

March 2023

Explore Asheville

Resident Perspectives on Tourism



Travel
Intelligence



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 study 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 2 through February 15 and a total of 400 surveys were completed. This sample size yields an error range of +/- 5 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

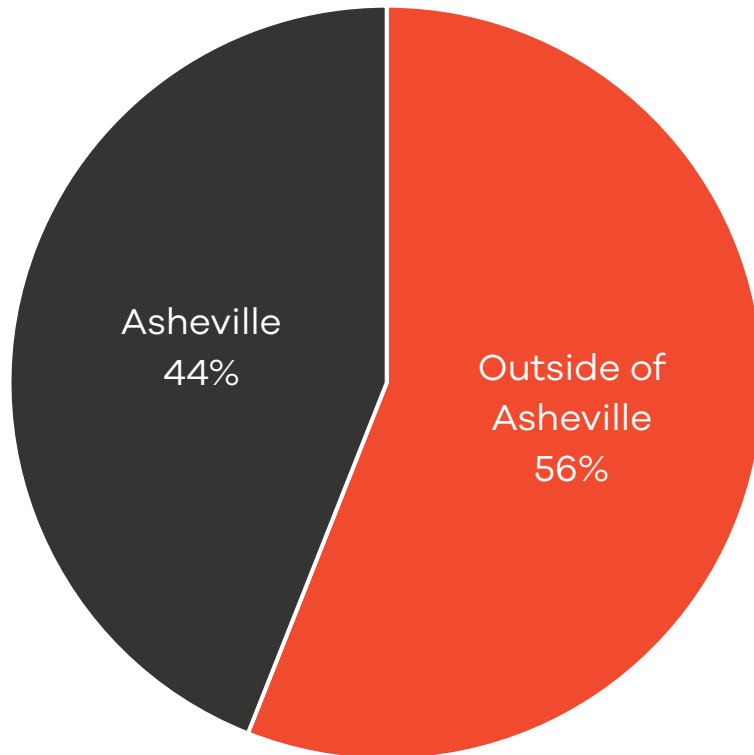
Additional questions were added or changed for this survey. In those cases, comparisons to 2019 or 2022 results are not applicable. Comparisons were made if there was little or no change to the question/answers. If there was a slight change, the original question text is included in a footnote for reference.

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=225).
- 175 respondents reside in the city of Asheville.

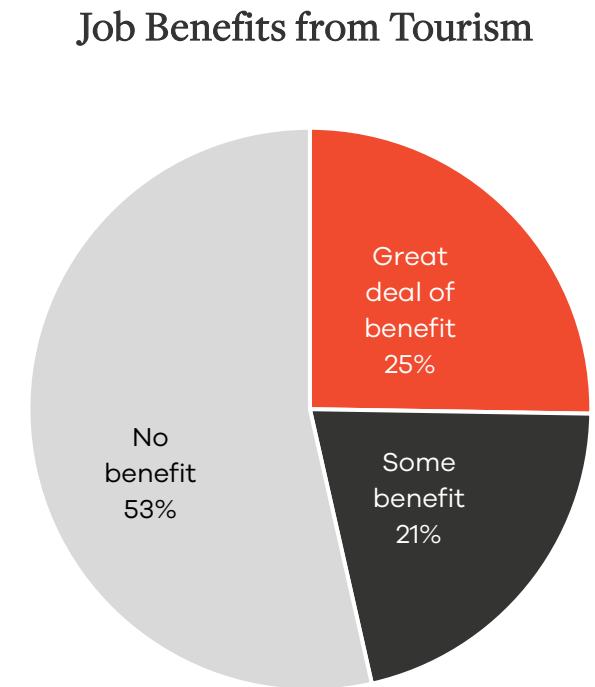
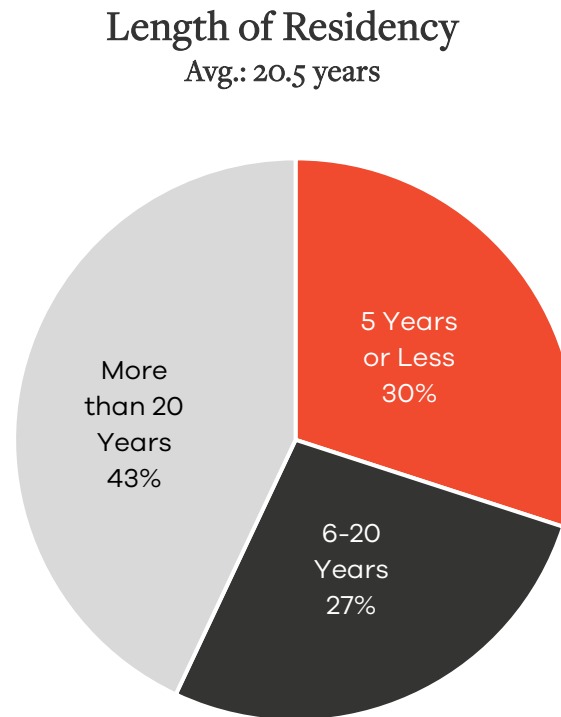
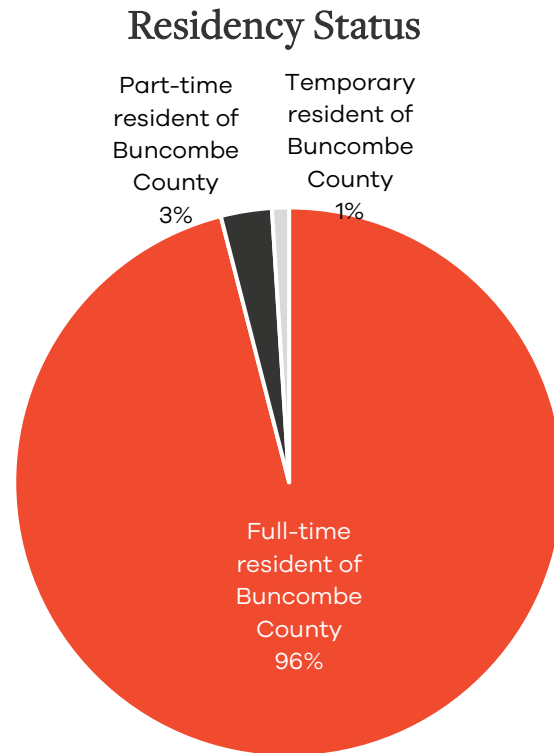


Outside of Asheville Neighborhood	n=225
Western Buncombe County	29%
Southern Buncombe County	18%
Eastern Buncombe County	15%
Northern Buncombe County	14%
Within the Town of Weaverville	9%
Within the Town of Black Mountain	9%
Within the Town of Woodfin	3%
Within the Town of Biltmore Forest	3%
Within the Town of Montreat	0%

Asheville Neighborhood	n=175
West Asheville	32%
East Asheville	18%
Downtown Asheville	15%
South Asheville	14%
North 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 20.5 years and among those who are employed, about half indicate that their job doesn't receive any benefit from tourism while a quarter (25%) indicate they receive a great deal of benefit from tourism.

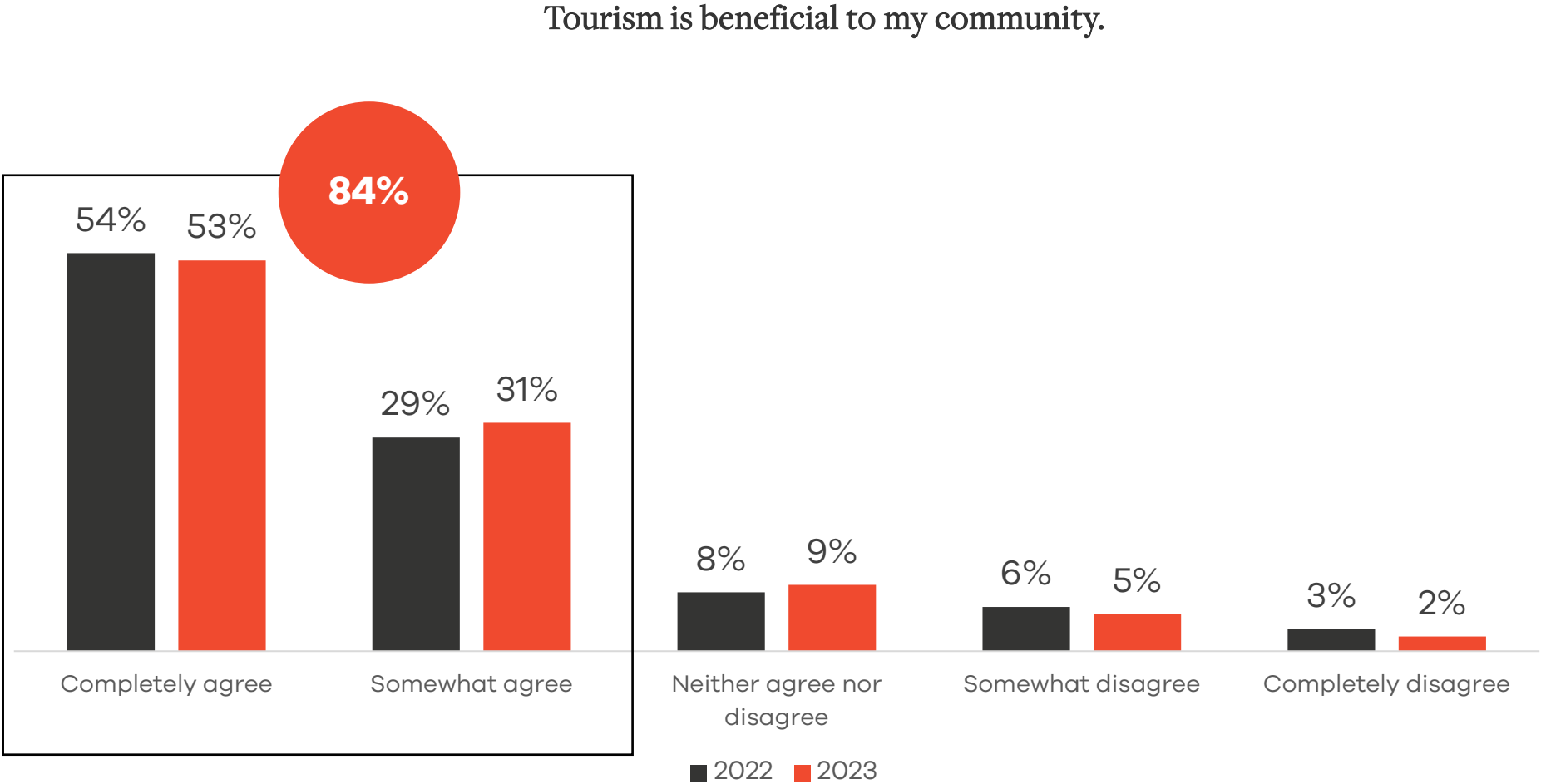


Among those who are employed: n=240

Key Insight ^{no.}1

While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.

Key Insight ^{no.1}: While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) 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.

84%

of Buncombe County residents believe
tourism is beneficial to the community.





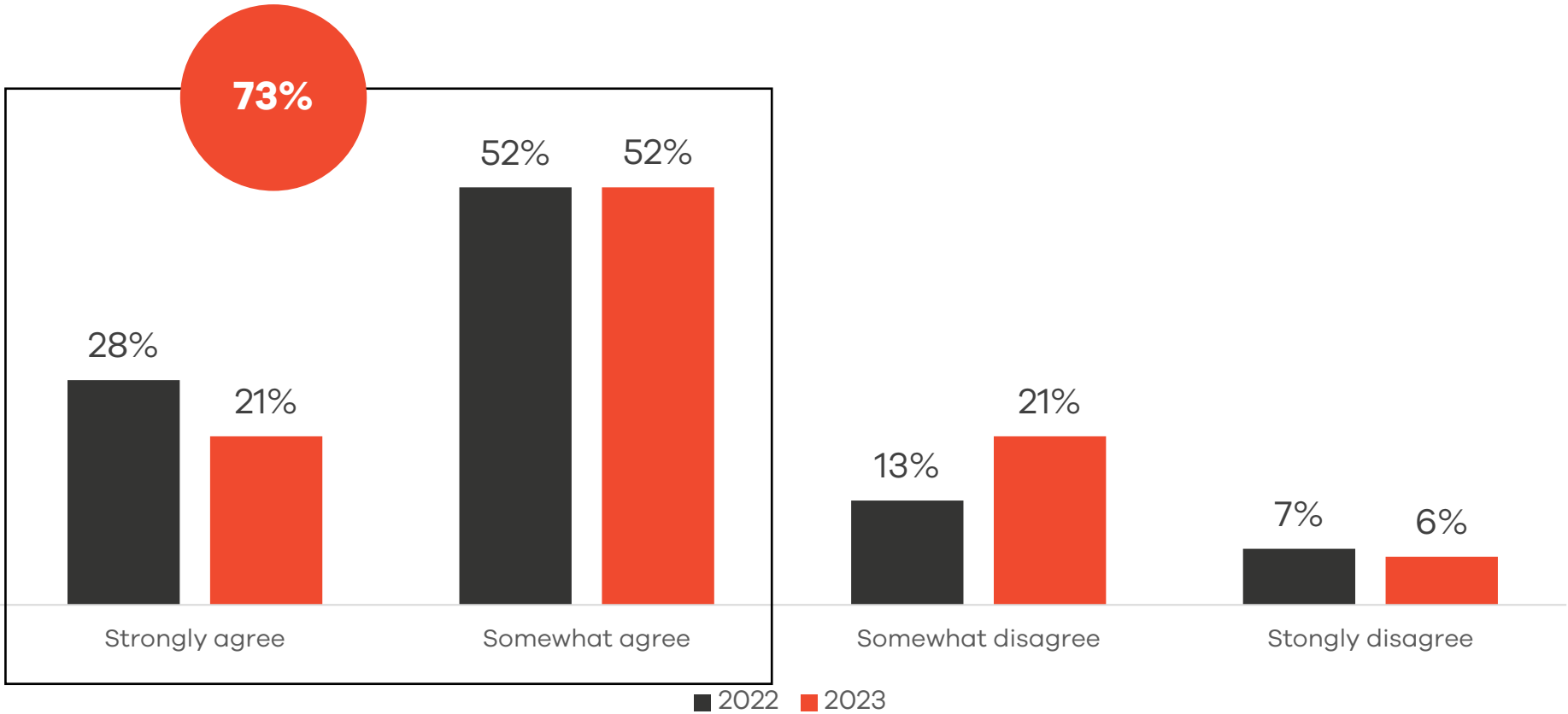
And...

52%

agree that "Tourism positively impacts me and my family."

Key Insight ^{no. 1}: While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.

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}: While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.

- Although down slightly from last year, a large majority of residents agree with all positive statements made about tourism and its economic impact. Nine in 10 agree that visitors to the community help support local businesses.

Positive Statements Related to Economic Impact % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	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%	-1
Tourism and conferences introduce visitors to my community who could potentially move their business or start a new business here.	NA	88%	85%	-3
Tourism is an economic driver for Buncombe County and provides an important part of the tax base.	NA	89%	85%	-4
The number of visitors to our area helps attract and support more airlines and direct flights for residents. ²	89%	84%	80%	-4
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community. ³	79%	89%	80%	-9 ▼

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2022.

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.

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

Key Insight ^{no.1}: While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.

- Only half of Asheville residents believe tourism positively impacts their family, down significantly from last year.

Positive Statements Related to Quality of Life % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2022	2023	Change
Visitors help make festivals and sports events in my community more successful. ¹	79%	82%	+3
Our visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities such as parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy. ²	82%	79%	-3
Residents that have vacation rentals in my community earn supplemental income that helps their quality of life.	86%	76%	-10 ▼
Tourism positively impacts me and my family.	72%	52%	-20 ▼

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2022.

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}: While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.

Positive Statements Related to Tourism Promotion % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	Change
The lodging taxes visitors pay cover the cost for marketing done by my community. ¹	66%	60%	66%	+6
Tourism promotion has helped build Asheville’s competitiveness and attracted new businesses to our community. ²	NA	86%	85%	-1
Investment in tourism promotion via lodging tax collected from overnight visitors fuels the local economy. ³	82%	80%	73%	-7 ▼

Negative Statements Related to Tourism Promotion % Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	Change
Enough visitors to support local businesses will continue to come to my community even if destination promotion stops. ⁴	73%	80%	74%	-6 ▼
I don’t want other people to know about the experiences and amenities here in Asheville and Buncombe County.	NA	NA	24%	-

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2022.

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 are proud of their community, the emphasis on inclusivity and diversity, and the culture and character of Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 2: Asheville residents are proud of their community, the emphasis on inclusivity and diversity, 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?

"I love my community because it feels like a family."

"Asheville has strived to maintain the historic charm and culture of the area."

"We watch out for one another."

"I'm proud to be part of a community that is so open minded, and has so many good people willing to help those in need."

"The folks living here are decent, helpful and friendly. I'll take that every time!"

"It is diverse, accepting and accommodating to all different types of people. I also like how they highlight or celebrate different races, ethnicities, gender etc in various festivals, exhibits and programs throughout the year."

88%

of Buncombe County residents believe visitors to the community help support the number and variety of independent businesses, including restaurants, retail shops, and entertainment opportunities.





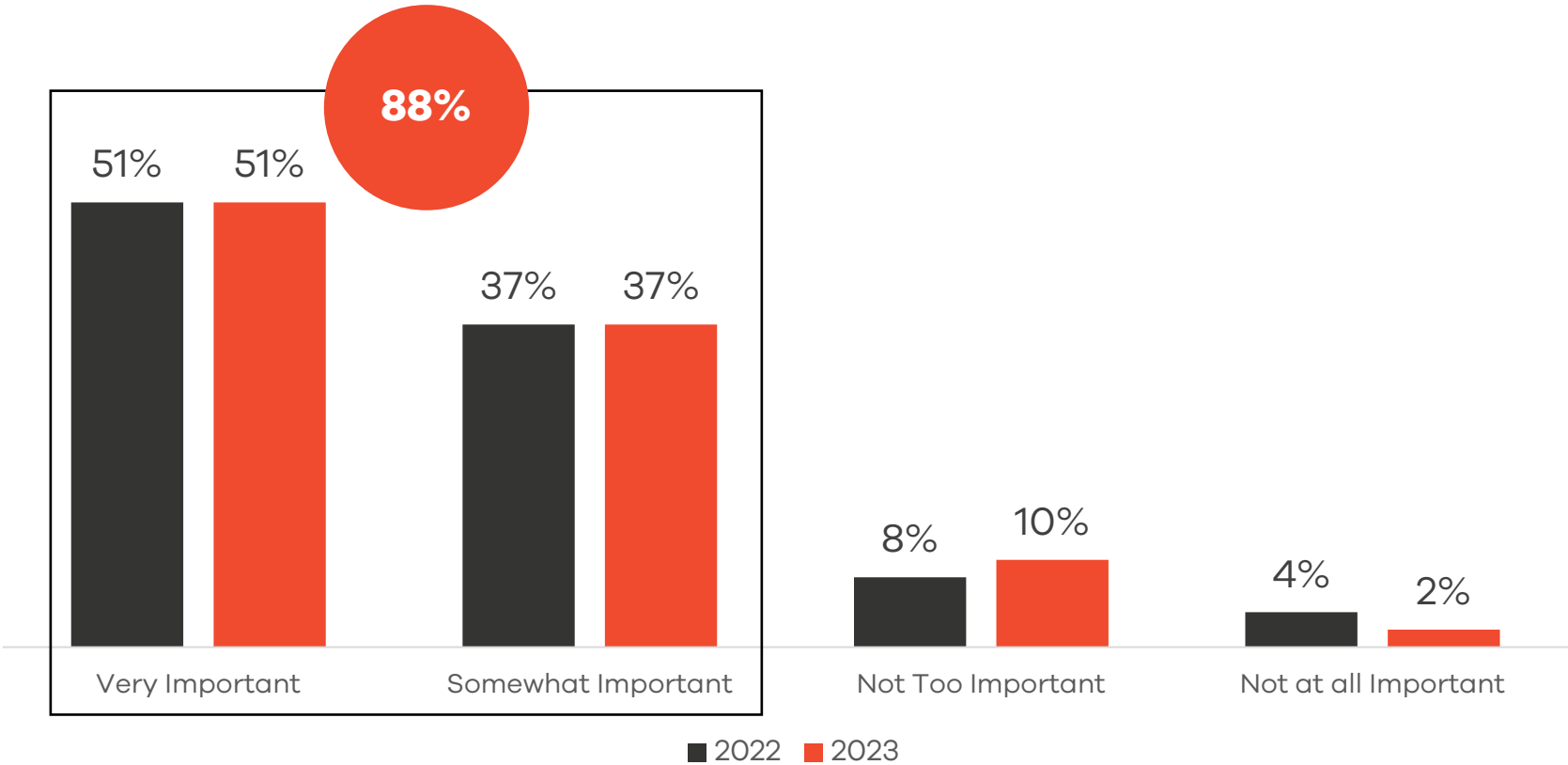
And...

38%

believe visitors detract from the
culture and character of our
community.

Nearly 9 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 Spirt 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:

9 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**

Parking and traffic congestion problems are the primary concerns Asheville residents have for their quality of life. Dispersing visitors to areas outside of downtown Asheville and shifting to concentration of visitors to less peak times of the year are important initiatives for Asheville residents.

Key Insight ^{no. 3}: Parking and traffic congestion problems are the primary concerns Asheville residents have for their quality of life. Dispersing visitors to areas outside of downtown Asheville and shifting to concentration of visitors to less peak times of the year are important initiatives for Asheville residents.

- 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	Change
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area. ¹	85%	74%	79%	+5
There are parking supply problems because of people visiting the community. ²	88%	76%	77%	+1
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer options for year-round residents.	NA	68%	72%	+4
Buncombe County’s economy is too dependent upon tourism.	NA	68%	67%	-1
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community. ³	NA	53%	48%	-5
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment.	NA	NA	46%	-
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions. ⁴	63%	45%	42%	-3
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources. ⁵	52%	37%	41%	+4
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community.	NA	32%	38%	+6

Data in bold indicate a significant difference from 2022.

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.

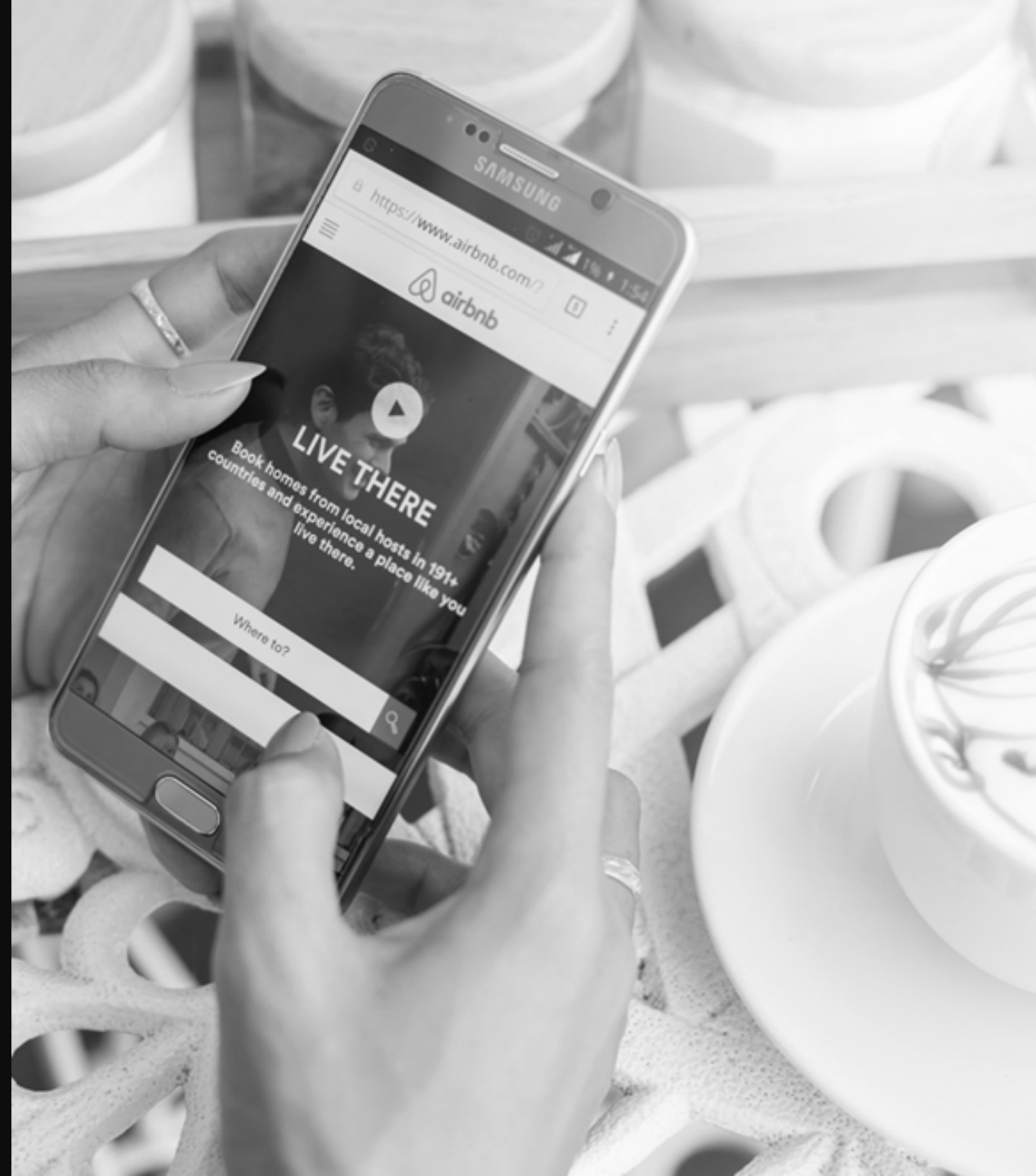
2022 Question Wording

- 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...”

72%

of residents believe short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer options for year-round residents.





And...

76%

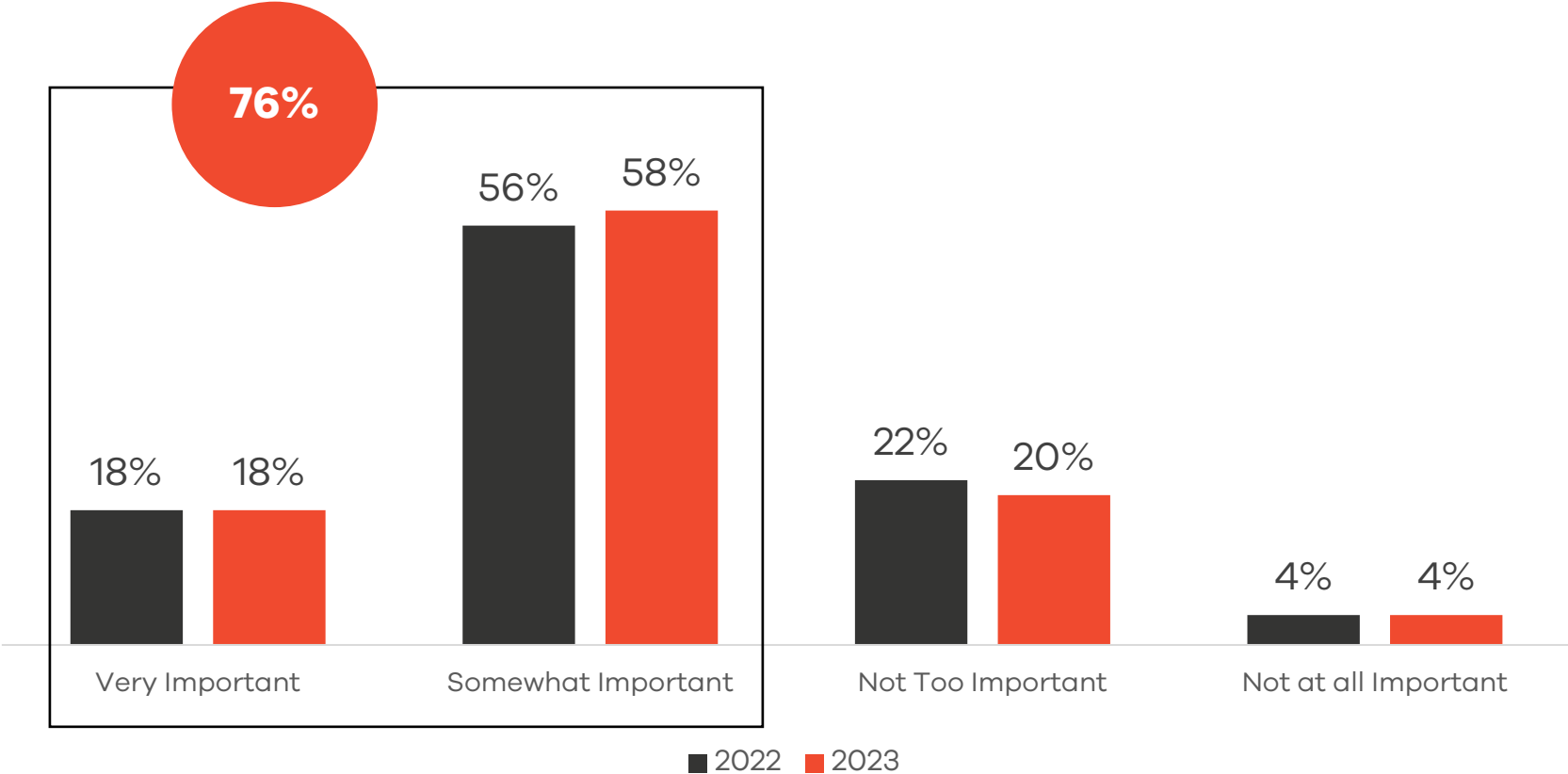
**believe residents who have
vacation rentals in my
community earn
supplemental income that
helps their quality of life.**

Key Insight ^{no.} 3: Parking and traffic congestion problems are the primary concerns Asheville residents have for their quality of life. Dispersing visitors to areas outside of downtown Asheville and shifting to concentration of visitors to less peak times of the year are important initiatives for Asheville residents.

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.

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



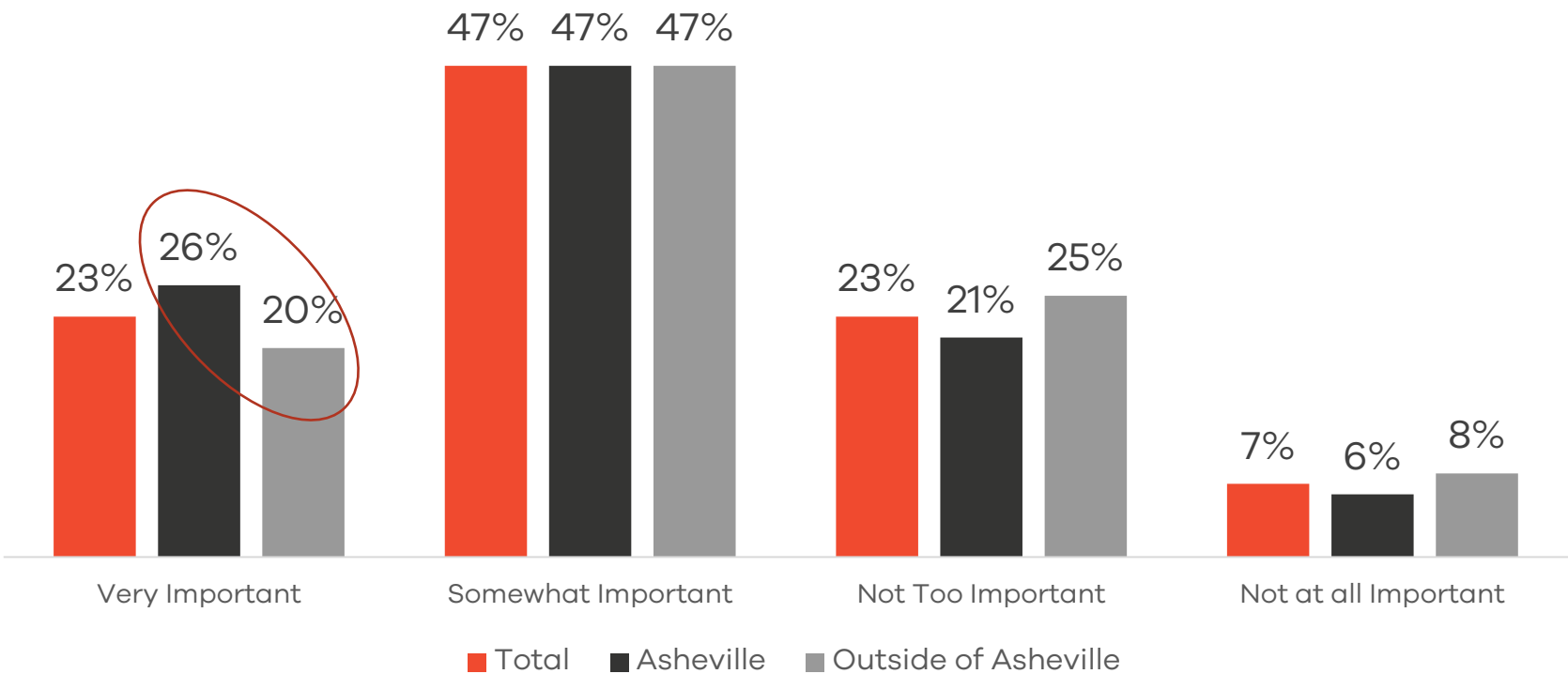
Q. How important do you believe each of the following initiatives are for managing visitors to and in your community:

Key Insight ^{no.} 3: Parking and traffic congestion problems are the primary concerns Asheville residents have for their quality of life. Dispersing visitors to areas outside of downtown Asheville and shifting to concentration of visitors to less peak times of the year are important initiatives for Asheville residents.

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

- 70% of residents indicate that dispersing visitors throughout the county is an important initiative.
- Significantly more Asheville residents consider this to be a very 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**

Residents are proud of the natural beauty and greenspaces of Asheville. Around half are concerned tourism may impact these natural amenities, and emphasize participating in sustainable tourism is important for visitors.

Key Insight ^{no.} 4: Residents are proud of the natural beauty and greenspaces of Asheville. Around half are concerned tourism may impact these natural amenities, and emphasize participating in sustainable tourism is important for visitors.

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?

"Grassroots efforts, commitment to environment and the welfare of the people."

"Efforts in sustainability. Increase access to composting. Strong equity and inclusion principals."

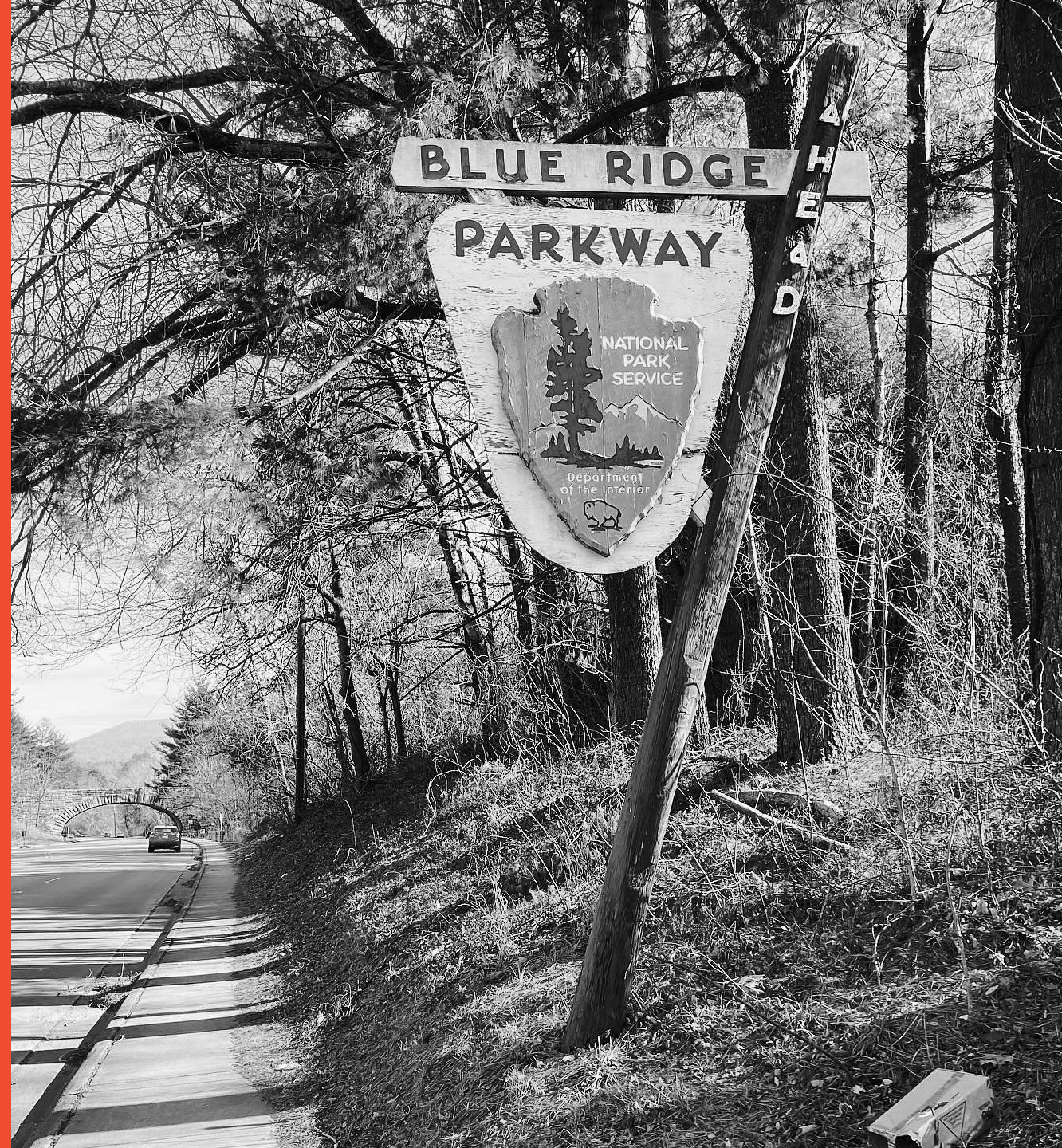
"Beautiful place, perfect weather, wonderful people."

"I like that we recycle and are environmentally friendly."

"Community is in tune with the importance of respecting nature."

48%

of Buncombe County residents believe tourism reduces available public green space in the community.





And...

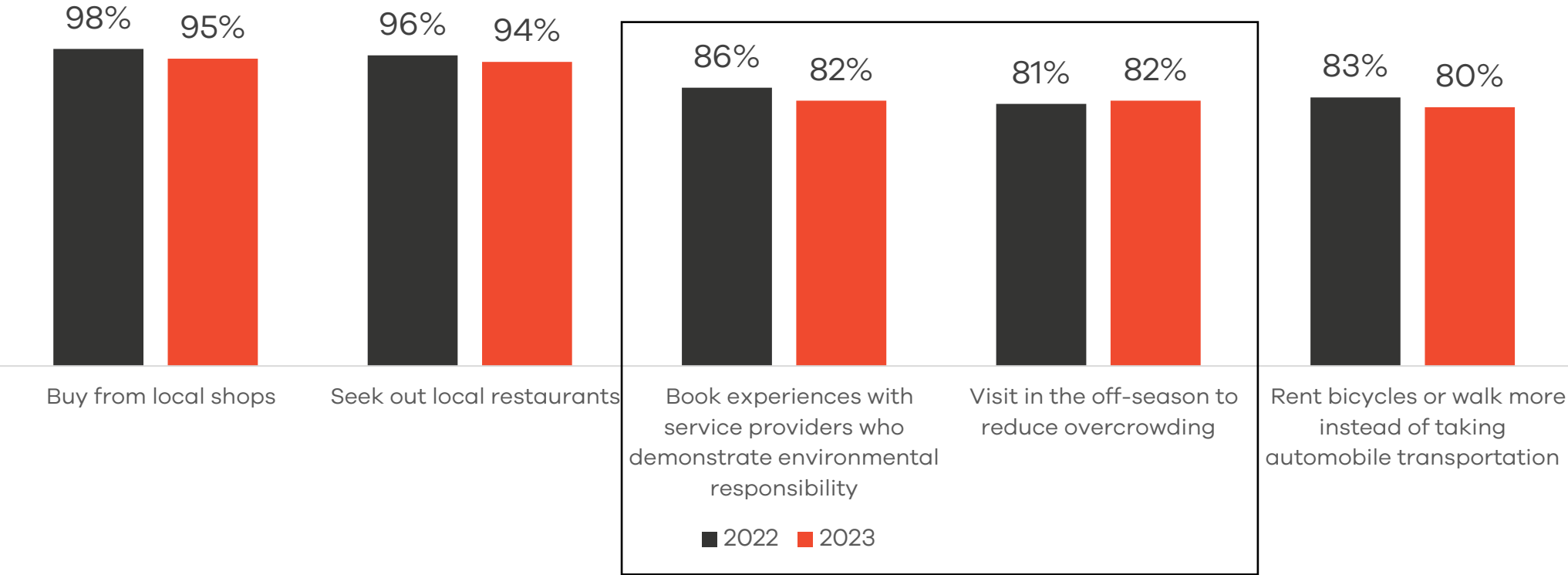
79%

agree that our visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities such as parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy.

Key Insight ^{no.} 4: Residents are proud of the natural beauty and greenspaces of Asheville. Around half are concerned tourism may impact these natural amenities, and emphasize participating in sustainable tourism is important for visitors.

More than 80% 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

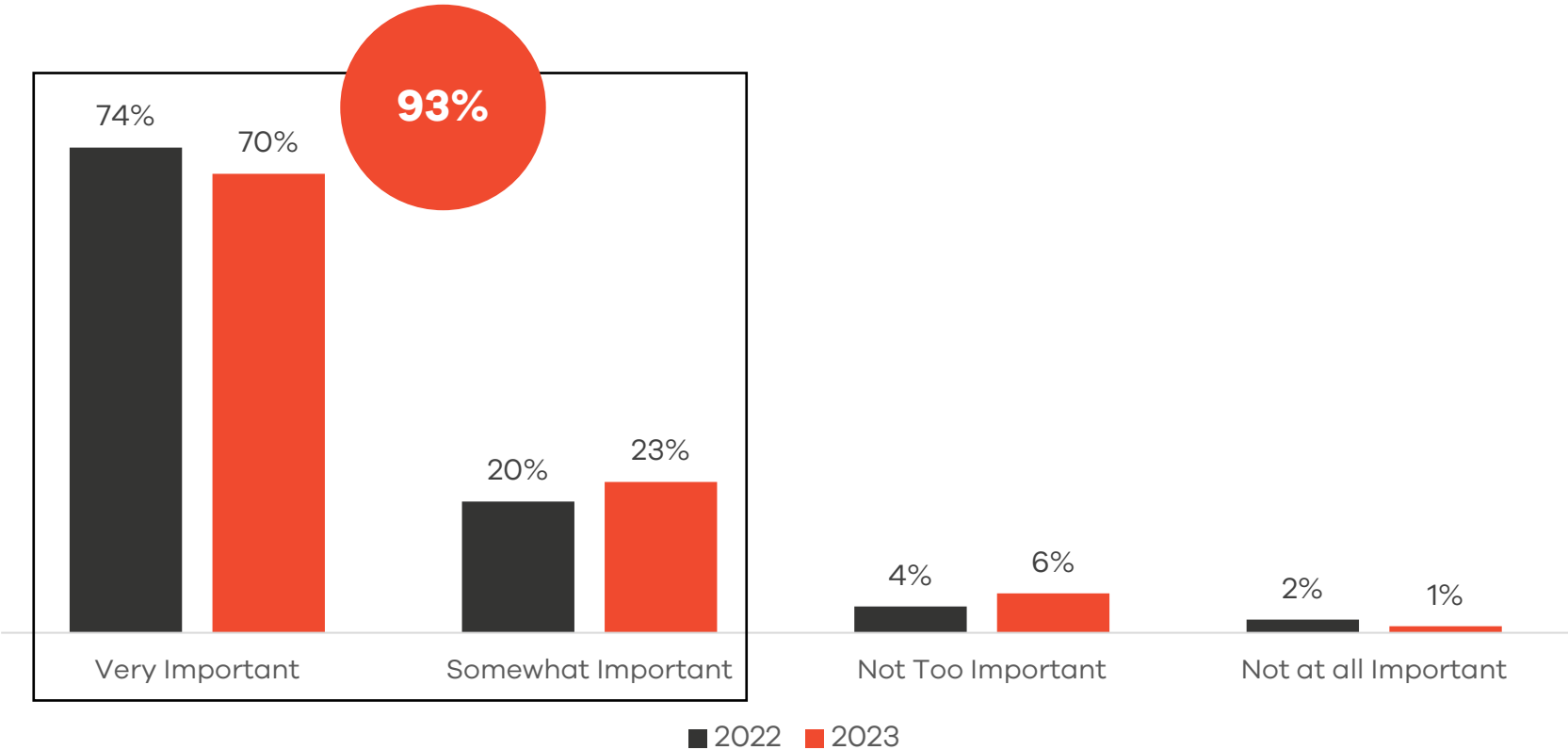


Q. How important do you believe it is for visitors to Buncombe County to do the following when in your community?

Key Insight ^{no.} 4: Residents are proud of the natural beauty and greenspaces of Asheville. Around half are concerned tourism may impact these natural amenities, and emphasize participating in sustainable tourism is important for visitors.

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 2022.

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:

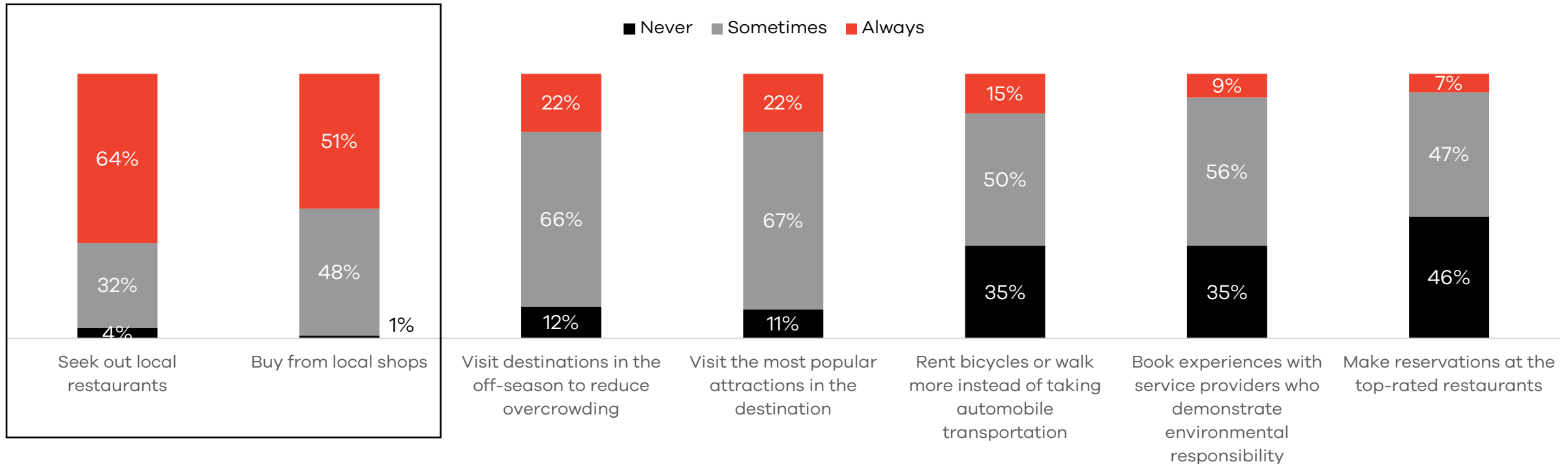
Key Insight ^{no.} **5**

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

Key Insight ^{no} 5: Supporting local businesses is important to Asheville residents, and most expect the same of visitors to Asheville.

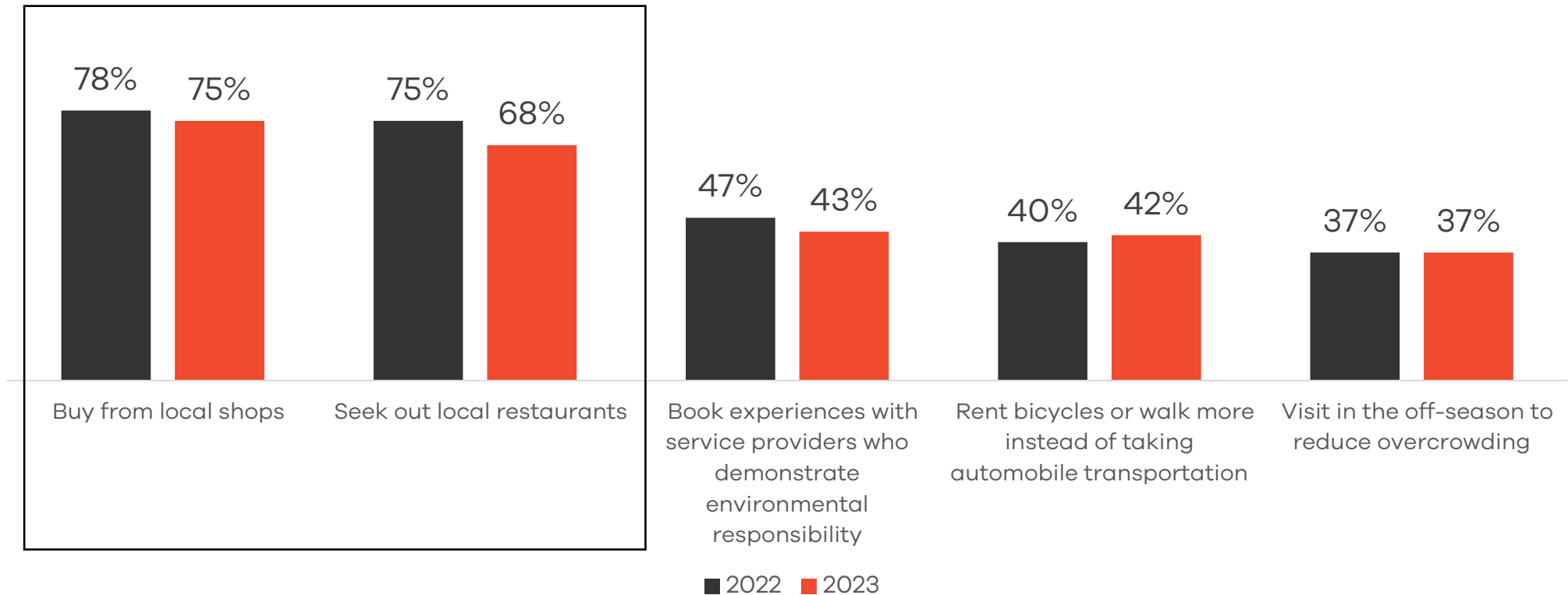
More than 96% of respondents indicate they either sometimes or always seek out local restaurants or buy from local shops while on vacation.

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.

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



51%

**of Buncombe County residents
say they always buy from local
shops when they travel for
vacation.**



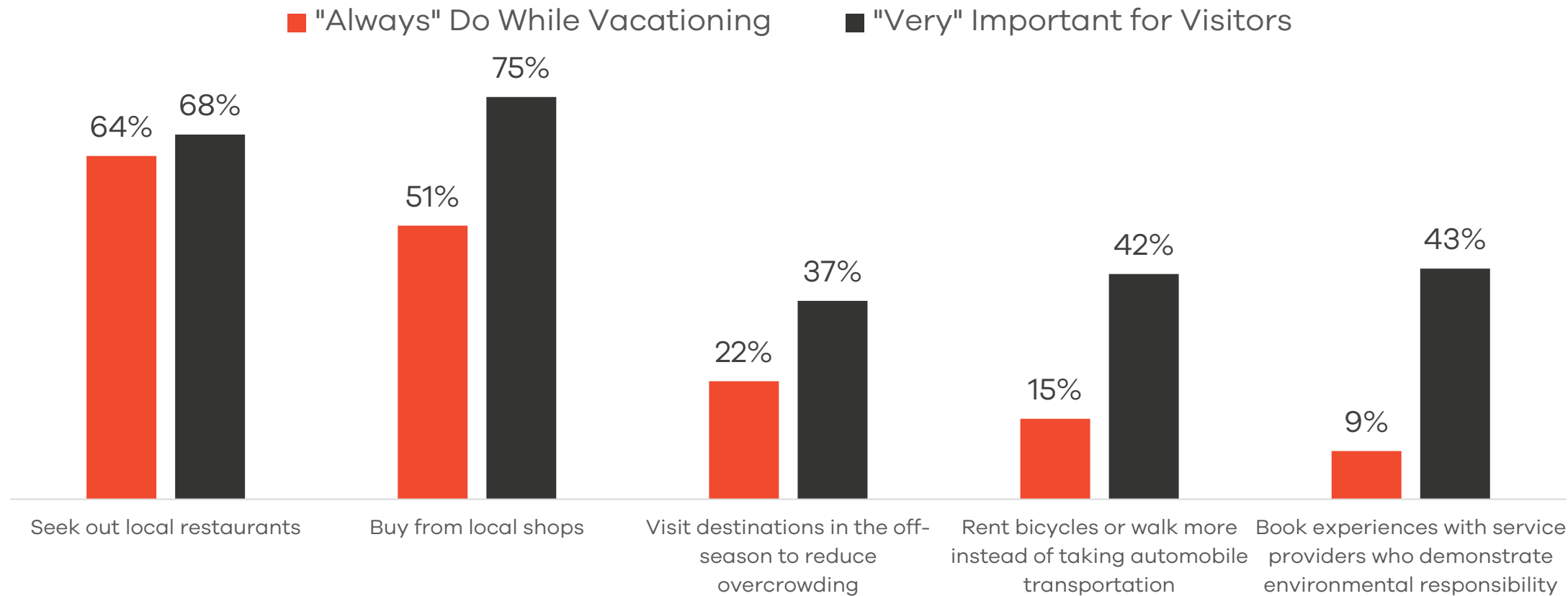


And...

75%

believe it's "Very Important" for
Buncombe County visitors to buy
from local shops when they visit.

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?

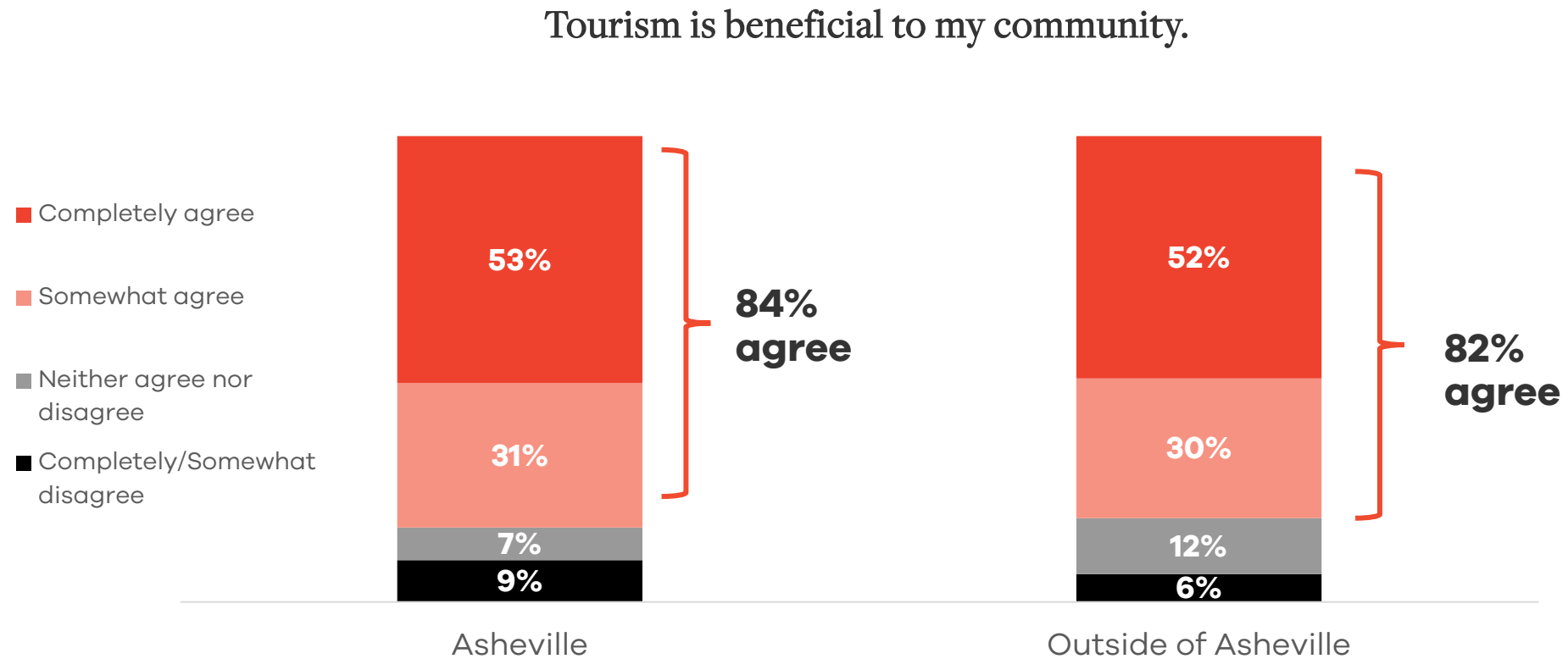
Q. How important do you believe it is for visitors to Buncombe County to do the following when in your community?

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

City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 6: City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville.

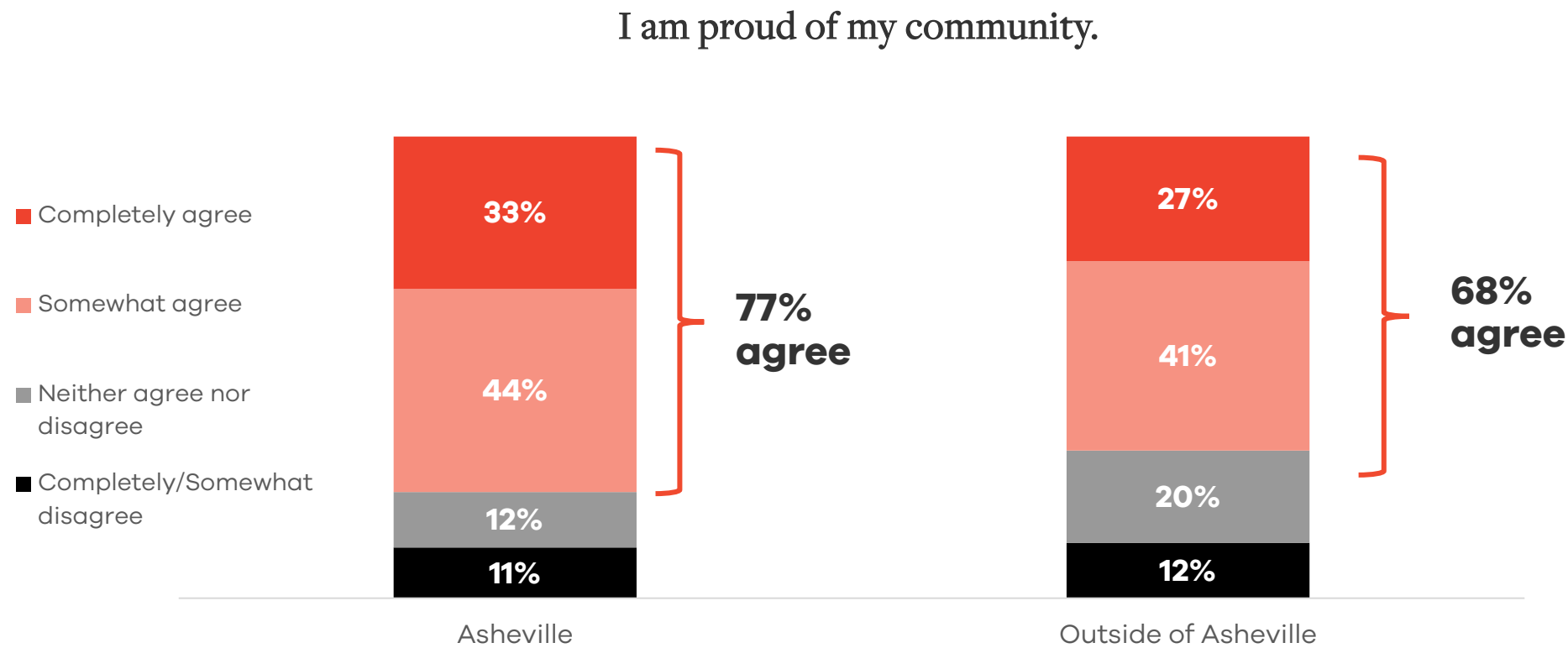
More than half of residents in Asheville and those outside of Asheville completely agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.



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

Key Insight ^{no.} 6: City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville. .

More residents in Asheville than those outside of 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.} 6: City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville.

- 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.	90%	82%
Tourism and conferences introduce visitors to my community who could potentially move their business or start a new business here.	89%	81%
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, entertainment opportunities.	88%	87%
The number of visitors to our area helps attract and support more airlines and direct flights for residents.	80%	79%
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community.	79%	82%

Positive Statements Related to Quality of Life % Completely/Somewhat Agree	Asheville	Outside of Asheville
Our visitor economy helps support natural and cultural amenities such as parks, greenways, performing arts and museums that residents enjoy.	84%	75%
Visitors help make festivals and sports events in my community more successful.	80%	84%
Residents who have vacation rentals in my community earn supplemental income that helps their quality of life.	74%	78%
Tourism positively impacts me and my family.	55%	50%

Key Insight ^{no.} 6: City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville.

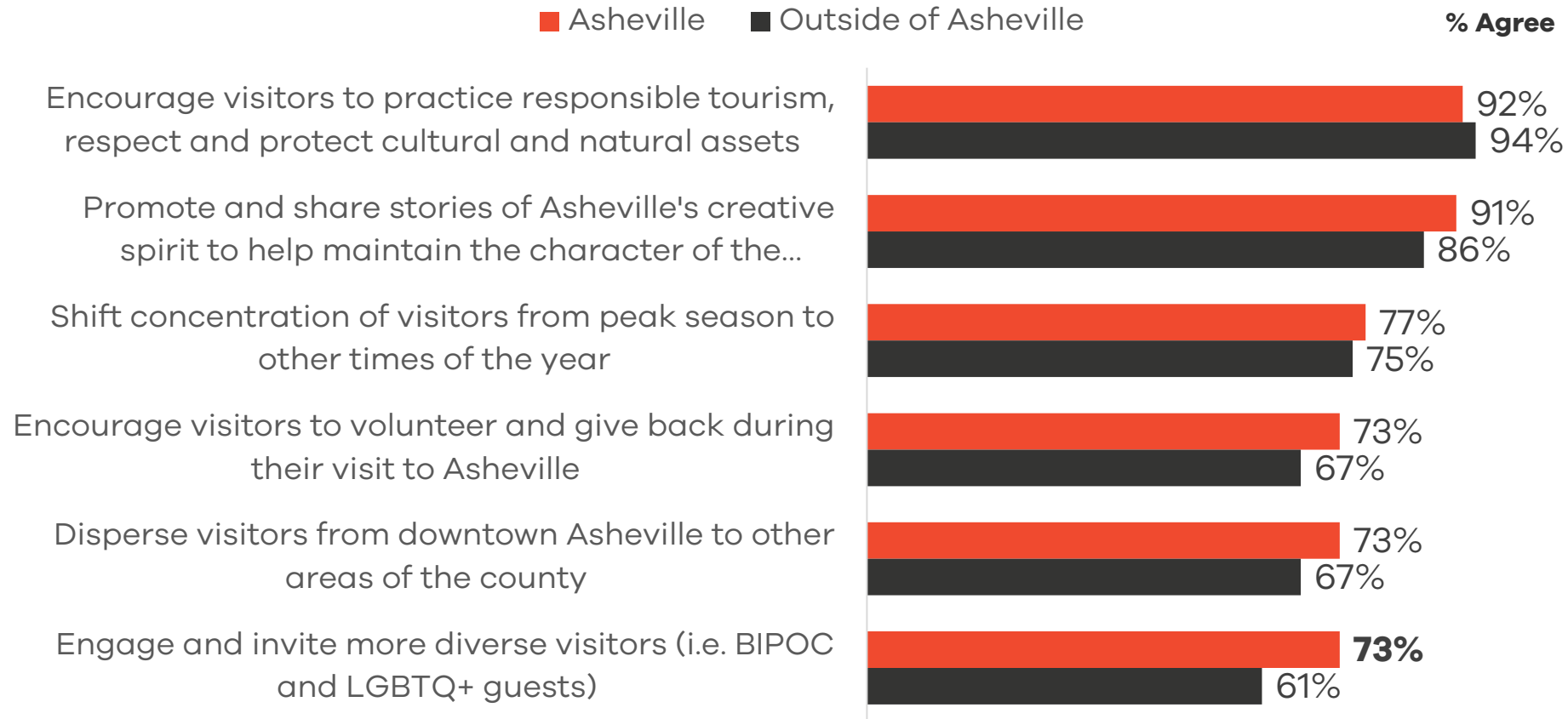
- Residents in Asheville are more concerned about parking supply problems than residents outside of Asheville. However, for other statements related to quality of life, Asheville residents generally are less concerned than residents outside of Asheville.

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.	81%	73%
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area.	77%	79%
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer housing options for year-round residents.	72%	72%
Buncombe County's economy is too dependent upon tourism.	67%	72%
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community.	48%	51%
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment.	46%	45%
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions.	42%	45%
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources.	41%	43%
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community.	38%	43%

Key Insight ^{no.} 6: City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville.

Significantly more Asheville residents believe it is important 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?

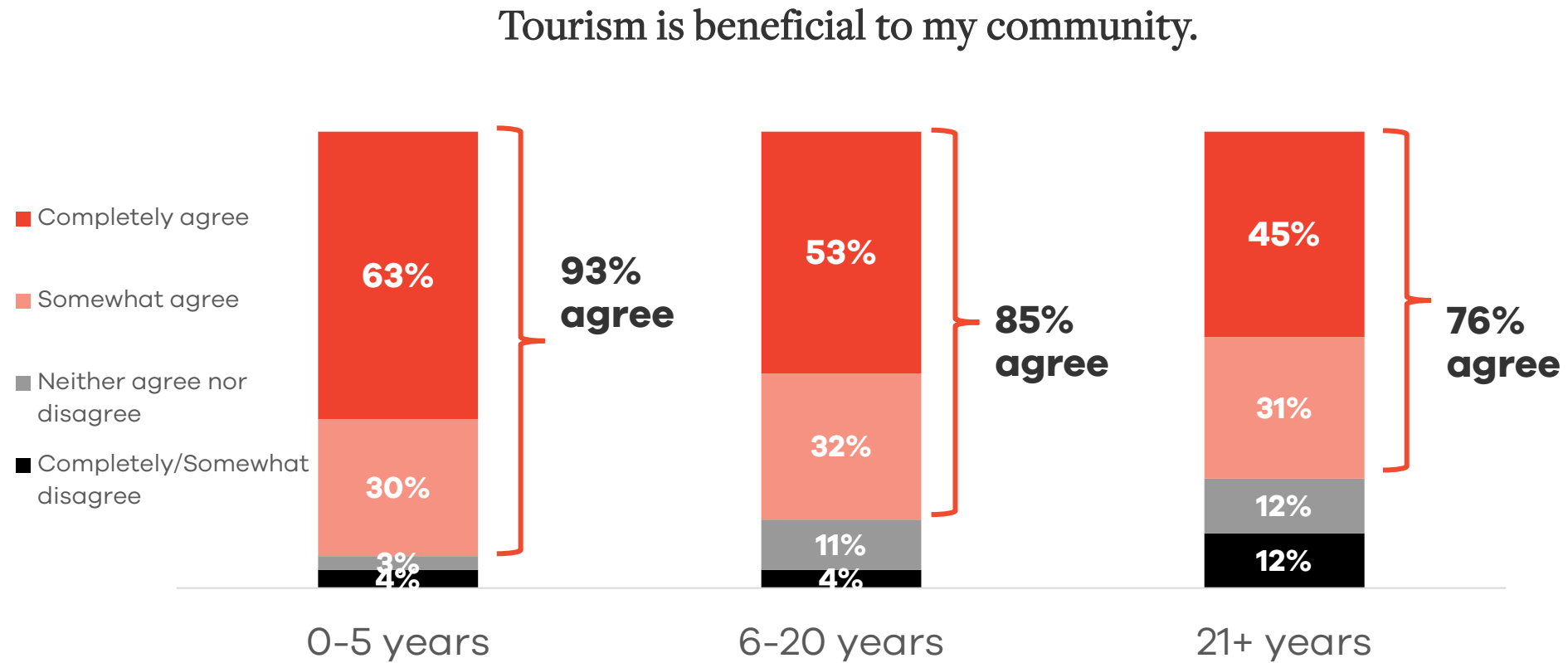


Key Insight ^{no.} **7**

Length of residency has a significant impact on how residents feel about tourism in Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no. 7}: Length of residency has a significant impact on how residents feel about tourism in Asheville.

- Only three-quarters of Asheville residents who have resided in Asheville for more than 20 years agree that tourism is beneficial to their community, compared to more than 90% of new residents.



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

Key Insight ^{no. 7}: Length of residency has a significant impact on how residents feel about tourism in Asheville.

- Less than half of longterm (21+ years) residents of Asheville believe tourism positively impacts their family, compared to more than 6 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.	90%	88%	82%
Tourism and conferences introduce visitors to my community who could potentially move their business or start a new business here.	88%	85%	84%
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, entertainment opportunities.	92%	87%	87%
The number of visitors to our area helps attract and support more airlines and direct flights for residents.	88%	78%	75%
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community.	86%	83%	77%

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.	86%	81%	75%
Visitors help make festivals and sports events in my community more successful.	86%	80%	83%
Residents who have vacation rentals in my community earn supplemental income that helps their quality of life.	78%	74%	78%
Tourism positively impacts me and my family.	61%	56%	46%

Key Insight ^{no.} 7: Length of residency has a significant impact on how residents feel about tourism in Asheville.

- Longterm (21+ years) residents of Asheville are particularly concerned about traffic congestion and parking supply problems associated with tourism.

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.	76%	73%	81%
We have traffic congestion due to the number of people visiting the area.	78%	75%	83%
Short-term/vacation rentals for visitors leave fewer housing options for year-round residents.	73%	71%	73%
Buncombe County's economy is too dependent upon tourism.	65%	67%	70%
Tourism reduces available public green space in my community.	47%	44%	53%
Tourism to my community is directly damaging to the environment.	42%	48%	48%
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions.	38%	44%	45%
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources.	33%	41%	48%
Visitors detract from the culture and character of our community.	38%	37%	41%

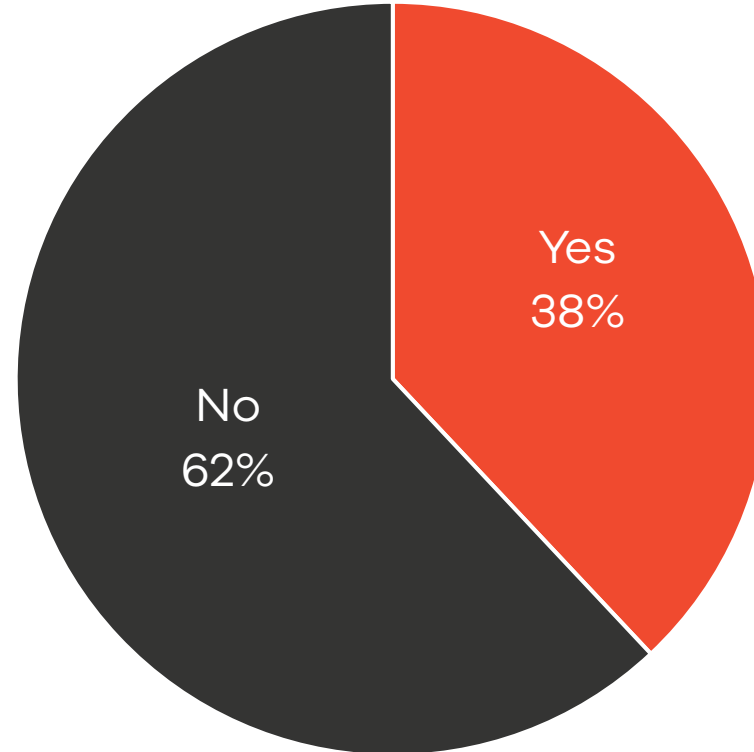
Key Insight ^{no.} 8

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

Key Insight ^{no.} 8: There is still an opportunity to educate Asheville residents about how taxes paid by visitors are used to benefit residents.

The majority of residents are not aware that hotel and vacation rental occupancy tax can only be used for tourism promotion and projects that benefit visitors as well as residents.

Q. Were you aware that, legally, hotel and vacation rental occupancy tax paid by visitors can only be used for tourism promotion and capital projects that benefit visitors as well as residents?

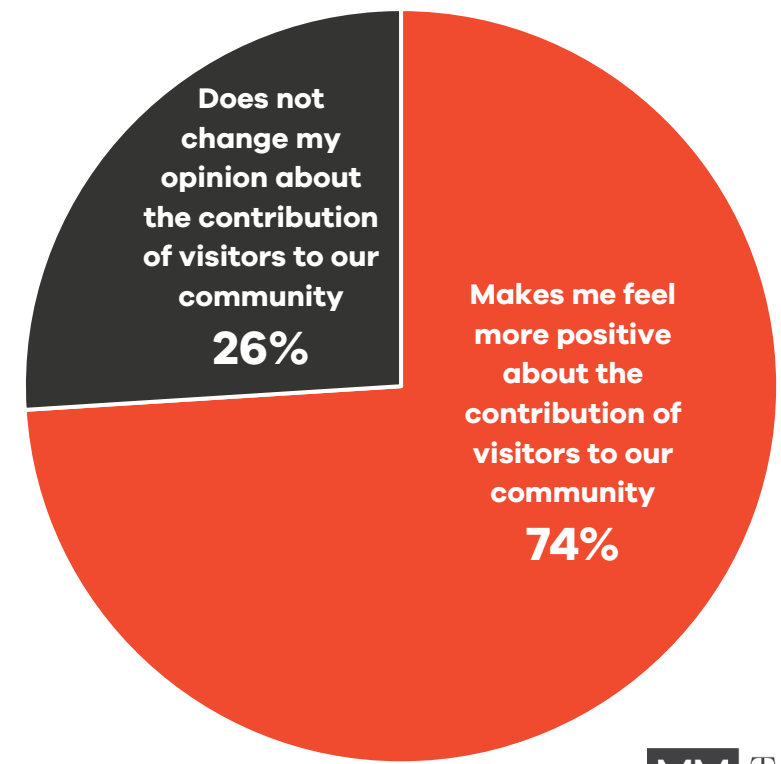


Key Insight ^{no.} 8: There is still an opportunity to educate Asheville residents about how taxes paid by visitors are used to benefit residents.

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	75%
NC Arboretum	69%
Western North Carolina Nature Center	69%
River Arts District Greenways	65%
Grove Arcade	64%
Pack Square Park	60%
Harrah’s Cherokee Center- Asheville	56%
Asheville Art Museum	47%
Asheville Community Theatre	38%
Asheville Museum of Science	33%
Wortham Center	27%
Montford Park Players Theater	24%
Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center	23%
JBL Soccer Complex at Azalea Park	20%
Center for Craft	18%
Enka Recreation Destination & Bob Lewis Ballpark	16%
LEAF Global Arts Center	15%
YMI Cultural Center	12%
None of these	6%

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



Q. Have you or a member of your household ever visited, or do you plan to visit any of the following community amenities? Select all that apply.

Key Insights Summary and Additional Findings

Key Insight ^{no.} 1

While residents agree that tourism poses some challenges, they clearly believe that tourism also provides immense value to the community, and an overwhelming majority (84%) agree that tourism is beneficial to their community.

Key Insight ^{no.} 2

Asheville residents are proud of their community, the emphasis on inclusivity and diversity, and the culture and character of Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 3

Parking and traffic congestion problems are the primary concerns Asheville residents have for their quality of life. Dispersing visitors to areas outside of downtown Asheville and shifting to concentration of visitors to less peak times of the year are important initiatives for Asheville residents.

Key Insight ^{no.} 4

Residents are proud of the natural beauty and greenspaces of Asheville. Around half are concerned tourism may impact these natural amenities, and emphasize participating in sustainable tourism is important for visitors.

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

City of Asheville residents view the economic impact of tourism, and its support of natural and community amenities, in a more positive light than residents outside of Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 7

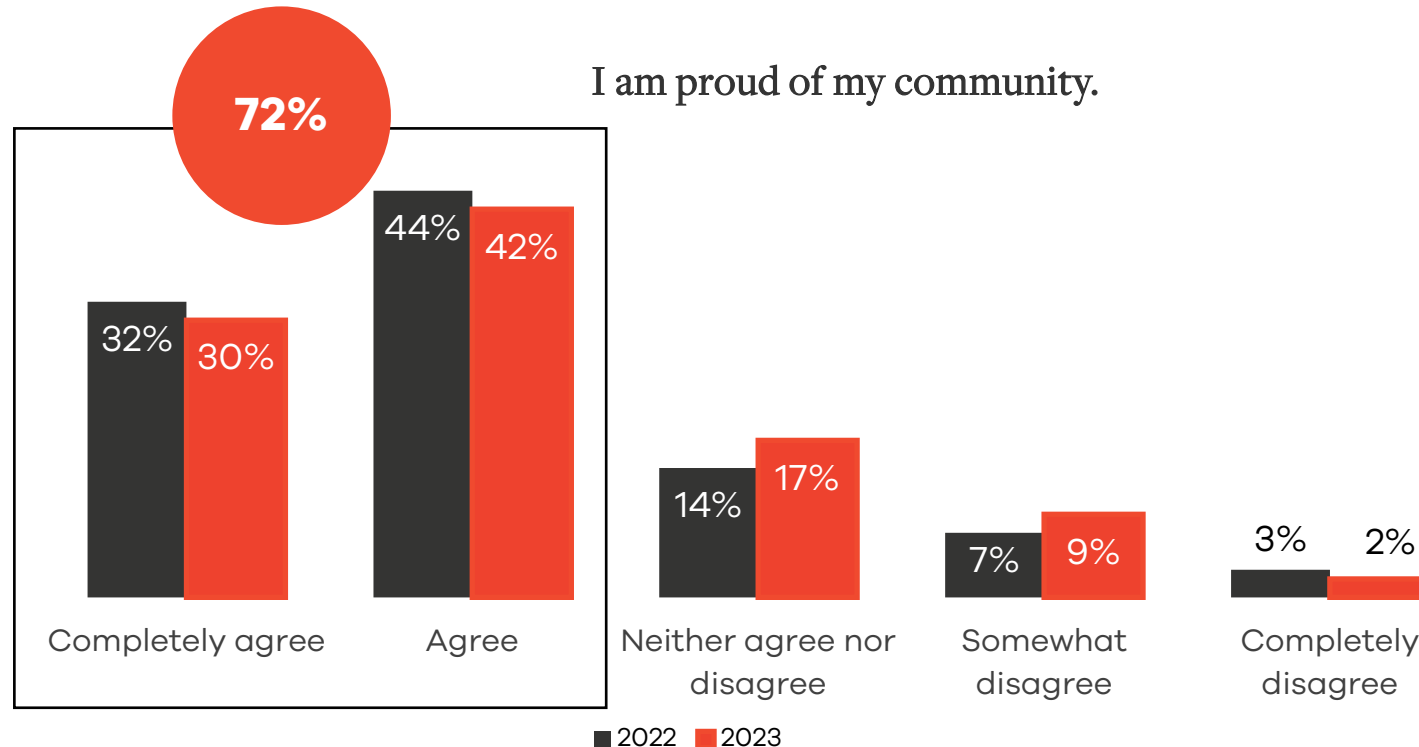
Length of residency has a significant impact on how residents feel about tourism in Asheville.

Key Insight ^{no.} 8

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

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

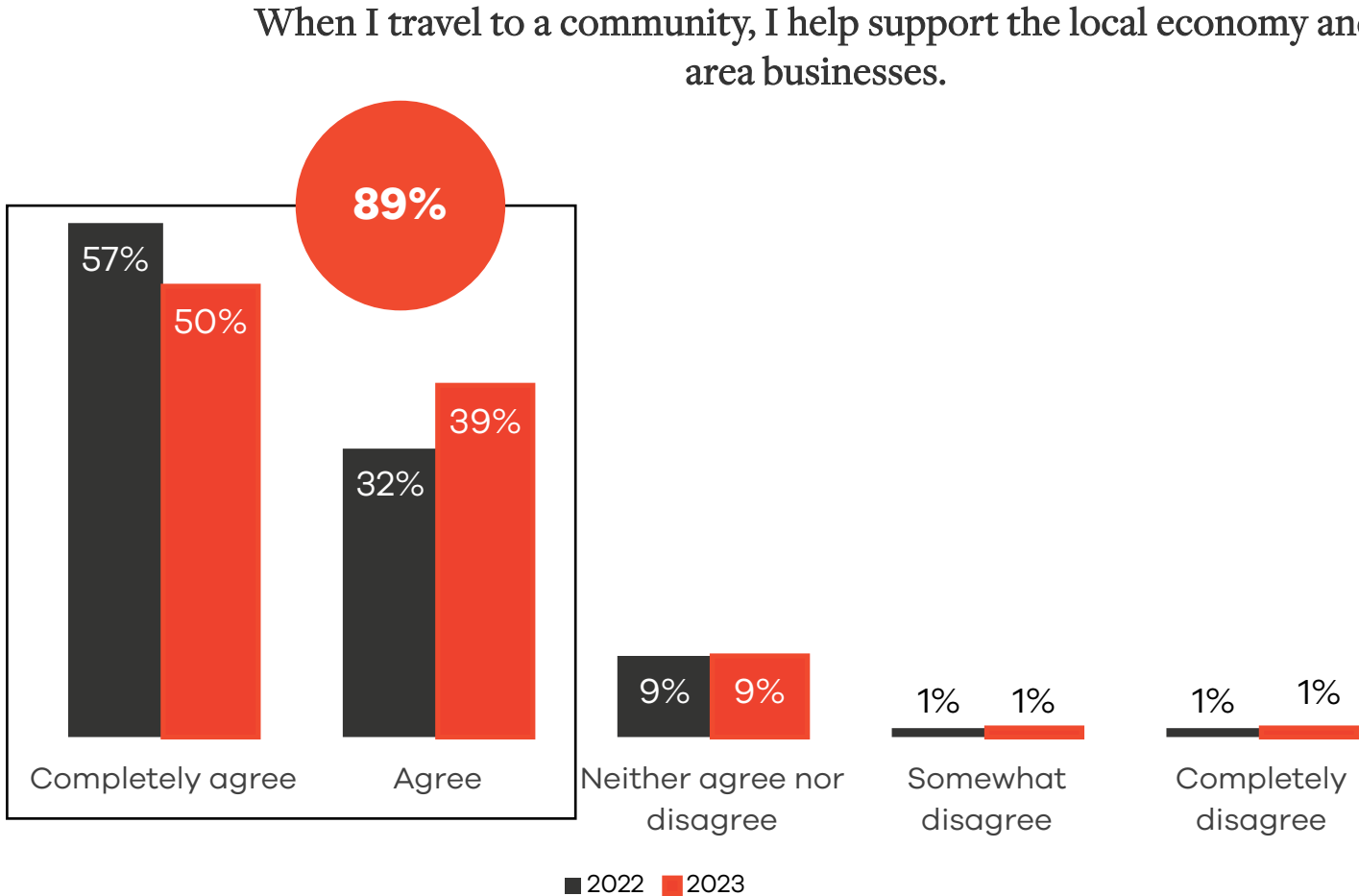
- Three-quarters of residents agree that they are proud of their community.
- Respondents were asked on an open-ended bases, why they were or were not proud of their community.
 - The responses for why they are proud appear to fit in the following categories: the community and people, the beautiful scenery, the variety of offerings/things to do, diversity and inclusion, and its creative/artistic culture.
 - The responses from those who indicated they were not proud of their community are primarily around homelessness 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

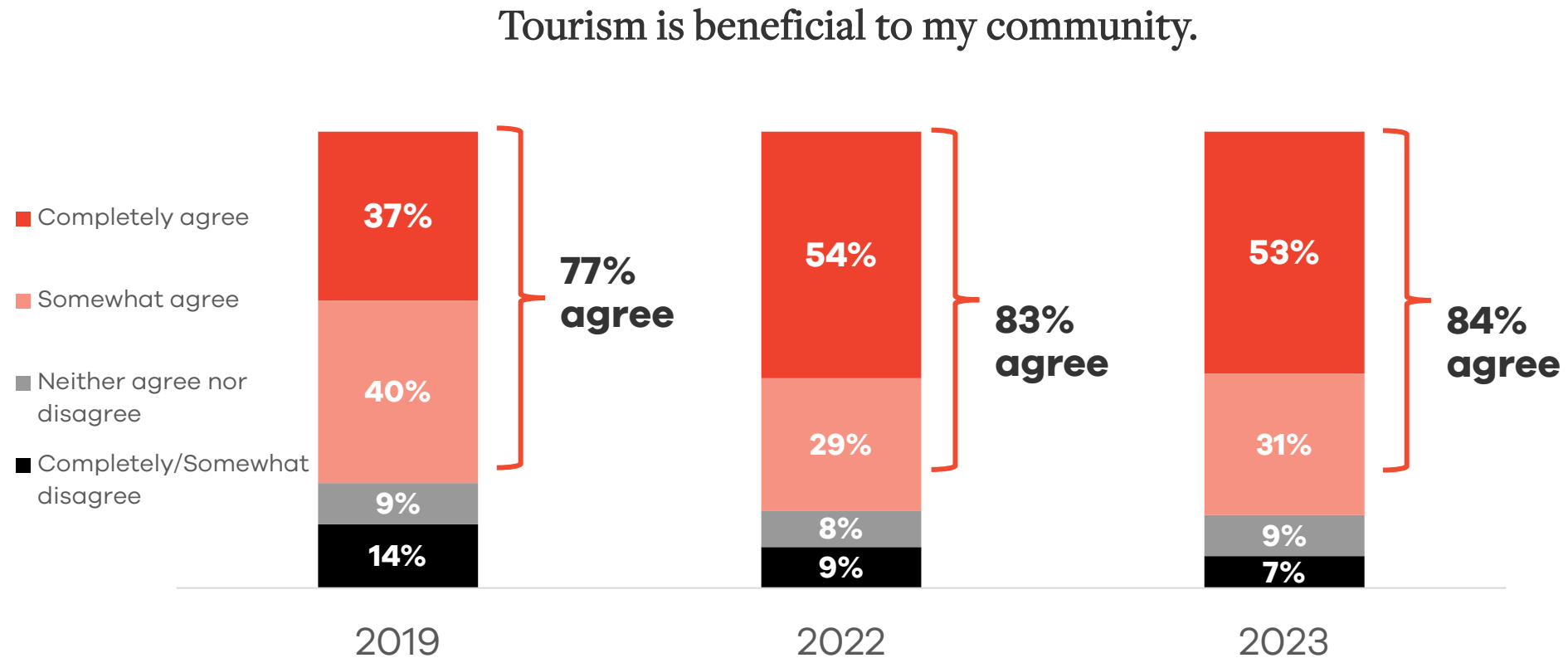
- Nearly 9 in 10 of Asheville residents agree that when they travel to a community, they help support the local economy and area businesses.



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

- 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 remains high, indicating residents still believe tourism is beneficial at a significantly higher rate than they did in 2019.



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

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- Although many categories decreased in 2023, overall positivity remains higher than in 2019.

Positive Statements Related to Economic Impact				
% Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	Change
Tourism supports entrepreneurial opportunities and jobs and can lead to additional career opportunities in my community. ¹	79%	89%	80%	-9 ▼
Visitors to our community help support the number and variety of independent businesses here, including restaurants, retail shops, and entertainment opportunities.	88%	89%	88%	-1
Negative Statements Related to Quality of Life				
% Completely/Somewhat Agree	2019	2022	2023	Change
We have traffic congestion problems due to the number of people visiting the area. ²	85%	74%	79%	+5
There are parking problems because of people visiting the community. ³	88%	76%	77%	+1
Visitors prevent me from enjoying community amenities such as restaurants and attractions. ⁴	63%	45%	42%	-3
People visiting the area are a drain on city and county resources. ⁵	52%	37%	41%	+4

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	70%	74%	67%
Citizen-Times	49%	52%	47%
Facebook	44%	46%	43%
Mountain Xpress	36%	41%	32%
Nextdoor App	24%	25%	24%
AVLtoday	18%	18%	18%
Online source such as Google News	16%	15%	16%
Blue Ridge Public Radio	14%	18%	10%
Other Asheville area radio station	13%	14%	12%
Asheville Politics or other local Facebook groups	11%	14%	8%
Ashvegas	10%	11%	8%
The Laurel of Asheville	8%	10%	7%
WWNC Radio/570	7%	9%	5%
Asheville Blade	5%	8%	2%
The Urban News	4%	6%	2%
The Tribune Papers	4%	3%	5%
Carolina Public Press	4%	5%	3%
WPVM/103.5	3%	5%	2%
Asheville Watchdog	3%	2%	4%
Other	10%	8%	12%
I don't follow local news	0%	1%	0%

Q. Which sources do you regularly rely on for local news?
Consider each source to be inclusive of its digital version.

DEMOGRAPHICS

	Total
Identify As:	
Female	66%
Male	33%
Other/prefer not to answer	1%
Age	
18 – 24	9%
25 – 34	20%
35 – 44	22%
45 – 54	19%
55 – 64	12%
65+	18%
Children under 18 in household	32%

	Total
Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian/White	85%
African American/Black	7%
Latino/Hispanic	6%
American Indian	3%
Asian	2%
Other/prefer not to answer	1%
Household Income	
Less than \$35,000	28%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	20%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17%
\$75,000 – \$99,999	12%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	11%
\$150,000 or more	6%
Prefer not to answer	8%

	Total
Political Affiliation	
Independent	30%
Democrat	28%
Republican	21%
Other/None of these	12%
Prefer not to answer	10%
Education	
High school or less	21%
Some college	31%
College graduate	34%
Post-graduate	15%



Chris Davidson

EVP, Insights & Strategy
CDavidson@MMGYIntel.com

Ashley Adams

Research Manager
AAdams@MMGYIntel.com