

CITY OF
BLOOMINGTON
CITY COUNCIL -
SPECIAL SESSION
MEETING
NOVEMBER 18, 2024



COMPONENTS OF THE COUNCIL AGENDA

RECOGNITION AND PROCLAMATION

This portion of the meeting recognizes individuals, groups, or institutions publicly, as well as those receiving a proclamation, or declaring a day or event.

PUBLIC HEARING

Items that require receiving public testimony will be placed on the agenda and noticed as a Public Hearing. Individuals have an opportunity to provide public testimony on those items that impact the community and/or residence.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Each City Council meeting shall have a public comment period not to exceed 30 minutes. Every speaker is allotted up to 3 minutes to speak. Individuals wishing to email public comment or speak remotely must email comments and/or register online at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. Individuals wishing to speak in-person must register up to 5 minutes before the start of the meeting. Speakers will be selected at random. Public comment is a time to provide feedback. City Council does not respond to public comment. Speakers who engage in threatening or disorderly behavior will have their time ceased.

CONSENT AGENDA

All items under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine in nature and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council Member, City Manager or Corporation Counsel so requests; in which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in the Regular Agenda, which typically begins with Item No. 8.

The City's Boards and Commissions hold Public Hearings prior to some Council agenda items appearing on the Council's Meeting Agenda. Persons who wish to address the Council should provide new information that is pertinent to the issue before them.

REGULAR AGENDA

All items that provide the Council an opportunity to receive a presentation, ask questions of City Staff, seek additional information, or deliberate prior to making a decision will be placed on the Regular Agenda.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor - Mboka Mwilambwe

City Council Members

Ward 1 - Jenna Kearns
Ward 2 - Donna Boelen
Ward 3 - Sheila Montney
Ward 4 - John Danenberger
Ward 5 - Nick Becker
Ward 6 - Cody Hendricks
Ward 7 - Mollie Ward
Ward 8 - Kent Lee
Ward 9 - Tom Crumpler

City Manager - Jeff Jurgens

Sr. Deputy City Manager - Billy Tyus

Deputy City Manager - Sue McLaughlin

CITY LOGO DESIGN RATIONALE

The **CHEVRON** Represents: Service, Rank, and Authority Growth and Diversity A Friendly and Safe Community A Positive, Upward Movement and Commitment to Excellence!

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUE STATEMENT

MISSION

To Lead, Serve and Uplift the City of Bloomington

VISION

A Jewel of the Midwest Cities

VALUES

Service-Centered, Results-Driven, Inclusive

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

- Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services
- Upgrade City Infrastructure and Facilities Grow the Local Economy
- Strong Neighborhoods
- Great Place - Livable, Sustainable City
- Prosperous Downtown Bloomington



**CITY COUNCIL - SPECIAL SESSION MEETING AGENDA
GOVERNMENT CENTER BOARDROOM, 4TH FLOOR, ROOM #400
115 E. WASHINGTON STREET, BLOOMINGTON, IL 61701
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2024, 6:00 PM**

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
3. Remain Standing for a Moment of Silent Prayer and/or Reflection
4. Roll Call
5. Recognition/Appointments
6. Public Comment

Individuals wishing to provide emailed public comment must email comments to publiccomment@cityblm.org at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. Individuals wishing to speak in-person or remotely may register at www.cityblm.org/register at least 5 minutes before the start of the meeting for in-person public comment and at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting for remote public comment.

7. Consent Agenda

Items listed on the Consent Agenda are approved with one motion; Items pulled by Council from the Consent Agenda for discussion are listed and voted on separately.

8. Regular Agenda

- A. Presentation on the 2025-2029 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan Outreach Efforts and Preliminary Goals, as requested by the Economic & Community Development Department. *(Recommended Motion: None; presentation only.) (Presentation by Melissa Hon, Economic & Community Development Director; William Bessler, Grants Manager, 20 minutes; and City Council Discussion, 10 minutes.)*
- B. Consideration and Action on Approving the 2024 Tax Levy Estimate for the City of Bloomington, as requested by the Finance Department. *(Recommended Motion: The proposed Property Tax Levy Estimate be approved in the amount of \$26,320,384.) (Presentation by Jeff Jurgens, City Manager; and Scott Rathbun, Finance Director, 15 minutes; and City Council Discussion, 20 minutes.)*
- C. Consideration and Action on Approving the 2024 Tax Levy Estimate for the Bloomington Public Library, as requested by the Bloomington Public Library. *(Recommended Motion: The proposed Tax Levy Estimate be approved in the amount of \$6,827,275.) (Presentation by Jeff Jurgens, City Manager; Scott Rathbun, Finance Director; and Jeanne Hamilton, Library Director, 5 minutes; and City Council*

Discussion, 15 minutes.)

- 9. City Manager's Discussion**
- 10. Mayor's Discussion**
- 11. Council Member's Discussion**
- 12. Executive Session**
- 13. Adjournment**

Individuals with disabilities planning to attend the meeting who require reasonable accommodations to observe and/or participate, or who have questions about the accessibility of the meeting, should contact the City's ADA Coordinator at 309-434-2468 mhurt@cityblm.org.



REGULAR AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.A.

FOR COUNCIL: November 18, 2024

WARD IMPACTED: City-Wide Impact

SUBJECT: Presentation on the 2025-2029 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan Outreach Efforts and Preliminary Goals, as requested by the Economic & Community Development Department.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: None; presentation only.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK:
Goal 4. Strong Neighborhoods

STRATEGIC PLAN SIGNIFICANCE:
Objective 4b. Upgraded quality of older housing stock
Objective 4c. Preservation of property/home valuations
Objective 4d. Improved neighborhood infrastructure

BACKGROUND: The City is an entitlement grantee for the Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"). Established through the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, the CDBG Program provides annual grants on a formula basis to states, cities, and counties to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low-to-moderate income persons. CDBG funding must meet one of three national objectives: benefiting low-to-moderate income persons, preventing or eliminating slums or blight, and meeting urgent community needs.

Every five years the City must develop a Consolidated Plan to assess affordable housing, community development needs, and market conditions to make data-driven, place-based spending decisions for CDBG funds. Each Consolidated Plan outlines the outreach process that was used to gather input and feedback from community members. Consolidated Plans are a requirement for CDBG funding per regulations found in 24 CFR Part 91.

The Consolidated Plan process is a joint effort between the City, Town of Normal, and McLean County Regional Planning Commission ("MCRPC"). Additional community stakeholder representatives participated in the steering committee that has guided the planning process. Both the City and Town of Normal must complete a separate Consolidated Plan for each community. However, the bulk of the data analysis and community outreach is completed at a regional level. Planning for the Consolidated Plan began in Fall 2023 and will continue throughout the development and submission of the Consolidated Plan for the City and the Town of Normal. Data analysis is primarily completed by MCRPC with guidance from City and Town staff. Sections of the Consolidated Plan for goals and spending are completed by City staff. Before the outreach process began, the steering committee developed and executed changes to the City's CDBG Citizen Participation Plan that was approved by Council (Resolution 2024-009).

The outreach process began in April 2024 with the launch of the resident survey, which allowed residents to state their priorities for CDBG spending from 2025-2029. Over 1,400 Bloomington residents completed the survey, which was a 181% increase in participation from the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan resident survey. Marketing of the survey was completed with the following actions:

- Staff Representation at Community Events (23 events in the City with 76.5 hours of dedicated staff time)
- Social Media Posts on City Channels
- Paid Social Media Advertisements in the 61701 ZIP Code
- Flyer Distribution in Public Locations
- Media Coverage (WGLT, Pantagraph)
- Program Partner Outreach
- Mailings and Emails to Public Housing Residents and Housing Choice Voucher Recipients
- Postcard Mailings to Residents in Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Properties (LIHTC)
- Peace Meal Lunches at Woodhill Towers and Phoenix Towers

Public forums were also held to gather resident input on the use of CDBG funds. In-person and virtual public forums were held to solicit resident feedback in a more detailed manner than a survey. In addition to the resident survey and public forums, seven stakeholder focus groups were held to gain additional insights from service providers on the needs of the people they serve and how CDBG could be used to address those needs. The seven stakeholder groups included: homeless and housing non-profit providers, infrastructure and climate resiliency, lenders and developers, social service and healthcare providers, major employers and economic development, rental owners, and college students. Key informant interviews were held to fill in any data gaps or to achieve further understanding of community needs in September and October 2024. Census and HUD data provided the final component of a comprehensive data gathering and analysis process to determine priorities and spending decisions.

The full draft Consolidated Plan is scheduled for release in January 2025 to gather public input via the public comment process within the Citizen Participation Plan. To ensure that HUD Consolidated Plan submission guidelines are met, the plan must be submitted by mid-March 2025. Meeting this deadline will require the City to deploy the Request for Proposal (RFP) in November 2024. The RFP will enable organizations to apply for CDBG funding under the public service and public facility & infrastructure partner program applications. A competitive application process helps ensure the City stays in compliance with Federal regulations and funds are spent in a reason-based, data-driven manner.

COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED: The 2025-2029 CDBG Consolidated Plan saw extensive community outreach activities designed to gather resident feedback on CDBG priorities for the next five-year period.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

Respectfully submitted for consideration.

Prepared by: William Bessler, Grant Coordinator

ATTACHMENTS:

[E&CD 1C Draft CDBG 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan Outreach Analysis Report](#)

[E&CD 1B Draft CDBG 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan Data Analysis Report](#)



2025-2029

Consolidated Plan Public Outreach Analysis

ABOUT

The Consolidated Plan Process



Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement communities must develop a five-year Consolidated Plan to assess affordable housing, community development needs, and market conditions to make data-driven, place-based spending decisions for CDBG funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Consolidated Plan sets spending priorities and goals for a five-year period and is a foundational document for community development efforts beyond the CDBG program.

The City of Bloomington and Town of Normal formed a steering committee with the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC), Housing Authority of the City of Bloomington, and Providing Access to Help (PATH) to develop the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan. The joint consolidated planning outreach process began in the fall of 2023 with updates to the joint Citizen Participation Plan the community outreach and engagement kicked off on April 2, 2024, and continued through August 2024. While each entitlement community receives separate funding allocations and submits individual plans, conducting the outreach and planning process jointly is a more effective use of resources to identify any regional housing and community development priorities.

Plan Partners



Where Community Members Could Find Information on the Planning Process

Staff from the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, and McLean County Regional Planning Commission utilized different methods to collect input from the respective communities on the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan funding priorities. Outreach efforts targeted both the general community, and specific populations such as low-and-moderate-income residents, renters, and black, indigenous, people of color. Information on the planning process and how residents could participate was also available in several methods to reach as many people as possible.

Citizen Participation Plan

Entitlement communities are required by law to adopt a detailed CDBG Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) containing the policies and procedures for stakeholder consultation and public engagement to develop the five-year Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report. This is required by regulations found at 24

CFR 91.105. The first step in the Consolidated Plan outreach process was to review and revise the City and Town the joint CPP. Revising the CPP first provided both communities with an updated baseline to guide the planning process.

The steering committee revised the plan to reflect the changed environment post the COVID-19 Pandemic. For instance, language allowing virtual public meetings under certain conditions was included. Additional modifications to the CPP were made to enhance accessibility and simplify sections to making the document easier for residents of both communities to understand. The Normal Town Council approved the updates on February 19, 2024, with Resolution 6215. The Bloomington City Council approved the changes to the CPP in April 2024 with Resolution 2024-009.

Website

Another critical step in the Consolidated Plan outreach process was to create a page on the MCRPC website dedicated to everything CDBG Consolidated Plan. The web page hosted a variety of information, including the current state of the process, an explanation of the CDBG program and CDBG eligible activities, links to the online version of the resident survey in all languages, and the location of resident survey drop-off boxes. The City of Bloomington also posted this information on the City CDBG Public Notices Page. The Town utilized the Normal Forum website to further promote the Consolidated Plan outreach efforts.

Resident Survey

Community members were provided the opportunity to give feedback through a brief resident survey. The primary opportunity community members had to give feedback was through a brief resident survey. This survey would be the primary method of data collection for the Consolidated Plan. The resident survey used for the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan was modified slightly for the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan outreach. Small adjustments were made to reflect the different environment and improve clarity. The steering committee decided to keep the survey as similar as possible to the 2020-2024 plan version for comparative analysis. ^[1]_{SEP}

The Resident Survey (See the Appendix) comprised of open-ended and

multiple-choice questions. The open-ended questions asked residents to rank the three most important public facility & infrastructure and public service projects, and which neighborhoods should be targeted with the funding. Finally, the survey asked a series of demographic questions to provide a picture of who was responding to the survey.

The survey was made available in both paper and digital (Jot form) formats in English, Spanish, and French. Paper survey opportunities also provided older residents or community members with limited access to the internet an opportunity to participate in the process. Copies of the surveys and drop boxes were made available at twenty-three locations throughout Bloomington and Normal. This provided an opportunity for residents to complete the survey while waiting for services. The paper survey also included a QR code linked to the electronic survey. This proved helpful at outreach events when residents were interested in taking the survey but didn't have time to complete it right then. The majority of the survey responses were submitted electronically.

Outreach Events

Community events provided opportunities to reach residents from different backgrounds and gather feedback from historically marginalized communities. MCRPC, City of Bloomington, and Town of Normal staff attended over 25 events to engage directly with residents from both communities. Paper surveys and the link to the electronic survey were made available to residents. The in-person events offered an opportunity for staff to provide additional information about CDBG and the consolidated planning process.

Events included the Downtown Bloomington Farmers' Market (5 times), McLean County Chamber of Commerce Business Before Hours, April Downtown Bloomington First Friday, Bloomington Parks Family Day, Phoenix Towers & Wood Hills Peace Meals Lunch, Festival ISU, parent pick-up at Unity Community Center, Bloomington Coffee with a Cop, Pridefest, Holi Moli Festival, Sweet Corn Circus (2 days), Cruisin' Uptown, McLean County Fair (4 days), Juneteenth Celebration at Miller Park, City & County Health Fair, and Back to School Alliance Backpack pick-up.

The survey was open to any resident of Bloomington or Normal, but special efforts were taken to reach low-to-moderate-income populations, as they are the intended beneficiaries of CDBG funds.

Public Forums

While the survey allowed residents to voice their opinions via open-ended and multiple-choice questions, public meetings allowed residents to interact directly with City, Town, and MCRPC staff to expand further on the needs and priorities they see in their neighborhoods. Additionally, the public meetings allowed staff to discuss the purpose and intent of the CDBG program and explain some of the restrictions of the funds. People could attend either virtually or in person in their respective communities.

Attendance Figures (does not include staff):

- In-Person (Bloomington)- 22
- In-Person (Normal) - 10
- Virtual: 25 total - (Bloomington 16, Normal 9)

City and Town staff gave a brief overview of the CDBG program. Then in-person meeting attendees participated in a resource allocation activity designed to reflect the funding restrictions associated with CDBG. With a fictional \$80 representing a year's CDBG allocation, attendees were asked to distribute that money in \$5 increments between public services, public facilities and infrastructure, and housing activities as these categories broadly reflect the eligible funding categories designated by HUD for the CDBG program. Spending was restricted to only \$80 to signify that 20%, or \$20 in this case, can be reserved for administrative expenses. Participants could only spend \$15 on public service activities to remain in line with the 15% cap on public service activities.

Once the results were tallied, attendees were asked to share why they selected the resources as they did. While many of the issues identified as priorities in the resident survey rose to the top again, the differences became clearer when the resources were limited. Additionally, some issues not listed in the survey or allocation activity were identified as needs. This provided valuable insight during the data analysis portion of the planning process.

Like the in-person forms, virtual forum attendees received an introduction to the CDBG program. Then program attendees were split into breakout rooms for their community where they were asked to give input on the public services, public infrastructure and housing needs in the community.

Once the needs were discussed, the participants were asked to provide their top three priorities for each category. Lastly, the City and Town staff asked how they could assist not-for-profit organizations. Below is a word cloud from one of the virtual breakout sessions. This

real-time interaction was supported by Menti.

What are the housing needs in our community?

32 responses



Stakeholder Focus Groups

Focus groups were held to gain additional insights from stakeholders on the needs of the people they serve and how CDBG funds could be used to address those needs. Seven different focus groups included:

1. Homeless & Housing Non-Profit Providers
2. Infrastructure & Climate Resiliency Experts
3. Lenders, Housing Developers & Realtors
4. Social Service and Healthcare Providers
5. Major Employers & Economic Development Professionals
6. Rental Property Owners
7. College Students



Not including staff, a total of 56 stakeholders attended the focus groups. Staff gave a brief overview of the CDBG program and outlined the uses of CDBG funds in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for both communities. MCRPC staff then led a discussion based on questions designed to discover what stakeholders believed were the greatest needs for their organization and clients/customers and how CDBG funding could address those needs with consideration of the restrictions outlined at the beginning of the meeting. While the discussions between the focus groups differed somewhat due to their topical nature, several common threads arose:

- Housing is a diverse issue and includes a variety of areas such as increasing housing diversity, creating affordable housing, preserving and rehabilitating existing housing stock, and creating subsidies for lowering housing costs such as rent, utilities, and down payment.

- Infrastructure needs were a nearly constant theme throughout the focus groups. Some examples are tree planting and landscaping neighborhoods, creating pedestrian islands on busy streets, repairing streets and sidewalks, and adding bike lanes.
- Organizational support in the form of additional funding to meet challenges. Focus groups universally stated that Federal and State funding was insufficient to meet local demand or needs.
- Transportation was also mentioned frequently as a barrier for low- and moderate-income residents.
- Homeless services and the need for additional resources for homeless residents were needs described in several focus groups.

One-on-One Key Informant Interviews

After the resident surveys closed, public events ended, and focus groups were completed, the steering committee determined additional areas they needed more information or clarification.^[1]

Staff completed the interviews, virtually or via email with questions developed by the Steering Committee. The following key informant interviews were completed:

- Information Technology/Broadband Access
- Public Transportation
- Child Care

Other Outreach Activities

In addition to attending meetings and events, City, Town, and MCRPC staff worked with community partners and local media to help spread the word about the Consolidated Plan and resident survey. During the public outreach phase, staff used several methods to reach different types of residents. The Resident Survey would not have been nearly as successful without the help of partner organizations.

- Staff gave radio interviews on a local public radio station (WGLT) to provide information on how the public could get involved in the outreach process. Coverage from a local TV station (WEEK) and newspapers (The Normalite and Pantagraph) also helped increase the visibility of the efforts.
- The City, Town, and MCRPC also used their



social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, NextDoor, GovDelivery, Constant Contact) to promote the survey and outreach process.

- The City created Facebook advertisements to promote the survey to residents in the 61701 zip code.
- The Town utilized its Normal Now newsletter and Normal Forum pages to target Normal Residents
- The Bloomington Mayor proclaimed at a public City Council meeting to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the CDBG program and encouraged residents to complete the survey. He also proclaimed at a different City Council meeting that April 2024 was Fair Housing Month in the City. Prairie State Legal Services discussed the importance of Fair Housing while the resident survey was launched. Meetings are accessible to residents with disabilities and non-English speaking residents.
- The Bloomington City Council included survey information on City Council slides available during public City Council meetings. Meetings are accessible to residents with disabilities and non-English speaking residents.
- The City and the Town sent a postcard mailer to Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units in Bloomington and Normal to encourage residents to take the survey. The mailer included a QR code linked to the survey online.
- Normal mailed postcards to randomly selected addresses for all the HUD Qualified Census Tracts. 2400 postcards were mailed in total.
- Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church on Bloomington's West Side is one of the community's largest congregations. The church helped the City and Town distribute the resident survey to its parishioners and other predominately Black congregations in Bloomington-Normal.
- All three local universities (ISU, IWU, and Heartland Community College) promoted the survey to their student bodies; both school districts (Unit 5 and District 87) sent emails to all parents and guardians, and PATH featured

the survey multiple times in their social service newsletter, the PATH-O-Gram. Other community organizations serving low-and-moderate-income residents including the McLean County Health Department WIC program, Mid-Central Community Action, Western Avenue Community Center, West Bloomington Revitalization Project, and Chestnut Health Care promoted the survey through email and social media.

- The Housing Authority of the City of Bloomington included a copy of the survey in each June 2024 rent statement to public housing residents in Bloomington. They emailed housing choice voucher holders information about the resident survey and a link to take it.



Outreach Results and Next Steps

The outreach process resulted in over 2,100 community members from Bloomington (1,408) and Normal (700) completing the resident survey. This far outpaced the efforts from the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan where 1,210 Bloomington-Normal residents completed the resident survey. The data and information gathered during the outreach process will be used to complete the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan. Data analysis began in September 2024 and will continue through January 2025. Draft Consolidated Plans for both communities will be available for public comment and review in January or February 2025. Plans will be submitted to HUD no sooner than February 2025.



Images from the events:





For questions or comments, contact us.

Regional Planning
www.mcplan.org
 309-828-4331
 Email: mcrpc@mcplan.org

City of Bloomington
www.bloomingtonil.gov
 309-434-2343
wbessler@cityblm.org

Town of Normal
www.normalil.gov
 309-454-9766
jtoney@normalil.gov

Appendix

Sample Social Media Graphics



**CDBG CONSOLIDATED
PLAN FORUMS**
JUNE 26, 2024

ONLINE



**12 PM JOINT CITY &
TOWN FORUM**

IN-PERSON



**5:30 PM
BLOOMINGTON
LIBRARY
COMMUNITY ROOM**

City of Bloomington ILLINOIS
Consolidated
PLAN RESIDENT
FORUM

Join us for this public forum
to provide your input on
future Bloomington CDBG
funding priorities.

JUNE 26, 2024

5:30 - 7:00 PM
BLOOMINGTON
LIBRARY COMMUNITY
ROOM

Register by 6/25/24
Email cdunlap@cityblm.org to register



**2025-2029 Consolidated Plan
Virtual Resident
Forum**

Join Staff from the City of
Bloomington & Town of
Normal to provide your
input on CDBG funding
priorities.

June 26, 2024

12:00 - 1:30 PM

Please register by emailing
MAdams@mcplan.org by 6/25/24



**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT**



2025-2029 Consolidated Plan Resident Survey

**Take the
survey here**



**YOUR INPUT HELPS SHAPE FUTURE CITY
CDBG SPENDING PRIORITIES**

Data Analysis

In-Person Public Forum

For the first time, both in-person and virtual meetings were held. The City and Town held separate in-person forums and worked with the McLean County Regional Planning Commission to host a virtual meeting.

In-person meeting attendees participated in a resource allocation activity to reflect the funding restrictions associated with CDBG. With a fictional \$100 representing a year's CDBG allocation, attendees were asked to distribute that money in \$5 increments between Housing, Public Services, and Public Facilities and Improvements. These categories broadly reflected the eligible funding categories designated by HUD for the CDBG program. Each person received three blue dots and 13 red dots. Participants were asked to allocate the blue dots to different Public Services efforts. By limiting the allocation to \$15, attendees could understand that a maximum of 15% of a yearly CDBG allocation can be used for Public Services. Participants were then asked to allocate the red dots (\$65) to a choice of Public Facilities and Improvements and Housing activities. By limiting the total allocation to \$80, attendees were made aware that up to 20% of the yearly allocation can be used for planning and administrative costs. The results of the exercise for both communities are above.

After the resource exercise, attendees shared their thoughts behind some of their votes with City and Town staff. Housing and infrastructure were major themes in the Bloomington and Normal in-person sessions.

Housing Rehabilitation	Bloomington	Normal
Housing Rehabilitation	39 votes	13 votes
Public Housing Modernization	33 votes	0 votes
Demolition of Dilapidated Structures	24 votes	8 votes
Accessibility Improvements	11 votes	5 votes
Public Service		
Child Care	9 votes	3 votes
Homeless Services	9 votes	6 votes

Senior Services	8 votes	0 votes
Fair Housing Services	7 votes	0 votes
Youth Services	7 votes	0 votes
Mental Health Services	6 votes	2 votes
Food Insecurity	5 votes	1 vote
Transportation Services	4 votes	0 votes
Formerly Incarcerated Services	4 votes	2 votes
Disability Services	3 votes	1 vote
Crime Prevention/Awareness	2 votes	0 votes
Health Services	2 votes	1 vote
Community/Recreation Centers	1 vote	0 votes
Job Training/Workforce Development	1 vote	0 votes
Substance Abuse Services	0 votes	0 votes

Public Facilities & Infrastructure

Sidewalk/Street Improvements	35 votes	8 votes
Homeless Facilities/Shelters	27 votes	21 votes
Water/Sewer Improvements	25 votes	8 votes
Community/Recreation Centers	19 votes	2 votes
Accessibility Improvements	13 votes	5 votes
Bus Facility Improvements	13 votes	0 votes
Public Parks/Trails/ Open Spaces	13 votes	4 votes
Medical Facilities	8 votes	3 votes
Electric Vehicle Charging	8 votes	1 vote
Libraries	7 votes	5 votes
Fire Stations	5 votes	0 votes
Police Substations	5 votes	0 votes

Please tell us about yourself!

Do you currently live in Bloomington or Normal?

☐ Bloomington ☐ Normal ☐ Neither

How long have you lived in your community?

☐ Less than 2 years ☐ 2-5 years
☐ 6-15 years ☐ 16-25 years
☐ More than 25 years ☐ Born and raised here

Age

Gender

☐ 18-24 ☐ Male
☐ 25-34 ☐ Female
☐ 35-44 ☐ Transgender
☐ 45-54 ☐ Non-Binary
☐ 55-64 ☐ Other
☐ 65+ ☐ Prefer not to answer

Race (Check all that apply)

☐ American Indian or Native Alaskan
☐ African American/Black
☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
☐ Asian ☐ White ☐ Multi-Racial
☐ Other ☐ Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity

☐ Latino/Hispanic
☐ Non-Latino/Hispanic
☐ Do you consider English as your second language? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Highest Level of Education Completed

☐ No High School Diploma or GED
☐ High School Diploma or GED
☐ Trade/Technical School
☐ Some College ☐ Bachelor's Degree
☐ Graduate Degree ☐ Other

Household Income (All income sources)

☐ Under \$25,000 ☐ \$25,000-\$49,999
☐ \$50,000-\$74,999 ☐ \$75,000-\$99,999
☐ \$100,000-\$124,999 ☐ \$125,000-\$149,999
☐ \$150,000-\$174,999 ☐ Over \$175,000

Housing Status (Where you currently live)

☐ Own home ☐ Rental unit
☐ With family/friends ☐ Unhoused
☐ In a Congregate Housing Setting (Nursing Home/Shelter/Group Home/Dorm)

Household Size (People)

☐ 1-2 ☐ 3-5 ☐ 6+

How to submit your survey:

By Mail:

McLean County Regional Planning Commission
115 E. Washington Street, Suite M-103
Bloomington, IL 61701

Drop-off Locations:

For a complete list of survey drop-off locations, call MCRPC at **309-828-4331** or visit **mcplan.org**

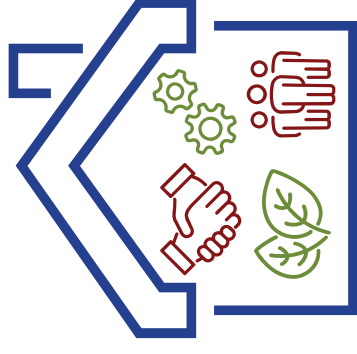
Electronic:

Visit **mcplan.org** or scan the QR Code below.



Participation is voluntary and responses are confidential. Surveys must be submitted by **Aug. 31, 2024**.

Want to provide input at an in-person meeting or virtual meeting? Visit **mcplan.org** for public meeting dates and locations.



**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT**

City of Bloomington
Town of Normal

RESIDENT SURVEY
for community development

2025-2029 Consolidated Plan



Each year, Bloomington-Normal receives about \$1 million in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. These funds can be used for eligible activities in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities, public services and planning/administration. All funded activities must meet one of the following national objectives:

- Assisting low- and moderate-income households
- Eliminating or preventing conditions of blight
- Responding to an urgent need

This survey helps provide insight on what is important to our community and informs local governments on how to best allocate grant dollars over the next five years.

Housing

Are you able to easily find safe, sanitary, and affordable housing in your community?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Approximately how much does your household spend on monthly housing costs (mortgage/rent/utilities/taxes/insurance/etc.)? *Do not include other monthly expenses such as food, gas, child care.*

- ☐ Less than \$500 ☐ \$500-\$749
☐ \$750-\$999 ☐ \$1,000-\$1,249
☐ \$1,250-\$1,499 ☐ \$1,500-\$1,749
☐ \$1,750-\$1,999 ☐ \$2,000-\$2,249
☐ \$2,500-\$2,749 ☐ \$2,750-\$2,999
☐ Over \$3,000

Would you be able to cover three or more months of household expenses in an emergency?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is your current housing unit in need of repairs or improvements?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how would you describe the housing repair need? *(Check one)*

- ☐ Minor ☐ Moderate ☐ Substantial

Public Facilities

What type of public facility or infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Accessibility Improvements
☐ Bus Facility Improvements
☐ Community/Recreation Centers
☐ Demolition of Dilapidated Structures
☐ Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
☐ Fire Stations
☐ Homeless Facilities/Shelters
☐ Housing Rehabilitation
☐ Libraries
☐ Medical Facilities
☐ Police Substations
☐ Public Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces
☐ Street/Sidewalk Improvements
☐ Water/Sewer Improvements
☐ Other *(Please specify below):*

Of those marked above, pick the three most important to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Public Services

What type of public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Child Care Services
☐ Crime Prevention/Awareness
☐ Community/Recreation Centers
☐ Disability Services
☐ Fair Housing Services
☐ Food Insecurity
☐ Health Services
☐ Homeless Services
☐ Job Training/Workforce Development
☐ Mental Health Services
☐ Senior Services
☐ Services for the Formerly Incarcerated
☐ Substance Abuse Services
☐ Transportation Services
☐ Youth Services
☐ Other *(Please specify below):*

Of those marked above, pick the three most important to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are there specific neighborhoods or areas within your community that should be targeted for revitalization?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of the neighborhood or describe the area.





Draft City of Bloomington 2024 Outreach Data Analysis Report: CDBG 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan



Report By: Mark Adams, MCRPC Community Planner

UPDATED OCTOBER 25, 2024

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Introduction

McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC), the City of Bloomington (City), Town of Normal (Town), Housing Authority of the City of Bloomington, and PATH staff initiated the public outreach process for the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan with the Resident Survey, which was open between April 1, 2024, and September 1, 2024. Residents completed the survey via online (JotForm survey), paper copy, or by phone. Surveys were available in English, Spanish, and French translations. Paper surveys were dropped off at MCRPC, City of Bloomington, or Town of Normal offices, and over fifteen separate locations including West Bloomington Revitalization Project, Mid Central Community Action, Normal Township Office, and Home Sweet Home Ministries. Overall, a total of 2,108 Bloomington-Normal residents responded to the Survey, with 1,408 surveys from Bloomington, and 700 from Normal. Nineteen responses were removed from the final sample, since those responses were from individuals residing outside of Bloomington.

During the same time as the survey, MCRPC collaborated with the City and Town staff to facilitate a virtual joint Public Forum over Zoom, and an in-person Public Forum for each Bloomington and Normal between June and July 2024. In addition, MCRPC, City, Town and PATH staff facilitated seven stakeholders focus group workshops in August 2024, which included Homeless and Housing Non-Profits, Infrastructure and Climate Resiliency, Lenders/Developers and Realtors, Social Services and Healthcare Providers, Economic Development and Major Employers, Landlords, and College Students. The City and Town conducted separate 1:1 interviews with Connect Transit, the Town of Normal Innovation and Technology Department & City of Bloomington Information Technology Department, and the Childcare Resource and Referral Network in September and October 2024.

Data Coding Methodology for Resident Survey

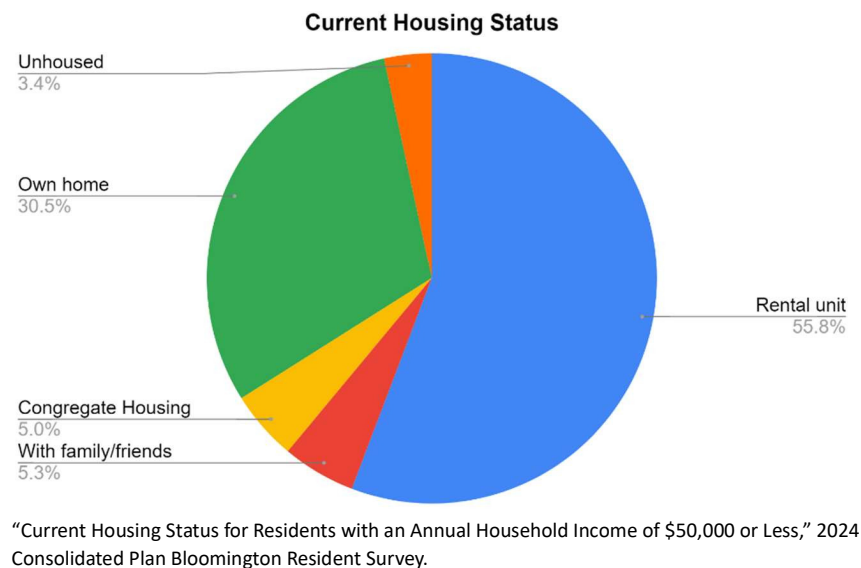
In terms data coding for analysis, MCRPC discovered that several survey answers required spelling and grammar corrections and consolidations to choices that aligned with those provided in the survey. For example, several respondents entered “street improvement” alone, which was thus coded as “Street and Sidewalk.” “Housing” under Services was coded as “Fair Housing,” since it was the only choice that matched those that were provided in the survey. Usable quotes were extrapolated from the original responses, including the top three most frequent public facility and services. Hence, mode was the most common type of descriptive statistics used for consistency purposes. Since the data collected included open-ended and not scales of measurement, mode remained the most logical choice. Median and mean were not applicable due to the lack of scales of measurement stemming from the survey questions. “Affordable Housing” emerged repeatedly in the survey responses, which connected to certain choices in the survey- for example, Housing Rehabilitation, Homeless Facilities, Homeless Services, and Fair Housing services respectively.

Also, approximately twenty respondents selected more than three responses when asked to pick the “three most important to you” under the public infrastructure and public service sections, and thus MCRPC counted the first three on the respondent’s list. Several respondents only listed one or two responses for the “three most important to you” question only listed one or two responses. Roughly twenty respondents repeated their top three choices to emphasize it, so MCRPC only counted that response as one (ex. Streets/Sidewalks) rather than the number of times that word was counted in total. If the respondent did not select any of the choices for the public facility or service questions but wrote in an activity for the ranking of the three most important, their responses were included regardless. It is also worth noting that sample sizes varied between each of the questions since many respondent(s) chose to not answer certain questions.

Key Findings from the Resident Survey

The most frequent resident survey responses were from individuals who have lived in Bloomington for more than 25 years (28%), were 55 years or older (43%), identified as White (71%) Female (66%), held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education (37%), earned \$50,000-\$74,999 in Annual Household Income (17%), were homeowners (67%), paid \$1,250-1,499 in monthly housing payments (15.2%), could cover a household emergency expense (55%), confirmed that their housing need repairs (56%) with minor (47%) to moderate (42%) level of repairs needed. The most frequent selections for public infrastructure improvements included Homeless Facilities/Shelters (17%), Street/Sidewalk Improvements (15%), Housing Rehabilitation (14%), and Community/Recreation Centers (11%). The most frequent selections for public service expansions included Homeless Services (10%), Mental Health Services (9%), Fair Housing Services (9%), and Youth Services (8%).

Moreover, 64% of Bloomington respondents stated “yes” when asked if there are specific neighborhoods that should be targeted for revitalization. West Bloomington was the mode (45%), followed by Downtown Bloomington (20%), Other (15%), and South Bloomington (5%). 100% of African American/Black Bloomington residents (91/91) responded with “yes” when asked if there are specific neighborhoods or areas in Bloomington that should be prioritized for revitalization. West Bloomington was the most frequent response regardless of the demographic filter applied- race, age, income, or gender.

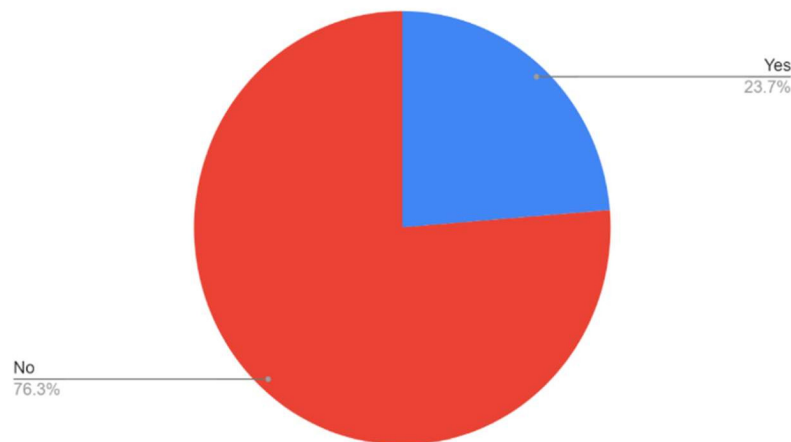


For respondents with an annual household income of \$50,000 or less, 56% of respondents rented and only 31% owned their home in this cohort, yet the overall sample of Bloomington showed 26% rented and 67% owned their home. This critical finding indicates that residents with lower incomes likely have less access to homeownership opportunities, especially with rising housing costs. Whereas 73.6% of the Bloomington total sample could find safe and affordable housing, only 54% of those earning \$50,000 or less said “yes” to the same question. Many respondents, 45%, of the Bloomington total sample could not afford to cover three or more months of household expenses in an emergency, yet 76% of respondents with an annual household income of \$50,000 or less could not afford to cover a household emergency expense.

Next analyzing the age cohorts (Under 25, 25 to 64, and 65+) data shows similar findings between each one, with fewer variations compared to the data by race and income filters. However, a higher share of people under 25 (55%) stated that they could cover a household emergency expense, but that number was lower for ages 25 to 64 at 51%, despite the assumptions of increasing financial stability with age and career maturation. The mid-age cohort (ages 25-65) had 68% of respondents

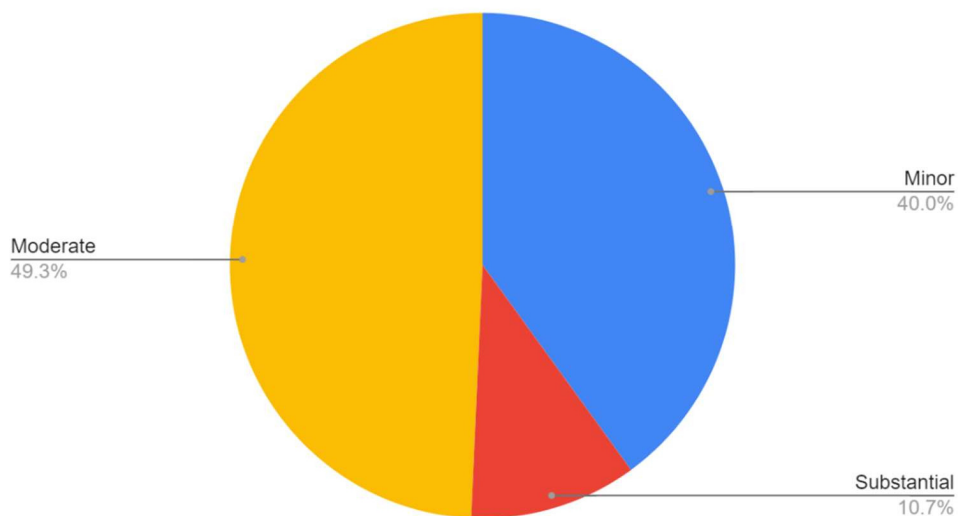
identify as homeowners, compared to 77% for the oldest-age cohort (ages 65+). Nearly three quarters, 72%, of the mid-age cohort stated they were able to find safe, sanitary and affordable housing, whereas 81% of the oldest-age cohort and 74% of the youngest cohort said yes to the same question. Housing repair needs were the most dire for the oldest-age cohort, with 60% selecting “Moderate” to “Substantial” repairs required on their home, compared to just 53% for the youngest cohort and 51% for the mid-age cohort. Most respondents older than 65 years old have lived in the community for more than 25 years (42%) or born and raised in Bloomington (22%).

Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency



“Ability to Cover Household Emergency Expense for Residents with an Annual Household Income of \$50,000 or Less,” 2024 Consolidated Plan Bloomington Resident Survey.

House Repair Needs



“Level of Housing Repair Needs for Residents over 65 years old,” 2024 Consolidated Plan Bloomington Resident Survey.

Key Findings from the Public Forums

MCRPC, City, Town, and PATH staff facilitated three separate public forums between June and July 2024, including a virtual joint public forum for both Bloomington and Normal, an in-person public forum for Bloomington and Normal each. Approximately 25 individuals attended the virtual joint forum, 20 individuals attended the Bloomington forum, and 7 attended the Normal forum. For the joint virtual public forum, MCRPC, City, and Town staff used Menti software to collect participants' input on their neighborhood needs, public facility and public service improvements, and successful strategies to solve those issues. For the in-person public forums, attendees participated in a workshop activity in which they received fictional money representing CDBG funding for public services and public infrastructure & facility improvements. Each participant received sticker dots that represented five dollars of CDBG funding. Participants were given three blue dots for public service funding (due to the 15% cap) and thirteen red dots for housing and public facility & infrastructure funding. The hypothetical CDBG funding was capped at 80 to reflect that 20% of funds would be used for general administration and administrative programs.

Bloomington residents placed a higher priority on Housing Rehabilitation and Public Housing Modernization for housing issues; Street and Sidewalk Improvements received the most votes for public infrastructure needs (35 votes), followed by Homeless Facilities/Shelters (27 votes), and Water/Sewer Improvements (25 votes). Homeless Services tied for the most votes with Childcare (9 votes), followed by Senior Services (8 votes). The Bloomington in-person public forum was the only form of public outreach that placed Childcare and Senior Services among the three highest-ranked activities. A few of the stakeholder focus groups emphasized the lack of affordable childcare, especially to address barriers to workforce development. However, this need was not as prevalent in the resident survey results. At the Normal Public Forum, Homeless Facilities/Shelters (22 votes), Housing Rehabilitation (13 votes), Street/Sidewalk Improvements (8 votes) and Water/Sewer Improvements (8 votes) received the most votes for public infrastructure, and Homeless Services (7 votes) and Childcare Services (3 votes) received the most votes for public services. While there are similarities, Bloomington forum participants placed a greater emphasis on public infrastructure improvements than their counterparts in Normal.

In terms of the virtual Bloomington public forum results, participants voted sidewalks/streets (4 votes) and water/sewer drains (4 votes) for the most pressing needs, which carried over into the public facility improvement discussion with water/sewer and sidewalk/street infrastructure receiving the most votes. For public service needs, the virtual public forum for Bloomington essentially matched that of the resident survey results and the focus group responses in terms of priority placement: Mental Health Services received the most (8 votes), Affordable Housing (7 votes), Homeless Services (6 votes).



Photo Above: City of Bloomington In-Person Public Forum for Consolidated Plan. June 26, 2024.

Key Findings from the Stakeholder Focus Groups

In August 2024, MCRPC, City, Town, and PATH facilitated seven stakeholders focus group workshops, which included a total of 56 stakeholders from Homeless and Housing Non-Profits, Infrastructure and Climate Resiliency Stakeholders, Lenders/Developers and Realtors, Social Services and Healthcare Providers, Economic Development Stakeholders and Major Employers, Landlords, and College Students. The agenda and engagement activity remained the same across all seven focus group meetings: an introductory Presentation on CDBG followed by the Activity Board questions and discussions. Participants were asked to answer five key questions and write their responses on sticky-notes. After participants submitted their responses, MCRPC facilitated dialogue on challenges in completing the activity, and indicated preliminary patterns and trends from the five questions.

Following the Focus Group workshops, MCRPC analyzed the written responses and coded the data based on key words emphasized during the discussion and the mode of the submitted responses. Certain focus groups provided answers that were outliers to the others. For example, the Landlord focus group was the only one that placed less emphasis on public infrastructure, unlike the other six focus groups. In terms of data coding methodology, rather than diluting the trends, MCRPC counted the responses from the focus groups in which those respective answers arose. This meant to help strategically highlight key patterns and trends and intended to find a consensus amongst the focus groups, which was difficult given the breadth of stakeholders who participated.



Photo Above: Landlord Focus Group Workshop for Consolidated Plan. August 15, 2024.

Question 1: What are the greatest needs of the clients you serve?	Response Frequency
Affordable Housing	22/105 or 21%
Infrastructure- Streets, Sidewalks, etc.	16/77 or 21%
Transportation	11/101 or 11%
Homeless Shelters/Services	9/105 or 9%

Question 2: What are the most effective strategies to meet those needs?	Response Frequency
Enhance Infrastructure	11/44 or 25%
More funding opportunities and grants	23/109 or 21%
Coordination, Collaboration and Partnership	16/125 or 13%
Build more housing	8/67 or 12%
Rehabilitate Housing Stock	6/52 or 12%
Enhance Transportation	8/78 or 10%

Question 3: Are those strategies currently being funded? If yes, by whom?	Response Frequency
Yes (with examples provided)	24/48 or 50%
Somewhat (Yes, but not enough)	21/47 or 47%
Yes (no further details added)	4/14 or 29%
No	7/36 or 19%

Question 4: What are the crucial gaps in service, or specific program areas which are currently under-resourced?	Response Frequency
Mental Health Services	12/47 or 26%
Workforce/Job Training	6/25 or 24%
Affordable Housing	11/52 or 21%
Rental Regulation/Rental Assistance	6/29 or 21%
More funding needed	15/70 or 21%
Transportation Improvements	10/60 or 17%
Homeless Facility/Shelter	10/70 or 14%

Question 5: Are there specific neighborhoods or areas within Bloomington-Normal that you feel should be targeted for revitalization?	Response Frequency
West Bloomington	23/65 or 35%
Downtown Bloomington	10/35 or 29%
Northwest Normal	6/33 or 18%

Key Findings from the One-on-One Stakeholder Interviews

Following the survey and focus groups, City and Town staff conducted 1:1 interview with three key stakeholders who were unable to participate in the focus group workshops. The one-on-one interviews included the Town of Normal's Director of Innovation and Technology & the City of Bloomington's Director of Information Technology, the Director of Connect Transit, and the Director of Childcare Resource and Referral Network (CCRRN). These three stakeholders also represented organizations who warranted further engagement following the focus group workshops, the latter of which highlighted a need for more collaboration.

During the first interview, the Town of Normal's Director of Innovation & Technology explained when the Affordable Connectivity Program expired in June 2024, the Town of Normal lowered its capacity to bridge the gap for broadband expansion. Many areas in Bloomington-Normal have access to only one broadband provider, limiting the available choices. The Town of Normal attempted to use state grant funds to improve broadband access but could not find contractors willing to do the work due to the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931- a federal law that requires paying local prevailing wages on public work projects. Municipalities have minimal leverage on how the Broad, Equity, Access and Deployment Program (BEAD) distributes its funding throughout Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's regions. In terms of broadband expansion, rural communities are eligible for the most benefits. Illinois State University conducted a local study using FCC definitions of "access" and found that Bloomington-Normal generally has access to broadband services. However, Federal standards for broadband access are behind the curve on internet needs as many applications and online service infrastructure used for employment, connection to public services, and education increasingly have higher broadband minimum standards.

In addition, key broadband stakeholders include the Illinois Innovation Network, the Illinois Broadband Lab, and Accelerated Access McLean County. A broadband survey to further understand the lack of access and affordability at the neighborhood level to fully achieve broadband equity could be beneficial to both entitlement communities. A study completed in 2021 concluded that Normal needs to educate households on how to best self-advocate for quality broadband choice. To ensure equitable access to broadband, middle mile connections would be needed and infrastructure in mobile home parks, and a study to address last mile connectivity to build private networks could better connect mobile home parks.

For the second interview, the Director of Connect Transit discussed the areas in Bloomington-Normal which lack public transit access: north Normal (North of Willow/Fort Jesse), east of Schnuck's (School Street), Normal Community High School, the Bridgestone factory, and east of Hershey Road in Bloomington. Connect Transit receives 60% of its Operating Budget comes from State funds but is expected to maximize the allocated funding by 2027. Thus, Connect is working on legislative solutions for long-term sustainability with continued a continued growth in the need for service. Connect Transit has recorded increasing rates of senior citizens who need transportation. Mobility ridership has skyrocketed for those with disabilities and high-needs and had to reduce peak services (work times), but still has a lack of funding. Connect Transit has considered expanding their service area into north Normal and southeast Bloomington, pending the availability of transportation funding.

The third and final interview with the Director of Childcare Resource and Referral Network (CCRRN) was conducted via written responses, rather than a virtual meeting. Overall, the main

takeaway from this interview was that Bloomington-Normal has a shortage of affordable and dependable childcare providers. Childcare staff retention remains a constant barrier because of low pay rates and inability to keep doors open due to lack of qualified staff. The COVID-19 pandemic strained many providers, and the community has lost providers due to retirement. Childcare jobs are not always the most desirable, because of low pay and the stress of dealing with demanding parents. CCRRN was able to formerly aid families for a set period while the parents were looking for a job, but that aid is no longer available.

Key barriers to increasing the number of childcare providers include lack of licensed providers for second shift, especially for Rivian employees, and lack of start-up funding for childcare businesses. Parents will often find alternative shifts to avoid paying for childcare or will depend on relatives to watch children outside of normal work hours. Bloomington-Normal has few childcare providers for during the weekend or during second shift. CDBG funds could be used for start-up childcare businesses since this funding is significantly lacking but given the limitation of CDBG public service funding it would be difficult to have enough funds to make a large impact. Funding is also needed to help cover the cost for updating structures for code compliance, such as fire doors, lead-based paint hazards, and egress windows. The Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship paid for providers who were interested in obtaining an Early Care and Education (ECE) credential or degree. However, ECACE scholarship funding has decreased despite growing costs. Lastly, CCRRN has experienced rental insurance not covering an in-home childcare, leaving childcare providers with unexpected bills to pay. Like broadband and transportation, the lack of funding for childcare start-ups and capacity-building surpasses beyond the amounts that the City and Town together received annually for CDBG.

CDBG Activity Prioritization Matrix & Comparative Findings

After the key informant interviews, MCRPC, City and Town staff gathered and analyzed findings from the multiple forms of public outreach. To accomplish this, the team relied on a similar methodology used during the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, which originated from McLean County Health Department's 2018-2020 Community Health Improvement Plan. Social determinants of health, such as access to safe and affordable housing, has complex root causes and requires intensive collaboration and innovation. The range of interventions available are limited by inadequate funding and grant requirements, and some are impractical, ineffective, or may have unintended consequences. Hence, MCRPC created an "Activity Prioritization Matrix" for each community's Consolidated Plan, which was originally created for the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan based on the methodology in McLean County Health Department's Community Needs Assessment. In each matrix, activities were scored in seven categories, three of which rate the activity against criteria, described below, derived from stakeholder focus group feedback and four of which incorporate survey results, two from the public survey (one for low-moderate income only), and one from the public meeting funding exercise. All scores were on a scale ranging from 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest rated.

Key operational areas that were rated included dependence, intent, and effectiveness. Dependence rates of how many other programs cover an activity and how much funds they receive from sources outside of the scope of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. For example, mental health services receive significant funding from other sources outside of the CDBG program. While that does not mean CDBG funds could not be used for a specific program that would be beneficial for the community or meet a targeted need, it does mean that CDBG funding is not necessarily needed to sustain work in this area. CDBG may still be used to amplify current programs or address specific target needs established in the Consolidated Plan.

Intent is a rating of how well an activity aligns with not only the intent of the CDBG program, but also with goals established in the Regional Housing Recovery Plan adopted by MCRPC in March 2024 and the City's 2015-2035 Comprehensive Plan. Each activity was judged by the importance of the activity across these two documents and the regulations guiding the CDBG program. For example, while fire stations are technically eligible for CDBG funds under limited circumstances and in alignment with the City Comprehensive Plan, the intent of the CDBG program is not to substitute funding for basic municipal services. Nor was fire stations or fire protection mentioned in the McLean County Housing Recovery Plan.

Effectiveness is a rating of how far funds allocated to this activity from CDBG will go towards producing meaningful results. For example, while mental health services are undoubtedly important and ranked highly in almost all the surveys, the amount of funding available through CDBG with the services cap (15% of the annual allocation) is quite limited. This, compared to the massive need and the expenses involved, means that mental health services received a 1 in this category for both entitlement communities.

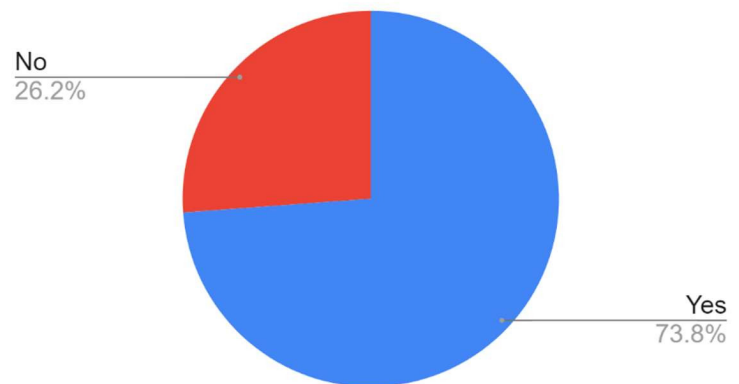
Not all CDBG-eligible activities in the final prioritization list were included in every survey. Some, such as "Street Improvements" and "Sidewalk Improvements" were originally combined in the public survey but separated in the public meeting where more elaborate conversations could be held about preferences. "Direct Renter Assistance" was not an option in any of the surveys or meetings but came up frequently enough through comments on surveys and in focus groups and public meetings that it warranted its own category. Since not all activities had a score in every category, MCRPC, Town and City

staff used the prioritization matrices as a guideline, using the scores to identify those activities which were balanced between feasibility, program intent, meeting objectives outlined in previous plans, and the overall needs of the community identified in the outreach process.

The 2024 Activity Prioritization Matrix's priorities were a mean of the dependence, intent, effectiveness scores combined with the priority levels placed on each activity from the various forms of public outreach. The mean score was calculated by adding the dependence, intent, effectiveness, public survey, public survey (households earning \$50,000 or less), focus group results, and public forums altogether. Mean scores 3.00 and higher were considered a high priority, scores between 2.00 and 2.99 were considered a medium priority, and scores below 2.00 were considered a low priority with the methodology used. Based on the results of the analysis the high priorities for non-public service funding were homeowner housing rehabilitation (3.71), sidewalk improvements (3.86), homeless facilities and shelters (3.29), and street improvements (3.29). The high priorities for public service funding were homeless services (3.86) and fair housing services (3.43). Accessibility improvements, demolition of dilapidated structures, public parks, water and sewer improvements, community and recreation center improvements, and bus facility improvements were ranked as medium priorities for non-public service activities. Childcare, mental health, senior services, youth services, disability services, and job training/workforce development activities were ranked as medium priorities in the analysis.

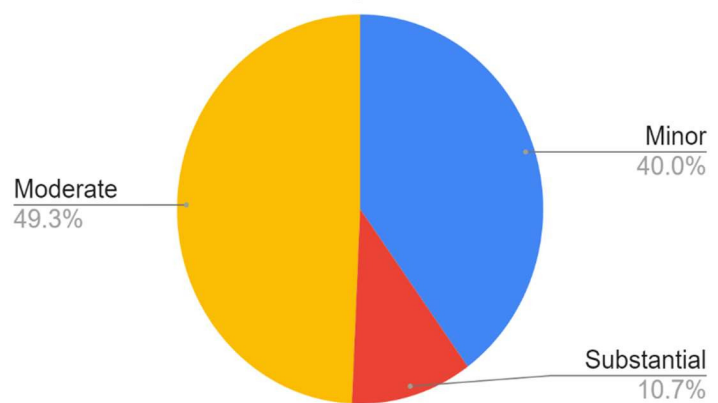
Between the resident feedback survey responses and the focus group results, three areas warranted further analysis: Housing Repair Needs, Public Facility Improvements, and Public Service Improvements. For the focus groups, housing repair needs were referred to as "rehabilitating housing stock," which yielded 12% (6/52) in Question 2 of the Board Activity: "What are the most effective strategies to meet the needs in the community and the clients your organization services?" Altogether, the focus groups did not emphasize housing repairs needs during the Board Activity or the discussion. Instead, the consensus was that the lack of funding opportunities and grants was the first barrier to address, before housing repair needs could be feasible. Housing Repair Needs was a frequent topic discussed during

Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?



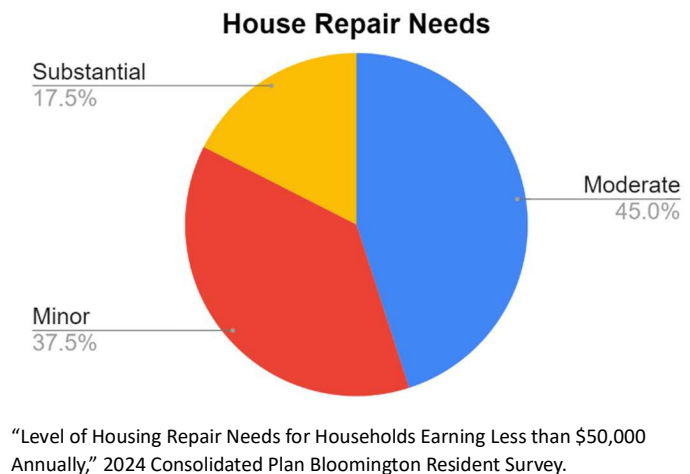
"Current Housing in Need of Repairs for African American/Black Residents," 2024 Consolidated Plan Bloomington Resident Survey.

House Repair Needs

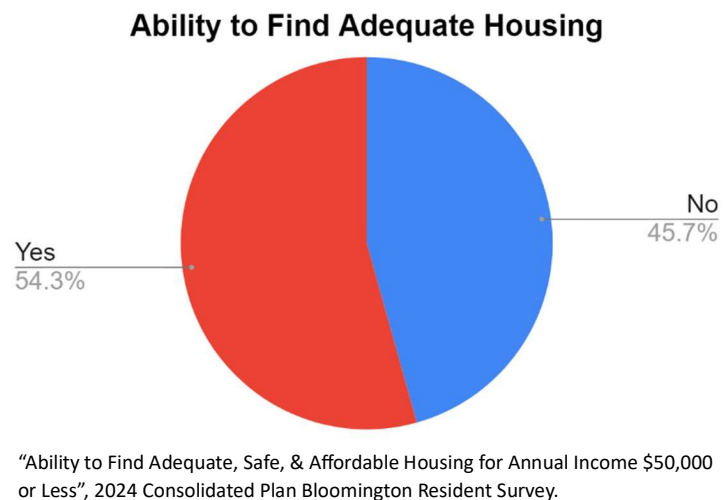


"Level of Housing Repair Needs for Bloomington Residents Over the Age of 65," 2024 Consolidated Plan Bloomington Resident Survey.

the three public Forum meetings. In terms of the resident survey results, 74% of African American/Black residents stated that their current housing in need of repairs which was the highest among the racial cohorts. The level of house repair needs was most significant for households earning less than \$50,000 annually, with 45% reporting moderate repairs needed and 18% reporting substantial repairs needed. This exemplifies the race and class disparities in Bloomington regarding access to safe, affordable, and healthy housing conditions.



Furthermore, the most frequent public facility improvements for the focus group results were Infrastructure such as Streets, Sidewalks, Water and Sewer (16/77 or 21%), Affordable Housing (22/105 or 21%) which closely aligned with the resident feedback survey results (e.g., Street/Sidewalk Improvements yielded 17% of the selected responses which was the highest, and Homeless Facilities/Shelters yielded 14% of the selected responses). It is worth noting that “Affordable Housing” was not specifically a choice in the Resident Survey, which several residents in the open-ended responses (see the additional comments section in this Report) stated that it should be its own choice despite its broad interpretations. The most frequent public service expansion needed for the focus group question “What are the crucial gaps in services or specific program areas which are currently under-resourced,” the mode was “Mental Health Services” (12/47 or 26% of responses), which exactly aligned with the resident survey results for Bloomington: Mental Health Services composed 13% of the selected responses. However, the resident survey results placed a higher priority on Homeless Facilities/Shelters, yet the focus groups repeatedly placed it a mid-priority (e.g. Homeless Facilities/Shelters placed seventh for question 4, as 10/70 or 14% of stakeholders stated that it was a crucial gap).



Comparing the resident survey responses to the public forums, “Affordable Housing” was the most common need identified in the virtual Public Forum via Menti, which aligned with the survey results and the focus group workshops. For example, for Bloomington residents whose Annual Household Income is \$50,000 or less, nearly half (46%) reported that they were not able find safe, adequate and affordable housing, according to the survey results. This was the highest rate of cohorts that responded with “no” across all age, race or income cohorts. Affordable Housing was not an explicit activity under public infrastructure or service yet received the second-highest votes during the Menti exercise at the virtual public forum (7 votes),

behind Mental Health Services, and was a reoccurring theme across all forms of public outreach. During the virtual public forum discussion with Bloomington residents, affordable housing was primarily identified as an aggregate term for housing rehabilitation, affordable housing development, homeless prevention, public housing expansion, and fair housing services.

Moreover, affordable housing and rehabilitation remained a constant priority no matter the form of outreach or the nuances of finding alignment between needs and the presented options in the survey and forum questions. For example, Public Housing Modernization received the second-most votes for Housing Rehabilitation needs (33 votes) at the Bloomington in-person forum but received 0 votes at the Normal in-person, in which Housing Rehabilitation instead was the highest priority (13 votes). Homeless Services received tied for the most-votes (9 votes), Fair Housing Services tied for the third-most votes (7 votes) Bloomington in-person Public Forum. Transportation was a major concern at the focus groups (11/101 or 11% of responses were transportation for the greatest need, third-highest overall) and arose in almost every focus group discussion and the virtual joint public forum (second-most frequent need in public services, public infrastructure and overall needs) in the Menti exercise. However, transportation services were a mid-level priority (4 votes) at the Bloomington public forum for both public services and infrastructures and received 0 votes for both at the Normal public forum.

City of Bloomington 2025-2029 CDBG Activity Prioritization Matrix											
Activity	Service?	Dependence	Intent	Effectiveness	Public Survey	Public Survey (low-income)	Focus Group Results	Public Meeting	Outreach Mean	Priority	Comprehensive Plan Citation
Street Improvements	No	2	3	2	4	4	4	4	3.29	High Priority	TAQ-1
Sidewalk Improvements	No	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3.86	High Priority	TAQ-1
Homeowner Housing Rehabilitation	No	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	3.71	High Priority	H-2
Fair Housing Services	Yes	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	3.43	High Priority	H-1
Homeless Facilities/Shelters	No	3	4	3	4	4	2	3	3.29	High Priority	CWB-1
Homeless Services	Yes	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3.86	High Priority	CWB-1
Accessibility Improvements	No	4	4	4	1	2	1	2	2.57	Medium Priority	H-1
Youth Services	Yes	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2.29	Medium Priority	EDU-1
Demolition of Dilapidated Structures	No	3	4	4	2	1	1	2	2.43	Medium Priority	PS-1/H-2
Job Training/Workforce Development	Yes	2	3	2	2	1	3	1	2.00	Medium Priority	ED-3
Water/Sewer Improvements	No	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2.43	Medium Priority	UEW-1
Bus Facility Improvements	No	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	2.00	Medium Priority	TAQ-2
Public Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces	No	2	3	3	3	3	1	2	2.43	Medium Priority	HL-1
Mental Health Services	Yes	1	3	1	4	4	4	2	2.71	Medium Priority	CWB-3
Senior Services	Yes	3	4	3	2	1	1	3	2.43	Medium Priority	CWB-2
Disability Services	Yes	3	4	3	1	1	1	1	2.00	Medium Priority	CWB-2
Childcare Services	Yes	2	3	1	3	3	3	4	2.71	Medium Priority	N/A
Transportation Services	Yes	2	3	1	1	1	4	2	2.00	Medium Priority	TAQ-2
Community/Recreation Center Improvements	No	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	2.14	Medium Priority	N/A
Direct Renter Assistance	Yes	2	3	1	1	1	4	1	1.86	Low Priority	H-1

Affordable Housing Development	No	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1.71	Low Priority	H-1
Indirect Rental Assistance (Landlords)	No	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1.71	Low Priority	H-1
Health Services	Yes	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1.29	Low Priority	CWB-3
Veterans Services	Yes	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1.43	Low Priority	N/A
Services for the Formerly Incarcerated	Yes	2	3				1	1	2	1.71	Low Priority	N/A
Business Support	No	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1.43	Low Priority	ED-1
Domestic Violence Services	Yes	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.14	Low Priority	N/A
Medical Facilities	No	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.14	Low Priority	CWB-3
Food Insecurity	Yes	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	1.86	Low Priority	HL-5
Crime Prevention/Awareness	Yes	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	1.43	Low Priority	PS-1
Fire Stations	No	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1.29	Low Priority	PS-2
Police Sub-stations	No	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.14	Low Priority	PS-1
Libraries	No	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.14	Low Priority	EDU-2
Substance Abuse Services	Yes	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1.43	Low Priority	CWB-3
Community/Recreation Center Services	Yes	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1.71	Low Priority	N/A
Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure	No	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1.43	Low Priority	TAQ-6

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Data Analysis Implications for Funding Decisions

Data collected in the outreach process will inform every spending decision for CDBG funds in the 2025-2029 program years, but several important topics are worth discussing in more detail. First, public infrastructure needs such as streets, sidewalks, and water/sewer service were clearly a focus in the different resident outreach components. While these activities all have merit on their own, these traditional infrastructure needs have interdependence with other needs such as housing, transportation options, public spaces, and accessibility requirements for residents. During discussions with residents in public forums and at community events, residents frequently connected infrastructure needs with other activities—especially housing. This connection of interdependent needs was apparent in the results of the various resident feedback opportunities during the outreach phase. When developing goals for the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan, City staff will look for ways to fund activities with interdependence on multiple needs in the community to amplify limited CDBG funds.

Second, affordable housing was an overall topic in each mode of public outreach. Residents generally considered a wide range of activities to be under the banner of affordable housing (housing rehabilitation, development, homeless services, fair housing, etc.). Affordable housing development was not listed as an activity on the resident survey due to the ineligibility of new housing construction under 24 CFR 570.207(b)(3). However, affordable housing development can be supported with CDBG funds in certain circumstances. Primarily, this includes services or infrastructure development. In the Lenders/Developers and Realtors focus group affordable housing development was discussed in great detail. During the discussion the development professionals expressed surprise that CDBG funding levels were not higher for both entitlement communities. Additionally, the focus group participants noted with limited funding CDBG would not likely make a significant contribution to the ability to finance most developments. However, smaller scale infrastructure improvements that support affordable housing development could be an opportunity for CDBG funds to be used in this space. Affordable housing developers have had an opportunity to apply through the City's public infrastructure and facility improvement partner program competitive application process in previous program years, but no affordable housing developer has done so within the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. Changes to the application Request for Proposal (RFP) and application information specifically could help raise awareness that affordable housing developers have an opportunity to apply for CDBG funds for infrastructure needs on projects through the City's competitive process. With several activities under the affordable housing banner, CDBG funds fill critical funding gaps for housing rehabilitation, homeless services, and fair housing. The importance of CDBG funding in these spaces contributed to the high scores on dependence and effectiveness criteria used in the priority ranking methodology. The development of affordable housing units has substantial funding sources beyond CDBG including the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), the Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit, local development incentives, and the Illinois Housing Trust Fund Program. While CDBG may be able to play a role in affordable housing development locally, it would not likely be a critical or significant source of financing.

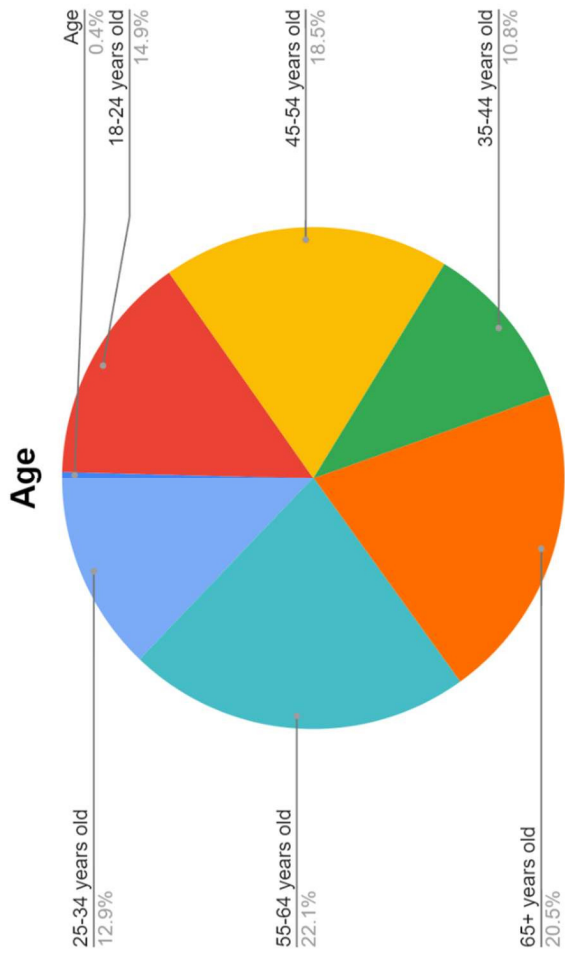
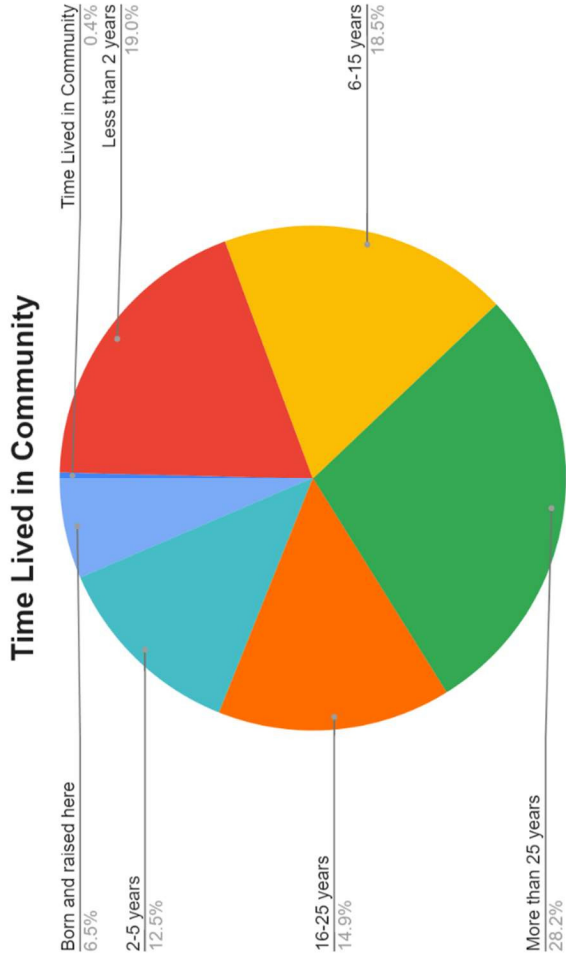
Finally, homeless services generally were at the forefront of discussion in various public outreach modes. During the timeframe of the outreach process, a tent encampment with homeless community members captured significant attention in media and in public meetings. While this certainly had an influence on the results, more detailed discussions with community members at the public forums and at community events revealed that the concern for homeless community members

went beyond the tent encampment in public discussions. Community members routinely provided information and expressed their thoughts on the difficulties in navigating homeless services locally. This was in part due to additional challenges with the Central Illinois Continuum of Care that were in public view as well. Based on the entirety of the outreach process, it became apparent that community members recognized a need to expand and (or) make homeless services with CDBG funds.

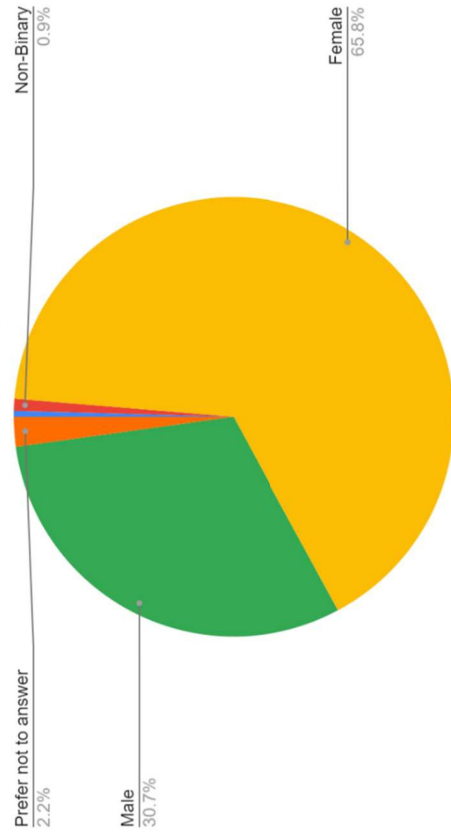
Conclusion

After six months of public and stakeholder engagement, MCRPC analyzed data from each method of community outreach. The results provided in this Report demonstrate the community's awareness regarding the lack of affordable housing, including emergency rental assistance, housing subsidies, housing rehabilitation, homeless facilities and services, and insufficient housing diversity and supply. Stakeholder focus groups placed higher emphasis on affordable transportation needs, whereas the resident survey results placed higher priority on street/sidewalk infrastructure improvements and mental health services. However, affordable housing needs remained a constant priority across all forms of outreach overall (e.g. Homeless Shelter and Services, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rental Housing Assistance, Housing Rehabilitation). West Bloomington was the most frequent response across all demographic cohorts, followed by downtown Bloomington. Based on the survey results, low-income senior homeowners in Normal have a noticeably higher rate of housing rehabilitation needs; most of whom have lived in the community for more than 25 years. Similar to broadband and transportation, the lack of funding for childcare start-ups and capacity-building surpasses beyond the amounts that the City and Town receive annually for CDBG. Based on the Activity Prioritization Matrix findings, the City and Town will need to weigh competing needs, while also allocating funds for feasible and sustainable activities that align with CDBG's requirements. Doing so will require intentional strategies and leveraging current and new funding opportunities with local CDBG dollars.

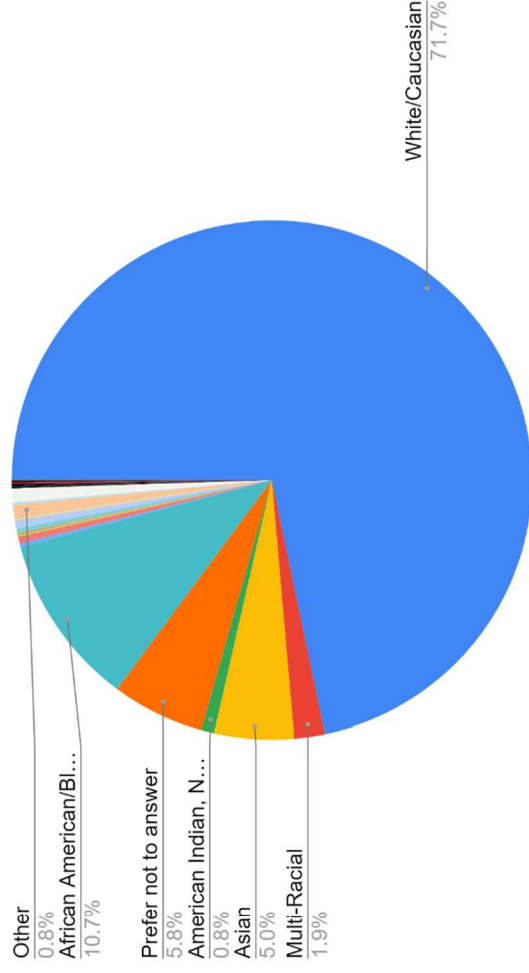
Appendix I: City of Bloomington Survey Responses



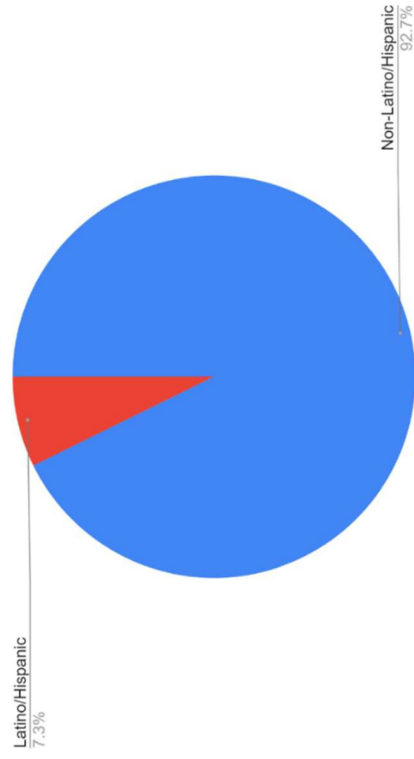
Gender Identity



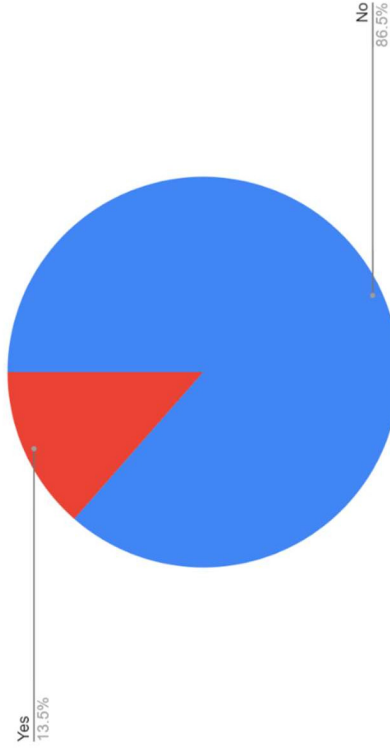
Race



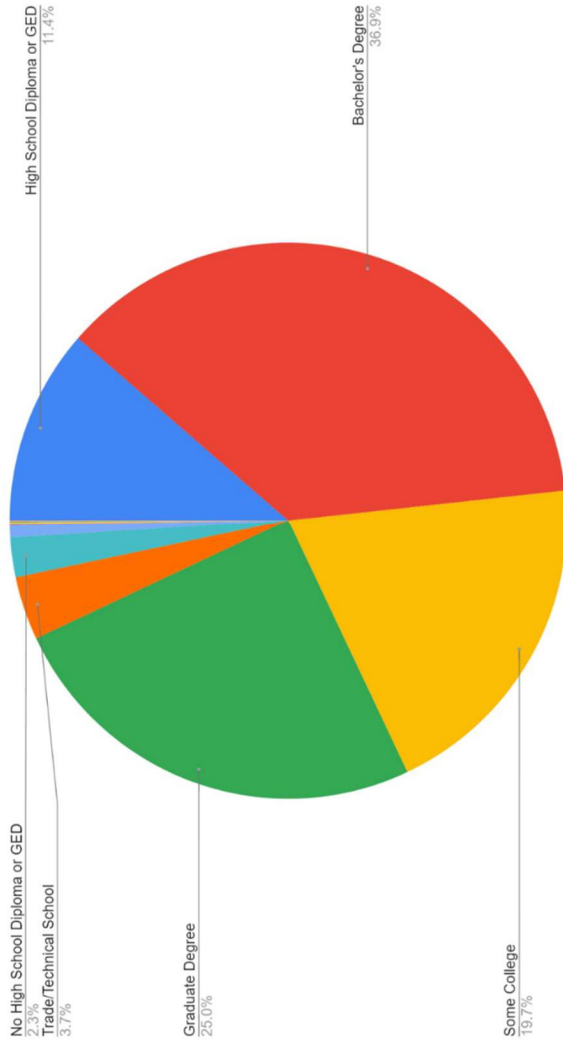
Ethnicity



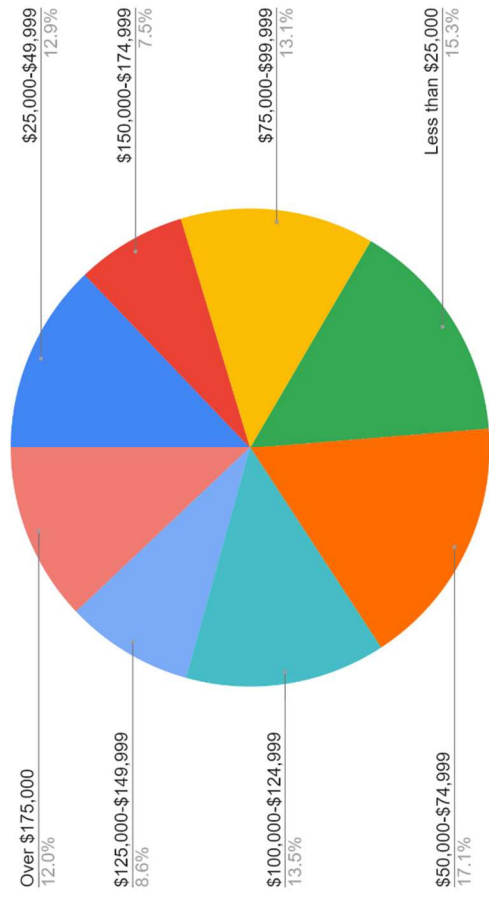
English as a Second Language



Highest Level of Education

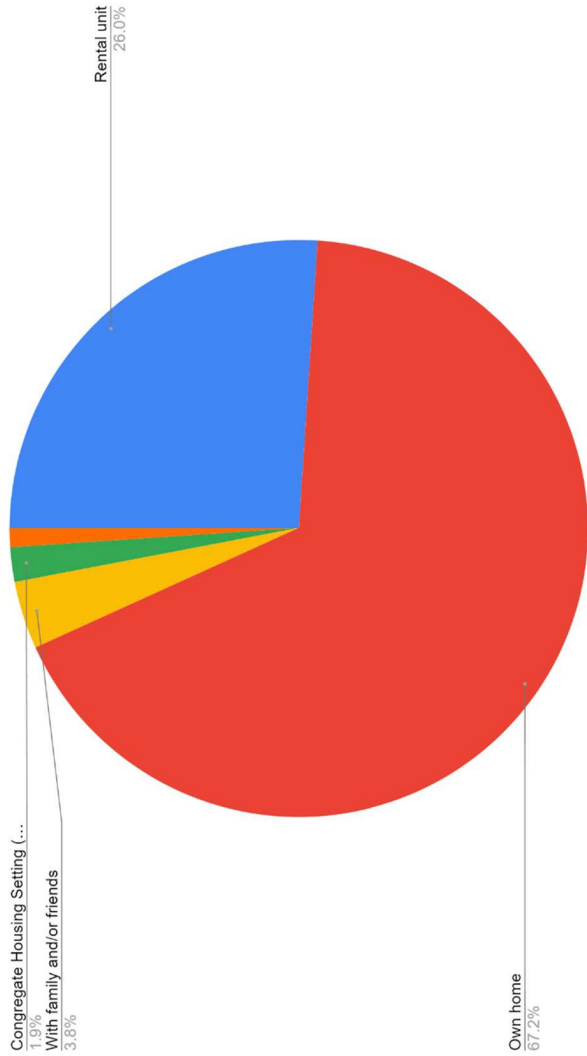


Annual Household Income

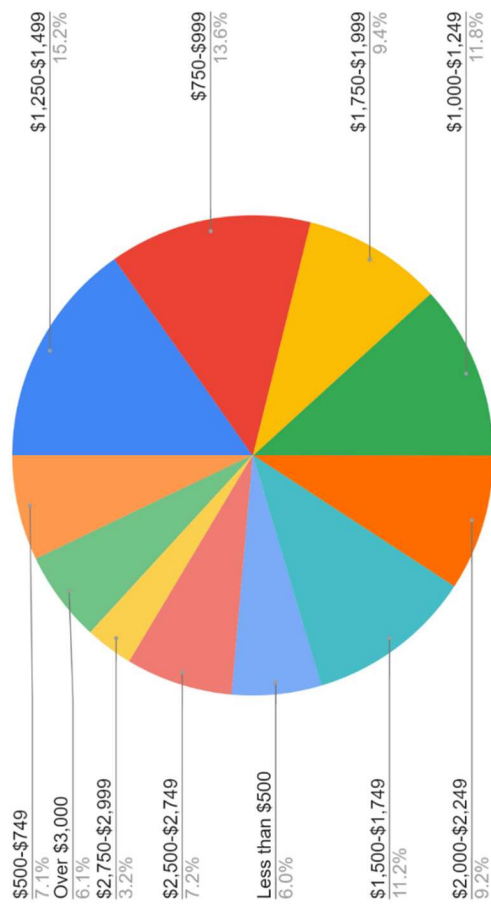


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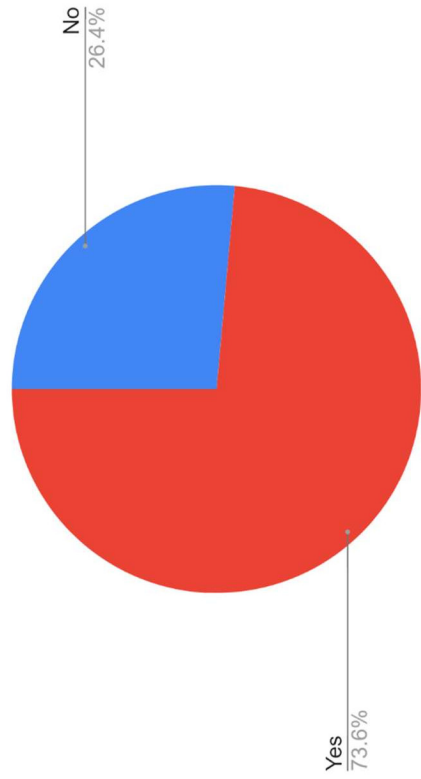
Housing Status



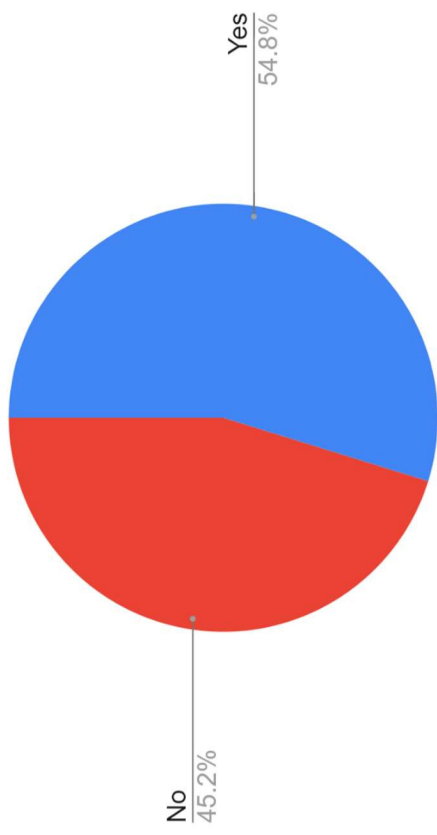
Monthly Housing Costs



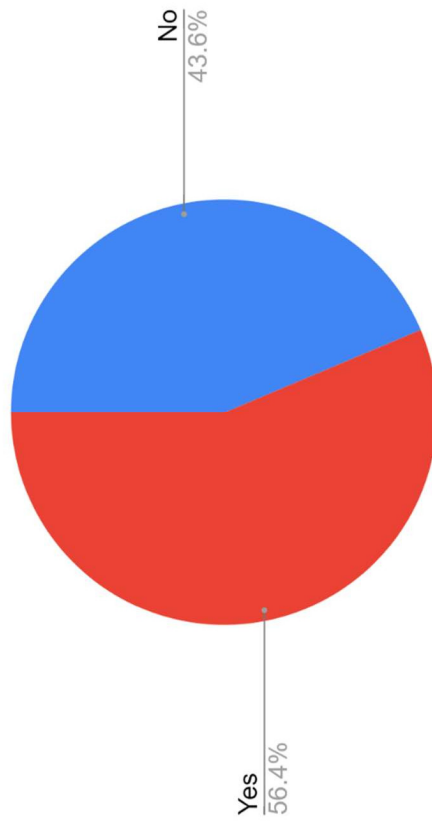
Able to Find Adequate Housing



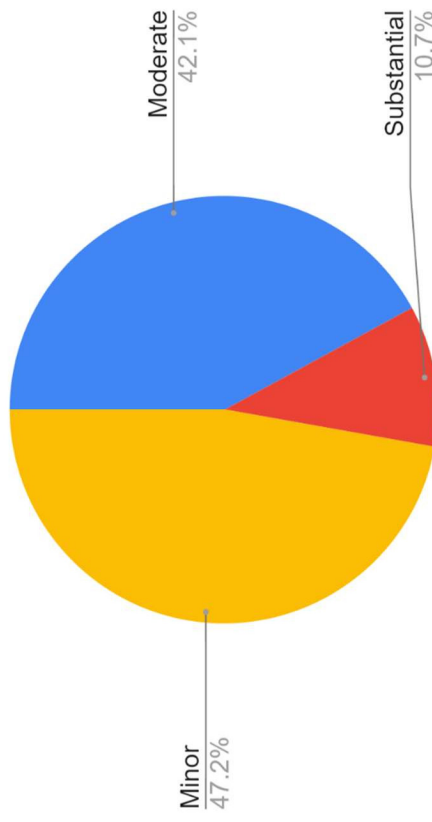
Able to Cover Household Emergency Expense



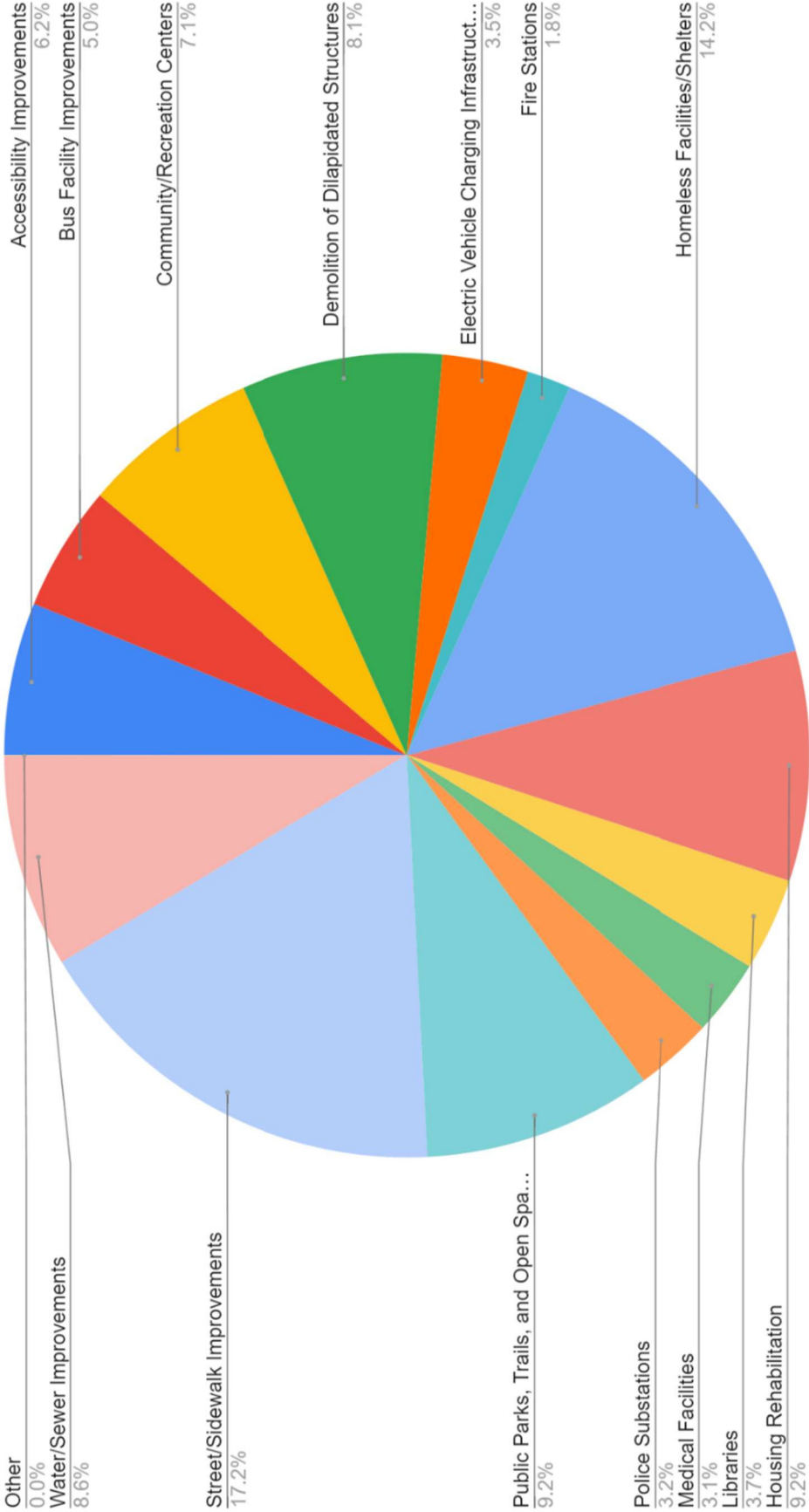
Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?



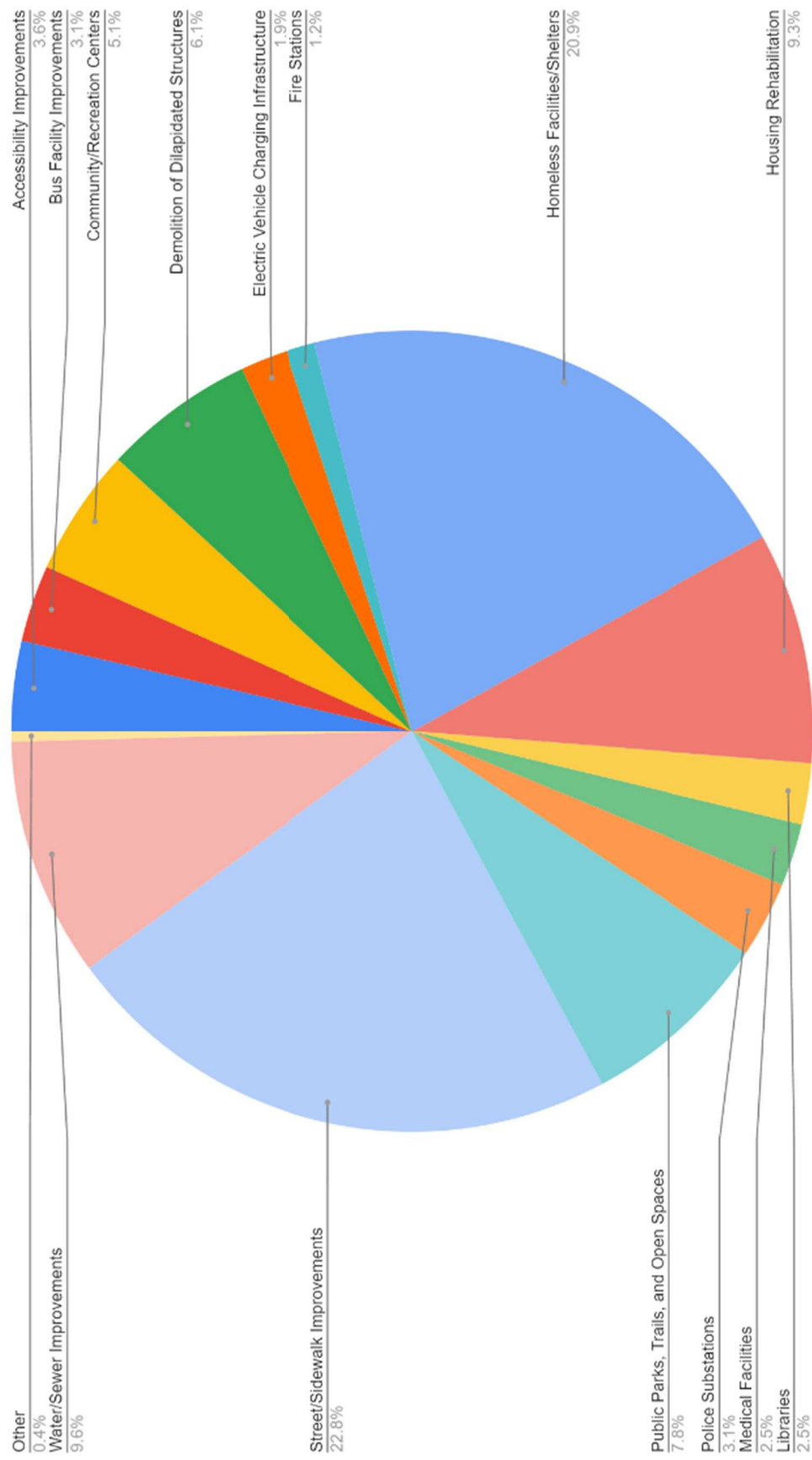
Level of Housing Repair Needs



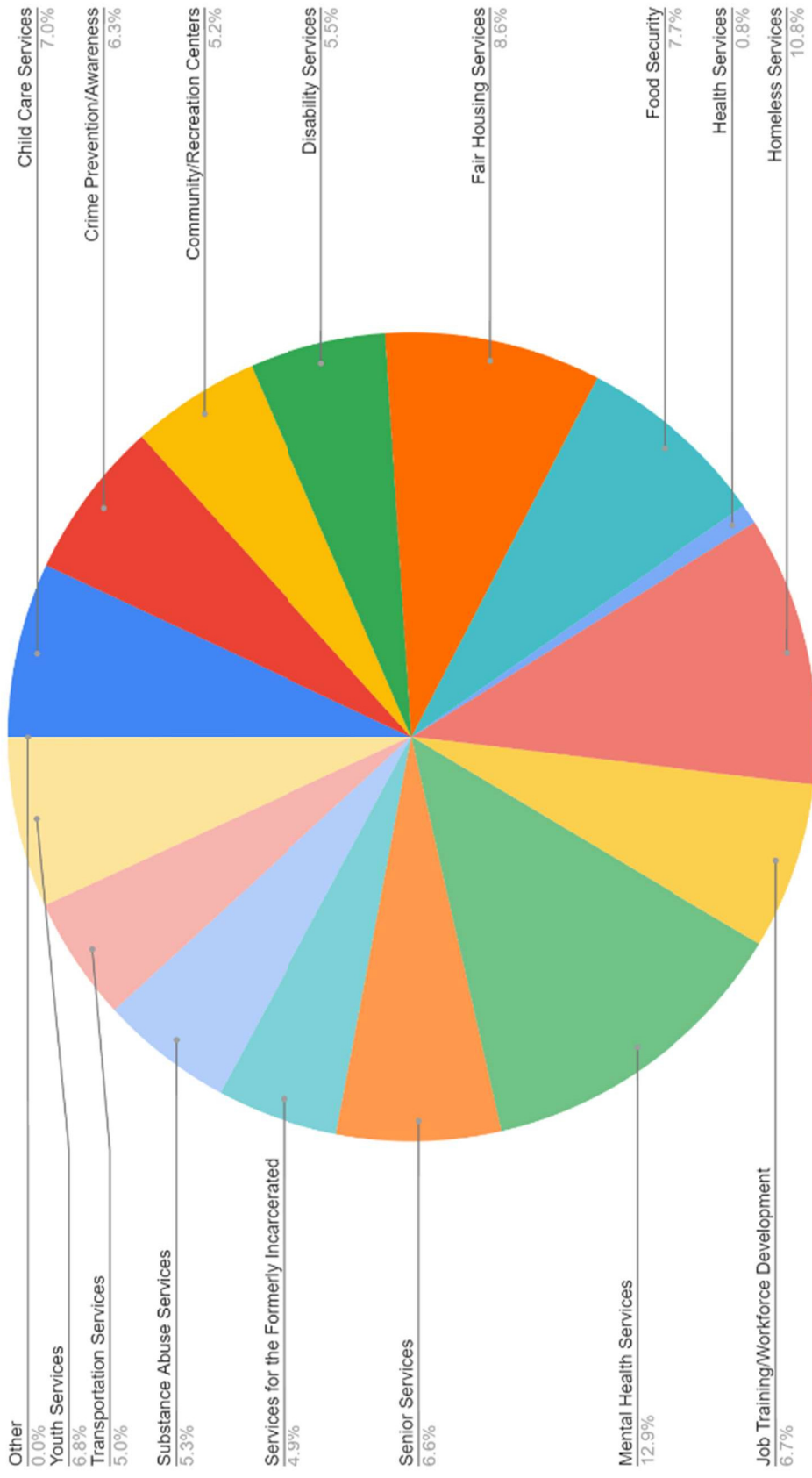
What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



Ranking of Top 3 Public Facility/Infrastructure Improvements

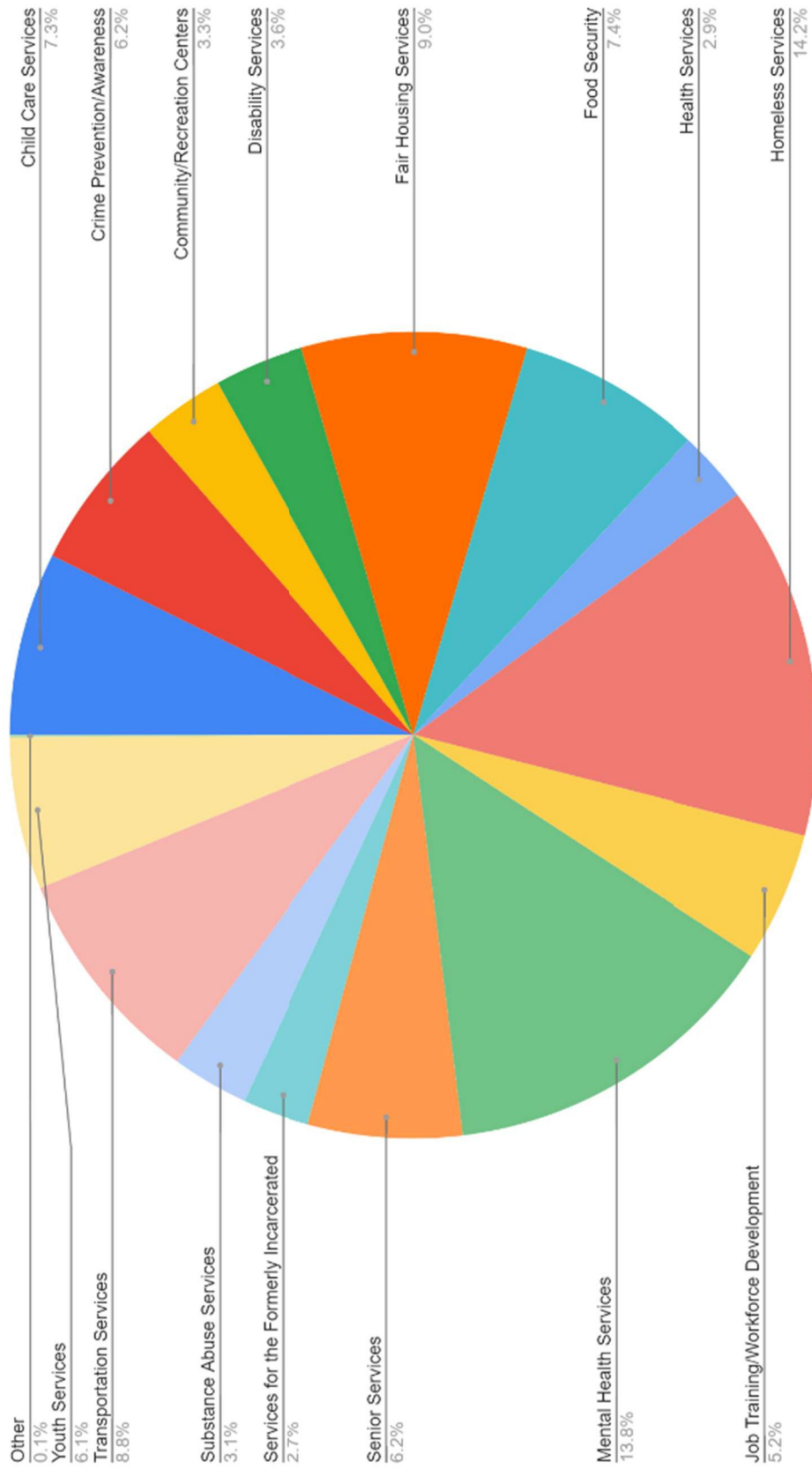


Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



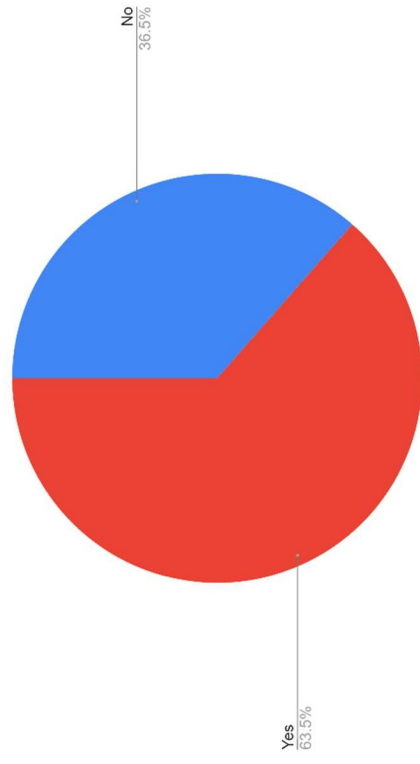
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Ranking of Top 3 Public Service Needs

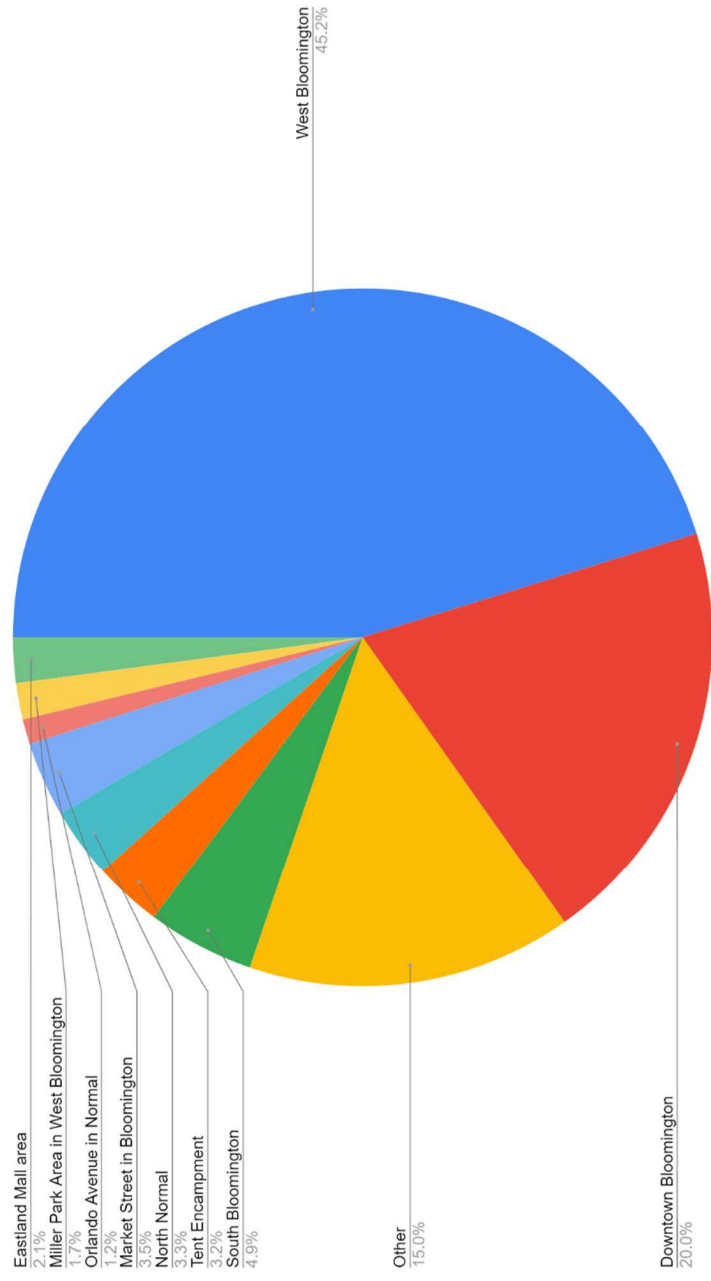


28-DRAFT

Are there specific neighborhoods/areas that should be targeted for revitalization?

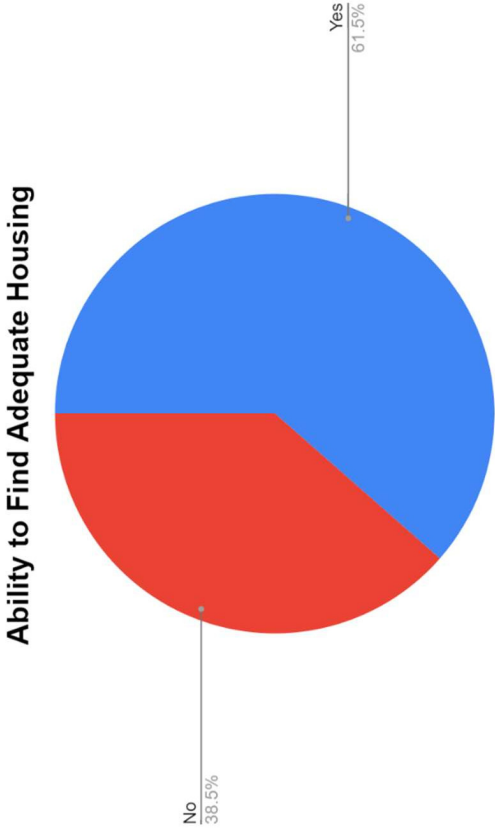
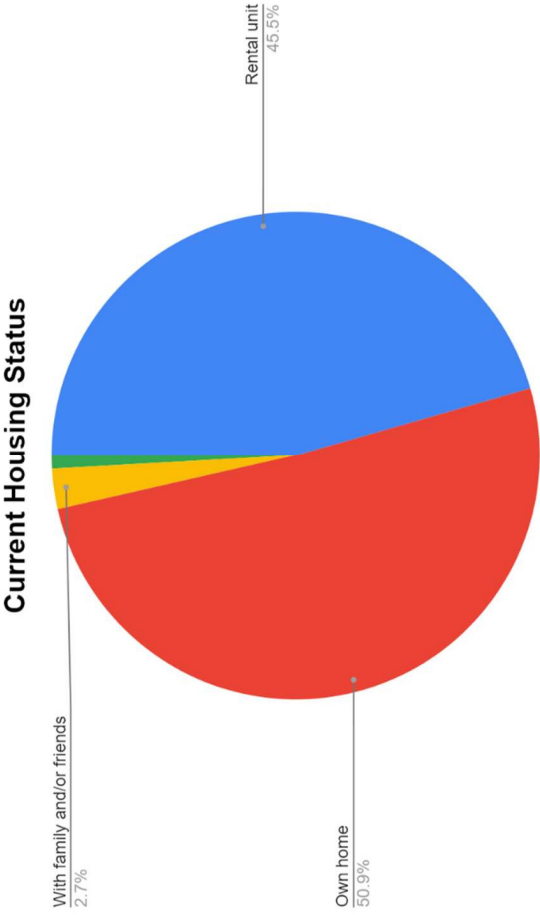


What specific areas should be targeted for revitalization?

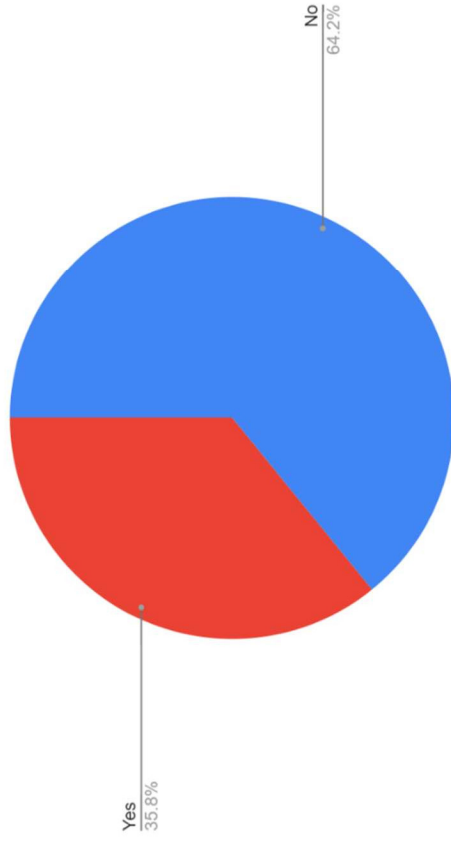


29-DRAFT

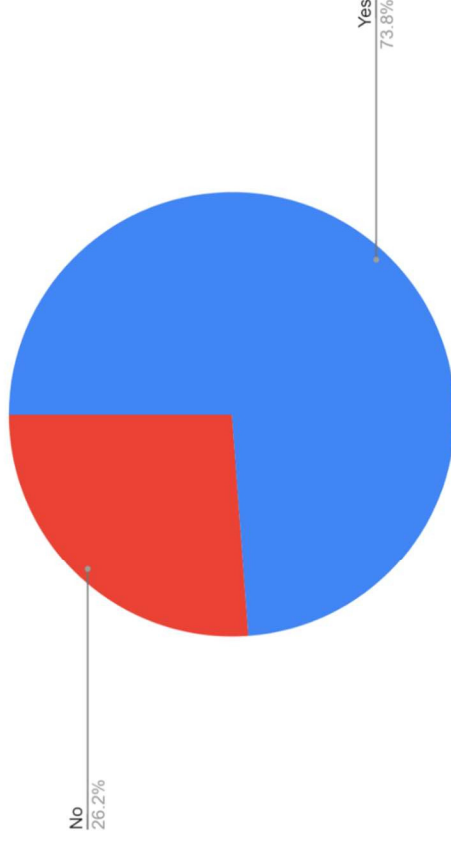
City of Bloomington (Filtered for African American/Black Only) Responses



Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency

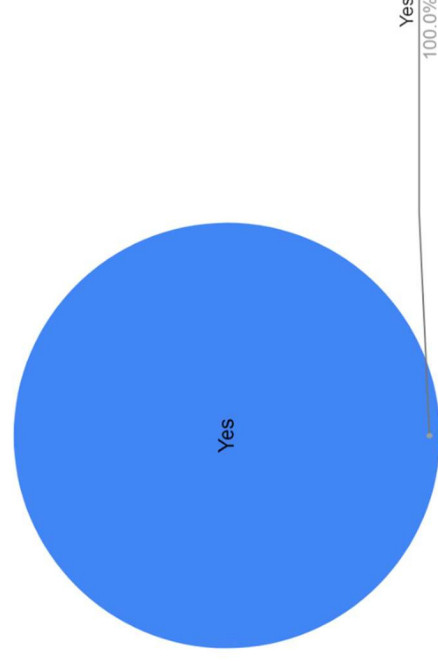
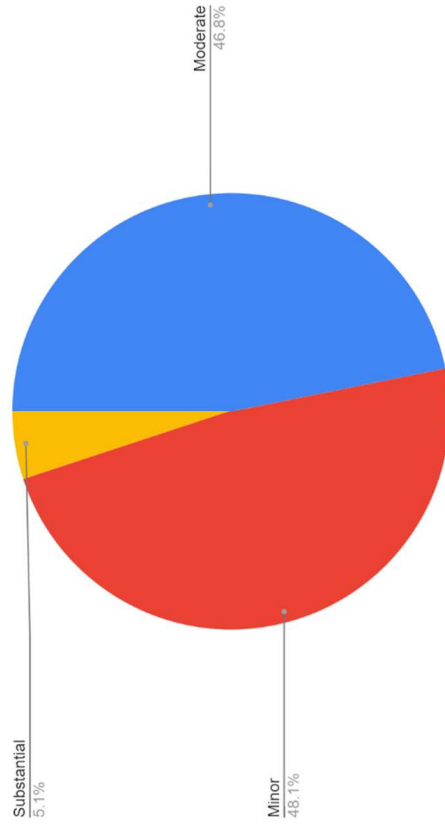


Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?

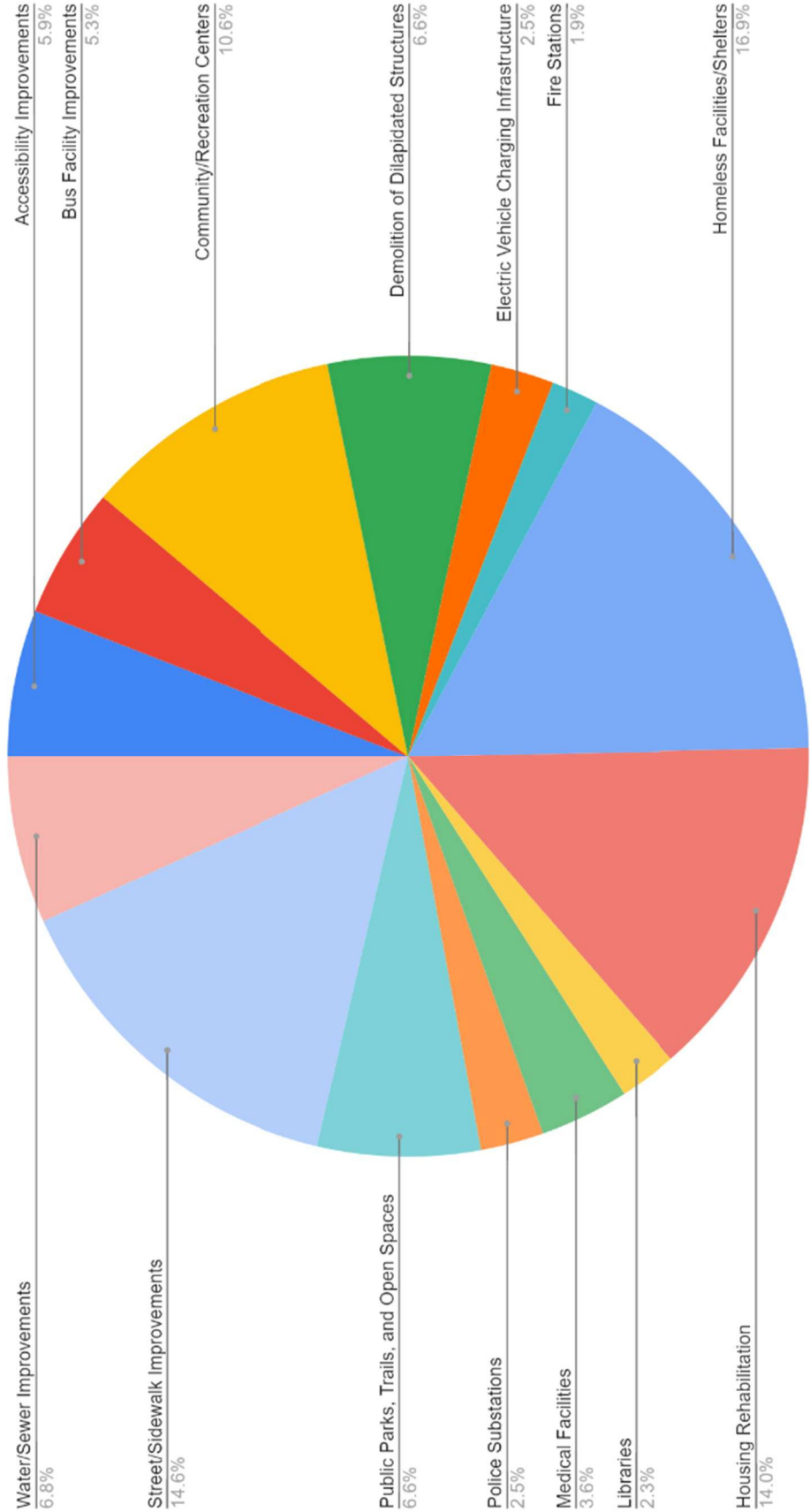


Are there specific neighborhoods that should be prioritized for revitalization?

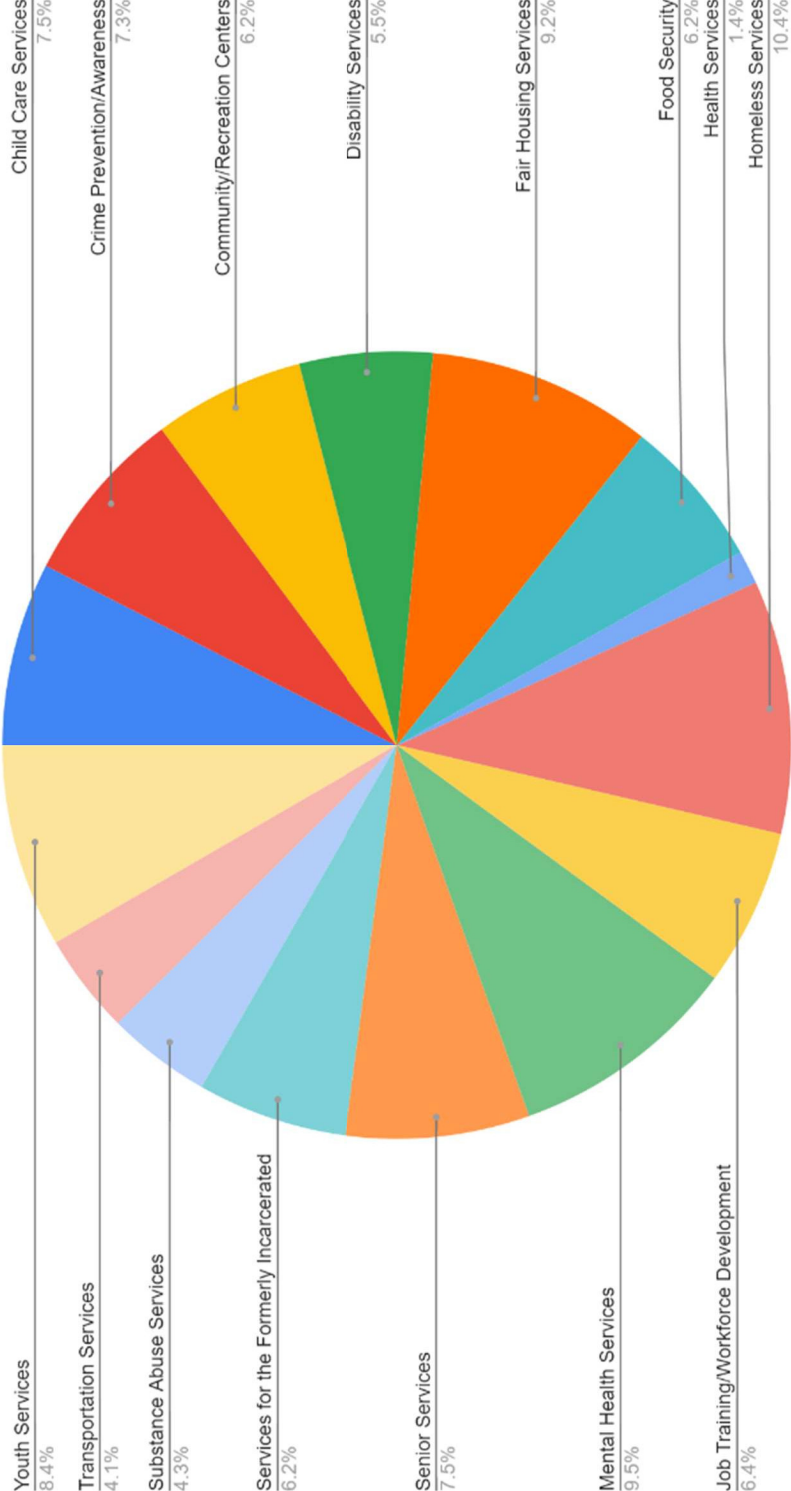
House Repair Needs



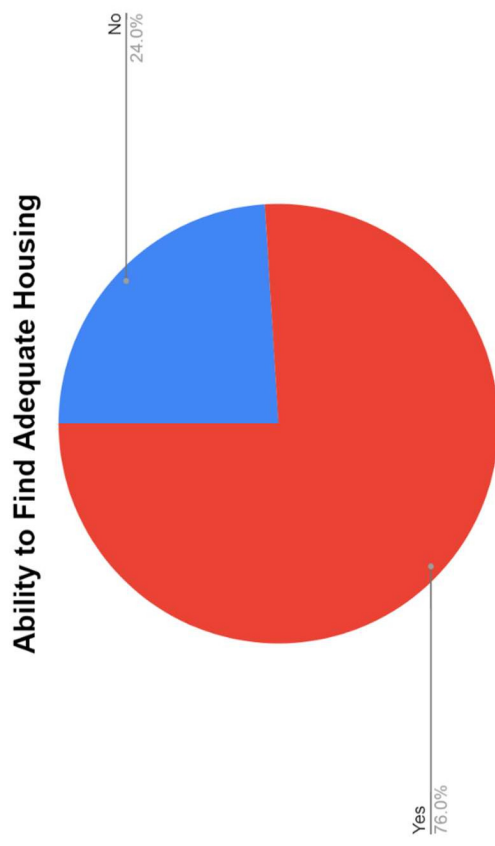
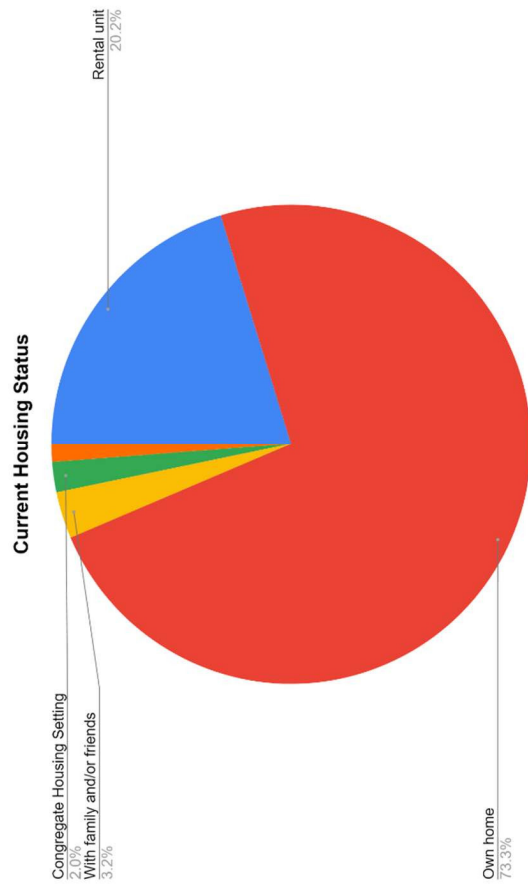
What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



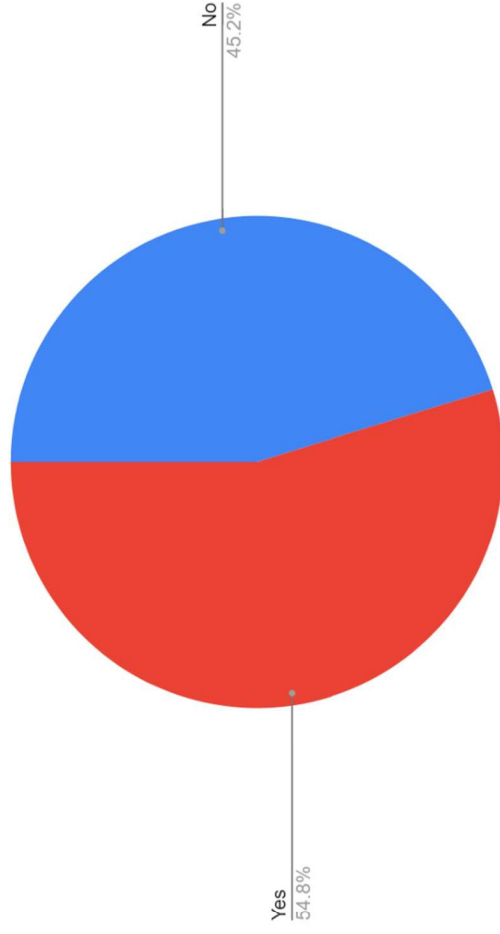
Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



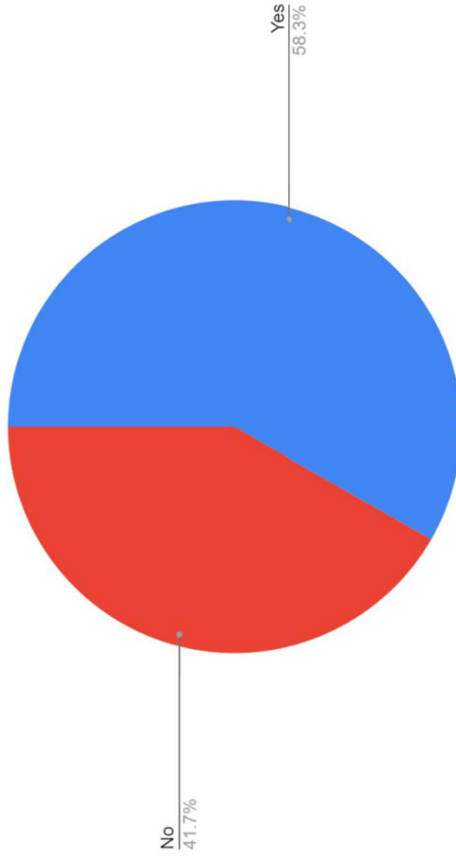
City of Bloomington (Filtered for White/Caucasian Only) Responses



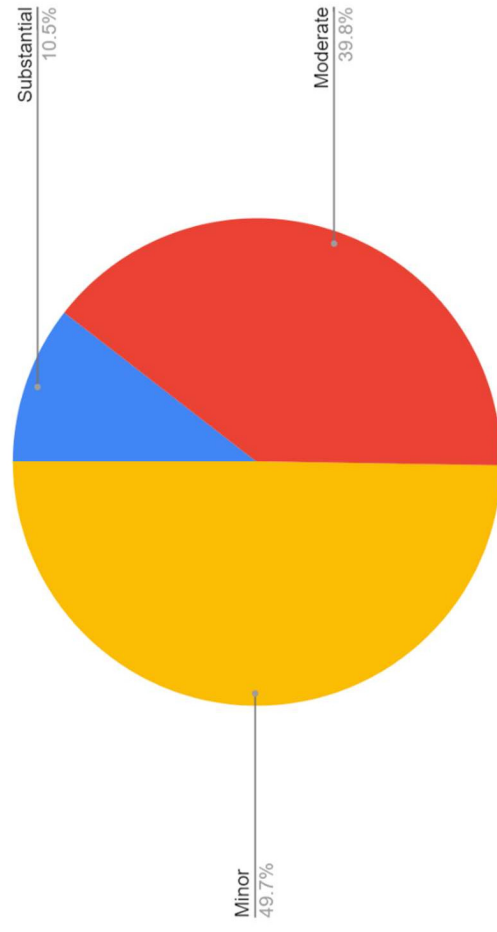
Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?



Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency

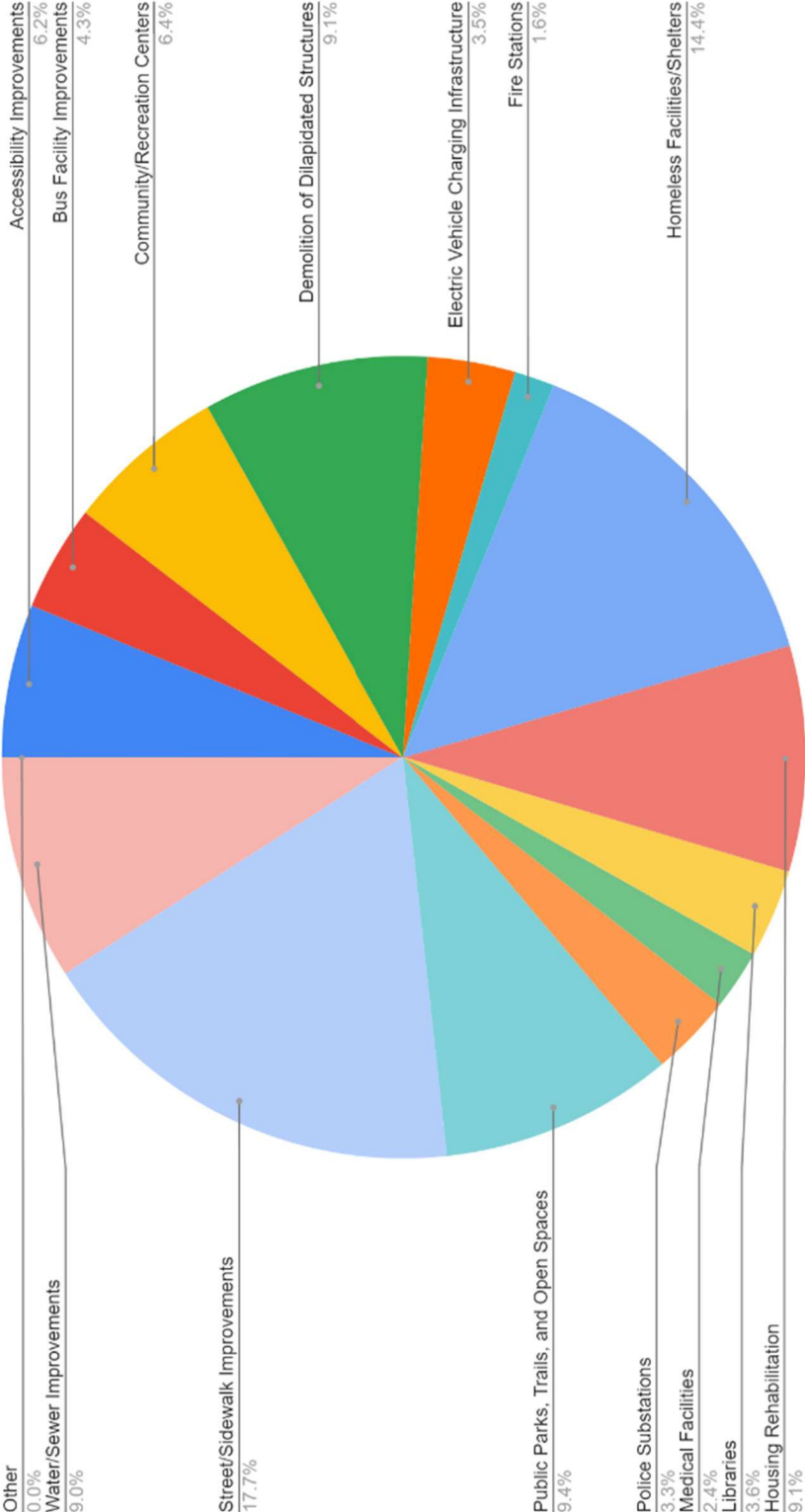


House Repair Needs

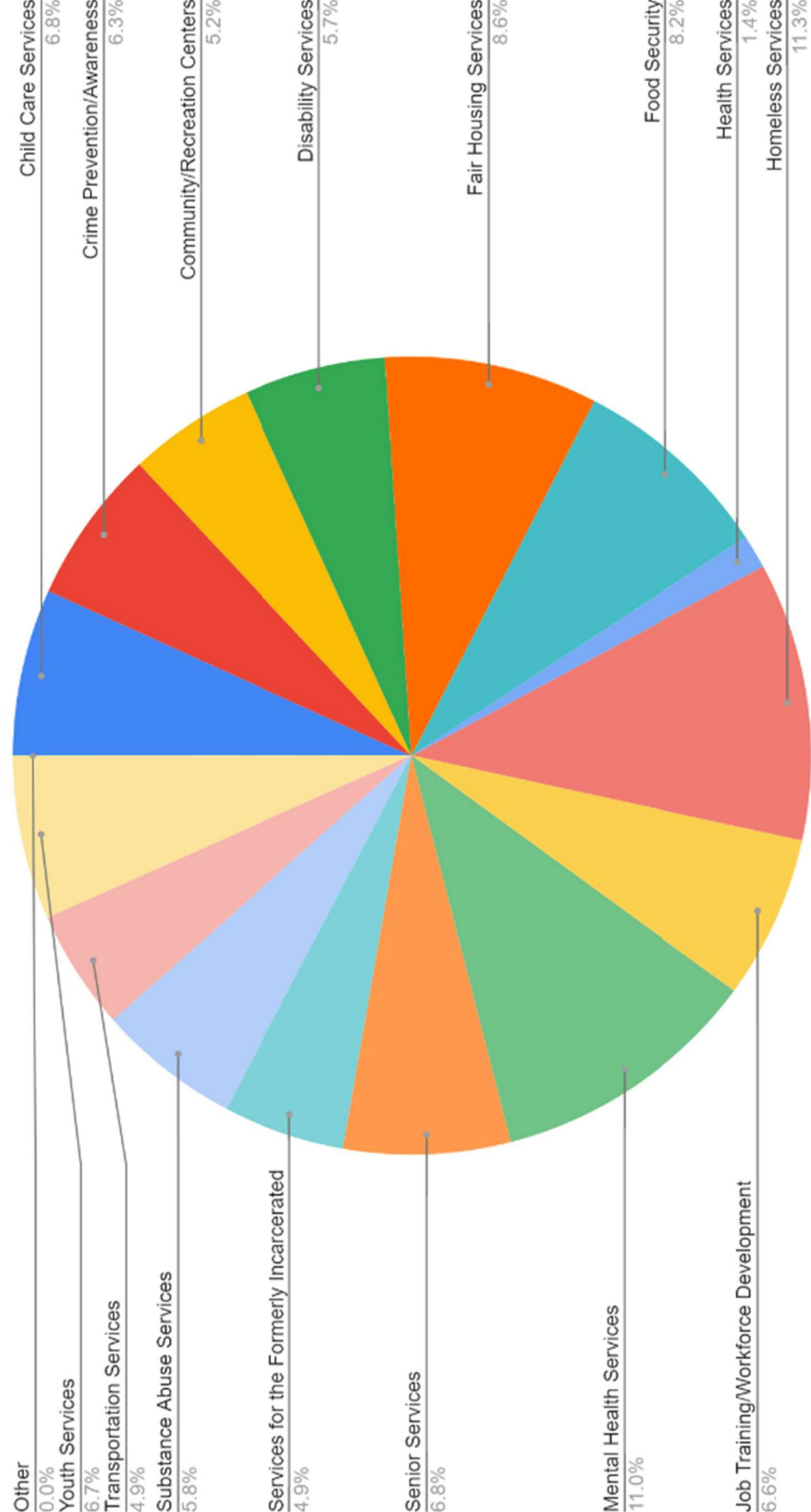


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What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

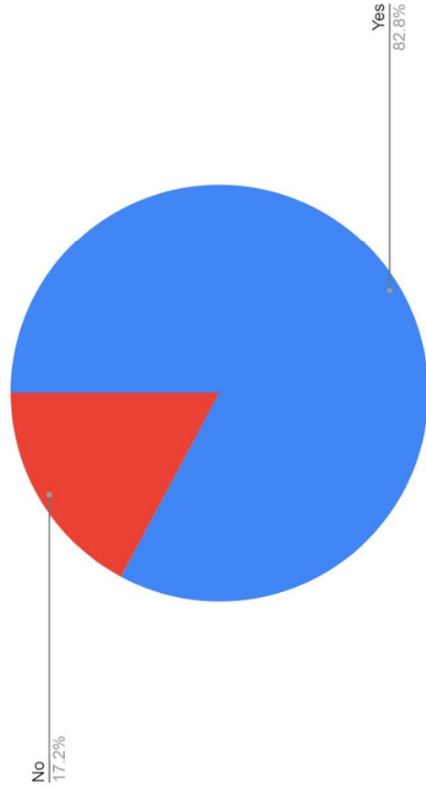


Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

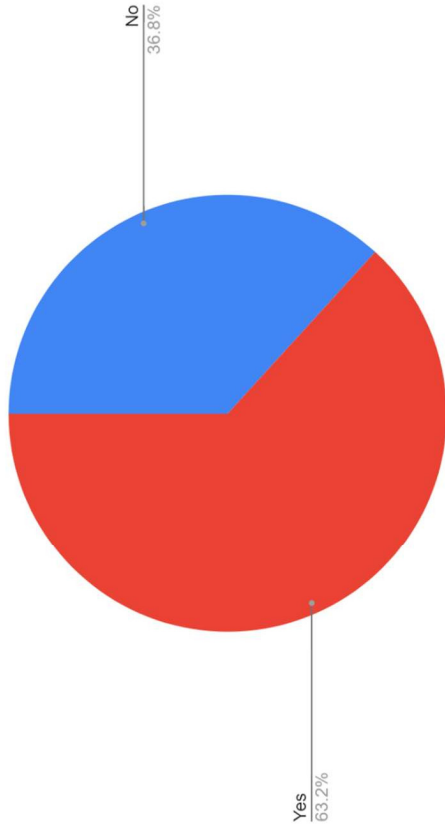


City of Bloomington (Filtered for Asian Only) Responses

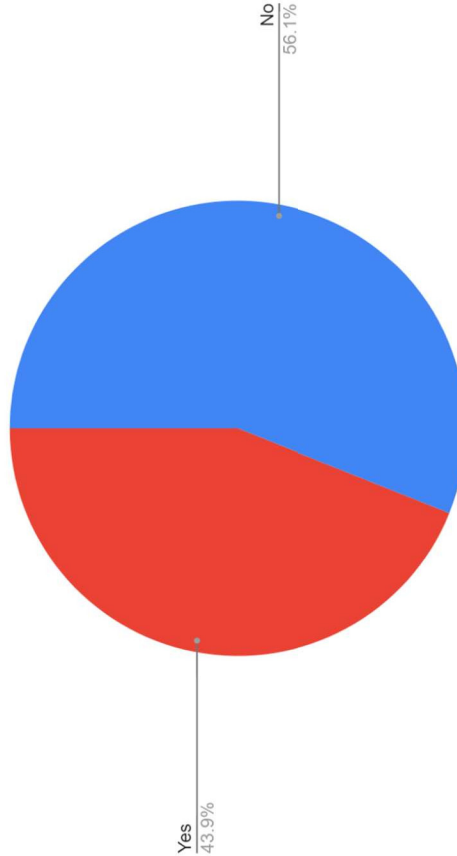
Ability to Find Adequate Housing



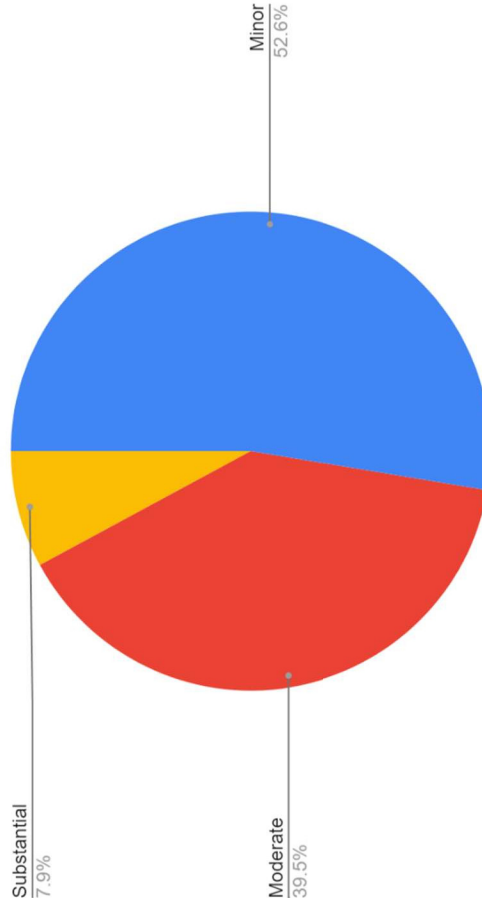
Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency



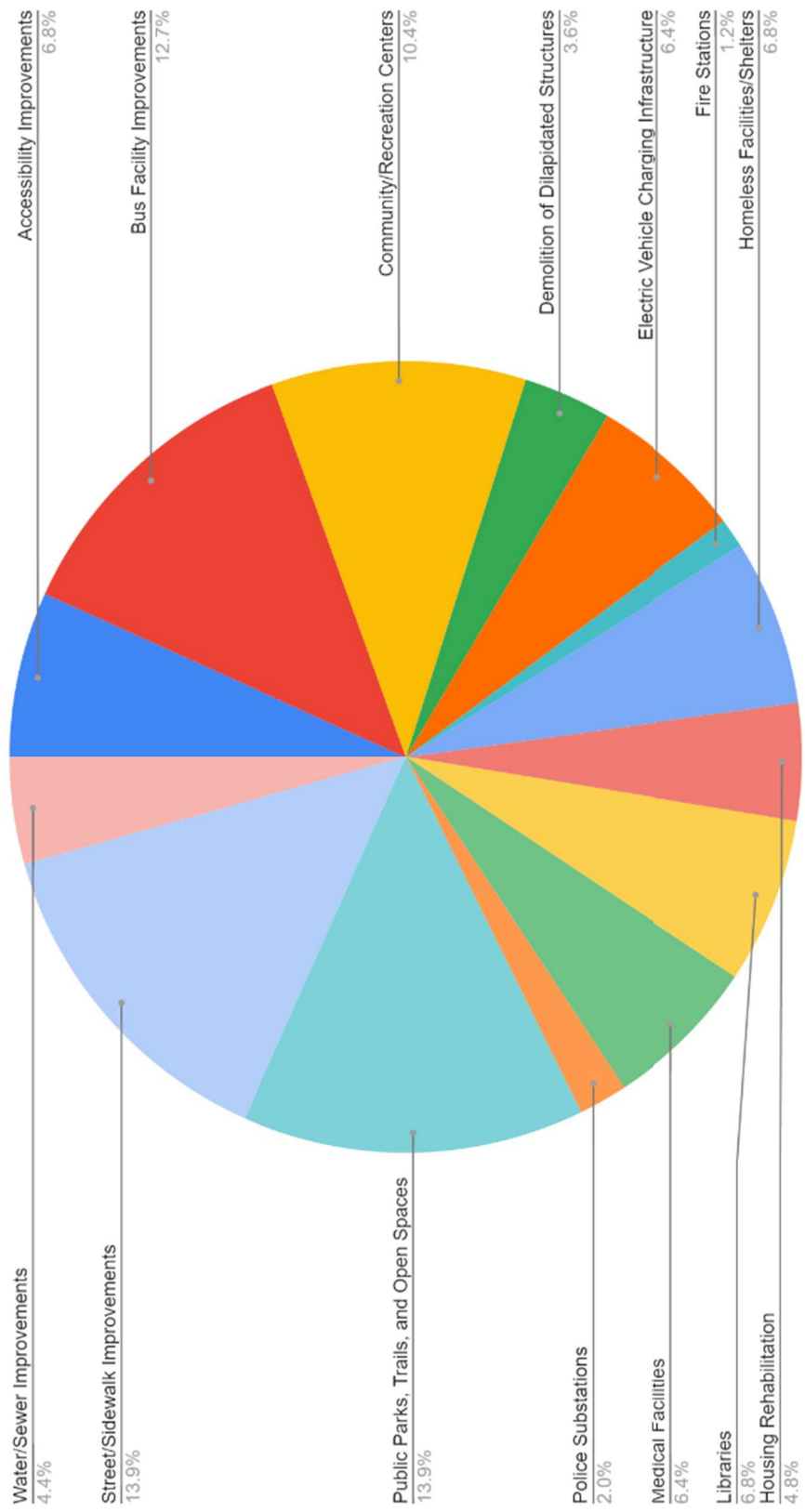
Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?



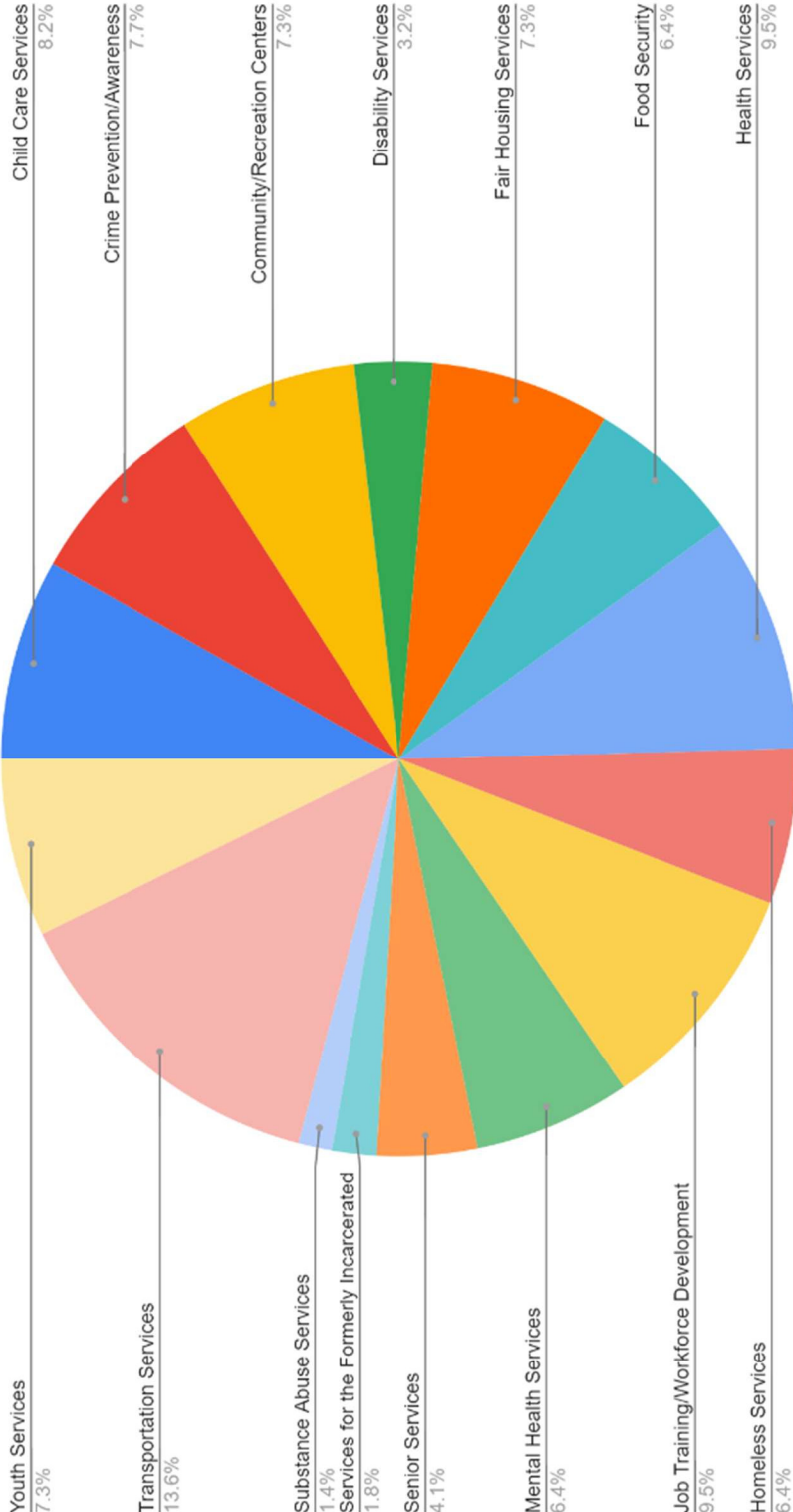
House Repair Needs



What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added/expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

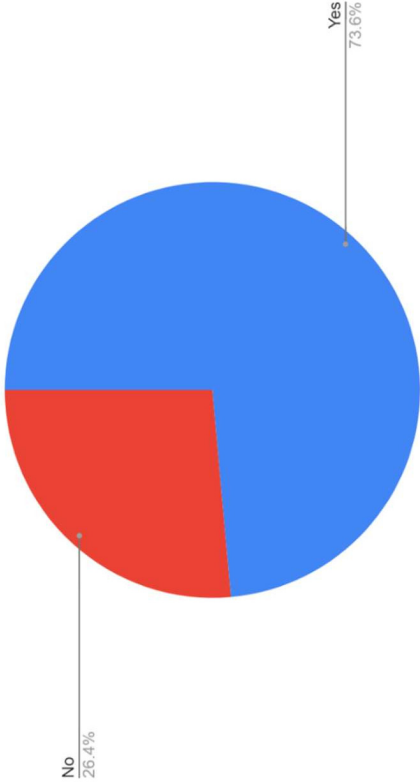


Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

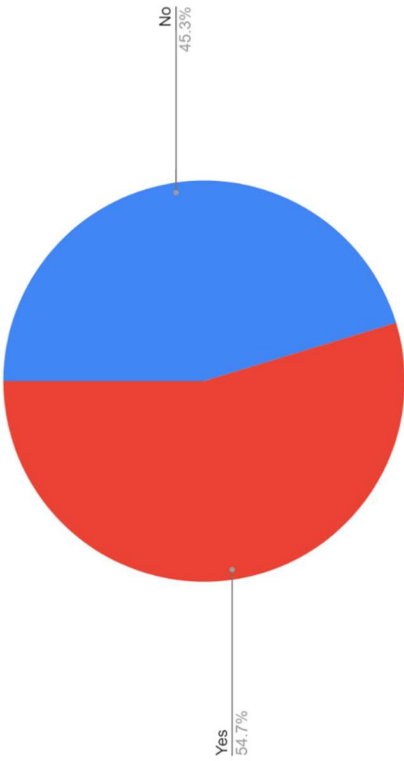


City of Bloomington (Under Age 25 Only) Responses

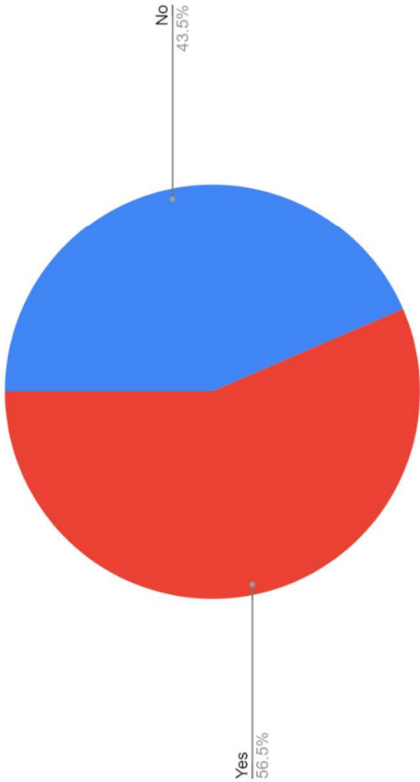
Ability to Find Adequate Housing



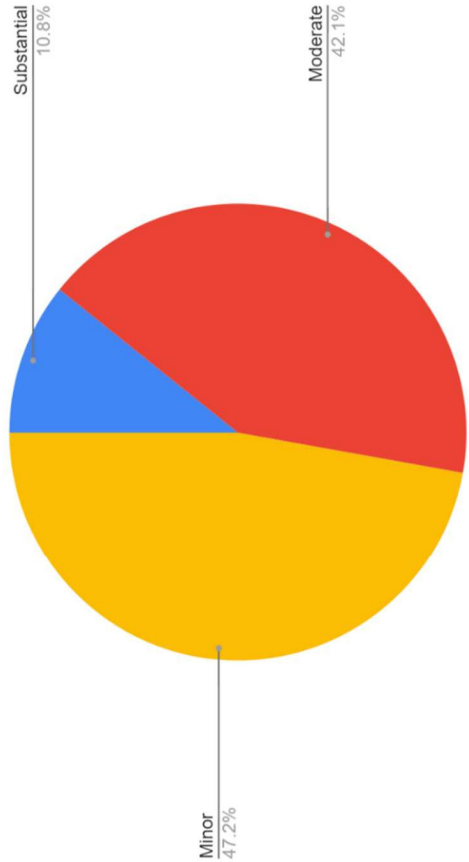
Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency



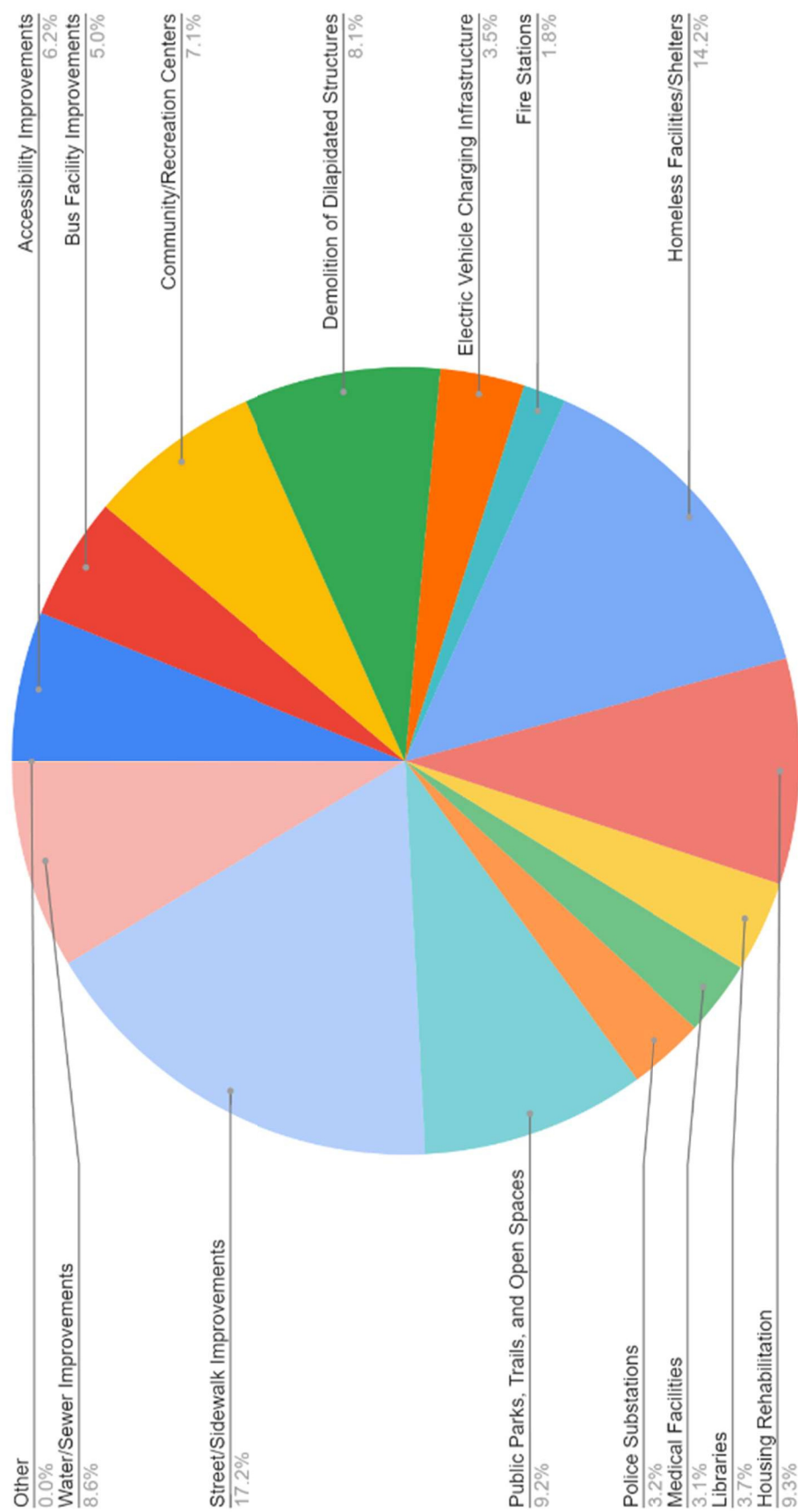
Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?



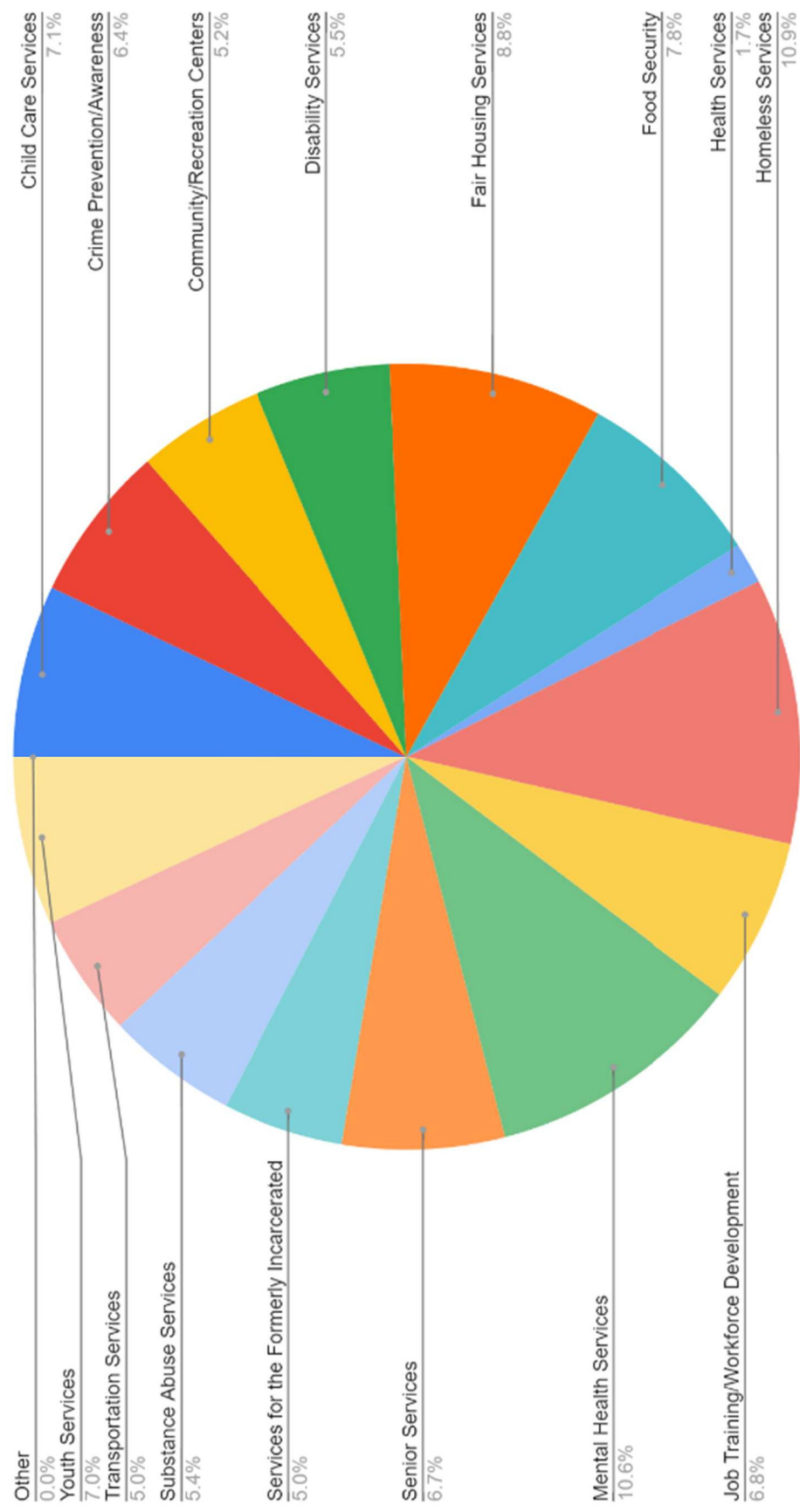
House Repair Needs



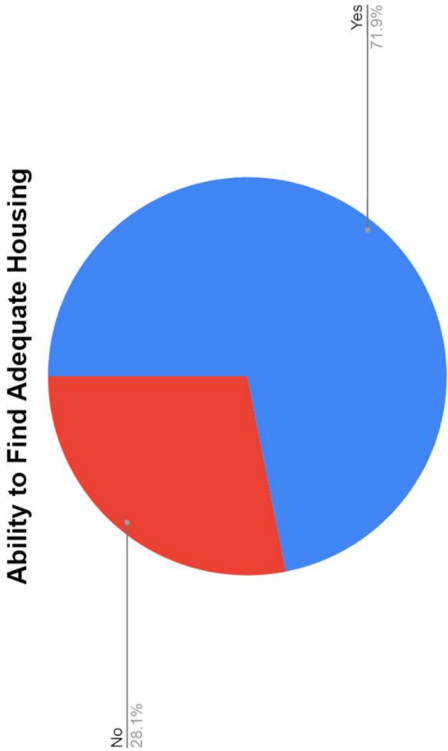
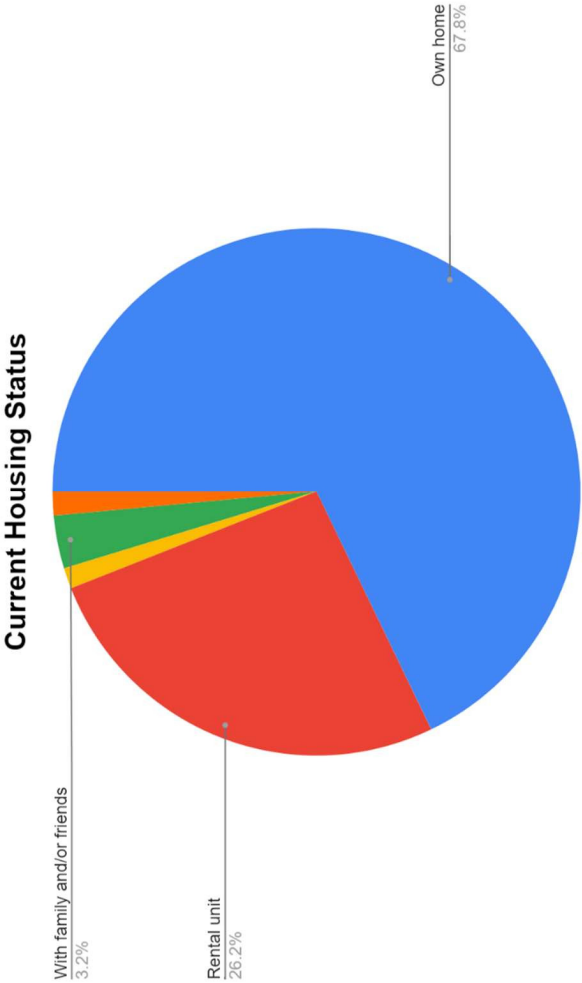
What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



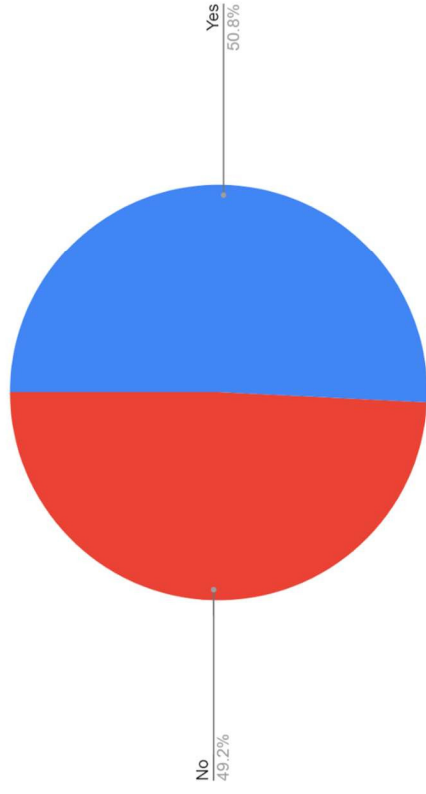
Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



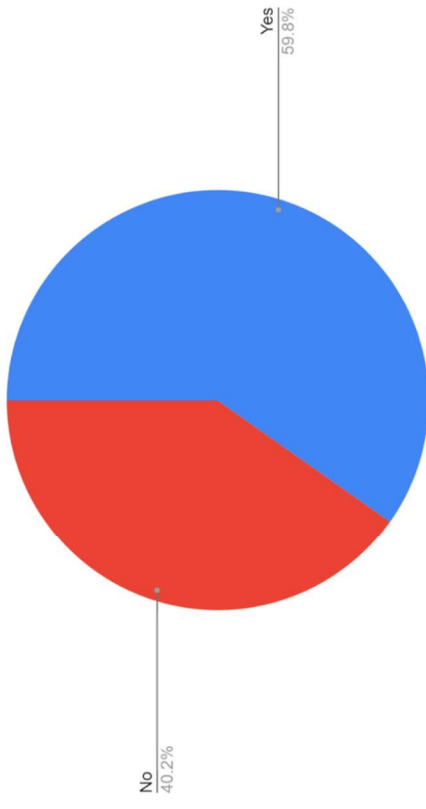
City of Bloomington (Ages 25 to 65 Only) Responses



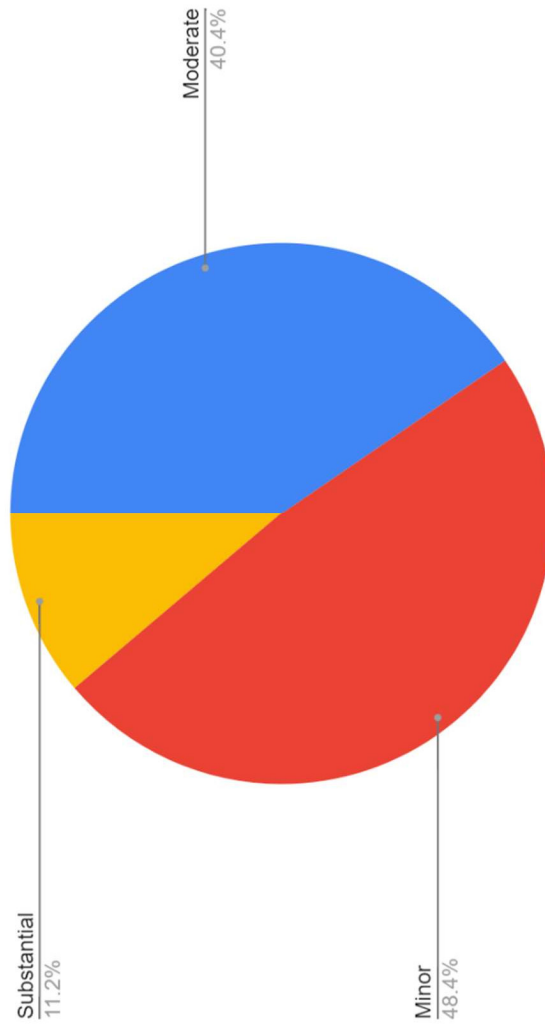
Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency



Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?

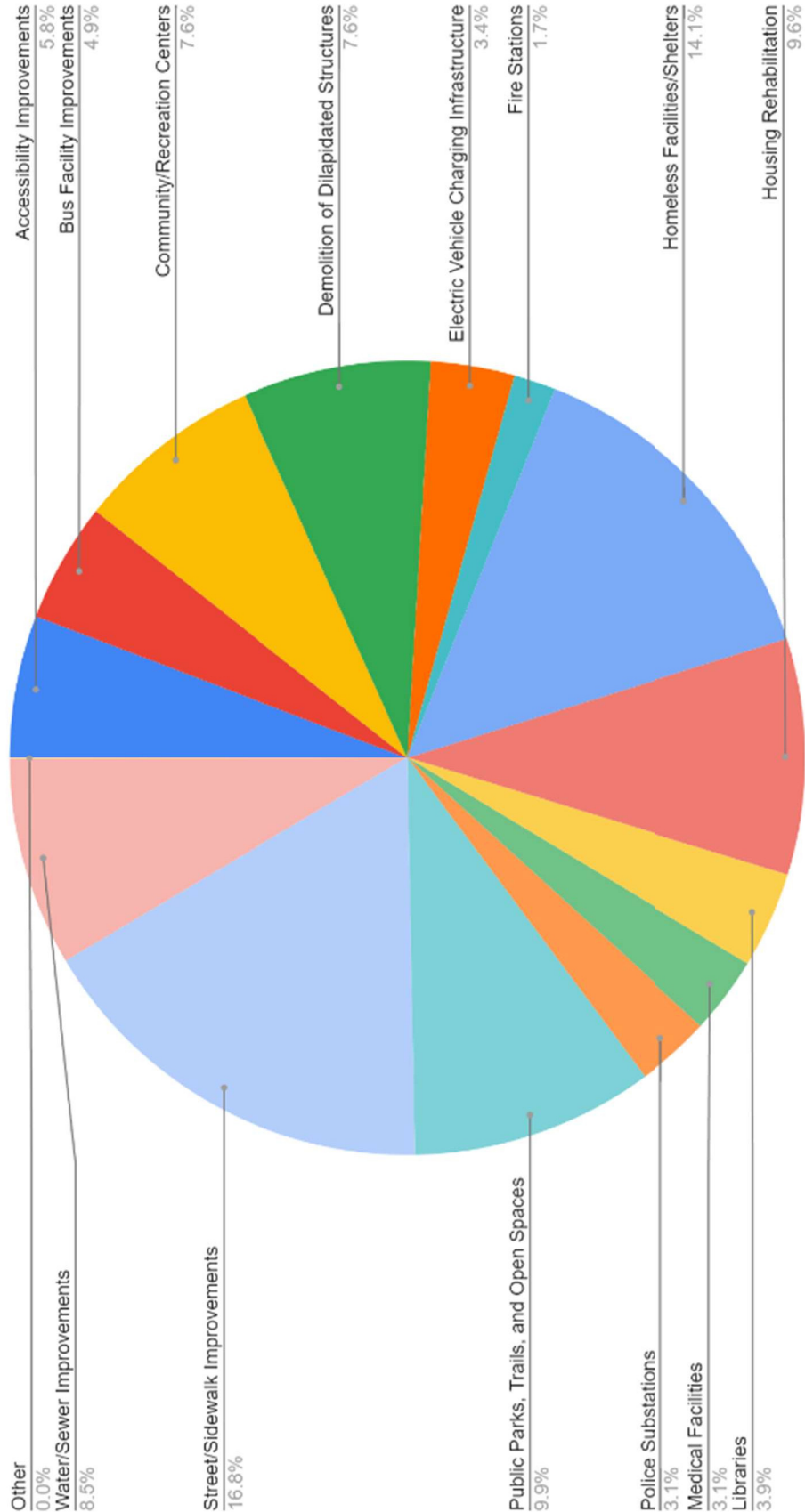


House Repair Needs

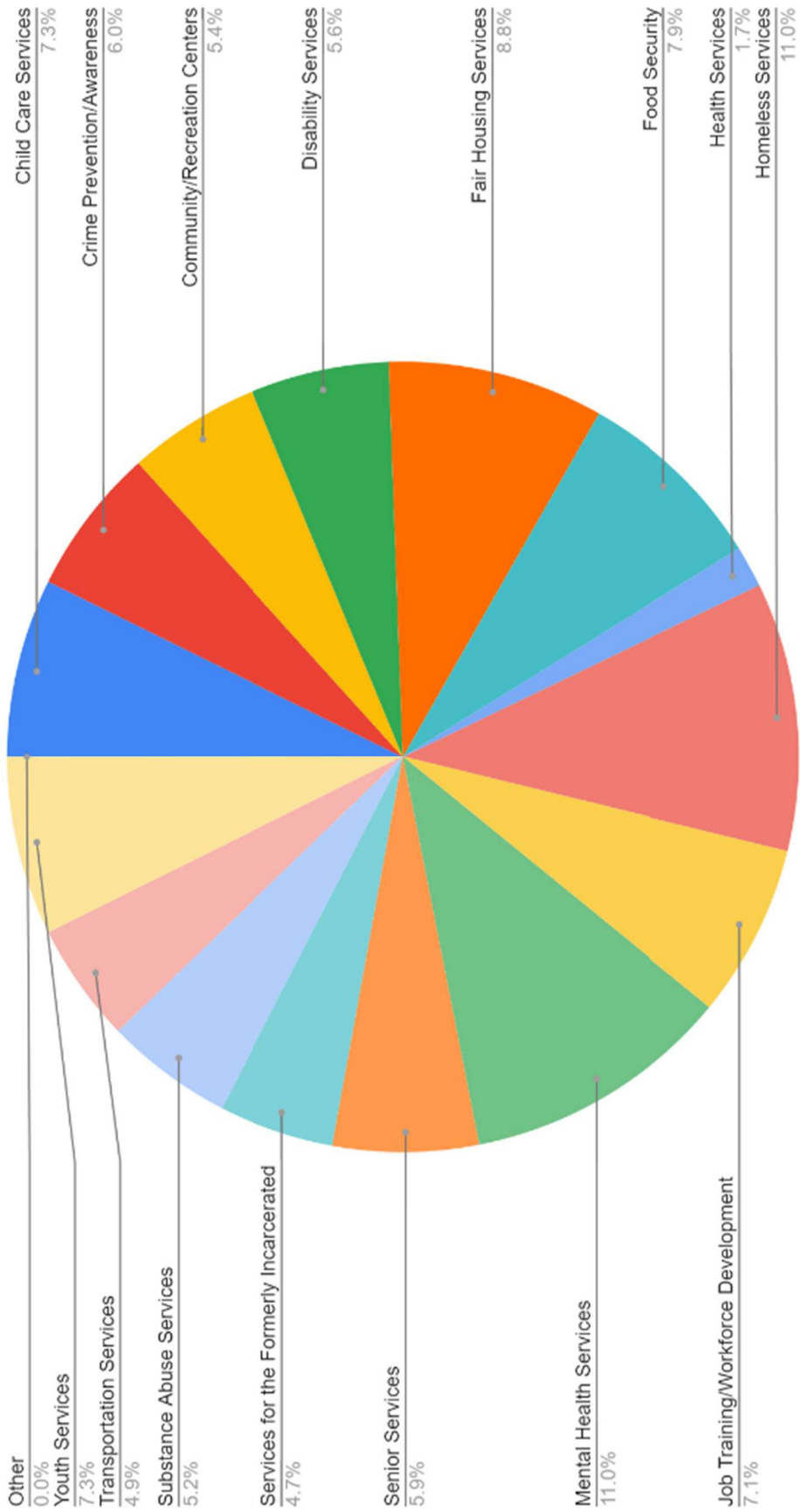


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What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

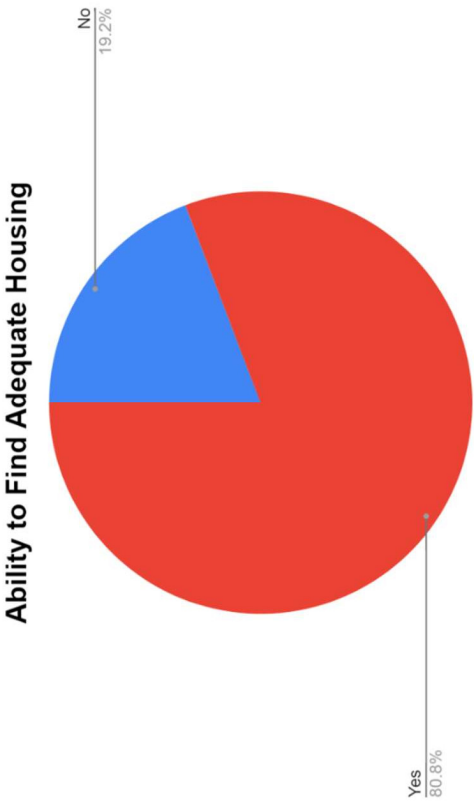
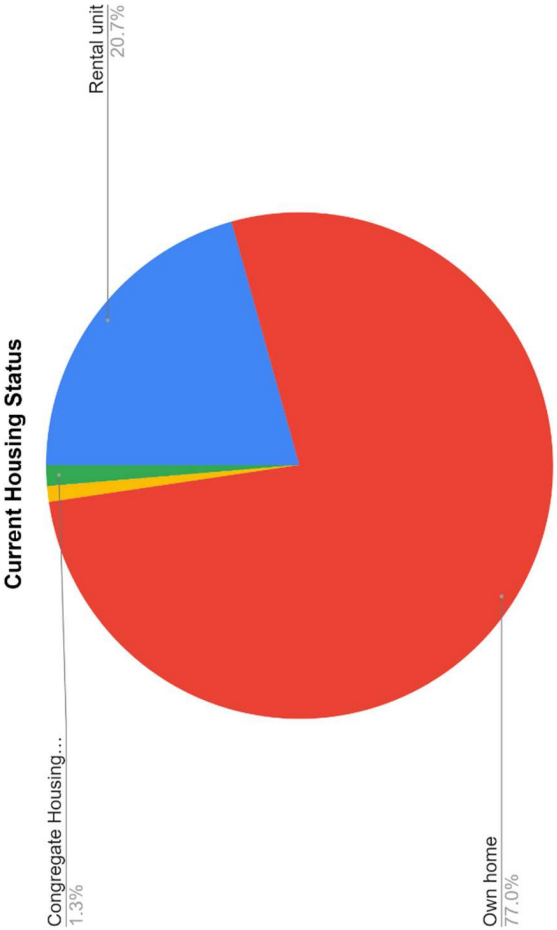


Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

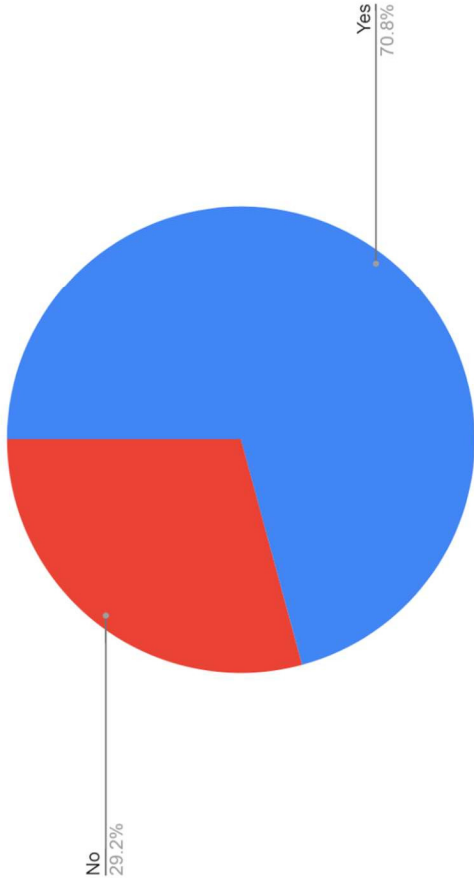


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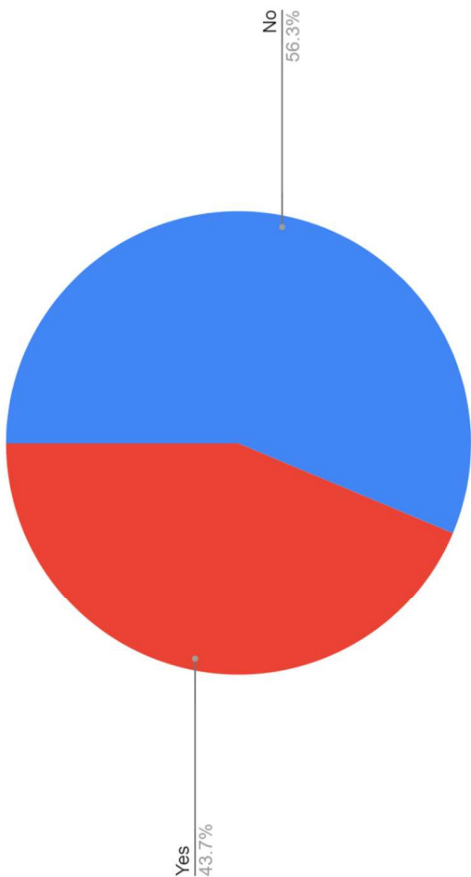
City of Bloomington (Above Age 65 Only) Responses



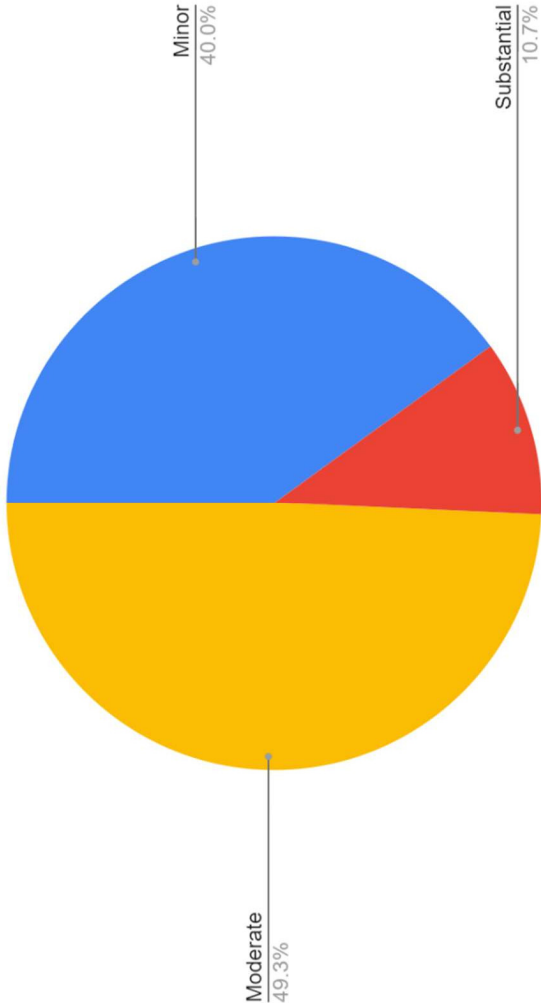
Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency



Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?

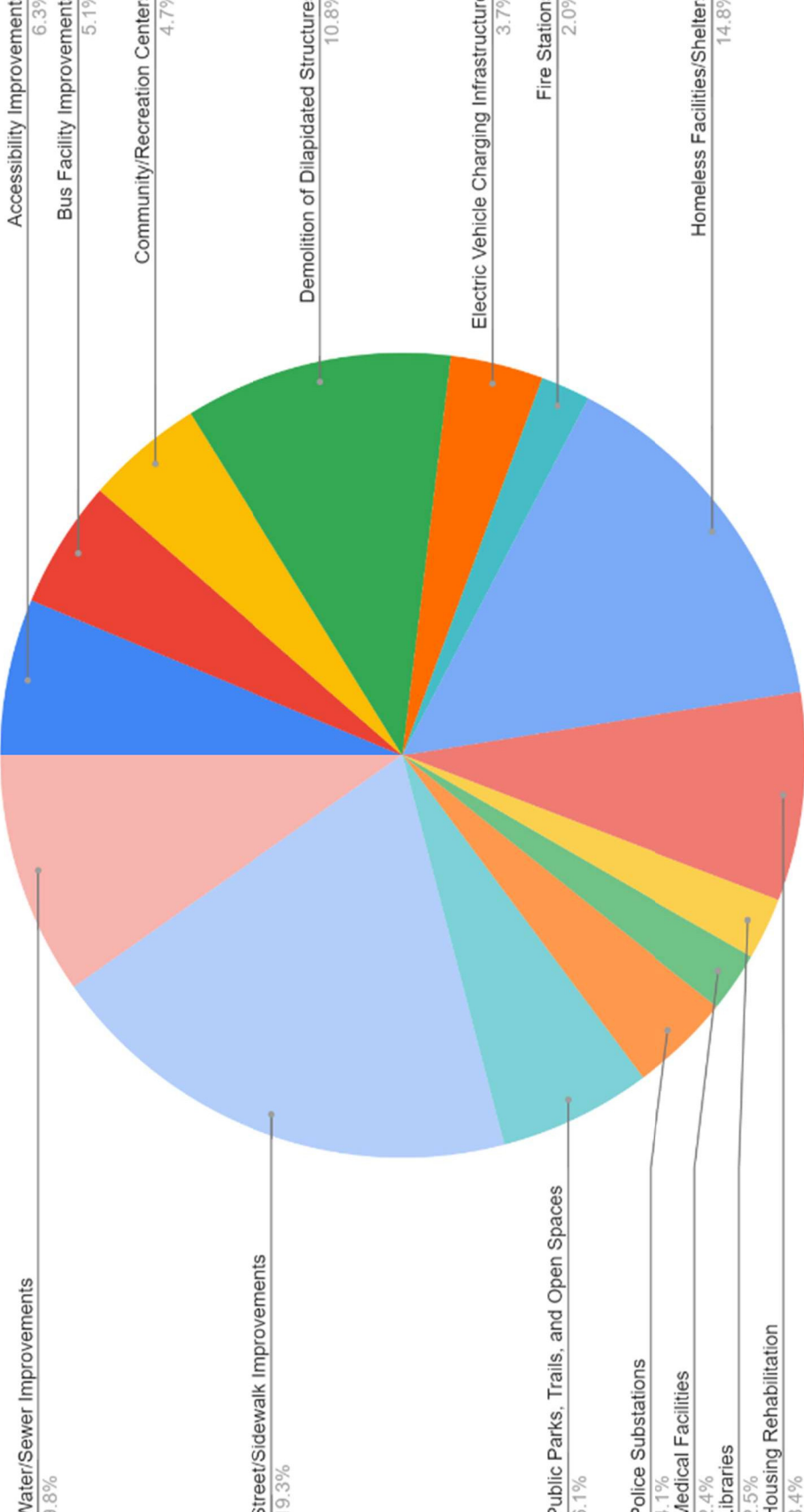


House Repair Needs

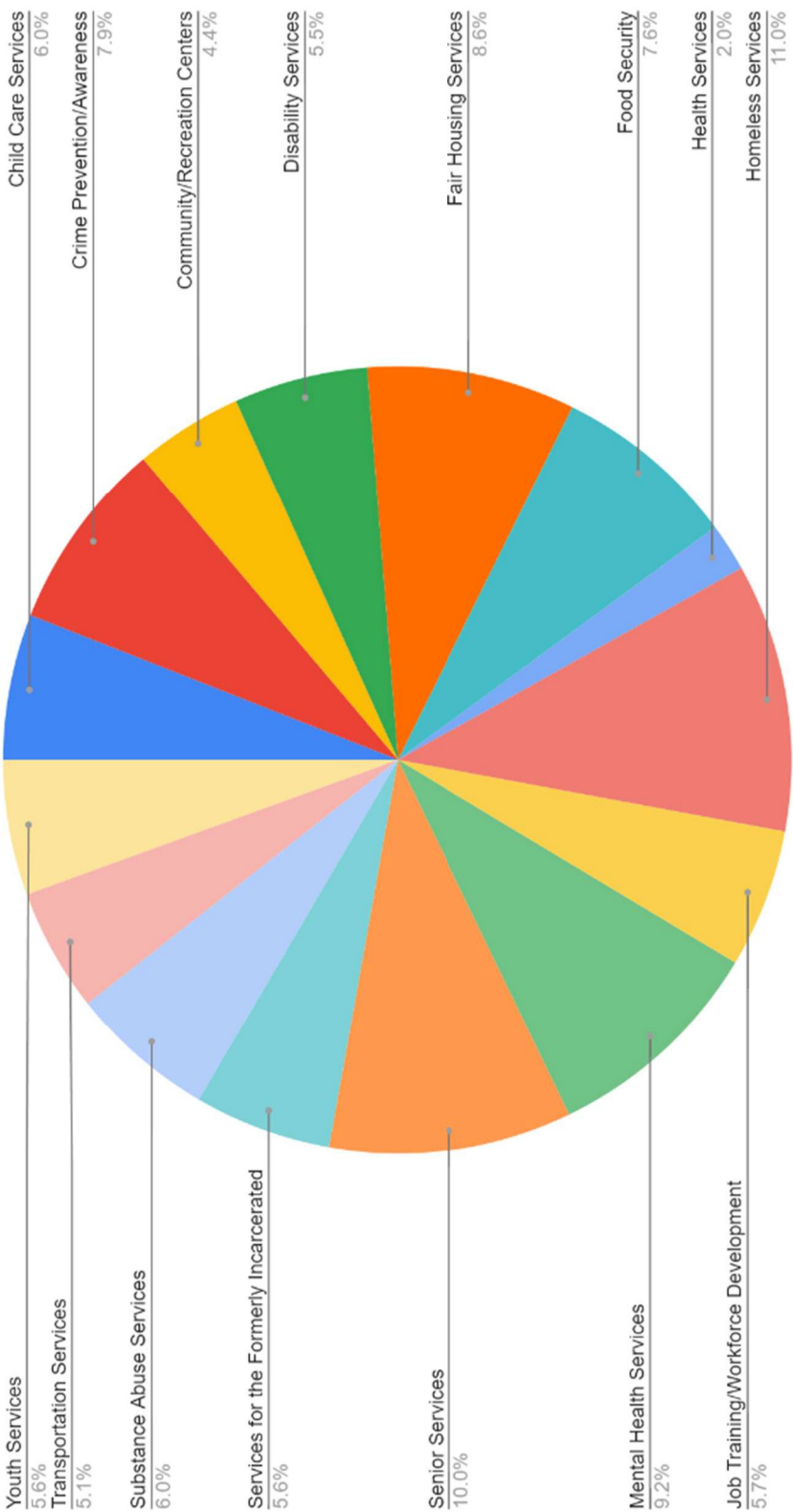


49-DRAFT

What type of public facility/infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

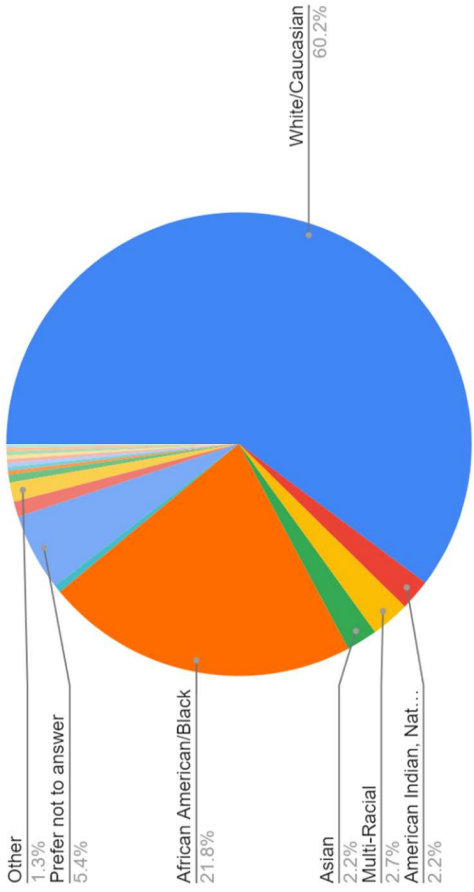


Which public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)

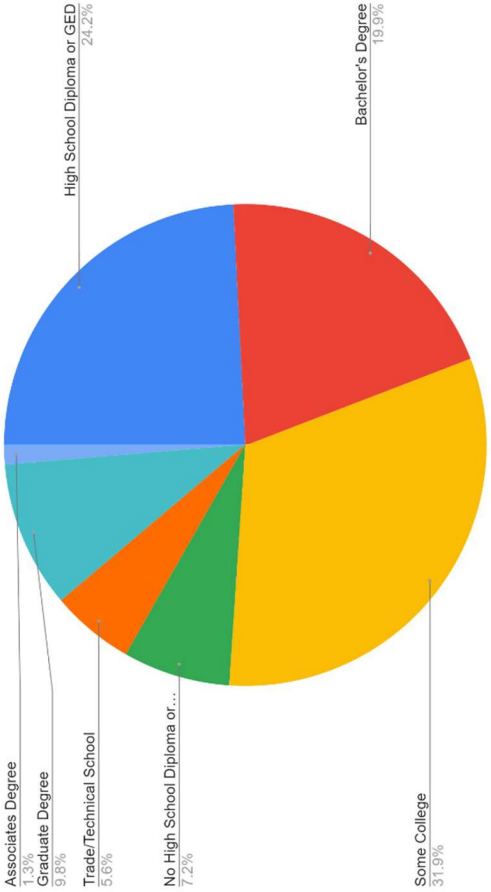


City of Bloomington (Annual Income Under \$50,000 Only) Responses

Race

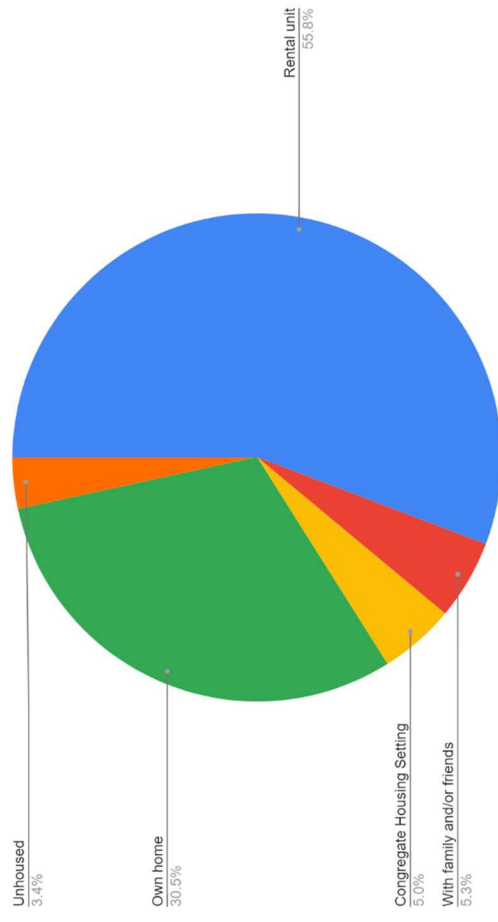


Highest Level of Education

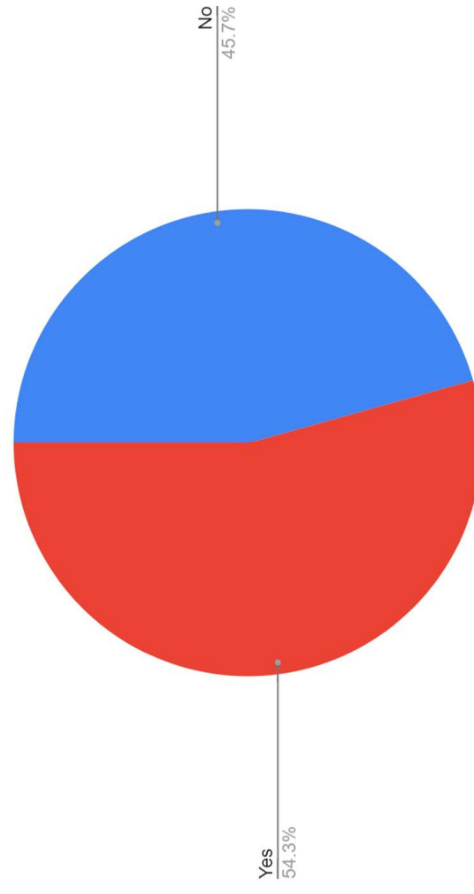


52-DRAFT

Current Housing Status

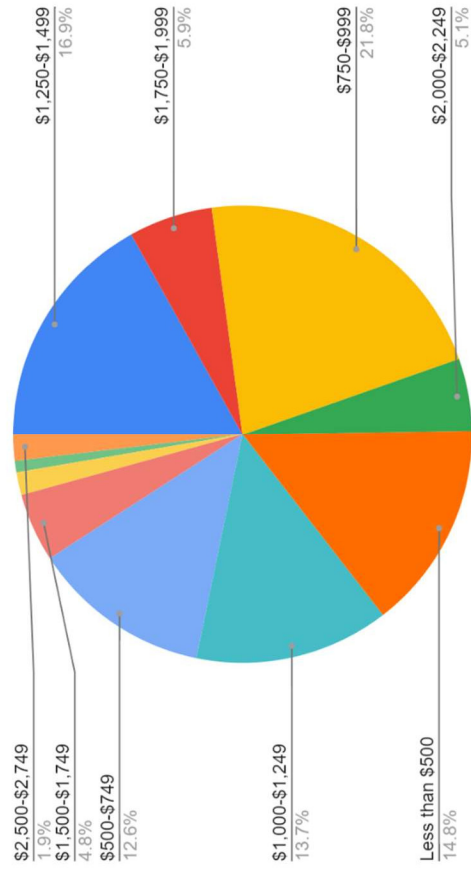


Ability to Find Adequate Housing

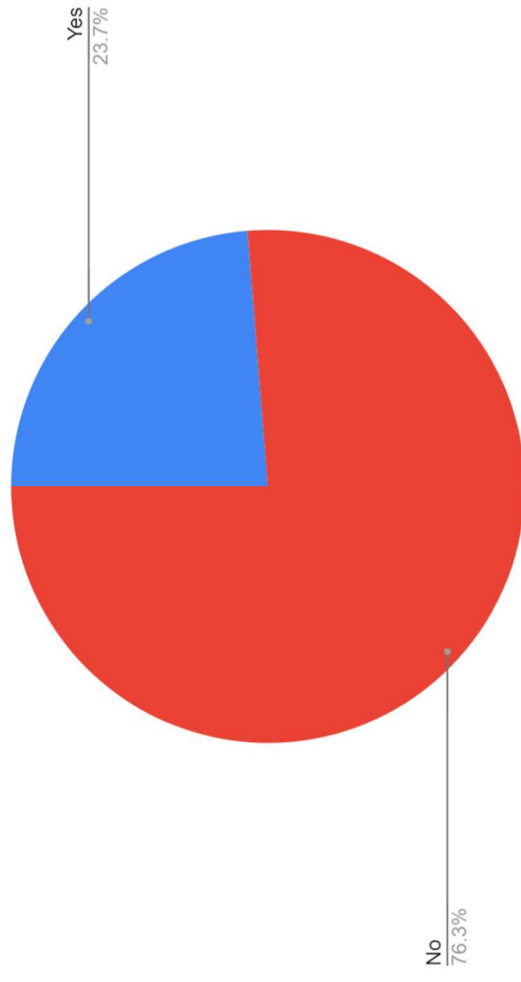


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Monthly Housing Costs

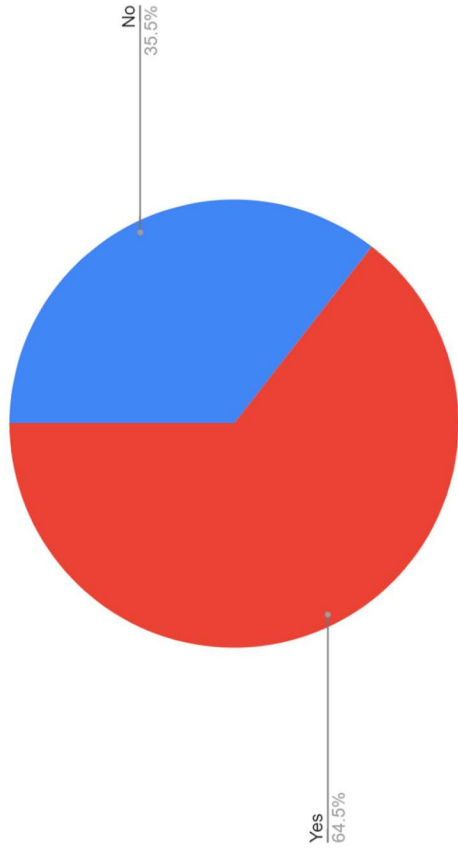


Ability to Cover Household Expenses in Emergency

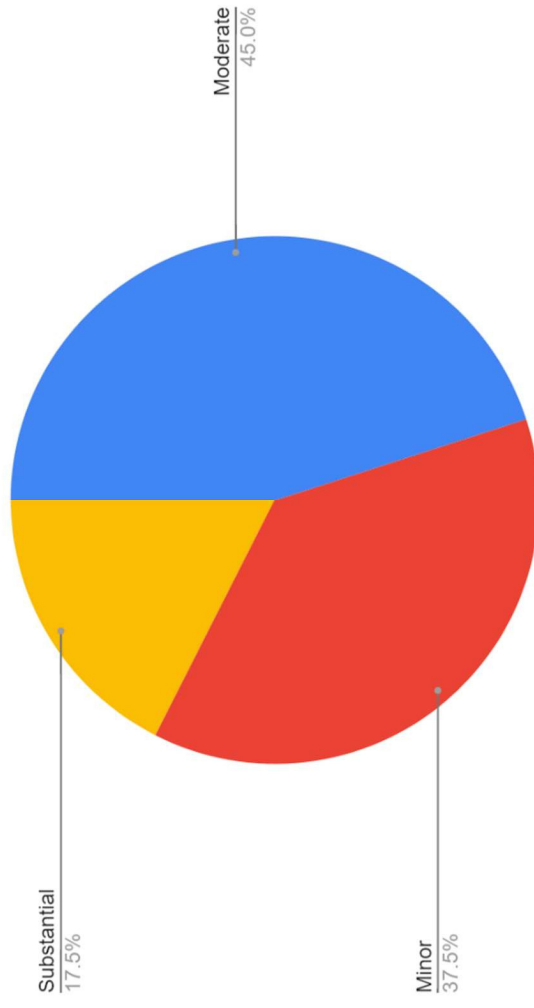


54-DRAFT

Is Current Housing in Need of Repairs?

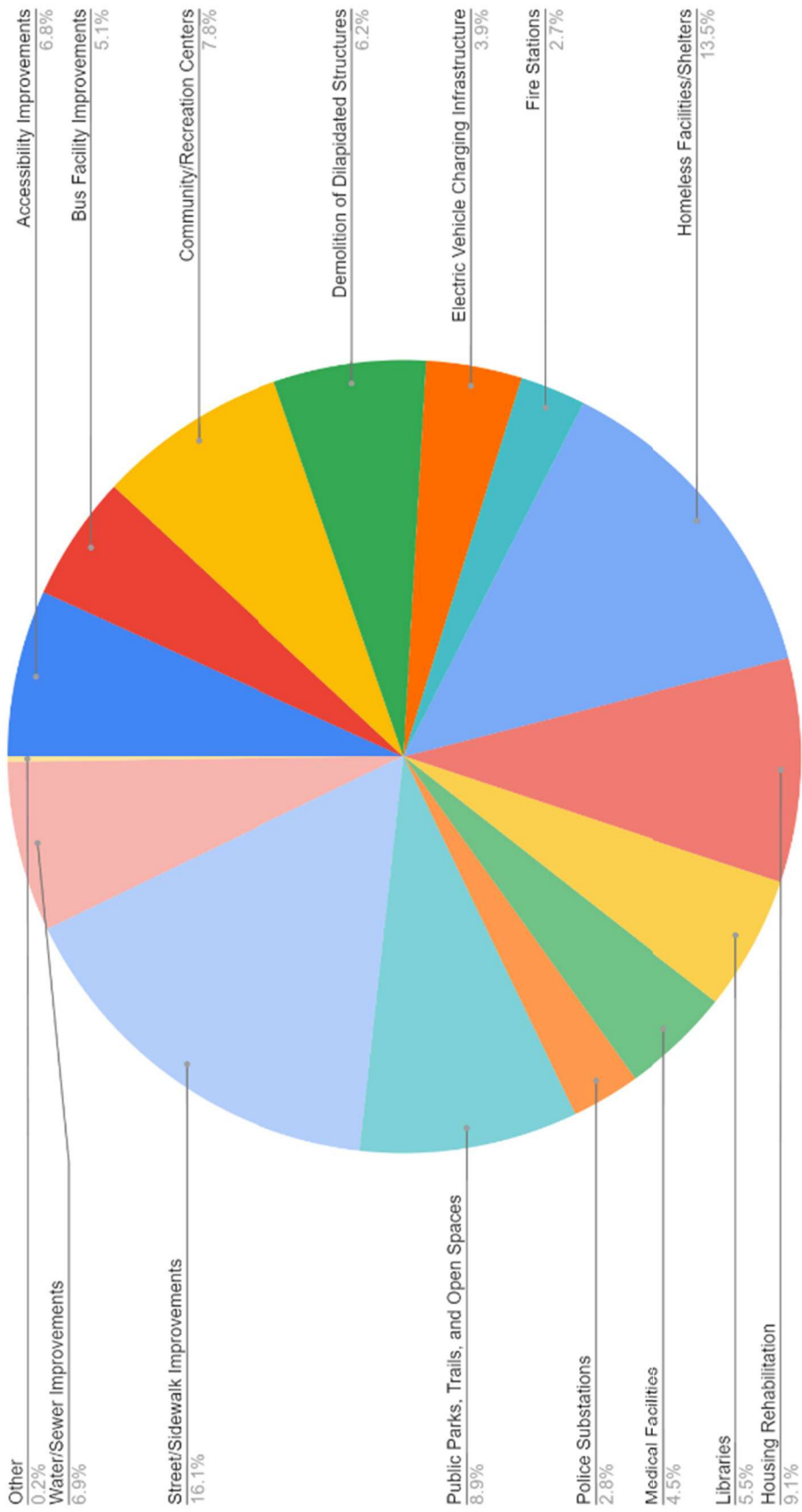


House Repair Needs



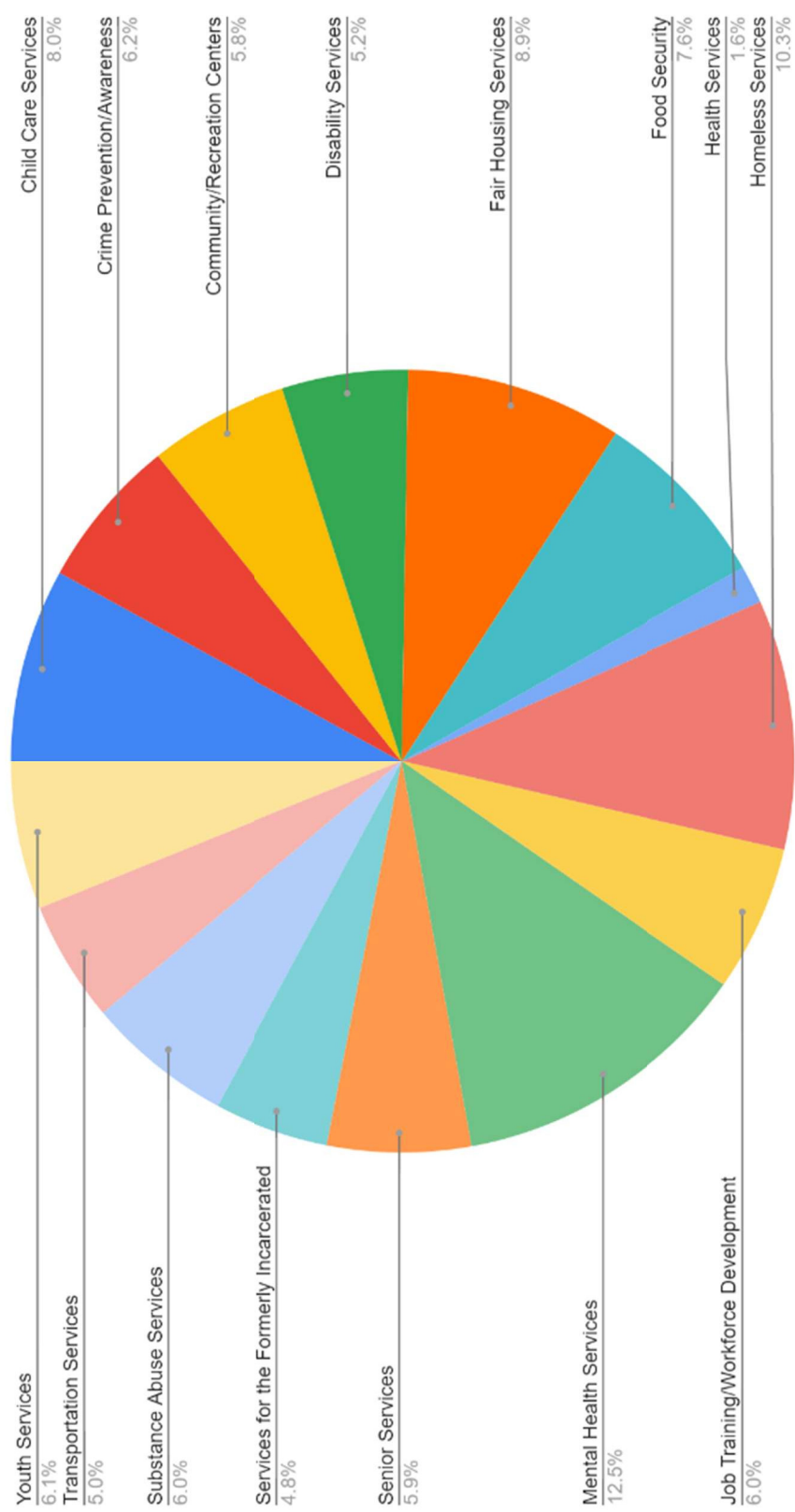
55-DRAFT

What type of public facility or infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community?

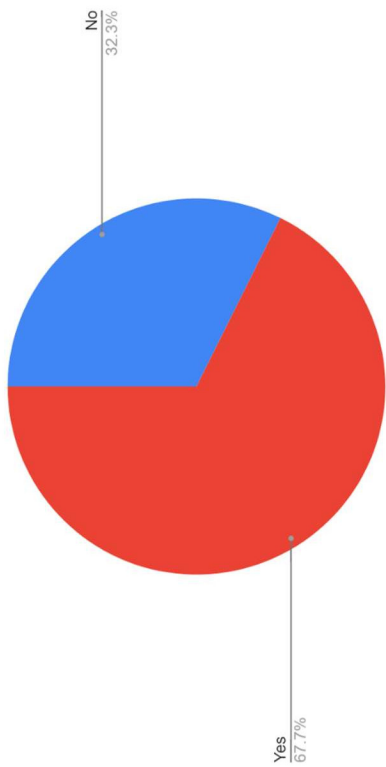


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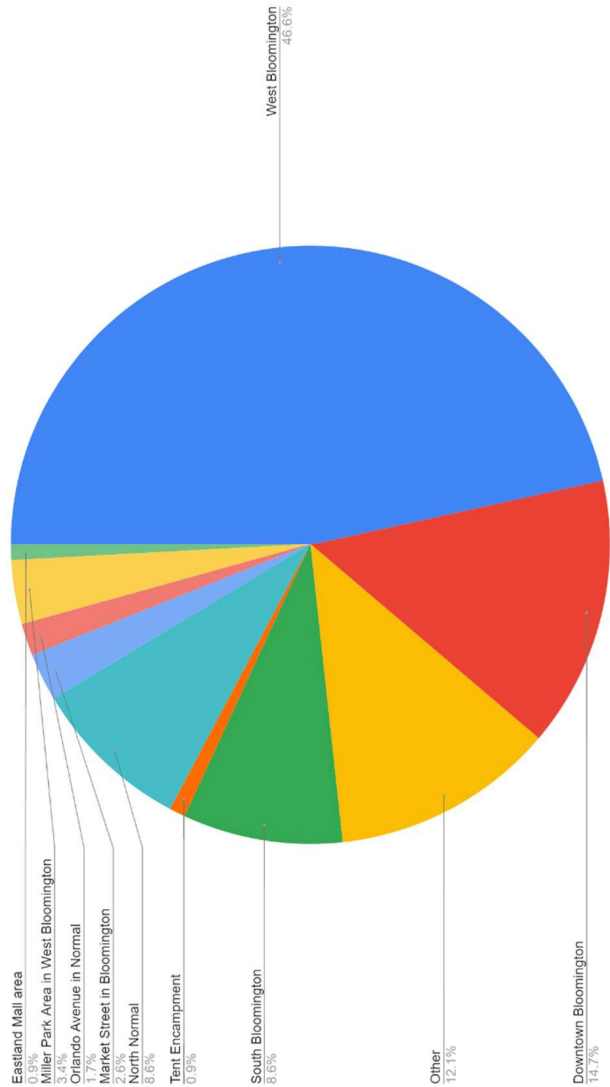
What type of public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? (Select all that apply)



Are there specific neighborhoods/areas that should be targeted for revitalization?



What specific areas should be targeted for revitalization?



Appendix II: Additional Open-Ended Comments from Resident Surveys

Landscaping at houses need to be kept up and if not, people need to be fined. Everyone needs to be held accountable for their property. Landlords included. Driving on the West Bloomington and seeing these properties with people living in them while the front yard is overgrown, and trash everywhere is depressing. If the property is being rented, then the Landlords need to be fined and held accountable for their properties. If it's a homeowner, then they need to be fined. Something needs to be done.
They need to pay more attention to the West Bloomington I live four blocks from Mill Park going west on wood and I feel like our neighborhood gets neglected quite a bit.
Of the ones marked in the previous question, three that are most important to me is water improvements because it's a basic human right and when we run out of water bottles this household depends on the water that taste disgusting. As a woman and a mother of two daughters, the second most important thing we need in this community is better staff for the medical facilities, better policies, and resources/better accessibility for the people who can't advocate for themselves REGARDLESS of age. The third most important thing to see in this community is housing. Requirements for housing needs to be modified and based on net pay. Basing our ability to pay rent/utilities on gross pay is unfair because we're not taking home our gross pay. People are taking home the chump change after being taxed. Raising minimum wage helps but reforming housing qualifications, reasonable rent based on net pay instead of gross wage is a starting place.
West Bloomington could use a lot of help. There are numerous buildings which need to be renovated or torn down. The crime rate is high, and I try to not go anywhere outside after 9pm unless I must. The roads are awful, especially throughout neighborhoods. The astronomically high rate of violence and crime though is what I'm most worried about.
I would like to see us stop "big business housing", meaning, large companies that buy houses across the country to rent which only increases cost of housing for younger people, etc. Pride in ownership is needed to revitalize our cities, and big business isn't in it for pride and community.
Central and west Bloomington currently do not have enough resources to efficiently assist the homeless and mentally disabled. They need resources for mental health, substance abuse, job preparation, and temporary housing and permanent housing. The lack of housing for both homeless people and employed people is a very big issue for the growing population Bloomington currently.
Private Drives are a pandemic in our community. Prairie View North Subdivision is all private drives, and it is going to lead to homelessness of its residents if something is not done soon. Being a private drive means we, as a neighborhood, are responsible for street repair and pond maintenance. Legally, liens could be placed against our homes for thousands and tens of thousands of dollars if a project needs to be done, and the neighborhood does not have the money (which we do not currently have enough). We are private because our developer took advantage of a loophole that should not have existed. The City of Bloomington has benefited from our tax dollars, while neglecting to care for the streets, sidewalks, and pond here. The airport drains water into our pond. The roads are connected to public sewers and drains. We pay property taxes just like other neighborhoods. We already pay a large annual HOA fee, but it is about to get much bigger. Folks have said they cannot afford to live here. These are starter homes, affordable housing. If you get priced out of this neighborhood, you will not be able to find something less expensive. You will be homeless. We are trying to fight to be brought into the City of Bloomington.
Revitalization is great, but then the current residents won't be able to afford the neighborhood in a decade or so after revitalization. If anything, focus on downtown Bloomington and make it a thriving city center.
West Bloomington is sad.
Market street sidewalks and accessibility in that part of the West Bloomington is horrible. This population relies so heavily on non-vehicular modes of transportation but has some of the worst maintained sidewalks with the narrowest access and limited accessibility that I've seen anywhere in Bloomington normal
Yeah, the salvation army needs updates the community service buildings need updated public aid needs updated this town doesn't put anything into helping the homeless or those in need.
The West Bloomington would benefit with continuing crime prevention efforts. I suggest cameras and gun sensors.
We are the home of two major insurance companies and two universities, yet people must travel to go to see rheumatologists, etc. There's no excuse for that.
We need better public transport and more empathy from local politicians. People deserve homes.

59-DRAFT

Maintaining sustainable infrastructure is a core responsibility of the city. Street and sidewalks repair and maintenance, and water/sewer maintenance, is vitally important. We are a well-off community with high paying jobs, high tax rates, and full employment. There is no excuse for having under maintained sidewalks, degraded Street, and outdated sewer/water issues. Maintaining existing infrastructure absolutely should be prioritized over expansion. Separately, homeless issues appear to be getting worse. People who need help with substance abuse/addiction should be moved to rehab facilities. Children in these environments are more likely to be subject to abuse/neglect. It is not compassionate to allow people to live in tents on the street when they are struggling with addiction. There should be constant coordination with churches & non-profits. Public safety and care for homeless are core city functions that are a sign of a healthy community. People should be safe to travel anywhere in town and not have to worry about crime. This is something that makes B/N a great place to live. We shouldn't not succumb to an assumption that these things aren't solvable.
Fair Housing Services (I'm homeless and find it hard to afford housing. Slumlords are even charging ridiculous rates for rent). Homeless Services. There is nowhere to go when the shelters are full. They run us away from everywhere Job Training/Workforce Development.
Accessibility improvements are an absolute must. Many areas have sidewalks in need of repair which causes difficulties for those with disabilities. Handicapped parking in downtown Bloomington was just changed so that they are "enforcing" the 1 1/2-hour parking limit. This is unfair to those with disabilities, as those with disabilities often take longer to complete their business. In addition, if there are people who work in downtown Bloomington who are disabled, they are unable to access handicapped parking. Street are covered in Street/Sidewalk Improvements. Tar just keeps being added, causing a very bumpy roadway which is detrimental to cars and those riding bicycles. In addition, many areas experience flooding due to issues with the sewer systems. Mental Health Services need to be expanded. The county needs to raise its funds for the Center for Human Services, as it cannot provide enough services due to staffing limitations because of funding. Disability services need to be expanded, especially for those with an "invisible" disability, as this population is often ignored and ostracized. Disability awareness and more programs and support groups should be available. There is a large homeless population in Bloomington, and they do not have enough support. They congregate around the parking garages and sleep in the stairwells when they can.
I think everyone would say homelessness is a concern. We continue to relocate them because "out of sight, out of mind." However, we're not fixing the issue. How are we using the federal funding targeting this issue? Are we passing the responsibility off to local organizations who are already strapped? Second, many residents have sewage infrastructure concerns that are too costly for them to address on their own. The damage of not addressing them can be catastrophic. Lastly, many sidewalks need attention on the West side. Additionally, bike lanes should be built. There's a ton of pedestrian traffic in the urban areas and a lack of quality mediums for travel.
Why isn't "More affordable housing" an option on this survey? Why not that while including "housing rehab"? CDBG money can be utilized to encourage the increase of housing stock in this city indirectly, but not one of these options has it on there. How is it possible to understand the community's desire for this if it isn't even an option? This is going to lead to every putting down street/sidewalks and CDBG money to continue in the same path it has always taken in Bloomington- Subsidizing Public Works.
I am concerned that rental monopolies like Young America have too much power and sway over how housing operations within 5 miles of ISU are handled. Old single-family houses (desperately in need by first-time homeowners) continue to be demolished and replaced with mammoth apartment buildings that only rent to students. Families also live close to campus and not all families can afford to own a home. And most students cannot afford the exorbitant rental prices charged at places like The Lodge. Our adult children would like to become homeowners in Blono but cannot find affordable homes to purchase, and their rents continue to skyrocket. Affordable housing is a real problem in our community.
Having a place for homeless to go because living in a Tent Encampment is unacceptable for them as humans. There are several abandoned half standing homes in town that kids could really get hurt in. There should be sidewalks for people to use especially going to the park from Ewing Manor. I don't understand why there are so many patches of Street/Sidewalk Improvements around the city but not fixing the roads properly.
More affordable housing period. Locals are being priced out of the city. We make over 200k and can barely live here.
Tons of people in town need help. There is probably someone in need of help in every neighborhood. And there are a great number of businesses that overcharge. it's hard to find reliable, responsible and affordable help. Many of our local landlords need to be held responsible for the conditions of their rentals. My neighborhood is average. My neighbors have a giant hole in the garage roof and their kitchen floor is sinking. They absolutely can't afford to fix it.

We live in Bloomington but instead often visit Uptown Normal for leisure. There is a lot of potential in downtown Bloomington, however, Uptown Normal is more updated, feels safer (less homelessness and crime, more police presence), and has a more modern feel than downtown Bloomington. However, we have noticed an increase in homeless presence in uptown normal this summer which has been disappointing.
The south side of Bloomington could use revitalization. Promoting grocery stores in the area. Make areas more walkable. Provide sheltered bus stop. Unhoused persons are using the area for shelter, we can revitalize the area to shelter them more.
I would personally love to see everything south of Front Street, west of Gridley Street, and north of Wood Street targeted for revitalization. Close to downtown Bloomington and full of its fair share dilapidated buildings, I can hardly think of a more suitable area for revitalization. Coupled with Bloomington's downtown streetscape project, I believe this could generate substantial development for years to come.
I lost everything to the 2021 floods- city drains are out of date.
I think West Bloomington has so much potential - we moved here from California to find more affordable homes to own and start a family, and we've met a few neighbors here from Chicago for the same reason. But the lack of transport/walkable paths to Downtown is frustrating; the dramatic increase in homeless population has been disappointing, and the lack of fresh food options feels like a reinforcement of the class stratification keeping the West Bloomington down. Developing the old Main Street (W Washington) feels like a no-brainer when so many Rivian employees are now passing through nearby, and expanding safe sidewalks and bike trails to provide access Downtown could help start to encourage foot traffic from a new population and provide relief to the dearth of abandoned buildings.
Downtown Bloomington. Several buildings have stood empty for years and the last time I saw the State Farm building, only 2 offices were filled in this 13-story structure. Demolish the crumbling buildings and provide more housing so we no longer need a Tent Encampment.
Corporations have gobbled up all the small starter homes. Rent is too high and buying a small starter home is almost impossible.
Affordable housing, better roads, and community outreach could all make this town a bigger pleasure to live in. I'm very excited for the downtown Bloomington improvements, and I'm a big advocate for local government and supporting your community, but the state of the affordable housing crisis and the lack of infrastructure improvements is embarrassing.
So many abandoned buildings. It is lovely to visit Uptown Normal! It is always clean, no homeless asking for money, plenty of free parking even on the street. The city needs to take more consideration into making it nice and where the community wants to visit and stay.
Housing repairs for the elderly at low or no cost.
General West Bloomington. Overgrown brush in areas for one. I feel like there is a clear divide when looking at east and west. Everything just looks cleaner. Finding somewhere for homeless to sleep besides outside the blood bank and in front of the old Pantagraph. The parking garages and the stairwells. I worked at the arena, and it would be 0 degrees outside, and people would be sleeping in the elevator spaces for warmth.
West Bloomington...uncared for and uninhabited homes... Crack down on the landlords
Downtown and the West Bloomington are crucial. Downtown because the nucleus must be healthy for the health of the organism as a whole and the West Bloomington because the inequity on the West Bloomington causes so many of our other problems
For Towanda Plaza a new facade on the buildings and some small spacers with trees and flowers in the parking lot (maybe some old-style streetlamp style lighting) would go a long way. And find whoever owns that strip of land between Community Players (CPT) and Towanda Ave and convince them to just donate it to CPT so they can maintain and care for it. They would do a far better job than what's not being done by the current owner. Just that whole section needs some love. If a park (as mentioned above) were there, and more invested on giving all those business areas a face-lift, especially with CPT getting ready for their big renovations and revitalizing themselves going into 102 years and the Shakespeare Festival/Ewing Cultural Center right there (not to mention the Country Club and BHS).
West Bloomington neighborhoods are seeing the worst decline. Tearing down the abandoned homes so other housing can be built is a start. Landlords are not being forced to maintain adequate housing and the areas west of the Fire Station 1 - Headquarters area are seeing a lot of decline. I don't consider this area safe any longer.

Appendix III: Resident Survey

Please tell us about yourself!

Do you currently live in Bloomington or Normal?
☐ Bloomington ☐ Normal ☐ Neither

How long have you lived in your community?

- ☐ Less than 2 years
- ☐ 2-5 years
- ☐ 6-15 years
- ☐ 16-25 years
- ☐ More than 25 years
- ☐ Born and raised here

Age

Gender

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65+
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Non-Binary
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Race (Check all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian or Native Alaskan
- ☐ African American/Black
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ White
- ☐ Multi-Racial
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity

- ☐ Latino/Hispanic
- ☐ Non-Latino/Hispanic
- ☐ Do you consider English as your second language?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Highest Level of Education Completed

- ☐ No High School Diploma or GED
- ☐ High School Diploma or GED
- ☐ Trade/Technical School
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ Graduate Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Other

Household Income (All income sources)

- ☐ Under \$25,000
- ☐ \$25,000-\$49,999
- ☐ \$50,000-\$74,999
- ☐ \$75,000-\$99,999
- ☐ \$100,000-\$124,999
- ☐ \$125,000-\$149,999
- ☐ \$150,000-\$174,999
- ☐ Over \$175,000

Housing Status (Where you currently live)

- ☐ Own home
- ☐ Rental unit
- ☐ With family/friends
- ☐ Unhoused
- ☐ In a Congregate Housing Setting (Nursing Home/Shelter/Group Home/Dorm)

Household Size (People)

- ☐ 1-2
- ☐ 3-5
- ☐ 6+

How to submit your survey:

By Mail:

McLean County Regional Planning Commission
115 E. Washington Street, Suite M-103
Bloomington, IL 61701

Drop-off Locations:

For a complete list of survey drop-off locations, call MCRPC at **309-828-4331** or visit **mcplan.org**

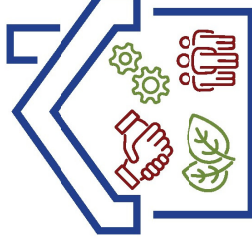
Electronic:

Visit **mcplan.org** or scan the QR Code below.



Participation is voluntary and responses are confidential. Surveys must be submitted by **Aug. 31, 2024**.

Want to provide input at an in-person meeting or virtual meeting? Visit **mcplan.org** for public meeting dates and locations.



**COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
BLOCK GRANT**

City of Bloomington
Town of Normal

RESIDENT SURVEY
for community development

2025-2029 Consolidated Plan



62-DRAFT

Each year, Bloomington-Normal receives about \$1 million in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. These funds can be used for eligible activities in the areas of housing, economic development, public facilities, public services and planning/administration. All funded activities must meet one of the following national objectives:

- Assisting low- and moderate-income households
- Eliminating or preventing conditions of blight
- Responding to an urgent need

This survey helps provide insight on what is important to our community and informs local governments on how to best allocate grant dollars over the next five years.

Housing

Are you able to easily find safe, sanitary, and affordable housing in your community?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Approximately how much does your household spend on monthly housing costs (mortgage/rent/utilities/taxes/insurance/etc.)? *Do not include other monthly expenses such as food, gas, child care.*

- ☐ Less than \$500 ☐ \$500-\$749
☐ \$750-\$999 ☐ \$1,000-\$1,249
☐ \$1,250-\$1,499 ☐ \$1,500-\$1,749
☐ \$1,750-\$1,999 ☐ \$2,000-\$2,249
☐ \$2,500-\$2,749 ☐ \$2,750-\$2,999
☐ Over \$3,000

Would you be able to cover three or more months of household expenses in an emergency?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is your current housing unit in need of repairs or improvements?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how would you describe the housing repair need? *(Check one)*

- ☐ Minor ☐ Moderate ☐ Substantial

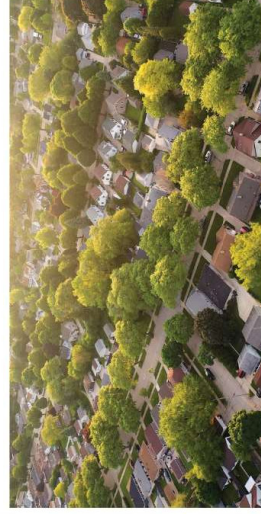
Public Facilities

What type of public facility or infrastructure improvements would you like to see added or expanded in your community? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Accessibility Improvements
☐ Bus Facility Improvements
☐ Community/Recreation Centers
☐ Demolition of Dilapidated Structures
☐ Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
☐ Fire Stations
☐ Homeless Facilities/Shelters
☐ Housing Rehabilitation
☐ Libraries
☐ Medical Facilities
☐ Police Substations
☐ Public Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces
☐ Street/Sidewalk Improvements
☐ Water/Sewer Improvements
☐ Other *(Please specify below):*

Of those marked above, pick the three most important to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Public Services

What type of public services would you like to see added or expanded in your community? *(Select all that apply)*

- ☐ Child Care Services
☐ Crime Prevention/Awareness
☐ Community/Recreation Centers
☐ Disability Services
☐ Fair Housing Services
☐ Food Insecurity
☐ Health Services
☐ Homeless Services
☐ Job Training/Workforce Development
☐ Mental Health Services
☐ Senior Services
☐ Services for the Formerly Incarcerated
☐ Substance Abuse Services
☐ Transportation Services
☐ Youth Services
☐ Other *(Please specify below):*

Of those marked above, pick the three most important to you:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are there specific neighborhoods or areas within your community that should be targeted for revitalization?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please provide the name of the neighborhood or describe the area.

- _____



REGULAR AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.B.

FOR COUNCIL: November 18, 2024

WARD IMPACTED: City-Wide Impact

SUBJECT: Consideration and Action on Approving the 2024 Tax Levy Estimate for the City of Bloomington, as requested by the Finance Department.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: The proposed Property Tax Levy Estimate be approved in the amount of \$26,320,384.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK:

Goal 1. Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services

STRATEGIC PLAN SIGNIFICANCE:

Objective 1a. Budget with adequate resources to support defined services and level of services

BACKGROUND:

Rate and EAV:

The calculation of the property tax rate is produced by taking the tax levy, a fixed amount, and dividing that by the Equalized Assessed Value ("EAV"). The final EAV will not be produced until January 1st, 2025, therefore, the City must adopt its levy based on preliminary estimates.

Tax Formula: Requested Levy / Preliminary EAV = Tax Rate

The City of Bloomington uses the preliminary EAV provided by the McLean County Supervisor of Assessments for the upcoming tax year. This year the preliminary EAV, as of October 11th, was \$2,484,313,944. That is a \$236.2M increase over the prior year's final EAV of \$2,248,095,820. The City anticipates some EAV challenges to be successful prior to the final EAV being set, as well as some adjustments to properties exempt from value increases, and therefore proposes reducing the EAV to \$2,469,313,944 (a reduction of approximately \$15M) – for purposes of providing this Estimate. That estimate total results in a \$221.2M - 9.84% increase in EAV over the 2023 final.

What is the Levy Used For:

The City's tax levy helps fund various components of the annual budget including debt service, parks, public safety protection, and pensions. While costs have increased significantly, the 2023 levy, for FY2025 budgetary funding, was held flat from the previous year at \$22.3M. This resulted in a reduction in the City tax rate from 1.089% to .993%.

The public safety pensions have continued to rise and, as set forth in more detail below, to help cover the rising costs, City staff is recommending the tax levy rate be increased by .07 this year to capture some of the EAV growth and to go directly to pay public safety pension costs.

Public Safety Pensions:

Public Safety Pensions are the largest component of the tax levy. For 2023, the combined Fire and Police Pension levy was \$9.6M / 43% of the total. Council has approved a 100% funding target policy by 2040. Annually, the City employs a licensed actuary to calculate the amount that should be contributed to these pensions in order to meet this target. City code authorizes the tax levy and utility taxes as funding sources. Due to significant increases in the contribution requirement, and since no growth was captured last year, the funds available from those sources are \$3M short for FY2025. Accordingly, the City has had to commit other funding sources to cover this \$3M shortfall (i.e., transfer money from the general fund). Complicating this further, the public safety pensions are projected to increase by another \$1M in FY2026, meaning that since the property tax levy and utility tax are not enough to cover the costs, the Council will need to transfer \$4M (instead of \$3M) from the general fund to cover the shortfall in funding.

If Council increases the rate .07 to 1.066%, the City will be able to add another \$2,000,000 directly to the Fire Pension Levy for a total of \$6,896,000 in that levy and another \$2,000,000 directly to the Police Pension Levy for a total of \$6,708,000 in that levy. While this increases the total levy over 17%, due to the growth in EAV, this again only requires an increase of .07 to the tax levy rate.

FY2026 / FY2027 Budgetary Concerns:

City staff are recommending an additional .07 be added to the tax levy rate solely to help cover pension costs. Although staff are looking at other revenue losses and cost increases, staff is not recommending the Council go back up to the historic rate of 1.089%. Rather, staff are looking at other ways to trim the budget and fill other gaps.

As an overview of other projected upcoming revenue losses and cost increases that staff have visibility on, staff are focused on: (1) the loss of the 1% grocery tax starting on January 1, 2026; and (2) lower vacancy savings due to more successful hiring of fire department and police personnel.

For the 1% grocery tax, staff are projecting a revenue loss of \$750,000 in FY2026 and then \$3,000,000 in FY2027 after a full fiscal year of the repeal has been in effect. For the vacancy savings, the City had historically budgeted \$2,000,000 in personnel costs for fire and police that would not actually be spent. With improved hiring practices and changes to requirements, this "savings" is no longer being realized.

According to the above, if nothing else changes, staff is projecting at least a \$2,750,000 deficit in FY2026 and a \$5,000,000 deficit in FY2027. Again, to address this and as opposed to putting this additional burden on the taxpayers, staff has already began exploring ways to cut the budget and find other savings.

As set forth above, if the property tax levy is not utilized to address the increased public safety pension costs, this will add projected deficits.

2024 Alternative Tax Levy Options:

If the Council chose to keep the levy at the recently historic rate of 1.089%, the levy amount would be \$26,720,384.

If the Council chose to keep the levy at the same rate as last year at .99%, the levy amount

would be \$24,520,384.

If the Council chose to keep levy amount flat at \$22,320,384, the rate would be .904%.

Staff Recommendation: Levy Request of \$26,320,384:

Staff recommends the Pension Coverage option of adding \$4M to the levy - to be committed evenly to the Police and Fire Public Safety Pensions. This would bring the City in compliance with its own code, demonstrate to the rating agencies, the community, and the City's first responders that the City is solidly committed to its funding policy, and address the FY2026 and a portion of the FY2027 anticipated budgetary shortfall. The estimated rate would be 1.066%. This is higher than the prior year of .993%, but lower than previous years' average of 1.09%.

Please see exhibit FIN 1B for historical levy and rate information. The exhibit also highlights the impact on a residential property owner – providing scenarios for both a flat assessment and one that has increased by 9% = the approximate average increase not including new construction.

Tax Levy Procedure:

The calculation of the property tax rate is produced by taking the tax levy, a fixed amount, and dividing that by the EAV. The final EAV will not be produced until January 1st, 2025, therefore, the City must adopt its levy based on preliminary estimates.

Tax Formula: Requested Levy / Preliminary EAV = Tax Rate

According to the Illinois Property Tax Code Division 2 Truth in Taxation (35ILCS 200/18-60), the City must formally adopt an estimated tax levy not less than 20 days prior to the adoption of the final tax levy. 35ILCS 200/18-85 requires said estimate to be compared to the prior year's aggregate levy (excluding amounts for bond debt service) and if a 5% increase exists then a public hearing in addition to a public notice must occur. A public notice related to this hearing must be published not more than 14 days, nor less than 7 days prior to the date of the hearing.

The final tax levy ordinance must be passed by a vote of the Council and a certified copy, thereof, filed with the County Clerk on or before the last working Tuesday in December which is December 31st. Therefore, the adoption of the 2024 Tax Levy Ordinance is recommended to be placed on the Council's December 9th, 2024 meeting agenda. In addition, the abatement of taxes related to bond covenants will occur at this same meeting. The City can abate debt service payments needed to keep the bond and interest portion of the levy flat which has been done historically. By bond covenant any debt service payments abated are guaranteed from other revenue sources.

The final EAV will be completed by January 1st, 2025. The tax rate generated is later applied to individual property owner's tax bills on April 1st, 2025 and bills are sent out on May 1st due by June 1st and September 1st.

COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED: N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Finance recommends the Council adopt the tax levy *estimate* of \$26,320,384 for the City of Bloomington.

Respectfully submitted for consideration.

Prepared by: Scott Rathbun, Finance Director

ATTACHMENTS:

[FIN 1B COB Tax Levy Estimate](#)

**2024 Estimated & Historical Tax Levy
For FY2026 Budget Year**

City of Bloomington

Levy Type	2024 Proposed Tax Levy	2023 Tax Levy	2022 Tax Levy	2021 Tax Levy	2020 Tax Levy
BONDS & INTEREST	\$1,683,345	\$1,683,345	\$969,879	\$1,804,533	\$2,153,070
FIRE PENSION	\$6,896,000	\$4,896,000	\$4,896,000	\$4,196,000	\$4,196,000
FIRE PROTECTION	\$1,900,228	\$1,900,228	\$1,900,228	\$1,900,228	\$1,900,228
GENERAL CORPORATE	\$3,468,248	\$3,468,248	\$4,181,714	\$3,347,060	\$2,723,523
IMRF	\$1,855,626	\$1,855,626	\$1,855,626	\$1,855,626	\$1,855,626
POLICE PENSION	\$6,708,000	\$4,708,000	\$4,708,000	\$4,008,000	\$4,008,000
POLICE PROTECTION	\$1,526,473	\$1,526,473	\$1,526,473	\$1,526,473	\$1,526,473
PUBLIC PARKS	\$1,001,454	\$1,001,454	\$1,001,454	\$1,001,454	\$1,001,454
SOCIAL SECURITY	\$1,281,010	\$1,281,010	\$1,281,010	\$1,281,010	\$1,281,010
TOTALS	\$26,320,384	\$22,320,384	\$22,320,384	\$20,920,384	\$20,645,384
Dollar Increase/(Decrease)	\$4,000,000	\$0	\$1,400,000	\$275,000	\$134,000
Percent Increase/(Decrease)	17.92%	0.00%	6.69%	1.33%	0.65%
EAV	2,469,313,944	2,248,095,820	2,048,944,043	1,926,553,423	1,887,703,781
Estimated Tax Rate	1.0659%	0.9929%	1.0894%	1.0859%	1.0937%
Rate Change	0.0730%	-0.0965%	0.0035%	-0.0078%	0.0036%

Residential Tax Scenarios:	2024 Proposed	2023 Final
House Flat EAV (200K value)	\$66,667	\$66,667
Total Tax	\$711	\$662
Tax Increase Flat EAV	\$49	
Increase per month	\$4	
House 9% EAV (218K value)	\$72,667	
Total Tax	\$775	
Tax Increase 9% EAV	\$113	
Increase per month	\$9	



REGULAR AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.C.

FOR COUNCIL: November 18, 2024

WARD IMPACTED: City-Wide Impact

SUBJECT: Consideration and Action on Approving the 2024 Tax Levy Estimate for the Bloomington Public Library, as requested by the Bloomington Public Library.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: The proposed Tax Levy Estimate be approved in the amount of \$6,827,275.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK:

Goal 1. Financially Sound City Providing Quality Basic Services

STRATEGIC PLAN SIGNIFICANCE:

Objective 1a. Budget with adequate resources to support defined services and level of services

BACKGROUND: The calculation of the property tax rate is produced by taking the tax levy, a fixed amount, and dividing that by the Equalized Assessed Value ("EAV"). The final EAV will not be produced until January 1st, 2025, therefore, the City must adopt its levy based on preliminary estimates.

Tax Formula: Requested Levy / Preliminary EAV = Tax Rate

The City of Bloomington and Bloomington Public Library use the preliminary EAV provided by the McLean County Supervisor of Assessments for the upcoming tax year. This year the preliminary EAV, as of October 11th, was \$2,484,313,944. That is a \$236.2M increase over the prior year's final EAV of \$2,248,095,820. The City anticipates some EAV challenges to be successful prior to the final EAV being set, as well as some adjustments to properties exempt from value increases, and therefore proposes reducing the EAV to \$2,469,313,944 (a reduction of approximately \$15M) – for purposes of providing this Estimate. That estimate total results in a \$221.2M - 9.84% increase in EAV over the 2023 final.

Bloomington Public Library Levy Request of \$6,827,275:

The Library proposes a decrease in the rate for this year's Levy. See *FIN 2B 2024 Tax Levy Estimate* (attached) for historical details. The final EAV will determine the final rate.

An increase in preliminary EAV will enable the Library to capture \$247,275 in revenue which is a 3.76% increase from the prior year's levy, as compared to the overall 9.84% increase in estimated EAV increase. If approved, this will result in a rate reduction.

The Library relies primarily on the tax levy as its source of funding. It does not benefit from economically driven revenues such as sales taxes. Therefore, to maintain consistent service, the Library's levy must at a minimum keep pace with inflation.

2024 Proposed Tax Levy Rate Calculations:

Bloomington Public Library:

Levy Request of \$6,827,275 / EAV of \$2,469,313,944 = .27648% (prior year = .29269%)
(Rate reduction of .01612%)

Tax Levy Procedure:

According to the Illinois Property Tax Code Division 2 Truth in Taxation (35ILCS 200/18-60), the City must formally adopt an estimated tax levy not less than 20 days prior to the adoption of the final tax levy. 35ILCS 200/18-85 requires said estimate to be compared to the prior year's aggregate levy (excluding amounts for bond debt service) and if a 5% increase exists then a public hearing in addition to a public notice must occur. A public notice related to this hearing must be published not more than 14 days, nor less than 7 days prior to the date of the hearing.

The final tax levy ordinance must be passed by a vote of the Council and a certified copy, thereof, filed with the County Clerk on or before the last working Tuesday in December which is December 31st. Therefore, the adoption of the 2024 Tax Levy Ordinance is recommended to be placed on the Council's December 9th, 2024 meeting agenda.

The final EAV will be completed by January 1st, 2025. The tax rate generated is later applied to individual property owner's tax bills on April 1st, 2025, and bills are sent out on May 1st due by June 1st and September 1st.

COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED: N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT: The Bloomington Public Library Board of Trustees and Finance recommends the Council adopt the tax levy *estimate* of \$6,827,275 for the Bloomington Public Library.

Respectfully submitted for consideration.

Prepared by: Jeanne Hamilton, Library Director

ATTACHMENTS:

[FIN 2B 2024 Bloomington Public Library Tax Levy Estimate](#)

**2024 Proposed & Historical Tax Levy
For FY2026 Budget Year**

Bloomington Public Library

Levy Type	2024 Proposed Tax Levy (collected in 2025 for FY26)	2023 Tax Levy	2022 Tax Levy	2021 Tax Levy	2020 Tax Levy	2019 Tax Levy
LIBRARY OPERATIONS	\$ 5,742,275	\$ 5,495,000	\$ 5,185,600	\$ 5,017,785	\$ 4,967,785	\$ 4,935,359
LIBRARY EXPANSION	\$ 1,085,000	\$ 1,085,000	\$ 1,085,000	\$ 850,000	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL	\$ 6,827,275	\$ 6,580,000	\$ 6,270,600	\$ 5,867,785	\$ 4,967,785	\$ 4,935,359
Operations Increase	\$ 247,275	\$ 309,400	\$ 167,815	\$ 50,000	\$ 32,426	\$ 63,519
Expansion Project Increase	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 235,000	\$ 850,000	\$ -	\$ -
Dollar Increase/(Decrease)	\$ 247,275	\$ 309,400	\$ 402,815	\$ 900,000	\$ 32,426	\$ 63,519
Percent Increase/(Decrease)	3.76%	4.93%	6.86%	18.12%	0.66%	1.30%
EAV	2,469,313,944	2,248,095,820	2,048,944,043	1,926,553,423	1,887,703,781	1,881,602,162
Estimated Operating Tax Rate	0.0023255	0.0024443	0.0025309	0.0026045	0.0026317	0.0026230
Estimated Expansion Tax Rate	0.0004394	0.0004826	0.0005295	0.0004412	0.0000000	0.0000000
Estimated Tax Rate	0.0027648	0.0029269	0.0030604	0.0030457	0.0026317	0.0026230
Operating Tax Rate Increase/(Decrease)	-0.0001188	-0.0000866	-0.0000737	-0.0000271	0.0000087	0.0000148
Expansion Tax Rate Increase/(Decrease)	-0.0000432	-0.0000469	0.0000883	0.0004412	0.0000000	0.0000000
Rate Increase/(Decrease)	-0.0001621	-0.0001335	0.0000147	0.0004141	0.0000087	0.0000148
House EAV (200K full value)	\$ 66,667	\$ 66,667	\$ 66,667	\$ 66,667	\$ 66,667	\$ 66,667
Tax Increase/(Decrease)	\$ (10.80)	\$ (8.90)	\$ 0.98	\$ 27.61	\$ 0.58	\$ 0.99
Taxes for a \$200,000 house	\$ 184.32	\$ 195.13	\$ 204.03	\$ 203.05	\$ 175.44	\$ 174.86