# MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Budget/Public Policy Session in Conference Center Room 267 on the 2nd floor of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center located at 600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte, North Carolina at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 2023.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** Chair George Dunlap, Vice-Chair Elaine Powell,

and Commissioners, Arthur Griffin, Mark Jerrell,

Leigh Altman, Vilma D. Leake, Laura J Meier,

and Susan Rodriguez-McDowell County Manager Dena R. Diorio County Attorney Tyrone C. Wade

Deputy Clerk to the Board Arlissa Eason

**Absent:** Commissioner Patricia "Pat" Cotham

Clerk to the Board Kristine M. Smith

Note: Commissioner Leigh Altman attended the meeting remotely.

#### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dunlap, followed by introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### 23-0704 MEDIC UPDATE

The Board received an update from the Executive Director of Medic, John (JP) Peterson, Deputy Director, Dr. Jonathan Studnek, and Medical Director, Dr. Doug Swanson.

Background: John (JP) Peterson, Director of MEDIC, will provide an update on the following:

- Data Management
- Response Configuration Overview
- Public Outreach
- Changes post-launch
- Impact
- Outcomes
- State of EMS
- Staffing update



### **CONTENTS**

- Data Management
- Response Configuration Overview
- Public Outreach
- Changes post-launch
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- Outcomes
- State of EMS
- Staffing update



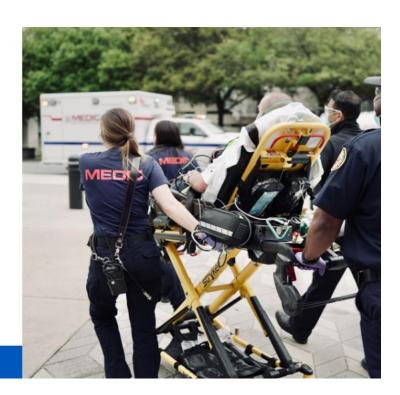
### **OVERVIEW**

- Why: Appropriate resource allocation & patient prioritization
- What: Resource type, mode, and time targets
- When: Effective April 17, 2023
- \* Who: Collaborative project under guidance of Medical Direction
  - Medic Agency Board of Commissioners/Medical Control Board
  - Charlotte Fire Department
  - Mecklenburg County Fire Departments/ETJs
  - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Departments
  - County law enforcement agencies



# **OVERVIEW:** Predictions

- No adverse impact to patient outcomes
- Improved resource alignment based on patient condition
- Reduction of lights and sirens responses
- Reduction of traffic accidents
- Reduction of first responder volume



### **PUBLIC OUTREACH PRE-LAUNCH**

- 16 formal meetings/presentations (all county districts)
- Traditional media & paid social media campaign
- Public resource website w/ language translation feature
- Promotional partnerships with Mecklenburg County, towns/city government, first responder partners, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations team (bilingual outreach)
- Ongoing focus of 911 education



### **CHANGES POST-LAUNCH**

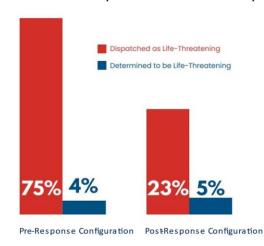
- Maintained feedback mechanism with first responders and employees
  - Resulted in updates to Standard Operating Guidelines
- Re-classified 6 call types to a higher priority response
  - Modified 32 sub-determinants
- Discontinued practice of dispatching an ambulance prior to understanding patient's condition
- Data management



### **IMPACT:** Medic Lights & Sirens Responses & Transports

Pre-response configuration,
Medic responded to 9,506
911 calls with lights & sirens on
average per month vs2,863
per month post-response
configuration; a reduction of
70%

Prediction: 72%



at a compares PreResponse Configurat ion April 2022-March 2023 vs. May 2023 -Sept em ber 2023



# **IMPACT:** Medic involved traffic accidents



Reduction in Medic involved traffic accidents responding with lights and sirens (2.25 average per month pre-response configuration vs..5 per month post-response configuration)



Overall reduction in Medic involved traffic accidents (11.25 average per month preresponse configuration vs.10.8 per month postresponse configuration)

Medic does not have access to first responder data regarding lights & sirens responses or traffic accidents. Data compares PreResponse Configuration April 2022-March 2023 vs. May 2023 -Septem ber 2023



# **IMPACT:** First Responder Volume & scene times



A seventeen percent decrease of the number of EMS 911 calls fire departments responded to countywide

> Prediction: 10%

0:1:16

One minute and 16 second increase to the amount of time fire departments were on scene for EMS 911 calls countywide

Prediction: ≤ 0:02:00

Dat a com pares PreResponse Configuration April 2022-March 2023 vs. May 2023 -Septem ber 2023 Dat a includes count y first responders only, Medic does not have access to Charlotte Fire Department dat a



# IMPACT: Call volume

Predicted vs Actual Call Volume Percentages								
Response Time Standard	10:59	15:00	30:00	60:00	90:00	ON/OP/OC	FR Only	
% of call volume prechange	20%	49%	0%	22%	0%	9%	0%	
Predicted % of call volume	19%	18%	25%	10%	.1%	9%	19%	
Actual % of call volume post change May 2023Sept 2023	22%	31%	20%	12%	1%	1%	13%	

ON=Omega Nurse Line, OP = Poison Control, OC = Behavioral Health Crisis Line, FR Only=First Responder Only



# Morbidity

Is Medic appropriately treating patients with the most serious conditions?

# **Mortality**

Has the rate of mortality increased?



# **CLINICAL IMPACT:** Low acuity responses resulting in a high priority transport

PRE-RESPONSE CONFIGURATION APRIL 2022-MARCH 2023					
Total Transported P1	244				
Total Low Acuity Calls	39,623				
% Low Acuity That Go P1	.6%				

POST-RESPONSE CONFIGURATION MAY-SEPTEMBER 2023			
Total Transported P1	274		
Total Low Acuity Calls	27,236		
% Low Acuity That Go P1	1%		

 911 calls categorized as non-life threatening that resulted in a high priority response happened 1% of the time after Response Configuration launch, which is better than predicted.

P1 = Priorit y one; life-t hreat ening calls Low acuit y=Non -life-t hreat ening calls



### **CLINICAL IMPACT:** Cardiac Arrests

Month	Total Cases	Total ROSC
May 2022	78	27
June 2022	72	27
July 2022	75	22
Aug 2022	60	18
Sep 2022	82	26
Oct 2022	74	22
Total	441	142

Month	Total Cases	Total ROSC
May 2023	71	27
June 2023	74	26
July 2023	71	27
Aug 2023	75	27
Sep 2023	91	29
Oct 2023	59	23
Total	441	159

Medic achieved ROSC 36% of the time post-response configuration changes vs. 32% pre-response configuration. Medic continues to perform well above the national average of 27%

National data sourced from the Cardiac Arrest Registryto Enhance Survival (CARES) 2022 ROSC = Return of Spontaneous Circulation; the percentage of time there is a restart of a sustained heart rhythm after a c**a**catirrest



## **CLINICAL IMPACT:** Mortality

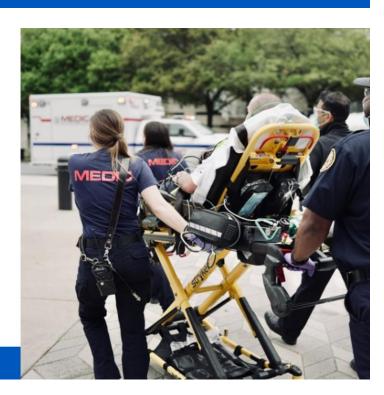
	May-September 2022	May-September 2023
Mortality Count	618	565
Total 911 Incidents	51,841	52,411

• Medic has seen no significant change in the number of patients with documented termination of resuscitation prior to transport post-response configuration change.



# **OVERVIEW:** Outcomes

- ✓ No adverse impact to patient outcomes
- ✓ Improved resource alignment based on patient condition
- ✓ Reduction of lights and sirens responses
- ✓ Reduction of traffic accidents
- ✓ Reduction of first responder volume



### STATE OF EMS

### Wisconsin's EMS agencies describe a system in crisis

Staffing shortages and funding gaps in Wisconsin have caused emergency medical services to become unreliable and some EMS operations have closed, putting communities at risk throughout the state.

#### The EMS Economic and Staffing Crisis Creates an Opportunity for Improved System Design

Using data to evaluate your community's EMS costs, ambulance staffing levels, and response time expectations to help prevent your EMS systems from collapsing.













### Response times to NYC crimes, fires and medical emergencies soar

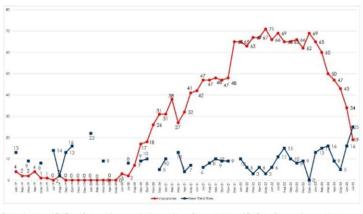
Minn. ambulance service director warns city officials of danger of closing

Altura Ambulance Director Jessica Romine told local leaders the service could lose its license due to staffing problems



### **STAFFING UPDATE:** Frontline Overall

- Wage increases
- Compression alleviation
- ⇒ OST-EMT program
- CPCC : partnership

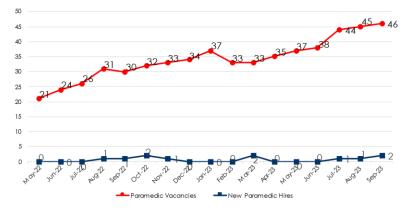


Red = Number of EMT and Paramedic vacancies by month ; Blue = Number of EMT and Paramedic new hires by month



## **STAFFING UPDATE:** Paramedics

- -46 Paramedics (25% vacancy rate)
- Priority 1 response growth 7% postresponse configuration
- 10 current EMTs expected to graduate Paramedic school in December 2023



Red = Number of Paramedic vacancies by month; Blue = Number of Paramedic new hires by month



### TIERED SYSTEM EVOLUTION: EMT responses



 The average number of weekly responses by a BLS ambulance increased by 290%. Response configuration allowed this to happen.

LS = Basic Life Support; an am bulance st affed with two EMTs





#### Comments

Commissioner Leake thanked them for the presentation.

Commissioner Griffin asked if they were continuing to strategize how they got the numbers "up" in relation to staffing. He asked for a response, not speaking of at the time of the presentation but forecasting the next five years or so. *Mr. Peterson responded that the trend had been steady for the last 20 years. He said it would grow and that their changes helped mitigate the need for paramedics but did not eliminate it.* 

Commissioner Griffin asked if he could speak to the professional development of the people who received and dispatched the calls. *Mr. Peterson said they were fully staffed for the first time in three years. He said the rapid influx in applications was partly due to the raises the Commissioners approved the previous year. He said the Communications Center was fully accredited for a 3-year term. He said dispatch went through a certification program like EMTs but specific to them.* 

Commissioner Jerrell said many presentations were data-driven, and this presentation was datadriven and informed. He said he wanted to highlight his appreciation for that. He asked if the predicted measure would be dialed in or adjusted over time. He said in reference to paramedics,

it was a skillset that was being poached. He asked what they needed to do to keep those they would train. He said he didn't want to train to give them away. He asked if they could get data on how they were maintaining newer EMTs. Mr. Peterson said they were very data-driven and would continue to take in staff and community feedback. He said the new system was designed to be flexible if needed. He said they needed to find a way to accelerate the paramedic school. He said he was proud of their turnover rate of 7%, and he had never worked at an agency with that low turnover. He said the national rate was around 30%. He said being an EMT was entry-level into the profession, and some got in and realized it was not for them.

Vice Chair Powell said that with all the issues they'd dealt with, she saw the frustrations of what they should have done. She asked if they had been tracking response times to the North Mecklenburg towns and how many times those ambulances couldn't make it. *Mr. Peterson said yes and that they tracked it monthly. He said the report was provided to the County monthly as well.* 

Vice Chair Powell hoped they would continue to dialogue with their towns and volunteer fire departments. She thanked them for doing what was necessary.

Commissioner Meier thanked them. She asked if the County would pay when they suggested that they send EMTs to school. *Mr. Peterson said they used the local college, so they didn't have to pay tuition but were paying salaries*.

Commissioner Meier asked how they were making sure they retained them. *Mr. Peterson said* they would have to sign on for a certain period of time, and if they left during that period, they would owe money back to the agency.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell highlighted that they were fully staffed due to salary increases and said they would come if you paid them.

Chair Dunlap thanked them for the update. He said those concerned about the changes should feel a whole lot better. He asked that Medic would have some consideration of how they arrived on the scene of accidents, since there were times when their arrival would tie up traffic and cause further accidents.

#### 23-0699 2023 MECKLENBURG COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Board received as information the results from the 2023 Community Survey.

Michael Griswold, MPA, Strategic Planning & Evaluation Deputy Director gave the presentation.

Background: Each year, the County's Strategic Planning & Evaluation unit administers the Community Survey to gather data on Mecklenburg County residents' perceptions on various aspects of County operations, particularly the level of awareness about County services, the perception of the value of County services provided, level of satisfaction residents have with opportunities for citizen involvement, and insight into the most important issues facing Mecklenburg County. The presentation includes highlights of those results.

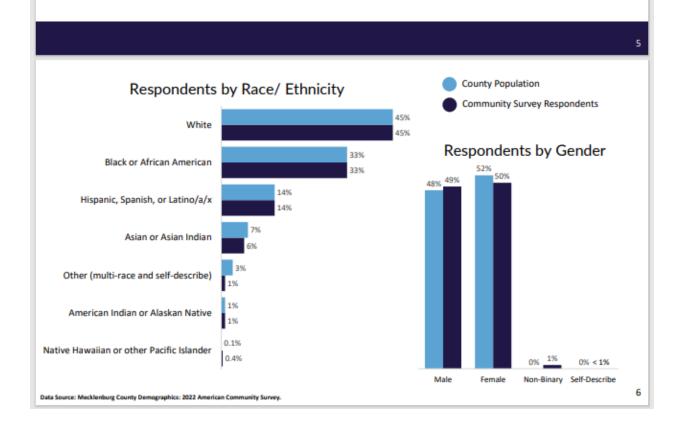


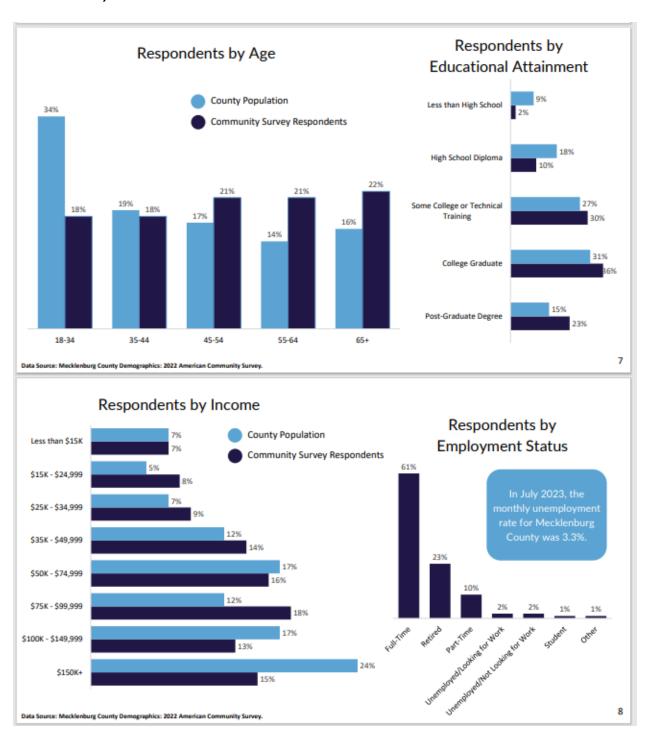


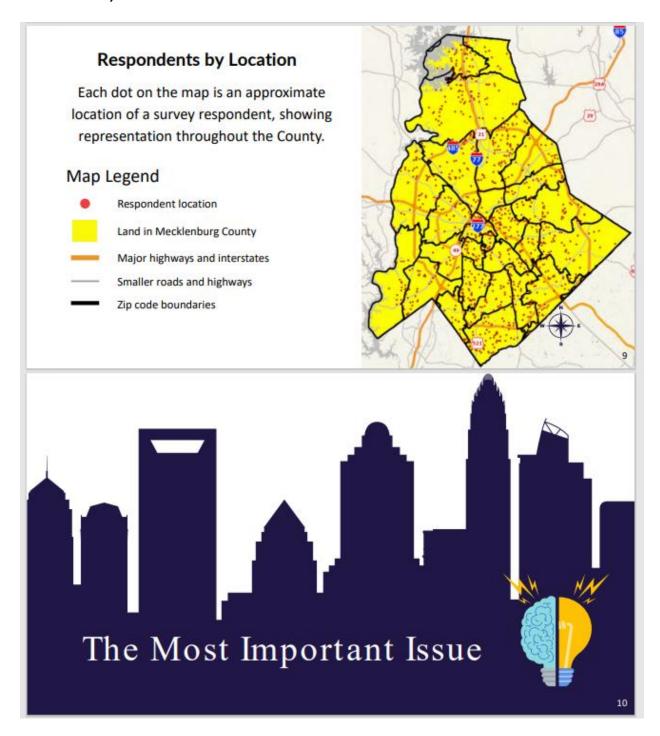
# Survey Methodology

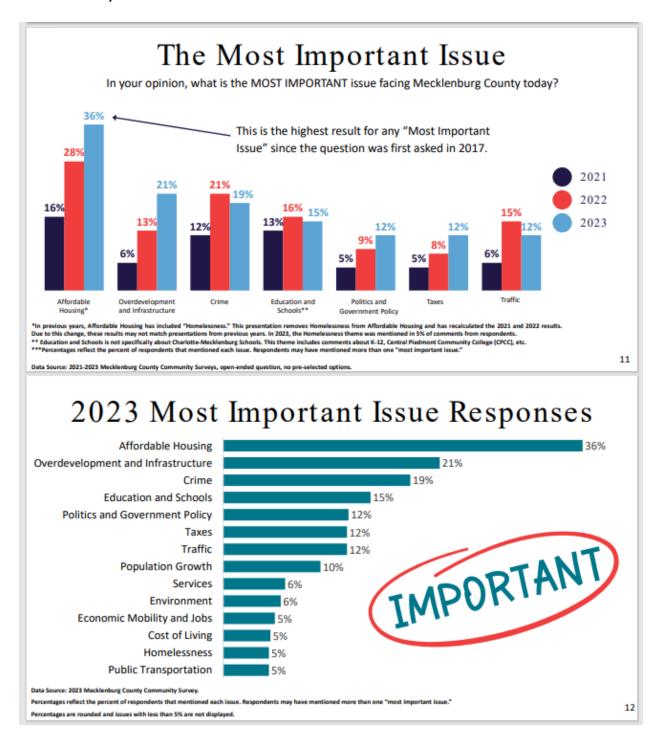


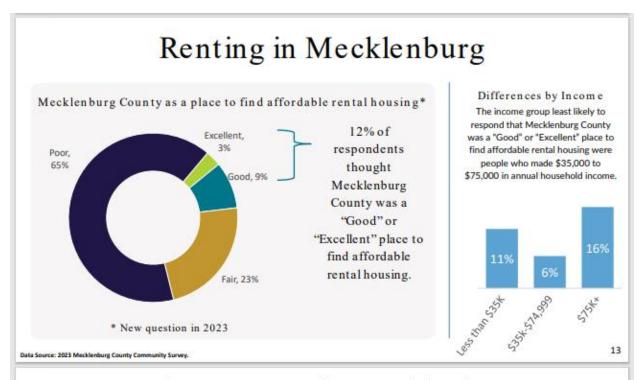
- · 21st year of the survey
- Conducted by vendor ETC Institute from June 8 – July 14, 2023
- Administered by mail, web and phone (landline + cellphone)
- · Random sample of 1,069 households
- 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 3.0%











# Buying a Home in Mecklenburg

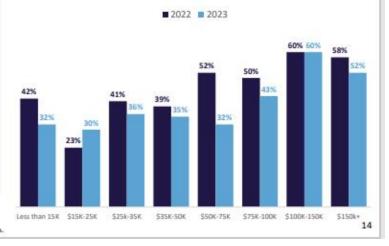
I make \$90,000 per year and my rent for a 2BR 1BA, older community in middle class south charlotte is \$1,600. I'm paying it year after year because I can't afford to buy a decent house within the 485 loop. Something has to be done about this for the

"

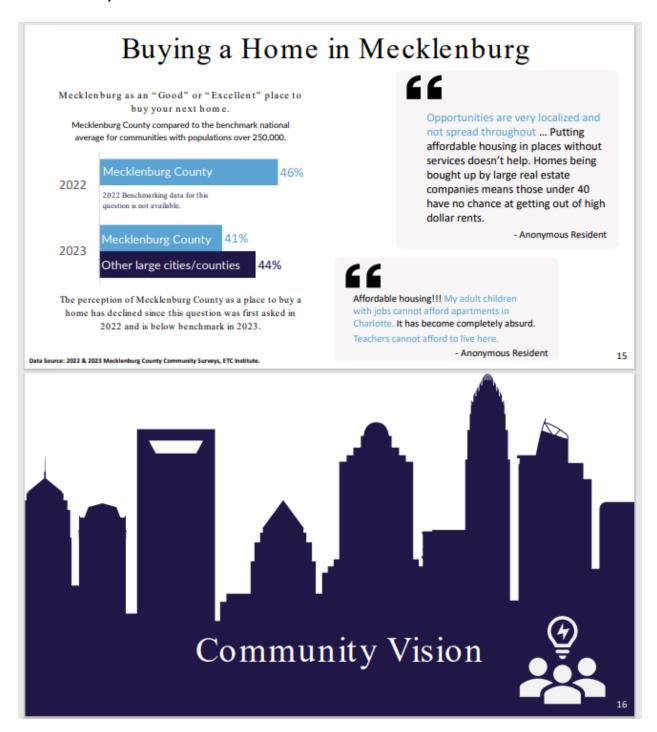
has to be done about this for the city to continue to grow... not every who lives here is a millionaire.

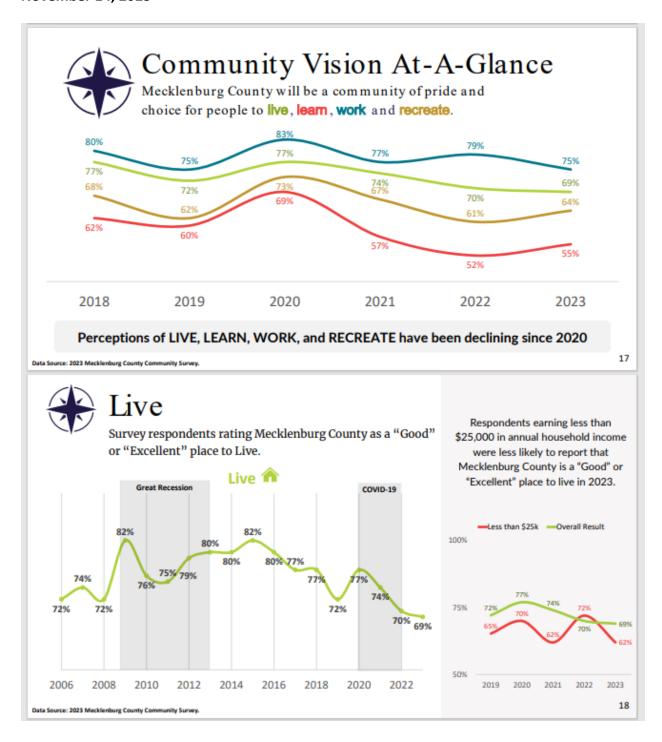
- Anonymous Resident

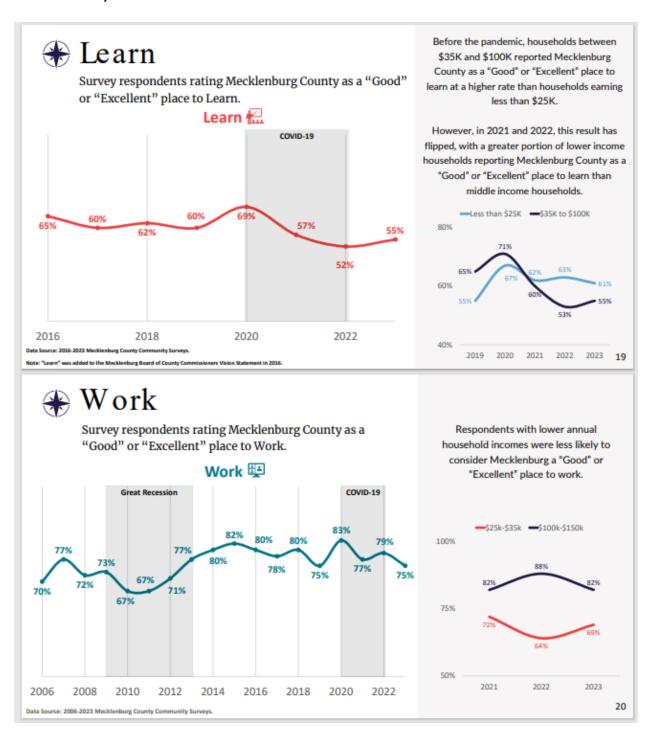
Across nearly all income levels, respondents' perceptions of Mecklenburg County as a "Good" or "Excellent" place to buy their next home declined from 2022 to 2023. Lower income residents are much less likely to consider Mecklenburg County as an attractive place to purchase a home than those with higher incomes.

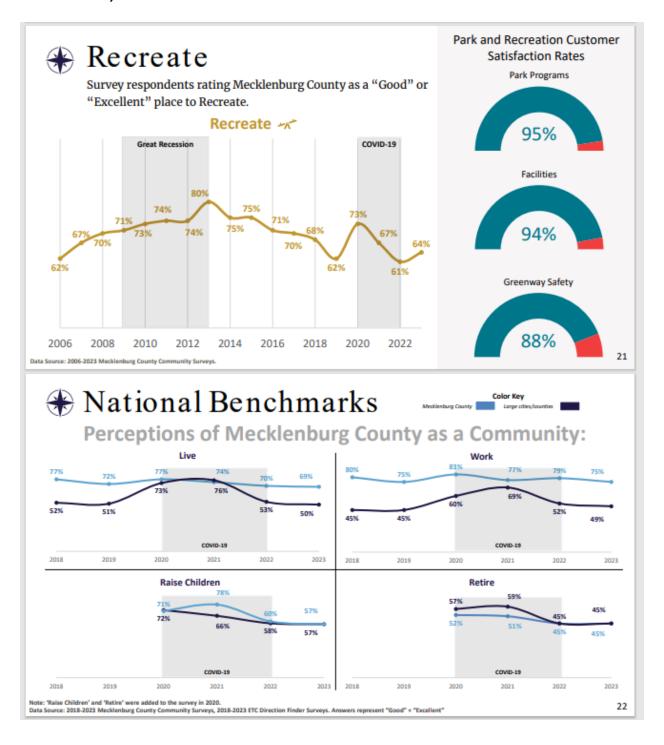


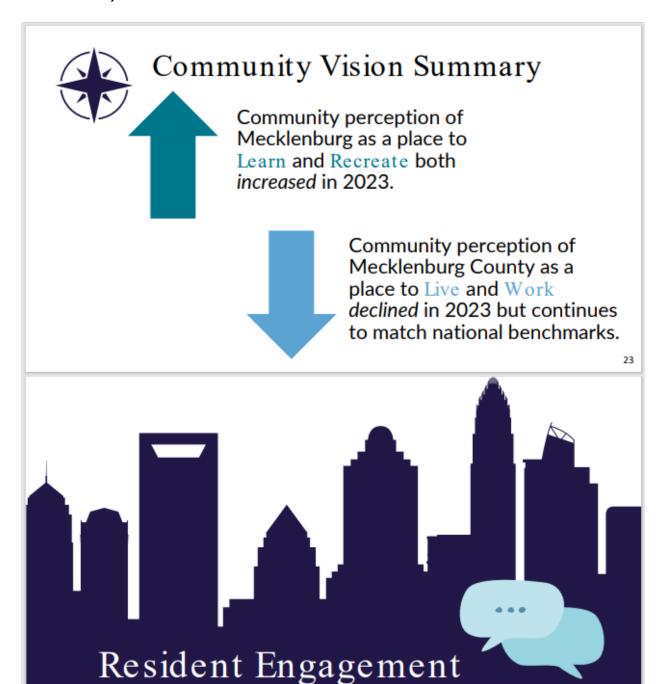
Data Source: 2022 & 2023 Mecklenburg County Community Surveys, ETC Institute

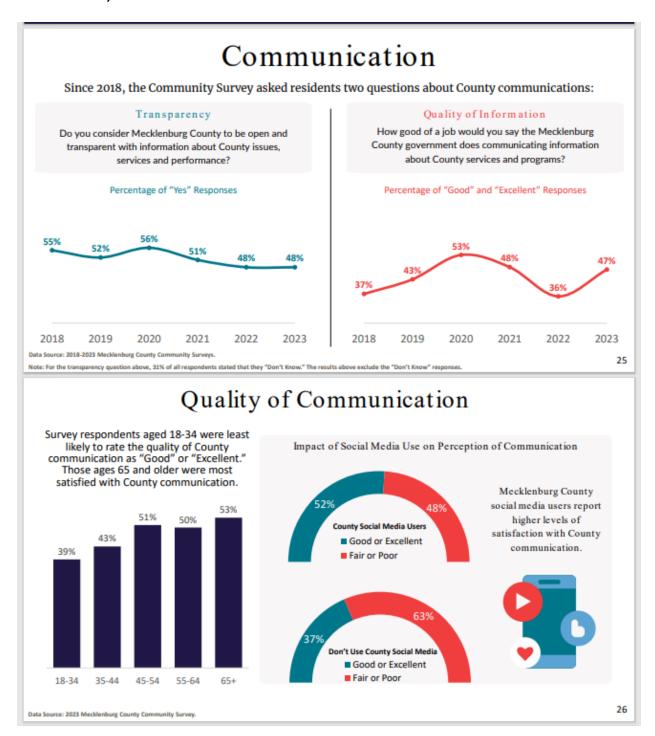


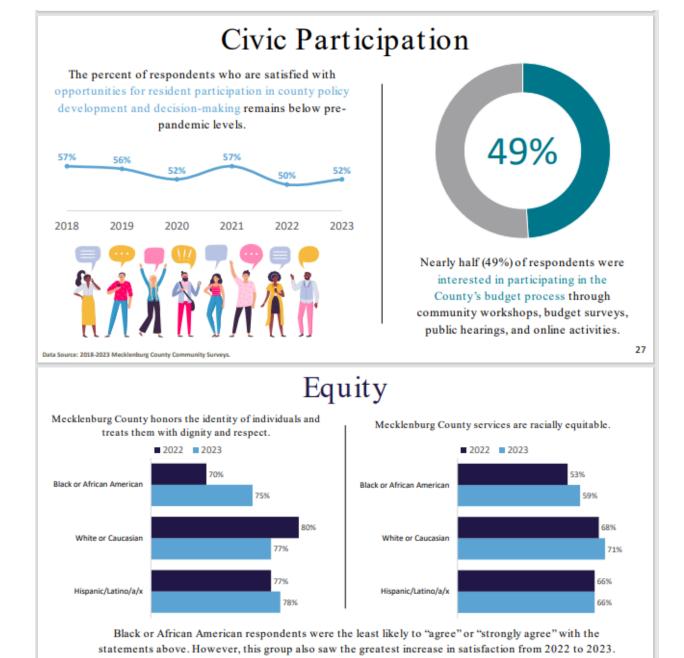


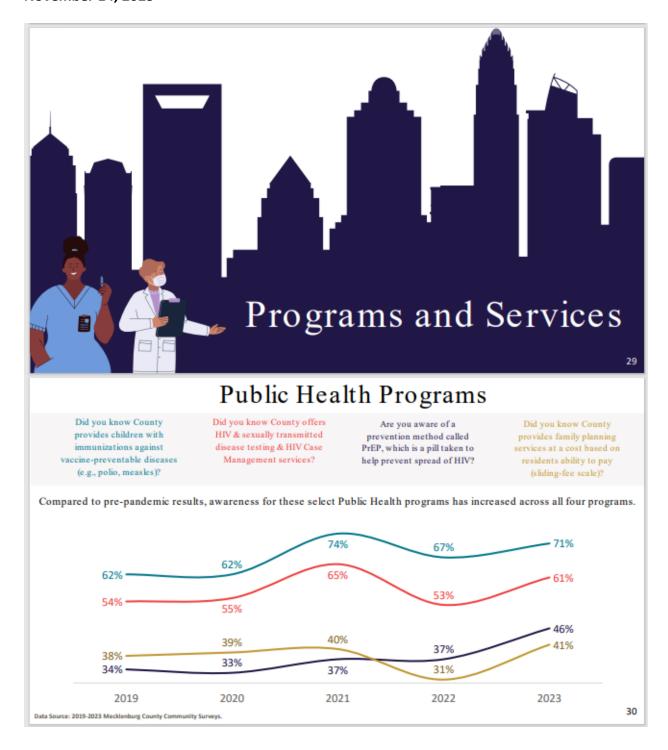


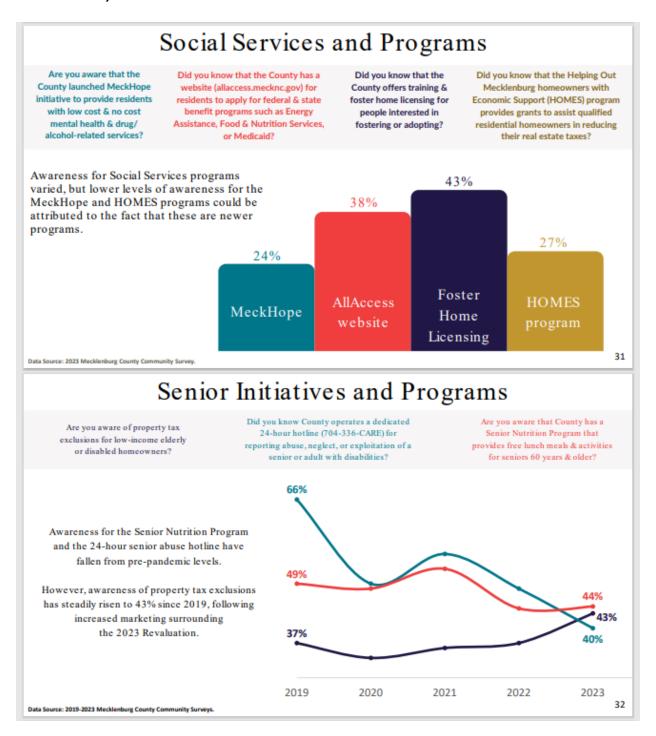


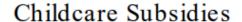






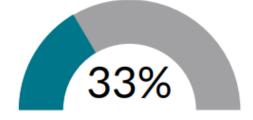






Two new questions were asked in 2023 around Mecklenburg County's childcare subsidy programs:

Did you know that County offers childcare subsidies to help working families pay for childcare?



Are you aware that County has expanded childcare subsidies to make more working families eligible for assistance?

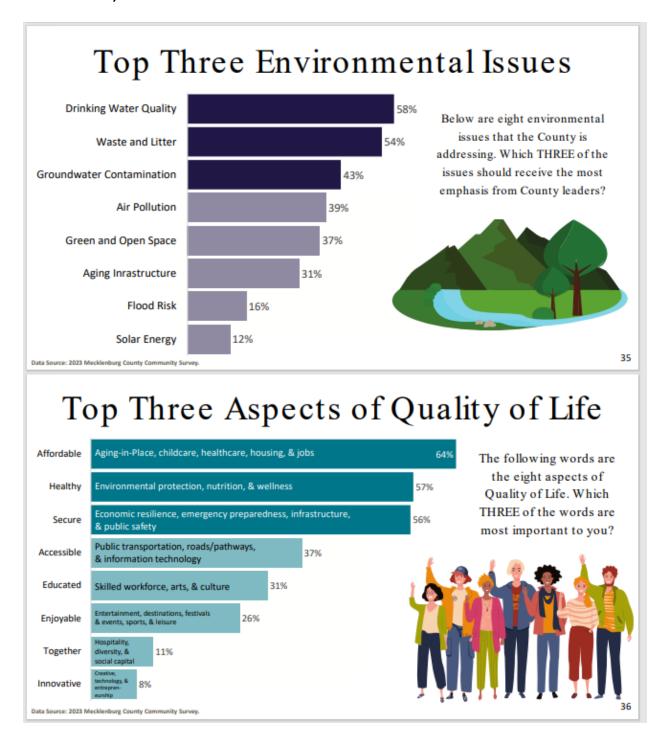


Black or African-American residents and households earning under \$15K were the most likely to be aware of the County's childcare subsidies program as well as the expansion of the program. Respondents aged 18-34 reported lower levels of awareness of childcare subsidies and the expansion of the program.

Data Source: 2023 Mecklenburg County Community Survey

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# Recommendations



### Affordable Housing

- Continue the County efforts and partnerships related to Affordable Housing, Subsidies, and Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH).
- Maintain awareness of potential obstacles to affordable housing.
  - Corporate Owned Rentals presentation (December)

### Community Communication & Engagement

- Leverage communication tools, community engagement opportunities, etc. to increase resident awareness of County programs and services.
- Continue to leverage the strength of social media to inform the community about County programs, services, and opportunities for participation.
- Consider opportunities to communicate more effectively with younger audiences (18-34).



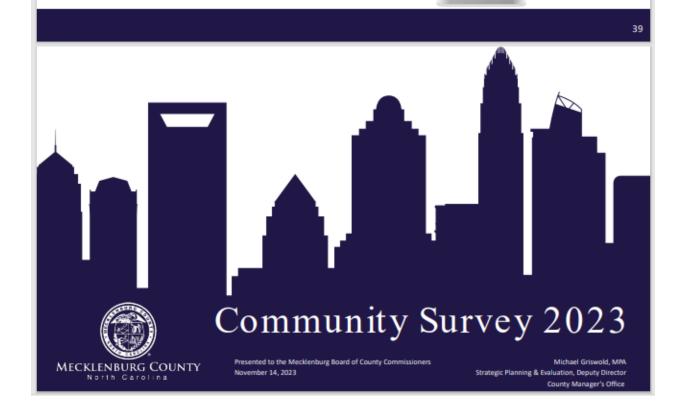
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# Accessing the Results

Results are available <u>via this dashboard</u> and include the following information:

- Overall Results
- · Results by Key Demographics
- · Who Responded
- More Results





#### Comments

Commissioner Griffin thanked him for the presentation. He said affordable housing was a problem and that he related some of that to someone's ability to afford a place to live, whether it was a rental or a home. He said that based on census data; there were disparities there that would be tough for them as an organization to close unless they focused on the ability to earn more household income. He said they couldn't build their way out of this one. He said they would have to create an opportunity to become more educated and affluent.

Commissioner Jerrell thanked him and the entire team. What did it mean when home ownership is so out of reach for many people in the community. He said as a county they had limits to what they could do. He said it was alarming they had such a high percentage of residents where ownership was out of reach. He asked if they would only have certain income levels in certain county areas, which was acceptable. He said it was alarming that they had high levels of affluence with no pushback and needed to look at that as a community. He said wealth was being more concentrated in small segments of their populations. He said the gap continued to widen.

Commissioner Leake thanked him for the presentation. She said she was worried about poverty. She asked what they could do to change the process.

Commissioner Meier thanked him. She said social media was clearly not reaching everyone and asked how they could reach the people. She mentioned how the homes program was provided, and a lot of people didn't know about it. She said she was interested in seeing what they were going to do. Mr. Griswold said concerning the homes program, the survey happened in June or July, and the inserts didn't go out until July or August, so they didn't quite overlap. He said he hoped for an increase in awareness the following year.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell asked if the survey's timing mattered, with it being done in June and July. She asked if if they did it at a different time, he thought they would get a different response. Mr. Griswold said they could see different responses. He said changing the time period may have limited their ability to compare to previous data.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said she liked that they used open-ended questions. She said the perception was that the County didn't use feedback and thought they needed to do better with their communication. She was surprised that public transportation came at the very bottom and said it was an opportunity for them to educate and talk to people about how those things impact one another.

Chair Dunlap highlighted how some of the questions should specifically target their targeted demographic. Mr. Griswold clarified that they did ask demographic questions at the end of the survey that allowed them to examine *different segments*.

Chair Dunlap noticed that since they had an environmental committee, the questions in those surveys became more relevant. He said it went to show that if the Board led with what was important, the community followed.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell asked about the environmental question, whether it was added that year or had it been on the survey. *Mr. Griswold said they were added that year.* 

#### 23-0026 COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

Commissioners shared information of their choosing within the guidelines as established by the Board which included but not limited to, past and/or upcoming events.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come befadjourned at 4:30 p.m.	fore the	Board,	Chair	Dunlap	declared	the	meeting
Arlissa Eason, Deputy Clerk to the Board			Ge	eorge Du	nlap, Chai	r	