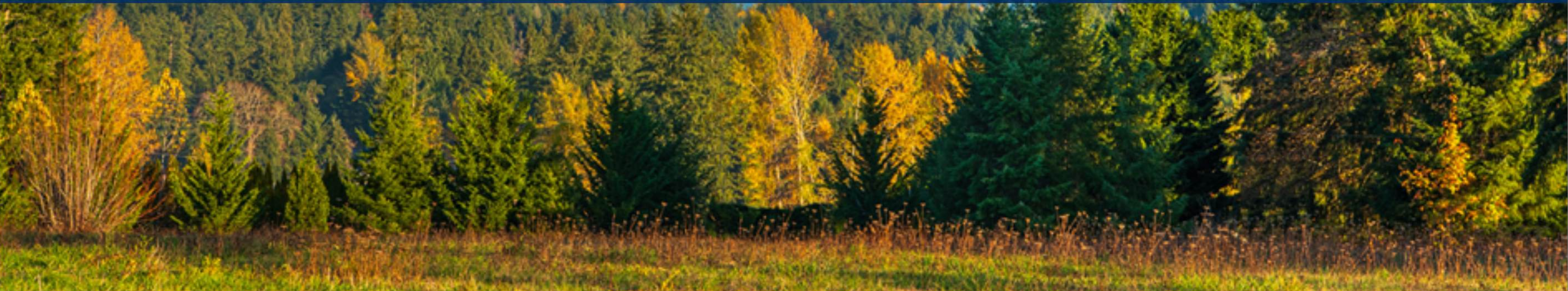


Concerns about Sumner (Full Rank Distribution)

	Rank Order													
	Base size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Growth and development	444	34.9%	17.3%	15.1%	8.8%	7.0%	4.3%	3.2%	3.2%	1.1%	2.3%	0.7%	1.4%	0.9%
Traffic	446	23.3%	25.1%	14.3%	11.4%	9.0%	5.8%	3.6%	2.2%	1.8%	1.6%	0.4%	1.3%	0.0%
Availability of affordable housing	341	15.2%	10.0%	8.5%	6.5%	6.7%	7.0%	6.7%	4.1%	5.3%	5.9%	7.3%	10.3%	6.5%
Homelessness	393	12.7%	14.2%	13.2%	10.2%	8.1%	7.6%	5.6%	6.6%	7.9%	3.3%	2.3%	4.1%	4.1%
Crime	366	12.3%	11.5%	11.5%	10.9%	9.6%	6.6%	7.9%	7.9%	4.9%	6.3%	2.2%	3.8%	4.6%
Warehouses / Trucks	369	7.6%	13.0%	10.3%	10.0%	9.8%	8.9%	6.5%	3.3%	6.2%	5.1%	6.2%	7.3%	5.7%
Damaged / missing sidewalks	366	7.1%	10.9%	12.8%	9.3%	8.7%	8.2%	11.2%	7.7%	6.8%	4.1%	7.1%	3.8%	2.2%
Availability of public transit	322	6.5%	5.3%	5.9%	6.2%	5.6%	3.1%	2.5%	8.4%	4.7%	11.2%	11.8%	11.2%	17.7%
Condition of roads	354	6.5%	7.3%	11.6%	13.0%	9.6%	9.0%	7.6%	10.7%	7.6%	7.9%	4.5%	3.4%	1.1%
Lack of shopping options / amenities	339	5.9%	9.1%	8.8%	7.4%	7.7%	10.6%	6.8%	5.9%	6.8%	8.0%	5.9%	7.4%	9.7%
Empty properties	326	5.5%	5.8%	7.4%	7.1%	5.2%	6.4%	8.3%	7.7%	8.6%	8.0%	12.0%	8.6%	9.5%
Parking	338	4.7%	5.3%	8.3%	8.6%	10.1%	9.2%	9.5%	9.8%	8.0%	9.5%	6.5%	3.8%	6.8%
Amount of parks / trails	321	4.4%	6.2%	6.9%	6.2%	5.0%	6.2%	8.1%	5.9%	9.7%	5.9%	12.8%	11.8%	10.9%

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

Perception

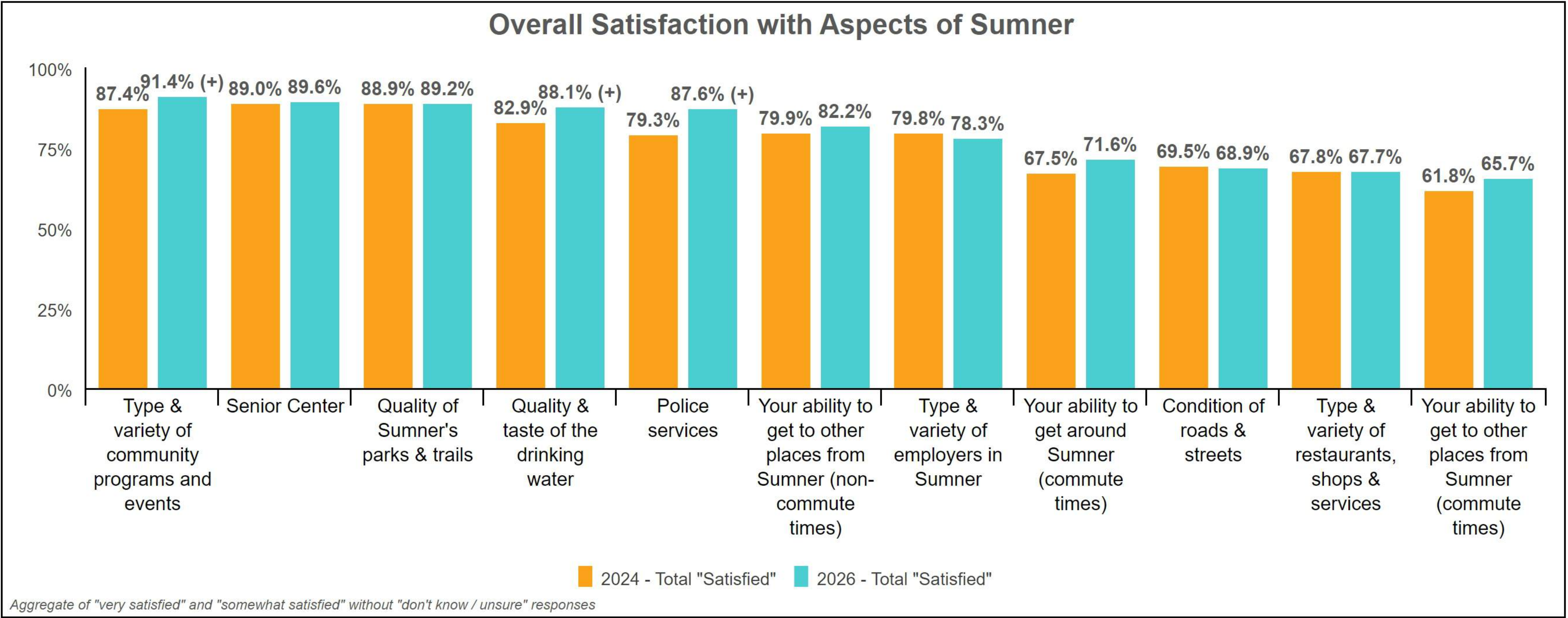


Sumner Perception | Resident Satisfaction



Residents remained highly satisfied across many aspects of Sumner, with significant improvements in community programs and events (+4.0 percentage points), drinking water (+5.2 percentage points), and police services (+8.3 percentage points) since 2024. While still strong, satisfaction with roads, mobility around town, and local amenities remained comparatively lower.

Overall Satisfaction with Aspects of Sumner



Q: 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.
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year
*Full 2026 breakdown on the subsequent slide, including N-Values

Sumner Perception | Satisfaction Breakdown



While satisfaction was generally positive, sentiment was often more moderate, with several aspects receiving considerably more “somewhat satisfied” than “very satisfied” ratings. More than half of residents were “somewhat satisfied” with the type and variety of employers (54.3%) and the condition of roads and streets (51.5%). A similar pattern emerged for restaurants, shops and services, where nearly half were somewhat satisfied (49.1%).

	Base size	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Quality & taste of the drinking water	555	54.4%	33.7%	8.6%	3.2%
Police services	539	50.8%	36.7%	9.3%	3.2%
Senior Center	164	44.5%	45.1%	7.9%	2.4%
Quality of Sumner's parks & trails	557	44.2%	45.1%	8.6%	2.2%
Type & variety of community programs and events	523	41.5%	49.9%	6.9%	1.7%
Your ability to get to other places from Sumner (non-commute times)	573	36.0%	46.2%	12.2%	5.6%
Your ability to get around Sumner (commute times)	570	34.0%	37.5%	18.1%	10.4%
Your ability to get to other places from Sumner (commute times)	566	26.7%	39.0%	20.5%	13.8%
Type & variety of employers in Sumner	392	24.0%	54.3%	17.9%	3.8%
Type & variety of restaurants, shops & services	582	18.6%	49.1%	25.4%	6.9%
Condition of roads & streets	575	17.4%	51.5%	24.5%	6.6%

Police Perceptions

Between 2024 and 2026, satisfaction with Police Services in Sumner improved significantly among 35- to 54-year-olds (+9.3 percentage points) and 55+ year-olds (+7.2 percentage points).

Employment Opportunities

In the same two-year time frame, fewer under 35-year-olds reported being satisfied with the employers available in Sumner (-11.2 percentage points)

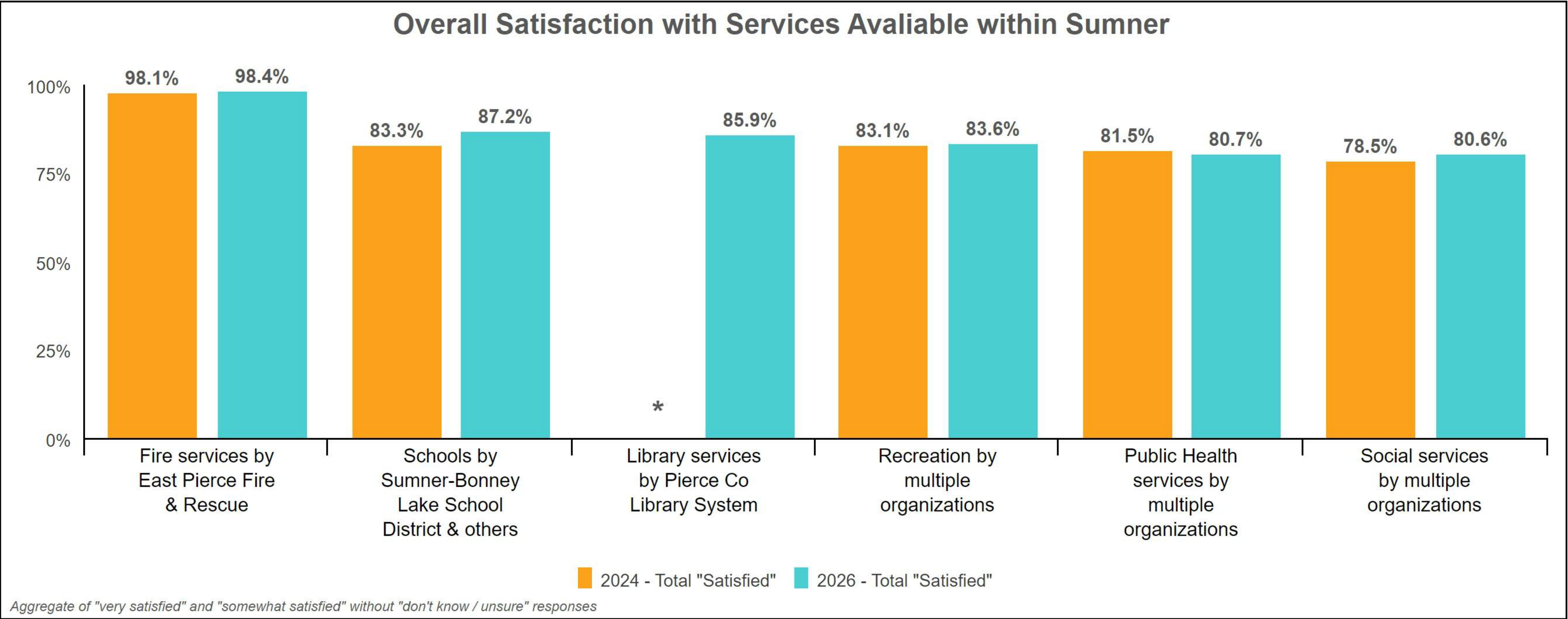
Without "don't know / unsure" responses

Q: 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.

Sumner Perception | Service Satisfaction



Residents continued to report high satisfaction with services available within Sumner, with all measured services receiving satisfaction ratings of 80% or greater and no significant changes observed since 2024. Fire services remained the clear standout, with nearly all residents satisfied (98.4%), while satisfaction with schools increased slightly to 87.2%. Newly measured library services also received strong ratings, with 85.9% satisfied.



Q: 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.
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year
*Full 2026 breakdown on the subsequent slide, including N-Values; Library Services was a new item measured in 2026

Sumner Perception | Service Satisfaction Breakdown



Satisfaction was strongest for fire, school, and library services, while recreation (51.4%), public health (53.3%), and social services (53.6%) received more moderate ratings, with more than half of residents reporting they were only “somewhat satisfied.”

	Base size	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Fire services by East Pierce Fire & Rescue	515	81.4%	17.1%	1.4%	0.2%
Schools by Sumner-Bonney Lake School District & others	423	52.7%	34.5%	8.0%	4.7%
Library services by Pierce Co Library System	462	51.7%	34.2%	10.4%	3.7%
Recreation by multiple organizations	383	32.1%	51.4%	14.1%	2.3%
Public Health services by multiple organizations	270	27.4%	53.3%	13.0%	6.3%
Social services by multiple organizations	211	27.0%	53.6%	13.7%	5.7%

Without "don't know / unsure" responses

Social Services

Between 2024 and 2026, satisfaction with the Social Services in Sumner improved significantly among 35- to 54-year-olds (+13.4 percentage points)

Renters

While not significant, more renters in 2026 were satisfied with the available recreation (+12.4 percentage points), social services (+15.9 percentage points), and public health services (+7.0 percentage points).

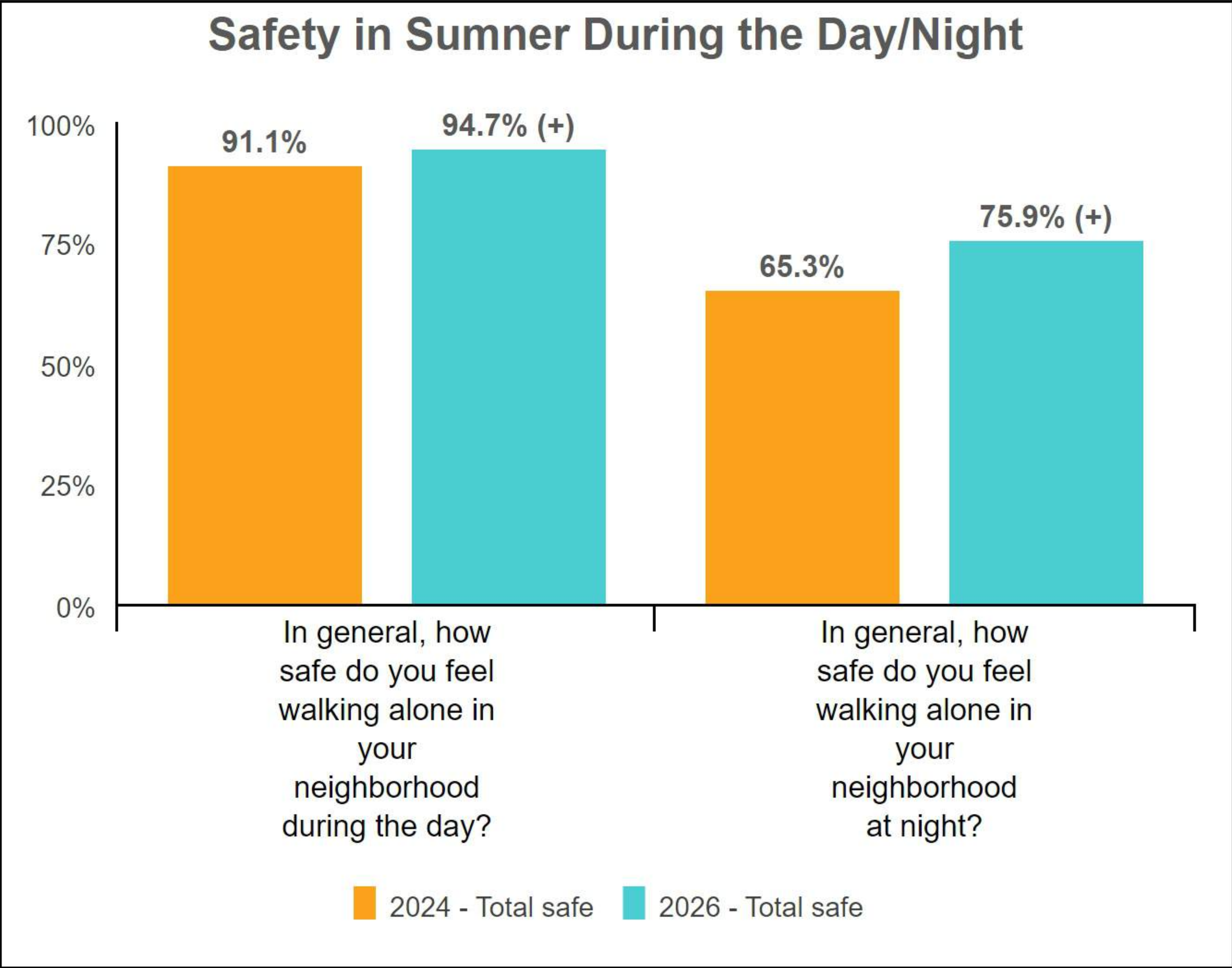
Library Services

In 2026, 91.6% of 55+ year-olds were satisfied with Library services provided by Pierce Co; significantly more than those 35- to 54-years-old (+13.5 percentage points).

Q: 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.

Sumner Perception | Safety

Perceptions of safety improved significantly since 2024, with 94.7% of residents feeling safe walking alone during the day (+3.6 percentage points) and 75.9% feeling safe at night (+10.6 percentage points). Among residents who felt unsafe, concerns related specifically to crime/drugs declined substantially from 29.4% to 10.7%, while concerns related to homelessness also fell from 26.5% to 15.2%.



Reasons Feeling Unsafe	2024	2026
Base size	204	112
Overall safety issue / can't walk at night / fear of the unknown	9.3%	18.8%
Concerns about public disorder / vulnerable populations	0.0%	16.1%
Increase in homeless population	26.5%	15.2%
Increase in crime / drugs / etc.	29.4%	10.7%
Lack of police presence / code enforcement	2.9%	6.3%
Lack of street lights throughout the city	6.4%	6.3%
Speeding cars	2.0%	5.4%
Transients	0.0%	5.4%
Unsavory people roaming streets	8.8%	4.5%
Youth crimes	0.0%	2.7%
Live near low income housing	0.0%	1.8%
Expressed multiple reasons	11.3%	0.0%

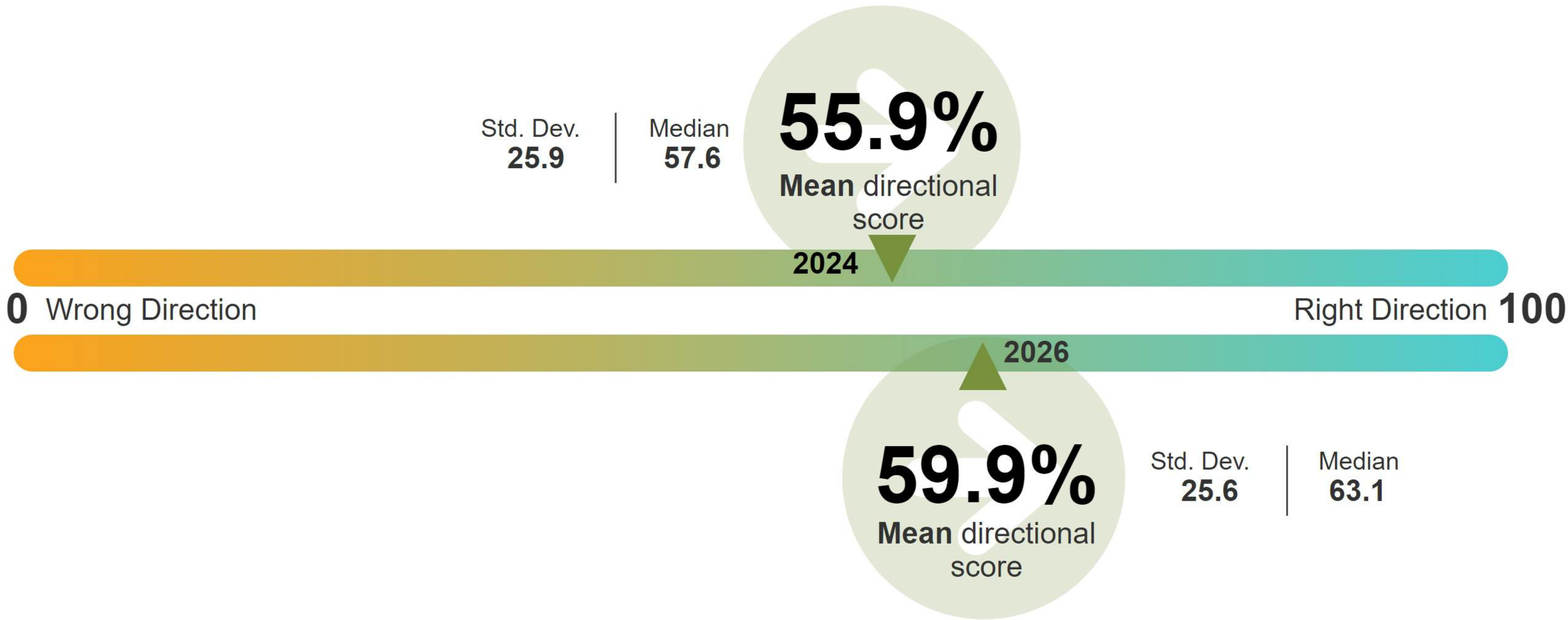
Q: In general, how safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood during the day?
Q: In general, how safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood at night?
Q: If you can identify what makes you feel unsafe, would you please share a little more about it here?
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year

Moving Forward

Moving Forward | Direction of Sumner



Residents leaned toward feeling Sumner was moving in the right direction, with the mean directional score increasing from 55.9 in 2024 to 59.9 in 2026. The median also increased from 57.6 to 63.1, indicating a broader shift toward more positive perceptions of the City’s direction.

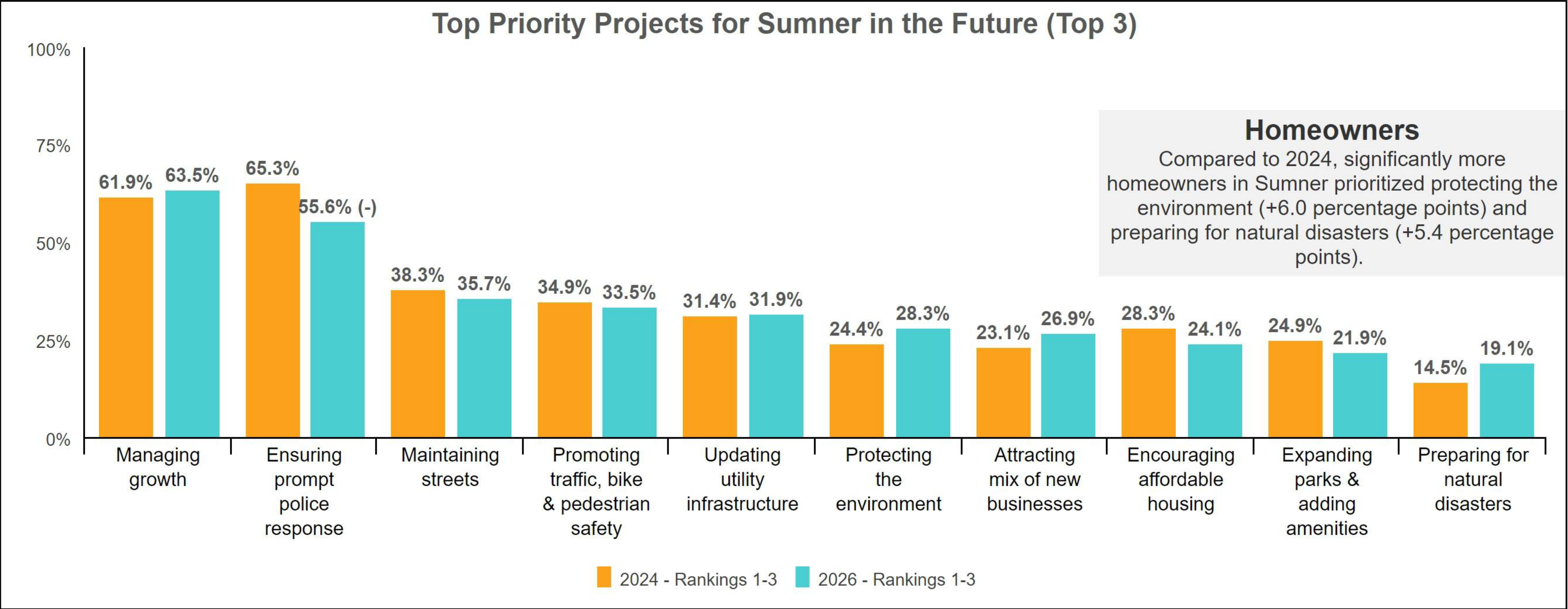


n=715 (2024), 571 (2026)
Q: Do you feel things in Sumner are generally going in the right direction or wrong? Please use the slider scale below to indicate your level of agreement toward either of the options below. Placing the slider directly in the middle will indicate that you are neutral or unsure at this time.

Moving Forward | Sumner Project Priorities



Managing growth remained residents' leading future priority (63.5%), while ensuring prompt police response declined significantly as a top-three priority (-9.7 percentage points). This shift coincided with significant improvements in satisfaction with police services and feelings of safety, suggesting police response may be viewed as an area of strength rather than an unmet need. At the same time, protecting the environment (+3.9 percentage points) and preparing for natural disasters (+4.6 percentage points) gained modest traction as future priorities; particularly among homeowners in Sumner.



Q: A City faces numerous priorities at once, but funding is limited. Please rank the following priorities with 1 being your top priority (+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year
*Full 2026 ranking on the subsequent slide, including N-values

Moving Forward | Sumner Project Priorities



Priority Projects for Sumner (Full Rank Distribution)

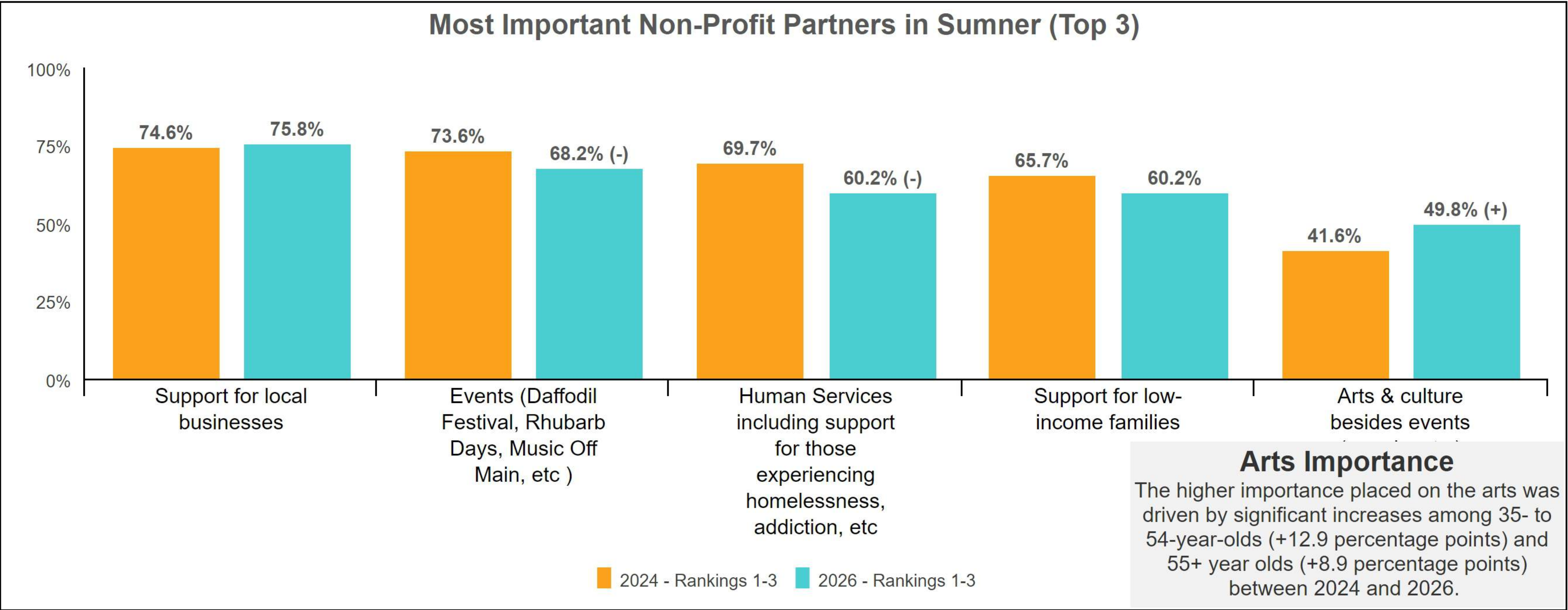
	Rank Order										
	Base size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Managing growth	520	34.0%	17.1%	12.3%	8.1%	7.3%	4.8%	5.4%	4.0%	3.3%	3.7%
Ensuring prompt police response	502	23.5%	18.7%	13.3%	9.2%	9.6%	5.4%	7.2%	3.6%	3.6%	6.0%
Attracting mix of new businesses	472	10.6%	9.5%	6.8%	7.6%	11.4%	11.2%	8.1%	11.2%	10.2%	13.3%
Promoting traffic, bike & pedestrian safety	486	9.5%	12.1%	11.9%	11.9%	11.7%	10.5%	10.5%	9.7%	8.4%	3.7%
Encouraging affordable housing	456	8.1%	9.2%	6.8%	6.8%	4.4%	4.8%	6.1%	9.4%	11.8%	32.5%
Maintaining streets	507	7.5%	10.8%	17.4%	18.1%	13.6%	10.7%	9.5%	6.7%	4.5%	1.2%
Protecting the environment	467	6.4%	10.1%	11.8%	11.3%	9.9%	10.5%	10.5%	9.9%	12.2%	7.5%
Updating utility infrastructure	486	5.8%	12.1%	14.0%	14.6%	9.5%	16.3%	8.6%	8.6%	6.4%	4.1%
Expanding parks & adding amenities	474	5.3%	8.2%	8.4%	9.3%	12.4%	9.3%	12.0%	13.5%	14.8%	6.8%
Preparing for natural disasters	467	4.5%	5.8%	8.8%	8.8%	11.6%	12.4%	13.9%	13.5%	11.6%	9.2%

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

Moving Forward | Sumner Non-Profit Partners



Support for local businesses remained residents’ leading non-profit priority (75.8%), while arts and culture increased significantly (+8.2 percentage points). Conversely, events (-5.4 percentage points) and human services (-9.5 percentage points) declined significantly in terms of being ranked among residents’ top three priorities.

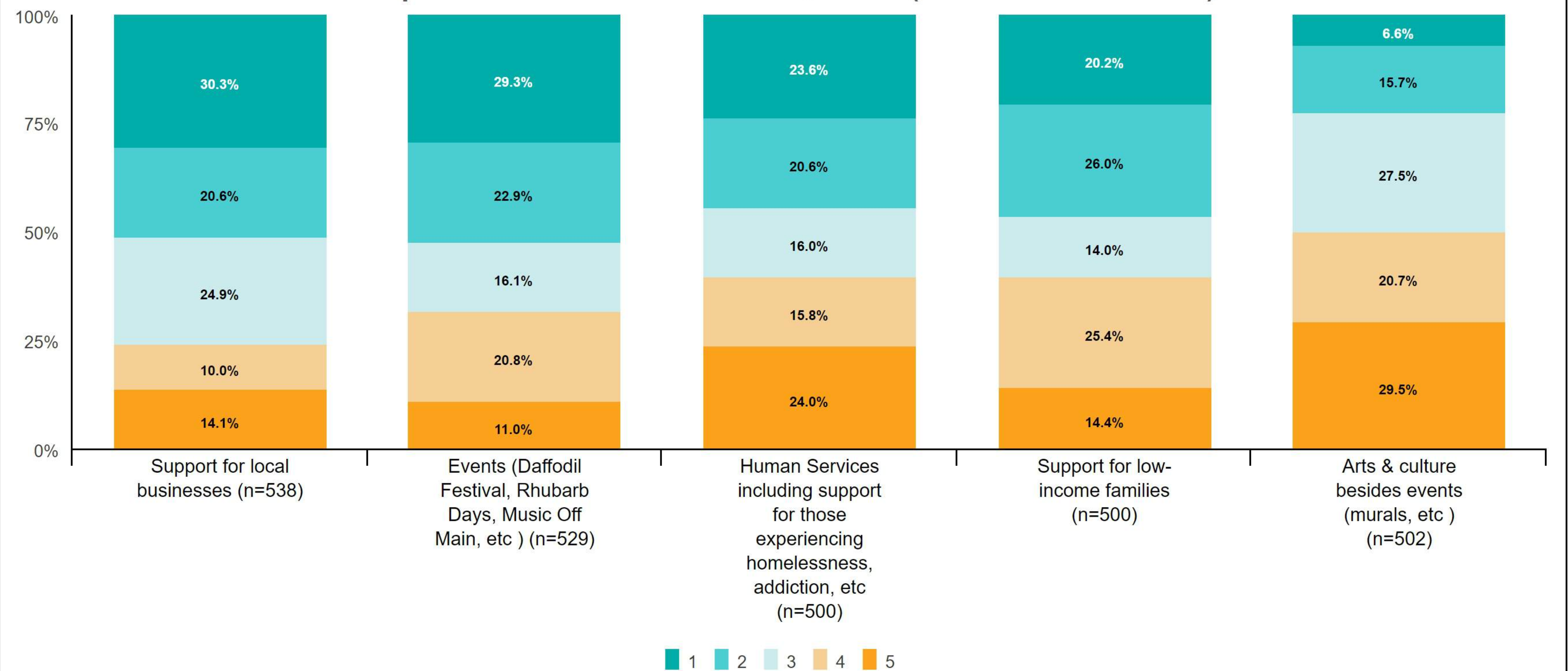


Q: The City supports a number of non-profit partners who offer a wide array of services, but funding is limited. In general, what’s your priority for funding the following kinds of efforts? Please rank in order of importance with 1 being most important.
(+/-) indicates a statistically significant difference at a 95% confidence level compared to the previous year
*Full 2026 ranking on the subsequent slide, including N-values

Moving Forward | Sumner Non-Profit Partners



Important Non-Profit Partners in Sumner (Full Rank Distribution)



Q: 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 most important.

Considerations

Considerations



Build on Today's Strengths While Managing Growth

Residents' quality of life and perceptions of safety strengthened considerably in 2026, reinforcing many of the characteristics that make Sumner an attractive place to live. This provides the City with a strong foundation moving forward; however, as concerns increasingly shift toward growth and development, maintaining these strengths will depend on thoughtfully managing change while protecting the community character residents value.

Key Takeaways:

- Continue reinforcing safety and police services as demonstrated community strengths, while recognizing that their declining prioritization may reflect needs residents increasingly feel are being well met.
- Preserve the characteristics residents value most (small-town atmosphere, walkability, safety, and community character) as Sumner continues to grow.
- Recognize that growth and development are now residents' leading concern and future priority, making how growth is managed increasingly important to maintaining positive quality-of-life perceptions.



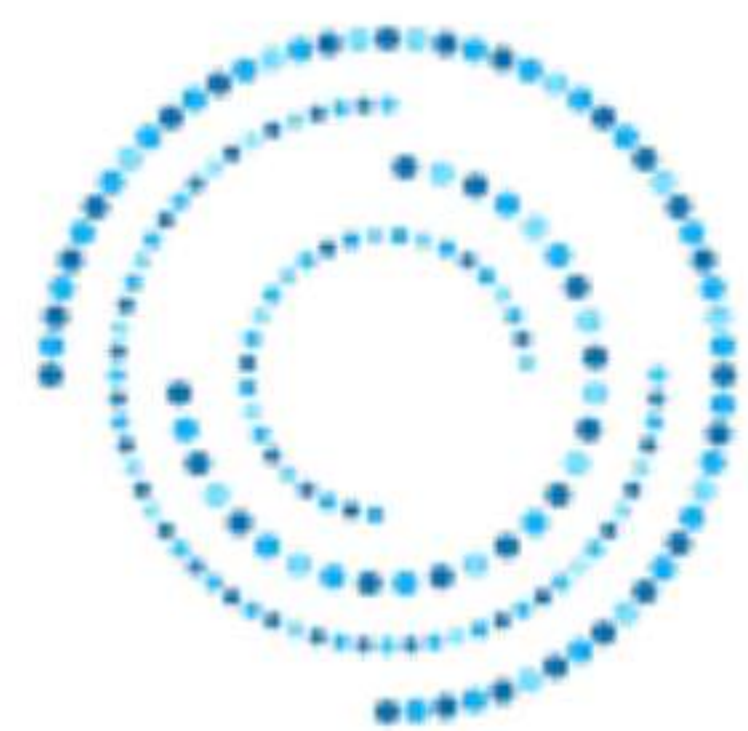
Plan & Communicate for "What Next?"

With residents increasingly focused on growth, attention should turn toward the infrastructure, services, and investments needed to support Sumner's future. Proactively addressing transportation, roads, mobility, and other infrastructure needs - while incorporating emerging priorities around resiliency, the environment, and community amenities - can help ensure that continued growth supports, rather than detracts from, residents' quality of life.

Key Takeaways:

- Connect future growth planning directly to traffic, roads, mobility, transportation, and supporting infrastructure, where concerns remain elevated and satisfaction is comparatively softer.
- Balance core infrastructure needs with emerging priorities, including environmental protection, natural-disaster preparedness, and arts and culture.
- Continue tracking these measures over time, and communicate progress around investments and improvements, to demonstrate how resident feedback is informing Sumner's longer-term planning.

About GreatBlue



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

Michael Vigeant CEO
MJV@GreatBlueResearch.com

Chris Biggs SVP, Research & Strategy
Chris@GreatBlueResearch.com

Seamus McNamee Head of Research
Seamus@GreatBlueResearch.com

Courtney Moore Insights Manager
Courtney@GreatBlueResearch.com

Catherine Vollmer Project Manager
Catherine@GreatBlueResearch.com

Sofia Vigeant Research Analyst
Sofia@GreatBlueResearch.com



WHAT'S NEXT.



/GreatBlueResearch

20 Western Blvd
Glastonbury, CT 06033
(860) 740-4000



GreatBlue Research