



**MECKLENBURG COUNTY**  
North Carolina

# Community Survey 2023

Presented to the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners  
November 14, 2023

Michael Griswold, MPA  
Strategic Planning & Evaluation, Deputy Director  
County Manager's Office

# Agenda

- Community Survey Purpose
- Survey Respondents
- The Most Important Issue
- Community Vision
- Resident Engagement
- Programs and Services
- Environment and Quality of Life
- Recommendations



# Community Survey Purpose

Perceptions



Attitudes



Awareness



# Survey Respondents



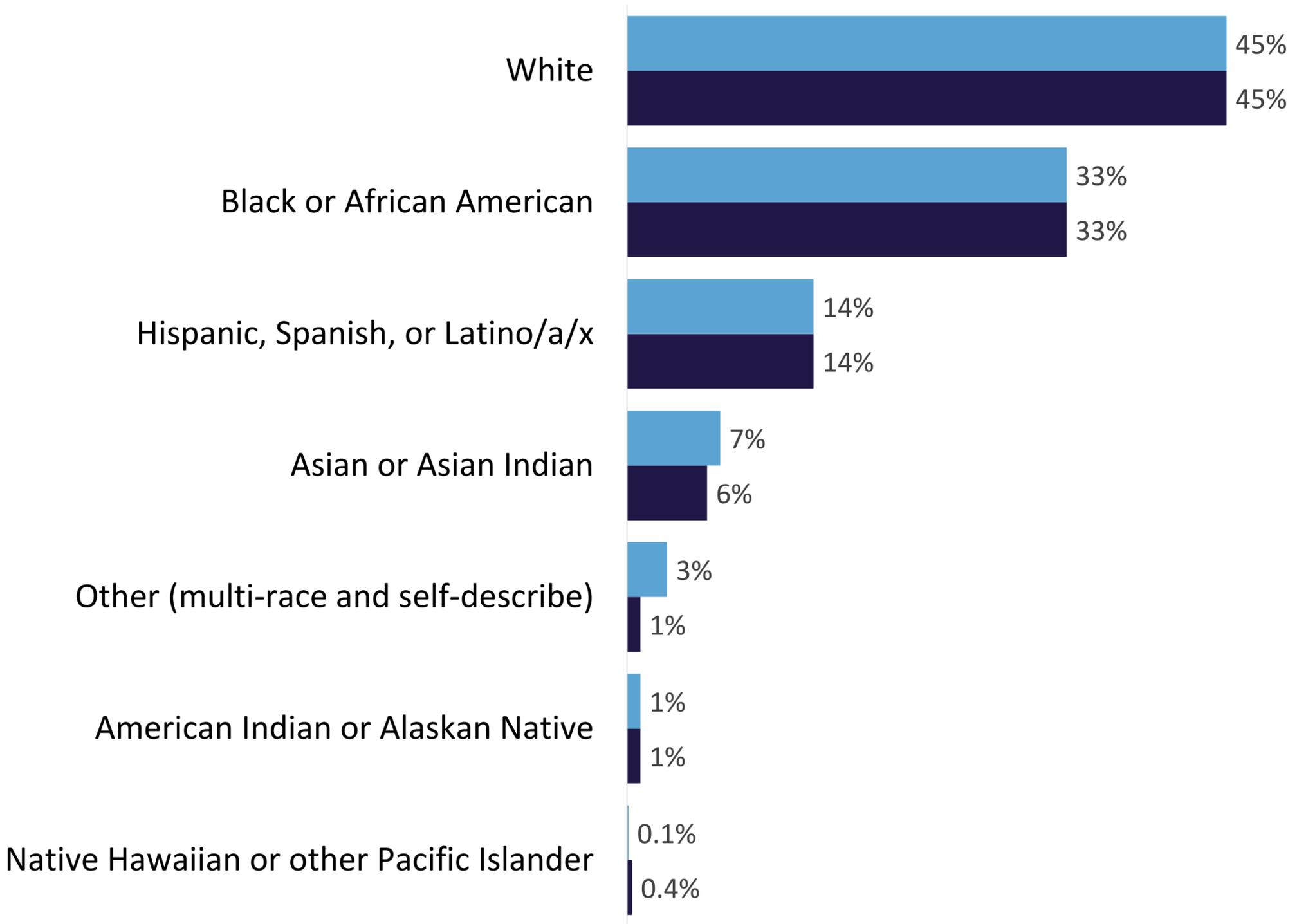
# Survey Methodology



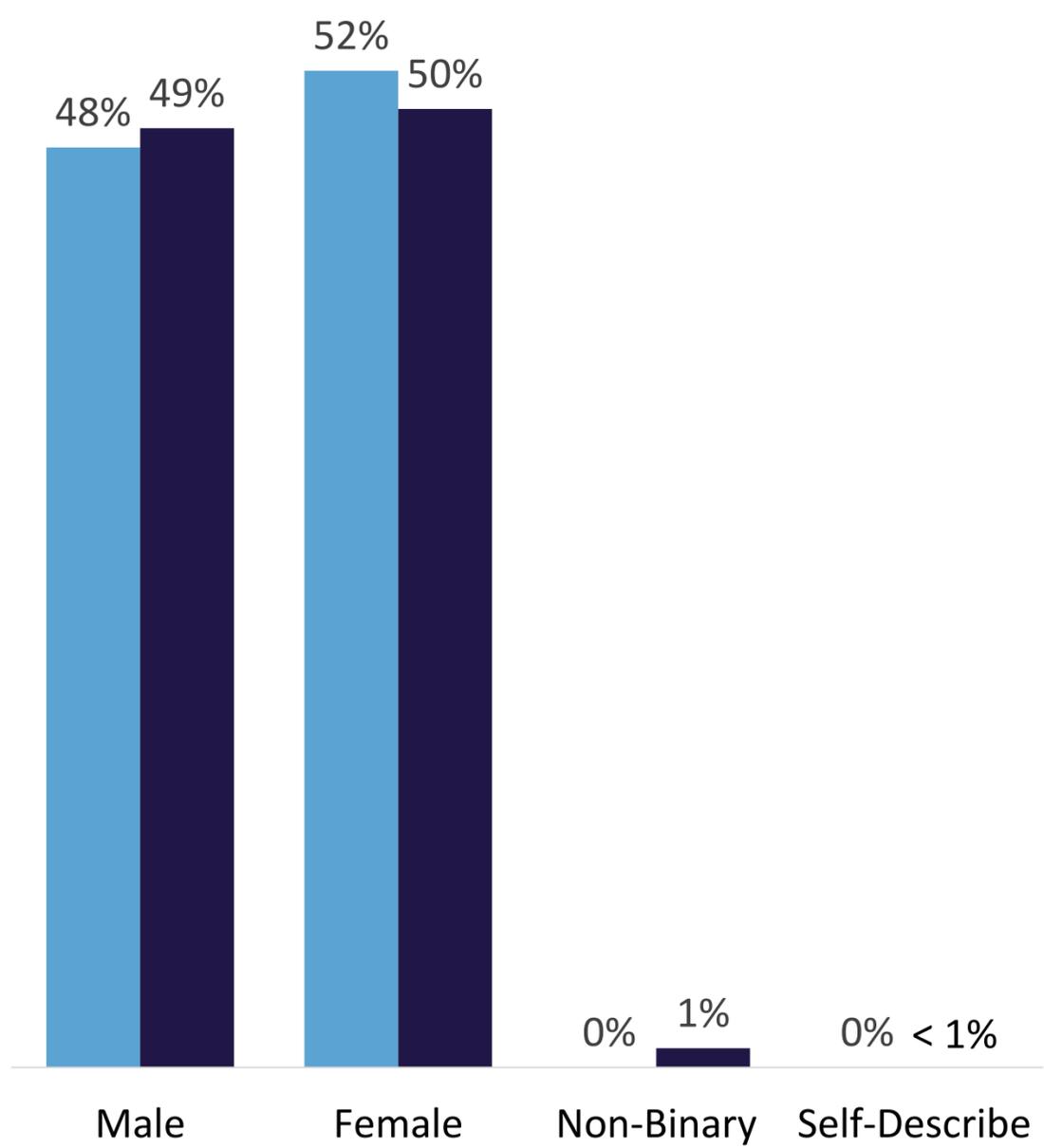
- 21st year of the survey
- Conducted by vendor ETC Institute from June 8 – July 14, 2023
- Administered by mail, web and phone (landline + cellphone)
- Random sample of 1,069 households
- 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 3.0%

# Respondents by Race/ Ethnicity

- County Population
- Community Survey Respondents

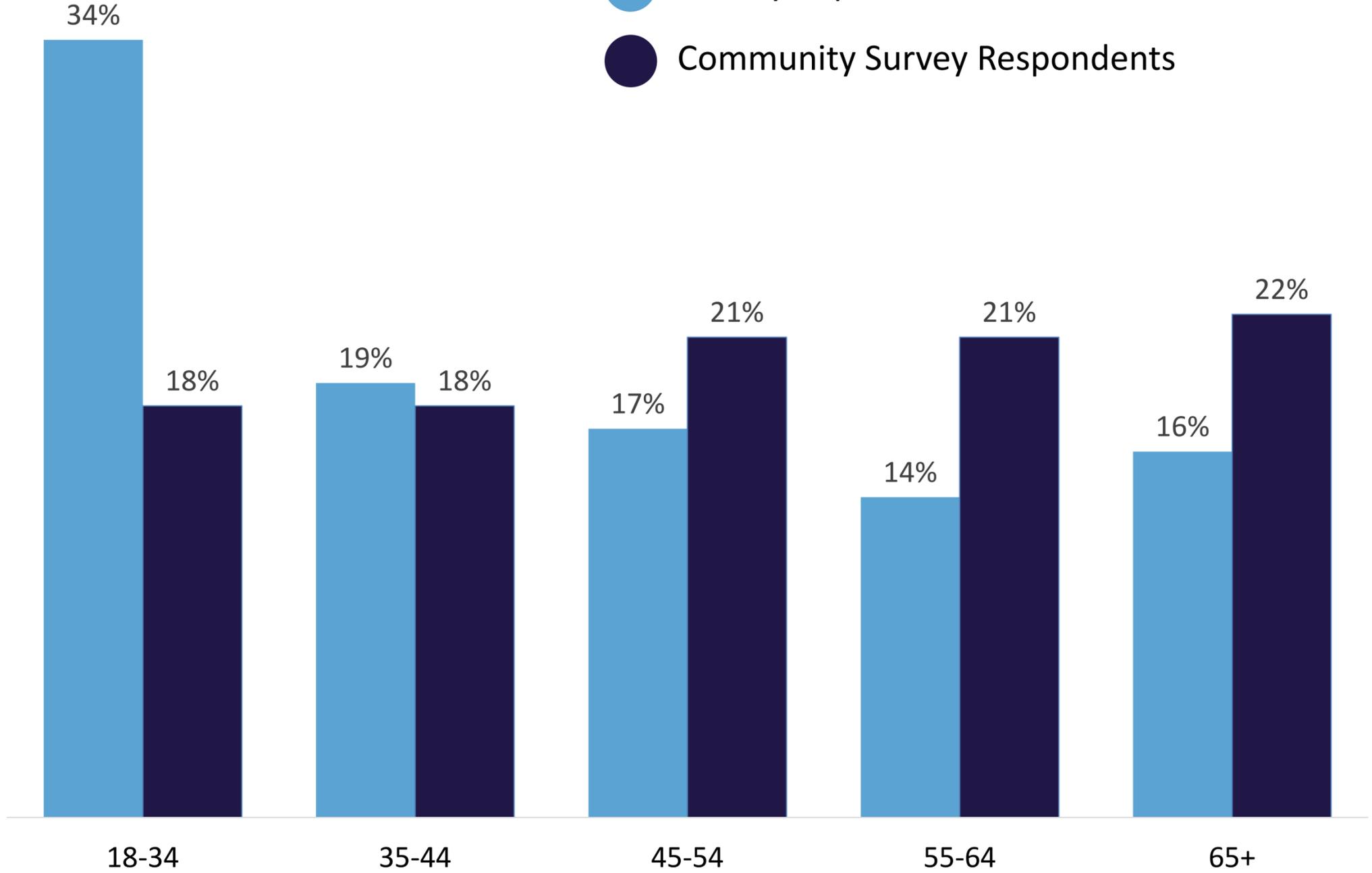


# Respondents by Gender

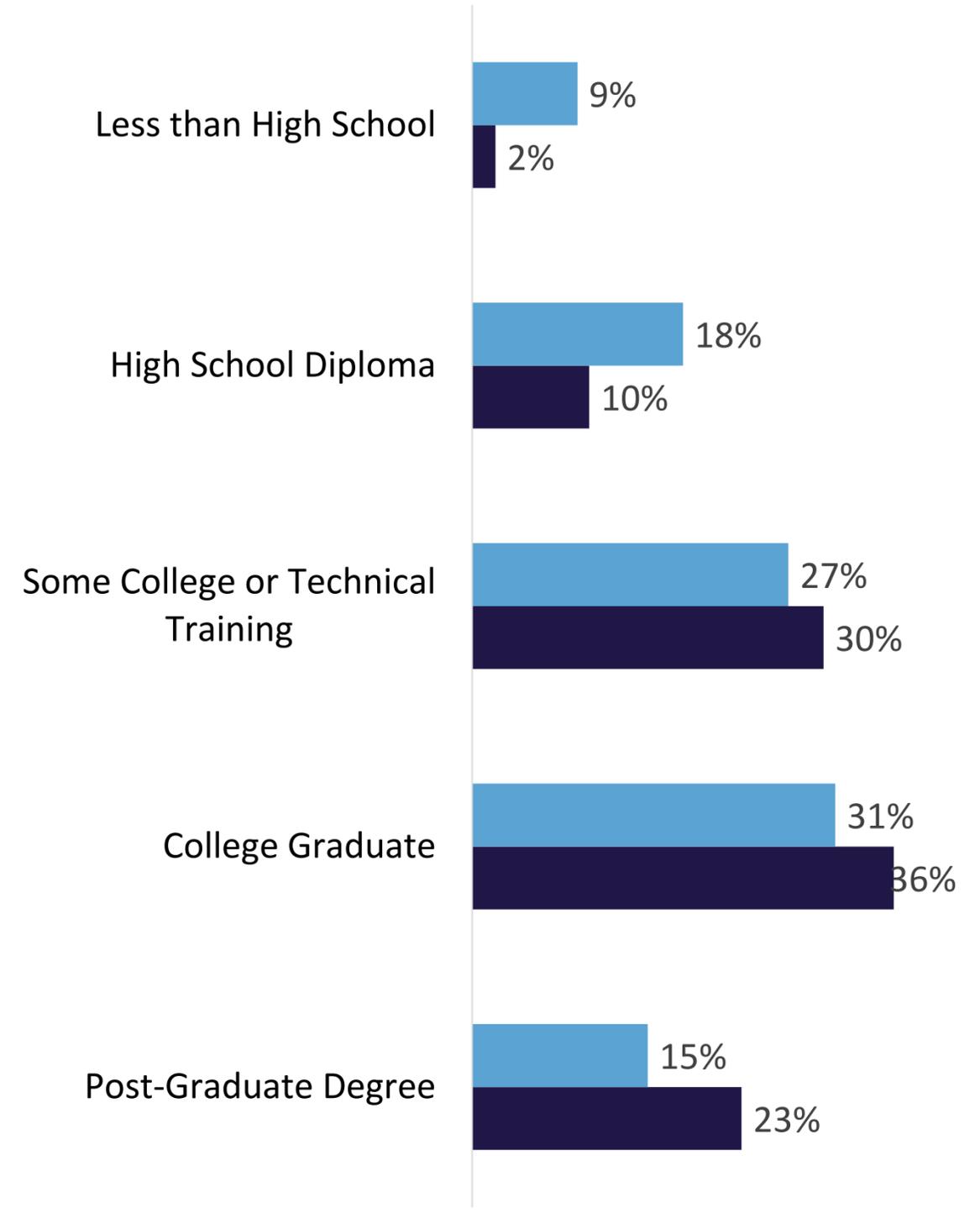


# Respondents by Age

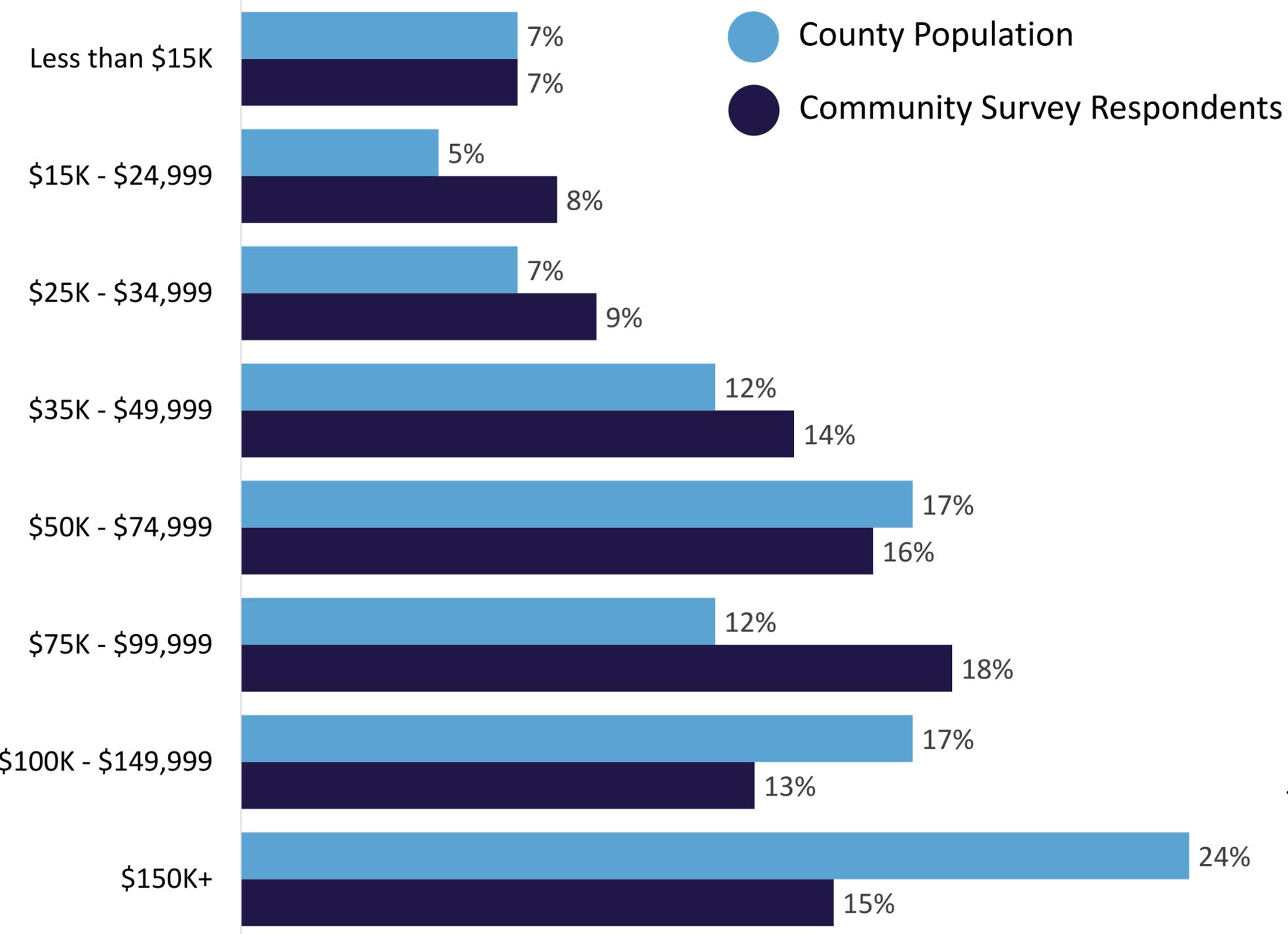
- County Population
- Community Survey Respondents



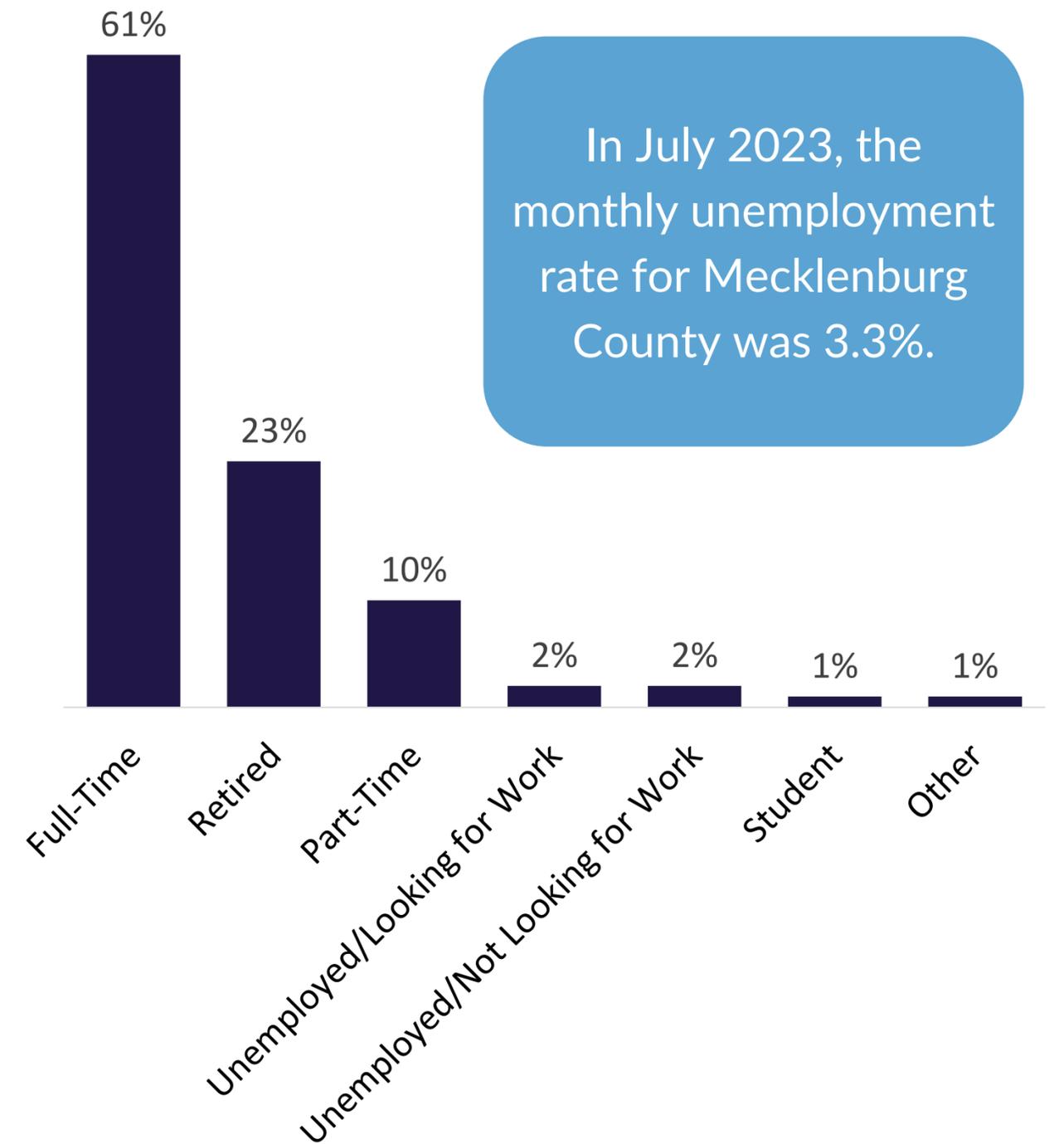
# Respondents by Educational Attainment



# Respondents by Income



# Respondents by Employment Status

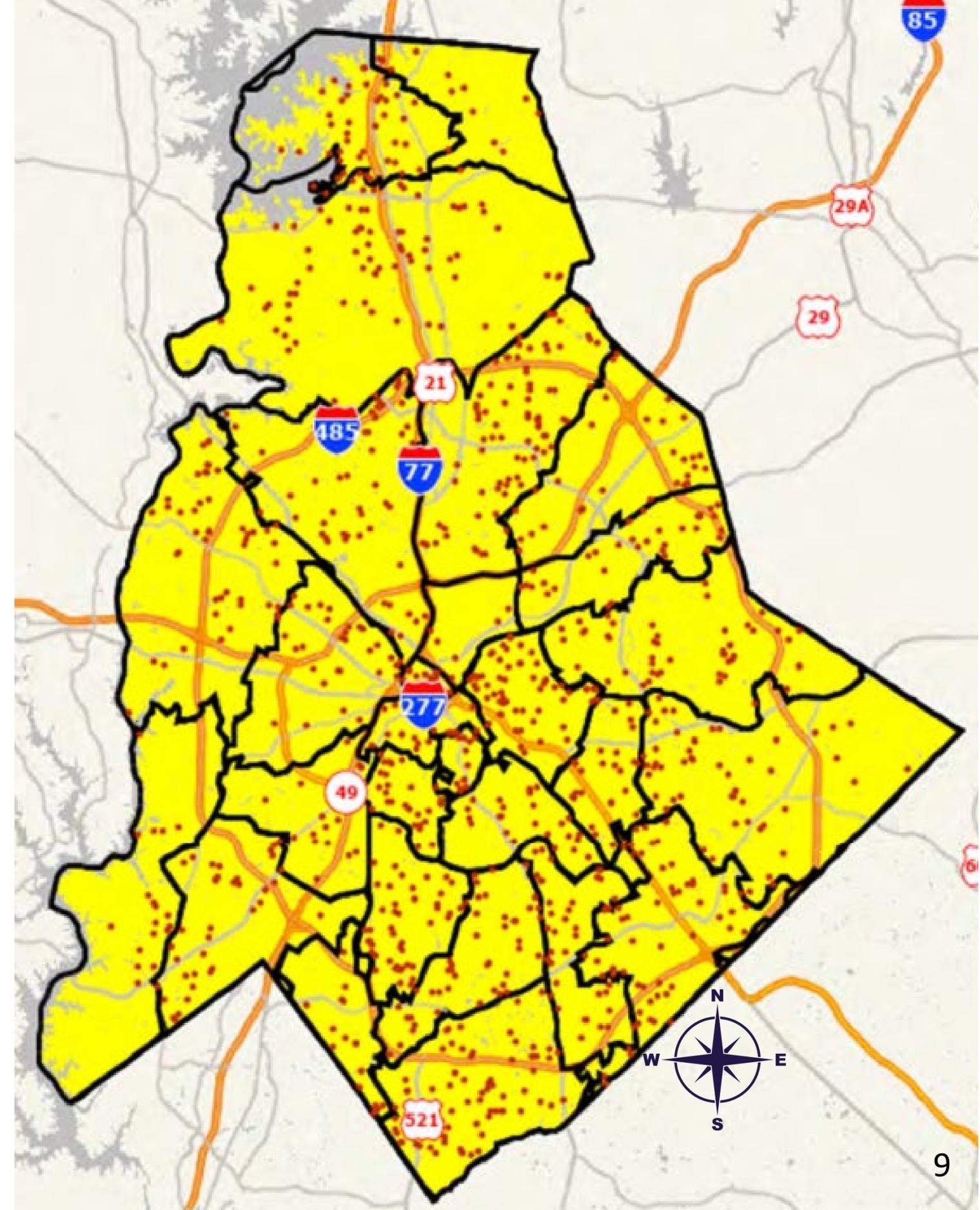


# Respondents by Location

Each dot on the map is an approximate location of a survey respondent, showing representation throughout the County.

## Map Legend

-  Respondent location
-  Land in Mecklenburg County
-  Major highways and interstates
-  Smaller roads and highways
-  Zip code boundaries



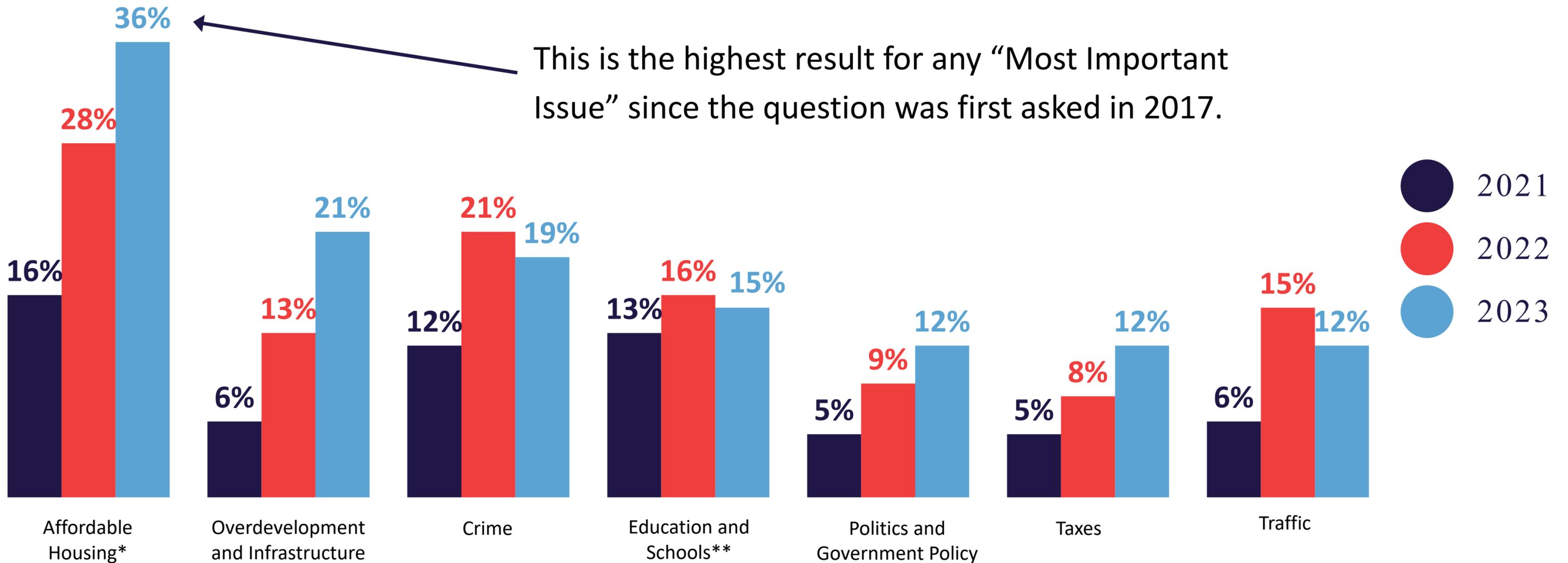


# The Most Important Issue



# The Most Important Issue

In your opinion, what is the MOST IMPORTANT issue facing Mecklenburg County today?



\*In previous years, Affordable Housing has included “Homelessness.” This presentation removes Homelessness from Affordable Housing and has recalculated the 2021 and 2022 results.

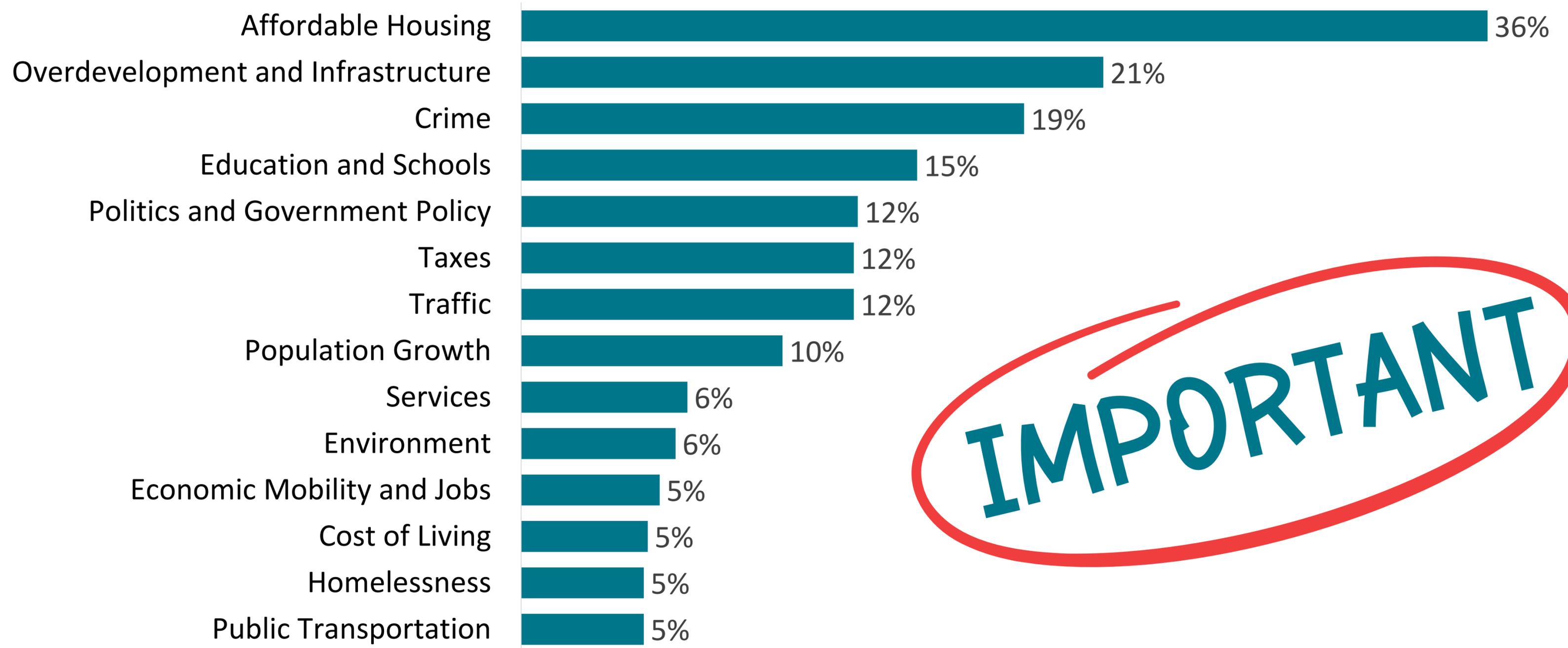
Due to this change, these results may not match presentations from previous years. In 2023, the Homelessness theme was mentioned in 5% of comments from respondents.

\*\* Education and Schools is not specifically about Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. This theme includes comments about K-12, Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), etc.

\*\*\*Percentages reflect the percent of respondents that mentioned each issue. Respondents may have mentioned more than one “most important issue.”

Data Source: 2021-2023 Mecklenburg County Community Surveys, open-ended question, no pre-selected options.

# 2023 Most Important Issue Responses



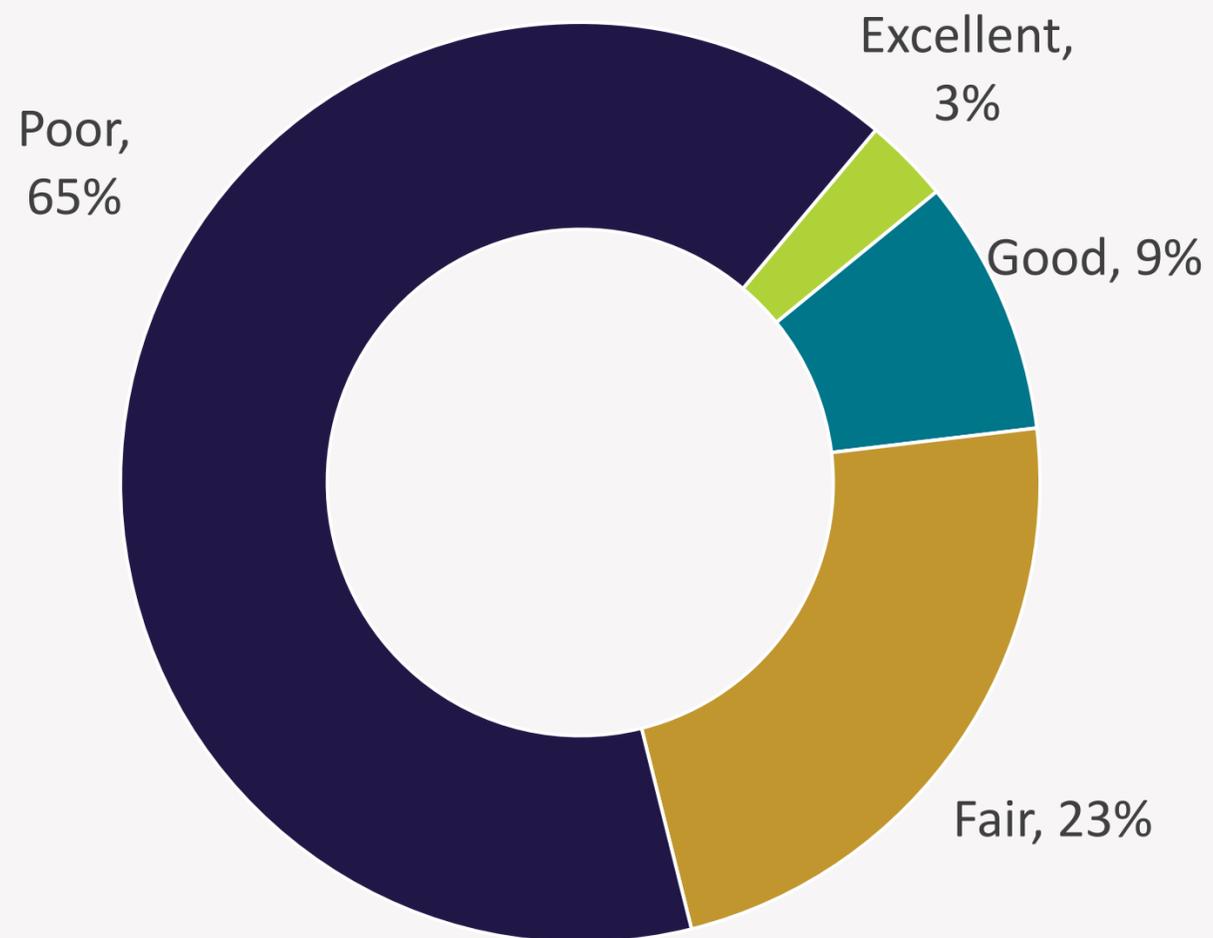
Data Source: 2023 Mecklenburg County Community Survey.

Percentages reflect the percent of respondents that mentioned each issue. Respondents may have mentioned more than one “most important issue.”

Percentages are rounded and issues with less than 5% are not displayed.

# Renting in Mecklenburg

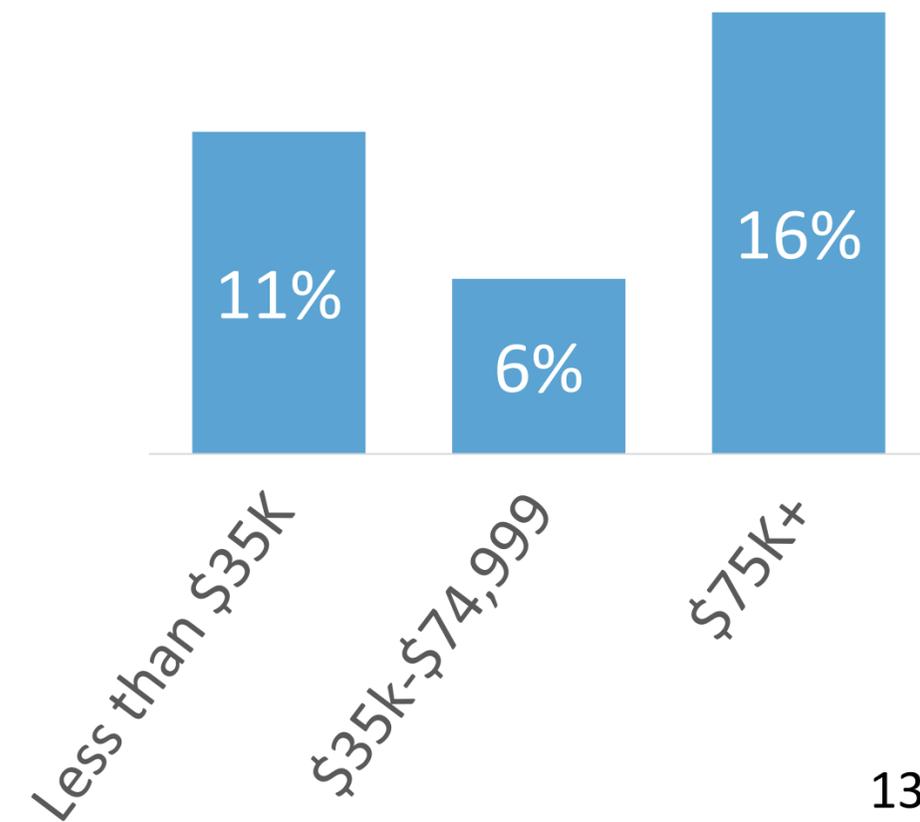
Mecklenburg County as a place to find affordable rental housing\*



12% of respondents thought Mecklenburg County was a “Good” or “Excellent” place to find affordable rental housing.

\* New question in 2023

**Differences by Income**  
The income group least likely to respond that Mecklenburg County was a “Good” or “Excellent” place to find affordable rental housing were people who made \$35,000 to \$75,000 in annual household income.



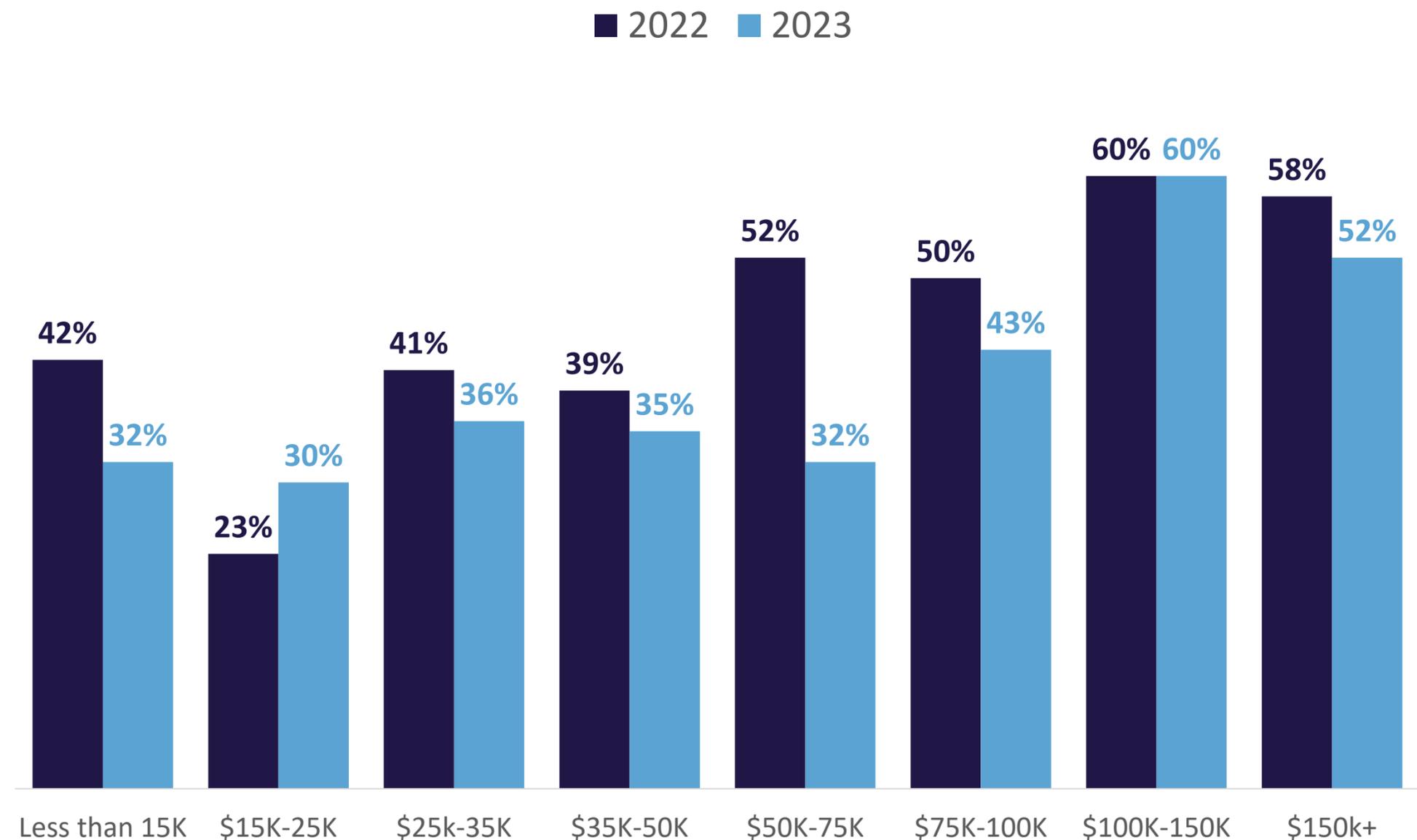
# Buying a Home in Mecklenburg



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 city to continue to grow... not every who lives here is a millionaire.

- Anonymous Resident

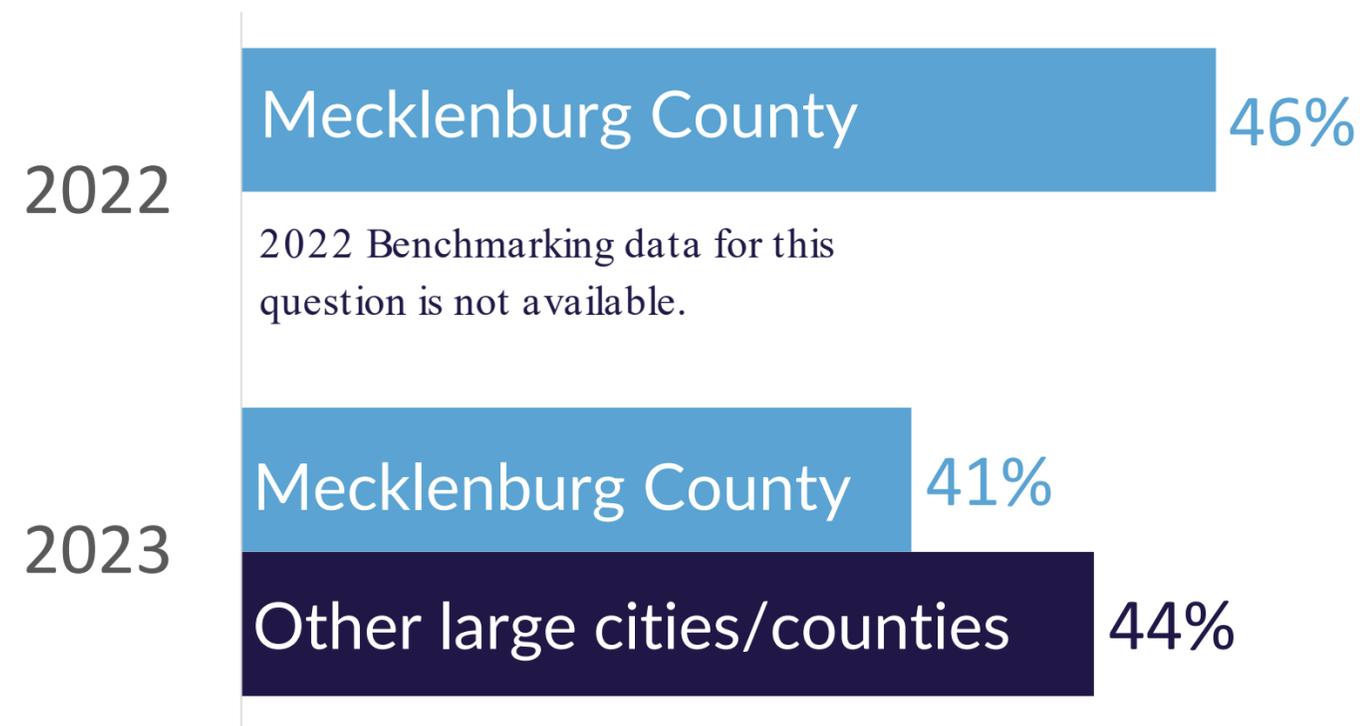
Across nearly all income levels, respondents' perceptions of Mecklenburg County as a "Good" or "Excellent" place to buy their next home declined from 2022 to 2023. Lower income residents are much less likely to consider Mecklenburg County as an attractive place to purchase a home than those with higher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



# Buying a Home in Mecklenburg

Mecklenburg as an “Good” or “Excellent” place to buy your next home.

Mecklenburg County compared to the benchmark national average for communities with populations over 250,000.



The perception of Mecklenburg County as a place to buy a home has declined since this question was first asked in 2022 and is below benchmark in 2023.



Opportunities are very localized and not spread throughout ... Putting affordable housing in places without services doesn't help. Homes being bought up by large real estate companies means those under 40 have no chance at getting out of high dollar rents.

- Anonymous Resident



Affordable housing!!! My adult children with jobs cannot afford apartments in Charlotte. It has become completely absurd. Teachers cannot afford to live here.

- Anonymous Resident



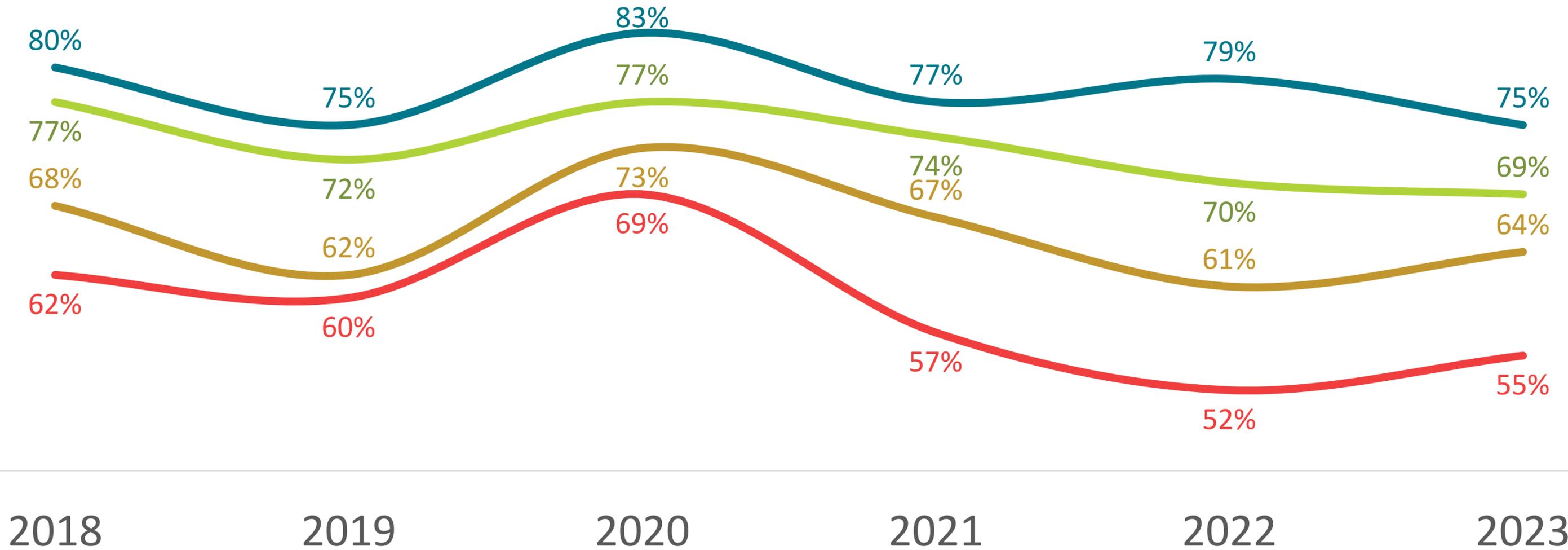
# Community Vision





# Community Vision At-A-Glance

Mecklenburg County will be a community of pride and choice for people to **live**, **learn**, **work** and **recreate**.



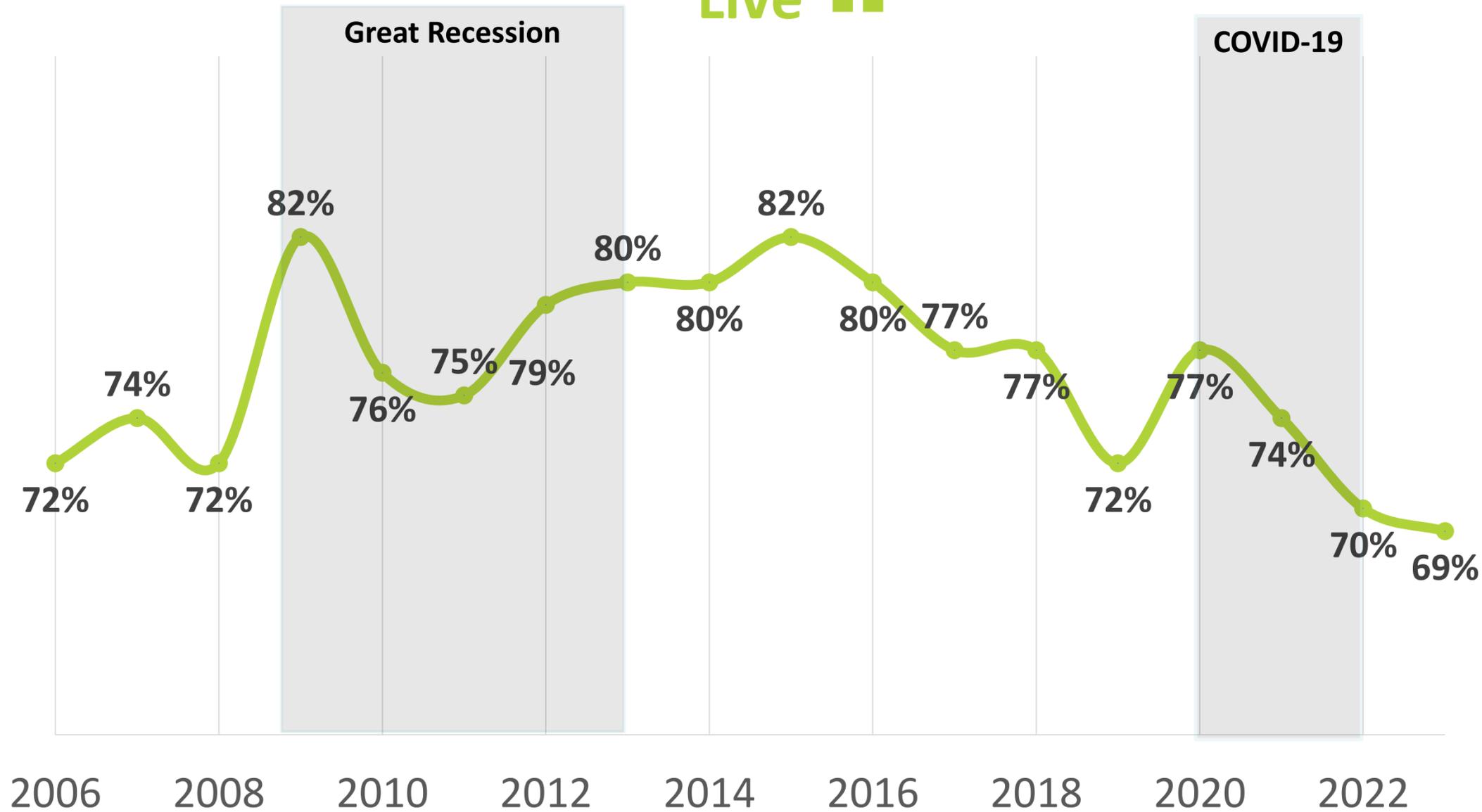
**Perceptions of LIVE, LEARN, WORK, and RECREATE have been declining since 2020**



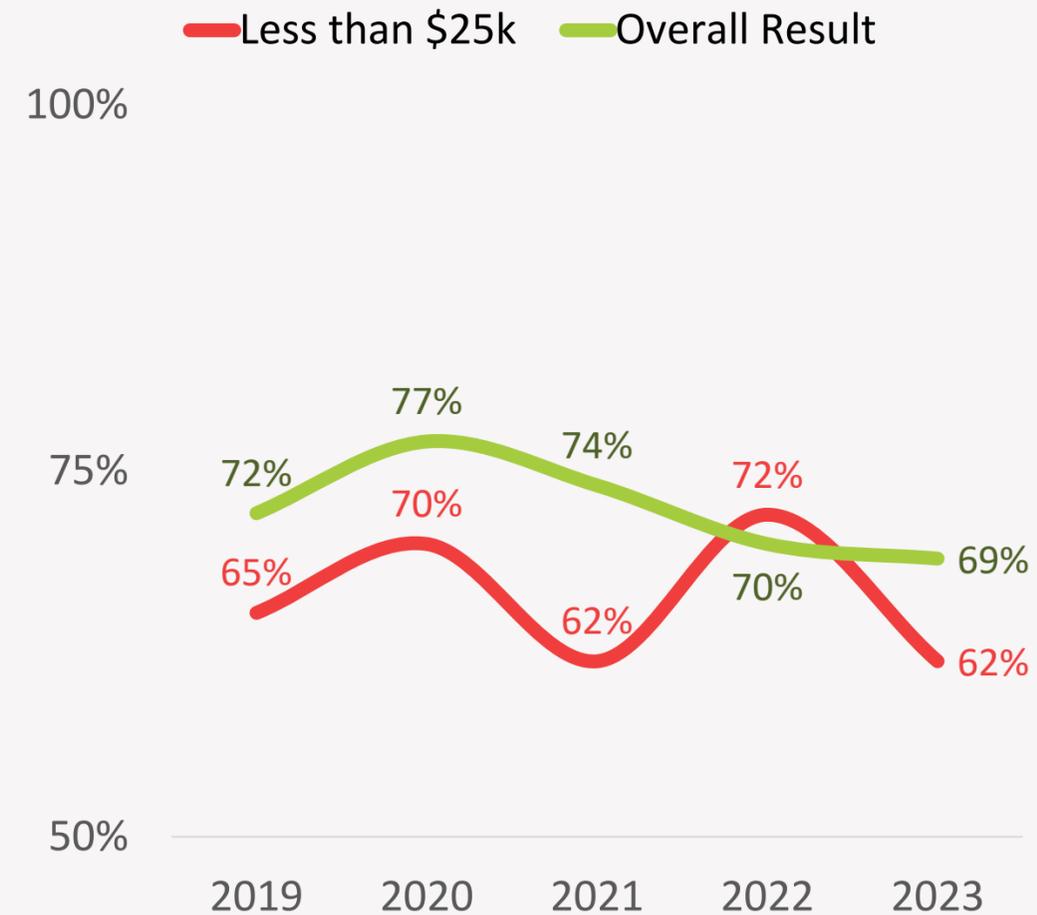
# Live

Survey respondents rating Mecklenburg County as a “Good” or “Excellent” place to Live.

Live 



Respondents earning less than \$25,000 in annual household income were less likely to report that Mecklenburg County is a “Good” or “Excellent” place to live in 2023.

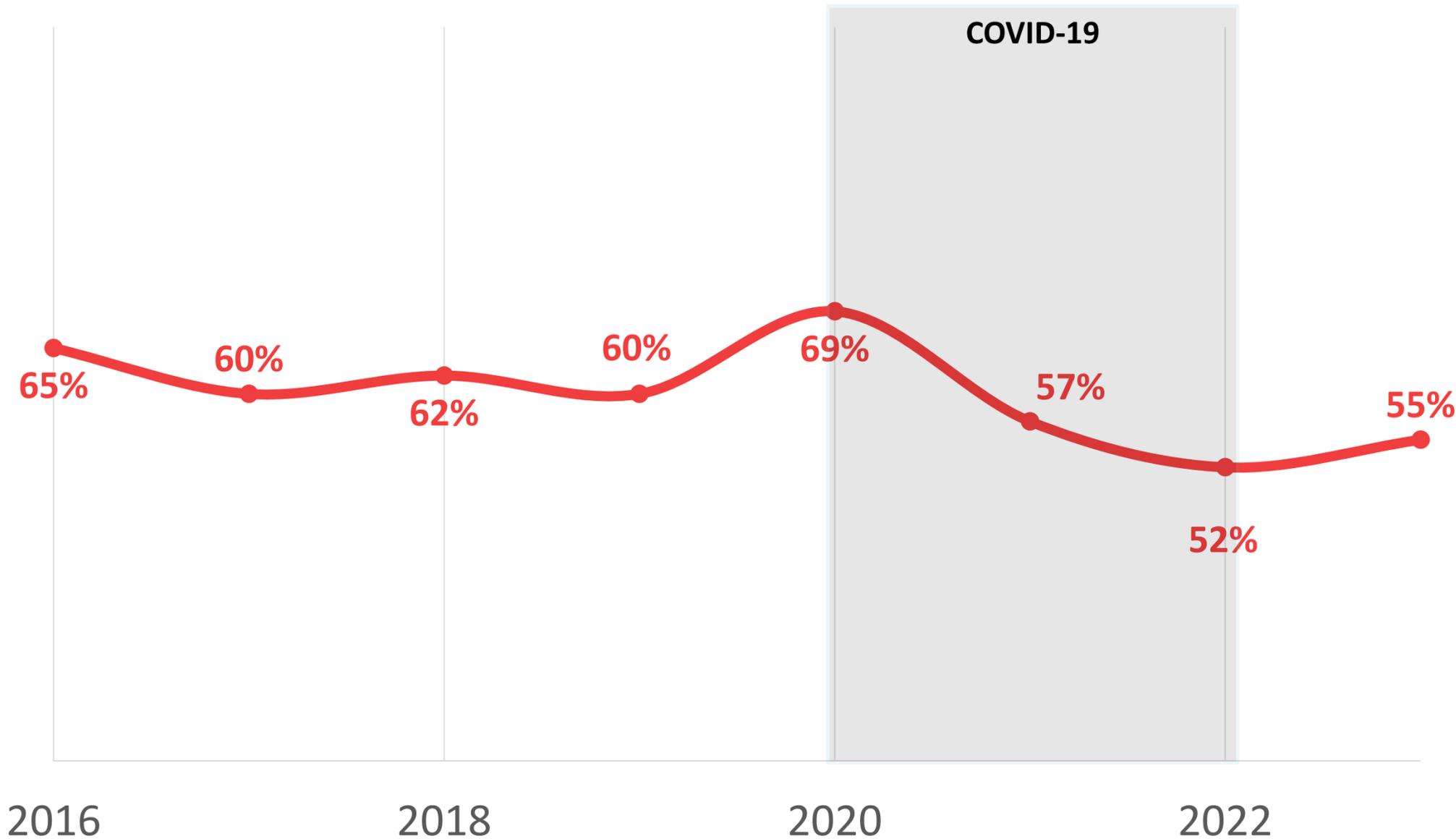




# Learn

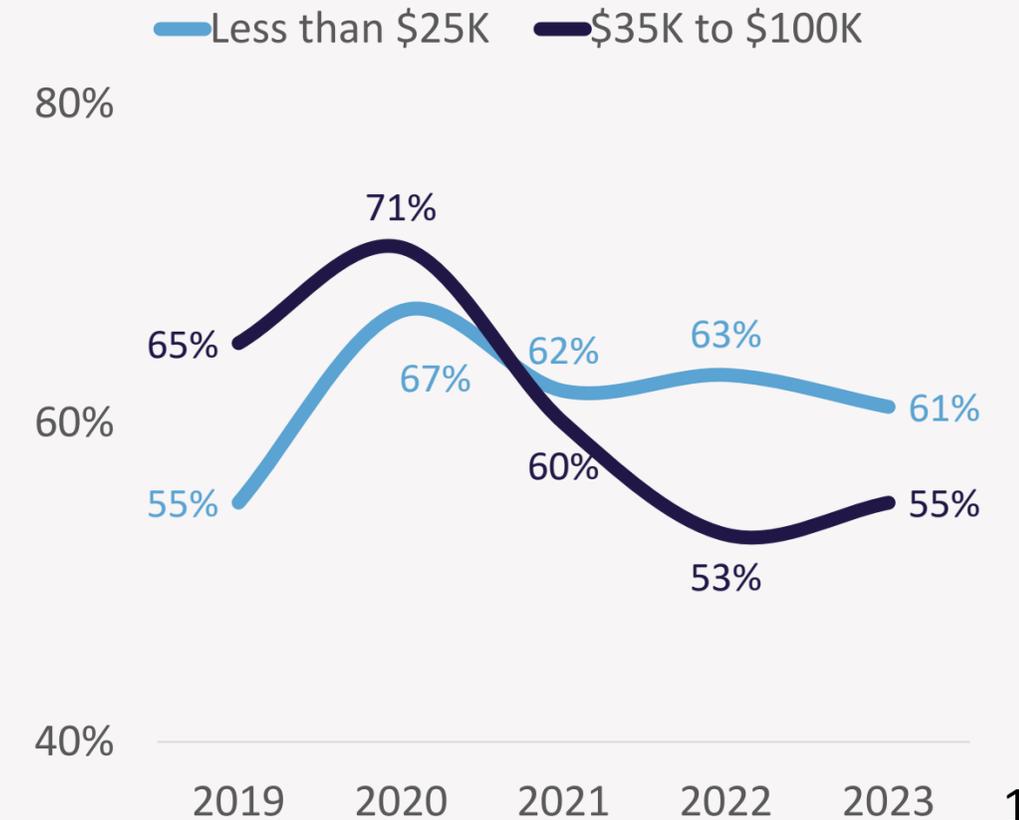
Survey respondents rating Mecklenburg County as a “Good” or “Excellent” place to Learn.

Learn



Before the pandemic, households between \$35K and \$100K reported Mecklenburg County as a “Good” or “Excellent” place to learn at a higher rate than households earning less than \$25K.

However, in 2021 and 2022, this result has flipped, with a greater portion of lower income households reporting Mecklenburg County as a “Good” or “Excellent” place to learn than middle income households.



Data Source: 2016-2023 Mecklenburg County Community Surveys.

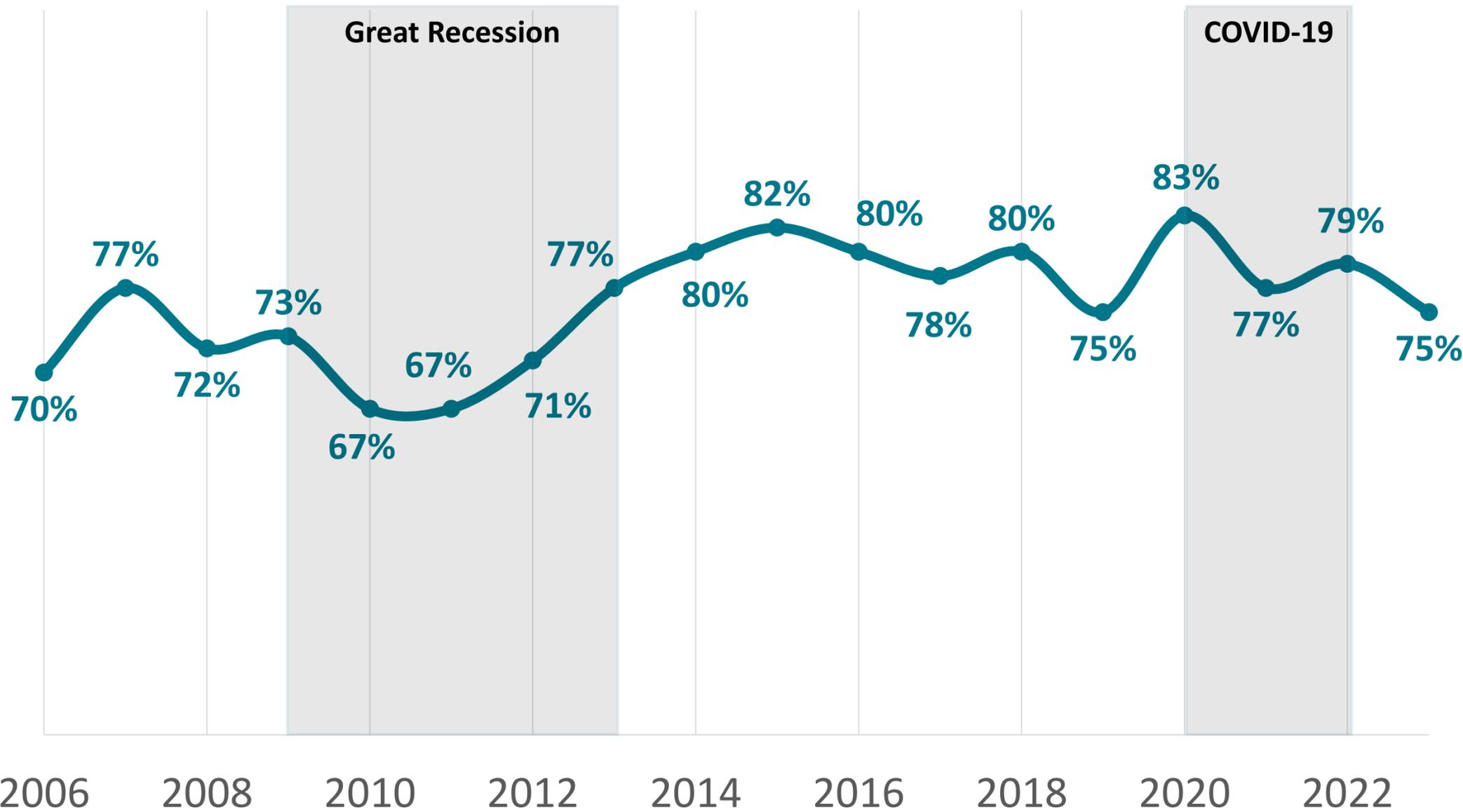
Note: “Learn” was added to the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners Vision Statement in 2016.



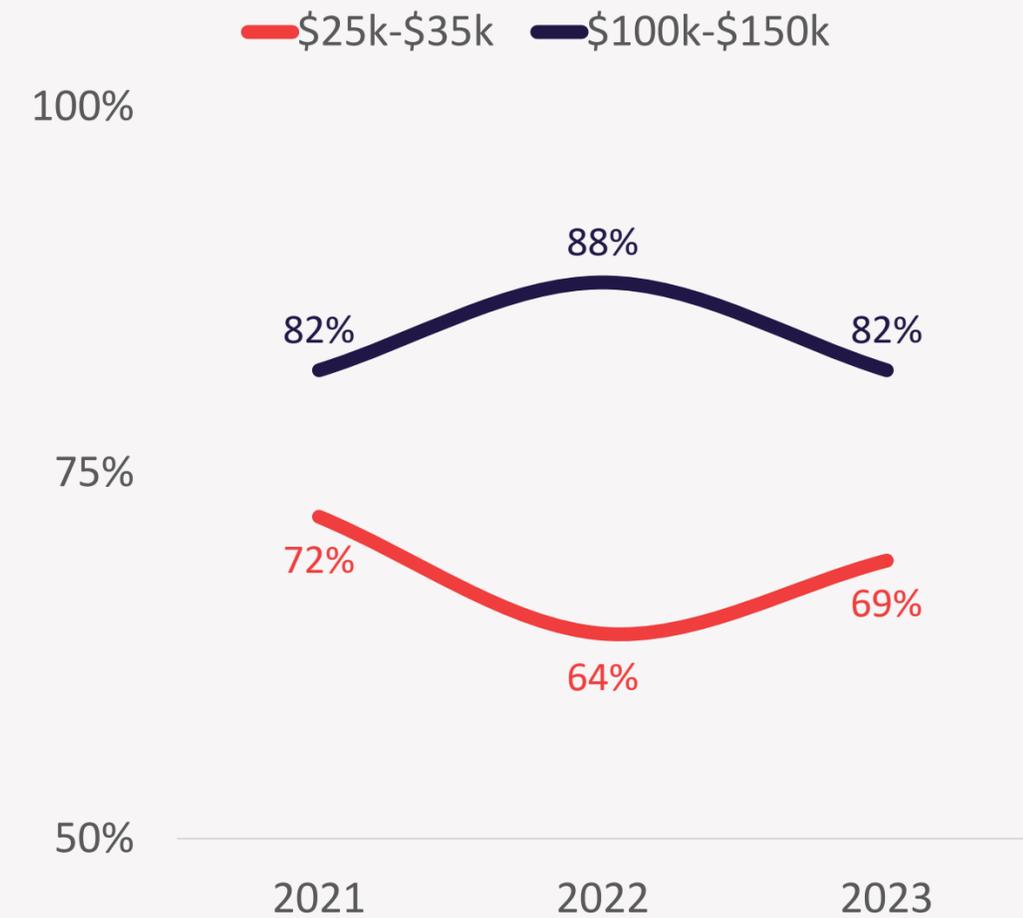
# Work

Survey respondents rating Mecklenburg County as a “Good” or “Excellent” place to Work.

## Work



Respondents with lower annual household incomes were less likely to consider Mecklenburg a “Good” or “Excellent” place to work.

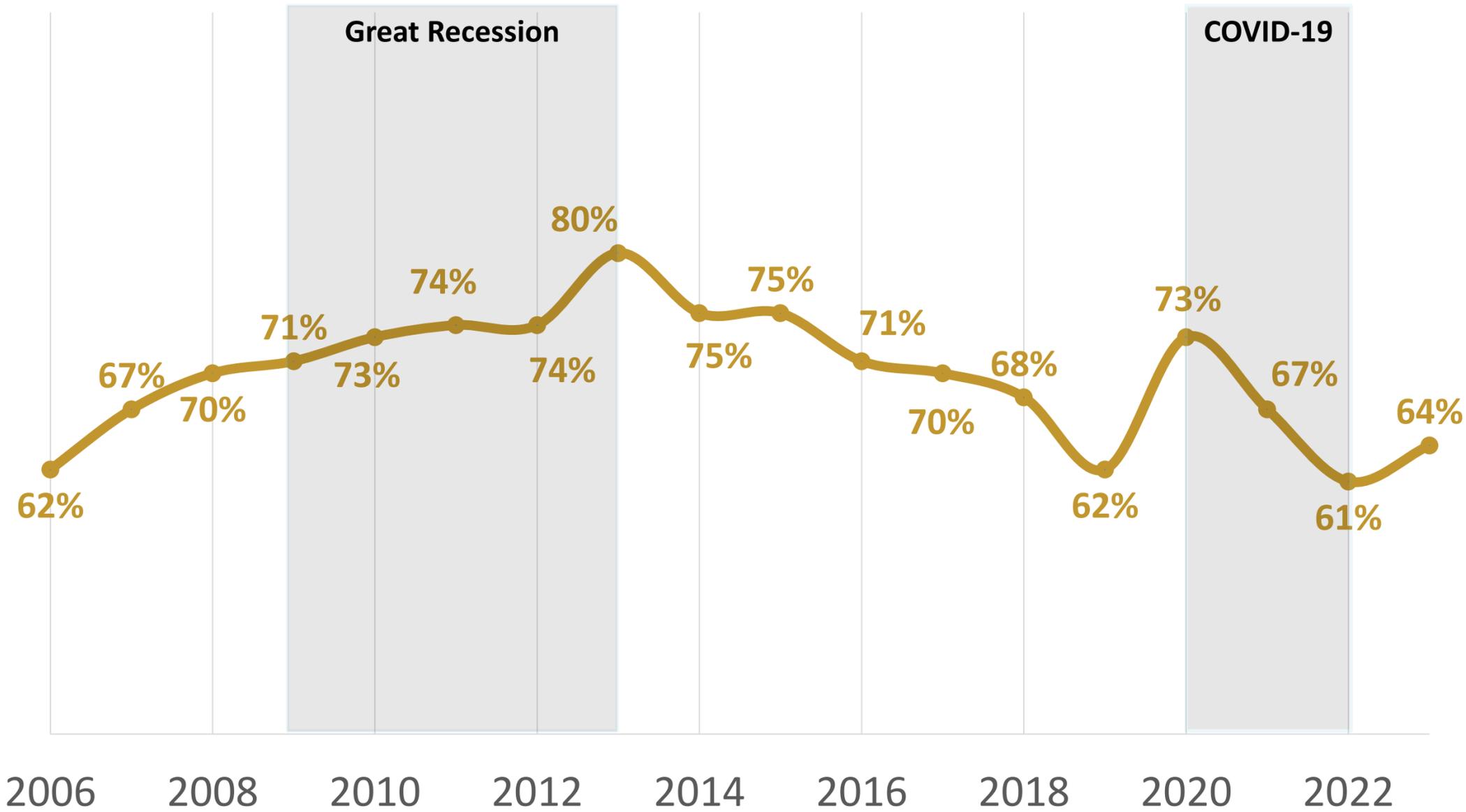




# Recreate

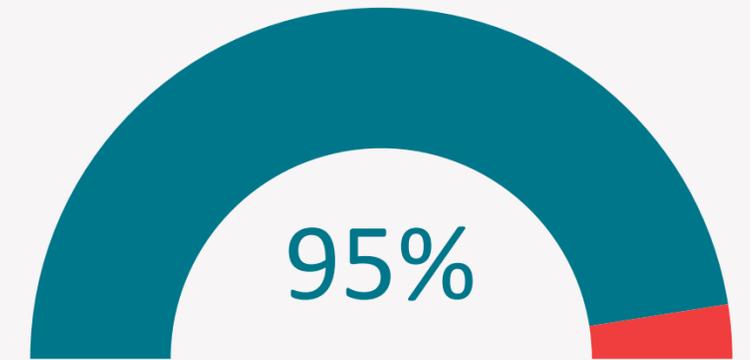
Survey respondents rating Mecklenburg County as a “Good” or “Excellent” place to Recreate.

## Recreate



## Park and Recreation Customer Satisfaction Rates

Park Programs



Facilities



Greenway Safety

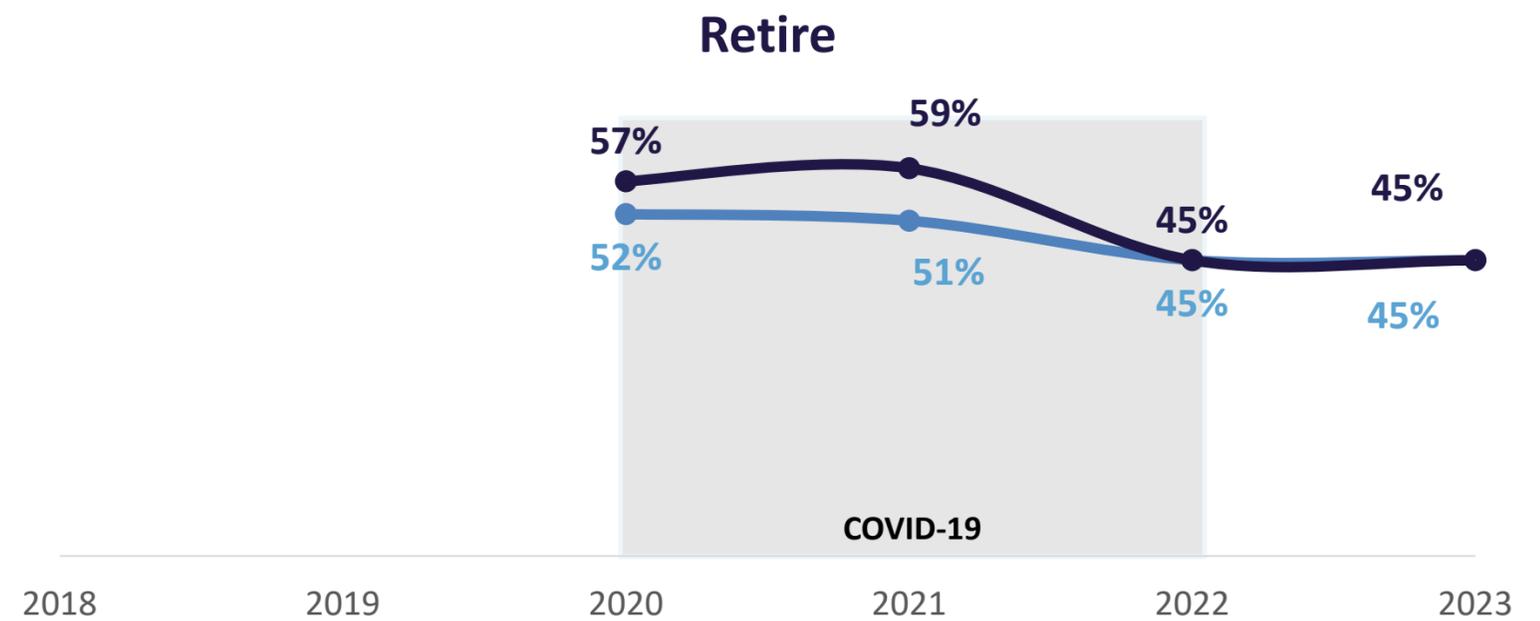
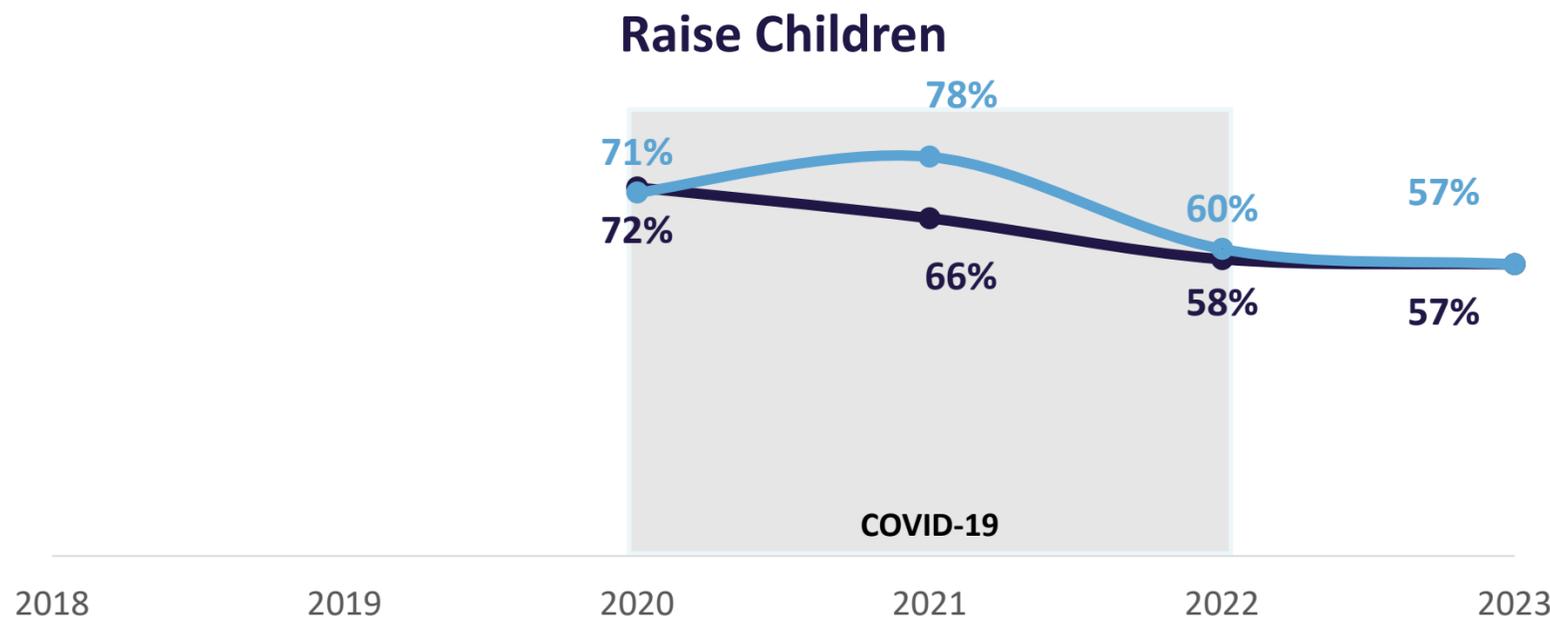
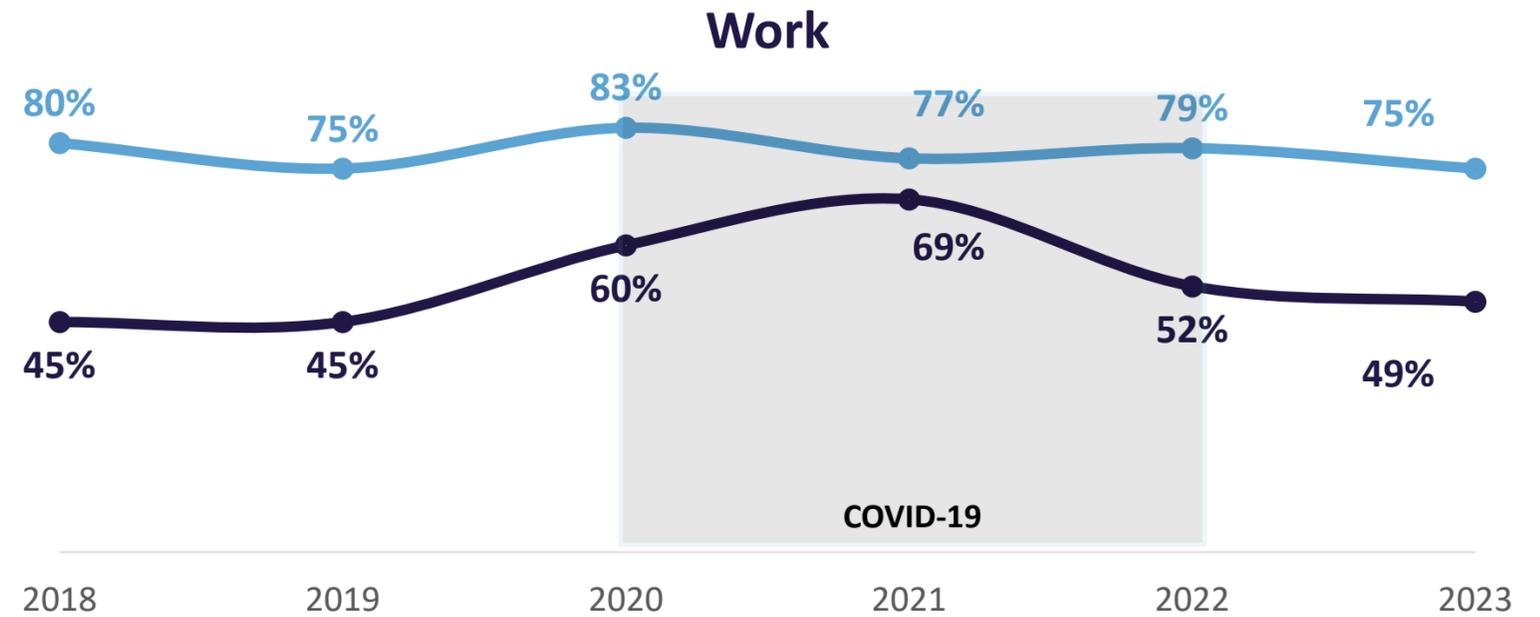
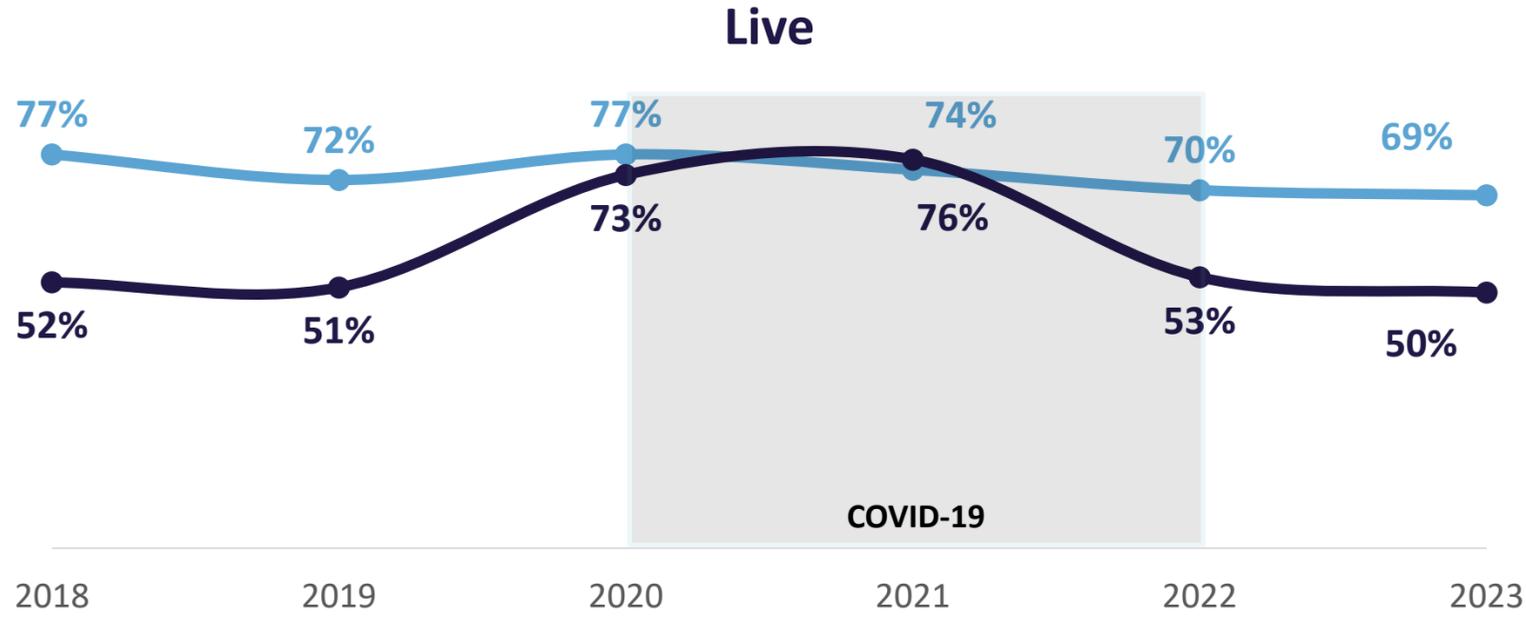




# National Benchmarks

Color Key  
Mecklenburg County ■ Large cities/counties ■

## Perceptions of Mecklenburg County as a Community:

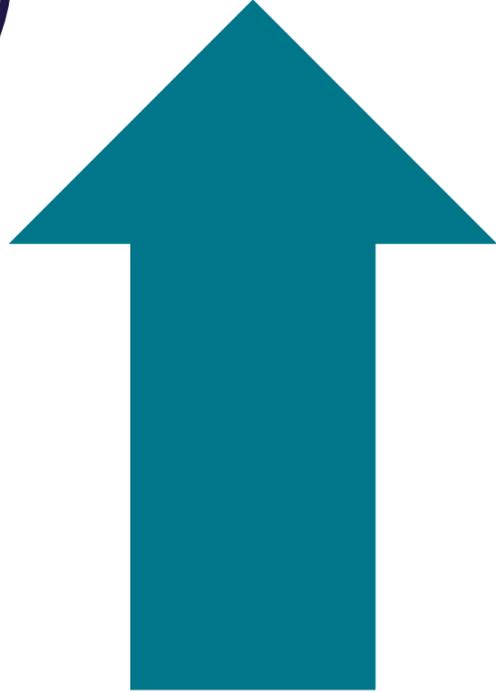


Note: 'Raise Children' and 'Retire' were added to the survey in 2020.

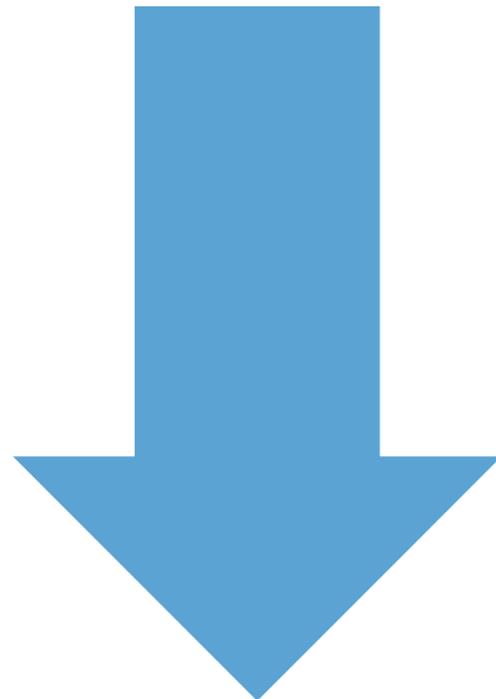
Data Source: 2018-2023 Mecklenburg County Community Surveys, 2018-2023 ETC Direction Finder Surveys. Answers represent "Good" + "Excellent"



# Community Vision Summary



Community perception of Mecklenburg as a place to **Learn** and **Recreate** both *increased* in 2023.



Community perception of Mecklenburg County as a place to **Live** and **Work** *declined* in 2023 but continues to match national benchmarks.



# Resident Engagement

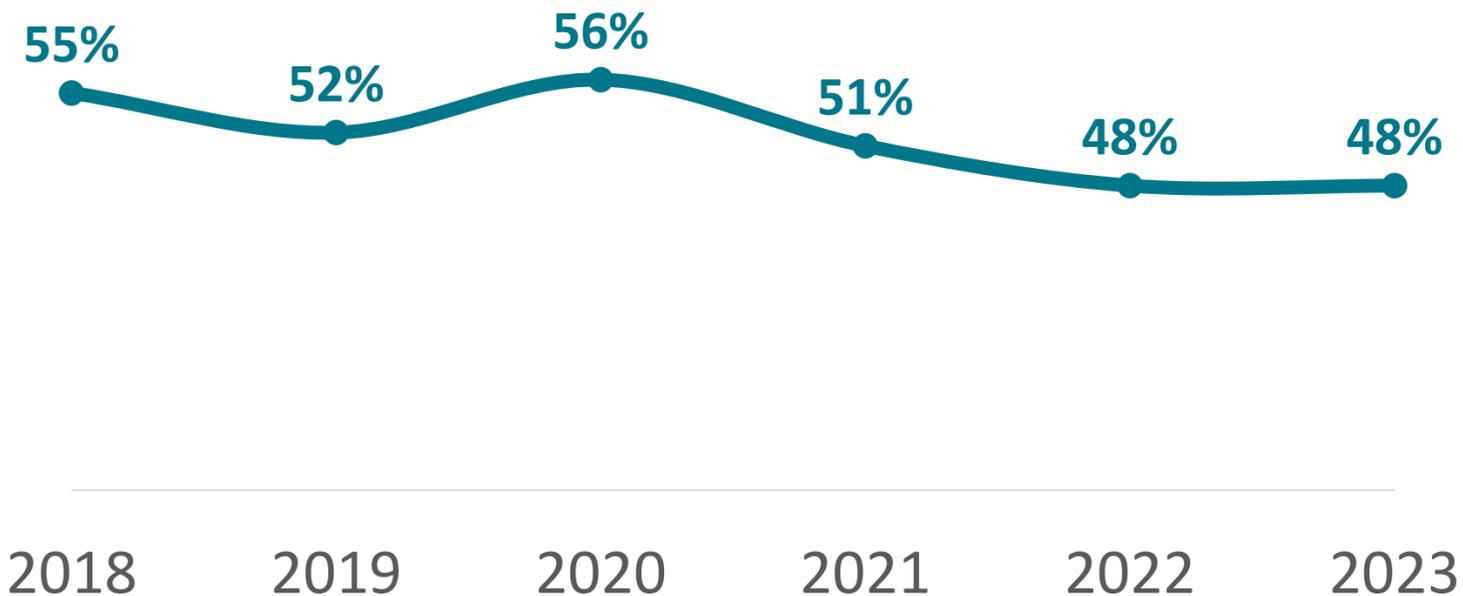
# Communication

Since 2018, the Community Survey asked residents two questions about County communications:

## Transparency

Do you consider Mecklenburg County to be open and transparent with information about County issues, services and performance?

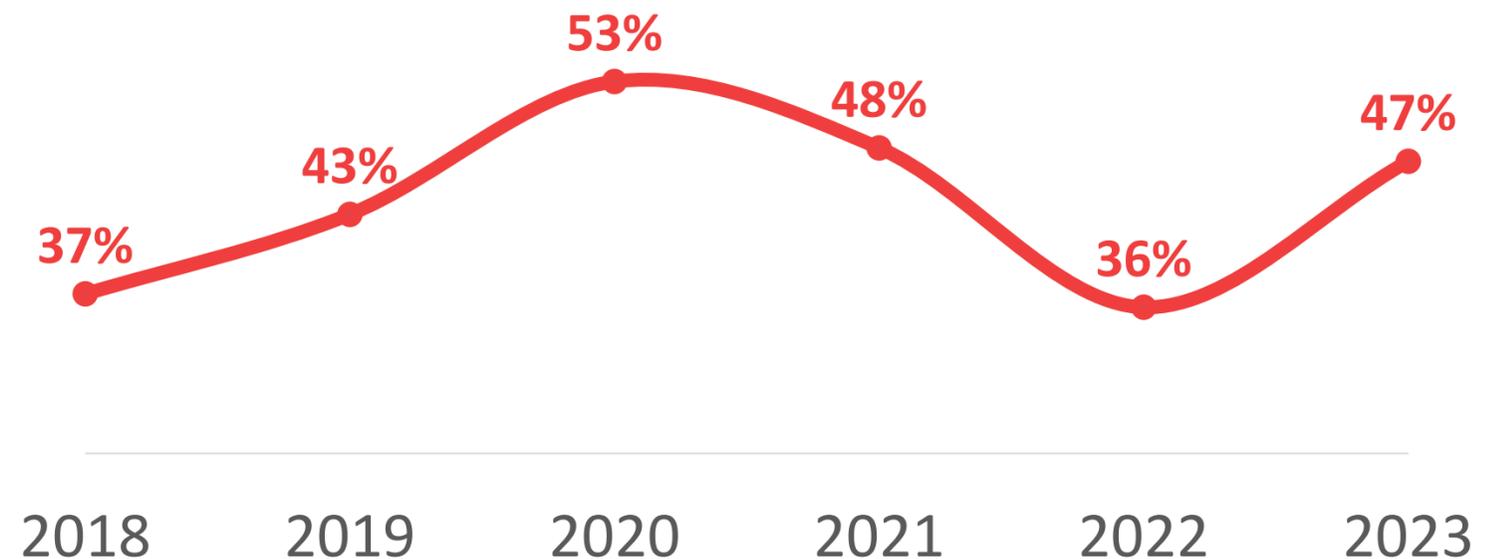
Percentage of “Yes” Responses



## Quality of Information

How good of a job would you say the Mecklenburg County government does communicating information about County services and programs?

Percentage of “Good” and “Excellent” Responses

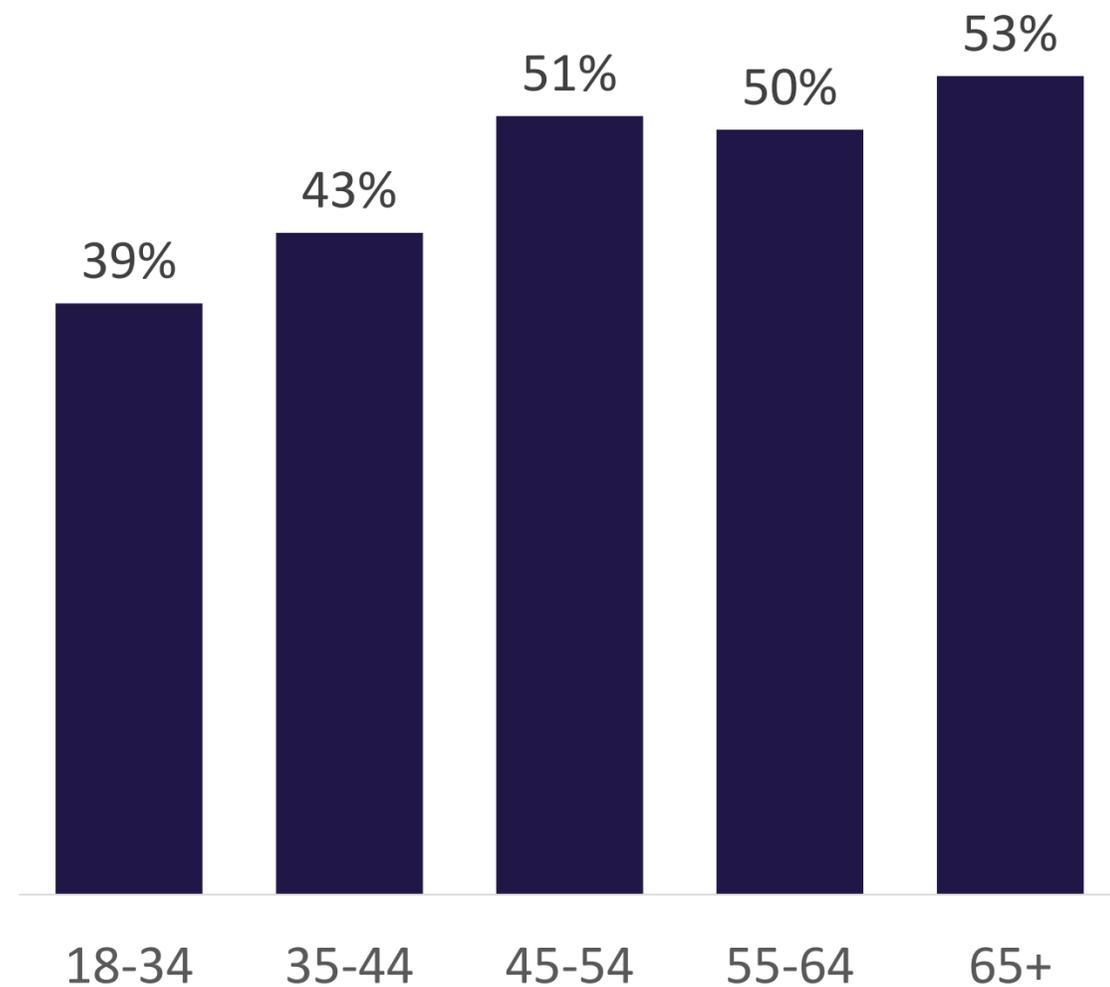


Data Source: 2018-2023 Mecklenburg County Community Surveys.

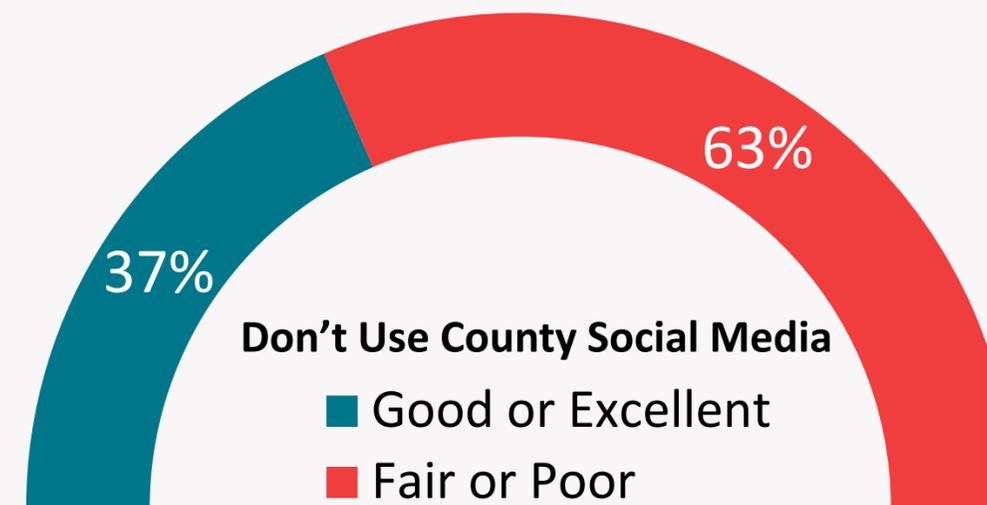
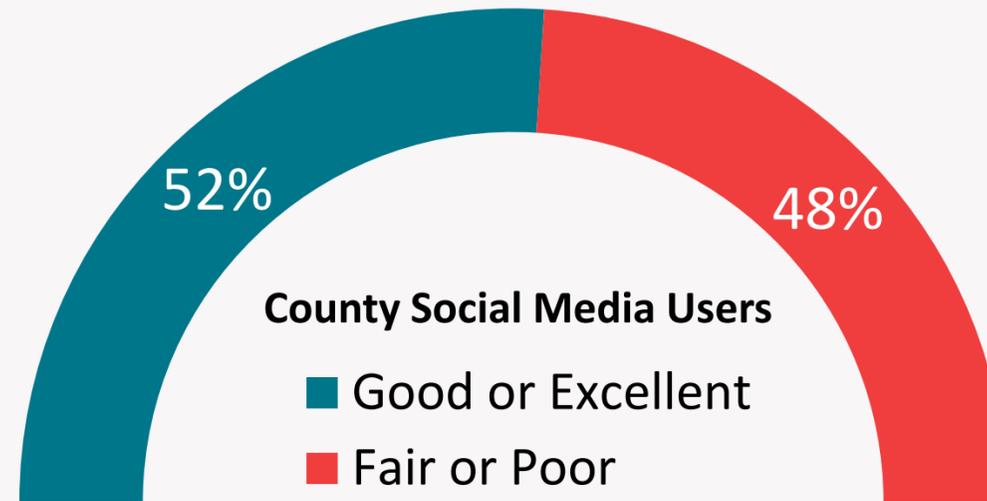
Note: For the transparency question above, 31% of all respondents stated that they “Don’t Know.” The results above exclude the “Don’t Know” responses.

# Quality of Communication

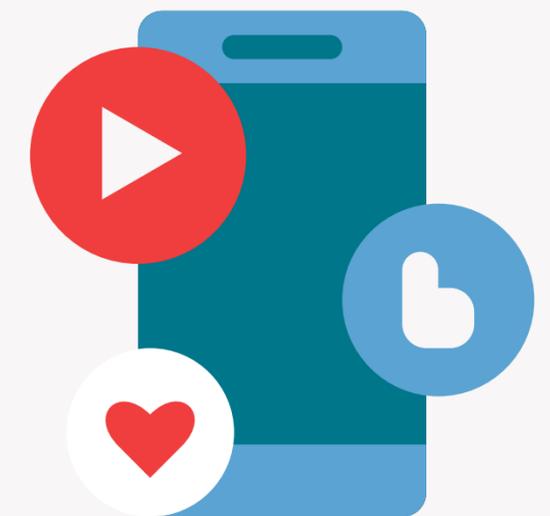
Survey respondents aged 18-34 were least likely to rate the quality of County communication as “Good” or “Excellent.” Those ages 65 and older were most satisfied with County communication.



## Impact of Social Media Use on Perception of Communication

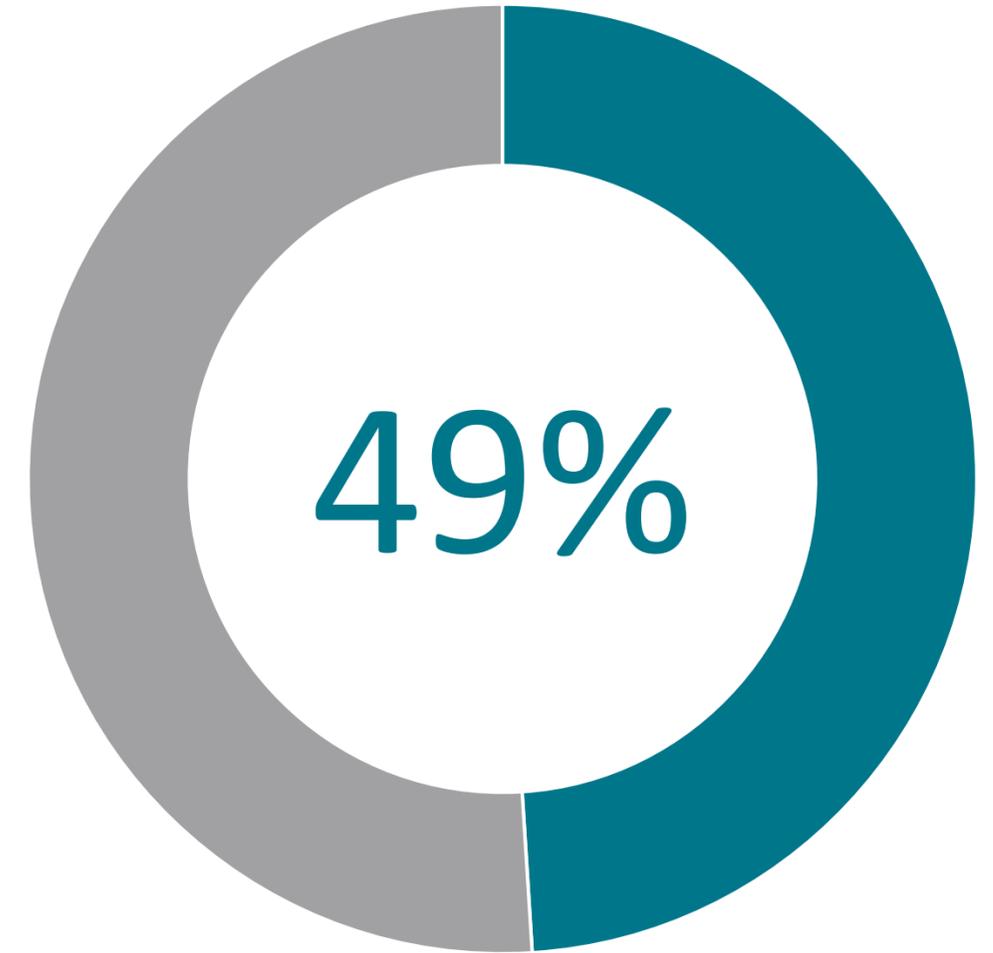
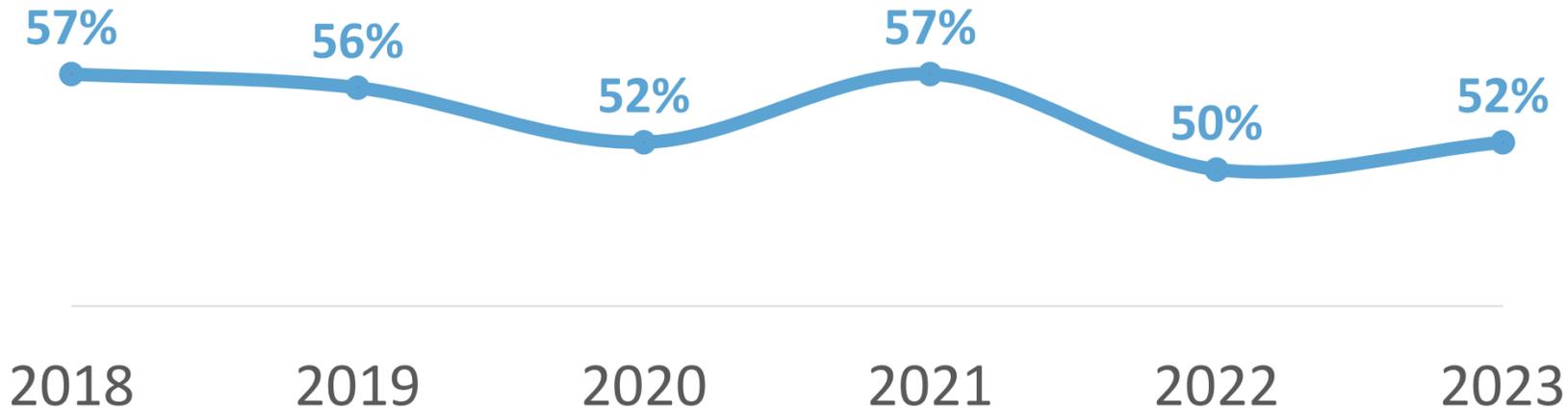


Mecklenburg County social media users report higher levels of satisfaction with County communication.



# Civic Participation

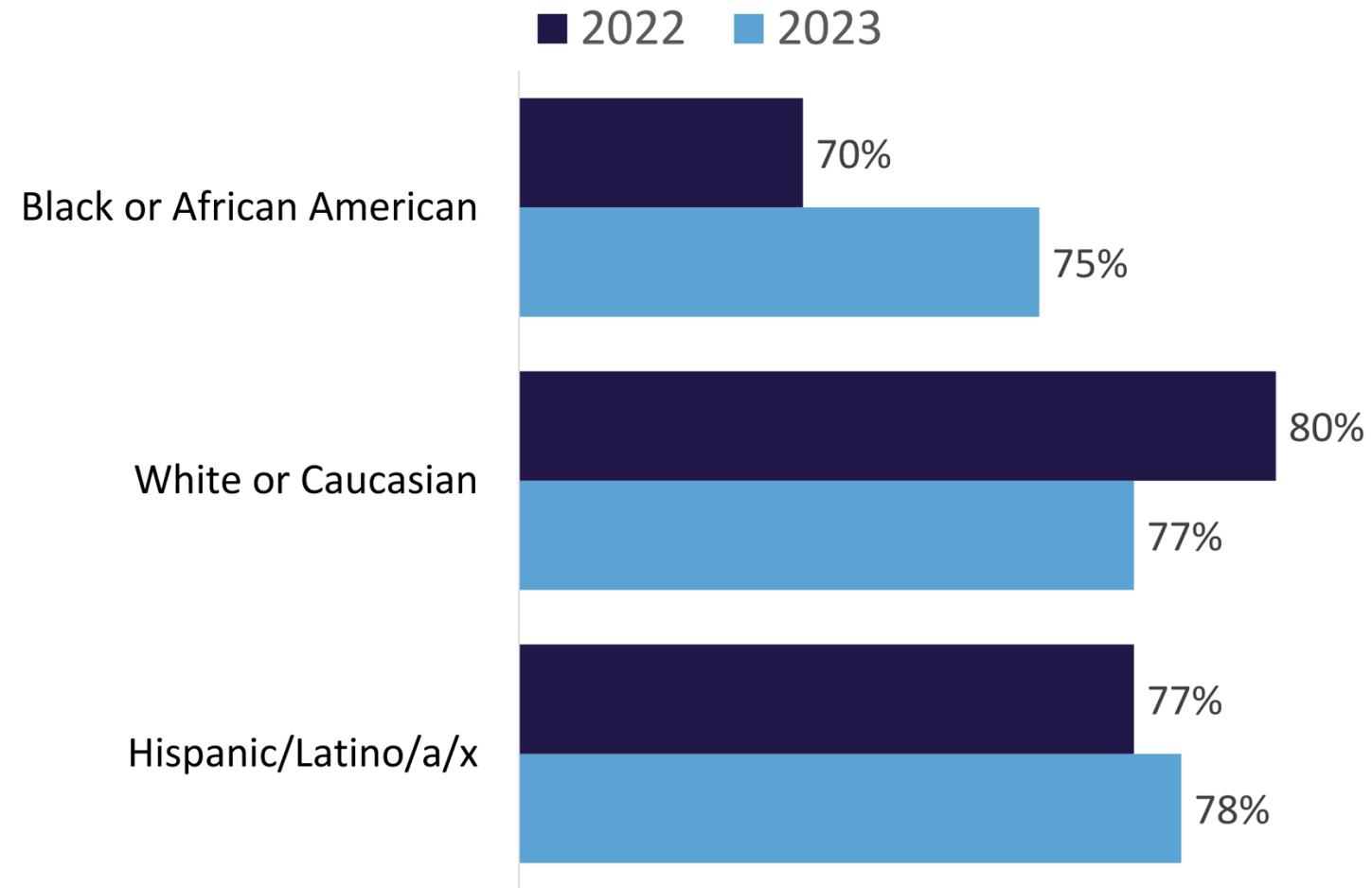
The percent of respondents who are satisfied with opportunities for resident participation in county policy development and decision-making remains below pre-pandemic levels.



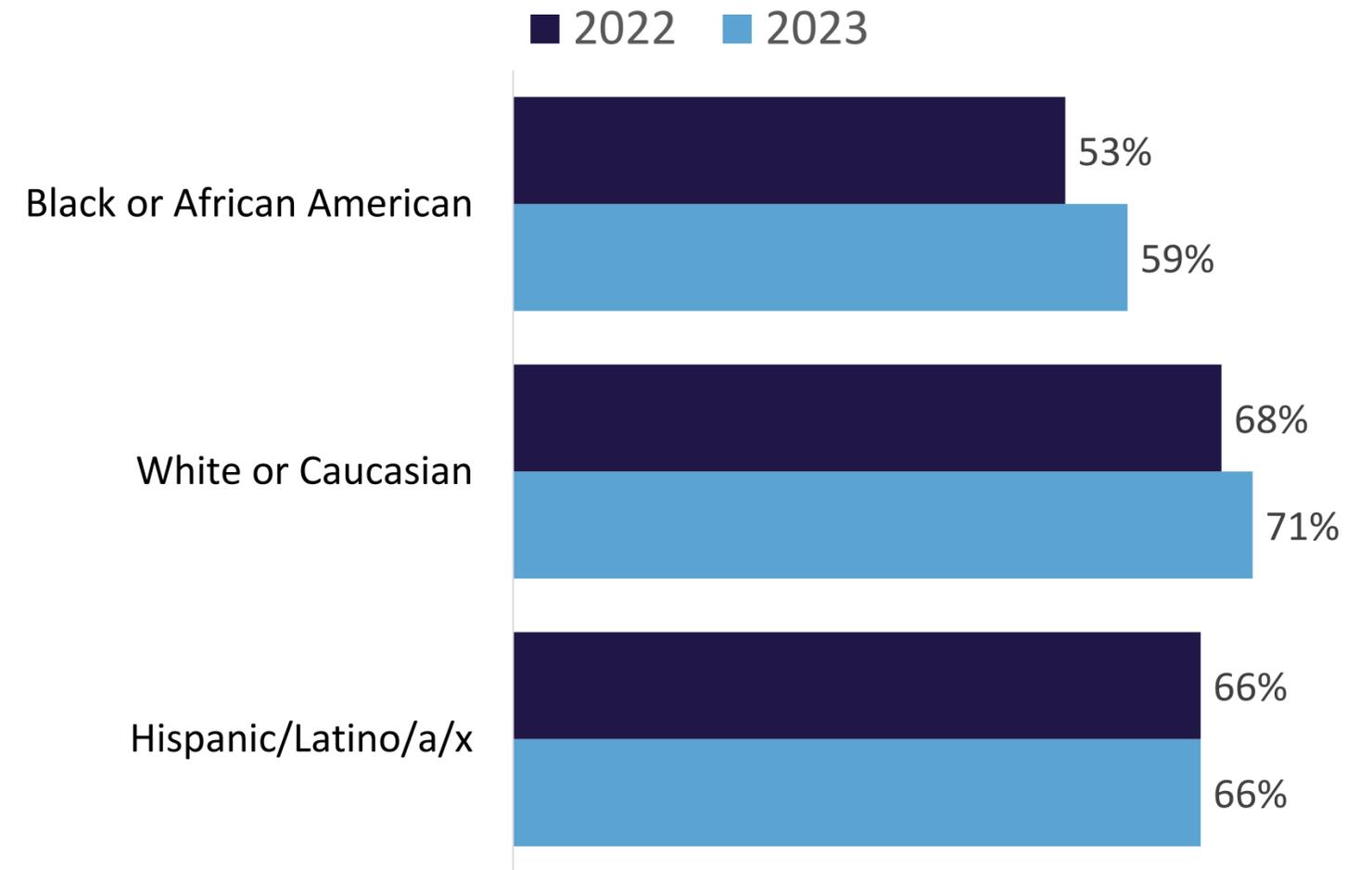
Nearly half (49%) of respondents were interested in participating in the County's budget process through community workshops, budget surveys, public hearings, and online activities.

# Equity

Mecklenburg County honors the identity of individuals and treats them with dignity and respect.



Mecklenburg County services are racially equitable.



Black or African American respondents were the least likely to “agree” or “strongly agree” with the statements above. However, this group also saw the greatest increase in satisfaction from 2022 to 2023.

Data Source: 2022-2023 Mecklenburg County Community Surveys.





# Programs and Services

# Public Health Programs

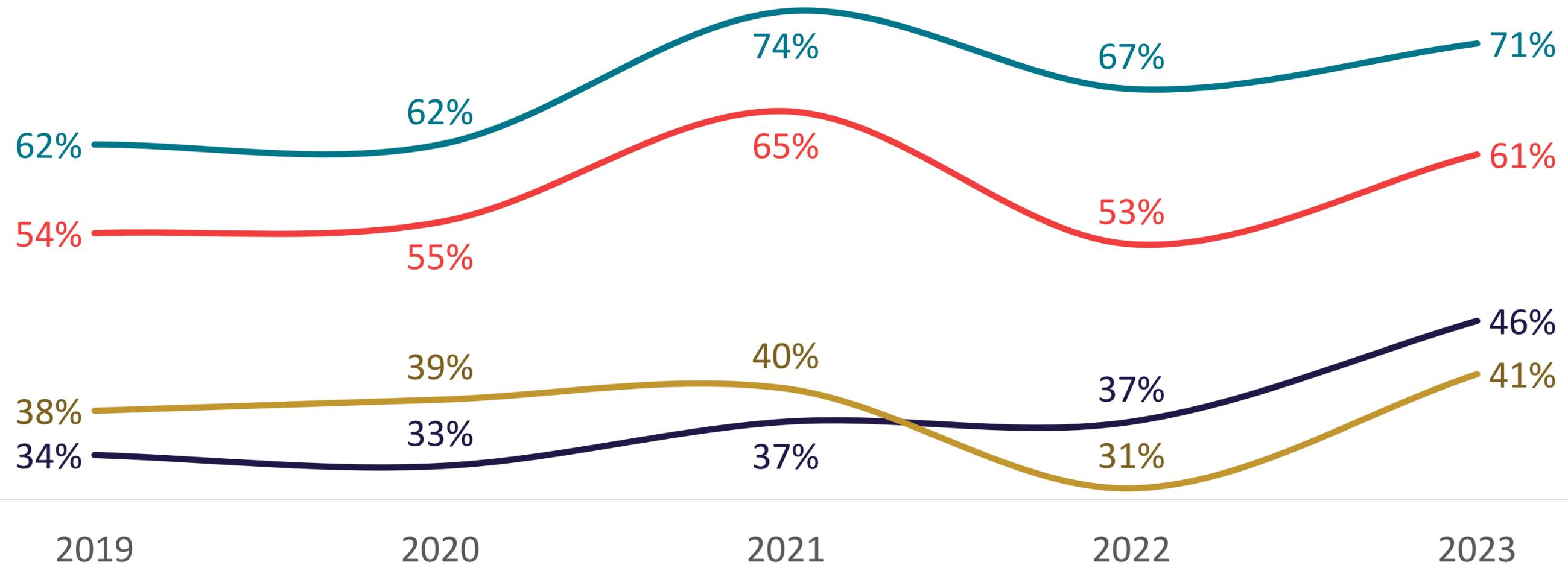
Did you know County provides children with immunizations against vaccine-preventable diseases (e.g., polio, measles)?

Did you know County offers HIV & sexually transmitted disease testing & HIV Case Management services?

Are you aware of a prevention method called PrEP, which is a pill taken to help prevent spread of HIV?

Did you know County provides family planning services at a cost based on residents ability to pay (sliding-fee scale)?

Compared to pre-pandemic results, awareness for these select Public Health programs has increased across all four programs.



# Social Services and Programs

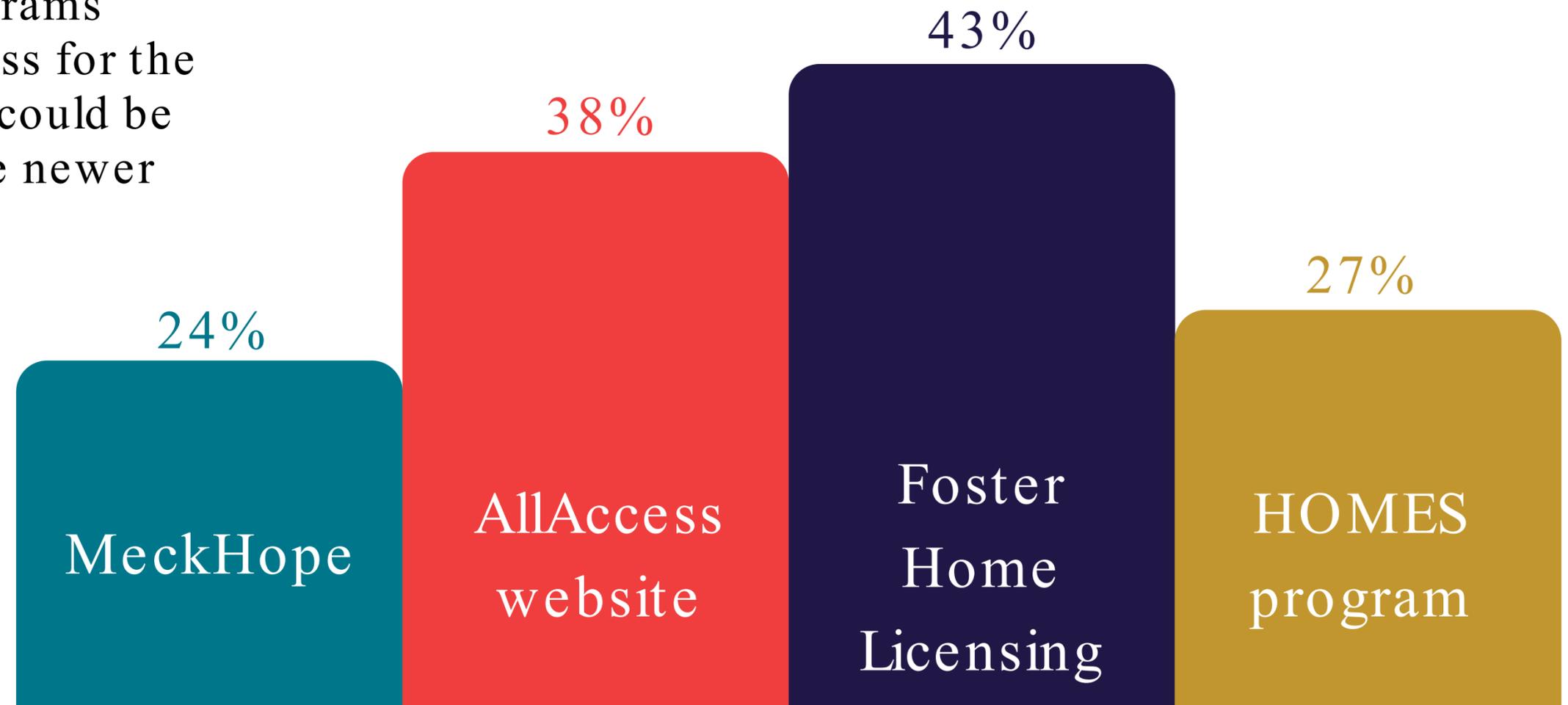
Are you aware that the County launched MeckHope initiative to provide residents with low cost & no cost mental health & drug/alcohol-related services?

Did you know that the County has a website ([allaccess.mecknc.gov](http://allaccess.mecknc.gov)) for residents to apply for federal & state benefit programs such as Energy Assistance, Food & Nutrition Services, or Medicaid?

Did you know that the County offers training & foster home licensing for people interested in fostering or adopting?

Did you know that the Helping Out Mecklenburg homeowners with Economic Support (HOMES) program provides grants to assist qualified residential homeowners in reducing their real estate taxes?

Awareness for Social Services programs varied, but lower levels of awareness for the MeckHope and HOMES programs could be attributed to the fact that these are newer programs.



# Senior Initiatives and Programs

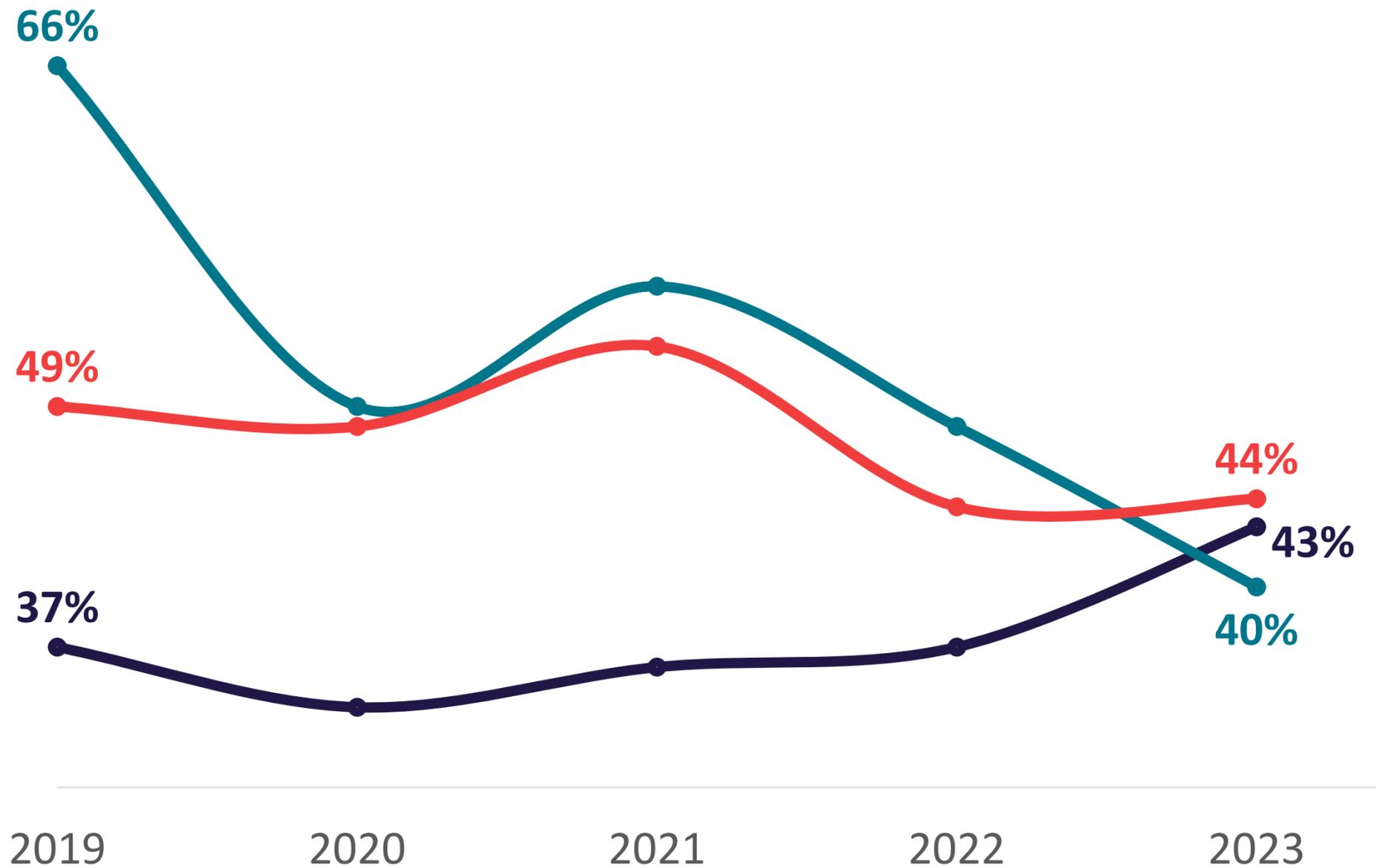
Are you aware of property tax exclusions for low-income elderly or disabled homeowners?

Did you know County operates a dedicated 24-hour hotline (704-336-CARE) for reporting abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a senior or adult with disabilities?

Are you aware that County has a Senior Nutrition Program that provides free lunch meals & activities for seniors 60 years & older?

Awareness for the Senior Nutrition Program and the 24-hour senior abuse hotline have fallen from pre-pandemic levels.

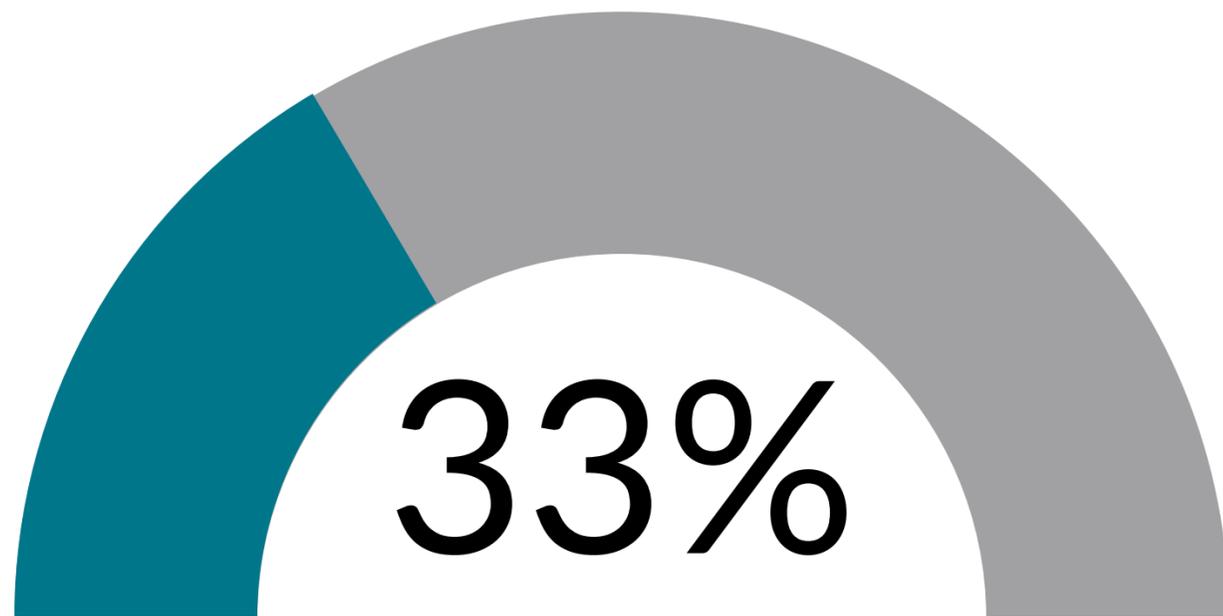
However, awareness of property tax exclusions has steadily risen to 43% since 2019, following increased marketing surrounding the 2023 Revaluation.



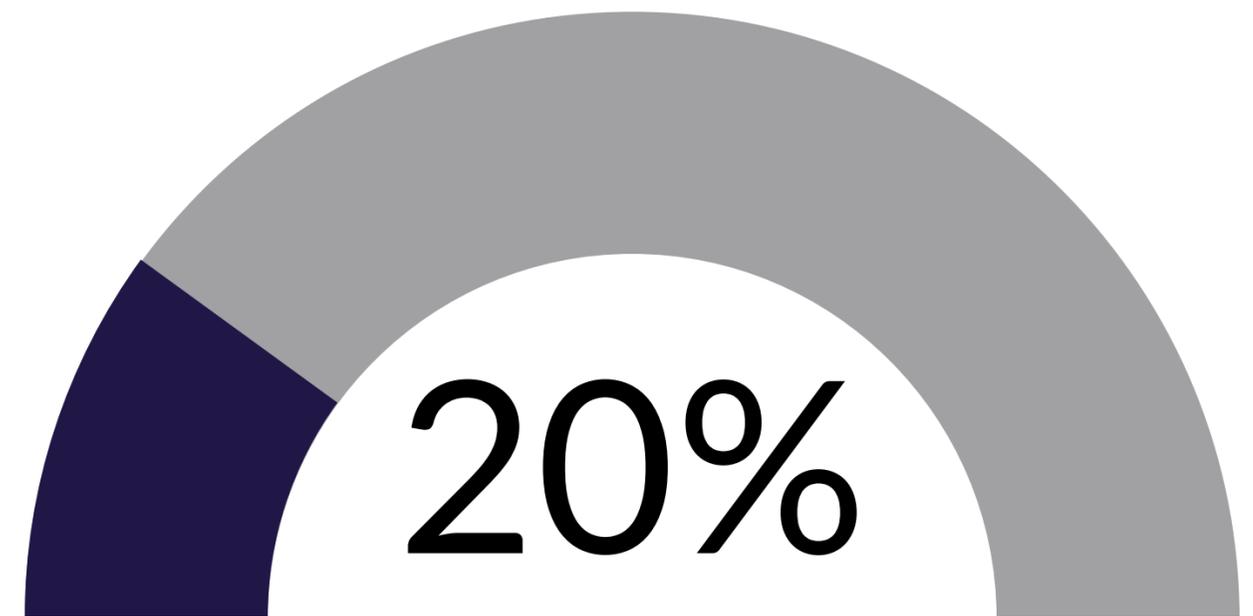
# Childcare Subsidies

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?



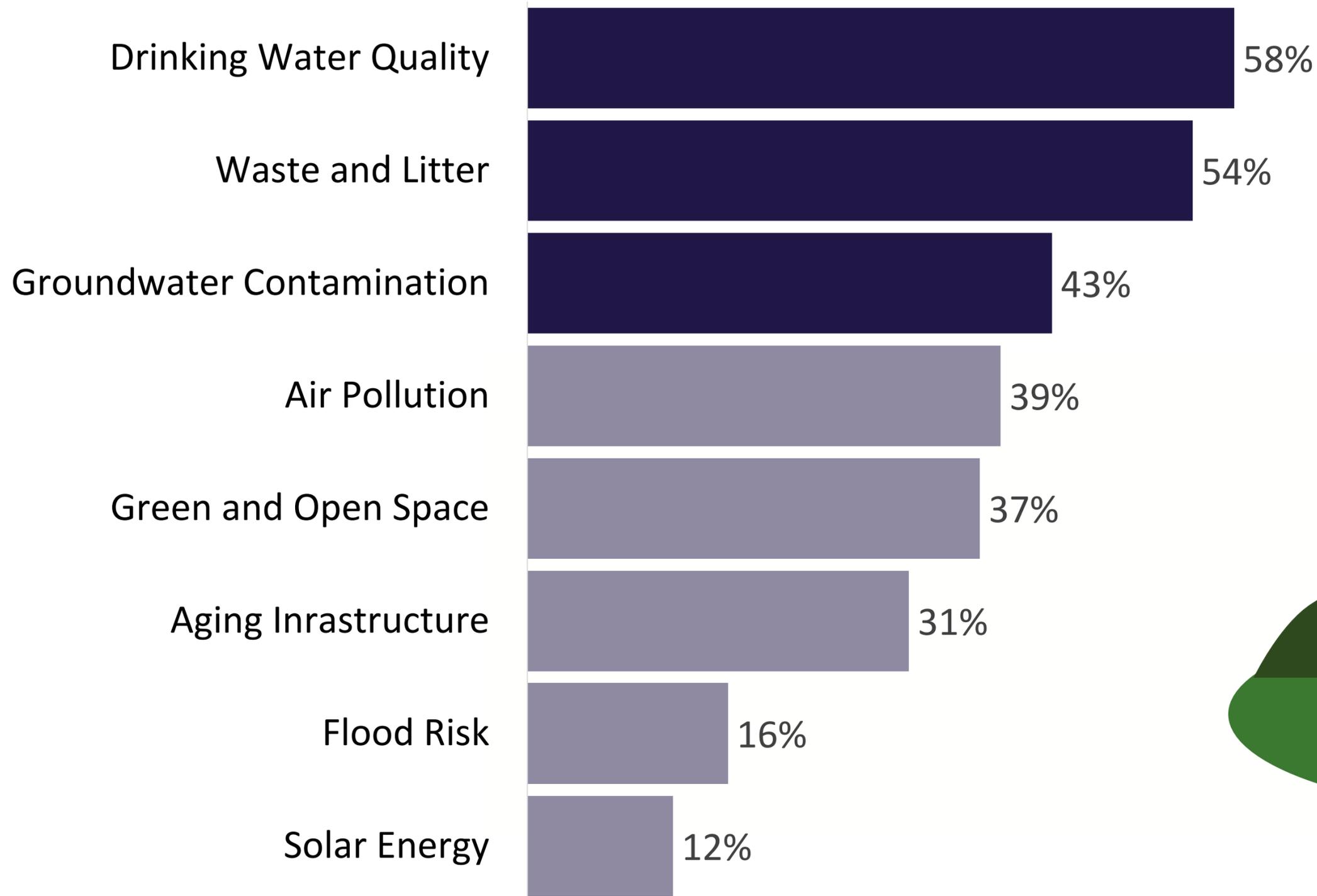
Black or African-American residents and households earning under \$15K were the most likely to be aware of the County's childcare subsidies program as well as the expansion of the program. Respondents aged 18-34 reported lower levels of awareness of childcare subsidies and the expansion of the program.



# Environment and Quality of Life



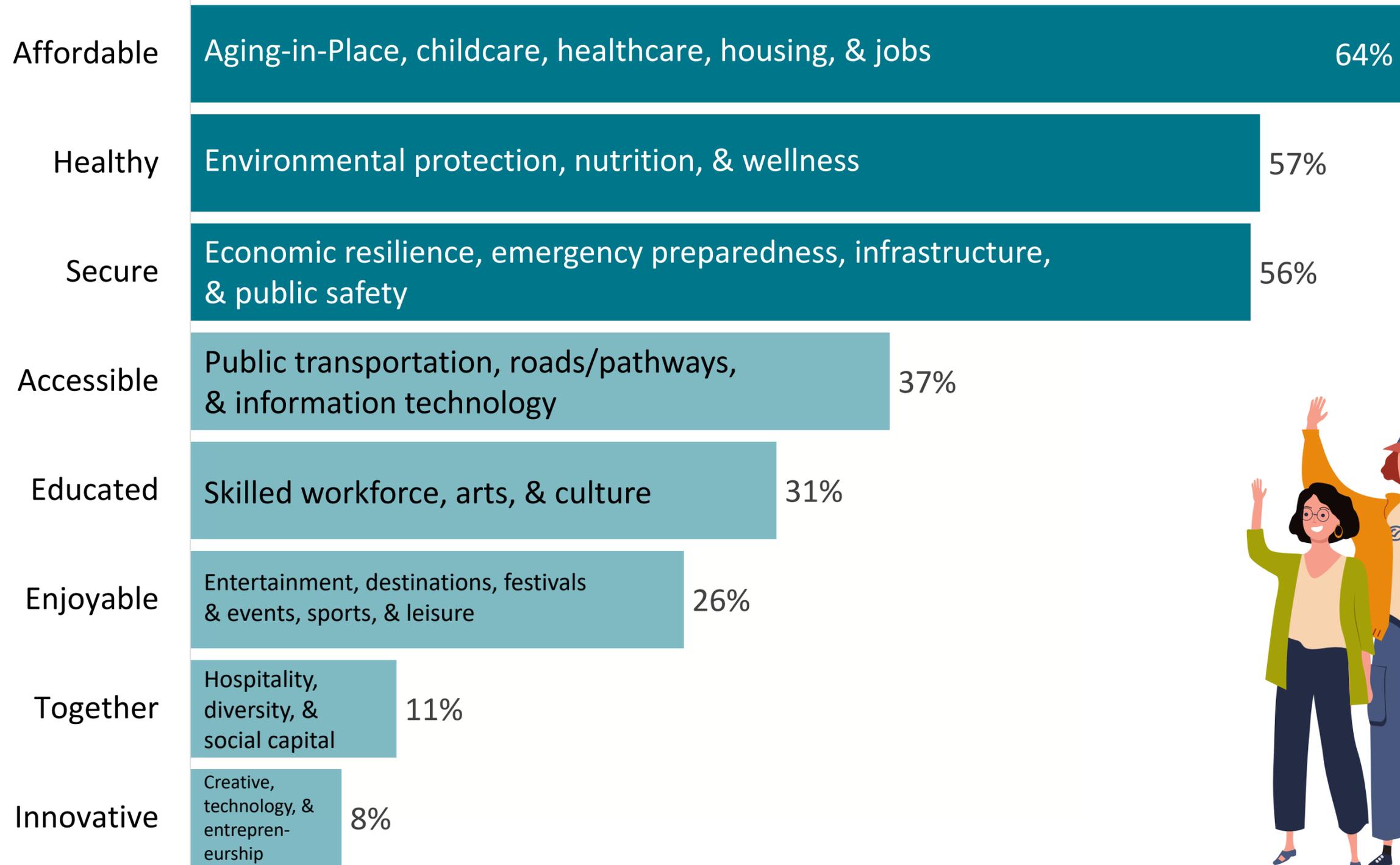
# Top Three Environmental Issues



Below are eight environmental issues that the County is addressing. Which **THREE** of the issues should receive the most emphasis from County leaders?



# Top Three Aspects of Quality of Life



The following words are the eight aspects of Quality of Life. Which **THREE** of the words are most important to you?





# Recommendations

# 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).



# Accessing the Results

Results are available [via this dashboard](#) and include the following information:

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





**MECKLENBURG COUNTY**  
North Carolina

# Community Survey 2023

Presented to the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners  
November 14, 2023

Michael Griswold, MPA  
Strategic Planning & Evaluation, Deputy Director  
County Manager's Office