



Summary Survey Insights

February 2026

Who responded?

- Almost 900 people took the survey, a fantastic response rate
- We had a great response from around Orleans County – over 70% of responses were from towns outside Newport City
- We have a good distribution of responses across age groups
- Almost 40% of respondents have children in their household

We have a pretty good distribution of responses across ages 25 - 74

Answer Choices ↑	Percentage ↓
● 18 - 24	3%
● 25 - 34	18%
● 35 - 44	23%
● 45 - 54	16%
● 55 - 64	17%
● 65 - 74	17%
● 75+	6%
● Under 18	0%

Food & Beverage and Retail / Shopping come out on top

Percentage of Respondents who listed the category as their -

Category	1st Priority	2nd Priority	3rd Priority	Total
Food & Beverage	19	23	17	58
Retail / Shopping	20	20	16	56
Entertainment	14	19	21	54
Family Activities	24	12	8	44
Hospitality	9	7	8	24
Health & Wellness	5	7	10	23
Essential Goods & Services	5	7	6	18
None of the Above	3	3	5	10
Personal Services	0	2	6	8
Professional Services	1	1	3	5
1st				
2nd				
3rd				
4th				
5th				

Food & Beverage: Respondents would visit International, Family, Bakery, Café and Deli most frequently

Sum of % Daily/Weekly/Monthly									
Food & Beverage	1st	2nd	3rd		WAverage				
International	87	72	75		78				
Family Sit Down	81	75	76		77				
Bakery	79	79	72		77				
Coffee Shop / Café	77	76	74		76				
Deli / Sandwich	77	74	67		73				
Farm to Table	76	70	63		70				
Brewpub / Taproom	69	53	54		59				high % of 'Never'
Takeout / Fast	55	55	55		55				high % of 'Never'
Ice Cream	54	55	50		53				
Food Truck / Seasonal	54	49	49		51				

1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	

Retail Shopping: Respondents would visit Clothing, Home, Gift, and Arts & Crafts stores most frequently

Sum of % Daily/Weekly/Monthly									
Retail / Shopping	1st	2nd	3rd		WAverage				
Clothing & Apparel	91	74	74		80				
Home Goods & Décor	69	57	57		61				
Gift Shop	62	55	61		59				
Art and Craft Supplies	63	52	58		58				
Second Hand / Thrift	50	41	58		49	high % of 'Never'			
Footwear	43	45	44		44				
Outdoor Gear	38	34	45		39				
Furniture Store	14	8	12		11	high % of 'Never'			

1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	

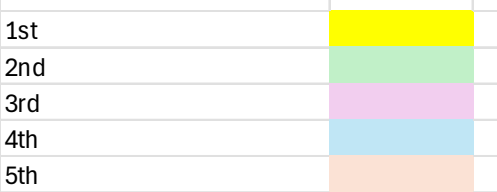
Entertainment: Respondents would attend live music, outdoor festival, performing arts, movies and comedy most frequently

Sum of % Daily/Weekly/Monthly					
Entertainment	1st	2nd	3rd	WAverage	
Live Music Venue	70	66	57	64	
Outdoor Festival	70	54	49	57	
Performing Arts Theater	52	49	39	46	
Movie Theater	41	45	40	42	
Comedy Club	45	41	31	38	
Museum or Gallery	31	41	38	37	
Arcade or Game Center	35	41	33	36	high % of 'Never'
Local Sports Events	34	34	31	33	
Dance Club	37	36	26	33	high % of 'Never'
Escape Room / Interactive	25	29	23	26	high % of 'Never'

1st	
2nd	
3rd	
4th	
5th	

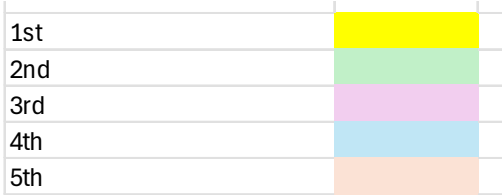
Family Activities: The large group who put family activities as their highest priority would attend frequently, especially indoor play, swimming, bowling, and a recreation center

Sum of % Daily/Weekly/Monthly					
Family Activities	1st	2nd	3rd	WAverage	
Indoor Play Area	82	64	62	74	
Swimming Pool	78	61	56	70	
Bowling Alley / Roller Skating	78	69	68	74	
Recreation Center	76	67	62	71	
Outdoor playground	71	47	48	61	
Event Venue	69	70	62	68	
Arts & Crafts Studio	67	47	40	57	
Children's Museum	63	51	36	55	
Kid's Fitness / Dance	61	33	36	49	high % of 'Never'
Summer Camps	50	31	20	40	high % of 'Never'



Hospitality: Most would only have visitors occasionally, and there was varied acceptance of all forms of lodging across groups. Hotel /Motel had the highest overall frequency when daily and monthly visits were included

Hospitality	Only "Occasionally" %			WAverage			
	1st	2nd	3rd				
Vacation Rental	64	64	74	74			
Conference/Event Lodging	41	76	70	65			
Hotel or Motel	50	78	41	63	Highest % of 'Daily' and 'Monthly'		
Clamping or Nature-Based	47	49	74	60			
Hostel or Budget	34	69	70	60			
Bed & Breakfast	59	49	43	58			
Boutique Inns / Guest Houses	41	58	57	56			
Wellness Retreat / Eco Lodge	29	56	50	47	high % of 'Never'		



What we heard from the comments

Way more comments about providing INDOOR activities than Outdoor Recreation

Example Comments

- We could also use a place like IROC when that was still a thing with stuff for younger adults and college students to enjoy. Rollerblading, rock climbing, bowling alley with a bar, karaoke bar, these are all things to attract the younger adults!
- Something educational or physical for kids/families to do so they can be active and learn. Specifically I think of Get Air or Monkey Do in Burlington.
- A INDOOR play space we all know winter sucks for little kids let's create a indoor soft play with rental rooms for parents to afford and rent a space for parties
- Need an indoor fun center for children not much to do with kids especially during the winter where when iroc was in derby everyone went there to have fun need a place like that again so kids are not getting bored.
- I think that we should focus on sustainable businesses that support locals in addition to newcomers. Fitness, cafe workspaces and ample opportunities for children and families should be prioritized if young professionals and families are the target audience.

Parking comments highlighted accommodation for large pickups, accessibility for seniors, as well as availability for events

Example Comments

I have heard many people complain that there is not much parking for a large/oversize vehicles. I know many people in the community drive pickup trucks, so perhaps this could be taken into consideration as well. Thank you!

Better parking for seniors with health issues.

Make sure to plan for parking. This is always an issue with small event, like Wednesdays on the waterfront. If people can't stop and find a place to get to you, they will keep driving and try another time.

Making parking easier on Main Street would help

I bring my Granddaughter to Playworld (which is fantastic by the way), but the parking deters me . I either have to park way down the the Gateway center or circle around to find street parking, which in the winter is difficult because I have to step over the icy, crusty snow banks to get to the sidewalk .

Security mostly mentions people hanging around downtown that make the respondents uncomfortable being there

Example Comments

- The services need to move off Main Street - it needs to feel safe and welcoming and the language and alcohol use does not promote a healthy environment- this will be tricky with Necka/social services/dcs /court house all on Main Street
- Less drug and criminal activity roaming the streets constantly and more "howdy neighbor"
- Clean up the boardwalk. My husband and I tried to go walking there. It felt very rundown and dirty and the gathering of drunk/high individuals under the gazebo was frustrating. It smelled of marijuana and alcohol just walking by
- Parking / police presence walking around for the addicts that are publicly intoxicated and the sleeping homeless on the benches

Respondents mentioned housing on main street as being important for commerce, and desperately needed for young people and elderly

Example Comments

- Sure- a return to a quaint, upscale, vibrant community center of commerce. Perhaps 2nd floor housing for elderly
- We need cheap rentals!!! I have a ton of friends I'm trying to talk into moving to Newport, and they're conceptually interested but the jobs here don't pay enough to support \$1k+ apartment rentals or mortgages, and so we keep hitting a wall.
- get people with disposable income living in downtown and the rest will sort itself out. Encourage development of market rate apartments/housing within walking distance or, ideally, in the downtown core. Build one floor of retail with two stories of residential above in "the hole". Redevelop Bayview from low-end housing to market rate and above (with lake views).
- A affordable apartment with parking. Once people move downtown, then there would be interest in dining and entertainment. The day of stores is over. We no longer shop that way. Make apartments with beautiful views of our lake. Maybe have kiosks for tourists shopping for trinkets. You have to get people living downtown in order for it to grow
- Independent senior living is a very high priority not addressed in this survey

Comments highlight the need to use the lakefront better (and some recognize it will be hard)

Example Comments

- Turn the city around to face the lake. Obviously not something that is easy to make happen. But I have never seen a city on such a beautiful lake built with its back facing the lake. It makes zero sense why that was ever done. The city has never recovered from its original design. The lake is an amazing asset and it barely exists in how this community lives.
- Boardwalk with shops along the water!
- This would be difficult. But to expand the use of the water front.
- Would love to see Newport become more of a tourist destination. The Beautiful waterfront area feels very underutilized right now in terms of the types of buildings and businesses that line the lakefront. It would be great to get more high end stores and restaurants and services that draw people to the area to spend money and support the local economy. A nice hotel and restaurants that face the lake would be great.
- Waterfront shops and spaces, a promenade

Respondents spoke directly about the need for a welcoming, home-town vibe

Example Comments

- You need to get that welcoming hometown vibe back to Newport
- anything unique that when freind visit I can be like "hey we should go here_____ its a great place to hang out, there is food, stores, its warm/cool and theres fun stuff to do (and shop).
- Sure- a return to a quaint, upscale, vibrant community center of commerce.
- A safe, friendly, welcoming destination with amenities
- Keeping the flavor of a small Vermont community while providing a place for visitors to enjoy
- Vibrancy, cheer, friendship, love. The water front entertainment is the best thing to happen to Newport in years.
- a nice sense of the place to be...more kid friendly eateries.
- Keeping small town, quintessential New England charm throughout the improvement process :)