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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 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



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.

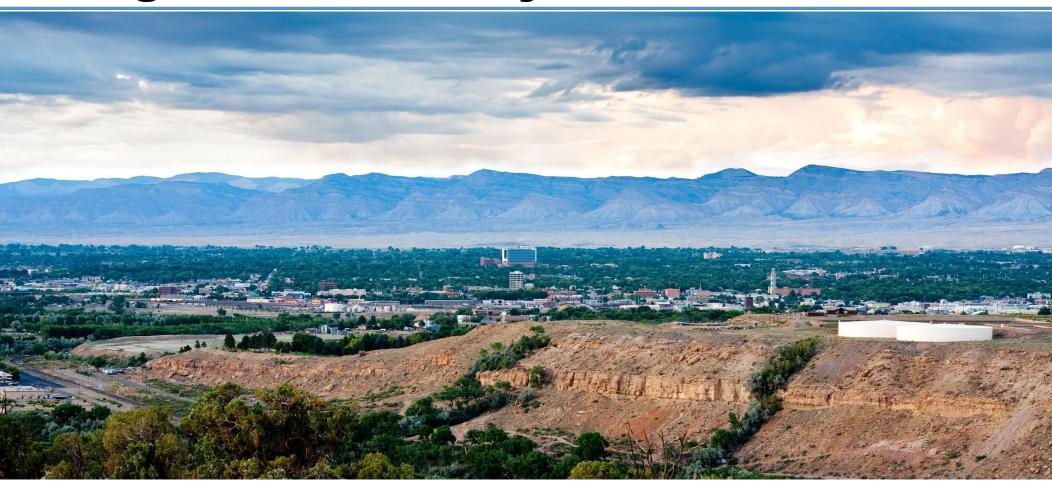


Key Findings (cont'd)

- 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.



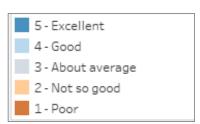
Living in Mesa County



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 <u>less positive</u> quality of life ratings are more likely to cite:

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

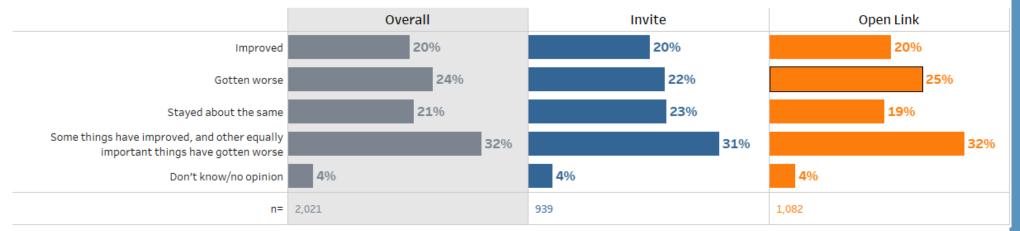


1,749 Total Comments Received / Word Cloud shows words used 6 or more times / Size of word is proportionate to its frequency of use



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?



Thinking back over the past 5-10 years, has Mesa County improved, gotten worse, or stayed about the same as a place to live? What factors most influence your response? (Comments)

Selected Themes:

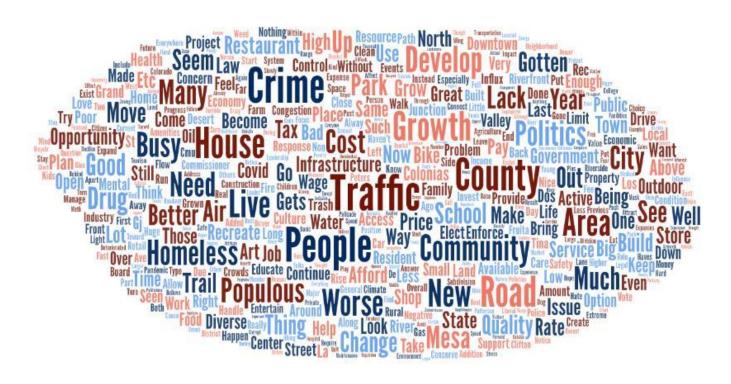
- Traffic/congestion is getting worse
- Perception of increases in crime
- Mixed feelings on growth

People who think Mesa County has <u>improved</u> are more likely to cite:

 New / better / more: amenities, stores, restaurants, things to do, parklands, trails, recreation, road improvements, etc.

People who think Mesa County has gotten worse are more likely to cite:

 Crime, traffic, too much growth, cost of housing, too many people, homelessness, drugs, roads, politics, taxes, etc.



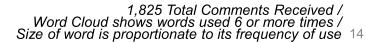


What do you believe are the one or two most important issue(s) currently facing Mesa County? – Comments

Selected Themes:

- Affordable housing
- Growth: planning for growth, adequate infrastructure, management of growth, too much growth, etc.
- Water / water conservation / drought mitigation
- Homelessness
- Crime
- Cost of living
- Traffic
- Condition of roads
- Drugs
- Schools
- Good-paying jobs
- Mental health
- Politics

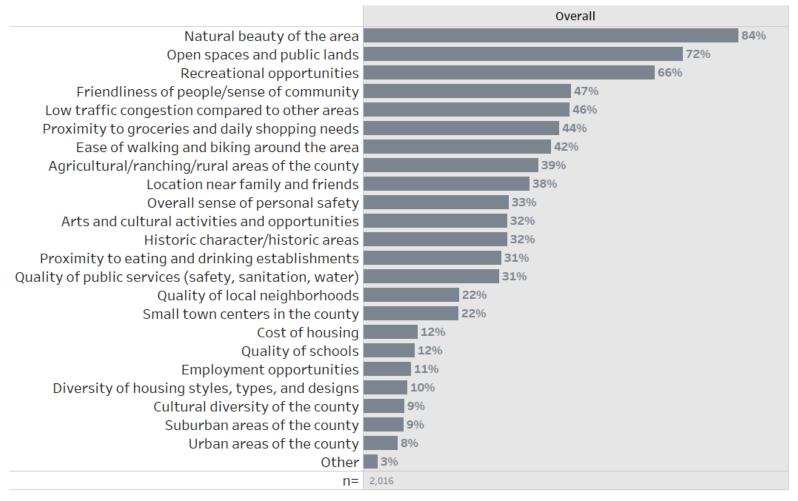






What do you like about living in Mesa County?

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



In a few words, what do you feel are Mesa County's greatest assets or strengths? – Comments

Selected Themes:

- Outdoor recreational opportunities
- Natural beauty
- The people friendly, good diverse, etc.
- Access to public lands, mountains, rivers
- Small town feel
- Favorable weather / climate
- Desirable location

 e.g. proximity to
 recreation/travel
 destinations,
 regional hub
- Agriculture
- Colorado Mesa University



1,665 Total Comments Received / Word Cloud shows words used 6 or more times / Size of word is proportionate to its frequency of use



In a few words, what do you like least about living in Mesa County? **Comments**

Selected Themes:

- Politics division, tone, disagreement with leaders or other residents, etc.
- Lack of affordable housing
- Traffic
- Crime
- Homelessness
- Cost of living
- Road maintenance and capacity
- Growth
- Quality of & support for schools
- Lack of diversity (cultural, social, housing, political, etc.)
- Tax rates / policies

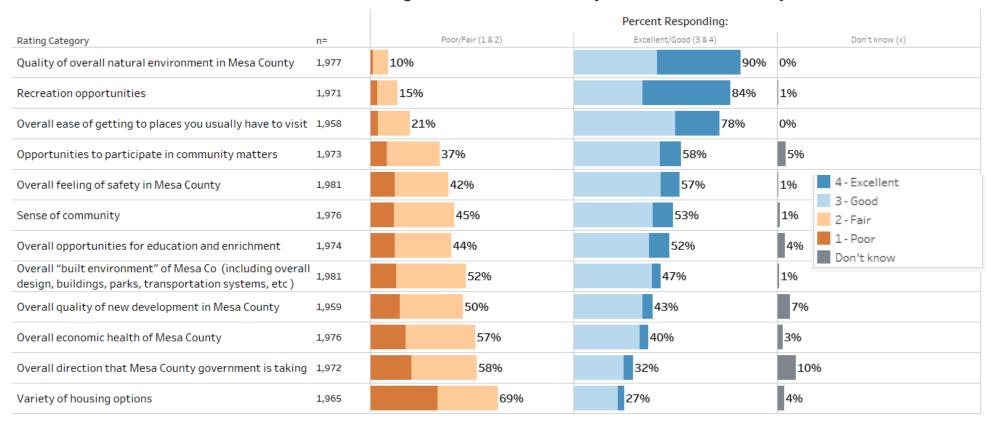


1.715 Total Comments Received / Word Cloud shows words used 6 or more times / Size of word is proportionate to its frequency of use 17



Ratings of Mesa County

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



Do you have any comments on your responses? (Regarding ratings of characteristics of Mesa County as a whole) – Comments

Selected Themes:

- More county/city collaboration and planning
- There are issues of urban sprawl, high housing costs, and a lack of low-income housing opportunities



Transportation



Transportation Priorities

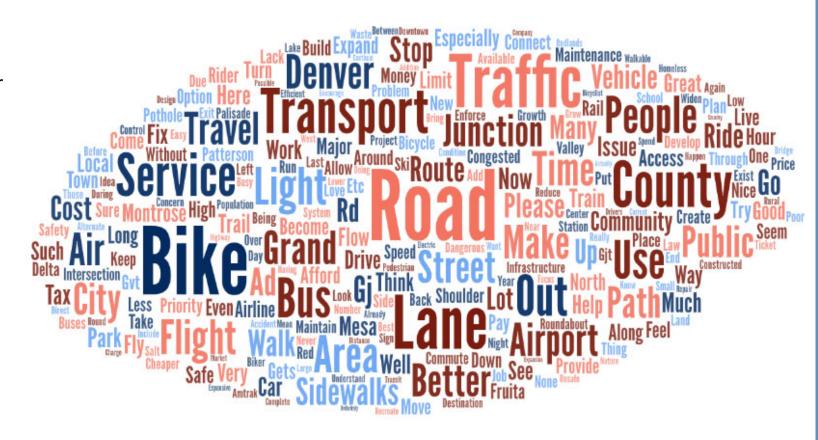
Q 8: Please rate the importance of the following potential actions to improve transportation in Mesa County in the future.



Any other comments / suggestions regarding transportation?

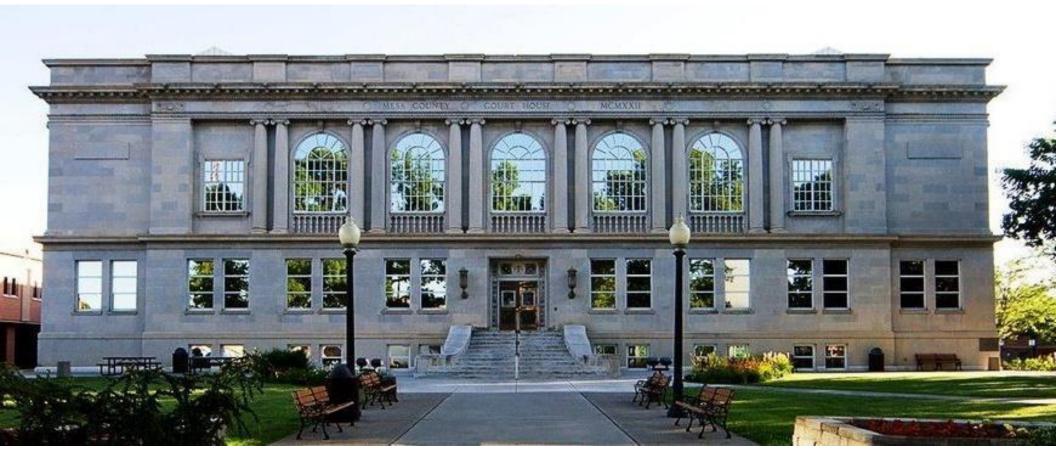
Selected Themes:

- General need for improved, repaired, and resurfaced roadways
- Development of more/safer bike lanes and sidewalks
- Improve local transit; provide covered seating for bus stops, increase frequency, and incentivize





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.

		Percent Responding:			
Rating Category	n=	Disagree (1 & 2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4 & 5)	Don't know (x)
New development should minimize		ı			
impacts on natural areas, scenic vistas,	1,828	5%	7%	87%	2%
and other rural features Agricultural practices should be					
_	1,826	5%	8%	84%	3%
near agricultural lands	1,020	340	870	84%	370
Developers shall provide adequate levels					
of services and facilities concurrent with	1,818	5%	9%	82%	5%
new development		l			
New development should be focused on					
land least suitable for productive	1,820	7%	12%	77%	4%
agriculture		_			5 - Strongly agree
Clustering of dwellings should be					4 - Somewhat agree
	1,818	13%	15%	68%	4% 3 - Neutral
and agricultural land		_			2 - Somewhat disagree
Future urban growth should be focused		1001		6004	1 - Strongly disagree
within existing communities where sewer is available	1,812	13%	18%	63%	6% Don't know
The Cooperative Planning Areas (Buffers)					
between Grand Junction, Fruita and	1,810	10%	19%	59%	12%
Palisade should be maintained					
Rural areas should remain rural, with lot sizes for houses of 5 acres or greater	1,814	16%	20%	58%	6%

Do you have any comments concerning where and how new growth should occur in Mesa County? - Comments

Selected Themes:

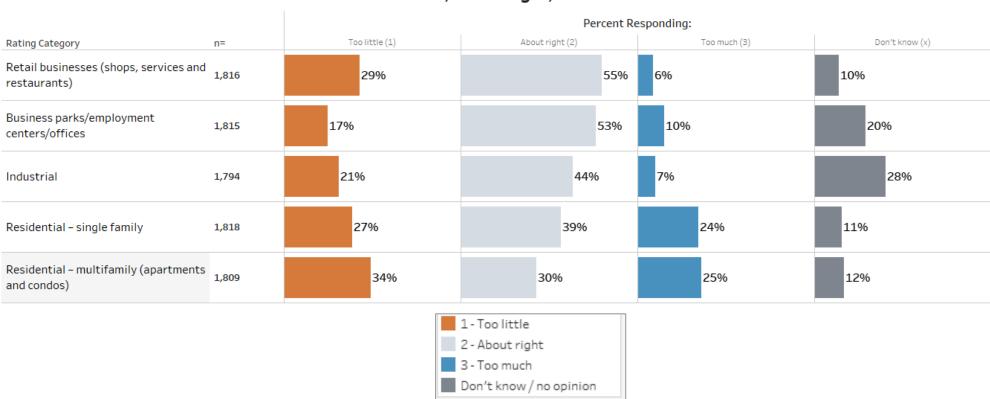
- Need for more affordable housing
- Mixed opinions on 5acre minimum lot sizes; with most agreeing that restrictions should have reasonable exceptions
- Mixed opinions on growth; for most future growth should be carefully planned with resources (water, housing, etc.) in mind. Others only want slow growth or no growth





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?



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? Any comments on your responses?

Selected Themes:

- Focus development within already developed areas; avoid urban sprawl and expanding into agricultural areas
- Single family housing is unaffordable, with new developments coming on to the market and already unattainable for many

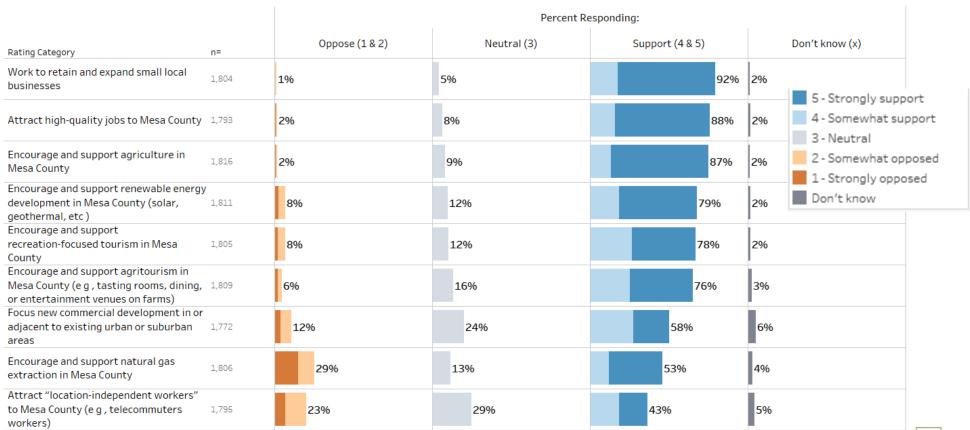


560 Total Comments Received / Word Cloud shows words used 6 or more times / Size of word is proportionate to its frequency of use



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?



What other types of economic development activities, if any, would you like to see pursued in Mesa County? - Comments

Selected Themes:

- Overall desire to further develop the Mesa County energy industry; mixed thoughts on whether this is through renewable energies or bringing back oil/gas extraction
- Support small/local businesses, agritourism, and outdoor industries



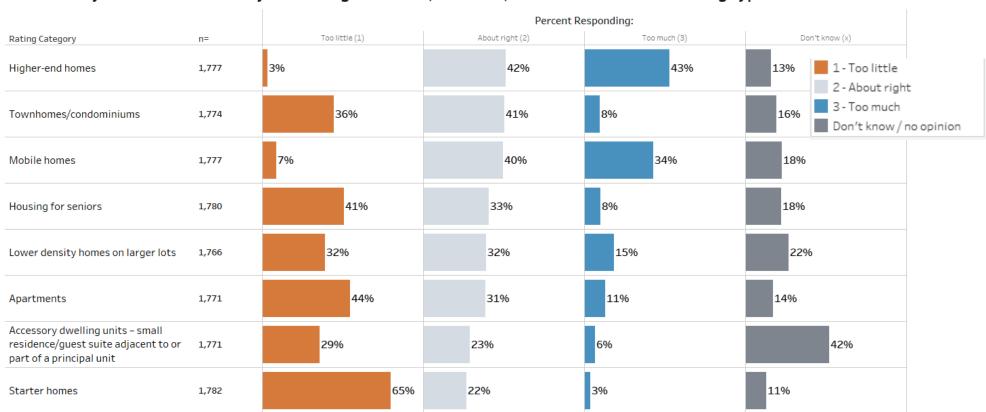


Housing



Housing Needs

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



Any comments/suggestions regarding housing?

Selected Themes:

- Increase affordable housing, rentals, and starter homes
- Ease restrictions on ADU and multifamily home development



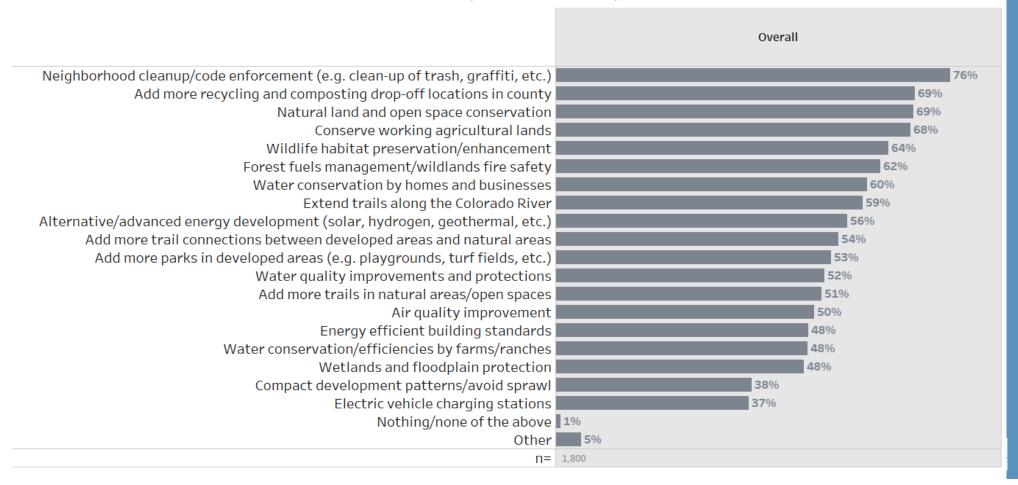


Environment, Natural Resources, and Parks & Recreation



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)

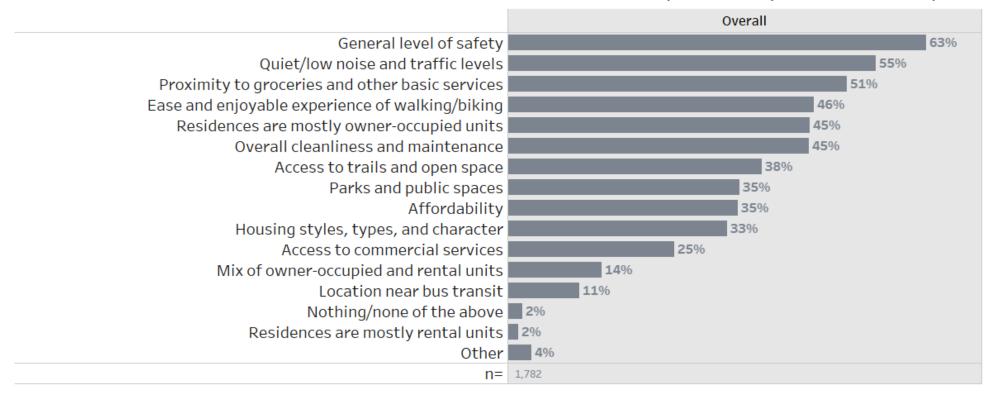


Your Neighborhood



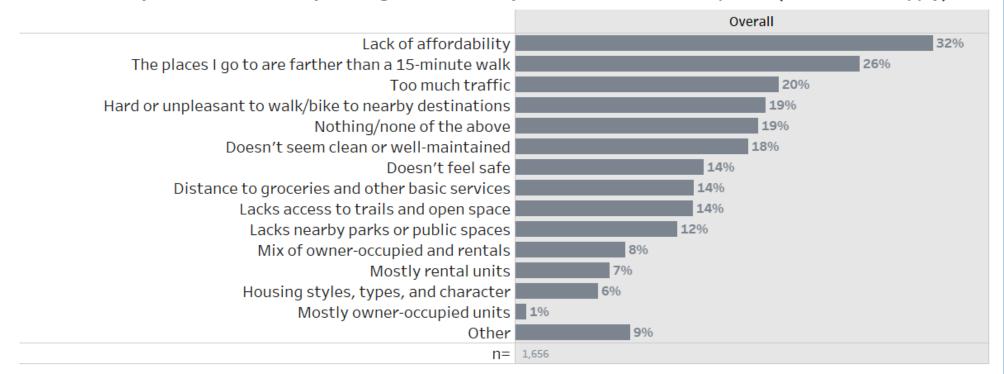
What do you like most about your neighborhood?

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)

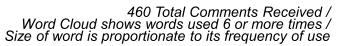


Do you have any specific comments on your neighborhood, either opportunities or problems to be addressed in the future? – Comments

Selected Themes:

- Increase code enforcement; home appearance, car parking, camping in parks, etc.
- Need for more/better local grocery stores and shops
- Improve overall walkability; repair and build more sidewalk areas







Do you have any final comments or suggestions regarding the Master Plan? – Comments

Selected Themes:

- Bring more attention to impoverished and homeless in the area
- Balance development/growth with conservation
- Consider water use and conservation
- Appreciation for the opportunity to express feedback



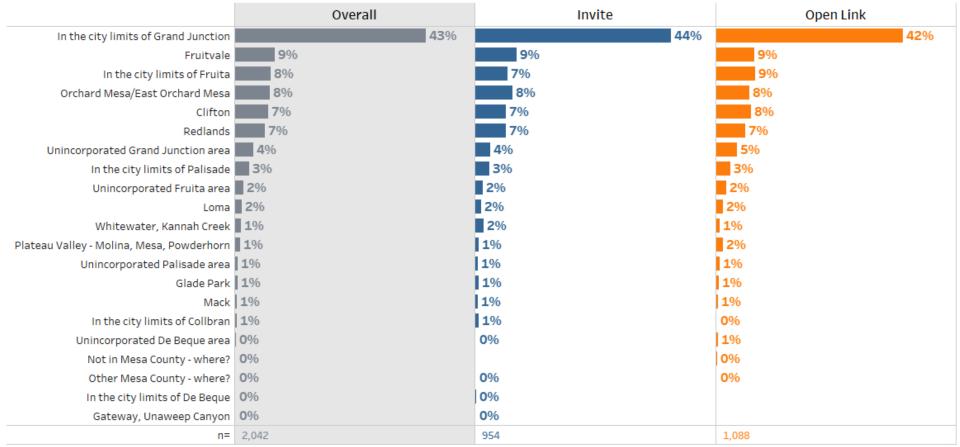


Respondent Demographics

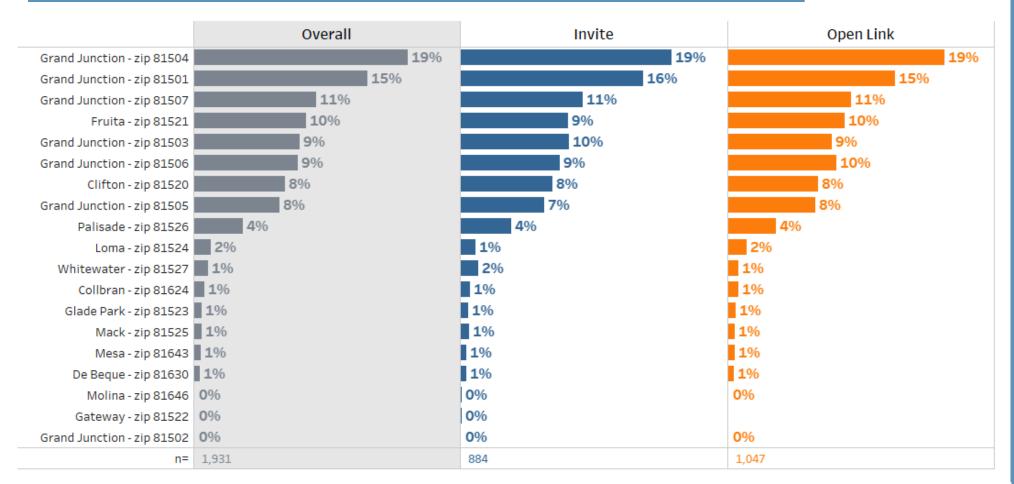


Place of Residence

Q 1: Where is your residence located?

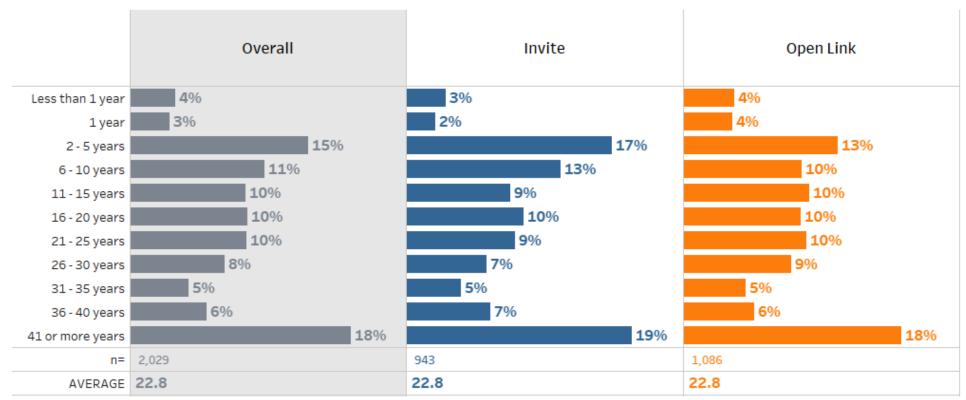


Home Zip Code

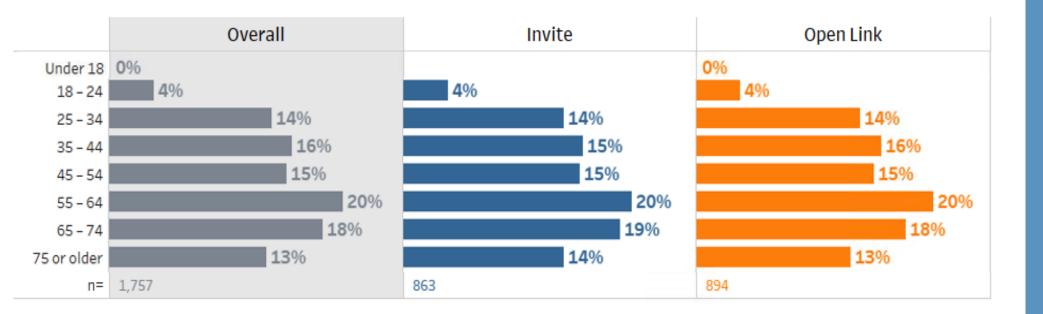


Length of Residency in Mesa County

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

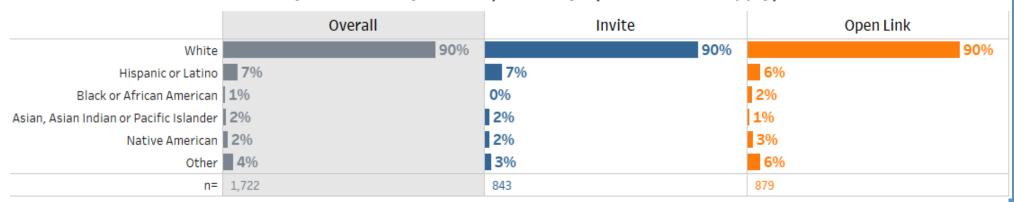


Age of Respondent



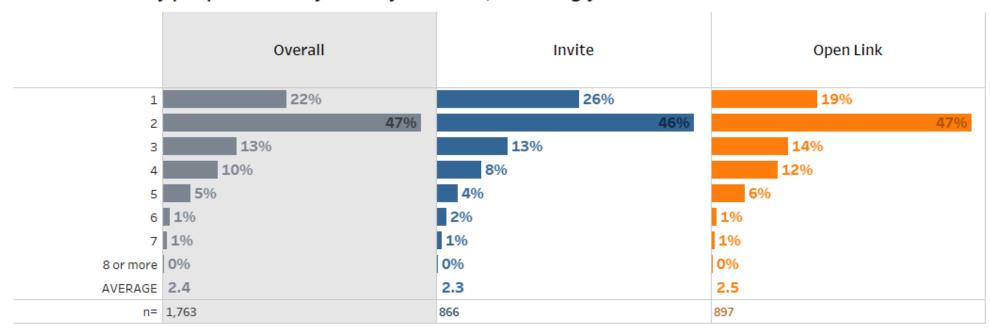
Race & Ethnicity

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



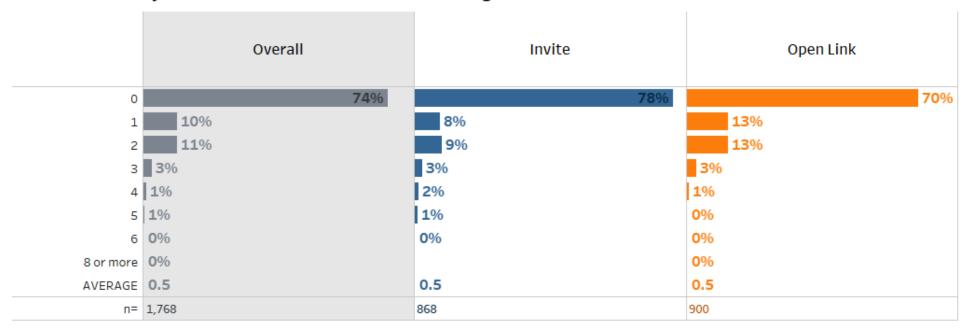
Household Size

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



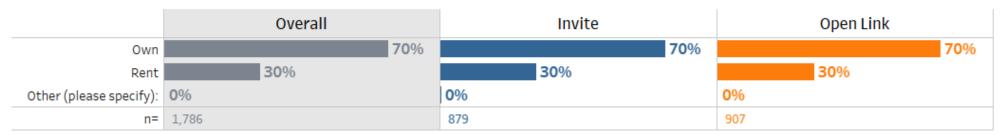
Children in Household

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



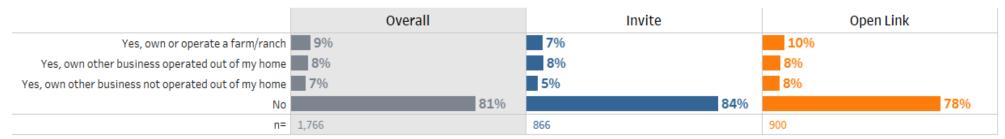
Housing Tenure

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



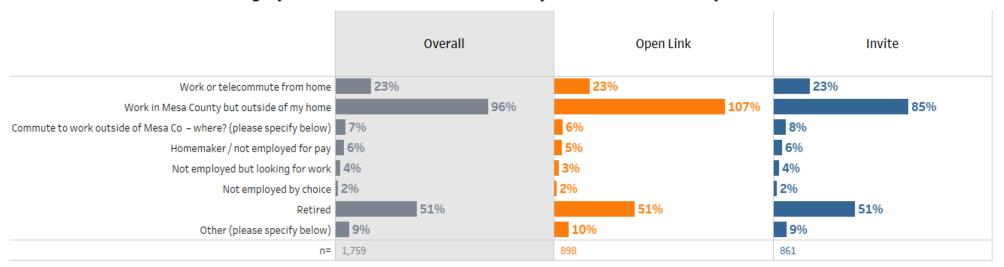
Farm/Ranch and Business Ownership/Operation

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?

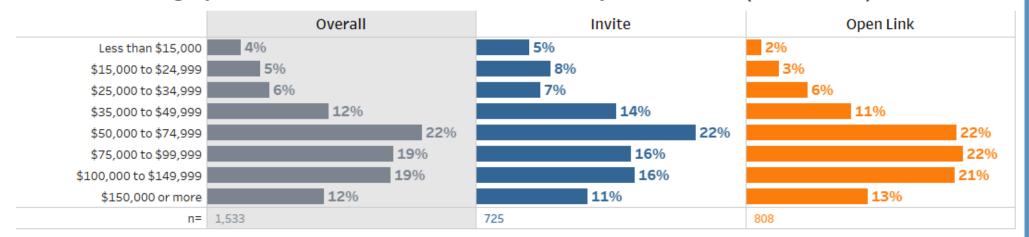


Interpretation:

- 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)?









Addendum: Survey Data Weighting

Survey Data Weighting by Place of Residence

	POPULATION NORM				
	Mesa Co. households	UNWEIGHTED DATA		WEIGHTED DATA	
Zip code (Mesa Co. residents)	(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

	POPULATION NORM				
	Mesa Co.: Age of householder	UNWEIGHTED DATA		WEIGHTED DATA	
In which category is your age?	(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

	POPULATION NORM	UNWEIGHTED DATA		ATA WEIGHTED DA	
Do you/others in your household	Mesa Co.: Housing tenure				
own or rent your residence?	(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