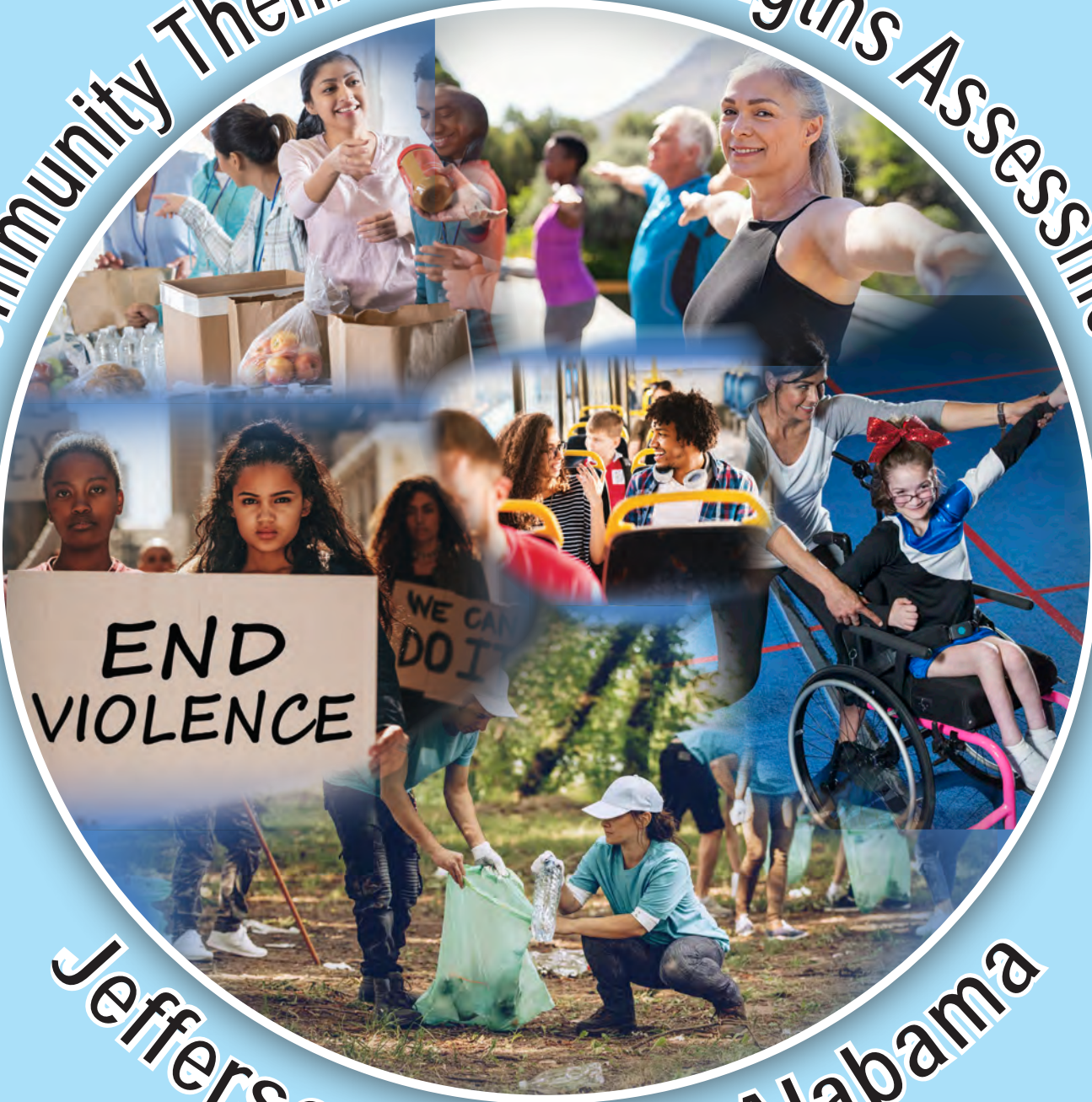


Community Themes and Strengths Assessment



Jefferson County, Alabama

October 2019



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Overview of the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (CTSA) is one of four assessments completed as part of a community health strategic planning process for Jefferson County called *Community Matters: Assessment, Visioning and Planning for a Healthy Jefferson County, Alabama*. The CTSA identifies community assets and issues, both strengths and weaknesses, important to those who live, learn, work, worship and/or play in Jefferson County, Alabama.



The CTSA is designed to answer the following questions:

- *What is important to the community?*
- *How is quality of life perceived in the community?*
- *What assets does the community have that can be used to improve the community's health?*

Design

The CTSA was completed with a community-driven design and process. Members of the CTSA Sub-committee¹ were selected to mirror the diversity of the community. Data was collected using both online and paper surveys and focus groups. The survey and focus group guide were developed based on Jefferson County's previous CTSA survey, as well as from review of community health surveys developed by local community hospitals, Alabama Department of Public Health and other local health departments in the United States. The CTSA sub-committee met on September 5, 2018 to develop the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey instrument and the focus group guide. Focus group facilitator training was held on September 27, 2018.

Development

The online version of the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey utilized a Survey Monkey® and was available in English and Spanish online from October 2018 through December 2018 in a format accessible to individuals with low vision. The link to the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey was accessible through the Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH) website, JCDH social media platforms and a variety of community partner websites. Additionally, many community partners and CTSA sub-committee members shared the survey link through business and personal email distribution lists. Paper surveys,



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available in English and Spanish, were distributed throughout JCDH Health Centers, community partner facilities, community events, community meetings and informal gatherings. Additionally, JCDH provided the survey verbally for individuals with low vision and low literacy, and offered interpreter services for survey completion for persons requiring sign language or speaking languages other than English or Spanish. The *Your Opinion Matters!* survey asked questions about quality of life indicators within the domains of the physical environment, education, health care access, public safety, economics, the community, programs, services, support networks, quality of life and chronic health problems in Jefferson County.

The primary process used to collect qualitative data for the CTSA was a series of 15 focus groups and one community conversation. Focus groups were conducted by trained facilitators to obtain more detailed information concerning resident perceptions of quality of life and health including perceived assets, strengths and weaknesses of Jefferson County. The questions asked in the focus groups were related to both positive and negative changes that Jefferson County residents experienced during the past five years, what residents would like to see changed in the next five years, community assets, equity and access to services, key organizations that help residents, opportunities for improvement in Jefferson County, the health of the county, access to health care, and environmental health concerns.

To analyze the focus group data, the team from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) was provided with focus group facilitation guides, notes, and audio recordings from the CTSA and the responses to the qualitative questions were analyzed. Each set of data was reviewed to develop a list of broad codes or themes identified in each group. The UAB team achieved consensus on the overall themes present in each data collection method.

Once consensus was achieved around themes, the frequency with which each theme was documented was calculated for each collection method. For example, “transportation” was noted in approximately 94% of Community Themes and Strengths Assessment sessions, and 18.5% of all survey comments. The themes were ranked by frequency of mention in each method and the rankings were combined to generate an overall ranking across methods. Each method was weighted equally in the calculation of overall ranking.

Sampling

A total of 1,360 *Your Opinion Matters!* surveys (324 paper and 1,036 online) were received, representing more than triple the calculated sample size requirement of 384. The fifteen focus groups and one community conversation engaged over 200 individuals from urban and suburban locations, as well as individuals from special populations within Jefferson County.

In addition to the transcripts from the focus groups, the responses to open-ended comments from the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey were analyzed as an additional source of qualitative data.



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The demographic profile of *Your Opinion Matters!* survey participants is shown in Figures 1- 9. The survey, targeting adults, included respondents ranging from 18 to 88 years of age. Almost three-quarters (74.4%) of the surveys were completed by females; the percent of female county residents, however, is 52.7%¹. Based on race, the survey captured data from a lesser percentage of white residents at 48.7% than live in Jefferson County (53.2%²). Black or African Americans, who represent 43.4%³ of Jefferson County's population, represented 36.4% of the survey participants. Nearly ten percent (9.5%) of survey respondents were individuals of other races, including Asian and American Indian, a percentage higher than the 3.3%⁴⁻⁶ of county residents self-identifying in these race categories. Slightly over 5% of survey respondents chose not to provide his or her race. Additionally, survey respondents could select more than one racial category.

By ethnicity, 8.8% of survey respondents self-identified as Hispanic/Latino although 3.9%⁹ of the county's population are of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. The distribution of survey completion by individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher was substantially greater at 62.8% than the 33.3%¹⁶ of county residents with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. Individuals with less than a high school education comprise 10.1%¹⁶ of the county's population, but represented only 1.4% of survey respondents. The percentage of county residents without health care insurance coverage is 9.2%¹⁷, whereas 5.4% of survey respondents indicated having no health insurance. Of note, respondents could select more than one insurance type. Among survey respondents, 14.5% indicated having a disability, a percentage slightly lower than the 17.3%¹⁹ Jefferson County residents living with a disability.

The profile of the survey respondents should be considered in the evaluation of the generalizability of the data as the demographic profile of survey respondents and residents of Jefferson County vary.



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Figure 1: Age Categories of Survey Respondents

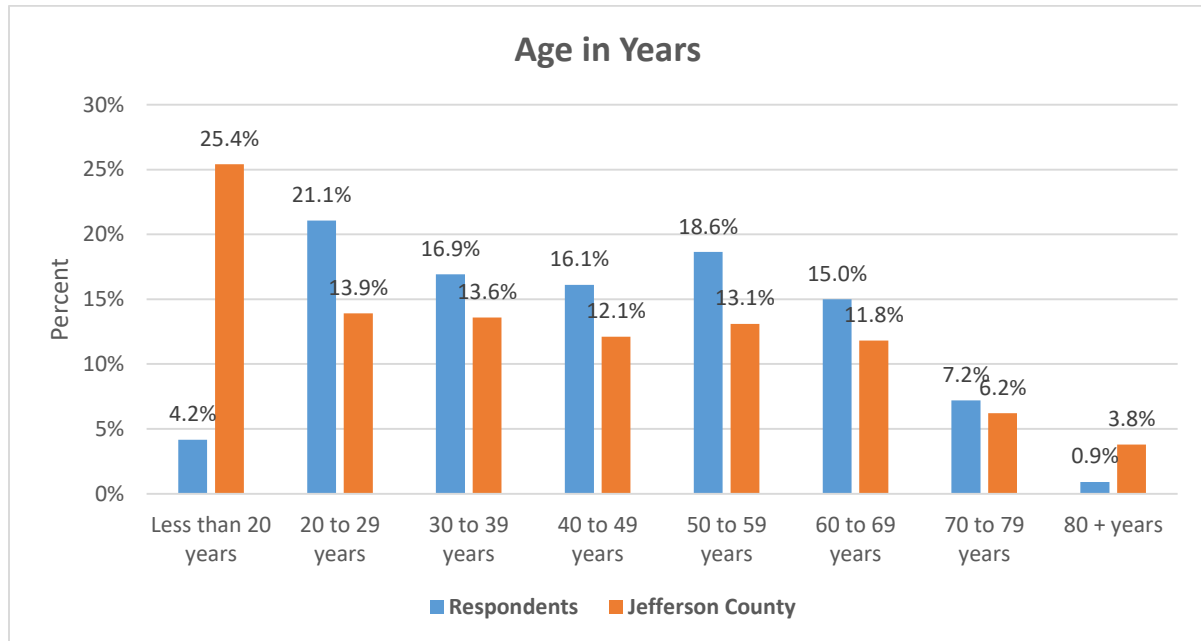
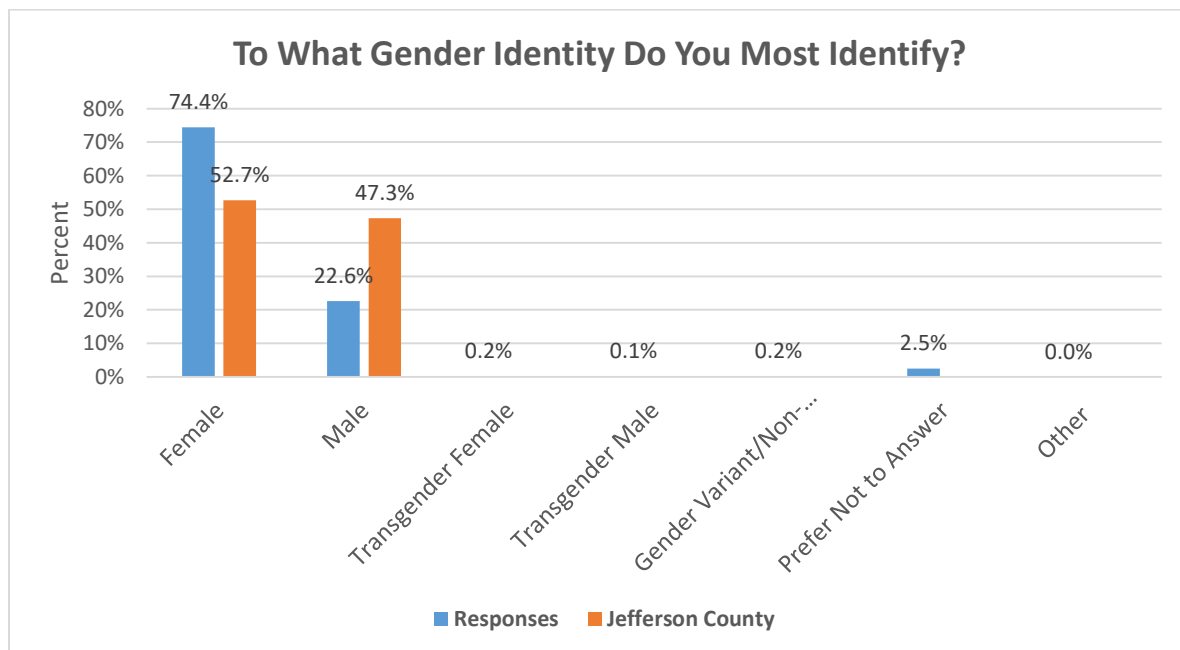
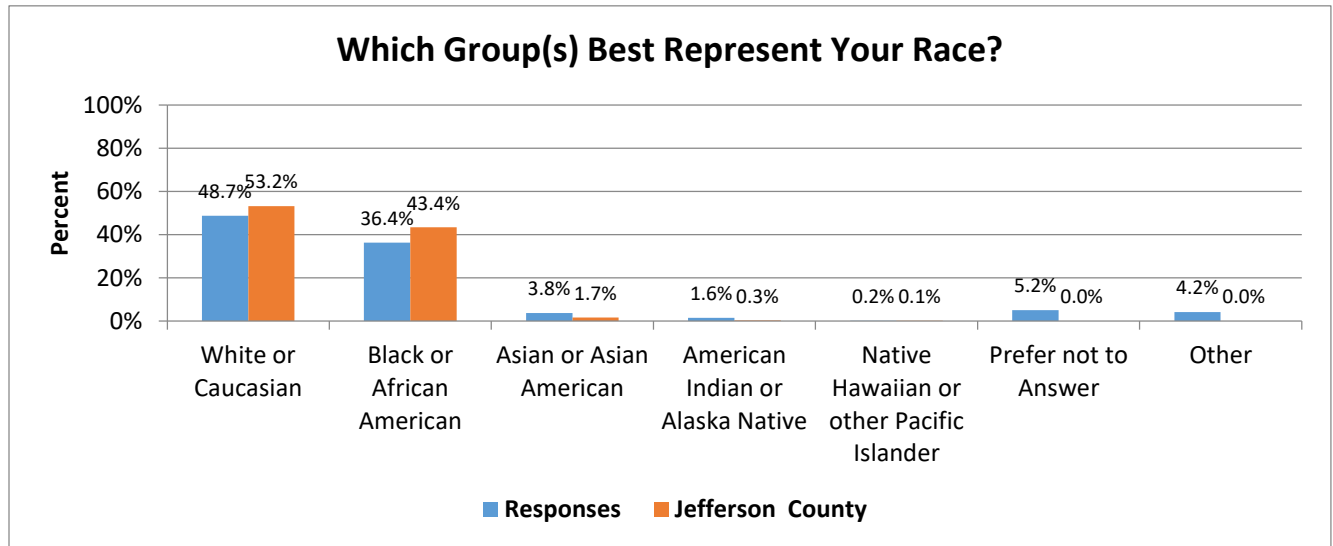


Figure 2: Gender of Survey Respondents



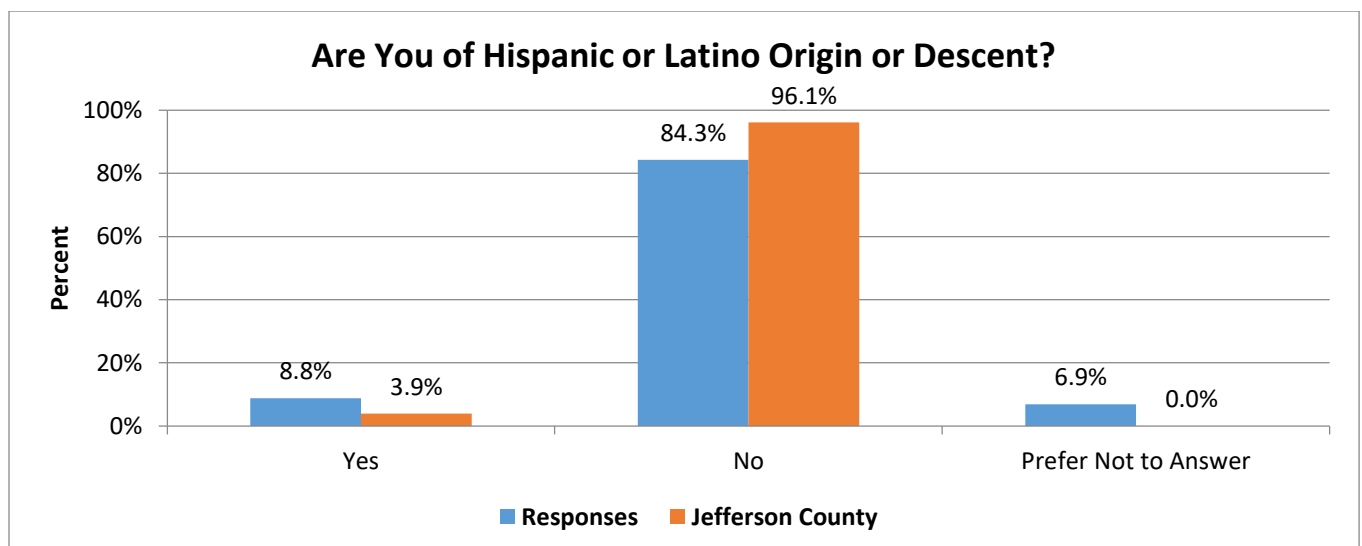
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Figure 3: Race of Survey Respondents



Other races provided by survey respondents included three individuals who responded “American,” two who responded as “Hispanic/Latino,” and one respondent for each of the following: African American/Native American/Irish, Cuban, Human, Inter-racial, Italian American, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Mixed, More than one “race”, Multi-racial, Negro, Pakistani, and Puerto Rican.

Figure 4: Ethnicity of Survey Respondents



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Figure 5: Educational Attainment of Survey Respondents

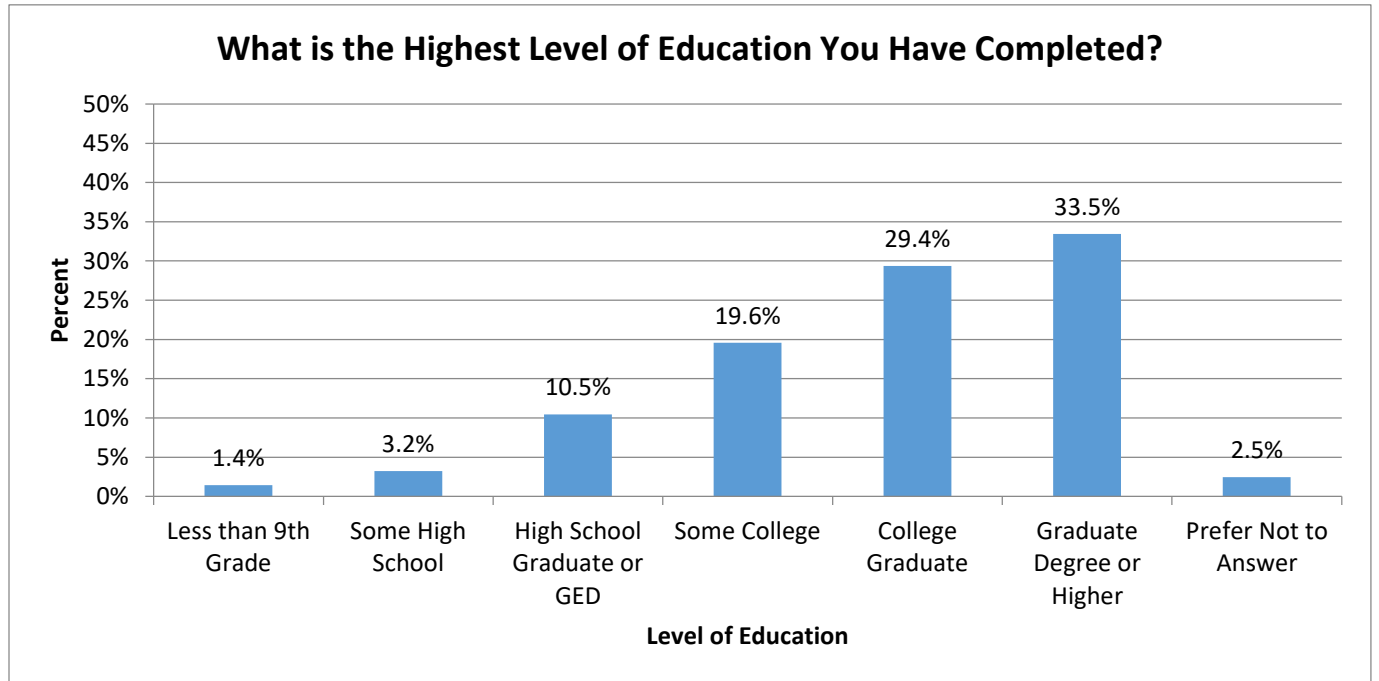
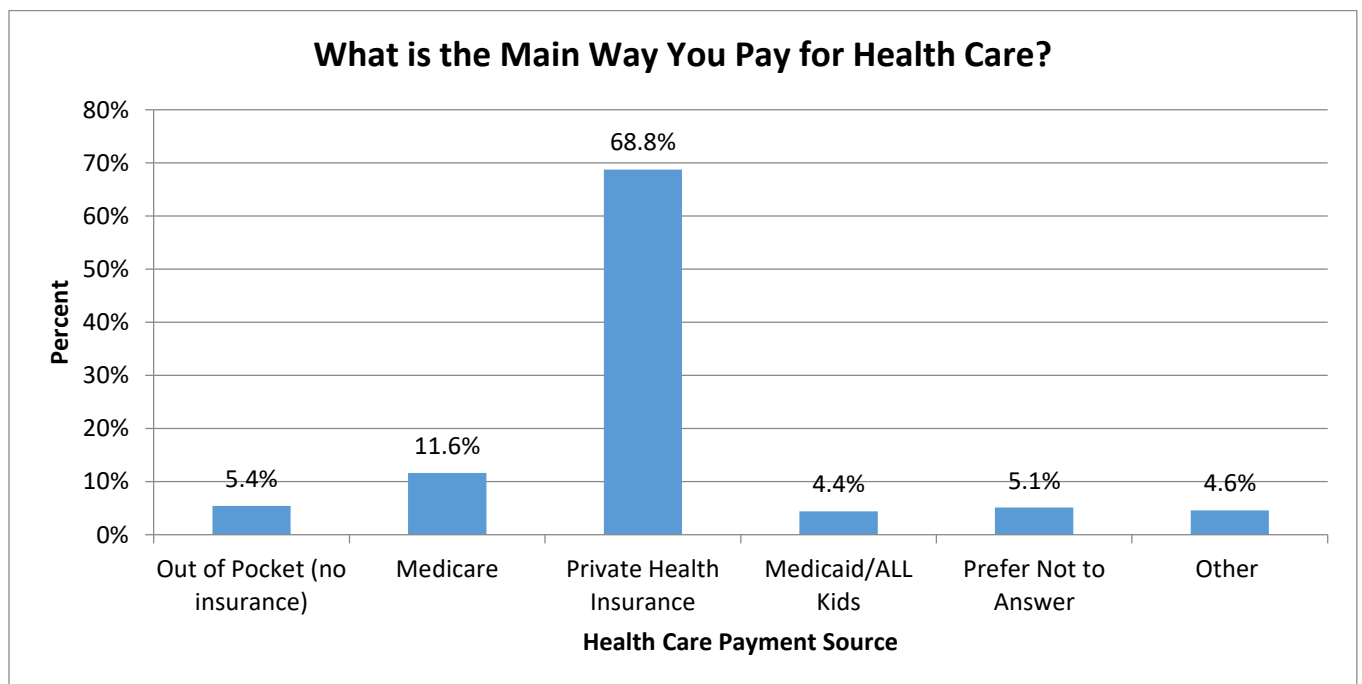


Figure 6: Insurance Status of Survey Respondents

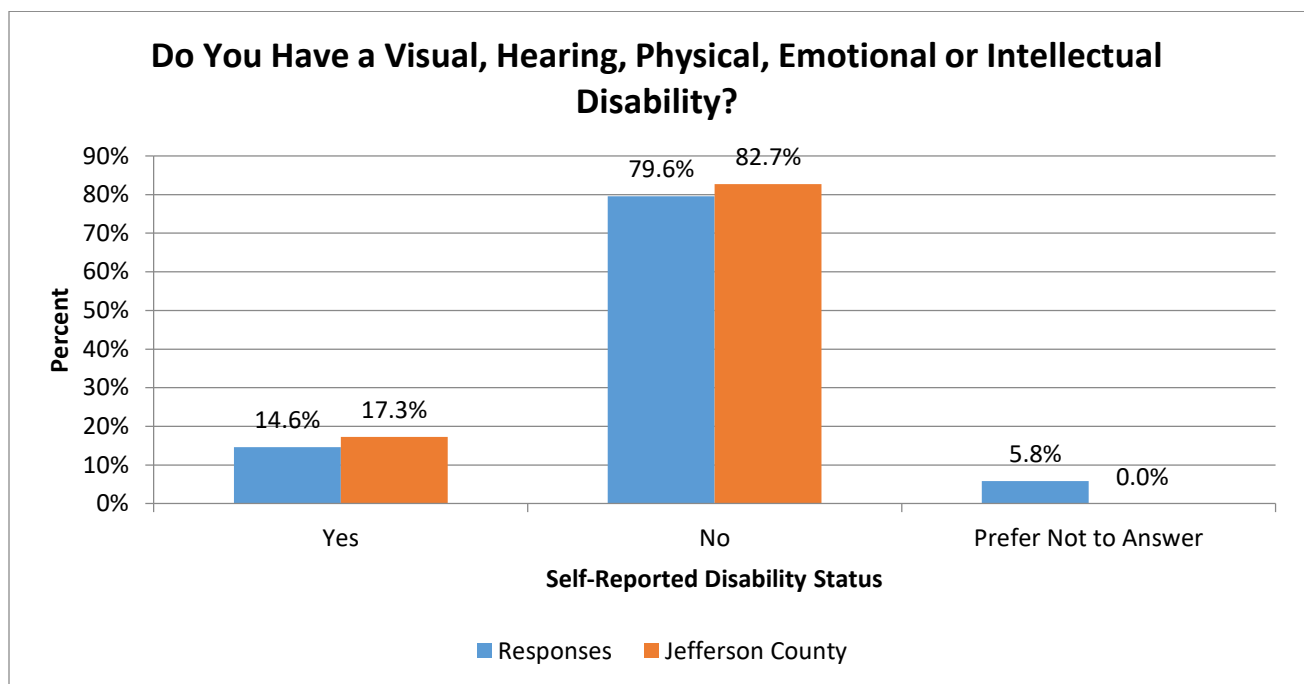




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Other mechanisms for health care payment provided by survey respondents were as follows: Tricare for Life (8), parents insurance (7), the Veterans Administration, Flex Pay, respondent doesn't have any, individual health care plan, Medicaid, Aetna, Kaiser Permanente, Employment, Student, respondent's job provided insurance, Medicare, school, ACA, Blue Advantage, Veteran Care, ALL Kids, and ISD.

Figure 7: Disability Status of Survey Respondents

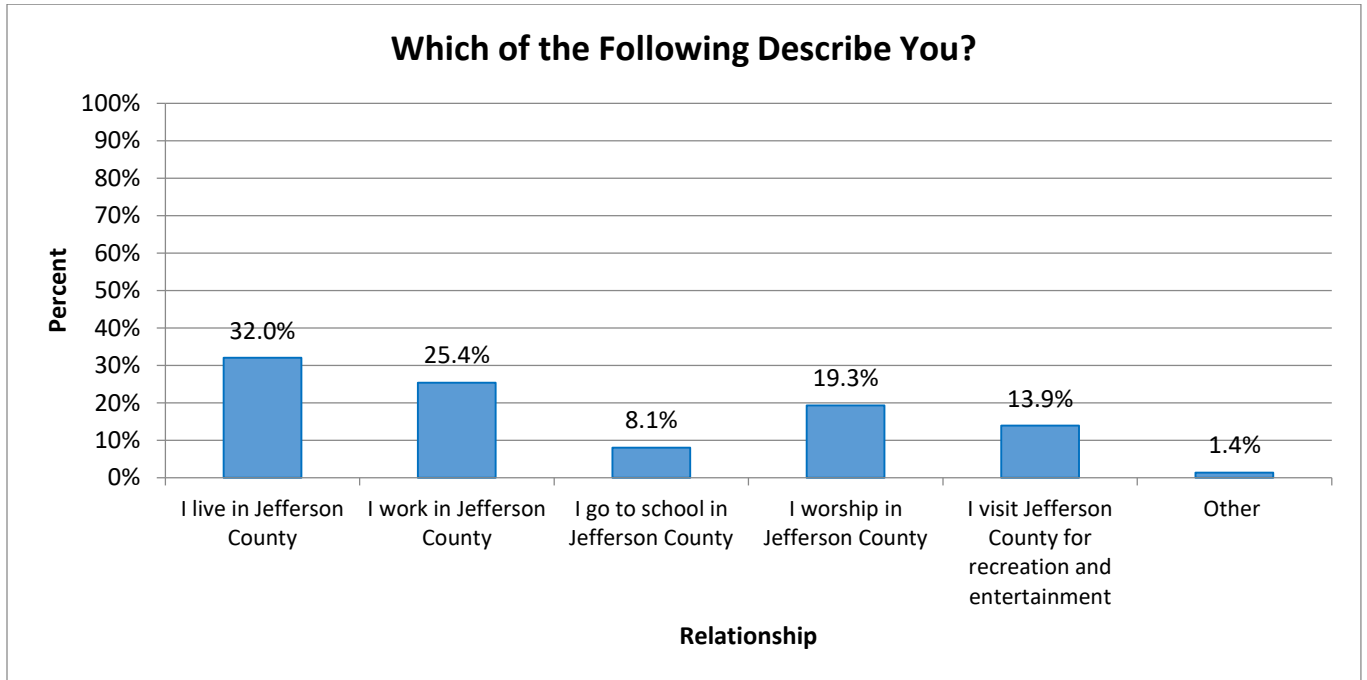




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Approximately 32% of survey respondents acknowledged residing in Jefferson County, and approximately 25% of respondents work in Jefferson County.

Figure 8: Relationship to Jefferson County



Other relationships included receiving medical care, shopping, volunteering, recreating, owning a business, having children or grandchildren in schools or participating in activities in Jefferson County.

“All my medical problems are handled in Jefferson County.”

“I was born in Jefferson County.”

“My kids go to school in Jefferson County.”

“I am active in community activities.”

“I went to school in Jefferson County.”

“I shop in Jefferson County.”

“I volunteer in Jefferson County.”

“I am a part time resident.”

“I used to live in Jefferson County.”

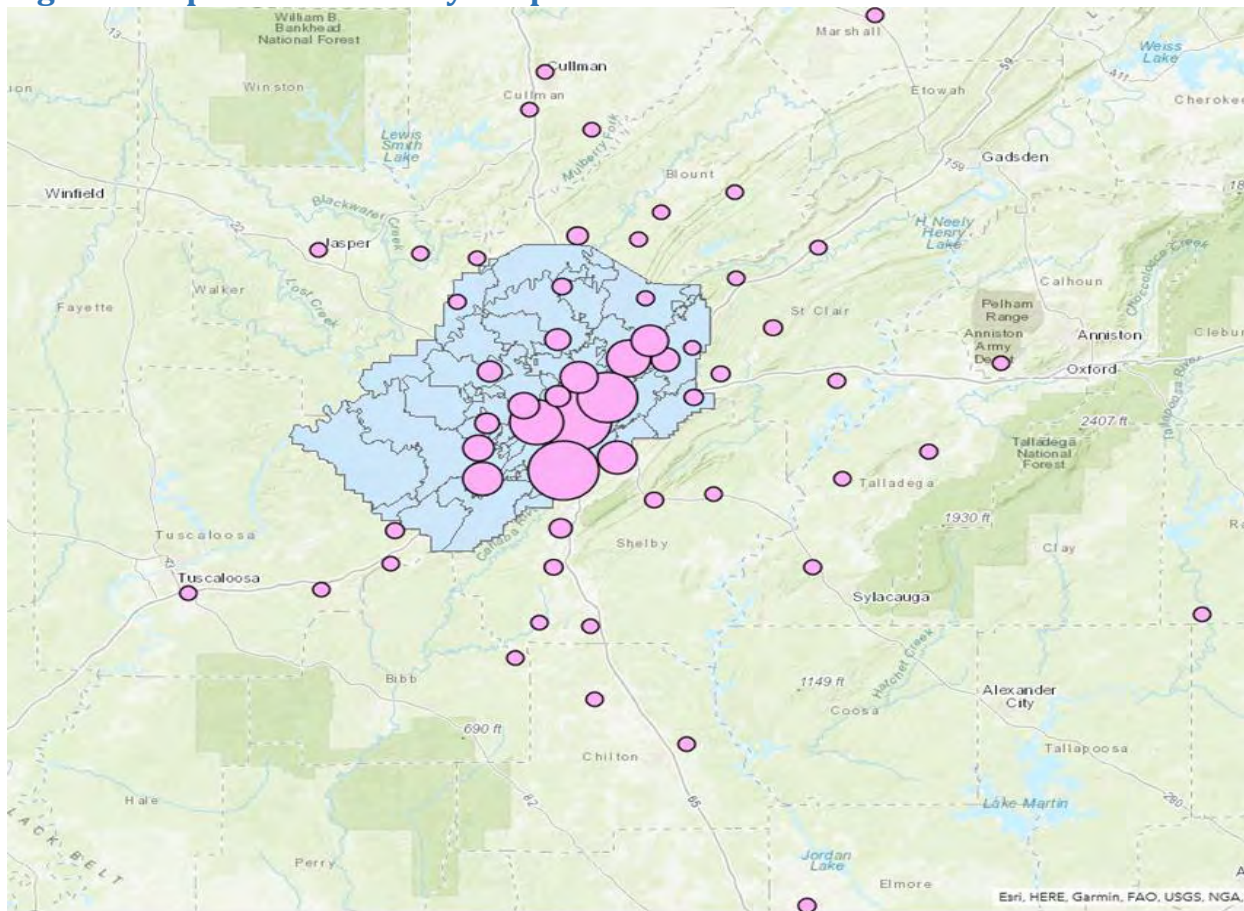
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“I use Jefferson County for outdoor recreation.”

“I own a small business in Jefferson County.”

Figure 9 is a map of the zip codes of the respondents to the survey.

Figure 9: Zip Codes of Survey Respondents



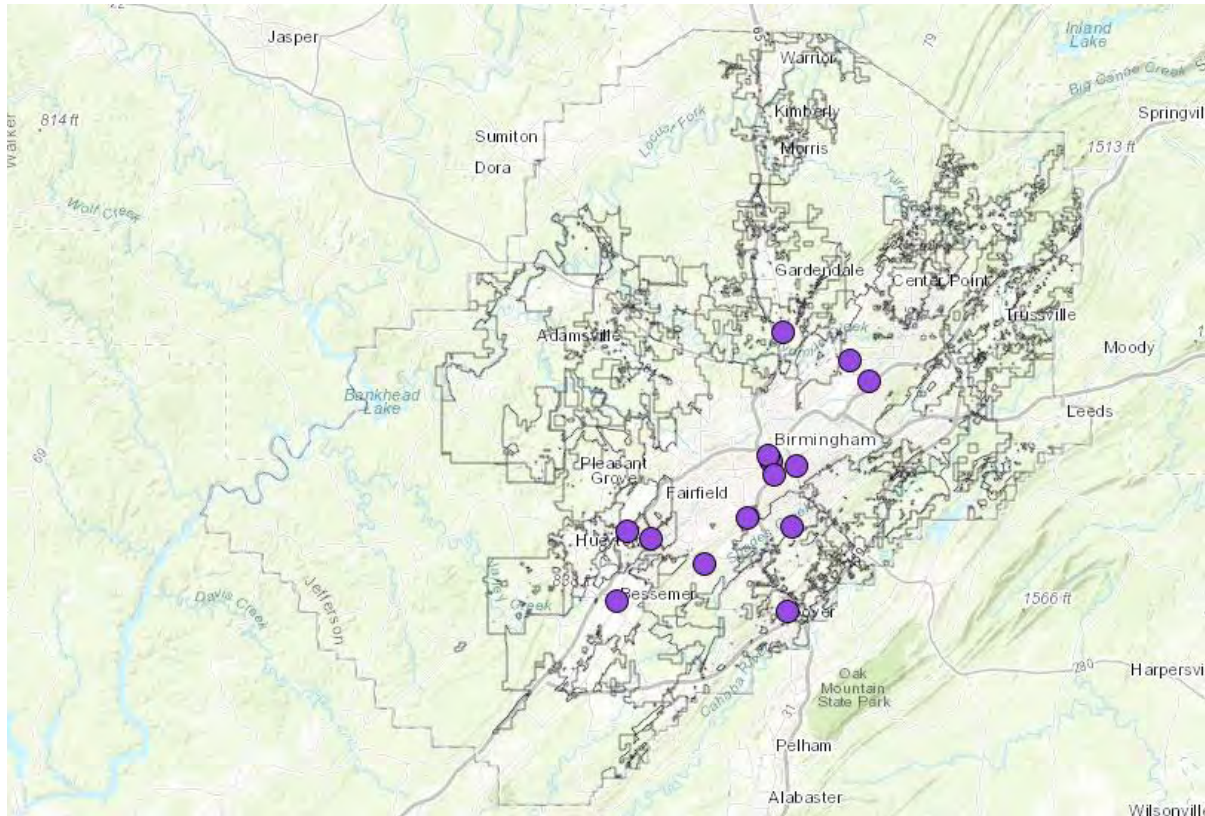
Focus Groups

The CTSA focus groups, conducted in urban (Birmingham, Brownsville, East Lake and Midfield) and suburban (Bessemer, Fultondale, Homewood and Hoover) locations within Jefferson County included two focus groups conducted with Spanish-speaking residents, two groups conducted with individuals living with a disability, two focus groups and one community conversation completed with the senior sub-population, and one focus group each with formerly incarcerated individuals and the homeless sub-

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population. Over 200 individuals participated in focus groups informing the assessment. Figure 10 displays the geographic location of the focus groups and community conversation.

Figure 10: Focus Group and Community Conversation Locations



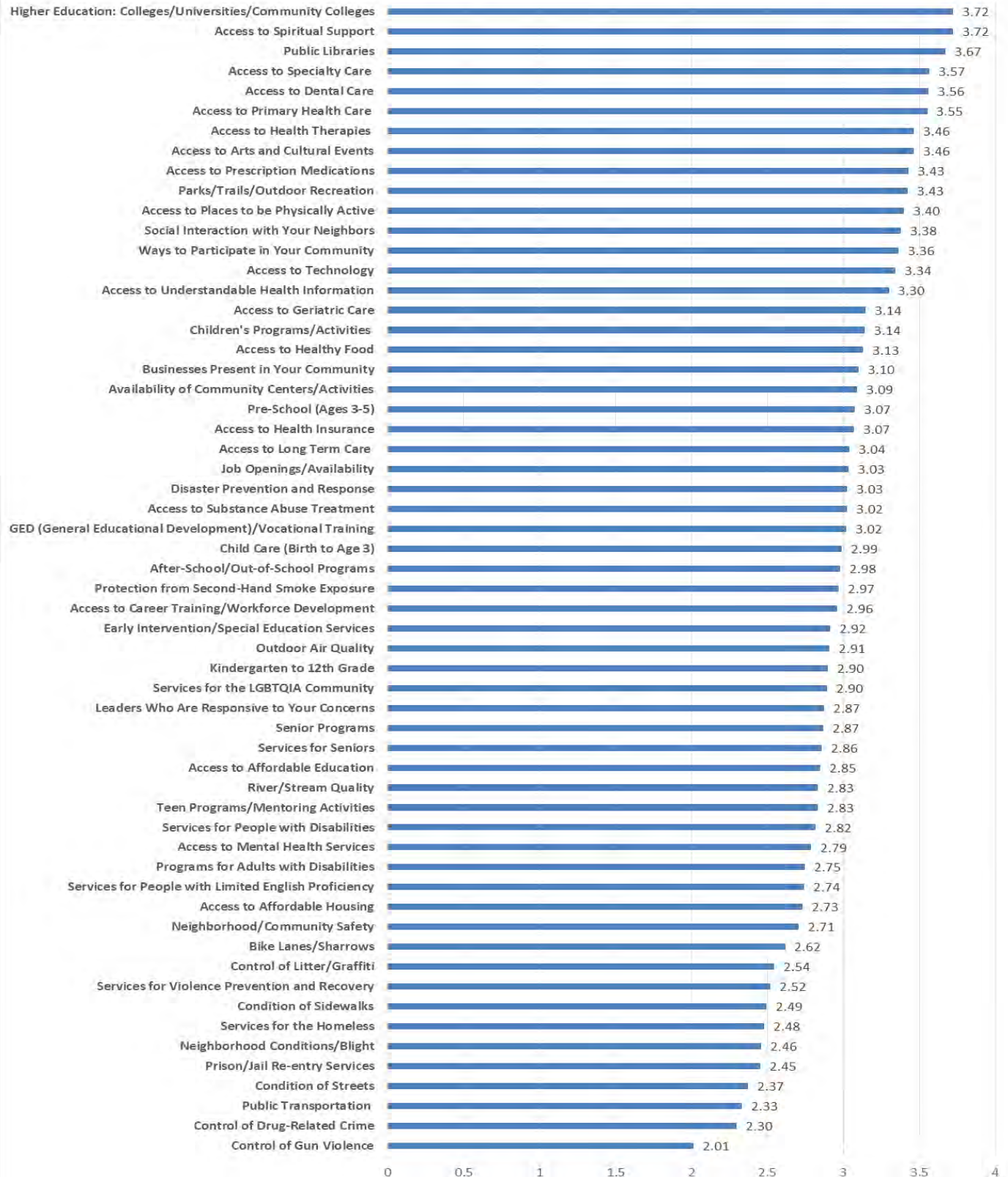
Your Opinion Matters! Survey Findings

The *Your Opinion Matters!* survey findings indicate that Jefferson County residents are most and least satisfied with the aspects of health and quality of life identified in Figure 11 and Tables 1 and 2. Satisfaction was rated on a five-point Likert-type scale with a score of one (1) representing very dissatisfied, three (3) representing neutral and five (5) representing very satisfied.

Figure 11: Satisfaction with Quality of Life Indicators by *Your Opinion Matters!* Survey Respondents

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Satisfaction with Quality of Life Indicators by Survey Respondents





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Table 1: Aspects of Health and Quality of Life with Highest Respondent Satisfaction Scores

Most Satisfied	Mean Score
Higher Education: Colleges/Universities/Community Colleges	3.72
Access to Spiritual Support	3.72
Public Libraries	3.67
Access to Specialty Care	3.57
Access to Dental Care	3.56
Access to Primary Health Care	3.55
Access to Health Therapies (Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy, etc.)	3.46
Access to Arts and Cultural Events	3.46
Access to Prescription Medications	3.43
Parks/Trails/Outdoor Recreation	3.43

Table 2: Aspects of Health and Quality of Life with Lowest Respondent Satisfaction Scores

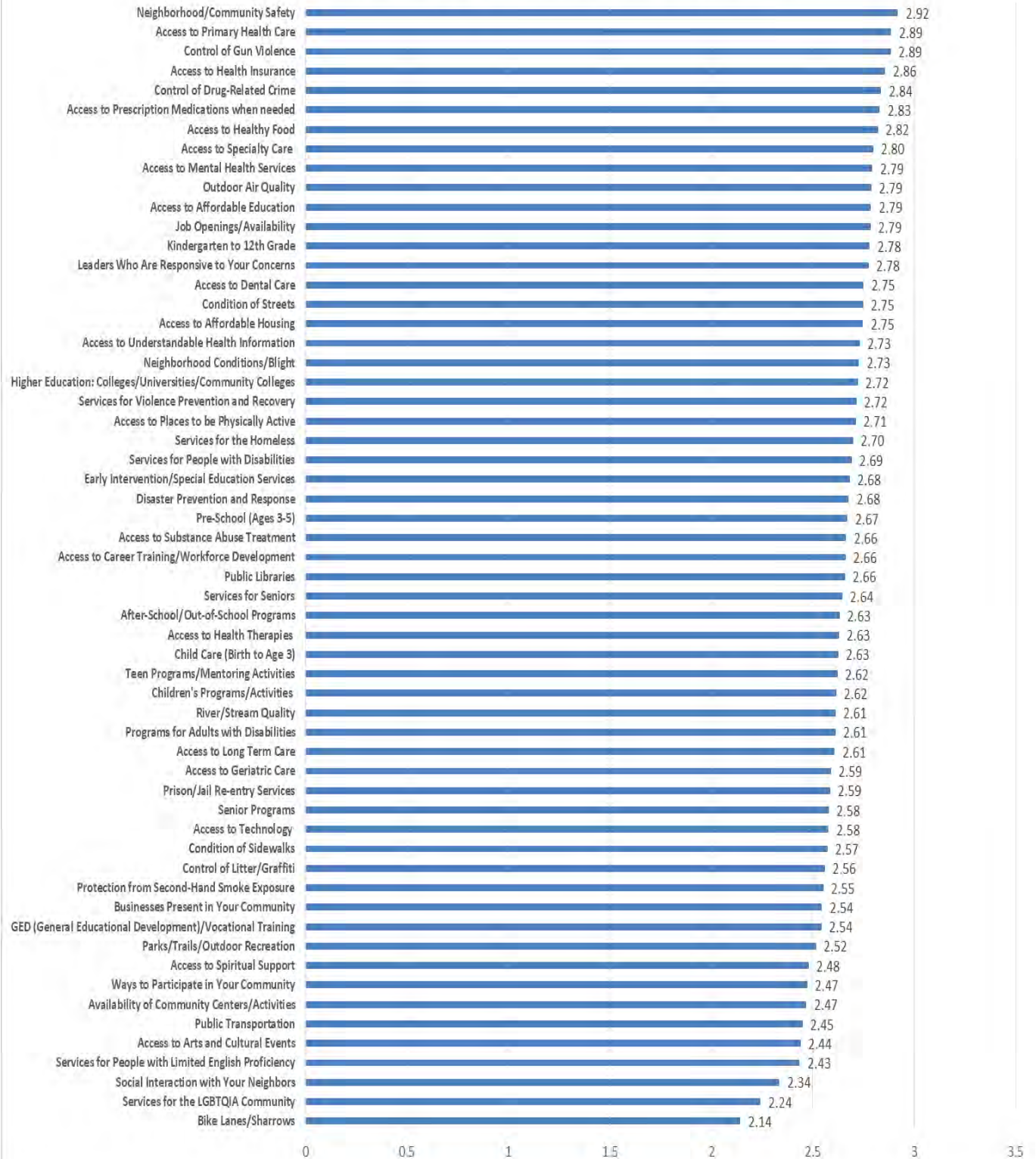
Least Satisfied	Mean Score
Control of Gun Violence	2.01
Control of Drug-related Crime	2.30
Public Transportation	2.33
Condition of Streets	2.37
Prison/Jail Re-entry Services	2.45
Neighborhood Conditions/Blight	2.46
Services for the Homeless	2.48
Condition of Sidewalks	2.49
Services for Violence Prevention and Recovery	2.52
Control of Litter/Graffiti	2.54

Survey respondents rated the importance of each domain of quality of life and health indicator. Figure 12 and Tables 3 and 4 indicate the items that survey respondents rated as most and least important. Importance was rated on a three-point scale with one (1) representing low importance, two (2) representing medium importance, and three (3) representing high importance.

Figure 12: Importance of Quality of Life Indicators by Survey Respondents

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Importance of Quality of Life Indicators by Survey Respondents





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Table 3: Aspects of Health and Quality of Life Survey Respondents Indicated as Most Important

Most Important Aspects of Health and Quality of Life	Mean Score
Neighborhood/Community Safety	2.92
Access to Primary Health Care	2.89
Control of Gun Violence	2.89
Access to Health Insurance	2.86
Control of Drug-related Crime	2.84
Access to Prescription Medications when needed	2.83
Access to Healthy Food	2.82
Access to Specialty Care	2.80
Access to Mental Health Services	2.79
Outdoor Air Quality	2.79

Table 4: Aspects of Health and Quality of Life Survey Respondents Indicated as Least Important

Least Important	Mean Score
Bike Lanes/Sharrows	2.14
Services for the LGBTQIA Community	2.24
Social Interaction with Your Neighbors	2.33
Services for People with Limited English Proficiency	2.43
Access to Arts and Cultural Events	2.44
Public Transportation	2.45
Availability of Community Centers/Activities	2.47
Ways to Participate in Your Community	2.47
Access to Spiritual Support	2.48
Parks/Trails/Outdoor Recreation	2.52

The *Your Opinion Matters!* survey requested respondents identify the health conditions of most concern for Jefferson County. Respondents were able to select multiple health conditions. The health conditions most commonly identified are listed in ranked order in Table 5.



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Table 5: Top Health Conditions

Condition
Obesity
Drug/Alcohol/Opioid Abuse
Diabetes
Homicide
Mental/Emotional/Behavioral Problems
High Blood Pressure
Stress
Tobacco Use
Heart Disease
Sexually Transmitted Infections
Cancer

The quantitative information collected from the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey identified aspects of health and quality of life important to the community and categorized respondent's perception of quality of life in Jefferson County. The CTSA also collected qualitative data through focus groups, a community conversation and through the open ended responses to survey questions. From analysis of the qualitative data there were 15 themes identified.

Table 6: Top Themes Identified from CTSA Qualitative Data

Identified Themes
Transportation
Access to Services
Crime/Violence
Mental Health
Environmental Concerns
Affordable/Accessible Housing
Infrastructure
Education
Government and Political Leadership
Blight
Shifting Demographics
Biases
Job Opportunities and Training
Food System
Drugs/Opioid Crisis



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Specific Results by Theme and Topic

Transportation

The quality, availability and accessibility of reliable transportation was the most commonly identified theme across the CTSA. Transportation was noted as essential to economic health (allowing travel to work), physical and mental health (facilitating access to medical providers, grocery stores and other services), and spiritual fulfillment (connecting to religious facilities and family).

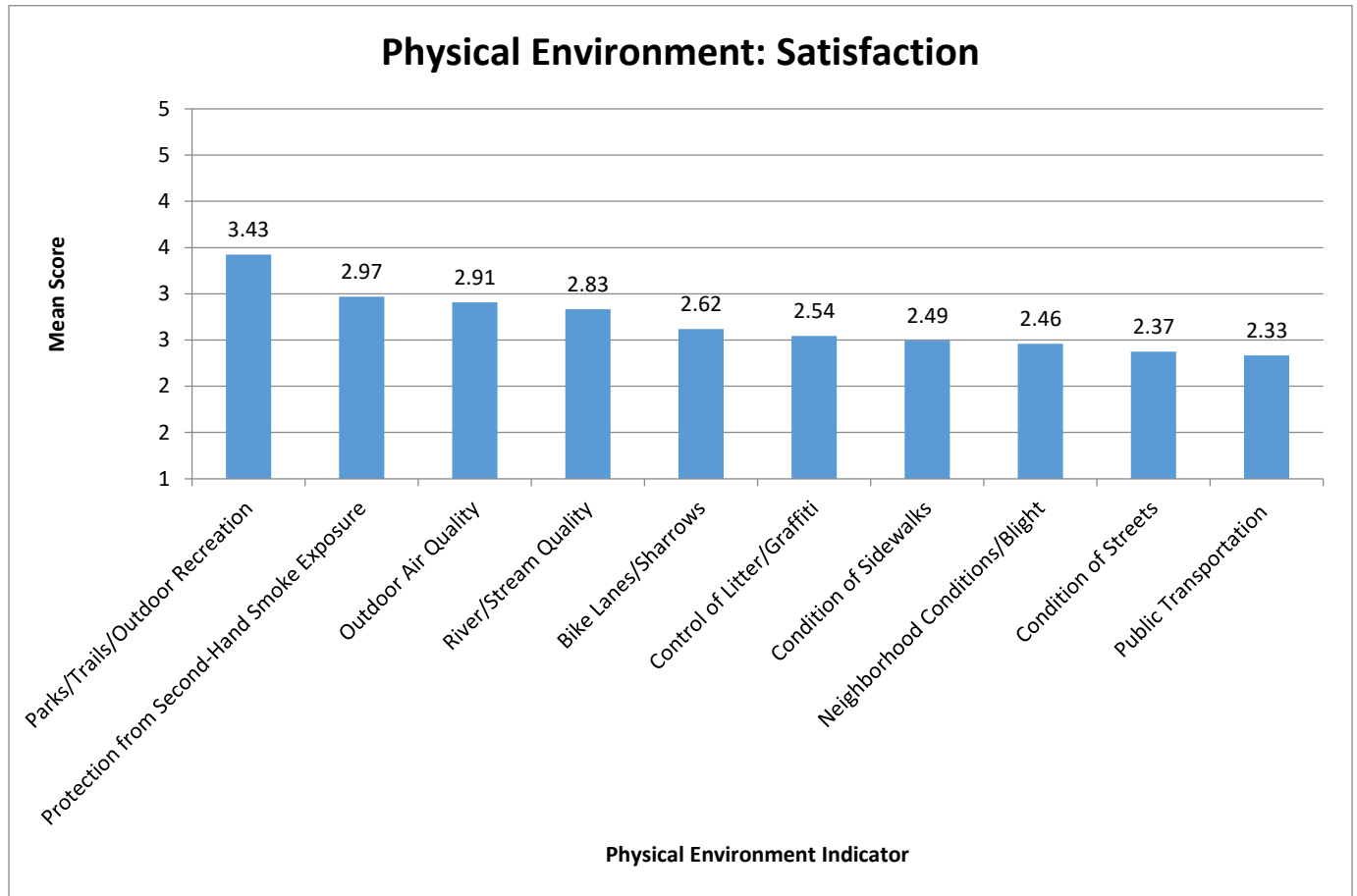
Transportation Strengths: Transportation was deemed by CTSA participants as critical for supporting economic health, enabling access to physical and mental health care, and connecting individuals to social support systems. With recent improvements to some roads and bridges within Jefferson County, traffic flow and congestion in areas within the county were noted to have improved.

Transportation Weaknesses: Jefferson County's current transportation system was indicated by CTSA participants to inhibit access to jobs, education, health care and support services especially for the poor and those with disabilities. A timely, safe and well-maintained public transit system is deemed as needed to serve all of Jefferson County. Current Birmingham Jefferson County Transportation Authority (BJCTA) bus routes were stated as inadequate in meeting the transportation needs of residents, especially those without personal vehicles. Many bus shelters were noted to need repair and maintenance. Altered traffic patterns in some areas of Jefferson County have placed large trucks on smaller roads, creating perceived increased traffic congestion and decreased safety.

Overall, *Your Opinion Matters!* survey respondents scored transportation low in satisfaction, with a score of dissatisfied (2.33), both overall and within the Physical Environment survey domain.

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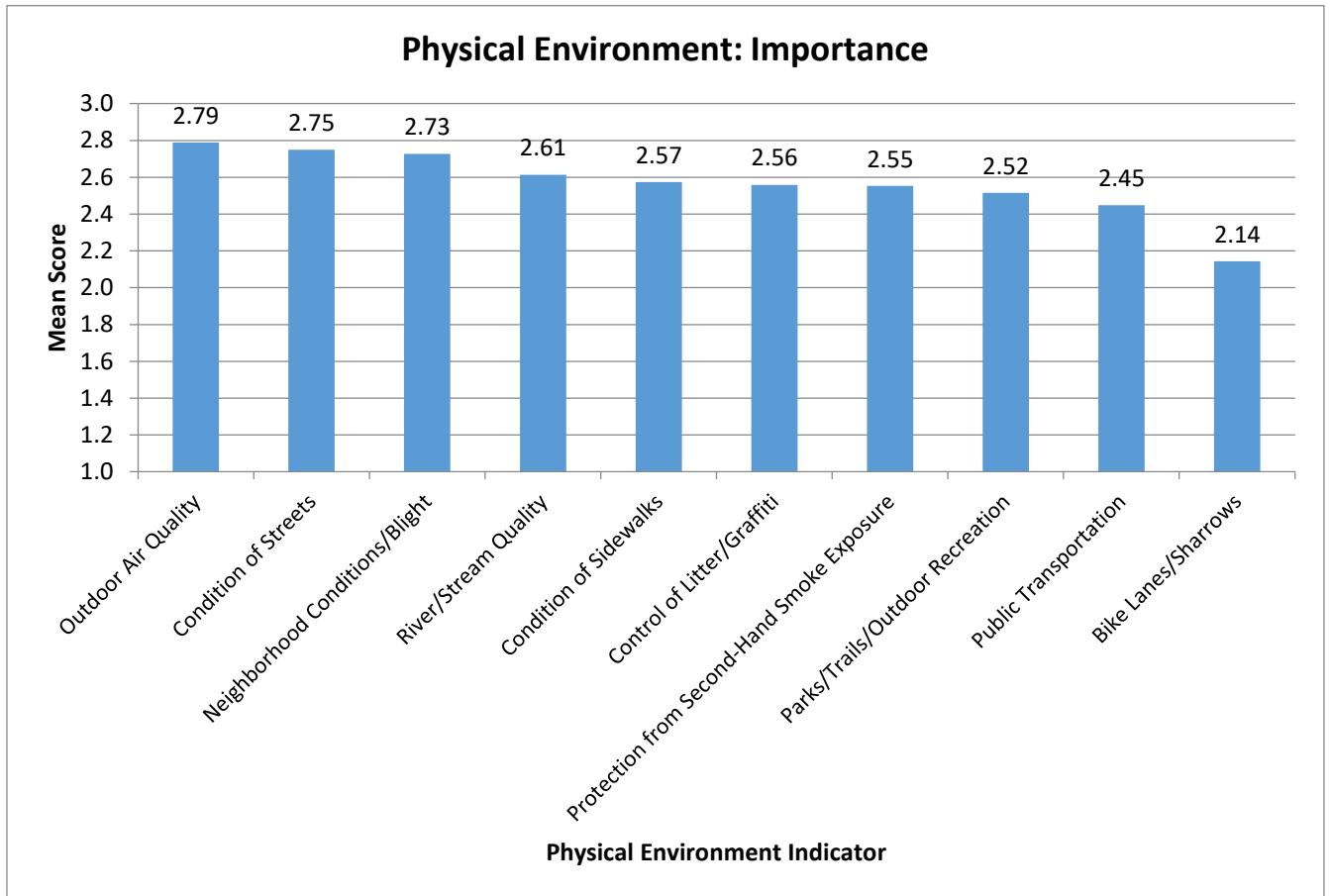
Figure 13: Satisfaction with Physical Environment Indicators



Transportation scored lower in importance both overall and within the Physical Environment domain with a score of medium Importance (2.45). Overall, survey respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the current public transportation in Jefferson County, but did not feel it was an indicator of high importance.

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Figure 14: Importance of Physical Environment Quality of Life Indicators



Access to Services

Respondents identified “access to services” as the second most common theme in the CTSA. Services include affordable health care, affordable medications, efficient and effective service coordination, and the need for Medicaid expansion.

Access to Services Strengths: Accessible and equitable access to health care services, prescription medications, mental health care and other supportive services were identified as a key factors in health and quality of life by CTSA participants. There were numerous organizations and individuals within Jefferson County identified as providers of high quality and needed services to the community.

Access to Services Weaknesses: Without equitable access and affordability of quality health care and

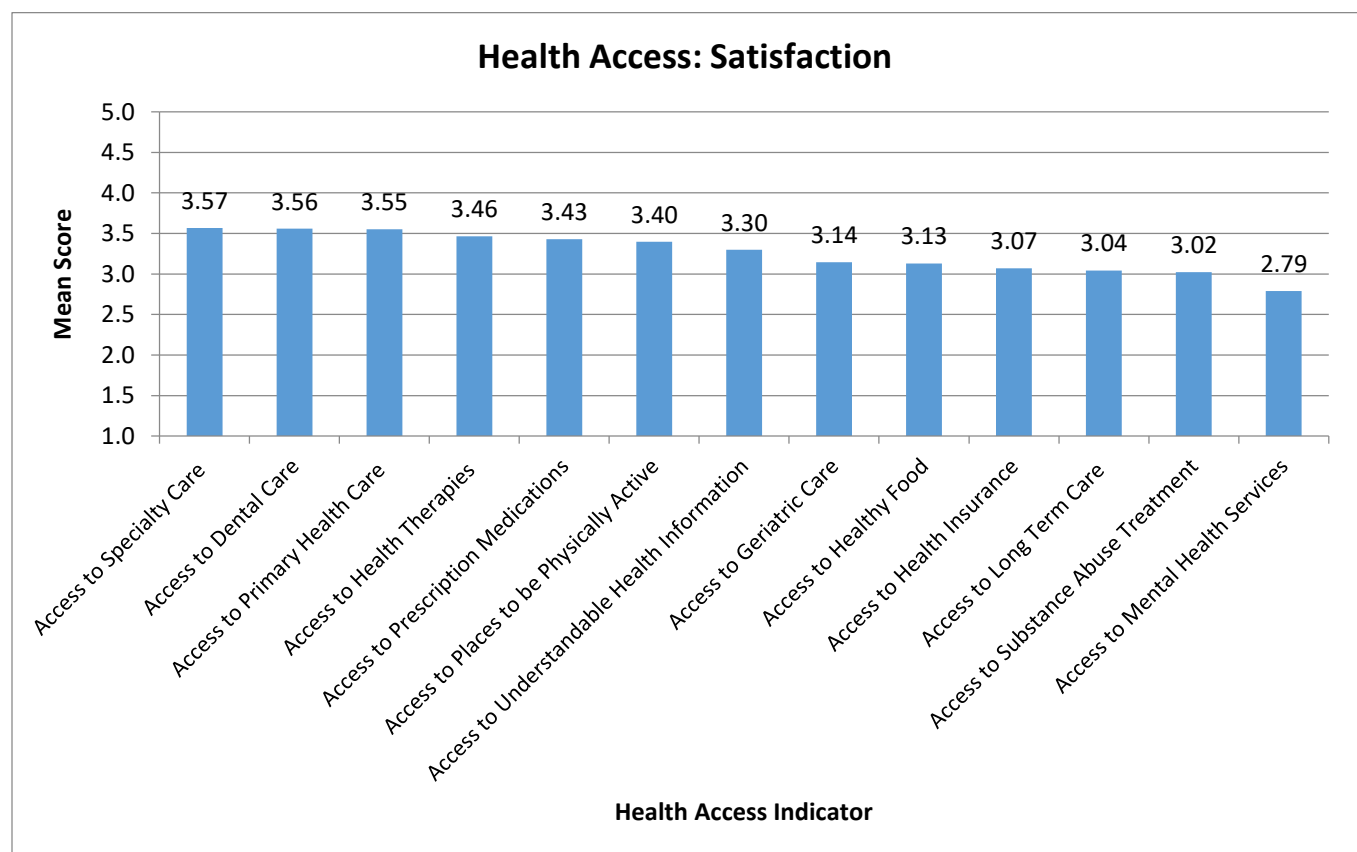


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other services across Jefferson County, many people indicated being unable to receive services, especially mental health care, childcare, and to obtain prescription medications. Individuals living in the rural areas of the county reported difficulty accessing multiple services. Specific populations, especially the Spanish-speaking sub-population, racial and ethnic minorities, the homeless, individuals living with a disability and seniors reported feeling unwelcome when accessing health care and other services in Jefferson County. Care coordination and service navigation were also noted as specific needs for seniors, the homeless, formerly incarcerated individuals and individuals with living with a disability.

In the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey results, respondents indicated highest satisfaction with access to specialty care, dental care and primary health care within the Health Access domain. Respondents were least satisfied with access to mental health services, substance abuse treatment and long term care.

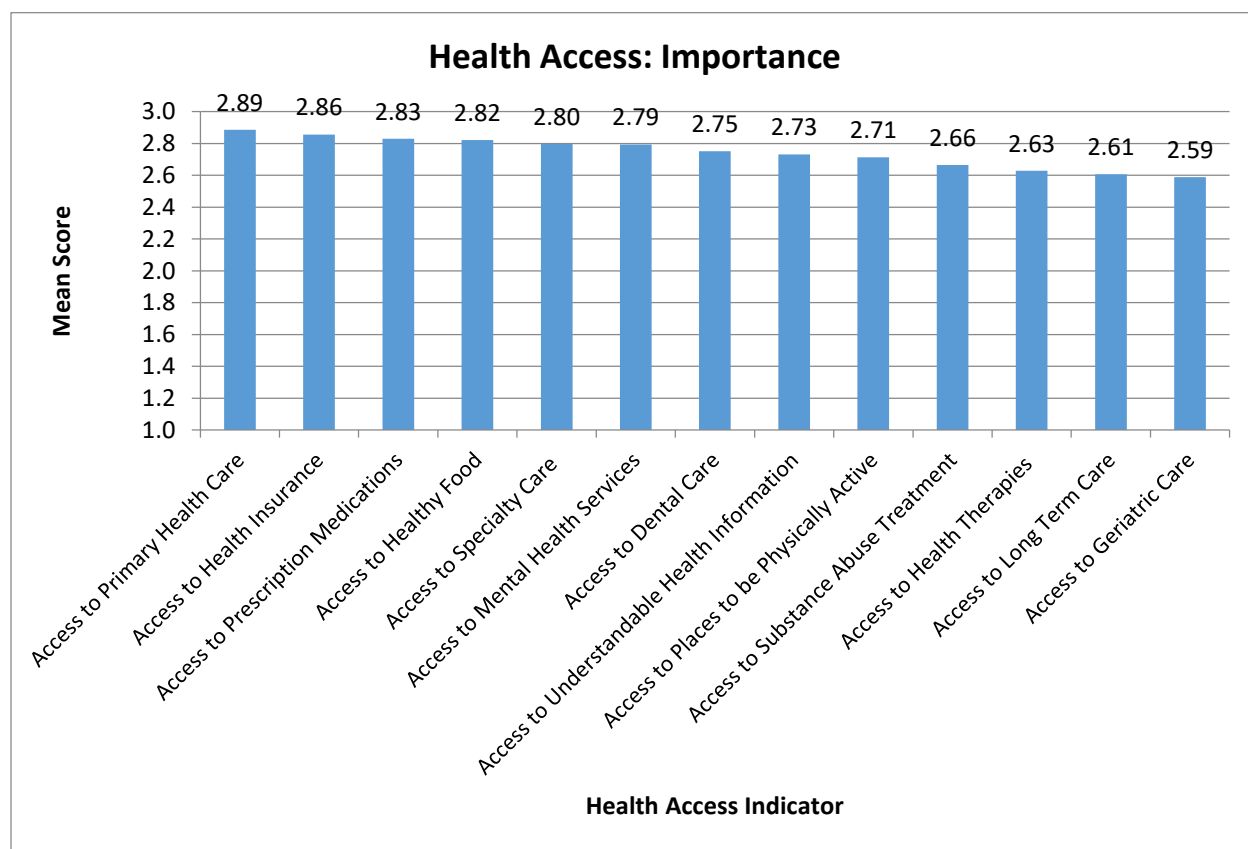
Figure 16: Satisfaction with Health Access Indicators



Respondents indicated that access to primary health care, health insurance and prescription medications were the most important items related to health access; access to geriatric care, long term care and health therapies were the least important items in the Health Access domain.

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Figure 17: Importance of Health Access Indicators



Crime and Violence

Crime, particularly drug-related crime and gun violence, was the third most commonly identified theme across the CTSA. Respondents reported concern about the perceived increase in crime over the past five years, noting that crime rates significantly impact the perception of safety and wellbeing.

Crime/Violence Strengths: Freedom from crime and violence, especially gun violence, was an important theme among CTSA participants. Some geographic areas within Jefferson County were perceived as having higher levels of safety than others.

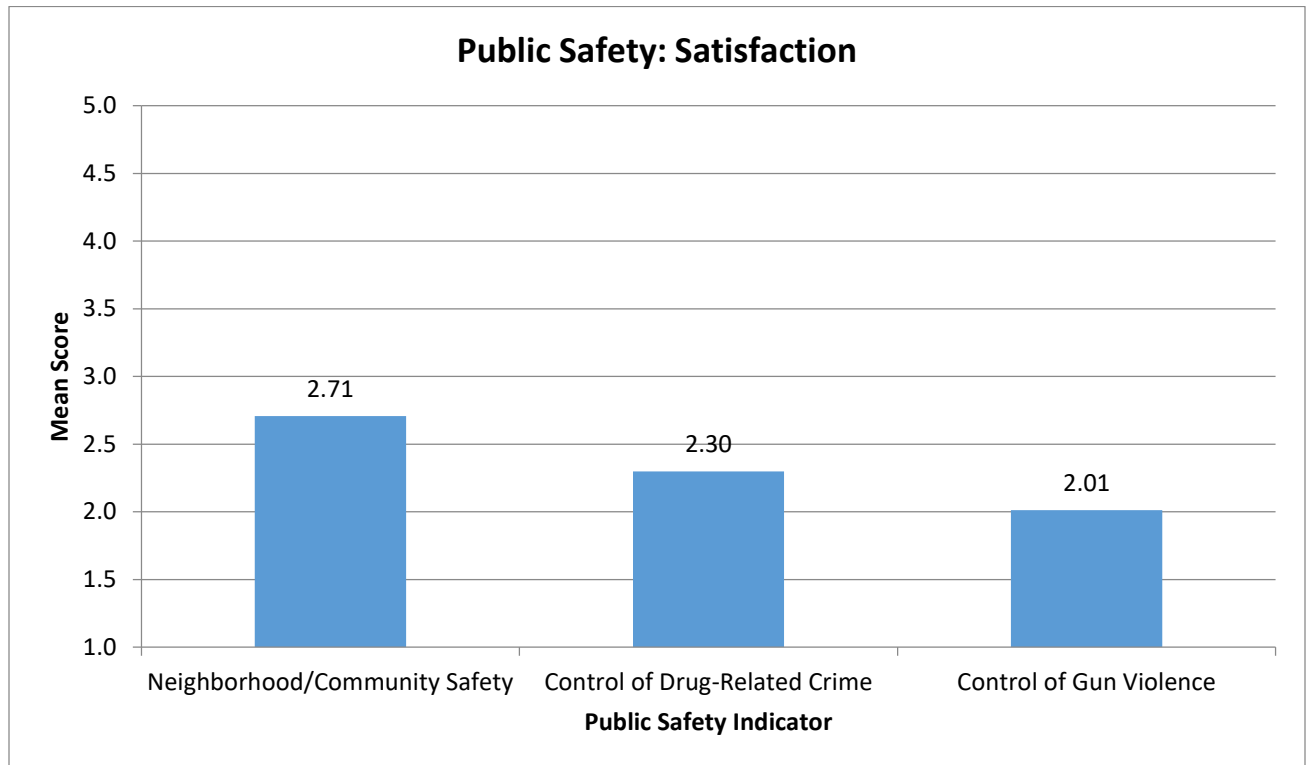
Crime/Violence Weaknesses: Crime and violence, especially drug-related crime and gun violence, were identified as significant concerns for residents of Jefferson County. Decreased perceptions of safety and well-being in the areas of Jefferson County in which residents live, learn, work, play and worship were noted across the county. Police visibility was considered to be inadequate. The drug epidemic was believed to be a significant driver of crime within the county. Gang violence continued to be perceived as a problem.



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Survey respondents indicated overall dissatisfaction with all three indicators in the Public Safety domain of the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey.

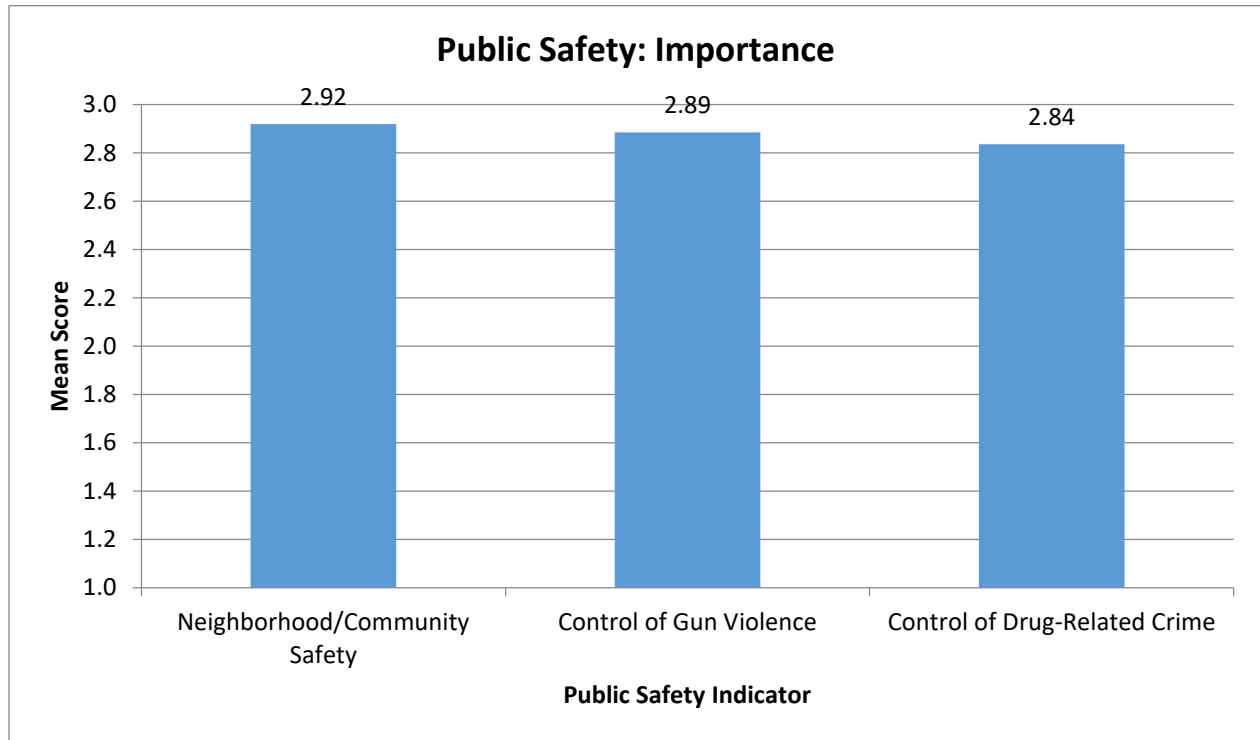
Figure 18: Satisfaction with Public Safety Indicators



Each of the three of the indicators in the Public Safety domain of the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey ranked as indicators of High Importance.

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Figure 19: Importance of Public Safety Indicators



Mental Health

Mental health was an area of concern for CTSA respondents. Participants exhibited high levels of mental health awareness and agreement that the promotion of mental health should occur alongside the promotion of physical health.

Mental Health Strengths: Focus group participants emphasized the importance of good mental health and accessibility of good mental health services accessible for all. Overall, participants felt that awareness of mental health needs and available services in Jefferson County had improved over the past five years.

Mental Health Weaknesses: Stigma related to mental health diagnoses and treatment was stated to continue to act as a barrier to receiving mental health care, especially among men. Location, cost and lack of mental health care provider availability within the county were reported as barriers to accessing mental health services and contributing to variability in access to care across Jefferson County. Youth suicide was specifically identified as a health concern needing improvement for prevention and post-intervention strategies.

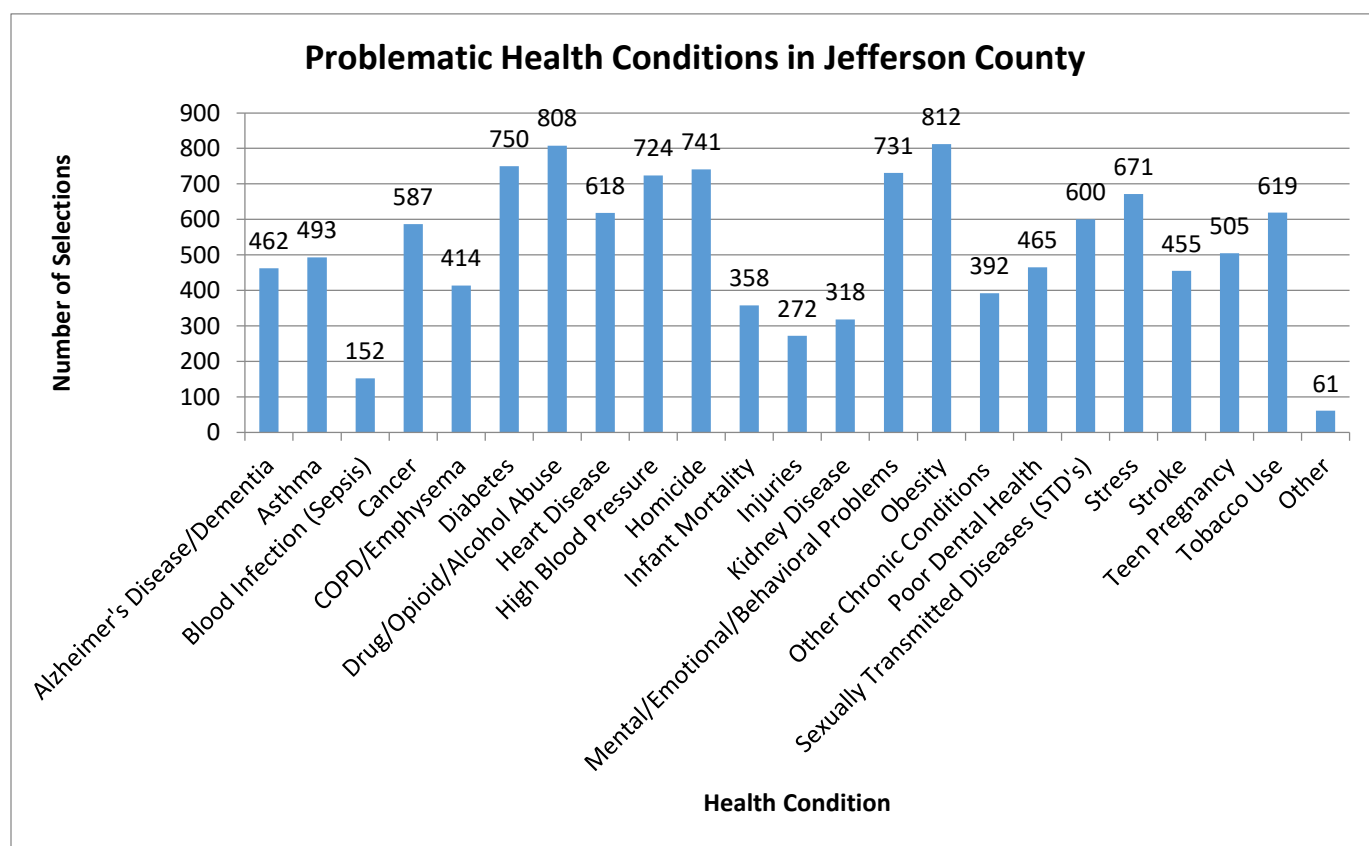


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For *Your Opinion Matters!* survey respondents, access to mental health services represented the indicator respondents were least satisfied with in the Health Access domain. Access to mental health services scored as high importance with a score of 2.79.

The category of Mental/Emotional/Behavioral problems was one of the top health conditions indicated as a leading health concern in Jefferson County, with 731 respondents selecting it as a problem.

Figure 20: Health Conditions in Jefferson County



Environmental Concerns

Environmental concerns include a variety of issues including illegal dumping, air pollution, safe water for drinking and recreation, flooding, and animal control. Illegal dumping was noted as a problem in a majority of CTSA focus groups.

Environmental Strengths: It was noted that Jefferson County possesses a wide variety of natural resources and a wealth of ecologic diversity contributing to the natural beauty of the county.

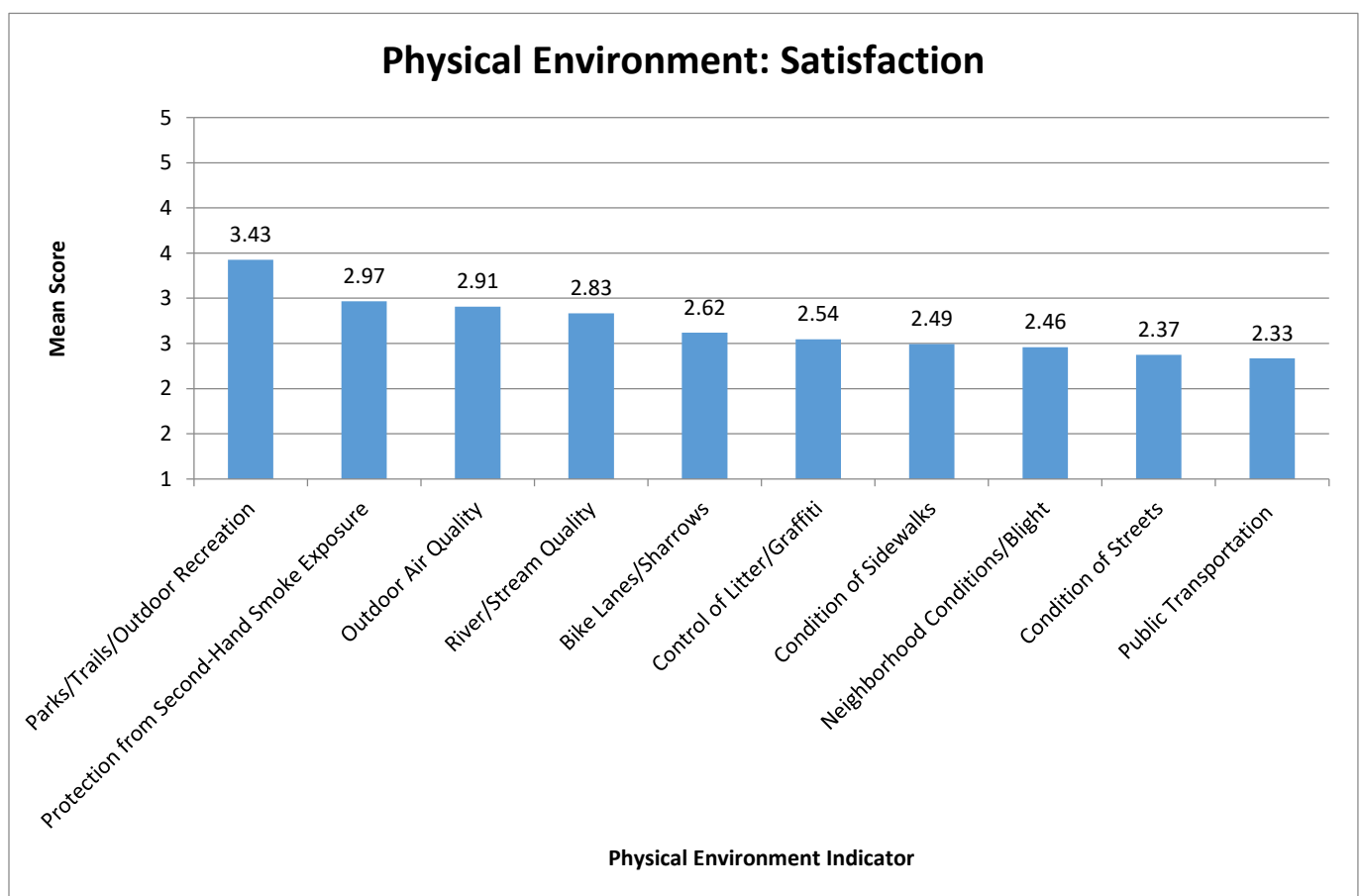


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Environmental Weaknesses: Illegal dumping, burning of trash and debris, inadequate trash pickup, air pollution, poor indoor air quality related to smoking and asbestos, inadequate animal control, lack of safe water for drinking and recreation, and environmental contamination by sewage were identified as issues of concern for Jefferson County. Specific concerns included the cost and lack of consistent availability of trash pick-up in some areas of Jefferson County; these factors were believed to contribute to illegal dumping.

For *Your Opinion Matters!* survey respondents, the areas of the physical environment with the greatest level of satisfaction included the parks/trails/outdoor recreation, protection from second-hand smoke and outdoor air quality. The areas of the physical environment with which respondents were least satisfied included public transportation, condition of streets and neighborhood conditions/blight.

Figure 21: Satisfaction with Physical Environment Indicators

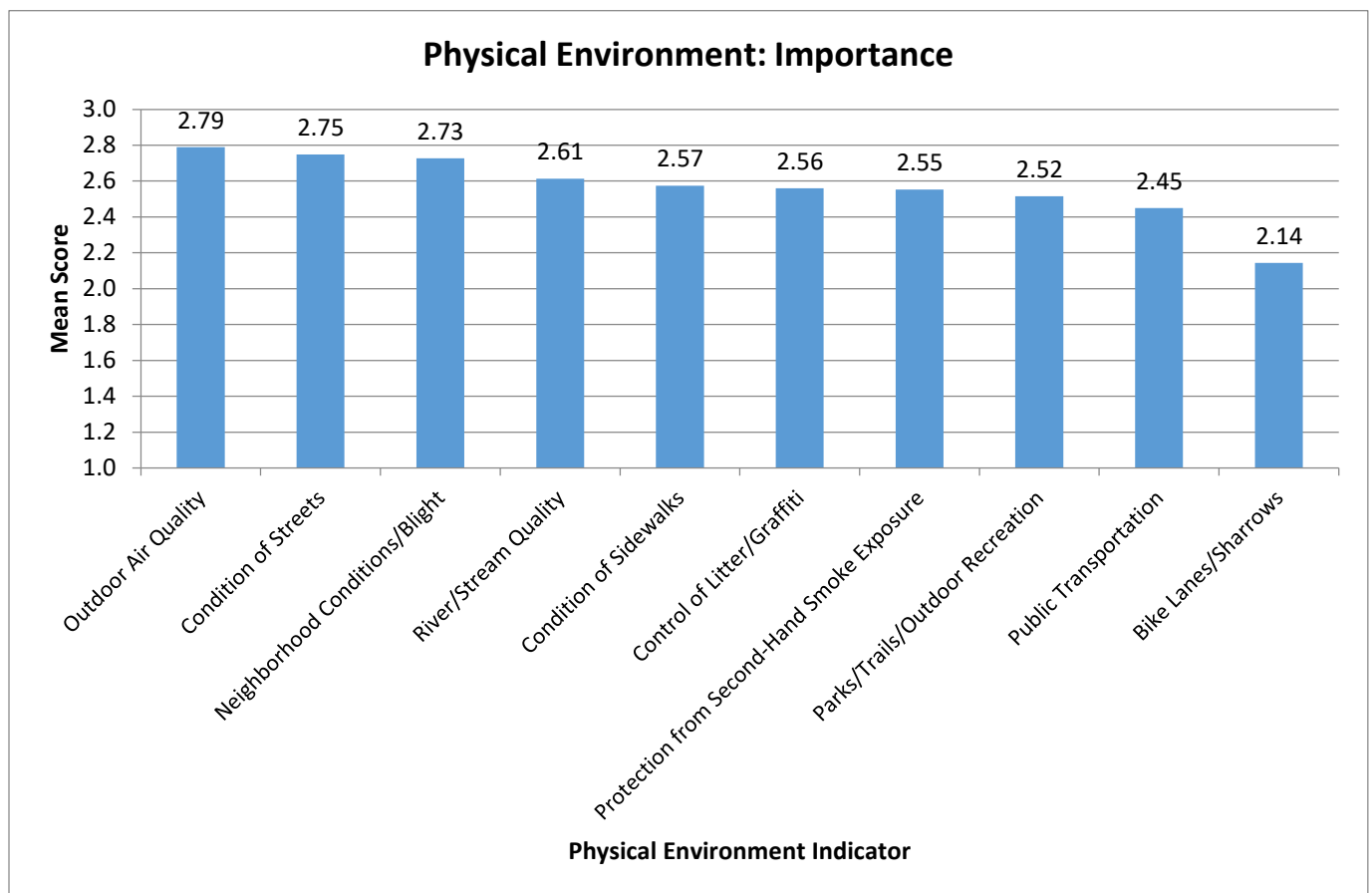




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Survey respondents ranked outdoor air quality, condition of streets and neighborhood conditions/blight as the most important items in the Physical Environment domain. Bike lanes/sharrows, public transportation and parks/trails/outdoor recreation were ranked as the least important areas of the physical environment.

Figure 22: Importance of Physical Environment Indicators



Affordable/Accessible Housing

CTSA participants indicated a disparity in the cost of living across Jefferson County and limited opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals and those who have been homeless to transition into permanent housing. Gentrification in areas of Birmingham was a noted concern for many individuals unable to attain affordable housing.



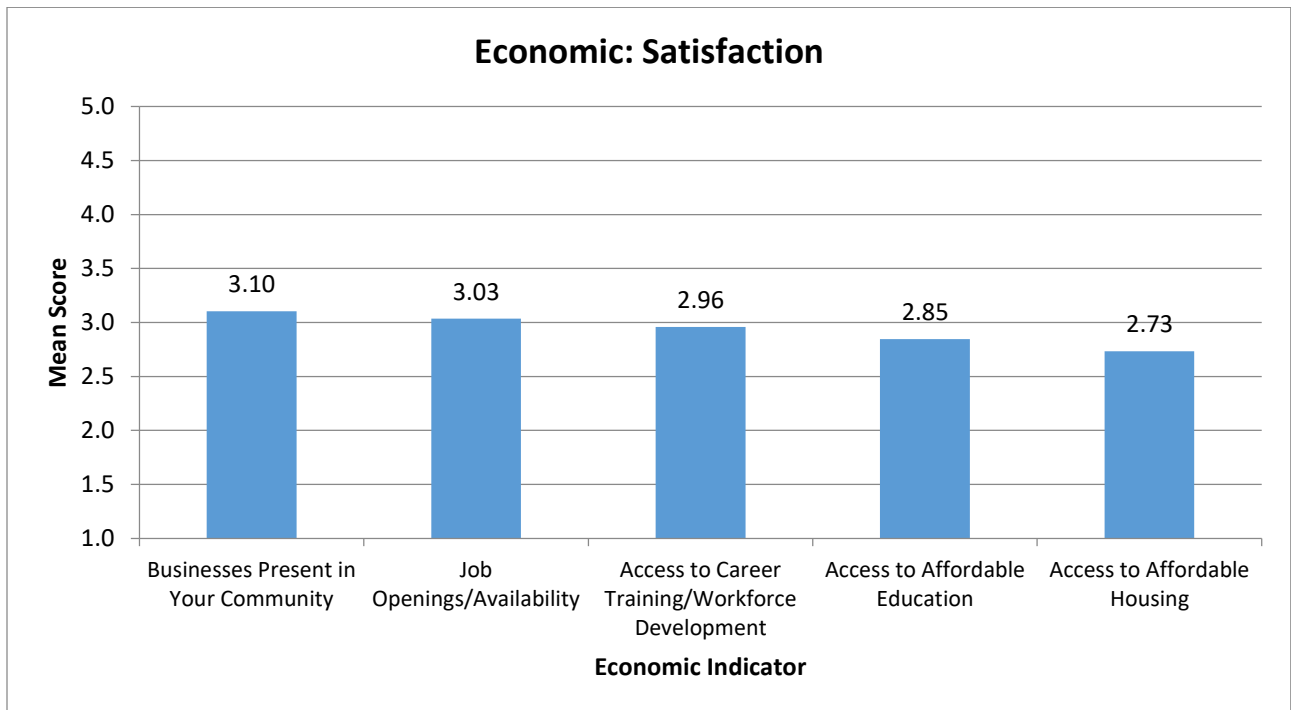
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Affordable/Accessible Housing Strengths: Jefferson County was identified as having a relatively low cost of living compared to other areas of the United States.

Affordable/Accessible Housing Weaknesses: Disparities in the cost of living across Jefferson County were identified as a weakness. These disparities disproportionately burden individuals with lower incomes, disabilities and seniors. Difficulty securing safe and affordable housing, especially for seniors, individuals with disabilities and those transitioning in or out of homelessness, was documented. Some areas of the county with affordable housing were considered unsafe and lack access to public transit. Individuals who were formerly incarcerated or are transitioning out of homelessness reported restricted opportunities to secure permanent housing.

Among *Your Opinion Matters!* survey respondents, affordable housing was the area with the lowest satisfaction within the Economic indicators domain.

Figure 23: Satisfaction with Economic Indicators

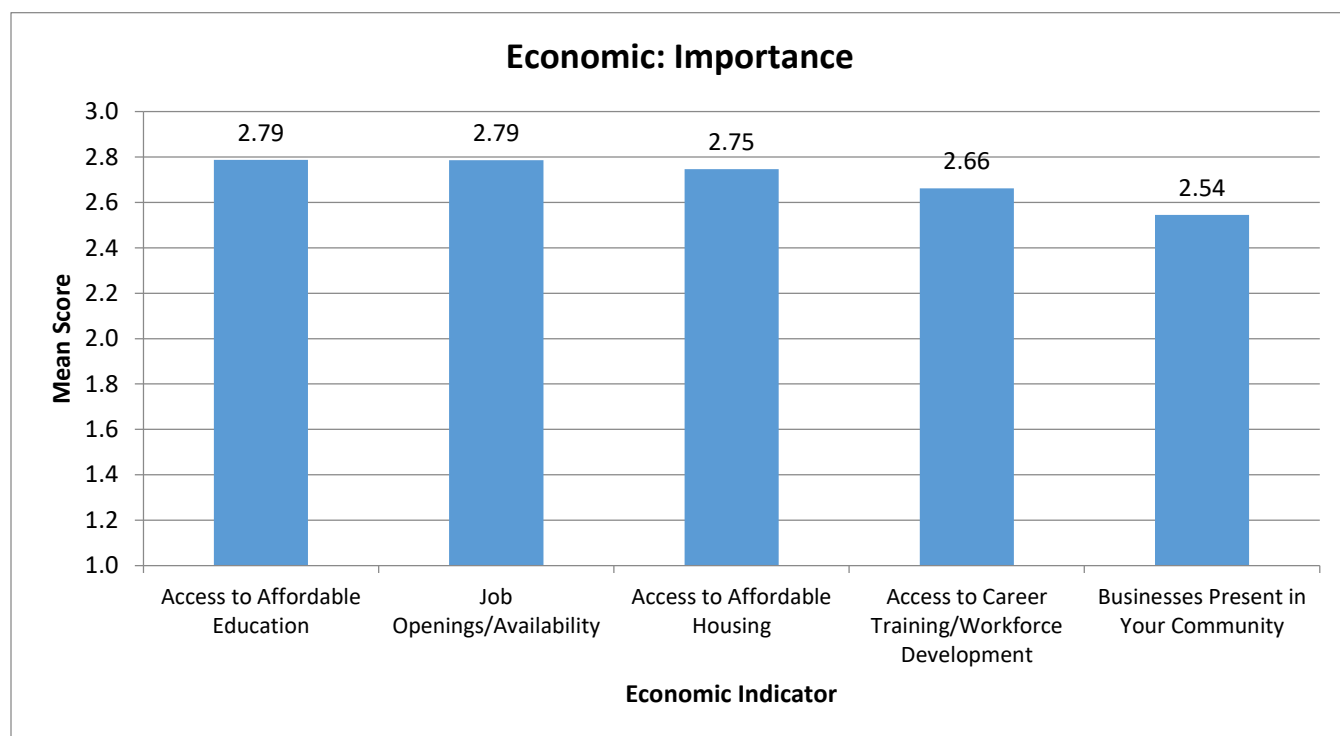


Within the Economic domain of the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey, respondents ranked Access to Affordable Housing as High Importance with a score of 2.75 out of 3.



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Figure 24: Importance of Economic Indicators



Infrastructure

Community concerns related to infrastructure issues include: hazardous road conditions leading to car accidents and increased wear and tear on vehicles, and sidewalks that are reported to be unsafe or unusable among individuals with mobility limitations and other disabilities, and economic disparities with improvements to local parks, trails and other community projects.

Infrastructure Strengths: With a number of highly visible construction projects in Jefferson County, improvements have been observed in some parks and recreational facilities, as well as improvements to streets, sidewalks and other aspects of the built environment. These improvements were considered by CTSA participants as making aspects of the county’s infrastructure more accessible. Development of local parks and trails such as Railroad Park were identified as particular strengths for Jefferson County.

Infrastructure Weaknesses: Hazardous road conditions, including potholes, roads without shoulders, and roads too narrow for traffic patterns were stated to have increased vehicular accidents. Many streets and sidewalks throughout Jefferson County need repair per CTSA participants. It was stated that sidewalks are not consistently available within the county or are present but inaccessible for individuals



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with disabilities. Infrastructure concerns included sewer and storm water issues leading to flooding, inadequate street lighting and poorly maintained cross-walks. Despite increasing technological requirements, widespread broadband access is unavailable in some areas of the county and is needed consistently throughout the county.

In the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey, respondents were neutral in overall satisfaction with access to technology but ranked it as an item of high importance within the Community Domain. Parks, trails and outdoor recreation, with a score of 3.43, had the highest level of satisfaction in the Physical Environment domain. Respondents indicated less satisfaction with the condition of sidewalks, scored at 2.49, and the condition of streets, scored at 2.37 out of five.

Condition of streets, sidewalks, parks, trails and outdoor recreation were ranked as the items of high importance within the Physical Environment domain by survey respondents.

Education

Overall, education was the eighth most commonly identified theme across the CTSA. Participants reported a need for health education including sexual and reproductive health education. There was also discussion of the need to strengthen and increase opportunities for after-school activities in safe, supervised settings beyond the academic day.

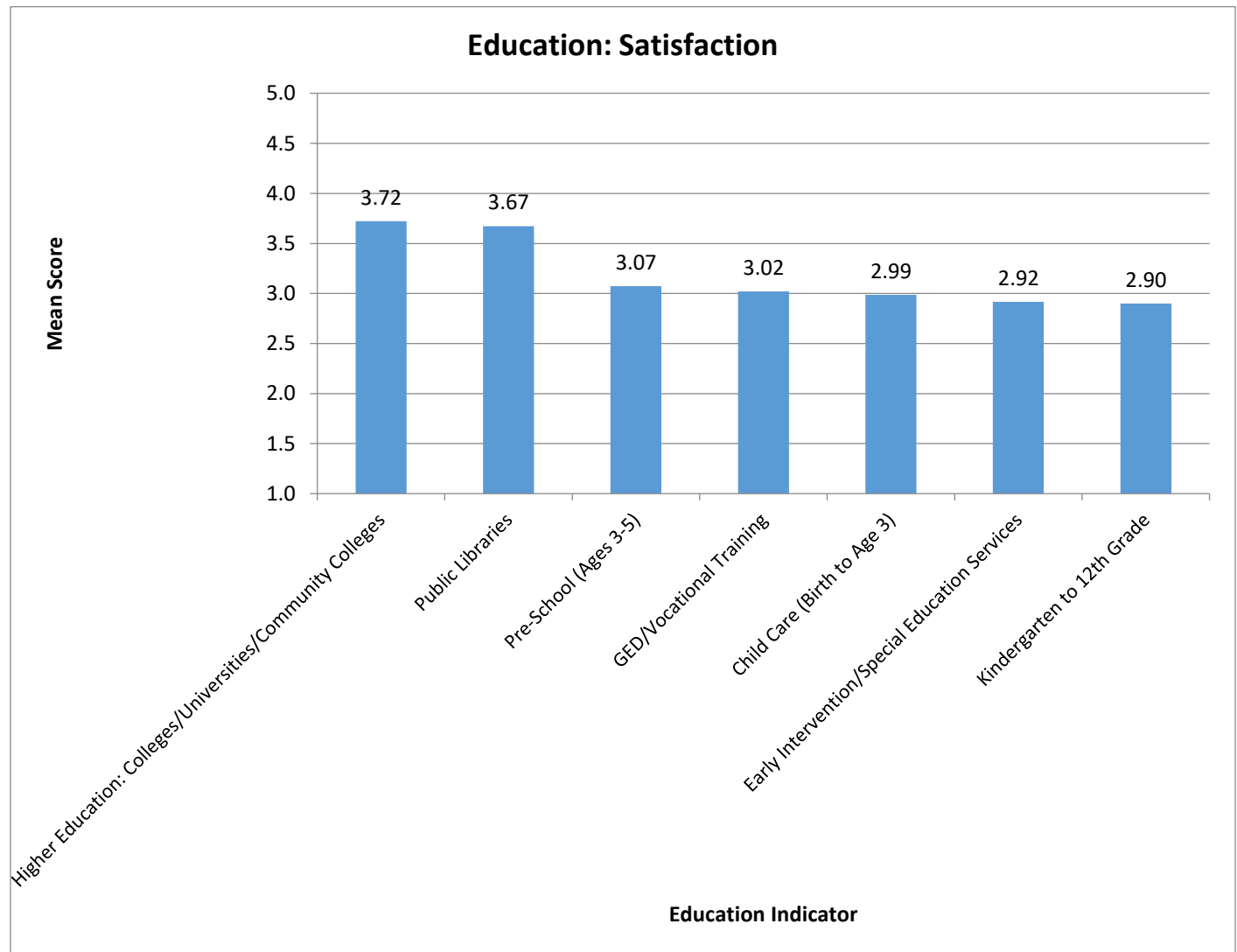
Education Strengths: Strong schools were indicated by CTSA participants as promoting health and providing a place where select health interventions occur. A number of school systems within Jefferson County were described as strong and widely respected.

Education Weaknesses: CTSA participants described the need for qualified, supported staff and faculty in all local school systems to enable students to achieve rigorous academic standards. Disparities in school system performance within Jefferson County was stated as a weakness. Access to equitable, high quality school resources was stated as inconsistent across the county. Mental health services, social services and health education, especially related to sexual and reproductive health, were indicated as lacking in local schools. Access to vocational training was deemed inadequate to prepare individuals for many jobs. Inadequate parental education and support was stated contribute to poor child academic success among students.

Higher education was the item with which *Your Opinion Matters!* survey respondents indicated the most satisfaction overall. Respondents also noted satisfaction with the public libraries in Jefferson County. Respondents were neutral and indicated lower levels of satisfaction with Kindergarten to 12th grade education and early intervention/special education in the Education domain.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

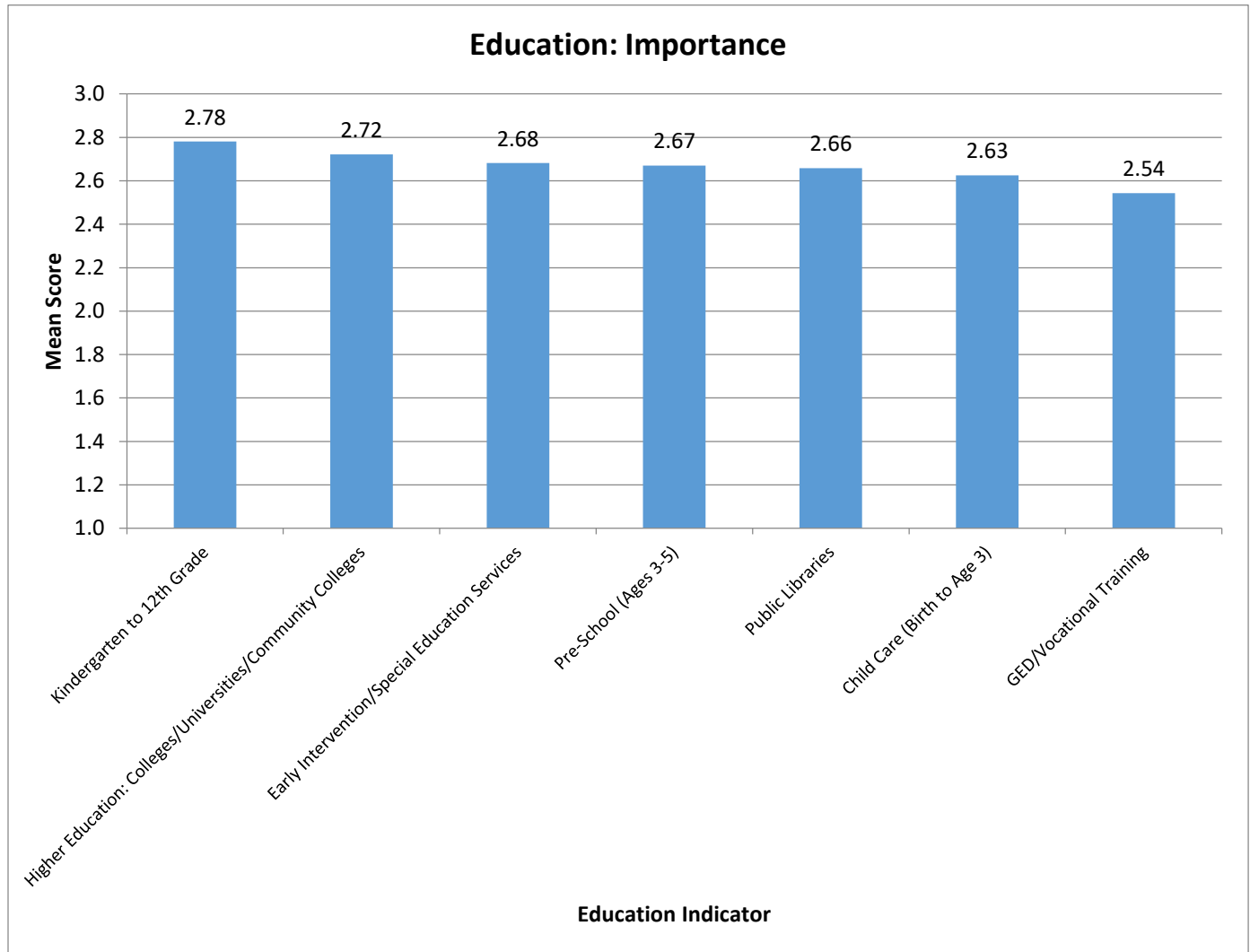
Figure 25: Satisfaction with Education Indicators



In terms of importance, survey respondents ranked kindergarten to 12th grade education, higher education and early intervention/special education as the most important items in the Education domain. GED/Vocational training, child care and public libraries were ranked as the least important items in the Education domain.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 26: Importance of Education Indicators



Government and Political Leadership

Broadly, CTSA participants reported disillusionment in regard to the presence of unified leadership and government and expressed a desire for improved, coordinated and collaborative public services and systems across municipalities, districts and neighborhoods.

Government and Political Leadership Strengths: Many of the CTSA respondents indicated personal engagement in the political process and system in Jefferson County reported renewed engagement with regarding the city of Birmingham's current leadership.

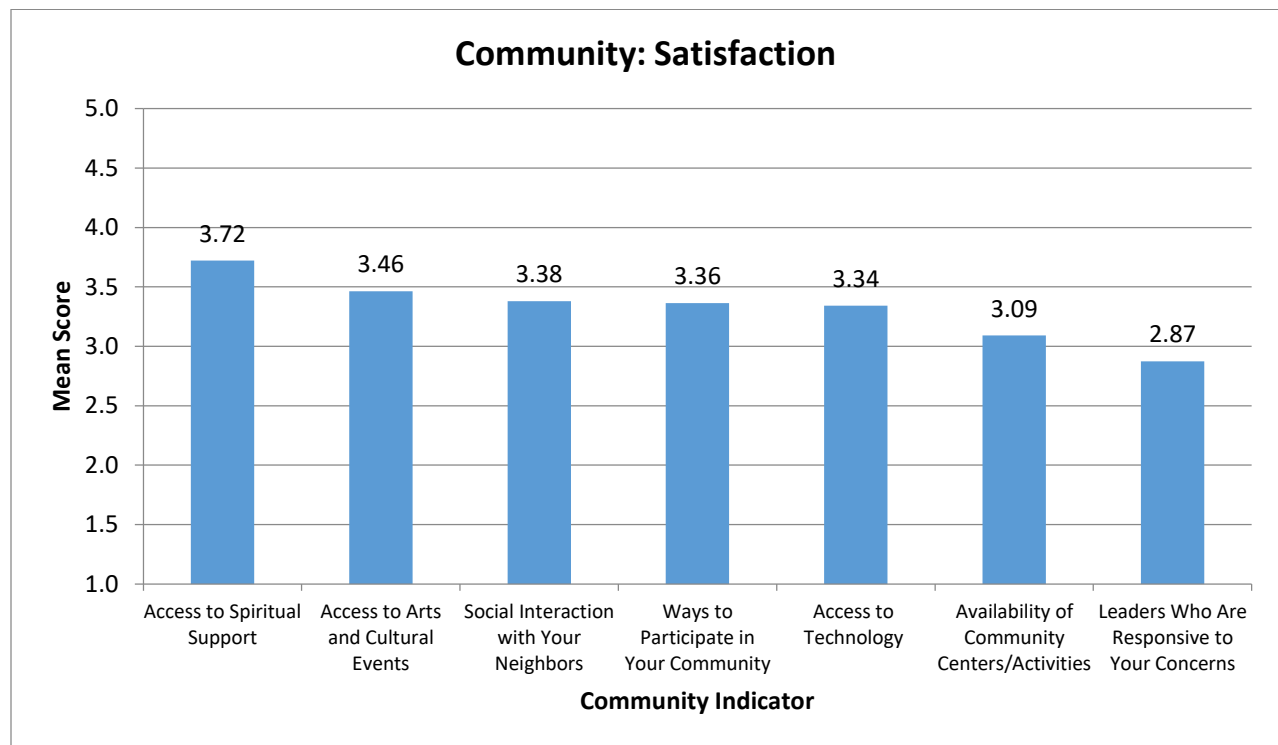


Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Government and Political Leadership Weaknesses: Disillusionment related to lack of unification and cohesiveness among local governments was a key concern of CTSA participants. A lack of cohesion and cooperation among the county’s municipalities and resident distrust of political leadership was identified as a significant dis-satisfier for those living in Jefferson County. CTSA participants revealed the perception that political leaders only assist the areas they directly represent and ignore the county as a whole.

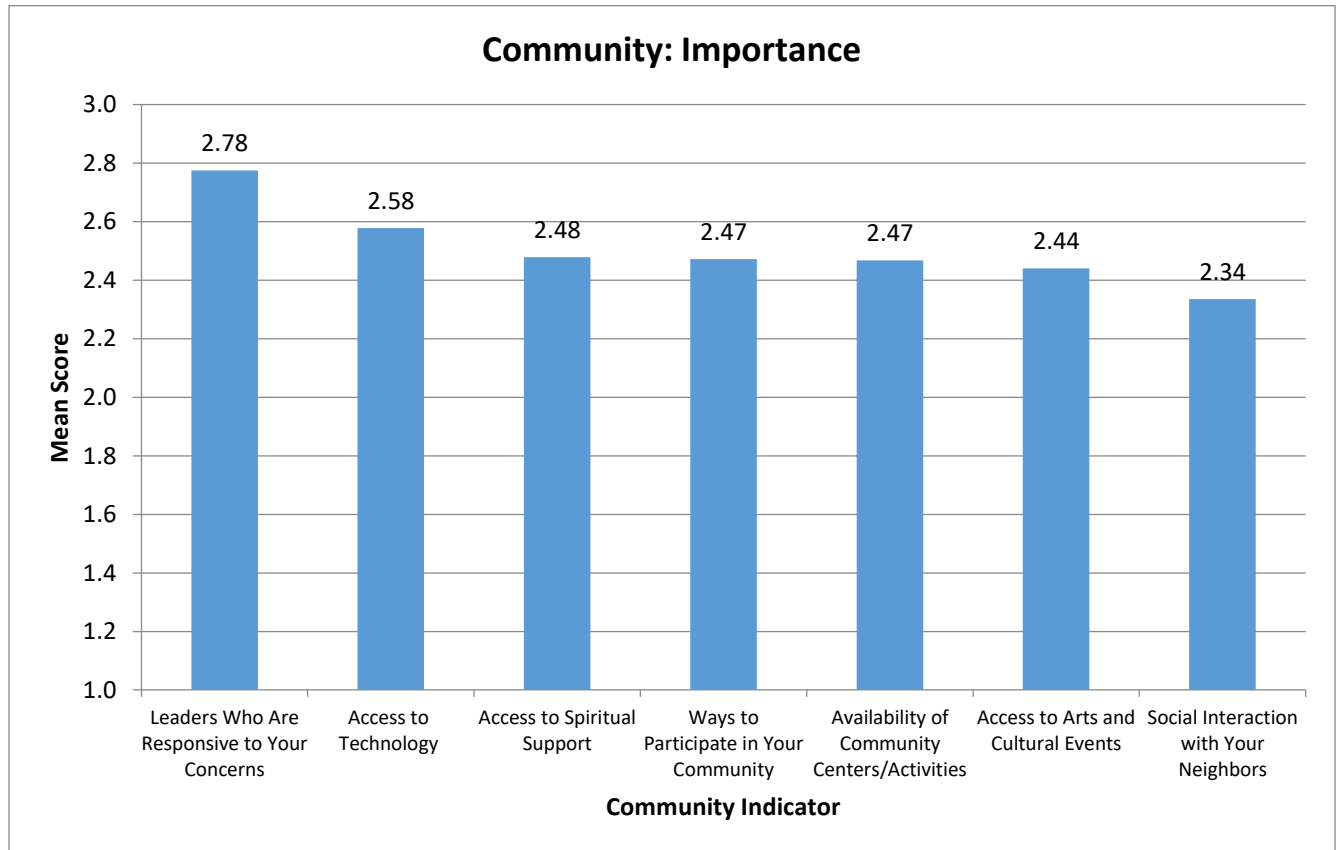
For *Your Opinion Matters!* survey respondents, leaders who are responsive to concerns was the item within the Community Domain rated as the least satisfying. This item notably ranked as the most important within the Community domain.

Figure 27: Satisfaction with Community Indicators



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 28: Importance of Community Indicators



Neighborhood Conditions

Poor neighborhood conditions influence health, safety, social opportunities, and the risk of becoming sick and dying. Conditions such as dilapidated and abandoned housing, crime, and litter or garbage on the street can adversely impact, either directly or indirectly, overall well-being.

Neighborhood Condition Strengths: Many CTSA participants indicated active involvement in their neighborhoods to maintain neighborhood beauty.

Neighborhood Condition Weaknesses: The large numbers of abandoned houses in some neighborhoods has resulted in overgrown lots, vermin, and other health and safety hazards. Increased percentage of rental housing units and absentee landlords were identified as factors increasing blight, illegal dumping and poor property maintenance by CTSA participants.

Survey respondents reported dissatisfaction with control of litter and graffiti in the Physical Environment domain and this item was ranked as one with High Importance.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Blight

There was significant discussion of blight among CTSA participants. Many participants reported high numbers of abandoned homes in neighborhoods which are thought to increase health hazards and risky activities such as drug and human trafficking.

Blight Strengths: The Land Bank Authority's implementation of the Blight Elimination Program throughout the City of Birmingham was stated to be a positive action. This program seeks to revitalize neighborhoods by partnering with private property owners to remove blighted structures (both residential and commercial) and encourage reinvestment in the property.

Blight Weaknesses: The large numbers of abandoned houses in local neighborhoods creates overgrown lots, vermin and other health and safety hazards. Increasing percentages of renters versus home owners in neighborhoods and absentee landlords were identified as factors that increase blight, illegal dumping and poor property maintenance.

Neighborhood conditions and blight were specific items of dissatisfaction among survey respondents in the Physical Environment domain of the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey, with a score of 2.46 out of five. This item scored a 2.75 out of three in importance, indicating that blight is of high importance to survey respondents.

Shifting Demographics

Shifting Demographics includes increases and decreases in county diversity across age, sex, economic, racial and ethnic, and country of origin categories. There was recognition among respondents that shifting demographics may lead to new challenges that must be addressed. Gentrification was a major concern.

Shifting Demographics Strengths: Jefferson County's population is recognized as highly diverse. Many persons who contributed to the CTSA considered this diversity one of the county's greatest strengths. UAB was identified as local driver of cultural diversity. Participants reported positive responses to economic development bringing new residents to neighborhoods such as Avondale.

Shifting Demographics Weaknesses: With an aging population, gentrification of select areas, and other changes, the population of Jefferson County was identified as changing. For some respondents, increasing diversity of Jefferson County's population is a weakness. Culturally and linguistically-appropriate services were stated as frequently absent or inadequate to equitably serve marginalized populations. Discrimination based on race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, ability, age and other factors were stated as negatively affecting individuals in Jefferson County.

With the shifting demographics of Jefferson County creating the need for tailored programs,

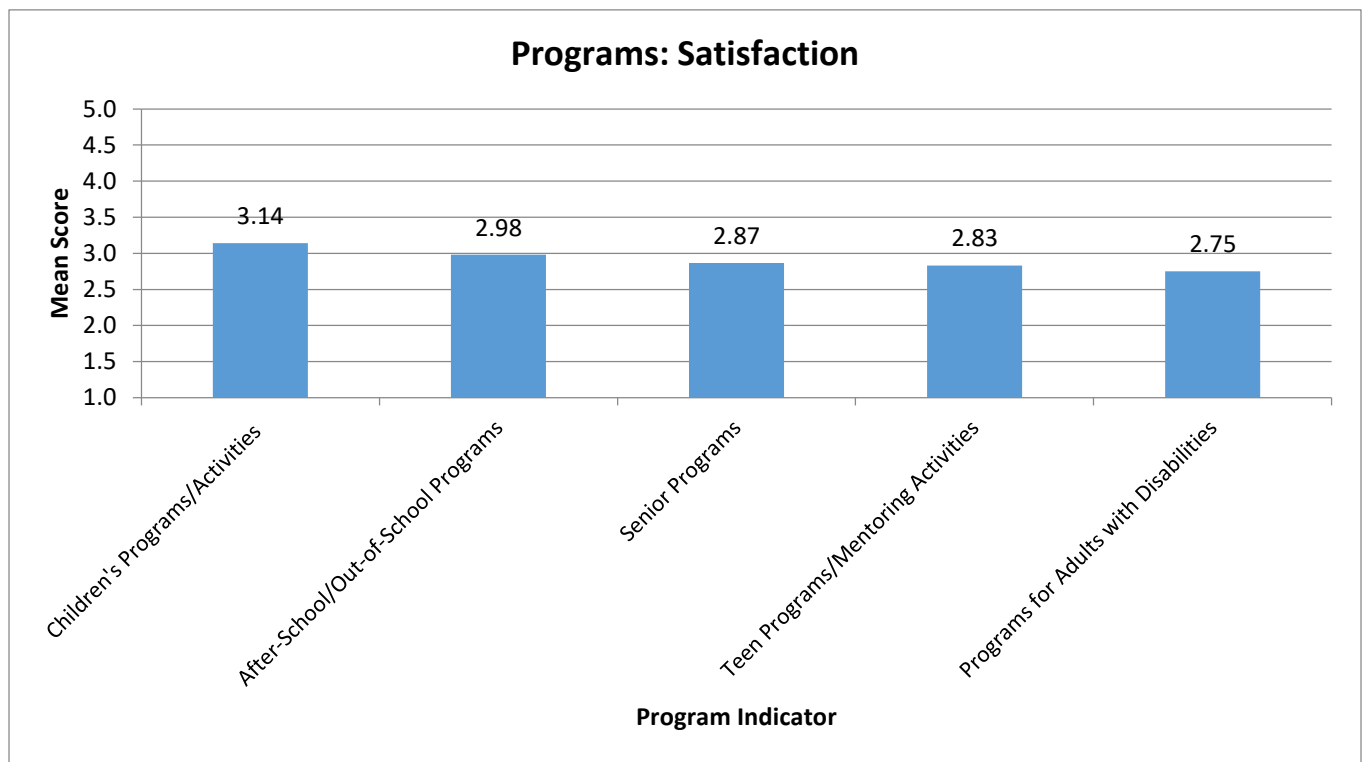


Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

consideration of current levels of satisfaction with the programs offered in Jefferson County was recommended.

Your Opinion Matters! survey respondents reported the highest satisfaction with children’s programs/activities and the least satisfaction with programs for adults with disabilities within the Programs domain.

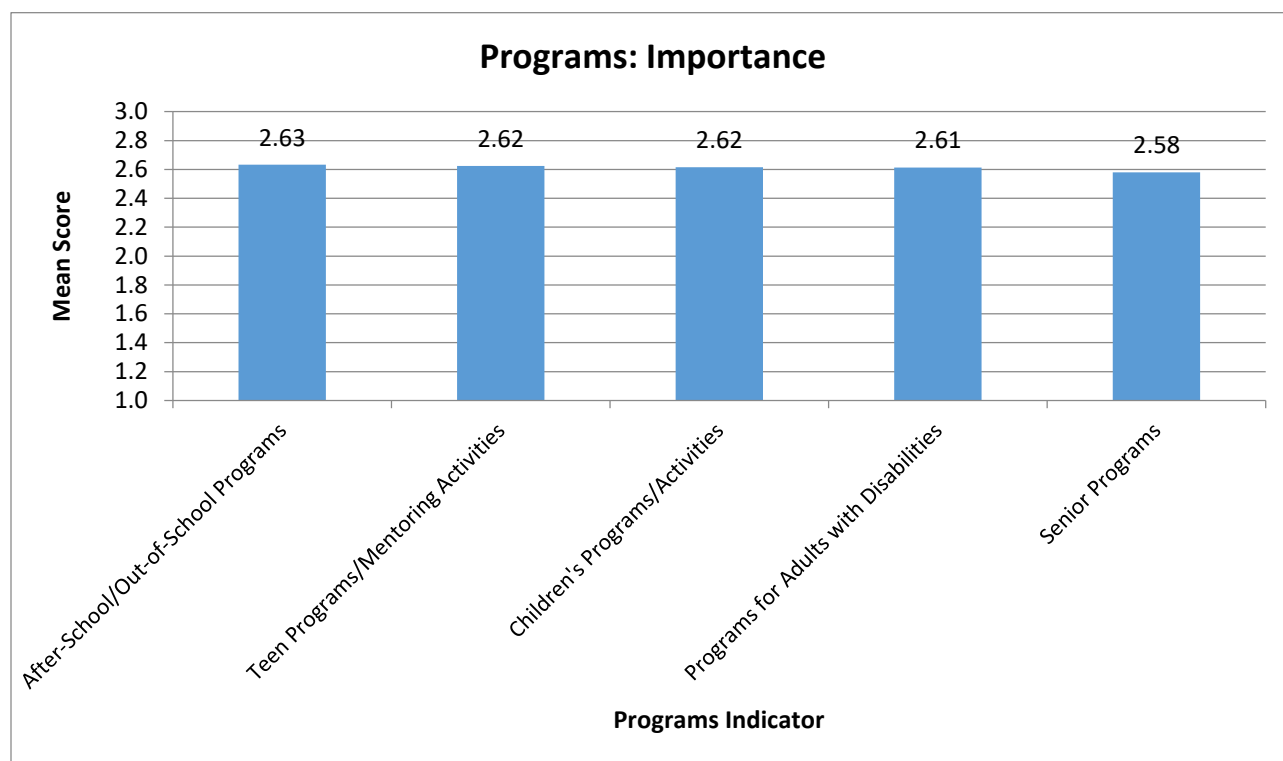
Figure 28: Satisfaction with Programs Indicators



Survey respondents scored after-school/out-of-school programs, children’s programs/activities and teen programs/mentoring activities as most important and senior programs as least important within the Programs domain.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 29: Importance of Programs Indicators



Biases

Survey respondents are aware of the racial history of Jefferson County and Birmingham and state it impacts daily interactions for many individuals. There was awareness of systemic biases and institutional policies that negatively impact health. Participants provided examples of discrimination based on race, age, gender/gender identity, language, economic status and sexual orientation. Hispanic and non-English speaking participants reported denial of services.

Biases Strengths: Birmingham's history of Civil Rights activism was indicated as increasing the willingness of Birmingham residents to confront biases more than in other cities in Alabama and the nation.

Biases Weaknesses: Police profiling and other practices were deemed to have contributed to health disparities and a lack of trust among marginalized populations. Racism, ageism, classism, gender bias and bias based on sexual orientation were reported broadly. Some populations, especially the Spanish-speaking sub-population, experienced limited access to services and systematic policies contributing to disparities in health.

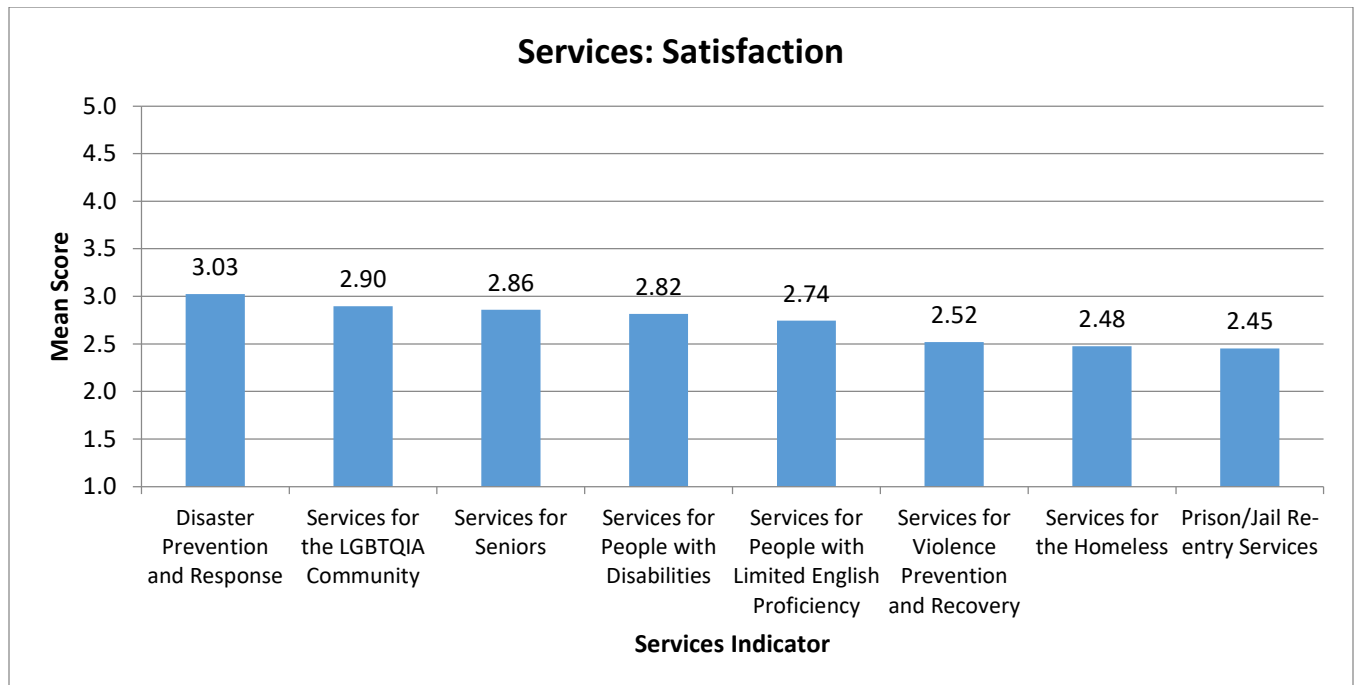
Service provision was state by CTSA participants as important in reducing bias. Among *Your Opinion*



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Matters! survey respondents, disaster prevention and response, services for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LGBTIA) community, and services for seniors received the highest satisfaction score. Respondents were least satisfied with services for prison/jail reentry, the homeless and for violence prevention and recovery.

Figure 30: Satisfaction with Services Indicators

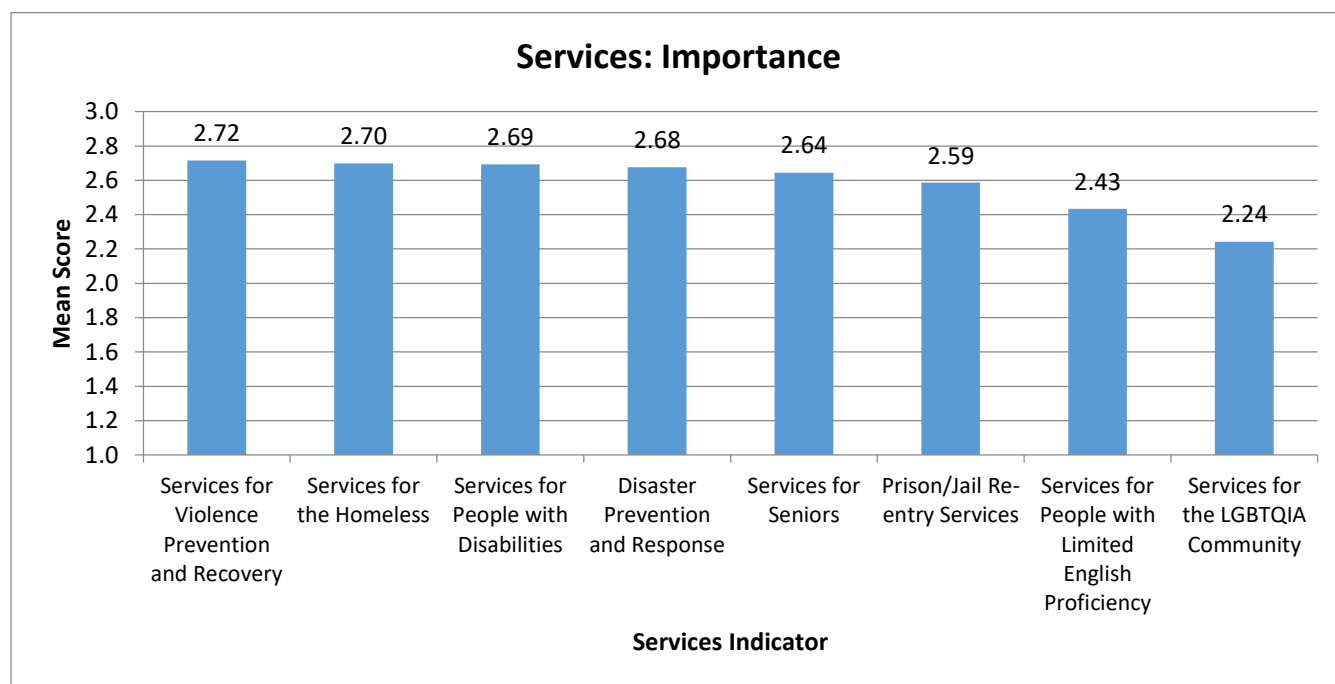


Survey respondents ranked services for violence prevention and recovery, services for the homeless and services for people with disabilities as most important and services for the LGBTQIA community, services for people with limited English proficiency and prison/jail reentry services as least important in the Services domain.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 31: Importance of Services Indicators



Job Opportunities and Training

Jefferson County's large employers are economic drivers for the county, including UAB and the soon-to-open Amazon distribution facility in Bessemer. Participants noted difficulty finding jobs, jobs paying a living wage, as well as inadequate job training.

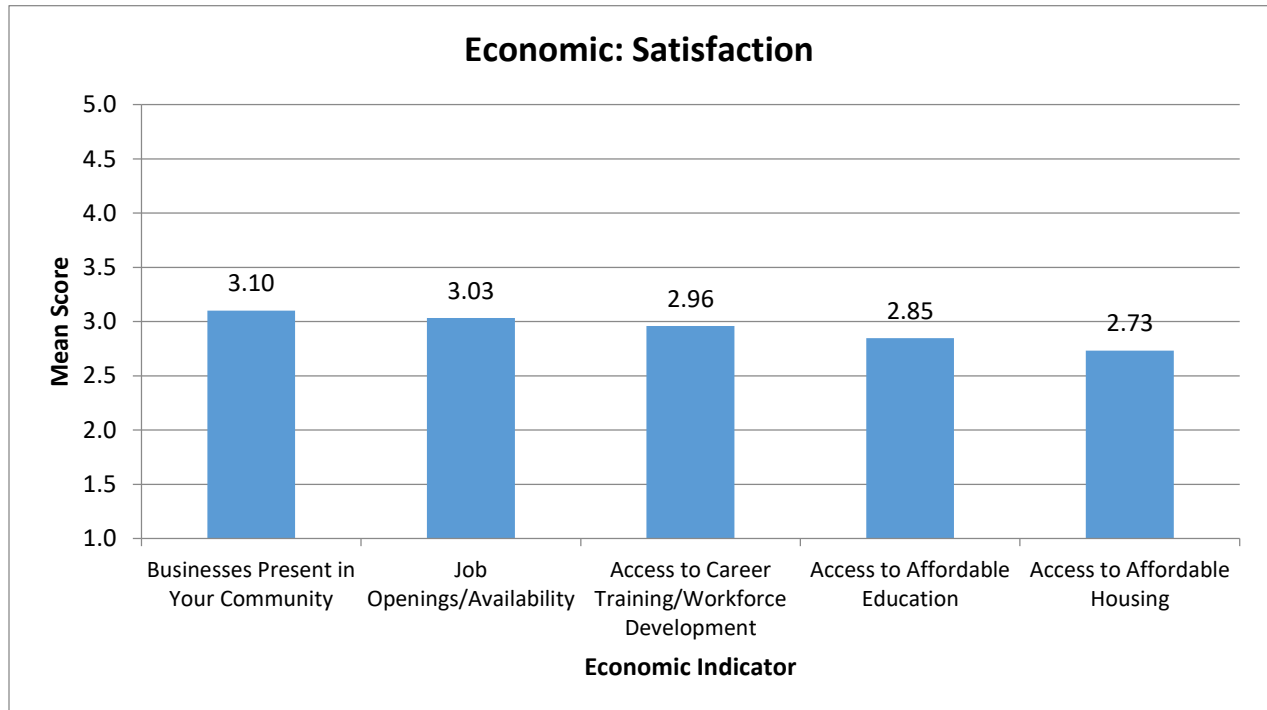
Job Opportunities and Training Strengths: Large employers are economic drivers within Jefferson County providing jobs and training for residents.

Job Opportunities and Training Weaknesses: Certain rural areas of Jefferson County provide fewer jobs and vocational training opportunities for residents. The lack of job availability and training opportunities disproportionately affect those living in rural areas of the county, young people, the homeless, non-English speakers, non-US citizens and individuals living with a disability. Low wages, difficulty finding jobs, lack of preparation for entering the workforce, and limited job opportunities for individuals living with a disability were cited as particular weaknesses. With an increasing dependence on technology, participants noted the need for greater job training in technology.

Your Opinion Matters! survey respondents for the Economic domain were most satisfied with the businesses present in the community and job openings/availability and least satisfied with access to affordable housing and access to affordable education.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

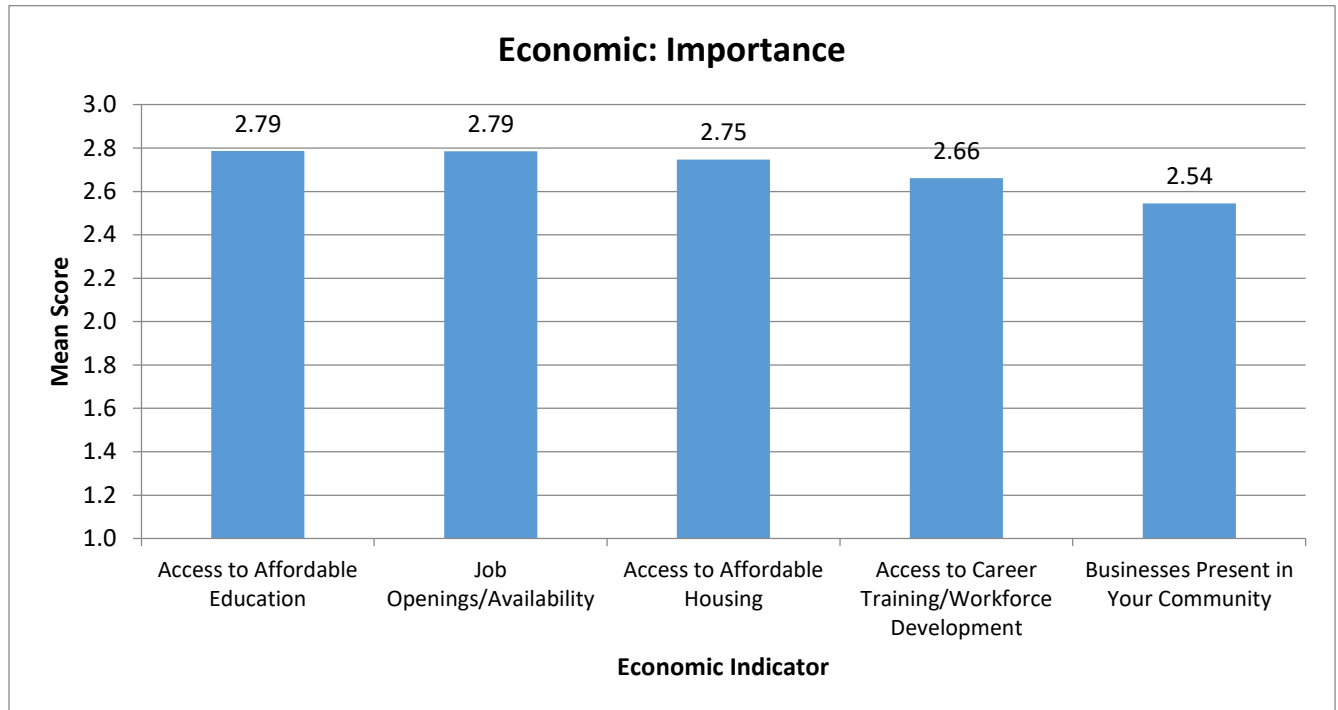
Figure 32: Satisfaction with Economic Indicators



Respondents scored job openings/availability and access to affordable education as most important and businesses present in the community and access to career training/workforce development as least important in the Economic domain.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 33: Importance of Economic Indicators



Food System

The food system in Jefferson County was recognized as both an asset and weakness.

Food System Strengths: With the city of Birmingham’s recent national recognition as a destination city for food, there are many high-end restaurants bringing tourists and other visitors into Birmingham.

Food System Weaknesses: Respondents reported inequitable access to healthy food within Jefferson County. Some areas lack grocery store access, and taxes on groceries further restrict the ability of those with limited resources to purchase healthy food. Municipality-based ordinances related to urban gardening and sale of food in mobile grocery trucks are limiting opportunities to make healthy foods more accessible to food insecure residents.

Your Opinion Matters! survey respondents scored satisfaction with access to healthy food with a neutral score of 3.13 out of five and as an item of high importance with a score of 2.82 out of three.

Drug/Opioid Crisis

Respondents were generally concerned about the impacts of drug abuse and addiction, especially as these related to opioids.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Drug/Opioid Crisis Strengths: Increasing awareness of substance abuse and its impacts among Jefferson County residents and increased opportunities to receive substance abuse assessment, referral to treatment and prevention services.

Drug/Opioid Crisis Weaknesses: Increased drug use, especially of opioids was believed to contribute to crime, poor mental health, neonatal abstinence syndrome and homelessness. Regional variation of drug use within the county and stigma were cited as particular concerns.

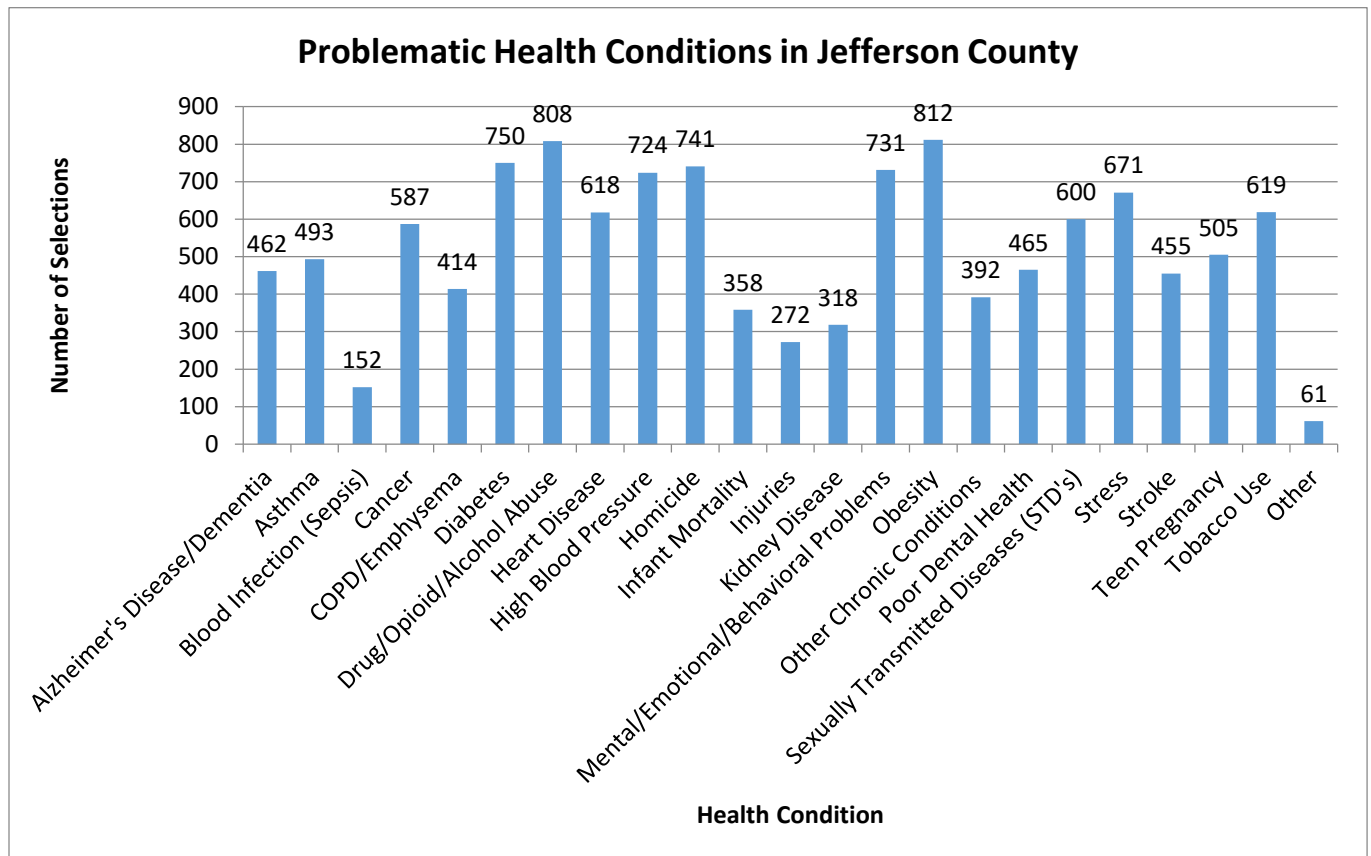
Control of drug-related crime was the item for which *Your Opinion Matters!* respondents were second least satisfied overall. Access to substance abuse treatment received a neutral satisfaction score, but was the second lowest scoring item for satisfaction in the Health Access domain. Control of drug-related crime was one of the top ten items of overall importance, while access to substance abuse treatment ranked as an item of High Importance with a score of 2.66 out of three.

Health Conditions

In both the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey response and in the focus groups, respondents expressed concerns about a variety of health issues in Jefferson County. The graph below reveals of survey responses to the question of what health issues are a problem in Jefferson County with the number of respondents to each health issue.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 34: Health Conditions in Jefferson County



Other health conditions of concern for survey respondents included the following: adult congenital heart disease, alcohol abuse, autism, birth defects, autoimmune conditions, childhood trauma, crime, disabilities, HIV, neurologic disorders/traumatic brain injury, respiratory illness due to industrial pollution, non-adherence to vaccine recommendations, nutritional deficits, suicide, and unwanted pregnancies.

In focus groups, chronic health conditions as a broad theme appeared in the various discussions, but it was not a top theme that emerged. When prompted for specific responses about health conditions of concern respondents noted several chronic and other medical conditions that impact the health of Jefferson County's population. The conditions most commonly identified included: Obesity, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, sexually transmitted infections, cancer, and Alzheimer's Disease.

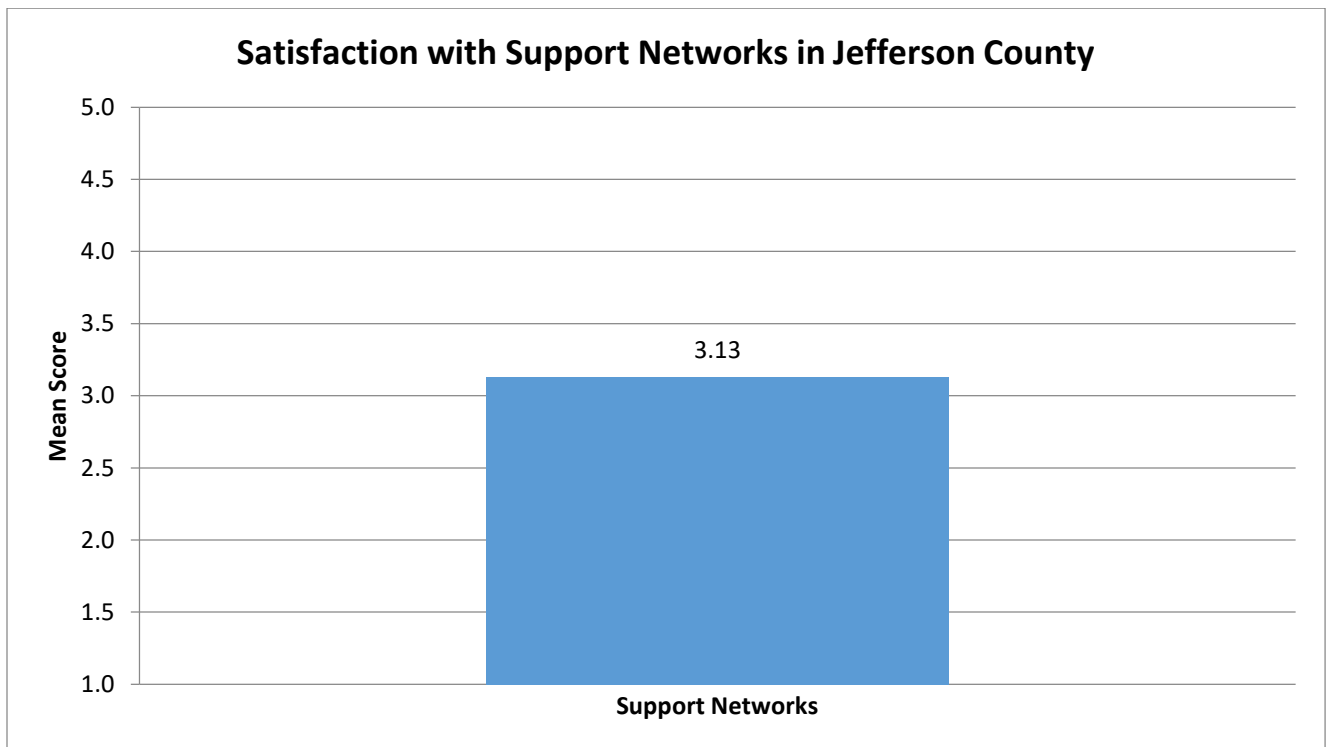


Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Support Networks

Your Opinion Matters! survey respondents were slightly higher than neutral in the ranking of support networks, including financial, emotional and spiritual support for themselves and their families during times of need.

Figure 35: Support Networks in Jefferson County



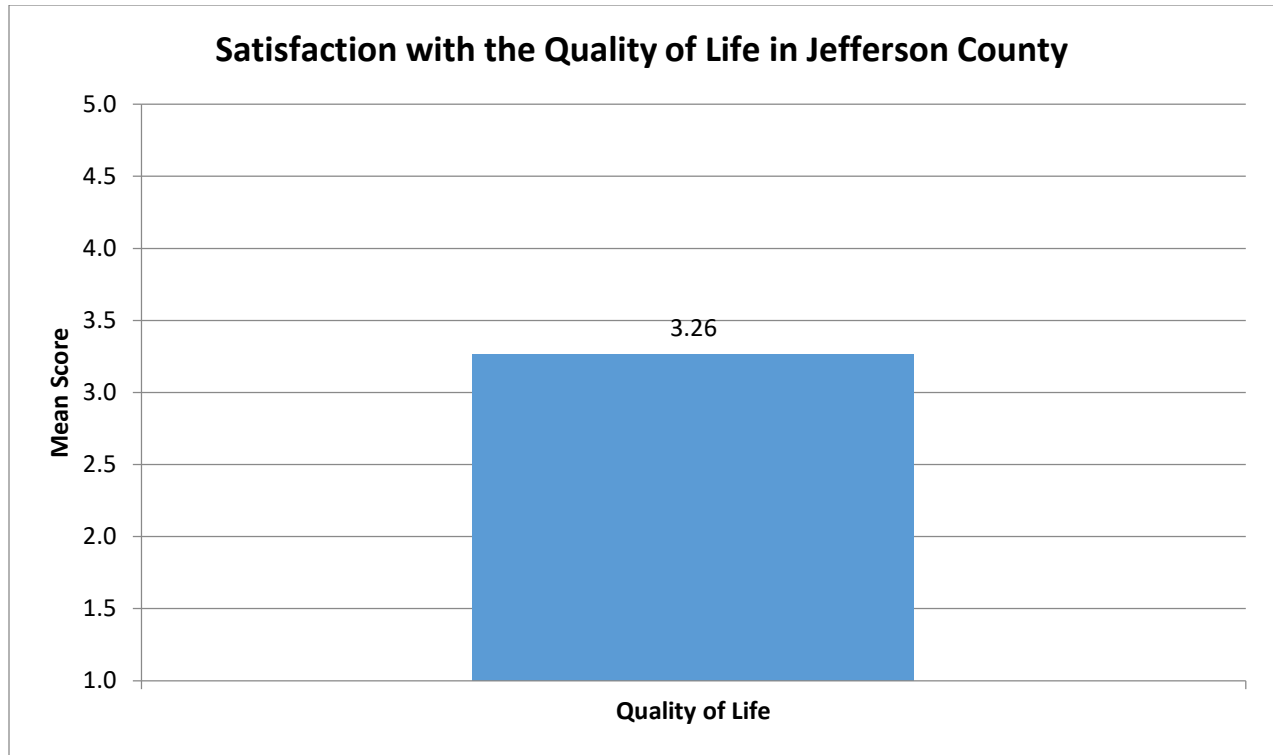
Quality of Life

Your Opinion Matters! survey respondents were slightly higher than neutral with a score of 3.26 in ranking the quality of life in Jefferson County.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 36: Quality of Life in Jefferson County

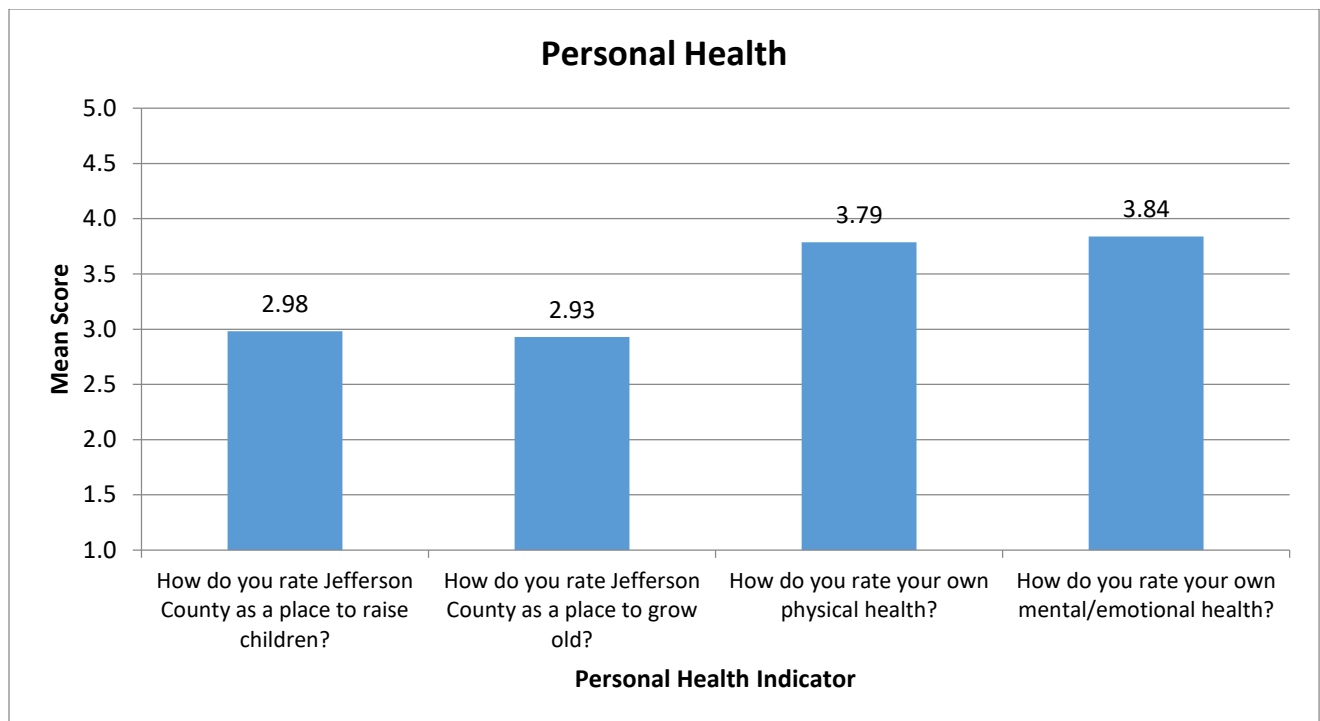


Personal Health

Individuals who responded to the *Your Opinion Matters!* survey rated Jefferson County neutrally as a place to raise children and grow old. Respondents rated both their physical and mental/emotional health as good with a score of 3.84 out of five.

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Figure 37: Personal Health in Jefferson County



Areas of Concern for Specific Populations

Spanish-Speaking

Overall, the concerns of the Spanish-speaking population mirrored those in the overall assessment. Spanish-speaking participants focused comments on the future of the county and how children will be impacted. In particular, discussion centered on quality education, especially quality teachers. An increase in drug-use and violence were noted issues. Litter, abandoned buildings, and the need for infrastructure improvement were items of concerns in this sub-population. There was discussion related to access to services; participants recognized that Jefferson County has quality providers for health care and other social services, but noted that there for Spanish-speaking individuals there are many barriers to access. These barriers included long waiting lists and lack of clarity around qualification for services. Lastly, this sub-population noted negative bias and general discrimination toward those who do not speak English.

Seniors

Seniors who participated in focus groups reported many of the same themes as those reported in the overall set of participants. Quality education, infrastructure improvement, particularly for participants with mobility challenges, and environmental concerns were of particular interest. Furthermore, this sub-



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

population noted particular needs for affordable housing and job re-training/job opportunities. Many of the participants in the senior-focused focus groups had lived in Jefferson County for decades and were keen to note how the county currently compares to the past with respect to shifting demographics, tension between youth and seniors, and political leadership's partnership with the community.

People with Disabilities

The participants in the two focus groups for people living with disabilities noted a variety of concerns. First, some improvements in infrastructure accessibility were reported, but these improvements were not indicated as consistent across the county (sidewalk availability, improvement, etc.) Participants also noted the need for accessible, convenient, well-maintained, and consistent public transit. Affordable housing and employment opportunities for people with disabilities providing a living wage were a great need to this population. While noting the presence of high quality providers and services, many service providers were reported as needing to improve accommodations for people with disabilities, including the provision of sign-language interpretation.

Homeless Population and the Formerly Incarcerated

Sub-populations of homeless or formerly incarcerated individuals expressed similar experiences to each other. Lack of access to health care and services were of particular note to these sub-groups. Many persons within these sub-populations use emergency rooms for health care and experience a lack of coordination among services. There was also a need identified for wrap-around services including job training and affordable housing. Stigma around mental health, homelessness, and whether someone has formerly been incarcerated was a common area of discussion.

Your Opinion Matters! survey respondents and focus group participants were asked to identify strengths in Jefferson County.



Figure 38: Word cloud representing responses to survey question “What is the best thing about living in Jefferson County?”

Participants in the focus groups and respondents to the survey highlighted many strengths in Jefferson County. Most consistently, the people of Jefferson County were identified as the best part of the region. The word cloud above (Fig. 38) was generated from the responses to the open ended survey question, “What is the best thing about living in Jefferson County?” and focus group participant comments regarding the strengths of the county. The larger the word appears in the graphic, the more frequently it was mentioned. The words that appeared most often (and are the largest in the word cloud above) are listed in Table 7 below.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Table 7. List of strengths and positive attributes of Jefferson County

	Word	Count	Similar Words
1	people	74	people, peoples
2	living	63	live, lives, living
3	community	55	communities, community
4	access	46	access, accessibility
5	diversity	45	diverse, diversity
6	parks	38	park, parks
7	UAB	36	UAB
8	activity	34	active, activities, activity
9	area	34	area, areas
10	family	33	families, family

In addition, throughout the data collection methods, participants identified a variety of specific organizations and services of particular importance to the health, well-being, and vibrancy of Jefferson County. These included UAB, the Jefferson County Department of Health, Cooper Green Mercy Health Services, Children’s of Alabama, Lakeshore Foundation and a variety of non-profit social service and religious organizations.

Non-profit, social service and religious organizations noted within the CTSA included:

- The public library system,
- Health and social service organizations (M-Power ministries, The Dream Center and Church of the Highlands, YWCA, Firehouse Shelter, Dannon Project, United Ability, Magic City Acceptance Center)
- Parks (Avondale Park, Railroad Park, Red Mountain Park, the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Aldridge Gardens,)
- Museums and cultural institutions (Vulcan Park, Birmingham Museum of Art, The Birmingham Zoo, The McWane Center)

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Conclusion

The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment engaged community members in a variety of ways to provide information on the community’s views about health and quality of life in Jefferson County, the county’s strengths and its assets that impact health and quality of life in Jefferson County.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Appendix 1:

Your Opinion Matters! Survey



Community Themes and Strengths Survey **YOUR OPINION MATTERS!**



Please complete this survey if you live, work, learn or play in Jefferson County. You do not have to give your name, and **your answers are anonymous**. Definitions of key terms (indicated by a star*) are on the last page.

Your Opinion Matters! survey is a part of a community health needs assessment for Jefferson County, Alabama. The word “community” means Jefferson County as a whole: its cities, unincorporated areas, neighborhoods and residents. This survey asks your opinions about Jefferson County, the good aspects and areas for improvement. The information will help improve health in the



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

coming years. Your information will help identify the key issues to be addressed in Jefferson County to improve health and quality of life.

This survey is available online at the following website: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RHHF8J8>. Your Opinion Matters! is conducted in collaboration with the Local Public Health System and is coordinated by the Jefferson County Department of Health.

Instructions: Thinking about Jefferson County, Alabama, rank your satisfaction, how pleased you are, with the current condition or presence of each item and rate how important it is to your quality of life. Quality of life refers to your level of satisfaction with the combined conditions (e.g. safety, health, employment, etc.) in which you live. If you cannot rate an item, please leave it blank.

	Satisfaction					Importance		
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
Physical Environment								
Condition of Streets	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
Condition of Sidewalks	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Neighborhood Conditions/Blight*	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Public Transportation (buses, paratransit, etc)	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Parks/Trails/ Outdoor Recreation	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Bike Lanes/Sharrows*								



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
Outdoor Air Quality*	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
River/ Stream Quality*	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
Control of Litter/ Graffiti	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
	Satisfaction		Importance					
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
Protection From Second-hand Smoke Exposure	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
Education								
Public Libraries	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
Child Care (Birth to Age 3)	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					
Pre-school (Ages 3-5)	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> <div>5</div> </div>		<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>					



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Kindergarten to 12 th Grade	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
Early Intervention/Special Education Services	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
GED (General Educational Development)/Vocational Training	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
Higher Education: Colleges/Universities/Community Colleges	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
Health Access								
Access* to Primary Health Care (ex. Pediatrician, Family Doctor)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
Access to Specialty Care (ex. Heart Doctor, Lung Doctor)	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
	Satisfaction					Importance		
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
Access to Long Term Care (ex. Nursing Home)	① ⑤	②	③	④		①	②	③
Access to Health Therapies (ex. Physical Therapy, Speech Therapy)	① ⑤	②	③	④		①	②	③



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Access to Geriatric Care*	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Dental Care	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Mental Health Services	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Substance Abuse Treatment	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Health Insurance	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Prescription Medications, when needed	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Understandable Health Information	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Healthy Food	⑤ ①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Places to be Physically Active	① ⑤	②	③	④	①	②	③

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Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

	Satisfaction					Importance		
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
Public Safety								
Neighborhood/Community Safety*	①	②	③	④	⑤	①	②	③
Control of Drug-Related Crime	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Control of Gun Violence	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Economic								
Job Openings/Availability	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Access to Career Training/Workforce Development	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Access to Affordable Housing	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Access to Affordable Education	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Businesses Present in your Community	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Community								



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Social Interaction with Your Neighbors	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Ways to Participate in Your Community	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③
	Satisfaction					Importance		
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
Leaders Who Are Responsive to Your Concerns	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Availability of Community Centers/Activities	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Technology (Internet, Computers, etc.)	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Arts and Cultural Events	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③
Access to Spiritual Support	⑤	①	②	③	④	①	②	③



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Programs*	Diverse programs make sure that all people in Jefferson County are given the opportunity to be healthy and thrive.							
After-school/Out-of-School Programs	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Children's Programs/Activities (ex. Soccer, Boy Scouts, Art, Music)	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Teen Programs/Mentoring Activities	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Programs for Adults with Disabilities	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Senior* Programs	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③

	Satisfaction					Importance		
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Low Importance	Medium Importance	High Importance
Services*	Services to people in Jefferson County allow everyone to have a fair opportunity to live a long and healthy life.							
Services for People with Disabilities*	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③
Services for Seniors*	⑤ ①	②	③	④		①	②	③



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Services for the LGBTQIA* Community	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>
Services for the Homeless	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>
Services for People with Limited English Proficiency*	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>
Services for Violence Prevention and Recovery	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>
Prison/Jail Re-entry* Services	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>
Disaster Prevention and Response	<div> <div>5</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> <div>4</div> </div>	<div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div> </div>

Please rate your level of agreement with the statement below.



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
There are support networks in Jefferson County for people and their families during times of need (financial, emotional, spiritual, etc.).	①	②	③	④	⑤

Please answer the following questions using the scale to the right of each question. If you cannot rate an item, please leave it blank.

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
How satisfied are you with the quality of life in Jefferson County? Quality of life refers to your own level of satisfaction with the combined conditions (e.g. safety, health, employment) in which you live.	④ ①	⑤ ②	③		
	Poor	Fair	Neutral	Good	Excellent
How do you rate Jefferson County as a place to raise children?	①	②	③	④	⑤
How do you rate Jefferson County as a place to grow old?	①	②	③	④	⑤
How do you rate your own physical health?	①	②	③	④	⑤
How do you rate your own mental/emotional health?	①	②	③	④	⑤

Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. Please select all the conditions that are a problem in Jefferson County.

Ⓐ Asthma Ⓕ Diabetes Ⓙ Alzheimer's Disease/Dementia
Mortality

⓪ Teen Pregnancy Ⓣ Infant



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- ☐ Obesity ☐ Injuries ☐ Drug/Opioid/Alcohol Abuse ☐ Tobacco Use ☐ Poor Dental Health
☐ Stroke ☐ Kidney Disease ☐ Other Chronic Conditions(ex. Arthritis) ☐ Stress ☐ COPD/Emphysema
☐ Cancer ☐ Heart Disease ☐ Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD's) ☐ Homicide ☐ High Blood Pressure
☐ Blood Infection (Sepsis) ☐ Mental/Emotional/Behavioral Problems ☐ Other, please specify_____

2. The best thing about living, learning, working or playing in Jefferson County is

_____.

3. The worst thing about living, learning, working or playing in Jefferson County is

_____.

4. Which of the following describe you? *(Mark all that apply)*

- ☐ I live in Jefferson County ☐ I work in Jefferson County ☐ I go to school in Jefferson County
☐ I worship in Jefferson County ☐ I visit Jefferson County for recreation and entertainment ☐ Other, specify_____

5. Please add other thoughts or comments you would like to share.

Please provide the following demographic information. This information will not be used to identify you.



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1. In what zip code is your home located? _____

2. What is your age in years? _____

3. To what gender identity do you most identify?

- ① Female ② Male ③ Transgender Male ④ Transgender Female ⑤ Gender Variant/Non-Conforming
⑥ Not Listed, specify _____ ⑦ Prefer not to answer

4. Which group(s) best represent your race?

- ① American Indian or Alaska Native answer ④ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ⑨ Prefer not to answer
② Asian ⑤ White or Caucasian
③ Black or African American ⑥ Other, specify _____

5. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent? ① Yes ② No ③ Prefer not to answer

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ① Less than 9th grade ③ Some High School ⑤ High School Graduate or GED
② Some College ④ College Graduate ⑥ Graduate Degree or Higher ⑦ Prefer not to answer

7. What is the main way you pay for your health care?

- ① Out of Pocket ④ Medicare ⑨ Prefer not to answer



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② Private Health Insurance (e.g. BCBS, VIVA, etc.)

⑤ Veteran's Administration

③ Medicaid/ALL Kids

⑥ Other, specify _____

8. Do you have a visual, hearing, physical, emotional or intellectual disability? ① Yes ② No ③ Prefer not to answer

If you would like to receive a summary of the results please give your contact information below: **(Optional)**

Email _____ or Address _____

Zip Code _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RESPONSE

Please fax or return completed surveys to:

Jefferson County Department of Health

1400 Sixth Ave South

Birmingham, AL 35233

Attn: Quality Improvement and Decision Support

Fax Number: 205-930-1576

If you need help completing this form, please call:

Elisabeth Welty – (205) 930-1478 or Greg Townsend – (205) 930-1401

Thank You for Your Opinion....It Matters!

Glossary of Key Terms

Access - a way to get near, at, or to something or someone



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Blight – an area that is ugly, neglected or rundown

Disabled – physical (seeing, hearing, walking, etc.), mental or emotional condition that limits activity especially in employment or education

Disaster - something (such as a flood, tornado, fire, etc.) that happens suddenly and causes major damage or loss to people

Geriatric Care – health care for elderly people

LGBTQIA – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual

Limited English Proficiency – a person who is not fluent in English

Outdoor air quality – the level of small particles, car exhaust, smoke, road dust, factory emissions, pollen, smog, etc. in the air

Programs – programs are a way for people to engage and be active in the community and include things like camps, groups and recreational activities related to your personal interests

Quality of life - Quality of life refers to your personal level of satisfaction with the combined conditions in which you live.

Re-entry - refers to the transition of offenders from prisons or jails back into the community

River/stream quality – the level of trash, chemical waste and agricultural (pesticides, fertilizers, etc.) waste in the waterways

Safety – a place that is free from harm or danger

Second-hand smoke exposure - smoke from a cigarette, cigar, etc., that is exhaled or given off by the smoker and is inhaled by persons nearby

Seniors – people age 55 and older

Services – help and provisions for people in Jefferson County

Sharrows – a street marking on a road designating where to ride a bicycle

Substance abuse – dependence on an illegal or legal drug(s), prescription drug(s) or alcohol in which the user consumes the substance in amounts or with methods that are harmful to themselves or others



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Appendix 2:

Community Themes and Strengths Focus Group Guide

Community Themes and Strengths Focus Group Guide
(8-12 people)

[Inform attendees entering that providing their information on the sign-in sheet is optional]

Opening

Welcome to the Community Matters Community Themes and Strengths Focus Group. My name is _____ and with me today are _____ and _____. Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions about Jefferson County. This focus group is a part of a large community health needs assessment, visioning and planning process for Jefferson County, Alabama. We conducted a similar assessment in 2014. The information we gathered helped to identify key issues in Jefferson County communities such as health disparities, lack of places to be physically active and mental health needs in the community. Since then we have implemented things like Zyp bikeshare, the Resource Recovery Center and other positive changes in Jefferson County.

We are here with you today to get your thoughts and experiences as residents of Jefferson County. We want your opinions and there is not a right or wrong answer to any of these questions. The information you share with us will give us insight into some of the concerns and points of pride for Jefferson County residents and will help direct our efforts in the coming years. We recognize that your time is valuable and this focus group will last about 90 minutes. We appreciate your participation.

Confidentiality

Your comments during this focus group session will remain confidential. If you do not feel comfortable using your real name please feel free to use a fake one. We will report summaries of the comments made today but your name will not be attached to the comment. In addition, we will not share who was present. Please do not discuss what was said by people here with others when you leave.

Ground Rules

Your input is important and we want to make sure we accurately capture what you tell us. Therefore, we would like to take notes and tape record this focus group. After we are finished using the tapes for this focus group they will be destroyed. Is this okay with you? Please speak



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clearly and do not interrupt when others are speaking. If you cannot hear what I am saying or what someone else is saying, please ask us to speak up. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Introduction (5 min)

Let's go around the room to give everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves and tell us:

1. How long have you lived in Jefferson County?
 - Probe: If you are new to the area what brought you here?

Changes over Time (15 min)

Think about your community over the past 5 years:

1. Is there anything different about your community now that was not the case 5 years ago?
 - Probe: Describe how your community has changed over the past 5 years.
 - Probe: What do you think about these changes? Do you consider them to be good or bad changes?
2. Is there anything you want to change about your community in the next 5 years?
 - Probe: What changes would you make and why?
 - Probe: How could those changes in your community be achieved?

Strengths and Weaknesses (25 min)

1. If you knew someone was thinking about moving to your community, what would you tell him or her about the area to convince them to move?
 - Probe: What are some other good things about your community?
2. Are people from all ages, abilities, races and ethnicities able to be involved and engaged in your community?
 - Probe: What barriers are there to having a good quality of life for people of different ages, abilities, races and ethnicities in your community?
3. Are there people, places or organizations in your community that are looked to when things need to be done or when people need help?
 - Probe: Who are these people and why do people look to them?
 - Probe: What groups or organizations exist in the community?
4. Do you believe your community and/or Jefferson County can be improved?



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- Probe: What are specific things that need to be improved in Jefferson County?
- Probe: What community groups, individuals or organizations should play a role in the improvement?

Community Health (25 min)

1. Do you consider Jefferson County to be a healthy community?
 - Probe: What makes it a healthy community or why wouldn't you consider Jefferson County to be a healthy community?
2. What health problems do people in your community have? (e.g. Heart disease, high blood pressure, depression, asthma, allergies, cancer, sexually transmitted infections)
 - Probe: Why do these health problems exist?
3. Where do people in your community go if they have health problems?
 - Probe: Do they seek care?
 - Probe: What actions do they take to obtain health care?
4. Do you have environmental health concerns?
 - Probe: Water quality, air quality, food safety, animal control, illegal dumping, etc.

Closing (5 min)

[Briefly summarize main points of discussion]

1. Think about the issues we have talked about today, what issues do you think are the most important for your community to address?
2. Think about the strengths in your community we have talked about today, what do you think is the community's greatest strength?
3. Is there anything else we have not asked about that is important for us to know about your community?

Thank you for your participation! [Reiterate that their thoughts will be summarized to direct the Jefferson County assessment, visioning and planning process.]



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Appendix 3:

Themes by Focus Group and Survey Comments

Themes	CTSA	Survey	Overall
Transportation	15	14	29
Crime/Violence	13	15	28
Access to Services (Affordable care/medication/Medicaid)	14	8	22
Environmental Concerns (Air, Water, Illegal Dumping, Animal Control)	11	11	22
Education	8	12	20
Mental Health	12	1	13
Fragmentation of Government	7	9	16
Infrastructure	9	13	22
Affordable/accessible Housing	10	3	13
Drugs/Opioid Crisis	1	6	7
Changing Demographics (Diversity, Poverty, Age)	5	10	15
Blight	6	4	10
Biases	4	5	9
Job Opportunities and Training	3	7	10
Food System	2	2	4



Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

THEME	Homeless Population #1	Formerly Incarcerated	Northern Area	People with Disabilities #1	People with Disabilities #2	Non- Profits	Southern Adults #1	Young Adults #1	Seniors #1	Western Professionals	PH Professionals	Seniors #2	Seniors #3	Hispanic #1	Hispanic #2	Young Adults #2	CTSA Summary
Access to Services (Affordable care/medication/Medicaid)	1		1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1		12
Affordable/accessible Housing		1	1		1	1			1	1		1	1	1		1	10
Biases	1			1		1		1			1	1				1	7
Blight	1	1	1			1		1	1			1	1		1		9
Changing Demographics (Diversity, Poverty, Age, etc)	1		1			1	1	1			1		1				7
Chronic Conditions							1			1					1		3
Crime/Violence	1		1	1		1	1	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	11
Drugs/Opiod Crisis		1		1			1								1		4
Education		1	1					1	1		1	1			1	1	9
Environmental Concerns (Air, Water, Illegal Dumping, Animal Control)		1	1			1	1	1	1	1		1	1			1	10
Food System	1						1	1				1	1				5
Fragmentation of Government	1		1	1		1	1	1		1	1					1	9
Homelessness		1				1		1	1								4
Infrastructure	1				1			1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	10
Job Opportunities and Training	1	1		1		1				1		1		1			7
Mental Health	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1					10
Policing										1		1	1		1		4
Senior Services			1			1	1		1			1					4
Transportation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	15

Appendix 4:

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Sub-committee Members

The Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Sub-committee members were: Greg Townsend, Elisabeth Welty, Bryn Manzella, Monique Mullins, Haskey Bryant, Adriana Valenzuela, Cathy Perdue, Brian Massey, John Stone, Celida Garcia, Jan Bell, Tawanna Wright, Chris Hatcher, Ryan Parker, Sally Allocca, Maxine Starks, Terrence Brown, Catherine Alexander, Frederick Hamilton, David Smith, Chris Mackie, Brad Watson, Sandra Smith, Elizabeth Patton, Gary Edwards, Lisle Hites, and Julie Preskitt.