



# Perceptions of Homelessness in the Greater Sacramento Region

## 2025 Representative Survey of Households



Institute for  
Social Research

August 2025

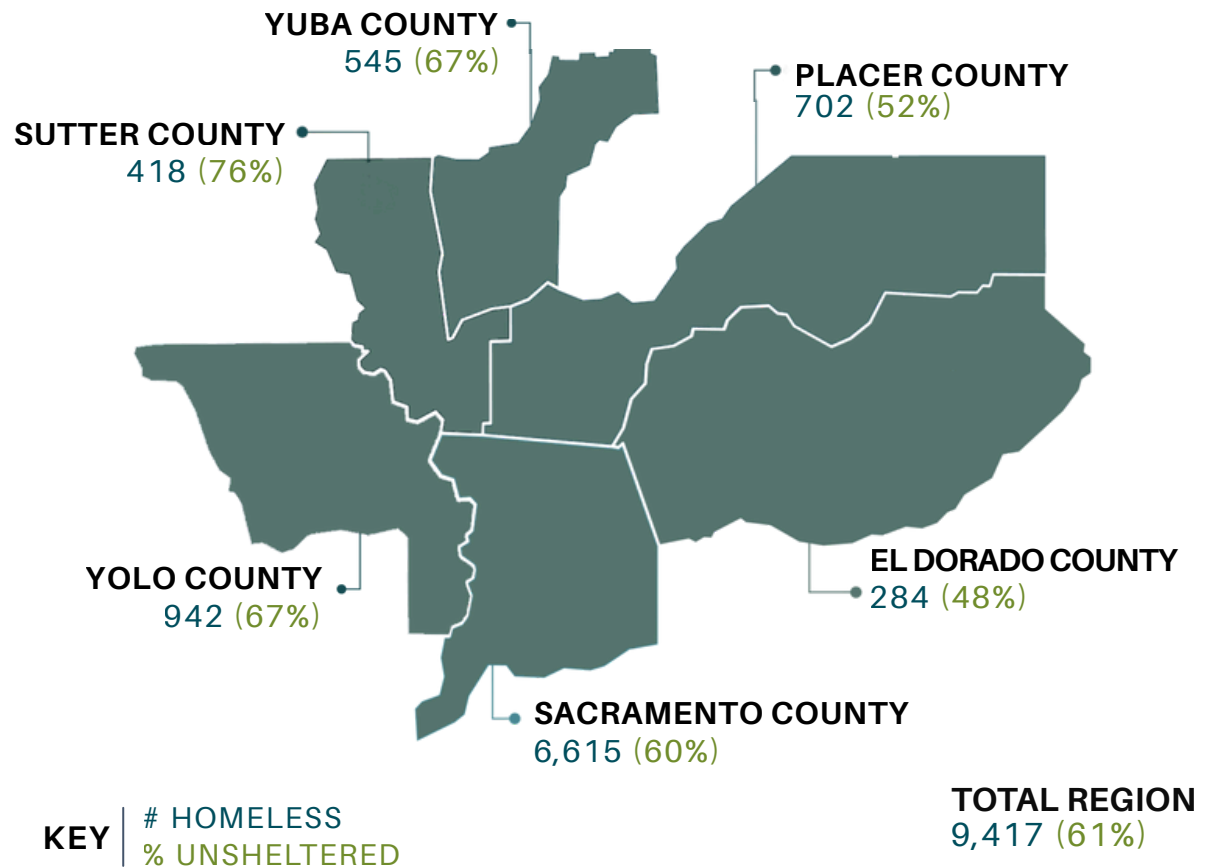


# Homelessness continues to be a challenge throughout the Sacramento Region.

Addressing the issue of homelessness across the six-county Sacramento region has been a persistent challenge. Over the past decade, the **number of individuals lacking permanent and adequate shelter has increased significantly.** While some are housed in emergency shelters or transitional programs, many more are living in tents, cars, or improvised dwellings.

As of 2024, **61% of the unhoused population were staying in places not intended for human habitation**—including sidewalks, parks, parking lots, and other public spaces. Consequently, homelessness has become highly visible throughout the region.

In 2024, there were **9,417** individuals experiencing homelessness in the Region.



As reported in 2024 County PIT Counts.  
Sutter and Yuba PIT Counts are from 2023.

# Perceptions of Homelessness Survey

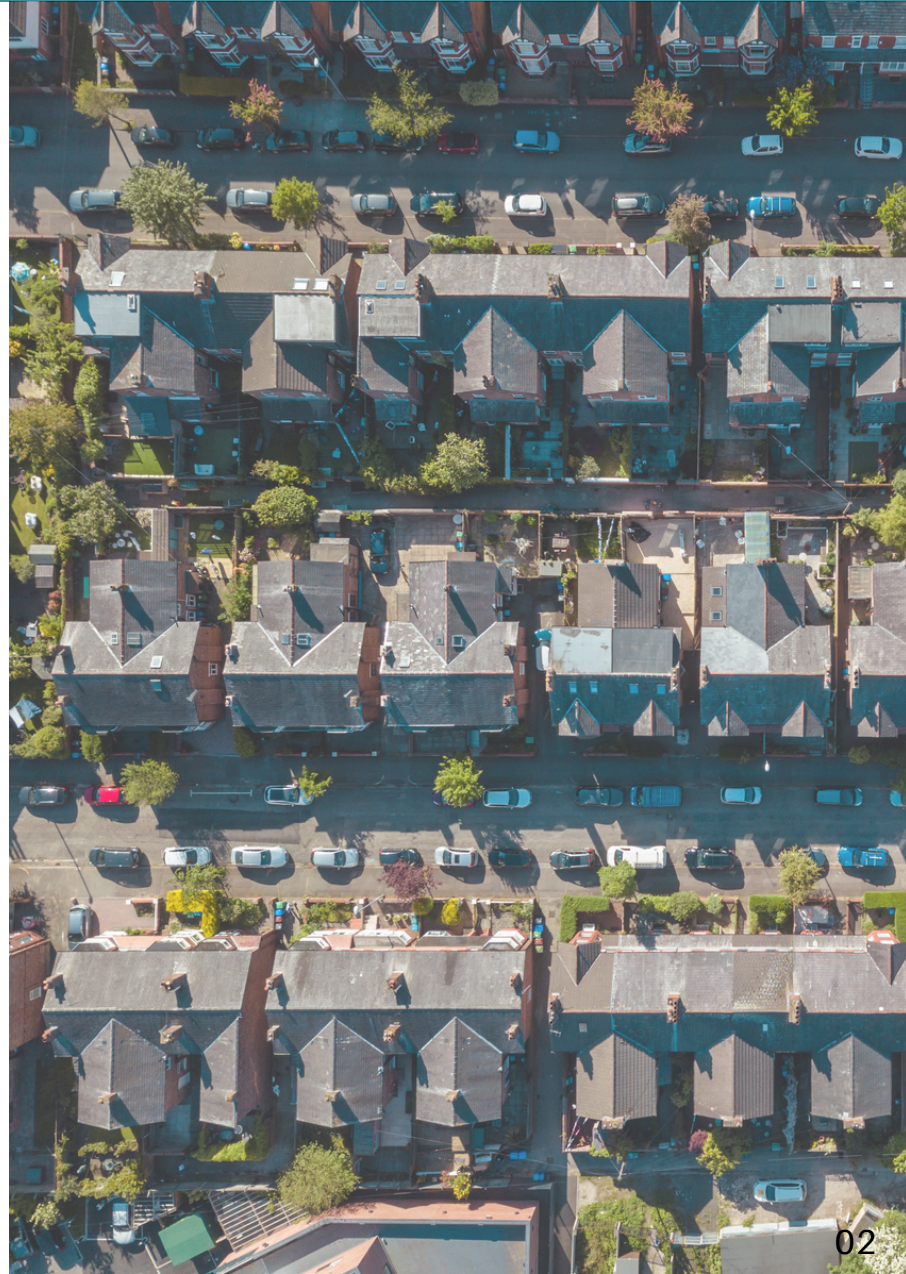
## Representative sample of regional households

### Purpose

To gain a regional perspective of how residents are experiencing the issue of homelessness.

### Survey Basics

- 1,750 households responded
- Representative of 6-County Region
- Completed in Spring 2025
- Survey in English and Spanish
- Margin of Error +/- 2.3%



# Key Survey Findings

1

The risk of housing insecurity is a deeply **personal issue** for many residents in the region

2

Homelessness remains a near-**constant presence** in public spaces

3

Overall, most residents perceive homelessness as **getting worse** in the past year

4

**Concern** about homelessness **remains high**, with most residents doubtful the situation will improve in the near future

5

Current efforts to address homelessness are not as well-known or visible as the issue itself

6

Residents express **growing frustration** with what they see as stalled regional efforts to tackle homelessness

7

Residents want their local elected officials to **take concrete steps** toward addressing homelessness

8

Residents are individually **taking actions** in response to the issue of homelessness

9

The issue of homelessness influences **how residents vote**

10

While challenges persist, most residents report a **strong quality of life** in their local communities



1

The risk of housing insecurity is a deeply personal issue for many residents in the region.

The majority of survey respondents have personal experience with the risks of housing insecurity.

56%

have a family member or close friend who has been at risk of or experienced homelessness

46%

have had family or a friend stay with them because the person did not have a permanent place to stay

26%

have themselves been at risk of being homeless or experienced homelessness



2

Homelessness remains a near-constant presence in the region's public spaces.

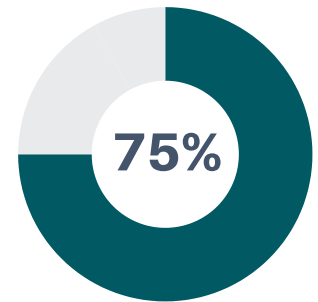
55%

of the region's residents **see signs of homelessness almost everyday** in their local communities

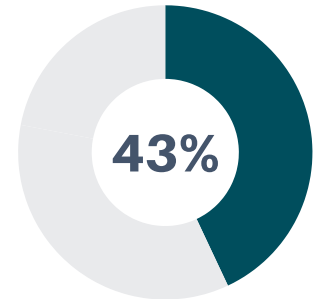
### Homelessness is the most visible in urban areas.

More people in urban communities (75%) see homelessness every day, compared to those in suburban or rural areas.

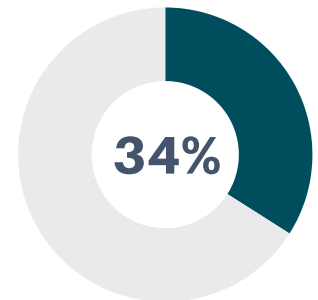
Urban



Suburban



Small Town  
& Rural





3

Overall, most residents perceive homelessness as getting worse in the past year.

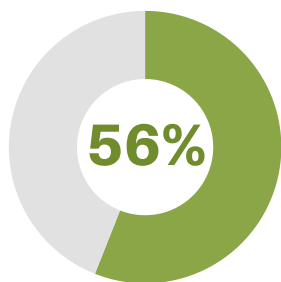
A photograph showing several tents pitched on a concrete surface under a bridge, illustrating homelessness.

# 50%

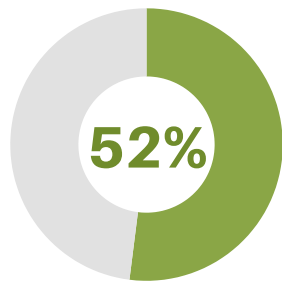
think homelessness has gotten worse in their community

**The portion of residents who think homelessness has gotten worse varies by County.**

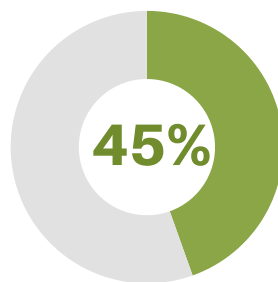
For example, over half (56%) of Sacramento County residents think homelessness has gotten worse, while only 24% in El Dorado County think so.



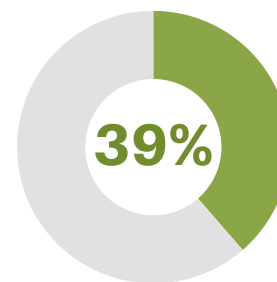
Sacramento



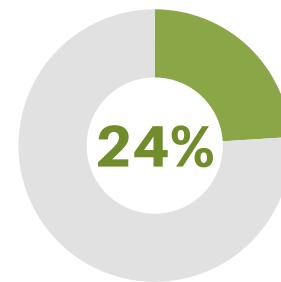
Yolo



Placer



Sutter/Yuba



El Dorado

4

# Concern about homelessness remains high, with most residents doubtful the situation will improve.

## 89%

**are very or somewhat concerned about homelessness**

Residents in the Greater Sacramento Region are very (53%) or somewhat (36%) concerned about the issue of homelessness in their community. Only 8% were not very concerned, and 3% were not concerned at all. Those living in urban areas were more likely to be very concerned (65%), compared to those living in suburban (44%) or rural (45%) areas.



## 54%

**do not expect the issue of homelessness to improve in the near future**

While most residents do not expect the issue of homelessness to improve in their community in the near future, a majority of those who are hopeful for positive change think it will take three (3) years or more to see significant improvements.

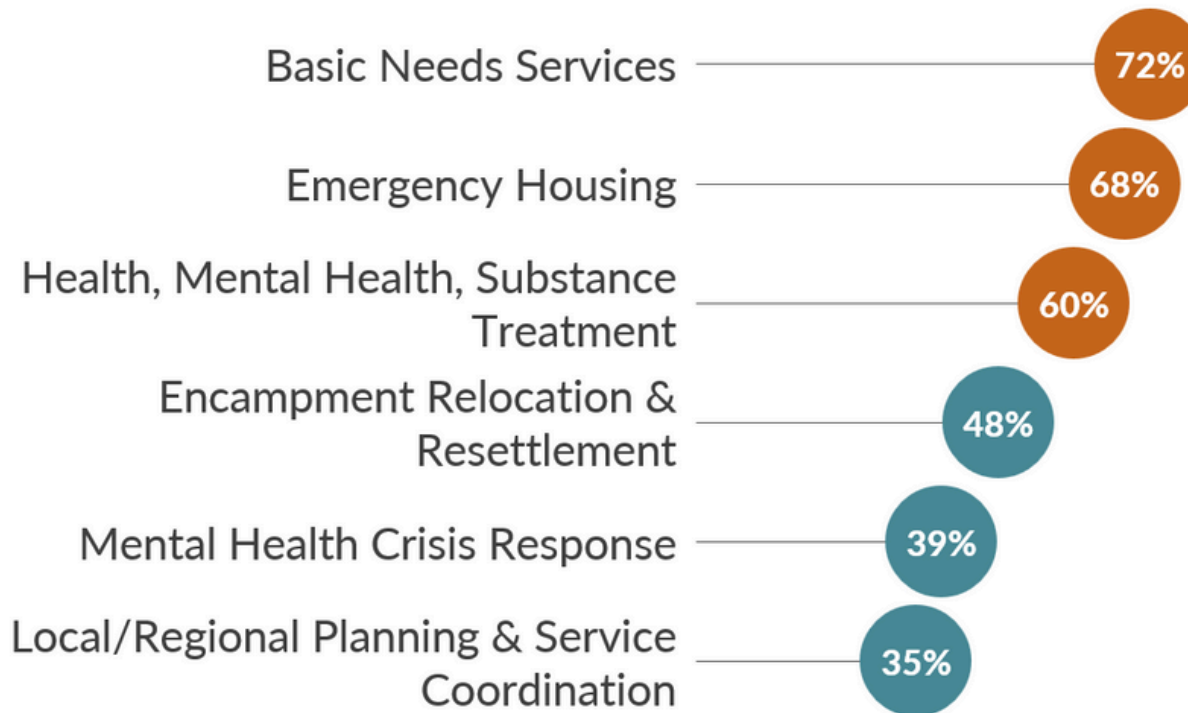


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## The region's efforts to address homelessness are not as known or visible as the issue itself.

### Residents are generally more aware of **individual services** in their communities compared to **local government initiatives**.

For example, while 72% of residents in our region are aware of Basic Needs services, about half as many (35%) know of Local/Regional Planning & Service Coordination to address homelessness.



Overall, **41% named at least one specific** local program, agency, or organization that addresses homelessness.

The most frequently cited efforts include:

1. Loaves and Fishes
2. County-specific efforts
3. Police Department efforts
4. City-specific efforts
5. The Salvation Army
6. The Gathering Inn
7. Sheriff Department efforts
8. WEAVE
9. SHRA
10. 211

6

Residents express frustration with what they see as stalled regional efforts to tackle homelessness.

**Get to work and put politics aside. It is not about your future career but the people that need help.**

El Dorado County resident

**Work collaboratively and intelligently to actually SOLVE the problem, instead of merely treating the issues.**

Sacramento County resident

**Track outcomes and make decisions based on data.**

Yolo County resident

**Do something and do something now.**

Placer County resident

**Find the political will to actually address the causes of homelessness and stop going with the status quo of enforcement.**

Sacramento County resident



## 7

# Residents want their local elected officials to take concrete steps toward addressing homelessness.

When asked what they would tell elected officials to do to improve homelessness, residents' most common suggestions centered on **resources and policies to support...**

01

## Behavioral health treatment & programs

(e.g., mental health and substance use disorder services, mandated treatment)

04

## Employment & job opportunities/services

(e.g., job readiness training, reduced barriers to employment)

02

## Housing for people experiencing homelessness

(e.g., temporary, transitional, permanent housing)

05

## Prohibiting homeless encampments

(e.g., clean up public areas, move encampments off streets and sidewalks)

03

## Affordable housing

(e.g., rent control/caps, building/zoning regulations, increased housing supply)

06

## Providing designated areas for encampments

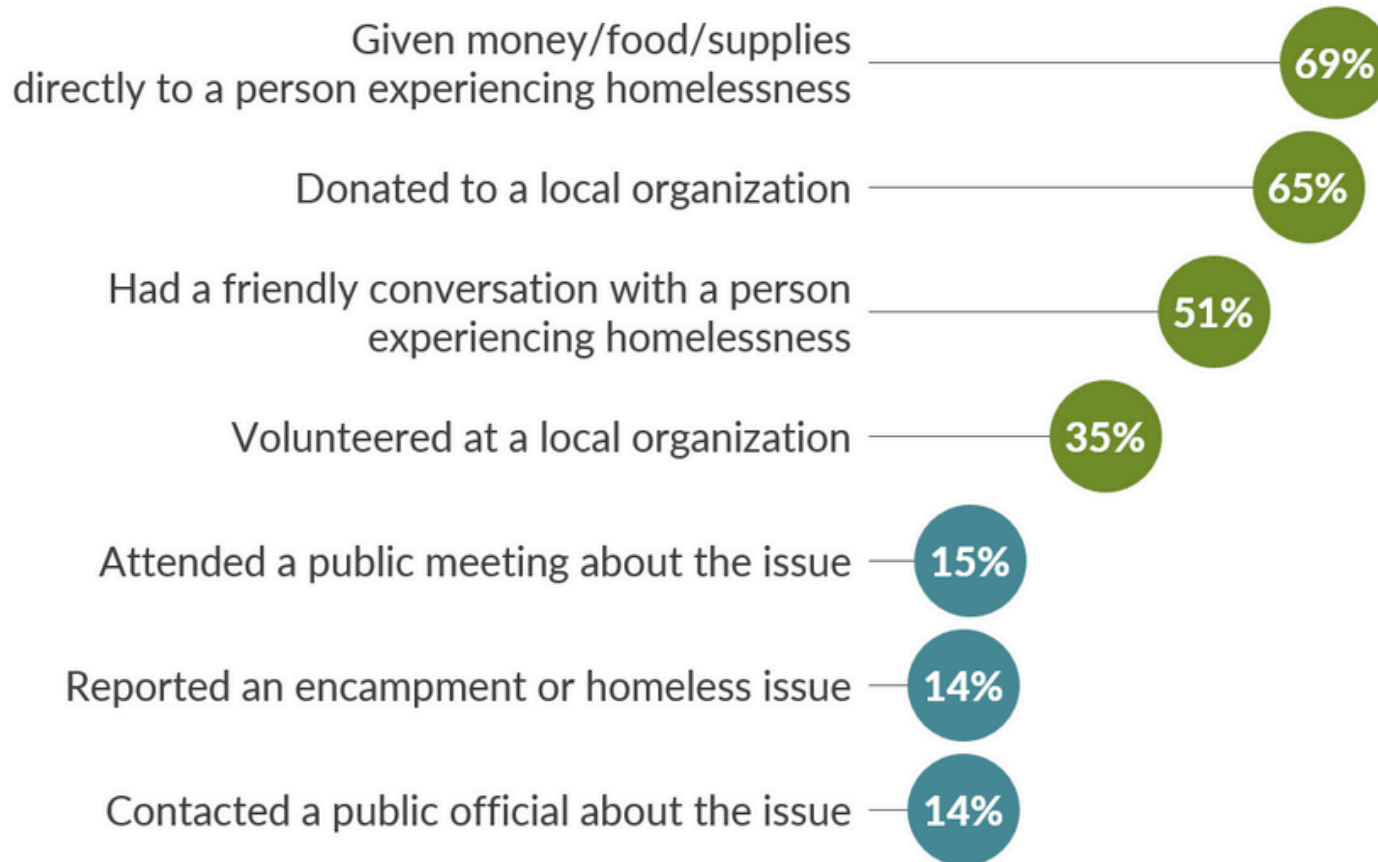
(e.g., safe areas for camping with basic amenities and access to support services)

8

## Residents are individually taking actions in response to the issue of homelessness.

### Residents were more likely to take action via directly through **community** vs. **government** involvement.

For example, while 65% of residents had donated to a local homeless organization, only 14% had contacted a public official about the issue.





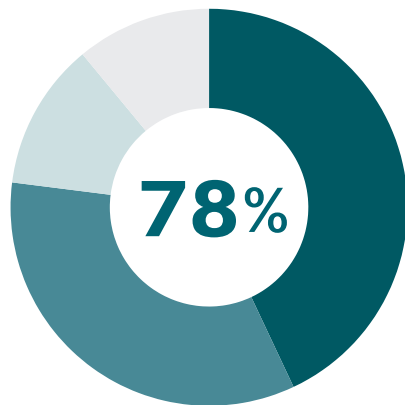
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## The issue of homelessness influences how residents vote.

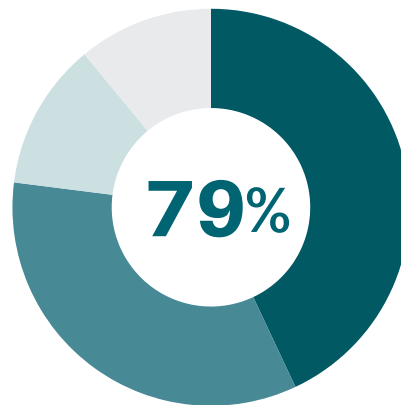
### The majority of residents strongly or somewhat considered the issue of homelessness in the 2024 elections.

Of those residents who voted in 2024, a large majority reported that they **strongly** considered or **somewhat** considered the issue of homelessness when voting...

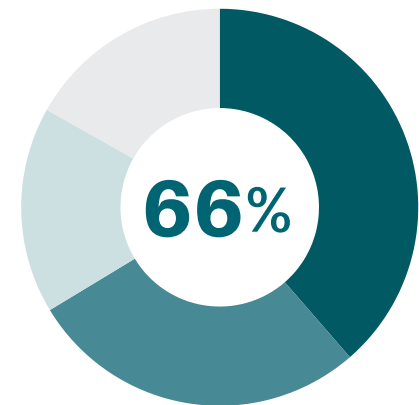
in local  
elections



in state  
elections



in federal  
elections

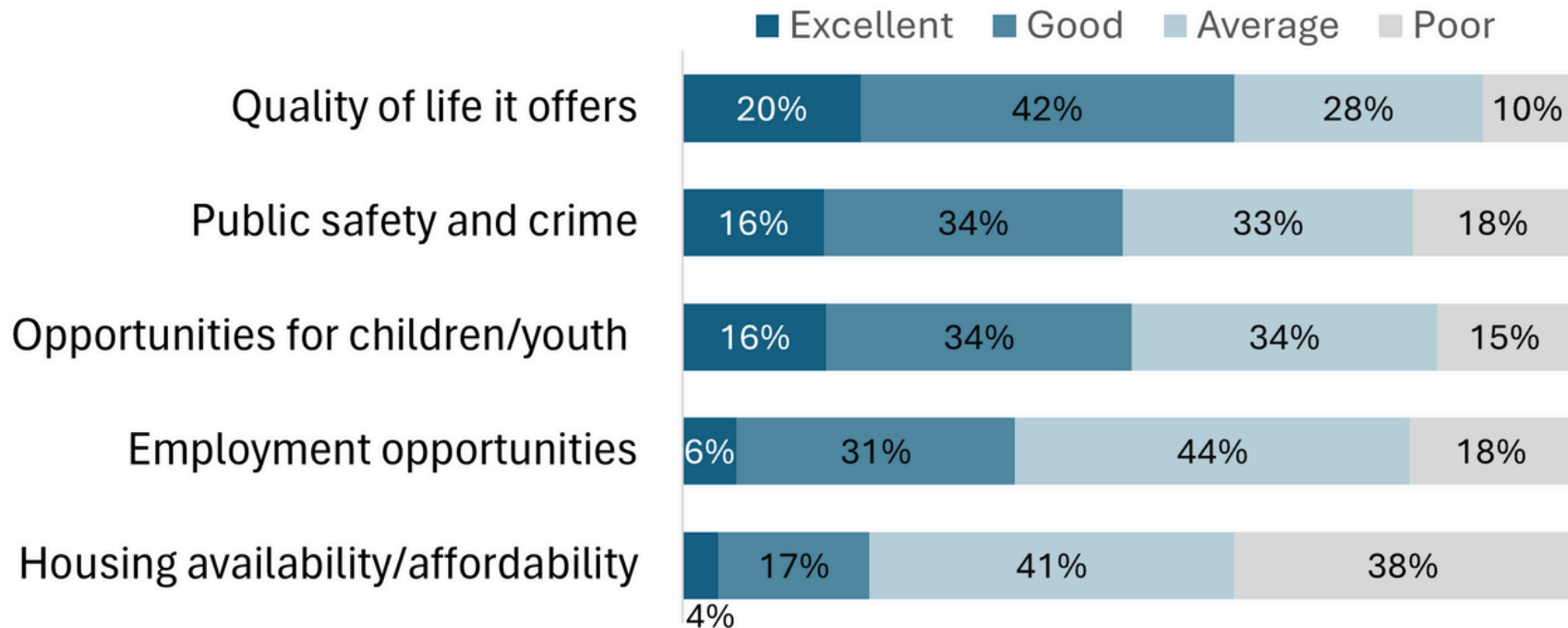


LEGEND | Strongly Considered Somewhat Considered Mildly Considered Not Considered

10

While challenges persist, most residents report a strong quality of life in their local communities.

Residents are generally happy with the overall quality of life in their community, although employment and housing availability remain challenges.





# Survey Methodology

The Institute for Social Research at Sacramento State surveyed 1,750 households across the Greater Sacramento Region (El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties) to better understand residents' awareness and perceptions related to the issue of homelessness. This poll was conducted during March and April 2025, and has a margin of error of +/-2.3%.

The Greater Sacramento Region Panel uses probability-based sampling to recruit a random sample of the Region's residents using the United States Postal Service Delivery Sequence File. Statistical weighting to reflect various selection probabilities is performed to ensure that the panelists responding to the survey statistically represent the demographics of the Region. We adjust for nonresponse and under-coverage by calibrating these base weights to known population-based control totals for gender and age, race, ethnicity, education, income, marital status, household size, homeownership, and county.

Scan the QR code below to access the survey data tables, county summaries, and learn more about the Institute for Social Research.



Institute for  
Social Research