

Mesa County Master Plan Survey

Summary Report | June 12, 2022





Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Selected Key Findings
- Living in Mesa County
- Transportation Improvements
- Growth & Economic Development
- Housing
- Environment, Natural Resources, and Parks & Recreation
- Your Neighborhood
- Respondent Demographics
- Addendum: Survey Data Weighting

Introduction

- The purpose of this survey was to gather community feedback to inform and help guide the Mesa County Master Plan update.
- Topics included housing, transportation, growth management, economic development, environment / natural resources, and others.



Methodology

Two survey methods:

1 = Statistically Valid (Invitation Survey)

Survey mailed to 4,600 households (4,412 delivered), with options to complete paper survey or respond online.



955

- 955 surveys completed
- 21.6% response rate
- +/- 3.2% margin of error (at 95% confidence level)

2 = Open Link Survey

Online survey available to all residents through

<http://mesacountysurvey.com/> and

<http://www.mesasurvey.com/>



1,091 - Open Link Surveys Completed

- Surveys provided in English and Spanish
- 582 pages of comments received

2,046

Total
Responses

Weighting the Data

1

The survey data was weighted by **age of householder**, **housing tenure** (own/rent), and **home zip code** to closely match the demographics of Mesa County residents (per US Census).¹



2

Both the Invitation and Open Link surveys were weighted to match the Mesa County population profile, in order to enhance the demographic representativeness of the results.

¹See demographics section for weighted age, tenure, and zip code results.

See survey data weighting addendum for age, tenure, and zip code results before and after data weighting.

Key Findings

- Most respondents feel the **quality of life in Mesa County** is good or excellent (61%), while 27% feel it is about average, and 12% say it is not so good / poor.
- Opinions are mixed about the general direction of Mesa County over the past 5-10 years; 20% feel that **Mesa County has improved**, while 24% say it has **gotten worse**, 21% say it has **stayed about the same**, and 32% responded that Mesa County has **experienced a mix of improvements and declines**.
- The **highest rated characteristics of Mesa County** include the quality of the natural environment, recreational opportunities, and ease of getting to places you normally have to visit.
- **Lower-rated characteristics** include variety of housing options, the overall direction the county government is taking, and the economic health of the county. Homelessness, crime, drought, planned/sustainable growth, and traffic are also common concerns.
- The **highest priority transportation improvements** include improved maintenance of streets, better management of traffic flow on major roads, and expanding air service.

Key Findings (cont'd)

- Mesa County's **rural development policies have broad support**, such as minimizing impacts on natural areas and scenic vistas and protecting agricultural practices.
- A plurality of respondents feel that the **rate of growth** (over the past few years) of retail businesses, business parks/employment centers/offices, and industrial development has been about right. Opinions are mixed regarding single-family and multi-family residential development, with significant shares feeling that growth has been too little, about right, and too much.
- There is broad support for a variety of **economic development actions**, led by retaining and expanding local businesses, attracting high-quality jobs to the county, and supporting agriculture.
- There is substantial support for **more affordable housing types**, particularly starter homes.
- **Top environmental/natural resource priorities** include neighborhood cleanup, adding more recycling/composting drop-off locations, natural land conservation, and conserving working agricultural lands. A variety of other efforts are supported too.
- When asked what they most like about their **neighborhood**, top responses include general level of safety in their neighborhood (63%), low noise and traffic levels (55%), and proximity to groceries and other basic services (51%). Leading neighborhood dislikes are lack of affordability (32%), the places I go to are further than a 15-minute walk (26%), and too much traffic (20%).
- The opinions of random-sample and open-link survey respondents were highly similar overall.

Key Findings (cont'd)

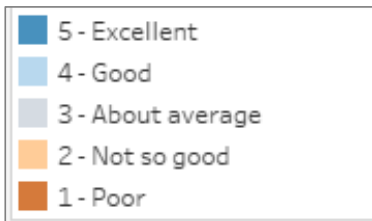
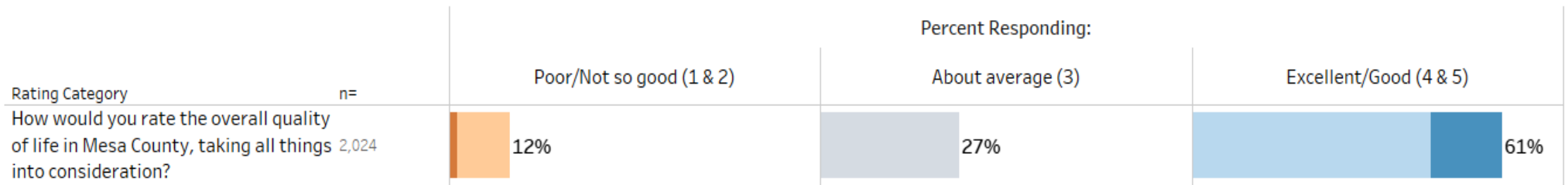
- There are moderate differences in the opinions of residents of the incorporated vs. unincorporated areas of the county.
 - Incorporated residents give somewhat higher ratings than unincorporated residents for the overall **quality of life in Mesa County**, and are also more likely to feel that Mesa County has **improved** over the past 5-10 years (and less likely to feel it has declined).
 - Incorporated residents give somewhat higher ratings than unincorporated residents for **sense of community, overall feeling of safety, and opportunities to participate in community matters**.
 - Incorporated residents are more likely to cite the following attributes as things they **like best** about living in Mesa County: friendliness / sense of community, proximity to groceries and daily shopping needs, ease of walking and biking around the area, overall sense of personal safety, quality of public services (safety, sanitation, water, etc.), proximity to eating and drinking establishments, quality of local neighborhoods, and cost of housing. Conversely, unincorporated residents are more likely to cite agricultural / ranching / rural areas of the county.
 - Incorporated residents put somewhat higher priority on the following **transportation improvements**: increase availability and quality of sidewalks, increase availability of walking paths and biking trails, add street lighting (nighttime lighting), and improve long-distance bus service (e.g. to Denver). Conversely, unincorporated residents put somewhat higher priority than incorporated residents on improving maintenance of streets.
 - Regarding **economic development**, incorporated residents place somewhat higher priority than unincorporated residents on encouraging and supporting renewable energy development, while unincorporated residents place greater emphasis than incorporated residents on supporting natural gas extraction.
- It should be emphasized that most of the differences between incorporated and unincorporated residents (where they exist) are **slight, not dramatic**. Overall, the two groups exhibit a **much greater degree of commonality than difference**.

Living in Mesa County



Quality of Life in Mesa County

Q 4: How would you rate the overall quality of life in Mesa County, taking all things into consideration?



How would you rate the overall quality of life in Mesa County, taking all things into consideration? What factors most influence your response?

Selected Themes:

- Access to the outdoors/recreational opportunities
- Good air quality and climate
- Sense of community
- Overall, extremely rich and diverse feedback

People giving more positive quality of life ratings are more likely to cite:

- Access to outdoor recreation, natural beauty, weather, small town feel, etc.

People giving less positive quality of life ratings are more likely to cite:

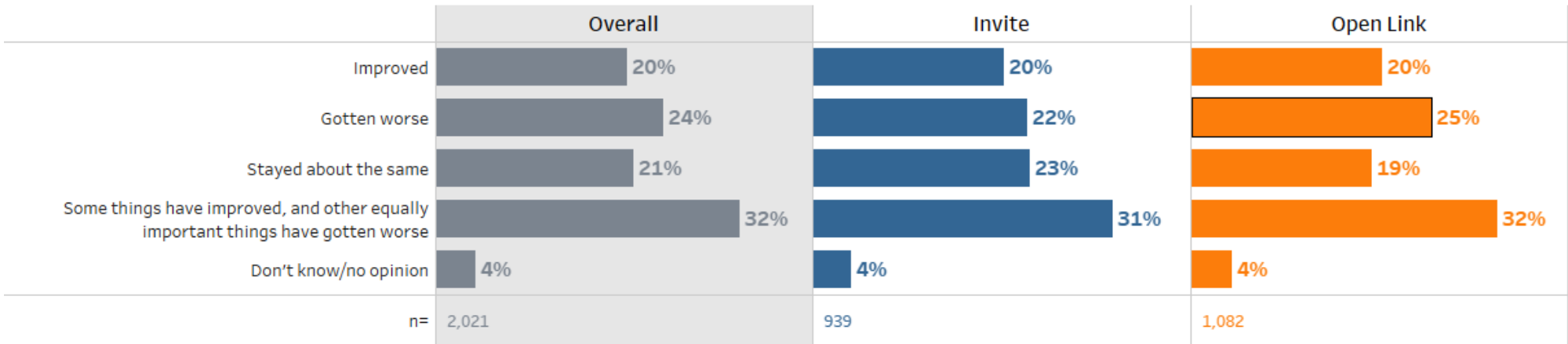
- Roads, cost of living, low wages, homelessness, crime, taxes, mental health services, etc.



1,749 Total Comments Received /
Word Cloud shows words used 6 or more times /
Size of word is proportionate to its frequency of use

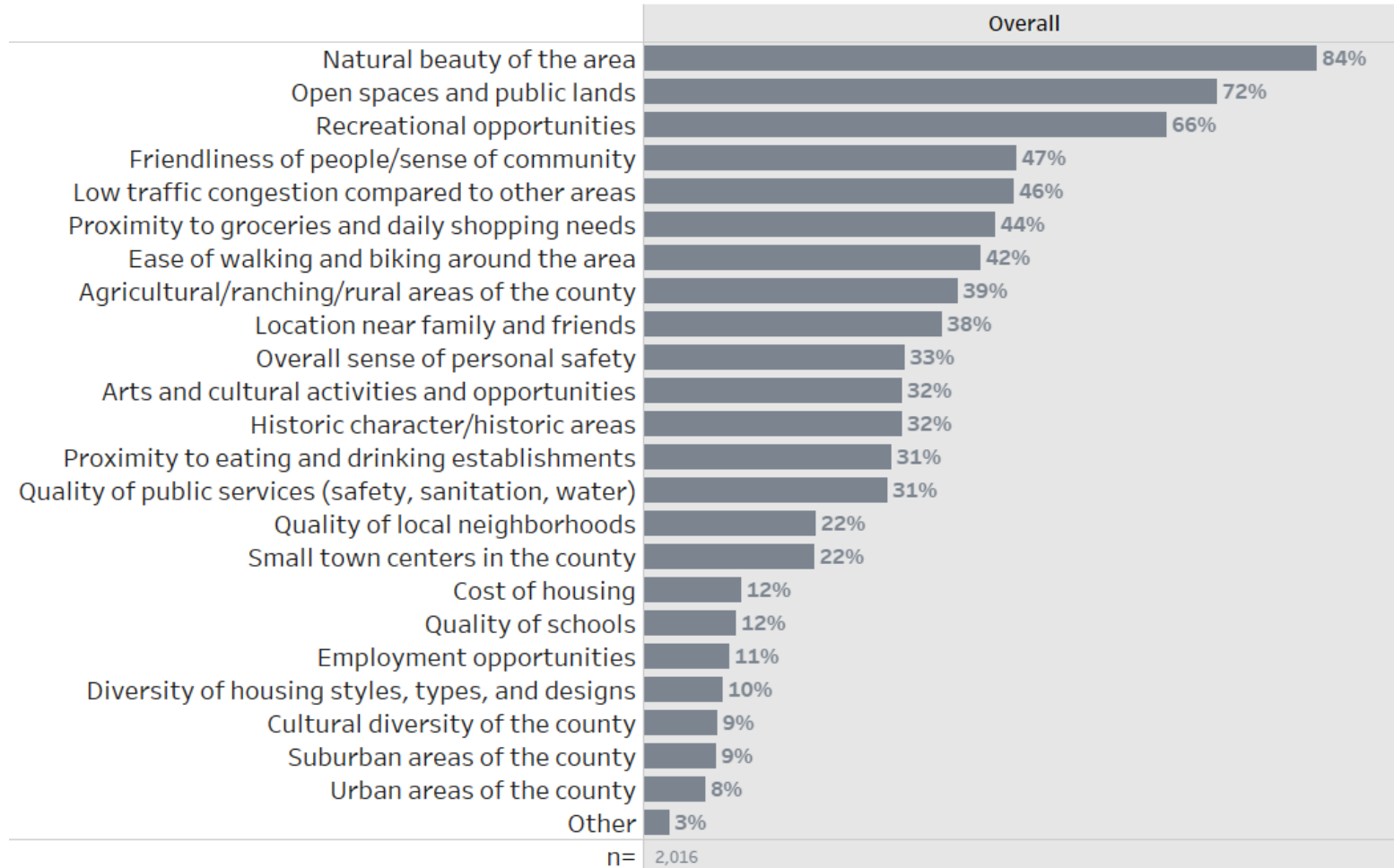
Change in Mesa County Over The Last 5 Years

Q 5: Thinking back over the past 5-10 years (or since you have lived here, if less than 5 years), has Mesa County improved, gotten worse, or stayed about the same as a place to live, taking all things into consideration?



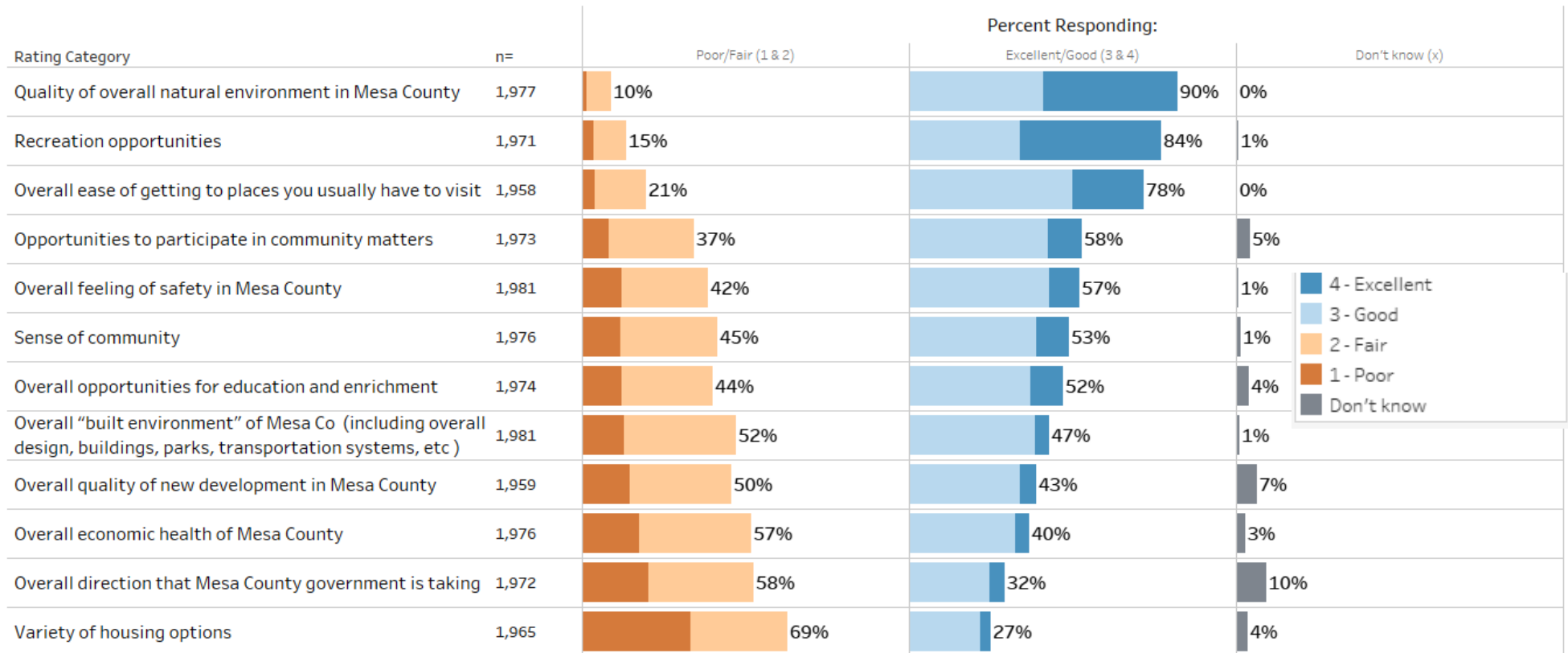
What do you like about living in Mesa County?

Q 6: What do you like about living in Mesa County? (Check all that apply)



Ratings of Mesa County

Q 7: Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Mesa County as a whole.

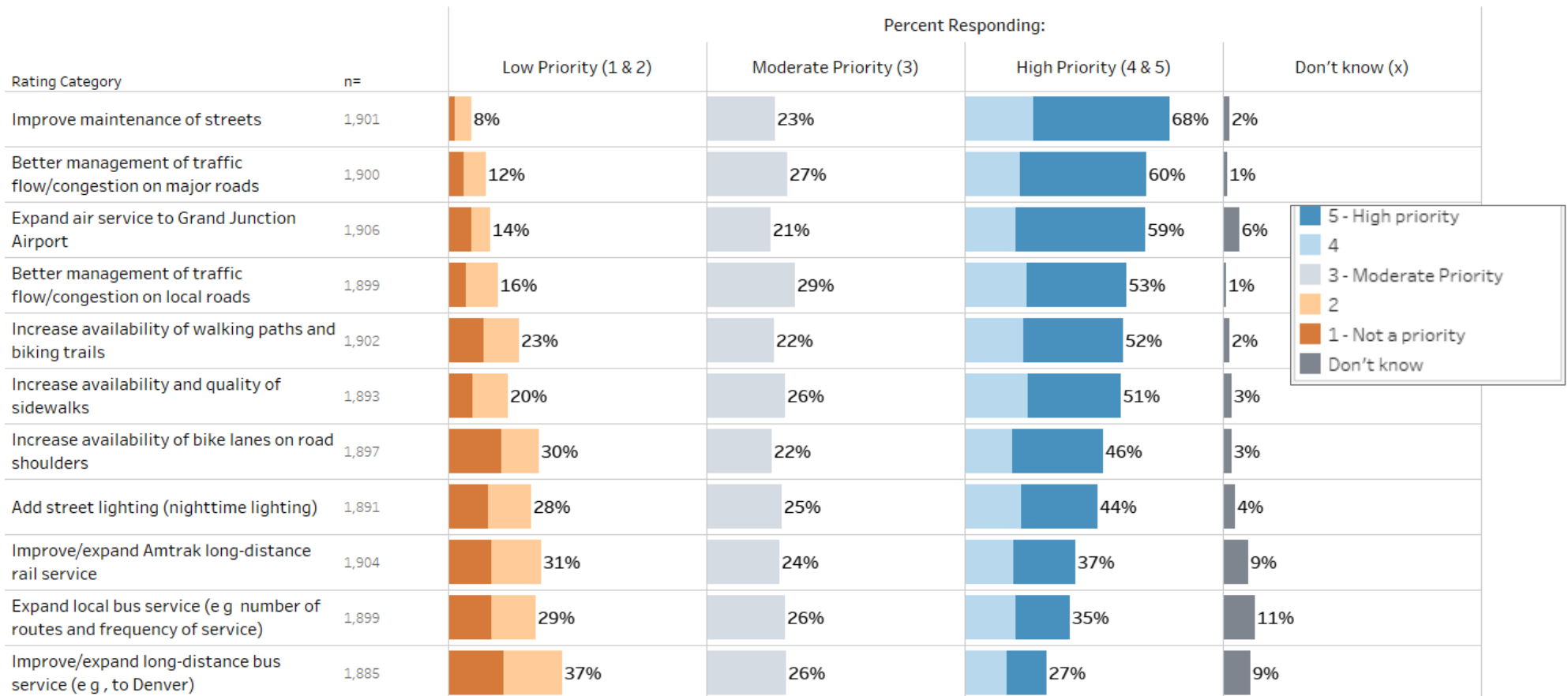


Transportation



Transportation Priorities

Q 8: Please rate the importance of the following potential actions to improve transportation in Mesa County in the future.

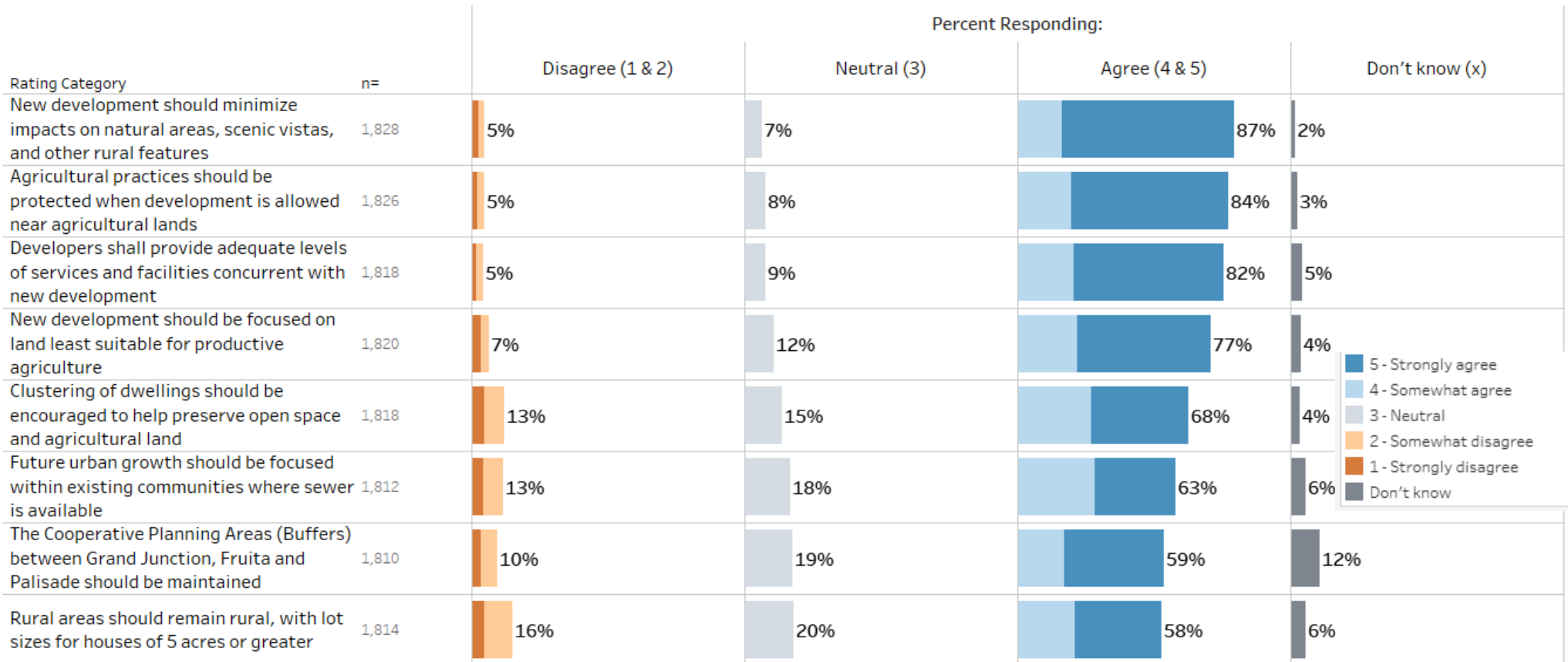


Growth and Economic Development



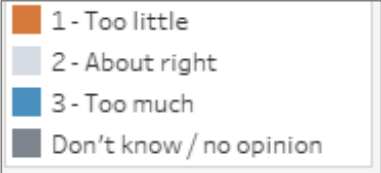
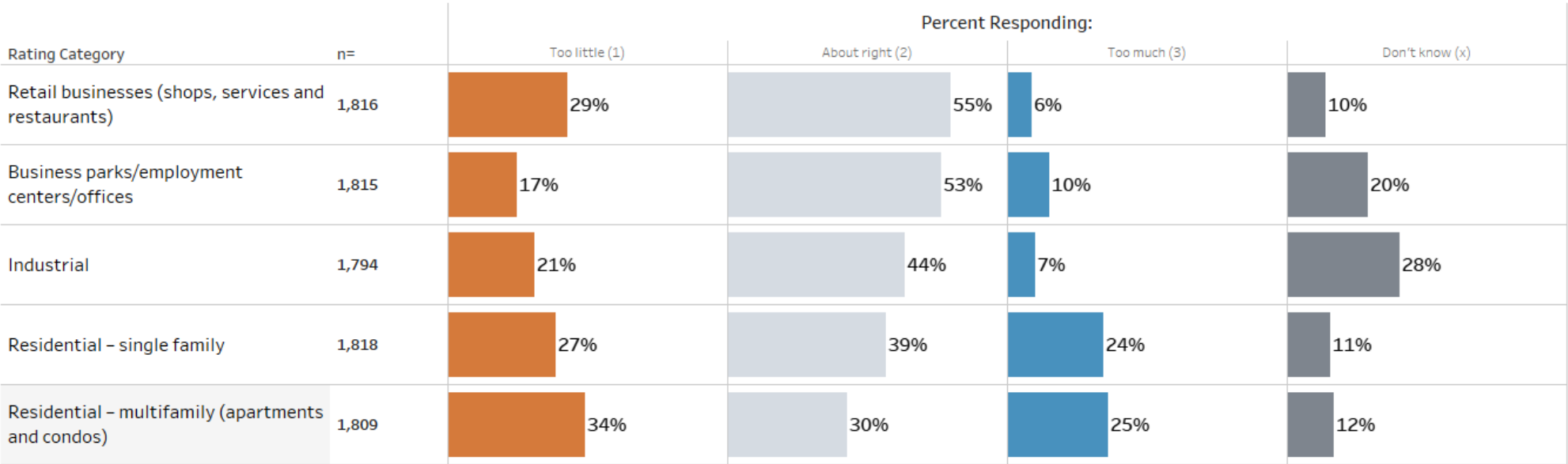
Rural Development Policies

Q 10: Following are some of the policies that help guide Mesa County's land use and growth decisions in rural parts of the county. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these policies.



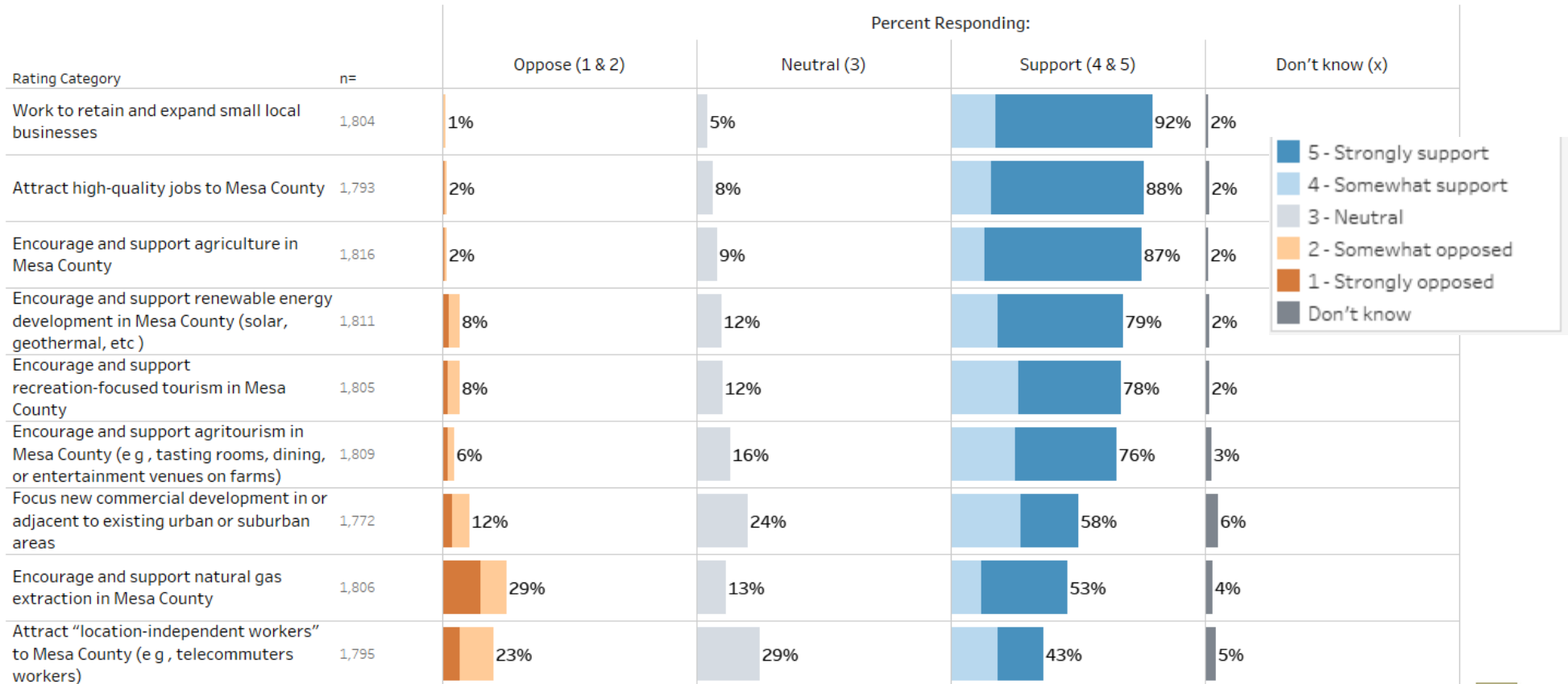
Rate of Growth

Q 9: Over the last few years, do you feel the rate of growth of the following types of development in Mesa County has been too little, about right, or too much?



Economic Development

Q 11: How do you feel about the following types of possible economic development actions that could be considered as a part of the Master Plan?

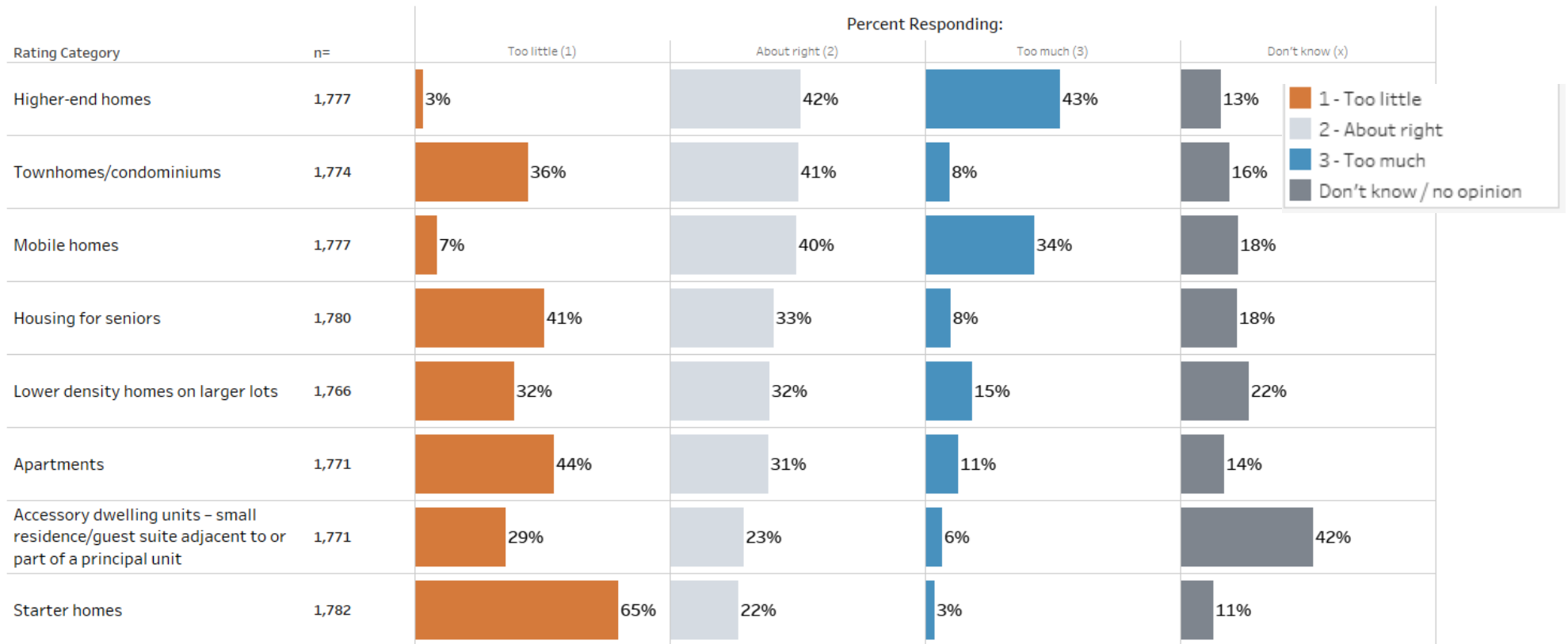


Housing



Housing Needs

Q 12: Do you think Mesa County has the right amount, too little, or too much of the following types of residences?

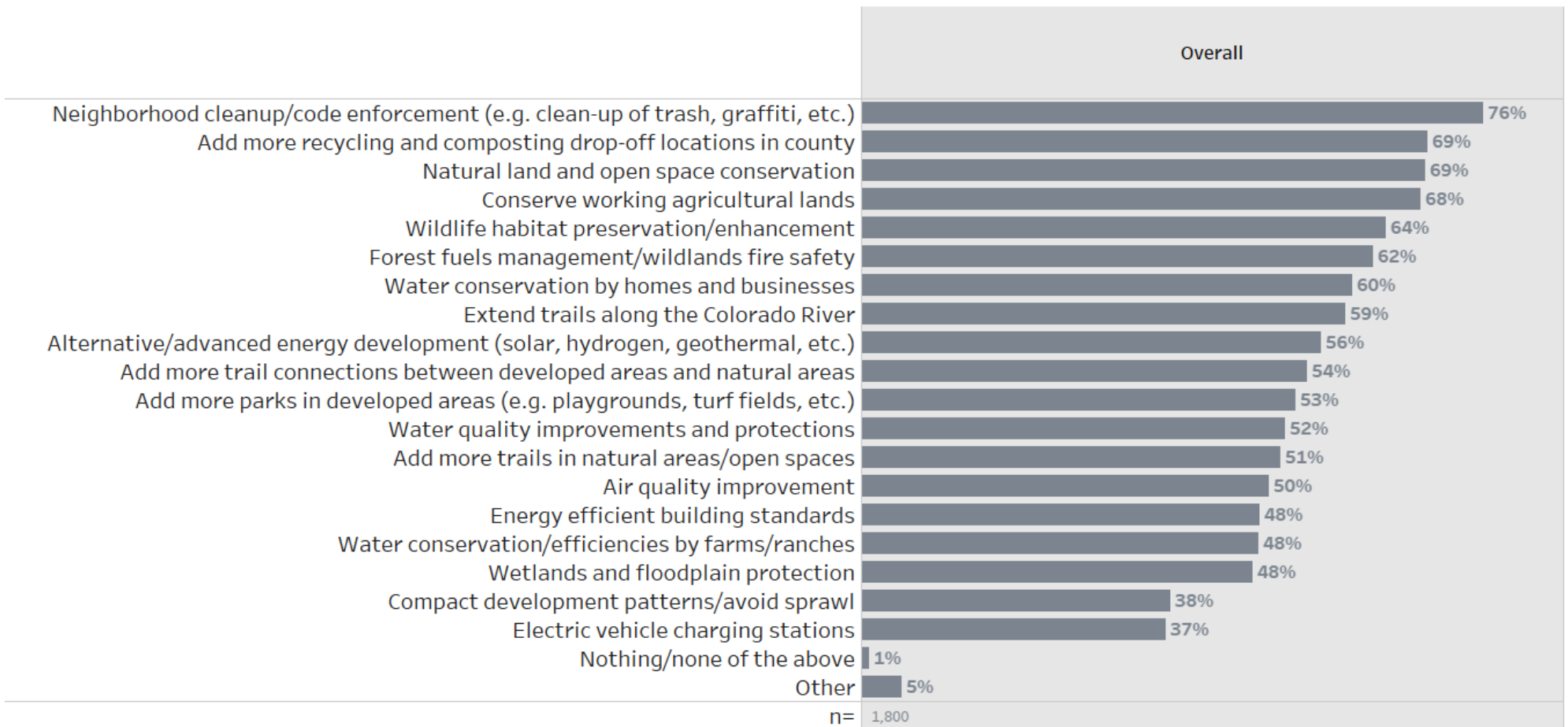


Environment, Natural Resources, and Parks & Recreation



Environment, Natural Resources, and Parks & Recreation Priorities

Q 13: What types of environmental, natural resource, and parks and recreation programs should Mesa County emphasize as we look to the future? (Check all that apply)

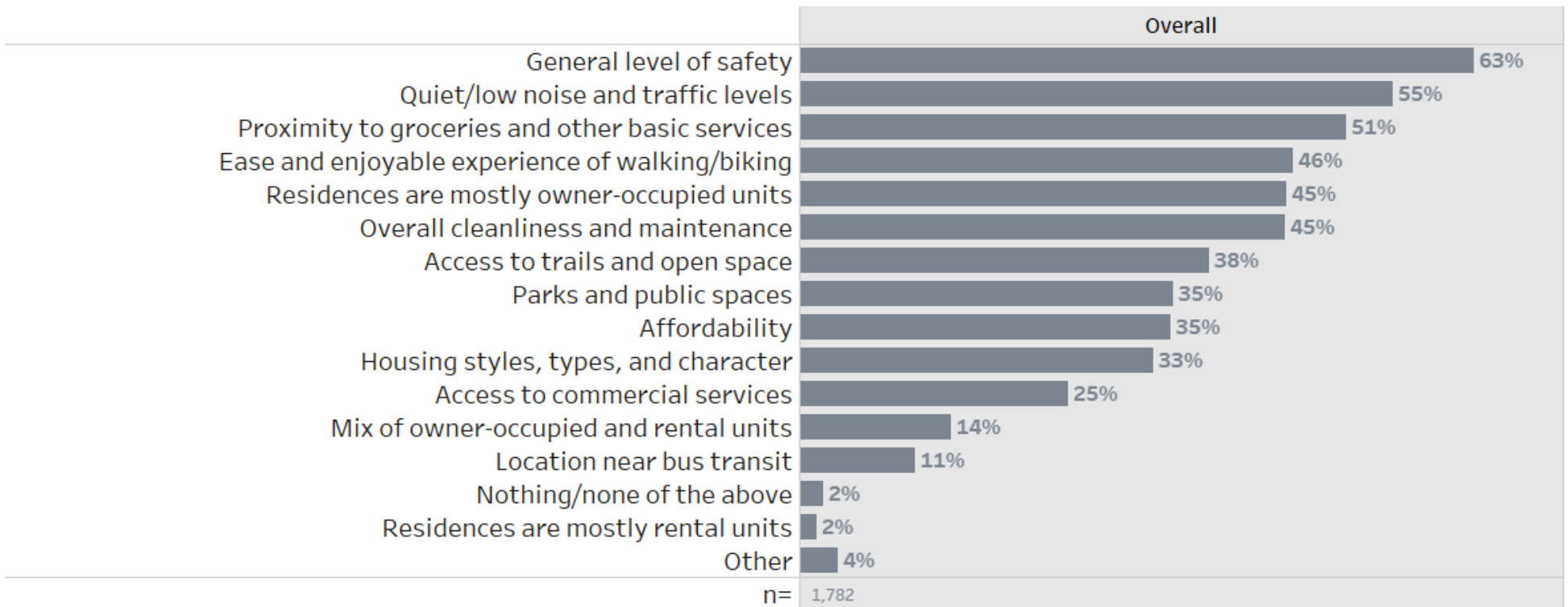


Your Neighborhood



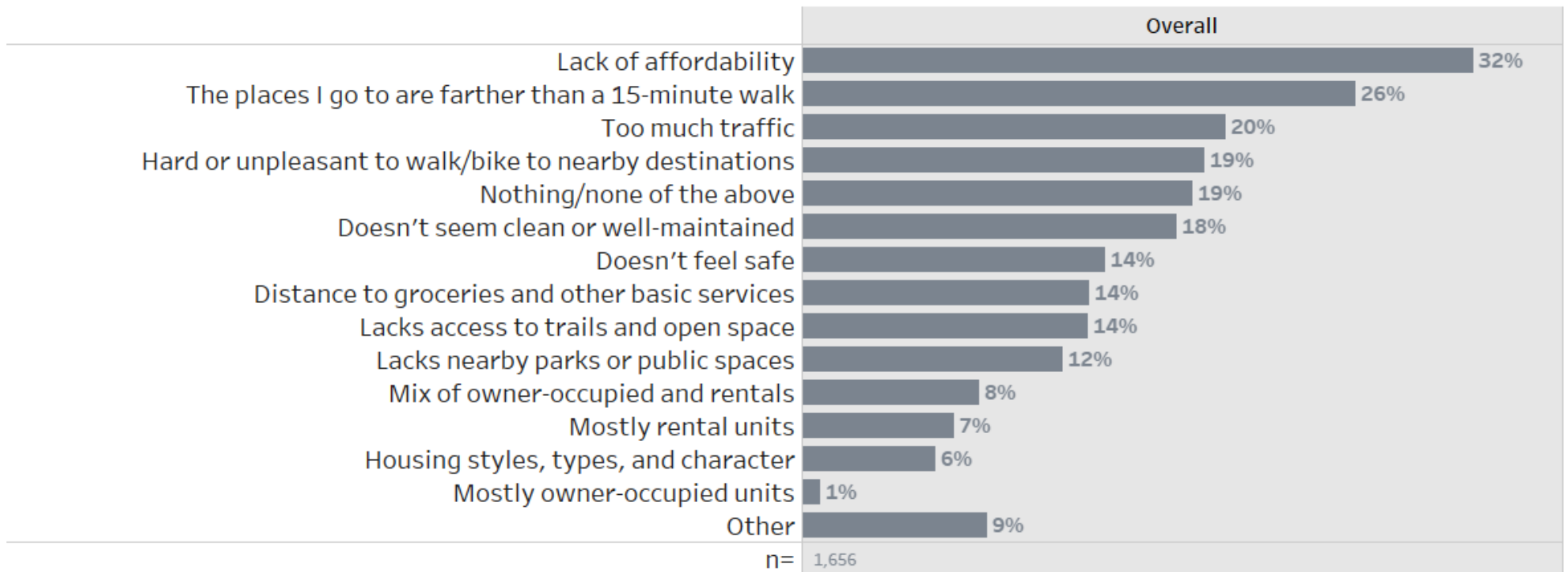
What do you like most about your neighborhood?

Q 14: What do you like MOST about your neighborhood that should be preserved/protected? (Check all that apply)



What do you like least about your neighborhood?

Q 15: What do you like LEAST about your neighborhood that you would most like to improve? (Check all that apply)

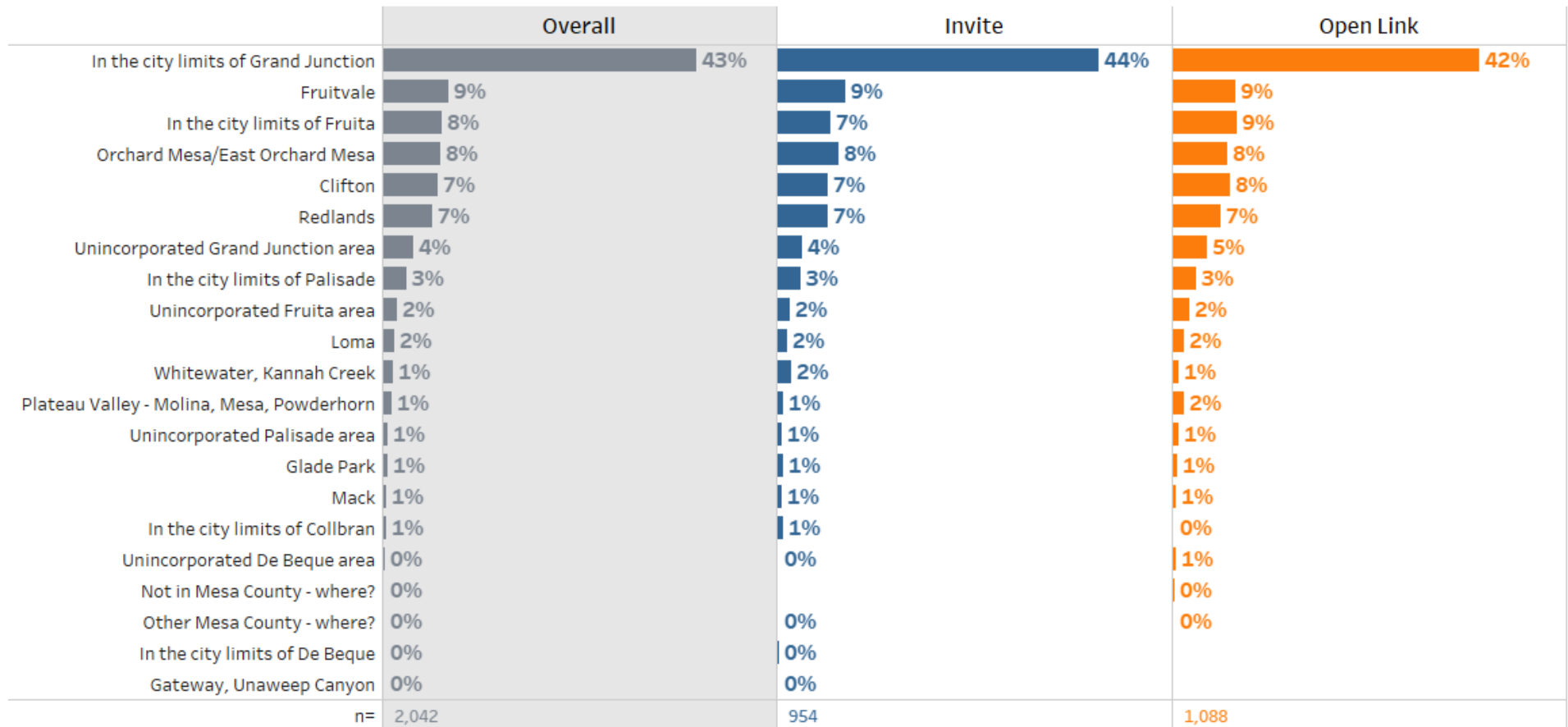


Respondent Demographics

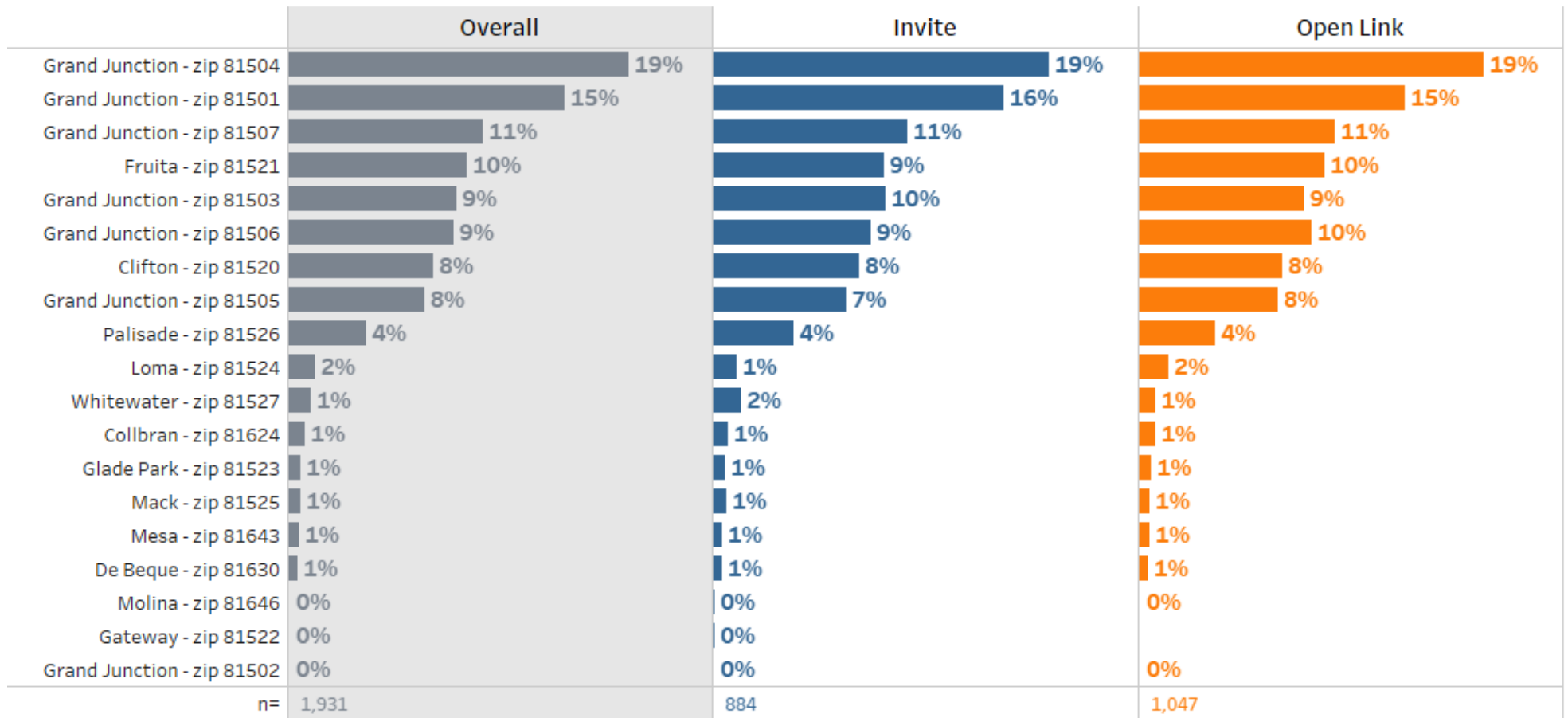


Place of Residence

Q 1: Where is your residence located?

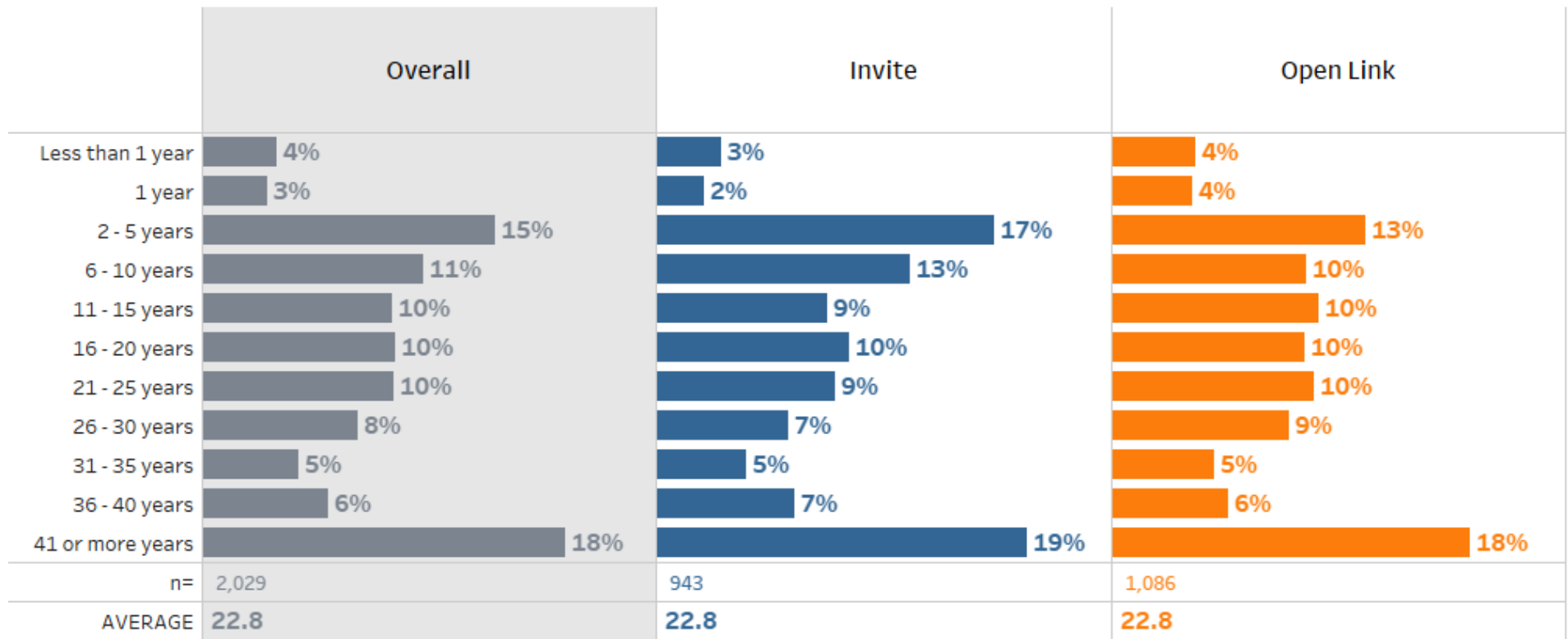


Home Zip Code

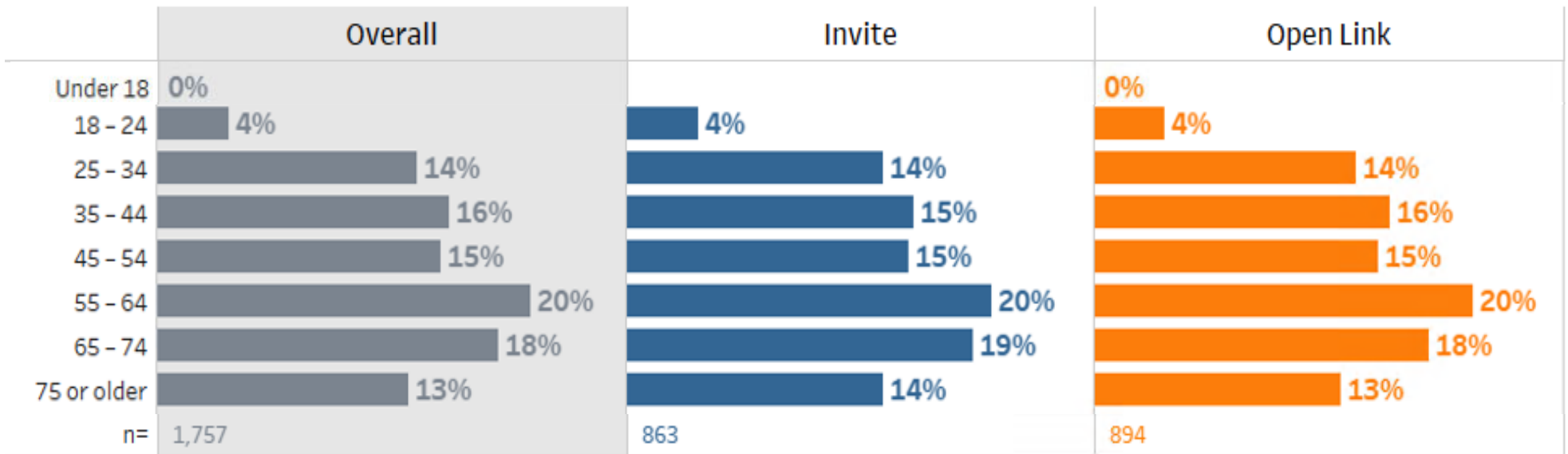


Length of Residency in Mesa County

Q 3: How many years have you lived in Mesa County?



Age of Respondent



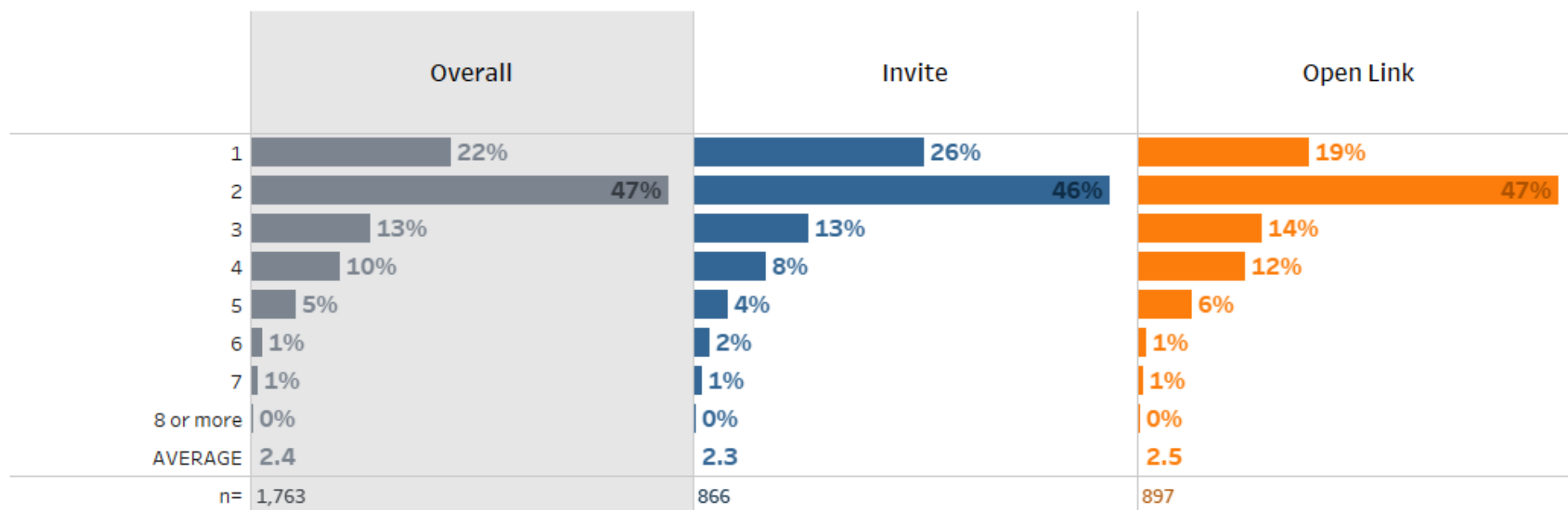
Race & Ethnicity

Q 18: How would you describe your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)

	Overall	Invite	Open Link
White	90%	90%	90%
Hispanic or Latino	7%	7%	6%
Black or African American	1%	0%	2%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	2%	2%	1%
Native American	2%	2%	3%
Other	4%	3%	6%
n=	1,722	843	879

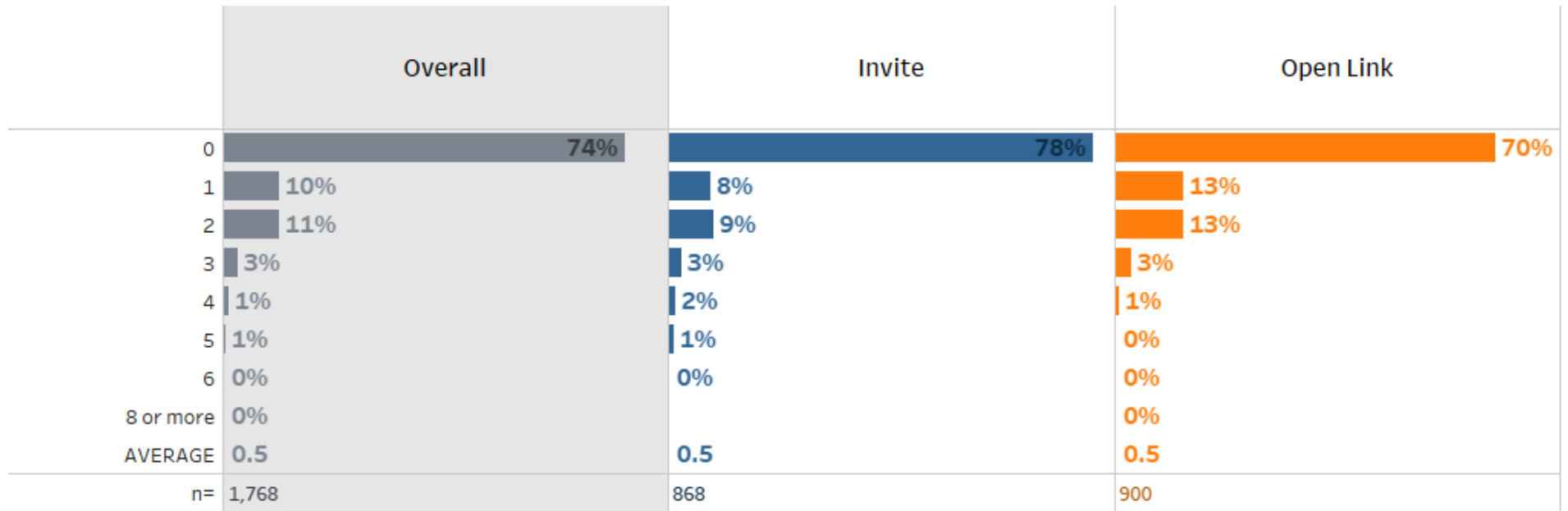
Household Size

Q 20: How many people currently live in your home, including yourself?



Children in Household

Q 21: How many of these household members are aged 17 or under?



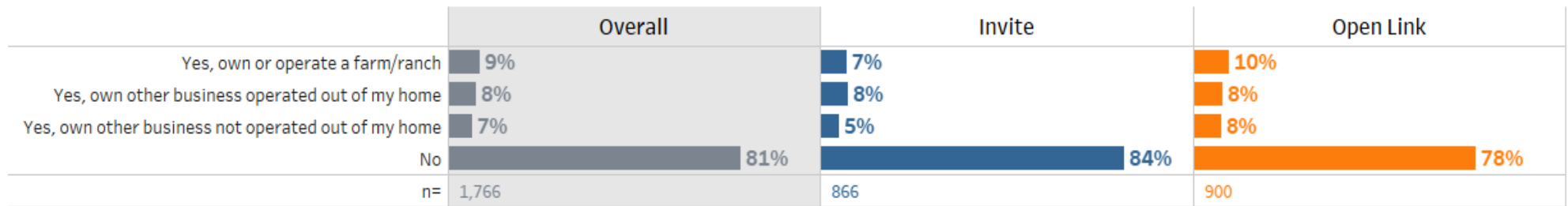
Housing Tenure

Q 17: Do you/others in your household own or rent your residence?

	Overall	Invite	Open Link
Own	70%	70%	70%
Rent	30%	30%	30%
Other (please specify):	0%	0%	0%
n=	1,786	879	907

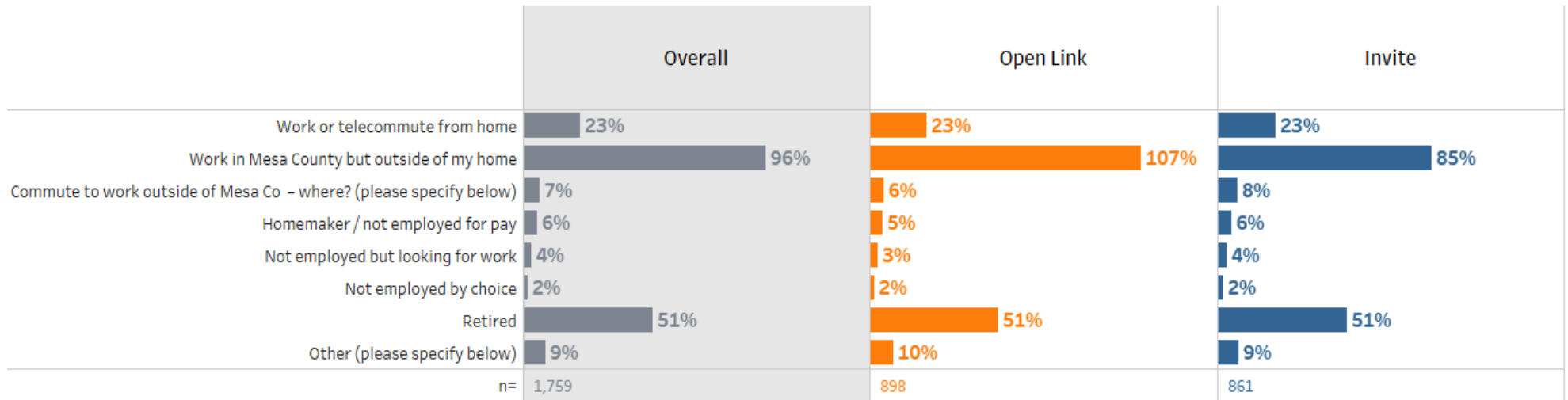
Farm/Ranch and Business Ownership/Operation

Q 19: Do you or another member of your household own or operate a farm/ranch or other business in Mesa County? (Check all that apply)



Work Status of Adults

Q 22: Which category best describes the work status of you and other adults in your household?

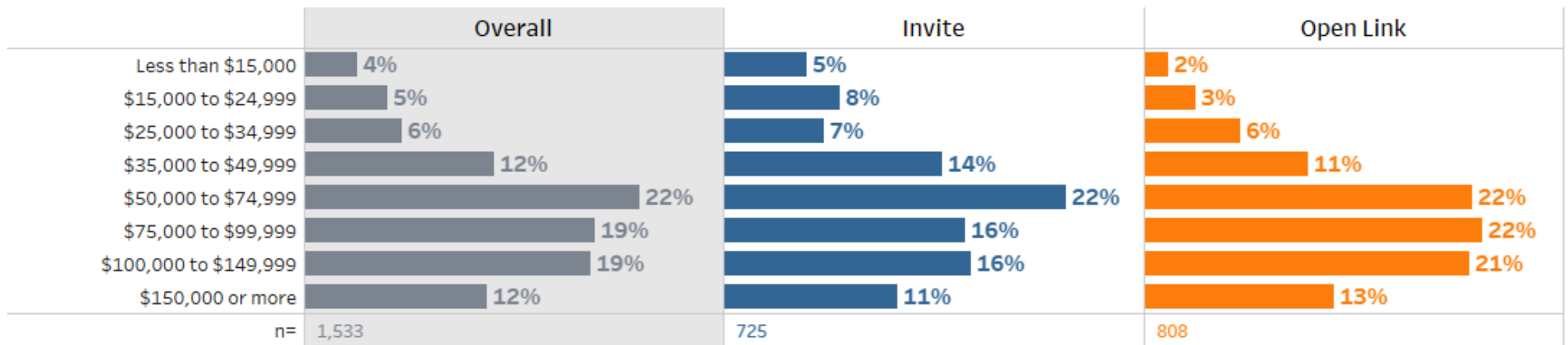


Interpretation:

- On average, 0.23 adults in household work or telecommute from home
- On average, 0.96 adults in household work in Mesa County but outside of my home.
- (etc.)

Household Income

Q 26: Which category best describes the total annual income of your household (before taxes)?



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Addendum: Survey Data Weighting

Survey Data Weighting by Place of Residence

Zip code (Mesa Co. residents)	POPULATION NORM		UNWEIGHTED DATA		WEIGHTED DATA	
	Mesa Co. households	(Source: 2016-20 ACS)	Invite ¹	Open Link	Invite	Open Link
81501 - Grand Junction	16.3%		8.6%	9.5%	16.0%	14.7%
81502 - Grand Junction	n/a		0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
81503 - Grand Junction	9.8%		10.2%	7.0%	9.5%	9.2%
81504 - Grand Junction	19.2%		13.2%	13.4%	18.5%	19.1%
81505 - Grand Junction	7.4%		5.5%	8.4%	7.4%	7.7%
81506 - Grand Junction	8.7%		5.5%	11.0%	8.7%	9.6%
81507 - Grand Junction	10.5%		13.2%	17.7%	10.7%	10.9%
81520 - Clifton	8.4%		4.2%	4.9%	8.1%	8.0%
81521 - Fruita	9.5%		9.8%	14.0%	9.5%	10.3%
81522 - Gateway	0.1%		0.8%	--	0.2%	--
81523 - Glade Park	0.8%		3.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%
81524 - Loma	1.4%		3.5%	2.5%	1.4%	1.7%
81525 - Mack	0.7%		3.2%	0.2%	0.8%	0.6%
81526 - Palisade	4.1%		6.7%	7.1%	4.5%	4.2%
81527 - Whitewater	1.1%		4.2%	0.9%	1.6%	1.0%
81624 - Collbran	0.8%		2.8%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%
81630 - De Beque	0.6%		1.7%	0.1%	0.6%	0.5%
81643 - Mesa	0.4%		2.0%	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%
81646 - Molina	0.1%		0.9%	0.4%	0.1%	0.1%
TOTAL	100.0%		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n =	59,798		884	1,047	884	1,047

¹Note: The invite survey deliberately oversampled many of the smaller communities in Mesa County, in order to achieve usable response volumes for those areas. This helps explain the robust response volumes from many less-populated zip codes in the unweighted invite data.

Survey Data Weighting by Age

In which category is your age?	POPULATION NORM		UNWEIGHTED DATA		WEIGHTED DATA	
	Mesa Co.: Age of householder (Source: 2016-20 ACS)		Invite	Open Link	Invite	Open Link
	24 and under	4.0%	1.2%	1.0%	3.9%	3.9%
25 – 34	14.1%	6.3%	9.2%	13.8%	14.0%	
35 – 44	15.8%	11.9%	20.8%	15.4%	15.8%	
45 – 54	15.2%	10.8%	18.2%	15.1%	15.2%	
55 – 64	20.1%	25.4%	21.1%	19.6%	20.2%	
65 – 74	17.6%	30.5%	24.0%	18.5%	17.9%	
75 or older	13.2%	14.0%	5.6%	13.7%	13.2%	
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
n =	59,750	863	894	863	894	

Survey Data Weighting by Housing Tenure

Do you/others in your household own or rent your residence?	POPULATION NORM	UNWEIGHTED DATA		WEIGHTED DATA	
	Mesa Co.: Housing tenure (Source: 2016-20 ACS)	Invite	Open Link	Invite	Open Link
Own	69.1%	92.0%	90.4%	69.8%	69.6%
Rent	30.9%	7.5%	9.4%	29.8%	30.2%
Other (please specify):	n/a	0.5%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
n =	59,750	879	907	879	907