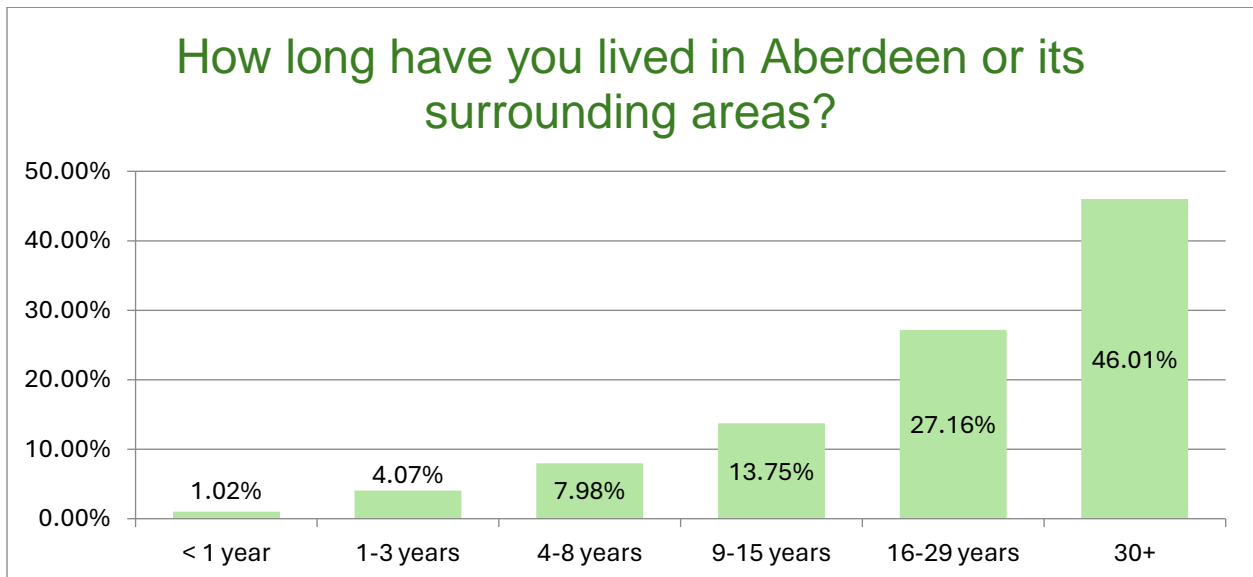
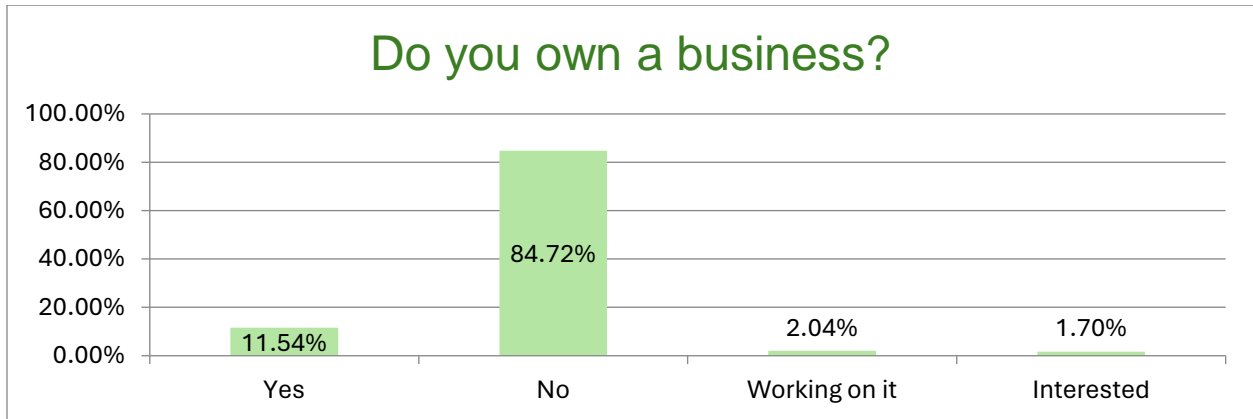
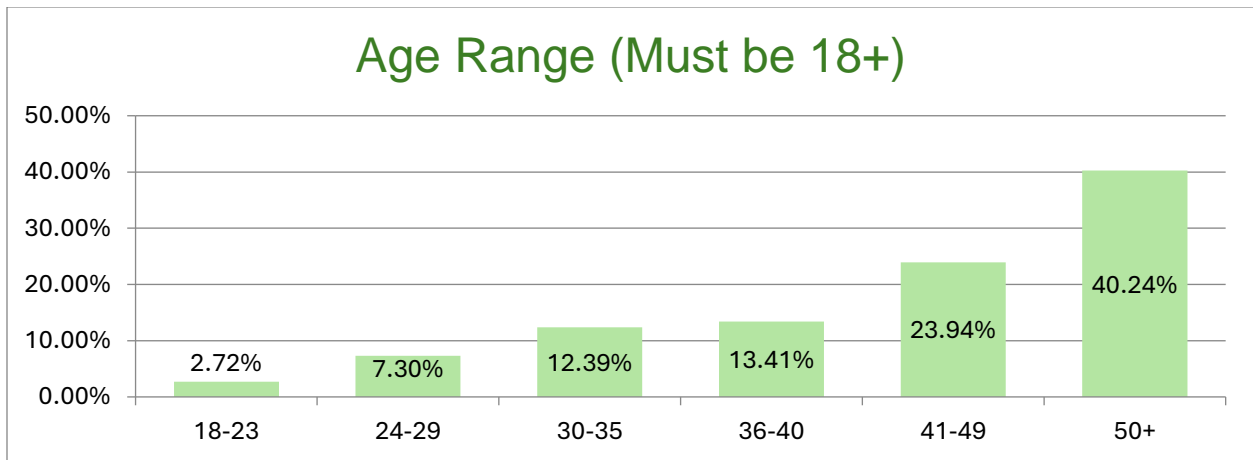
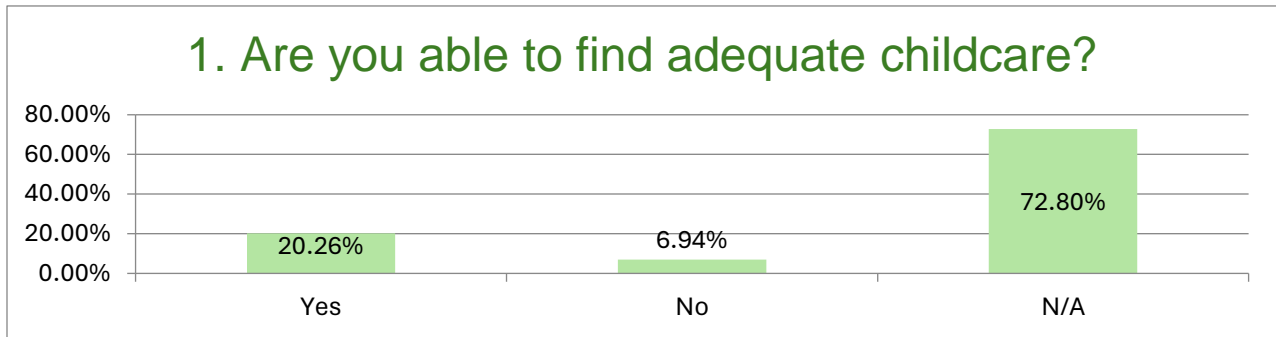


Aberdeen Community Survey Results – 589 Total Responses

SECTION 1 - Demographics



SECTION 2 – Livability & Environment



If no, please specify:

Availability and Waitlists:

Long waitlists for childcare, Difficulty in finding openings, Daycares being full or not accepting new children, Limited options for childcare- particularly for infants, Need to start searching for childcare very early- sometimes during pregnancy, Limited availability for part-time childcare.

Expense:

Childcare costs being excessive for some families, Difficulty in finding affordable options, Mention of high prices for certain daycare centers.

Quality and Trust:

Concerns about the quality and safety of home daycares. lack of trust in some daycare facilities, Difficulty in finding a daycare that meets safety standards.

Specific Needs:

Difficulty in finding childcare that caters to unorthodox work hours, Limited options for shift workers, Difficulty in finding childcare for infants, especially with specific requirements like hospitals shifts, Limited availability for school-age children, Limited options for qualified workers in childcare businesses.

Changes Over Time:

Challenges faced by parents when their children were younger are highlighted, implying that the situation might have improved for older children.

Transition and Alternatives:

Transitioning between different daycare providers, Exploring alternatives to traditional daycare, such as nannies or stay-at-home parenting.

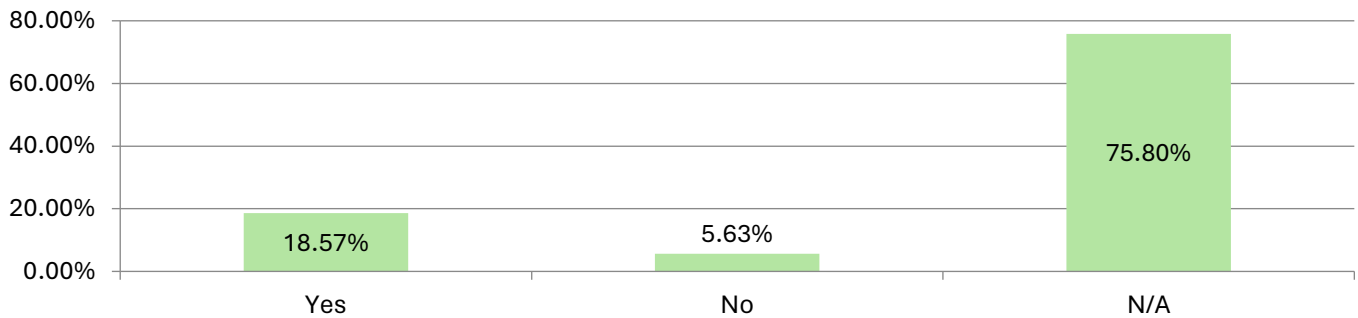
Geographical Limitations:

Specific mention of difficulties in Aberdeen, implying regional challenges.

Satisfaction and Success:

Some respondents mentioned success in finding childcare but highlighted the difficulty and time-consuming nature of the process.

2. Are you able to find adequate after-school care?



If no, please specify:

Quality of Care: Concerns about supervision, affordability, and preference for more personalized attention.

Lack of Availability: Limited options, insufficient space, and transportation difficulties.

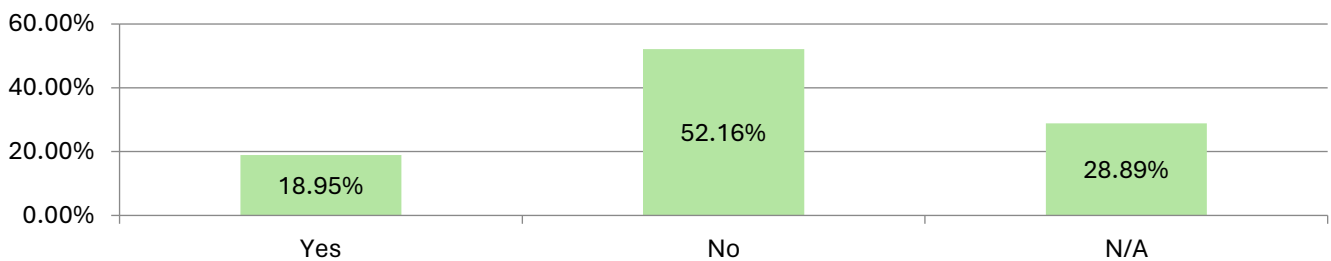
Changes in Personal Circumstances: Some respondents no longer need after-school care due to children growing older or not having children.

Specific Needs: Requests for specialized care for children with autism and desire for programs available at each school.

Comparison to Other Programs: Comparisons to after-school care in other locations, particularly regarding affordability and accessibility.

Alternative Preferences: Preference for alternatives such as religious organizations' programs.

3. Is it easy and affordable to find housing in Aberdeen?



If no, please specify:

High Housing Costs and Low Wages:

Many respondents mentioned that the wages in Aberdeen do not match the high housing costs, making it difficult for people to afford decent housing.

Overpriced Rentals and Properties:

Numerous respondents highlighted that both rental and property prices are overinflated, making it challenging for individuals and families to find affordable options.

Limited Housing Options:

There's a consistent complaint about limited housing options, particularly in the mid-range or affordable segments of the market.

Poor Housing Quality:

Several respondents expressed concerns about the poor quality of available housing, with issues such as mold, structural problems, and outdated facilities being common.

Impact of Investors and Corporations:

There were mentions of investors buying up properties and raising rents, contributing to the affordability issue. Some respondents also criticized the influence of corporations on the housing market.

Property Taxes:

Many respondents cited high property taxes as a significant barrier to affordable housing in Aberdeen.

Difficulty for First-Time Homebuyers:

Several respondents mentioned challenges faced by first-time homebuyers, such as limited options within their budget and difficulty qualifying for assistance programs.

Lack of Affordable Rentals:

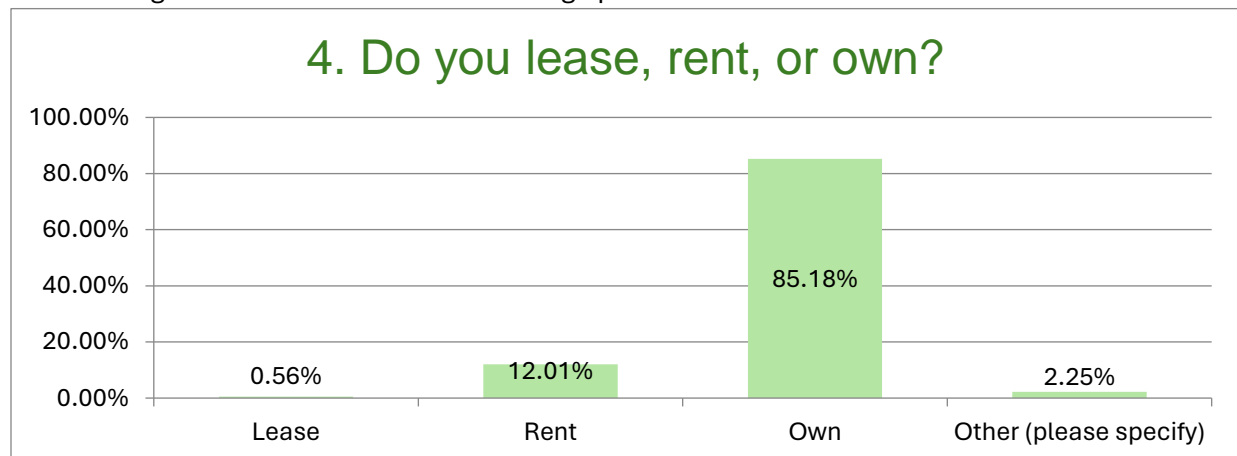
There's a consensus that affordable rental options are scarce, particularly for those with pets or specific requirements.

Lack of Starter Home:

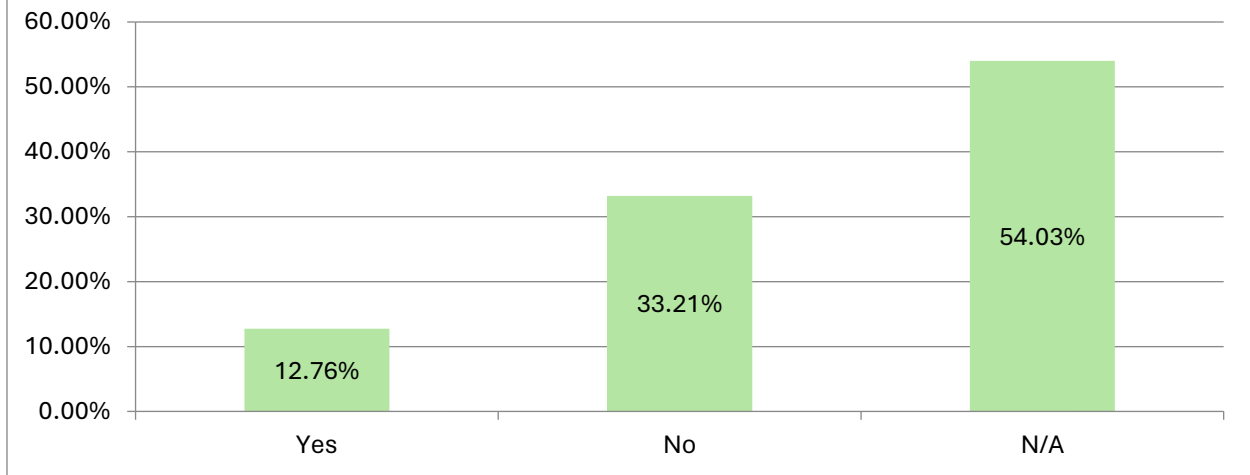
Respondents noted a shortage of starter homes, making it challenging for individuals or young families to enter the housing market.

Inadequate Infrastructure and Development:

Some respondents mentioned issues related to infrastructure costs and limited land development, contributing to the lack of affordable housing options.



5. Do you find public transportation to be readily available when needed?



If no, please specify:

Limited Availability/Accessibility:

Concerns about difficulty accessing public transportation, including limited service hours and the need for advance scheduling.

Community Needs and Accessibility:

Importance of public transportation for accessing essential services, with emphasis on affordability and accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities.

Reliability and Quality of Services:

Dissatisfaction with the inconsistency and quality of transportation services, including unreliable service and poorly maintained vehicles.

Desire for Improvement:

Call for significant improvements in public transportation infrastructure, including regular bus routes and more affordable options.

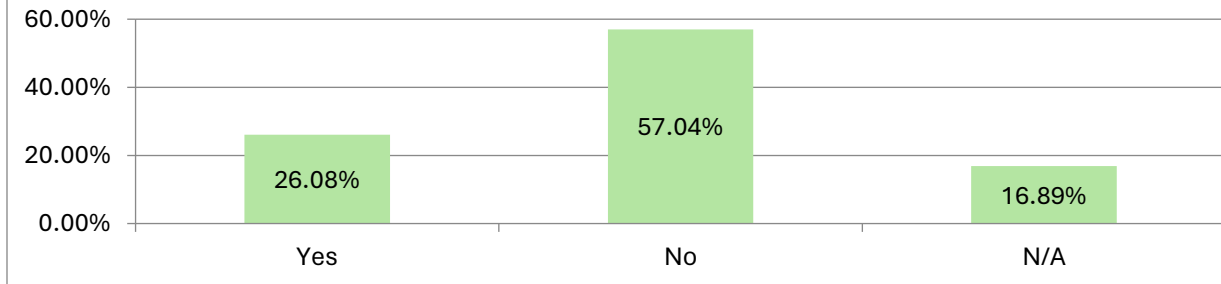
School Transportation:

Challenges related to the absence of school bussing, impacting parents' ability to transport children to and from school.

Negative Perceptions:

Overall dissatisfaction and skepticism towards existing transportation services, perceived as inadequate and unreliable.

6. Do you find the needed flights out of Aberdeen adequate without having to fly out of other areas?



If no, please specify:

The main concerns regarding flights out of Aberdeen revolve around cost, limited options, connectivity issues, comparisons to other airports, inconvenience, reliability, and desires for improvements such as more destinations and airlines.

Cost/Expense:

Many respondents cited the high cost of flights as a major issue, often comparing it unfavorably to nearby airports such as Watertown, Sioux Falls, or Fargo. Some mentioned that flying out of Aberdeen is significantly more expensive than driving to other airports, making it cost-prohibitive, especially for families or budget-conscious travelers.

Comparison to Other Airports:

There were numerous comparisons made to other nearby airports such as Watertown, Sioux Falls, Fargo, or even Minneapolis. Respondents often stated that they choose to fly from these airports due to better prices, more flight options, or easier connections.

Limited Options/Flights:

Respondents expressed frustration with the limited flight options and schedules available from Aberdeen. Some mentioned that there are only two flights per day to Minneapolis, which may not always align with their travel needs. They expressed a desire for more destinations, airlines, or flight times to choose from.

Inconvenience/Ease of Travel:

Many respondents mentioned the inconvenience of flying from Aberdeen, citing factors such as limited flight times, unreliable schedules, or the need for overnight stays in Minneapolis. Some stated that it's easier and more convenient to drive to other airports.

Connectivity/Connections:

Several respondents highlighted difficulties with making connections, especially when flying to destinations beyond Minneapolis. They mentioned long layovers, missed connections, and unreliable flight schedules as significant concerns. Many expressed a preference for direct flights or better connectivity to their final destinations.

Cost-Benefit Analysis:

Several respondents discussed their decision-making process when choosing flights, weighing the cost of flying from Aberdeen against the savings of driving to other airports. They often concluded that the savings from flying elsewhere outweighed the convenience of flying locally.

Desire for Additional Airlines/Destinations:

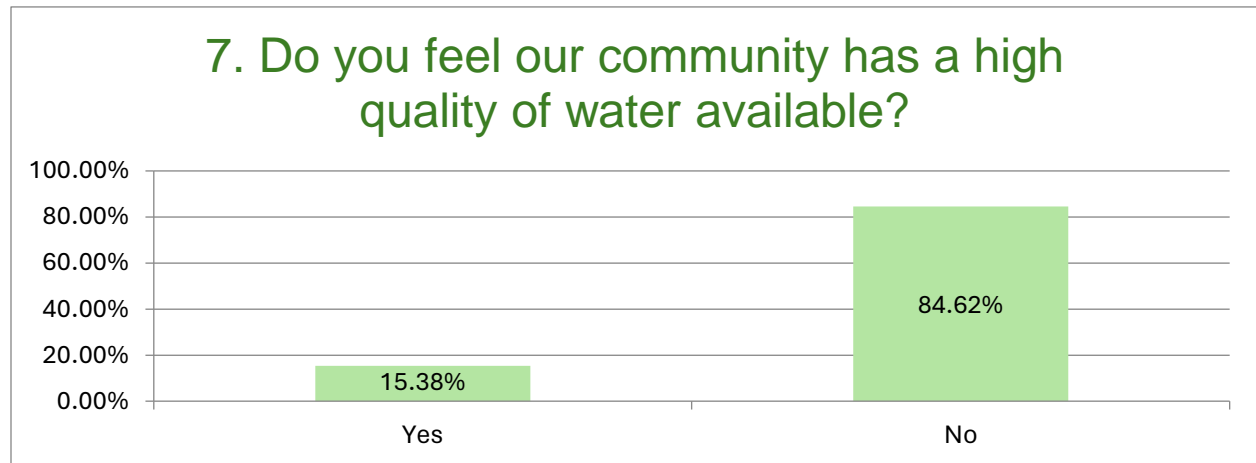
Some respondents expressed a desire for more airline options or direct flights to specific destinations, such as Denver or Chicago. They believe that additional airlines or destinations would improve competition and potentially lower prices.

Suggestions for Improvement:

Respondents offered suggestions for improvement, such as adding more destinations, increasing flight frequency, attracting additional airlines, or offering better connectivity to other hubs.

Reliability:

There were mentions of reliability issues, including flight cancellations, mechanical problems, and perceived lack of proper staffing at the Aberdeen airport, leading to stranded passengers and missed connections.



If not, do you find yourself finding other sources of quality water? Ex. bottled or filtered water

There was a significant dissatisfaction with the current state of Aberdeen's water, with many opting for bottled or filtered water as alternatives. There's also a notable desire for Web water and efforts to mitigate water quality issues through filtration systems.

Use of Bottled Water or Filtered Water:

Responses indicating the use of bottled water, filtered water, or other alternatives due to dissatisfaction with Aberdeen's water quality.

Aberdeen's Bad Water Quality Comments:

Comments specifically addressed the poor quality, smell, taste, or appearance of Aberdeen's water.

Desire / Praise for Web Water:

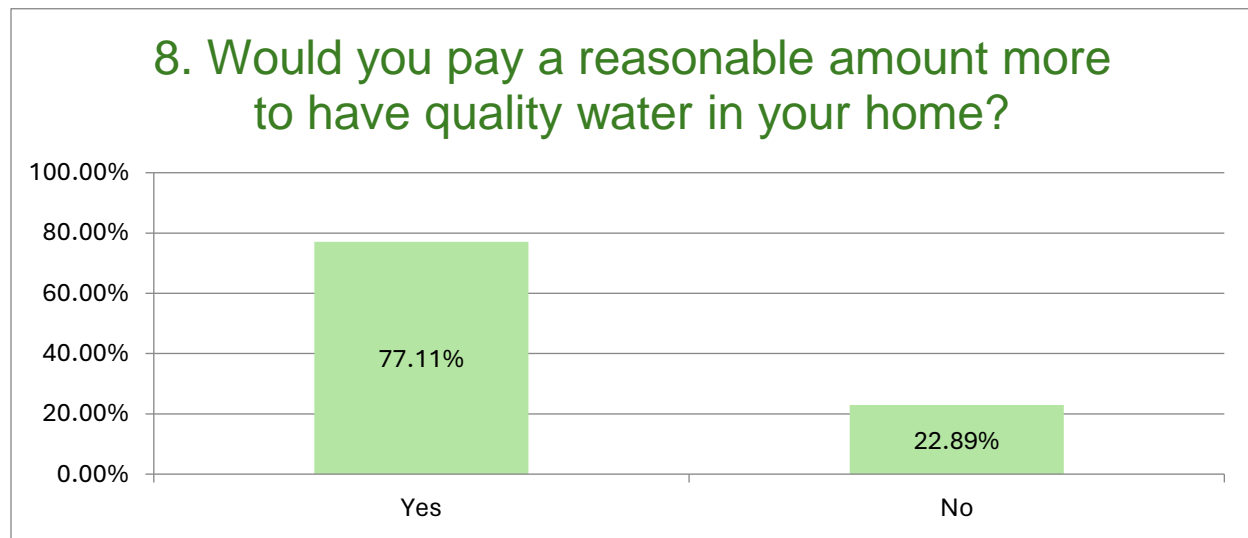
Comments of a desire for Web water, seen as an alternative and a solution to Aberdeen's water quality issues and a frustration for past water decisions.

Installation of Water Filtration Systems:

Instances where individuals have installed or are considering installing water filtration systems in their homes.

Comments on Water's Harsh Impact on Appliances and Plumbing:

Feedback on how Aberdeen's water quality affects appliances, plumbing, and fixtures because of the hardness.



If no, please specify:

Challenges with Current Recycling System and Limited Services/Options:

Concerns regarding the availability and quality of recycling services, including inadequate education, limited resources, absence of certain recycling facilities (e.g., for glass), challenges faced by residents living in apartments or outside city limits, unreliable pickup services, selectivity in what is accepted for recycling, recyclables being blown away due to inadequate containers, and dissatisfaction with specific recycling providers. Many expressed that our recycling system can do better would like to see improvements.

Awareness and Education on Recycling:

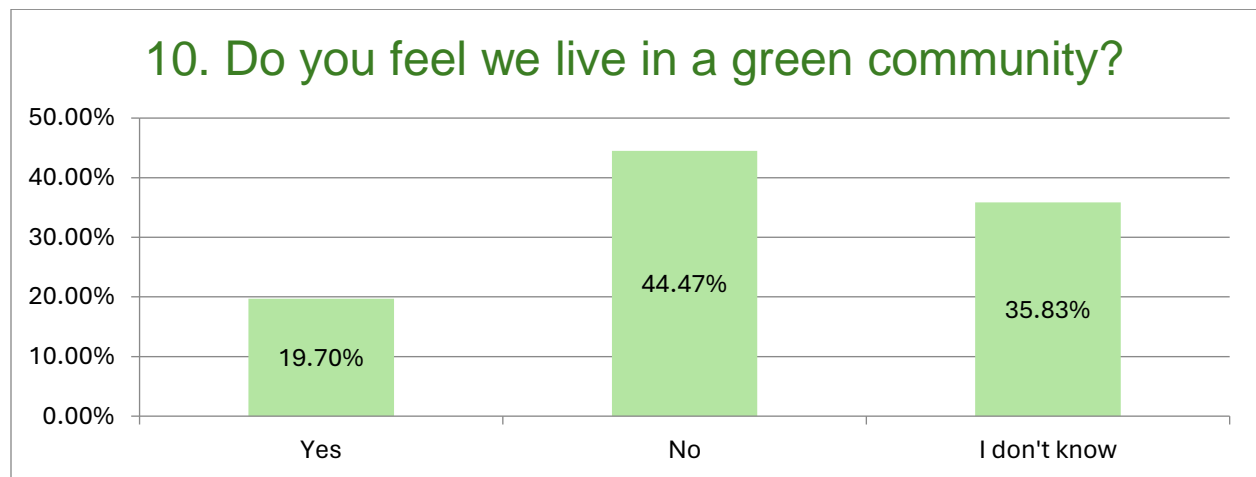
Comments indicating respondents' unawareness of recycling options and a desire for information on how to recycle. It highlights the need for improved education and awareness campaigns to inform residents about available recycling services and how to participate effectively.

Other Issues:

General dissatisfaction with waste management, complaints about specific recycling providers, calls for mandatory recycling, issues with recycling fees or costs, and concerns about the environmental impact.

Satisfaction with Recycling:

This theme includes positive feedback on the existing recycling service, acknowledging efforts but expressing room for improvement.



If not, what would help Aberdeen to be more of a green community?

Recycling Improvement:

Various suggestions related to improving recycling practices such as expanding recycling options, offering incentives, making recycling more accessible, and increasing awareness about recycling resources.

Public Transportation:

Suggestions for enhancing public transportation services, including bus routes to schools, increasing bus service for children, and improving overall public transportation infrastructure.

Education and Awareness:

Recommendations focused on educating the community about green initiatives, recycling practices, and the importance of sustainability. This includes suggestions for continuous education, providing information about recycling, and raising awareness through various channels.

Renewable Energy:

Suggestions aimed at promoting the adoption of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, along with incentives for their usage.

Community Development and Infrastructure:

Ideas related to developing green spaces, implementing green building practices, improving infrastructure for recycling (e.g., public recycling bins), and enhancing overall community aesthetics.

Waste Reduction:

Recommendations focused on reducing waste by eliminating single-use plastic items, promoting reusable products, and implementing measures to minimize landfill waste.

Government Action and Leadership:

Suggestions for city officials to take action, develop long-term plans, and demonstrate leadership in promoting green initiatives and sustainability efforts.

Other Suggestions:

Responses highlighting various areas for improvement in Aberdeen's environmental efforts. Suggestions include implementing water conservation measures, such as reducing excessive lawn watering and promoting efficient water usage. Additionally, there are concerns about littering and a call for community clean-up initiatives to maintain cleanliness and enhance aesthetics. Furthermore, there is recognition of the crucial role younger generations play in driving environmental responsibility and the importance of fostering sustainable practices for the future.

[SECTION 3 – Community / Entertainment](#)**11. As a community member, what would you like to see more of in Aberdeen?****Desire for More Cultural and Community Events:**

Residents are eager for a greater variety of festivals, cultural celebrations, and events that bring the community together. These could include music festivals, art shows, food fairs, and cultural heritage celebrations. There's a strong desire for events that are family-friendly, where people of all ages can participate and feel welcome. Increased cultural events can foster a sense of community pride and attract visitors to Aberdeen.

Demand for Increased Business Variety and Services:

Requests for more diverse retail options, including grocery stores like ALDI, specialty stores (e.g., smoothie shops, breweries), and clothing stores catering to various demographics. Additionally, there's a call for more job opportunities and support for small businesses.

Interest in Healthier Food Options and Wellness Services:

Residents seek healthier dining options, including meal prep services, smoothie bars, and businesses offering organic or low-waste products. There's also a desire for more recreational facilities like outdoor pickleball courts and improved amenities for health and wellness.

Infrastructure and Community Development:

Suggestions include investing in public amenities like indoor conservatories, observatories, or science-related attractions. Additionally, there's a call for better transportation options, improved roads, and accessible facilities for people with disabilities.

Family and Youth-Oriented Activities:

Concerns revolve around the need for more activities and entertainment options for children, teenagers, and families, particularly during winter months. Requests include expanded parks, indoor playgrounds, and affordable recreational facilities.

Civic Improvement and Quality of Life:

Residents express a desire for better-maintained public spaces, enhanced city services, and improvements in housing affordability, including quality housing options for lower-income individuals and families.

Cultural and Entertainment Expansion:

Calls for more diverse entertainment options, including concerts, restaurants, and events catering to various age groups and interests. Additionally, there's a desire for larger-scale entertainment venues and attractions to draw visitors to the area.

Infrastructure and Safety Concerns:

Requests for improved infrastructure, including road repairs, better snow removal, and enhanced safety measures such as increased street lighting and pedestrian-friendly pathways.

Environmental Sustainability:

Suggestions for more environmentally friendly initiatives, such as recycling programs, low-waste businesses, and efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

Veteran Support and Community Engagement:

Calls for increased support for veterans, community involvement, and initiatives to revitalize public spaces like the downtown area.

12. What business or type of business should Aberdeen focus on attracting in the next 5 years?

Economic Diversification and Job Creation:

Many responses highlighted the need for Aberdeen to diversify its economy in not only traditional

industries like manufacturing, but in other industries as well. There's a strong emphasis on attracting businesses that offer stable, well-paying jobs to replace those lost due to recent closures. Suggestions include technology, healthcare, professional services, and agriculture-related businesses. Respondents also expressed a desire for large-scale employers to offset recent job losses.

Retail and Dining Expansion:

There's a consistent call for expanding retail options, especially clothing stores, department stores, and grocery stores. Respondents want a wider variety of choices to meet their shopping needs without having to travel to other towns. Similarly, there's a desire for more diverse dining and bar options, including upscale bar/restaurants, family-friendly eateries, wine/craft beer bars, and healthier food choices. The aim is to enhance the overall shopping and dining experience within Aberdeen.

Community and Family-Focused Entertainment:

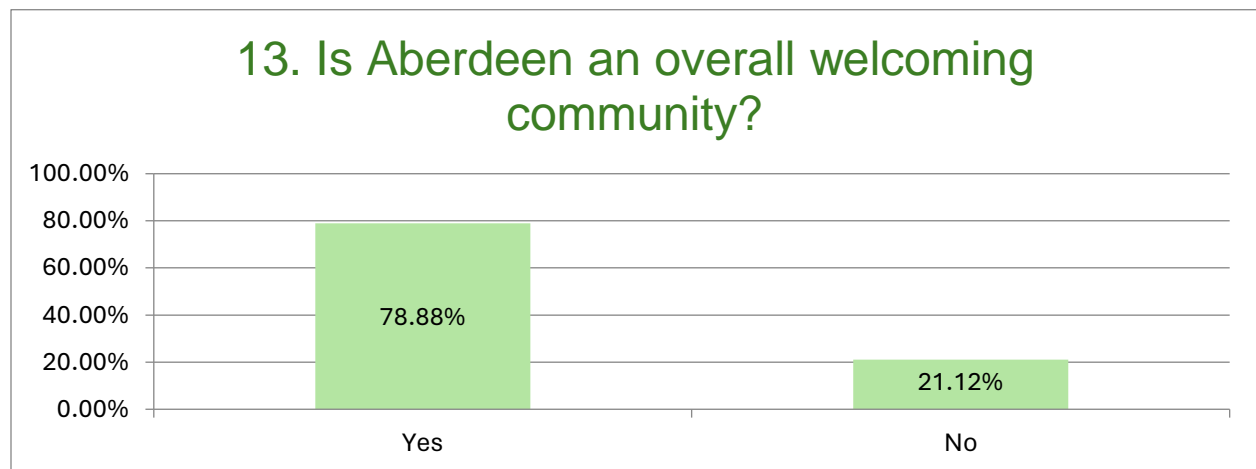
Many respondents expressed a need for more entertainment options catering to families and the community. Suggestions include indoor recreational facilities, family-friendly attractions like trampoline parks or arcades, and venues for concerts and events. There's also a desire for activities that can be enjoyed year-round, especially during the winter months when outdoor options are limited.

Revitalization of Existing Infrastructure:

Several responses highlighted the importance of revitalizing existing infrastructure, such as the Aberdeen Uptown Mall, to attract businesses and improve the overall aesthetic appeal of the city. This includes renovating or repurposing vacant buildings to accommodate new businesses, as well as addressing parking and accessibility issues.

Education and Training Opportunities:

Many respondents emphasized the need for educational and training institutions to support workforce development. Suggestions include the establishment of technical colleges, vocational schools, or specialized training programs to equip residents with the skills needed for emerging industries. Additionally, there's a call for initiatives that support entrepreneurship and small business development to foster local talent and innovation.



If no, what would make us more welcoming?

Community Atmosphere and Attitude:

Respondents emphasize the pivotal role of Aberdeen's community atmosphere and attitude in fostering a more welcoming environment. Suggestions include embracing diversity, reducing hostility, breaking down social cliques, and promoting acceptance of newcomers. Popular recommendations include organizing cultural events where residents can share their backgrounds, initiating community-wide campaigns to promote inclusivity and understanding, and implementing training programs to educate locals on the importance of embracing diversity.

Infrastructure and Services:

Feedback regarding infrastructure and services highlights the need for improvements in housing, shopping, dining options, and public spaces. Suggestions include developing affordable housing options, revitalizing commercial areas, and enhancing customer service standards. Popular recommendations include constructing affordable housing units, revitalizing abandoned properties, improving the appearance of public spaces through better maintenance, and providing training for service industry employees to enhance customer interactions.

Community Engagement and Events:

Community engagement and events are seen as vital for promoting inclusivity and social integration. Recommendations include organizing diverse gatherings, cultural events, and programs to facilitate interactions among residents, particularly newcomers. Popular recommendations include hosting multicultural festivals, organizing community picnics or potlucks, establishing mentorship programs for newcomers, and creating welcoming committees to greet and assist new residents.

Business Environment and Job Opportunities:

Feedback regarding the business environment and job opportunities underscores the importance of economic development in enhancing Aberdeen's appeal. Recommendations include attracting new businesses, fostering entrepreneurship, and creating job opportunities to boost the local economy. Popular recommendations include providing incentives for businesses to invest in Aberdeen, supporting local startups and small businesses, collaborating with educational institutions to align workforce training with industry needs, and promoting Aberdeen as a favorable destination for job seekers.

Communication and Information Accessibility:

Enhancing communication and information accessibility emerged as a key theme to help newcomers navigate Aberdeen effectively. Recommendations include improving platforms for accessing community resources and providing clear guidance for newcomers. Recommendations also include developing a centralized online portal for community information, publishing multilingual materials to reach diverse populations, offering orientation sessions for newcomers, and establishing welcome centers to provide assistance and information.

Mixed Feelings and Uncertainties:

Mixed feelings and uncertainties reflect varied opinions and experiences regarding Aberdeen's

welcoming nature. Respondents express uncertainty about the community's friendliness towards outsiders, highlighting the need for further exploration and understanding. Popular recommendations include encouraging open dialogue and honest discussions on this subject by conducting surveys or focus groups to better understand community perceptions and implementing initiatives to address specific concerns raised by residents regarding welcoming practices.

14. What is one thing you feel would improve Aberdeen livability for its residents and visitors?

Affordable Housing:

Many respondents expressed concerns about the affordability of housing in Aberdeen, highlighting the need for rental rates and housing prices to be more aligned with local income levels. Suggestions included implementing rent caps, incentivizing affordable housing development, and ensuring quality standards for rental properties. Additionally, there were calls for addressing the housing needs of specific demographics, such as low-income families and college graduates.

Infrastructure and Urban Development:

Residents emphasized the importance of maintaining and improving Aberdeen's infrastructure, particularly its roads, sidewalks, and water quality. Recommendations included investing in road repairs, enhancing snow removal processes, and upgrading water treatment facilities. There were also suggestions for expanding transportation options, such as implementing a more efficient public transit system and creating pedestrian-friendly pathways.

Economic Development and Job Opportunities:

Many respondents advocated for strategies to stimulate economic growth and attract businesses that offer higher-paying jobs. Suggestions included promoting downtown revitalization efforts, providing incentives for new business development, and fostering entrepreneurship. Additionally, there were calls for diversifying the local economy to reduce dependence on specific industries and creating pathways for career advancement.

Community Engagement and Quality of Life:

Residents emphasized the importance of community engagement and enhancing the overall quality of life in Aberdeen. Recommendations included organizing more community events and recreational activities, improving safety and cleanliness in neighborhoods, and making new residents feel welcomed. There were also suggestions for supporting local arts and culture initiatives to enrich the community experience.

Retail and Entertainment:

Respondents expressed a desire for more retail options, restaurants, and entertainment venues to enhance the city's amenities. Recommendations included attracting major retailers like Aldi and Hy-Vee, revitalizing the mall, and diversifying dining options. Additionally, there were calls for

expanding entertainment options, such as hosting more concerts and cultural events, to cater to a wider range of interests.

Water Quality:

Concerns about water quality were prevalent among respondents, with many highlighting the need for improvements to the city's water infrastructure and treatment processes. Recommendations included investing in water treatment facilities, addressing issues related to taste and safety, and exploring alternative water sources like WEB Water. Additionally, there were calls for increasing transparency and communication regarding water quality issues with residents.

15. What is one thing that would make Aberdeen's downtown more appealing and competitive as a destination in South Dakota?

Parking:

Respondents frequently highlighted concerns about parking availability as a key issue affecting downtown Aberdeen's appeal. Many suggested that addressing this issue could significantly improve the downtown experience for visitors and residents alike. Recommendations included increasing the number of parking spaces, improving signage to guide drivers to available parking areas, implementing parking incentives or discounts, and exploring the possibility of constructing parking garages or lots to alleviate congestion during peak times. Some respondents also emphasized the importance of ensuring that parking facilities are well-maintained, safe, and easily accessible.

More Retail, Restaurants, and Bars:

Another common theme identified by respondents was the desire for a greater variety of businesses, retail stores, dining options, and bars in downtown Aberdeen. Many expressed concerns about the prevalence of empty storefronts and suggested that attracting new businesses could help revitalize the area and attract more visitors. Recommendations included offering incentives or tax breaks to encourage entrepreneurs to open businesses downtown, conducting market research to identify gaps in the market and opportunities for new ventures, and providing support and resources to local businesses to help them thrive. Some respondents also suggested focusing on attracting unique, locally owned businesses that would differentiate downtown Aberdeen from other commercial areas.

Beautification and Aesthetics:

Respondents frequently emphasized the importance of beautifying downtown Aberdeen to enhance its appeal and create a more welcoming and vibrant atmosphere. Suggestions included renovating historic buildings, improving signage and wayfinding to make it easier for visitors to navigate the area, enhancing landscaping and green spaces, installing public art and sculptures, and implementing regular street cleaning and maintenance programs. Many respondents also stressed the importance of preserving the historical character of downtown Aberdeen while simultaneously modernizing and updating its infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and businesses.

Events and Entertainment:

Another key theme identified by respondents was the importance of hosting more events, festivals, and entertainment activities in downtown Aberdeen to attract visitors and create a sense of community. Suggestions included organizing live music concerts, art shows, food festivals, farmers markets, and family-friendly events throughout the year. Many respondents also emphasized the potential economic benefits of hosting events downtown, such as increased foot traffic for local businesses and restaurants. Some suggested forming partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and artists to coordinate and promote events effectively.

Two-Way Main Street:

A significant number of respondents expressed opinions regarding the proposal to convert Main Street into a two-way street in downtown Aberdeen. Proponents of this idea argued that it could improve traffic flow, enhance pedestrian safety, and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. They suggested that a two-way street would encourage drivers to slow down and spend more time exploring downtown Aberdeen, leading to increased business for local merchants. However, opponents raised concerns about potential traffic congestion, increased travel times, and the impact on parking availability. Some suggested alternative solutions, such as improving existing traffic patterns, implementing traffic calming measures, or conducting further studies to assess the potential impacts of the proposed changes.

16. What types of programming and or events would you like to see in the Parks and Rec / Aberdeen Recreation & Cultural Center (ARCC) building?

Recreational and Entertainment Events:

This category encompasses a diverse range of suggestions aimed at enhancing recreational and entertainment opportunities within the community. Recommendations include hosting more concerts, theater shows, live music performances, and festivals to cater to varying interests and preferences. Additionally, there is a desire for themed events, such as those based on literature or cultural icons like Frank L. Baum's "Oz," to attract attendees and create memorable experiences. The community seeks modern facilities capable of hosting a wide array of events, from concerts to sports competitions, to meet the demand for cultural enrichment and leisure activities.

Arts and Crafts Programs:

Suggestions in this category emphasize the importance of fostering creativity, skill development, and self-expression through arts and crafts activities. The community desires a broader selection of classes, workshops, and creative outlets for individuals of all ages, ranging from painting and pottery to sewing and woodworking. These programs aim to provide opportunities for participants to explore their artistic talents, learn new techniques, and engage in hands-on experiences that promote personal growth and artistic expression.

Youth and Family Activities:

This category focuses on initiatives tailored to youth and families, aiming to provide engaging and constructive experiences for children, teenagers, and their parents. Suggestions include expanding youth-focused programs, offering family-friendly events, and providing opportunities for outdoor

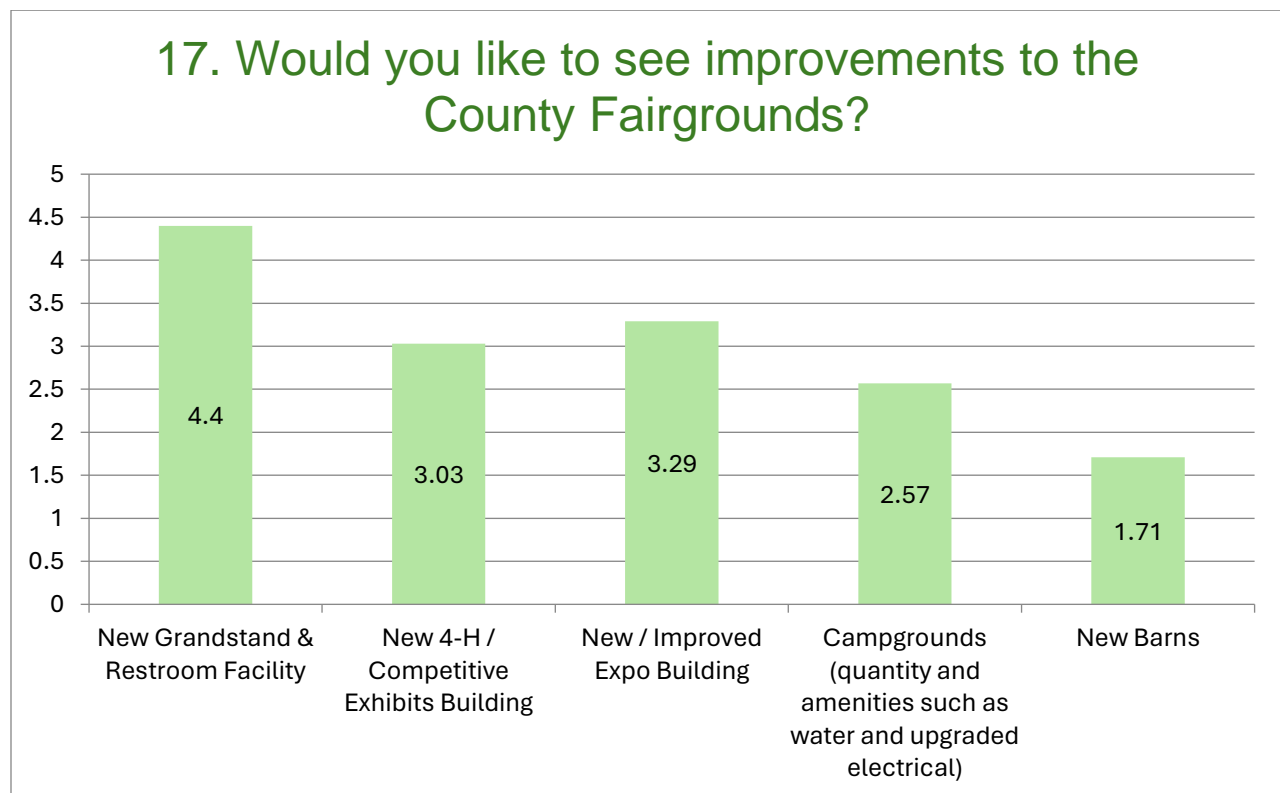
activities and sports leagues. Additionally, there is a call for educational workshops, summer camps, and cultural experiences designed to promote social interaction, learning, and personal development among young community members.

Health and Fitness Initiatives:

Recommendations within this category center on promoting physical well-being and healthy lifestyles through various health and fitness initiatives. Suggestions include offering a diverse range of exercise classes, yoga sessions, and sports activities to cater to different interests and fitness levels. The community seeks opportunities to engage in regular exercise, improve fitness levels, and adopt healthy habits that contribute to overall wellness and vitality. Additionally, there is a desire for facilities and programs that prioritize accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring that individuals of all ages and abilities can participate in physical activities.

Adult Education and Community Engagement:

This category encompasses suggestions for adult-focused educational workshops, community engagement events, and marketing strategies to enhance awareness and participation. Recommendations include offering classes on a variety of topics, such as cooking, technology, and life skills, to promote lifelong learning and personal development among adults. Additionally, there is a call for improved communication and marketing efforts to raise awareness about existing programs and events, engage community members, and foster a sense of belonging and connection within the community.



18. Is there any other improvement to the County Fairgrounds not listed that you would like to see?

Parking and Infrastructure Improvement:

Respondents overwhelmingly express concerns and suggestions related to parking facilities and infrastructure improvements at the fairgrounds. This includes calls for better parking arrangements, asphalt paving of parking lots and roads, enhanced drainage systems to prevent mud and water accumulation, and overall infrastructure upgrades to accommodate larger events and improve accessibility for attendees.

Community Engagement and Promotion:

Several comments emphasize the importance of community engagement, promotion, and collaboration to enhance the fairgrounds' appeal and utilization throughout the year. Suggestions include promoting local events and attractions, improving facilities such as Centennial Village, and fostering partnerships to attract diverse activities and visitors to the fairgrounds beyond the annual fair week.

Facility Upgrades and Maintenance:

Many respondents highlighted the need for facility upgrades and maintenance to enhance visitor experiences and ensure the fairgrounds' long-term viability. This includes calls for improvements such as modernizing restroom facilities, upgrading grandstands, maintaining historical buildings like Centennial Village, and investing in overall cleanliness and aesthetics.

Accessibility:

A significant number of comments underscore the importance of improving accessibility and inclusivity at the fairgrounds to accommodate individuals with disabilities and diverse needs. Suggestions include providing more wheelchair-accessible facilities, installing paved pathways, and offering amenities such as shaded areas and water bottle refill stations for all visitors.

Events and Entertainment:

Some respondents express a desire for a better lineup of entertainment options and events at the fairgrounds throughout the year. Suggestions include hosting concerts, classic rock bands, and family-friendly activities, as well as reintroducing popular events like the demolition derby to attract diverse audiences and increase community engagement.

SECTION 4 – Open Answer

19. What is Aberdeen's greatest strength? (Ex. Safety, Job Economy)

Community Safety and Low Crime Rate:

Aberdeen residents highly value the city's reputation for safety and its low crime rate. They appreciate the peace of mind that comes with living in a secure environment where they feel comfortable and protected. This strength reflects positively on the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts and community policing initiatives in maintaining public safety.

Strong Sense of Community:

Respondents emphasize the strong sense of community in Aberdeen as a defining strength. They

cherish the close relationships and support networks within neighborhoods, fostering a sense of belonging and unity among residents. This community spirit is evident in the way people come together to celebrate local events, support one another during times of need, and collaborate on initiatives to improve the quality of life for everyone.

Quality Education and Schools:

Aberdeen's quality education system and schools are regarded as a significant strength by many respondents. They recognize the importance of access to excellent educational opportunities for children and youth, which contribute to their academic success and future prospects. The presence of quality schools reflects positively on the commitment of educators, administrators, and parents to provide students with a solid foundation for learning and growth.

Natural Beauty and Outdoor Recreation:

Aberdeen residents take pride in the city's natural beauty and abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities. They enjoy exploring the scenic landscapes, parks, trails, and waterways that enhance their quality of life and promote physical well-being. This strength reflects the city's commitment to preserving and enhancing its natural assets for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Local Businesses and Economy:

The strength of Aberdeen's local businesses and economy is highlighted by respondents who appreciate the diversity and vitality of the city's economic landscape. They value the presence of small businesses, industries, and job opportunities that contribute to economic growth and stability. This strength underscores the resilience of Aberdeen's business community and its ability to adapt to changing market conditions.

20. What one weakness should Aberdeen address that would make the most difference?

Housing Affordability and Quality:

Aberdeen faces challenges related to housing affordability and quality, with concerns about the shortage of affordable housing options and the lack of adequate rental properties. Many residents struggle to find suitable housing within their budget, impacting their overall quality of life. Addressing this issue requires collaborative efforts from government agencies, developers, and community organizations to increase the availability of affordable housing and ensure that existing housing meets quality standards.

Economic Development and Stability:

Aberdeen's economic vitality is a significant concern, with worries about job market instability, business closures, and declining manufacturing. Residents emphasize the need for greater economic diversity and stability to support sustainable growth and prosperity. Attracting new businesses, retaining existing ones, and fostering entrepreneurship are essential strategies for revitalizing Aberdeen's economy and creating job opportunities for its residents.

Infrastructure and Maintenance:

Infrastructure deficiencies, including potholes, road conditions, and inadequate snow removal,

pose significant challenges for Aberdeen's residents and businesses. Poor infrastructure can impede economic development, jeopardize public safety, and detract from the overall quality of life. Investing in infrastructure improvements and implementing effective maintenance programs are critical steps to address these challenges and ensure that Aberdeen remains a vibrant and attractive community.

Water Quality and Availability:

Concerns about water quality and availability highlight the importance of access to clean and reliable water sources for Aberdeen's residents and businesses. Issues such as water quality issues and accessibility impact public health, economic development, and overall community well-being. Collaborative efforts to address water infrastructure needs, improve water treatment processes, and protect water sources are essential to safeguarding Aberdeen's water quality and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

Community Amenities and Services:

Residents express a desire for enhanced community amenities and services, including entertainment options, shopping variety, childcare, and public transportation. Access to these amenities and services contributes to residents' overall quality of life and enhances Aberdeen's appeal as a place to live, work, and visit. Investing in the development of recreational facilities, promoting local businesses, and improving transportation infrastructure are key strategies to meet these community needs and enhance Aberdeen's vibrancy.

Civic Leadership and Government:

Concerns about civic leadership and government effectiveness underscore the importance of transparent, accountable, and responsive governance in addressing community challenges and promoting positive change. Residents seek leadership that prioritizes collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity to effectively address issues such as infrastructure, economic development, and social equity. Strengthening civic engagement, improving communication between government entities and the community, and fostering a culture of trust and accountability are essential for effective governance in Aberdeen.

Community Perception and Identity:

Aberdeen's community identity and perception are influenced by factors such as cleanliness, community pride, and cultural vibrancy. Residents express a desire for a positive community image that reflects pride in homeownership, cultural diversity, and civic engagement. Enhancing community aesthetics, promoting cultural events and activities, and fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity are key strategies to shape Aberdeen's identity and improve its reputation both locally and regionally.

Social Issues and Equity:

Social issues such as drug addiction, crime rates, lack of diversity, and homelessness were concerns mentioned by several respondents. Residents emphasize the need for comprehensive approaches to tackle these complex challenges, including prevention, intervention, and support services. Collaborative efforts among government agencies, nonprofits, and community stakeholders were suggested as a way to build a stronger, more cohesive strategy to address these issues.

21. Additional Comments?

Economic Development and Community Growth:

Many respondents expressed concerns and suggestions related to economic development, job creation, and community growth. This included calls for attracting more businesses, improving job opportunities, and diversifying the local economy beyond part-time or low-paying jobs. Additionally, there were suggestions to focus on promoting Aberdeen's amenities and attractions to attract newcomers and support local businesses.

Infrastructure and City Management:

Infrastructure-related issues such as road maintenance, traffic flow, and snow removal emerged as significant concerns among respondents. Suggestions included improving road conditions, exploring traffic management solutions like traffic circles, and investing in air transportation development. There were also calls for responsible city management and allocation of tax dollars to address infrastructure needs effectively.

Community Engagement and Promotion:

Several comments emphasized the importance of community engagement, promotion, and collaboration among various organizations in Aberdeen. Suggestions included promoting local businesses and events more effectively, streamlining the efforts of multiple community organizations, and fostering partnerships to better promote Aberdeen as a desirable place to live and work.

Quality of Life and Amenities:

Respondents highlighted the importance of amenities and quality of life factors in Aberdeen. This included praise for existing amenities like Storybook Land and calls for additional offerings such as more restaurants, grocery stores, and recreational opportunities. Affordable housing and access to clean water were also mentioned as important factors contributing to quality of life in Aberdeen.

Leadership and Civic Engagement:

Some respondents expressed concerns about leadership and civic engagement in Aberdeen. Suggestions included the need for new leadership with fresh ideas, greater responsiveness to resident concerns, and more transparent communication between city officials and residents. There were also calls for increased community involvement and participation in decision-making processes.