



Missoula Resident Sentiment on Tourism

2026 Results

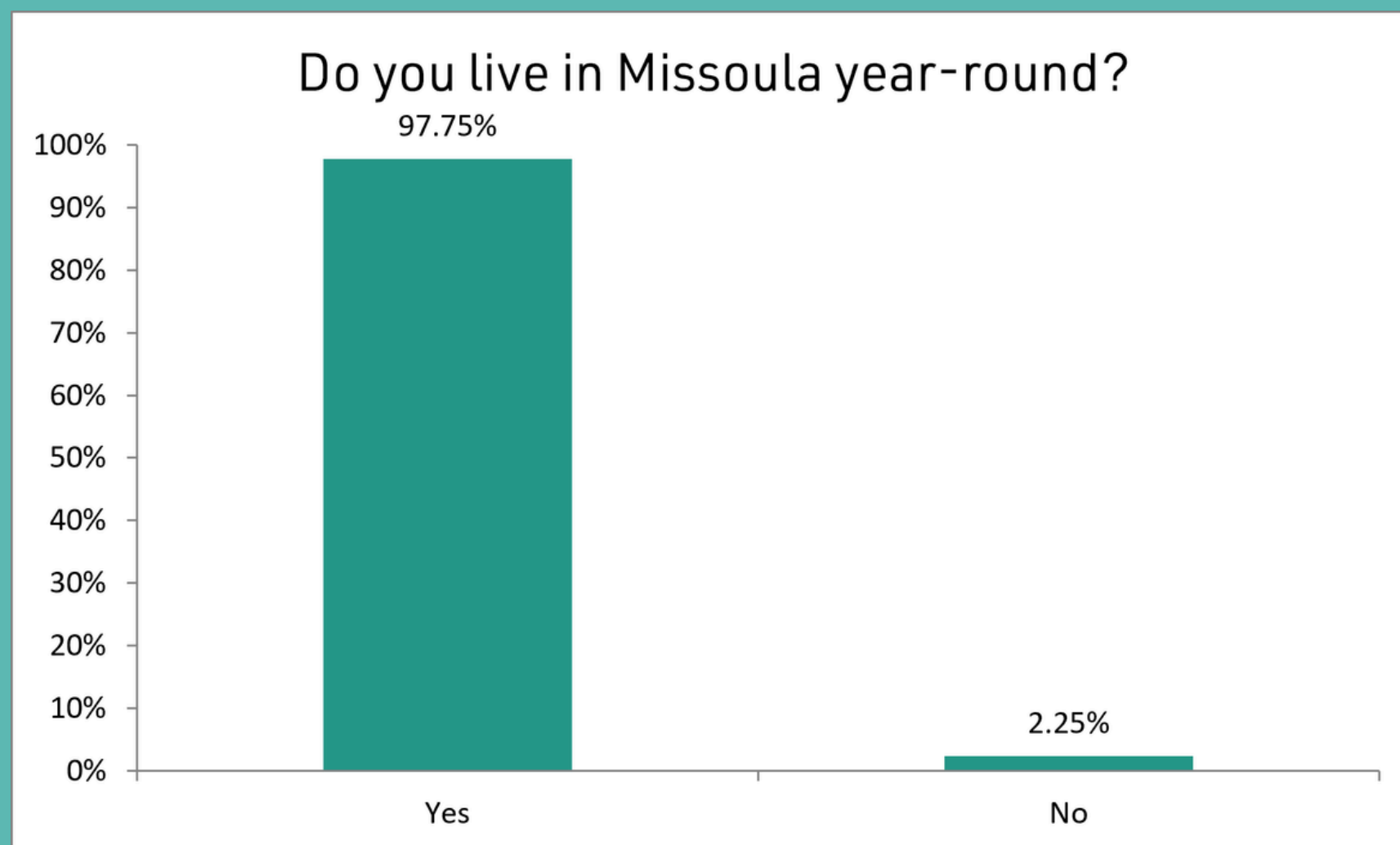
Survey Methodology & Acknowledgements

- Online survey to identify Missoula residents' perceptions on a variety of key characteristics regarding tourism in Missoula
- Survey was fielded from May 5th to June 8th, 2026
- 1,589 total survey repondents with 1,511 indicating they were Missoula residents (95%)
- The following results from most survey questions will show a weighted average
- The survey was created by MMGY NextFactor and first conducted in 2023 – comparisons are noted when applicable
- The Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research assisted with data analysis and summary reporting

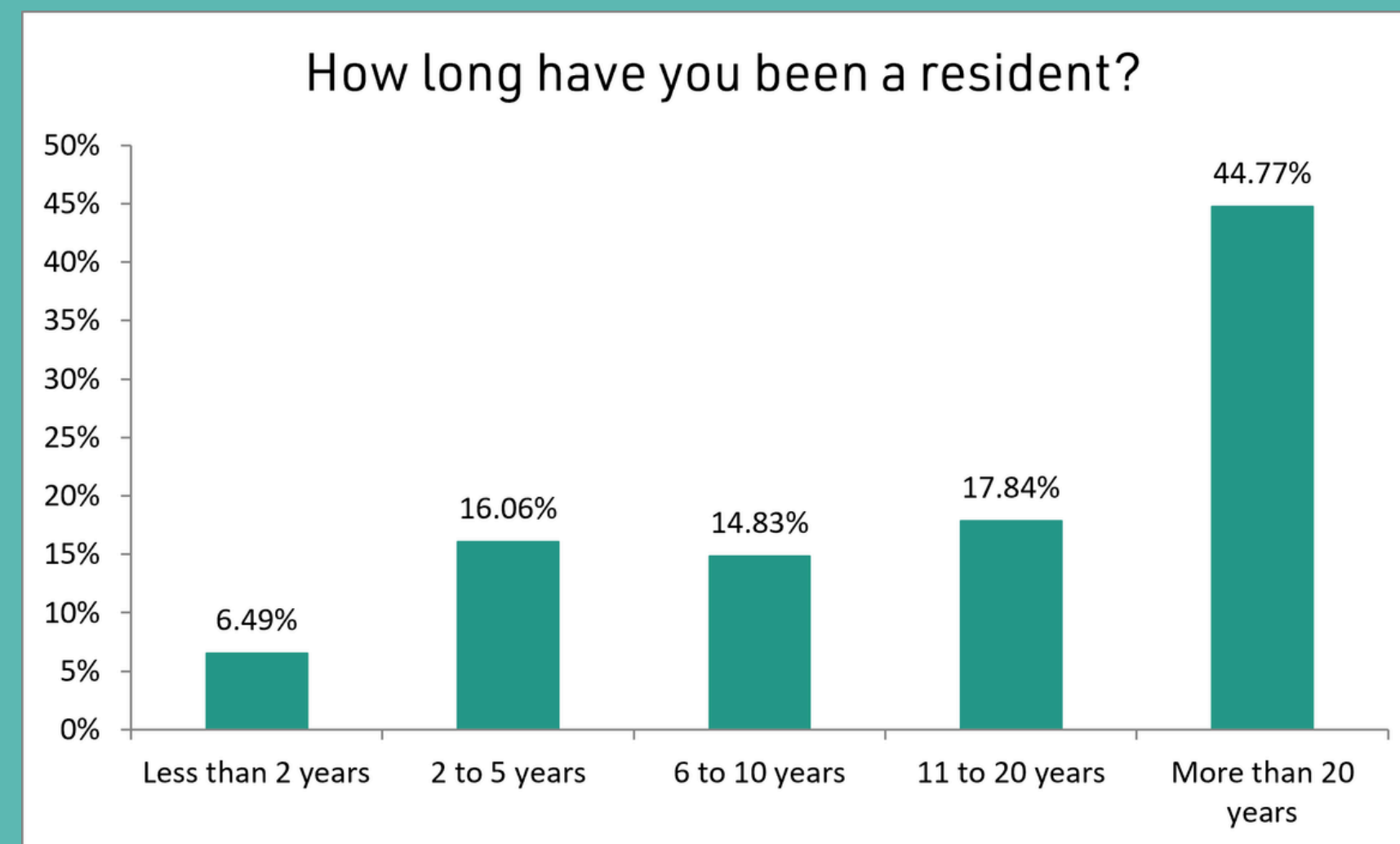
Residency in Missoula

Most respondents (nearly 98%) live year-round in Missoula

The majority of respondents are long-term residents, who have lived in Missoula for more than 10 years



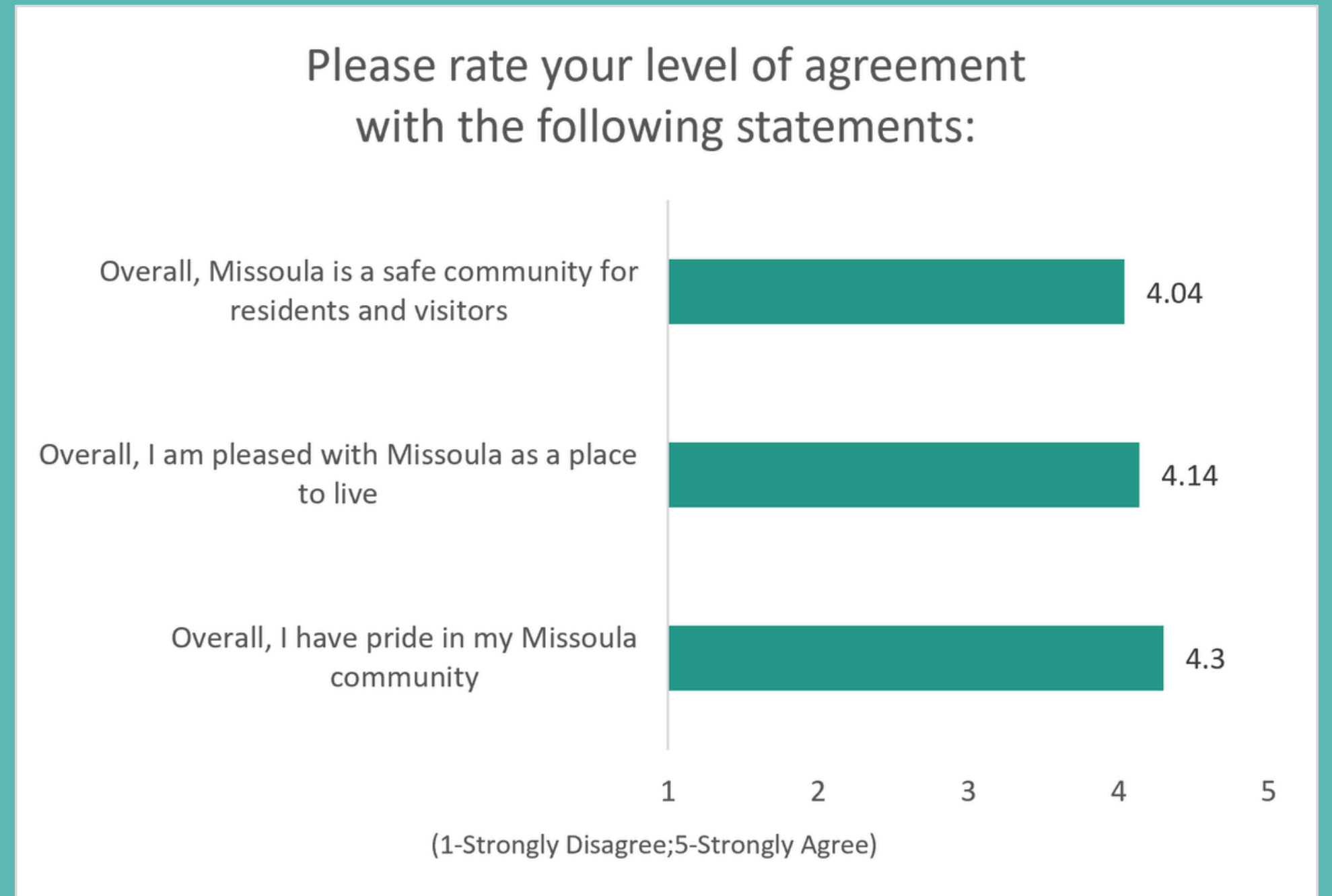
2023 survey results: Yes -97.58%, No - 2.42%



2023 survey results: 6.8%, 13.47%, 12.98%, 18.42%, 48.33%

Missoula Community Perceptions

Respondents overwhelmingly indicated they believe Missoula is a safe community for residents and visitors, are pleased with Missoula as a place to live, and have pride in their Missoula community.

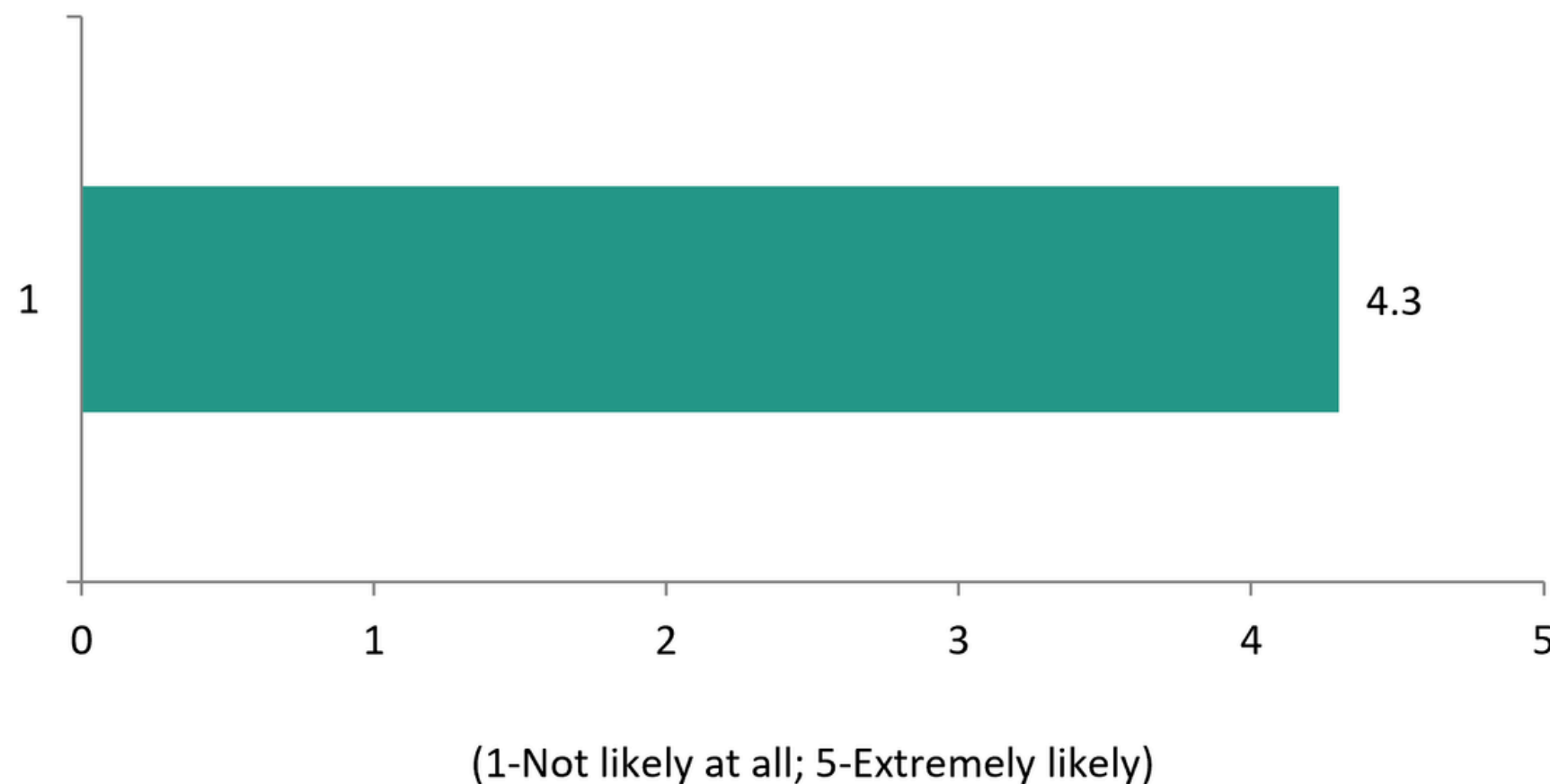


2023 survey results: 3.79, 4.02, 4.2 respectively

Recommending Missoula

Respondents are likely to recommend Missoula as a place to visit with 62% reporting they are “extremely likely” to recommend it.

How likely are you to recommend Missoula as a place to visit when talking to friends and family members who do not live in the area?

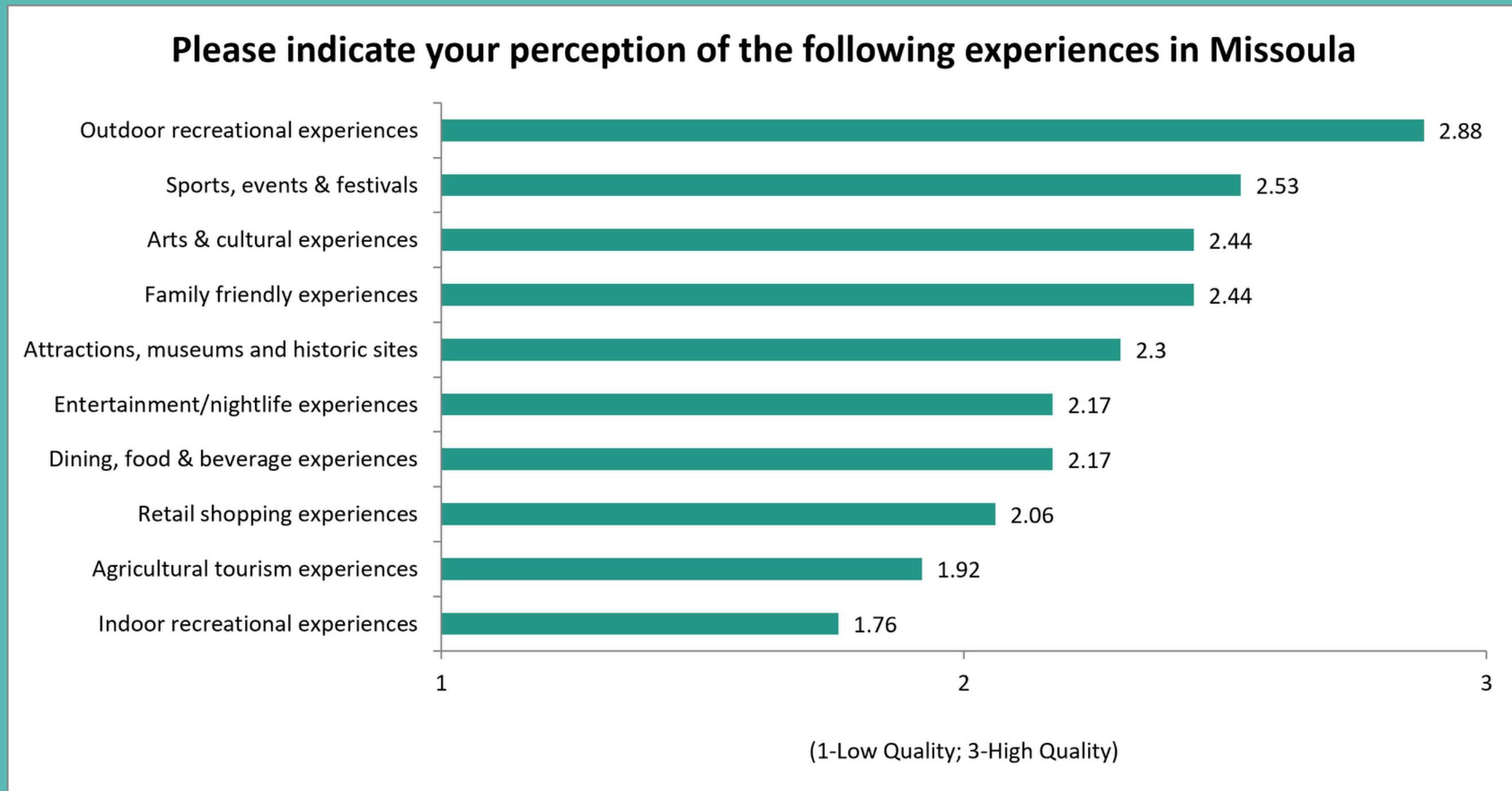


When asked what they would take family/friends to see or recommend they experience, respondents most frequently mentioned:

- Hiking & trails
- Clark Fork River
- Downtown Missoula (farmers markets, Carousel, Caras Park)
- Restaurants
- Butterfly House
- Bison Range

Missoula Experiences

Outdoor recreational experiences were rated the highest quality, while indoor recreational experiences were rated the lowest quality.



Outdoor recreational experiences was also listed as the highest and indoor recreational experiences the lowest in the 2023 survey.

Missoula Experiences

What are tourism experiences that Missoula could develop to benefit its natural environment, cultures, local businesses, residents, etc.?

Indigenous & regional history	Indigenous-led tours, Salish & Kootenai storytelling, land acknowledgment, restored place names, powwows, and deeper local history (mining, timber, WWII internment).	“Indigenous-led cultural experiences that respectfully highlight Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d’Oreille history, storytelling, art, food, and land knowledge.”
Regenerative tourism, nature/conservation education	River/trail stewardship days, native planting, wildlife education, voluntourism (“adopt-a-species” models), Leave No Trace partnerships, dark-sky camping.	“River and conservation experiences where visitors participate in restoration projects, native planting days, trail stewardship... alongside local organizations.”
Food, farm & maker experiences	Culinary walking tours, farm-to-table/agritourism, indoor food hall/trucks, brewery and ranch tours, heritage-skills workshops	“At one point they had ‘taste of Missoula’... I thought that was a brilliant way to try several places with a group all in one night.”

Missoula Experiences

Four-season / shoulder-season programming	Winter ski packages, nordic skiing development, Snowbowl improvement, winter markets, indoor recreation for bad-weather days, more evening events.	“Winter ski packages with local hotels and ski areas. With 4 ski areas within 90 minutes, it’s a huge opportunity!”
Transportation & infrastructure	Promotion of free Mountain Line transit, regional bus service (Bitterroot, ski areas, Glacier), hop-on/hop-off trolley, themed bus routes, parking, a conference/convention center.	“A large convention center and theater that can host events, conferences, and touring Broadway shows.”
Arts, culture & family-friendly	Support for Westside Theater, Arts Missoula, Bare Bait Dance; more/smaller music venues; history/culture museum; family-friendly experiences	“More experiences that attract families with children like the Butterfly House and water parks that are much more affordable.”

About 12% of respondents to this question shared caution on developing tourism experiences noting negative impacts on growth, housing costs & availability, and the natural environment.

Thematic summary was provided by ITRR.

Missoula Experiences

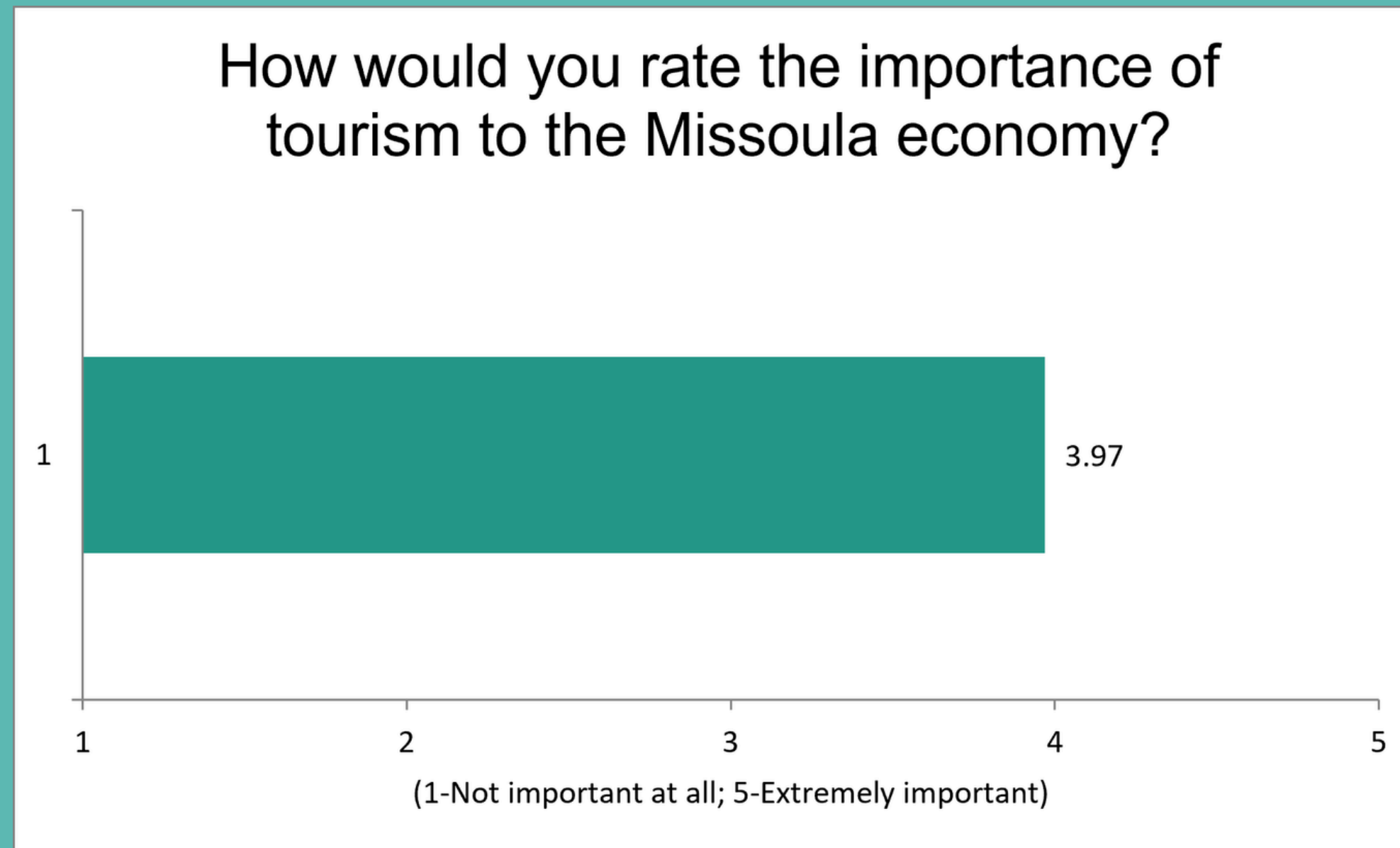
What are words or phrases that come to mind when you think of what could improve the Missoula experience for visitors and residents?

A word cloud of suggestions for improving the Missoula experience. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with the most prominent words in the center. The words are in various shades of blue and green. The suggestions include:

- homeless problem
- Less expensive
- traffic congestion
- Lower rent
- variety
- Better road
- Homeless population
- Clean homeless
- housing prices
- rid homeless activities
- Parking downtown
- food options
- Make place
- Free parking
- homeless camps
- downtown parking
- Less traffic
- traffic flow
- Better traffic
- Remove hotels
- local
- Affordability
- restaurants
- roads
- safe
- walk
- friendly
- trails
- Food
- Cheaper
- Clean
- downtown
- parking
- Missoula
- issues
- bike
- Improve
- street
- need
- Reserve
- along river
- areas
- living
- options
- homeless
- Less
- people
- tourists
- stay
- expensive
- bike rentals
- Fix
- safety
- Traffic
- Affordable housing
- housing costs
- population
- easier
- Shops
- Cost
- Price housing
- residents
- ways
- lodging
- things
- Better restaurants
- taxes
- affordable rent
- Cost living
- bike lanes
- Stop
- trash
- property taxes
- Keep
- events
- diversity
- Homelessness
- Lower
- Less people
- housing residents
- Transportation
- povcommunity
- Lower taxes
- infrastructure
- Reduce
- vehicle airport
- Better food
- Lower cost
- Public transportation
- especially
- Affordable hotels
- public transport

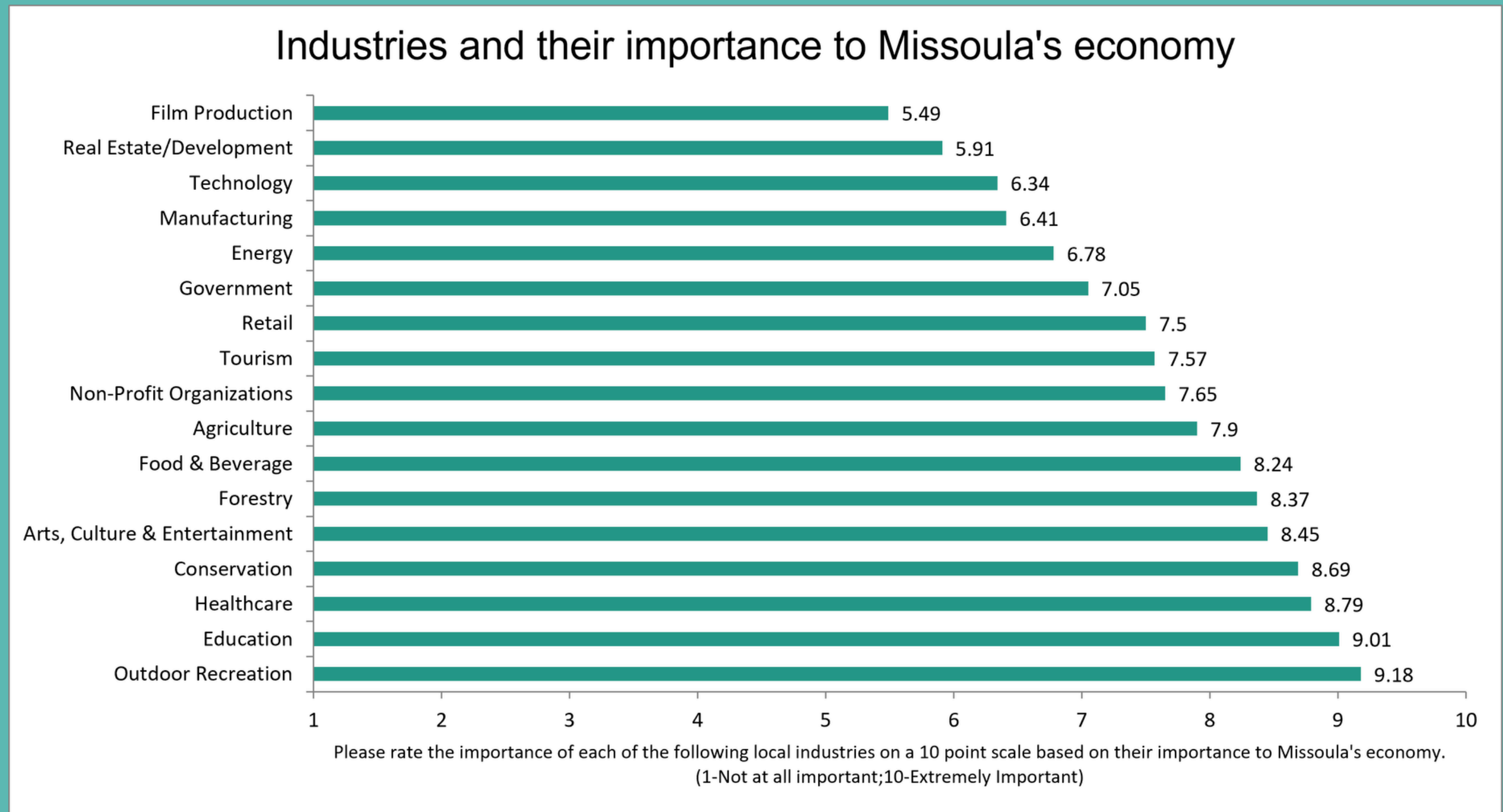
Tourism and Missoula's Economy

Most respondents believe tourism is important to Missoula's economy



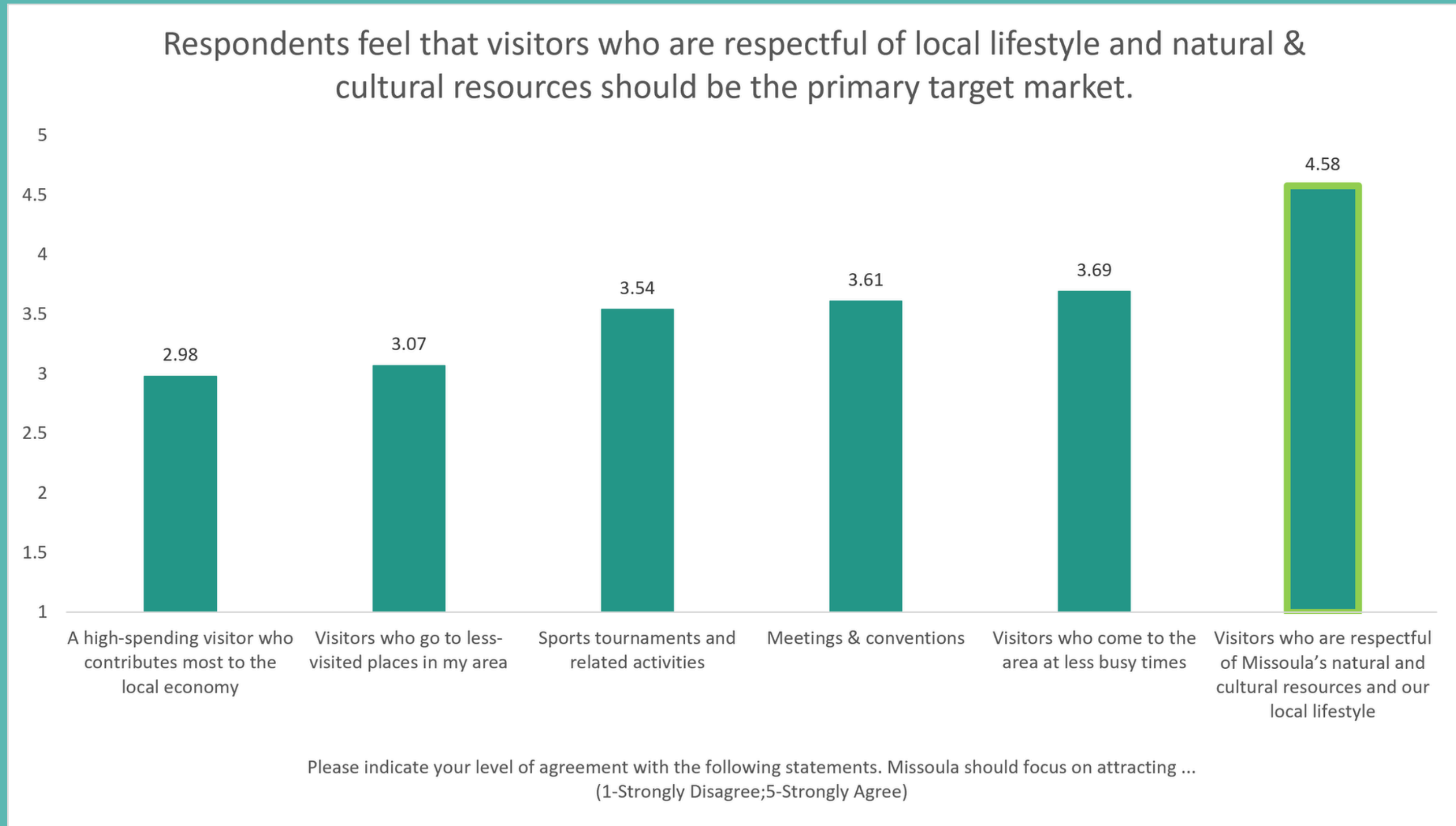
2023 survey results: 3.85

Tourism and Missoula's Economy



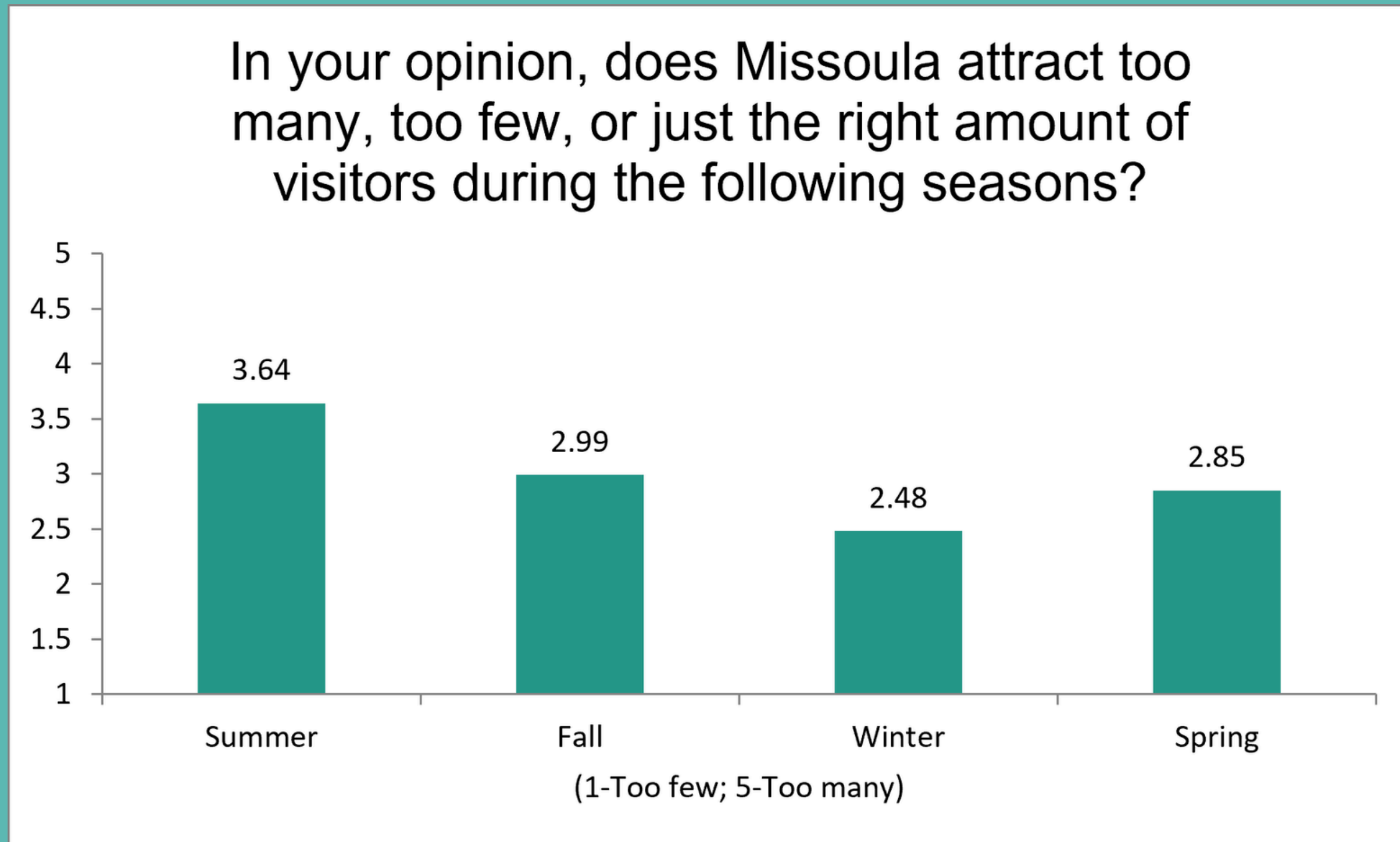
Outdoor Recreation, Education, Healthcare, Conservation, and Arts, Culture & Entertainment were the top five industries from the 2023 survey. Tourism was also ranked 10th in 2023 with a weighted average of 7.19.

Attracting Visitors to Missoula



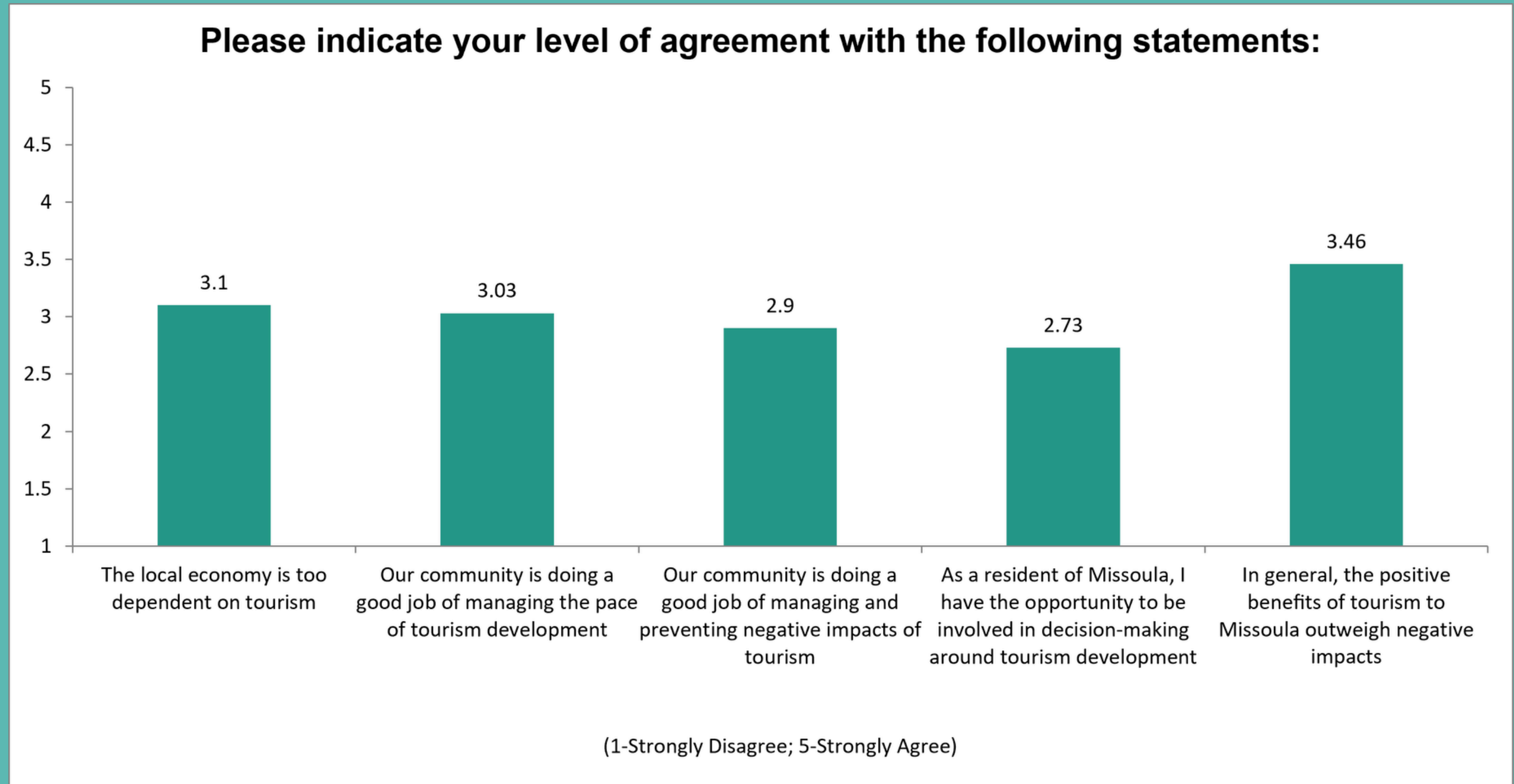
2023 survey results: 2.79, 2.84, 3.45, 3.52, 3.51, 4.48

Attracting Visitors to Missoula



2023 survey results: 3.92, 3.19, 2.74, 3.03

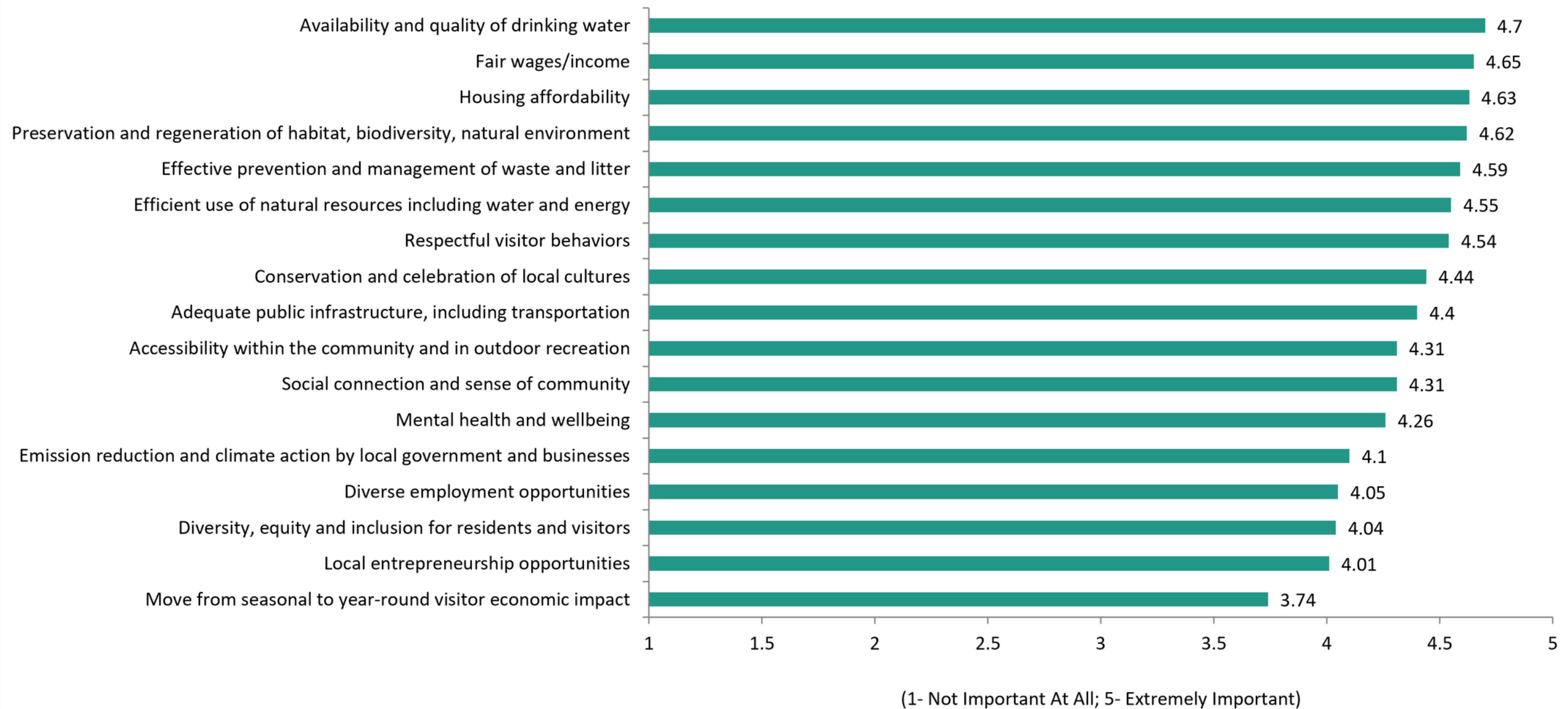
Tourism Impacts



2023 survey results: 3.16, 2.64, 2.46, 2.76, 3.14

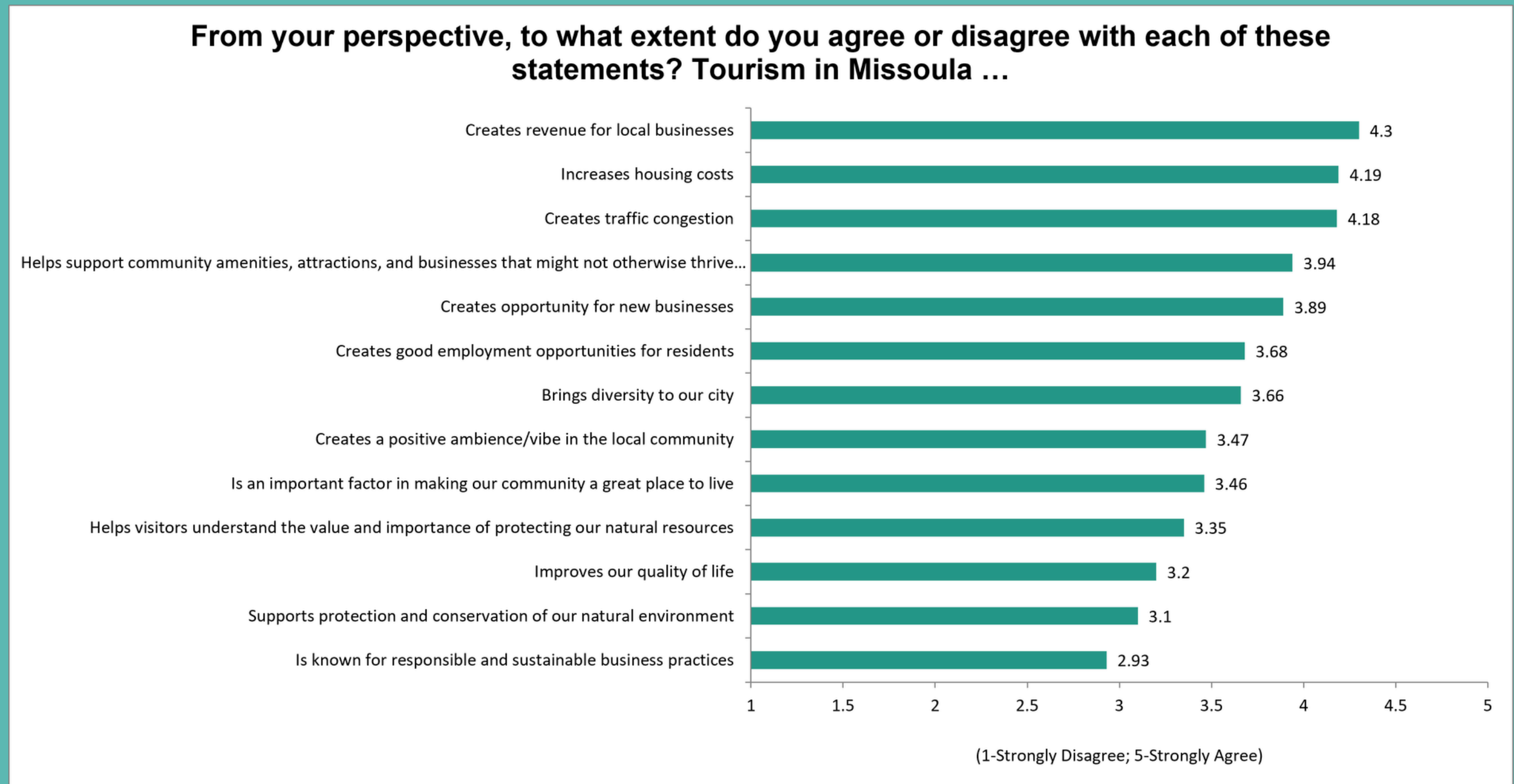
Tourism Impacts

In order for any community to achieve the greatest benefits of tourism, both positive and negative potential impacts of visitation need to be prioritized and managed. In shaping the future of Missoula's visitor economy, what level of importance should be:



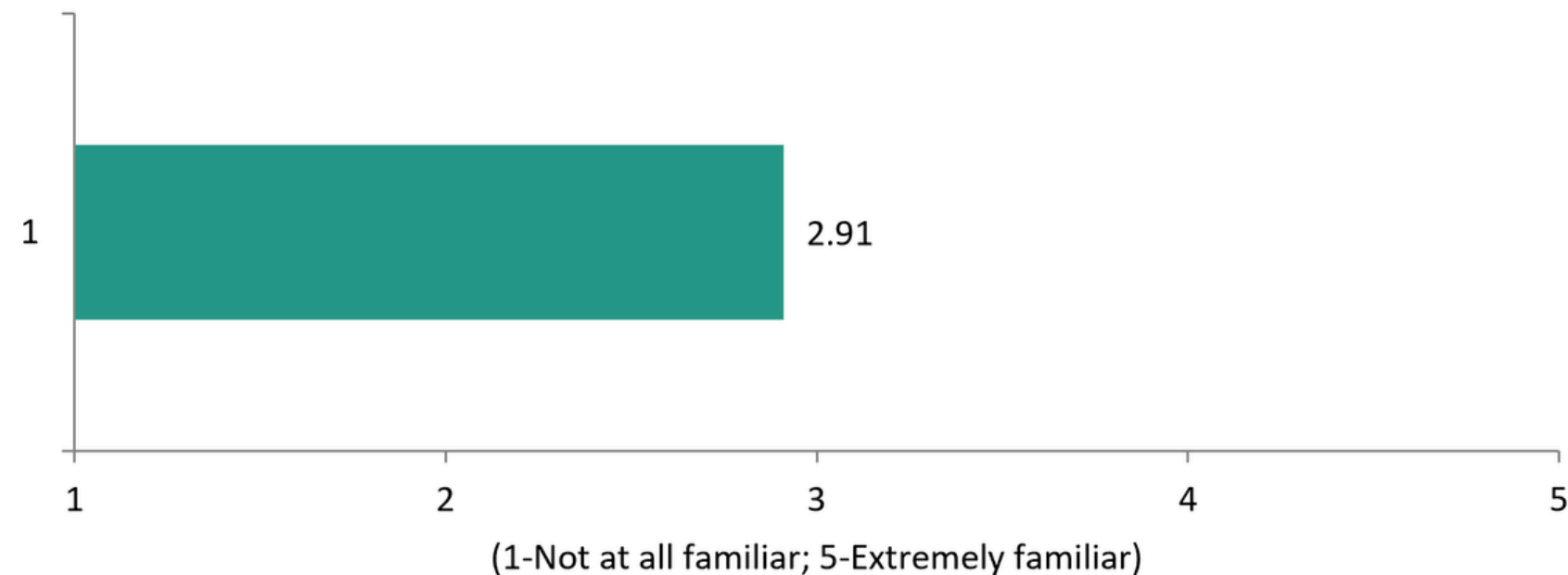
Tourism Impacts

There is a strong belief among respondents that tourism creates revenue and opportunities for local businesses but also increases housing costs and traffic.



Destination Missoula Familiarity

To what extent are you familiar with Destination Missoula, the organization responsible for promoting and managing Missoula as a destination for visitors?



2023 survey results: 3.4

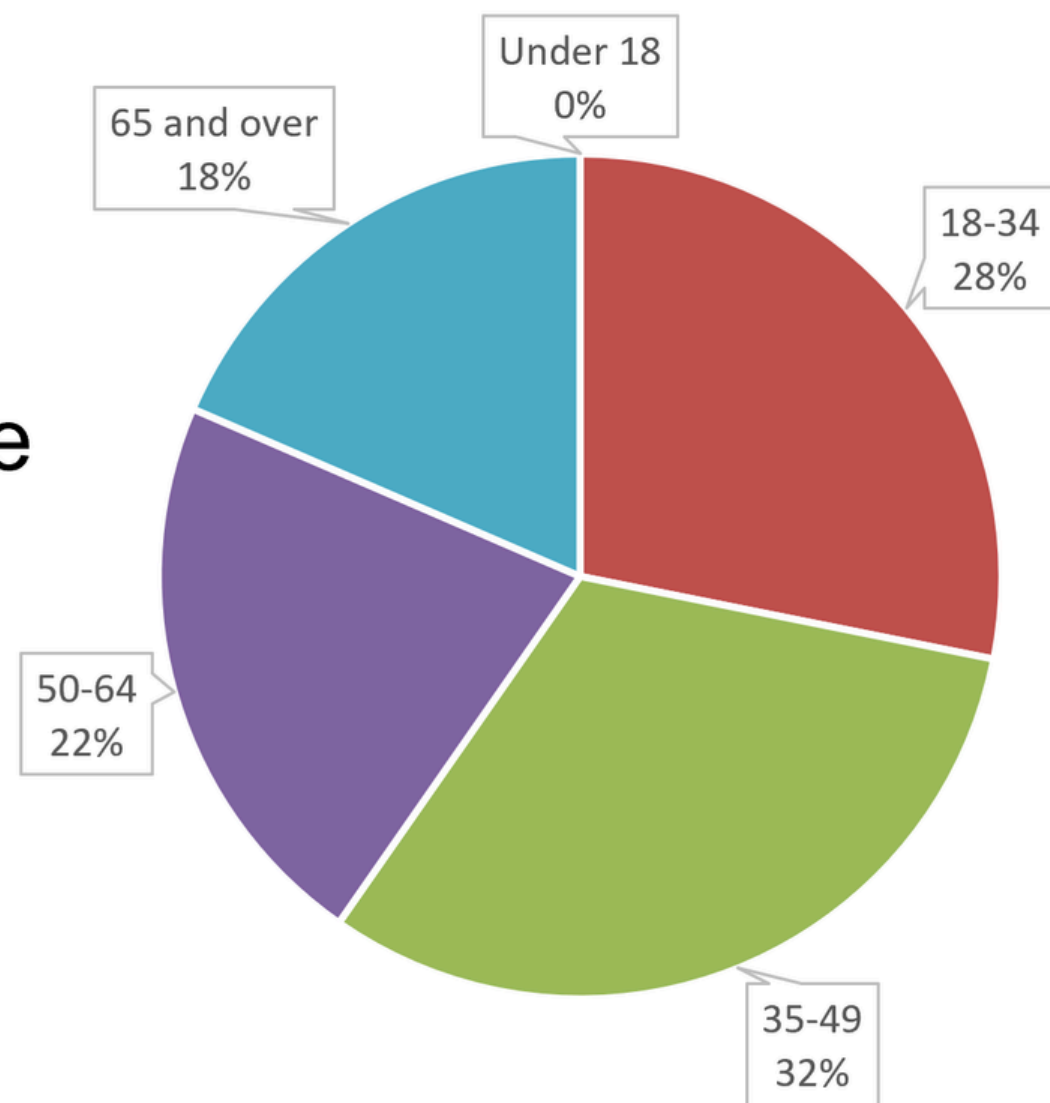
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: Destination Missoula is a resource for locals as well as for visitors



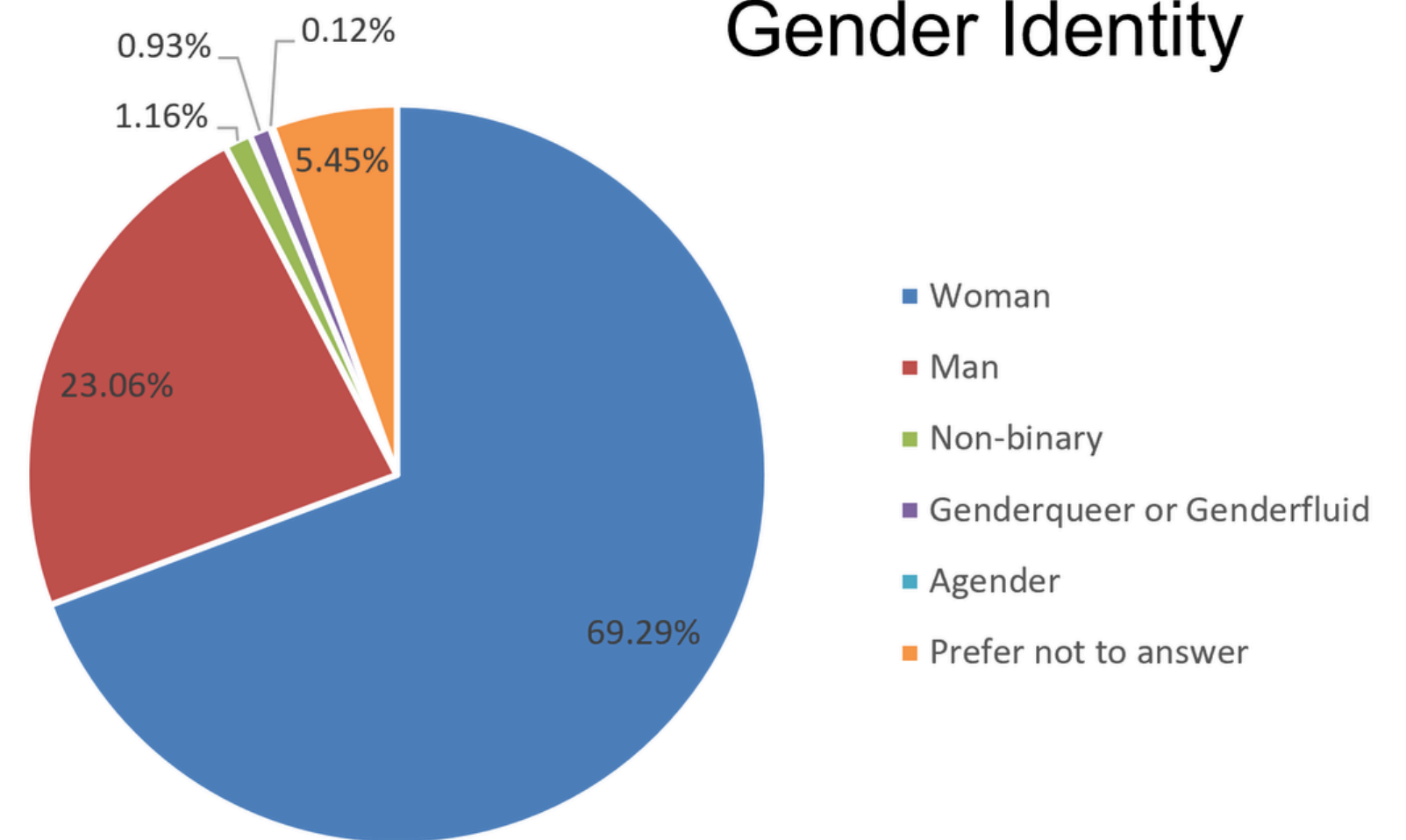
2023 survey results: 3.44

Survey Demographics

Age

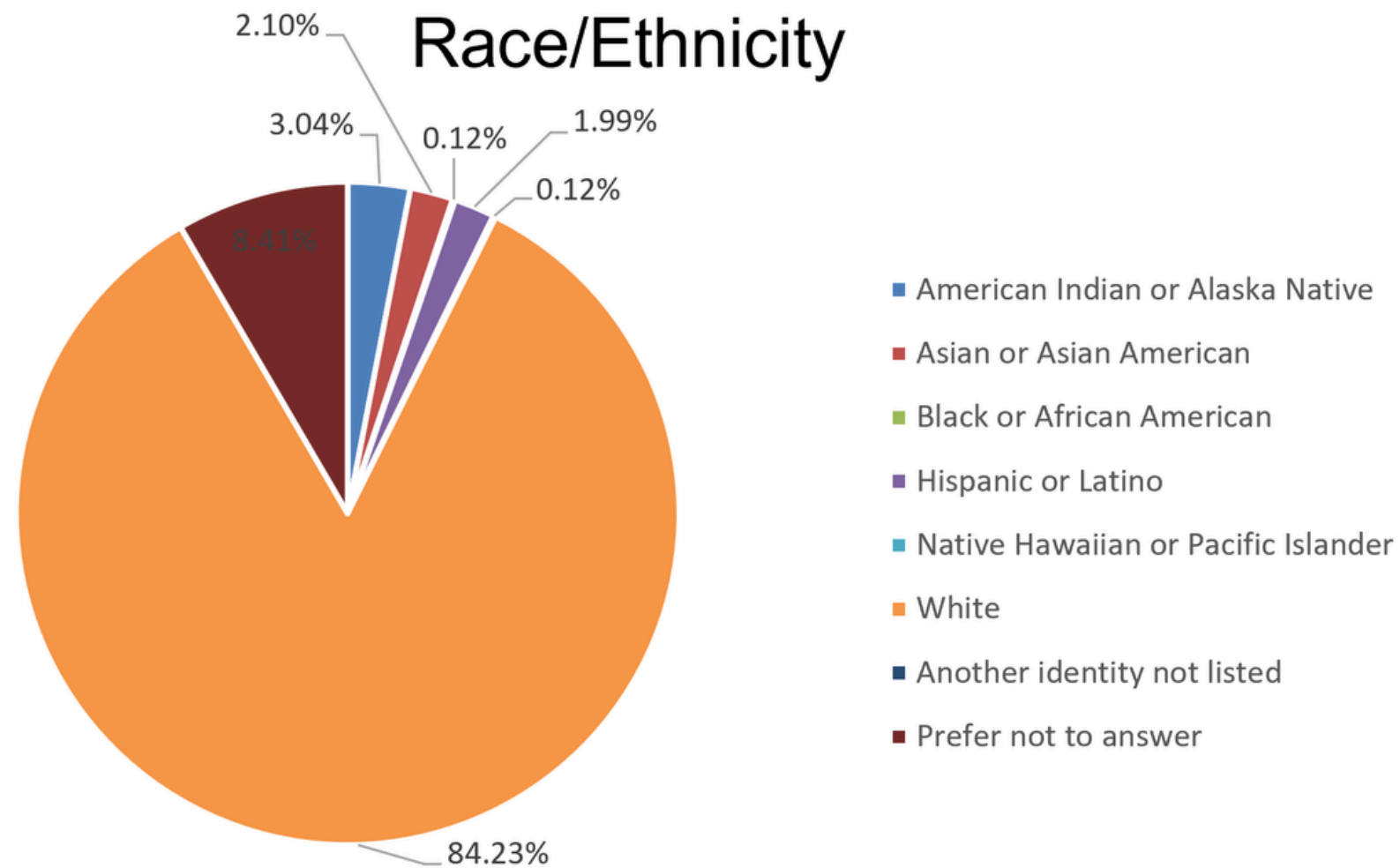


Gender Identity

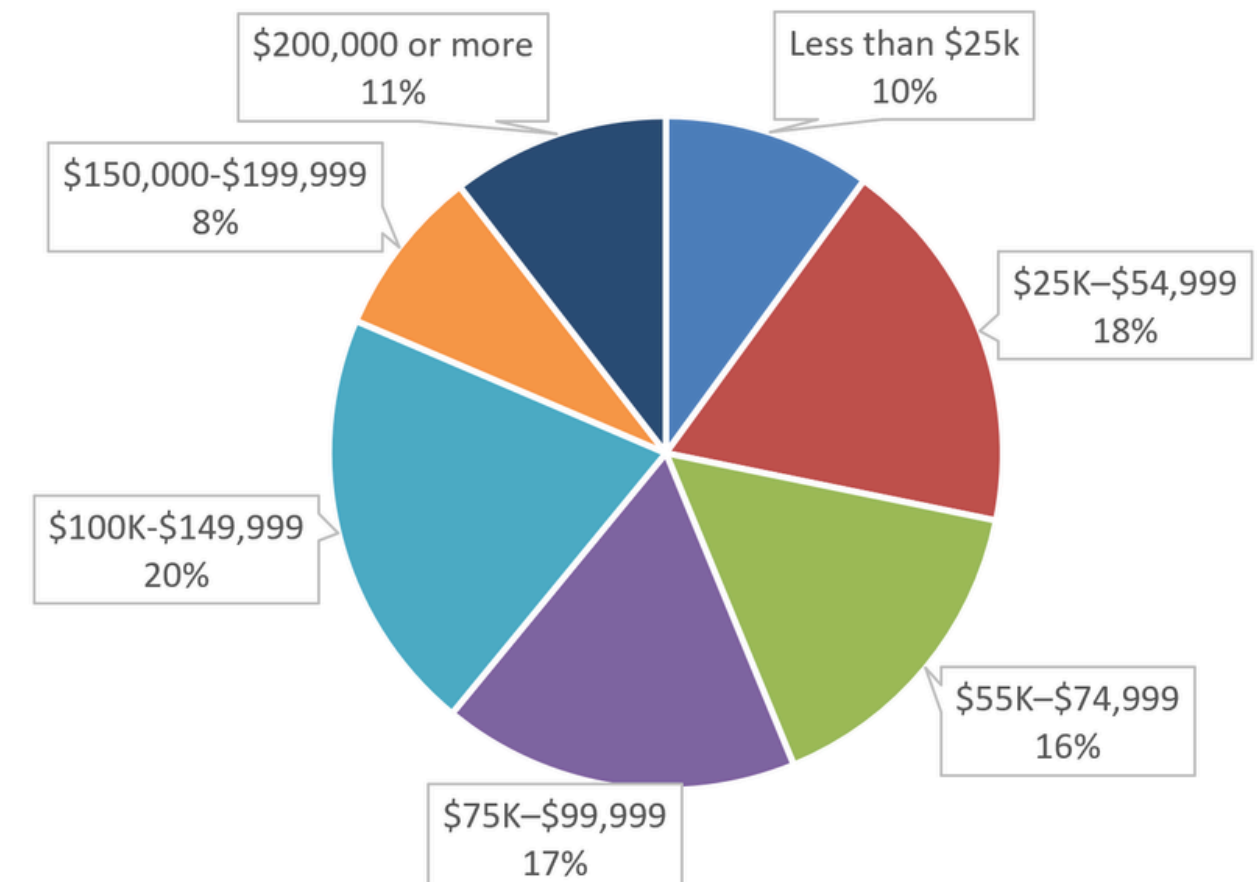


Survey Demographics

Race/Ethnicity

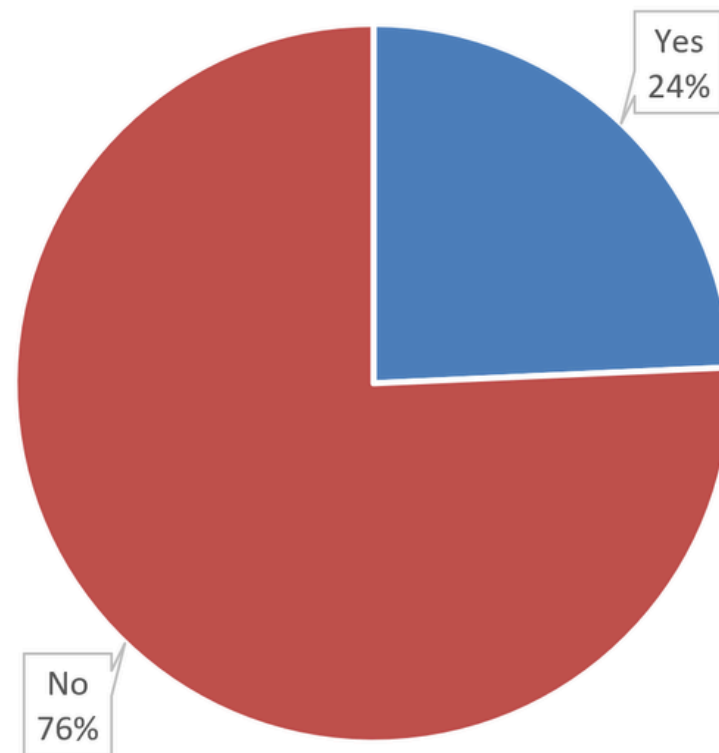


Annual Household Income

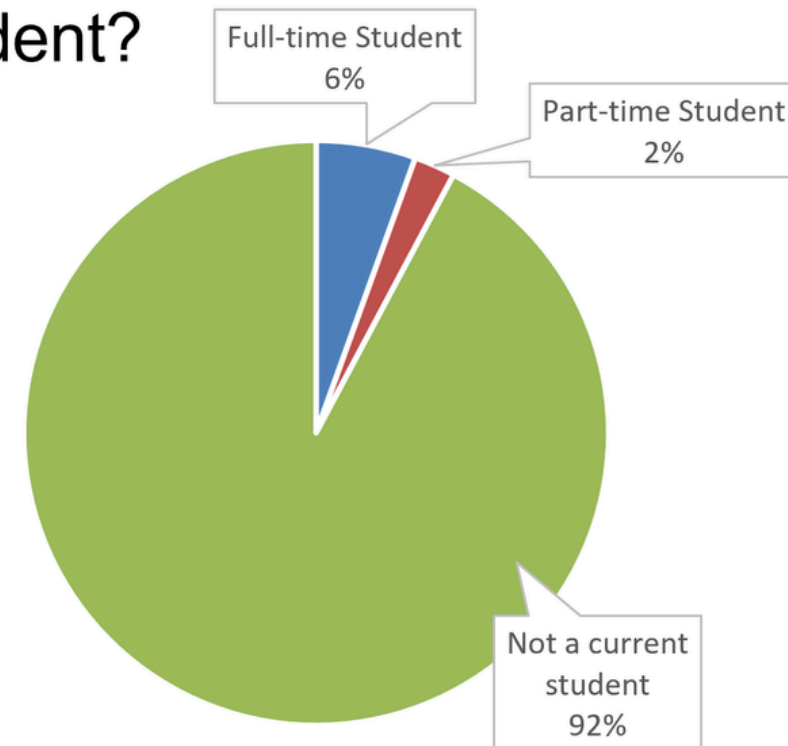


Survey Demographics

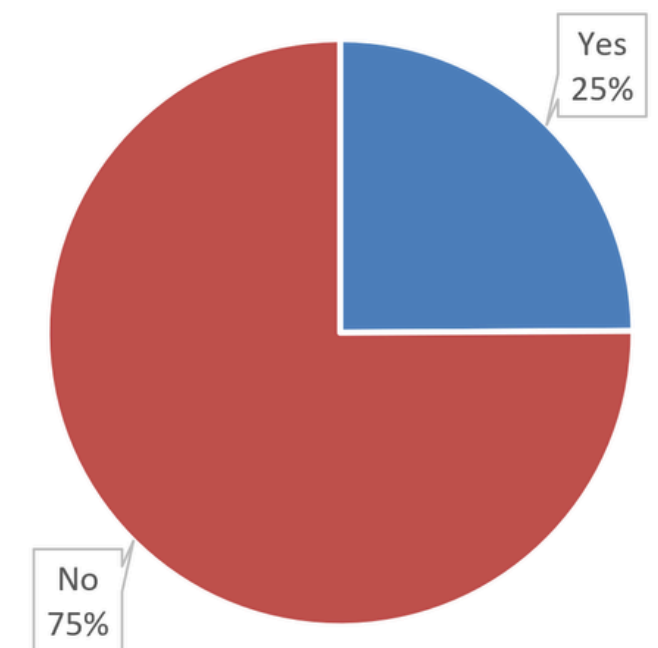
Do you have children under 18?



Are you a current student?

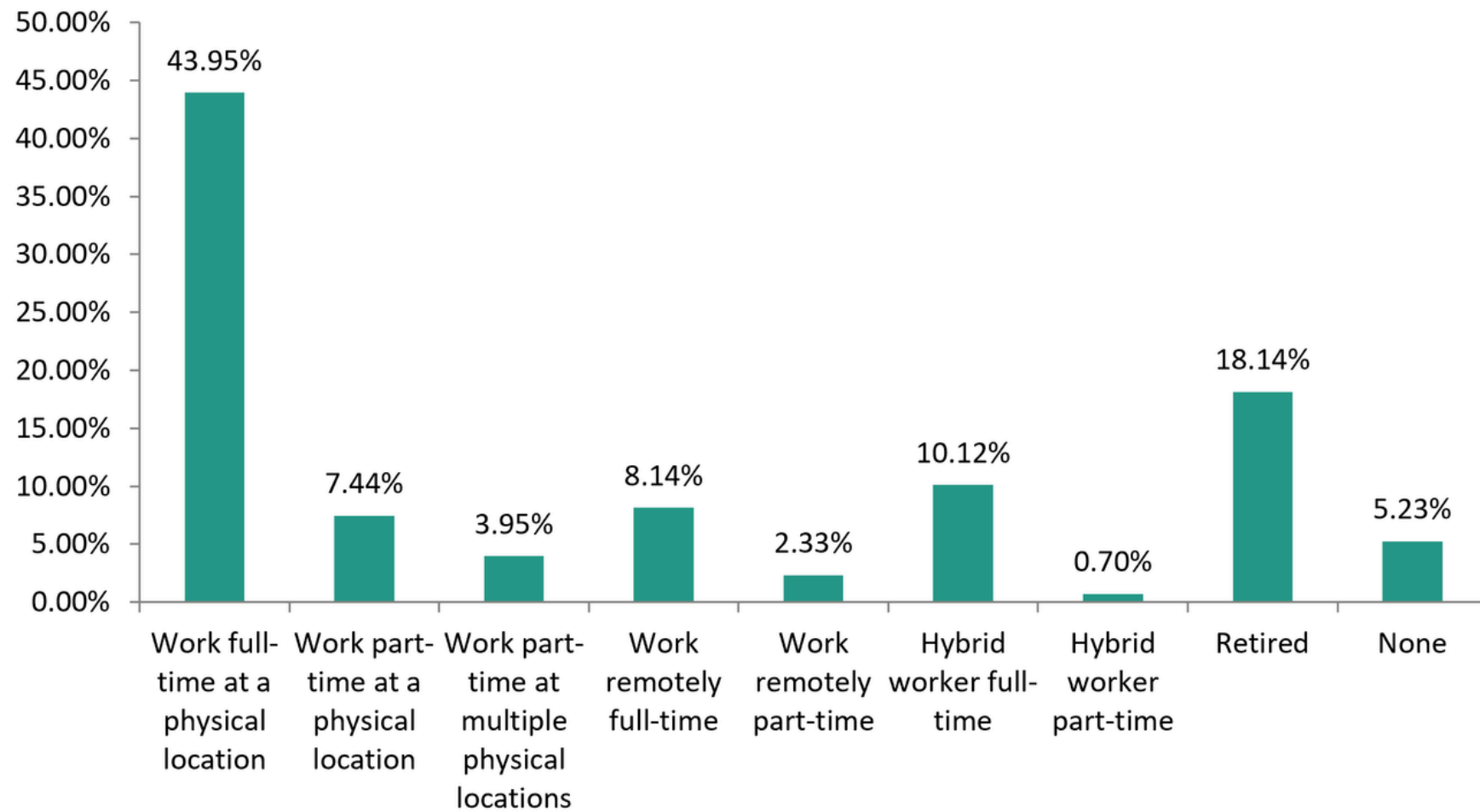


Do you or a close family member work in tourism, hospitality, or a related field?



Survey Demographics

Employment Status



If you are currently employed, do you own or work for a local business in the Missoula area?

