

NORTH  STAR

+ Auburn, CA

Branding Research & Strategy Presentation

June 2023

Branding Process



Stakeholder & Community Education



Insight Gathering & Research



DNA & Strategy Formation



Creative Brand & Message Development



Brand Action Ideas

mostly confirmation and articulation

not revelation

Today's presentation is about research and strategy and does not include any creative elements for Auburn.

Research by the Numbers

METHODOLOGY

80+ Site Visit Conversations: intercepts, focus groups, interviews, & calls

78 DistinctlyAuburn.com

385 Community Survey Respondents

7 External Perception Calls

310 External Consumer Respondents

= More than **860** unique inputs during the research

Internal Qualitative Data

Site Visits

Intercepts

DistinctlyAuburn.com

Focus Groups

Stakeholder Interviews

(in person, phone conversations, and via Zoom)

Internal Qualitative Data

THEMES

Best Descriptors

Eclectic	Connectedness
Exciting	Welcoming
Family oriented	Forward thinking
Historic	Somewhat older community
Potential	Endurance
Growing	Agriculture
Interesting	Outdoors
Opportunities	Old town
Jumping off point	Safe
Destination	Festive
Bright and lively	Open
Generous	Historical treasure
Conservation minded	Awakening/Emerging
Character	

Greatest Assets

- I-80
- Wine and Ale Trail
- Skate Park
- Bike Park/Track
- Airport
- Small Town Vibe
- Endurance Races
- Canyon and River
- Nature (hiking, trails, biking, water, etc.)
- Downtown
- High school
- Theater
- Fairgrounds
- City services

Internal Qualitative Data

THEMES

Opportunities

Approachable city gov't
County seat
Making Auburn known
Becoming the destination
Recognizing City accomplishments
Celebrating the people and ideas currently here
Retrofitting the older buildings
Halfway point to end destination
Further leveraging our history
Capitol Corridor Train

Challenges

Cost of living
Filling vacancies for businesses
Empty buildings and facades
Getting people to stop and stay
Unifying/Connecting Old Town and Downtown
Transient population
Small town Facebook gossip/chatter
Expensive housing
Getting everyone to stay on track
Identifying city limits
Decent schools. They aren't the driving force.
Finding people to work
Everything is volunteer based

Internal Qualitative Data

THEMES

Missing

High paying jobs
Boutique hotel
Cohesive message and visuals
Road improvements
Enhanced fire protection
Affordable housing
Parking
Cohesive bike trails for e-bikes
ADA accessibility
Social media presence
Performance arts theater
Teen activities
Follow through from the City
Vision from the City
Additional revenue sources
Transportation from the airport
Outdoor retailers
Culture (theater and film)

Most Important to Identity

Gold history
Courthouse
Endurance races
Water (recreation, consumption, ag)
Creativity and innovation
Mandarin Festival
Parades and celebratory spirit
Confluence of the river

What we Think Outsiders Say

"Admire all there is to do in Auburn"
"That's where people go to hike."
"There's a lot of character there."
"They're a tiny town."
"Oh I love Auburn. It's so cute!"
"Halfway between SF and Tahoe."

Internal Quantitative Data Brand Barometer

385 Resident Responses

Answering The Question:

*"On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to recommend **living, visiting, or conducting business in** Auburn to a friend or colleague?"*

The Math: Promoters (9-10), Passives (7-8), Detractors (1-6)

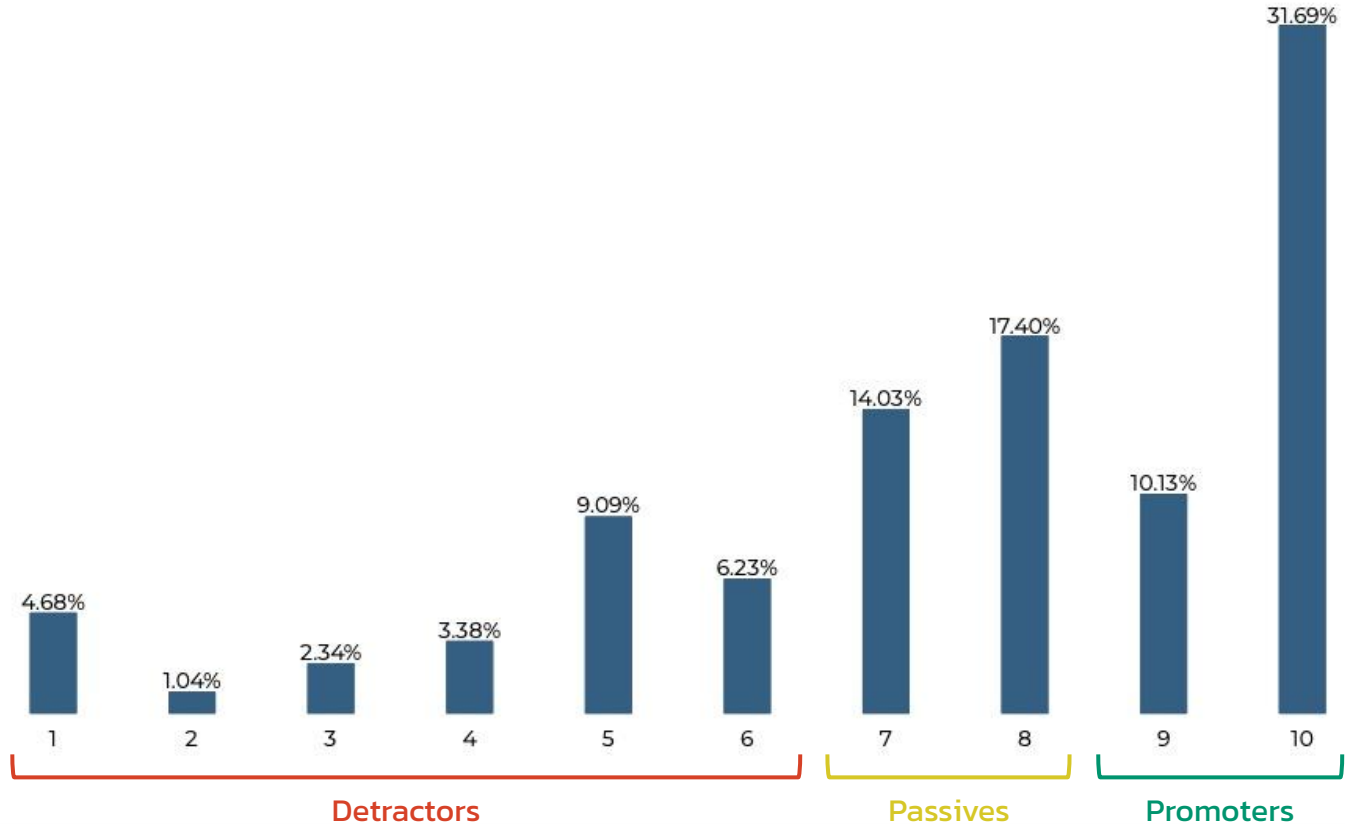
Promoters - Detractors = Brand Advocacy Score (Net Promoter Score)

Passives are not counted.

Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend...

Living in Auburn



Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend...

Living in Auburn

15.06%

Overall Brand Advocacy Score

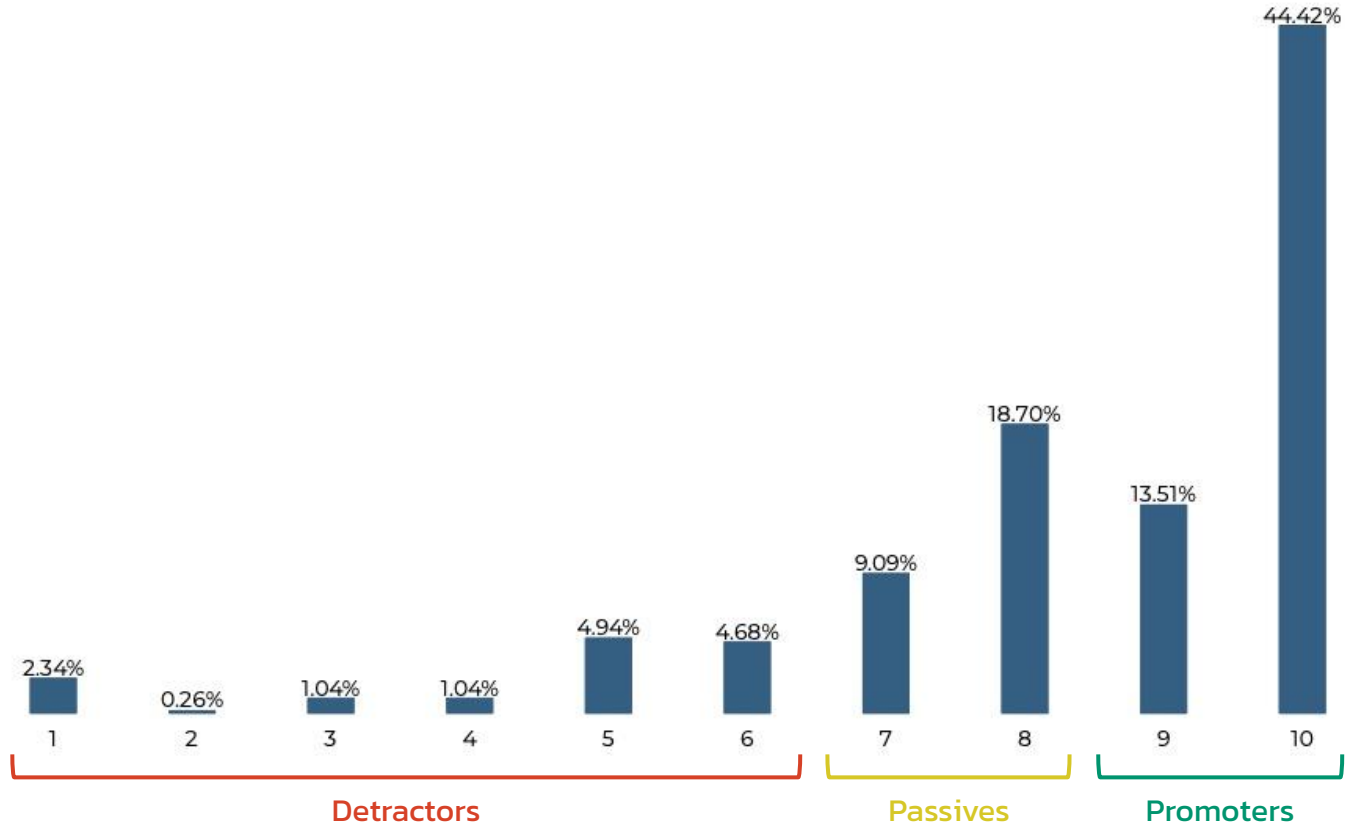
Living in Auburn

(% of Promoters minus % of Detractors)

Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend...

Visiting Auburn



Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend...

Visiting Auburn

43.63%

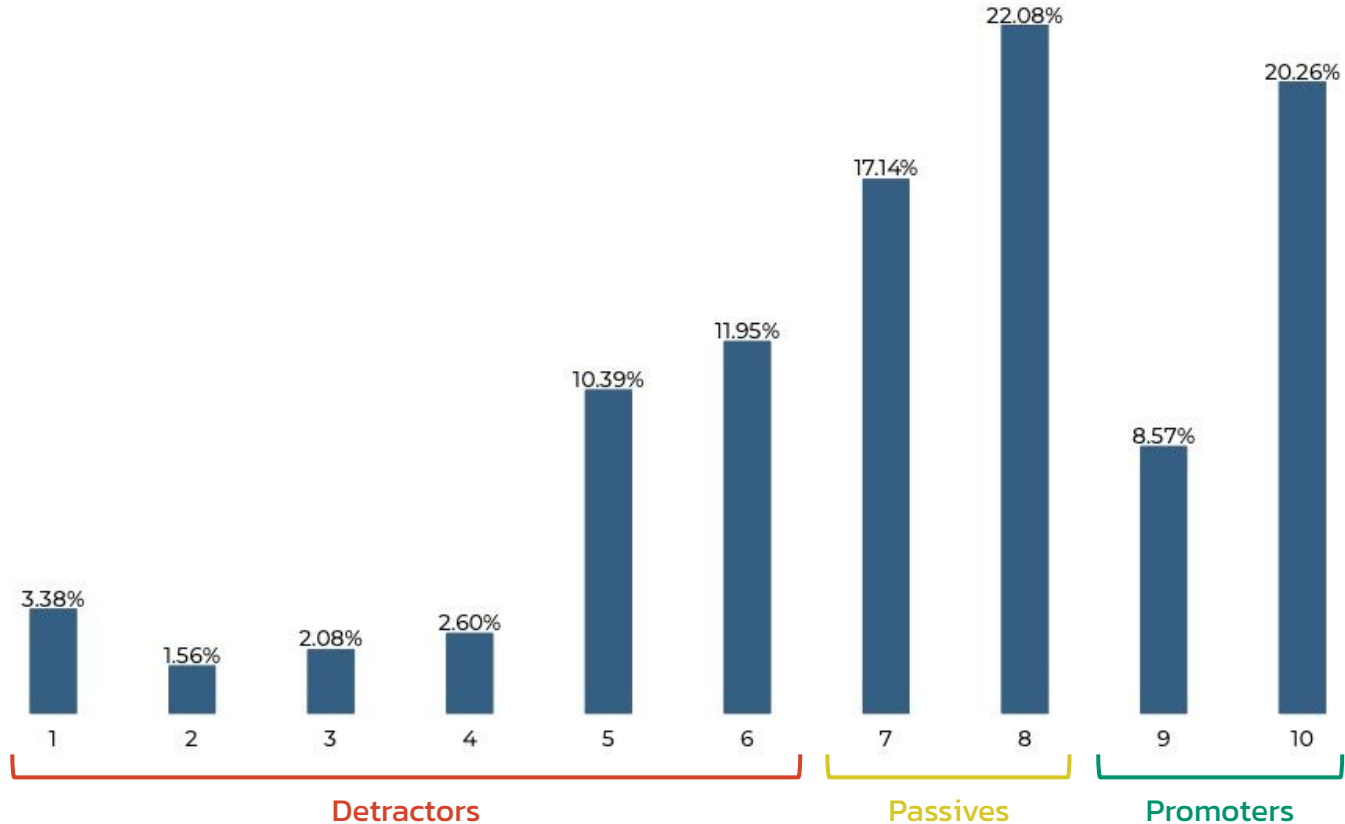
Overall Brand Advocacy Score
Visiting Auburn

(% of Promoters minus % of Detractors)

Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend...

Conducting Business in Auburn



Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend...

Conducting Business in Auburn

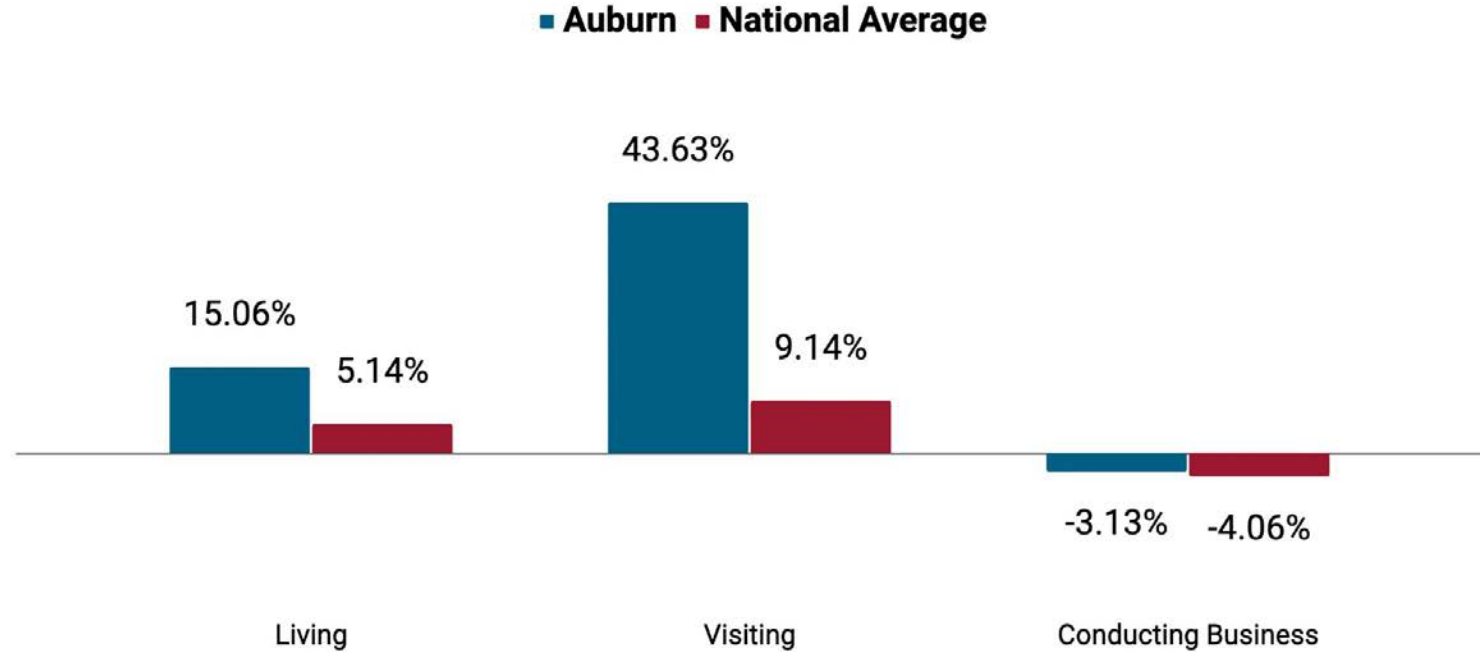
-3.13%

Overall Brand Advocacy Score
Conducting Business in Auburn

(% of Promoters minus % of Detractors)

Brand Barometer

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," how likely would you be to recommend Auburn to a friend or colleague...

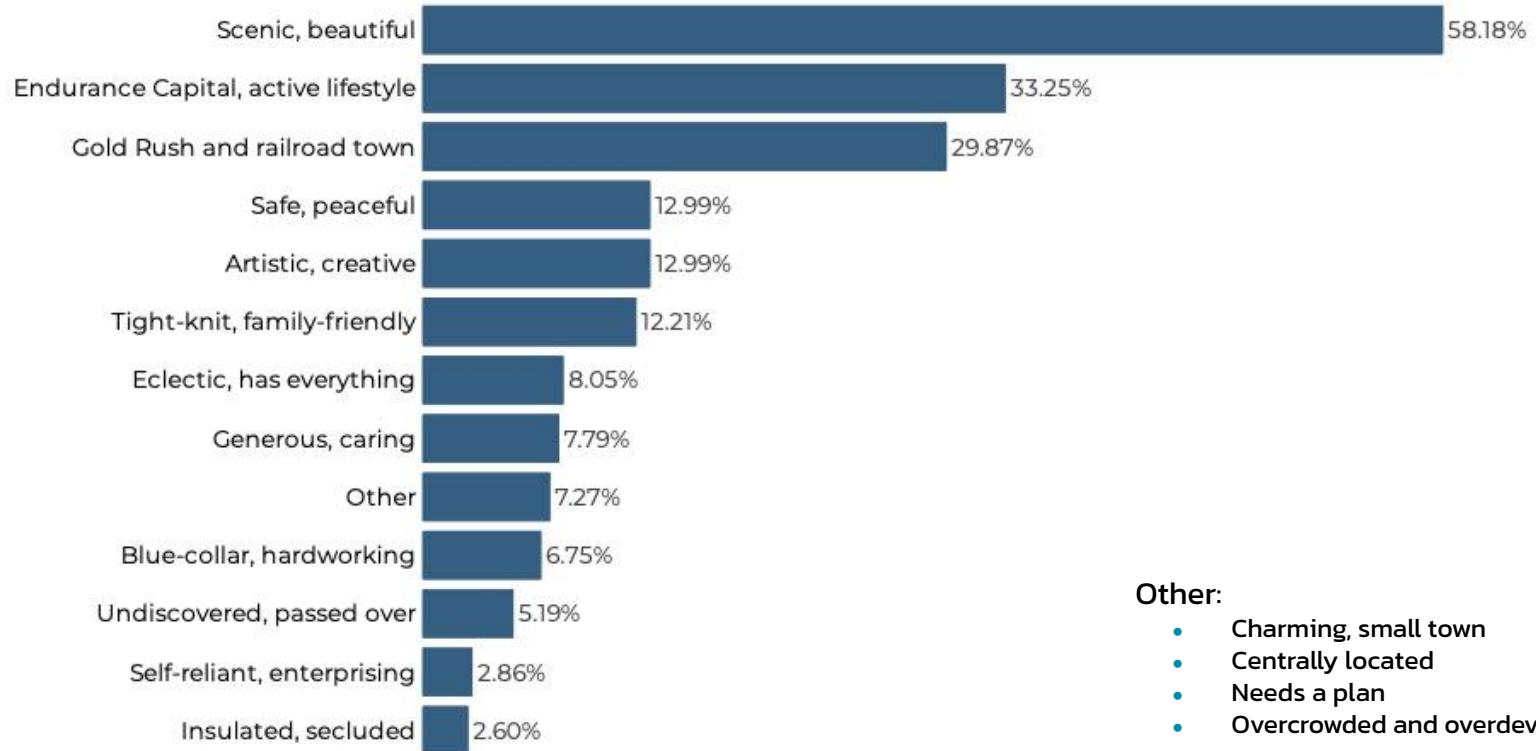


Community Survey

385 Respondents
±5.00% at the 95% confidence level

Community Survey

Which of the following are the best descriptors for Auburn?
Choose two answers.

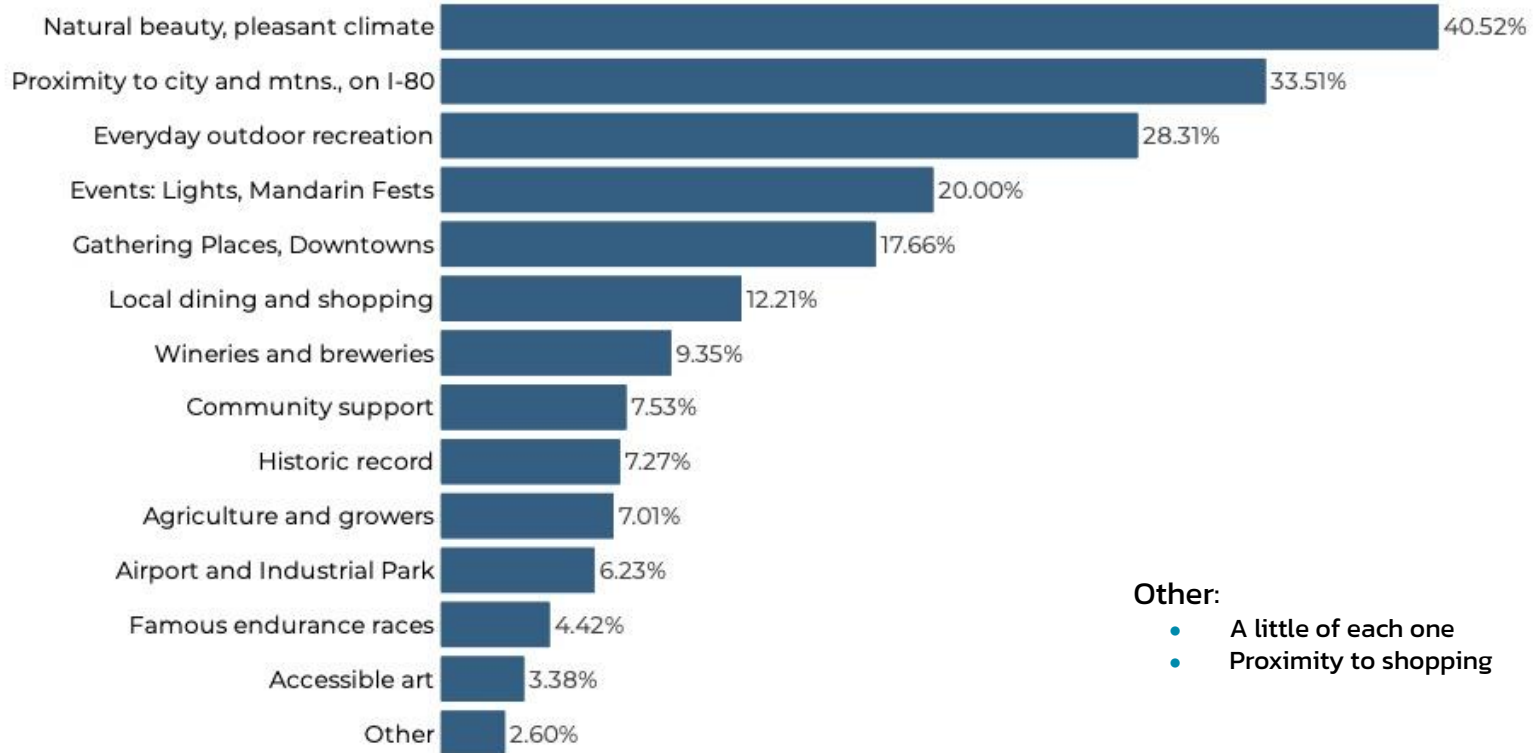


Other:

- Charming, small town
- Centrally located
- Needs a plan
- Overcrowded and overdeveloped

Community Survey

In your opinion, what are Auburn's greatest assets?
Choose two answers.



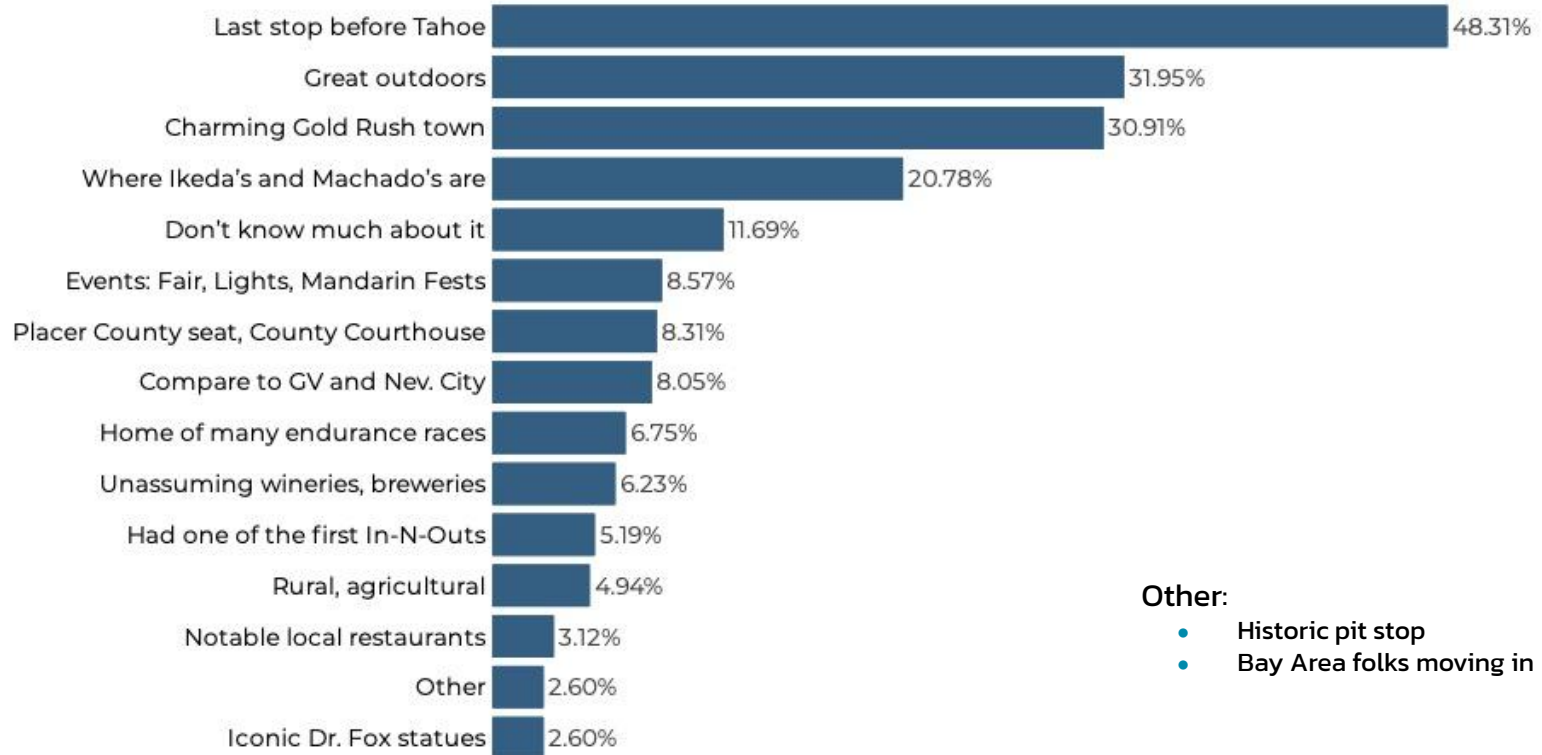
Other:

- A little of each one
- Proximity to shopping

Community Survey

How do you think people describe Auburn across the Sacramento Area and the Bay Area?

Choose two answers.



Community Survey

What do people not know about Auburn that they should know?
What are its hidden gems?
Share up to five things.

1. *Breweries & Wineries*
2. *Local Restaurants*
3. *Hiking Trails*

Other top answers include (in order of frequency):
Farmers Market, American River/Confluence,
Above the Fog/Below the Snow, Safety

Community Survey

What is the first adjective that comes to mind when describing the following communities in California?

Grass Valley

- Quaint, rustic
- Hippie, artsy
- Historic
- Rural, remote

Lincoln

- Growing
- Flat
- Retirement
- Rural, farm land

Nevada City

- Quaint, charming
- Hippie, artsy
- Historic
- Shopping

Placerville

- Historic, Gold Rush
- Hangtown
- Quaint
- Apple Hill

Community Survey

What distinguishes Auburn from the nearby communities in the previous question?

Convenient Location

- *"It's the trailhead that leads to all of the other cities."*
- *"I-80 access to San Francisco and Truckee-Reno. The beach, the mountains, skiing—we've got it all."*
- *"Centrally located and easy to get to. People throughout the state know Auburn because they stop here on the way to Tahoe."*

Natural Beauty & Outdoor Recreation

- *"Many beautiful areas in a hilly terrain. Amazing views of the surrounding areas."*
- *"Proximity to ASRA, trail running, hiking, mountain biking, road biking, white water rafting, and rock climbing."*
- *"Less snow and a better climate that's better for horses and runners. And the best river!"*

Range of Activities & Amenities

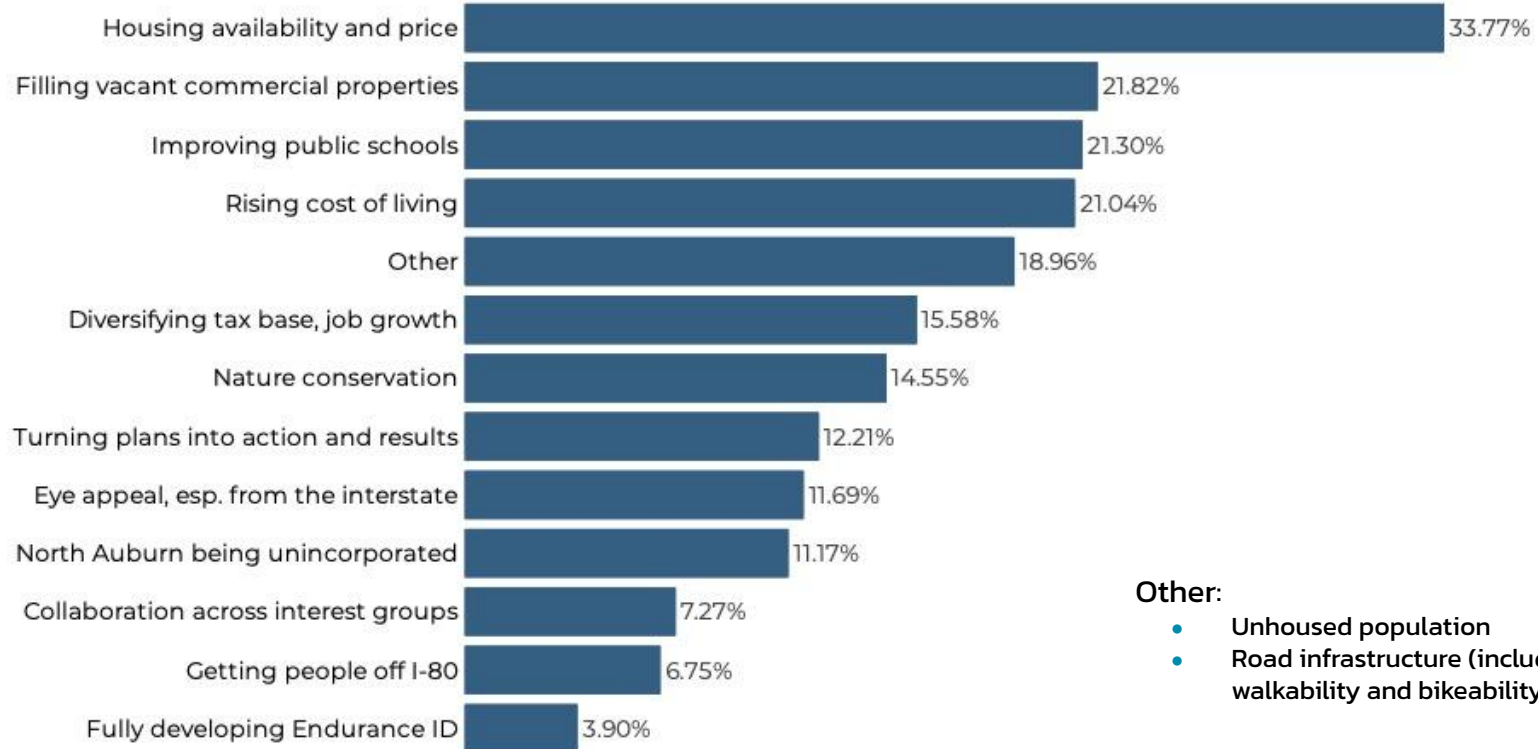
- *"We are a very active, involved community with a diverse amount of things to offer, between outdoor activities, arts, agriculture, wineries/breweries, and eateries."*
- *"We encompass outdoor recreation, eclectic character, historical, and family oriented. It's a mix of everything Placer County has to offer"*

Rich History

- *"Small town vibe and so much history without feeling touristy."*
- *"Gold Camp legacy and intact Old Town"*
- *"The rich history of the railroad and gold mining, the famous shop owners in Downtown and Old Town. We love the specific history the Chinese played in this area."*

Community Survey

In your opinion, what are the greatest challenges currently facing Auburn?
Choose two answers.

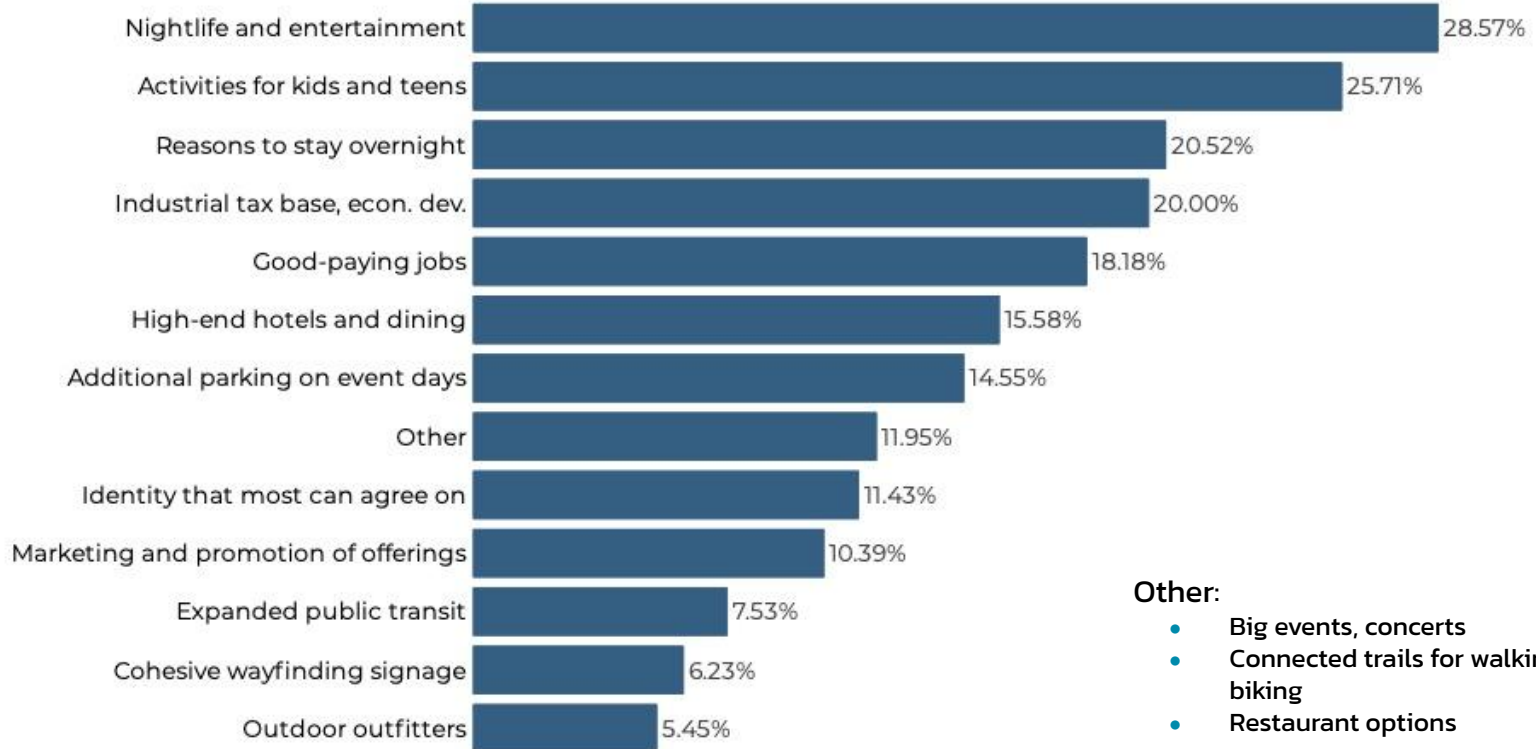


Other:

- Unhoused population
- Road infrastructure (including walkability and bikeability)

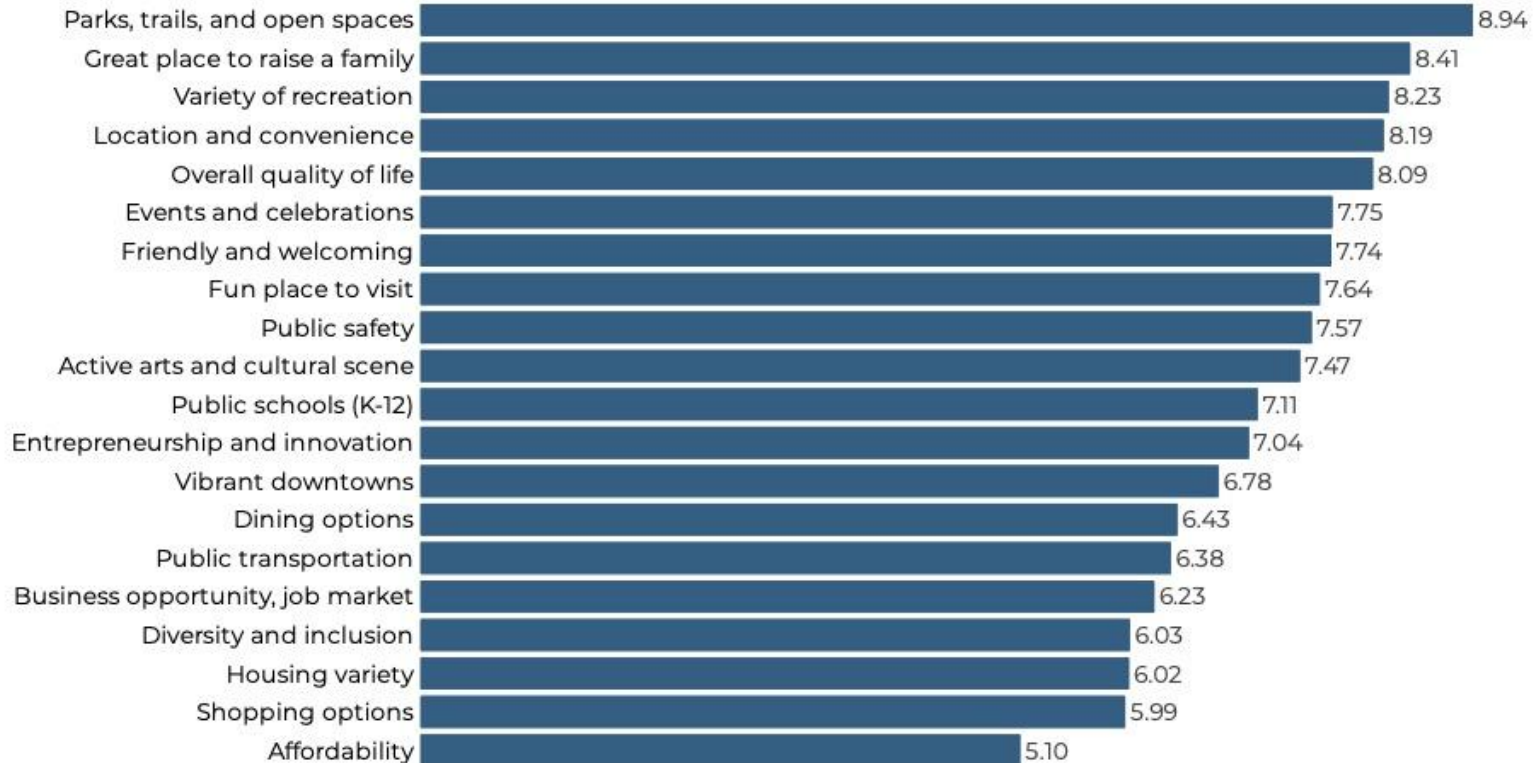
Community Survey

In your opinion, what is missing in Auburn?
Choose two answers.



Community Survey

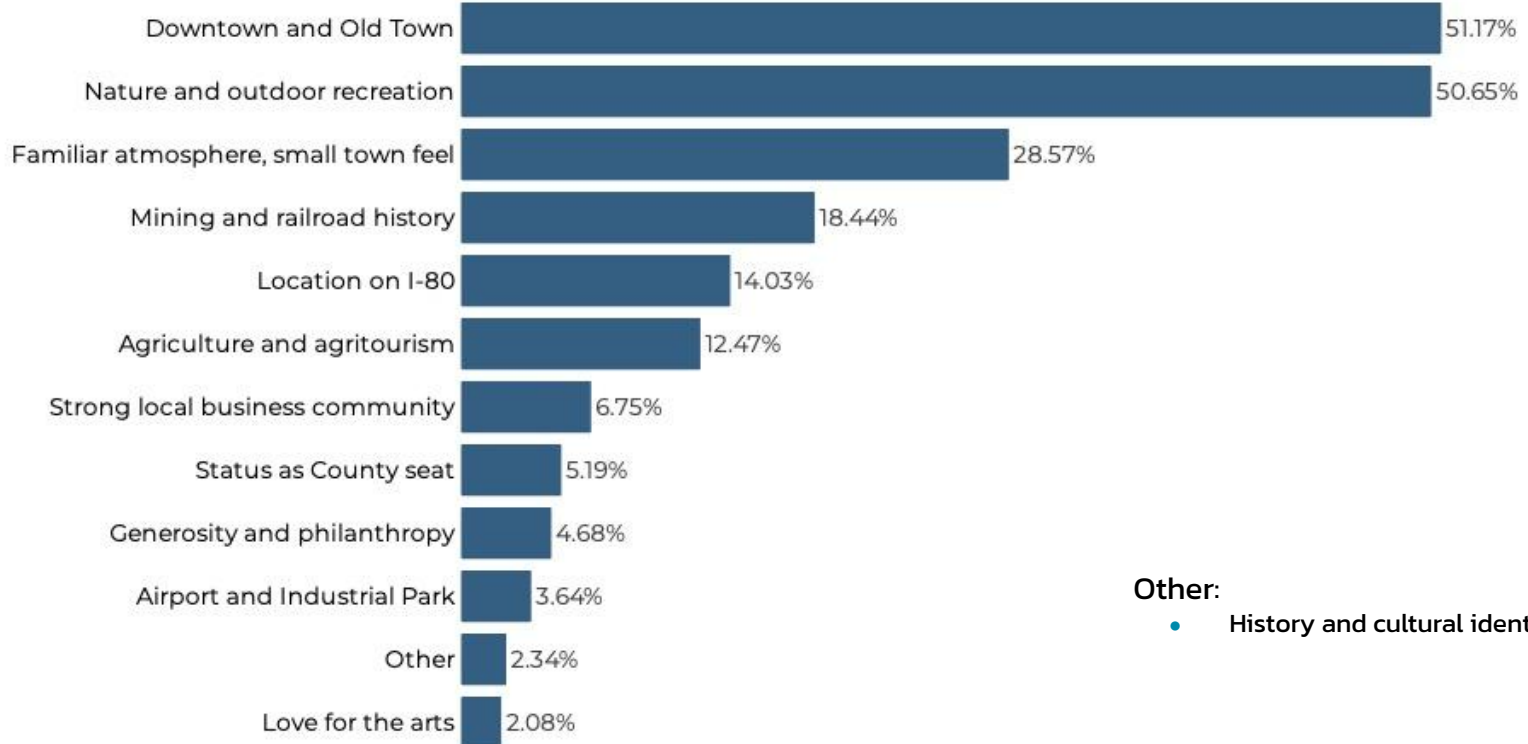
In your opinion, please rate the following Auburn attributes and characteristics on a scale from 1-10, where 1 is "Poor" and 10 is "Excellent."



Community Survey

In your opinion, what is most important to Auburn's identity as a community (without these, Auburn wouldn't be Auburn)?

Choose two answers.



Other:

- History and cultural identity

Community Survey

What does your ideal version of Auburn look like in the future, ten or fifteen years from now?

Affordable Housing

- *"A place where there is a variety of affordable rental homes for lower-income to middle-class families and folks."*
- *"Affordable housing that people can afford and not just retirees who have the means without work."*
- *"Being able to afford living here. A single mom with two kids can't even afford an apartment."*

Safer Place to Live

- *"Homeless, addiction, mental health issues taken care of—that benefits the rest of the community."*
- *"Eliminate homelessness and all the crime, drug abuse and mental illness associated with the homeless. This issue, in my opinion, needs to be Auburn's priority above all else. It is ruining our quality of life."*

Small Town Feel

- *"Remaining small but vibrant. Filled storefronts and businesses but not huge population growth."*
- *"I'd like Auburn to keep its small city charm—not allow so many chains into the area and be more supportive of the small mom-and-pop options."*
- *"Hopefully it will be similar to what it is now: still a small friendly town outside of Sacramento and not a suburb of Sacramento."*

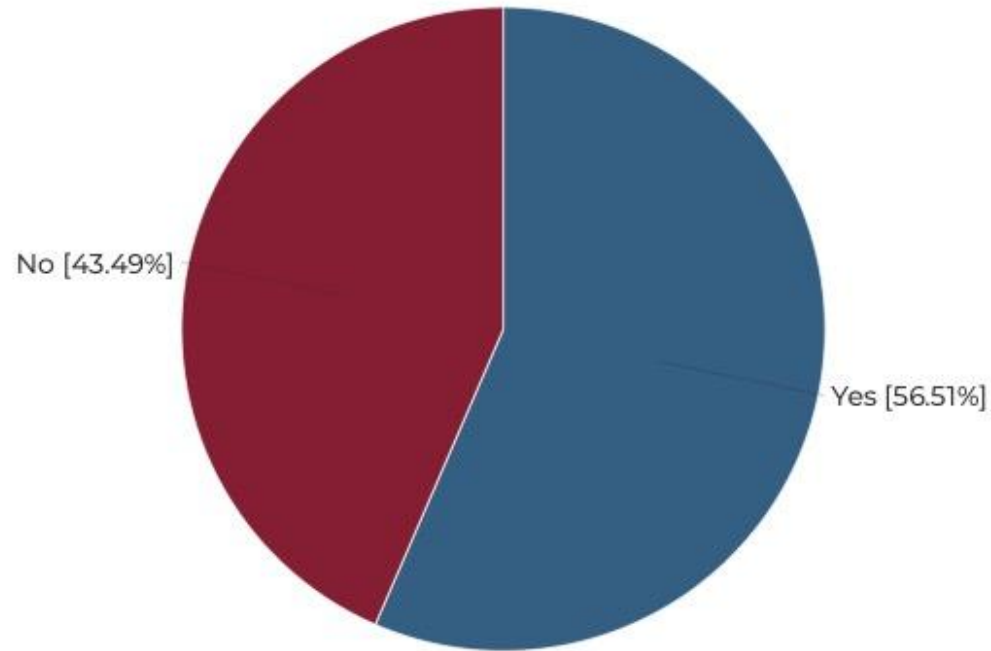
Diverse & Welcoming

- *"I would love to see Auburn become more diverse and welcoming and accepting of all kinds of people, instead of bristling against change and diversity."*
- *"I would love to see more diversity, i.e. more young families of different races, religion, etc."*

Brand Character

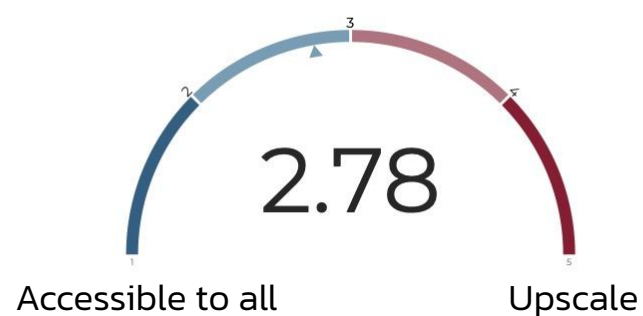
Community Survey

Would you like to answer more questions about visual elements and the brand character of Auburn?



Community Survey

The pairs of phrases below represent opposite characteristics. Please indicate which phrase is a better descriptor for Auburn by marking a square on the spectrum from 1 to 5.



Community Survey

Which **vehicle** best represents
the personality of Auburn?

32.71%

Pickup Truck



Community Survey

Which of the images below best represents the personality of Auburn?
Vehicles



Pickup Truck
32.71%



Off-Road SUV
25.23%



Classic Car
21.50%



Luxury SUV
7.48%



Hybrid Sedan
4.67%



Minivan
3.74%



RV
2.80%



Motorcycle
1.87%

Community Survey

Which **Building/Architectural Style** best represents the personality of Auburn?

49.07%

Main Street

Community Survey

Which of the images below best represents the personality of Auburn?
Buildings/Architectural Styles



Main Street
49.07%



Single-Family
Victorian
19.16%



Suburban
Home
14.95%



Farmhouse
12.15%



Rustic Cabin
4.21%



Urban Living
0.47%



Corporate
Offices
0.00%



Modern Home
0.00%

Community Survey

Which **Brand Personas/Archetypes** best represents the personality of Auburn?

50.47%
Explorer

Community Survey

Which of the images below best represents the personality of Auburn?
Brand Personas/Archetypes



Explorer
50.47%



Creative
16.82%



Best Friend
14.49%



Helper
9.81%



Teacher
3.27%



Hero
2.80%



Entertainer
1.40%



Expert
0.93%



Tech Scientist
0.00%

Community Survey

What Visual Symbol/Landmark is iconic in Auburn?

17.08%
County Courthouse

Community Survey

What visual symbol or landmark is iconic in Auburn?
Share up to five icons.



Placer Co. Courthouse
17.08%



Dr. Ken Fox Statues
12.90%



Foresthill Bridge¹ and
the American River²
12.65%

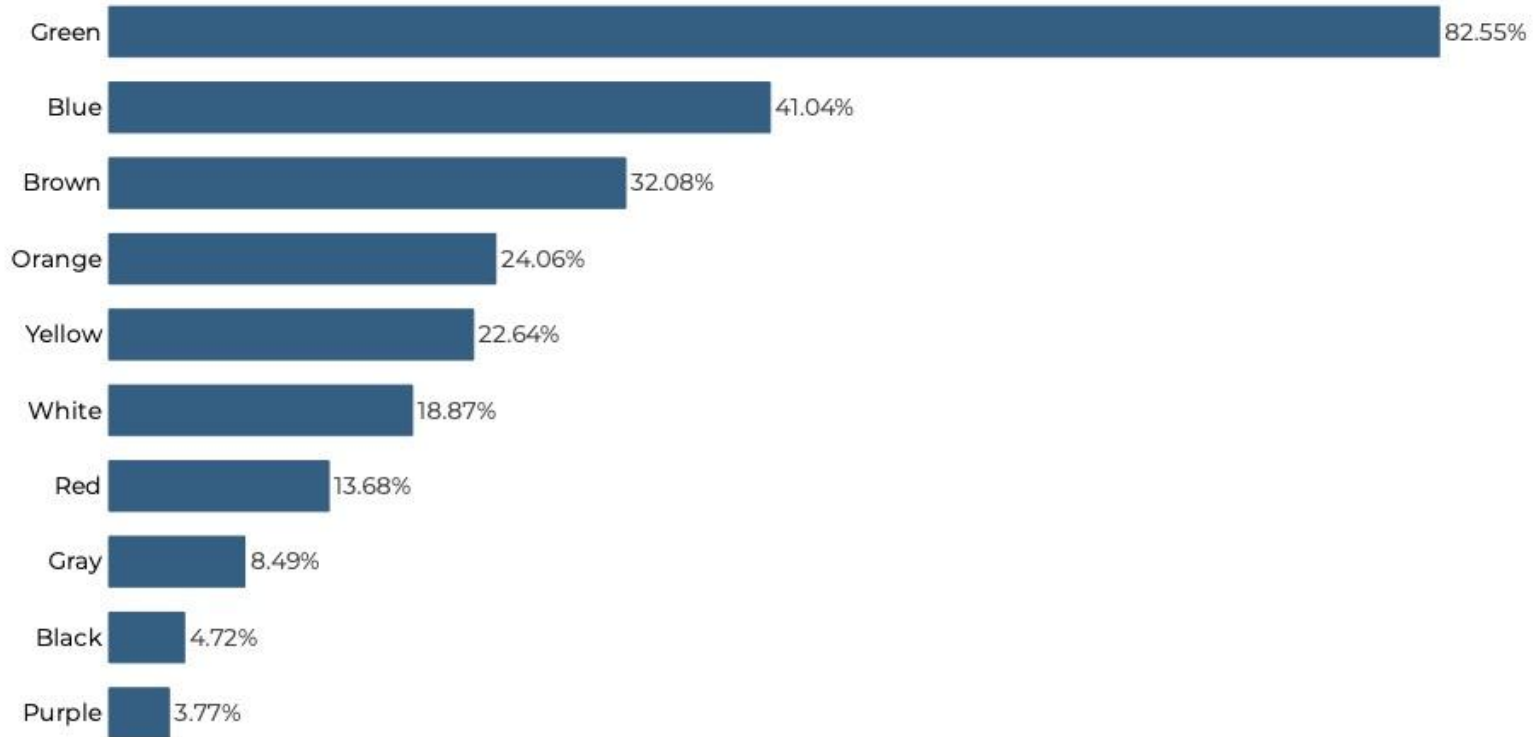
¹6.88%

²5.77%

Community Survey

Which colors do you most associate with the personality and physical nature of Auburn?

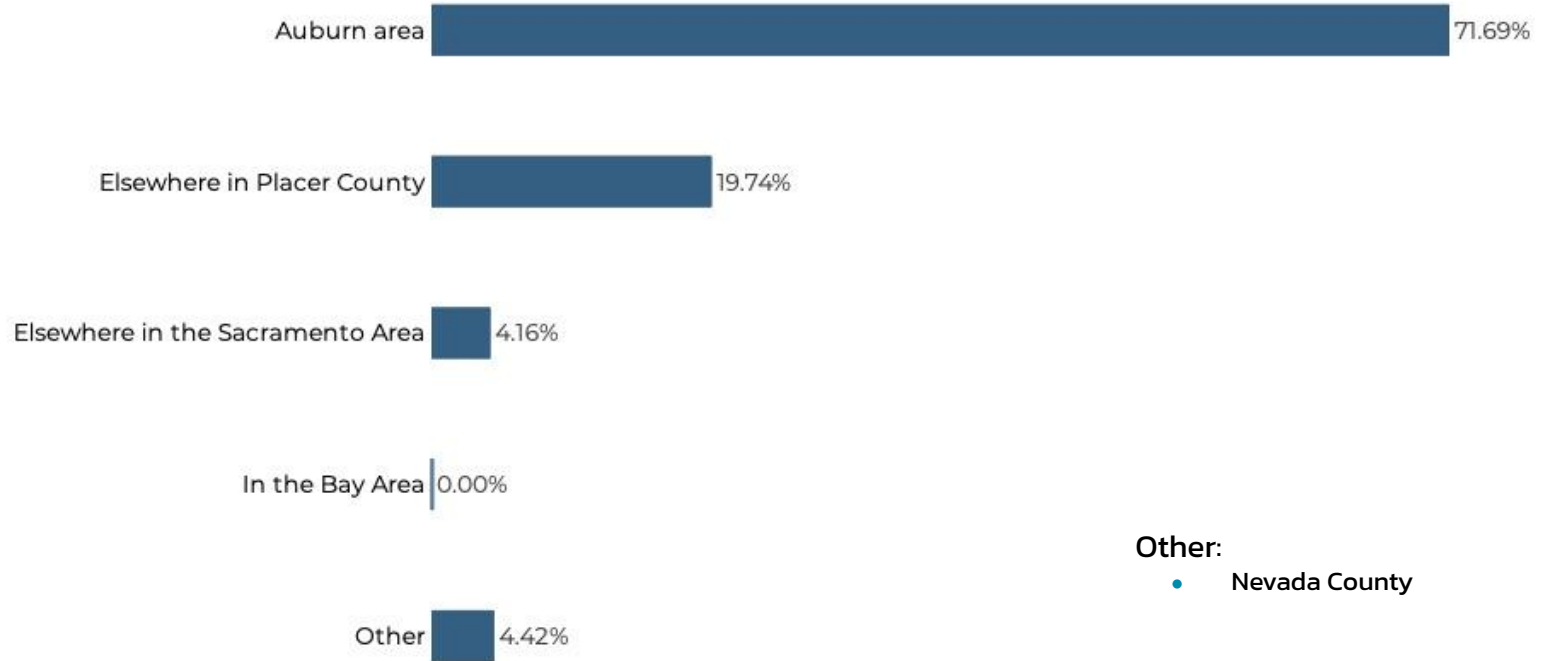
Choose up to three answers.



Demographics

Community Survey

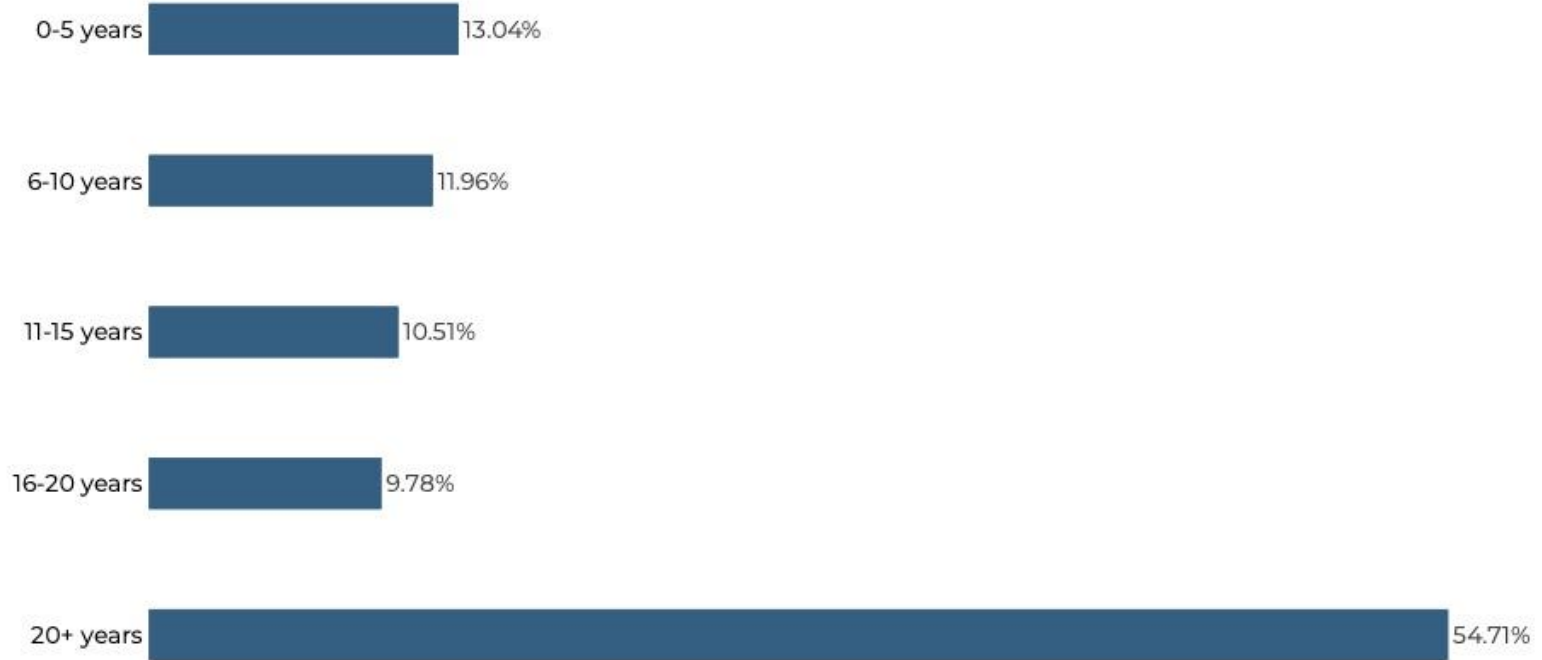
Where do you live?



Community Survey

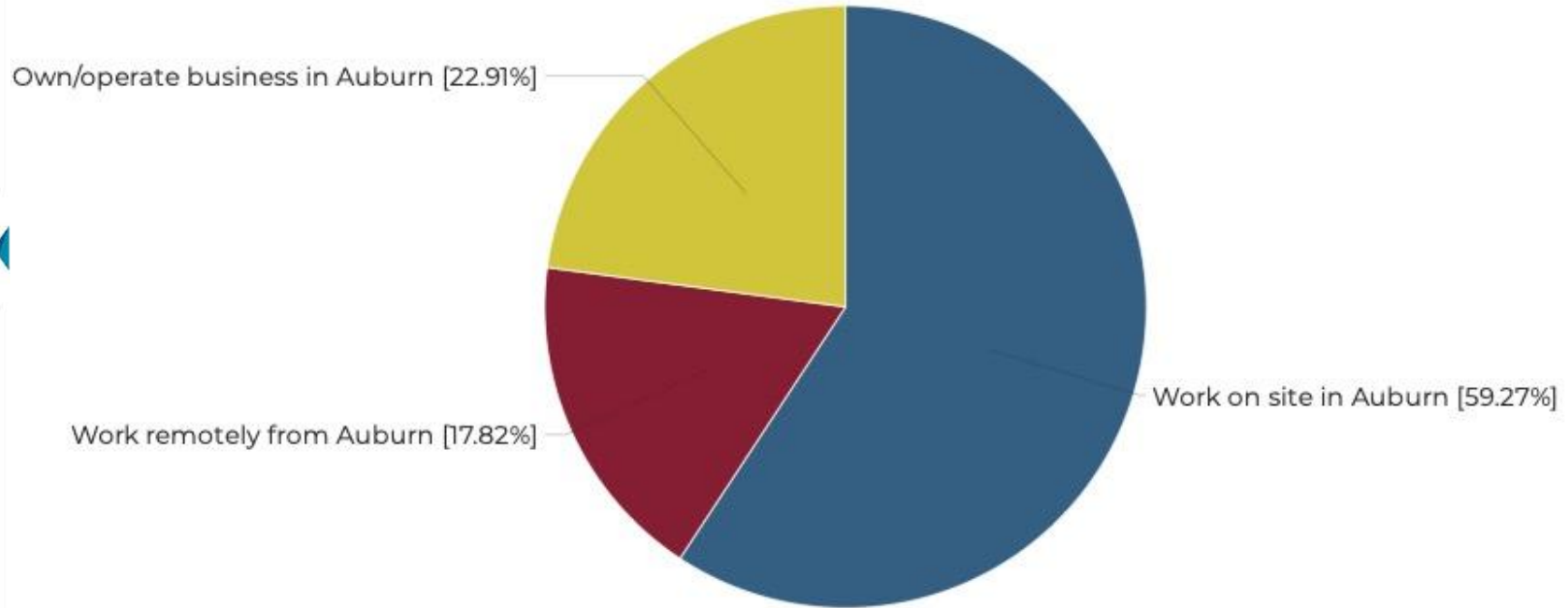
RESIDENTS ONLY, 276 RESPONSES

How long have you been a resident of Auburn?



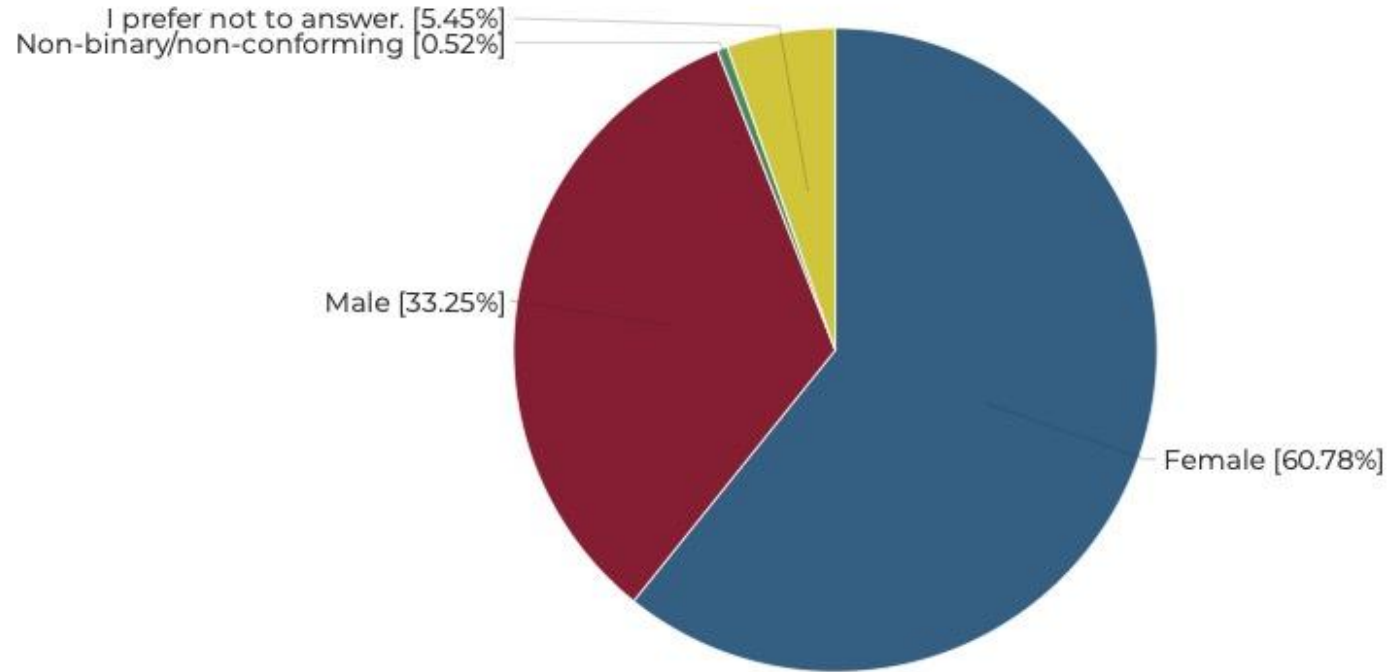
Community Survey

Do you work (daily or occasionally) in the Auburn area?



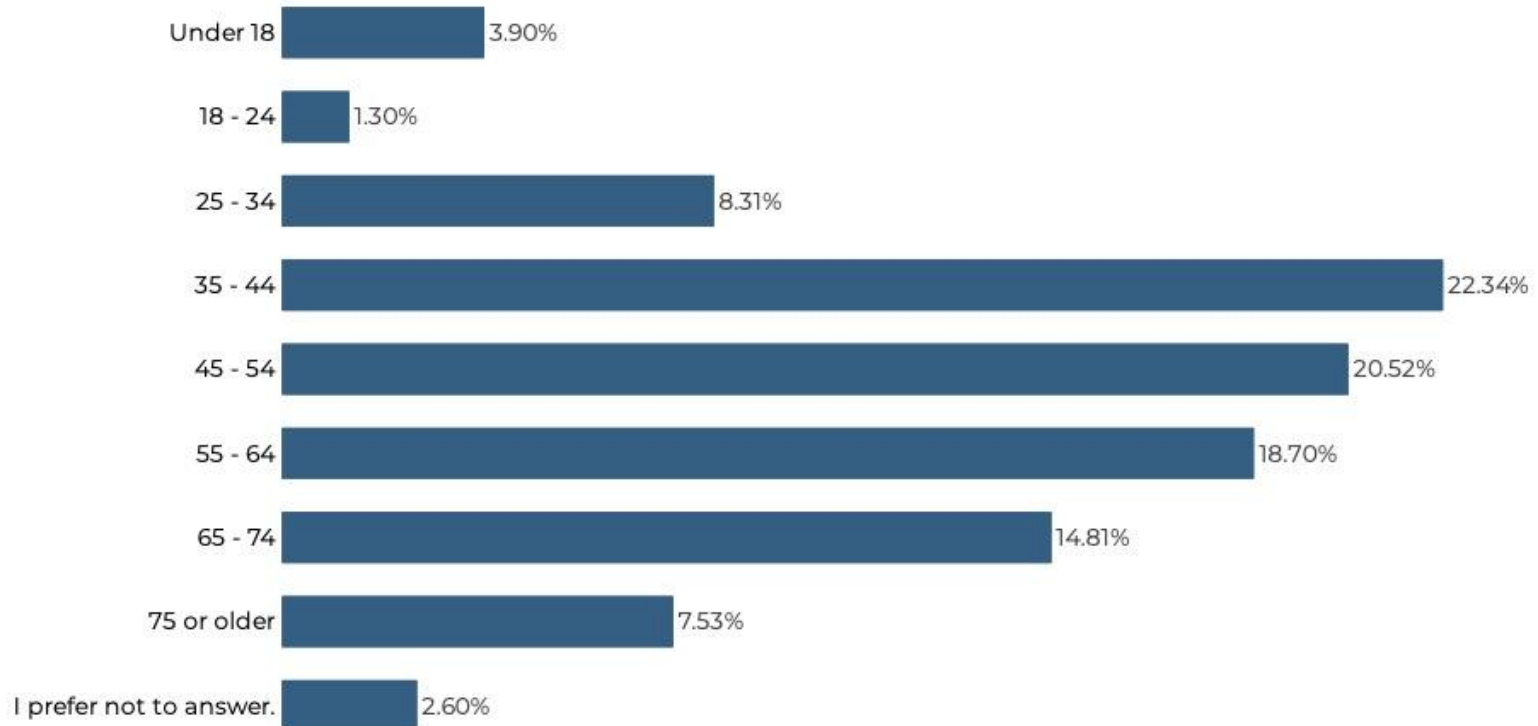
Community Survey

What is your gender?



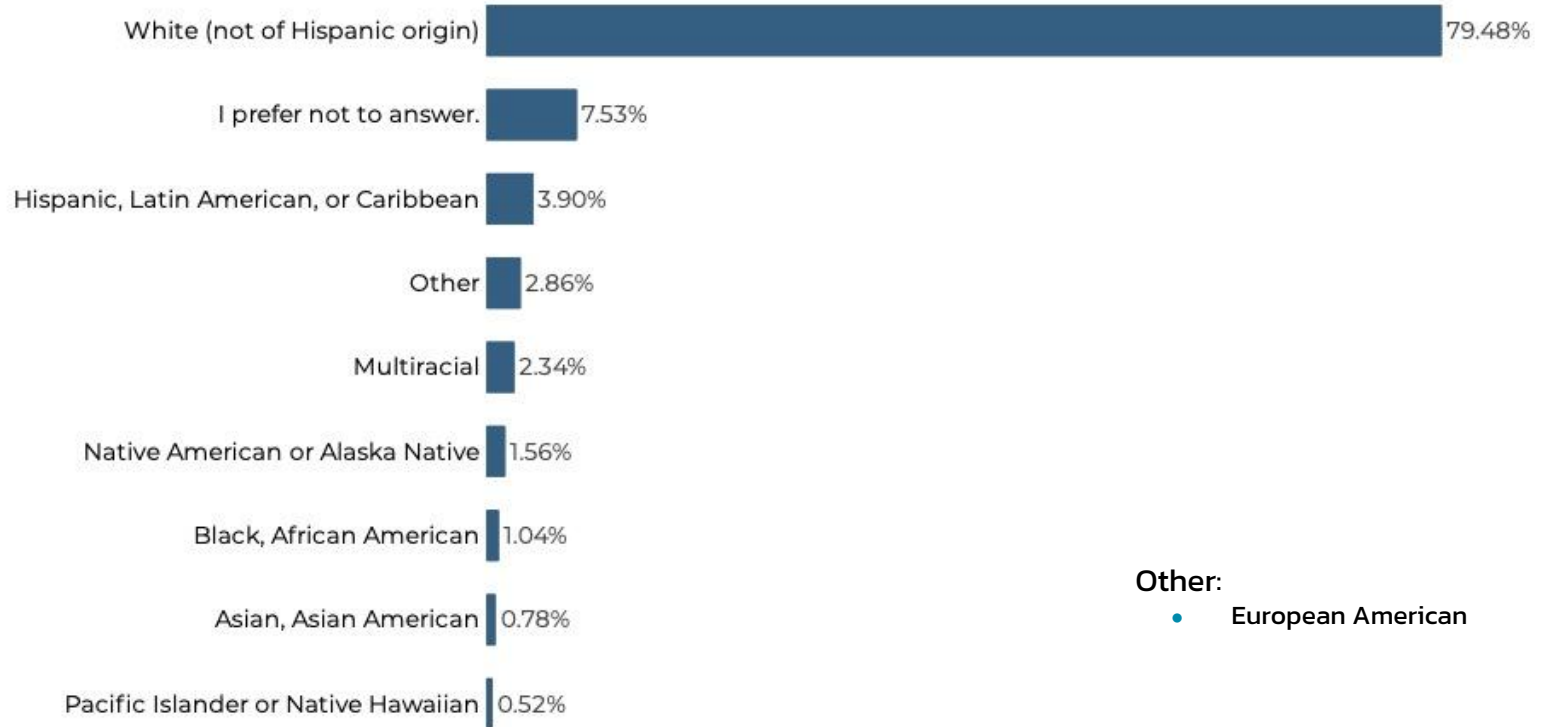
Community Survey

Which of the following includes your age?



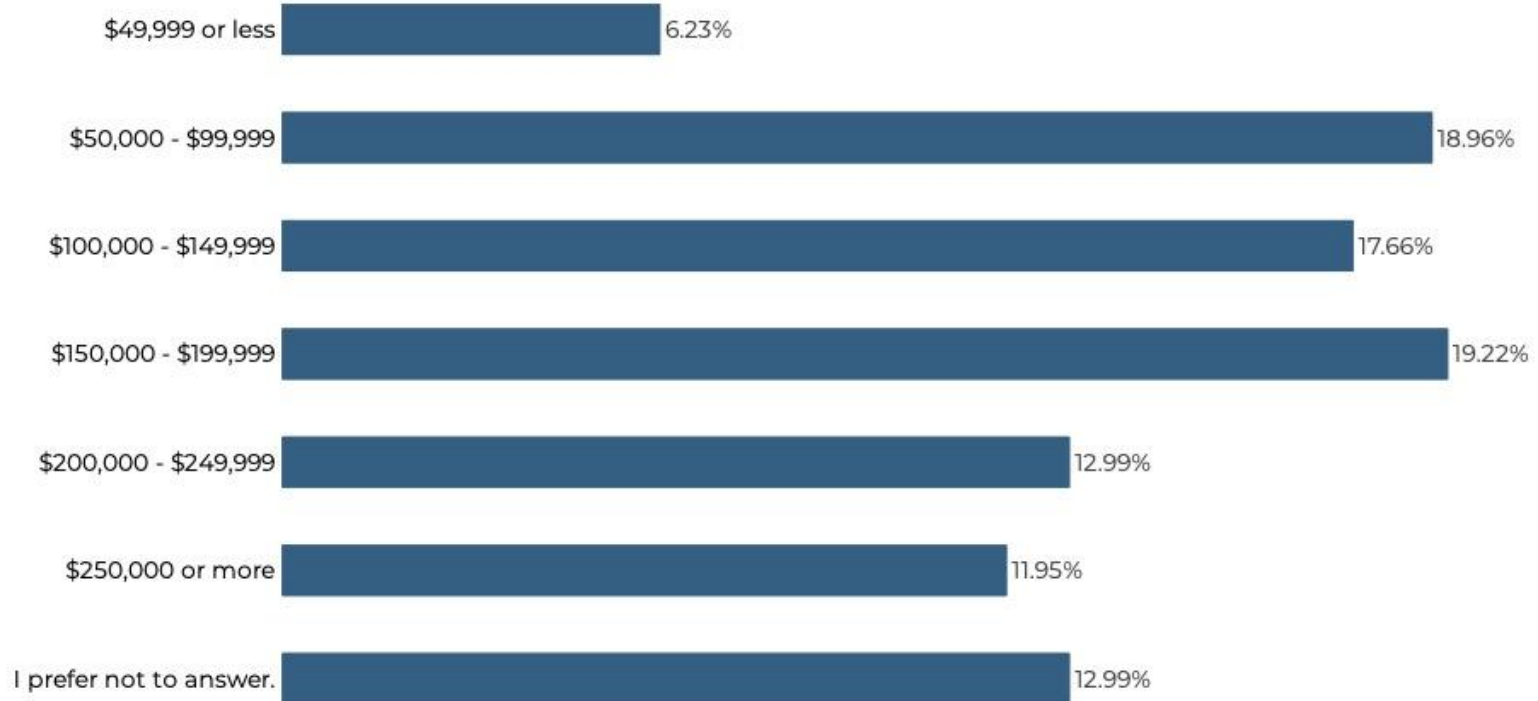
Community Survey

Which of the following best describes you?



Community Survey

Which of the following ranges includes your total household income?



External Quantitative Data Consumer Awareness & Perception Study

310 External Responses
 $\pm 5.57\%$ at the 95% confidence level

Consumer Awareness and Perception Study

SURVEY TERMINATION

310 Total Respondents

- 155 from Bay Area
- 155 from Sacramento–Stockton Area

Terminations

- 331 for being “Not at all familiar” with Auburn

Consumer Awareness and Perception Study

SURVEY ANALYSIS GROUPINGS

Markets

- Bay Area: *Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties*
- Sacramento–Stockton: *Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo Counties*

Age

- Gen Z and Young Millennials: *18–34 years old*
- Gen X and Old Millennials: *35–54 years old*
- Boomers +: *55+ years old*

Visitors (182 Respondents)

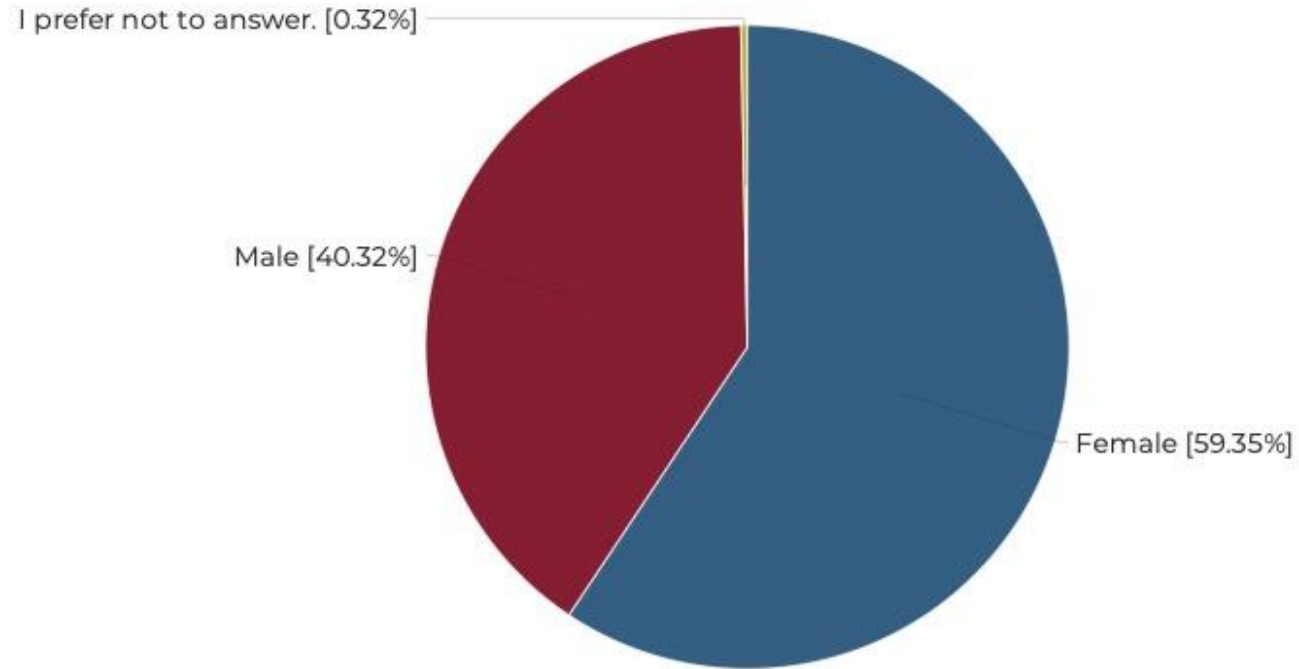
- Visitors indicated that they have visited Auburn in the past 3 years.

Pass-Throughs (76 Respondents)

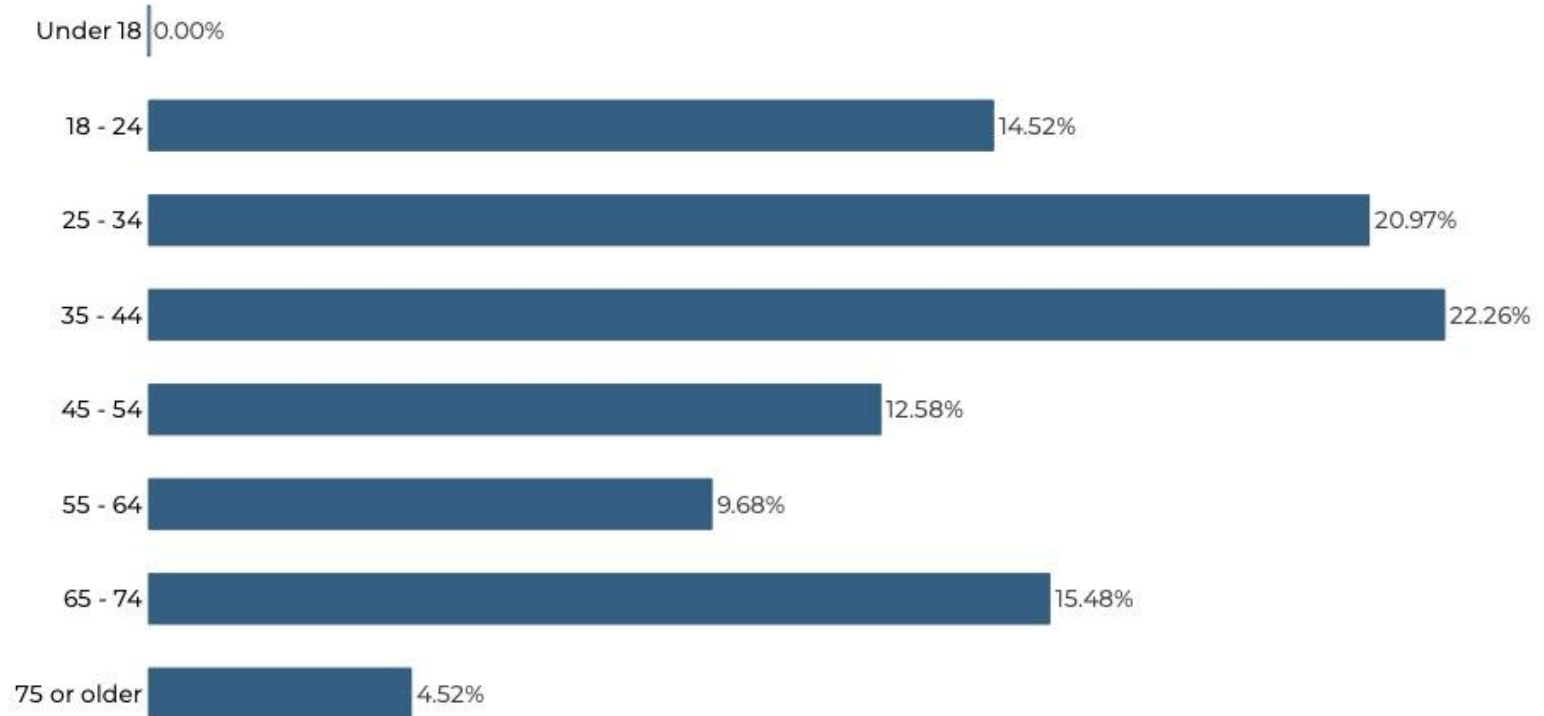
- Pass-throughs indicated that they have visited Lake Tahoe in the past 3 years and drive I-80 to reach their destination.

Demographics

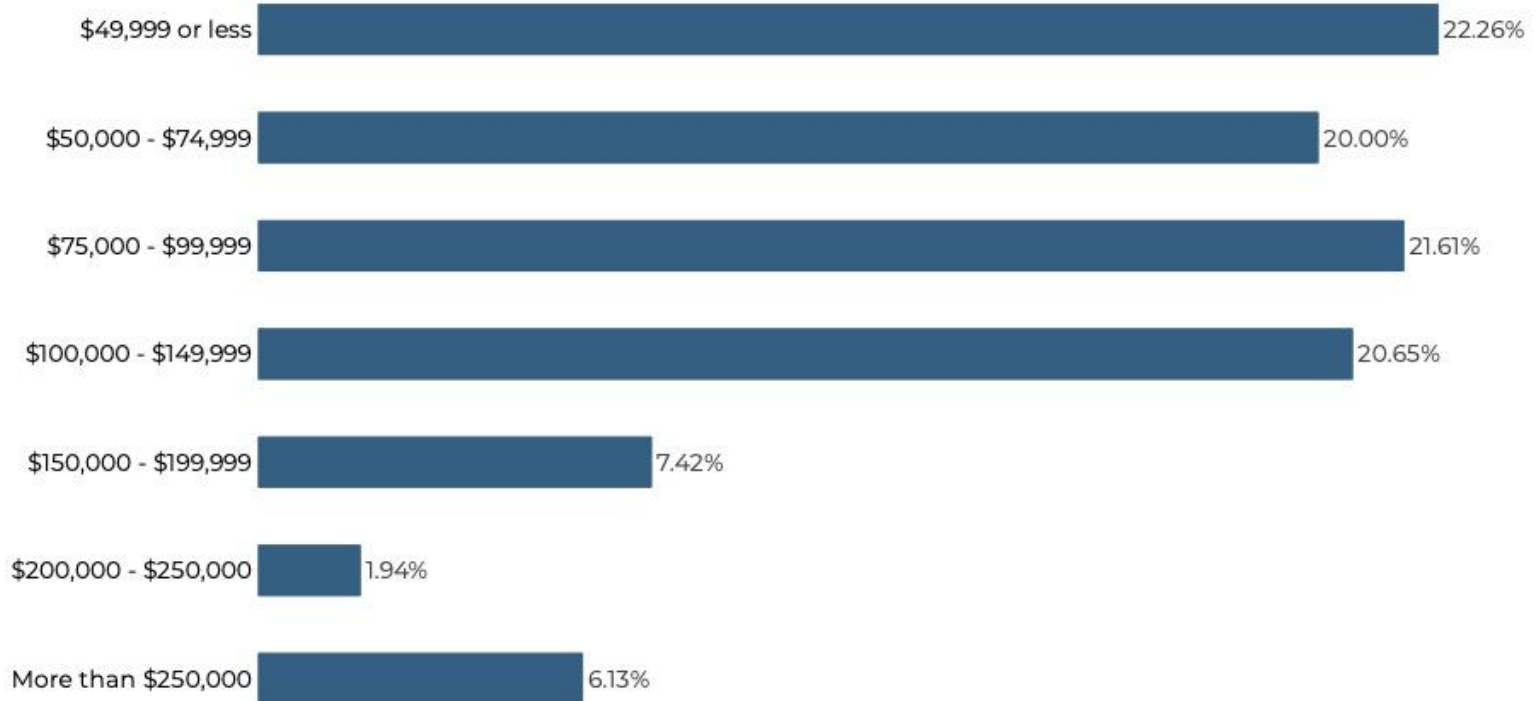
What is your gender?



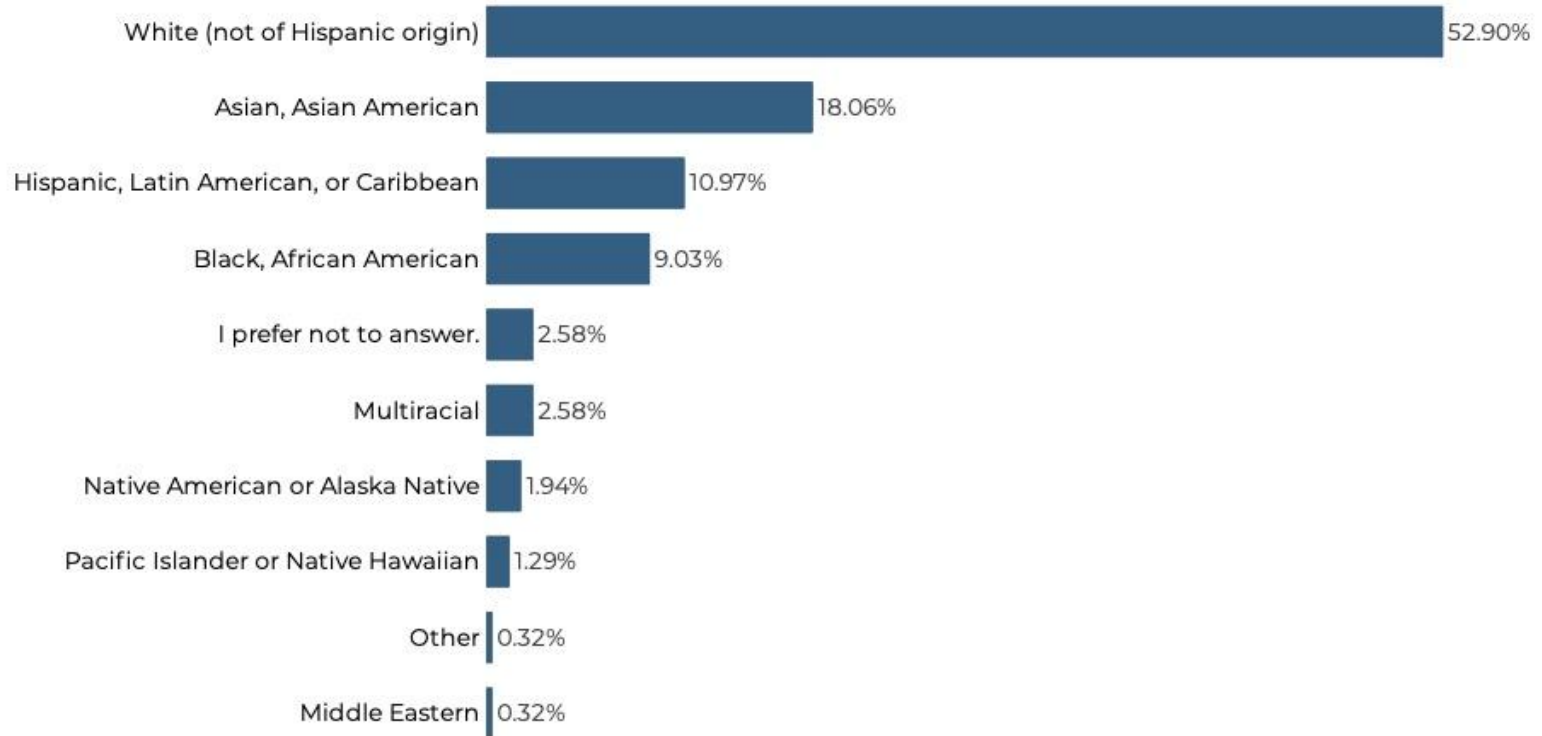
Which of the following includes your age?



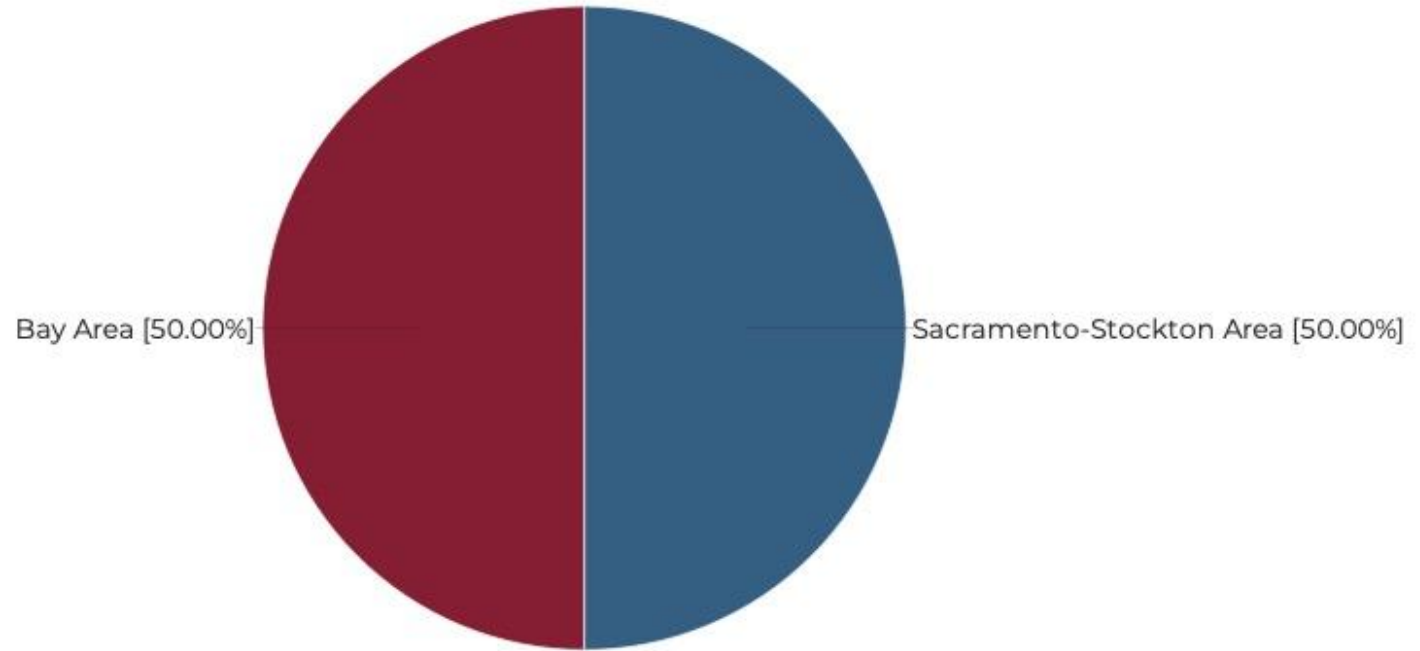
Which of the following ranges includes your total household income?



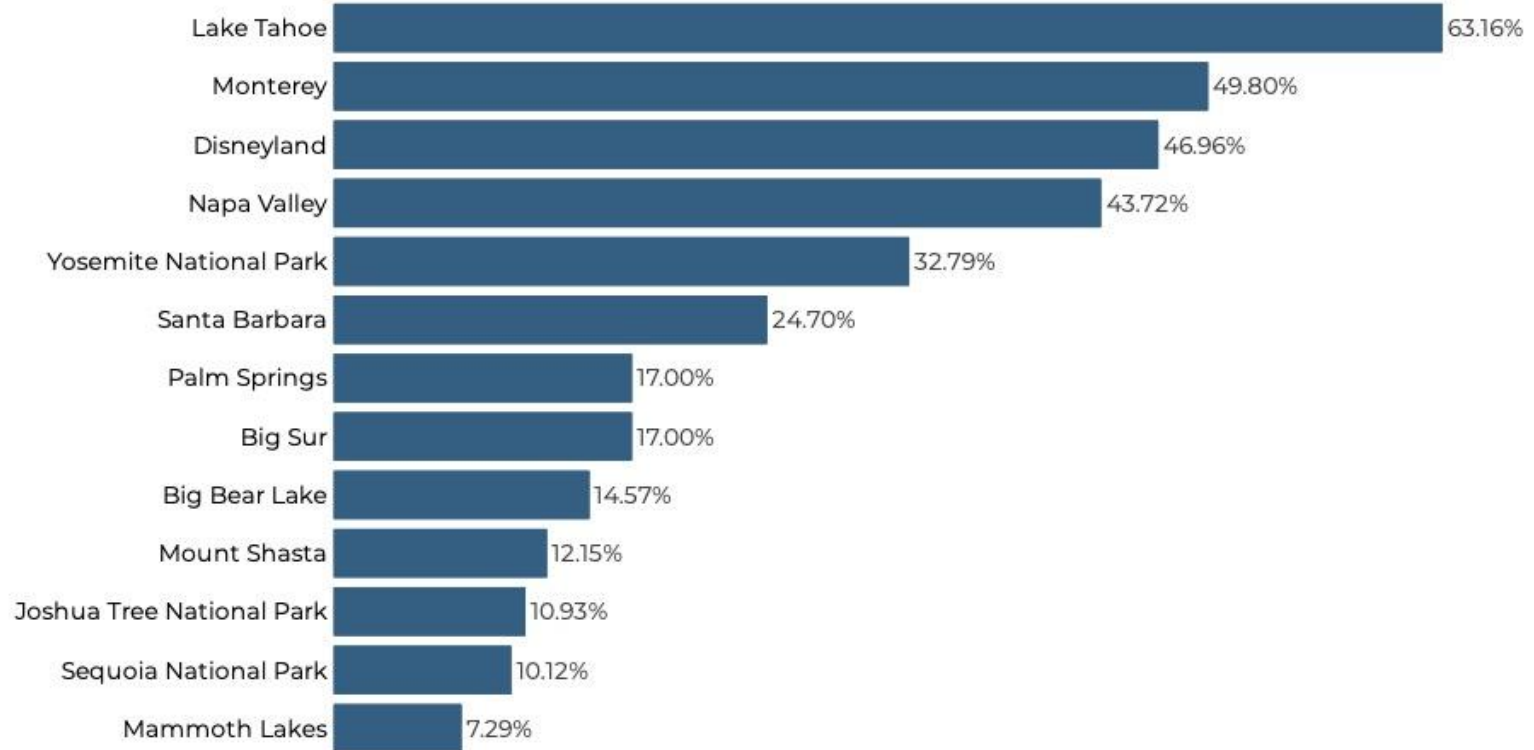
Which of the following best describes you?



Where in California do you live?



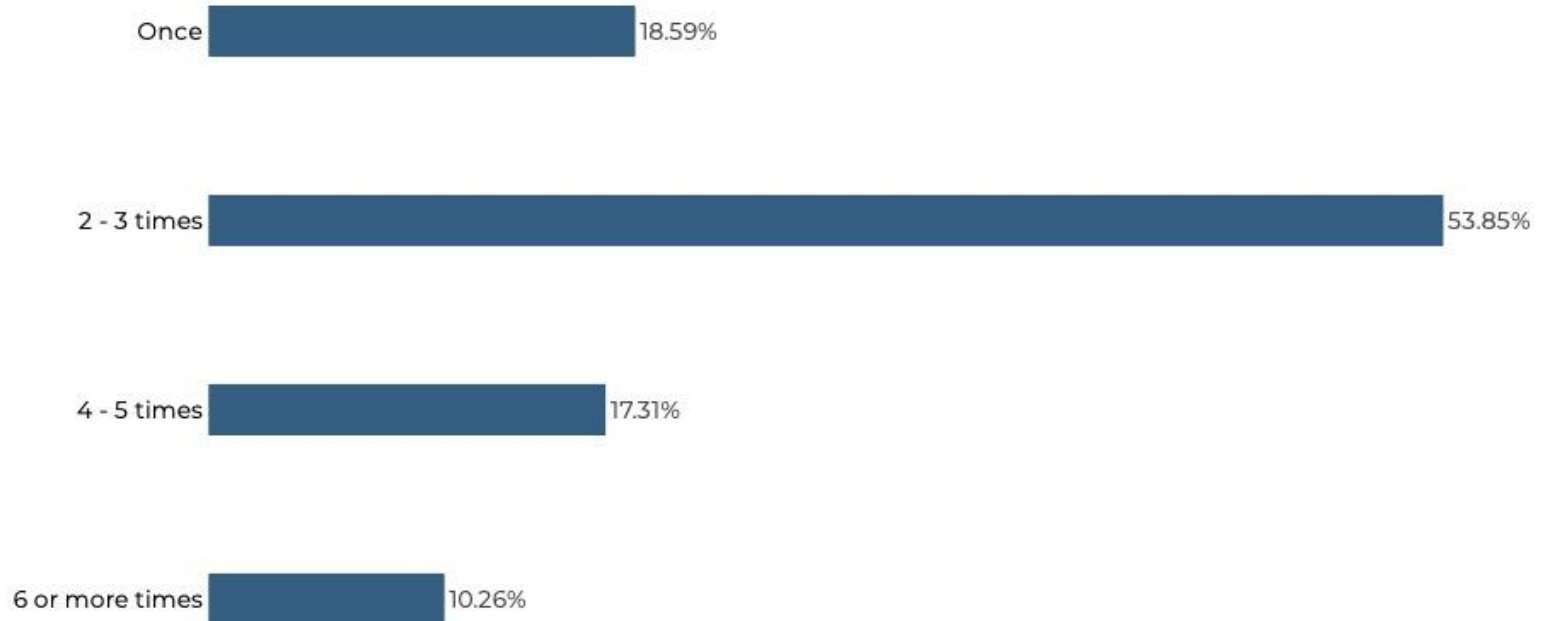
Have you visited any of the following California destinations in the past 3 years?
Choose all that apply.



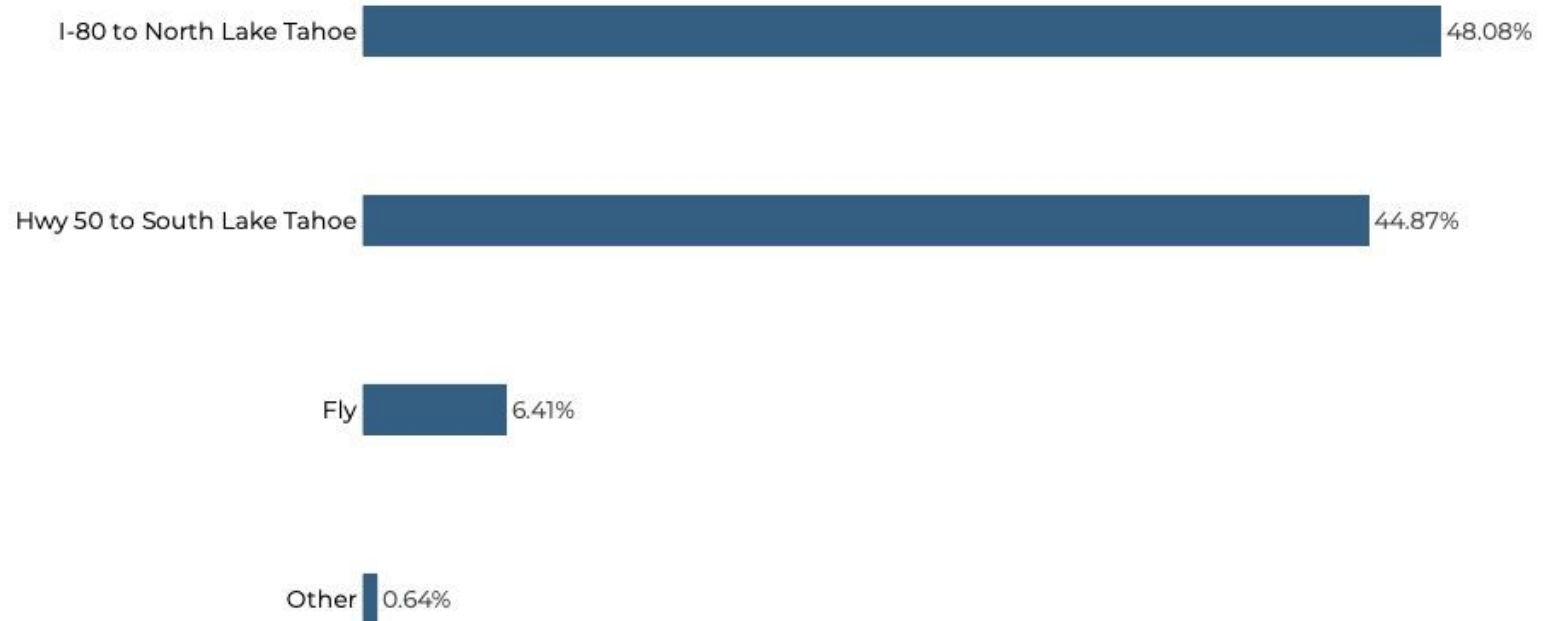
CAP Study

LAKE TAHOE VISITORS ONLY, 156 RESPONSES

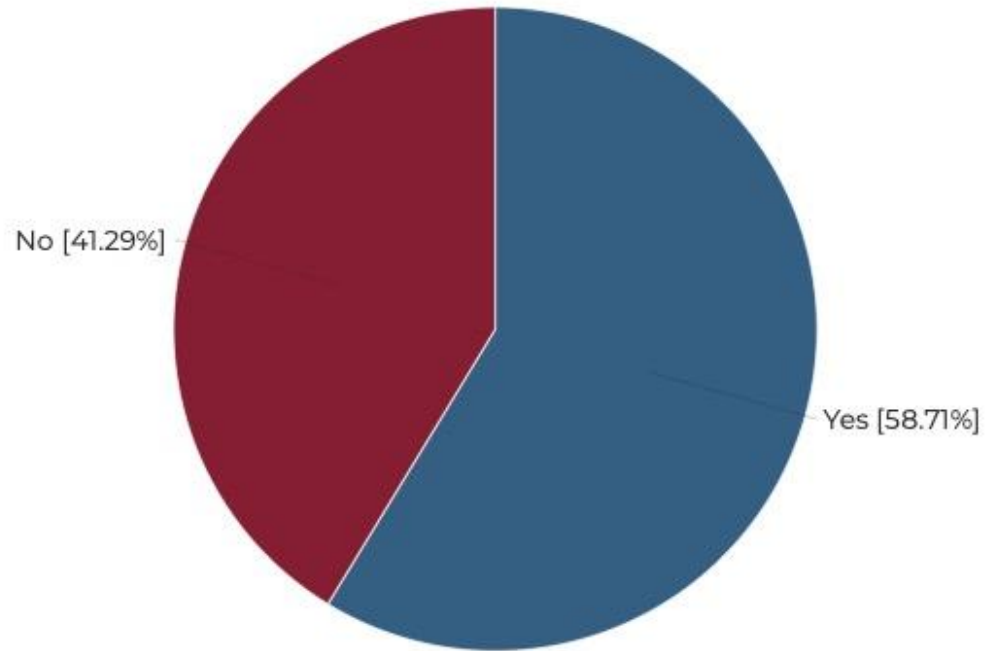
How many times have you visited Lake Tahoe in the past 3 years?



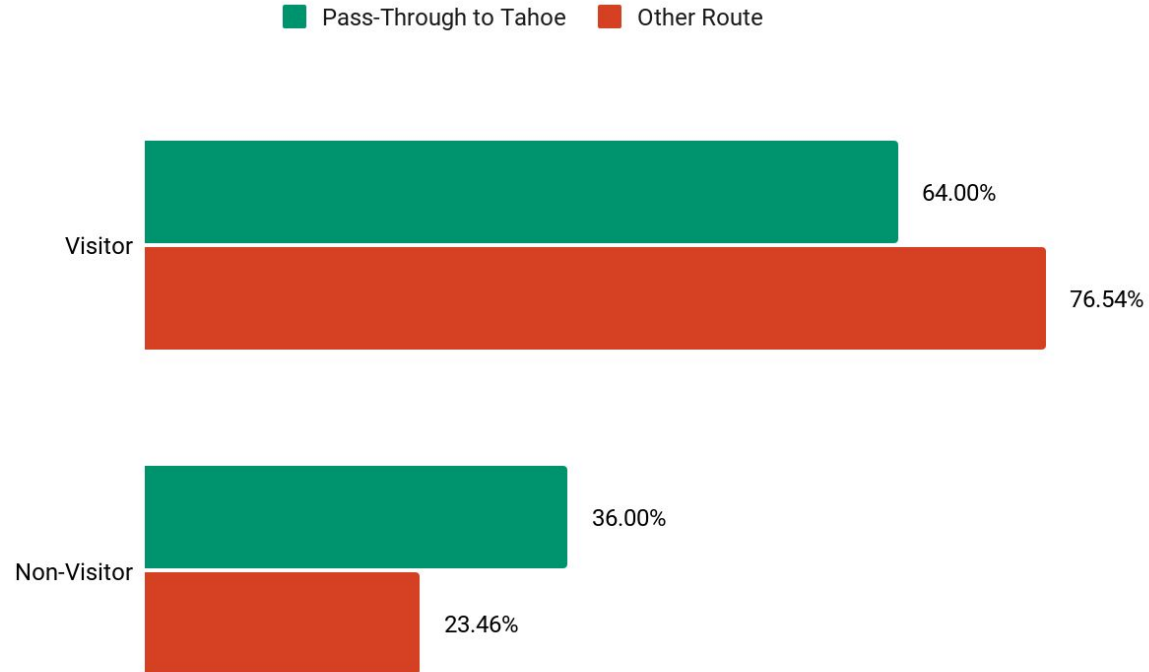
When traveling to Lake Tahoe, what is your preferred route?



Have you visited Auburn in the past three (3) years?



Have you visited Auburn in the past three (3) years?

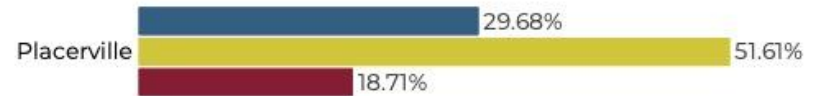
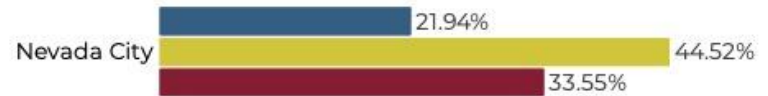
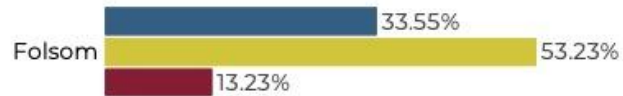
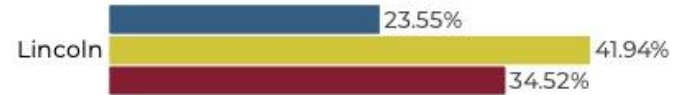
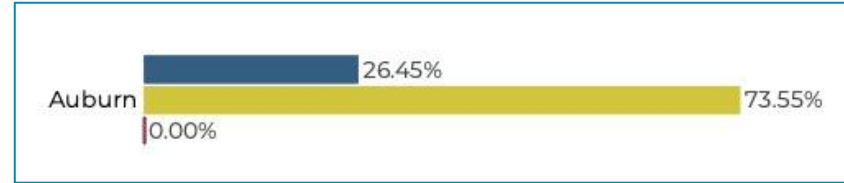


Familiarity

CAP Study

How familiar are you with the following communities in Northern California?

● Very familiar ● Somewhat familiar ● Not at all familiar

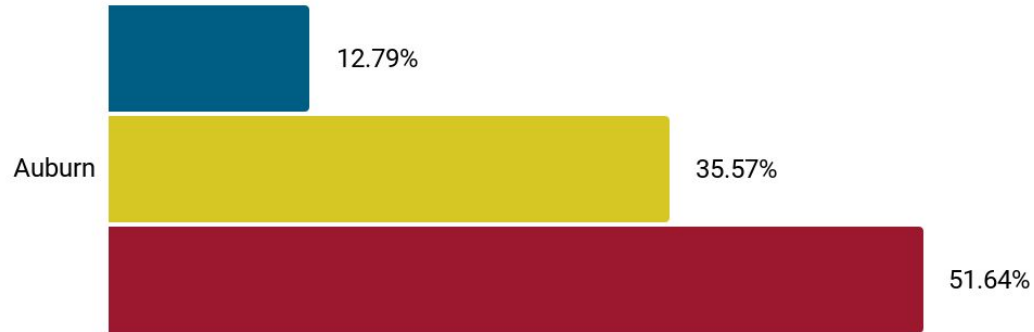


CAP Study

AUBURN ONLY, TERMINATIONS INCLUDED

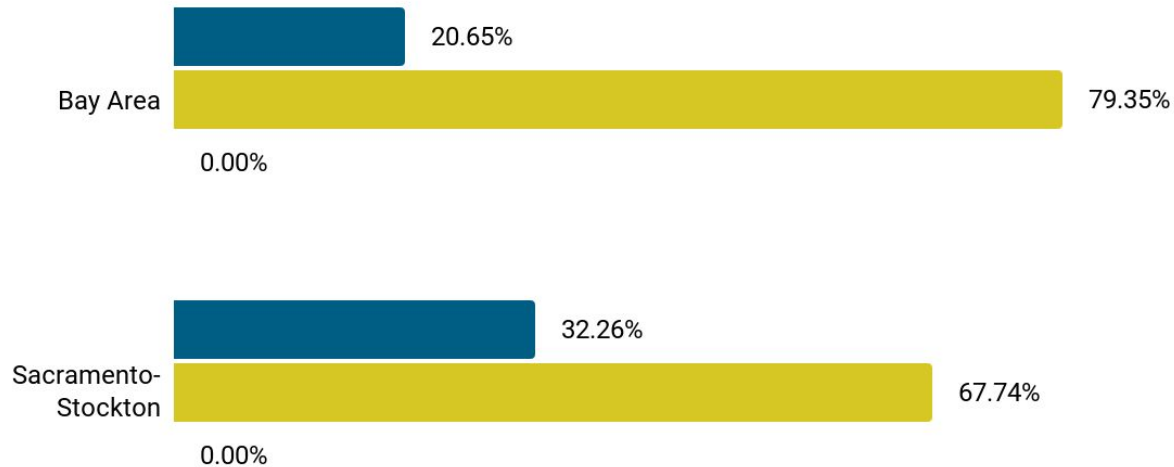
How familiar are you with the following communities in Northern California?

● Very familiar ● Somewhat familiar ● Not at all familiar



How familiar are you with the following communities in Northern California?

● Very familiar ● Somewhat familiar ● Not at all familiar



Unaided Perceptions

CAP Study

When you think of the following cities, what is the first thing that comes to mind?

Auburn

- Trees
- Hiking
- Beautiful, pretty

Folsom

- Prison
- Lake
- Shopping outlets

Grass Valley

- Green, nature
- Mountains, foothills
- Rural, country

Lincoln

- Thunder Valley
Casino
- Clay Products

Nevada City

- Gold Rush
- Foothills, mountains
- Close to Tahoe/Reno

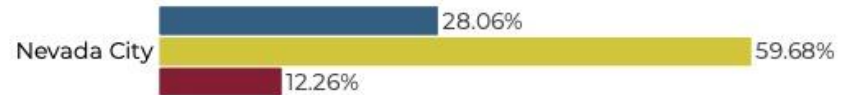
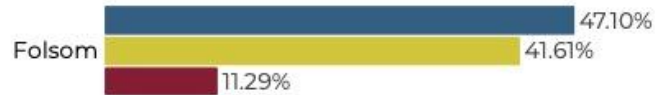
Placerville

- Hangtown
- Casino
- Apple Hill

CAP Study

From your perspective, do you think the following cities are improving, declining, or staying the same?

● Improving ● Staying the same ● Declining

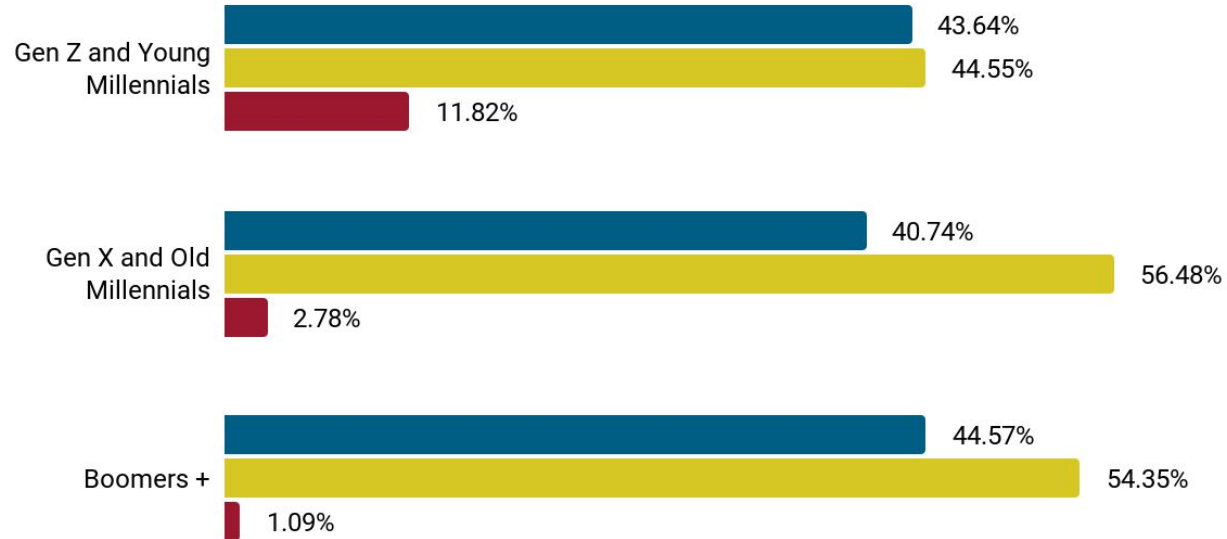


CAP Study

AUBURN ONLY, BY AGE

From your perspective, do you think the following cities are improving, declining, or staying the same?

● Improving ● Staying the same ● Declining

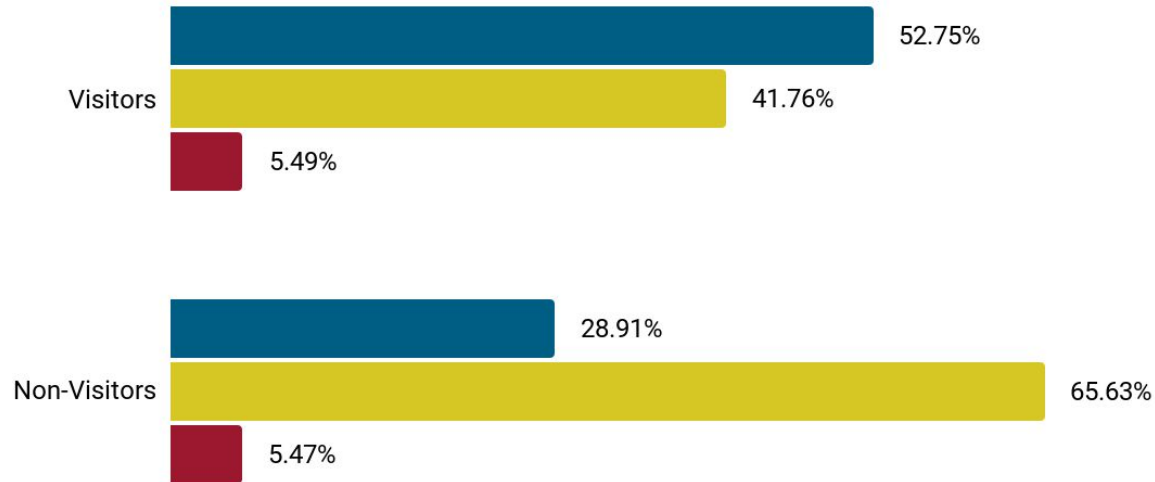


CAP Study

AUBURN ONLY, BY VISITATION

From your perspective, do you think the following cities are improving, declining, or staying the same?

● Improving ● Staying the same ● Declining

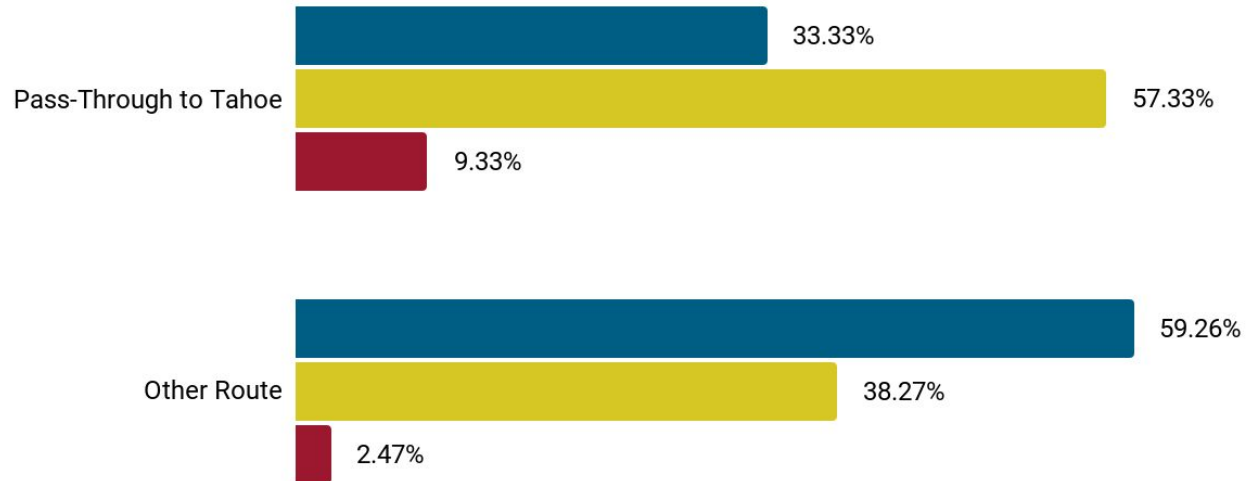


CAP Study

AUBURN ONLY, BY PASS-THROUGHS

From your perspective, do you think the following cities are improving, declining, or staying the same?

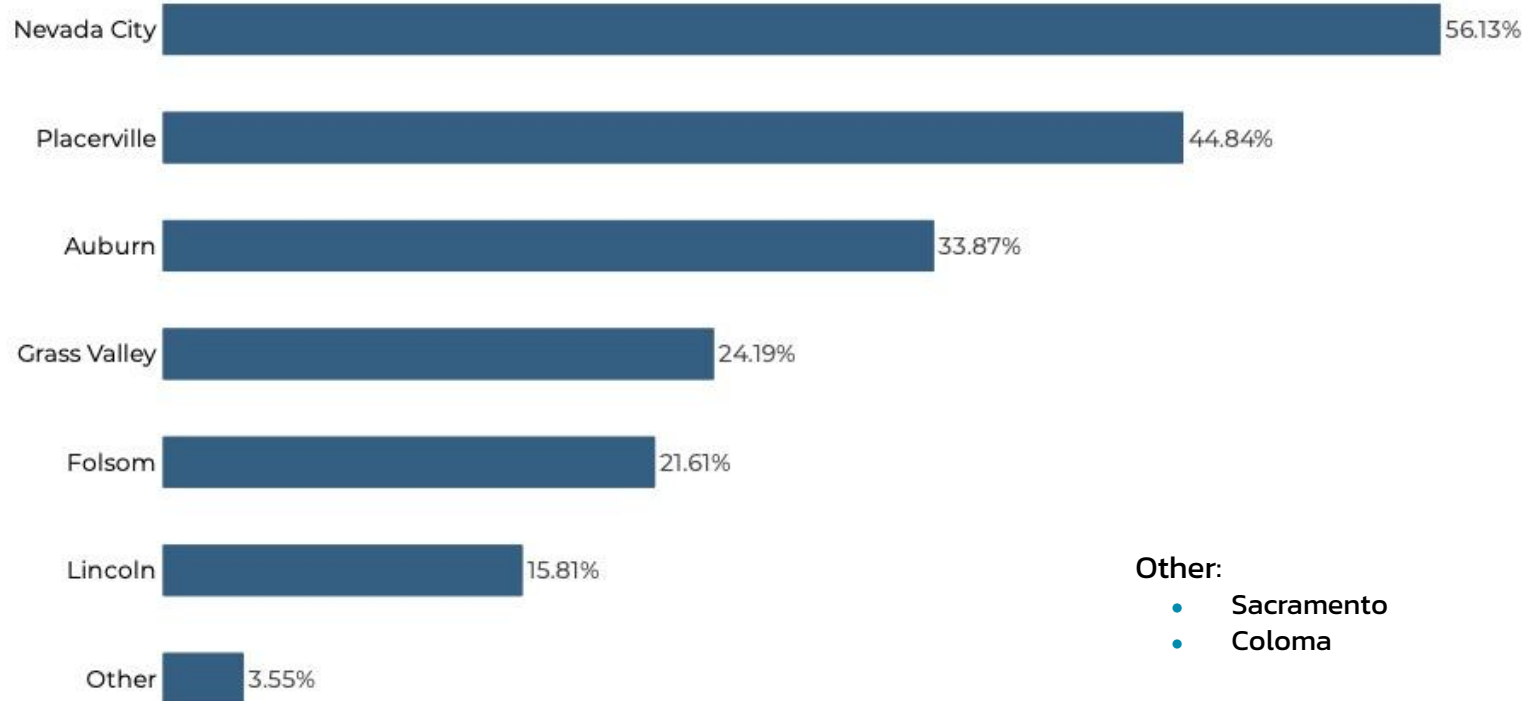
● Improving ● Staying the same ● Declining



CAP Study

Which of the following communities do you most associate with history and architecture related to the California Gold Rush?

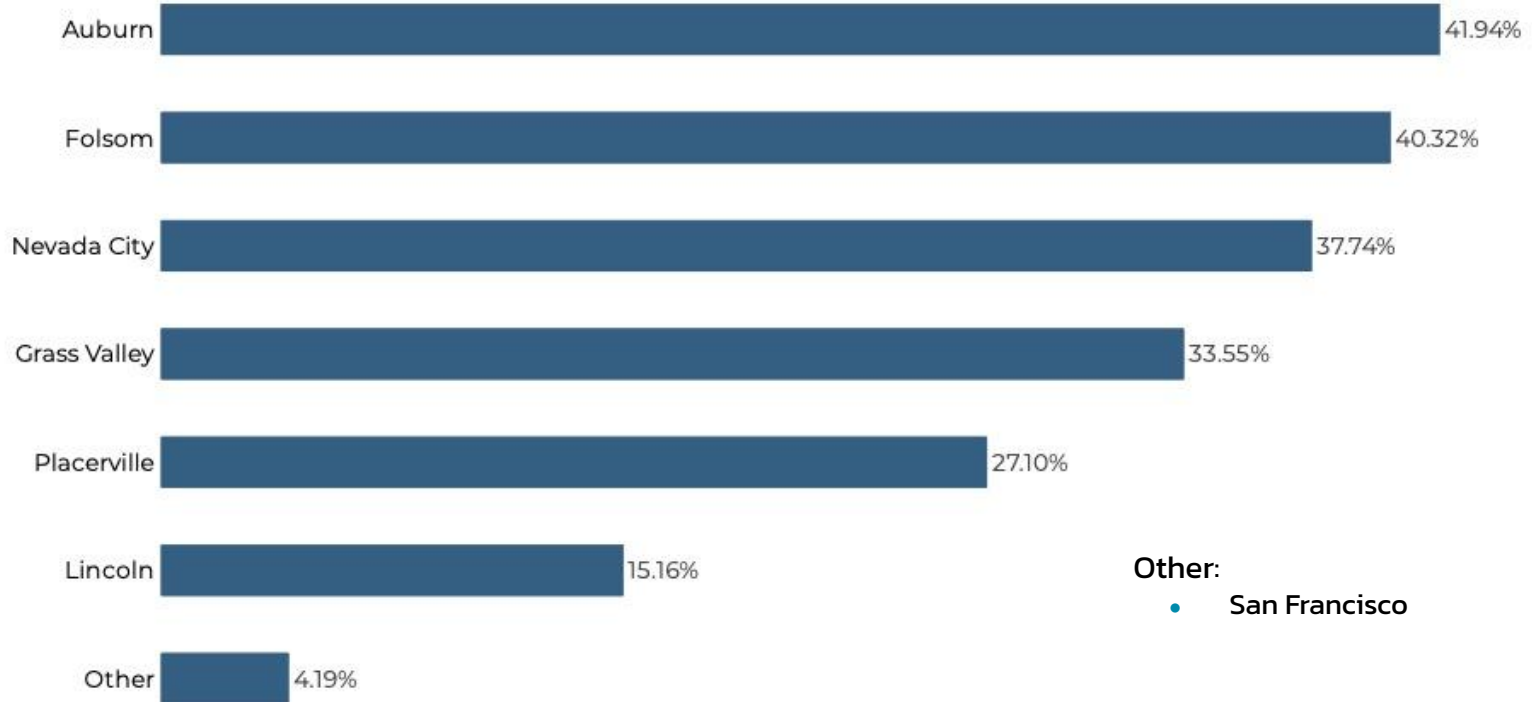
Choose two answers.



CAP Study

Which of the following communities do you most associate with strong support for local arts, crafts, and music?

Choose two answers.

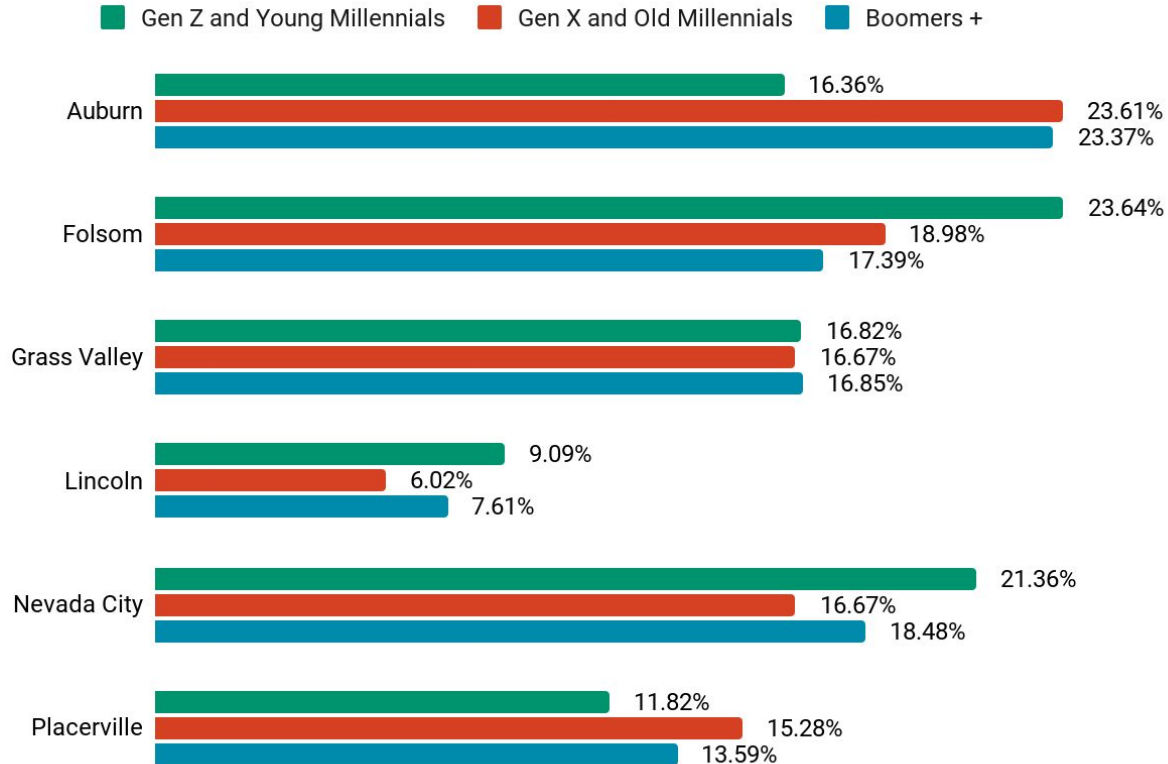


CAP Study

BY AGE

Which of the following communities do you most associate with strong support for local arts, crafts, and music?

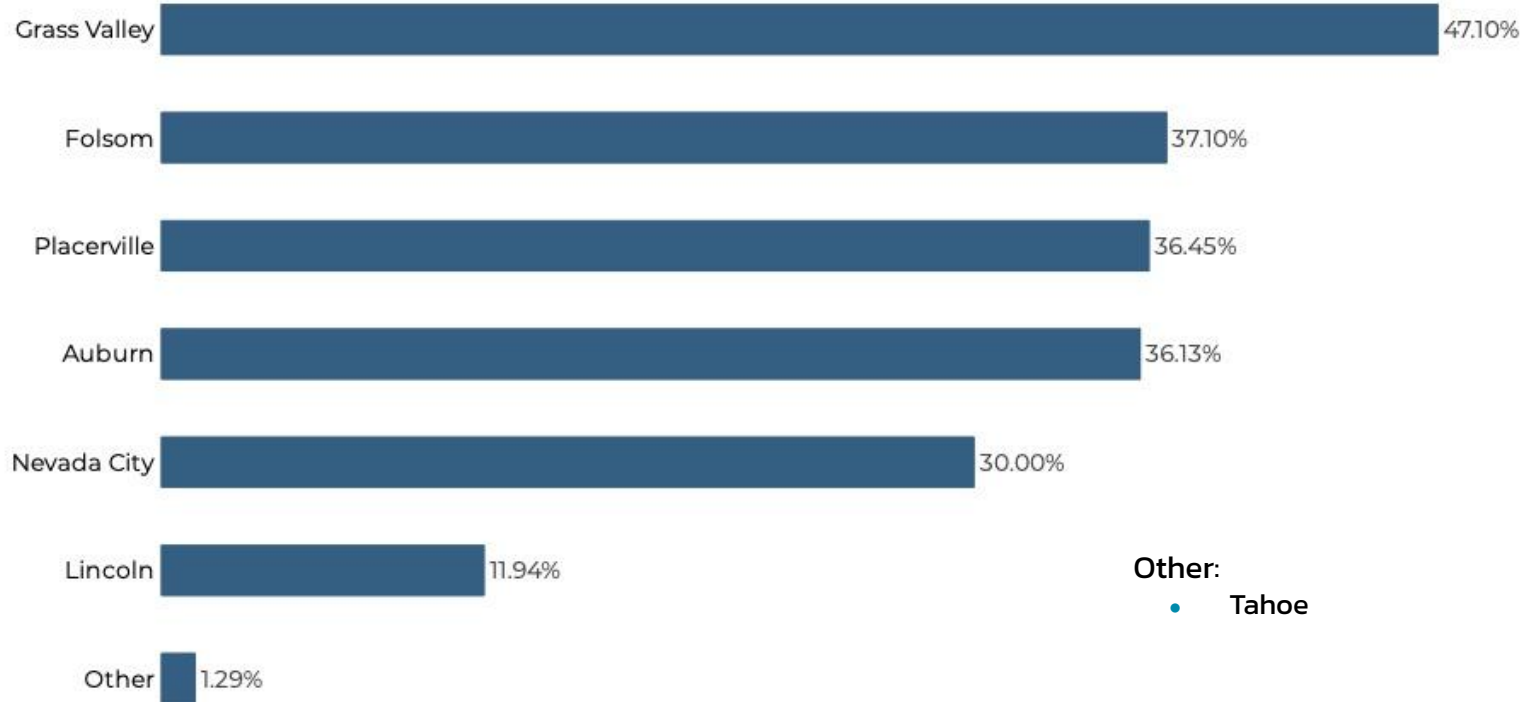
Choose two answers.



CAP Study

Which of the following communities do you most associate with access to scenic natural areas and outdoor recreation?

Choose two answers.

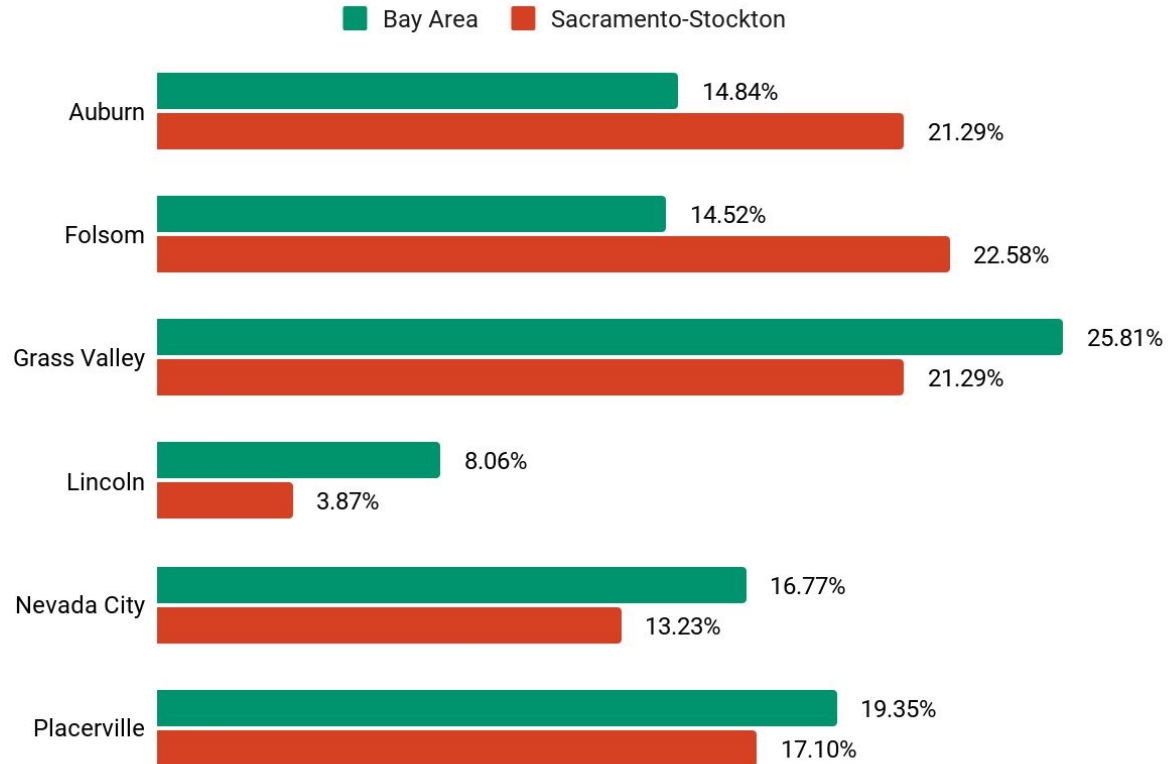


CAP Study

BY MARKET

Which of the following communities do you most associate with access to scenic natural areas and outdoor recreation?

Choose two answers.

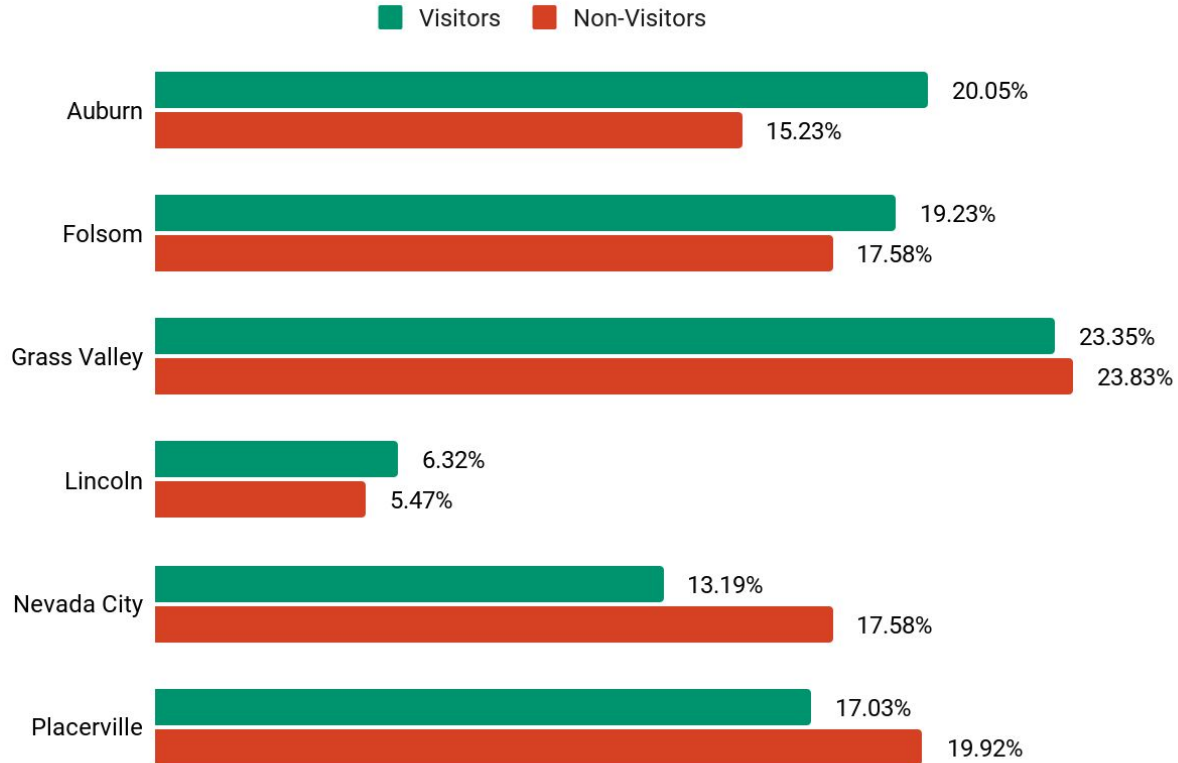


CAP Study

BY VISITATION

Which of the following communities do you most associate with access to scenic natural areas and outdoor recreation?

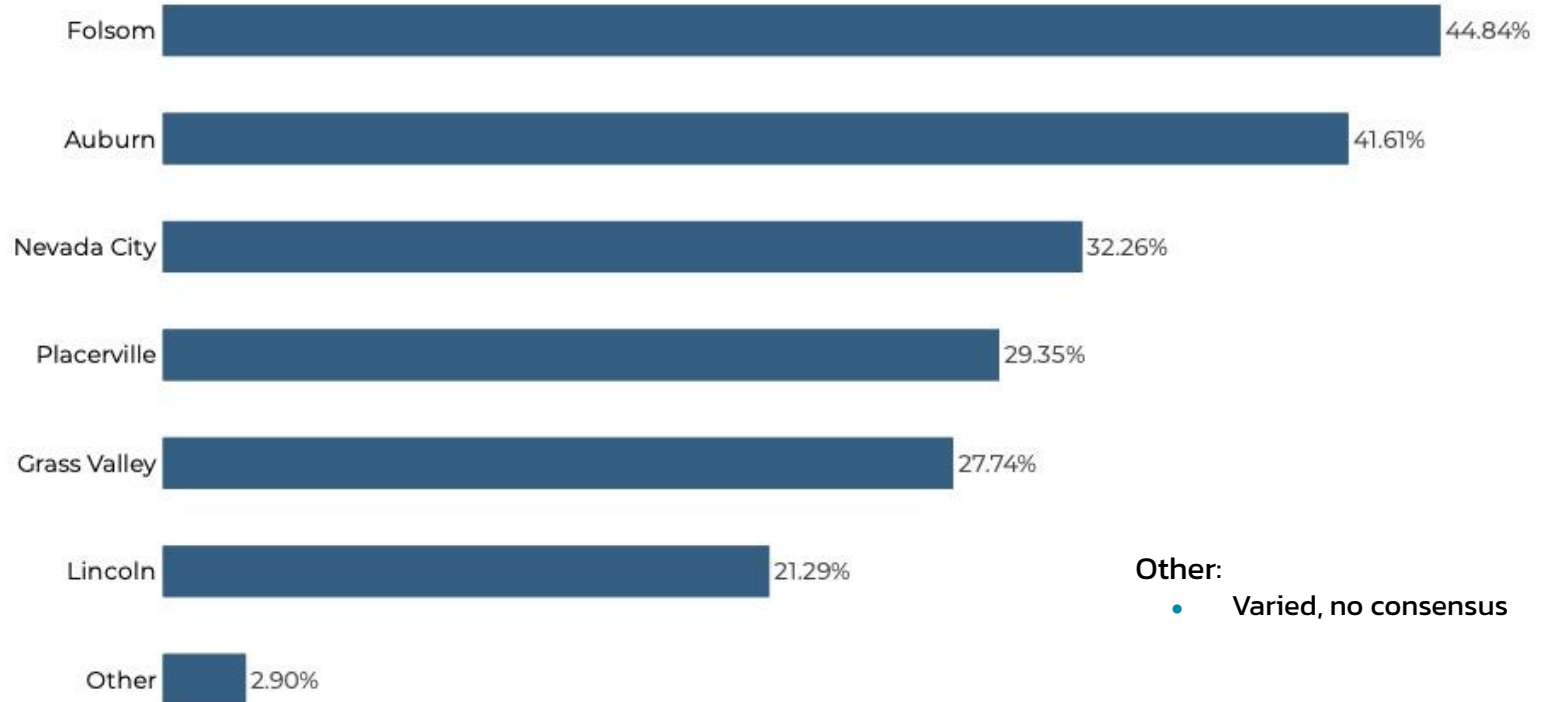
Choose two answers.



CAP Study

Which of the following communities do you think offer the best food and drink options—including restaurants, breweries, wineries, and markets?

Choose two answers.



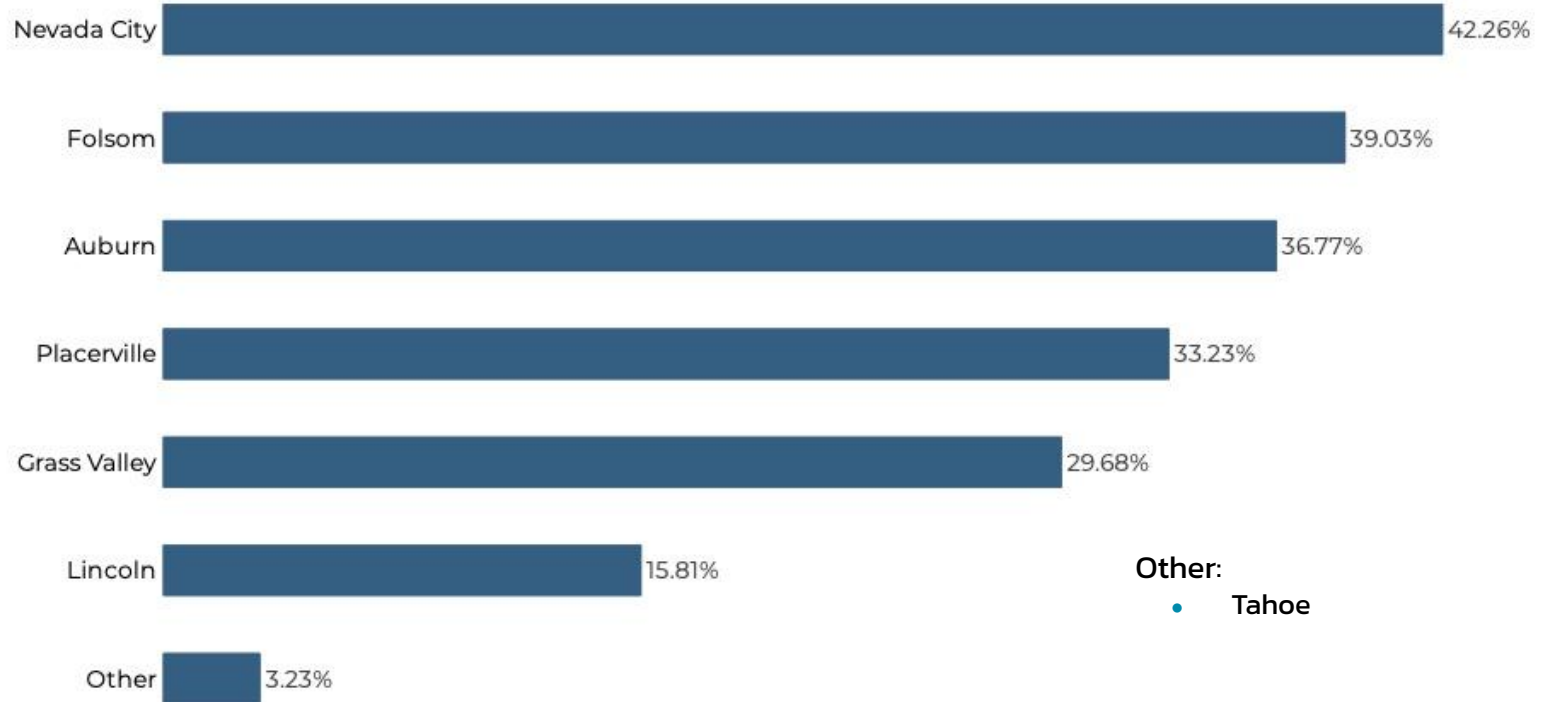
Other:

- Varied, no consensus

CAP Study

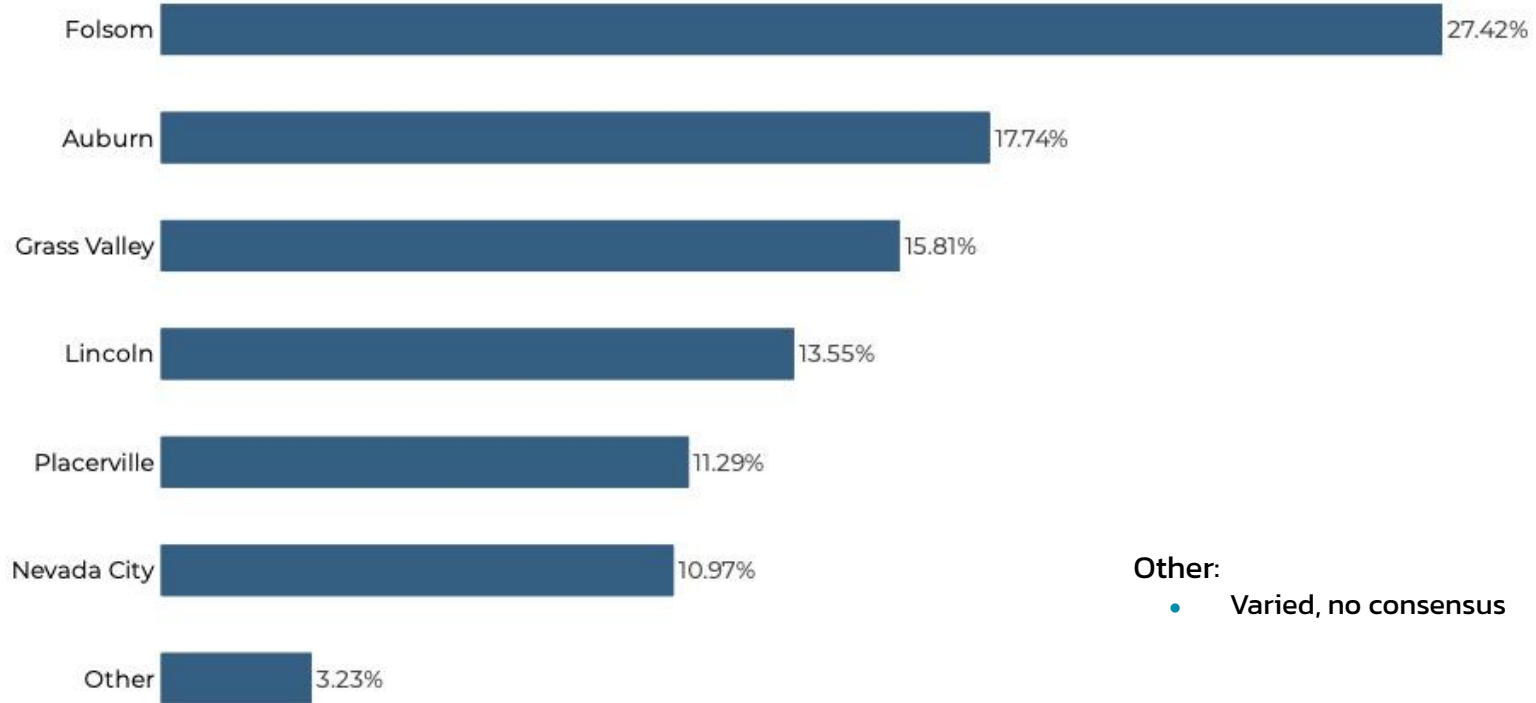
Which of the following communities do you think put on the best themed events and festivals, year after year?

Choose two answers.



CAP Study

In general, which of the following communities do you think is the best place for someone to...
Buy a Home? Choose one answer.

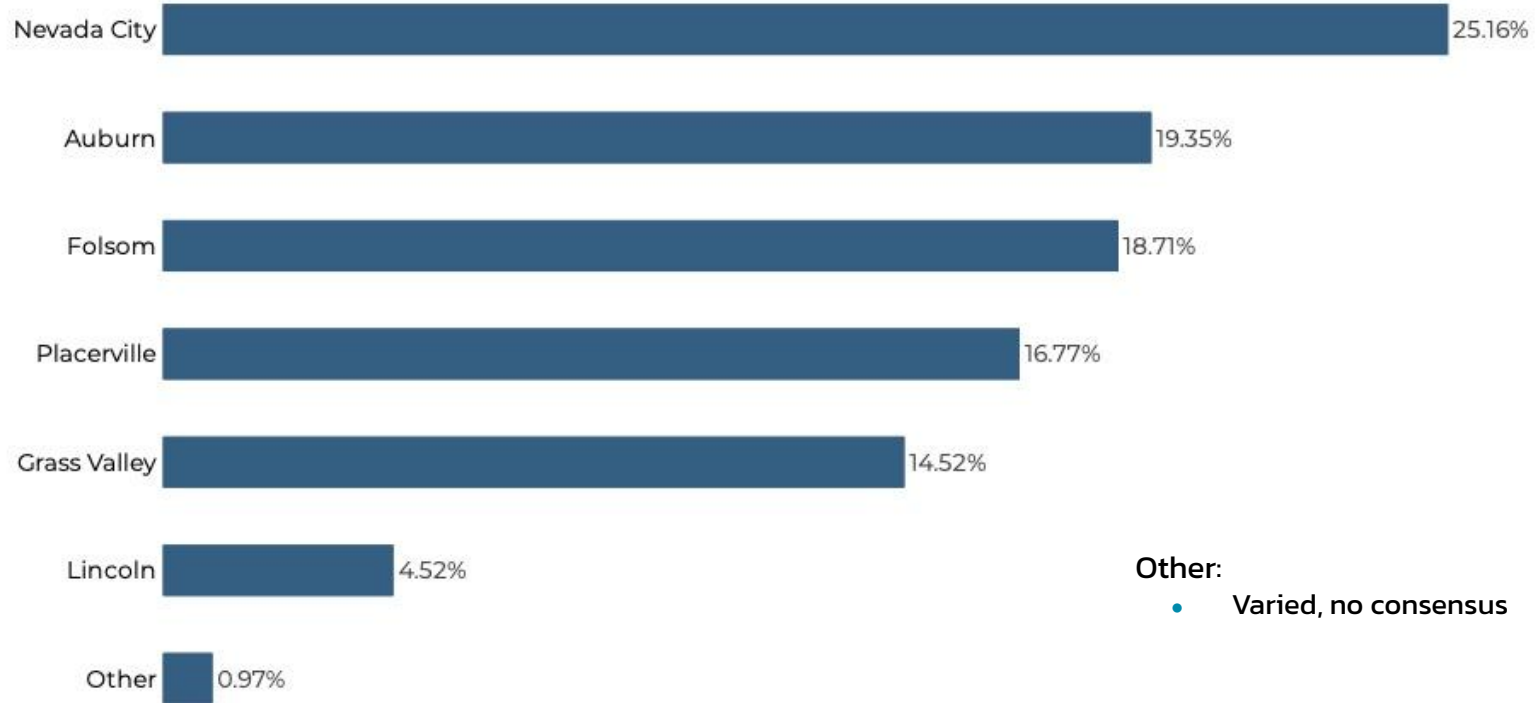


Other:

- Varied, no consensus

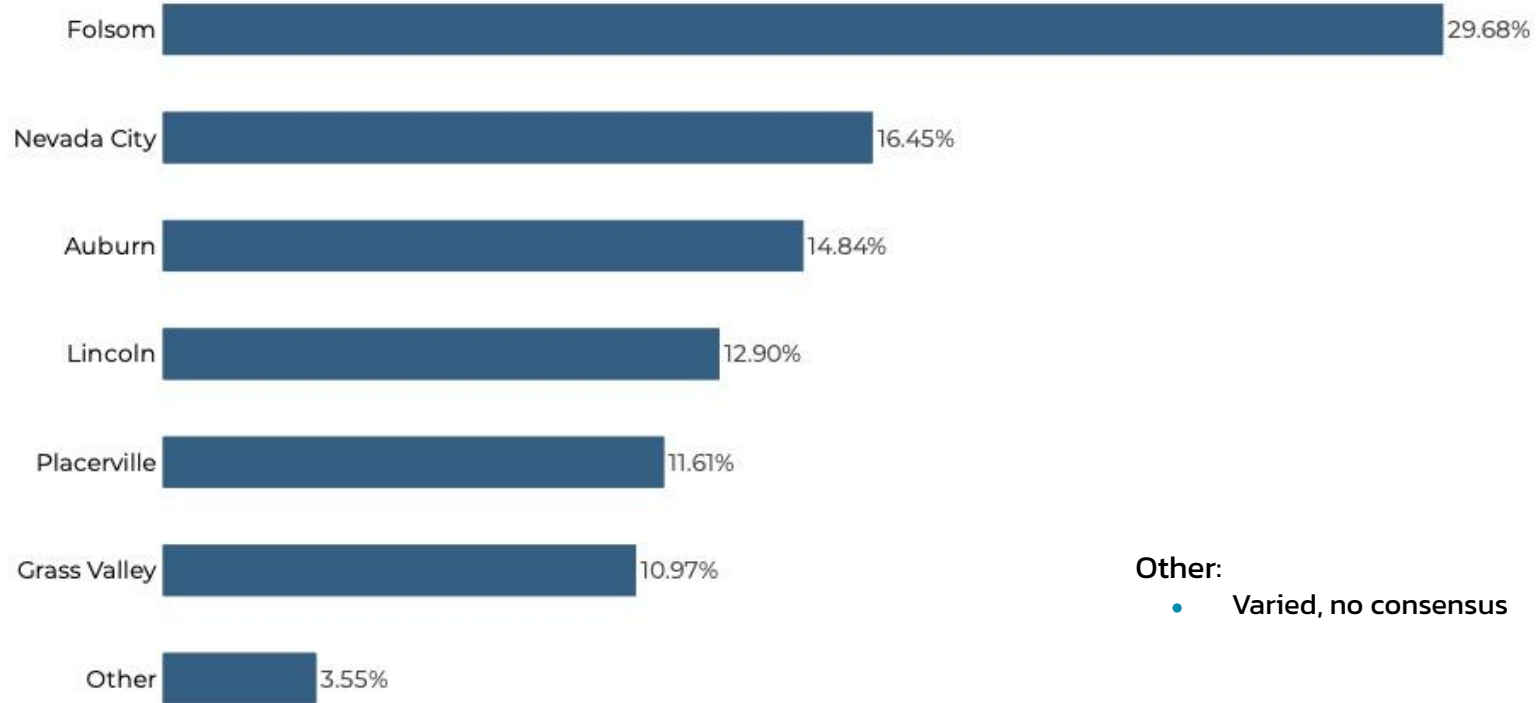
CAP Study

In general, which of the following communities do you think is the best place for someone to...
Go on a day trip? Choose one answer.



CAP Study

In general, which of the following communities do you think is the best place for someone to...
Start a business? Choose one answer.



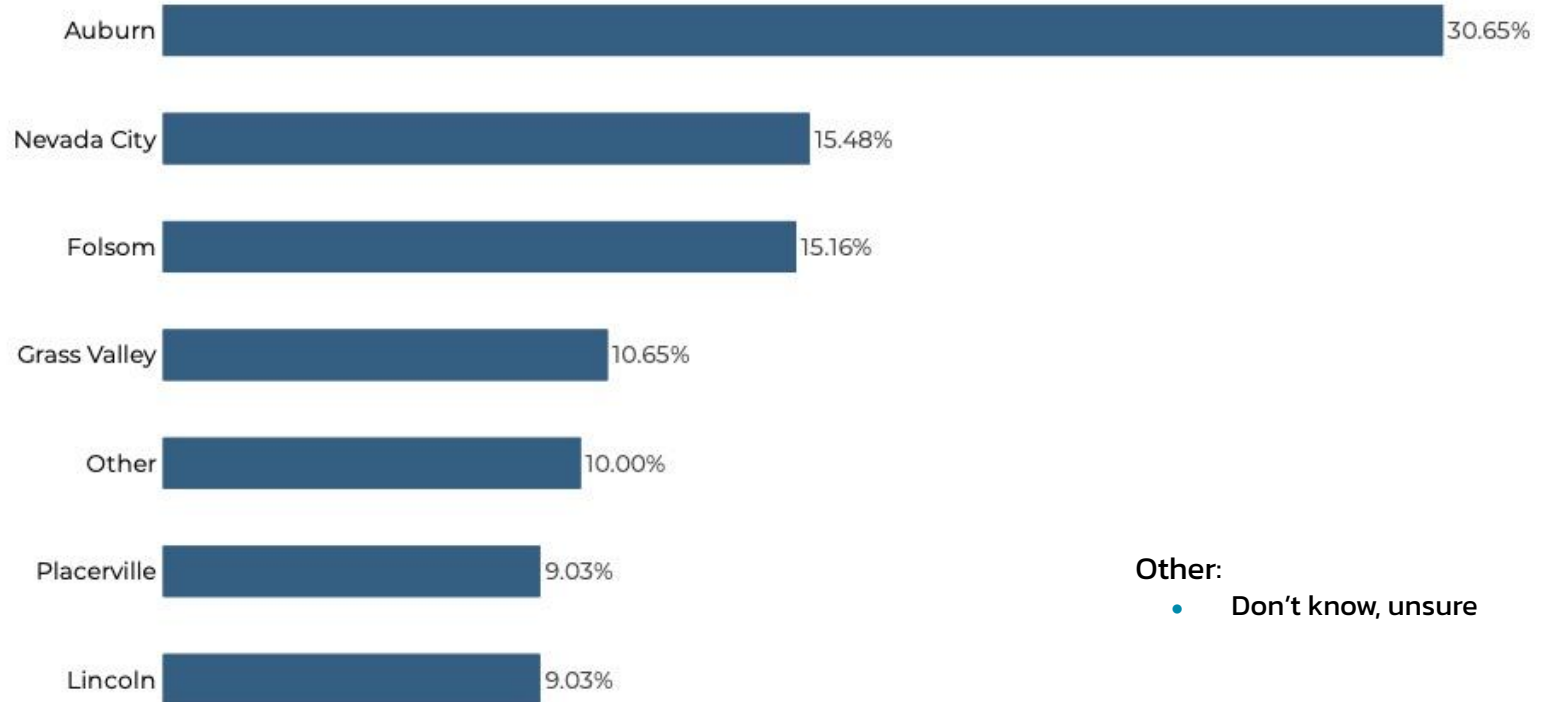
Other:

- Varied, no consensus

CAP Study

Which of the following communities is known as the “Endurance Capital” for hosting a variety of long distance races, including the Western States and the Tevis Cup?

Choose one answer.



Other:

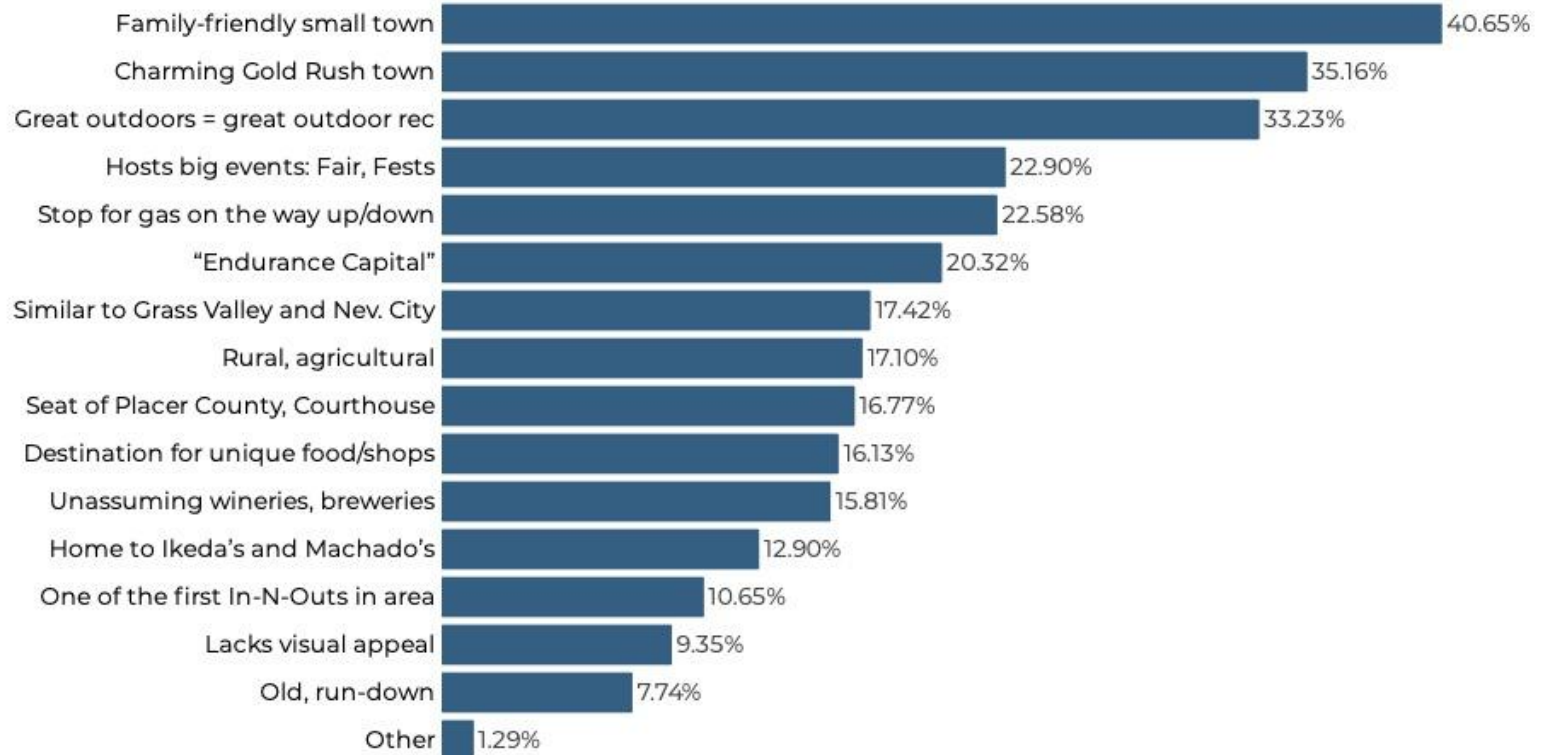
- Don't know, unsure

Perceptions

CAP Study

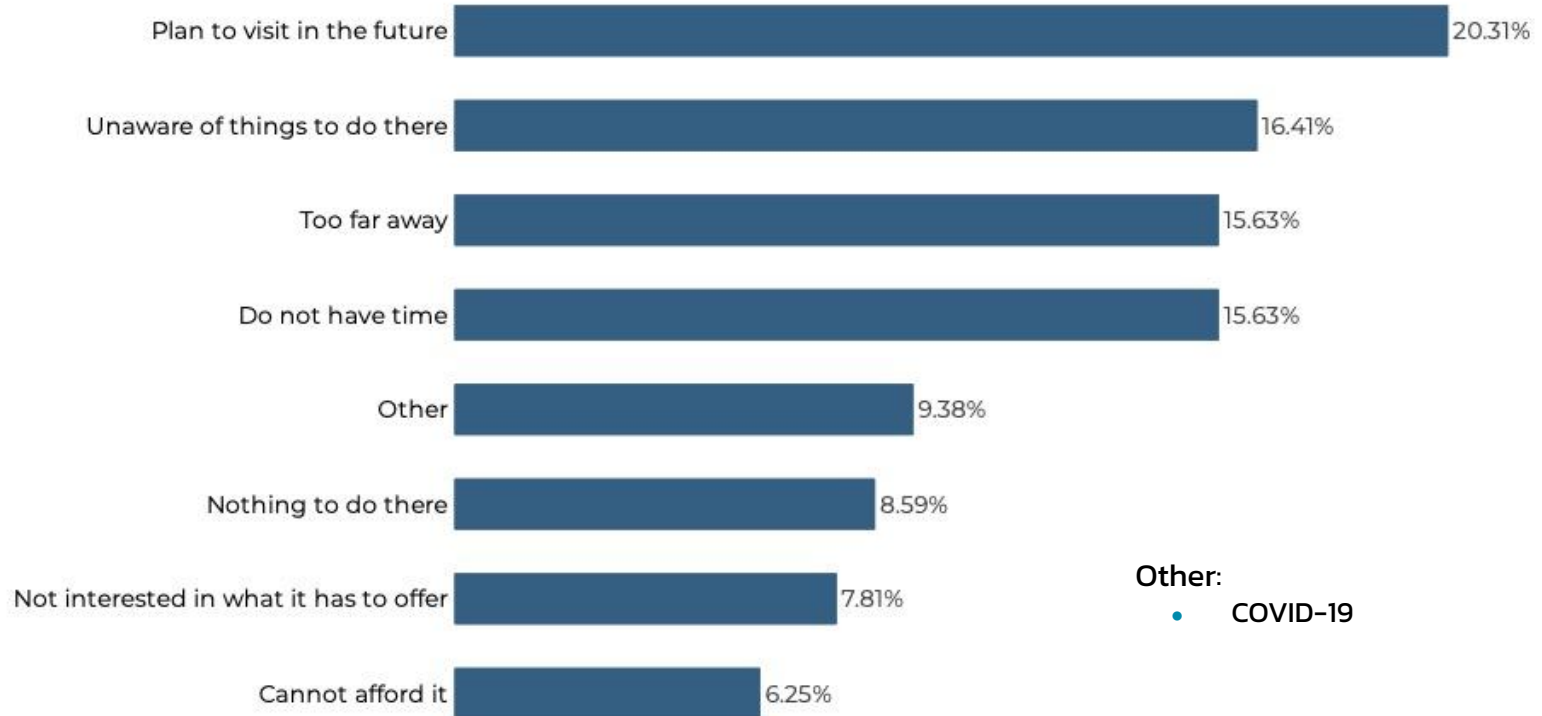
Which phrase or adjective best describes the City of Auburn, CA?

Choose three answers.



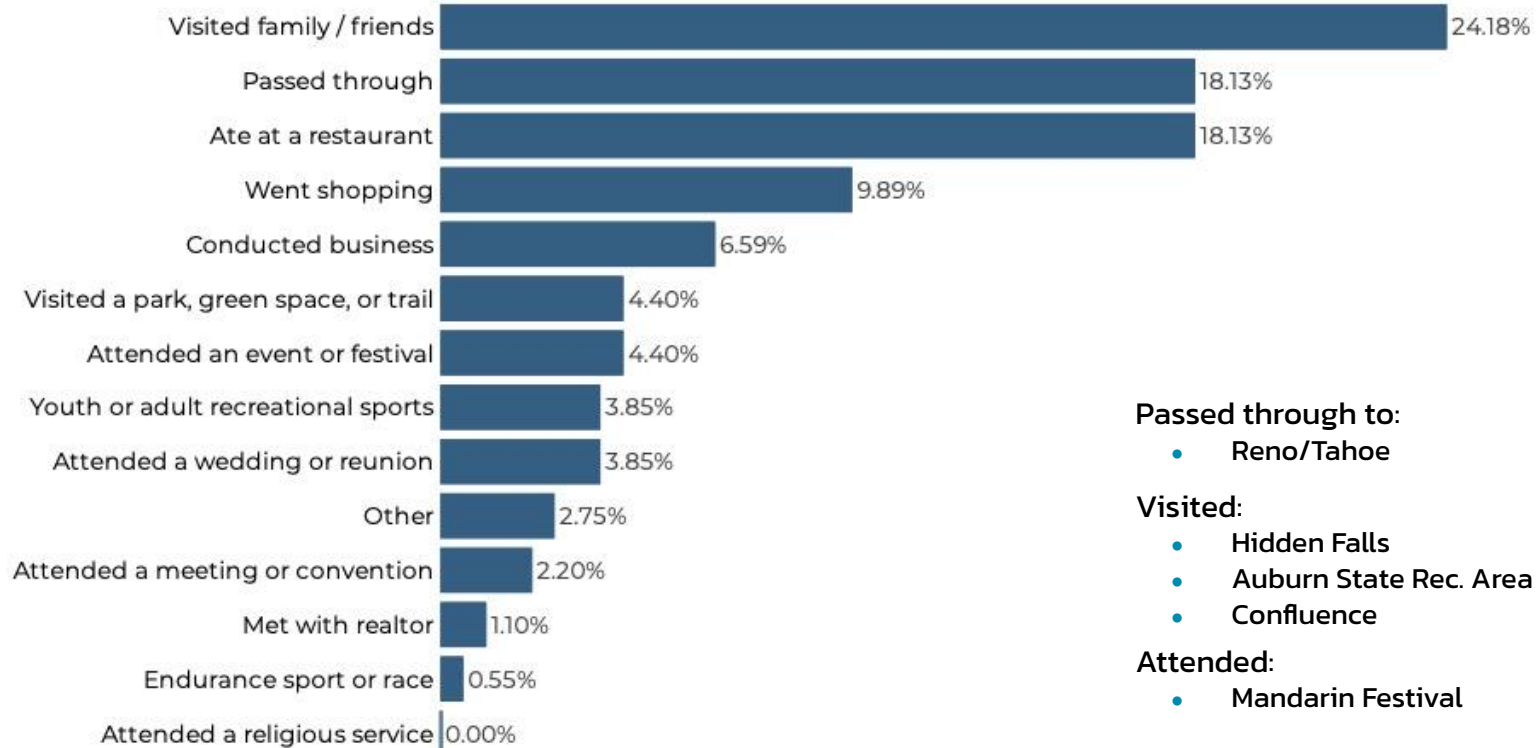
Non-Visitors

Why have you NOT visited Auburn?



Visitors

What was the primary purpose or main reason you visited Auburn on your most recent visit?



What aspect of Auburn leaves the most positive impression on visitors and newcomers?

- *"It's a good pit stop when you go to Lake Tahoe."*
- *"Ikeda's and other unique restaurants"*
- *"It's a lovely little town. Very family oriented and unassuming."*
- *"Trendy cafes, craft beer, wine trails, and stunning outdoor activities"*
- *"The nostalgic ambiance and the sense of stepping back in time can be appealing and captivating for those exploring the city."*
- *"People in Auburn are welcoming, kind, and always willing to help."*
- *"The scenic views are great."*

What aspect of Auburn leaves the most **negative** impression on visitors and newcomers?

- *"It can be tough to distinguish from other towns nearby. I wouldn't have thought to go there if I didn't have friends living there already."*
- *"Parking is too limited."*
- *"Lack of big city services"*
- *"I have noticed that they don't like outsiders."*
- *"The traffic in Auburn can be congested and frustrating, especially during peak hours."*
- *"Not highly visible from the highway"*
- *"Few choices of options for dining"*
- *"It is small, not much to do. Auburn tends to be a drive-through/passing-by kind of town."*

All Respondents

CAP Study

BY VISITATION, TOP RANKED

Based on your experience in Auburn, in your opinion, please rate the following Auburn attributes on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is "Poor" and 10 is "Excellent."



CAP Study

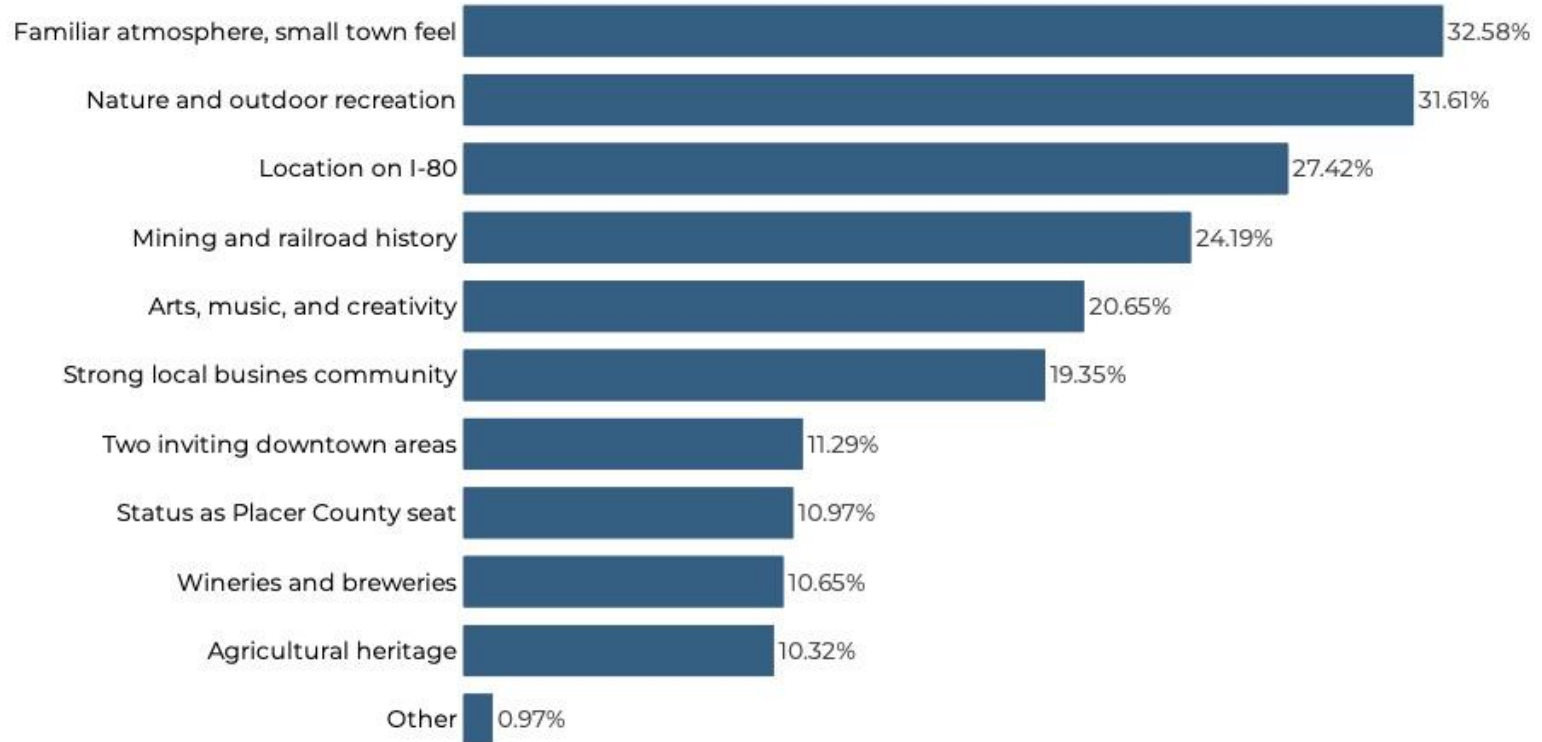
BY VISITATION, BOTTOM RANKED

Based on your experience in Auburn, in your opinion, please rate the following Auburn attributes on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is "Poor" and 10 is "Excellent."



CAP Study

What is most important to the distinct identity of Auburn?
(Without _____, Auburn would lose its essence.)
Choose two answers.



External Influencer Perception Study

Influencer Perception Study

Assets

Outdoor recreation, parks, trails
Scenic beauty, natural resources
Authenticity
Proximity
Rich history and charm (statues)
Relative affordability
Eclectic
Agriculture (incl festivals)
Unique small businesses
Sense of community
County seat

Challenges

Pass through, lacks any reputation
Uncertain industrial base
Lack of ED strategy
County regs for small biz
Underutilized parcels, land for development
Old ideas, status quo
Aging community
North Auburn growth, sprawl
Costly fire insurance
Continuity in City Manager position

Missing

Reasons to visit
Awareness (incl endurance)
Major employers, industry
Strong identity, anything distinct
Entertainment
Cultural identity
High paying jobs
Strong retail, healthcare

EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS

Opportunities

Wineries, breweries
Weekend getaway
Marketing and promotion
DT/OT revitalization
Redevelopment
Outdoor recreation
Entrepreneurs, remote workers
Higher end amenities
Intentional ED strategy
Housing growth
Regional industrial support
Dining scene
County ED support
Sports focus

STRATEGY

Insights

Insights

The job of the brand is to tell your most competitive story.

The job of the strategy is to determine what that story should be about.

Insights

"It doesn't stand out."*

"Not sure whose radar Auburn is on."*

WHERE DID THE RESEARCH LEAD US?

"Auburn thinks they are well known, but they are not known."

"We are on the cusp of something really cool here."

"It's like Petaluma. Cool but unknown."*

"We respect the past, but we don't want to live in it."

"Not open to the idea of change or outsiders, but once you're here, you're welcomed."

"Our biggest need is economic development, then tourism."

"This is where things grow: family, business, crops, etc."

"We're very cautious here. One foot on the gas and one foot on the brake at all times."

"All trails lead to Auburn."

"Every single person in California knows where Auburn is because they have to drive through to get to Tahoe."

"We're the foothills community where we still can't convince people to lock their doors."

"Town is generally friendly to you as a transplant as long as you're not from the Bay Area."

"A stranger in this town is not unusual, so people are friendlier."

"Auburn is far enough and close enough."*

"We don't have to correct the perception of California. If you want to go to Texas to a failing grid, fine. You'll come back."*

"Nothing much negative. Just not known for anything distinct."*

"Auburn needs to get out of its own way."*

**External comment*

Insights

WE HEARD LOTS OF GREAT THINGS

"It's amazing what's offered in such a small town."

"Moved here because I want something of my own."

"The city has much more of a recreation character than it does gold rush."

"Auburn is the perfect size. It's not tiny, but holds its character."

"Runners. Drinks. Hippies. Farm to fork. Bougie farm to fork. It's all here."

"We're above the fog and below the clouds and snow."

"Surrounding communities wish they could be us."

"A Sunset Magazine type of vibe."

"Once people pass Roseville, that's when their shoulders relax and they feel like they've arrived."

"For Fast Fridays at the racetrack 'You pay for the whole seat but you'll only need the edge!'"

"You can walk into City Hall and take care of everything you need. Every door is open. It's a one-stop shop."

"They should bring in industry for outdoor activities."*

"Go after the employee not the employer - pursue talent and visitors with money."*

"When a resident leaves a message in the system and you call them back, their reaction is usually,

'Oh my god, somebody called me back!'"

Insights

WE HEARD LOTS OF GREAT THINGS

"The City of Auburn is tiny, and that's a beautiful thing."

"If they have a brand, it will help them."*

"You don't even need a car to get to the big cities or the mountains with Amtrak"

"As soon as I was ready to have a family, it was an instinct to come back."

"Auburn is the closest town where I can get everything I need. I shop there. I bank there."*

"Old Town is beautiful. Like a step back in time."*

"Auburn used to be the pit stop, but it is becoming more of a destination."*

"We want change and want to be progressive, but want to also be respectful of people who want things to stay the same."

"When I left Auburn, it was a hokey redneck town. But when I came back, the business community had leveled up. And we wanted to fit in as a quality brand first and volume second."

"North Auburn chains are not the Auburn I'm trying to show off. We need the 'bespoke' Auburn to stay."

"Show folks the affordability in Auburn and how to take advantage of it."*

"Keep the authentic feel and increase the value of the asset for high-end remote workers."*

"They need an assertive future."*

Insights

WE HEARD CONCERNS

"Endurance Capital doesn't do much for residents."

"We're trying to become a destination. But people still view us as a pass-through town."

"Everything goes in phases. So things take a long time to get done."

"We have space for businesses but nowhere for employees to live. Young families can't afford to buy a home here"

"There are a lot of hobby businesses here. We need more serious businesses."

"If we're going to be a true destination, we need more experiential places to stay. Like boutique hotels."

"I don't tell tourists to go to the places I like because they get too crowded. The businesses are doing just fine anyways."

"Two different opinion on North Auburn: some don't want to include it at all but residents do feel like a part of Auburn."

"Signage is weak off the freeway."

"There have been a lot of fits and starts with branding here as recent as 2019. Work has been, but not much follow-through."

"You have to go out of Auburn to make the funds to start a business to improve Auburn. You can't make the funds locally."

"Auburn makes the news when something bad happens."*

"They are not going to be the next tech hub. And you cannot base an economy on \$15/hour tourism jobs."*

"County regs get in the way of small businesses there."*

"Auburn struggles to see options for redevelopment."*

Insights

WHAT IS DISTINCT?

"We have the same feel as Nevada City and Grass Valley, but you don't have to go through a bunch of winding roads to get there."

"I once worked really hard to build a subdivision near LA that inadvertently looked like Auburn, but we could never capture the independent spirit and collaboration that built this city."

"We take the intimidation factor out of wine tasting."

"The proximity to I-80 is a win for the whole county, but it's a huge win for Auburn specifically."

"From a corporate retreat standpoint, we offer a better variety for Bay Area companies looking for Napa without the prices."

"Something that can't be discounted is the volume of events surrounding the endurance community"

"Auburn is more affordable, (but fire insurance is an unannounced surprise.)"*

"Auburn is more outdoorsy and granola with sophisticated remote workers. Nevada City is hippie and eclectic."*

"Auburn is the most unique city in the region with charm and authenticity."*

STRATEGY

DNA Platform

Auburn DNA Platform Statement

Target Audience: ***To whom Auburn has the most appeal***

Frame of Reference: ***Geographic context of Auburn***

Point-of-Difference: ***What makes Auburn special***

Benefit: ***Why it should matter to the consumer***

Auburn DNA Platform Statement

Target Audience: ***For active lifestyles who like to push the limits,***

Frame of Reference: ***Auburn, Placer County's scenic seat on I-80 with a year-round growing season,***

Point-of-Difference: ***still invites Gold Rush optimism and wide-eyed discovery***

Benefit: ***so your rewards are handpicked.***

Strategy

RATIONALE

Target Audience: ***For active lifestyles who like to push the limits,***

- Rivers, parks, and trails invite adventurers and enthusiasts to an unmatched outdoor playground for recreation and competition.
- Health and wellness are priorities for many in the community, from nutrition to exertion.
- Known as the Endurance Capital, Auburn is recognized as a leader globally for a range of challenging races across sport. Auburn has long attracted those pushing limits and challenging themselves (miners, rail workers, adventurers and even businesses today.)
- These distinctions are talent magnets for those who enjoy the recreation even without competition. This group often push their personal limits in exercise and adventure but also in entrepreneurship and ideas.

Frame of Reference: ***Auburn, Placer County's scenic seat on I-80 with a year-round growing season,***

- Auburn is the county seat of Placer County which stretches across some of California's most scenic landscapes from Sacramento to Lake Tahoe.
- The community celebrates its unassuming, flavorful ag product with the Mandarin Festival, Wine and Ale Trail, Farmers Markets, and more.
- The setting enjoys a perfect climate for ag and outdoor recreation 365 days each year.

Strategy

RATIONALE

Point of Difference: ***still invites Gold Rush optimism and wide-eyed discovery***

- Auburn presents a legacy of optimism and achievement that continues today. Optimism is a posture critical to growth and productivity.
- The setting inspires clear and creative thought and invites a sense of discovery personally and professionally.
- The jaw-dropping landscape and wonders of nature instill a responsibility and reverence for an enviable quality of life.
- The growing seasons are not just for mandarins and ag products. Ideas and individuality thrive year round.
- There is a sense of community here that gets lost in the chaos of crowded locales elsewhere.
- Strong local businesses (not chains) and districts are emblematic of the town's authentic character creating a welcoming, memorable experience.

Benefit: ***so your rewards are handpicked.***

- Rewards are wide ranging and specific to the hopes and goals of diverse individuals and businesses.
- You choose: achieve rewards here for your specific life well-lived.
- Optimism and hard work yield a fruitful future for families, adventures, and enterprise.

Auburn DNA Platform Statement

Target Audience: ***For active lifestyles who like to push the limits,***

Frame of Reference: ***Auburn, Placer County's scenic seat on I-80 with a year-round growing season,***

Point-of-Difference: ***still invites Gold Rush optimism and wide-eyed discovery***

Benefit: ***so your rewards are handpicked.***

Next Steps



Stakeholder & Community Education



Insight Gathering & Research



DNA & Strategy Formation



Creative Development & Brand Messaging



Brand Action Ideas

Thank you, Auburn!