



PARK COUNTY
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

We Will

PARK COUNTY



2023 Report

Data and opinions for the future of our county



We Will

PARK COUNTY

We Will Park County is an initiative informed by residents to help Park County determine its future. Launched more than four years ago with the initial input of over 700 citizens, We Will articulates a vision for the community across five key areas.

Data relevant to those areas is regularly compiled, tracked and updated. The goal is to establish a set of facts and values that can help inspire the community to solve the challenges threatening its mutually desired future.



Thank you

We Will Park County is made possible by the generous support of our sponsors:



LANDSCAPES AND NATURAL AMENITIES



SMALL TOWN AND RURAL LIFESTYLE



ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE



HOUSING AND AFFORDABILITY



HEALTH, SAFETY AND EDUCATION



From the Park County Community Foundation

We launched the We Will initiative with the hope that regularly compiling a set of data about the health of our community would serve as a sort of common language among our citizens. That we could agree on what our most pressing issues are and work towards mutually agreeable solutions.

While the data sets remain critically important, we've also learned that compiling and distributing them isn't enough. This year's survey showed that people are growing increasingly pessimistic about the future of Park County and that the overwhelming majority believe our county's challenges aren't being successfully addressed.

Action is often a result of momentum, and momentum—in physics—is mass in motion. High numbers of citizens from all corners of Park County who understand and are deeply involved in our county's issues—mass, if you will—can create action. We can truly tackle some of our thorniest issues and create the future we all seem to agree on if we are all more thoroughly engaged. If we have mass.

The We Will Park County initiative is a sort of mirror, reflecting back and more deeply informing all of us on where our county's challenges are most acute, where our citizens agree and where we disagree. It's an important baseline of information and a key part of our pledge to **Learn** about the community's challenges, to **Engage** with and listen to the whole community to help develop solutions to those challenges, and to **Give** freely of our time and resources.

Yet here at the Community Foundation we also recognize the need to inspire. To get more citizens more deeply involved. To create mass.

The old saying that "the world is run by those who show up" has never rung more true. As we look for more ways to inspire citizen engagement, we hope you'll join us. Find ways to get involved in the issues, listen, and inspire your neighbors to do the same.


Jeff Welch, Board Chair


Gavin Clark, Executive Director

COVER: Historic grain elevator in Wilsall. | Photo Credit: Keelia Jo Photography, LEFT: Truck cab view of the Wilsall Rodeo. | Photo Credit: Nashan Photographers

The Vision

LANDSCAPES & NATURAL AMENITIES: We Will remain one of the most beautiful places to live on earth.

SMALL TOWN & RURAL LIFESTYLE: We Will embrace and nurture our sense of community.

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE: We Will support varied and viable economic opportunities consistent with the character of our community.

HOUSING & AFFORDABILITY: We Will support good solutions that address affordability for all who choose to live and work here.

HEALTH, SAFETY & EDUCATION: We Will continually strive to improve the well-being of all our residents.

Executive Summary

From May through July 2023, the Park County Community Foundation conducted our third county-wide survey to understand residents' perceptions and concerns about our county's biggest issues. We received more than 850 individual responses. (A summary of the survey methodology is on page 22).

The results of the survey are similar to what we've found over the past several years: affordability and growth are far and away the top concerns of Park County residents. Other issues such as infrastructure, mental health, political divisions—these too will sound quite familiar to anyone who's spent any time in our county's coffee shops and diners, social media channels, public meetings and the like.

Citizens know the issues—78% say they are personally affected by the challenges we face. But because they are not easily solved there is much frustration. Only 6% of respondents think our county's challenges are being successfully addressed. This seems to breed some negativity, with one out of every three respondents saying they are pessimistic about the future of Park County.

Affordable housing is impossible to find. We have lots of service workers with nowhere to live. The Gardiner school is on its last legs because enrollment is down as families have nowhere to live.

- Full-time resident of 21-40 years, age 55-64

“

Park County, and Montana as a whole, is changing. It is hard for me to see the changes occurring knowing what a beautiful and wild country it once was.

- Full-time resident, Park County native, age 65-74

Yet our study showed that more people are optimistic (41%) than pessimistic (34%) about Park County's future. Half of respondents consider themselves engaged in Park County's issues. But a glass half full is also a glass half empty. Lots of people still remain on the sidelines. 26% say they don't get involved because they don't have enough information. An additional 21% want to get involved but don't know how.

Perhaps this is where solutions lie. When we inspire people to get involved, deepen their awareness of the issues and introduce them to the individuals and organizations working on them, good things happen. An engaged community is a community that thrives.

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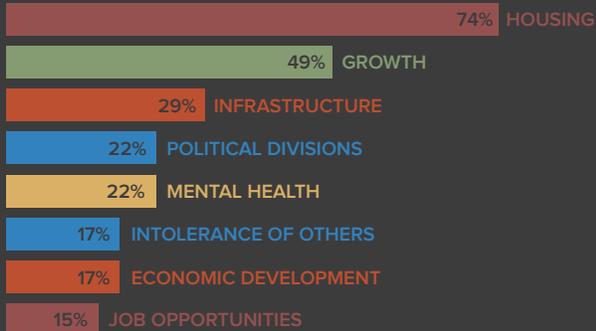
As a life-long community member, I recognize the tendency of my fellow life-timers to want this place to never change. But change is inevitable, and can be good for us if we embrace it and make it good!

- Full-time resident, Park County native, age 75-84

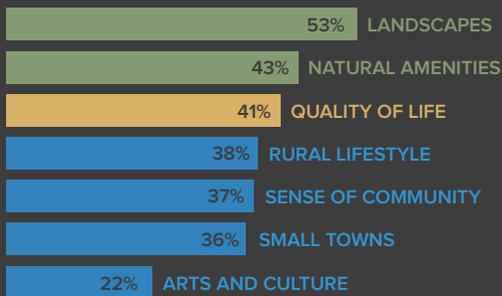
TOP TO BOTTOM: Family stroll in Springdale. | Photo Credit: Keelia Jo Photography; Coffee time at the Highway 10 truck stop diner. | Photo Credit: Lynn Donaldson; Private plane at Mission Field Airport in Livingston. | Photo Credit: Nashan Photographers

2023 PARK COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONS:

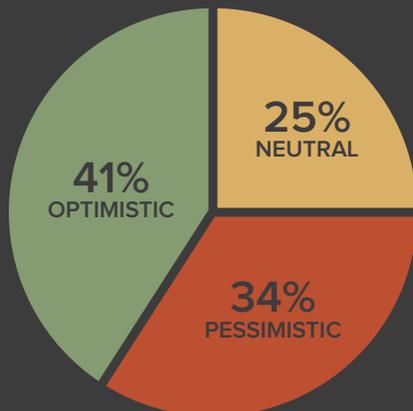
WHAT ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES THAT PARK COUNTY IS FACING?



WHAT ARE THE 3 THINGS YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT LIVING IN PARK COUNTY?



WHAT'S YOUR OVERALL FEELING ABOUT THE FUTURE OF PARK COUNTY?



Citizen Engagement

Identifying and studying challenges is one thing. Taking successful action on them is often much harder.

96% of our survey respondents want to see our challenges resolved locally. Yet awareness of the local organizations and individuals working to address these challenges is low. More than half (51%) said they weren't aware of any local entities working to address our county's challenges.

And even if they did know who was working on the challenges, a large majority of respondents (69%) didn't feel like they were being successfully addressed.

As engaged as our county's residents may be—nearly half say they volunteer time, donate money, attend public meetings or contact elected officials—it may not be enough to move the needle toward solutions. More—and deeper—citizen engagement is likely an area that we can improve upon if we want to realize our mutual vision of Park County's future.

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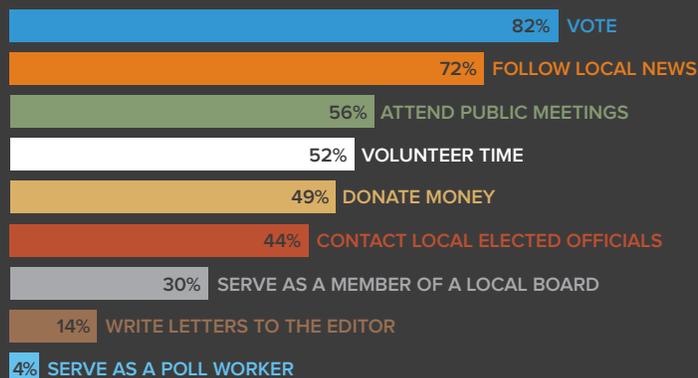
With the loss of the radio station and cost of the paper and NOT being on social media, I do not feel informed, engaged or a sense of community especially when living in the county vs. the city.

- Full-time resident of 21-40 years, age 65-74

Wintertime fly tying. | Photo Credit: Rusty Fox Media

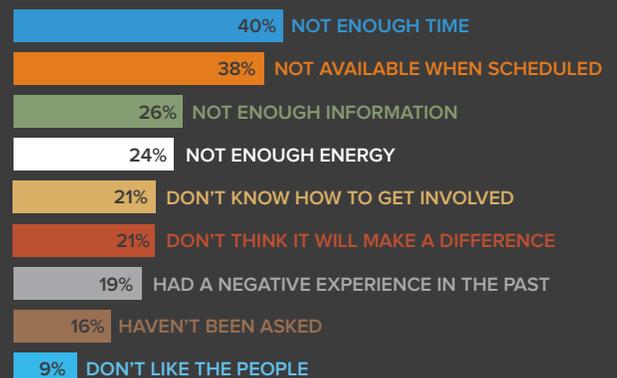
HOW PEOPLE ARE GETTING INVOLVED

SURVEY QUESTION: HOW HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.



WHY PEOPLE DON'T GET INVOLVED

SURVEY QUESTION: WHEN YOU DON'T GET INVOLVED, PLEASE SELECT ALL OF THE REASONS WHY.







Landscapes and Natural Amenities

THE VISION:

We Will remain one of the most beautiful places to live on earth.

The natural beauty of our county was no secret long before it was featured on a blockbuster television series. Our landscapes and natural amenities are what people like most about living in Park County. Thus, 94% agree that it's important to preserve these natural resources for future generations—a similar finding to previous studies.

Yet our attitudes about how we should manage and interact with our landscapes is far less uniform. We seem to have mixed feelings on everything from non-resident tourism to recreation to development with people seeming to understand the importance of these subjects to the local economy and our lifestyle, yet recognizing the challenges they bring when unchecked.

“

The community needs to address the fact that uncontrolled growth will change the county irreparably and they need to discuss and reach an agreement on what the limits of growth are.

- Full-time resident of 6-10 years, age 75-84

Looking across DePuy Spring Creek to the Absaroka Range. | Photo Credit: Keelia Jo Photography

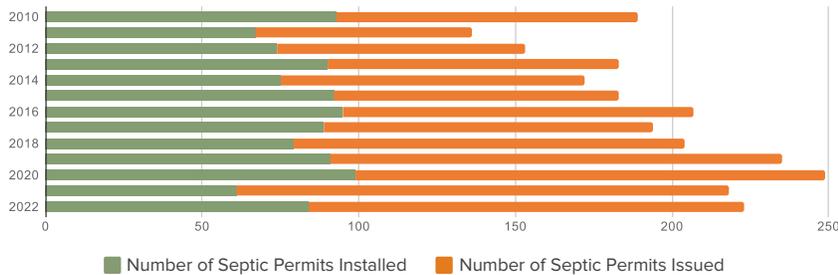
While we value our natural assets, Park County residents are also trying to navigate the challenge of inevitable growth both within the county and beyond as other Montana residents and visitors come to enjoy what this area offers.

- 64% agree that there is a lack of planning for growth.
- For those who noted growth as one of the biggest challenges,
 - 95% agree that it's important to have growth challenges addressed locally.
 - 89% consider themselves to be affected by the challenges related to growth.
 - 65% believe that the growth challenges are not being successfully addressed.
 - 51% are aware of local organizations/groups/coalitions/individuals that are working to address the growth challenges.

AVERAGE OF 86 SEPTIC INSTALLATIONS PER YEAR SINCE 2013

SEPTIC PERMITS BY YEAR: ISSUED AND INSTALLED

Source: Park County Health Department



The chart shows the septic permits issued in Park County by year through 2022. This data does not include data related to sewage infrastructure and use within Livingston city limits unless a property within Livingston city limits is served by a septic system. Issued permits are valid for two years. This data may reflect errors, omissions and inconsistencies but is provided to give an overview of development in Park County.

YELLOWSTONE RIVER STILL A FAVORITE FOR RECREATION

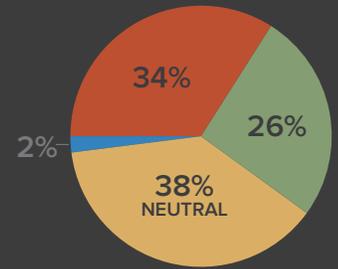
YELLOWSTONE RIVER RECREATION USE

Source: Upper Yellowstone Watershed Group

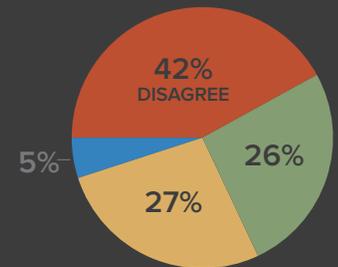
Weekend Averages (July 4-Labor Day)	2021*	2022*	2023*
Total Vehicles, all sites	332	318.9	273
Trailers, all sites	152.8	163.4	140.2
Emigrant, all vehicles	51.2	57.8	52.8
Loch Leven, all vehicles	47.8	97.1	74.3
Pine Creek, all vehicles	64.3	95.3	76.1
Carter's Bridge, all vehicles	81	88.1	85.9

*Tracking Yellowstone River recreational use for 10 sites from the Carbella fishing access site downriver to Carter's Bridge. Due to the June 2022 flood, only Aug. 6 through Labor Day was sampled in 2022. Many factors affect when and where river users come to the Upper Yellowstone. A few examples include: In 2021, COVID-19 caused many to escape indoor confinement and head to the river. In 2022, flooding damaged fishing access sites upriver as well as closed Mallard's Rest. In 2023, there was unseasonably cool and wet weather, especially on the weekends, which typically deters river users.

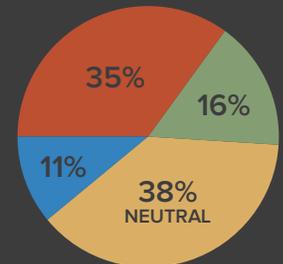
THERE ARE TOO MANY TOURISTS VISITING IN THE SUMMERTIME.



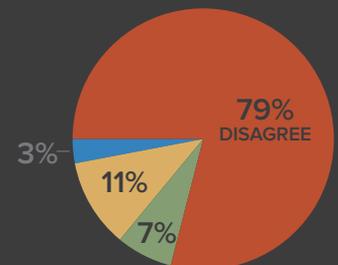
THERE SHOULD NOT BE A LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE RECREATING ON THE YELLOWSTONE RIVER EACH DAY.



THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE ON THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE/DIRT TRAILS.



FUTURE FLOODING, WILDFIRES AND/OR OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS IN THE AREA WILL NOT IMPACT ME.



- Strongly disagree/disagree
- Strongly agree/agree
- Neutral
- Don't know or N/A

Small Town and Rural Lifestyle

THE VISION:

We Will embrace and nurture our sense of community.

With new people moving to Park County, the idea of retaining our small town and rural lifestyle can feel very challenging—both from an overall growth standpoint as well as a cultural standpoint.

- More than 1/3 believe that there are too many newcomers moving here.
- More than 1/2 believe that too much ranching and farming land is being subdivided.

One of the greatest challenges facing Park County is people figuring out how to work together. Although the 2022 Flood certainly showed that county residents can and will come together in times of need, only 16% of this year's survey respondents believe that people will put their political differences aside and work together. That lack of collaboration may be happening even at the neighbor-to-neighbor level. For example, nearly one in four survey respondents believe they should be able to do anything they want with their property, but only one in five agree that their neighbors should have the same right.

- For those who noted political differences as one of the biggest challenges,
 - 92% agree that it's important to have these challenges addressed locally.
 - 87% consider themselves to be affected by these challenges.
 - Only 27% are aware of local organizations/groups/coalitions/individuals that are working to address these challenges.

“

I have no idea how to better address political divisions, but I see the political divide spreading to what used to be non-political topics. If I am a conservative, and I voice concerns with mining impacts, then I am viewed as left wing crazy. If I am a liberal, and I voice opposition to the spread of “woke-ism” into the education system, then I am disregarded as a far right bigot.

- Full-time resident of 11-20 years, age 45-54

LEFT TO RIGHT: Summertime dance at Music Ranch Montana. | Photo Credit: Donald Zanoff;
Livingston Jazz Festival performance at The Attic. | Photo Credit: Nashan Photographers





PARK COUNTY SCORES IN TOP 3% IN NATION FOR ARTS VIBRANCY

ARTS VIBRANCY INDEX 2022

Source: SMU DataArts, the National Center for Arts Research, <https://dataarts.smu.edu/ArtsVibrancyMap>

**TOP 3%
OVERALL SCORE**

TOP 1% IN ARTS PROVIDERS

TOP 10% IN ARTS DOLLARS

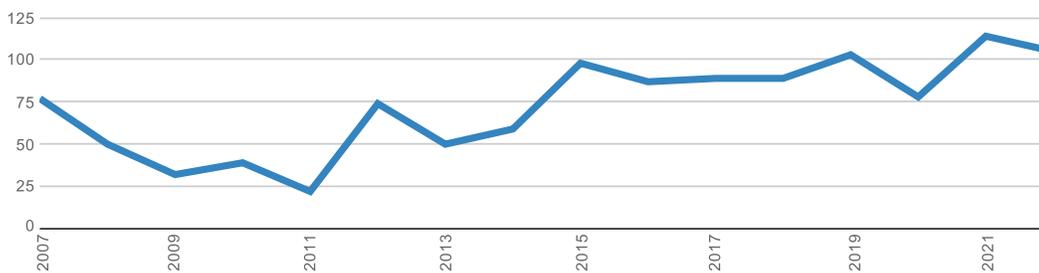
TOP 23% IN GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

Park County scored in the top 3% of all counties in the nation, based on an assessment of arts vibrancy among more than 3,100 counties. The assessment includes three main rubrics including art providers (number of artists, organizations, employees, firms), arts dollars (programming, revenue, expenses, compensation) and government support (number of government grants and funding for the arts) for arts and culture.

AVERAGE OF 100 NEW RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES ADDED EACH YEAR SINCE 2019

NEW RESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES ASSIGNED IN UNINCORPORATED AREAS: BY YEAR

Source: Park County GIS/IT Department

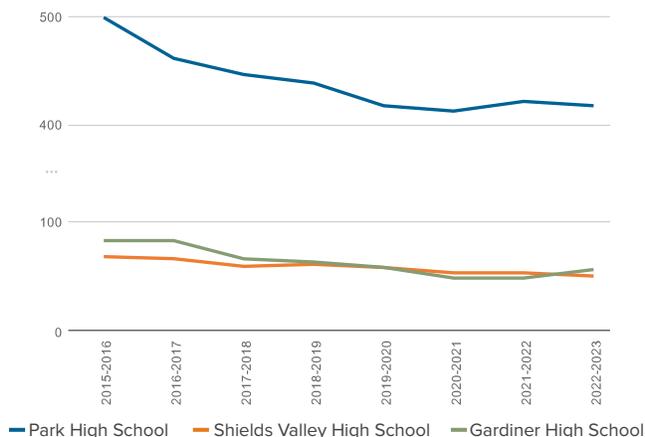


New residential addresses are another indicator of growth in Park County. The chart shows the number assigned by year in Park County. This data does not include new residential addresses from the incorporated towns of Livingston and Clyde Park. According to Park County government, it may reflect errors, omissions and inconsistencies but is provided to give an overview of residential development in Park County.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT IS STILL STRUGGLING

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT COUNTS

Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction



Gardiner High recently saw a small uptick but has declined 32% in the last 7 years. Shields Valley High has declined 26% during the same time period.

POPULATION UP 14% SINCE 2010; MEDIAN AGE REMAINS HIGH

POPULATION CHANGE

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Year	Population
1990	14,643
2000	15,706
2010	15,595
2020	17,224
2021	17,531
2022	17,790

Year	Median Age
2010	44.6
2019	46.3
2020	46.5
2021	46.3

Park County's median age of 46.3 years in 2021 was higher than the Montana median age of 40 and the U.S. median age of 38.4.

Economic Performance

THE VISION: We Will support varied and viable economic opportunities consistent with the character of our community.

Park County's overall economic performance continues to be impacted by a high cost of living with comparatively lower paying jobs. Again, this isn't a surprise and the data supports how survey respondents continue to feel.

- 79% believe that more people are struggling financially.
- 71% believe that it's hard for employers to get quality employees.
- 70% believe that it's not easy for people to find a good-paying, living-wage job.
- 72% believe that the current overall cost of living is not acceptable.

Additionally, there is concern that our infrastructure may be holding us back. Nearly 2 out of 3 survey respondents believe that the county infrastructure is not keeping up with the times.

- For those who noted infrastructure as one of the biggest challenges,
 - 96% agree that it's important to have infrastructure challenges addressed locally.
 - 98% consider themselves to be affected by the challenges related to infrastructure.
 - 67% believe that the infrastructure challenges are not being successfully addressed.
 - 37% are aware of local organizations/groups/coalitions/individuals that are working to address the infrastructure challenges.

“

If improvements in our small unincorporated community were made in a more timely manner, that would be helpful. I understand that a lot of this comes back to funding, resources, housing etc., and that living in an unincorporated community that relies on the county's help is a challenge within itself.

- Full-time resident of 6-10 years, age 25-34

LEFT TO RIGHT: Sheep shearer getting to work in Livingston. | Photo Credit: Nashan Photographers; Crafting a custom fly rod. | Photo Credit: Rusty Fox Media



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME = \$58,510

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: PARK COUNTY OVER TIME

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1901



ANNUAL COST OF LIVING = \$81,327

ANNUAL COST OF LIVING IN PARK COUNTY, 2023

Source: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/30067>

Food.....	\$10,702
Childcare	\$10,162
Medical.....	\$8,581
Housing.....	\$11,789
Transportation	\$11,789
Civic	\$6,480
Other.....	\$9,463
Required annual income after taxes.....	\$69,000
Annual taxes	\$12,327

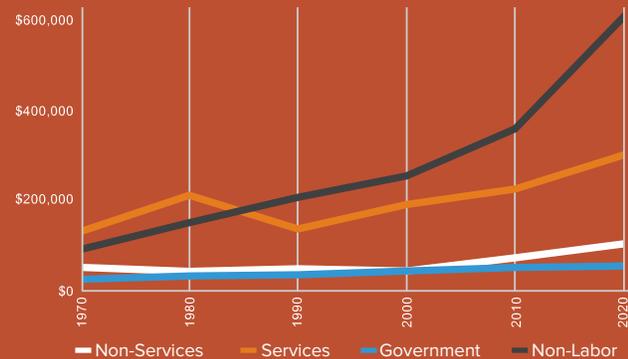
Required annual income before taxes.....\$81,327

Cost of living is for two working adults and one child.

NON-LABOR INCOME 54% OF ALL PERSONAL INCOME

INCOME IN PARK COUNTY BY SOURCE

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

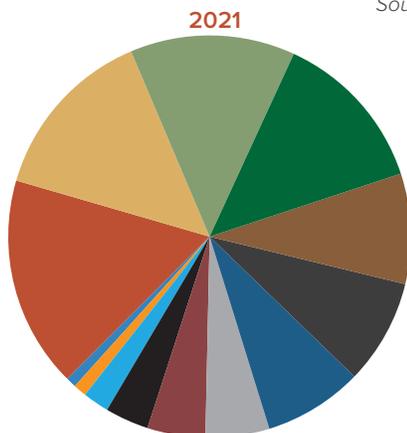


Non-labor income includes dividends, interest, rent, and transfer payments. Services are industry sectors that include transportation & public utilities, wholesale trade, retail trade, finance, insurance, real estate, and other services. Non-services are industries that include farm, agricultural, forestry, fishing, mining, construction, and manufacturing. Government includes income from jobs in federal, military, state, and local governments.

57% OF JOBS COME FROM 4 SECTORS

JOBS BY INDUSTRY

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03



- Educational services, health care, social assistance
- Tourism: Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services
- Construction
- Professional, scientific, management, administrative services
- Retail trade
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining
- Other services, except public administration
- Public Administration
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, leasing
- Transportation, warehousing, utilities
- Wholesale trade
- Information

Housing and Affordability

THE VISION:

We Will support good solutions that address affordability for all who choose to live and work here.

- 90% agree that the cost of housing is too expensive when compared to the types of current jobs available.
- 82% agree that there are not enough places to live for those who want to work here.
- 79% agree that first-time buyers cannot afford to buy a home in the area.
- 72% agree that there are too many people who pay rent/mortgages that exceed 30% of their income.

Affordable housing is an area that residents definitely agree needs to be addressed. And while many organizations are working to do so, the majority of our survey respondents don't believe there have been many successes.

- For those who noted housing as one of the biggest challenges,
 - 97% agree that it's important to have housing challenges addressed locally.
 - 63% consider themselves to be affected by the challenges related to housing.
 - 73% believe that the housing challenges are not being successfully addressed.
 - 40% are aware of local organizations/groups/coalitions/individuals that are working to address the housing challenges.

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Once the housing plan is put into motion, I believe we will see much more progress being made to address the issues. However, these changes take time, so housing is still very challenging for those in need of affordable housing right now.

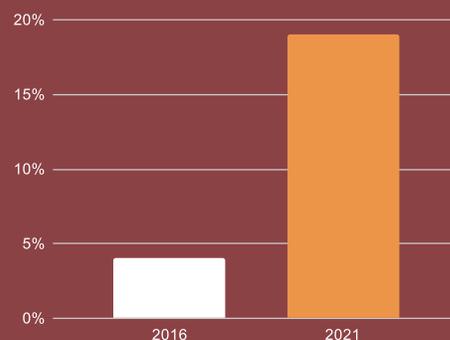
- Full-time resident of 6-10 years, age 25-34



INCREASE IN MIDDLE CLASS RENTERS WHO ARE COST-BURDENED

COST-BURDENED RENTER HOUSEHOLDS

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Policy Map



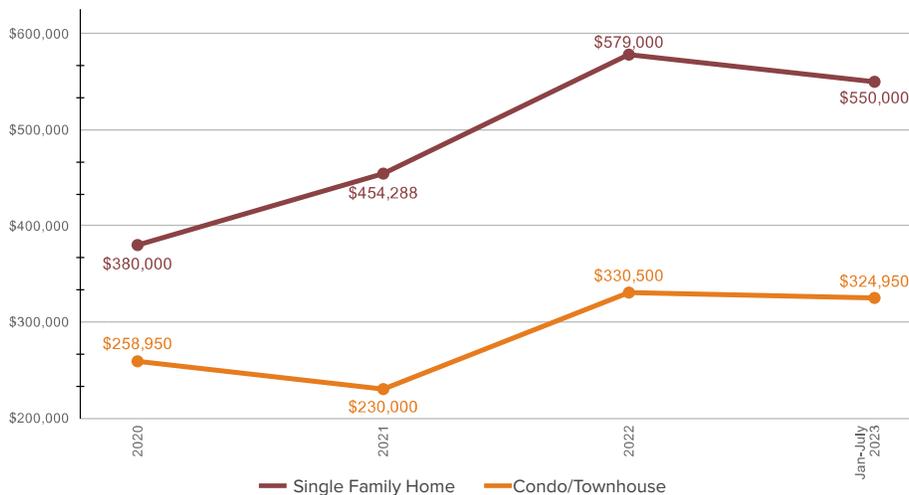
The chart above shows the percent of cost-burdened renters with a household income of \$50k-\$75k. Cost-burdened households spend 30% or more of their income on monthly rent and utilities.



HOME PRICES DECLINE, BUT STILL UP 45% SINCE 2020

MEDIAN SALES PRICE IN DOLLARS

Source: Big Sky Country MLS



RENTS OUTSIDE OF LIVINGSTON INCREASED 28% IN 2023, BUT MOST RENTS INCREASED LESS SUBSTANTIALLY THAN PREVIOUS YEARS

RENTAL RATES IN PARK COUNTY

Source: Park County Housing Needs Assessment, Hannah Montana LLC

Type of Rental	2020 Rental Rate	2021 Rental Rate	2022 Rental Rate	2023 Rental Rate	% Change YOY
Studios in Livingston	\$480–\$520	\$520–\$795	\$550–\$900	\$625–\$865	-4% to 14%
2 bedrooms in Livingston	\$1,000–\$1,250	\$1,200–\$1,500	\$1,250–\$1,600	\$1,550–\$1,700	6% to 20%
4 bedrooms in Livingston	\$1,700–\$1,900	\$1,900–\$2,200	\$1,900–\$2,400	\$2,200–\$2,500	4% to 16%
4 bedrooms outside of town	\$2,100+	\$2,300+	\$2,500+	\$3,200+	28%

The rental prices included above were provided by Hannah Montana LLC, based on its current inventory of 296 rentals in Park County. Rental rates are for standard rentals; luxury or high-end rentals may demand higher rents.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Patiently grinding edges on a Nordic ski. | Photo Credit: Rusty Fox Media;
 Historic barn outside of Clyde Park, overlooking a tributary of the Shields River and the Crazy Mountains. | Photo Credit: Rusty Fox Media



Health, Safety and Education

THE VISION: We Will continually strive to improve the well-being of all our residents.

76% agree that Park County is a safe place to live, down 8% from last year's survey. This decline is one of the few areas in which there is a noticeable change year over year and may reflect citizen concern about the overall well-being of our county.

- 68% of respondents with kids in the home agree that there are not enough daycare providers.
- 62% agree that there is an increase in mental health issues and/or suicides.
- 68% believe that drug use and substance abuse seem more and more common.
- 61% agree that there are more people needing food assistance.
- 59% agree that there are more families living in poverty.

Mental health was noted as one of the county's biggest challenges, and we could easily argue that it's tied to our other needs including housing, growth and affordability.

- For those who noted mental health as one of the biggest challenges,
 - 100% agree that it's important to have mental health challenges addressed locally.
 - 84% consider themselves to be affected by the challenges related to mental health.
 - 64% believe that the mental health challenges are not being successfully addressed.
 - 52% are aware of local organizations/groups/coalitions/individuals that are working to address the mental health challenges.



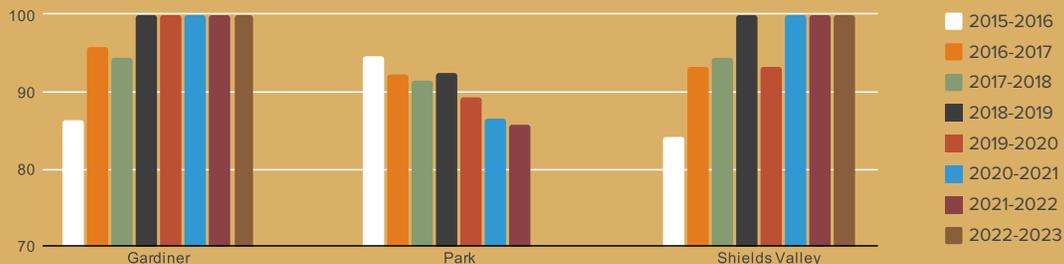
We need better access to services without having to leave the county. Provide more therapeutic aid and guidance to those seeking any services. Address a lack of childcare. Recognize and address the impact housing instability has on mental health by providing more affordable options to the community. - Full-time resident of 21-40 years, age 35-44

Family outing to the Wilsall Rodeo. | Photo Credit: Nashan Photographers

100% GRADUATION AT SHIELDS AND GARDINER

GRADUATION RATES IN PARK COUNTY

Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction



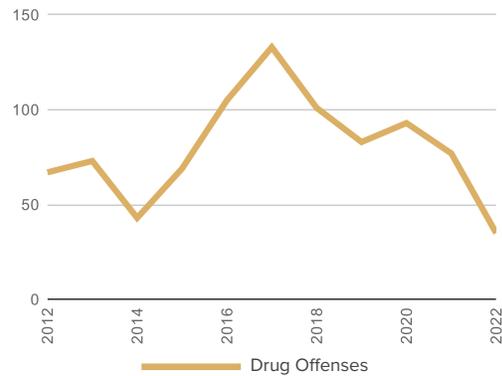
The Montana Office of Public Instruction did not have confirmed graduation rates for Park High at the time of printing.



DRUG OFFENSES CONTINUE TO DECLINE

PARK COUNTY DISTRICT COURT DRUG OFFENSES

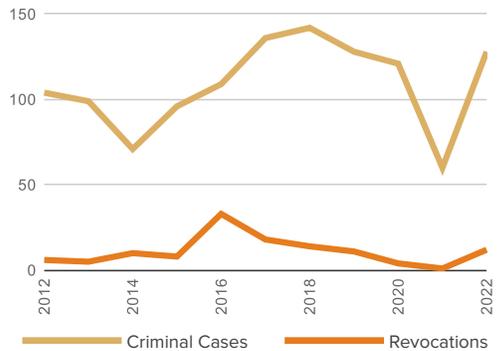
Source: Park County District Court



COURT CASE LOADS ARE BACK UP

PARK COUNTY DISTRICT COURT CASE LOADS

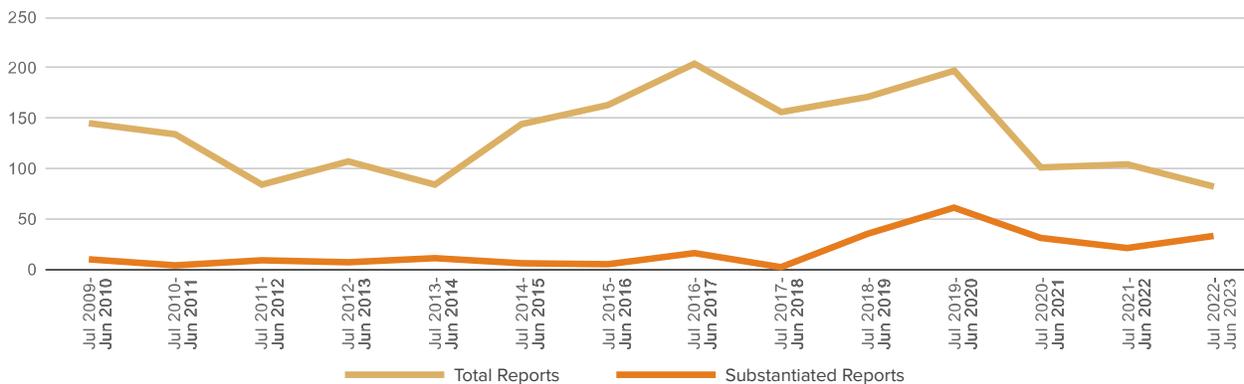
Source: Park County District Court



SUBSTANTIATED CHILD ABUSE CASES ARE TRENDING BACK UP

CHILD ABUSE REPORTS: TOTAL AND SUBSTANTIATED

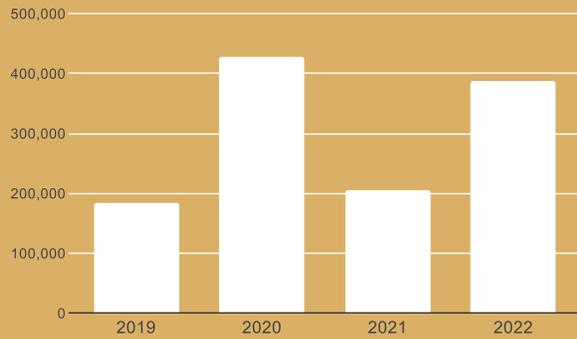
Source: CAPS and MFSIS



Total reports indicate the number of total reports accepted for investigation and substantiated reports indicate the total reports that concluded in a disposition of founded or substantiated reports within the fiscal year.

AMOUNT OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED REMAINS HIGH; 50% INCREASE IN HOUSEHOLDS SERVED SINCE 2021

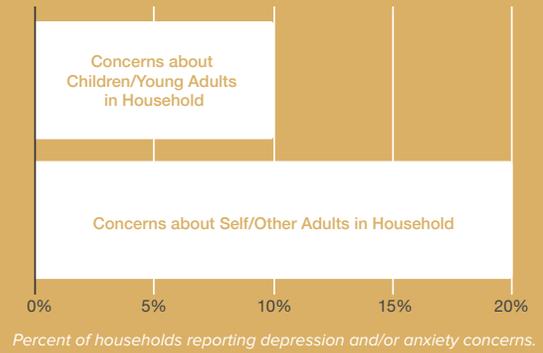
POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED
Source: Livingston Food Resource Center



DEPRESSION OR ANXIETY CONCERNS IN 1 OF 5 HOUSEHOLDS

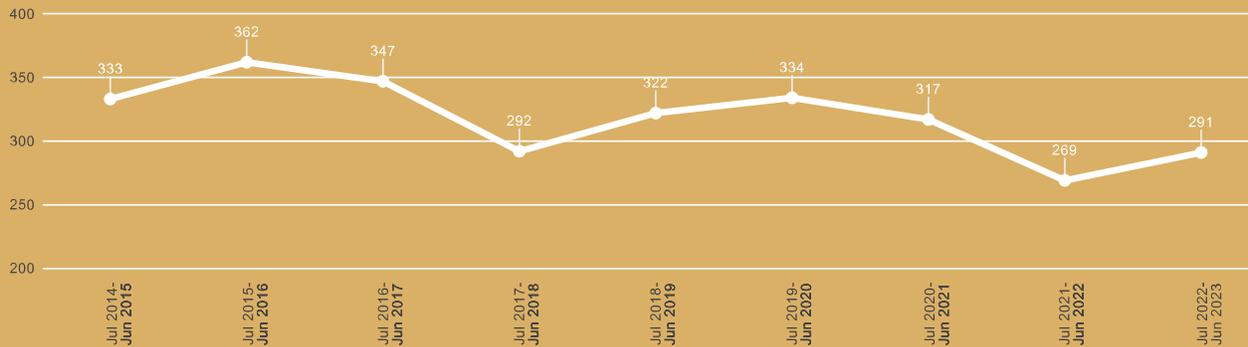
DEPRESSION OR ANXIETY IN HOUSEHOLDS

Source: Park County CASPER Survey, May 2022, Community Health Needs Assessment, a collaboration between Livingston HealthCare and the Park City County Health Department



LICENSED CHILD CARE CAPACITY UP 8%

PARK COUNTY LICENSED CHILD CARE PROVIDER CAPACITY
Source: MT Child Care Connections



As of July 31, 2023, there were 11 licensed providers in Park County with 291 slots. There were an estimated 733 children under the age of 5 in Park County in 2021, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The data in this chart reflects the total child care capacity from licensed providers. It does not include the capacity from unlicensed providers.

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Park County residents are becoming increasingly diverse. | Photo Credit: Donald Zanoff; Livingston bike shop employees ensure a batch of new kids' bikes are ready for the summer. | Photo Credit: Rusty Fox Media; Ice skating on Sacagawea Lagoon. | Photo Credit: Keelia Jo Photography





Inspiration

Ready to get more involved? Here are things you can do as a Park County resident to have an impact on what's happening in our community.

Prioritize

- Make a short list of the issues you care about most.
- Prioritize one issue.

Have Coffee with a Neighbor

- An informal chat is a great way to become more comfortable talking about a topic that is important to you.
- Perhaps they don't share your views on this issue? Listen to their concerns and see where you can find common ground.

Listen and Join in the Discussions

- Watch for your issues on the agendas of city and county meetings – these agendas are shared in advance on the government websites, and then recordings and meeting minutes are posted afterwards.
- Listen to what others have to say and provide your perspective – government meetings frequently allow time for public comment.
- Maybe your issue isn't yet on an agenda? Reach out directly to your county or city commissioner and ask to set up a meeting or phone call. County commissioners often hold informal meetings outside of Livingston; Livingston City Commissioners regularly attended the Livingston Farmers Market in 2023.

Look to See What Others Are Doing

- Check out Utah State University's Gateway & Natural Amenity Region (GNAR) Initiative to learn more about how similar communities are addressing these issues; you'll find blog posts and videos on their website: <https://extension.usu.edu/gnar/>
- Headwaters Economics recently released a report about communities like ours: "The Amenity Trap: How high-amenity communities can avoid being loved to death." You can find that online at: <https://headwaterseconomics.org/outdoor-recreation/amenity-trap/>

Other Ways to Get Involved

- Reach out to the local news media and let them know why you think they should consider covering your issue.
- Serve as a member of a local board, run for public office, or support those who are working on your issue.
- Volunteer your time or donate money.

No matter what action you take, it will make a difference.



A list of organizations currently addressing some of the issues outlined in this report can be found on the Park County Community Foundation's website at: find.pccf-montana.org/We-Will-Park-County-GET-INVOLVED

Survey Methodology

The 2023 Park County Community Survey was conducted in May, June and July 2023. The purpose of the survey was to obtain qualitative perspectives from Park County residents. More than 850 respondents from throughout the county answered fill-in-the-blank questions where they wrote in their thoughts and opinions about what they liked most and liked least about Park County as well as their greatest fears about the future of Park County. Additionally, survey respondents answered questions on various topics in which they could note if they agreed, disagreed, had a neutral opinion, or select not applicable or didn't know.

Respondents were invited to participate via: an article in the *Livingston Enterprise*; an ad in the Gardiner email newsletter; various social media channels; email marketing to the databases of numerous Park County organizations and individuals including the PCCF database; outreach to community leaders who work directly with high school students; promoted on the PCCF website; hard copy surveys placed at the Park County Public Library, Gardiner Chamber of Commerce, Livingston Food Resource Center, Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) office, and the PCCF office; postcards mailed to all Park County zip codes outside the city limits of Livingston; and flyers placed throughout the county from Wilsall to Gardiner.

The survey was not a random sampling or a scientifically-based representative sample of Park County residents; however, actions were taken to encourage feedback from as many community members as possible.

Among those who shared their demographic information, respondents skewed female; older; full-time residents; employed/self-employed; and Park County residents for more than 20 years including many who noted they had lived here their entire lives.

Similar to the demographics of the county, the single largest percentage of respondents were from Livingston, but there was also a significant sample of respondents from across the county. 66% of the respondents were from Livingston; 11% were from Gardiner; 4% were from Emigrant; 3% from Pray; 3% from Wilsall; 2% from Clyde Park; 2% from Paradise Valley; 2% from Cooke City and Silver Gate; and 1% from Shields Valley. Other communities represented included Cedar Creek, Cokedale, Corwin Springs, Jardine, McLeod, Pine Creek, South Glastonberry, Springdale, Tom Miner, and Whispering Pines.

□ **67% of all of the respondents are female**

□ **62% are between 45-74 years old**
□ **26% are between 25-44 years old**
□ **Less than 8% are 75 and older**
□ **Less than 6% are 24 and younger**

□ **89% are full-time residents**

□ **59% are employed full-time or self-employed**
□ **Less than 26% are retired**

□ **45% have lived here more than 21 years**
□ **23% have lived here 11 to 20 years**
□ **12% have lived here 6 to 10 years**
□ **20% have lived here less than 6 years**



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