



Delta Quality of Life **Survey Report**

Strategy, Learning and Evaluation Department
May 2018

Table of Contents

- Executive Summary 4
- Introduction and Survey Overview..... 12
 - Quality of Life in Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi 12
 - Defining and Measuring Quality of Life..... 13
 - Survey Purpose 13
 - Survey Administration and Content..... 13
- Full Survey Analysis..... 14
 - 1. General Perceptions about Overall Quality of Life..... 15
 - Investments 15
 - Results 15
 - Implications 19
 - 2. Foundation Investment Areas 20
 - Support Pre-K-12 Educational Improvement 20
 - Investments 20
 - Results 20
 - Implications 23
 - Improve Public Safety..... 24
 - Investments 24
 - Results 24
 - Implications 26
 - Engage and Develop Young People 27
 - Investments 27
 - Results 27
 - Implications 28
 - Targeted Job Creation..... 29
 - Investments 29
 - Results 29
 - Implications 30

3. Other Quality of Life Topics 30

 Results 31

 Implications 33

Diversity and Inclusion..... 34

 Results 34

 Implications 35

Community Engagement..... 36

 Results 36

 Implications 37

Health Care 38

 Results 38

 Implications 38

Impact of Foundation Investments 39

Limitations/Moving Forward..... 39

Executive Summary

Quality of Life in Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi

In the Home Region Program, the Walton Family Foundation aims to measurably impact the quality of life for Delta residents through focused investments in four strategic areas: support Pre-K-12 educational attainment, improve public safety, engage and develop young people, and invest in targeted job creation. WFF has finalized a five-year strategic plan, and Home Region foundation investments in the Delta have totaled nearly \$21 million to 22 organizations between January 2015 and January 2018.

The Delta is defined as Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi for this survey since this is the region that is the focus of the foundation's investments. The table below lays out the characteristics of the population in these locations.

ES Table 1: County Demographics¹

	Coahoma County, Mississippi	Mississippi	Phillips County, Arkansas	Arkansas	United States
Population					
Population estimates, July 1, 2017	23,154	2,984,100	18,572	3,004,279	325,719,178
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017	-11.4%	0.5%	-14.6%	3.0%	5.5%
Race and Hispanic Origin					
White alone, percent	22.3%	59.3%	36.0%	79.4%	76.9%
Black or African American alone, percent	76.3%	37.7%	62.1%	15.7%	13.3%
Education					
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	77.5%	83.0%	76.4%	85.2%	87.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	17.2%	21.0%	11.7%	21.5%	30.3%
Income & Poverty					
Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	\$28,217	\$40,528	\$26,829	\$42,336	\$55,322
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	\$16,066	\$21,651	\$16,684	\$23,401	\$29,829
Persons in poverty ² , percent	41.2%	20.8%	32.3%	17.2%	12.7%

¹<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US,MS,AR,coahomacountymississippi,phillipscountyarkansas/PST045216>

² The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps).

Defining and Measuring Quality of Life

A complete understanding of quality of life must include both quantitative and qualitative measures. In 2013 for the first time, the foundation conducted the Delta Quality of Life Survey. The survey was commissioned by the WFF Strategy, Learning, and Evaluation Department (SLED) in partnership with the Survey Research Laboratory (SRL) at Mississippi State University to gauge the extent to which residents are satisfied with overall quality of life and to assess whether they think quality of life is improving in ways related to foundation investments. In 2017, SLED again commissioned the SRL and Mississippi State University to conduct another survey to determine if the quality of life perceptions of residents in Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi have changed over the past four years.

Survey Purpose and Method

The 2017 Delta Quality of Life Survey has two primary goals:

- 1) To assess the contributions of foundation giving in the Delta community by tracking changes over time; and
- 2) To inform strategic decisions about future grant making.

To accomplish these goals, residents were asked to provide their views on areas in which the foundation invests directly and on areas commonly associated with quality of life in which the foundation is not currently investing.

SRL surveyed a representative sample of 756 residents in Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi between the ages of 20 and 64; there were 122 survey questions, including demographic questions.

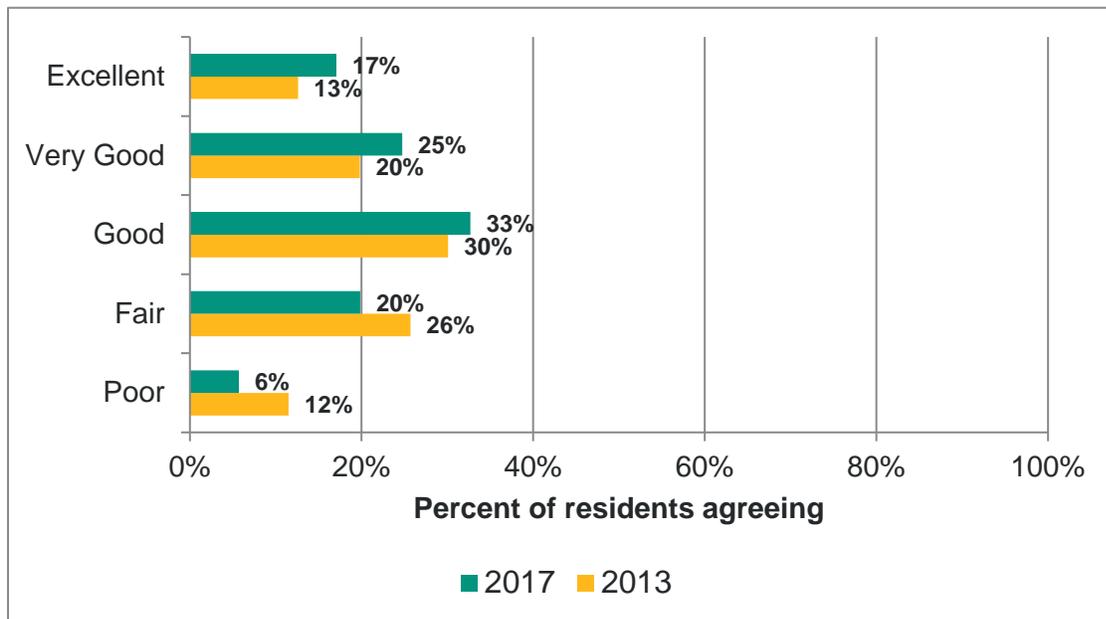
Key Findings: Overall Quality of Life

In general, most Delta residents reported being happy; however, while 74 percent say they have a “good”, “very good”, or “excellent” quality of life, that still leaves 26 percent who say their quality of life is “fair” or “poor”.

- 89 percent of residents reported being “very happy” or “fairly happy” (89 percent in 2013)
- Delta residents have improved perceptions of quality of life with 44 percent in Phillips County (26 percent in 2013) and 40 percent in Coahoma County (37 percent in 2013) rating quality of life as “excellent” or “good”
- 39 percent said that their overall quality of life has “significantly increased” or “increased” over the past year (34 percent in 2013).

Common themes about what most influences quality of life were family, finances/jobs, and health.

ES Figure 1: Resident Perceptions of Overall Quality of Life



These factors are in many ways outside of the influence of the foundation; however, as discussed below, residents reported improved satisfaction with aspects of life that the foundation invests in (such as job creation). The evidence in this report indicates that the foundation is investing in the areas deemed most important to improve by the community.

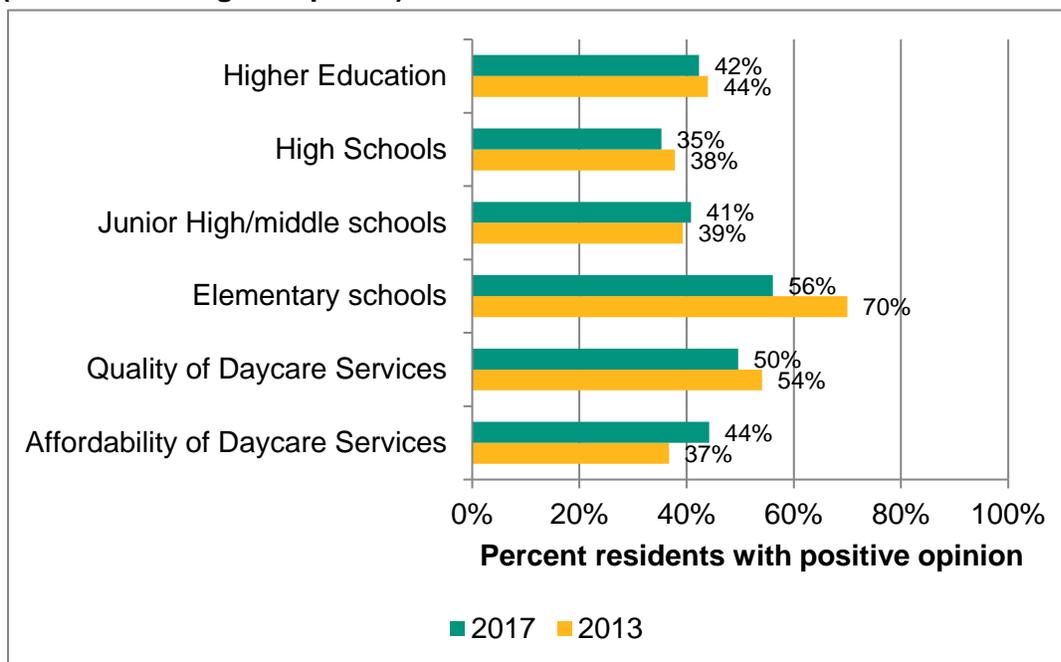
Key Findings: WFF Family Directed Investment Areas

Support Pre-K-12 Educational Improvement

Foundation Home Region education grantees include The College Initiative, KIPP Delta Public Schools, Mississippi First, Inc., Coahoma County School District, Clarksdale Collegiate, and Arkansas Tech University. Overall, investments between January 2015 and January 2018 were \$16.2 million to 10 organizations.

Overall, 35 to 56 percent of respondents perceived the quality of elementary school through higher education to be of “good” or “very good” quality. Fifty percent perceived daycare offerings in the region as high quality, and only 44 percent believed daycare to be affordable, though this reflects a seven percentage point increase from 2013.

ES Figure 2: Respondent Perceptions of Quality Local Education and Pre-K Affordability (Percent offering a response)³



The small fluctuations in perceptions of quality at most levels are not particularly meaningful. However, the 14 percentage point drop in perception of elementary schools was statistically significant. Across all grade levels, African Americans and low-income residents tended to rate the quality more positively than white and non-low-income residents; there was no difference between the counties.

In addition, in 2017, residents were asked whether they thought adding more public charter schools or private schools would be good for their community. These results showed a significant difference in the desire for more public charter schools versus more private schools

³ Residents could select a “does not apply option” on the question of quality schools. The number of respondents on the school quality questions and Pre-K affordability ranged from 534 to 721 (total surveyed 756).

(60 percent responded favorably about the addition of public charter schools while only 49 percent did so for private schools). Moreover, there was a higher rate of negative perceptions toward additional private schools (26 percent reported not being in favor of more public charter schools versus 37 percent not in favor of more private schools).

Improve Public Safety

Foundation Home Region public safety grantees include the City of Helena-West Helena and City of Clarksdale. Investments between January 2015 and January 2018 were \$240,000 in 2 organizations.

Overall, more than 80 percent of residents reported feeling safe during the day and in their homes at night. Men were more likely than women to report feeling “very safe” or “fairly safe” in their homes after dark (men 88 percent; women 82 percent), walking alone in their neighborhood after dark (men 68 percent; women 44 percent), or in a downtown area after dark (men 58 percent; women 36 percent). Higher income residents were more likely to report feeling safe in their homes and neighborhoods after dark. African Americans were more likely than white residents to report feeling safe in the downtowns during the day and after dark (54 percent of African Americans reported feeling safe in the nearest downtown after dark versus 32 percent of whites). When analyzing at the county level, the results show that residents of Coahoma County were more likely than residents of Phillips County to report feeling safe in the nearest downtown area after dark (53 percent reported feeling safe in Coahoma County versus 39 percent in Phillips County).

When asked to rate various potential problems in their community on a 1-5 scale (with 1 meaning “no problem at all” and 5 meaning “very serious problem”), the largest crime and safety problem identified by residents was related to gangs (70 percent answered “serious” or “very serious” problem), followed closely by alcohol or drugs (68 percent), and violent crime (63 percent). Coahoma County respondents were more likely to report gangs were a “very serious” or “somewhat serious” problem (74 percent) versus Phillips County respondents (65 percent).

Engage and Develop Young People

Grantees include Spring Initiative, Inc., Boys and Girls Club of Phillips County, Griot Arts, Inc., and Delta Health Alliance, Inc. From January 2015 through January 2018, the foundation invested \$3.1 million in 6 organizations.

Local after-school programs saw moderate levels of use according to the 2017 survey with 49 percent of respondents who reported having a child 18 years or younger in their home (n=298) indicating that they or a child in their household had accessed a local after-school program in the last 12 months⁴. African American residents reported attending more often (on average African American residents reported attending after-school programs 36 times in the past year

⁴ Direct comparison between 2013 and 2017 is not possible, due to the 2013 survey asking only specifically whether the respondent or any children in the household accessed a local Boys and Girls Club in the last 12 months. The foundation has since invested in numerous after-school programs requiring a broadening of the scope of the question. In 2013, 14 percent of respondents indicated attending a Boys and Girls Club.

while white residents reported an average of 10 times in the past year), and interestingly, higher income individuals reported accessing after-school programs more often (on average those who reported an annual household income less than \$20,000 averaged 20 visits in the past year, while respondents reporting an annual household income over \$50,000 averaged 38 visits per year). There was no significant difference in usage by county.

Targeted Job Creation

The foundation's two primary job creation grantees are the Helena-West Helena/Phillips County Port Authority and the Coahoma Collective. Investments between January 2015 and January 2018 totaled \$1.5 million.

Satisfaction with the number of available jobs and with job wages and salaries remains low, but perceptions did improve from 2013 to 2017. Compared to respondents in 2013, respondents in 2017 reported significantly lower levels of dissatisfaction regarding the number of jobs in the local communities (72 percent rated the number of available jobs as “poor” or “very poor” in 2017 compared to 80 percent in 2013). The percent of respondents who reported dissatisfaction with job wages or salaries also declined from 73 percent in 2013 to 68 percent in 2017 (5 percentage point decrease). In 2017, 30 percent of respondents reported they had “plenty of money” or an “adequate amount of money” to meet everyday needs a nine percentage point increase from 2013. Whites were more likely to report they had “plenty” or “adequate” amount of money to meet everyday needs (49 percent of whites compared to 22 percent of African Americans.)

Key Findings: Other Quality of Life Areas Not Funded By WFF

Diversity and Inclusion

When asked whether they felt accepted by people in their local community, 78 percent of residents said they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” (82 percent in 2013), and all races reported relatively high levels of acceptance (White residents at 80 percent and African American residents at 77 percent). However, significantly more respondents in 2017 reported that relations amongst different racial groups had become worse (23 percent in 2017 up from 18 percent in 2013). A greater percentage of respondents in 2017 reported that racial tensions were “a very serious problem” in their communities (39 percent in 2017 versus 29 percent in 2013).

Civic Engagement

The region's voting rates, 71 percent within the past 12 months, far surpass the national turnout in the federal election in 2016 (60 percent), but are down from 2013 (77 percent).

Only 36 percent of respondents expressed confidence in local government or city council to make decisions that are in the best interest of their communities; this is two percentage points

lower than reported on the 2013 survey⁵. Phillips County residents were more likely to express disagreement that local government or city council makes decisions that are in the best interest of the community (48 percent of residents of Phillips County responded “strongly disagree” or “disagree” compared to 41 percent of Coahoma County residents).

Health Care

The majority of all residents are satisfied with the quality of care they receive at their local doctor. Sixty-two percent rate the quality of care at their local doctor as good or very good, but only 34 percent do so for their local hospital⁶. Eighty-two percent of respondents feel it is important to improve local opportunities to improve their health. Phillips County residents were more positive in their ratings of affordability of health care, with 50 percent (39 percent in 2013) reporting their ability to afford needed health care compared to only 38 percent (42 percent in 2013) in Coahoma County.

⁵ According to a 2013 study conducted by PEW Research Center, 63 percent of Americans have a favorable opinion of their local government. <http://www.people-press.org/2013/04/15/state-governments-viewed-favorably-as-federal-rating-hits-new-low/>

⁶ Perceptions of quality are below national comparisons based on a 2014 survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, in which 88 percent of Americans reported care is “good” or “somewhat good” at the local doctor, and 81 percent at local hospital. <http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Pages/HTML%20Reports/finding-quality-doctors.aspx>

Impact of WFF Investments and Survey Implications

Perceptions about the overall quality of life in the Delta are improving slightly. While top reasons are related to family and income, the foundation is addressing the primary issues identified by the community as important to improve.

The quality of life survey was meant to inform strategic decision making moving forward. Based on the results, the following key questions are recommended for considerations for future strategic plans:

Next Steps

The Delta quality of life poll was designed to provide a broad overview of residents' perceptions of quality of life in the region, with particular attention to the foundation's four investment strategies. These data allow for surfacing of key issues that can help guide discussions about strategic refinement.

Staff proposes that the foundation continues to conduct a quality of life poll every three years, using an almost identical script in order to continue to track resident perceptions over time. The survey provides unique data and has value to the foundation as well as to grantees who work in the foundation's investment areas.

Introduction and Survey Overview

Quality of Life in Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi

In the Home Region Program, the Walton Family Foundation aims to measurably impact the quality of life for Delta residents through focused investments in four strategic areas: support Pre-K-12 educational attainment, improve public safety, engage and develop young people, and invest in targeted job creation. WFF has finalized a five-year strategic plan, and Home Region foundation investments in the Delta have totaled nearly \$21 million to 22 organizations between January 2015 and January 2018.

The Delta is defined as Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi for this survey since this is the region that is the focus of the foundation's investments. The table below lays out the characteristics of the population in these locations.

Table 1: County Demographics⁷

	Coahoma County, Mississippi	Mississippi	Phillips County, Arkansas	Arkansas	United States
Population					
Population estimates, July 1, 2017	23,154	2,984,100	18,572	3,004,279	325,719,178
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017	-11.4%	0.5%	-14.6%	3.0%	5.5%
Race and Hispanic Origin					
White alone, percent	22.3%	59.3%	36.0%	79.4%	76.9%
Black or African American alone, percent	76.3%	37.7%	62.1%	15.7%	13.3%
Education					
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	77.5%	83.0%	76.4%	85.2%	87.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2012-2016	17.2%	21.0%	11.7%	21.5%	30.3%
Income & Poverty					
Median household income (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	\$28,217	\$40,528	\$26,829	\$42,336	\$55,322
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2016 dollars), 2012-2016	\$16,066	\$21,651	\$16,684	\$23,401	\$29,829
Persons in poverty ⁸ , percent	41.2%	20.8%	32.3%	17.2%	12.7%

⁷<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US,MS,AR,coahomacountymississippi,phillipscountyarkansas/PST045216>

⁸ The Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or noncash benefits (such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps).

Defining and Measuring Quality of Life

A complete understanding of quality of life must include both quantitative and qualitative measures. In 2013 for the first time, the foundation conducted the Delta Quality of Life Survey. The survey was commissioned by the WFF Strategy, Learning, and Evaluation Department (SLED) in partnership with the Survey Research Laboratory (SRL) at Mississippi State University to gauge the extent to which residents are satisfied with overall quality of life and to assess whether they think quality of life is improving in ways related to foundation investments. In 2017, SLED again commissioned the SRL and Mississippi State University to conduct another survey to determine if the quality of life perceptions of residents in Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi have changed over the past four years.

Survey Purpose

The 2017 Delta Quality of Life Survey has two primary goals:

- 1) To assess the contributions of foundation giving in the Delta community, including tracking changes over time; and
- 2) To inform strategic decisions about future grant making.

To accomplish these goals, we asked residents to provide their views on areas in which the foundation invests directly and on areas commonly associated with quality of life in which the foundation is not currently investing.

Survey Administration and Content

In January 2013 and November 2017, the WFF Strategy, Learning, and Evaluation Department (SLED) partnered with the Mississippi State University Survey Research Laboratory (SRL) to administer a telephone survey to a representative sample of 756 (1007 in 2013) working-age Phillips County, Arkansas and Coahoma County, Mississippi residents (ages 20-64). The survey script was developed in collaboration with foundation staff and included 122 questions (101 content questions; 21 demographic/context questions) as follows:

Table 2: Survey Content

Category	Number of Questions	Sample Question
Overall perceptions of quality of life	10	Overall, how would you rate your quality of life? Would you say...? (Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, Don't Know)

Explore resident perceptions of their satisfaction in the four strategy areas in which the foundation directly invests	80	Different K-12 school options, including public charter schools, would be a good addition to my community. Would you say you: (Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, Don't know/not sure, Refused)
Probe topics commonly associated with life satisfaction that are not currently included in the strategic plan but are commonly used in domestic and international quality of life research	11	Example: Have you voted in the past 12 months? (Yes, No)

The content of this survey is not directly comparable to national and international quality of life surveys. These differences occur because: 1) it was important to include content specific to the Delta region; and 2) international quality of life surveys ask different questions or ask questions about similar themes in different ways. Benchmarking these survey responses to other U.S. locations would require conducting additional surveys in select regions.

Both landline and cellphone users were contacted, and interviews lasted approximately nine minutes. The reported cooperation rate was 53 percent, and the foundation was not explicitly identified unless the respondents asked. To ensure a representative sample, the collected data was weighted through a two-stage process by the research team at SRL.

Full Survey Analysis

The next three sections provide the results from the survey. They are organized as follows:

1. General perceptions about overall quality of life in the Delta
2. Foundation investment areas
 1. Support Pre-K-12 educational improvement
 2. Improve public safety
 3. Engage and develop young people
 4. Invest in targeted job creation
3. Other quality of life topics
 1. Amenities
 2. Diversity
 3. Civic Engagement
 4. Health

Each section begins with an overview of foundation investments related to the relevant survey results. Then survey results are presented in a variety of formats. Various subgroup analyses are provided throughout as well (by race, income, age, county, parental status). Finally, each section concludes with a discussion of implications based on the findings.

1. General Perceptions about Overall Quality of Life

Investments

The Home Region Program's five-year strategic plan (2015-2020) outlines the strategies and initiatives covered in the quality of life survey. From January 2015 through January 2018, the foundation invested nearly \$21 million in 22 organizations in the Delta region through this program.

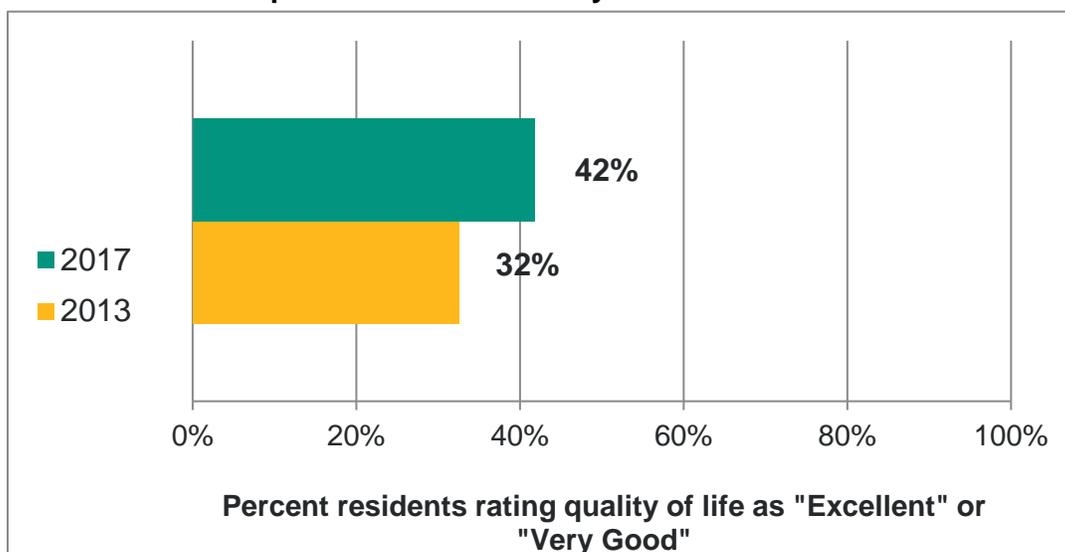
Results

Three questions focused on how satisfied residents were with life overall: whether they consider themselves happy, how they would rate their quality of life, and whether they felt their quality of life had improved in the past year.

In general, in 2017, a high percentage of Delta residents reported being happy (89 percent reporting "very happy" or "fairly happy"); this was the same figure as in 2013. A disaggregation of survey results by race across the full sample shows little difference overall (91 percent of white residents reported being happy versus 88 percent of African American residents). However, there was a statistically significant difference in percent of white residents saying they were "very happy" (51 percent) versus 38 percent of African American residents.

When asked directly to rate their quality of life, resident perceptions have increased significantly since 2013.

Figure 1: Resident Perceptions of Overall Quality of Life



Despite this improvement, many Delta residents still would not rate their quality of life to be “good” or better than it was 12 months ago⁹ (26 percent report a “poor” or “fair” quality of life). There were no statistically significant differences by county. Overall, however, there was a statistically significant difference in perceptions of quality of life between the races; 57 percent of white residents versus 36 percent of African American residents reported an “excellent” or “very good” quality of life. These differences in perceptions by race are consistent across both counties.

- *Key Quality of Life Drivers:*

Common themes about what most influences quality of life were family, health, and finances; all three of these were consistent from 2013.

Table 3: Most Important Influences on Quality of Life and Reasons for Moving to the Delta

Most important influences on quality of life (n=756 or 100% of the sample)
Family and friends (37%)
Finances and Job (19%)
Health (11%)

These data indicate the main forces driving quality of life for most people are outside the current scope of foundation investments, with the exception of targeted job creation.

Residents also provided the following information on other quality of life questions:

1. *Quality of Life Changes in the Past 12 Months:* 39 percent of residents said that their quality of life had increased in the past 12 months. This is significantly improved from the 34 percent who reported an increase in quality of life in 2013. There were no differences in these trends overall by race or by county.
2. *Not Enough Money to Meet Basic Needs:* Thirty-six percent of Delta residents said they did not have enough money to meet their everyday needs. This is a 12 percentage point improvement from 2013. There are not large differences by county; however, when looking at differences by race, there are rather large discrepancies. Overall, 19 percent of white residents report not having enough money versus 43 percent of African American residents.
3. *Those Planning to Leave:* When asked if they planned to leave the Delta in the next five years, there has been an increase in the percent of residents planning to leave. In 2017, 49 percent said “no” (56 percent said “no” in 2013). Of the 43 percent who said “yes” (39

⁹ There were five possible responses to this question: excellent, very good, good, fair, poor.

percent in 2013), the top three reasons identified for leaving were: 1) job, salary (32 percent); 2) to improve quality of life (24 percent); and 3) crime and safety issues (12 percent).

A comparison of the two groups on relevant characteristics is in Table 3 below. The figures indicate that, on average, people planning to stay are older, have lived in the area longer, and have higher incomes. To provide additional context, net migration to the Delta over the past three years was negative 2,799 people or a decrease of six percent¹⁰.

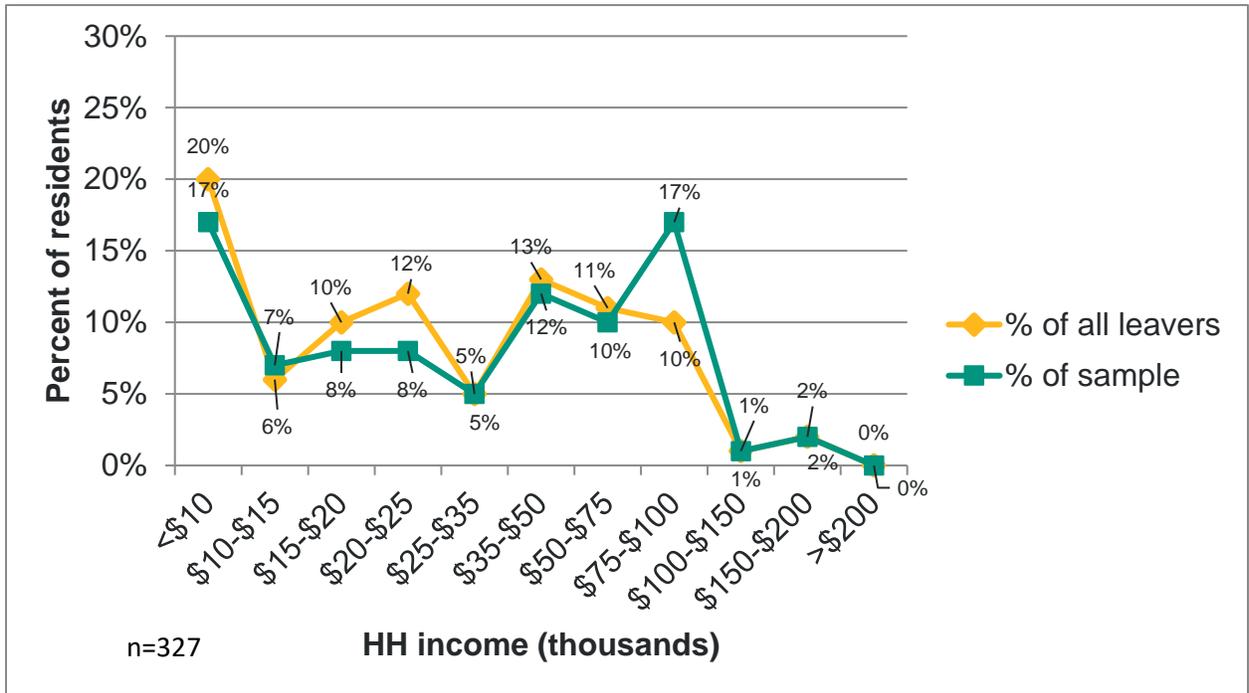
Table 4: Comparison of Characteristics of Delta Residents Planning to Leave in the Next 5 Years and Those Who Plan to Stay

Characteristic	Across the Full Sample	Those Who Plan to Stay (49%, n=371)	Those Who Plan to Leave (43%, n=327)
Average Age	42	48	36
Median Age	41	50	32
Average Years Lived in Delta	32	37	26
Median Years Lived in Delta	30	38	24
Median Education Level	Some college or vocational program	Completed 2yr Degree	Some college or vocational program
Percent with at least a bachelor's degree	13 percent	18 percent	9 percent

The following two graphs provide some additional information about people who reported intending to stay and those intending to leave, based on more detailed information on their characteristics. The first chart (Figure 2) shows residents who are planning to leave by *income* bracket. The data show that, of all residents intending to leave, the percent intending to leave in each income category is approximately the same as the percent of all residents in that category overall. That said, there is a notable under-representation (yellow line) of those intending to leave in the \$75-100K income category. On whole, the highest percentage of those wanting to leave are in the <\$10K income category.

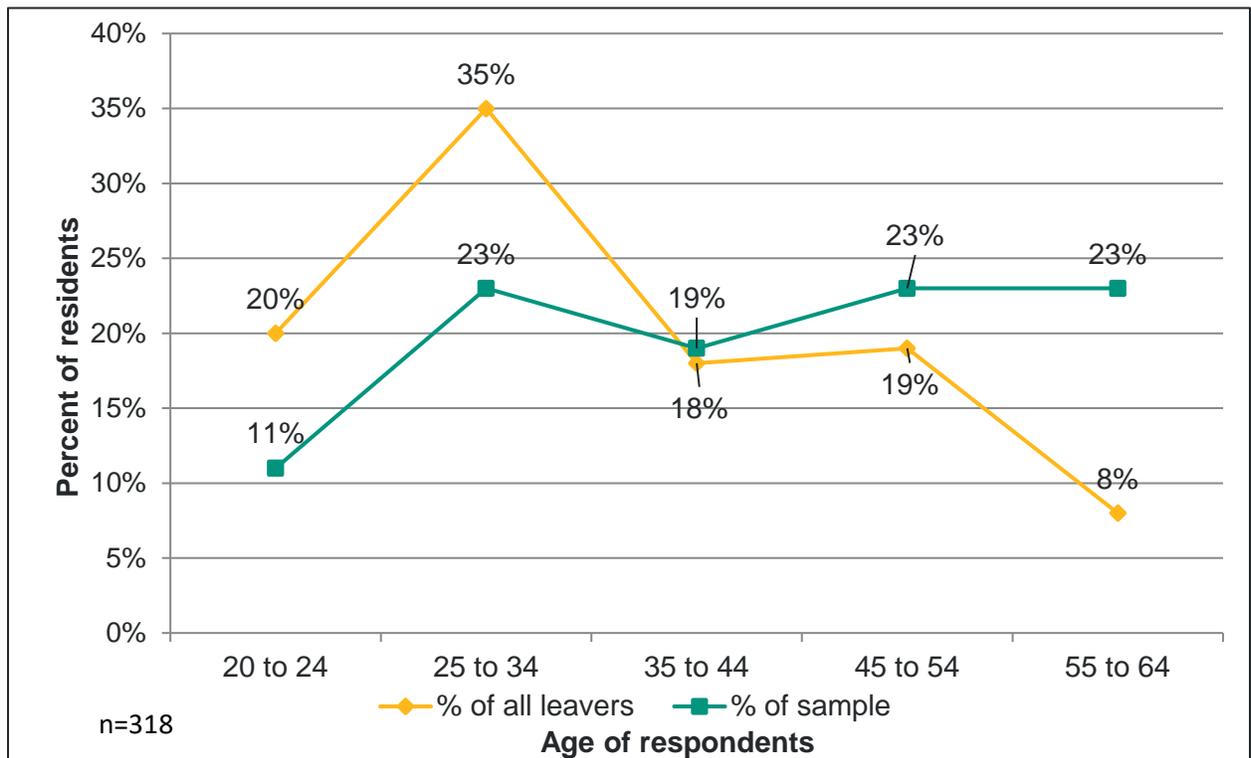
¹⁰ https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

Figure 2: Representativeness of Those Reporting an Intent to Leave (Percent of Those Planning to Leave by Income Bracket Compared to Percent of Residents in Each Income Bracket)



The second graph (Figure 3) shows the percent of residents in each age bracket who anticipate leaving the Delta in the next five years. The data show that, of all residents intending to leave, the percent intending to leave in the younger age brackets are over-represented, and those intending to leave in the older age brackets are under-represented. On whole, the highest percentage of those wanting to leave are in the 25-34-year-old age category.

Figure 3: Representativeness of Those Reporting an Intent to Leave (Percent of Those Planning to Leave by Age Bracket Compared to Percent of Residents in Each Age Bracket)



Implications

There are a number of clear patterns in how Delta residents view their quality of life and their intent to remain in the area or not. The most important factors driving quality of life, influencing decisions to move to the region, and influencing decisions about staying in the area vary in their order, but are consistently: 1) family and friends; and 2) salary/career prospects/financial stability. While family and friends are in many ways outside of the influence of WFF, job creation is explicitly called out as strategy for foundation investments. These data may reinforce the importance of this area of investment for the foundation, even as the foundation works with local grantees on creating an environment that will be conducive to larger scale investment and economic growth. Finally, the overall interpretation of this group of survey responses is that relatively fewer residents rate their quality of life as “excellent” or “very good”, but this perception is improving.

2. Foundation Investment Areas

Support Pre-K-12 Educational Improvement

Investments

Foundation Home Region education grantees include The College Initiative, KIPP Delta Public Schools, Mississippi First, Inc., Coahoma County School District, Clarksdale Collegiate, and Arkansas Tech University. Overall, investments between January 2015 and January 2018 were \$16.2 million in 10 organizations.

Results

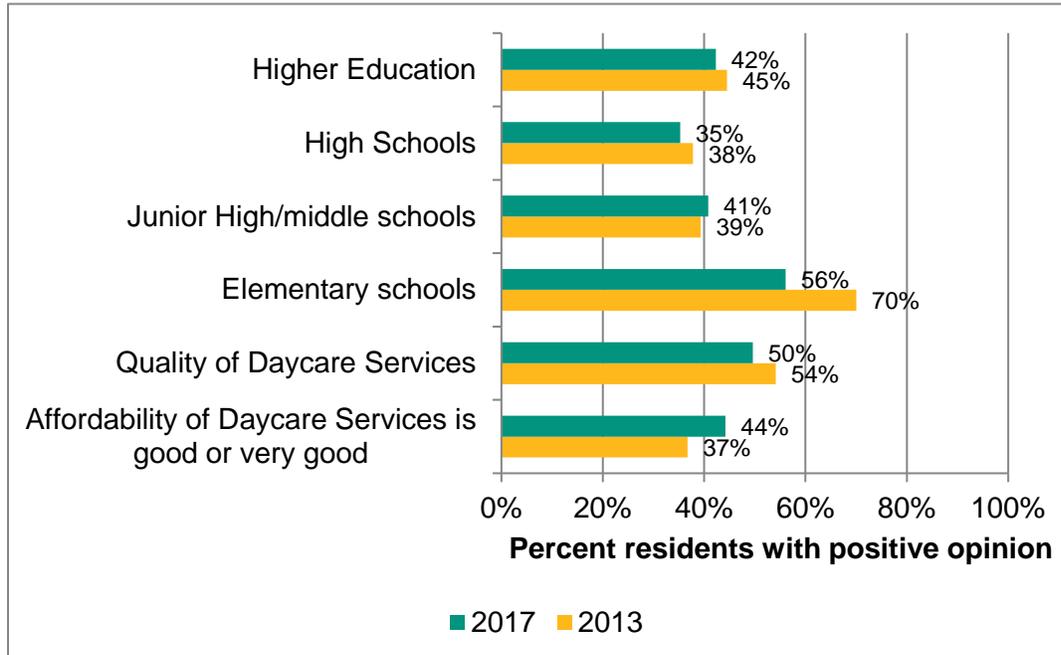
Residents were asked the question: How would you rate the local schools in your community? Results indicated 33 percent of respondents with an opinion rated their local school to be “good” or “very good”, 35 percent were neutral, and the remaining 33 percent rated the local schools as “poor” or “very poor”. These ratings show very little change in perception from 2013 when 30 percent of respondents with an opinion rated their local school to be “good” or “very good”, 34 percent were neutral, and the remaining 36 percent rated the local schools as “poor” or “very poor”.

When analyzing the results to this question by county, there were not significant differences between the counties. In Phillips County, 29 percent rated the local schools as “good” or “very good” while 35 percent in Coahoma County rated local schools “good” or “very good”.

When analyzing the results to this question by race, there were significant differences between white and African American respondents. Only 14 percent of white residents rated local schools as “good” or “very good” while 41 percent of African American residents rated local schools in those categories. Inversely, 43 percent of white residents rated schools as either “poor” or “very poor” while 28 percent of African American residents rated local schools in those categories.

When asked to consider quality at different levels of schooling, 35 to 56 percent of respondents perceived the quality of elementary school through higher education to be of “good” or “very good” quality. This range of responses is smaller than in 2013 when the range was 38 to 70 percent. Fifty percent perceived daycare offerings in the region as high quality, and only 44 percent believed daycare to be affordable, though this figure increased slightly from 37 percent in 2013.

Figure 4: Respondent Perceptions of Quality Local Education and Pre-K Affordability (Percent offering a response)¹¹



The small fluctuations in perceptions of quality at most levels are not particularly meaningful. However, the 14 percentage point drop in perception of elementary schools was statistically significant. Across all grade levels, African American residents and low-income populations tended to rate the educational quality more positively.

- Perceptions of Daycare/Pre-K

On the question related to perceptions of quality of daycare services, again African American residents tended to rate the quality of daycare more positively. There was, however, no difference by county.

Regarding daycare affordability, Phillips County residents rated the affordability of daycare services more positively (50 percent in Phillips County ranked affordability positively versus 40 percent in Coahoma County).

- Perceptions of School Choice

In addition, in 2017, residents were asked whether they thought adding more public charter schools or private schools would be good for their community¹². These results (Figure 5) showed a significant difference in the desire for more public charter schools versus more private

¹¹ Residents could select a “does not apply option” on the question of quality schools. The number of respondents on the school quality questions and Pre-K affordability ranged from 534 to 721.

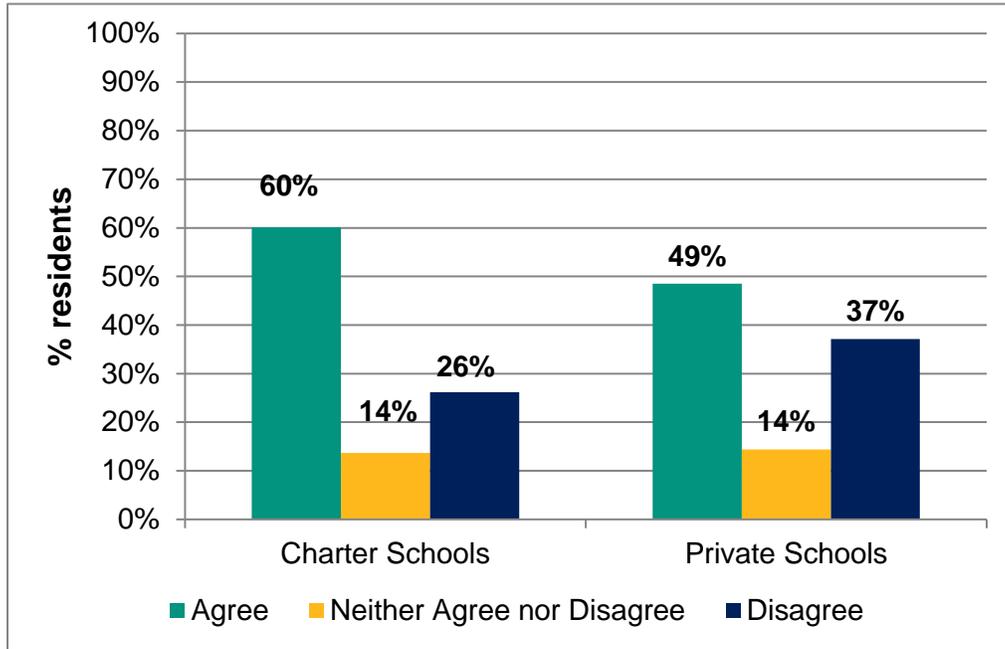
¹² On this question, to limit the length of the survey, the sample was randomly split. Half of those surveyed were asked about the desirability of additional charter school options, and half were asked about the desirability of additional private school options. In the 2013 survey, this question about additional options combined the charter school option with the private school option.

schools (60 percent responded favorably about the addition of public charter schools while only 49 percent did so for private schools). Moreover, there were many more negative perceptions toward additional private schools (26 percent reported not being in favor of additional public charter schools versus 37 percent not in favor of additional private schools).

On whether more private schools would be a good addition to the community, white respondents tended to view additional private schools more favorably (55 percent “agreed” or “strongly agreed” compared to 45 percent of African American residents). There was not a statistically significant difference by race, however, related to perceptions on adding more public charter schools; 60 percent of white residents and African American residents “agreed” or “strongly agreed”.

The percent of respondents in both counties who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that charter schools would be a good addition to the community were nearly identical (61 percent in Coahoma and 59 percent in Phillips). Coahoma County did have a higher percentage of respondents who “strongly agree” that public charter schools would be a good addition to the community (25 percent “strongly agreed” in Coahoma versus 15 percent in Phillips County), which may be surprising given the success of the KIPP School in Phillips County, but perhaps the excitement of Coahoma County opening about its first public charter in 2018 drove more favorable results.

Figure 5: Percent of Residents with Opinion¹³ Who Support School Choice (Charter vs Private)



Implications

As in 2013, the majority of the region's residents do not feel the local schools are providing a high-quality education, with the exception of at the elementary school level. A large percentage (91 percent) of residents believe it is important to improve the quality of local schools. Another notable finding is that 60 percent of residents also thought more public charter schools would benefit their community.

Key questions related to future education investments are:

- 1) Does the foundation want to do more to impact Pre-K quality?
- 2) Is the foundation interested in continuing to explore and make direct investments for improving local district public schools?
- 3) Public opinion appears high enough to support a more aggressive campaign for additional public charter school options (particularly in Mississippi); does the foundation have appetite to address this more aggressively?

¹³ 95% of those surveyed had opinion on the charter school question; 96% of those surveyed had opinion on the private school question.

Improve Public Safety

Investments

Foundation Home Region public safety grantees include City of Helena-West Helena and City of Clarksdale. Overall, investments between January 2015 and January 2018 were \$240,000 in 2 organizations.

Results

Overall, more than 80 percent of residents reported feeling safe during the day and in their homes at night. Men were more likely than women to report feeling “very safe” or “fairly safe” in their homes after dark (men 88 percent; women 82 percent), walking alone in their neighborhood after dark (men 68 percent; women 44 percent), or in a downtown area after dark (men 58 percent; women 36 percent).

Higher income residents were more likely to report feeling safe in their homes and neighborhoods after dark. African American residents were more likely than white residents to report feeling safe in the downtowns during the day and after dark (54 percent of African American residents reported feeling safe in the nearest downtown after dark versus 32 percent of whites). When analyzing at the county level, the results show that residents of Coahoma County were more likely than residents of Phillips County to report feeling safe in their downtowns and neighborhoods after dark (53 percent reported feeling safe in Coahoma County versus 39 percent in Phillips County).

When asked to rate various potential problems in their community on a 1-5 scale (with 1 meaning “no problem at all” and 5 meaning “very serious problem”), the largest crime and safety problem identified by residents was related to gangs (70 percent answered a 4 or 5), followed closely by alcohol or drugs (68 percent), and violent crime (63 percent). Coahoma County respondents were more likely to report gangs were a “very serious” or “somewhat serious” problem (74 percent) versus Phillips County respondents (65 percent).

Overall since 2013, perceptions of crime and safety have remained stagnant. The consistently poor perceptions of crime are reinforced by only 29 percent of residents’ rating law enforcement as “good” or “very good” (Coahoma residents had a more favorable view than Phillips residents (35 percent versus 22 percent)). Additionally, 82 percent of all respondents indicated that it is important to improve law enforcement (no statistical difference by county).

Figure 6: Perceptions of Community Crime

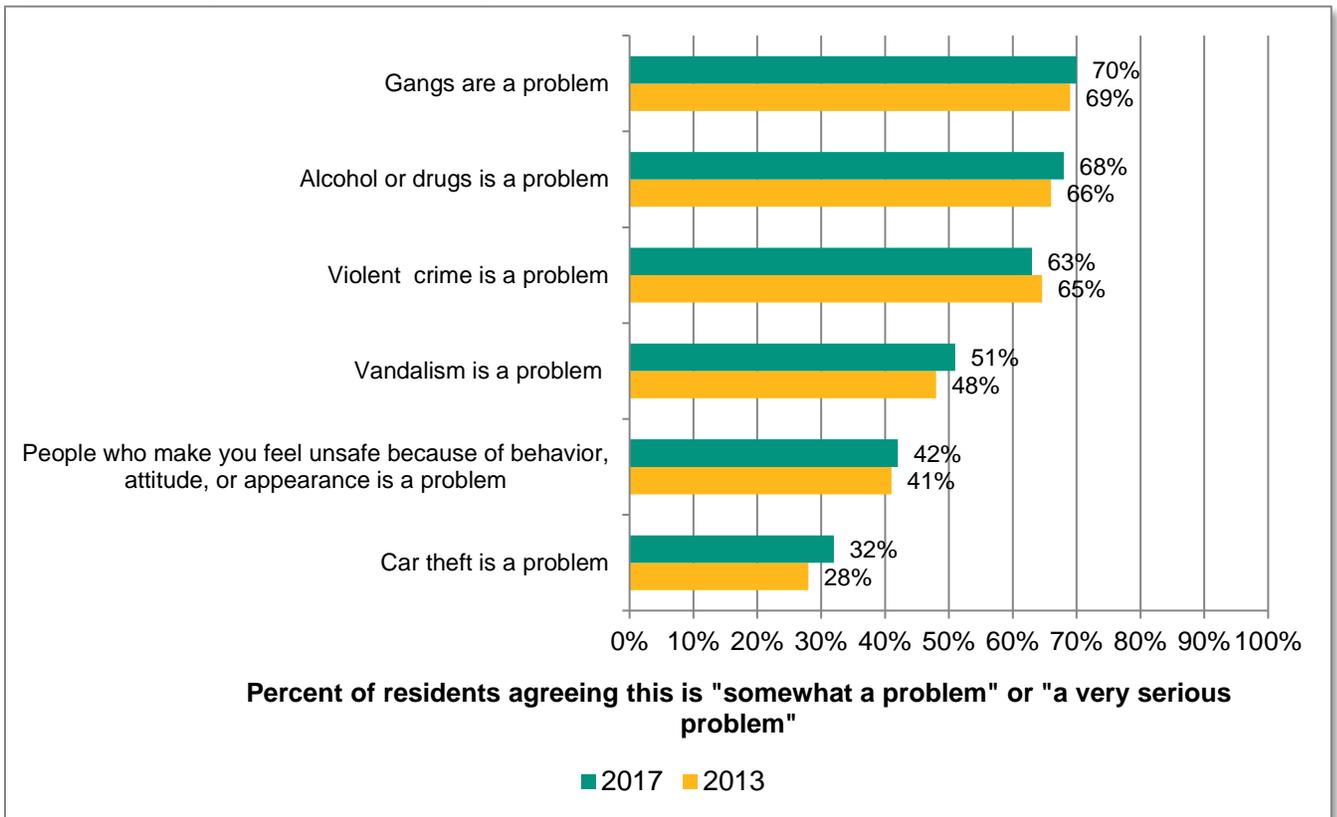
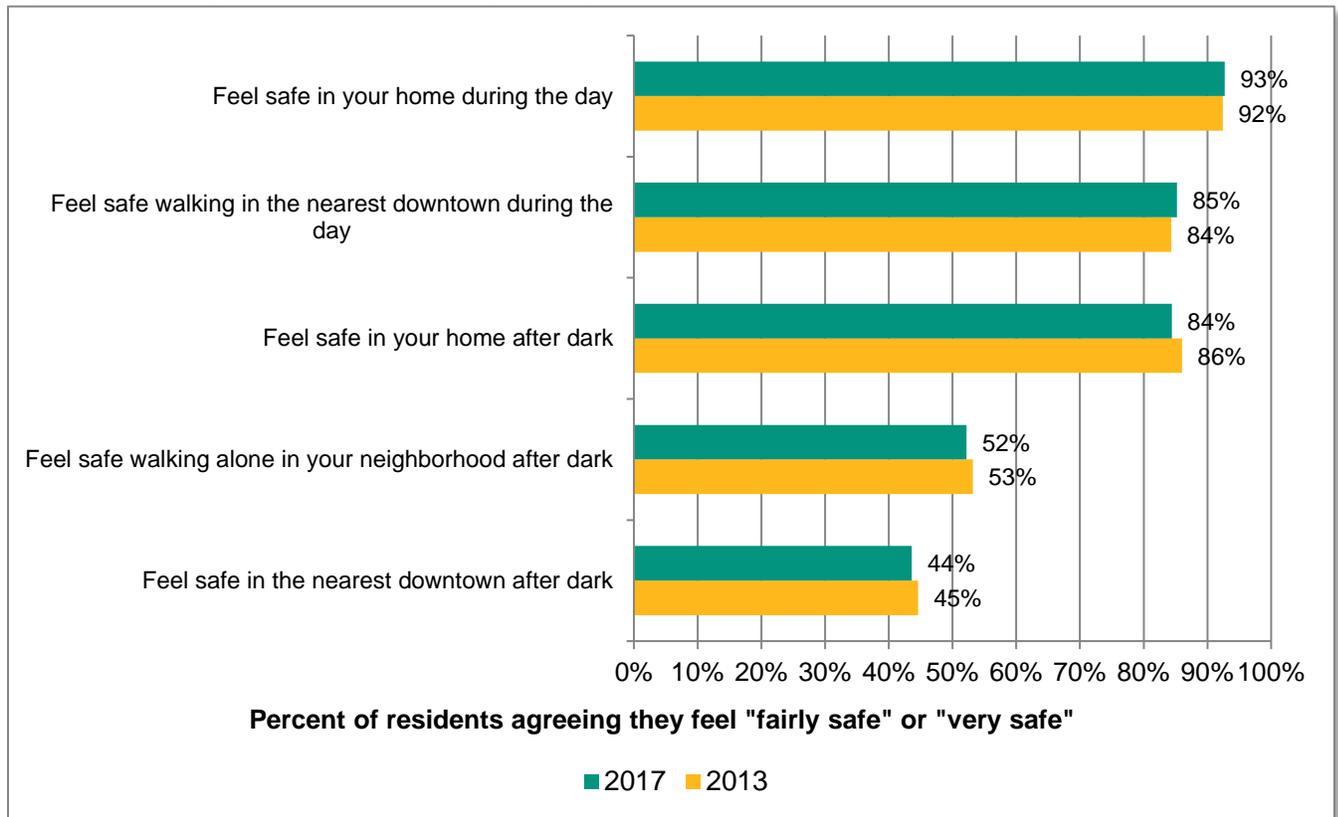


Figure 7: Perceptions of Community Safety



Implications

Delta residents generally perceive crime as a problem, and this perception is consistent with the fact that the Delta has relatively high crime rates. For example, in 2015, homicide rates in Helena-West Helena (2.9/10,000) and Clarksdale (3.5/10,000) were more than double the state averages (AR, 1.1/10,000 and MS, 1.2/10,000) and four times the U.S. average (0.7/10,000). The fact that white residents reported feeling safer in their homes after dark suggests crime may be concentrated in lower income African American neighborhoods.

Key questions for strategic discussion are:

- 1) One of the largest issues noted related to public safety was abuse of alcohol or drugs. Does the foundation want to make more direct investments to reduce alcohol and drug use?

- 2) Given the stagnant nature of these indicators – and the foundation’s view that economic development is difficult in places that lack public safety – does the foundation need to rethink the intensity of giving in this area?¹⁴

Engage and Develop Young People

Investments

Grantees include Spring Initiative, Inc., Boys and Girls Club of Phillips County, Griot Arts, Inc., and Delta Health Alliance, Inc. From January 2015 through January 2018, the foundation invested \$3.1 million in 6 organizations.

Results

Local after-school programs saw moderate levels of use according to the 2017 survey; 49 percent of respondents who reported having a child 18 years or younger in their home (n=298) indicated that they or a child in their household had accessed a local after-school program in the last 12 months¹⁵.

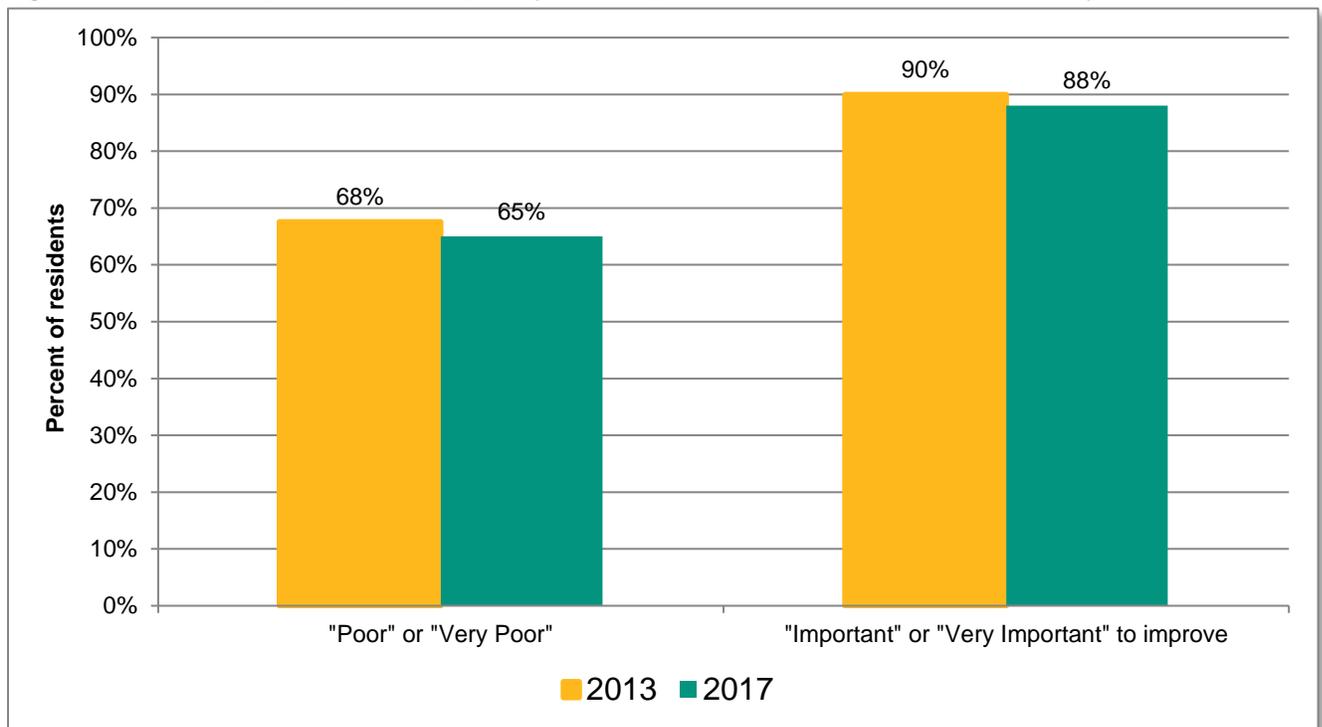
Of the 268 respondents in the full sample (38 percent) who indicated they or a child in their household had accessed an after-school program, only four percent indicated they had attended a WFF-funded program.

African American residents attended more often (on average African American residents reported attending after-school programs 36 times in the past year while white residents reported an average of 10 times in the past year). Interestingly, higher income individuals reported accessing after-school programs more often (on average those who reported an annual household income less than \$20,000 averaged 20 visits in the past year, while respondents reporting a household income over \$50,000 per year averaged 38 visits per year). There was no significant difference in usage by county. Although there was only a three percentage point drop in the overall percent of residents who rated the quality of after-school programs as “poor” or “very poor”, there was a significant decrease in respondents from 2013 to 2017 reporting that activities for youth in their community were “very poor” (7 percentage point decrease).

¹⁴ The foundation has commissioned research from the RAND Corporation to understand the state of crime in the delta and recommend potential investment areas.

¹⁵ Direct comparison between 2013 and 2017 is not possible, due to the 2013 survey asking only specifically whether the respondent or any children in the household accessed a local Boys and Girls Club in the last 12 months. The foundation has since invested in numerous after-school programs requiring a broadening of the scope of the question. In 2013, 14 percent of respondents indicated attending a Boys and Girls Club.

Figure 8: Resident perception of quality and importance for local activities for youth



Implications

The theory of change is that access to after-school programming will reduce the incidence of unproductive behavior by local youth, but after-school program usage, particularly of foundation-funded programs, was in low-to-moderate range. Moreover, these programs appear to have been more often accessed by higher income individuals.

There is clearly a perceived need to improve after-school programming. Additionally, there are other social concerns that may warrant expanding the scope of such programs. For example, the perception of teen pregnancy as a problem remains high (73 percent compared to 71 percent in 2013), and that this perception is backed up by public data showing the teen birth rate in both Phillips and Coahoma remaining steady, while the rest of the nation shows a decline¹⁶. These figures may suggest an opportunity for the foundation, either through after-school program or through investments in public health.

Key question related to future after-school investments:

1. Are after-school offerings in these counties reaching and generating the demand from target populations at the volume necessary to eventually see community level change? How can the foundation best support this effort?

¹⁶ <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/>

2. Does the foundation want to make investments to address teen pregnancy, either through after-school or public health programming?

Targeted Job Creation

Investments

The foundation's two primary job creation grantees are the Helena-West Helena/Phillips County Port Authority and the Coahoma Collective. Investments between January 2015 and January 2018 totaled \$1.5 million.

Results

Satisfaction with the number of available jobs and with job wages and salaries remains low, but perceptions did improve from 2013 to 2017. Compared to respondents in 2013, respondents in 2017 reported significantly lower levels of dissatisfaction regarding the number of jobs in the local communities (72 percent rated the number of available jobs as “poor” or “very poor” in 2017 compared to 80 percent in 2013). Phillips County respondents reported a less negative perception with 66 percent reporting the number of available jobs to be “poor” or “very poor” compared to 76 percent of Coahoma County respondents. White respondents reported a less negative perception of job availability with 64 percent reporting the number of available jobs to be “poor” or “very poor” compared to 74 percent of African American respondents.

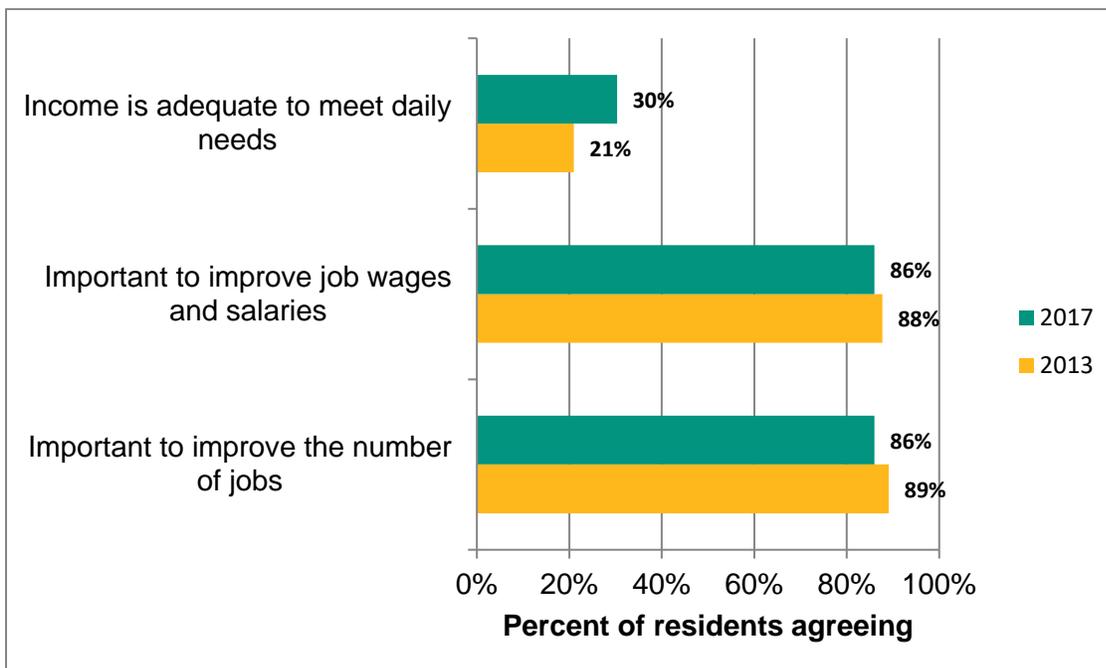
The percent of respondents who reported dissatisfaction with job wages or salaries also declined from 73 percent in 2013 to 68 percent in 2017 (5 percentage point decrease). However, similar to perceptions about the number of available jobs, Phillips County respondents reported a less negative perception of job wages and salaries with 65 percent reporting the job wages and salaries to be “poor” or “very poor” compared to 70 percent of Coahoma County respondents. White respondents reported a less negative perception of job wages and salaries with 60 percent reporting that job wages and salaries were “poor” or “very poor” compared to 70 percent of African American respondents.

In 2017, 30 percent of respondents reported they had “plenty of money” or an “adequate amount of money” to meet everyday needs, a nine percentage point increase from 2013. White residents were more likely to report they had “plenty” or “adequate” amount of money to meet everyday needs (49 percent of white residents compared to 22 percent of African American residents.)

Despite these improvements in perceptions related to the quality of both the number of available jobs and job wages and salaries, these aspects of life in the Delta were ranked by 86 percent of respondents as important to improve, which made them the 3rd highest ranked priority community aspect to improve. Eight percent of respondents reported being unemployed, which is slightly higher than the federal unemployment rate listed for the two counties (5.6 percent in Phillips County and 6.4 percent in Coahoma County¹⁷).

¹⁷ https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm

Figure 9: Satisfaction with jobs and wages remains low, but is improving



Implications

The level of dissatisfaction around jobs is improving, as evidenced by lower levels of dissatisfaction regarding the number of jobs in the local communities (72 percent rated the number of available jobs as “poor” or “very poor” in 2017 compared to 80 percent in 2013) and a decline in dissatisfaction with job wages or salaries from 73 percent in 2013 to 68 percent in 2017 (5 percentage point decrease), but remains low; further, a large percentage of residents continue to feel it is a priority.

Key questions related to future targeted job creation investments are:

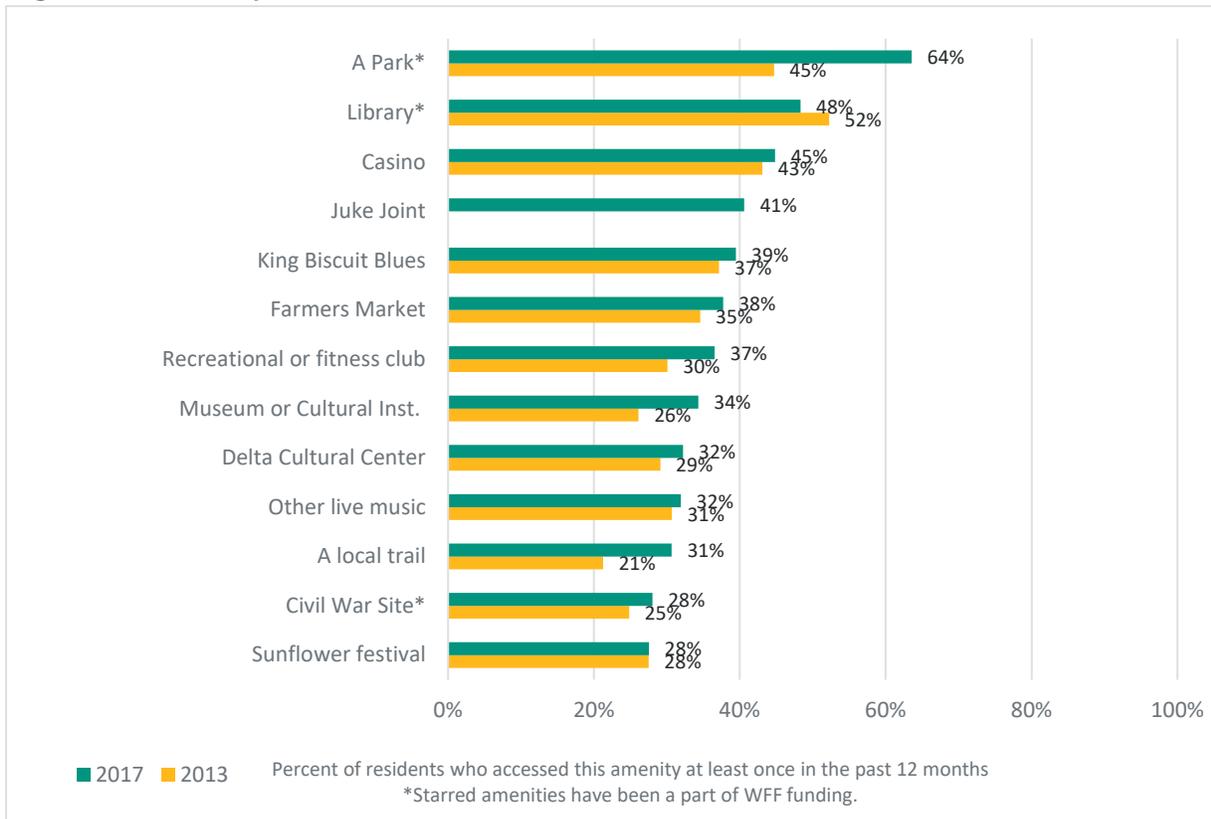
- 1) What role can the foundation play in improving local infrastructure to make these two counties appealing destinations for business? What are the industries most likely to thrive in these environments?
- 2) What role should the foundation play in supporting local entrepreneurial growth, in order to facilitate creation of living wage jobs or supplemental income?

3. Other Quality of Life Topics

In this section, we asked residents for their perceptions on four issues—amenities, diversity and inclusion, community engagement, and health—that are related to quality of life and are often included in similar surveys. These three areas are not currently the focus of any Delta WFF grantmaking. We included these topics to see if there were any major issues not in the strategy that were important to residents and that the foundation may wish to address.

As Figure 10 below shows, between 28 percent and 64 percent of Delta residents reported using listed amenities at least once in the past 12 months¹⁸.

Figure 10: Amenity Use in the Past 12 Months



Results

In addition to reporting on residents' overall rates of visitation and use of area amenities, the analysis also included usage patterns of amenities by income, race, ethnicity, and county.

There was a statistical difference in usage rates for a number of amenities:

- Local park or green space: Coahoma County respondents indicated less difficulty in accessing local parks or other green spaces (78 percent in Coahoma County indicated it was “very easy” or “easy” to get to a local park or green space versus 71 percent in Phillips County).
- Local park or green space: Higher income individuals found it easier to access local parks or other greenspaces (85 percent of residents with a household income more than \$50,000 reported it was “very easy” or “easy” to access a local park or greenspace versus 65 percent of respondents whose household income was less than \$20,000).
- Local park or green space: Coahoma County residents averaged 19 visits to a park in the last 12 months versus the Phillips County average of 11 visits. Additionally, African American residents averaged 19 park visits in the last 12 months while whites averaged

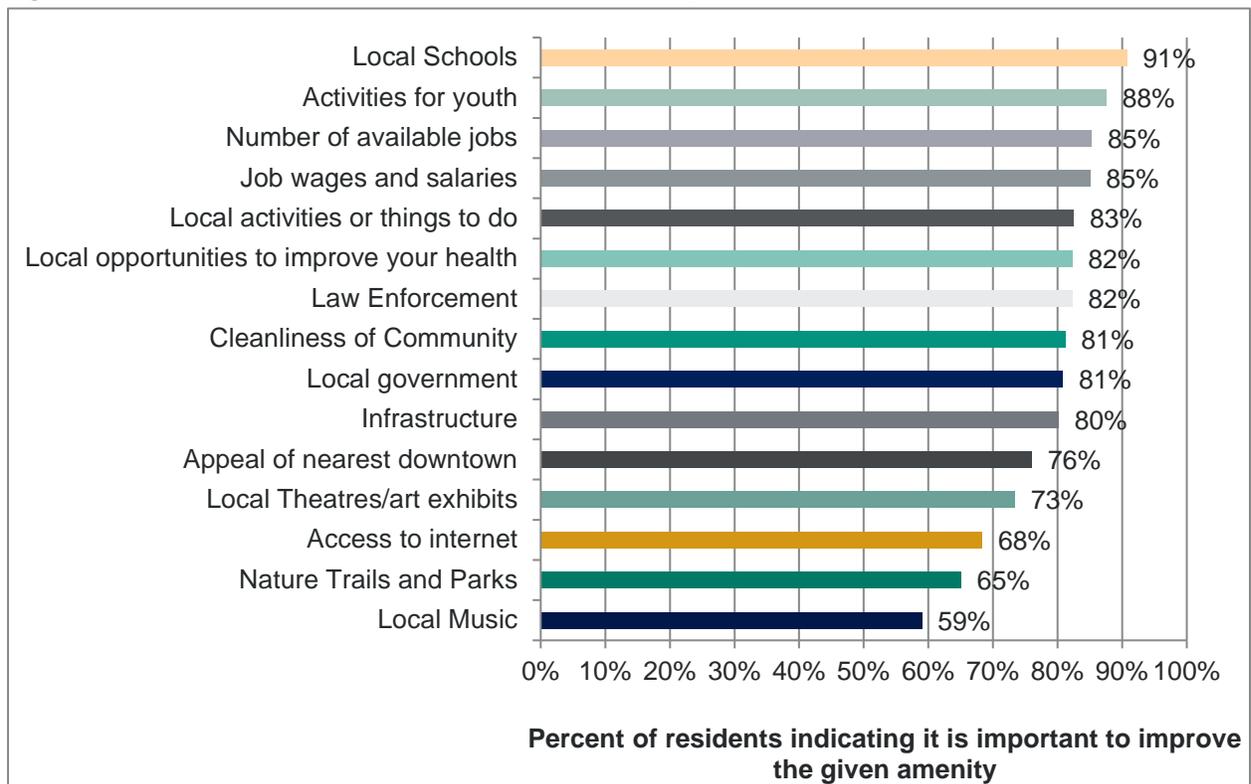
¹⁸ For the majority of amenities, usage from 2013 appears to have increased.

seven visits. Despite reporting higher levels of difficulty accessing parks, individuals with household incomes less than \$20,000 averaged 19 visits to a park versus households with incomes greater than \$50,000 which averaged eight.

- Library: African American residents visited the library more often. The average number of library visits in the last 12 months for African American residents was nine, while the average number of annual visits for white residents was three.
- Casino: African American residents (average number of visits was eight versus three for whites), lower income individuals (average number of visits was 10 for those with household income less than \$10,000 and five for those with a household income greater than \$50,000), and residents of Coahoma County (average number of visits was eight versus five for Phillips County) accessed the casino more often.
- Civil War site: White residents accessed a civil war site on average twice in the last 12 months, while African American residents averaged one visit in the last 12 months. Phillips County residents accessed Civil War sites on average twice per year, while Coahoma County residents on average accessed a Civil War site less than once in the last 12 months.
- Local trail: Coahoma County residents accessed a trail on average six times in the last 12 months, while Phillips County residents accessed a trail on average three times in the last 12 months. African American residents accessed a local trail on average five times in the last 12 months, while white residents accessed a local trail twice on average.
- Live music venues: Coahoma County residents (averaged three annual visits versus one for Phillips County residents), white residents (averaged four annual visits versus one for African American residents), and higher income individuals (averaged two visits in the last 12 months versus one for lower income households) accessed other live music venues more often.

The next chart (Figure 11) shows the areas residents feel are important to improve. The top four areas for improvement, chosen by at least 85 percent of the residents, were: 1) local schools; 2) activities for youth; 3) number of available jobs; and 4) job wages and salaries.

Figure 11: Amenities Residents Would Like to Improve



Implications

Many of the highest priority items for residents are currently funding areas for the foundation.

Coahoma County residents were more likely to report local schools and activities for youth were “very important” or “important” to improve when compared against Phillips County residents:

- Coahoma County residents were more likely to report that it was “very important” or “important” to improve the local schools (94 percent versus 89 percent in Phillips County). This difference, albeit small, is potentially a result of KIPP Delta’s presence in Phillips County and the collaboration between KIPP Delta and the local traditional public schools.
- Coahoma County residents were more likely to report that it was “very important” or “important” to improve the activities for youth (91 percent versus 84 percent in Phillips County). Perhaps this is related to the initial Boys and Girls Club investment and recent expansion in Phillips County. Nonetheless, there is a high level of interest in these communities in improving these amenities.
- Coahoma County residents were more likely to report that it was “very important” or “important” to improve opportunities to improve their health (88 percent versus 75 percent in Phillips County). This result could be related to the availability of the UAMS medical facility which offers a variety of exercise facilities for the Phillips community. Regardless, demand for improvement is high in both locations.

Key question for strategic discussion:

- 1) Despite reporting higher levels of difficulty accessing parks, low-income populations reported higher frequency of park visits. Given this information, would the foundation be interested in exploring the possibility of funding parks and other amenities that establish a sense of place, similar to work being conducted in the Northwest Arkansas strategy?

Diversity and Inclusion

Results

Although not an explicit strategy for the foundation currently, the survey included questions about issues related to diversity and inclusion. The questions in this section were related to feelings of acceptance, perceptions of change in race relations, and severity of racial tension in communities.

When asked whether they felt accepted by people in their local community, 77 percent of residents said they “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they felt accepted (82 percent in 2013). Although there was a statistically significant difference by education levels (82 percent of respondents with some college education or more reported feeling accepted, while only 74 percent with a high school degree or less), all races reported relatively high levels of acceptance (White residents at 80 percent and African American residents at 77 percent). Coahoma residents reported a higher level of acceptance than Phillips County residents, with 80 percent in Coahoma reporting “strongly agree” or “agree” to feeling accepted versus 74 percent in Phillips County.

Next, the survey question probed resident perceptions of whether relations among people from different racial groups in their community had “improved”, “stayed the same”, or “become worse”. Fewer respondents in 2017 reported that relations among people from different races had improved, and significantly more respondents in 2017 reported race relations had become worse (23 percent in 2017 versus 18 percent in 2013). White residents were more likely to indicate relations had become worse (30 percent versus 20 percent of African American residents).

For the third question in this section, residents were asked to rate how big a problem racial tension is. On this, a greater percentage of respondents in 2017 reported that racial tensions were “a very serious” or “serious” problem in their communities (39 percent in 2017 versus 29 percent in 2013). White residents were more likely to rate the problem as “very serious” or “serious” (45 percent) versus African American residents (28 percent).

Figure 12: Perceptions of How Race Relations are Changing by Race

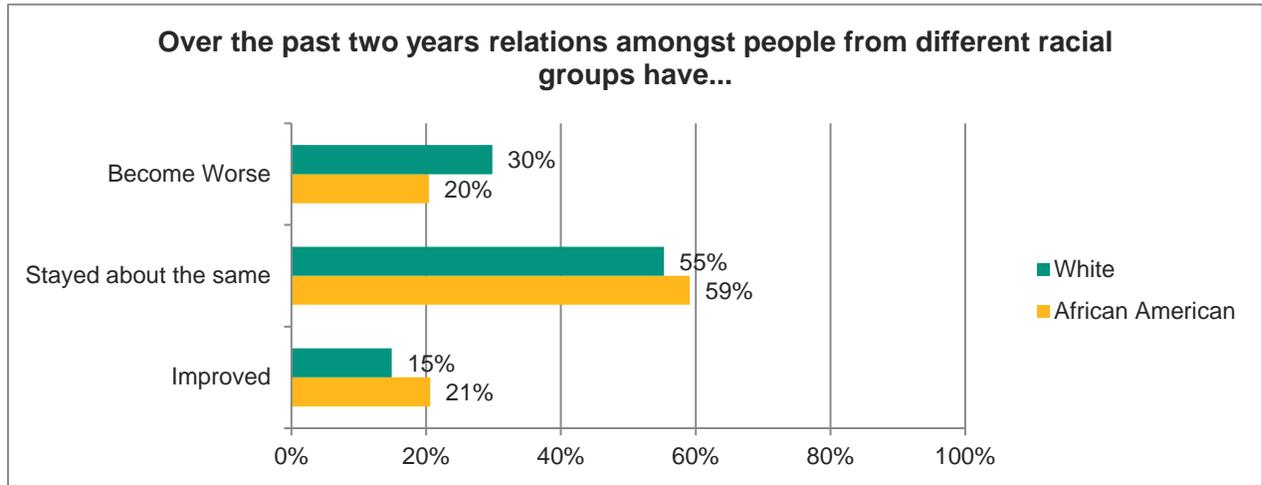
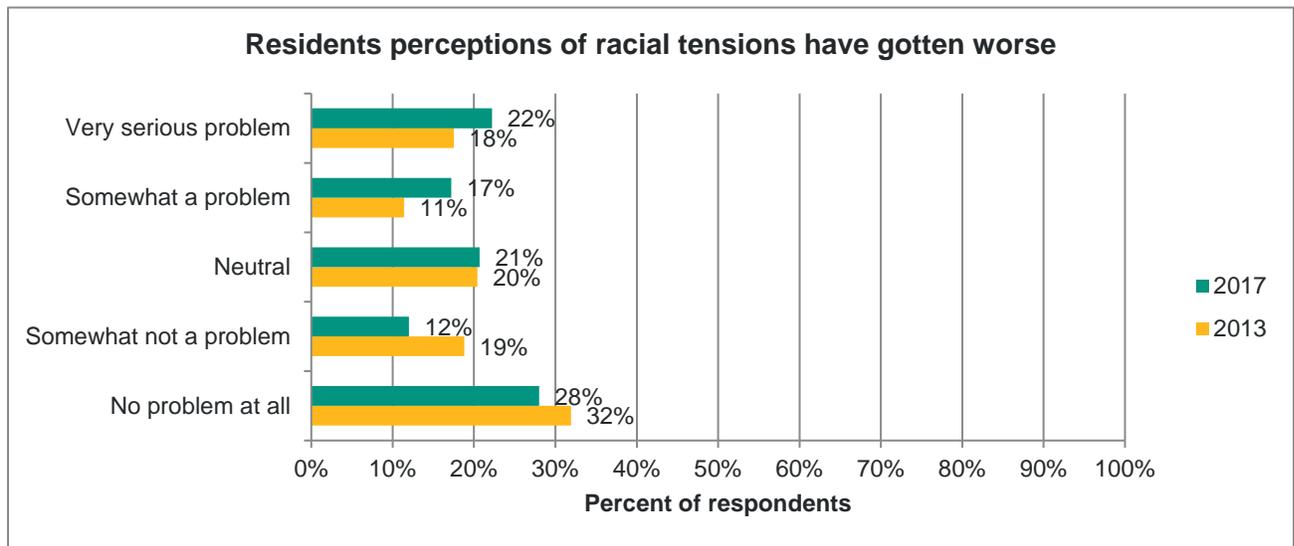


Figure 13: Perceptions of Racial Tensions¹⁹



Implications

People overwhelmingly reported feeling accepted by the local community, although level of education did seem to play a role. Concerning though is that perceptions of race relations and of racial tensions are getting worse. White residents were more likely to rate declines in these areas.

However, the survey does not indicate what residents believe to be driving the change, what options are available, or what role philanthropy might play in addressing this problem.

¹⁹ Percentages based on those with an opinion (n=726). Four percent of respondents reported they “did not know” or “not sure”.

Key question for strategic discussion:

- 1) Given the growing levels of racial tension, what types and amounts of diversity and inclusion investments make most sense, if any?

Community Engagement

Quality of life surveys typically measure social cohesion by asking questions related to civic engagement. In this survey, residents were asked about their level of volunteer work with charitable, political, and religious organizations, as well as whether they voted in the past 12 months.

Results

- Voter Participation and Local Government Perception

The region's voting rates, 71 percent within the past 12 months, far surpass the national turnout in the federal election in 2016 (60 percent), but are down from 2013 (77 percent). Respondents from Coahoma County were more likely to report voting in an election in the past 12 months (77 percent versus 65 percent of Phillips County residents). A greater percentage of African American residents reported voting in the last 12 months (75 percent versus 62 percent of white residents). Finally, residents with higher household incomes (82 percent of respondents with a household income over \$50,000 versus 65 percent of households with an income less than \$20,000), and respondents with higher education (83 percent with some college or more versus 59 percent of those with a high school degree or less) were more likely to have reported voting.

Only 36 percent of respondents expressed confidence in local government or city council to make decisions that are in the best interest of their communities; this is two percentage points lower than reported on the 2013 survey. Phillips County residents were more likely to express disagreement that local government or city council makes decisions that are in the best interest of the community (48 percent of residents of Phillips County responded "strongly disagree" or "disagree" compared to 41 percent of Coahoma County residents).

- Charitable, Political, and Religious Activities

The percent of residents participating in charitable, political, and religious activities increased from 2013. The percent of residents reporting voluntary charitable activity increased from 21 percent in 2013 to 38 percent in 2017 (17 percentage point increase). White residents were more likely to report engaging in charitable activities (51 percent versus 33 percent of African American residents). Higher income residents were also more likely to report engaging in charitable activities (66 percent with household incomes over \$50,000 compared to 22 percent of households with incomes less than \$20,000).

A smaller percentage of residents reported participating in voluntary political activities (16 percent), but there was still an 11 percentage point increase from 2013 (five percent). Similar to charitable activities, white residents were more likely to report engaging in voluntary political activities (22 percent versus 13 percent of African American residents). Higher income residents were also more likely to report engaging in political activities (26 percent with household incomes over \$50,000 compared to seven percent of households with incomes less than \$20,000).

The highest resident reported participation rate was in voluntary religious activities. In 2017, 54 percent of residents reported engaging in voluntary religious and church related activity (helping churches and religious groups), compared to 34 percent in 2013 (20 percentage point increase). Similarly to charitable and political activities, higher income residents were also more likely to report engaging in religious activities (77 percent with household incomes over \$50,000 compared to 44 percent of households with incomes less than \$20,000). There was no difference by race.

Implications

Overall, voter engagement in the Delta exceeds the national average, with Coahoma County residents reporting voting at an even higher rate than Phillips County residents; though, this could be attributed to a highly-contested mayoral race in Coahoma County.

The majority of residents reported volunteering with local religious organizations; this may suggest these organizations may be an effective conduit for community engagement.

Key question for strategic discussion:

- 1) Despite the fact that voter engagement indicators exceed national rates, is there any desire for the foundation to work to promote higher levels of political engagement, particularly among low-income and African American populations?

Health Care

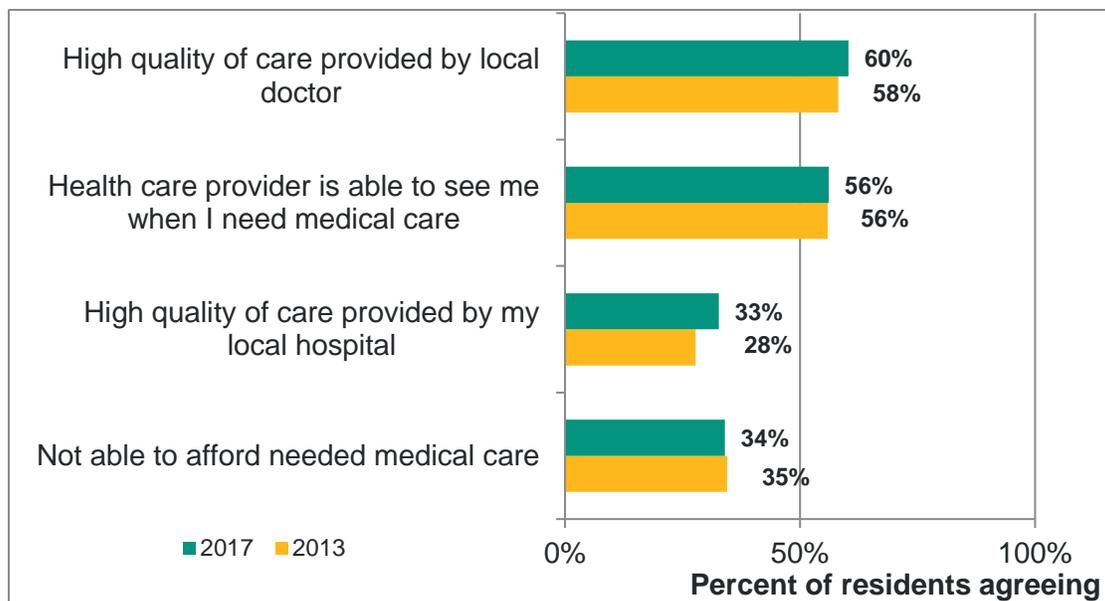
The quality of life survey included several questions related to perceptions of the quality of health care in the region. Although not a focus of foundation investments currently, health and access to health care are typically considered key aspects related to quality of life.

Results

The majority of all residents are satisfied with the quality of care they receive at their local doctor. Sixty percent rate the quality of care at their local doctor as “good” or “very good”, but only 33 percent do so for their local hospital. Perceptions of quality are below national comparisons based on a 2014 survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, in which 88 percent of Americans reported care is “good” or “somewhat good” at the local doctor, and 81 percent at local hospital²⁰.

Additionally, Phillips County residents were more positive in their ratings of affordability of health care, with 50 percent (39 percent in 2013) reporting their ability to afford needed health care compared to only 38 percent (42 percent in 2013) in Coahoma County.

Figure 14: Perceptions of Health Care: Some Problems with Access and Affordability



Implications

There were few changes in perceptions overall, still, the improvement in the percent of residents in Phillips County reporting they were able to afford needed medical care is significant. This affordability might also contribute to the finding that Phillips County residents were more likely to report their total income being “plenty of money” or “adequate amount of money” to meet everyday needs (38 percent versus 25 percent in Coahoma County). Overall, residents do have some concerns about access to care. While 60 percent of residents reported positive

²⁰ <http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Pages/HTML%20Reports/finding-quality-doctors.aspx>

perceptions about the quality of care they receive from their local doctors and 56 percent reported that their health care providers could see them when needed, that leaves over 40 percent of residents with concerns in these areas of quality and access.

Key questions for strategic discussion:

- 1) Is access to health care an issue the foundation should explore further?
- 2) Is there interest in exploring increasing access to opportunities to improve health?

Conclusion

Impact of Foundation Investments

Perceptions about the overall quality of life in the Delta are improving slightly. While top reasons are related to family and income, the foundation is addressing the primary issues identified by the community as important to improve.

Limitations/Moving Forward

The Delta quality of life poll was designed to provide a broad overview of residents' perceptions of quality of life in the region, with particular attention to the foundation's four investment strategies. The information in this survey reveals that the foundation is working on the problems that residents are most concerned about.

Other topics identified by residents as problems or areas of concern may be worth further study. For example, the survey identified some concerns related to racial tensions, elementary school quality, quality of activities for youth, gangs, and access to health care.