



Conversations with the Community

Report from a Targeted Community Engagement Approach

Prepared in support of the:
Scott County 2040 Comprehensive Plan
September 2017

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to the many community members who took the time to participate in our engagement efforts along with the many cross-sector committees and partnerships who advised throughout this effort. Additional thanks to the 50 x 30 workgroups, Scott County Development Agency, Wagner Brothers Orchard and Thompson Hillcrest Orchard for guidance and support through incentives.

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Executive Summary

Targeted community engagement efforts began in August 2016 and continued through January 2017. We held six focus groups, attended 16 community events, and received 639 responses to an online survey.

The purpose of this report is to document the experiences of residents as they relate to the following topic areas:

- Active Living
- Career
- Early Childhood
- Healthy Eating
- Housing
- Parks & Trails
- Transportation

Conversations around these topics will not only inform the County's 2040 comprehensive plan and support the goal of the county to work toward a Safe, Healthy, and Livable Community but they will also provide insight to the countywide effort called **50 by 30: Live Learn Earn**. This collective impact effort seeks to advance a vision for Scott County: a place where residents are Stable, Connected, Educated, and Contributing.

The responses were an interesting insight into the views of the residents. This effort is an important step into creating more authentic engagement with the residents of Scott County. The following will highlight what we learned from this effort both in terms of what we heard from people but also how we engaged with people and how we might improve upon that approach.

Introduction

In April 2016, Scott County developed an engagement plan to guide a series of participation opportunities for stakeholders and residents of the County throughout the development of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Previous engagement efforts with residents resulted in useful, albeit limited response, from a fairly uniform demographic. In an attempt to engage with a more representative cross section for the current planning effort, Scott County strove to engage with a variety of diverse populations within the county.

The impact of environmental factors on health, diseases, and chronic disease affect an individual's life. Similarly, the health and vitality of a community depends on that of its people. The goal of community level efforts is to make healthy living not only easier – but possible – where people live, learn, work, and play. How the surrounding environment is built contributes to many of the problems and solutions to improving our health. Supporting people who are affected most by death, disability, and suffering from chronic disease help them reach health equity.

The conversations with community included the following topics as they relate to the county's development by 2040:

- Active Living
- Career
- Early Childhood
- Healthy Eating
- Housing
- Parks & Trails
- Transportation

Conversations around these topics will not only inform the County's 2040 comprehensive plan, but they will also provide insight to the countywide effort called **50 by 30: Live Learn Earn**. This collective impact effort seeks to advance a vision for Scott County: a place where residents are Stable, Connected, Educated, and Contributing.

The Community Engagement Plan included additional strategies to solicit input from residents: Resident Survey Results, Speak Up Scott County, Conversations with the Community, Commission Input and Oversight, Workshop with Reconvened 2030 Visions Advisory Committee, Township Planning Area Meetings, Intergovernmental and Interagency Meetings and Review, Open House for the Draft Comprehensive Plan, Public Hearing for the Draft Comprehensive Plan, Scott County Website and Social Media, Scott Scene Newspaper, Participation by request or on the fly, Logo and Cover Page Design Competition, and SCALE Collective Impact Input.

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To support this effort, a group of Scott County staff assembled to discuss the engagement opportunities. This advisory group included members from Planning and Zoning, Public Health, Parks, and Transportation.

Of the various community engagement strategies, *Conversations with the Community* required the biggest investment of time and reached the most diverse residents within the county.

Methods

The advisory group collected data from residents through focus groups, online surveys, and paper surveys through pop-up engagement efforts. Instead of formalizing a single questionnaire for every responder to provide input on every topic, we encouraged respondents to comment on at least one. Throughout the process, they were welcome to respond to as many of the topics as they are interested in discussing.

Engagement with each individual was generally limited to three main questions about the selected topic. These questions were asked within the four different engagement approaches we deployed to help reach a broad sample of people in the County. These include online surveys deployed through NextDoor (Nextdoor is a social media site focused on connecting with neighbors, in this case all Scott County residents who are enrolled in the site) and Facebook, pop-up engagement at various community gatherings, displays at all seven county library facilities, and focus groups with diverse populations – specifically targeting the previously underrepresented.



Staff ask Project Community Connect attendees about their experiences living in Scott County.

Pop-Up Engagement

Between September 2016 and January of 2017, there were 16 different events in which staff joined in at different community gatherings for pop-up engagement efforts.

Pop-up meetings consisted of one or two county staff attending a public event. With survey forms in hand, the crew engaged with residents, offering an incentive for participation. Scott County partnered with Wagner Brothers Orchard and Thompsons' Hillcrest Orchard to provide people with locally grown apple. We were present at Project Community Connect, a career fair, the government center lobby, Scott West trail, mobile clinic events, Shakopee farmers market, Spring Lake Park volunteering event, Halloween and fall themed events, and a Diversity Alliance event.

There were 151 responses at these events. The events that were family-oriented were most successful while others such as the mobile clinics and farmers markets did not garner much of

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a response. We found that people were less likely to engage with staff if they were gathering for a specific task and were not there to linger and enjoy the event.

Events Attended	Location	Count
Project Community Connect, Canterbury Park	Shakopee	14
Fall Community Fest, Prior Lake High School	Prior Lake	0
Shakopee Farmers Market	Shakopee	2
Mobile Clinic, Russian Baptist Church	Shakopee	1
Fall Frenzy, Prior Lake	Prior Lake	42
Autumn Fare, Scott County Fairgrounds	Jordan	4
Mobile Clinic, Workforce Center	Shakopee	0
Scott West Trail	Shakopee	5
Volunteer Event, Spring Lake Regional Park	Spring Lake Township	1
Mobile Clinic	Savage	0
Scott County Senior Expo, Prior Lake High School	Prior Lake	5
Shakopee Diversity Forum	Shakopee	2
Scott County Government Center	Shakopee	12
Savage Halloween Bash	Savage	50
Career Fair, Canterbury Park	Shakopee	7
Shakopee Diversity Alliance Event, Workforce Center	Shakopee	6

Paper surveys were also available at all seven of the County libraries with available translations in Cambodian, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. There was minimal response to these surveys, and none in any of the non-English translations. Savage Library did dedicate a large space to advertise these surveys and received, by far, the most surveys from these library displays.

Online Survey

The most responses were received through an online survey that was delivered through Facebook and Nextdoor. As of April 2017, there were nearly 10,000 residents within Scott County who have accounts with Nextdoor. The Scott County Facebook page has nearly 2,000 likes.

Focus Groups

While pop-up meetings and online surveys provided an easy opportunity for people to provide input, the depth of their responses was typically very limited. Focus groups provided another way for people to respond. Several different demographics were approached about the idea of sitting down for a discussion about county issues we will be facing as we head toward 2040. It was an important part of the strategy in the hopes that it would garner responses from people who have a different perspective than those we typically hear from. Whether it be the next generation, those who will help us understand our past to help pave the way for the future, lower income or disadvantaged in some way, or ethnically diverse, we hope these interactions provide a broader context for issues in the county.

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We held six focus groups with the following groups – Esperanza, Scott County Historical Society, the Savage Buddhist Temple, CAPS (Center for Advanced Professional Studies) students, senior citizens, and 4H leaders.

There were six groups that ultimately decided to participate in this manner.

Focus Group	Date	Location	Topics
Esperanza at New Creation Church	September 2016	Shakopee	C, E, HE
Scott County Historical Society	November 2016	Shakopee	E, HU, PT
Kingsway Retirement Facility	November 2016	Belle Plaine	AL, HE, T
Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS)*	December 2016	Shakopee	AL, C, HE
Tay Phung Temple	December 2016	Savage	AL, HU, PT, T
4H Leaders*	December 2016	Shakopee	AL, HE, PT

AL = Active Living, C = Careers, E = Early Childhood, HE= Healthy Eating, HU = Housing, PT = Parks & Trails, T= Transportation

**denotes youth involvement*

Other attempts were made to have more thorough discussions with the Russian community, Parents, Friends and Family of Lesbian and Gays (“PFLAG”), the Somali community, and representatives of the agricultural community for example. These efforts were thorough, but ultimately did not result in interest in participating in a focus group. A group of Somali respondents did spend some time filling out surveys which are represented in this analysis.

The focus groups were generally coordinated to be in a location that was easy for participants to attend, frequently at a location where they are already gathering. At the commencement of the meeting, the facilitator provided an overview of the Comprehensive Plan, the process for developing the plan, and the seven topic areas that are part of this initiative. Each of the participants was then asked to name one or two of the topics that were most interesting to them. Generally three or four of the most popular topics selected were able to be discussed within the time frame allotted. In addition to the standard questions asked on the surveys, follow up questions were available and a dialogue to understand more about their responses was possible.

Youth Involvement

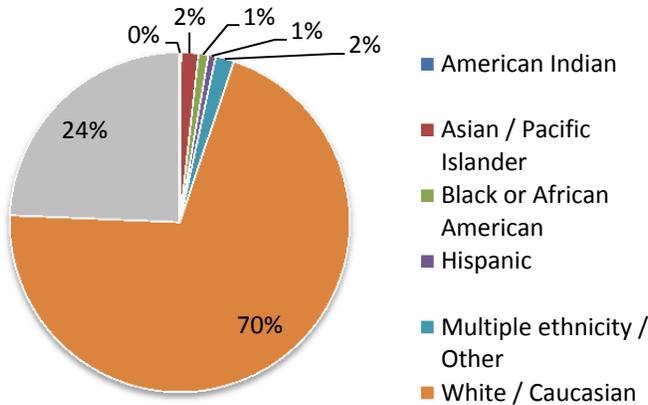
The CAPS students also provided a survey and analysis to students at Shakopee High School. Their results can be found in **Appendix A**.

Results

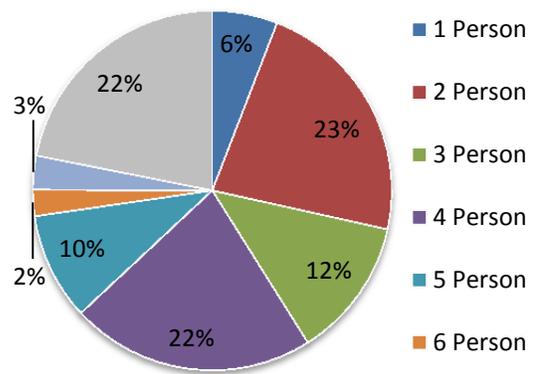
Demographics

These results provide an overview of the responses by all participants in our online and pop-up community engagement efforts. Here are some summaries of what the respondent demographics look like:

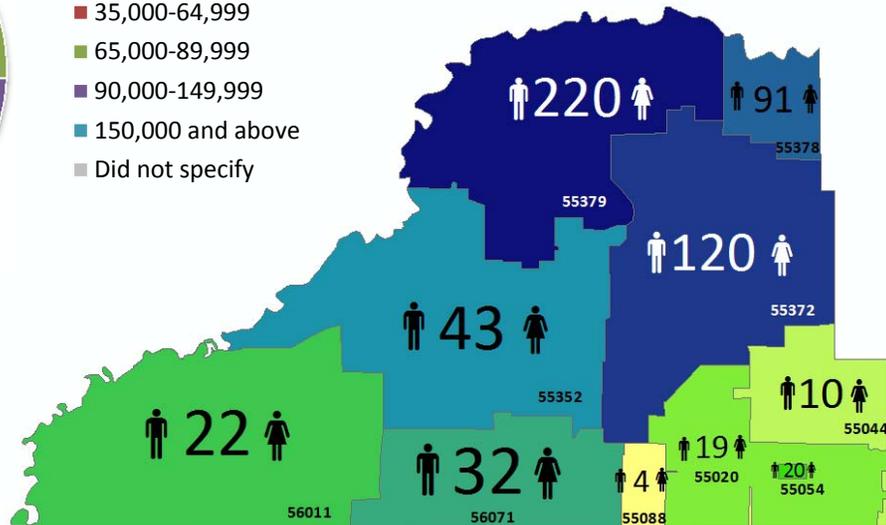
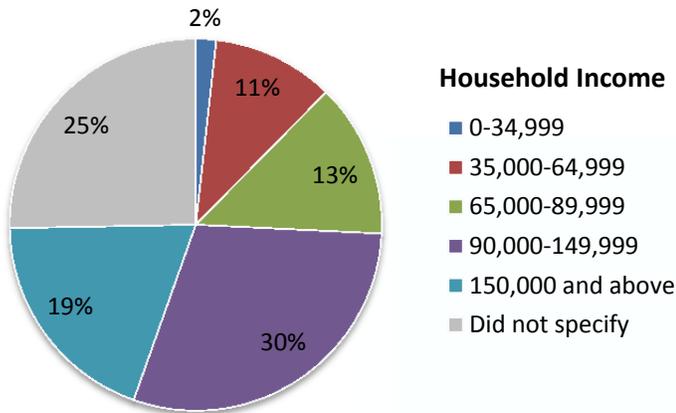
Race/Ethnicity



Household Members



Household Income



Number of residents who responded from each zip code

208 did not specify.

61 were not residents of Scott County, but may work here.

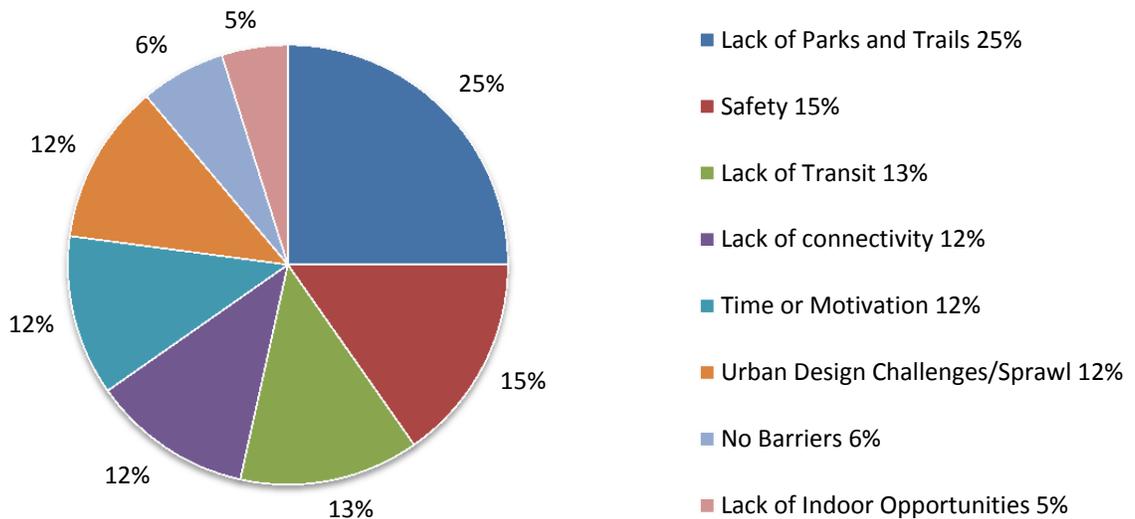
Active Living

Providing opportunities for people to lead an active lifestyle supports our role as a regional park and trail provider as well as the initiatives framed by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP). As part of our community engagement process we sought out answers to the following questions:

- When you think about transportation and its relationship to physical activity, what barriers exist to being physically active?
- Is there an adequate system of trails and paths that allow for alternative modes of transportation (walking, bicycling, etc.) to occur throughout the city? How accessible are these options?
- When you think about active living in Scott County, what are the strong points? What could be improved upon?
- We were pleased to have received responses from nearly **100** residents via online surveys and **30** with paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results.



When you think about transportation and its relationship to physical activity, what barriers exist to being physically active?



Response	Explanation
Lack of parks and trails	Respondents expressed a lack of parks and trails and that existing trails are not well connected. Others showed interest in additional parks and recreational opportunities.

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Safety	Responses were evenly split between concerns of personal safety – particularly at night – and the compatibility of recreational trail and fast moving traffic adjacent to each other.
Lack of transit	Lack of a robust transit system created a barrier getting to places to be active. Respondents suggested options like buses, light rail transit, and taxis.
Lack of connectivity	Desire for a system of trails that connect with other trails, community centers, businesses, and transit opportunities. Others called out the need for more consistent sidewalks within neighborhoods.
Time/Motivation	Respondents noted long commutes as a contributing factor. One suggested time spent during work hours as an opportunity to help increase physical activity.
Urban Design Challenges & Sprawl	Scott County development is spread out making travel difficult, particularly without a vehicle.
No Barriers	Respondents listed no barriers to active living.
Lack of indoor opportunities	Additional indoor facilities needed, presumably during winter months.
Other	Lack of equipment, lack of support from employers, physical limitations, and income disparities.

“I do not think there are adequate trails and paths for cycling in Scott County, and/or Shakopee where I live. Riding on the roadways gets to be too dangerous.”

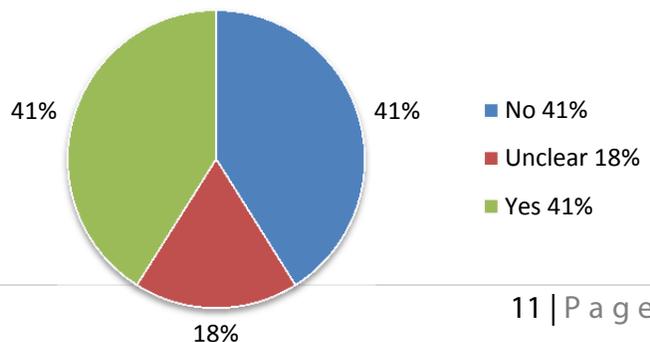
“I think our park system is strong but getting information out to the community about events is a challenge.”

“The biggest barrier is how spread out everything is. We don't want to be crowded so it is a catch 22.”

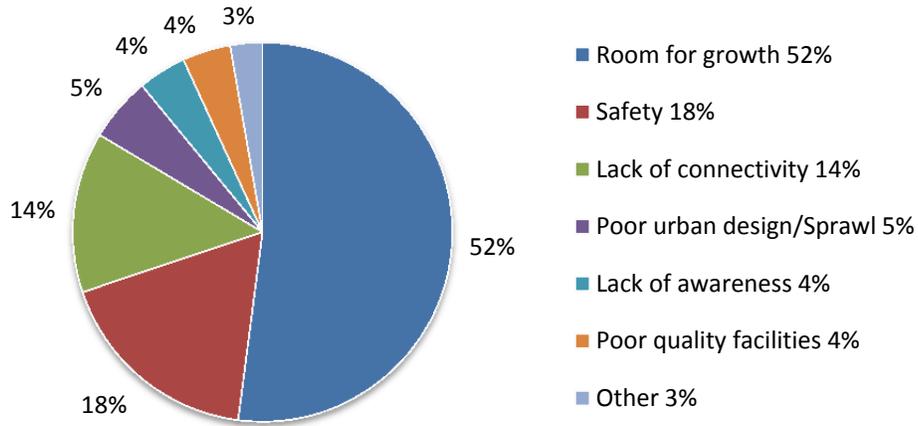
“...it needs to be easy to be active or there needs to be more opportunities to introduce [physical activity] into work life.”

Is there an adequate system of trails and paths that allow for alternative modes of transportation (walking, bicycle, etc.) to occur throughout the city?

In answering the first portion of the question, the respondents were evenly split. Nearly 20% didn't directly address this as a yes or no question.

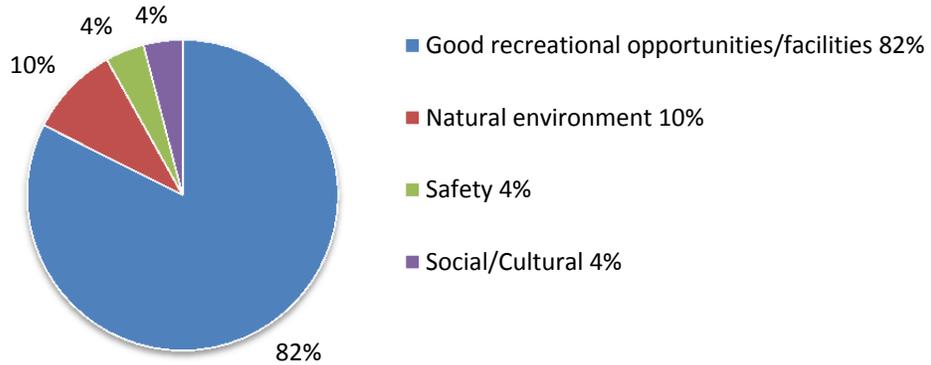


How accessible are these options?



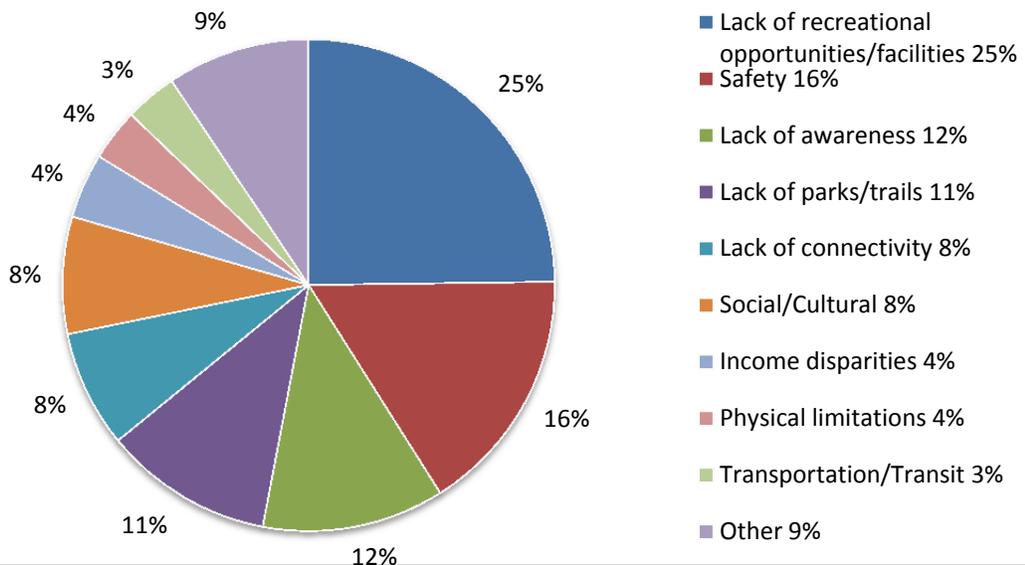
Response	Explanation
Room for Growth	Over half of the respondents felt the trail system has room for growth. Many discussed the poor connection between trails and business centers. Several noted that the trail system is improving.
Safety	Responses were evenly split between concerns of personal safety – particularly at night – and the compatibility of recreational trail and fast moving traffic adjacent to each other.
Lack of connectivity	Desire for a system of trails that connect with other trails, community centers, businesses, and transit opportunities. Others called out the need for more consistent sidewalks within neighborhoods.
Urban Design Challenges & Sprawl	Scott County development is spread out making travel difficult, particularly without a vehicle.
Lack of awareness	Respondents felt there was little information available to help understand access to trail systems. Some suggested marketing efforts, improved signage, and maps to help the public connect to amenities.
Poor Quality Facilities	Respondents commented on the quality of maintenance on existing trails.
Other	Support from businesses to help with active living and concerns about bicyclists and pedestrians mixing on trails.

When you think about active living in Scott County, what are the strong points?



Response	Explanation
Good Recreational Opportunities/Facilities	Respondents were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of recreational opportunities and facilities. Trails, activities, and amenities were highlighted.
Natural Environment	Natural features of the county with an emphasis on scenery, lake shores, and open spaces.
Safety	Responses were evenly split between concerns of personal safety – particularly at night – and the compatibility of recreational trail and fast moving traffic adjacent to each other.
Social/Cultural	Entertainment opportunities such as Land of Big Fun as places to pursue active living. One respondent felt there was a strong sense of community in the county contributing to Active Living.

What could be improved upon?



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Response	Explanation
Lack of recreational opportunities	There is a missing piece in the provided recreational opportunities. This ranged from amenities that aren't offered – indoor activities – as well as expansion of existing trails and community programs and equitable geographically dispersed activities.
Safety	Responses were evenly split between concerns of personal safety – particularly at night – and the compatibility of recreational trail and fast moving traffic adjacent to each other.
Lack of awareness	Respondents felt there was little information available to help understand access to trail systems. Some suggested marketing efforts, improved signage, and maps to help the public connect to amenities.
Lack of parks/trails	Lack of trails and connectivity in Scott County.
Lack of connectivity	Desire for a system of trails that connect with other trails, community centers, businesses, and transit opportunities. Others called out the need for more consistent sidewalks within neighborhoods.
Social/Cultural	Entertainment opportunities such as Land of Big Fun as places to pursue active living. Parks could be more culturally inclusive.
Income disparities	Lack of opportunities for all citing fees and sensitive demographics such as the aging population.
Transportation/transit	Additional indoor facilities needed, presumably during winter months.
Other	Lack of equipment, lack of support from employers, physical limitations, and income disparities.

Focus Groups

There were four groups that discussed their challenges and experiences with regard to living an active lifestyle in Scott County. Tay Phuong, as a community, talked about their concerns with a lack of, or unsafe, sidewalks, crosswalks, and general mobility through trail systems (and a lack knowledge of regional parks and trails systems), particularly for the elderly. The Kingsway residents had similar concerns and mentioned a general lack of resources available to them. This seemed to be partly due to geography as they felt resources were focused in the more populous cities such as Shakopee and Prior Lake.

The two groups consisting of youth (CAPS and 4H) had some strong overlap – particularly as it related to having time and motivation to balance their school

Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

The focus groups had many similar thoughts about Active Living. The strongest themes for the focus groups were time, motivation, and lack of amenities. These themes were also some of the most significant themes represented in the comments from the previous section.

It is worth noting that the youth groups had similar responses despite the different environments (urban vs rural).

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life and being active. The CAPS students liked the idea of incorporating physical activity into their day. The 4H students offered the idea that standing desks or stability balls would offer easy ways to be more active. The 4H students did recognize the benefits of being active with chores – particularly as many lived and assisted on the family farm. CAPS students found summer activities hard to balance with their summer jobs. They would like to see flexibility of sports programs and intramurals.

The conversation with Tay Phuong did leave an impression that this group was fairly isolated from government services, we were happy to provide some outreach for this group and hope that they explore some of the services that were passed along to them.

Active Living themes discussed included:

Focus Group	Themes
Tay Phuong	Safety, Communication, Transportation, Awareness
4H	Cost, Time, Motivation, School
CAPS	Time, Motivation, School, Summer Programs
Kingsway	Lack of resources



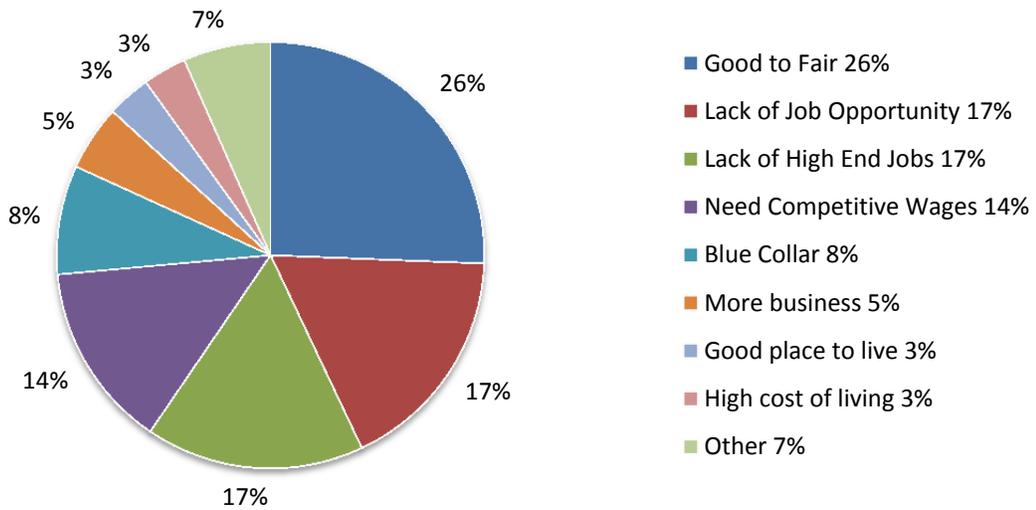
Career

The 50 by 30 initiative is an effort to have 50% of employees live within Scott County by the year 2030. The County, along with public and private partners, hopes to foster better employment opportunities and attract quality jobs to our residents. As part of our community engagement process we sought out answers to the following questions:

- Within Scott County, what do you think about the balance between good career opportunities and being a good place to live?
- Do you feel there are professional growth opportunities where you work?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about finding or keeping work in Scott County? Is additional professional training in your future?

We were pleased to have received responses from nearly 100 residents via online surveys and paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results. We understand that during our engagement we might be finding people who work, but do not live in Scott County, we asked each respondent if they were currently working the county: 56% of respondents said no and 44% said yes.

Within Scott County, what do you think about the balance between good career opportunities and being a good place to live?



Response	Explanation
Good to fair	Respondents felt the balance was generally positive
Lack of job opportunity	Respondents expressed a lack of job availability
Lack of high end jobs	Respondents touched on idea that there are not adequate high paying, office-based careers in the county

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Need competitive wages	Wages in Scott County don't compare to wages offered outside the county
Blue collar	Respondents requested a wider variety of career availability; they felt there is a preponderance of blue collar employment opportunities
More business	Requested more business attraction to the county
Good place to live	Respondents felt Scott County as a good place to live while referencing limitations in the job market
High cost of living	Respondents found that high cost of living compared to type of jobs available created a challenge in both living and working here
Other	Referenced difficulty in matching available careers to skills of people who live here; social and cultural environment could be more welcoming; property taxes are too high; difficult commutes. Respondents also recognized the continuous improvements in the job market.

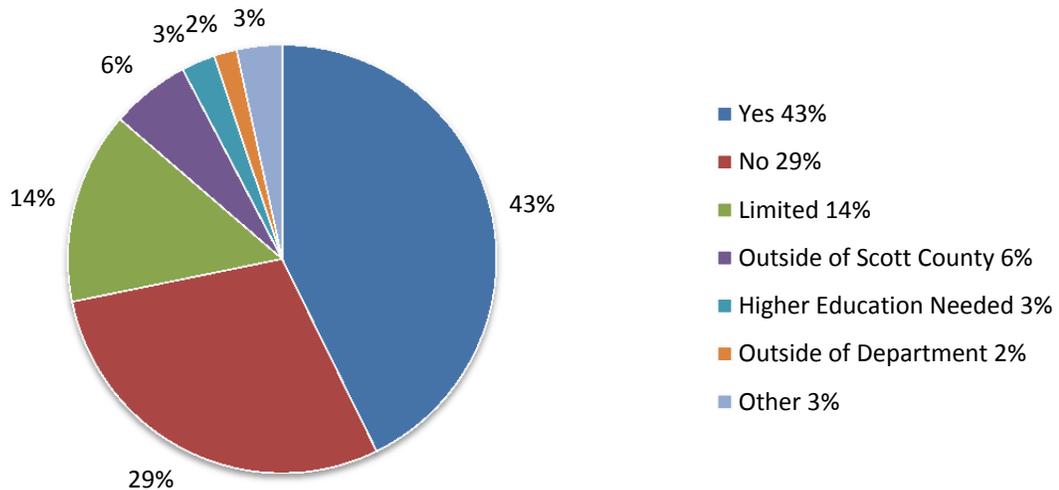
"It's a good place to live but there aren't a wide variety of professional jobs available."

"With the size of Scott County, attracting technical colleges or job training companies might be beneficial."

"We need more careers that match the local skills."

"Yes, Scott County can be the best county in the next 5-20 years."

Do you feel there are professional growth opportunities where you work?

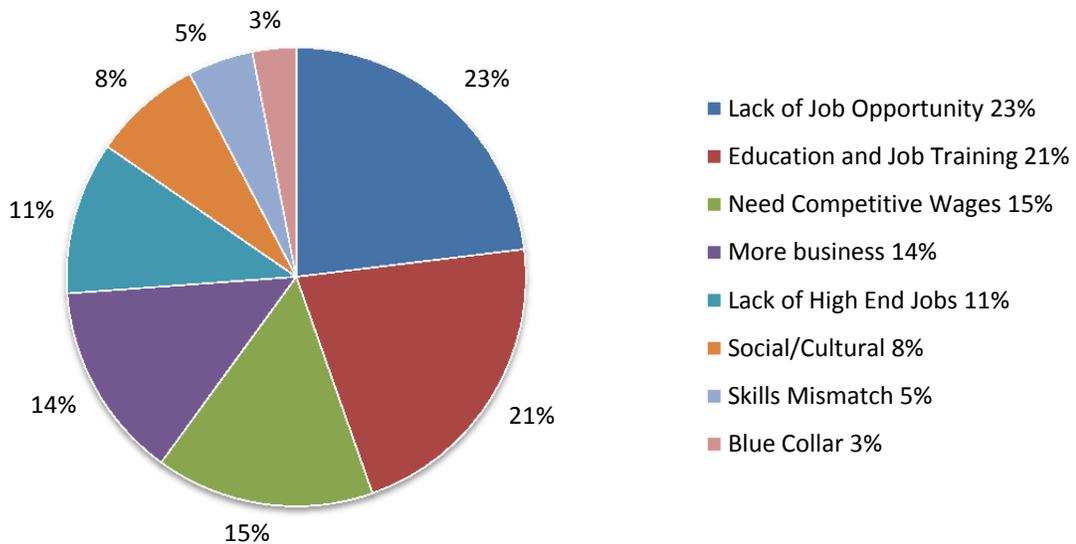


Response	Explanation
Yes	Largest proportion of responses were generally positive about the prospects of professional growth where they currently work

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No	Felt there was no possibility of growth at the current employer
Limited	Responses reflected the thought that there is not a clear path to professional growth with their current employer
Outside of Scott County	Respondents do not work in the county and found growth opportunities exist in their current career
Higher education needed	Respondents mentioned education growth and felt they would not likely advance in their current career without higher education
Outside of department	A career change would be necessary to see advancement.
Other	Some respondents felt that while opportunities exist, the commute makes it less appealing. One respondent was self-employed and one felt that low wages would be a concern even if advancement was possible

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about finding or keeping work in Scott County? Is additional professional training in your future?



Response	Explanation
Lack of job opportunity	Many respondents felt that things would improve for them with more job opportunities
Education and job training	Respondents provided many paths to finding new job opportunities through training and education: vocational training, post-secondary education, attaining special licenses, and technical school training
Need competitive wages	Wages in Scott County don't compare to wages offered outside the county
More business	Requested more business attraction to the county
Lack of high end jobs	Respondents touched on idea that there are not adequate high paying,

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	office-based careers in the county
Social/Cultural	Respondents felt that improvements were needed to make this a more welcoming community
Skills mismatch	Skills required for job openings do not match skills of people in the community
Blue collar	Respondents requested a wider variety of career availability; they felt there is a preponderance of blue collar employment opportunities

Focus Groups

Both Esperanza and CAPS students discussed the career topic. The Latina group felt that there were too few opportunities for jobs outside of the industrial/manufacturing industries. The lack of public transportation options further lessened opportunities for those without reliable personal transportation. This group also echoed the analysis in the previous section finding that there was not a great match-up between cost of living and salary within the boundaries of the County. Opportunities for further training in the County was a priority for this group, particularly including English classes, technology training, and opportunities for specialized certifications (specifically referencing was Nursing (CNA).

The CAPS students have a different perspective; this group discussed the lack of future prospects in Scott County. They felt that there were too few long term, promising careers here and didn't envision themselves staying after schooling.

Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

While much of the conversation echoed the responses from the general population responses, there was more focus placed on the difficulties of career upward mobility with barriers such as a lack of transportation and education options.

The future was not bright for the students who participated and they already view themselves working outside the county boundaries.

Focus Group	Themes
Esperanza	Industrial, Cost, Transportation
CAPS	Small Community, Professional Careers



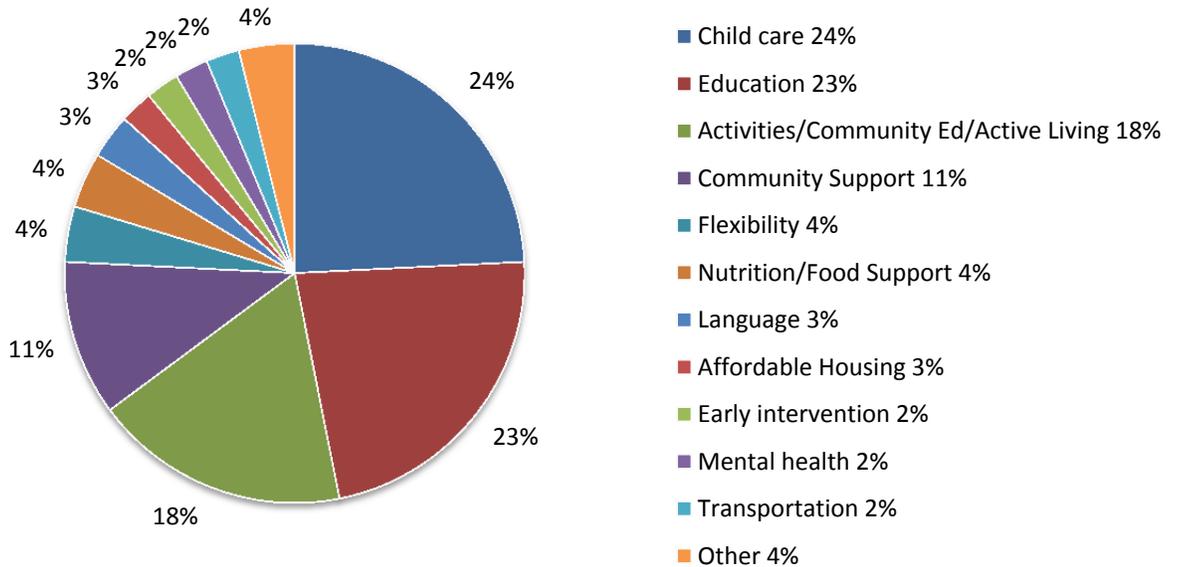
Early Childhood

The County recognizes that investment in children can have a positive influence in our future. To help understand how the County might be able to provide services that could help children and their families we asked the following questions:

- What kinds of support do families of young children need?
- Thinking about supporting children and families, what are your community's strengths?
- What are the barriers to educational success?

We were pleased to have received responses from approximately 50 residents via online surveys and 35 paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results.

What kinds of support do families of young children need?

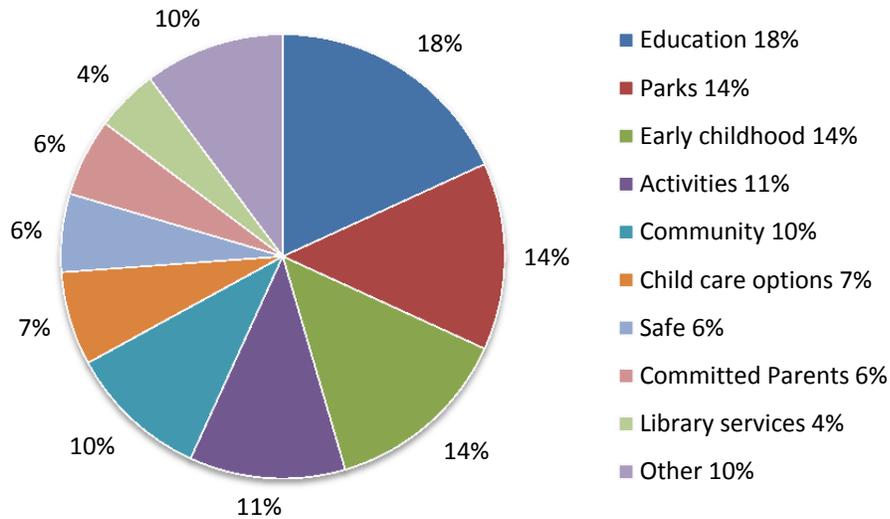


Response	Explanation
Child care	Affordable child care available for all ages was a primary concern. Also mentioned was a care option for parents with ill children and special needs.
Activities/Community Ed/Active Living	Respondents touched on the idea that children need activities in addition to classroom education. Some responses focused on group activities while others expressed a specific need for high level activities
Community support	Community support through increased awareness initiatives, providing mentoring, parental support, and access to services

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Flexibility	Responses focused on people needing assistance outside of the “standard” 9AM-5PM work day
Nutrition/food support	People who responded to this theme were concerned with food insecurity, healthy eating, and kids getting a balanced diet
Language	Respondents recognized that children would benefit from focus on different language skills including ESL, speech improvements, and immersion opportunities
Affordable housing	Financial burden people feel from the high cost of housing means that sacrifices in child care are choices people might have to make
Early intervention	Respondents focused on making sure parents have support for recognizing and providing services for possible cognitive or physical disabilities
Mental health	Providing mental health services and removing negative stigma of mental health concerns was a theme for some respondents
Transportation	Transportation was a barrier for providing adequate care to children
Other	Financial support, better health care, more job opportunities, and support in religious organizations

Thinking about supporting children and families, what are your community’s strengths?



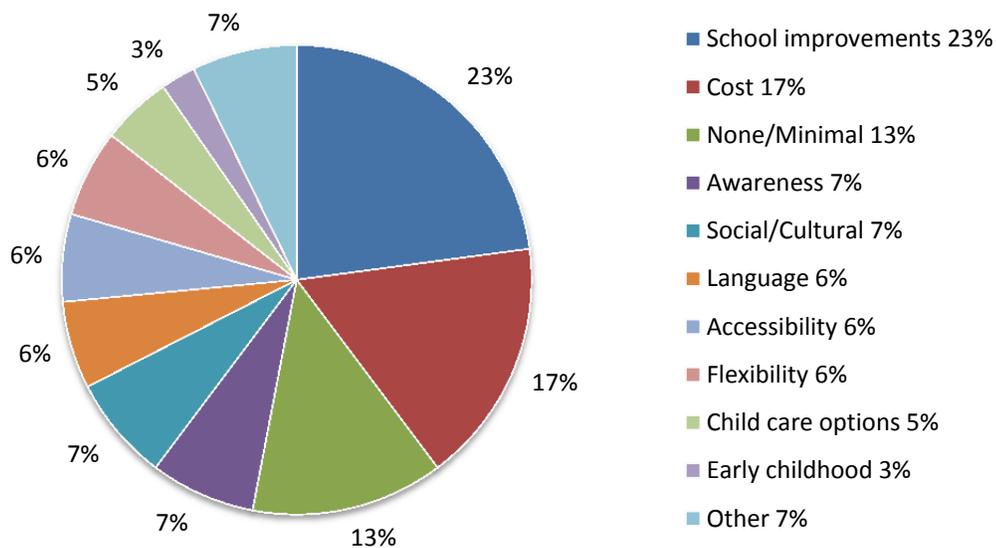
Response	Explanation
Education	Respondents recognized schools and educational programs as significant contributors to support of families and children
Parks	Parks and trails in Scott County bring opportunities for outdoor play

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Early childhood	This theme recognizes all of the community programs available for early childhood development including ECFE, Follow Along, preschool offerings and community education
Activities	An important element for many was the offering of activities within the community
Community	Importance of community in raising children was recognized by many respondents. Responses included elements of community such as neighbors, small town feeling, family events and awareness campaigns
Child care options	With the reality that many families include two working parents or single parents raising children, child care becomes a necessary support for families
Safe	Respondents felt that the safe feeling of their community in Scott County is an important factor for supporting families and children
Committed parents	Engaged family members was recognized as a critical element in child rearing
Library services	Libraries and programs they offer are recognized as a support structure for families
Other	Mental health support, work done by Public Health department, farmers markets, healthy eating, support for diversity, and early intervention

What are the barriers to educational success?



Response	Explanation
School improvements	Respondents felt that the following are barriers: lack of funding, transportation, student to teacher ratios, special education, early intervention, and lack of secondary education options within the County

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Cost	The cost of education, both out of pocket and taxes, were a concern of residents. Some touched on the idea that for many, it is critical that both parents work
None/minimal	Some respondents felt that they did not face any barriers to educational success
Awareness	There was a sense that some respondents were missing things simply because they were not aware of what is offered, and what critical stages children are going through so they can provide the best for them
Social/cultural	This theme is centered on the recognition of different cultures and teaching with that in mind. Providing a welcoming environmental for all was important to these residents
Language	Referenced language barriers for ESL students
Accessibility	Making school and educational opportunities accessible was a focus for some referencing time, transportation options, and winter activity lulls
Flexibility	Challenge of balancing lives for working parents and benefits available to children
Child care options	Respondents would like to have more options for quality child care to help support their children’s mental and physical growth
Early childhood	Better understanding of young children’s needs referencing play time as a specific activity
Other	Mental health support, support from peers, family engagement, improved nutrition, and comprehensive health care

“The Public Health Staff work hard with the least dedicated amount spent capita we have our priorities backwards here. Prevention is where it is at!”

“Scott County has better schools and housing for now, but there is growing needs for better housing and playgrounds.”

“We do not have easy access to college classes in Scott County other than online.”

“The county is nice place to raise family, but we need the county to hire bilingual staff.”

Focus Groups

Two themes shared between the Scott County Historical Society and Esperanza was a desire for more cultural competency within the community and a lack of program availability.

The Scott County Historical Society focused on the need for increased awareness of early education programs and support for children when school is out of session. They liked the idea of summer learning programs through libraries and SCHS to help meet demand. They did emphasize the need for bilingual programs and increased cultural competency throughout the community.

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Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

There were several common themes between the two different approaches. Child care and access to programs were the most prominent themes to show up in both.

Cultural sensitivity was a significant focus for these groups – something that was only barely touched on by the survey responses.

A strong emphasis for the Esperanza focus group during this discussion was the financial impact that child care has on a family. While they recognized that early education was an important part of child rearing, it was a financial hardship for some of them. This included costs for preschool, limited free programs, and transportation to and from the provider. There was also significant discussion about a lack of cultural sensitivity within the schools for Hispanic people. Feelings of profiling and a general unwelcoming attitude were perceived by many. Conversely, there was a significant amount of support within the group to help build a strong Latino community. Much of the discovery of community services and offerings are done through word of mouth.

Focus Group	Themes
Esperanza	Cost, Community Support, Education, Child Care
SCHS	Social/Cultural, Education, Early Intervention, Community Ed

Healthy Eating

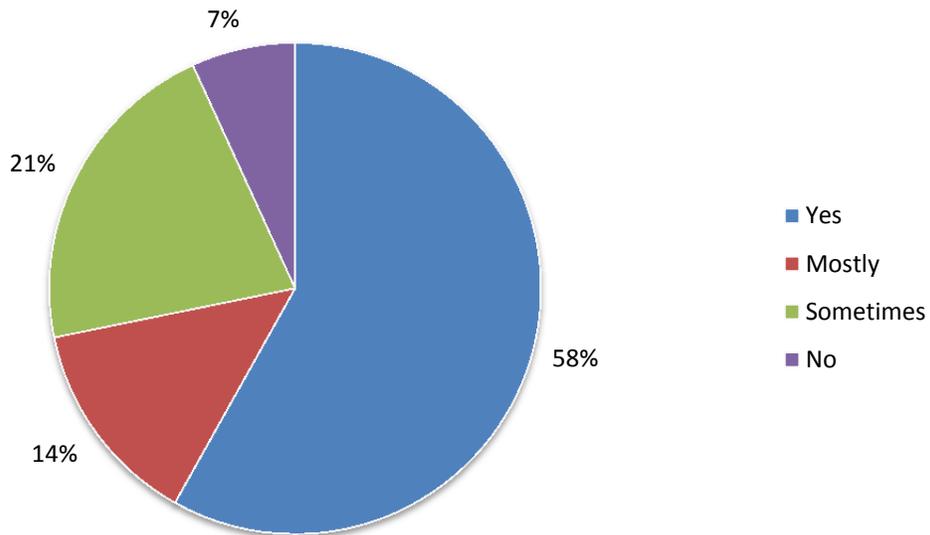
The County recognizes that one of the pillars of health is access to and consumption of healthy foods. Our health and human services department will use this information to develop programs to encourage healthy eating for all people who live, learn, work, and play in Scott County:

- Do you feel like the food you eat is healthy?
- When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?
- What could be improved upon?

We were pleased to have received responses from approximately 120 residents via online surveys and 30 paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results.



Do you feel like the food you eat is healthy?



Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the respondents felt they generally ate healthy foods. Some respondents provided further insight to what contributed to eating, or not eating, a healthy diet. Those responses included the following means of support for healthy eating:

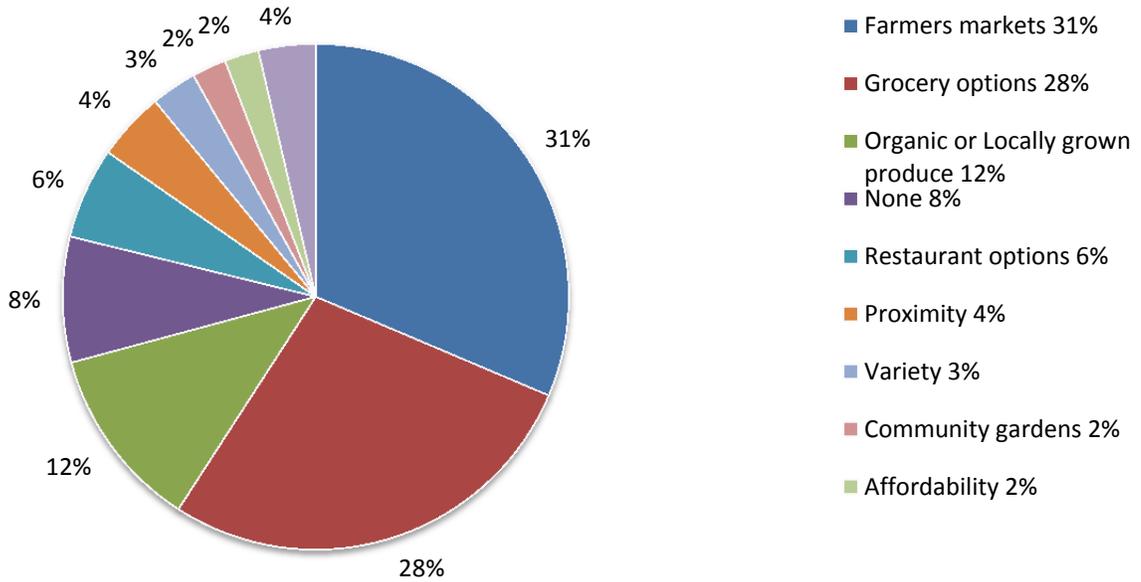
- Controlling what you eat by cooking for yourself
- Eating what you grow
- Using motivation to stay healthy to encourage consumption of healthy foods
- Eating organic foods
- Eating fruits and vegetables

Some pointed out the difficulties they found in eating healthy.

- Food options, particularly restaurants, are limited in Scott County
- Fast food is too prevalent
- Higher cost to eat healthy foods.

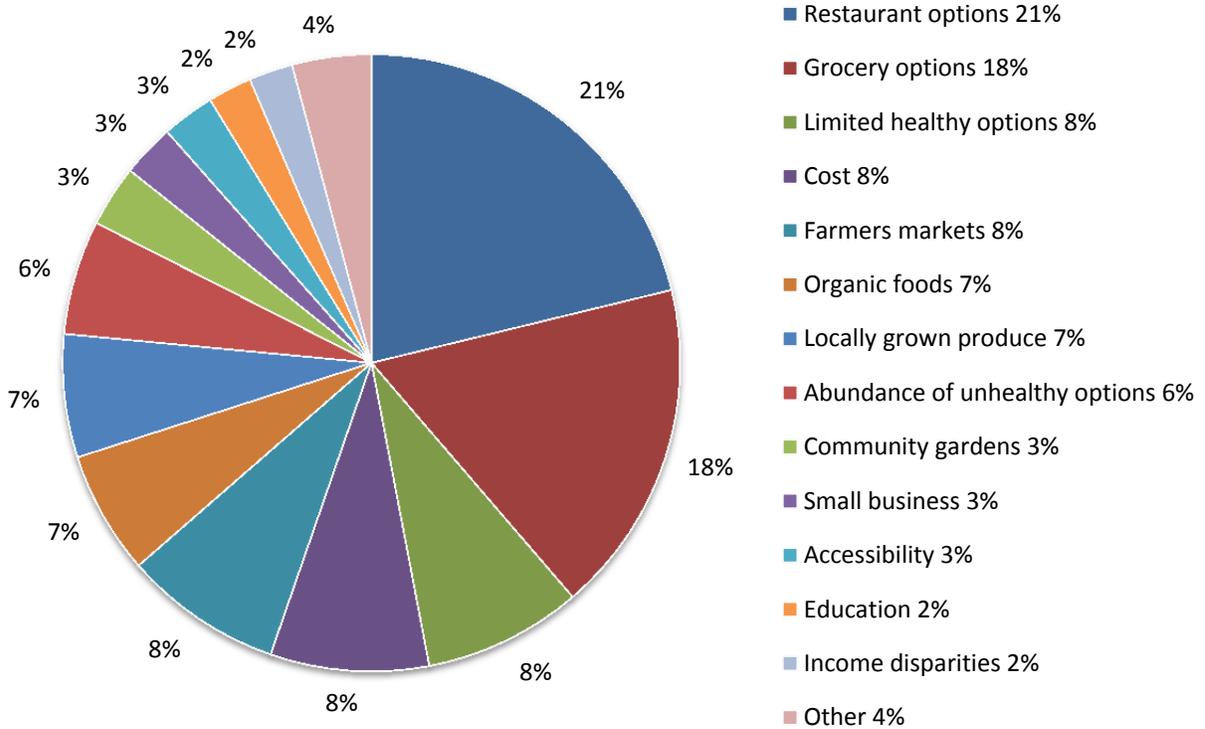
- Needing more education regarding what constitutes healthy eating

When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?



Response	Explanation
Farmers markets	Local markets are present in every city during the summer months
Grocery options	Respondents generally have their choice of markets to purchase healthy foods
Organic or locally grown produce	Residents felt one of the strengths in Scott County was availability of organic or locally grown produce to eat at home
None	Many people felt there were not many, if any, strong points related to healthy eating in Scott County
Restaurant options	Many choices offered in Scott County provide people with options to eat healthy foods
Proximity	Respondents felt they would not have to travel far to find healthy food options
Variety	Availability of options has continue to improve and respondents have access to more than one option
Community Gardens	In addition to grocery stores, respondents made use of different locally grown produce including community gardens or community supported agriculture (CSAs)
Affordability	Within the county, respondents felt the food available is affordable.
Other	Support for teaching children and families about healthy eating at a young age, support within school districts and culturally varied food stores

When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what could be improved upon?



Response	Explanation
Restaurant options	Restaurants in Scott County are the top item respondents would like to see improved upon. Current offerings favor fast food options with few restaurants offering healthy menu choices
Grocery options	Respondents were concerned with the number and variety of grocery options available
Limited healthy options	Concern for quality of food available both from restaurants and grocers
Cost	Respondents believed that eating healthy is more expensive than eating processed and fried foods
Farmers markets	Desire for more opportunities to visit farmers markets. Times offered do not align with some respondents' schedules
Organic foods	Quality and selection of organic foods is lacking in Scott County but some mentioned it was improving
Locally grown produce	Respondents were interested in seeing increased access to local foods
Abundance of unhealthy options	Respondents felt fast food and junk food is too prevalent in Scott County
Community gardens	The availability of locally grown foods would be bolstered by more community gardens

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Small business	Respondents stated they would like to support small businesses opening restaurants featuring healthy food, bakeries, or grocery stores
Accessibility	Access to healthy foods could be improved upon by offering more flexible hours, more locations of farmers markets, or more places to pick up local produce
Education	Respondents felt there is a lack of education both for children through schools and adults.
Income disparities	Access to healthy food is more limited for those with lower incomes
Other	Providing more nutritious foods through school lunches, increasing awareness for farmers markets and community gardens, recognizing ethnic barriers, making it easier for mothers to breastfeed in public locations

“There is a preponderance of chain and fast-food restaurants in Scott due mainly to the county's reliance on industrial spaces and worker housing.”

“Outside of a few grocery stores and farmers markets, there are not many places (at least that I know of) to obtain organic, non-gmo, and locally produced food.”

“Teach people how to cook. A lot of young people don't know how to prepare meals with the four food groups to provide nutritious food to their families.”

“I think there should be places around each community for residents to grow their own veggies.”

“I need healthy eating classes. I am not sure if I am eating healthy.”

Focus Groups

A popular topic in the focus group format, Esperanza, 4H students, CAPS students, and Kingsway all discussed how healthy eating affected their lives. Two pervasive themes were heard in all of the groups. The first was that it is too expensive to eat healthy. The price of organic foods and fresh produce in particular were referenced as barriers to eating well. Junk food tends to be plentiful, affordable, and convenient. Which leads to the second pervasive theme, people do not have time to eat healthy. It is so much easier to fit in a trip to a fast food restaurant as people navigate their busy lives than to plan a weeks' worth of meals, plan for and visit the grocery store, and prepare homemade meals every day of the week. The seniors worried about spending more money on food when housing and medical costs were a hindrance on their budgets.

Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

Of the two big themes discussed to the left (Cost to eat healthy, and convenience of junk food), one was well discussed in both formats. The emphasis on time being a barrier to eating well was less of an issue for the pop-up/online responses. Perhaps this serves as an explanation to why fast food restaurants are so prevalent in Scott County. Convenience usually wins when one is pressed for time.

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The CAPS student group felt that school healthy food options were of poor quality and were not an appealing choice. The 4H students were proud of the agricultural foundation in the county and were glad to have farmers markets as an option to access fresh produce. They did have concerns that the markets weren't easy to access and wondered if more advertising might help. The increase in the amount of land dedicated to housing worried them as well. It seemed to them that it might end up having a negative impact on the price of agricultural goods.

The retirees at Kingsway spoke positively about Scott County's agrarian economy though they worried about corporate influence. Too much commercial farming has limited the feasibility of the small family farm. They also expressed concern that the food that comes from the commercial farms were not of the same quality.

Cultural influences were recognized by Esperanza as well, their cultural traditions include a lot of unhealthy foods. There were also struggles with finding their culture's foods in schools or in healthy cooking classes. The cultural divide was also found within the family as 2nd generation family members preferred traditional "American foods" to the Latino cooking of their parents. They were the one group to mention the benefits of community gardens.

Focus Group	Themes
4H	Time, Cost, Farmers Markets, Restaurant options
CAPS	Cost, Awareness, Limited healthy options
Esperanza	Cost, Social/Cultural, Community gardens
Kingsway	Cost, Locally grown produce, Organic

Housing

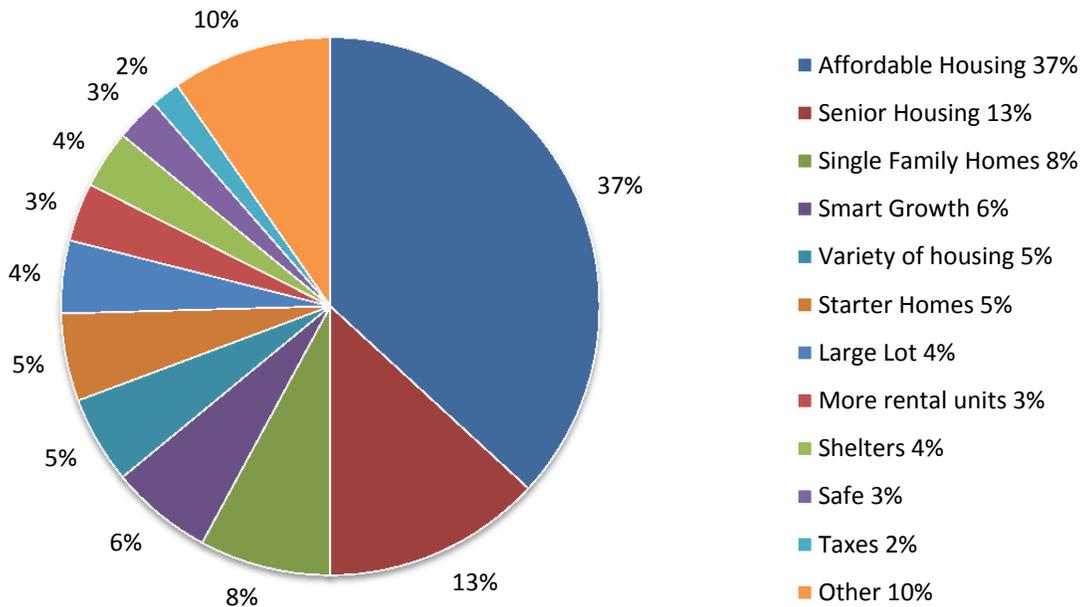
One of the basic necessities for all residents is shelter. The current housing stock in Scott County is predominantly single family housing for middle to upper class. The Community Development Agency in Scott County strengthens communities by providing housing opportunities to low and moderate income families. We asked:

- What do you see as the greatest housing need in Scott County?
- We've identified that 30% or less of your income to housing indicates a sustainable cost. What does affordable housing mean to you?
- What makes a good neighborhood?

We were pleased to have received responses from approximately 95 residents via online surveys and 25 paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results.



What do you see as the greatest housing need in Scott County?

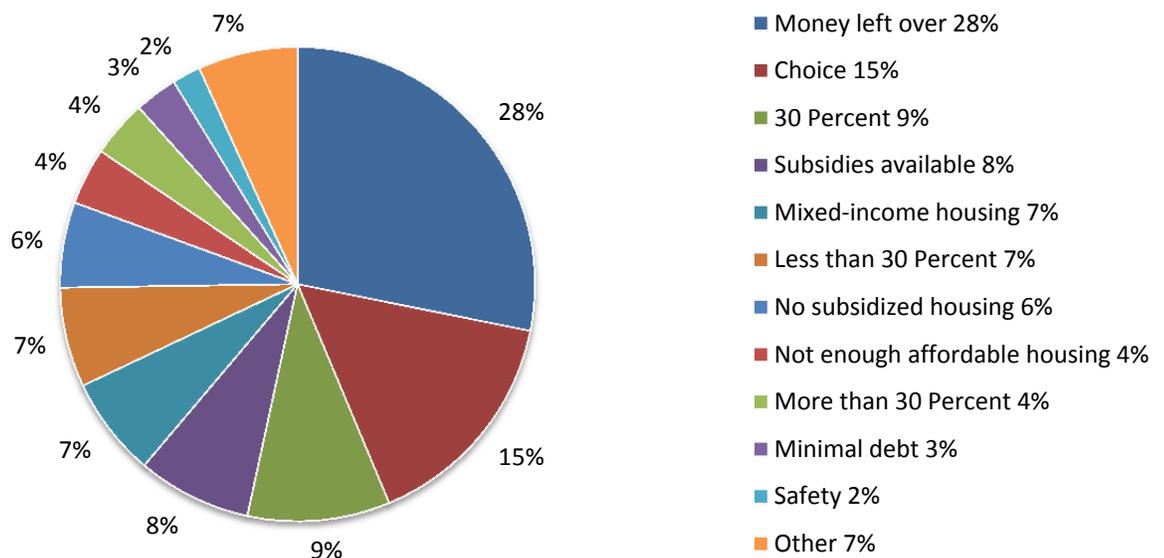


Response	Explanation
Affordable housing	Different considerations for affordable housing were mentioned within this theme. Most comments referred to the need as being simply affordable. Others gave more detail in their responses. This included the desire for clean/new housing, near transportation and employment, and workforce housing

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Senior housing	Ensuring there is a place for seniors to live was a concern for residents. Quality and cost were considerations provided when responses were more detailed
Single family homes	There were comments about wanting more single family homes with large lots. These responses included people who want less low income housing and apartments
Smart growth	Respondents felt a need to limit development or ensure that development occurred in a more thoughtful manner
Variety of housing	Responses within this theme are the opposite perspective of the Single Family Homes theme. More options including townhomes, middle priced homes, multi-family housing, and transitional housing
Starter homes	People who indicated more starter homes as a need recognized the high cost of entry into this housing market
Large lot	Some responses were focused on preserving larger lots with more space between houses
More rental units	Lack of rental options
Shelters	This theme included the desire to provide housing for the homeless and those who cannot afford housing
Safe	Providing safe and affordable housing as well as sidewalks in all neighborhoods
Taxes	Property taxes are too much of a burden for some respondents
Other	Limiting sounds coming from busy roads, renovating historical homes, limiting association fees, not enough housing, smaller homes, and housing for seasonal workers

We've identified that 30% or less of your income to housing indicates a sustainable cost. What does affordable housing mean to you?



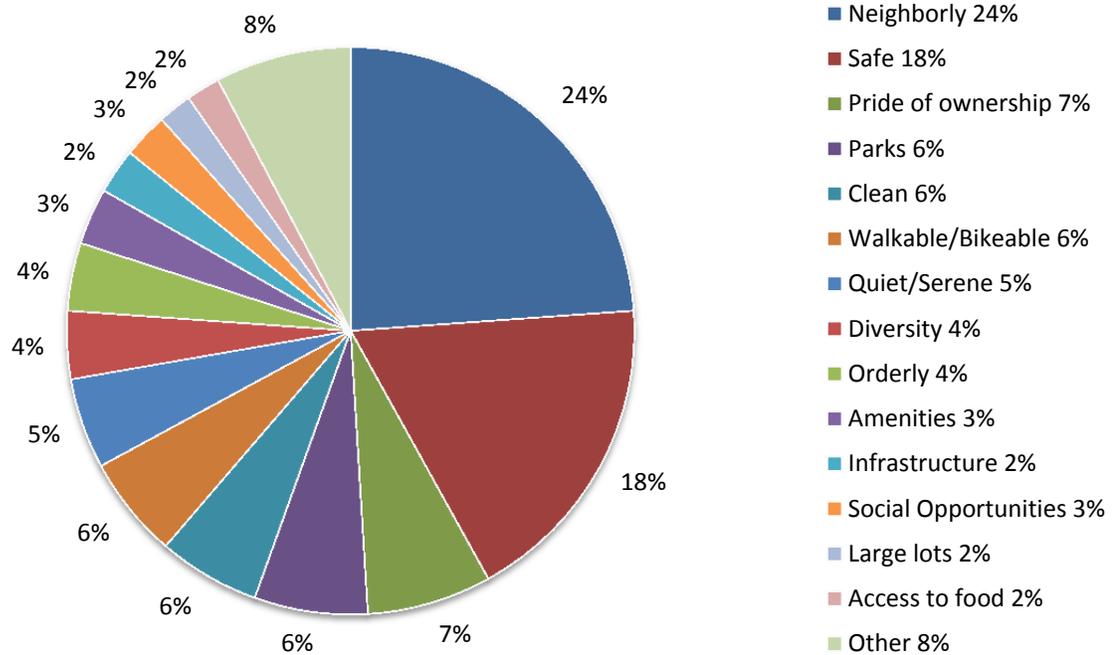
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Response	Explanation
Money left over	Many comments indicated that affordable housing means that there is money leftover but it was unclear how much and what percentage that would be
Choice	Respondents did not directly indicate what affordable meant as a percentage of their earning but many indicated a variety of price ranges mostly under \$225,000 for a house or under \$1,000 for rent. Others wanted more options living in a safe neighborhood near work.
Thirty percent	Accurate representation of what affordable means.
Subsidies available	Residents felt programs to help low-income families were important
Mixed-income housing	Focused on the idea that housing should be mixed in terms of income levels and housing type (i.e., single family homes, townhomes, apartments, etc.)
No subsidized housing	Respondents felt the availability of these programs were enabling and did not support any subsidized housing
Not enough affordable housing	Residents responded that there needs to be more housing available at lower price points. Some specified that they would like to see subsidized housing
More than thirty percent	Respondents felt that 30% wasn't necessarily the right value and that they could put more toward housing
Safety	Housing should be safe no matter the income level
Other	Responses included commentary about high taxes, seeing low income housing as a handout, and being smart about the pace of development

What makes a good neighborhood?

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Response	Explanation
Neighborhoodly	People and how they interact with each other was a strong consideration for people
Safe	Living in an area where you feel safe at night
Pride of ownership	Neighborhoods are strong when people take care of their property
Parks	Having quality parks nearby
Clean	Cleanliness of homes, streets, and nearby amenities
Walkable/bikeable	Respondents appreciated having access to walking or biking trails and that they were connected with nearby amenities such as retail or outdoor spaces
Quiet/Serene	Emphasis on the natural environment (green space), low traffic, and a peaceful setting
Diversity	Diversity of people within neighborhood
Orderly	Availability and responsiveness of police force
Amenities	Included quality schools, nearby attractions, and retail
Infrastructure	Physical infrastructure including internet/cable and road maintenance
Social opportunities	Opportunities to interact with neighbors and attend events
Large lots	Larger lots for single family homes
Access to food	Access to groceries or farmers markets
Other	Quality housing stock, family friendly attitude, homogenous people and housing, heterogeneous people and housing, limited access to welfare recipients

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"There has been a boom of housing in the east end, but those are \$300,000 - \$400,000. Single family homes to raise families in with yards are critically important. Most affordable options are townhomes or apartments."

"Property taxes need to be lowered. It is difficult for people to stay living in Scott County because property taxes are high."

"[Scott county needs to work on] Achieving the right balance of population. We don't necessarily need to keep growing."

"[A good neighborhood includes] people who take pride in caring for their property and reaching out to the neighbors to build community."

"[A good neighborhood has] community involvement and events, crime watchers, and parks for the kids."

Focus Groups

Building a sense of community came through as one of the most important facets if the housing discussion between both the Tay Phuong and Scott County Historical Society focus groups. They both placed a lot of emphasis on living in a caring community where people are helpful and respectful.

Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

While many people discussed home ownership and pride of ownership in the surveys, the Tay Phuong response about the reason for home ownership being a part of financial security was an interesting detail.

Both formats recognized the current and growing problem with providing housing for our aging population. SCHS were strongly in favor of support for the homeless.

The SE Asian focus group discussed home ownership and found that to be an important goal for any members of their community. It was seen as an important investment for the future. For families, they placed a strong emphasis on having parks available near their homes. They had concerns about the making sure there was adequate access to housing for the elderly including both independent and assisted living facilities.

The SCHS also focused some of their discussion on housing for seniors. They saw the increasing demand and wanted to make sure there were options available to various income levels. They noted that income-based housing is hard to get into and better transition housing was needed for the homeless. They recognized there were no facilities for them in the County.

Focus Group	Themes
Tay Phuong	Senior Housing, Pride of ownership, Neighborly, Parks
SCHS	Neighborly, Senior Housing, Affordable Housing, Shelters



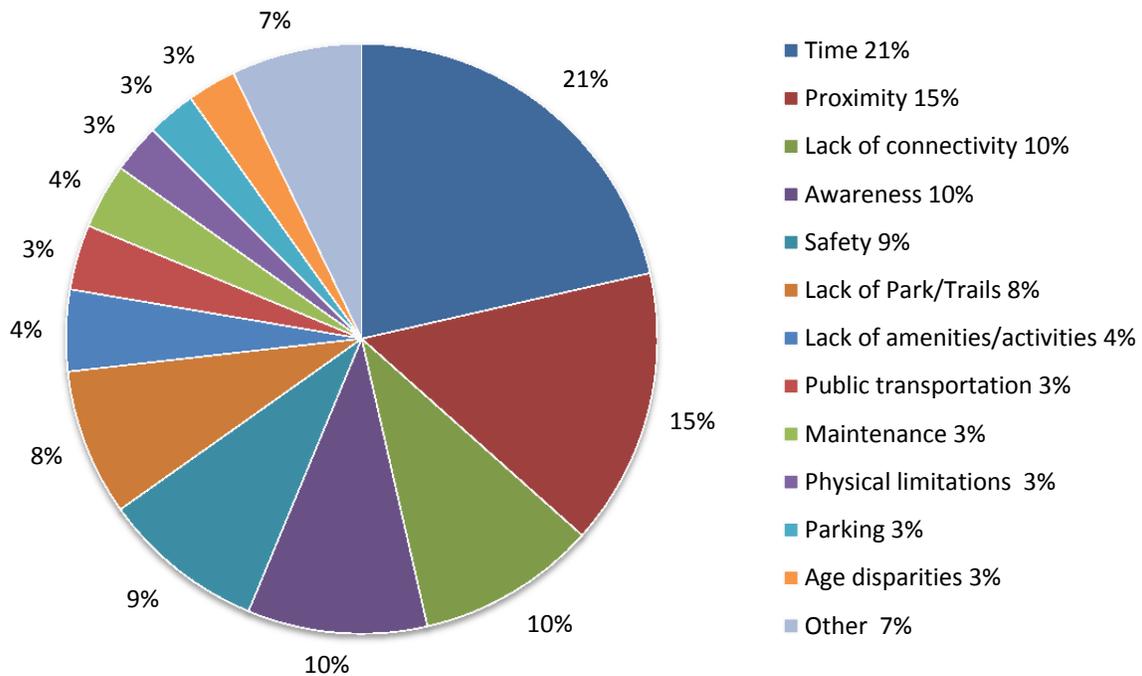
County Parks & Trails

Scott County operates four regional parks and one regional trail. The goal of our regional parks is to develop opportunities for recreation and learning in a natural resources-based setting and with a focus on outdoor activities that tend to be larger in scale than city parks. It is important for people to experience, typically, large expanses of open natural landscapes. The parks and trails department is interested in finding out what barriers might exist for residents visiting our regional parks and trails. We hope this will help us understand if there is something that can be done to remove these barriers. We asked:

- What prevents you from visiting regional, more natural resources based, parks?
- Do you have concerns about visiting regional county parks?
- What changes would you like to see made to make visiting regional county parks easier?

We were pleased to have received responses from over 80 residents via online surveys and 35 with paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results.

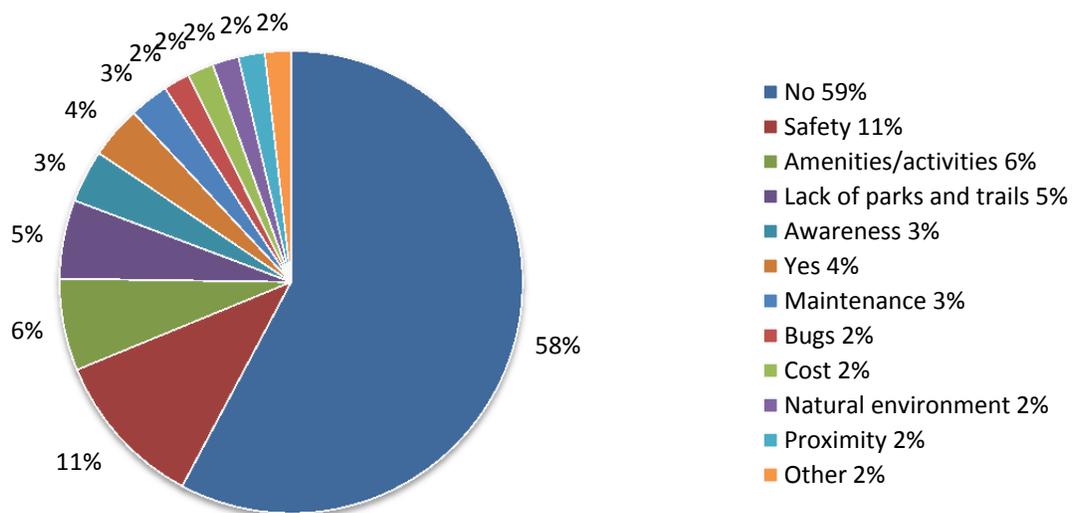
What prevents you from visiting regional, more natural resources based, parks?



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Response	Explanation
Time/Motivation	Lack of time or motivation. Several respondents mentioned their long commute as a contributing factor. At least one person suggested that time spent during work hours is an opportunity that could help increase physical activity
Proximity	Distance to parks and trails from a person’s home or place of work
Lack of connectivity	Desire for a system of trails that connects to other trails, community centers, businesses, and transit opportunities
Lack of awareness	Little information available to help individuals understand accessible trail systems
Safety	Two safety themes around personal safety and compatibility of recreational trail and fast moving traffic adjacent to one another
Lack of parks and trails	Lack of trails in Scott County that are poorly connected. Others wanted more parks and recreational opportunities
Lack of amenities/activities	Amenities provided are not consistent with visitor interests. Responses include lack of playgrounds, restrooms, and sufficient campsites
Public transportation	Lack of a robust transit system causes a barrier to accessing places to be active
Maintenance	Quality of facilities including cleanliness, closures, and wear and tear
Physical limitations	Lack of opportunities for people who have physical limitations
Parking	Insufficient parking
Age disparities	Lack of activities for young children
Other	Cost of services, weather, fear of racism, paper passes, not allowing pets in certain areas

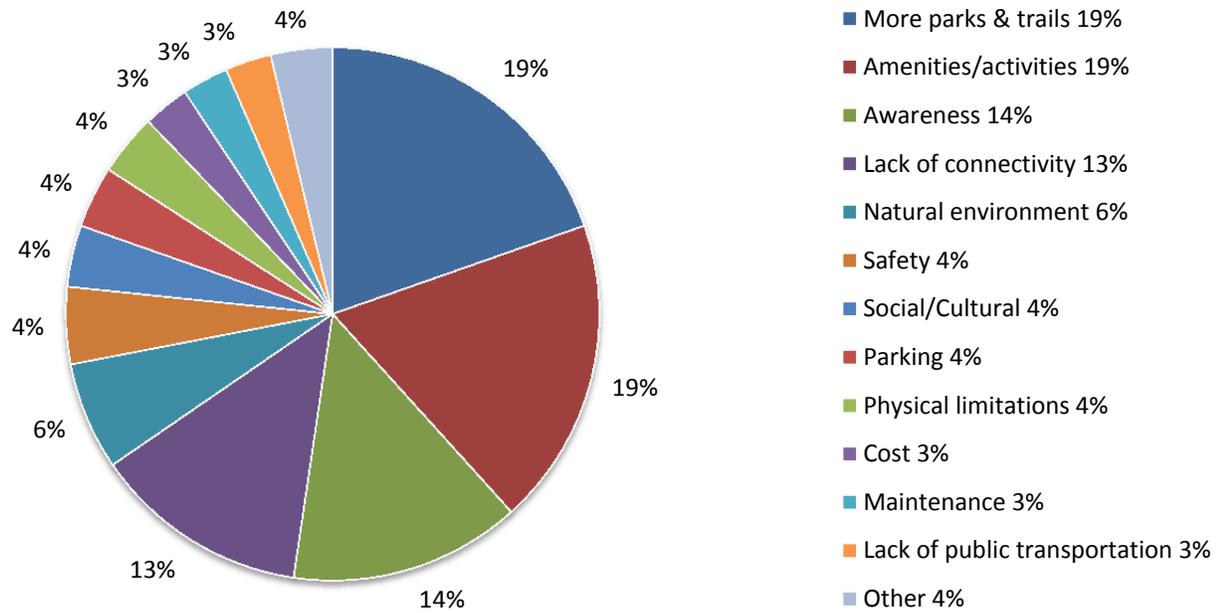
Do you have concerns about visiting regional county parks?



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Response	Explanation
No	Respondents had no concerns about visiting regional parks
Safety	Two safety themes around personal safety and compatibility of recreational trail and recreating near incompatible uses (e.g. walking near fast moving bikes)
Amenities/activities	The offerings within the parks do not provide an activity the respondent is interested in
Lack of parks and trails	Residents felt that the park and trail network should expand. The responses were evenly split between more parks and trails
Awareness	More information needed prior to visiting regional parks
Yes	Some respondents referenced that they did have concerns but did not elaborate
Maintenance	Quality of amenities such as bathroom upkeep and trail pavement
Bugs	Too many pests
Cost	Includes rental fees and misperception of entry fees
Natural environment	Respondents mentioned the desire for the parks and trails to feature nature and wildlife
Proximity	Parks location and time required to travel to park was a concern for some respondents
Other	No time for visiting parks and trails; design not suitable for children or elderly

What changes would you like to see made to make visiting regional county parks easier?



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Response	Explanation
More parks and trails	By developing more parks and trails, people could more easily access existing parks
Amenities/activities	Respondents felt that by expanding the amenities or activities offered, they would be more likely to participate
Awareness	For some there was more information needed to encourage more visitation at regional parks
Lack of connectivity	There was a desire for a system of trails that connected with other trails, community centers, businesses, and transit opportunities.
Natural environment	Respondents mentioned the desire for parks and trails to feature nature and wildlife
Safety	Two safety themes around personal safety and compatibility of recreational trail and recreating near incompatible uses (e.g. walking near fast moving bikes)
Social/cultural	Residents were concerned that they might not be welcomed at parks
Parking	Insufficient parking
Physical limitations	Making parks more accessible for people of all physical capabilities
Cost	Programming or rental fees and misconception of entry fees
Maintenance	Quality of amenities including cleanliness and trail pavement quality
Public transportation	Lack of a robust transit system in Scott County caused a barrier accessing places to be active
Other	Automation through electronic passes; fewer bugs; more/less investment

“I don't want to drive to [parks]. I want a way to safely walk/bike straight to them.”

“Regional parks are beautiful - finding time is the challenge.”

“Make [parks] usable for people who are not fitness nuts and who may have limited mobility or time to hike distances.”

“I do visit regional parks and trails, but I am amazed at how empty they are when they are so nice!”

Focus Groups

For two of the three groups, awareness seemed to be an issue. Both the SCHS and Tay Phuong were generally unaware of the regional parks and trails in Scott County. Of the members of the SCHS that were aware, they were unaware that the parks were free for all (and have been for over 10 years), and unaware of programming. There were suggestions that more efforts could be made to advertise the parks and for special events to bring families and a more diverse group of people to the parks and trails. They viewed parks as a community building asset.

Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

Many common themes were found between the focus groups and the pop-up/online survey group. The biggest issues perceived by both were awareness, time, and connectivity.

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The connectivity of parks and trails was discussed by the 4H group. They would like to see more trails connecting urban areas and parks so they could better enjoy the natural environment. This group was aware of the parks, and visited, generally, in groups. Time impeded their use of the parks and found them to be too clustered within the County.

Focus Group	Themes
4H	Time, Proximity, Lack of connectivity, Natural environment
SCHS	Awareness, Amenities/Activities, Social/Cultural
Tay Phuong	Awareness



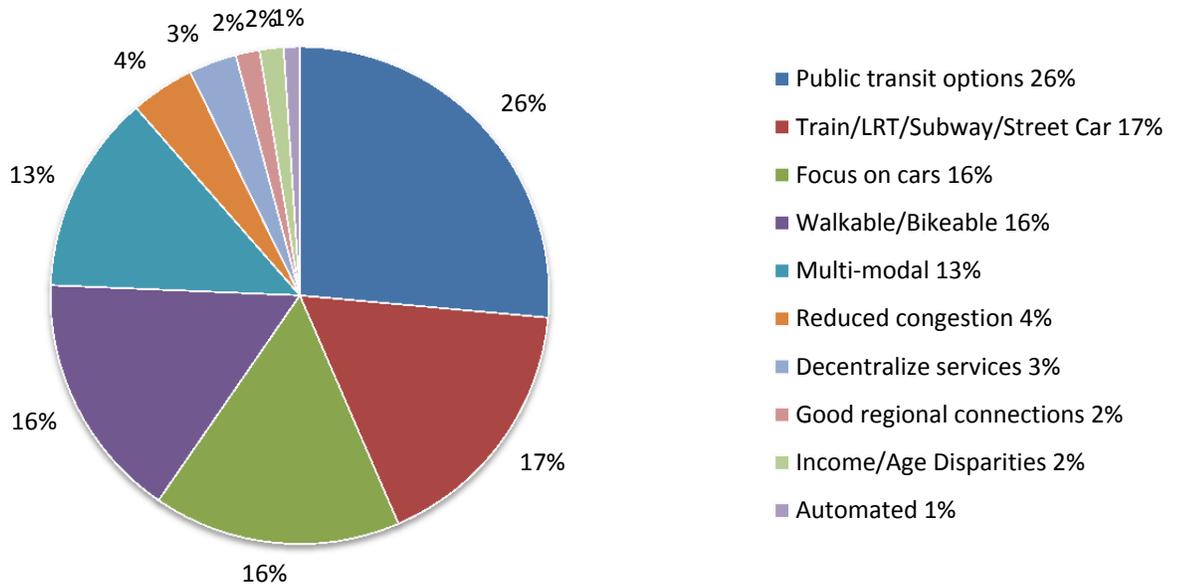
Transportation

One of the most visible and widely used county services is the construction and maintenance of county roads and trails. As a county, we work to provide a high standard for the quality of our transportation network and the quality of our roads:

- If you could design your perfect city, how would you like to get around and travel from place to place?
- What aspects of the transportation system work well for you?
- Describe current challenges you face with the transportation system?

We were pleased to have received responses from over 150 residents via online surveys and nearly 30 with paper surveys. Below is a summary of the results.

If you could design your perfect city, how would you like to get around and travel from place to place?

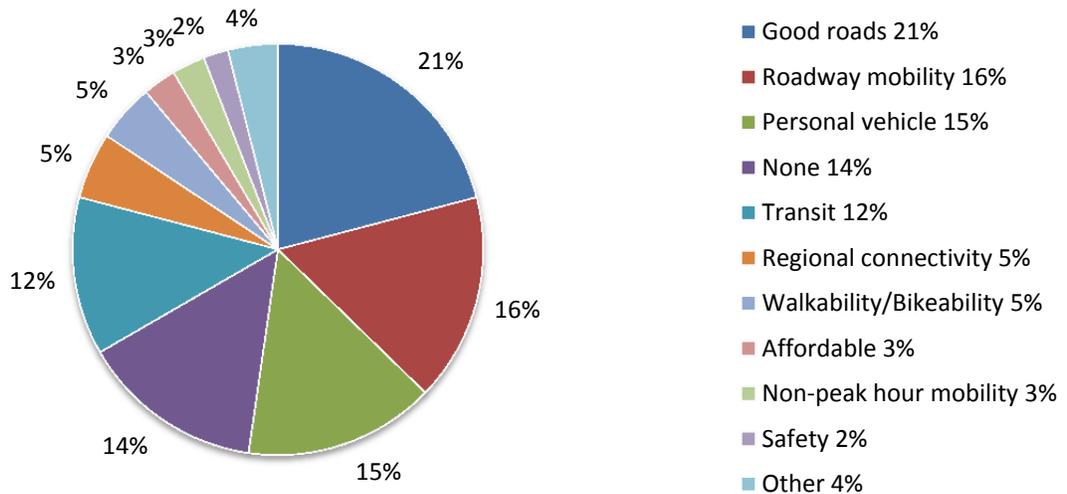


Response	Explanation
Public transit options	Transportation would be improved with more options. A strong subtheme was that cars were the only way to get around
Train/LRT/Subway/Street car	Suggestions for alternative modes of transit on a fixed route
Walkable/bikeable	Cities accessed easily via human-powered transportation
Multi-modal	Sharing similarities with above themes, these respondents would like

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	more options but did not specify
Focus on cars	Car is the best mode of transportation for ideal city
Reduced congestion	Too much traffic results in a city that is hard to navigate.
Decentralize services	Design of cities to include neighborhood nodes instead of large scale commercial development for easier access to good and services
Good regional connections	Respondents made connections between their community and regional network making it easy to travel within and to neighboring communities
Income/age disparities	More options need to be available for those who can no longer drive or can't afford to drive
Automated	Providing more future focused options such as Hyperloop technology or implementing more technology to sense when to provide traffic control measures

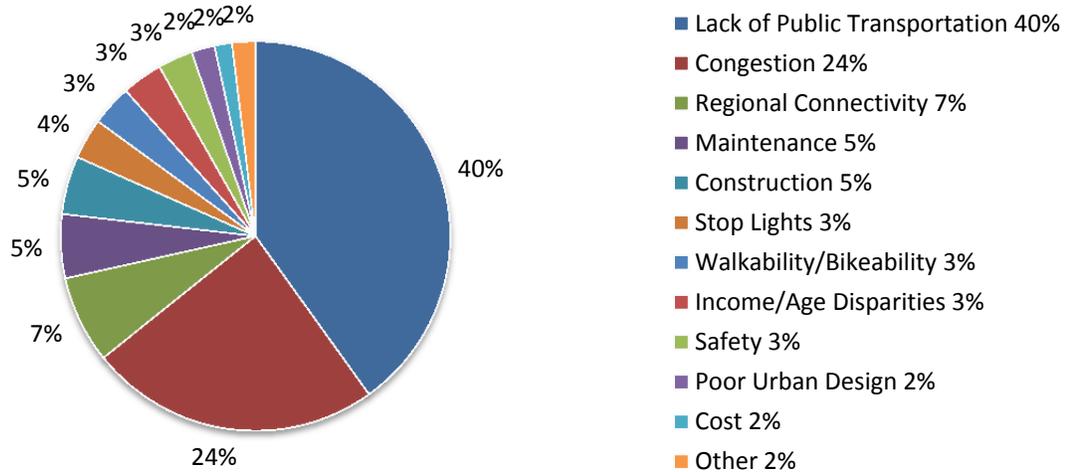
What aspects of the transportation system work well for you?



Response	Explanation
Good roads	Leading theme referenced the general quality of the roads
Roadway mobility	Good quality access to regional connections, improvements to circulation, and the network in general
Personal vehicle	Respondents for this theme felt that their use of a car was well served by the transportation system
None	Transportation network is not providing what is needed
Transit	Public transportation options were notable
Regional connectivity	Connections to nearby counties
Walkable/bikeable	Trail network works well
Affordable	Cost is not a barrier to travel about the county
Non-peak hour mobility	During non-peak hours the road network moves freely and easily

Safety	Public transportation is a safe option that reduces traffic
Other	MnPass, choosing to work closer to home, and flexibility

Describe current challenges you face with the transportation system?



Response	Explanation
Lack of public transportation	Lack of options for mobility without driving your own vehicle
Congestion	Too much traffic
Regional connectivity	Connections to the rest of the metro
Maintenance	Condition of roads
Construction	Timing of and seemingly constant presence of construction projects
Stoplights	Too frequent stoplights
Walkability/bikeability	Trail network doesn't allow for transportation efficiently as an incomplete network
Income/age disparities	Need for mobile support systems for those with limited resources
Safety	Concerns about being safe on the roads including inexperienced drivers, fast drivers, dangerous corridors and public transportation
Poor urban design	Design of cities limits easy transportation
Cost	Cost of driving
Other	Multiple names of roads is confusing and train transportation is loud

Focus Groups

The Kingsway focus group spent the most time discussing transportation. They were very interested in having more options for public transportation. They felt there were not many options in Scott County and would love to see something like light rail brought into the County. They also had concerns that the county lacked options to get out of the city and county. It would be beneficial for this group if the county raised awareness and provided them with better access to transportation resources. They also noted that disseminating information via the web was a poor way to reach them.

Tay Phuong talked about challenges they have with regard to getting to and from their temple.

Transportation came up at other times during other topic areas in other focus groups. Esperanza discussed the challenges they have with regard to getting children to and from care. Transportation to and from their jobs presented a barrier to wider employment opportunities.

Transportation also was discussed by Tay Phuong, in regards to general transportation for aging people within their community.

Comparison to Pop Up/Online responses:

It was helpful to hear from Kingsway in Belle Plaine express their interest in public transit. We hear that in the three more urban cities, but for a community in one of the four more rural cities to express that desire helps us understand this is a countywide issue, not just for the emerging suburban communities.

Focus Group	Themes
Kingsway	Public transit options, Regional connections, Income/Age disparities
Tay Phuong	Poor urban design

“Driving is my preferred method for moving around Scott County. If I lived in a denser area, I would love light rail or biking options.”

“Depending on where I needed to go, I'd like the option of biking, walking or riding on public transportation that was easily accessible.”

“It is not about traveling within the city it is about transportation to health care in other cities that is not available in the rural communities.”

Lessons Learned

This effort was generally successful. We did reach a more diverse cross section of the county. We did provide an easy way for residents to provide input on the future of the county. We were able to provide outreach to residents about county services. We were able to receive quality responses that will help inform the goals developed for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Within these successes there is room for growth in future community engagement endeavors. The first goal was to strive to reach a representative cross section of the county in terms of ethnicity, income, and age. We also wanted to reach as many community members as possible. There were several factors we identified that would result in better connections with the community.

Findings

The findings in this report represent a new approach to community engagement. In fact, this approach reached many people who had never been involved in a public meeting, including nearly 60% of respondents to the paper surveys. The targeted approach resulted in more diverse response rate, and while we aren't able to conclusively say that certain populations have a significantly different opinion on the topics we asked about than the population we traditionally hear from, we were surprised to find hints that there were some differences.

We heard from multiple ethnically Somali respondents that they had safety concerns in our parks. This finding was interesting enough that we need to do more to determine if there is cause for concern or if this effort is highlighting an anomaly. Similarly, we are interested in learning more about data that would suggest there are a large number of people who receive no benefit from the transportation system. More information could be gathered to understand if the failings of this transportation system follow the most common challenges we hear about or if they have other insight into what does not work well for them. The concerns of some residents that felt they weren't sure if they were eating a healthy diet or not was another response that could be explored. One conversation with the Latino focus group showed a strong difference in how this group experienced a vastly different experience as a minority in the school system. There may be more to explore with regard to acceptance of diversity in Scott County.

Begin early

Community engagement takes a significant amount of time to coordinate with event operators, find focus group participants, and to coordinate with staff. The staff responsible for planning and rolling out the community engagement program began in July 2016 with a goal of finalizing any community engagement by late winter/early spring of 2017. For pop up events, this allowed staff to participate at many events throughout the county starting in September—many of which were fall themed events. The Apples for Ideas program was very successful at fall themed events where people were interested in the incentive. We may have missed out on some very well attended events earlier in the spring and summer that could

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have provided a more diverse response. Ideally the plan to engage with the community would be in place at least 12 months in advance and be implemented for a period of 12 – 18 months .

Find Community Partners

The single biggest issue we had with setting up focus groups was in finding people who were engaged and interested in the topic areas who had connections with targeted audiences. We reached out to WIC, PFLAG, the Somali community, the Russian community, and the agricultural community. While we offered incentives to participate – including food and grocery gift cards – there was little to no response from any of these groups. Given more time we may have found participants who would be willing.

Funding

Through the Planning and Zoning, Parks and Trails, Public Health/SHIP budgets we were able to fund portions of this effort. The biggest cost savings was the partnership with the two orchards, Wagner Bros and Thompsons' Hillcrest. They provided a great value in providing a healthy draw for residents to engage with staff at pop-up events. In return we provided each person who took an apple a card advertising the hours and location of the two orchards. Without that partnership, more funding would be needed to provide an incentive to encourage resident participation.

It was not without its drawbacks, after a few weeks, many of the apples became soft and unappealing. It was nice to provide these apples from the local orchards, but it may be preferred to have a smaller amount on hand and pick up what is needed for each event. Because they were donated, we had little say into what we were given. More funding would allow for more flexibility in incentives for participation, particularly for focus groups targeting lower income brackets. Some require child care and many are working multiple jobs and do not have the time to donate to this effort. It would allow for funding payment of key non English speaking facilitators.

Translation

While most residents speak English, we know there is a growing population of first generation non-English speakers. We did provide translated surveys in all of the libraries, we asked for a native Spanish speaker to participate and help facilitate the Esperanza focus group and we had assistance with Vietnamese during the Tay Phuong focus group. The translated surveys were not responded to with the exception of a group of Somali participants. Even then, a Somali representative assisted with translation and had concerns with the quality of the translations. A different vendor may provide better translations, but different dialects may be in play. We were promised that the translators used were extremely proficient. We may also want to work directly with any future translator/facilitators to provide the translation at focus groups or facilitator led events.

Pop up methods

The approach to pop-up events could use some tweaking. There were two areas that we saw room for improvement. Firstly, staff had different approaches to communicating with the public. Some filled out the questionnaires for the guest after hearing their response, while others handed them the clipboard. The approach to getting people to participate varied as well. By providing an opportunity for the community to participate in an accessible setting are we doing enough to engage them? Should staff be outgoing and proactive to ensure we get as many responses as possible? What is the balance between offering an opportunity and being intrusive?

The second area to consider is the face we present at each pop-up. The Shakopee farmers market was an interesting case where two staff members were ready and available with apples to give for free which would seem quite compatible with the event. At the venue, many people from different backgrounds and ethnicities were present. It is possible the people there were not interested in participating in any capacity – only two white/Caucasian people responded. It seemed that we may have gotten a better response if we would've been able to present a person of color to help the respondents feel more comfortable.

Some events worked better than others. Those with a connection to autumn were most productive from a sheer numbers standpoint. Where people were gathered and waiting around, we found a good response from residents. We did not get a good response from the medical clinic locations. Similarly, events such as farmers markets were not effective.

Other thoughts

What can be done to capture ideas that don't fit nicely into the 7 topics?

Many times residents offered ideas on other topic areas, but may not have fit within the topic areas offered.

How do we leverage the right staff and experts to assist in response collection?

There were a few select staff that were active in facilitating pop-ups, more people at more events would result in more responses; we have to weigh the benefit of more responses with the extra staff time that would be required.

There were a few other topics that were brought up by the focus groups. Tay Phuong expressed interest in partnering with the county on healthy living through flu shot clinics and observation of food prep practices.

CAPS students wanted to promote more awareness of school clubs and programs that could be better attended. They also felt there was room for improvement regarding cultural sensitivity.

Esperanza would like an opportunity to explore and discuss women's health issues.

What next?

This report is the beginning of sharing the results with local cities, townships, county government departments, and the community.

Our goal is to find meaningful ways of engaging with the community to inform and affect county goals and policies. This is hopefully the beginning of a discussion about ways we can improve our engagement and communication with the community.

This targeted community engagement approach also serves as a model for community engagement moving forward. This was a large undertaking using a collaborative approach to reach out to populations that we have not historically heard from as often. If we are to advance the safety, health, and livability of our community and residents, it is necessary to ensure we've taken steps to engage underserved populations and ensure ample opportunities for all voices to be heard and incorporated into both short- and long-term planning efforts.

These findings will be available in fall of 2017 for people to discuss on Speak Up Scott County (<https://www.scottcountymn.gov/1127/speak-up>). Participants in the six focus groups will see the report and have the opportunity to comment on it. The community engagement efforts will be shared with the 50 by 30 initiative. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, they will be inspire and affect future goals in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan due to be approved in 2019.

The information found in this effort has already helped influence how different departments are approaching comprehensive plan development.

From Parks Planner, Nathan Moe:

"The information gathered in this community engagement effort has been helpful to review our policies within the context of this new information. We don't use one source as we focus our efforts toward making our parks and trails more useful, more welcoming, and more relevant to our residents, but this has been an important resource for us as we make . This is an important piece of the puzzle and has influenced how we increase the importance of our trail development goals from the previous plan, how we have placed increased importance on equity within our parks, and how we think about making the active choice the easy choice." – Parks Planner Nathan Moe

Senior Transportation Planner, Angie Stenson:

"The public input illustrates the public's desire for a multi-modal transportation system that includes public transit options and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Specific items related to a multi-modal system for consideration are transportation for an aging population and development patterns that make accessibility a challenge. The feedback also acknowledged the continued role of personal vehicles in everyday transportation for residents. Respondents felt congestion reduction and regional connections are crucial components to address in a 2040 transportation system.

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This feedback supports and directs key aspects of the transportation section of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. For example, congestion and regional connections are major areas of study in planning a 2040 highway network. Multi-modal transportation solutions and infrastructure makes up a specific section of the transportation plan, focusing on strategies and policies to promote transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure. The drafting of these sections is underway and the goal is to incorporate and elevate topics identified by the public through the outreach process.”

SHIP staff, Nathan Moe, on Active Living:

“Active living is a relatively new focus for the County, certainly new since our last comprehensive plan. We want to see the barriers people see in being active in their daily life and, conversely, the strong points here in Scott County. This effort helped shed light on to both of these characteristics of active living. The community engagement report has enlightened SHIP staff as we review the comprehensive plan to share Active Living principles throughout the comprehensive plan.”

Housing Director, Julie Siegart:

“The community engagement information reaffirms and supports the continued work of the Scott County Community Development Agency to strengthen the communities in Scott County. The CDA will continue to partner with each of our communities to support the development of a variety of housing types across income levels so that as people move through their life cycle they have access to housing that meets their changing needs.”

Healthy Eating, Jamie Bachaus, SHIP Coordinator:

“The results of the healthy eating and active living portions serve as a starting point for addressing barriers and opportunities of livability within Scott County. We will work to incorporate these issues into our current and future SHIP work, not only with our efforts at the County but also efforts of our partner agencies. We want this to serve as an open invitation to everyone experiencing barriers and opportunities surrounding healthy eating and active living in Scott County to create solutions and strengthen partnerships so that the healthy choice is a possible choice for all, especially those most vulnerable. As we see it, these plans will be continuously monitored and evaluated so that we truly meet the needs of our residents.

Brad Davis, Planning Manager, on the future of the workforce in Scott County:

“The input received through community conversations around the topic of workforce and career development informed the 2040 Plan’s chapter on economic competitiveness in a number of ways. First, the surveys and focus groups involving the County’s student population (which found a lot of younger residents speculating they will leave the county for employment in the future) resulted in the chapter for the first time inventorying the unemployment rate for 16-19 year olds and 20-24 year olds, and for the first time forecasting labor force trends for these two age cohorts to 2025. Most respondents to our community engagement felt the County was not balanced enough with good career opportunities, high end jobs, and competitive wages. As a result, the 2040 Plan includes, for the first time, goals

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that specifically commit to identifying reasons residents are commuting to jobs outside of the county through employer surveys and resident surveys. A new goal also commits to exploring opportunities to offer post-secondary educational opportunities within the County. Finally, the 2040 Plan recommends new areas in the County's rural areas for commercial or industrial development, which again is intended to tip the balance toward a more balanced mix of jobs desired by respondents in our community engagement efforts."

Jacob Grussing, Director of the Scott County Library on early childhood:

"The results of the comprehensive planning focus groups and pop-up engagement activities targeting families with young children provide helpful information about the supports those families need, the barriers they experience, and the community strengths they recognize. These results will inform Scott County Library's 2018-2019 business plan. While I was pleased that the library was recognized as an asset that supports families, it is clear we can build on our position in the community. Expanding evening and weekend programs, increasing awareness of existing library and partner organization programs, and engaging child care providers to help create literacy-rich environments are just a few of the opportunities the engagement results identified or affirmed."

Appendix A:

Community Engagement Questions

Questions for Community Engagement: Pop-ups and Online Surveys

Active Living

- **When you think about transportation and its relationship to physical activity, what barriers exist to being physically active?**
- **Is there an adequate system of trails and paths that allow for alternative modes of transportation (walking, bicycle, etc.) to occur throughout the city? How accessible are these options?**
- **When you think about active living in Scott County, what are the strong points? What could be improved upon?**

Careers

- **Within Scott County, what do you think about the balance between good career opportunities and being a good place to live?**
- **Do you feel there are professional growth opportunities where you work?**
- **Is there anything else you would like to tell us about finding or keeping work in Scott County? Is additional professional training in your future?**

Early Childhood

- **What kinds of support do families of young children need?**
- **Thinking about supporting children and families, what are your community's strengths?**
- **What are the barriers to educational success?**

Healthy Eating

- **Do you feel like the food you eat is healthy?**
- **When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?**
- **What could be improved upon?**

Housing

- **What do you see as the greatest housing need in Scott County?**
- **We've identified that 30% or less of your income to housing indicates a sustainable cost. What does affordable housing mean to you?**
- **What makes a good neighborhood?**

Parks & Trails

- **What prevents you from visiting regional, more natural resources based, parks?**
- **Do you have concerns about visiting regional county parks?**
- **What changes would you like to see made to make visiting regional county parks easier?**

Transportation

- **If you could design your perfect city, how would you like to get around and travel from place to place?**
- **What aspects of the transportation system work well for you?**
- **Describe current challenges you face with the transportation system?**

Questions for Community Engagement: Focus Groups

Esperanza – New Creation Church

Healthy Eating

- Do you feel like the food you eat is healthy?
- What makes it difficult to eat better?
- What inspires you to eat better?
- When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?
- What could be improved upon?
- What are the forces that could affect healthy eating in Scott County over the next 20 years?

Early Childhood

- What kinds of supports do families of young children need?
- Thinking about supporting children and families, what are your community's strengths?
- What are the barriers to educational success?

Career

- Are you currently working in Scott County?
- Within Scott County, what do you think about the balance between good career opportunities and being a good place to live?
- If you don't work in Scott County, do you look for work here?
- Do you feel there are professional growth opportunities where you work?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about finding or keeping work in Scott County?
- Is additional professional training in your future?

Scott County Historical Society

Parks and Trails

- What types of things prevents you from visiting regional parks?
- What types of activities are you interested in?
- Do you have concerns about visiting regional parks?
- What changes would you like to see made to make visiting regional parks easier?

Housing

- What do you see as the greatest housing need in Scott County?
- What does affordable housing mean to you?
- What makes a good neighborhood?

Early Childhood

- What kinds of support do families of young children need?
- Thinking about supporting children and families, what are your community's strengths?
- What are the barriers to educational successes?

Kingsway Retirement Facility

Transportation

- If you could design your perfect city how would you like to get around and travel from place to place?
- What aspects of the transportation system work well for you?

Healthy Eating

- When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?
- What could be improved upon?

CAPS Students

School & Education

- Have you ever skipped class? Why?
- Are you looking forward to or dreading senior year?
- Do you think Shakopee High School respects various cultures?
- What could be addressed/improved at Shakopee High School?
- How many adults do you trust to talk to at Shakopee High School?
- Do you think Shakopee High School should have an open campus?
- Are cell phones more of a distraction or good use at school?
- What advice would you give younger students coming in to high school?

Healthy Eating

- Do you feel like the food you eat is healthy?
- What makes it difficult to eat better?
- What inspires you to eat better?
- What does healthy eating mean to you?
- When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?
- What could be improved upon?

Career

- Could you see yourself working in Scott County after schooling?

Active Living

- How much physical activity do you get a week (in hours)?
- Are you as active as you would like to be?
- Are you able to make time for physical activity?
- What are the biggest barriers to living an active life?
- What aspects of your daily life could be more active?
- What types of intramurals would you like to see at Shakopee High School?

Tay Phuong Temple

Active Living

- When you think about transportation and its relationship to physical activity, what barriers exist to being physically active?
- Is there an adequate system of trails and path allows alternative modes of transportation (walking, bicycle, etc.) to occur throughout the city?
- How accessible are these options?
- When you think about active living in Scott County, what are the strong points?
- What could be improved upon?

Housing

- What do you see as the greatest housing need in Scott County?
- How have you compromised in finding adequate housing for your needs?
- What does affordable housing mean to you?
- We've identified that 30% or less of your income to housing indicates a sustainable cost, is that reasonable?
- What makes a good neighborhood?
- What factors are most important to you in choosing your current home?

4H Extension

Healthy Eating

- Do you feel like the food you eat is healthy?
- What inspires you to eat better?
- When you think about healthy eating in Scott County, what are the strong points?
- What could be improved upon?
- What are the forces that could affect healthy eating in Scott County over the next 20 years?

Parks and Trails

- What types of things prevent you from visiting regional parks?
- Regional parks typically have a more natural environment focus than city parks, does that interest you?
- What types of activities are you interested in?
- Do you have concerns about visiting regional parks?
- What changes would you like to see made to make visiting regional parks easier?

Active Living

- How much physical activity do you get in a week (in hours)?
- Are you as active as you would like to be?
- Are you able to make time for physical activity?
- What are the biggest barriers to living an active life?
- What aspects of your life could be more active?

Appendix B:

CAPS Student Analysis

2040 Comprehensive Plan

By: Neal Bhakta, Nasra Ismail, and Tommy
Nguyen



Objectives

- Influence adolescents to get involved with focus groups
- Implement ideas of what teens or adults find most important in Scott County
- Develop a teen survey
- Report on findings for all focus groups and general survey

Overview

Online/Paper Survey

- 1,271 responses
- 72 paper survey responses
- Students did not take it seriously
- Very vague answers
- Not as effective in getting responses to sensitive questions
- Paper Survey was given to Students and Adults

Focus Group

- 3 Focus Groups
- More honest
- Open-minded
- Dynamic environment

Focus Group Responses



Healthy Eating

- Common Themes
 - Did not feel like they were eating healthy
 - Difficult to eat better due to availability
 - Unhealthy foods taste better
 - “Healthy foods are too expensive”
 - “McChicken's are not only delicious, but cheaper”

Active Living

- Common Themes
 - Difficult to find time for physical activity
 - Stress
 - Motivation
 - “Simply not enough time for exercise”
 - “Sometimes I feel too lazy to exercise”

Housing

- Common Themes

- Housing too expensive in Scott County
- Safe neighborhoods
- “The only houses I see affordable is single-family homes in Shakopee”
- “Some homes are too expensive for no reason”

Career

- Common Themes:
- Not enough opportunities (healthcare)
- Exploring the world
- “Shakopee is a great community, but I rather stay away from home”
- “Scott County is growing, but I do not see much opportunities out of college”

Transportation

- Common Themes:
- Better roads
- Cheaper driver's education
- Lack of public transportation
- “Gas prices are too high for my blood”
- “Driver's education should not be \$370, it should be a free thing”

Parks & Trails

- What prevents you from visiting parks?
 - Time/Transportation
- What should we do with extra land?
 - More agriculture, mall, and nature preserves
- Common Theme:
 - Need to improve a new system of trails
- “We need to expand more trails throughout neighborhoods”

Strengths & Weaknesses

Strengths

- Very diverse
- Many health clubs (YMCA, Community Center)
- Lots of parks & trails

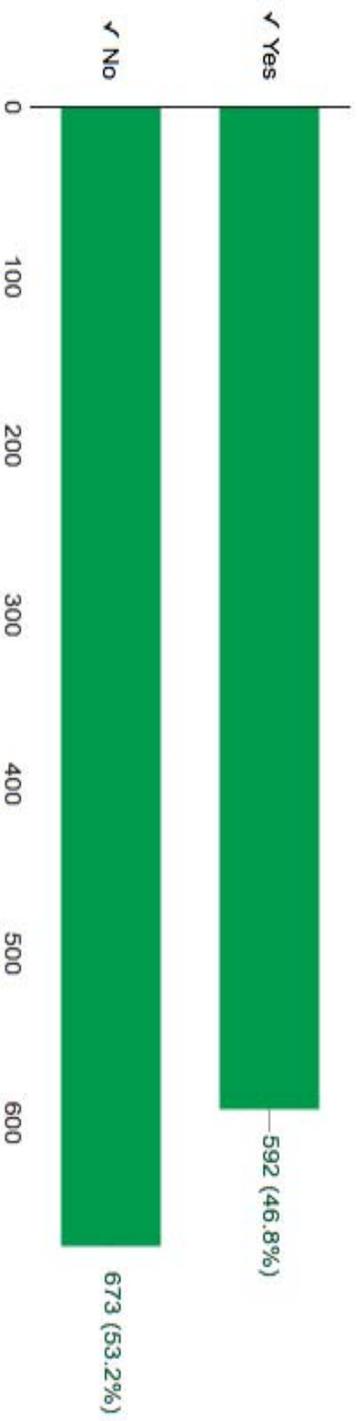
Weaknesses

- Little career opportunities
- Cost of health clubs - not enough to incentivize teens
- Interaction between students and teachers – need to strengthen relationships

Online Responses

Are you as active as you would like to be?

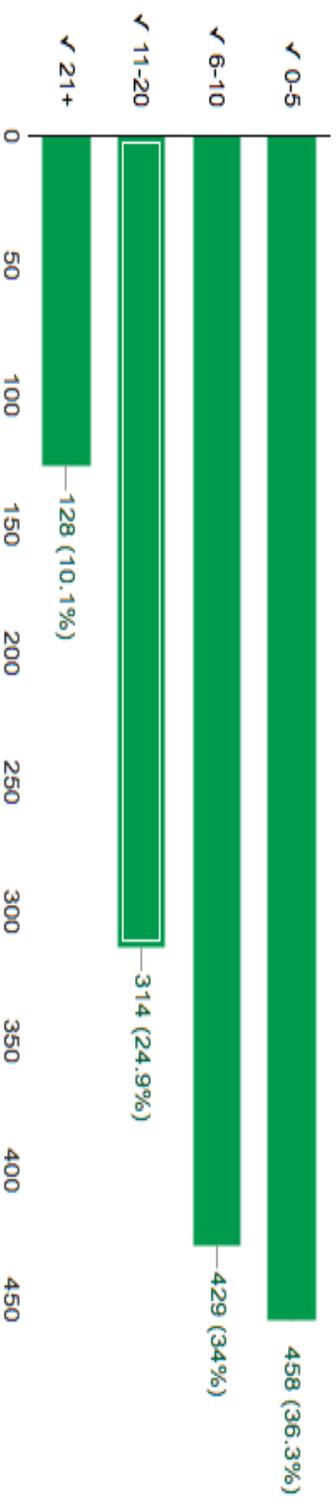
1265 / 1265 correct responses



Online Responses

How much physical activity do you get a week (in hours)?

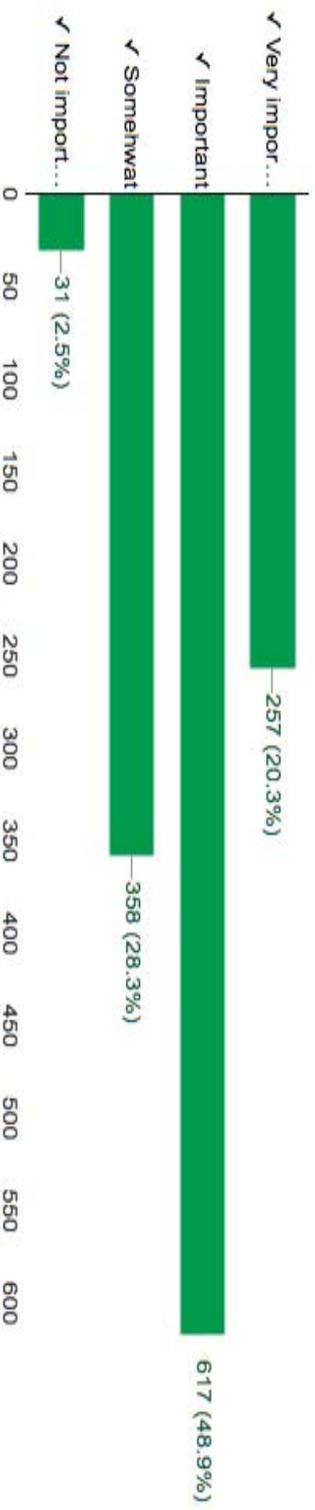
1 / 1262 correct responses



Online Responses

How important is it to you to eat healthy?

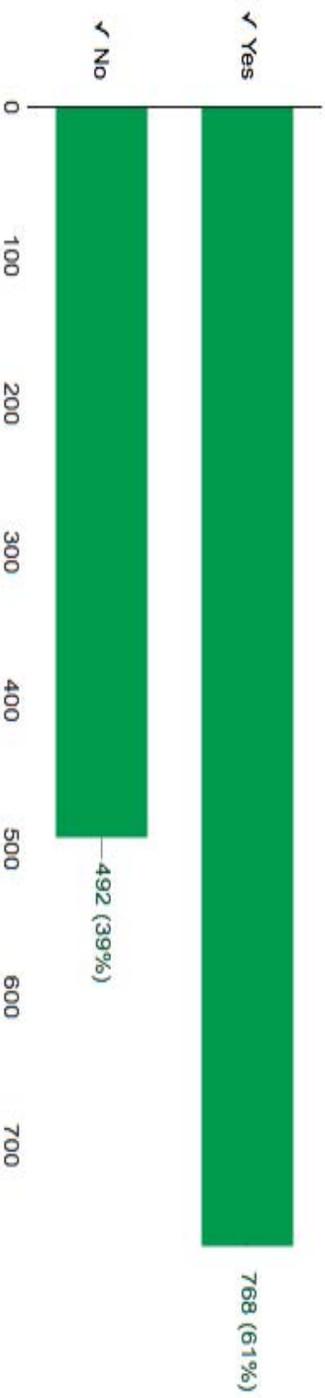
1263 / 1263 correct responses



Online Responses

Are you concerned where your food comes from?

1260 / 1260 correct responses



Main Themes to Open Ended Questions

- What Does healthy eating mean to you?
- Balanced Diet
- What makes a good neighborhood?
- People, Low crime rate, parks
- What do you think Shakopee should do with their extra land?
- Farming, business, parks, and mall
- Challenges with transportation?
- None or lack of public transportation, no car,
- Perfect city?
- Walking, bikes, cars, and public transportation

Paper Surveys Common Themes

Housing

- What makes a neighborhood?
 - Generous people/Clean
 - Low crime rate
- What does affordable housing mean to you?
 - Necessary commodities

Career

- Could you see yourself coming back and working in Scott county?
 - Participants from focus group all reported, “No” due to the lack of training and little growth

Paper Surveys Common Themes

Transportation

- What aspects of the transportation work well for you?
 - Many nearby highways
- Do you have access to a car?
 - All students said, “Yes”

Parks and Trails

- What prevents you from visiting parks?
 - Time/Transportation
- What should we do with extra land?
 - More agriculture, mall, and nature preserves

