



City and Borough of Wrangell
Economic Development Board Meeting
AGENDA

Tuesday, June 04, 2024
5:30 PM

Location: Borough Assembly Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of the Economic Development Board meeting minutes from March 5th, 2024.

8. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

- a. Tongass Forest Plan Updates from the USFS/CBW Liaison, Bob Dalrymple

6. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Letter requesting the National Outdoor Leadership School to consider Wrangell as a satellite campus locale.
- b. Rain Coast Data Southeast Alaska Business Climate Survey Report

7. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

9. DIRECTOR REPORT

- a. Economic Development Department Report for the months of March and April 2024.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

11. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review and discussion of Economic Focus Groups to support business and industry expansion
- b. Review of USDOT Thriving Communities Site Visit Agenda and an invitation to the board to participate.

12. NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

13. ADJOURN

**Minutes of Economic Development Committee Meeting
Held on March 05, 2024**

1. CALL TO ORDER: Call to order at 5:32 PM

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Chair Bob Dalrymple, Brian Ashton, John DeRuyter, Jillian Privett

ABSENT: Caitlin Cardinell

STAFF: Kate Thomas, Matt Henson

3. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA: NONE.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST: NONE.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of the Economic Development Board meeting minutes from December 20, 2023.

M/S: JP/JD move to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of the Economic Development Board from December 20th, 2023.

Approved by unanimous vote.

6. CORRESPONDENCE: NONE.

7. PERSONS TO BE HEARD: NONE.

8. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Dalrymple: Stated that the conversation has continued with Cabin EA. The draft decision had 5 cabins, and the final decision only had 3 cabins. He stated he has not had a discussion with USFS yet as to why. Funding will come soon, other communities have started progress on their cabins. Tongass Forest Plan is forthcoming. The last plan revision was in 1997. This will have an impact on the Borough. Would like to see Borough as a cooperative agency. Ashton stated that the FS has also added restoration of the Bradfield Canal as a part of the plan.

9. DIRECTOR REPORT

- a. Economic Development Department Report for January and February 2024

Director Thomas and Matt Henson provided an oral report.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE.

11. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review and approval of a recommendation to the Borough Assembly to sell the former Wrangell Medical Center (old hospital)

M/S: JP/BA move to recommend approval to the Borough Assembly of the purchase and sale agreement to sell the Wrangell Medical Center (old hospital) for \$200,000.

Thomas provided an administrative report. Dalrymple stated that previous estimates of the construction costs to demolish the building have totaled over one million dollars therefore, this deal is to the Borough's benefit. Thomas stated that the sale agreement terms have been signed

but the agreement cannot be executed until the Borough Assembly approves the agreement. Ashton stated that his concerns lie with the possibility of Mr. Johnson abandoning the property and the borough taking the property back through unpaid taxes. Ashton also stated that he cautions anyone who forms an LLC for a specific purpose, as it raises questions about whether that person is trying to protect their assets.

Dalrymple stated that there is a limited perspective on this project and stated that he is slightly skeptical of the project as a whole due to this being the only proposal. Dalrymple stated that it may be a matter of time before something catastrophic happens to the property. He also stated that he likes that the property will generate property taxes. Thomas stated that the greatest value to the property should the borough retain ownership, is to have the property be demolished. Dalrymple stated that the biggest value to him is the focus on housing, whether it be affordable or not.

Approved by polled vote.

12. NEXT AGENDA ITEMS

Dalrymple suggested having USFS Ranger Tory Houser come and speak with the board about an update on the Tongass Forest Plan. Thomas stated that Entitlement Lands will be on the agenda for the next meeting. There will need to be a review of the land patents and confirm land use preferences with the Planning and Zoning Commission. Thomas also stated that the Thriving Communities Grant team will be in town mid-June. Mayor Gilbert suggested that there could be a joint work session with the Economic Development Board and Assembly around the topic of Entitlement Lands.

13. ADJOURN

Adjourned at 6:40 PM

The next scheduled meeting is June 4th, 2024, at 5:30 PM.

Chair

ATTEST: _____
Secretary

CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

May 2, 2024

Hello NOLS Leaders and Alumni,

My name is Kate Thomas, Economic Development Director for the City and Borough of Wrangell. I am a long-time resident of Wrangell, Alaska. Originally, I came to Wrangell to work as a field guide for the Alaska Crossings Wilderness Therapy Program after studying Adventure Tourism and Business Operations at the College of the Rockies in Golden, British Columbia. The program facilitated 50-55-day canoe and backpacking expeditions around the Tongass National Forest, Stikine River, and Mount Edziza Park in British Columbia. I am also privileged to be a NOLS Alumni, completing the 2015 Professional Instructors Course as well as the White-Water Canoe Seminar in 2016.

On behalf of the City and Borough of Wrangell, I am writing to express our strong interest in catalyzing Wrangell as the next satellite campus for Alaska-based sea kayaking, canoeing, and backpacking expeditions under the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS).

Wrangell, a scenic island community located in Southeast Alaska, boasts a unique combination of natural beauty and cultural heritage. Nestled amidst towering mountains, glaciers, and temperate rainforests, Wrangell offers a stunning backdrop for outdoor adventure experiences. Our protected waterways provide ideal conditions for sea kayaking, with opportunities to explore hidden coves, observe abundant marine wildlife, and immerse oneself in the tranquility of the Alaskan wilderness.

Wrangell has extensive public lands due to the size and span of the Tongass National Forest. This region provides endless backcountry mountain travel opportunities for backpackers ranging from moderate to extremely difficult routes. Hikers can traverse through old-growth forests, ascend mountain peaks with breathtaking panoramic views, and discover historical sites that tell the story of the Tlingit people and early European settlers.

Beyond the natural wonders, Wrangell offers a welcoming recreation-minded community with a history of supporting expedition model programs. We believe that Wrangell possesses all the necessary attributes to become a premier destination for NOLS expeditions, and we want to highlight several specific advantages that make us an ideal location:

Local Expertise and Support: Several NOLS alumni reside in Wrangell, offering a unique understanding of your program and the potential our geographical location offers. Our collaborative and engaging municipal leadership team is eager to work with you to establish a successful NOLS base.

Welcoming Community: Wrangell boasts an inviting recreation-minded community that would embrace NOLS and its students. Residents are enthusiastic about outdoor pursuits and understand the value of wilderness education.

Sea Kayaking and Canoe Logistics: Experienced marine operators in Wrangell understand wilderness tripping models and have the significant haul capacity to transport people and boats efficiently in marine and river environments.

Unparalleled Access: Wrangell provides access to a vast wilderness playground. With 17 million acres of public land at your doorstep, you'll have an abundance of expedition opportunities. The supportive and proactive USFS Ranger District and management team are eager to collaborate on developing safe and enriching itineraries with streamlined permitting processes.

Unique Advantages: Unlike other areas, Wrangell has no competing expedition models, eliminating user conflict. Our safe and navigable waterways with limited boat traffic offer ideal conditions for student training. Wrangell boasts a longer tripping season compared to other parts of Alaska, allowing for greater flexibility in scheduling expeditions.

Diverse Terrain: Wrangell's varied terrain provides exceptional opportunities for ocean, river, and mountain expedition itineraries. Established backcountry (unmarked) mountain routes with supporting LAT/LONG data offer challenging and rewarding adventures for experienced students.

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Cultural Integration: Wrangell's strong Tribal Partnerships and rich local cultural heritage present a unique chance to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into your trip model. This can provide your students with a truly unique and enriching learning experience that meshes with the existing NOLS Curriculum.

Comprehensive Support System: Wrangell offers ample water transportation services that can access remote locations within the marine waterways and rivers. Our history of productive working relationships with British Columbia Provincial parks and permitting supports cross-border expeditions if desired.

Safety and Security: Wrangell prioritizes safety. We have a strong and regionally active Search and Rescue team with proven response methods and exceptional response times. A local hospital with medivac services provides additional peace of mind. Given that Wrangell is situated along the inner coastal waters of Southeast Alaska, proximate to mainland Alaska/British Columbia it is not as vulnerable to tsunamis and other natural threats.

Accessibility and Logistics: Wrangell is conveniently accessible via commercial jet service with connections from Seattle and Anchorage. Available lodging offers ample space to accommodate NOLS tripping groups, with open areas for gear issuance, staging, and resupply.

Local Resources: A local gear store and retailers can provide any necessary equipment or repairs. Additionally, Wrangell boasts low property taxes and available land for development, creating a financially attractive opportunity for NOLS to establish a permanent base.

Partnership Opportunities: We envision a strong partnership with NOLS that extends beyond simply hosting expeditions. Wrangell is open to exploring opportunities for NOLS to establish a brick-and-mortar presence in our community. This could involve supporting facility development, establishing instructor training programs, or creating a wilderness leadership certification program in collaboration with the University of Alaska-Southeast.

We are confident that a partnership between NOLS and Wrangell would be mutually beneficial. Wrangell offers NOLS an exceptional location to expand its Alaskan expedition offerings. At the same time, NOLS would bring its expertise and reputation to our community, fostering economic growth and a deeper appreciation for the natural world.

We are eager to collaborate with NOLS and showcase the unparalleled beauty and adventure opportunities. Please consider joining us for a reconnaissance trip to scout Wrangell as the next development location for the future of NOLS. We have partners at the ready, standing by to ensure that you have a productive visit that exposes you to all the opportunities surrounding our little island.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the niche selling points of our community. We look forward to the possibility of further discussion on this topic.

In health,

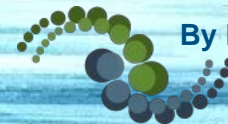
Kate Thomas, Economic Development Director

Southeast Alaska Business Climate 2024



SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

May 2024



By Rain Coast Data

PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS SOUTHEAST ALASKA



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Southeast Alaska Business Survey Item b.

Results 2024

440
Businesses

22
Sectors

11,000
Workers
Represented

25
Communities

Southeast Conference, in partnership with organizations across the region, conducts an annual Southeast Alaska Business Climate Survey. Rain Coast Data designs and conducts the business confidence analysis. A total of 440 Southeast Alaska business owners and top managers, representing a combined staff of approximately 11,000 workers, responded to the survey in April 2024. Survey analysis includes the following key findings:

- **Strong Visitor Sector:** The regional tourism sector is remarkably strong, with 83% of tourism business leaders calling the current business climate good or very good; and more than half reporting a better or much better outlook in the summer of 2024, moving into 2025. Tourism leaders have plans to increase capacity, with 28% expanding staffing levels to meet rising demand. The top obstacle for the sector is the tight housing market, followed by increasing costs and an insufficient workforce.

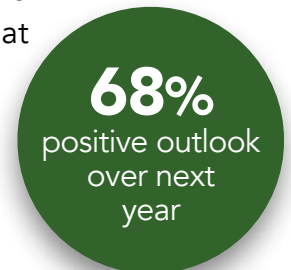
- **Seafood Sector in Decline:** The current weakness in the regional seafood sector starkly contrasts the success of the tourism industry. Leaders in the seafood industry are experiencing significant economic challenges, marked by historically low salmon prices, rising operational costs, consolidation of processing facilities, and unfavorable global dynamics. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of seafood leaders call the current Southeast business climate poor or very poor, with 43% projecting that the next 12 months will be worse or much worse (15% expect the business climate to improve). Key opportunities include increased value added processing, waste utilization, and sales of locally-caught seafood on cruise ships.

- **Housing, Workforce, Transportation Challenges:** Southeast business leaders continue to identify housing as the top obstacle to economic development and critical for creating a vibrant business climate in the region, with 61% of business leaders saying it is *critically important* to focus on housing over the next five years. The housing shortage is deterring young families and workers from relocating to, or remaining in, the region. Half of regional business leaders say that finding better ways to attract and retain workforce-aged residents to the region is *critically important*. This is most strongly expressed by Juneau, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Ketchikan businesses leaders, where three-fifths of respondents say the need to attract young professionals over the next five years is critical. Nearly half of business leaders say a continued focus on transportation remains a critical area of focus, a percentage that rises sharply in communities like Kake, Pelican, Gustavus, and Haines. The reduction of Alaska Marine Highway ferry service and lack of ferry reliability continues negatively impact regional businesses.

Southeast Alaska Business Survey Results 2024

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- **Strong Business Climate Overall:** More than two-thirds (67%) of regional business leaders currently have a positive view of the Southeast Alaska business climate, the second highest positivity rating since recording began in 2010. While most sectors and communities have a positive perspective, those in large cruise ship port communities are the most likely to say that the regional economy is good or very good. *In contrast, more than half of those in the seafood, timber, and mining sectors report that the business climate is poor or very poor.*
- **Outlook is Slightly Below Average:** In 2024, just over two-thirds (68%) of respondents describe the economic outlook for their business or industry over the next 12 months as positive; and 30% of regional business leaders say that their business or sector is on track for continued improvement or growth over the next year. Compared to past survey years this is slightly below average. The sectors most likely to report that the coming year will bring improvement for their entities include Alaska Native organizations, non-profits, tourism, and healthcare sectors. The communities with the most positive outlook include Hoonah, Skagway, and Ketchikan; while Wrangell, Petersburg, and Haines have the most negative outlook moving forward. The seafood and timber sectors report negative outlooks.
- **Businesses are Hiring:** The survey shows that about a quarter (24%) of regional businesses are actively hiring or anticipate growing their workforce over the next twelve months. Alaska Native organizations and financial institutions are expected to see the most significant job gains. Nearly half of businesses in Hoonah and Prince of Wales are adding staff. The most significant job cuts are expected in the seafood sector.
- **Industry Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats:** Business leaders were asked to participate in sector specific SWOTs. An additional 60 Southeast Conference committee members participated in the SWOTs. Top line results are below:



Seafood

- Top Strength: **High quality product**
- Top Weakness: **High costs**
- Top Opportunity: **Increase value-added processing**
- Top Threat: **Low seafood prices**

Visitor Industry

- Top Strength: **Natural beauty of region**
- Top Weakness: **Limited seasonal housing**
- Top Opportunity: **Workforce housing development**
- Top Threat: **Housing shortages**

Transportation

- Top Strength: **Connecting communities**
- Top Weakness: **Lack of qualified workforce**
- Top Opportunity: **Improve ferry service**
- Top Threat: **Demise of AMHS**

Energy

- Top Strength: **High % renewable/hydropower**
- Top Weakness: **High costs of infrastructure**
- Top Opportunity: **Heat pump installation**
- Top Threat: **Inadequate workforce**

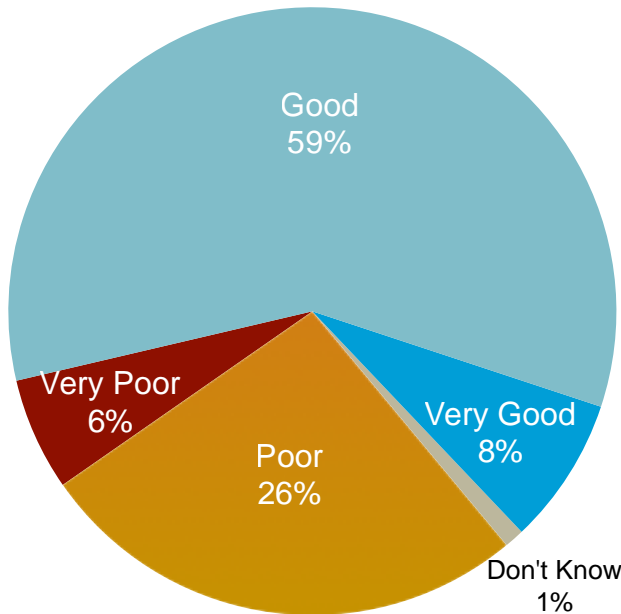
The following pages summarize survey findings.

Southeast Business Climate Spring 2024

Item b.

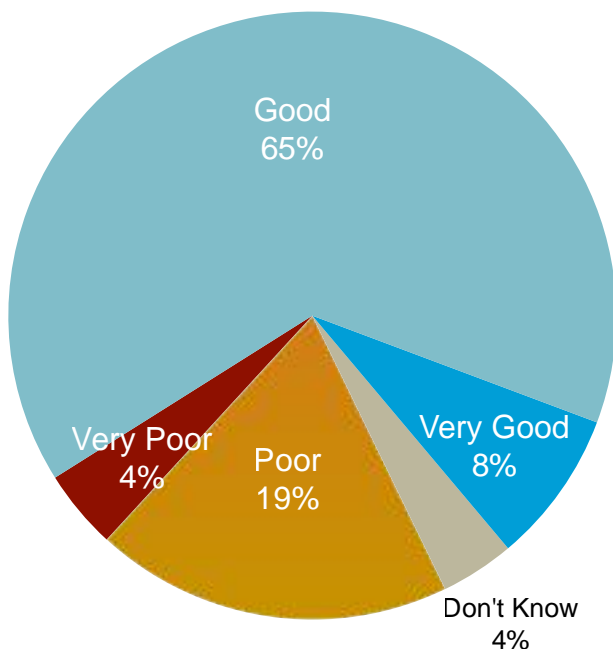
April **2024** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now?**

67% Positive / 32% Negative



April **2023** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now?**

73% Positive / 23% Negative



Southeast Alaska Annual Business Climate Survey

In April 2024, 440 Southeast Alaska business owners and top managers from 25 communities responded to Southeast Conference's Business Climate Survey.

Economy Now: How do you view the overall business climate right now?

In 2024, despite a significant decline in business confidence from the previous year (where post-pandemic optimism played a large role) Southeast Alaska business leaders reported the 2nd best business climate since the survey began in 2010. Approximately two-thirds of all business leaders in the region called the business climate good or very good; while just a third called it poor or very poor.

While many sectors have a positive perspective on the current economy, those leading **financial** organizations, **tourism** enterprises, and **construction or engineering**—focused businesses were the most positive.

In three sectors, **seafood, timber, and mining**, those calling the business climate "poor" or "very poor" outweighed those with a positive perspective.

Among communities, business leaders in **Skagway, Yakutat, Sitka, and Hoonah** reported the most positive business perspectives.

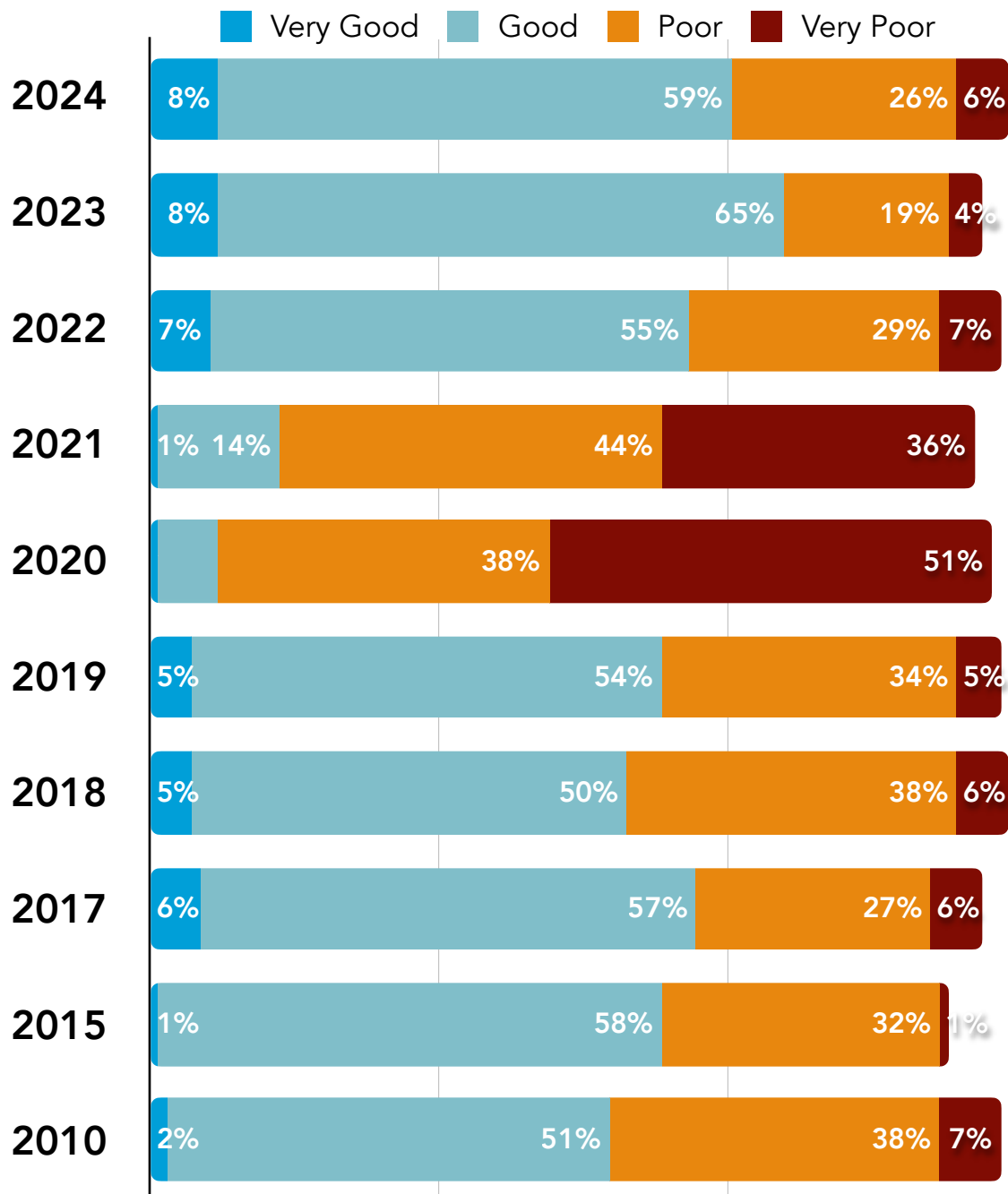
Petersburg was the only community where business leaders were more likely to report a poor business climate than a positive one.

Southeast Business Climate Results Item b.

By Year

Southeast Alaska businesses are rating the current 2024 business climate as less positive than last year. Those calling the business climate good or very good declined by 6-points, while those calling it poor or very poor grew by 9-points. Despite this, 2024 rates as the second best business climate ever, second only to 2023.

April **2024** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now**

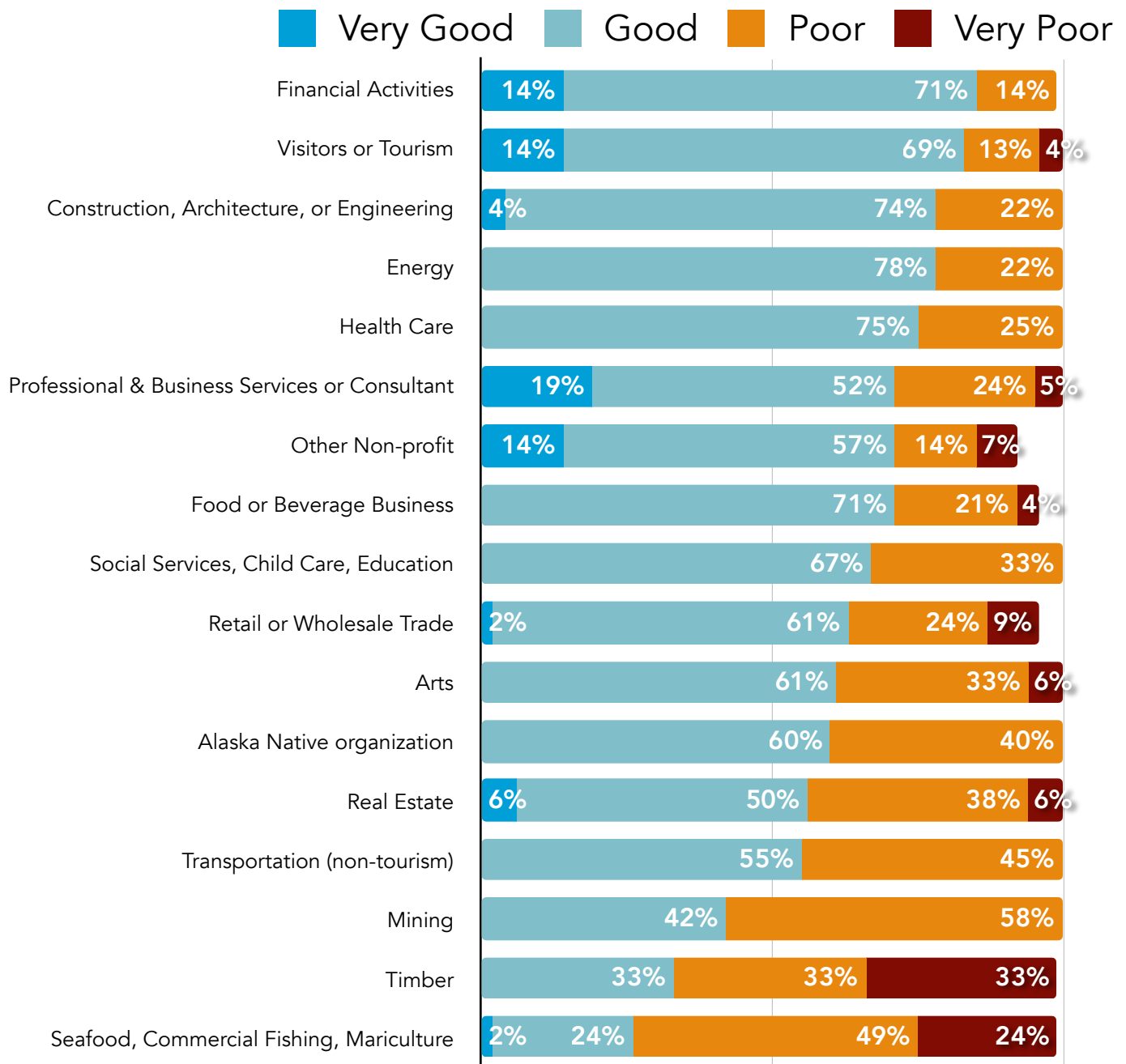


The "don't know" category has been excluded from this chart.

Southeast Business Climate Result Item b. By Industry

The following graphic breaks out how the current Southeast Alaska business climate is viewed by each sector. Alaska Native organizations, those in tourism, or in the food/beverage businesses are most likely to call the current economy good or very good; while the seafood and transportation sectors are most likely to call the economy poor or very poor.

April **2024** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now**

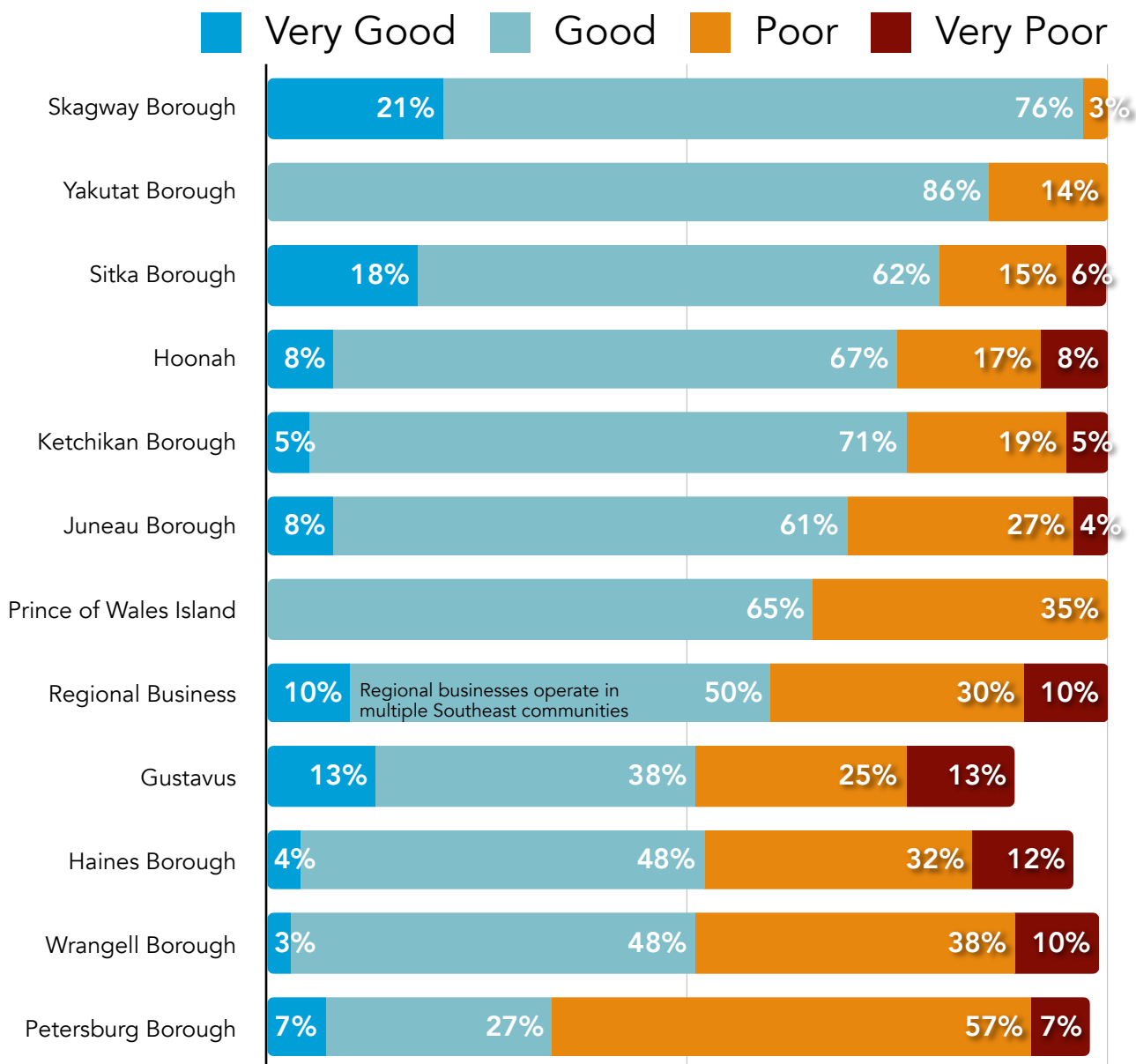


The "don't know" category has been excluded from this chart.

Southeast Business Climate Result Item b. By Community

The graphic below shows how the current regional business climate is being experienced by business leaders in each community. The region's large cruise ship ports reported the most positive perspectives overall. **Skagway** moved from last place and a 96% negative view of the economy in 2021 to first place with a 97% positive view in 2024. Other communities reporting the best business climates include **Yakutat**, **Sitka**, and **Hoonah**. Communities with the most reliance on a seafood economy reported the least positive business climates. **Petersburg** business leaders were mostly likely to call the business climate poor for very poor.

April **2024** Southeast Alaska: **How do you view the overall business climate right now**

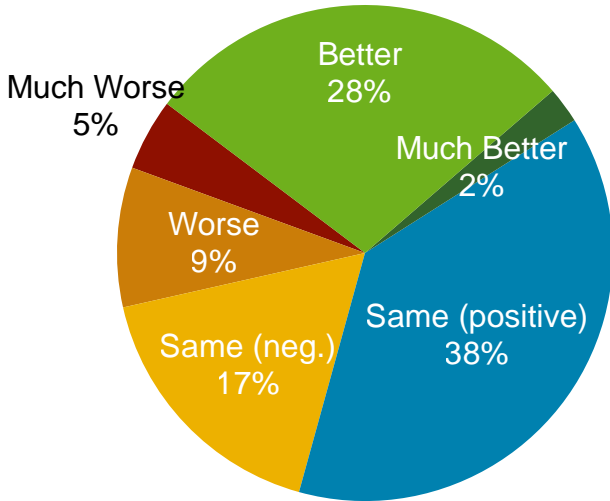


The "don't know" category has been excluded from this chart.

What is the economic outlook for your business/industry over the next year (compared to the previous year)?

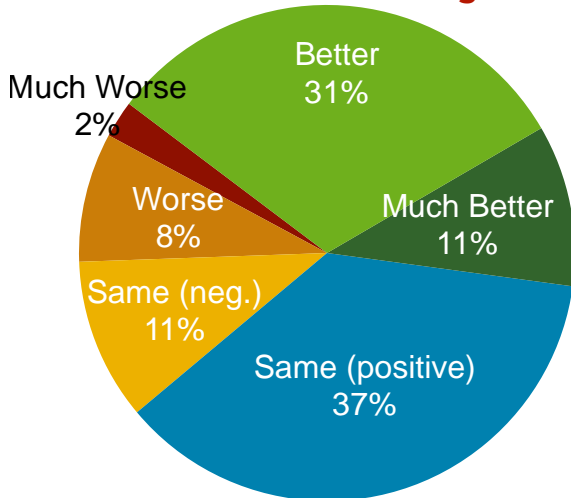
2024

68% Positive / 31% Negative



2023

79% Positive / 21% Negative



Southeast Alaska Economic Outlook

Economic Future: In 2024, just over two-thirds (68%) of respondents describe the economic outlook for their business or industry over the next 12 months as positive; while nearly a third (31%) have a negative outlook. Thirty-eight percent of regional business leaders say their business outlook is similar to current operations, in a positive way. This outlook is demonstratively less sunny than in 2023 when 79% were positive about the economic outlook for their organization, as bad news regarding the seafood sector creates a great deal of uncertainty moving forward.

Fourteen percent of respondents expect their businesses to decline in the coming year.

The economic outlook for Alaska Native organizations, non-profits, tourism, and the healthcare sector are most positive moving into 2024.

The seafood and timber sectors are most likely to have a negative outlook.

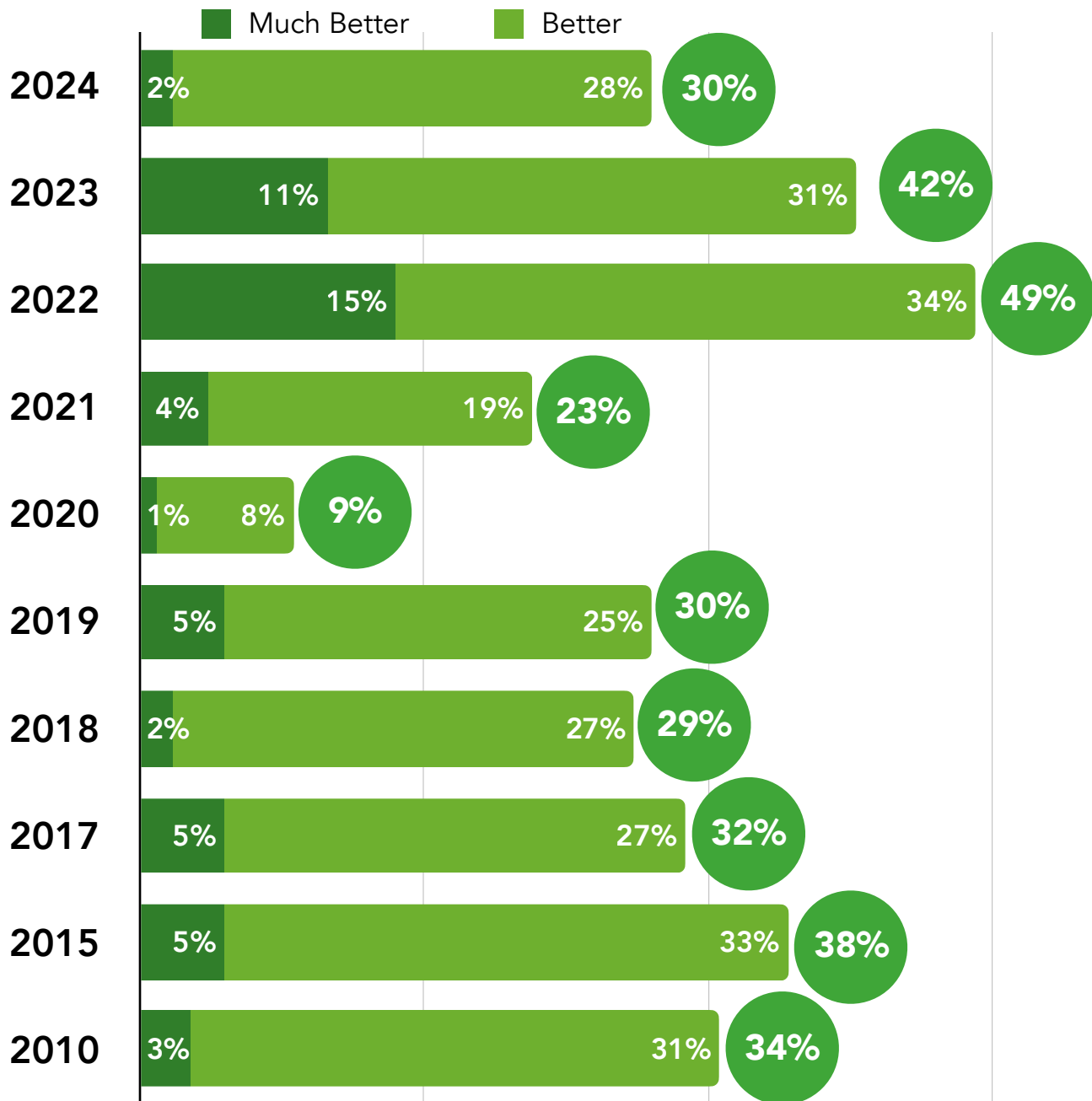
The communities most optimistic looking forward include **Hoonah**, **Skagway**, and **Ketchikan**.

Wrangell, **Petersburg**, and **Haines** have the most pessimistic outlooks.

Southeast Business Outlook Result Item b. By Year

Thirty percent of Southeast Alaska businesses are forecasting that the coming year (2024 through the spring of 2025) is likely to be even better than spring 2024 for their business or industry. Compared to past survey years, this is slightly on the lower size, and a significant drop from the last two years (42% in 2023, and 49% in 2022).

What is the economic outlook for your business/industry over the next year (compared to the previous year)?



Southeast Economic Outlook: By Community and Industry

Item b.

The graphics below show economic outlook breakdowns for the next year by industry and by community.

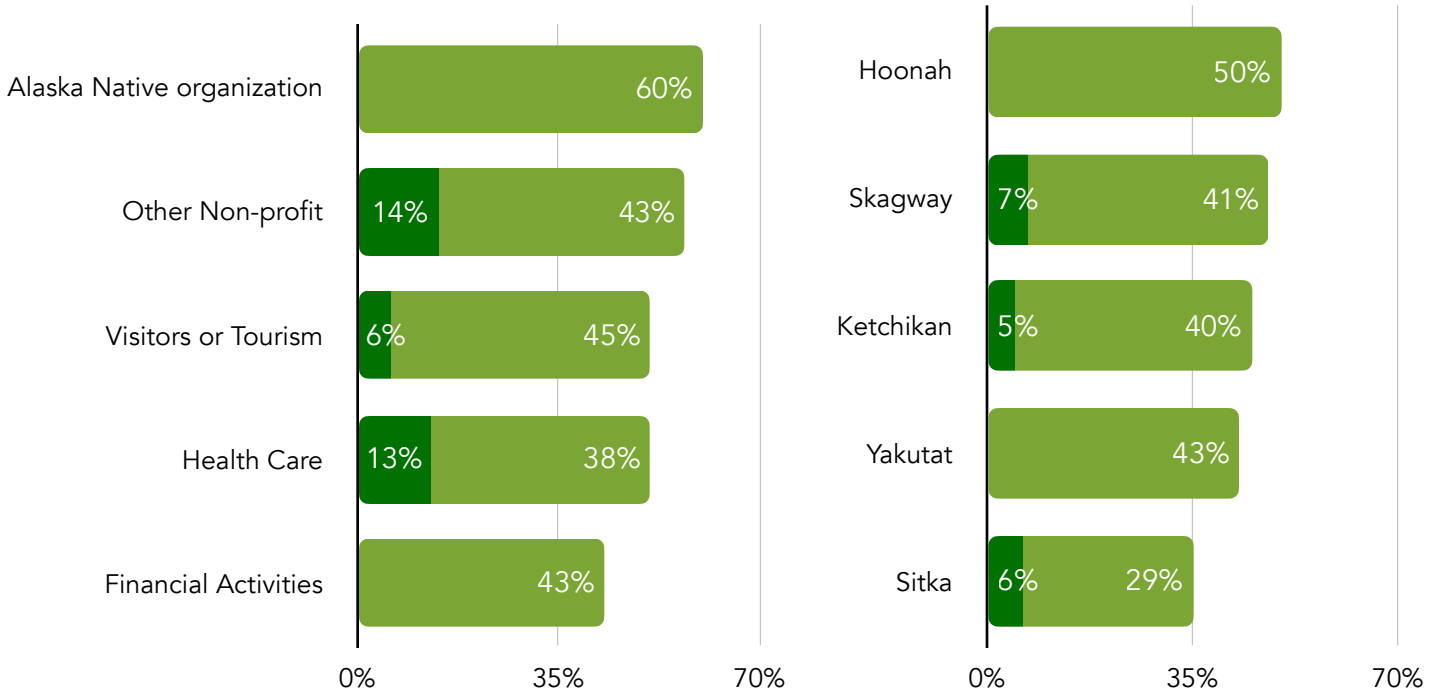
What is the economic outlook for your business or industry

By Industry

By Community

■ Much Better

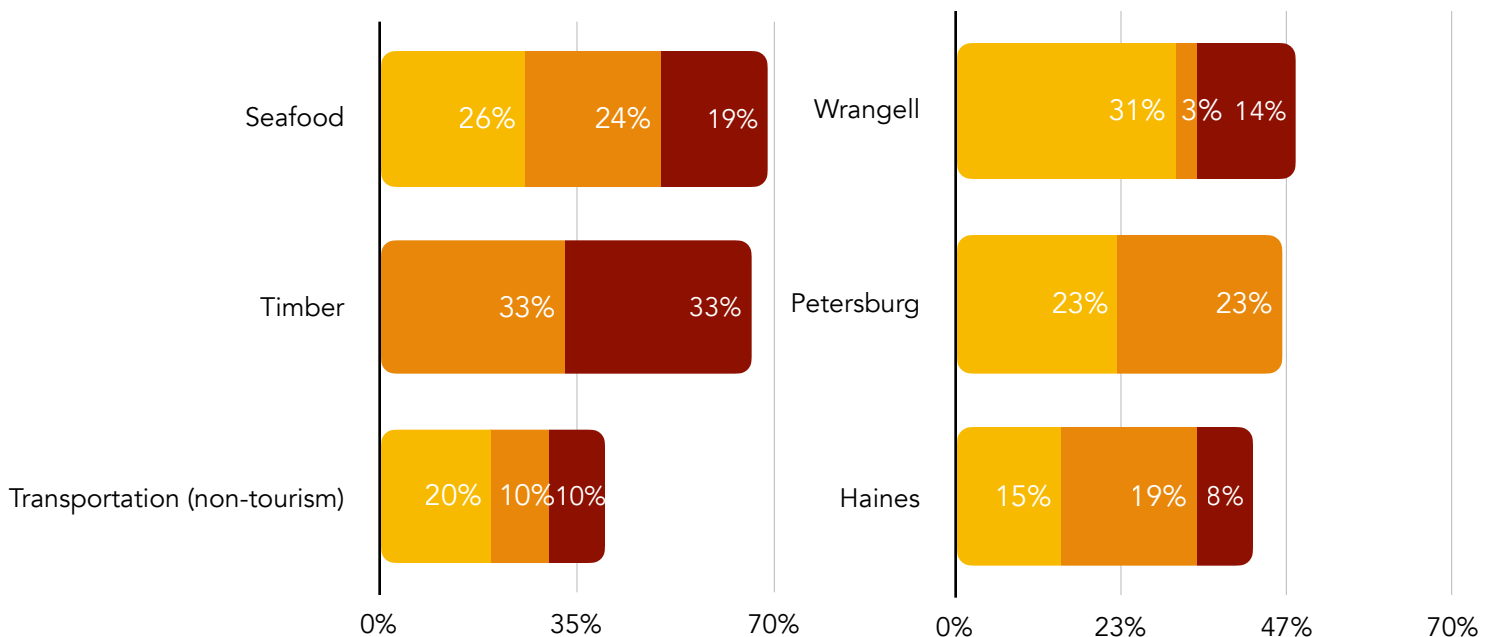
■ Better



■ Same (generally negative)

■ Worse

■ Much Worse



Southeast Economic Outlook: By Industry

Item b.

The following table shows a detailed economic outlook by industry.

What is the economic outlook for your business or industry?						
Sector	Much Better	Better	Same (generally a positive statement)	Same (generally a negative statement)	Worse	Much Worse
Alaska Native organization	0%	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%
Other Non-profit	14%	43%	14%	14%	14%	0%
Visitors or Tourism	6%	45%	31%	7%	9%	2%
Health Care	13%	38%	25%	25%	0%	0%
Financial Activities	0%	43%	43%	14%	0%	0%
Retail or Wholesale Trade	0%	28%	43%	19%	6%	4%
Professional & Business Services or Consultant	5%	19%	62%	10%	5%	0%
Energy	0%	22%	67%	11%	0%	0%
Construction, Architecture, or Engineering	0%	22%	61%	13%	0%	4%
Communications, Information Technology	0%	14%	71%	14%	0%	0%
Social Services, Child Care, Education	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%	0%
Arts	0%	22%	39%	33%	6%	0%
Transportation (non-tourism)	0%	30%	30%	20%	10%	10%
Food or Beverage Business	0%	17%	42%	25%	13%	4%
Mining	0%	0%	67%	17%	17%	0%
Real Estate	0%	19%	38%	31%	13%	0%
Timber	0%	0%	33%	0%	33%	33%
Seafood, Commercial Fishing, Maritime	0%	14%	17%	26%	24%	19%

Southeast Economic Outlook:

In their own words

Item b.

Please elaborate on the outlook for your business or sector over the next year.

In some ways, no collection of charts is more valuable than the words of the business leaders themselves. A total of 260 businesses took additional time to write about their expectations and needs for the upcoming year.

- **Visitors, Tourism:** *“Tourism has rebounded to about pre-pandemic numbers for us. I expect business demand to be strong enough to allow for growth over the next few years. Challenges related to housing and affordability limit the ability to take full advantage of business opportunities.”*
- **Seafood:** *“The steep decline of the salmon market has made my commercial fishing business unviable. I will not be able to afford to pay deckhands to work with me on my vessel, and I will work all summer to break even without making a profit.”*
- **Food, Beverage:** *“Sales are good but margins are very tight with the ongoing inflation of prices as well as freight prices that continue to go up.”*
- **Construction, Architecture, Engineering:** *“I’m finding there is more work than I can accept. There is a lack of skilled workers.”*
- **Retail, Wholesale Trade:** *“Sales are down due to the fishing industry. Customers aren't spending due to economic uncertainty.”*
- **Real Estate:** *“There is a minimum inventory of available housing for sale. Coupled with rising interest rates, housing sales will likely decline.”*
- **Transportation (non-tourism):** *“Hiring is very difficult. Not enough skilled workers. Alaska is failing to develop workers.”*
- **Art:** *“In my field of indigenous art, the prospects are good. Due to increases in tourism and a high interest in locally made indigenous artwork, the field has the capacity to grow.”*
- **Energy:** *“As a local electric utility, our health is tied to a number of factors in the community. The apparent lull in the fishing industry will surely have the largest impact on power sales.”*

Southeast Economic Outlook: Summary

Item b.

As a whole, several top themes emerged from the comments of regional business leaders. While significant challenges related to workforce and housing shortages, transportation, and inflation remain, there is also optimism about growth opportunities. Addressing housing affordability and improving transportation infrastructure are seen as crucial steps for supporting sustained economic development in Southeast Alaska.

The following six themes summarize the comments of business leaders across Southeast Alaska:

1. **Tourism Growth:** Business leaders say that the visitors sector has rebound to pre-pandemic levels and a significant increase in cruise ship visitors is boosting the local economy. Tourism businesses are expanding, with new ventures contributing to growth. There is optimism for growth in niche tourism markets and specialized business ventures. However, some businesses emphasized the contrast between the busy summer tourism season and the slow winter months. This seasonal variability presents a challenge in maintaining revenue and employment levels throughout the year. Overall, the sector is experiencing strong demand and positive business development, with plans to increase capacity and staffing to meet rising demand.
2. **Fishing and Seafood Industry Decline:** Leaders in the seafood industry are experiencing severe economic challenges, marked by historically-low salmon prices, rising operational costs, and consolidation of processing facilities. Global competition from farmed salmon and Russia has further strained profitability, while high supply and low demand exacerbate the situation. The downturn is impacting local economies, with adjacent sectors also suffering. Despite some optimism in areas like mariculture, direct marketing, and sales to the tourism sector, the overall outlook remains grim for 2024, with systemic issues such as rising shipping costs and declining labor access continuing to pose significant barriers.
3. **Housing and Workforce Challenges:** Business leaders continue to stress that housing in Southeast Alaska presents a critical challenge for economic development and community stability. The region faces a severe shortage of housing, which significantly impacts the ability to attract and retain workers. High housing costs deter skilled professionals from relocating to the area, and the limited availability of rental units exacerbates the problem. The shortage not only affects businesses but also puts a strain on local residents, contributing to higher living costs and financial stress. The lack of housing that is affordable is a barrier to economic growth, as it hinders the ability of businesses to expand and sustain operations. Addressing this issue requires coordinated efforts from local governments, developers, and community organizations to increase the supply of affordable housing and create a more supportive environment for residents and businesses alike.

Southeast Economic Outlook:

Summary continued

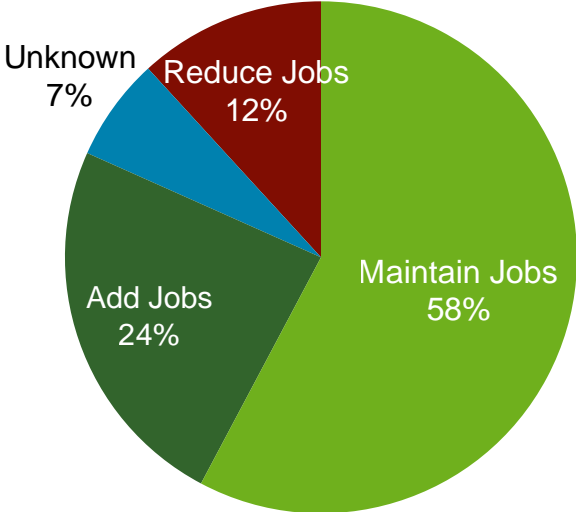
Item b.

4. **Ferry Service:** Many business leaders highlighted the critical role of the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) and the negative impacts of its reduced service. They reported disruptions to tourism, challenges in transporting goods, and decreased economic activity due to unreliable ferry schedules. These insights underscore the importance of AMHS in maintaining economic stability and supporting local businesses across the region. The high shipping costs and logistical issues mentioned by business leaders further emphasize the need for improved ferry services to facilitate smoother operations and economic growth. In addition to crucial ferry service, business leaders also highlighted the need for better air, marine, and road transportation to support economic activities and ensure reliable access to remote areas.
5. **Inflation, Rising Costs, and Economic Uncertainty:** Many businesses struggle with the high cost of goods, shipping, and labor, which squeezes profit margins and hampers stability. Additionally, reductions in ferry services and regulatory hurdles exacerbate these challenges. Unpredictable market conditions in key industries like fishing and tourism further contribute to the uncertainty, making long-term planning and investment difficult. Business leaders emphasize the need for more predictable and supportive economic policies to foster a stable business environment. Businesses are struggling with rising costs of goods, fuel, shipping, and labor. Increased expenses are squeezing profit margins and making it difficult to sustain operations. High freight costs, particularly for remote areas, impacts the ability to maintain inventory and supplies. Economic uncertainty is a significant concern for business leaders in Southeast Alaska, driven by factors such as inflation, rising operational costs, and inconsistent government policies.
6. **Optimism for the Future:** Despite challenges, many business leaders in Southeast Alaska remain optimistic about future opportunities. The expected increase in cruise ship visitors is particularly seen as a driver of economic growth, bringing more business to local enterprises. Renewable energy projects and mariculture initiatives are viewed as promising areas for diversification and economic development. Some leaders also report steady or improving business performance, ongoing major projects, and the potential for job creation. This optimism reflects a belief in the region's resilience and the potential for innovation and growth despite existing obstacles.

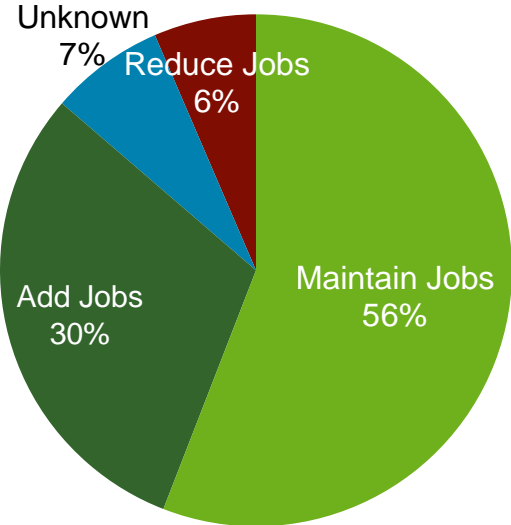
Job Projections in 2024 and 2025

Over the next 12 months, do you expect your organization to add jobs, maintain jobs, reduce jobs, or are you unsure
(For those business with staff)

2024: Jobs Outlook



2023: Jobs Outlook



Employment changes in the next year

When asked about staffing expectations, nearly a quarter (24%) expect to add employees, and more than half of business leaders (58%) expect to maintain job levels in the coming year.

Twelve percent of business leaders expect to reduce staffing levels in the upcoming year, twice as many as in 2023.

The expected job gains will be most significant in **Alaska Native** organizations, **financial activities**, **non-profits**, **tourism**, and **health care**.

Employment reductions will be concentrated in **seafood**, **timber**, and the **arts**.

Business leaders in **Hoonah**, **Prince of Wales**, **Yakutat**, and **employers with regional businesses** expect the greatest job gains for their businesses moving forward.

Petersburg, **Wrangell**, **Pelican**, and **Haines** have the most negative job expectations in the coming year.

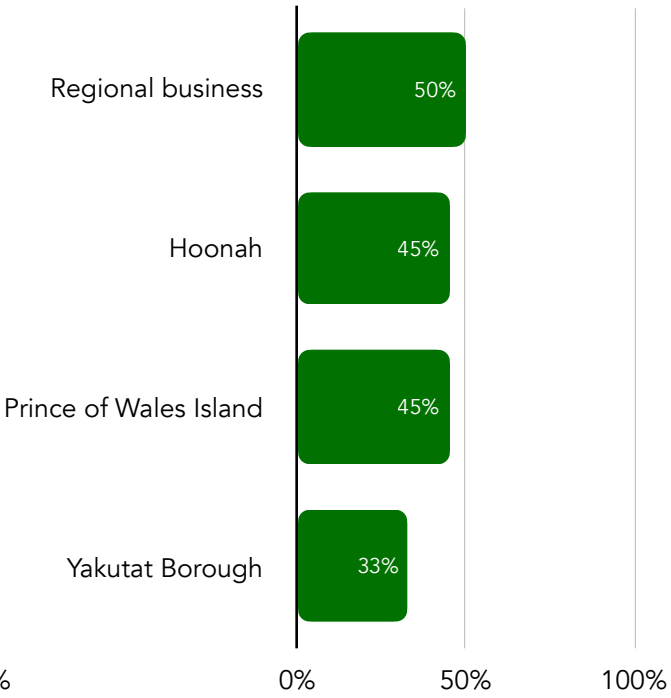
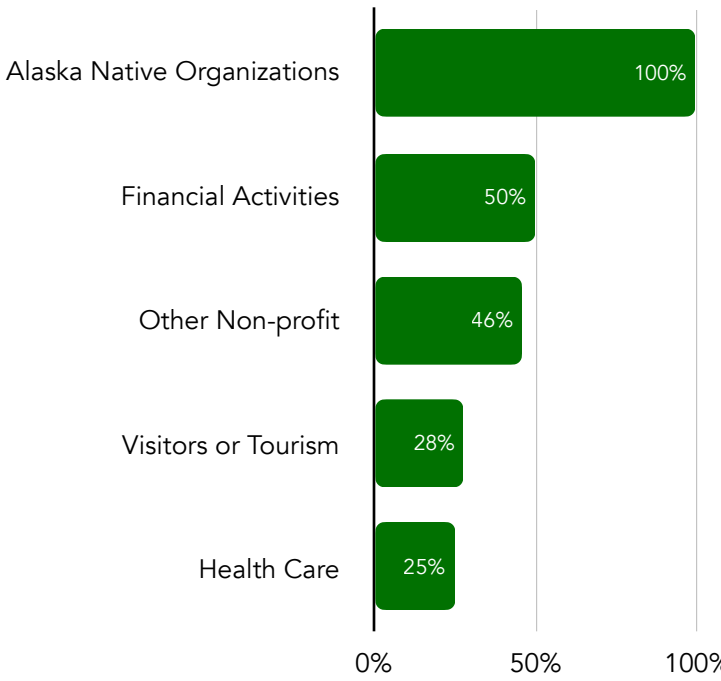
By Community: Jobs in Next 12 Months

Over the next year, do you expect your organization to add jobs, maintain jobs, reduce jobs, or are you unsure?

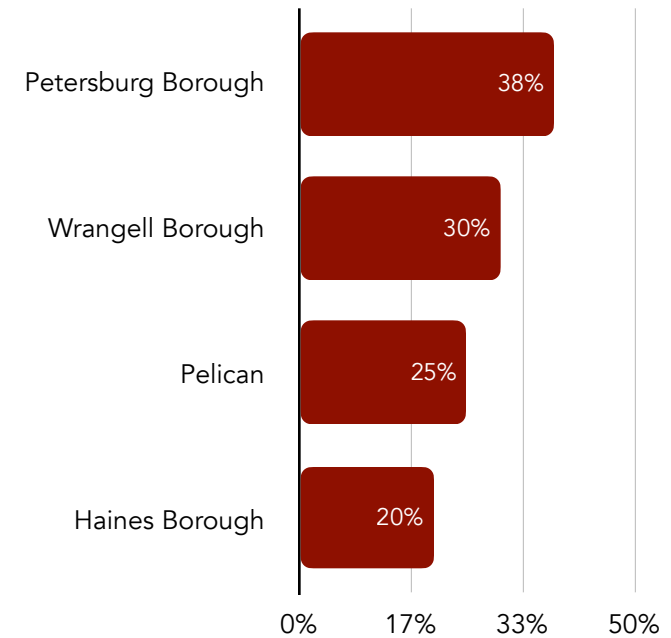
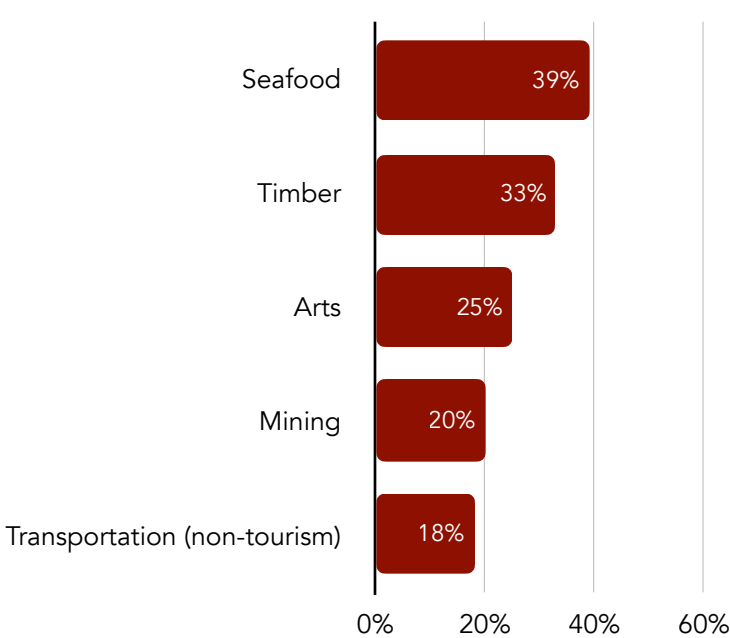
By Industry

By Community

■ Add jobs

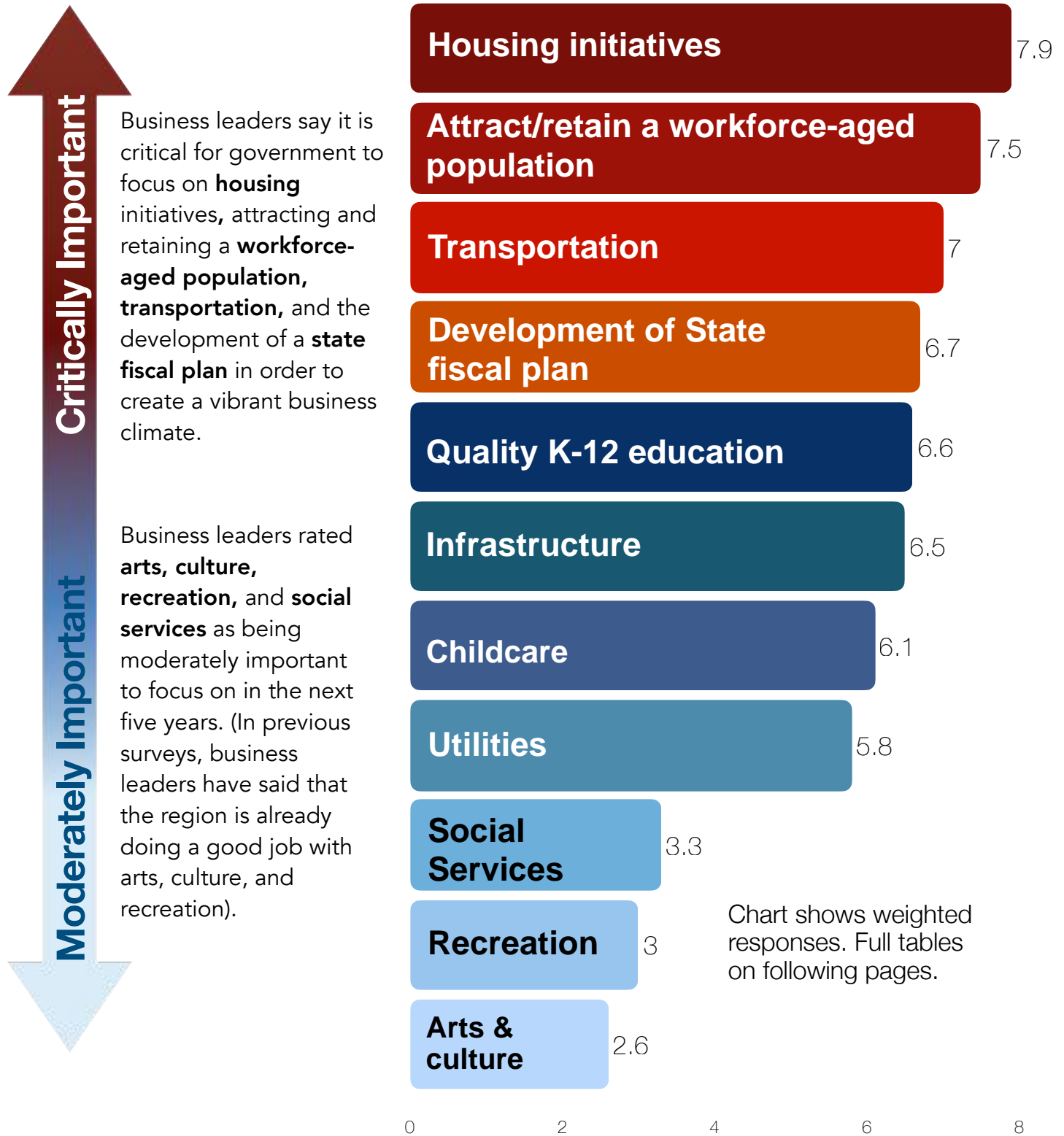


■ Reduce total jobs



Creating A Vibrant Business Climate: How important is it to focus on these factors over the next five years? Item b.

Southeast Alaska business leaders were asked to rank the importance of focusing on 11 key element necessary for creating a vibrant business climate. This is a weighted ranking of their responses.



Creating A Vibrant Business Climate: How important is it to focus on these factors over the next five years? Item b.

Business leaders say that **housing**, attracting and retaining a **workforce**-aged population, **transportation**, and the development of a **state fiscal plan** are all the most critically important areas to focus on within the next five years as we work to create a vibrant business climate in Southeast Alaska.

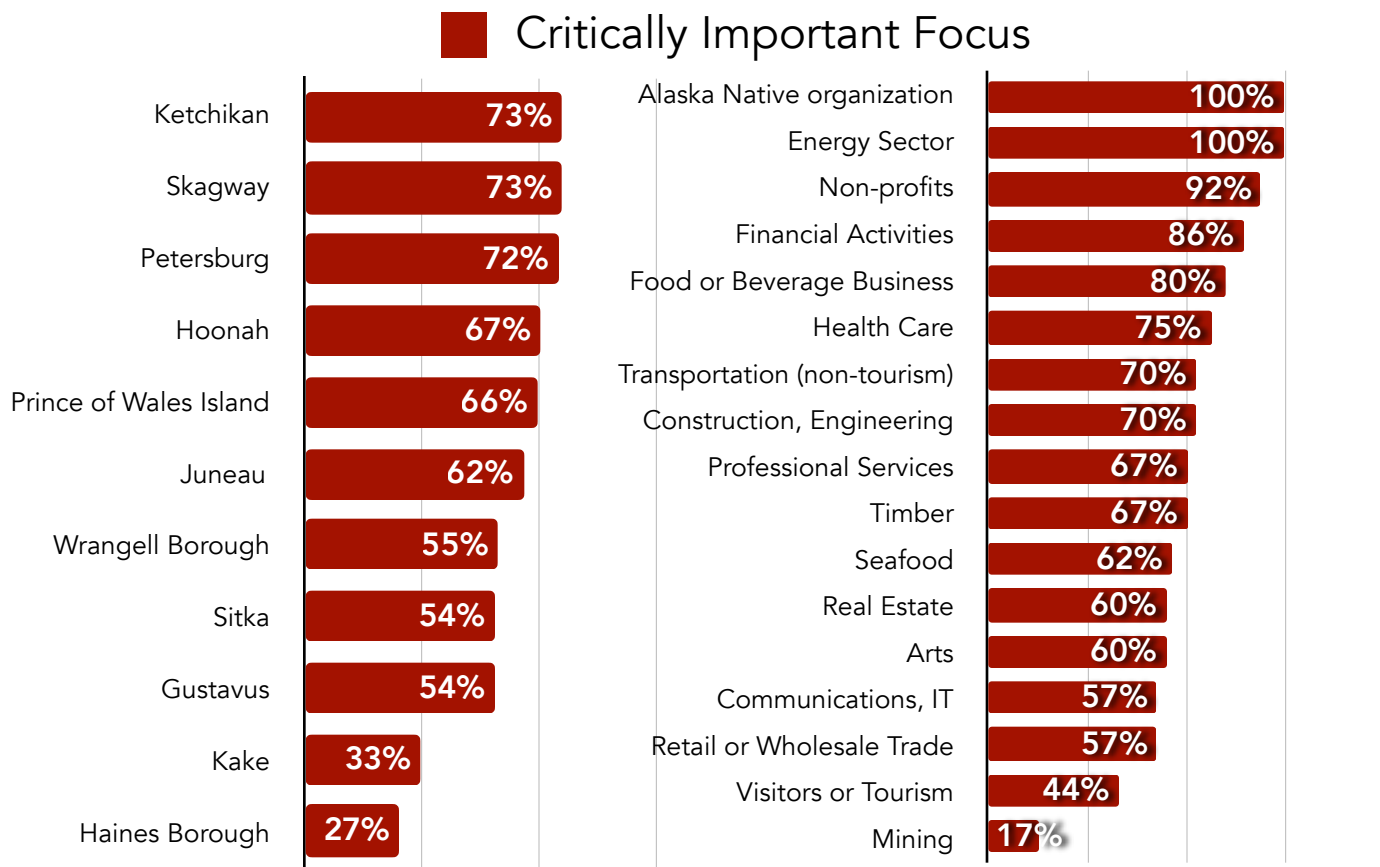
To create a vibrant business climate in your Southeast Alaska community, which of the below elements require the most focus over the next 5 years? (Maximum of 5 can be rated as critically important).

How important is it to focus on these factors over the next five years?					
Factor	Critically Important Focus	Important Focus	Moderately Important Focus	Neutral Issue	We should focus less on this
Housing initiatives (availability, affordable, quality)	61%	26%	7%	5%	1%
Attract/retain a workforce-aged population (people in 20s to 50s, and young families)	49%	34%	12%	4%	1%
Transportation (availability, reliability, infrastructure improvements)	46%	30%	18%	6%	0%
Development of State fiscal plan (i.e. create a stable state budget by resolving size/funding sources long-term, including the PFD, to provide more fiscal certainty).	43%	32%	18%	5%	2%
Quality of K-12 education (sufficient funding for public schools and youth activities)	40%	36%	16%	7%	1%
Infrastructure improvements/extensions (ports, harbors, roads, sidewalks)	34%	40%	19%	6%	1%
Childcare (quality, availability, affordable)	34%	37%	18%	10%	1%
Utilities improvements/extensions (water, wastewater, solid waste, energy, and communications)	24%	44%	22%	9%	1%
Social Services	10%	33%	33%	20%	4%
Recreational opportunities	9%	29%	38%	20%	4%
Arts and culture	8%	28%	36%	22%	6%

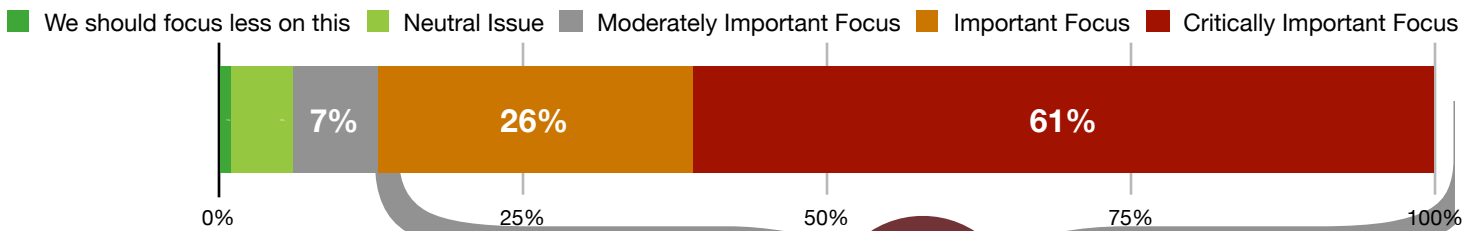
Critically Important Breakout: Housing Initiatives (availability, affordable, quality)

Housing is a significant problem for businesses across the region, and 61% of business leaders say that within the next five years it is critically important for government and political leaders to focus on housing initiatives to increase the availability, affordability, and quality of housing in the region. The need for this focus is most acute in **Ketchikan, Skagway, Petersburg, and Hoonah**; as well as for **Alaska Native organizations, energy, non-profit, and financial** sectors.

To create a vibrant business climate in your Southeast Alaska community, how important is the focus on housing over the next 5 years?



Region Overall



87% of SE business leaders say that housing initiatives are an important or critically important focus over the next 5 years.

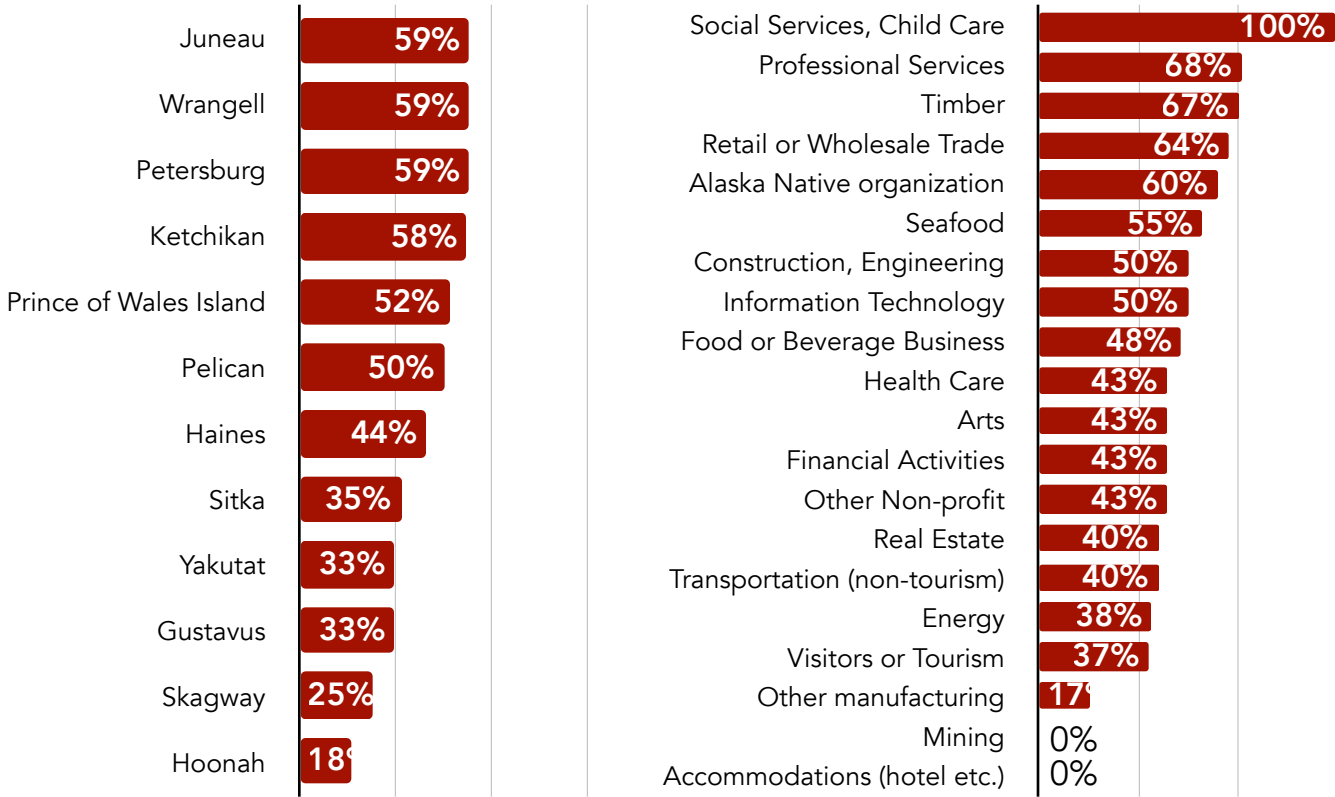
87%

Critically Important Breakout: Workforce (attract, retain workforce-aged residents)

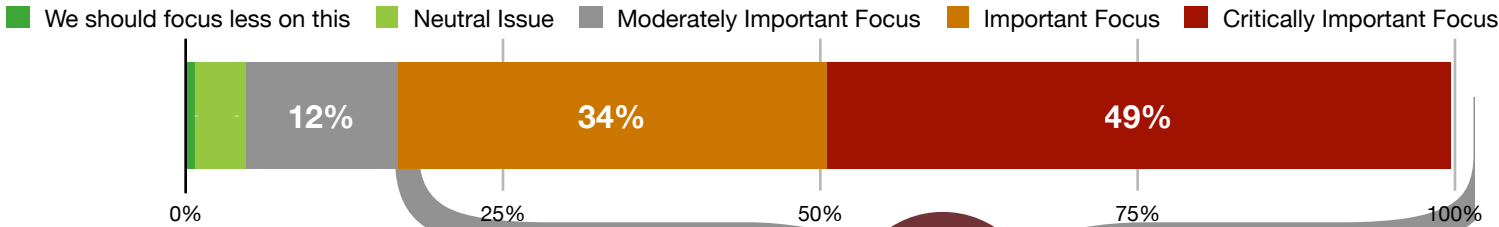
As the region grows older, the importance of attracting younger residents also grows, and 49% of all business leaders say that within the next five years it is critically important to focus on attracting and retaining younger workers and families to the region. Business leaders in **Juneau, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Ketchikan**; along with the **social services, professional & business services, timber, and retail** sectors are feeling the impacts of too few young professionals the most.

To create a vibrant business climate in your Southeast Alaska community, how important is the focus on attracting workforce aged-residents over the next 5 years?

Critically Important Focus



Region Overall



83% of SE business leaders say that attracting and retaining a younger workforce is an important or critically important focus over the next 5 years.

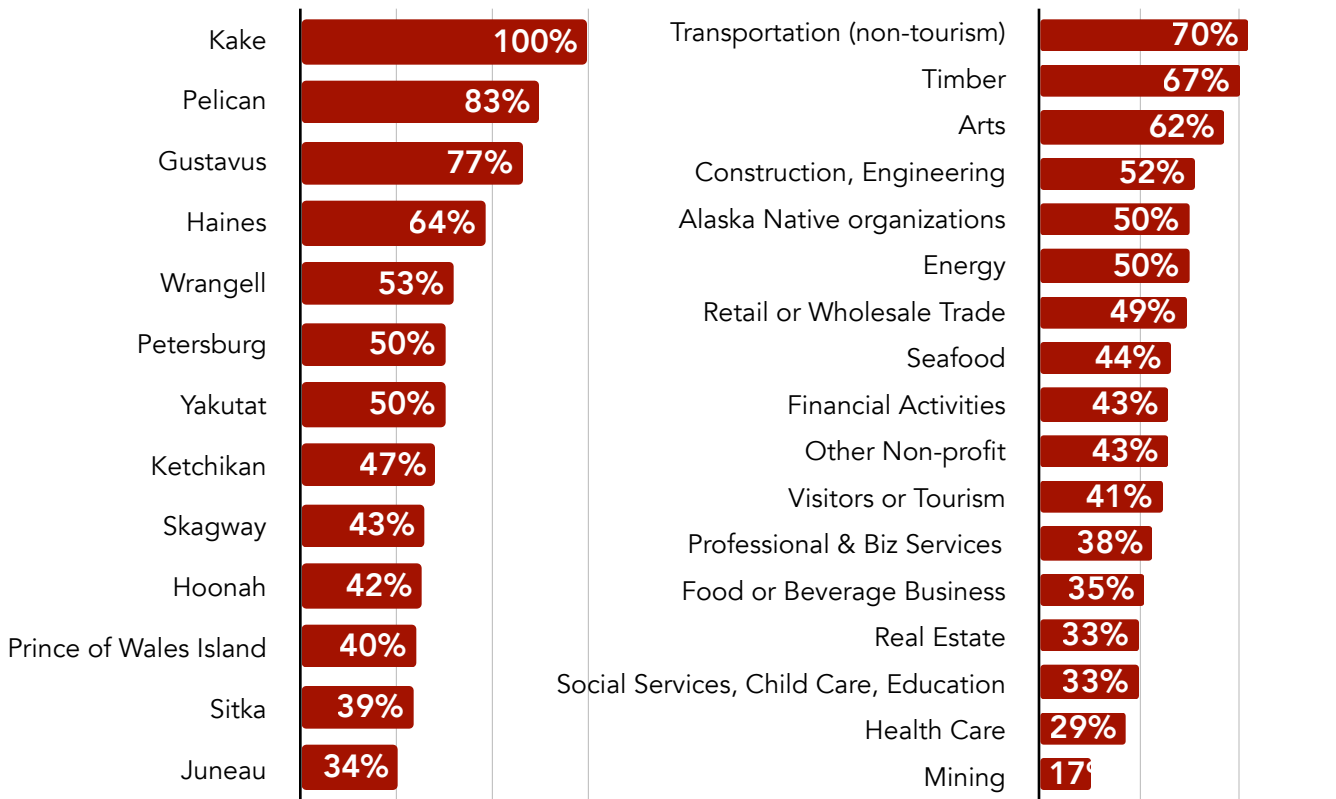
83%

Critically Important Breakout: Transportation (availability, reliability, improvements)

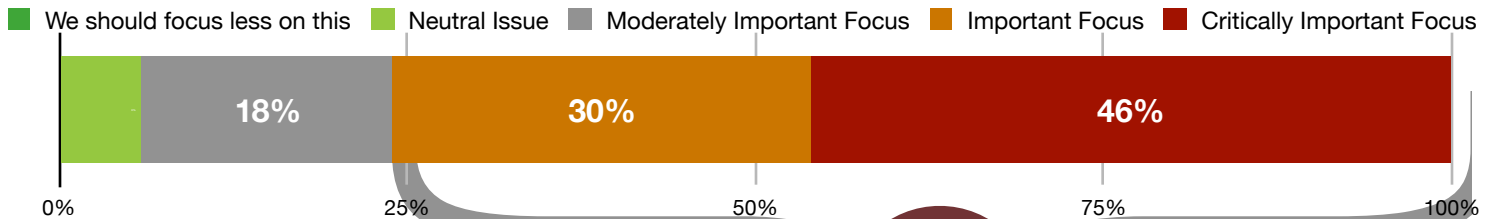
Transportation is critical to all commerce in Southeast Alaska, and 46% of business leaders say that within the next five years it is critically important for government and political leaders to focus on transportation to improve the availability, reliability, and quality of transportation in the region. The need for transportation improvements is most acute in **Kake, Pelican, Gustavus, and Haines**; along with the **transportation, timber, arts, and construction** sectors.

To create a vibrant business climate in your Southeast Alaska community, how important is the focus on transportation over the next 5 years?

Critically Important Focus



Region Overall



76% of SE business leaders say that transportation is an important or critically important focus over the next 5 years

76%

How would you rate the Quality of Life in Southeast Alaska?

Southeast Alaska is known for its high quality of life ratings. Among business leaders, the overall quality of life rating is 7.3 out of 10 in 2024. **Gustavus, Sitka, and Juneau** business leaders give the region the highest ratings, while **Kake, Hoonah, and Yakutat** have the lowest rankings. Those in **manufacturing, IT, accommodations, and energy** provide the highest ratings, while those in **Alaska Native organizations and seafood** provide the lowest ratings.

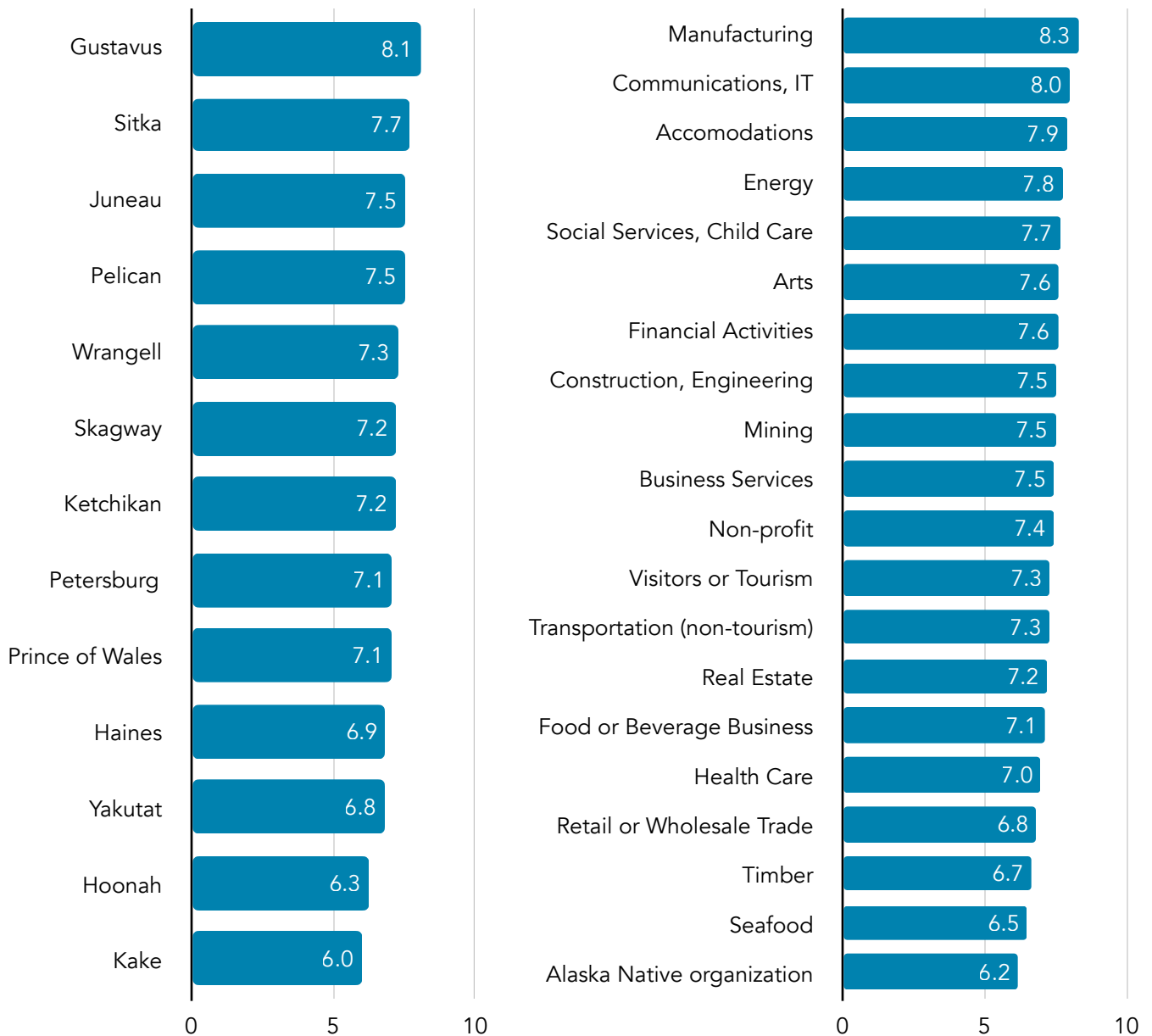


By Community

By Industry

2023=7.3
2022=7.2

■ Southeast Quality of Life

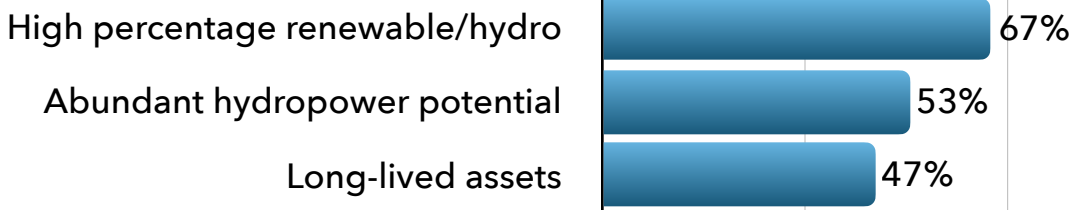


Industry Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

Nearly 200 business leaders and Southeast Conference members were asked to participate in sector-specific SWOTs within the Southeast Conference committee areas. A SWOT analysis is an in-depth analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. These SWOT analyses identify the region’s sector-specific competitive advantages and obstacles. The sectors that received their own SWOTs in 2024 include seafood, energy, transportation, tourism, and mining. Summaries are included on the following pages, with 2020 sector SWOT comparisons, while the full SWOT results are in the Appendix.

Energy SWOT 2024

STRENGTHS



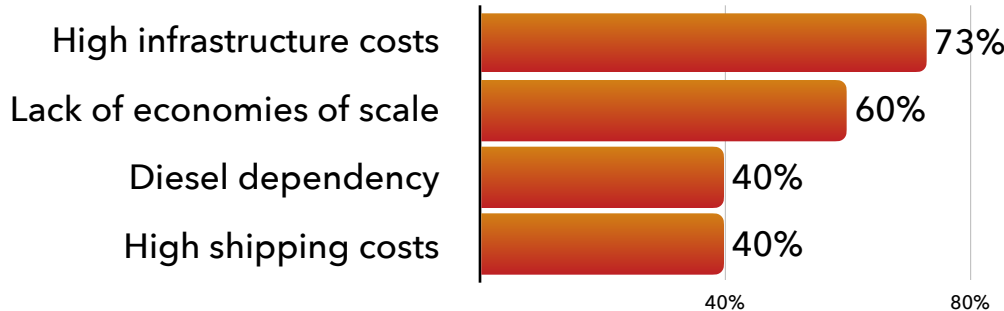
2020

Not on 2020 list

#1

Not on 2020 list

WEAKNESSES



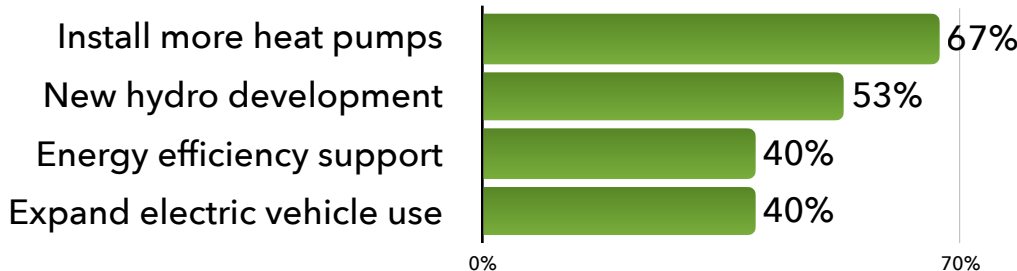
2020

#1

#2

#7

OPPORTUNITIES



2020

#2

#1

#6

#3

THREATS



2020

Not on 2020 list

#8

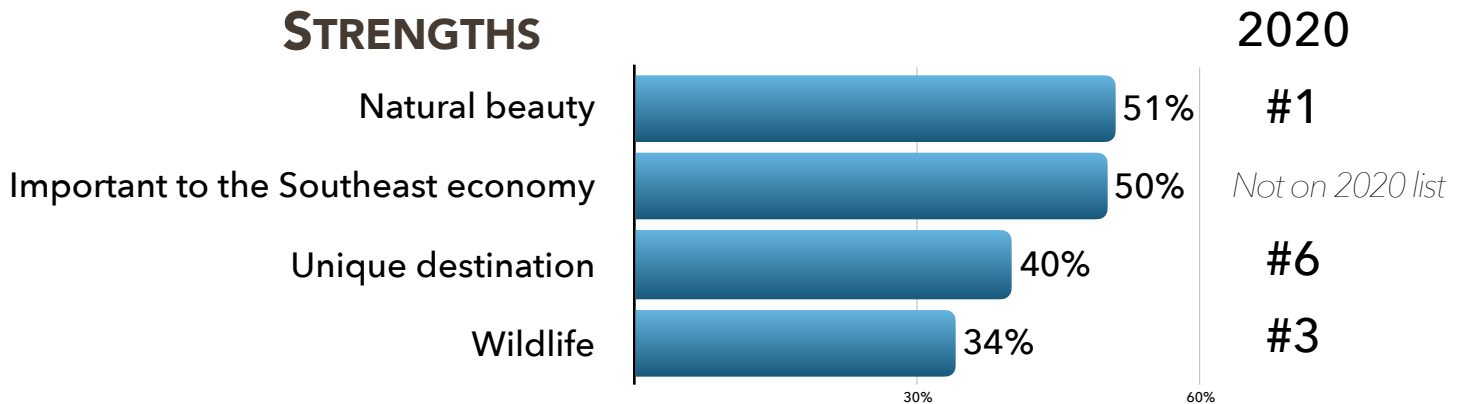
#2

Not on 2020 list

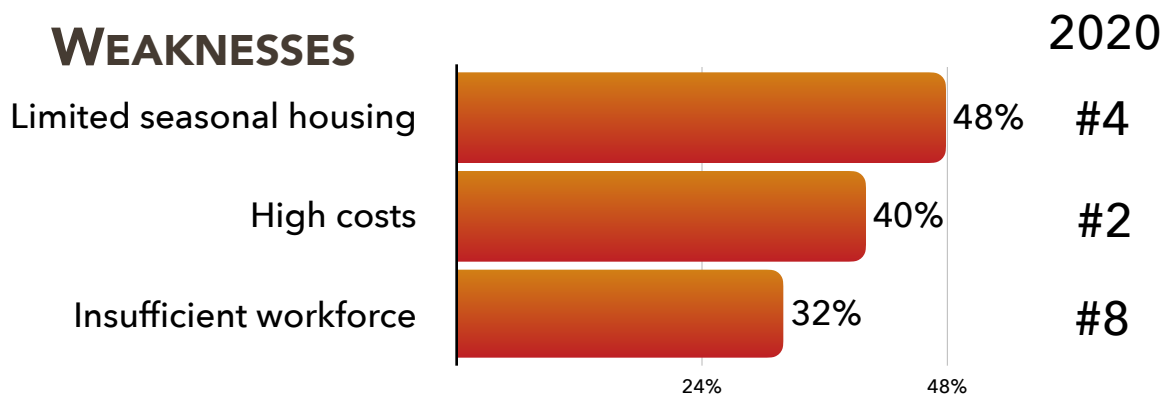
Tourism SWOT 2024

Item b.

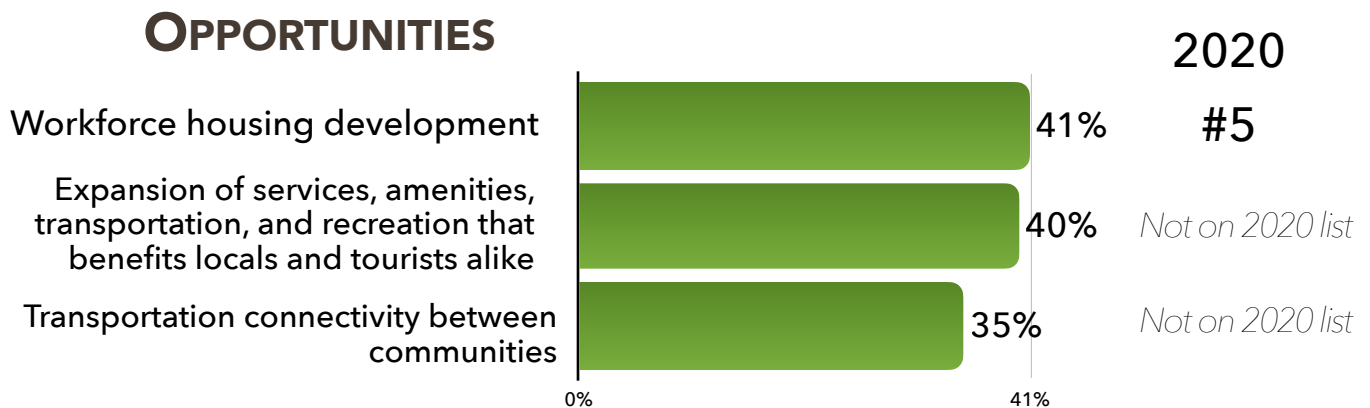
STRENGTHS



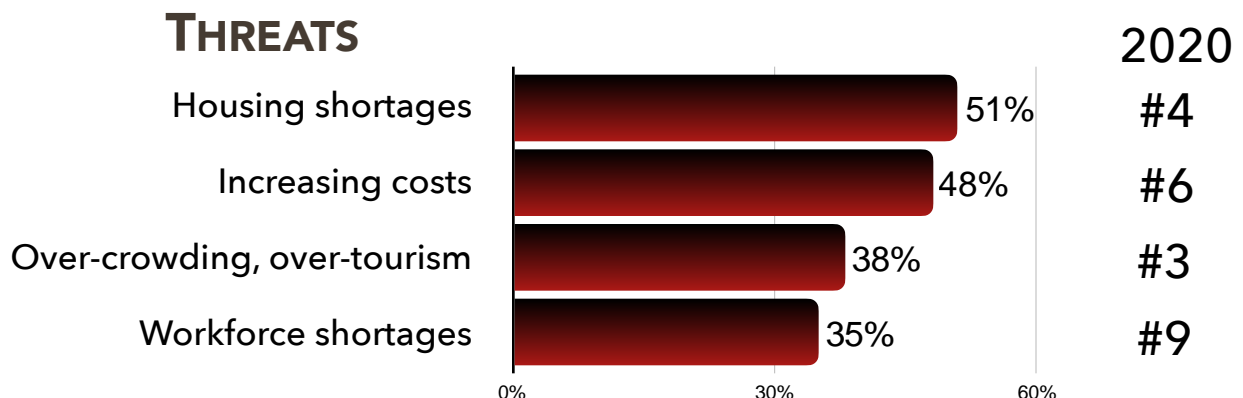
WEAKNESSES



OPPORTUNITIES



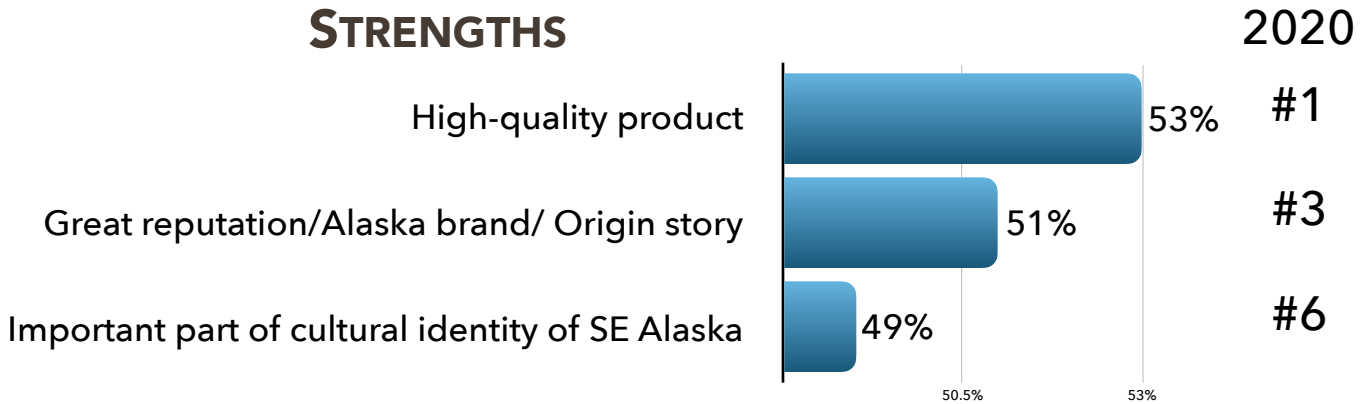
THREATS



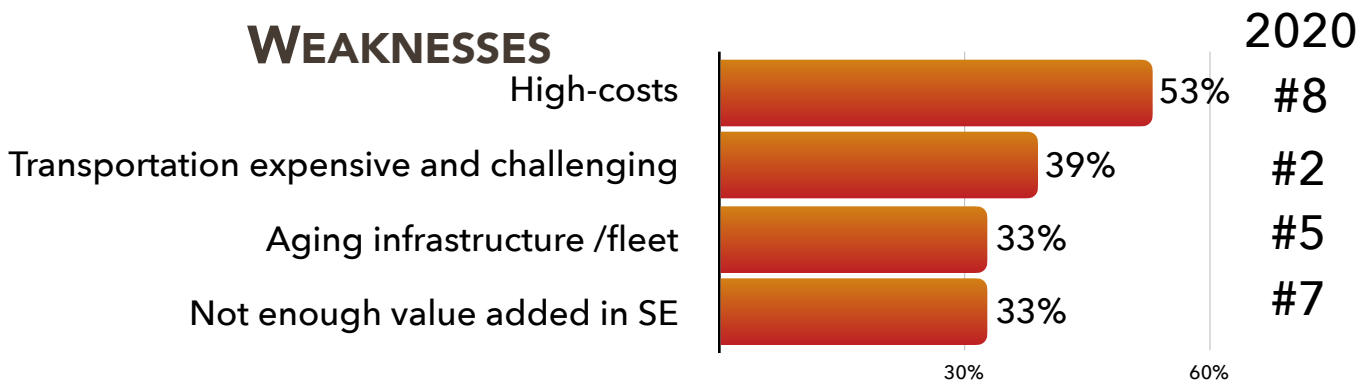
Seafood SWOT 2024

Item b.

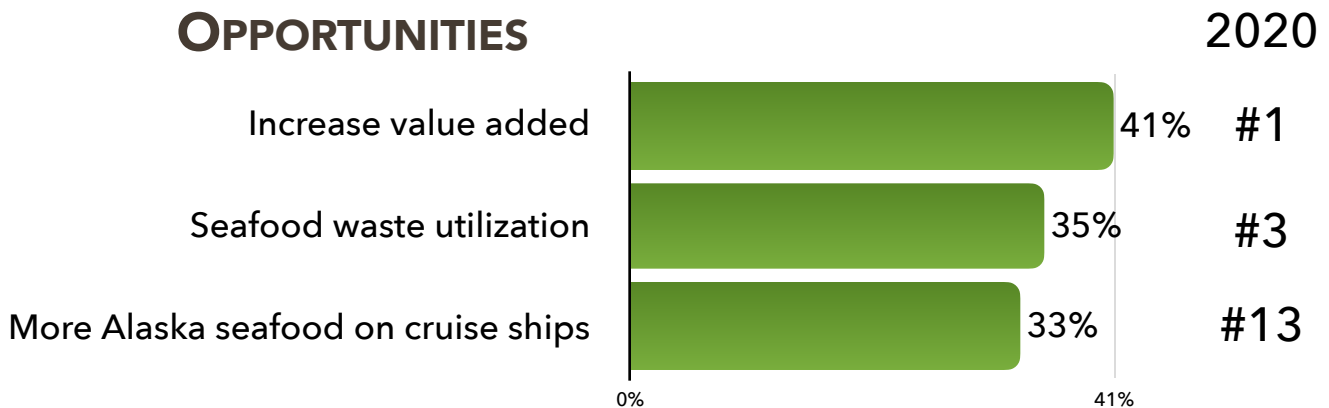
STRENGTHS



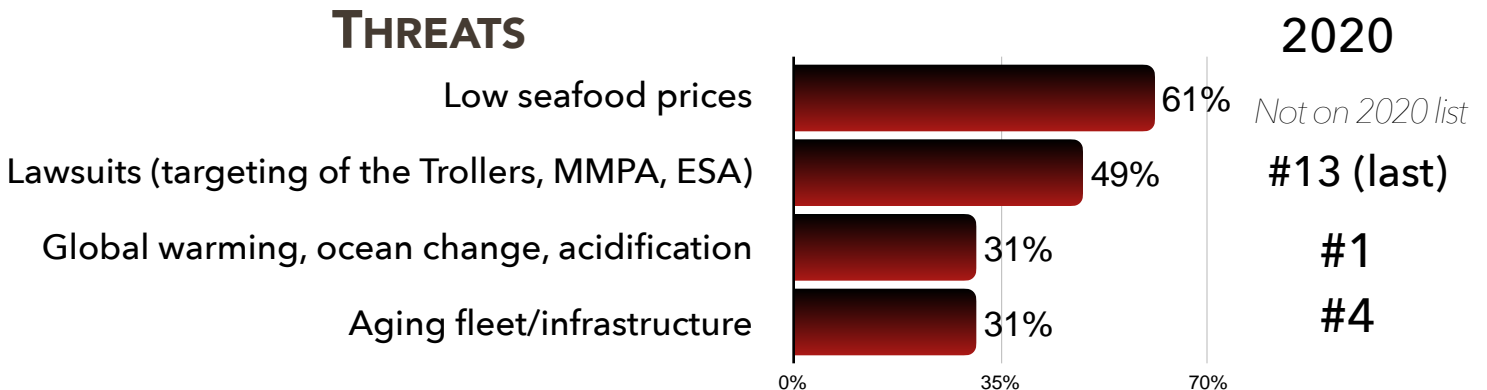
WEAKNESSES



OPPORTUNITIES



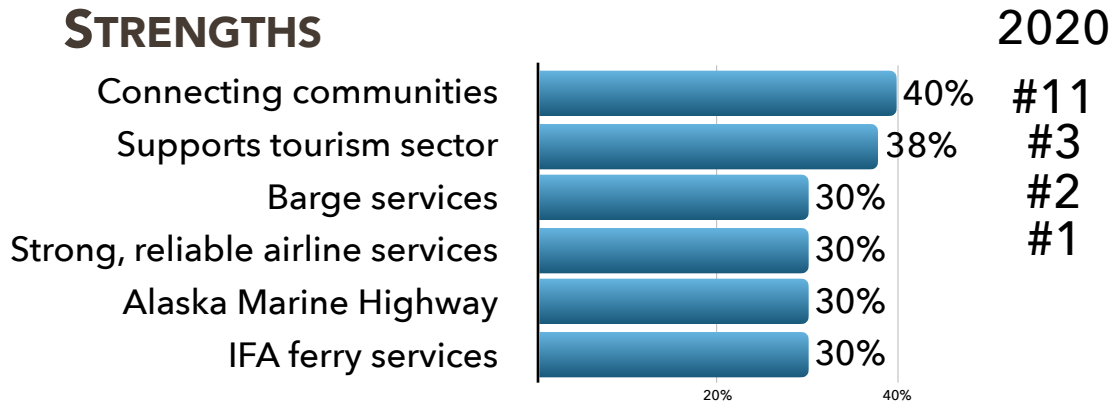
THREATS



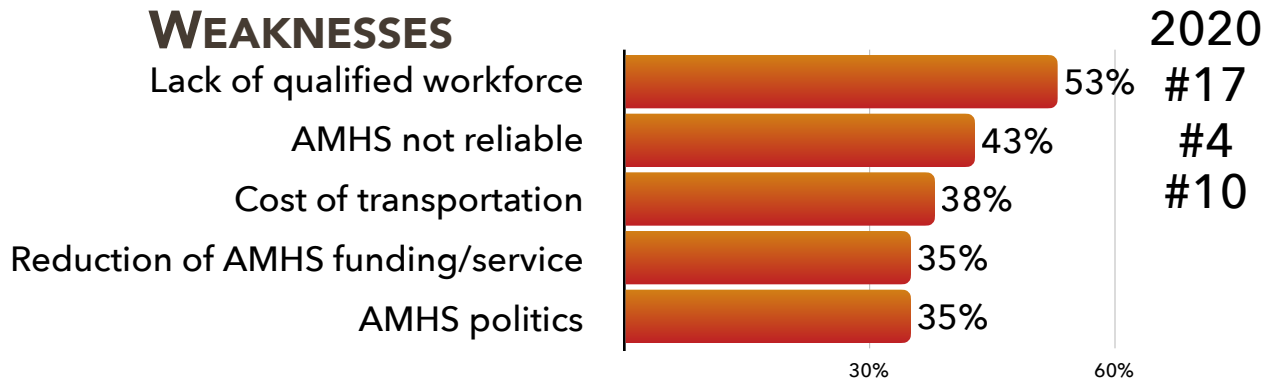
Transportation SWOT 2024

Item b.

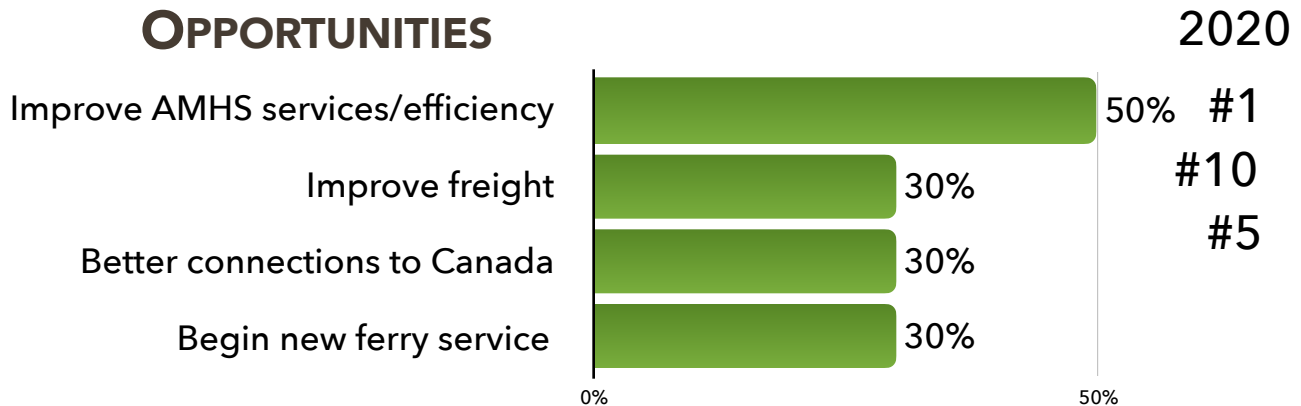
STRENGTHS



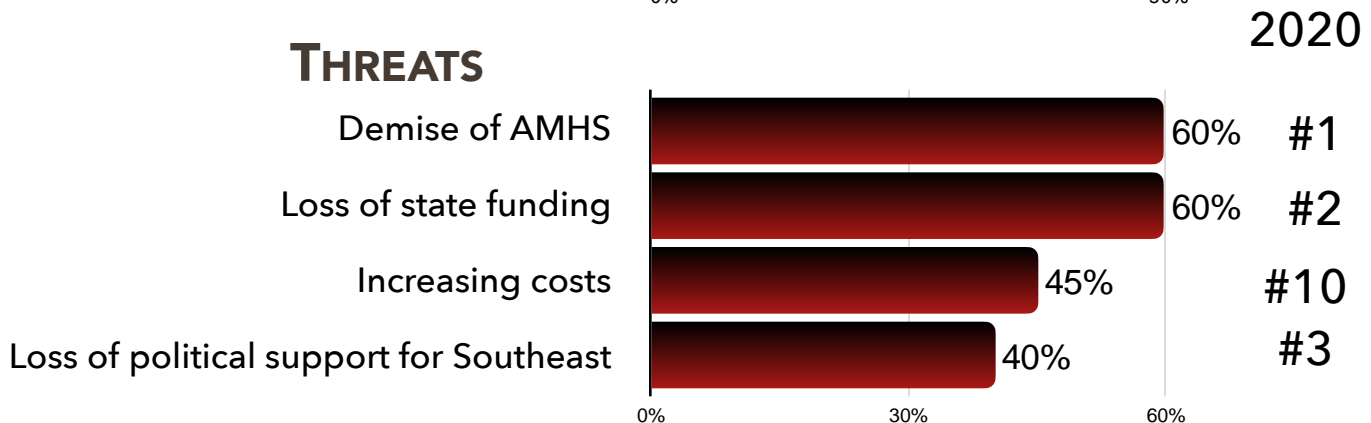
WEAKNESSES



OPPORTUNITIES



THREATS



Southeast Business Respondent Profile

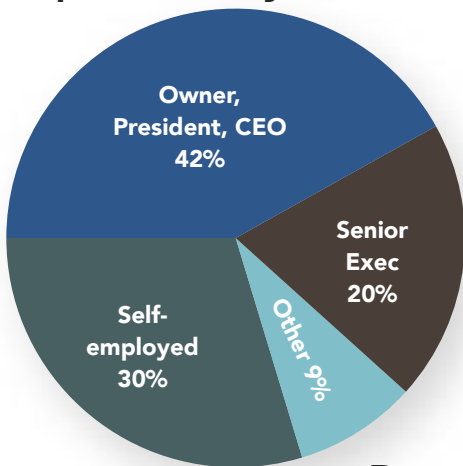
440
Business Leaders

The 440 responding businesses represent approximately 11,000 Southeast Alaska workers.

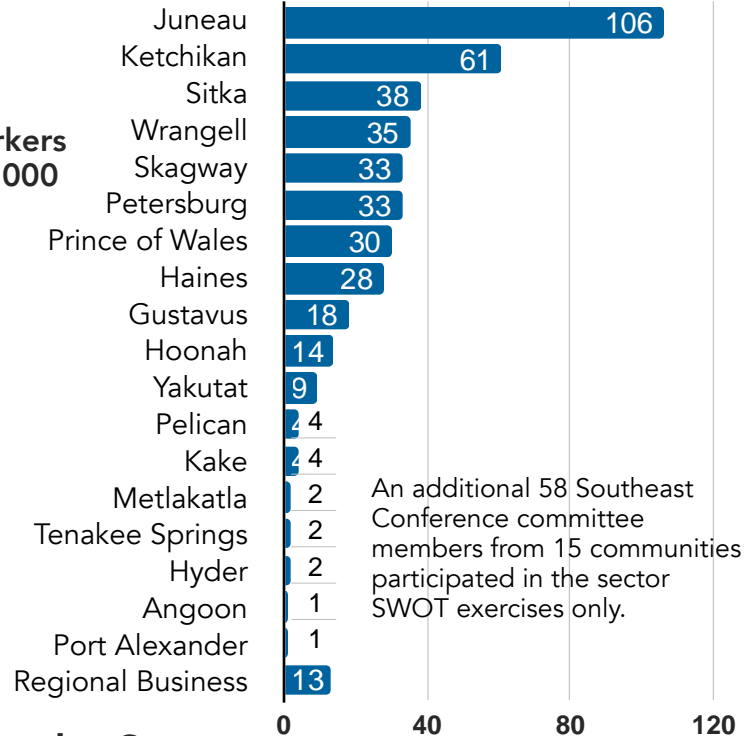
Responding Businesses Profile

Responding Businesses = **440**
Average Employees Per Business = **25 Workers**
Total Workers Represented by Survey = **11,000**

Respondent by Position



Respondents by Community



Respondents by Sector

Sector	Businesses	Workers Represented
Visitors or Tourism	85	2,935
Retail or Wholesale Trade	50	724
Seafood, Commercial Fishing, Mariculture	49	812
Food or Beverage Business	26	612
Professional & Business Services	26	261
Construction, Architecture, or Engineering	23	203
Arts	19	85
Other Non-profit	19	257
Transportation (non-tourism)	19	1,163
Real Estate	17	94
Energy	12	478
Mining	11	1,001
Health Care	8	652
Other manufacturing	8	23
Accommodations (hotel etc.)	8	127
Financial Activities	7	319
Communications, IT	7	47
Agriculture	5	13
Alaska Native organization	4	103
Timber	3	76
Government	3	34
Social Services, Child Care, Education	3	91

Appendix



Detailed Industry Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)



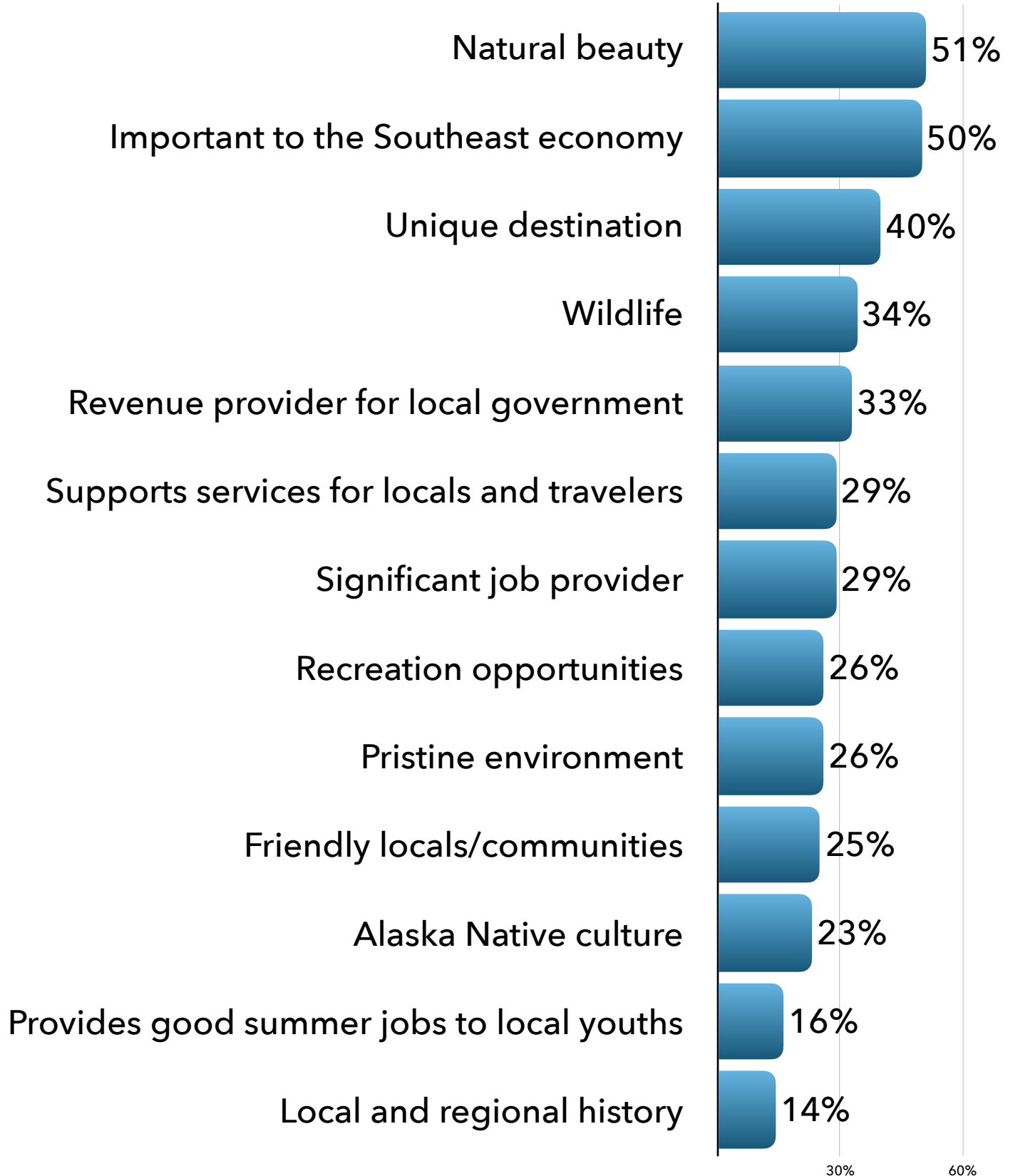
Southeast Tourism SWOT

SOUTHEAST TOURISM SWOT SUMMARY

The Southeast Alaska Tourism SWOT analysis was conducted by 129 tourism business leaders and members of the Southeast Conference Visitor Industry Committee in the spring of 2024. Participants were asked to prioritize by choosing the top 2-4 items that they felt were most representative of regional visitor sector's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The results of this exercise are presented on the following pages.

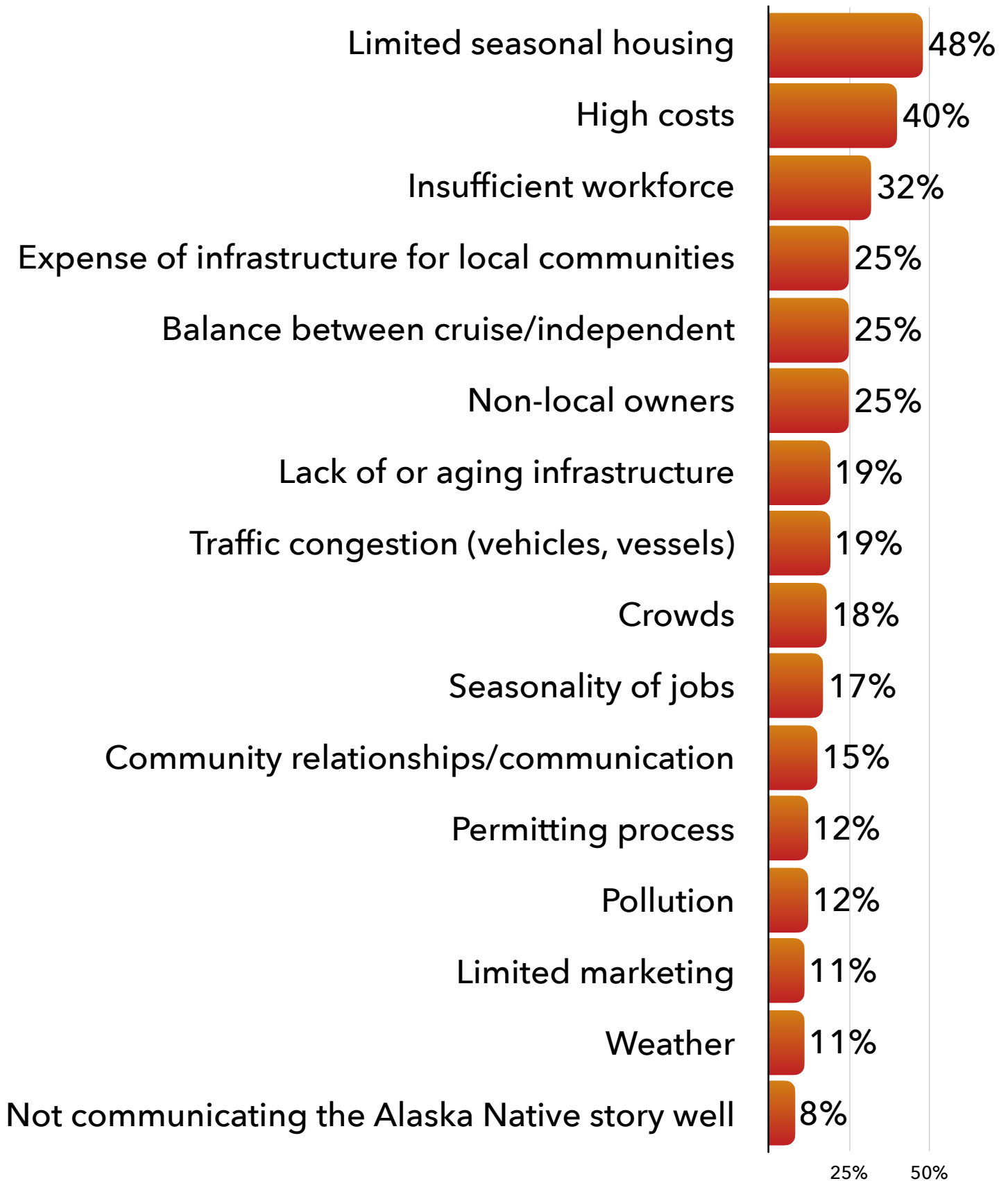
Tourism Strengths

Item b.



Tourism Weaknesses

Item b.

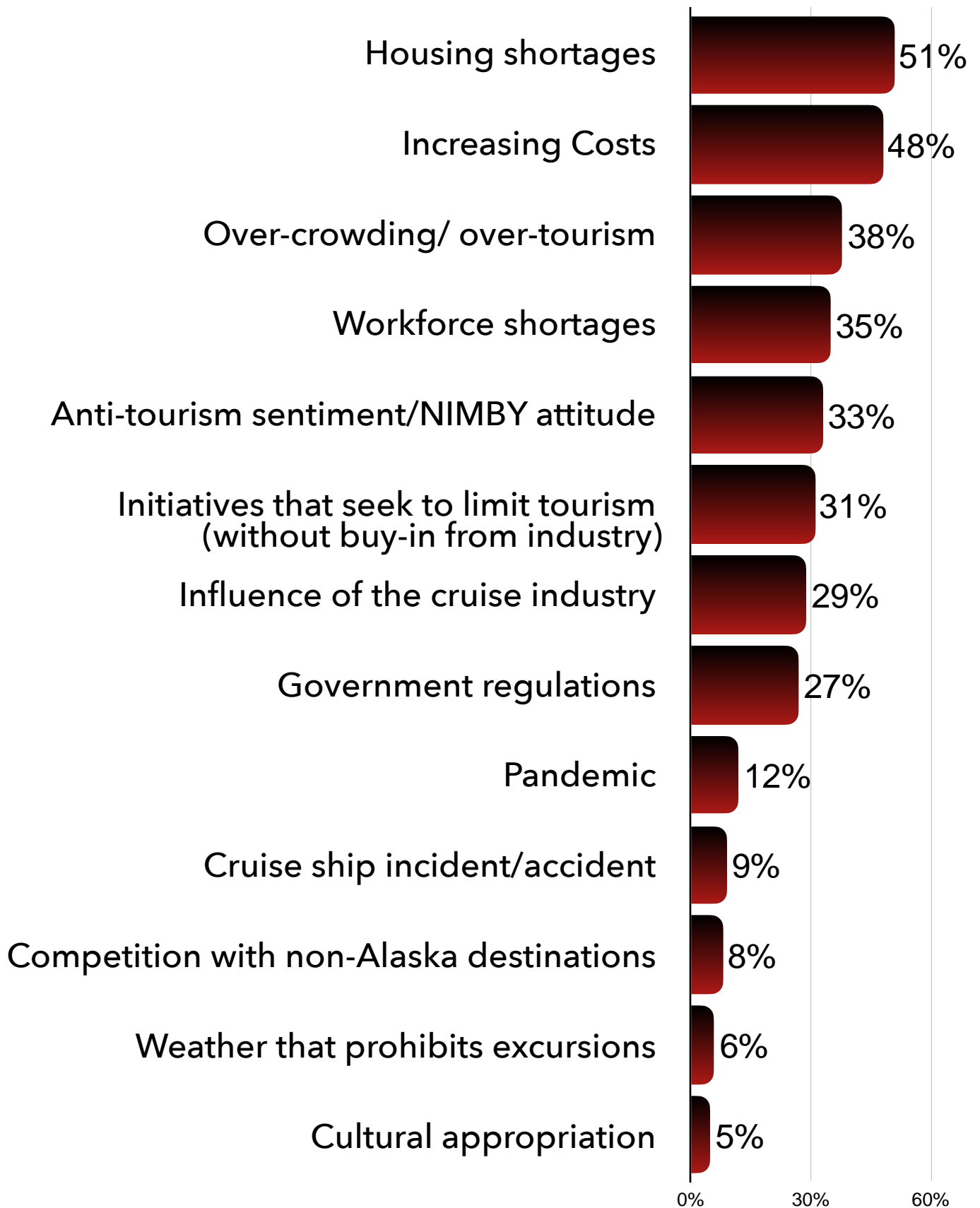


Tourism Opportunities Item b.



Tourism Threats

Item b.



Southeast Seafood SWOT

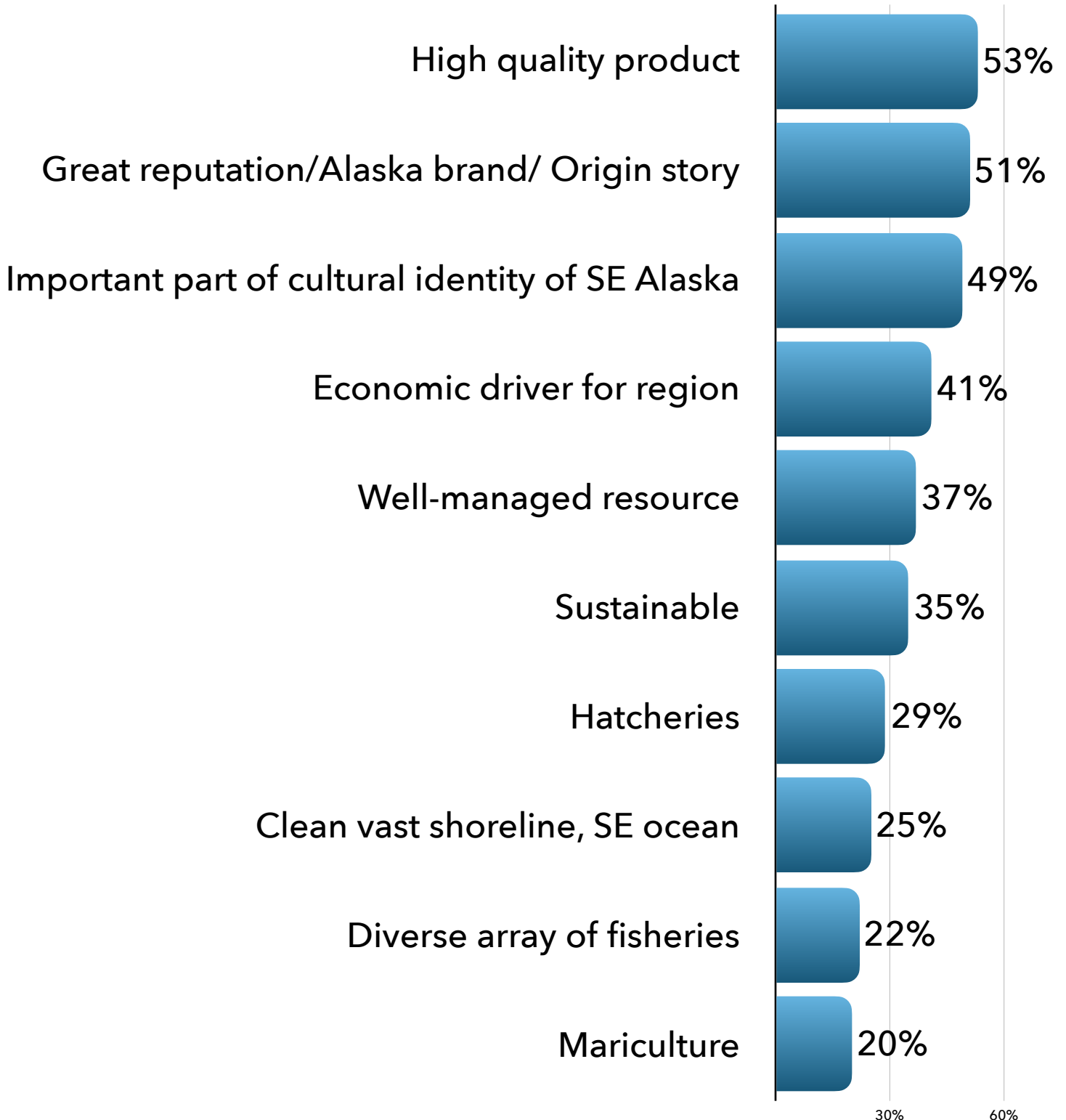
SOUTHEAST SEAFOOD SWOT SUMMARY

The Southeast Alaska Seafood SWOT analysis was conducted by 51 seafood business leaders and members of the Southeast Conference Seafood and Maritime Industry Committee in the spring of 2024. Participants were asked to prioritize by choosing the top 2-4 items that they felt were most representative of regional seafood strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The results of this exercise are presented on the following pages.

Seafood Strengths

Item b.

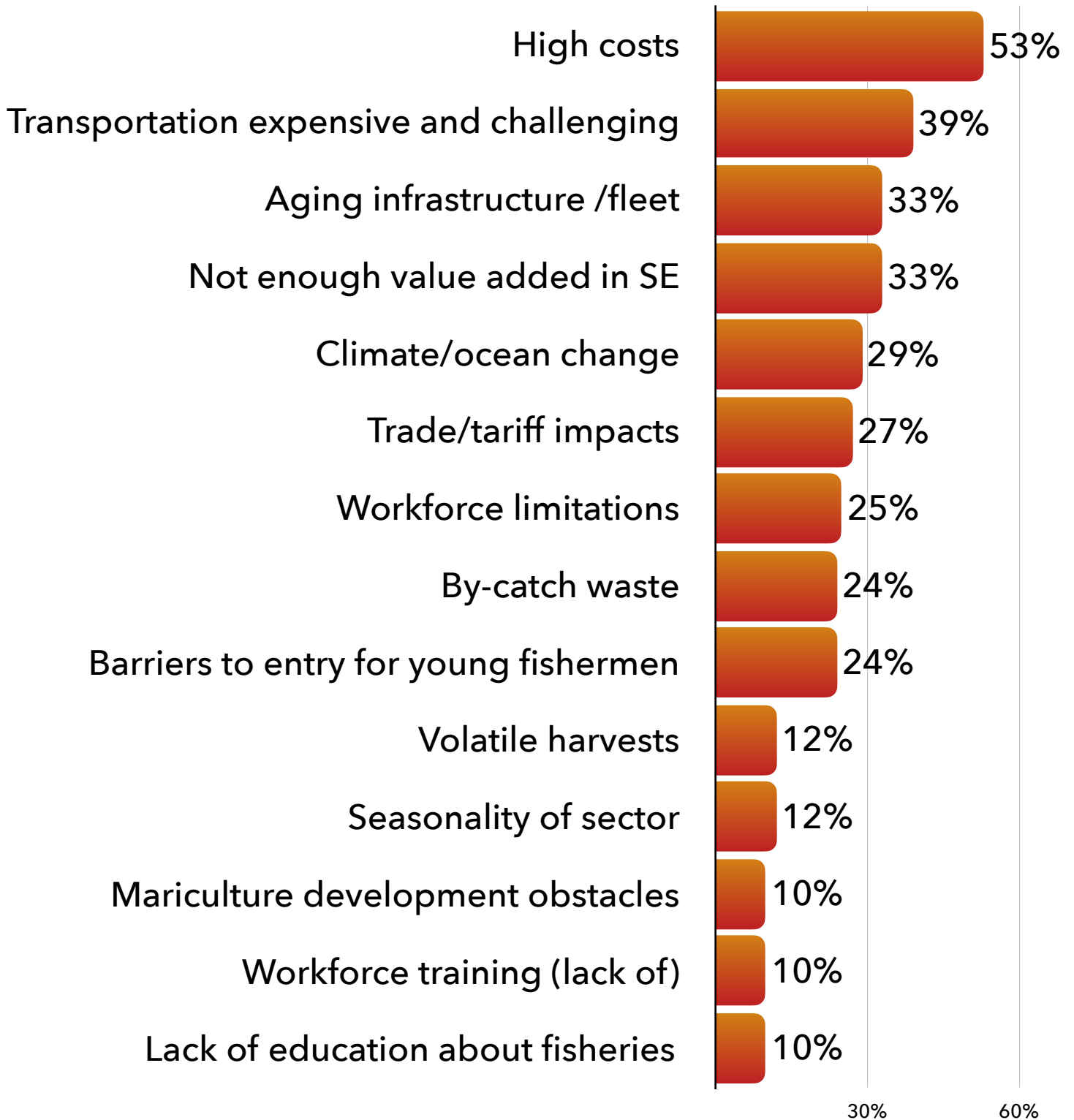
What does the seafood sector in Southeast Alaska do well?
What unique resources does it draw on? What are the benefits the seafood industry provides to the Southeast Alaska region? What is the Southeast Alaska seafood sector "known for"?



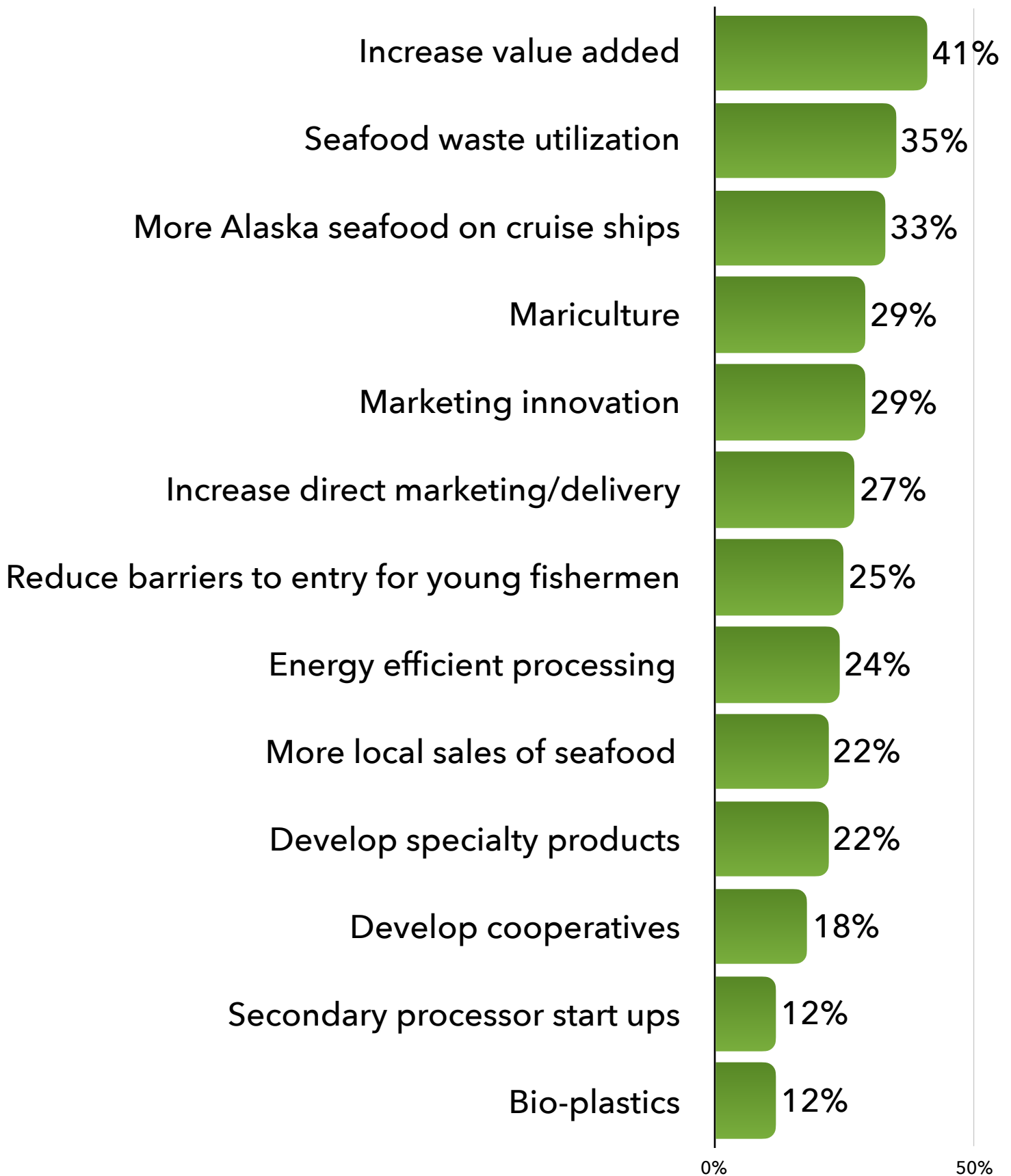
Seafood Weaknesses

Item b.

What are the known challenges of regional seafood? What could the Southeast Alaska seafood sector improve? Where does the seafood sector have fewer resources than it needs? Pick 2-4

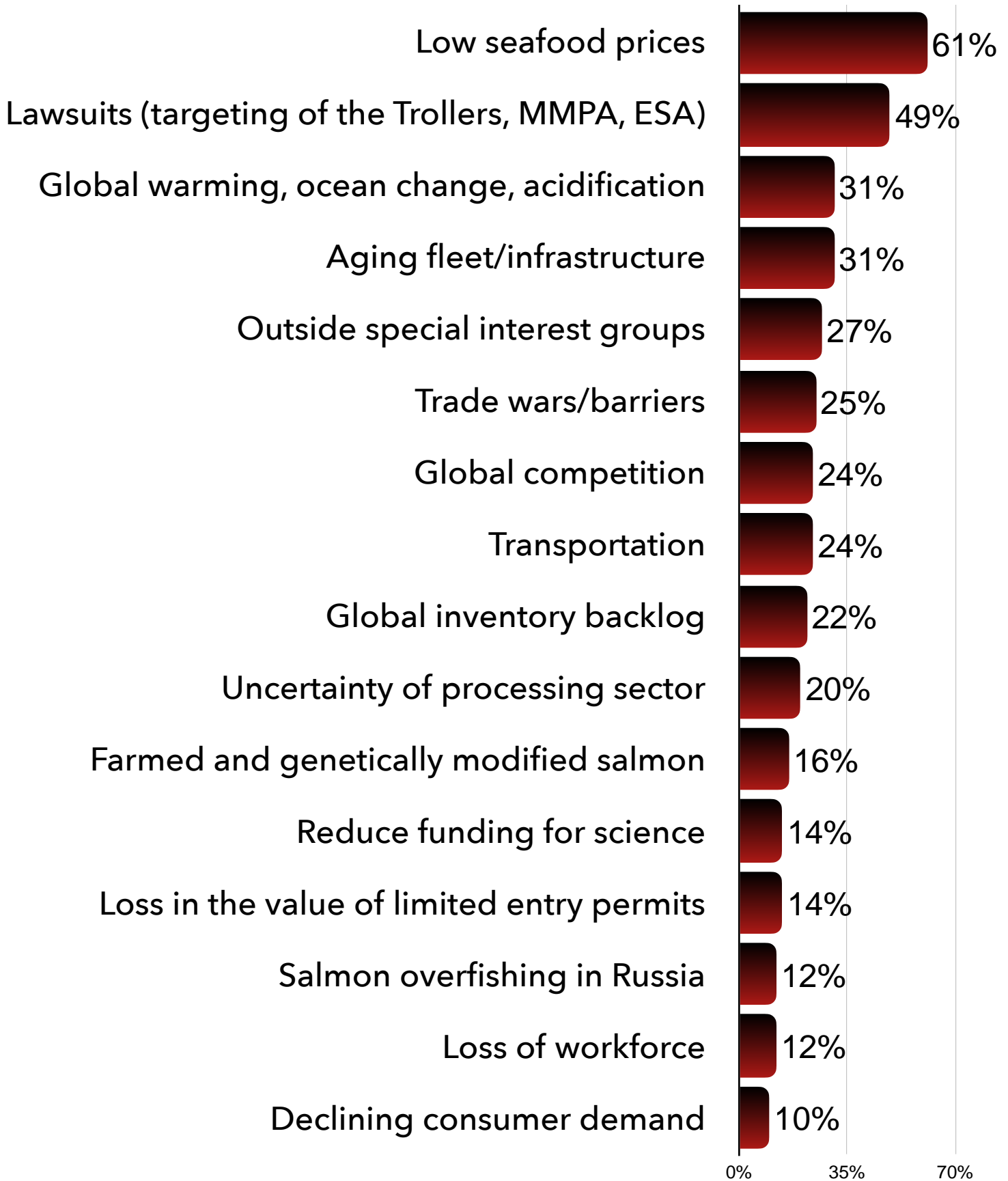


Seafood Opportunities Item b.



Seafood Threats

Item b.



Southeast Transportation SWOT

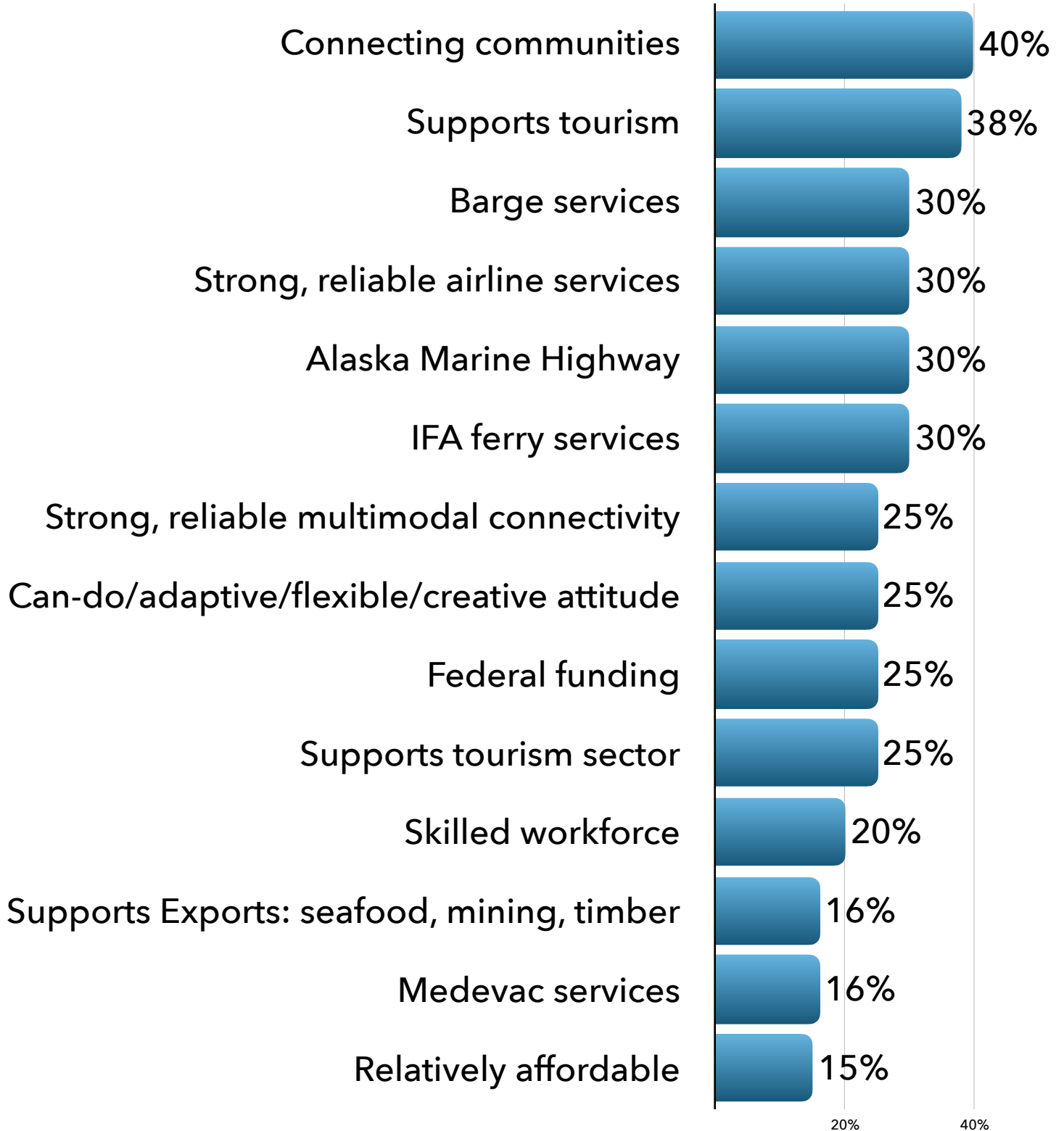
SOUTHEAST TRANSPORTATION SWOT SUMMARY

The Southeast Alaska Transportation SWOT analysis was conducted by 24 transportation business leaders and members of the Southeast Conference Transportation Industry Committee in spring 2024. Participants were asked to prioritize by choosing the top 2-4 items that they felt were most representative of regional transportation strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The results of this exercise are presented on the following pages.

Transportation Strengths 2024

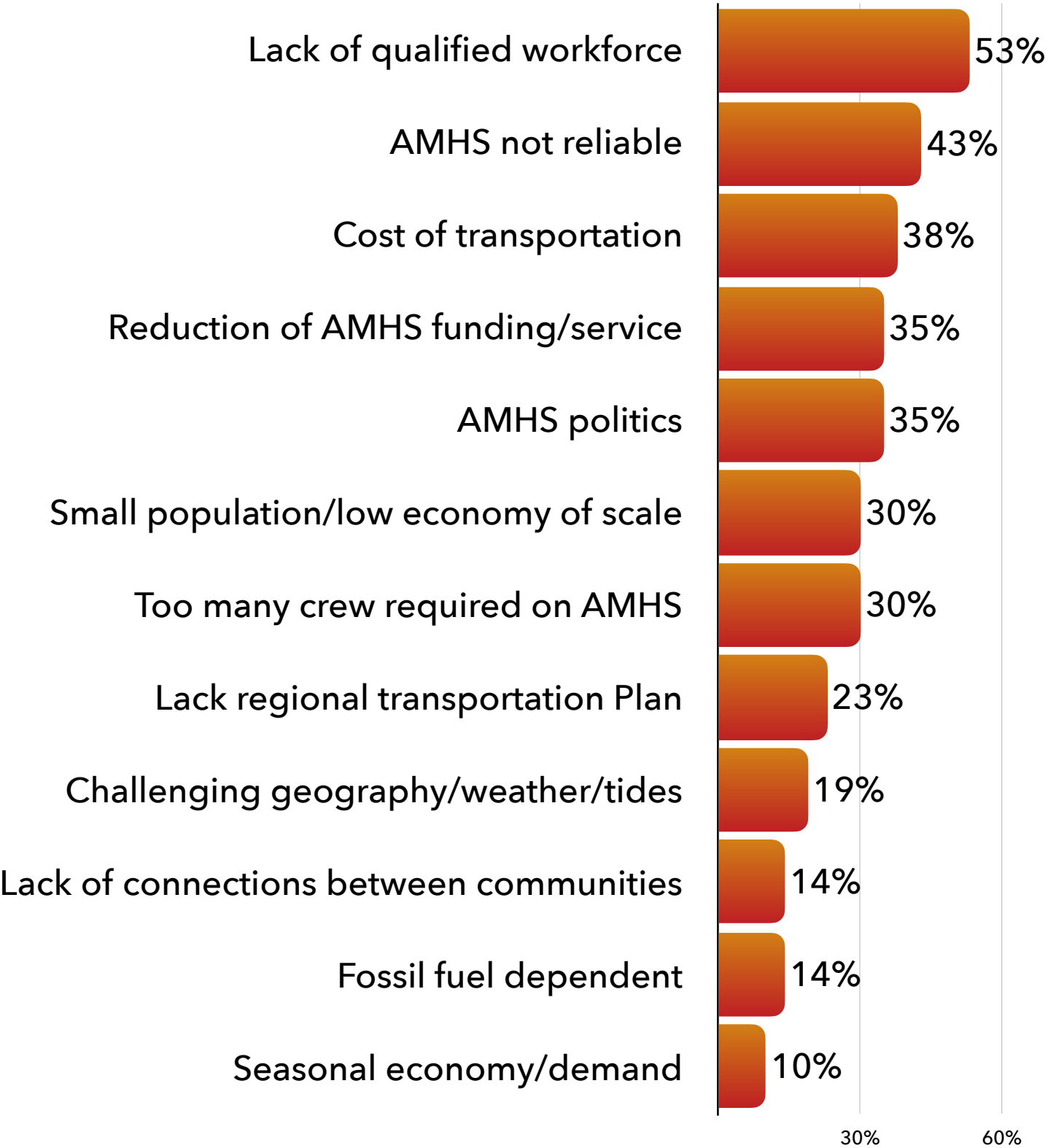
Item b.

What does the Transportation sector in Southeast Alaska do well?
What unique resources does it draw on? What are the benefits the Transportation industry provides to the Southeast Alaska region? What is the Southeast Alaska Transportation sector "known for"?



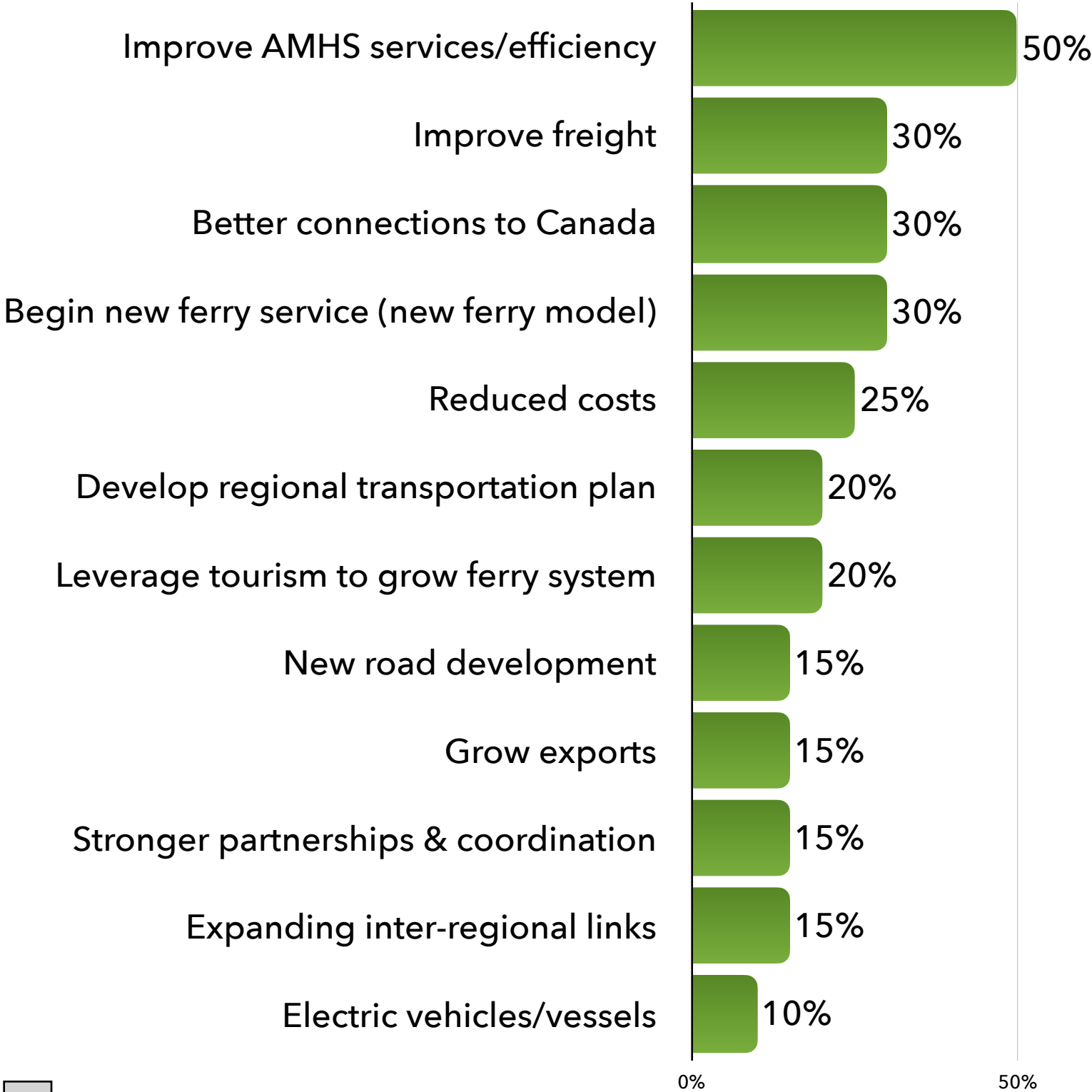
Transportation Weaknesses

What could the Southeast Alaska Transportation sector improve?
Where does the Transportation sector have fewer resources than it needs?
What are the known challenges of regional Transportation? Pick 2-4



Transportation Opportunities

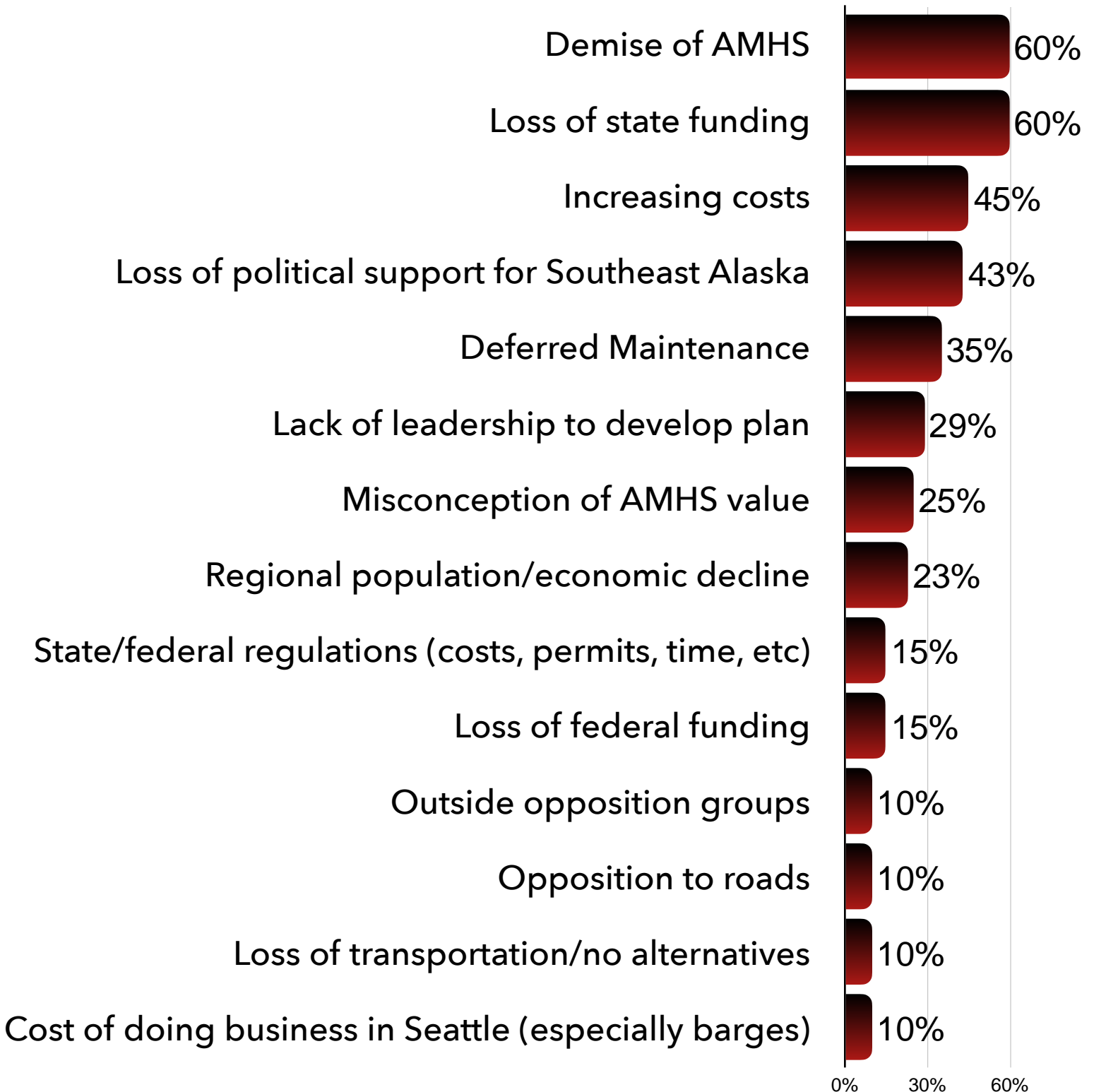
What opportunities are open to the regional Transportation industry? What trends could the regional Transportation sector take advantage of? How can the Transportation sector in Southeast Alaska turn its strengths into opportunities? Pick 2-4



Transportation Threats

Item b.

What threats (from outside the region or the sector) could harm the region's Transportation sector? What outside obstacles does the Transportation sector face? What threats does Transportation's weaknesses expose it to? Pick 2-4

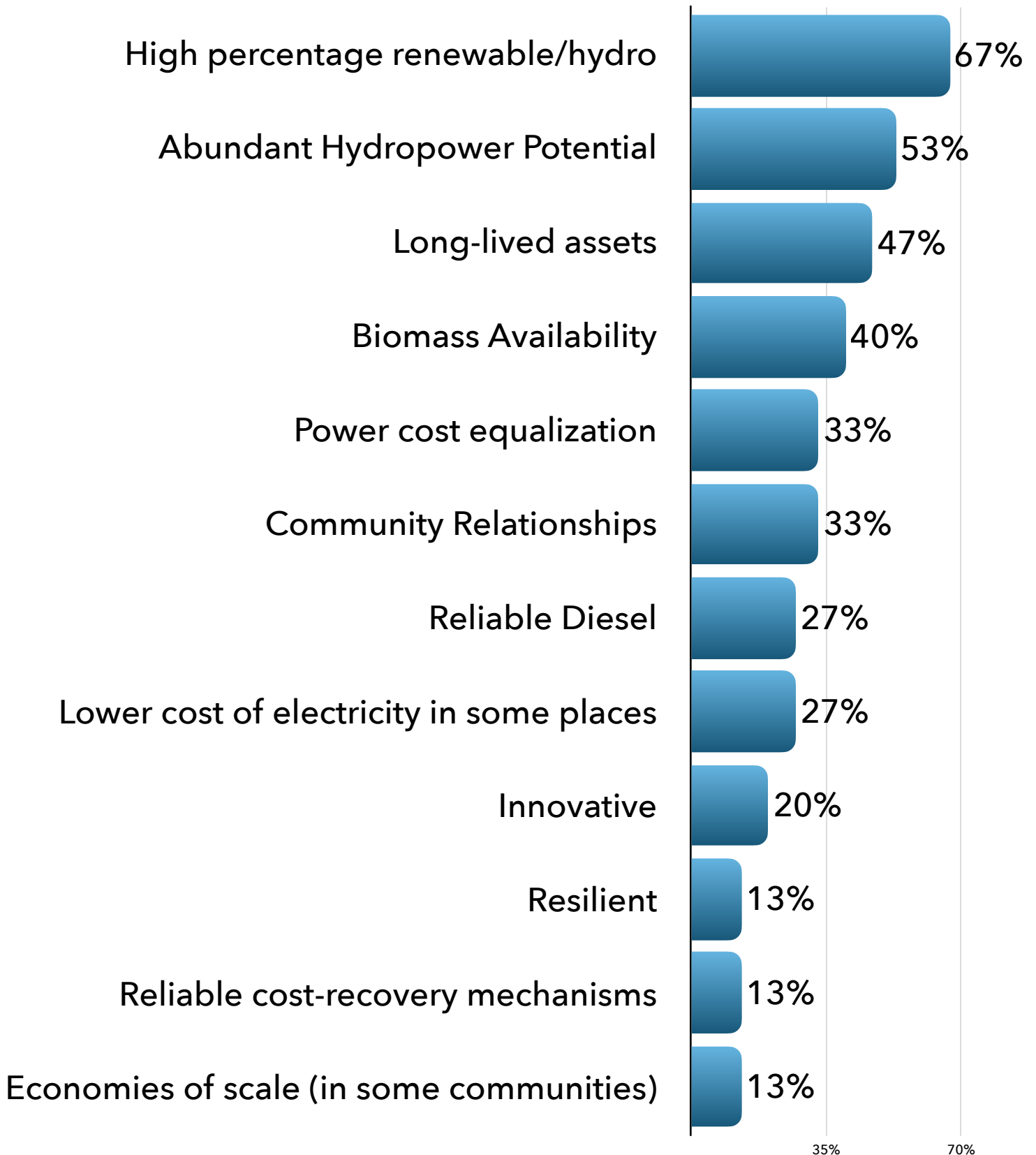


Southeast Energy SWOT

SOUTHEAST ENERGY SWOT SUMMARY

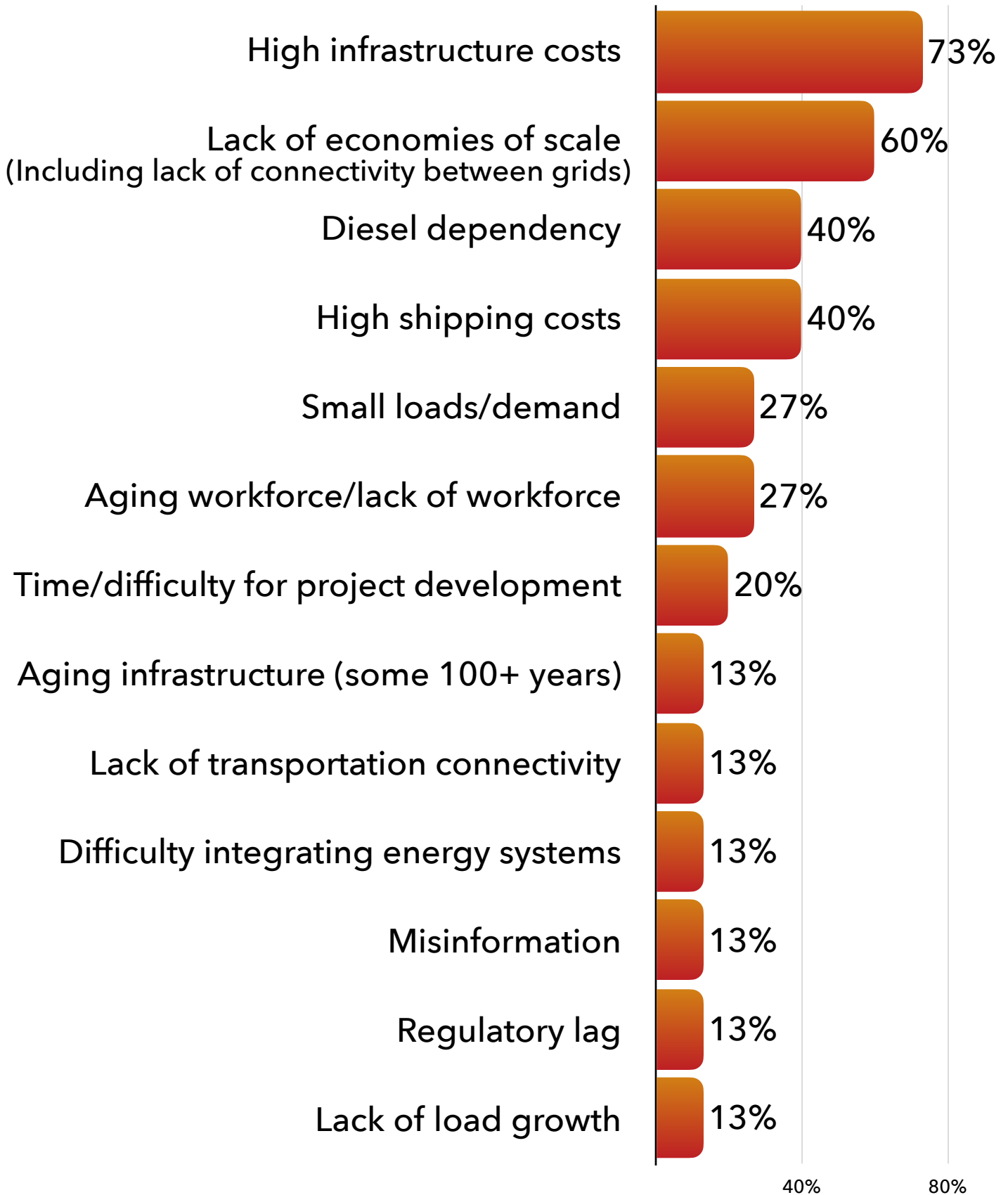
The Southeast Alaska Energy SWOT analysis was conducted by 15 energy business leaders and members of the Southeast Conference Energy Industry Committee in the spring of 2024. Participants were asked to prioritize by choosing the top 2-4 items that they felt were most representative of regional energy strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The results of this exercise are presented on the following pages.

Energy Strengths



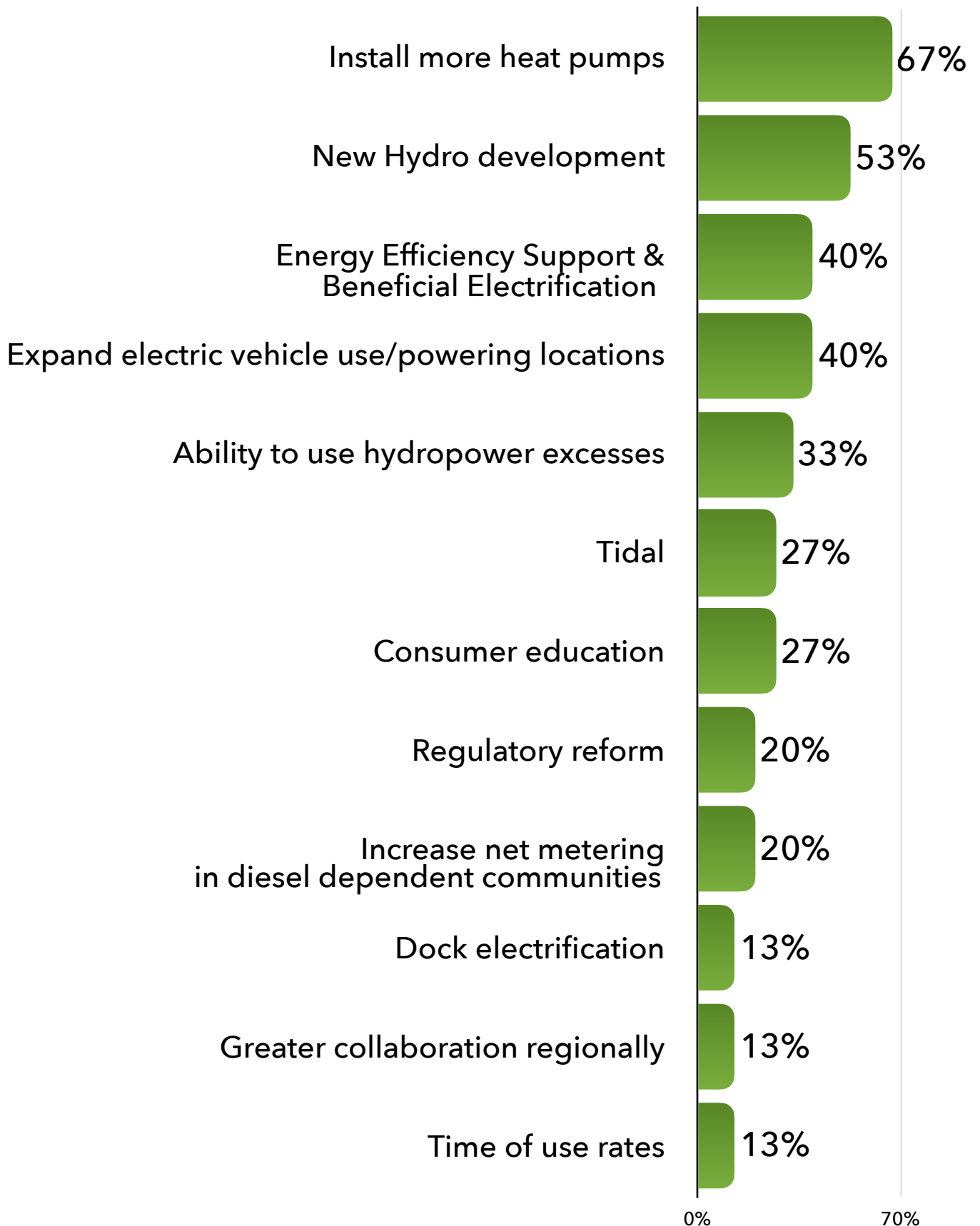
Energy Weaknesses

Item b.



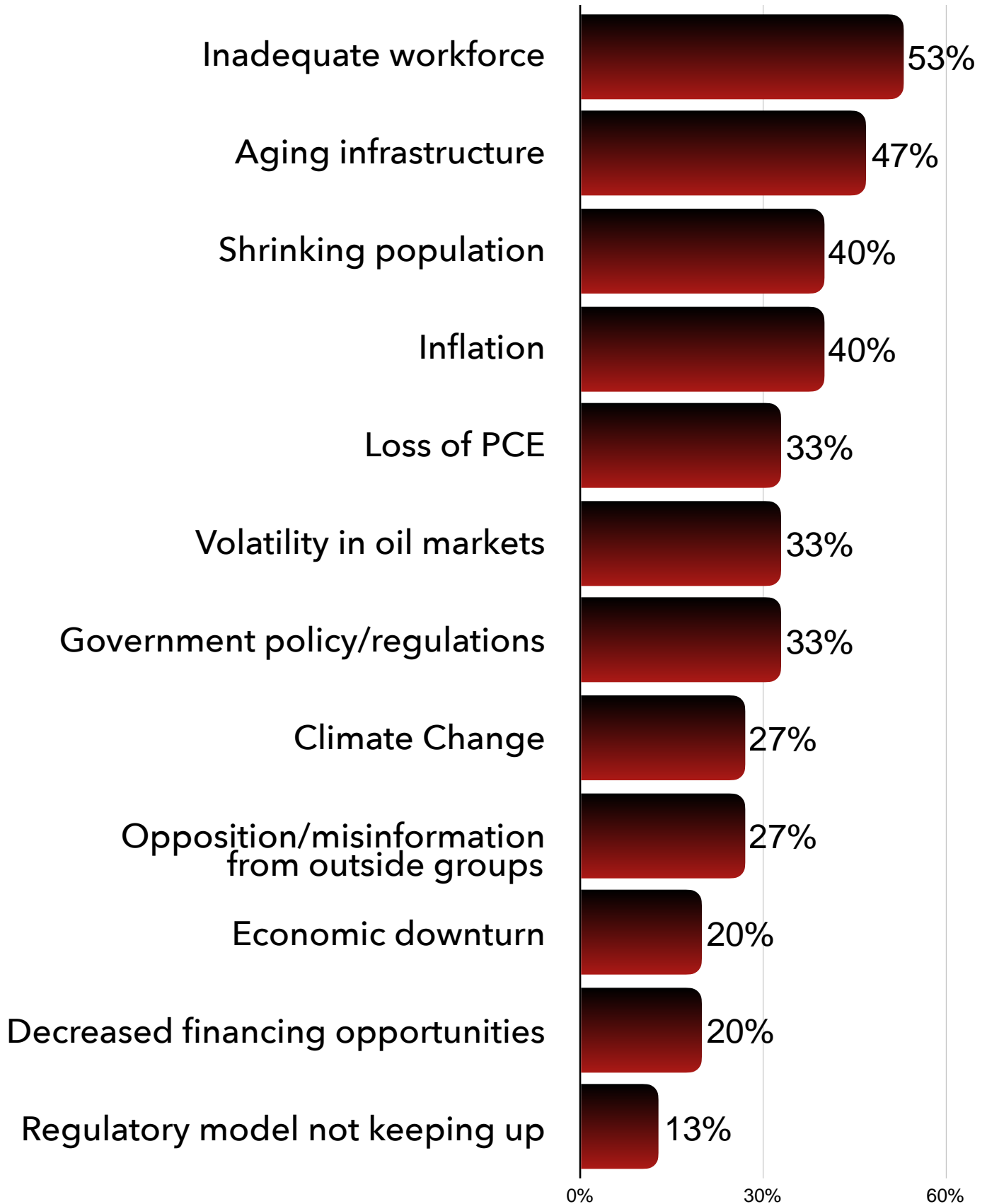
Energy Opportunities

Item b.



Energy Threats

Item b.



Southeast Mining SWOT

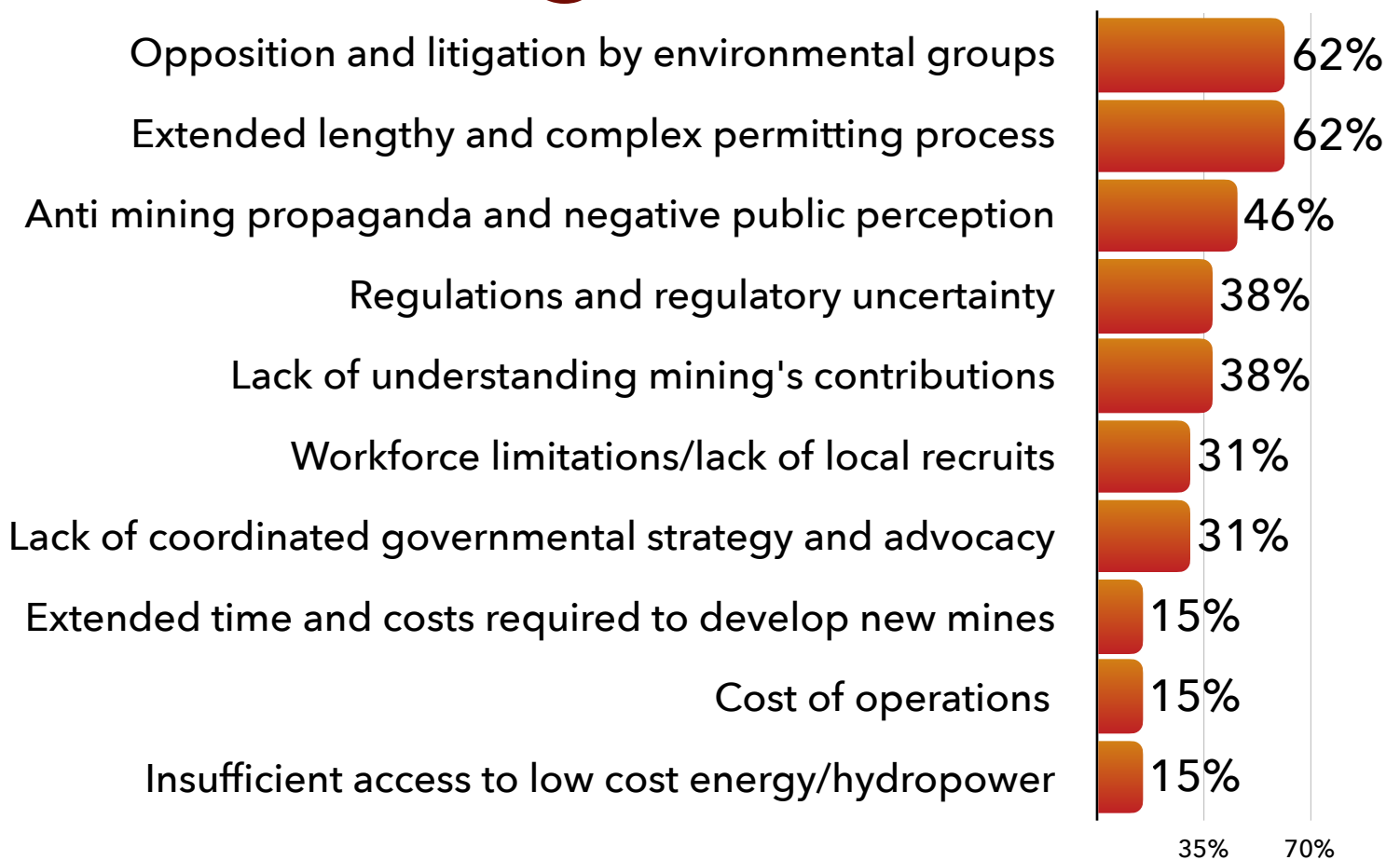
SOUTHEAST MINING SWOT SUMMARY

The Southeast Alaska mining SWOT analysis was conducted by 13 mining business leaders in the spring of 2024. Participants were asked to prioritize by choosing the top 2-4 items that they felt were most representative of regional mining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The results of this exercise are presented on the following pages.

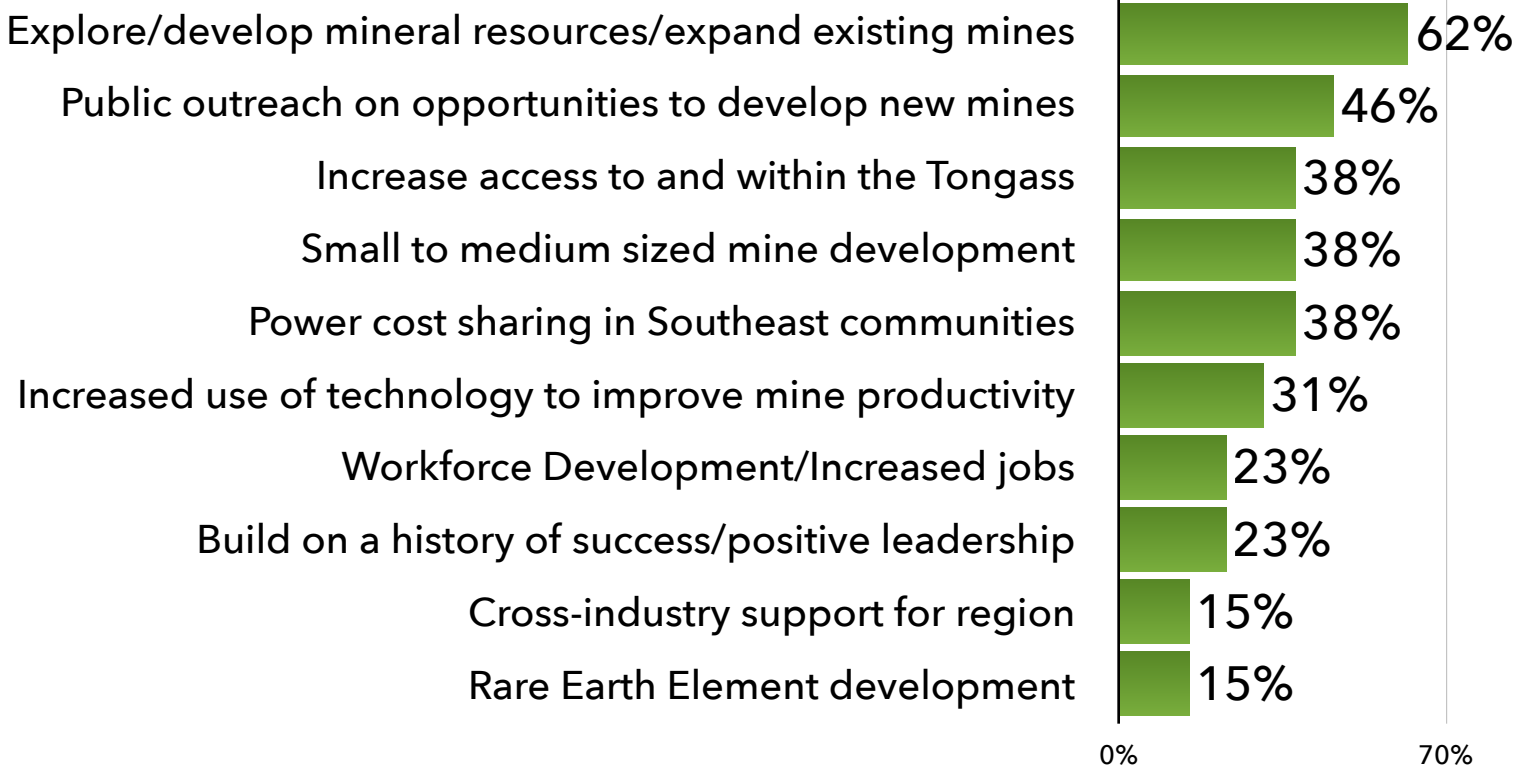
Mining Strengths



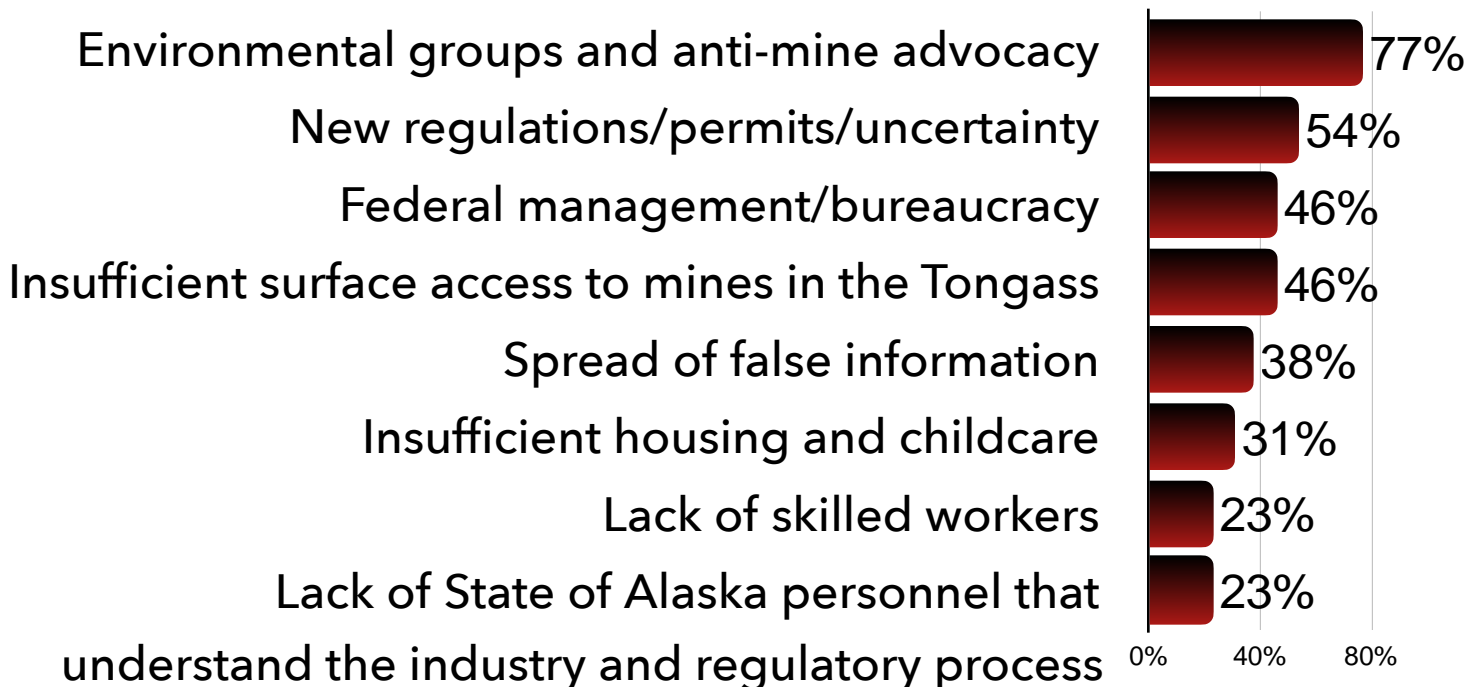
Mining Weaknesses



Mining Opportunities



Mining Threats



Open Ended Responses



Please elaborate on the outlook for your business or sector over the next year.

A total of 260 businesses took additional time to write about their expectations, hopes, concerns, and needs for the upcoming year.

The full comments of business leader are presented below:

Accommodations

Airbnb in off season; long term spring to fall rental one party, works well, though we could use more winter renters.

Summer part-time

Capacity increases in Skagway projected over the next few years will bring additional demand to a business segment nearing max capacity.

We were blessed with a new 14-million-dollar ferry dock, ramp, pull out in 2020 and then AMHS cut our ferries roughly by 50% I have a rental cabin and my economic outlook has decreased by 50 to 70%. Our big attraction was what we called “the ferry turnaround “ - a twice weekly ferry where people could come from Juneau on Thursday morning and return Saturday afternoon. We were booked most turnarounds from May through December, with Juneau residents wanting to come enjoy the hot tub, then tourists, and lastly fall hunters. We are not getting this traffic anymore. The ferries can be very sporadic and can get cancelled so when I do have bookings my customers have cancelled due to the ferry cancellations. It not only hurts those of us with short term rentals, but our store is really hurting without that extra traffic buying goods, they have had to reduce their hours to only 10 hours a week, that’s rough! Then AML has started a horrible pricing policy that is frankly unacceptable, I tried to get a chipper, shredder for my garden last summer, it weighed 225 lbs. normally that would be about \$115 for AML to ship but with their new pricing they wanted \$768 - wow! Who can afford that? I also run a small business farm, hence my mention of this problem. I tried to get a 550-gallon water tank, but it was going to cost me about \$1000 to ship. It just goes on and on, frankly I don’t see how we as a small town can pull out of this downward spiral. Any ideas? Suggestions or solutions would be greatly appreciated!

It sounds like there is still a strong need for temporary, or transient housing.

Alaska Native Organizations

Other than the policies causing inflation and energy prices to rise, we are looking pretty solid. We are adding jobs and have several major projects ongoing.

Expanding the SBA 8a world, problem is most of these potential jobs are in the lower 48 states. We have intentions of developing a local biomass project sometime soon.

We are adding a few jobs. We are a Tribal Organization

Arts

The visitor experience has change from independent adventure people to lets jill and home money fish than could possibly eat before it gets freezer burn.

Being artists and owning our own gallery you never know what's coming up. The disastrous neglect of our ferry system has had a negative effect.

More cruise ships stopping here, but election year fears inhibit spending. People are not buying big ticket art.

In my field of indigenous art, the prospects are good. Due to increases in tourism and a high interest in locally made indigenous artwork, the field has the capacity to grow.

Business is steady, improving slightly quarter after quarter.

I am a self-employed small business service provider, wedding and elopement photographer. I'm finding that in my industry (in Alaska and around the country), there is a slight decline in business.

Housing is too expensive to bring skilled workers to this community. We are re-tooling our nonprofit organization in order to fulfill our mission with fewer staff members.

With really dumb politicians everywhere ,climate activists, environmentalists, too much government with too many rules and regulations everywhere, fishing way down, sky high prices on everything, ultra-stupid wars, my business in art will never go anywhere. Our downfall started when we stupidly let our logging and pulp mills be taken from us. Then mining then. . . Then. Then . . .I am amazed when municipal leaders act perplexed when we have no economy, and they say they don't understand why people are leaving Alaska. Feel tired to write this as I wrote the same thing last year and Nothing has changed. For Heaven's Sake don't let Bristol Bay ever shut down.

I am an independent artist and expect my sales to be about the same.

We are in the arts education business. We see potential to continue to expand as a sector however need the sector to grow for our business to grow. Right now the biggest threat to our business is the destruction of public schools.

Wrangell needs an arts council to help promote our numerous arts businesses on the island. We used to have one decades ago & there hasn't been one or at least an active one. It needs to be supported by the city's economic development and chamber etc.... opportunities flourish if we have an active council like other communities. Plus local businesses need to encourage artists to

sell their products in the stores. Wrangell could be known for being an artist's haven & benefit financially from that!

Communications, Information Technology

2023 just wasn't that great. It seemed to be a year in which my sector tried to pull out of the pandemic years and kind of had a lull. We are setup for growth in 2024, opportunities may come from such sectors/sources as the broadband initiative, IRA, and other federal funding still making its way through our economy.

The IT sector continues to grow and require more overall support for other businesses that are growing.

We reached our goal last year on all the clients we wanted to sign up and are now looking at expanding our customer base outside the state.

I'm in the newspaper business. If businesses around our area do well, I do better.

Construction, Architecture, or Engineering

As a residential designer I'm find there is more work than I can accept. There is a lack of skilled workers in the design sector.

Business could be busy next year or very depressed depending on the State capital budget and local municipality planning commission and assembly discussions that affect local housing projects and local tourism infrastructure. We could be on a hiring trend if the needle for private sector infrastructure gets a positive nod.

It seems that the blend of public and private design and construction development is balancing itself out well enough for offices like mine that serve both markets.

Lack of employees is crippling residential construction.

Our business continues to be negatively impacted by the lack of a meaningful State of Alaska Capital budget, with a terrible series of priorities from the governor's office. On the flip side, tourism is strong, with greater breadth and meaningful steps to support balanced growth and diversified, sustainable experiences. Secondly, Federal programs are making some positive impact in alternate energy initiatives, and general support for Native organizations and program expansions.

We are a multi engineering business so depended on private and government interest and funding of the design and construction of facility type projectors. Our scope of projects lasts from 3 months to 1 year. The next year seems to be similar to the last year in terms of amount and number of new projects.

I am a welder I maintain the fishing fleet, construction companies and tour operator industry. My company was building up, I had two employees and a lot of work. Then covid hit and my two employees quit to collect UIB, and most welding jobs dried up. It's been a long way back from covid. although I've done far less business with the fishing fleet and the construction companies. I think the low fish prices and the high inflation has really harmed the fishing industry. There very limited construction jobs and the ones there are, are out of state/town contractors w/their own welder in tow. Tourism seems to be

coming back but it's been slow. I've had to use other skills to take other types of work and worked remote welding jobs outside of my hometown. But the stagflation is killing my business.

Looking forward to interest rates to hopefully fall so we can secure line of credit to help us grow.

Ours is a service provider responding to the needs of other SE businesses & organizations.

We are maintaining business volume and considering adding a staff member next cruise ship season.

We rely on forest service and government contracts, and they have not been coming out this year as they have in previous years.

Closing until Biden is done Then very likely not reopen.

We have expanded to other underserved communities and anticipate having additional staffing requirements to provide those services.

ADOT is one of our main sources of business and it appears they will not be putting out much work again this year, in fact they have given us a suspension of work notice on a large project in Sitka due to funding issues.

My company specializes in residential construction. The demand for housing far outweighs the supply. I anticipate a near constant demand for my company's services for years to come.

We only plumbing and heating company in Skagway, Ak. The work never stops and there's not enough people to hire in the trades. I am also a commercial fisherman I gillnet in Lynn Canal. The outlook for fishing is sad like always, and not enough grants, or money to keep up on maintenance.

We hope to build one or possibly two houses this year. Contractors in Wrangell are always swamped and busy with more work than bodies to do the work. We prefer to hire locally - or at least from within SE communities.

Energy

Business is electrical generation and distribution. It will grow as the area's economic conditions improve.

Electric sales are mostly flat with a slight uptick the past couple years.

Energy sales are expected to stay about the same or rise a little over the next year.

Inflation in the cost of equipment that requires precision manufacturing remains high. The cost of and lead time on vehicles is still a problem. We have difficulty finding dealerships willing to place orders for vehicles, and specialty vehicles are extremely expensive and have lead times in the order of 2-4 years.

Demand for electrical and telecommunication services responds to community demand and growth, which has been limited. While our company has interest in investing further in southeast Alaska, opportunities to do so are limited by small populations spread across large geographic distances. Power Cost Equalization is very helpful in keeping energy costs affordable. However, it also absorbs the benefit of new projects that seek to lower the cost of energy. For instance, let's say the cost of energy is \$0.60 per kWh, and PCE buys down energy costs to \$0.25 per kWh. If the utility is able to cut energy costs in half to \$0.30 per kWh, PCE will continue to buy energy costs down to the same \$0.25 level. The consumer will not experience any improvements. Being that is the case, why would a utility incur the cost, risk, opportunity cost, etc. in seeking to develop new renewables? Our company recently decided to relocate its corporate headquarters from Washington State to Ketchikan. While this will not cause any immediate changes in employment, it places roots for further growth in southeast Alaska. State of Alaska regulation of electrical utilities needs to become more progressive and forward-thinking in order to realize the types of socioeconomic outcomes desired by society, and policymakers. Options should include time of use rates, performance-based regulation, increased ability to sell energy at economic development rates (below fully distributed costs), attrition and inflation adjustment mechanisms to minimize the need for ongoing rate cases in times of inflation, and more.

As a local electric utility, our health is tied to a number of factors in the community. The apparent lull in the fishing industry will surely have the largest impact on the power sales in Petersburg, however a new owner of one local processing plant may inject new life into the local processing scene and actually help the community and utility. Only time will tell, but overall the outlook for us will be cautious. Tourism is as healthy as it has ever been in Petersburg, but it still is not an overriding driver of Petersburg's economy. There is the possibility of providing electrical service to a small sawmill on Mitkof Island - that was previously powered by small diesel generators at the mill site. This will add load and sales to the Petersburg grid, but also require additional backup sources in the event that an outage of SEAPA power is experienced. Housing construction by way of private investment and also grant funded projects through the regional and local tribal entities, continues to slowly move forward. We see the utility sector as a building block for other businesses and markets in Petersburg. As such, utility jobs will remain the same but reliable, low-cost power will hopefully foster new business and opportunities for others in Petersburg.

Financial Activities

There is potential for growth, but staffing is a major constraint and will hold us back.

We just added a new line of business. As that grows, we expect to see an increase in revenue, but as a start-up, it will take a long time to ramp up. We expect to see moderate to significant growth in a sector we support, kelp farming. A new kelp will be in operation by 2025 and will have a first crop.

Many of our customers rely on tourism income. They are all optimistic about 2024. Employee housing is still a very big concern here in Sitka.

Food or Beverage Business

In Gustavus we have no tourism due to the lock up of every available space by inclusive charter fishing lodges. Shipping to get items here, in a monopoly of air service and general cost of goods make it impossible to operate. There were four food outlets last year, three shuttered, one is limping along, and one will be opening by a person who owns everything else in town. Glacier Bay Lodge picks tourist up from the jet, takes them directly to the lodge to eat and sleep. In the morning, they board the glacier boat adding again nothing to the local economy, then bus them directly from the glacier boat to Alaska airlines. In addition subsistence fishers are being boxed out by the enormous unguided charter business, which in turn send our Alaska seafood to the lower 48 to be sold. Gustavus is going down the tubes.

summers are good and seem to be getting better, but winters are worse every year.

Sales taxes way to high along with freight costs and utilities the cost of doing business here in HOONAH way to high and nothing every getting done to promote business.

Inflation has left a lasting and far-reaching negative impact.

I own a small local food business in addition to working part-time at one of the only two locally owned natural food store--Rainbow Foods. I specialize in sustainable and healthy products with special focus on finding local sources and/or producing healthy foods at a commissary commercial kitchen. In food industry, it is becoming more and more challenging for locally owned businesses as the cost of shipping is overbearing for small businesses. The recent unexpected inflation spike is driving food prices up which is diverting many local customers to purchase the cheaper options from franchise large-corporate stores. In fact, the majority of our community members shop at large franchise stores, even those with middle, middle-high, or high income. As a startup owner with a goal & passion to provide healthier food alternatives, I have not paid myself in four years. I have another part-time job and been mostly bootstrapping financially for my startup. I have not yet found a seed funding and entrepreneurial support to get my business off the ground in order to be able to create consistent supply of local, healthy foods with local labor and jobs created. Yet I see other small local food businesses go down, which is very discouraging.

Inflation is impacting my business sector.

Sales are good but margins are very tight with the ongoing inflation of prices as well as freight prices that continue to go up.

Hard to find employees, which limits productivity.

Increased input costs (including commodities, manufactured goods, transportation, fuel/electricity/ water) and labor costs are driving up prices to consumer, reducing demand. High interest rates make commercial real estate needed for expansion non-viable, so increasing revenue through increasing customer through-put isn't currently possible; I can't put more people in more seats if I can't get a bigger place to put more seats. Failure to deal with social issues, particularly the unhoused and the "open air" drugs and sex market, make employee and consumer safety more concerning. Downtown Ketchikan is no longer considered a desirable place to go at night, and even if you wanted to go, it would be expensive.

Our industry is very concerned about the impact of the lack of fishing this year in our area. We depend on fishermen during a large portion of the summer, as well as tourism. With little to no projection on a Southeast fishing season, our numbers will also be down and impact all of our employees. With fewer and fewer year-round opportunities, we, unfortunately are solely dependent on what happens from April to October. It's sad that there is no longer a draw for people to stay in the area during the winter months, the town is ghostly. We remain open, but there is very little business, and if it wasn't made during the summer, it isn't going to be made. As far as new business or job opportunities this year, there won't be any without a strong fishing season.

With the rising cost of payroll, suppliers, rent, and taxes along with the added numbers of cruise passengers 7 days a week without a break is just burning employers & employees out. Most business owners will tell you that they are not making more money but rather just working harder & longer hours to accommodate the heavier flow. We all really miss the days of no ships on Sundays! Having a day for church, family time, beach picnic or any summer activity at all would be nice. Having the ability to enjoy summer at least 1 day a week I think is important for our mental health as well. Tourist season is Very stressful and getting worse every year!

Pelican's economy is becoming stabilized. There are 3 commercial fish buyers now. We are having visits from Allen Marine Cruise ships and the Alaskan Explorer. We have some active Lodge businesses We have a new grocery store.

People would like to limit visitors to our town. BAD for us.

I think that at the end of the season, our numbers will match that of 2023. We are receiving more cruise ship passengers, but I believe that spending on higher ticket items will be reduced, so though we will run more people through our facility, the per ticket spending will be lower.

I'm concerned that our dock situation will be not up to grade for a season like last year .

The number of expected tourists has grown, meaning our business must grow to meet potential demand.

Government

Construction is increasing and private building in going is increasing. population is increasing.

Health Care

I am a healthcare professional. Services remain in demand although I personally am approaching retirement.

Having more regular ferry service in winter would help our business significantly as flying remains inconsistent, expensive and is less sustainable for both the climate and the consistency required for us to provide services. We are hiring in our Juneau and Haines locations but often even if we find staff which is challenging in our specialty healthcare field with a nationwide shortage of clinicians, the State's licensing process being so incredibly slow for healthcare costs us a significant amount of money as does the frequent selling of the Medicaid contract to new vendors which always disrupts provider credentialing timelines. This means it takes at least two to three months for a new hire to make us money in most cases which strains existing staff and admin. Limited ferry service, professional licensing and limited efficiency in Medicaid administrative processes are all significant barriers to expansion and growth of our business.

It is challenging to get enough folks --we have mostly entry level sales associate jobs that seem to be the hardest to fill. We are NOT seasonal, and we offer numerous benefits including health and profit share.

southeast Alaska is becoming more and more a place with a Ruling Class and a Servant Class. the servant class is growing in large part due to the short sighted and pathetic lust for tourism.

The labor pool is our bottle neck. "Pool" is an oxymoron it is a dried-up mud hole. We cannot afford to continue to raise wages to keep up with the summer employment prospects. We are a year-round business with benefits, and we cannot discriminate wages for summer vs year-round employees.

Private practice behavioral health & addiction services. In the next year I am hoping to be able to connect clients with the mental health trust grant to help them meet some financial needs/burdens as the economy is continuing to rise but the disability pay that a lot receive minimally rises. With the rise they do get, their subsidized housing increases which in turn leaves them in the same predicament. Not enough income to buy food and pay bills as food and power continue to rise. This will also need to increase the hours for one of my employees.

Mining

The business is again expanding its workforce to meet production expectations. This is an increase of 12 positions over the 2023 budget. We are expecting improving metals prices and therefore, better economics in 2024.

The cost to operate is getting higher and higher and margins are getting narrower. Even with improving revenues it is very challenging to improve margins because of rising costs.

Underground mine operation. We are good for a few years.

Mineral exploration opportunities are small and declining as the dominate land owner is the Federal Government (USFS) and they have a decidedly negative attitude towards mining on the lands they administer. this coupled with their bureaucratic permitting delays severely dampens any enthusiasm towards any mineral development opportunities. The negative opinion of the financial markets towards working on the Tongass make financing development virtually impossible. Better to invest across the

border in Canada than here in Southeast Alaska. The mineral endowment doesn't stop at the border but the attitudes do. Investment goes to where it is welcomed and treated appropriately.

Mineral exploration outlook for Southeast is dependent on the world demand for minerals and the ability to finance. The lead time from discovery to production is very long and fraught with risks. Working in the Tongass under the US Forest Service increases the time risk and compounds the financial. The favorable geology for minerals doesn't stop at the BC Alaska border but the mineral development mindset does.

Community has poor economic outlook after our recent election.

Manufacturing

I make and sew clothing for women and children. I have too much going on to put much time into my business. I do perhaps \$45 worth of business per quarter due to being busy with raising my family.

More and bigger cruise ship season in 2024, and continuing relationship with specific ship personnel: We will need to hire someone to help with the counter this season. Although it's great to have more business opportunities, more big ships than what we have are not our preference for growth for our community.

Business opportunities are out there. Unfortunately good personnel are in short supply and transportation costs are killing us.

Tourism growth is good for summer activity, but off season is likely to be slow.

We will hire one additional person who will mainly do maintenance.

Non-profit

I work at the Chamber of Commerce and there has been a lack of actual employees. As a result we are building from the ground up basically.

It is my first year as the Business Manager / Interim Director here. I couldn't say what the outlook looks like, just because I just started in January 2024 and our official opening season is in the Summer. So, I should have a better understanding by this summer. We are, however, going to be focusing on biodiversity and research for the foreseeable future.

We are looking to add 1-2 more positions.

No new business or job opportunities. Similar outlook as last year.

My sector supports the mariculture industry. A new kelp farm and another seafood business need services. If my organization expands, it can provide those services and perhaps help develop a kelp processing and product development center. As the mariculture sector expands, my sector expands also.

The Governor's veto of the education bill plus the legislature's failure to override that veto is going to make it harder to attract and retain working parents. Workers want a good education system for their children and underfunding of schools threatens that. Additionally there has already been a childcare

crisis for kids below school age. Our business relies on an educated workforce. All of our core employees have a master's degree or higher. Even our part-time staff are current college students. Suffice it to say children's education matters greatly for our staff.

The scientific sector for research and education both are quite hopeful. Communities need and want these services.

We are a nonprofit that used to be supported by the State but are no longer, The COVID money is running out and we are forced to lay off people and reduce services.

Business is looking to grow here in Skagway. We have multiple new businesses opening this summer and existing businesses are adding to their infrastructure.

Not able to compete with the government for staff. They get all the perks, while business owners get all the bills.

Professional & Business Services or Consultant

Bipartisan and infrastructure dollars are currently 100% of the workload, which will be strong in our business sector for another 18 months.

As a self-employed attorney I expect to be working for the same clients with the same amount of work over the coming year as I did last year.

As more interest in energy conservation and renewable energy system installations increase, I see more opportunities for business and economic growth. And lower energy costs equal more disposable income for residents.

Current state administration is actively hostile to our region, cutting ferry service, raising prices. We are dependent on supplies and tourists all moving by carbon-intensive transportation, with no effort to be ahead on making the transition to a sustainable economy, and almost no planning or regulation of industries like mass tourism.

Government relations and consulting. So long as the capital doesn't move things are stable.

I expect to add jobs but doubt they will be in Alaska due to lack of qualified employees and high health care costs.

I have found that Juneauites do not support local businesses enough. I have lost clients to people who go on-line for educational services by people who are less qualified than me. Or maybe they do not think women are smart. I told one supposed business advisor that I taught French and Spanish to children and adults. He asked me if I spoke those languages. He never apologized to me, though he has had the chance. I used to support his local business all the time and bring more clients there. He does not do the same. I do not feel that people value being bilingual or understand what skill it takes to be a reading specialist. It is sad.

Professional business with clients that will not change much over time.

There is still a lot of speculation about what will happen, hence my generally negative outlook. That could change if businesses started to feel a sense of change/improvement coming for the Transportation and natural resource sectors. For the transportation sector- much has already been said over and over and I don't need to repeat that here. What is needed is a sense of reliability for the system. For the natural resources sector, some decisions made around the permitting process would provide some much-needed predictability that could allow businesses and ventures to have a higher level of confidence in investments.

With the advent of increased government funding in the infrastructure sector, I have a large amount of work. Too much really. I've been having to turn down work due to capacity. I'm partnering with another firm while I determine if I can/should add employees.

We have 100 open positions nationwide that we are struggling to fill, with project backlog growing and exceeding our capacity.

Our business is dependent on the fisheries. 2023 was a very difficult year for the fleet which absolutely showed in our books. Despite 2023 and the poor fisheries outlook for 2024, we plan on increased growth by focusing on some other customer needs. Our plan is to expand our Managed Computer Services to other parts of the state and to add Solar solutions to our stack. To do this we are going to have to add some more IT and installer staff.

I have 2 businesses. One is a tutoring business, and I expect, that I will be very busy with the Governor's latest budget cuts to education. I also run a photography business, and I am as busy as I want to be at the moment and probably for the future as well.

Our sector is growing in all directions. Visitors bring direct service jobs, but also indirect services are needed by way of bookkeepers, mechanics, and other tradesman.

Seasonal town- busy in summer very slow in winter. I was the only salon for 10 years and now there is a new one. My winter was slower than normal, but I expect it will be helpful in the cruise ship season.

Negative net migration and aging populations are not economically viable environments.

Real Estate

Inflation is having a huge impact on our client base.

Our business is selling homes and managing rental property. There is less inventory of homes for sale and not encouraging outlook for increased numbers of dwellings.

The current oversupply of commercial office supply will continue to depress this sector next year.

New business opportunities in my sector are tempered by local government failing to support development projects in their regions. There is potential to develop new subdivisions and housing opportunities in SE AK, which are supported by local residents and unable to get off the ground due to restrictive platting requirements and/or expectations from Boroughs beyond and above platting requirements.

I am in the property rental business and the market in my community is far short of needed units. Thus, I am 100% full and the need to build more units is ever-present. The industry I am invested in now is very solid.

I am in the real estate industry, selling/buying residential and commercial properties and also manage residential real estate. The market is still strong, and I anticipate it remaining strong.

Unknown due to complete morons in Gov't. Outcome of the revolution will dictate how SEAK responds.

We will be bringing Cruise ships to Klawock. This will provide jobs and economic growth to POW.

I am hoping with a new business that I am able to hire 1-2 people.

I think that seasonal employment will continue to grow but year-round employment that will support a family will be challenging for most citizens. The exceptions will be those who have housing at an affordable level. The number of school age children will continue to decrease as the opportunities for blue collar working families continues to be very limited. The city needs to reduce the number of housing units that are being used as air B&Bs, especially those that are close to town and remain empty during the winter months. Our citizens need year-round housing!

Lack of affordable housing for work force.

Retail or Wholesale Trade

Hard to survive the drastic seasonal swings. We shift into high gear in summer and then hang on through winter long enough to make it to another summer.

We own a 17-year retail business in Gustavus. While summer visitors boost sales during these months, we enjoy a solid year-round local business.

Flat to negative growth. Disposable income is declining due to inflation the last few years and a lack of job growth. Fishing industry had a poor year last year and looks like revenue will be depressed in that sector for a few more years. Under normal situations I would look at new business opportunities during periods of economic slowdown but with local elected bodies making anti-business decisions, it is hard to justify continued local investment.

I don't anticipate my business changing from last year to this year. I don't have any employees.

improved ferry service is the biggest need for my business.. my business thrives with regular, reliable, affordable ferry service.. I market my products to Yukon and Interior Alaska as well as locally.. and these business need regular, reliable, affordable ferry service to feed people into the Yukon and Interior Alaska through SE Alaska ports of Haines and Skagway

The AMHS is vital for my business to travel to various communities to print on site for sporting events, etc. Right now, it was impossible for us to make it to Sitka for a basketball tournament.

The Local government has a very negative attitude towards business growth and jobs.

We have no economy and the group that doesn't want to see anything doesn't understand because most of them are not here during the winter months and they all have funds to live on.

If the dry winter doesn't mean heavy fire season, I'll be fine.

Unless this year has a lot of fires, I expect a good year.

Boating with electric propulsion is becoming more popular with small vessel owners and the economy seems to be doing well so people are buying more.

our sector was a "winner" during covid (if that is possible) our sales increased substantially and are now leveling off. Hopefully they remain at the higher level going forward.

The lack of qualified employees in all levels of the organization is our biggest threat. The city of Juneau is committed to solving the affordable housing problem without understanding the cause of the problem, which is CBJ policy and regulations.

With the economy stabilizing, our sales are becoming more predictable instead of up and down. This leads to savings in ordering. We also see an increase in regional sales for our business.

Despite increase in cruise passengers our local shoppers have dropped alarmingly. Our overall projections for revenue are the same as last year.

Retail is tough and subject to external factors - global economies, war, etc. Also, the ever-present competition with online powerhouses.

We have had a few great growth years and I feel that Ketchikan lags the economic trends that the lower 48 experiences. Many of the owners of stores in the buying group that we belong to have said 2023 was down from 2022. We experienced growth in 2023 over 2022. But we may feel a downturn in 2024 if Ketchikan follows the economic trend of the lower 48 state.

Sales are down due to the fishing industry. Customers aren't spending due to economic uncertainty. Taxes are going up in the Borough making things worse. Too much government spending.

Tourism related business looks positive as we service clients serving that industry. The portion of my business related to the commercial fishing industry looks flat or down going into this year with fish prices lower. Consumers seem slightly less positive facing inflation and higher interest rates.

We rely heavily on fishing, and it is expected to be poor this year, also we won't have the BBC show due to Port Protection not being renewed. Also there will be a slight decline in cruise ships because one going bankrupt.

We need to grow. So we need to manufacture, Made in Alaska

We took a larger space. We need to increase our sales. Our intent is to manufacture some made in Alaska items. Hire one more.

We went to a larger location(last new owners), so we have to maintain a double overhead. I believe we can 3 committed workers. A data focused CEO. We need to focus on production, and we are working on it.

Our community has increasingly become a government reliant community. We have added more and bigger Federal, State, and Local governmental agencies with a commensurate increase in acquisition of land and use of resources and utilities. We have an inordinate percentage of non-profit agencies which, like the governments, have no tax obligation to the benefit of Sitkans. As a small-medium business owner, the benefit of the "shop locally" mantra is ZERO since the City, State & Federal agencies in Sitka use volume sellers i.e. e-tailers, manufacturers, and major corporations to source materials and supplies.

Our town has several construction projects rolling out in the next couple of years. New airport terminal building expansion and renovation, a new and relocated seaplane base, a new hospital being built, an expanded cruise ship terminal that will add an auditorium, to name most of the big ones. This brings high paying jobs and people. We could hire a dozen people today but unfortunately, and since the pandemic, they are just not there to hire. So, we steal each other's employees and depending on how seafood does during the summer, they go to the highest, "bidder," so to speak.

We are losing money last two fiscal years; people are tightening up their belts. Not as much discretionary budget as before. As sales decline, so do the number of jobs.

I don't know that I'll do as well this year as I did last year. I had two employees then. Now without housing I have zero.

Our hope is to begin more value-added processing here in Skagway which would provide more year-round employment verses the summer seasonal employment we currently have.

We depend on the cruise economy. It has bounced back very well after the declines of 2020-22.

Gaining new customers as our marketing helps us become better known.

Our outlook is very poor and can't really think of any new opportunities. As a downtown retailer, we just experienced the worst 4th quarter (ending 12/23) and the worst 1st quarter (ending 3/31/24) in over 40 years! This is due to several factors including customers not returning after Covid, poor commercial and sport fishing season, the devastating landslide in November 2023, and the lack of local jobs together with the high cost of groceries and living experiences does not bode well for our local economy. Our upcoming tourism season does not look promising partly due to our local government not wanting cruise ships.

We could do more business throughout SE Alaska if we had a reliable ferry service also could hire more people we have multiple locations in Craig, Ketchikan and Wrangell. Wrangell has only four employees at this time looking to add more.

Gas Station - 24 hour Looking at adding other convenience services associated automobiles. Partner with Chamber and add tourism booth and kiosk.

Seafood, Commercial Fishing, Maritime, Mariculture

I own and operate a Southeast Alaska Drift Gillnet operation that doesn't appear to be profitable. Historic low prices for salmon that have not kept up with inflation for decades, increased operating costs, fuel, insurance, moorage, net costs, and most importantly, consolidation of processing capacity have gutted a once profitable and sustainable local industry.

Salmon Prices will be at all-time lows and fuel continues to climb.

Fishing industry outlook is poor due to high supply. Working on seaweed harvesting and processing with sales in tourism sector. Standard Juneau economy, tourism and government. No great growth internally.

Seafood community is hurting.

The steep decline of the salmon market has made my commercial fishing business unviable. I will not be able to afford to pay deckhands to work with me on my vessel, and I will work all summer to break even without making a profit.

There is room to grow and although we face many challenges, the outlook is fairly good.

Commercial fishing and processing are in a tailspin.

Have been fishing in Alaska for 40 years now and my confidence in the industry is at an all-time low. The industry is looking for very low prices this season and our costs to run a boat keep going up.

The seafood industry particularly salmon is going through tough times with market globally, but salmon returns are good. Even though we are going into an uncertain time with market and still do not know what prices will be for the coming season, there are some bright spots: Federal purchase of pink salmon surplus. Ketchikan Trident plant purchased to be operated in the coming season by Silver Bay Seafoods. Local ECPS, Inc in Ketchikan purchasing the Trident processor plant in Petersburg Circle Seafoods coming north with a novel processing barge to buy salmon in SE AK this summer. These items and other indicators are spinning up the rumor mill that pricing will not be as dire as predicted earlier. So, even though it is generally not looking great, it is reason to be optimistic.

While opportunities for contracts are steady, access to labor and needed housing for that labor remains a major challenge.

Salmon market tanked and lucky to have EC Philips buying.

Seafood industry in peril. Competition from farmed salmon, Russian hatchery produced fish has upended the economics of how we conduct business in US. Processors wondering if they will even make money buying salmon at rock bottom prices.

USDA expansion of program for the commercial fishing sector

With high interest rates and operations costs, the seafood industry is struggling.

The outlook for the seafood market continues to trend in the negative for 2024. 2023 saw an economic crisis hit like we have never seen before, and the markets have yet to stabilize. One area where we see some growth continues to be in the direct marketing sector. Headwinds that continue to hamper growth for direct marketers has always been and continues to be logistics (i.e.- shipping). Shipping frozen product is incredibly expensive and a high risk. Shipping shelf stable seafood is an option, but the price of shipping large quantities remains high.

Fish prices are down, and processors are closing down. I see the only real opportunities for my sector are self-marketing your catch.

Fisherman. Market is poor.

I need the fish prices to come up.

Market declines leading to worse prices for fish.

might serve dinner add 2 seasonal jobs.

Poor salmon prices are expected, high interest rates and inflation will be fuel to that fire. Halibut prices appear stable, but black cod prices are also seeing lows not experienced for decades. Crab prices are improving, but those fisheries are not large volume, and will have little impact in the overall picture. I have not seen this much uncertainty in the 42 years I have been fishing. There are no new opportunities in the fishing business in SEAK, as we have not seen any new fisheries in decades, and there has been a loss of highly profitable fisheries, like herring in recent years.

Hopefully, the growth of the mariculture industry will be accelerated through the implementation of the build back better programs.

Significantly expanding business due to high demand

We anticipate the sale of our products into the visitor industry will be a strong growth center, so long as the visitor industry continues to maintain or grow at its current rate.

Commercial Fishing has been steady. Plenty of opportunities to increase income.

Fish prices are down so that's going to be a negative because nothing else is down -the cost of doing business.

Commercial Salmon fishing is in the tanks and the community of Wrangell has lost several cruise ship stops due to a company going out of business. These both will have a negative effect on the amount of money circulating around Wrangell businesses.

fishing and logging have gotten worse over the last few years. I own a mechanics shop so when there is poor fishing and logging no one has the money to spend on repairs.

Fuel and inflation pricing is decimating margins.

It's commercial fishing, do I really need to spell it out?

The seafood industry is still in a downward spiral and 2024 is not expected to improve. Fishermen and processors are already feeling it, and this will continue as savings dries up. The trickle-down effect will begin and/or continue to increase in communities. It is worse than the salmon downturn in the 90's-2000's, because it is across species and global.

Seafood industry is experiencing a perfect storm of economic circumstances. All economic factors are peaking in the wrong direction.

Social Services, Child Care, Education

As an education service agency we continue to support schools and employment training. We are in need of funding support for a new driving education vehicle to train learners to receive their license to increase their opportunities for employment that require a license. This fiscal year we have also paid for about 10 learners to receive their CDL license. However, the first step is a regular license.

I can say that new business or sales of stock may be harder because shipping cost has gone WAY UP.

Timber

We are in the timber business and supply of timber and labor are bleak. We have to decide soon whether or not to pursue and future endeavors or retire the business.

With the failure of the federal government to provide any supply of timber to the industry we have had to rely on state and mental health trust timber sales. Both of which have a very small land base and have not always been able to provide adequate supply to the industry in a timely manner. With the smaller sales we currently only have 16 months of supply and are not expecting either landowner to have another sale on the market for 12 months.

We hope to self-certify our lumber soon which can open new opportunities for us. My son has started a business designed to use the lumber we produce: Second Growth Homes. Not many contractors have interest in small sheds, homes or greenhouses so Sterling thinks he has good market.

Transportation (non-tourism)

Population decline is affecting our bottom line.

Airport passenger growth is moderate and steady.

Appears to be a small decline in demand for passenger transportation by air. We have invested in new facilities and equipment to create efficiencies in the non-safety sensitive areas of our business. We have also developed FAA approved proprietary approaches for most of the airports we serve which will increase our reliability in weather conditions that have kept us on the ground previously.

Hiring is very difficult. Not enough skilled workers. Alaska is failing to develop workers.

Our business sector is seeing low growth as customers are not spending their money on new projects. Seeing less construction and state projects taking too long to get started.

Natural Resource use and development continues to be decreasing and hindered by lack of private lands and dominance of federal forest/control, impacting housing, living wage jobs, and year-round livability.

Nothing new, just shifts. New owners of Trident plant in Ketchikan. No dock in Klawock. Wrangell doing some interesting things.

Covid19 really did a number on our small village. That includes small businesses such as Hometown Cab LLC. Where we are in tight quarters with people 99% of the time. We can't get by it. We have to take the clients word they aren't sick or didn't come in contact with anyone who is sick. We couldn't take

that chance in our small village. .with all the younger children and elders...Covid19 would wipe Hoonah out. We had to close our doors 6/2020. After everything cleared up; so to speak; we tried reopening but during that time people were still very cautious and it cost more to stay open than what the cab was actually bringing in. So with heavy heart we permanently shut our door effective 12/31/23. We still were the longest running cab business in Southeast (for small communities). Over 8 years. That's something to be proud of. Damn Covid19

Population on Prince of Wales is growing so Ferry travel is growing along with it.

Visitors or Tourism

Due to the increase in the cost of living and the cost of goods, we have fewer bookings for our lodge this summer.

I have a 12-passenger charter boat business. The influx of many small ship cruise lines, more yachts and then the illegal charterers has saturated the market. Our costs are high I fuel freight, labor (pay well to retain)and food. Our fares are at about the top of what the market will bear. I have seen boats similar to mine reach for a higher rate and their bookings then decrease. I do not forecast business growth. But I am grateful to work in a beautiful place. If Alaska Airlines would service Gustavus for all of May, the lodge could extend their season and then our town could grow. Thank you.

The city of Gustavus continues to raise taxes directly for businesses. It is a constant battle with them. They continue to look to the businesses of Gustavus to fund the entire city budget, and every year add more to it. There is no help from the city to help promote business, even though they say they value our contributions. If it were not the GVA we would have no marketing for business in Gustavus at all. We also have road issues as they are not keeping our infrastructure intact to allow customers to drive out to our business. We hear every year that people do not want to drive down an unmaintained DOT road to get to us.

Bookings and travel data suggest a very similar year to last year. We hope to develop multi-day trip itineraries but do not plan to implement before next year.

Can do more cruise ship departures if we had more staff and CDL drivers.

Travel/tourism has rebounded to about pre-pandemic numbers for us. I expect business demand to be strong enough to allow for growth over the next few years. Challenges related to housing and affordability limit the ability to take full advantage of business opportunities.

Additional cruise pax visiting have lifted our positive outlook.

Icy Strait Point has added additional seasonal employees to our community. We are also adding a coffee and snack shop to help feed our community.

Our current operations are growing, we're expanding into other opportunities and will be taking on more work and more growth. Specifically we will be opening a fish-processing facility to purchase locally caught fish, process them, and ship them down to the lower 48 for sale.

CBJ has increased property assessments, water & sewer pricing, capped cruise ship dockings and increased spending on social issues. Given national inflation and poor test scores for entry level employees, new business is not economically feasible.

Given the current strength of the tourism industry, our business is set to grow - which is completely dependent on staffing. If we can hire adequate staff - we anticipate growth.

I have concerns with CBJ adding more regulatory restrictions on BNBS.

Inflation, interest rates, rising fuel and food prices are negatively affecting the traveling public. Additionally, the hospitality industry is experiencing the same rising expenses plus increasing supply, personnel and freight cost. AND, Juneau has capped the number of cruise ships in port at the same time without a smarter infrastructure. Discussion is circulating for a ban on cruise ships in Juneau on Saturdays, which would dismally affect the future for Juneau restaurants, retailers, hospital, ski resort and families who depend on the hospitality industry for jobs/income. This could potentially trigger an increase in property taxes to make up for the shortfall in sales tax lost. Additionally, our local public school system has had declining student enrollment for last several years while harboring a deficit budget. Families are moving out of town and Juneau taxpayers have lost trust in both their school board and city assembly.

It's impossible to find labor. How can anyone grow a business? Even if we were to bring someone in from elsewhere there is nowhere to house them.

Just added 3 businesses to them largely in food service and rental probably make 20 hires in the next two weeks.

We're a new tour business trying to carve out a corner of the industry. We are a family run business and don't plan to hire any new full-time employees until next year at the earliest.

With a focus on Tourism we expect increases in cruise ship visitor numbers with the community assisting in managing the effects to our residents. We don't expect any new business or job opportunities with servicing cruise ship vessels.

Big corporations taking over.

The increase in cruise visitors and independent travelers is driving Southeast's economy.

Tourists bring more opportunities in tourism.

We are primarily focused on cruise tourism. We expect little to moderate growth presuming no limiting initiatives or new regulations are passed.

We are primarily in the tourism business (cruise tours, fishing, rental cars). Ketchikan will see a record number of guests this summer, with the season being lengthened by April ship port calls. Additionally, there is a lot of money available from local lenders for the right projects, which makes expanding or taking advantage of new opportunities that much easier. Negatives would include the rise in interest rates and the cost of labor, so even with an increase in sales, some of that "profit" may get gobbled up before it hits the bottom the line.

We have a tourism related business, and that sector is seeing good growth. With our people limitations on our tour destinations I see maintaining the current level of operations.

We rely on cruise ship guests for the success of our tour product and appreciate growth to help our business expand and become more profitable.

I am the Tourism Program Director for Metlakatla Indian Community. We are still trying to rebuild and grow after the COVID Pandemic like many other businesses in SEAK. So far we are slowly making strides to get more guests from the ship over to Metlakatla.

We are in Tourism and the business environment is being impacted by general public sentiment and the public process. We are uncertain if the level of today's tourism will be allowed to stay, grow, or be required to shrink. Housing is also a major concern for us. We were over 60 beds short only about a month ago in order to be fully staffed. The reality is we will not be fully staffed until we secure/build our own housing. We are actively looking into building crew house and also not taking away from the local housing inventory.

Business is strong and growing each year.

Our family businesses involve both commercial fishing and tourism. Commercial fishing has changed dramatically over my lifetime, but the last 4 or 5 years has been very tough. In the fishing industry, the "old timers" (like me) do not see an exit plan as the younger guys do not have the capital to get in and do not want to take a chance with the current state of affairs. For the larger boats, finding crew members is becoming much more difficult since the income is much lower than in the past, and the processors aren't getting the fishermen paid. Many crew members are looking for employment elsewhere. We purchased a tour boat in January of 2020 and lost that season due to the pandemic. We've done progressively better each year since but are realizing that the tourism industry can be challenging as well. Our clients are mostly middle-class folks and they've communicated to us that inflation makes them hesitant to spend money to do a glacier or whale tour. They just don't have the money. The State of Alaska is a resource state. For decades, we had oil, timber, commercial fishing, and mineral money. Tourism has also been important. How are we doing now in regard to these industries? With the housing market and cost of living being what it is, I'm hearing more pessimism in regard to life in Alaska and the future.

We own a B&B and tourism seems to still be growing in SE Alaska. We don't have employees so are not growing in the job market, though. With the fishing industry struggling, however, the general feel of the economy is not good.

Sport fishing limits keep decreasing and permits and flights are expensive, so I have a harder time getting guests to repeat their visit compared to 5 years ago. I would like to see more adventure tourism if I could figure out how to do that with the outrageous float plane costs. People come to AK for the adventure and beauty not the overcrowding of towns and flights.

The chamber of commerce membership has grown by a few new memberships this year. Our membership mostly relies on fish and tourism. Businesses are mostly full which means a busy year for visitors. We have 6-cruise ships scheduled to arrive this summer so that's even better financially for our communities- as long as they keep the vendors local and don't bring them in from out-of-town.

Vacation rental bookings has been down since 2020. As of right now we have ZERO bookings for our 3 units for the upcoming season. One in Thorne Bay and 2 in Whale Pass. It is just so expensive for the

middle class to come anymore. The big lodges, that cater to big money clients don't appear to be having the same struggle.

Local leadership is not supporting of independent business. Some residences constantly complain and lead resistance to visitor industry income.

Our business depends on healthy tourism, and our business is stable after difficult covid years.

Our lodge is fully booked each summer and we will not grow the size. The quality of the experience is more important than the increase volume of guests.

Seasonal business (cruise ships) good outlook as long as environmentalist groups don't reduce our numbers.

We are rebuilding the reputation of Sitka's oldest boat tour company. Looking for collaborators.

We operate in the cruise tourism market including shore excursions. We plan to add boats this next to expand our capacity which will also add employers.

Growth on our seasonal tourism end is strong & growing. But our year-round or winter growth is decreasing, making it harder than ever to maintain year-round employees in our two year round stores. Cost of living & lack of housing is number one reason people are still moving away permanently every year.

Outlook closely tied to availability of local housing for employees as well as reliable ferry service from AMHS. Medical resources would be a plus.

The tourism industry looks optimistic, which translates to growth in construction. This is great for securing long-term residence and keeping money in the local economy. However, I always worry when there is tension and or fear in the fishing industry, as it is the backbone of our region. Whether that be the money made or the appeal for tourists to visit and revisit, it has a greater overall impact than people realize. I'm far from an expert, but I've always needed clarification to hear about the fishing methods and freedom south of our region, such as seining, and then to see the restrictions of a gillnetter here. It appears to be a pretty clear indicator that decisions aren't made based on sustainability but on some level of power play. I worked to expand my business during COVID-19, building the structure and infrastructure that will now be utilized, allowing me to add an additional 4 jobs on top of the 6 jobs I added last year.

Tourism in Southeast remains strong and cruise ship travel robust. Growth in this sector will be created by new small -or large= business startups to. Good opportunity for self-employed business owners who can create niche growth to serve the specialized tourism market and services for staff.

As cost of travel increases (flights) and access decreases (poor Alaska Marine Highway operations) and the overall cost of living increases, less independent travelers will be able to travel to smaller communities like Wrangell. We want to maintain the soul of our community by not inundating it with large cruise ships, but we need the independent travelers and group travel to fill in the gaps. Given the difficulty and expense in actually getting to Wrangell, I'm not sure our business will increase. We will be hiring more staff in order to train young workers and fill the pipeline. This is an added expense for us as we will be doubling up on many positions so that this younger staff members can shadow the experienced guides.

Due to the bankruptcy of Ocean Victory we took a significant hit by not getting paid. They will not be coming to Wrangell in 2024 so we're playing catch up.

I am in the accommodation, visitor industry, we have a B&B. My husband runs a sister company that does Charter Fishing. While the B&B seems stable (Cruise ships affect us negatively because we get more independent travelers trying to avoid the cruise ship circuit). Fishing is projected to decline because of low returns and harsh federal and state regulations for Charter boats.

I have concerns about the effects of the struggling seafood industry having a negative impact on southeast Alaska. Cruise ship companies are relocating passengers to more in house locations or activities and not dispersing as much spending as much on existing communities or tours and shops. Sport fishing regulations are inequitable, and poorly enforced resulting in residents and legitimate businesses suffering while unguided or illegally guided out of state users pilfer our resources unrestricted. These sectors need attention for industry to have confidence in local economies.

It's inbound Alaska travel so it's always growing, even when most of the country is not. (Covid 2020 excluded)

Mostly I expect it to be the same. Our revenue from independent travelers is dropping, which is concerning. The cost and difficulty of travel is the main cause. Although revenue will be stable, costs increase as our workforce is aging out and we are spending more money on training a younger staff.

Need more housing.

Simply improving an older business that had become "tired" and bringing up to its potential.

We are a hunting and fishing lodge and while still digging out of the hole from Covid, we see things moving in the right direction.

We really need the ferry to stop in Yakutat on a regular basis. Current logistic and fuel cost are too much to sustain middle class families we would be able to hire.

Yakutat needs the ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAY ferry service restored so we can develop business and thrive as a whole for all residents, and guests. Having no ferry service is harming, having a negative effect on all folks of Yakutat. Businesses included. The one main thing that can help local economy and lives is having regular scheduled ferry service. I cannot imagine how or why the state ferry system has dropped Yakutat from their itinerary. Unbelievable

CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

Economic Development Report

April 9, 2024



MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE
ASSEMBLY OF CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

CC: MASON VILLARMA, BOROUGH MANAGER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WRANGELL CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

FROM: KATE THOMAS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: MONTHLY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

DATE: APRIL 9TH, 2024

IMPORTANT DATES

- Please note that staff from the economic development were out of town between March 21 and April 3, reducing the scope of accomplishments for March 2024.
- April 5, Completion of the new design for Travel Guide 2024-2025
- April 9, Assembly appointment of two new WCVB members
- April 11, Kid's Don't Float event
- April 11, Planning and Zoning Meeting
- April 12, Denali Commission grant deadline
- April 12, Branding Project Kick-Off meeting
- April 16, Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau Meeting
- April 19, Street Banner Ceremony (tentative/weather dependent)
- April 20, Community Clean Up Day
- April 22, Tongass Forest Plan revision community drop-in meeting (public)
- April 23, Tongass Forest Plan cooperating agency meeting (USFS/CBW)
- April 24, Mass Emergency training
- April 25, Bi-Annual tourism stakeholder meeting
- April 25-28, Annual Bird fest

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Conducted a one-year performance evaluation for Matt Henson, Marketing and Community Development Coordinator
- Reconciled credit card reports for January and February
- Reviewed budget details for year-end of FY24
- Submitted draft budgets for Transient Tax and Economic Development divisions
- Published recruitment information for EDB and WCVB board positions
- Met with potential board candidates

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Held and facilitated March 5th, Economic Development Board Meeting
- Coordinated and attended a meeting with the Alaska Department of Commerce
- Researched publications for promoting development opportunities at the Deep-Water Port
- Met with RAIB and TCP team about the June site visit under the Thriving Communities grant program
- Met with an interested party regarding Hospital purchase
- Completed several deliverables of the PIDP grant Title VI requirements
- Worked with Amber, Lucy, and Mason to prioritize and submit funding requests for recreation appropriations package through the Alaska Outdoor Alliance Group

PLANNING AND ZONING

- Held and facilitated March 14th, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting
- Met with GIS consultant about year deliverables and transition to the new mapping program
- Researched and began draft for Alder Top Village protective covenants
- Established stakeholders and set initial meetings for the Community Addressing program
- Reviewed and finalized planning and zoning fee revisions
- Reviewed, finalized and published new planning and zoning forms/applications
- Began draft FAQ sheet for Alder Top promotional webpage
- Contacted agencies about the Comprehensive Plan process and associated costs (150k-300k)
- Studied survey determinations for Entitlement Lands
- Read the Denali Commission notice of funding in preparation for the upcoming grant application

TOURISM MANAGEMENT

- Spoke to Cruise Lines Agency of Alaska regarding schedule opportunities to recover lost revenues from canceled sailings
- Researched cultural tourism marketing policies for internal development
- Scheduled and began planning for Street Banner Ceremony

- Spoke with operators and state agencies about Petroglyph Beach permitting

MARKETING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Participated in a financial planning seminar with High School
- Established branding committee, project deliverables and timelines
- Reached the \$15,000 fundraising benchmark for the fall recreation conference
- Continued planning efforts for the annual Bird Festival scheduled for April 26-28
- Coordinated planning session for recreation conference
- Met with the Port Director regarding the Seattle Boat Show and other trade show attendance
- Developed and designed the 2024-2025 Travel Guide
- Began implementation of the Customer Relationship Management software

Sincerely,

Kate Thomas
Economic Development Director

CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL

Economic Development Report

May 7, 2024



CITY & BOROUGH OF WRANGELL
GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

Item a.

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE
ASSEMBLY OF CITY AND BOROUGH OF WRANGELL**

**CC: MASON VILLARMA, BOROUGH MANAGER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WRANGELL CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU**

FROM: KATE THOMAS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

General Administration

- Facilitated April Planning and Zoning Meeting
- Facilitated April Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau Meeting
- Conducted quarterly review of Annual Workplan and documented progress
- Provided input with supporting documentation to Manager regarding evaluation procedures
- Analyzed budget detail and reviewed planned expenditures for the remainder of the year
- Attend the WPSD and Assembly joint workshop on upcoming budget
- Completed revision of Marketing and Community Development Coordinator

Economic Development

- Attended Grant Management training through the Thriving Communities program
- Started to develop the framework for a workforce development program
- Contacted the National Outdoor Leadership School to solicit them to set up a satellite campus in Wrangell for their ocean-based expedition program in the state
- Attended the Tongass Forest Plan revision cooperating agency meeting
- Participated in the Alaska Municipal League interagency transportation workshop
- Began planning for the USDOT Thriving Communities site visit scheduled for June 11-13
- Met with USFS Information Officer about the Tongass Christmas Tree
- Established an Economic Focus Group concept and initiated meetings with hospitality providers to better understand our niche selling points and opportunities for growth
- Continued planning efforts for the statewide recreation conference which will be held in Wrangell on September 18-19
- Met with Phillip Mach of Trident Seafoods to discuss future opportunities

- Met with WCA on Bridge Property developments leading to Chief Shakes tribal house
- Met with local business owners to discuss current climate and future opportunities
- Promoted Small Business Administration loan program

Planning and Zoning

- Discussed Comprehensive Plan needs with Beth McKibben at R&M Consulting
- Began planning for the Emergency Addressing project including research, outreach to Denali Borough, and facilitation of Wrangell stakeholder meeting with Police, Fire, Utilities, Public Works, Capital Facilities, AP&T and GCI
- Submitted quarterly report to the state for the Borough's SHSP grant
- Reviewed Denali Grant Funding Opportunity Announcement, drafted and submitted a grant application for \$150,000 to fund the Comprehensive Plan
- Met with Petersburg Planning Director
- Reviewed and organized GIS data for transition to ArcGIS Pro
- Conducted research on Borough Entitlement Lands, and began outlining a plan of action for zoning, surveying and productive use of those lands
- Began review of Monofil permitting needs to expand current location, or develop a new
- Completed draft MOA for Petroglyph Beach Land Use agreement
- Met with staff at Alder Top Village to discuss protective land covenants to accompany the sale agreement for all properties of the subdivision

Tourism Management

- Scheduled and facilitated tourism stakeholder meeting
- Met with Nolan Center Director on Tourism Initiatives
- Revised the Visitor Survey, identified partners and developed a schedule to draw more surveys to better inform our tourism management plan this fall
- Met with Prince of Wales Chamber of Commerce to discuss cooperative marketing and partnership opportunities in tourism

Marketing and Communications

- Met with Wander, our mobile mapping application to request an extension of our license agreement due to unmet deliverables in the first year of service. They agree to extend our license for an additional six months.
- Completed 2024/2025 Travel Guide, including Tlingit Land Acknowledgement approved by WCA
- Published Birdfest schedule and promotions, including KSTK on-air time
- Met with the Passport Unlimited program to learn about their corporate employee travel discount program
- Completed onboarding of Customer Relationship Management system, currently working towards implementation

- Completed web audit for Nolan Center, Economic Development, and Harbor Departments, currently working towards incorporating all requested revisions and updates
- Worked operations support for NCAA tournament to learn more about production
- Engaged committee group in first round of Borough Branding project
- Issued Trip Giveaway from Seattle Boat Show
- Finalized advertisements for Travel Guide of Alaska, including Breath of the Bear
- Installed new street banners downtown and facilitated ceremony with WCA
- Posted Borough social media, establishing a routine of cyclical information sharing such as jobs, meetings and events
- Conducted a media day at the Water Treatment plant, documenting the projects progress
- Obtained aerial footage of LeConte glacier
- Began distribution of Travel Guides
- Obtained aerial footage of Deep Water Port property, specifically the marine infrastructure such as the bulkhead
- Established a small design group to help with idea generation for marketing efforts
- Met with Alaska Business Magazine and Alaska Journal of Commerce to promote Port development opportunities at the former sawmill
- Finalized draft Communications Plan for implementation borough-wide
- Established marketing objectives and deliverables for the Alder Top Land sale
- Reviewed and finalized creative content for the Travel Alaska the statewide Destination Marketing Organization to ensure Wrangell is better represented on their site
- Met with Outside magazine to engage them in sponsored content to promote Wrangell as a viable place to live and work, and visit for outdoor recreation opportunities

Community Development

- Participated in See Stories with Laura Davies Class
- Facilitated USCGC John McCormick community event
- Attended Nolan Center grounds cleanup day
- Attended the USCG spring Port safety and Mass Emergency meeting
- Spoke on-air during the KSTK Pledge drive to share more about Borough Initiatives with the community
- Met with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss partner opportunities

City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Economic Development Board
Regular Meeting June 6th, 2024
Agenda Statement

Agenda Item: New Business, Item 11A

From: Kate Thomas, Economic Development Director

Subject: Review and discussion of Economic Focus Groups to support business and industry expansion

INFORMATION: Based on the number of industry stakeholders and businesses that are interested in engaging in more pointed dialogue with staff from the Economic Development Department, the team developed the concept of hosting monthly economic focus group discussions (coffee chats) with persons of interest. Below is an outline of that concept and how it could be implemented. Staff are interested in hearing input from the board as to what focus areas are most critical, and what prompts might be compelling to drive conversation.

FOCUS AREAS:

- ✓ Hospitality and Services
- ✓ Fisheries and Mariculture
- ✓ Cruise and Independent Tourism
- ✓ Marine Services and Port Infrastructure
- ✓ Commercial and Residential Construction
- ✓ Deep Water Port Development and Partnerships

OBJECTIVE:

To establish a schedule of economic focus groups designed to gather valuable insights from key stakeholders within various sectors critical to the region's economic growth.

RATIONALE:

Gaining a deeper understanding of the specific needs, challenges, and opportunities within each focus area is essential for developing effective strategies to support and accelerate business and industry growth.

Engaging directly with industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and community members through focus groups will provide crucial data and perspectives to inform policy decisions, resource allocation, and infrastructure development initiatives.

NEXT STEPS:

- Identify key stakeholders and participants: Develop a targeted list of individuals representing diverse perspectives within each focus area.

- **Schedule and format:** Determine the frequency, duration, and format of focus group sessions to ensure optimal participation and information gathering.
- **Develop discussion guides:** Craft specific questions and topics to guide each focus group session, ensuring relevant and insightful discussions.
- **Data analysis and reporting:** Analyze the collected data from focus groups to identify key themes, trends, and actionable recommendations.
- **Dissemination and implementation:** Share findings and recommendations with relevant stakeholders and work collaboratively to develop and implement strategies that address identified needs and opportunities.

TIMELINE:

- Stakeholder identification and participant recruitment
- Focus group scheduling and format finalization
- Development of discussion guides
- Focus group sessions
- Data analysis and report generation
- Dissemination of findings and recommendations

By establishing a well-defined schedule of economic focus groups, we can gather valuable insights from key stakeholders and develop data-driven strategies to support and accelerate the growth of critical industries within the region.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff are seeking review from the board and input on the concept. Staff welcome participation from the board as the concept develops and more specifically upon implementation.

City and Borough of Wrangell, Alaska
Economic Development Board
Regular Meeting June 6th, 2024
Agenda Statement

Agenda Item: New Business, Item 11B

From: Kate Thomas, Economic Development Director

Subject: USDOT Thriving Communities Site Visit Scheduled for June 11-13

INFORMATION: This site visit is conducted as part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Thriving Communities Program (TCP). The TCP aims to empower disadvantaged communities, including Wrangell, to compete for federal funding and develop impactful infrastructure projects that promote economic growth and community well-being.

The purpose of this visit is to:

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of the community of Wrangell: This includes its unique needs, challenges, and opportunities.
- Build strong partnerships with key local stakeholders: Collaboration is crucial for the success of any infrastructure project.
- Develop a strategic funding plan for the 40-acre deep water port site: The team will work with the community to identify potential funding sources and develop a sustainable approach to revitalizing this critical area.
- Facilitate community engagement: The team is committed to hearing directly from residents and incorporating their vision for the deep-water port site into the development plan.

This agenda outlines the planned activities for the visit, including site tours, meetings with community stakeholders, and a presentation to the Wrangell Assembly. Through these interactions, the team aims to establish a strong foundation for collaboration and move forward with the development of the deep-water port site in a way that benefits the entire community.

Thriving Communities Program, Networked Communities Site Visit Agenda

MEETING NAME

Wrangell TCP Site Visit

DATE AND TIME

June 11 – 12, 2024

ORGANIZER

David Peters, Project Manager

LOCATION

City Hall - 205 Brueger St, Wrangell, AK 99929

LEAD PARTICIPANTS

RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Mason Villarma, Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller, Tom Weter, Matt Henson.), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Esther Reese, WCA Tribal Admin, Bill Willard-WCA-T, Lizzy Romaine- WCA-T, Gary Allen- Alaska DOT, Tory Houser- USFS, Brooke Leslie- Spruce Root

PURPOSE:	OBJECTIVES:
<p>The purpose of this site visit is to familiarize the team with the community, its essential partners, and the project areas, thereby gaining a comprehensive understanding and enhanced perspective. Additionally, this visit will serve as a platform to actively participate in ongoing funding applications and strategic grant planning for future endeavours.</p>	<p>This site visit effectively executes the priorities outlined in the workplan, guaranteeing the successful implementation of the defined objectives.</p> <p>Together, we aim to develop a funding strategy for the 40-acre Mill site in Wrangell. A successful development will be the culmination of several projects undertaken in tandem making the best use of the available space at the Mill site.</p> <p>RAIB remains committed to conducting an in-depth analysis of funding strategies and applications, delving further into the details of who, when, and how to secure necessary resources. Additionally, RAIB will actively collaborate with the community to identify potential funding opportunities and establish strategic partnerships to assist with filling gaps for infrastructure and Mill site needs</p>

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

10:45am – Arrive in Wrangell on Flight 65 from Seattle

12:00pm – 12:45pm - Meet and Greet Introductions and Site Visit Overview

Location: Wrangell City Hall: City Hall - 205 Brueger St, Wrangell, AK 99929

- Meet and greet
Attendees: RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Other community partners?

1:00pm – 3:00pm – Site tours:

- Mill Property Tour - Land/Water Perspective
- Inner Harbor Basin Tour
- Heritage and Shoemaker Tour
- Marine Service Center Tour - shop visit
- Trident Tour - Maritime industry dependent on highway freight
- 8 Mile Bluffs Project and Landslide Site - State DOT
- Emergency Access Road - Airplane Tour
- Water Taxi Vessel Tour - Breakaway Ferry/ Muddy Waters
- Alder Top Subdivision - Site Tour

3:30pm – 4:30pm – Meeting for community engagement on Mill development

- Meeting to discuss goals and objectives of community engagement meeting tomorrow focused on Mill site development.
Attendees: RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Other community partners?

6:00pm – Wrangell Assembly presentation

- Presentation to the Wrangell Assembly and community members about the Thriving Communities Program, success so far, and work ahead.
Attendees: RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Other community partners?

Thriving Communities Program, Networked Communities Site Visit Agenda

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

Location: Wrangell City Hall: City Hall - 205 Brueger St, Wrangell, AK 99929

8:30am – 11:30am – Discuss short- and long-term transportation projects and priorities – Select attendees

- Discussion with regional partners on coordination of regional transportation projects and planning for long-term transportation investment and development.
Attendees: RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Other community partners?

11:30am – 12:30 pm Lunch

12:30pm – 2:30 pm – Meeting with community stakeholders

- Community engagement opportunity, following up on the internal team discussion about economic development opportunities at the Mill site. Hear from the community about their vision for the Mill site.
Attendees: RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Other community partners?

2:45pm – 4:00 pm – Review takeaways from Community Engagement and Wrap up

- Review what we heard during the community engagement and how it can factor into planning for Mill site development. Takeaways from the site visit and action items to follow-up on,
Attendees: RAIB Team (David Peters and Jessica Mimbs), Wrangell (Kate Thomas, Amber Al-Haddad, Steve Miller), Milo Booth, Victor Austin (USDOT) TBC, Other community partners?

Thursday, June 13, 2024

4:00pm – Depart Wrangell on Flight 64 to Seattle