

Dewey Beach Comp Plan Workgroup

October 14, 2026

1. Final Survey results (45 min)
2. Key Themes and Planning Considerations (15 min)
3. Review and revision of Vision Statement (30 min)
4. Overarching goal discussion
5. Existing Land Use and Environmental Constraints; (15 min)

Survey: Final Tally

421 Non-Residents

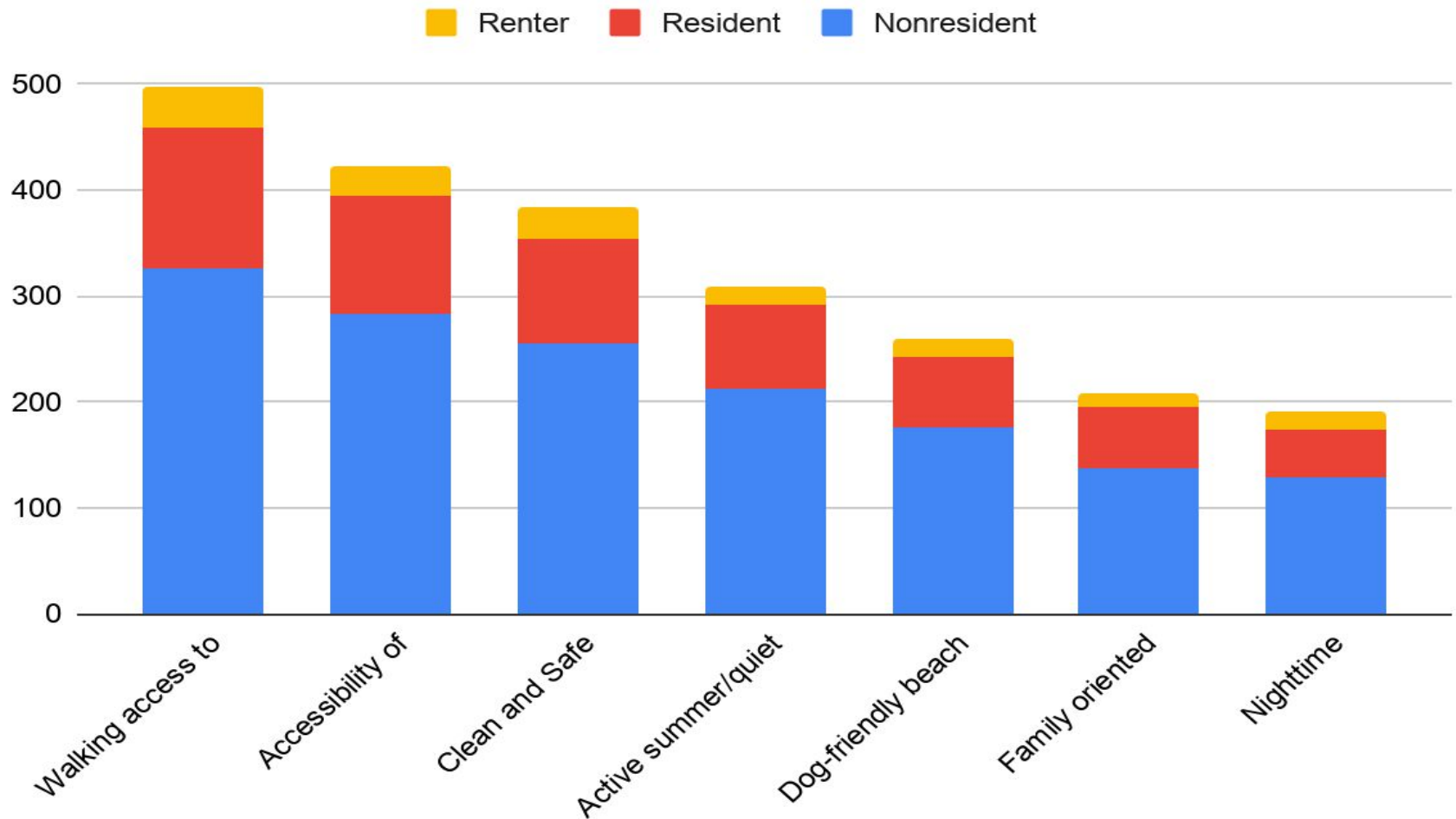
168 Full-time Residents/Owners

49 Full time Residents/Renters

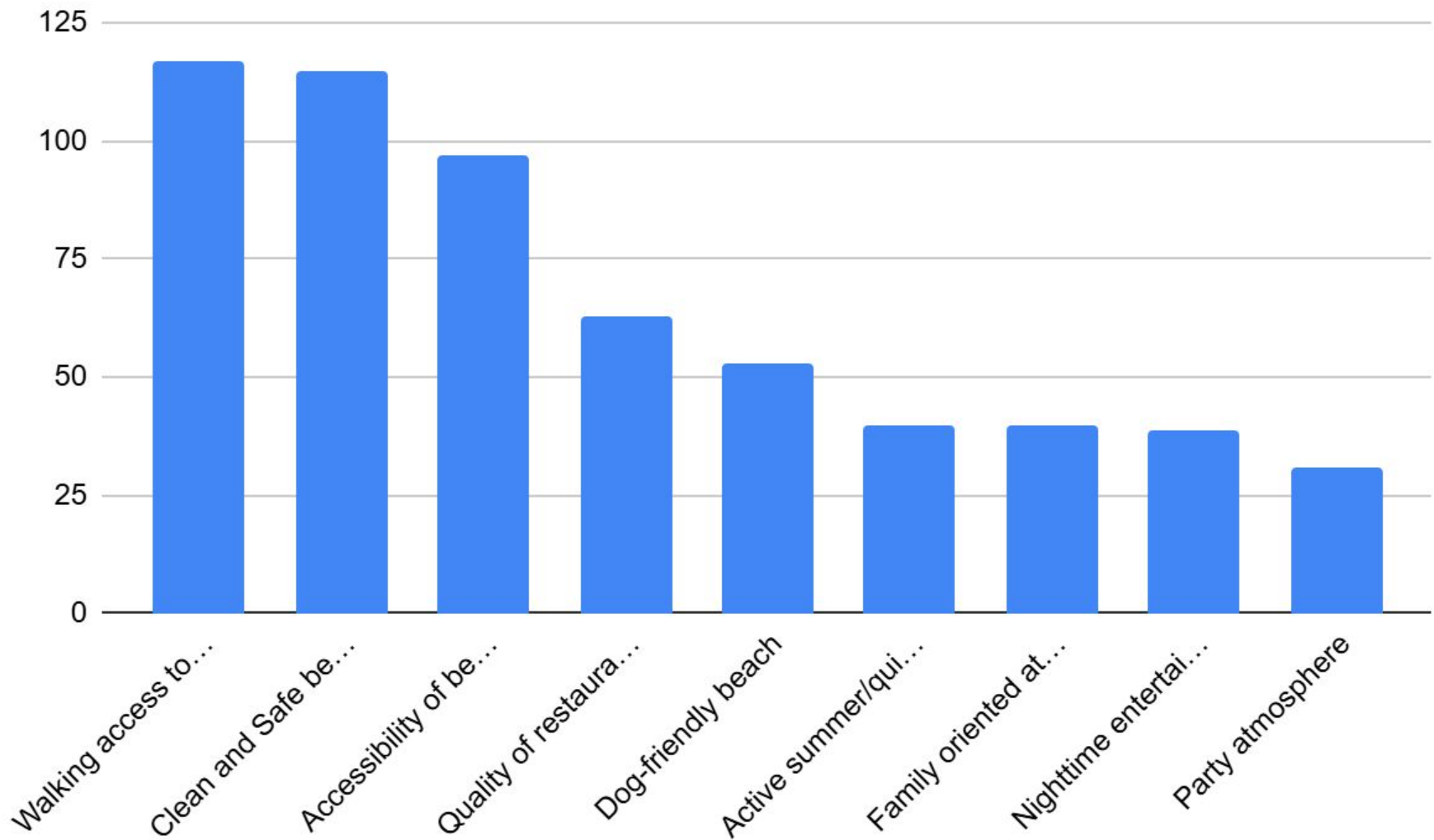
24 Business Owners

263 Visitors

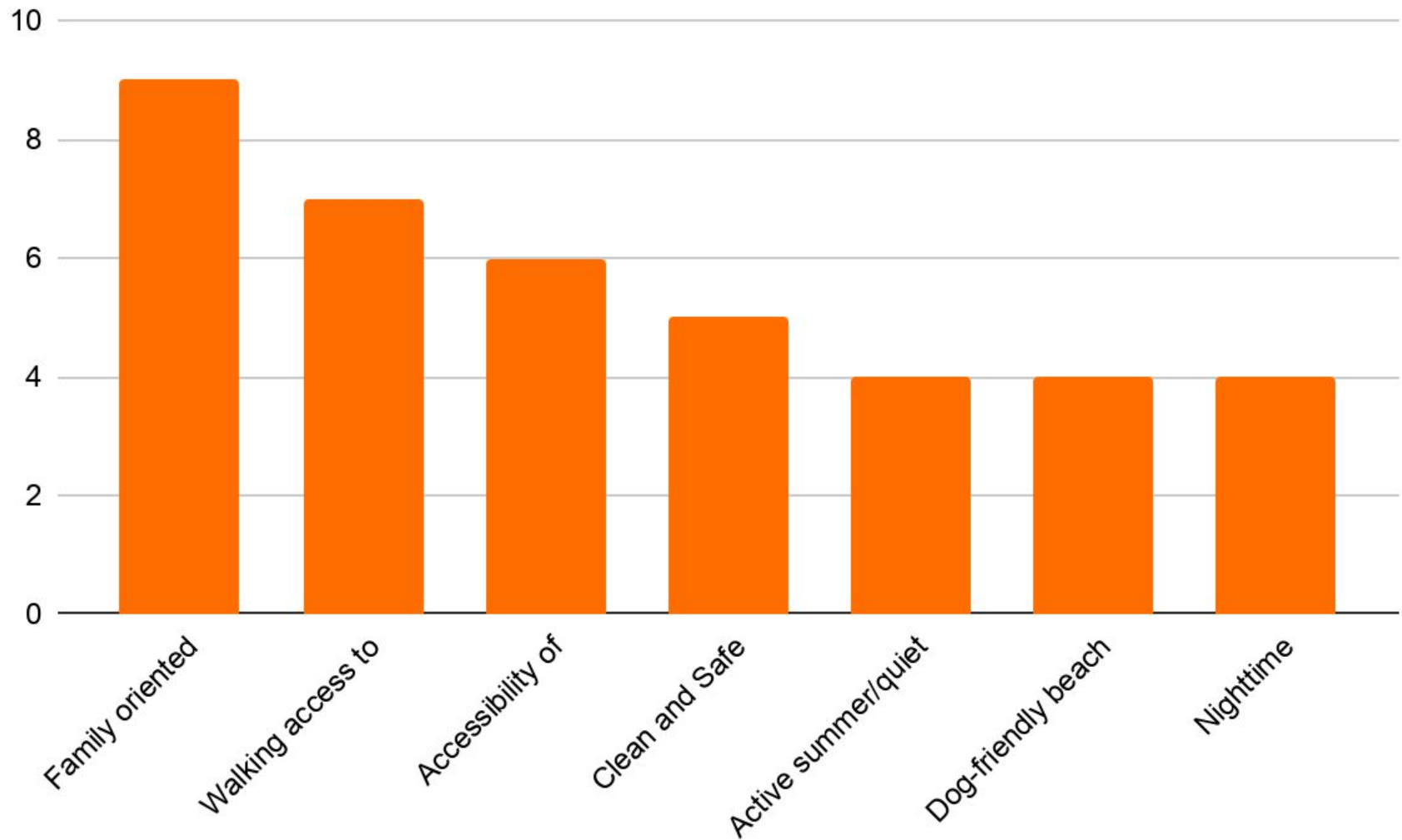
Top 5 Positive Characteristics



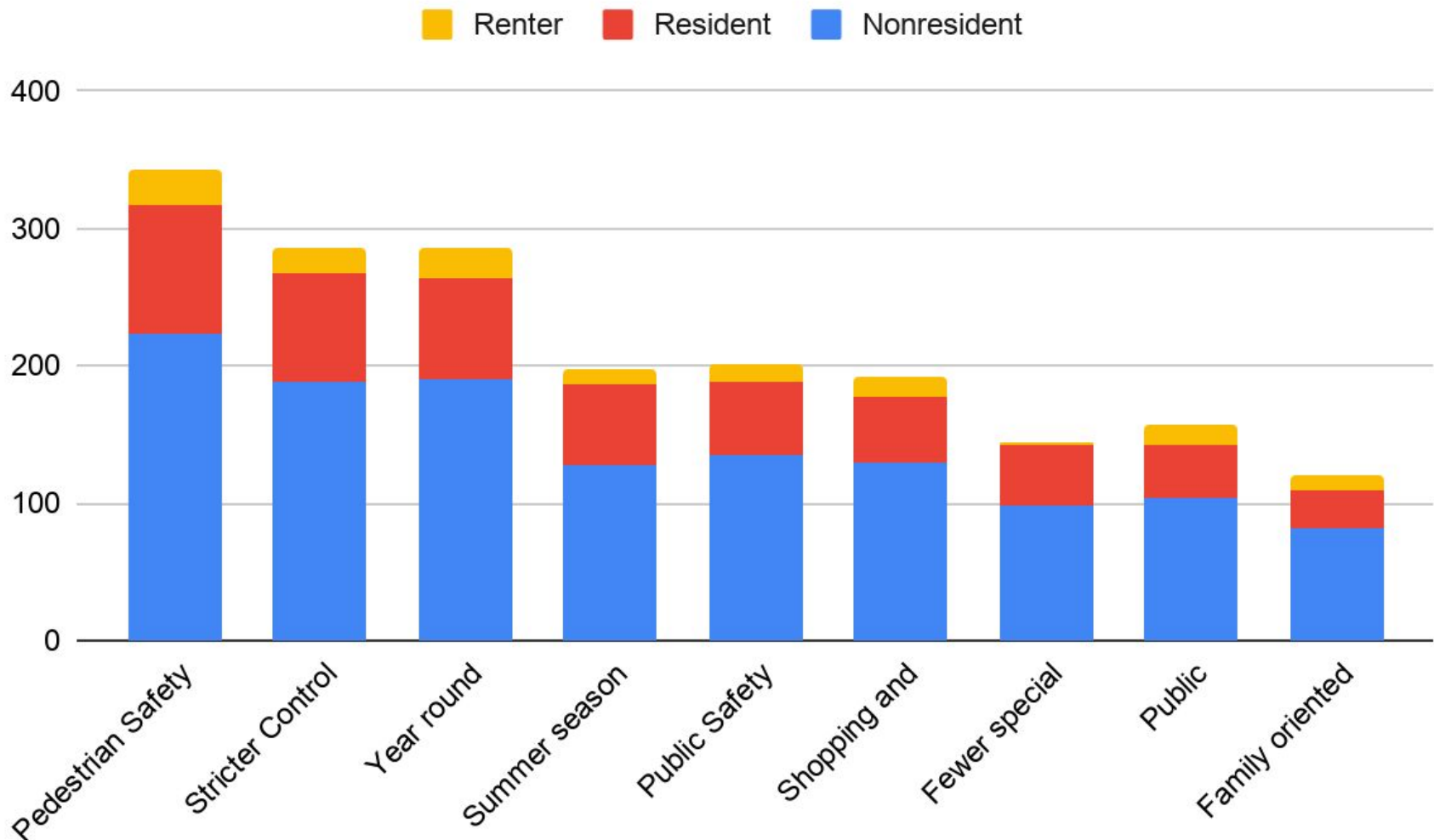
Top 5 Positive Characteristics- Visitors



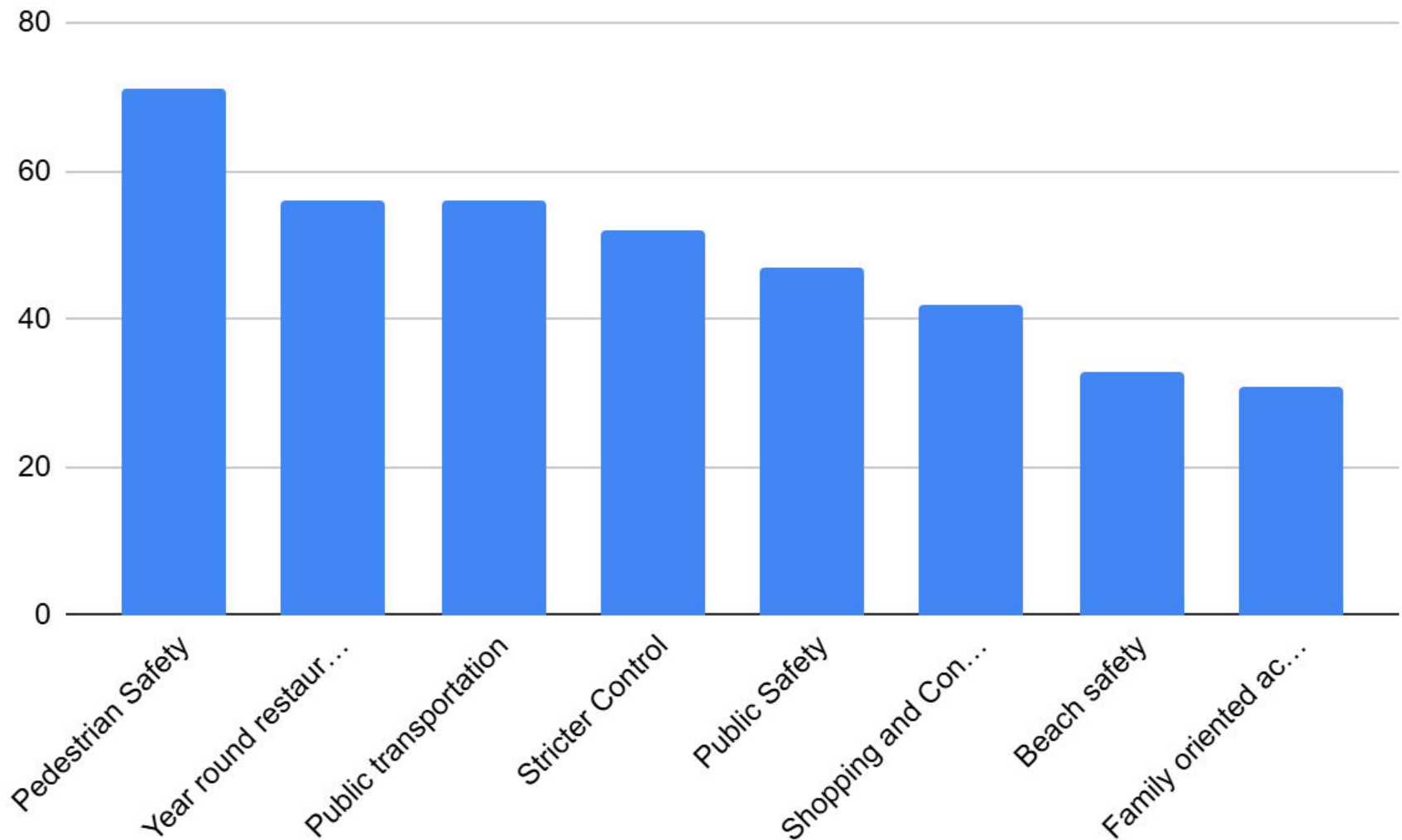
Top 5 Positive Characteristics- Business Owners



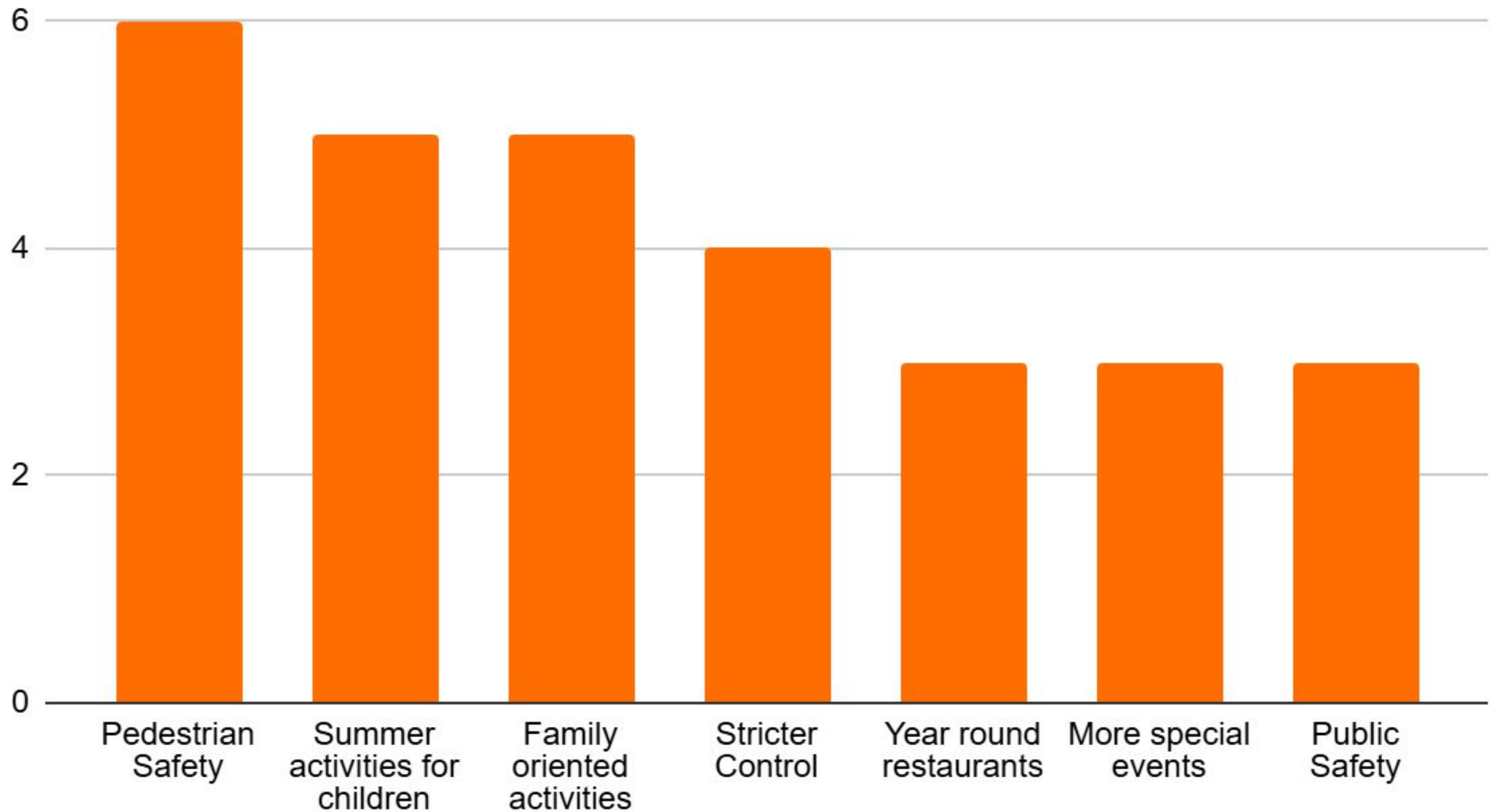
Top 5 Areas of Improvement



Top 5 Areas of Improvement: Visitors

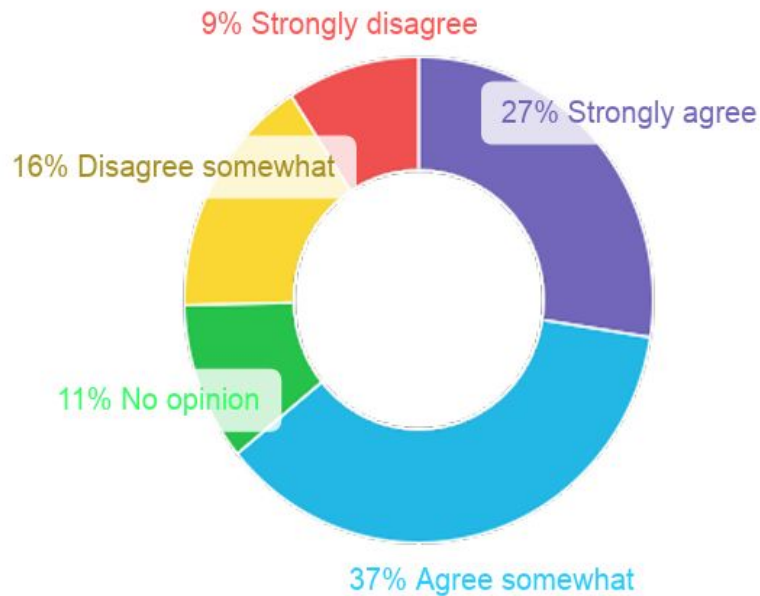


Top 5 Areas of Improvement: Business Owners

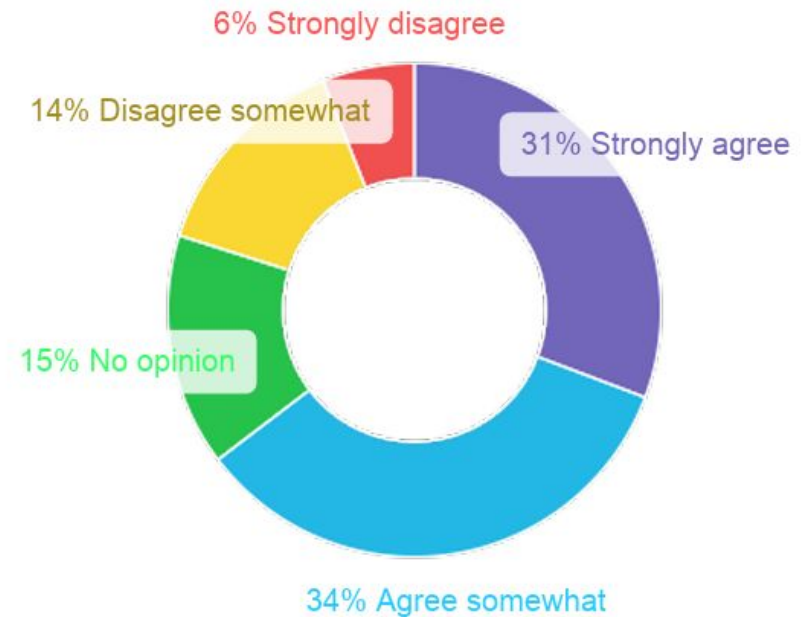


Expanding the Shoulder Season

Residents

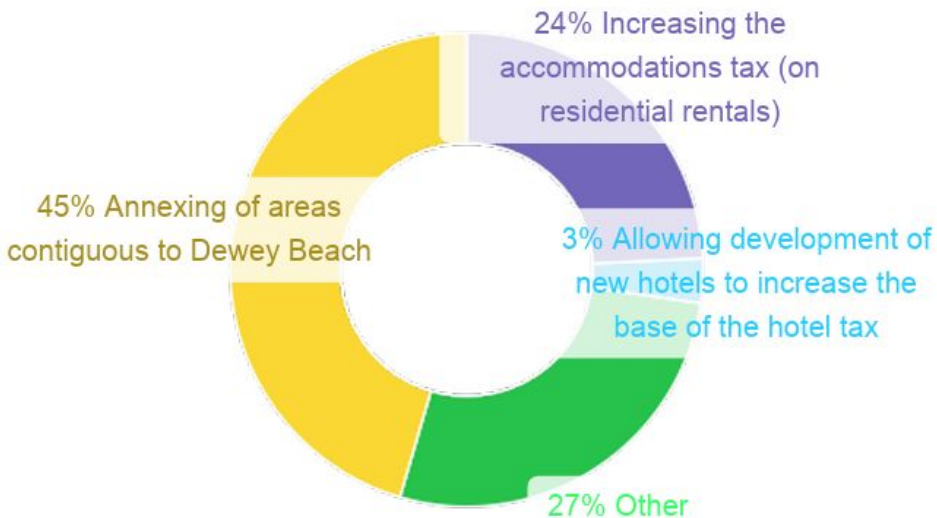


Non-Residents

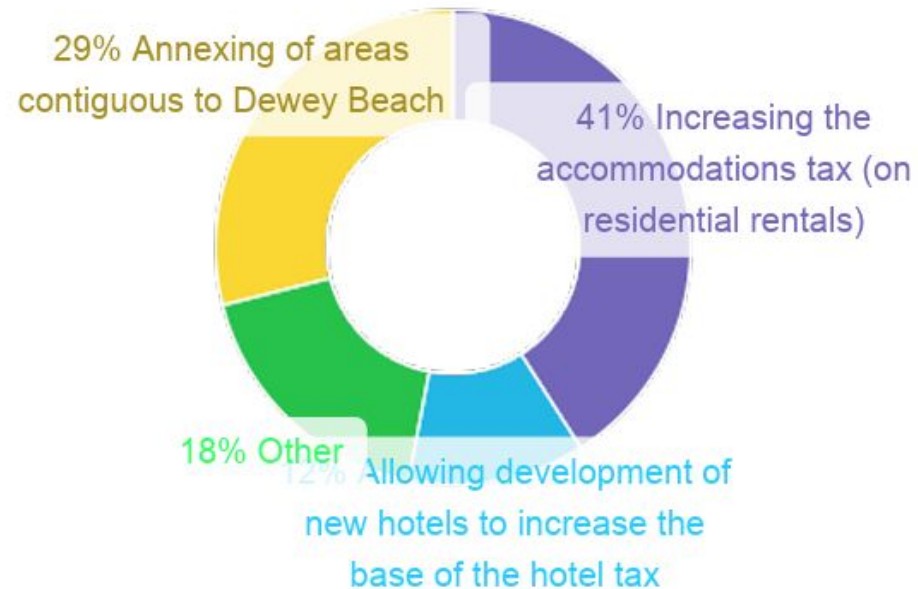


Increasing Town Revenue

Residents



Non-Residents



Comparison to 2018 Survey

- **Characteristics of respondents:**
 - The majority of respondents in both surveys are long-term property owners with tenure in Dewey Beach for over a decade.
 - Single-family dwelling owners made up a larger share of respondents in 2026 than in 2018, shifting the sample from a condo majority (60.3%) in 2018 to a 50/48 split in 2026.
- **Planned renovations:** Owner investment plans have remained steady over the eight-year period, defined by a strong preference for maintaining existing structures alongside minor interior updates.
- **Time spent in Dewey Beach:** Respondents reported longer average stays in 2026, highlighted by a notable increase in those residing in town for 9 to 12 months a year (increasing from 10.43% to 23%).

Comparison to 2018: Top 5 Trends

- ↔ **Top 5 Positive Characteristics:** remained the same over the decade, but their order changed slightly as restaurant walkability rose to number one
- ↔ **Top 5 area for Improvement:** remained the exact same over the decade, the priorities shifted as pedestrian safety rose to become the #1
- ↔ **Shoulder season:** Respondent support held steadily in favor of expanding shoulder season activities, maintaining a clear two-thirds in favor
- ↑ **Nighttime safety:** Respondents' perception of nighttime pedestrian/bike safety improved substantially, with total agreement increasing from 57.8% in 2018 to 72% in 2026.

Flooding



Flooding adaptation: Between 2018 and 2026 there was a 10-percent increase in residents who strongly favor prioritizing adaptation efforts (rising to 65% strongly agree).

Should adaptation remain a high priority for the town?

	Residents	Nonresidents	Business Owners
Somewhat or Strongly Agree	90	86	90
Somewhat or Strongly Disagree	5	7	NA
No Opinion	5	7	NA

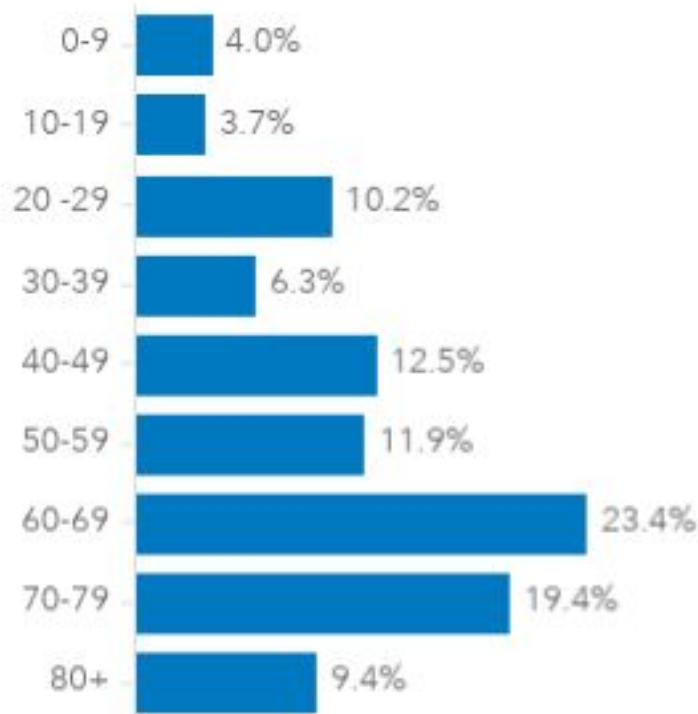
Other Planning Considerations

- Aging Population
- Potentially more year-round residents
- Increased risk and vulnerability
 - Emergency preparedness
- Development in Sussex County and surrounding areas

DB Population Comparison

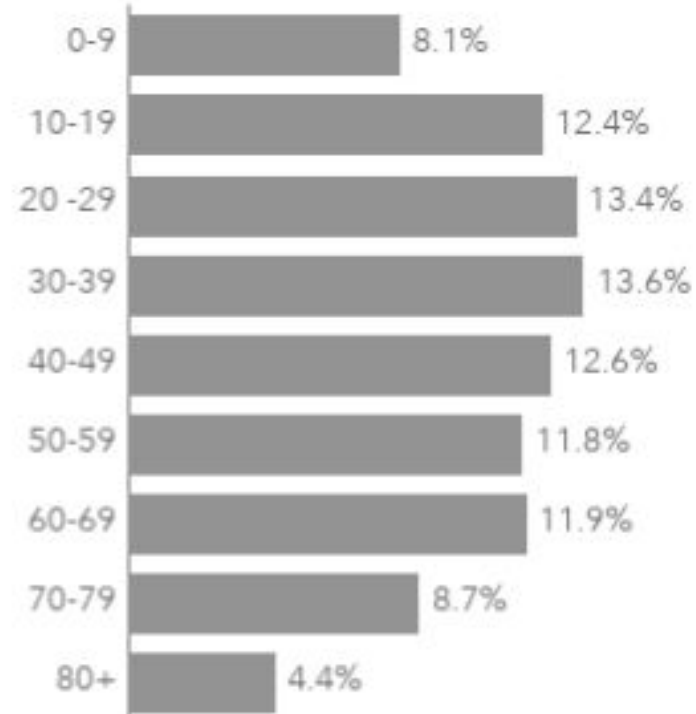
Population by Age

Selected area



National

United States



Delaware is consistently ranked as 6th in terms of age of population

Vision Statement

What is a vision statement?

- Future focused
- Aspirational
- Answers the question, “What do we want to be in the future?”



Existing Vision Statement

The Town of Dewey Beach is widely recognized as a gem of a Mid-Atlantic small beach town, characterized by a diverse culture, prized natural resources, and small-town ambience.

How would you update this statement?

Charter Goals

- Maintain peace and order.
- Protect and preserve all property, public and private.
- Provide for the Town's sanitation.
- Provide for the health, safety, convenience, comfort, and well-being of the population.
- Protect the Town's beauty.

Defining Community Character & Small Town Ambiance

- Physical aspects of the built environment: age of housing (median year 1969); architecture; key sites
 - height
 - mix of housing and commercial
 - types of commercial
- “small town ambiance”- can you define this?
 - events
 - dog friendly
 - walkability
 - recognizable venues

Existing Land Use



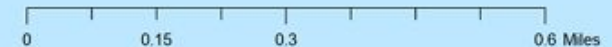
Town of Dewey Beach Sussex County, Delaware

DRAFT - Existing Land Use



- Beaches and River Banks
- Single Family Dwellings
- Mixed Single and Multi-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Dwellings
- Mixed Urban or Built-up Land
- Other Commercial
- Parking Lots
- Retail Sales/Wholesale/Professional Services
- Institutional
- Town of Dewey Beach
- Outdoor Recreation Areas
- Major Routes
- Centerline Roads
- Major Rivers

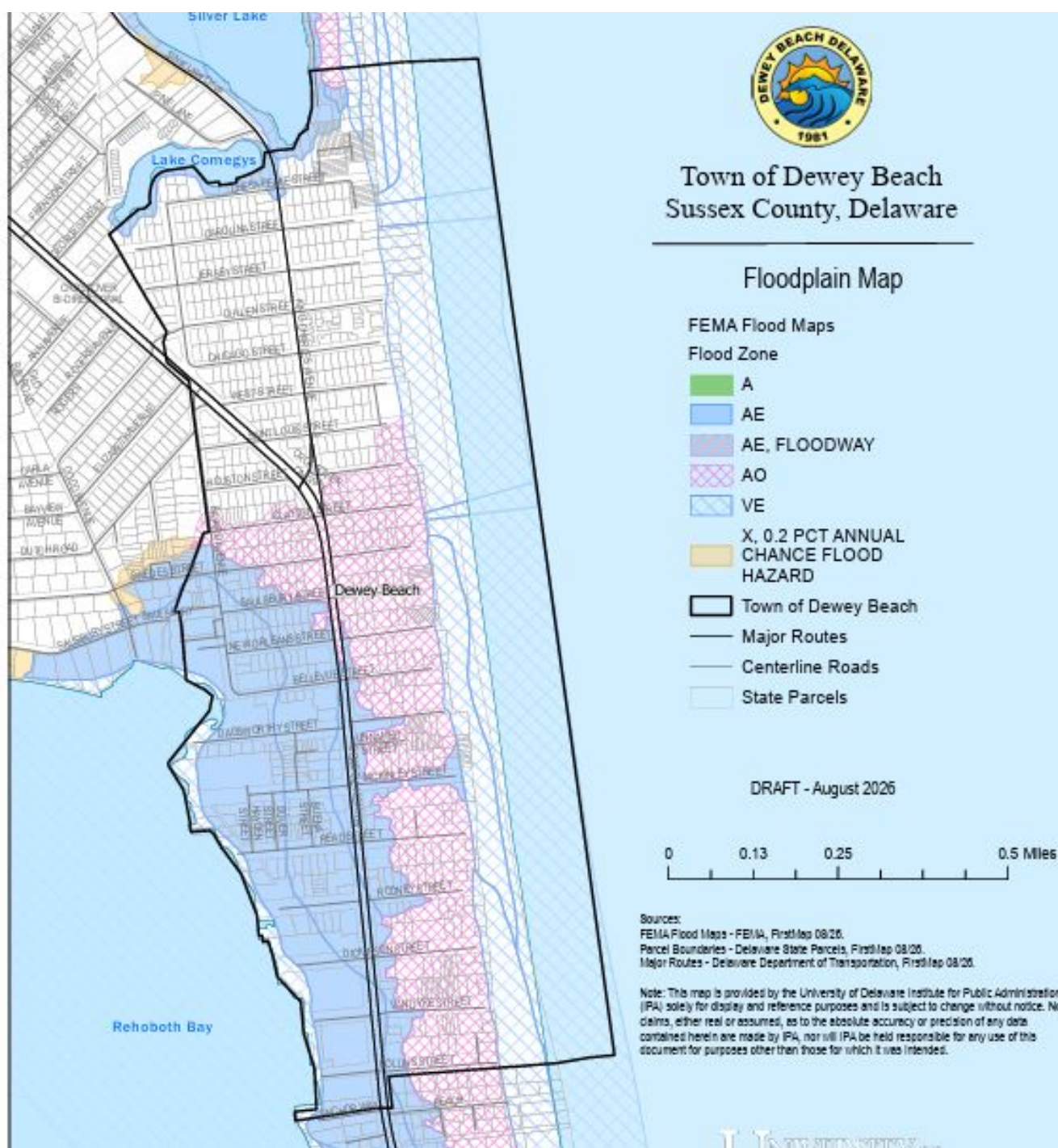
DRAFT - September 2026



Sources:
 Draft Existing Land Use - Taken from LULC 2024 and coded by Delaware State
 Parcels, UD IPA 09/26.
 Parcel Boundaries - Delaware State Parcels, FirstMap 08/26.
 Major Routes - Delaware Department of Transportation, FirstMap 08/26.
 Municipal Boundaries - Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination, FirstMap 08/26.

Note: This map is provided by the University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA) solely for display and reference purposes and is subject to change without notice. No claims, either real or assumed, as to the absolute accuracy or precision of any data contained herein are made by IPA, nor will IPA be held responsible for any use of this document for purposes other than those for which it was intended.

FEMA Floodplains



CP REQUIREMENTS	TOPICS
Position on Population, Housing & Land Use	Redevelopment; Annexation; Housing;
Critical Community Development Issues	Climate & Flooding; Natural Resources Quality of Life Emergency Economic Development: restaurants
Key Infrastructure Issues	Pedestrian Safety (Lighting, sidewalks)

Framework (Tentative)

October	Survey; Vision; Community Character; Start land use
November	Land Use, Annexation, & Redevelopment; Housing; Town Services & Facilities
December	Key Infrastructure Issues: Safe streets
January	Critical Community Development Issue: Climate Change and Resilience; Emergency preparedness
February	Critical Community Development Issue: Beach and Bay;