

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES RESIDENT STUDY

WAVE 2 RESEARCH REPORT – MARCH 2021

VISIT  MESA
CITY LIMITLESS®

MMGY Travel Intelligence

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WAVE 1 COMPARISON

- Slightly fewer residents indicate they do not know what funds Visit Mesa. Among those who believe they do know what funds Visit Mesa, fewer indicated they believe Visit Mesa is funded by hotel bed taxes.
- Pride in Mesa among residents is down slightly from Wave 1.
- Fewer residents are following Visit Mesa and sharing content from Visit Mesa on Facebook and more are doing so from Instagram.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Similar to Wave 1, nearly all residents believe that tourism is at least somewhat important to Mesa and support investments in tourism. The majority feel they are impacted positively by tourism while one in ten indicate it has a negative impact on their life.
 - Many Mesa residents still aren't well-versed on the specifics of Mesa tourism and how it positively impacts their life.
 - Again, despite nearly all residents feeling pride in being a Mesa resident, they tend to be less enthusiastic about promoting Mesa visitation and what the city has to offer visitors.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Mesa residents would like to see Mesa develop its own identity by focusing on local and the unique aspects of Mesa and its residents. They would like to see Mesa expand its offerings to keep visitors spending money in Mesa rather than going to other nearby cities.
- Residents are sharing messaging and content on social media but very few are currently sharing it from the Visit Mesa social accounts. Similar to Wave 1, many residents indicate they are likely to share in the future despite not doing so previously.



FINDING ONE

Similar to Wave 1, nearly all residents believe that tourism is at least somewhat important to Mesa and support investments in tourism. The majority feel they are impacted positively by tourism while one in ten indicate it has a negative impact on their life.

- Nearly half of residents (47%) believe that tourism is extremely important to Mesa, while only one-percent believe it is not important at all.
- Six in ten residents (61%) say that tourism impacts their lives positively, while only nine-percent say it impacts their life negatively.
- Nine in ten residents (91%) believe it is important to attract visitors to Mesa at off-peak times of the year.
- More than nine in ten residents (94%) believe it is important for Visit Mesa to educate visitors on how to respect the local environment and natural resources when visiting Mesa.
- More than eight in ten residents (83%) believe hosting major sports events and festivals in Mesa has a positive impact on residents and visitors.
- About seven in ten residents support investments by Visit Mesa to fund incentives that create attractions, festivals, and exhibits in Mesa (72%) and to educate visitors to protect and preserve Mesa's natural resources (67%).

FINDING TWO

Many Mesa residents still aren't well-versed on the specifics of Mesa tourism and how it positively impacts their life.

- Eight in ten residents believe that tourism generates tax revenues for state, county, and local governments (80%) and creates jobs (79%), followed by three-quarters who believe it supports local business creation (77%) and brings new amenities and attractions that local residents can also enjoy (76%). Only four in ten (41%) believe that tourism reduces taxes for residents.
- When asked what resources they believe fund Visit Mesa, more than four in ten residents (44%) indicate they do not know what resources fund Visit Mesa. Among the remaining 56%, 72 percent believe Visit Mesa is funded by bed taxes from hotel stays, 59 percent believe sales taxes, 45 percent believe bed taxes from RV stays, and 39 percent believe their own taxes fund Visit Mesa.
- One quarter of residents are aware of where Mesa visitors are visiting from (29%), followed by 15 percent who are aware of both the amount of money visitors spend when visiting Mesa and the number of Mesa visitors per year, and 14 percent who are aware of the number of jobs tourism creates in Mesa.
- Nearly six in ten residents (56%) are at least somewhat familiar with Visit Mesa while 20 percent would consider themselves extremely or very familiar.

FINDING THREE

Again, despite nearly all residents feeling pride in being a Mesa resident, they tend to be less enthusiastic about promoting Mesa visitation and what the city has to offer visitors.

- Nine in ten residents (88%) indicate they are at least somewhat proud to be a Mesa resident, with 22 percent indicating they are extremely proud and 30 percent are very proud.
- Three-quarters of residents (73%) agree that Mesa is a very safe place to live.
- The Net Promoter Score among Mesa residents is -2, meaning there are more residents who fall into the Detractor category than Promoter category when asked if they are likely to recommend Mesa as a place to visit to their family and friends.
- Half of residents (48%) would consider themselves Mesa Ambassadors.
 - The most mentioned reasons for calling themselves ambassadors are patronizing and promoting local businesses, as well as a being local business owners themselves. They also spoke of correcting misinformation and negative impressions of Mesa to family, friends, and strangers.
- Three in ten residents (29%) provide webpage and resource links to family and friends when planning to visit Mesa.
 - Among those who indicate they provide links to webpages and resources, the most frequently shared resources are Visit Mesa, specific attractions and restaurants, and City of Mesa.

FINDING FOUR

Mesa residents would like to see Mesa develop its own identity by focusing on local and the unique aspects of Mesa and its residents. They would like to see Mesa expand its offerings to keep visitors spending money in Mesa rather than going to other nearby cities.

- The most well-perceived Mesa products, services, and infrastructure are Sloan Park (79%), Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (73%), and city-wide parks (68%).
- When asked about the availability and diversity of dining options in Mesa, about six in ten residents believe Mesa has a good selection of take-out options (62%), fast casual dining (60%), and national/regional chains (59%).
- When asked about the availability and diversity of shopping options in Mesa, nearly half of residents believe Mesa has a good selection of big box retail centers (46%).
- Residents were asked what Mesa could do to make the city more attractive to entice travelers to visit Mesa instead of other cities. Residents would like to see Mesa develop its own identity by showcasing its cultural, unique, and local features. Residents would like to see parts of town be revitalized, specifically Downtown Mesa. They believe this will keep visitors in Mesa instead of leaving to go to other cities for nightlife and dining. Residents would like to see a bigger focus on local when it comes to dining and shopping in town, as well as seeing more upscale options and fewer chains. Lastly, many residents spoke of “cleaning up” some areas of town by redeveloping abandoned buildings and strip malls. They also mentioned the homeless population and the need to help them in order to make the areas in which they currently are more inviting for visitors and to make visitors more comfortable.

FINDING FIVE

Residents are sharing messaging and content on social media but very few are currently sharing it from the Visit Mesa social accounts. Similar to Wave 1, many residents indicate they are likely to share in the future despite not doing so previously.

- Nearly four in ten residents (37%) follow Visit Mesa on social media. The most popular social media platforms on which those residents follow Visit Mesa are Instagram (65%) and Facebook (55%), while one in ten follow on Twitter (12%).
- Although six in ten residents (61%) indicate they have shared messaging from an account on social media, only two in ten (21%) have shared messaging from Visit Mesa on social media.
- Among those who have shared messaging from Visit Mesa on social media, the most used platforms to do so were Facebook (52%) or Instagram (52%).
- Six in ten (61%) residents indicate they are at least somewhat likely to share messaging from Visit Mesa on social media in the future with 24% indicating they are extremely or very likely to do so.