

S A I N T  
**LOUIS** ♦  
**COUNTY**  
M I N N E S O T A

# 2019 Resident Survey

June 11, 2019

Presented by Dana Kazel & BreAnn Graber

*Survey Conducted by:*



**NRC**  
National Research Center Inc

# What is the St. Louis County Resident Survey?

Statistically valid survey of St. Louis County residents

Scorecard of community livability

Feedback on County services and employees

Resident opinion about community issues

Guide for strategic planning and investment



# How was the survey administered?

Surveys mailed to 2,100 households

647/1,964 surveys completed  
(33% Response Rate)

Results weighted to reflect community

Comparisons to other counties and national benchmark

Dear St. Louis County Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about St. Louis County. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,



Kevin Z. Gray  
County Administrator



# Respondent Demographics

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- 60% have lived in St. Louis County for more than 20 years
- Most (72%) owned their own home
- Most lived in a one family house detached from other houses (73%)
- 51% employed full time; 29% retired
- 48% earn \$50,000 or less annual income



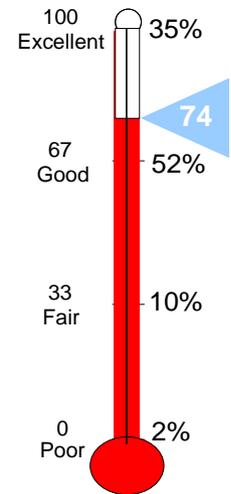
# Interpreting the Results

## ➤ Margin of error:

- $\pm 5\%$
- $\pm 3$  points on the 100-point scale

## ➤ Significant differences from 2016 to 2019:

- 6% or more
- 4 points or more



## Key Finding #1

*St. Louis County residents continue to experience a positive quality of life and think highly of St. Louis County as a place to live and raise a family.*



# Overall Quality of Life

★ 70

2019

69

2016

66

2013

62

2011

61

2007



*\*100-point scale*



*Higher than benchmark*

# Quality of Life

Average rating (0= poor, 100= excellent)	2016 Average rating (100pts)	2019 Average rating (100pts)	Change
Recreational opportunities	70	<b>72</b>	↑
St. Louis County as a place to live	68	<b>69</b>	↑
St. Louis County as a place to raise a family	67	<b>67</b>	↔
Educational opportunities	60	<b>60</b>	↔
Overall image or reputation of SLC	57	<b>57</b>	↔
St. Louis County as a place to retire	56	<b>52</b>	↓
Cost of living in St. Louis County	43	<b>44</b>	↑
Employment opportunities	36	<b>42</b>	↑

# Factors of Quality of Life

## Characteristics higher than national benchmark



Recreational opportunities

Cost of living

## Factors rated most important to quality of life

Availability of quality of health care (79)

Affordability (76)

Public safety (76)

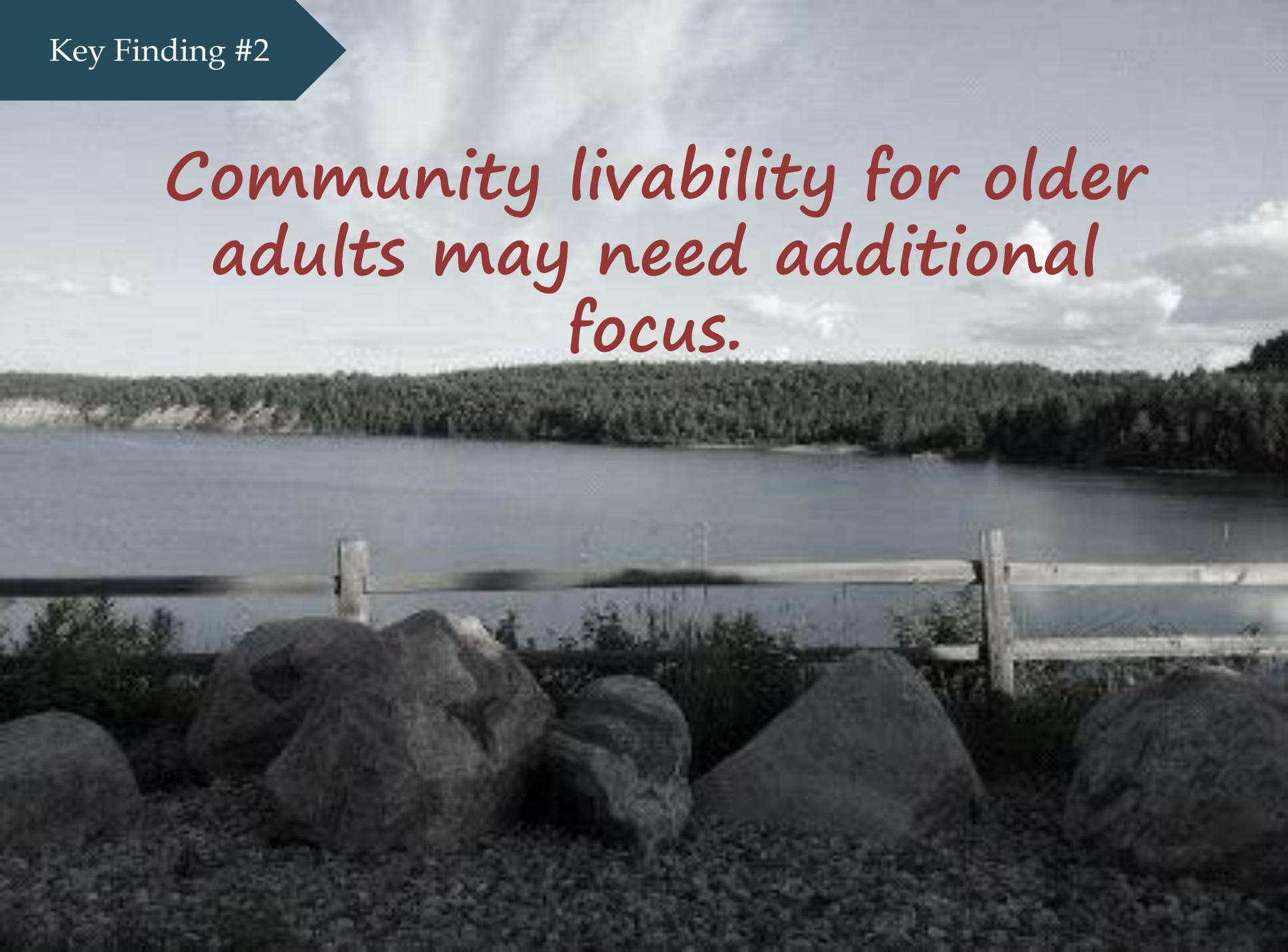
Natural Environment (75)



*Much higher than benchmark*



*Community livability for older adults may need additional focus.*



# Community Livability

- St. Louis County as a place to retire was rated, on average, below good – dipping slightly over the two-year period **(from 56 to 52)**
- Services to older adults were rated lower compared to national county benchmark **(from 48 to 47)**
- Services to lower income residents were also rated lower compared to national county benchmark **(from 47 to 44)**

*Note:* Older adults often fall into this population subgroup



# Feelings of Safety

## Residents feel MOST safe:

- From violent crimes (68)
- From property crimes (64)

## Residents feel LEAST safe:

- Illegal drug activity (49)
- From drunk or impaired drivers (47)
- From distracted drivers (36)

*Note: Average rating (0=very unsafe, 100=very safe)*



*Drug and alcohol use are concerns in St. Louis County.*



# Potential Problems & Concerns

In 2013, lack of jobs and lack of opportunities for young people tied for the top concern with a rating of 78. These concerns continue to be seen as less problematic.

Average rating (0=not a problem, 100=major problem)	2016 Average rating (100pts)	2019 Average rating (100pts)	Change
Opioid epidemic	<i>New in 2019</i>	<b>80</b>	N/A
Lack of opportunities for young people	74	<b>69</b>	↓
Conditions for county roads and bridges	71	<b>68</b>	↓
Poverty	70	<b>67</b>	↓
Homelessness	61	<b>63</b>	↑
Lack of jobs	75	<b>62</b>	↓
Crime	60	<b>61</b>	↑
Taxes	57	<b>55</b>	↓
Foreclosed properties/tax forfeiture/blight	58	<b>54</b>	↓

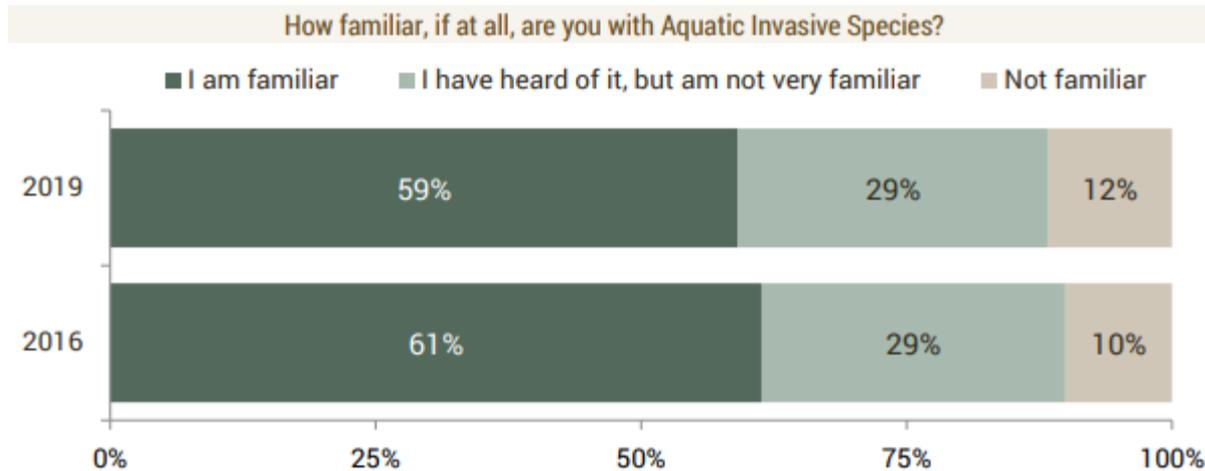
# Health Concerns

Average rating (0=not a concern, 100=major concern)	2016 Average rating (100pts)	2019 Average rating (100pts)
Illegal drug use	80	<b>79</b>
Abuse of prescribed medications	73	<b>73</b>
Domestic violence	70	<b>67</b>
Depression	64	<b>67</b>
Alcohol abuse among adults	68	<b>67</b>
Overweight adults	69	<b>67</b>
Abuse and neglect of children	70	<b>67</b>
Availability of mental health services	64	<b>66</b>
Bullying	67	<b>64</b>
Health and support of older adults	67	<b>64</b>
Quality of parenting skills (of parents of children ages 0-17)	66	<b>64</b>
Underage alcohol use	68	<b>63</b>

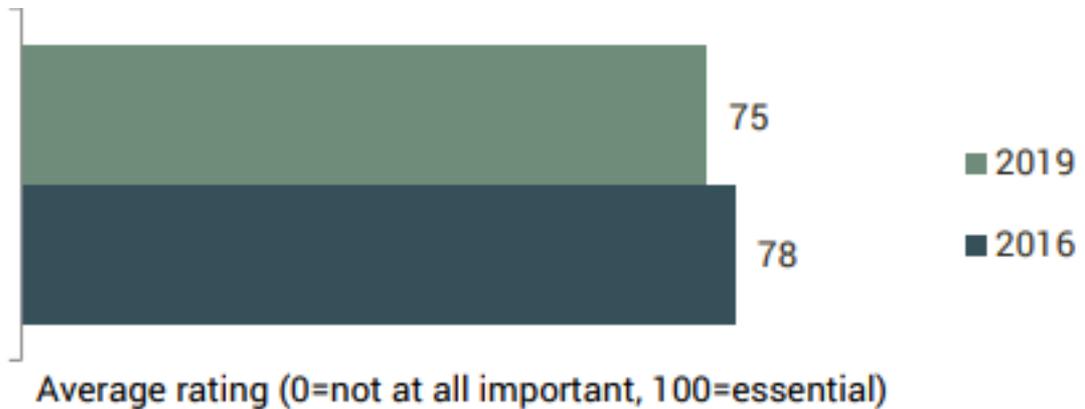
	2016 Average rating (100pts)	2019 Average rating (100pts)
Misunderstanding or discrimination faced by people with mental health challenges	<i>New in 2019</i>	<b>62</b>
Suicide/attempted suicide	59	<b>62</b>
Health and support of persons with disabilities	63	<b>62</b>
Abuse & neglect of older adults	63	<b>61</b>
Overweight children	65	<b>61</b>
Vaping (e-cigarettes)	<i>New in 2019</i>	<b>58</b>
Unplanned pregnancy	55	<b>53</b>
Tobacco use (smoking & chewing tobacco)	58	<b>53</b>
Pedestrian and bicyclist safety	50	<b>49</b>
Sexually transmitted diseases	50	<b>46</b>



# Familiarity & Importance of AIS



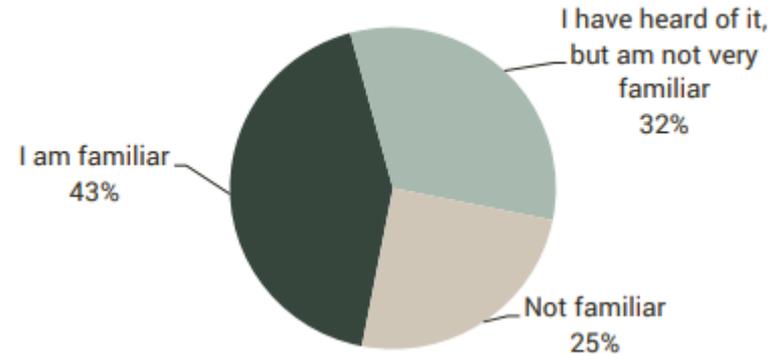
How important, if at all, do you believe it is to take action to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species?



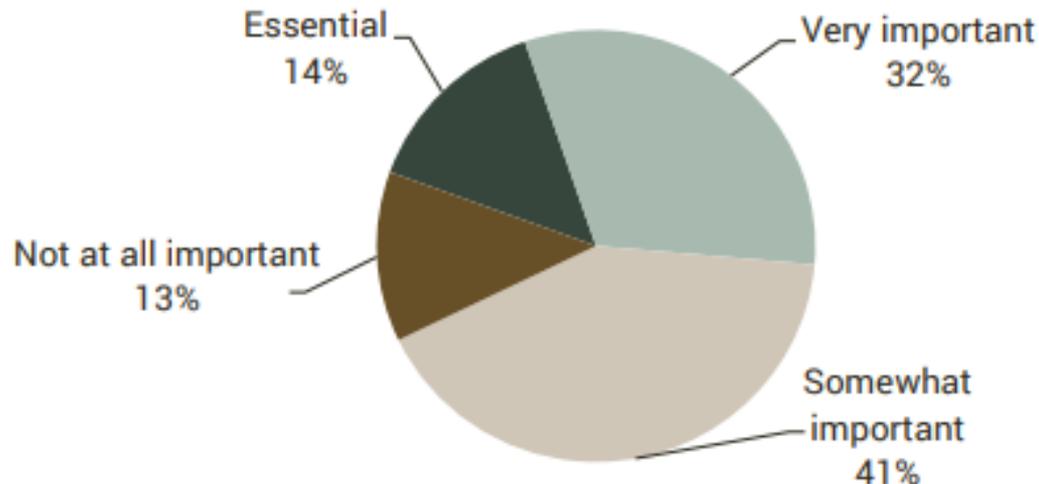
# St. Louis County Heritage & Arts Center



How familiar, if at all, are you with the St. Louis County Heritage and Arts Center (the Depot)?



How important, if at all, is it for St. Louis County to invest in the St. Louis County Heritage and Arts Center (the Depot) to ensure its long term viability?

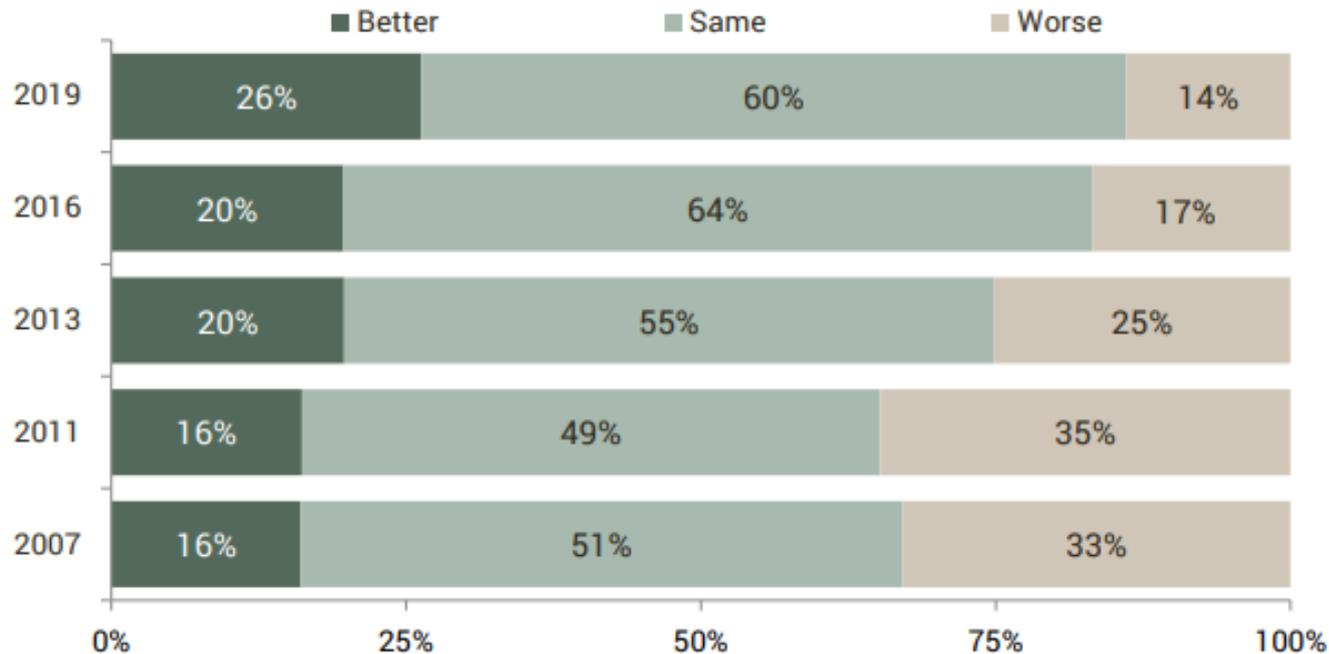


*Residents are feeling more optimistic about the economic future of St. Louis County.*



# Household Financial Status

Do you think that a year from now you or your household will be better off financially, worse off, or just about the same as now?



When respondents were asked how their household financial status would be a year from now, there was a slight uptick in those who reported that they would be better off in a year from now.



*Perceptions of St. Louis  
County government  
performance have been inching  
upward since 2013 with  
public safety seeing the largest  
boosts.*

# Government Performance



**48** Providing access to St. Louis County government services

**45** Informing residents\*

**42** Providing culturally responsive services

**41** Value of services for the taxes paid to St. Louis County\*

**40** Listening to residents\*

**39** Managing tax dollars\*

**39** Effectively planning for the future of the County



# Notable Benchmarks

- Respondents overall confidence in the St. Louis County Government continues to **rise** (from 44 to 46)
- Average rating of overall quality of County Services remained **steady** (48)
- Maintenance of County **roads** was rated **higher** than national county benchmark (42)
- **Child protection** (44) and accessibility and functionality of County **website** (53) rated **below** the national county benchmark



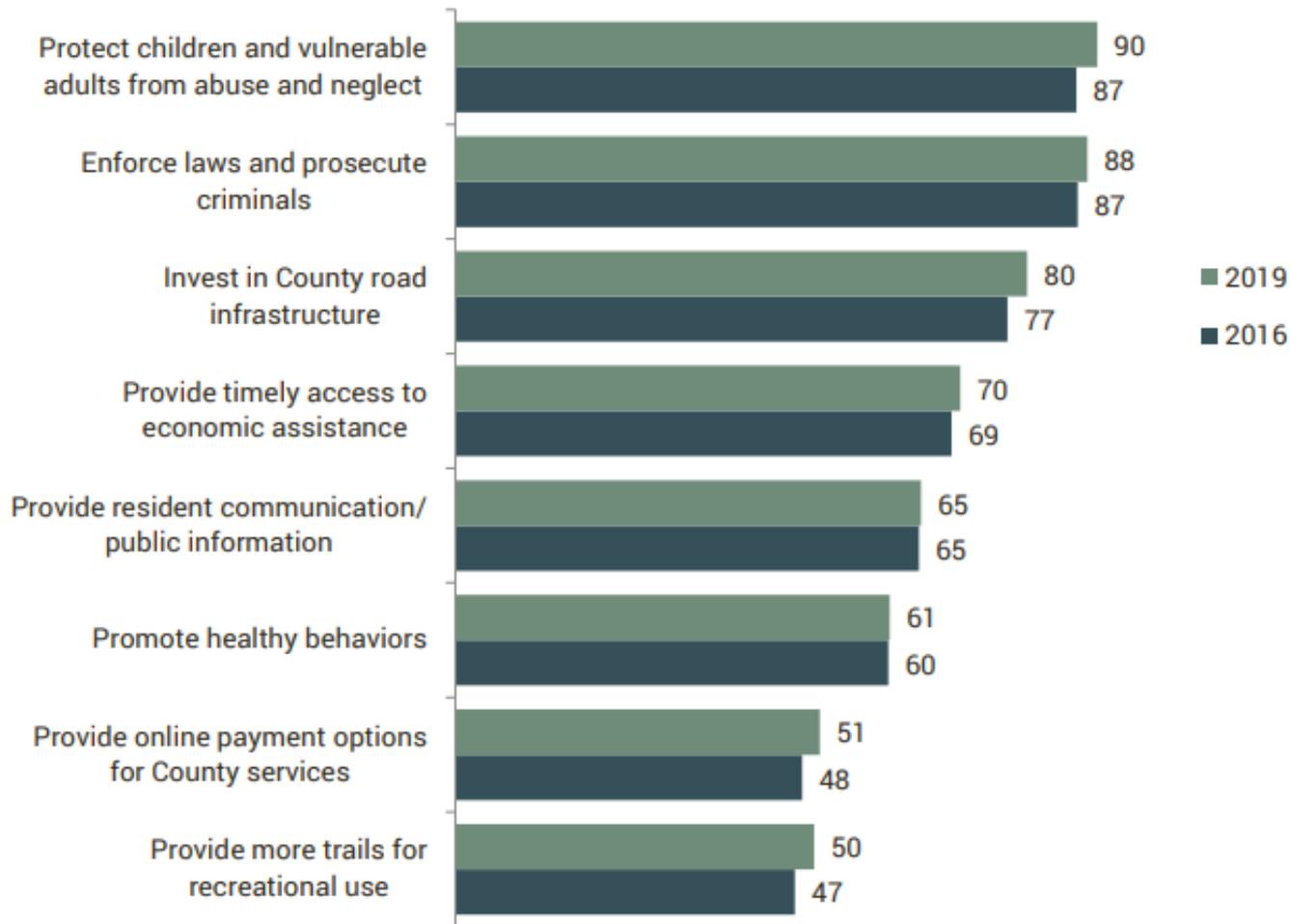
# Specific Government Performance

Average rating (0= poor, 100= excellent)	2016 Average rating (100pts)	2019 Average rating (100pts)	Change
911 dispatch	72	78	
Sheriff patrol	66	70	
Landfill, canister site and recycling services	59	59	
Snow & ice removal on County roads	56	54	
Disaster preparedness and response	52	54	
Records and vital statistics	50	53	
Public health	52	52	
Licensing and vehicle registration	56	51	
Management of County-owned land	50	51	
Land use services, including building & conditional use permitting	43	46	
Employment support	43	45	
On-site wastewater & septic permitting	42	45	
Information about the work of the St. Louis County Board	40	42	
Assessment process/property tax system	39	42	
Services to youth	41	42	
Services to veterans	43	42	



# Importance of County Services

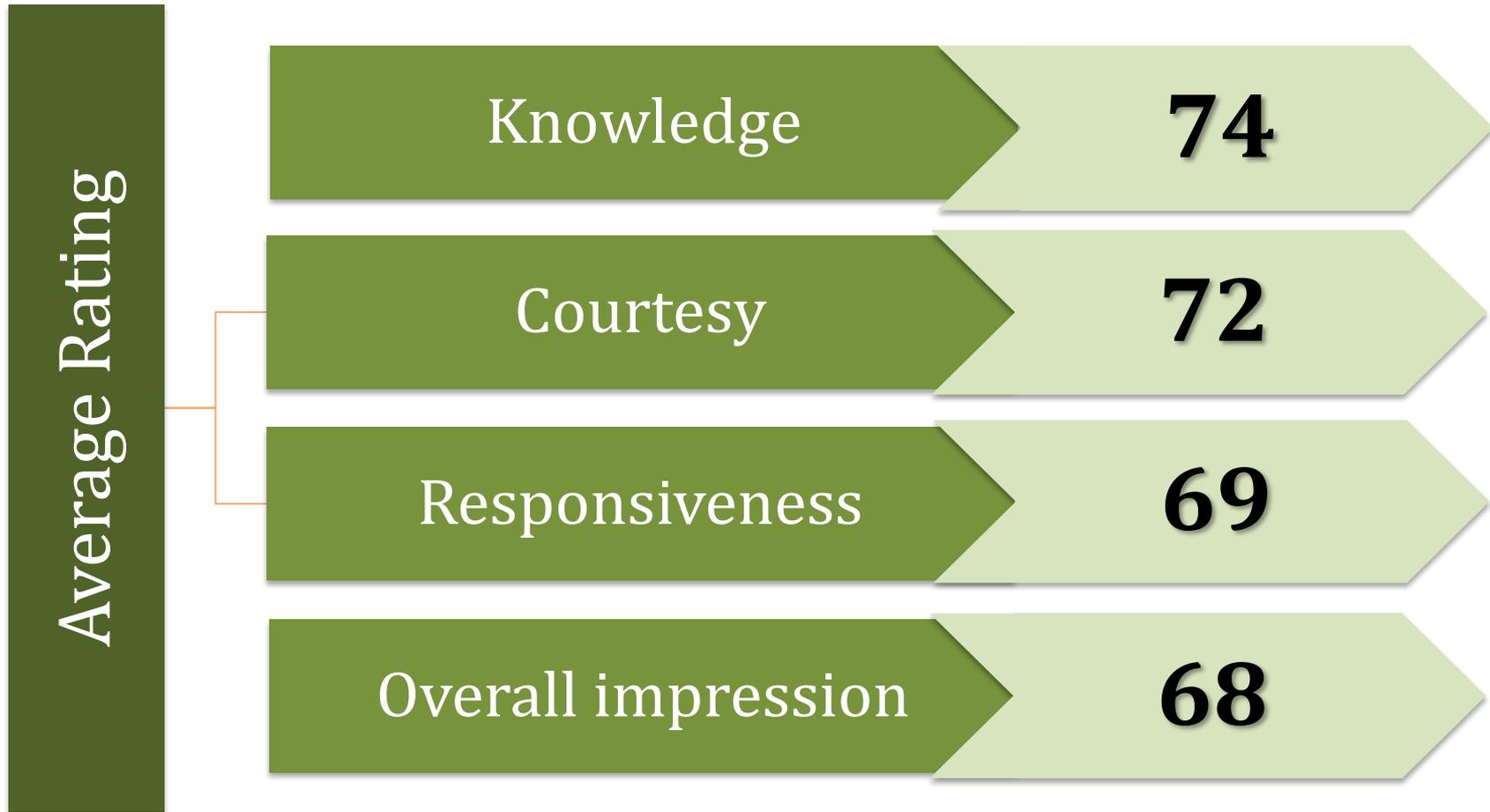
How important, if at all, is it for the County to provide the following services?



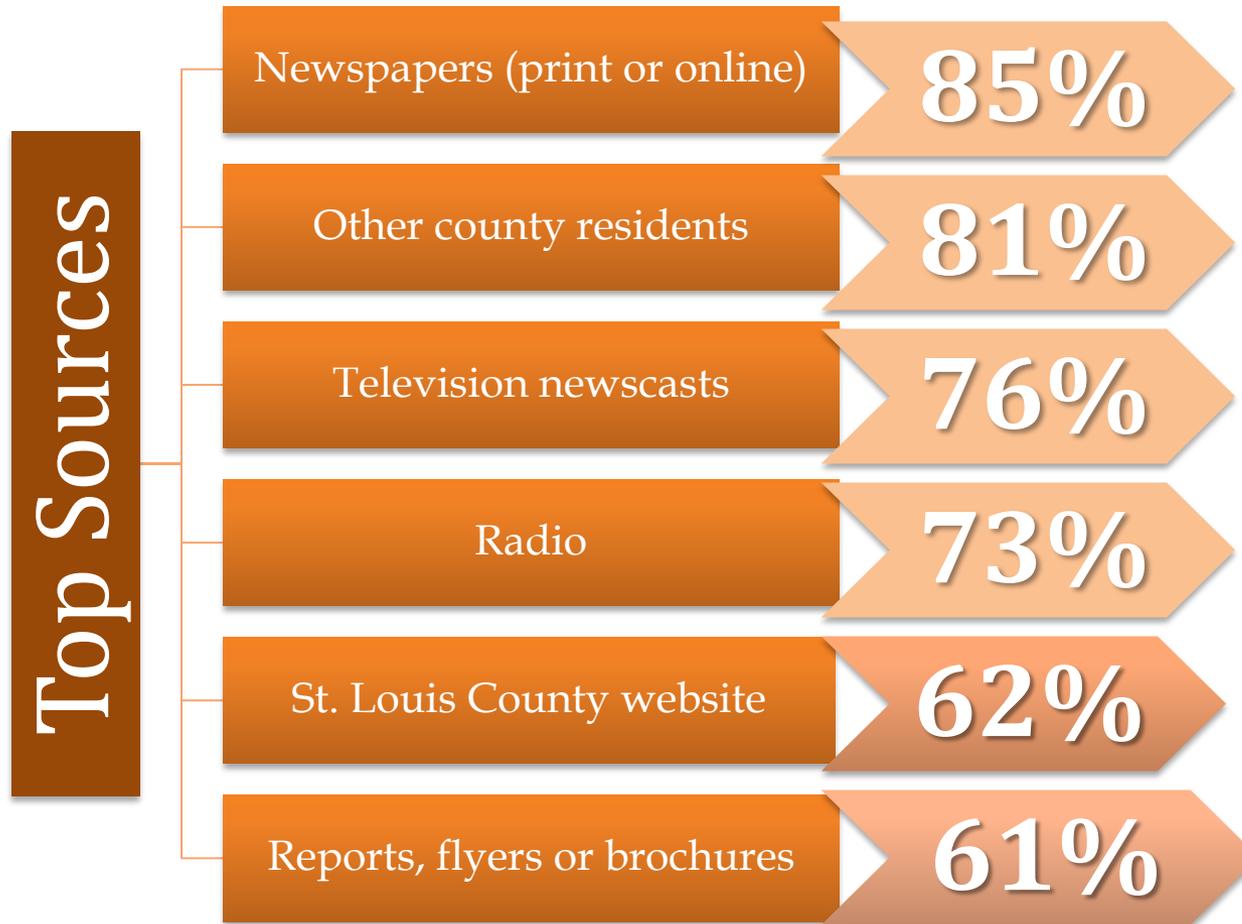
Average rating (0=not at all important, 100=essential)



# Customer Service



# Information Sources

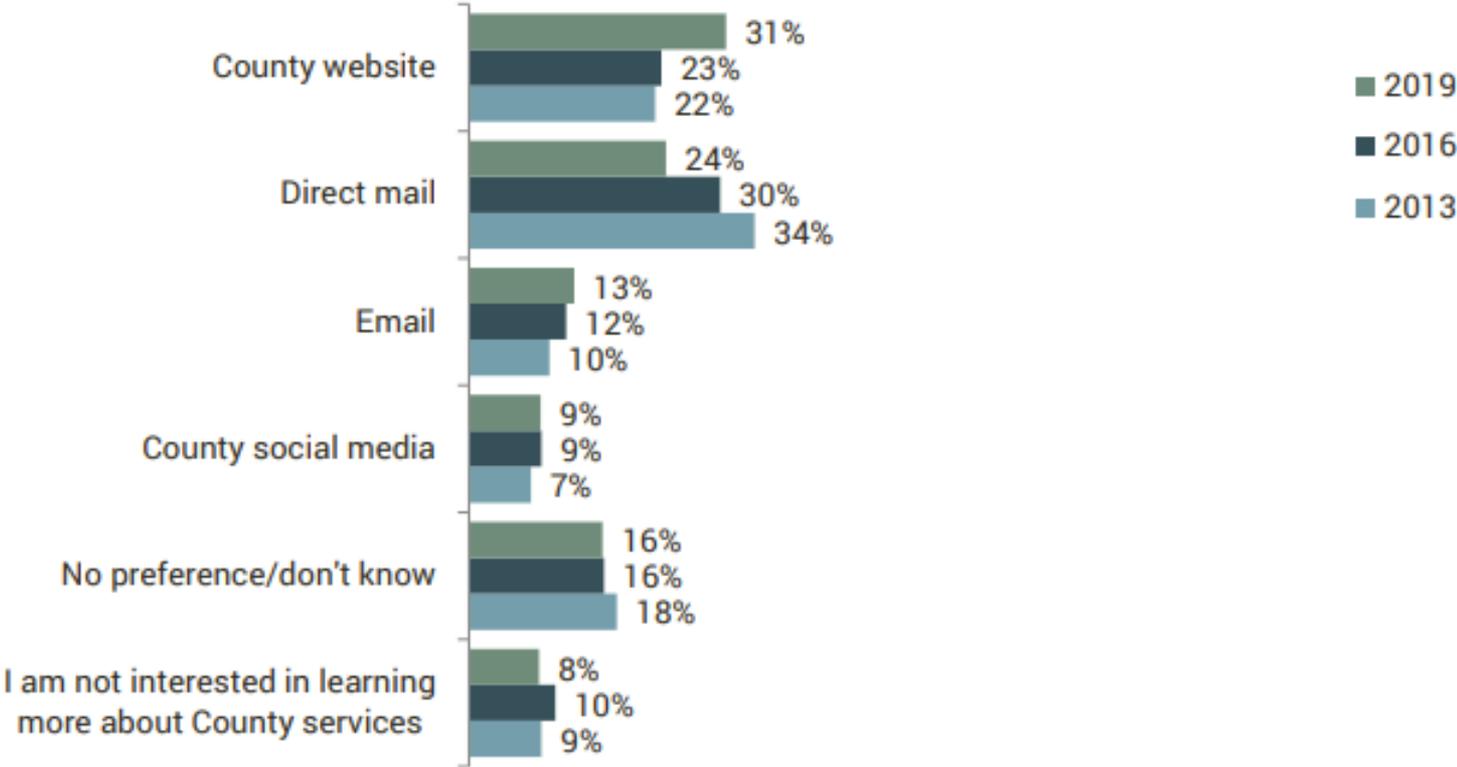


*\*percent major or minor source*



# Top Preferred Method to Learn about County Services

Which ONE of the following options below would you most prefer to use to learn more about County services?



Percent of respondents



# Summary of Key Findings

Residents continue to experience a positive quality of life

Residents feel more optimistic about the County's economic future

Drug and alcohol are significant concerns

Community livability for older adults may need additional focus

Perceptions of the County's government performance continues to rise, with public safety seeing largest boosts



# Next Steps

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- ❑ Facilitate Department Heads discussion
- ❑ Hold individual department discussions and/or presentations (*as requested*)
  - Discussions to focus on how department/program specific results help engage staff to analyze and use this data
- ❑ Build into business plan updates, budget discussions and strategic planning
- ✓ Build into performance reporting efforts – State Auditor Local Government Performance Program, KPIs





# Questions?



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