



PITTSBURGH  
TODAY

UCSUR



# THE PITTSBURGH REGIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

2018

OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
ENVIRONMENT  
GOVERNMENT  
ARTS & CULTURE  
TRANSPORTATION  
EDUCATION  
PUBLIC SAFETY  
HOUSING  
ECONOMY  
HEALTH  
RELIGION  
HAPPINESS

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

Seven years ago, we released the findings of the Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life Survey, the most extensive survey of Greater Pittsburgh residents since the historic Pittsburgh Survey of 1908. The intent was to understand the attitudes and circumstances of the region's citizens then and, by revisiting the questions later, to determine how their views change over time.

The following pages highlight key findings of that update. The 2018 Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life Survey, conducted in June by the University of Pittsburgh University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) and Pittsburgh Today, asked many of the same questions that were posed in 2011, in addition to a few new ones.

The 2018 update was a web-based survey. Participants were drawn from members of the UCSUR Research Registry living in Allegheny County, southwestern Pennsylvania's urban core. Some 1,881 residents completed the survey. Data were adjusted for age, sex, race, education, income, and political affiliation to make the sample representative of the county population aged 18 and older.

Their responses are compared to those of 799 Allegheny County residents who took the 2011 survey, which was a telephone survey. Use of weighted data allows for comparing trends over time. A detailed description of the methodology is found in the appendix of this report.

The findings are contained in seven data sets, which allow for comparing responses across age, gender, income, race, education and geography. This report and the complete survey data can be found online at:

[pittsburghquarterly.com/quality-of-life-2018](http://pittsburghquarterly.com/quality-of-life-2018)  
and  
[ucsur.pitt.edu/quality\\_of\\_life\\_2018.php](http://ucsur.pitt.edu/quality_of_life_2018.php)

We believe the 2018 Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life Survey and its predecessor provide information valuable both as historic documents and as a guide to inform decisions about the region's future. And we plan to repeat the survey in later years to measure progress toward improving the quality of life in the region. ■

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December 2018



FINDINGS: **OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE**

**S**OUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA gets high marks overall as a place to live among Allegheny County residents. But on this topic, the perspectives of residents often depend on who is asked.

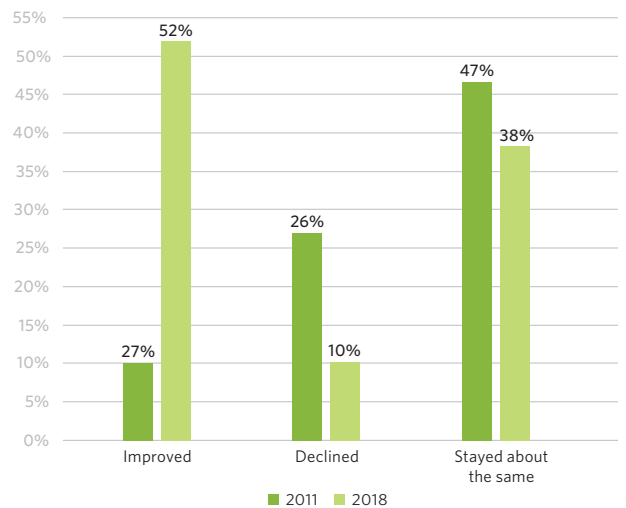
Overall, 68 percent of Allegheny County residents rate the region as either an excellent or very good place to live, while less than one percent consider it is a poor place to call home. In fact, they rate the region more favorably than they did in the 2011, when 60 percent described the quality of life in the region as excellent or very good.

More than half of residents overall also believe the quality of life in the region has improved in recent years, a much rosier assessment than before, when less than 30 percent thought it had gotten better. And county residents overall are more likely to rate their neighborhood more highly than they did seven years earlier.

But when race is considered, opinions sharply diverge. Only 29 percent of African Americans in Allegheny County rate the region as excellent or very good place to live compared to 74 percent of whites. African Americans are more than twice as likely to say the quality of life has declined. And 9 percent rate their neighborhood as poor compare to only 2 percent of white residents.

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How has the **quality of life** in the region changed in the last few years?



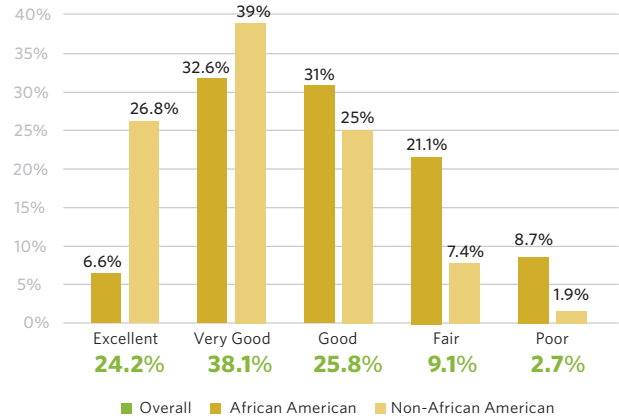
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## LONG-TERM RESIDENCY

Most county residents should have a good sense of the quality of life in the region. Nearly 74 percent have lived in the county for more than 20 years, although that is down from 78 percent who in 2011 had been residents for that long.

When relative newcomers to the region — those who've lived in the county 5 years or less — are asked what brought them to southwestern Pennsylvania, nearly 60 percent list education as the primary reason. For 21 percent, the move was job-related, which was the second most popular reason mentioned for landing in the region. ■

How would you rate your **neighborhood** or local community as a place to live?



## FINDINGS: NEIGHBORHOOD

**W**IDELY PUBLICIZED police shootings, protests and social justice movements have elevated race relations in American political and public discourse in the years since the 2011 quality of life survey was conducted. Today, many more Allegheny County residents express concern about race relations in their community, the new survey suggests.

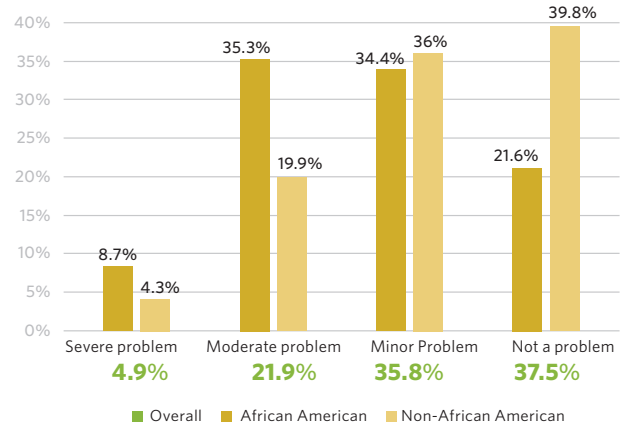
Most residents live in neighborhoods they at least describe as somewhat diverse. Only 1 in 4 say their neighborhood is not diverse at all. The 2011 findings suggest the diversity of their neighborhoods have changed little since then.

But 27 percent overall feel race relations is a severe or moderate problem in their neighborhoods, which is nearly twice the rate reported in 2011. Seven years ago, 58 percent

of residents overall didn't see race relations as being a problem in their neighborhood at all. Today, only 37 percent feel that way.

African Americans are much more likely to sense a problem than their white neighbors. For 40 percent of white residents, race relations aren't a problem at all. But less than 22 percent of African Americans share that view. And 44 percent of African Americans see race relations in their neighborhood as a severe or moderate problem compared to 24 of white residents. ■

How much of a problem, if any, do you think **race relations** are in your own neighborhood or local community?



## FINDINGS: ENVIRONMENT

**A**IR POLLUTION has thinned significantly since the decline of steel making in south-western Pennsylvania. The heavy smoke and smell of sulfur have dissipated. And ground level ozone pollution levels fell to within federal standards last year for the first time in decades.

Still, Allegheny County remains one of the few U.S. counties that fail to meet health-based limits on fine particulate pollution. And public concern is rising, the survey suggests.

Seven years ago, air quality wasn't a problem in the minds of 47 percent of county residents. Today, only 32 percent of Allegheny County residents share that view. Young people are more likely than residents over 45 years of age to believe air quality is a problem. Nearly 45 percent of residents aged 18-29 years describe it as a severe or moderate problem compared to 24 percent of residents 65 years old or older.

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## WATER QUALITY

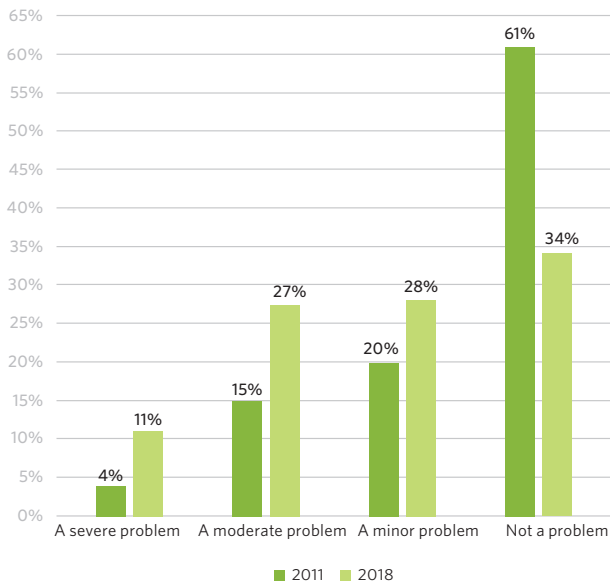
Their heightened concern extends to the quality of their drinking water and the water in the region's streams and rivers.

Only 34.5 percent of county residents believe their drinking water is problem-free. That's a steep drop in confidence compared to 2011, when 61 percent didn't think there was a problem. Since 2011, water quality became a prominent national issue, particularly after the widely reported lead contamination of drinking water in Flint, Mich.

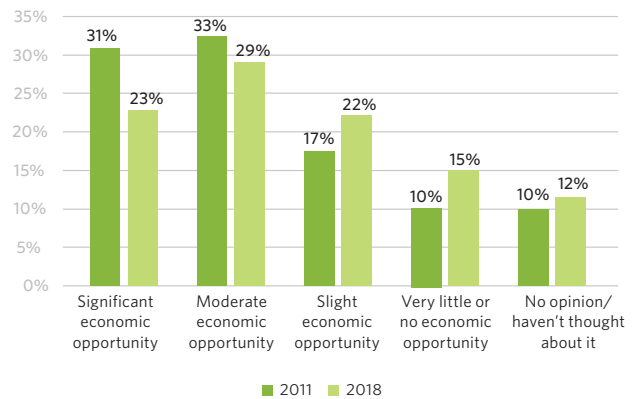
Concern over drinking water is much more widespread in the City of Pittsburgh than in the rest of the county. More than 86 percent of city residents say the quality of drinking water is a problem to some degree compared to 54 percent of those who live outside the city.

More residents are also concerned about the quality of the region's streams and rivers. Some 57 percent feel pollution in streams and rivers is a severe or moderate compared to 47 percent seven years earlier. Today, less than 14 percent believe pollution isn't a problem at all in local streams and rivers, a sharp drop in confidence from 2011, when 32 percent saw the region's waterways as problem free.

Would you say the quality of your drinking water is...



To what extent does natural gas drilling represent an economic opportunity for this region?



## GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

Allegheny County residents are not averse to adding muscle to government watchdogs to address such environmental concerns.

At a time when relaxing federal environmental regulations is gaining momentum, increasing state oversight is gaining favor in the county: 78 percent of residents favor increasing the state oversight compared to 63 percent who shared that view in 2011.

## ENERGY ISSUES

County residents are less likely to view natural gas drilling as producing significant economic benefits for the region than they were seven years ago, the survey suggests. The percentage of residents who believe drilling for natural gas is a significant or moderate economic opportunity for the region has fallen from 64 percent to 52 percent since 2011.

When residents are asked what factors matter to them in determining the sources of energy the community uses, they're most likely to put cost, public health and environment at the top of the list and their own personal energy independence at the bottom.

Less than 14 percent of Allegheny County residents rule out installing solar panels at the homes. And 18 percent say they're willing to pay for panels themselves if doing so lowers their energy bills by less than \$1,000. But others want to be paid: 38 percent say it would take subsidies of \$1,000–\$5,000 for them to install solar panels and another 20 percent want \$5,000–\$10,000.

POPULAR PARKS

From scenic hiking and biking trails to city riverfront greens, the region’s parks impress, the survey suggests. Nearly 62 percent of county residents rate them as excellent or very good, 30.5 percent rate them as “good” and only 1 percent think they are of poor quality.

The survey suggests most residents base their assessment of the parks and trails on firsthand knowledge: 52 percent say they use outdoor public recreation areas at least 10 times a year and 31 percent say they do some more than 20 times a year. ■



FINDINGS: **GOVERNMENT**

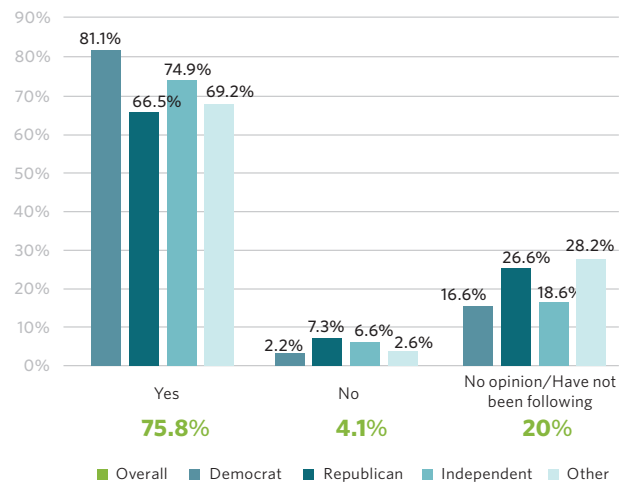
**N**EW QUESTIONS IN 2018 asked Allegheny County residents for their views on two recent high-profile government issues in Pennsylvania —redrawing political boundaries and legalizing marijuana — and their thoughts on loosening the state’s hold on liquor sales, which has been a controversial issue for decades.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court imposed a new congressional district map for the 2018 elections after lawmakers failed to agree on a replacement of the previous map that the court ruled was unconstitutional.

County residents are of one mind when it comes to gerrymandering, the process of manipulating political districts to favor one party over another: 73 percent describe it as a serious or moderate problem, while less than 10

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Should the **redrawing of political districts** in Pennsylvania be done by an independent, non-partisan commission?



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percent view it as a minor problem and only 3 percent think it isn't a problem at all.

Overall, 76 percent of county residents favor having an independent, nonpartisan commission redraw political districts in the future, not state lawmakers who traditionally have redrawn the boundaries. But there is a divide along major party lines with 81 percent of Democrats favoring such a commission compared to 66.5 percent of Republicans.

## LEGAL CANNABIS

The political divide is wider on the issue of legalizing marijuana. Pennsylvania's first medical cannabis dispensaries opened in 2018. Like Pennsylvania, more than two dozen other states have legalized marijuana to treat certain health conditions. But Pennsylvania has not legalized pot for adult recreational use, something nine other states and the District of Columbia have done.

More than 62 percent of Allegheny County residents favor legalizing marijuana for recreational use among adults. But political party affiliation matters: 73 percent of Democrats and 63 percent of independent voters favor taking that step, but only 37.5 percent of Republicans support full legalization.

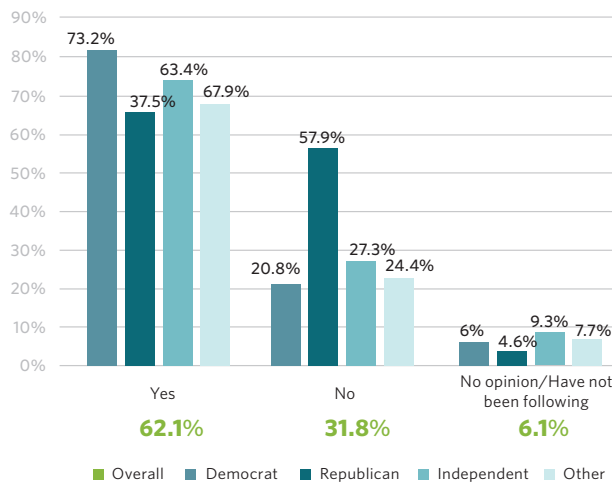
Similarly, 62 percent of county residents support abandoning Pennsylvania's "state store" system to fully privatize the sale of liquor and wine. While Republican and independent voters are more likely than Democrats to favor scrapping the state stores, fewer than 1 in 4 residents overall want to keep them.

## AMAZON HQ2

Pittsburgh entered the race to land Amazon's second headquarters to contend for the jobs, investment and prestige it is expected to deliver. Although Pittsburgh survived the first cut in 2018, the company ended up selecting Long Island City, NY and Crystal City, Va. The prospect of Amazon and its jobs coming to the region was tempered by concerns, such as the risk of shrinking the supply of affordable housing and a debate over whether the specifics of the city's proposal should be made public.

Nearly 62 percent of Allegheny County residents strongly favored the idea of Amazon coming to town and only 22 percent opposed it when they were surveyed in June 2018. Support varied across income levels. Generally, the higher their income, the more likely residents were to support HQ2. The strongest opposition was reported among those earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000, nearly 29 percent of whom moderately or strongly opposed it. ■

Do you support legalizing the **sale of marijuana** for recreational use in Pennsylvania?







## FINDINGS: ARTS & CULTURE

**A**PPRECIATION OF THE REGION’S ARTS and cultural offerings has risen sharply. And Allegheny County residents continue to show their support through steady attendance, the survey suggests.

More than two thirds of residents rate the quality of regional arts and culture as excellent or very good, up from 59 percent who felt that way in 2011. Only 1 percent rate the offerings as poor.

Nearly 38 percent visit a museum, gallery or attend an arts or cultural event six or more times a year, which mirrors the 2011 rate of attendance. Only 13 percent never take in the local arts and cultural scene. Income is a significant influence: 46 percent of residents with incomes under \$25,000 visit a museum, gallery or attend an arts or cultural event only two or fewer times a year compared to 21 percent of those earning \$100,000 or more who attend that infrequently.

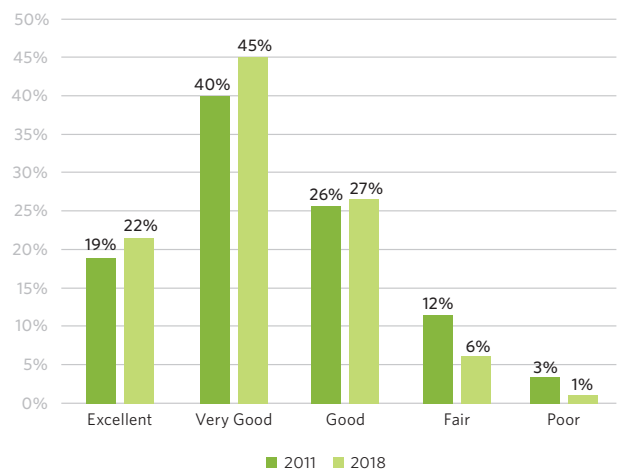
### ARTS EDUCATION

A greater percentage of Allegheny County residents feel strongly that the arts are important to children’s education. Some 36 percent say arts education is extremely

important. Seven years earlier, 26 percent felt that strongly about the value of the arts.

Significantly more women feel that way and the income bracket mostly likely to express such strong support are residents earning less than \$25,000, about 42 percent of whom believe arts education in school is extremely important. ■

How would you rate the quality of the arts and cultural opportunities in the region?

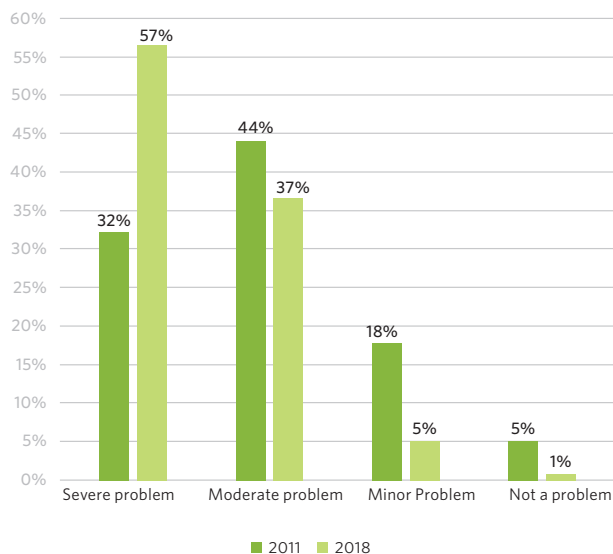




## FINDINGS: TRANSPORTATION

**S**INCE THE 2011 SURVEY, transportation emerged as a key issue in the last presidential campaign and, locally, it was the subject of several major news reports for all of the wrong reasons. The city's Liberty Bridge, for example, was closed for a month in 2016 due to se-

How much of a problem, if any, is there with **road and bridge quality** in the region?



vere fire damage. A stretch of Route 30 in East Pittsburgh collapsed in early 2018, closing it for two months.

And over that time, concern about the quality of local roads and bridges has soared among the people of Allegheny County, as this survey finding suggests: 57 percent overall believe roads and bridges are a severe problem today compared to only 32 percent who felt that way in 2011.

They overwhelmingly support increased funding to improve roads and bridges. More than 86 percent favor spending more for repairs and the most popular way to pay for it is with money from other government funds, not higher gasoline taxes, vehicle registration fees and tolls.

But it's not only roads and bridges that draw their ire. More residents also see traffic congestion, and the availability of public transit, nonstop flights, and bike and pedestrian routes as problems compared to 2011.

### PUBLIC TRANSIT

More county residents frequently ride public transportation than before. Some 21 percent say they ride buses and rail at least five days a week compared to 15 percent who said they ride that frequently in the previous survey. The rate of people who never take public transit dropped from 44 percent to 38 percent.

When income is considered, the most likely residents to take public transportation 5 or more days a week are those earning under \$25,000. More than 38 percent of those residents rely on it that often compared to 12 percent of people earning \$75,000–\$99,999. And 37 percent of African American residents ride public transit at least 5 days a week, which is more than twice the rate of white residents.

The availability of public transportation is a severe problem for 27 percent of Allegheny County residents overall, which is a lower rate than in 2011, when 35 percent described it as such. Instead, more people describe it as a moderate or minor problem. And only 9 percent say public transit availability isn't a problem at all compared to 20 percent who said it wasn't an issue when surveyed seven years ago. ■



## FINDINGS: EDUCATION

SEVERAL MASS SHOOTINGS at U.S. schools received wide publicity since 2011 when the last Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life Survey was published, including the February 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., which took the lives of 17 students and staff. Although southwestern Pennsylvania had not experienced violence on that scale at the time of the survey, concern over school safety is rising, the latest survey suggests.

The percentage of Allegheny County residents who feel schools are “very safe” has fallen from 41 percent to 25 percent. At the same time, the percentage residents who describe schools as “very unsafe” has held steady at 4 percent.

Men are more likely than women to feel schools are very safe by a margin of 30 percent to 19 percent. White residents are more likely than African American residents to feel schools are very safe by a margin of 26 percent to 16 percent.

Nearly 82 percent of county residents with school age children send them to public schools, with most of the others choosing private schools and charter schools. Only a little more than one-half of one percent home school their children.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Families are most likely to consider academic outcomes when choosing a school for their children. More than half of residents with children rank academic outcomes at the top of the list. Another 23.5 percent say safety is their chief consideration. But there are racial differences.

For 42 percent of African American families, safety is the top consideration when choosing a school for their children while only 19 percent of white families say that is their first concern.

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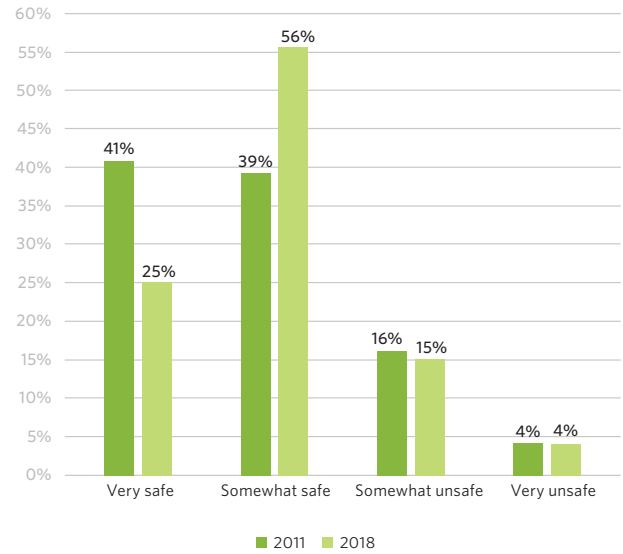
Parents are generally pleased with the quality of the education their children receive at school. More than 64 percent rate it as excellent or very good, although the rate is lower than in 2011, when 70 percent felt that way. Only 2 percent rate the quality of education as poor, which is down from 4 percent who felt that way seven years ago.

### SCHOOL FUNDING

Allegheny County residents also express more concern about the level of funding for schools. Nearly 40 percent overall believe it is generally or completely inadequate. In 2011, 33 percent felt that way.

African American families are more likely to say school funding is falling short: 56 percent of African Americans describe it as generally or completely inadequate compared to 37 percent of white families. And 53 percent of City of Pittsburgh residents feel funding for schools is inadequate while 33 percent of residents outside the city share that view. ■

How would you rate the safety in the local **public schools**?



## FINDINGS: PUBLIC SAFETY

**S**OUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA consistently reports one of the lowest overall crime rates among U.S. metropolitan regions. While Allegheny County residents are less likely to say their neighborhood is safer than others today than in 2011, more than 58 percent still

believe it is. And more than 76 percent say the rate of crime is about the same in the past year.

But race and income bracket influence those views. While 60 percent of white residents and 68.5 percent of people with incomes of \$100,000 or more feel their neighborhood is safer than others, those views are shared by only

44 percent of African Americans and 43 percent of people who earn less than \$25,000 a year.

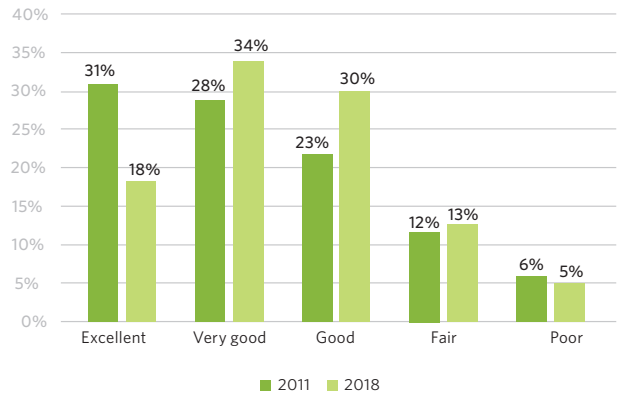
**POLICE PROTECTION**

Public opinion of the job that police do protecting their communities has slipped since 2011, when 31 percent of Allegheny County residents described local police work as excellent. Today, only 18 percent rate give local police such high marks.

Instead, they're more likely to rate police protection as very good, a notch lower. Still, 83 percent overall are unwilling to give police a grade any lower than "good."

Race matters little in those assessments. But the incomes of residents do. More than 33 percent of those with incomes under \$25,000 rate police protection as fair or poor compared to less than 8 percent of residents earning \$100,000 or more. ■

How would you rate the **police protection** in your neighborhood?



FINDINGS: **HOUSING**

**H**OUSING IS A BUDGET-STRAINING necessity for a significant number of Allegheny County residents, the 2018 Pittsburgh Regional Quality of Life Survey suggests.

Families whose housing costs consume more than 30 percent of their income are considered cost burdened by the U.S. Department of Housing

and Urban Development. More than 43 percent of Allegheny County respondents report housing costs above that threshold, which HUD warns puts them at risk of being unable to afford other necessities, such as food, transportation and health care.

The rate of people facing such circumstances is higher in the city than the rest of the county, and among those

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earning less than \$50,000 a year. Such financial strain is particularly widespread among African Americans, 64 percent of whom report housing costs that HUD considers a burden.

### OWNERSHIP AND CONDITION

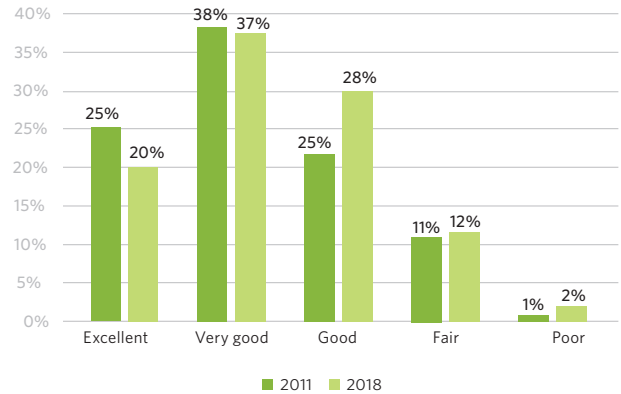
The percentage of county residents who own a home fell from 73 percent in 2011 to 64 percent and those who rent increased from 26 to 30 percent, the survey suggests. There are wide racial differences in the rates.

Only 36 percent of African American residents own a home compared to 69 percent of white residents. And more than 52 percent of African Americans rent, which is twice the rate of white residents.

Stark racial differences also are seen in assessments of the conditions of their homes and other homes in their neighborhood.

More than 60 percent of white residents rate the con-

How would you rate the physical condition of your **own home/dwelling**?



dition of their home as excellent or very good compared to 39 percent of African Americans. About 54 percent of white residents say the other homes in their neighborhood are in excellent or very good condition, but only 36.5 percent of African Americans give homes in their community such ratings. ■



## FINDINGS: ECONOMY

**T**HE PAST THREE YEARS have been good for 38 percent of Allegheny County residents who say their household finances improved in that time. That's better than in 2011, when

30 percent of county residents reported an improvement in their finances.

Generally, the greater their income the more likely residents are to report financial gains in the past three years.

For example, only 13 percent of those earning less than \$25,000 say their finances have gotten significantly or somewhat better compared to 57 percent of residents with incomes greater than \$75,000 a year.

African American residents (42 percent) are more likely than white residents (37 percent) to report such gains. And residents with a bachelors, master's or higher degree were more likely to see such improvement than people with a high school degree or less.

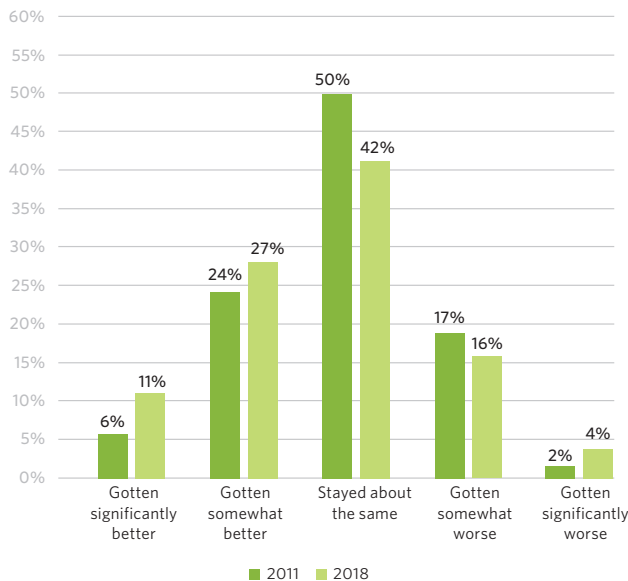
**ECONOMIC OUTLOOK**

More county residents believe the local and national economies will improve next year than when the question was asked in 2011.

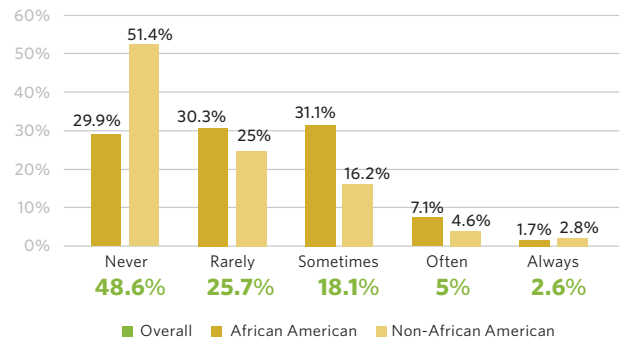
Expectations of a better regional economy vary significantly depending on residents' race and level of education. Nearly 44 percent of residents with the highest level of education expect it to get much better or somewhat better next year compared to 35 percent of residents with a high school degree or less. And 41 percent of white residents share such expectations compared to 29 percent of African Americans.

Asked about their own finances, 44 percent of African Americans expect them to get much better or somewhat better compared to 35 percent of white residents.

How has your **household financial situation** changed in the past three years?



How often is paying for **basic necessities** (monthly rent/mortgage, food, utilities) a problem?



**PAYING BILLS**

That would be welcome news to 26 percent of county residents who report always, often or sometimes having trouble paying rent, utilities and other necessities. That hardship rate is up from 2011, when 21 percent of residents reported the same experiences.

Such hardships are not evenly shared: 40 percent of African American always, often or sometimes have trouble paying bills compared to 24 percent of white residents. Not surprisingly, 75 percent of people earning \$100,000 or more say they never have such difficulty, something only 26 percent of residents with incomes under \$25,000 say is the case.

**GETTING TO WORK**

Cars remain the preferred way of getting to work for Allegheny County residents, but the rate of those choosing public transportation has risen from 16 percent in 2011 to 21 percent.

Women are more likely than men to take public transit to get to and from work. More than 31 percent of African Americans rely on bus or rail to get to their jobs compared to 19 of whites. And for 28 percent of residents earning less than \$50,000 public transportation is their primary means for getting to work compared to only 12 percent of those with incomes between \$75,000 and \$99,999. ■



## FINDINGS: HEALTH

**F**EWER COUNTY RESIDENTS OVERALL describe their health as excellent compared to 2011. Still, only 16 percent say they are in fair or poor health. And the rate of residents who say they never smoke has risen from 80 percent to 87 percent.

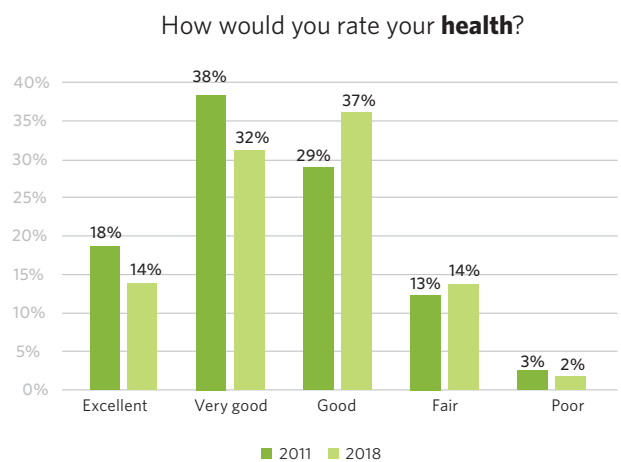
Reported stress levels remain the same overall. However, bouts of severe stress are reported by 14 percent of women compared to less than 7 percent of men and by 18 percent of residents with incomes under \$25,000 compared to less than 6 percent of those earning between \$75,000 and \$99,999.

### AFFORDING CARE

Cost deters a growing number of people from getting a doctor's care. More than 14 percent of residents overall say there were times in the past year they couldn't afford to see a doctor when they needed to. Seven years ago, 11 percent said they couldn't afford an office visit.

Differences are slight among races. But younger residents are more likely to experience such hardship than older residents: 23 percent of those aged 18-29 report not being able to afford a doctor's visit compared to less than 4 percent of people aged 65 or older. Among income brackets, 23

percent of residents earning between \$25,000 and \$49,999 a year say they had skipped a doctor's visit because of costs compared to 4.5 percent of those with incomes of \$100,000 or more. ■







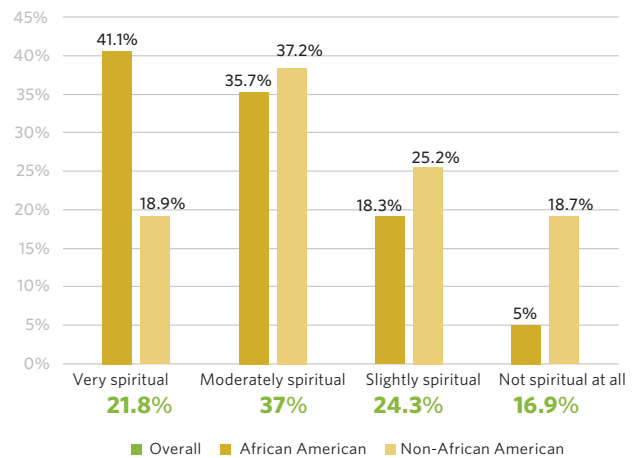
## FINDINGS: RELIGION

**F**EWER ALLEGHENY COUNTY RESIDENTS describe themselves as very spiritual or moderately spiritual today than in 2011, about 59 percent compared to 74 percent. But the overall responses of residents mute the significant differences seen when they are compared by age and race.

Residents aged 65 or older are the most likely to say they are very spiritual or moderately spiritual. More than 69 percent describe themselves in those terms compared to 42 percent of people aged 18–29.

A similarly striking gap is seen among African American and white residents: 77 percent of African Americans say they are very or moderately spiritual compared to 56 percent of white residents. Moreover, 41 percent of African Americans say they are very spiritual, while only 19 percent of white residents describe themselves that way. ■

To what extent do you consider yourself a **spiritual person**?





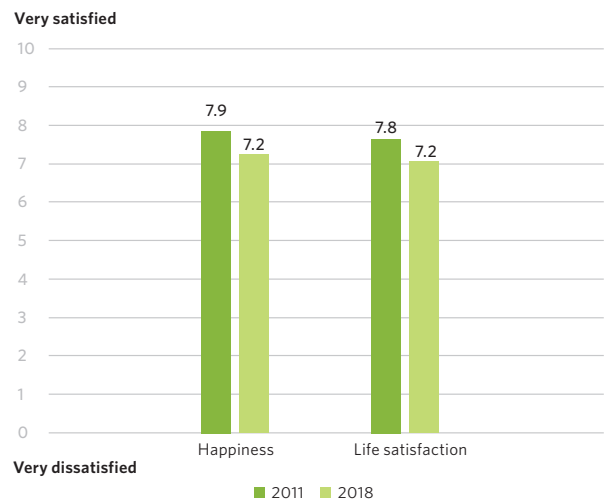
## FINDINGS: HAPPINESS

**M**ORE PEOPLE IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY may be better off financially than seven years ago, but the survey suggests that hasn't made them any happier.

Their overall life satisfaction and happiness scores are lower today. County residents overall had a mean score of 7.2 when asked to rate how satisfied they are with their lives on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being "very dissatisfied" and 10 being "very satisfied." In 2011, it was 7.7. They also scored 7.2 on the happiness scale, down from 7.88 seven years ago.

Men and woman, and blacks and whites have similar scores. But age and income are key factors. People earning under \$25,000 a year are the least likely to be happy and satisfied with life, while earning \$75,000 or more and being old enough to qualify for Medicare makes happiness and satisfaction more likely. ■

On a scale of 1 to 10, how **happy** are you and how **satisfied** are you with your life?



## APPENDIX DETAILED SURVEY METHODS

The 2018 Pittsburgh Today/UCSUR regional quality of life survey was conducted in June, 2018. A web-based online survey was sent to members of the UCSUR Research Registry residing in Allegheny County for whom an email address was available. The registry contains community members recruited through UCSUR surveys and research studies who have agreed to be contacted for future research studies. These studies used to recruit registry members employed a combination of probability and non-probability sampling designs. Email addresses are available for approximately 75% of the registry members. Those without emails tend to be older, African-American, less educated, and lower income. However, these demographic factors were adjusted for in the weighting of the data (see below).

On June 8, 2018 an initial email invitation with a link to the survey was sent to 4,934 registry members. The survey contained 101 questions covering a variety of quality of life topics, and took respondents an average of 19 minutes to complete. Follow-up reminders to non-respondents were sent on June 13 and June 18, with a notice that data collection would end on June 30. As an incentive, respondents were entered into a lottery drawing for one of four mini-IPADS. This resulted in 1,881 completed surveys, for a 38.1% response rate. Note that this is technically a non-probability sampling method, as registry/panel members are

volunteers. Thus, statements about “margin of error” are not appropriate, as these apply only to probability sampling designs. To reduce potential bias, the data were adjusted using statistical “raking” methods for age, sex, race, education, income, and political affiliation to make the sample more representative of the Allegheny population age 18 and older. This is the standard approach in the survey industry when relying on survey registries and panels for population estimates. We are encouraged that our weighting method resulted in estimates that closely matched external population benchmarks for home ownership, unemployment rate, and overall perceived health.

Data are compared to the 2011 regional quality of life survey. This probability sample telephone survey (including both landline and cell phones) was conducted using random digit dialing (RDD), and resulted in 799 respondents from Allegheny County. The 2011 data was also weighted for probability of selection, age and sex to make it more representative of the county population age 18 and over at that time. Using the weighted data from 2011 and 2018 allows comparisons of trends over time. ■

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This report and the complete survey data can be found online at:

[pittsburghquarterly.com/quality-of-life-2018](http://pittsburghquarterly.com/quality-of-life-2018)  
and [ucsur.pitt.edu/quality\\_of\\_life\\_2018.php](http://ucsur.pitt.edu/quality_of_life_2018.php)

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