

**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>

THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY SURVEY<sup>TM</sup>



# Results for Alleghan County, MI

October 13, 2022



## Civic Communication & Analytics Platform

Smarter, better connected communities. A civic surveying, policy polling, and constituent communication tech platform.



## Advanced Survey Science & Performance Analytics

Data insights to help communities move forward. The premiere provider of professional civic surveys and performance benchmarking analyses.

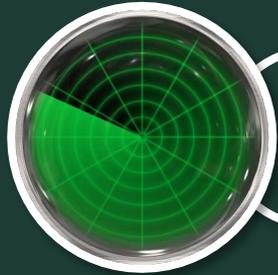
Questions about our product?

Visit [www.polco.us](http://www.polco.us) to learn more

Exclusive partners of:



# Role of Resident Surveys in Local Governance



Monitor trends in resident opinion



Measure government performance



Inform budget, land use, strategic planning decisions



Benchmark service ratings

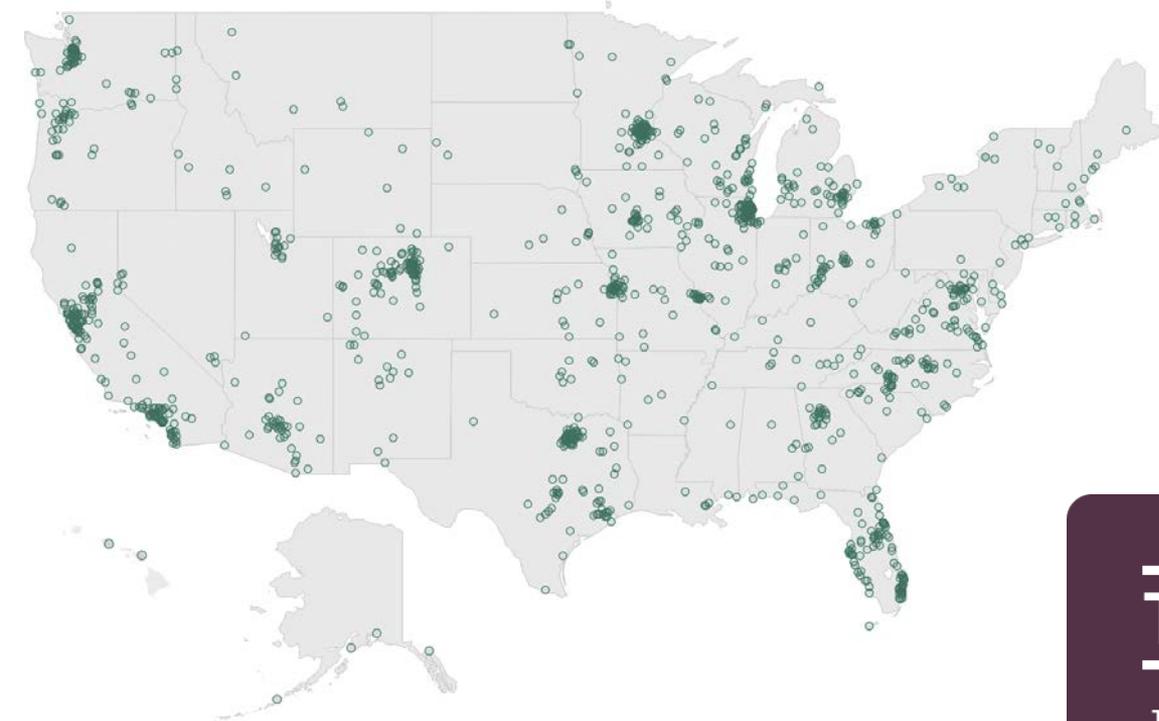


# The National Community Survey™ in Allegan County

## The NCS™ for Allegan County, MI

- Second time conducting The NCS (previous survey in 2019)
- Survey conducted from June 13, 2022 to August 1, 2022
- “Hybrid” mailing approach employed:
  - Probability-based sample of 2,800 households
  - 371 total responses received
  - 14% overall response rate
  - Non-probability, open-participation sample: 126 responses
- Results statistically weighted to reflect Allegan County overall
- 95% confidence interval with a +/- 5% margin of error

# National Benchmark Comparison Database



More than **500** comparison communities across the nation.

Representing the opinions of more than **50 million** residents.

**THE NCS**<sup>™</sup>

THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY SURVEY<sup>™</sup>

# Overview of Survey Results

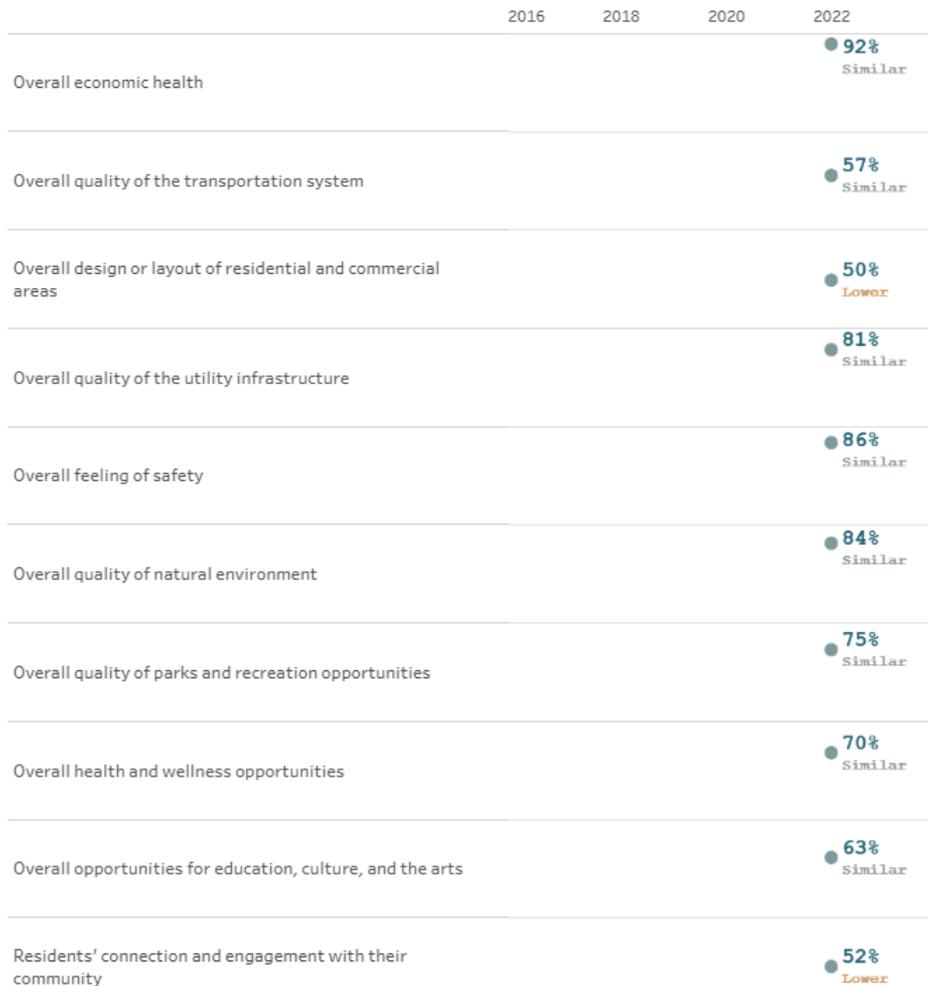
# Facets of Community Livability: Quality

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Allegan County as a whole.  
(% excellent or good)



# Facets of Community Livability: Importance

Please rate how important, if at all, you think it is for the Allegheny County community to focus on each of the following in the coming two years.  
(% essential or very important)



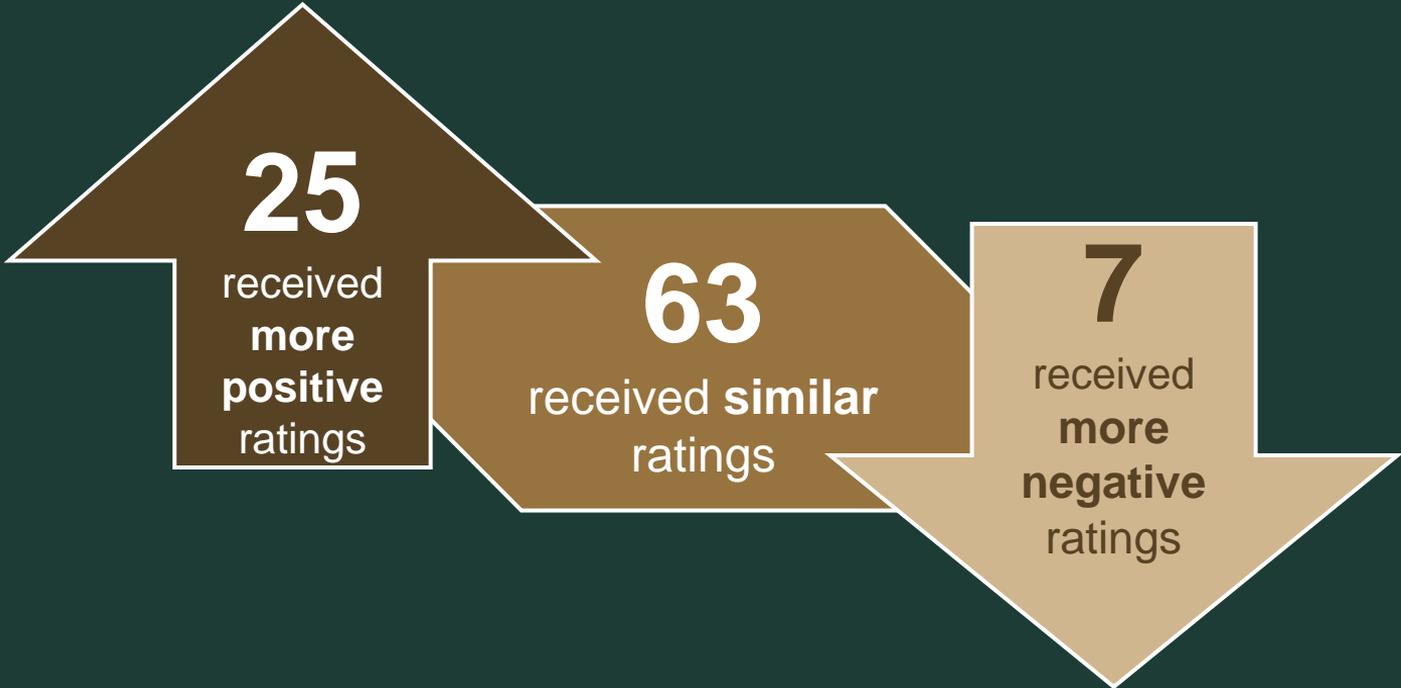
# Balancing Quality and Importance



# Comparisons to National Benchmarks



# Comparisons to 2019 County Data



# Survey Highlights

Key Finding #1:

**Residents appreciate Allegan County's natural environment and recreational opportunities**

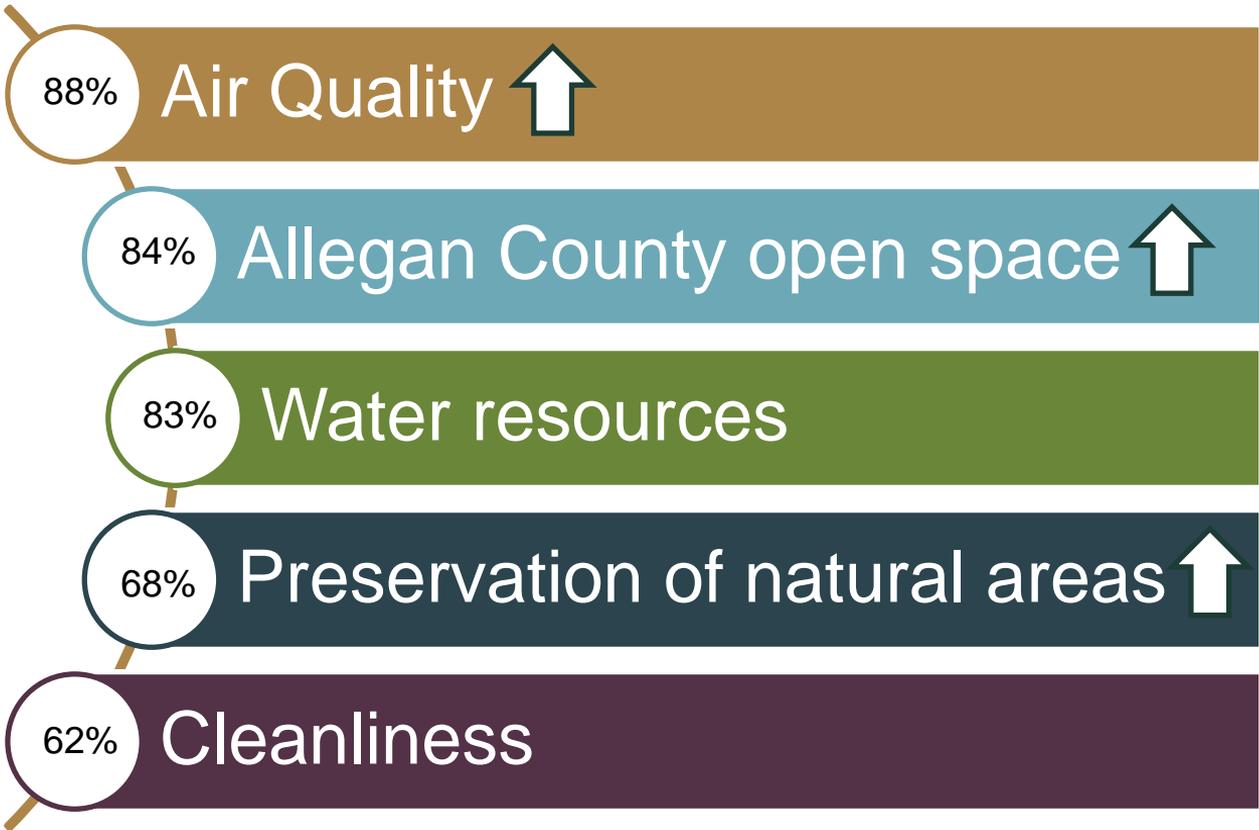
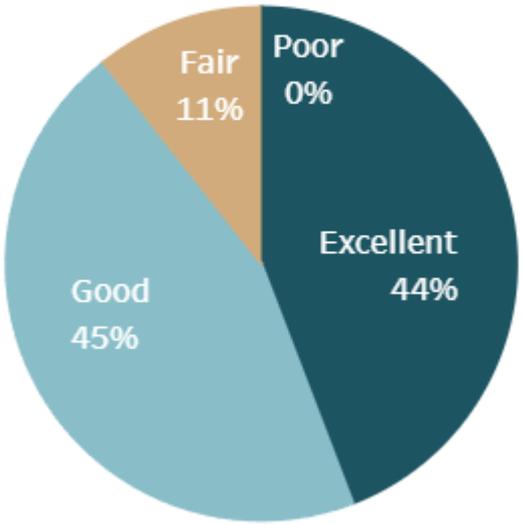


# Alleghan County's Natural Environment



Significant increase from 2019

Overall quality of natural environment in Alleghan County, 2022



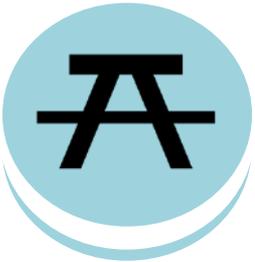
Percent excellent or good

# Parks and Recreation

↑ Increased from 2019



**75%**  
Recreational opportunities  
↑



**74%**  
Overall quality of parks and recreational opportunities



**60%**  
Availability of paths and walking trails  
↑



**55%**  
Recreation centers or facilities



**53%**  
Fitness opportunities  
↑



**50%**  
Recreation programs or classes

Percent excellent or good

Key Finding #2:

**While there have been small gains in the local economy, it remains an area of opportunity.**



# Alleghan County Economy



Increased from 2019



- Alleghan County as a place to visit
- Overall quality of business and service establishments
- Alleghan County as a place to work

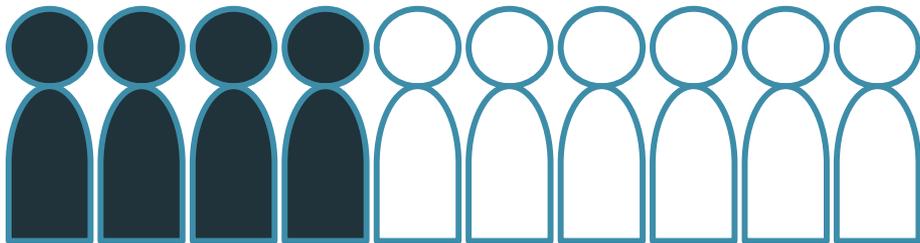
Percent excellent or good

- Variety of business and service establishments
- Economic development
- Cost of living



Percent excellent or good

# Allegan County Economy

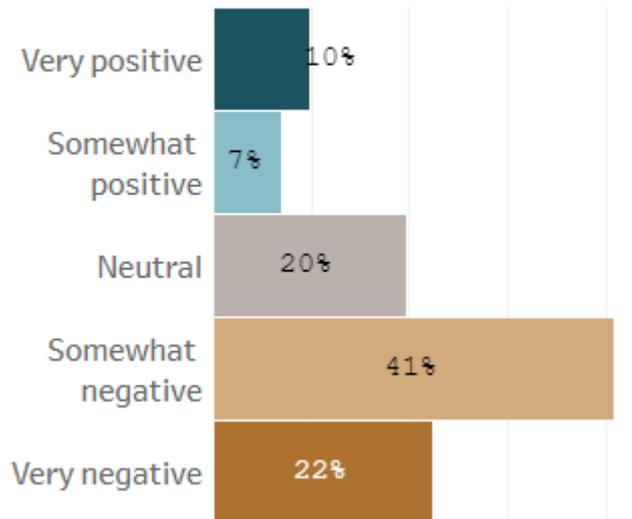


About

## 4 in 10

residents gave **excellent** or **good** ratings to the overall economic health of Allegan County

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:



Key Finding #3:

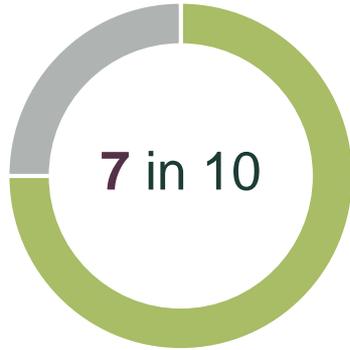
**Allegan County's  
engagement is on  
the rise, and  
residents feel a  
strong sense of  
community**



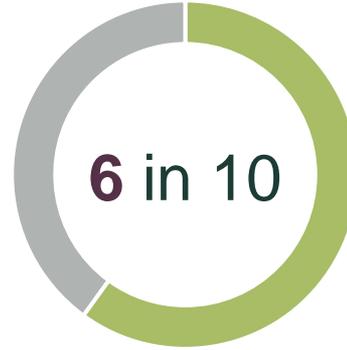
# Inclusivity and Engagement



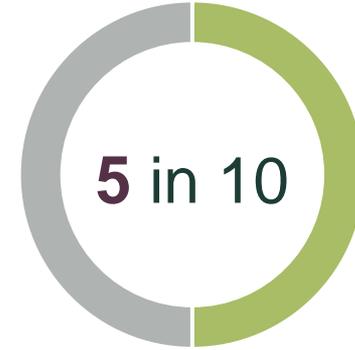
Increased from 2019



- A place to raise children
- A place to retire 
- Sense of community 



- Making all residents feel welcome
- Valuing/respecting residents from a diverse background
- Opportunities to volunteer



- Opportunities to participate in social events and activities 
- Neighborliness of residents
- Opportunities to participate in community matters 
- Resident's connection and engagement with their community

Percent excellent or good

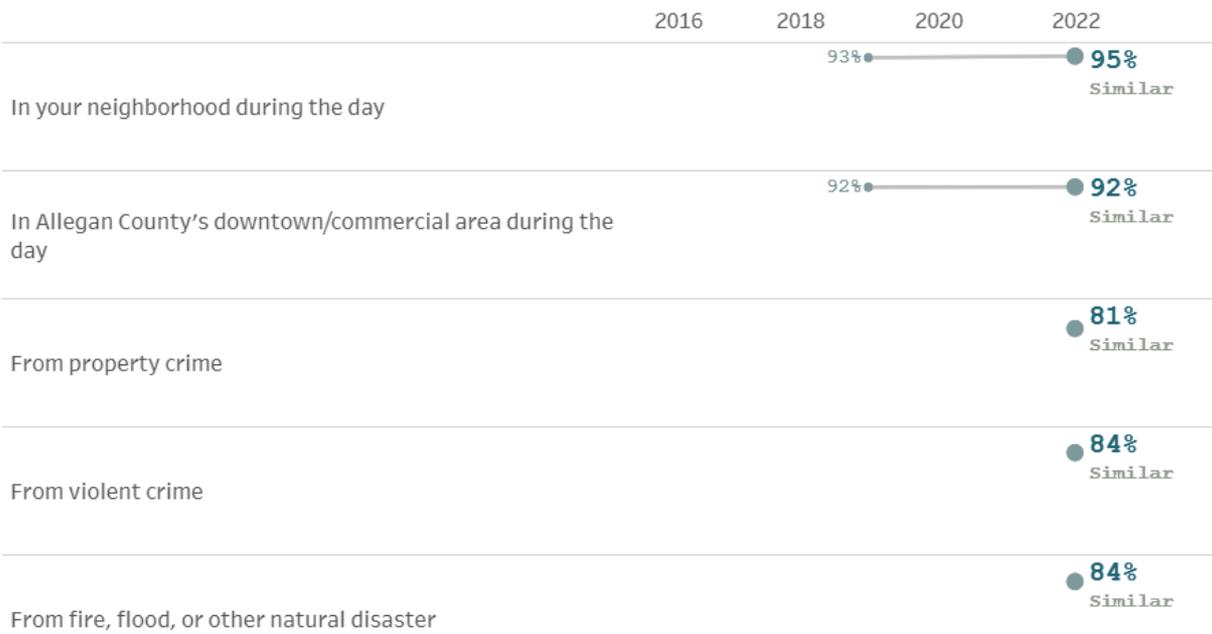
Key Finding #4:

**The majority of residents continue to perceive Allegan County as a safe place to live.**

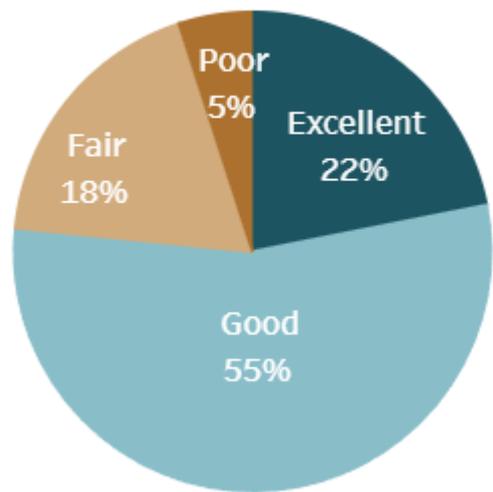


# Safety in Allegan County

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:  
(% very or somewhat safe)



Overall feeling of safety in Allegan County, 2022



Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Allegan County.  
(% excellent or good)



# Safety Services in Allegan County



**91%**

Fire services



**89%**

Ambulance/  
Emergency  
medical  
services



**76%**

Sheriff  
services



**75%**

Fire  
prevention  
and  
education



**67%**

Crime  
prevention



**66%**

Animal  
control

# Additional Special Topics

## 13. How much of a problem, if at all, do you think the following issues are in Allegan County?

	Major problem	Moderate problem	Minor problem	Not a problem	Don't know
Animal problems (animals running at large, barking dogs) .....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic problems (e.g., residential speeding, aggressive drivers).....	1	2	3	4	5
School safety (e.g., bullying, fighting, or weapons) .....	1	2	3	4	5
Domestic violence (adult).....	1	2	3	4	5
Sexual assault/rape (adult).....	1	2	3	4	5
Elder abuse and financial crimes against the elderly .....	1	2	3	4	5
Driving under the influence (i.e., alcohol or drugs) .....	1	2	3	4	5
Underage drinking .....	1	2	3	4	5
Drug abuse (e.g., manufacture, sale, or use of illegal/prescription drugs).....	1	2	3	4	5

## 14. Overall, how would you rate each of the following in Allegan County?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know
High quality, affordable infant care .....	1	2	3	4	5
High quality, affordable toddler care .....	1	2	3	4	5
High quality, affordable preschool care .....	1	2	3	4	5
Available childcare that meets my regular scheduling needs .....	1	2	3	4	5
Available childcare that meets my irregular scheduling needs (e.g., during school breaks or evenings/weekends).....	1	2	3	4	5
Assistance available to meet families with young children basic needs 0-5 years old for those who need it (e.g., diapers, formula, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5
Services available to support families with young children 0-5 years old (e.g., Early-on, Headstart, 20 Hands, Mental Health).....	1	2	3	4	5

## 15. Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following to be for obtaining information about the County government and its activities, events and services:

	Major source	Minor source	Not a source
County Meeting online (Zoom or YouTube).....	1	2	3
Local newspapers.....	1	2	3
County website (allegancounty.org) .....	1	2	3
County email notifications.....	1	2	3
Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) .....	1	2	3
County communications via U.S. mail.....	1	2	3
Talking with County officials or County staff, or attending public meetings .....	1	2	3
Word of mouth .....	1	2	3

# Additional Special Topics

16. If you had a choice, which housing option would you prefer? Then, please tell us which is your current housing situation.

	Strongly prefer	Somewhat prefer	Do not prefer	Current situation
Own a house.....	1	2	3	<input type="radio"/>
Rent a house.....	1	2	3	<input type="radio"/>
Own a condominium.....	1	2	3	<input type="radio"/>
Rent an apartment.....	1	2	3	<input type="radio"/>
Own a mobile home.....	1	2	3	<input type="radio"/>
Rent a mobile home.....	1	2	3	<input type="radio"/>

17. If you had a choice, would you prefer to keep your current housing situation?

- No  Yes  Don't know

18. If you were considering a move within Allegan County, how much a barrier, if any, would each of the following be in your decision to move?

	Major barrier	Somewhat of barrier	Not a barrier	N/A
I can't find housing that is affordable in Allegan County.....	1	2	3	4
I can't find housing that is large enough/meets my sizing needs in Allegan County.....	1	2	3	4
Cost of moving (hiring movers, transport, etc.).....	1	2	3	4
I can't get out of my lease.....	1	2	3	4
I can't sell my house.....	1	2	3	4

19. Do you currently subscribe to internet at home?

- No (Skip to question 23)  Yes (Go to question 20, skip question 23)

20. If yes, please tell us how you access internet at home. (Select all that apply)

- Cable  DSL  Fiber  Satellite  Fixed wireless  Cell phone  Mobile Hotspot

21. If yes, please tell us how you use the internet at home. (Select all that apply)

- School  Work  Video conferencing  Tele-medicine  Home monitoring  Video/TV streaming

22. If yes, please tell us of any challenges with internet in your home: (Select all that apply)

- Cost  Reliability  Too slow  None

23. If no, please tell us why:

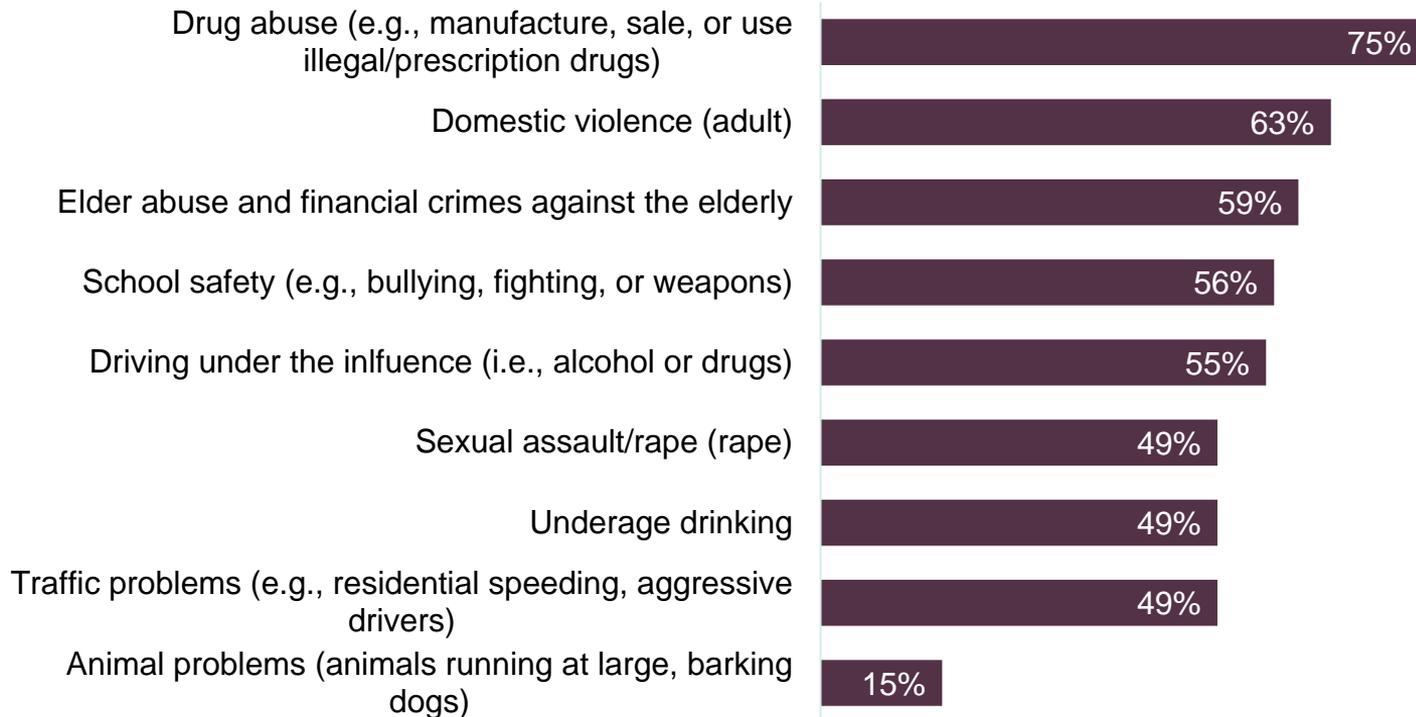
- Not available  Cost  Do not want it

24. In general, when considering recycling:

	Very	Somewhat	Not very	Not at all	Don't know
Is recycling and materials management important to you?.....	1	2	3	4	5
Are you satisfied with the recycling services available to you?.....	1	2	3	4	5
How convenient is it for you to dispose of household hazardous waste?.....	1	2	3	4	5
Are you willing to pay more for increased recycling services? (e.g., the ability to recycle a wider variety of materials, more frequent pickups, etc.)?.....	1	2	3	4	5

# City Priorities

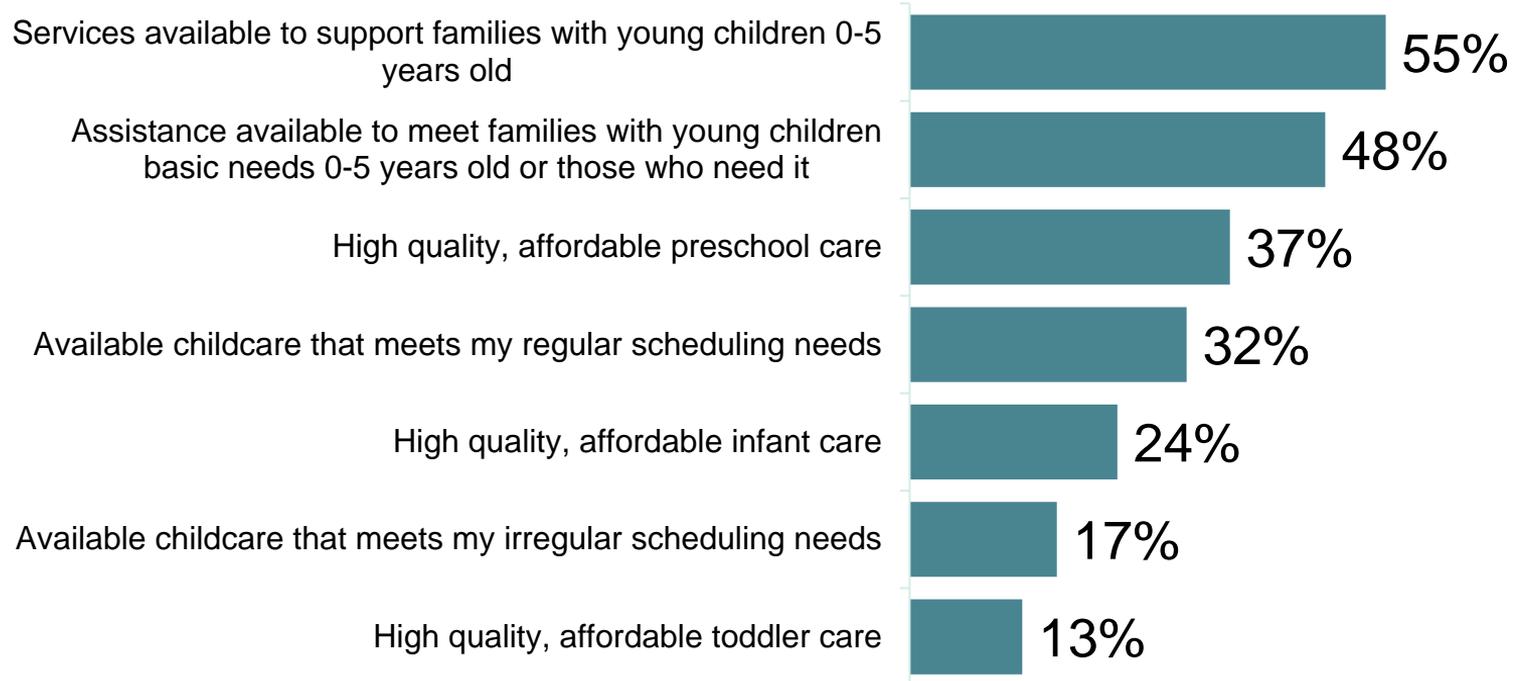
How much of a problem, if at all, do you think the following issues are in Allegan County?



Percent major or moderate problem

# Child Services

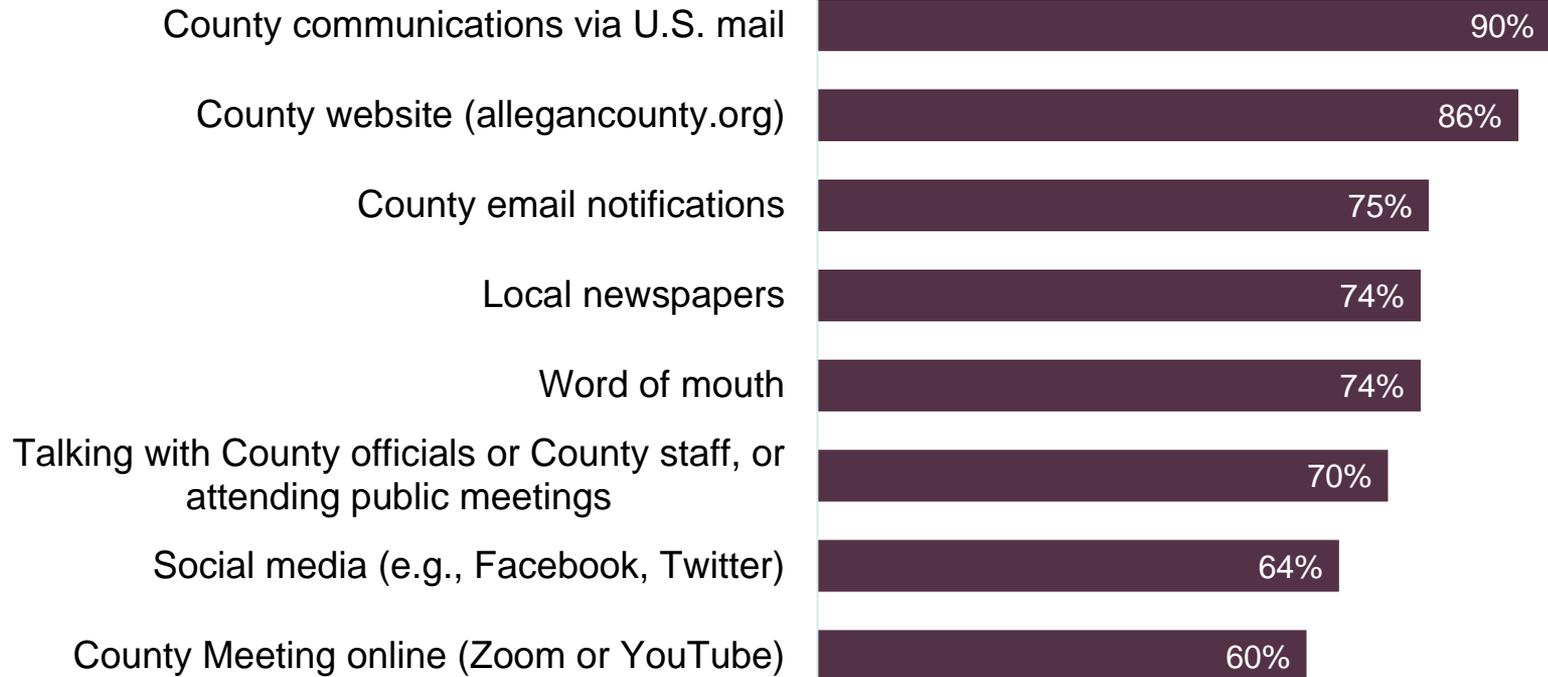
Overall, how would you rate each of the following in Allegan County?



Percent excellent or good

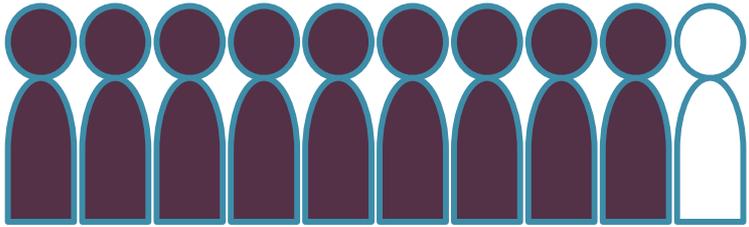
# Sources of Information

Please indicate how much of a source, if at all, you consider each of the following for obtaining information about the County government and its activities, events and services



Percent major or minor source

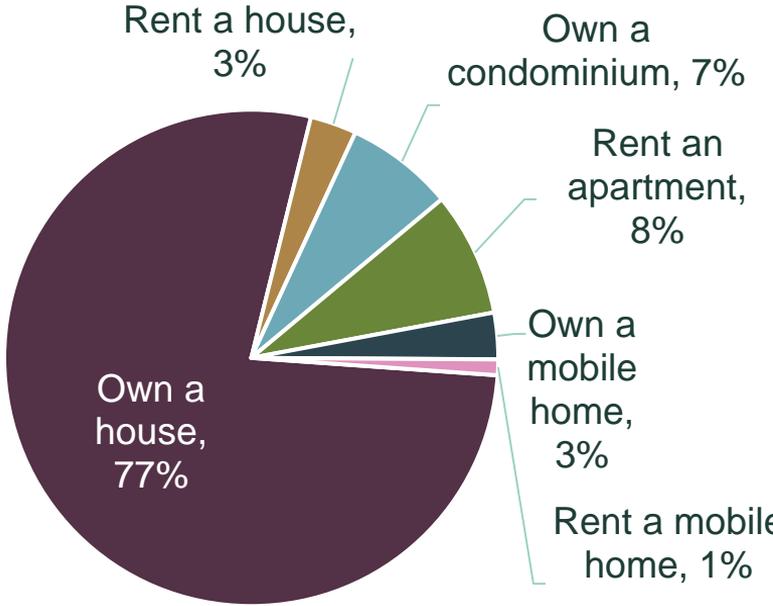
# Housing in Allegan County



About  
**9 in 10**

Strongly or somewhat prefer to own a house and keep their current housing situation

## Current housing situation

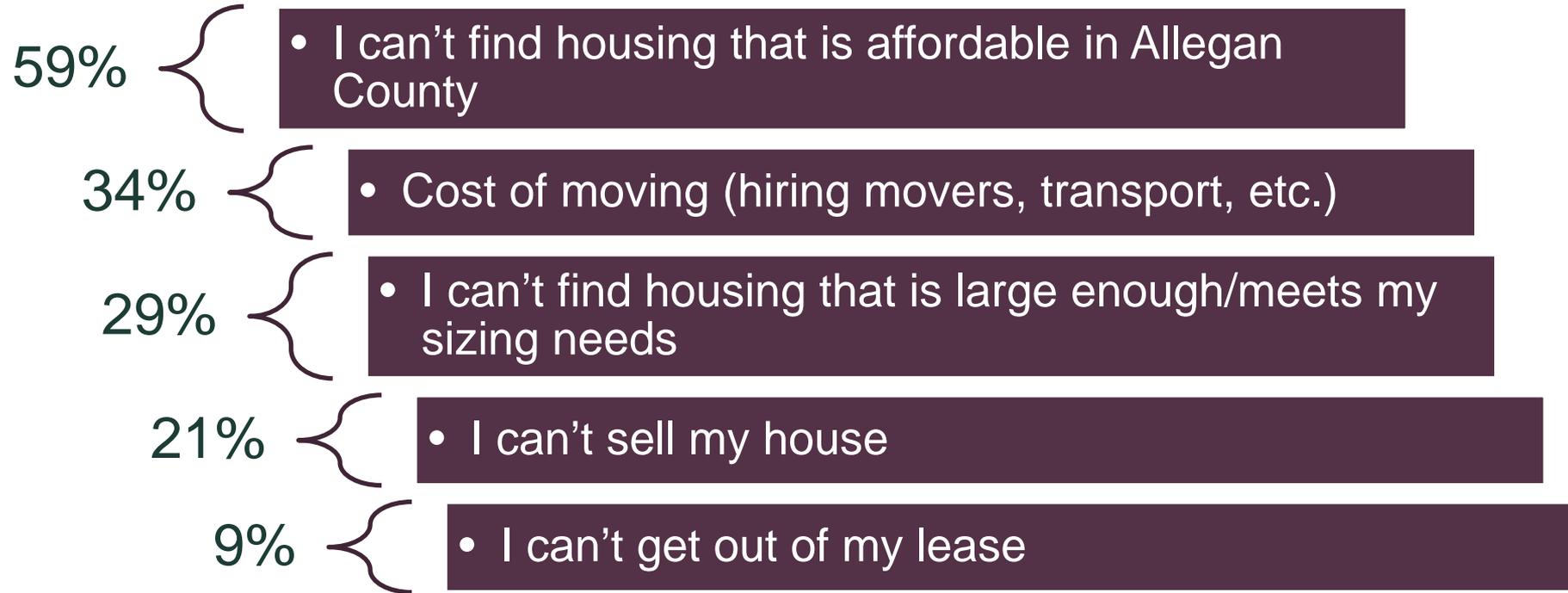


**about one-quarter of residents also prefer:**

- Owning a condominium
- Renting a house
- Owning a mobile home

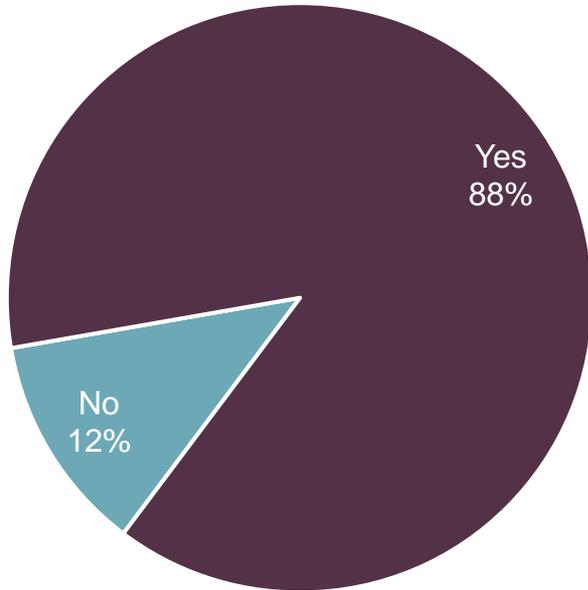
# Moving Barriers

If you were considering a move within Allegan County, how much of a barrier, if any, would each of the following be in your decision to move?

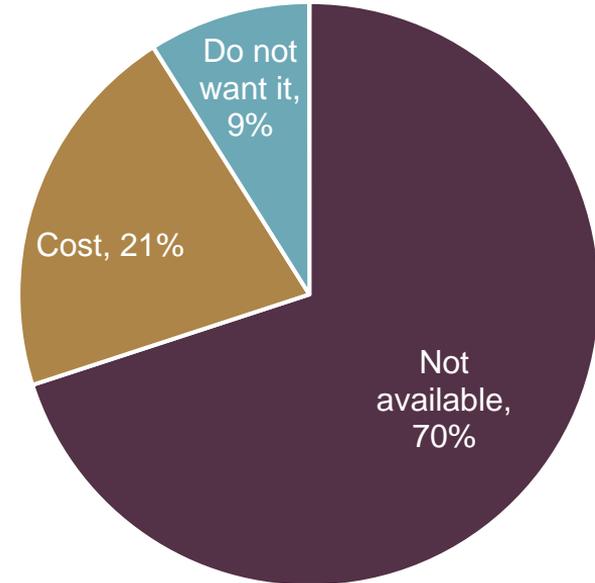


# Internet Access

Do you currently subscribe to the internet at home?

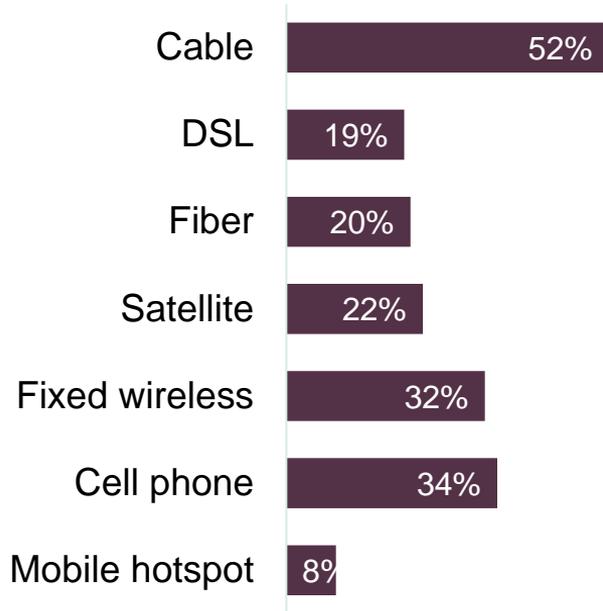


If no, please tell us why:

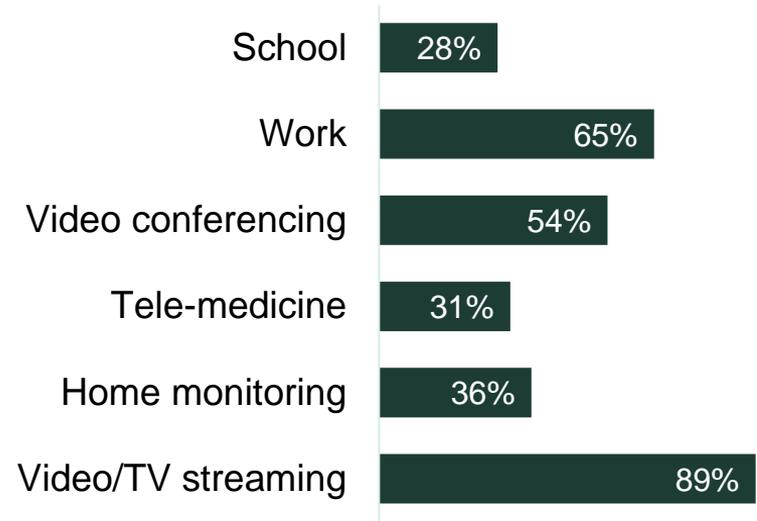


# Internet service and uses

If yes, how do you access internet at home.  
(Select all that apply)



If yes, please tell us how you use the internet at home (Select all that apply)

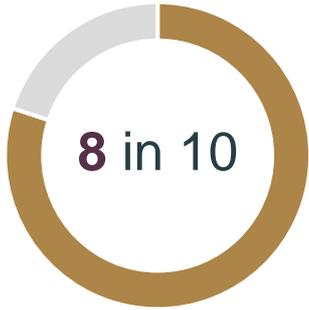


If yes, please tell us of any challenges with internet in your home: (Select all that apply)

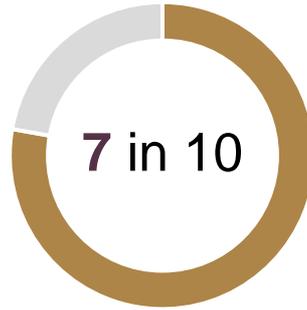


# Recycling

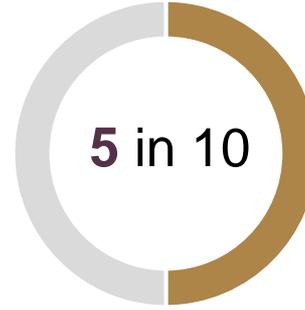
In general, when considering recycling:



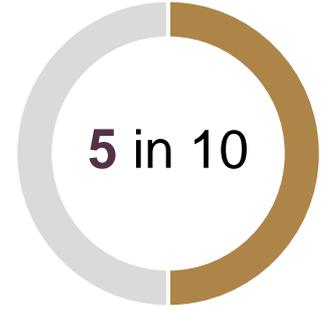
Is recycling and materials management important to you?



Are you satisfied with the recycling services available to you?



How convenient is it for you to dispose of household hazardous waste?



Are you willing to pay more for increased recycling services (e.g., the ability to recycle a wider variety of materials, more frequent pickups, etc.)?

# Conclusions

1. Residents appreciate Allegan County's natural environment and recreational opportunities.
2. While there have been small gains in the local economy, it remains an area of opportunity.
3. Allegan County's engagement is on the rise, and residents feel a strong sense of community.
4. The majority of residents continue to perceive Allegan County as a safe place to live.



## Next Steps

After analyzing the results, we recommend using Polco to dig deeper into the following topics, with smaller more focused surveys.

- **Public transportation use**
- **Community design and housing**
- **Child Care & early childhood education**
- **Health services and concerns**
- **Broadband internet access**
- **Recycling services**
- **Older Adult needs and services**

# Recommendations for Ongoing Engagement



- Community Appearance
- Health Services and Concerns
- Problems, Issues and Priorities
- Mobility: Transit Use
- Older Adult Needs
- Child Care & Youth Programs





# Continue Engagement Through The Policy Lifecycle

Don't let the community input and dialogue conclude with the survey.



## Identify Sentiment Baselines and Trends

- Conduct annual surveys, performance metric checks, and other broadly-scoped questionnaires for feedback
- Establish a baseline understanding and discover new trends in sentiment

*"How satisfied are you with (parks, roads, transportation, economic development)?"*

*"How would you rank our community as a place to live?"*



## Crowdsource Concerns, Brainstorm Ideas

- Seek community input through structured discussions that uncover new ideas and solutions
- Tap individual perspectives and wisdom often unheard at town halls

*"What sort of amenities would you like to see more of downtown?"*

*"What events would you like to see more of being held on a Friday Night?"*



## Prioritize Initiatives and Alternatives

- Engage your constituents on fund allocation exercises and participatory budgeting projects
- Determine community priority areas that may require additional focus

*"How would you allocate next year's budget across the following initiatives?"*

*"Which of the following options for an aquatic center would you prefer?"*



## Collect Verified Input on Specific Proposals

- Receive citable input on hot topic issues that consume open listening sessions
- Gauge final community sentiment before beginning on costly, controversial projects

*"Would you be willing to pay \$3.18 a month more for bi-weekly curbside recycling?"*

*"Do you believe we should be using pesticides on public property?"*



Identify opportunities for improvement. Engage along the way to cultivate buy-in. Demonstrate progress. Repeat.





# The Process To Deliver Great Outcomes



More participation



Good government



More informed participation



Data driven performance management

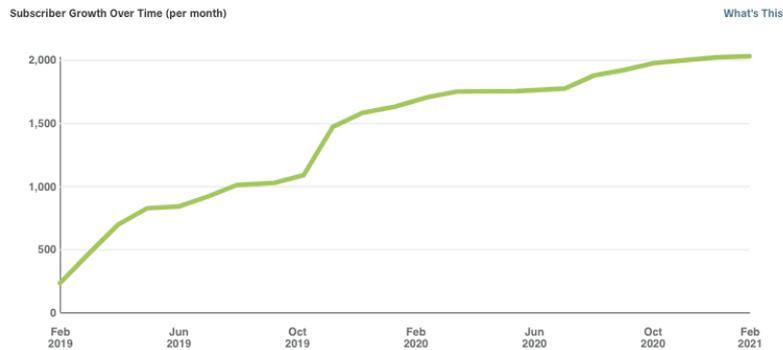
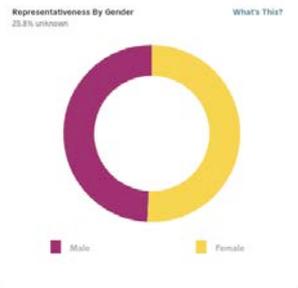
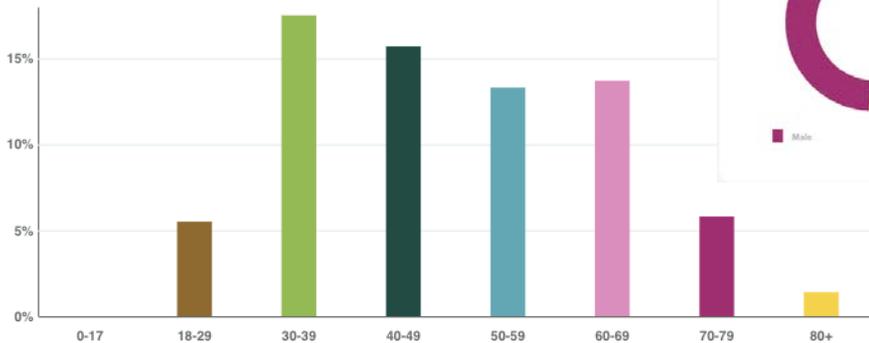


Better balanced participation



Save staff time and effort

Representativeness By Age  
27.2% unknown



Oshkosh ( View Profile | Edit Profile )

## Dashboard

- Dashboard
- Content
- Outreach
- Premium
- Superadmin
- Configuration

Subscriber Locations

County of Calumet, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, METI

Subscriber Growth Over Time

**Questions?**

# Thank you!

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