

2020 Report

*Albemarle County
Community Survey*

Prepared by the Center for Survey Research
Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
University of Virginia

Table of Contents

List of Figures	ii
List of Tables	ii
I. Introduction	1
About the Survey.....	1
Survey Methodology.....	1
Survey Response.....	2
Demographic Overview.....	2
Weighting.....	2
Demographic Overview.....	3
Locality.....	7
Analysis.....	9
Descriptive Statistics.....	9
Open-end Responses Coding.....	9
Group Comparisons.....	10
II. Quality of Life	12
Quality of Life Today.....	12
Quality of Life in Five Years.....	12
Open feedback on why quality of life in Albemarle will change.....	14
Desirability of Albemarle as a Place to Live.....	14
III. County Services and Value	16
Rating of County Services.....	16
Transportation.....	17
Value for Tax Dollars.....	17
Tax Allocation.....	18
Demographic differences in tax allocation preferences.....	19
Open feedback on Albemarle County’s allocation of tax dollars.....	20
IV. Equity and Access to Resources	21
Convenience in Accessing Services and Assets.....	21
Open feedback on convenience or inconvenience in accessing assets within Albemarle.....	22
Barriers to Accessing Services and Assets.....	23
Open feedback on barriers encountered regarding resources within Albemarle.....	25
Sense of Belonging and Inclusion within Albemarle.....	26
Feeling welcome in Albemarle County.....	26
Sense of belonging in Albemarle County.....	26
Importance of living in a diverse community.....	28
Importance for those who work in Albemarle to be able to live in Albemarle.....	29
Importance of affordable housing across the county.....	30
V. Growth and Development	31
Importance of Economic Development.....	31
Opinions on Rate of Growth.....	31
Anticipated Effects of Growth.....	32
Preferences for Types of Development.....	33
VI. Summary	35
Quality of Life.....	35
Satisfaction with County Services.....	35
Allocation of Tax Dollars.....	35

Access to Assets and Services	36
Barriers to Access	36
Belonging and Inclusion	36
Growth and Development.....	37

Appendices

Appendix A: Weighted Probability Frequencies
 Appendix B: Weighted Probability and Non-probability Cross-tabulations
 Appendix C: Weighted Probability Cross-tabulations by Select Demographics
 Appendix D: Weighted Probability Means Comparisons across Demographics
 Appendix E: Questionnaire
 Appendix F: Open-ended Probability Responses
 Appendix G: Open-ended Non-probability Responses
 Appendix H: Methodology

List of Figures

Figure 1. Map of Albemarle with designated planning areas	7
Figure 2. Overall quality of life in Albemarle County	12
Figure 3. Expected relative quality of life in Albemarle County 5 years from now	13
Figure 4. Rating of Albemarle County as a place to live.....	15
Figure 5. Quality rating of Albemarle County services.....	16
Figure 6. Transportation concerns in Albemarle County	17
Figure 7. Satisfaction with value of County services for the tax dollars	18
Figure 8. Importance of tax allocation across various topic areas.....	19
Figure 9. Convenience in accessing community assets and services within Albemarle	22
Figure 10. Barriers encountered in accessing services and assets within Albemarle	24
Figure 11. Barriers encountered in accessing services and assets among those who use them.....	25
Figure 12. Rating for feeling welcome in Albemarle County	26
Figure 13. Rating of sense of belonging in Albemarle County	27
Figure 14. Importance of living in a diverse and multicultural community	28
Figure 15. Importance for people who work in Albemarle to be able to live in Albemarle.....	29
Figure 16. Importance for there to be affordable housing in all parts of Albemarle County	30
Figure 17. Importance for Albemarle County to support economic development in the county	31
Figure 18. Opinion on Albemarle County's rate of growth over the past few years	32
Figure 19. Anticipated effects of future growth and development within Albemarle County	33
Figure 20. Preferred amount of development in Albemarle across different types of development	34

List of Tables

Table 1. Survey tasks and dates	1
Table 2. Sample and population distributions across racial/ethnic affiliation by homeownership status	3
Table 3. Sample distributions across gender, age, and children status	4
Table 4. Sample distributions across employment status, income, and education	5
Table 5: Sample distributions across urbanicity, length of residence, race/ethnicity, and homeownership status.....	6
Table 6. Geography/locality schema	8
Table 7. Sample distributions across geographies.....	9

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Survey Research at the University of Virginia conducted the Albemarle County Community Survey during the winter of 2020 to determine opinions about quality of life in Albemarle; assess satisfaction with County services and preferences for tax allocation; identify barriers and level of access to resources and assets within the county; understand residents' sense of belonging and preferences for inclusion; and measure opinions on growth and development.

A total of 2,431 Albemarle residents participated in the survey; 1,507 of these completions were probability-based and 924 were non-probability. A mixed-probability design was utilized as a probability sample better ensures that results reflect the community across demographic categories and may thus present more accurate reflections of the community's attitudes. A non-probability sample offers the opportunity for all resident to offer their views, but those who choose to participate are not necessarily representative of the community taken as a whole. Across these samples, the survey was able to capture the wide range of experiences and opinions of Albemarle residents.

Because of the scientific methods used to recruit the probability sample, these results may be used to draw statistical inference to the study population. Specifically, survey results from the probability respondents can be generalized to all Albemarle residents with a margin of error of +/- 2.8 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Highlighted findings, which are identified below, are based on responses from the probability sample. For complete responses across both samples, please see Appendix B of this report.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Nine out of ten (90%) respondents said overall quality of life in Albemarle County was either "Excellent" or "Good".
- Respondents were divided on how quality of life in the county would change over the next 5 years: 21% expect quality of life will improve, 46% expect it to get worse, and 33% expect it will stay the same.

Among those who expect quality of life will worsen, the primary concern was that Albemarle's growth will outpace the capacity of its infrastructure, leading to overcrowding, increased traffic, and lack of affordable housing.

SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

- Four out of five Albemarle residents (80%) rated the quality of County services overall as either “Excellent” or “Good.”
- Fire services and ambulance/emergency medical services received the highest quality ratings; whereas, land use, planning, and zoning as well as recycling services received the lowest quality ratings.
- When asked about transportation concerns, residents expressed the highest level of concern for traffic congestion (88% reported being “Somewhat” to “Very” concerned).

ALLOCATION OF TAX DOLLARS

- The vast majority of residents were either “Somewhat satisfied” (58%) or “Very satisfied” (20%) with the value of services for their tax dollars, though responses differed along demographic lines.

Regarding allocation of tax dollars, residents identified improvements to roads, bike/pedestrian paths, and public transit as the most important area for tax allocation. In particular, they would like to see traffic congestion alleviated, public transportation expanded, increased safety surrounding bike lanes, and improvements to roads in rural parts of the county.

ACCESS AND BARRIERS TO SERVICES

- Across various assets and services within Albemarle, medical care and emergency services were the most conveniently accessed items, followed by public schools, places of worship, hospitals, and grocery stores.
- Bike lanes, solid waste and recycling services, sidewalks and pedestrian walkways, public transportation, and child care were among the most inconvenient assets to access.
- Convenience in accessing services varied significantly by the locality and type of community in which the residents lived. In general, respondents who live in rural communities reported the most inconvenience in accessing a wide array of assets compared to Albemarle residents from other types of communities.

Residents would like the County to increase and improve bike lanes, put in more walking and biking trails, increase street lighting, and either provide curbside recycling pickup or increase the number of recycling centers throughout the county.

BELONGING AND INCLUSION

The vast majority of respondents reporting feeling welcome in Albemarle (79% reported a high rating). A slightly lower portion, though still a majority, reported a high sense of belonging in Albemarle (69%). These ratings did vary by demographics.

Measures of inclusion were reported as important by the majority of respondents:

- Three out of five residents said it was either “Important” or “Very important” for them to live in a diverse and multicultural community.
- Three out of four residents felt it was either “Important” or “Very important” for people who work in Albemarle to be able to live in Albemarle.
- Three out of four residents also considered it “Important” or “Very important” for there to be affordable housing options in all parts of the county.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Growth and development, particularly the management of it, is a significant topic to Albemarle residents.

- Approximately three-quarters of respondents (73%) considered it either “Important” or “Very important” for the County to support economic development in Albemarle.
- Yet, the majority of respondents (68%) thought the county’s rate of growth over the past few years has been too fast, indicating that while residents support development, they want to ensure the County controls growth at a managed pace.
- Respondents recognized future growth and development in the county may improve job availability, but they also held concerns that ease of getting around by car, housing affordability, and parking could all get worse as a result of future growth in Albemarle.

I. Introduction

About the Survey

The 2020 Albemarle County Community Survey was conducted by the Center for Survey Research (CSR) on behalf of the County. The objectives of the survey were to:

- Determine opinions about quality of life in Albemarle County
- Assess satisfaction with County services
- Capture preferences for allocation of tax dollars
- Identify barriers and level of access to resources and assets within the county
- Understand residents' own sense of belonging and preferences for diversity and inclusion
- Measure opinions on growth and development

Survey Methodology

To support community-wide participation and maintain statistical integrity, the survey followed a mixed-probability and mixed-mode design. The probability sample was based on a stratified address-based sample (ABS) of 5,000 Albemarle County households. Survey administration to the ABS sample employed a mail-forward design with a delayed web alternative. These participants were first mailed an advance letter followed by a questionnaire packet that contained a cover letter and postage-paid return envelope. Shortly thereafter, non-respondents were mailed a reminder/thank you postcard. As a final contact, a second questionnaire packet was mailed that contained instructions to participate in the survey online as an alternative to the enclosed paper questionnaire. The probability sample provides the survey's basis for statistical inference to the Albemarle County population.

To ensure all Albemarle residents could voice their perspectives and participate in the survey, an open-source online version of the questionnaire was posted to Albemarle County's website and available for any individual to complete. The questionnaire did include two eligibility criteria: the respondent must (1) be at least 18 years old and (2) reside in Albemarle County.

A timeline of key dates during survey design and data collection is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Survey tasks and dates

Task	Date
Online pretest	November 7 - 15, 2019
Mail advance letters	January 9, 2020
Mail first questionnaire packets	January 14, 2020
Mail thank you/reminder postcard	January 30, 2020
Open-source web survey launched	February 3, 2020
Mail second questionnaire, web-referral packets	February 14, 2020
Close data collection	March 17, 2020

Data collection for probability and non-probability responses ended on March 17, 2020. CSR managed the tracking of responses and performed data entry for all paper questionnaire completions. Data entry validation was performed on approximately 15% of submitted questionnaires. The survey was available in English and Spanish.

Survey Response

A total of 2,431 responses were collected, 1,507 of which were probability-based and 924 were non-probability. The survey response rate (based on returns from the probability sample) was 30.2%, with a margin of error of ± 2.8 percent at the 95 percent level of confidence¹. For a detailed discussion of the survey methodology, including sampling design and weighting procedures, please see Appendix H. A copy of the survey questionnaire is presented in Appendix E.

Demographic Overview

Weighting

An early task in the analysis of any survey data is comparing the demographics of the survey sample with the demographics of the population being studied. For example, surveys often over-represent women and people in higher socio-economic categories. When there are discrepancies between the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents and the full population, it is wise to “post-weight” the data in order to compensate for these differences. In post-weighting, greater statistical weight is assigned to respondents who are in categories under-represented in the survey results compared to the population, whereas those in over-represented groups are given lesser weight. Put differently, applying weights allows the survey sample to more closely mirror the demographics of Albemarle County.

These weights are calculated by matching the survey sample’s percentages to the population percentages on selected variables. The weighting procedure leads to small differences in the survey results but increases their accuracy by making them more reflective of the actual study population.

After base weights were run to accommodate the sampling design, the probability survey data were then post-weighted to the population (Albemarle County residents) on a single characteristic: homeownership status by race. This means that survey responses from individuals in under-represented race/homeownership categories will be given greater weight so that the final data file more closely matches the distribution of these categories in the population. The non-probability results are not weighted. For a complete description of the weighting procedures, including the base weighting conducted to counteract the effects of the probability sampling design, see Appendix H.

Table 2 provides the proportion breakdowns across racial/ethnic affiliation and homeownership within the samples and population. The first column shows the count and

¹ This margin of error is calculated using the finite population correction factor (fpc), which was 0.984 for this survey, and incorporating the design effect due to weighting, which was 1.26.

proportions of these variables among the non-probability sample, which as noted, is not weighted. The second column of the table presents the results from the probability sample prior to any weighting. The third column shows the results of the probability sample after all weighting has been applied. The narrative of the report focuses on the weighted probability sample as it is this data that provides the study's ability to draw statistical inference and generalize survey results to the population of Albemarle County. The fourth column presents estimates of the Albemarle County population, when available. These population estimates are from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

As seen in Table 2, renters were under-represented across racial/ethnic affiliations, and White homeowners were over-represented. Weighting helped to bring the probability sample in closer alignment to the Albemarle County population on this measure. Specifically, the percentage of White homeowners in the weighted probability sample was adjusted down to 60%, and the percentage of White renters was brought up to 27%. The percentages of African American/Black renters, Asian renters, and Multiracial/Another race renters were also brought up to more closely match the Albemarle County population.

Table 2. Sample and population distributions across racial/ethnic affiliation by homeownership status

	Non-probability Sample		Probability Sample Unweighted		Probability Sample Weighted		Albemarle	
	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Own	Rent
White	85.3%	6.7%	76.4%	13.6%	60.0%	27.2%	59.1%	26.8%
African American/Black	1.9%	0.1%	2.4%	1.2%	3.2%	3.4%	3.2%	5.2%
Asian	0.4%	0.1%	1.9%	1.2%	1.6%	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%
Multiracial/Another race	4.8%	0.4%	2.3%	1.0%	1.5%	1.5%	1.1%	1.5%
<i>Total</i>	<i>92.5%</i>	<i>7.5%</i>	<i>83.0%</i>	<i>17.0%</i>	<i>66.3%</i>	<i>33.7%</i>	<i>65.0%</i>	<i>35.1%</i>

Demographic Overview

The following demographic overview presents other characteristics of the non-probability and weighted probability data. The characteristics presented in this chapter are comprehensive of the measures used in the study's comparative analysis. Complete demographics for the full sample can be found in Appendix B.

As seen in Table 3, gender was similarly distributed across samples with slightly more female than male respondents. While both survey samples skew older than the population, the weighted probability sample achieved slightly younger representation. However, over half (55%) of the weighted probability respondents were 60 years old and above. Approximately one-quarter of weighted probability respondents (23%) reported having a child in the household.

Table 3. Sample distributions across gender, age, and children status

	Non-probability Sample		Probability Sample Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
Gender				
Male	352	46.9%	651	44.6%
Female	393	52.3%	808	55.4%
I wish to provide my own description	6	0.8%	0	0.0%
<i>Total</i>	<i>751</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>1,459</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
Age				
39 and younger	76	10.4%	232	16.4%
40-49	84	11.4%	176	12.4%
50-59	130	17.7%	217	15.3%
60-69	225	30.7%	350	24.7%
70 and older	219	29.8%	442	31.2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>734</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>1,416</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
Household has children in the home				
Yes, have children	158	20.0%	276	23.1%
No, no children	633	80.0%	921	76.9%
<i>Total</i>	<i>791</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>1,196</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

As seen in Table 4, 46% of weighted probability respondents were working full-time, an additional 10% were working part-time, and 36% percent were retired. Approximately one-quarter (23%) of probability respondents reported a household annual income below \$50,000. One-third (34%) reported annual income between \$50,000 and \$99,999. One-fifth (20%) earned \$100,000 to \$149,999, and the remaining one-fifth (22%) earned \$150,000 or more. Relative to the non-probability sample, the weighted probability sample achieved greater variation across income categories.

Approximately one-fifth (21%) of weighted probability residents' highest achieved educational level was some college or less. Twenty-five percent had attained a four-year college degree. Two-fifths (41%) had done some graduate work or completed a graduate program. Both survey samples skewed toward higher education relative to the population.

Table 4. Sample distributions across employment status, income, and education

	Non-probability Sample		Probability Sample Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
Employment status				
Employed full-time	324	41.8%	656	45.7%
Employed part-time	61	7.9%	137	9.6%
Looking for work	3	0.4%	16	1.1%
Stay-at-home-parent/Homemaker	23	3.0%	42	3.0%
Student	7	0.9%	29	2.0%
Retired	340	43.9%	519	36.1%
Disabled	9	1.2%	34	2.3%
Other	8	1.0%	2	0.2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>775</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>1,436</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
Household income				
Less than \$50,000	70	11.5%	283	23.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	197	32.3%	421	34.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	144	23.6%	251	20.5%
\$150,000 or more	199	32.6%	272	22.1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>610</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>1,227</i>	<i>100.0%</i>
Education				
Less than a high school diploma	2	0.3%	25	1.7%
High school graduate/GED	19	2.5%	118	8.3%
Some college, no degree	84	11.0%	162	11.4%
Associate's degree/trade	36	4.7%	91	6.4%
Bachelor's degree	211	27.6%	356	25.0%
Some graduate work	84	11.0%	84	5.9%
Master's, Professional or Doctoral degree	329	43.0%	588	41.3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>765</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>1,423</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

As reported in Table 5, approximately half (51%) of probability respondents identified their residence to be in a suburban part of the county. About one-quarter (24%) live in a rural area, 11% live in an urban area, and the remaining 15% identify their area as "Small town/Village." The majority of respondents have lived in Albemarle more than ten years. Specifically, 44% have lived in Albemarle for more than 20 years, and 18% have lived in the area between 11 and 19 years. About one-quarter (26%) have lived in Albemarle less than six years.

Table 5: Sample distributions across urbanicity, length of residence, race/ethnicity, and homeownership status

	Non-probability Sample		Probability Sample Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
Urbanicity				
Urban	73	8.0%	155	10.8%
Suburban	435	47.9%	729	50.7%
Small town/Village	86	9.5%	208	14.5%
Rural ²	313	34.5%	347	24.1%
<i>Total</i>	907	100.0%	1,439	100.0%
Length of Residence in Albemarle County				
Less than 6 years	187	20.4%	381	25.5%
6-10 years	116	12.6%	178	12.0%
11-20 years	172	18.7%	275	18.4%
More than 20 years	445	48.4%	657	44.1%
<i>Total</i>	920	100.0%	1,491	100.0%
Race/Ethnicity				
White	619	91.0%	1128	85.2%
Black or African American	14	2.1%	86	6.5%
Asian	4	0.6%	41	3.1%
Hispanic	12	1.8%	35	2.6%
Multiracial/Another race	31	4.6%	35	2.6%
<i>Total</i>	680	100.0%	1,325	100.0%
Homeownership Status				
Own or buying	708	92.8%	965	68.0%
Rent	55	7.2%	454	32.0%
<i>Total</i>	763	100.0%	1,419	100.0%

Distributions of responses across race/ethnicity and homeownership status are presented as separate variables in Table 5.³ Eighty-five percent of probability respondents identify as White, seven percent as Black/African American and three percent each as either Asian, Hispanic, or Multiracial/Another race. Approximately two-thirds of weighted probability respondents are homeowners.

² This category was labeled as “Out in the country” in the questionnaire.

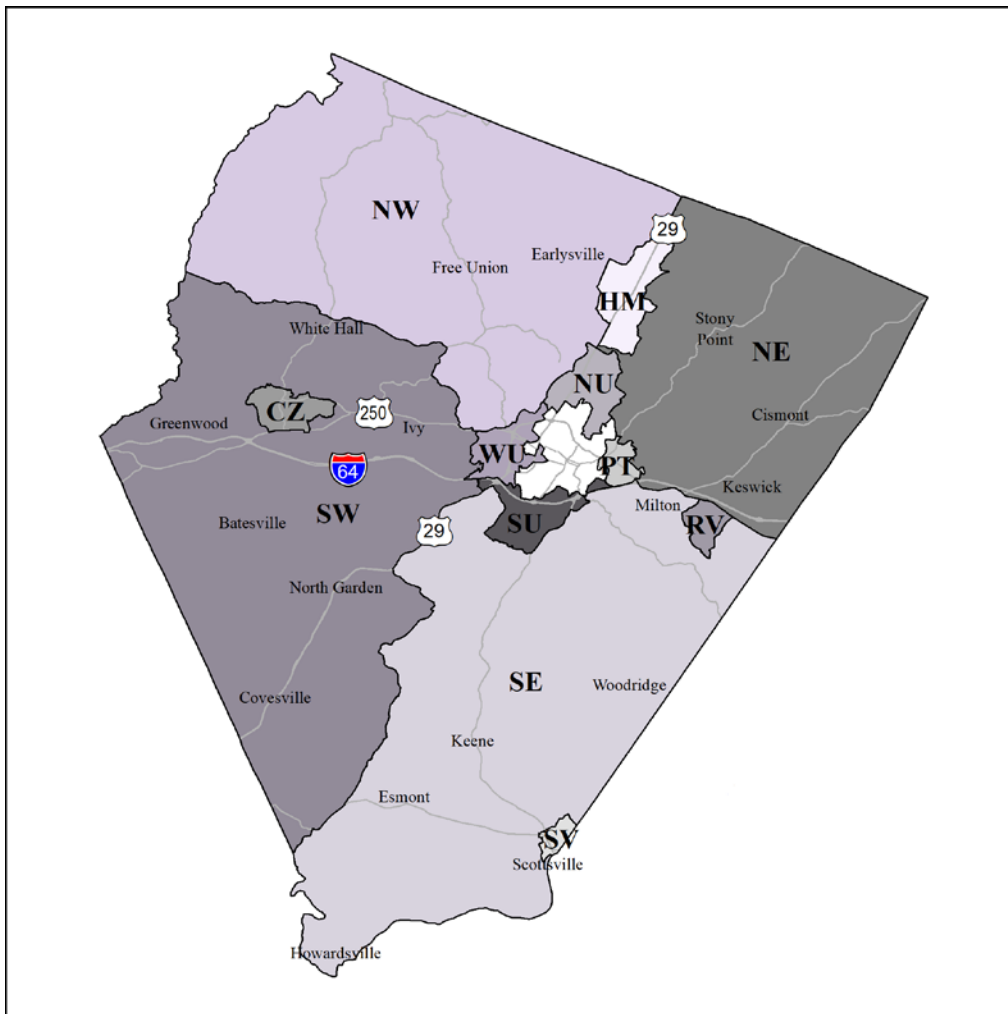
³ Because the percentages presented in Table 2 reflect the intersection of race/ethnicity and homeownership status, those figures are based only on cases for which both characteristics were reported, meaning if a respondent only answered one of the two questions, their response is not reflected in Table 2 totals. Conversely, percentages presented in Table 5 reflect responses to race/ethnicity and homeownership status as separate questions, thus percentages between the two tables may vary slightly as not all respondents answered all questions.

Locality

Because of the probability sampling strategy employed alongside a confidential protocol, the research team could match the household address of probability respondents. However, the open-source survey was anonymous, so it was necessary to ask non-probability respondents the general location of their household in the county. In the open-source questionnaire, non-probability respondents were shown the following map (Figure 1) and asked to locate their household within the following geographic areas, which directly align with the County’s comprehensive planning areas:

- Crozet (CZ)
- Northeastern Albemarle (NE)
- North urban neighborhoods (NU)
- Northwestern Albemarle (NW)
- Pantops (PT)
- Southeastern Albemarle/ Scottsville (SE/SV)
- Southern urban neighborhoods (SU)
- Southwestern Albemarle (SW)
- Village of Rivanna (RV)
- Western urban neighborhoods (WU)
- 29 North/Hollymead (HM)

Figure 1. Map of Albemarle with designated planning areas



Using ArcGIS software, CSR was able to match the probability respondents' addresses to the 11 planning areas designated in the open-source survey. For the purposes of the survey's comparative analysis, the 11 areas had to be further collapsed. Table 6 portrays the schema followed in grouping the 11 planning areas into four localities.

Table 6. Geography/locality schema

11 Planning Areas	4 Localities
Northeastern Albemarle Northwestern Albemarle	Rural Northern Albemarle
Southeastern Albemarle/Scottsville Southwestern Albemarle	Rural Southern Albemarle
Village of Rivanna Crozet	Satellite Communities
Southern urban neighborhoods Northern urban neighborhoods Western urban neighborhoods Pantops 29 North/Hollymead	Urban Ring/29 North

Table 7 presents the distribution of survey respondents by sample across the 11 planning areas and four localities within the county. The weighted probability sample achieved greater representation from the Northern urban neighborhoods and Southern urban neighborhoods, whereas the non-probability sample had higher representation from Northeastern Albemarle and Southeastern Albemarle/Scottsville. The samples had similar representation across the other planning areas of the county.

Looking at the locality distribution, the majority of probability respondents are from the urban ring/29 North area of Albemarle. Approximately equal percentages of respondents (18%) are from each rural northern Albemarle and rural southern Albemarle. Finally, one-tenth of respondents are from the satellite communities.

Table 7. Sample distributions across geographies

	Non-probability Sample		Probability Sample Weighted	
	N	%	N	%
Geographic Area				
Crozet	68	7.4%	108	7.2%
Northeastern Albemarle	127	13.8%	101	6.7%
Northern urban neighborhoods	104	11.3%	326	21.7%
Northwestern Albemarle	118	12.8%	172	11.5%
Pantops	48	5.2%	85	5.7%
Southeastern Albemarle/Scottsville	112	12.2%	118	7.9%
Southern urban neighborhoods	59	6.4%	186	12.4%
Southwestern Albemarle	112	12.2%	158	10.6%
Village of Rivanna	49	5.3%	39	2.6%
Western urban neighborhoods	43	4.7%	102	6.8%
29 North/Hollymead	79	8.6%	105	7.0%
<i>Total</i>	<i>919</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>1500</i>	<i>100%</i>
Locality				
Rural Northern Albemarle	245	26.7%	273	18.2%
Rural Southern Albemarle	224	24.4%	276	18.4%
Satellite communities	117	12.7%	147	9.8%
Urban ring/29 North	333	36.2%	804	53.6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>919</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>1500</i>	<i>100%</i>

For complete frequencies of the probability sample, see Appendix A. For additional comparison between the probability and non-probability samples, see Appendix B.

Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

Frequencies across all close-ended questions are presented in the appendices. Specifically, Appendix A presents the complete frequencies from the weighted probability sample. Appendix B presents the complete frequencies split by probability and non-probability responses, presented side by side for each question.

Open-end Responses Coding

To provide respondents ample opportunity to fully share their experiences and opinions, the survey questionnaire contained multiple open-ended questions where respondents could write-in their answers. CSR performed thematic coding across the open-ended responses, which entailed an inductive and iterative process. When a similar or related response appeared repeatedly for a given question, a code was assigned to represent that response category. These codes were tracked, assigned, and tallied using Microsoft Excel. Coding schemes were also reviewed by a second analyst to improve integrity of the subjective coding process.

For the close-ended questions that contained an open-ended answer choice (e.g., an “Other, please specify”), new categories were added to the quantitative data file and analysis was rerun when the new category had a critical mass of cases (typically at least 30 cases). If an open-ended response was given by fewer than 30 cases, then a new category was not added to the data file because the count size would be too small for meaningful analysis. Additionally, if a respondent gave an open-ended response that matched one of the existing categories, their response was reassigned to the existing category.

For the free-form open-ended questions (e.g., “Why do you think the quality of life in Albemarle County will improve, get worse, or stay the same in 5 years from now?”), a summary is provided in the narrative of the recurrent common themes that emerged across those responses. The complete list of verbatim open-ended responses, by question, can be viewed in Appendices F (probability responses) and G (non-probability responses).

Group Comparisons

For this study, two types of comparative analyses were run: cross-tabulations and means comparisons. Across both types of comparison, statistical significance tests⁴ were performed to verify the existence of statistical differences among various subgroups. For the cross-tabulations, Chi-Square tests of independence were used to determine statistical significance; t-tests were run to determine significance across the means comparisons. Put simply, if a survey result is found to be statistically significant, then we can confidently expect the same finding to exist in the population (i.e., Albemarle County).

The cross-tabulation analysis examined most of the attitudinal and behavioral measures by five demographic variables:

- *Locality*: Residences in southern rural Albemarle, northern rural Albemarle, the urban ring/29 North and satellite communities were compared.
- *Urbanicity*: Self-reported community types of either urban, suburban, small town/village, and rural were compared.
- *Length of residence*: Respondents were compared according to the length of time they had lived in Albemarle County—less than 6 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years, more than 20 years.
- *Age*: Five categories were used to compare age groups—18 to 39, 40 to 49, 50 to 59, 60 to 69, and over 69.
- *Racial/ethnic affiliation*⁵: Self-identified racial/ethnic groups of White, African American/Black, Asian, Hispanic/Latinx, and Multiracial/Another race⁶ were compared.

⁴ Design effect was applied when running tests of statistical significance.

⁵ Race/ethnicity were asked across two questions and combined in post-coding. Racial affiliation was asked as a multiple-response item.

⁶ Selections of American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, non-listed/self-described categories, and multiple-selections were combined for analysis. These affiliations could not be preserved as separate categories in comparative analysis due to the small number of cases within each category.

The results of the demographic cross-tabulation analysis are presented in Appendix C.

In addition to the five demographic variables above, the means comparison analysis compared mean scores on a subset of attitudinal and behavioral measures by the following demographic variables as well:

- *Education level:* Persons with some college or less, college degrees, some graduate work or higher were compared.
- *Presence of children in the home:* The responses of householders with children were compared with those that did not have children living at home.
- *Annual household income:* Four categories of self-reported annual household incomes were compared—less than \$50,000, \$50,000 to \$99,999, \$100,000 to \$149,999, and \$150,000 or more.
- *Homeownership status:* Homeowners were compared to renters.
- *Gender:* Women were compared to men.

The results of the means comparison analysis can be found in Appendix D.

Unless otherwise noted, the analysis and summary of findings in this report are based on weighted probability responses only, which provide the necessary measures of prevalence and enable inference to the larger Albemarle population.

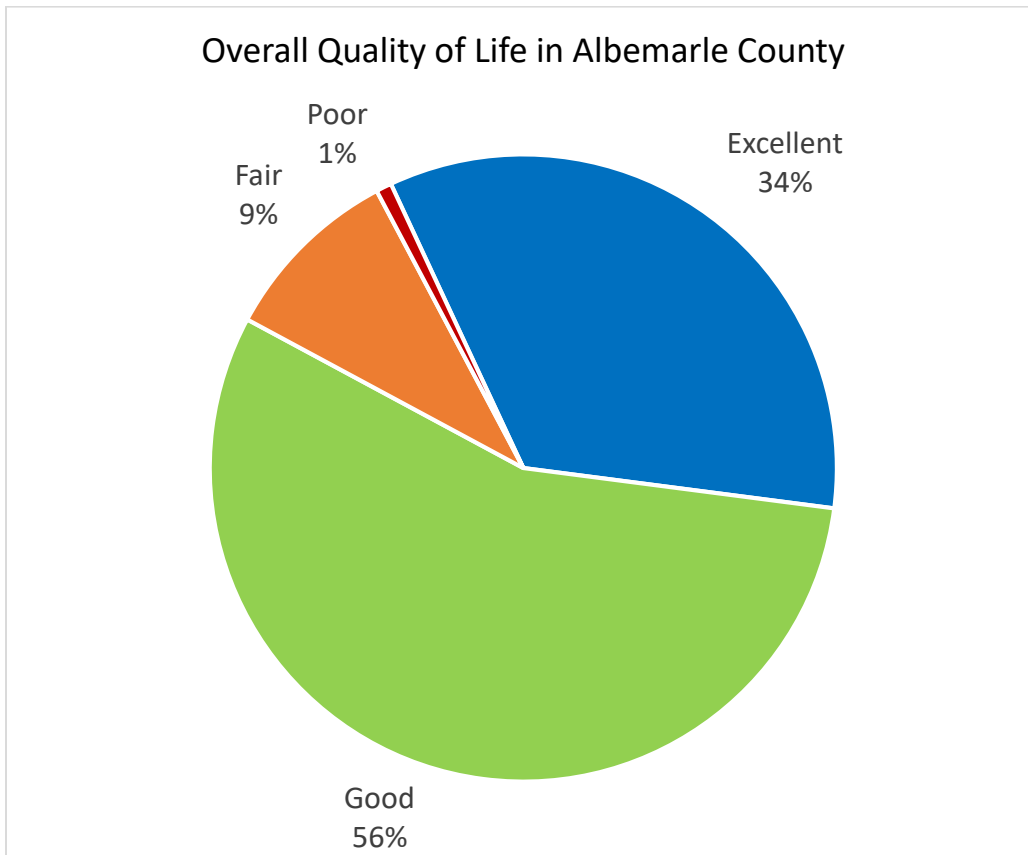
While the scientifically drawn probability sample provides the statistical inference for the study, it was still vital to include non-probability data collection. First, the non-probability design permitted additional household members to respond, not just those selected from the ABS sample, making the survey process more inclusive. Additionally, the non-probability design provided the opportunity for any resident to express their opinions and experiences living in Albemarle County. Because of the opt-in nature of the open-source survey, the non-probability platform very well may have attracted more engaged and impassioned respondents, compared to the probability cases, as these were individuals who sought out the survey. As already noted, complete non-probability responses can be found in Appendix B.

II. Quality of Life

Quality of Life Today

As a general quality measure, respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of life in Albemarle County. Nine out of ten respondents rated the quality of life as either “Excellent” (34%) or “Good” (56%). Just nine percent of respondents rated the quality of life as “Fair” and one percent rated it as “Poor” (See Figure 2).

Figure 2. Overall quality of life in Albemarle County



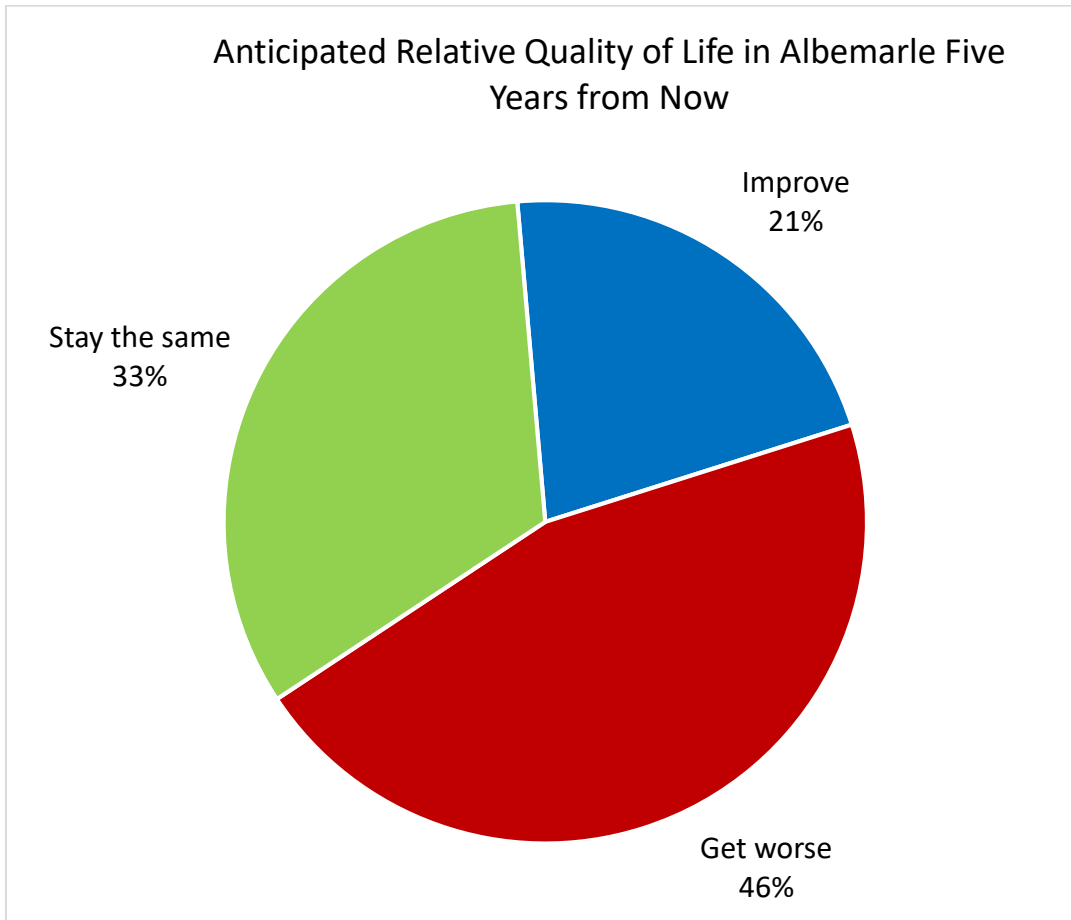
Ratings of quality of life did statistically vary based on several demographic characteristics. In general, ratings on quality of life were significantly higher among home owners, respondents with higher household income and those with higher educational levels. Additionally, residents in rural northern Albemarle reported higher quality of life ratings than those reported by residents in rural southern Albemarle and the urban ring/29 North localities. Additionally, quality of life ratings varied by race with White respondents reporting a higher rating than African American/Black respondents. See Appendix D (Mean Comparisons) for complete comparisons.

Quality of Life in Five Years

Respondents were also asked to speculate on future quality of life with the prompt: “Thinking about 5 years from now, do you think the quality of life in Albemarle County will improve, get worse, or stay the same?” As seen in Figure 3, outlooks were mixed, though the largest

response—reported by 46% of respondents—expected quality of life to worsen. Twenty-one percent expect life to improve and 33% expected it to stay the same.

Figure 3. Expected relative quality of life in Albemarle County 5 years from now



There were significant differences on these ratings across several characteristics. First, there was a clear linear relationship between length of residence and this rating. Residents who have lived in Albemarle for less time were more likely to report quality of life will improve while residents who have lived in Albemarle longer were significantly more likely to assert life will worsen. A similar statistical pattern was held by age. Respondents over 50 years old are more likely to expect quality of life to worsen while respondents under 50 report relatively higher rates of thinking quality of life will improve. Additionally, respondents who identify as Black/African American or Asian were much more likely to report quality of life will improve.

Responses also significantly varied by locality with higher proportions of residents from rural northern Albemarle and rural southern Albemarle expecting quality of life to worsen. Respondents who live in rural communities were significantly more likely to report that quality of life will worsen and respondents who live in small town or village communities were the most likely to expect life to stay the same. See Appendix C for specific percentage comparisons across groups.

Open feedback on why quality of life in Albemarle will change

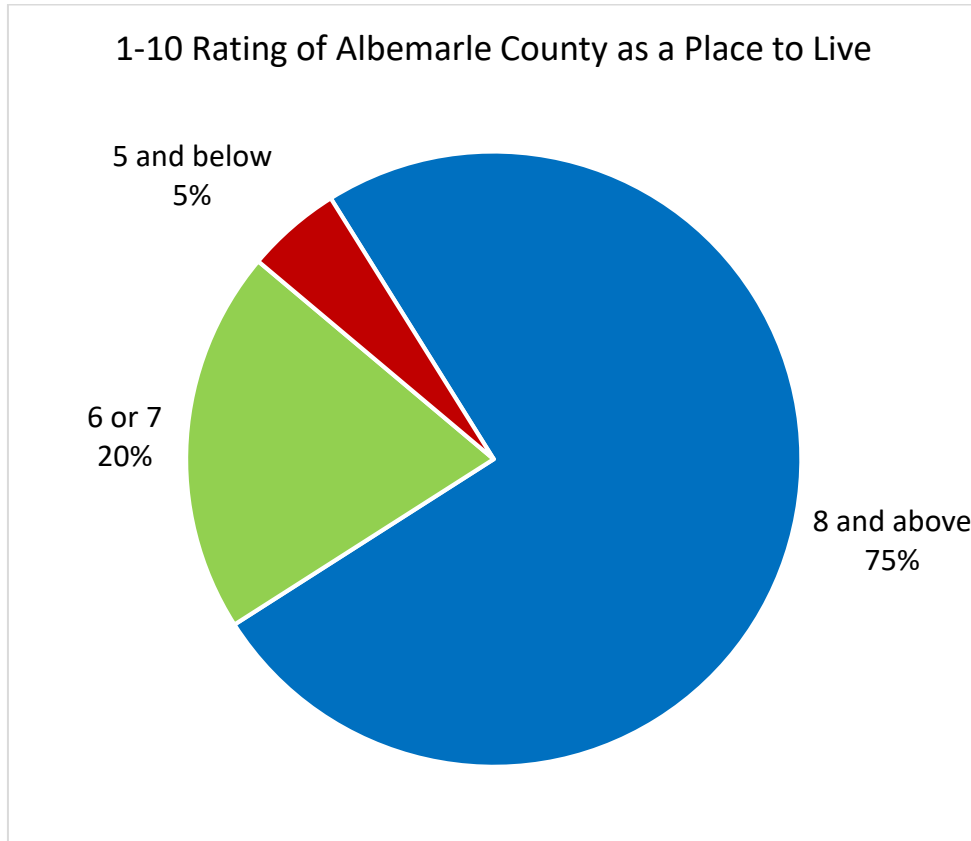
In an open-ended question, respondents were asked to elaborate on why they thought the quality of life in Albemarle would improve, get worse, or stay the same. Among those who expected quality of life will worsen, the most common response revolved around concerns with growth and development. Specifically, respondents worried that Albemarle was growing too fast, there would be overcrowding, too much construction, and that the existing infrastructure within the county is inadequate to keep up with the growth. Another common response related to dissatisfaction with traffic congestion and feeling that the current road system cannot accommodate traffic needs. Additionally, respondents worried about the increasing cost of living and lack of affordable housing within Albemarle County.

Among the respondents who felt quality of life in Albemarle will improve in the next five years, the most common reason was also related to growth and development, but they consider this to be a positive direction for the county. Specifically, they anticipate growth to bring additional amenities and opportunities to Albemarle. Another explanation for expecting life to improve is based on trust in the local government's ability to manage and lead. Finally, respondents cited the existing amenities, like the restaurants, wineries, nice outdoors spaces, etc. as reasons for why they expect quality of life will only get better. For complete and verbatim responses, see Appendices F and G.

Desirability of Albemarle as a Place to Live

To gauge respondents' views on desirability of living in Albemarle, respondents were asked, "On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 represents the worst possible community in which to live, and 10 represents the best possible community, where would you rate Albemarle County as a place to live?" Respondents rated Albemarle highly with a mean rating of 8.1. As seen in Figure 4, three in four respondents (75%) rated Albemarle with a value of 8 or higher as a place to live, 20% rated Albemarle as either a 6 or 7, and just 5% reported a rating of 5 or below.

Figure 4. Rating of Albemarle County as a place to live



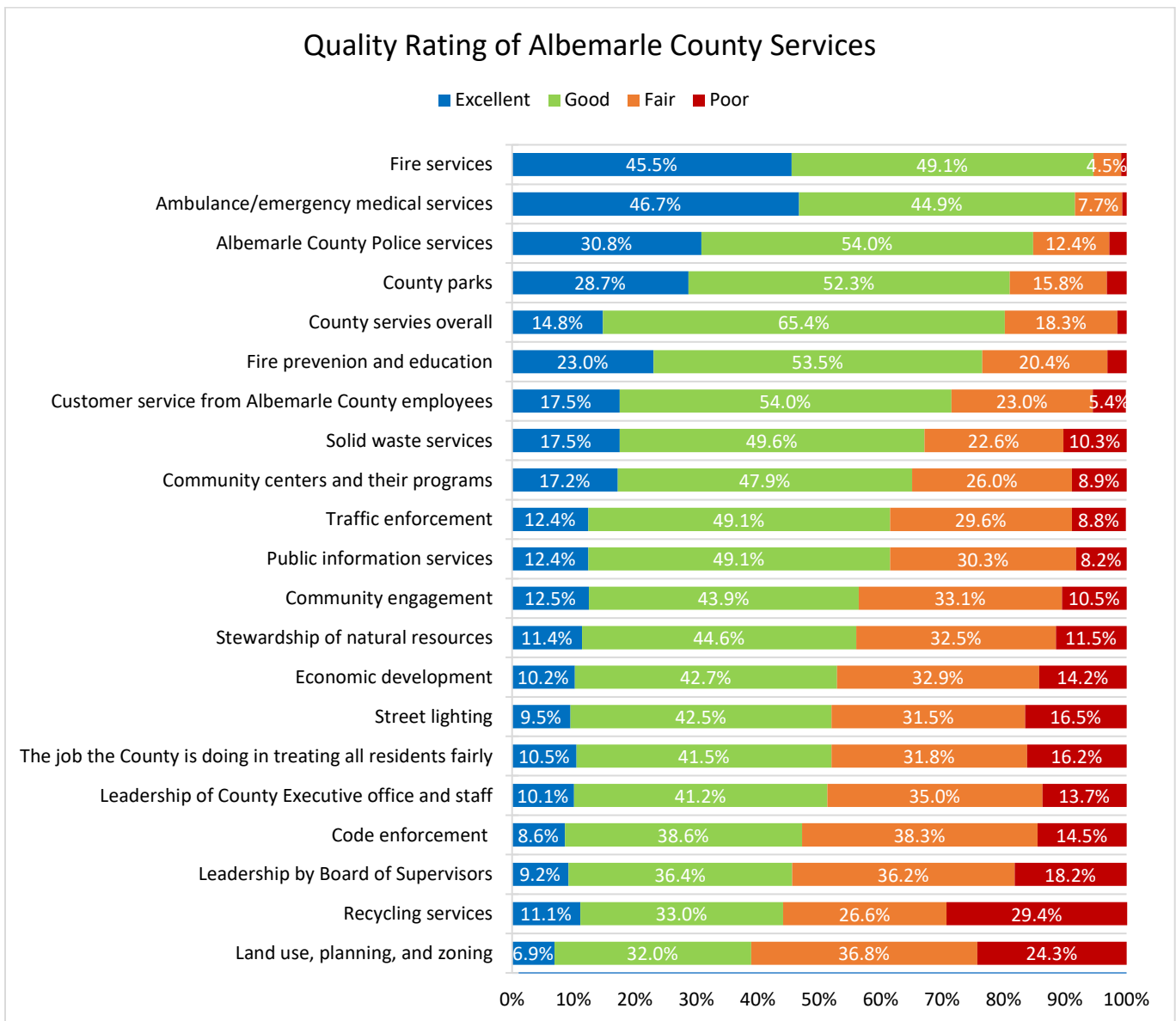
The mean rating did vary significantly by certain demographic characteristics. The average rating was highest among respondents with some graduate work, higher household income, those who have lived in Albemarle for more than 20 years, and respondents aged 70 years and older. Ratings also varied by locality with residents in rural northern Albemarle reporting a higher average rating than residents from rural southern Albemarle and those from the urban ring/29 North area (see Appendix D for specific mean ratings and complete comparisons).

III. County Services and Value

Rating of County Services

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of 20 different Albemarle County services or functions as well as to rate the quality of County services overall. Services were rated among four categories: Excellent, Good, Fair, and Poor. As seen in Figure 5, County services overall were well rated, with 80% of respondents reporting a rating of either “Excellent” or “Good.”

Figure 5. Quality rating of Albemarle County services

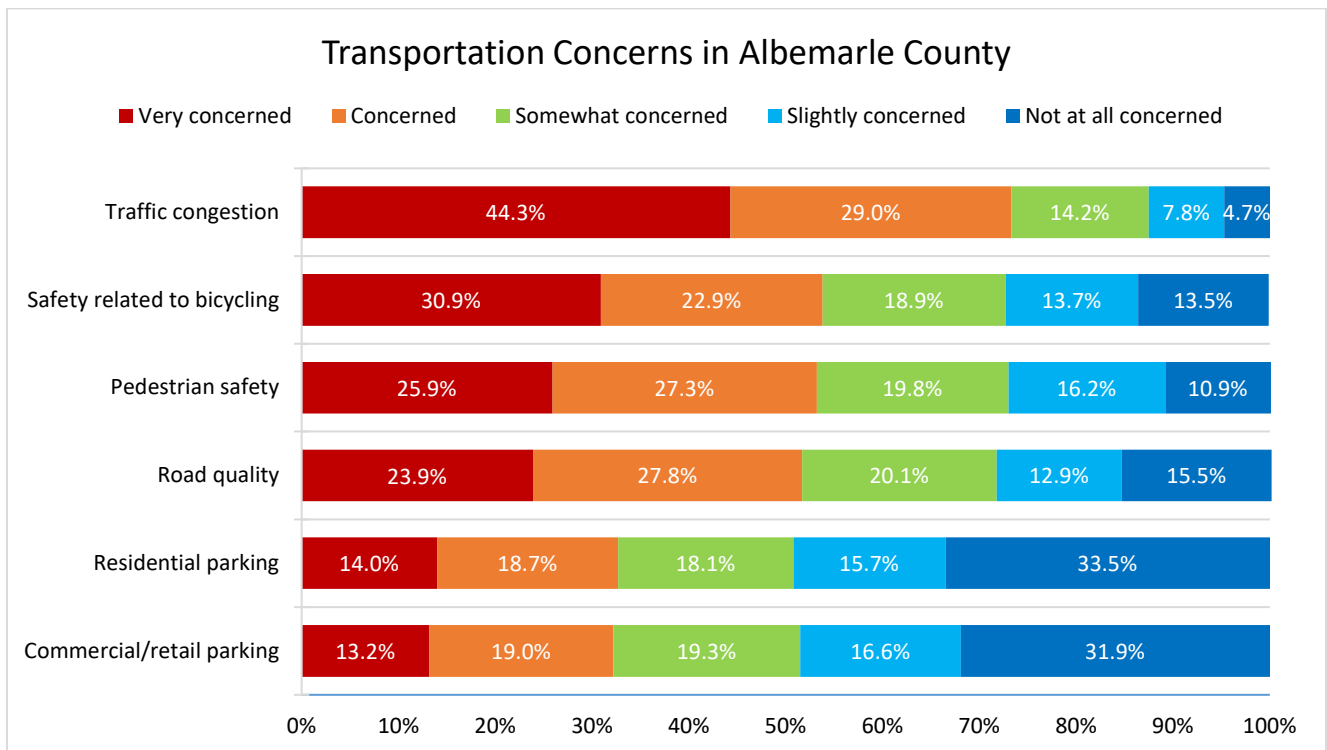


Fire services, ambulance/emergency medical services, Albemarle County Police service, and county parks were the highest rated services, each with over an 80% combined rating of “Excellent” and “Good.” There are also areas for improvement among County services. The two lowest rated items were recycling services and land use, planning, and zoning, which were rated as “Poor” by 29% and 24% of respondents, respectively.

Transportation

Respondents were asked to consider transportation related issues within Albemarle and rate their level of concern, ranging from “Not at all concerned” to “Very concerned.” As shown in Figure 6, traffic congestion is the top area of concern with approximately three out of four Albemarle residents reporting they are either “Concerned” (29%) or “Very concerned” (44%) with traffic. Safety related to bicycling (54%), pedestrian safety (53%), and road quality (52%) are all areas of concern to a majority of residents. Overall, parking in the county is less of an area concern relative to other transportation issues; however, residential parking is a statistically larger concern for residents who live in urban areas of the county. Pedestrian safety was also a large area of concern in urban areas, as well as in small town/village communities in Albemarle. Residents who live in rural areas or small town/village communities in Albemarle report higher concerns with road quality and bike safety compared to residents from other areas in the county. See Appendix C for complete percentage comparisons by demographics.

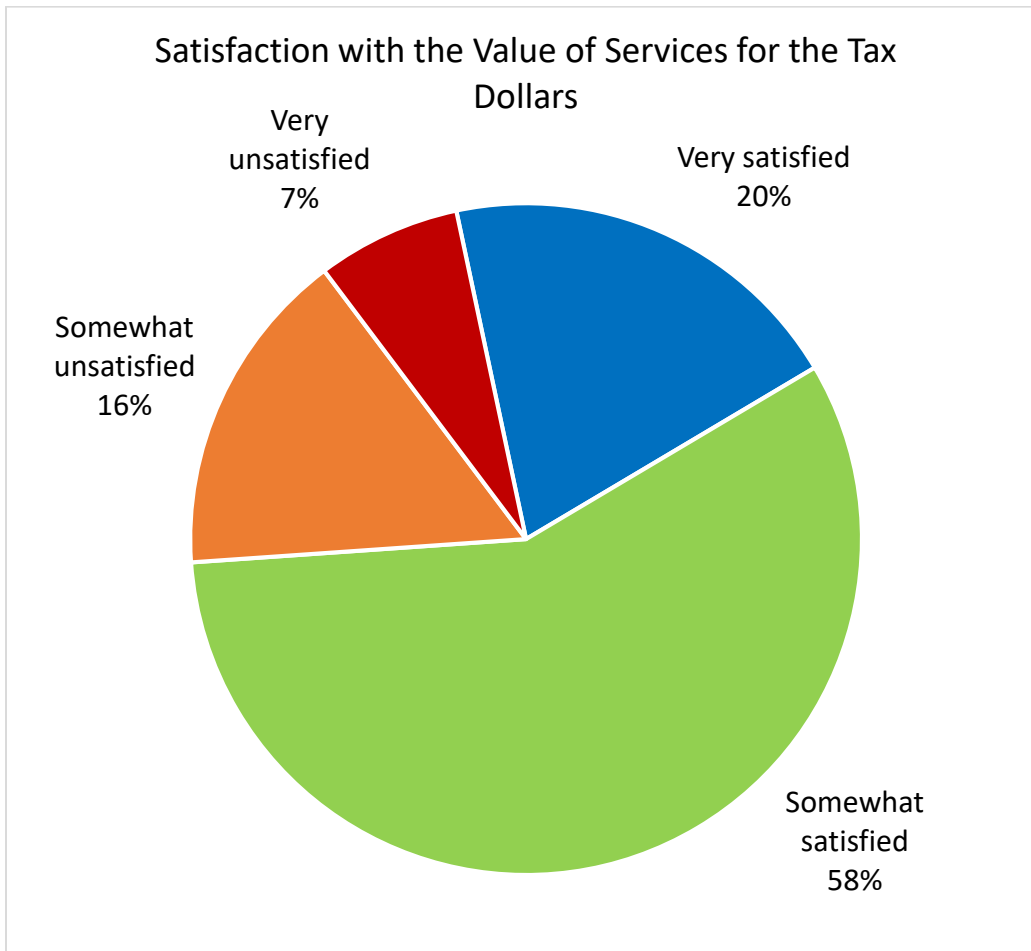
Figure 6. Transportation concerns in Albemarle County



Value for Tax Dollars

Respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the overall value of service provided in Albemarle for their tax dollars. Four out of five Albemarle residents are satisfied with the value of services for tax dollar, with 20% reporting they are “Very satisfied” and an additional 58% are “Somewhat satisfied” (Figure 7).

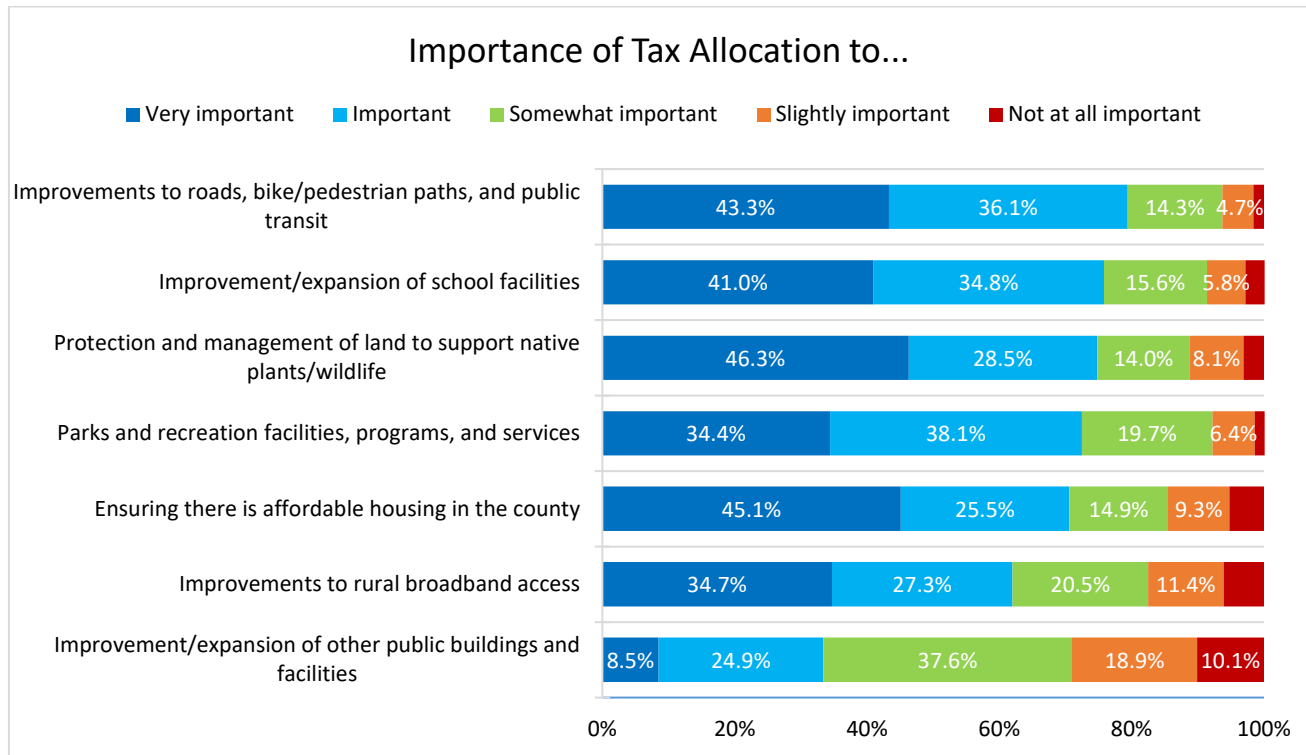
Figure 7. Satisfaction with value of County services for the tax dollars



Satisfaction with the value of services for their dollar was highest among residents with a college degree or higher, with an annual household income of \$100,000 and higher, and those over 70 years old. Renters and residents who have lived in Albemarle less than 6 years also reported statistically higher satisfaction than their fellow residents. Ratings also varied by the where the residents lives, with those who live rural areas across the county and those living specifically in rural southern Albemarle reporting relatively lower satisfaction ratings. See Appendices C and D for additional comparisons and specific figures.

Tax Allocation

Respondents were given a list of seven topic areas and asked to assess the importance of Albemarle County allocating tax dollars to each area. Improvements to roads, bike/pedestrian paths, and public transit was the most highly rated area for tax allocation, with 79% of respondents considering this area either "Important" or "Very important" for allocation of tax dollars. This area also received the highest mean rating of 4.14 on the 5-point importance scale. Improvement and expansion of school facilities (76%, \bar{x} =4.05) and protection and management of land to support native plants and wildlife (75%, \bar{x} =4.06) were also widely considered important for tax allocation by respondents. See Figure 8 for importance ratings across all topic areas.

Figure 8. Importance of tax allocation across various topic areas

Demographic differences in tax allocation preferences

Ratings of importance across these areas did statistically vary by respondents' demographic characteristics. Improvements to roads, bike/pedestrian paths, and public transit received a higher average rating of importance by older respondents as well as those with annual household income below \$50,000.

The mean importance rating for improvements to and expansion of school facilities varied significantly by age, homeownership status, geography, and race. Respondents under 50 years old, those with children in the home, renters, Black/African American respondents, and residents living in satellite communities and the urban ring/29 North reported higher importance for allocated tax dollars to school facilities.

Protection and management of land was given statistically higher mean importance by residents who live in rural southern Albemarle, rural communities or small town/village communities as well as those with annual household income below \$100,000.

Allocating tax dollars to ensure affordable housing in the county received an average importance rating of 3.96 overall, but several statistically significant differences emerged between groups. In particular, tax allocation towards affordable housing received a higher mean rating of importance among households with annual income below \$100,000, renters, residents living in the urban ring/29 North, and Black/African American respondents.

Tax allocation to parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services received an average rating of 3.97. Compared to other residents, respondents younger than 50 years old, renters,

and those living in urban areas of the county reported statistically higher average importance ratings for allocating taxes to parks and rec.

Allocating taxes to improvements to rural broadband access received a mean importance rating of 3.73. Tax allocation to improve broadband access received statistically higher mean ratings among respondents over 50 years old, households with income less than \$50,000, Black/African American respondents, and residents who live in rural areas.

Improvement and expansion of other public buildings and facilities received an average importance rating of 3.02 overall, and mean ratings did vary across demographic characteristics. In particular, tax allocation to public buildings and facilities received a higher mean rating of importance among Black/African American respondents, residents who live in satellite communities and the urban ring/29 North, those who live in urban areas of the county as well as small town/village communities, as well as households with income below \$50,000.

Open feedback on Albemarle County's allocation of tax dollars

In addition to answering specific questions about tax allocation, respondents were given the opportunity in an open-ended question to share general feedback and comments on Albemarle County's allocation of tax dollars. Those responses shed light on the importance ratings reported above and are consistent with the traffic concerns discussed earlier in this chapter.

Improvements to roads, bike/pedestrian paths, and public transit was the most highly rated area for tax allocation. In comments, respondents indicated specifically they would like to see congestion alleviated, either through expanded public transportation and/or construction of new roads, including the Western Bypass, and they would like to see improved safety, particularly in regards to bike lanes. There was also concern over roads in rural areas, with several respondents requesting they be resurfaced in effort to improve safety and access.

While respondents appreciated the existing parks and green space available in Albemarle, which they consider an asset of living in the area, they encouraged the expansion of more parks, walking paths and bike trails, and other recreation opportunities (e.g., public outdoor pools). Many respondents recognized the quality of the public schools in the area, and encouraged the County prioritize maintaining that high quality.

Finally, many respondents referenced the need for affordable housing in Albemarle. They cited observing an increased cost of living, including housing, in recent years and worried that not all current residents could keep up and remain in Albemarle. Another concern related to housing was that individuals who work in Albemarle ought to be able to live in the county as well.

For the complete list of open-ended responses to this question, see Appendices F and G.

IV. Equity and Access to Resources

Assessing equity and access to resources was a key focal area of inquiry for the 2020 Albemarle County Community Survey. Specifically, respondents were asked a series of questions to capture the level of convenience, or inconvenience, in accessing services and assets within the county; identify the specific barriers encountered in attempting to access these services and assets; understand the sense of belonging and inclusion within Albemarle, and how that may vary across residents; and assess the level of importance residents place on having inclusion and diversity within Albemarle.

Convenience in Accessing Services and Assets

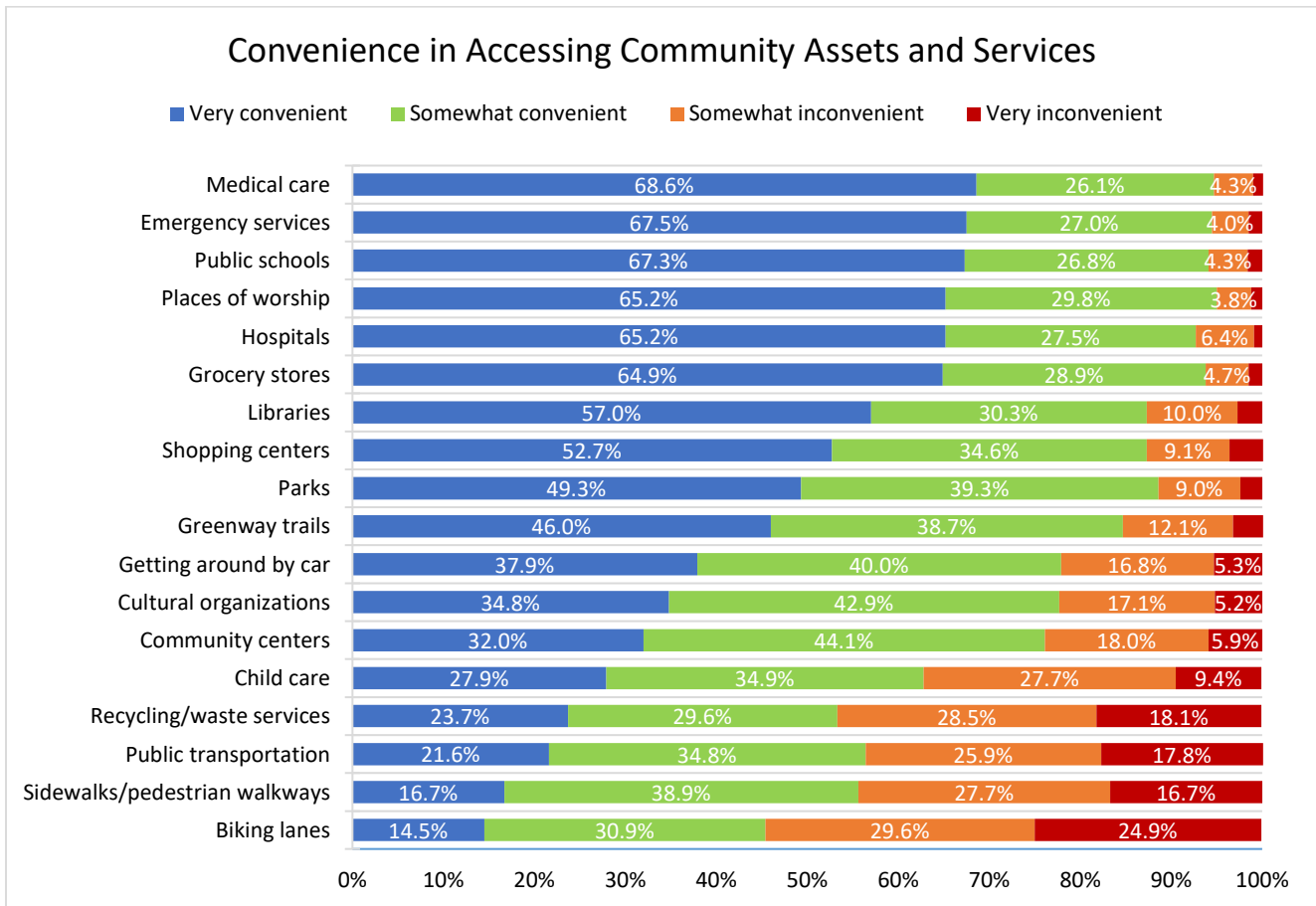
To assess residents' access to various services and institutions within Albemarle, respondents were presented a list of 18 items and asked to rate their level of convenience in accessing each item. Many of the listed items are *not* services provided by Albemarle County but rather an asset or good that exists within the broader community. The intent of the question was to capture respondents' ease of accessing a variety of assets or services within Albemarle, regardless of whether or not it's a public service/good. The items were:

- *Hospitals*
- *Medical care*
- *Emergency services*
- *Public schools*
- *Libraries*
- *Child care*
- *Places of worship (e.g., churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.)*
- *Community centers*
- *Cultural organizations (e.g., galleries, theaters, etc.)*
- *Parks*
- *Greenway trails*
- *Solid waste and recycling services*
- *Getting around by car*
- *Public transportation systems: Jaunt/Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT)*
- *Sidewalks and pedestrian walkways*
- *Biking lanes*
- *Grocery stores*
- *Shopping centers*

Figure 9 presents respondents' reported convenience in accessing these 18 items. Medical care and emergency services were the most conveniently accessed items, followed by public schools, places of worship, hospitals and grocery stores. For all of these items, less than 10% of respondents reported experiencing inconvenience in accessing the asset.

Bike lanes, solid waste and recycling services, sidewalks and pedestrian walkways, public transportation, and child care were among the most inconvenient services/assets to access.

Figure 9. Convenience in accessing community assets and services within Albemarle



Convenience in accessing services varied among Albemarle residents. In particular, several services and assets were significantly less convenient for residents in the satellite communities and rural southern Albemarle to access, and these included medical care, hospitals, emergency services, grocery stores, cultural organizations, and shopping centers.

Likewise, convenience in accessing services varied by the urbanicity of the community in which the respondents lives. In general, respondents who live in rural areas reported the most inconvenience in accessing assets compared to respondents from other types of communities. More specifically, residents living in rural areas or in small town/village communities had greater inconvenience in accessing medical care, hospitals, emergency services, child care, and cultural organizations. Public transportation is most inconvenient for residents in rural and suburban areas as well as for residents who identify as White, Hispanic/Latinx, and Multiracial/Another race. Bike lanes, sidewalks and pedestrian walkways, and grocery stores are most inconvenient for residents living in rural areas. For specific percentage comparisons, see Appendix C. For the complete overall frequencies, see Appendix A.

Open feedback on convenience or inconvenience in accessing assets within Albemarle

In an open-ended question, respondents were invited to write in comments regarding their convenience or inconvenience in accessing the previously discussed assets. The most common responses referred to issues with traffic and roads, biking and pedestrian concerns, and

recycling services. The convenience of “Getting around by car” was ranked in the bottom half of items, and that sentiment was echoed in the open ends. Many respondents lamented the increased traffic congestion, particularly on Route 29 North and Route 250. Additionally, several respondents spoke to the need for road improvements in rural areas of the county.

As reported elsewhere, respondents expressed concerns about bike safety. Some respondents would like to see bike lanes expanded, better connected, and increased throughout the county, while others worry some roads are not safe for cycling at all (e.g., rural roads in which there are blind spots and potholes, and high traffic roads on which drivers do not observe bike lane divisions). Residents appreciate the existing walking and biking trails, but would like to see more throughout the county and improved access to those that exist. They would also like to see more sidewalks along with street lights to ensure safe pedestrian options.

Finally, a common service that respondents commented on as inconvenient is the lack of recycling services in the county. Residents would like to see more recycling centers with expanded hours. Several residents want curbside pickup as an option, particularly for those without cars as getting to a recycling center is less feasible. The complete list of open-ended responses can be viewed in Appendices F & G.

Barriers to Accessing Services and Assets

In addition to understanding the level of convenience (or inconvenience) respondents experience in accessing community assets, it was important to identify the barriers encountered that may drive that inconvenience. Towards that end, respondents were presented the same list of services and assets⁷ and asked to indicate the barriers, if any, they encounter in accessing a given asset. Respondents could also indicate that they access the asset without encountering any barriers or they do not use the asset. The barrier categories were:

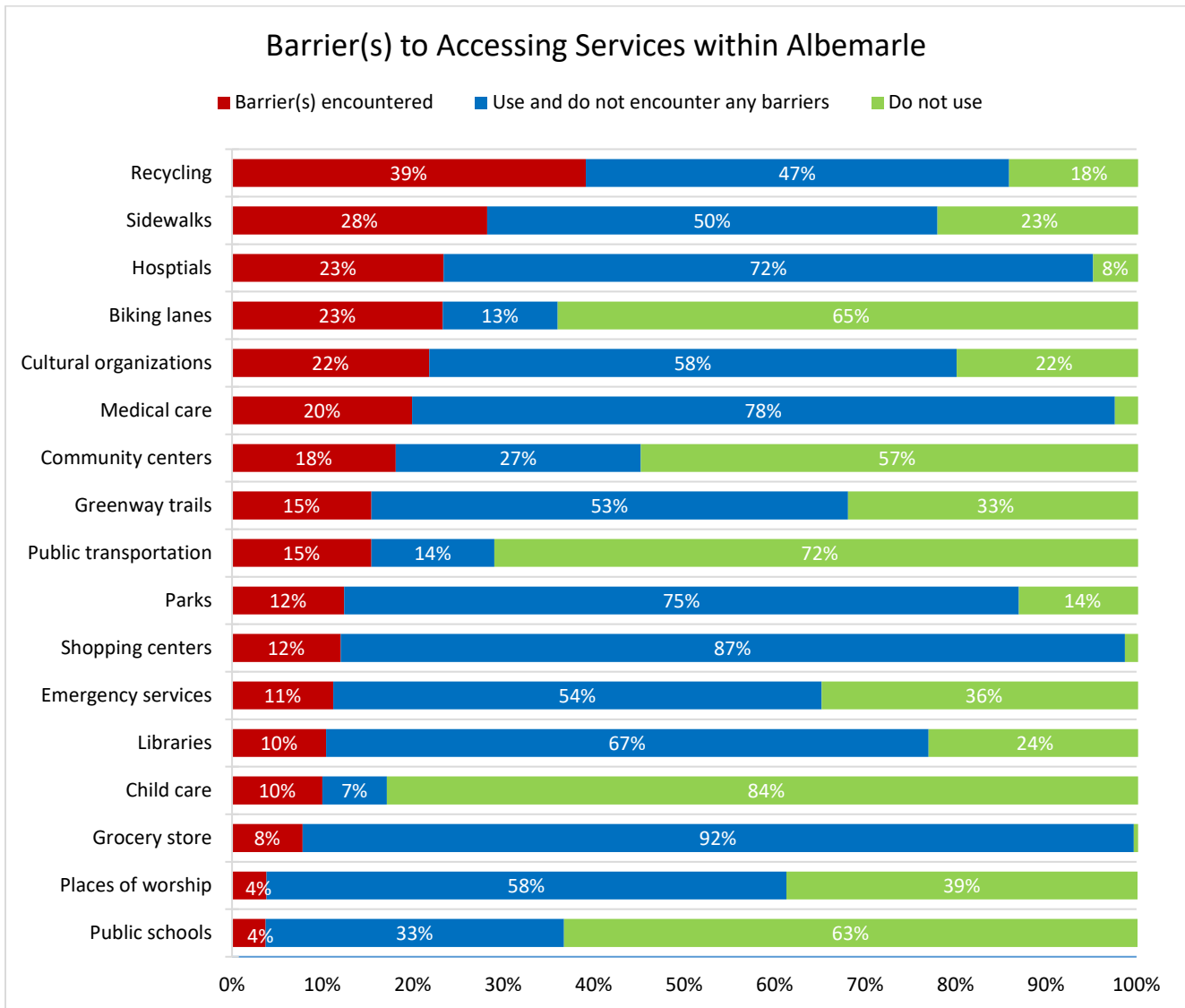
- *Too far away/Does not exist in my part of the county*
- *Too expensive*
- *Unaware of program/how to access*
- *Don't feel welcome/Don't fit in*

Responses to each item, with the reported frequency of encountering specific barriers, can be referenced in Appendix A. As an overview, Figure 10 shows the percentage of respondents who have encountered any barrier in accessing the service/asset, as well as the rate of use without encountering barriers, and the percentage of respondents who simply do not use the asset.

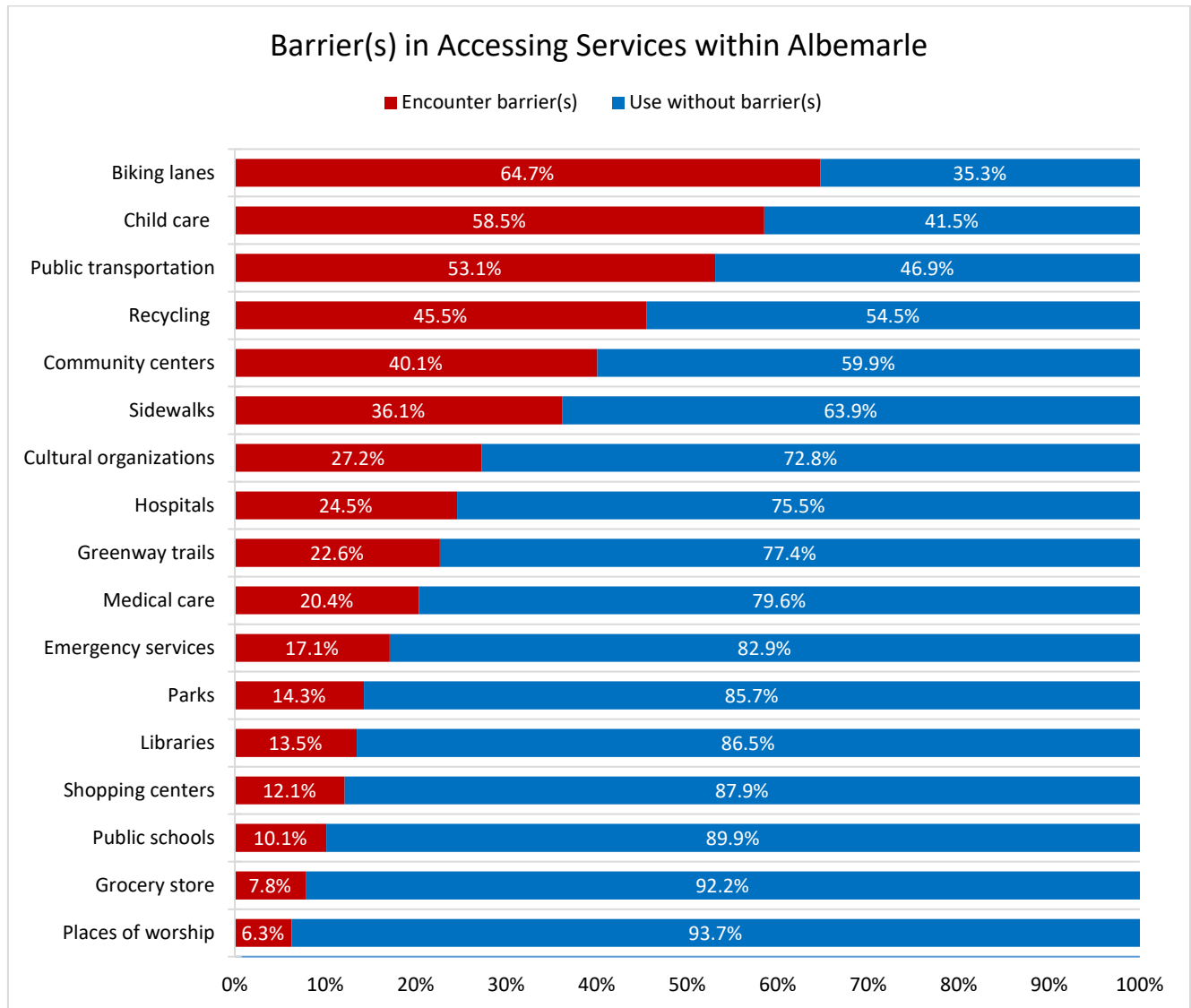
The assets for which the largest share of respondents encountered a barrier when accessing are recycling/waste services (39%), sidewalks (28%), hospitals (23%), and bike lanes (23%).

⁷ “Getting around by car” was excluded from the barrier assessment as the barrier categories did not apply to this item.

Figure 10. Barriers encountered in accessing services and assets within Albemarle



While it is important to address the community assets for which the largest percentage of respondents encounter barriers in accessing, it also critical to consider the assets for which there is high proportion of those encountering barriers out of those using the asset. As seen in Figure 11, along with bike lanes, public transportation and child care are two other community assets worth closely examining as they had a high proportion who encountered barriers among those who used the asset. Of those who used bike lanes, 65% encountered barriers. Of those who used public transportation, 53% encountered barriers. Of those who used child care, 59% encountered barriers.

Figure 11. Barriers encountered in accessing services and assets among those who use them

For those who encountered barriers in accessing waste and recycling services, the most common barrier was not having the service available in their area of the county, followed by being unaware of how to access recycling services. The most common barrier respondents reported in using sidewalks as well as bike lanes was not having them in their area. Being too expensive, followed by distance, were the most commonly encountered barrier for those accessing hospitals.

Respondents who encountered barriers in accessing public transportation cited not having the service in their area as the most common barrier, followed by being unaware of how to access the program. Being too expensive was the most commonly encountered barrier for those accessing child care. See Appendix A for complete frequencies.

Open feedback on barriers encountered regarding resources within Albemarle

Open-ended comments echoed many of these same findings. Common responses included the lack of sidewalks and bike lanes in many parts of the county. Even for those who do have

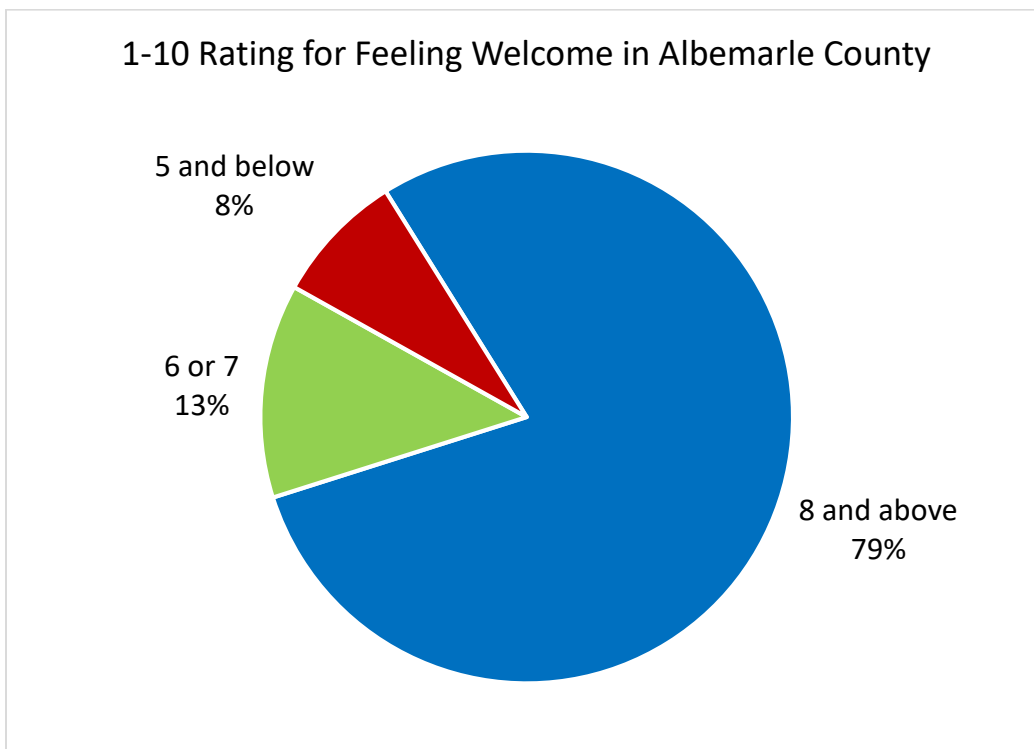
sidewalks, they explain streets are poorly lit and do not feel safe outside at night without more street lighting. Residents also lamented that existing public transit routes do not reach their area of the county, and if they do, the schedule is inconvenient/too limited. See Appendices F & G for verbatim open-ended responses.

Sense of Belonging and Inclusion within Albemarle

Feeling welcome in Albemarle County

As an initial measure of inclusion to capture the respondent's sense of reception, respondents were asked, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how welcome do you feel in Albemarle County?" The vast majority of respondents feel welcome in Albemarle. Approximately 80% of respondents reported a value of eight or higher, 13% reported a value of 6 or 7, and 8% reported a value of 5 or lower.

Figure 12. Rating for feeling welcome in Albemarle County



The average rating across respondents was 8.44, though averages significantly differed by demographic characteristics. The average response of feeling welcome in Albemarle was statistically higher among residents of rural northern Albemarle, home owners, households with annual income above \$100,000, those with a college degree or higher, and respondents age 70 and older. See Appendix D for complete mean comparisons.

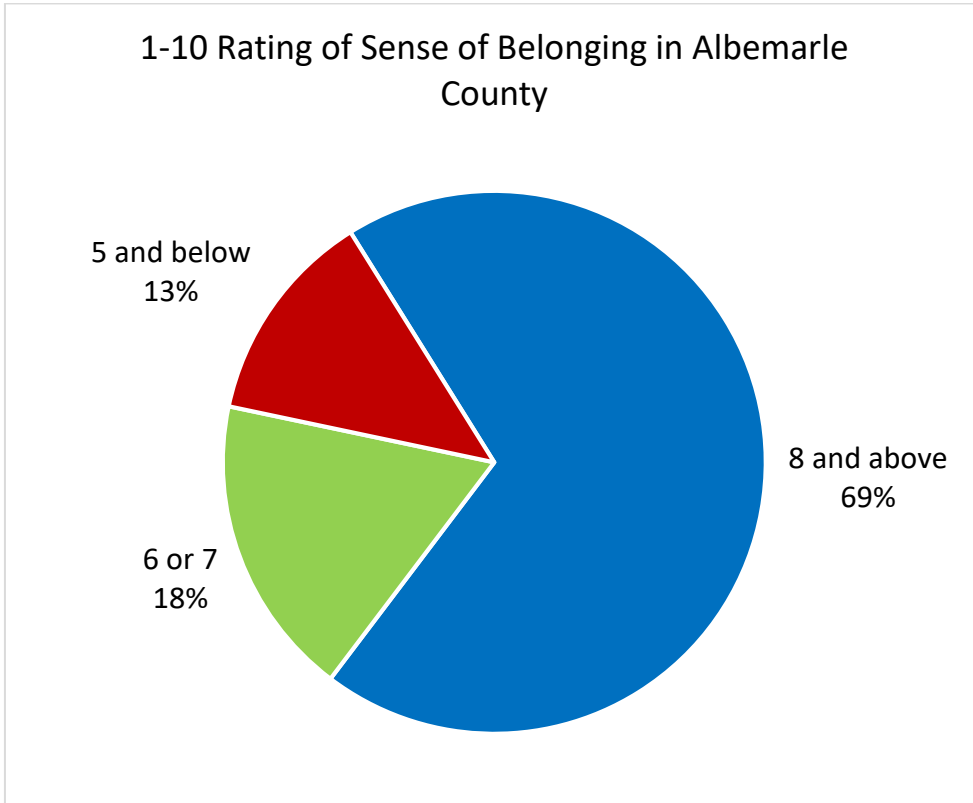
Sense of belonging in Albemarle County

As an additional measure of inclusion that speaks to the respondent's own sense of attachment and affiliation, respondents were asked about their sense of belonging. Specifically, "On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your sense of belonging in Albemarle County?" Again, the majority of respondents report a high value for their experience in Albemarle. Sixty-nine

percent of respondents reported a value of eight or higher, 18% reported a value of 6 or 7, and 13% reported a value of 5 or lower. The average rating across respondents was 7.98.

The average response of having a sense of belonging in Albemarle was statistically higher among home owners, households with annual income above \$100,000, those who live in rural areas, respondents age 50 and older, and those who have lived in Albemarle for more than 10 years. Residents who live in the urban ring/29 North reported the lowest sense of belonging. See Appendix D for complete mean comparisons.

Figure 13. Rating of sense of belonging in Albemarle County



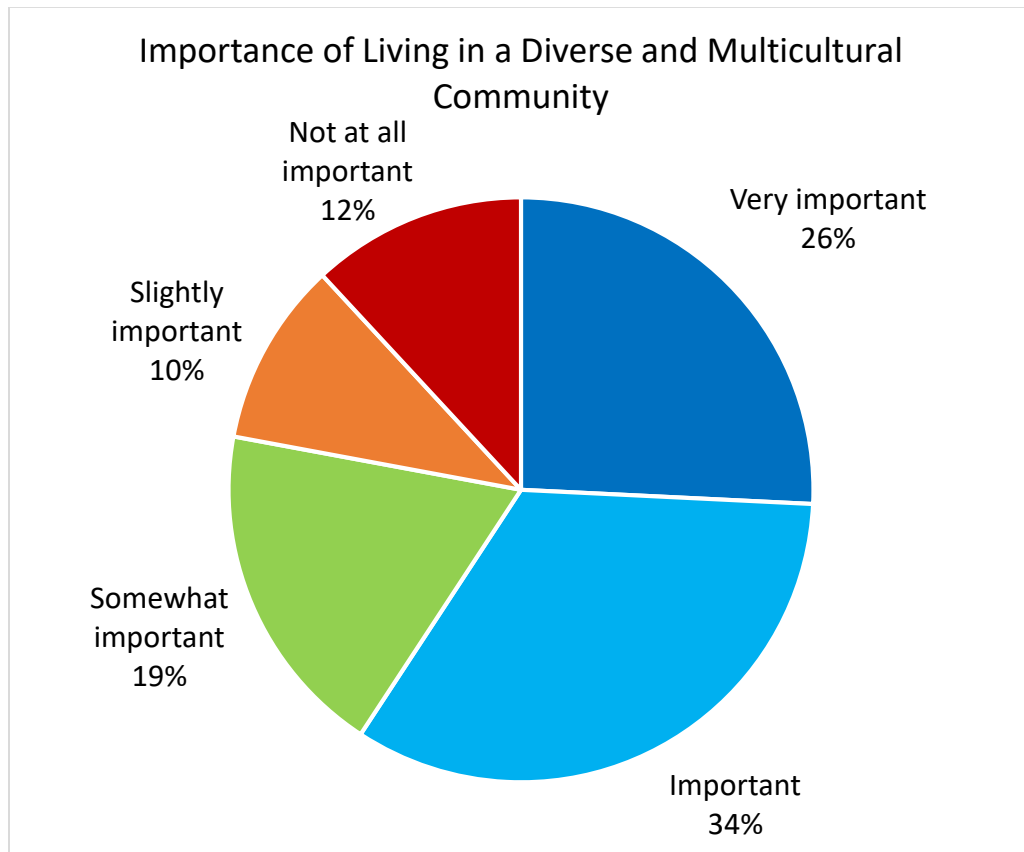
Importance of Inclusion and Diversity

Respondents were asked a series of questions that were intended to get a sense of residents' opinions and priorities regarding inclusion and diversity within the county.

Importance of living in a diverse community

Respondents were asked, "How important is it to you to live in a diverse and multicultural community?" Six out of ten respondents considered it either "Important" or "Very important" for them to live in a diverse community. Two out of ten consider this "Somewhat important." Figure 14 presents the full range of responses.

Figure 14. Importance of living in a diverse and multicultural community

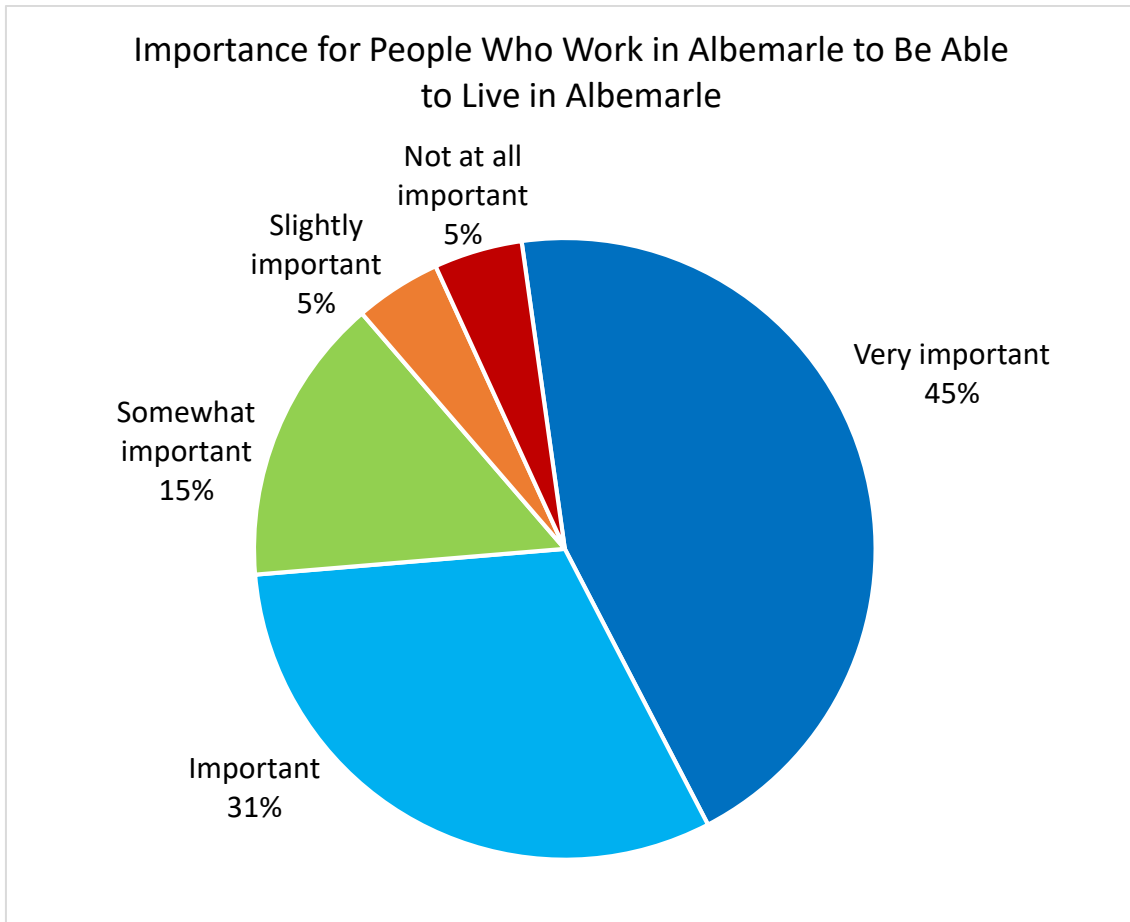


Across demographic groups, the majority of Albemarle respondents consider living in a multicultural community to be important; however, relative importance ratings do vary. Specifically, respondents who live in urban parts of the county, including the urban ring/29 North, reported higher rates of importance on this item. Additionally, residents who have lived in Albemarle for 10 years or less, as well as residents who identify as Black/African American or Asian reported statistically higher rates of importance on this item. See Appendix C for complete percentages by group.

Importance for those who work in Albemarle to be able to live in Albemarle

The vast majority of respondents considered it important for people who work in Albemarle County to be able to live in Albemarle County. Three-quarters felt this was either "Important" or "Very important." Just 5% of respondent considered this not at all important (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Importance for people who work in Albemarle to be able to live in Albemarle

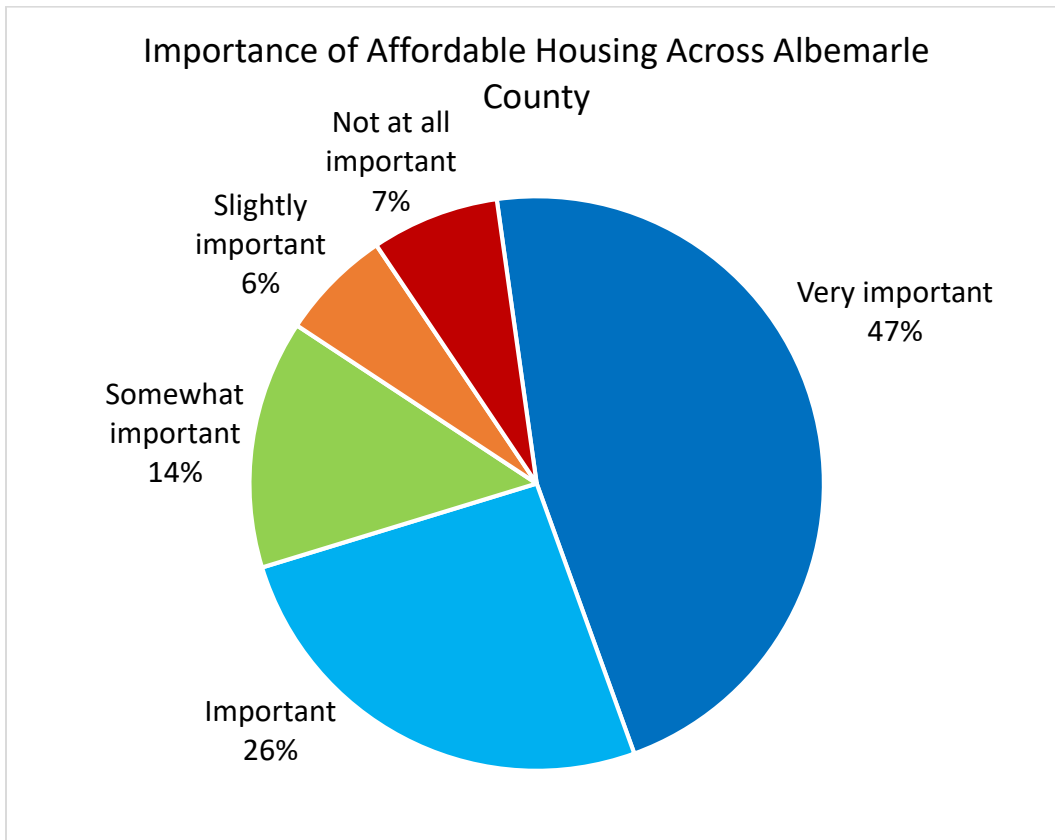


While the majority of respondents across all age groups considered this item important, higher ratings of importance were reported by respondents under 60 years old. There were not statistically significant differences among any other demographic groups (Appendix C).

Importance of affordable housing across the county

Residents responded similarly to the question, "How important do you think it is for there to be affordable housing options in all parts of the county?" Seventy-three percent consider it either "Important" or "Very important" for affordable housing to exist across the county, and another 14% consider this somewhat important (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Importance for there to be affordable housing in all parts of Albemarle County



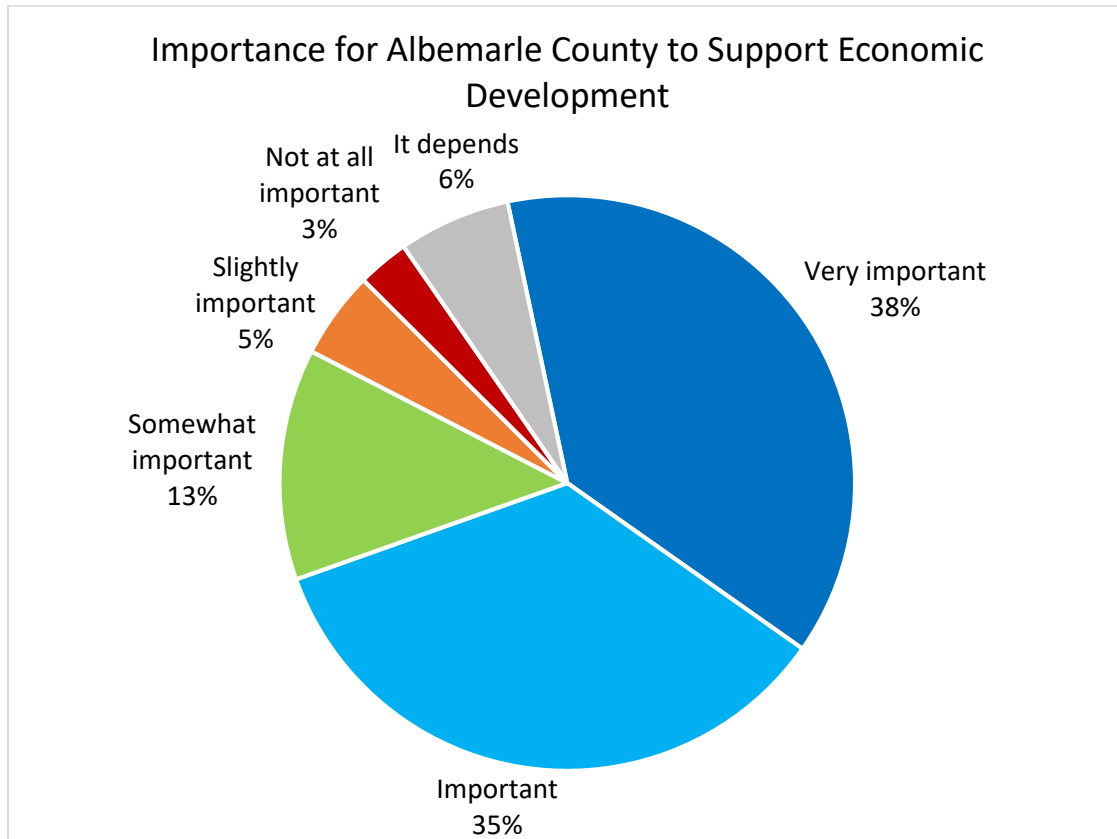
The average rating of importance for having affordable housing across the county was 3.99 (on a scale of 5). Statistically significant group differences did occur on this measure. On average, affordable housing was rated more important by residents who live in the urban ring/29 North, those living in urban areas and small town/village communities, renters, households with annual income below \$100,000, Black/African American respondents, and women. See Appendix D for complete means comparison results.

V. Growth and Development

Importance of Economic Development

Respondents were asked, “Generally, how important do you think it is for Albemarle County to support economic development in the county?” and there was clear consensus. A combined 73% considered it either “Important” or “Very important” for the County to support development in Albemarle, and another 13% considered it “Somewhat important” (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Importance for Albemarle County to support economic development in the county



The overall importance rating for this item was 4.07 (on a 5 point scale⁸), and this did vary significantly by demographic characteristics. The average importance rating for the County supporting economic development was highest among respondents under 40 years old, those with a college degree or less, renters, residents who have lived in Albemarle less than 6 years, Asian respondents, and residents who live in the urban ring/29 North, satellite communities, and urban parts of the county.

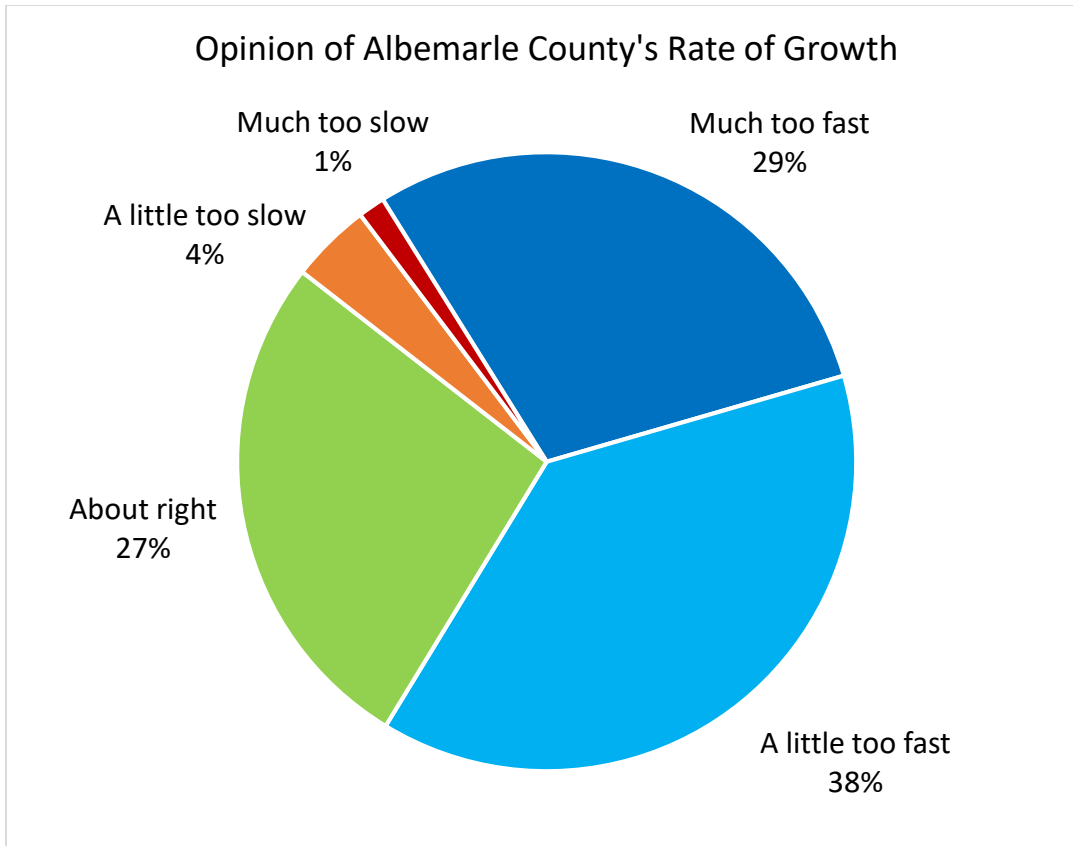
Opinions on Rate of Growth

Having established respondents’ views on the importance of the County to support economic development, another consideration is the rate of such development. Respondents were asked their opinion of the county’s rate of growth over the past few years. As seen in Figure 18,

⁸ Response “It depends” was excluded from the means comparison analysis.

approximately two-thirds of residents were concerned at the pace of recent growth in Albemarle. Twenty-nine percent considered the County’s growth be going “Much too fast,” and 38% consider it “A little too fast.” About one-quarter did think the County’s growth rate was “About right.” Respondents who live in rural areas, home owners, respondents over 60 years old, and residents who have lived in Albemarle for more than 11 years all reported statistically higher means indicating they think the County is growing too fast (Appendix D).

Figure 18. Opinion on Albemarle County's rate of growth over the past few years



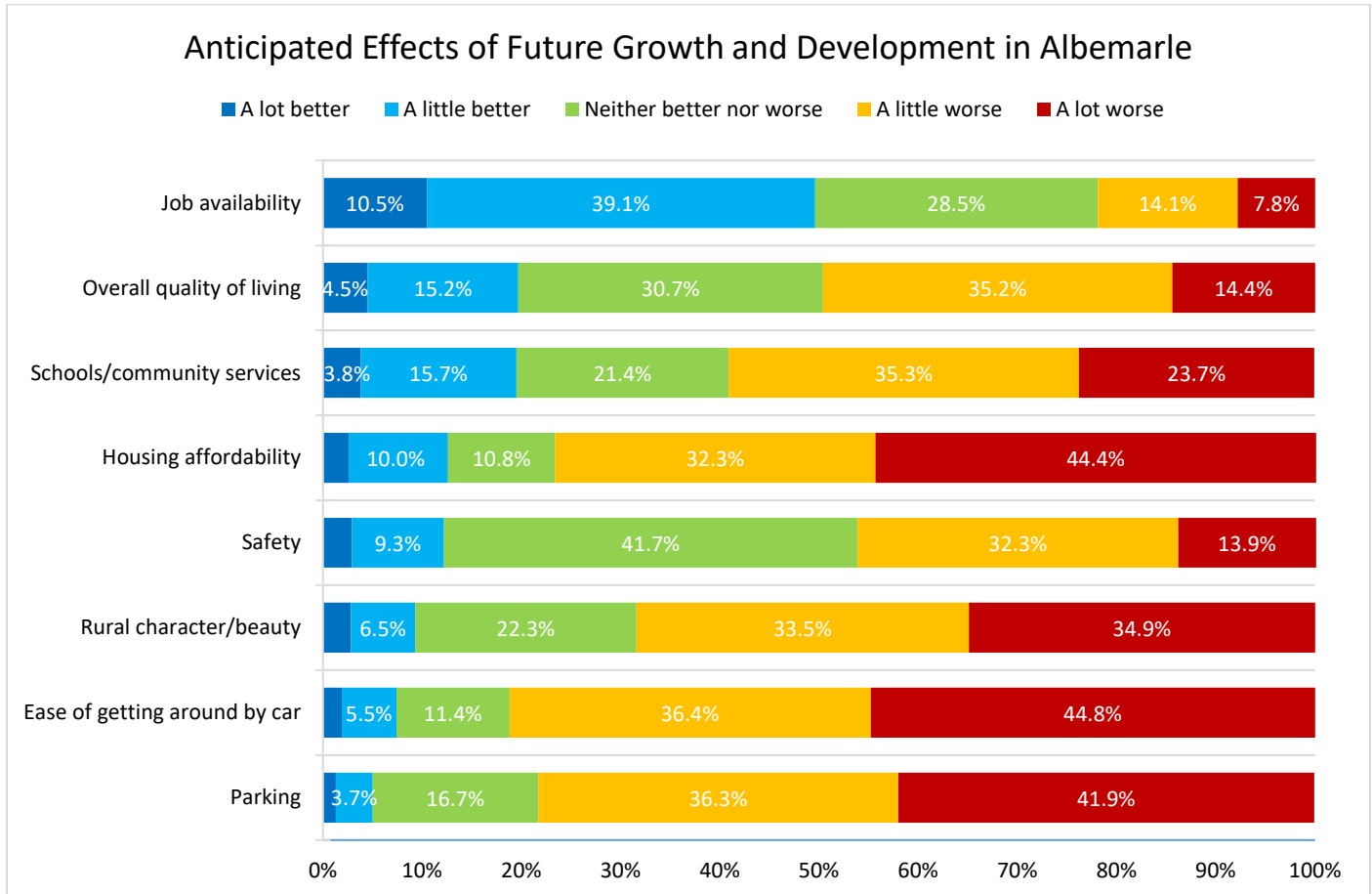
Anticipated Effects of Growth

Respondents were asked to speculate on how they think future growth and development will affect various aspects of life in Albemarle County. On a 5-point scale from “A lot worse” to “A lot better,” respondents reported the anticipated effects of development on the following aspects:

- Housing affordability
- Schools or community services
- Ease of getting around by car
- Parking
- Job availability
- Rural character/beauty
- Safety
- Overall quality of living

Job availability was the aspect the largest portion of respondents (50%) considered likely to get better as a result of future growth and development. As seen in Figure 19, respondents tended to anticipate worsened effects more often than improved effects across a variety of aspects of life in Albemarle. In particular, ease of getting around by car, housing affordability, and parking were all expected to get worse as a result of future growth in Albemarle County.

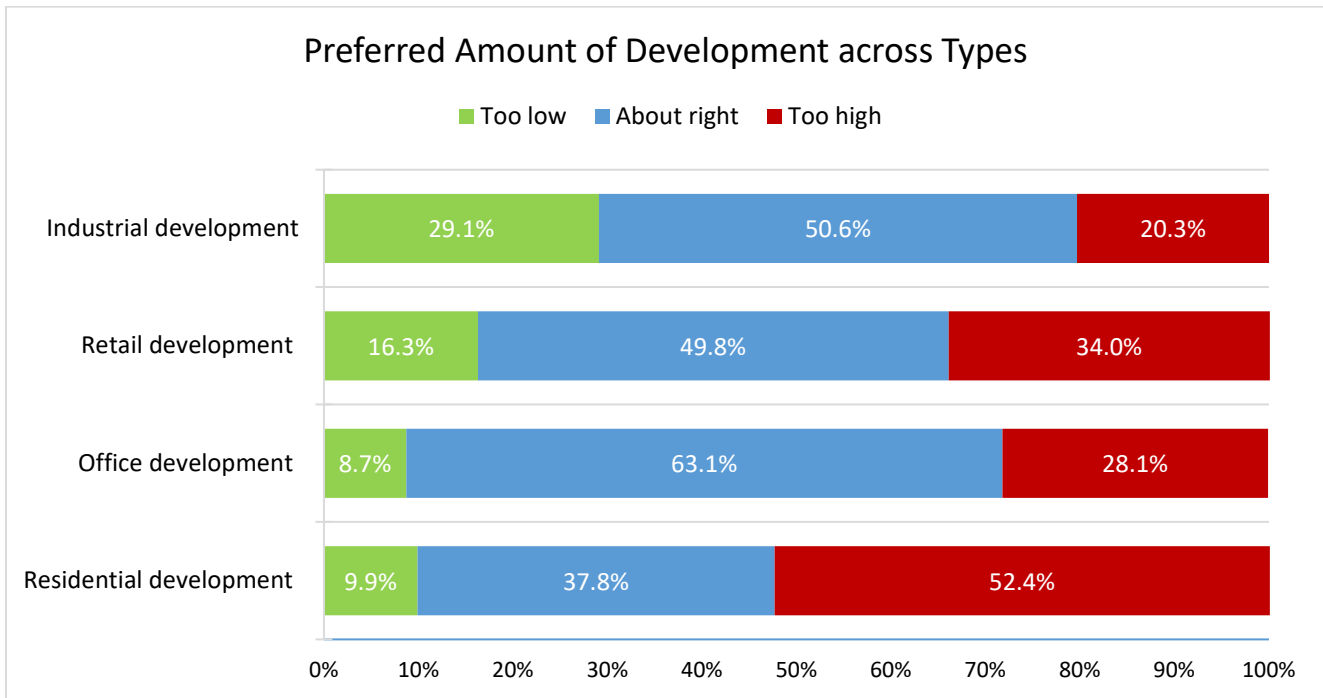
Figure 19. Anticipated effects of future growth and development within Albemarle County



Preferences for Types of Development

To further explore residents’ opinions surrounding development, respondents were presented with a list a four different kinds of development, either built or approved: residential, office, retail, and industrial. Respondents were asked to rate the amount of each kind of development in Albemarle County. Figure 20 presents the responses.

Figure 20. Preferred amount of development in Albemarle across different types of development



Twenty-nine percent of respondents think there is not enough industrial development in the county, and it is the only type of development for which a larger portion of respondents consider the amount to be “Too low” rather than “Too high.” Conversely, the majority of respondents (52%) consider the amount of residential development in Albemarle to be “Too high,” just 10% consider it “Too low.” Half of respondents consider the amount of retail development to be “About right,” and nearly two-thirds consider the amount of office development to be “About right.”

VI. Summary

The Albemarle County Community Survey was designed to determine opinions about quality of life in Albemarle; assess satisfaction with County services and preferences for tax allocation; identify barriers and level of access to resources and assets within the county; understand residents' sense of belonging and preferences for inclusion; and measure opinions on growth and development in the county.

Quality of Life

In general, Albemarle residents enjoy a high quality of life (90% report quality of life in Albemarle is either "Excellent" or "Good"). They also rated Albemarle County as a desirable place to live (75% rated Albemarle highly as a place to live). However, respondents were divided on how quality of life in the county would change over the next 5 years: 21% expect quality of life will improve, 46% expect it to get worse, and 33% expect quality of life will stay the same.

The primary explanation among those who expect quality of life will worsen was concern that Albemarle will grow too quickly and too fast for existing infrastructure to adequately accommodate the increased population, leading to overcrowding, increased traffic, and lack of affordable housing. Conversely, among the respondents who felt quality of life in Albemarle will improve in the next five years, the most common reason was also related to growth and development, which they expect will bring additional amenities and opportunities to Albemarle.

Satisfaction with County Services

Indicating broad satisfaction, four out of five Albemarle residents rated the quality of County services overall as either "Good" or "Excellent." Across specific services, fire services and ambulance/emergency medical services received the highest quality ratings. Conversely, residents rated land use, planning, and zoning as well as recycling services with the lowest quality ratings. When asked about transportation concerns, residents expressed overwhelming concern about traffic congestion, and relatively little concern over residential parking and commercial/retail parking.

Allocation of Tax Dollars

When it came to opinions regarding taxes, residents were considerably more divided. While the majority of residents were somewhat satisfied with the value of services for their tax dollars, responses differed along demographic lines. Older residents, residents with a college education, and those with higher annual income reported higher rates of satisfaction, while residents who live in the southern rural portion of the county reported less satisfaction.

Regarding allocation of tax dollars, residents identified improvements to roads, bike/pedestrian paths, and public transit as the most important area for tax allocation. In particular, they would like to see traffic congestion alleviated, public transportation expanded, increased safety surrounding bike lanes, and improvements to roads in rural parts of the county.

Access to Assets and Services

Across 18 different assets and services within the county, medical care and emergency services were the most conveniently accessed items, followed by public schools, places of worship, hospitals and grocery stores. For all of these items, less than 10% of respondents reported experiencing inconvenience in accessing the asset. Bike lanes, solid waste and recycling services, sidewalks and pedestrian walkways, public transportation, and child care were among the most inconvenient services/assets to access.

Specifically, respondents indicated they would like to see bike lanes expanded, better connected, and increased throughout the county. Residents would also like to see more walking and biking trails throughout the county, and improved/increased street lighting to provide safer pedestrian options. Finally, residents would either like curbside recycling pickup or more recycling centers throughout the county.

Convenience in accessing services varied significantly by the locality and type of community in which the residents lived. In particular, medical care, hospitals, emergency services, grocery stores, cultural organizations, and shopping centers were significantly less convenient for residents in the satellite communities and rural southern Albemarle to access. In general, respondents who live in rural areas reported the most inconvenience in accessing assets compared to Albemarle residents from other types of communities.

Barriers to Access

The assets for which the largest share of respondents encountered barriers were recycling/waste services (39%), sidewalks (28%), hospitals (23%), and bike lanes (23%). Along with bike lanes, public transportation and child care were two other community assets with a high proportion encountering barriers among those who use the asset. Specifically, of those who used bike lanes, 65% encountered barriers. Of those who used public transportation, 53% encountered barriers. Of those who used child care, 59% encountered barriers.

Not having the asset in their area of the community was the most commonly cited barrier to accessing recycling/waste services, sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transportation. Cost was the most commonly cited barrier regarding child care and access to hospitals.

Belonging and Inclusion

The vast majority of respondents feel welcome in Albemarle (79% reporting a high rating). A slightly lower portion, though still a majority, reported a high sense of belonging in Albemarle County (69%). These ratings did vary by demographics, and the average rating for both measures was statically higher among residents living in the rural northern part of the county, households with an annual income above \$100,000, and home owners.

Measures of inclusion were reported as important by the majority of respondents. Three out of five residents said it was either "Important" or "Very important" for them to live in a diverse and multicultural community. Three out of four residents felt it was either "Important" or "Very important" for people who work in Albemarle to be able to live in Albemarle. Three out of four

residents also considered it "Important" or "Very important" for there to be affordable housing options in all parts of the county.

Growth and Development

Growth and development, particularly the management of it, is a highly significant topic to Albemarle residents. Approximately three-quarters of respondents consider it either "Important" or "Very important" for the County to support economic development in Albemarle. While residents consider economic development important, the majority think the County's rate of growth over the past few years has been too fast. In particular, respondents who live in rural areas, home owners, respondents over 60 years old, and residents who have lived in Albemarle for more than 11 years all reported statistically higher means indicating they think the County is growing too fast.

While respondents recognize future growth and development in the county may improve job availability, they also hold concerns that other aspects of life in the county will worsen. In particular, ease of getting around by car, housing affordability, and parking were all expected to get worse as a result of future growth in Albemarle County.

Respondents' preferences for growth do vary by type of development. Industrial development was the one type of development for which a larger portion of respondents consider the amount to be too low rather than too high, suggesting this is an area the County may consider expanding further. Conversely, the majority of respondents (53%) consider the amount of residential development in Albemarle to be too high with just 10% consider it too low. Half of respondents consider the amount of retail development to be about right, and nearly two-thirds consider the amount of office development to be about right.

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In every project we undertake and every community we serve, the Weldon Cooper Center draws on eighty years of experience and expertise from across the organization to support the needs of our clients and partners. Cooper Center professionals embrace mission and impact-driven service to individuals, organizations, governmental bodies, and communities seeking to serve the public good. We conduct advanced and applied research in collaboration with clients so they may make a difference in governance and community life. We offer training programs and expert assistance to public leaders and skill development for political leaders who seek to work cooperatively with others. Our values of access, collaboration, commitment to community, and impact guide our work. We welcome partnerships and invite conversation about your goals and needs.

The Center for Survey Research

The Center for Survey Research opens channels of communication to give voice to the many. By helping governments, organizations, and researchers to measure attitudes, opinions, behaviors and interests, we enable them to serve their communities more effectively. As a full-service facility, we offer customized project design, professional interviewing, data collection and analysis, report preparation and presentation, and ongoing conversation with clients to help put survey findings to work.



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