



CITY OF MAQUOKETA COMMUNITY SURVEY

East Central Intergovernmental Association &
City of Maquoketa

May 25 - June 16, 2018

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the Maquoketa Community Survey that was conducted 5/23/2018 – 6/16/2018 by ECIA for the City of Maquoketa. The results are based on a total of 615 responses. 556 online survey responses were collected through Survey Monkey 59 and were collected through paper survey forms. The report is divided into two sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the survey methods used and the data collected. Section 2 provides summary results of all thirty survey questions.

Section 1. Survey Overview

Survey Method

The survey was completed as part of the public engagement process for the *Maquoketa Comprehensive Plan* update. The survey included thirty questions related to existing and desired future conditions in Maquoketa. The questions were developed by a team that included the City of Maquoketa, ECIA, and the Maquoketa Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.

The City of Maquoketa and the members of the Comprehensive Plan Steering committee used various communications channels to publicize the survey including word of mouth, online, and local access TV. The Maquoketa Sentinel-Press published several articles about the comprehensive plan and included instructions on how to fill out the survey.

The online survey form was published on the city comprehensive plan project website http://ecia.org/maquoketa_plan. The survey page on the website included a link to the Survey Monkey form and instructions on how to fill it out. The City of Maquoketa made paper forms available at City Hall, the Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce, and the Maquoketa Public Library. City staff and committee members distributed paper forms to interested individuals and community groups. The Steering Committee originally intended to close the survey on June 8, but after reviewing survey response data, the group decided to extend the survey for an additional week until June 16.

This memo will summarize the results of the community survey. In some cases, it will also compare its results to the results of the 2012 *Maquoketa Future Choices Survey* that was conducted by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and sponsored by the Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce. Go to http://ecia.org/maquoketa_plan/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Future-Choices-Survey-2012.pdf for the full *Maquoketa Future Choices Survey* Report.

Key Findings

In reviewing the survey results the project team has identified several key findings that are highlighted below.

Quality of Life – Question 1

Most survey participants felt that the quality of life in Maquoketa was fair, good, or very good. Fair was the most popular response with 46 percent, 39 percent felt quality of life was good, and 4 percent felt it was very good. Only 9 percent felt that the quality of life was poor or very poor. These findings

represent an improvement over the 2012 survey where 22 percent rated Maquoketa as “Below Average” and 6.7 percent said it was “One of the worst communities in the eastern half of the state.”

Downtown Green Space – Question 21

Survey participants favored using the downtown green space for a park or community gathering place. When asked “What would be the best future use for the downtown green space?” 60 percent of participants selected community gathering place / park, 26 percent would like to see retail, 1.4 percent selected residential, and 11 percent would like to see some other use. These results differed from the 2012 survey where 68 percent wanted to see retail and only 10 percent wanted to see a city park.

Infrastructure, Safety, Poverty, and Workforce are Top Priorities – Question 18

Question 18 provided a list of fifteen items and asked participants to rank the items from most important to least important. Maintain Infrastructure (streets, water, sewer) received the highest average ranking, reduce crime and substance abuse ranked second, addressing poverty in our community ranked third, and recruit and retain workers came in fourth.

Outdoor Pool – Question 18

Question 18 also included Outdoor Pool in the list of 15 items to be ranked. When sorting the items by average ranking, Outdoor Pool ended up at number ten on the list, however a closer look at the data revealed a more mixed result. 10.3 percent of ranked the pool as their number one priority, while 16.3 percent ranked it as fifteenth most important. The split result indicates a divide within the survey participants, however, it is also important to point out that the survey asked participants to react to the idea of an outdoor pool and not a specific pool proposal. A specific proposal that included a preferred design, budget, and estimated the cost to city taxpayers would likely provide a better measure of public opinion.

Major Themes

The project team recognized several major themes in the responses to the survey questions and in the written comments. These themes are identified below and will be used to help develop a list of priorities for the *Maquoketa Comprehensive Plan*.

- **Downtown.** Many see downtown as critical to the community’s future. The recent streetscape project is seen as an improvement, but people would like to see more retail, restaurants, and gathering places in the downtown.
- **Recreation.** Recreation is seen as one of the community’s biggest strengths, especially its natural attractions like Maquoketa Caves State Park. Many recommended improving and expanding existing parks, trails, facilities, and programs.
- **Employment.** Lack of good paying jobs came up frequently in the survey responses. Survey comments focused on increasing the number of good paying jobs, attracting new employers to town, and improving the attractiveness of the city to young workers.
- **Housing.** Good quality housing is seen as an important for the future growth of the community. Some pointed out the poor condition of some existing older housing units while others commented on a lack of good quality rental housing for younger workers.
- **Infrastructure.** Infrastructure maintenance was the top ranked priority and many desire well maintained streets and utility infrastructure.

- **Schools.** Overall, Maquoketa’s schools received positive marks in the survey. Many listed good schools as a reason that they chose Maquoketa as a place to live.
- **Community and Family.** A sense of community and the presence of family are important to Maquoketa residents. In their comments, many talked about liking the small town feel of the community and living in Maquoketa to be close to family and friends.
- **Location.** Location was often cited as a reason for living in Maquoketa. 63 percent agree and 32 percent strongly agree that convenient location and highway access help Maquoketa stand out when compared to other Iowa towns. (Q7) Some said they moved to Maquoketa for a job in town or to commute to other larger cities like Dubuque or the Quad Cities for work.
- **Safety.** Overall, survey participants view Maquoketa as a safe community. 66 percent agree and 23 percent strongly agree that Maquoketa is a safe place to live. (Q7) Several commenters cited safety as a reason they chose to live in Maquoketa. However, comments also reveal concerns about poverty, crime, and substance abuse.

2012 - 2018 Comparison

When developing questions for the Maquoketa Community Survey, the project team reviewed the results of the 2012 *Maquoketa Future Choices Survey* conducted by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. The team chose to include several repeat or similar questions in the 2018 survey to help track changes in opinion over time. Figures highlight some of the 2012-2018 comparison questions.

Downtown Green Space

Both 2012 and 2018 surveys asked about the Downtown Green Space. The results of the two questions show a change in opinion of how the green space should be used. In 2012, 68.3 percent preferred the property be used as retail. In 2018, 60.8 percent said they would like to see a community gathering place or park on the property, with only 26.6 percent wanting to see retail. Of the 57 (11.3%) people that selected “other” for this question in 2018, 31 recommended some type of community gathering place or park in their written comments, indicating that people selected other so they could provide specific recommendations on what they would like to see in the gathering place or park. Adding these 31 responses would bring community gathering place / park up to 66.9 percent.

Figure 1. 2018 Question

In your opinion, what would be the best future use for the downtown greenspace located at 121 S. Main Street?	
Community Gathering Place / Park	60.7%
Retail	26.6%
Other (please specify)	11.3%
Residential	1.4%

Figure 2. 2012 Question

There are five lots that are vacant because of the fire in 2008. These lots are located downtown at 121 S. Main Street. What should be constructed on this site?	
Retail	68.3%
A city park	10.8%
Nothing	2.7%
Downtown parking	3.5%
Retirement village	1.9%
Residential housing	0.7%
Gas station	0.1%
Office	0.6%
Others (please specify)	11.4%

Appearance of Downtown

Results of the 2018 survey indicate that the appearance of downtown Maquoketa has improved in the eyes of survey participants. In 2012, 71 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that “Maquoketa stands out when compared to other towns because main street is an attractive place to be.” In 2018, the results flipped. 56 percent now agree or strongly agree with the same statement. Figure 3 shows the percentage point difference between the 2012 and 2018 questions.

Figure 3. Appearance of Downtown

Maquoketa stands out when compared to other Iowa towns because.....		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
2018	main street is an attractive place to be	7%	49%	32%	8%	3%
2012	Main Street is an attractive place to be	2%	10%	41%	31%	16%
	Difference	5%	39%	-8%	-23%	-13%

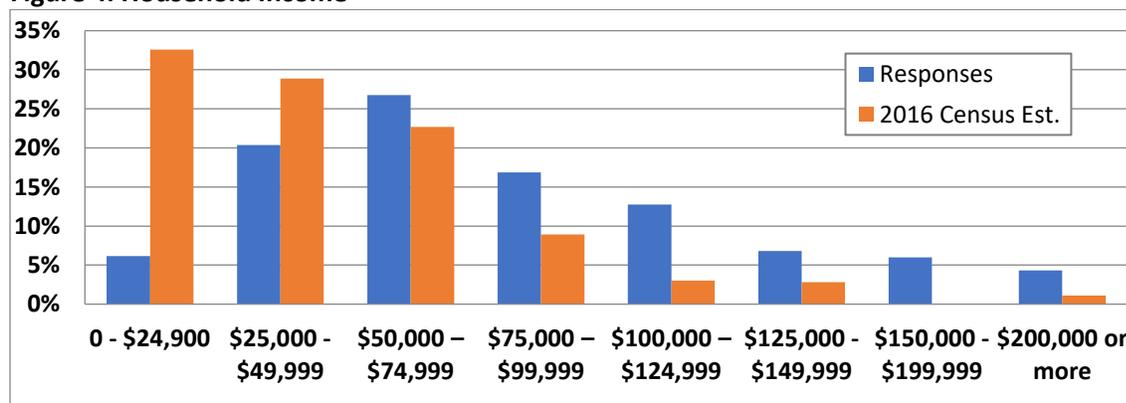
Demographics of Participants

Questions 22 through 29 of the survey asked a series of demographic questions. The project team included these questions as a way to learn more about the people who filled out the survey and to make sure that all the community’s residents have the opportunity to help plan its future. The team compared the information gathered through the demographic questions to demographic data from the US Census Bureau. The project team will use this information to guide future public engagement for the *Maquoketa Comprehensive Plan*. Figures 4 - 7 show the comparison for the demographic of income and age.

Income

The household income chart in Figure 4 shows that the lower income households are underrepresented in the survey sample. Households making less than \$25,000 make up 32 percent of all households in Maquoketa, but only 6 percent if survey participants came from a household making less than \$25,000. The comparison shown in Figure 4 indicates that the project team may have to do more to reach out to lower income residents of Maquoketa.

Figure 4. Household Income

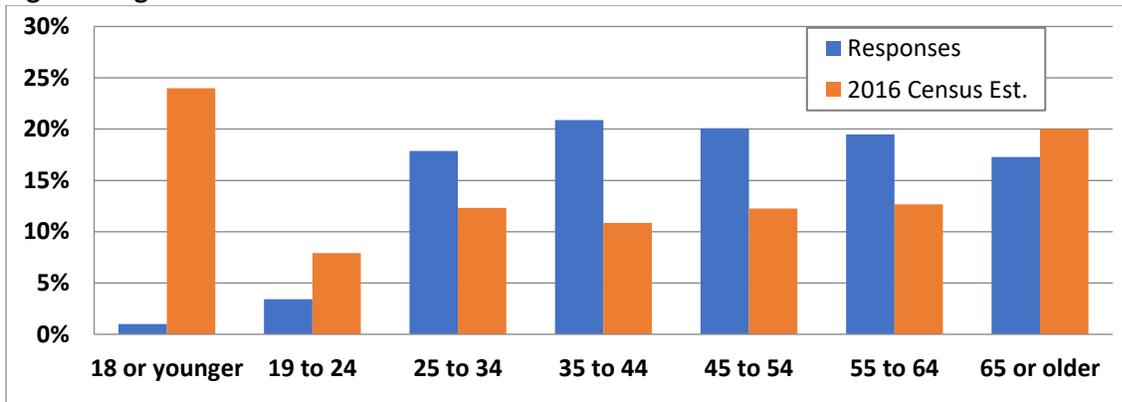


Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Age

Some age groups were also underrepresented in the survey results. Figure 5 shows that people under age 25 were underrepresented as were people age 65 and older, although to a lesser extent. The project team expected under 18 group to be underrepresented, as we would not expect young children to fill out a survey. However, the team is interested in the opinions of younger people, especially high school students. The team may need to create a special survey targeted at high school students.

Figure 5. Age

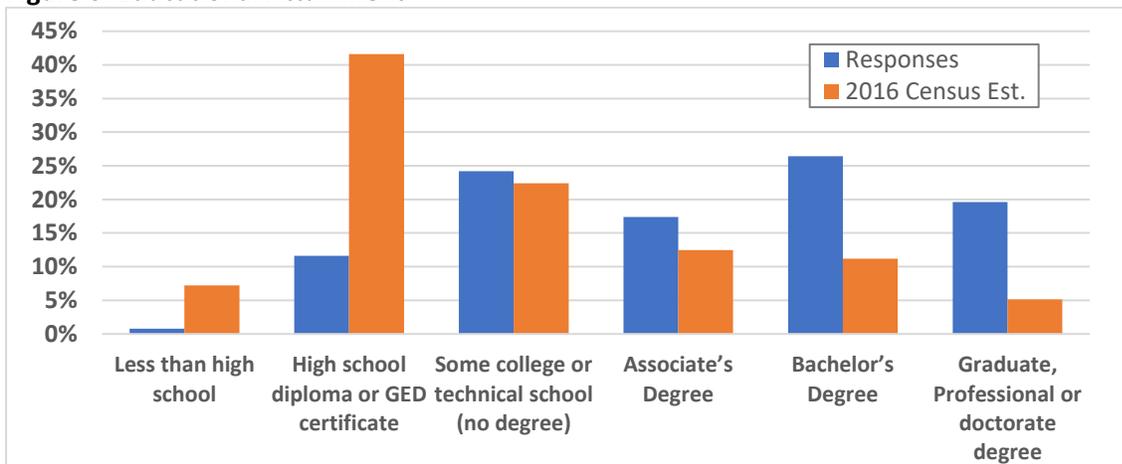


Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Education

Comparison of the education levels of survey participants and census estimated education levels for the City of Maquoketa reveals an underrepresentation of people with a high school diploma or GED certificate and over representation of people with associate's, bachelor's or graduate level degrees. Figure 6 shows that the census estimates that 42 percent of Maquoketa's population has a high school diploma or GED while only 12 percent of the survey population falls into this same category.

Figure 6. Educational Attainment

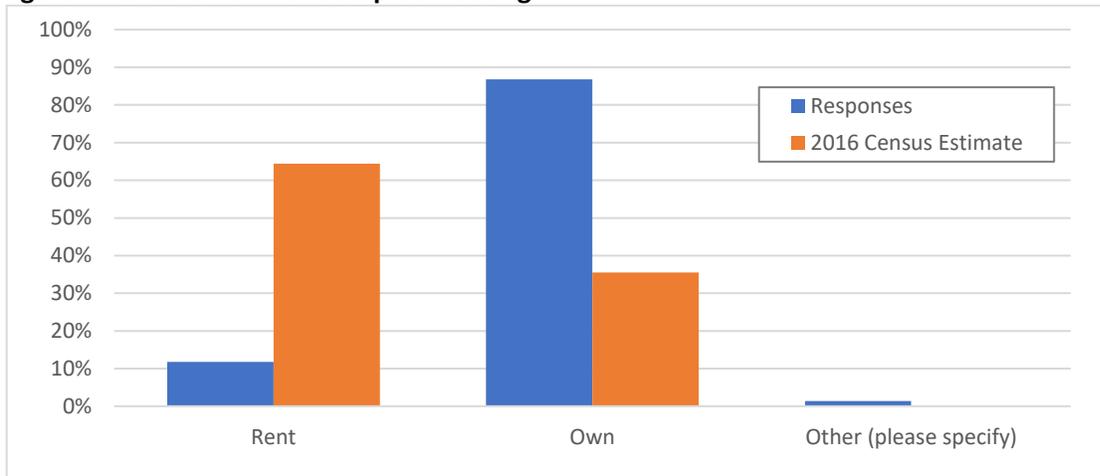


Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Renter or Owner Occupied Housing

87 percent of people filling out the survey reported they owned their place of residence while 12 percent identified themselves as renters. The census bureau estimates that 64 percent of Maquoketa residents live in owner occupied housing and 36 percent live in rental housing units.

Figure 7 Renter or Owner Occupied Housing



Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

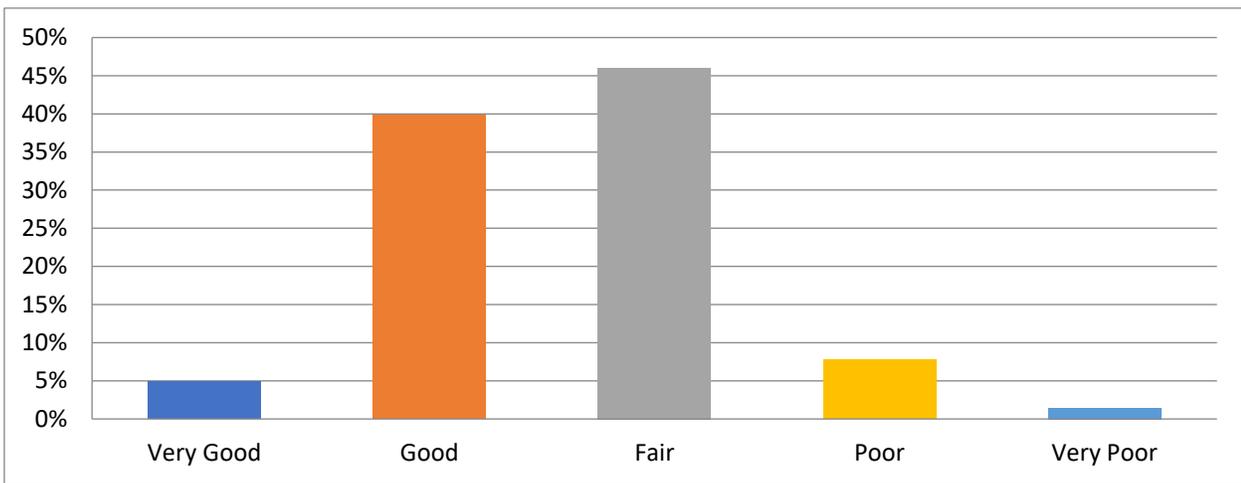
Section 2. Question Summaries

The following section includes summary information for all 30 questions in the Maquoketa Community Survey. Questions 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 15, 30 allowed users to enter written comments. This document includes a summary of the number of responses to these questions. Written responses are included in separate documents.

Q1. How would you describe the quality of life in Maquoketa today?

Answered 615 Skipped 0

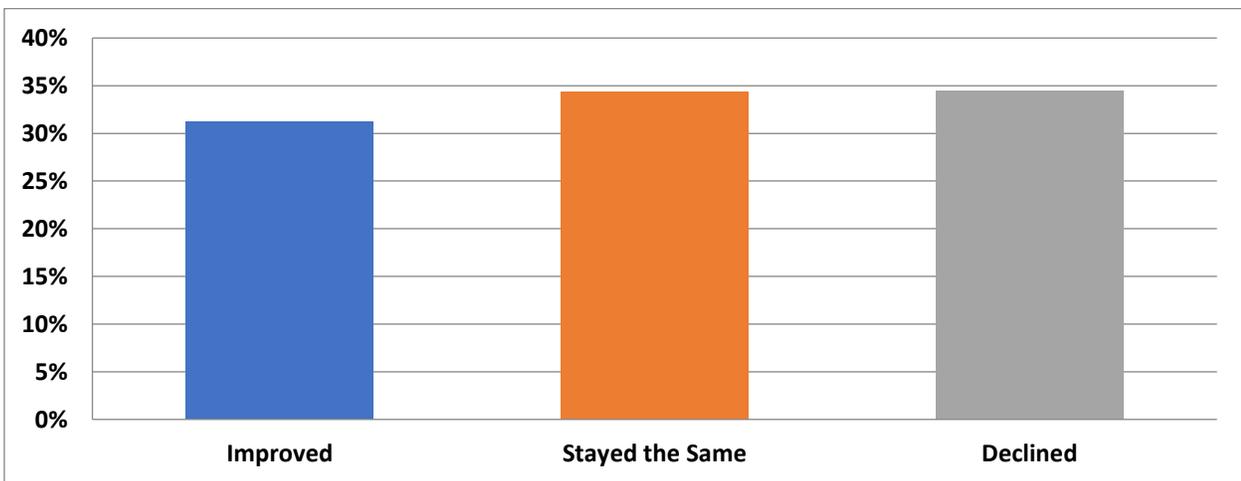
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	4.88%	30
Good	39.84%	245
Fair	46.02%	283
Poor	7.80%	48
Very Poor	1.46%	9



Q2. How would you say the quality of life in Maquoketa has changed over the past five years?

Answered 615 Skipped 0

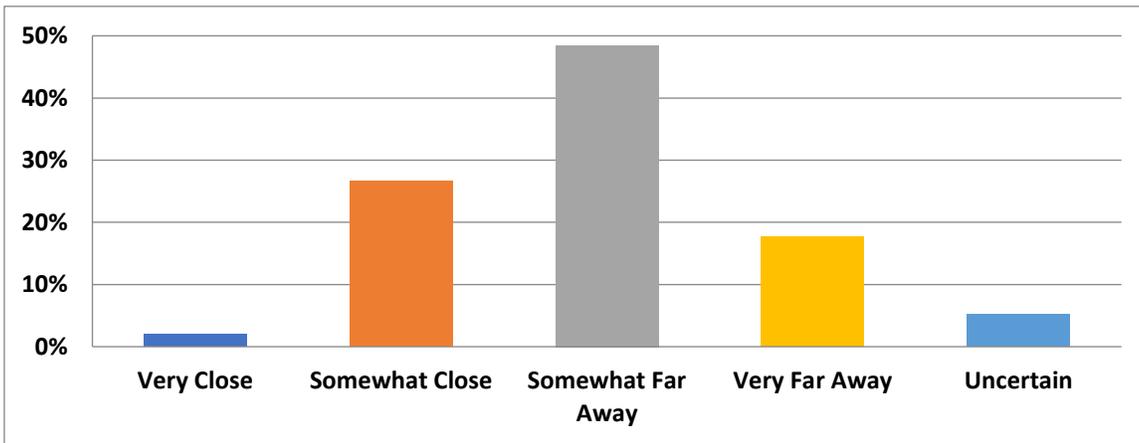
Answer Choices	Responses	
Improved	31.22%	192
Stayed the Same	34.31%	211
Declined	34.47%	212



Q3. How far is the Maquoketa of today from the ideal Maquoketa you envision for the future?

Answered 615 Skipped 0

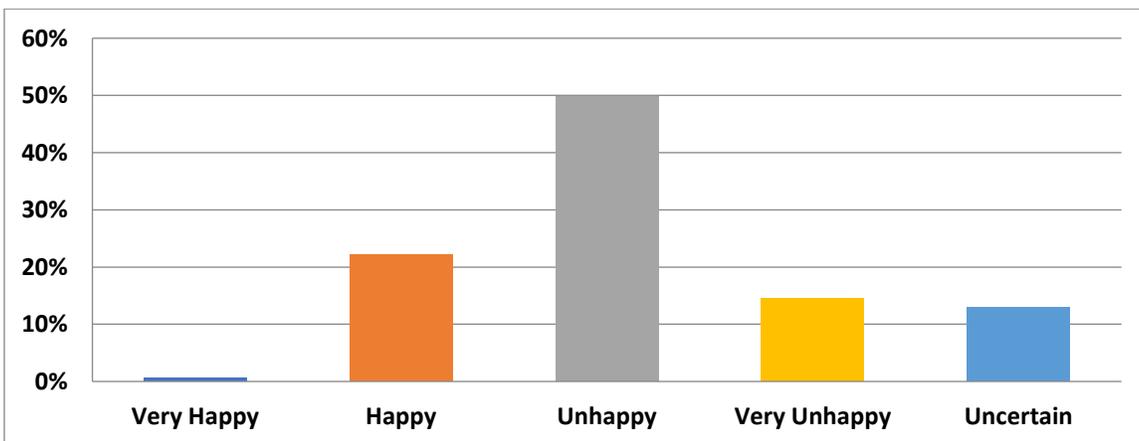
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Close	1.95%	12
Somewhat Close	26.67%	164
Somewhat Far Away	48.46%	298
Very Far Away	17.72%	109
Uncertain	5.20%	32



Q4. How happy are you with current economic conditions in Maquoketa?

Answered 614 Skipped 1

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Happy	0.65%	4
Happy	22.15%	136
Unhappy	49.84%	306
Very Unhappy	14.50%	89
Uncertain	12.87%	79



Q5. Please provide us with two or three ways the quality of life in Maquoketa might be improved?

Answered 527 Skipped 88 See Q5 Comments for all written responses.

Q6. Please provide us with two or three reasons you chose Maquoketa as a place to live.

Answered 529 Skipped 86 See Q6 Comments for all written responses.

Q7. Maquoketa stands out when compared to other Iowa towns because.....

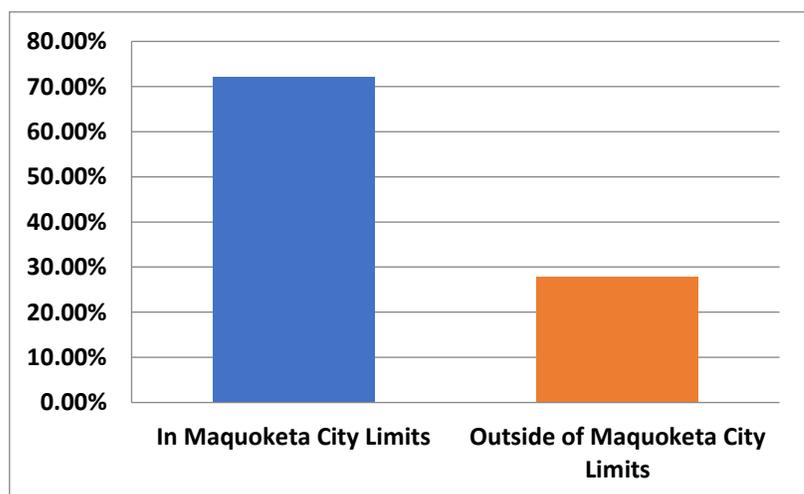
Answered 585 Skipped 30

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
it is attractive, clean, and well maintained.	2%	40%	41%	13%	5%
it is a safe place to live.	12%	66%	16%	4%	2%
of its small town feel.	23%	62%	10%	2%	3%
of its convenient location - highway access.	32%	63%	3%	1%	1%
of its recreation services – parks, trails, open spaces, and YMCA	17%	45%	28%	8%	3%
it has good schools	12%	54%	20%	8%	6%
it has access to a community college	30%	57%	8%	1%	4%
of its locally owned and operated shops and restaurants	9%	53%	30%	5%	3%
it is ethnically diverse	4%	42%	35%	9%	9%
it has family/kid friendly activities	7%	42%	35%	12%	4%
it has good medical care and facilities	10%	48%	27%	11%	4%
it is culturally vibrant—fine arts center, city hall gallery, art community, interpretive center	14%	56%	19%	5%	6%
it has natural tourist attractions – caves state park	27%	62%	6%	2%	3%
main street is an attractive place to be	7%	49%	32%	8%	3%
housing is affordable	13%	54%	20%	7%	6%

Q8. Where do you live?

Answered 585 Skipped 30

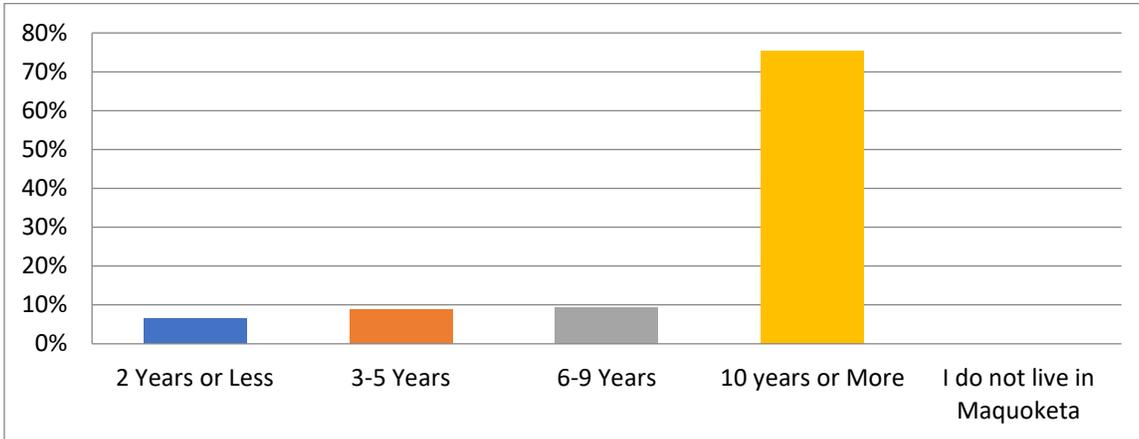
Answer Choices	Responses	
In Maquoketa City Limits	72.14%	422
Outside of Maquoketa City Limits	27.86%	163



Q9. If you live in Maquoketa, how many years have you lived here?

Answered 420 Skipped 195

Answer Choices	Responses	
2 Years or Less	6.43%	27
3-5 Years	8.81%	37
6-9 Years	9.29%	39
10 years or More	75.48%	317
I do not live in Maquoketa	0.00%	0

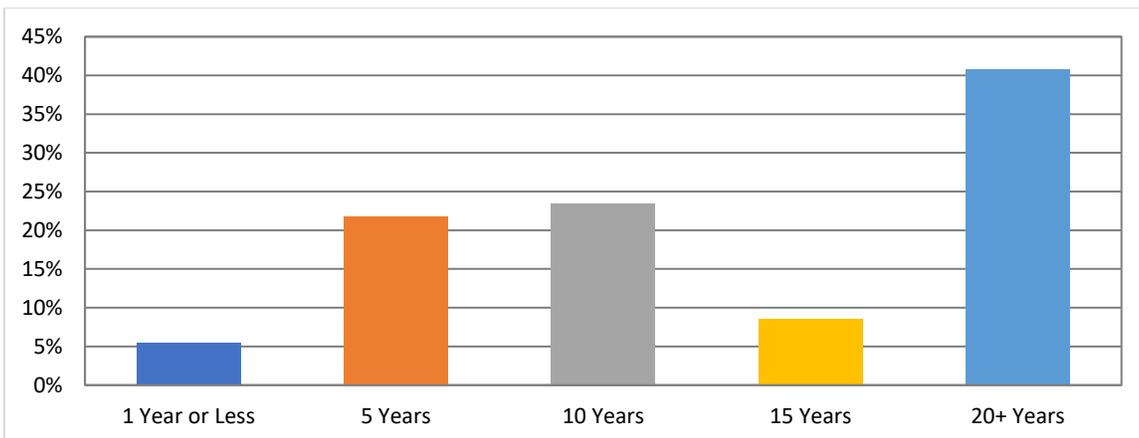


Q10. How long do you see yourself living in Maquoketa?

Answered 419 Skipped 196

Average 12.88 Years

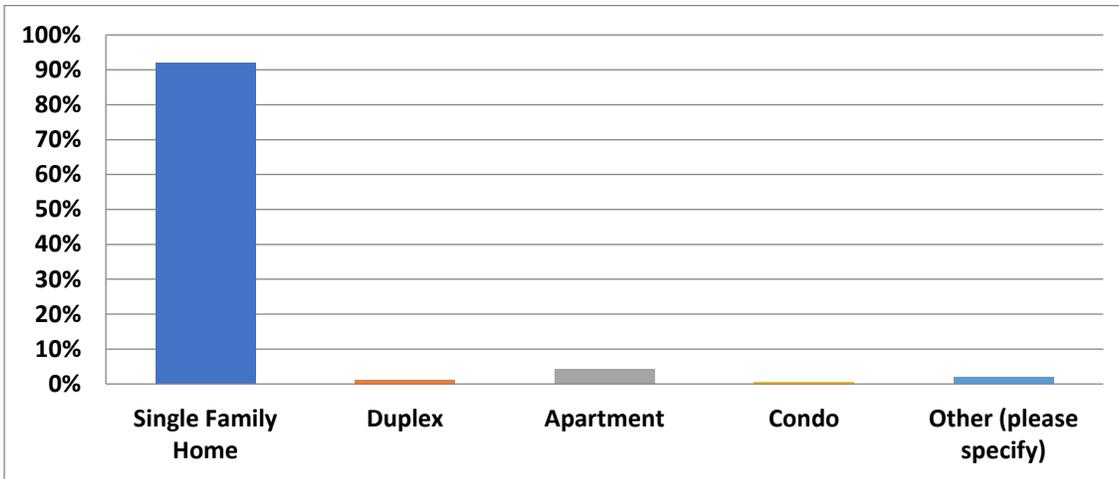
Answer Choices	Responses	
1 Year or Less	5.49%	23
5 Years	21.72%	91
10 Years	23.39%	98
15 Years	8.59%	36
20+ Years	40.81%	171



Q11. What type of housing do you currently occupy?

Answered 570 Skipped 45

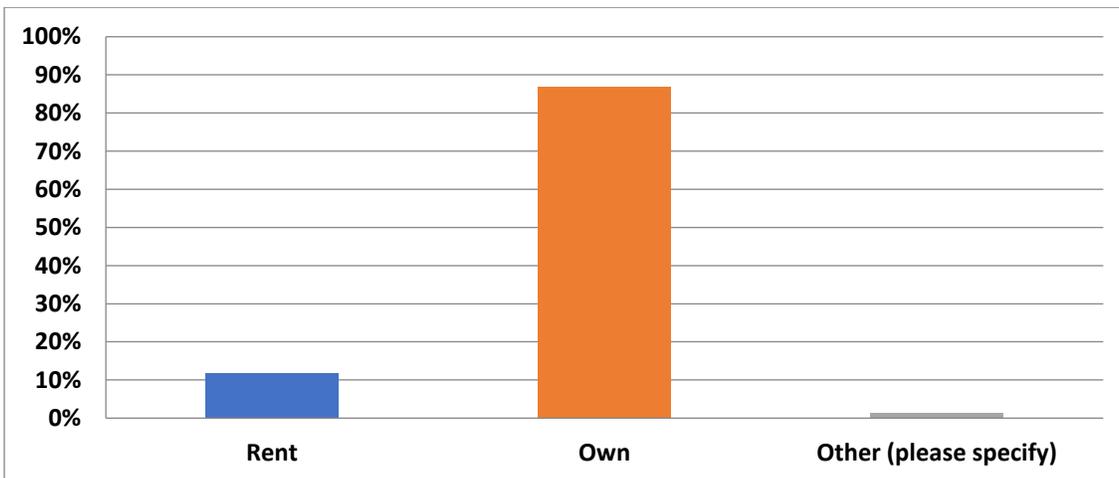
Answer Choices	Responses	
Single Family Home	91.93%	524
Duplex	1.23%	7
Apartment	4.21%	24
Condo	0.70%	4
Other (please specify)	1.93%	11



Q12. Do you own or rent your current place of residence?

Answered 570 Skipped 45 See Q12 Comments for all written responses.

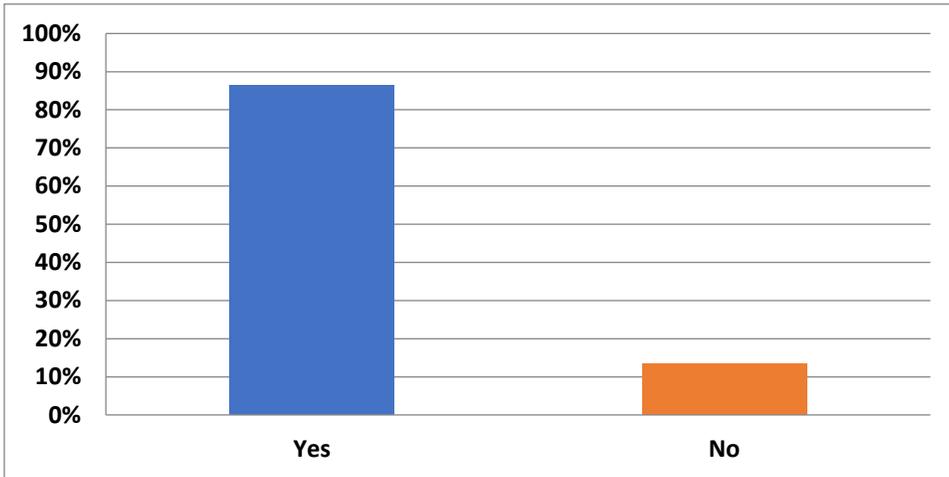
Answer Choices	Responses	
Rent	11.75%	67
Own	86.84%	495
Other (please specify)	1.40%	8



Q13. Are you satisfied with your current housing situation?

Answered 570 Skipped 45 See Q 13 Comments for all written responses.

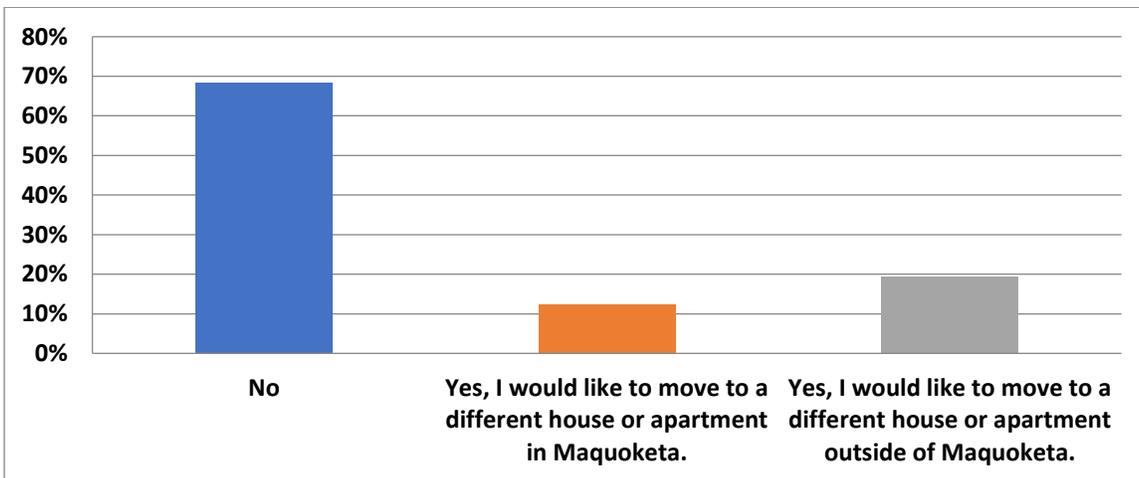
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	86.49%	493
No	13.51%	77
Please tell us why.		238



Q14. Would you like to move to a different house or apartment?

Answered 570 Skipped 45 See Q14 comments for all written responses.

Answer Choices	Responses	
No	68.25%	389
Yes, I would like to move to a different house or apartment in Maquoketa.	12.28%	70
Yes, I would like to move to a different house or apartment outside of Maquoketa.	19.47%	111
Please tell us why.		190



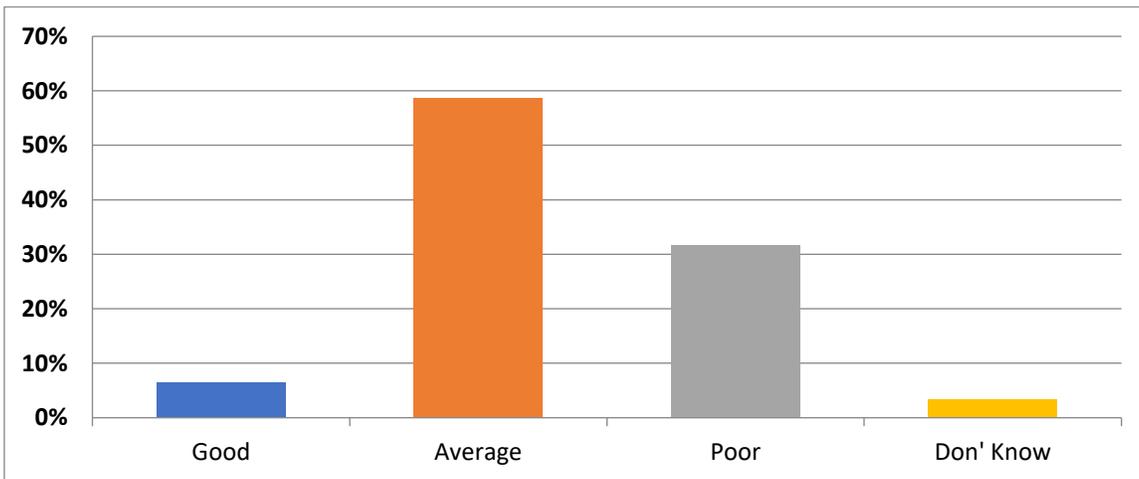
Q15. If you would like to move, but have not, please tell us why.

Answered 255 Skipped 360 See Q15 Comments for all written responses.

Q16. How would you rate the quality of housing in Maquoketa overall?

Answered 570 Skipped 45

Answer Choices	Responses	
Good	6.49%	37
Average	58.60%	334
Poor	31.58%	180
Don' Know	3.33%	19



Q17. Maquoketa has good quality affordable housing options for...

Answered 569 Skipped 46

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
Families	4%	46%	34%	6%	10%
Renters	3%	33%	36%	13%	15%
Young professionals	3%	31%	40%	13%	13%
People over 65	7%	46%	23%	8%	16%
First time homebuyers	4%	43%	31%	8%	14%
Disabled People	3%	28%	25%	8%	37%

Q18. Please think for a moment about what you want the community to focus on in the future. Rank the following items based on their importance to the future growth and development of the community. 1 is the most important and 15 is the least important.

Answered 505 Skipped 110

Item	Ranking	Average Score
Maintain infrastructure (streets, water, sewer)	1	10.09
Reduce crime / substance abuse	2	9.62
Addressing poverty in our community	3	9.17
Recruit and retain workers	4	9.15
Develop more quality, affordable housing	5	9.07
Improve parks, recreation and trails	6	8.06
Add more retail options	7	7.91
Provide training opportunities for workers	8	7.79
Encourage entrepreneurship	9	7.76
Outdoor Pool	10	7.69
Add more dining options	11	7.67
Improve the appearance of downtown storefronts	12	7.37
Affordable childcare	13	6.98
Promote tourism	14	6.77
Invest in arts and culture	15	4.97

Rank	Maintain infrastructure (streets, water, sewer)	Reduce crime / substance abuse	Addressing poverty in our community	Recruit and retain workers	Develop more quality, affordable housing	Improve parks, recreation and trails	Add more retail options	Provide training opportunities for workers	Encourage entrepreneurship	Outdoor Pool	Add more dining options	Improve the appearance of downtown storefronts	Affordable childcare	Promote tourism	Invest in arts and culture
1	70	75	65	40	59	21	14	16	19	52	25	12	13	11	13
2	60	63	53	58	39	23	23	22	20	45	24	25	20	22	7
3	65	37	38	36	47	35	39	34	37	20	35	26	27	15	12
4	32	36	29	42	47	40	42	47	28	32	28	38	24	27	11
5	42	31	37	38	29	31	39	32	39	29	33	37	33	32	20
6	44	31	31	45	30	39	35	32	32	32	37	31	39	28	16
7	29	39	30	32	41	41	35	45	39	24	41	27	35	29	13
8	29	28	31	37	28	34	37	40	42	30	36	38	30	39	23
9	28	22	33	30	24	45	39	33	37	22	33	47	43	37	29
10	21	30	25	32	26	49	32	32	53	17	31	38	37	47	32
11	16	32	31	23	28	44	53	34	40	23	36	40	29	31	41
12	11	21	34	25	26	32	32	46	30	27	38	31	37	60	52
13	18	20	32	27	23	26	38	25	33	27	37	37	46	53	60
14	23	15	18	22	25	33	23	38	29	42	39	40	41	37	76
15	15	23	16	15	28	10	21	25	24	82	30	34	48	34	98

Q19. Please think for a moment about the quality of services provided in Maquoketa. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the services listed below.

Answered 509 Skipped 106

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Police protection	47%	41%	6%	3%	2%
Fire protection	75%	19%	0%	0%	5%
Ambulance service	61%	26%	3%	1%	10%
Recreational facilities for youth	12%	39%	24%	18%	7%
Recreational facilities for adults	13%	43%	25%	14%	4%
Street/Road maintenance	6%	29%	35%	30%	0%
Public water and sewer	19%	53%	13%	6%	8%
Schools	24%	47%	14%	9%	6%
Health care	26%	43%	18%	10%	4%
Snow removal	28%	45%	16%	7%	5%
Internet	11%	36%	24%	21%	8%
Electrical service (MMEU)	34%	43%	7%	5%	11%
City parks	17%	51%	23%	7%	3%
YMCA Services	26%	33%	17%	15%	9%

Q20. Please think for a moment about the condition of Maquoketa. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the items listed below.

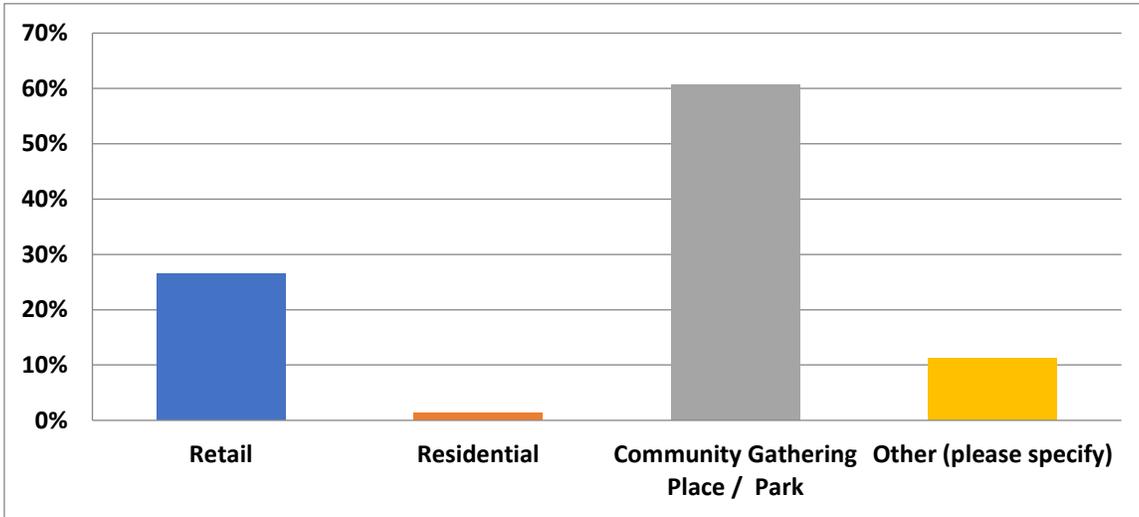
Answered 505 Skipped 110

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
Streets	2%	35%	34%	29%	0%
Sidewalks	4%	49%	33%	13%	2%
Parks	13%	53%	24%	8%	2%
Residential properties	3%	46%	34%	14%	3%
Commercial properties	4%	47%	35%	8%	6%
Industrial properties	4%	47%	26%	12%	11%
Agricultural properties	14%	53%	6%	3%	24%
Recreational areas	16%	55%	20%	7%	3%
School facilities	22%	52%	14%	7%	4%
YMCA facilities	28%	39%	15%	11%	8%
Skate Park	8%	18%	15%	12%	47%

Q21. In your opinion, what would be the best future use for the downtown greenspace located at 121 S. Main Street?

Answered 504 Skipped 111

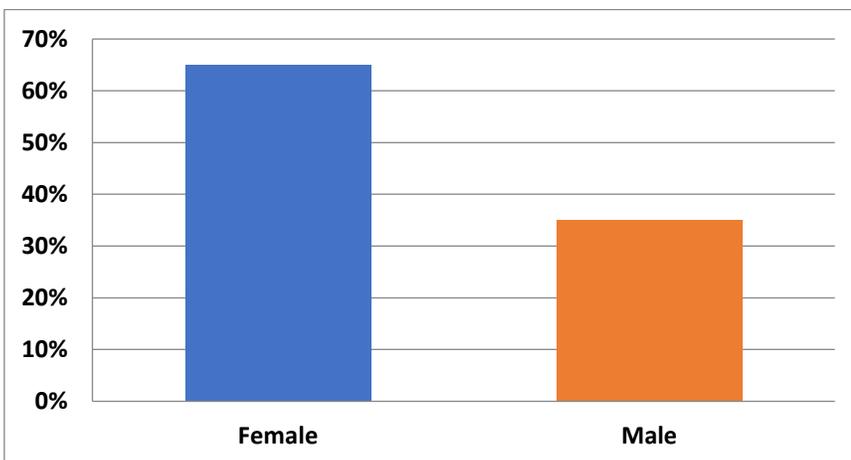
Answer Choices	Responses	
	Retail	26.59%
Residential	1.39%	7
Community Gathering Place / Park	60.71%	306
Other (please specify)	11.31%	57



Q22. What is your gender?

Answered 497 Skipped 118

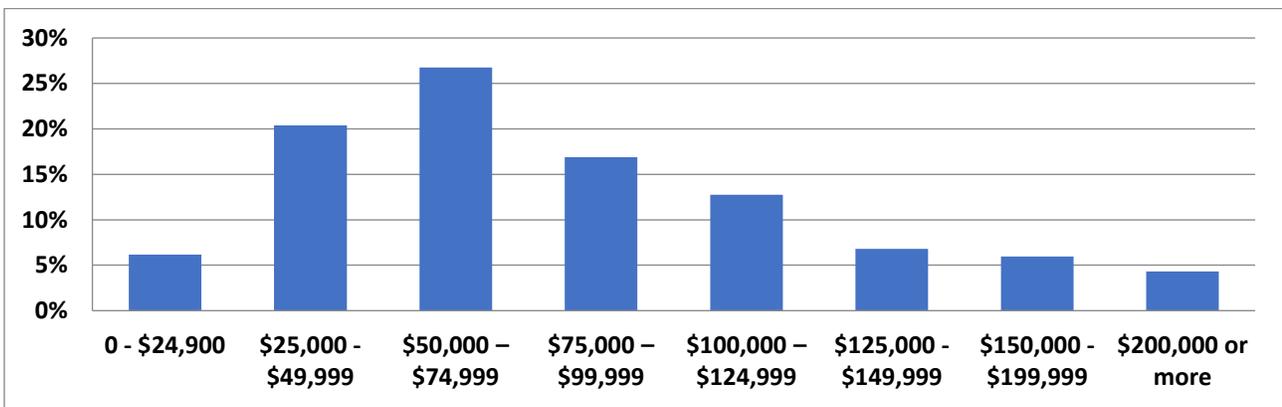
Answer Choices	Responses	
	Female	64.99%
Male	35.01%	174



Q23. Which of the following categories includes your total annual household income before taxes.

Answered 486 Skipped 129

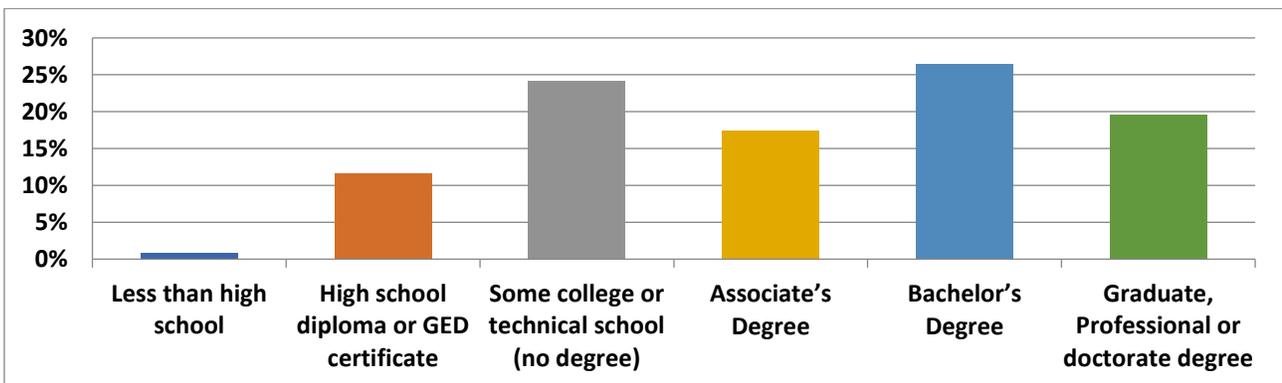
Answer Choices	Responses	
0 - \$24,900	6.17%	30
\$25,000 - \$49,999	20.37%	99
\$50,000 – \$74,999	26.75%	130
\$75,000 – \$99,999	16.87%	82
\$100,000 – \$124,999	12.76%	62
\$125,000 - \$149,999	6.79%	33
\$150,000 - \$199,999	5.97%	29
\$200,000 or more	4.32%	21



Q24. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

Answered 500 Skipped 115

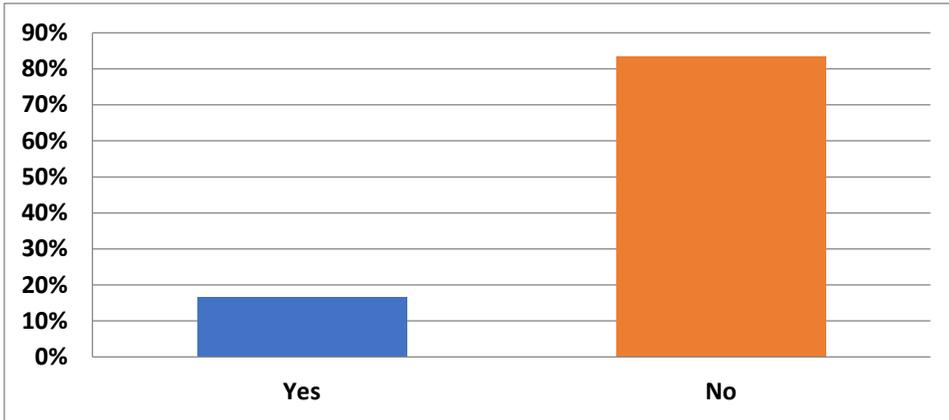
Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than high school	0.80%	4
High school diploma or GED certificate	11.60%	58
Some college or technical school (no degree)	24.20%	121
Associate's Degree	17.40%	87
Bachelor's Degree	26.40%	132
Graduate, Professional or doctorate degree	19.60%	98



Q25. Do you own a business in Maquoketa?

Answered 498 Skipped 117

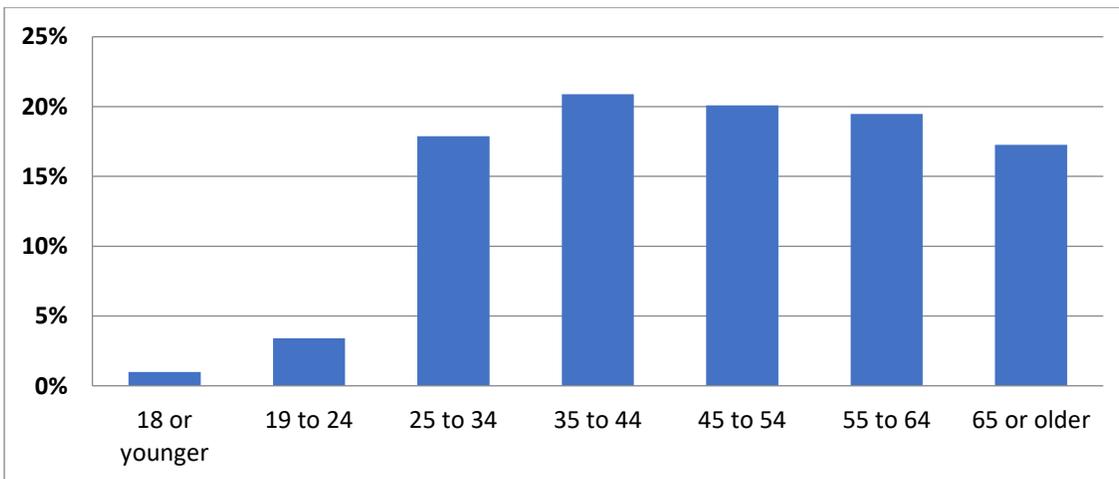
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	16.67%	83
No	83.33%	415



Q26. Which of the following categories includes your age?

Answered 498 Skipped 117

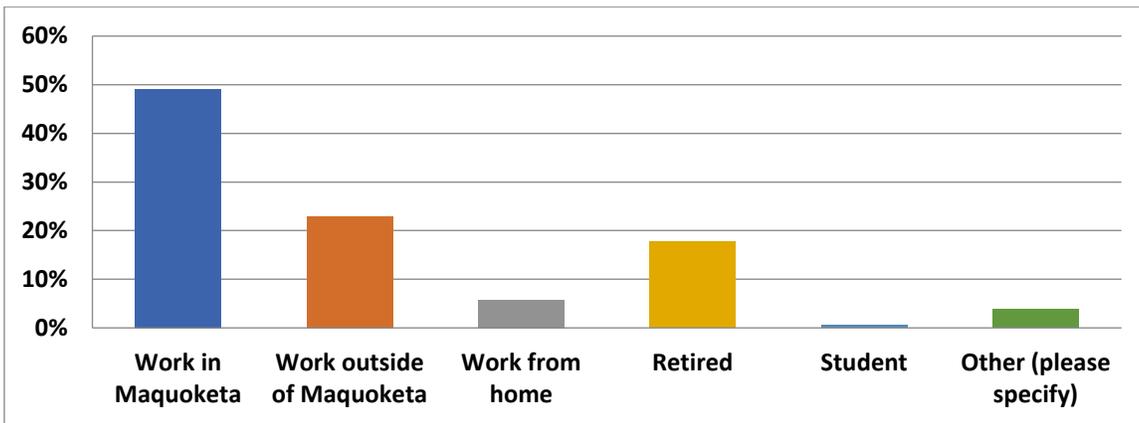
Answer Choices	Responses	
18 or younger	1.00%	5
19 to 24	3.41%	17
25 to 34	17.87%	89
35 to 44	20.88%	104
45 to 54	20.08%	100
55 to 64	19.48%	97
65 or older	17.27%	86



Q27. Please select the option below that best reflects your current work situation.

Answered 501 Skipped 114

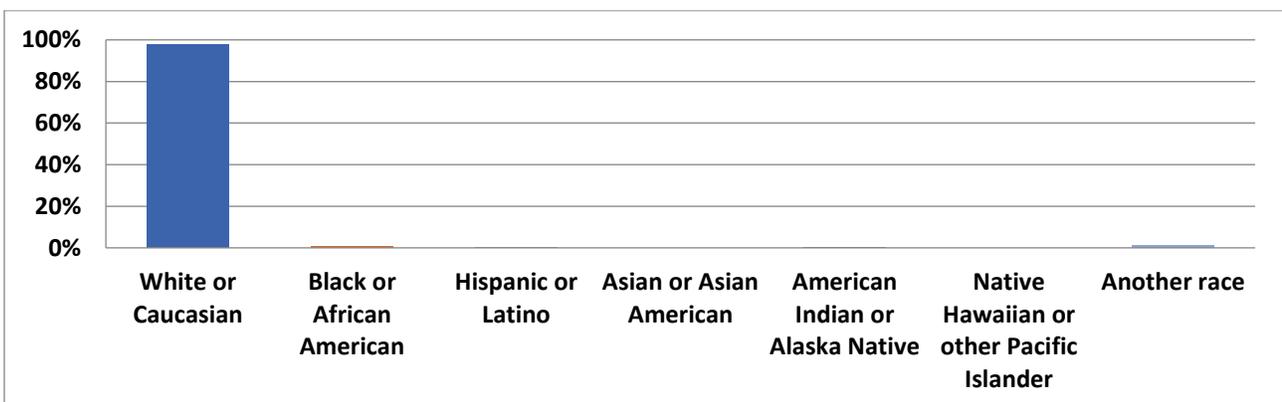
Answer Choices	Responses	
Work in Maquoketa	49.10%	246
Work outside of Maquoketa	22.95%	115
Work from home	5.79%	29
Retired	17.76%	89
Student	0.60%	3
Other (please specify)	3.79%	19



Q28. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

Answered 500 Skipped 115

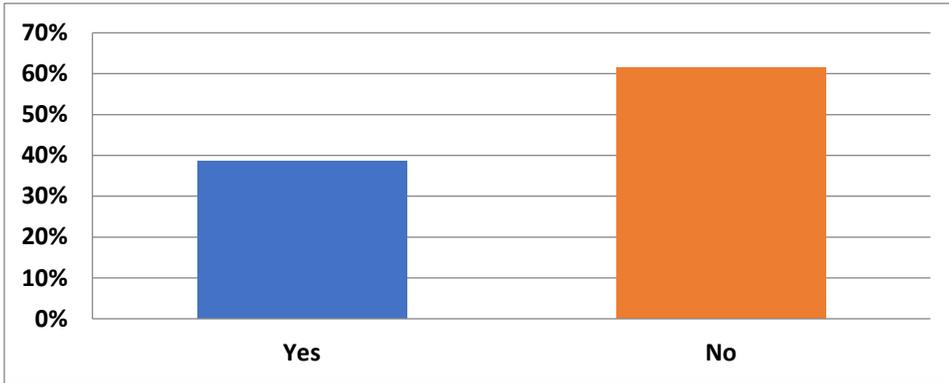
Answer Choices	Responses	
White or Caucasian	97.60%	488
Black or African American	0.60%	3
Hispanic or Latino	0.20%	1
Asian or Asian American	0.00%	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.20%	1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
Another race	1.40%	7



Q29. Do you have any children under age 18 living at home?

Answered 501 Skipped 114

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	38.52%	193
No	61.48%	308



Q30. Please provide us with any additional comments on the City of Maquoketa or the survey questions.

Answered 227 Skipped 388 See Q30 Comments for all written responses.