

# Washington Community Survey and Stakeholder Focus Group



Connecticut  
Economic  
Resource Center

# Agenda

- Themes
- Survey Methodology and Respondents
- Profile of Part-Time Residents
- Comparison of Full-Time Versus Part-Time Residents
  - Demographics
  - Employment
  - Life in and Perceptions of Washington
- Summary Findings

# General Overview of Survey Methodology and Respondents

# Survey Methodology

- Survey designed by CERC with input from Washington Economic Development Committee
- Data collected through SurveyMonkey
  - Link provided to Town of Washington to publicize and recruit respondents
- Survey open August 14 – September 12, 2016

# 428 Respondents

## Residential Status

- 374 (88.4%) owned a home in Washington
  - 314 (85.8%) were full-time residents
  - 52 (14.2%) were part-time residents

## Employment Status

- 77 (20.6%) were self-employed with their business in Washington
- 42 (11.2%) were self-employed with their business outside Washington
- 79 (21.1%) worked for someone else in Washington
- 64 (17.1%) worked for someone else outside Washington
- 11 (2.9%) were not employed
- 101 (27.0%) were retired

**Charter: Balancing unique  
village character, with rural  
and appropriate commercial  
development**

# Challenge: Balancing Resident Expectations

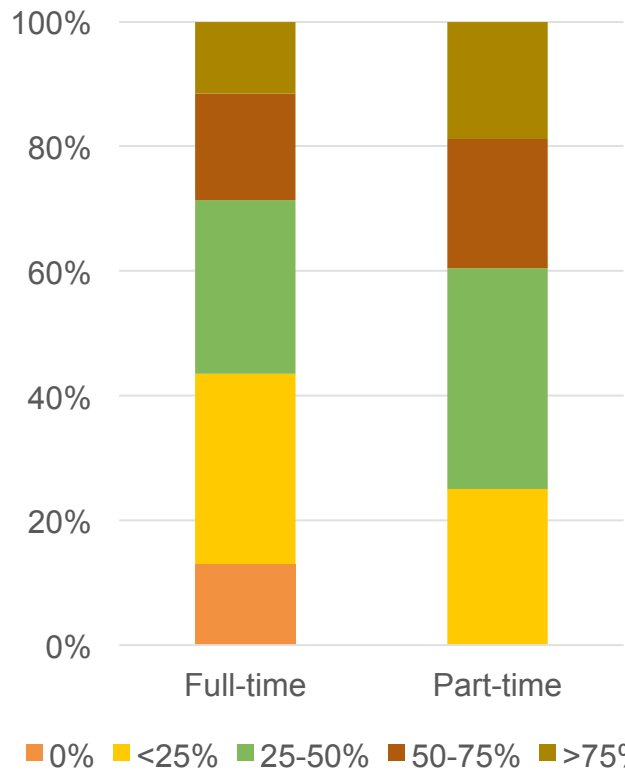
- Washington should make a strong push for smart economic development. We have no choice. Either we are committed or we are out of business!”
- “Be creative in attracting young families, support our school system”
- “The biggest issue facing Washington is the declining population. All the other problems flow from this one. ...”

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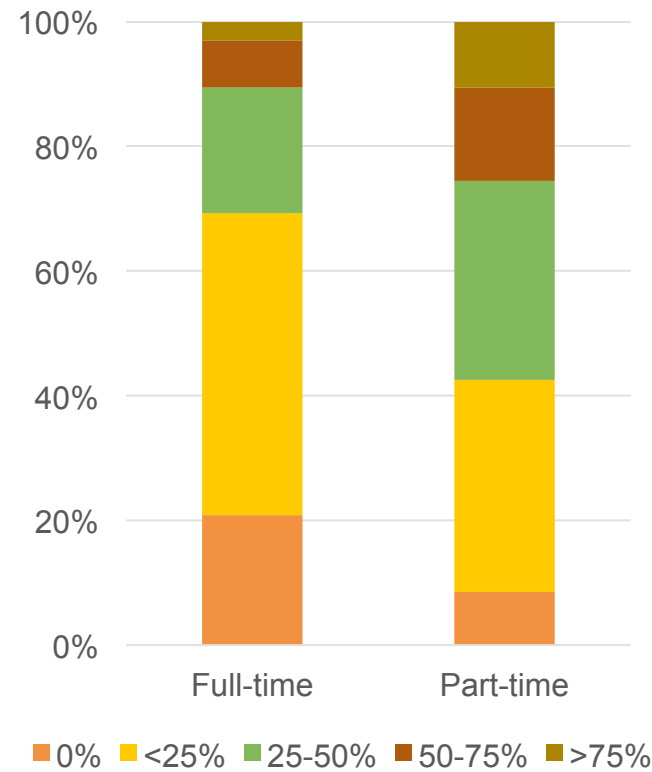
- “For a small town we have a lot going for us now. Don't mess it up!”
- “Keep doing what you've been doing. We have no complaints. Washington is a very unique community and we are blessed to live here.”
- “The less it changes, the better. We came to Washington because of the way it was. ...”

# When Here, Part-Time Residents Spend As Much or More Time in Town

## Dining in Washington



## Shopping in Washington

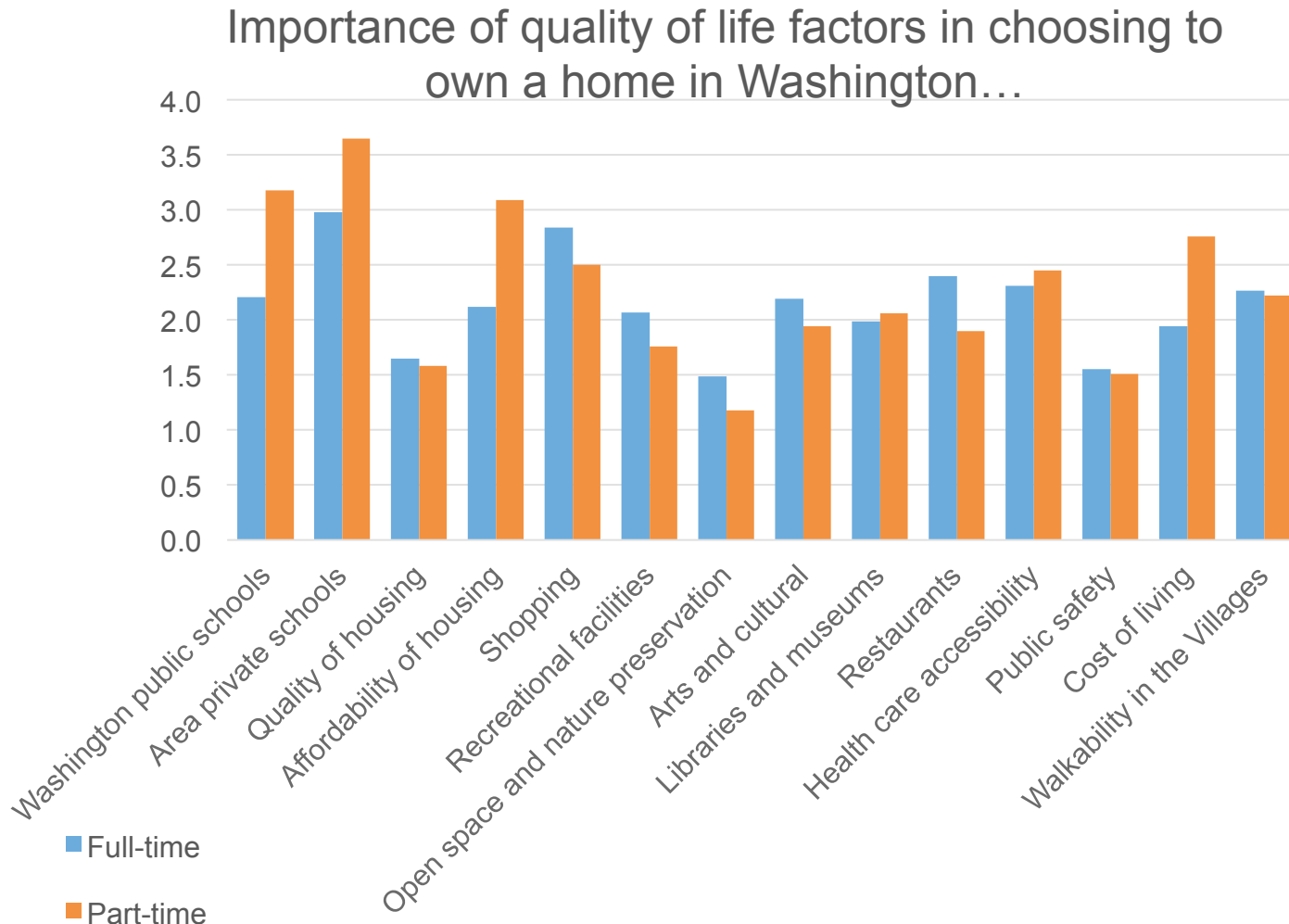




# Business & Growth Mindset

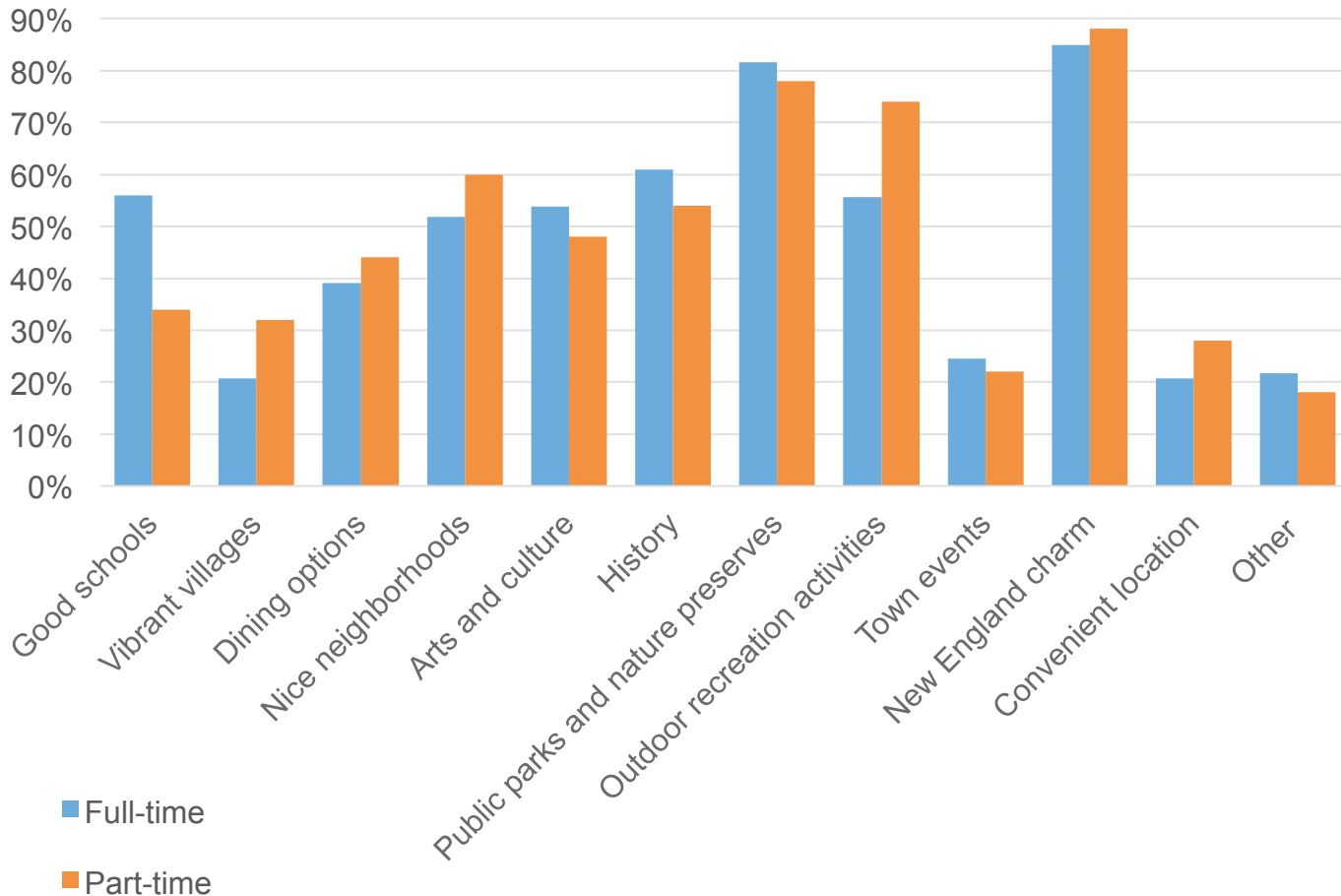
# Washington's Assets make it a Destination

# Part-Time Residents Rated Most Quality of Life Factors Slightly Higher

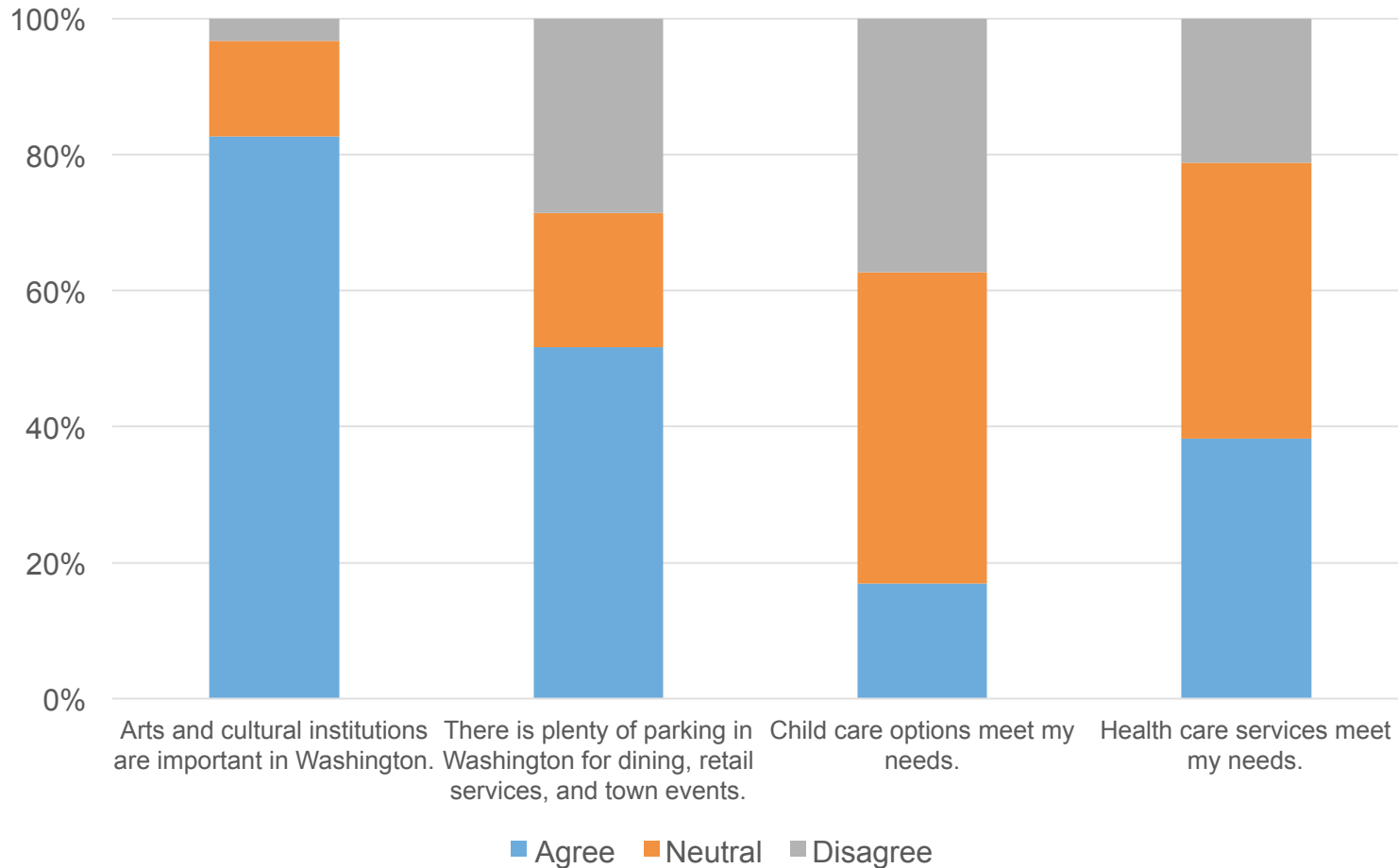


# Respondents Generally Agreed on Drivers of Washington's Reputation

Washington is know for...



# Good Quality of Life

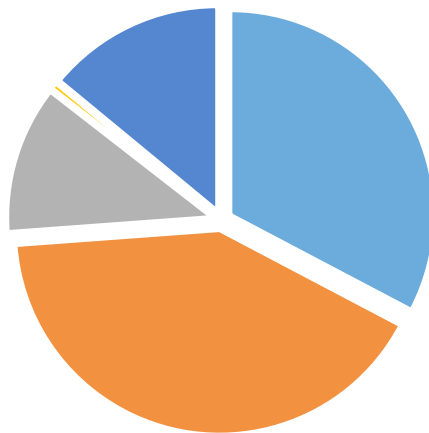


# Dedicated Economic Development Function

# Attracting Young Families

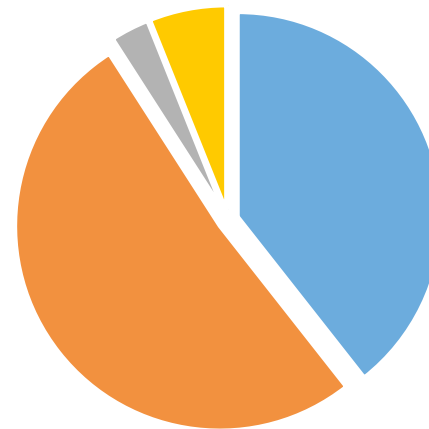
# Neighborhood Characteristics and Family Drive the Decision to Live In Washington

Full-Time



- Family reasons
- Neighborhood characteristics
- Favorable cost of living
- Proximity to another home
- Proximity to work

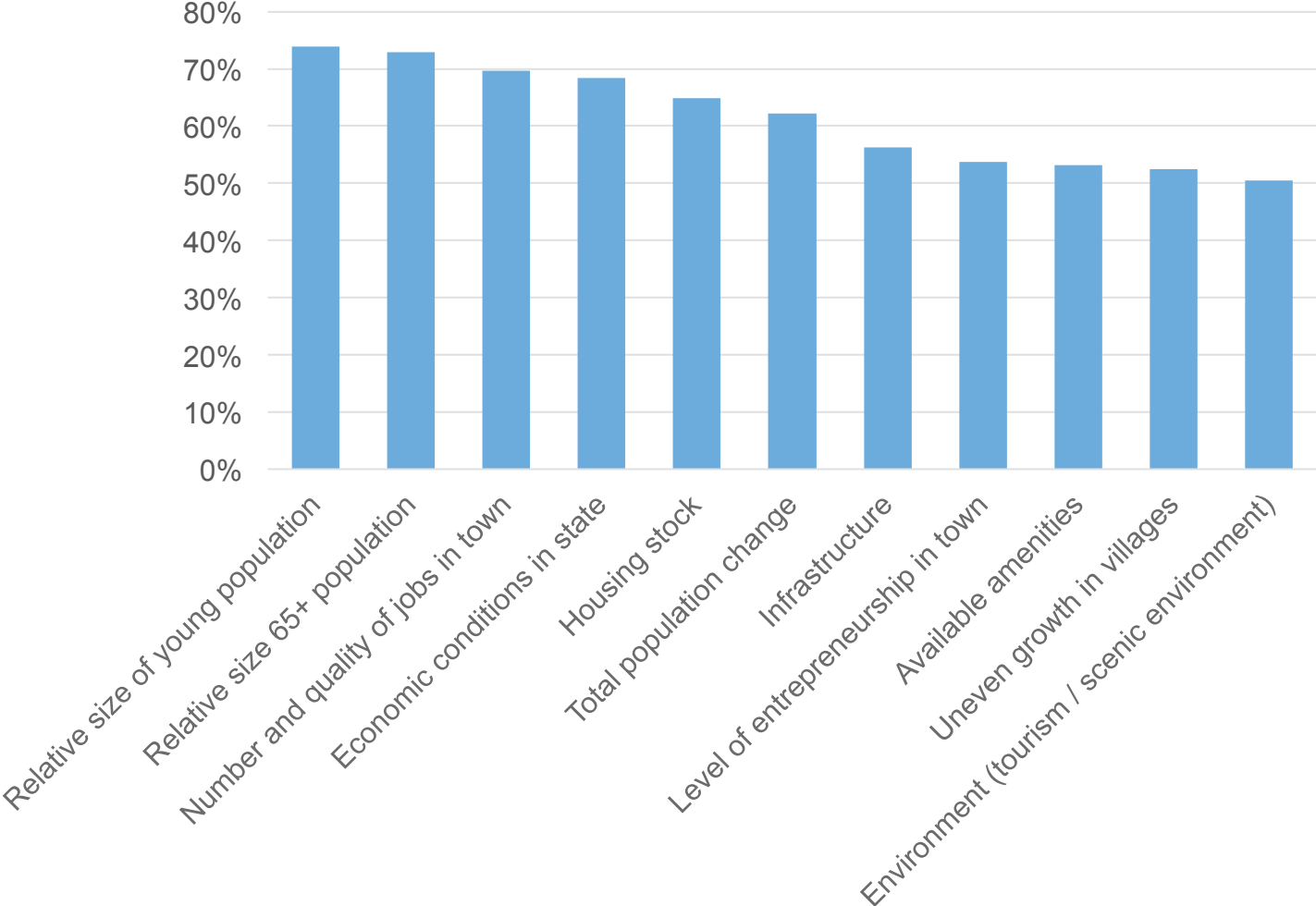
Part-Time



- Family reasons
- Neighborhood characteristics
- Favorable cost of living
- Proximity to another home
- Proximity to work

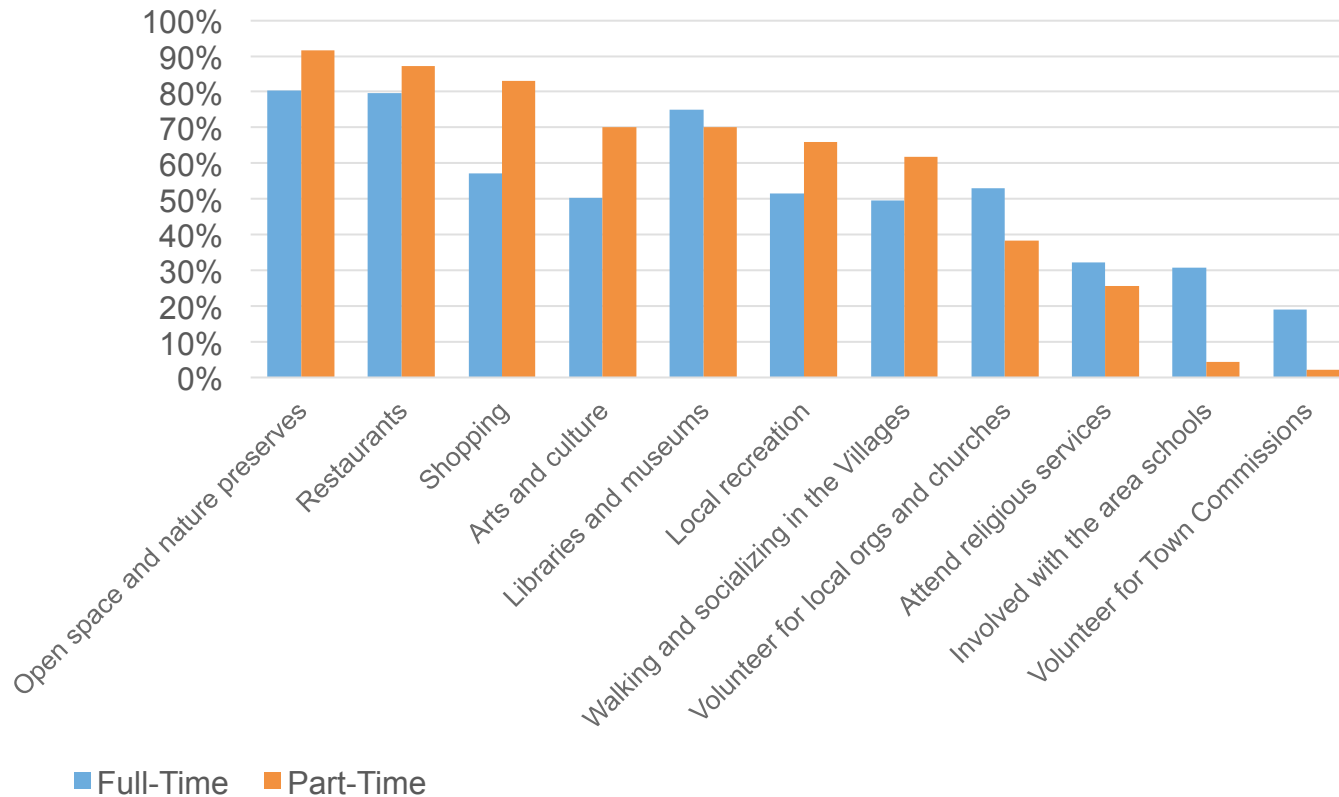


# Population and Jobs Considered Top Challenges



# Part-Time More Likely to Participate in Activities; Full-Time More Likely to Volunteer

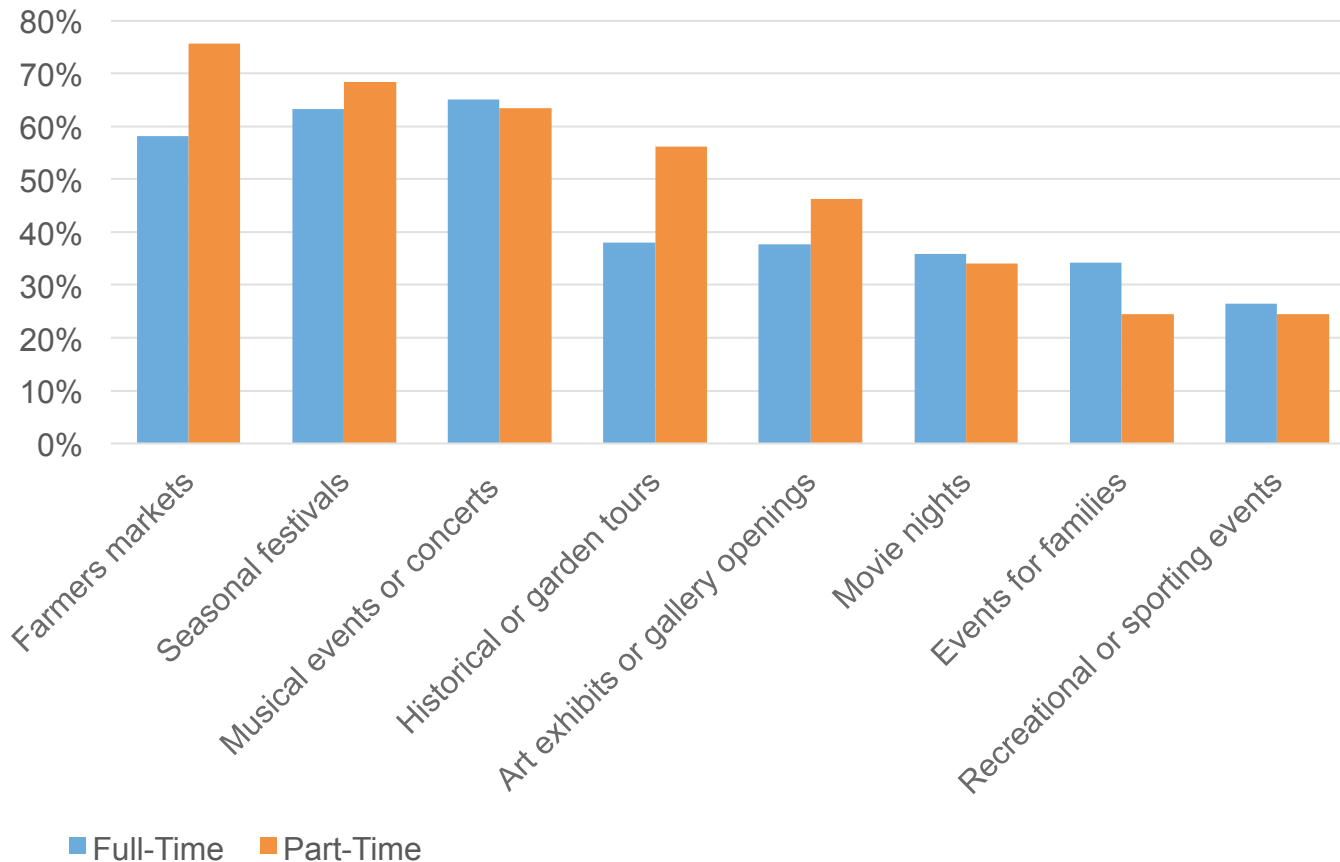
## Participation in Local Activities



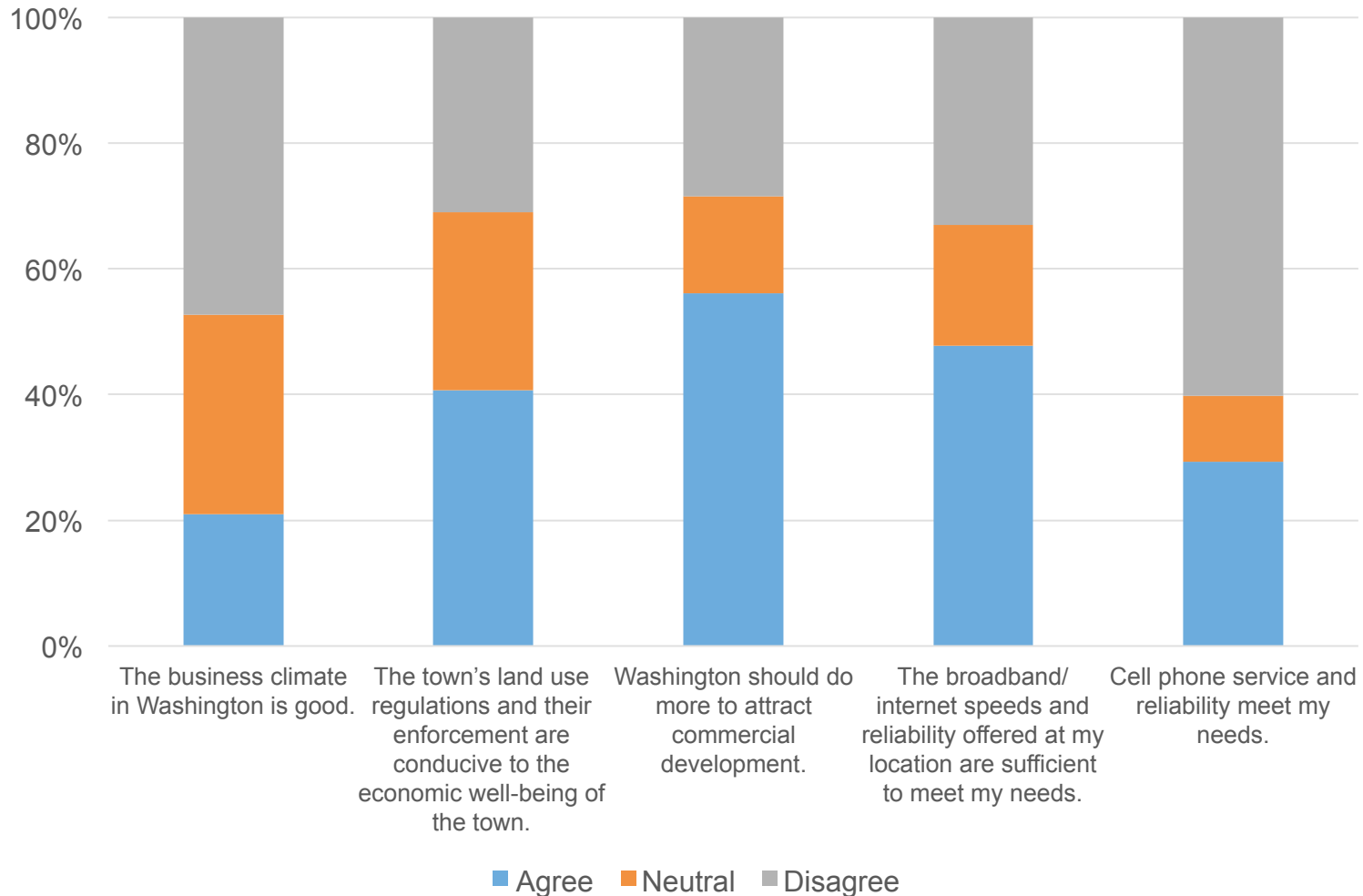
# Connections

# Strong Interest in Additional Activities in Washington

Activities to Offer or Expand

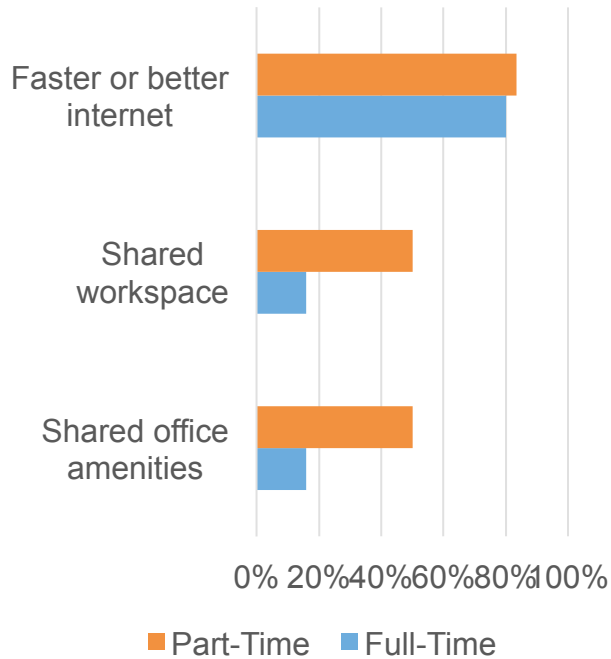


# Business Conditions Can Be Improved

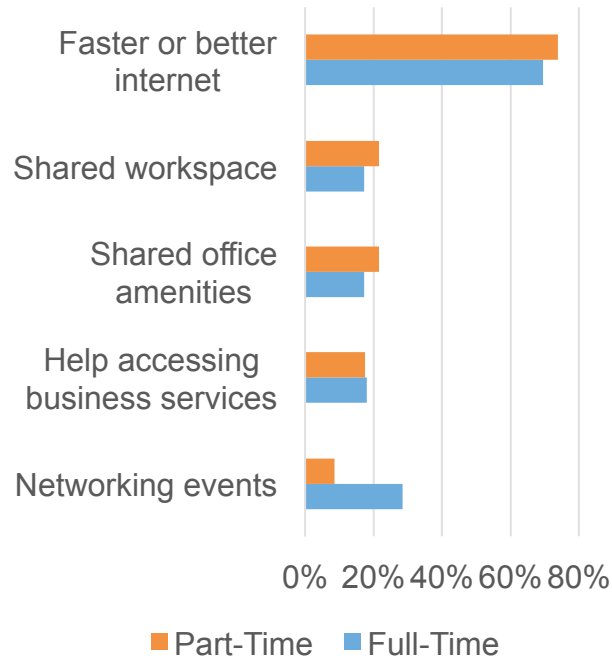


# Internet Service Was Top Business Need

## Telecommuters



## All Employed Respondents



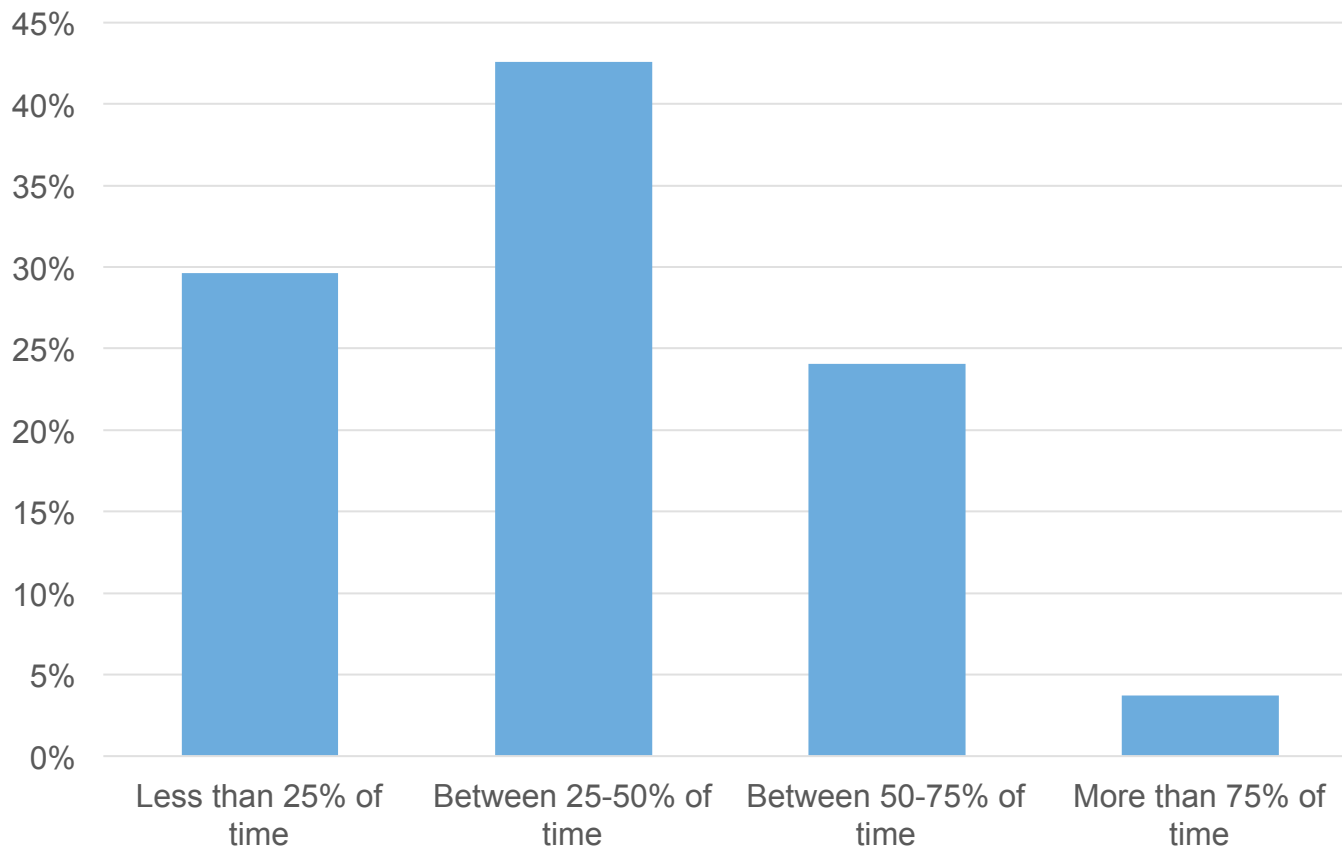
# Other Business Needs

- In open-ended responses to business service needs, better cell service was mentioned frequently
  - Sample comments:
    - *“Cell Towers. Service is horrendous. It’s 2016.”*
    - *“Better Cell reception imperative to me staying in Washington.”*
- Other items mentioned:
  - More retail, including food, gas, pharmacy, books, clothing, office supplies, hardware store, restaurants
  - A shared marketplace in town for craft items, antiques and food
  - Artist studio space
  - A fitness gym
  - More hotels and inns
  - More doctors
  - Bus or helicopter service

# Characteristics Specific to Part-Time Residents

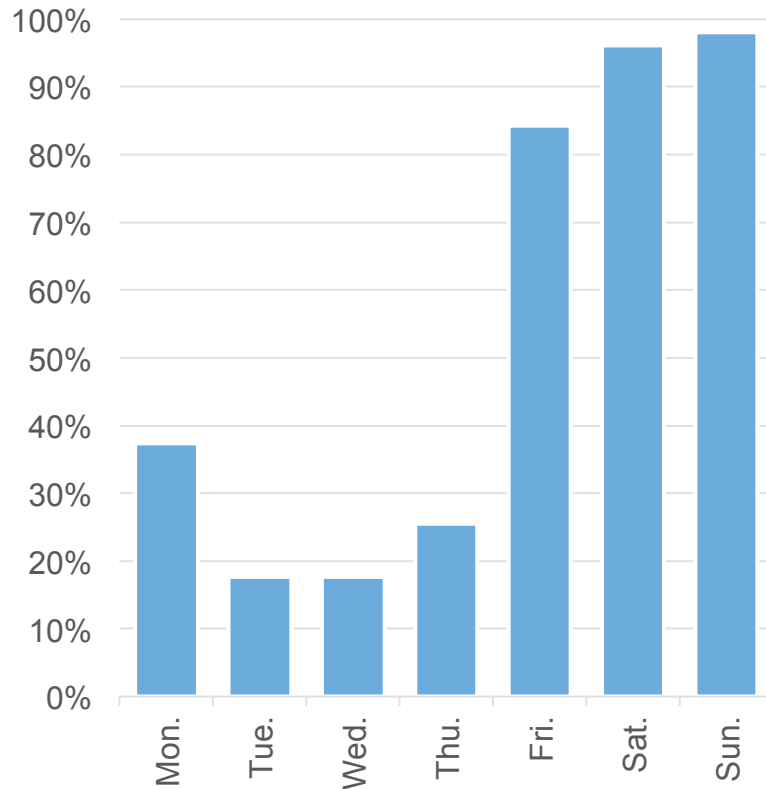


# They Spend Less than Half of Their Time in Town

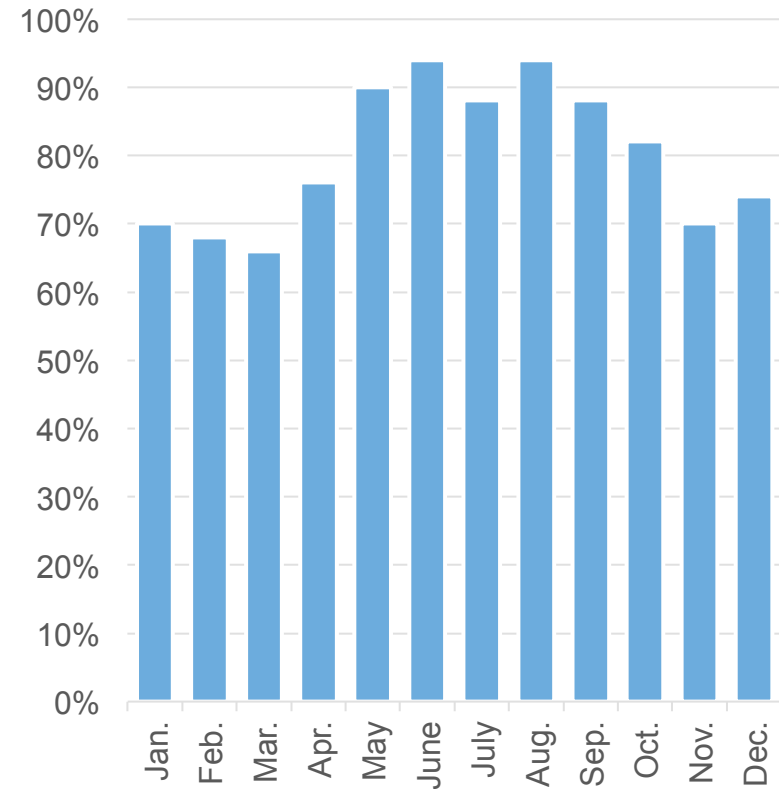


# They Are More Likely to Be in Town on Weekend and in Summer

## Days in Washington

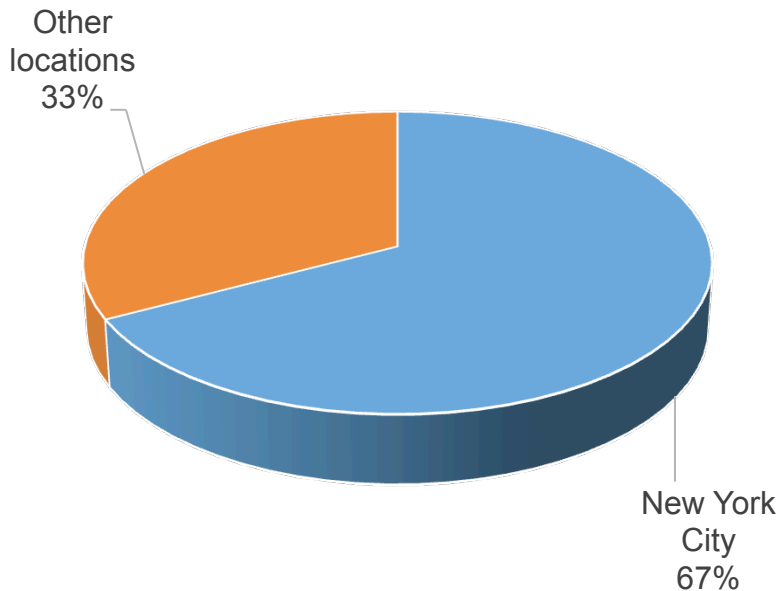


## Months in Washington



# Most Part-Time Residents Also Own in NYC

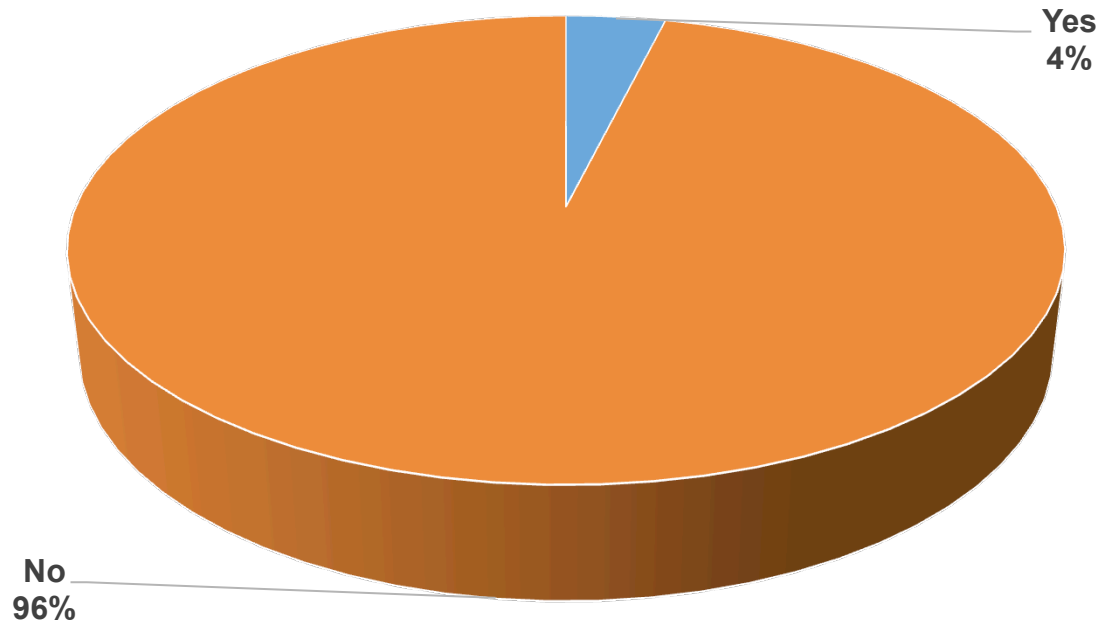
Location of second home



- 67% of part-time residents had another home in New York City
- Other locations include: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, other cities in New York, Virginia, Florida, and Texas

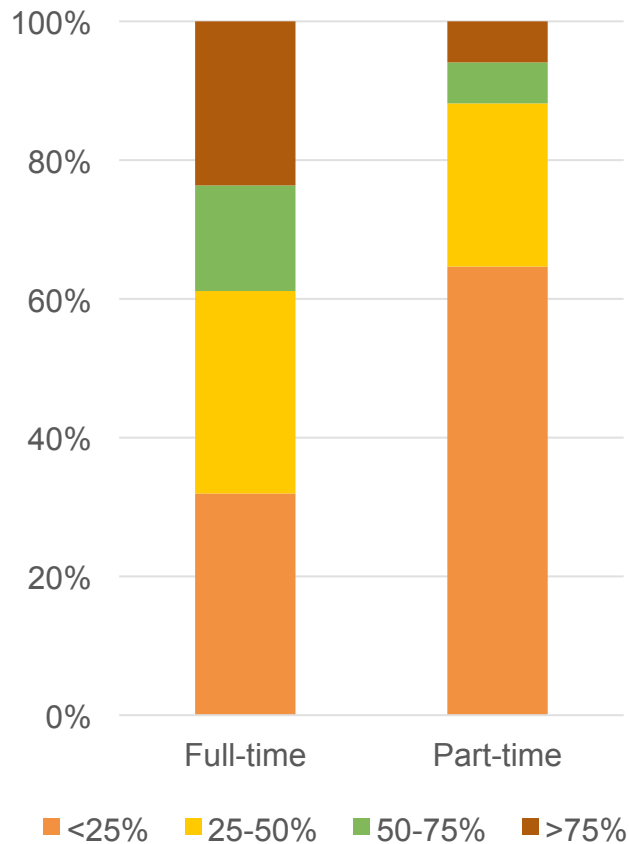
# Unlikely to Rent Out Home on a Long-Term Lease

Do you rent out your home on a long-term lease when you are not here?

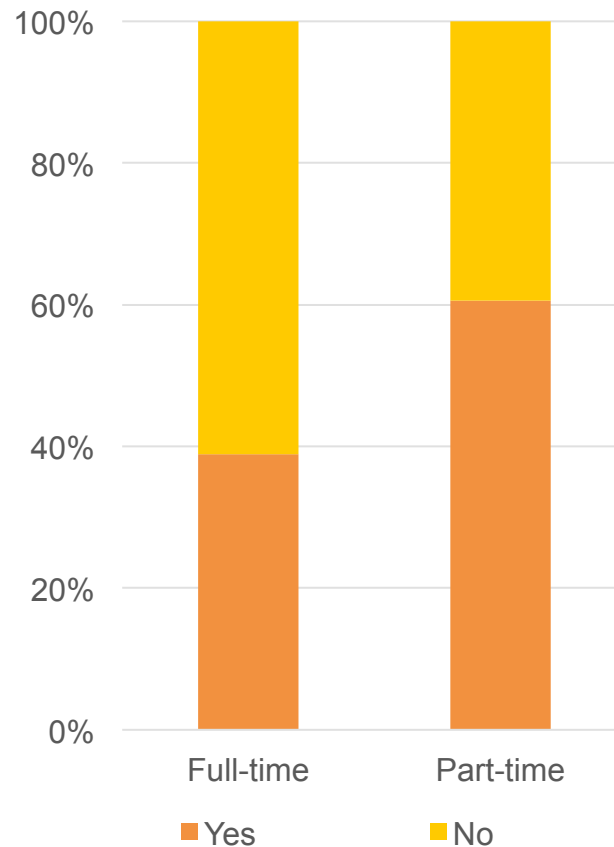


# Part-Time Residents Telecommute...

## Less Frequently but



## Want to telecommute more

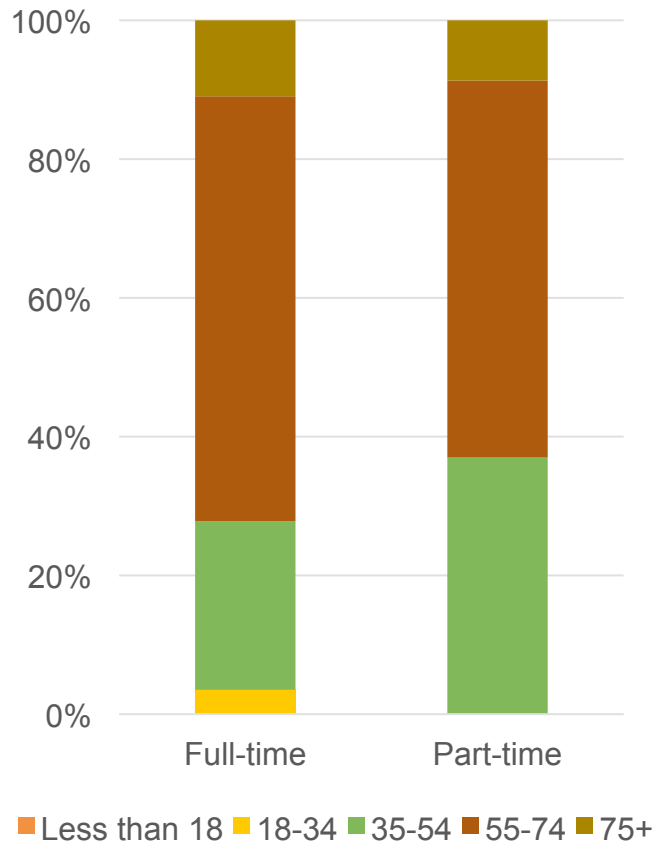


# Comparison of Full-Time Versus Part-Time Residents

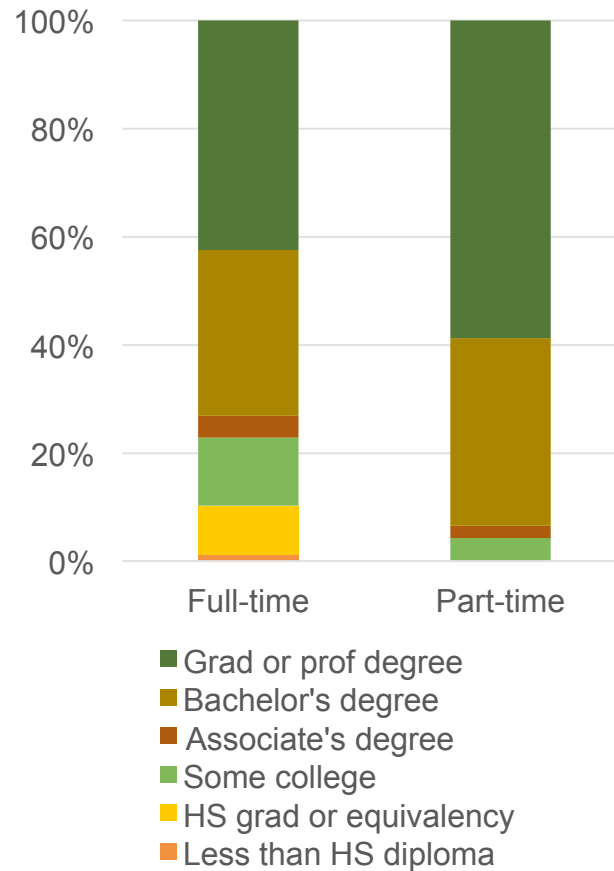
Demographics

# Part-Time Residents Were...

## Slightly Younger

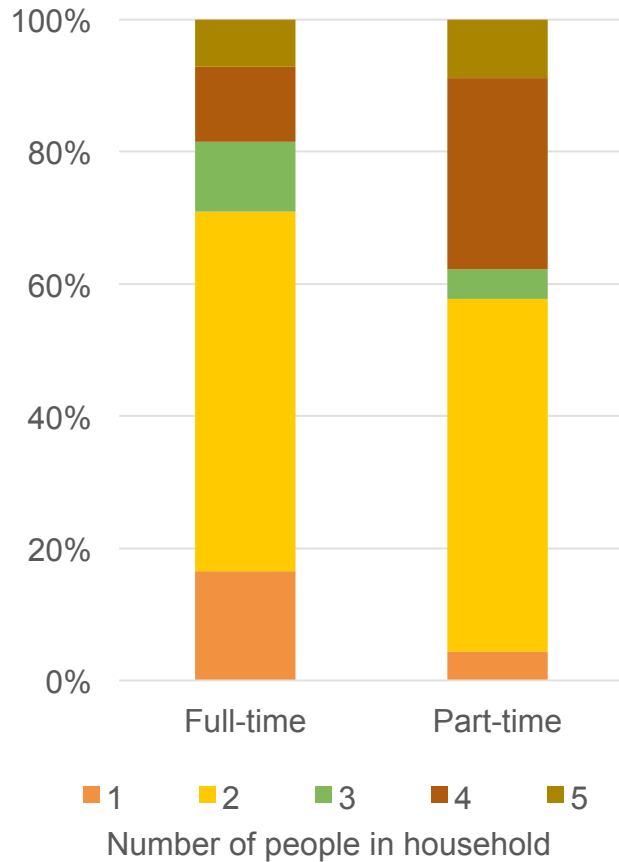


## More Educated

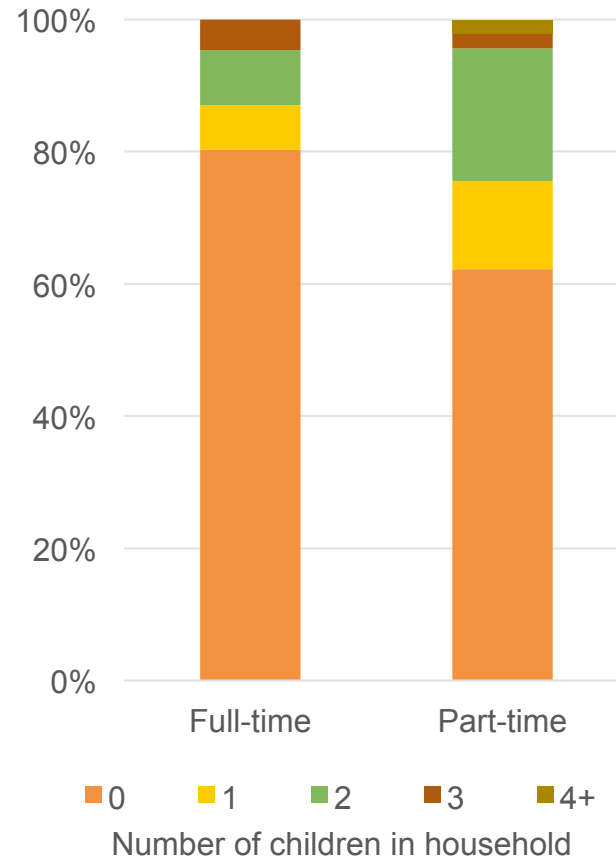


# Part-Time Residents' Households Were...

## Bigger



## With More Children

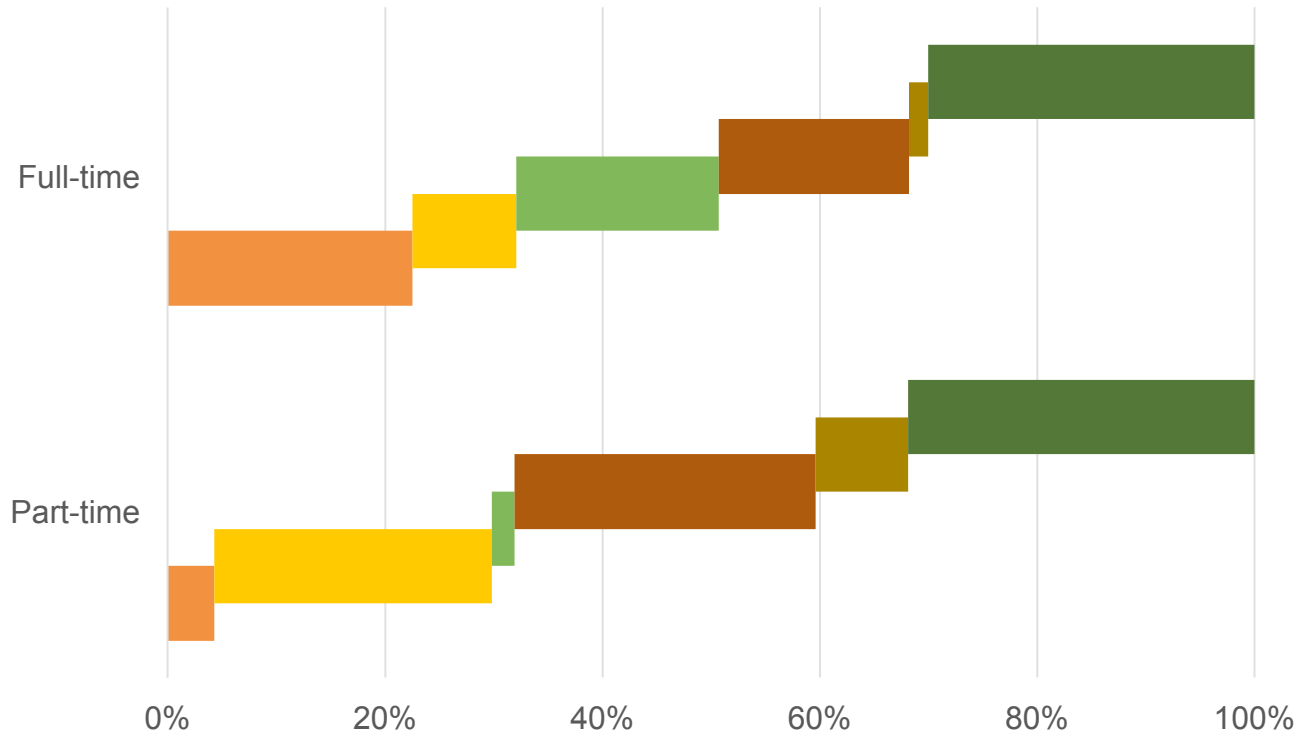




# Comparison of Full-Time Versus Part-Time Residents

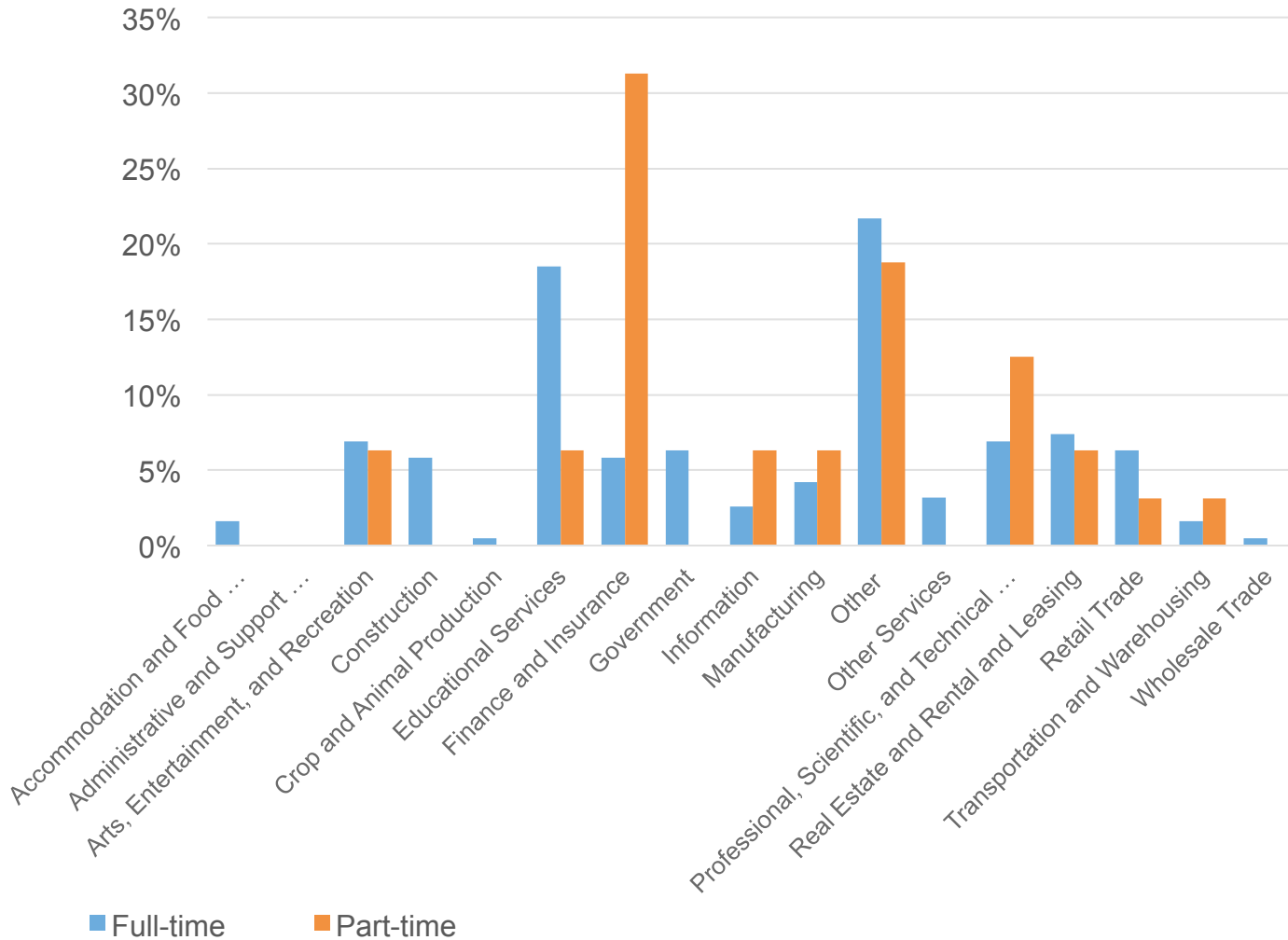
Employment

# Employment Patterns Differed



- Self-employed in town
- Self-employed outside town
- Employed in town
- Employed outside town
- Retired
- Not employed

# Employers' Industries Also Differ

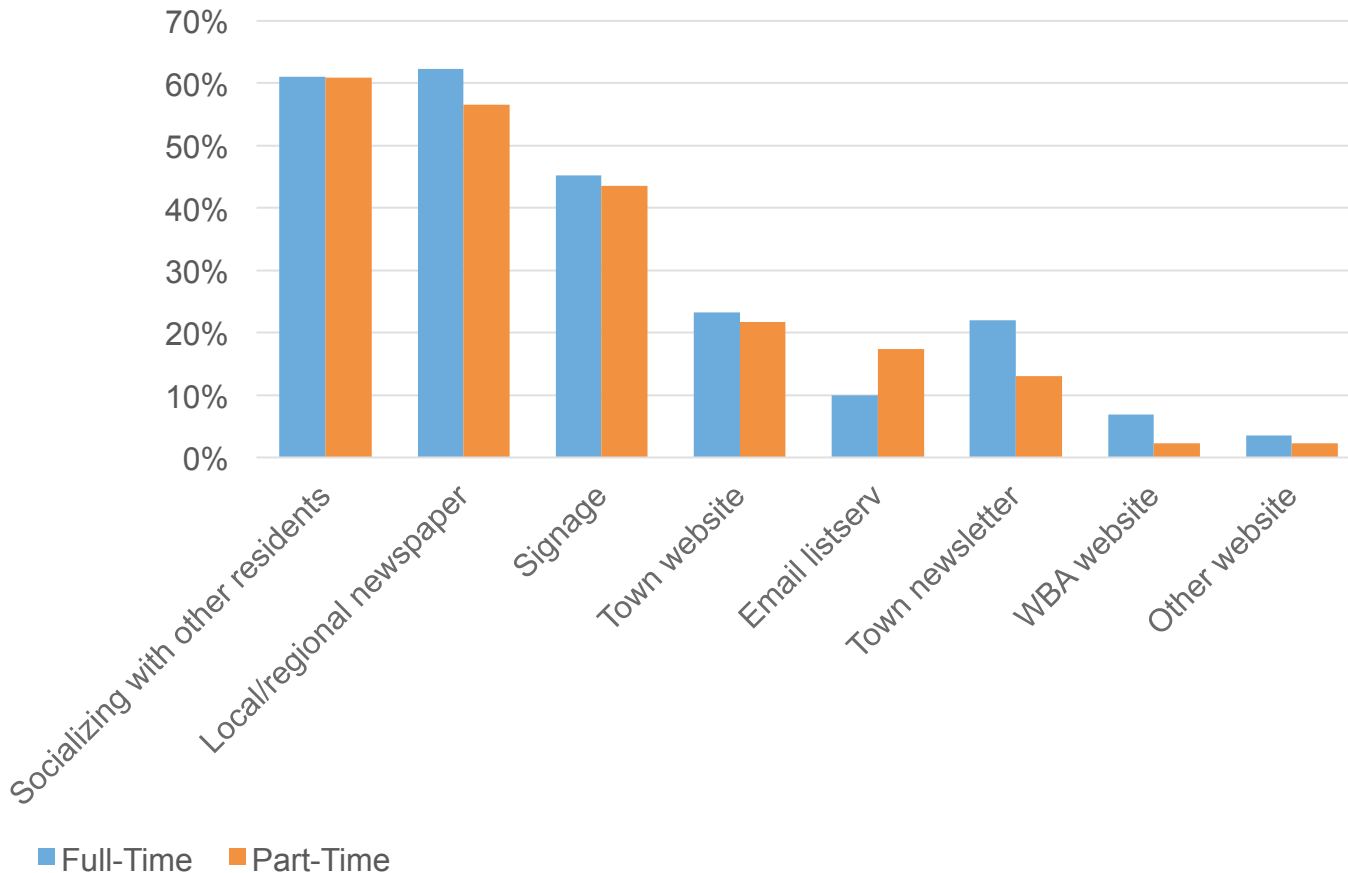


# Comparison of Full-Time Versus Part-Time Residents

Life in and Perceptions of Washington

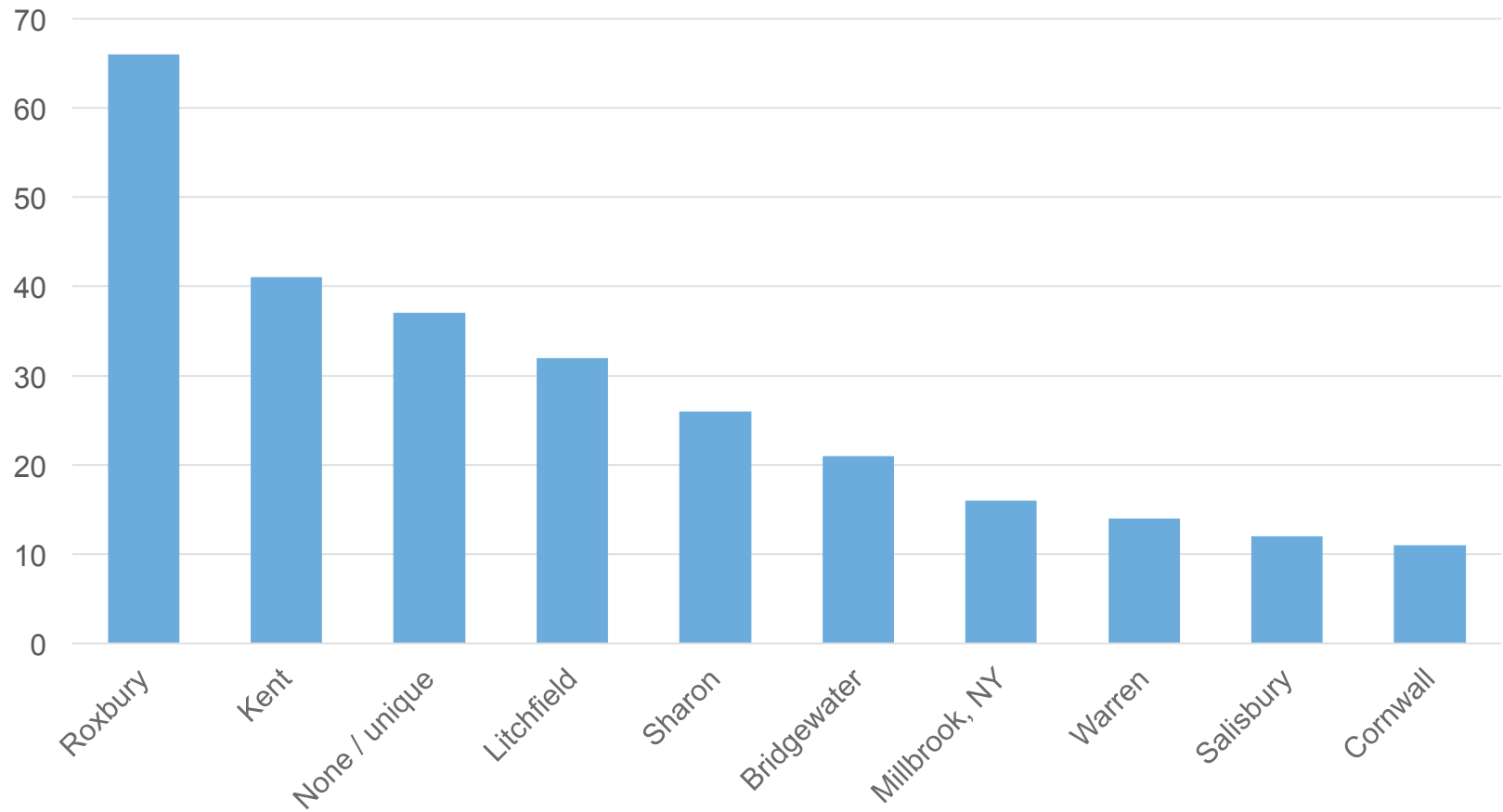
# Most News Comes From Other Residents or the Newspaper

How Respondents Get Town News



# Summary Findings

# Washington is Most Similar To:



# A Few Representative Comments

- “Washington CT is a cultural and environmental destination. People come here to be in nature and to relax. I see this as the primary attractor for the town and for the future. ...”
- “Please don't turn Washington into a Disney attraction.”
- “We need longer-term thinking than just tourist destinations and summer homes. ... We must be willing to change and welcome newcomers or we will fade away.”
- “We need more affordable housing. Our children cannot afford to live here.”
- “As much as I would love to ‘shop local’, existing local shops are minimal and are not in my ‘price point’.”
- “I have lived in this town for over 20 years. I still don't know what it has to offer or what I can offer to become a member of this community.”



For more information, please contact: