

Regional Tourism Organization 4

Regional Resident Sentiment Survey
Community of Focus Breakout (Stratford)

May 2025

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Acknowledgments

We acknowledge that the region encompassing Huron County, Perth County, Waterloo Region, and Wellington County is the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabek, and Haudenosaunee Peoples. These lands have long been a place of gathering, exchange, and connection for Indigenous Peoples. We recognize that each place within this territory holds its own history of settlement and colonialism, and that the 11 treaties and agreements related to these lands tell only a small part of the larger story.

This land acknowledgment is a declaration of our collective responsibility to honour this place and its peoples' histories, rights, and continued presence. It is also implicitly a recognition of the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and create on this territory, and we commit to listening, learning, and working in partnership with Indigenous communities towards truth, reconciliation, and decolonization.

Destination Partners

The Regional Resident Sentiment Survey was made possible through a collaboration between Regional Tourism Organization 4 and three destination partners, including Destination Stratford. Along with appreciation for the support provided by these partners, special thanks go to the individuals at each organization, who dedicated significant time, and effort to the shaping and dissemination of the survey.



Funding Support

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Residents

To everyone that took the time to complete the questionnaire for this important survey, thank you! Your insight, input, and feedback is greatly appreciated, valued, and will serve to inform decision-making around tourism in the region moving forward.

Introduction

Background and Context

In Fall 2024, under the leadership of RTO4, three destination organizations came together to co-design, develop, and disseminate a survey to gauge resident sentiment around tourism.

Goal

The Regional Resident Sentiment Survey aimed to understand the perceptions, attitudes, and feelings of residents towards tourism.

Objectives

1. **Assess resident perceptions:** Identify how residents in the three target destinations feel about the impact of tourism on their quality of life, local economy, and community identity.
2. **Measure support for tourism:** Gauge resident support for current and future tourism development in their communities.
3. **Identify key concerns:** Uncover residents' concerns, if any, regarding tourism, including potential issues related to environmental, social, or economic impacts.

Design and Development

The research, design, and development process was facilitated by Bannikin, a purposeful company working within and beyond travel and tourism. Data analysis and preparation of this report was also completed by Bannikin.



Methodology and Sample

Methodology

1. Review of background and contextual documentation, including documents shared by RTO4 and destination partners.
2. Key informant interviews with RTO4 and destination partners around survey needs, expectations, challenges, and lines of inquiry.
3. Jurisdictional scan for good practices in conducting resident sentiment surveys focussed on tourism.
4. Co-design of survey system with destination partners and development of related materials, including a design guide, questionnaire, and implementation plan.
5. The questionnaire was made up of 15-21 questions, including mandatory and optional questions, grouped into the following sections: Introduction, Your Community, Tourism and You, Tourism and Your Community, Tourism Development and Marketing, Community-specific Questions, About You, and Thank You.
6. Destination partner dissemination of questionnaire took place across five weeks (35 days) from Monday 3 March 2025 to Sunday 6 April 2025.
7. Data analysis, synthesis, and presentation via one main report and four confidential community breakout reports.

Sample

Target: residents aged 18 or above living in specific catchment areas within three communities of focus. Stratford's catchment area included the area within 4km of Stratford City Hall.

Sample size: the total number of qualified responses to the questionnaire was 1716, and this breaks out into robust sample sizes for each catchment area within the three communities of focus, based on population size, a confidence level of 95% and a 5% margin of error.

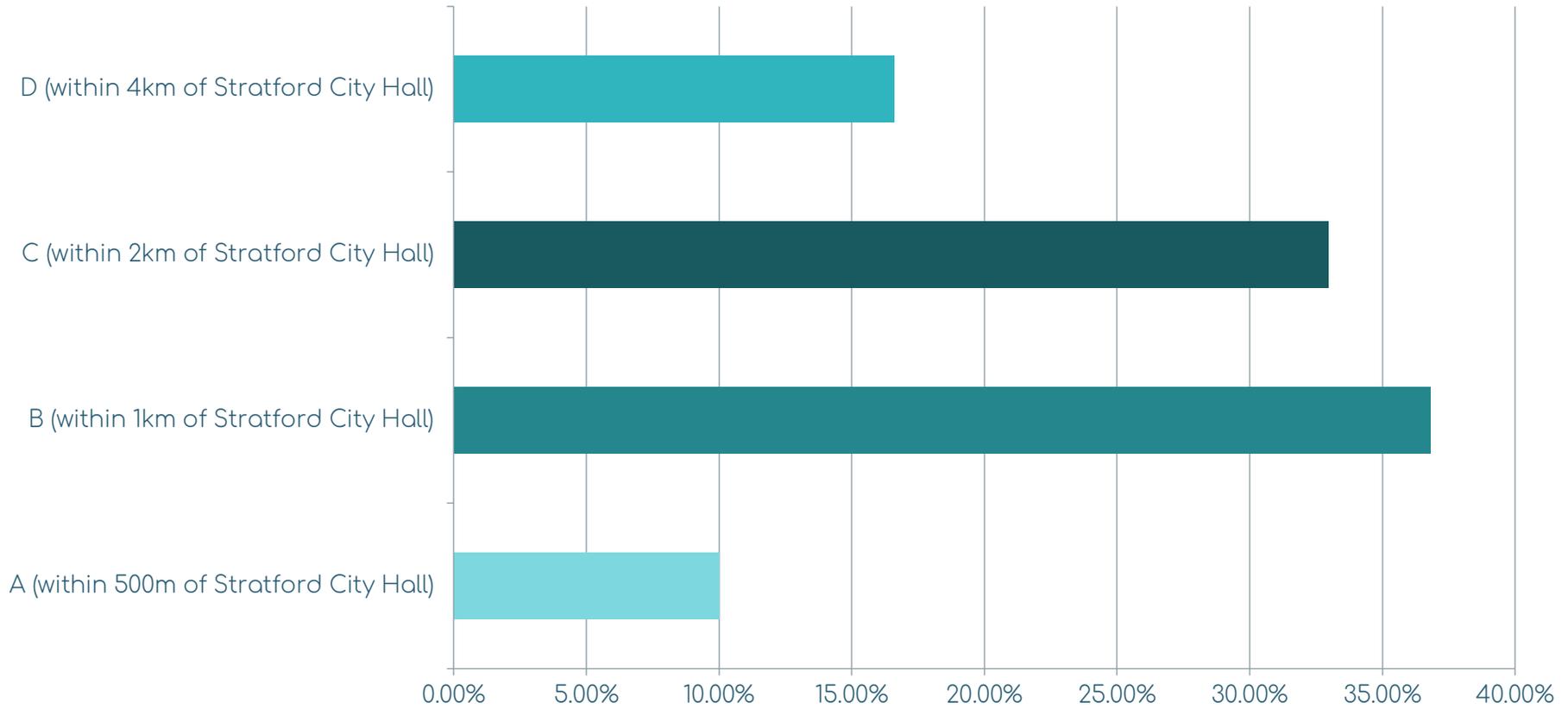
Note to Reader

- Some of the questions were optional; therefore, it is unknown whether the samples proportionally represent the populations in the catchment areas within each community of focus. The total response to each question is also identified in the report where appropriate.
- There were an additional 173 responses to the survey from individuals who either lived in Ontario Tourism Region 4 but not within the catchment areas for each community of focus or did not live in Ontario Tourism Region 4, so these responses were removed from the data analyzed for this report.
- All qualitative data that could be reasonably connected to an individual, business, organization, or community has been removed as part of the analysis process, and where the language of “town” or “downtown” is quoted, this is not referring to any one community or place.

Survey Sample Snapshot

Location

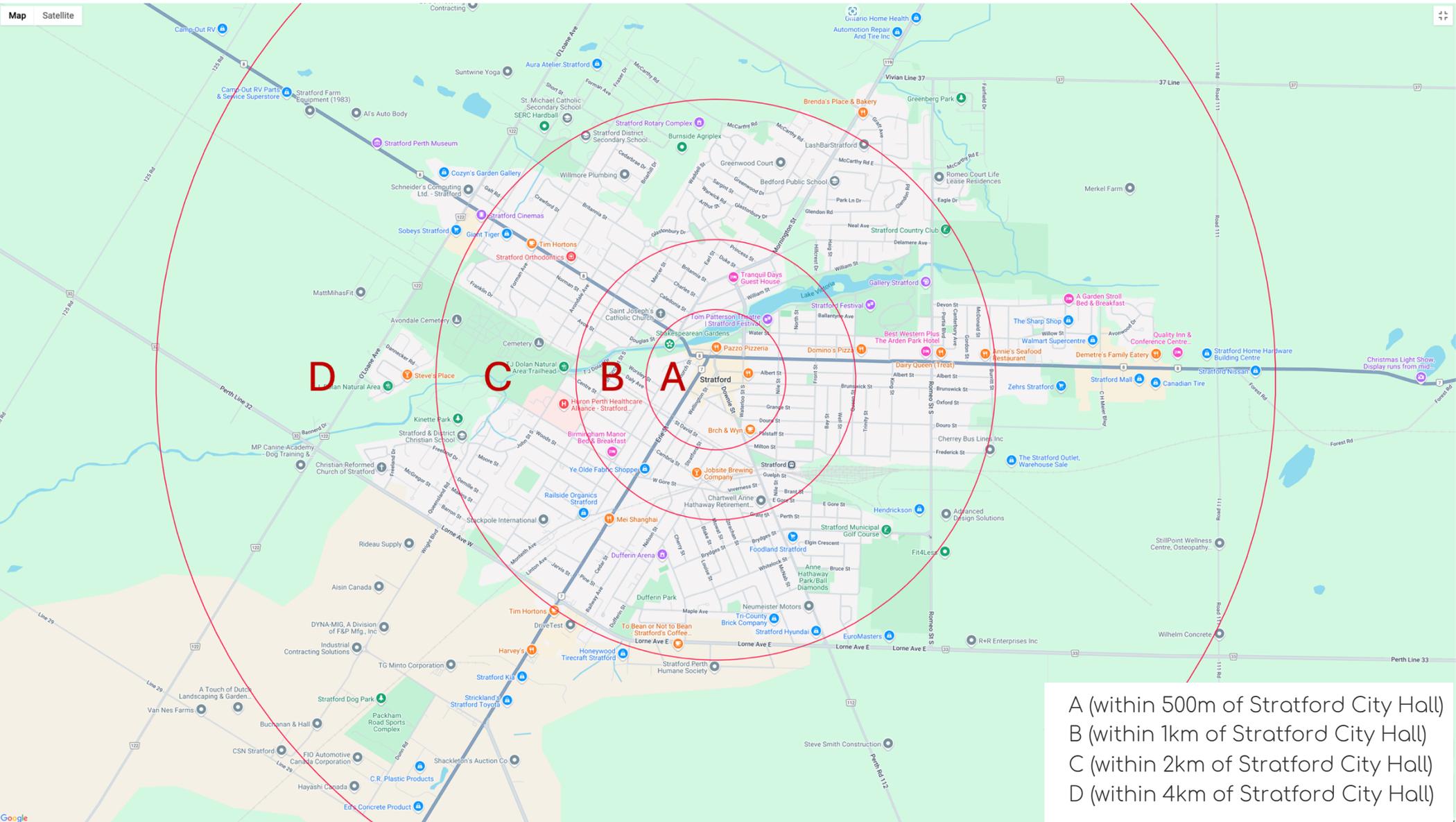
Whereabouts in Stratford do you live?



Answer Choices (Corresponding map on next page)

- A (within 500m of Stratford City Hall)
- B (within 1km of Stratford City Hall)
- C (within 2km of Stratford City Hall)
- D (within 4km of Stratford City Hall)
- Prefer not to answer

	Responses	
	10.00%	47
	36.81%	173
	32.98%	155
	16.60%	78
	3.62%	17
Total		470



A (within 500m of Stratford City Hall)
B (within 1km of Stratford City Hall)
C (within 2km of Stratford City Hall)
D (within 4km of Stratford City Hall)

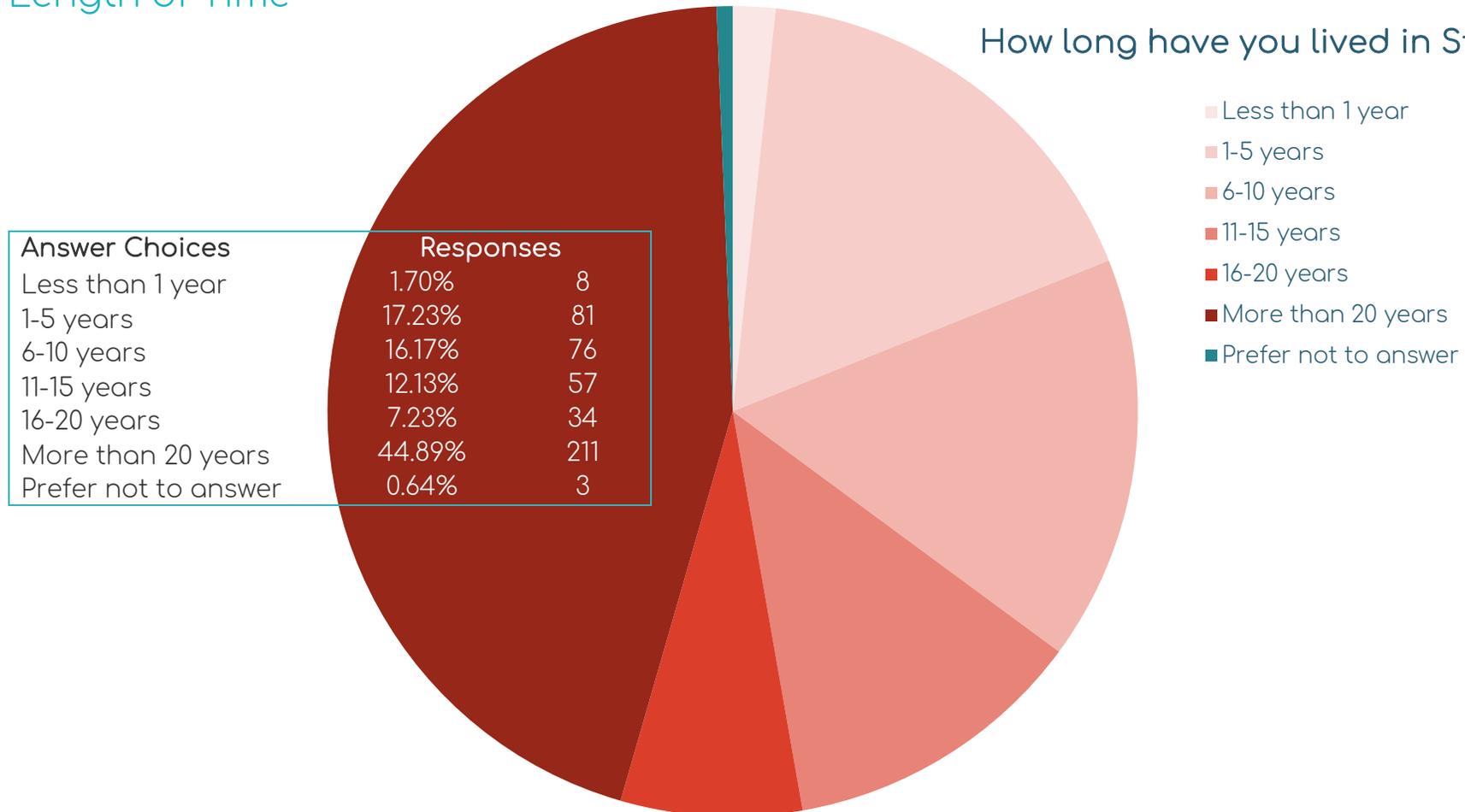
Residency

Status

Answer Choices	Responses	
I am a year-round resident of Stratford	97.66%	459
I live in Stratford for an extended period of time each year (e.g., weekends, seasonally, etc.)	1.70%	8
Prefer not to answer	0.64%	3
	Total	470

Length of Time

How long have you lived in Stratford?

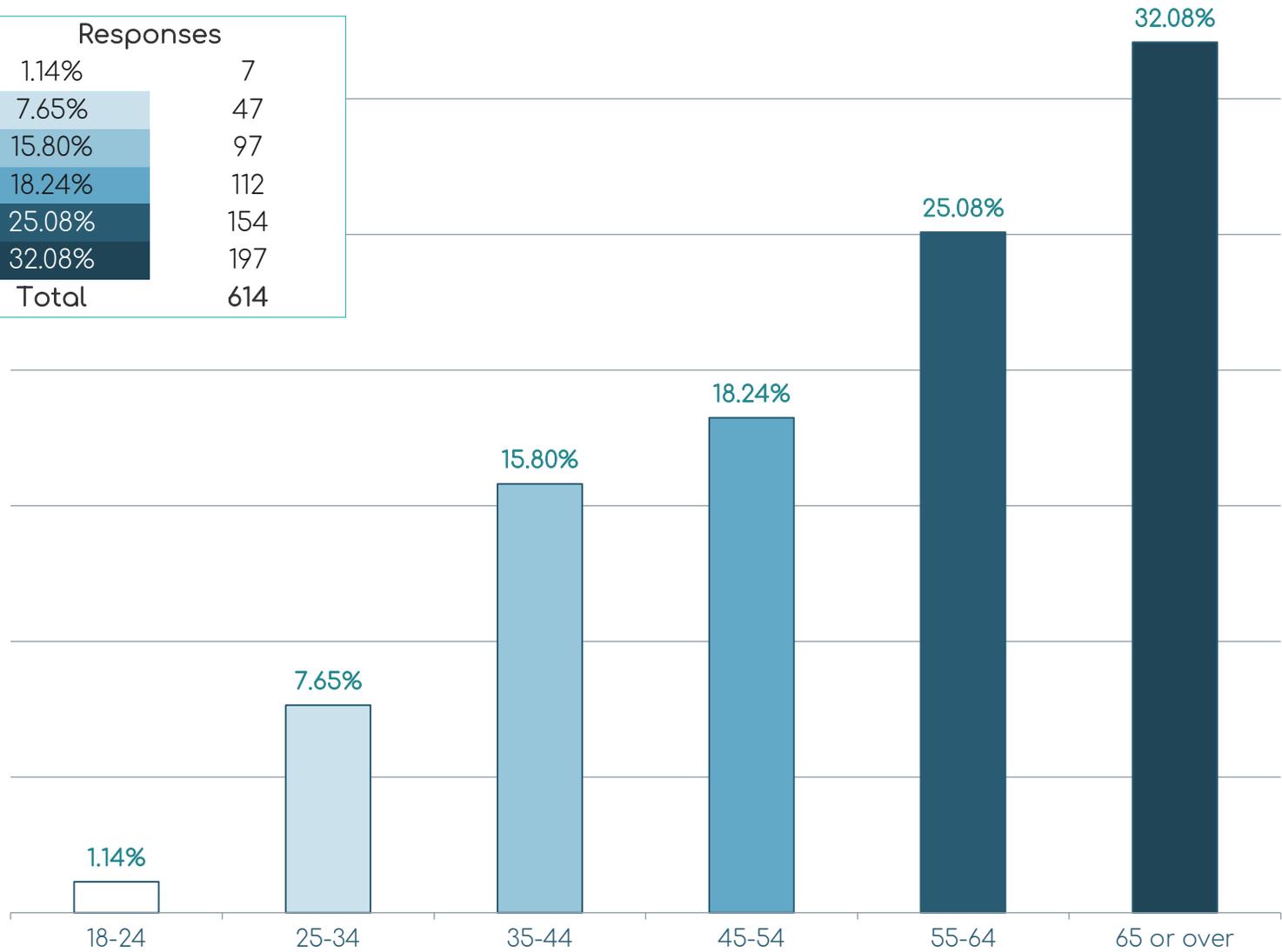


Demographics

Age

What is your age?

Answer Choices	Responses	
18-24	1.14%	7
25-34	7.65%	47
35-44	15.80%	97
45-54	18.24%	112
55-64	25.08%	154
65 or over	32.08%	197
Total		614



Identity

Gender

Answer Choices	Responses	
Female/woman/feminine	72.45%	334
Male/man/masculine	24.73%	114
Genderqueer/genderfluid/non-binary	0.87%	4
Two-spirit	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	1.95%	9
	Total	461

Equity-deserving Group

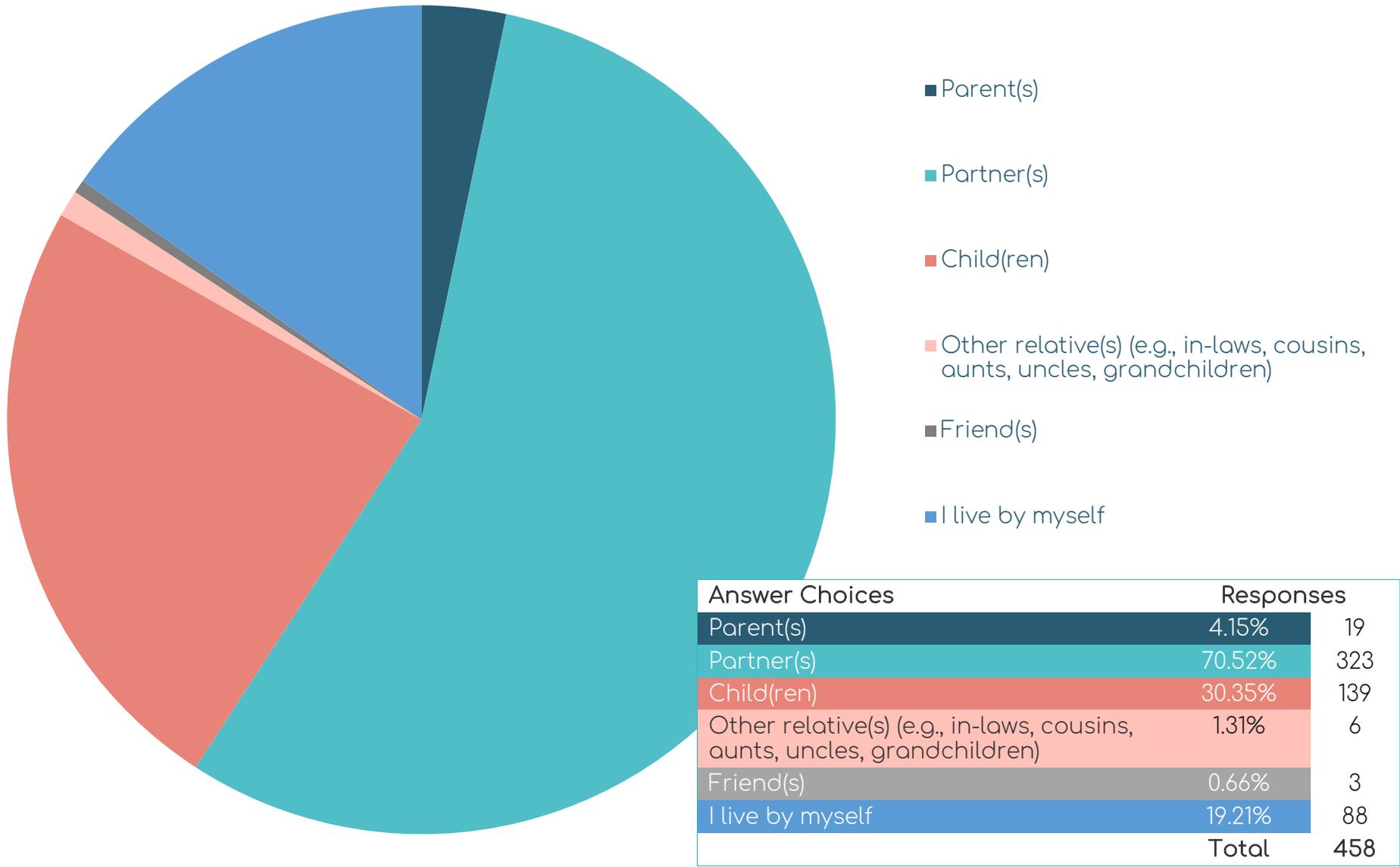
Answer Choices	Responses	
Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, or Inuit, including those with or without treaty status)	0.00%	0
Racialized people or people of colour (non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour, other than Indigenous people)	3.54%	16
People with disabilities (people who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment)	7.30%	33
None of the above	87.83%	397
Unsure	1.33%	6
	Total	452

Newcomer (immigrated to Canada within the past 5 years)

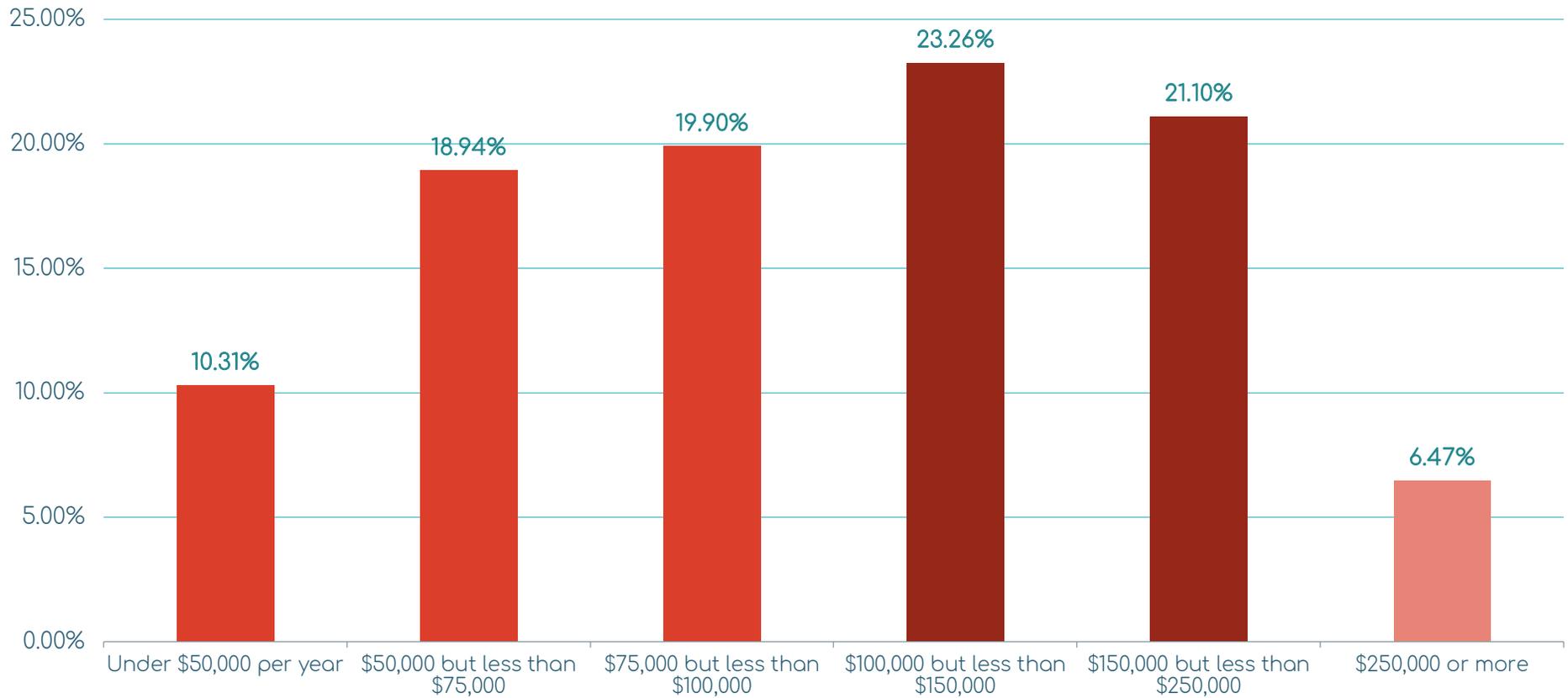
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	1.30%	6
No	98.70%	455
	Total	461

Household

Who else lives in your household? Select all that apply.



What is your household income?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Under \$50,000 per year	10.31%	43
\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	18.94%	79
\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	19.90%	83
\$100,000 but less than \$150,000	23.26%	97
\$150,000 but less than \$250,000	21.10%	88
\$250,000 or more	6.47%	27
	Total	417

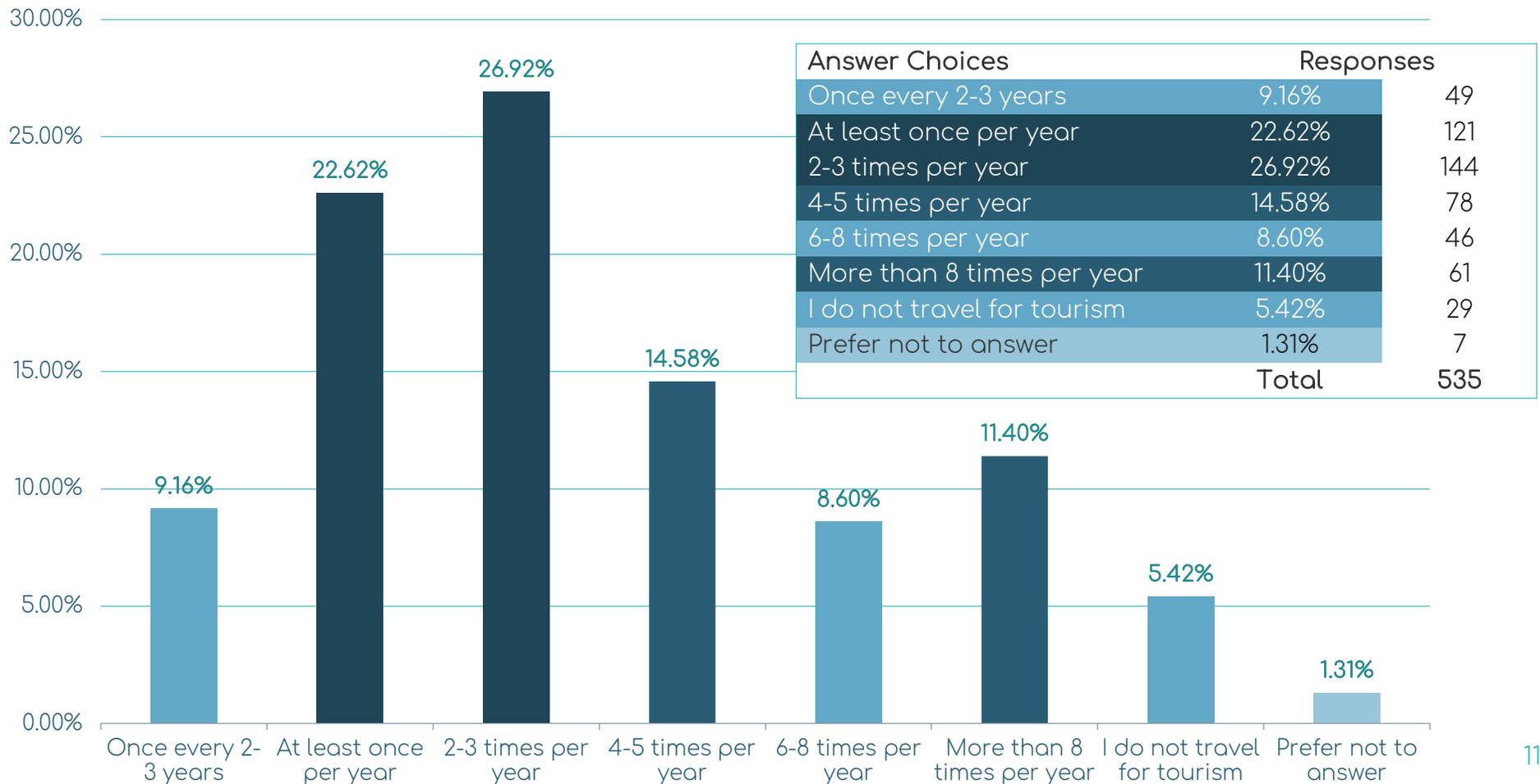
Connection to Travel and Tourism

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism follows the World Tourism Organization's definition of tourism, which refers to the activities of people travelling to and staying in places (for up to one year) outside of their usual environment, for leisure, business, or other purposes.

For this survey, "visitors" are defined as individuals engaged in tourism. Typically, this includes anyone who has traveled more than 40km from home.

Travel for Tourism

How often do you travel for tourism?



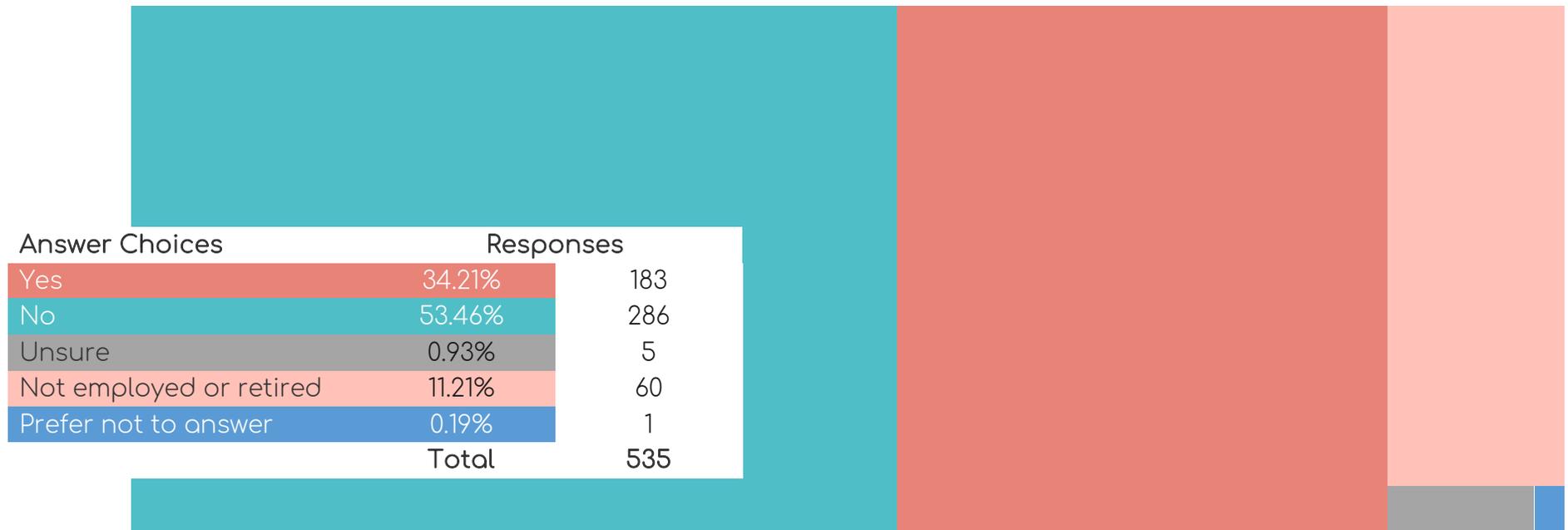
Work in Tourism

Businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors through the delivery of services and experiences are considered to be operating within the tourism sector.

In Canada, this includes but is not limited to:

- **accommodation providers** (hotels, motels, resorts, short-term rentals, campgrounds, RV parks...)
- **food and beverage companies** (restaurants, cafés, pubs...)
- **recreation and entertainment providers** (museums, cultural institutions, parks, sports venues, attractions, farmers' markets, agritourism operators...)
- **transportation providers** (airlines, trains, ferries, car rentals...)
- **travel service providers** (travel agencies, visitor information centres, destination organizations...)
- **other** (including retail businesses catering to visitors, such as gift shops, boutiques and specialty stores, art galleries, and artisan shops...)

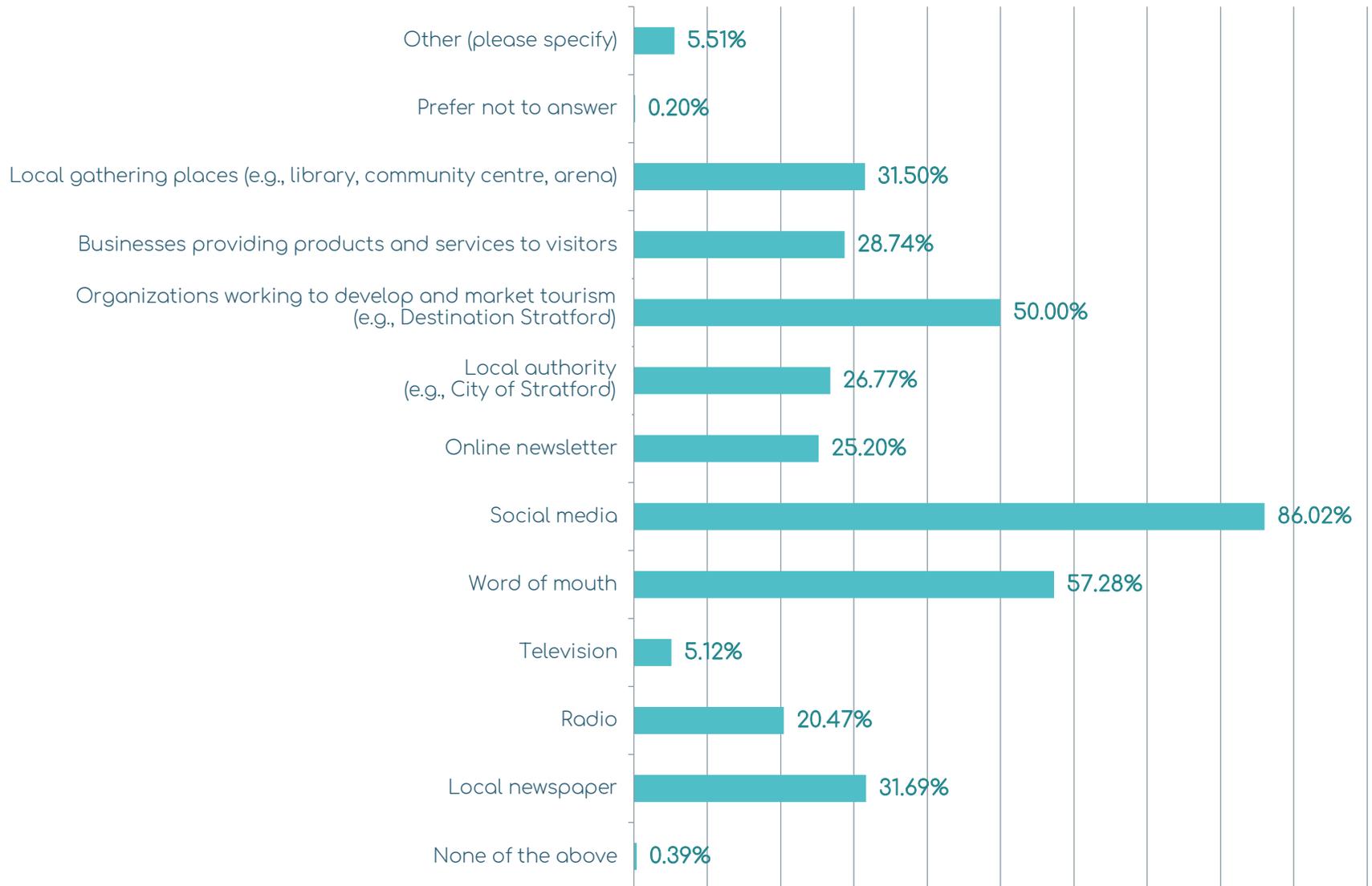
Do you work in or own a business or organization that is operating within the tourism sector?



Topline Findings

Tourism Awareness and Participation

Tourism Information Sources, as Identified by Residents



Answer Choices	Responses	
None of the above	0.39%	2
Local newspaper	31.69%	161
Radio	20.47%	104
Television	5.12%	26
Word of mouth	57.28%	291
Social media	86.02%	437
Online newsletter	25.20%	128
Local authority (e.g., City of Stratford)	26.77%	136
Organizations working to develop and market tourism (e.g., Destination Stratford)	50.00%	254
Businesses providing products and services to visitors	28.74%	146
Local gathering places (e.g., library, community centre, arena)	31.50%	160
Prefer not to answer	0.20%	1
Other (please specify)	5.51%	28
	Total	508

Other

Posters and flyers found in various locations (e.g., downtown, libraries, stores, cafes, community bulletin boards, etc.)

- "Helen at the Green Room from posters in her window. Way more informative than the tourism office"
- "notice board in the mall"
- "Balzac's community bulletin board"
- "Local Paper Stratford Times"
- "Posters downtown"

Websites and online research (e.g., Visit Stratford, business websites, online research using Google, etc.)

- "I'm on the mailing lists of the Stratford Festival, the Summer Music Festival, and Here for Now Theatre"
- "...Specific internet sites i.e. Stratford Festival, Summer music schedule, etc."
- "Visit Stratford website"

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
I am aware of the businesses and organizations in my community that are working to meet the needs of visitors.	29.13%	55.12%	10.04%	3.54%	0.98%	1.18%
I am aware of the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors to my community.	25.59%	58.27%	10.04%	4.53%	0.79%	0.79%
I enjoy the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors to my community.	31.50%	46.06%	16.14%	3.54%	2.17%	0.59%
I am aware of the organization(s) responsible for developing my community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit.	30.71%	50.59%	12.40%	4.13%	1.18%	0.98%
					Total	508

Insights

- Those who are 25-34 year olds are significantly more likely to be aware of the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than all other ages, while 18-24 year olds are less likely to be aware of the same than all other ages.
- Those who are 25-34 year olds are significantly more likely to enjoy the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community than all other age groups, while 18-24 year olds are less likely to enjoy the same than all other ages.
- The closer someone lives to Stratford City Hall the more likely they are aware of the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than those who live further away.
- Those who have lived in Stratford for less than 1 year are significantly more aware and enjoy the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors.
- The longer someone has lived in Stratford, the more likely they are aware of the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit.

- People with disabilities are less likely to enjoy the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors, but more aware of the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than racialized people.
- Those who work or own a business or organization that is operating within the tourism sector are more likely to be aware and enjoy the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than those who do not work or own a business in the tourism sector.
- Those who do not travel for tourism are significantly less likely to be aware and enjoy the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than those who travel.
- Those who live with friends are significantly less likely to be aware and enjoy the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than those who live with parent(s), partner(s), child(ren), other relative(s), or live by themselves.
- Those who make under \$50,000 per year are less likely to be aware and enjoy the businesses and organizations working to meet the needs of visitors; the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors in the community; and the organization(s) responsible for developing the community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit than those who make more per year.

Openness and Willingness to Host

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining members of my community, including family, friends, and neighbours who I invite to my home or an event.	53.27%	32.34%	10.09%	1.87%	1.12%	1.31%
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining family and friends who live outside of my community and come for a visit.	55.51%	34.95%	6.54%	0.56%	1.31%	1.12%
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining people who live outside of my community that I do not know but choose to come for a visit, i.e., visitors.	36.64%	30.47%	20.37%	6.54%	4.30%	1.68%
	Total					535

Insights

- The closer someone lives to Stratford City Hall the more likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, family and friends, or those who live outside of the community they do not know.
- The longer someone has lived in Stratford the slightly less likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, or family and friends.
- A significant majority of racialized people, and people with disabilities are likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, and family and friends. Most racialized people also are likely to welcome those who live outside of the community they do not know, but people with disabilities are divided in half on the same.
- Those who work or own a business or organization that is operating within the tourism sector are slightly more likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, family and friends, or those who live outside of the community they do not know.
- Those who do not travel for tourism are significantly less likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, family and friends, or those who live outside of the community they do not know, than those who travel for tourism.
- Those who make under \$50,000 per year are slightly less likely to receive, interact with, or entertain members of the community; family and friends who live outside the community they don't know, than those who make more per year.

- Those who live with friends are significantly less likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, family and friends, or those who live outside of the community they do not know, than those who live with parent(s), partner(s), child(ren), other relative(s), or live by themselves.
- Those 18-24-year-olds are less likely to welcome and interact with or entertain members of their community, or family and friends, than any other age, but 18-24-year-olds are more likely to welcome and interact with those who live outside the community they do not know.

Impacts of Tourism

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
Tourism in my community is helping to create jobs and attract new businesses.	55.71%	29.72%	7.28%	4.53%	1.18%	1.57%
Tourism in my community is helping to bring people together and strengthen our social fabric.	41.54%	30.31%	15.94%	8.27%	2.76%	1.18%
Tourism in my community is helping to protect the environment and our natural places.	14.17%	21.85%	37.01%	16.73%	4.72%	5.51%
Overall, tourism in my community is creating more positive impact than negative impact.	47.83%	33.46%	10.04%	5.51%	2.36%	0.79%
					Total	508

Insights

- Those who make under \$50,000 per year are less likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; or creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who travel for tourism than those who make more per year. However, those making \$150,000 but less than \$250,000 are less likely to agree that tourism helps protect the environment and natural places than those who make more or less per year.
- Those who live with friend(s) are significantly more likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; and creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who live with parent(s), partner(s), child(ren), other relative(s), or live by themselves.
- Those 25-34 years old are more likely to agree that tourism: helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; and creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who travel for tourism than those who make more per year than all other age groups. However, this same age group comes in second when agreeing that tourism helps protect the environment and natural places, only after those 65 and over.

- Those 18-24 years old are significantly less likely to agree tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; or helps to protect the environment and natural places than all other age groups.
- Those who travel 6-8 times are significantly more likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; helps protect the environment and natural places; and creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who travel for tourism than those who travel more or less.
- Those who do not travel are significantly less likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; helps to protect the environment and the community's natural spaces; or creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who travel for tourism.
- Those who both work or own a business or organization that is operating within the tourism sector, and those who do not, equally agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses.
- Those who work or own a business or organization that is operating within the tourism sector are significantly more likely to agree that tourism helps bring people together and strengthen the community's social fabric; helps protect the environment and natural places; and creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who do not work or own a business in the tourism sector.
- Over 80% of racialized people are more likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses, and bring people together and strengthen the community's social fabric. Additionally, over 90% agree that tourism creates more positive impacts than negative impacts.
- Those who have lived in Stratford for more than 20 years are less likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; helps protect the environment and natural places; or creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who have lived less time in Stratford.
- Those who have lived in Stratford for less than 1 year are significantly more likely to agree that tourism helps bring people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; helps protect the environment and natural places; and creates a more positive than negative impact than those who have lived more time in Stratford.
- Generally, those who live closest to Stratford City Hall are slightly more likely to agree that tourism helps create jobs and attract new businesses; brings people together and strengthens the community's social fabric; helps protect the environment and natural places; and creates more positive impacts than negative impacts than those who live further away.

Destination Development

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
My community already has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors.	8.94%	31.60%	26.20%	27.44%	4.37%	1.46%
My community needs to be investing in the development of new infrastructure, including services and amenities, such as parking spaces, public washrooms, and benches, to be able to meet the needs of visitors and residents.	32.64%	41.37%	12.89%	10.40%	2.70%	0.00%
Tourism has a role to play in the development of my community.	51.77%	39.71%	6.44%	1.46%	0.62%	0.00%
Residents have a role to play in the development of my community as a destination.	45.95%	39.50%	9.77%	2.91%	1.66%	0.21%
					Total	481

Insights

- Those who live closest to Stratford City Hall are significantly less likely to agree that their community has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors.
- Generally, those who live closest to Stratford City Hall are slightly more likely to agree that their community needs to invest in the development of new infrastructure; as well as that tourism and residents have a role to play in the development of the community as a destination than those who live further away from Stratford City Hall.
- Those who have lived in Stratford for 16-20 years are significantly less likely to agree that their community has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors, than those who have lived there for less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and more than 20 years.
- Those who have lived in Stratford for less than 1 year are significantly less likely to agree that residents have a role to play in the development of the community as a destination than those who have lived there for 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, and more than 20 years.
- About 60% of people with disabilities agree that their community has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors.

- Those who work or own a business or organization that is operating within the tourism sector are less likely to agree their community has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors, but more likely to agree the their community needs to invest in the development of new infrastructure; as well as that tourism and residents have a role to play in the development of the community as a destination than those who do not work or own a business or organization in the tourism sector.
- Those who make \$75,000 but less than \$100,000 and those who make \$150,000 but less than \$250,000 per year are significantly less likely to agree their community has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors than those that make less than \$75,000, \$100,000 but less than \$150,000, and more than \$250,000 per year.
- Those who make \$75,000 but less than \$100,000 are significantly more likely to agree that their community needs to invest in the development of new infrastructure than those who make more or less per year.
- Those who make under \$50,000 per year are significantly less likely to agree residents have a role to play in the development of the community as a destination than those that make more per year.
- Those who live with friends are significantly more likely to agree their community has enough natural and cultural attractions and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors than those who live with parent(s), partner(s), child(ren), other relative(s), or live by themselves. They are also significantly more likely to agree their community needs to invest in the development of new infrastructure, and also that tourism and residents have a role to play in the development of the community as a destination.
- Those who live with their parent(s) are significantly less likely to agree their community has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors than those who live with their partner(s), child(ren), other relative(s), friend(s), or live by themselves.
- Those who identify as female, woman, or feminine are slightly more likely to agree their community needs to invest in the development of new infrastructure; as well as that tourism and residents have a role to play in the development of the community as a destination than those who identify as male, man, or masculine.
- Those who are 25-34 years old are significantly more likely to agree that their community already has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors, than those who are older and younger.
- Those 18-24 years old are significantly more likely to agree that their community needs to invest in the development of new infrastructure, while also significantly less likely to agree that residents have a role to play in the development of their community as a destination than those who are older.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
It is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals such as Lights On Stratford and community infrastructure projects like the Boathouse Public Washrooms.	50.21%	37.23%	7.02%	2.55%	1.70%	1.28%
It is important to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons, i.e., outside of the summer months of June, July, and August.	56.60%	31.49%	7.45%	2.13%	2.34%	0.00%
					Total	470

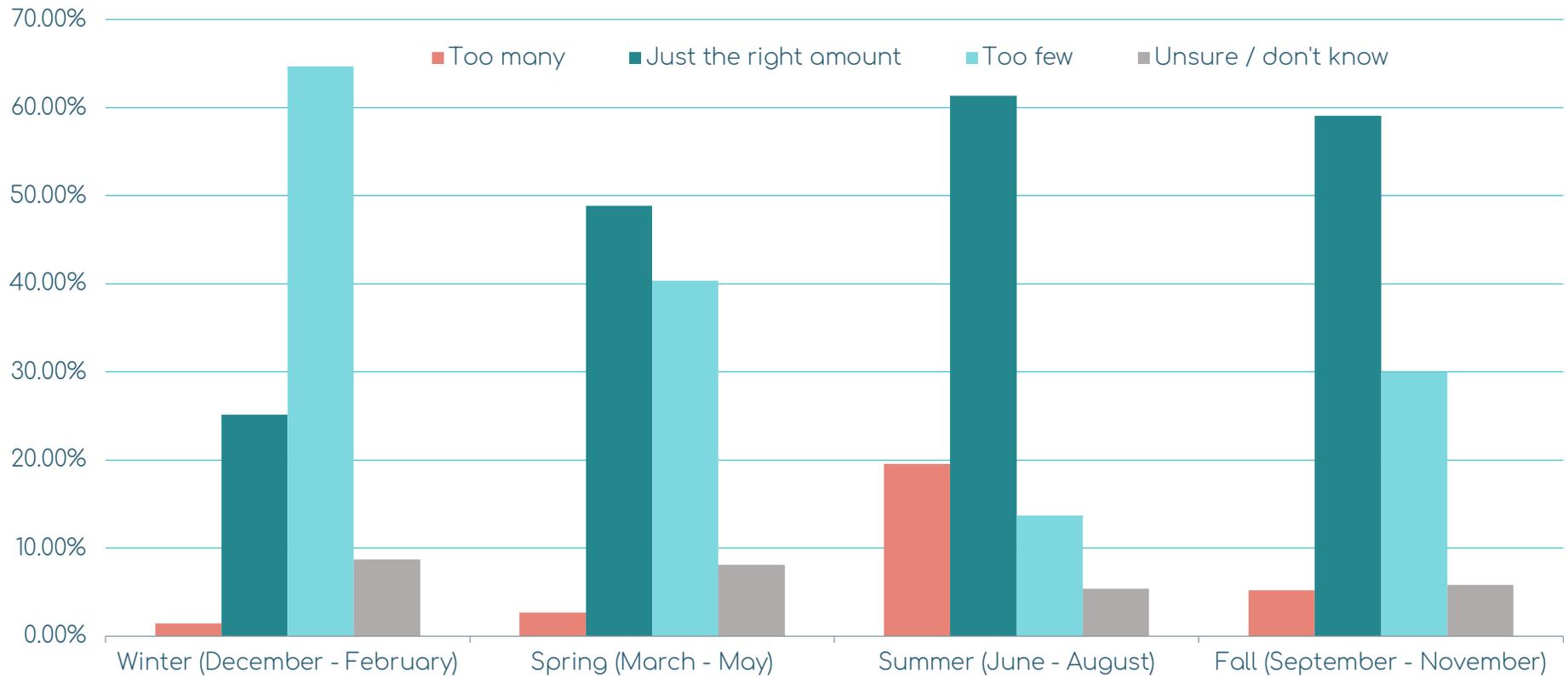
Insights

- Those who are 18-24 and 25-34 years old are significantly more likely to agree that it is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals and community infrastructure projects, than those who are older.
- Those who are 25-34 years old are more likely to agree that it is important to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons than those who are younger and older.
- Those who identify as female, woman, or feminine are significantly more likely to agree that it is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals and community infrastructure projects, and to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons than those who identify as male, men, or masculine.
- Those who live with friend(s) are significantly more likely to agree that it is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals and community infrastructure projects, and to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons than those who live with their parent(s), partner(s), child(ren), other relative(s), or live by themselves.
- Those who live with other relative(s) are significantly less likely to agree that it is important to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons than those who live with their parent(s), partner(s), child(ren), friend(s), or live by themselves.
- Those who do not travel are significantly less likely to agree that it is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals and community infrastructure projects, and to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons than those who do travel.
- 100% of racialized people, and over 80% of people with disabilities, agree that it is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals and community infrastructure projects.

- Over 90% of racialized people, and over 75% of people with disabilities, agree that it is important to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons.
- Those who have lived less than 1 year in Stratford are significantly more likely to agree that it is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals and community infrastructure projects, and to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons than those who have lived longer in Stratford.

Destination Promotion

Are there too few, too many, or just the right amount of people visiting your community across the year?



	Too many	Just the right amount	Too few	Unsure / don't know
Winter (December - February)	1.46%	25.16%	64.66%	8.73%
Spring (March - May)	2.70%	48.86%	40.33%	8.11%
Summer (June - August)	19.54%	61.33%	13.72%	5.41%
Fall (September - November)	5.20%	59.04%	29.94%	5.82%
Total				481

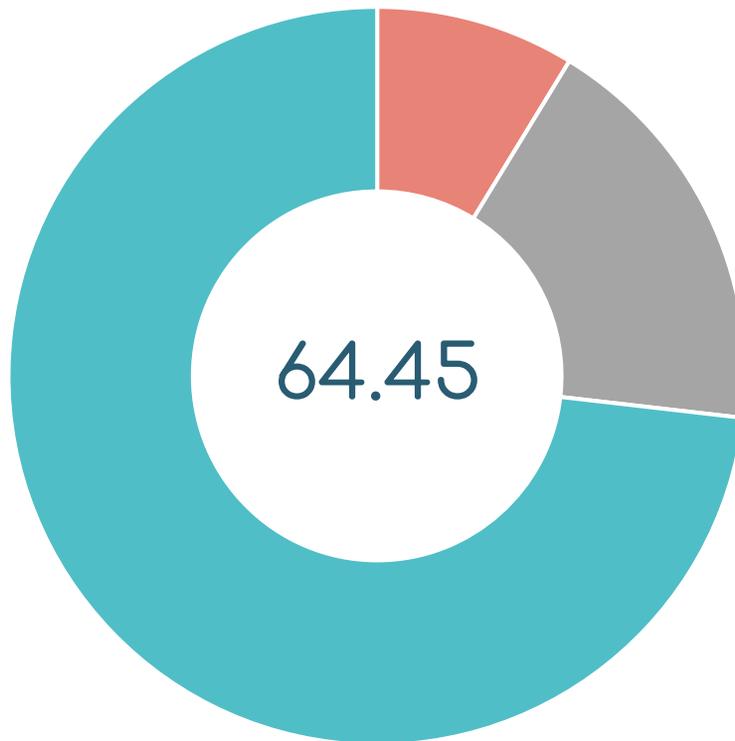
Net Promoter Score

The Net Promoter Score is a customer loyalty metric that is used to measure on how likely an individual (customer) will recommend a product, service, company, or in this case place, to others. The scale used is as per below:



Scores, which range from -100 to +100, are calculated by tallying up responses to an NPS question and subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters.

How likely is it that you would recommend your community as a place to visit to a friend or colleague?



■ Detractors (0-6) ■ Passive (7-8) ■ Promoters (9-10)

Detractors (0-6)	Passive (7-8)	Promoters (9-10)	Net Promoter Score
8.73%	18.09%	73.18%	64.45
Total			481

Detailed Findings

Tourism Awareness and Participation

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
5	4	3	2	1	0

I am aware of the businesses and organizations in my community that are working to meet the needs of visitors.

I am aware of the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors to my community.

I enjoy the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors to my community.

I am aware of the organization(s) responsible for developing my community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit.

Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
84.25%		4.52%		4.04
83.86%		5.32%		4.01
77.56%		5.71%		3.99
81.30%		5.31%		4.03
Total		508		

Top 2 Box by Length of Residency

Age	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
I am aware of the businesses and organizations in my community that are working to meet the needs of visitors.					
Less than 1 year	87.50%		0.00%		4.13
1-5 years	86.42%		3.70%		4.11
6-10 years	77.63%		7.89%		3.95
11-15 years	91.22%		0.00%		4.21
16-20 years	91.17%		0.00%		4.18
More than 20 years	82.46%		5.68%		4
I am aware of the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors to my community.					
Less than 1 year	100.00%		0.00%		4.5
1-5 years	87.65%		3.70%		4.09
6-10 years	81.58%		5.27%		4.01
11-15 years	84.21%		8.77%		4.02
16-20 years	88.23%		0.00%		4.18
More than 20 years	82.94%		6.16%		3.96
I enjoy the tourism services and experiences (incl. events) being marketed and promoted to visitors to my community.					
Less than 1 year	100.00%		0.00%		4.63
1-5 years	87.65%		3.70%		4.26
6-10 years	78.95%		6.58%		4.05
11-15 years	82.45%		7.02%		4.04
16-20 years	82.35%		5.88%		4.03
More than 20 years	71.09%		6.64%		3.87
I am aware of the organization(s) responsible for developing my community as a destination and promoting it as a place to visit.					
Less than 1 year	75.00%		0.00%		4
1-5 years	79.01%		2.47%		4.09
6-10 years	78.95%		10.53%		4.05
11-15 years	82.45%		1.75%		4.14
16-20 years	84.30%		8.82%		4.21
More than 20 years	84.83%		3.79%		4.03
	Total		467		

Openness and Willingness to Host

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
5	4	3	2	1	0

	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining family and friends who live outside of my community and come for a visit.	85.61%		2.99%		4.31
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining members of my community, including family, friends, and neighbours who I invite to my home or an event.	90.46%		1.87%		4.39
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining people who live outside of my community that I do not know but choose to come for a visit, i.e., visitors.	67.11%		10.84%		3.84
	Total		527		

Other

Many mentioned their involvement in hospitality-related services (e.g., operating bed and breakfasts, working to provide a welcoming environment, etc.)

- “I work seasonally for a local organization. The focus of my job is to provide a welcoming atmosphere for our patrons and do whatever they need to enjoy their experience. Hopefully, they will return as well as share their experiences with others so they will come as well.”
- “American tourist once welcome will be difficult to react to but I will be polite.”
- “We have family and friends in the GTA that visit often.”

Some mentioned the importance of focusing on community needs.

- “My focus is more on the unhoused community rather than entertaining strangers/people...”
- “Depends who and what it is.”

Insights

There is an appreciation for tourism as a vital aspect of Stratford's identity, as it enriches the community, supports local businesses, and contributes to the overall local economy.

- "I enjoy hearing guests stories."
- "Formerly in the service industry, so understand the value of tourism for our local economy."
- "Tourism feeds all of us regardless of whether we are in the tourism industry or not."
- "I love Stratford and all that it has to offer in terms of cultural attractions -- theatre, film, music and art -- as well as the wealth of restaurants, stores, B&Bs, hotels, bars and coffee shops. Stratford's beauty and walkability is incredible and I am proud to call this city my home. I constantly invite friends, family, and acquaintances to come here and see what we have to offer."
- "Tourists bring energy to our community as well as wealth and support for local businesses."

There is pride among residents of Stratford around their hospitality and enjoyment in engaging with visitors and acting as unofficial ambassadors. Some mentioned supporting visitors by providing directions, recommendations, and creating friendly environments.

- "We love to show off Stratford to our family and friends!"
- "It is so good to see people from all walks of life visiting town!"
- "I love Stratford and am always willing to help tourists with directions, opinions and specific rules."
- "If I recognize persons who appear to be visitors & look like they're seeking information, I gladly offer to assist."
- "I often invite out-of-town guests to visit our beautiful city and see a show."
- "I enjoy answering questions or providing directions and recommendations to visitors I m proud of my town and all it has to offer. I want people to enjoy there visit."
- "I volunteer at the Stratford Festival and also support other cultural organizations that host tourists."

There are concerns about the increased traffic, high cost of living, affordability of businesses, and impacts on the overall well-being of residents. Some mentioned the need for better infrastructure and resources to accommodate visitors, while addressing the needs of residents.

- "Stratford puts more emphasis on drawing tourists money over retaining locals well being."
- "As individuals I don't know it's fine but the increased traffic in summer in the downtown makes me avoid it even though I live here."
- "Increased visitors to smaller communities requires increased resources and infrastructure. While I welcome (and rely on tourism to feed my family) there is nothing more frustrating than the traffic congestion that is created in Stratford in the summer. Campaigns to bring larger numbers to the city should also include messaging of using alternative transportation, being conscious of local activity/ culture."
- "Bed and Breakfast...is an important factor in the Stratford experience, but with all the taxes it's not doing well!"
- "Sometimes the people visiting are not pleasant to locals or understand that people live and work in core areas."

Top 2 Box by Household Income

Household Income	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining members of my community, including family, friends, and neighbours who I invite to my home or an event.					
Under \$50,000 per year	72.09%		11.63%		3.95
\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	82.27%		3.80%		4.27
\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	92.77%		0.00%		4.49
\$100,000 but less than \$150,000	92.78%		1.03%		4.48
\$150,000 but less than \$250,000	89.78%		3.41%		4.34
\$250,000 or more	92.59%		0.00%		4.7
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining family and friends who live outside of my community and come for a visit.					
Under \$50,000 per year	81.40%		9.30%		4.07
\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	92.40%		1.27%		4.47
\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	92.78%		0.00%		4.53
\$100,000 but less than \$150,000	96.91%		1.03%		4.58
\$150,000 but less than \$250,000	89.77%		2.27%		4.32
\$250,000 or more	96.29%		0.00%		4.78
I welcome receiving and interacting with or entertaining people who live outside of my community that I do not know but choose to come for a visit, i.e., visitors.					
Under \$50,000 per year	55.81%		27.90%		3.53
\$50,000 but less than \$75,000	69.62%		7.59%		3.95
\$75,000 but less than \$100,000	59.03%		12.05%		3.77
\$100,000 but less than \$150,000	80.41%		6.18%		4.1
\$150,000 but less than \$250,000	68.19%		11.37%		3.72
\$250,000 or more	77.78%		7.41%		4.22
	Total		417		

Impacts of Tourism

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
5	4	3	2	1	0

	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Tourism in my community is helping to create jobs and attract new businesses.	85.43%		5.71%		4.3
Tourism in my community is helping to bring people together and strengthen our social fabric.	71.85%		11.03%		3.96
Tourism in my community is helping to protect the environment and our natural places.	36.02%		21.45%		3.07
Overall, tourism in my community is creating more positive impact than negative impact.	81.29%		7.87%		4.17
Total				508	

Insights

There is a recognition of the economic benefits tourism brings to Stratford, including supporting local businesses, arts, and cultural events. However, many are concerned that there is a narrow focus, mostly seasonal employment, and a lack of job creation beyond standard roles.

- "Tourism is not only an economic driver but also changes the place, having people here from other places is good for us socially and politically"
- "Most of our local businesses heavily rely on outside visitors. The Stratford Festivals employs a large number of locals as well as some from afar who then choose to live here. It is a fact of life in Stratford, which we need to embrace."
- "Seasonal employment is not stable job creation."
- "Tourism is not creating NEW jobs, and they aren't good jobs. It sustains existing weak jobs which are seasonal or low paying."

There is a concern and dissatisfaction with the prioritization of tourism over residents' needs. Some mentioned poor road conditions, lack of affordable housing, and insufficient public services. Some suggested extended store hours, better snow plowing, and improved public transit.

- "I feel that money that is going to tourism could be used to fix infrastructure ie: road repair."
- "There are aspects to tourists coming to the city that are seemingly not addressed. The most blatant being the condition of our roads. I have met tourists at all ends of the city and the main roads are not the only route taken to get to where they are going."
- "I recognize the positive contributions that tourists make to our economy year round. That said, when the major season is over, I'm ready for a bit of a break from the congestion!"
- "I think many in the community would like to see certain things improve, such as better snow plowing in the off season and better public transport to the city year-round to reduce auto traffic. Oh, and more tables in market square."
- "Tourism highlights the differences between the people who live here and the people who come from "away" - and these differences trouble us. Big city dwellers from both Canada and the US do not understand our environment or economy. They are here to escape their crappy normal situation, but that means they consider us to be "other than normal". They want special treatment - special retail, special restaurants, special experience. On the other hand, we need normal services."

There is a recognition that tourism can play a role in conserving the environment and natural spaces, including reducing light pollution. However, some highlighted concerns with feeding waterfowl and limited promotion of general environmentally friendly practices.

- "Would be interested to know more about how tourism can help protect environment and natural places. This is important."
- "Natural spaces around the river should be left natural. So much light pollution, flashing light. Yes to Christmas time but otherwise a unnecessary distraction."
- "I believe tourism in the Stratford Community ensures that all the public parks and spaces are beautifully maintained. Visitors always remark about the lush hanging baskets, well-maintained flower gardens and groomed areas by the water. It makes me proud to call this city my home."

- “I think there's potential for tourism in Stratford to do more to support the environment! Everyone who visits says how beautiful it is. Then about 2/3 of them feed the waterfowl, which is not great from an environmental perspective! But it does demonstrate engagement with the natural environment here and a desire to be a part of helping it grow, and that's a great place to start.”

There is an interest in tourism leadership to promote longer stays, engage residents in tourism activities, and address gaps in event promotion and accessibility.

- “...invest in your off season people in your community to develop artists young and old so they can give their talents to the visitor population enhancing all their lives not just investing in the tourism people look after your own and they will attract the rest.”
- “I think tourism creates a positive impact on the economy. I don't believe tourism cares about the environment or community members and I don't think it's strengthening our social fabric. I think citizens are an after thought. If they did care [others] wouldn't be a better source of information for events. It is common for social media to feature an event after it's over.”
- “We do not feel that Stratford Tourism is doing enough to promote multiple night stays for visitors and that their vision is not far reaching enough. Needs to get international and across to all provinces.”
- “Little received from official tourist info providers - primarily find out what is happening via friends sharing on social media or telling me.”
- “We get a very specific kind of tourist here compared to neighbouring cities. Ours are spending money on theatre tickets and expensive restaurants. I feel the only folks that really benefit are similar demographic living here. The majority of our population does not benefit.”

Top 2 Box by Whereabouts

Age	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Tourism in my community is helping to create jobs and attract new businesses.					
Within 500m of Stratford City Hall	89.36%		2.13%		4.49
Within 1km of Stratford City Hall	85.55%		4.05%		4.39
Within 2km of Stratford City Hall	84.52%		7.75%		4.21
Within 4km of Stratford City Hall	84.61%		8.97%		4.18
Prefer not to answer	76.47%		11.76%		3.88
Tourism in my community is helping to bring people together and strengthen our social fabric.					
Within 500m of Stratford City Hall	85.11%		6.39%		4.32
Within 1km of Stratford City Hall	75.14%		10.98%		4.07
Within 2km of Stratford City Hall	67.74%		14.19%		3.83
Within 4km of Stratford City Hall	66.67%		7.70%		3.9
Prefer not to answer	41.17%		23.52%		2.94
Tourism in my community in helping to protect the environment and our natural places.					
Within 500m of Stratford City Hall	46.81%		14.90%		3.15
Within 1km of Stratford City Hall	39.30%		18.49%		3.24
Within 2km of Stratford City Hall	33.55%		25.16%		2.97
Within 4km of Stratford City Hall	35.89%		17.95%		3.09
Prefer not to answer	11.76%		52.94%		2.35
Overall, tourism in my community is creating more positive impact than negative impact.					
Within 500m of Stratford City Hall	89.36%		6.38%		4.34
Within 1km of Stratford City Hall	83.24%		6.94%		4.28
Within 2km of Stratford City Hall	78.71%		10.32%		4.07
Within 4km of Stratford City Hall	82.05%		6.41%		4.13
Prefer not to answer	47.06%		17.64%		3.47
	Total		470		

Destination Development

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / don't know
5	4	3	2	1	0

	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
My community already has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors.	40.54%		31.81%		3.09
My community needs to be investing in the development of new infrastructure, including services and amenities, such as parking spaces, public washrooms, and benches, to be able to meet the needs of visitors and residents.	74.01%		13.10%		3.91
Tourism has a role to play in the development of my community.	91.48%		2.08%		4.41
Residents have a role to play in the development of my community as a destination.	85.45%		4.57%		4.25
Total			481		

Insights

There is a recognition that tourism is vital for Stratford's economy, and that the Stratford Festival primarily drives tourism, but also a recognition that there is sometimes a disconnect on how tourism is beneficial to the community.

- Stratford has done a great job developing beautiful, comfortable places for tourists.
- More can be done to help the entire local population understand the benefits of the tourism dollar
- Tourism in Stratford owes its success to one thing only.....the Stratford Festival. All other endeavours are distant wish list items.
- "I don't see a lot of buy-in created among locals. We don't often hear why we're campaigning for more tourism or why we're funding existing businesses/special events. This creates a disconnect and resistance."

There is a desire to diversify tourism offerings and extend activities year-round and especially into the winter season, such as winter festivals, skating areas, diverse cultural events, family-friendly activities, etc.

- We need to broaden our horizons to ensure year round tourism taking place. We need sufficient accommodations in and around our community to cater for tourists, who probably won't come if there's nowhere to stay.
- Mostly we have 3 season tourism which inflates prices as supporting businesses have to cover the winter. We subsidize the festival but they never use any of the 4 theatres in the winter. A Xmas panto could be an option?
- "It'd be cool to see some more diversity in the cultural offerings, maybe concert promoters bringing in acts that aren't so white/Celtic/classic rock."
- "I would love to see more activities in the tourism sector that appeal to children."
- "We need to extend the offerings and not rely on the festival."

There is a concern about the prioritization of tourism development over the concerns and needs of residents. Some suggest using a more inclusive approach that ensures tourism investments benefit both residents and visitors.

- "Money spent on flowers for tourists would be better spent on maintaining infrastructure within Stratford for residents ie: road repairs that aren't main streets."
- "We do have some wonderful playgrounds. However families of younger children (not old enough for theatre) could benefit from more indoor places to explore."
- "Our community is already over stressed and taxed, so to ask the community to pay for more benches and parking (which isn't free like all over neighbouring towns) is a big ask."
- "metrics about mental health and community wellness and belonging need to be included in evaluating the additional purposes, value and aspects of events and coming together that also fall in the tourism sector."

There is a desire for better infrastructure, including bike paths, public washrooms, accessible sidewalks, parking, road improvements, community facilities, affordable housing, and public transit.

- "More public washrooms needed"
- "Infrastructure and amenities that come to mind in my community that need development are wayfinding and garbage/recycling/compost services on the street (currently do not meet the needs in peak visitor season)"

- In terms of infrastructure, I am *sure* that the hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists is offputting to the more green tourists who visit. If I feel menaced on foot and wheels, and I know this place, I can't imagine it as a tourist trying to do active transportation!"
- "The City thinks we have bike paths, but we don't. We need to be able to bike anywhere in Stratford and trails to other communities. We also need parking for our bikes to ensure they will be there when we return....Also, if you want to encourage locals to shop downtown, lower the parking costs and/or shorten the hours where paid parking is required. We shop elsewhere to avoid paying for parking."
- "City needs to work on accessibility to buildings and sidewalks, paths etc."

Top 2 Box by Age

Age	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
My community already has enough natural and cultural attractions, and tourism businesses, events, and organizations to attract visitors.					
18-24	33.34%		33.33%		2.67
25-34	50.00%		20.00%		3.37
35-44	36.36%		31.17%		3.01
45-54	36.47%		31.76%		3.08
55-64	42.50%		27.50%		3.12
65 or over	41.72%		37.42%		3.07
My community needs to be investing in the development of new infrastructure, including services and amenities, such as parking spaces, public washrooms, and benches, to be able to meet the needs of visitors and residents.					
18-24	100.00%		0.00%		4.5
25-34	80.00%		6.66%		4.13
35-44	66.23%		16.88%		3.64
45-54	75.30%		14.11%		4.07
55-64	74.17%		13.33%		3.85
65 or over	74.85%		12.27%		3.93
Tourism has a role to play in the development of my community.					
18-24	83.33%		0.00%		4.33
25-34	93.34%		0.00%		4.47
35-44	92.21%		1.30%		4.31
45-54	92.94%		1.18%		4.39
55-64	89.16%		0.83%		4.38
65 or over	92.03%		0.00%		4.47
Residents have a role to play in the development of my community as a destination.					
18-24	66.66%		0.00%		4
25-34	90.00%		0.00%		4.37
35-44	77.92%		3.90%		4.04
45-54	89.41%		2.35%		4.31
55-64	80.83%		3.33%		4.13
65 or over	90.18%		0.00%		4.38
	Total		481		

	Top 2 Box		Bottom 2 Box		Weighted Average
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
It is important to take a community-centred approach to tourism with festivals such as Lights On Stratford and community infrastructure projects like the Boathouse Public Washrooms.	87.44%		4.25%		4.28
It is important to develop and support cultural experiences in the winter and shoulder seasons, i.e., outside of the summer months of June, July, and August.	88.09%		4.47%		4.38
Total				481	

Destination Promotion

Community Pride

Recognized as a world-class theatre destination, with a vibrant arts and cultural scene. It offers a variety of artistic experiences, including live performances, film screenings, and music events.

- “Cultural hub with gorgeous riverside parks and a downtown filled with fantastic choice for restaurants and retail.”
- “Stratford is a wonderful destination with a wealth of cultural attractions, fantastic dining options, and a beautiful parks system.”
- A beautiful city filled with great restaurants, interesting stores and many types of cultural events.”
- “Stratford is a beautiful town in a lovely rural setting, which offers world-class theatre and music and agri-tourism - there's something for everyone.”
- “A beautiful artistic enigma in the middle of farm country.”

A culinary destination that boasts a variety of culinary assets including restaurants, bars, and cafes, and provides a diversity of quality dining options.

- “Great bars and restaurants for a city of this size.”
- “A charming food and cultural scene, with beautiful nature and unique events to engage in.”
- “Vibrant entertaining filled with culture, arts and culinary delights.”
- “Interesting, great attractions, great parks, fantastic food and drinks ... including chocolate and coffee. Innovative tourism providers and the best people.”
- “Fun, foodie, easy to get around.”

A visually stunning destination that is welcoming, walkable, and home to beautiful parks, historic buildings, and a scenic riverside.

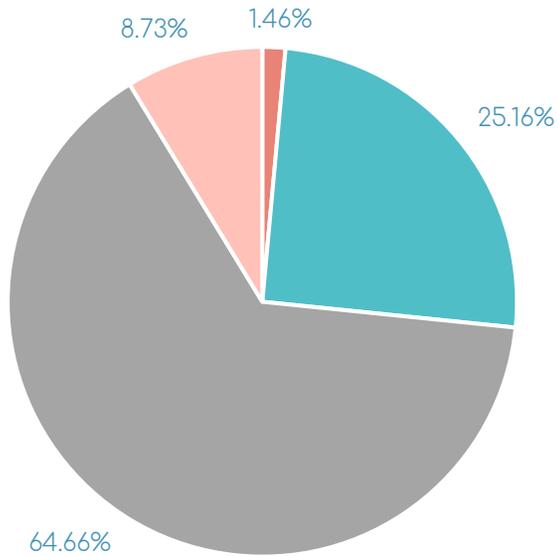
- “Stratford is a safe and friendly place to visit at any age, though tailors more to older audiences and families with children.”
- “We are visually pleasing, welcoming to visitors, and have many amenities that you would associate with a tourist destination.”

A community concerned about the balance of resident and visitor needs, including high costs, limited accessibility, and affordability.

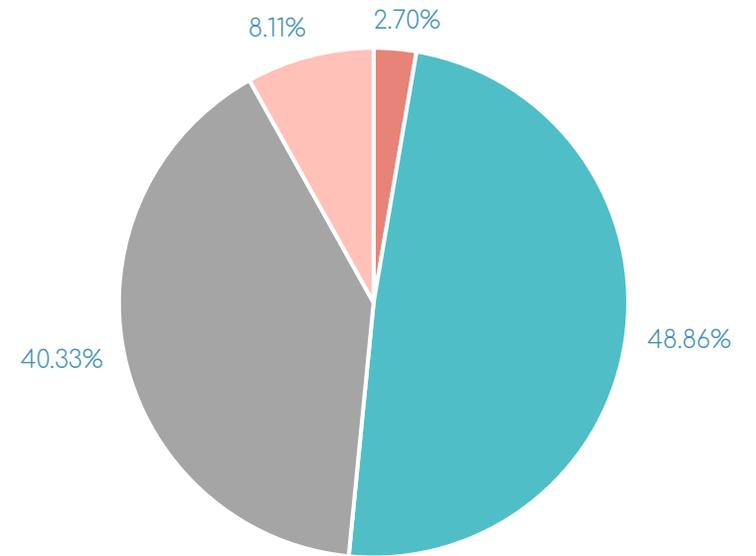
- “Tourists trump the residents who live and pay way too high taxes here.”
- “Expensive, surface welcoming, many cliques and divisions. Not run very well.”
- “Attractive to people who can spend a lot of money.”
- “A boring retirement community with high poverty and many drug problems that get hidden to attract tourists.”
- “It’s a pretty town. Most places are geared to tourists so it’s expensive, but there’s the odd place that won’t break your wallet.”

Visitation

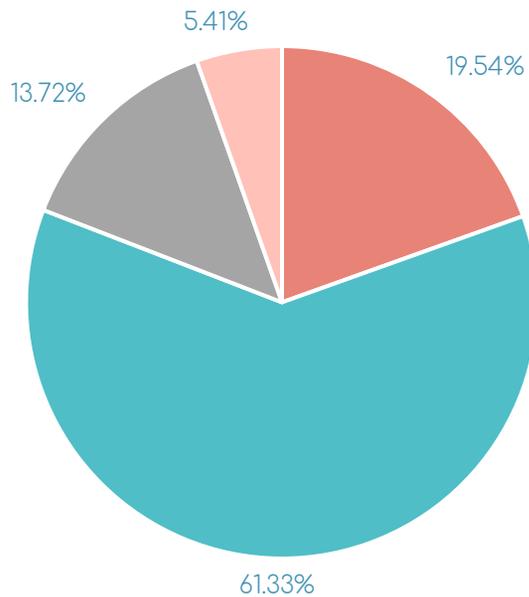
Winter (December - February)



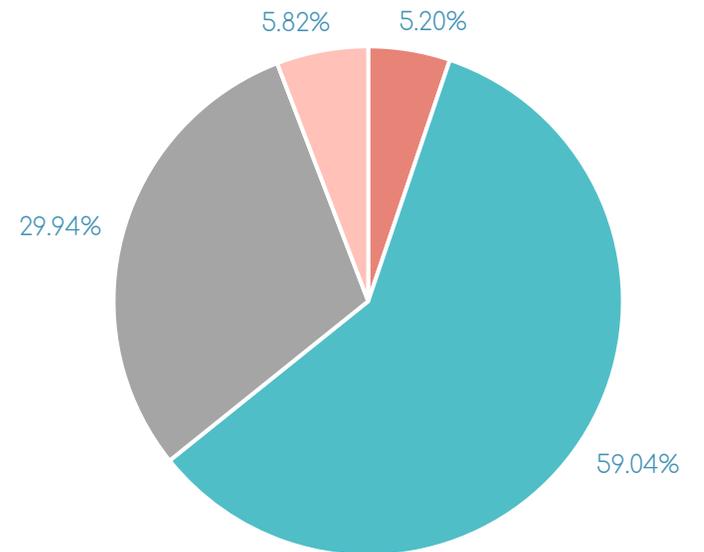
Spring (March - May)



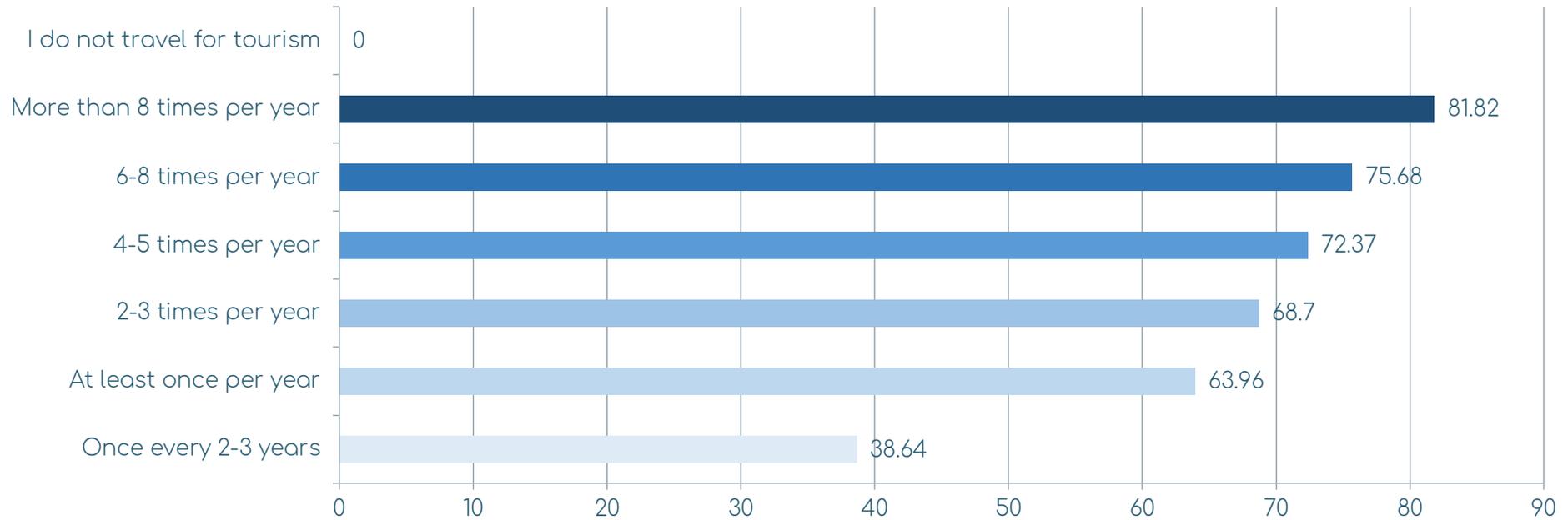
Summer (June - August)



Fall (September - November)



Net Promoter Score by Frequency of Travel for Tourism



	Detractors (0-6)	Passive (7-8)	Promoters (9-10)	Total	Net Promoter Score
Once every 2-3 years	20.45%	20.45%	59.09%	9.26%	38.64
At least once per year	7.21%	21.62%	71.17%	23.37%	63.96
2-3 times per year	7.63%	16.03%	76.34%	27.58%	68.7
4-5 times per year	3.95%	19.74%	76.32%	16.00%	72.37
6-8 times per year	5.41%	13.51%	81.08%	7.79%	75.68
More than 8 times per year	1.82%	14.55%	83.64%	11.58%	81.82
I do not travel for tourism	38.10%	23.81%	38.10%	4.42%	0

Insights

- Those who do not travel for tourism are less likely to recommend their community as a place to visit to a friend of colleague, while those who travel more than eight (8) times for tourism are most likely to recommend their community as a place to visit.

Additional Insight

Below is a compilation of additional insight and perspective captured through an invitation to provide final comment.

There is a recognition that tourism is a vital economic driver, especially for Stratford, because it supports local businesses, creates jobs, and maintains a vibrant downtown. Importantly, the Stratford Festival is noted as a cornerstone of the community that attracts visitors, and sustains cultural and economic prosperity.

- "Tourism brings both \$\$ and energy to this community."
- "Tourism is vital for Stratford. New projects and ideas, festivals, and experiences make the city better for all of us."
- "Tourism is the main driving force in bringing in revenue and attracting new commercial enterprises. It is the lifeblood of this community!"
- "Tourism is a vital part of the economic fabric of this area. Without tourism, a lot of businesses simply would not exist in this community. I wish more people would recognize that fact and be more appreciative of the visitors that come to our beautiful town every year."
- "It is my belief that tourism is our lifeblood. I moved to Stratford specifically because of the cultural offerings and the local amenities. Not sure I would stay if the Festival suddenly folded."

There is a recognition about the importance of balancing the needs of residents and visitors, including lack of parking, housing affordability, and other impacts on residents. Some suggest offering perks/incentives to residents, and improving infrastructure.

- "Tourism should not take more resources than helping the less fortunate. Tourism has a special place too."
- "I am worried about the people who try to cross Ontario/Huron right at the county courthouse area. Trucks and pedestrian seniors aren't a good combo."
- "Until we get better highways coming into Stratford folks aren't going to come here in the winter..."
- "Tourism is important but fundamental issues persist in Stratford e.g. unhoused, food deprivation, doctor shortage etc. We have a focus on tourism at the expense of our permanent residents who are heavily taxed. We don't have the work force, affordable housing or industry development but we have pretty flowers."
- "What's that old saying? "Your eyes are bigger than your stomach". Stratford festival pays no taxes but is the first consideration by a number of council members and gets an easy pass. Do I enjoy restaurants and theatre? Yes. But we need infrastructure in Stratford."
- "Parking is often a summer issue, to the frustration of locals. Perhaps offering the local residents some perks, such as free summer parking, loyalty cards at more businesses and a small discount at restaurants and services would help. The Stratford Festival does offer many sales, but having a local rate might soothe the souls of some and encourage new visitors from our community."

There is a need to improve infrastructure and accessibility, such as transportation options, expanding parking facilities, and enhancing cycling and walking routes. Some suggest developing a shuttle service, improving train schedules, and developing accessible amenities for seniors and people with disabilities.

- "We still need...improvements in infrastructure to support expanding housing developments will always be necessary. I feel the completion of the Cooper Site development...would possibly alleviate the feeling by some that ' everything is for the tourists'."
- "There doesn't seem to be any perks to residents in infrastructure when it comes to tourism vs residents."

- “Biking infrastructure would be greatly welcomed and could also be attractive to visitors.”

There is an interest in diversifying the tourism offerings in Stratford to broaden its appeal. Some suggest winter programming, sports tourism, cultural events, activities catering to younger demographics and families, hosting conversations, creating indoor attractions, and leveraging cultural assets.

- “Needs to diversify beyond just the Festival.”
- “We need to focus on events that will benefit local business. Things like Lights On bring in some people - but at night, majority of businesses are closed. This brings people but has zero financial impact to my retail business...Greater collaboration among businesses with regard to business hours etc downtown would be very helpful.”
- “Activities for young families need to be created to draw that demographic here. The art gallery could be a venue for that.”
- “I have a vested interest in sports tourism events.”

There is some concern about current initiatives, such as Lights on Stratford, because of its perceived limited impact and high costs. Some suggest reallocating funds to more impactful program, improving event promotion, and focusing on inclusivity and creativity in tourism planning.

- “A way to increase tourism in the winter is NOT things like lights on. We have so many hockey tournaments etc....”
- “Lights on Stratford is a massive waste of money.”
- “Where lights on Stratford is a nice idea do not be fooled with twisted numbers to think this build new business - it is a nice idea for the local people.”

Contact

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For more information about what is happening in tourism in Stratford, visit:

<https://visitstratford.ca/>