



# Wabash Heartland Innovation Network

## PLACE-MAKING SURVEY RESULTS

### AGGREGATED REPORT

#### **Regional Socio-Demographics**

Nearly 2,500 residents of the Wabash Heartland Region responded to this place-making survey between June 4 and September 4, 2018. Nearly 600 of those residents completed the short-form, paper version of the survey, while nearly 1900 residents responded to the survey online.

Keeping in mind this is a convenience sample, not a scientific one, the “profile” of a typical respondent is as follows: female (68%), employed (75%), between the ages of 35-64 (64%), with at least a Bachelor’s degree (53% with Bachelor’s degree or Master’s degree), resident of the region for 11-40 years (54%).

As a baseline question, we asked the survey participants in these 10 counties (Benton, Carroll, Cass, Clinton, Fountain, Montgomery, Pulaski, Tippecanoe, Warren & White) if they identify as a resident of the Wabash Heartland Region; 72% said they do!

In addition, 79% of residents would rate their community overall as either an “excellent” or “good” place to live, while 62% of them would recommend their community to a friend as a good place to raise a family. As part of the survey design, we intentionally left the term “community” open to the interpretation of individual residents. As we conduct annual follow-up surveys to measure against this baseline, we will increasingly lend definition to the term.

#### **Regional Vitality**

Overall, regional residents rank parks and trails (50%), access to quality affordable healthcare (37%), and shopping and dining (26%) as their No. 1 most valuable community asset. At the same time, 79% of residents say they have to “leave the community to take advantage of services, purchase products, or patronize businesses they prefer.”

While 61% of respondents say it “is easy to find information about activities and events occurring in our community,” 39% disagree. Respondents are split more evenly (47% agree, 53% disagree) regarding whether there are activities available for children, teens and families.

## **Regional Education**

Overall, regional residents chose workforce and education alignment (53%), providing youth workforce opportunities (30%), and work ethic certification (29%) as their No. 1 picks for how to improve the regional education ecosystem.

WHIN received a mandate from regional residents, 93% of whom insisted that we “need a way to motivate work ethic and engagement among young people.”

However, a split opinion was registered when it comes to the actual services the region provides for the adult workforce. When responding to the question: “Our community promotes and provides adequate training, technical assistance or other workforce education to skill up adult workers,” 41% said they agree and 48% said they disagree. This is a response that will require follow-up qualitative work to determine where the disconnect is occurring.

## **Regional Connectivity**

Overall, regional residents rank community-wide, high-speed Internet (52%), becoming a welcoming community (33%), and community improvements (32%) as the attributes they would most like to see their community improve.

Couple this with residents’ answer to “Do I have access to reliable and affordable high-speed Internet? (56% agree, 43% disagree), and you’ll see that WHIN has received a mandate to improve regional broadband access. A “digital divide” exists between those with the infrastructure and adoption wherewithal, depending largely on where you live in the region.

By contrast, transportation does not show up as a significant barrier (at least for those residents who responded to the survey). Only 24% agreed, and 68% disagreed with the statement: “Transportation access has been a barrier to my mental, social, and/or financial health.”

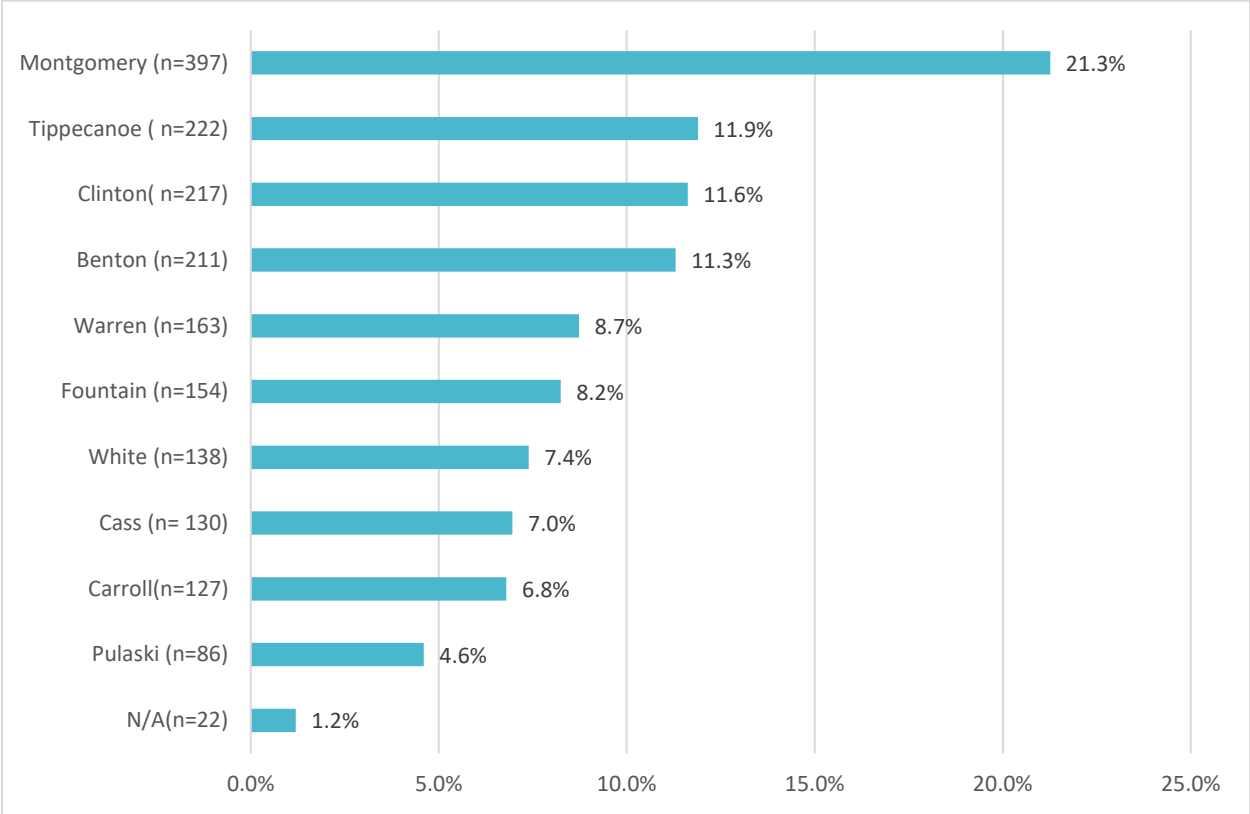
Slightly more than the majority of residents said that their “community has an adequate connected system of parks, trails, green spaces and/or waterways to enjoy” (62% agree, 36% disagree). This is a community asset to build upon from a place-making standpoint, as studies show that millennials are choosing where they want to live over where they have a job (many times basing their decision on the natural beauty and amenities of the location).

## **A WHIN-Win Situation**

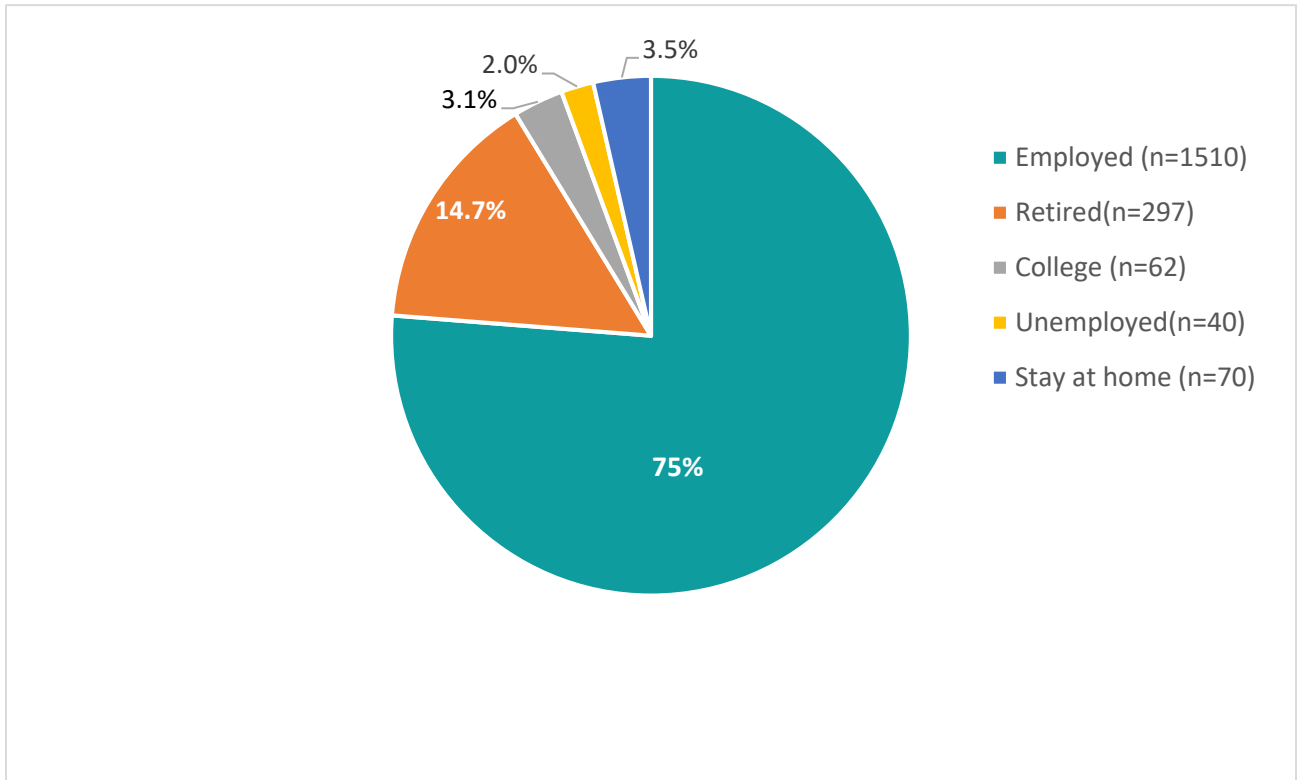
This survey provides the Wabash Heartland Innovation Network (WHIN) a solid foundation to begin its work in convening and catalyzing the region through the Regional Cultivation Initiative. The process for allocating the funds that have been dedicated to region-building will be explained in great detail at technical assistance workshops being hosted in several locations across the region beginning in late November/early December 2018. WHIN is pleased to release this information to the regional residents who participated in the survey—and excited to begin creating opportunities for improvement and engagement within and among these 10 counties.

**Survey Respondents**

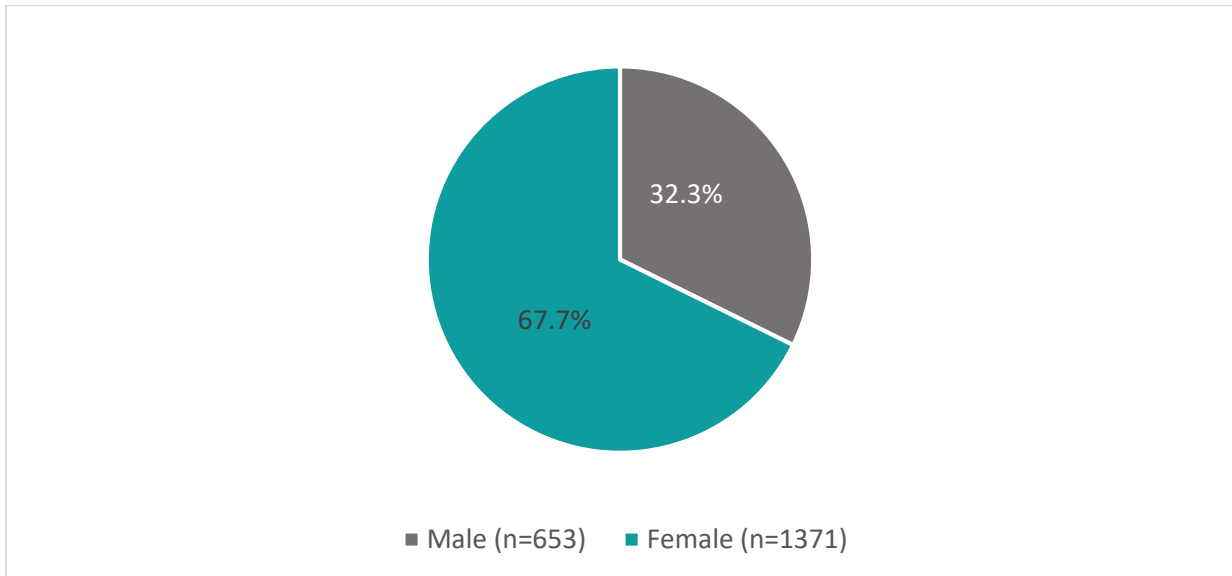
**Socio-Demographics: County of Residence (Out of 1867 Survey Respondents)**



**Socio-Demographics: Employment Status (Out of 1,979 Survey Respondents)**

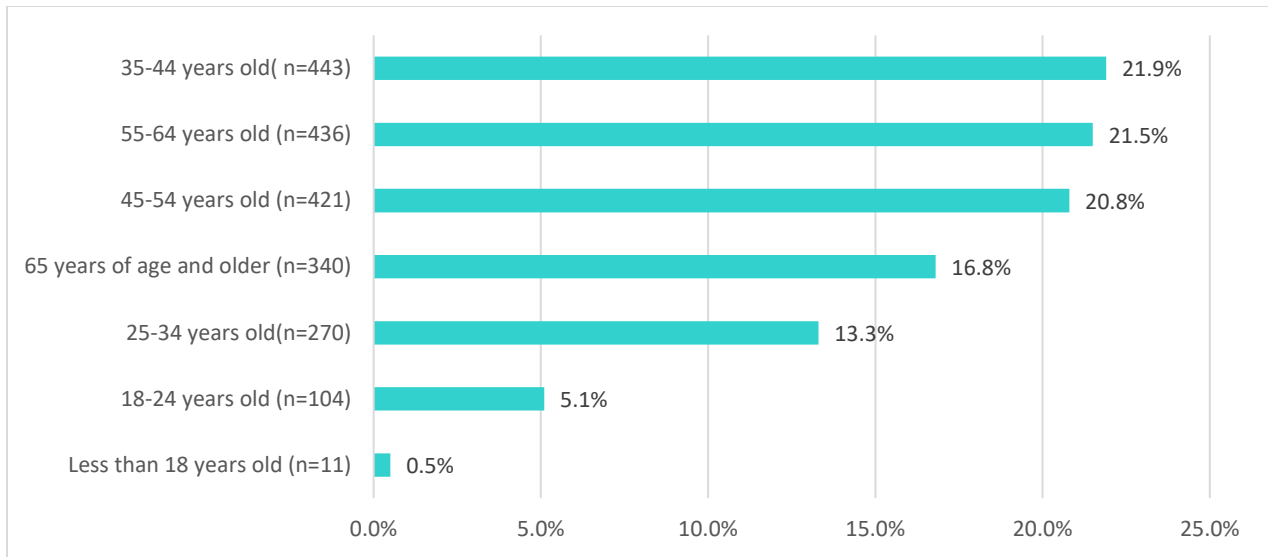


**Socio-Demographics: Gender (Out of 2,024 Survey Respondents)**

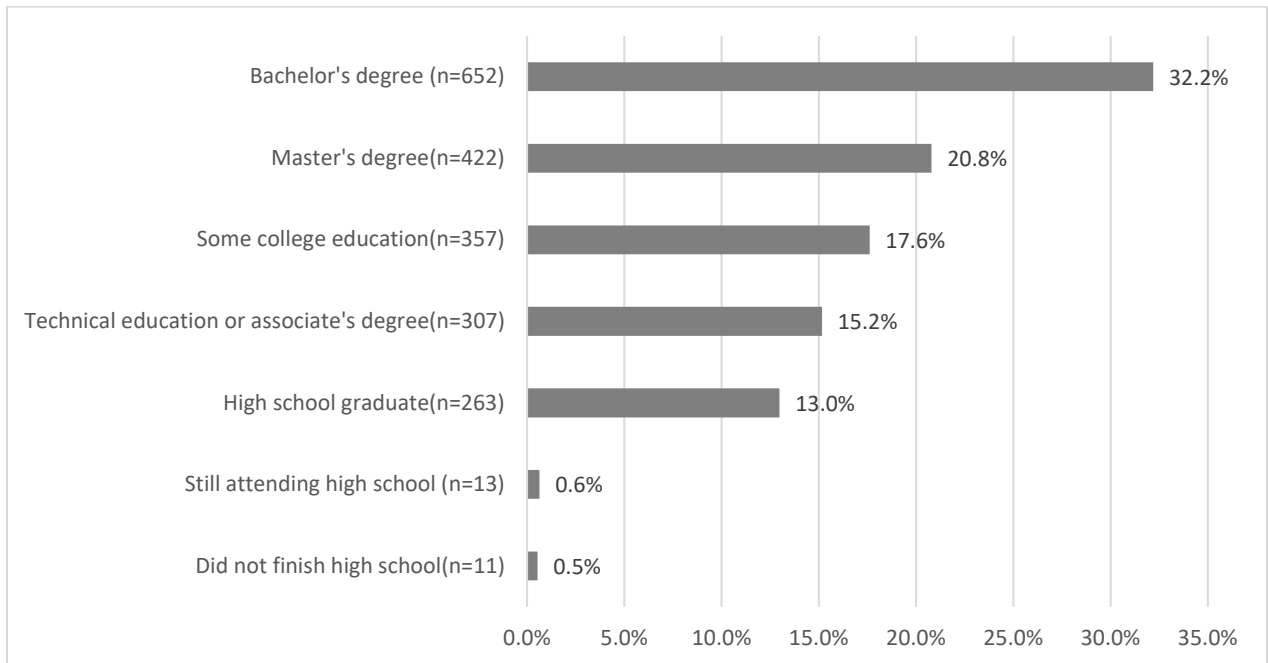


**Note:** 18 survey respondents did not answer this question on the county fair survey.

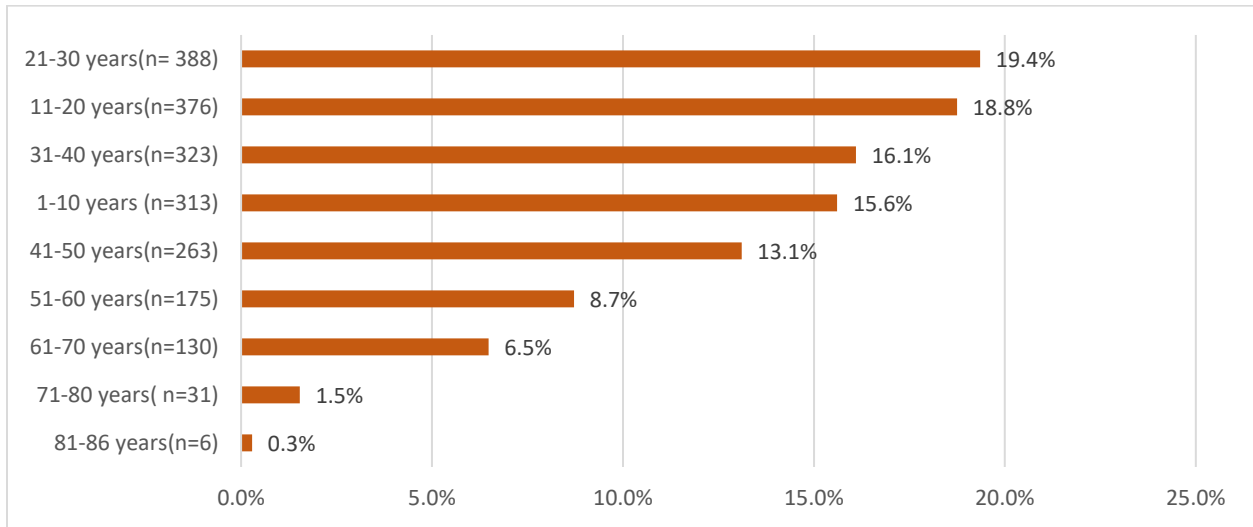
### Socio-Demographics: Age (Out of 2,025 Survey Respondents)



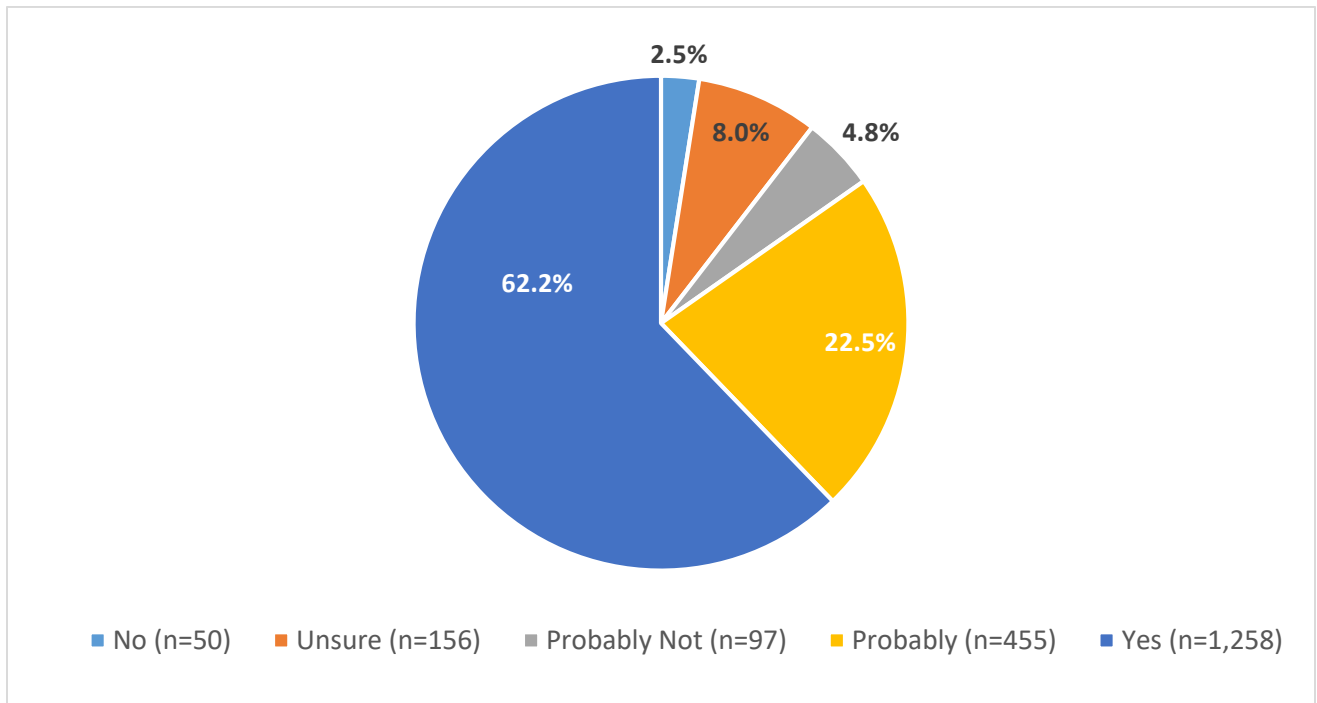
### Socio-Demographics: Educational Attainment (Out of 2,025 Survey Respondents)



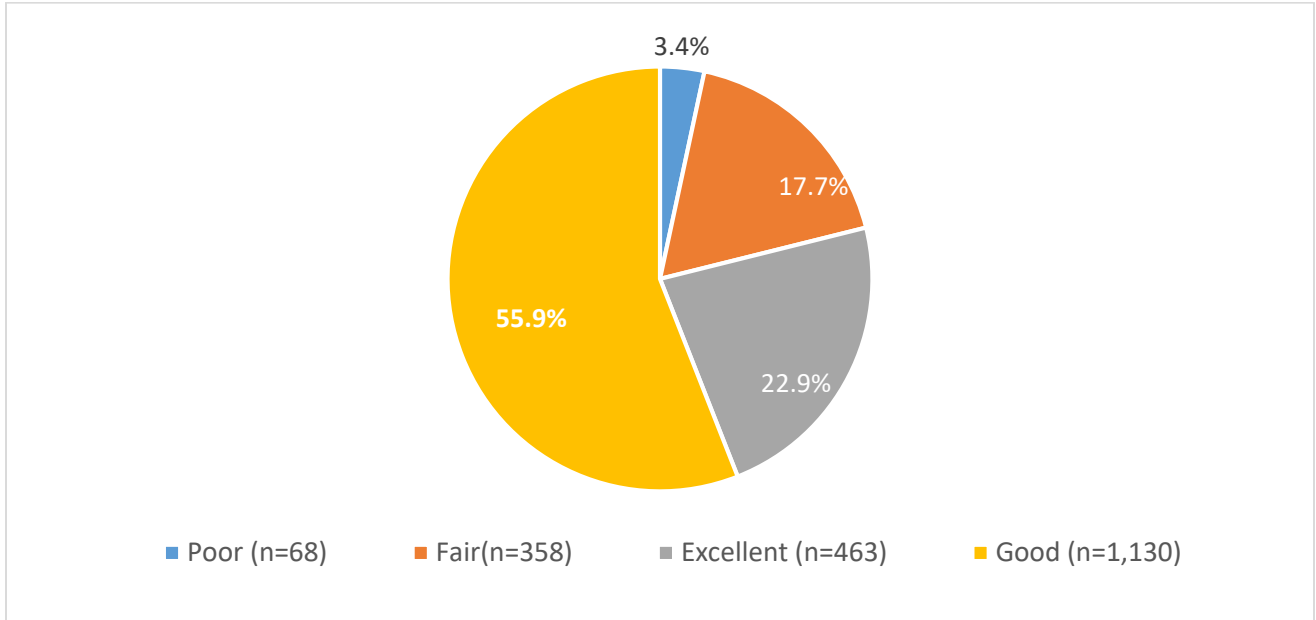
**Socio-Demographics: Years Living/Employed in the Community (Out of 2,005 Survey Respondents)**



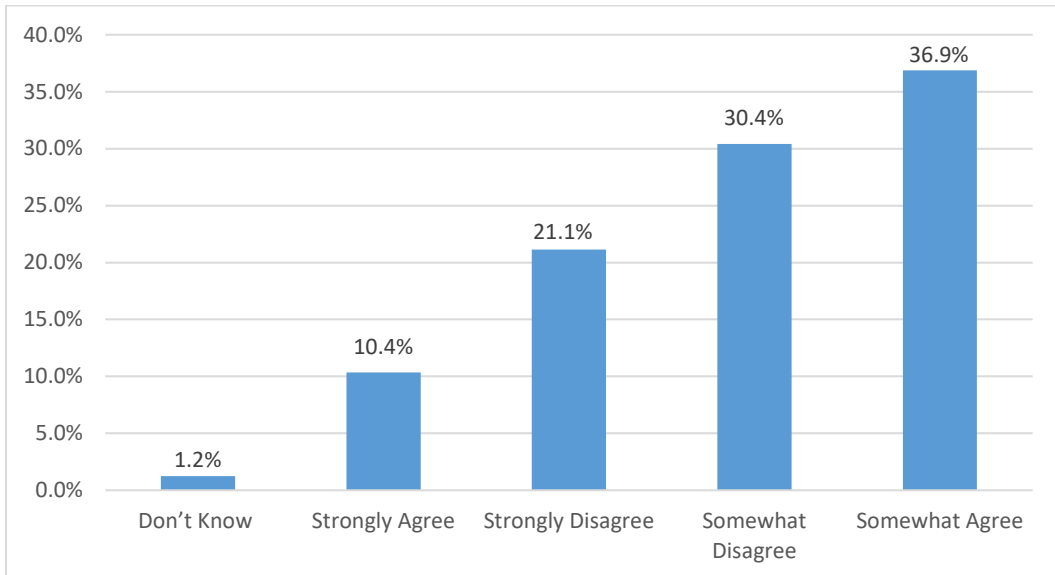
**Socio-Demographics: Would you recommend your community to a friend as a good place to raise a family? (Out of 2,016 Survey Respondents)**



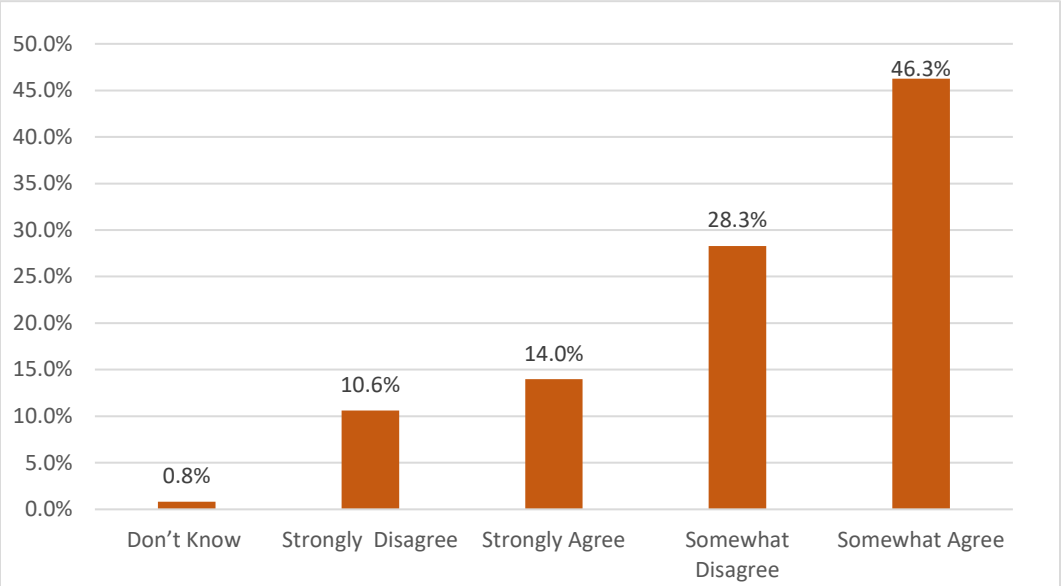
**Socio-Demographics:** How would you rate your community overall as a place to live? (Out of 2,019 Survey Respondents)



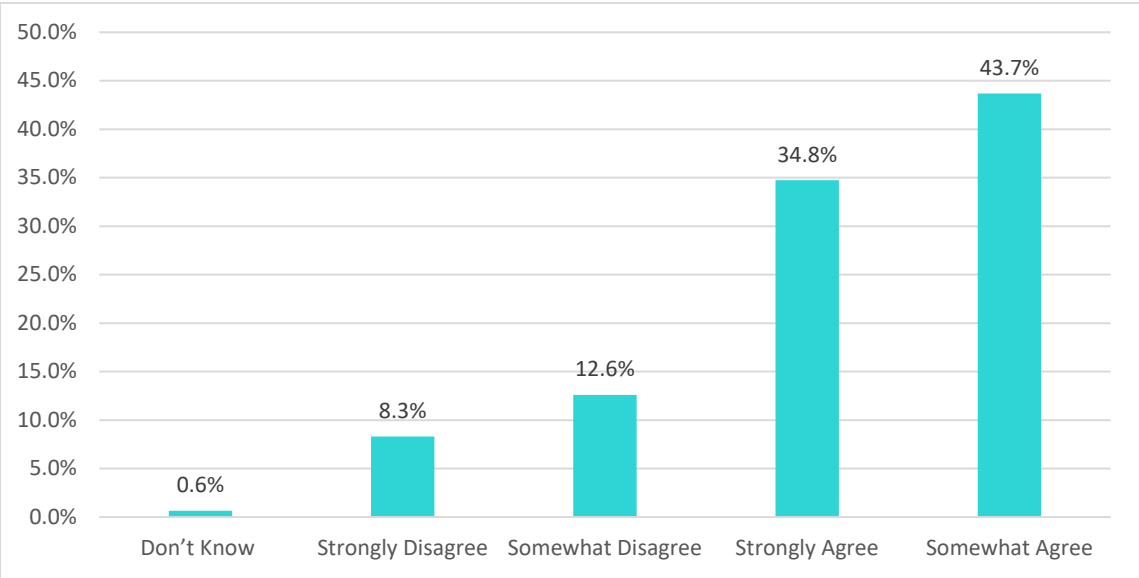
**Community Vitality:** There are activities available for children, teens and families to do for a community of our size (Out of 2,026 Survey Respondents)



**Community Vitality:** It is easy to find information about activities and events occurring in our community (Out of 2,025 Survey Respondents)

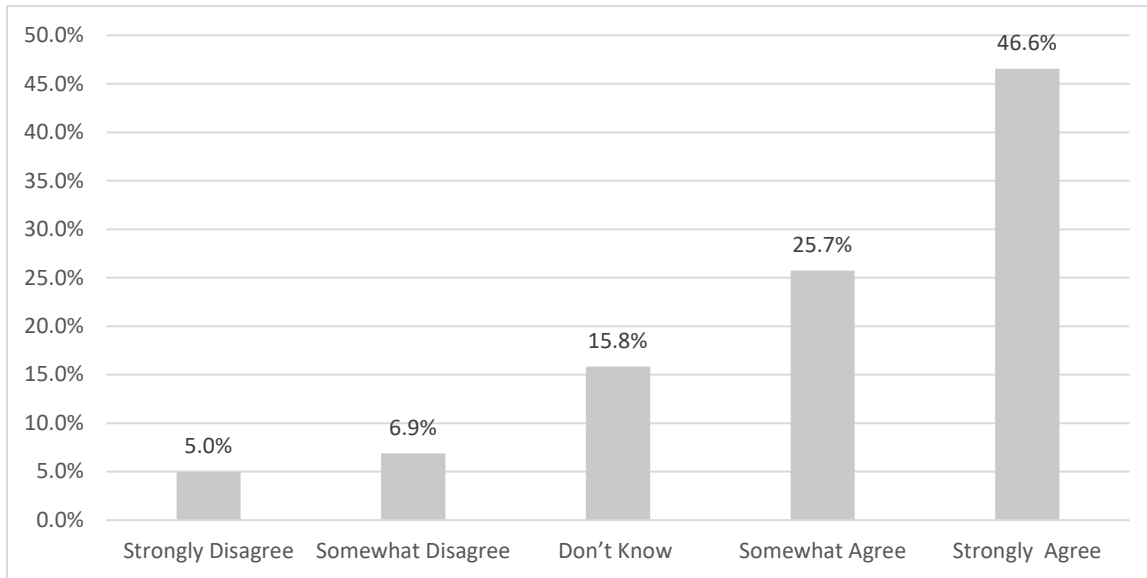


**Community Vitality:** I have to leave my community to take advantage of services, purchase products, or patronize businesses that I prefer (Out of 2,023 Survey Respondents)

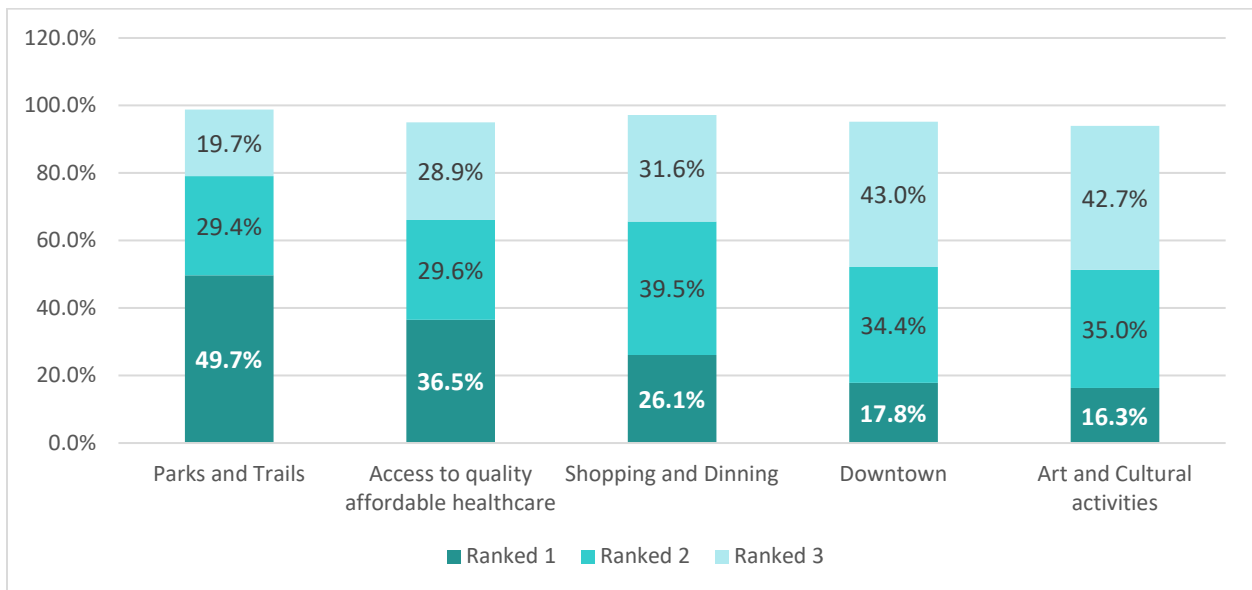




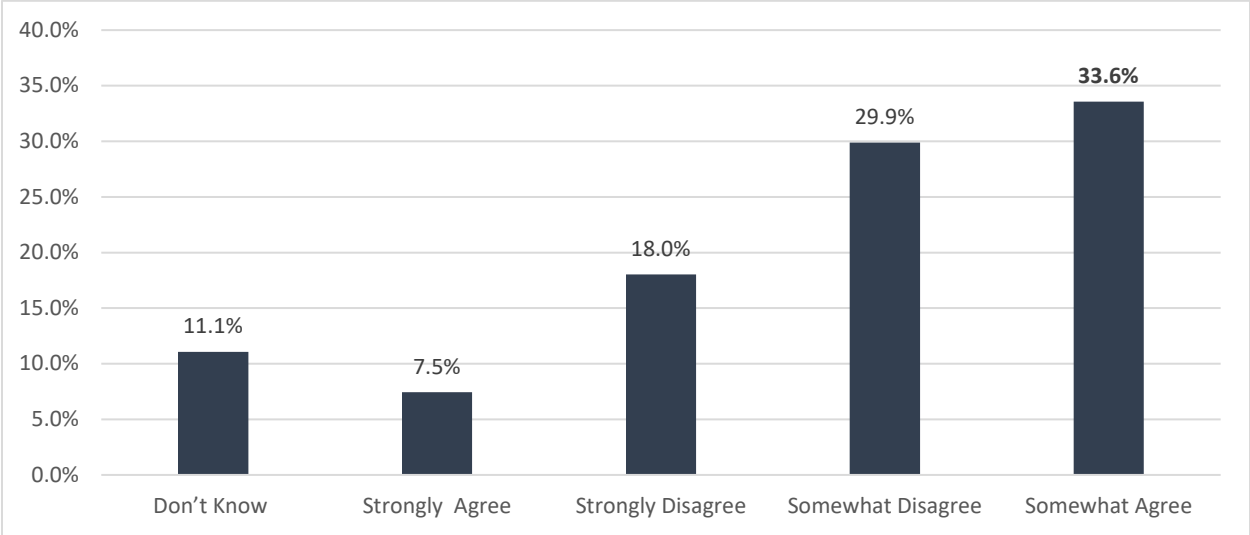
**Community Vitality: I identify as a resident of the Wabash Heartland Region (Out of 1,931 Survey Respondents)**



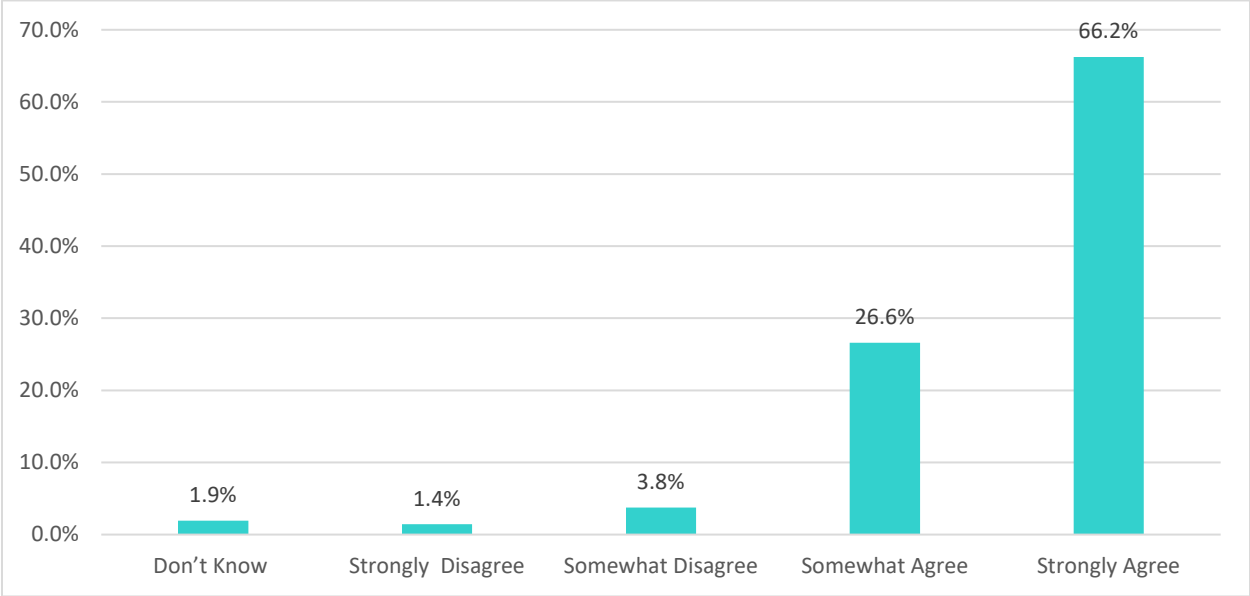
**Community Vitality: Please rank the TOP 3 attributes that you find most valuable about your community.**



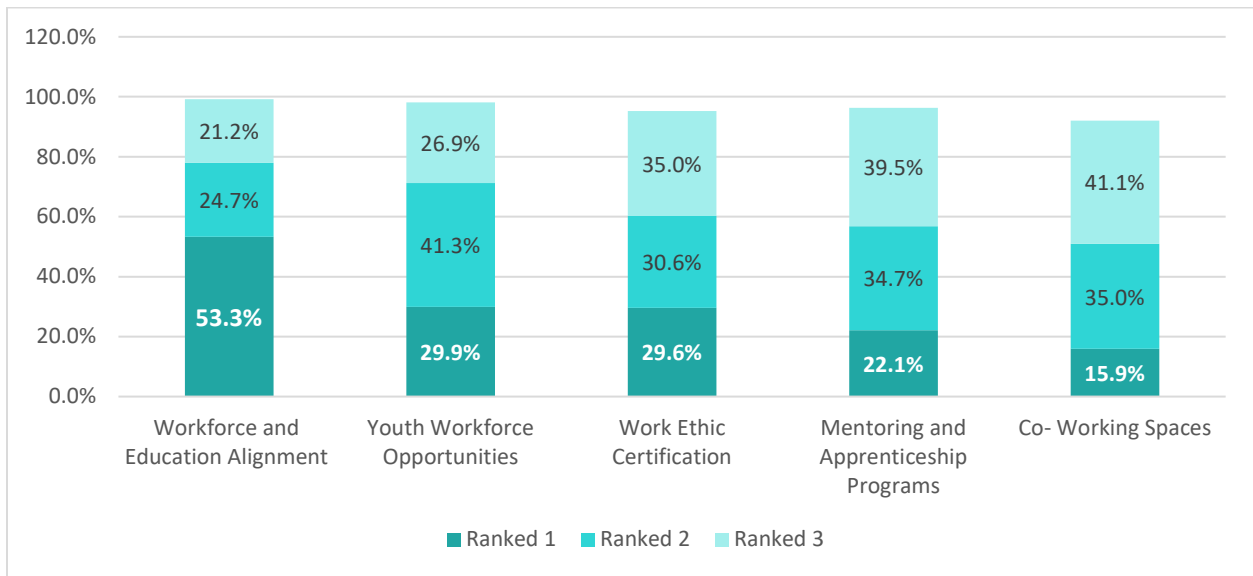
**Community Education:** Our community promotes and provides adequate training, technical assistance or other workforce education to “skill up” adult workers (Out of 2,014 Survey Respondents)



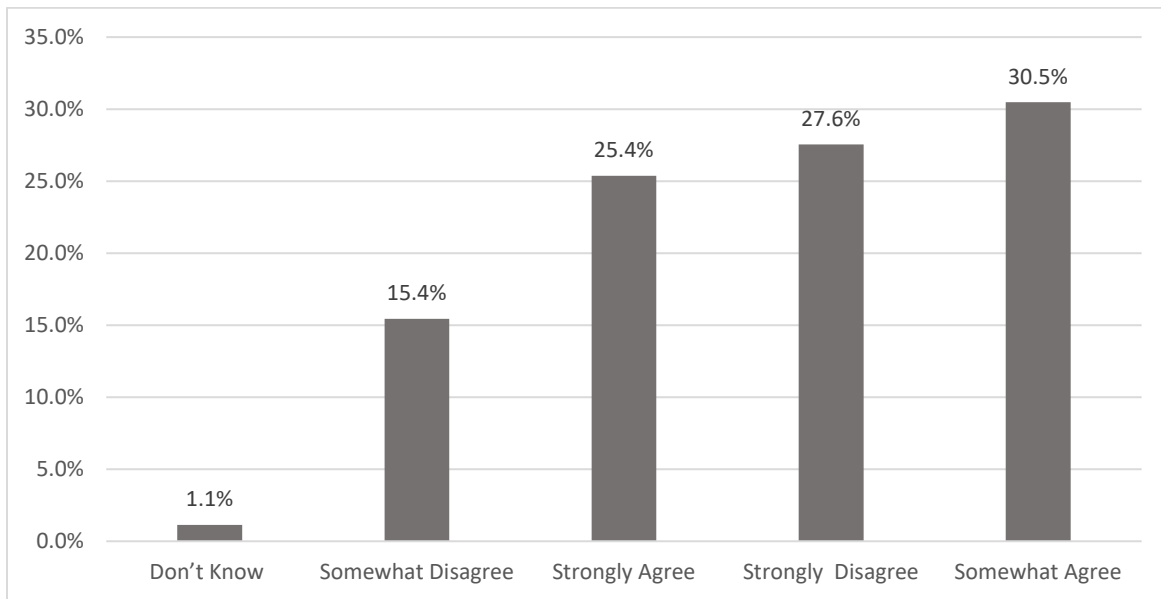
**Community Education:** We need a way to motivate work ethic and engagement among young people (Out of 2,013 Survey Respondents)



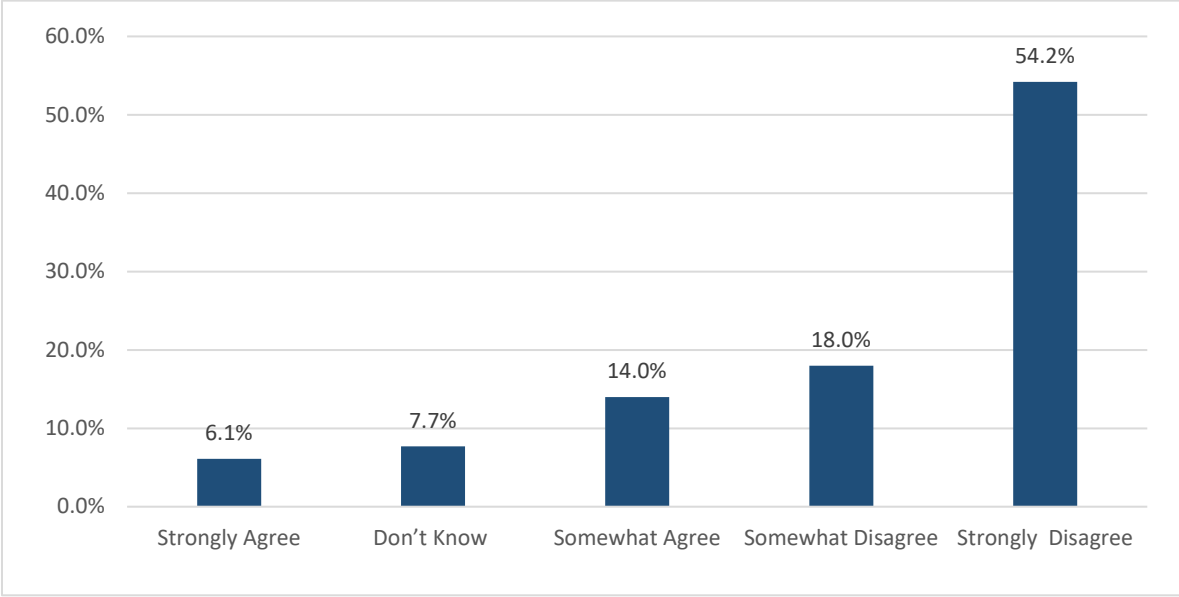
**Community Education:** Please rank the TOP 3 picks for education and job improvements.



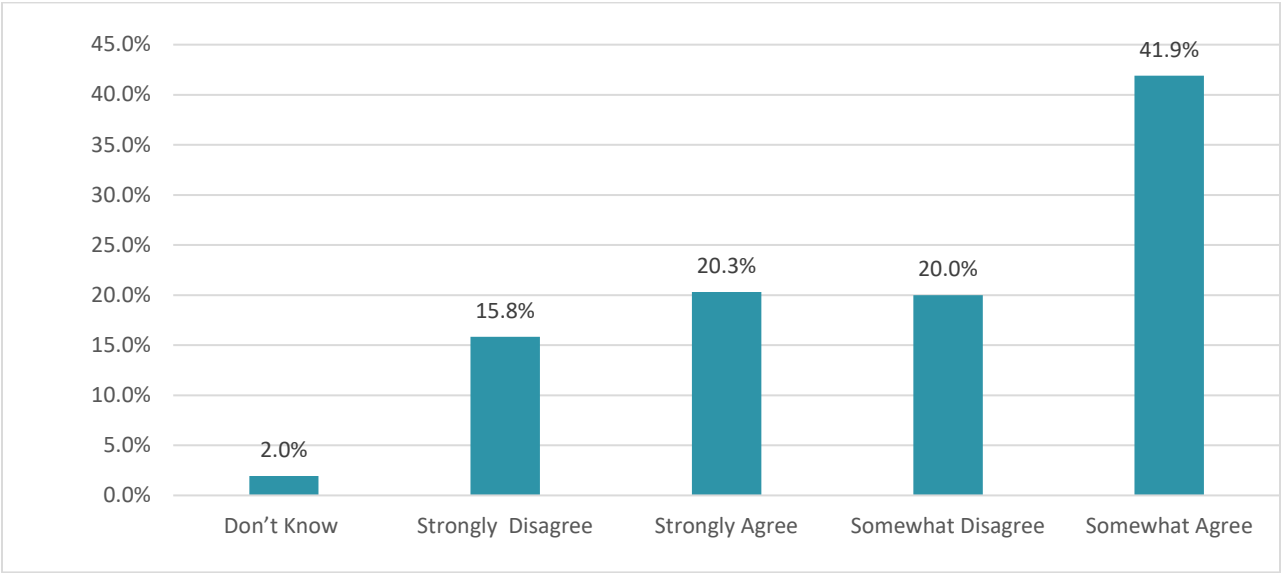
**Community Connectivity:** I have access to reliable and affordable high-speed Internet (Out of 2,014 Survey Respondents)



**Community Connectivity:** Transportation access has been a barrier to my mental, social, and/or financial health (Out of 2,012 Survey Respondents)



**Community Connectivity:** Our community has an adequate connected system of parks, trails, green spaces and/or waterways to enjoy (Out of 1,995 Survey Respondents)



**Community Connectivity:** Please rank the TOP 3 attributes you would most like to see your community improve its connectedness.

