

## Asheville Comprehensive Plan Survey Summary

A public input survey was deployed to collect feedback on the priorities of citizens to incorporate into the Asheville Comprehensive Plan. A total of 626 responses were received from a wide variety of age groups. The majority of respondents have lived in Asheville for 6 years or more and a majority also work in the city of Asheville. Culture and environment are the two most popular reasons among respondents for living in Asheville. The majority of respondents have access to a range of food options, have convenient access to quality recreation facilities, are satisfied with their connection to the natural environment within their neighborhood, and believe Asheville is a healthy place to live.

The following key objectives, concerns and opportunities for improvement were identified.

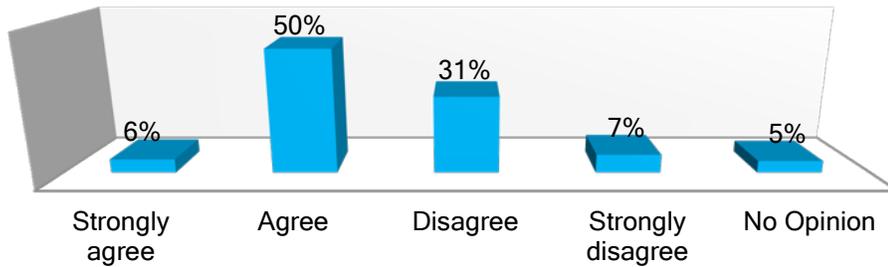
- **Prioritizing livability** – The vast majority of respondents believe downtown Asheville is a successful tourist destination, however, a much smaller percentage of respondents believe downtown successfully and appropriately serves Asheville residents. The majority of respondents do not think downtown is easily accessible and provides an appropriate amount of parking. Open-ended responses include many concerns that the city prioritizes tourism over livability, and express concerns about excessive hotels being constructed and excessive traffic congestion.
- **Affordability of living in Asheville** - The majority of respondents are not as satisfied with homelessness downtown, affordability of housing, and the availability of housing options. Many open-ended responses focused on concerns around housing costs, low wages, homelessness, cost of commercial space for small businesses, access to mental health services, and high taxes.
- **Appropriate Development** - The majority of respondents do not think Asheville accommodates the right amount of new development and do not believe Asheville supports development that reflects the city's character. Open-ended responses often emphasized maintaining Asheville's unique culture by prioritizing small, local business over bigger businesses and chains as well as supporting the arts.
- **Economic Vibrancy** - A large majority of respondents do not think Asheville has an appropriate mix and quality of jobs. Responses indicate residents value diversifying the local economy, supporting local entrepreneurship - especially small business and home businesses, and advancing economic opportunities for all residents.
- **Natural Environment** – Most respondents highly value protecting against environmental hazards, protecting green spaces, protecting forests and rivers, promoting green and sustainable energy sources, promoting development that occurs in a pattern that is sensitive to air and water quality concerns, and preserving or enhancing access to parks and natural environments.
- **Equity and Diversity** - A large majority of respondents do not believe the city values each of the city's neighborhoods equally. Open-ended responses included concerns about the resources and inclusion of minority communities as well as an overall lack of racial diversity in Asheville. Several open-ended comments focused on a need to promote minority business ownership and opportunities.
- **Public Transit** – The majority of respondents are not satisfied with public transit and do not think there are adequate transportation options to cities and communities outside of Asheville.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycling Infrastructure** – The majority of respondents are dissatisfied with the city's pedestrian infrastructure and over half of respondents are also dissatisfied with bicycling infrastructure. Many open-ended responses expressed a desire for more comprehensive infrastructure for both walking and biking within the city and connecting to surrounding areas

The following summary provides a more detailed analysis of each section of the survey, briefly highlights key results of that section in blue, and provides graphs to break down the responses received within that category.

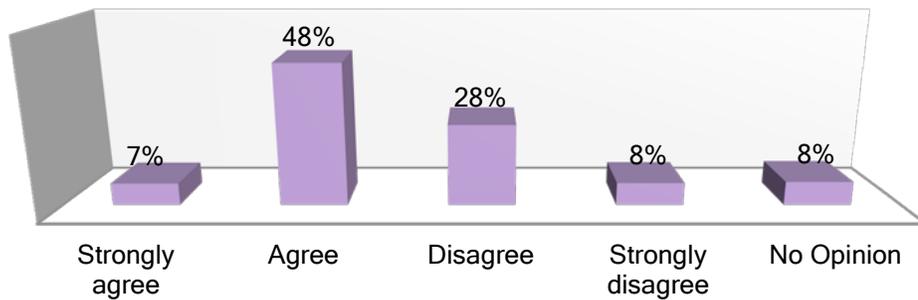
**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

*Over half of respondents (56%) believe Asheville supports an appropriate mix of land uses across the city and almost as many think Asheville supports an appropriate mix of land uses within their neighborhood. However, the majority of respondents do not think Asheville accommodates the right amount of new development and do not believe Asheville supports development that reflects the city's character.*

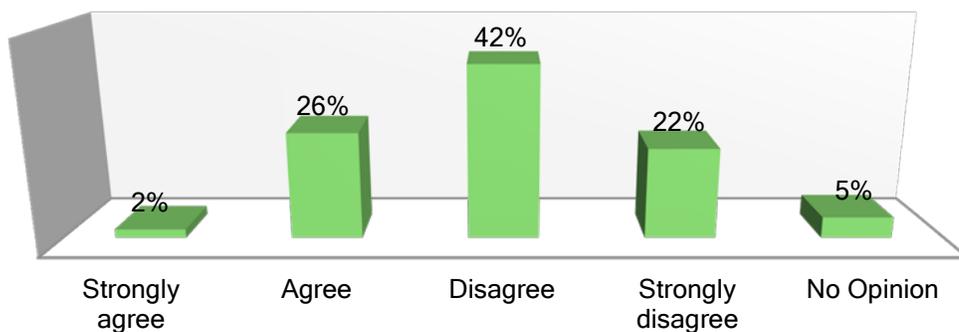
Asheville supports an appropriate mix of land uses across the city. A land use is a particular type of utilization or occupation of land for human activity (i.e. housing, commercial, retail, industrial, parks, open space, etc.)



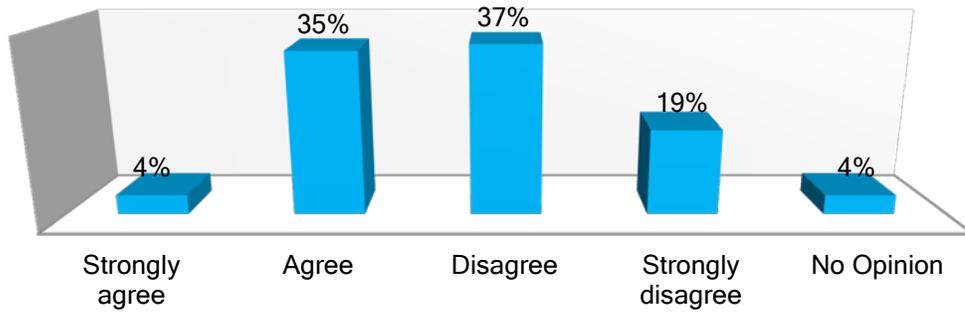
Asheville supports an appropriate mix of land uses within my neighborhood.



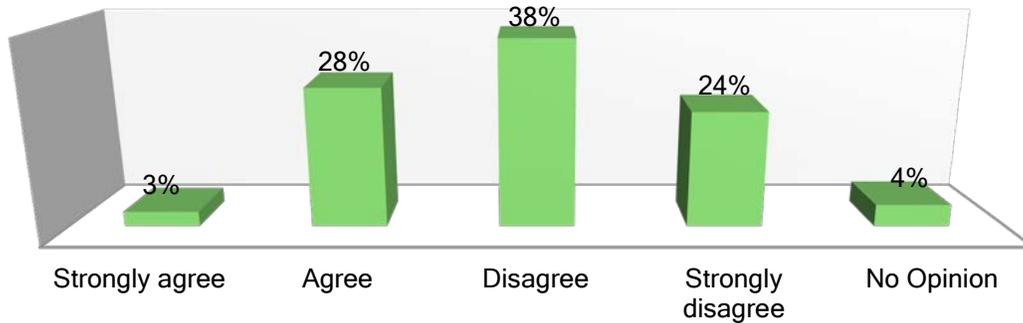
Asheville accommodates the right amount of new development.



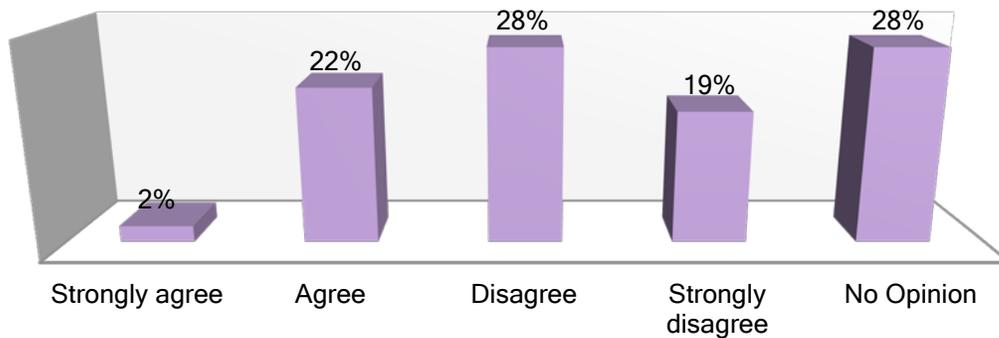
Asheville appropriately protects open space and natural systems across the city.



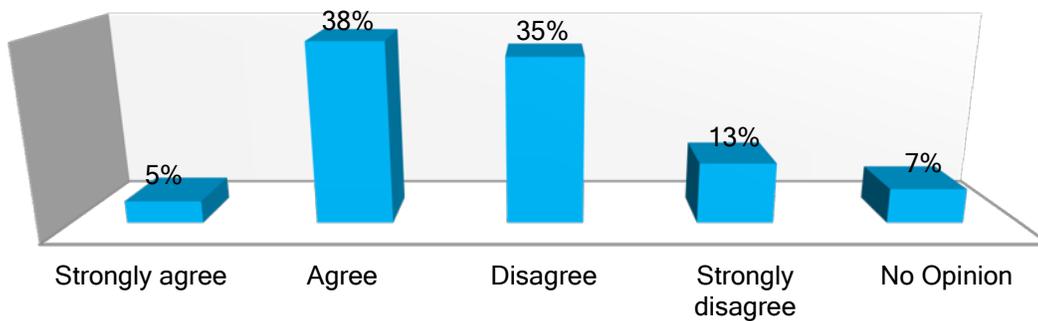
Asheville supports development that reflects the city's character.



Asheville's development, permitting, and inspection processes are appropriate and suitable to my needs.



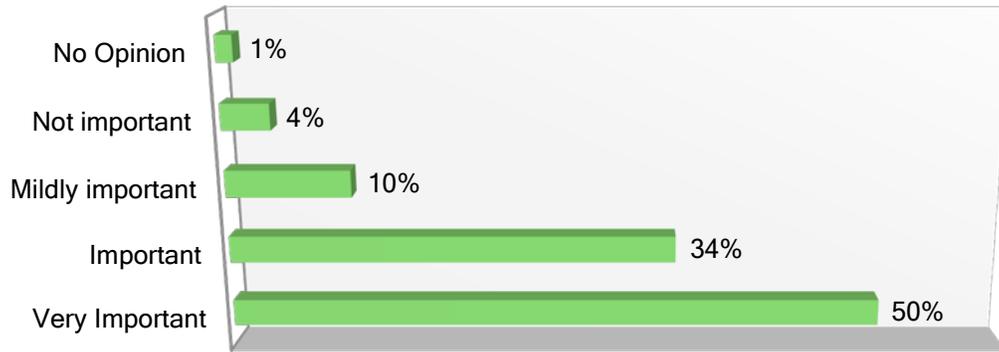
The current physical density of the Asheville is appropriate.



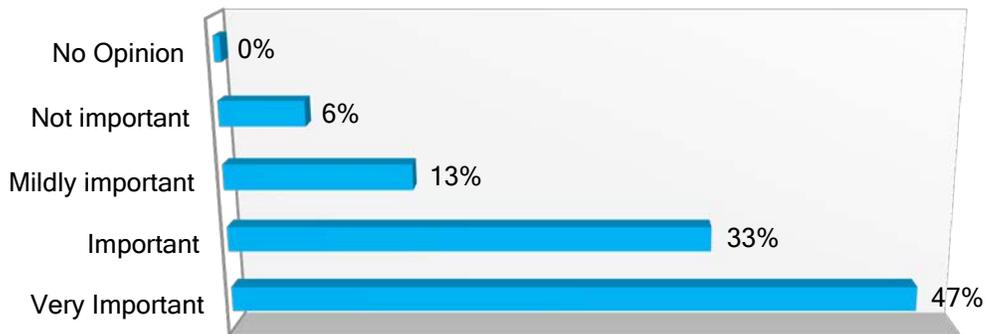
**Question: How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

*The objectives most frequently rated as very important for respondents are protecting open space, preserving historic structures and sites, and promoting local character through the built environment.*

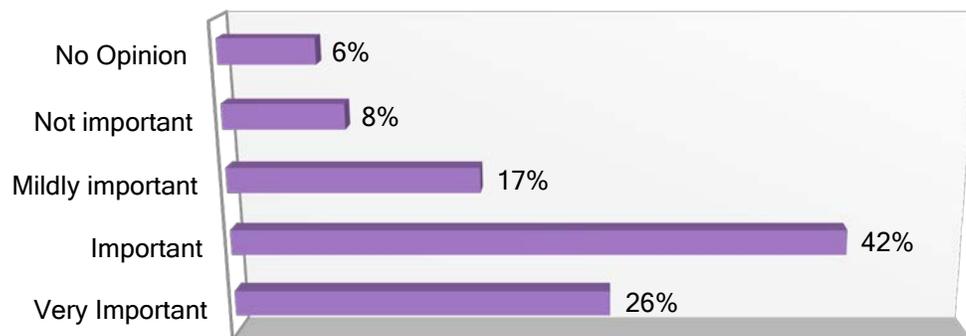
Expanding urban planning and urban design services to address topics like neighborhood planning.



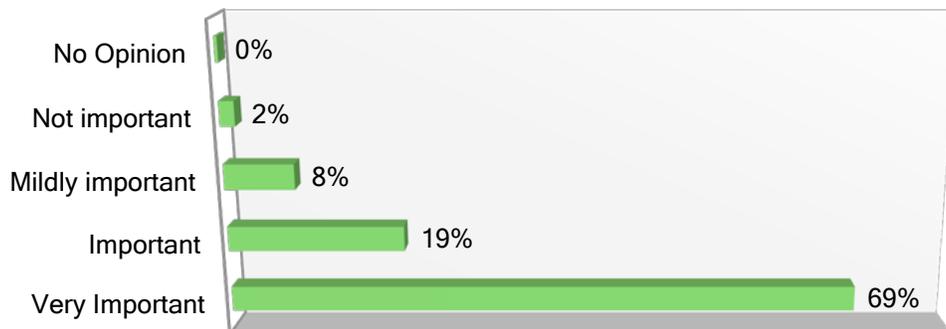
Increasing mixed-use development. Mixed-use development is development in which multiple uses (ie., residential and retail) are co-located in specific areas so as to promote walkable access between them.



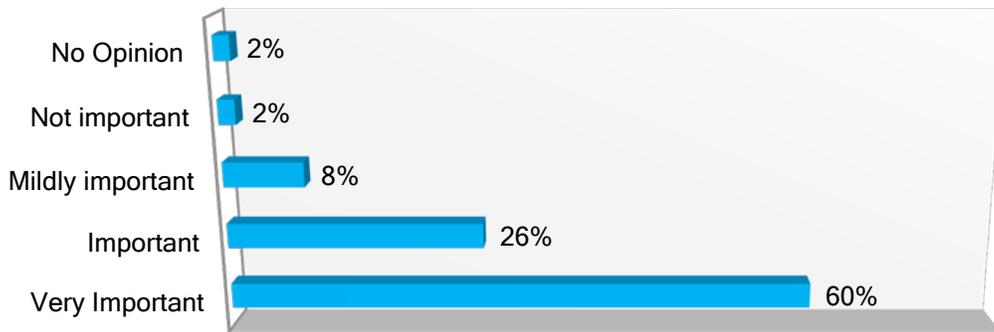
Promoting a wider range of land uses throughout the city.



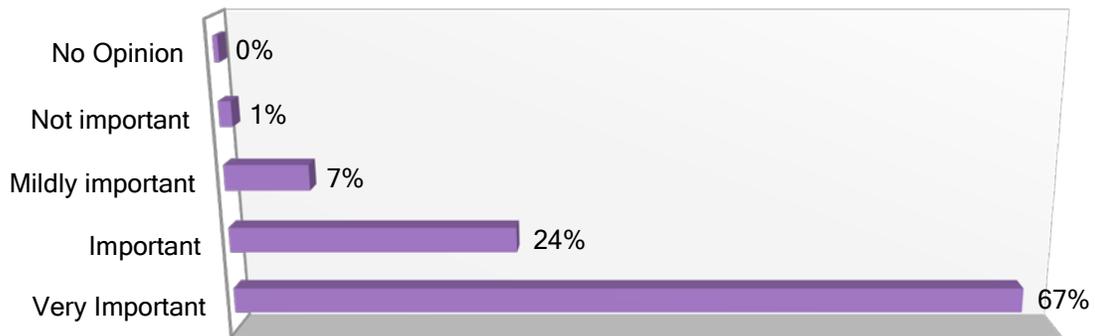
Protecting open space.



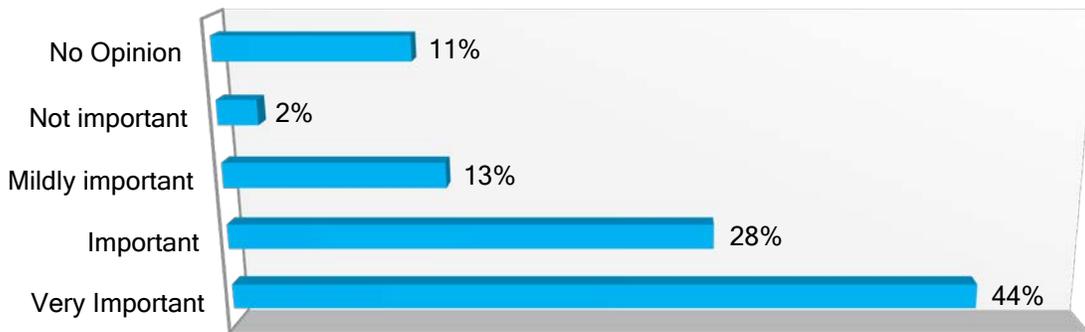
Promoting local character through the built environment.



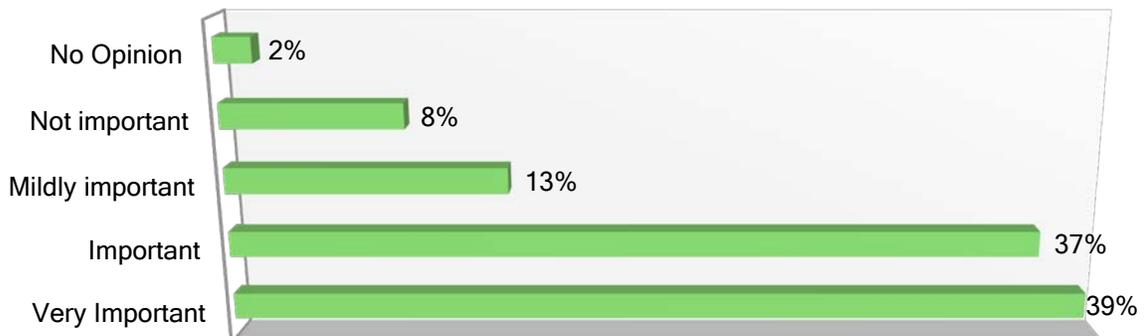
Preserving historic structures and sites.



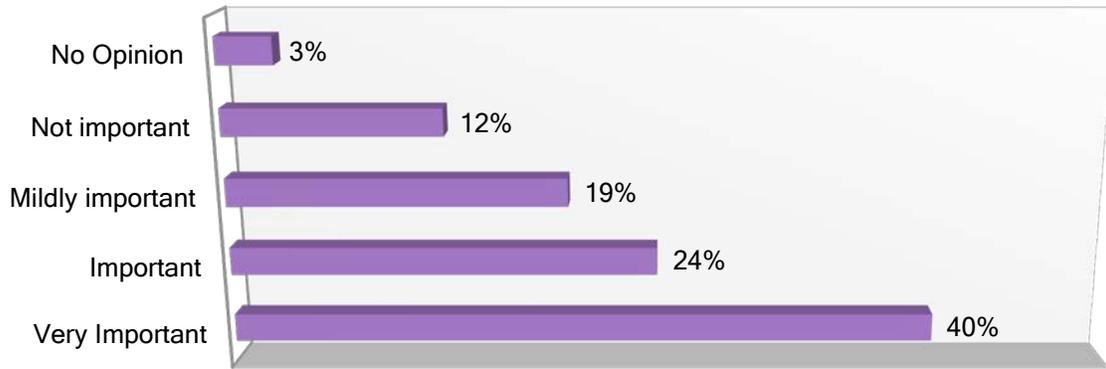
Improving the development, permitting, and inspection processes.



Accommodating added population growth within the city, particularly along commercial corridors, in compatible neighborhoods, and in urban villages.



Limiting new growth and development.

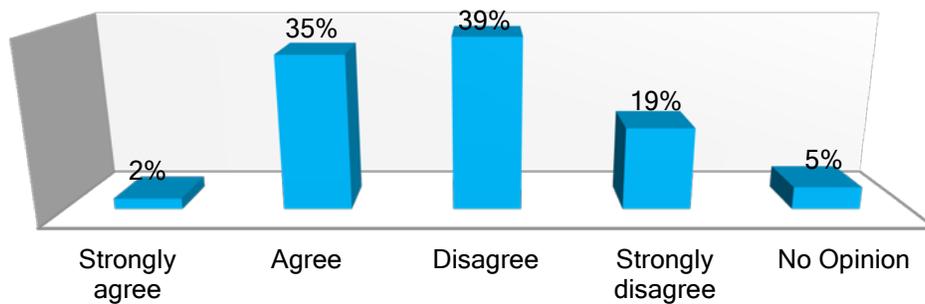


**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

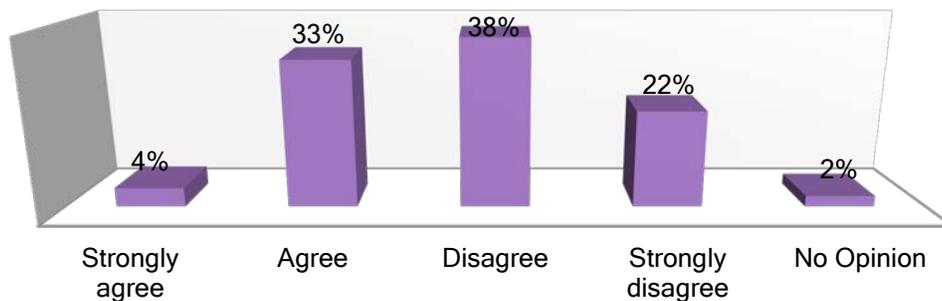
*While responses reveal some room for improvement in all of the departments, services, or aspects of city life identified in the following statements, a higher percentage of respondents are dissatisfied with the city's pedestrian infrastructure, bicycling infrastructure, and the flow of traffic within the city.*

*Additionally, the high proportion of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with public transit, although not significantly higher in volume in comparison to the other statements, is worth noting. The proportion of respondents with no opinion on this question could be indicative of people who do not have experience using public transit, meaning the majority of respondents who actually use public transit are not satisfied with the service.*

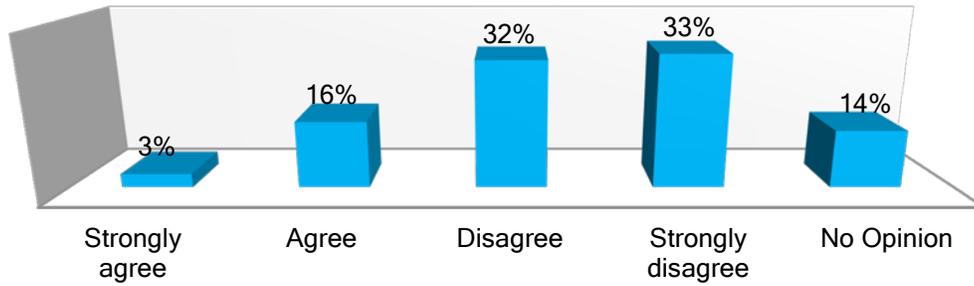
Asheville provides adequate and timely street maintenance.



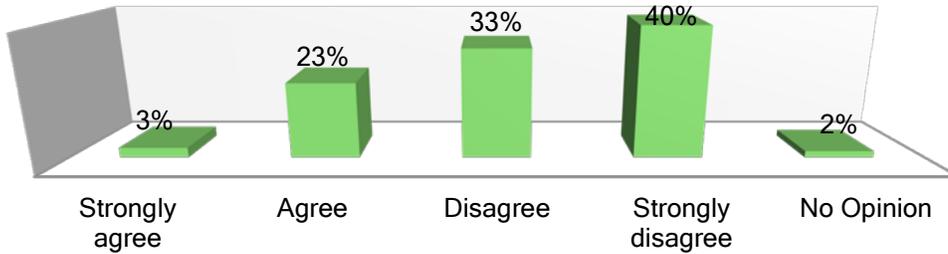
There are an appropriate number of parking facilities, lots, and garages.



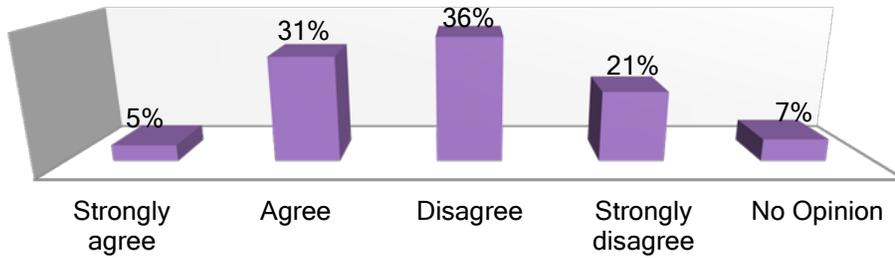
I am satisfied with the city's bicycling infrastructure such as bike lanes, sharrows, bike racks, and lockers.



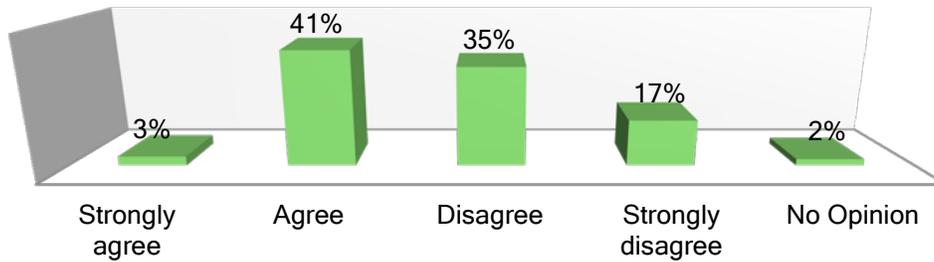
I am satisfied with the city's pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and signals.



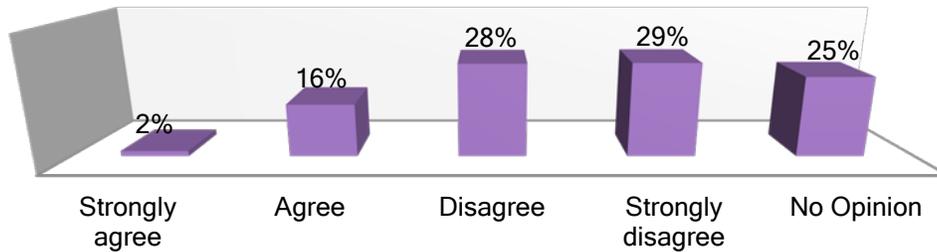
I am satisfied with greenway infrastructure.



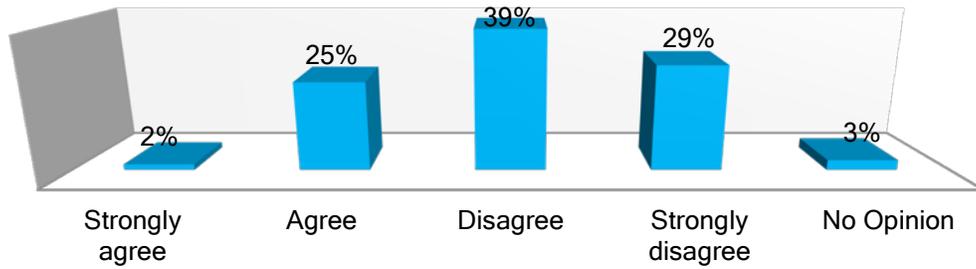
I am able to get around quickly and easily.



I am satisfied with public transportation in Asheville.



I am satisfied with the flow of traffic in the city.

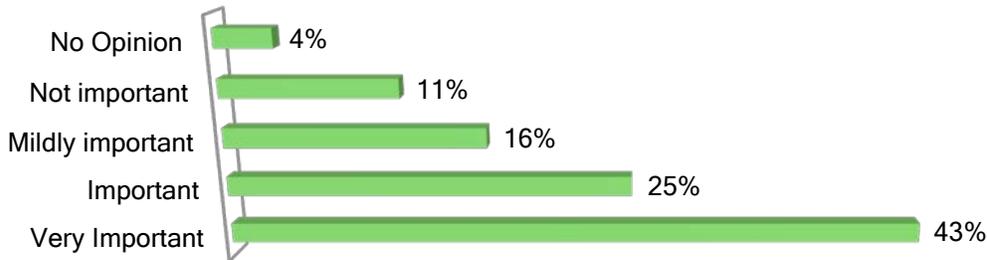


**How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

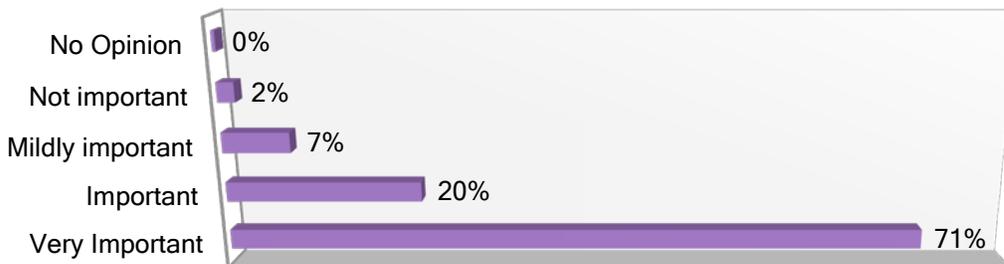
*The objective in this category most frequently rated as very important by respondents is increasing infrastructure that supports walkability, including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and signals. This objective was rated as very important by 71% of respondents while the next highest category was rated as very important by only 45% of respondents.*

*Respondents most frequently expressed that it is important or very important to them to improve or increase street maintenance programs and reduce traffic congestion.*

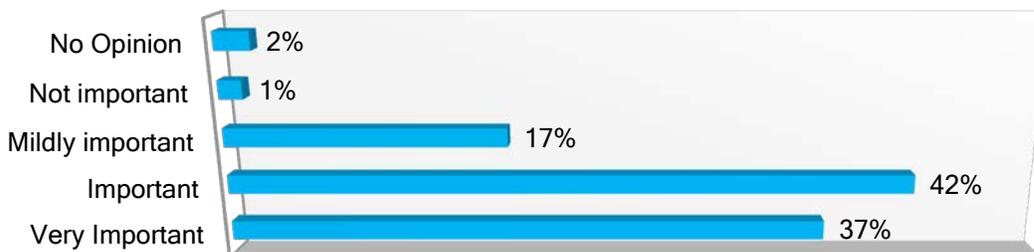
Promoting additional and safer bicycle infrastructure, such as bike lanes, sharrows, bike racks, and lockers.



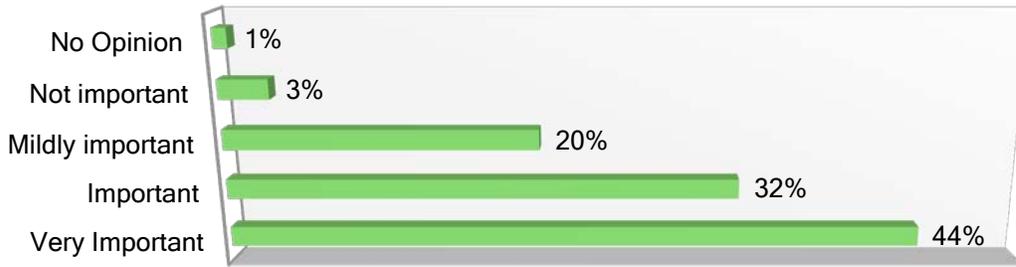
Increasing infrastructure that supports walkability, including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and signals.



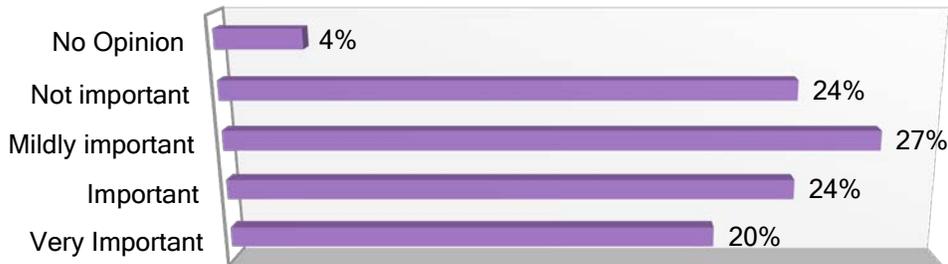
Improving or increasing street maintenance programs.



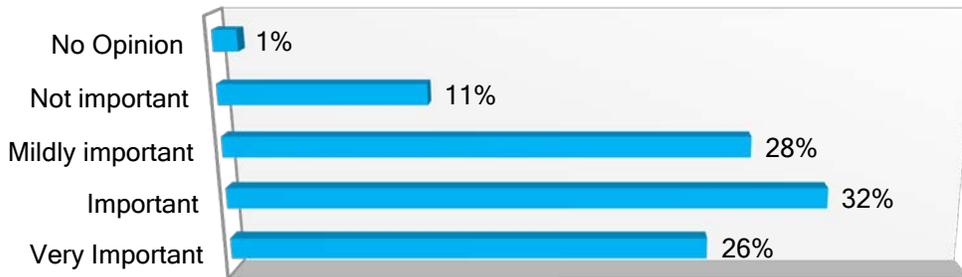
Reducing traffic congestion.



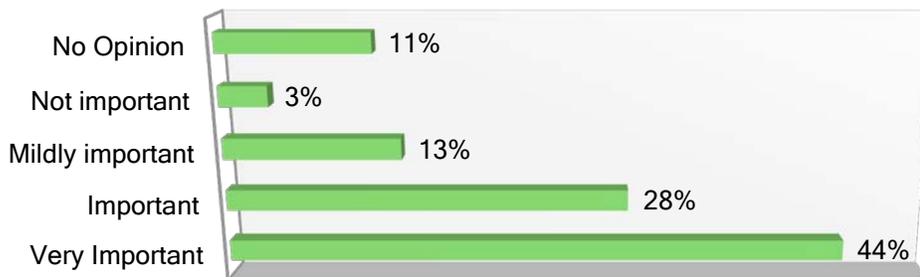
Adding roadway capacity.



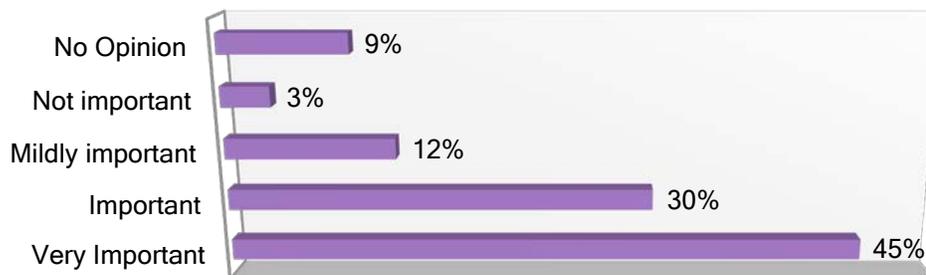
Providing additional parking options.



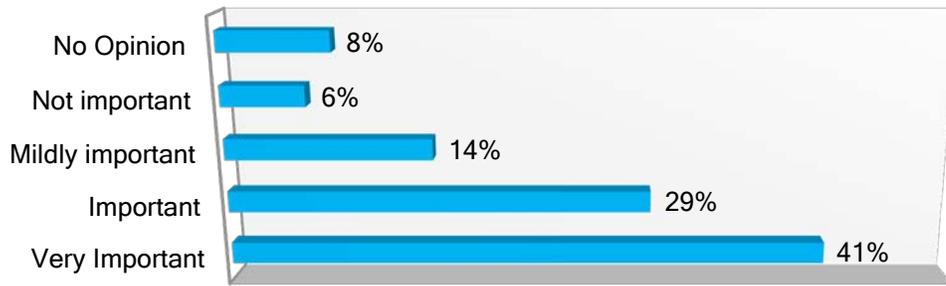
Providing public transportation that runs more quickly and frequently.



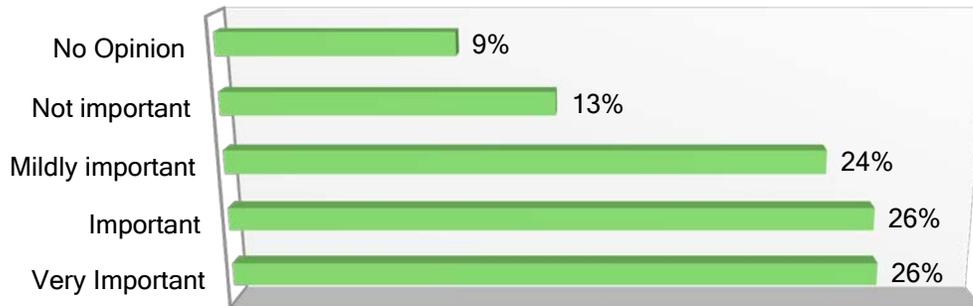
Providing public transportation that reaches more areas of the city.



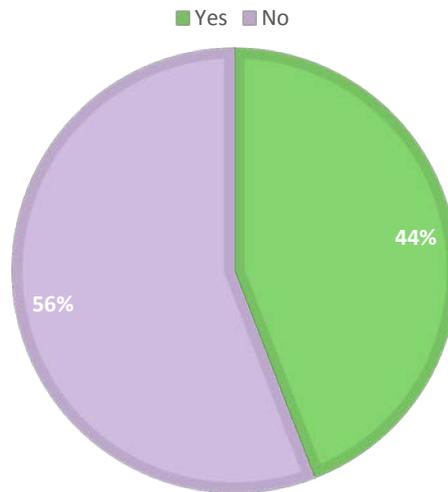
Providing a wider range of transportation options.



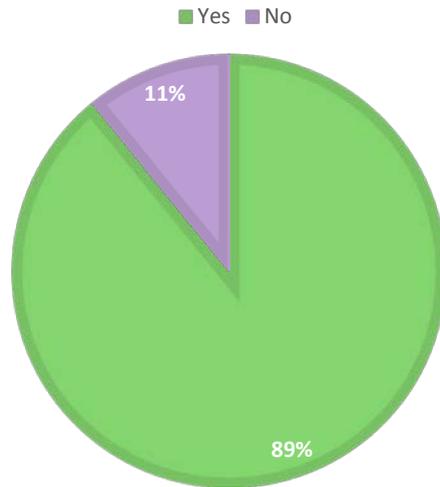
Improving the visual and experiential character of the city's transportation infrastructure.



Are you able to walk to any or all of your daily needs?

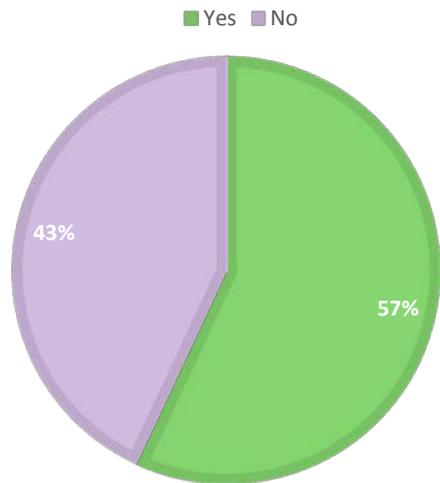


If you were able, would you choose to walk to your daily needs?



Most respondents can't currently walk to their daily needs, but a very large majority of respondents would choose to walk to their daily needs if they were able.

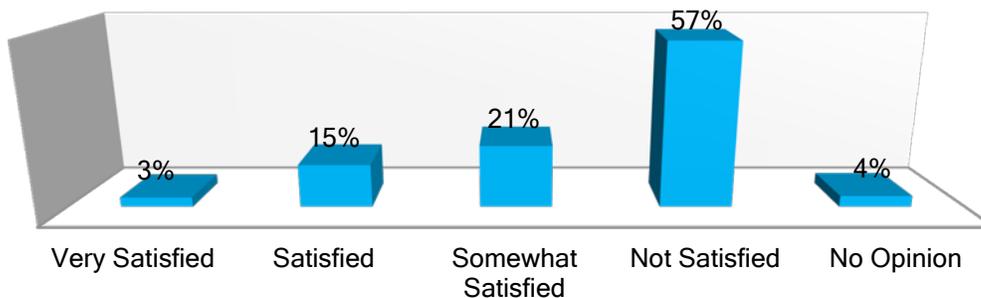
**Would you be willing to pay more for housing if you could get around without a car?**



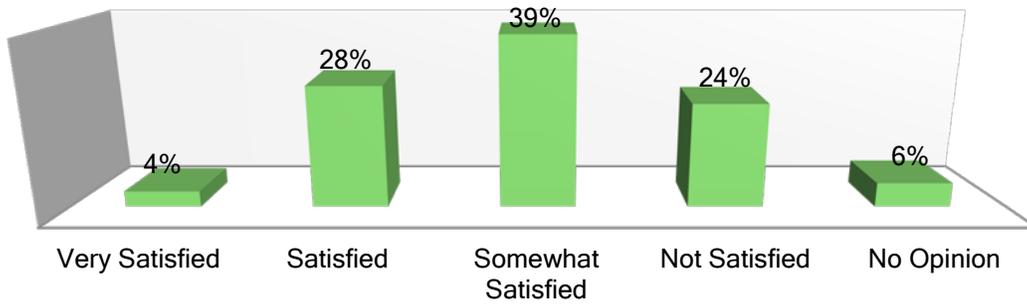
**How satisfied are you with the following city services or aspects of city life?**

Respondents most frequently said they are not satisfied with homelessness in Asheville. The majority of respondents are satisfied with the quality of housing within the city, however, they are not as satisfied with the affordability of housing and the availability of housing options.

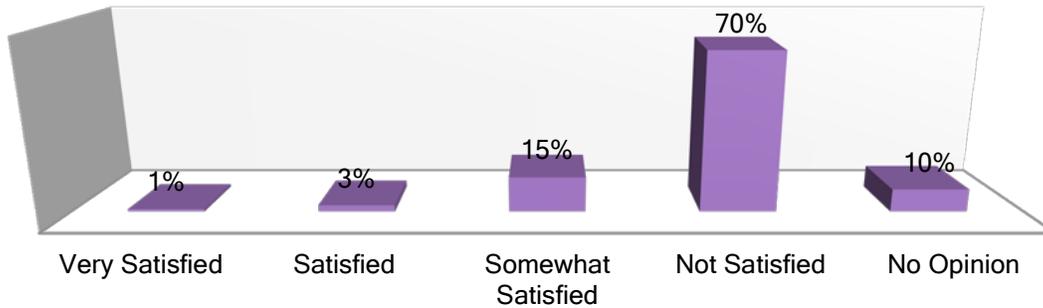
Affordability of housing



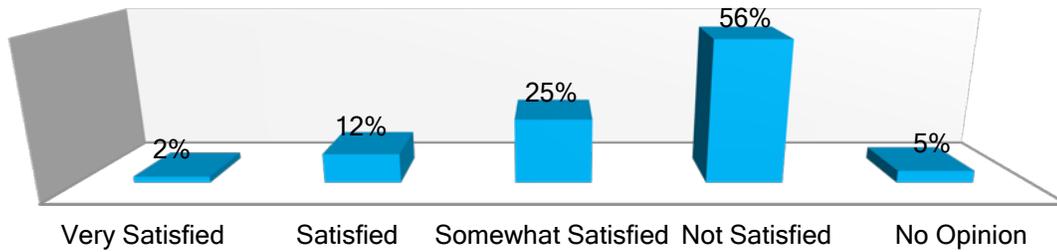
The quality of housing in the city



Homelessness in Asheville



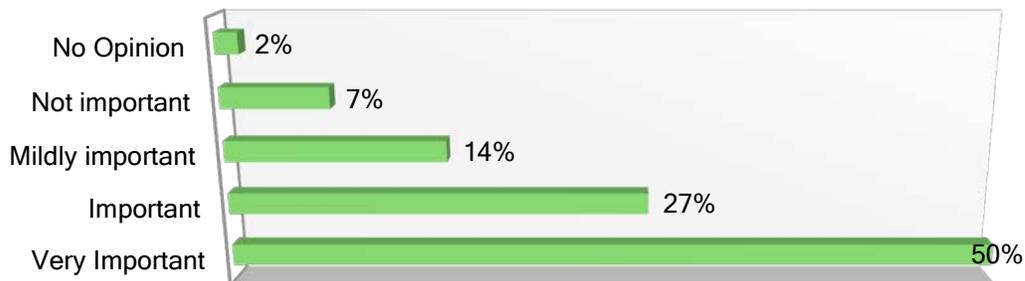
Availability of housing options



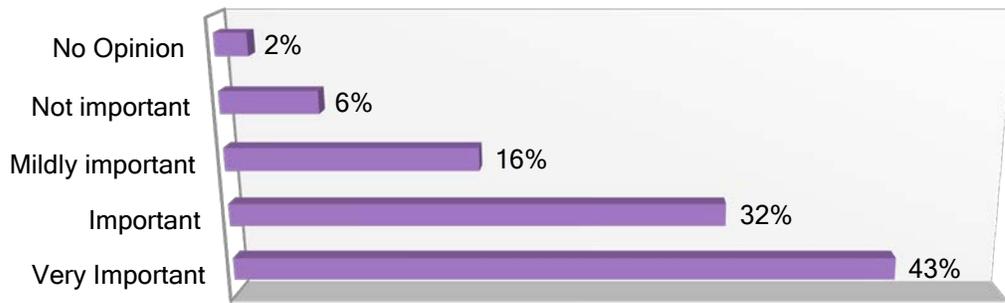
How importantly do you value the following objectives?

*The objectives in this category most frequently rated as very important by respondents are alleviating homelessness and improving housing affordability.*

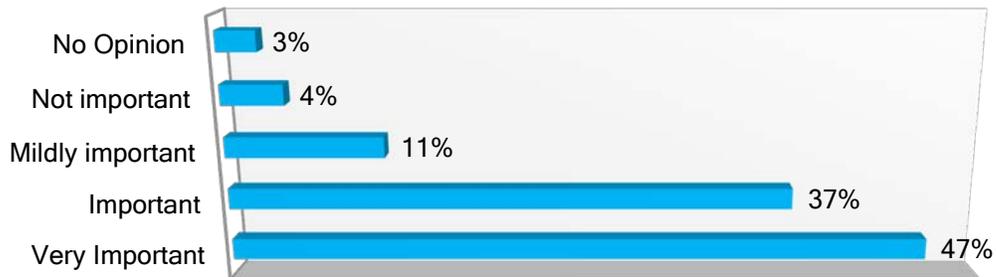
Improving housing affordability



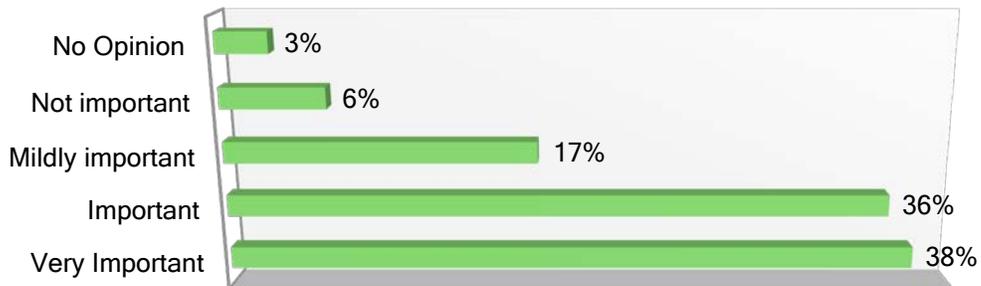
Increasing housing options and types of housing



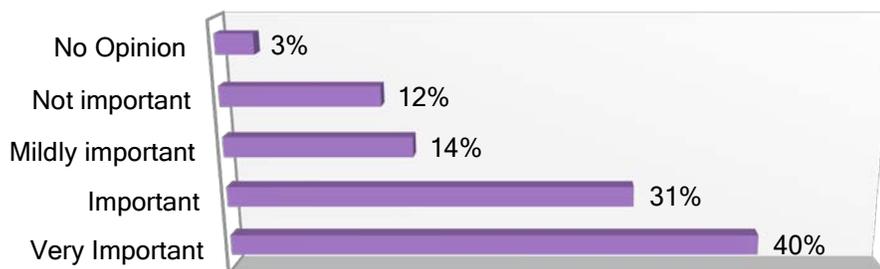
#### Locating housing and public transportation closer together



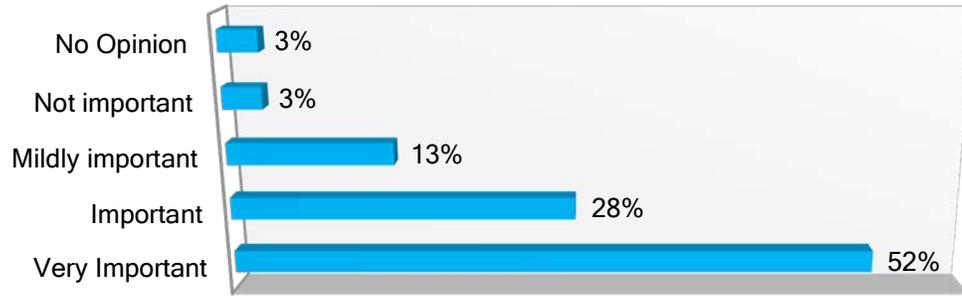
#### Locating housing near jobs



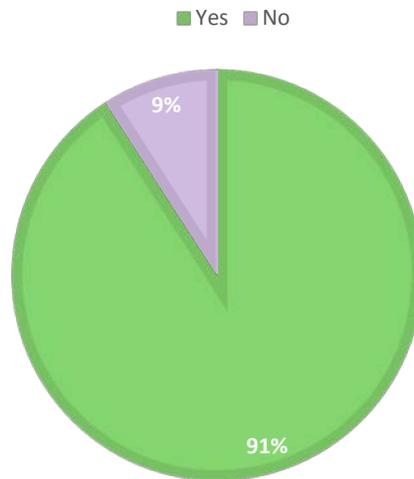
#### Creating and maintaining affordable public housing within the city limits



#### Alleviating homelessness



Do you live in a type of housing that suits your preferences?

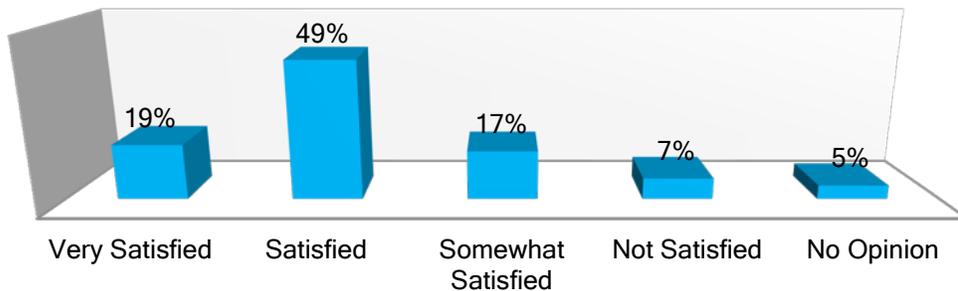


**How satisfied are you with the following city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

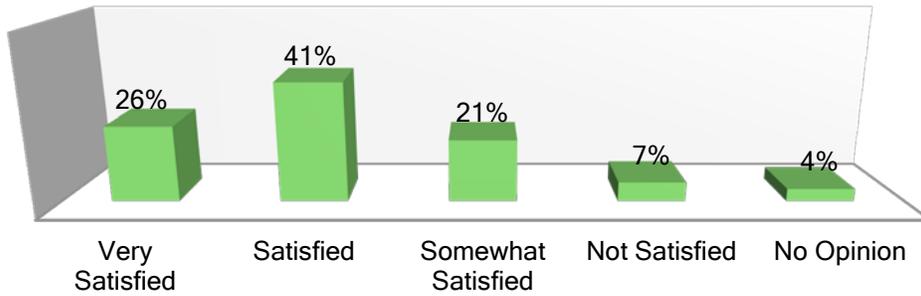
*Of the departments, services, or aspects of city life in this category, respondents are least satisfied with stormwater services and utilities and city streetlights.*

*The very high percentage of respondents (59%) with no opinion on the Asheville App for reporting issues could indicate a lack of awareness about the service.*

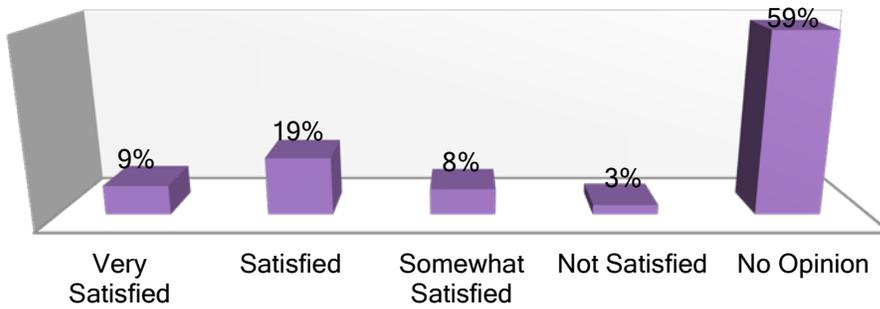
Water and sewer services



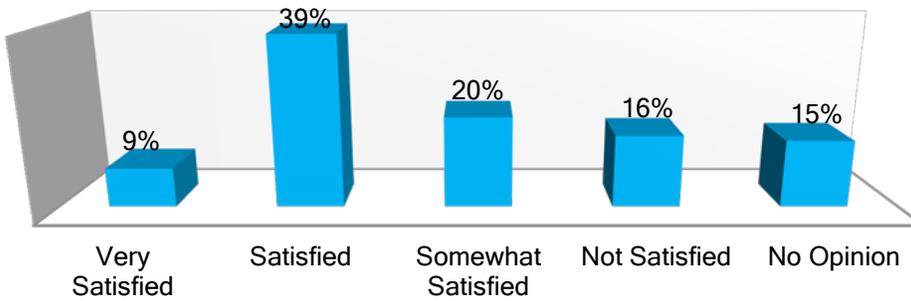
Sanitation (garbage collection, brush and leaf collection, bulky item collection, Household Hazardous Waste program, recycling collection, and Adopt a Street program)



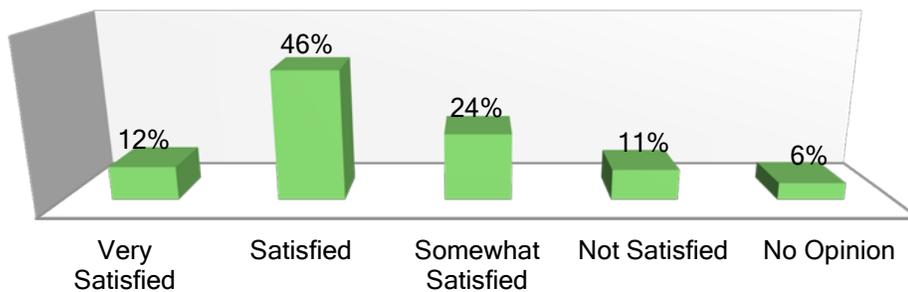
The Asheville App (for reporting issues)



Stormwater services and utilities



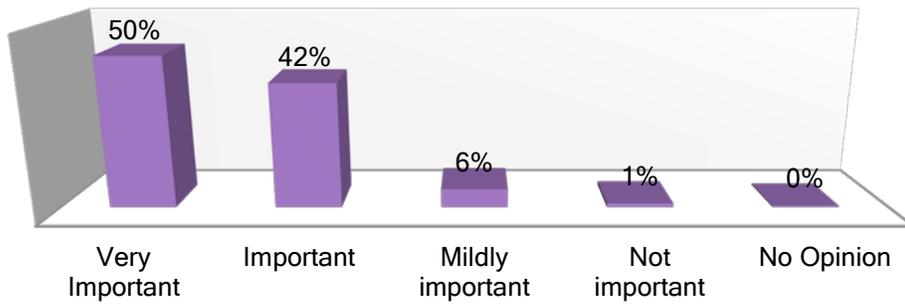
City streetlights



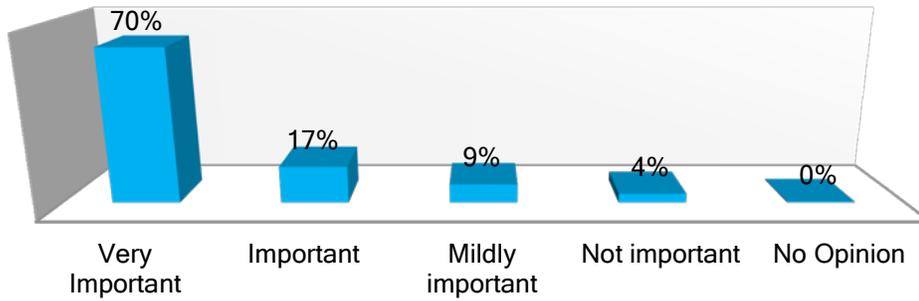
**How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

*While all of the objectives in this category are important to respondents, the objective most frequently indicated as very important is promoting green and sustainable energy sources, including solar, wind, and other renewable energy.*

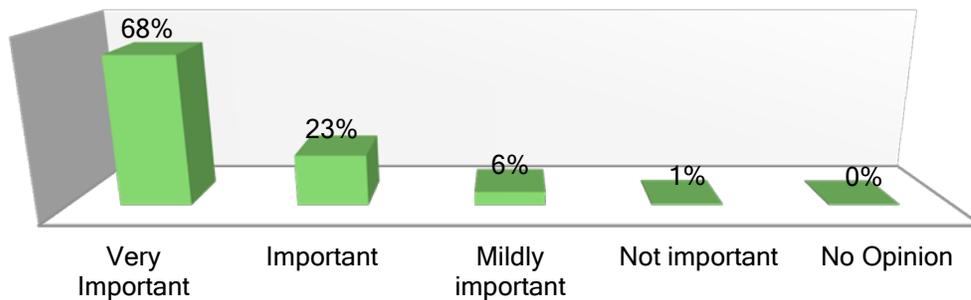
Ensuring city waste, water, and energy services are affordable



Promoting green and sustainable energy sources, including solar, wind, and other renewable energy



Mitigating flooding, landslides, and other environmental hazards



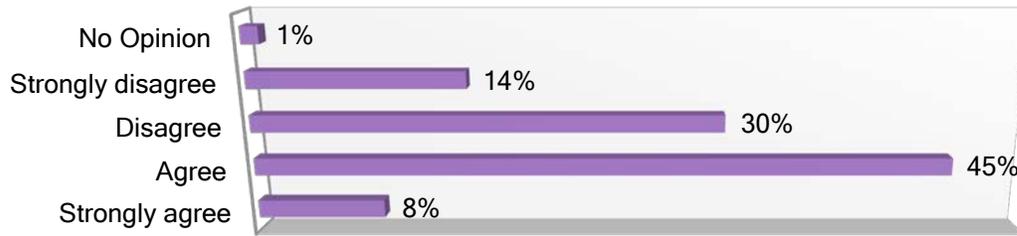
**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

*The vast majority of respondents believe downtown Asheville is a successful tourist destination, however a much smaller percentage of respondents believe downtown successfully and appropriately serves Asheville residents. The majority of respondents do not think downtown is easily accessible and provides an appropriate amount of parking.*

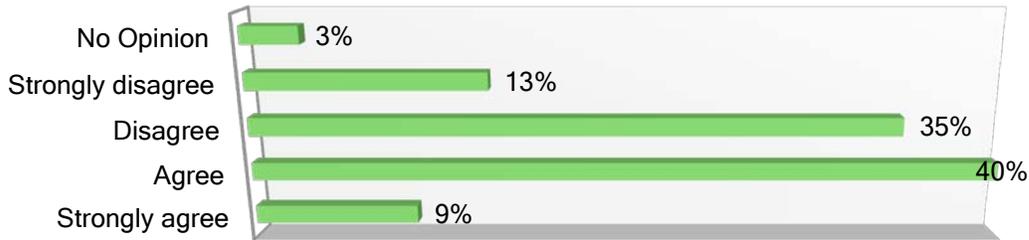
Downtown is a successful tourist destination.



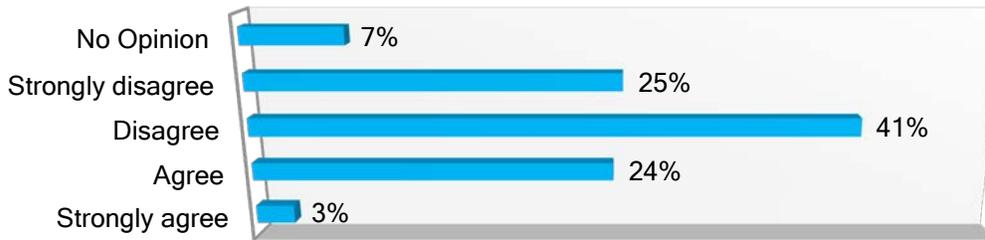
Downtown successfully and appropriately serves Asheville residents.



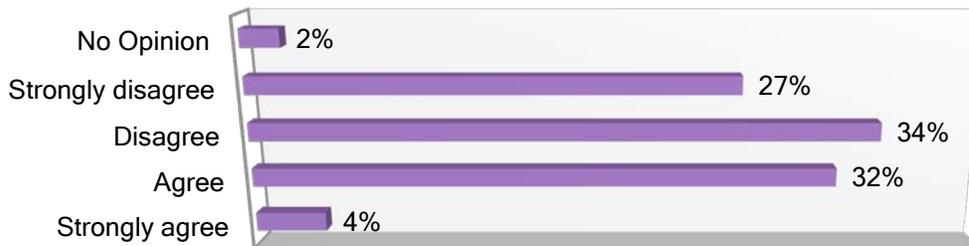
Downtown supports the right mix of uses, including residential, retail, commercial, hotel, etc.



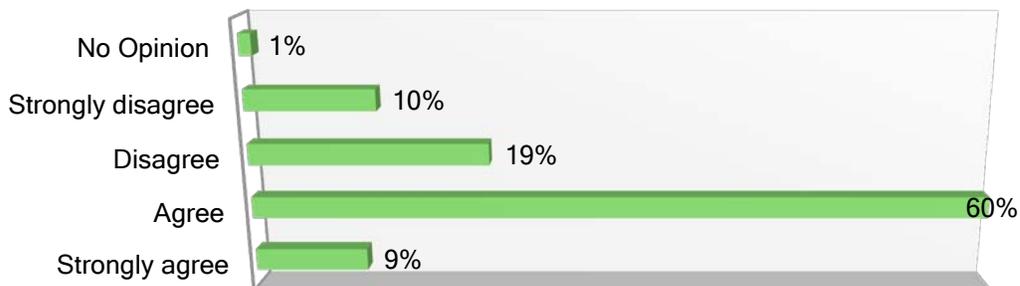
Downtown is appropriately affordable.



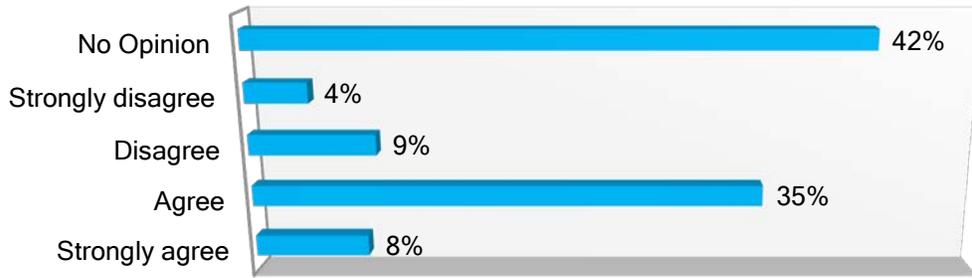
Downtown is easily accessible and provides an appropriate amount of parking.



Downtown offers a suitable environment for pedestrians.



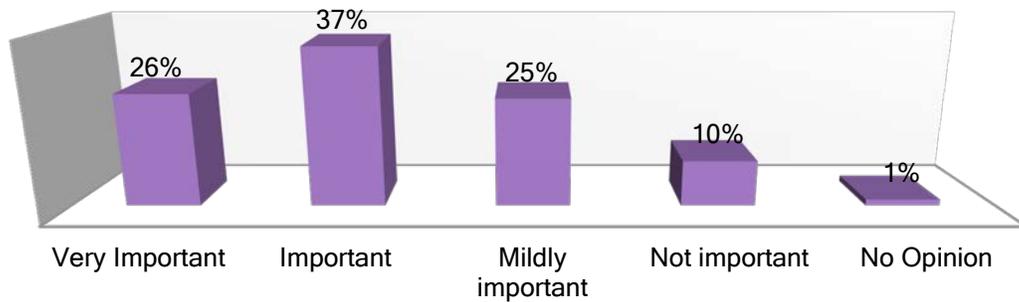
I am satisfied with the Urban Trail



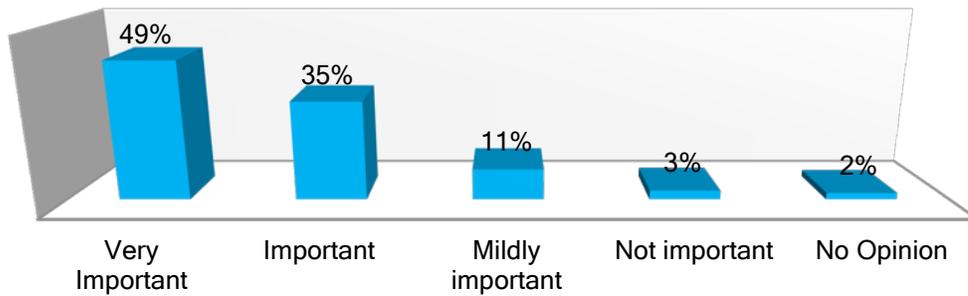
**How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

*The objectives most frequently rated as very important by respondents are promoting culture and vibrancy and alleviating homelessness downtown. Most respondents do not think it is important to expand downtown hotel capacity.*

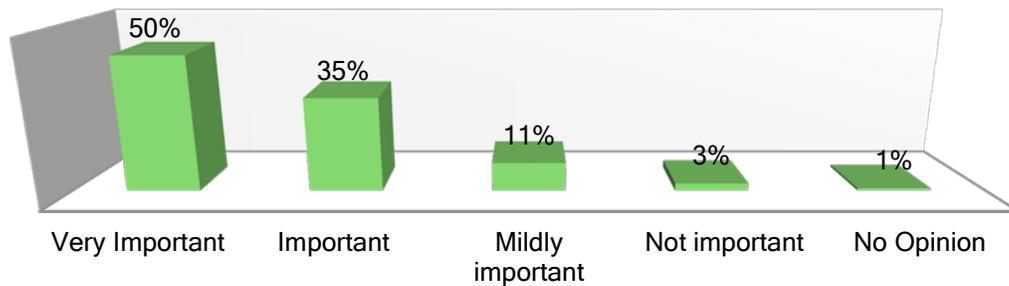
**Expanding the ability for people to live Downtown**



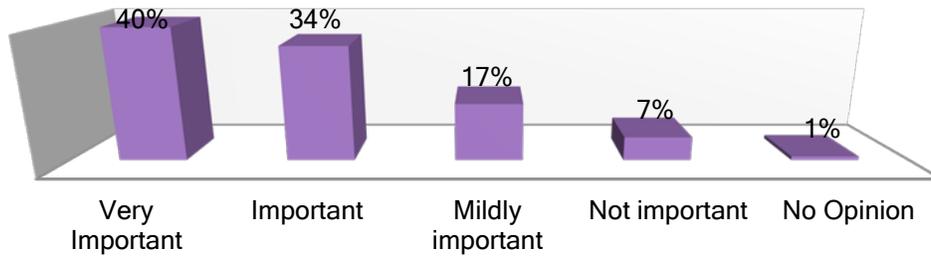
**Alleviating homelessness downtown**



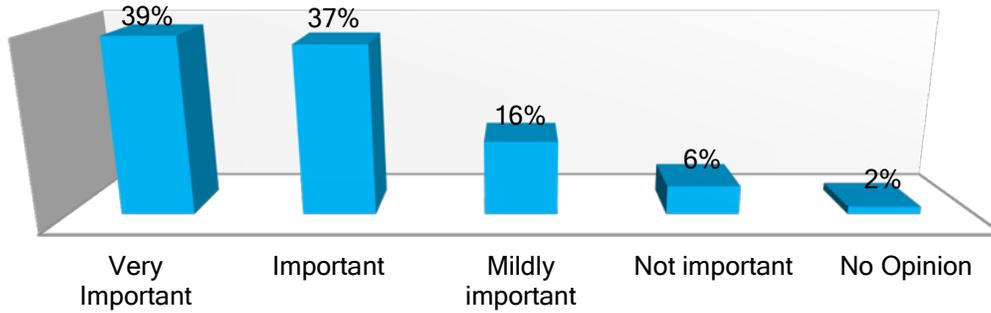
**Promoting culture and vibrancy**



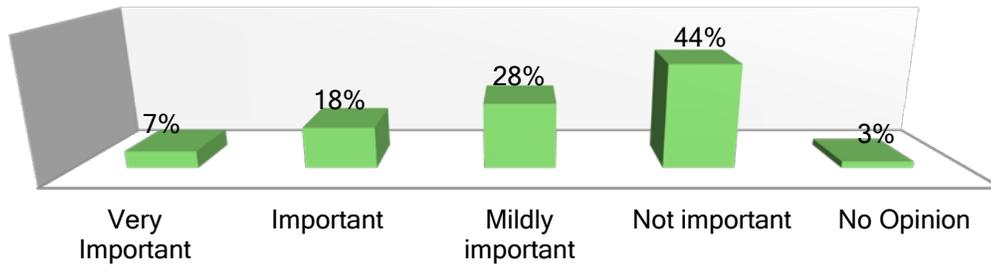
**Promoting public art**



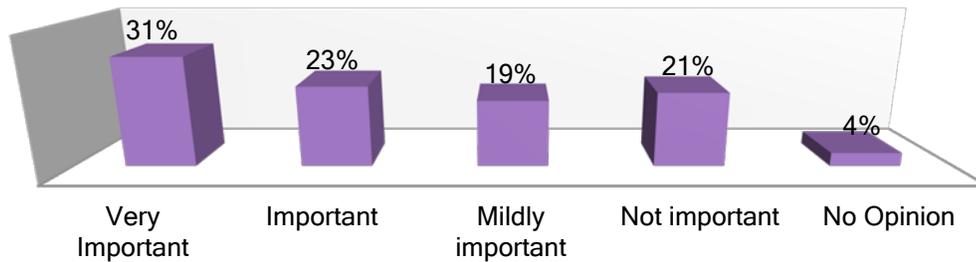
Increasing the quality of nearby neighborhoods, including South Slope, River Arts



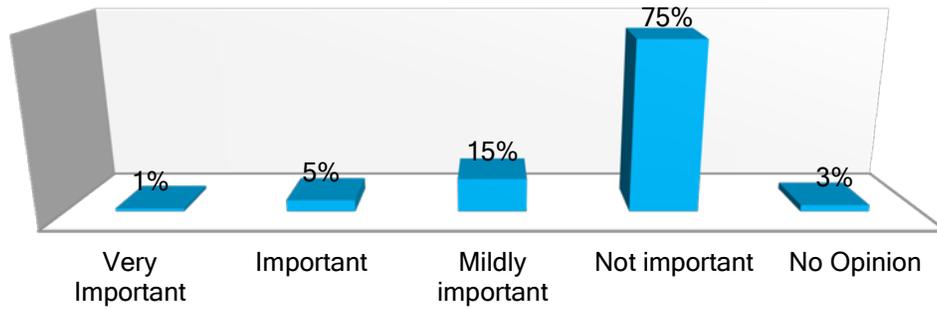
Increasing development downtown



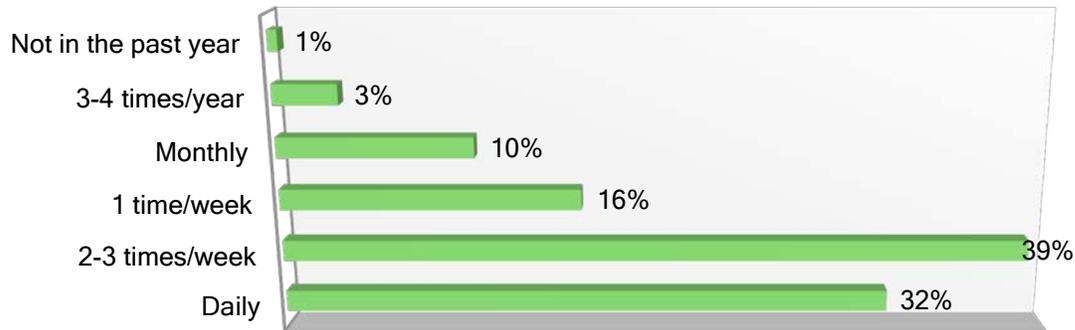
Limiting development downtown



Expanding downtown hotel capacity



**How often do you travel downtown?**

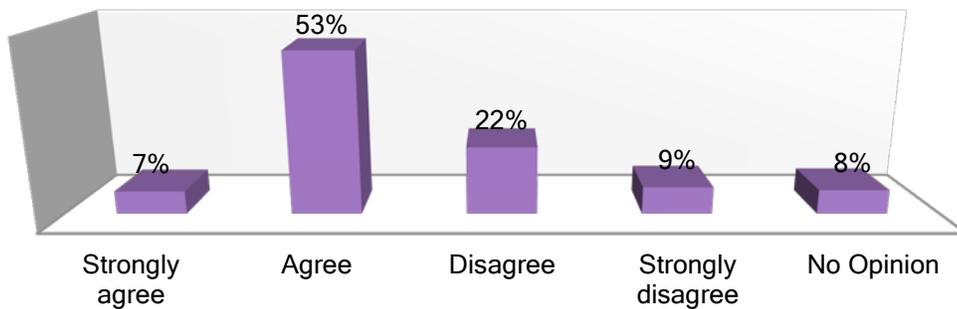


*Most respondents travel to downtown at least twice per week and nearly 1/3 of respondents travel to downtown daily.*

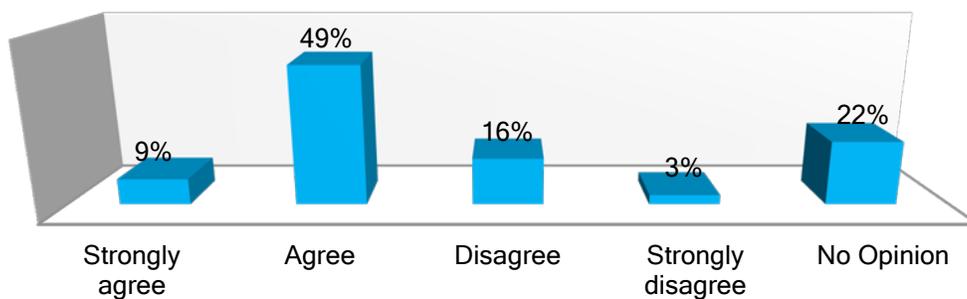
**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

*The majority of respondents are satisfied with the quality of the city's parks and recreation facilities, the city park and recreation events/programs, and their connection to the natural environment within their neighborhood.*

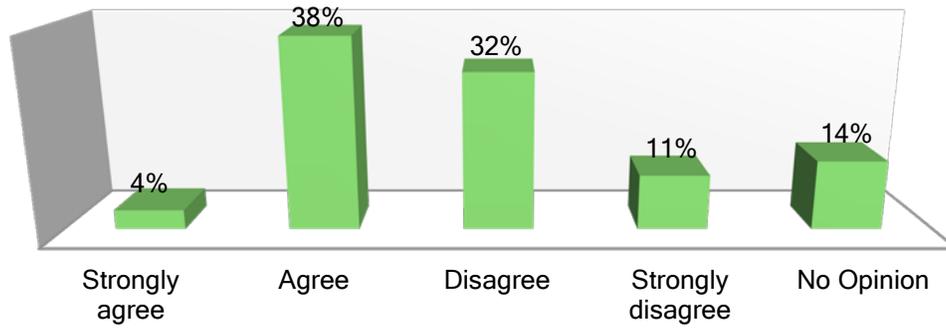
I am satisfied with the quality of the city's parks and recreation facilities (Parks, pools, playgrounds, community/recreation centers, WNC Nature Center, Food Lion Skate Park, Splasheville)



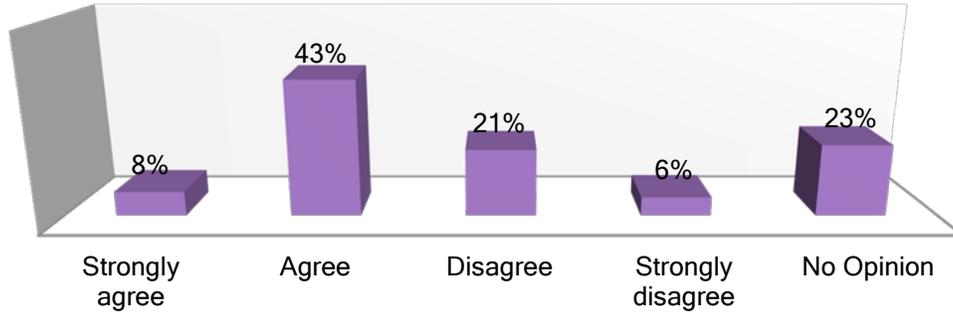
I am satisfied with city park and recreation events/programs



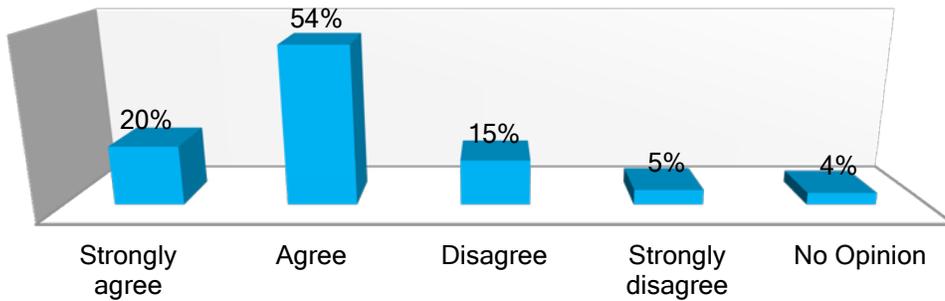
I am satisfied with Asheville's efforts to address sustainability concerns across the city



I am satisfied with the city's efforts to reduce energy use by city vehicles and facilities



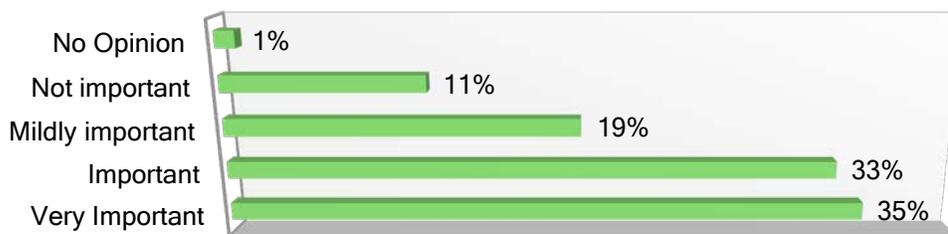
I feel an appropriate connection to the natural environment within my neighborhood.



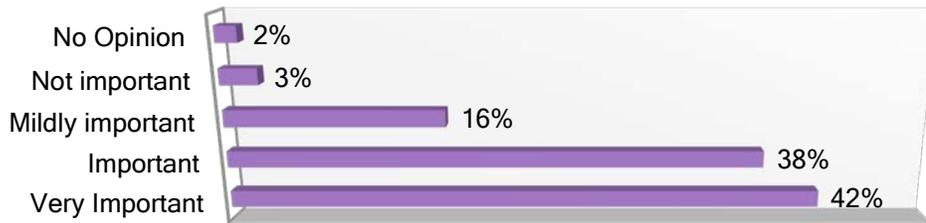
**How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

*While responses indicate all of these objectives are highly valued, the objectives most frequently categorized as very important are promoting development that occurs in a pattern that is sensitive to air and water quality concerns and preserving or enhancing access to parks and natural environments.*

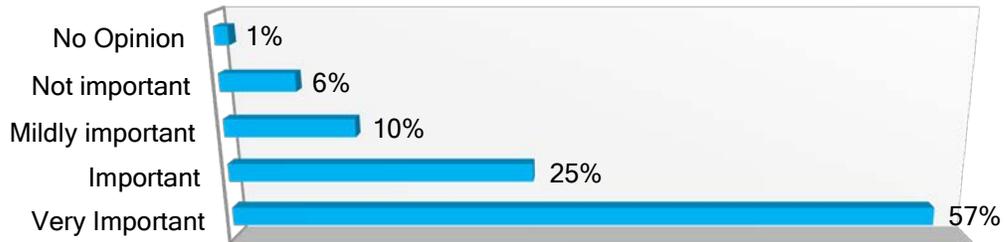
Increasing the amount of park space in the city



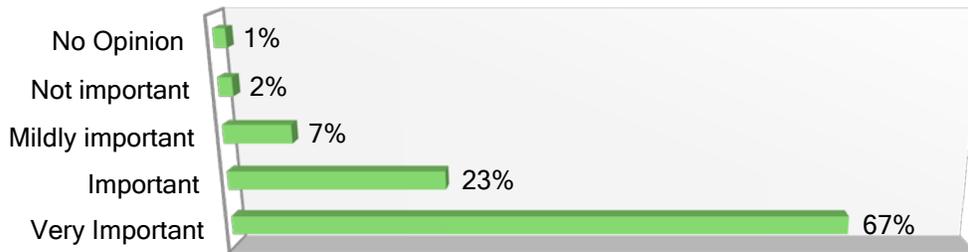
Improving the quality of existing parks and recreation amenities



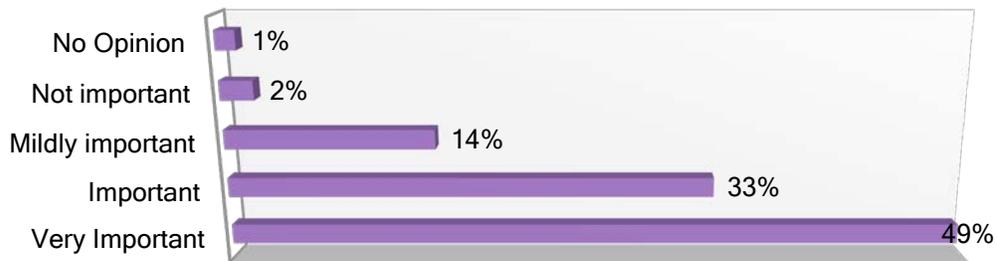
Growing the network of greenways and bike trails



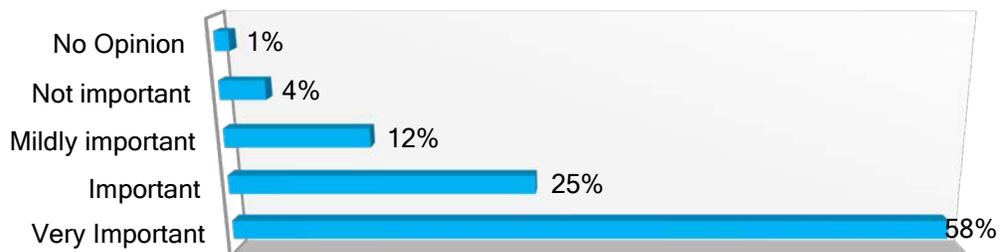
Promoting development that occurs in a pattern that is sensitive to air and water quality concerns



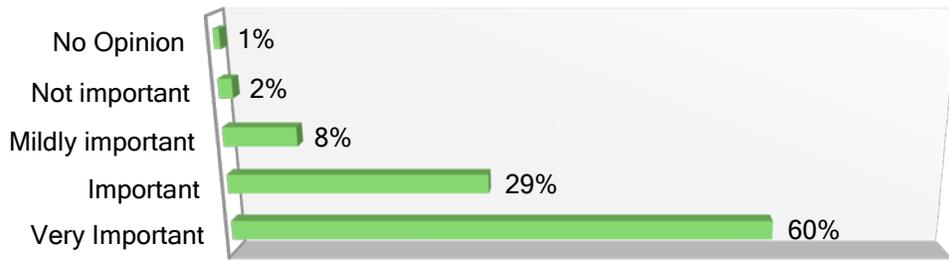
Enhancing efforts to reduce energy usage by city vehicles and buildings



Preserving or enhancing views



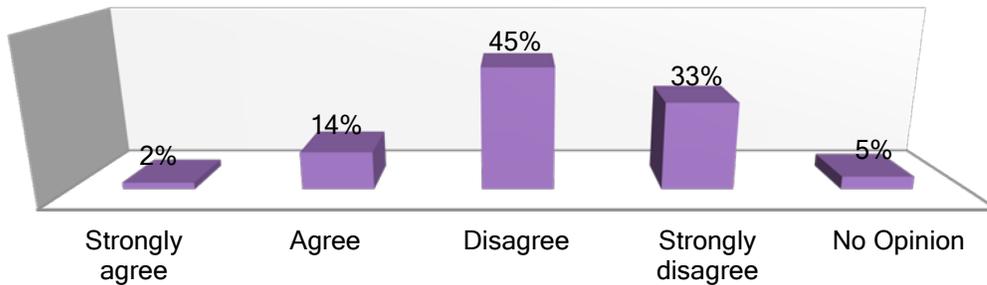
Preserving or enhancing access to parks and natural environments



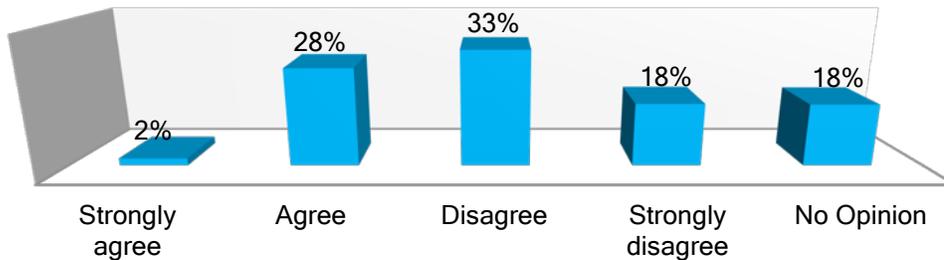
**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

*A large majority of respondents do not think Asheville has an appropriate mix and quality of jobs. A significant proportion of respondents are not satisfied with the city's development services or the city's efforts to recruit new businesses and retain existing businesses.*

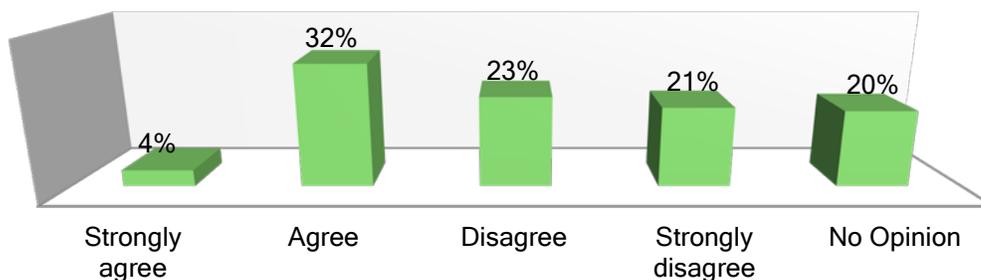
Asheville has an appropriate mix and quality of jobs



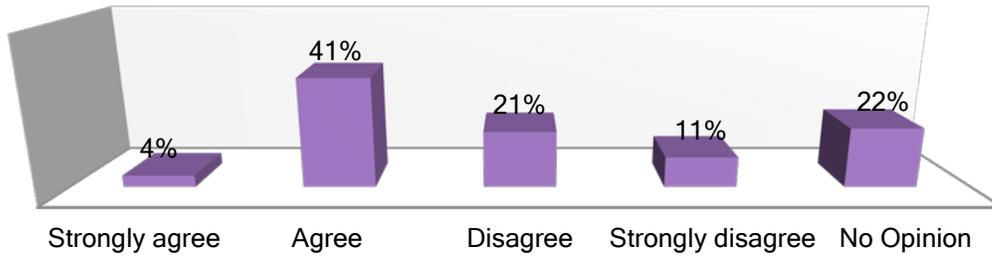
I am satisfied with the city's efforts to recruit new businesses and retain existing businesses.



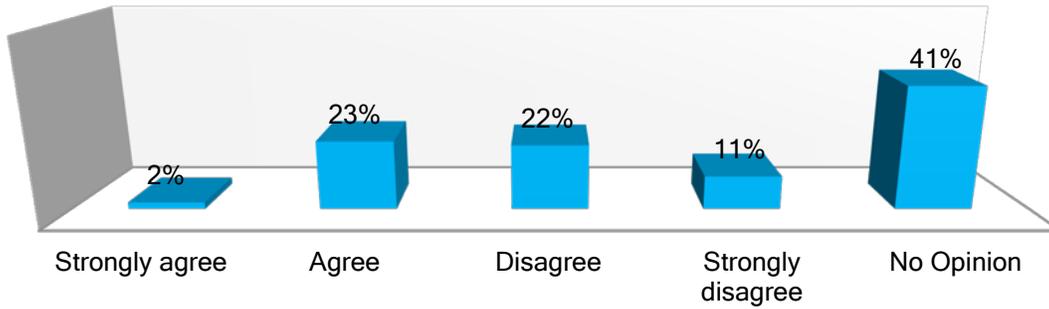
The employment market in Asheville is well-suited to my skills and abilities



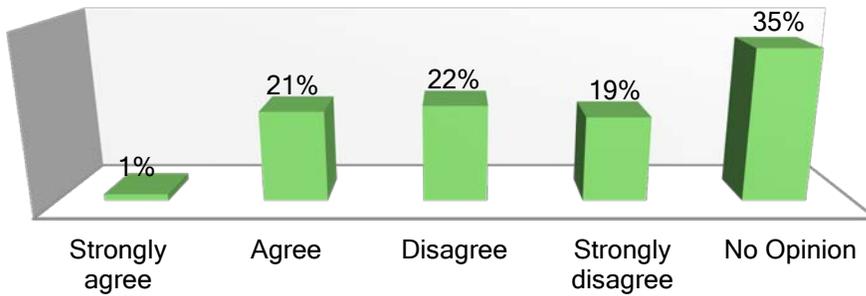
I am satisfied with the city's efforts to support entrepreneurship, small business, and home businesses.



I am satisfied with the work done by the city's Community and Economic Development



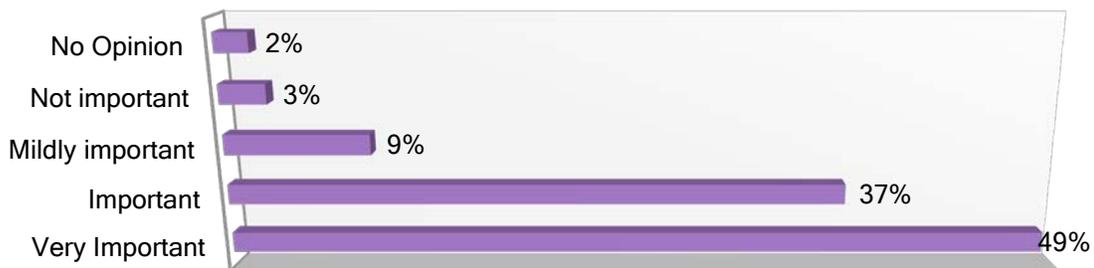
I am satisfied with the city's Development Services (Permits, Building, Plan Review, Site Plans, Erosion Control)



**How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

While all of the objectives in this category are highly valued by respondents, the 2 objectives most frequently categorized as very important are diversifying the local economy and supporting local entrepreneurship, especially small business and home businesses.

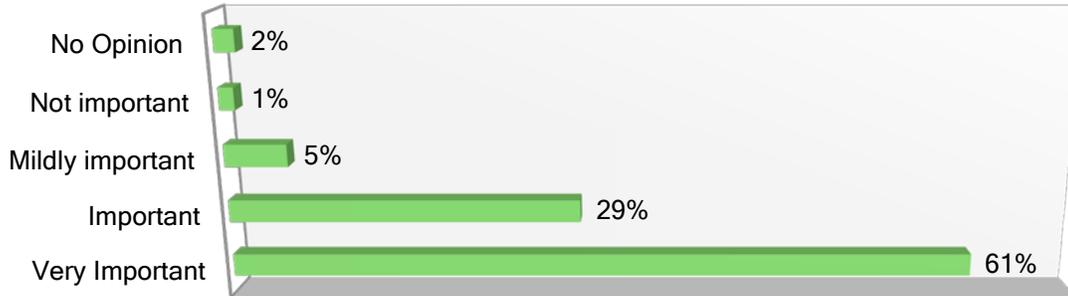
Developing a skilled workforce through training programs, recruitment, continuing education



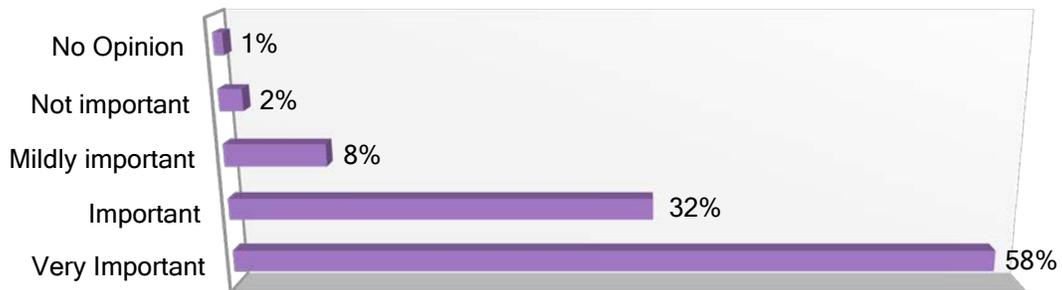
Increasing the number of jobs for high-skilled residents



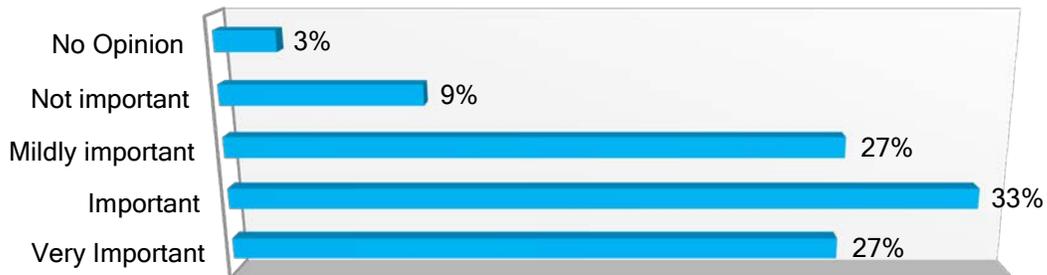
Diversifying the local economy



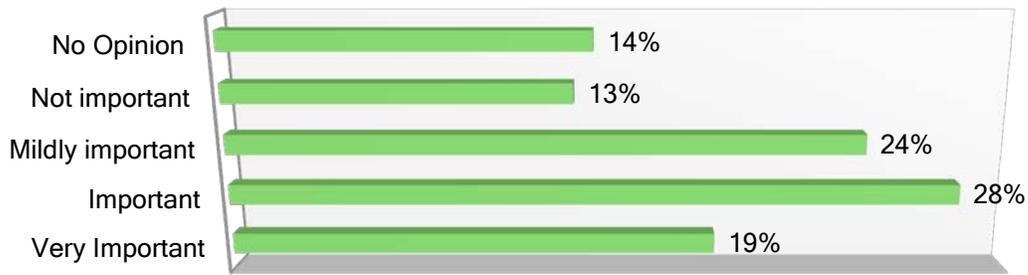
Supporting local entrepreneurship, especially small business and home businesses



Increasing industrial and manufacturing jobs



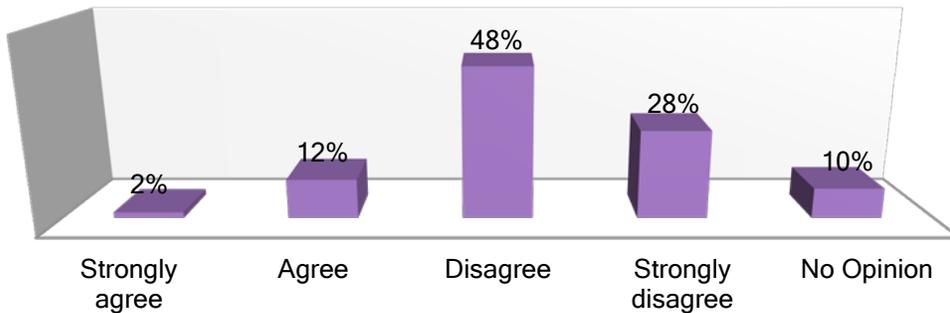
Increasing property investment, particularly along our commercial corridors



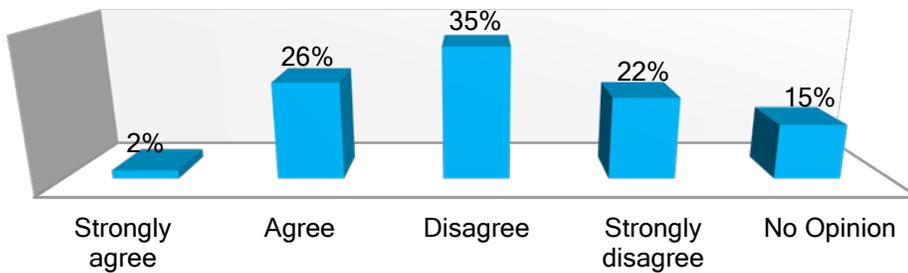
**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

*A large majority of respondents do not believe the city values each of the city's neighborhoods equally.*

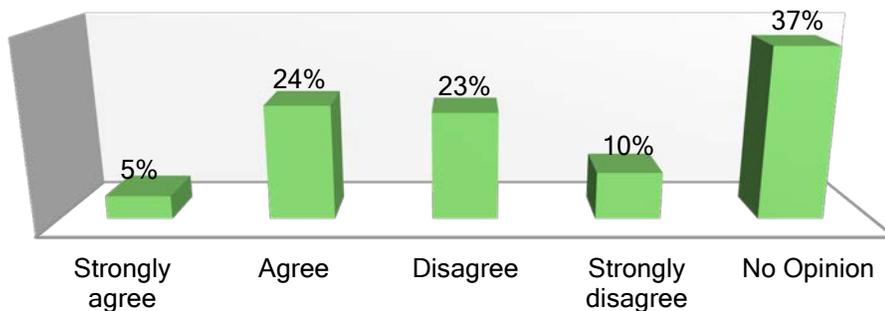
I feel the city values each of the city's neighborhoods equally



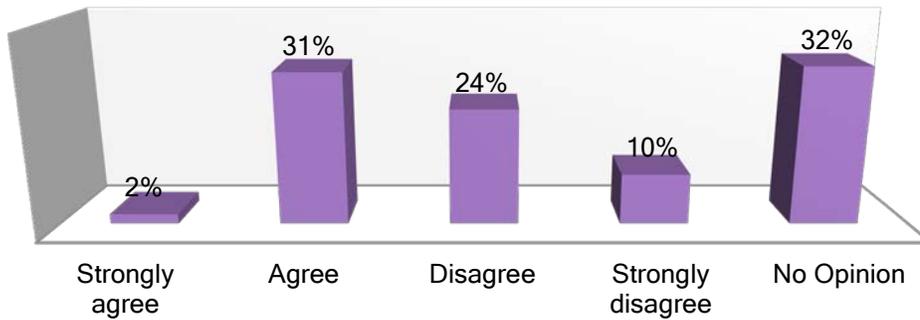
I am happy with the extent of urban planning and urban design efforts that have been invested in my neighborhood.



I am satisfied with the city's efforts to encourage opportunities for members of minority groups, such as the Minority Business program.



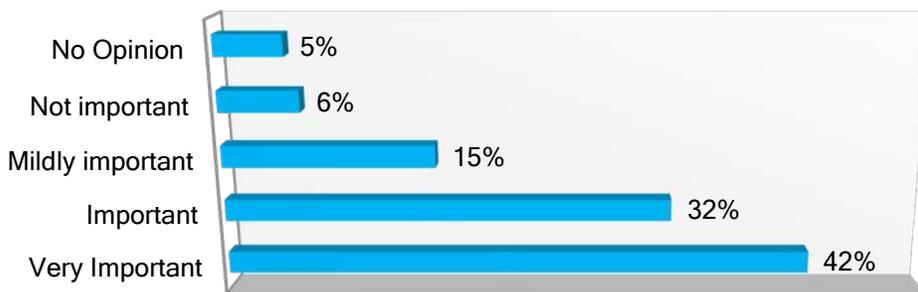
I am satisfied with the city's neighborhood services and programs



**How importantly do you value the following objectives?**

*Although respondents place a lot of value on all of these objectives, the objective most frequently rated as very important is advancing economic opportunities for all residents.*

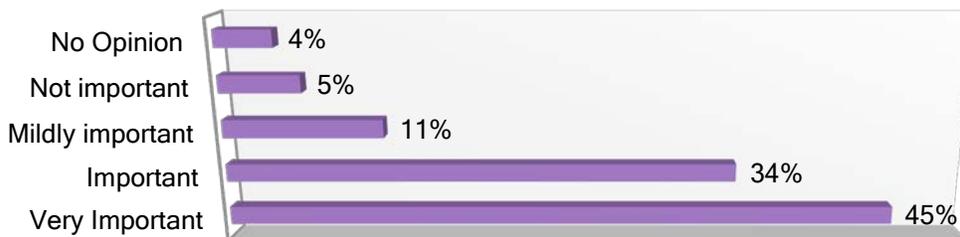
**Advancing the participation of minority residents on city boards and commissions**



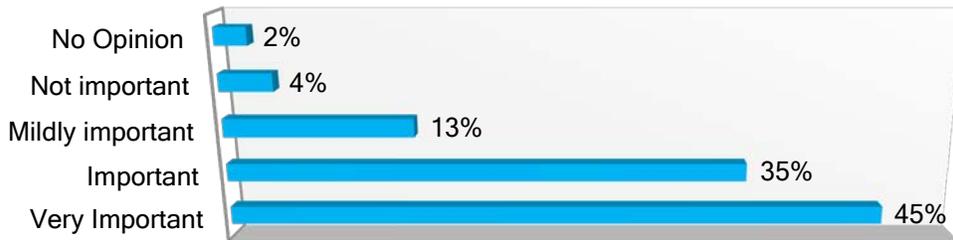
**Advancing economic opportunities for all residents**



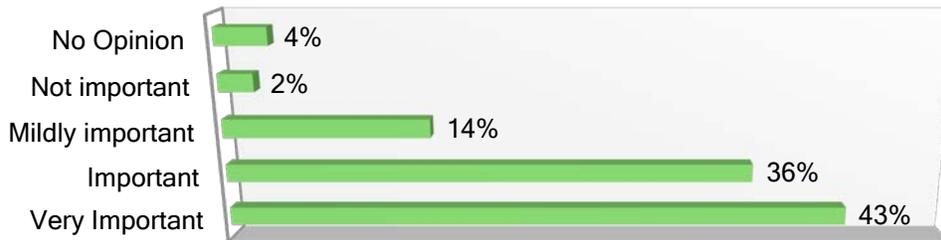
**Expanding urban planning and urban design services across the city's neighborhoods**



**Increasing job training and preparation programs**



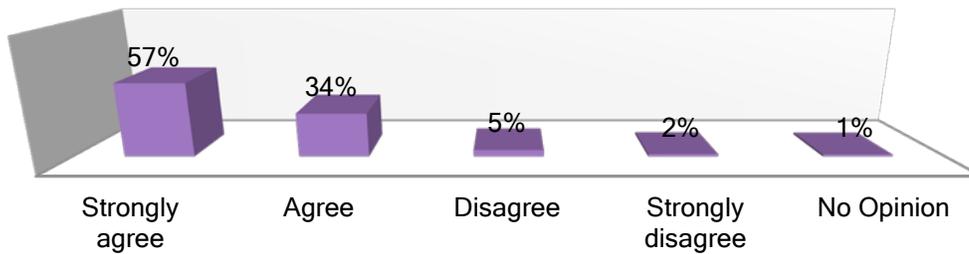
Promoting access for individuals with disabilities



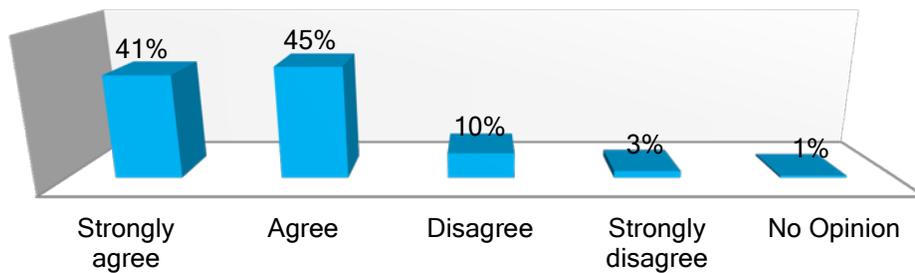
**How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?**

*The majority of respondents have access to a range of food options, have convenient access to recreation facilities and believe Asheville is a healthy place to live.*

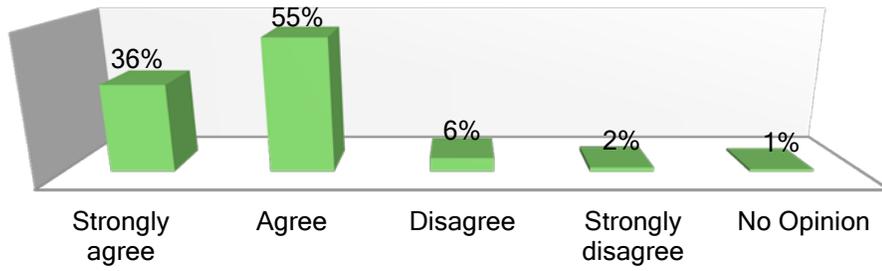
I have convenient access to a range of food options, including access to healthy and fresh options.



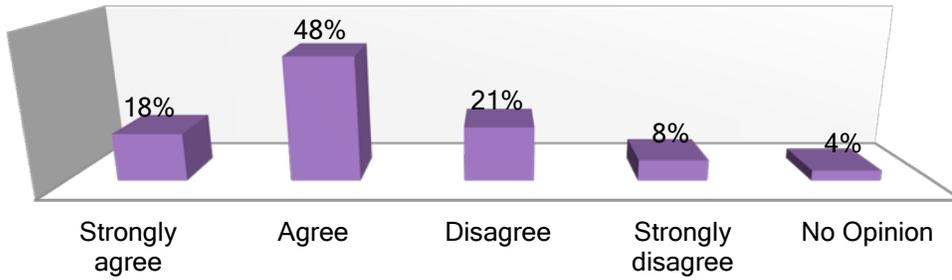
I have convenient access to recreation facilities, including access to natural places



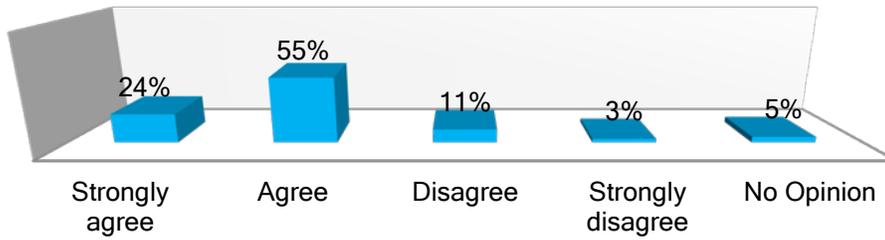
I think Asheville is a healthy place to live



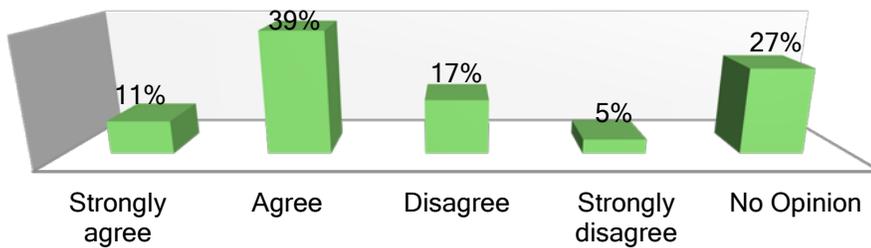
I feel safe with respect to larger economic and environmental threats



I am satisfied with neighborhood safety services (police and fire)



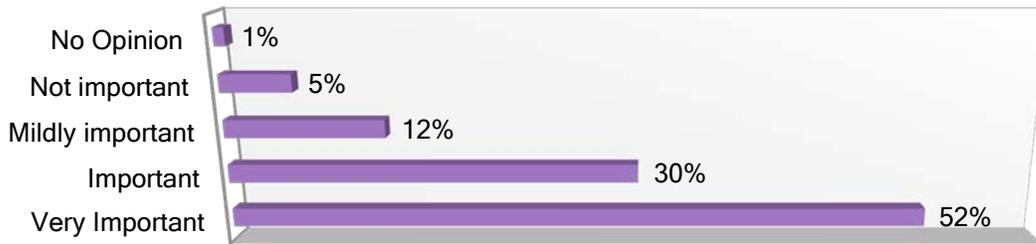
I am satisfied with the city's neighborhood services and programs



**How important are the following potential city objectives to you?**

*While all of the objectives in this category are quite important to respondents, the objective most frequently rated as very important are protecting against environmental hazard and protecting the community against crime.*

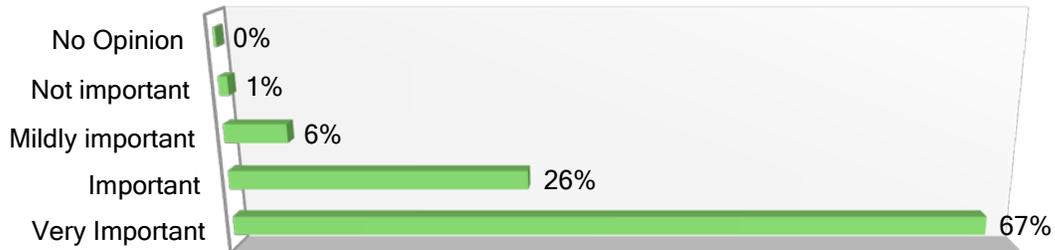
Promoting access to healthy food



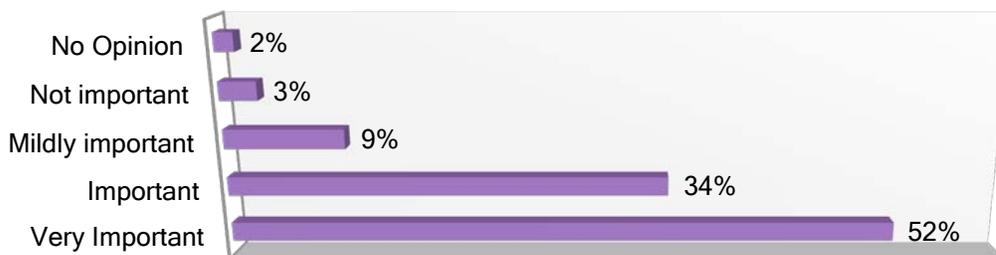
Promoting access to natural environments within the city's communities



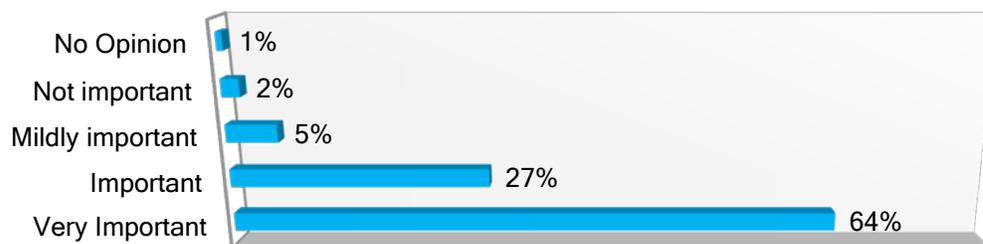
Protecting against environmental hazards



Planning for active living



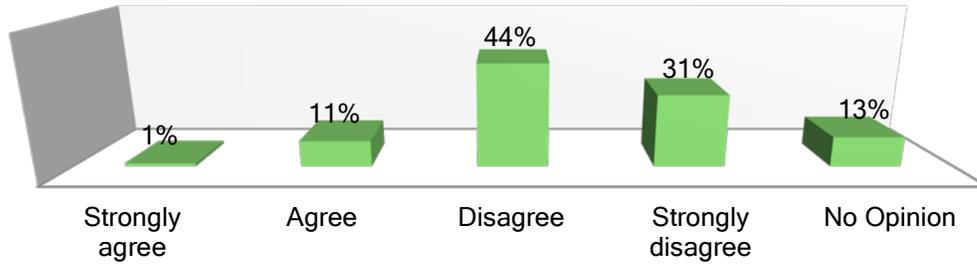
Protecting the community against crime



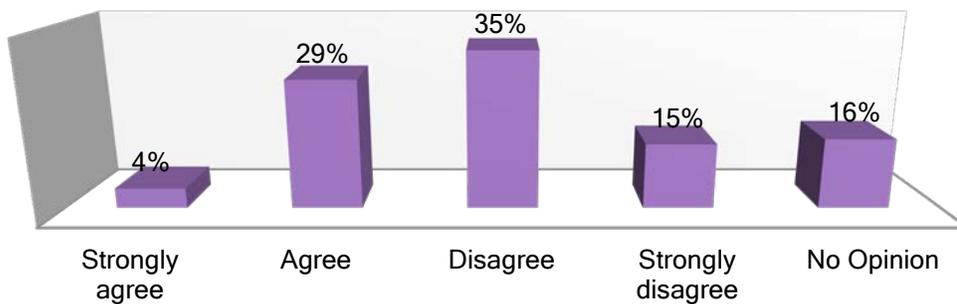
How strongly would you agree with the following statements about city departments, services, or aspects of city life?

The majority of respondents do not think there are adequate transportation options to cities and communities outside of Asheville and half of respondents do not believe there is a strong relationship between Asheville and surrounding cities and towns.

I feel there are adequate transportation options to cities and communities outside of Asheville



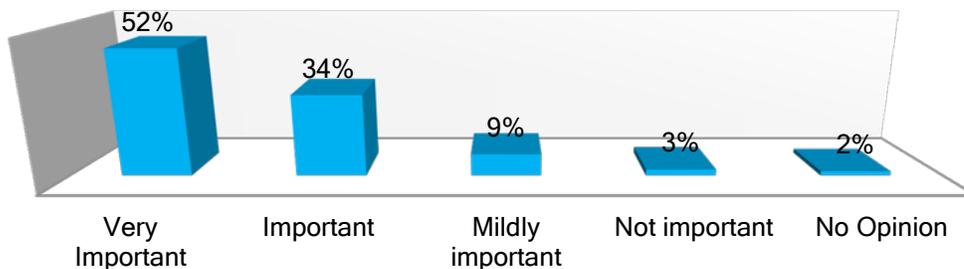
I feel there is a strong relationship between Asheville and surrounding cities and towns



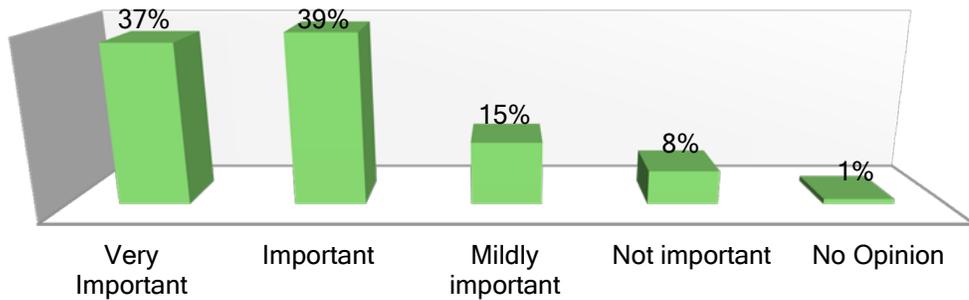
**How importantly do you value the following potential city goals?**

The potential city goal most frequently rated as very important is ensuring Asheville retains a distinctive character separate from surrounding communities. However, the goal which was most frequently categorized as either important or very important is promoting Asheville's participation in efforts to develop larger regional planning for issues like transportation and sustainability with 86% of respondents rating this goal as either important or very important.

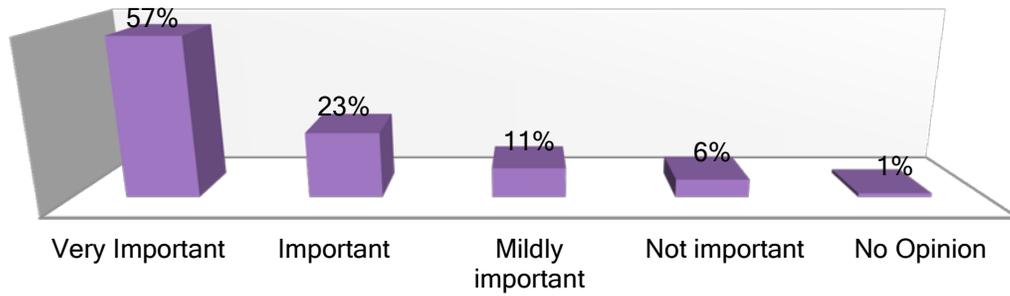
Promoting Asheville's participation in efforts to develop larger regional planning for issues like transportation and sustainability



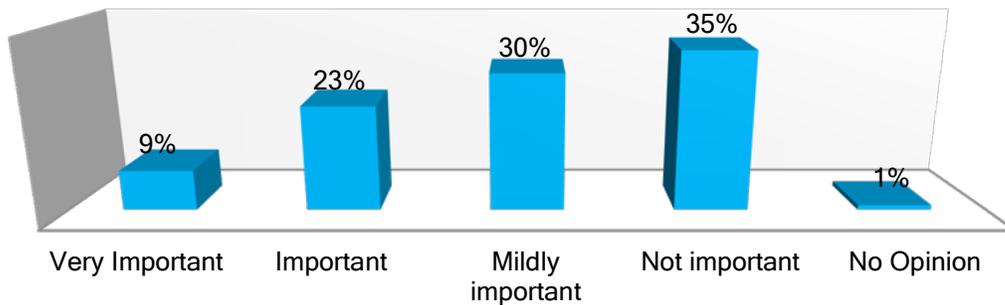
Growing Asheville's role as an economic hub of a larger region



Ensuring Asheville retains a distinctive character separate from surrounding communities



Growing Asheville's presence as a tourist destination



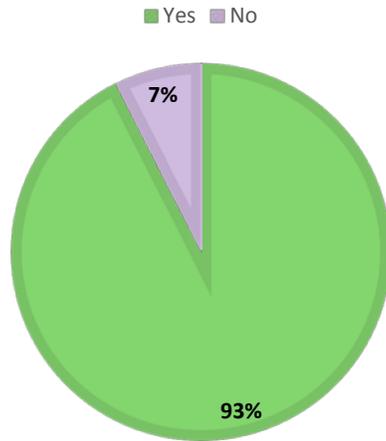
**Are there other priorities not listed in this survey that you think are important for the city to consider as part of the Comprehensive Plan?**

**Other Comments?**

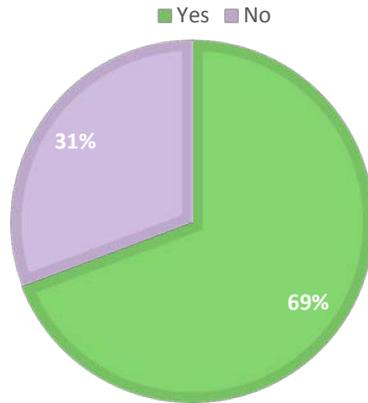
*The recurring themes emerging from open ended responses to these 2 questions include the following:*

- **Affordability of living in Asheville** - responses focused on concerns around housing costs, low wages, homelessness, cost of commercial space for small businesses, access to mental health services, and high taxes
- **Prioritizing livability** - responses included many concerns that the city prioritizes tourism over livability, expressed concerns about excessive hotels being constructed, and concerns about excessive traffic congestion
- **Preserving Asheville's unique culture** - responses often emphasized maintaining this culture by prioritizing small, local business over bigger businesses and chains and supporting the arts
- **Pedestrian/Bicycling Infrastructure** - many responses expressed a desire for more comprehensive infrastructure for both walking and biking within the city and connecting to surrounding areas
- **Preserving the environment** – Responses emphasized cleaner, more efficient energy, prioritizing green spaces, and protecting forests and rivers
- **Promoting diversity and equity** -responses included concerns about the lack of racial diversity in Asheville, the inclusion and resources of minority communities and comments about the need to encourage minority business ownership

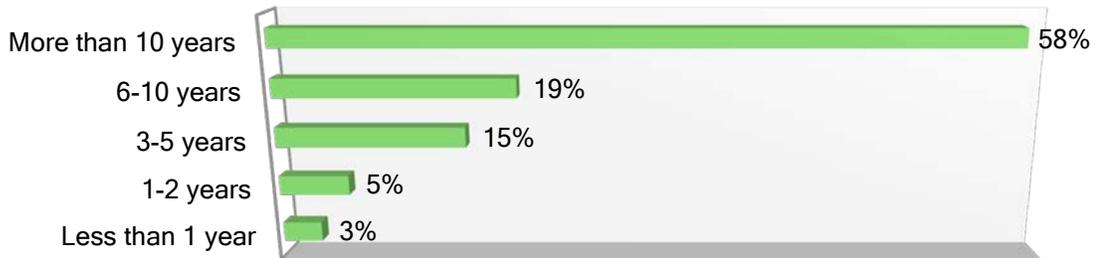
**Do you live in Asheville?**



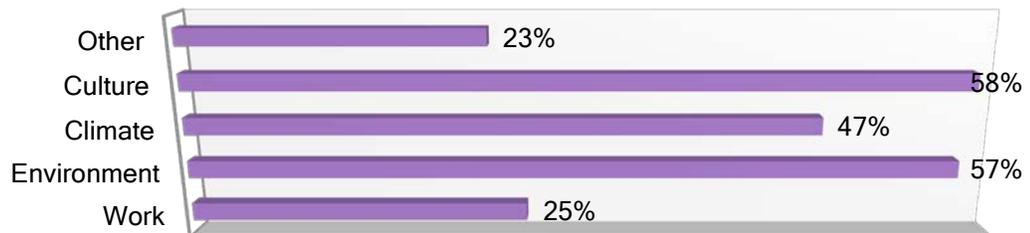
**Do you work in Asheville?**



**If you are a resident, how long have you lived here?**

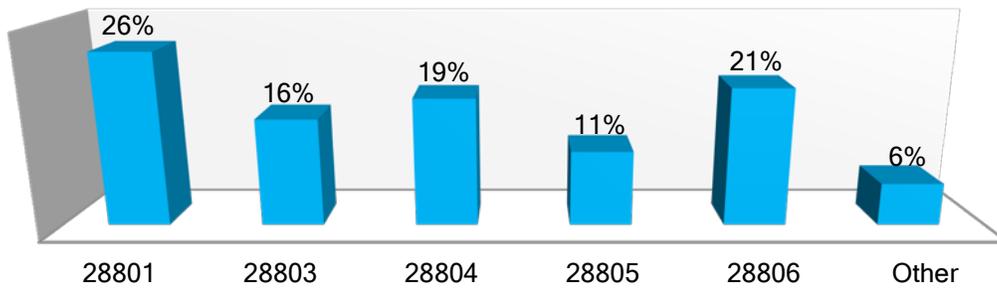


**If you are a resident, why do you choose to live here?**



*Culture and environment are the 2 most popular reasons among respondents for living in Asheville.*

**What is your zip code?**



**What is your age?**

