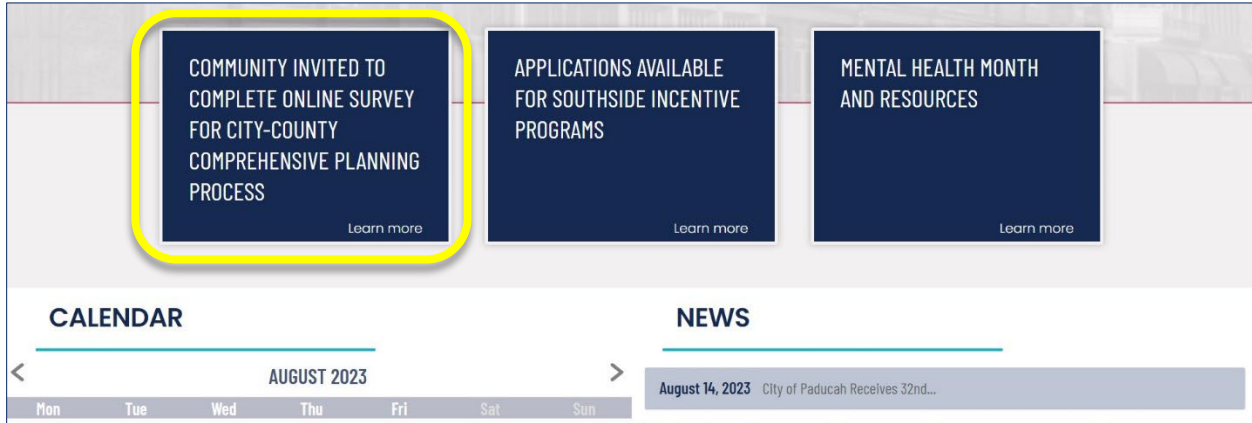


# Community Survey Highlights

## Paducah-McCracken County Joint Comprehensive Plan

As another way to obtain broad input to the City and County’s joint Comprehensive Plan effort from area residents, business community and others, a survey was made available online to supplement and reinforce in-person outreach activities completed during April-June 2023. The survey was available for four weeks starting in early August. It was promoted on the City and County websites and through other usual public notification means, and the survey effort also drew local media coverage. The survey closed on September 8 and received **1,154 total responses**.



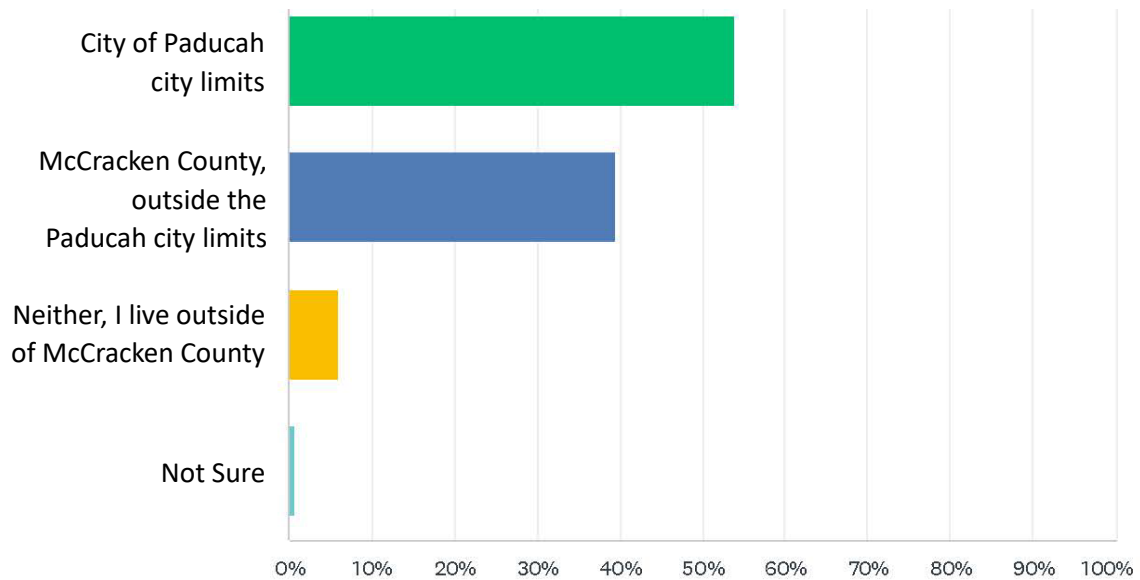
The survey included 24 questions, providing a mix of multiple-choice and open-ended response question types. On average, respondents took 9 minutes to complete the survey and answered 71%, or 17 of the 24, survey questions. Respondents were not required to answer every question to proceed through the survey. The response rate for each question is provided in this summary report.

As this was an open online survey, the first question asked whether the respondent lived in the City of Paducah, McCracken County or outside of the county. If a respondent answered “Outside of McCracken County” or “Not Sure,” they were able to answer only questions 1, 2, 7, 8 and 9 – with 8 and 9 the same as questions 10 and 11 for residents of the city and county.



PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

QUESTION 1: Do you live in ...

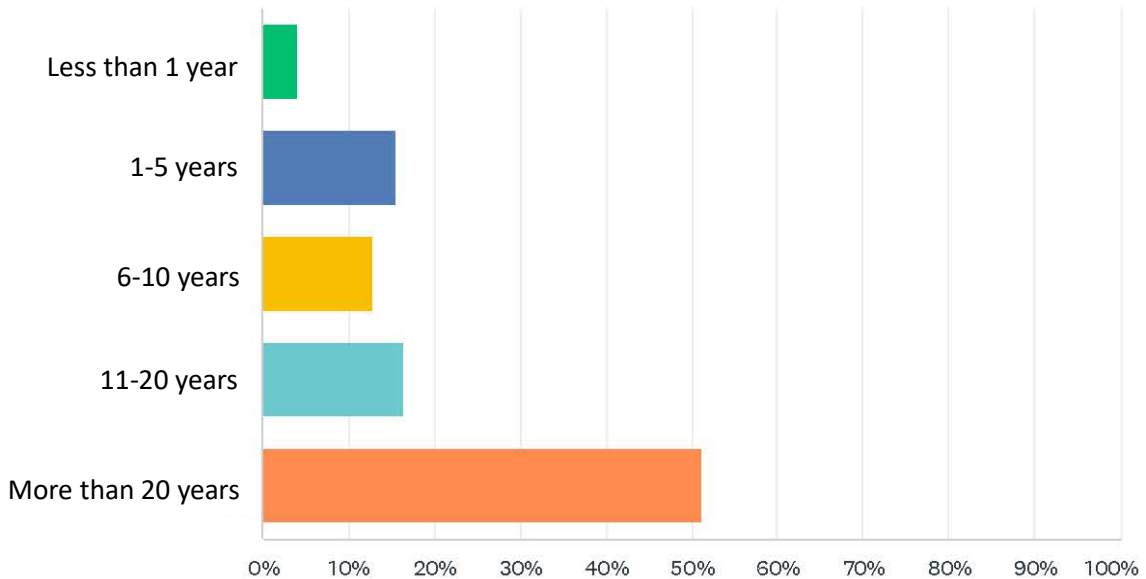


- 1,152 of the 1,154 survey respondents answered this question – only 2 did not.
- 54% of respondents live within the city, 39.4% live in the county outside the Paducah city limits, 5.9% live outside of McCracken county, and 0.69% were not sure.

**QUESTION 2: Physical Location**

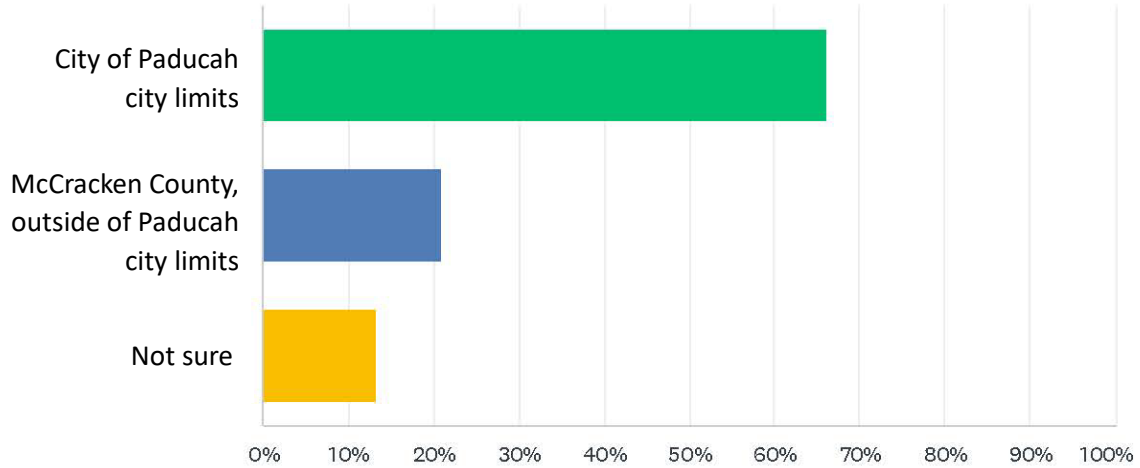
This question asked participants who live within the city or county to provide their address (or nearest intersection) so the general geographic coverage of the survey response could be made visual on a map. Of the 1,086 respondents eligible to answer this question, 857 (81.2%) provided an answer. However, only 454 (53.0%) of the 857 responses provided enough detail to pinpoint a specific location, so the map illustration was not pursued. However, a broader review of the Question 2 responses confirmed that the survey was completed at various locations across the county based on references to place names such as Camelia, Concord, Lone Oak, Reidland, St. Johns, West Paducah, etc.

**QUESTION 3: How long have you lived in the city or county?**



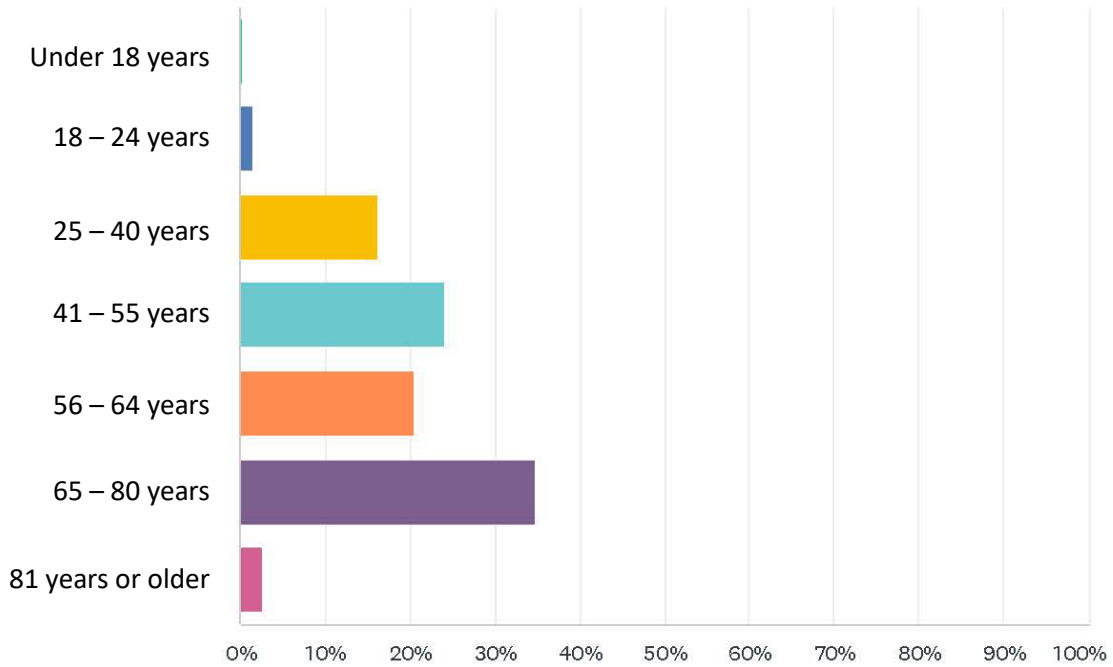
- 995 (91.6%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 51.2% of respondents have lived in Paducah and/or McCracken County for 20 years or more.
- 19.6% of the respondents are fairly new to the city and county, having moved here within the last five years.

**QUESTION 4: Is your place of business or employment in:**



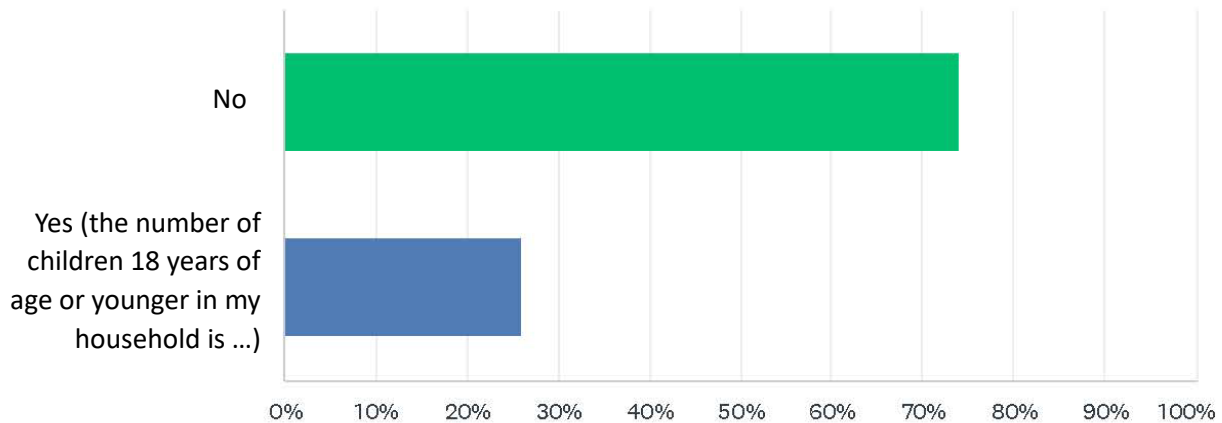
- 793 (73.0%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 66.1% of the respondents work within the City of Paducah, while 20.8% work outside of the city limits but within the county.

**QUESTION 5: In which age range are you?**



- 994 (91.5%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- Just over one-third of respondents (34.8%), and the largest share of respondents to this question, noted that they are 65-80 years old.
- The second largest group of respondents (24.1%) included people between ages 41-55.

**QUESTION 6: If you are an adult, do any children 18 years of age or younger live in your household?**



- 987 (90.9%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 26% of respondents answered “Yes,” with anywhere from 1 to 10 children age 18 years or younger in their household.

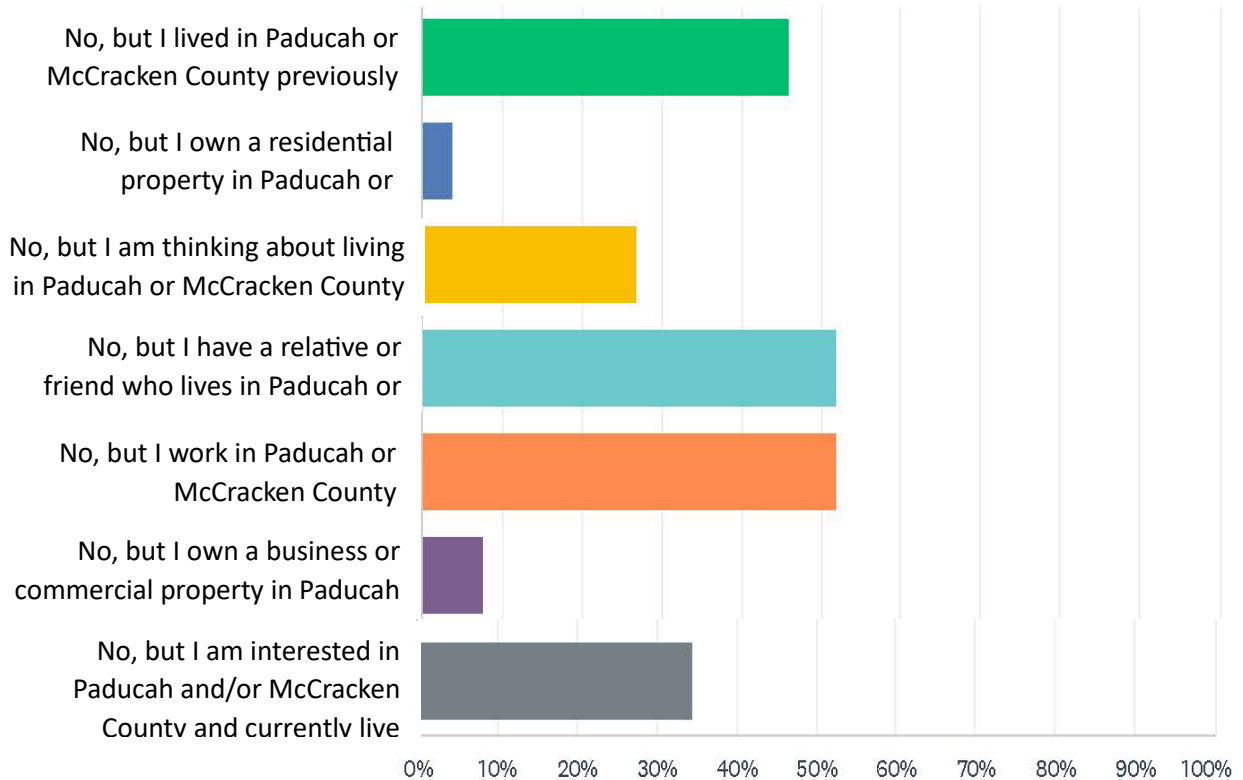
**QUESTION 7: Non-Resident Reasons for Interest in Paducah and/or McCracken County**

Those who identified as non-residents in Question 1 were asked to check all that apply out of seven options shown on the chart below. Among the 52 (76.5%) of the 68 eligible respondents who answered, the top three responses were:

- No, but I lived in Paducah or McCracken County previously. (46.2%)
- No, but I have a relative or friend who lives in Paducah or McCracken County. (51.9%)
- No, but I work in Paducah or McCracken County. (51.9%)

18 respondents (34.6%) chose the last option – “No, but I am interested in Paducah or McCracken County and currently live elsewhere” – and provided their current locations. These included Ballard County, Calloway County, Graves County, Marshall County, Kentucky Lake, Kevil (KY), Louisville (KY), Sharpe (KY), Clarksville (TN), Knoxville (TN), Unionville (IL), Humble (TX), Missouri, Illinois and Wyoming.

PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS



**QUESTION 10:**

**What positives about Paducah and/or McCracken County today and into the future energize you most?**

For this open-ended question, 708 (65.2%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered. Representative quotations are included below, and similar responses were consolidated. **[Question 8 posed the same question to non-residents, whose responses are compiled below after the resident list.]**

- Safety and responsiveness of first responders.
- School system.
- Good medical facilities and physicians.
- Excitement about the new sports area/sports complex.

*“The up and coming sports complex that will not only help our city economically but will have something to offer children to keep them engaged in positive activities.”*

- Parks, trails and green space, including the greenway and dog park.

*“Our commitment to quality of life for our citizens. The Greenway Trail, Noble Park, Riverfront, downtown entertainment district all contribute to a healthy, exciting lifestyle.”*

- Development of downtown area.

*“I was born and raised in Paducah, left in 1989 and moved back in 2021. I can tell that the city is trying to bring the downtown area back to life (good thing).”*

- Rural setting.
- Diverse cultures.

## PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Events, entertainment and the arts.

*"We have a thriving artist community which contributes to our community and tourism."*

- Growth of new businesses.

*"I love how we encourage mom and pop owned business in downtown area. I like seeing the arts being a major focus."*

- Services for senior citizens.
- Geographic location to other large cities.
- Small town feel with big city amenities.

*"It is an easy town to travel in, the cost of living is reasonable, efforts continue at work to enhance the quality of life in the area – retail offerings, recreational options, cultural offerings."*

- Low traffic congestion, walkable and bikeable.
- Activities on the waterfront and new riverfront projects.
- Public library.
- Restaurants and breweries.
- Positive, friendly people and a sense of community.

*"I like our connected community. How we as a collective strive to be a unit of one. This is a wonderful place to raise your children."*

- Growth and jobs.
- Family events and activities.
- High quality of life and affordable cost of living.
- Tourism opportunities.
- New airport terminal.
- Cooperation between government entities.

Of the 68 non-resident respondents, 41 (60.3%) responded to the same question. Their responses included:

- New development.
- Arts, entertainment and events.
- Parks.
- Proposed sports complex.
- Job opportunities.
- Location in the region.
- Cost of living.
- Small town feel, big city amenities.
- Downtown revitalization.
- Riverfront work.
- New businesses.

## PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- City and County cooperation.
- Community focused organizations.
- Educational opportunities.

### QUESTION 11:

#### What concerns you most about Paducah and/or McCracken County today and into the future?

For this second open-ended question, 751 (69.2%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered. Representative quotations are included below, and similar responses were consolidated. **[Question 9 posed the same question to non-residents, whose responses are compiled below after the resident list.]**

- Losing the small town feel.
- Cost of living and high taxes.
- Condition of infrastructure.
- Lack of job opportunities at large employers.
- Types of retail and services available.
- Lack of coordinated approach to economic development.
- Increase in crime.
- Poor property upkeep.
- Not keeping up with growth in the area, and losing out on opportunities for the community.
- Local governments that are not cooperative.
- Lack of affordable housing.

*"I worry about the stability of the medical community both from a financial standpoint and a staffing standpoint."*

- Lack of cultural diversity.
- Lack of youth programming.
- Slow pace of development.
- Vacant buildings.

*"Older buildings not being used to their full potential for the good of the community. For example, commercial property prices are too high and those spaces could be used to house homeless, etc."*

- Lack of safe transportation for all modes, not just cars.
- A clear vision for growth.

Of the 68 non-resident respondents, 38 (55.9%) responded to the same question. Their responses included:

- Education.
- Maintenance of City and County facilities, including parks and recreation facilities.
- Small business decline.
- Attraction of large employers.



## PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Lack of cooperation between City and County governments.
- Potential traffic issues with new growth.
- Lack of unified vision for the area.
- Challenge of attracting and retaining educated young professionals.
- Flooding concerns after rain.
- Lack of affordable housing.
- Increase in crime.
- Lack of diversity and inclusion.

### QUESTION 12:

#### **Top 5 priorities from a list of 20 items frequently mentioned in early leadership and public input for the current Comprehensive Plan update process.**

For this question, 795 (73%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered. The following items were ranked among the top five most often, in this order:

- Safe community and City/County public safety services (police, fire, emergency medical service). (44.5%)
- Infrastructure condition and capacity (streets, water, sanitary sewer). (42.9%)
- Make the area more attractive to retain – or regain – youth who grew up here, and to attract younger individuals and families (i.e., quality jobs, housing, amenities, etc.). (42.5%)
- Storm water management, mitigation of flooding risks and readiness to deal with and recover from natural hazards. (39.6%)
- Continue efforts to diversify the area’s economic and employment base, for long-term economic sustainability and also to offer a wider range of job options to current and prospective residents. (38.1%)

Other options on the list of 20 selected most often for the top five included:

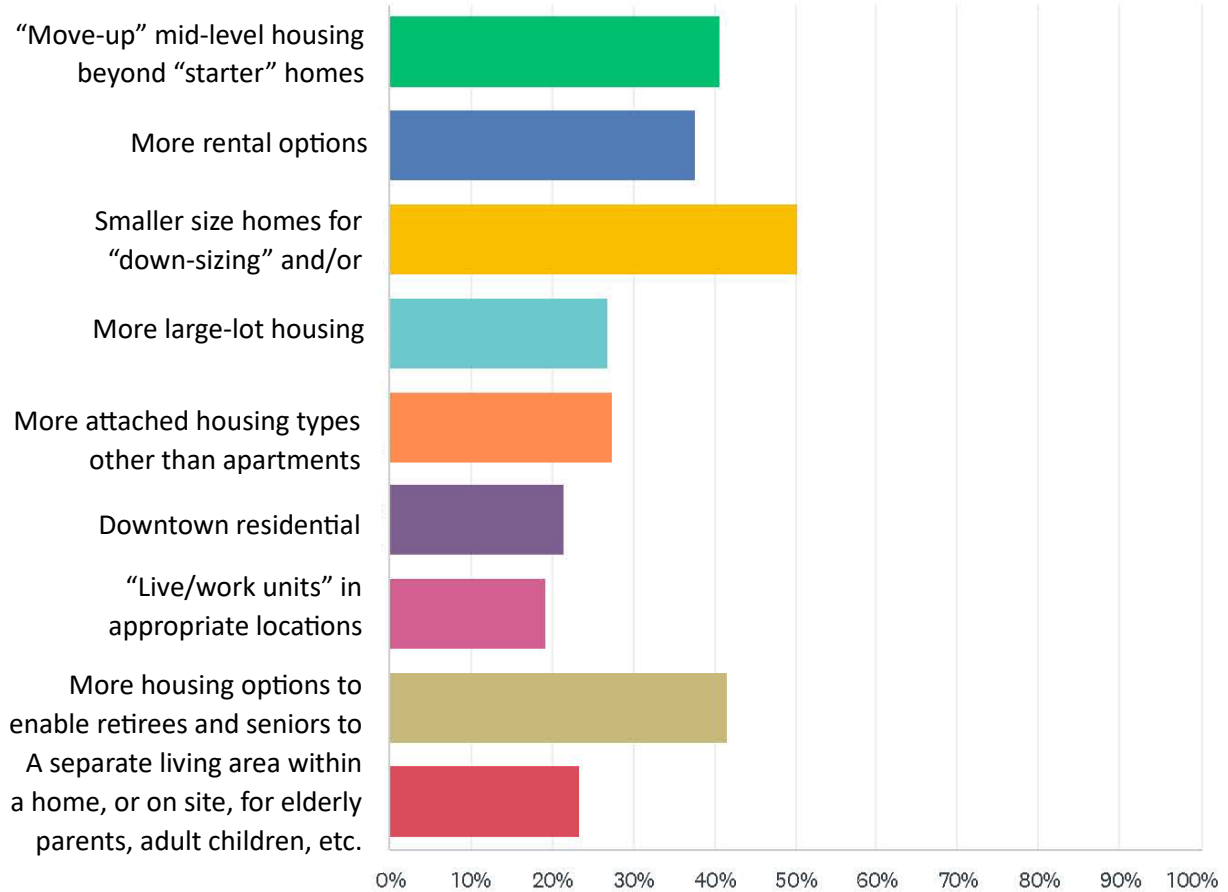
- Increased quantity and variety of housing options. (31.7%)
- Preservation of the area’s natural resources and landscapes. (29.6%)
- Continue to build on the area’s success as a tourist destination. (25.8%)

**QUESTION 13:  
Do you have other priorities for the Comprehensive Plan review  
that are not included on the list above?**

Following the previous question, resident participants were given the opportunity to identify other top priorities to address beyond those listed. Two-thirds, or 717 (66.0%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question, 220 of whom (30.7%) said “yes.” Similar responses were consolidated.

- Maintenance of streets.
- Clean up the river.
- Attract more diverse and family-owned businesses.
- Increase traffic safety.
- Safety for all modes of transportation including walking, biking and buses.
- Attract more jobs in additional industries.
- Attract businesses and services specifically for residents, such as areas in need of a grocery store.
- Reduce crime and increase police presence in neighborhoods.
- Plan for future parks and green spaces.
- Increase efforts to include diverse cultures and voices.
- Offer a wider range of housing options and price points.
- Additional emphasis on the arts.
- Equal attention to the needs of all parts of the community.
- Attention to economic development efforts.
- Increase collaboration between City and County governments.

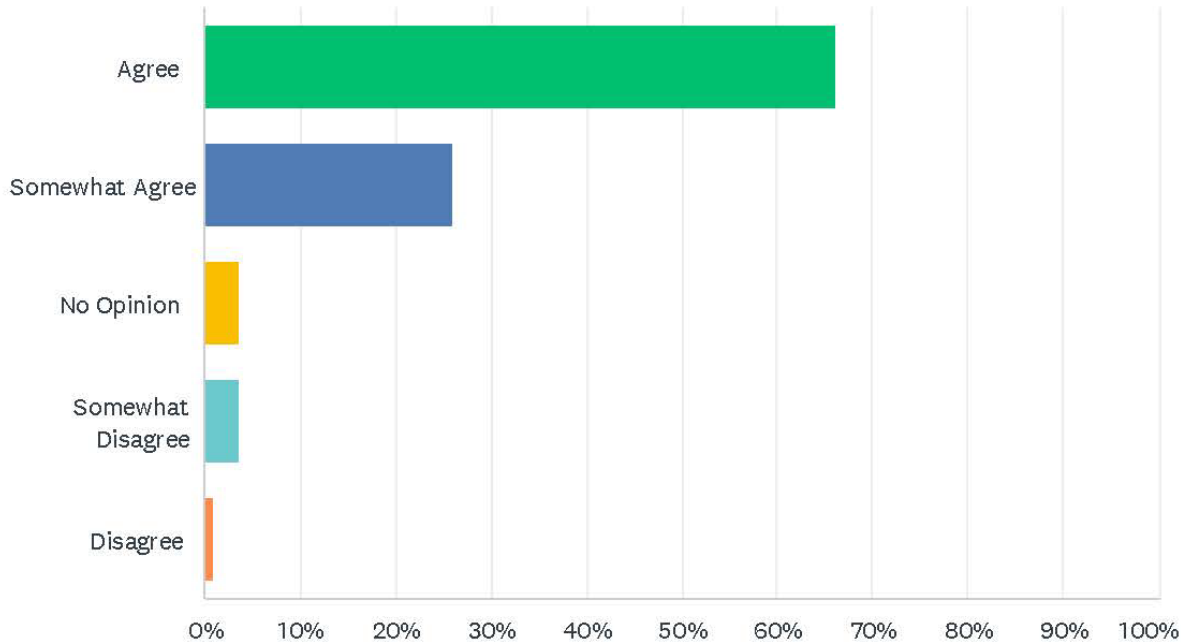
**QUESTION 14:**  
**Housing is a key concern in Paducah and McCracken County as in many parts of the nation. What housing options does this area need more of? Please check all that apply.**



- 709 (65.3%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- Half of the respondents (50.4%) selected the option to increase the amount of "smaller homes for 'down-sizing' and/or affordability."
- The second and third most selected options nearly tied, with 41.6% and 40.6% respectively – "More housing options to enable retirees and seniors to stay in the area" and "'Move-up' mid-level housing beyond 'starter' homes."

**QUESTION 15:**

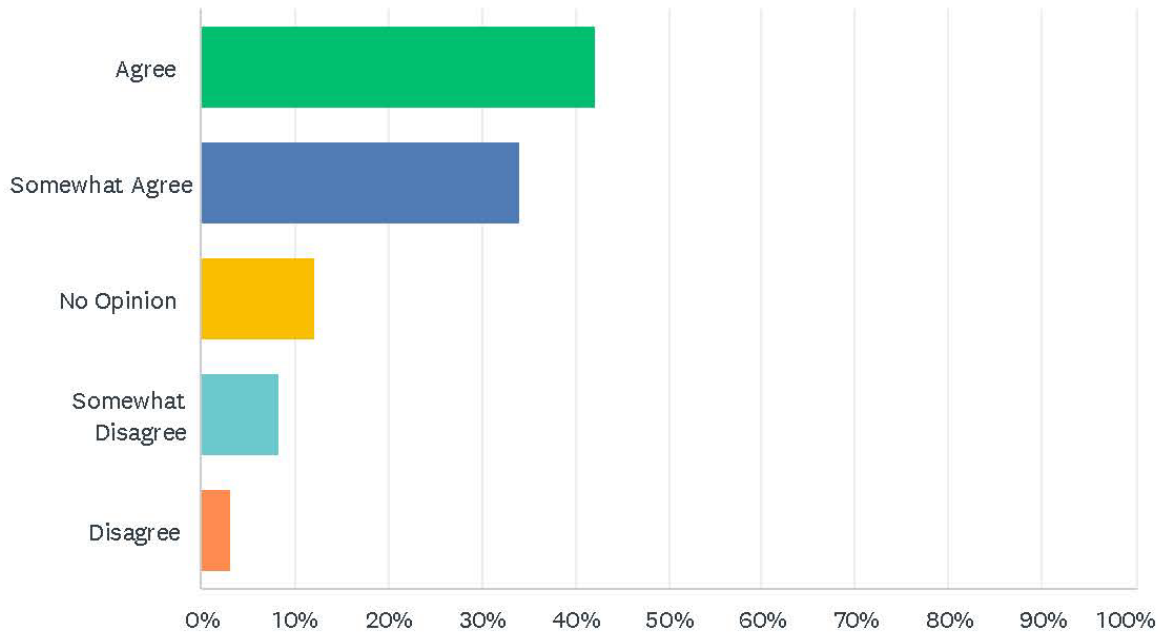
**The City and County should treat as “Job 1” economic development that generates well-paying jobs in key and emerging industries, especially to retain and attract young adults and other workers who are already drawn by the area’s recreational and cultural assets.**



- 766 (70.5%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 66.2% agree.
- 26.0% somewhat agree, making the combination of agree and somewhat agree over 90% (92.2%) – the highest percentage among the series of Agree/Disagree questions that continue through Question 19.
- The remaining 7.8% have no opinion or somewhat disagree or disagree.

**QUESTION 16:**

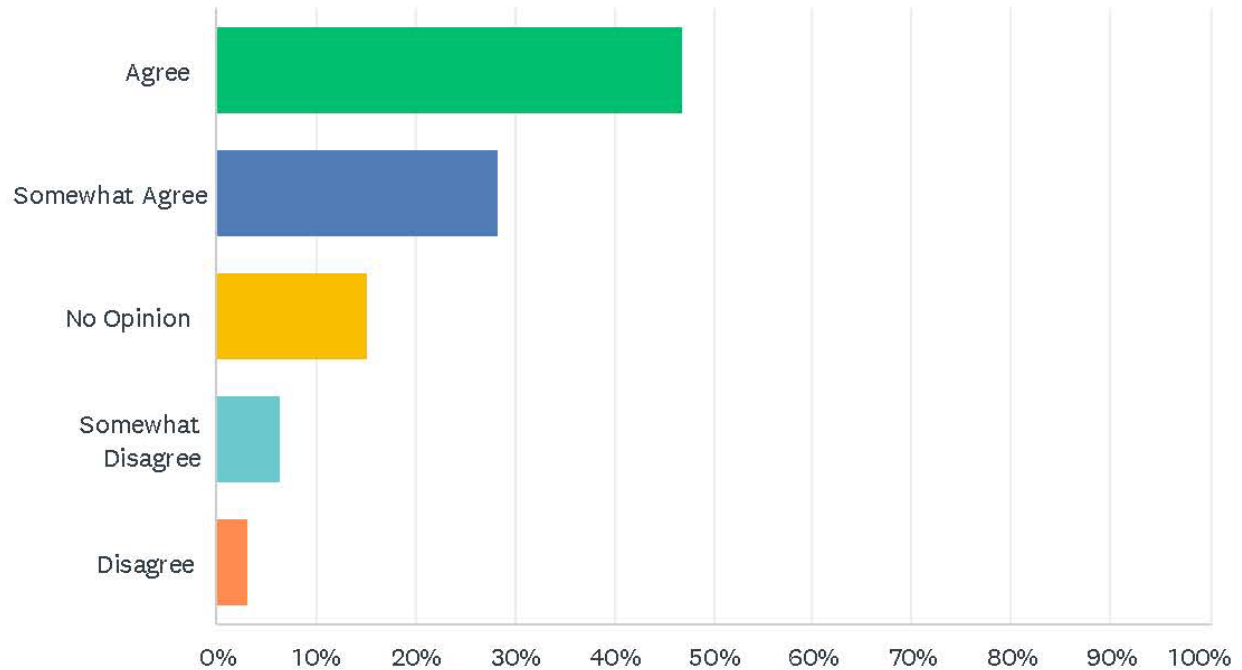
**For our area to be more successful in its economic development efforts, the City, County and other community partners must first prioritize ways to spur more local housing development, of all types, to be more appealing to both prospective residents and businesses.**



- 764 (70.3%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 42.3% agree.
- 34.2% somewhat agree, making the combination of agree and somewhat agree just over three-quarters (77.4%).
- 8.3% somewhat disagree, and 3.1% disagree.
- 12.2% have no opinion.

**QUESTION 17:**

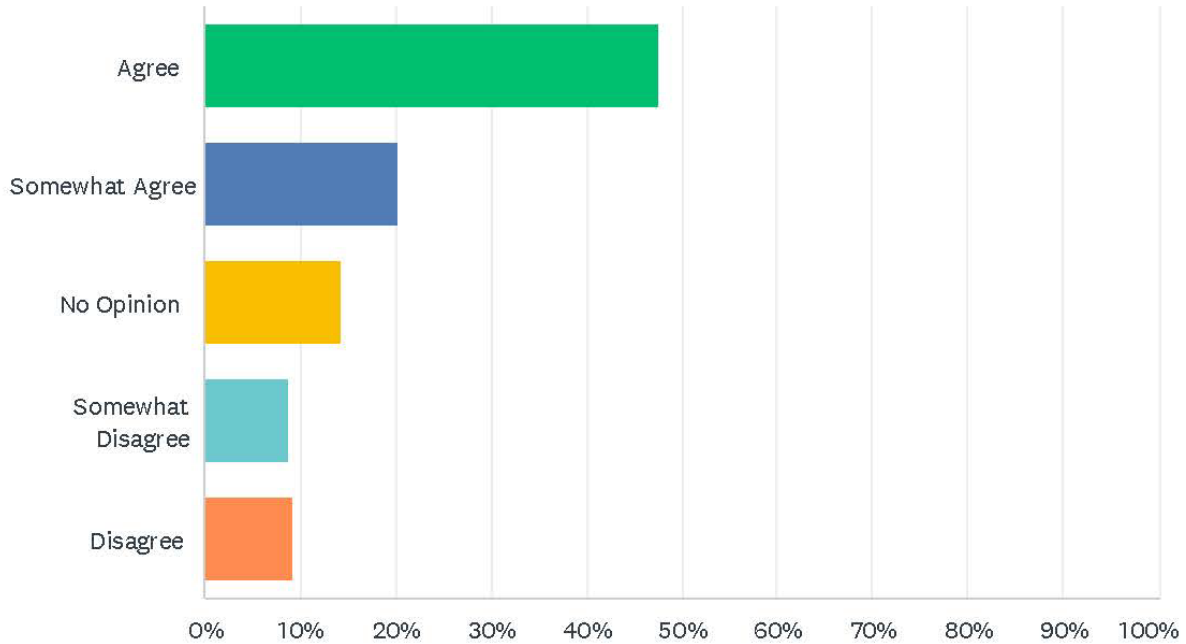
**Among its long-term planning priorities, McCracken County should focus on protecting agricultural activity in the county and preserving rural character and landscapes while accommodating beneficial housing and economic development in appropriate locations.**



- 764 (70.3%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 47.0% agree.
- 28.3% somewhat agree, making the combination of agree and somewhat agree approximately three-quarters (75.3%).
- 9.6% somewhat disagree or disagree.
- 15.2% have no opinion.

**QUESTION 18:**

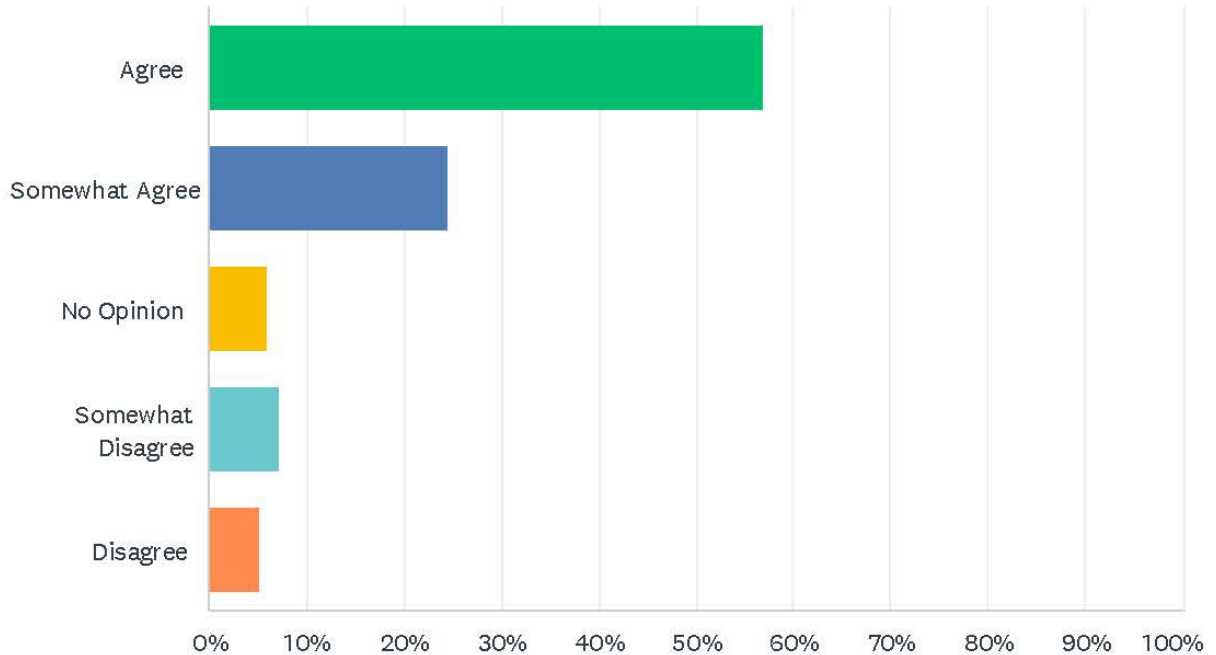
**The City and County should strive to sustain and reinvigorate the area's commitment to the arts, crafts and culture as a key driver of both the economy and residents' quality of life, building on Paducah's 2013 acceptance into the UNESCO Creative Cities Network among nearly 300 other cities worldwide.**



- 767 (70.6%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 47.6% agree.
- 20.2% somewhat agree, making the combination of agree and somewhat agree just over two-thirds (67.8%).
- 18.0% somewhat disagree or disagree.
- 14.2% have no opinion.

**QUESTION 19:**

**The City and County should continue to invest in upgrading Paducah’s historic riverfront as a “front door” to the area, especially with increasing riverboat visitation, and for the year-round enjoyment of area residents along with a vibrant downtown.**



- 766 (70.5%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- 56.9% agree.
- 24.5% somewhat agree, making the combination of agree and disagree 81.4%.
- 12.5% of respondents somewhat disagree or disagree.
- 6.0% have no opinion.

**QUESTIONS 20-22:**

**Adjectives that describe a better version of Paducah and/or McCracken County you would like to see upon your return if you had to leave the area and came back in 20 years to live here again.**

Approximately half (47-52%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents took the opportunity to type in one or more adjectives – or other words – that came to mind in response to this “imagine if” question. The word cloud graphic on the next page provides a visual summary of the top 100 responses, with larger word sizes indicating the words mentioned most. A list of all the words provided, across the three response opportunities, follows the word cloud graphic.





## PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

### Responses for Adjective 1 (Question 20) included:

Growing, Local business, Safe, Walkability, Vibrant, Infrastructure, Housing, Change, Culture, Roadways, Beautiful, Growing, Revitalized, Spacious, Sprawling, Thriving, Walkable, Clean, Diverse, Highly Educated, Clean, Road connectors, Excellent, Better streets, Greener, Less Homeless, Stay separate, Confident, Inclusive, Black, Invigorated, Improved sewer, Open, Lower town, Patriotic, Beauty, Vibrant, Progressive, Beautification, Equality, Easy to travel, No panhandling, Diversity, Maintained, Low taxes, River Aquarium, Dynamic, Accessible, Welcoming, Green, Input, Fun, Accommodating, Indoor Pool, Affordable, Friendly, Active, Well-kept, Consolidated, Picturesque, Eclectic, Senior Friendly, More Sidewalks, Less Crime, Bustling, Vital, Progressive, Less Regulation, Parking, Working, Local, Unchanged, Bible community, Charming, Energetic, Expensive, Sustainable, Radiant, Industry Jobs, River City, Prosperous, Jobs, Rural, Rapid, Activity filled, Healthy, Entertainment, Biking trails, Quaint, Small town, Responsive, University, Tax free, Consistent, Friendly, Well-preserved, Stormwater, Awakened, Downtown, Heritage, Bus friendly, Cohesiveness, Visionary, Well-balanced, Eventful, Opportunity, Metro Government, Classy, Historic, Collaborative, Local vibe, Artsy, Expanded, Manufacturers, Competitive, Modern, Green, Cornucopian, Imaginative, Homeowners, Grounded, Cheap housing, Homeless shelter, Rec facility, Better shopping, Parking deck, Quiet, Responsible, Retail variety, Enlivened, Better airport, Rental homes, Urban renewal, Outdated, Alive, School issues, New shops, Robust, Restaurants, More activities, Connected, Educated, Traffic control, Similar, Family friendly, Safe roadways, Peaceful, Less drugs, Tolerance, Restored, Charitable, Unique, Resilient, Prepared, Lively, Quilt show, Downtown nice, Streets marked, Bigger, Less flooding, Closer-knit, Ambitious, Nature, Happy, Affluent, Less racist, Flights.

### Responses for Adjective 2 (Question 21) included:

Beautiful, Reidland better, Developed, Quaint, Bikeable, Upgraded, Thriving, Manufacturing, Change, Restore housing, Innovation, Healthy, Vibrant, Accepting, Matured, Greener, Urbanized, Value, Attractive, Safety, Rejuvenate, Walkable, Progressive, Creative, Centrist, Affordable, Improved, Tax Incentives, Diversified, Cheaper housing, Invested, Northside, Welcoming, Robust, Traffic flow, Progressive, Housing, Charm, Strong, Comfort, Expanded, Young, Cleanliness, Community led, Great parks, Keep rural feel, Opportunity, Organized, Arts & music, Mall area park, Inclusive, Smoking-free, Shady, Small, More prosperous, Better jobs, Roads, Preserved, Attractive, Lower tax, Affordable homes, Gorgeous, Riverfront, Equality, Connected, Exciting, More police, Recreational, Well planned, New homes, infrastructure, Quilting needle, Peaceful, Free worship, Kid centered, Green, Historic, Charming, Retirement, Intentional, Engaged, Expansion, Active, Hospitable, Culture, No woke, Thrifty, Concert/event, Steady, Open, New industry, Sincere, City renovation, Family-friendly, Energetic, Lively, Conservative, Medical care, A+ schools, Well rounded, Ambitious, Well kept, Serene, Adaptive, Upgrade, Answers, Fair judicial, Multicultural, River, Interesting, Pretty, Secular, Safe schools, Teeming, Theater, Senior-friendly, Locally owned, Tech start ups, Focused, Busy, Free venues, Better roads, Efficient, Stunning, Better biz area, Green all year, Youth sports, Jobs, Diverse dining, Merged, Flourishing, Prosperous, Proud people, Storm drains, Less homeless, Sports complex, Good bones, Economic boom, Disable program, Planned growth, Industrialized, Proactive, Not too big, Help for all people, Downtown Thrive, Christian-like, Intermodal, Caring, Parks nice, Secure, Strong, Intact, Decent jobs, Enjoyable, Grocery store, Renewed, Skilled, Hip, Openness, Practical, God-fearing, Young, Attractive, Eco-friendly, Ambitious.

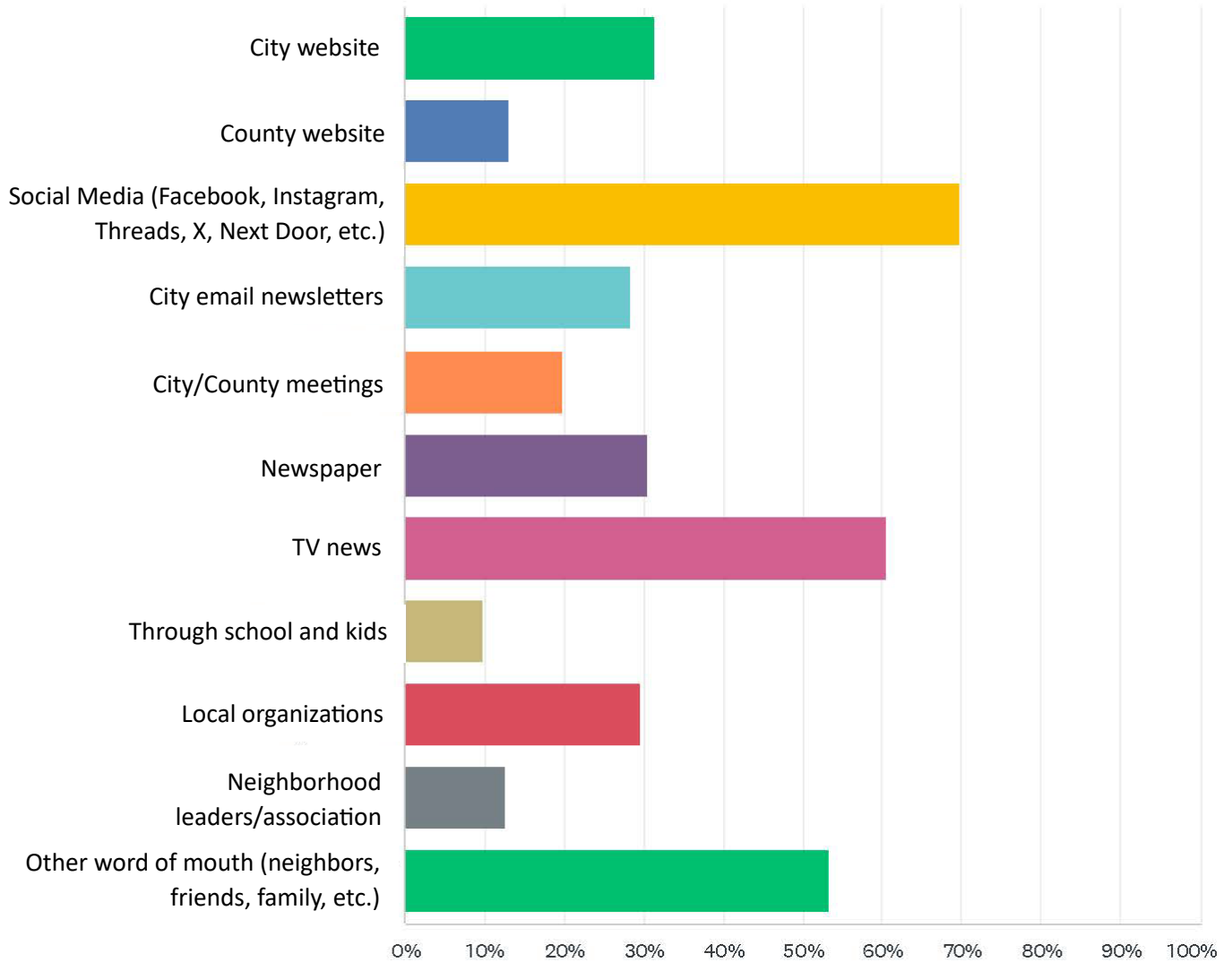
## PADUCAH-McCRACKEN COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

### Responses for Adjective 3 (Question 22) included:

Safe, Walking trails, Comfortable, Friendly, Industry, Functional, Diverse, Variety, Change, Better jobs, Housing, Expanded, Clean, Imaginative, Diversified, Beautified, Recreational, Opportunistic, Inviting, Progressive, Family friendly, Vibrant, Educated, Productive, Developed, Medical system, Congenial, Artsy, Metro-ized, Growing, Gentrification, Rural, Cleaner city, Parks, All-American, Vital, Improved, United, Active/healthy, Sidewalks, Transparent, Fun, Sustainable, Low crime rate, Less homeless, Flourishing, Educational, Giving, Beautiful, Well-educated, Healthy, Better pay, Community, Affordable, Lively, Art, Memorable, Dynamic, Parks, Unique, Historic, Kind, Airport options, Access, Peaceful, Profitable, Friendlier, Nice eateries, Eco-conscious, Homey, Carson Park, Desirable, Culinary, Family friendly, Welcoming, Parking, Quiet, Shopping, Local focused, Enticing, Educated, River expansion, Drug free, Proudful, Inclusive, Stabilized, Successful, Target, Taxes, Urban, Neighborhood, Efficient, Communing, Cultural, Compassionate, Artistic, Working, Neighborly, Quality dining, More fun, Equitable, Accountability, Informative, Christian, Diverse economy, Open, Not overcrowded, Adaptable, Bustling, Charming, Reliable, Industrious, Opulent, Eco-friendly, Hidden gem, Better parking, Flowering, Cooperative, Better pay, Food banks, Flood control, Future-looking, Safer roads, Fix abandoned, Cosmopolitan, Self-sustaining, Classy, Respect nature, Less police, Unified, Policed, Open-minded, Caring, Recycle school, Simple, Young leaders, Familiar, Dynamic, Innovative, Smarter, Happy residents, 911 Service, Churches, Educated, Inexpensive, Shopping/mall, Helpful, Morality, Love, Welcoming, Two airlines, Intriguing, Harmonious, Gun-free safety, Care of parks, Large lots, Live music, Entrepreneurial, Connected, Tree-lined, Advantageous, Less slum lords.

**QUESTION 23:**

**Where do you get information about what’s going on in the city and county? Please check all that apply.**



- 700 (64.5%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this question.
- Over two-thirds (69.7%) of respondents get information from social media, the highest percentage among the sources listed.
- Next highest were from TV news (60.6%) and word of mouth (53.3%).

**QUESTION 24:**

**As you think about the future of Paducah and McCracken County, do you have any other hopes or concerns that you did not see covered in the questions above?**

661 (60.1%) of the 1,086 eligible resident respondents answered this final, open-ended survey question. Just under half of the respondents (48.7%) answered “yes” and provided a write-in answer. Representative quotations are included below.

- “Better restaurants, food trucks and businesses.”
- “More benefits/activities for residents.”
- “Development of Port/river walk area.”
- “More affordable housing for low-income families.”
- “Lack of variety food and store choices.”
- “More activities at the Carson Center, Convention Center and Cherry Civic Center.”
- “Make sure all residents are heard. Make everyone feel welcome.”
- “There are empty lots and lots with dilapidated homes on them throughout the city and county.”
- “I hope to see Paducah and McCracken County work to make the whole city walkable, bikeable and a place for young people to want to stay.”
- “Save our trees and neighborhoods.”
- “Build more parks and create more attractive green space.”
- “Our community needs one unified metro government.”
- “Safer and more options for healthy lifestyles – safer bike routes, more bike trails, etc.”
- “Please leave our riverfront as intact as possible.”
- “We need to encourage population growth in the city and the county.”
- “I hope that more people realize the opportunity we have as a central location for transportation. This would include river, rail, air and highway.”
- “Revitalize the buildings we have.”