



**CITY COUNCIL DRAFT MINUTES
Monday, October 3, 2022**

HELD HYBRID - Council and some City Staff will be live in the Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street. Citizens and presenters will be joining via zoom

View on Channel 9 or Channels 180 and 181 (for Charter Communications customers) or live stream via rvtv.sou.edu select RVTV Prime.

Written and oral testimony will be accepted for public input. For written testimony, email public-testimony@ashland.or.us using the subject line: Ashland City Council Public Testimony. For oral testimony, fill out a Speaker Request Form at ashland.or.us/speakerrequest and return to the City Recorder. The deadline for submitting written testimony or speaker request forms will be at 10 a.m. on the day of the Study Session meeting and must comply with Council Rules to be accepted.

5:30 PM Study Session

Mayor Akins called the Study Session to order at 5:30 PM.

Councilors' Hyatt, Graham, Moran, Seffinger, DuQuenne and Jensen were present.

1. Public Input (15 minutes, maximum)
None.
2. EcoNorthwest Economic Diversity Study
Chamber President Sandra Slattery gave an introduction.

Senior Project Manager Kyrn Sausedo went over a PowerPoint (*see attached*). Items discussed were:

- Process
- Engagement
- Wide range of Input
- Strengths
- Data Regarding the Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Data Regarding the Weaknesses
- Ashland's Greatest Threats
- Biggest Opportunities
- Data Regarding Opportunities
- Strategies

DuQuenne spoke in appreciation of EcoNorthwest.

Council discussed City partnership.

Council Discussed next steps.

3. Croman Mill Redevelopment Overview

Alan Harper, Michael Mehaffy, and Mike Montero presented to Council.

A Video was displayed (*see attached*)

Council discussed:

- Community outreach.
- Economic Development
- Affordably Housing
- Zoning
- Next Steps

Council spoke in appreciation to EcoNorthwest and looking forward to working with them.

4. Look Ahead

City Manager Joe Lessard went over the Look Ahead (*see attached*).

5. Adjournment

The Study Session was adjourned at 7:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted by:

City Recorder Melissa Huhtala

City Recorder Melissa Huhtala

Attest:

Mayor Akins

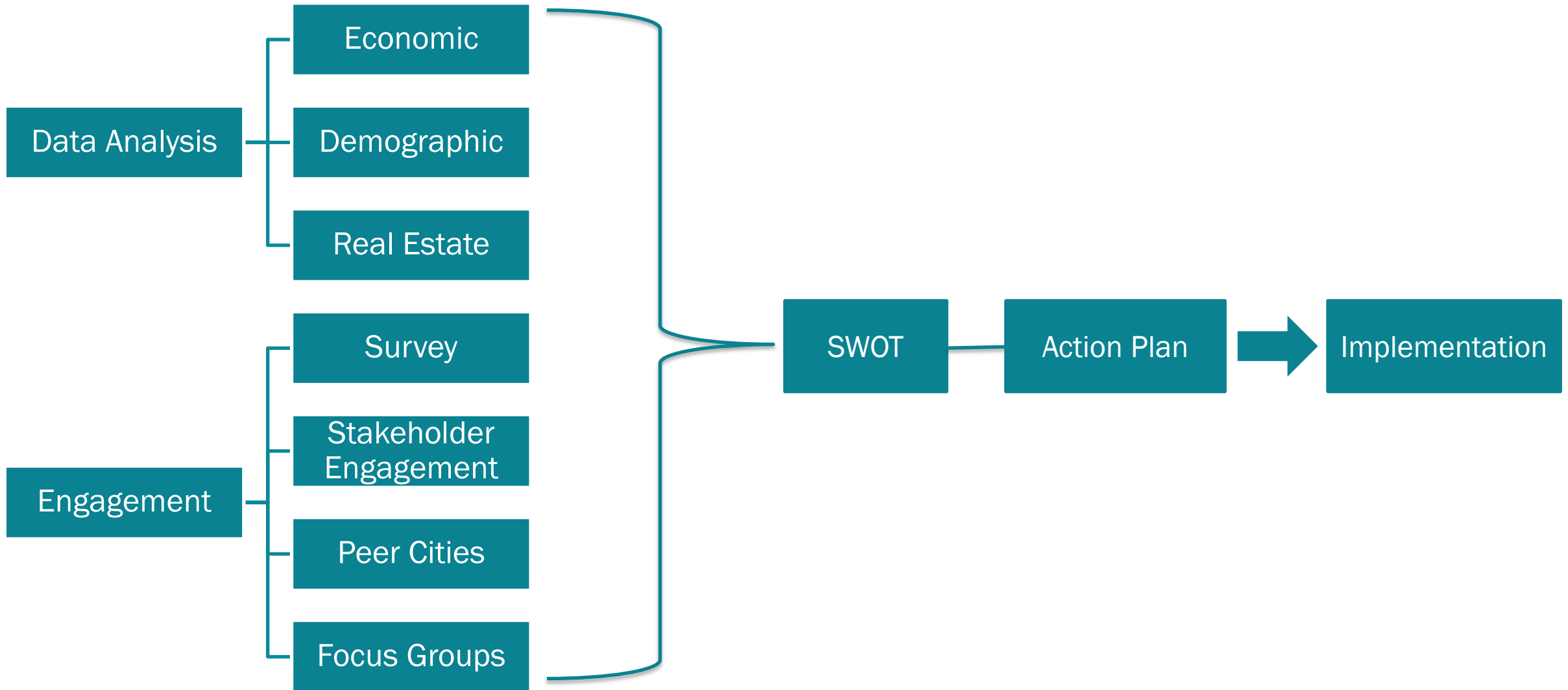
In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Administrator's office at (541) 488-6002 (TTY phone number 1-800-735-2900). Notification 72 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Ashland Economic Diversification

City Council Meeting

ECONorthwest
ECONOMICS • FINANCE • PLANNING

Develop an economic plan that **leverages existing strengths, addresses weaknesses, and explores exciting new initiatives** to further diversify the local economy.





- **231 Survey Respondents**



- **45 Stakeholder Conversations**



- **4 Focus Groups**

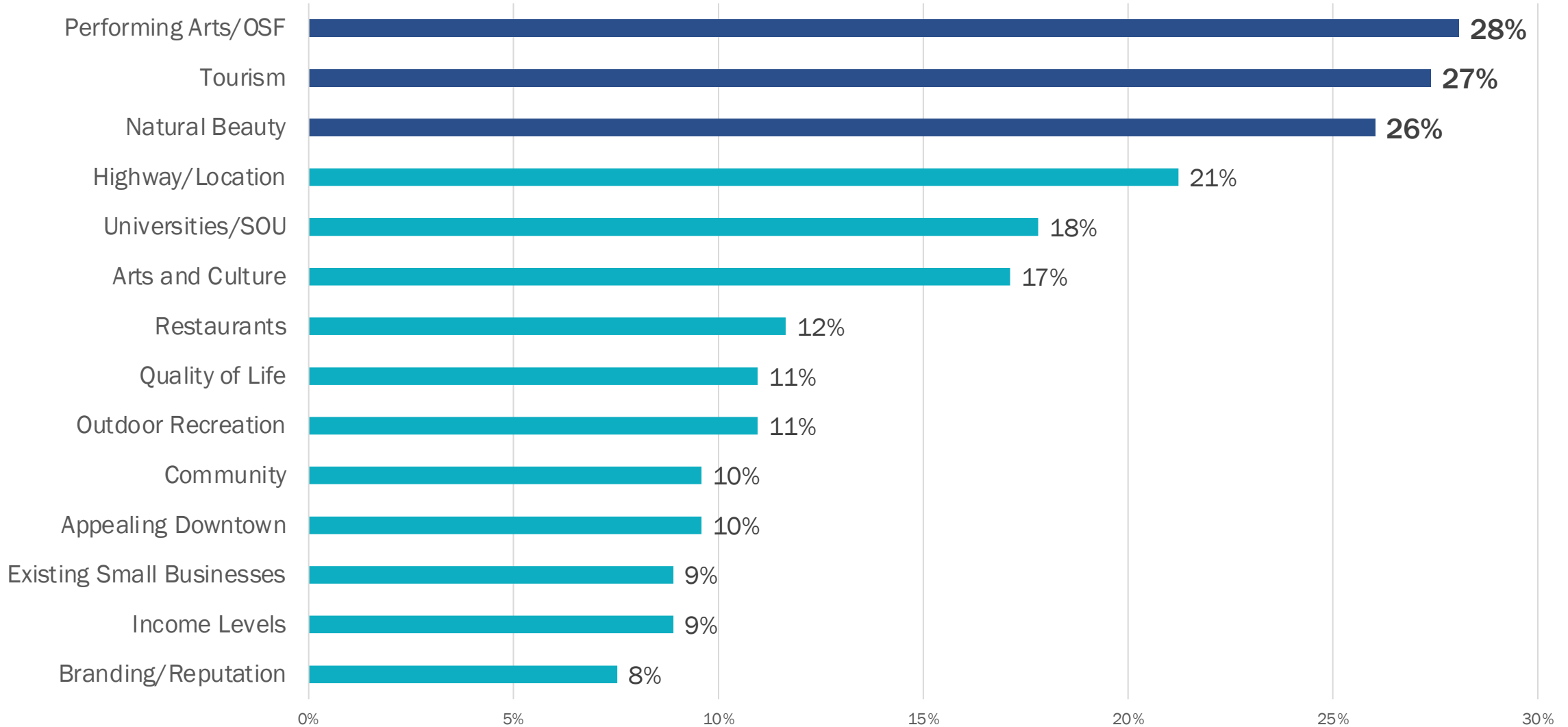


- **4 Peer City Conversations**

Wide Range of Input



In your view, what are the three biggest strengths of Ashland's economy?



Note: Themes with fewer than 10 total respondents are not listed here.

“It’s a desirable place to live or visit”

“Good digital infrastructure”

“Charming Downtown”

“Place--We love where we live, it’s beautiful and connected”

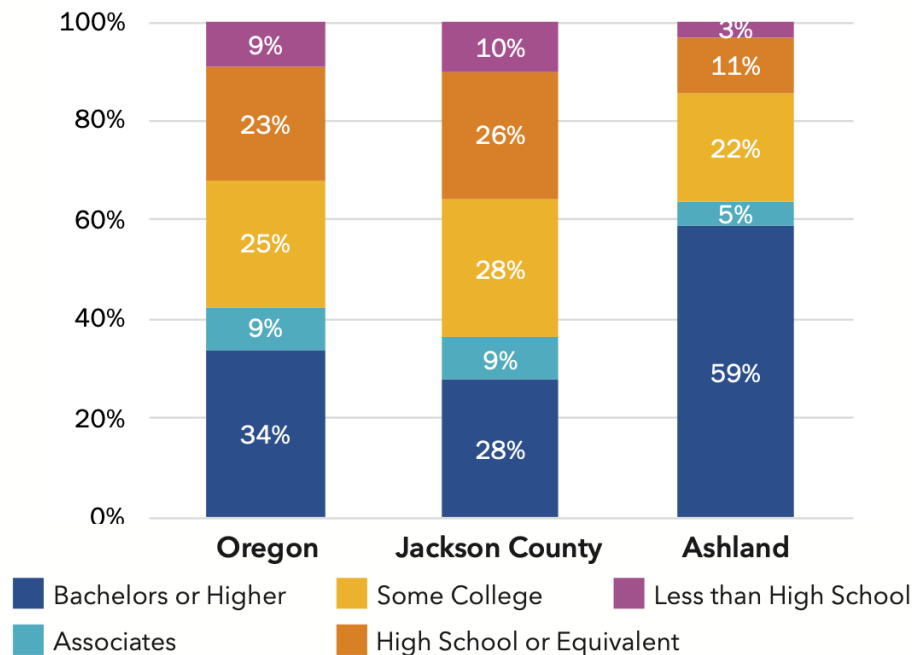
“Town is positioned well for tourism”

“University and educational training grounds”

Ashland residents are highly educated. The city has unique sectors that are locally concentrated with high employment.

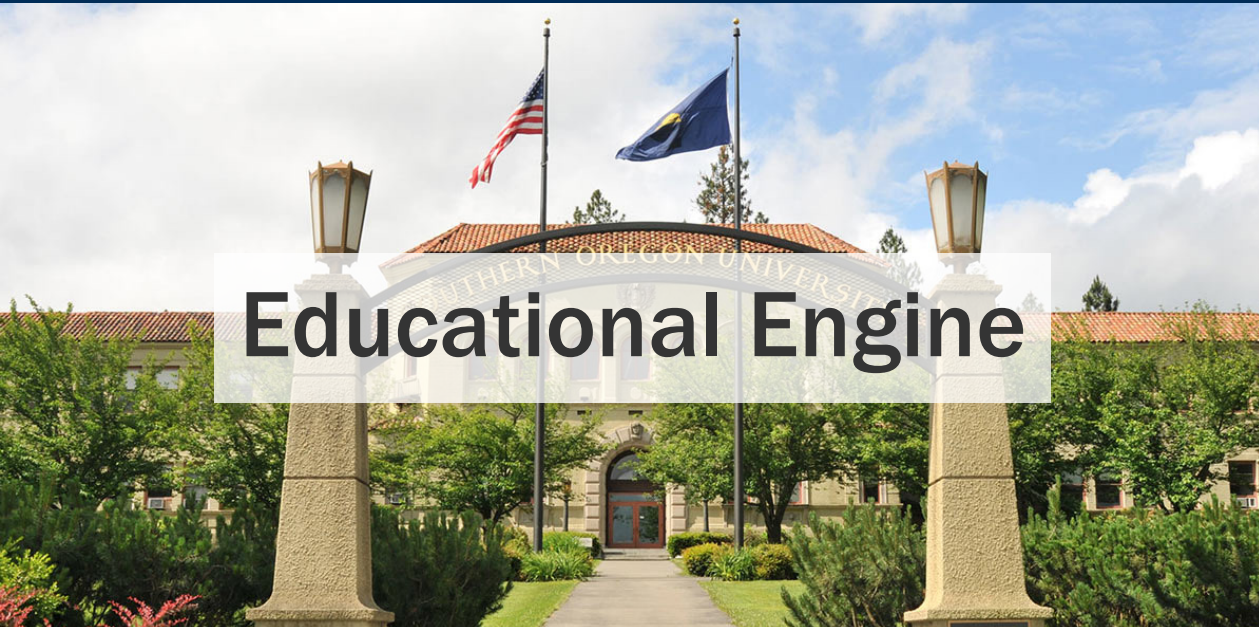
Educational Attainment For Population 25 Years Plus, Ashland, Jackson County, and Oregon, 2015-2019

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 ACS 5-year estimate, Table B15003.



	High Employment (more than 50 employees)	Low Employment (at least 10 employees)
High Location Quotient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry Construction of Buildings Miscellaneous Manufacturing Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers Food and Beverage Stores Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, and Book Stores Miscellaneous Store Retailers Nonstore Retailers Publishing Industries (except Internet) Ambulatory Health Care Services Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries Accommodation Food Services and Drinking Places Personal and Laundry Services Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations Private Households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chemical Manufacturing Health and Personal Care Stores Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments and Related Activities

What are Ashland's greatest strengths?



Educational Engine



Strong Healthcare



**Established
Tourism**

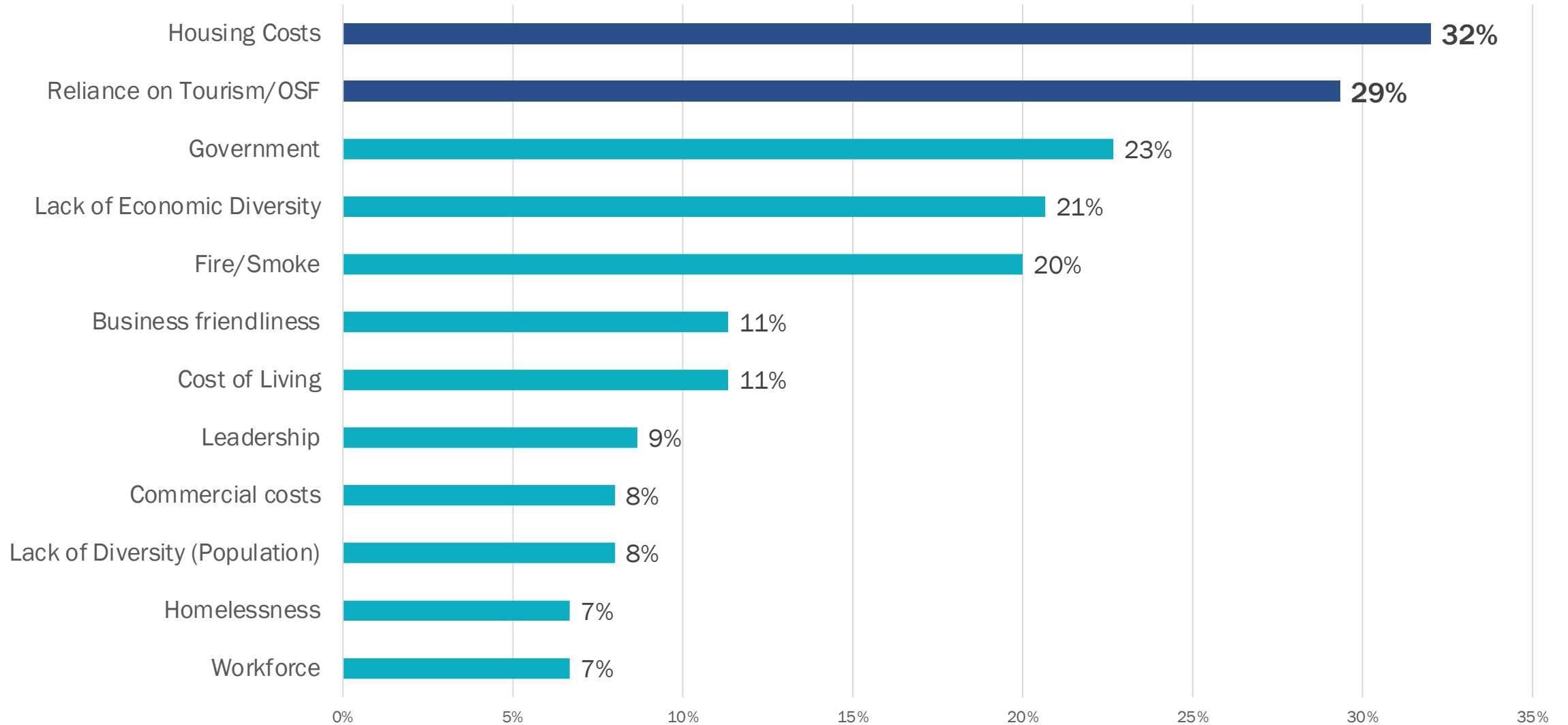


**Walkable
Downtown**



**Fast Fiber
Network**

In your view, what the three biggest weaknesses of Ashland's economy?



Note: Themes with fewer than 10 total respondents are not listed here.

“Lack of communication between City and business owners”

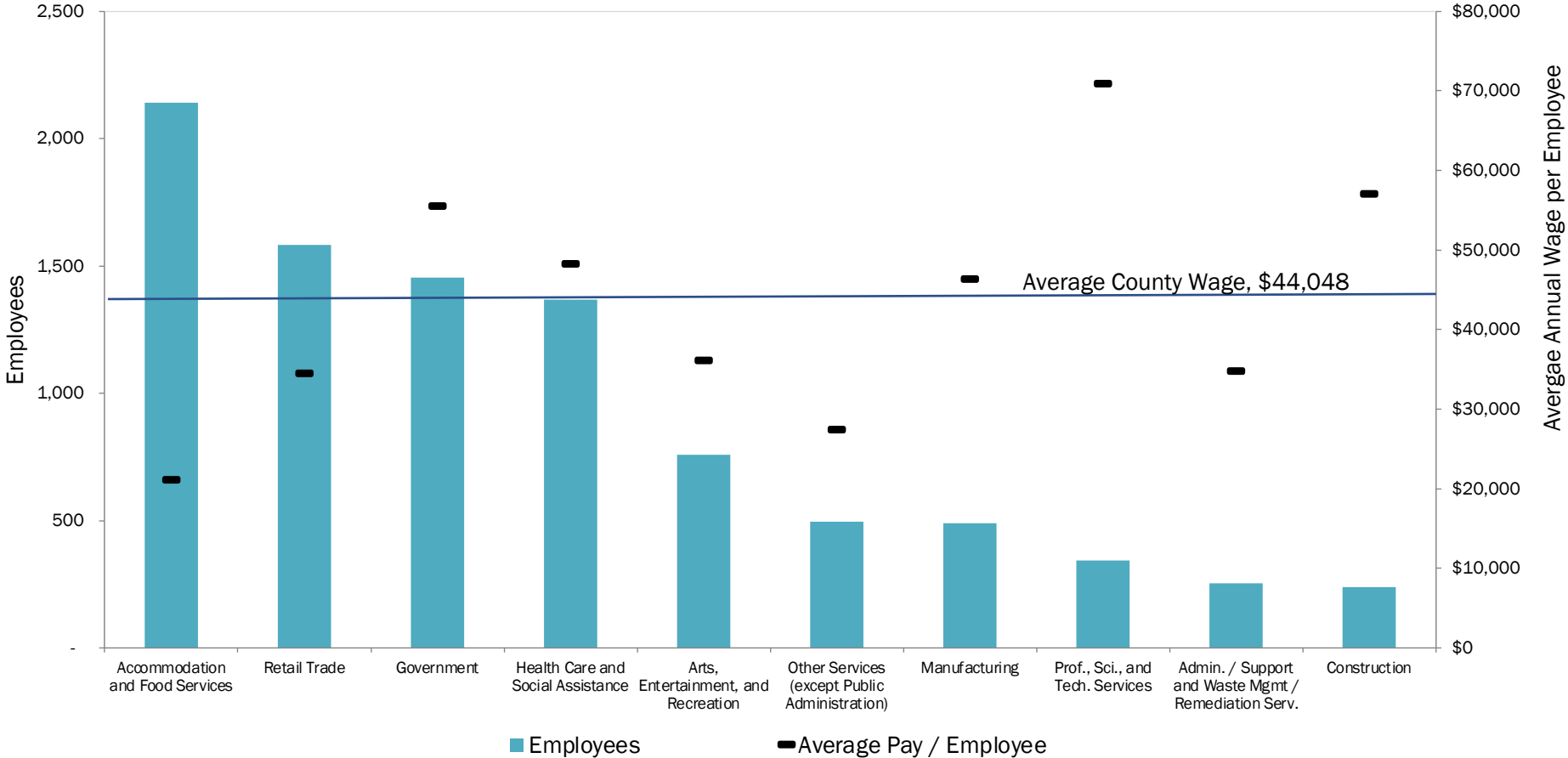
“Too many regulations” “Overemphasis on Shakespeare”

“Over-reliance on summertime tourism (smoke season)”

“Lack of workforce housing (therefore lack of workforce)”

“Tourist economy vulnerable to pandemic and climate change”


Many of Ashland's largest sectors have below average pay, including services, retail, and entertainment.



What are Ashland's greatest weaknesses?



**Disruptions to
Tourism and
Arts**

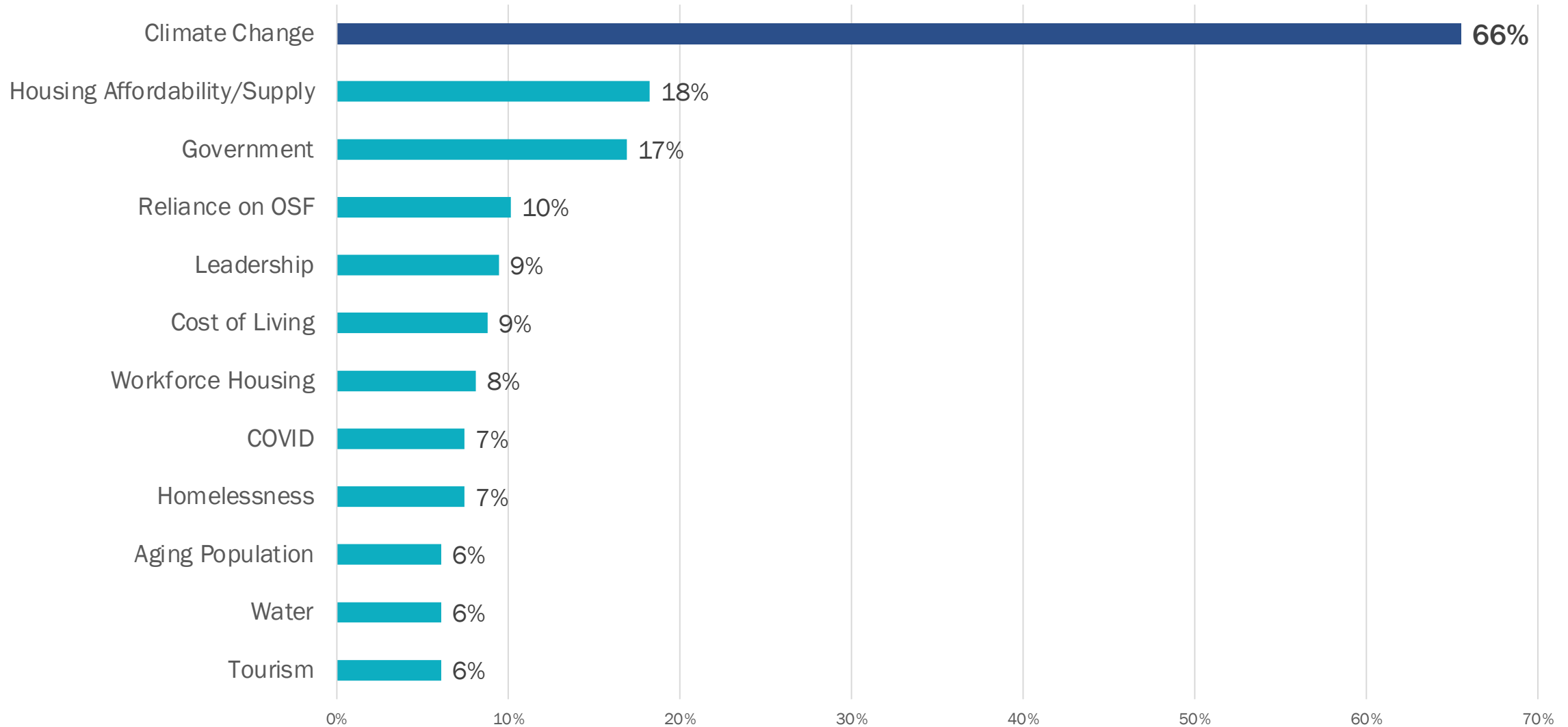


**High Cost of
Workforce
Housing**



**Lack of
Public Sector
Collaboration**

In your view, what the three biggest threats to Ashland's economy?



Note: Themes with fewer than 10 total respondents are not listed here.

“Climate change effecting available water and increased wildfires”

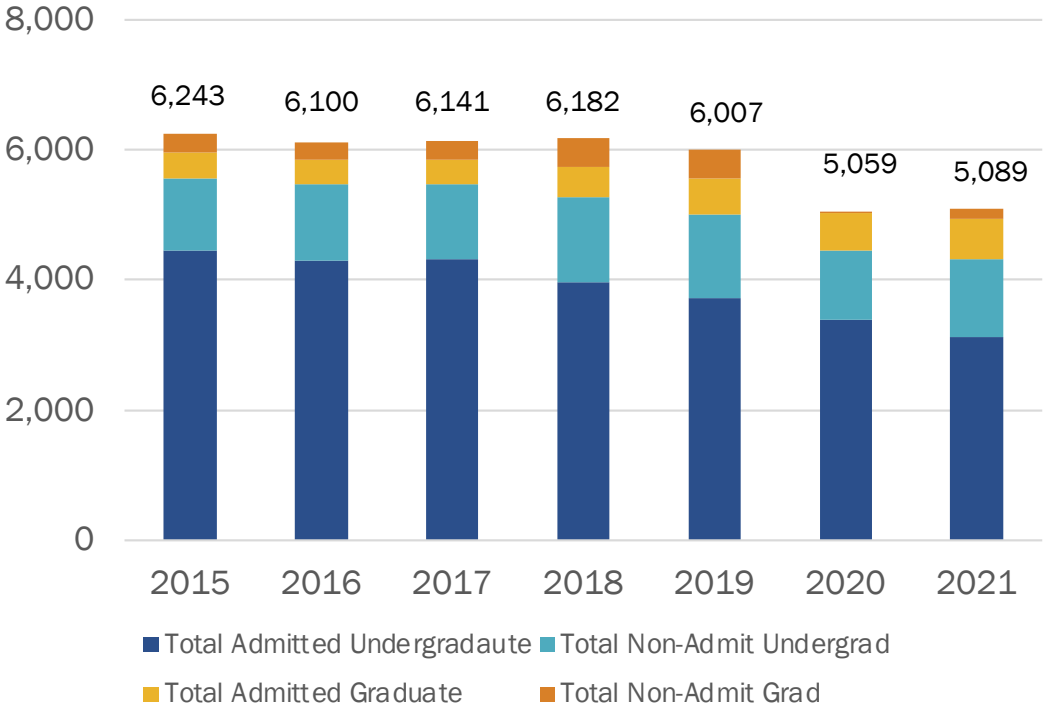
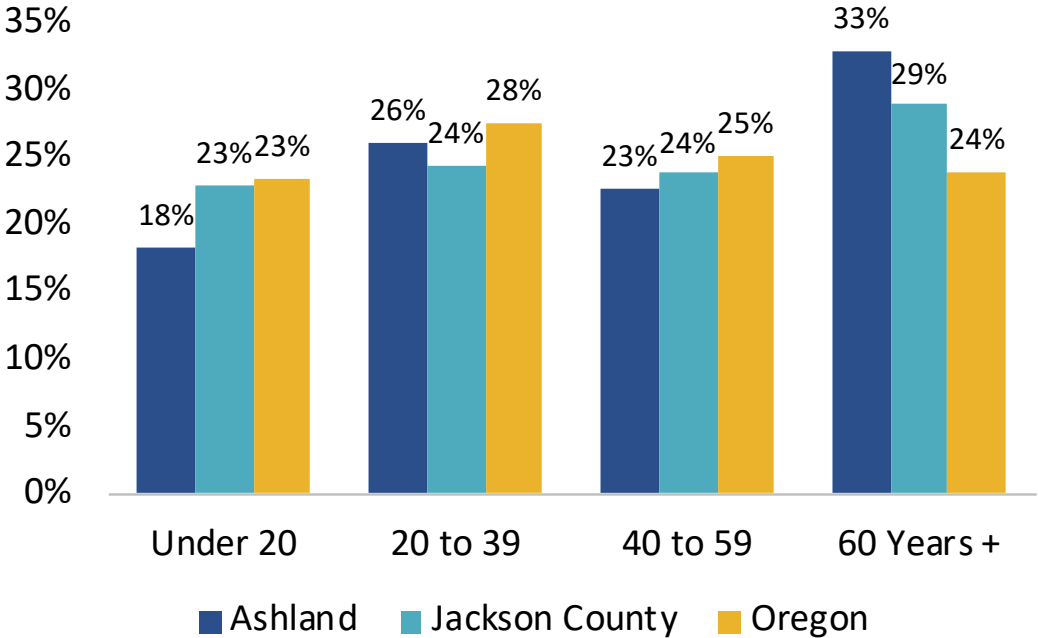
“City staff turn-over and loss of institutional knowledge”

“Anti-business sentiment among some leaders”

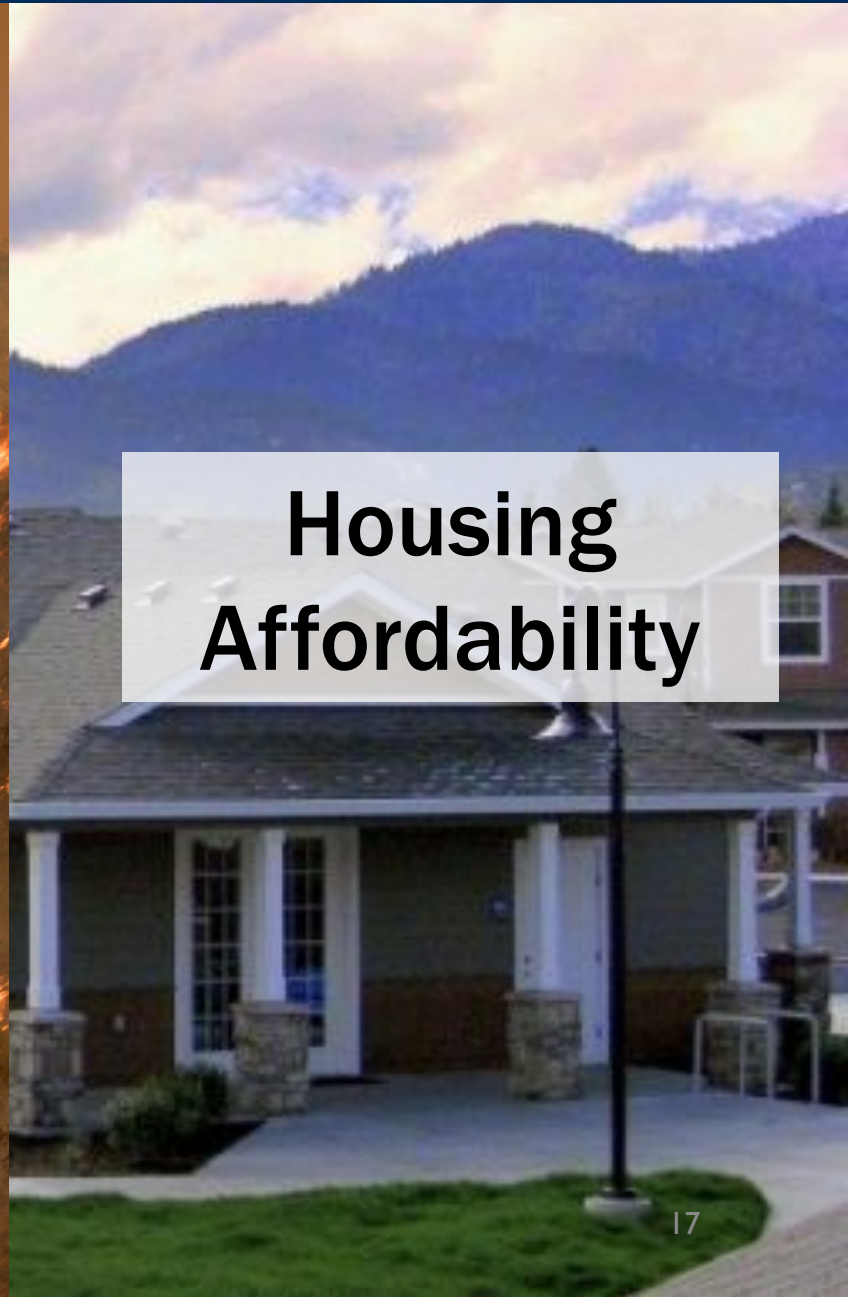
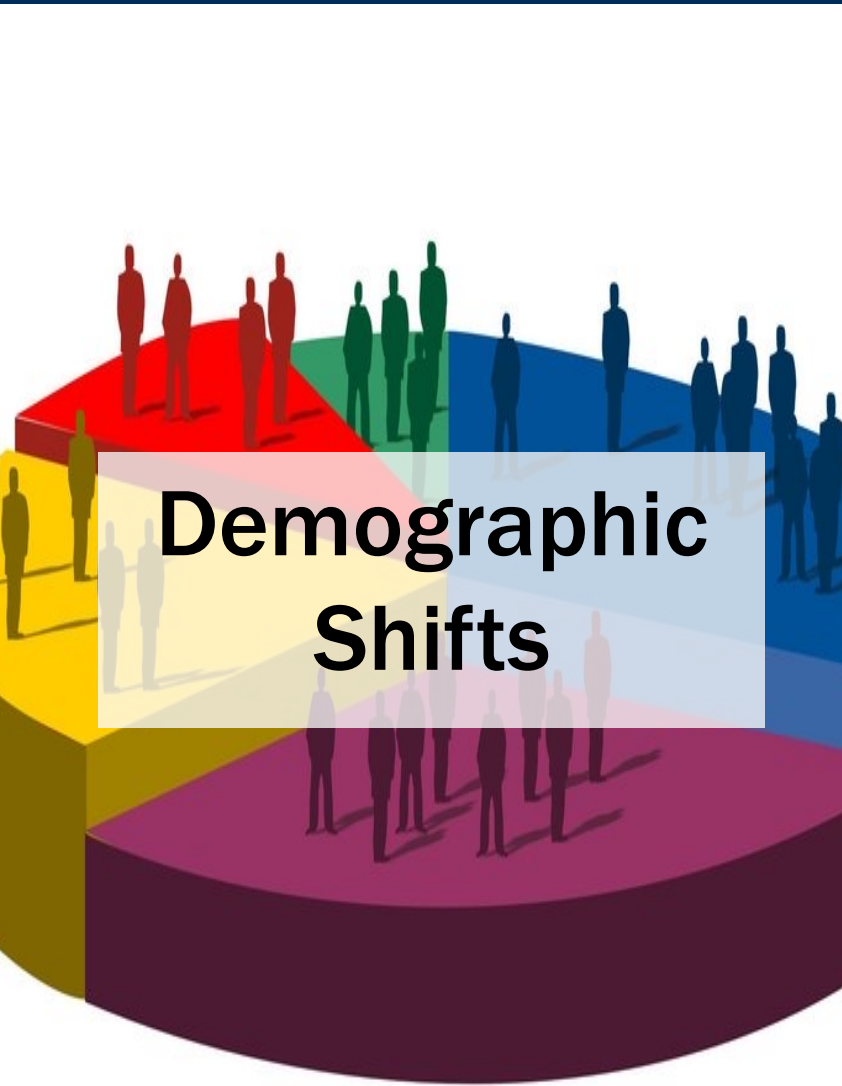
“Low housing stock excluding minimum wage workers”

“People moving away or not coming because of fires and smoke”

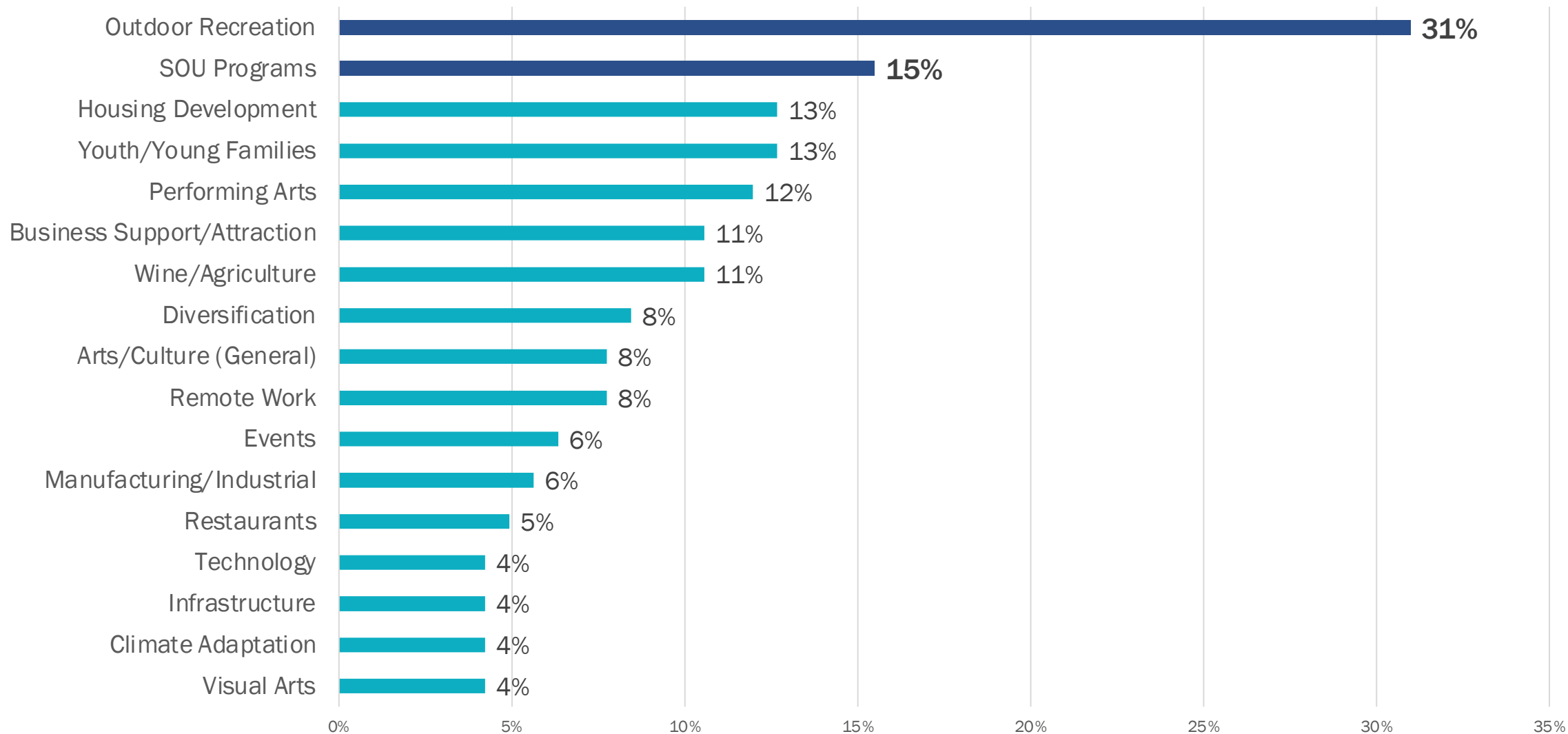
Ashland's population is aging more so than Jackson County and Oregon overall, while enrollment in SOU declined since 2020.



What are Ashland's greatest threats?



In your view, what the three biggest opportunities for Ashland's economy?



Note: Themes with 5 or fewer total respondents are not listed here.

“Education opportunities in all forms and levels”

“SOU could create training programs as part of the curriculum”

“Education in general, we could be an incubator”

“Expand, develop and promote outdoor activities when it’s not smoke season”

“Access to outdoor recreation - must expand hiking, mountain biking, safe road biking trails, fishing, swimming, etc.”

“Farm-to-fork festivals and celebrations” *“More exciting food options, food trucks”*

Healthcare occupations are growing quickly in the region and expected to be the largest number of job openings overall.

STEM Occupational Employment Projections for Rogue Valley (Jackson and Josephine Counties), 2020-2030, Top Five Occupations

Source: QualityInfo, Oregon Employment Department

OCCUPATION TITLES	Employment 2020	Project Employment 2030	Percent Change	Employment Change	Replacement Openings	Total Openings
Registered Nurses	2,828	3,238	14.5%	410	1,453	1,863
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	1,610	1,761	9.4%	151	1,592	1,743
Carpenters	1,330	1,440	8.3%	110	1,212	1,322
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	770	859	11.6%	89	697	786
Accountants and Auditors	645	737	14.3%	92	563	655
TOTAL, ALL OCCUPATIONS	23,870	27,278	14.3%	3,408	18,705	22,113

What are Ashland's greatest opportunities?



**Diversify
Tourism**



**Rediscover
Downtown**

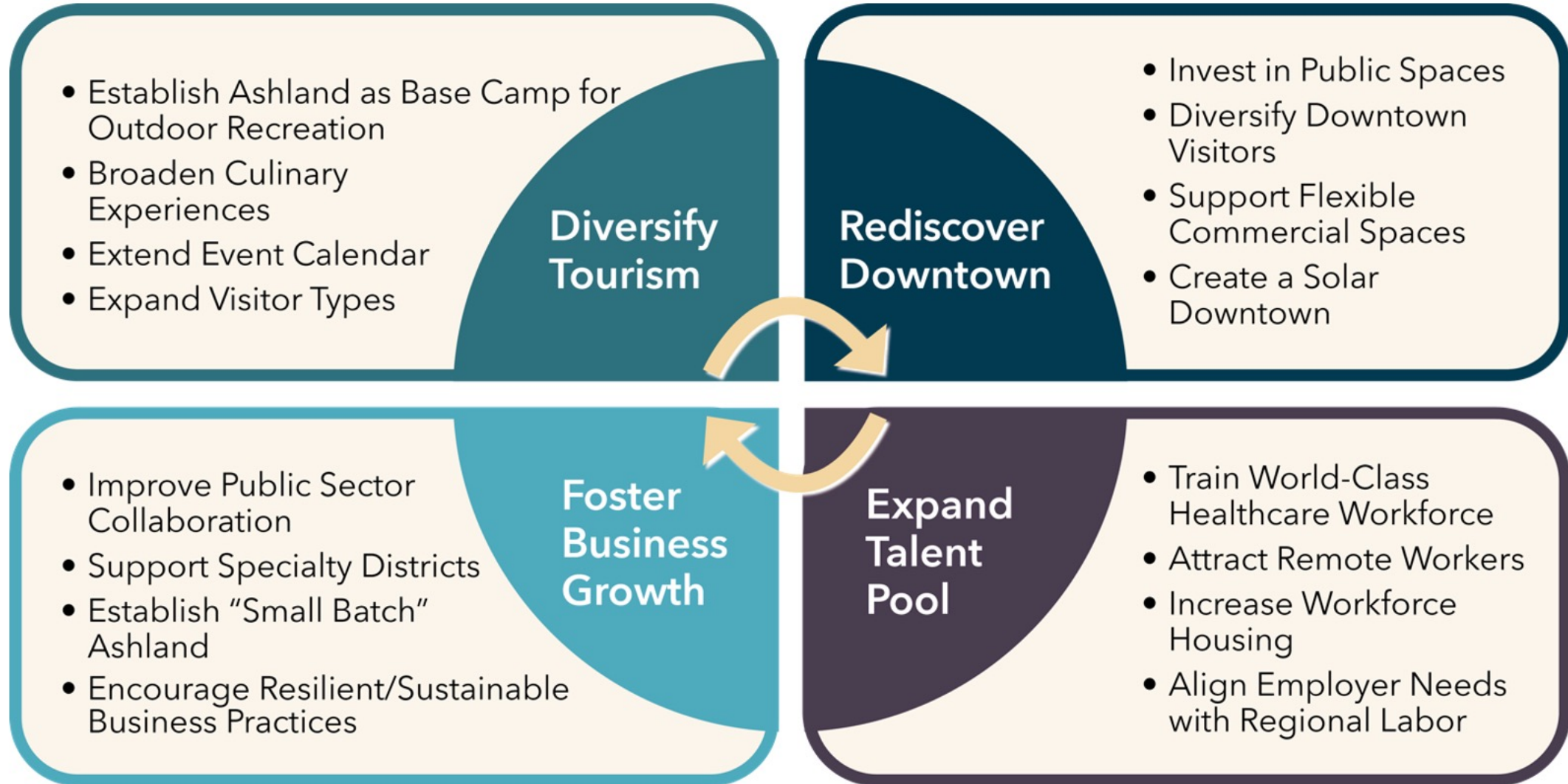


**Expand
Talent Pool**



**Foster Business
Growth**

Strategy Groupings



ECONNorthwest

ECONOMICS • FINANCE • PLANNING



Los Angeles



Portland



Seattle



Boise