



2024 TOWN SURVEY

REPORT ON SURVEY RESPONSES

TOPICS

Energy • Tourism • Recycling and Composting

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion • Education

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INTRODUCTION

Since 1992, Envision Arlington has invited the Arlington Community to share their opinions and ideas. This year's selected questions on business development are in direct response to last year's concerns over open store fronts. 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 2024 survey focuses on how we engage in tourism and business development, recycling and composting, programs like MassSave, as well as how we feel about our community, our schools, and our government. The survey ran online between January 4 and March 12, 2024, and paper copies of the survey were provided at Arlington's Robbins Library Media Desk. This year we received a total of 3,004 responses, up over 1,000 from 2023. It was the Town Meeting members in many Precincts whose outreach made a dramatic difference this year. The survey only reflects the ideas of those completing the survey, which is not fully representative of the Town as a whole. It should also be noted we report some statistics as the percentage of respondents identifying in each category. This means the total can be more than 100% if residents identify in more than one category. Federal and State demographic data give us a sense of Arlington's racial demographics in 2020, so we acknowledge our respondents are not fully representative of Arlington's actual demographic profile. This data is used for town planning work including policy and program changes as well as operational design. Reports from prior years are on the Envision Arlington webpage.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The highest number of respondents was from Precinct 2 and Precinct 12.



To view a full-sized version of the precinct map, please visit:
<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/election>

What precinct do you live in?

Answered: 2394; Skipped: 609

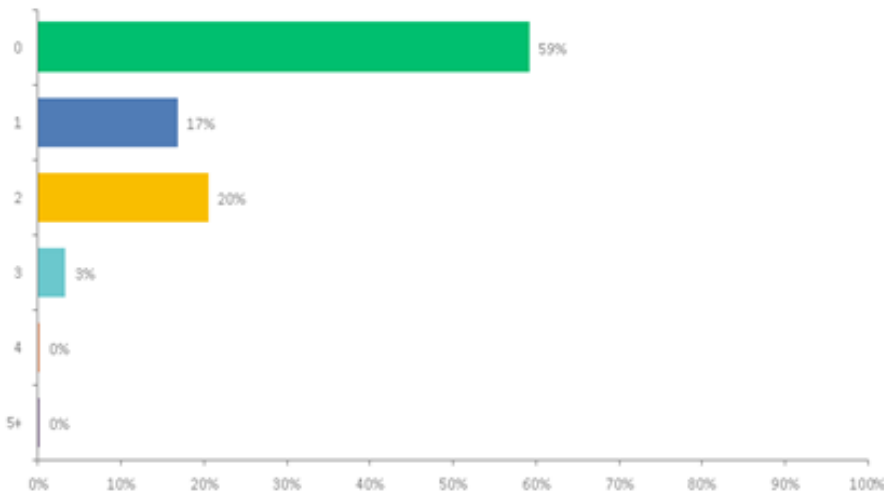
ANSWER	RESPONSES	
1	3.43%	82
2	7.52%	180
3	4.89%	117
4	4.55%	109
5	4.34%	104
6	4.64%	111
7	4.72%	113
8	5.72%	137
9	3.51%	84
10	4.55%	109
11	4.51%	108

12	6.27%	150
13	4.22%	101
14	4.47%	107
15	4.30%	103
16	5.68%	136
17	3.72%	89
18	3.01%	72
19	5.35%	128
20	4.30%	103
21	5.72%	137
I don't know	0.58%	14
I don't live in Arlington	0%	0
TOTAL		2394

While the proportion of households responding to this year’s survey is an improvement over 2023, up over 1,000 respondents, there are some indicators that survey responses are still not representative of Arlington’s population. Measured against data from the 2019 Town of Arlington Survey, around 43% of Arlington households have a child under 18 in the house with 2024 respondents it drops to 41%. In addition, because of the differences between Arlington’s overall population and the demographics reported in the Town Survey, the responses are skewed to that of households with an average income of \$212,000 with two adults and few if any children.

How many Children (17 years or younger) are in your household?

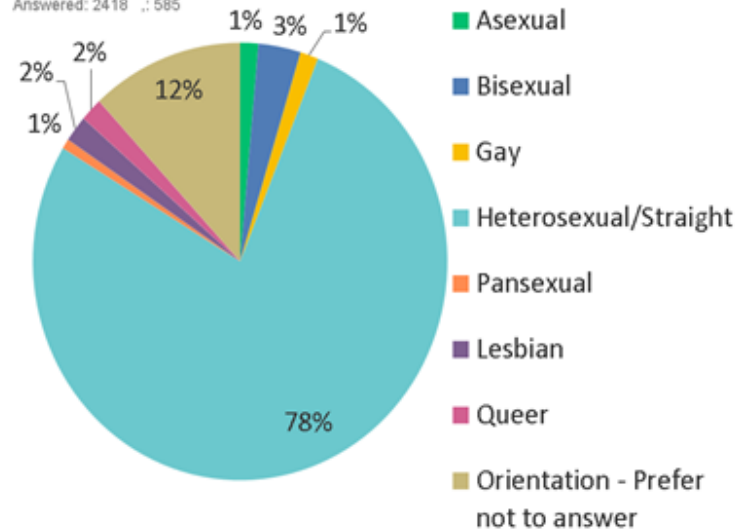
Answered: 2435 / 568



What is your current gender identity?	RESPONSES	Count
Female	58.70%	1755
Male	37.46%	1120
Agender	0%	0
Non-Binary	0.94%	28
Transgender	0.30%	9
Another Gender (e.g. Two-Spirited, Genderqueer)	0.27%	8
Gender- Prefer not to answer	2.34%	70
TOTAL		2990

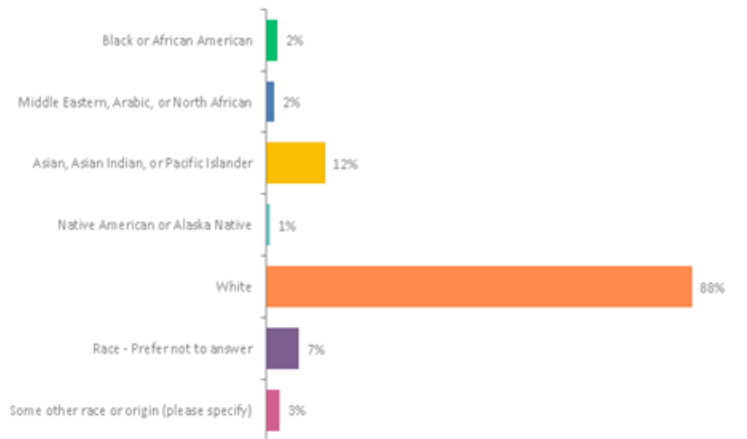
What is your current sexual orientation?

Answered: 2418 / 585



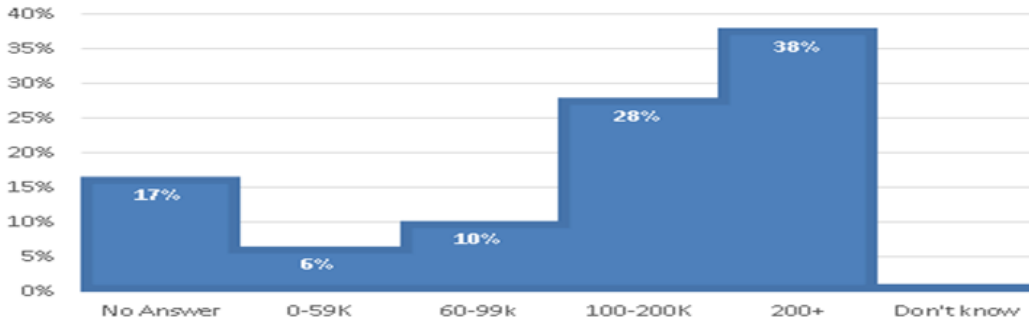
How would you describe the race of individuals in your household? (Select all that apply.)

Answered: 2450 ; 553



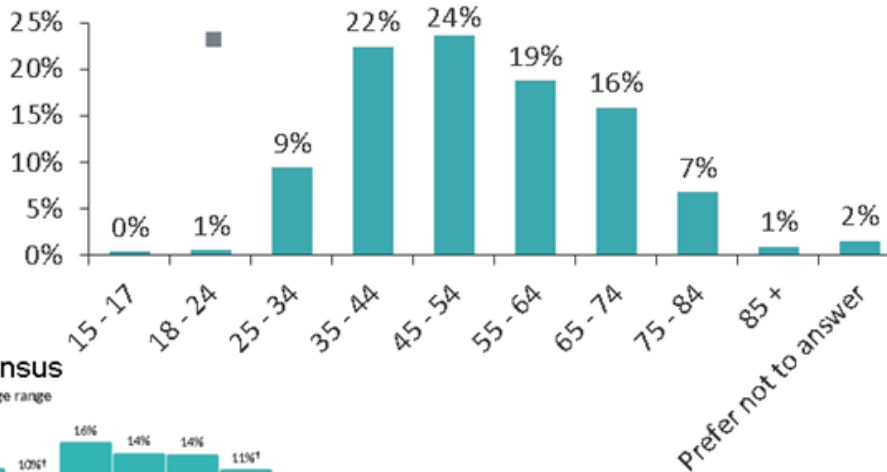
Some other race or origin(please specify)
 Jewish Multiracial Hispanic white Mixed American race
 European

2024 INCOME



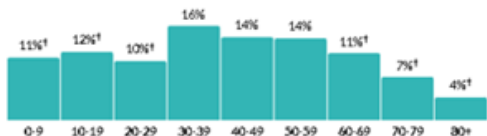
What is your age?

Answered: 3003 Skipped 0

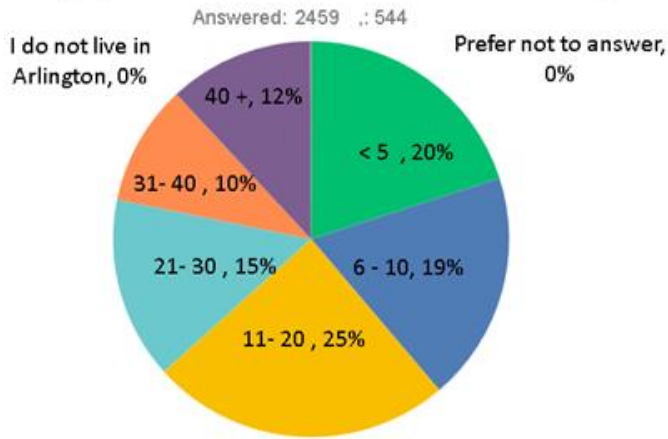


2020 Census

Population by age range

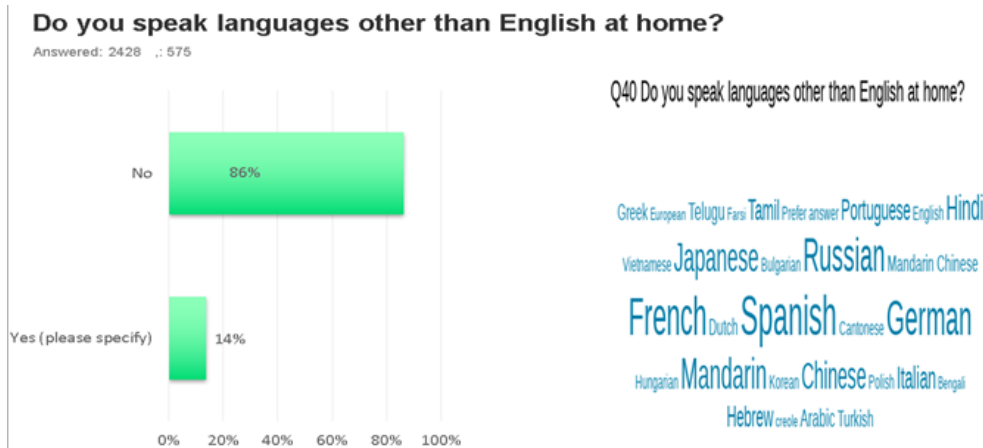


How many years have you lived in Arlington?

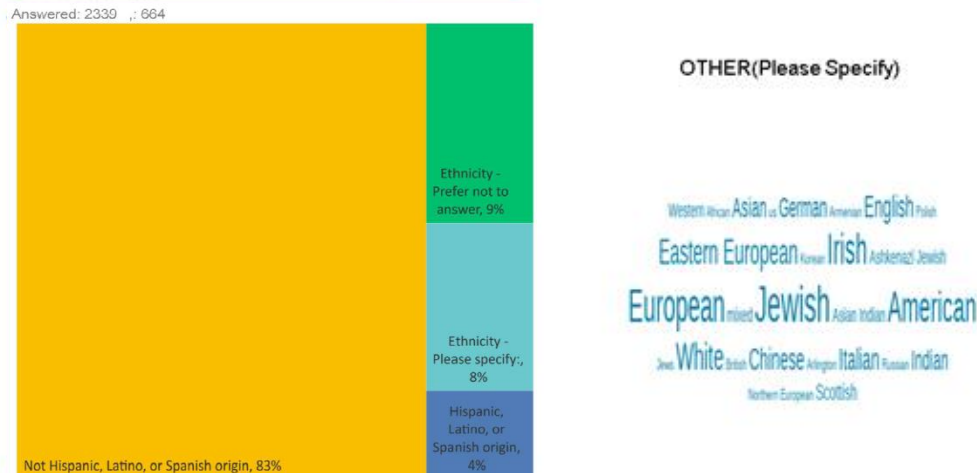


Nine percent of the respondents answered yes to having a physical, sensory, cognitive, emotional, or mental illness and/or other disabilities that may limit or shape their participation in work and society. This may be up slightly due to the broader definition.

English is spoken in 86% of responding households. For other languages, French, Spanish, German, Mandarin Russian, Japanese, Hindi as well as Portuguese, Italian, and Chinese were most often mentioned.



How would you describe the ethnicity of individuals in your household? (Select all that apply.)

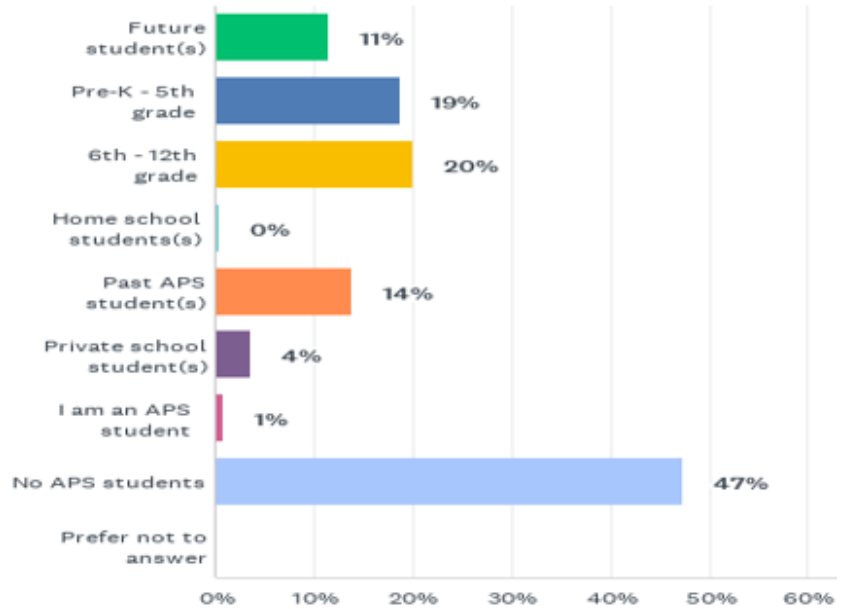


EDUCATION

When examining students in Arlington households and answering the question,

Does your household include students?

the survey finds that 47% of respondents have no APS students up 6% from last year, 19% have pre-K to 5th grade down 2%, 20% have 6th to 12th grade up 2% from 2023, 11% have future students, and 14% have past students. Zero percent of respondents had home school students down 3% from 2023 and 4% private school students. These numbers vary greatly across Precincts. With Future students as high as 16- 17% in Precincts 21, 3, and 5 with a low of 5% in Precincts 9 & 10. Pre-K to 5th grade had a high of 28% in Precinct 1 and low of 7% in Precinct 6.

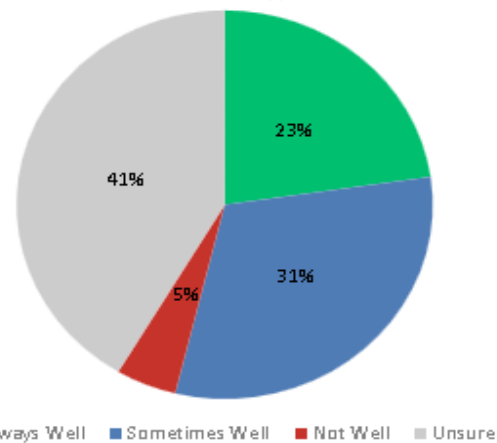


How well is the school district serving students and families?

Respondents replied with 54% choosing Always (23%) or sometimes well (31%). Unsure was 41% while only 5% responded Not Well. These numbers vary greatly across Precincts. With Always Well as high as 38% in Precincts 13, and not well a high of 8% in Precincts 17 & 21.

How well is the school district serving students and families?

Answered: 2471 Skipped: 532



HOW WELL FUNDED DO YOU THINK THE ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE?

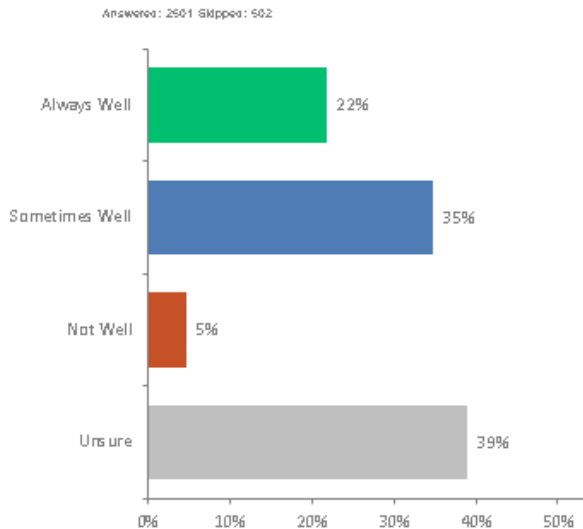


How well funded do you think the Arlington Public Schools are?

Respondents replied with 64% choosing Always or sometimes well up from 46% in 2023 to a similar inquiry. Unsure garnered 30%, down 8% from last year with only 6% responding Not Well.

How well maintained are APS facilities, classrooms, and community spaces?

Respondents replied with 57% choosing Always or sometimes well while 39% were unsure and 5% replied not well. Facilities are Always well maintained, garnered 22% up from 16% last year and Sometimes Well received 35% up 8% with Not Well at 5% up 1%. These numbers vary across Precincts. With Always Well as high as 29% in Precincts 1 and 13, and not well a high of 9% in Precinct 18.



Below is a summary of responses to the question:

What ways could the business community partner with APS or the broader community contribute to APS programming?

- Improve food quality and school facilities. Partner with local farms and restaurants to enhance school cafeteria offerings for healthier eating habits.
- Collaborations with Local Businesses: Encouraging partnerships between schools and local businesses for internships, sponsorships, and advertising benefits both parties. Businesses can offer shadowing opportunities, sponsor events, or engage in educational programming, providing students with valuable experiences.
- Universal Pre-K and Special Needs Accessibility: Advocating for universal pre-K to support early childhood education and ensure accessibility for children with special needs is a key focus.
- Community and Cultural Understanding: Emphasizing the importance of students understanding the local community, making connections, and seeing how businesses and the community support family life in Arlington.
- Taxation and Funding: Discussions on implementing different property tax rates for business and residential properties and addressing concerns from those without children in Arlington schools regarding their financial contribution to school funding.
- Encourage local businesses to donate cleaning supplies or sponsor classrooms to support families and create well-equipped learning spaces.
- Provide internships, job shadowing, and partnership projects with local businesses for practical experiences.
- Support student-led businesses through mentorship and resources to develop entrepreneurial skills. Enhance student involvement in community projects.

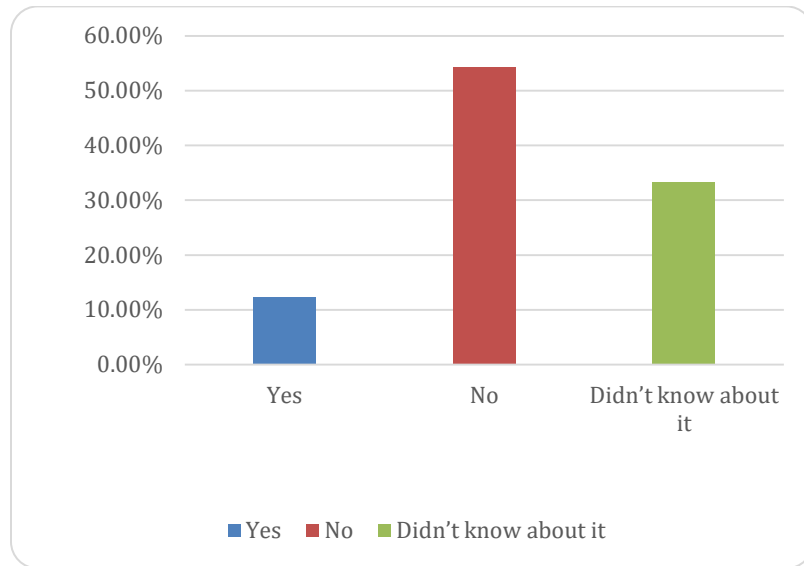
- Host lecture series with local experts and artists, engaging in public art partnerships to enrich educational experiences and strengthen community ties.
- Provide additional funding, volunteer assistants, and resources to support teachers and create a positive teaching environment.
- Address concerns about teacher shortages, compensation, and school facilities by suggesting more funding and repairs.
- Increase volunteer opportunities and programs connecting older adults with students to foster community bonds.
- Improve transportation for field trips and enhance school surroundings for safety and accessibility.
- Call for more resources for schools, financial support from businesses, and funding for extracurricular activities.
- Attract tech/science companies to Arlington and encourage business support for education.
- Highlight specific school needs like bussing and facility improvements for targeted enhancements.
- Maximize tax dollars for education, invest in schools to boost housing demand, provide support for Special Education families, and expand after-school services.
- Promote community engagement, innovative practices, and educational opportunities for town improvement.
- Demand programs focusing on banking, saving, budgeting, and small business for students.
- Offer intern programs and workshops for practical skills and career guidance for junior high and high school students.
- Address concerns about care for seniors and lower income individuals and engage more in local issues.
- Improve lunch options near high schools and transportation for middle school students.
- Enhance crosswalks and after-school care for elementary students.
- Increase funding for the Arlington Education Foundation, school renovations, and support for science, sports, and art programs.
- Encourage businesses to partner for facility updates and community events at high schools.
- Advocate for changes in school leadership to address student behavior accountability.
- Provide diverse after-school options, better club and job support, and initiatives for neurodivergent students including internships, lead reduction, apprenticeships, mental health education, and career readiness programs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

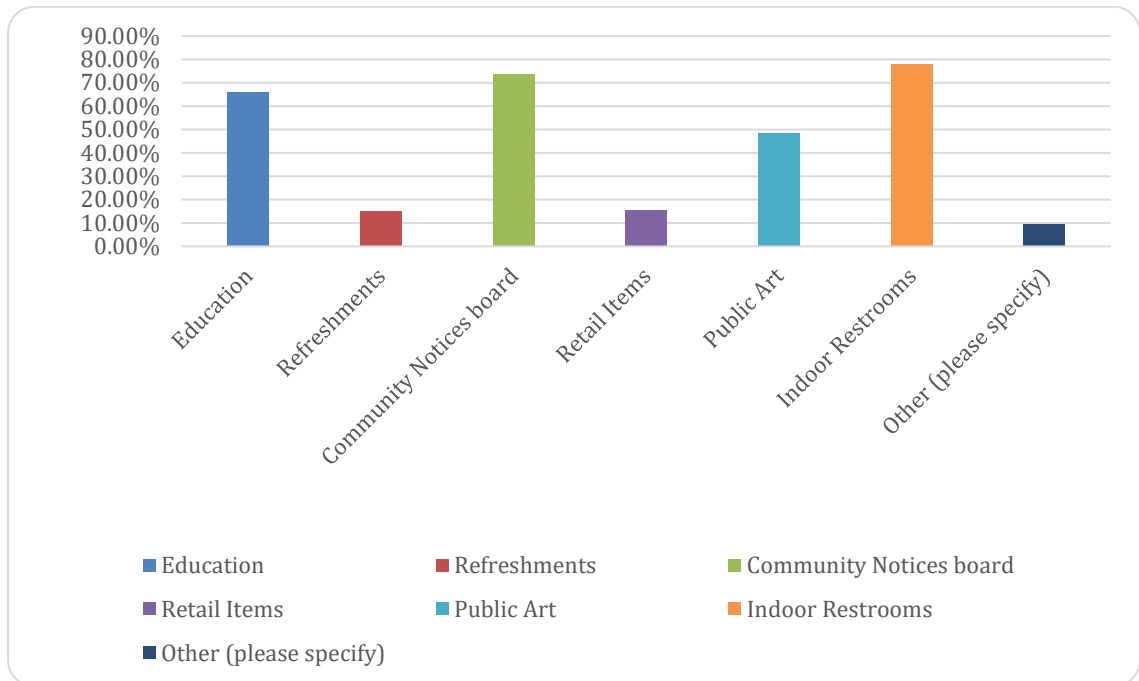
The Visitor Center

Located in Uncle Sam Plaza in Arlington Center, the Arlington Visitor Center is managed by the Arlington Committee on Tourism and Economic Development (A-TED). The center is open seasonally, from spring to fall, contingent upon volunteer availability and weather conditions.

Have you ever visited Arlington’s Visitor Center?



What do you think the Visitor Center should offer?



Other (included): water fountain, maps, bike tools

Arlington's Town Day

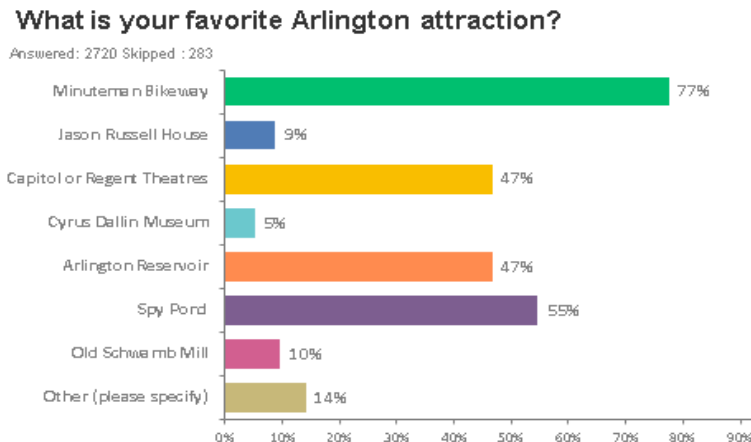
How can we make Town Day more appealing?

As an open-ended question residents had many suggestions. Overall, residents wanted Town Day to be less crowded and suggested extending the footprint of Town Day over a larger area. They also wanted to see more smaller businesses represented and more food vendors from local restaurants. More live music and art were also a popular suggestion. Accessibility was also a theme given the congestion taking place on previous Town Days to ensure that everyone could navigate the festivities. Lastly, residents recommended the creation of a map.

Local Economy & Economic Development

What is your favorite Arlington attraction?

Arlington's local economy and arts and culture are central to the sense of community within the town. In the 2024 Town Survey, we found that residents overwhelmingly favored the town's natural resources as Arlington's top attractions, citing the Minuteman Bikeway, Spy Pond, and the Arlington Reservoir with the Capitol/Regent Theatres close in tow. Residents were also fond of Menotomy Rocks Park and the Robbins Library.

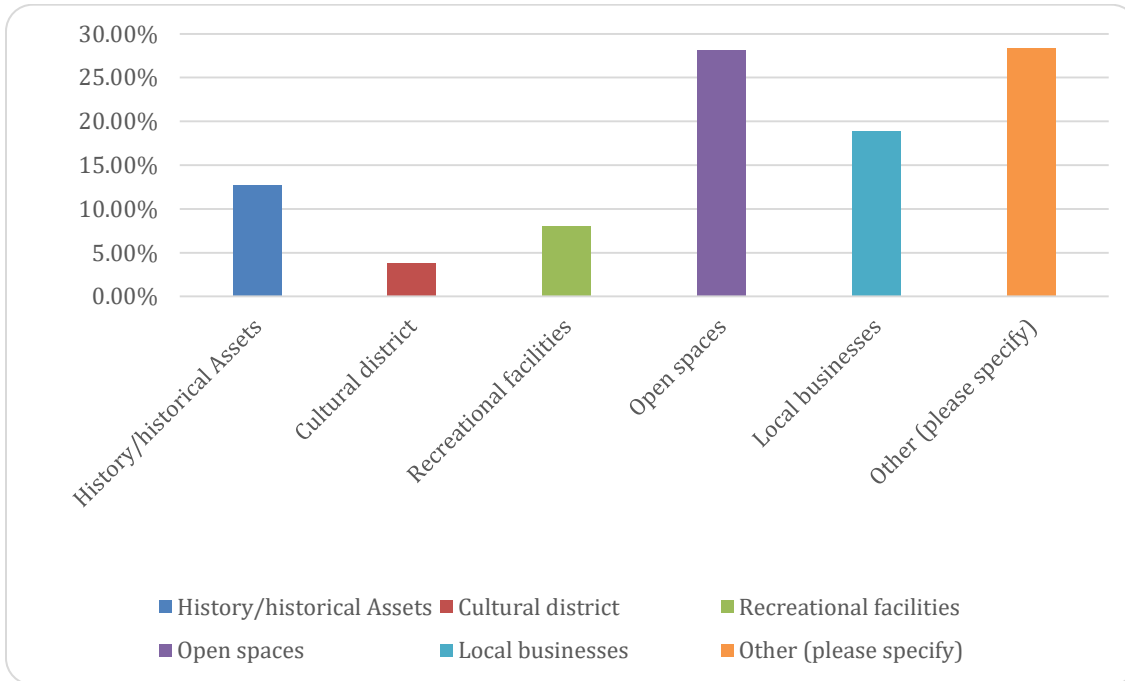


What makes somewhere your favorite local place to shop or eat?

In this open-ended question respondents shared that cultivating a cozy, friendly atmosphere, or 'vibe', ideally with outdoor seating was the most important quality. Having unique, high-quality offerings and an engaging staff were also factors in what made an establishment a 'favorite' for someone. Other notable qualities were walkability, community engagement, kid friendliness, parking for vehicles or bikes and having entertainment. Residents deeply valued how many of our wonderful stores were owned and operated by locals and well curated.

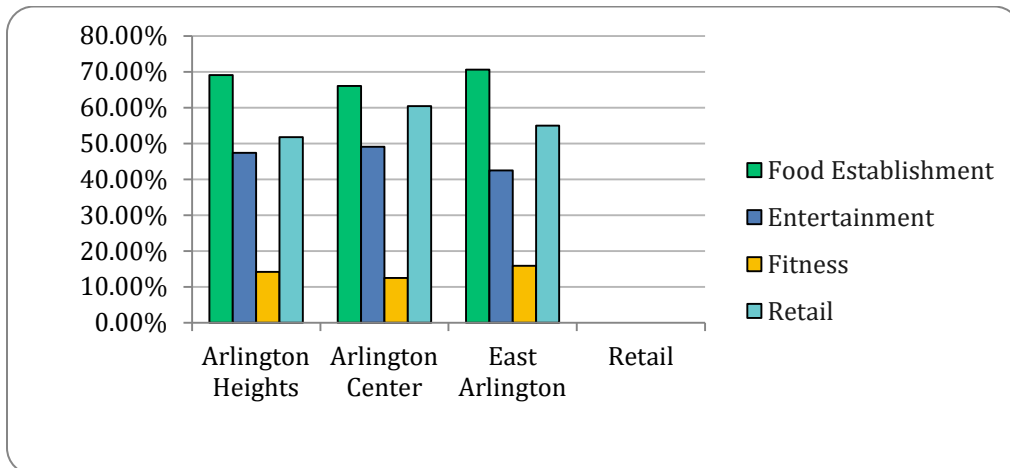
What is Arlington's biggest strength?

When polled regarding what Arlington's biggest strength was residents ranked the town's open spaces and local businesses at the top. Close behind Arlington's biggest strength is its proximity to Boston, public transit options and sense of community involvement.



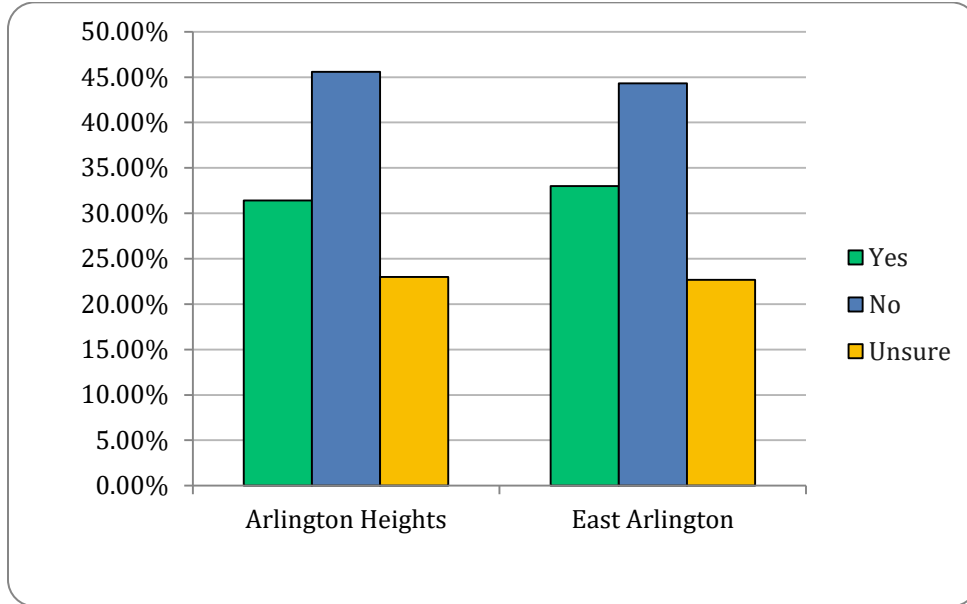
Other, included: safety, quality of schools, public library, walkability

What new type of businesses or facilities would you like to see?

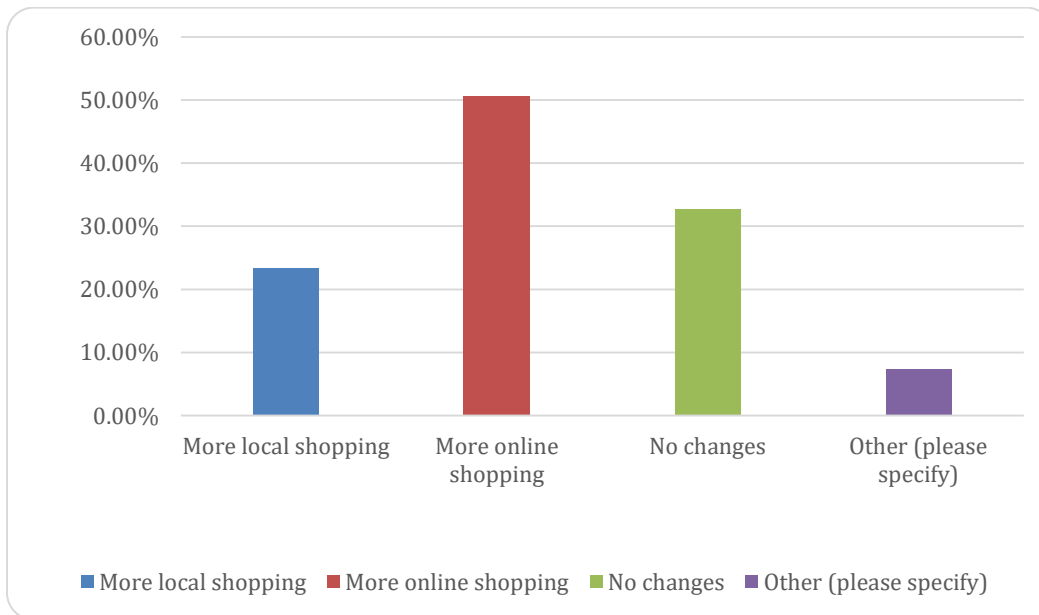


So, what's missing? When polled about what new type of businesses or facilities residents would like to see, residents provided us with lots of hopes for what they'd like to see come to Arlington! This included higher end ice cream stores, a brewery, food trucks, a grocery store in East Arlington, a teahouse, a thrift store, and the list went on!

Do you favor adding parking meters in Arlington Heights and/or East Arlington to fund beautification and storefront improvements?



How have your shopping habits changed since the pandemic?



TOWN PRIORITIES

How satisfied are you living in Arlington?

When asked, 52.19% of respondents replied very satisfied with 40.30% as satisfied, up 10% from last year's 83% satisfaction level. While 1.39% were very dissatisfied this year, down from 3%, 6.12% were dissatisfied remaining the same as last year.

Respondents also answered about how welcoming Arlington is based on various demographics. When queried:

Currently, how satisfied are you living in Arlington?

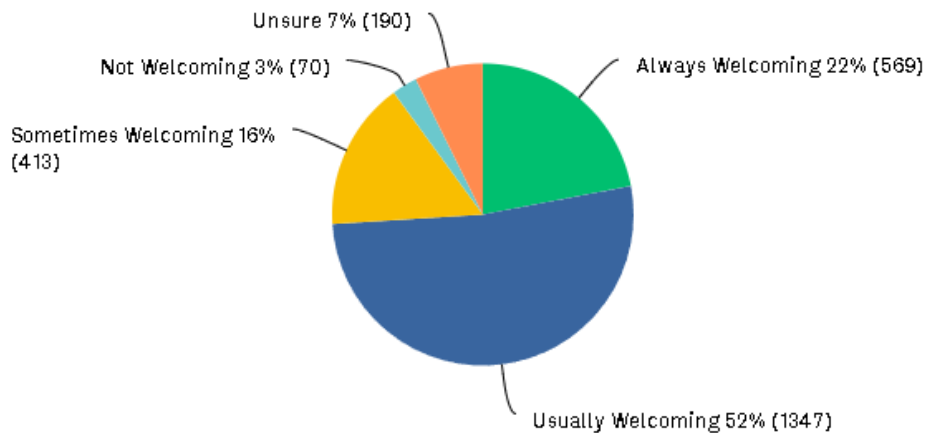
Answered: 2598 Skipped: 405



How welcoming is the community of Arlington?

Arlington community responded with 52% choosing usually welcoming, 22% responding always welcoming, and 16% responding sometimes welcoming with 3% not welcoming and 7% unsure.

Answered: 2,589 Skipped: 414



Asked to rate the Town of Arlington government, people responded to **fostering belonging** with 42% as good 18% is excellent 13 % is fair and 5% is poor with 22% being unsure. In the Precinct comparison, the highest was Precinct 5 with 26% responding excellent and 1% poor while the lowest Precinct 17 responded with 14% excellent and 9% poor.

When rated on the **celebration of cultural traditions** the government rated 42% responded good, 14% was fair and 4% was poor with 20% being both excellent and unsure. In the Precinct comparison, Precincts 11, 15, 16 & 20 responded with over 25% excellent.

For the town government, on **equally serving all** 40% responded good, 13% responded fair, 5% responded poor and 20% responded excellent with 22% being unsure. In the Precinct comparison, Precincts 13 & 11 responded with over 28% excellent while Precincts 17, 19 & 6 responded 12, 11, and 11% poor respectively.

Rating Arlington town government on **involving residents in community decisions** 40% responded good, 15% responded fair, and 9% responded poor with 23% responding excellent and only 12% being unsure. In the Precinct comparison, Precincts 5 & 12 responded with 30% and 34% excellent while Precincts 17 & 8 responded 15% poor.

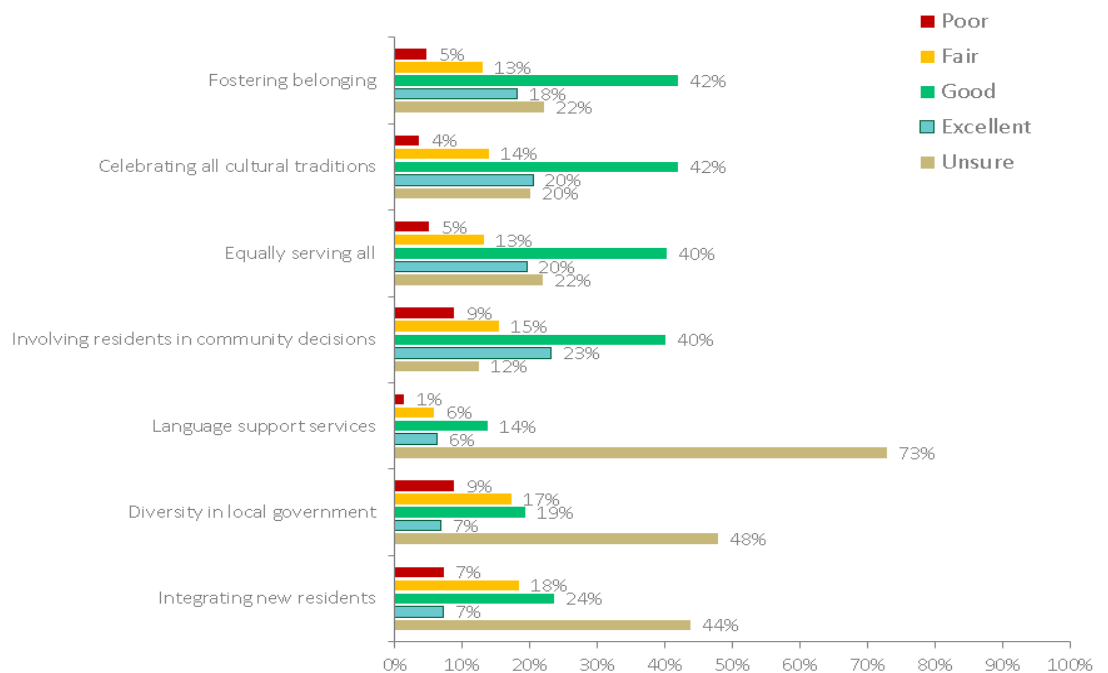
In grading town government on **language supports services**, most were unsure at 73%, 14% responded good, 6% responded fair, 1% responded poor with 6% responding excellent. In the Precinct comparison highs, Precincts 17 responded 5% poor while Precinct 11 responded 13% excellent.

Rating Arlington town government on the **diversity in local government** we find that 19% responded good, 17% responded fair, 9% responded poor with 7% responding excellent and 48% being unsure. In the Precinct comparison highs, Precincts 1, 17 & 6 responded 13% and 15% poor respectively while Precincts 11, 12, 14 & 16 responded with over 10% excellent.

In rating Arlington town government on **integrating new residents** 24% responded good, 18% responded fair, 7% responded poor with 7% responding excellence and 44% responding unsure. In the Precinct comparison, Precincts 6, 9 & 17 responded with 10% or more poor and Precincts 5, 8, 11 & 12 from 10-15% responding excellent.

Please rate Arlington Town government on each of the following:

Answered: 2504 Skipped: 499

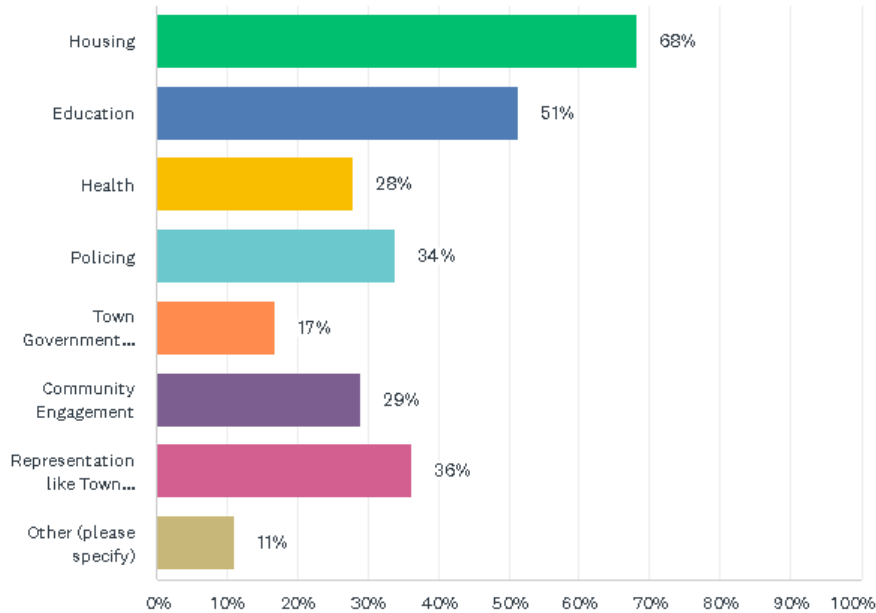


Arlington Town government should focus on addressing social, economic and racial equity differences in which sectors?

Respondents overwhelmingly choose Housing at 68%, Education at 51% and Representation at 36% as being the top three areas. Across the town by Precincts, Housing had the highest percentage in all Precincts. Only in Precinct 6 did Representation 44% surpass Education at 40%. All other Precincts chose Education second.

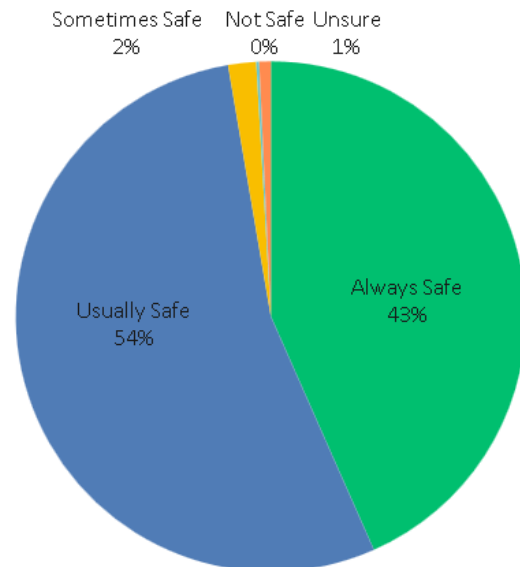
Representation garners a high of 46% in Precinct 21. Policing received a high of 45% in Precinct 10. Health got a high of 36% from Precinct 2. Town government received a high of 23% from Precinct 13. Community Engagement garnered a high of 38% in Precinct 1.

Answered: 2,332 Skipped: 671



How safe is Arlington?

43% responded always safe, 54% responded usually safe, 2% response responded sometimes safe with 1% unsure. In reviewing this question by Precinct, Precincts 5, 13, 15 & 16 all had over 50% responding always safe. Precinct 2, 17, 19 & 20 all had 1% responding not safe.



How safe is Arlington?

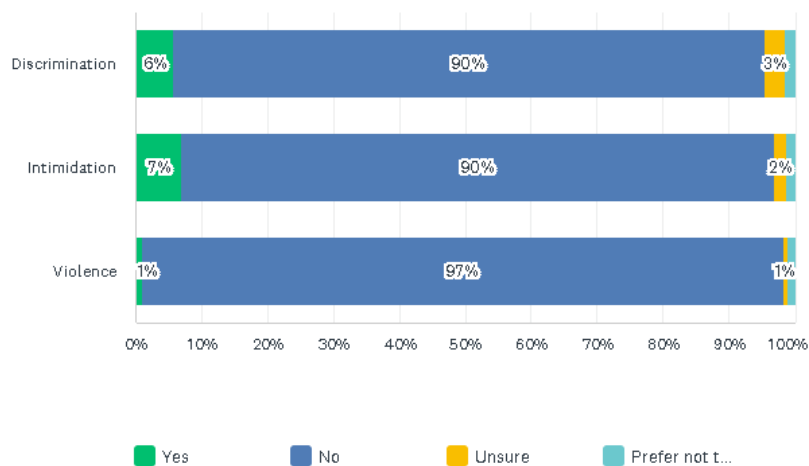
Answered: 2605 Skipped: 398

In Arlington in the past year have you personally experienced discrimination, intimidation or violence?

Six percent responded yes to discrimination, 7% responded yes to intimidation and 1% responded yes to violence with 3% responding unsure to discrimination 2% responding unsure to intimidation and 1% responding unsure to violence. We also had 1% percent prefer not to answer for discrimination intimidation and violence. Furthermore, in response to have you personally experienced discrimination 90% said no, intimidation 90% said no, or violence 97% said no.

In reviewing the Yes-Experienced discrimination by Precinct, Precinct 19 was the highest at 9%. In reviewing Experienced Intimidation by Precinct, Precinct 9 was the highest at 13% for Yes. In reviewing Experienced violence by Precinct, Precinct 9 was the highest at 6% for yes.

Answered: 2,602 Skipped: 401



In conclusion, overall satisfaction in Arlington has increased, with 92.69% of respondents satisfied or very satisfied, marking a 10% rise from last year. Dissatisfaction rates have decreased, with only 7.56% expressing dissatisfaction or strong dissatisfaction.

A survey on government presented mixed ratings across various dimensions. "Fostering Belonging" and "Celebrating Cultural Traditions" received favorable ratings from 42% of respondents, with variations in excellence and poor ratings across precincts. "Equally Serving All" and "Involving Residents in Decisions" observed similar trends, with 40% rating them as good. "Language Support Services" had the highest uncertainty at 73%, while "Diversity in Local Government" and "Integrating New Residents" showed significant portions of unsure respondents and precinct-specific variations in ratings. Arlington Heights precincts consistently give higher poor ratings across multiple dimensions.

Respondents identified Housing (68%), Education (51%), and Representation (36%) as key areas for Arlington to address social, economic, and racial equity. The highest concerns by precinct were Representation in Precinct 21 (46%), Policing in Precinct 10 (45%), Health in Precinct 2 (36%), Town Government in Precinct 13 (23%), and Community Engagement in Precinct 1 (38%). The data indicates increasing satisfaction and highlights areas requiring attention for greater inclusivity and equity in Arlington.

RECYCLING, COMPOSTING and DROP-OFF SERVICES

Residents favor the use of the Reuse & Recycling Center and collection bin program but have also voiced several concerns regarding local recycling and drop-off services, which are essential for promoting community sustainability.

Have you used the free collection bins?

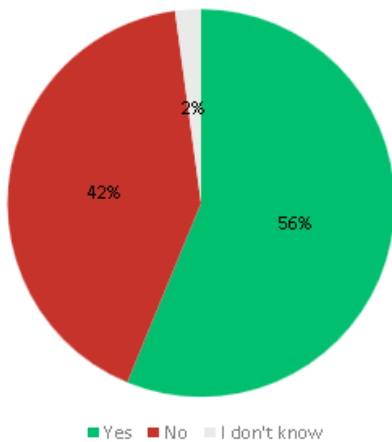
When it comes to free collection bins 56% or 1,408 of the respondents replied Yes, while 42% or 1,042 had responded No.

Have you used the swap shed to give or receive household items?

In answer to this question, 21% responded positively with 76% responding No and only 3% responding I don't know.

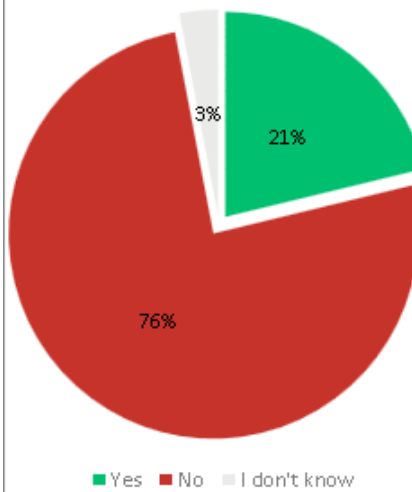
Have you used the free collection bins (schools or Reuse & Recycling Center) to recycle textiles or had a mattress picked up by Tough Stuff Recycling?

Answered: 2504 Skipped: 499



Have you used the Swap Shed (33 Ryder St) to give or receive household items?

Answered: 2489 Skipped: 514



What problems do you face recycling textiles or having mattresses picked up by Tough Stuff Recycling?

Responses included:

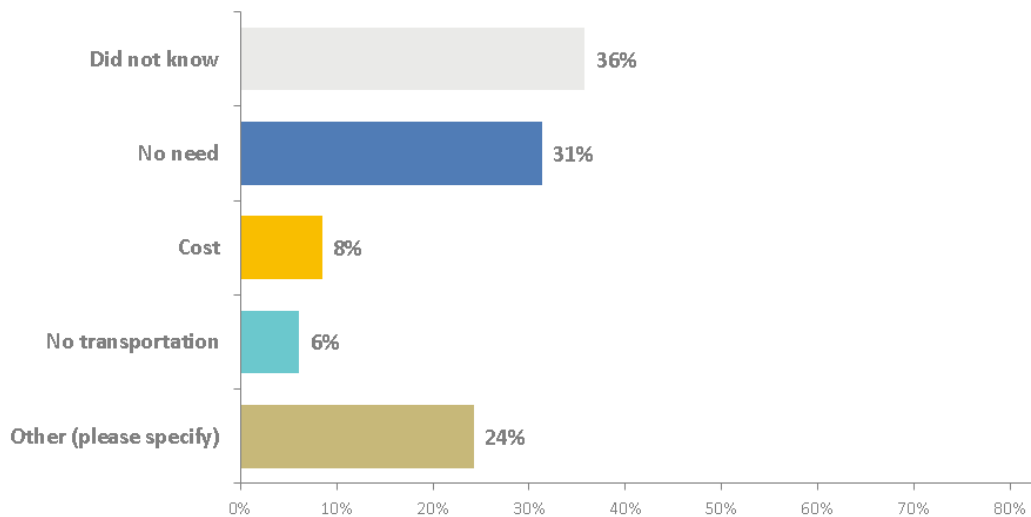
- **Inconvenient Scheduling:** The current by-appointment system for recycling services has been cited as cumbersome, leading to appeals for a more flexible drop-in option.
- **Limited Awareness:** Despite the availability of recycling services, many residents are unaware of them (36%), indicating a significant need for increased outreach and education.
- **Material Limitations:** Feedback has pointed out the lack of facilities for recycling certain materials, such as worn-out textiles, and the desire for a more comprehensive service that accepts a broader range of recyclables like electronics. However, the materials already collected at the curb and dropped

off are the only plastics that are recyclable. Outreach and education about the textile bin program as well as limits of recycling could be increased.

- **Cost Barriers** (8%): The associated costs for disposing of specific items, particularly electronic waste, are seen as a deterrent for residents wanting to recycle responsibly.
- **Accessibility Challenges:** Limited operation hours and difficulties in accessing drop-off locations have been especially problematic for seniors and those without vehicular transportation (6%).

Supporting these concerns, residents have shared experiences of limited hours, need for simpler guidance, less complicated rules, and the unreliability of white goods or appliances pick-up services, which impact the user experience. Potential solutions to these issues include revising the scheduling system to allow drop-ins, enhancing promotional education to raise awareness about the textile bin program and other available services.

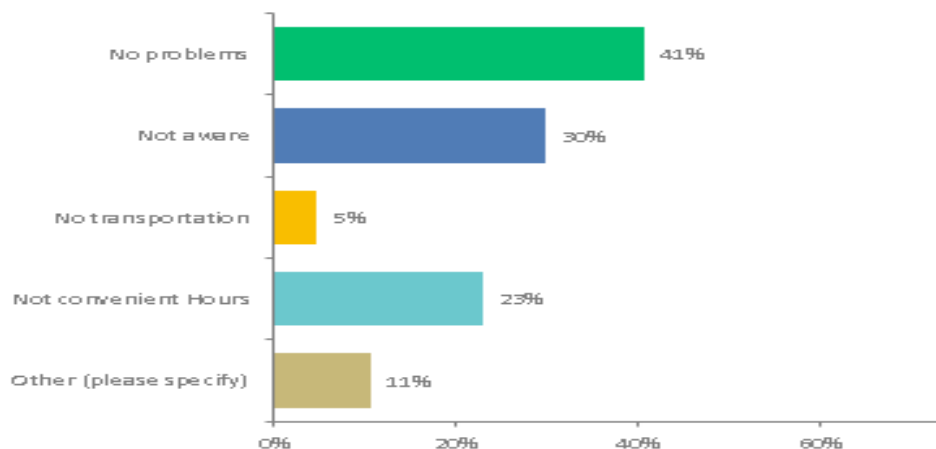
Answered: 1785 Skipped: 1218



What problems do you face when using the Reuse & Recycling Center?

41% of responses indicated users had no problems, while 30% were unaware of the Reuse & Recycling Center and 23% found it did not have convenient hours.

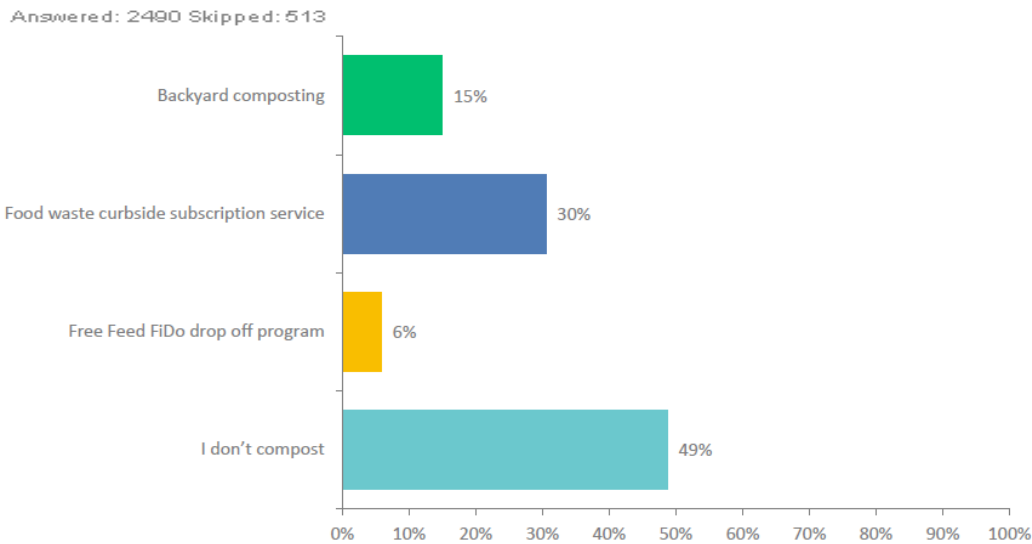
Answered: 2195 Skipped: 808



Addressing Arlington's Composting Challenges

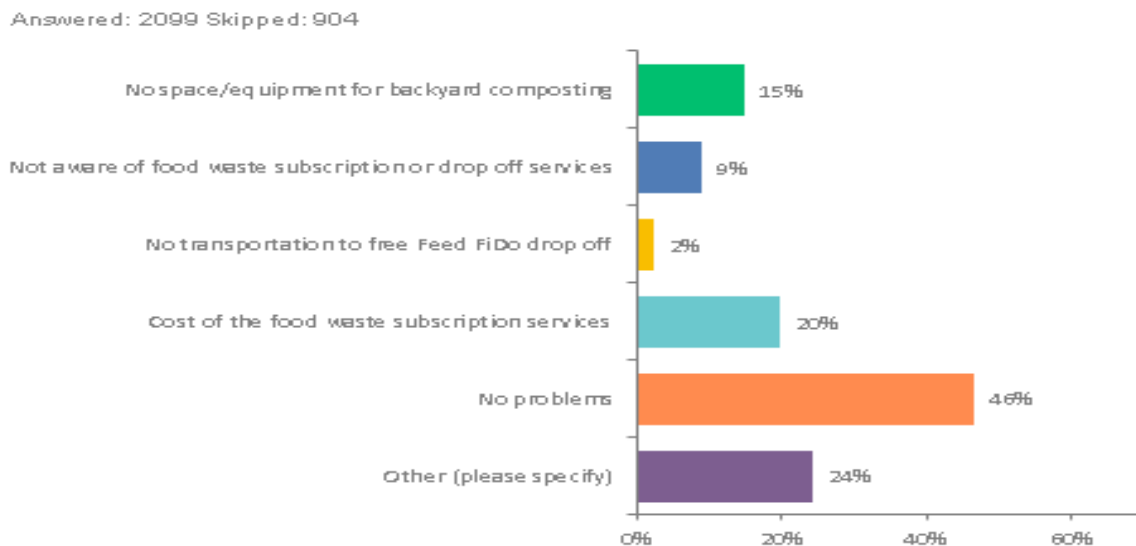
Do you compost your food waste?

49% of respondents reported they did not compost. Thirty percent replied they used the food waste curbside subscriptions and 15% are involved in backyard composting with only 6% responding they used the free FiDO drop-off program.



What problems do you face composting?

46% responded they had no problems, 20% responded the cost of food waste subscriptions, 15% responded with no space or equipment for back yard composting, and 9% reported being unaware of subscription services. Another 24% responded by specifying other problems.



In reviewing the respondents' comments on other problems, the concern for space-efficiency, rodent-proofing, as well as easily accessible solutions were mentioned. As residents take measures to divert food scraps away from the trash, they report facing the following challenges:

- **Landlord Restrictions Placing Limitations on Composting:** Many Arlington residents are hampered by rules set by landlords that disallow composting on their properties. The town must find innovative ways to circumvent these barriers, such as promoting communal composting programs, to enable everyone to participate in composting initiatives.
- **Space Concerns Requiring Compact Solutions:** The residents' needs call for compact compost systems that are adaptable to apartments and homes with restricted outdoor space. There's an opportunity for the distribution of specifically designed compost bins that dovetail with the spatial limitations.
- **The Rodent Dilemma Necessitating Smart Waste Management:** Rat and racoon infestation is a major dilemma for potential composters. Educating the community on the use of vermin-resistant bins and methods for deterring pests could mitigate the issue, encouraging more residents to engage in composting activities without the fear of attracting rodents.
- **Cost and Convenience as Factors for Community Uptake:** To further boost participation in composting activities, there's a call for the establishment of a conveniently located drop-off center to the east of Arlington Center. A subscription-based model for compost services may offer the dual benefit of affordability and convenience, enhancing overall participation rates.

In conclusion, the respondents to Arlington's Town Survey voiced the desire for changes in the local composting and recycling infrastructure to align with their eco-conscious intentions. Residents recounted experiences with:

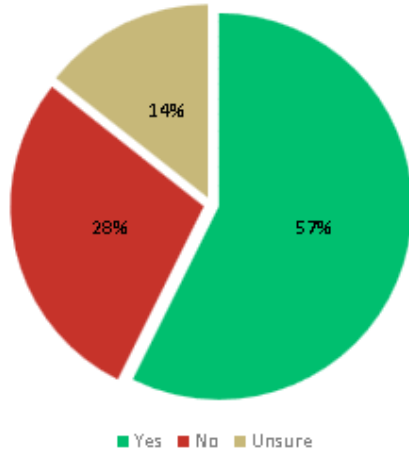
- "Limited hours and inconvenient scheduling system"
- "High cost to bring in electric items... they remain piled up in my basement."
- Appeals for "more collection points throughout town" and "free pick-ups" for accessibility.

The Recycling Center has already implemented new drop-off hours as a result of this feedback.

ENERGY

Has your home had a Mass Save home energy assessment in 2013 or later?

Answered: 2511 Skipped: 492



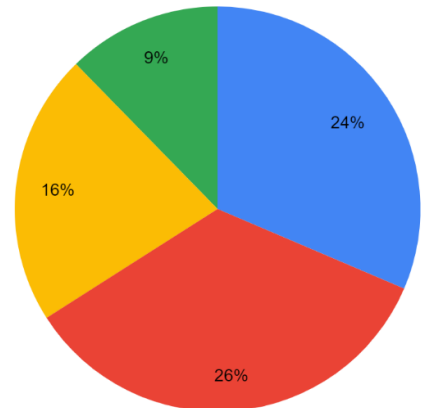
The 2024 Town Survey included two questions related to Mass Save home energy assessments and recommendations for weatherization (insulation and air sealing).

More than half of the people responding to the first question (57%) indicated that they had had a home energy assessment (HEA) since 2013. When we include the people who skipped this question, roughly half of all respondents to the Town Survey have had a HEA in the last ten years, a quarter have not had a HEA in the last ten years, and a quarter either were unsure or skipped this question.

If you had a home energy assessment in 2013 or later, how many of the Mass Save recommended weatherization measures were implemented?

In response to a follow-up question about how many of the Mass Save weatherization recommendations were implemented, about a third of the people who had an HEA since 2013 said that they had implemented all of the Mass Save recommendations and another third had implemented some of the Mass Save recommendations. One in eight people who had an HEA reported that there were no recommendations for improving their home's weatherization. The remainders were unsure about whether the weatherization recommendations had been implemented.

- All recommendations implemented
- Some recommendations implemented
- Not sure
- No weatherization recommendations were made



We asked respondents who did not implement all of the Mass Save recommended weatherization measures why they had made this choice.

Inconvenience	12.39%	153
Lack of time	11.50%	142
Loss of storage	2.19%	27
Cost too much	29.64%	366
Vermiculite	1.30%	16
Knob-and-tube wiring	3.56%	44
A different physical barrier	5.26%	65
Didn't like the recommendations	7.04%	87
I did more than recommended	10.93%	135
Other (please specify)	45.34%	560
TOTAL		1595

The most common response was “other,” and 560 people wrote in personal comments about why they did not implement the recommendations. The most common comment was that the respondent is a renter and the landlord did not choose to implement the recommendations, but there were also a wide range of other written-in responses.

Almost a third of the people who answered this question (30%) responded that they did not implement the weatherization recommendations because they cost too much. One in eight responded that the recommendations were too inconvenient and another one in eight said they did not have enough time to follow through. Ten percent reported being blocked by knob-and-tube wiring or another physical barrier to weatherization. Eleven percent did not implement all of the recommended measures because they chose to install more weatherization than was recommended. Note: participants had the option of choosing more than one answer, so percentages listed in the table above do not add up to 100.

The 2024 Town Survey also included a question about how much, if anything, Arlington residents would be willing to pay each month to increase the default amount of renewable electricity supplied by Arlington Community Electricity. Sixty percent of respondents were willing to pay more to have more renewable electricity (in amounts ranging from up to \$5 per month to \$15-20 per month), 18% did not want to pay more for renewable electricity, and 21% were unsure.

After the Town Survey was conducted, the Town negotiated a new contract for Arlington Community Electricity that, starting in November 2024, will both increase the default amount of renewable electricity to 100% and decrease the electricity rate paid by Arlington residents and businesses. Residents who wish to learn more and/or change how much renewable electricity they receive can do so on the Arlington Community Electricity website: ace.arlingtonma.gov

Use of renewable electricity mitigates climate change impacts. Arlington Community Electricity (ACE) offers renewable electricity plans. The majority of households use a default 30% additional renewable electricity plan. The Town’s Net Zero Action Plan sets a goal to increase the ACE default plan from 30% to 100% by 2030. How much would you increase your electric bill to support a ACE higher default level of renewable electricity?

Answered: 2450 ; 553

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Up to \$5/month	14.94%	366
\$6-10/month	18.98%	465
\$11-15/month	9.51%	233
\$16-20/month	17.27%	423
Nothing	18.37%	450
Unsure	20.94%	513
TOTAL		2450

OTHER QUESTIONS

What influences your opinion about property tax overrides?

The Override question reflects a range of perspectives on the necessity, benefits, and management of property tax overrides, with a focus on education funding, the environment, and town services. Residents express support for using additional taxes to fund high-quality schools with competitive teacher salaries, recreation opportunities for children, the environment, and public services. They also raise issues about transparency, fiscal responsibility, and advocate for better fiscal management. The section raises questions about property taxes, tax rebates, and the town's outreach as the importance of transparency, responsible spending, and consideration for the financial change to property values, renters, seniors, and individuals with fixed incomes is mentioned. More transparent communication about tax usage, and fair distribution of allocations would support the perception of better money management.

Comment on issues of importance to you

A summary of community concerns and areas for improvement in response to this open-ended question included:

- **Sidewalk Maintenance:** There's frustration over 20+ years of unaddressed icy sidewalks, forcing pedestrians to walk on the streets.
- **Public Transportation:** Citizens request changes to bus routes, particularly Route 87, for better connectivity and restoration of previously cut routes.
- **Local News and Engagement:** The shutdown of the local paper has left residents feeling disconnected from town affairs. They desire more community events to foster neighborliness and engagement.
- **Safety Improvements:** The dangerous intersections, particularly on Park Avenue, require attention with the need for walk signals and traffic controls to prevent accidents and fatalities.
- **Council on Aging:** Funding for services like van transport and dining options needs improvement, along with resolving disputes between local associations. Accessibility for the disabled and older population is a concern, with requests for paper copies of surveys for those without internet access sent to the home.
- **Economic Development:** Calls for financial prudence, more diverse food, and retail establishments to attract visitors, and solutions for vacant commercial buildings.
- **Infrastructure Concerns:** There are mixed opinions on urban development, with some residents opposing zoning changes and habitat destruction.
- **Social Issues:** There is a perceived lack of response from town officials on antisemitism, a divide between longstanding and new residents, and a need for better school programs for diverse educational needs.
- **Town's Administration and Police Issues:** There are grievances about town governance perceived to be biased and real estate-driven, concerns over policing strategies, and requests for more mental health support.
- **Housing and Taxation:** The high cost of living and property taxes are stressing residents, particularly retirees. Proposals include more affordable housing, better bike and transportation infrastructure, and incentives for maintaining private property.

- **General Services:** Suggestions include expanding parking pilots (while the vote on this question found the majority is against), addressing school bullying, installing more public waste bins, and ensuring transparency in town committee operations.
- **Development and Budgeting:** Opinions are divided on housing development and budget spending on discretionary projects, with an emphasis on the need for housing in walkable areas.
- Residents articulate a diverse range of issues, calling for improved local government response, better infrastructure and services, increased safety measures, and community-driven development to sustainably support the town's growth and diversity.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Residents call for preservation of open spaces and town character, the need to address climate change including better stormwater management, the impact of development on natural spaces and better regulation of construction practices and outdoor activities.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 Town Survey saw an increase in responses via the Town Meeting members' participation. Yet it still lacked representation across various demographic factors. The survey skewed towards higher-income two-adult households and longer-term residents. These individuals indicated high satisfaction and perceived welcomingness in the Arlington community. Concerns over empty store fronts lead to feedback on business development and exposure through the Visitor Center and Town Day suggestions.

The feedback on Arlington's Visitor Center, local businesses, Arlington Town Day, shopping habits found a desire for new unique businesses, and potential business-school collaborations. The community desires indoor restrooms, community notice boards, and educational resources at the Visitor Center. Local businesses are valued for their uniqueness, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability practices. Suggestions to enhance Arlington Town Day include improving the space and layout, expanding the event, and emphasizing cultural and historical engagement. The pandemic has led to increased online shopping and a concerted effort to support local businesses. Residents express a strong preference for new food establishments, followed by retail and entertainment facilities. The community also seeks stronger business-school collaborations to enhance local economy and workforce skills. Overall, the community emphasizes the importance of preserving Arlington's history, and promoting sustainability.

Overall, the survey indicated high satisfaction and perceived welcomingness in the Arlington community, with some variability based on demographics. The town government's performance received favorable ratings, but concerns about inclusivity and equity were highlighted, particularly in housing, education, and representation. The data highlights a need for greater inclusivity and equity in Arlington.

The section regarding local recycling and drop-off services highlights a favorable response to the Reuse & Recycling Center and collection bin program. There are also concerns: limited awareness of recycling services, material limitations, cost barriers, inconvenient scheduling, and accessibility challenges. Residents have expressed the need for increased outreach and education, more flexible drop-in options, broader acceptance of recyclables, and solutions to cost and accessibility barriers. Notably, there is a significant need for increased outreach and education to address the limitations and challenges in the current recycling system.

On the topic of food waste composting in Arlington, it reveals respondents do not compost because of cost and space constraints. Additionally, the respondents highlighted challenges such as landlord restrictions, and concerns about rodents. The section emphasizes the need for innovative solutions, such as communal composting programs and compact compost systems, to address these challenges. Overall, the survey reflects

residents' desire for changes in the local composting and recycling infrastructure to align with their eco-conscious intentions.

Over half of respondents had undergone a Mass Save home energy assessment (HEA) in the last ten years, with about a third implementing all recommended weatherization measures. Reasons for not implementing all measures included cost, inconvenience, lack of time, and physical barriers. Additionally, the survey found that 60% of respondents were willing to pay more for increased renewable electricity.

Public opinion on property tax overrides found residents expressing support for funding high-quality schools, the environment and public services, but also raising concerns about transparency, fiscal responsibility, and financial impact on individuals with fixed incomes. In summary, the survey findings emphasize the importance of addressing demographic disparities, enhancing community representativeness, improving recycling and composting infrastructure, ensuring transparent communication and responsible spending in town governance while promoting sustainability and protecting the environment.