

# 2019 Allen County Business Survey

## Report on Results

December 2019



**GREATER  
FORT WAYNE INC.**  
METRO CHAMBER ALLIANCE



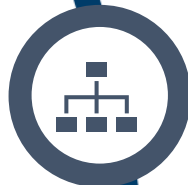
**GREATER  
FORT WAYNE INC.**  
METRO CHAMBER ALLIANCE



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# Objectives & Methodology

## Key Objectives

- ✓ **Assess** investors confidence in the Fort Wayne market and any key areas of concern.
- ✓ **Uncover** plans for future expansion/investment, as well as current hiring and recruiting strategies.
- ✓ **Understand** prevalence of membership in partner organizations, such as Black Chamber, Hispanic Chamber, NewAllen Alliance member chambers, and the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership.
- ✓ **Create** a clear and concise definition of Investor Loyalty.
- ✓ **Quantify** the current state of Investor Loyalty.
- ✓ **Define** more clearly the member needs and expectations of GFW Inc.'s value proposition (as well as how it should be communicated) within specific member segments.
- ✓ **Diagnose** strengths and weaknesses within the member experience (i.e. leadership programs, networking events, and affinity benefits) and uncovering opportunities for GFW Inc. and local government partners to better serve the business community.
- ✓ **Explore** differences in these perceptions across GFW Inc.'s Current Investors and Non-Investors (Prospective, Former and/or Lapsed Investors).

## Methodology

### Sampling:

- ✓ Survey invitations were sent to **1,268 investors**, and **1,942 non-investors**. In addition, an anonymous link was published in various media outlets throughout Allen County.
- ✓ A total of **368** responses were collected.
- ✓ Using a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error is +/-5.11% at the aggregate.

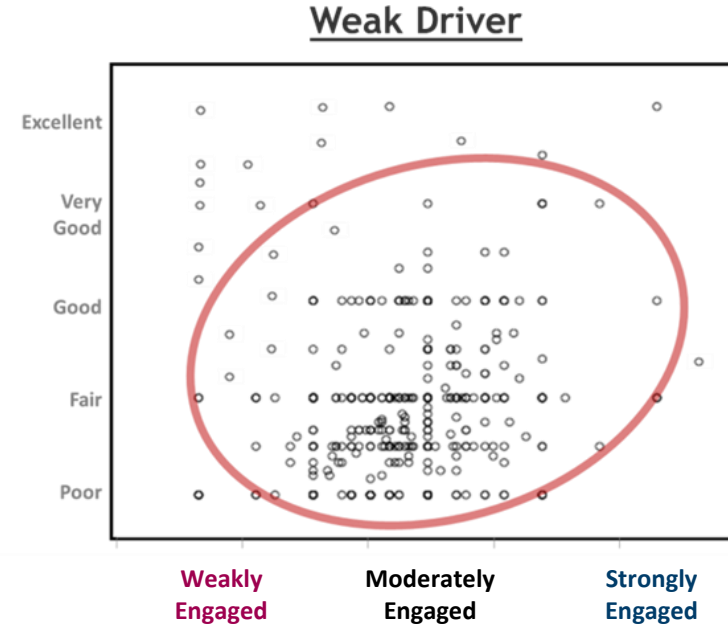
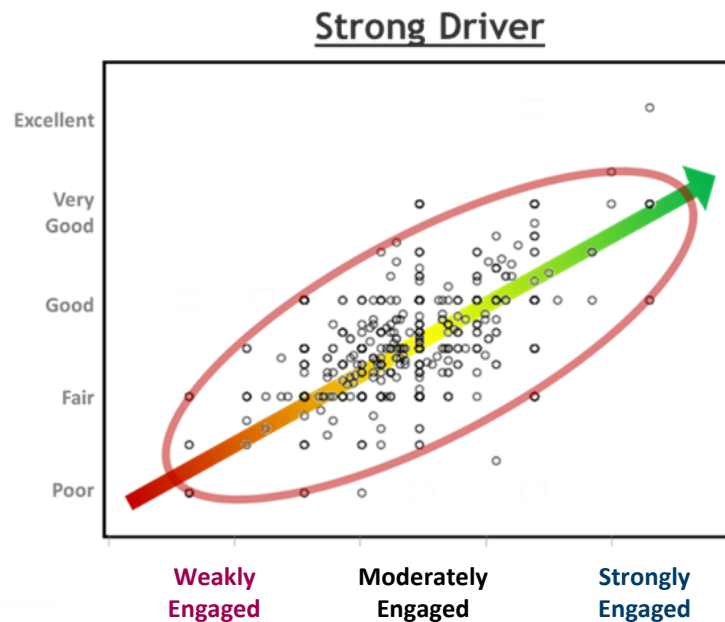
### Survey:

- ✓ The survey was designed by Loyalty Research in collaboration with GFW Inc. based on qualitative interviews conducted with the GFW Inc. executive team, selected staff, and board members.
- ✓ The survey was administered online from October 8 to November 1. An invitation and 4-5 reminders were sent to eligible participants.
- ✓ On October 24, a \$5 Starbucks gift card was added as an incentive. On October 29, the total increased to \$10. This incentive was offered to non-investors only, and only via email.

# Objectives & Methodology

## Key Driver Analysis

- **Key driver analysis** was used to determine the relative weight or impact different aspects of the member experience have on Engagement, and to further derive the impact that attribute-level experiences have on those relationship aspects.
- The plotted data points in the Strong Driver graph below form a pattern which reflects the strong linear interaction between the performance evaluation and the strength of the relationship segments.
  - Higher performance ratings are clearly associated with a stronger relationship (Strongly Engaged) and lower ratings are aligned with a weaker relationship (Weakly Engaged).
- In the Weak Driver example, there is little to no pattern or linear interaction between the performance evaluation and the relationship strength.



# Objectives & Methodology

## Performance Evaluations

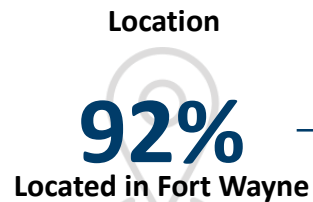
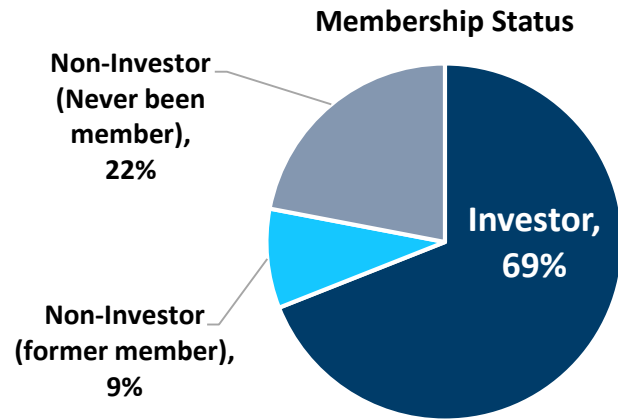
- Performance evaluations throughout the report are characterized as Excellent, Above Average, Average, and Below Average based on industry standards and LRC's experience with membership associations.

Performance Evaluations (% - Top 2 Box = % Excellent + % Very good)	
≥ 70%	= Excellent
60% - 69%	= Above Average
50% - 59%	= Average
< 50%	= Below Average

Likelihood to Recommend (% - Top 2 Box = % Extremely + % Very likely)	
≥ 70%	= Excellent
60% - 69%	= Above Average
50% - 59%	= Average
< 50%	= Below Average

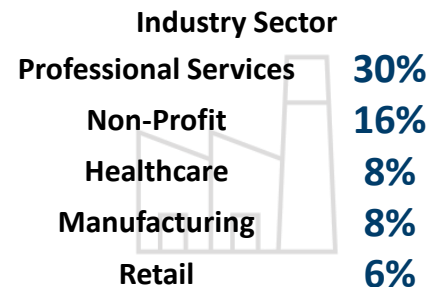
# Objectives & Methodology

## Sample Firmographics



### Profile of the Average Respondent

n=368



### Diverse Business

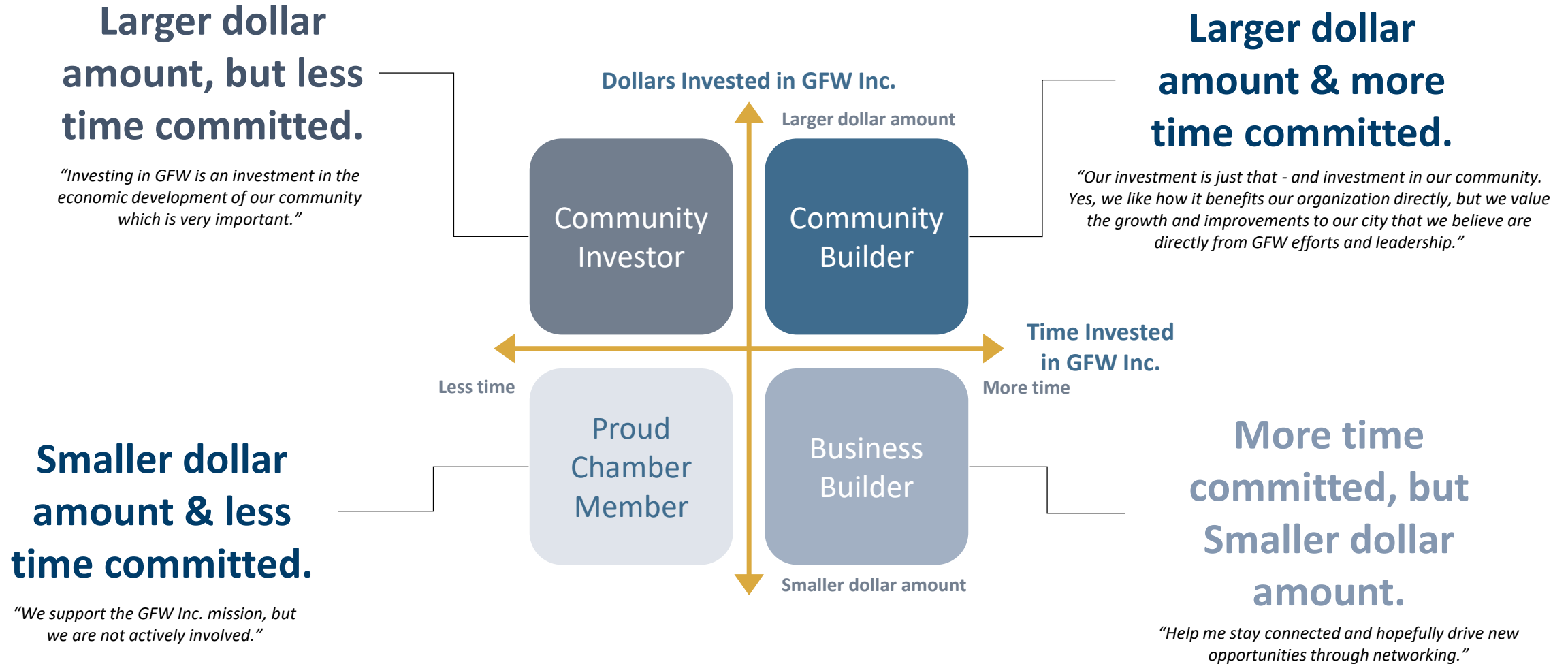


### Size of Business



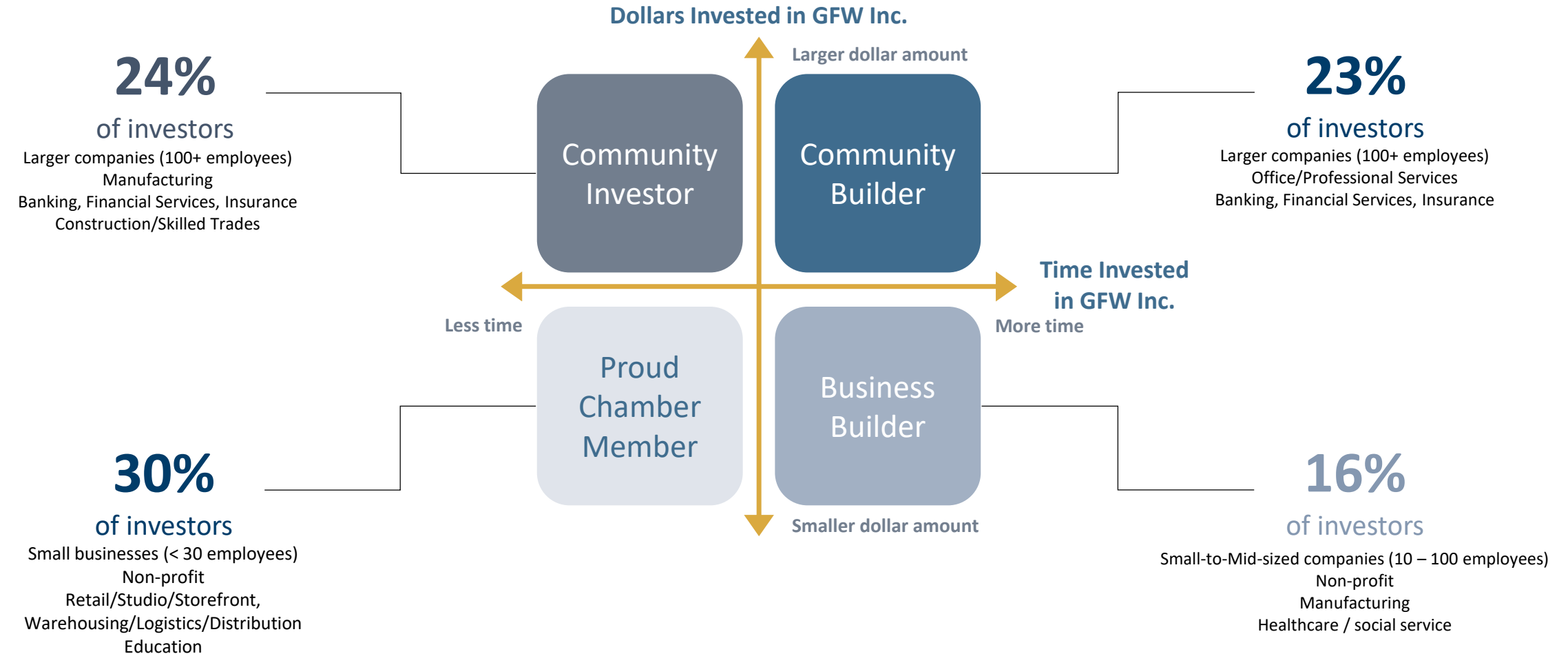
# Objectives & Methodology

Investor Personas / Membership Segments Defined



# Objectives & Methodology

## Investor Personas / Membership Segments





# Key Findings

# Key Findings

- GFW, Inc.'s Engagement Profile is at a “Best-in-Class” level with 55% of investors classified as Strongly Engaged, while only 11% of investors are Weakly Engaged.
  - Key strengths that drive engagement are **GFW Inc.'s Reputation**, particularly being “an effective organization producing real results for the community” and “bringing a fresh, innovative, and inclusive approach to the traditional chamber of commerce model” and **Advocating on behalf of the business community**.
  - Areas of potential improvement are **Networking Events** and **Communication**, i.e. “Top 5 Newsletters/GovConnect/Other Communication”.
- Over **90% of respondents** have a Very positive or Positive outlook on the current business climate in Allen County and also indicate that the “downtown Fort Wayne revitalization” has a strong impact on talent attraction and retention.
- Areas of community improvement would be in **closing the talent gap** and **further community development**:
  - 37% of respondents indicate that it is “Difficult” to find needed talent in Allen County, and 82% state that there is at least a moderate talent gap among candidates and new hires.
  - There is strong agreement among respondents (67%) that Southeast Fort Wayne is in the most need of additional private sector investment.

# Investor Engagement & Key Drivers

# Perceptions of GFW, Inc.

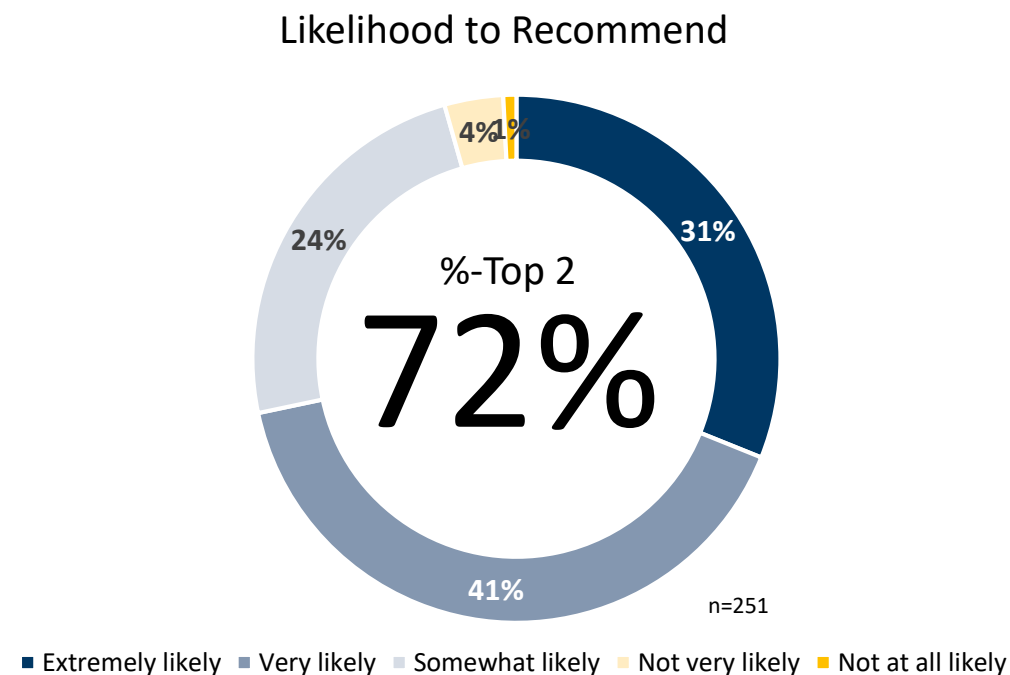
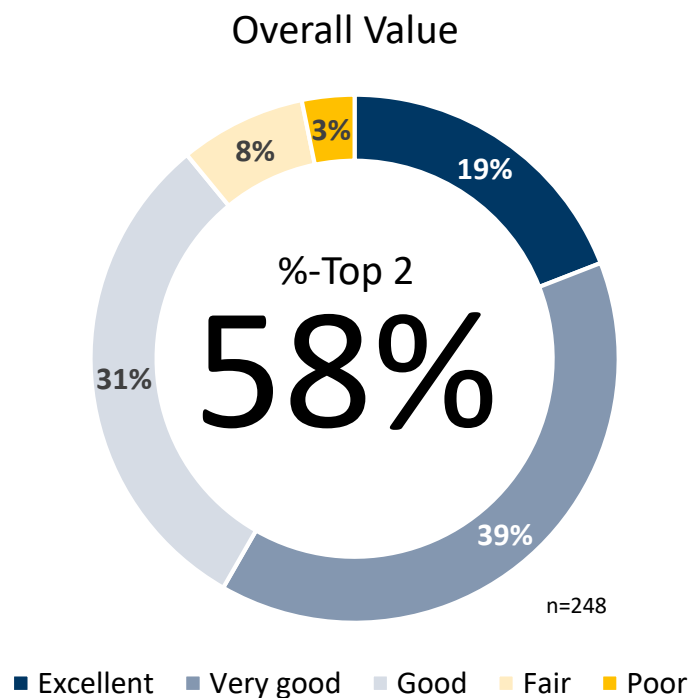
- Top words used to describe GFW Inc. were “Innovative”, “Helpful”, “Progressive”, and “Community”.

**What are 3 words that you would use to describe the GFW Inc.?**



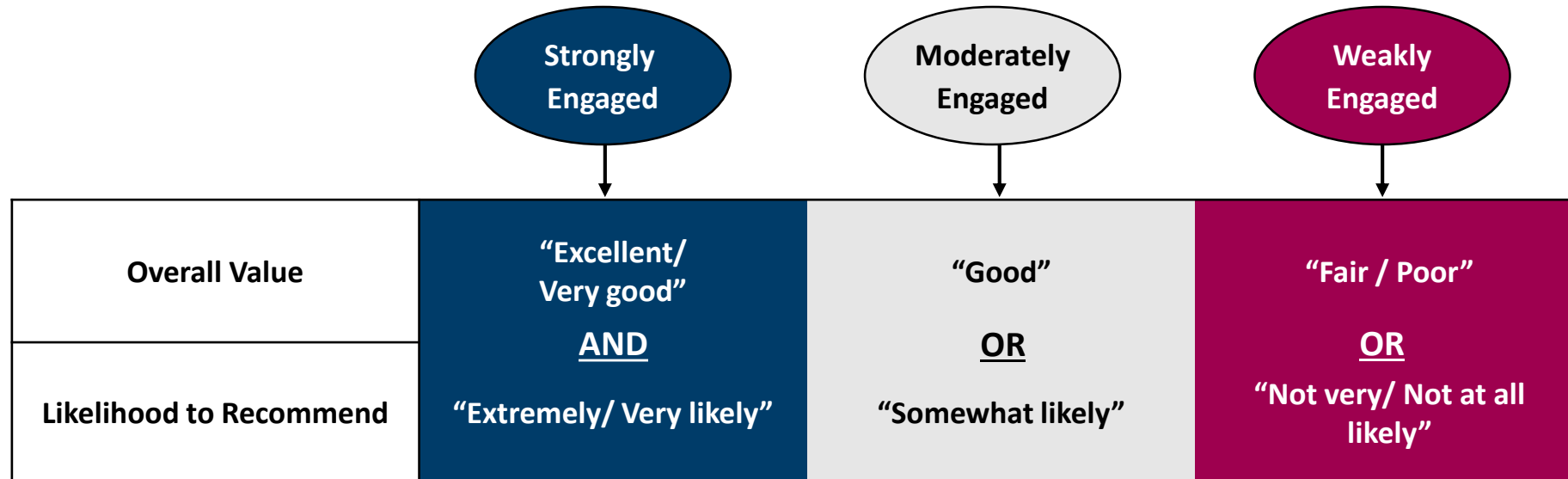
# Overall Value & Recommend

- Nearly 60% of investors perceive the overall value of membership with GFW Inc. to be Excellent or Very good, while just under three-fourths of investors are highly likely to recommend membership.



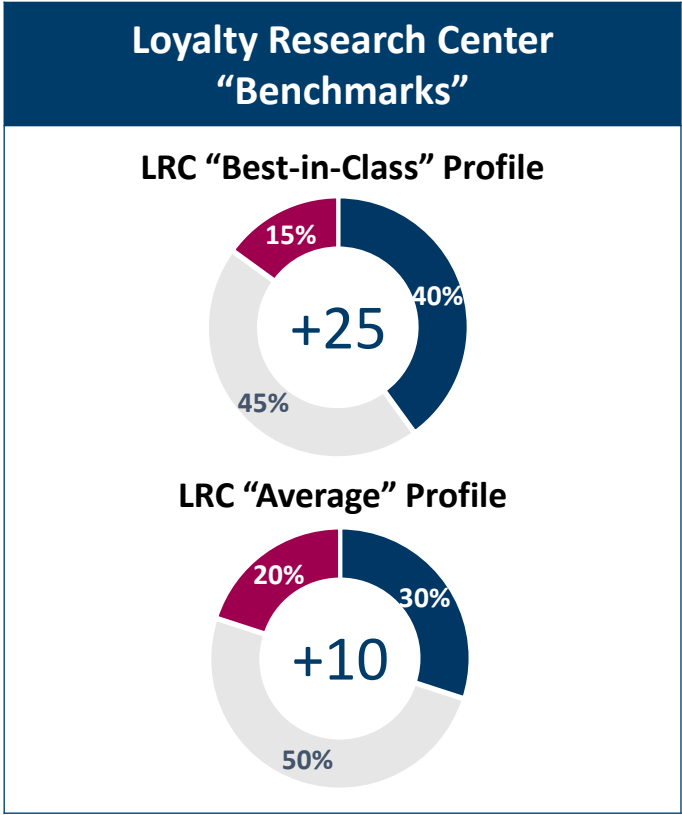
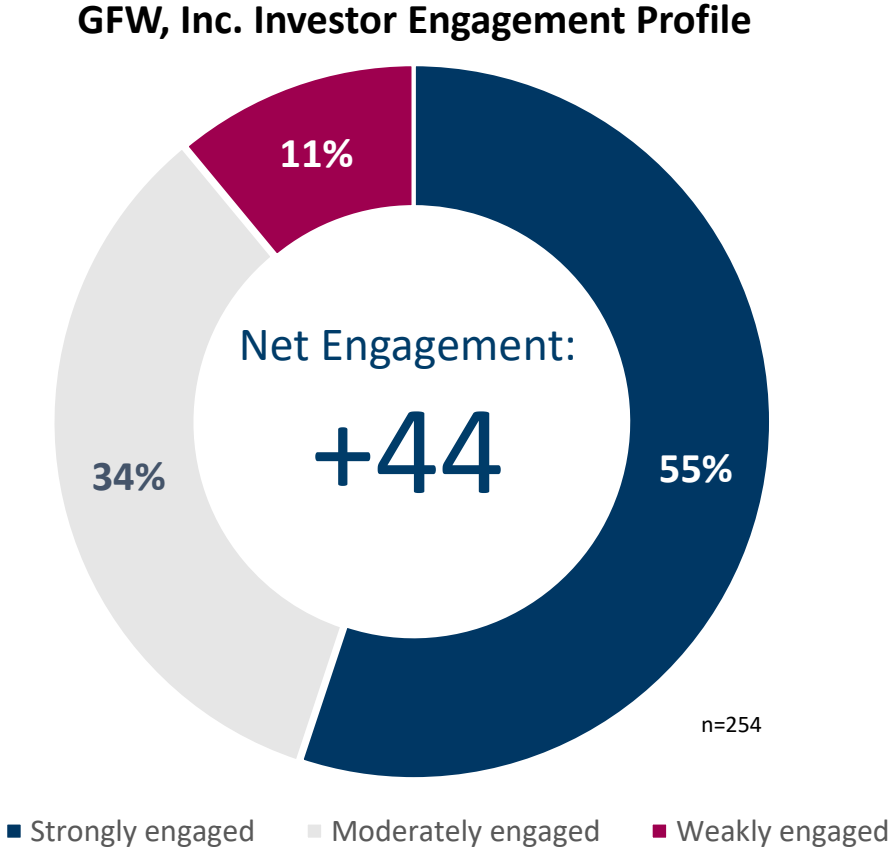
# Engagement Segments Defined

- The Engagement Profile is derived based on perceptions of Overall Value and the Likelihood to Recommend.
- Examples:
  - An investor that says GFW Inc.'s value is "Excellent or Very good" AND is Highly Likely to Recommend "Extremely or Very likely", that investor would be classified as **Strongly Engaged**.
  - An investor that says GFW Inc.'s value is "Good" OR is a "Somewhat likely to Recommend", that investor would be classified as **Moderately Engaged**.
  - An investor that either says GFW Inc.'s value is "Fair or Poor" OR is Unlikely to Recommend "Not very or Not at all likely", that investor would be classified as **Weakly Engaged**.



# Engagement Profile

- GFW, Inc.’s Engagement Profile is at a “Best-in-Class” level with 55% of investors classified as Strongly Engaged, while only 11% of investors are Weakly Engaged.

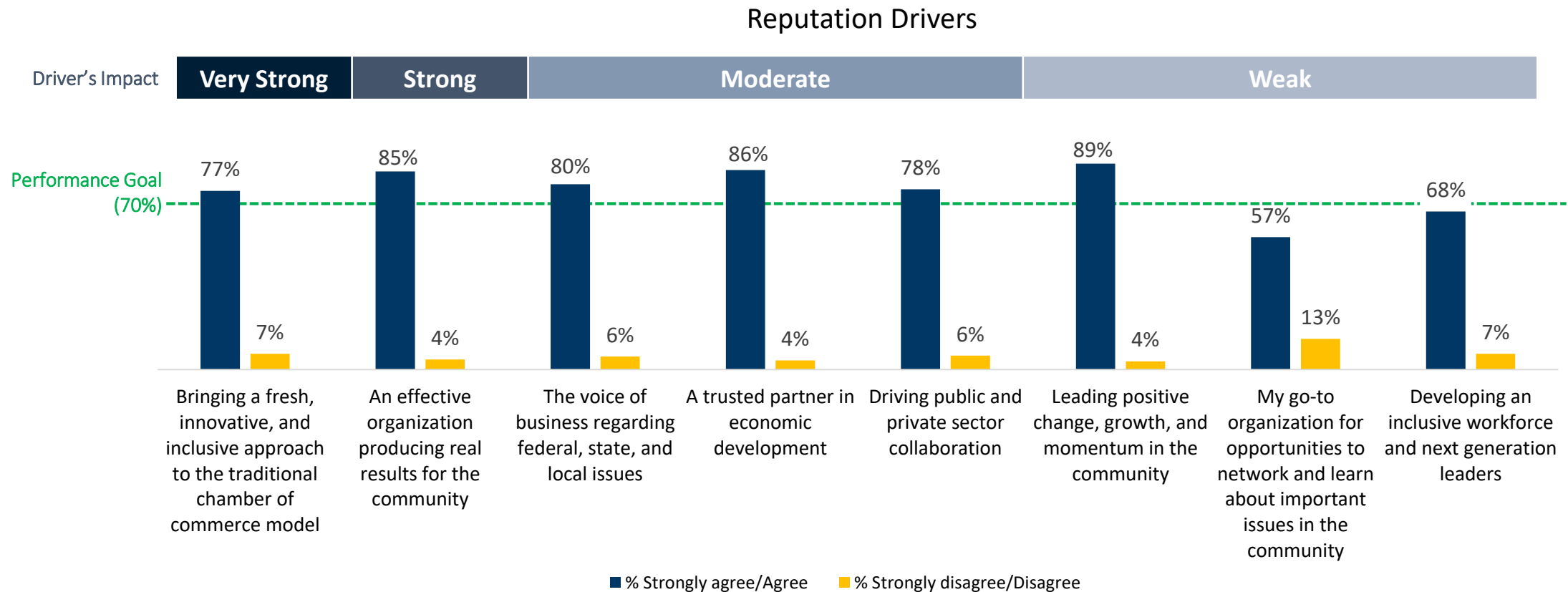


# Investor Key Driver Evaluations



# Reputation Drivers

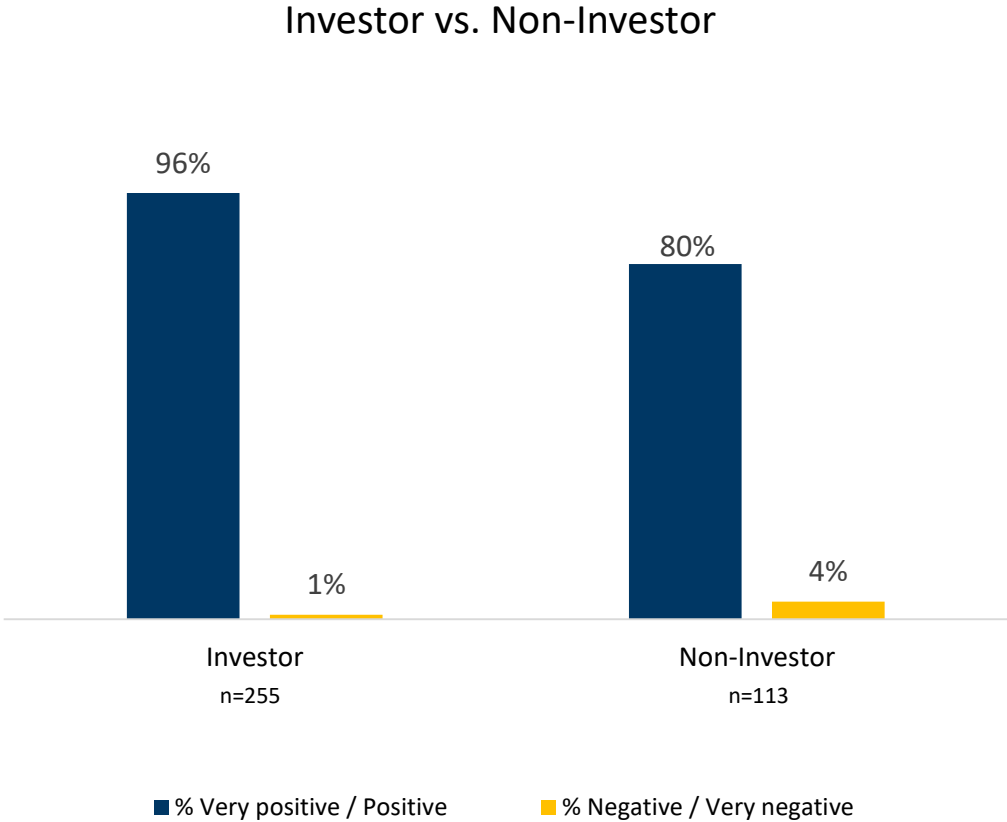
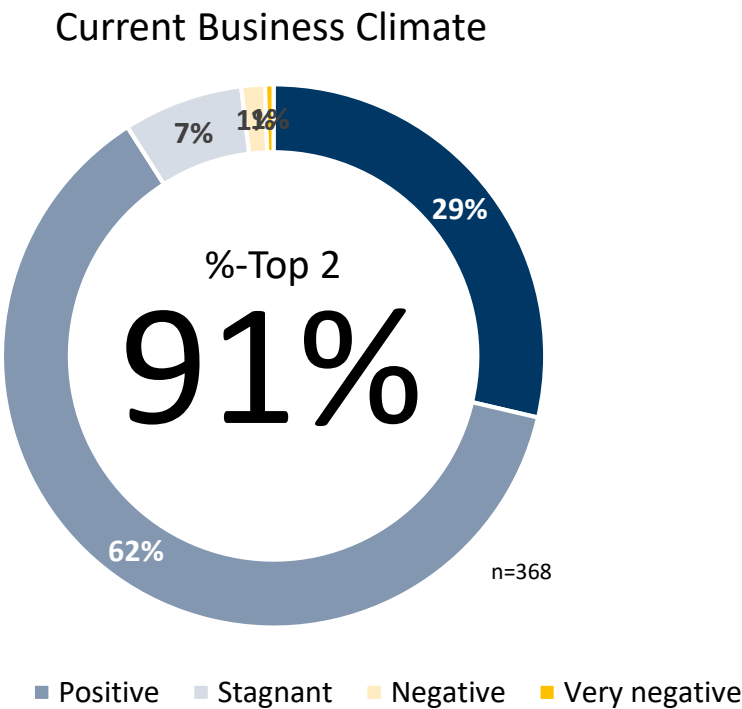
- Among Investors, key drivers of GFW Inc.'s Reputation receive high marks. Leveraging its reputation is critical to maintain the high level of engagement among Investors.



# BUSINESS CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

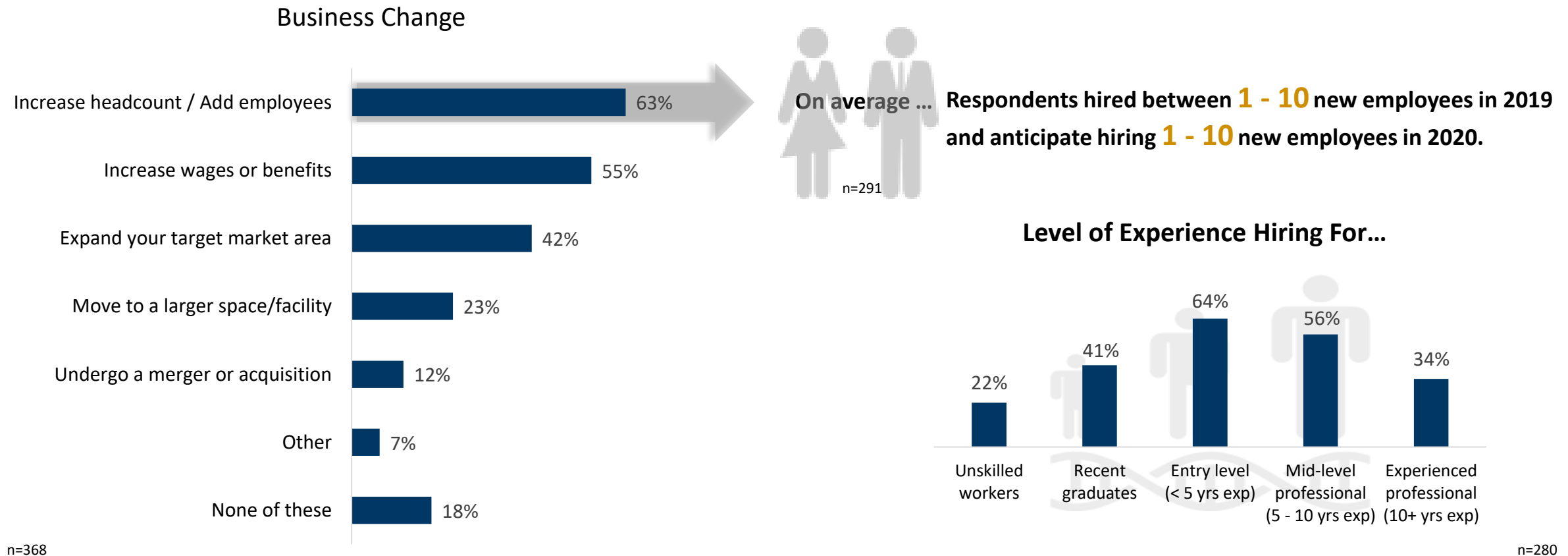
# Current Business Climate

- Over 90% of respondents have a Very positive or Positive outlook on the current business climate in Allen County.



# Business Growth

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents plan to increase headcount, while just over half say that they plan to increase wages or benefits.
- For those increasing headcount, on average, between 1-10 new hires are expected to be made in 2020 – mostly entry and mid-level positions.



D1. In the next few years, do you expect your business to change in any of these ways?

D3. In 2019, approximately how many new employees did your company hire?

D3A. Approximately how many new employees does your company anticipate hiring in 2020?

D4. For the positions you anticipate hiring for in 2020, what level of experience are you looking for?

# Business Talent & Recruitment

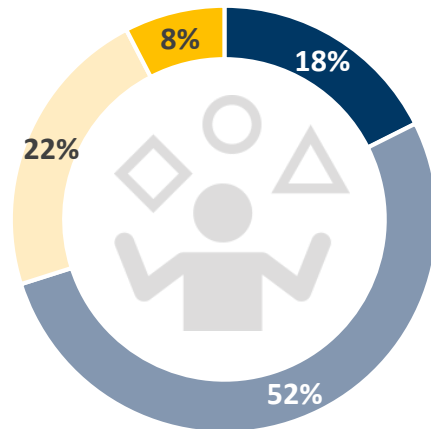
- While 37% of respondents indicate that it is “Difficult” to find needed talent in Allen County, 82% state that there is at least a moderate talent gap among candidates and new hires.



n=339

**37%** indicate that it is “Difficult” to find the talent they need in Allen County.

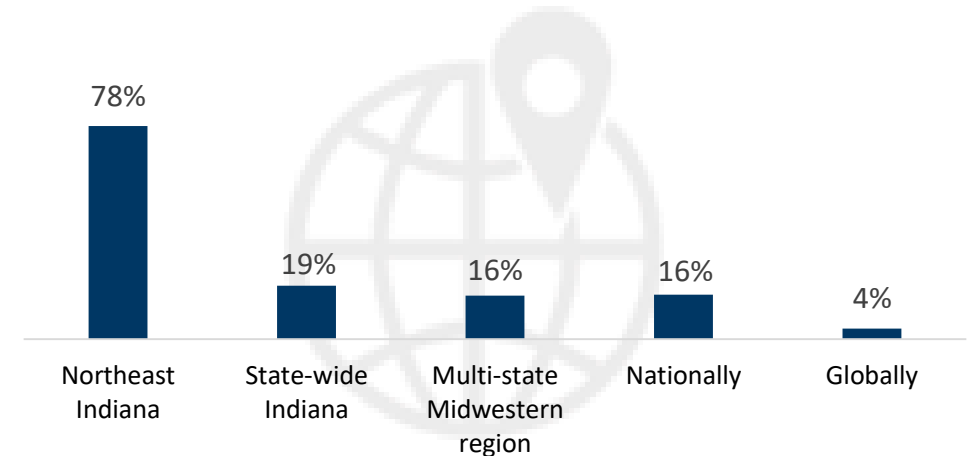
Skills Gap Among Candidates and New Hires



n=301

■ No gap ■ Moderate gap ■ Significant gap ■ Very significant gap

Recruitment Geography



n=339

# Talent Development & Initiatives



n=368

**60%** of respondents report their business has an internship program or plans to implement one.



n=272

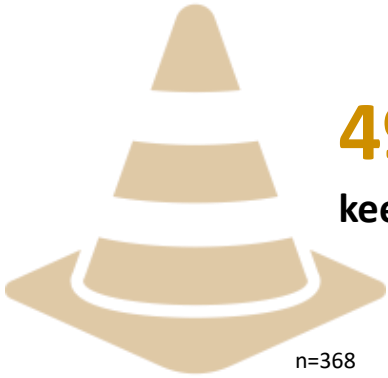
**84%** of respondents state their company has initiatives or policies supporting diversity and inclusion.



n=246

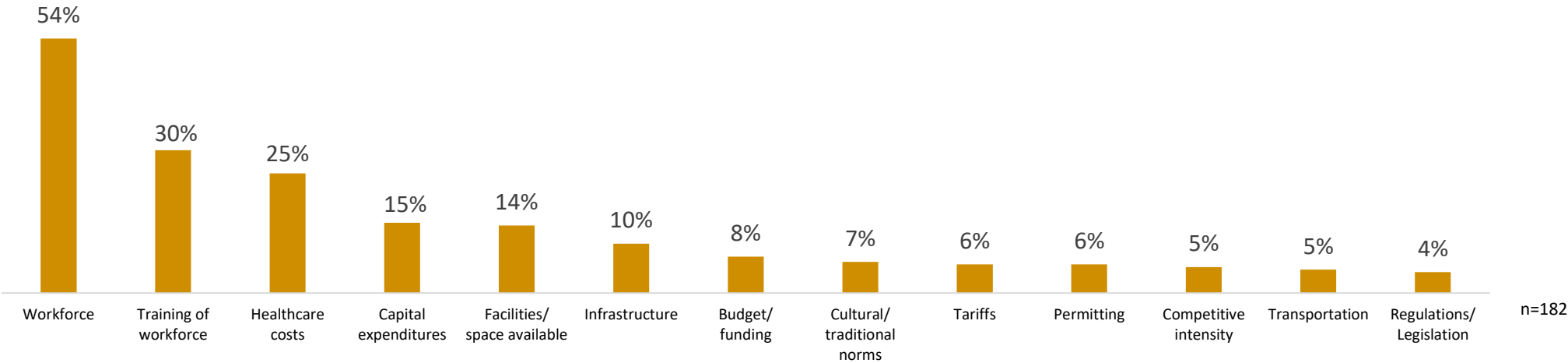
**68%** of respondents state their company has initiatives or policies supporting hiring workers with disabilities.

# Barriers to Growth



**49%** of respondents believe there are barriers keeping them from growing their business.

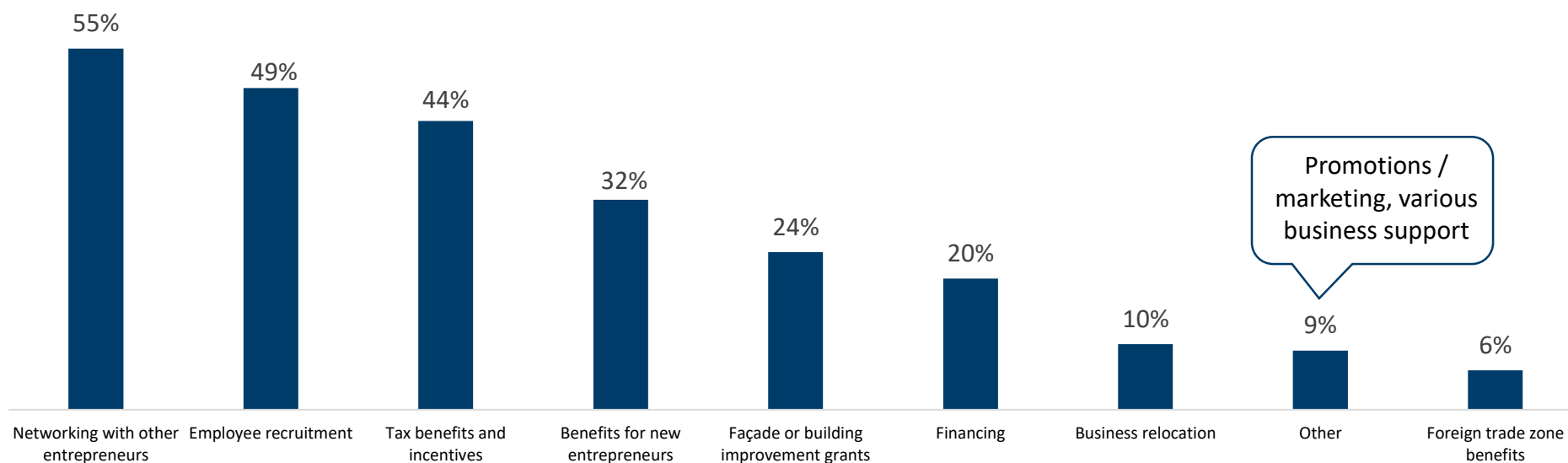
## Top Barriers to Growth



Responses < 4% not shown.

# Beneficial Info from GFW for Growth

- Entrepreneurial networking, employee recruitment, and tax benefits/incentives are the most frequently mentioned types of information GFW Inc. could produce that would be beneficial to enabling respondents' companies to grow.

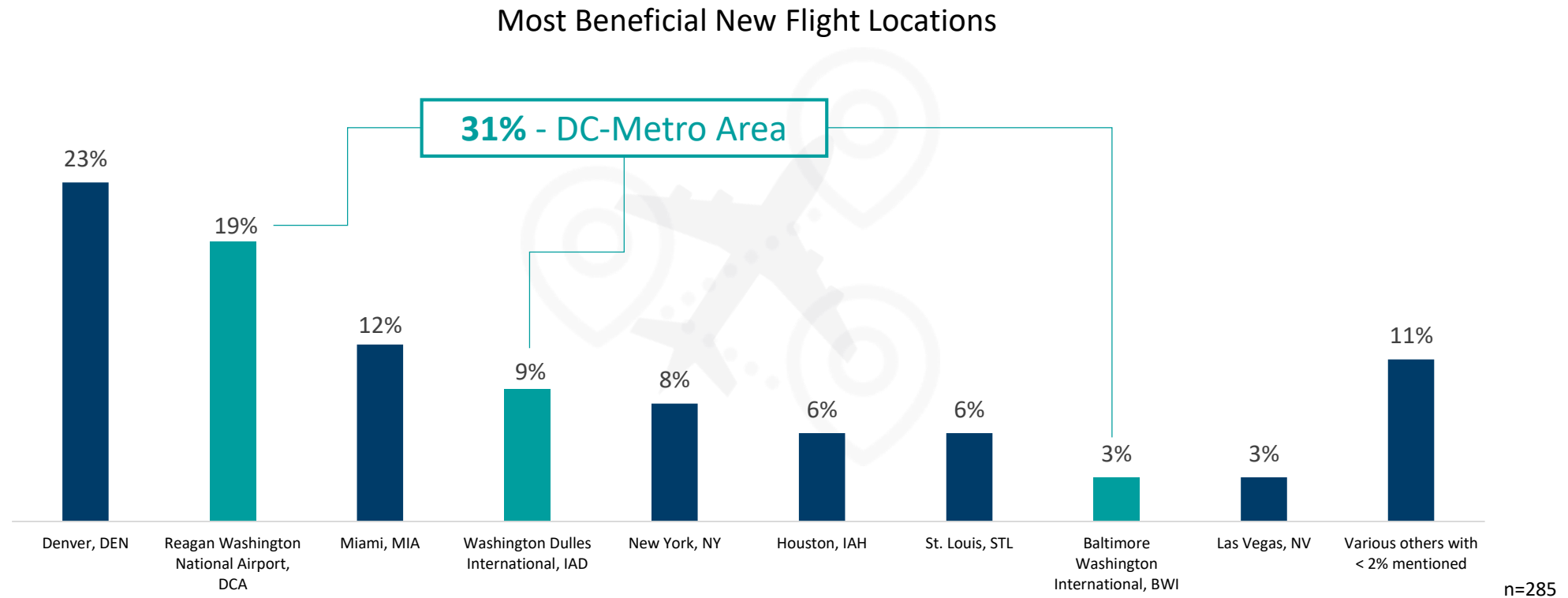


n=316



# FWA & Connectivity

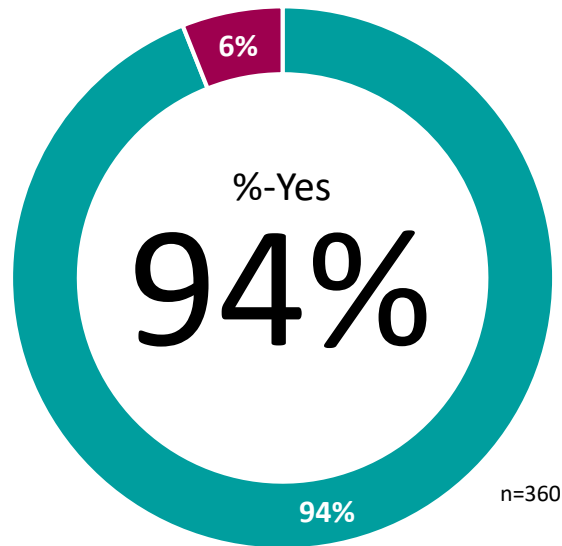
- While Denver was the most frequently selected airport, the DC-metro area was the region that was selected most often as being most beneficial if a new non-stop location was added to FWA.



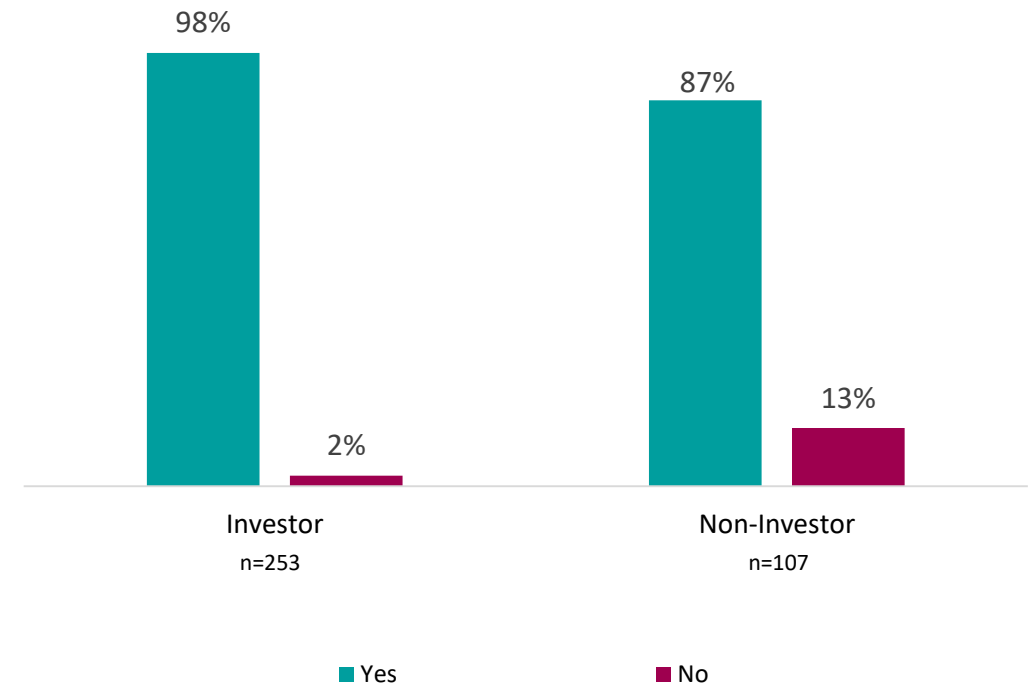
# Community Perceptions

- 94% of respondents believe that Allen County is on the “right track”. This percentage is higher among GFW Inc. Investors than Non-Investors.

Believe Allen County is on the Right Track



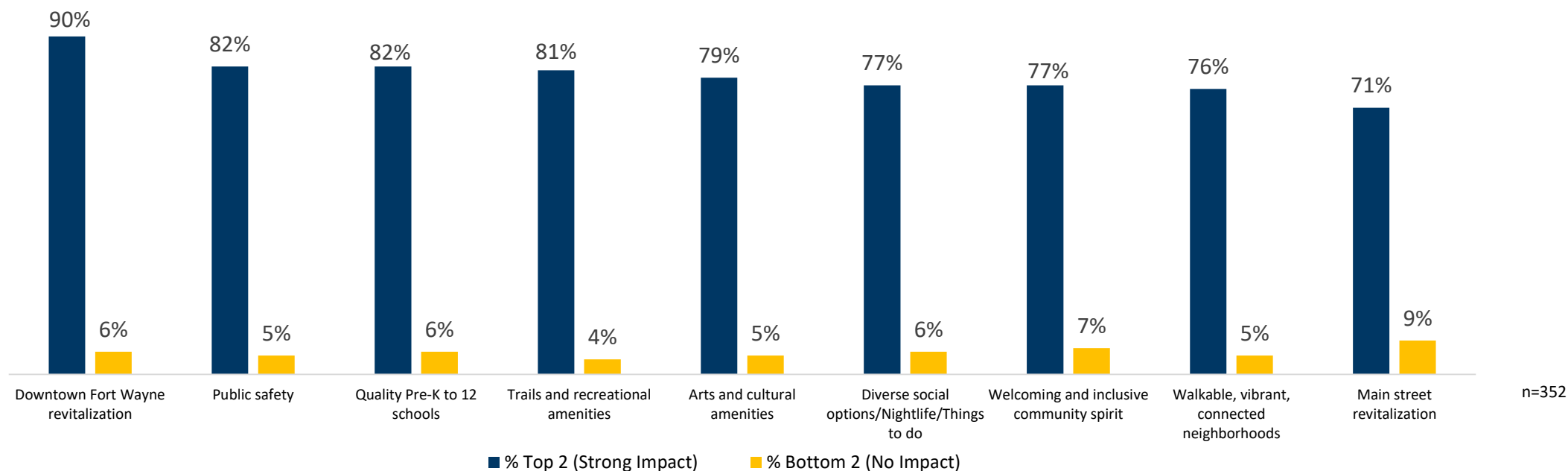
Investor vs. Non-Investor



# Community Building Attributes Impactfulness

- 90% of respondents indicate that “downtown Fort Wayne revitalization” has a strong impact on talent attraction and retention.
- The next two most impactful attributes are “public safety” and “quality pre-K to 12 schools”.

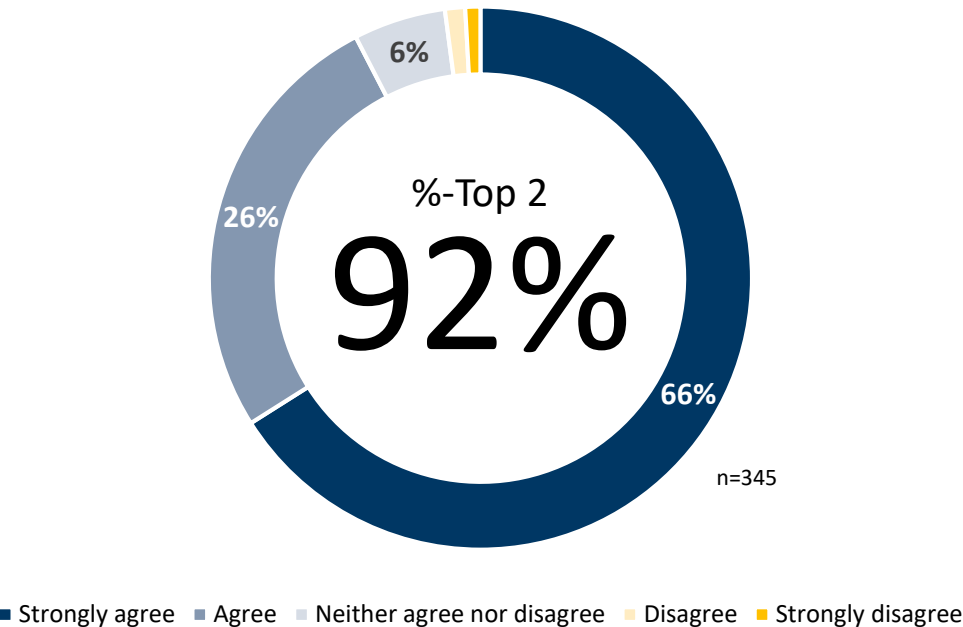
**Community Attributes Impact on Talent Attraction/Retention**



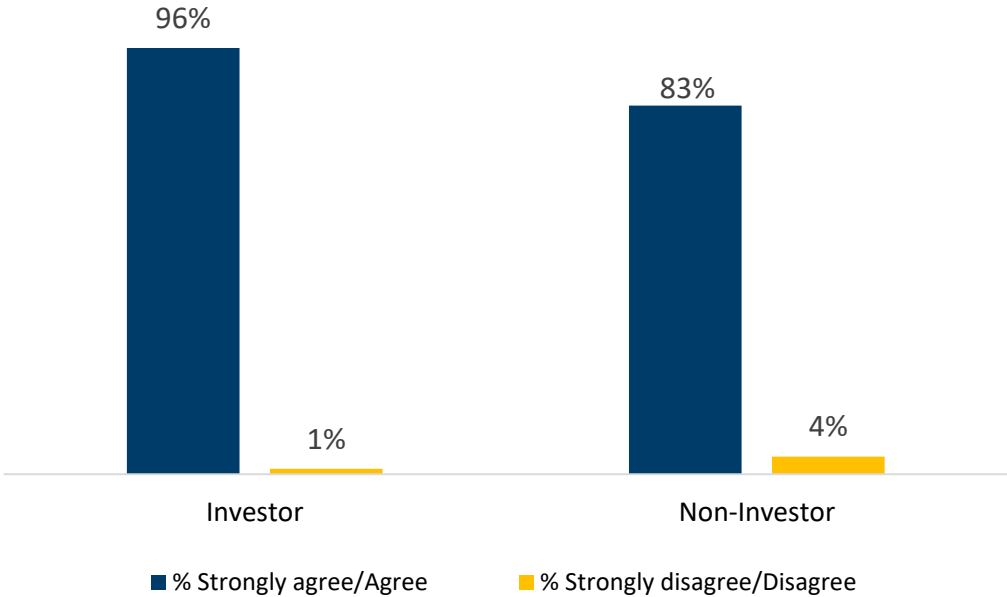
# Downtown Revitalization Impact

- 92% of respondents agree that the revitalization of Fort Wayne has a positive impact on surrounding communities. This is much higher among Investors compared to Non-Investors.

The revitalization of Fort Wayne has a positive impact on surrounding communities.

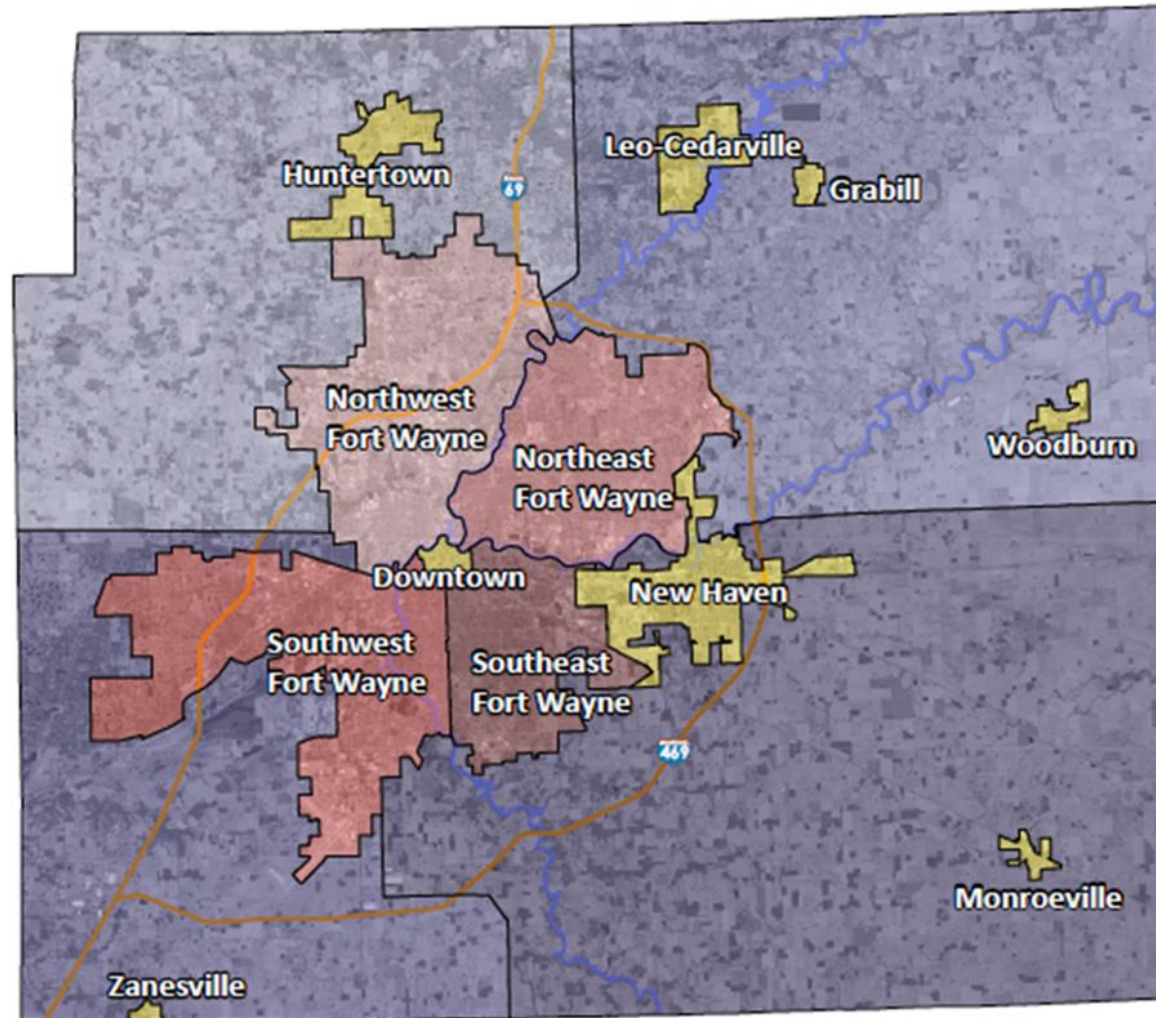


Investor vs. Non-Investor



# Community Development Regional Map

- This map was shown to respondents in the subsequent “Community Development” questions.



# Community Development Perceptions

- Nearly all respondents perceive positive changes in the Downtown Fort Wayne region.
- There is strong agreement among respondents that Southeast Fort Wayne is in most need of additional private sector investment.

	% Positive Δ	% Negative Δ	% Priority for Development
Downtown Fort Wayne	99%	0%	13%
Northwest Fort Wayne	76%	3%	2%
Northeast Fort Wayne	54%	5%	4%
Southwest Fort Wayne	59%	3%	5%
Southeast Fort Wayne	20%	30%	67%
New Haven	44%	5%	4%
Grabill	30%	3%	0%
Huntertown	62%	4%	3%
Leo-Cedarville	58%	2%	2%
Monroeville	20%	5%	0%
Woodburn	27%	4%	0%
Zanesville	16%	5%	1%

# Conclusions

# Conclusions

- GFW, Inc.'s Investor Engagement is at a “Best-in-Class” level.
  - This Engagement is strongly driven by a strong-positive Reputation and Business Community Advocacy.
  - There are opportunities to improve upon somewhat inconsistent value perceptions on Networking Events and Communication.
- There is a strong outlook on the business climate in Allen County.
  - 94% of respondents believe that Allen County is on the “right track”.
  - Over 90% of respondents indicate that the “downtown Fort Wayne revitalization” has a strong impact on talent attraction and retention.
  - Nearly two-thirds of respondents plan to increase headcount, while just over half say that they plan to increase wages or benefits.
- Opportunity exists for community improvement surrounding workforce and community development.
  - Many respondents indicate that it is “Difficult” to find needed talent in Allen County, and most state that there is at least a moderate talent gap among candidates and new hires.
  - There is also strong agreement among respondents that additional private sector investment is needed in Southeast Fort Wayne.