



Utah is growing . . .

How do Utahns feel about it?

Research on Utahns' values and priorities related to growth

Regional Growth Committee | WFRC

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Research Design + Methodology



MODE

Online Survey



LENGTH

22 minutes



DATES

November 11-23, 2021



GEOGRAPHY

State of Utah



AUDIENCE

General public living in Utah, 18+ (n=800)

- To ensure a representative sample, quotas were imposed on key demographics such as gender, age and ethnicity
- *Weighted to reflect population of Utah on ethnicity*

Sample Details

Respondents were selected from among those who have volunteered to participate in online surveys and were then screened in the survey based on quotas and survey audience definition. The data (800 respondents) were gathered across multiple, large online survey panels that included a cross-section of the Utah population.

To ensure representation of a wide variety of demographic groups, we established quotas by age, gender and race/ethnicity based on U.S. Census data for people aged 18 and older.

In a hypothetical case of a probability sample size of 800, the margin of error would be +/- 3.5% at the 95% confidence level. It should be noted that all sample surveys are subject to multiple sources of error, some known and some unknown, which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate. These includes some of the following types of error: sampling, coverage, nonresponse, question wording/placement, response options, interviewer (in phone-based surveys), and post-survey weighting. The margin of error should be used as a directional guide because of these types of error and to account for online panel self-selection.

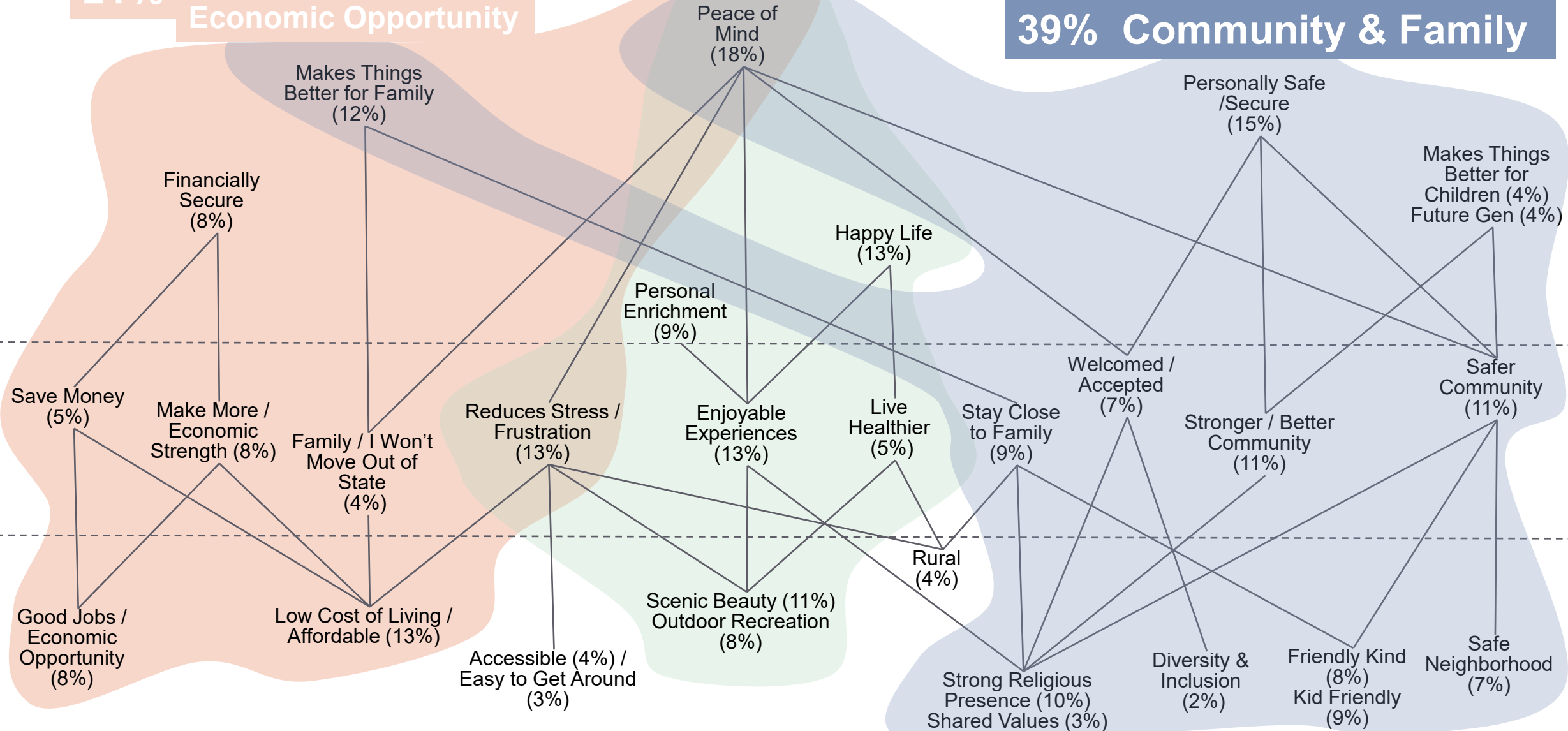
Why do Utahns love Utah?

VALUES
EMOTIONS
BENEFITS
ATTRIBUTES

21% Affordability/Jobs/
Economic Opportunity

19% Outdoor Beauty & Recreation

39% Community & Family

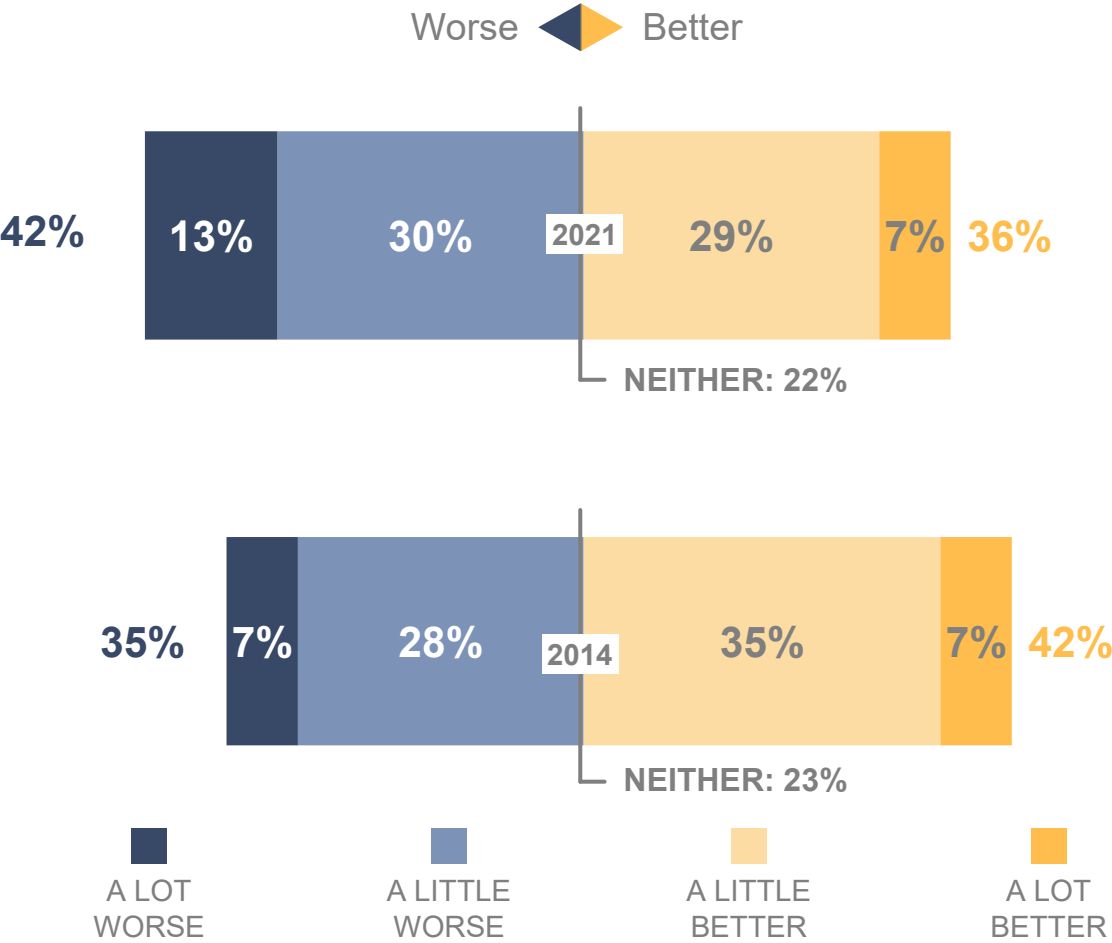




**Utahns are more
concerned about growth
now than at any point in
the last 25 years.**

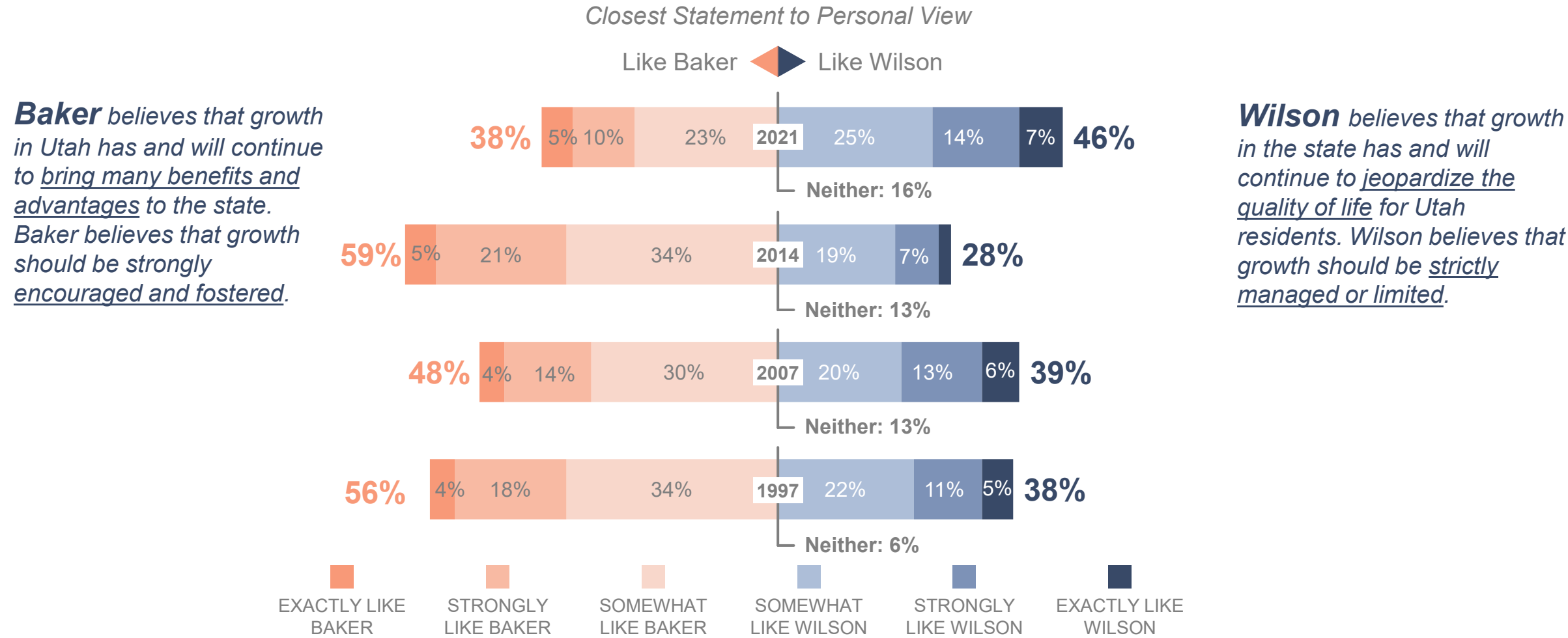
Two in five believe that future growth will make Utah worse, up significantly since 2014.

Believe Future Growth Will Make Utah Better or Worse



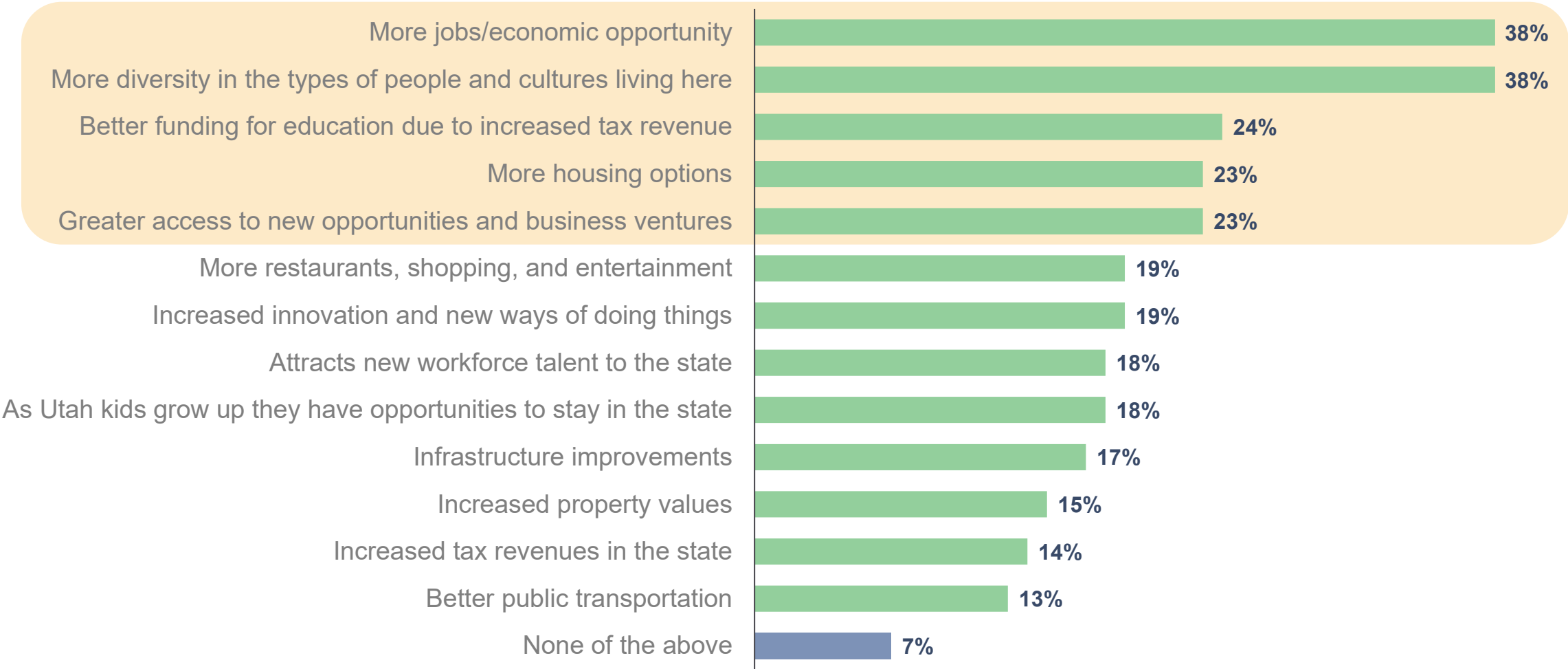
In a dramatic shift, more Utahns now feel that growth in the state will continue to jeopardize the quality of life for residents.

This feeling is markedly different from those expressed in previous years of testing. Utahns are now concerned about growth and lean towards greater management.

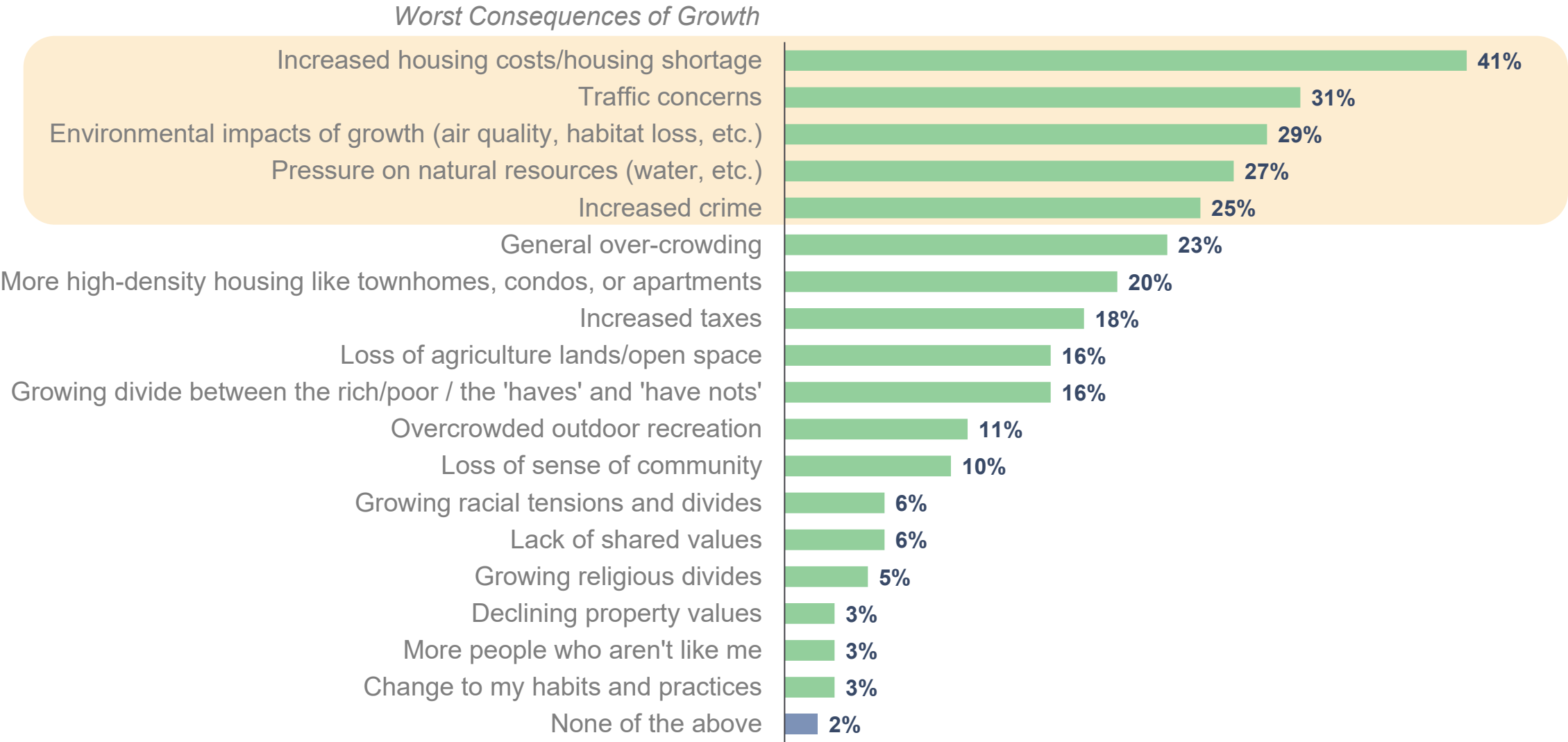


The top benefits of growth are more jobs/economic opportunity and more diversity.

Key Benefits of Growth



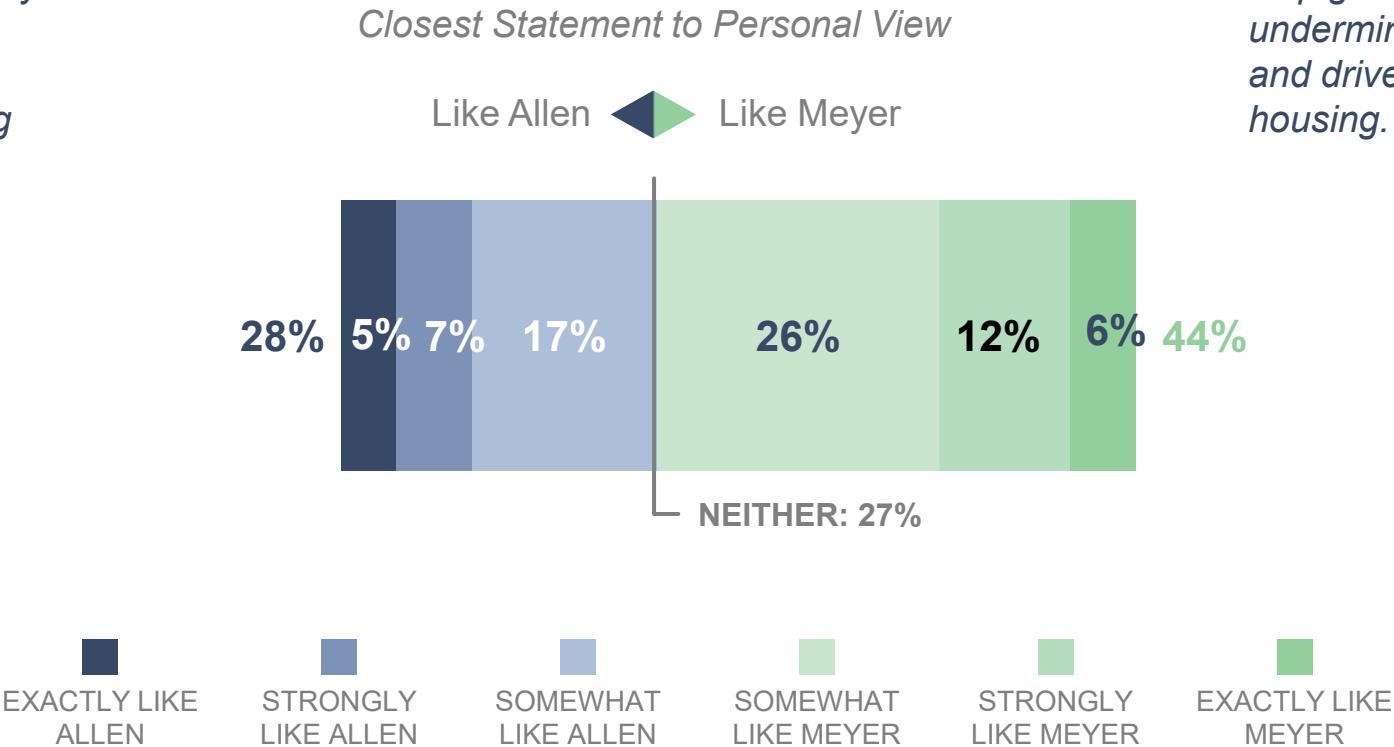
Housing cost and shortage is viewed as most significant negative consequence of growth.



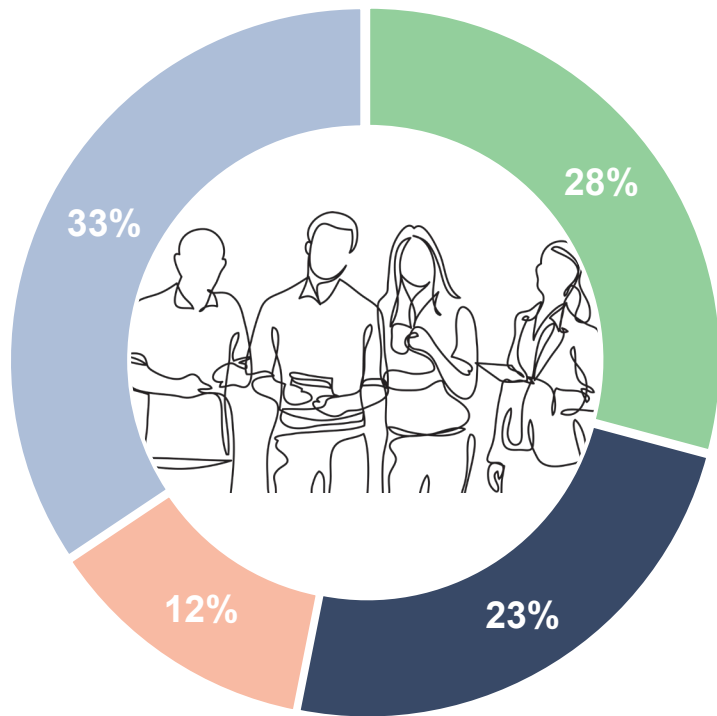
Almost half feel that trying to stop growth will only undermine the economy and drive-up housing costs.

Allen thinks we should try to stop or slow growth by slowing economic development and not approving new housing developments.

Meyer thinks that trying to stop growth will only undermine our economy and drive up the cost of housing.



Utahns fall into basically 4 categories



28 percent of Utahns feel like **growth brings benefits** and we should **not** try to stop growth

23 percent of Utahns believe growth **jeopardizes quality of life** and think we **should try to stop or slow growth**.
(About one-third of these Utahns only “somewhat” feel this way. Another third feel very strongly about this.)

12 percent of Utahns believe growth **jeopardizes quality of life**, but they think it would **be bad if we were to try to stop or slow growth**.

33 percent of people are **on the fence**. About of a third of these Utahns lean towards thinking growth is bad.

There are three main reasons Utahns are concerned about growth



HOUSING — Growth puts pressure on the housing market, driving prices. This leads to a lack of affordable housing and a higher cost of living. This is such a large concern that it has become a top priority for Utahns, even higher than air quality and education.



TRAFFIC — Growth leads to more traffic that makes it take longer to get around. More traffic also makes it less safe to get places.



Community & Family — Growth can change communities. They become more crowded, less quiet and peaceful, and potentially less safe or less family friendly.

All these concerns are tied to deeper priorities—or values—that make them more poignant for Utahns

	<u>PRACTICAL IMPACTS</u>	<u>FEELINGS</u>	<u>VALUES</u>
HOUSING	Housing affordability and cost of living affect Utahns’ ability to save money and can even mean that their children won’t be able to afford to live in Utah .	As a result, Utahns lose a sense of financial security and feel more stressed , worried , and frustrated about the problem.	Ultimately, housing affordability impacts whether Utahns feel they can make things better for their families and for future generations . Utahns experience less peace of mind and an overall loss of security .
TRAFFIC	Traffic, congestion, and more time in the car affect Utahns’ ability to get more done and can make their communities or roads less safe.	This makes Utahns feel more stress and frustration . It even diminishes their overall happiness.	Ultimately, traffic affects Utahns’ sense of accomplishment , their feelings of safety and security in their community, and their overall peace of mind .
COMMUNITY	Utahns worry growth might change their communities making them more crowded , less safe , and less family friendly .	This would make Utahns feel more worried and less connected to their community and neighbors.	Ultimately, loss of strong family and communities affects Utahns’ peace of mind , their feelings of safety and security , and the ability to make things better for their families .



Rising housing costs have emerged as a top concern for Utahns.

Still many Utahns are reluctant to increase housing supply by adding more housing options.

Housing/cost of living is a top priorities for Utahns . . .

Mean Importance of Priorities for the State of Utah

		2014's Mean Score	Movement
Water	6.5	6.4	
Housing and cost of living	6.2	6.0	+.2
Education	6.2	6.2	
Air quality	6.1	6.2	
Healthcare	6.1	6.1	
Economic development/jobs	6.0	6.0	
Healthy living	5.9	5.9	
How our towns and cities grow	5.9	5.7	+.2
Energy	5.9	5.9	
Preparation for disasters	5.8	5.8	
Agriculture	5.7	5.5	+.2
*Public land management	5.6	NA	
Outdoor recreation	5.6	5.6	-
Transportation	5.6	5.7	
Diversity and inclusion	5.3	NA	
Climate change	5.2	NA	
Arts and culture	5.0	5.0	

But housing/cost of living has the worst performance.

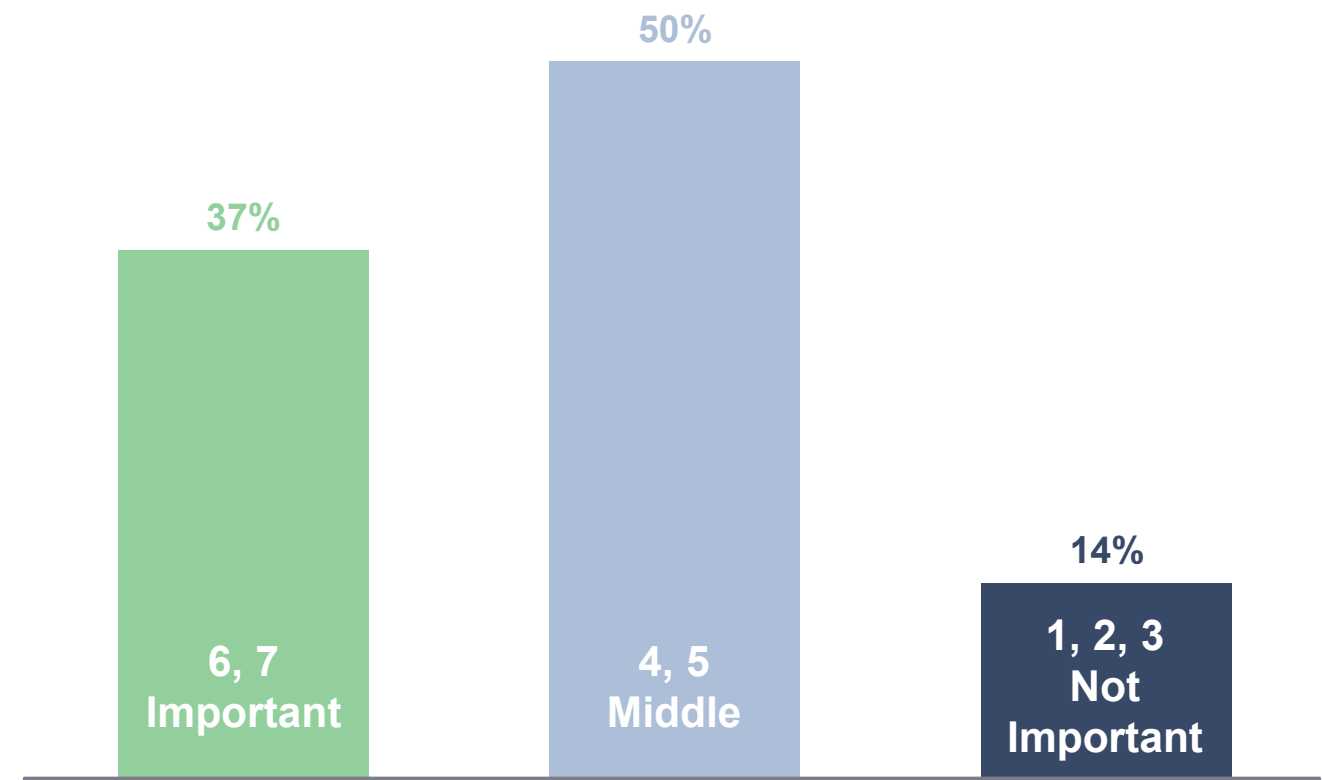
Performance on Priorities for the State of Utah		2014's Mean Score	Movement
Outdoor recreation	5.4	5.7	-.3
Economic development/jobs	4.8	5.1	-.3
Agriculture	4.7	4.7	
Arts and culture	4.7	4.9	-.2
Healthy living	4.6	4.9	-.3
Energy	4.6	4.6	
Transportation	4.6	4.7	
Healthcare	4.5	4.7	-.2
*Public land management	4.5	NA	
Preparation for disasters	4.5	4.8	-.3
Education	4.4	4.1	+.3
How our towns and cities grow	4.3	4.6	-.3
Water	4.3	4.6	-.3
Diversity and inclusion	4.2	NA	
Climate change	4.0	NA	
Air quality	3.6	3.4	+.2
Housing and cost of living	3.3	4.6	-1.3

One in three Utahns place high priority on housing variety.

Lower-income, young, single want more housing types

Important to Utah's Future

Rating on a scale from 1 (Not at all important) – 7 (Extremely important)

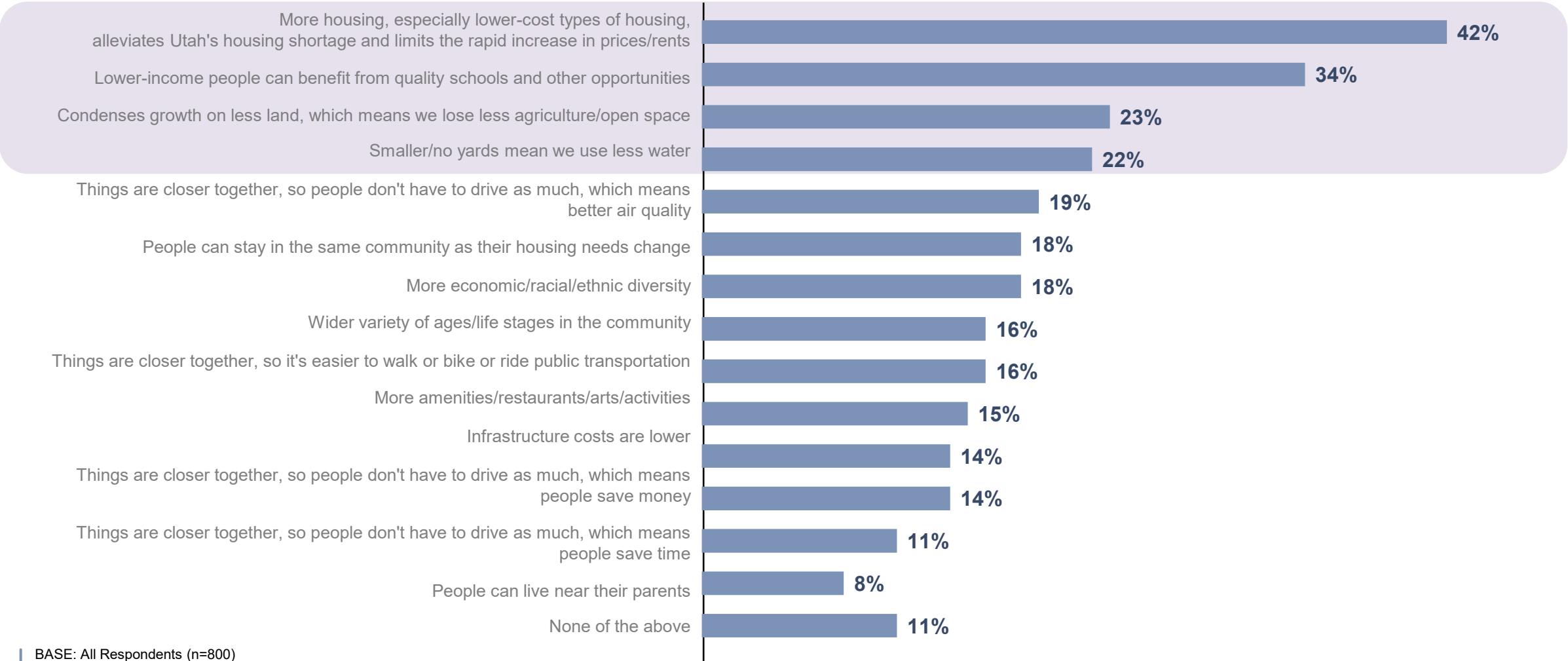


In your opinion, how important is it for communities like yours to allow a variety of housing types—including single-family homes on small lots, townhomes, duplexes, and apartments—to accommodate Utah's growth?

BASE: Split Sample A (n=400); Split Sample B (n=400)

Q615A. In your opinion, how important is it for communities like yours to allow a variety of housing types—including single-family homes on small lots, townhomes, duplexes, and apartments—to accommodate Utah's growth? Please use a scale where 1 means "not at all important to Utah's future" and 7 means "extremely important to Utah's future."

Utahns view greater housing variety as improving housing affordability & benefiting lower-income families.

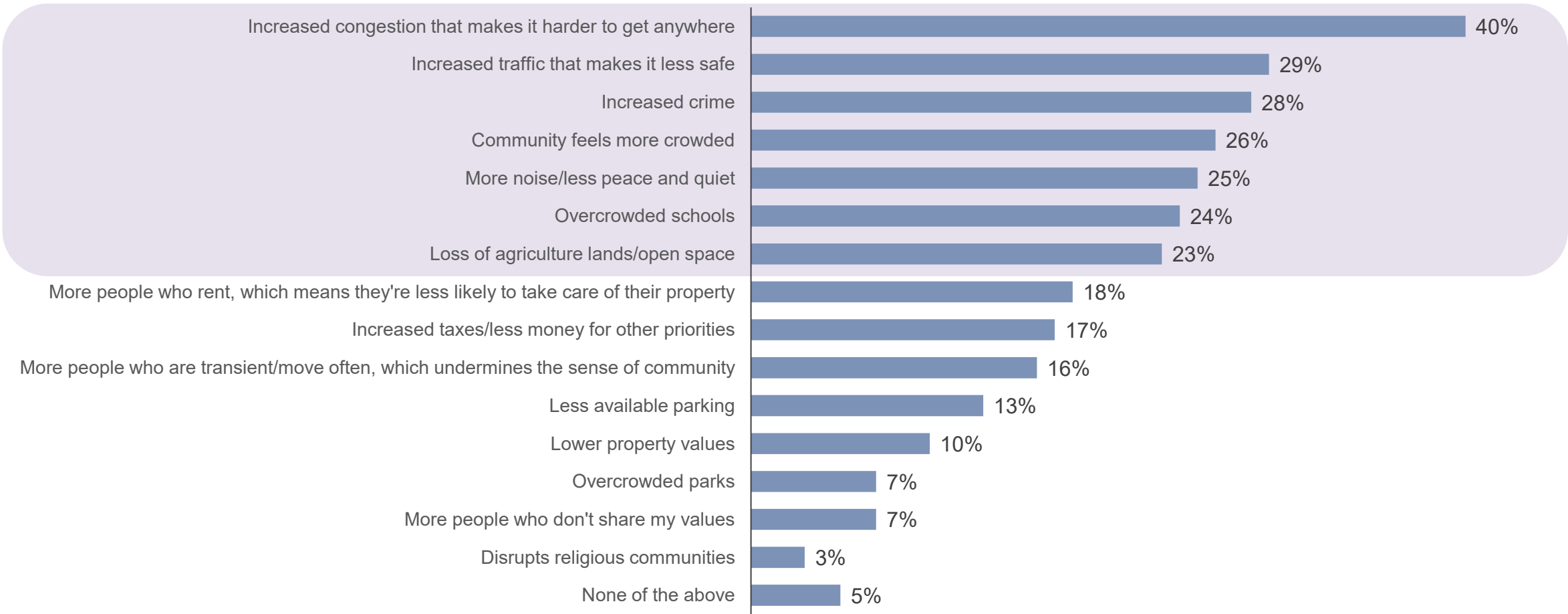


BASE: All Respondents (n=800)

Q630. Which **three** items below do you feel are the **biggest benefits** of allowing more small lots, townhomes, duplexes, and apartments in communities like yours?

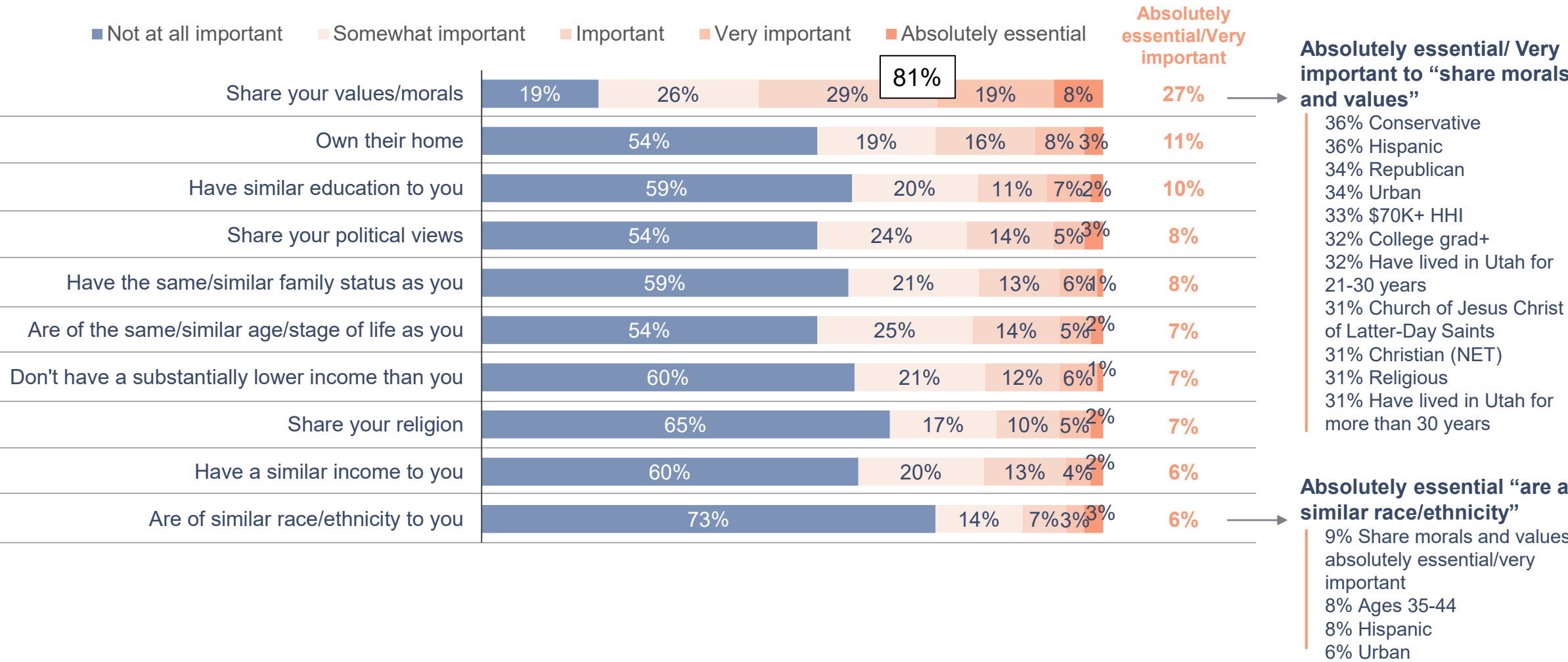
Increased congestion, crime, crowding are top concerns relating to high density housing.

Biggest Downsides of Allowing High Density Housing



Utahns prioritize sharing morals and values with their neighbors far more than other characteristics.

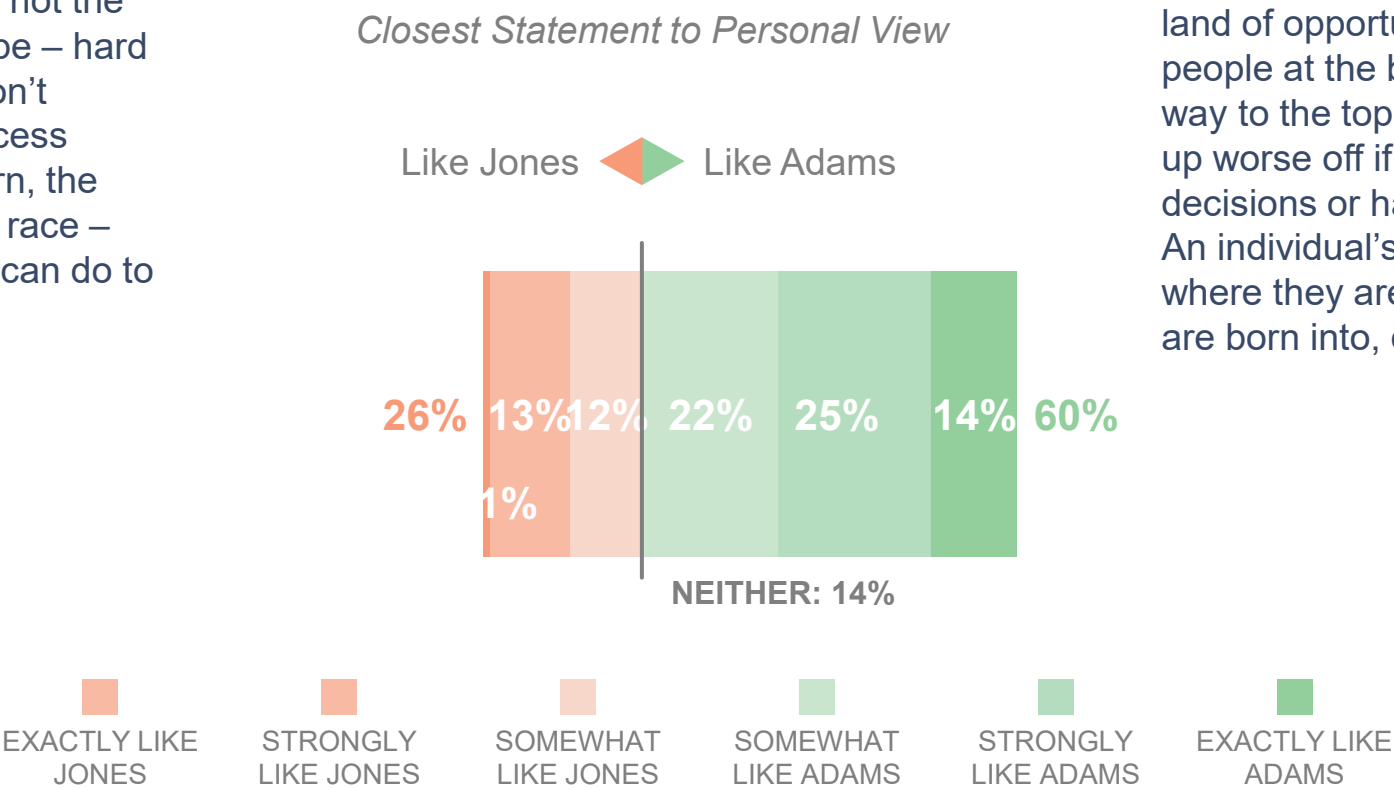
How Important is it that Your Neighbors Have the Following Characteristics?



3 in 5 Utahns believe America is land of opportunity and that individuals can work their way to the top.

Jones believes that America is not the land of opportunity it aspires to be – hard work and playing by the rules don’t ensure a bright future. Your success depends on where you were born, the family you are born into, or your race – there really isn’t much a person can do to change their position in life.

Adams believes that America is a land of opportunity – with hard work, people at the bottom can work their way to the top, and people can end up worse off if they make bad decisions or have a bad work ethic. An individual’s future is not tied to where they are born, the family they are born into, or their race.





Questions?
Discussion?



Thank you!

EnvisionUtah.org

Newsletter

Messaging Guide: How to Talk about Growth

Coming Soon!

Spring Breakfast — Future of Housing

Wednesday, May 25

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