

# Seattle/King County Resident Sentiment

2026 STUDY



## Resident Sentiment Study Background

The purpose of the study was to understand resident perceptions and sentiment of tourism and the benefits that visitors bring to the local economy and quality of life. As part of an ongoing research effort, Visit Seattle partnered with SMARInsights in 2023 to establish baseline measures on awareness of the organization’s role, perceptions of the tourism industry, and its impact on quality of life across King County. This work helps ensure alignment between how Seattle is promoted and how it is experienced by residents.

The 2026 study builds on this foundation by measuring changes in sentiment over time, with responses weighted to reflect the population’s demographics and geography. It also provides updated insights into community support for the industry and organization as well as evolving resident perceptions and key areas of concern. Data was collected through surveys of 2,004 residents.

### Community Pride

Residents Are Proud To Live In The Area



**77.7%**

72.5% in 2023

### Top Rated Aspects

Respondents agree and strongly agree that the area has/is...



...Abundant Access To Nature And The Outdoors

**89.4%**



...A Location That Is Diverse And Culturally Rich

**81.7%**



...Abundant Attractions For Everyone

**81.6%**

### Sentiment Toward Tourism

Nearly 9 in 10 respondents agree and strongly agree that tourism benefits the region.

**88.3%**

85.3% in 2023



**75.3%**

Had positive interactions with visitors



**72.1%**

Encouraged friends and family to visit



**70.1%**

Enjoy visiting attractions that are popular with tourists



**67.3%**

Think tourism depicts the area as a good place to relocate

### Tourism Improves Quality Of Life

Nearly 8 in 10 respondents agree and strongly agree that visitor spending supports the arts, culture, and entertainment opportunities available in the area. Respondents also think tourism...

**78.4%**

74.9% in 2023



...Supports preservation of history & heritage

**70.8%**



...Supports investments in accessibility

**66.4%**



...Supports investment in environmental stewardship

**63.9%**



...Provides increased access to more / better attractions

**63.5%**

## Tourism As An Economic Engine

More than 7 in 10 respondents agree and strongly agree that tourism and visitor spending encourage investments in community revitalization. They also think tourism...

**71.0%**

66.7% in 2023



...Helps businesses in the community thrive

**84.8%**



...Supports job creation & employment growth

**76.4%**



...Generates tax revenue paying for public services

**71.2%**



...Benefits other sectors of the local economy

**79.8%**

### Benefits Of Destination Promotion

**74.4%**

Believe tourism promotion strengthens the area's reputation

**73.5%**

Support hosting major events that attract visitors

**55.6%**

Think taxes generated by visitors should be reinvested in attracting more visitors

**68.4%**

Think promoting the area as a place to visit is an effort all community members should embrace

### Regenerative & Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable or regenerative tourism is when travelers obtain a real local experience while addressing the environmental and social impacts of host communities.



**76.9%**

71.4% in 2023

Nearly 8 in 10 respondents agree/strongly agree that these initiatives are important for the success of the industry in the area.

## Public Safety: #1 Issue For All Residents



**61.0%**

Nearly 6 in 10 respondents in Greater Seattle/King County, think there are places in the area that are not safe for their family, guests, or visitors.

**46.8%**

Nearly 5 in 10 respondents think the community prioritizes public safety because of visitors (36.3% in 2023)

**91.0%**

Nearly 9 in 10 respondents think a vibrant downtown is essential to attracting visitors (87.6% in 2023)

## Additional Challenges For Tourism

Seattle/King County respondents agree and strongly agree that...



**26.7%**

There aren't enough accessible amenities for visitors of all abilities



**30.5%**

Visitors are putting a burden on natural resources



**34.8%**

Tourism growth is at odds with the environment and sustainability



**23.5%**

The area is too dependent on tourism for revenue