



ORG
BAHAMAS

North-Central, Central, and South Eleuthera Perceptions of Development Survey Analysis

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Table of Contents

Overview:	3
Research Context and Objectives	4
Survey Model:	5
Survey Design:	6
Methodological Considerations:	7
Strengths:.....	8
Sampling Approach:.....	9
Participant Profile:.....	9
Demographic Characteristics:.....	10
General Survey Insights	11
Environmental Concerns.....	11
Casino and Social Impacts.....	14
Role of Bahamians in Development.....	16
Civic Participation and Trust.....	18
Project Specific Survey Insights	21
Familiarity and Interpretation of Survey Findings.....	23
Familiar vs. Unfamiliar Analysis.....	23
Overall Perception.....	24
Community and Infrastructure Impacts.....	30
Broader Perspectives on Environment and Development.....	38
Conclusion	42
Annex 1 - Methodology.....	44
Survey Development and Review Process.....	44
Annex 2 - Survey Tool.....	46
Annex 3 - Survey Responses.....	46
Annex 4 - Full Familiarity vs Non Familiarity Analysis.....	47
Works Cited	48

Overview:

In February 2026, the Organization for Responsible Governance (ORG) conducted a community survey across Eleuthera to better understand local perspectives on sustainable development and tourism initiatives, with a specific focus on the proposed Jacobs Resort Development. This large-scale project, which may include a resort, marina, golf course, and casino, is proposed for the Governor's Harbour area. The survey, funded by the Leon Levy Foundation, targeted residents across settlements between Hatchet Bay and Tarpum Bay, as these are communities that have historically had limited opportunities to engage in decisions about large-scale developments that directly affect their way of life. As tourism and development continue to expand across the Family Islands, so do the social, economic, and environmental considerations that can impact livelihoods, cultural identity, and long-term opportunity.

ORG, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, conducted this research as part of its broader commitment to strengthening participatory governance in The Bahamas. Drawing on more than a decade of experience in citizen engagement and governance initiatives, ORG recognizes that sustainable development depends on meaningful public consultation and inclusive stakeholder engagement. These principles are supported by global research, including studies by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2022), the World Bank (2021), and the OECD (2020), which consistently demonstrate that citizen participation contributes to stronger accountability, social cohesion, and long-term development outcomes.

The results of this survey provide a clear baseline of community perspectives on the proposed Jacobs Resort Development and development at large in Eleuthera. They reflect a community that is not opposed to development in principle but that places strong importance on transparency, environmental protection, Bahamian participation and ownership, and the effectiveness of public consultation processes.

Taken together, these findings present an opportunity to translate well-established principles of participatory development into practice in Eleuthera. By grounding development approaches in community perspectives, this report can support developers, nonprofit organizations, and government authorities in designing strategies that are more responsive, inclusive, and sustainable. In doing so, it reinforces a central message reflected throughout the survey: that how development is undertaken, through transparency, inclusion, and accountability, is as important as the development itself.

Research Context and Objectives

This survey was undertaken to understand public perceptions of environmental conservation, particularly in context to the proposed Jacobs Resort Development, a large-scale tourism project planned for the Governor's Harbour settlement that may include a resort, marina, golf course, and casino. At the time of survey design and data collection, publicly available information on the project was limited to two articles published in the *Tribune Business* section of *The Tribune* on February 19, 2026.

The first article, titled "*Casino Developer's 'Win-Win' Governor's Harbour Pledge,*" reported statements by developer Jeff Jacobs of Jacobs Entertainment, outlining initial concepts for the project. These included lock-and-leave neighbourhoods, a mega-yacht marina, a boutique casino, a small resort, and affordable workforce housing, along with a stated commitment to engage the local community throughout the planning process. The second article, titled "*Governor's Harbour Plan is Model 'That's Never Worked,'*" presented the perspective of Eric Carey, former Executive Director of the Bahamas National Trust, Principal of ONE Consultants and an Eleuthera resident. It should be noted that Mr. Carey is a consultant with the Leon Levy Foundation, which funded this project. His comments raised concerns about the scale and character of the proposed development, its potential impacts on infrastructure and the environment, and broader patterns of large resort-style projects not consistently delivering meaningful economic empowerment for Family Island communities.

These two articles represented the full extent of formally published information available to the public, and to ORG's survey team, at the time of fieldwork. They were used as reference points in framing survey questions where specific project details were required. All descriptive information included in the survey instrument was drawn exclusively from these sources to maintain accuracy and neutrality. Given the limited information available, the survey was also designed to capture broader community perspectives on development, including environmental, economic, and governance considerations.

The geographic scope of the survey, spanning settlements from Hatchet Bay to Tarpum Bay, was identified by the Leon Levy Foundation as the primary focus area for this research, reflecting the communities most proximate to the proposed development.

To gather data, ORG employed a “walkabout” survey approach, facilitating direct, in-person engagement and structured dialogue within the community. This method enabled the research team to capture a range of perspectives while also providing important context for how residents understand and respond to development-related issues.

Survey Model:

The walkabout survey model has proven particularly effective in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as The Bahamas, where close-knit community ties and informal communication networks make personal engagement essential for meaningful data collection. By meeting residents in their homes, businesses, and communal spaces, this approach builds trust and fosters open dialogue, enabling the collection of both quantitative data and rich qualitative insights that might be overlooked through digital or formal survey methods.

Across the Caribbean, walkabout-style surveys have been successfully applied in participatory environmental management and recovery planning. In Grenada, for instance, door-to-door surveys conducted after Hurricane Ivan helped identify priority sites for mangrove rehabilitation by integrating fishers’ and residents’ firsthand knowledge. Similarly, in Saint Lucia, this method was used to gather diverse community perspectives that informed marine protected area zoning, balancing biodiversity conservation with the protection of local livelihoods. ORG’s past work regarding public engagement around developments in Exuma also exemplified the strength of the walkabout-style survey and the importance of participatory development,

These examples demonstrate that walkabout surveys effectively address barriers common in small communities in Small Island Developing States, such as limited internet access, survey fatigue, and mistrust of external actors. The method promotes inclusivity and local ownership by validating community expertise and ensuring that data collection reflects lived realities. It also aligns with international best practices in participatory conservation planning, which emphasize legitimacy, transparency, and collaboration as essential elements of long-term environmental stewardship.

In contexts where development proposals are sensitive or contested, individual survey engagement offers distinct advantages over focus groups. One-on-one interactions minimize the influence of dominant voices, ensure confidentiality, and create space for candid responses, conditions that are particularly important where social or political dynamics may inhibit open

discussion (NOAA, 2010). This personalized approach reflects global standards in participatory justice, particularly within SIDS, where fair and inclusive engagement is foundational to building trust and resilience (Springer, 2024).

By adopting this culturally responsive method in Eleuthera, ORG ensured that the survey process not only generates reliable data but also strengthens community relationships and supports collaborative conservation rooted in mutual respect and shared responsibility.

Survey Design:

A mixed-methods research design was employed for this survey, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to develop a well-rounded understanding of community perspectives across Eleuthera. Quantitative measures were combined with open-ended responses to capture both measurable trends along with more personal perspectives on sustainable development and local governance.

The survey consisted of 34 questions, organized into 10 key themes. The full survey tool can be accessed in Annex #2.

A 5-point Likert scale was used throughout much of the quantitative portions of the survey, allowing respondents to express their level of agreement or concern on a range of statements.

Qualitative components of the survey included open-ended questions that gave respondents the opportunity to elaborate on their perspectives in their own words. These narrative responses added context to the quantitative findings, capturing specific dimensions of community experience that closed-ended questions alone could not reflect.

To strengthen data integrity and ensure ethical compliance, a required consent question was incorporated at the beginning of the survey. This also allowed enumerators to formally record instances where individuals chose not to participate after being read the introduction script, providing a more complete picture of the community's engagement.

Demographic questions were included to gather basic respondent information such as age group, occupation, and settlements of residence and work. This data supports analysis of how concerns differ across population segments, enabling more targeted and evidence-based recommendations for development planning and community engagement.

The survey was developed without assumptions about respondents' prior familiarity with the Jacobs Resort Development or its potential impacts. Prior to the survey, respondents were provided with a standardized script to provide context and the available information about the proposed context. (Annex 2) Questions were designed to gauge existing levels of awareness and understanding among residents, ensuring that both informed perspectives and knowledge gaps were captured in the data. Due to publicly available information being limited at the time of fieldwork, the survey did not attempt to verify the merits of the proposed development. Instead, it measured residents' perceptions based on the information then available. Responses reflect residents' views, expectations, and concerns at the time of fieldwork and should not be interpreted as factual predictions about future project outcomes.

This mixed-methods approach produced data that balances statistical trends with community attitudes, helping to inform sustainable development strategies and governance decisions across Eleuthera.

Methodological Considerations:

Several limitations were encountered during the design and implementation of this survey and should be considered when interpreting the findings.

A significant limitation during data collection was the restricted availability of publicly accessible information regarding proposed developments in Eleuthera. Enumerators frequently encountered participants who sought additional details about specific projects before or during the survey. This required careful navigation in survey design and data gathering in order to avoid speculation and hearsay and preserve the integrity of responses. Responses may have reflected a lack of awareness rather than informed opinion about development activity in their area prior to this survey.

Compounding this, Eleuthera has seen several development proposals in recent years. In the absence of clear and distinguishing information about the Jacobs Resort Development, some participants appeared to conflate it with other projects. This may have introduced some inconsistency in how certain questions were interpreted and answered across the sample.

Geographic and demographic reach also presented a limitation. Efforts were made to capture perspectives from residents across the selected settlements, including north-central

communities. However, a significant portion of the working population in that area commutes to Governor's Harbour for employment, making them more difficult to reach during survey hours. As a result, the sample reflects a higher representation of Governor's Harbour residents, who are more densely concentrated and accessible.

The walkabout methodology, while effective for capturing in-person community perspectives, also meant that individuals who own property in Eleuthera but do not reside on the island full-time were not included in the survey sample. The survey was not circulated online during this phase of the project. However, the potential inclusion of these stakeholders was discussed as a future strategy. An online version of the survey is currently being considered as a separate follow-on effort to gather additional input from this group, with careful consideration of how to mitigate any potential overlap with the results of this community-based survey.

Finally, not all respondents answered every question. This was particularly evident in employment-related questions, where some individuals, including retirees, stay-at-home residents, and those not currently in formal employment, were unable to provide responses applicable to their circumstances. In other cases, participants chose not to respond to questions they did not feel equipped to answer. This reflects natural variation in respondents' lived experiences and their ability to engage meaningfully with certain topics.

Strengths:

The implementation of this survey was marked by notable strengths that enhanced the quality of the data collected.

Community enthusiasm and willingness to engage stood out as a defining feature of the fieldwork. The vast majority of individuals approached were willing and enthusiastic to participate. Participant hesitation was not a notable barrier during data collection. Of the 465 individuals approached, 401 agreed to participate, indicating a strong response rate and a high level of community willingness to engage. This level of buy-in contributed to a high-quality dataset focused on community sentiment.

Daily targets were met consistently throughout the data collection period, demonstrating the efficiency and preparedness of the survey team and ensuring the project was completed within its intended timeframe.

Sampling Approach:

This survey employed an in-person intercept sampling approach, targeting residents across settlements between Hatchet Bay and Tarpum Bay, with a particular focus on Governor's Harbour given its central role in ongoing and proposed development activity in the region. Respondents were recruited across a range of community locations, including gas stations, banks, cafés, electronic stores, offices, and roadsides, ensuring exposure to a diverse cross-section of the local population and reducing the likelihood of capturing a narrow or homogenous sample.

All surveys were administered in person by trained enumerators, which offered several methodological advantages. Face-to-face administration allowed for first-hand verification of participant eligibility, ensured that respondents met the criteria of being residents within the defined survey area, and effectively eliminated the possibility of duplicate responses. This approach also gave enumerators the opportunity to clarify questions where needed, further strengthening the integrity of the data collected.

Participant Profile:

Of the 465 individuals approached to participate in the survey, 401 consented and completed the questionnaire, representing an 86.2% participation rate. The remaining 64 individuals (13.8%) declined after being read the introduction script. This strong uptake reflects a high level of community willingness to engage on issues related to development and local governance.

Consent Status	Count	% of Approached
Consented & Completed	401	86.20%
Declined to Participate	64	13.80%

Settlement of Residence	Number of Participants	Percentage
Governor's Harbour	149	37.20%
Tarpum Bay	60	15%
Palmetto Point	57	14.20%

Rock Sound	40	10%
James Cistern	25	6.20%
Savannah Sound	20	5%
Hatchet Bay	15	3.70%
Gregory Town	11	2.70%
Rainbow Bay	8	2%
Deep Creek	6	1.50%
Green Castle	4	1%
Waterford	4	1%
Harbour Island	2	0.50%
Total	401	100%

Demographic Characteristics:

The survey captured a demographically diverse cross-section of residents across north-central, central, and south Eleuthera, spanning settlements between Hatchet Bay and Tarpum Bay. Of the 401 consenting respondents, the largest share resided in Governor's Harbour (149, 37.2%), reflecting both its status as the most densely populated settlement in the survey area and its proximity to the proposed Jacobs Resort Development. Tarpum Bay (60, 15.0%) and Palmetto Point (57, 14.2%) followed as the next most represented communities, with Rock Sound (40, 10.0%) and James Cistern (25, 6.2%) also contributing meaningfully to the sample. When examining place of employment, Governor's Harbour again dominated, with 151 respondents (37.7%) reporting it as their primary work location, highlighting the settlement's role as the economic hub of the region and the concentration of livelihoods most directly exposed to the potential impacts of the proposed development.

Occupational backgrounds showed the variety of Eleuthera's workforce. The most commonly reported occupation was Clerical Support Workers (58 respondents). Service Workers and Sales formed the second largest group, emphasizing the dependence of a large portion of the workforce on tourism-related development (56 respondents). Craft and Related Trades workers (40 respondents) showed the ongoing development efforts on the island. Managers constituted another notable segment of the sample (40 respondents), suggesting that the survey also

captured the perspectives of those with a stake in Eleuthera's economic direction at an ownership level. Elementary Occupations such as cleaners, laborers, and food preparation made up 20 respondents, along with Skilled Agricultural and Fishery workers consisting of 14 participants. Retired residents (22 respondents) formed a distinct and important group within the sample, bringing long-term perspective to questions.

The age distribution of survey respondents reflects broad intergenerational participation, with representation across all adult age groups. The largest cohort was adults aged 25-34, comprising 87 respondents, closely followed by those aged 35-44 (80) and 45-54 (68). Together, respondents between the ages of 25 and 54 accounted for approximately 58% of the total sample, reflecting strong engagement from working-age adults. Younger adults aged 18-24 represented 14.6% of the sample. Residents aged 55-64 and 65 and above contributed 46 and 41 responses, respectively, ensuring that the perspectives of more established community members were captured in the data. The demographics shown strengthen the overall representativeness of the survey and support the credibility of findings as reflective of community-wide sentiment rather than the views of any one generation.

General Survey Insights

Environmental Concerns

This section explores how residents of Eleuthera perceive the importance of their natural environment, their level of concern about potential environmental impacts from development, and their confidence in existing environmental safeguards.

The first question established a baseline for understanding how community members value their natural environment. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of Eleuthera's marine and coastal ecosystems, including reefs, seagrass, and beaches, on a five-point scale ranging from very unimportant to very important. The results showed that the majority of respondents indicated that Eleuthera's marine and coastal ecosystems are either important (16.8%) or very important (71.3%). 8.9% of respondents described the ecosystems as neither important or unimportant, while only 3% of respondents expressed any degree of negativity towards the environment, with 1% rating them unimportant and 2% rating them very unimportant.

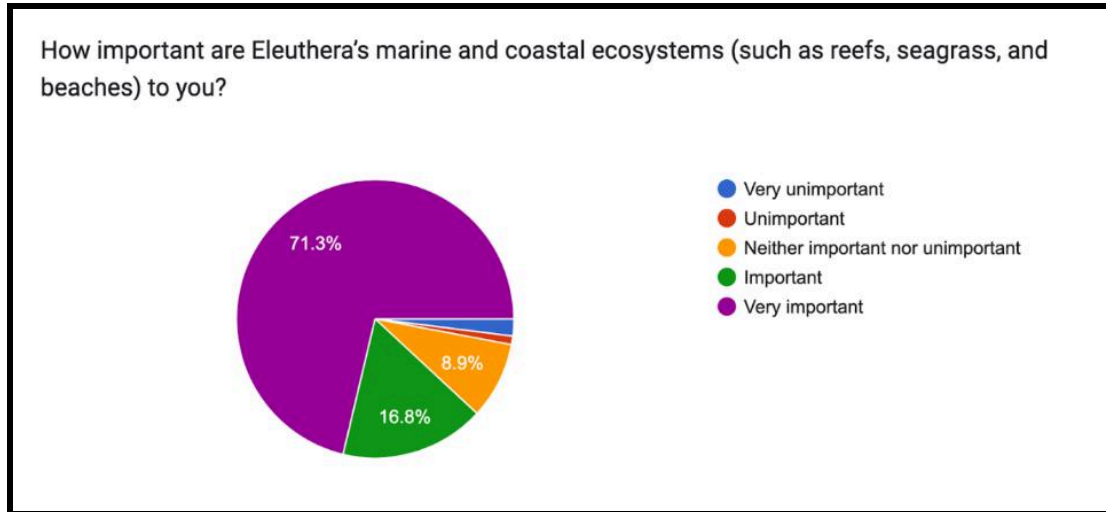


Figure 1.1, Importance of Environmental Protection

Building on this baseline, participants were then asked to indicate their level of concern about possible environmental impacts associated with large-scale developments, specifically referencing dredging, marina construction, golf course operations, and waste management.

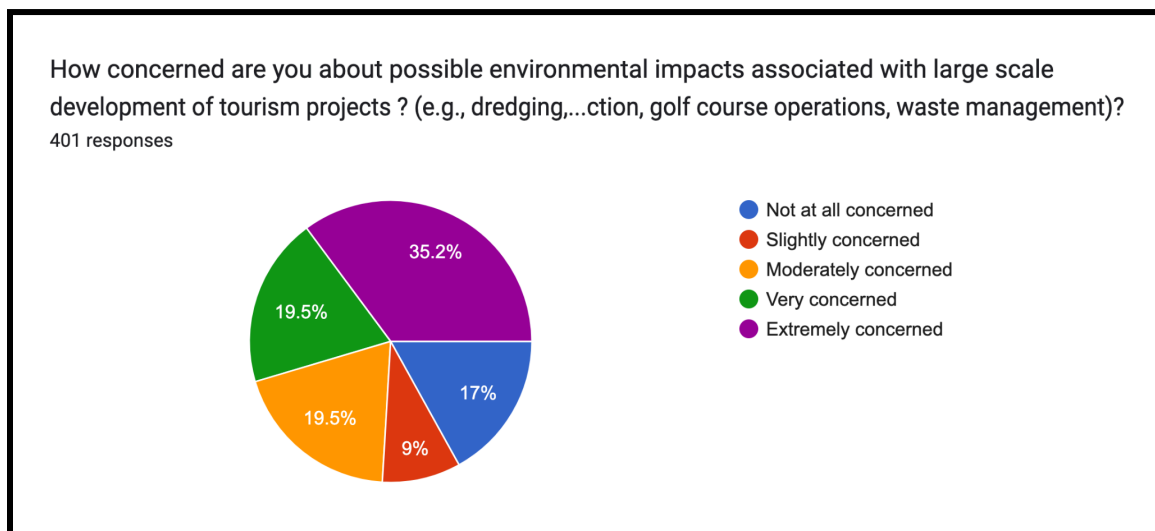


Figure 1.2, Concern about possible environmental impacts

The results show that the concern is widespread among the surveyed population. A combined 73.9% of respondents expressed concern about potential environmental impacts. The largest response was extremely concerned, making up 35.2% of responses, followed by very and

moderately concerned respondents, both consisting of 19.5%. 9% revealed that they were slightly concerned, while 17% expressed no concern at all.

The concentration of responses at the higher end of the concern scale suggests that environmental risk is a significant consideration for many residents, reinforcing the strong environmental values identified in the previous question. At the same time, the 17% who reported no concern may reflect varying levels of familiarity with specific aspects of development, as some respondents may not have had sufficient information to assess potential environmental impacts.

Following this, respondents were asked to assess their level of confidence in existing environmental safeguards and their enforcement.

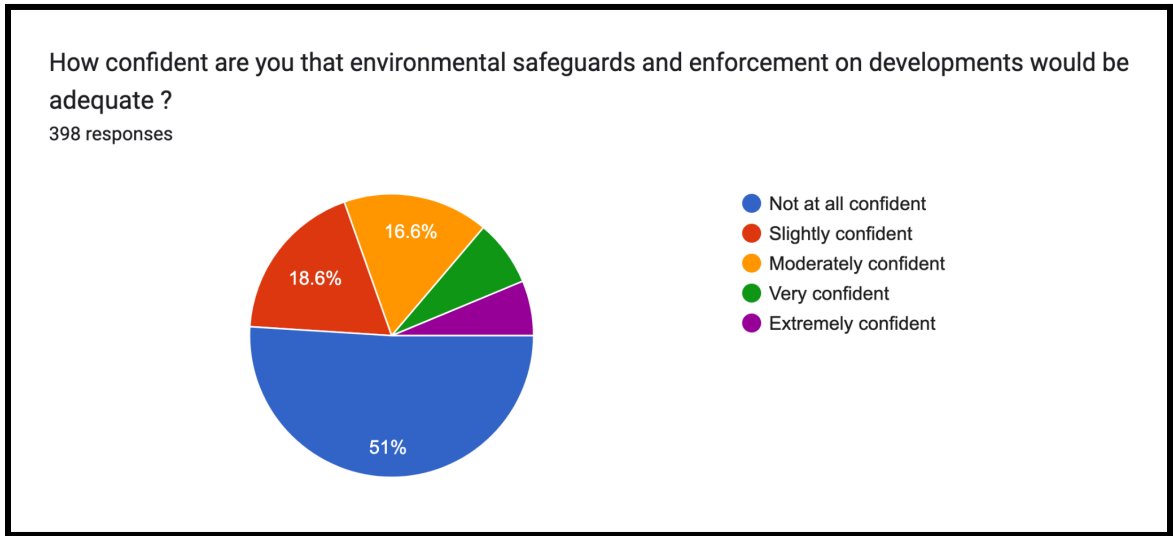


Figure 1.3, Confidence in Environmental Safeguards and their enforcement

The results indicate relatively low levels of confidence in current environmental protections. The largest share of respondents (51%) reported that they were not at all confident in the adequacy of enforcement. An additional 18.6% indicated they were slightly confident, while 16.6% reported being moderately confident. Smaller proportions expressed higher levels of confidence, with 7.3% indicating they were very confident and 6.3% extremely confident.

Taken together, these findings suggest that while residents place high importance on environmental protection and express concern about potential impacts, there is less confidence in the systems in place to effectively safeguard these resources.

Casino and Social Impacts

While questions elsewhere in the survey allowed participants to give opinions on general development, this section focuses on casino-related concerns.

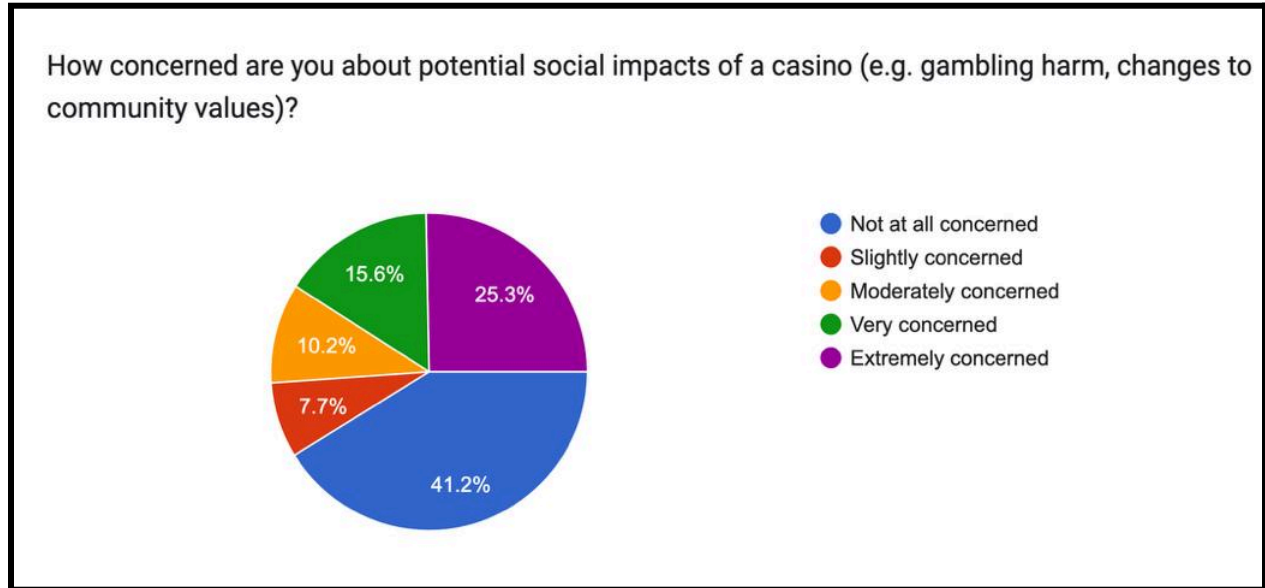


Figure 1.4, Potential social impacts of a casino

The results present a polarized distribution of opinions. The largest response category was not at all concerned, representing 41.2% of respondents, indicating that a substantial portion of the community does not view the casino as a social threat. The extremely concerned category was the second largest, indicating that strong concern, while less prevalent, can still be seen as a significant position within the community. The two middle categories of slightly and moderately concerned together represent the smallest share of responses at 17.9%, suggesting that respondents who had formed a view on this question tended to feel strongly in one direction rather than settling in the middle ground.

Economic Impacts

Across the survey, questions about jobs, business impacts, and development ownership were among those that generated the most engaged and detailed responses, both quantitative and qualitative. Responses reflect a community that is not opposed to economic growth but is deeply invested in who benefits from it, how it is structured, and what kind of development model best serves the long-term interests of Eleutherans.

The following question prompts participants to describe the best approach to economic growth and jobs over time.

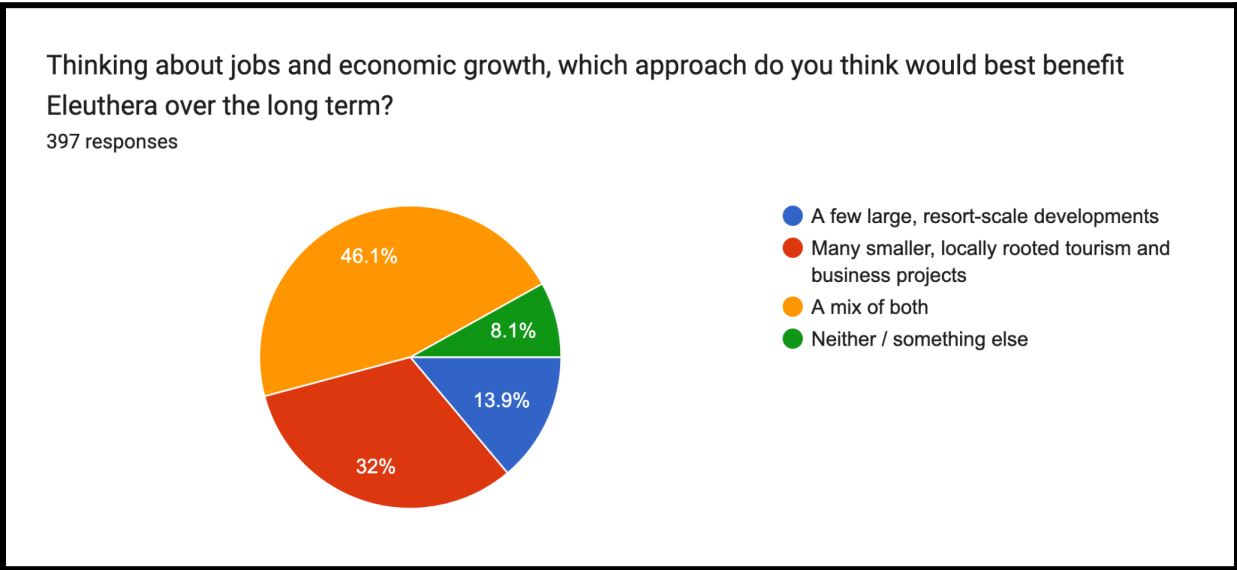


Figure 1.5, Eleuthera's long term economic growth

The preference for a mixed approach was the majority position, with nearly half of all respondents selecting it. It does not suggest complete opposition to large developments, but it does indicate that the community's preferred economic vision for Eleuthera is one that is mixed.

Participants also answered a qualitative follow up question in conjunction with the previous one, giving them the opportunity to expand upon their sentiments.

Respondents who preferred a mixed approach primarily focused on balance between employment scale and local ownership and between economic growth and cultural preservation. The most common thread was an acknowledgement that different visitors have different needs, and that a single development model cannot serve all of them. **"Not everything appeals to everyone, we have a lot of personalities and levels of sophistication on the island,"** said one respondent, while another noted simply **"variety is good, bring more things that make sense."**

Those who preferred smaller, locally rooted projects reasoned that smaller developments keep money circulating within the local economy, along with the fact that boutique and locally owned operations create authentic connections between tourists and the community. Most frequently,

respondents stated that Eleuthera's physical and social infrastructure cannot sustain large-scale resort development. On the economic argument, respondents were direct: **"large scale development attracts a certain type of tourism. The money leaves the country. That's already happening with short-term stay places. 90% of our Airbnbs and homes are already foreign owned and operated. If we keep a smaller boutique style, maybe a Bahamian can put some money together to own something ourselves."**

Finally, those that preferred larger, resort scale developments were economically focused and the least conditional of any category. Employment creation was the primary justification, with respondents pointing to the gap in the market left by the closure of Club Med, as evidence that Eleuthera needs a large anchor development. **"More people would be employed with big ones, smaller things don't bring work for people who need work. I worked at Club Med for over 30 years and that had a big impact. Since it's been gone, nothing is here for people,"** said one respondent.

Role of Bahamians in Development

This section asked respondents to rate the importance of Bahamian participation in major developments.

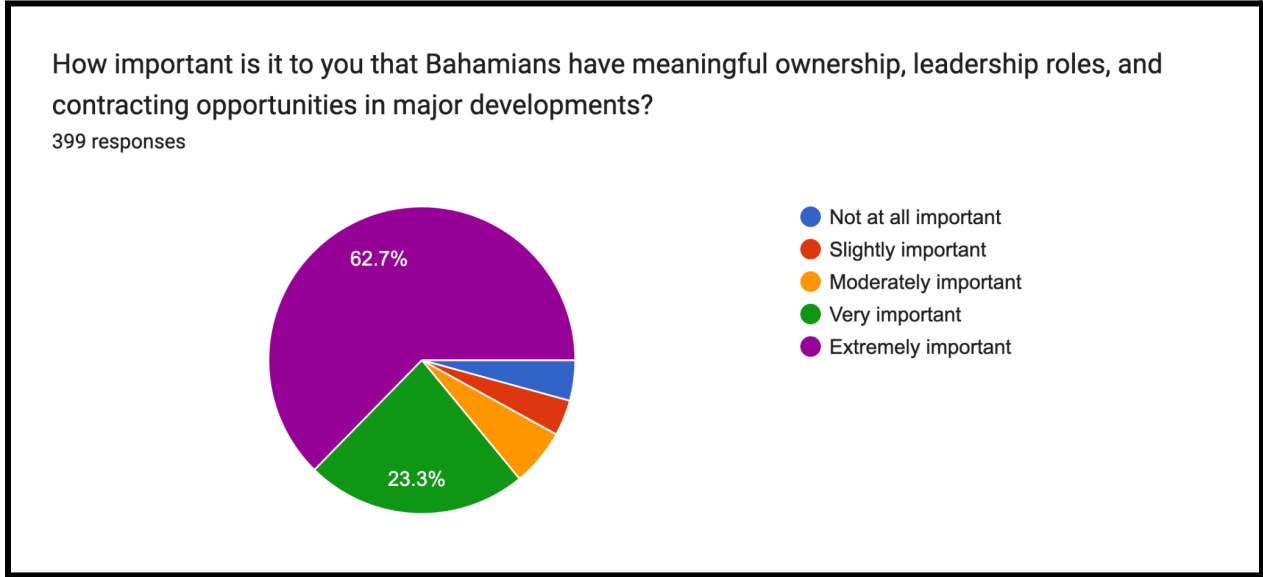


Figure 1.6, Bahamian roles in major developments

The findings from this question are clear. Respondents placed a high level of importance on Bahamian ownership, leadership, and contracting opportunities within major developments.

This result can be understood as an important signal to both developers and policymakers. Community support for large-scale investment is closely tied to the extent to which Bahamians are actively included, not only as employees, but as owners, partners, and contributors to the broader economic value generated by development.

Participants were then asked to share their views on developments being built on public land. In The Bahamas, public land holds both cultural and legal significance. It represents a shared national resource, and its use for private development is often a matter of strong public interest.

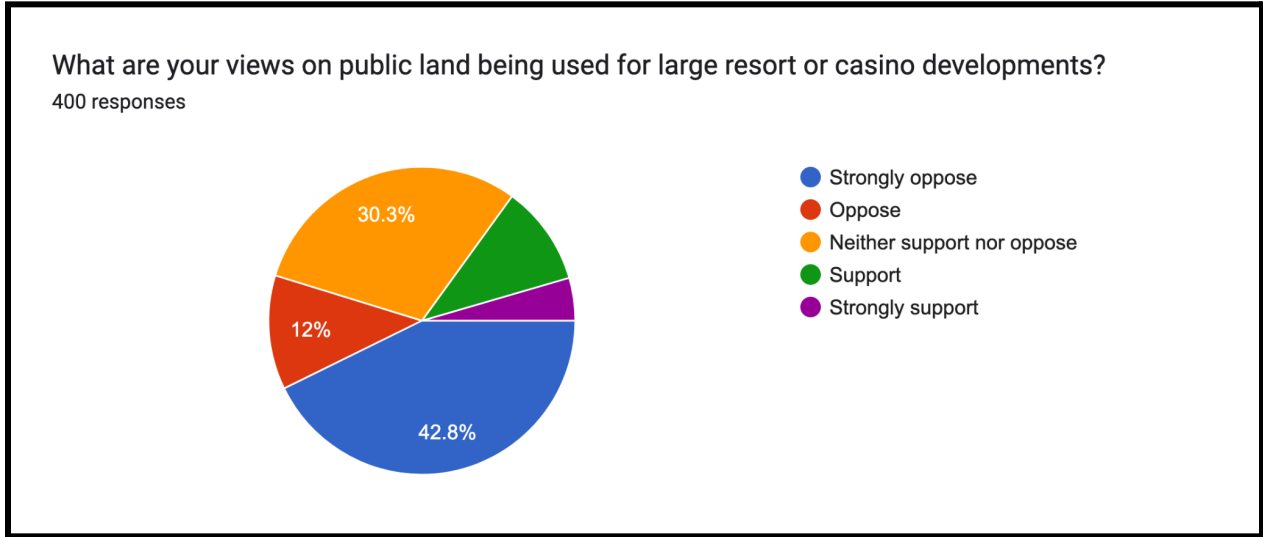


Figure 1.7, View on public land use in development

The largest share of respondents (42.8%) indicated that they strongly oppose the use of public land for development. The second largest group (30.5%) selected neither support nor oppose. As seen in other sections of the survey, a neutral response may reflect varying levels of awareness or understanding of how public land is being used in specific cases.

In this context, some respondents may have been uncertain about the extent to which public land is involved in the proposed development and, therefore, less inclined to take a definitive position. This pattern is consistent with broader findings throughout the survey, which highlight the role that access to clear and timely information plays in shaping public perspectives on development.

Civic Participation and Trust

The right of communities to be informed and meaningfully involved in decisions that affect their lives is a foundational principle of good governance and responsible development. The following question asked respondents to assess whether sufficient opportunities had been provided for the public to learn about and contribute input on developments in Eleuthera. This question speaks not only to the proposed project but also to the broader culture of public engagement on the island.

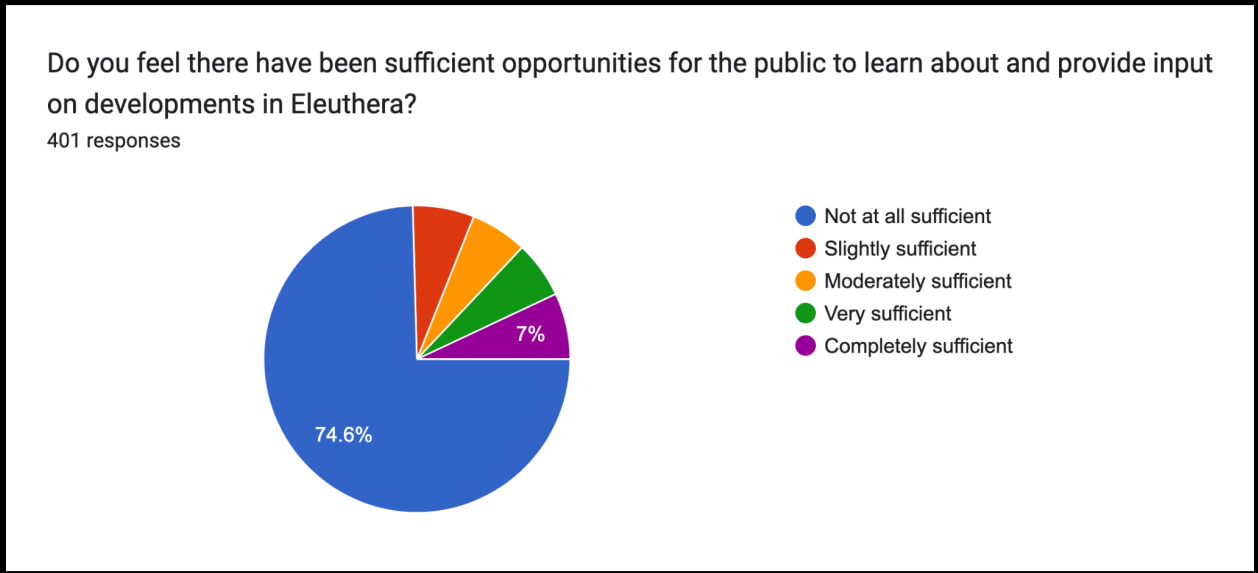


Figure 1.8, Opportunities for public participation in development

The findings are clear and significant. The “not at all sufficient” category, at 74.6%, represents the largest single response to any question in the survey. Nearly three in four respondents, across settlements, age groups, occupations, and differing perspectives on development, shared the view that opportunities to learn about and provide input on developments are not available to them.

Building on this, respondents were asked whether community input, when it is provided, has any meaningful influence on development decisions.

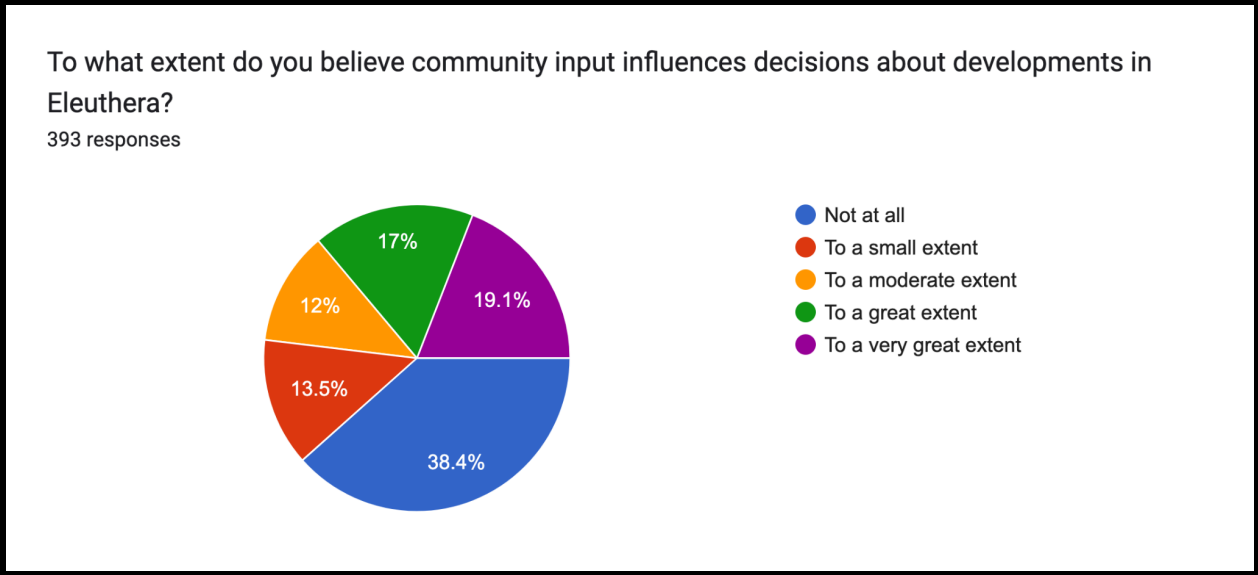


Figure 1.9, Community input's influence in development decisions

The largest share of responses (38.4%) selected “not at all,” indicating that more than one in three respondents believe community input has no meaningful influence on development decisions in Eleuthera. Taken together with the previous finding, the data suggests not only limited access to participation but also uncertainty about the value or impact of engagement when it does occur.

Participants were then invited to explain the reasoning behind their responses. A commonly expressed view was that decisions are often made prior to public consultation, limiting the effectiveness of engagement processes. As one respondent stated, **"When they bring it to the community, they have already got their grits, conch, and gravy under the table. When they bring it to us, it's a done deal."** Another observed: **"I've noticed recently that with every development someone has a forum, but they do it after the project passes, and I know locals stop going because we see that trend."** Timing and accessibility were also identified as challenges.

Respondents noted that public meetings are not always effectively communicated or accessible to all communities. **"When they do hold town halls, they aren't advertised properly and they are last minute; it doesn't set us up to attend,"** said one respondent. Another added, **"If it's happening in Governor's Harbour, we on the outskirts don't hear about it. Only the**

people directly in Governor's Harbour know about that. Bring back notice boards in the community. It can't only be Governor's Harbour talking when this affects us too."

Some respondents highlighted potential consequences of limited engagement. **"There was a development by the old navy base and the promise was that it would be beneficial to all. Almost everyone that spoke at the town hall was against it happening. The demolition of the building on the property would cause asbestos in the air, and the cries were not heard."**

Closely related to concerns about timing was a broader perception that consultation processes can feel procedural rather than influential. **"I think they come to the meetings, take the opinions, and do nothing with them,"** said one respondent. Another shared: **"I went to the town hall for another development, and I know it's just symbolic. My concern is the process isn't being followed and there isn't full transparency."**

Several respondents referenced past developments, including **"When Disney came, some tried to stop it, but it still started"** and **"when it came to Disney, the community got up and pushed and fought and had a plan for that land, and we still didn't get it."**

A further theme reflected perceptions about decision-making dynamics. Some respondents expressed concern that development decisions may prioritize investor interests over community perspectives. **"Once you have money, the government goes with it,"** said one respondent. Another noted, **"From a government point of view, we haven't been informed. Investors and realtors are only here to collect a percentage. They don't care what happens. They're not interested in impact. Only personal gains. So, we as Eleutherans have no say. We are treated as if we are uneducated and don't know what's going on."** Others reflected on longer-term changes: **"I remember a time when Bahamians owned everything. And now we have to deal with these foreigners because they are the only ones able to invest. We can't invest in our own islands anymore."**

Respondents also emphasized the distinction between consultation and access to information. Many indicated that meaningful participation depends on being informed in advance. **"You need to hear from the locals too about how they feel about certain things, but we need to have more deep ecological reports provided for the public,"** said one respondent. Another noted: **"More people would be making noise now if they knew about some of the things**

happening." One respondent suggested, **"We need the central government and local government to educate us and tell us. A lot of us are still in the dark about a lot of things. We need seminars; we need to be able to learn about this and what it means, not just talk about it."** This perspective was reinforced by another: **"I haven't heard about the nitty-gritty details, so how much input can we give that would be considered?"**

While these concerns were prominent, a smaller number of respondents offered more optimistic reflections on public consultation. One respondent noted that community engagement, even when it does not change the overall outcome, can still influence how developments are implemented: **"Disney was very vocal many years before they started to develop. A lot of anti-development voices got them to consider their approach. Disney considered them, and so what exists is a compromised approach, but not to their disadvantage. They still won, but voices against them were heard."** Another highlighted the role of local organisations: **"One Eleuthera Foundation was opposed to the way Lighthouse was being done, so they had their own EIA and OEF became a watchdog. Even if they weren't successful in deferring, Disney has now followed some environmental rules. When you have people to watch, they know they are being watched and they won't be so careless."**

Taken together, these responses reflect a community that is engaged and attentive but that reports limited access to consistent, timely, and effective participation in development decisions.

The preceding findings establish that many residents feel they have not been adequately consulted and are uncertain about the influence of their input.

Project Specific Survey Insights

This section examines how residents of Eleuthera understand and perceive the proposed J Resort Eleuthera development, with particular attention to levels of awareness and how familiarity may influence perspectives.

Project Awareness

The survey results indicate generally low levels of prior awareness of the proposed development. This suggests that many respondents may have formed perspectives with limited exposure to publicly available information. This pattern is consistent with observations noted in the limitations section regarding constrained access to project-related information.

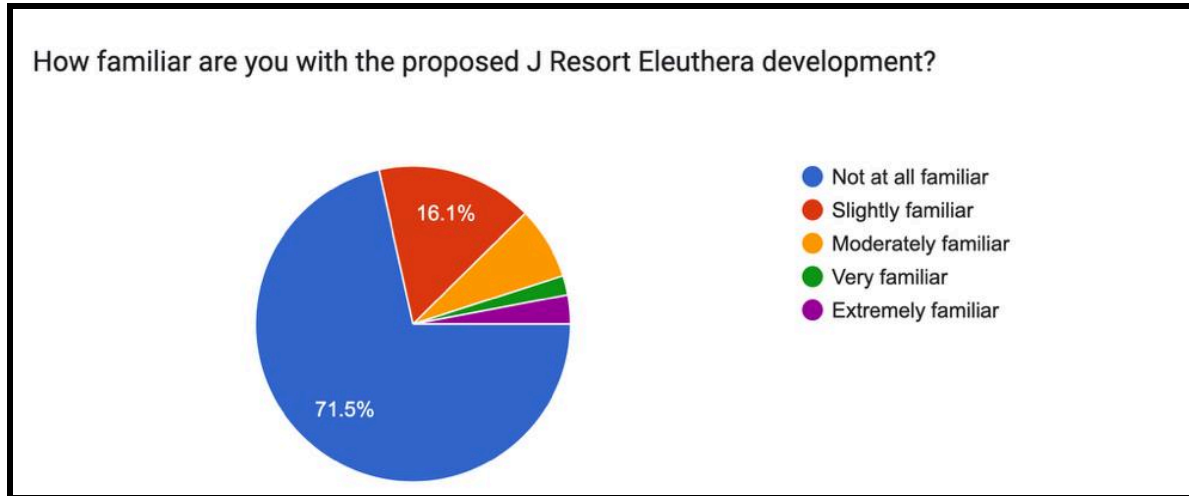


Figure 2.0, Familiarity with proposed development

A majority of respondents (71.5%) reported that they were not at all familiar with the proposed development. An additional 16.1% indicated they were slightly familiar. Moderate familiarity was reported by 7.5% of respondents, while 2.0% described themselves as very familiar and 3.0% as extremely familiar.

Respondents were also asked to assess their familiarity with the scale, footprint, and major features of the development.

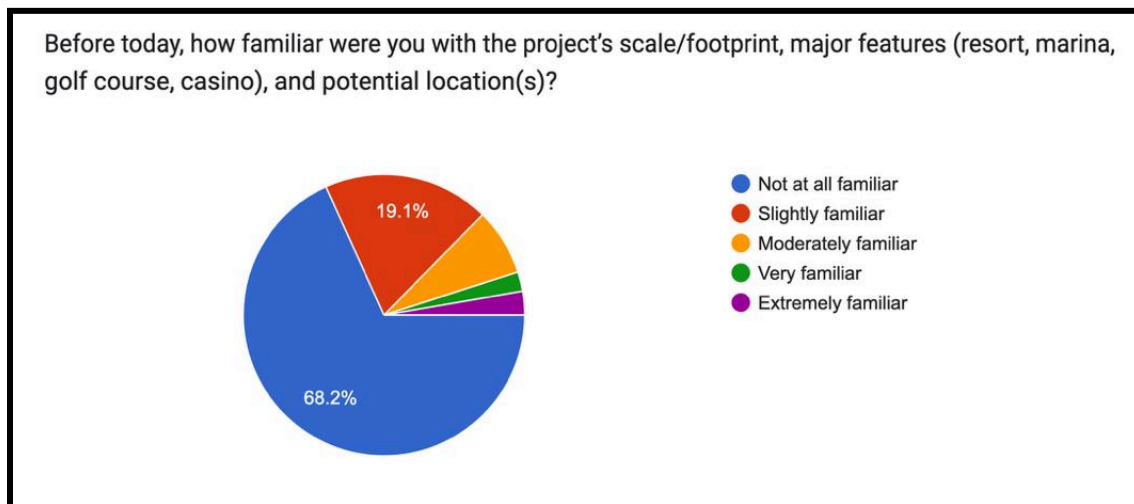


Figure 2.1, Familiarity with project scale

Findings on project scale reflect a similar pattern. A total of 68.2% of respondents reported being not at all familiar with the scale and major features of the project, with an additional 19.1%

indicating slight familiarity. Combined, 87.3% of respondents reported little to no familiarity with the scope of the development. Moderate familiarity was reported by 7.8%, while 2.2% and 2.8% identified as very and extremely familiar, respectively.

Taken together, these findings suggest that a large proportion of respondents were not only unfamiliar with the project overall, but also with its specific components, such as the proposed casino, marina, and golf course.

Familiarity and Interpretation of Survey Findings

Given the limited availability of public information, all respondents were provided with a standardized description of the project prior to completing the survey (see Annex 2) to establish a common baseline. However, the high proportion of respondents reporting low familiarity suggests that this introduction may not have fully bridged knowledge gaps, or that respondents interpreted “familiarity” as prior knowledge before the survey.

To better understand how awareness may shape perceptions, responses to key project-related questions were analyzed by levels of familiarity.

Overall, the response patterns between familiar and unfamiliar groups were broadly aligned in direction, though respondents with higher familiarity tended to express more defined views. In contrast, respondents with lower familiarity were more likely to indicate uncertainty or select neutral responses

Familiar vs. Unfamiliar Analysis

The following chart highlights selected differences in responses to project-specific questions between respondents who reported familiarity with the project and those who did not.

Question	Response	Not Familiar	Familiar
Based on what you know, who do you understand to be leading and financing the proposed development?	Not sure / don't know	75%	43%
	Primarily foreign-owned/financed	22%	51%

How likely do you think the proposed development is to significantly change the physical appearance, historic character, or day-to-day feel of Governor's Harbour?	Very likely	44%	62%
To what extent do you believe that the project will provide meaningful long-term economic benefits for Eleutherans?	Likely	34%	17%
	To a small extent	13%	33%
Do you believe including a casino supports or undermines sustainable tourism in Eleuthera?	Undermines	31%	46%

Across multiple questions, respondents who were familiar with the project were less likely to select “not sure” and more likely to express definitive views. For example, 75% of respondents who were not familiar indicated uncertainty regarding project leadership and financing, compared to 43% among familiar respondents. Similarly, familiar respondents were more likely to identify the project as primarily foreign-owned or financed (51% vs. 22%).

Familiar respondents also reported stronger expectations of impact. A higher proportion indicated that the project was “very likely” to significantly change the character of Governor's Harbour (62% vs. 44%), and were more likely to express concerns about specific features such as the inclusion of a casino (46% vs. 31%).

These findings suggest that increased familiarity is associated with greater certainty in responses and stronger views regarding both potential impacts and project characteristics. Full response distributions are provided in Appendix 4.

Overall Perception

This section examines respondents' overall sentiment toward the proposed development.

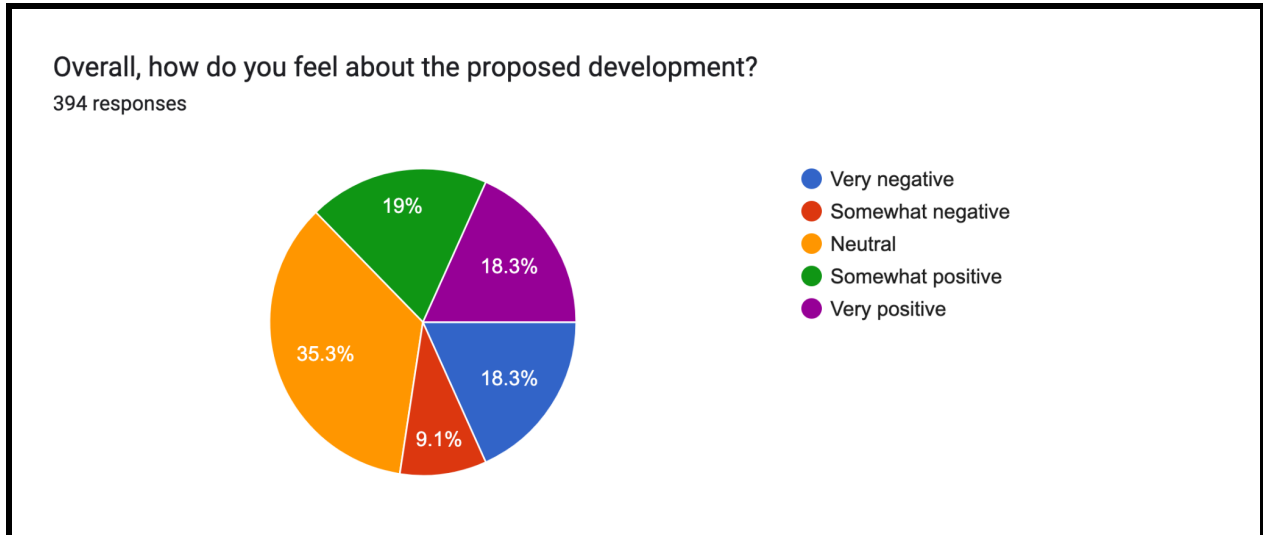


Figure 2.2, Overall feelings about the proposed development

Survey responses indicate a range of perspectives within the community. The largest share of respondents (35.3%) selected a neutral position. Positive responses were distributed between somewhat positive (19.0%) and very positive (18.3%), while negative responses included very negative (18.3%) and somewhat negative (9.1%).

Among respondents expressing more defined views, positive and negative perspectives were relatively balanced at the “very” level. The relatively large neutral category may reflect varying levels of familiarity with the project, as noted in earlier sections.

Overall Perception by Familiarity

To further examine how awareness influences sentiment, overall perceptions were disaggregated by familiarity.

Overall Perception of the Proposed Development	Not Familiar	Familiar
Very positive	20%	16%
Somewhat positive	20%	20%
Neutral	40%	26%
Very negative	15%	27%
Somewhat negative	8%	13%

The disaggregated data indicates that respondents who were not familiar with the project were more likely to report a neutral position, with 40% selecting neutral. Among respondents who were familiar with the project, fewer selected neutral (26%), and responses were more distributed across both positive and negative categories.

Respondents with higher familiarity were more likely to express negative views, with 27% indicating a very negative perception and a combined 40% reporting somewhat or very negative opinions. Positive perceptions were also present among familiar respondents, with 20% somewhat positive and 16% very positive.

Overall, these findings suggest that increased familiarity with the project is associated with more defined opinions, including both positive and negative perspectives, and a reduced likelihood of neutral responses.

Culture Alignment

Respondents were then asked whether the proposed development aligns with Eleuthera's character, culture, and way of life.

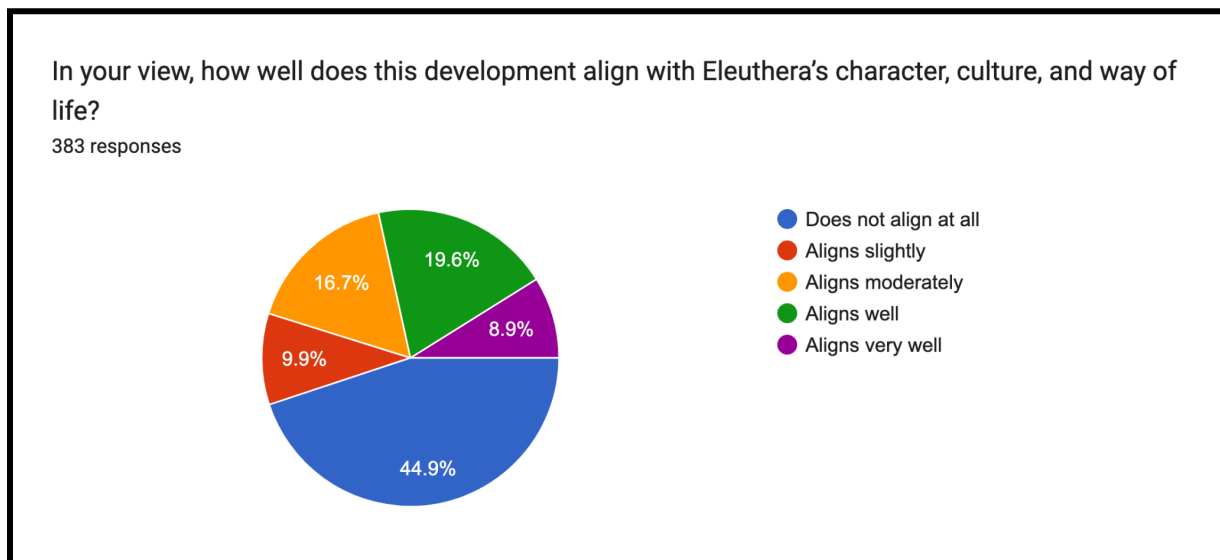


Figure 2.3, Development alignment with Eleuthera's character, culture and way of life

44.9% of respondents expressed that the proposed development does not align with Eleuthera's character, culture, and way of life, making this, by far, the largest response group. A further 9.9% acknowledge that the project aligns slightly, followed by 16.7% believing it aligns

moderately, 19.6% stating that it aligns well, and 8.9% finding that it aligns very well. These responses suggest that, for many residents, perceptions of alignment are closely tied to the scale and features of the proposed development. Elements such as a casino, golf course, and large resort appear to shape how respondents assess compatibility with the island's identity and way of life.

Respondents were also asked to provide qualitative insight into how they perceived the potential project. Of the 401 respondents, 316 provided a response, with 85 declining or indicating that they had no reaction to share. .

A frequently occurring reaction was initial surprise. Many participants expressed that his survey was their first exposure to the proposed development, with responses ranging from:

“Never heard of it.”

“I was shocked when I heard. I was like what? Initially shocked and still don't know the full extent of the size.”

“I've only heard about this at the barbershop. I don't know how reliable that information is.”

Several respondents who did have some awareness stressed the informal nature of their sources, with one stating:

“I read what was posted but nothing official from them to say what this is. I haven't seen anything about this officially.”

“Well, I read the article and I feel cautious and apprehensive. I feel like we don't know the whole story.”

Another prominent theme was conditional support. Some respondents expressed openness to development while emphasizing specific expectations. Participants said:

“Put a hospital in Governor's Harbour too if you're doing this, because it would be a town like how Nassau is a town.”

“Eleuthera used to be booming one time ago, so it depends. If it's going to support Eleutherans with employment, I want to support it.”

“I’m not against foreign investment, but I want to keep in mind the natives and native ecosystems. We need to maintain some of the controls on these things.”

Employment for Bahamians, particularly Eleutherans, was a commonly stated condition, with respondents framing their reactions around thoughts like:

“Once you bring jobs for Bahamians, specifically Eleutherans.”

“If it’s benefiting Bahamians, then it’s cool, but does it actually benefit Bahamians?”

The conditionality of support suggests openness that is contingent upon mutually beneficial outcomes for the impacted community.

The inclusion of a casino emerged as a concerning element of the proposed development. Contrary to the majority of survey responses when asked directly about the casino, some respondents expressed concern about its potential social and cultural impacts. Participants shared sentiments such as

“We don’t need a casino; I feel like a casino attracts the wrong attention.”

“Everyone comes for peace and relaxation, so the type of people that will come for the casino are different, and I don’t support that. The casino part is a NO for me. A lot of people are addicted, and now imagine if more tourist casino-goers come.”

“As far as casinos are concerned, that’s the problem. We already have these number houses that cause people to walk the streets because they gamble their life away, and this will make it worse.”

The exclusion of Bahamians from casino gambling was raised as a grievance and a concern, with respondents saying:

“We can’t gamble in the casino or use those facilities, so at the very least let us have the work there,” or “A casino? That’s only for white people. We can’t use any of those facilities, but they’re using our facilities.”

It is important to note that not all respondents were opposed to the casino, with some saying that **“I don’t mind a casino if you make it legal (for Bahamians)”** or **“We never had anything like that, but we need advancement. A lot of people had to leave.”**

Respondents also raised concerns about increases in crime and broader social implications, with one respondent stating:

“If it’s a casino, you’re talking about organised crime and big business. Once they enter the picture, the rich will get richer and the poor won’t get anything.”

Religious and cultural concerns also were featured prominently, with statements such as: **“I grew up in a Christian home, so I don’t want casino-goers here,”** and **“the Christians here don’t want to go in there, and we have to be careful with our grandchildren not to have that culture on us.”**

Another concern raised was a fear that large-scale development would transform Eleuthera’s social landscape into something resembling Nassau. **“Watch we end up like Nassau,”** warned one participant. Residents that relocated from Nassau expressed the personal stakes that this development could bring: **“I left Nassau to come to a peaceful land, there’s no room for changes in Eleuthera,”** and **“That development seems Nassau-centric and over the top and will take away from the charm that brought us here.”** Others stated that **“All this is doing is turning Eleuthera into a city. Eleuthera is more like the country, and “they’re gonna make Eleuthera be very fast, especially with the people that come.”** Some participants drew on international examples, stating, **“I was in Hawaii in the 80s and the same thing happened. I went back 30 years later and it was destroyed.”**

Despite these sentiments, many respondents were not opposed to the development in principle, but were opposed to the size and character of the development, highlighting that **“I’m pro development but large-scale development doesn’t fit the sense of place for Governor’s Harbour, the reason people even come here and choose to live here is the tranquility, calm, and pristine nature. We just need to be mindful that it doesn’t shoot us in the foot.”**

The following question builds on this by examining whether residents trust the information they are receiving about the proposed Jacobs Resort Development from the developer and government agencies.

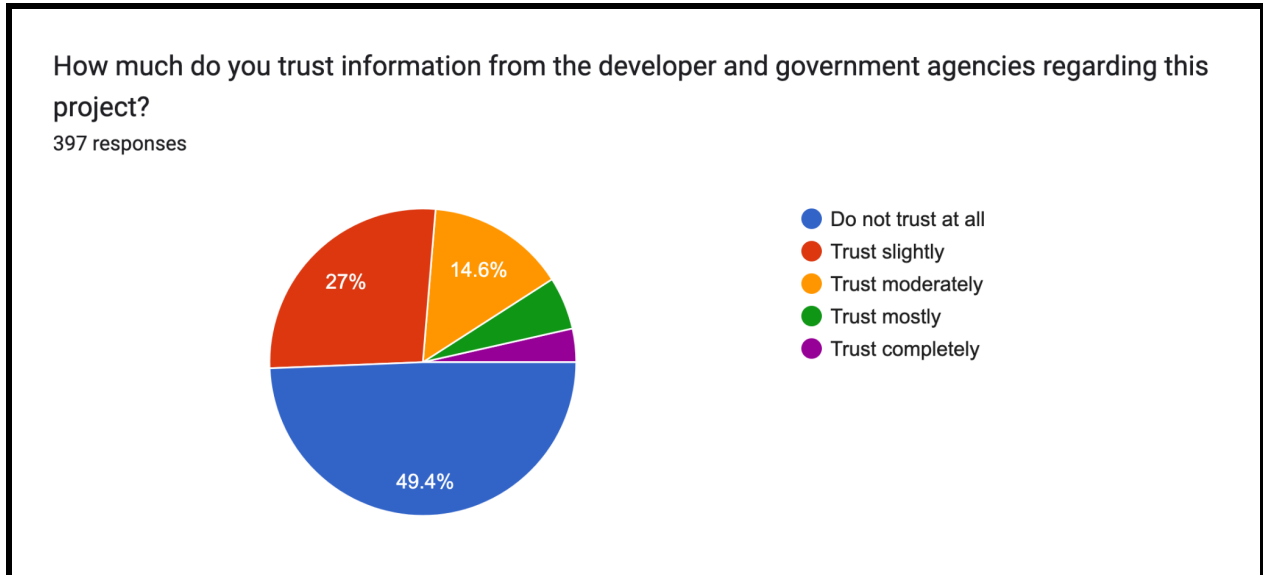


Figure 2.4, Trust in information from the developer and government agencies regarding the project

The results indicate low levels of trust in information provided by both the developer and government entities among a substantial portion of respondents. When considered alongside earlier findings, a consistent pattern emerges: many residents reported limited access to information through official channels, insufficient opportunities for engagement, and uncertainty about whether their input influences outcomes. In this context, reduced trust in information sources reflects broader concerns about transparency, communication, and the overall development process.

Community and Infrastructure Impacts

In this section residents were asked to consider the infrastructural implications of the proposed development and its potential impact on Eleuthera's existing facilities and their capacities.

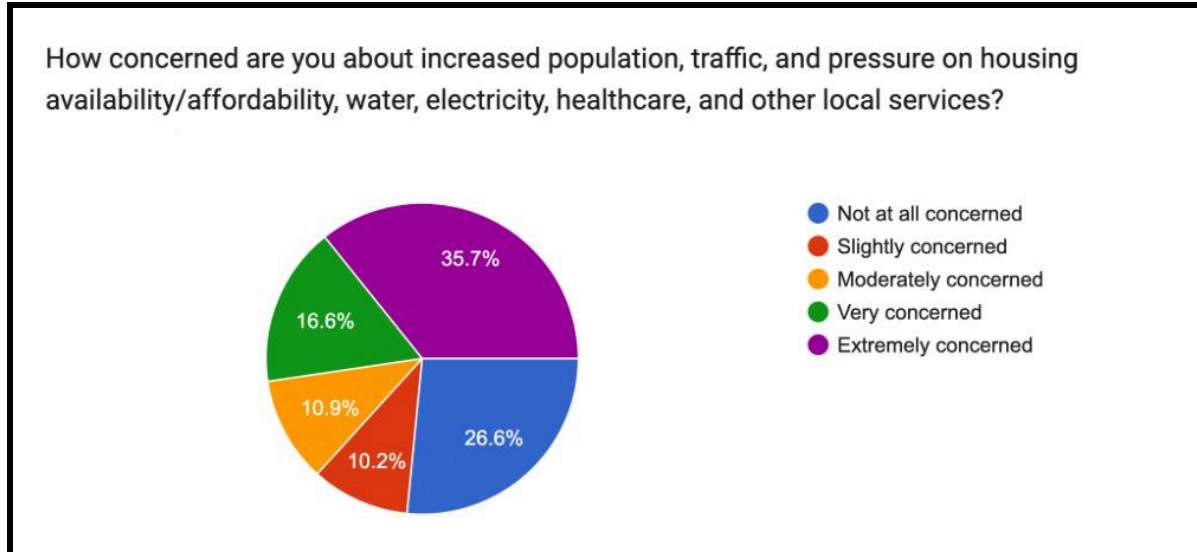


Figure 2.5, Concern about infrastructural changes

Respondents were given the opportunity to rate their concern about the pressure a large-scale development would place on Eleuthera's existing infrastructure and services. The distribution of responses was as follows: 35.7% of respondents were extremely concerned, 16.6% very concerned, 10.9% moderately concerned, 10.2% slightly concerned, and 26.6% not at all concerned. The pattern again reflects a tendency toward polarised opinions over moderate positions, with the balance tilting toward concern.

Survey participants also indicated their expectations of the project's impact on beach and coastal area access. The reduced access category was the single largest response, with more than one in three respondents anticipating a negative impact on public coastal access. The "not sure or need more information" response category was the second largest at 31.3%, again reflecting the low levels of project awareness documented throughout the survey.

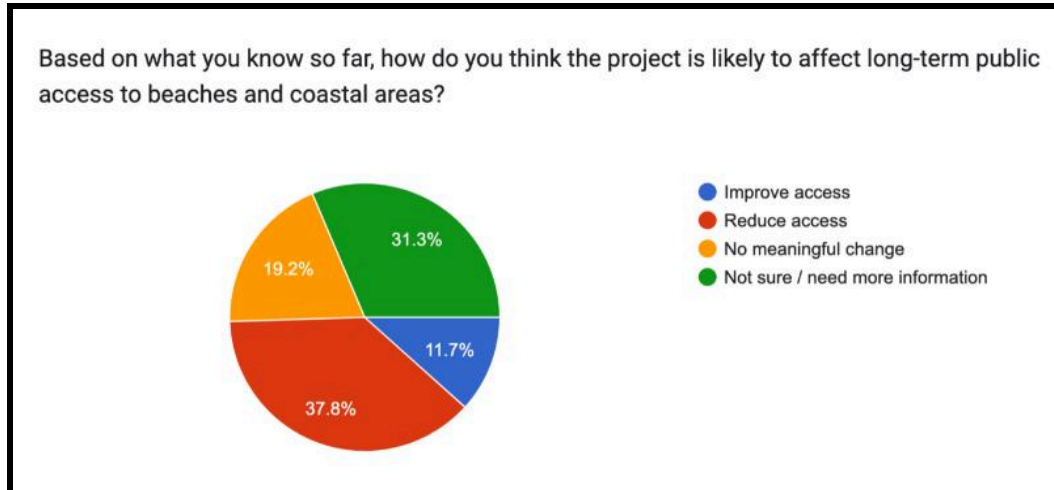


Figure 2.6, Access to public beaches and coastal areas

Among those who did form a view, the ratio of those anticipating reduced access to those anticipating improved access was more than three to one, 37.8% versus 11.7%, a finding consistent with the broader pattern of skepticism about the development's benefits to the general public. Public beach and coastal access is a deeply held value in Eleuthera, and the concern that development could erode it showed prominently in responses.

The following question asked respondents to rate their confidence in the long-term delivery and maintenance of public infrastructure commitments associated with the proposed development.

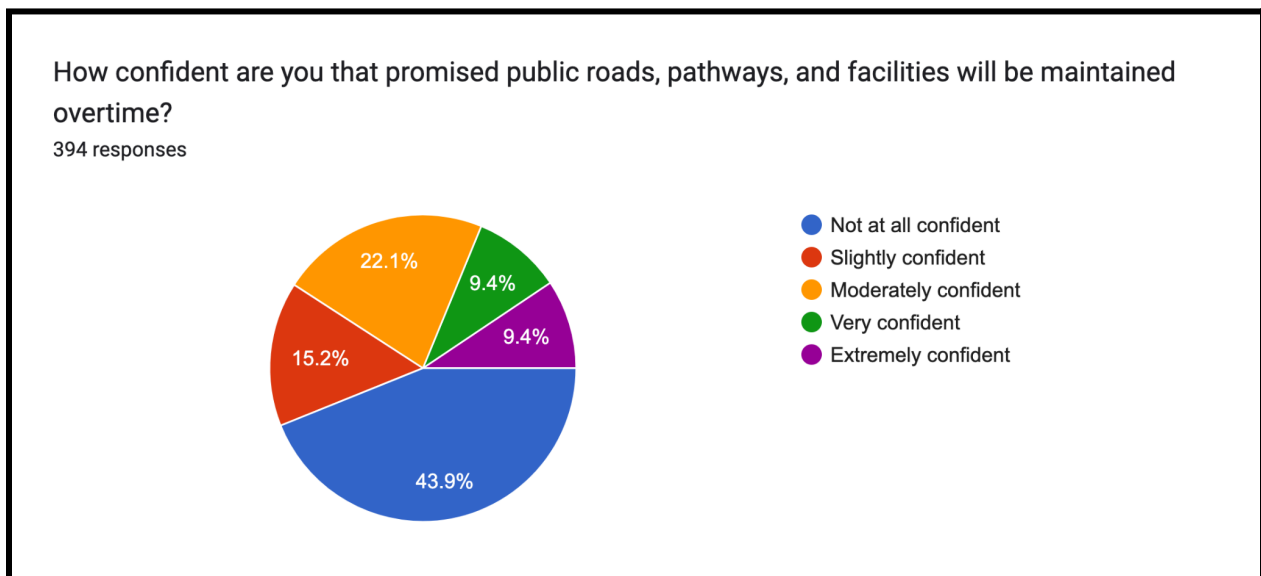


Figure 2.7, Confidence in maintenance overtime

The distribution of responses was as follows: 43.9% of respondents were not at all confident, 15.2% slightly confident, 22.1% moderately confident, 9.4% very confident, and 9.4% extremely confident. The not at all confident category was the single largest response by a substantial margin, with nearly half of all respondents selecting the lowest available level of confidence in the maintenance of promised infrastructure over time.

Casino Perception

The following question allowed residents to think strategically about a casino's compatibility with sustainable tourism in Eleuthera.

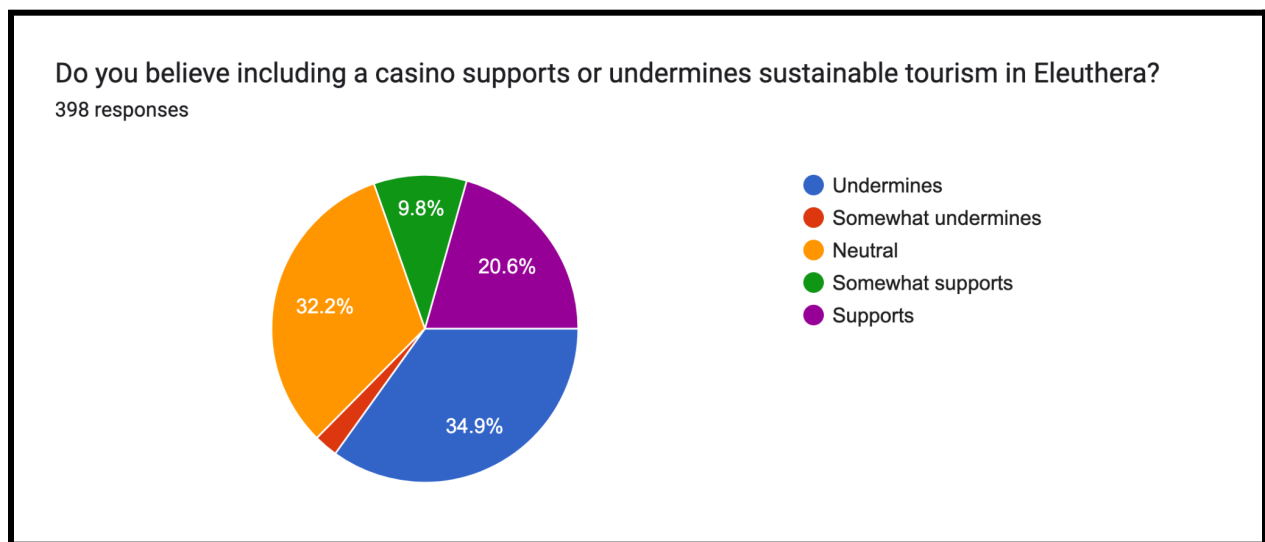


Figure 2.8, Casino impacts on sustainable tourism

The distribution of responses was as follows: 34.9% of respondents believed a casino undermines sustainable tourism in Eleuthera, 2.3% felt it somewhat undermines it, 32.4% took a neutral position, 9.6% felt it somewhat supports sustainable tourism, and 20.8% believed it supports it. The undermines category represented the largest response, followed by the neutral position at 32.4%, reflecting a large portion of the community that either had not formed a view or felt the relationship between a casino and sustainable tourism was not straightforward. The somewhat undermines category at 2.3% was the smallest response, suggesting that those with a negative view of the casino's tourism implications held that position with little reservation.

Participants were asked to assess the likelihood that the development would meaningfully alter the appearance, historic character and day to day feel of Governor's Harbour.

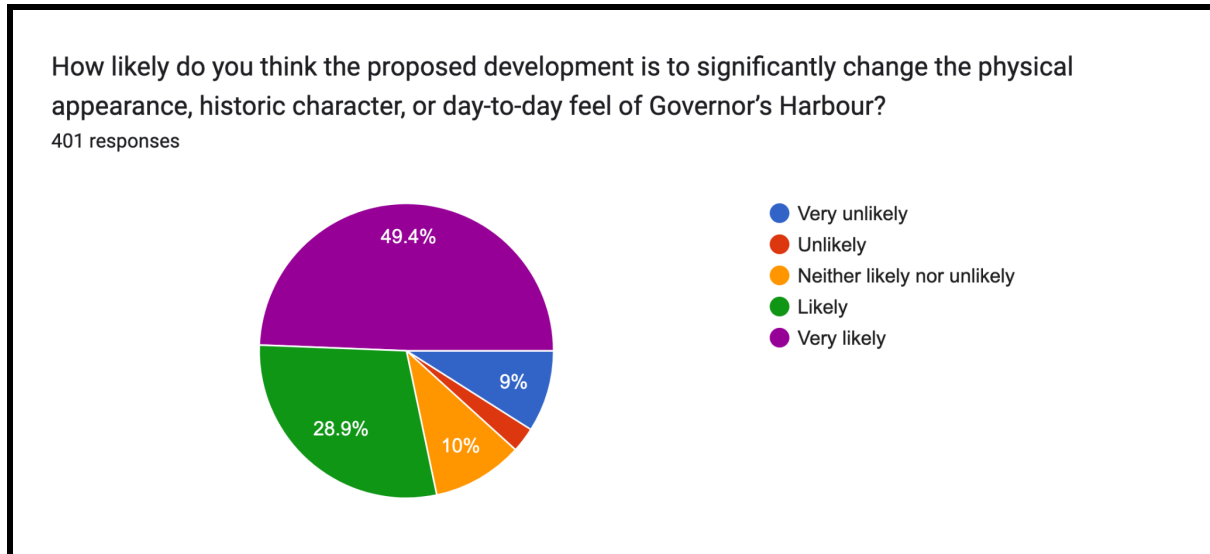


Figure 2.9, Changes in characteristics of Governor's Harbour

The distribution of responses was as follows: 49.4% of respondents said it was very likely, 28.9% said likely, 10% (40) neither likely nor unlikely, 2.8% unlikely, and 9% very unlikely. The very likely category alone at 49.4% reflects the view that the proposed development would fundamentally alter the community it sits within.

This finding shows the strong sentiment that the development is likely to change Governor's Harbour's historic character, appearance, and day-to-day feel.

Following this, respondents were asked to describe who they believe is leading and financing the project.

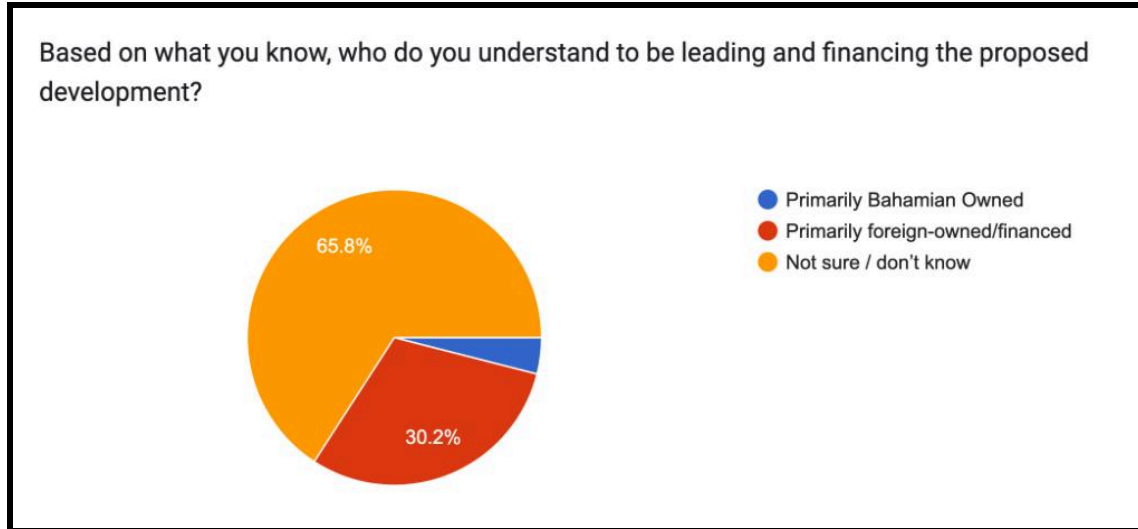


Figure 3.0, Understandings of leaders and financiers of the proposed development

A majority of respondents (65.8%) indicated that they were unsure or did not know who is leading or financing the project. A further 30.2% believed the project to be primarily foreign-owned or financed, while only 4% identified it as primarily Bahamian-owned. These findings suggest limited clarity among respondents regarding the ownership and financial structure of the development.

Respondents were asked to what extent they believe that the proposed project will have long-term economic benefits for Eleutherans.

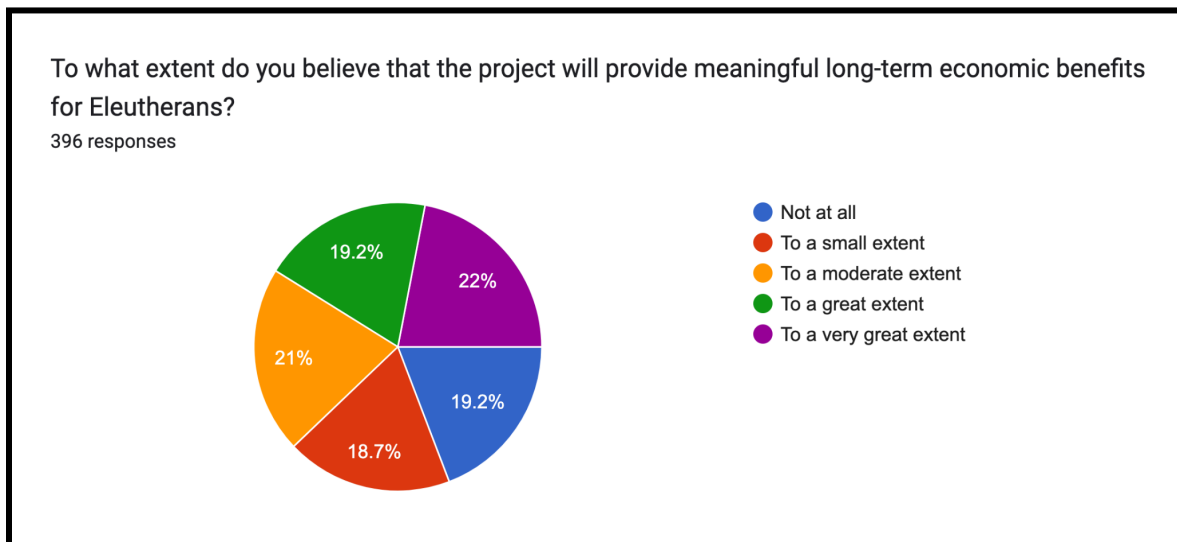


Figure 3.1, Extent of meaningful long term economic benefits for Eleutherans

The near-equal spread across all five options reflects a community that is divided about the meaningful long-term economic benefits for Eleutherans.

When asked about levels of concern regarding the potential impact of the development on public land and coastal access, responses reflected a range of views across the community.

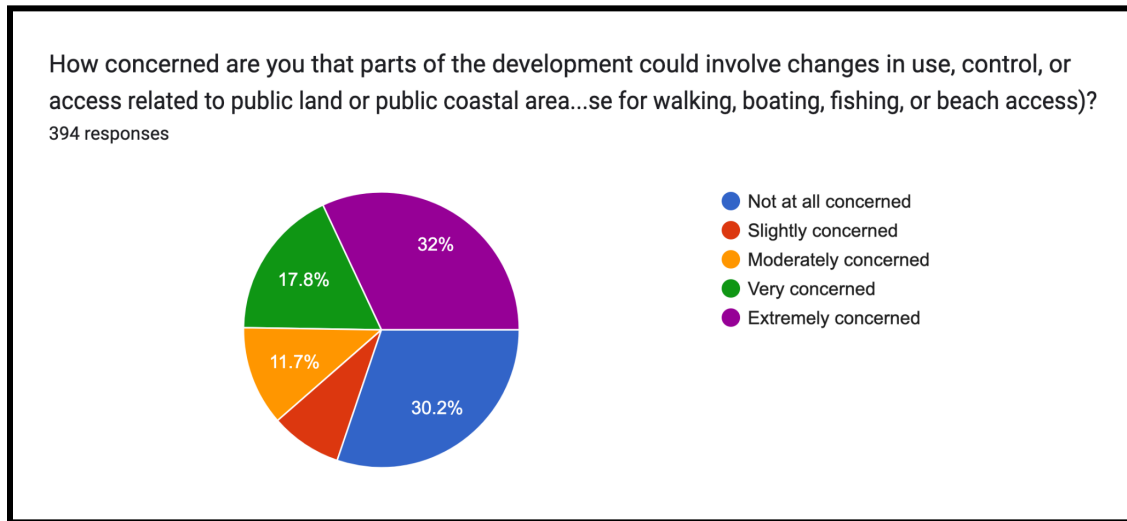


Figure 3.2, Development impact on public land or coastal areas

The distribution shows a pattern observed in other sections of the survey, where respondents were more likely to express either higher or lower levels of concern, with comparatively fewer selecting moderate positions.

A notable proportion of respondents (32%) indicated that they were extremely concerned about potential impacts on public land and coastal access, while 30.2% reported no concern. The remaining responses were distributed across varying levels of concern.

Although this question may benefit from more specific attention to each area of impact, public land and coastal access are noted as important considerations in Eleuthera, where beaches, fishing grounds, and coastal pathways are closely connected to cultural practices, livelihoods, and everyday use. The variation in responses may reflect differing perspectives on the potential risks and benefits of development of each of the noted areas of impact, as well as varying levels of familiarity with similar developments in The Bahamas and on Eleuthera.

Overall, the findings suggest a community with mixed but often strongly held views on this issue, highlighting it as an area of importance for further engagement and information-sharing.

A follow-up qualitative question asked respondents to identify which beaches or communities were most important to them. A large number of responses emphasized that all beaches and communities were equally valued. Common phrases such as **“all of them,” “every beach,” “the whole island,”** and **“all the areas”** appeared frequently, suggesting a broad and inclusive sense of connection to Eleuthera’s coastline rather than concern focused on a single location.

French Leave Beach in Governor’s Harbour was among the most frequently mentioned specific sites. Its proximity to the proposed development appears to have made it a point of reference for some respondents, including those who expressed concern about future access and environmental changes. One respondent noted, **“French Leave Beach... I’m concerned about the green space and loss of plants as well.”**

Other locations cited included Ten Bay Beach, Cocodimama, and Receivers Beach. These sites, spanning central Eleuthera, reflect the geographic range of coastal areas that residents associate with shared use and cultural value.

Given that the proposed development is centered in Governor’s Harbour, several responses referenced that community and nearby coastal areas, including the bayfront, Cupid’s Cay, and the beach near the police station. Some respondents highlighted the importance of maintaining access to these areas, with one stating **“Protect Governor’s Harbour,”** and another noting concern about **“paths that have beach access in Governor’s Harbour.”**

Overall, the qualitative responses indicate a strong, island-wide attachment to coastal spaces, alongside more localized concerns related to access and potential changes in areas closest to the proposed development.

Participants were then asked about perceived impacts on local businesses and small tourism operators:

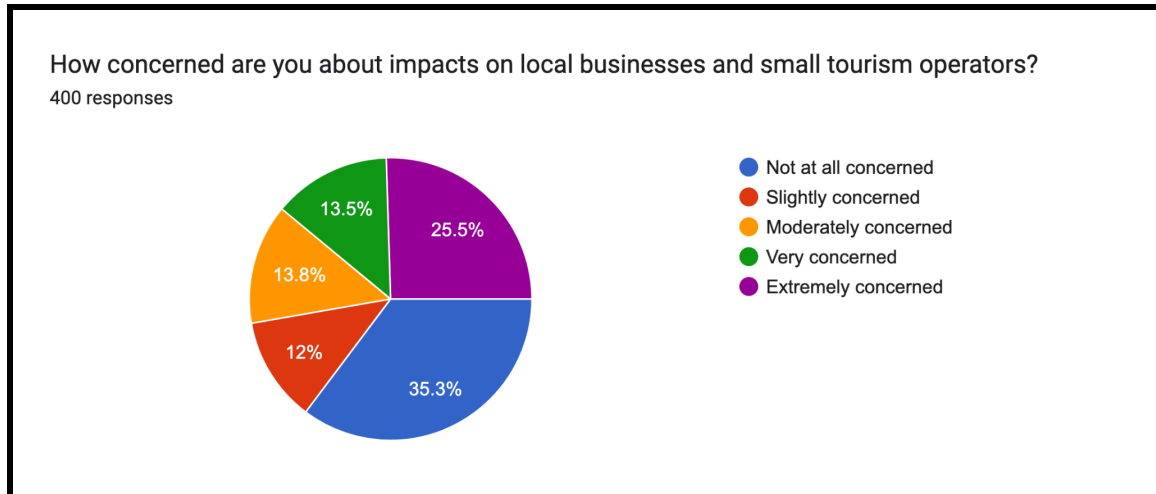


Figure 3.3, Impact on local businesses and small tourism operators

The "not at all" category received the largest amount of responses, followed by the "extremely concerned" category. This relatively even distribution across the middle ground is different compared to other concern questions in the survey, where middle categories tended to attract fewer responses.

Broader Perspectives on Environment and Development

The final section of the survey invited respondents to step back from the specific details of the proposed development and consider two broader questions: the importance of a healthy environment to Eleuthera's economy and personal livelihoods, and the factors decision-makers should weigh when determining whether to approve, modify, or reject developments of this nature.

This section serves as a synthesis of the survey findings, bringing together environmental priorities, economic considerations, governance expectations, and cultural values. The responses, both quantitative and qualitative, provide insight into how residents frame responsible development and what they consider most important for the island's future.

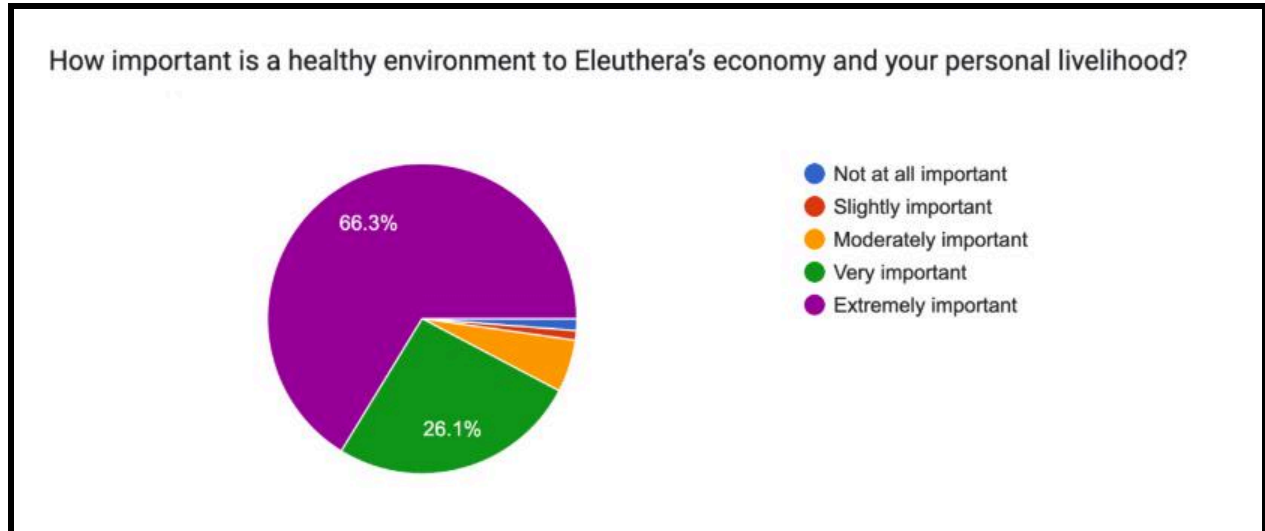


Figure 3.4, Importance of a healthy environment

Survey results indicate a strong consensus on the importance of environmental health. A majority of respondents (66.3%) identified a healthy environment as extremely important. When combined with those who selected very important, 92.3% of respondents indicated that environmental health is central to both Eleuthera's economy and their personal livelihoods. The remaining responses (7.7%) were distributed across lower levels of importance, with only 2.2% indicating that it is not at all or only slightly important.

These findings highlight the central role that environmental conditions play in shaping both economic activity and daily life in Eleuthera. Key sectors such as tourism, fishing, and marine-based activities are closely linked to the condition of natural resources, including coastal waters, beaches, and marine ecosystems. As such, perceptions of environmental importance appear to reflect both economic considerations and lived experience.

Overall, the results suggest a high level of alignment among respondents regarding the significance of environmental health, underscoring its relevance in considerations of future development.

The final open-ended question invited respondents to describe what should guide development decisions in Eleuthera. These responses represent direct community input to decision-makers, and several consistent themes emerged.

A central and recurring priority was that development must deliver meaningful benefits to Bahamians, not only through employment, but through ownership, leadership, and long-term participation. As one respondent stated, **"How are we benefiting? How do Bahamians benefit from these deals? Not just as a simple worker but as owners. We are still not being given the opportunity for Bahamians to be owners."** Another noted: **"Anything like this needs to make sure the people benefit. I want whatever they do that Eleutherans be involved, and it's a chance for Bahamians to succeed and not just foreigners."** This perspective was often expressed in concrete terms, including calls for structured opportunities: **"Majority contracts need to be Bahamians. Lots of projects say they want Bahamians but they hire foreigners,"** and **"I want to see a change where 70 to 80 percent of contracts go to Bahamians."** Clearly, a respondent stated: **I am very strong on Bahamians first. Anything that comes into our country, we should benefit more than developers. The development is always good but Bahamians need to be more involved and have more shares and input into the development that's going on in Eleuthera. It should be Bahamian centric".**

Environmental protection was another consistently raised concern. Respondents highlighted potential impacts on marine ecosystems, land use, and long-term sustainability. As one respondent shared, **"The only major factor should be how any development affects our ecosystem."** Another elaborated: **"Please maintain the delicate balance of the environment, development of the people, and the commitment to ensuring we maintain the historical and ecological balance over the long term. Don't just say you'll do a community centre and drop it."** Some respondents referenced observable changes: **"I feel like there's been destruction to the water. We have been coming here for ten years and sea life has disappeared. I don't want to see that happen to the land as well."**

The importance of early and meaningful community engagement was also emphasized. Respondents consistently expressed that consultation should occur before decisions are made. **"I want them to come here before they get approval to do these things,"** said one respondent. Another noted, **"We don't need a sham meeting where what you say doesn't count because the deal is already done. Engage first."** Some advocated for more formal mechanisms of participation: **"They need a community vote, they need input from us, then a final decision."** Concerns were also raised about the perceived effectiveness of current consultation processes: **"All the developments take more than they give. It's a smoke screen. They say they come to improve us but they don't. Our leaders make pacts with**

these people and agree to whatever, then they come to the community under the guise that they want our opinions. They honestly aren't serious. Don't come to me after you've done the deal and then say you're concerned. You aren't."

Infrastructure capacity emerged as another key consideration. Respondents noted that existing systems, including utilities, healthcare, and transportation, are already under strain and may not be able to support large-scale development without investment and planning. **"With our infrastructure, water and light are problems. If you're coming, you need to help,"** said one respondent. Another added: **"Electricity and water aren't reliable, so any big project has to take that into account. We already have enough problems with a weak and old system. Everything has to move together or it can't sustain a positive impact for tourists and locals."** Healthcare concerns were also raised: **"When you do this, you put a strain on the healthcare system. There's a new clinic coming here, so perhaps the developer supports that or builds their own clinic so you don't strain us with the scale of your development."** Road safety was another issue: **"Fix the roads. There's a pothole that claimed two young Eleutherans' lives because they refuse to fix the road."**

The protection of public land and guaranteed beach access for Bahamians was identified as a critical issue. **"Public land should be prioritized for Bahamians, not foreign developers,"** said one respondent. Another reflected on personal experience: **"All my life I could walk from one end of the sea to another and now I can't. How did the sea become private property? How did the rocks become private property? That's my biggest problem."** Others referenced specific examples: **"Kemp's Creek, where my brothers fish, it's now blocked off. When they walk on the rocks, sometimes foreigners run them from the rocks. They tell them it's their property, that they can't fish here. People are building on the rocks and closing in the mangroves. Natives wouldn't be able to go through. Eleuthera means freedom. Free at all times, anywhere on my island."** Respondents emphasized the need for enforceable protections: **"The government needs to make sure that protecting the beaches is in the terms of agreement."**

Accountability was a final and consistent theme. Respondents highlighted the importance of ensuring that commitments made during the development process are upheld over time. **"Making sure what they say is actually executed, it's easy to say and not do it,"** said one respondent. Another reflected: **"I'm passionate about the people responsible holding developers to their word, they switch up. When it comes to beach access the agreements**

are forgotten. Everything done with developments, they say natives can access beaches but when the development is up and running, they cut it off." Concerns about follow-through were also expressed more broadly: **"That's how the government loves us, no action. If I say I love you, you can say, well, so-and-so loves me, but if I don't show you then it's just a word."** Trust in institutions was also raised directly: **"I don't trust them, because it won't be the first or last time the government tricks us and sells our rights for a bowl of soup,"** said one respondent.

At the same time, some respondents expressed cautious optimism paired with clear expectations. **"Put their foot on the investor's neck about giving back to the community. Something we can see. Year after year of making billions, they give us crumbs,"** said one respondent. Another shared: **"We have no choice but to trust you, keep that in mind. We have no choice but to trust you, and you are making questionable choices."** One respondent summarized the long-term perspective: **"They come in, make money, and leave our island spoiled where no one else can come. We are just left here."**

Together, these responses reflect a community that is not opposed to development but one that is clear about the conditions under which development should proceed, grounded in transparency, inclusion, environmental stewardship, and tangible benefits for Bahamians.

Conclusion

Eleuthera residents place extraordinary value on their environment, with near unanimity. An overwhelming 92.3% regard a healthy environment as very or extremely important to both their livelihoods and the local economy. At the same time, residents express clear concern about the potential impacts of large-scale development on the island's natural resources, infrastructure, cultural identity, and access to the beaches and coastal areas that define daily life. Views on economic benefit are nuanced and considered. While perspectives vary, there is a strong preference for development models that are mixed or locally rooted rather than dominated by large, resort-scale operators. Notably, 86% of respondents identify meaningful Bahamian ownership, leadership, and contracting opportunities as very or extremely important.

It is important to emphasise that these findings do not constitute a judgment on the Jacobs Resort Development or its proponents. At the time of the survey, the full scope of the project had not been directly presented to residents. Many of the concerns identified in this report, related to

environmental safeguards, employment practices, beach access, and the inclusion of a casino are issues that can be addressed through a transparent and inclusive development process. The survey does not presume otherwise.

The most consequential insight from this data extends beyond any single project. It points to the absence, or limited enforcement, of a consistent framework that ensures Bahamian citizens can access timely, reliable information about decisions that directly affect their lives, land, and livelihoods. Across the survey, a consistent theme emerged: many residents reported not knowing what was being proposed, who was responsible, what had been approved, or how to access clear and verified information. Nearly three-quarters (74.6%) of respondents felt that opportunities to learn about and provide input on developments in Eleuthera had been insufficient. Trust in information provided by both developers and government agencies was correspondingly low. Importantly, these responses do not reflect opposition to development itself; rather, they underscore that how development is undertaken is just as important as whether it proceeds.

Qualitative feedback further highlights patterns that warrant attention. Residents described consultations occurring after key decisions had already been made, input that did not appear to influence outcomes, and early commitments that were not consistently maintained throughout the development process. Together, these experiences point to the need for stronger transparency, clearer processes, and mechanisms that ensure community input is both meaningfully considered and, where commitments are made, upheld with accountability.

The 401 residents who participated in this survey offered a thoughtful and diverse set of perspectives. These include concerns about long-term community wellbeing, the preservation of natural and cultural assets, and a deep sense of connection to what makes Eleuthera unique. At the same time, many respondents recognised the potential benefits of well-managed development. Across these perspectives, a consistent message emerges: residents want to be informed, included, and meaningfully engaged in shaping decisions about the future of the communities and landscapes they call home.

Annex 1 - Methodology

Survey Development and Review Process

The survey instrument and field approach were designed and validated through a three-phase development and review process to ensure objectivity, clarity, and neutrality:

Phase I

ORG prepared an initial draft based on established frameworks for community engagement and international environmental and social governance (ESG) standards.

Phase II

The draft was reviewed internally and externally for neutrality, accessibility, and cultural appropriateness.

Phase III

The survey was pilot-tested, and revisions were made to question wording, sequencing, and structure to avoid leading phrasing or bias.

Each phase focused on improving objectivity, minimizing potential for influence, and ensuring the survey could accurately capture diverse community views on development and environmental management.

Transparency and Independence Commitment

This project was conducted under ORG's Transparency and Independence Commitment, which was a non-negotiable precondition of ORG's participation, as a nonpartisan, apolitical, and independent registered Bahamian not-for-profit dedicated to inclusive, transparent, and accountable decision-making, and of any funding agreement.

In this engagement, funded by Leon Levy Foundation facilitated by ONE Consultants. ORG's role was to design, facilitate, and report on community engagement in a manner that ensured all voices were heard and accurately represented, without bias, influence, or endorsement.

ORG designed and led all survey and engagement methodologies. Leon Levy Foundation staff and ONE consultants could provide factual context but had no authority to edit or influence the survey structure, interpretation, or final report.

Findings are to be presented exactly as collected, whether or not they align with perspectives of developers of government. The full methodology is to be published, and the final report released publicly by ORG.

Both the funding agency and the community are to receive the same version of the report simultaneously. No party is to receive partial access.

Responses are confidential and reported in aggregate. Enumerators did not engage in advocacy or make assurances regarding the project.

ORG's facilitation does not imply endorsement of either Leon Levy Foundation or Jacobs Resort Development's development plans or advocacy positions.

This commitment, co-signed by both ORG and Leon Levy Foundation, was required under ORG's Research Ethics and Independence Policy as a condition of engagement.

Ethical Oversight

The project complied fully with the ORG Research Ethics and Independence Policy, and UNDP Ethical Guidelines for Data Collection and Use (2021).

Although not legally subject to institutional review, ORG voluntarily applied equivalent standards of:

- Respect for Persons: informed, voluntary participation;
- Beneficence: minimizing risk and protecting data;
- Justice: ensuring equitable representation across settlements and demographics.

Field Team and Supervision

The survey was carried out by two ORG staff members, a Senior Project Manager, experienced in stakeholder engagement, community-based surveys, and participatory consultation throughout The Bahamas and a Project Assistant.

The fieldwork was directly supervised by ORG's Executive Director, who oversaw methodological integrity, neutrality, and adherence to the organization's research and transparency policies.

Enumerator Field Protocol

Enumerators were required to read all prompts verbatim, avoid interpretive comments, and refrain from sharing opinions or project information beyond the standardized context sheet.

Fieldwork occurred between February 17- March 5, 2026, with supervisory check-ins and quality control of completed forms.

Informed Consent and Participant Protection

Before each interview, enumerators read the following consent statement:

"The Organization for Responsible Governance (ORG) is conducting this survey as an independent and non-partisan organization to understand community views in Eleuthera regarding a large-scale development proposal in and around Governor's Harbour. The project could include a resort, large homes, a marina, a golf course, and a casino, with new or relocated roads across a large "sea-to-sea" footprint, impact on beach access and the use of public land,

including on Cupid's Cay. Your responses are anonymous. Results will be summarized to objectively reflect public sentiment and inform decision-making processes."

Verbal consent was obtained from all participants. No minors were interviewed. Interviews were postponed if respondents appeared inebriated or distressed.

Responses were anonymized during entry and stored on encrypted, access-controlled servers. Only ORG's research team had access to identifiable field logs.

Data Processing and Analysis

Quantitative responses were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics in Microsoft Excel. Frequencies, percentages, and margins of error were calculated for all items.

Qualitative responses were thematically analyzed.

Representative quotes were chosen to illustrate each domain.

Funding and Independence Disclosure

The Eleuthera Stakeholder Analysis was funded by the Leon Levy Foundation. Funding was explicitly contingent upon full adherence to ORG's Transparency and Independence Commitment and Research Ethics and Policy.

The Leon Levy Foundation provided logistical support only and had no role in:

The selection or training of enumerators

The analysis or interpretation of findings; or

The drafting or approval of this report.

Annex 2 - Survey Tool

The complete survey instrument used for data collection is available at the following link:

[ORG Eleuthera Survey](#)

This tool includes all quantitative and qualitative questions administered to residents during the walkabout survey.

Annex 3 - Survey Responses

The full dataset of survey responses can be accessed at the following link:

[ORG Eleuthera Survey Responses](#)

This includes anonymized quantitative and qualitative responses collected during the study.

Annex 4 - Full Familiarity vs Non Familiarity Analysis

The full dataset of disaggregated survey responses can be accessed at the following link:
[Disaggregated survey responses based on familiarity](#)

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