



Visit
LOUDOUN

2023-2025
STRATEGIC PLAN

AGENDA

- Objectives
- Review of 2019-2022 Strategic Plan
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Resident, Visitor and Business Owner Survey
- 2023 – 2025 Strategic Plan
- Appendix – Travel Trends



2023 - 2025 PROJECT OBJECTIVES



To develop the 2023-2025 strategic plan that serves as a blueprint for Visit Loudoun to achieve its key goals and objectives related to: tourism infrastructure, industry engagement, public awareness and board governance.

To revisit Loudoun County stakeholders to follow up on changes and how their previous input was leveraged.



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2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

OUR ANCHORS

OUR VISION : To be a "must visit" destination supported by a community that recognizes the economic and quality of life benefits that come from sharing our home with visitors. Loudoun County will be the preferred east coast destination for lovers of artisanal, epicurean, and culturally rich experiences.

OUR MISSION : To stimulate the sustainability and enhancement of Loudoun County's economy and quality of life by advocating for smart destination development and marketing an exceptional experience to travel consumers worldwide.

OUR VALUES

Accessibility

Collaboration

Creativity

Transparency

Accountability

Empowerment

OUR CULTURE

We are an open, collaborative, and visionary organization in which team members are encouraged to think creatively, work hard, have fun and create industry-leading marketing programs that serve our stakeholders and community.

OUR BRAND INTENTION

Our collaborators—stakeholders and customers alike—trust Visit Loudoun because we bring passion, creativity, and leadership to our strategic initiatives.

OUR VALUE PROPOSITION

Visit Loudoun is the only organization solely dedicated to maximizing brand awareness and driving demand for the destination. We are the "go to" resource and expert for data as well as relevant information regarding tourism in Loudoun County.

2020—2022 Strategic Pillars



Embrace Variety
Spreading the word



Involve the Community
Spreading the word to everyone



Support Music and the Arts
Culture Shock



Inform Infrastructure
Building Up Loudoun



Curate Themed Experiences
Making it Happen

2020 - 2022 Strategies

- Foster a view of Loudoun with its variety of offerings as a cohesive entity.
- Diversify Loudoun's offerings even further by ramping up Loudoun's sports-related activities.
- Identify opportunities to market directly to a diverse set of travelers and markets.
- Ensure that all marketing efforts highlight the variety and diversity that Loudoun County has to offer.

- Continue to inform government stakeholders and residents on Visit Loudoun's role.
- Provide resources for business owners to understand how their businesses fit into the larger landscape of Loudoun tourism.
- Re-think the Visit Loudoun Visitor Center experience.
- Foster connectivity across different tourism groups, creating a more integrated tourism industry.

- Facilitate and support Loudoun County as a destination for music and the arts.
- Integrate music and arts into the greater tourism assets and existing events.
- Foster and support the local arts scene.

- Continue to work with local government to break down barriers and ensure infrastructure issues are on the priority list.
- Build transportation options into the experience of Loudoun, creating packages and opportunities for visitors.
- Identify ways to reduce the need for motorized transportation where possible.
- Continue to address the challenges for the workforce in Loudoun County.

- Reach identified markets, highlighting enticing experiences and enabling an emotional connection between our target and Loudoun County.
- Ensure a frictionless travel experience whenever possible.
- Educate and train industry partners to be part of this effort.
- Focus on creating demand for both eastern and western Loudoun County.

FY22 Key Actionable Initiatives

- Revamp visitor guide, wine & ale trail guides; produce new assets that reflect the community we serve & attract
- Launch adventure trail
- Partner with and asset development w/ LoCo pro sports teams
- Expand sales activities for diverse markets
- Expand incentives and sponsorships to drive group business

- Provide context and data regarding allocation to facilitate industry recovery
- New 4-year MOU with Loudoun County
- Use SeeSource data to help municipalities understand the role of tourism and visitor profiles
- Move to in-person CTA classes
- Develop 2023-2025 Strategic Plan

- With recommendations from music committee, create networking and education opportunities.
- Continue to highlight local musicians and artists in blogs, itineraries & experiences and media pitches
- Summer campaign that is event/experience focused to include the music and art community

- Continue to work with local governments to integrate short-term residential rentals.
- With DED and PCRS, define indoor sports tournament facility, operating model/ scope of county engagement
- Work with DED on Rivana opportunities
- Integrate Metro and create experiences
- Continue to advocate on behalf of Loudoun's tourism industry

- Leverage new technologies to enhance visitor experiences
- Conduct Brand Study
- Expand Google DMO program and Threshold 360 mapping tools.
- Host DEI industry event
- Branch Out 2.0: continue to identify creative concepts/experiences that depict the blending of east and west Loudoun and multiple products/experiences

CONCLUSIONS AND REVIEW OF THE VISIT LOUDOUN PLAN

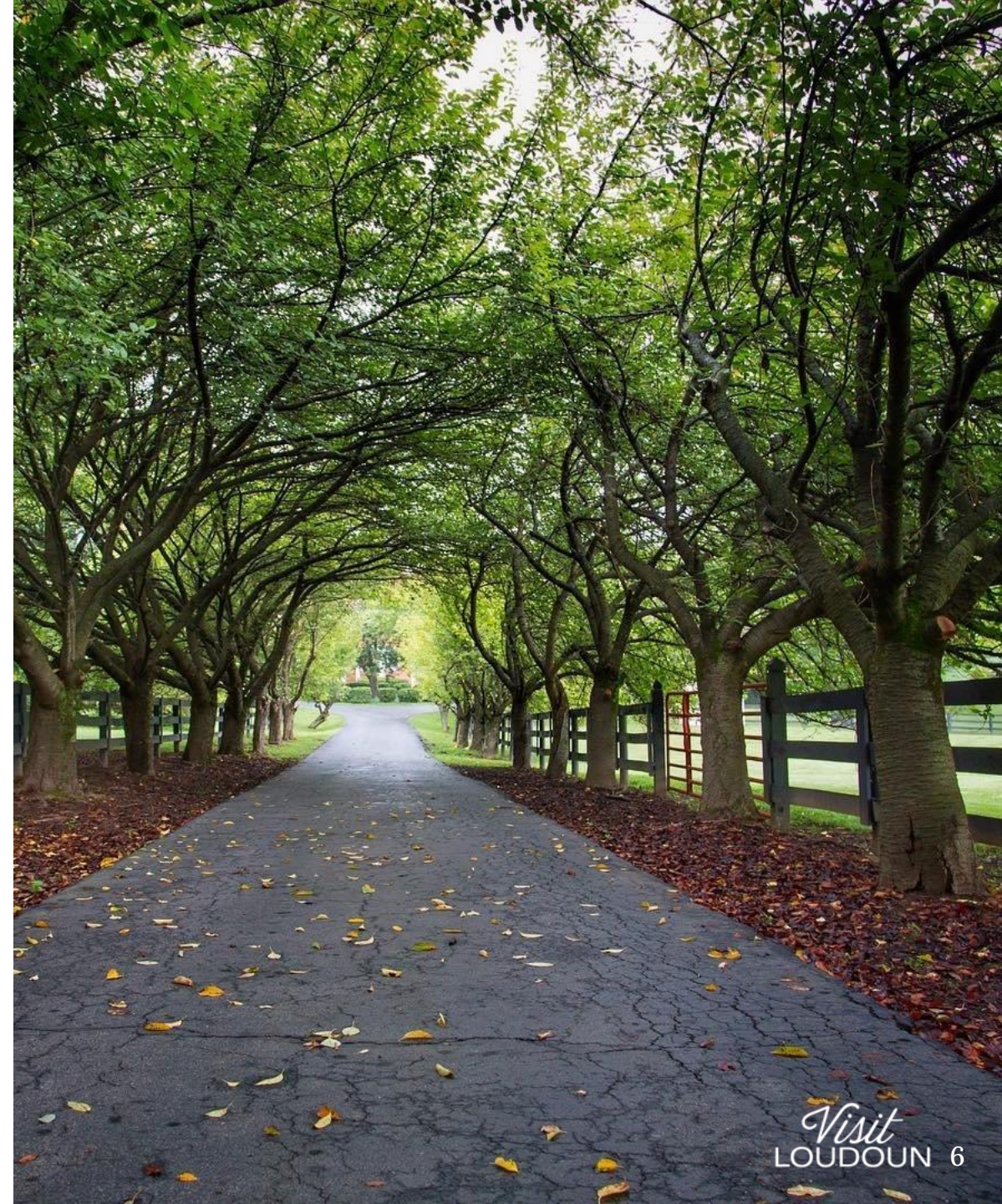
The plan was extremely well executed and successful despite the pandemic

The key challenges issued by stakeholders were enabled

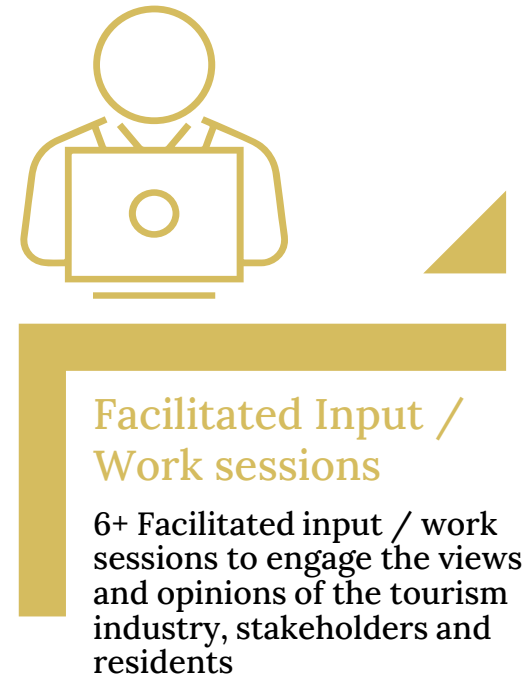
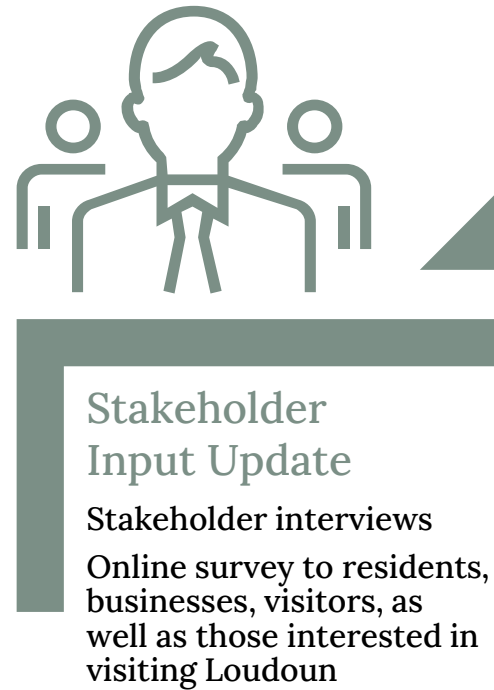
DE&I development was on the forefront and very actionable

The plan is sustainable and therefore is working throughout recent travel challenges

The team has worked very hard to ensure that the plan is actionable, sustainable and measurable



THE 2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

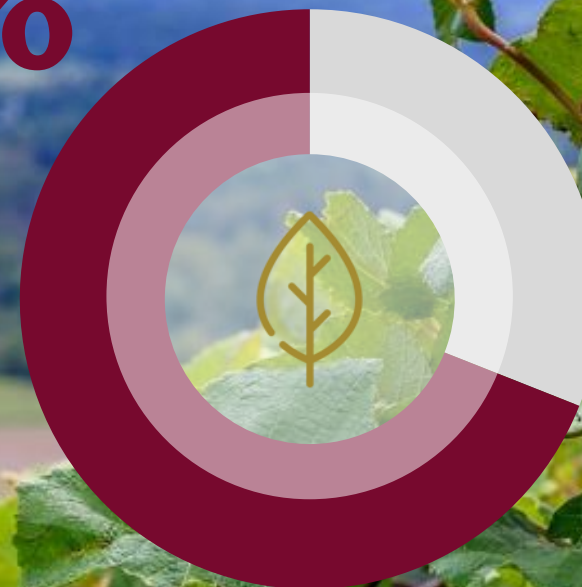


2022 RESEARCH AND STAKEHOLDER INPUTS



Sustainability on the Rise

69%



Expect the travel industry to have more
sustainable travel options

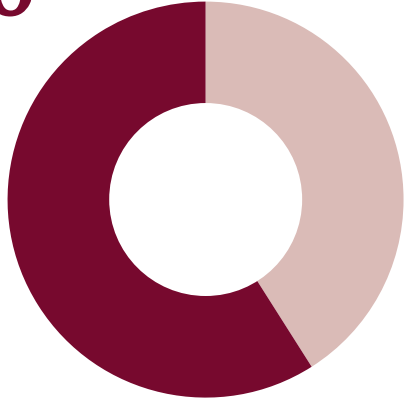
Content Still Rules

Travelers' attention is captivated
by social media with different
platforms by target audiences



'Get Local' Travel

59%



Of U.S. survey respondents are planning domestic only trips for 2022-2023



One-of-a-kind experiences that support locally owned businesses are more appealing to travelers than ever

Self Care Travel

People are traveling to relax and recharge from the stress of juggling all the pains of the pandemic



Sports Travel



BUSINESS TRAVEL



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STAKEHOLDERS WHO WE INTERVIEWED

Interviews Conducted during December 2021; January and February 2022

Phyllis Randall, Supervisor, Chair at Large
Koran Saines, Vice Chair, Sterling District
Julie Briskman, Supervisor, Alconkian District
Mike Turner, Supervisor, Ashburn District
Tony Buffington, Supervisor, Blue Ridge District
Sylvia Glass, Supervisor, Broad Run District
Kristen Umstattd, Supervisor, Leesburg District
Kelly Burk, Mayor of Leesburg, VA
Roger Vance, Mayor of Hillsboro, VA
Bridge Littleton, Mayor of Middleburg, VA
Kwasi Fraser, Mayor of Purcellville, VA
Valmarie Turner, Assistant County Administrator, Loudoun County
Buddy Rizer, Executive Director, Economic Development for Loudoun County
Steve Torpy, Director, Loudoun County Parks , Recreation and Community Services
Russell Seymour, Director, Economic Development for Leesburg

Melanie Mathewes, Chair, Visit Loudoun Board
Tracy Hamlin, Vice Chair, Visit Loudoun Board
Esther Turner, Secretary, Visit Loudoun Board
Tony Stafford, Past Chair, Visit Loudoun Board
Rusty Foster, At Large, Visit Loudoun Board
Tom Gates, Treasurer, Visit Loudoun Board
Kristin Gibson, Chair of Wedding Committee, Visit Loudoun
Tony Howard, CEO, Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
Kelly Foltman, Chair, Loudoun County REDC
Ellen Goldberg, Loudoun County B&B Guild
Sarah Walsh, Loudoun County Wineries Association
Chris Suarez, Loudoun Craft Brewers Association

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Stakeholder Interviews Ranged from 40 minutes to an Hour+

What keeps you awake at night?

Loudoun County is...

What barriers are currently in place for Loudoun County?

What are the key issues and opportunities for Loudoun County?

What can Visit Loudoun do to keep their DE&I initiatives as a priority?

If you had a magic wand, and you could wish for anything...

What infrastructure / development is needed to ensure Loudoun County remains a world-class visitor destination?

What has gone well for Visit Loudoun in the past? What have been the challenges?

Has the east vs west divide shown improvement over the last three years?

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Loudoun County is...



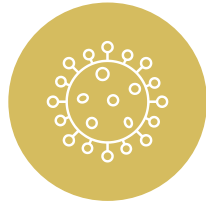
STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

What Keeps You Up At Night?

Stakeholders were most concerned with the dichotomy of preserving the County's current landscape, while knowing that in order for the economy to continue growing, there needs to be infrastructure to support growth.



Housing affordability,
specifically how it
affects
the tourism sector
and its workforce



Covid-19 past impact on
small business and
how it may continue
to impact tourism



Worries that Loudoun
County is becoming less
of a place made up of
towns where people can
live and work



Perceptions that
tensions still exist
between Eastern and
Western
Loudoun County

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

What would you wish to change for Loudoun County?

Stakeholders had handful of similar responses, but also mentioned other wish list items. Some brought up the east and west divide, while others touched on affordability, not only for residents but for visitors as well.



More mid-priced activities



Tolerance and respect amongst the broader community



Lack of affordable housing in the county



Finding a way to bridge the division that exists between the east and west of Loudoun County

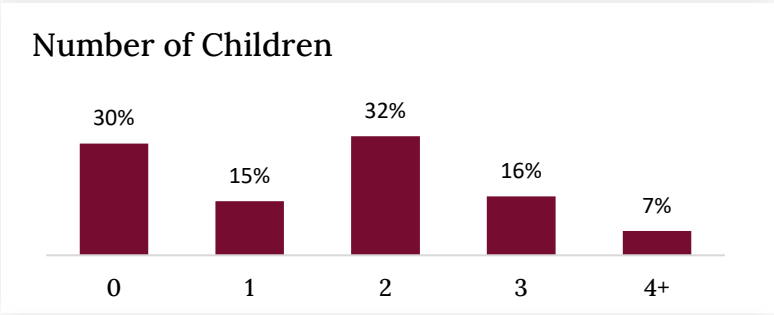
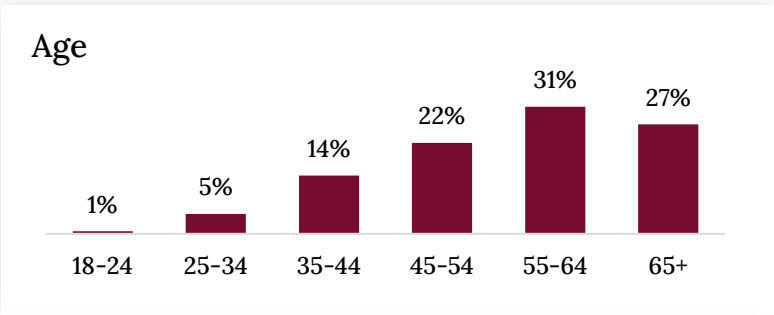
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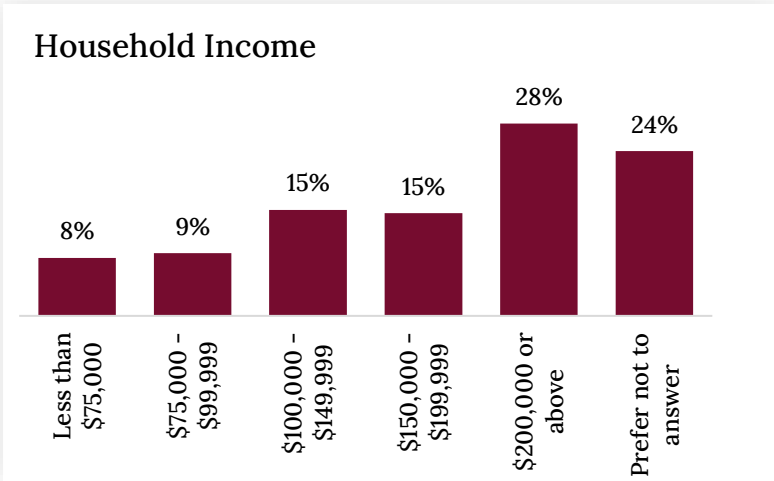
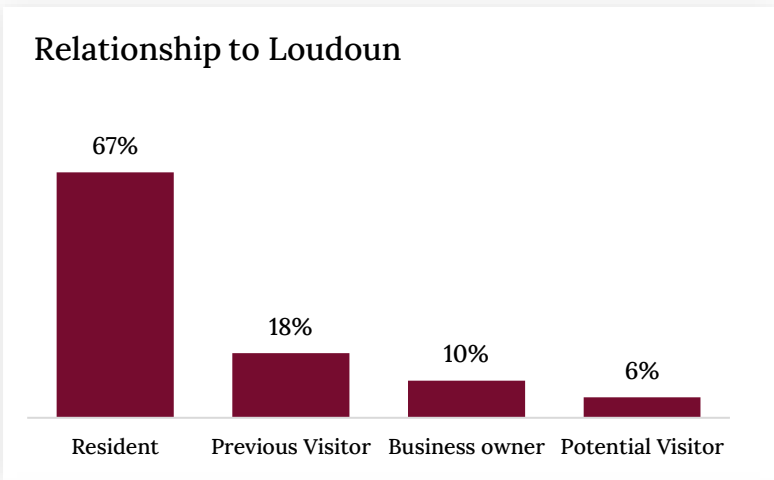
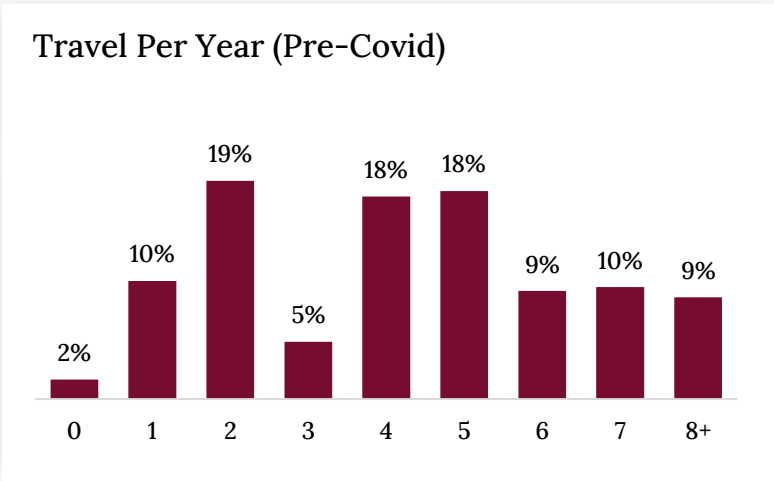
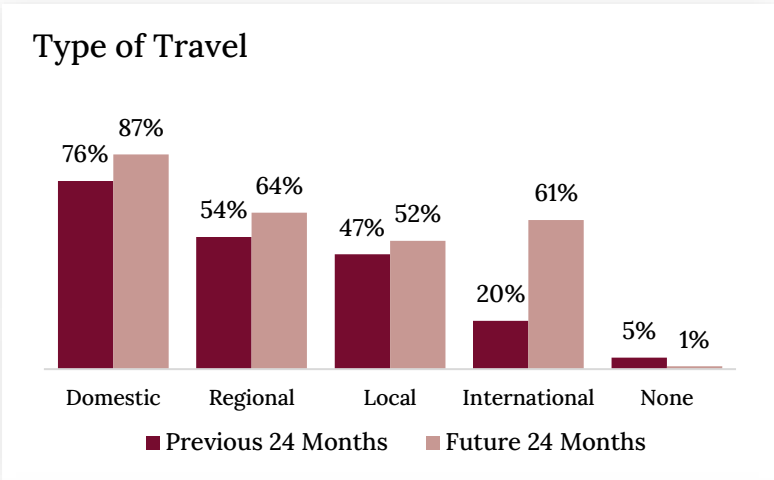


SAMPLE BREAKOUT

Demographics

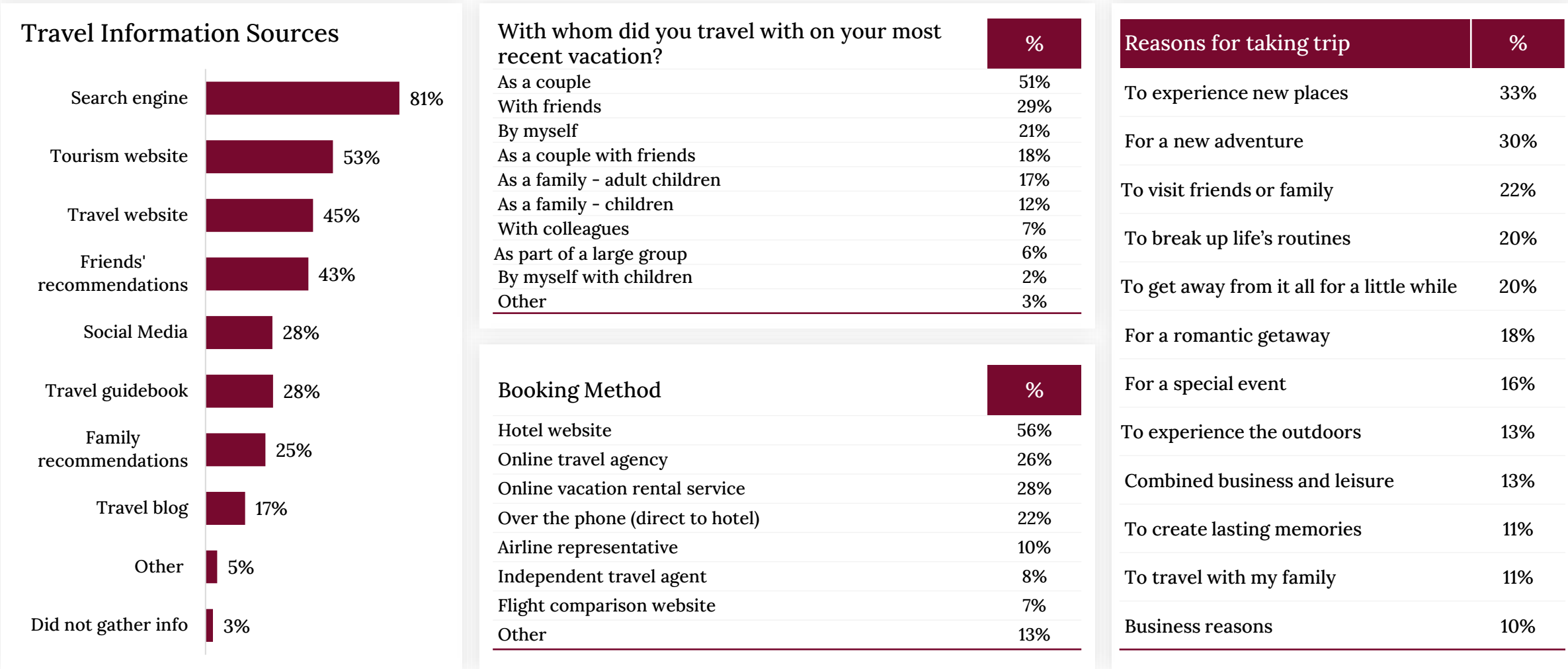


Gender	%
Female	65%
Male	32%
Other	3%



DESIRE TO EXPERIENCE NEW PLACES IS TOP REASON FOR TAKING TRIPS

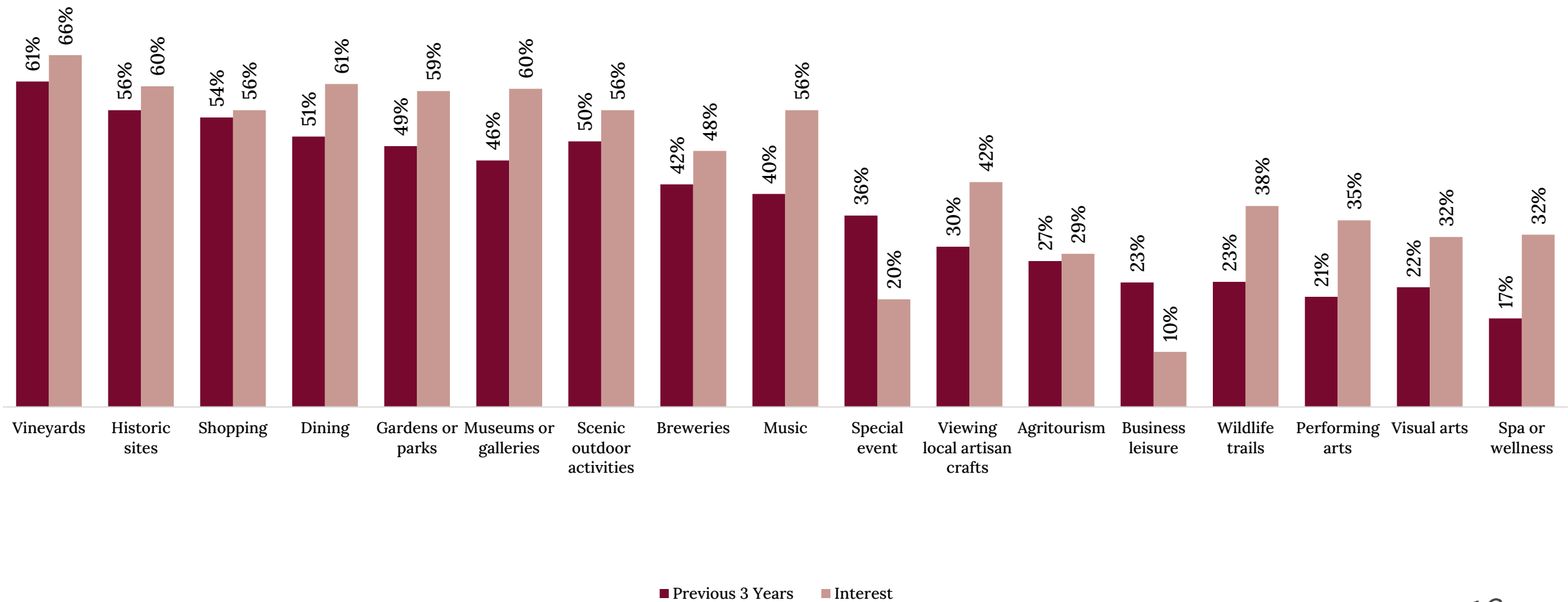
Most visitors reported they traveled as a couple and gather information from search engines and tourism websites



VISITORS ARE MOST INTERESTED IN VINEYARDS, CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS, AND DINING

High interest and potential opportunities for growth in arts, outdoor activities, and wellness

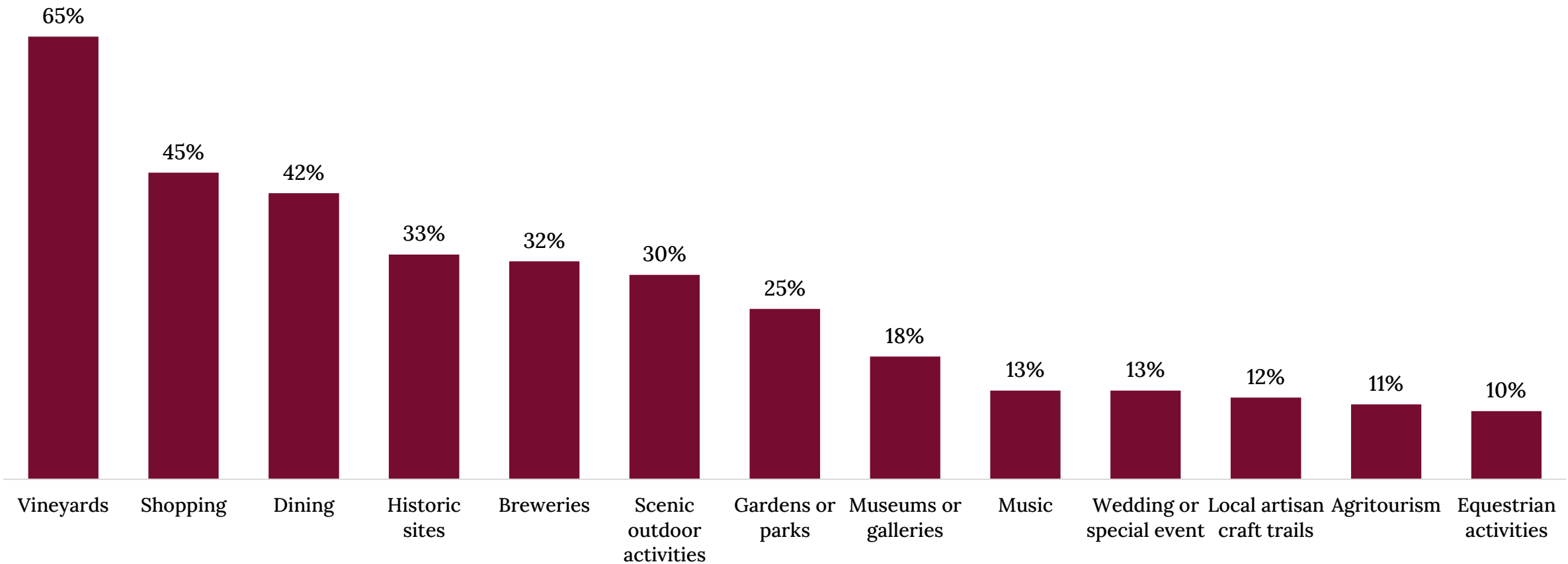
Activities – Interest and History



VINEYARDS AND SHOPPING ARE MOST POPULAR VISITOR ACTIVITIES

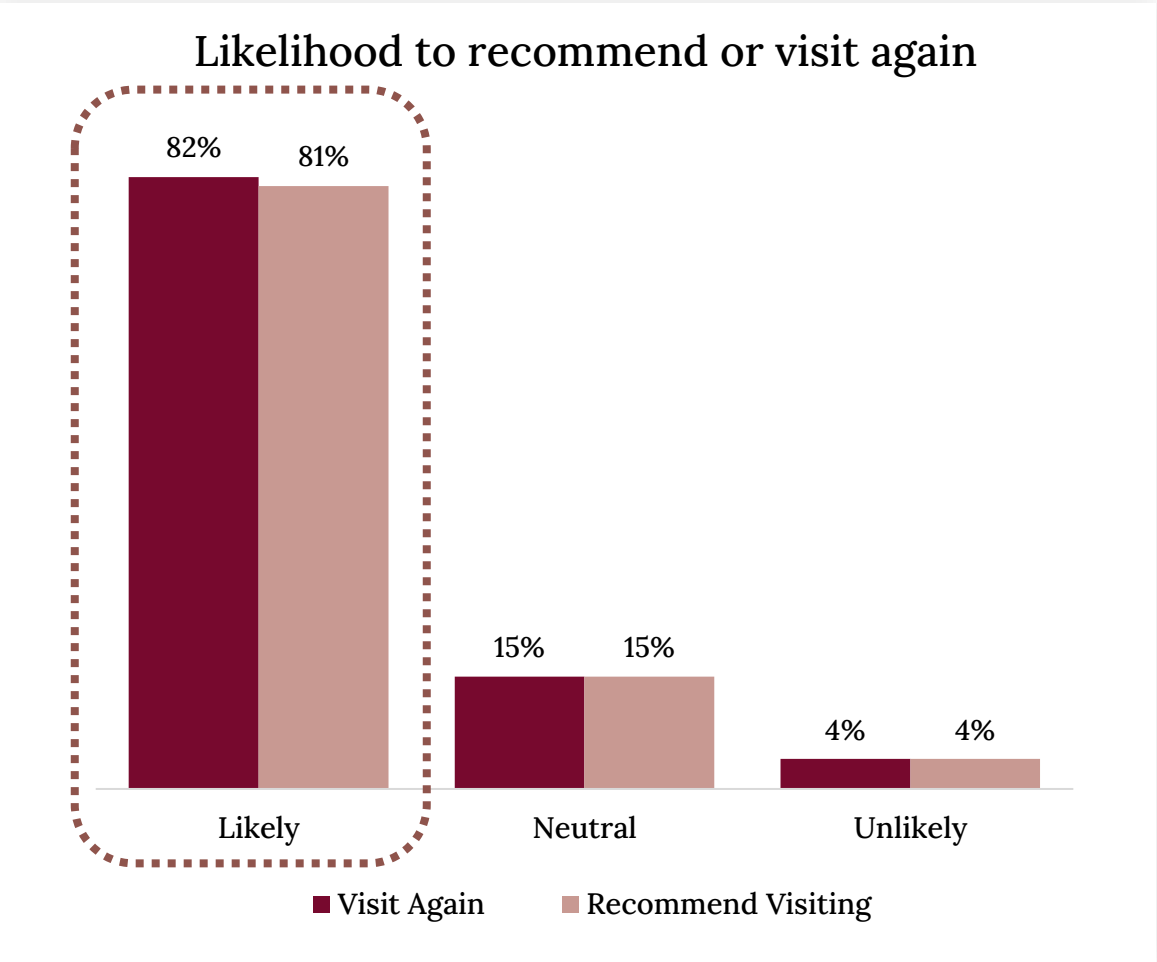
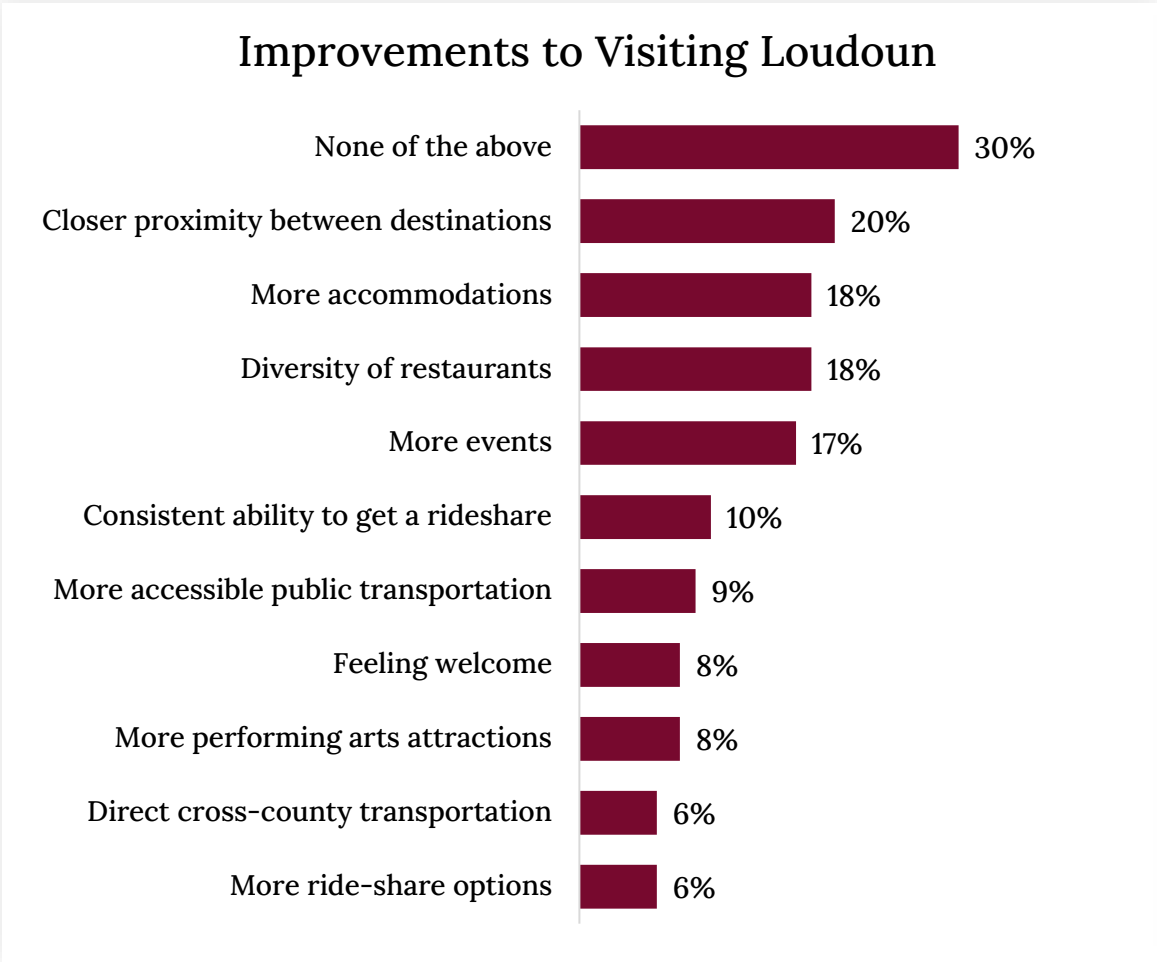
Fine dining, historic sites, and breweries are also common activities visitors reported partaking in

Activities Participated in Loudoun County



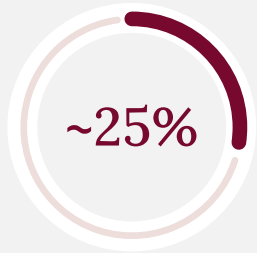
PREVIOUS VISITORS LIKELY TO COME AGAIN OR RECOMMEND TO OTHERS

More accommodations, closer distances between destinations, and diversity of restaurants would improve visitor experience



VISITORS

What do you feel differentiates Loudoun from other destinations?



Of visitors said the beautiful landscape, open spaces, and incredible scenery



Of visitors said the proximity to such a variety places. Washington, DC is nearby, wineries are not too far away, and there is plenty of shopping and other activities in between



Of visitors said they loved that one county could encompass a healthy mix of urban activity centers and rural vistas

Other differentiators of Loudoun County...

Virginia Charm

Local artisan events

Farmland and nature

Historical culture

Mix of urban and rural

Not overbuilt

The Potomac River

The safe, clean environment

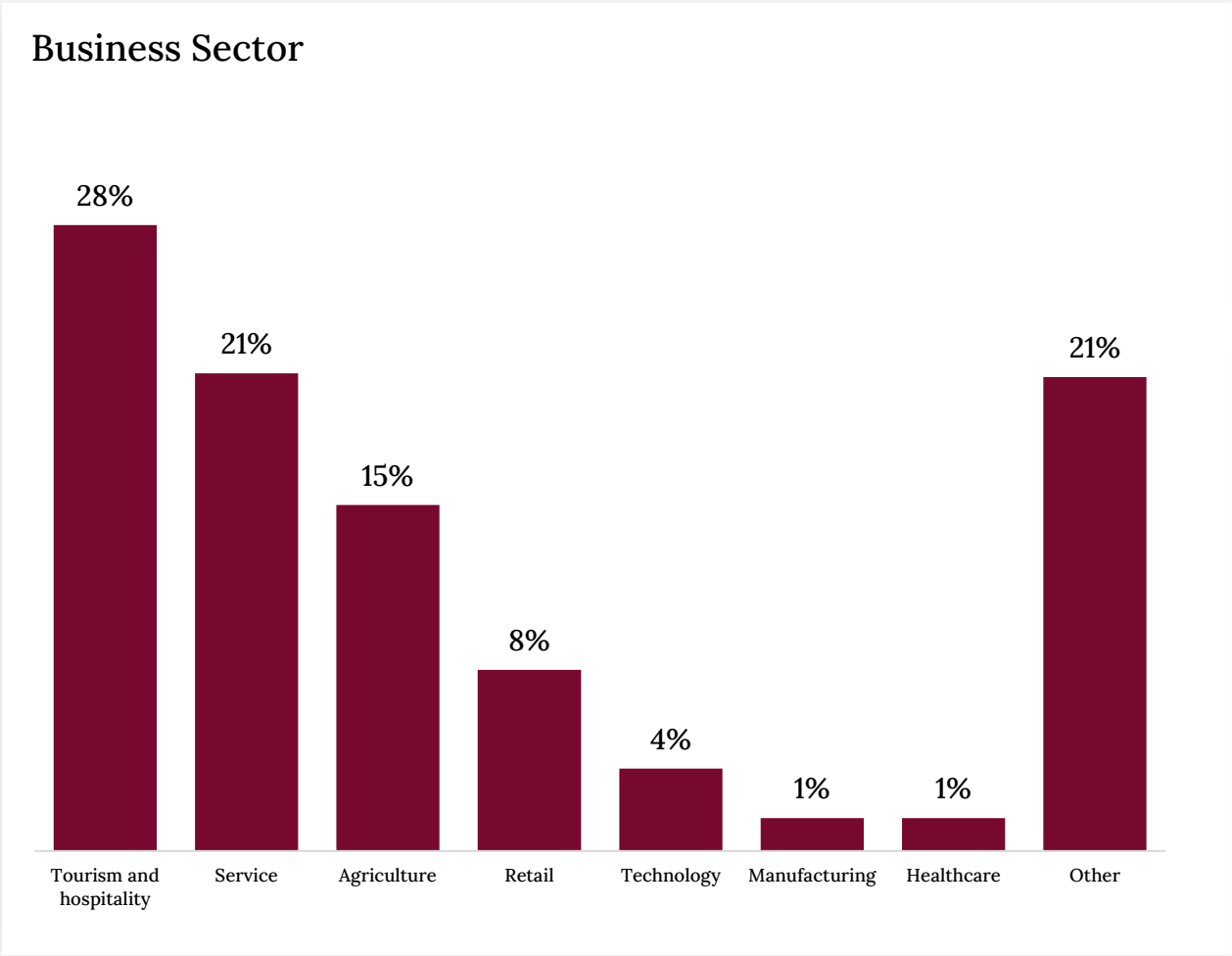
VISITOR WORD CLOUD

Loudoun County is...

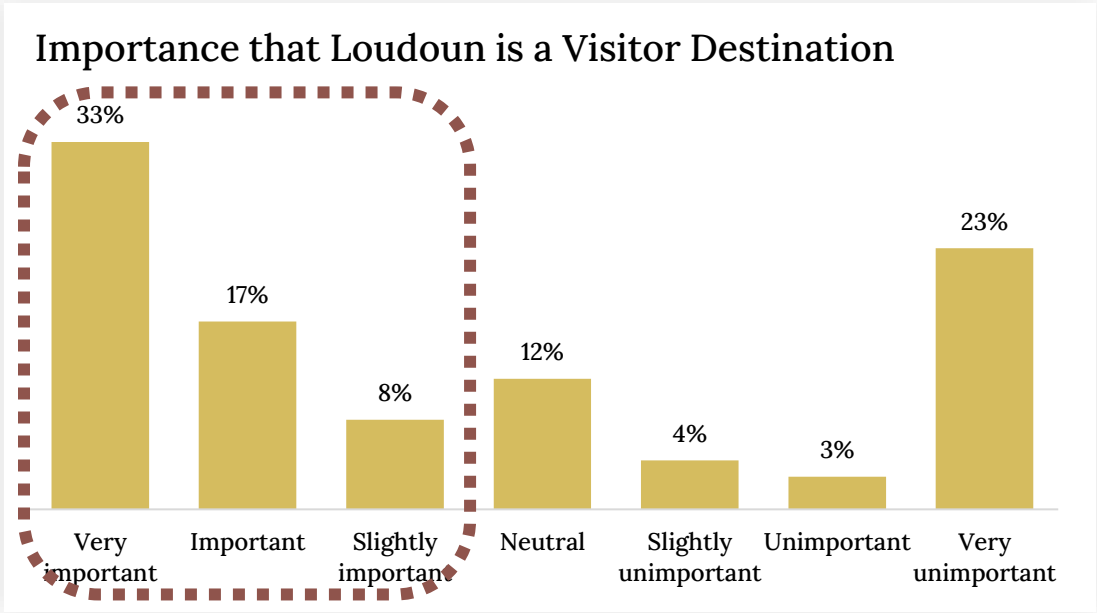


MOST BUSINESS OWNERS SAY TOURISM IS VITAL TO BUSINESS

58% of respondents said it is important that Loudoun is viewed as a visitor destination



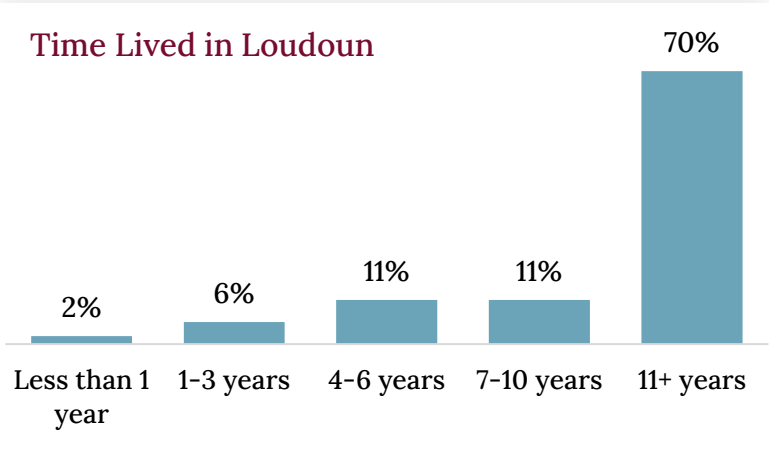
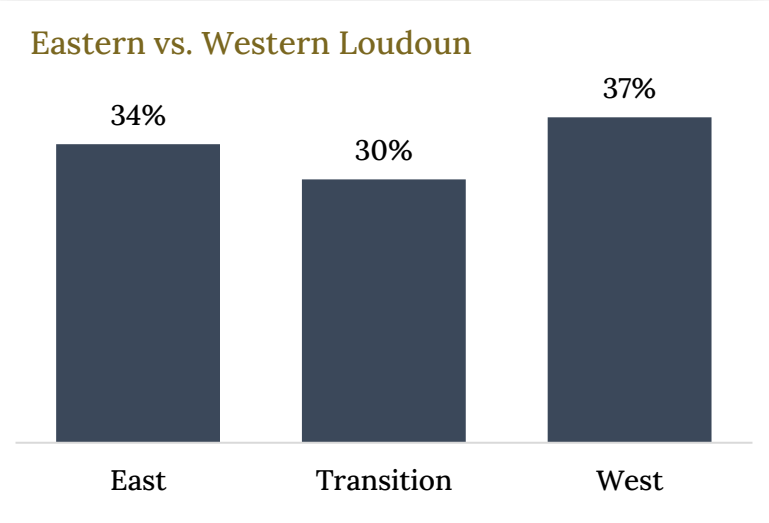
Is tourism important to your business	%
Yes	78%
No	22%



RESIDENT LOCATION DEMOGRAPHICS

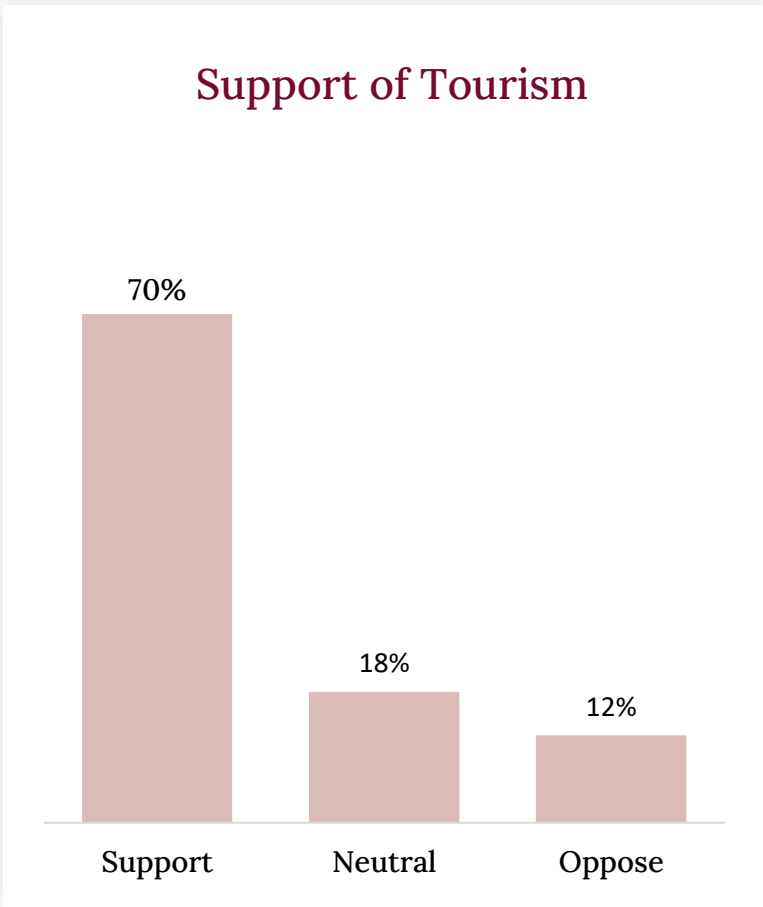
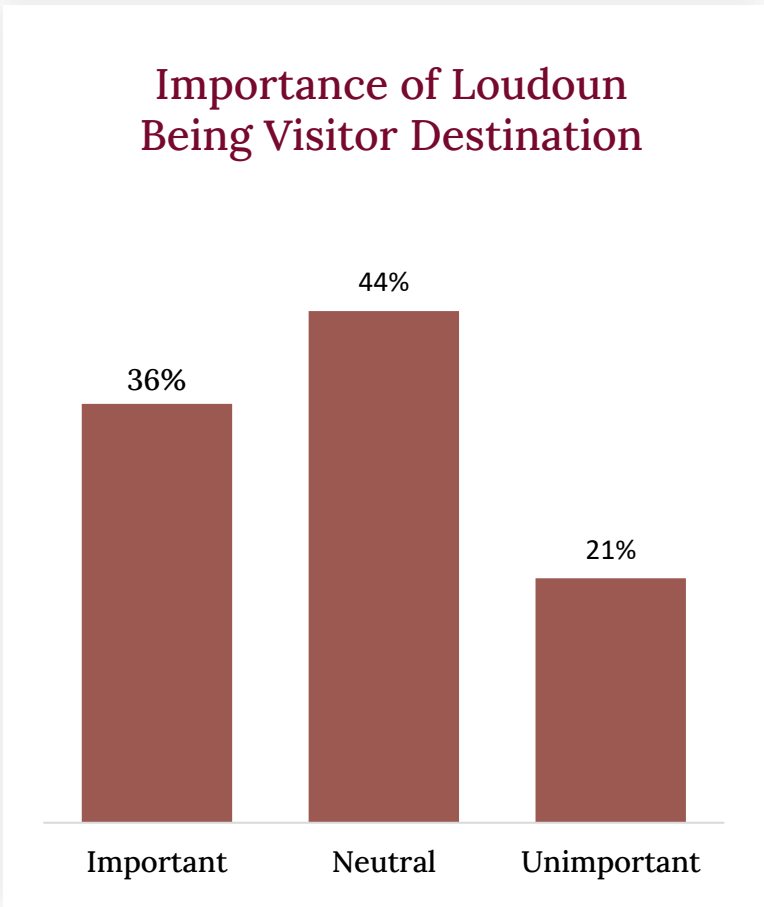
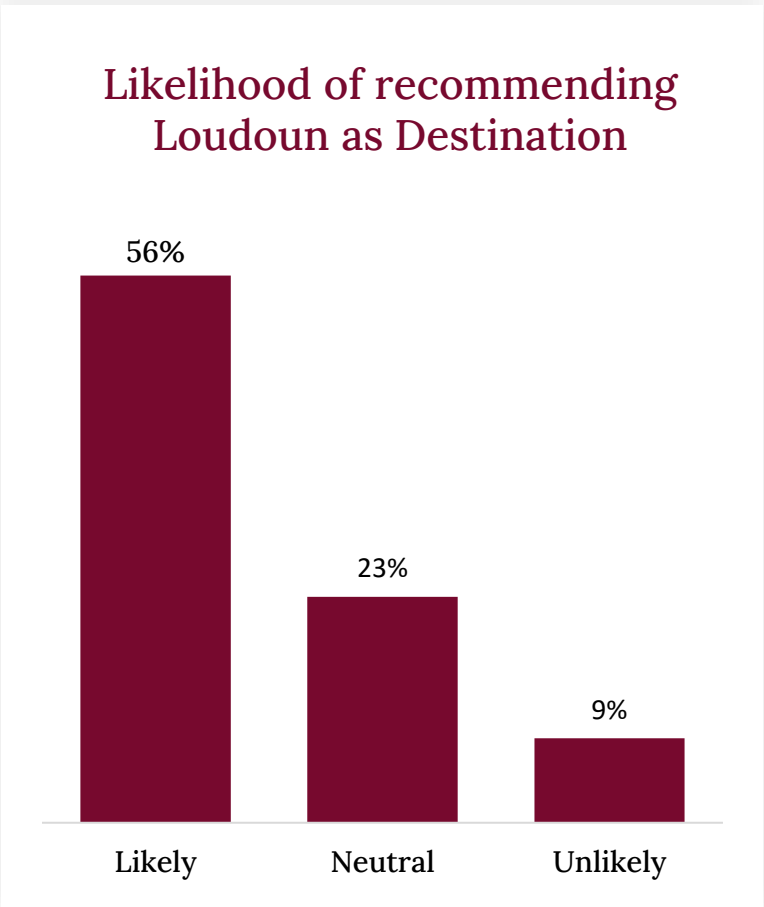
About an even split, with slightly more responses coming from Western Loudoun

Residency	%
Sterling	16%
Ashburn	16%
Leesburg	16%
Purcellville	8%
Aldie	7%
Lovettsville	6%
Brambleton	5%
Round Hill	5%
Hillsboro	4%
Middleburg	3%
South Riding	3%
Waterford	3%
Hamilton	2%
Lansdowne	2%
Bluemont	2%
Philomont	2%
Lincoln	1%
Lucketts	1%



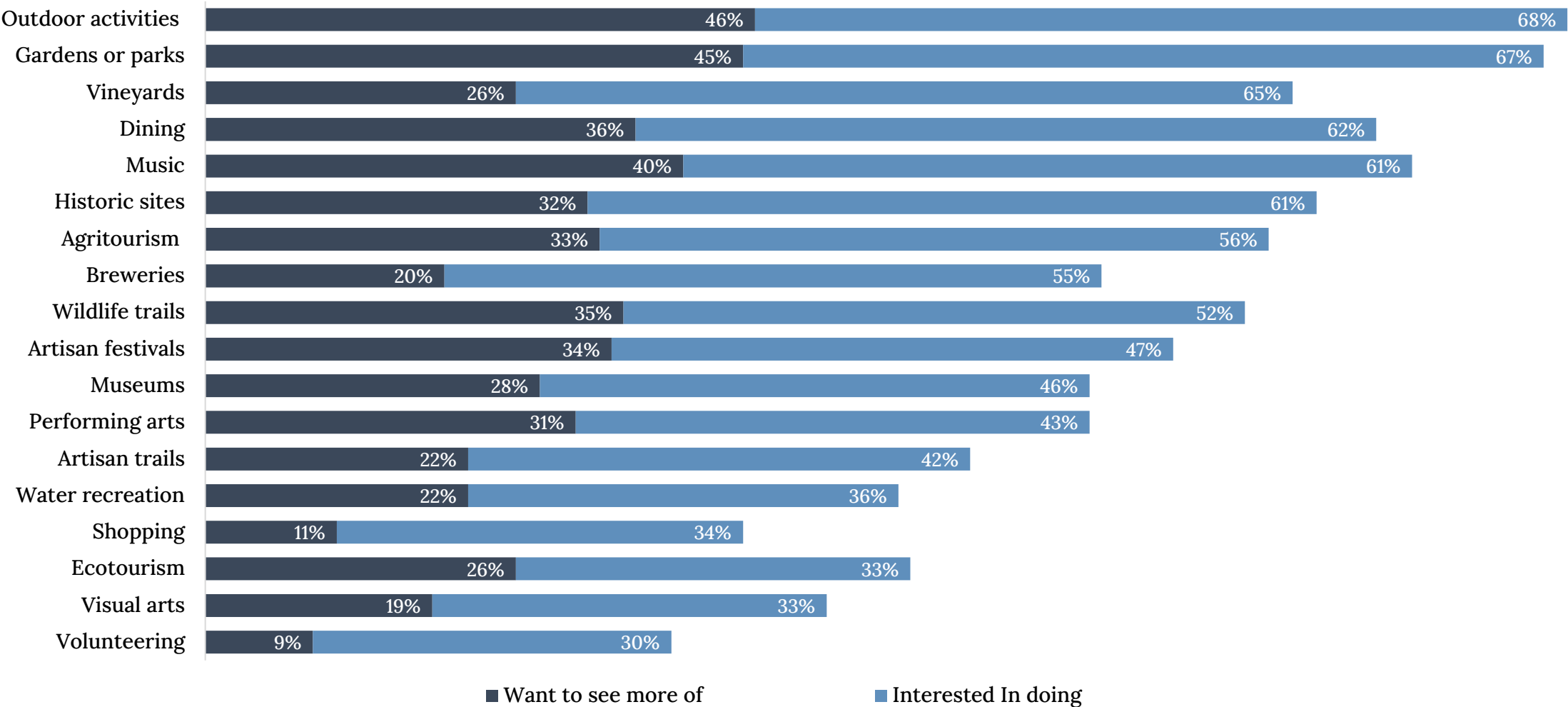
RESIDENTS OVERWHELMINGLY SUPPORT TOURISM

A third of residents say it's important that Loudoun is a visitor destination, while 70% support tourism



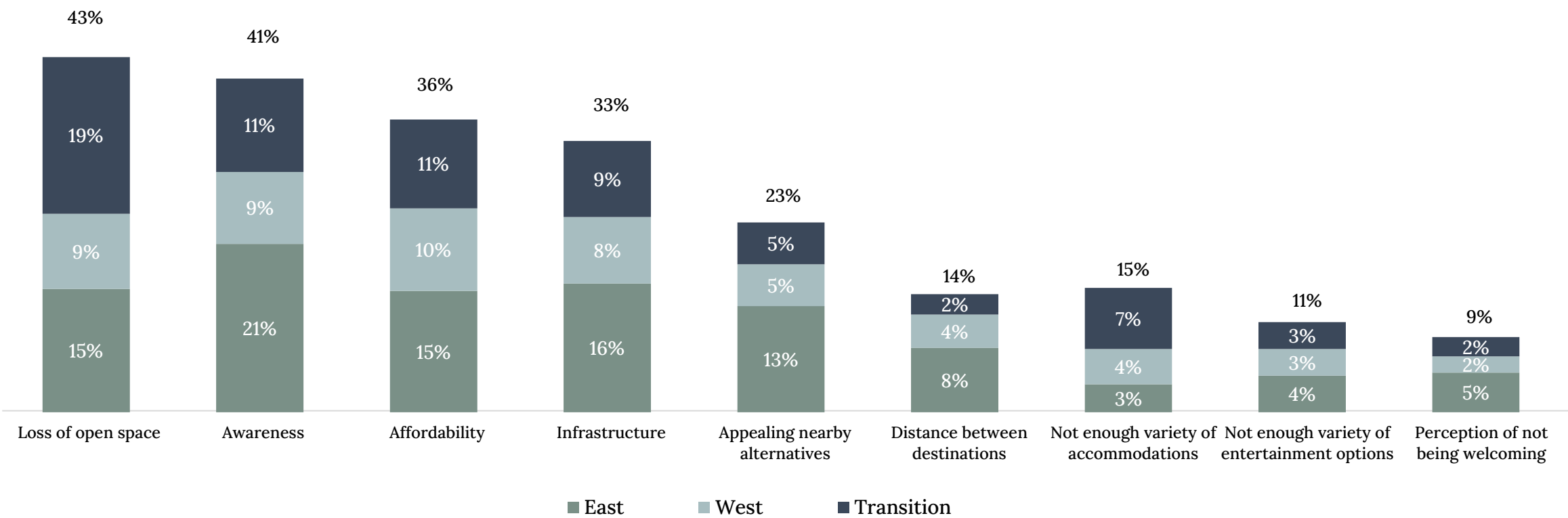
RESIDENTS WANT MORE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, DINING, AND MUSIC

Activities in Loudoun



RESIDENTS SEE LOSS OF OPEN SPACE AND AWARENESS AS LARGEST BARRIERS

Affordability and infrastructure are close seconds



RESIDENTS

What are you most concerned about in regards to tourism in Loudoun County?



Over Development

About **32%** of residents are worried that much of the open spaces and green landscape that makes Loudoun County unique will be ‘destroyed’ because of too much **urban development and infrastructure**



Traffic

More than **30%** of residents believe that traffic is a concern, as the congestion is **disrupting the quiet atmosphere**.



Affordability

About **15%** of residents are concerned over the lack of **affordable housing**. This presents itself an issue in the eyes of residents, both from the tourism side as well as resident housing prices for the tourism and hospitality sector workers.

OTHER ISSUES THEY WERE CONCERNED ABOUT...

Losing the quaintness of Western Loudoun County

Not enough variety in arts venues, night life, events

A history that continues to be forgotten

A lack of awareness for tourism in general

Too much national media attention

RESIDENT WORD CLOUD

Loudoun County is...



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EMBRACING VARITEY: BALANCING
AND BUILDING AWARENESS

BY 2025

Loudoun County will celebrate and
inspire visitors and residents alike to
enjoy the benefits and variety of
Loudoun County



Visit
LOUDOUN

EMBRACING VARIETY: 2022 KEY ISSUES

Balancing all Loudoun County has to Offer for all Stakeholders

Visit Loudoun represents the tourism industry and provides a visitor perspective and recommendations regarding land use and zoning. Visit Loudoun also functions as a referral agency to assist county and town staff, boards, and commissions regarding tourism issues.

Loudoun County should be Known for its Diversity

Loudoun County is unique in its diversity of products. From equestrian experiences; craft-beverages, a range of dining options, farm to table experiences, agriculture, historic attractions; and outdoor recreation. All combined to make Loudoun County a unique and diverse visitor destination.

Partnerships in Local Travel Destinations

Current travel trends shows more visitors are traveling domestically and regionally. Increasing the successful execution of partnerships and joint ventures will continue to grow activities and attractions that complement each other.

DE&I Efforts

Visit Loudoun received a B+ in their DE&I efforts in 2022. Additionally, 89% of stakeholders are highly likely to recommend Visit Loudoun to other diverse tourism and hospitality businesses in Loudoun County.

EMBRACING VARIETY: HOW WILL WE EFFECT CHANGE?

STRATEGIES:

WHAT WE WILL DO...

V

Diversify Loudoun's offerings even further by ramping up the promotion of Loudoun's sports-related activities, primarily by leaning into the trend of silent sports and self-care options to capitalize on the growing trend.

V

Ensure that all marketing efforts highlight the variety and diversity that Loudoun County has to offer in all respects. One way is by leveraging the vast diversity of the county to increase the quality and length of visits through travel trends such as work-cations and biz-leisure travel.

V

Encourage industry members and residents to share what they love about Loudoun County through their own experiences with Loudoun County

V

Visit Loudoun will continue to build on the DE&I strategies to reverse any negative perceptions of Loudoun County by building inclusion and belonging within its marketing and social media assets.

INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY:
SPREADING AND AMPLIFYING THE
WORD TO EVERYONE

BY 2025

Loudoun County (residents,
business owners, and government
alike) continue to support and
engage with tourism in the county



INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY: 2022 KEY ISSUES

Continue Involving Residents with Tourism

Stakeholders and business owners may still lack information and understanding of Visit Loudoun's role, contributions, and key metrics when it comes to promoting Loudoun's tourism assets. Resident opinions have evolved since the pandemic and are **positive** about Visit Loudoun's work (70% of residents support tourism).

Sustainable Travel should Highlight the Importance of Open Spaces

All of Loudoun County feels a strong desire to protect their outdoor amenities, including open spaces, parks, and beautiful vistas. Rather than viewing this concern through the lens of anti-development, it can be reframed by highlighting Visit Loudoun's role in increasing interest and education around the outdoor amenities within the county. The data supports this, as 46% of visitors want to see more outdoor activities and 68% of them are interested in enjoying some kind of outdoor activity in the county.

Balancing Act Across the County

Visit Loudoun will continue to balance and promote tourism assets throughout the county with unique support and promotion.

INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY: HOW WILL WE EFFECT CHANGE?

STRATEGIES:

WHAT WE WILL DO...

- I Draw in visitors by creating and showcasing curated itineraries that allow resident interests to be highlighted in tourism material. One example is the CTA (Certified Tourism Ambassador) program, which could showcase the resident's top five favorite things to do in the county.
- I Deliver more opportunities to continue changing the narrative around tourism – according to the data, more than 70% of residents support tourism in the county. Leveraging resident following on social media to share data in a compelling manner could be a key metric of interest
- I Communicate the view of Loudoun with all its variety of offerings, as a cohesive entity (with Visit Loudoun survey data) to residents, government, and business stakeholders to reinforce the mission and purpose of Visit Loudoun.
- I Support local businesses by creating attractive offerings for visitors that highlight activities the county has to offer while also showcasing its unique ability to be a place where visitors could work and live.

SUPPORT MUSIC AND THE ARTS:
SHOWCASE CULTURE

BY 2025

Loudoun County will highlight music
and the arts as key drivers and
enablers for growth and excitement
in the destination



SUPPORT MUSIC AND THE ARTS: KEY ISSUES

Signature Annual Events Draw Repeat Visitors

Loudoun has an opportunity in promoting key signature annual events to serve as a draw for repeat visitors and to remain competitive with other destinations.

Music and The Arts Contributes to Overall Quality of Life

Having more variety within the music and arts scene is central to creating a sense of place for everyone in Loudoun County, including the diversity that exists in the county.

Loudoun Should Seek Additional Variety in Venues to Truly Be a Music and Arts Destination

Continue adding to and diversify venues. Find ways of utilizing the existing infrastructure to highlight the music and arts scene (while also hoping for a big performing arts center in the future).

Enhance Destination Development

Enhance destination development 'in concert' with the county's comprehensive plan for economic development related to a large performing arts venue.

SUPPORT MUSIC AND THE ARTS: HOW WILL WE EFFECT CHANGE?

STRATEGIES

WHAT WE WILL DO...

- S Foster and support both visual and musical local arts through the music sub-committee. Find local, niche venues and showcase local talent that emphasizes the importance of local artistry.
- S Integrate the music and arts scene into the greater tourism assets and existing events in order to draw awareness towards how the arts scene can make a big impact into the broader business community.
- S Continue providing insights and data to facilitate and support with the goal for Visit Loudoun to be a resource for knowledge about how Loudoun County can be viewed as a destination for music and the arts.
- S Get creative about intertwining arts and history (e.g., historical arts walk).

INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE:
SUPPORT LOCAL EFFORTS

BY 2025

Loudoun County will feel more like
an integrated destination with a plan
for growth, frictionless flow and
sustainable distribution of visitors
throughout Loudoun County



INFRASTRUCTURE: 2022 KEY ISSUES

Affordable Housing for Workers

Key tourism businesses continue to struggle to find a robust and local workforce, many of which do not reside in Loudoun County because of the lack of affordable housing.

Transportation Bottlenecks

Loudoun County continues to see increases in traffic, which translates to bottlenecks for residents and visitors alike. The current infrastructure of dispersing visitors is both a challenge and opportunity for the destination.

Expansion of Full-Service Hotels

There is concern that a lack of full-service hotels is a short coming for business travel and families. In order to fully advance and develop visitor infrastructure – full-service hotels are needed and desired for the long term.

INFORMING INFRASTRUCTURE: HOW WILL WE EFFECT CHANGE?

STRATEGIES:

WHAT WE WILL DO...

- I Leveraging and utilizing data from survey results (residents and visitors) as input into the Economic Development Councils and local government planning
- I Participate in conversations and or partnerships for long-range planning, including alternative transportation options across the county
- I Drawing awareness of affordable housing as a key priority for the county and local government officials.

THEMED CURATED EXPERIENCES:
RECOGNIZING THE DIVERSITY OF
LOUDOUN COUNTY

BY 2025

Loudoun County will offer newly
curated experiences that will delight
and inspire visitors and residents
alike to continue to drive the growth
of the destination



THEMED AND CURATED EXPERIENCES: 2022 KEY ISSUES

Focused and Customized Itineraries

Entering the post-pandemic era, consumers want to make vacations special and unique. Travelers are looking towards social media, family and friends to create a vision for them of what their trip could look like. Highlighting lesser-known areas in Loudoun County will help to further disperse visitors throughout the county.

Creative Local Partnerships

Instilling local business partnerships is important so that visitors know the entire business community is working with one another in an effort to give them the best experience of what Loudoun has to offer during their stay.

Focus on Creating Demand throughout the County

Continuing to build awareness throughout Loudoun County by identifying unique activities that can be done in the East and other unique activities in the West. Creating itineraries that offer incentives to travel throughout the county is important.





Increase the Longevity and Quality of Stays

As visitors begin to travel again (post pandemic), trends indicate consumers still wanting local and regional travel. When consumers do travel, they travel a bit differently than they did before the pandemic (e.g., the rise of silent sports, biz-leisure trips, etc.). It is important that Visit Loudoun is able to offer the visitors options that would make staying an extra day easier

THEMED AND CURATED EXPERIENCES: HOW WILL WE EFFECT CHANGE?

STRATEGIES:

WHAT WE WILL DO...

-  Continue to build upon the existing business partnership network with one core mission to make Loudoun County thrive in a post-pandemic world and look outside the industry to create partnerships.
-  Providing focused, themed itineraries for visitors by delivering customized interest categories so visitors can feel less overwhelmed while planning the trip.
-  Nudging visitors through providing activities centered around convenience. One way to do this is by making it easier for them to extend their trip an extra day (e.g., offer a discount to a co-working space nearby).
-  Allow visitors an outlet to learn more about Loudoun County before they arrive by leveraging an existing asset (e.g., the CTA program).

AGENDA

- Objectives
- Review of 2019-2022 Strategic Plan
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Resident, Visitor and Business Owner Survey
- 2023 – 2025 Strategic Plan
- Appendix – Travel Trends



A landscape photograph of a vast, golden wheat field. A narrow path or furrow runs straight down the center of the field, leading the eye towards a distant line of trees. The sky is filled with soft, white and grey clouds, suggesting a late afternoon or early morning setting. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

THANK YOU