

Gloucester County Comp Plan Survey

November 2024

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Presentation Structure

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Methodology

Methodology

Sample

432 respondents were recruited online between **October 10th and November 11th, 2024** using targeted ads on various platforms (e.g., social media, apps for Android and IOS) as well as online survey panels. Using data from the **US Census Bureau**, this survey employed quotas to match the distribution of **race, ethnicity, age, and gender** in Gloucester County, ensuring that the sample represents the entire population of the area.

Weighting

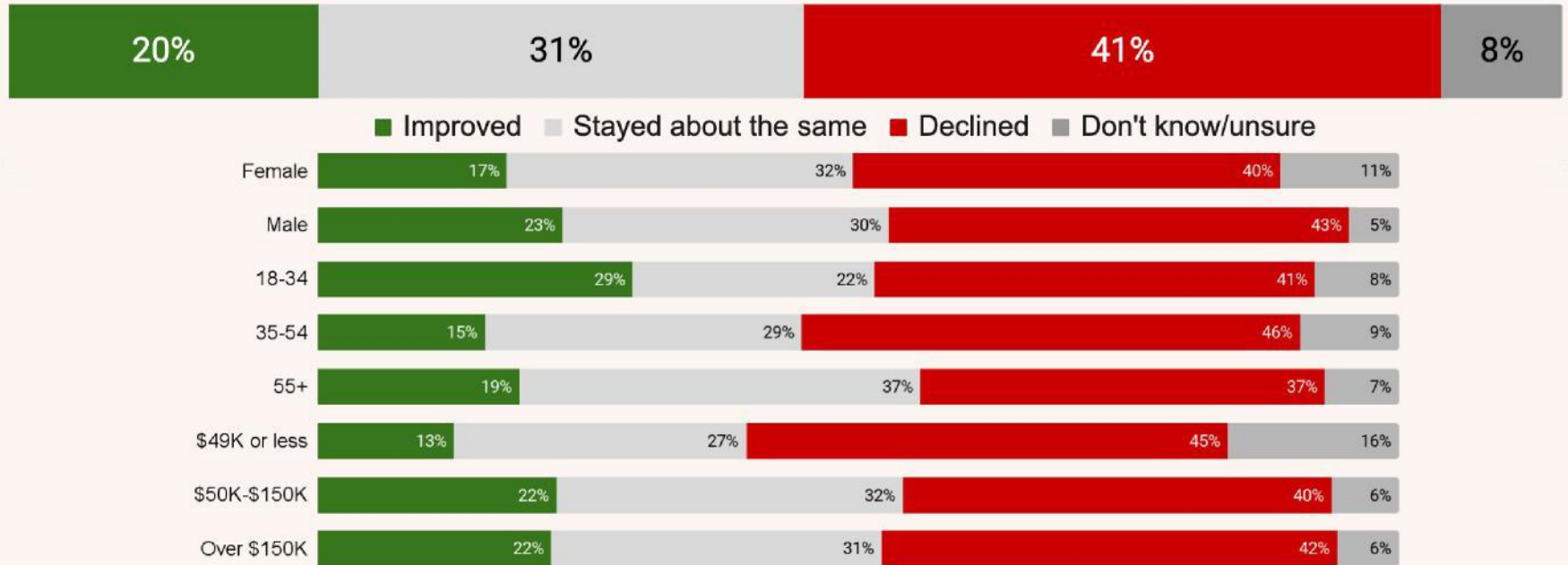
To make sure the sample is representative, a technique called **rake-weighting** was used to balance out any remaining differences between the makeup of the survey respondents and the community. This process serves as a **statistical safeguard** against any demographic group being overrepresented or underrepresented in the final score calculations by giving **overrepresented groups a lower weight** and **underrepresented groups a higher weight**.

| 02

Overall Experience Living in Gloucester County

Overall Experience: 51% of respondents think that the overall experience living in Gloucester has improved or stayed the same in the last 10 years. 41% of respondents think that the overall experience living in Gloucester has declined.

Q2: Thinking about your community ten years ago, would you say your overall experience living in Gloucester has improved, stayed about the same, or declined?



Q3: Why would you say your overall experience living in Gloucester has improved?

- **Improved Roads and County Services:**

Some residents highlighted better-maintained roads and enhanced county services as key improvements, making daily commutes smoother and providing more reliable public amenities.

- **Local Businesses:** Respondents noted the positive impact of new local businesses, which have contributed to the community's economic growth and offered residents more shopping and dining options.

- **Parks and Recreation:** A few residents appreciated recent enhancements to parks and recreational facilities, which have improved outdoor activities and community engagement opportunities.

“More amenities, clearer communication from local government, modern facilities.”

“More opportunities for community involvement and family oriented events.”

“Because Gloucester has really improved and grown as a whole”

Q4: Why would you say your overall experience living in Gloucester has declined?

- **Overdevelopment of the Area:** Overwhelming feedback highlighted dissatisfaction with the rapid urbanization and unchecked growth, which many believe has eroded Gloucester's rural charm, strained local infrastructure and led to overcrowding.
- **Decline in Community Resources:** Respondents noted a significant reduction in essential community services, such as schools, recreational facilities, and family-friendly amenities, which has diminished the quality of life and opportunities for residents.
- **Traffic and Road Maintenance:** Many residents expressed frustration with worsening traffic congestion and poorly maintained road infrastructure, which they feel have not kept pace with the area's growth, resulting in safety concerns and daily inconveniences.

“Uncontrolled growth resulting in too many housing projects being approved, without providing the infrastructure (roads, schools, recreational facilities) to support the extra residents.”

“I loved Gloucester for what a quiet and peaceful town it was. Now it's becoming super industrialized with tons of trees being cut down and tons of businesses and apartments being put up.”

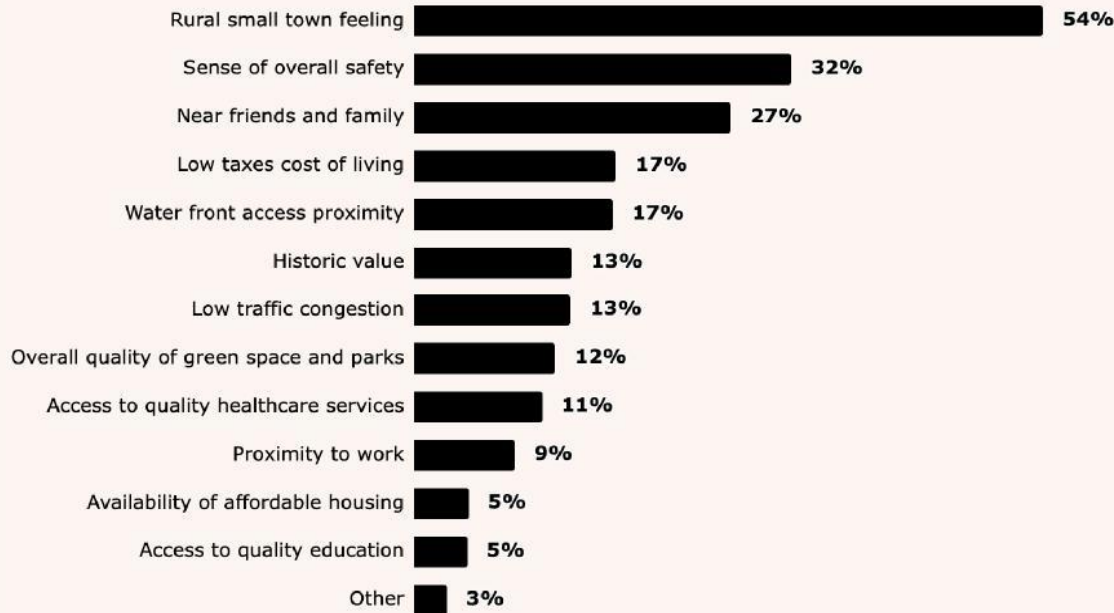
“Traffic has increased, stores and other public places have gotten crowded.”

Primary Reasons for the Decline in Quality of Life

Theme-Why has your quality of life in Gloucester declined?	Number of times mentioned
Traffic/Speeding (particularly along 17)	77
Too much development (residential and/or commercial)	61
Crime/Drug Activity	41
Increased Population	38
Infrastructure and services have not kept up with the growth/Declining Infrastructure	30
Limited recreational or sports opportunities/venues for youth and adults	19
Losing small town charm/rural character	17
Diminished quality of education in GCPS/Limited investment in schools	17
Diminished aesthetics of the community/too much trash, etc.	12
Limited retail and restaurant opportunities	9
Lack of accountability of government leaders	9
Constructing new business spaces rather than using existing, vacant structures	8
High taxes	8
Too much low-income housing	6
Nature of rezoning (encouraging growth)	5
High business turnover rate	5
Noise and light pollution	5

Characteristics of Gloucester: 54% of respondents think that the most desirable characteristic of Gloucester County is the rural small town feel, this is followed by 32% of respondents who think it is the sense of overall safety..

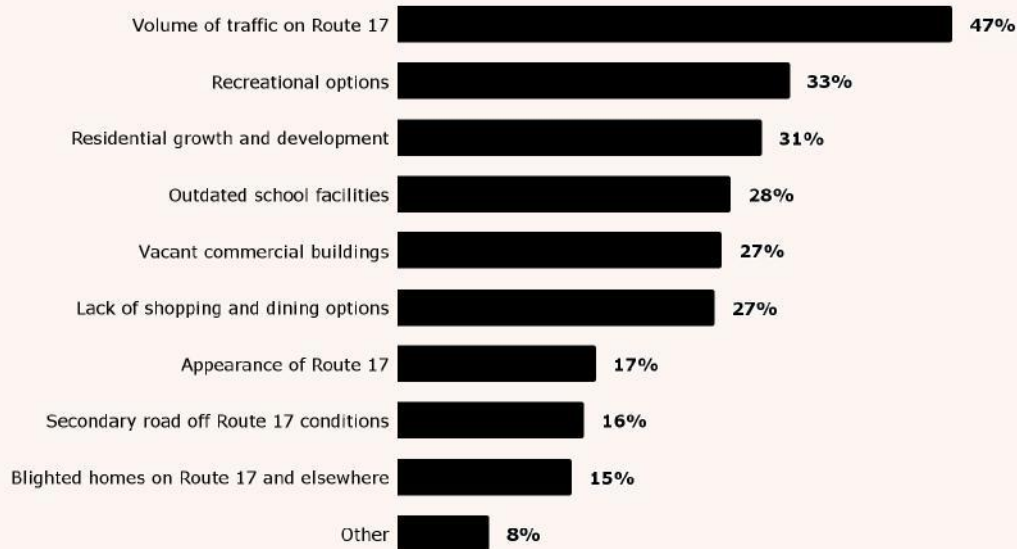
Q5: What do you see as the most desirable characteristics of Gloucester County?



Group Second choice	
Overall	Sense of overall safety (32%)
18-34	Sense of overall safety (38%)
35-54	Near friends and family (33%)
55+	Sense of overall safety (30%)
\$49K or less	Near friends and family (33%)
\$50K-\$150K	Sense of overall safety (30%)
Over \$150K	Sense of overall safety (44%)

Changes to Gloucester County: 47% of respondents report that the top thing that they would want to change about life in Gloucester County is the volume of traffic on Route 17. This was the top choice for most demographic groups except for younger respondents, for whom it is recreational options, and high income respondents, for whom it is residential growth and development.

Q6: What are the top things you would most want to change about life in Gloucester County?



Group	Top choice	Second choice
Overall	Volume of traffic on Route 17 (47%)	Recreational options (33%)
18-34	Recreational options (42%)	Outdated school facilities (39%)
35-54	Volume of traffic on Route 17 (50%)	Recreational options (38%)
55+	Volume of traffic on Route 17 (50%)	Residential growth and development (32%)
\$49K or less	Volume of traffic on Route 17 (43%)	Recreational options (35%)
\$50K-\$150K	Volume of traffic on Route 17 (52%)	Recreational options (33%)
Over \$150K	Residential growth and development (40%)	Volume of traffic on Route 17 (34%)

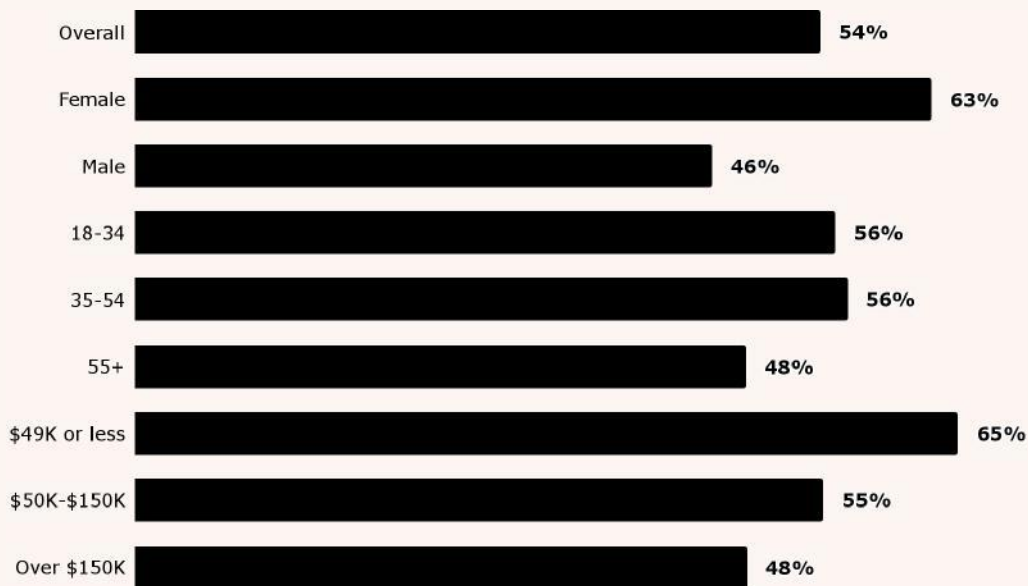
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Employment in Gloucester County

Working in Gloucester County: Of respondents who are employed, 54% work in Gloucester County. A higher percentage of female respondents (63%) work in the county compared to male respondents (46%). Additionally, 48% of high-income respondents work in Gloucester County, which is lower than both middle-income (55%) and low-income (65%) respondents.

Q7: Do you work in Gloucester County?

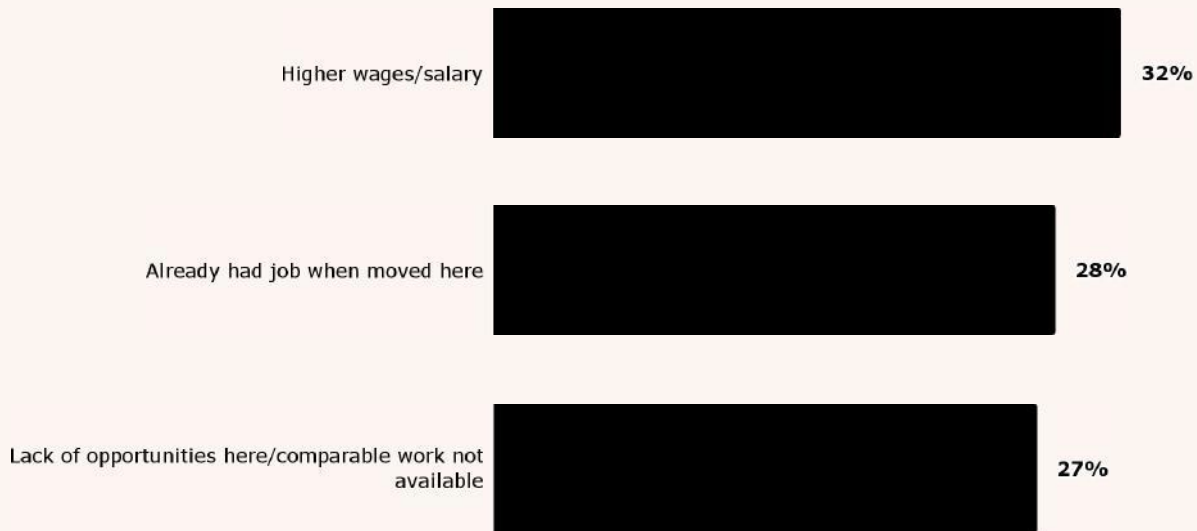
% Who work in Gloucester County



** not including respondents who are unemployed, retired or permanently disabled*

Working outside Gloucester County: Of those respondents who are employed and don't work in Gloucester county, 32% say that they work outside Gloucester County because of higher wage/salary and 27% say it is because of lack of opportunities in Gloucester County.

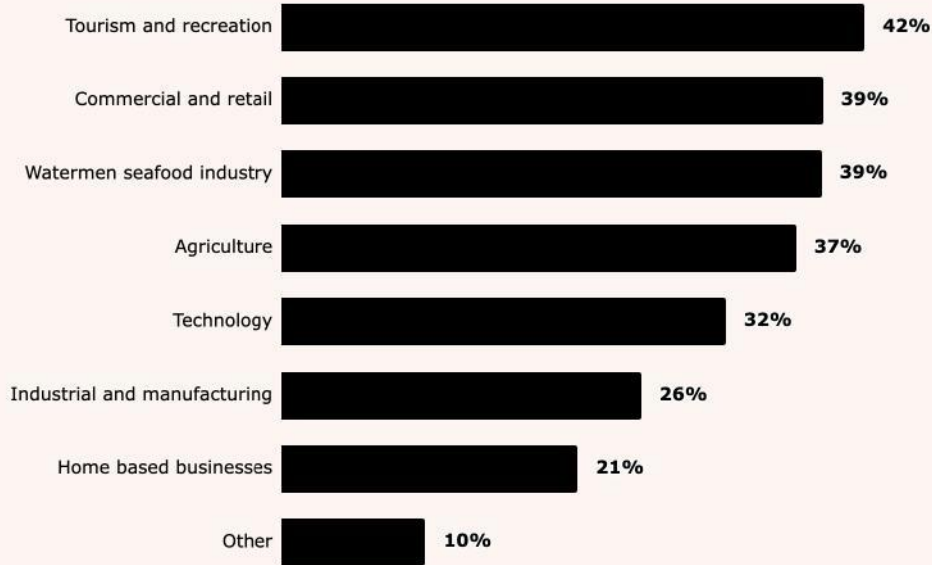
Q8: Why do you work outside of Gloucester County?



** not including respondents who are unemployed, retired or permanently disabled *"Other" option not included because sample size too small*

Business & employment growth: 42% of respondents feel that the most important business and employment growth for residents in Gloucester County is tourism and recreation. This is the top choice for most demographic groups except for younger respondents, for which it is agriculture growth (46%), and low-income respondents, for which it is commercial and retail growth (41%).

Q9: What types of business and employment growth do you feel are important based on the needs of Gloucester County residents?



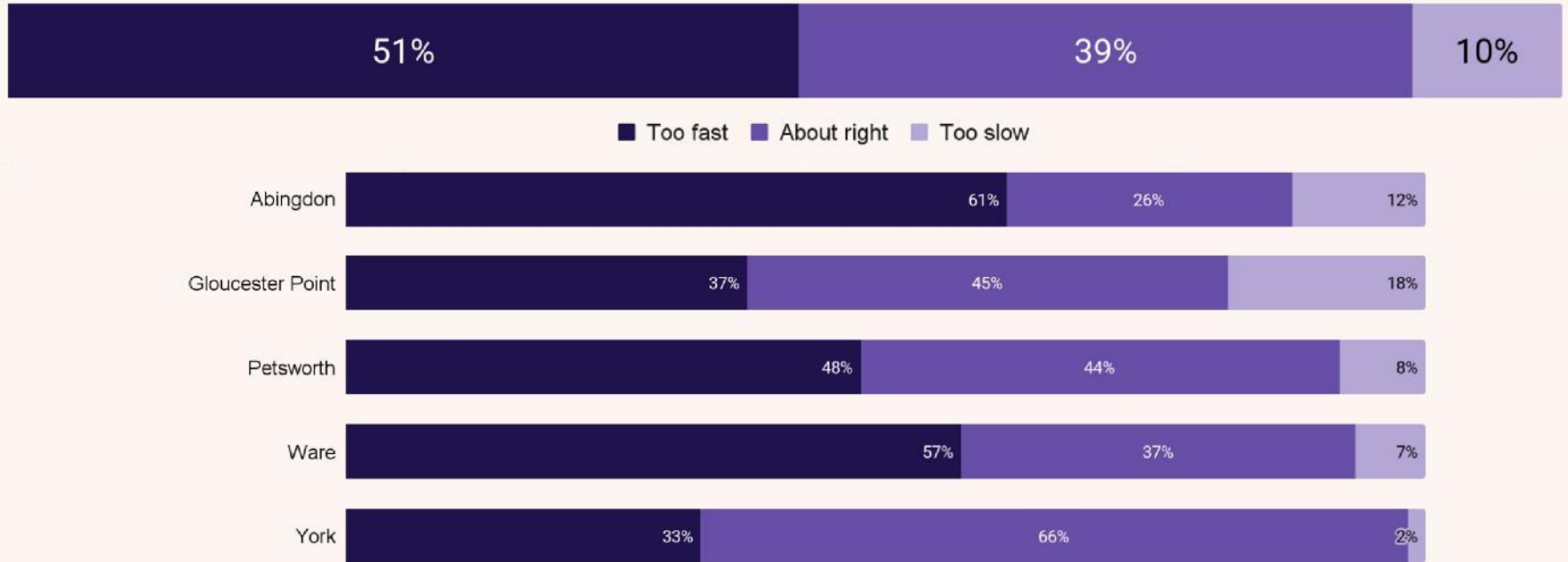
Group Top choice Second choice		
Overall	Tourism and recreation (42%)	Commercial and retail (39%)
18-34	Agriculture (46%)	Watermen seafood industry (43%)
35-54	Tourism and recreation (46%)	Commercial and retail (42%)
55+	Tourism and recreation (40%)	Technology (38%)
\$49K or less	Commercial and retail (41%)	Tourism and recreation (39%)
\$50K-\$150K	Tourism and recreation (43%)	Watermen seafood industry (39%)
Over \$150K	Commercial and retail (46%)	Tourism and recreation (39%)

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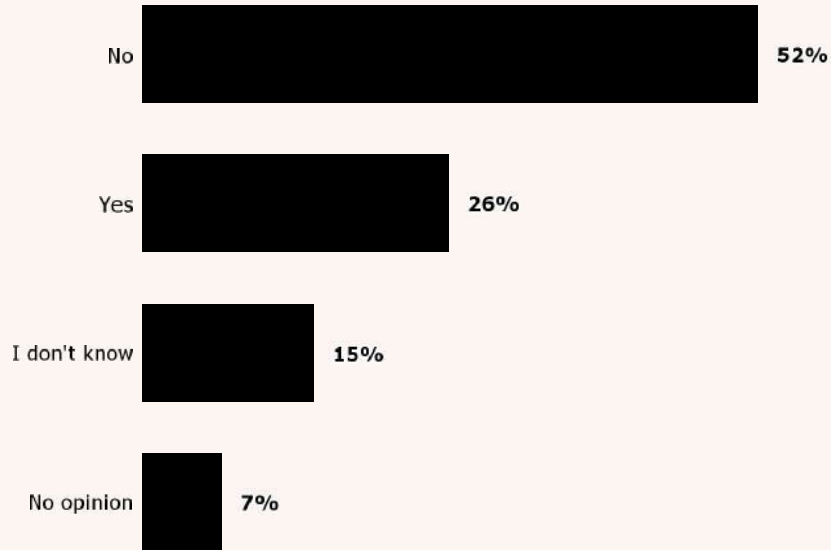
Housing in Gloucester County

Residential growth: 51% of respondents think that growth in their district is too fast and 39% think it's about right. Abingdon has the highest percentage of respondents who think growth is too fast, with 61%, followed by Ware, where 57% think that the growth it too fast.

Q10: In your district, do you think the residential growth is..,



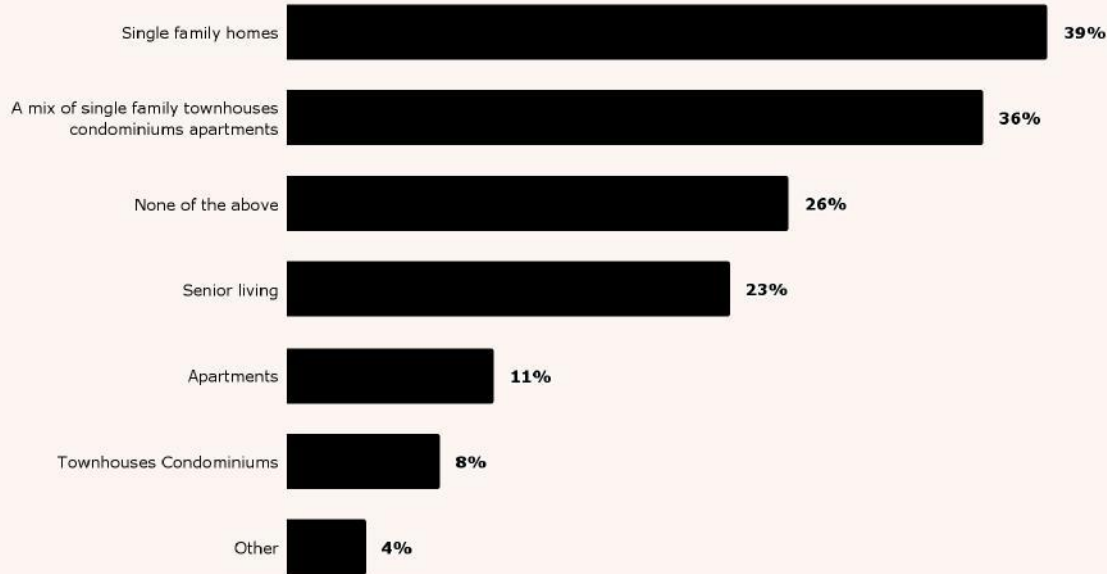
Adequate affordable housing: Most respondents (52%) do not believe there is an adequate amount of affordable housing in Gloucester County. Low-income respondents and respondents from Ware had the highest percentages of respondents who don't think there is enough affordable housing (66% and 58%, respectively).
Q11: Do you feel there is an adequate amount of affordable housing in Gloucester County?



Group	%No	% Yes
18-34	52%	34%
35-54	54%	26%
55+	52%	22%
\$49K or less	66%	18%
\$50K-\$150K	53%	29%
Over \$150K	43%	32%
Abingdon	50%	33%
Gloucester Point	49%	20%
Petsworth	56%	29%
Ware	58%	24%
York	47%	20%

New housing: 39% of respondents think that single-family homes are the new type of housing needed in Gloucester County, followed by 36% who think it is a mix of single-family, townhouses/condominiums & apartments. These are the top two choices across all demographic groups except for older respondents, whose top choice was senior living (38%)

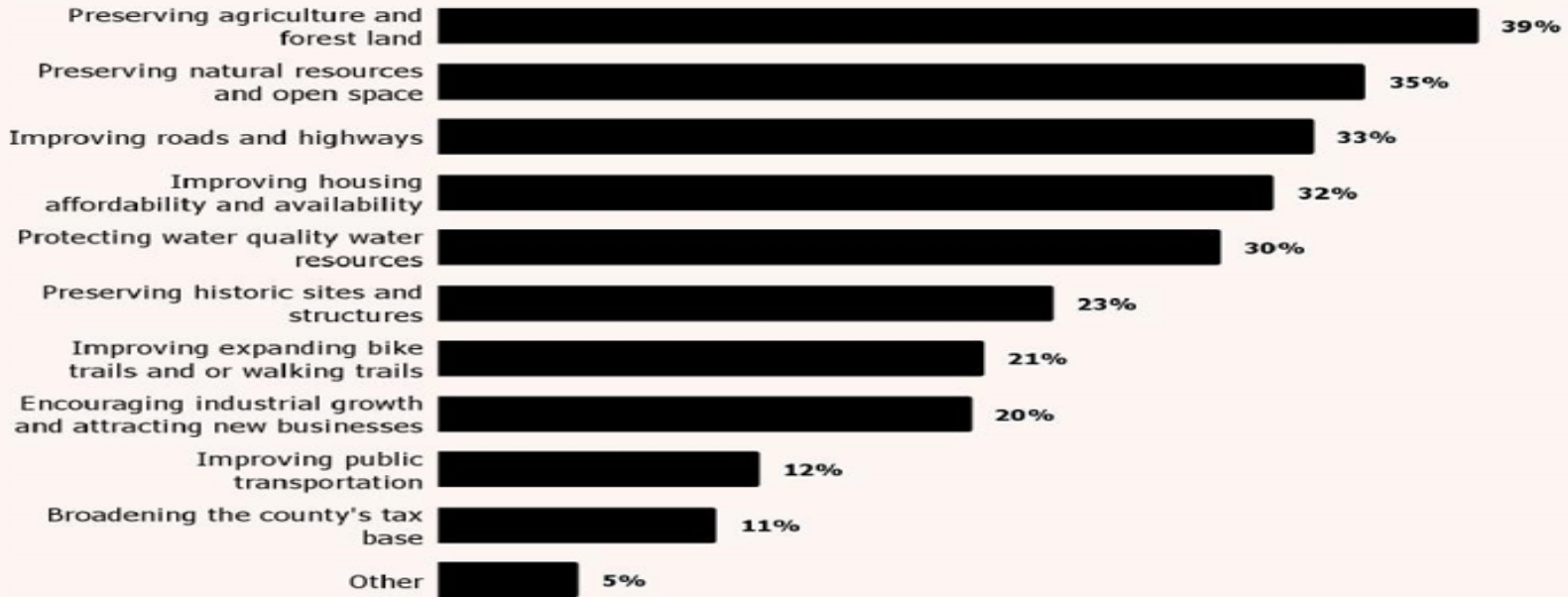
Q12: What types of new housing do you think are needed in Gloucester County?



Group	% Single family homes	% A mix of single-family, townhouses /condos & apartments
18-34	39%	38%
35-54	45%	40%
55+	36%	33%
\$49K or less	39%	39%
\$50K-\$150K	37%	36%
Over \$150K	53%	39%
Abingdon	36%	32%
Gloucester Point	44%	44%
Petsworth	37%	38%
Ware	45%	28%
York	44%	25%

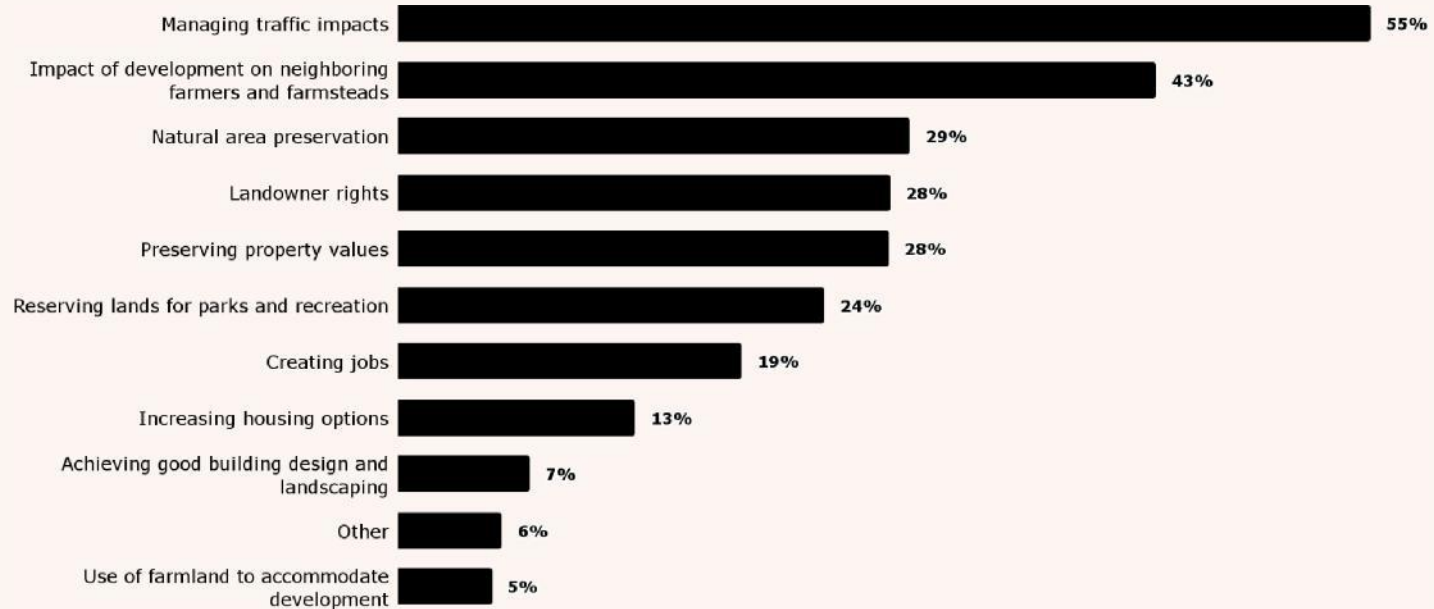
Growth and development: 39% of respondents think that the most important factor for the future growth and development of Gloucester County is preserving agriculture and forest land. This is the top choice across most demographic groups except for low-income respondents and respondents from the Gloucester Point district, for whom it is improving housing affordability and availability. Respondents from the York district think protecting water quality is the most important.

Q13: In your opinion, which of the following are the most important factors for the future growth and development of Gloucester County?



Residential and commercial development: 55% of respondents think that the most important factor in considering future residential and commercial development proposals is managing traffic impacts, followed by 43% who think it is the impact of development on neighboring farmers and farmsteads.

Q14: In your opinion, which of the following are the most important things for Gloucester County to keep in mind while considering future residential and commercial development proposals?

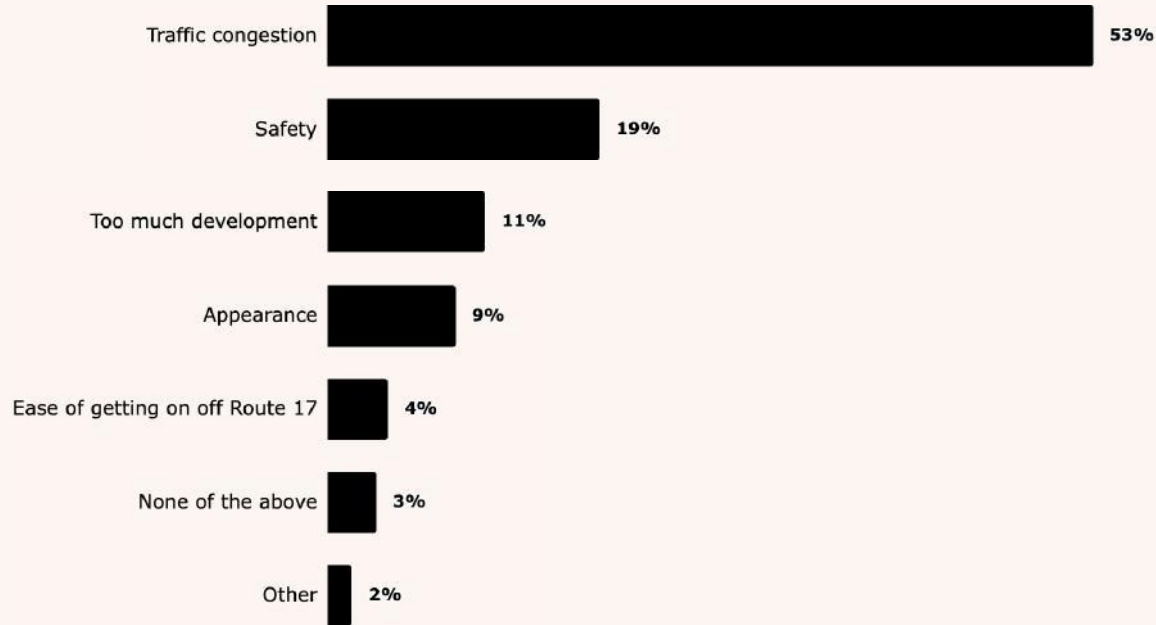


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Route 17 and Transportation Options

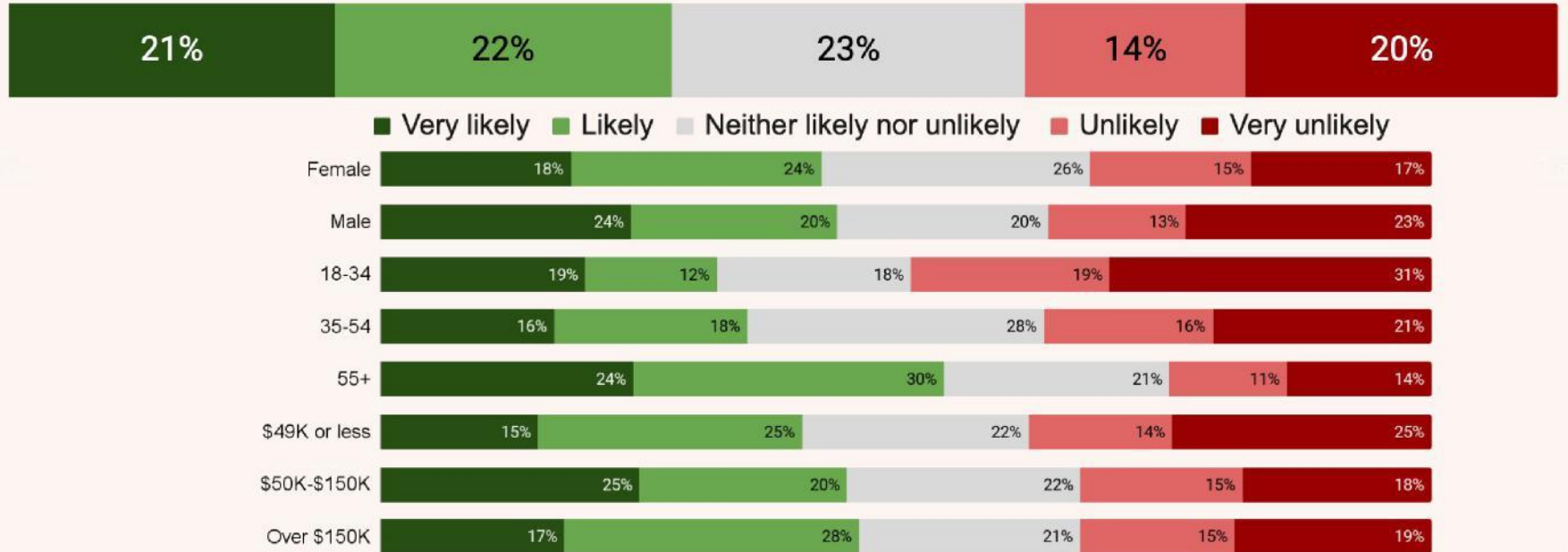
Issues with Route 17 Corridor: The majority (53%) of respondents think that the biggest issue with the Route 17 corridor is traffic congestion, while a further 19% of respondents think it is safety. These are the top two concerns across all districts and demographic groups.

Q15: In your opinion, what is the biggest issue when it comes to the Route 17 corridor?



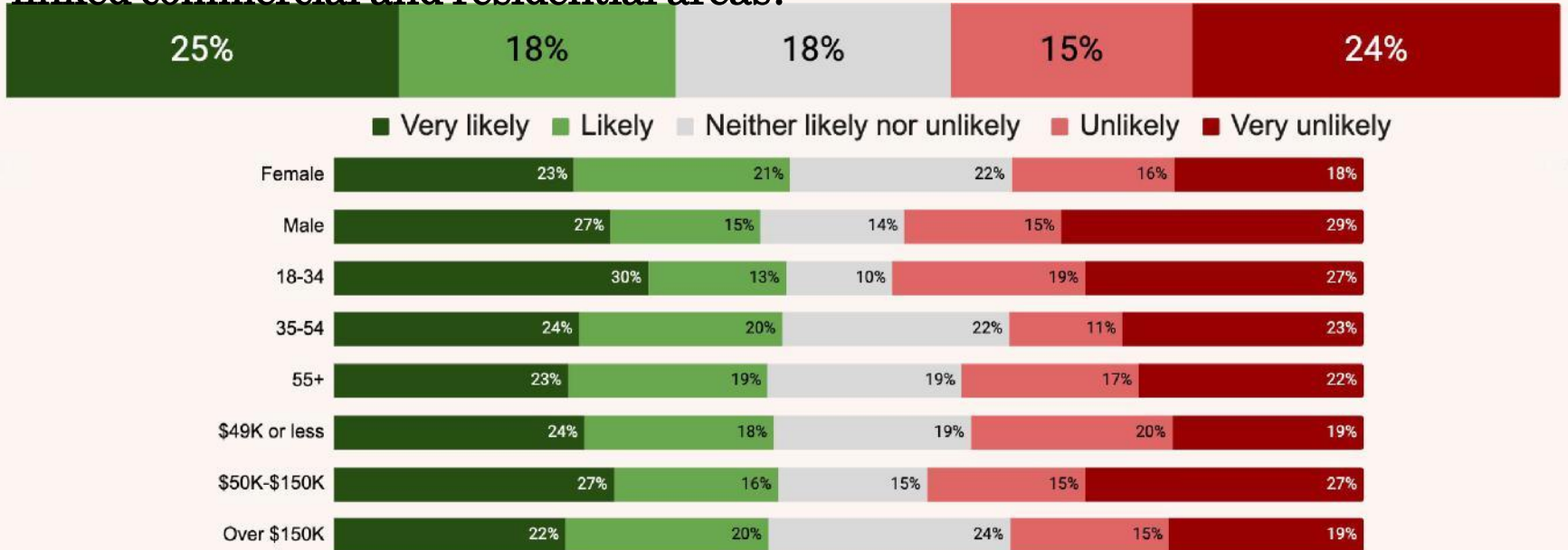
Route 17 alternatives: 43% of respondents are likely (likely or very likely) to support purchasing private property to create a public route as an alternative to Route 17, whereas 34% of respondents are unlikely (unlikely or very unlikely) to support this option. Older respondents (aged 55+) are the most likely to support this (54%) and younger respondents (18–34) are the least likely to support this (31%).

Q16: How likely are you to support purchasing private property from a willing seller to create a public route as an alternative to Route 17?



Bicycle & pedestrian facilities: 43% of respondents are likely (likely or very likely) to utilize bicycle and pedestrian facilities if they linked commercial and residential areas, whereas 39% of respondents are unlikely (unlikely or very unlikely) to utilize this. A larger percentage of younger respondents are unlikely (46%) to utilize this in comparison to older respondents. Similarly, middle-income respondents are less likely to utilize this (42%) in comparison to low and high-income respondents.

Q17: How likely would you be to utilize bicycle and pedestrian facilities if they linked commercial and residential areas?



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Summary of Findings

Summary

Overall Experience Living in Gloucester County	Employment in Gloucester County	Housing in Gloucester County
<u>Overall experience</u> 51% improved or stayed the same 41% decline	<u>Work Outside Gloucester County</u> 46% work outside Gloucester, primarily for higher wages	<u>Residential Growth</u> 51% Too fast 39% About right 10% Too slow
<u>Top Characteristics of Gloucester County</u> #1 Rural Small-town feeling #2 Sense of overall safety	<u>Top Business & Employment Growth Need</u> #1 Tourism and recreation #2 Commercial and retail	<u>Adequate affordable housing</u> 26% enough affordable housing 52% not enough affordable housing

Summary

Housing in Gloucester County	Route 17 and Transportation Options
<p><u>Top new types of housing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">#1 Single-family homes#2 A mix of single-family, townhouses/condominiums & apartments	<p><u>Top issue with Route 17 Corridor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">#1 Traffic congestion#2 Safety
<p><u>Factors for future growth & development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">#1 Preserving agriculture and forest land#2 Preserving natural resources and open space	<p><u>Purchasing Private Property for an Alternative to Route 17</u></p> <p>43% likely support 34% unlikely support</p>