



2022 TOWN SURVEY

REPORT ON SURVEY RESPONSES

TOPICS

Civic Engagement • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Business Districts • Schools • Safety

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Introduction

Since 1992, Envision Arlington has invited the Arlington Community to share their opinions and experiences about selected issues. Through the guidance of the Planning Department, Envision Arlington works with town departments and committees to open a dialog about the community and how the government works, soliciting suggestions for future improvements and engagements.

The 2022 survey focuses on connections to the town where we engage, how we feel, and where we would participate more. It reviews how we perceive the Town of Arlington and its government. It moves to find out how we can increase civic participation and what areas of engagement would be most valuable to the people of Arlington.

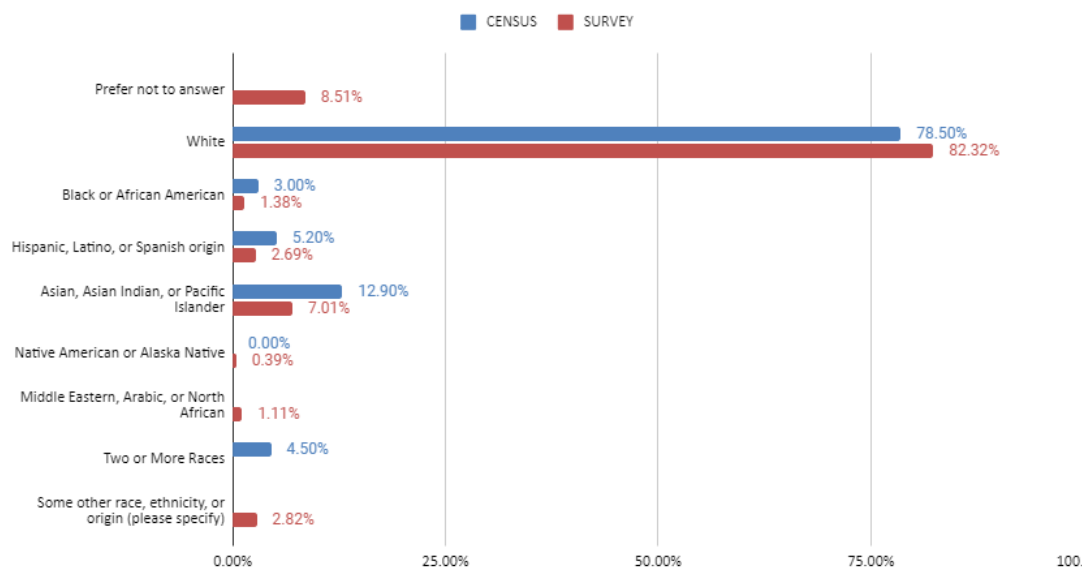
The survey ran online between January 1 and April 1, 2022, and paper copies of the survey were provided at Arlington’s Robbins Library and the Senior Center. This year we received a total of 1,898 responses down over 50% from 2020(4,581). The total number completing the survey dropped to 1537 including those who skipped sections or left “blanks”(unanswered questions.) The findings of this report are based on the **1537 completed survey responses**.

This year we have prepared an online version of the survey report that uses PoweBI this edition allows one to filter the data and consider how the answers are affected by various sub-groups. The “blanks” population varies by question and category. The "blanks" cause significant variations in some responses.

It should be noted we report diversity and other statistics as the percentage of respondents identifying as the category. This means the total can be more than 100% if one identifies as more than one race or gender identity, this raises the percentage for that category through double counting. Federal and State demographic data give us a sense of Arlington's racial demographics so we acknowledge our respondents are not representative of Arlington's actual demographic profile.

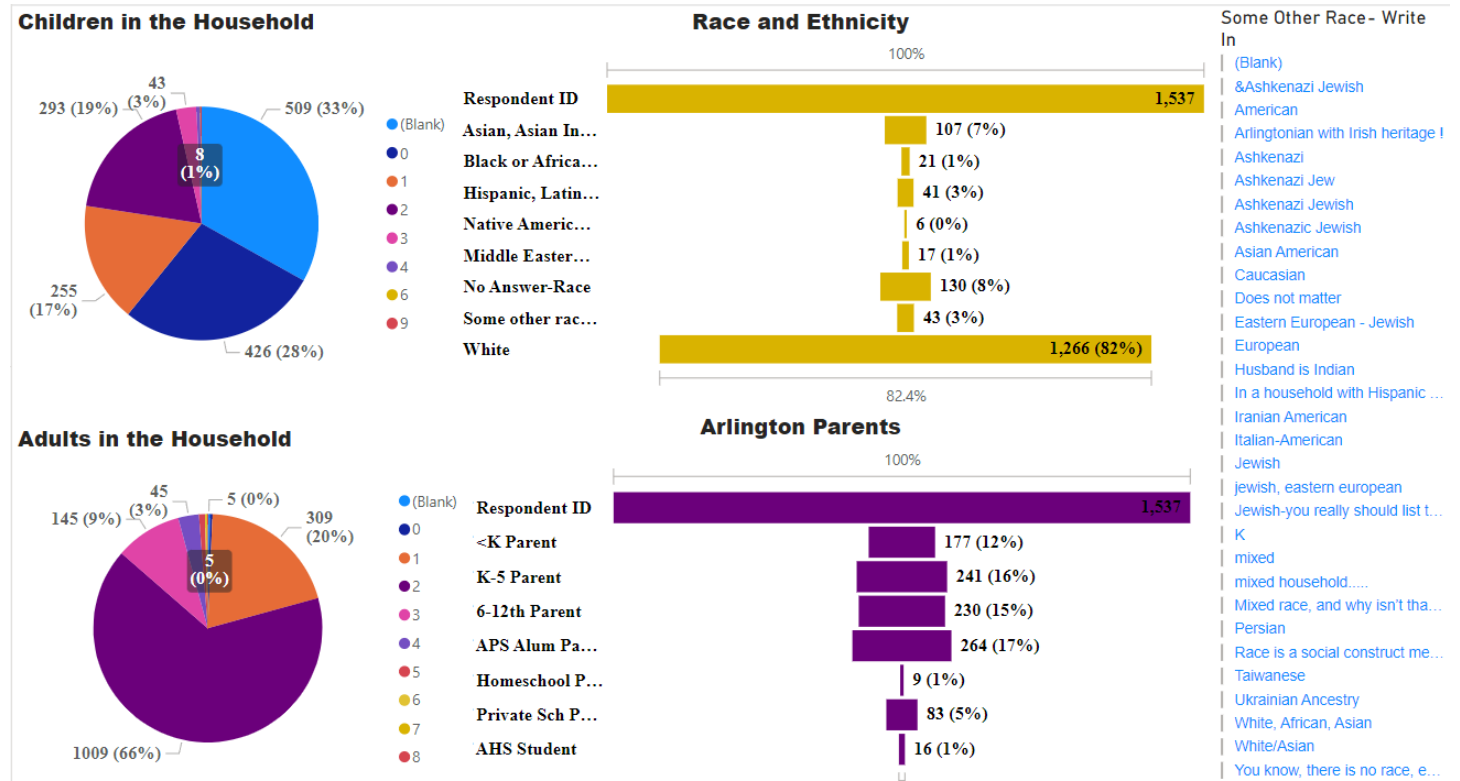
2022 Annual Town Survey

How would you describe your race or ethnicity?



Arlington MA demographics in the 2020 Census differed in its racial mix with White: **78%**, ours 2022, **82%**; Asian: **12%**, ours **7%**; Black or African American : **3%**, ours **1%**; Hispanic **5%** with ours at **3%**.

2022 Annual Town Survey underrepresented racial subgroups' opinions by half to two-thirds. We also have a strong **8%** preferring not to answer further clouding the subgroup perspectives. The household demographics found 64% in 2 adult households followed by 20% with one adult. The majority left the children in the household blank (33%) followed by 28% with no children, 17% with one child, and 19% with two children. Other important demographics include the parent demographics. **(For more Demographics see charts on p. 17.)**

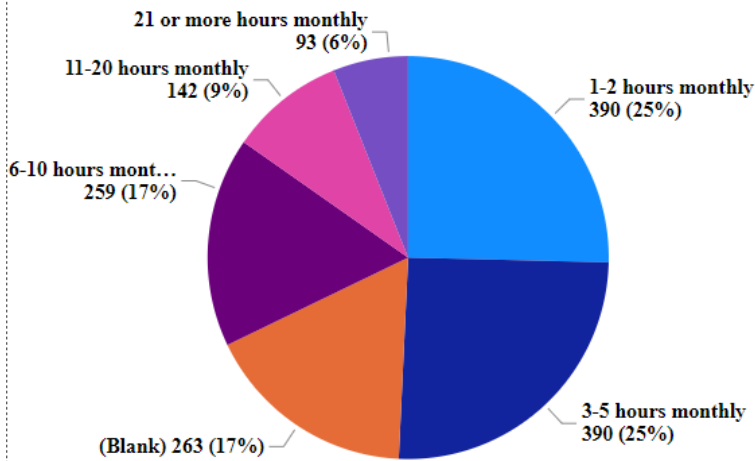


2022 Survey

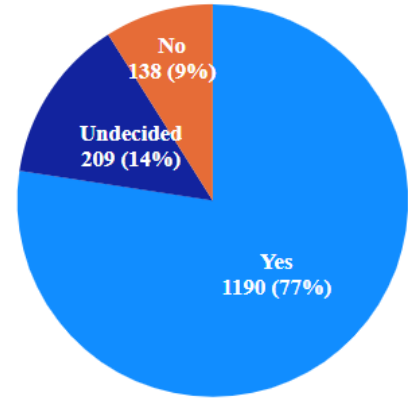
Arlington parents responding to the survey were 17% former student parents with similar distributions in the other categories. Only 6% representing Home and Private school parents responded to the survey. Note the parent demographic strongly influences the school responses. To eliminate blank responses for the school questions, we review one subgroup of respondents with children as well as the largest parent group of 6th-12th grade parents for their perspective on the schools. In many of the topic areas, we review for a subgroup.

The subgroups chosen in this report were random to show the ability to review by subgroup. In some cases, subgroups would not be considered statistically significant as there were too few. This is a basic review of the answers with one or two subgroups' perspectives. In the future, review a specific subgroup, like a single precinct or income bracket online. PowerBI is an online application used for visual display and analysis of data, most of the graphs here are generated with the PowerBI application.

How many hours do you spend volunteering?



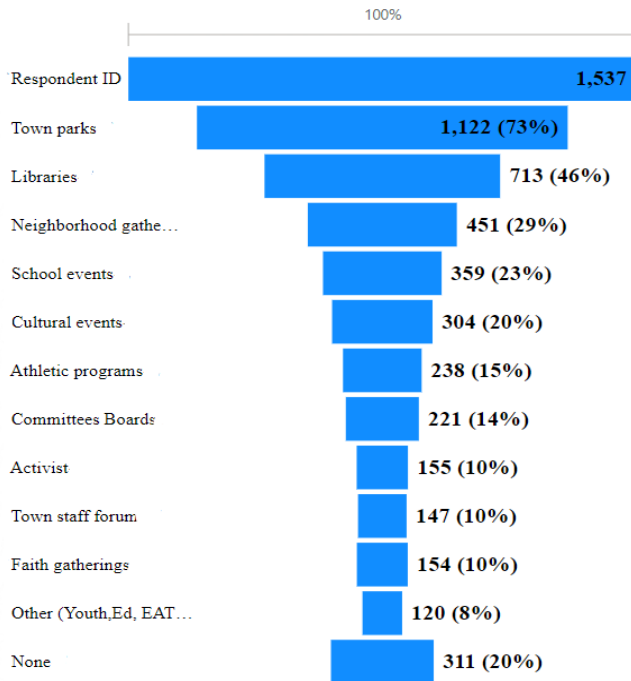
Do you plan to vote in this year's Town (local) elections in April?



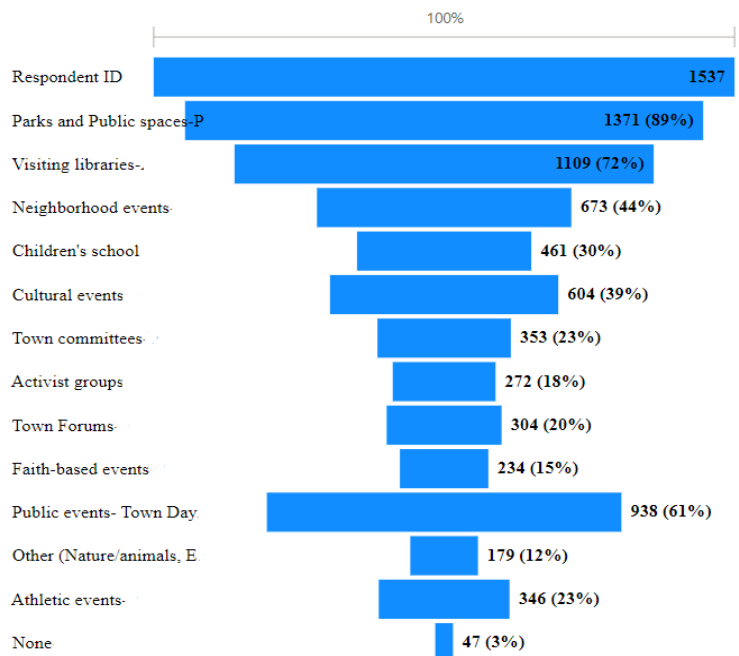
Participation

The survey begins with quantifying two main ways to participate in civic life, Volunteering, and Voting. A strong majority (77%) of respondents plan to vote and 83% of respondents volunteer some of their time each month to the community. With volunteering, nearly 17% left this Blank, 25% responded for both 3-5 hours and 1-2 hours with 17% responding.

Where do you engage most with the community?



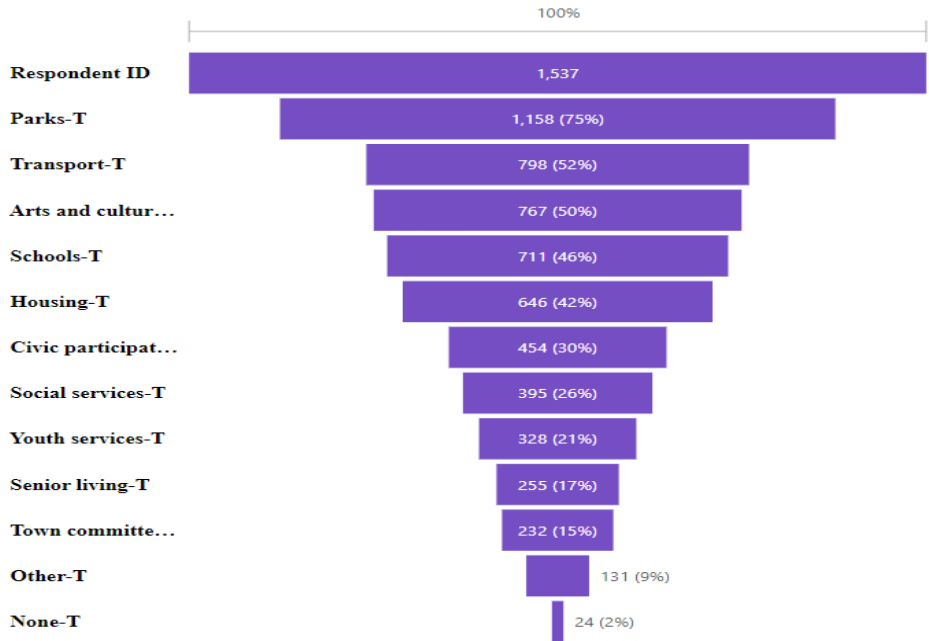
How do you currently participate, engage, or volunteer in the Arlington community?



In response to How do you Currently Participate, Engage or volunteer, 89% responded in parks and public spaces use, 72% chose libraries followed by 61% choosing Public events.

The survey revealed community engagement **most** with the parks at 73% followed by the libraries at 46% and the school events at 23%.

Which topics are particularly important to you in community life?



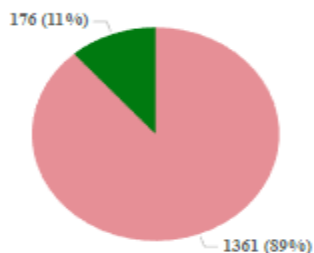
When reviewing the data by subgroups, the rank events remained similar. Parks, Libraries, Cultural and Town Events followed by School events, only among the parents did school events rank higher than Cultural events.

In response to “What is particularly important in your community life?”, an overwhelming 75% reported parks and recreation. Housing as well as Active Transportation/Mobility both received about 50% responding as important. This was followed by about 40% support for Schools as well as Arts & Culture.

Political Engagement

Political engagement starts with 77% responding they would vote. Eleven percent (11%) would run for local government. Twenty-six (27 %) reported considering running for a government committee. Important issues were many, some focused on environmental issues, safety issues, and business revitalization.

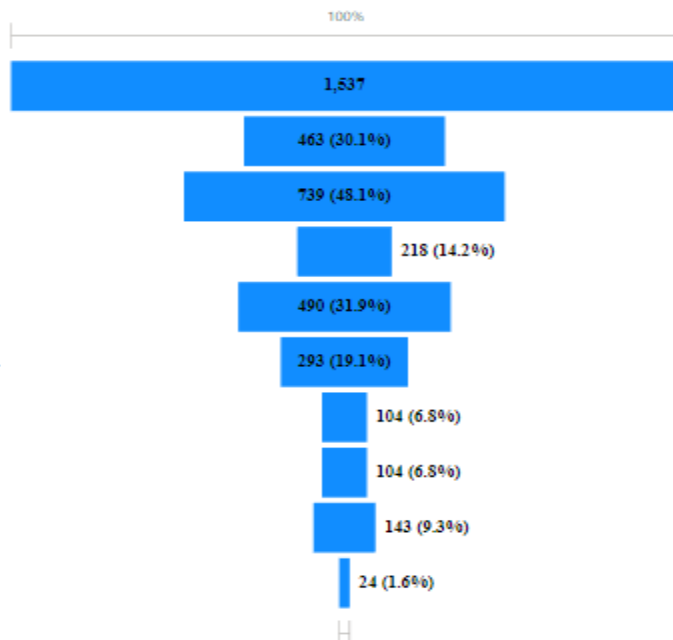
Have you ever run for a local government office (e.g., Town Meeting, School Committee, Select Board)?



Would you consider running for local government office in Arlington? (e.g., Town Meeting, School Comm etc.)

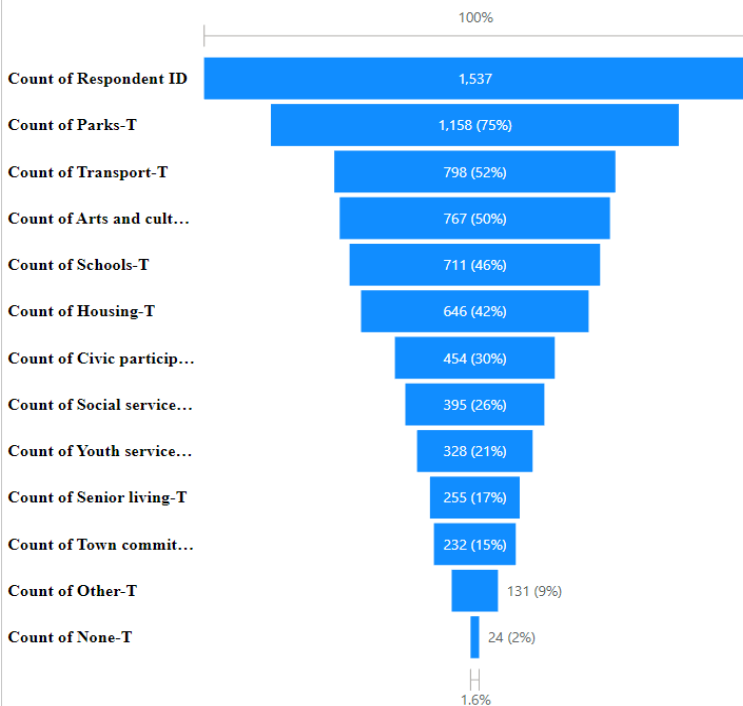


What support do you need to run for office?

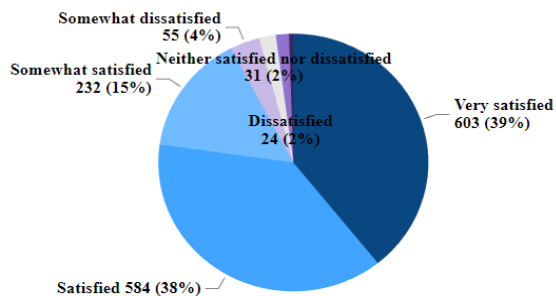


Following on from voting, the survey inquired into the possibility of being involved in a committee and asked what would help to encourage more people to get involved. Nearly 11% were already involved in a town committee or ran for a board. Twenty-seven percent were positive about running for a committee or government office. While 73 % would not consider running for government, close to 48% felt they might run given more information, and about 30% given it fits their schedule or it was remote participation.

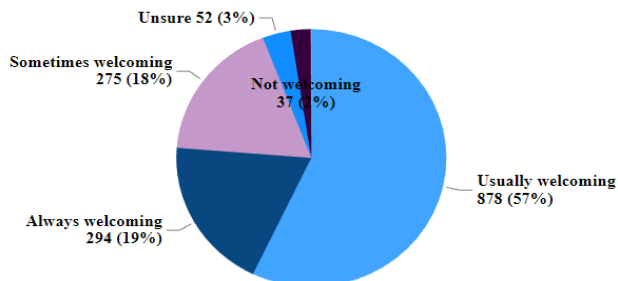
Which topics are particularly important to you in community life?



Currently, how satisfied are you living in Arlington?



How welcoming do you perceive Arlington to be?



These numbers jump up 50% needing more information, 35% fitting their schedule, and 36% participating remotely for those answering “Yes” to the “Would you consider running?” subgroup.

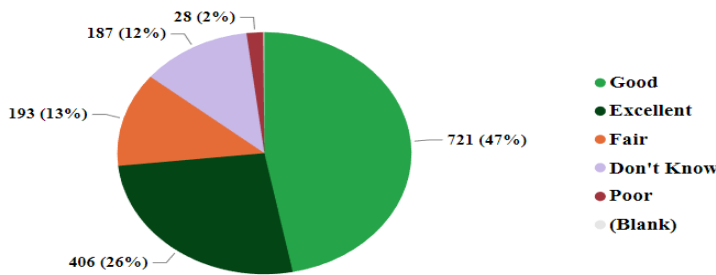
Town of Arlington

Overall, fifty-seven (57%) of the respondents perceived Arlington to be **Usually Welcoming** with about equal numbers 18% perceiving it **as Always** or **Sometimes**. “Welcoming” follows the same pattern as 2021. An overwhelming 77% were either very satisfied or satisfied with living in Arlington while only 6% were somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied.

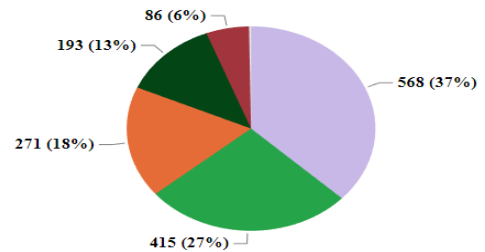
The majority of respondents are satisfied (38%) or (39%) very satisfied living in Arlington. The topics of importance ranked by percentages are Parks and Recreation(75%), followed by Transportation (52%), Arts & Culture (50%), and Schools (46%). The topics of importance ranked by precinct, always have Parks and Recreation as the first, but the next three categories change ranking by one or two places, for example, Arts & Culture (60%) becomes the third place for Precincts 20 and 21 while Schools (59%) move to third for Precincts 12,19 and 14 and Housing jumps to third 55% for Precincts 4, 5, and 7.

Precincts 4,5,7-subgroup

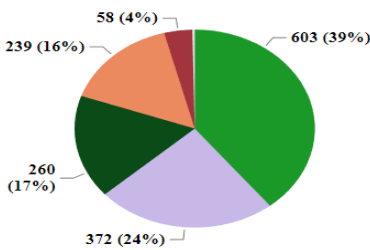
Rate ARLINGTON on the following: Respect for different cultural traditions



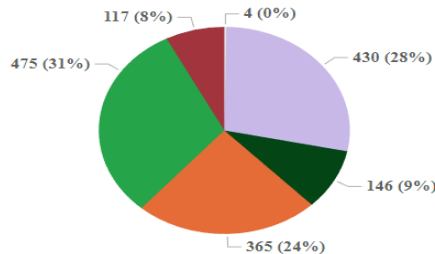
Welcoming residents from all backgrounds to participate in local government and community decision-making



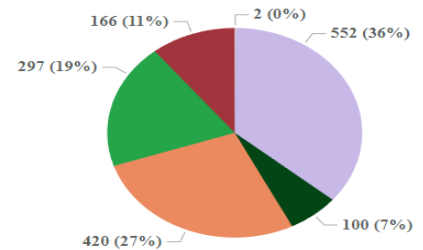
Treating all residents fairly



Helping new residents feel connected and integrated



Diversity of representation in local government

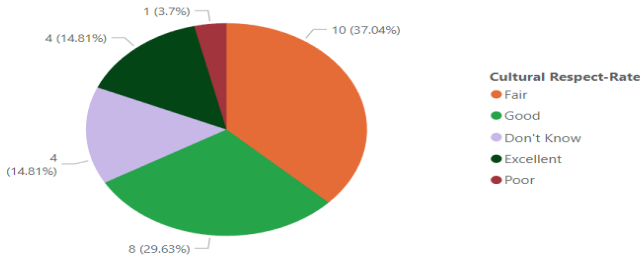


Regarding Respect for different cultural traditions In Arlington, 73% said good or excellent, while 12% said I don't know, and 15% Fair or poor. Similarly, all residents being treated fairly received 39% good and 17% excellent with 24% responding I don't know and 20% saying fair or poor. As far as Arlington helping new residents feel connected, 28% responded I don't know and forty percent (40%) responded good or excellent with 32% reporting fair or poor connection. On creating a connected and integrated community 40% responded good or excellent, 28% “I don't know “ while 32% responded Fair or poor. In welcoming residents from all backgrounds to participate in government decision-making, the response was equally split: the Don’t Know and poor amounted to over 40%, not including 18% at Fair with an equal to 40% saying they're good or excellent. When asked about the diversity of representation 38% replied Fair or poor with an additional 36% responding I don't know, only 26% said good or excellent.

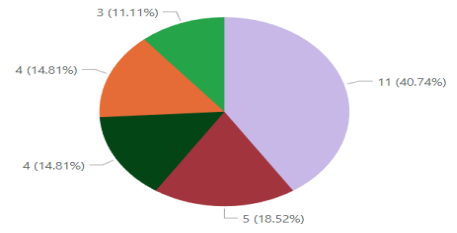
When reviewing the same data for all respondents **not identifying as Male or Female**, we see a drop in the percentage for Good and Excellent and an increase in Fair and Poor in most of the below questions except for the diversity of representation of local government. Excellent Rating for Diversity of Representation moves to 11% from 7% overall.

Not identifying as Male or Female subgroup

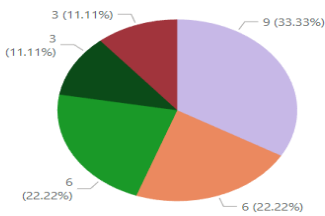
Rate ARLINGTON on the following: Respect for different cultural traditions



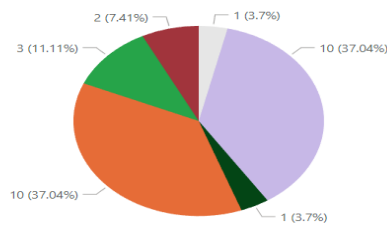
Welcoming residents from all backgrounds to participate in local government and community decision-making



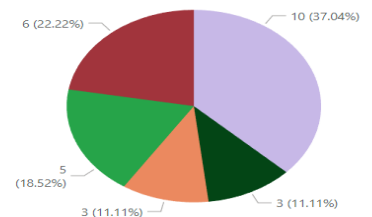
Treating all residents fairly



Helping new residents feel connected and integrated



Diversity of representation in local government



In the **Not identifying as Male or Female** subgroup “I don’t know” response jumped to 30-40% for both welcoming and feeling connected and integrated as well as diversity in government. With Fair raising to 37% with Respect for different cultural traditions, 37% for helping new residents feel connected and 14% for welcoming. Addressing social economic and racial equity in housing also ranked very high with 85% priority making it the next highest.

While at the same time treating all residents fairly received a 33% in fair or poor, I don't know 33%, and 33% responded excellent or good.



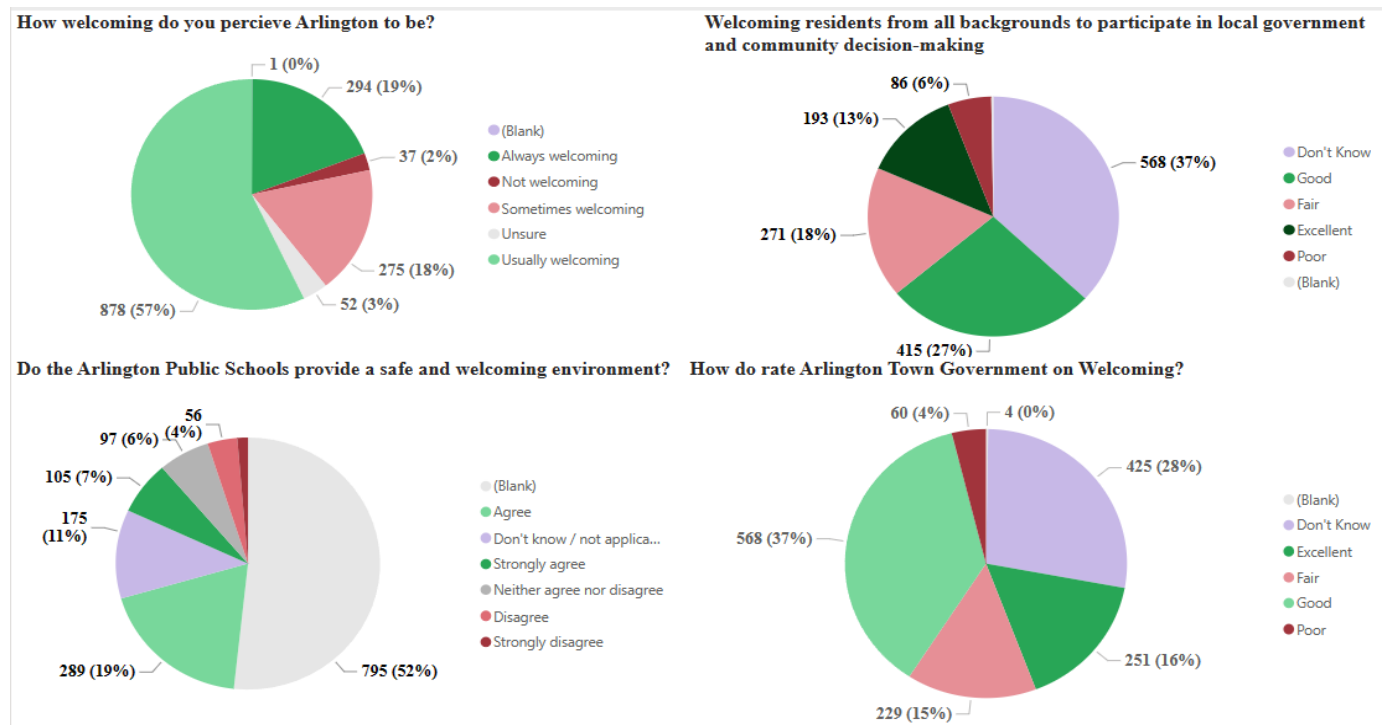
When it comes to things that Arlington could improve on, word density graphs show single words increase in size with use. For the issues that need improving, there were many different words with no strong

trend. The strongest density was with **street parking** and with **housing and businesses** maintenance words.

When answering what Arlington was doing well, the words helpful, responsive **staff, services, communication, DPW, and Police** were used the most often.

Welcoming

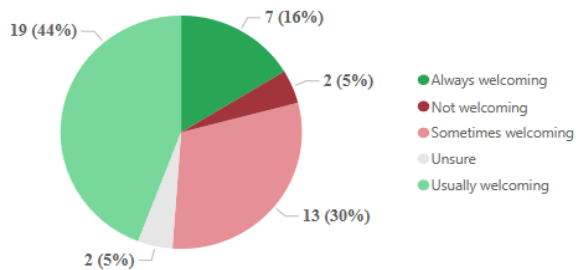
If we focus on just Welcoming from the town, town government, welcome to participate and Arlington Public schools, we have various levels of agreement. Arlington overall has 76% welcoming with 20% only sometimes or not welcoming. Arlington Town Government received 53% excellent or good at welcoming with 19% fair or poor. With Welcoming to participate, 50% found it good or excellent with 25% found it only fair or poor. Finally, with the schools, agree and strongly agree to a safe and welcoming environment is 26%, and disagree/strongly disagree drops to 5%.



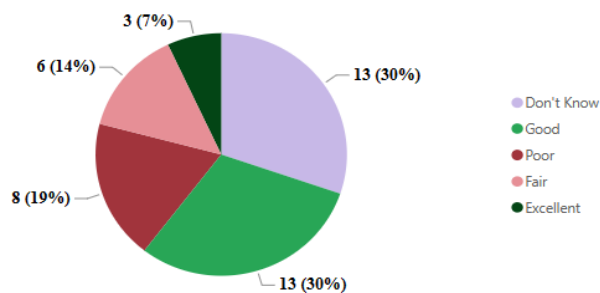
While most of the racial minorities follow the majority in welcoming, those identifying as Some other race had significantly different responses. (See graphs below and List of Some Other Race on page 2)

Arlington drops 16% to 60% for welcoming with 35% finding it sometimes or not welcoming. Arlington Town Government drops to 37% excellent or good at welcoming with 34% fair or poor, up 14% from the majority. With Welcoming to participate, the number drops to 37% good or excellent with fair or poor increasing by 7% to 33%. Finally, with the schools, the agree and strongly agree for a safe and welcoming environment is only 16%, down 10%, and disagree/strongly disagree increases by 7% up to 13%.

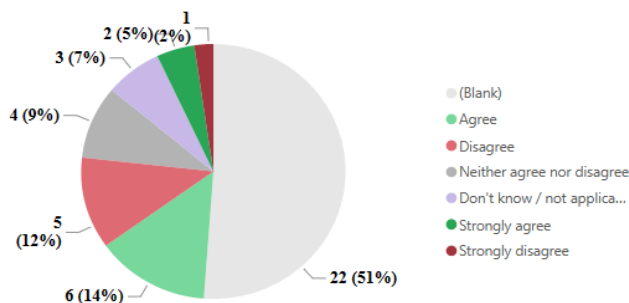
How welcoming do you perceive Arlington to be?



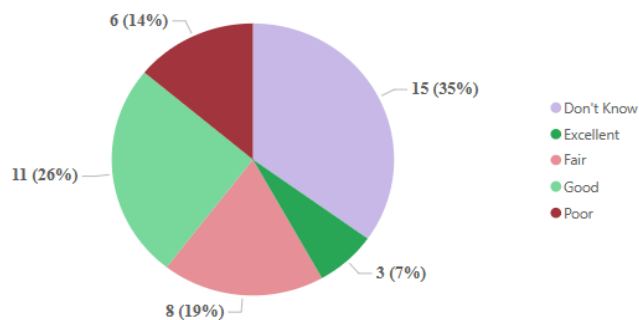
Welcoming residents from all backgrounds to participate in local government and community decision-making



Do the Arlington Public Schools provide a safe and welcoming environment?



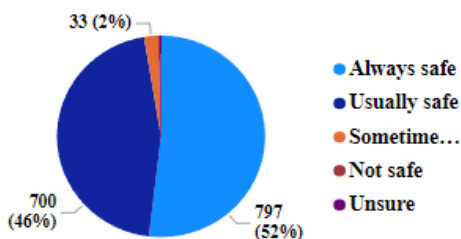
How do rate Arlington Town Government on Welcoming?



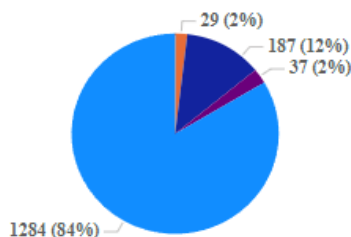
Public Safety from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Overall, 52% of respondents felt always safe with 46% feeling usually safe. With 84% having not witnessed a violent crime and 68% not witnessing a Hate crime. The majority 93% Very comfortable calling for a medical emergency; 81% for a Non-violent crime, 84% for a Violent crime, 68% for a Hate crime, and 62% for a Mental Health emergency. While racial sub-groups followed similar trends in always and usually feeling safe, sexual orientation and gender identification subgroups were significantly different.

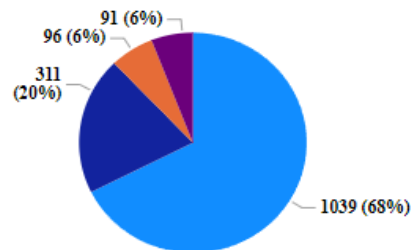
How safe do you, personally, feel in Arlington?



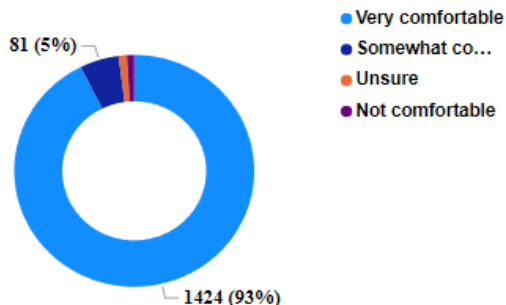
Comfortable calling police for a Violent Crime?



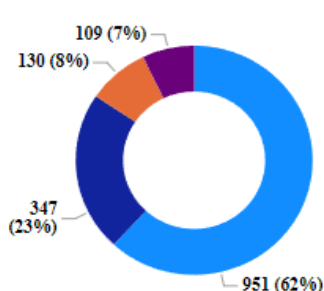
Comfortable calling the police for a Hate Crime?



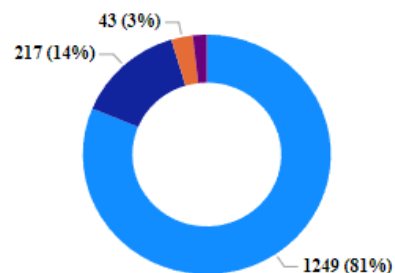
Do you feel comfortable calling the police for a Medical Emergency?



Do you feel comfortable calling the police for a Mental Health emergency?



Do you feel comfortable calling the police for a Nonviolent Crime?

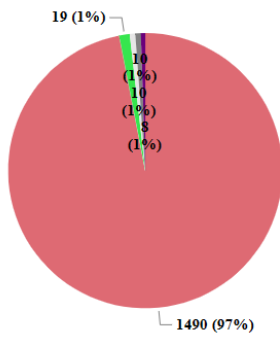


Overall, more than 89% of respondents did not personally experience discrimination, intimidation, or violence (97%) in Arlington. Over 5.6 % responded Yes with 1- 3% unsure about experiencing discrimination, intimidation, or violence.

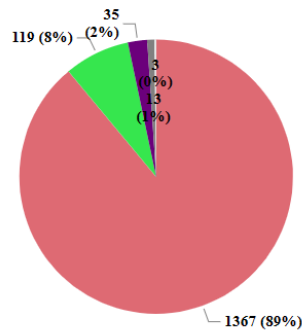
Experienced Discrimination?



Experienced Violence?



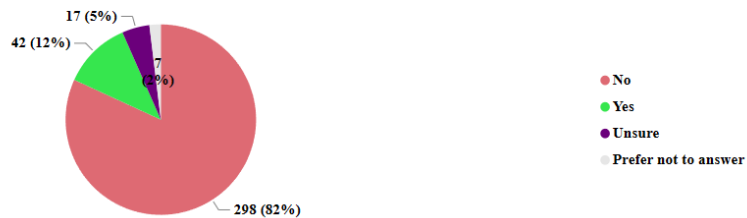
Experienced Intimidation?



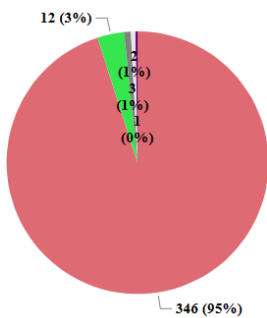
Focusing on two minority groups, **non-Heterosexuals and Hispanic subgroups**, the survey reveals two perspectives that differ from the overall respondents.

Sexual Orientation- All but Heterosexual and Choose not to disclose

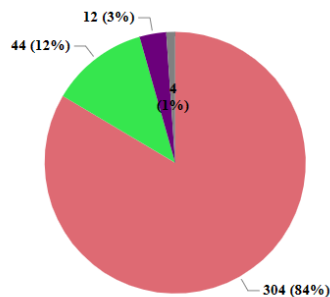
Experienced Discrimination?



Experienced Violence?



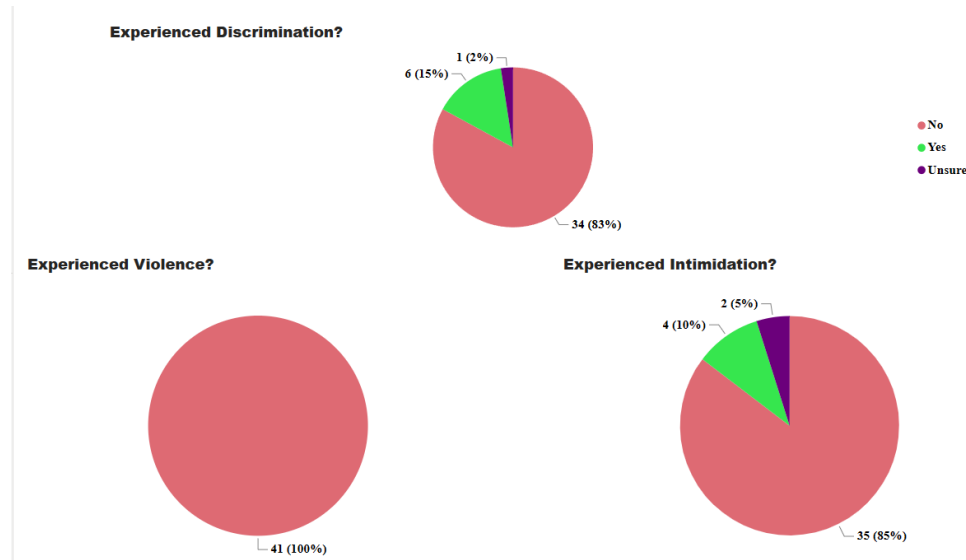
Experienced Intimidation?



Those identifying as **NOT Heterosexual or Choose not to disclose** had a higher percentage reporting Yes to experiencing intimidation (12%), discrimination (12%), or violence(3%.) We also see a higher percentage not comfortable calling the police.

Racial Hispanic

Those identifying as Hispanic have higher than overall feelings of safety at 68% and none felt unsafe. Those experiencing intimidation followed the majority group with 83% answering no but an increase in unsure and none responding Yes to experienced violence. Those experiencing discrimination doubled to 12% overall. Those

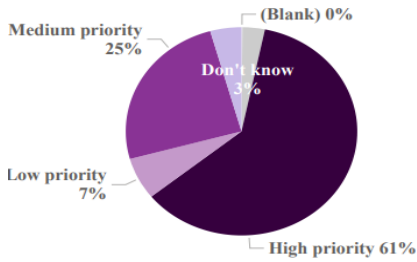


experiencing violence was 0%.

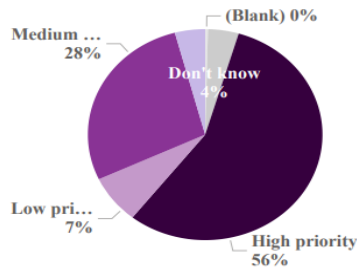
Similarly, the Hispanic respondents felt more comfortable than the overall population, in “Calling the Police” for Physical emergencies (100%), medical emergencies (72%), and mental health Emergency (72%) felt very comfortable, higher than the overall population of respondents in every question.

When asked about addressing social, economic, and racial equity differences in various areas Housing, Health, Safety(Police), and Education the majority was always High Priority, Housing-61%, Health 56%, Safety 66%, and Education 68% with Education and Safety showing the highest priorities. When reviewing a diverse inclusive fair community High priority received 58%. When asked about Recruiting diverse residents into positions of government leadership, High priority received 46%, and hiring more diverse staff garnered 39%.

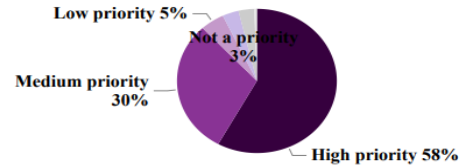
Addressing social, economic, and racial equity differences in Housing



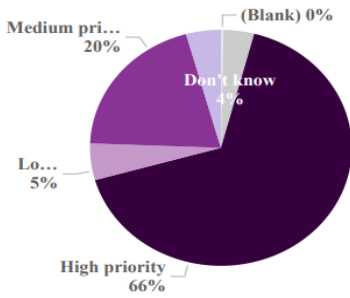
Health



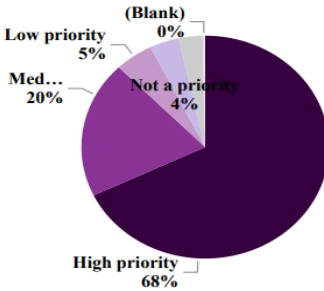
Creating a diverse, inclusive, and fair community



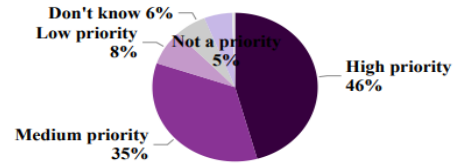
Police



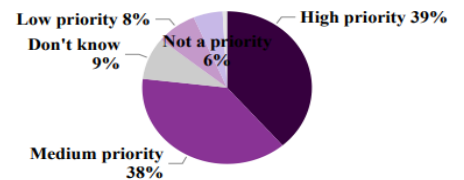
Education



Recruiting diverse residents into positions of local government leadership



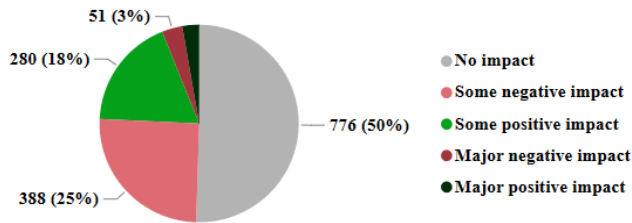
Hiring more diverse staff



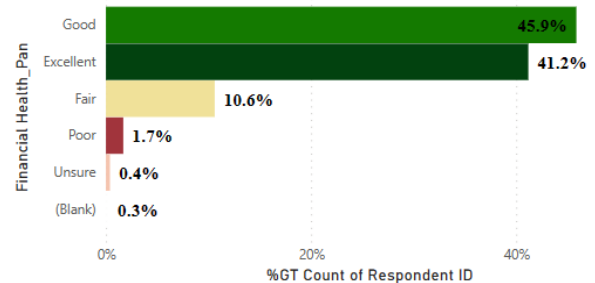
*Note the number of respondents of the minorities is small compared to the overall numbers and so may not be statistically significant, this issue was noted first in the introduction.

Pandemic Wellness 2022

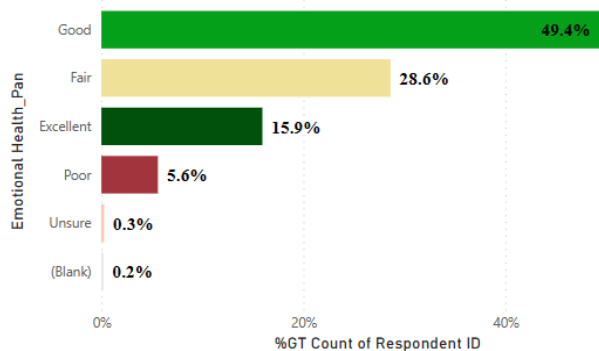
What impact, if any, has there been on your household's financial situation over the course of the pandemic?



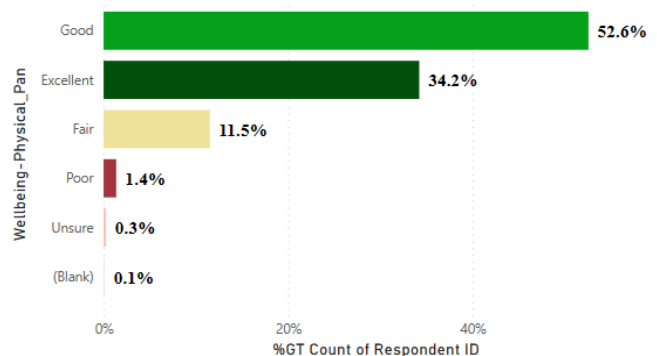
Financial Health in Pandemic



Emotional Health in Pandemic



Wellbeing Physical in Pandemic

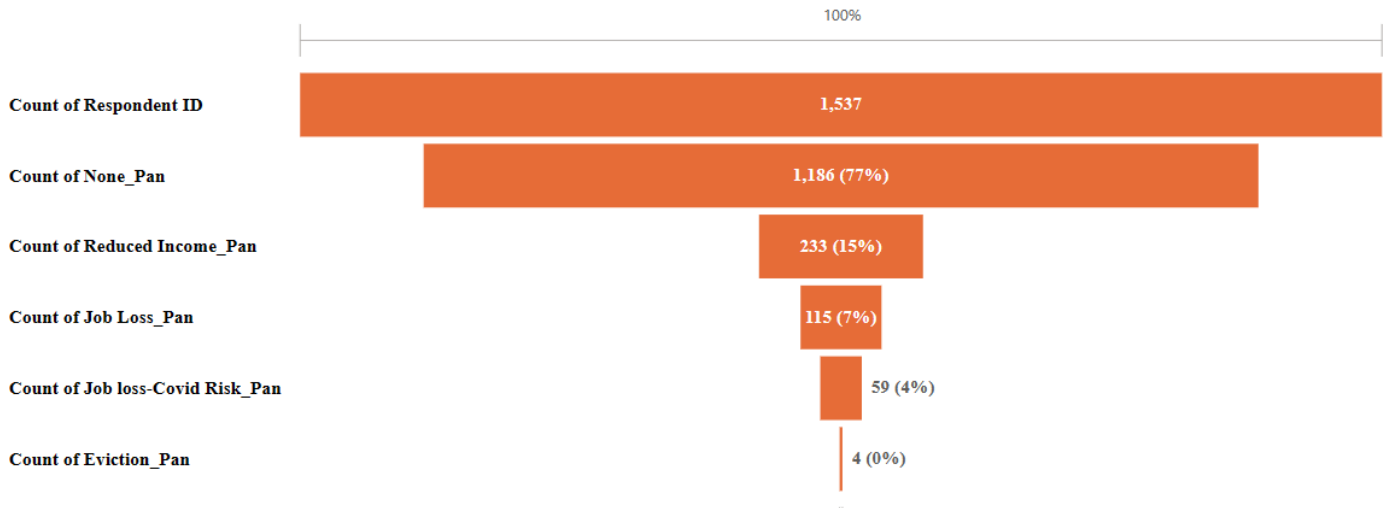


Reflecting on the pandemic, overall **Physical Well-being** was excellent or good at 86% with 13% reporting fair or poor

For overall well-being regarding **Financial Health**, 86% felt good or excellent during the pandemic with only 2% feeling poor or 10% fair. This varied only 1% from the 2021 survey.

Overall **Emotional Health** during the pandemic over 34% felt Fair or poor while 66% remained Excellent or good, this is similar to last year.

Have you or anyone in your household experienced any of the following because of th the pandemic?



Fifty percent reported No impact on the household financial situation from the pandemic. Over 25% report some negative impact and only 3% report a major negative impact on the financial side.

Twelve percent(12%) reported a temporary or permanent loss of job during the pandemic down 4% from 2021 with Job loss due to fear of COVID exposure being 4%. Seventy-seven (77%) reported no impact by the pandemic

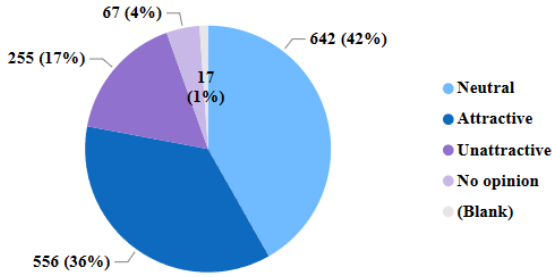
[Arlington Business Centers](#)

To attract both residents and visitors to spend more time in Arlington and to attract new businesses to fill open storefronts, we asked a series of questions about beautification.

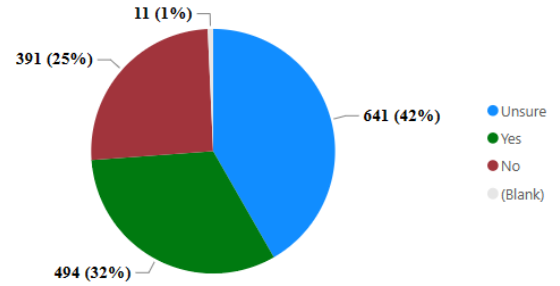
Overall, when asked about the beauty of the business areas in town, about 43% had a neutral response with 14% finding them unattractive and more than the 36% responding positively. Only 36% found East Arlington business districts attractive, while 39% were neutral and 17% found them unattractive. Over 40% found the Arlington Center business district attractive, while the neutral response was about equal at 39% and unattractive was at 18%. The highest neutral and negative response was forty-seven (47%) for Arlington Heights with 21% finding it unattractive with only 26% finding it attractive. When asked what would improve the business districts, 56% responded by increasing plantings, hanging baskets, and greenery, 55% chose storefront upgrades

and public art (44%) as well as sidewalk improvements (39%).

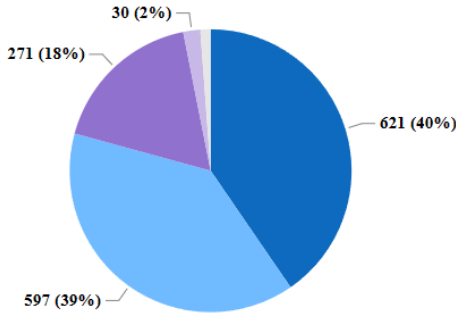
Is East Arlington Attractive?



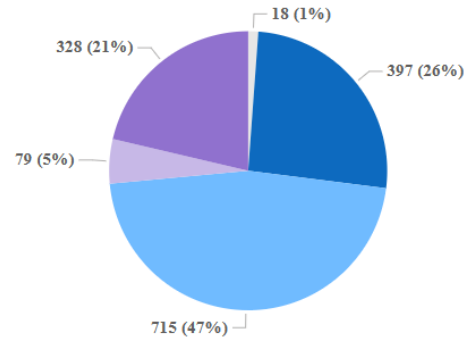
Would you donate to a Town Beautification Fund for the business districts if one were to be established?



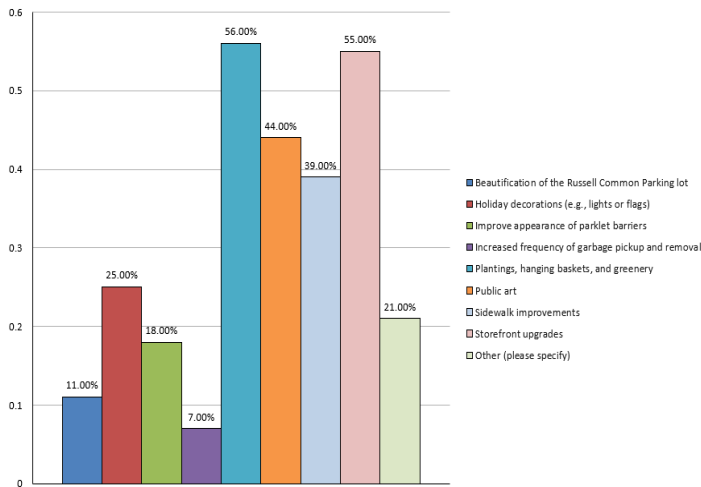
Is Arlington Center Attractive?



Is Arlington Heights Attractive?



What do you think would best improve the attractiveness of the business districts in Arlington?

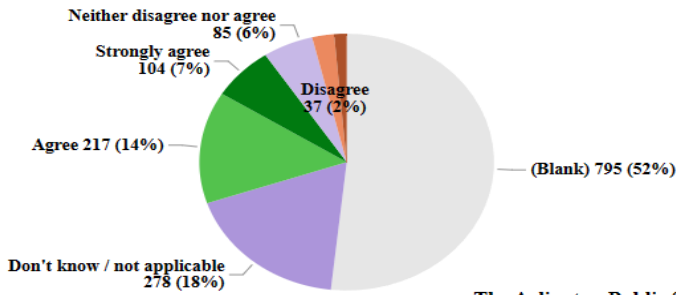


When asked if they would donate to town beautification, 32% of respondents replied Yes.

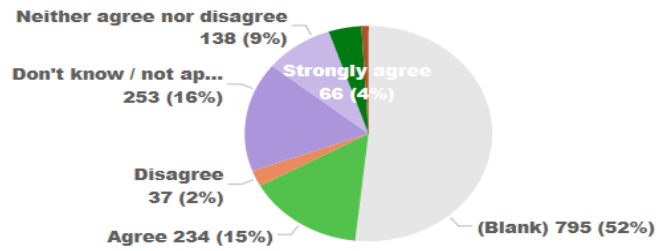
Public Schools

Overall, 76% of the respondents did not know or neither disagree or agree nor left blank on Arlington Public Schools' preparation of the student for a job, university, internship, or postgraduate occupation. This disparity may come from survey results of 44% not being a parent or involved in the school system at all.

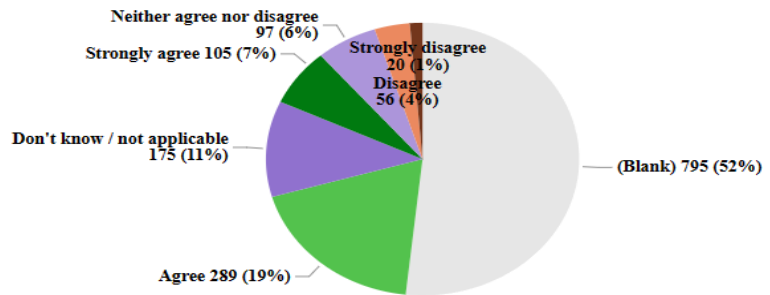
The Arlington Public Schools prepare all students to succeed in finding a job, college/university, etc.



The Arlington Public Schools have a clear vision, mission, and strategic priorities that guide planning.



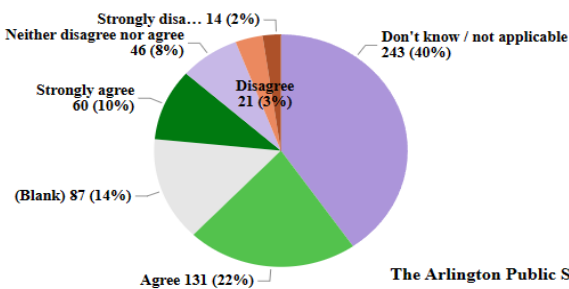
The Arlington Public Schools provide a safe and welcoming environment for all students and families.



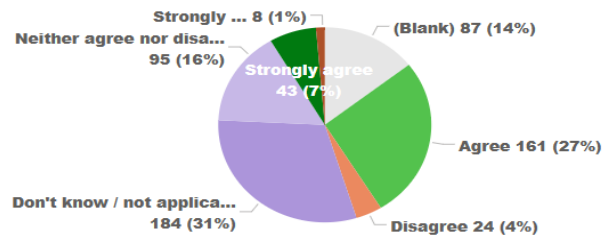
Overall, 19% of respondents agreed The Arlington Public School system has a clear vision, mission, and strategic priorities while 25% did not know or did not agree or disagree. Overall, 26% of respondents agreed The Arlington Public School system has a safe and welcoming environment. While 27% did not know or did not agree or disagree.

When reviewing the data for the subgroup of **households with one or more children**, the agree and strongly agree percentages for welcoming rise significantly to 48% with disagree and strongly disagree dropping to under 10%. In Preparing the student to succeed, agree and strongly agree rises to 32%, and disagree, strongly disagree remains at 5%.

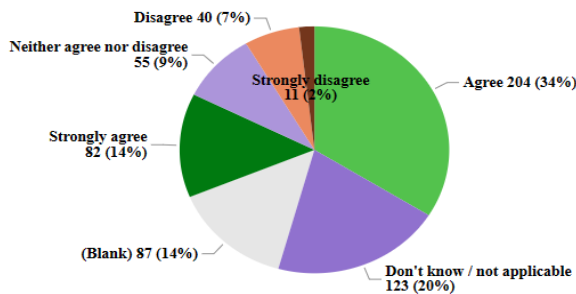
The Arlington Public Schools prepare all students to succeed in finding a job, college/university, etc.



The Arlington Public Schools have a clear vision, mission, and strategic priorities that guide planning.



The Arlington Public Schools provide a safe and welcoming environment for all students and families.



In the question about providing a safe and welcoming environment at school, agree and strongly agree goes to 48% while don't know moves to 20%. In the area of Clear Vision, Agree and Strongly Agree show at 28%, and Don't know is only at 26%. The category of did not know or neither disagree or agree or "blank" garnered 60% for Preparing students to succeed, 61% for clear vision, and 55% for a safe and welcoming environment, all down from the overall population.

These numbers drop slightly when using the majority of 237 parents of the 6-12th grade students subgroup. The agree and strongly agree rises to 44% and the response of Blank or don't know or neither agree or disagree dropped to just over 35%. It is clear those involved with the school feel better about it overall but there remains a great deal of uncertainty.

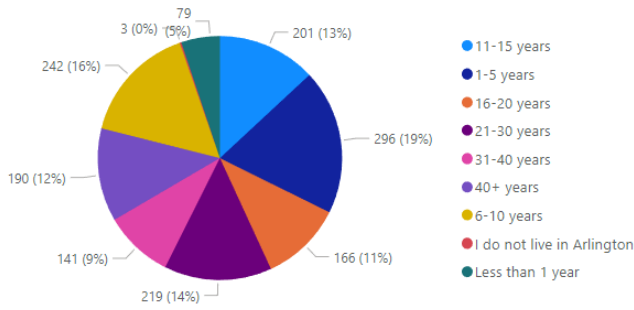
Conclusion

Under the leadership of the Planning Department, Envision Arlington works with town departments and commissions to open a dialogue about the work of the community and government, soliciting suggestions for future improvements and engagement. The 2022 survey focused on the relationship to the town where we live, how we feel, and where we would like to participate more. This shows how we see the city of Arlington and its government. The findings of this report are based on 1,537 survey responses.

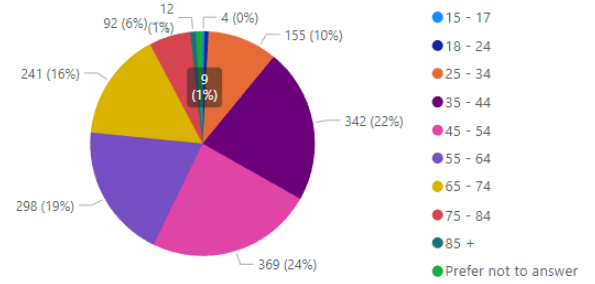
Many feel connected in the town and are very positive about safety and confident about call the police. Many feel they don't know about the school's goals and town equity issues but would like to see improvements in business areas in all parts of town. Different precincts of town have different priorities for participation but the majority valued the parks, libraries, and arts and culture highest. While most felt they could not participate more, 17% felt with encouragement and information they might get more involved. Overall, most respondents felt little impact from the pandemic.

Demographics

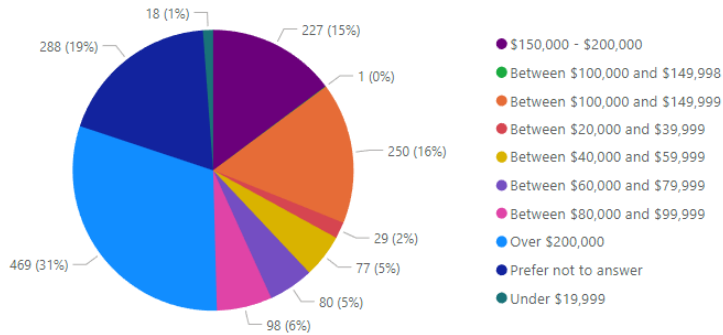
How long have you live in Arlington?



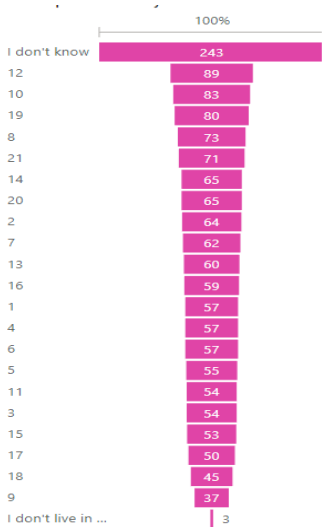
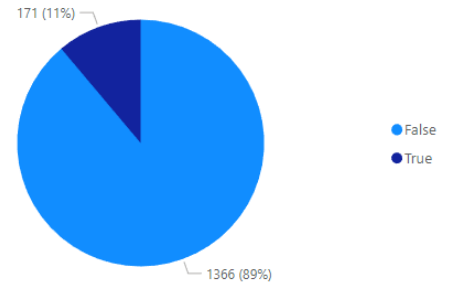
Age



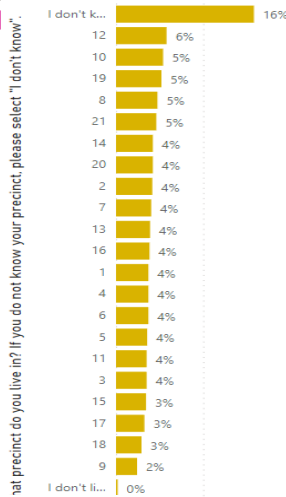
Income



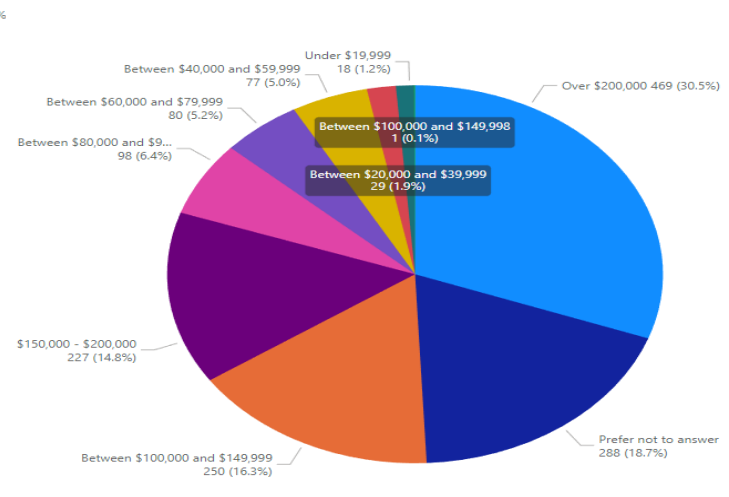
Do you have a mental or physical disability?



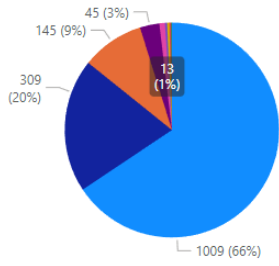
What Precinct do you live in?



Which category best describes your household's annual income in 2021?



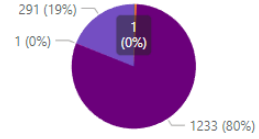
Adults in Household



- 2
- 1
- 3
- 4
- 5
- (Blank)
- 0
- 6
- 7
- 8

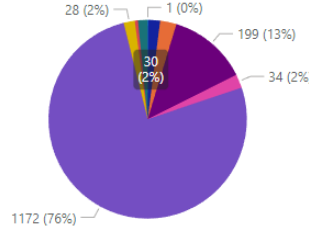
Living Situation

- Co-living
- Does not matter
- Other (please specify)
- Own
- Prefer not to answer
- Rent



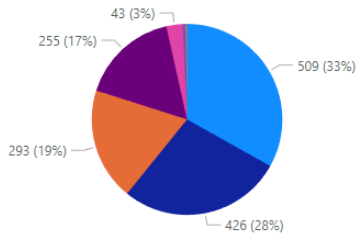
- Other Living Arrangement
- Share
- Prefer not to answer
- Partner of owner
- No
- Myob
- My spouse owns. I live with her.
- my life partner owns living with parents
- Live with parents (own) but out of state for college as of this year
- Live with elderly mother
- Does not matter
- condo
- Co-living

Sexual Orientation



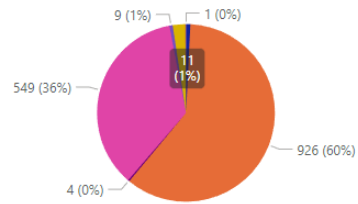
- (Blank)
- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Choose not to disclose
- Gay
- Heterosexual/Straight
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer

Children in Household



- (Blank)
- 0
- 2
- 1
- 3
- 4
- 9
- 6

Gender



- Agender
- Another gender identity...
- Female
- Gender Queer
- Male
- Non Binary
- Prefer not to answer
- Transgender Man