

# Results from the 2017 Sangamon County Citizen Survey

*Conducted by*

*The University of Illinois Springfield Survey Research Office*

*&*

*Funded by*

*The United Way of Central Illinois, the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, and the UIS Center for State Policy and Leadership*



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## Thank You

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### *Project Funders*



### *2017 Steering Committee Members*

*John Allen, Citizens Club of Springfield*

*Sarah Buening, Tom Lange Company*

*Dr. Beverly Bunch, University of Illinois Springfield*

*Heather Burton, Central Counties Health Centers*

*Sharmin Doering, Sangamon County Department of Community Resources*

*Randy Eccles, NPR Illinois 91.9 UIS*

*Jennifer Gill, Springfield Public Schools District 186*

*Bob Gray, Citizens Club of Springfield*

*Angela Hall, Hospital Sisters Health System*

*John Kelker, United Way of Central Illinois*

*Valerie Patterson, Village of Williamsville*

*Katrina Schroeder, United Way of Central Illinois*

*Norm Sims, Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission*

*Dr. David Steward, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine*

*John Stremsterfer, President and CEO, Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln*

*Mia Woods, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Illinois Capitol Region*

## Introduction and History

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The 2017 Sangamon County Citizen Survey (SCCS) is the third iteration of a biennial project which aims to understand the attitudes and behaviors of Sangamon County residents. The survey is a collaborative project undertaken by the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, the United Way of Central Illinois, and the UIS Center for State Policy and Leadership. The idea behind the survey is simple: to establish benchmarks and examine changes over time in the lives of Sangamon County residents.

Since its outset, the survey has relied upon a steering committee of representatives from the community. The committee provides input into the questionnaire by including topics of interest to leaders in the county. The inaugural survey was conducted in 2013 while a second survey, which focused on education, was conducted in 2015. The current survey, the third in a planned series of five, contains expanded sections on infrastructure and the economy.

Many questions in the current survey remain the same as in the previous two – this is necessary to make comparisons over time. However, the current survey also contains new questions on topics which have recently received attention in the community, such as the development of the former YWCA block adjacent to the Illinois

Executive Mansion and the Illinois state budget impasse.

Much has changed in Sangamon County since the inaugural survey was conducted in the spring of 2013. For instance, there are now fewer residents in Sangamon County. According to the US Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, Sangamon County has lost residents in each of the years 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016.<sup>1</sup> The recent decline in population is not unique to Sangamon County and is typical of other Illinois counties, 89 of which shrank during the period July 2015 – July 2016.

Indeed, much of the Midwestern United States is growing at lower rates than other regions of the country. However, while other Midwestern states have seen low rates of growth, Illinois is actually losing residents. Illinois holds the unfortunate distinction of losing the most residents of any state for three consecutive years: the state lost 77,966 residents during the period 2013-2016.<sup>2</sup> However, this loss of population in Illinois should be put into perspective as it represents only a 0.6 percentage point decrease in population.

For more information on the project or for data requests, please contact the Survey Research Office at [sro@uis.edu](mailto:sro@uis.edu) or via telephone at 217-206-6591.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. (2017). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016

<sup>2</sup> Eltagouri, M. (2016, December 21). Illinois loses more residents in 2016 than any other state. *Chicago Tribune*. Retrieved from: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-illinois-population-decline-met-20161220-story.html>

## Methodology

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The University of Illinois Springfield Survey Research Office is dedicated to the principles of transparency in research and is a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative. Membership entails adherence to AAPOR's code of ethics<sup>3</sup> as well as a commitment to promoting understanding of survey methodology and how it relates to survey quality. For more information about project methodology please contact the UIS Survey Research Office at [sro@uis.edu](mailto:sro@uis.edu)



### *Study Funding*

The Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln, the United Way of Central Illinois and, the Center for State Policy and Leadership at the University of Illinois Springfield contracted with the UIS Survey Research Office to conduct a mixed-mode survey (mail and web) of adults living in Sangamon County. The survey was conducted from April 26 to June 6, 2017 via mail questionnaire with the option to take the survey via the Qualtrics Research Suite.

### *Sampling Frame*

The sample is an address based sample (ABS) of 8,000 households in Sangamon County, Illinois.<sup>4</sup> Those in zip codes 62702 and 62703 were oversampled to better obtain representativeness with regards to income and minority status. To calculate the percentage for the oversampled zip codes, we took the percentage of individuals living in zip codes 62702 and 62703 and divided it by the unweighted percentage of responses for these zip codes in a previous survey conducted by SRO. In the sample, 7,840 households (98%) had a name appended to the address and 5,290 had a phone number appended (66%). The sampling frame excludes those who do not have an address (such as the homeless) as well as those living in group quarters (such as a boarding house or a fraternity/sorority), and those who may have moved into a formerly vacant address (a delivery point that has been unoccupied for 90 days or more). The survey also excludes those who are unable to take the survey in English. The sample was supplied by Marketing Systems Group and developed by personnel at Marketing Systems Group for the Survey Research Office.

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<sup>3</sup> The American Association for Public Opinion Research. (2015). The code of professional ethics and practices. Retrieved from: [http://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/AAPOR-Code-of-Ethics/AAPOR\\_Code\\_Accepted\\_Version\\_11302015.aspx](http://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/AAPOR-Code-of-Ethics/AAPOR_Code_Accepted_Version_11302015.aspx)

<sup>4</sup> The initial sample was 8,000 addresses. However, 34 addresses consisted of residences in which the resident had moved and there was no forwarding address available.

## Methodology

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### *Weighting*

The data for the 2017 Sangamon County Citizen Survey are weighted using population parameters provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. The parameters used for weighting in the survey are: sex, age, race, and education.<sup>5</sup>

### *Recruitment*

The Survey Research Office sent an envelope to addresses containing an introductory letter, the mail questionnaire, and a postage paid business reply envelope. Households with a matching name were addressed to the name of individual.<sup>6</sup> Individuals without a matching name were addressed simply to “resident.” The introductory letter tells respondents that the survey is sent to the household rather than the individual listed on the envelope. Because all individuals over the age of 18 residing in Sangamon County were considered eligible to participate there is no purposive within-household selection.

### *Final Disposition of Cases and Outcome Rates*

A total of 756 interviews were completed (687 via mail; 59 via the web using Qualtrics Research Suite). Additionally, 8 individuals completed some questions in the survey but not enough to be considered completes and 4 individuals sent back blank questionnaires. These were coded as implicit refusals. Nine persons sent back the questionnaire but after the field period. The majority of questionnaires were never returned (7,183) and 12 questionnaires came back as undeliverable. Finally, four questionnaires were returned with responses indicating no one at the household was able to take the survey.

The Response Rate for the survey (AAPOR Response Rate 3) is 9.4%, the Cooperation Rate is 9.8% (AAPOR Cooperation Rate 3), and the refusal rate is 1.6% (AAPOR Refusal Rate 3). The table on the following page shows the final disposition of cases which were coded in accordance with guidelines set forth by AAPOR<sup>7</sup> as well as outcome rates calculated using AAPOR’s response rate calculator.<sup>8</sup>

### *Precision of Findings*

The margin of sampling error for the survey is  $\pm 3.8\%$  at the 95% confidence level. When examining subgroups, the margin of error will increase. The margin of sampling error has not been adjusted for design effect.

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<sup>5</sup> Sex and age are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Population Estimates Program and race and education are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2011-2015).

<sup>6</sup> The original intent of the survey was to include “or current resident” on all envelopes under the respondent name. However, an error in processing led to the omission of this line.

<sup>7</sup> The American Association for Public Opinion Research. (2016). Survey Outcome Rate Calculator 4.0. Retrieved from: [http://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/Standard-Definitions-\(1\).aspx](http://www.aapor.org/Standards-Ethics/Standard-Definitions-(1).aspx)

<sup>8</sup> The American Association for Public Opinion Research. (2016). *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. AAPOR. Retrieved from: [http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR\\_Main/media/publications/Standard-Definitions20169theditionfinal.pdf](http://www.aapor.org/AAPOR_Main/media/publications/Standard-Definitions20169theditionfinal.pdf)

**Final Disposition of Cases and Outcome Rates**

<b>Final Dispositions</b>		
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Interview</b>	
1.1	<i>Completed interview</i>	746
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Eligible non-interview</b>	
2.113	<i>Implicit refusal</i>	4
2.12	<i>Break off/Implicit refusal</i>	8
2.25	<i>Completed questionnaire, but not returned during the field period</i>	9
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Unknown eligibility, non-interview</b>	
3.19	<i>Nothing returned</i>	7183
3.25	<i>USPS: Cannot be delivered</i>	12
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Not eligible</b>	
4.7	<i>No eligible respondent</i>	4
	<b>Total sample used</b>	<b>7966</b>
<b>Outcome Rates</b>		
	AAPOR Response Rate 3	9.4%
	AAPOR Cooperation Rate 3	9.8%
	AAPOR Refusal Rate 3	1.6%

## Sample Demographics

### Demographic Comparison

(% of respondents in the unweighted and weighted sample and population parameters provided by the U.S. Census Bureau)

	Unweighted sample	Weighted sample	Sangamon County population parameters
<b>Gender<sup>9</sup></b>			
Male	46.7%	47.1%	46.7%
Female	53.3%	52.9%	53.3%
<b>Race<sup>10</sup></b>			
White alone	91.4%	80.8%	82.7%
Black or African American	4.5%	12.2%	12.4%
Native American/Alaska Native	1.7%	2.6%	0.1%
Asian alone	0.3%	2.0%	1.8%
Pacific Islander	0%	0.0%	0%
Some other race or two or more races	2.2%	2.6%	3%
<b>Education<sup>11</sup></b>			
Less than HS	2.1%	6.0%	7.9%
HS Degree	16.6%	26.1%	28.1%
Some college	30.3%	31.4%	30.6%
4 year degree	29.2%	22.5%	20.9%
More than 4 year degree	21.7%	14%	12.5%
<b>Age<sup>12</sup></b>			
20-24	0.8%	2.9%	8.2%
25-34	4.7%	12.6%	17.1%
35-44	8.6%	17.1%	16.3%
45-54	13.8%	21.4%	18.2%
55-64	24.6%	21.7%	18.7%
65+	47.6%	24.3%	21.4%

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (2017). *Annual Estimates*

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Population

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

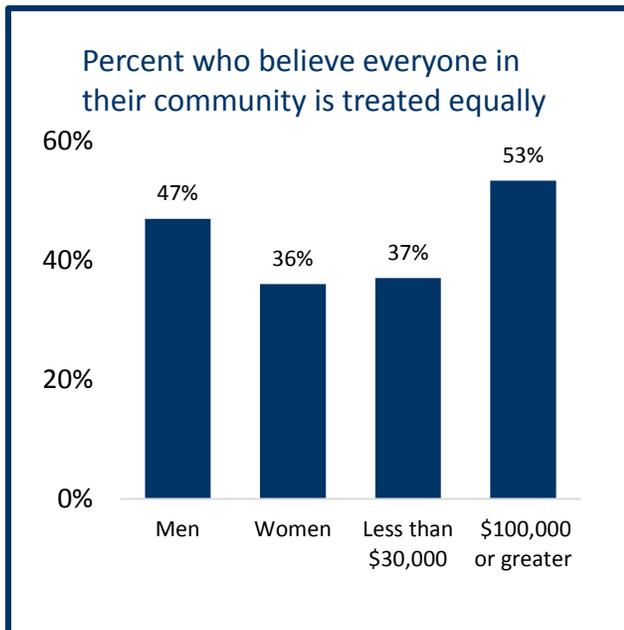
<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (2017). *Annual Estimates*



### *Direction of Sangamon County*

Sangamon County residents are optimistic about the future: 62% feel the county is moving in the “right direction” compared to 38% who feel things are “off on the wrong track.” However, respondents are less likely to believe that everyone in the community is treated equally. Just over four in ten (41%) believe that everyone gets a fair shake.

These differences break down across income lines and gender lines. Whereas 37% of respondents with household income of less than \$30,000 per year believe everyone gets a fair shake, over half (53%) of those with incomes of \$100,000 or more indicate they believe everyone is treated equally. Men (47%) are also more likely than women (36%) to say everyone is treated equally.



The survey also measures social trust, a construct which has been studied extensively in the social sciences<sup>13</sup>, by responses to the question:

*“Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?”*

Responses to the above question, which is contained in the long-running General Social Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago<sup>14</sup> and in other prominent surveys, typically differ markedly across demographic groups. Usually, respondents from groups that have experienced a history of discrimination (such as African Americans), those with lower incomes, and those with lower levels of education are less likely to report trusting others than those who are more affluent, white Americans, and those with higher levels of education. The current findings are similar to those at the national level: Whereas, overall, 43% of respondents believe that “most people can be trusted,” white respondents (44%) are more likely than nonwhite respondents (35%) to say they trust others. However, Sangamon County respondents are more likely than respondents in the most recent GSS to say most people can be trusted— just 33% of individuals in September 2016 told NORC interviewers they can trust most people.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See: Francis Fukuyama, 1995. *The Social Virtues and The Creation of Prosperity*.

<sup>14</sup> Smith, Tom W, Peter Marsden, Michael Hout, and Jibum Kim. General Social Surveys, 1972-2016 [machine-readable data file] /Principal Investigator, Tom W. Smith; Co-Principal Investigator, Peter V. Marsden; Co-Principal Investigator, Michael Hout; Sponsored by National Science Foundation. -NORC ed.- Chicago: NORC at the University of Chicago [producer and distributor]. More information regarding the General Social Survey is available here: <http://gss.norc.org/>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



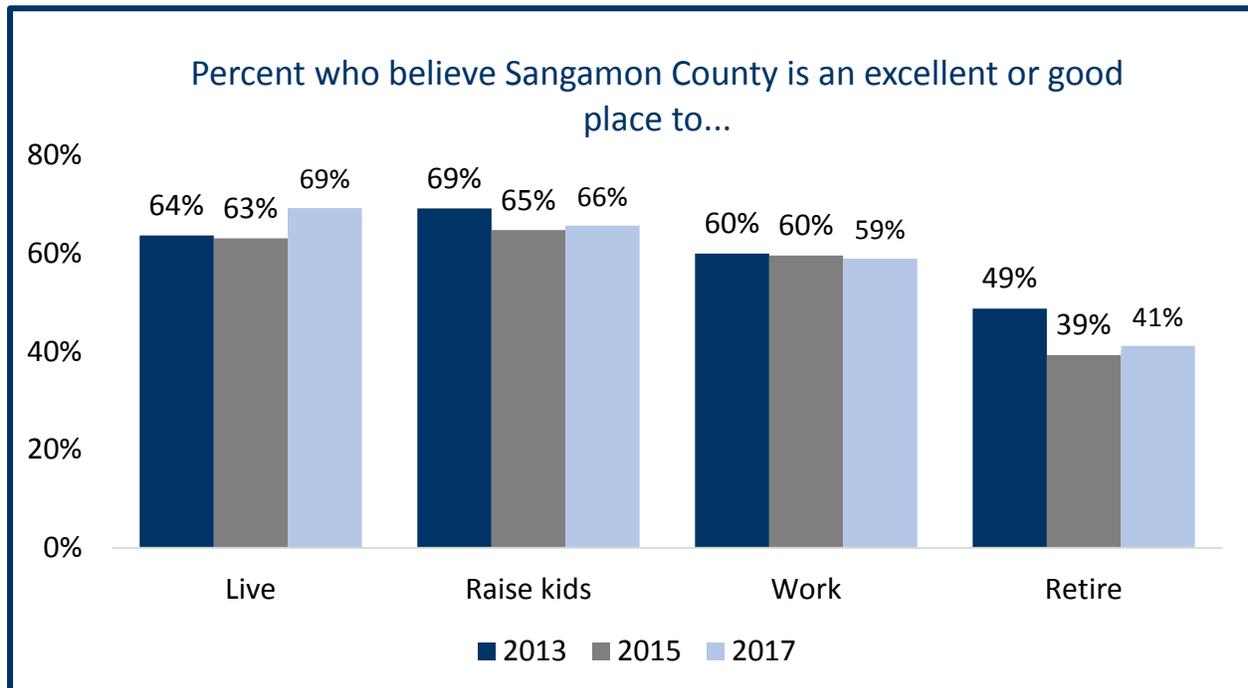
Quality of life

When asked whether Sangamon County is an excellent, good, fair or poor place to live, raise children, work, and retire, majorities indicate it is either an excellent or good place to do each except retire. Nearly seven in ten (69%) survey respondents say the county is either an “excellent” or “good” place to live and two-thirds (66%) say it is an “excellent” or “good” place to raise children. However, respondents are less enthusiastic about Sangamon County as a place to retire – just 41% say it is an “excellent” or “good” place to spend life after work. Looking back to previous surveys, there are very few changes in public opinion over time with regard to these questions (see figure below). One finding that sticks out is that the percentage of respondents who say Sangamon County is an “excellent” or “good” place to retire has dropped significantly since 2013.

69% say Sangamon County is an “excellent” or “good” place to live

While public opinion on quality of life has not changed much over the past four years, the 2017 survey sees significant differences between more affluent respondents and those with lower incomes in their appraisal of Sangamon County as a place to raise their children and to work. For instance, in the 2017 survey, over three quarters (77%) of those making more than \$100,000 per year say the county is an “excellent” or “good” place to raise children versus just 58% of those making less than \$30,000 per year.

Additionally, younger respondents are much less likely to say that Sangamon County is a “good” or “excellent” place to live, raise children, work, or retire (see table on next page). Strikingly, 47% of respondents ages 18-34 say that Sangamon County is an “excellent or good” place to work compared to 68% of respondents ages 65 and older. Similarly, while 79% of respondents 65+ say Sangamon County is an “excellent” or “good” place to live, just 56% of respondents 18-34 say so.





**Views of Sangamon County**

*(% who believe the county is an excellent or good place to...)*

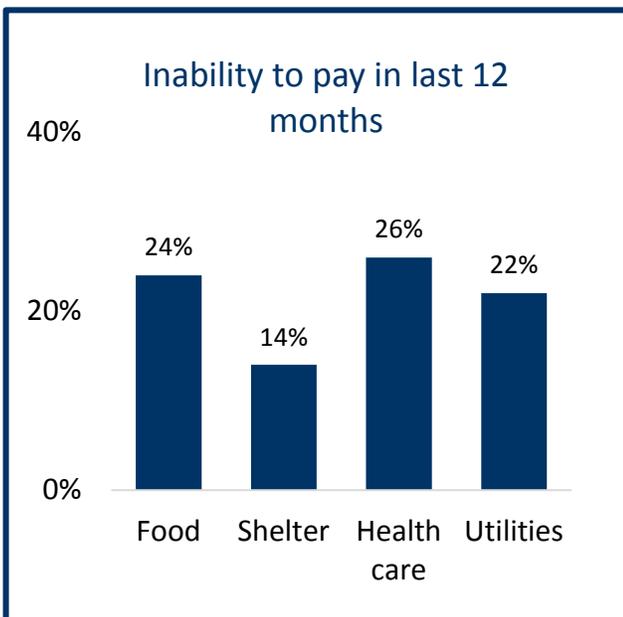
	Live	Raise children	Work	Retire
Male	66	67	60	35
Female	72	66	58	45
White	71	69	60	40
Nonwhite	60	54	53	46
Less than HS	76	68	54	54
High School	66	57	55	52
Some college	67	71	58	32
Bachelor's	77	71	63	40
Graduate degree	69	69	66	35
Less than \$30,000	66	58	50	49
\$30,000 - \$49,000	64	64	48	34
\$50,000 - \$99,999	68	64	59	37
\$100,000 or greater	77	77	71	36
18-34 years old	56	56	47	32
35-44 years old	57	66	46	25
45-54 years old	67	66	60	38
55-64 years old	75	68	65	44
65 or older	79	73	68	55
Springfield resident	68	62	58	43
Not a Springfield resident	76	83	65	37



## Resident needs

Survey respondents are asked: “Have there been times in the past 12 months you did not have enough money to pay for food, shelter, health care and/or medicines, and utilities that your or your family needed?” While most respondents are able to pay for these items, minorities of respondents cannot. About a quarter of respondents (24%) report not being able to pay for food and a similar percentage report not being able to pay for health care (26%). A smaller minority (14%) say there have been times they have been able to pay for shelter in the past 12 months.

Unsurprisingly, survey respondents who report income of less than \$30,000 per year are more likely to report having trouble paying for food. In fact, nearly half of these respondents (48%) report that there have been times in the past 12 months they did not have enough money to pay for food. Nonwhite respondents are also much more likely to report having trouble paying for food (37%) than are white respondents (21%).

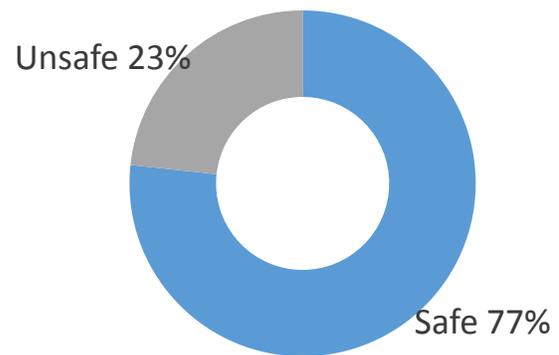


## Safety concerns

A majority of respondents indicate they feel safe in their community; over three quarters (77%) indicate they feel safe walking alone at night in their neighborhood. Additionally, a large majority (80%) indicate they feel “the same” level of safety in their own home compared to one year ago, with another 5% saying they feel “safer” in their own home. It is notable that about an equal percentage of respondents say they feel “less safe” in their own home compared to a year ago as those who say the immediate area where they live is getting worse (14%) compared to a year ago.

**36%** earning less than \$30,00/year report having trouble paying for shelter

## Safety walking alone at night





Though majorities indicate they feel safe walking alone at night in their neighborhood, this is less likely to be the case for some demographic groups than others. For instance, women feel less safe at night (72%) than men (83%), as do those with household incomes less than \$30,000 per year. Regarding income, it is the case that those earning less income are more likely to live in areas with higher rates of crime and so would feel unsafe walking alone at night because of this.

### *Moving away from Sangamon County*

As discussed above in the introduction, Sangamon County has lost residents in recent years. To find out more about why respondents are leaving, the 2017

**36% have considered moving out of Sangamon County**

survey, like the 2015 survey, asks respondents whether they have considered moving away from Sangamon County. The survey finds that 36% of 2017 respondents – the same percentage as in 2015– indicate they have considered moving away in the past 12 months.

Reasons for moving away vary. Some respondents cite concerns about employment. For instance, one respondent said that “legitimate career opportunities for young adults with college degrees are needed.” Another respondent simply wrote, “more jobs are needed.” In all, about 18% of respondents provide an answer pertaining to jobs or the economy. The state budget impasse and issues with both state and local government were also frequently cited by respondents.

.....  
*“It’s not the County’s fault-  
It’s the state of Illinois’ bad  
behavior that makes me  
want to move.”*

- Sangamon County resident on considering a move

.....  
Regarding state government, another respondent indicated he would stay if “the state would solve its unsolvable budget mess.” Also frequently cited by respondents are issues related to taxes (especially property taxes), and a lack of cultural opportunities in the county. However, it is important to stress that the majority of respondents (64%) report they have not considered moving away and that, despite the budget issues that have affected the area the past two years, this percentage has not changed since 2015.



## *Biggest change needed to improve school district*

The survey asks, “What is the biggest change needed to improve K-12 education in your local school district?” While a variety of answers are provided by respondents, the most frequent responses have to do with increasing or overhauling school funding, improving the curriculum, improving safety at school, and achieving smaller class sizes

Certainly, concerns over funding stand out due to the frequency with which respondents cite them yet these concerns are quite distinct from one another. Some respondents are concerned about better allocation of funding whereas others wish to simply see more funding. However, the uncertainty of school funding, particularly uncertainty as to how funds will be dispersed by the state, seems to be the primary concern for those who cite a response related to funding. For instance, one respondent who lives in the Sherman-Williamsville school district said that “consistent funding from the state” is needed. Another respondent, in the Springfield Public Schools district indicated that the state needs to “provide funds that the district is supposed to get.”

Those who cite concerns about the curriculum provide a variety of responses. Many, however, cite issues with the “common core” curriculum. Says one typical respondent, “get rid of common core education and actually teach the children about real life.” Another respondent, similarly dissatisfied with reliance on tests, wrote that the school district needs “higher education standards that are less focused on standardized testing.”

*“Schools need to be mindful: not all kids are college-bound. They need to offer classes for technical/ trade oriented kids.”*

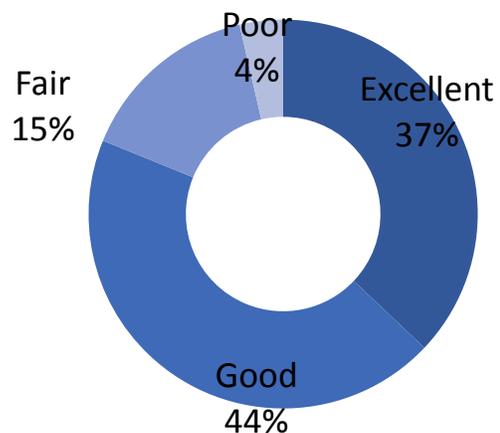
*- Resident on the biggest change needed to improve education*

## *Quality of child’s education*

About a quarter of respondents (24%) in the current survey are parents or primary guardians of school-aged children. Eighty-seven percent of these individuals report that their child is enrolled in public school while 12% of respondents report their child attends private school. A single respondent reports that their child is homeschooled.

Parents and primary guardians are asked to rate the quality of their child’s education. A large majority of respondents (81%) rate the quality of their child’s education as either “excellent” or “good.”

Quality of child's education





*Confidence in local school board*

Sixty-three percent of respondents say they are “very” or “somewhat confident” that their local school board can effectively address problems in their local schools. These figures are about the same for respondents who indicated they live in Springfield Schools District 186 (61% “very” or “somewhat confident”) and respondents who reported living in some other school district (63% “very” or “somewhat confident”). Interestingly, respondents’ confidence in their school board has varied throughout the years; whereas 63% report confidence in 2017, 74% do so in 2015, and 55% do so in 2013.

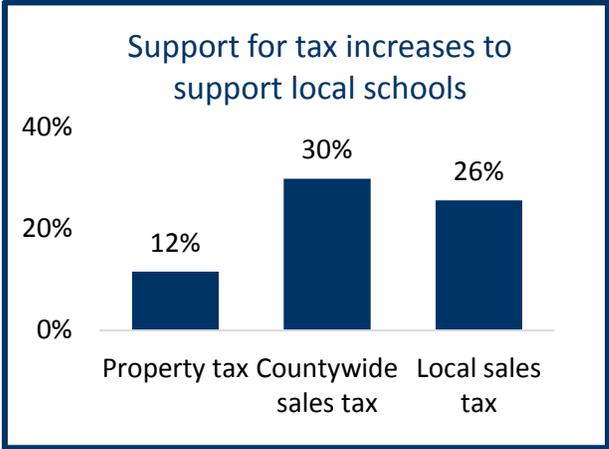
**63%** are “somewhat” or “very confident” in their local school board

**51%** say they would not support any tax increase to support local public schools

Just over half of respondents (51%) report that they would not support any tax increase to support local public schools. However, three in ten (30%) would support a countywide sales tax increase and over a quarter (26%) would support a local sales tax increase. A small minority (12%) would support a property tax increase to support local public schools. This incredibly low support for property taxes is an interesting finding and one that merits further exploration.

*Support for tax increases*

Respondents are asked, “If local leaders chose to increase taxes to support local public schools, which of the following would you support?” Respondents were instructed to check all tax increases that they would support or to choose the option “would not support any tax increase.” Note that, due to the change in the way this question is asked in the current survey, it is not possible to compare responses over time as respondents are now able to support more than one tax.





Health care in America has changed significantly since the first Sangamon County Citizen Survey was administered in 2013. As mentioned in the 2015 Citizen Survey report, provisions in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) mandate that all individuals have health insurance coverage. Illinois is also one of 32 states which opted to expand Medicaid.<sup>16</sup> In Illinois, the Medicaid expansion means that individuals who earn up to 138% of the federal poverty level for a household are eligible to participate in the program. So while the future of the ACA is uncertain, for now individuals are bound by its provisions.

*Health insurance coverage*

Nearly all respondents, (96%) report that they have health insurance including Medicare or Medicaid. In 2015, 96% of respondents also reported having health insurance while in 2013, 89% report having coverage. Additionally, 88% of survey respondents report having someone they think of as a personal doctor or health care provider. This has changed little from the 90% in 2015 and 86% in 2013 who report having a personal doctor.

**96% report having health insurance**

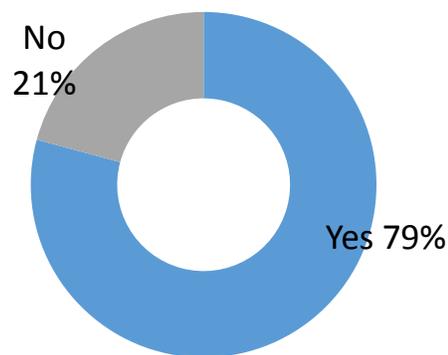
**88% report having someone they think of as their personal**

However, while almost all respondents have health insurance coverage, a significant minority (16%) report that there was a time in the past 12 months that they needed to see a doctor but could not because of cost. This figure is consistent with data from the 2012 Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) which found that 17% of Sangamon County respondents could not afford to see a doctor because of cost.<sup>17</sup>

*Health of Sangamon County respondents*

About four in five (79%) respondents report engaging in physical activities outside of their regular job in the past 30 days. This is slightly less than the 85% in 2015 and 80% in 2013 who report engaging in leisure time at least once in the past month.<sup>18</sup> By comparison, in 2012 the Illinois BRFSS finds that 74% of Sangamon County respondents report exercising at least once in the past 30 days.

Engaged in physical activity in past 30 days



<sup>16</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation. (2017). *Status of state action on the Medicaid expansion decision*. <http://www.kff.org/health-reform/state-indicator/state-activity-around-expanding-medicare-under-the-affordable-care-act/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

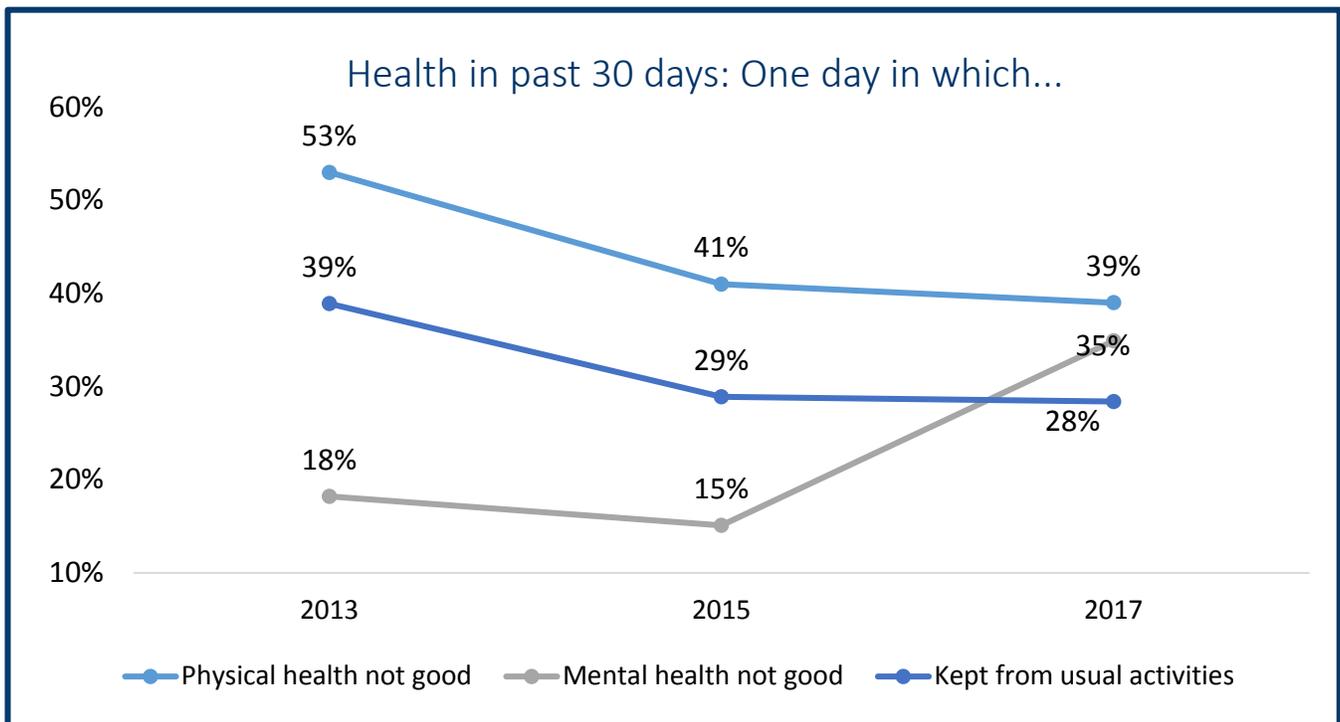
<sup>17</sup> Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: County level prevalence data. (2012). Retrieved from: <http://www.idph.state.il.us/brfss/>

<sup>18</sup> The exact wording of the question in the 2013 and 2015 surveys is: “Thinking about the last 30 days, was there at least one day in which you engaged in physical leisure time activity?”



The current survey finds that little has changed in terms of respondents' physical health since the 2015 survey. About two-fifths (39%) report that there was at least one day in the past month in which their physical health was not good – only slightly less than the 41% of respondents in 2015. However, respondents are three times more likely in 2017 (35%) than in 2015 (15%) to report at least one day in which their mental health was not good in the current survey. Additionally, 28% report that they were kept from their usual activities at least once in the past 30 days due to poor physical or mental health, a figure that is slightly less than the 29% of 2015 survey respondents who indicate this.

**35%** say there was at least one day in which their mental health was not good



*Health disparities*

Individuals with household incomes of less than \$30,000 per year are significantly more likely to report having a day in which their physical health was not good (57%) or a day in which their mental health was not good (64%) than those with higher incomes. Individuals with household incomes of \$100,000 or greater are unlikely to report having a day in which their physical health was not good (28%) or a day in which their mental health was not good (22%). Younger individuals, individuals with lower levels of education, and nonwhite individuals are also more likely to say they have had at least one day in which either their physical or mental health was not good. In some cases, these differences are quite striking (see table on next page).



### ***Health in past month***

*(% reporting there was at least one day in the past month in which...)*

	Physical health not good	Mental health not good	Kept from activities due to poor health
Male	33	29	23
Female	46	42	36
White	37	31	29
Nonwhite	45	56	28
Less than HS	48	39	21
High School	44	38	26
Some college	44	41	36
Bachelor's	36	31	24
Graduate degree	25	23	22
Less than \$30,000	57	64	35
\$30,000 - \$49,000	40	43	39
\$50,000 - \$99,999	42	32	29
\$100,000 or greater	28	22	17
18-34 years old	46	56	42
35-44 years old	31	46	30
45-54 years old	33	35	24
55-64 years old	46	33	27
65 or older	39	18	27
Springfield resident	37	34	29
Not a Springfield resident	43	38	27



The 2017 Sangamon County Citizen Survey finds that nearly all respondents believe it is important to take care of the natural environment. The survey also finds that slight majorities are concerned about water and air quality. In terms of recycling behavior, 72% of respondents report they recycle at least “sometimes.” This is less than the 86% of respondents nationally in the most recent General Social Survey who indicate they recycle at least “sometimes.”<sup>19</sup>

### *Importance of natural environment*

The natural environment in Sangamon County is very important to residents both in terms of their own well-being and the well-being of the community. Ninety percent of respondents say that conserving the local natural environment is either “very” or “somewhat important” to their own personal well-being.” Furthermore, 92% report that conserving the local natural environment is important for the well-being of the community.

### *Concern about local water, air quality*

Majorities of respondents are concerned about their local water and air quality, though more are concerned about the quality of their water. While slightly over half (53%) are “somewhat” or “very concerned” about local air quality, 63% report being “somewhat” or “very concerned” about their local water quality. Concern about air and water quality has remained quite similar since the last time the survey asked these questions in 2013. At that time, 54% said they were “somewhat” or “very concerned” about air quality and 66% said they were “somewhat” or “very concerned” about water quality. The

survey finds that nonwhite respondents are much more likely to report being “somewhat” or “very concerned” about air quality (71%) than white respondents (49%). In addition to race, respondents differ on their level of concern about air quality by income and their level of education (see table on the next page).

**73% of non-Springfield residents are concerned about water**

Respondents also differ on their level of concern regarding water quality by race, though the difference is not quite as stark – 62% of white respondents report being “somewhat” or “very concerned” about water quality compared to 71% of nonwhite respondents. Respondents with higher levels of income are less concerned about water quality than are those with lower incomes. Additionally, those who live outside of Springfield are more likely to report being “somewhat” or “very concerned” with local water quality (73%) than those who live in Springfield (60%).



<sup>19</sup> The exact question wording is: “How often do you make a special effort to sort glass or cans or plastic papers and so on for recycling?” See: <https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org/> for GSS data.



**Views of local air and water quality**

(% either “somewhat” or “very concerned”)

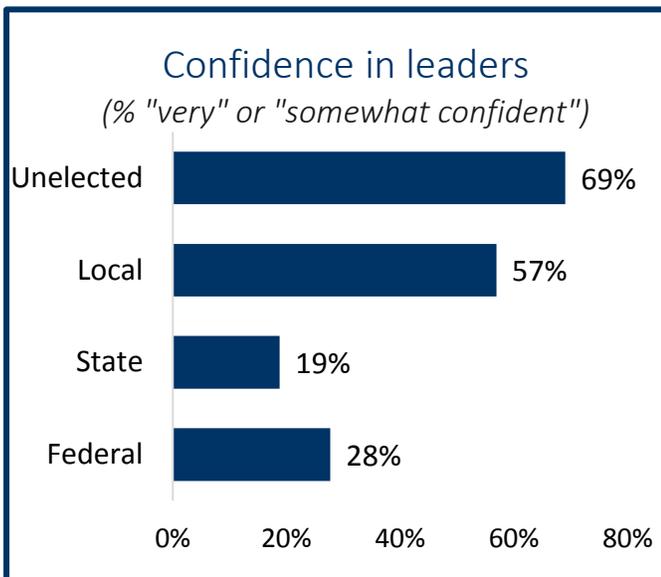
	Air	Water
Male	51	61
Female	53	65
White	49	62
Nonwhite	71	71
Less than HS	62	70
High School	61	66
Some college	54	65
Bachelor’s	40	59
Graduate degree	48	58
Less than \$30,000	71	77
\$30,000 - \$49,000	41	63
\$50,000 - \$99,999	48	55
\$100,000 or greater	42	62
18-34 years old	51	67
35-44 years old	44	61
45-54 years old	53	60
55-64 years old	60	72
65 or older	50	55
Springfield resident	54	60
Not a Springfield resident	48	73



## Confidence in leaders

Respondents in Sangamon County report higher levels of confidence in their local elected officials than officials at the state and federal level. While 57% report being “very” or “somewhat confident” in local elected officials just 28% say this about federal elected officials. State elected officials fare very poorly – just 19% of respondents report they are “very” or “somewhat confident” in these leaders.

Yet while respondents report low levels of confidence in elected officials, they are confident about unelected officials — when asked to rate their confidence in “leaders in your community,” 69% say they are “very” or “somewhat confident.” Interestingly, about half (46%) report that Sangamon County has “strong leaders” — again signifying that respondents are more confident in both local in their community than they are of elected officials at the state and federal level.



## Voting behavior

Though almost all (97%) respondents report being registered to vote, only three quarters (75%) say they remembered to vote in the most recent election. Additionally, when asked to name the polling place at which they most recently voted, just 60% of the total sample were able to do so.<sup>20</sup> This last set of individuals — those who could name their polling place — are considered voters for the purpose of this report.

Two-thirds (66%) of respondents in the current survey report understanding how their local government makes decisions. This percentage is slightly less than the 69% of

**66%**  
*understand how their local government makes decisions*

respondents in 2013 which was the last survey that asked this question. However, respondents with lower levels of income and education are less likely to understand how their local government makes decisions. Unsurprisingly, those who could name their polling place — those individuals we count as voters — were more likely (71%) to say they understand how their local government works than those who could not name their polling place (58%).

<sup>20</sup> It is likely that some individuals voted in the most recent election but did not wish to provide their polling place out of choice.



### *Trust in local media*

Since 2015, the survey has asked respondents how much trust and confidence they have in the local media when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly. The 2017 survey finds a small decrease in the percentage of respondents who report that they have either “a great deal” or “a fair amount” of trust (61% in 2017; 61% in 2015). The question is identical to a Gallup poll question with the exception that it asks about trust in the local media as opposed to the “mass media.” Gallup has found that the percentage of Americans who report either “a great deal” or “a fair amount” of trust in the mass media has declined substantially in recent years from 53% in 1997 to 32% (an all-time low) in September 2016.<sup>21</sup>

While there are no significant differences between demographic groups such as race, income, and level of education, there is a marked difference in trust in the local media between women and men. Women (68%) are far more likely to report either “a great deal” or “a fair amount” of trust in the local media than men (45%). This was the case in the 2015 survey as well where 55% of men reported either “a great deal” or “a fair amount” of trust compared to 67% of women.



### *Civic engagement: Politics*

Home to the state capitol, Sangamon County has many opportunities for its citizens to get involved in various causes and interest groups. Interested in finding out about how citizens are engaged in their community, the survey has since its inception studied civic engagement. In order to measure civic engagement, the survey asks respondents whether they have engaged in 12 different activities which range from writing a letter to the editor of a local newspaper to working for a political party or candidate.<sup>22</sup>

A strong majority of respondents (86%) say they have discussed politics with family or friends in the past twelve months and 17% say they have contributed money to a political party or candidate. A small percentage (5%) say they have actively worked for a political party or candidate in the past 12 months.

***86% have discussed politics with family or friends***

***17% contributed money to a political party or candidate***

<sup>21</sup> Swift, Art. (2016). “Americans’ Trust in Mass Media Sinks to New Low.” Retrieved from: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/195542/americans-trust-mass-media-sinks-new-low.aspx>

<sup>22</sup> The full list of responses to these questions are contained below in Appendix A.



*Civic engagement: Giving and volunteering*

A majority of respondents (73%) report donating money to a charitable or religious organization in the past 12 months. This is similar to the 72% in 2015 but still down from the 84% in 2013 who reported giving to charity. As noted in the 2015 report, donations to charitable organizations decreased during the economic downturn of the previous decade but have risen in recent years.<sup>23</sup> In fact, Giving USA notes that in 2016 — for the third straight year — charitable donations rose to a new high of over 390 billion dollars.<sup>24</sup> Given national trends, it remains unclear why the percentage who report giving to charity has not risen above the levels reported in 2013.

It is reasonable to expect that respondents with higher levels of income are more likely to give to

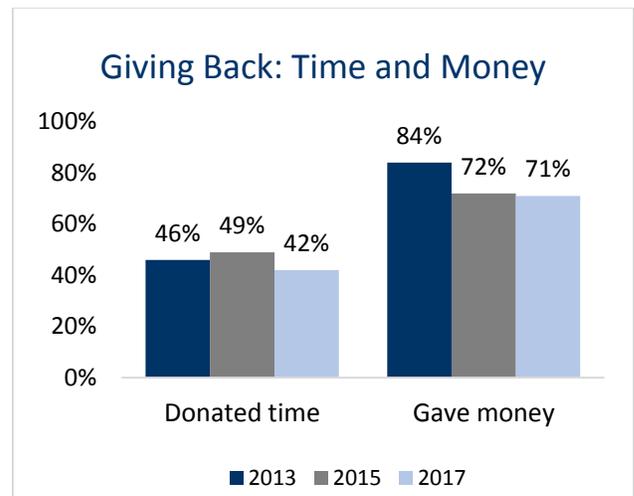
**91% earning \$100,000 or more give**

charitable or religious organizations as they are in a better position to do so. Indeed, the survey finds that nearly all respondents (92%) with household incomes above \$100,000 per year report giving compared to 77% of those with incomes between \$50,000 and \$99,999 and 70% of those with incomes between \$30,000 and \$49,999. Those with incomes of less than \$30,000 are the least likely to give, though just under half (49%) do so.

In addition to giving, Sangamon County residents are active in volunteering: 42% report volunteering through a charitable or religious organization. This figure is less than the 49% in 2015 and 46% in the 2013 survey. As with giving, those with higher incomes are most likely to report volunteering: 60% of those earning more than \$100,000 per year report doing so compared to just over half (51%) of those who earn between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Those earning between \$30,000 and \$49,999 per year are less likely to volunteer (29%) as are those earning less than \$30,000 (17%).

About half of respondents (48%) report that they have a will.

However, 73% of respondents 65 years or older report having a will as do 56% of respondents between the ages of 55 and 64. Of those with a will, one-fifth (20%) report having a charitable component to their will.



<sup>23</sup> University of Illinois Springfield Survey Research Office. (2015). *The Citizen: Results from the 2015 Sangamon County Citizen Survey*, pg. 33. Retrieved from: [http://www.uis.edu/surveyresearchoffice/wp-content/uploads/sites/162/2014/09/citizen\\_report.pdf](http://www.uis.edu/surveyresearchoffice/wp-content/uploads/sites/162/2014/09/citizen_report.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Giving USA. (2017). Giving USA 2017: Total Charitable Donations Rise to New High of \$390.05 Billion. Retrieved from: <https://givingusa.org/giving-usa-2017-total-charitable-donations-rise-to-new-high-of-390-05-billion/>



**How respondents get involved**

(% reporting the following in the past 12 months)

	Donated money to religious or charitable organization	Volunteered through or for religious or charitable organization	Discussed politics with family or friends	Contributed money to a political party or candidate
Male	69	45	87	21
Female	74	43	84	13
White	74	42	86	17
Nonwhite	69	39	85	15
Less than HS	49	33	51	5
High School	65	23	79	6
Some college	71	40	89	14
Bachelor's	84	56	96	25
Graduate degree	94	67	96	36
Less than \$30,000	49	17	66	4
\$30,000 - \$49,000	70	29	89	10
\$50,000 - \$99,999	77	51	94	23
\$100,000 or greater	92	60	98	24
18-34 years old	74	39	89	17
35-44 years old	63	50	90	10
45-54 years old	75	42	91	14
55-64 years old	73	42	84	12
65 or older	78	42	84	23
Springfield resident	72	39	87	18
Not a Springfield resident	77	49	84	14



## *Focus on Springfield*

Previous surveys asked respondents about the importance of growing downtown Springfield to Sangamon County. The surveys found that large majorities (83% in 2013; 87% in 2015) felt that growing downtown was either “very” or “somewhat important.” The current survey asks both whether growing downtown is important to the Sangamon County economy and to the respondent’s own personal well-being but included the possibility of response choice “neither important nor unimportant.” The survey finds that nearly eight in ten (78%) say that growing downtown is either “very important” or “somewhat important” to the Sangamon County economy whereas just 7% say it is either “not very important” or “not important at all” (14% say it is “neither important nor unimportant”).

Just over half of respondents (51%) say that growing downtown Springfield is either “very important” or “somewhat important” to their own personal well-being while 20% say it is “not very important” or “not important at all” (29% say it is “neither important nor unimportant”).

**78% believe growing downtown Springfield is important to the Sangamon County economy**

Throughout its history, the survey has focused on issues relevant to the day. One issue that has received a good deal of attention recently has been the future of the former YWCA block, purchased by the City of Springfield, north of the Illinois Executive Mansion. The survey asks respondents what they believe the City should do with the property: either turn it into a space for recreation purposes or use the block to create jobs by attracting businesses to the location. Slightly more than half (55%) say the City should use the space to create jobs whereas 45% say the City should turn it into a space for recreation purposes.

As in 2015, the current survey asks respondents whether they believe there is a need for an independent citizen’s advisory board to focus on challenges facing City, Water, Light, & Power (CWLP). Support for the advisory board is about the same in the current survey (81%) as in the 2015 survey (85%).<sup>25</sup>

Springfield residents are also asked whether they believe the City of Springfield should hire a planner. Slightly over half (54%) say the City should use its resources to hire a planner whereas just under half (46%) do not.

Springfield residents are also asked to weigh in on the issue of a second source of water in Springfield. Respondents are asked, “to what extent, if any, is creating a second source of water for Springfield a priority?” The current survey finds that 60% of respondents believe a second source of water for Springfield is either a “high” or “medium” priority. By comparison, 59% in 2013 and 66% of in 2015 said they believe a second source of water is either a “high” or “medium” priority.

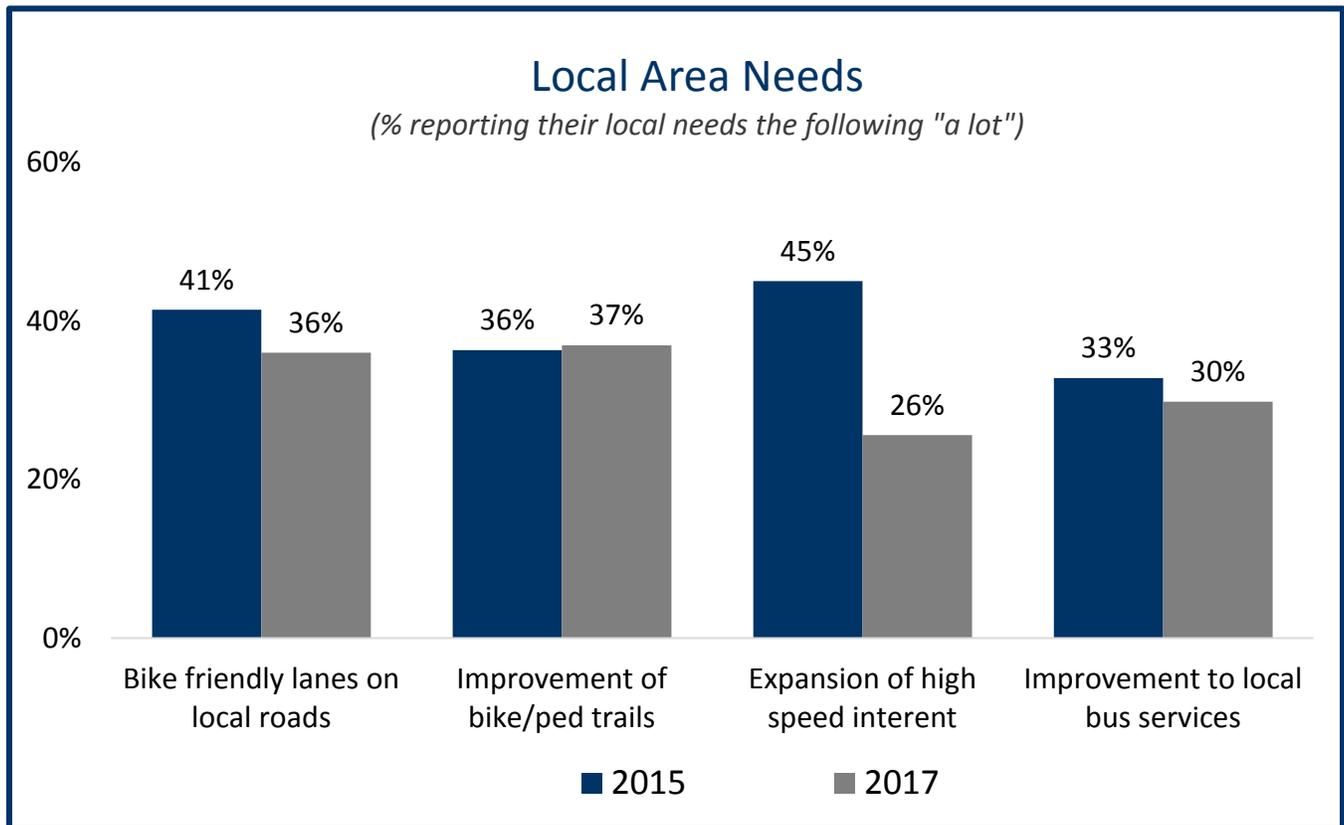
<sup>25</sup> In the current survey, only those who identify as being a resident of Springfield are asked whether or not they support the idea of an advisory board. In 2015, the question was open to all respondents. 2015 responses exclude those who answered, “don’t know.”



*Community needs*

First asked in 2015, the current survey again asks respondents whether their local area needs bike friendly lanes on local roads, improvement to bike and pedestrian trails, expansion of high speed internet, and improvements to local bus service either “a lot,” “a little,” or “not at all.” The survey finds a modest decline in the percentage of respondents who report that their local area needs bike friendly lanes on local roads “a lot” from 2015 (41%) to 2017 (36%), as well as a sharp decrease in the number who report needing expansion of high speed internet access in their area (45% in 2015; 26% in 2017).

Perhaps not surprisingly, those with household incomes of \$100,000 per year or greater (48%) are much more likely to indicate that improvements to local bus services are “not at all” needed than those with incomes of less than \$30,000 (22%). Individuals with lower levels of income are more likely to use the bus than those with higher incomes. In fact, the current survey finds that just 2% of those with incomes above \$100,000 per year use the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) at all.





*Transportation*

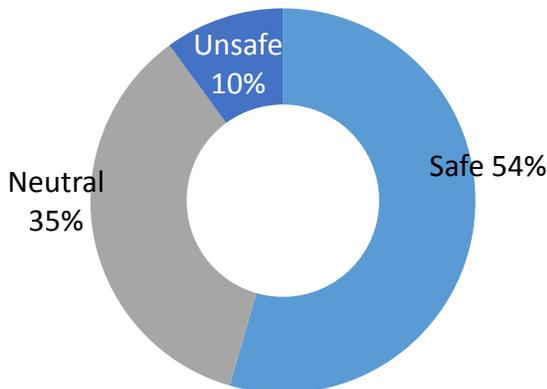
Fifty-four percent of respondents report commuting to work. Of those who do, nearly all (96%) report using a car or personal vehicle to get to work. Smaller percentages report using a bicycle (5%), a bus (4%), and walking (2%).

When respondents travel out of town, almost all (97%) report using a car or personal vehicle. About a third (32%) report using Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport, and about three in ten (29%) report using Amtrak. Just 5% of respondents report using an intercity bus like Greyhound when travelling out of town.

**32% use Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport when travelling out of town**

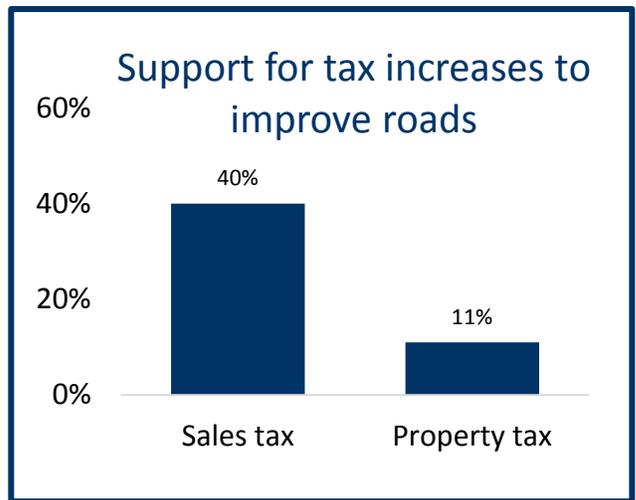
A slight majority of respondents (54%) report that it is either “very safe” or “safe” to travel on local roads and highways whereas 35% provide a “neutral” response and 10% say that it is either “unsafe” or “very unsafe.”

Safety travelling on local roads and highways



*Support for tax increases to improve roads*

Far more respondents are likely to support a local sales tax increase (40%) than a property tax increase (11%) to fund road improvements. However, a slight majority (53%) say that they do not support any tax increase. These findings are similar to those regarding a proposed tax increase to support local schools where support was higher both for a local sales tax (26%) and a countywide sales tax (30%) than support for a property tax increase (12%).



*Improving the Illinois State Fairgrounds*

Survey respondents indicate there are a variety of ways to improve the funding-strapped Illinois State Fairgrounds. When asked which improvements they would like to see, nearly nine in ten (87%) indicate that they would like to see more year-round activities, 72% say they would like to see funding attracted through a privately funded fairgrounds foundation, 66% say they would like to see a strategic or master plan developed for the fairgrounds, and about half (48%) say they would like to see state appropriations increased.





**Support for tax increases to fund road improvements**

	Support sales tax increase	Support property tax increase	Do not support any tax increase
Male	39%	12%	53%
Female	39%	11%	54%
White	40%	11%	54%
Nonwhite	39%	12%	52%
Less than HS	41%	8%	59%
High School	31%	6%	65%
Some college	35%	11%	57%
Bachelor's	52%	15%	39%
Graduate degree	48%	13%	45%
Less than \$30,000	40%	16%	52%
\$30,000 - \$49,000	36%	15%	50%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	42%	11%	51%
\$100,000 or greater	48%	9%	48%
18-34 years old	33%	8%	62%
35-44 years old	45%	18%	44%
45-54 years old	31%	9%	65%
55-64 years old	45%	9%	48%
65 or older	41%	10%	51%
Springfield resident	39%	12%	54%
Not a Springfield resident	44%	10%	49%



In recent years, discussion about the economy has centered on the health of state government and now – to a lesser extent – potential changes to the Affordable Care Act. This focus makes sense – the Census estimates that 17% of Sangamon County residents are employed in health care and social assistance and 14% are employed in public administration.<sup>26</sup>

In terms of the health of the economy, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the unemployment rate in Sangamon County is 3.8% as of May 2017. This compares with an unemployment rate of 4.2% for May of 2016.<sup>27</sup>

### *Employment in Sangamon County*

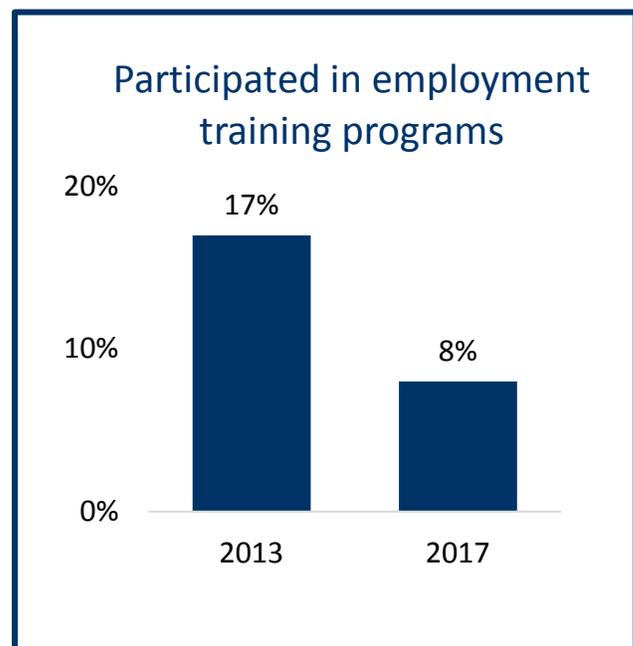
When asked to describe their employment status, just 4% report that they are unemployed. The remainder of respondents are either employed full-time (45%), employed part-time (8%), self-employed (5%), disabled (6%), retired (30%), or full-time students (1%). Of those who are unemployed, 81% report that they are currently seeking employment. However, some respondents who are employed do not feel they are employed to their fullest capacity – a quarter (25%) report that they consider themselves to be underemployed.

***25% consider themselves underemployed***

### *Employment training programs*

Eight percent of survey respondents report participating in employment training programs - a figure lower than the 17% of 2013 survey respondents who reported participating in these programs. Of those who did participate, nearly all (92%) found them to be useful.

However, while participation in training programs is low, support for these programs is very high: 92% of respondents consider them to be either “very” or “somewhat important” for the local area. This high support is consistent with 2013 survey findings in which 94% of respondents indicated training programs are either “somewhat” or “very important” to the local area.



<sup>26</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

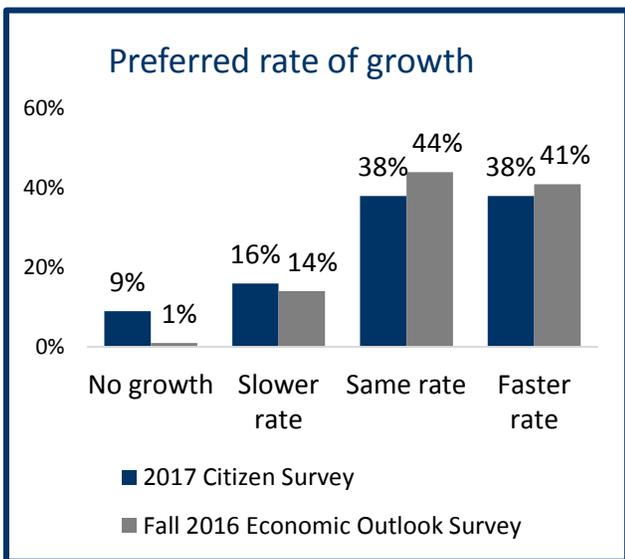
<sup>27</sup> Illinois Department of Employment Security. (2017). “Unemployment Rates for the State, Metro Areas, Counties, and Cities Not Seasonally Adjusted.” Retrieved from: [http://www.ides.illinois.gov/lmi/Pages/Current\\_Monthly\\_Unemployment\\_Rates.aspx](http://www.ides.illinois.gov/lmi/Pages/Current_Monthly_Unemployment_Rates.aspx)



### Preferred rate of growth

As mentioned above in the introduction, Sangamon County has seen modest population decline in recent years. With this in mind, the current survey asks respondents what type of population growth rate Sangamon County should encourage over the next 20 years. Respondent opinion on growth is split: 38% indicate they would like to see a “faster rate” of growth, 38% “the same” rate, 16% a “slower rate,” and 9% saying they would like “no growth at all.”

The Survey Research Office asked a similar question in its Fall 2016 Sangamon County Economic Outlook Survey, a survey of local businesses and nonprofits who belong to the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce.<sup>28</sup> While results are very similar, Citizen Survey respondents are more likely to indicate a preference for “no growth.”



### Personal financial status and local business conditions

About a quarter (24%) say they are “better” off financially compared to twelve months ago whereas about a fifth (20%) say they are “worse” off. A majority (56%) say they are doing about the same as they were one year ago. These figures have not changed considerably since the survey was initially conducted in 2013. It is worthwhile to note here that the median income of a survey respondent in the 2017 survey is \$50,000 which is slightly below that of the median household income of \$56,167 according to recent estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau.<sup>29</sup> While responses have not changed much with regard to the personal finance question, respondents are far more likely to evaluate local business conditions as “worse” now than compared to twelve months ago in the 2017 survey (46%) than in the surveys conducted in 2015 (20%) and 2013 (30%). Furthermore, just 5% of survey respondents in 2017 say that local business conditions are “better” today than in the previous 12 months compared to 13% in 2015 and 14% in 2013 who said so. While it is not possible to say for certain, it is likely that responses were more negative due to the effects of the state budget impasse.



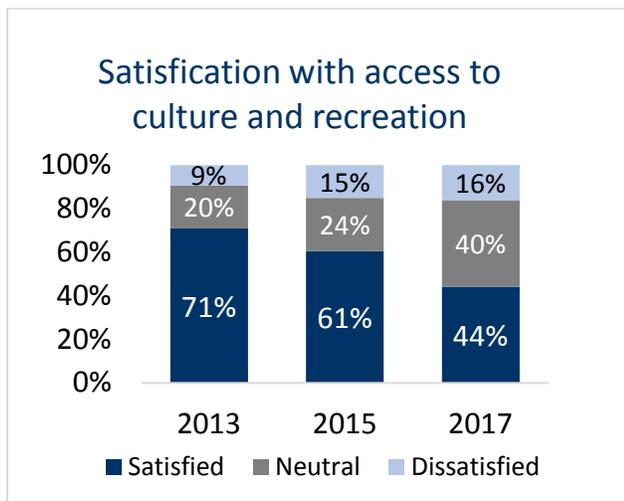
<sup>28</sup> The wording for the question is slightly different in the Economic Outlook survey: “The Springfield, IL metropolitan statistical area grew by approximately 4% from 2000 to 2010. Over the next 20 years, what type of population growth should the area strive for?” The Survey Research Office also asked the question in a community survey conducted on behalf of the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission. However, because that question focuses solely on Springfield we do not reference results here.

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2016). American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates.



*Access to recreational and cultural events*

Respondents in the 2017 survey are significantly less likely to say that they are satisfied with access to cultural or recreational events than those in previous surveys. While 71% in 2013 and 61% in 2015 say they are either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with access to these events, just 44% say so in the 2017 survey. This change is largely due to the fact that the percentage providing a “neutral” response has risen considerably to 40% in the current survey (see figure).



There are some interesting differences between demographic groups regarding access to events. For instance, men (48%) are more likely than women (40%) to say they are “very satisfied” or “satisfied.” Additionally, white respondents (47%) are more likely to say they are “very satisfied” or “satisfied” compared to nonwhite respondents (31%). Individuals with higher level of income are also more satisfied than those with lower levels of income: 56% of those with household income of \$100,000 or more are satisfied compared with just 38% of those earning less than \$30,000.



*Satisfaction with local park and library*

As in previous surveys, 2017 survey respondents are satisfied with their local library. Three quarters (75%) of 2017 survey respondents rate their local library as either “excellent” or “good” compared to 73% in 2015 and 75% in 2013. However, the survey finds that nonwhite respondents are less likely to report satisfaction with their local library (64%) than white respondents (78%).

Respondents are also satisfied with their local parks. A strong majority (77%) rate their local park as either “excellent” or “good.” This is consistent with the 73% of 2013 survey respondents and 78% of 2015 survey respondents who rate their local park as either “excellent” or “good.” As with their local library, the survey finds that nonwhite respondents are less likely to rate their local park as “excellent” or “good” (69%) than white respondents (78%). Those with incomes between \$30,000 and \$49,999 are less likely than other income groups to rate their local park positively (see table on next page).

**75% rate their local library as “excellent or good” and 77% rate their local park as “excellent” or “good”**



***How respondents view cultural and recreation in Sangamon County***

	“Somewhat” or “very satisfied with access to local recreational or cultural events	Rate their local park “excellent” or “good”	Rate their local library “excellent” or “good”
Male	48	76	72
Female	40	77	78
White	47	78	78
Nonwhite	31	69	64
Less than HS	59	71	73
High School	33	79	76
Some college	43	72	74
Bachelor’s	49	77	76
Graduate degree	56	77	76
Less than \$30,000	38	77	74
\$30,000 - \$49,000	31	61	73
\$50,000 - \$99,999	45	83	81
\$100,000 or greater	56	79	76
18-34 years old	45	75	86
35-44 years old	32	73	76
45-54 years old	27	68	63
55-64 years old	57	79	78
65 or older	54	85	79
Springfield resident	43	77	75
Not a Springfield resident	47	75	78

### *Effect of the impasse on the Economy*

Prior surveys conducted by the Survey Research Office showed how important the issue of the Illinois state budget impasse is to individuals living in Sangamon County.<sup>30</sup> Thus, it was a natural choice to include questions specifically pertaining to the budget impasse in the survey.

The survey asks respondents “what effect, if any” they believe the state budget impasse has had on the Sangamon County economy?” The results were nearly unanimous: 88% of respondents indicated the budget impasse has had a “negative effect” on the economy whereas 7% say it has had “no effect.” Just 5% report that the impasse has had a “positive effect” on the Sangamon County economy. The survey finds that those with a high school diploma or less (85%) are less likely to say the impasse has had a negative effect than those with at least a bachelor’s degree (83%). Furthermore, individuals with household income less than \$30,000 per year (75%) are less likely to say the impasse has had a negative effect than those with higher incomes (93%).

**88% say the state budget impasse has had a negative effect on the Sangamon County economy**

### *Personal effects*

Forty-four percent of respondents say they have been personally affected by the state budget impasse yet certain groups

are more likely to say they have been affected than others. The survey finds especially large differences between older and younger individuals and between those with lower and those with higher levels of income.

Remarkably, individuals 65 years old and older – those who are most likely to be retired – are less than half as likely to say they have been personally affected by the impasse (25%) than those ages younger than 65 (52%). Those earning less than \$50,000 are also less much likely (33%) to say that the state budget impasse has affected them than those earning \$50,000 or more (51%).

**44% have been personally affected by the state budget impasse**

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<sup>30</sup> For instance, the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 explored the effects of the state budget impasse on area organizations. The Spring 2016 survey found that 47% said the impasse was having a negative effect on their organization’s profitability whereas 23% said the impasse was having a negative impact on their organization’s total number of employees. Furthermore, the surveys found that nonprofit organizations were more deeply affected than businesses.

## How respondents are affected

Those who indicated they have been personally affected by the state budget impasse were asked to explain how they have been affected. Those who responded to this question provided responses pertaining to a variety of topics such as uncertainty of funding for higher education. One respondent who brought up the fact that he “Works in higher education and there is no funding.” Says another respondent: “Zero funding for higher ed.” Another respondent, referencing higher education wrote “no MAP grants,” referencing the uncertainty over funding of the Monteary Award Program (MAP) which helps undergraduate students with demonstrated financial need pay for college.

Many responses focused on the inability of the state to reimburse employees’ medical claims. For instance, one respondent wrote, “we are owed co-pays we have fronted for medical services” while another individual responded “we are still waiting for a dental reimbursement for over \$900.” The claim for that reimbursement was filed in 2014, the respondent noted. Another respondent, a state employee, wrote: “my medical providers have not been paid. This prompts some providers to ask for full payment up front.”

Business owners are also affected. Says one respondent, who indicated in the survey he is employed part-time: “The business that we own has lost business because the state of Illinois will not pay their bills.”

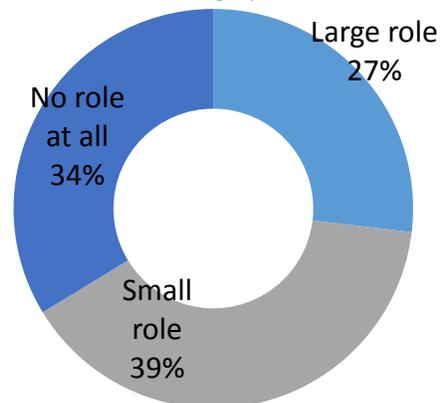
.....  
*“I sell paint for a living. When there is no budget then nothing is being built! It affects everyone!”*  
.....

- Respondent on how the state budget impasse affected her

## Role of the impasse in responses

When creating the questionnaire, we anticipated that the budget impasse would be on the minds of respondents. With this in mind, we asked respondents whether the impasse played “a large role,” “a small role,” or “no role at all” in their responses. Respondents were about evenly split: 27% say that the survey played “a large role,” 39% say it played “a small role,” and 34% say it played “no role at all.”

Role the budget impasse played in answering questions



## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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### *Social Well-being and Public Safety*

Generally speaking, would you say that things in Sangamon County are heading in the right direction or are they off on the wrong track?

Right track	62%
Wrong direction	38%

In general, do you think race relations in your community are very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or very bad?

Very good	10%
Fairly good	66%
Fairly bad	21%
Very bad	3%

Do you think everyone in your community is treated equally, in other words, does everyone get a “fair shake?”

Yes	41%
No	59%

Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?

Most people can be trusted	43%
Can’t be too careful	57%

*Do you think Sangamon County is an excellent, good, fair, or poor...*

#### Place to live

Excellent	13%
Good	57%
Fair	30%
Poor	1%

#### Place to work?

Excellent	11%
Good	48%
Fair	33%
Poor	8%

#### Place to retire?

Excellent	8%
Good	33%
Fair	37%
Poor	22%

#### Place to raise children?

Excellent	11%
Good	55%
Fair	27%
Poor	8%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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*Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money to pay for \_\_\_\_\_ that you or your family needed?*

### Food

Yes	24%
No	76%

### Shelter

Yes	14%
No	86%

### Healthcare and/or medicines

Yes	26%
No	74%

### Utilities that you or your family needed?

Yes	22%
No	78%

### How many years have you lived in your local neighborhood?

Less than one year	1%
One to five years	32%
6-10 years	19%
11-20 years	22%
More than 20 years	26%

Would you move away from your current neighborhood if you could, or would you stay in your current neighborhood?

Move away	36%
Stay in current neighborhood	64%

Do you feel safe or unsafe walking alone at night in your neighborhood?

Safe	77%
Unsafe	23%

Compared to a year ago, do you feel less safe, safer, or about the same level of safety in your own home?

Less safe	13%
Safer	5%
About the same level of safety	80%
Did not live there a year ago	2%

How often, if at all, do you see police or other types of law enforcement patrolling your own neighborhood or street?

Very often	13%
Somewhat often	34%
Not very often	36%
Not often at all	17%

Compared to a year ago, would you say the immediate area where you live is...?

Getting better	4%
About the same	82%
Getting worse	14%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

---

In the past twelve months, have you considered moving out of or away from Sangamon County?

Yes	36%
No	64%

### *Education*

Are you the parent or primary guardian of a school age child?

Yes	24%
No	76%

*If yes:* Is your child currently enrolled in a public school or a private parochial school? Or, is your child home schooled?

Public school	87%
Private/parochial school	12%
Homeschooled	1%

*If yes:* If you had to rate the quality of education that your oldest (or only) child is receiving would you say that it is...?

Excellent	37%
Good	44%
Fair	15%
Poor	4%

What is the biggest change needed, if any, in order to improve K-12 education in your local school district? (CODED RESPONSES)

Improved leadership and administration	4%
Better quality teachers	6%
Increase/overhaul school funding	30%
Smaller class sizes	8%
Improved technology and resources	3%
Improved or newer buildings	4%
Improved curriculum	14%
Improved safety	11%
Increased diversity in schools	4%
Increased parent/student involvement	4%
Increase teacher salaries	3%
Return to neighborhood schools	1%
Something else	9%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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If local leaders chose to increase taxes to support local public schools, which of the following would you be most likely to support? *(Please check all that apply)*. Or would you not support any tax increase?

Property tax increase	12%
Local sales tax increase	26%
Countywide sales tax increase	30%
Would not support any tax increase (exclusive response)	51%

How much confidence would you say that you have in your local school board to effectively address problems in your local schools? Would you say that you are...

Very confident	11%
Somewhat confident	52%
Not very confident	27%
Not at all confident	10%

Thinking about early childhood education programs in community, how important, if at all, would you say these programs are for the local community?

Very important	64%
Somewhat important	27%
Not very important	7%
Not important at all	2%

### Health

During the past month, other than your regular job, did you participate in any physical activities or exercises such as running, calisthenics, golf, gardening, or walking for exercise?

Yes	79%
No	21%

Do you have any kind of health care coverage, including health insurance, prepaid plans such as HMOs, government plans such as Medicare, or Indian Health Service?

Yes	96%
No	4%

Do you have anyone who you think of as your personal doctor or primary health care provider?

Yes	88%
No	12%

Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed to see a doctor but could not because of cost?

Yes	16%
No	84%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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Thinking about your physical health, which includes physical illness and injury, for how many days during the past 30 days, was your physical health not good?

0 days	61%
1-5 days	21%
6-10 days	4%
11-15 days	4%
16-20 days	2%
20 or more days	8%

Thinking about your physical health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days, was your mental health not good?

0 days	65%
1-5 days	15%
6-10 days	7%
11-15 days	2%
16-20 days	3%
20 or more days	8%

During the past 30 days, for about how many days did poor physical or mental health keep you from doing your usual activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation?

0 days	72%
1-5 days	16%
6-10 days	4%
11-15 days	2%
16-20 days	2%
20 or more days	5%

### *Environment*

*How big of a problem, if at all, is litter/improper trash disposal in each of the following areas?*

Sangamon County?

Big problem	37%
Small problem	47%
Not a problem at all	16%

On your street?

Big problem	13%
Small problem	33%
Not a problem at all	54%

In your community?

Big problem	21%
Small problem	45%
Not a problem at all	34%

How often do you make a special effort to sort glass or cans or plastic or papers and so on for recycling?

Always	46%
Often	12%
Sometimes	14%
Never	28%

Do you support or oppose consolidating waste management services in your county?

Support	33%
Oppose	22%
Don't know (offered)	46%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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*How would you rate your level of concern toward the following?*

Local water quality

Very concerned	35%
Somewhat concerned	29%
Not very concerned	22%
Not at all concerned	15%

Local air quality

Very concerned	24%
Somewhat concerned	28%
Not very concerned	27%
Not at all concerned	20%

How important, if at all, is conserving the local natural environment to your personal well-being?

Very important	63%
Somewhat important	28%
Neither unimportant nor important	7%
Not very important	1%
Not important at all	1%

How important, if at all, is conserving the local natural environment for the well-being of the community?

Very important	66%
Somewhat important	26%
Neither unimportant nor important	6%
Not very important	1%
Not important at all	1%

*Government and Civic Participation*

*In general, how much confidence would you say you have in \_\_\_\_\_ to effectively address problems in your community?*

Leaders in your community (not elected officials)

Very confident	11%
Somewhat confident	58%
Not very confident	22%
Not confident at all	9%

Local elected officials

Very confident	9%
Somewhat confident	49%
Not very confident	29%
Not confident at all	14%

State elected officials

Very confident	3%
Somewhat confident	16%
Not very confident	36%
Not confident at all	45%

Federal elected officials

Very confident	5%
Somewhat confident	22%
Not very confident	30%
Not confident at all	42%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

---

Do you feel that you understand how your local government makes decisions?

Yes	66%
No	34%

Do you think that Sangamon County has strong leaders or weak leaders?

Strong leaders	46%
Weak leaders	54%

Are you currently registered to vote?

Yes	97%
No	3%

*If yes, did you happen to remember to vote in the most recent election?*

Yes	75%
No	25%

In the past twelve months, have you done any of the following? (% reporting “yes”)

Written a letter to the editor of a local newspaper	4%
Expressed your opinion about an issue online	33%
Discussed politics with family or friends	86%
Donated money to a charitable or religious organization	73%
Volunteered through or for a charitable or religious organization	42%
Worked with other people in your neighborhood to fix a problem or improve a condition in your community or elsewhere	23%
Contributed money to a political party or candidate	17%
Worked for a political party or candidate	5%
Participated in an adults’ sports or recreation team	17%
Participated in a neighborhood, school, or community association	27%
Discussed government and politics with others on social media	28%
Participated in an arts or cultural event	41%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the local media-such as newspapers, TV, and radio-when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly?

Great deal of trust	9%
A fair amount	47%
Not very much	33%
None at all	11%

Do you have a will or estate plan?

Yes	48%
No	52%

*If yes, does it have a charitable component?*

Yes	19%
No	81%

### *Infrastructure*

Do you have access to the internet in your home?

Yes	87%
No	13%

*Do you think your local area needs the following a little, a lot, or not at all?*

Bike friendly lanes on local roads

A little	36%
A lot	43%
Not at all	21%

Improvement of bike and pedestrian trails

A little	37%
A lot	41%
Not at all	22%

Expansion of high-speed Internet access in your area

A little	26%
A lot	51%
Not at all	23%

Improvements to local bus services

A little	30%
A lot	37%
Not at all	33%

If local leaders determined that roads needed to be improved, which of the following would you support as a way to pay for improvements?  
*Please check all that apply.*

Property tax increase	11%
Local sales tax increase	40%
I would not support any increase (exclusive response)	53%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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How important, if at all, do you think growing downtown Springfield is to the Sangamon County economy?

Very important	46%
Somewhat important	32%
Neither unimportant nor important	15%
Not very important	5%
Not important at all	2%

How important, if at all, do you think growing downtown Springfield is to your own personal well-being?

Very important	25%
Somewhat important	26%
Neither unimportant nor important	29%
Not very important	13%
Not important at all	8%

Do you commute to work?

Yes	54%
No	46%

*If yes, during a normal work week, what form of transportation do you use to get to work?*

*Please check all that apply.*

Car/personal vehicle	96%
Bus	4%
Walk	2%
Bike	5%

In recent years, the Illinois State Fairgrounds has lacked funding for repairs and improvements. Which of the following would you like to see developed to support improvements to the Fairgrounds? *Please check all that apply.*

Increased state appropriations for the Fairgrounds 48%

Increased efforts to attract private funding through the newly created Illinois State Fairgrounds Foundation 72%

More year-round activities at the Fairgrounds (e.g., horse shows, races, concerts, trade shows) 87%

Creation of a master/strategic plan for the future of the Fairgrounds 66%

Other, specify 14%

The former YWCA property next to the Executive Mansion in downtown Springfield has been purchased by the city. What do you think would be the best use of this property?

Turn it into a space for recreation purposes 45%

Use it to create jobs by attracting businesses to the location 55%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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How safe or unsafe do you feel it is to travel on local roads and highways?

Very safe	8%
Safe	46%
Neutral	35%
Unsafe	10%
Very unsafe	1%

In the past year, when traveling out of town, which of the following modes of transportation have you used?

	Yes	No
Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport	32%	68%
Amtrak	29%	71%
An intercity bus like Greyhound	5%	95%
Car or personal vehicle	97%	3%

In a normal month, how often, if at all, do you use the Springfield Mass Transit (SMTD) bus system?

Almost every day	3%
Once or twice a week	1%
Once or twice a month	3%
Less often than once a month	7%
Never	86%

Are you a resident of Springfield?

Yes	75%
No	25%

*Please answer the next questions in this section only if you are a resident of Springfield. If you are not a resident of Springfield, please skip to the Economy section.*

For several years, local leaders have discussed the need for a second source of water in Sangamon County, also referred to as Hunter Lake or Lake 2. To what extent, if any, is creating a second source of water for Springfield a priority?

High priority	21%
Medium priority	39%
Low priority	28%
Not a priority at all	12%

Recently local leaders in Springfield have been discussing the possibility of creating a citizen advisory board (an independent board of users and citizen/owners) who can focus on the challenges facing City, Water, Light, and Power (CWLP). Do you support or oppose the creation of a citizen advisory board for CWLP?

Support	81%
Oppose	19%

Do you believe the City of Springfield should use its resources to hire a city planner to help develop and follow a long-term plan?

Yes	54%
No	46%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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### *Economy*

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Employed full-time	45%
Employed part time	8%
Self-employed	5%
Full-time student	1%
Unemployed	4%
Disabled, unable to work	6%
Retired	30%

*If you are currently employed, do you consider yourself to be underemployed?*

Yes	26%
No	74%

If you are not currently working, are you seeking employment?

Yes	81%
No	19%

Thinking about twelve months ago, would you say you are better off financially, worse off, or about the same?

Better off	24%
Worse off	20%
About the same	56%

What about current local business conditions in Sangamon County. Do you think these are better off, worse off, or about the same as they were twelve months ago?

Better off	5%
Worse off	46%
About the same	49%

Have you participated in employment training programs in Sangamon County?

Yes	8%
No	92%

*If yes, did you find these programs useful?*

Yes	92%
No	8%

How important, do you think employment training programs are for the local area?

Very important	55%
Somewhat important	37%
Not very important	6%
Not important at all	2%

In 2016, for the first time in its history, Sangamon County experienced a small population decline. Over the next 20 years, what type of population growth rate should Sangamon County encourage?

No growth at all	9%
Slower rate	16%
Same rate	38%
Faster rate	38%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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### *Culture and Recreation*

How satisfied, if at all, are you with your current access to local recreational or cultural events?

Very satisfied	9%
Satisfied	35%
Neutral	40%
Dissatisfied	11%
Very dissatisfied	5%

*Thinking about public facilities close to your home, would you rate the following as excellent, good, fair, or poor?*

Your local library

Excellent	31%
Good	45%
Fair	18%
Poor	6%

Your local park

Excellent	32%
Good	45%
Fair	17%
Poor	6%

### *State Budget Impasse*

The State of Illinois is currently operating without a budget in place. What effect, if any, do you believe the state budget impasse has had on the Sangamon County economy?

Negative effect	88%
No effect	7%
Positive effect	5%

Have you personally been affected by the state budget impasse?

Yes	44%
No	56%

What role, if any did the state budget impasse play into the answers you selected in this survey?

A large role	27%
A small role	40%
No role at all	34%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

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### Demographics

What is the highest grade of school that you completed? Is it...

Less than high school diploma	6%
High school diploma or GED	26%
Trade school or technical training after high school	7%
Some college	24%
Four-year college degree	23%
An Advanced degree (PhD, MD, Law)	14%

If you completed a four-year college degree or greater, did you get any of these degrees from a local college or university?

Yes	43%
No	57%

What is your gender?

Male	45%
Female	51%
Other	0%
Prefer not to say	5%

In what year were you born?

18-34 years old	16%
35-44 years old	17%
45-54 years old	21%
55-64 years old	22%
65 or older	24%

Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino (a)?

Yes	1%
No	99%

Do you generally consider yourself...*Please check all that apply.*

White	81%
Black or African American	12%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3%
Asian	2%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0%
Some other race	3%

*Others mentioned: Swede/Fin; Multi-racial; Jewish; Irish; Indian Bharat; Human (2); Gypsy, space alien; Greek; European American; Caucasian American; American (4)*

What is your disability status?

Have a disability	17%
Do you not have a disability	83%

Do you identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender?

Yes	5%
No	95%

## Appendix A: Top Line Report

---

What is your marital status?

Single	22%
Married	47%
Widowed	10%
Separated	2%
In a civil union or have a domestic partner	2%
Divorced	15%
Other	2%

*Others mentioned: Single widowed; married but can't afford divorce; living with someone; engaged (2)*

What was your household's income last year before taxes?

Less than \$15,000 a year	8%
\$15,000-\$30,000	18%
\$30,001-\$45,000	16%
\$45,001-\$60,000	15%
\$60,001-\$75,000	9%
\$75,001-\$100,000	15%
More than \$100,000	19%

How often, if at all, do you attend religious services?

More than once a week	10%
Once a week	26%
One to three times a month	12%
At least twice a year	12%
Less often than twice a year	11%
Never	28%

Were you born in Sangamon County?

Yes	45%
No	55%

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

If you have considered moving away from Sangamon County what would make you want to stay?

A better job and better house
A better job market or employment opportunities
A better place to live; houses to rent are unreal at the price that they want to rent them for
A budget, serious changes to local and state government, more college programs, more trades
A different home-maybe
A different president
A job
A mayor with balls
A passed budget, more build-up of downtown such as a movie theater, more shops downtown
A state budget, better governor, better mayor, and stop trying to annex in the townships into Springfield i.e. Lake town, Southern view etc.
A state government that can do the job they were elected to do
A state that could act within their budget and pass a budget, and stop raising my property taxes
An area where family members are.
Arresting the neighborhood decline in the 62704 zip code; stop the increases in taxes and utility costs.
Away from Illinois more than Sangamon County, more safe activities for kids/families in the evenings to keep them occupied
Because drugs and guns and shootings all the time
Bellingham, WA
Better career opportunities
Better commitment to downtown. less train noise
Better economic environment, better water - left Chatham
Better employment, lower utilities, lower city/state taxes, better physicians (removal of SIU Medical in Springfield would alone keep us here)
Better interest rates on homes and much better schools, substantive school funding reform is a must for the future of the county and the state in general - There is also too much emphasis on building up the west and south sides of town.
Better job
Better job options and more recreation options
Better jobs
Better quality of weather
Better school choices & bigger lots
Better state level government and fiscal responsibility.
Better water, lower electric bills, police patrolling - Chatham has really bad water, water very expensive

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Bought a house in Port Charlotte for investment and winter breaks. I'll move there permanently if nothing is done about the gunfire here. The racket makes my dogs frantic and makes it risky to ride my horses.
Cheaper taxes
Children and jobs
Clear up the Illinois budget mess....has really impacted Sangamon County and areas businesses because of the uncertainty. Fed up with Illinois politics!
Consider leaving country. Blacks and illegals are allowed to riot burn cities, close highways etc. Being black does not give you those rights. Being illegal should get you deported- now.
Cost of living (low), job security, familiarity (I grew up here).
Currently employed in Sangamon County
Equal protection. Accountability by all retailers to keep their patrons safe while on their property with regulated mandate of clear camera footage.
Evidence that Springfield is trying to improve the community
Family
Family - (also it is less Sangamon County and more to do with that State of Illinois.)
Family & I am only 6 years from retirement.
Family and friends
Family living here
Family moving here
Family- If it weren't for local family, we would highly consider leaving the state (No IL Budget, high taxes).
Family, job
Family, secure job
Family/siblings
Finding a job
Fix road, put up speed signs, fix drainage system
Friends and family
Friends, house , and neighborhood
Getting the dope dealers out of our neighborhood - one person has already lost their life as a result of their violence.
Government needs to clean up its act
Grandchildren live here
Grandkids
I can't afford to move at this point and this is where my job is. But as soon as I can retire I am out of here.
I live downtown Springfield- We need more amenities- theater (movies), food services, shops, etc.
I love my home neighborhood & community. it's the horrible state/condition the state of IL is in that has me considering moving out of state.

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

I want out of Illinois.
I work at █. I've been there for 15 years. I'm only making \$11.90 an hour after 15 yrs. of service. Things just keep getting more expensive every year. My benefits at work are the only reason I'm still in this state; so I guess more money.
If all the section 8 homes were burnt down in my neighborhood.
If Illinois would balance the budget and deal with pension problems
If our adult children live in Sangamon county
If the crime rate, per capita, were to decrease significantly
Illinois in general is causing us to look elsewhere.
Illinois in general is financially a wreck & getting worse. Do not like what is happening to state gov't, higher ed, and social services.
Improvement in the weather - I hate the gray winter days, and long for the southwest.
Indiana near family
Inertia - convenience
It isn't so much staying- we have a horse that we board and would like to find small amounts of acreage with house and barn, pasture, etc.
Job
Job encouraged me to stay (move away to be closer to family- but I enjoy Springfield)
Jobs and a damn budget
Kentucky or Tennessee
Kick out all the politicians and start over.
Kids
Kids in high school - let them finish here
Kids/grandkids
Legitimate career opportunities for young adults with college degrees, a state budget so we can trust investing our future in this state
Less apartments/stricter guidelines & enforcement on historic homes/preservation/installing historic street lamps example: Enos park. more involvement in neighborhood committees/neater cleaner alleys/having neighbors that wanted to care more.
Less committees making decisions about small communities; taking away job (tax assessors, collectors, etc.) because people in the city don't understand small towns
Less crime, cheaper utilities
Less crime, more employment opportunities, more competitive tax rate
Less drugs, less taxes
Less expensive rent and utilities in my neighborhood, better schools, Springfield schools don't prepare kids with learning disabilities for life after high school or to go to college-they try but it's not enough
Less property tax
Less rental properties in our area

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Less taxes- my house is paid for & I still pay \$450 a month for taxes
Less taxes!
Less violence Improved public schools in city of Springfield
Lower my property taxes
Lower property taxes
Lower property taxes and get some politicians that know how to run the state - Illinois government is embarrassing
Lower property taxes, better safety in public places, such as downtown, White Oaks Mall, etc.
Lower property taxes, get a state budget, get rid of M. Madigan
Lower property taxes, lower prices on homes/condos, etc.
Lower property taxes, state income tax
Lower real estate taxes
Lower real estate taxes + property taxes
lower taxes
Lower taxes
Lower taxes (property) Sangamon county has one of the highest tax in Illinois - Time to lower property tax!
Lower taxes and higher pay
Lower taxes and rate of living expenses
Lower taxes, and a state government that does what they are paid to do.
Lower Taxes, Better water quality, lower utilities
Lower taxes, better water, better road maintenance
Lower taxes, more stable government
Lower taxes, State budget, State employee contract
Lower the real estate taxes
Lower utilities, no section 8 homes, city buses, repair streets, don't have to call every year to plow the street I live on, lower property tax, people keep yard up
Medical care
More advancement opportunities for minorities
More and more, I have lived here 39 years, the city council and state is a joke. Why? Do firemen spouses' get 100% of a fireman's pension? Why? Needs to stop!
More city services for yard waste, tree limbs and snow removal
More diversity, increased job opportunities
More jobs are needed
More jobs making a better tax base for infrastructure improvements
More natural areas, better (non-chain) restaurants, and more bike trails and environment awareness
More of a state issue than county. My property taxes are a big issue. also, I work in service industry so my income is directly effected by state/government jobs which have been suffering

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

More opportunities for purchase of home or rent for those with poor credit
More progressive ideas
More stable state government
More things to do with kids
Mostly weather related politicians trying to work together for the good of all
Moving off the corner I live in
My family lives in the area. Probably would look for more secure location away from drug dealer problems.
My job
My kids are here.
My mother is here (elderly), children finishing college
Neighborhood gentrification in lieu of continuing sprawl to the west, lower crime levels / improved safety, additional cultural activities
No winters- will retire in the southern states
Not sure
Not the county's fault- It's the state of Illinois bad behavior that makes me want to move. I want warmer weather also.
Nothing
Nothing - economy is done, no state budget & a governor only interested in helping wealthy & getting his way
Nothing - I plan to retire to another state.
Nothing really
Opportunity for growth in economic, recreation, safety, and advancement, next to Illinois political environment gets fixed, i.e. budget crisis, putting the state's interests above the politicians
OUT OF ILLINOIS
Out of state
Pass budget
Pay increase
Police that show up less than 1 hour after being called & police willing to do something about neighbors disturbing the peace - I am tired of being told that there is nothing that they can do. They seem to tell this to everyone unless you a
Political Changes, smaller government, increase in good paying job without having to join unions, more focus on rural areas
Property tax relief
Quiet and cleaner neighborhood
Reduced property taxes
Reduced school taxes for people over 65
Safe community, lower sales and property taxes
Safer neighborhoods

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

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Safety is my issue.
Schools receiving money owed from state
Some place warm all year like Florida or South California
State budget
State fixing the budget
State getting better jobs and taxes lowered
State government and stability
State government improves
Stop raising my assessments. Family court is spiteful. [REDACTED] leaving was a blessing to families in this county. [REDACTED] is a tool and has no idea of the impact she is making; she is hurting the process.
Taxes
Texas
The resignation of the Governor
The state would have to solve its unsolvable financial mess.
The village of Grandview needs to enforce their ordinances and clean up the village and fix the roads.
Trout streams & mountains
Upgrade shopping and recreation
Warmer
Warmer weather, sunshine in winter, more performing arts, better restaurants
We found a nice neighborhood out of Springfield.
Work pay increase, change of scenery

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

What is the biggest change needed, if any, in order to improve K-12 education in your local school district?

A complete overhaul & state funding restored
A new Junior and Senior High School building with modern conveniences such as air and state of the art technology -and the state of Illinois to get up to date on their payments
A return to basics-reading, writing, math, science, history/geography, PE, music/art, and technology
A state budget
A state budget each year on time
Accountability for the students
Adequate, consistent state funding; county sales tax increase; reduction in the number of TIF districts - in other words, money.
After school Bus service for pre-K and specialized service for students needing treatment or sitter
Although my grandchildren attend private school, I believe that all teachers would benefit from salary increases. We need to pay those who teach a better wage.
Been out of school so long I cannot really answer
Better allocated funding - there should be more of a focus on the most needy schools and the most needy children in those schools, with fewer funds going toward administration and more toward the students' actual development.
Better communication via local paper & community - better focus on downtown & use of library & Capitol
Better drug education - school is out-of-date- the kids know more than the administration.
Better facilities
Better facilities to accommodate growth & technology; better technology integrated into the learning curriculum; on site dual credit classes at the H.S. level
Better facilities, more teachers, more technology
Better funding and higher quality curriculum
Better management of school budget
Better math, English, and handwriting
Better pay for teachers
Better programs for Lanphier, Sacred Heart, Springfield High School
Better teachers
Better teachers and teacher accountability
Better teachers in all schools
Better teachers, local control
Better teachers, stronger academic standards and priorities
Better use of available funding
Budget
Building and sports complex updates

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Bullying
Bullying and fairness of sports
Change state school funding
Change the grades and help other students when needed with special needs
Chatham
Classes for parents on parenting and respect, more money for teachers and facilities and support for the teachers, no bussing, children attend neighborhood schools
Community, especially parental involvement, biggest difference I experience overall between private versus public, parental involvement
Consistent funding from the state
Consolidate the public high schools so as to get new buildings and less overhead, have two great schools instead of one fairly good and two rather average, two schools with 1,500-1,600 instead of 3 at 1,000, plus new facilities
Consolidation
Control costs and discipline, focus on academics instead, not buildings or sports
Crowded classrooms
Currently in Laketown & good school but my concern is junior high and high school and bullying and disrespect
Cursive handwriting, phonics, and old school math
Cut out administrators, teach kids some trades, cut common core math
Decisions made by educators not politicians
Discipline
Diversity
Do away with buses
Do away with sports or not be so focused on them
Do away with tenure for teachers
Do not know, have no associations with the school or school-age children
Don't have kids so no idea
Don't know the education system here in Chatham
Don't pass children on to another grade if they haven't completed requirements, private school area year ahead of public school kids, follow their curriculum, less classroom sizes (smaller) support services for kids that are falling behind
Don't waste money. Don't raise taxes.
Educate children in basics- math, science, English, history - not indoctrinate
Educate the parent/parents about how they should help educate their children, starting at birth
Educate the students to their potential
Eliminate computers (business tool); the cost has robbed our children of the three R's. Computers are for office use only. Teach the Constitution that was backed by God and the Bible - shame on educators for not standing against the "me" regenerations! Pre-school children should have a

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

child's life, fun, nature activities, Mothers/dads - their organization shouldn't need a school. On the other hand, kids without benefits pre-school so ambivalence sets in.
Eliminate half of the administration and busing
Eliminate teachers union
Eliminate teachers' tenure
Elimination of so many trailer courts
Ell services are needed
Emphasize the basics. If they are going to teach values, support church, and family don't work against them.
Enforce homework policy and stop the lack of discipline.
Equal access to ALL educational opportunities for ALL students
Equal funding
Expel the riff-raff that do not want to be in school to learn
Finance
Financial
Financial resources
Find another way to fund schools other than relying on our extremely high property taxes and politicians bad judgment
Full federal and state funding
Full funding state of Illinois share of state mandated programs
Funding
Funding for student education
Get ahead of current technology, better school buildings
Get away from PC
Get back to old school math and TEACH the subject not just introduce and return to it later.... AAARRRGGGHHHH
Get disruptive kids out of the classroom
Get drugs eliminated or under control with school age children
Get rid of "common core"!
Get rid of common care, get state budget that we can live with, better discipline, no cell phones in classes or headphones, teach respect and responsibilities
Get rid of common core
Get rid of common core and get smarter teachers
Get rid of common core and TIF
Get rid of common core education and actually teach the children about real life
Get rid of common core-teach cursive
Get state funding issues resolved.
Give teachers back the class room control they need. Private school has control and it works good.

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

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Give teachers more control over students. Parents need to be more responsible parents. They need to instill good values in their children's minds. Instead of running after money, parents need to spend more time with their children and take care of them better.
Go back to basic learning, not worry about being high class people of other countries, more reading books
Go back to neighborhood schools
Good school and safe schools for kids to go to
Have been away too long to make a judgment on improvement
Have not experienced K-12 here yet
Have the state pay their bills to schools so they can operate properly
Have the State provide funds that district is supposed to get. This is not happening because of Mike Madigan and the Democrats who he controls in the legislature. Madigan is a dictator who has been speaker for 30 years.
Having been an educator, I think the challenges presented by the students is not sufficiently taken into account. Too much talk is given to how to improve teachers. The teachers are not as much of "the problem" as assumed. It is difficult to teach students who do not want an education.
Higher education standards that are less focused on standardized testing
Higher standards, more funding from property taxes
Higher teacher salaries
Hire better teachers, fire incompetent ones, discipline children when needed, administration have teachers backs
Home ec classes, life skill classes
I did not have a good experience with my son in Springfield Public Schools although I was a active parent.
I do not feel qualified to make this judgment because of my age and lack of current relative information.
I don't have kids, but do have a lot of nephews and nieces. I think kids have their faces in cell phones & Facebook too much even at a very young age. They need to read more books and write more instead of counting on computers to do their work, plus they need more physical ed.
I don't know of anything they are not already doing.
I haven't had two children in Tri-City for 35 years, therefore unable to know the changes needed
I like control of school at a local level
I like our school
I like that the seniors have the opportunity to take dual credit classes. However, I feel that not having honors classes for the other classes is a disservice to them.
I moved out to Riverton because the education is better.
I see evidence that kids who grow up with solid homes get a great education here- Those who come from chaotic homes, without role parents don't do well, regardless of efforts to tutor and assist.

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I think you need to work on bullying which would give kids a better chance at concentrating on their studies than worrying about who is going to bully them.
I'm retired from District 186. In retrospect I believe the district Caucasian teachers and administrators need training on how to respect and accept substitute educators. More importantly they need to show respect to black students.
Illinois to pay hurting school districts. More social workers & psychologists to help minority kids deal with society
Improve condition of school buildings
Improve infrastructure. more minority teachers, including males
Improve student to teacher ratio
Improved funding
Improved state funding
Increase funding base, quit reliance on property tax
Increase teachers' pay and focus on educating kids and their behavior
Increased funding - better collaboration between teachers and parents
Increases funding especially for early childhood education.
Just need money owed by the state of Illinois - school district is well run
Keep current superintendent - do not change
Keeping the standards high
Kids with learning disabilities don't get the help they need - parents have to keep on top of teachers constantly - I know they try but there are not enough specialized teachers for all of the kids who need help.
Kids, old people, ADHD, autism etc. - everyone is a victim and wants money for it. It makes no difference how much money is raised, our politicians will not spend it.
Kindergarten, first, and second graders need two teachers (one preferably a special ed teacher) to determine which children can function in this classroom- helping all children of course. Knowing if a child cannot function well, they can then be transferred to special school for emotionally disturbed children. When the child can handle being in a regular classroom they could be transferred back. In the mainstream school, good manners should be fostered- kindness and respect should be the atmosphere of the school. All schools should get the same amount of money. It should not be based on property values.
kindness, manners
Less bullying and parent involvement
Less emphasis on sports - we need to prepare our children for life after high school. While I believe college is important, we are losing our skilled laborers. We will always need skilled workers in our society and it seems there is a general consensus that these workers are not as educated as those who have college degrees. There needs to be an emphasis on attending trade schools and that these jobs are just as important and vital to our communities.
Less emphasis on sports and more on education

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Less government involvement in school, core values of right and wrong is not being taught
Less homework, address the bullies issues
Less students, open class, more teachers, better facilities for schools
Let schools kick out students that don't want to be there and are disrespectful and interrupt learning for students that want to learn. Stop with the safe place crap!
Lose the politics
Make sure schools are fully funded for the basics and not sports. Arts and sports are important but not exclusive to being educated. You know lottery was to help fund education - don't believe that is happening.
Make the success of students' passing to the next grade relative to salary increases.
Merit based employment/better use of management positions
Modernization of school & facilities
Money
Money paid to school districts that the state owes them
Money, interaction, and teamwork between administration, teachers and students
More classes offered, more electives
More cost efficient, lower property taxes, less school administration
More discipline in the school system
More discipline/greater staff to student ratio/greater funding/health and science academy/more involvement & funds from local businesses
More diversity
More diversity in religion and ethnicity
More emotional and financial support of educators
More emphasis on academics and less on sports
More employment
More funding
More funding, more arts
More funding, more job security for faculty
More involvement for students - it seems a large number of children lack stability
More liberal expulsion policy- develop/expand vocational education for low skill students
More money
More money and more activities to keep kids busy
More money and teachers, mothers and fathers that care
More money for schools
More money needs to be spent on remediating the socio-economic needs of low income students
More money to match all the money Chatham and Rochester get due to higher rent districts
More of 3 R's- less liberal indoctrination
More one-one-one with kids

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

More opportunities, more motivation, more extra curricular activities, improved course offering, more strict rules and enforcement, not allowing the kids to manage and dictate their education
More parent involvement
More parent involvement, strong pre-school opportunity for all students
More parental involvement
More sports opportunities
More state funding
More state money
More teachers
More teachers and aides
More teachers to spend time with special needs children
More teachers, less administration
More teaching, teachers and funding
More text books and fewer program cuts
More time in class
My child had horrible cooperation with teachers in middle school. He is autistic with physical tics and was told to stop. I had to go to the special ed director for 2 face to face meetings! These teachers need more training. The high school is GREAT though.
N/A - haven't had school age children in my household for 20 years
Need to achieve higher ACT scores
Needs more facilities
Nepotism
New buildings
New high school
New middle school support from community (Realtors quit pushing Chatham, SHG, etc.)
No clue
No common core
No idea- children were not raised in Sangamon County
No kids
None
None - it is a good school system.
None - Rochester is an excellent school district.
Not as many opportunities as the larger districts offer
Not educated enough to answer
Not knowledgeable
Not same since do not have school age children attending school
Not sure
Nothing

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

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Parent involvement, tutors, reinstall the MAA project (circa 1968-1966) Science and math are paramount, but so are the liberal arts!
Parent participation and support
Parental choice- more charter schools and vouchers/ scholarships for private schools
Parental guidance
Parental involvement, it's sorely lacking
Parents need to step up to the plate
Parents taking responsibility
Pass a budget
Passing of a bond referendum
Pay teachers more
People's taxes should not have to pay for public school buses to take athletes to events or to scholastic bowl
Please keep the arts- I have grandchildren who are school age and they need music, art, PE all of that to stay well balanced
Police on site
Predictable state funding
Provide quality education for ALL children regardless of race or gender
Public needs to support 186
Public school needs a way to handle the disruptive children & deal with drugs
Put prayer back in school
Reduce administration & related costs
Reduce bureaucracy, make district leaner & more efficient even if there are larger class sizes- I went to grade school with 40 kids in each class & got a good education
Reduce classroom sizes and hire more teachers
Reduce teacher union influence, return authority to parent, offer vouchers to let families choose their schools
Remember that people are people, and that we are all on the earth to learn, live, and love. Don't try to change or limit who a person is.
School discipline, removal of trouble maker students from classroom
School district is fine
School funding
School is great, taxes are high
School of choice, better teachers and less politics
Schools are underfunded and teachers are underpaid - getting them to actually teach will be a long term challenge
Schools need to be mindful not all kids are college bound. They need to offer classes for technical /trade oriented kids.

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Schools need to involve parents more, have to bring them into the schools, buses need, after school/evenings for parents
Should not bus
Sidewalks for students attending Jefferson school - no East-West route
Since I don't have children, I really don't know.
Smaller class rooms (less students)
Smaller class size! Chatham is building so many new homes--where are all these kids going to go? My oldest daughter (5th grade) has 28 kids in her class, with only 1 teacher
Smaller class sizes for reading and math at the elementary level
Smaller class sizes, safer - moving out of district for upcoming child due to low educational scenes of Springfield schools
Smaller classes, free after school tutoring (only), more 1 on 1 teachers or helpers (assistant) or even other student tutors
Smaller classrooms (less students per teacher)
Smaller classrooms, P.E. and health classes, to teach children proper etiquette and life skills
Smaller student: teacher ratio
Smarter teachers
Society must value education
Special ed for the upper tier students - community mentoring, esp. for high school students
Special education services
Spend money wisely, raising taxes
Spent 33 years in 186 Springfield and 4 years in New Berlin. Teachers are great in both schools.
Springfield 186 needs to improve facilities.
Stable state funding
State budget & proper funding (100%)
State budget getting approved
State budget/funding
State funding
State funding and support
State funding coming through
State needs to fund all education at appropriate and promised levels, both K-12 and higher education.
State of Illinois pay their bills, helping & motivating children be engaged in education and ready to learn, helping families support their K-12 children in learning and being prepared for school (enough sleep, food, support for homework, etc.), providing support for teachers in their jobs....trying to forgo teacher burnout, make the state pay their fair share of education - property and sales taxes are already too high! I would rather pay more state income tax that HAS TO come back the community.

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Stop cutting back on school staff when you are getting more kids going to these schools and expanding the schools.
Stop new enrollment
Stop the Marxist socialization of children. Schools should educate, not indoctrinate. The majority of students cannot pass the standardized tests.
Stop wasting money
Strong, evidence-based parenting, pre-natal, and early childhood programs
Tax increase: to improve buildings, hire elementary librarians, pay for curriculum
Taxes already too high
Taxes need to be used wisely. No one takes responsibility.
Teach children to relate to each other without smartphones. Requires classes in personal finance and housekeeping.
Teach our children and provide for them in their own community with the same quality of education given the west side of town.
Teach without injecting politics or personal agendas.
Teachers are teaching there
Teachers are very good, but need high honors classes some students have moved because they aren't given here
Teachers being paid better salaries, then we get quality educators - the lower salaries keep the good teachers away. Start teaching manners and being polite to each other.
Teachers do not teach, they need to make kids understand the topic before jumping to the next, every kid should learn and every teacher must own up to it
Teachers that live what they do & take interest in our children -a good teacher improves your child wanting to learn & expand, pay more attention to the teachers
Teachers who care about the pupils
Teaching critical thinking- not to the tests
The area where you live shouldn't determine where you go to school.
The biggest challenge is that upper and middle income families are not sending their children to Springfield 186. The perception is that the Springfield Public Schools cannot provide quality education and that the schools are not safe. The private schools, mostly parochial, and suburban schools, mostly Chatham, Rochester and Williamsville, draw families away from the District 186 schools and thus the pool of students becomes more tilted to lower income families. I have no idea as to whether the perception is based upon reality. My children are middle aged. But the school district has a definite PR problem. And the real estate folks in this town are not afraid to quietly push the supposed superiority of other schools.
The money should be used for kids and their educational needs and NOT for raises and things not needed, they are not applying their funds properly

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

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<p>The school district needs to spend more wisely and put more attention and money on education and less money and attention on sports. Schools should be strict on bullying and stop favoritism. It's been like that since I was a kid. If you have the wrong last name - you are nothing.</p>
<p>The school district seems to be doing well in all areas.</p>
<p>The state getting it's crap together and funding schools</p>
<p>The State needs to get their act together and start getting the money back to the schools.</p>
<p>The State of Illinois must ensure the local school district receives the general state aid in a timely fashion - pass a budget. The governor must submit a budget.</p>
<p>The state to pay the schools what they have coming</p>
<p>The system overall</p>
<p>There should be more little schools that are ranked in top 25 year in &amp; year out, based on the Illinois schools report card. The only school that is ranked is "Iles" grade school, year in year out top 5 always in the last 10 years.</p>
<p>They need more money to improve building and technology; have good teacher: student ratio, implement and maintain programs for at-risk children, compete with suburban schools who draw taxpayers out of Springfield (facilities mainly influence the latter)</p>
<p>Throwing additional money does not improve quality, teacher responsibility</p>
<p>Unknown, our children attended Catholic schools (allow prayer in public schools)</p>
<p>Update information in education</p>
<p>Use current funding the right way - live within your means like the rest of us.</p>
<p>We have a 16 month old &amp; would like to feel safe about putting her in public schools instead of resorting to a private school.</p>
<p>We need to start teaching and have less emphasis on how well students test or do exams, because not everyone does well on test or feels comfortable taking them.</p>
<p>We sent our children to Lutheran grade schools and high school (4 children). We believe public education is headed in the wrong direction, following the agenda pushed by gay rights, common core, etc. We are in favor of a voucher program for those wanting to send children to private/parochial schools!</p>

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

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In recent years, the Illinois State Fairgrounds has lacked funding for repairs and improvements. Which of the following would you like to see developed to support improvements to the Fairgrounds? *Please check all that apply.* (Other responses)

A budget
A small skilled group of workers (probably contracted) to do repairs and solve problems rather than the hacks that are working out there now with their sick days and absences and attitudes
Accurate accounting
Add slot machines
Adding more events to bring even more people & money to our state - wine tent, boat rides, water rides - things disabled people and seniors can do- I have some struggles getting through the crowds. Mariachi bands with food & dance
Address disabled people that do not own wheel/power chair but need transportation that does not cost an arm and a leg
All of the above- Disgraceful what's happened
Attract corporate money for maintenance and naming buildings
Better entertainment for fair worth listening to
Bring back agriculture
Bring back Bill Ford- the cash at the main gate never sees the bank
Bring back Blues and Jazz tent with big names
Cancel it -no budget equal no fair
Car shows and other activities bring in a lot of income
Change - something new is always an attraction
Close it- put up state owned buildings and stop paying all these ridiculous rents - free parking for employees - they are just paying rent for crap buildings- many owned by lobbyist and buddies
Colorado has great fairgrounds
Community training: culinary, gardening, etc.
Corporate sponsorship and support for individual buildings and areas. i.e. the Caterpillar conservation area, the AT&T Colloquium etc.
Cut welfare funds and give it to the fairgrounds
Decrease train noise
Do all needed repairs/ upkeep
Dump the Quincy fair - we don't need state fairs
Either fund it adequately from state revenues, or close it & sell the property
Encourage volunteers and more publicity through articles for 4H etc. and give more attention to positives of youths
Fair should be self-sustaining

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Fix the facilities and bring in more revenue by yearly activities and mix new and innovated events with nostalgia
Foreclosure not needed
Fundraisers, raffles etc.
Fundraising
Get rid of the politics
Go after large shows such as RV MFGs, truck MFGs
Good funding foundation
Gospel performance
Government driving events away
Harness racing -people now have to go to New York & other places to see it
Have free gate (more people would come), get drum and bugle back again
Hire ex-cons/ get rid of background checks to a certain level
Horse show money, save for repair collision on barns for horse entertainment money repairs grandstand, track and needs fans in grandstands new sound systems, new stage
I have attended Fair off & on since 1955, needs help now
I'm more concerned over hungry, abused children.
Improve roads
Increase activities at the fairgrounds
Increase entry fee
Increase fees for anyone using the fairgrounds
Increased usage fees to be used only for fairground up keep and repairs
Indifferent to the fairgrounds
It may be that the fair grounds are no longer an important part of our community and not necessary to maintain. The state fair is no longer a major destination for families. What role does it and the fairgrounds play in our community?
It needs to be kept in good condition
It should be self-supporting as it is in other states.
Keeping admissions fee reasonable
Kidapalooza (all activities included with administration indoor and outdoor activities)
Liquidation sales, car & park swap meets
Look to the need of the state fair
Lower fee to go to fair so more families could go.
Lower other spending
Lower price at gate
Make a three leg stool with three forces to control and promote activities on fairgrounds: agricultural leaders; statewide board members; foundation board members; competent board members.
Make it more secure during the state fair

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

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Manage the money better and with less employees
More activities, if they make the buildings and facilities safe
More career fairs/sale consignments/concerts
More free market and diverse entertainment year round
More interest for actual fair events
Move Illinois State Fair to Du Quoin
Need more jobs year round at fairgrounds
New management period
No longer necessary-close it
Professional county planner for fair grounds
Put state employees nothing to work on fairgrounds same with inmates
Remodel the coliseum
Require Rauner to pay for it all personally
Return funds from years of appropriation
Schedule maintenance rental costs, remove necessity for electronics to turn on lights
Sell Du Quoin and privatize state fair
Sell off some fairgrounds property to private enterprise
Senior citizen activities & get together
Should hire/promote Illinois businesses and people
Something needs to be done to preserve the fairgrounds and buildings
Sponsorship of buildings
State of Illinois should pay their bills and money owed
Stop paying politicians so much and use it for getting our state back in shape, and our fairgrounds.
The condition of the fairgrounds is a disgrace!
The place is decrepit and deteriorating - Fix it
The state has plenty of revenue, needs to be appropriated appropriately
The State of Illinois is headed for disaster, in my opinion. If they decide to raise taxes, there will be even more emigration than there already has been, which will further erode the tax base.
Try to raise funds to be able to fix the coliseum
Unify presentations to buy expenses
Upkeep needed badly
Use inmates for more repairs, e.g., painting, mowing, small repairs
Use it for private rental to generate revenue
Volunteer clean-up days - schools, scouts, church groups etc. help out

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If you have been affected by the budget impasse, how have you been affected?

A county without a budget affects all citizens. Moving forward all citizens should feel betrayed and let down by their elected officials. It's ludicrous not to have a budget in place by the ones you voted into office.
Access to healthcare is slowed
Access to some services - also when it comes to our advocacy sources
Added stress
Affects everyone in the state of Illinois on a daily basis
All citizens of the state are affected due to the ineffective leadership unable to provide the state with a budget or uphold their constitutional duty. We have the worst credit rating of all the states, not to mention the corruption; too many politicians have been sent to prison.
Anxiety to spend money or invest in home.
As a state employee retiree, I've had to pay medical professionals at time of service because Governor Rauner has not submitted a budget and medical claims aren't paid in a timely manner.
As a State employee working to implement Federal grant funded programs, without a budget the State will lose over \$15M in Federal funds to cover the costs of some research and environmental programs. This is very difficult for the State. The backlog of bills continues to grow and no one seems concerned. This administration is ruining the State. It will take decades to get out of this mess!
As a state employee, it's frustrating not knowing how secure the future is.
As a state employee, the uncertainty of not having a budget is stressful.
Because of the Democrats not staying within the income that comes in, the budget is a disaster. They used the lottery money for other projects rather than school funding. Dishonesty figures into the state our State is in. Power is seen as the evil that has caused this impasse.
Budget cuts at work, reduction of resources
Business has been affected slightly
Business is slow to invest because of the negative press regarding Illinois
Business payments for state contracts delayed more than 6 months
Businesses I work with and patron are not being paid
By the state neglecting it's duties, patients now often have to go without treatment since the plans they use are being cut and aren't paying their bills....so medical offices aren't accepting them. Illinois is run by children; it's a disgrace.
child care.
Children's school is owed, so now I pay more for school sign up
Closing of state facilities used by public
Community agencies, grant-making entities, and community service providers with whom I work have cut back on services or are unable to create plans for the future.
Community college employee; no funding for higher ed is painful for all
Constant negativity broadcasting loss of intelligence among decision makers party power struggle accomplished
Cut back on activities in Sangamon County water services and district and staff reductions
Decline in services

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Delayed medical payments
Denial of medical services because I have state insurance plan, local restaurants losing business because state employees saving for a strike, lack of grant funding for social services, high level of angst about uncertainty with the state, university budget issues cutting classes, staff, etc.
Depression over billionaire governor and pig headed ideas.
Don't of the reason I retired
Don't see doctors and dentist unless necessary. Try to not spend money due to uncertainty of employment and of getting paid
Due to lack of budget, premiums and other payments from insurer Healthlink are not being made. Some Doctors are not taking the insurance causing hardship.
Each and every citizen of Illinois has been affected by the incompetent politicians. I'm mad!
Economically, projects not being addressed, businesses leaving the area, schools not being funded adequately
Employed by state university, so it has a diverse impact on everything we do
Employment
Employment losses, local businesses and hospitals suffering, social services cut, higher crime
Employment uncertainty
Employment/salary issues, fewer services
Every citizen in Illinois has been affected by the impasse.
Every citizen of this county is affected- it relates to all businesses, local economies and discourages business and the public! Fewer people in Illinois will pay higher taxes for those that left. People are moving out!
Everyone has
Everyone has been affected. It's time to lower property taxes. Seniors are on a fixed income and can't afford tax increases.
Everyone is affected by Madigan's 40 years of mismanagement. They will raise our taxes.
Everyone is affected.
Failure to pay insurance companies has caused providers to change or reduce services.
Family members left state after eight years without a raise.
Feeling frustrated and hopeless about the impasse and unwillingness of legislators and governor to push for needed increased revenue
Friends and family unable to do business
Funding for my employer delayed
Funding for the nonprofit I work for
Funding of higher education
Funding shortfalls have created great stress in the work that I do
General negative feelings, state bills not being paid to businesses and individuals, interest paid due to backlog
Have to pay out of pocket for bills the state needs to pay
Haven't been paid by State in medical office
Health care changed
Health insurance
Health insurance in doubt constantly - may lose one full-time income from household

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Healthcare payments
Higher cost on items and utilities
Humiliation on national news
Husband is a contractor - fewer construction jobs available because businesses are afraid to spend the money for improvements
I am a state employee and my healthcare and job security have been negatively affected.
I am a state employee.
I am a state of Illinois worker- no cost of living increases- which should be yearly-anxiety for the future of my paycheck being given to me
I am employed by a non-for-profit substance abuse facility that has had to cut back on the non-insured and Medicaid clients we serve due to the impasse.
I am owed a large sum of money.
I believe everyone is affected to some degree. I also believe politicians do not consider their constituents anymore - it's the fact they are in there for themselves.
I cannot find help to do home improvement for my home it's the same thing
I cannot plan or do anything because I don't know what will happen with my job. I work for the state. Our health insurance isn't paying bills timely, so doctors are making us pay up front and wait for reimbursement. My office is now charging \$44 a month to park-pay cut- no raises still owed back pay from 2011 - this state is awful
I don't have much money as I use to for little extras only necessities.
I get paid by the day and they cannot pay me all I'm owed.
I get paid to watch my grandson while my daughter works and it takes 2 weeks to get my paycheck and sometimes almost a month.
I go to the Senior Circle daily. They can only be opened four days a week due to the budget not being passed
I have a small antique business. Sales have been steadily declining for one.
I have placed most buying decisions on hold.
I retired early to have the best chance to lock in pension and health benefits under attack by Rauner administration and his efforts to crush unions.
I retired from state of Illinois employment and am moving to Florida.
I sell paint for a living. When there is no budget then nothing is being built! It affects everyone!
I was a state employee. The programs that I helped administer are defunct because of no budget. My insurance premiums are paid but medical providers are not being paid.
I work for a 501 (c) (3) no raises, health care costs increased due to Obamacare
I work for Springfield Clinic. Hiring and pay increases have been effected because we are owed so much money from the state. I am working harder without increase because two little boys want to see who's going to cave. People's lives are being hurt and no one cares. It's a disgrace! Do your flipping job!
I work for the government and must pay for doctor and dentist visits now. I may stop getting a pay check if the courts decide we shouldn't get paid.
I work for the state - no supplies, no money, no salary increase - working conditions are poor

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

I work for the state and I am still owed money. I may have to start paying fully for medical treatment. I volunteer for a nonprofit and we have seen a steep decline in donations because our largest funders are suing more to clear organizations due to lack of state funds.
I work for the state and planning for the future is different if not impossible.
I work for the state of Illinois. We are woefully understaffed which effects the services we can provide.
I work for the state university. No budget equals no raises, laying off of other employees, and hiring freezes.
I work for the state!
I work in health care- people are scared to come to appointments because their job is not secure or worry about health insurance.
I work in the social services field so there is a reluctance to spend anything which is decreasing community spending and increasing the reliance on social services since places are closing down.
I worked at the Springfield clinic. They closed my program and I lost my job because the state didn't pay them and the Doctors didn't like not getting paid their huge salaries.
I'm affected when others in my community are affected.
I'm retired from the state of Illinois. The State needs to pay their part of medical and dental insurance.
I'm tired of hearing about the lack of progress.
Illinois low income home energy assistance in 2016 summer no help
Impeach Madigan, ban all unions-especially AFSCME
In constant fear of losing pension and benefits
In our schools
Inability to prosper, no upward mobility.
Income at my business has declined as families are watching their expenses more.
Income decreased, medical bills not paid
Insurance reimbursements
It had created less stability in my job which is funded partially by state funding
It has affected my business which is in Springfield. People are not spending money as they have in the past.
It has affected opportunities to find and keep clients at work, and exacerbates a general malaise over the county and state. I and those around me have had to step up our volunteer efforts to make up for the lack of services available to the most needy.
It has greatly affected the business that employs me.
It is not just me; everyone in this state has been affected. Our businesses are leaving and taking jobs. Parks are falling to pieces with trash every place. The only ones happy are politicians because they're still getting a check even though they're not doing a damn thing to fix it!!
It's disheartening the Governor and other elected officials are ruining this state. They are ridiculous and shameful.
It's embarrassing to be from Illinois. The level of corrupt politicians is so high its unbelievable.
Job loss
Job opportunities for my adult children
Kids programs

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Lack of construction projects
Lack of grant funding
Lack of payment related to work completed
Lack of spendable income for citizens
Less job opportunity
Less money for agency services
Less money is allocated to schools
Less police presence Poor road conditions- no repairs
Less programs for elderly
Less retail sales- people afraid and saving money
Less retail sales- people afraid and saving money.
Lost accounts, can't afford my services
Lost business from the highest paying customers, government employees
Lost job
Lost Snap benefits
Madigan should have been out years ago. Term limits are needed. Madigan is the cause of budget impasse.
Medical and dental insurance claims not being paid by state for over 18 months
Medical bill still waiting for payment
Medical bills have been unpaid.
Medical bills not paid
Medical bills not paid in a timely manner by insurance company
Medical insurance issues
Medical reimbursement
Monetary
Must pay up front for dental care - I am waiting for reimbursement for 2 years, so cannot afford to go for follow-up dental care needed
My business sales are declining.
My customers have no money for projects.
My employer has been significantly negatively impacted.
My employer is grant funded. The state of Illinois does not make approved payments timely which effects the entire operation of this school district.
My health insurance bills have not been getting paid therefore I have to call each time I get a bill to keep it from going to collections. This is for a test that was done in April 2016 and just had the same test in May 2017.
My health insurance gone
My husband has made non-profit and civic organizations a career and the state budget has caused several job opportunities to fall through.
My husband is still unemployed.
My husband works at UIS and as middle management AP, is concerned he'll be replaced with a younger, cheaper, less knowledgeable option.
My husband's employer requires reimbursement from the SOI and it is delayed significantly and there are concerns that funding could be eliminated altogether. Substantial budget cuts and lack of

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

payment to essential healthcare services impacts my employer and the work I do with vulnerable populations.
My job is in jeopardy after 30 years at the same job. There is no increase in salary so my salary is definitely not going as far as it used to; I had to get a second job.
My job is vulnerable, our children are in the state university and community colleges and their programs are weaker and at risk. I am considering an out of state college. My retirement benefits are in jeopardy. My doctors and dentists are not getting paid. I use personal money for my client programs (elderly). I and my friends are cautious about spending money. Our house was on the market way longer than normal--sales in general are down
My last pay raise was in 2006 and no cost of living, so medical, insurance, taxes, utilities, phone, cable goes less I make to take home - need a new car and can't - 29 years state worker and paycheck by paycheck only
My medical providers have not been paid. This prompts some providers to ask for full payment up front.
My pensions and health insurance
My school has made cuts
My state agency lacks fund for basics like copier repair and supplies. We all live with the fear that this governor will do almost anything to harm union employees.
My tax dollars are being wasted.
My wife has been going f***ing nuts over her hate of Governor Rauner. He is my hero. This has been causing issues.
My wife works at local schools, no raises due to funding from state
My wife works for the state and I watch my grandkids for my daughter part-time so that she can continue to work.
My work is owed billions of dollars.
No budget affects everybody state, local, government services
No dental bill payments (state insurance) for over a year -concerned about funding for my state pension
No jobs in Springfield, Illinois
No MAP grants
No pay increase - I haven't had a raise in a little over 4 years
No payment of medical bills
No raise/promotion due to state funds owed to husband's employer - as a state employee- buying own office supplies and increased stress with not enough staff
No raises
No raises -slower at work because no budget to purchase commodities for distribution
No raises for 4 years - other bills utilities have increased including rent - doctor and dental visits have to be rescheduled due to expensive rates - bills not being paid
No salary increase
No salary increase in many years despite much more work -greater stress at work due to fewer employees and more citizen complaints (yet state political appointees continue to do nothing)
Not for profit agencies have cut budgets/services I could have used
Not getting reimbursed for medical, dental or work travel expenses in timely manner

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

Not paying bills on time
Not paying bills- coworkers laid off- me next
Our entire future is at stake and in jeopardy as a result. I believe the entire legislative and Governor have betrayed the people and their oath and should all be impeached and/or jailed.
Our lawmakers - I am a democrat and at present they should be ashamed -Madigan needs to get out
Over \$1,500 in dental bills I had to pay up front out of pocket
Paying my health bills - need to get rid of Rauner and Madigan
Payment for doctor, dentist, eye care
Payment of health insurance claims
Payments made to my business
People have lost jobs and seniors are hurting
Poor image of our state affects each of us in many ways
Possibility of 'striking' AFSCME
Program shut down temporarily
Programs - I'm involved in cut
Programs cut that help friends and family
Raises- want to relocate
Reimbursement for medical expenses
Retired state employee-retirement system under attack and it is a sound system that was not under attack until Governor Rauner was elected
Retirement pensions, insurance, higher prices on everything, loss of services for senior citizens, loss of payments due from state (probably will not be reimbursed in my lifetime)
Salary lowered
School funding -I'm an elementary teacher
Senate reimbursement has not been paid.
Senior benefits
Several service providers have eliminated or severely cut back on services.
Slow growth in the economy
Slow pay to my healthcare providers
Smaller raises and employee cuts
So many positions were cut in my agency and now we are cutting programs again because of the budget impasse. My school is beginning to suffer as well because of the lack of funding.
Spouse works for state -no raises in years before and continues with this uncooperative group - quite obvious everyone suffers from this
SSCI (Senior services) closed on Fridays - used to play Canasta there on Fridays
State employee
State employee myself, public educators in my family, city employee in family
State employee- uncertain of my pay and insurance
State employee, no raises, delayed travel reimbursement
State health insurance- delayed payments
State is not paying their bills
State not paying bills on time for services we provided

## Appendix B: Responses to Open-ended questions

State not paying for services rendered - owed money
State not paying medical and dental bills
State of Illinois employment opportunities
State owes me money - no payment until budget
State worker in home
State worker worried about strike
Stress over pension/health system
The business that we own has lost business because the State of Illinois will not pay their bills.
The impasse affects us all. Social services are crucial for a healthy community. Everything has been affected including my faith in politicians, my access to services, and my desire to live in Illinois.
The shutdown of senior services
The state has been slow to pay their bills - dental claims - businesses suffer
The state is not paying the hospitals so hospitals have had to cut staff. Also, the state is not funding schools. We have 4 children. Property taxes are outrageous!
The state not paying their bills has caused SMTD to cut bus services.
The state owes my employer thousands of dollars. They are doing cutbacks.
They don't pay the bills.
This state needs dissolved and should be completely ashamed. All legislators and the governor are completely incompetent and need to be fired.
Two state workers in my home, always on edge if going to get paid; medical bills not getting paid
Uncertain about medical/dental coverage for retirees not on Medicare yet
Upfront payment for medical services - state withholdings - employment opportunities due to lack of confidence in the state
Was laid off my job last year, the business closed - insurance needs not met - expenses keep increasing - can't afford to attend several local events - feel isolated
We all have been affected in direct or indirect ways.
We are all affected because of those who no longer receive hot, home delivered meals, those with less access to mental health, domestic violence shelters, daycare, lack of state government activities in Springfield, etc. I have been a volunteer to assist helping provide meals for seniors when there was no budget.
We are owed co-pays we have fronted for medical services.
We are still waiting for a dental reimbursement for over \$900.00. This claim was filed in 2014.
We saved money rather than make purchases we wanted to make.
Wife is public school teacher - self-explanatory - I'm a landlord so residents have left due to job loss
Witness people hurt by lack of budget for social service programs
Work for a consulting firm and less work coming from the state.
Work in higher ed - no funding
Zero funding for higher ed