

**STATE OF THE REGION SURVEY, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2022  
CENTRAL OREGONIANS BY THE NUMBERS AND IN THEIR OWN WORDS  
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

**INTRODUCTION**

From October 19 – November 28, 2022, the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center in partnership with the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) conducted a survey of Central Oregonians' values and beliefs to assist COIC with planning, policymaking, and communications. A description of the methodology used for the research is provided below.

Due to rounding, the percentages reported below may not add to 100% or compare exactly to the percentages for the same question in the annotated questionnaire or tabs.

Included below for selected questions are noteworthy subgroup variations for gender, age, education, area, households with and without children, area (Deschutes County, Jefferson County, Crook County, and Bend), BIPOC/White. The accompanying set of tabs notes subgroup variations for all the questions.

OVBC surveys currently use aggregated data to analyze the opinions of BIPOC residents in comparison to the opinions of residents who identify as white and not another race. BIPOC residents are not a monolith; the grouping represents a wide diversity of races and ethnicities. The findings included in this memo should not be construed such that all people of color are believed to share the same opinions. Disaggregated race data will be provided when sample sizes permit reliability.

For survey full question wording, all statistically significant subgroup findings, and respondent quotes, readers are encouraged to refer to the accompanying three documents: (1) annotated questionnaire, (2) crosstabulations document, and (3) verbatim written responses spreadsheet.

**The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC)** collaborates with city and county governments of Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to provide services related to workforce development; education; transportation; community and economic development; and natural resources. COIC also partners with businesses and nonprofit organizations in central Oregon to fulfill its mission.

[Oregon Values and Beliefs Center \(OVBC\)](#): This research was completed as a community service by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center and in partnership with COIC. OVBC is an independent and non-partisan organization and an Oregon charitable nonprofit corporation. Representative OVBC projects include opinion research about race-based crimes for the Asian Health and Service Center, as well as research about early childhood education and the cost of childcare for the Children's Institute.

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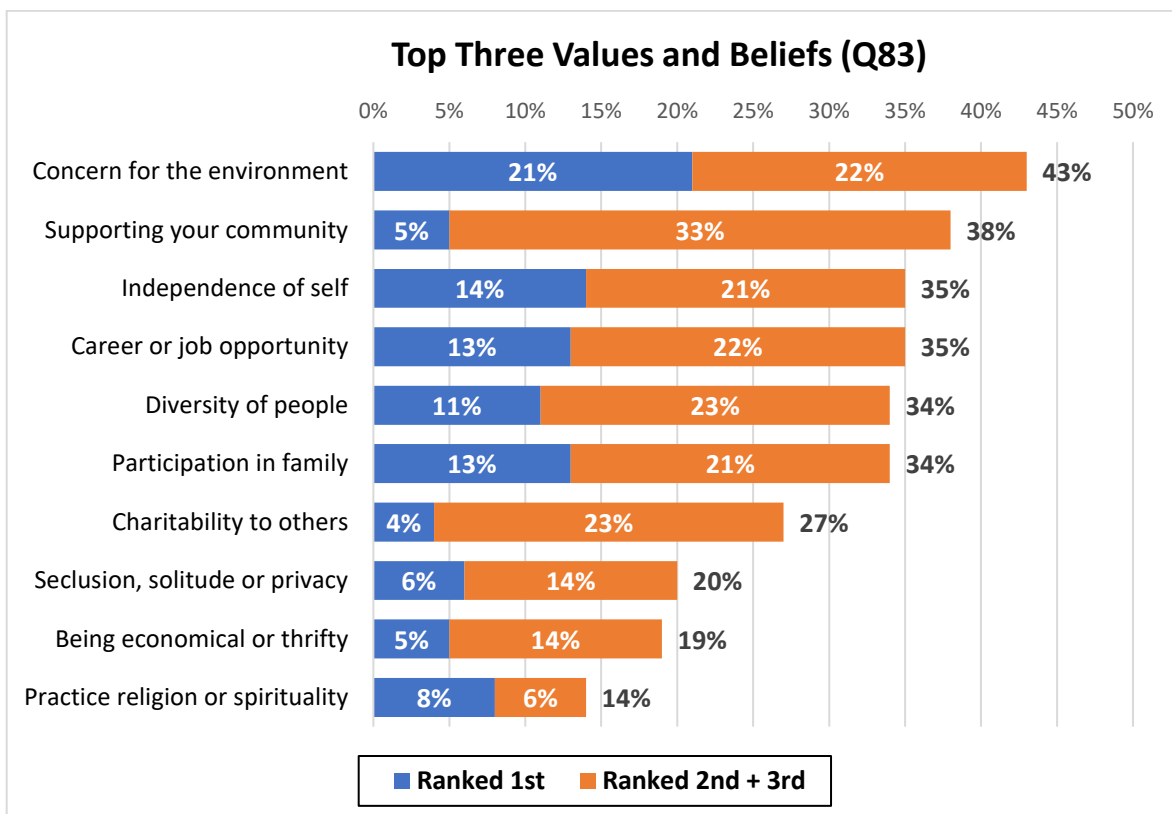
## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Central Oregonians share an appreciation for the natural environment and a concern for the protection and stewardship of natural resources and environmental quality in the area.
- Council is addressing this through parks, trails, and implementing sustainable practices.
- Central Oregonians have two big concerns on their minds: housing and water. They are worried about these basic needs both for current day realities, as well as for the future of their area of Oregon.
- Council is addressing housing through the Housing Action Plan. Council has addressed the water issue through support of water line infrastructure projects.
- Those with children under the age of 13 need more childcare options and are open to many different formats.
- Council has shown support for the COCC child care center project.
- About half feel like they are being left behind economically.
- Although some support an influx of tourists, businesses, and population growth, many are worried about the impact on infrastructure, cost of living, natural resources, and housing availability.
- This issue may be more prevalent in areas such as Bend and Sisters.
- Most Central Oregonians would like the government to step up in helping with community needs.
- This is something Council is getting their arms around now. But getting more involved in the community and getting the community more involved in committees and city projects will help with this issue.
- There is a common belief that mental health treatment and drug/addiction rehabilitation services would have the greatest impact on reducing houselessness.
- The City/Council are addressing this with the implementation of the Homeless Advisory Committee and by supporting the development of the Homeless Services Center which will be more than simply a warming/cooling center.
- A strong majority would like to see their cities and towns do more to deal with extreme heat and cold when it comes to changing weather patterns.
- Council is addressing this with support of a permanent facility for the Homeless Services Center.
- A majority would like to see a new transit district in their area of Oregon.
- Council has a representative serving on the COIC Transit Committee and they are challenged by a lack of drivers.

## GENERAL ATTITUDES

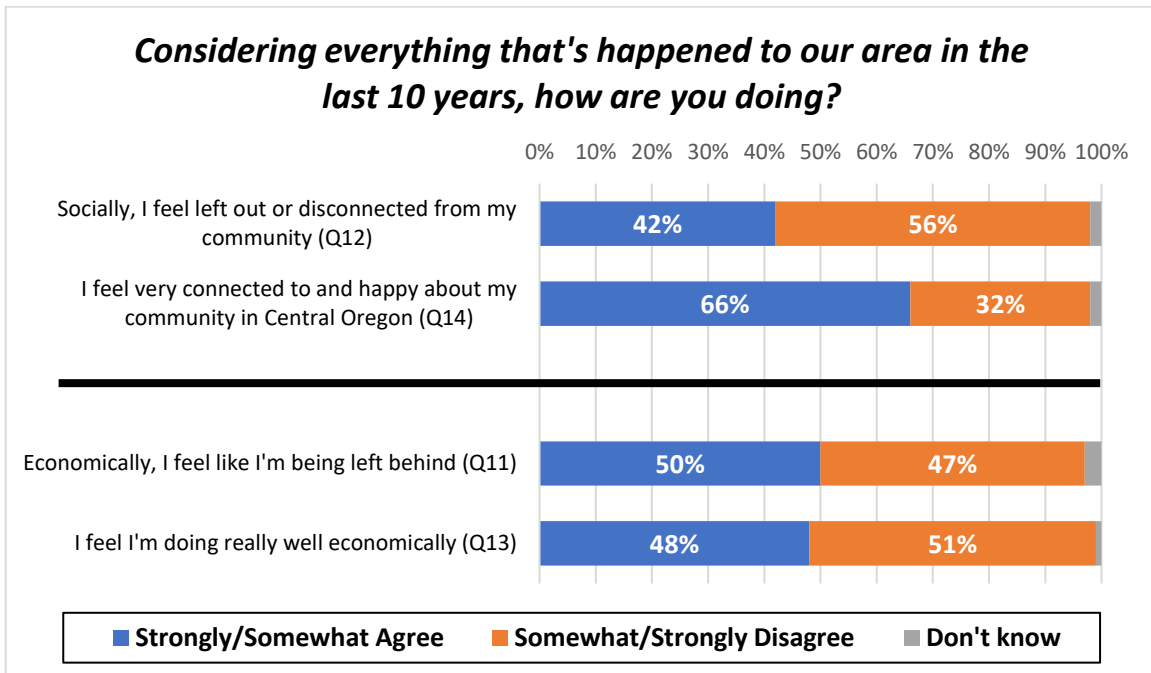
### Core values and beliefs

- Central Oregonians have a wide range of core values and beliefs, with concern for the environment the most commonly listed among the top three from a list of ten options (43%). Other key values and beliefs include supporting the community (38%), independence of self (35%), careers and jobs (35%), diversity of people (34%), and participation in family (34%) (Q83).
  - In a statewide survey from December 2020, Oregonians identified a different set of top values and beliefs, with family (62% top three) and independence of self (47%) rising above the rest. Just one in four ranked concerns for the environment in their top three (25%), as compared to 43% of Central Oregonians in this survey.



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- More Central Oregonians are content with their social life than not (Q12, Q14), while they tend to be split on how they are doing economically (Q11, Q13).



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- When asked to record comments about how they are doing, many Central Oregonians mention economic hardships, either experiencing it firsthand or seeing it around them. Socially, many are not keen on more people moving to Central Oregon (Q15).

***“I feel like overall my generation is facing hard economic times and although I am not struggling to pay bills, I don’t have a lot left over afterwards.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“I’m doing fine socially. Economically, I’m getting farther behind because wages aren’t keeping up with cost of living.”***

Man, age 45-54, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“Rapidly rising costs create a concern as we are nearing retirement that is substantially self-funded. In contract, government workers are retiring early with guaranteed income through retirement.”***

Woman, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“We are a single income family which is tough in today’s economy.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Jefferson County, White

***“I feel others are doing much poorer than myself and my husband economically. Examples would be working at gas stations or fast food restaurants that don’t pay livable wages.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Deschutes County (not Bend), White

***“Overall, doing well and happy. Too many people are moving into the area too quickly.”***

Man, age 65-74, Crook County, White

***“The long-term Central Oregonians are great. The problem is that the influx of very-Left in-migrants from California, Portland, and Seattle have brought values with them that are out of step with what Central Oregon used to be.”***

Man, age 45-54, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“To add insult to injury, bias and hate incidents are growing every day!”***

Woman, age 30-44, Deschutes County (Bend), Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino/a/x

***“As the community grows, our diversity increases which is amazing. It is also challenging because there are more people to reach and serve. We were doing well economically until recently when inflation increased our expenses. Socially, we feel very connected to our community, however there are so many more people that I am feeling increasingly disconnected.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“Unless born and raised in area you are nothing but an insignificant transplant and told to move back to where came from if voicing for improvements and equality.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, White

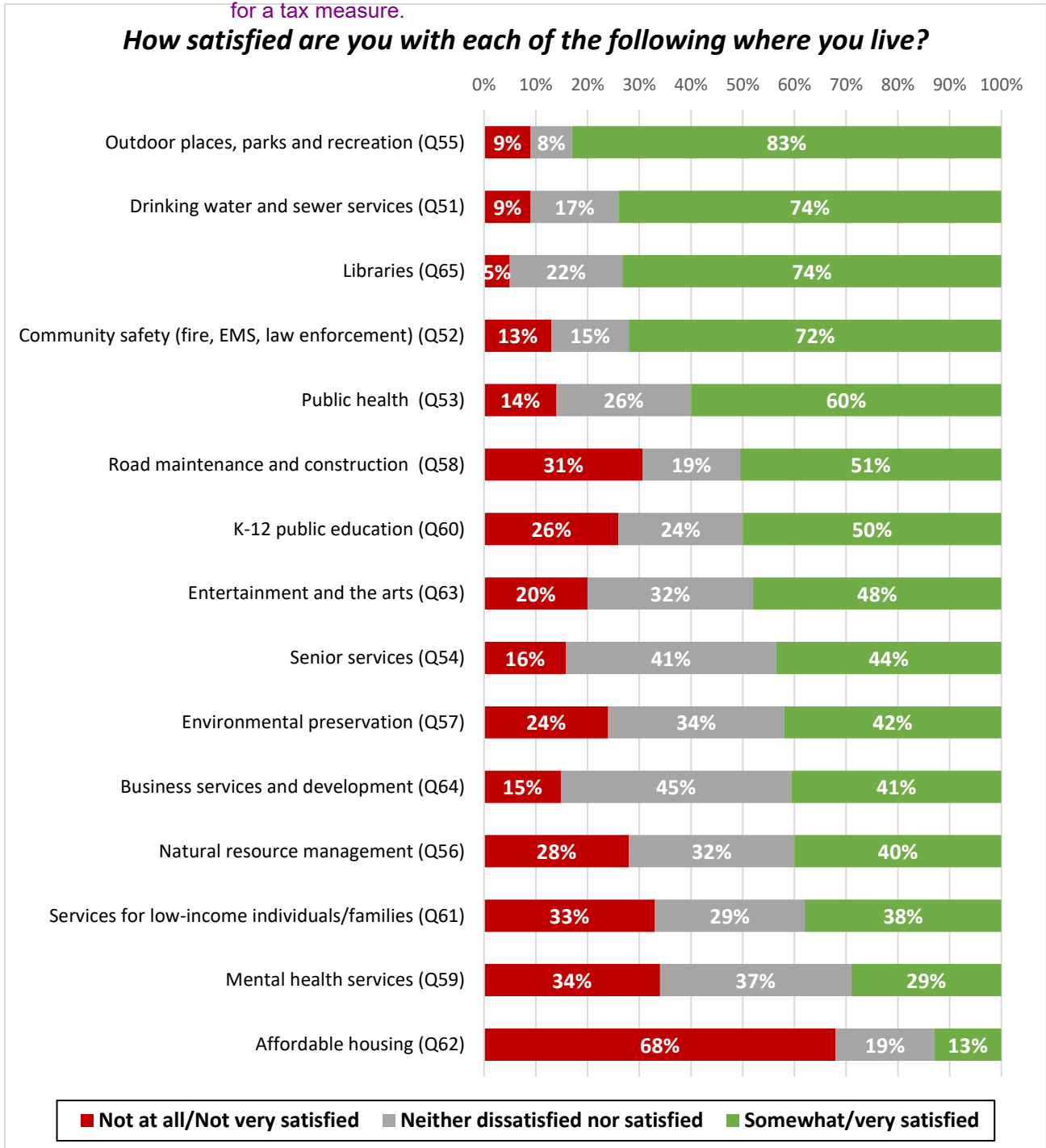
## Most Important Issues

- In an open-ended question, 35% of Central Oregonians cite finances and affordability as their most pressing personal issues, by far the most frequently mentioned topic (Q80). Other issues include housing (9%), aging (7%), health (6%), fabric of community (6%), climate change (6%), and more (5% or less).
- In another open-ended question, top issues at the community level (Q81) include water and drought (19%), housing (18%), population and development (14%), houselessness (13%), costs (10%), and climate change (9%).
- Projecting out to ten years from now (Q82), Central Oregonians volunteer that they are most concerned about water and drought (24%), population and development (18%), infrastructure (15%), climate change (14%), housing (14%), and houselessness (10%).

## Satisfaction with Services

- Of the fifteen services tested, Central Oregonians are most satisfied when it comes to outdoor parks and recreation (83%, Q55); drinking water and sewer services (74%, Q51); libraries (74%, Q65); community safety (72%, Q52); and public health (60%, Q53).
- Dissatisfaction is by far the highest for affordable housing (68%, Q62). Around one in three are dissatisfied with mental health services (34%, Q59); services for low-income people and families (33%, Q61); and road maintenance and construction (31%, Q58).
  - When it comes to affordable housing availability (Q62), not one of the 40 Crook County respondents are satisfied. Among those who live in Deschutes and Jefferson counties, at least two in three are dissatisfied, as well.
    - Those *without* school-age children are some of the least satisfied compared to other demographic groups.
  - Of the 33 respondents who are 18-24 years old, 21 of them are either not all or not very satisfied with services for low-income individuals or families (food, housing, utilities, childcare, healthcare) (Q61).

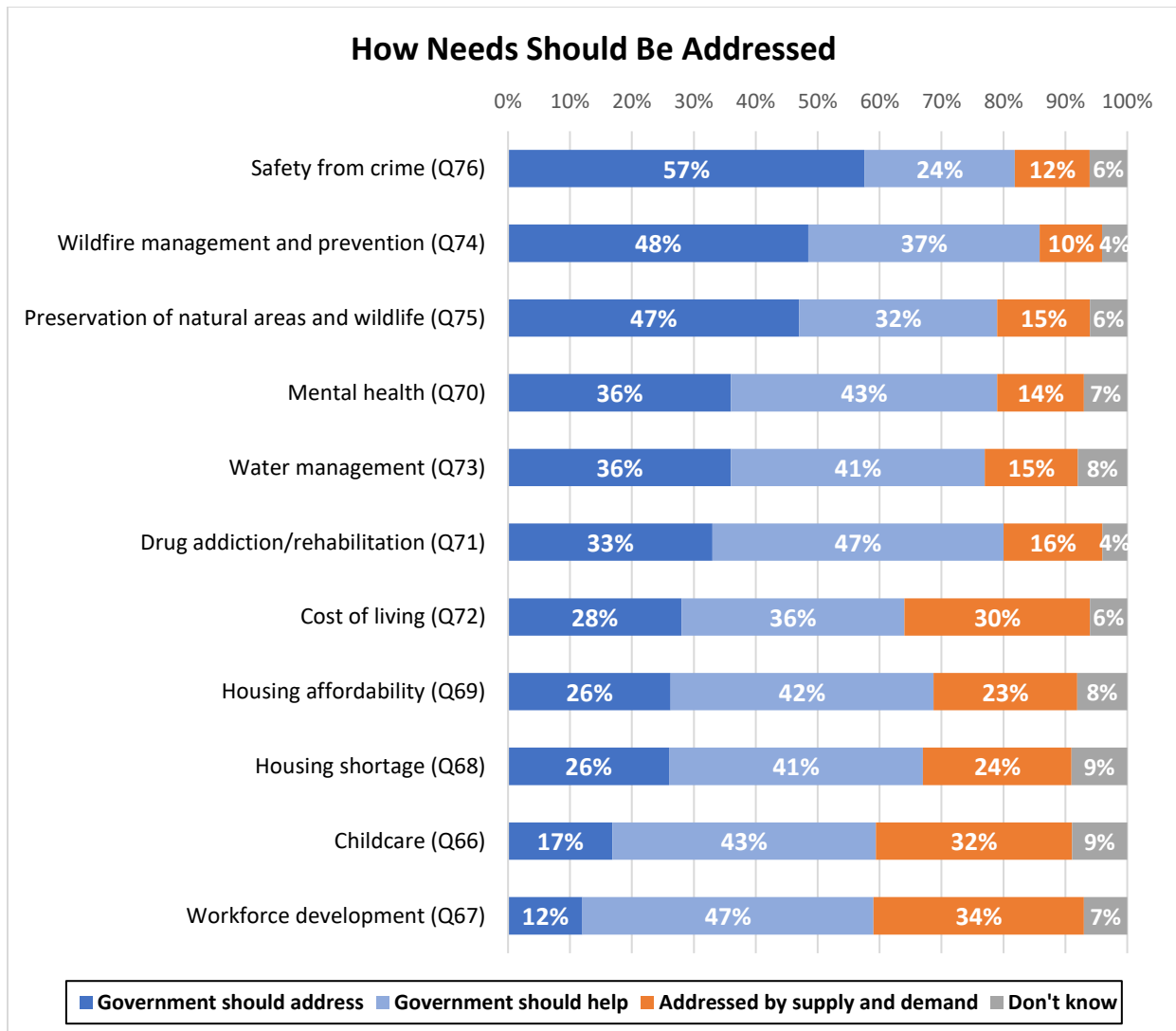
- When it comes to road maintenance and construction, those living in Jefferson County are some of the least satisfied, with 58 of the 66 respondents expressing dissatisfaction (Q58). This may be an opportunity to promote more of the paving programs, grants, or whatever you can to show what the City is doing currently, and to bring a consultant onboard to prepare you for a tax measure.



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

## Addressing Needs

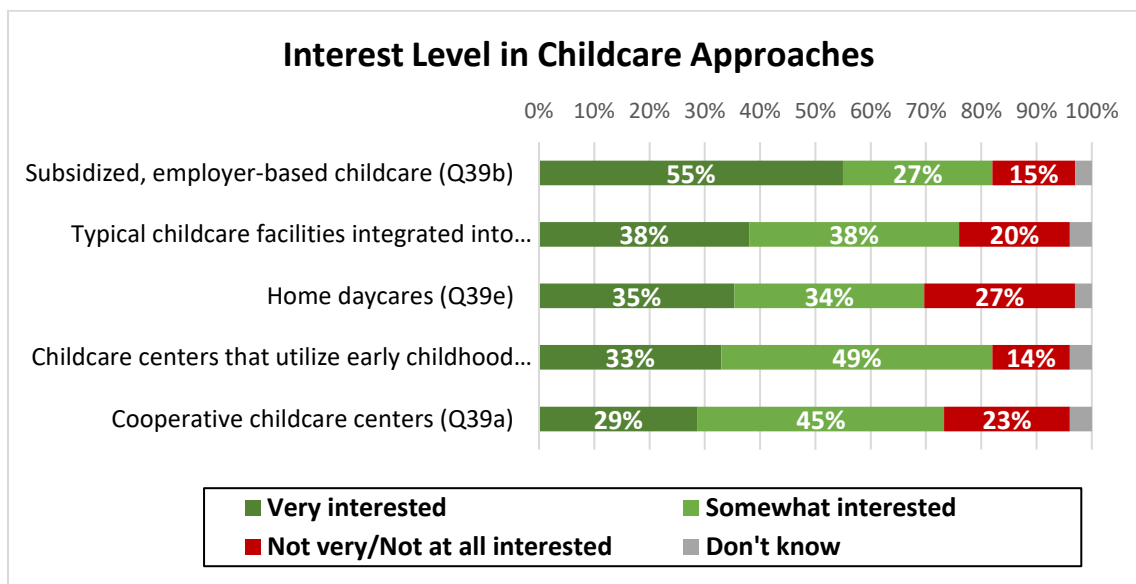
- At least a plurality of Central Oregonians believe that safety from crime (Q76), wildfire management and prevention (Q74), and preservation of natural areas and wildlife (Q75) should be addressed primarily by government.
- A plurality of Central Oregonians believe that government should help the private sector via tax breaks and subsidies when it comes to drug addiction and rehabilitation (Q71), workforce development (Q67), mental health (Q70), childcare (Q66), housing affordability (Q69), the housing shortage (Q68), water management (Q73), and cost of living (Q72).
- Central Oregonians are not in favor of addressing any of the proposed needs exclusively with supply and demand. The needs with the highest preference for supply and demand are workforce development (Q67), childcare (Q66), and cost of living (Q68).
- A statewide survey from October 2022 showed similar preferences among Oregonians as a whole. In some cases, Oregonians showed stronger preference that government address community needs than Central Oregonians do.





## CHILDCARE

- About one in four respondents have children under the age of 13 in the household (Q35). Among those with children under 13, 19% have children ages 0 to 18 months old, 17% have children 18 months to 3 years old, 40% have children 3 to 5 years old, and 64% have children ages 6 to 12 years old (Q36).
  - These figures are very similar to those from a statewide survey of Oregonians from October 2022.
- About eight in ten respondents with children under 13 spend at least some time transporting their children to and from childcare each day (Q37). More specifically, 23% spend up to 15 minutes in transit, 47% spend 16 to 30 minutes in transit, and around 11% spend longer than that.
  - In a statewide survey from October 2022, Oregonians as a whole were twice as likely to spend no time transporting their children (40%) compared to Central Oregonians in this survey (18%). Central Oregonian respondents are more likely to travel between 16 to 30 minutes daily (47% vs. 18%), while Oregonians were more likely to travel for longer than 30 minutes each day (18% vs. 11%).
- Of those with children under 13, 23% of Central Oregonian respondents spend nothing on childcare (Q38). Beyond that, 23% spend 1-10% of their income, 8% spend between 11-20%, and 8% spend between 21-30% (this question contains missing data for 36% of respondents with children under 13).
  - Results from an October 2022 OVBC general Oregon sample ( $n = 379$ ) reveal 47% of Oregonians with children under the age of 13 do not spend any of their income on childcare, 21% spend 1-10%, 12% spend 11-20%, and 21% spend 21% of their incomes or more.
- Asked to consider alternative models for providing childcare (Q39a-e), eight in ten are most interested in subsidized, employer-based childcare (with 55% *very* interested) (Q39b), though they are broadly interested in all approaches tested.
  - Those who live in an urban area are most interested in home daycares (Q39e).
  - While results are generally similar to those from a statewide survey in October 2022, Central Oregonian parents have more interest in subsidized employer-based childcare (55% very interested) than those statewide (39%).

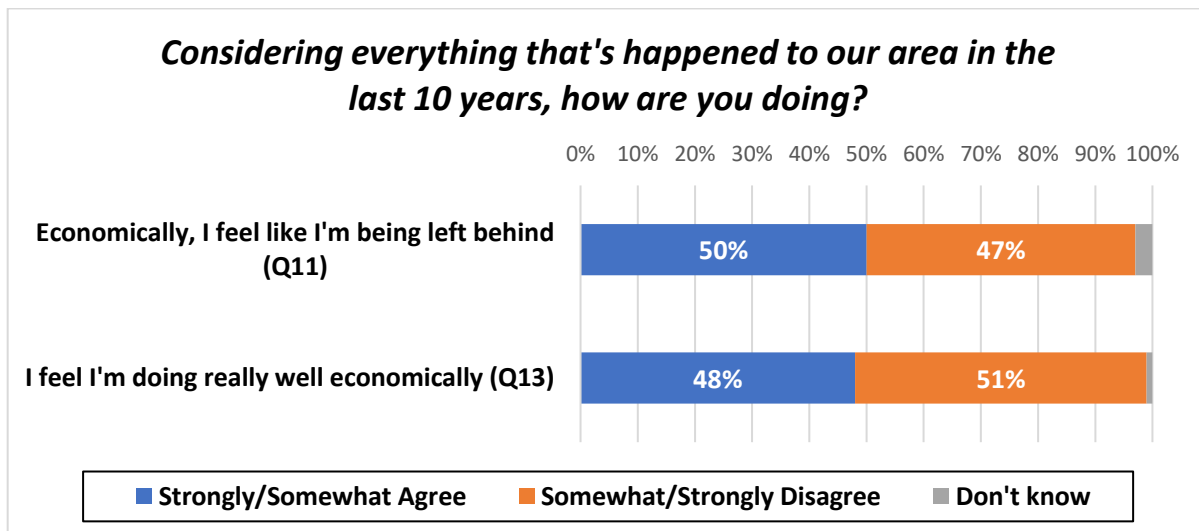


Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults with children in the home ( $n = 94$ ).

- In an open-ended question, respondents with children under 13 cite cost (33%) and transportation (12%) as their main barriers to accessing childcare (Q40). Schedules of operation and other time-related issues (6%); quality (6%); shortage of options (5%); and finding after school care (5%) are other notable issues.
- Of those surveyed, 15% are employers (Q41). Among this subsample (54 respondents), 37 say a lack of access to childcare at least somewhat impacts their ability to hire or retain employees. Another seven say it affects their ability to hire, but not much (Q42).
  - Employers in an October 2022 statewide survey were much less likely to cite issues with access to childcare impacting their ability to hire or retain employees (42%).

## ECONOMY

- Personal finances (35%) and housing affordability (9%) are among the top issues Central Oregonians are personally facing (Q80). They see these issues, along with water shortages and overpopulation, as the most pressing for their community as a whole and expect these issues to continue in the future (Q81, Q82).
- About half of Central Oregonians say that they feel like they are being left behind economically (Q11). Likewise, about half disagree that they are doing well economically (Q13).
  - Among the 40 respondents who live in Crook County, 25 feel they are being economically left behind (Q11).
  - Six in ten women say they feel left economically left behind, and 30 out of the 42 BIPOC respondents feel the same.



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- While nearly half of Central Oregonians believe that businesses moving to the region (Q8) and wage increases (Q9) have had a positive impact on them and their families, just three in ten feel the impacts of people moving to the region have had a positive impact on their lives (Q7).
- Only about one in ten say housing prices have had a positive impact on them and their families (Q10).

**“Growth is great but planning and infrastructure are needed.”**

Woman, age 65-74, Jefferson County, White

***“Growth means development on Native food gathering and customary hunting land.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

***“Economic growth has meant, for the most part, growth of communities and increase of value of investments. However, it has also hurt relationships in some ways, especially for those struggling.”***

Woman, age 18-24, Deschutes County (Bend), Asian and White

***“The two mega-businesses at the top of the grade (Prineville) are an abomination, especially Facebook/Meta, because of what they're being allowed to do: ridiculous growth and consequent squander of building resources, exorbitant use of water and electricity, etc. They're also an eyesore on the landscape. They were encouraged to settle here because of perceived benefits of local jobs and tax revenues; in reality, neither has materialized from what I've heard.”***

Woman, age 65-74, Crook County, White

***“The growing population has the serious potential to degrade the overall quality of life and the reason(s) people want to live here in the first place.”***

Man, age 65-74, Crook County, White

***“The outsiders moving in are crowding the rest of us out of services and housing options.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Jefferson County, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

***“I don't feel that there has been a wage increase at all. I make the same amount of money I did before but my rent has doubled in the last four years.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“The cities' permitting processes have created a housing market that is out of reach for most.”***

Woman, age 30-44, Deschutes County (Bend), Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino/a/x

***“Increasing the minimum wage doesn't help. It just makes everything more expensive. I used to have a good paying job, now that ‘good pay’ is just above minimum wage. This does not help people who have worked hard to get their career, as we now make little more than unskilled professions.”***

Man, age 30-44, Crook County, White

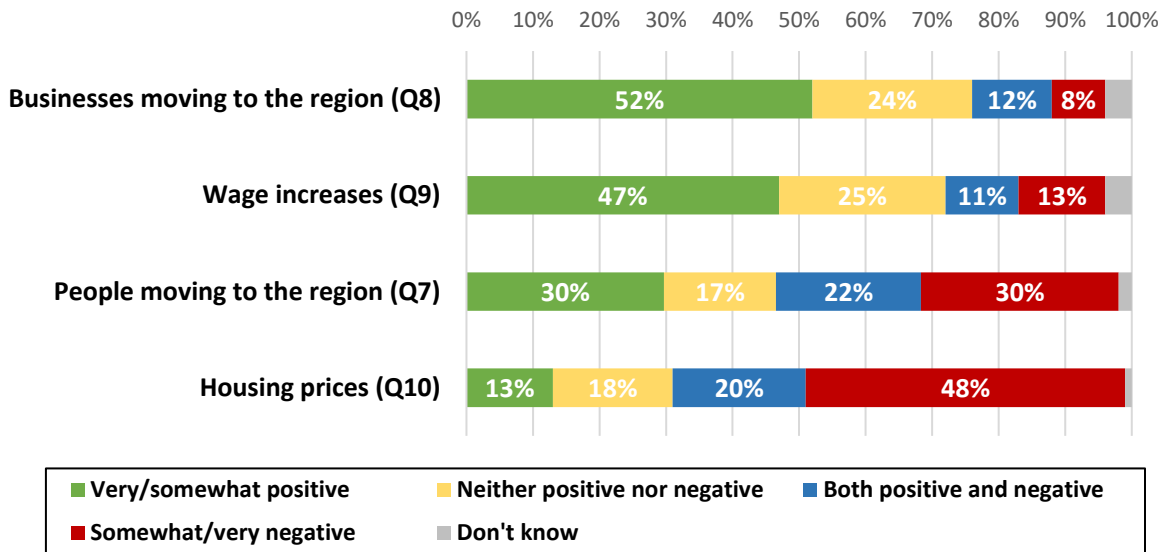
***“As an employer, high housing prices and wages hurt my business.”***

Man, age 55-64, Deschutes County (not Bend), White

***“Everything is a question of scale. SOME influx of population is good, but it's been overwhelming lately. Plus, when folks bring outside wealth in, the cost of living is no longer related to local wages.”***

Man, age 45-54, Deschutes County (Bend), White

**Please indicate whether each of the following have had a positive or negative impact on you and your family:**



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- Nine out of ten respondents see natural and environmental assets as strengthening the economy in their area, with six in ten saying these assets have contributed a lot (Q2).
- They also largely say that the influx of people (Q5) and businesses to the area (Q4); government investments (Q3); and the availability of retail and services (Q6) have contributed to a strong economy in their area, although some question the associated costs that come with an influx of people and businesses.
  - Comparatively few believe that extractive natural resource industries are a major factor in the economy (Q1).
- Thinking about drivers of a strong economy in their area of Central Oregon:

***“Natural Resources industries did contribute a lot to our economy in past years, but have diminished greatly with the reduced harvest from the USFS and potential litigation of awarded timber sales.”***

Woman, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“Tourists come here because of the environment and natural beauty.”***

Man, age 75+, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“Oregon is a well sought after state the influx of new people is a benefit to the economy.”***

Woman, age 65-74, Deschutes County (not Bend), White

***“The massive influx of visitors and new residents has put a strain on natural resources and good paying jobs, while at the same time causing housing prices go through the roof.”***

Chooses not to share gender, age 55-64, Deschutes County (Bend), Black or African American

***“Without growth, a town dies.”***

Man, age 65-74, Deschutes County (not Bend), White

***“Just because some of the above have contributed [to a strong economy in my area], the question not asked is ‘...at what cost?’”***

Man, age 65-74, Crook County, White

***“Central Oregon has many different resources - economic, recreational, business growth, intellectual capital. Of course, that makes growth and associated high costs of living.”***

Man, age 65-74, Deschutes County (not Bend), White

***“Those moving into Jefferson county are only seeking cheaper housing and commute to Deschutes county to work and shop; government investments are only to the friends of the commissioners and city councilors.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, White

***“We mostly have small retailers which do not meet all community needs, necessitating travel to Redmond or Bend.”***

Woman, age 65-74, Jefferson County, White

***“How is the economic prosperity of the region equivalent to the wellbeing of workers when folks can't afford to live in decent homes in the area?”***

Woman, age 30-44, Deschutes County (Bend), Black or African American and Hispanic/Latino/a/x

***Mining and timber industries are all but gone in the region. Replaced with service industry due to tourism.***

Woman, age 65-74, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“The breweries have added a lot of structured alcoholism.”***

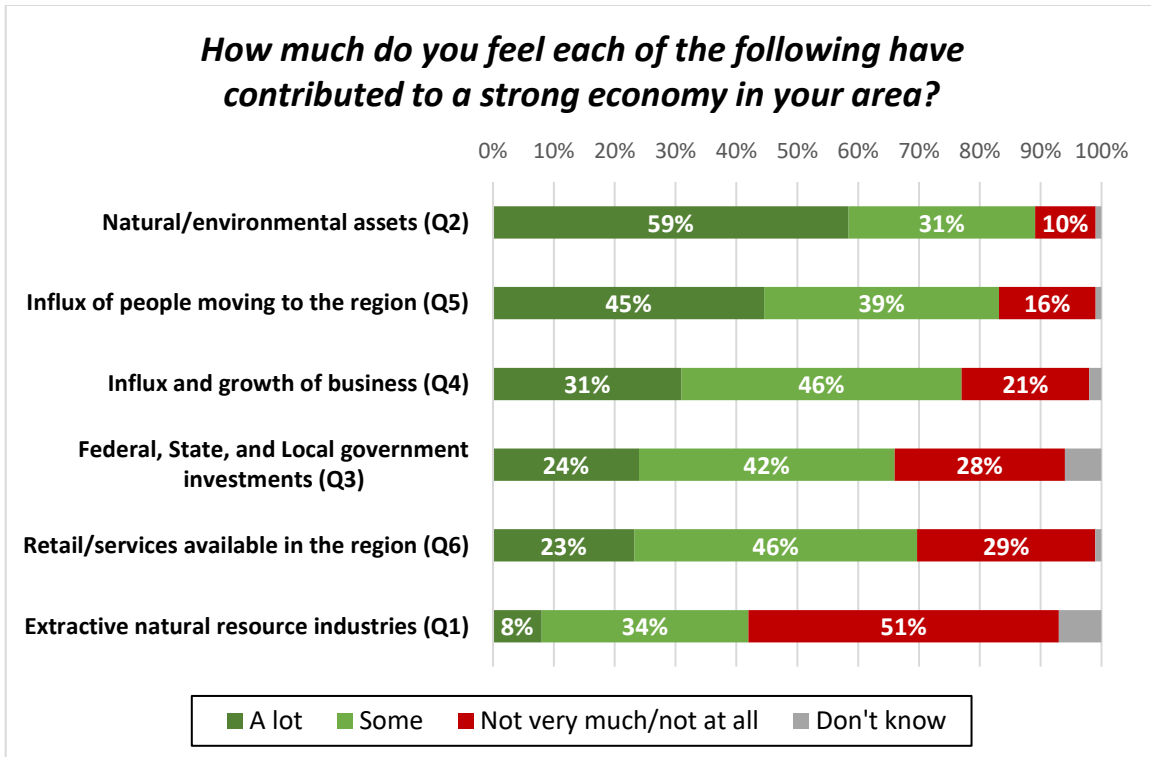
Woman, age 25-34, Jefferson County, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

***“We don't have a strong economy in Jefferson County.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, Hispanic/Latino/a/x, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native, and White

***“I don't feel extractive processes are still a strong factor, but they were a fundamental part of early Oregon economy.”***

Man, age 25-34, Deschutes County (Bend), White



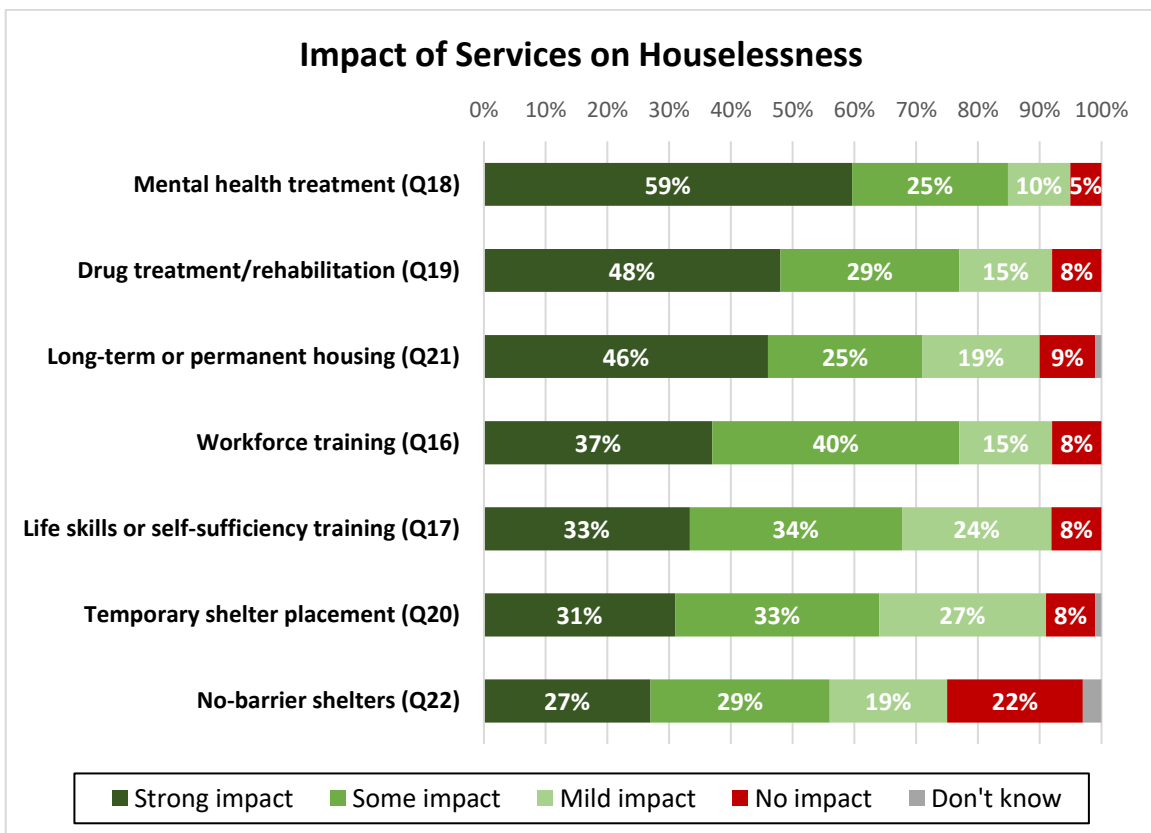
Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- A plurality of Central Oregonians are neither dissatisfied nor satisfied (45%, Q64) with business services and development in their community, suggesting low awareness or familiarity. That said, far more are satisfied (41%) than are dissatisfied (15%).

## HOUSELESSNESS

- Some 5% of respondents cite houselessness as their top personal issue (Q80), an issue they see as even more prevalent for their community as a whole (13%, Q81). They also largely believe that this will still be a significant issue in Central Oregon 10 years from now (10%, Q82). Related issues such as housing affordability, cost of living, and population increases are also top of mind for Central Oregonians.
- Central Oregonians are quite dissatisfied with services connected to the houselessness crisis.
  - For instance, approximately seven in ten are dissatisfied with affordable housing availability (Q62), 34% are dissatisfied with mental health services (Q59), and 33% are dissatisfied with services for low-income individuals and families (Q61).
    - On the flipside, only about one in three are satisfied with mental health services and services for low income families, with the rest feeling neither dissatisfied nor satisfied.
- Half say that the people they see living on the street are likely from their area, while over a third say they are likely from elsewhere (36%), with 12% being unsure (Q25).
  - Those with a high school degree or less and Jefferson County residents are especially likely to say people living on the street are from their area.
- Very few Central Oregonians (15%) say that there is sufficient local policy in place to deal with issues stemming from homelessness, with 74% sure there are not and 11% unsure (Q23).

- While there is no consensus recommendation from those who say there aren't enough services, the most common recommendations are for more and improved services (14%); a commitment to solution follow-through (14%); and more housing (13%) (Q23a).
      - Other common (8-9% of respondents) suggestions include compassion and dignity; affordable housing; shelter; and collaboration among communities and those in leadership positions.
    - All demographic groups clearly believe that there is not sufficient policy in place to deal with issues related to houselessness.
  - Central Oregonians have the most faith in the positive impacts that mental health treatment (Q18); drug treatment and rehabilitation (Q19); and long-term or permanent housing (Q21) could have to address houselessness (see bar chart below).
    - Priorities were very similar among all Oregonians in an October 2022 survey, where mental health treatment (56% said this would have a strong impact), long-term or permanent housing (50%, strong impact), and drug treatment and rehabilitation (46%, strong impact) were seen as having the highest impact.



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

## HOUSING

- Housing availability more broadly is also a core issue for Central Oregonians. On a personal (9%, Q80) and community level (18%, Q81), they list housing among their most important issues.
- Connected issues like cost of living, houselessness, and population growth all rise to the top as well. Central Oregonians also expect these issues to continue, with 18% listing population growth and 14% listing housing availability and affordability as likely issues ten years down the road (Q82).
- As noted above, Central Oregonians are broadly unsatisfied (68%) with affordable housing services in their community (Q62).
- Central Oregonians most favor approaches where the government helps the private sector to address the housing shortage (41%, Q68) and housing affordability (42%, Q69). In each case, the remainder are split between preferring government address the issue on their own and preferring a supply and demand approach.
- The most common housing and housing features that Central Oregonians have found difficult to find in the region (Q26) are those that are affordable (23%) and rentals (11%). Over half surveyed said this question was not applicable to them (56%).
- Among those who have found it difficult to find certain kinds of housing, 67% say that price played a significant role (Q26a).

***“Mixed income, affordable housing for folks who do not make a living wage.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, Hispanic/Latino/a/x, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native, and White

***“No aid for single parents that can’t work enough to live alone and spend enough time with kids.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Jefferson County, White

***“First/Last/Deposit is impossible for those who are currently houseless. Even a fulltime job won’t work.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, White

***“Any housing? There is no housing.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Crook County, White

***“Anything affordable, there is one place that charges under \$2,000 a month.”***

Man, age 18-24, Deschutes County (Bend), Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native and White

***“Housing type is not the issue, housing cost is.”***

Man, age 75+, Deschutes County (Bend), Prefers not to share race/ethnicity

***“Smaller single story, affordable housing with low maintenance to help seniors stay home.”***

Woman, age 65-74, Deschutes County (Bend), White



## RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Climate change and drought are second-tier personal issues (Q80), though they rise in importance when considering the impacts of climate change and availability of water on the community, as a whole (Q81).
  - Central Oregonians expect these issues to be two of the most significant issues facing Central Oregon 10 years from now, with 24% listing water and 14% listing climate change as top tier concerns for the future (Q82).
- Central Oregonians are more satisfied (40%) with natural resource management than dissatisfied (28%), with the remaining 32% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Q56).
- Seven in ten Central Oregonians say climate change has personally impacted them, impacted their community, or both them personally and their community. Beyond that, 23% say there have been no direct impacts from climate change, with 8% being unsure (Q47).
  - The belief that climate change is having personal and/or community impacts is higher among those with college degrees.
- Of those who have faced direct impacts, they most commonly cite drought and wells running dry (47%), extreme weather events (31%), fires and smoke (28%), and impact on agriculture and vegetation (24%) (Q47a).

***“This area has had severe drought conditions for the past several years now. The reservoirs are at historic lows that I have never seen before in my lifetime and my 40 plus years of living in Central Oregon.”***

Man, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“Water is becoming a problem. The drought has dramatically increased our risk to fire at our house. We've had to implement several expensive plans to try and protect the house.”***

Non-binary or gender non-conforming, age 55-64, Jefferson County, White

***“The impacts can be seen all around in our weather changes, our extreme heat and cold temps already. This impacts our natural environment, our crops, our plants, our water. Seeing lakes dry up by mid-summer, our irrigation water turned off early to conserve, plants and animals are adjusting and changing how they live. It is able to be seen all around us if we but look and notice. And yet, humans have not shifted their behavior that is causing it.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, Hispanic/Latino/a/x, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native, and White

***“I've noticed that weather seems to more extreme and there seem to be more wildfires lately. Obviously, it's understandable that those would deeply affect me and my community.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Deschutes County (not Bend), Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native and White

***“The price of feed for my horse has gone up a lot. Private wells are drying up as are community wells. I'm very worried about what will happen to me, my lifestyle and my community if stricter measures aren't put in place pretty damn soon.”***

Woman, age 18-24, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“Personally, the grass and trees in my yard are not getting enough water. My garden did not do well, the farmers crops didn't do well, cows and other animals can't feed like normal. everything and everyone is affecting by not having enough water, hotter summers and colder winters.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Jefferson County, White

***“Extreme drought and record heat are affecting crops and stressing the power grid and water sources. Costs are increasing.”***

Man, 65-74, Crook County, White

- Those who do not believe they have faced direct or community impacts say changes to the climate are natural (51%), that “climate change” is just a scare tactic (29%), and that they have not seen any impacts (23%) (Q47b).

***“Earth’s natural cycle of warming and cooling is to be expected.”***

Woman, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“I’m a believer in climate shift and climate patterns and climate changes isn’t happening. Plenty of scientists will show you that the earth runs on a cycle and nothing new is happening, in fact they can damn near pinpoint what point of the cycle we are on.”***

Man, age 18-24, Deschutes County (Bend), Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native and White

***“Climate change is not real. It’s a fallacy perpetuated by the government to give themselves more control over people.”***

Woman, age 30-44, Jefferson County, White

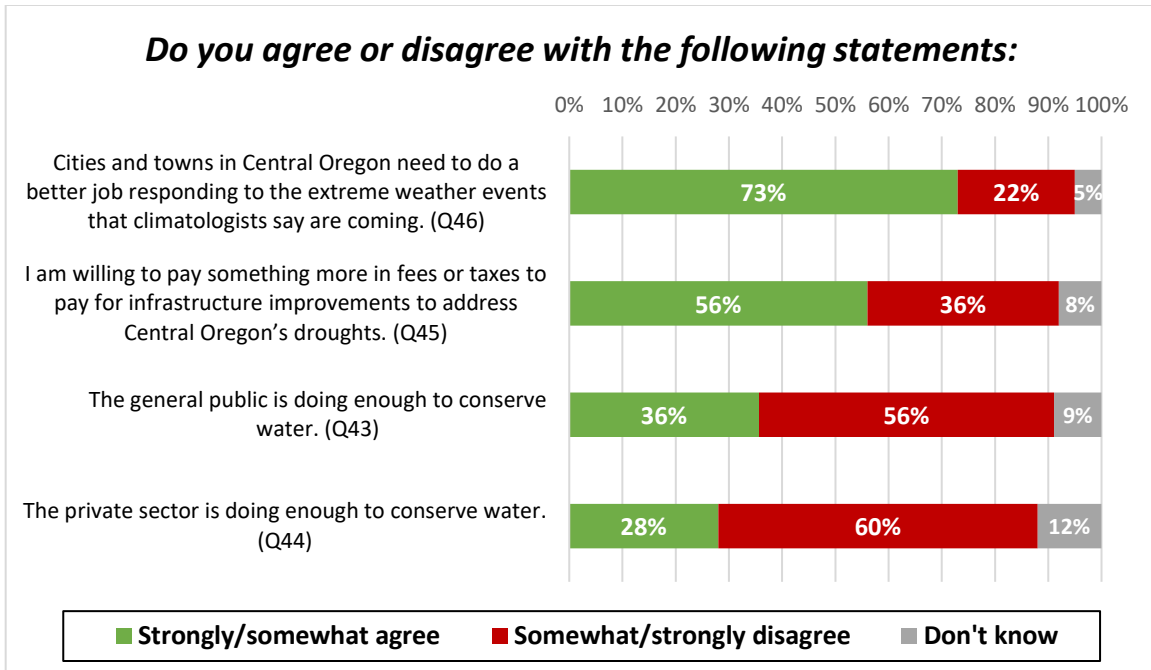
***“The term ‘climate change’ is bandied about as the overarching cause of many things. It is a scare tactic used to extract money for projects of dubious value to make the populace feel good that something is being done.”***

Man, age 75+, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“The community of Bend is not impacted. The broader community, which includes farms and ranches, is impacted by the lack of water for irrigation.”***

Man, age 75+, Deschutes County (Bend), White

- Regardless of opinions and perceived experiences with climate change, Central Oregonians largely agree that cities and towns in the area need to do a better job at preparing for extreme weather events (Q46) and that they are willing to pay for infrastructure improvements to address droughts (Q45) (see bar chart below).
  - Six in ten think the private sector is *not* doing enough to conserve water (Q44), with nearly as many who feel the general public is also *not* doing enough in this regard (Q43).



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- For a number of issues related to climate change and resiliency, Central Oregonians believe that the government should take the lead or work to help the private sector address the issue. This holds true for wildfire management (Q74), preservation of natural areas (Q75), and water management (Q73).

## TOURISM

- Central Oregonians say that population growth, development, and tourism are some of the biggest issues facing their community (14%, Q81). They also believe these issues will continue to be present 10 years from now (18%, Q82).
- Overall, 64% of Central Oregonians have a positive view of tourism in their community, though only 17% view it as very positive (Q49).
  - Groups holding more negative views include those with some college experience, and Bend residents.
- Those with positive views on tourism express pride in their area of Oregon, and appreciate the economic boost that tourism can bring (Q49a):

***“The tourists support the local businesses and restaurants and that boosts our local economy. Plus, it’s nice to have others see and feel the beauty of this area.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Deschutes County (not Bend), Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native and White

***“Because tourism has the advantage of rebuilding and restoring historic sites and encouraging the revitalization of cultures.”***

Woman, age 30-44, Deschutes County (Bend), Hispanic/Latino/a/x

***“They generate income for a lot of people in our economy. Generally living in a place where people come to ‘play’ is a good thing.”***

Man, age 25-34, Deschutes County (Bend), Asian and White

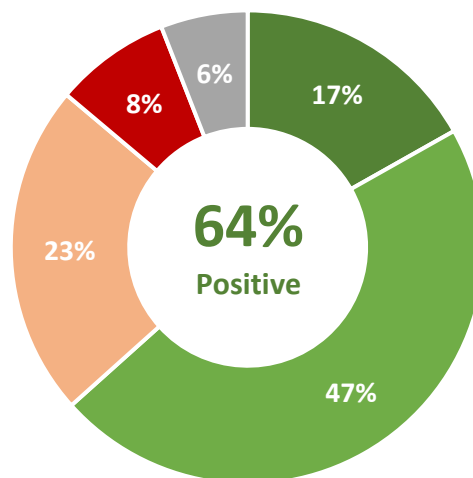
***“We don’t have huge resorts. People can wander through nature without many crowds. The arts are supported by the downtown businesses, which draws in travelers passing through. I like being in a hidden gem.”***

Woman, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“Because we get a lot of tourists here, that helps the local economy.”***

Man, age 65-74, Jefferson County, White

**Q49. How do you feel about tourism in your community?**



■ Very positive ■ Somewhat positive ■ Somewhat negative ■ Very negative ■ Don't know

Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- Those who shared why they have negative views on tourism in their area Oregon, commonly mention the stress it puts on natural resources, as well as how it increases the cost of living for locals (Q49b):

***“Local politicians and governments seem to have forgotten that central Oregon should be for residents first. The priority has gone to the extreme in that the focus is on tourist, not locals.”***

Man, age 55-64, Deschutes County (Bend), Asian and White

***“Too many people and can hardly go anywhere without others being there. Nature is not peaceful anymore.”***

Woman, age 55-64, Jefferson County, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native and White

***“Ignorance of those visiting from a different environmental area (e.g. wildfire risk and prevention), occasional sense of entitlement, pressure on resources, traffic and associated increased pollution.”***

Man, age 65-74, Crook County, White

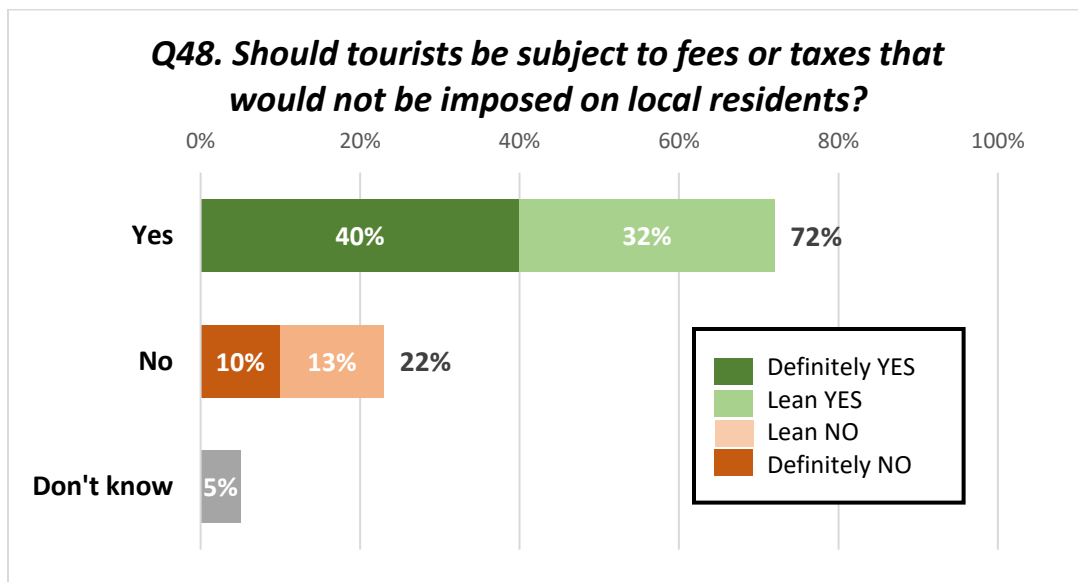
**“It is a huge drain on community resources, such as fire, EMS, and police.”**

Chooses not to share gender, age 55-64, Deschutes County (Bend), Black or African American

**“It drives up costs of living, tons of houses are taken off the rental market, they can charge \$5000+ a month to some rich dude coming to ski for a month why would they rent it to someone like me who could only afford \$1000-\$1500 a month.”**

Man, age 18-24, Deschutes County (Bend), Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native and White

- Central Oregonians overwhelmingly believe that tourists should be subject to fees or taxes not imposed on local residents (Q48).
  - Support for tourist fees and taxes is high across all key demographic subgroups.



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

## TRANSPORTATION

- Transportation and infrastructure more generally are lower-level issues for Central Oregonians whether personally (4%, Q80), or on a community level (7%, Q81). That said, infrastructure is seen as the third most important issue when looking to the future (15%, Q82).
- One in two residents are satisfied with road maintenance and construction (51%), with 31% dissatisfied and 19% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Q58).
- Satisfaction levels are lower for services related to public transportation in the area, with the highest satisfaction levels for biking and walking infrastructure (Q32), costs of public transportation (Q31), and easy access to bus stops (Q28) (see bar chart below).
  - Some of example of what people would like to see more of when it comes to public transportation (Q33):

**“Buses that go to COCC & OSU Cascades campus.”**

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

***“It would be nice to get a booklet or something in the mail that’ll provide more information.”***

Woman, age 45-54, Jefferson County, Hispanic/Latino/a/x

***“Rural access to services even if its once or twice a week just so they are able to meet their basic needs.”***

Woman, age 25-34, Jefferson County, Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native

***“On-demand shuttles, public transportation to medical/dental appointments in Bend/Redmond and to local grocery stores.”***

Woman, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“I’ve never taken public transportation in Central Oregon. If I knew more about schedules and routes, I might.”***

Man, age 55-64, Crook County, White

***“I count the number of passengers on buses passing by on 3rd St, Wall St, Brookwood. The most people I have seen on a bus in the past year is 2, and often zero. Big buses for so few riders is insane. There has to be a better way.”***

Man, age 75+, Deschutes County (Bend), White

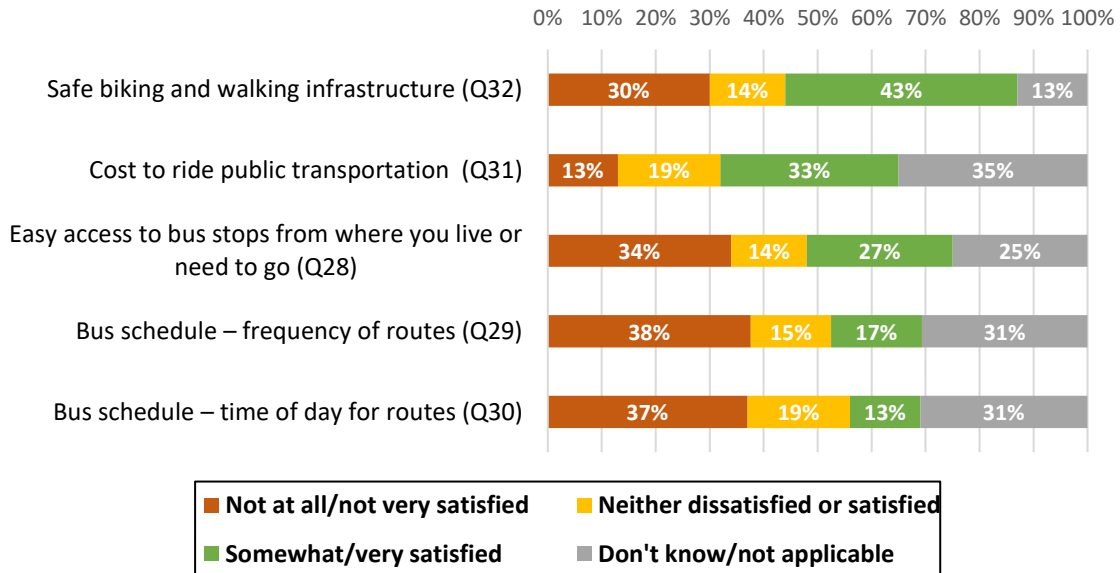
***“Cascades East Transit needs to operate longer into the evenings and more frequently, but it’s challenging with so few riders. Also need to time schedules to coincide with typical 8-5 work schedules.”***

Man, age 55-64, Deschutes County (Bend), White

***“We have a monopoly of Medical Transportation that actively chooses to drop off people an hour before appointments and consider it on time. If you don’t perfectly schedule your pick up time, it will take no less than 1 hour before you are picked up. If you do schedule it, it can be 30 min to an hour before you are picked up. This can turn a 15 minute appointment into a 2 hour appointment, making it impossible to schedule anything else around the appointment.”***

Non-binary or gender non-conforming, age 18-24, Deschutes County (not Bend), White

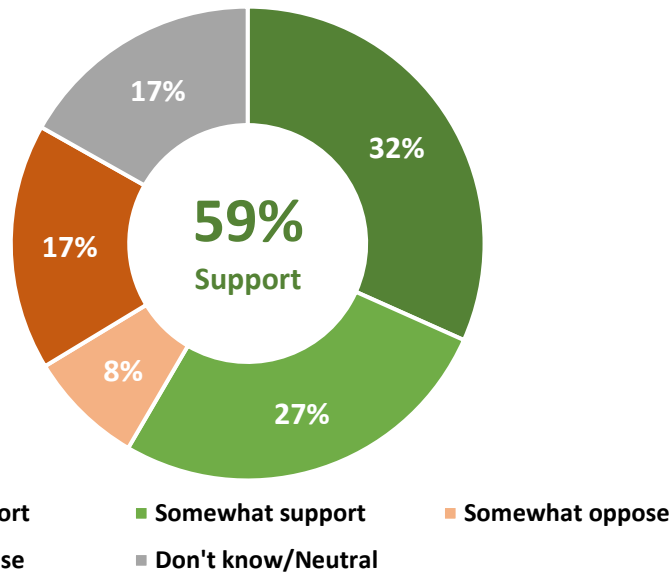
### Satisfaction with Public Transportation



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

- A majority favor the creation of a transit district that utilizes a small property tax or utility fee to pay for enhanced public transportation services (Q34) (see pie chart below).
  - There are few significant differences within demographic categories.

### Q34. Support or Oppose Creating a Transit District



Source: OVBC survey conducted Oct. 19 – Nov. 28, 2023, among Central Oregon adults (N = 368).

## METHODOLOGY

From October 19-November 28, 2022, the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center in partnership with the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) conducted a survey of Central Oregonians' values and beliefs to assist COIC with planning, policymaking, and communications.

**Research Methodology:** The online survey consisted of 368 residents of Deschutes, Jefferson, and Crook Counties ages 18+ and took approximately 15 minutes to complete. This is a sufficient sample size to assess Central Oregonians' opinions generally and considering the smaller sample sizes to cautiously review findings between multiple subgroups for differences in values and beliefs.

Respondents were contacted by using professionally maintained online panels. In gathering responses, a variety of quality control measures were employed, including questionnaire pre-testing, validation, and real time monitoring of responses. To ensure a representative sample for the 3-county COIC area, demographic quotas were set and the data was weighted by age, gender, education, and White/BIPOC.

**Statement of Limitations:** Any sampling of opinions or attitudes is subject to a margin of error. The margin of error is a standard statistical calculation that represents differences between the sample and total population at a confidence interval, or probability, calculated to be 95%. This means that there is a 95% probability that the sample taken for this study would fall within the stated margin of error if compared with the results achieved from surveying the entire population. This survey's margin of error for the full sample is  $\pm 5.1\%$ .

**The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC)** collaborates with city and county governments of Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to provide services related to workforce development; education; transportation; community and economic development; and natural resources. COIC also partners with businesses and nonprofit organizations in central Oregon to fulfill its mission.

**Oregon Values and Beliefs Center:** The research was completed as a community service by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center. OVBC is an independent and non-partisan organization and an Oregon charitable nonprofit corporation.