

# Franklin to the Fort Conversations: Digging Deeper with Resident Voice

A collaborative project of University of Montana, Missoula City-County Health Department and Missoula Invest Health

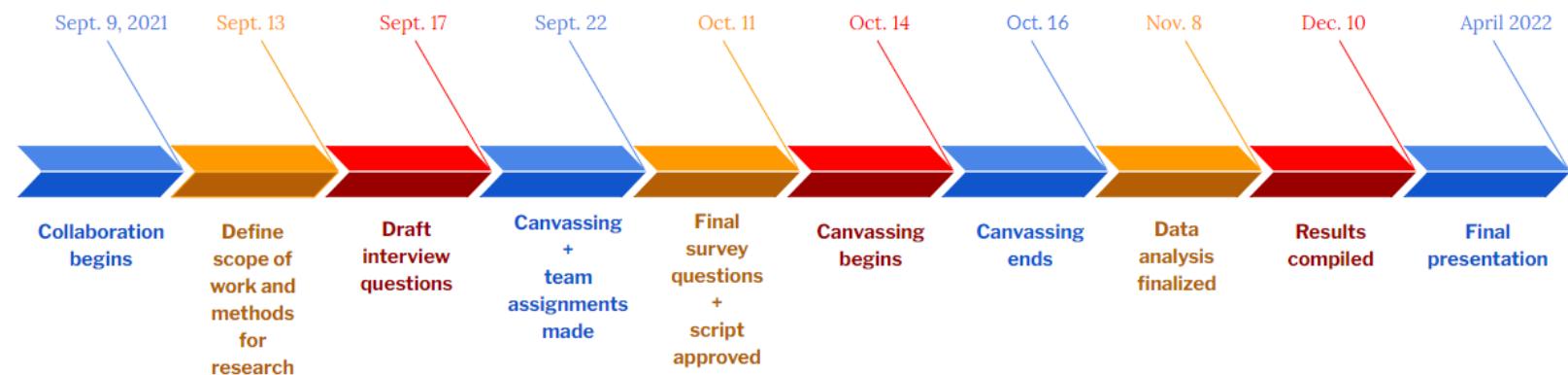


## Introduction

Background information: In 2016, Missoula was one of 50 small to mid-sized cities chosen by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Reinvestment Fund to participate in Missoula Invest Health (MIH). Missoula Invest Health brings together partners from the Missoula community to create and innovate ways to support the overall health and well-being of Missoula. Through this project, the MIH team has worked to create, build, and empower an equitable and inclusive community. Within this initiative, funding has been created for public and private policies, and local leaders have transformed both their thinking and resources to improve health outcomes in Missoula neighborhoods facing the biggest health barriers.

Project overview: In September of 2021, Lisa Beczkiewicz from Missoula Invest Health collaborated with Bachelors in Social Work student, Annalise Jensen, to explore the needs of the lower-income communities. They focused on resident engagement in order to ensure the project was based on resident voice and perspective, rather than an outsider lens. This research follows up on the last project conducted in 2018 in the Westside neighborhood. Data collection occurred October 14-16th, 2021 in the Franklin to the Fort neighborhood. Eighty four conversations and resident responses were hand recorded.

### Timeline:



Purpose and scope: This semester-long project engaged Franklin to Fort neighbors through one-on-one connection and conversation. Resident perspective was the main focus during data collection and community engagement. Through highlighting their voice, residents feel empowered, and heard. This is crucial to recognize while finding a new normal after the pandemic. The results of this project will inform current stakeholders and policy makers, and create change at various levels for the benefit of both individuals and the community. Outcomes of the project include a structured conversation assessment tool created based on previous research as well as the needs of the neighborhood. A final report will be created and presented to MIH for the next steps in the process.

Project team: The project team included Lisa Beczkiewicz as representative of Missoula Invest Health and Health Promotion Supervisor of the Missoula City-County Health Department. University of Montana members included Annalise Jensen, practicum student in the School of Social Work, as well as Aurora Liberty-Dupuis, Carissa Russell, and Dr. Annie Sondag from the School of Public Health. The three students conducted the canvassing with the assistance of Lisa Beczkiewicz. Forward MT presented the research team with a canvassing workshop and served as a partner in the completion of the project. Dr. Annie Sondag provided input and made suggestions to the conversation development and canvassing process. Mary-Ann Bowman and Sarah Garber reviewed the final presentation materials, and served as a partner in the completion of the project.

## Texture of the Neighborhood



Franklin Park



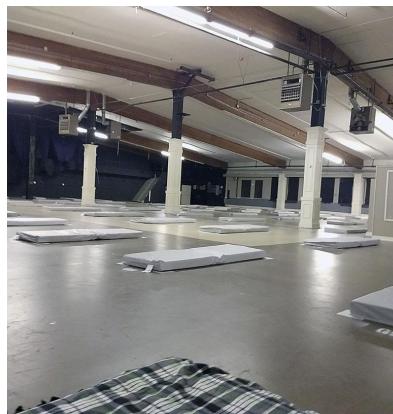
Franklin Elementary



Montana Rail Link Park



Grocery Stores



Johnson Street Winter Shelter



Limited sidewalks



Community Pantry

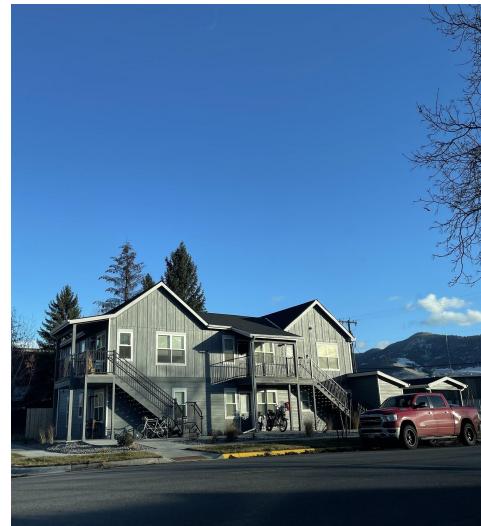


Various Places of Worship

## Housing Diversity



Trailer Courts



Apartments



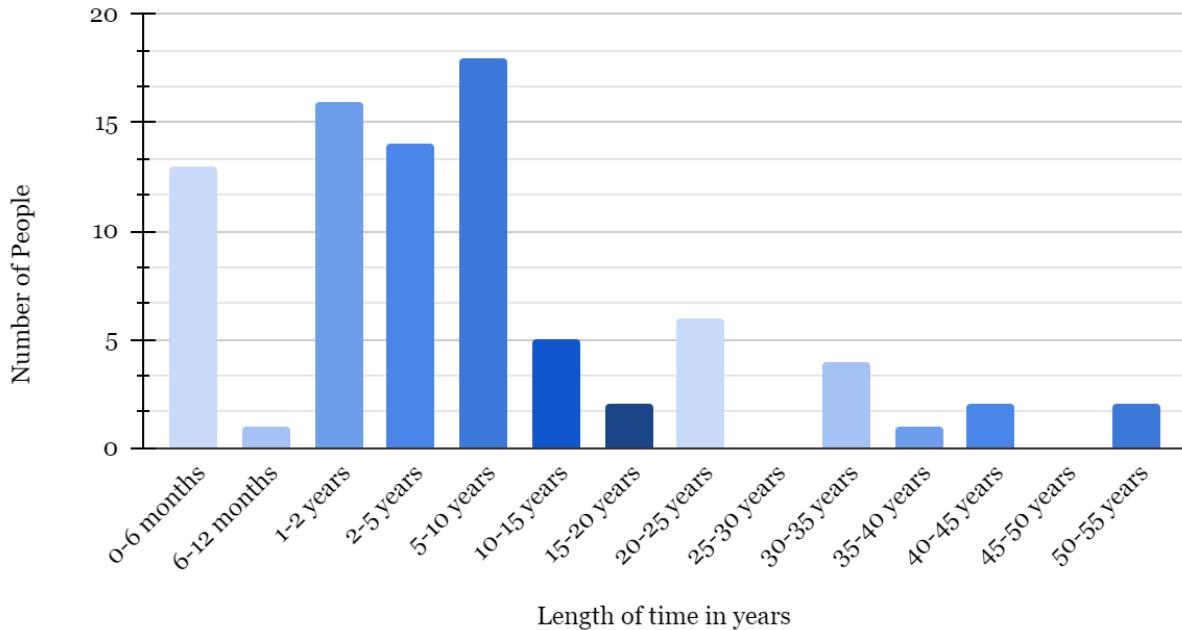
Town Homes



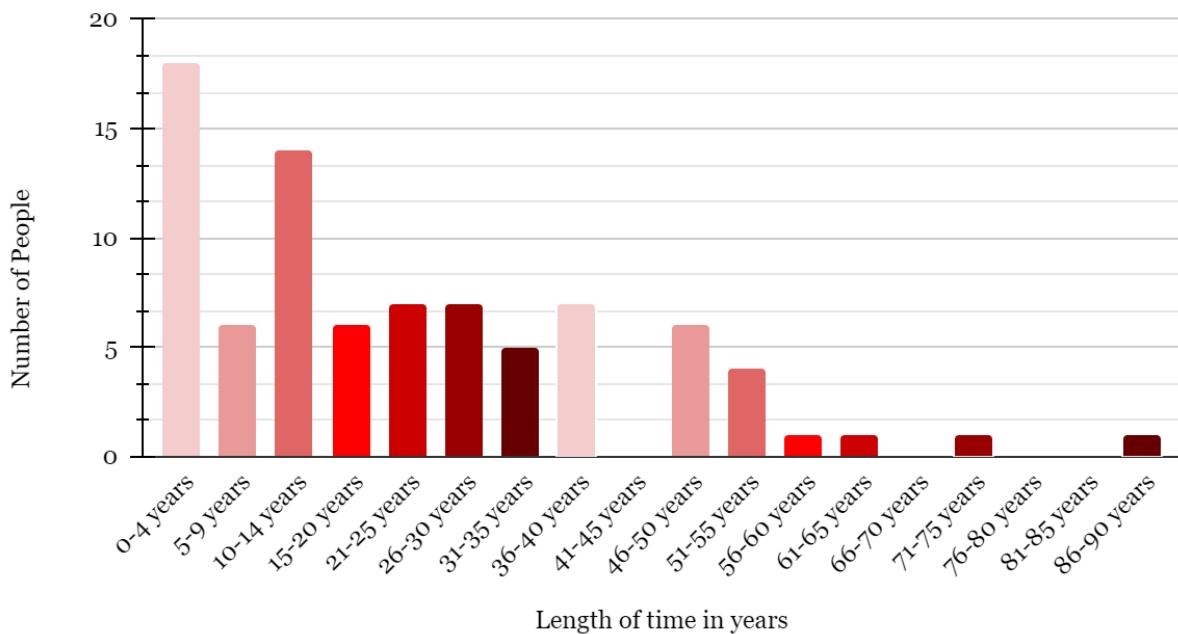
Old & New Homes

## Conversation questions with graphs

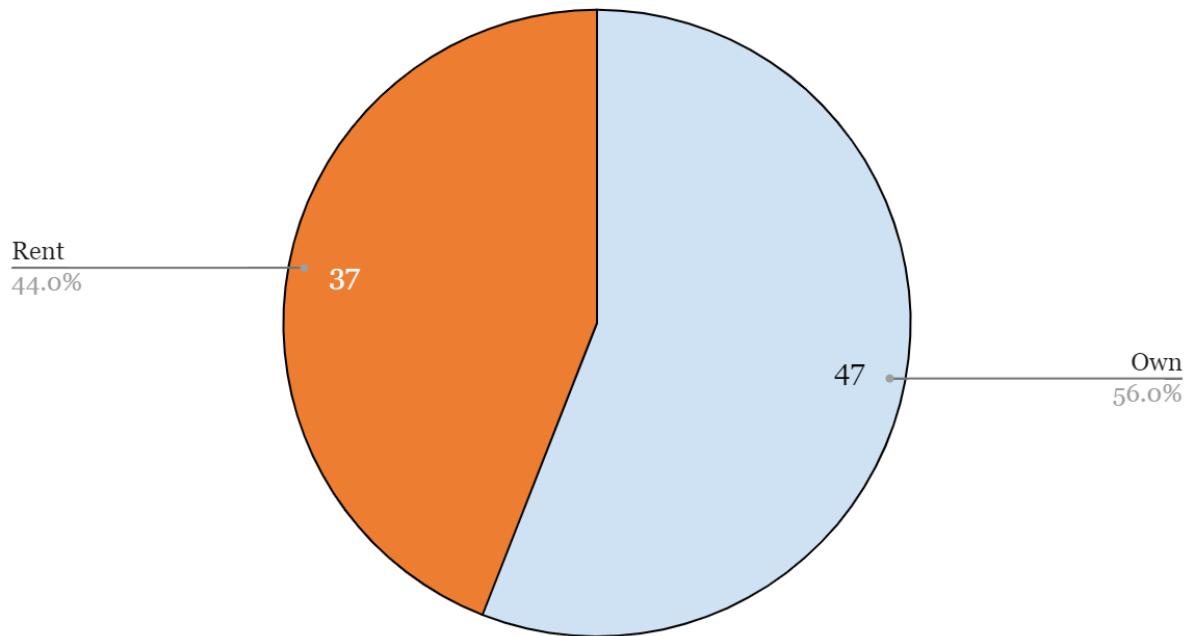
Question #1: How long have you lived in this house?



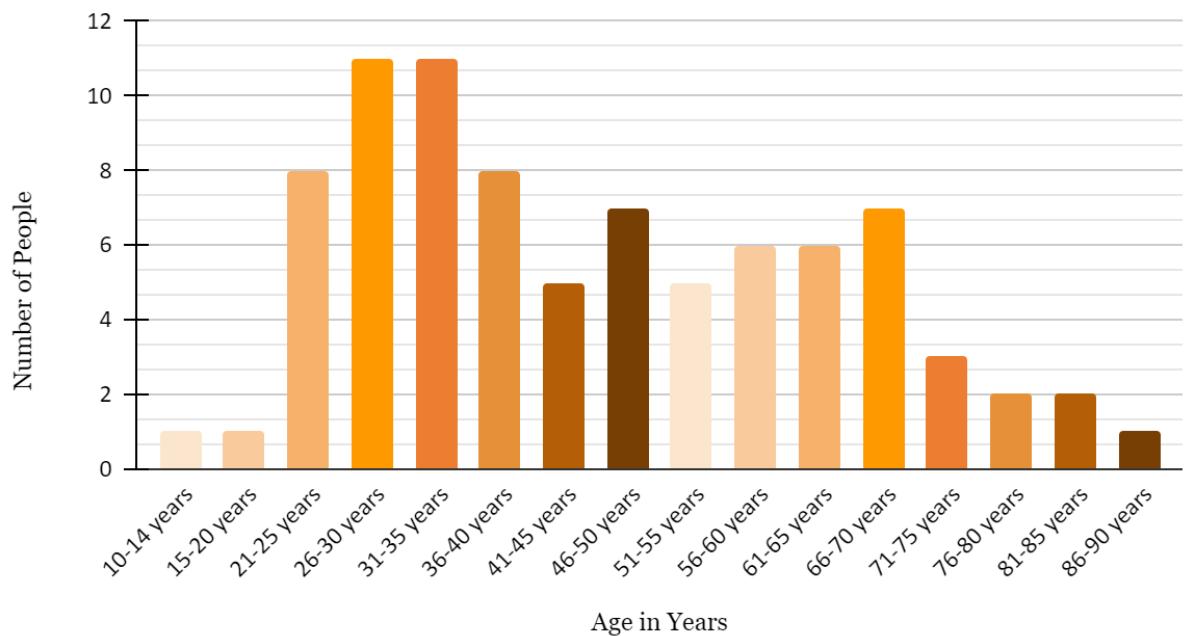
Question #2: How long have you lived in Missoula?



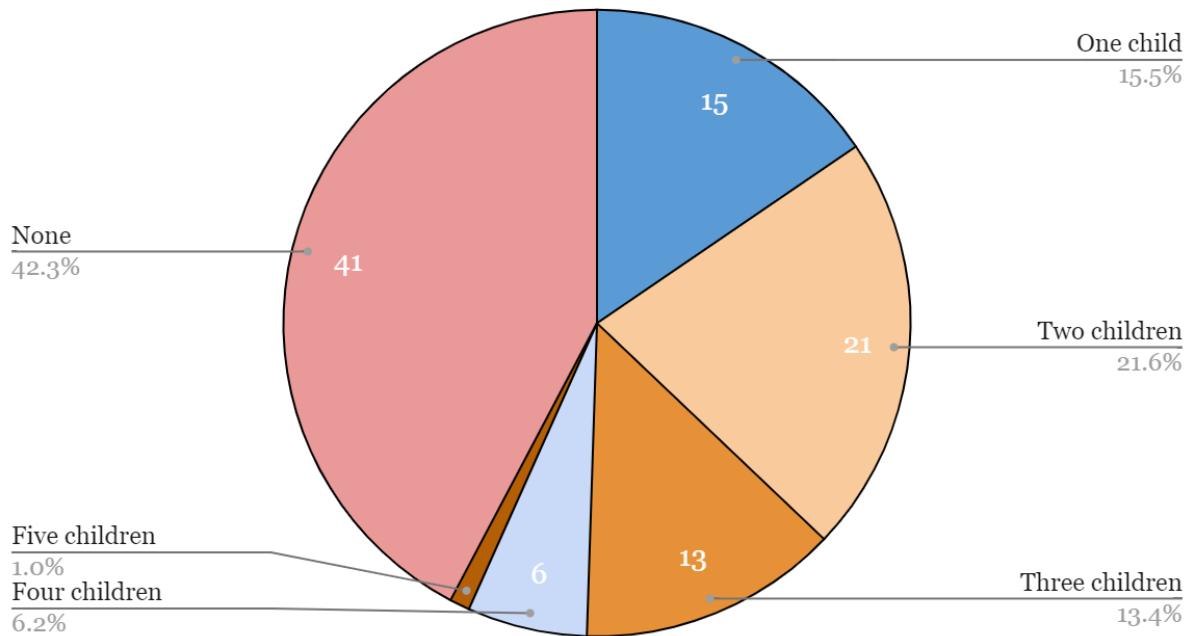
### Question #3: Do you rent or own this house?



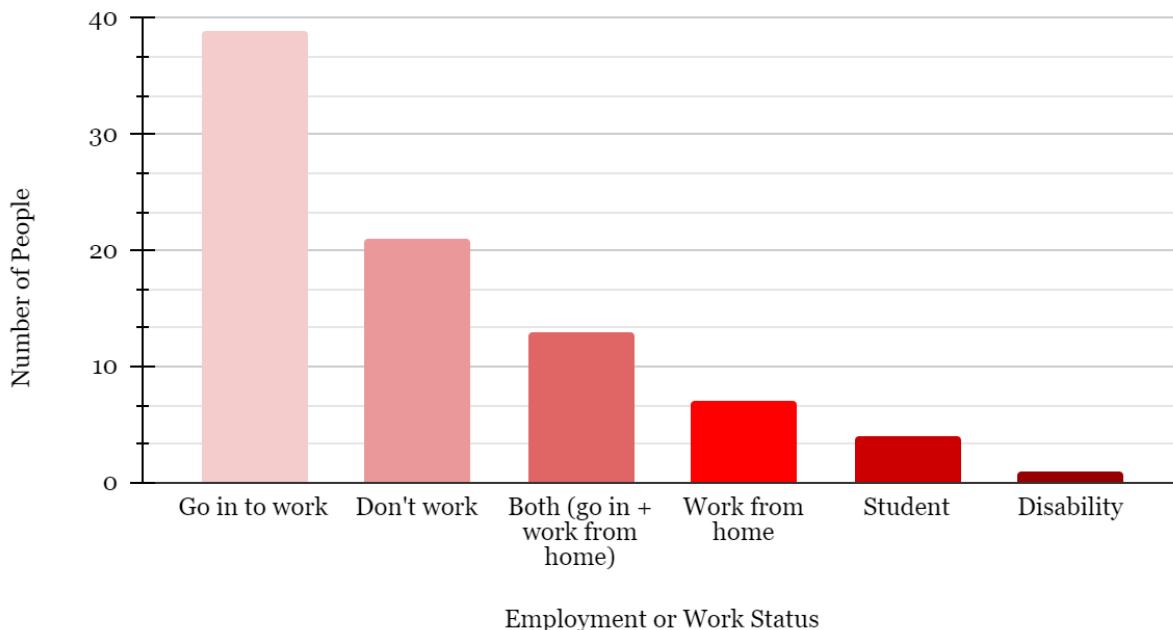
### Question #4: How old are you?



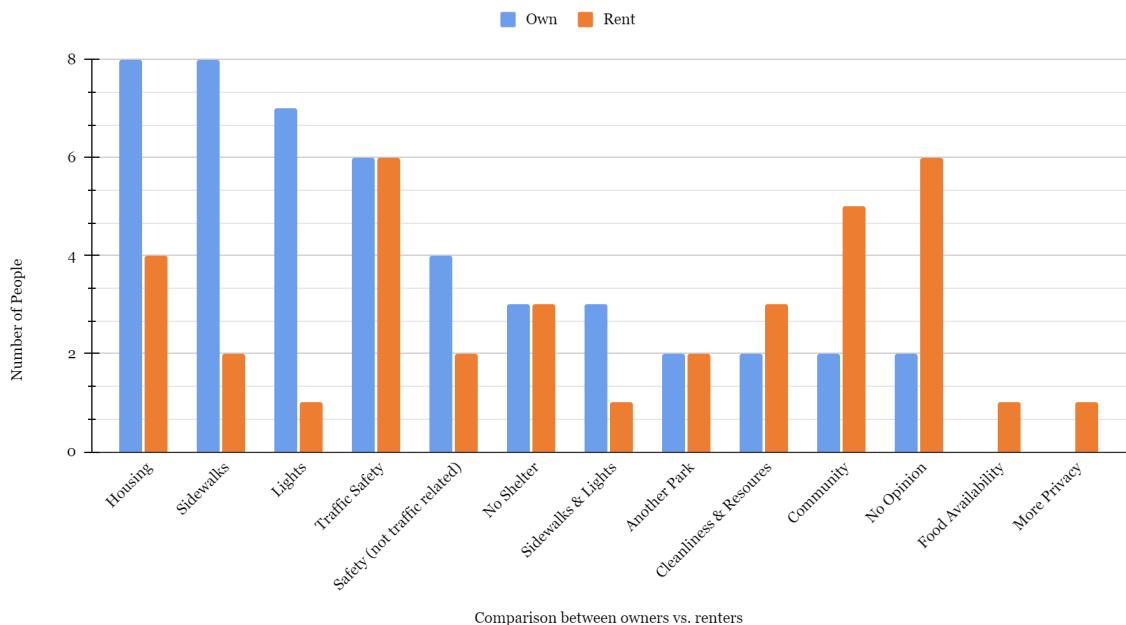
## Question #5: Do you have kids?



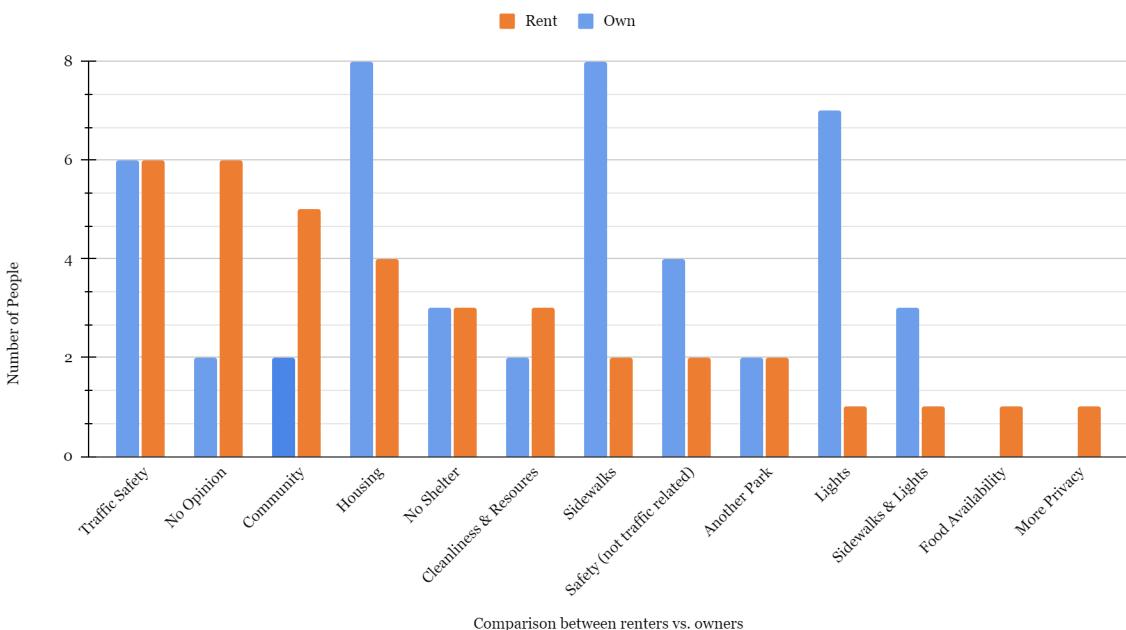
## Question #6: Do you work? If so, at home or in an office?



Question #8: What is your greatest need for your neighborhood?



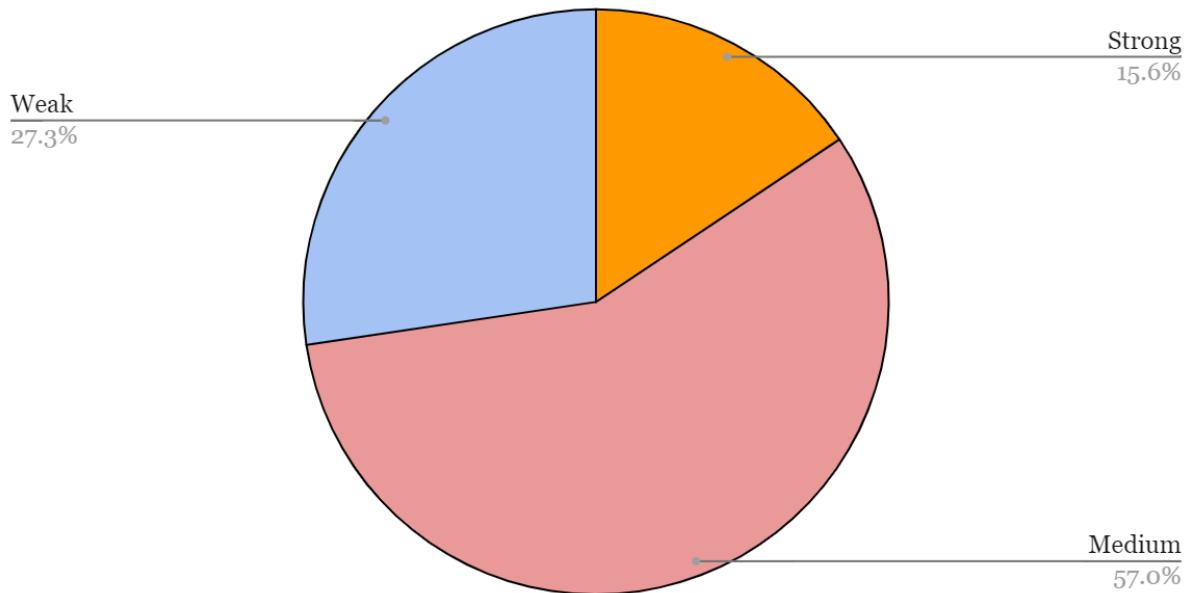
Question #8: What is your greatest need for your neighborhood?



Question #8: What is your greatest need for your neighborhood - compared by owners vs renters

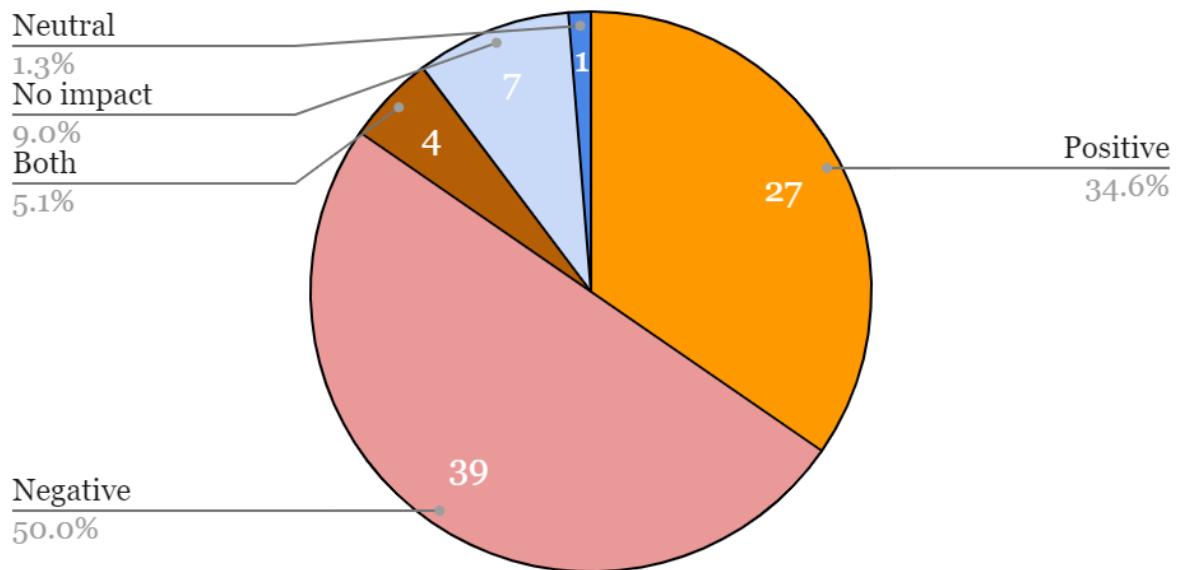
	Another Park	Cleanliness	Community & Resources	Food Availability	Housing	Lights	More Privacy	No More Homeless Shelter	No Opinion	Safety (not traffic related)	Sidewalks	Sidewalks & Lights	Traffic Safety	Total
Own	2	2	2	0	8	7	0	3	2	4	8	3	6	47
Rent	2	3	5	1	4	1	1	3	6	2	2	1	6	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>84</b>

Question #9: How would you describe the relationship you have with your neighbors?



- **Strong** - warm, personable, caring, excellent, helpful, "good fences make good neighbors"
- **Medium** - fine, decent, good, friendly, amicable, cordial
- **Weak** - "it's not the Missoula I grew up in", no connection, keep to oneself, nothing more than wave

## Question #10: How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted your life positively and negatively?



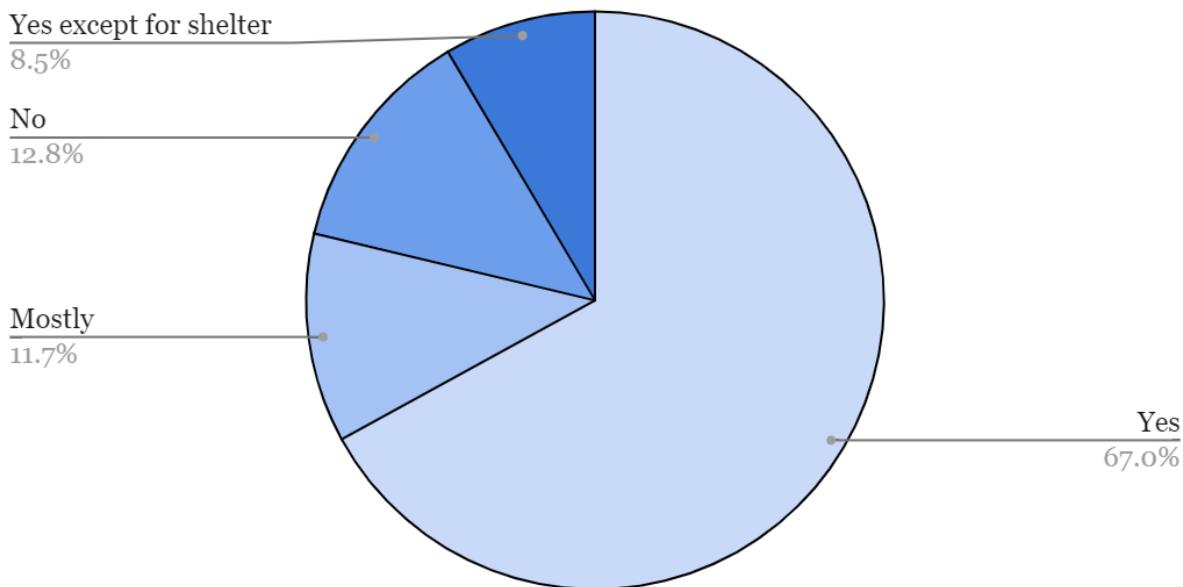
- **Positive**

- Stay home / more time with family
- Work from home / get new job
- Not a bother / don't go out much

- **Negative**

- Stay home / more time with family
- Economic impacts / lost job
- Can't see loved ones

## Question #11: Do you feel safe in your neighborhood & Missoula community?



- **Unsafe**

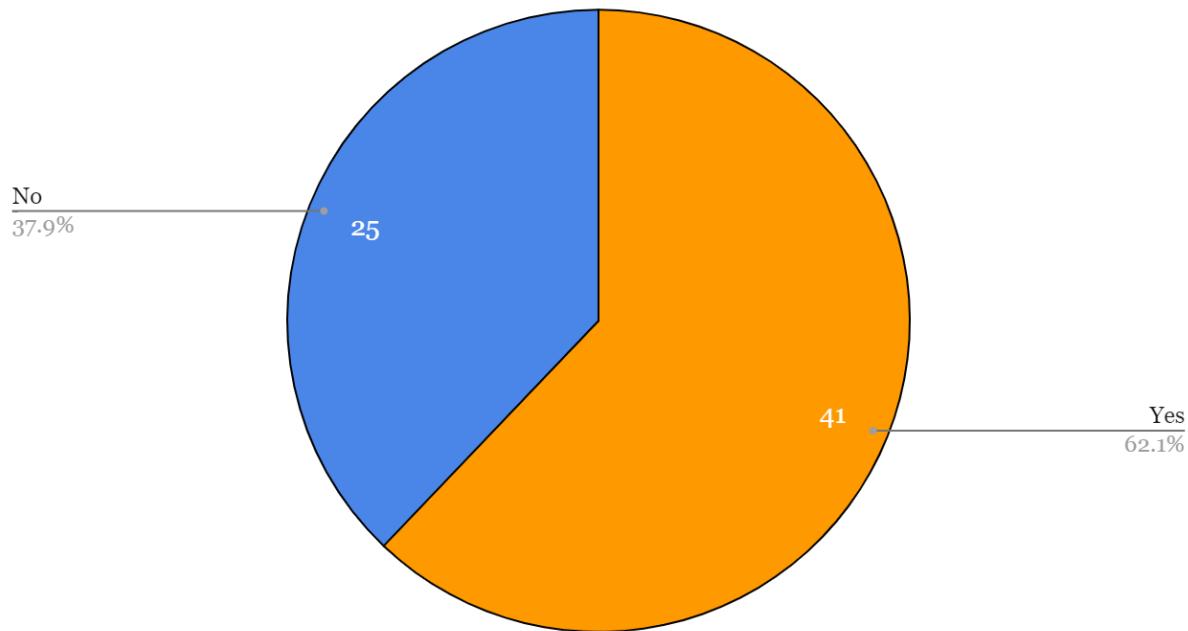
- Homelessness issue
- Crime / theft
- Winter shelter

- **Safe**

- Know neighbors / nice neighbors
- People protecting us / police presence
- Crime has gone down

Question #12: Do you feel connected to your neighborhood?



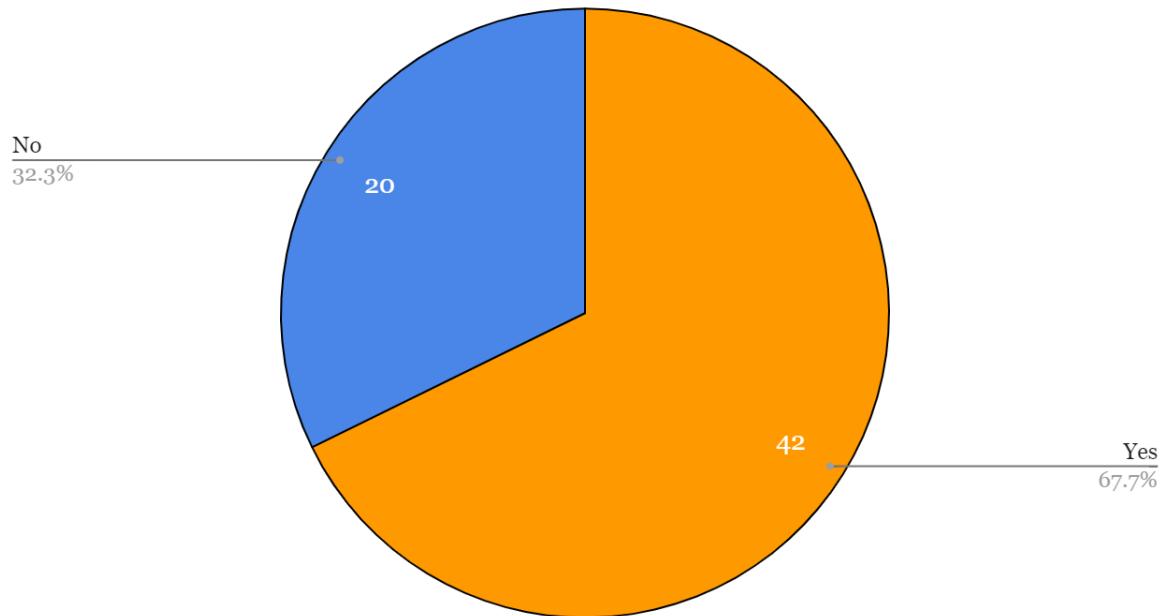
### Connected

- Build relationships
- Walking dogs

### Disconnected

- Keep to oneself
- No activities → “connected enough”

Question #12: Do you feel connected to your Missoula community?



### Connected

- UM alumnae
- Work / volunteering

### Disconnected

- Don't make effort
- Connected, but not involved

## Insight from Poverello and Johnson Street Community Shelter

- Question #1: What is the Poverello or the Johnson St shelter doing in their day-to-day operation to build connection as well as safety with people of both the community, and the nearby neighborhoods?
  - Partnership with the City of Missoula
    - Contracting security to both locations to field neighbors' concerns
  - Three monthly meetings for neighbors/supporters to problem solve concerns
- Question #2: How could we in the health department support your efforts at the shelter?
  - Welcome insight and collaboration from other health agencies
- Question #3: What information would you like us to share in our project related to this, or with people of the community?
  - Working to shift narrative of houselessness in order to better support with needed resources
    - Expressed increased need for affordable housing
- Question #4: What is the time frame or long-term plan for the purpose of the Johnson St shelter?
  - City has more information on the plans as they own the shelter

## Considerations

- What is good for physical health, mental health, diversity, low income areas
- Inclusive in practice and community wide
- Culturally appropriate
- Accessible within a mile of where people live, work and play
- Ensure any recommendations have the support from the Franklin to the Fort neighbors so that they are involved in the process
- We are striving for the community to not be “us and them” but rather a more collective effort

## Recommendations

- Support for the Winter Shelter / Poverello Center / Houselessness in Missoula
  - Support education efforts - based on ideas from The 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness
    - Partner with Poverello, City, County, and neighborhood groups to leverage and gain momentum
    - Cost vs value campaign
  - Support changes in policy
    - Increase access to meet the current need of eligible applicants
    - Provide additional housing-related supports and services
    - Incentivize use of housing vouchers in high opportunity areas
  - Pallet shelter implementation and expansion + tiny homes
  - Increase cultural support in the Temporary Safe Outdoor Space (TSOS), as well as the Poverello Center and throughout Missoula, to create a sense of community for all
  - Support / partnership with the Trinity Apartments and Navigation Center
- Support for the city of Missoula
  - Increased communication through engagement with community through neighborhood council
  - Expand the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

- Support for Accessibility / Sidewalks
  - Born Learning Trail
    - Incorporate other agencies, partners, cultures, and history into this trail
    - Include plants native to the area / self watering planters
    - History of Missoula and/or Montana
    - Physical activities for people of all ages
    - Engaging activities while walking along the trail
    - Guest book for people to write in when they are on the trail
  - Support innovative ways to build more sidewalks in low income neighborhoods
  - Continue to work on greenway and street revamp projects

## **Resident Voice**

“The community doesn’t care what citizens think, they say it’s open for discussion but it’s not.”

“Good fences make good neighbors.”

“It was one thing to experience Missoula as a young person, but now...”

“I’m all for changes, but not ones that we don’t want or have to pay for.”

“I choose to respect others and try to see their side of things.”

“Build a relationship with those who can.”

“The pandemic has allowed me to play into all other life qualities I was not addressing.”

“Deckonsonian → the best and worst of worlds.”

“Eclectic.”

## **Contact Information**

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