



2022

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS



Completed by the Juneau Economic Development Council in partnership with the Alaska Committee. JEDDC research efforts are supported by core funding from the CBJ.

Final Draft: June 8, 2022



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) partnered with the Alaska Committee to survey all elected officials and staff of the 32nd Alaska State Legislature about their satisfaction with Juneau and its amenities. The survey objective was to determine how the community of Juneau, through collaboration among community partners, can better serve legislators and staff. The survey also served to elicit ideas for changes or upgrades to the Capitol Complex and for improvements to Gavel Alaska.

The survey was made available to elected officials and staff both in paper and online in April 2022. One hundred twenty-four responses were received, providing an overall response rate of 47% and a 6.3% margin of error at the 95% confidence level. Survey analysis focused on the 80 responses from elected officials and staff who made their home outside of Juneau. Results were analyzed as well as compared to a similar survey of the legislature done in 2018.

Consistent with past surveys, legislators and staff primarily found accommodations in or proximal to downtown Juneau in long-term rental housing. Most used their own car as their primary mode of transportation, but many others reported walking most places. The safety, walkability, availability of affordable housing and parking downtown was found to be of primary importance to survey respondents. Snow removal was also top of mind for respondents as this year had particularly heavy snow loads.

Overall, Juneau received satisfactory ratings from out-of-town legislators and staff, and have increased somewhat since 2018. The walkability of downtown continued to receive the highest satisfaction rating. The friendliness of the community, and Juneau's entertainment, recreation, and downtown look also received high ratings.

However, the affordability of accommodations, airport concessions options, the availability of parking, snow and ice removal, and transportation options to the airport received the lowest satisfaction ratings of all Juneau amenities. Many comments were directed at poor snow removal on downtown sidewalks making it difficult or unsafe to walk. Respondents were also concerned about the many vagrants and homeless individuals downtown. Both these issues were common topics in the 2018 survey as well.

Suggestions for improved access to Juneau mainly focused on more flights and improved flight connections. Improved access between the airport and downtown was also a common suggestion, and a few requested improved ferry service. There was a notable decrease in the suggestion of building the road from the previous survey.

Overall ratings for the Capital Complex were high. However, most comments focused on ways to improve it. Broadly, they fell into the categories of improving or increasing meeting space, improving or modernizing utilities, and improving the physical street access of the building. More than one comment suggested moving the Governor's office out of the building. The use of the

Assembly Building as legislator housing was top of mind for many, with twice as many comments in support of it as against it.

Gavel Alaska, the service providing TV coverage of state government activities, is highly valued. Comments indicated that the service needs more publicity in the rest of the state and easier integration with social media for sharing with constituents. This is a slight change from the previous survey, where there were requests for more availability on local television channels. Suggestions for improvement included easier-to-navigate archives, less House, and more Senate coverage.

Final comments on steps to make Juneau a better capital city reinforced issues identified earlier in the survey. The lack of affordable housing, homeless population downtown, and accessibility from other parts of the state were common issues legislators and staff would like to see addressed.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

The Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) partnered with the Alaska Committee to survey both elected officials and staff of the 32nd Alaska State Legislature about their satisfaction with Juneau and its amenities. The survey was distributed in April 2022 to all 257 legislators and their staff working in Juneau during the legislative session, both in paper form and by a link to SurveyMonkey, an online survey development and analysis tool, where the survey could be taken electronically. Respondents were asked to take the survey only once, in the form most convenient for them. The survey asked about the living situation, transportation, satisfaction with amenities, satisfaction with Capitol facilities, the importance of Gavel Alaska, and solicited opinions on how to improve the Capitol Complex and how to improve Juneau. Most questions were repeated from the 2018 survey, providing feedback on the current state and how their feelings have changed in the past few years.

JEDC developed the Legislative Satisfaction survey with input from members of the Alaska Committee, Travel Juneau, the Juneau Chamber of Commerce, and Gavel Alaska. The survey consisted of 20 questions. Some were multiple-choice, some were open-response, and some were opinions based on a rating scale. To encourage participation, respondents were offered the opportunity to submit their name into a drawing for a \$25 Local Frequency gift card at the end of the survey. Anonymity was guaranteed.

The survey was launched on April 1, 2022, when advanced notification was emailed to each legislator and their staff in the form of a letter of introduction from the JEDC Executive Director alerting them to the survey. This was followed by an email with a link to the online survey. Paper copies were made available as well, though none were used. Follow-up emails were sent on April 6th, 11th, and 15th. The survey closed on April 18.

In total, 124 respondents, out of a possible total of 257 legislators and staff, completed the survey. Two respondents reported they did not live in Juneau during the legislative session and their responses were removed from the dataset. This provides a 47% overall response rate with a 6.3% margin of error at a 95% confidence level. Of the total respondents, 80 (65%) indicated that they do not live in Juneau year-round. This report discusses the survey results for the subset of respondents not living in Juneau year-round, as improving the experience of living in Juneau for this population is a specific intent of this survey. In some cases, results are compared to the subset of respondents who live in Juneau year-round. A further breakdown of responses is given in the chart below.

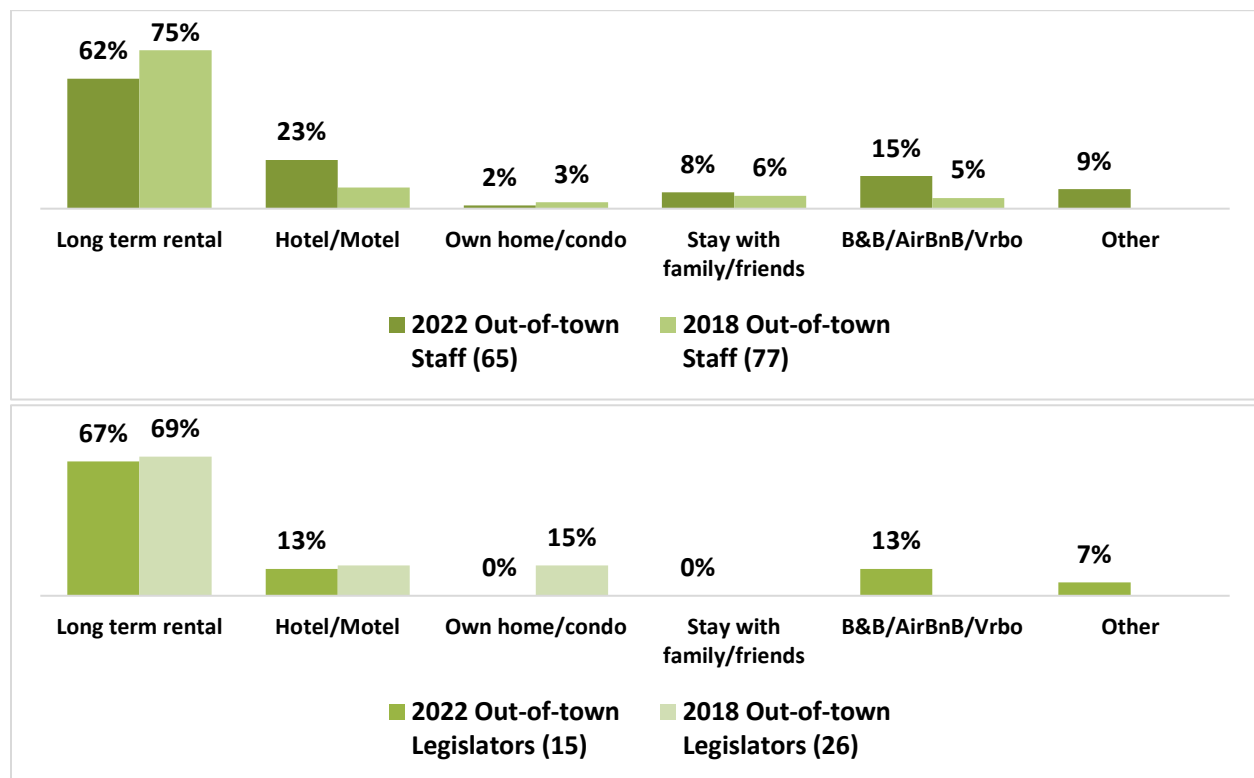
	<i>Total Pool</i>	<i>Responses</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>	<i>Respondents from Out of Town</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
<i>Legislators</i>	60	17	28%	15	25%
<i>Staff</i>	197	106	54%	65	33%
<i>Total</i>	257	122	47%	80	31%

FINDINGS

Respondent Characteristics

Among legislators who live in Juneau only during the legislative session, the majority (67%) find housing in long-term rentals, while 13% own a home in Juneau, and another 13% lodge in a hotel or motel. Among out-of-town staff, a lower number (62%) find a long-term rental, and 2% own a home in Juneau. The rest find lodging in hotels, with family or friends, or in short-term rentals. Lodging is more diversified, most likely reflecting lower pay and more turnover among staff. The percentage of staff that stay in long-term rentals fell significantly since the previous survey, from 75% to 62%, while the amount who stayed in a hotel/motel grew from 10% to 23%. This change reflects the complaint that Juneau is currently experiencing a tight rental market, driving staff to more expensive stays in Juneau, and will likely decrease their enjoyment of their time working in Juneau.

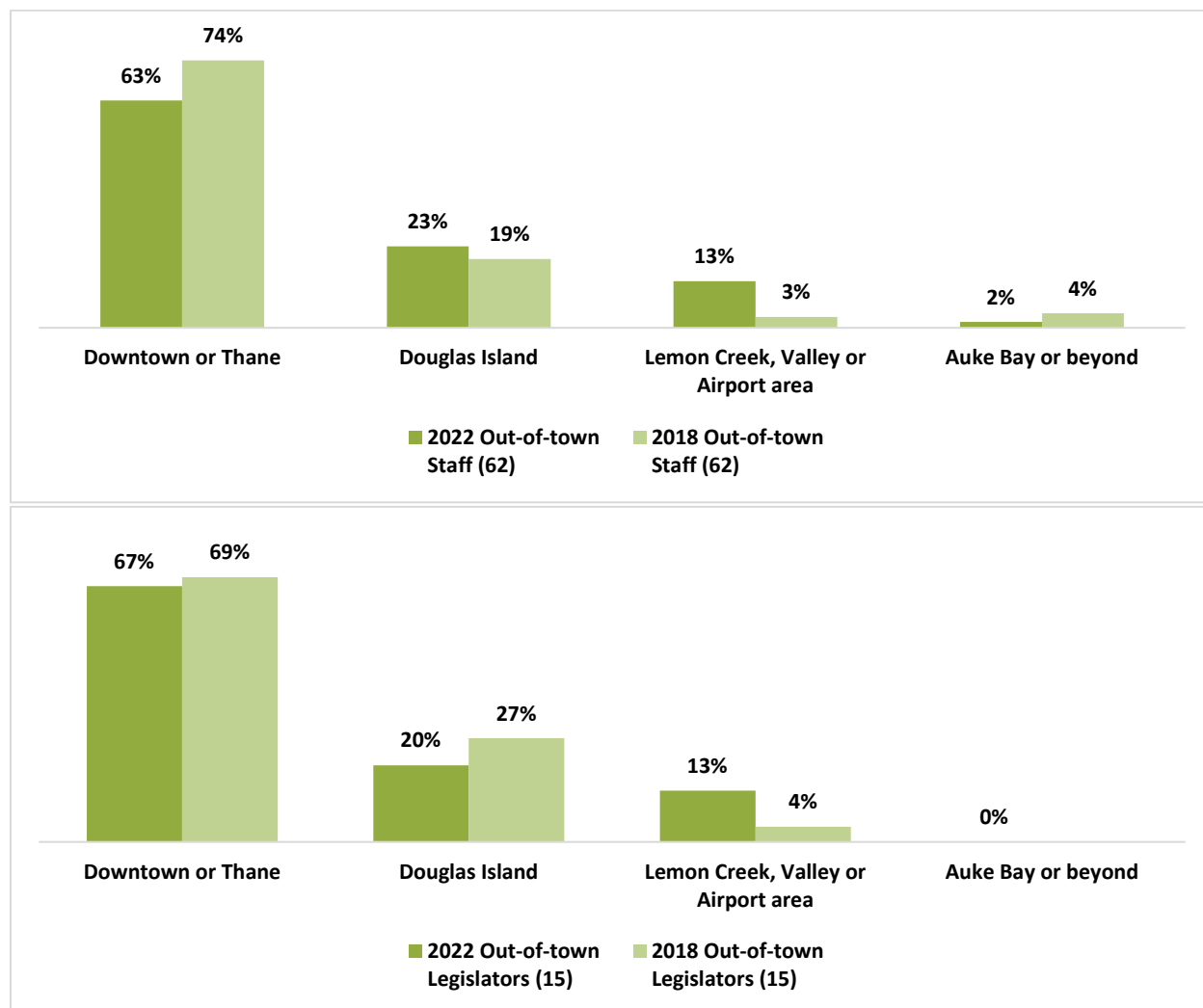
Figure 1: What kind of accommodations do you have while in Juneau during this session?



Legislators living in Juneau for the session prefer to live close to the Capitol, with 87% living downtown or on Douglas Island. Staff also prefer proximity to the Capitol, with 86% living downtown or on Douglas Island. Again, there is more diversity of location among staff, with a few even living in Auke Bay and beyond. The trend of legislators and staff moving farther from the Capitol (out of Douglas and Downtown and into Lemon Creek, Valley, or Airport area) was also observed in the 2018 study. The percentage of legislators and staff living in the area of Lemon

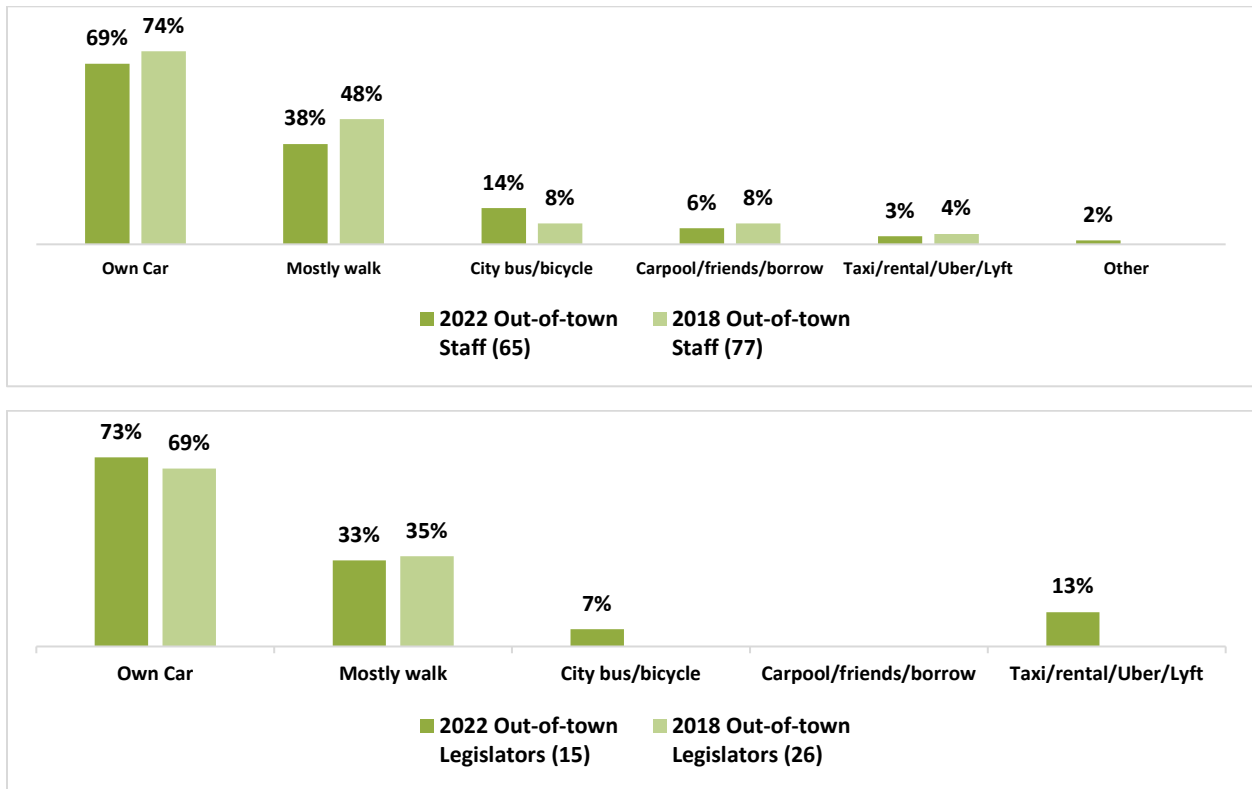
Creek/Valley/Airport Area is up from 4% and 3%, respectively, to both at 13%. This is likely also due to the limited availability of housing in the areas in which they would prefer to live.

Figure 2: Where in Juneau are your accommodations?



Despite the proximity of housing to their offices, 73% of legislators indicated that their primary form of transportation during the session was their own car, and 33% primarily walked (more than one choice was allowed). Staffers, again, had more diverse transportation. While 69% drove their own cars and 38% walked, 14% indicated they used a bicycle or city bus. The use of personal vehicles increased among legislators from the previous survey from 69% to 73%. While in the previous survey, no legislators reported using any mode of transportation other than personal vehicles or walking, 7% reported they used a bicycle, and 13% used a taxi, rental, or other ride-sharing apps in this survey. Staff showed a decrease in personal vehicle usage from 74% to 69% and a decrease in walking from 48% to 38%. Instead, more staff are now using the bus or bicycling, up from 8% to 14%. This may have been due to the difficulty of bringing a car to Juneau or the unusually heavy snowfall during this session.

Figure 3: What is your primary form of transportation during this session? (More than one choice allowed)



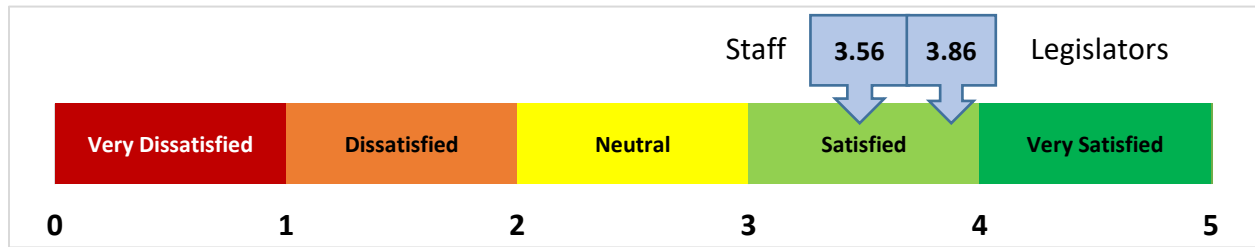
Juneau Aspect Evaluation

The survey next asked a series of questions where, using a 1-5 scale, respondents were asked if they were very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with several aspects of their stay in Juneau (5=very satisfied, 1=very dissatisfied). Rating responses were averaged over the number of responses received for a question. The result is an average evaluation score for each aspect. Responses were tabulated for all respondents combined and separately for legislators and staff.

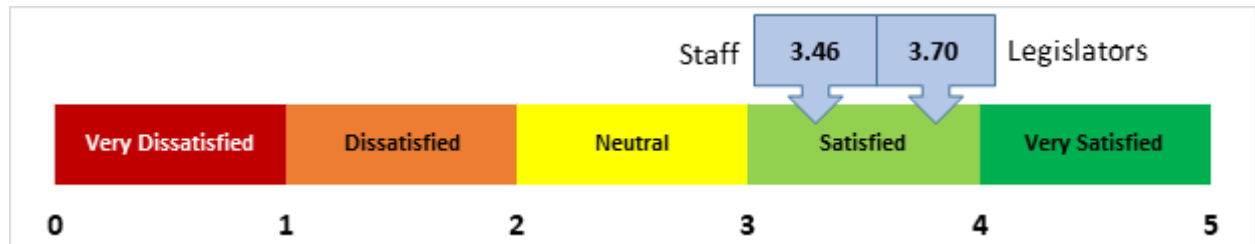
An overall average evaluation score was calculated for elected officials and staff. Results showed that both legislators and staff were satisfied with Juneau, with legislators significantly happier than staff. Both groups showed an increase in their ratings of Juneau since the previous survey. Legislators went from an average of 3.70 to 3.86, and staff went from an average of 3.46 to 3.56.

Figure 4: Overall rating of Juneau amenities

2022 Responses

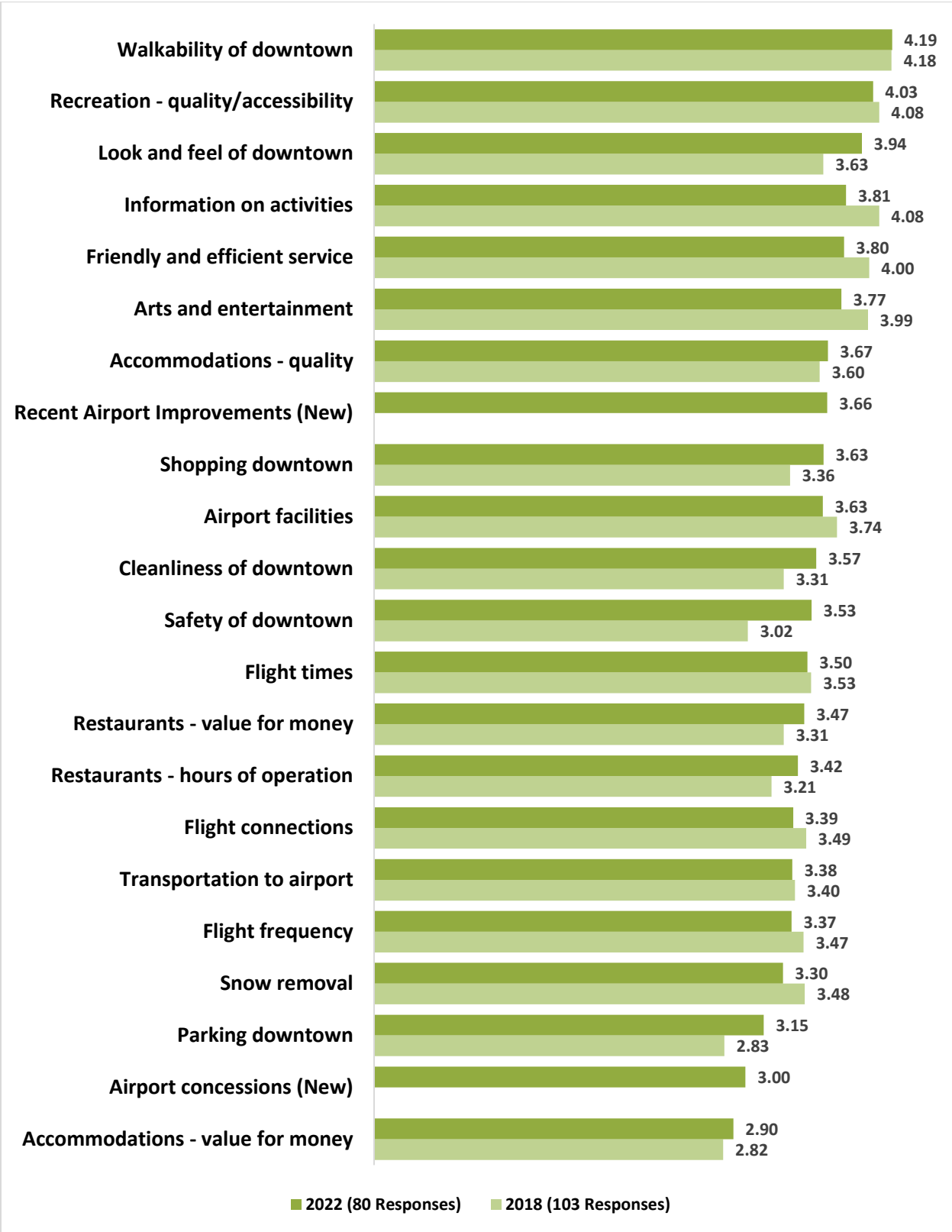


2018 Responses



Individual scores for each aspect show Juneau to have a number of amenities that legislators and staff enjoy when they are here during the session. Downtown walkability, recreation, and the look and feel of downtown get high marks, along with information on activities; Juneau provides friendly and efficient service and has decent arts and entertainment. There were several shifts in opinion among the top amenities since the last survey. Information on activities fell from 4.1 to 3.8. However, of note is that at least three respondents mentioned they appreciated Senator Kiehl's forwarding of the weekly ArtsUp newsletter for activities around Juneau. Two others, potentially out of the loop, asked for better distribution of information on arts and entertainment information. The look and feel of downtown, while commonly complained about in the short replies, rose from 3.6 to 3.9.

Figure 5: Average Evaluation Score from highest to lowest for all non-Juneau respondents



Other comments made on Juneau amenities focused on expanding business hours, such as restaurants and coffee shops being open later or having movies playing later. Of note was the desire for more availability on Sundays, when participants had time to explore Juneau.

Below are some representative comments made by respondents on their satisfaction rating:

- "Juneau is literally incredible when it comes to vibrancy of community. Hiking is the best hands down. And the culture & arts must be the best on a per capita basis in the state."
- "I love the restaurants and cafes---I wish they were open later and on Sundays!"
- "Senator Kiehl gets kudos on this, every Friday he shares info on what's happening over the weekend. It's been very useful to me."
- "I took walks on harbor. Loved it."

However, the bottom-ranking aspects of Juneau should be of concern to the community. Accommodations value for money and parking scored the lowest, with many comments noting the lack of availability or difficulty finding appropriate accommodations. While the airport concessions scored low, only 20% of comments on the subject of Juneau's airport mentioned them, meaning they were not a high concern for travelers. More comments focused on flight availability and transportation between the airport and downtown, both of which also scored low. While parking scored low, comments on what the issues were with parking downtown were split, with some suggesting more parking, while others thought the current amount was adequate or even too much.

Comments on snow removal and safety were also common. 52% of comments made by respondents on rating the downtown mentioned issues with snow removal this winter, and 35% of comments referenced vagrancy or other issues with the perceived safety of downtown. Here are some representative comments:

- "We need more housing and more affordable housing!"
- "Snow removal and lack of pedestrian safety are incredibly dangerous - I feel very unsafe."
- "Have more free public parking."

When responses from out-of-town legislators and out-of-town staff are scored separately and compared, the 22 listed Juneau aspects have a different ranking.

Figure 6: Legislator and staff comparison of satisfaction ranking for top 5 and bottom 5 aspects

2022 Responses

Legislator Satisfaction Ranking	
1	Recent Airport Improvements
2	Look and feel of downtown Juneau
3	Accommodations - quality
4	Walkability of downtown
5	Recreation - quality/accessibility
...	
18	Airport facilities
19	Safety of downtown
20	Flight connections
21	Parking downtown
22	Airport concessions

Staff Satisfaction Ranking	
1	Walkability of downtown
2	Recreation - quality/accessibility
3	Look and feel of downtown Juneau
4	Information on activities
5	Friendly and efficient service
...	
18	Transportation to downtown
19	Snow removal
20	Parking downtown
21	Airport concessions
22	Accommodations - value for money

2018 Responses

Legislator Satisfaction Ranking	
1	Information on activities
2	Friendly and efficient service
3	Walkability of downtown
4	Recreation
5	Arts and entertainment
...	
16	Flight times
17	Flight frequency
18	Accommodations value for money
19	Safety of downtown
20	Parking downtown

Staff Satisfaction Ranking	
1	Walkability of downtown
2	Recreation
3	Information on activities
4	Arts and entertainment
5	Friendly and efficient service
...	
16	Restaurant hours of operations
17	Cleanliness of downtown
18	Safety of downtown
19	Parking downtown
20	Accommodations value for money

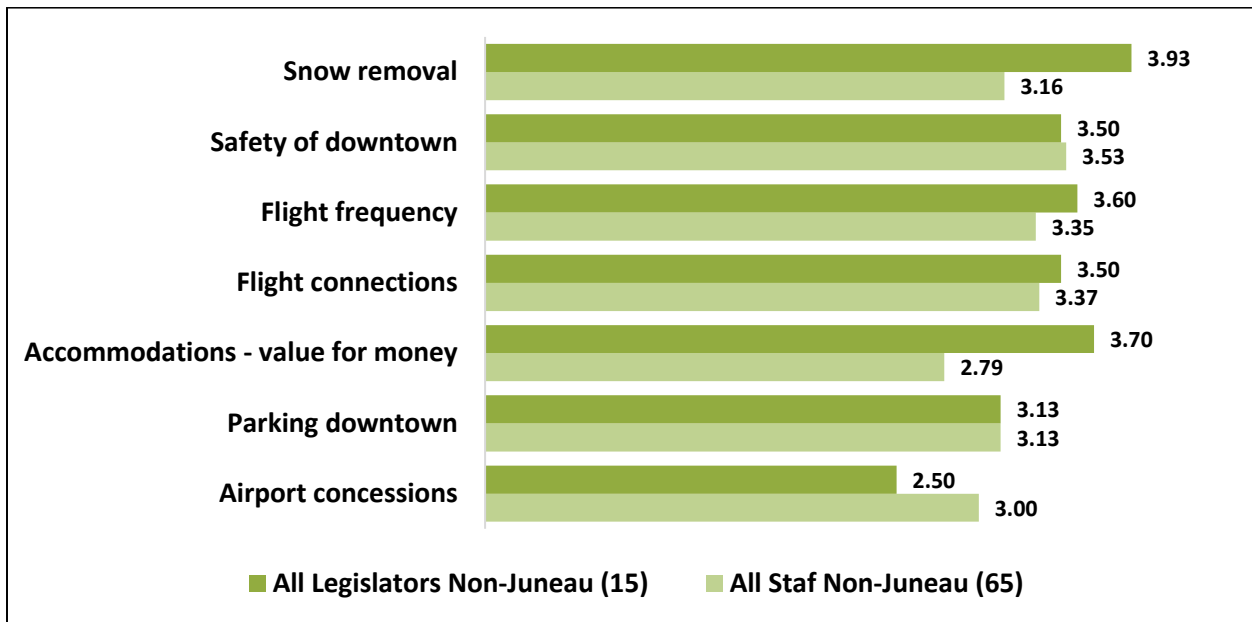
The ranking of the top five and bottom five Juneau aspects, from highest to lowest, for out-of-town legislators and out-of-town staff separately are shown in Figure 6. The difference in rankings between the two groups shows the difference in priorities and expectations between legislators and their staff. The legislators rated the recent airport improvements as the highest, while staff ranked at number 11, giving it a 3.53 compared to the legislators' 4.31. Other large splits between the groups were the value for money of accommodations or lodgings, with legislators giving Juneau a 3.70 to their staff's 2.79. Both groups rated the walkability of downtown highly, despite many complaints about issues with snow removal this year, though

again, they were split on that issue. Legislators rated snow and ice removal at 3.93, while their staff rated it at 3.16.

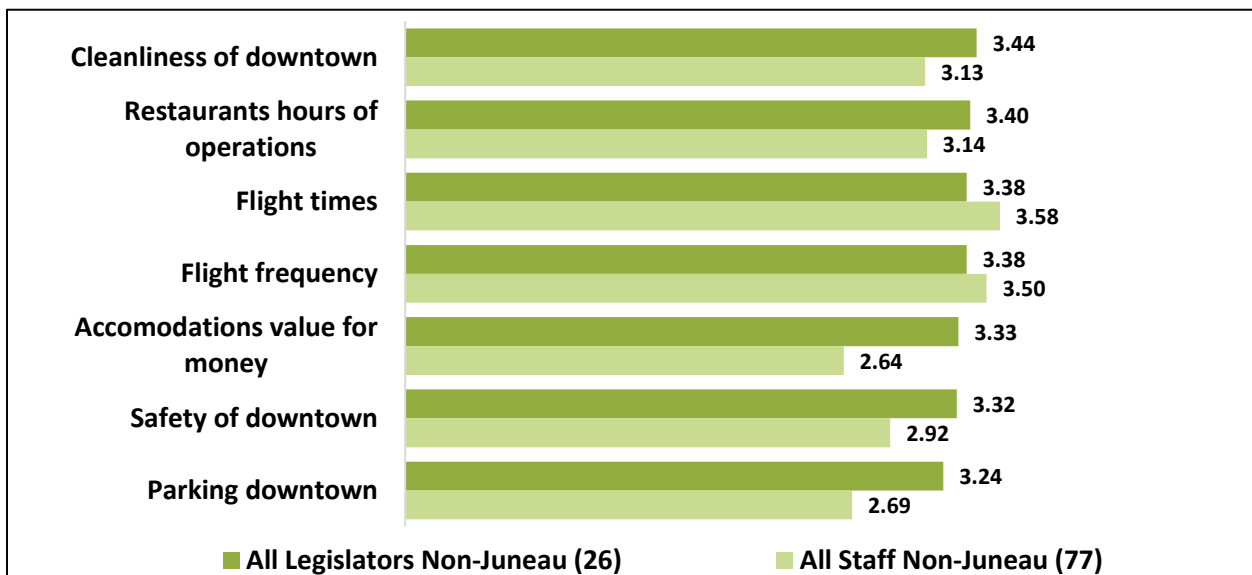
For most aspects of Juneau, the legislators gave higher scores than their staff. However, the staff gave a higher score to airport concessions, the safety of downtown, airport facilities, availability of info on arts and leisure activities and events, and recreation accessibility and quality.

Figure 7: Satisfaction score compared for out-of-town legislators and staff, bottom seven aspects

2022 Responses



2018 Responses



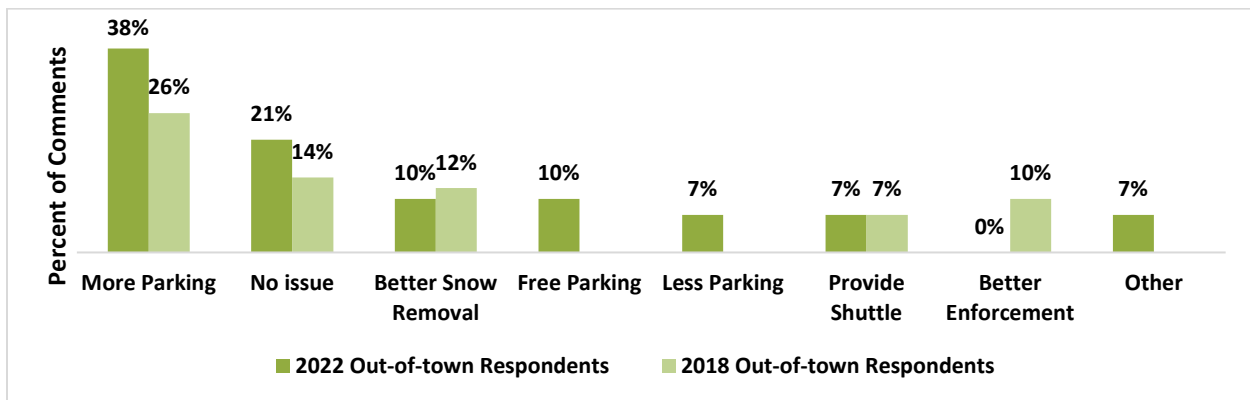
A direct comparison between their rankings of the lowest scoring aspects is shown in Figure 7. Many of the same issues that received low rankings in the 2018 survey again received low ratings. Snow and ice removal was a new issue to the list, as well as airport concessions. These replaced restaurant hours and cleanliness of downtown. While those still ranked in the bottom half, they did not score as low as they have in the past.

Parking Downtown

Respondents were solicited for opinions on what Juneau could do to improve parking downtown. They could provide more than one suggestion. Of comments received about parking, most suggested more parking was needed, though many felt the amount of parking was adequate, and some even felt like there was too much space dedicated to parking. Other suggestions were for providing a shuttle service or making parking free.

Compared to the 2018 survey, there was an increase in 10% of comments asking for more parking and a 7% increase in comments both stating that parking was no issue, or for less parking. In the 2018 survey, 10% of respondents had asked for better parking enforcement, a topic that was not mentioned in the 2022 survey. Instead, 10% of respondents wanted free parking. Better snow removal and a shuttle remained about the same. Other comments included incentives for more biking and walking.

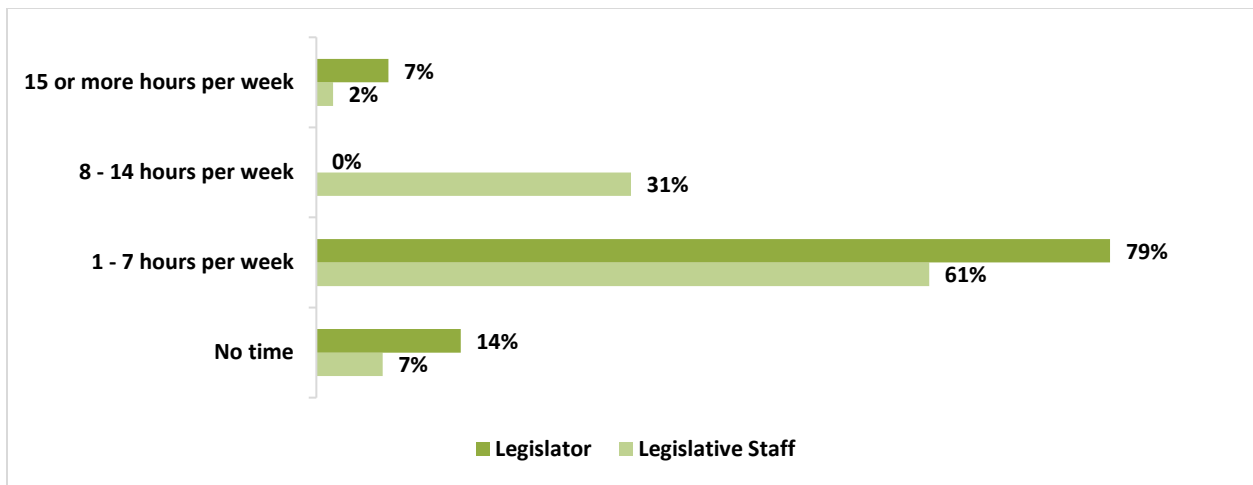
Figure 8: What can Juneau do to improve parking downtown?



Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation

Respondents were asked how much time they spent on arts, entertainment, and recreation activities outside of work. Most spent between 1 and 7 hours, with a few taking 8 to 14, or even over 15 hours. 14% of legislators and 7% of their staff reported no time spent on these activities.

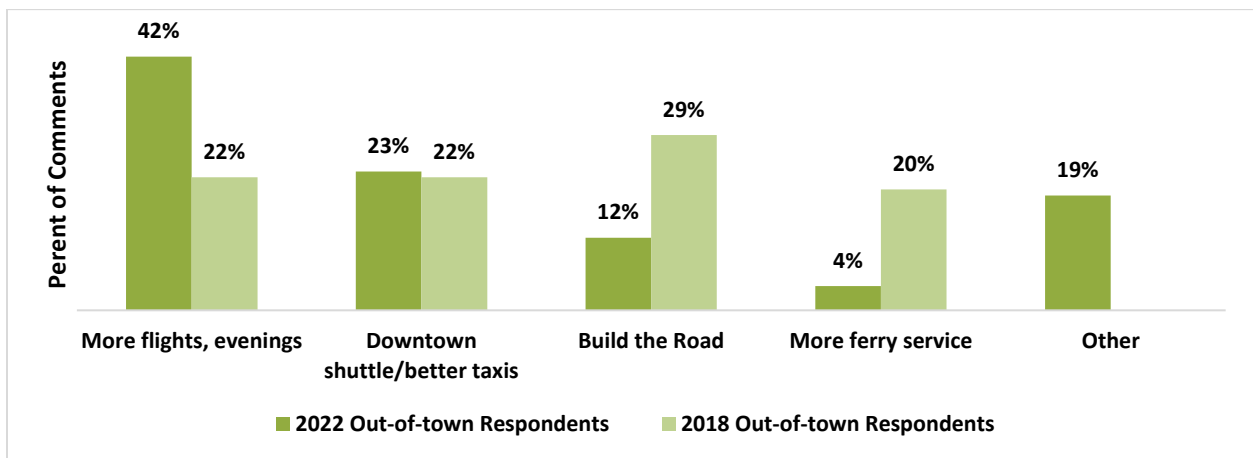
Figure 9: Time spent on arts, entertainment, and recreation activities



Access to Juneau

Survey respondents were asked for opinions on what would improve their access to Juneau. The top choices were more flights, especially in the evenings, as well as better transportation from the airport to downtown, such as by a shuttle or taxi. The suggestion to build the road fell significantly from the previous study, from 29% in 2018 to 12%, and the suggestion for more ferry service also fell significantly, from 20% to 4%.

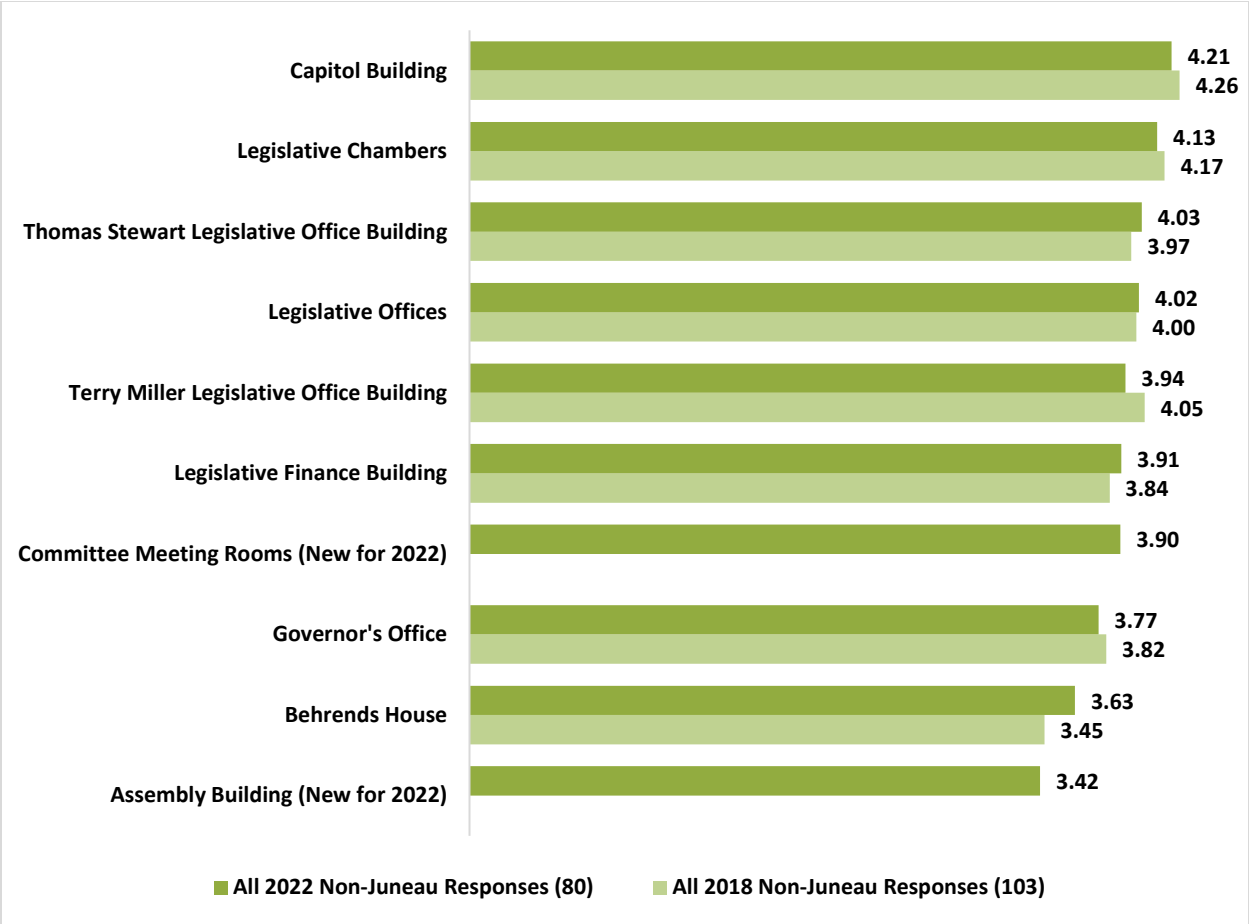
Figure 10: In your opinion, which of the following would most improve your access to Juneau?



Capitol Complex

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the buildings that constitute Juneau's Capitol Complex. Most buildings received very high satisfaction scores. The Behrends House, Governor's Office, and the Assembly building scored somewhat low. All buildings were rated similarly to how they were rated in the 2018 survey

Figure 11: Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of Juneau's Capitol Complex

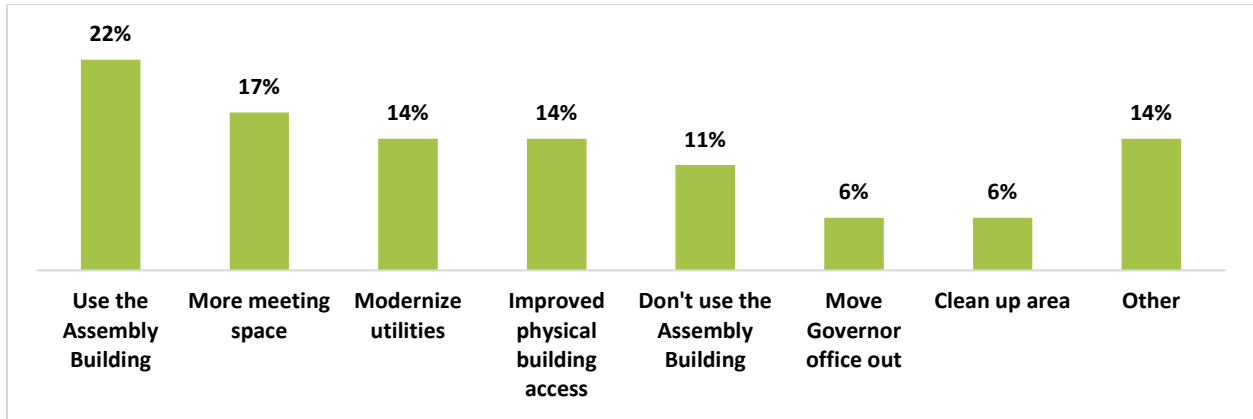


In the space for comments, there was fierce debate over using the Assembly Building for future legislative housing. Twenty-two percent (22%) of comments referred to the move in a positive light, while only half as many, 11%, were opposed. Other commonly mentioned suggestions were to have more meeting space and more equitable office space at 17%. Modernizing utilities, such as restrooms and elevators, was mentioned in 14% of comments. Fourteen percent (14%) of comments included the suggestion to improve access to the building, such as more visibility when entering or exiting and less traffic in front. Six percent (6%) of respondents wanted to move the Governor's office out of the building, as well as clean up the surrounding area of downtown. Here are some sample comments:

- "Excited to see what happens with the Assembly building! The renovations in recent years have been wonderful. Great work!"
- "It is inconvenient to have to go outside to travel between buildings."
- "Maintenance and IT are wonderful, responsive, and professional."

- "The capitol building appears 'dingy' and is overwhelmed by surrounding buildings. Cleaning up the bird poop from the main entrance would make a significant improvement. "
- "Handicapped accessibility to bathrooms needs improvement."

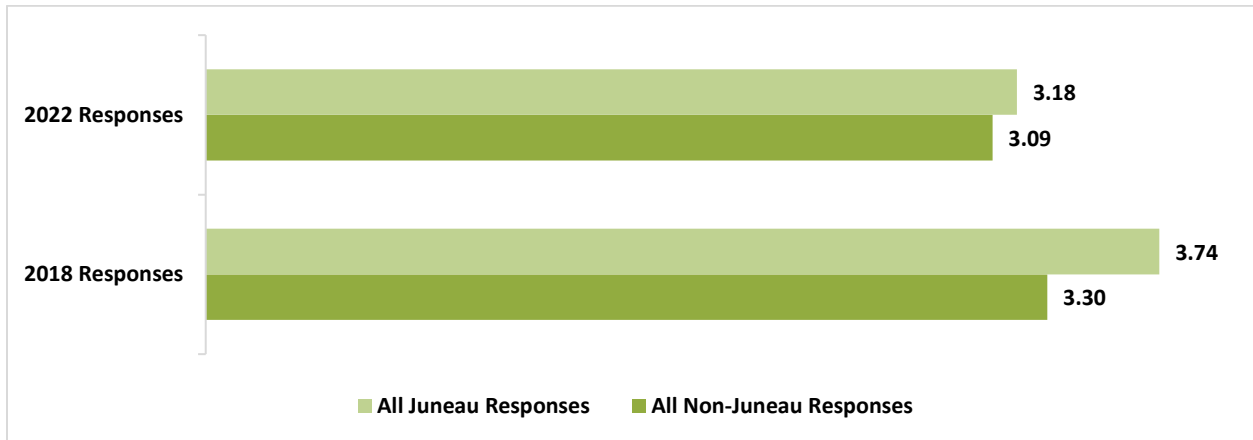
Figure 12: Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of Juneau's Capitol Complex



Gavel Alaska

Respondents were asked to assess the importance of Gavel Alaska to their constituents on a scale of 1 to 4. Overall, 79% of out-of-town respondents rated the service as Important to Very Important. This is the same as in 2018. In comparison, 82% of legislators and staffers who are year-round Juneau residents scored the service Important to Very Important. This is down slightly from the 90% it received in 2018.

Figure 13: How important is Gavel Alaska to your constituents?

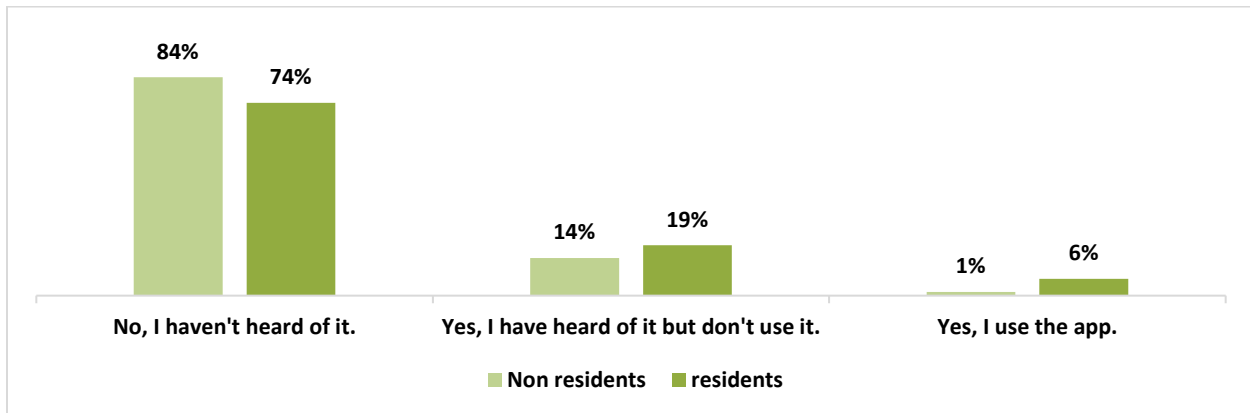


Overall, the importance of Gavel to Gavel was rated lower than it was in 2018. Comments made about the service were mostly positive. Feedback focused more on making the service easier to use over the internet, a slight change from the 2018 survey which had more comments asking for better television access. Comments asked for an easier way to use clips, such as a video archive, an audio-only version of coverage, and more coverage of the floor. A few comments suggested having coverage of more than one hearing at a time. There was a suggestion for a mobile alert for a hearing going live. There were also sound complaints of uneven volume and a suggestion to replace the 'at ease' song due to the high-pitched clarinet.

Local Frequency

When asked about the use of the Local Frequency App, most had not heard of it. Even among residents, nearly three-quarters reported not knowing about the great deals and support to local businesses they could enjoy by using the Local Frequency App.

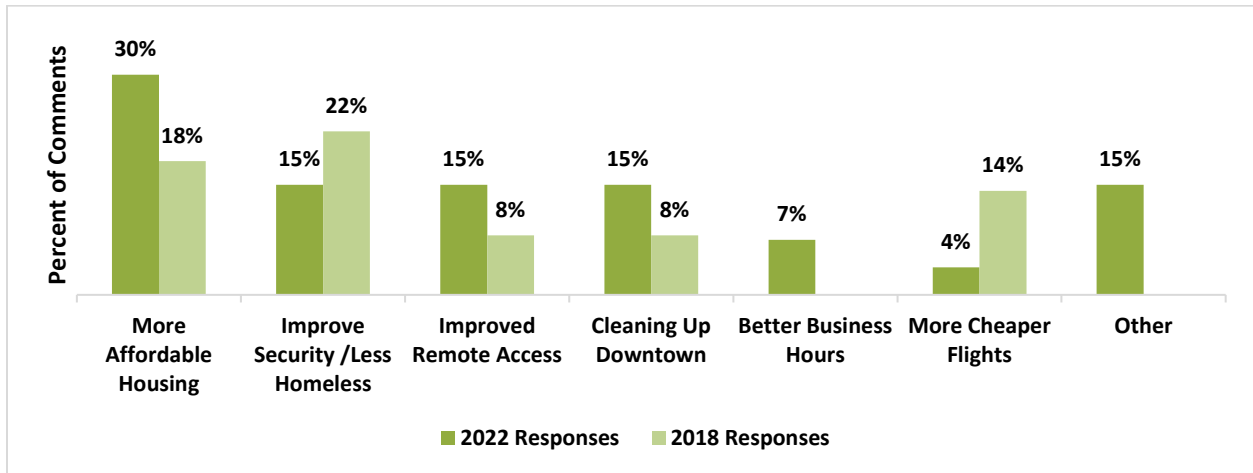
Figure 14: Use of Local Frequency



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, survey results show that out-of-town legislators and staff are satisfied with Juneau during the legislative session. One final survey question asked respondents, "What can the people and/or the local government of Juneau do to make Juneau a better capital for all of Alaska?" Constructive suggestions fell into a diverse range of responses; many repeating concerns already expressed above and effectively providing a summary of issues raised in this survey. The largest percentage of responses to this question, 30%, stated that the lack of affordable housing was an important issue. The next most-cited issues were improved security or less vagrancy, improved access, and cleaning up of the downtown. This is a significant change from the 2018 survey, where security was the highest priority for the legislature and their staff, followed by housing.

Figure 15: What can the people and/or the local government of Juneau do to make Juneau a better capital for all of Alaska?



Based on the results of this survey, the issue that needs immediate attention is the need for more affordable housing. The use of the Assembly Building for this purpose should help, and a future survey should be conducted to see if there have been any substantial changes after the building starts to be used.

The second issue that can be directly mitigated by CBJ is the cleanliness and the snow removal downtown, both in the Capitol Complex and in the residential areas, where most legislators and staff live.

The perceived safety in Juneau's downtown area is another concern that can be addressed by community action. Having more resources available for those who would otherwise add to the vagrancy issue would help give the legislature a more positive view of the city.

Gavel Alaska is highly valued and is perceived to do a good job of connecting Alaskans to the capital, but better advertising in the rest of the state is needed.

Finally, the issue of access to Juneau can be improved by working with Alaska Airlines to modify winter flight times, add flights, and reduce airfare during the legislative session.

APPENDIX 1: 2022 SURVEY QUESTIONS

	List of Legislative Satisfaction Survey 2022 Questions:
Question 1	In which capacity do you serve the State of Alaska?
Question 2	Are you living in Juneau during the legislative session? (If no, thank you for your time.)
Question 3	Do you live in Juneau year round?
Question 4	What kind of accommodations do you have while in Juneau during this session? (Select all that apply)
Question 5	Where in Juneau are your accommodations? (if you stayed in more than one location during the session please choose the area of town where you spent the most time.)
Question 6	What are your primary forms of transportation during this session?(Select all that apply.)
Question 7	Using the following ratings: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied, or Not Applicable, please rate the following aspects of downtown Juneau.
Question 8	Do you have any suggestions for how Juneau can improve parking downtown? (Optional)
Question 9	Using the following ratings: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied, or Not Applicable, please rate the following aspects of Juneau's hospitality and recreation.
Question 10	During this legislative session, approximately how much time will you spend in arts, entertainment and recreation activities outside of work?
Question 11	Using the following ratings: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied, or Not Applicable, please rate the following aspects of Juneau's airport.
Question 12	In your opinion, what would most improve your access to Juneau?(Optional)
Question 13	Using the following ratings: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Neutral, Dissatisfied, Very Dissatisfied, or Not Applicable, please rate your satisfaction with the following physical aspects of Juneau's Capitol Complex.
Question 14	Are there physical or structural changes or additions to the Capitol Complex or the surrounding area that you feel might improve your experience or make your interactions more productive? (Optional)
Question 15	How important is Gavel Alaska to your constituents (prev. "Gavel to Gavel")?
Question 16	How can Gavel Alaska (prev. "Gavel to Gavel") better help you reach your constituents? (Optional)
Question 17	How can we improve the TV and web service Gavel Alaska provides?(Optional)
Question 18	Juneau desires to be an outstanding capital city for Alaska. What can the community and/or the local government of Juneau do to make Juneau a better capital for all of Alaska? (Optional)
Question 19	Have you heard of The Local Frequency before? If yes, do you use it? (Learn more)
Question 20	Thank you for your time. Would you like to be entered in a drawing to win a \$25 Local Frequency gift card?