

Rural Pulse™ 2019



Cultural/Racial Research
July 2019

Russell Herder
Strategy wins.



Blandin Foundation™
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA



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Executive Summary

Project Objectives

Approximately every three years since 1998, the Blandin Foundation has commissioned Rural Pulse™, a research study designed to gain a real-time snapshot of the concerns, perceptions and priorities of rural Minnesota residents. The following report encompasses the results of the 2019 cultural/racial research study with comparisons, where significant, to the responses within the full 2019 rural Minnesota survey of those self-identifying as White. Both initiatives were conducted to accomplish the following objectives:

- Understand the issues and priorities within rural Minnesota;
- Determine if current needs are being addressed and, if not, identify what needs to be; and
- Compare and contrast perceptions and opinions amongst demographic segments and also to previous year results.

Methodology

For the cultural/racial survey, telephone and online interviews were conducted in early 2019 with 459 individuals within rural Minnesota who self-identified as belonging to cultural/racial groups, including African American, Asian, Native American or American Indian, Hispanic or Latino, Hmong, Somali, Southeast Asian and multi-cultural, among others. As African American, Hispanic/Latino and Asian respondents self-identified, additional breakdown of cultures within those ethnic groups is not available. Landline and cellular telephone lists were purchased within communities of fewer than 35,000 residents and surrounding geographical areas (excluding the seven-county metropolitan area), as well as an online survey link distributed to achieve target completion goals. The surveys were administered in English. The overall results provide a statistical reliability of +/-4.6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. The data was also analyzed by the four primary cultural/racial groups listed by the U.S. Census Bureau: Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, African Americans and Asians to show comparative findings.

Collected, compiled and reported upon separately for Rural Pulse earlier in 2019 were the following sectors:

- Telephone interviews with 1,068 rural Minnesotans overall;
- Telephone interviews with 492 Minnesota residents within the seven-county Twin Cities area and those in zip codes with populations of 35,000 or more;



- Some 300 residents within the Blandin Foundation's home area – defined as the Grand Rapids and Itasca County area, including the communities of Blackduck, Hill City, Northome and Remer; and
- An online survey with 688 alumni of the Blandin Community Leadership Program and the Blandin Reservation Community Leadership Program.



Key Findings within Cultural/Racial Study

Economic optimism is fluctuating; better for some, not for others.

- One in four in rural Minnesota feel their local economy has improved over the past year, less than in 2016 study findings. Another half believe it stayed the same, and 18 percent indicate that their local economy has worsened.
- Six in 10 feel their community successfully maintains and grows job opportunities.
- About half say that living-wage job opportunities in their community are inadequate, a slight increase from 2016 study findings.
- Thirty-seven percent feel their communities are not sufficiently addressing economic development. One in five identify job opportunities or economic development as the most critical issues in their community.
- Six in 10 feel their community has an adequate workforce available for local businesses.
- While 31 percent saw an increase in their household income over the past year, 15 percent say they experienced a decrease.
- Fourteen percent experienced a job loss in the past year, a six percentage point decline from 2016 study findings.

Optimism remains steady.

- Three-quarters are optimistic about the future of their community.
- Eighty-three percent feel they are personally able to impact their community make it a better place to live, an increase from 2016 findings.
- The ability to address local issues has improved in confidence across the rural cultural landscape. Three in four (74%) agree that individuals in their community are able to work across differences – such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and nationality – to face local challenges.



Quality of Life: Communities have substantial progress to make in many areas.

- Cultural/racial residents in rural Minnesota rank opioids and drug abuse, job opportunities, provision of adequate healthcare and affordable housing as the most critical issues facing their communities.
- There are significant gaps when comparing the importance of an issue to how communities are performing. Areas in which communities are decidedly underperforming include addressing opioid and drug abuse, addressing mental health issues, affordable housing, economic development, healthcare, job opportunities and availability of childcare.

Rural Voice: Even more so than before, cultural/racial residents don't feel that they are being heard.

- Two in five feel metropolitan needs are more important to elected officials than those of rural communities, a continued increase in dissatisfaction from previous studies.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: There is room for communities to be stronger.

- Two-thirds have close friends of a different race or culture.
- Two in five feel people who experience the most discrimination, bias or harassment within their local area are those with a drug or mental health issue.
- Sixty-eight percent are confident that members of their community are able to stand up to discrimination and hatred, should they see it occur. One in four disagree.

Migration: Moving to urban areas is still a consideration.

- Down from 2016, 16 percent of those studied do not expect to live in their current community five years from now; another 12 percent are unsure.
- One in four have considered moving to a metro area within the past two years, primarily for job opportunities.



Leadership: Participation has increased.

- Fifty-seven percent feel local community leaders represent a diversity of backgrounds.
- Just over half (52%) have served in a leadership role within their rural community, 16 percentage points higher than in 2016.
- Of the cultural/racial residents in rural Minnesota who have not yet served in a leadership role, more than six in 10 (62%) would at least consider doing so if asked.

CULTURAL/RACIAL COMMUNITY FINDINGS

Note: The following analysis includes cultural/racial study responses with a comparison to other rural Minnesotan findings, where significant.



Project Objectives

Approximately every three years since 1998, the Blandin Foundation has commissioned Rural Pulse™, a research study designed to gain a real-time snapshot of the concerns, perceptions and priorities of rural Minnesota residents. This initiative has identified trends within significant, complex subject areas including the economy, education, employment, inclusion and quality of life. Since its inception, this initiative has grown to encompass a parallel study of metropolitan Minnesota residents as well as in-depth research within rural Minnesota cultural/racial communities.

The following report encompasses the results of the 2019 cultural/racial research study with comparisons, where significant, to the responses within the full 2019 rural Minnesota survey of those self-identifying as White. Both initiatives were conducted to accomplish the following objectives:

- Understand the issues and priorities within rural Minnesota;
- Determine if current needs are being addressed and, if not, identify what needs to be; and
- Compare and contrast perceptions and opinions amongst demographic segments and also to previous year results.

Methodology

The survey instrument for this study mirrored the questionnaire utilized in the overall 2019 Rural Pulse study. It was developed in cooperation with Blandin Foundation leadership, and implemented by Russell Herder, an independent research and strategic consulting firm. Where possible and relevant, certain questions from past studies were repeated for comparison purposes. Several new questions were also added for 2019. The surveys were administered in English.

Telephone and online interviews were conducted in early 2019 among individuals who self-identified as belonging to cultural/racial groups within rural Minnesota, including African American, Asian, Native American or American Indian, Hispanic or Latino, Hmong, Somali, Southeast Asian and multi-cultural, among others. As African American, Hispanic/Latino and Asian respondents self-identified, additional breakdown of cultures within those ethnic groups is not available.



Landline and cellular telephone lists were purchased within communities of fewer than 35,000 residents and surrounding geographical areas, as well as an online survey link distributed to achieve target completion goals.

A total of 459 surveys were completed, providing a statistical reliability of +/-4.6 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. Best efforts were made to reach a comparative response rate within this study to the actual cultural/racial populations of rural Minnesota (excluding White), as obtained from data derived from the U.S. Census Bureau. Some 35 percent of respondents said that they are Hispanic or Latino and 25 percent reported that they are of Native American or American Indian descent. Sixteen percent of respondents noted that they are African American and seven percent said Asian, including those of Southeast Asian heritage. Somali and Hmong participants each comprised a one percent response rate. Nine percent reported that they are of more than one nationality. Three percent offered another response to the question and five percent chose not to identify their specific culture/race.

The term “community” during the interviews was not pre-defined; respondents were allowed to interpret what it meant when answering the questionnaire.

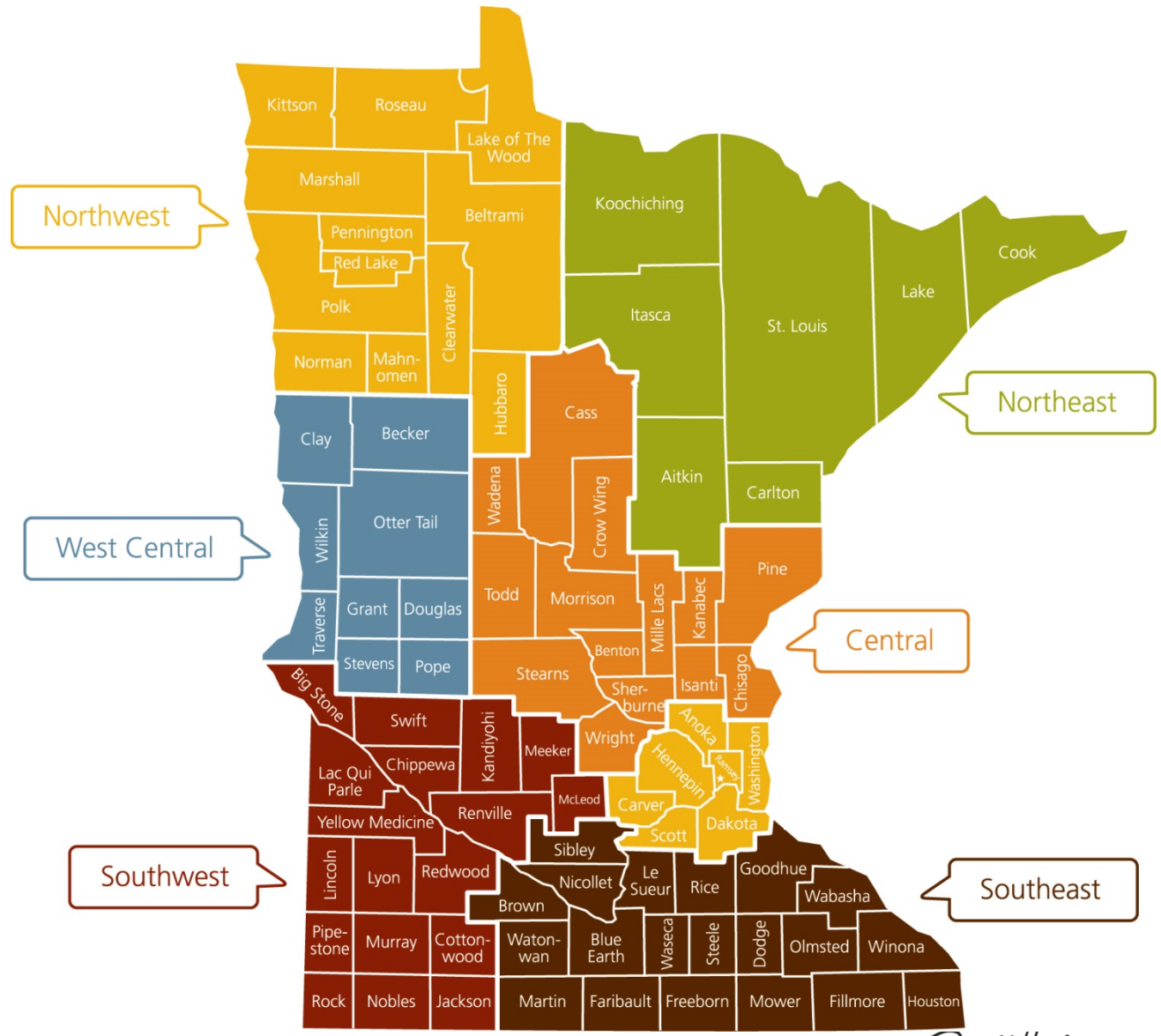
Completed questionnaires were processed and analyzed using SPSS software. The data was sorted by the four primary cultural/racial groups listed by the U.S. Census Bureau: Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, African Americans and Asians. Responses received from other cultural/racial residents did not provide a large enough sample size to include in the detailed group comparisons.

Results that are referenced as White in the following report came from survey interviews within a study group of 1,068 rural Minnesotans who self-identified as White. Note that metropolitan (population 35,000-plus) areas were excluded from both the rural and cultural/racial results, including the seven-county Twin Cities area and those in communities with populations of 35,000 or more.



Study Regions

Note: For purposes of this study, cities with a population of 35,000 or larger, including the Twin Cities, Duluth, Mankato, Moorhead, Rochester and St. Cloud, were excluded from study regions.



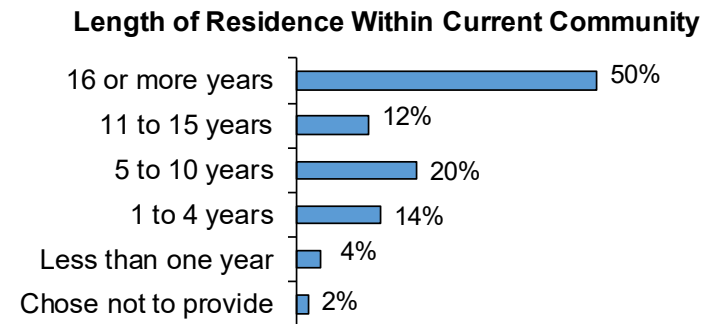
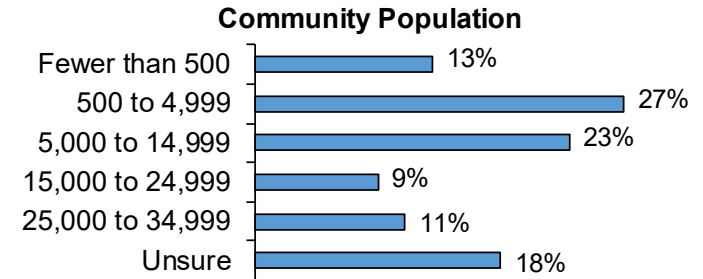
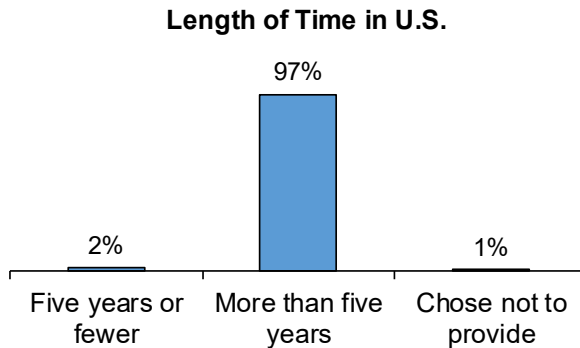


Demographics

Four in 10 rural cultural/racial respondents said the community they live in, or nearest to, has a population of fewer than 5,000, 13 percent of which cited fewer than 500. Another 23 percent said between 5,000 and 14,999, followed by 25,000 to 34,999 (11%) and 15,000 to 24,999 (9%). Eighteen percent were unsure of the size of their community.

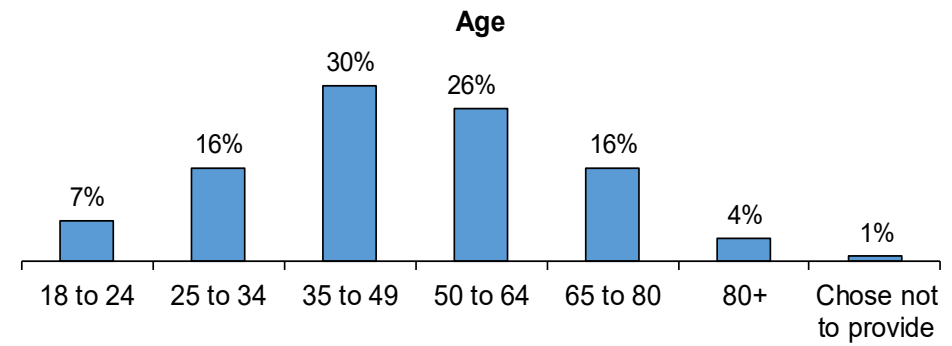
Half said that they have lived in their community for 16 or more years, followed by those stating five to 10 years (20%), one to four years (14%), 11 to 15 years (12%), and less than one year (4%). Two percent chose not to provide this information.

When asked how long they have resided in the United States, the majority (97%) said it has been more than five years, while two percent indicated it has been five years or fewer. One percent chose not to provide this information.

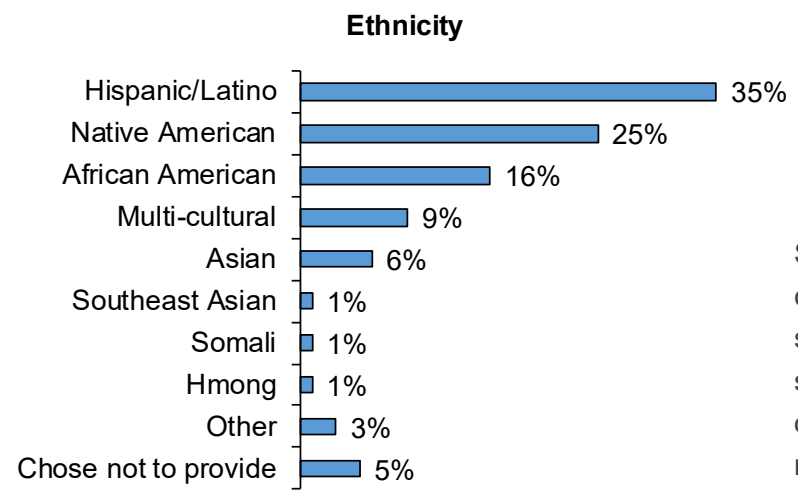
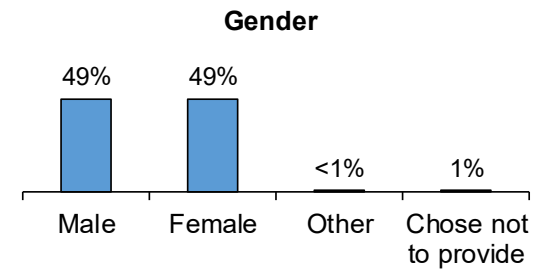




Fifty-six percent of respondents were age 35 to 64. Another 23 percent were age 18 to 34 and 20 percent were age 65 or older. One percent chose not to provide age information.



Gender was equally represented, with 49 percent each self-identifying as male or female. Less than one percent self-described as another gender and one percent chose not to provide gender information.



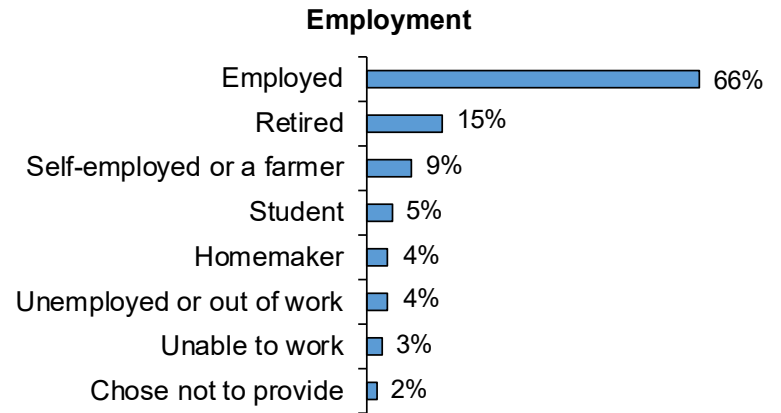
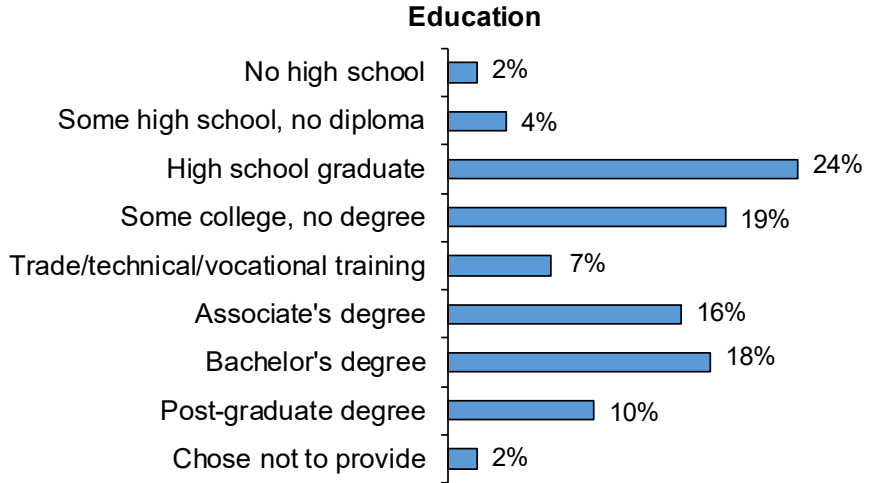
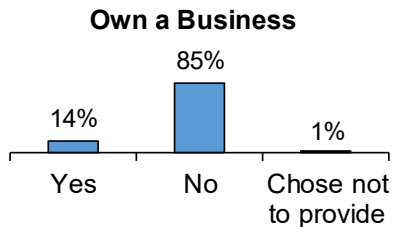
Survey participants were asked to self-identify their ethnic or cultural background. Thirty-five percent of survey respondents said that they are Hispanic or Latino, followed by a fourth who said Native American. African Americans comprised 16 percent of survey participants, followed by those who said they are multi-cultural (9%) and Asian Americans (6%). Southeast Asian, Somali and Hmong each had one percent responding. Three percent gave other responses. (See Appendix for listing of other responses.) Five percent chose not to provide their specific culture/race.



Survey respondents possessed the following educational background: high school graduate (24%); some college experience, but no degree (19%); bachelor’s degree (18%); associate’s degree (16%); post-graduate degree (10%); trade, technical or vocational training (7%); some high school but no diploma (4%); and two percent of cultural/racial residents in rural Minnesota said they have never attended high school. Two percent chose not to provide educational information.

Sixty-six percent of those surveyed said that they are employed by others, while fewer noted being self-employed or a farmer (9%). For those not employed, 15 percent noted that they are retired, five percent were a student, four percent each said they are a homemaker or unemployed, and three percent noted that they are unable to work for another reason. Two percent chose not to provide employment information.

Fourteen percent said they own a business of some type.



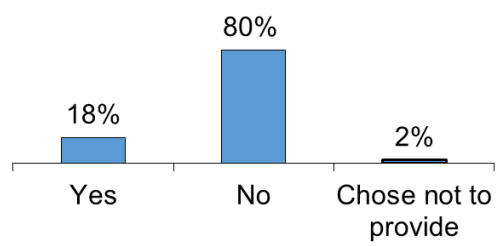
Multiple responses allowed



Forty-one percent cited their household income as \$50,000 or less. Another 28 percent reported their household income to be between \$50,001 and \$100,000, and 14 percent said more than \$100,000. Seventeen percent chose not to provide income information.

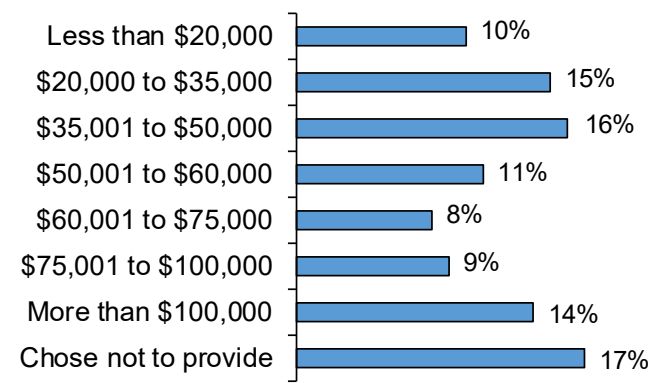
Eighteen percent noted that they have a disability or impairment of some type.

Has a Disability or Impairment

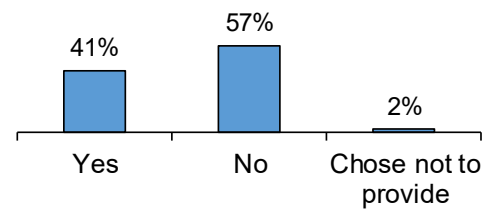


Forty-one percent cited that at least one child 18 years old or younger resides in their household. Another 14 percent said that they have an adult child living in their home that they help financially support.

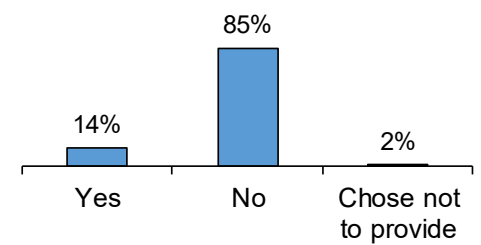
Family Household Income



Minor Children in Household



Adult Children in Household



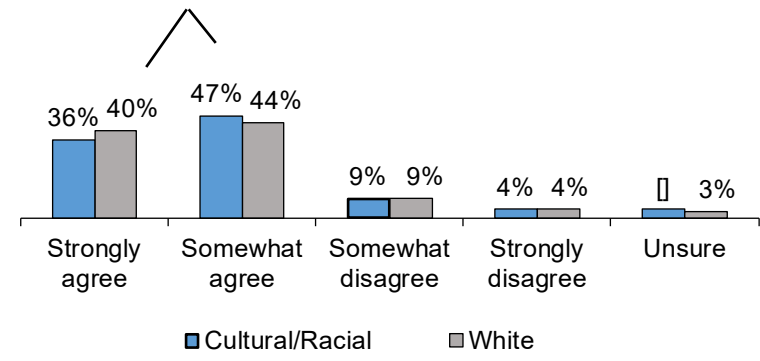


Collaboration and Contribution

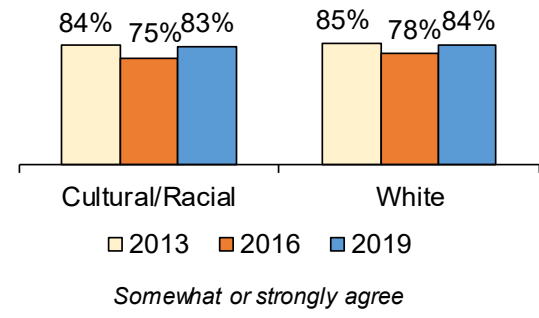
Those interviewed as part of this study were confident about being able to personally make a positive impact on their community. More than eight in 10 (83%) felt they can impact change, while 13 percent did not agree. This was an upswing from 2016 Rural Pulse findings of eight percentage points. Rural White findings were similar.

Residents Like Me Are Able to Make an Impact and Make My Community a Better Place to Live

83% Cultural/Racial vs. 84% White



Residents Like Me Are Able to Make an Impact and Make Community a Better Place to Live



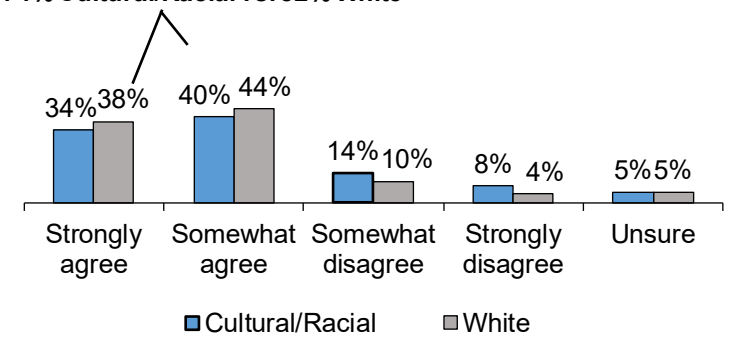


When asked whether they feel local community members work across differences to address local issues, about one in five (22%) said that they feel their community is not collaborative, compared to 74 percent who said that they feel it is – a positive upturn of five percentage points from 2016 study findings.

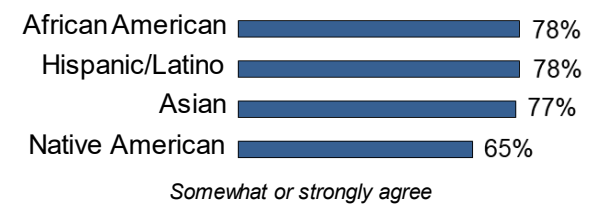
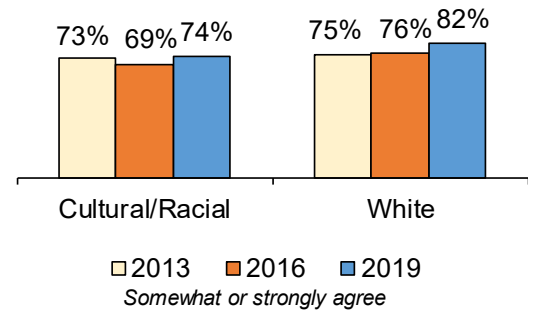
Native Americans were the least likely of those surveyed (65%) to have agreed that residents are able to work together across differences for the betterment of their communities.

Residents are Able to Work Across Differences, such as Ethnicity, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Nationality, to Address Local Issues

74% Cultural/Racial vs. 82% White



Believe Residents are Able to Work Across Differences to Address Local Issues

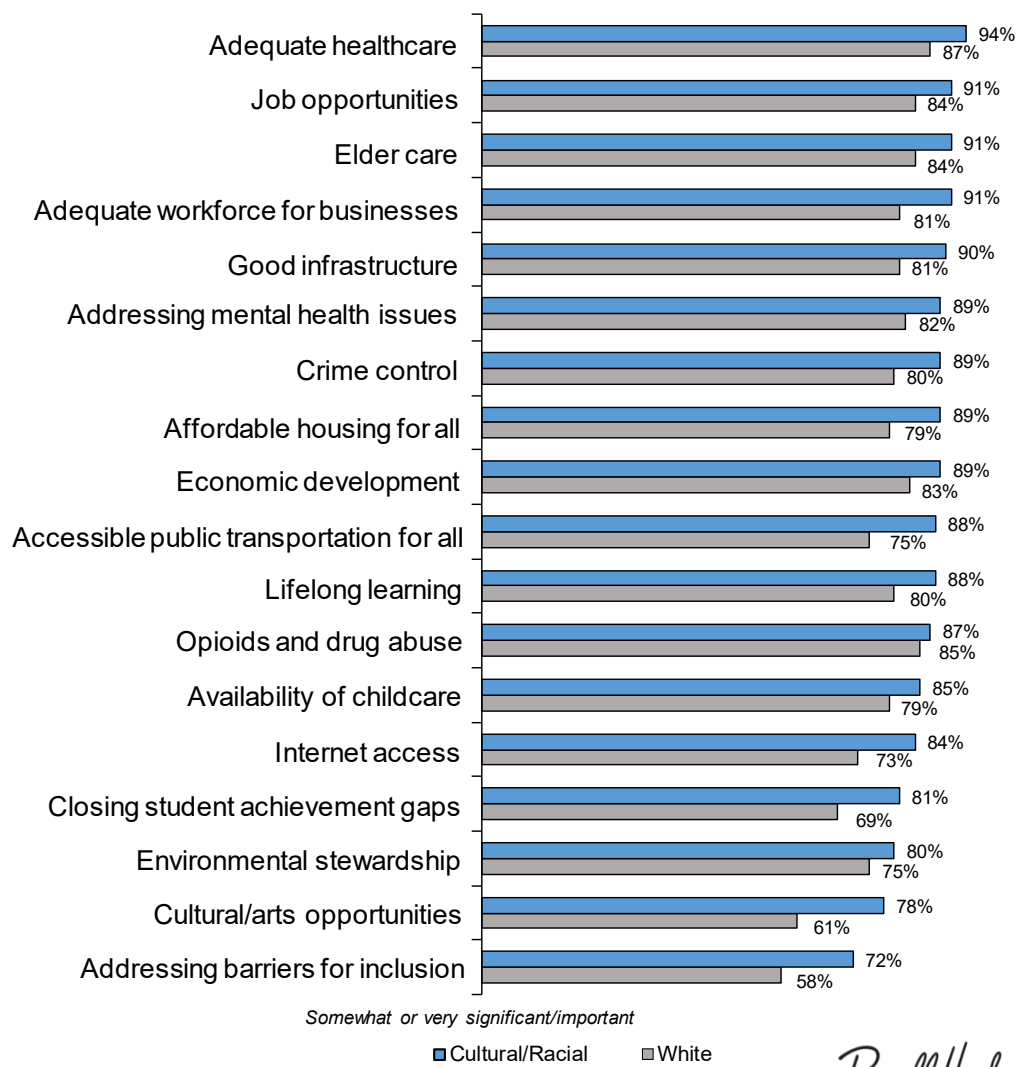




What is Important in Their Communities?

Study participants were given a list of community issues and asked to rate the significance of each. Cultural/racial groups placed higher importance than their White counterparts on every area queried, to varying degrees. The most highly rated areas for participants of this study were healthcare services (94%); jobs, elder care and having an adequate workforce available (91% each); and good roads and other infrastructure (90%). While barriers due to race, gender, religion and other differences, and offering diverse cultural opportunities and the arts, among other areas, had lesser degrees of significance, they were still viewed as highly important within their communities by no less than seven in 10 cultural/racial survey respondents.

How significant or important are the following within your community?





While being provided adequate healthcare services was of main significance for all four cultural groups, there were some differences in which other queried areas were felt to be of top priority amongst those surveyed. African Americans rated having an adequate workforce for businesses, good roads and infrastructure and addressing opioids and drug abuse as their most important issues, following healthcare. Asians placed job opportunities and economic development in dominant spots. Hispanics and Latinos rated jobs, good infrastructure and affordable housing all with equal importance to healthcare. Native Americans felt elder care is a main priority, as well as job opportunities, affordable housing and accessible public transportation.

Issue Importance

	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American
Adequate healthcare	96%	97%	93%	97%
Job opportunities	89%	97%	93%	94%
Elder care	91%	86%	91%	96%
Adequate workforce	93%	87%	89%	90%
Good roads/infrastructure	92%	87%	93%	87%
Addressing mental health issues	88%	89%	90%	93%
Crime control	90%	90%	88%	90%
Affordable housing	88%	84%	93%	94%
Economic development	91%	95%	91%	87%
Accessible public transportation for all	83%	92%	88%	94%
Lifelong learning opportunities	90%	90%	86%	92%
Opioids and drug abuse	92%	84%	85%	91%
Availability of childcare	78%	87%	92%	83%
Internet access	84%	87%	86%	81%
Closing student achievement gaps	85%	82%	81%	88%
Environmental stewardship	80%	87%	80%	81%
Cultural/arts opportunities	78%	84%	74%	87%
Barriers to inclusion	78%	76%	68%	78%

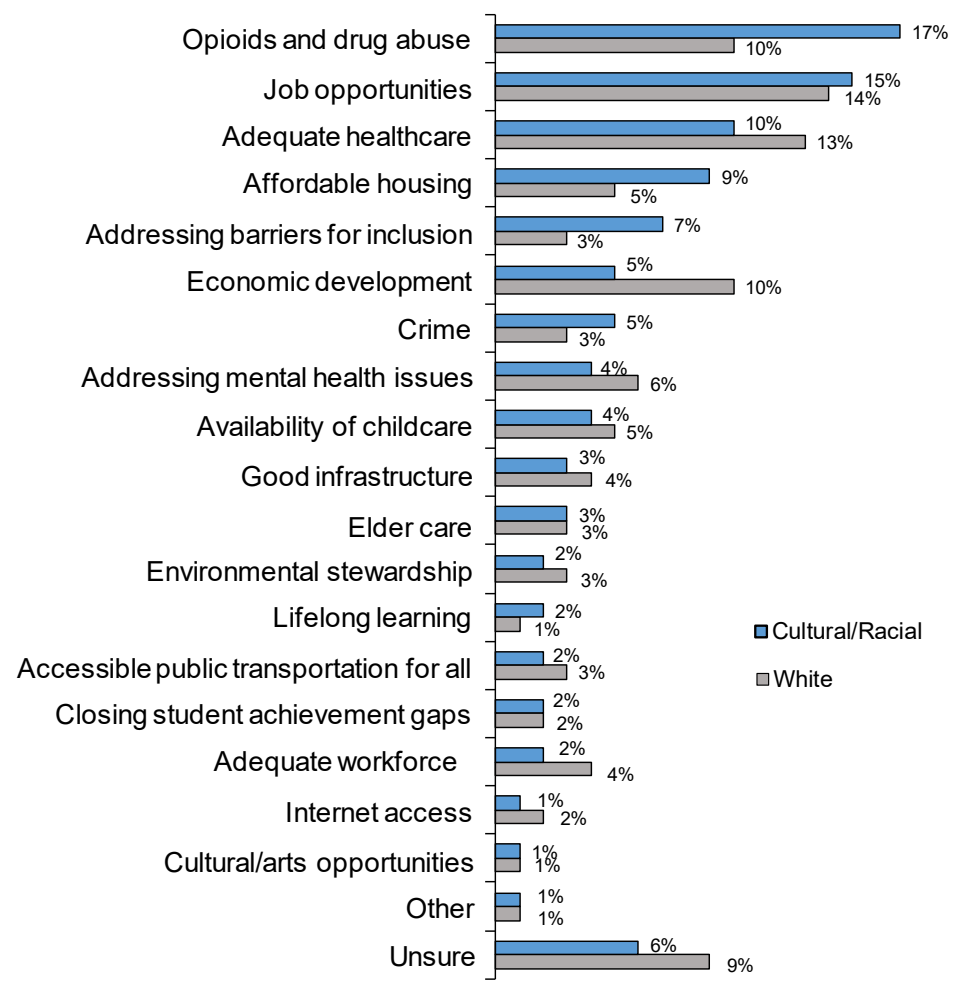
Somewhat or very significant/important

■ Top issues within culture/race



Although all issues queried were considered important for the majority of respondents, participants were asked what one issue was most critical to their community. Addressing opioids and drug abuse was seen as the top priority issue (17%), followed by jobs (15%), healthcare (10%) and affordable housing (9%). These findings differed from their White counterparts, who placed jobs in the number one spot (14%), followed by healthcare (13%), drug abuse and economic development (10% each).

Most Critical to Your Community





While opioids and drug abuse was the top concern for cultural/racial residents overall, Native Americans were by far the most apt to believe that addressing this problem is of utmost priority. African American, Asian and Hispanic survey participants placed the highest concern on job opportunities. Healthcare was also viewed as a top critical issue for Hispanic residents.

Top Four Critical Issues by Race/Culture

	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American
Opioids and drug abuse	15%	8%	8%	30%
Job opportunities	18%	21%	16%	9%
Healthcare	8%	13%	16%	4%
Affordable housing	8%	13%	8%	8%

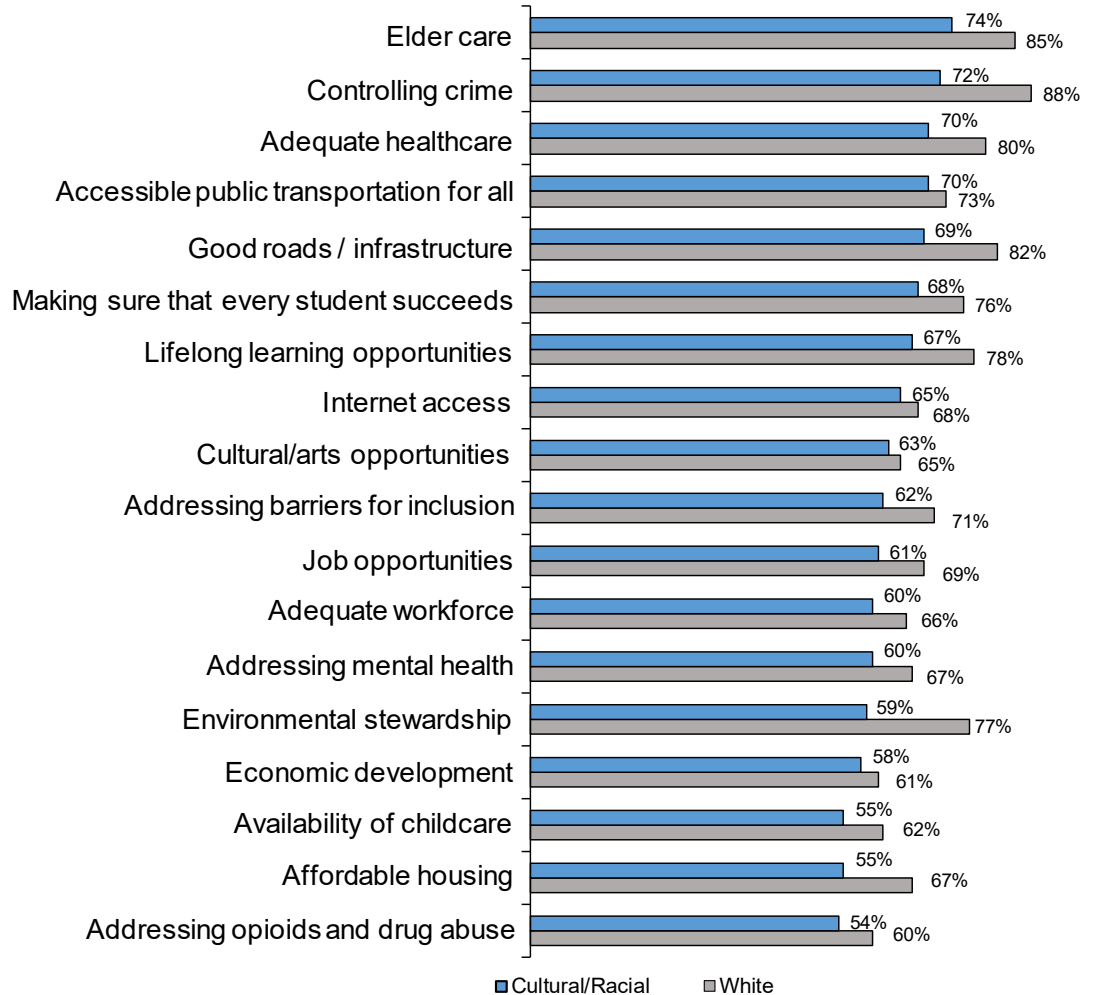
Most critical within culture/race



Community Performance

Study participants were asked if they agree or disagree that their community is doing a good job addressing local issues. Cultural/racial residents had the greatest confidence in their community's performance addressing elder care, crime, rural healthcare and accessible public transportation for all, including the disabled. They were least likely to agree that their community adequately addresses opioids and drug abuse, affordable housing and economic development.

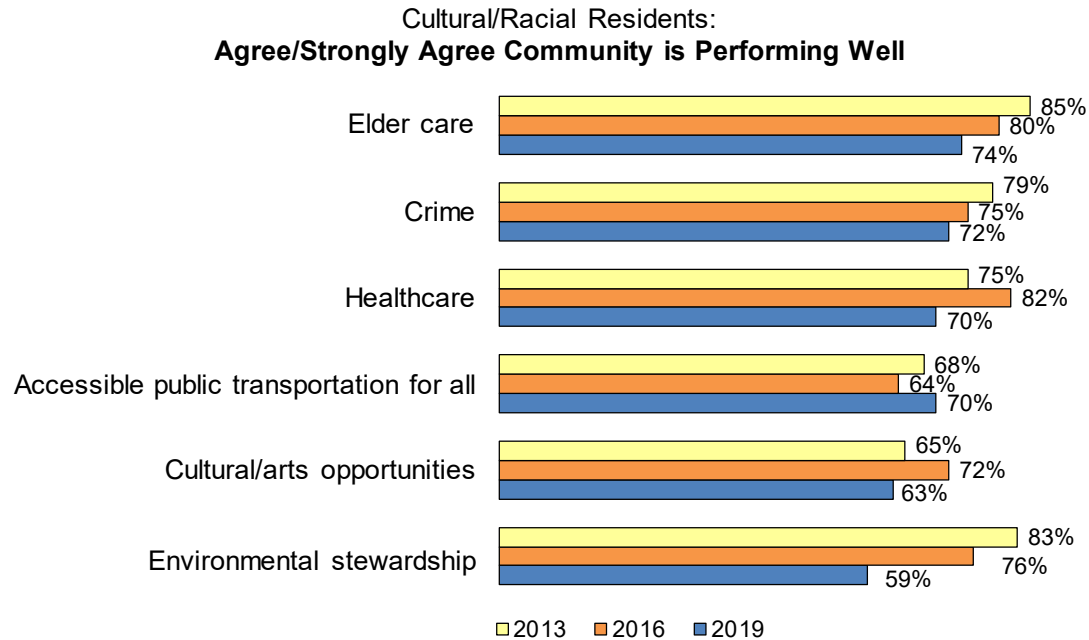
Agree/Somewhat Agree Community is Performing Well



Multiple responses allowed



Community performance has slightly improved since 2013 Rural Pulse findings in the area of providing accessible public transportation, according to cultural/racial residents in rural Minnesota. There have been perceived performance declines over time in other areas, however, including elder care, crime, healthcare, cultural/arts and, particularly, perceptions of local environmental stewardship.



The following pages show the opinions of rural Minnesota residents in greater detail.



Crime Control

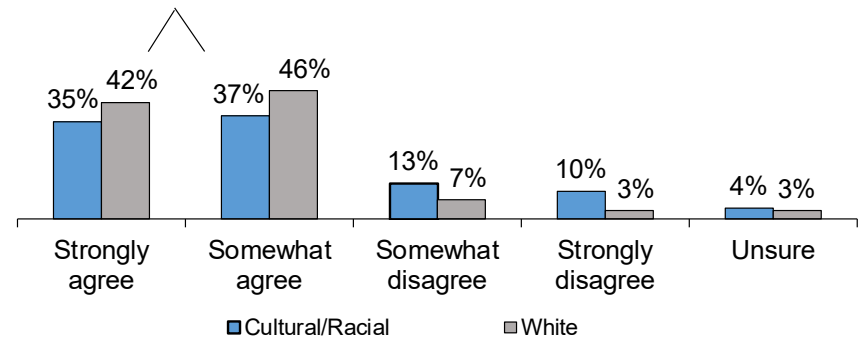
More than seven in 10 (72%) cultural/racial respondents agreed that their community is able to control crime. Twenty-three percent disagreed. Their White counterparts were much more likely to have said crime is dealt with sufficiently (88%).

Caring for Elderly Residents

About three-quarters (74%) of cultural/racial residents in rural Minnesota said that they have confidence in the elder care their communities provide, while 21 percent did not agree.

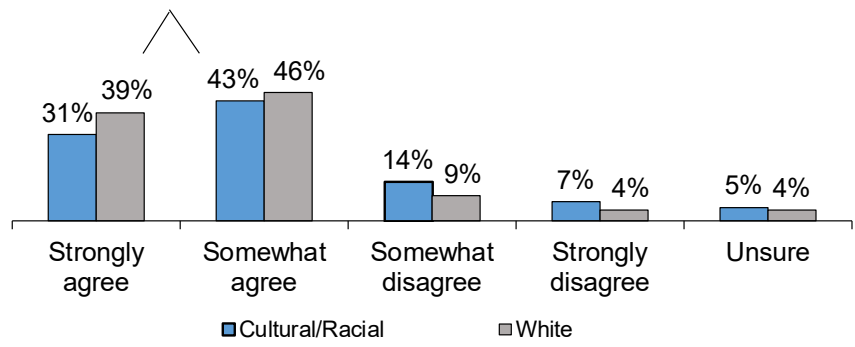
Community Does a Good Job Controlling Crime

72% Cultural/Racial vs. 88% White



Community Does a Good Job Caring for the Elderly

74% Cultural/Racial vs. 85% White





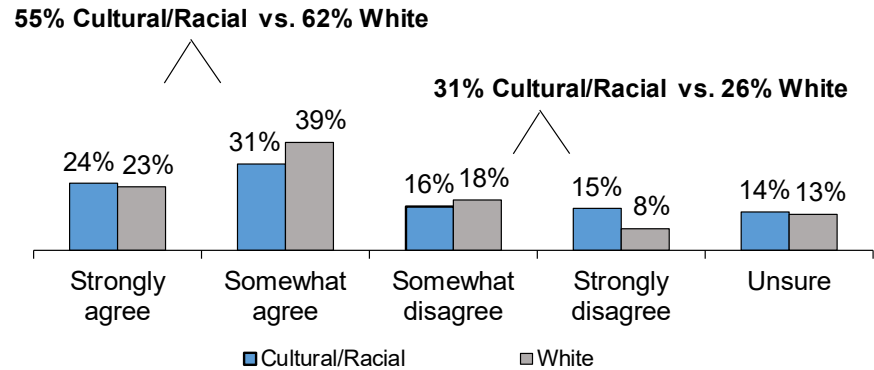
Childcare

Slightly more than half (55%) of cultural/racial survey participants – and 62 percent of Whites – felt that their community is doing a good job of providing childcare. Thirty-one percent did not agree; 14 percent were unsure.

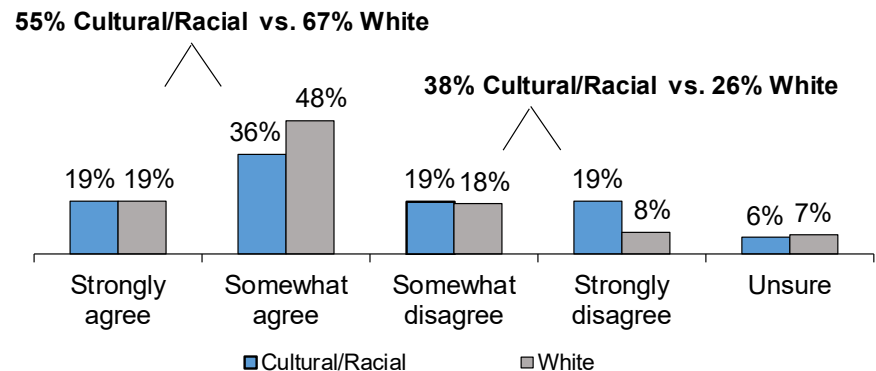
Housing

Similarly, affordable housing was seen as lacking in local communities, with 38% of cultural/racial residents – and 26% of Whites – believing such is not sufficient. Some 55 percent of cultural/racial groups – and 67 percent of Whites – in rural Minnesota felt affordable housing is available.

Community Provides Availability of Childcare



Community Ensures Affordable Housing for All





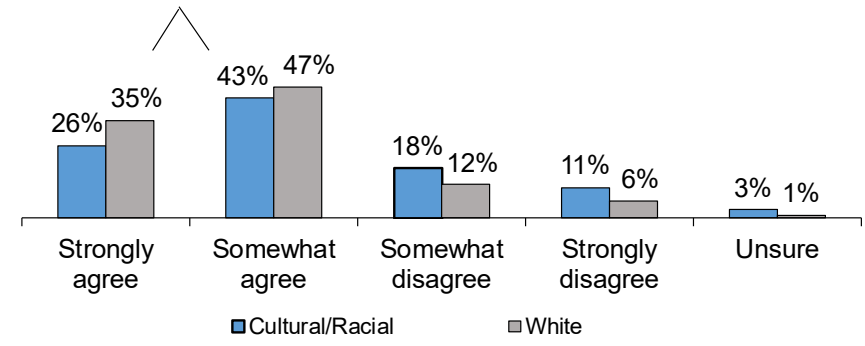
Roads and Transportation

Seven in 10 (69%) rural cultural/racial Minnesotans – and 82 percent of Whites – agreed that their community ensures good roads and other infrastructure. Some 29 percent disagreed.

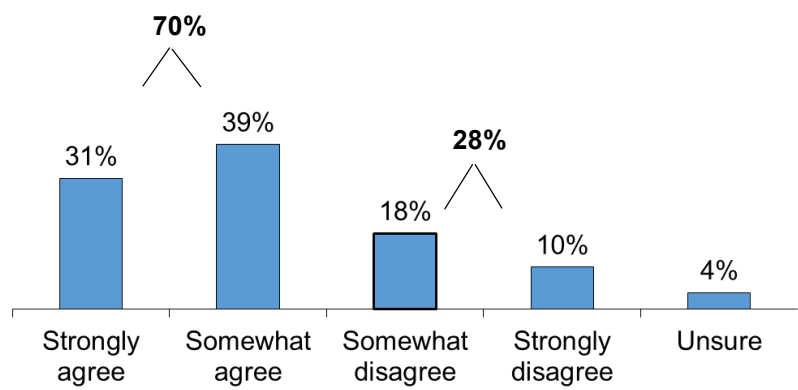
When asked if they felt their community provides accessible public transportation for all, including the disabled, 28 percent did not agree. Seven in 10 (70%) believed that their community provides adequate transportation opportunities.

Community Ensures Good Roads and Other Infrastructure

69% Cultural/Racial vs. 82% White



Cultural/Racial Residents: Community Provides Accessible Public Transportation for All, Including the Disabled



Rural White residents had similar responses



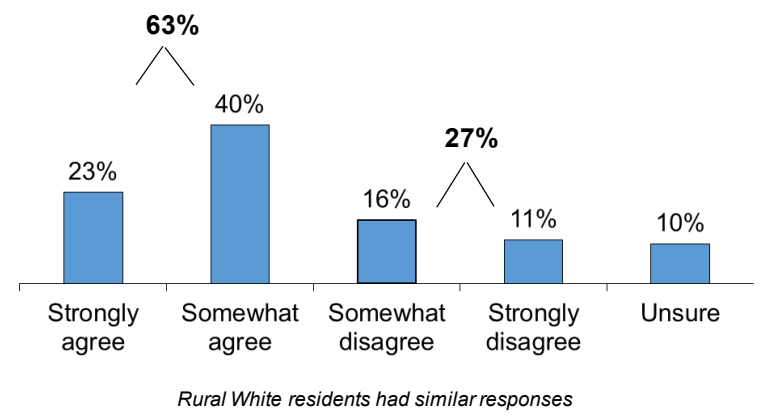
Culture and the Arts

The community's performance in providing diverse cultural and arts opportunities was a concern for about one in four cultural/racial residents (27%). Sixty-three percent felt local needs are being met; 10 percent were unsure. Results were similar for their rural White counterparts.

The Environment

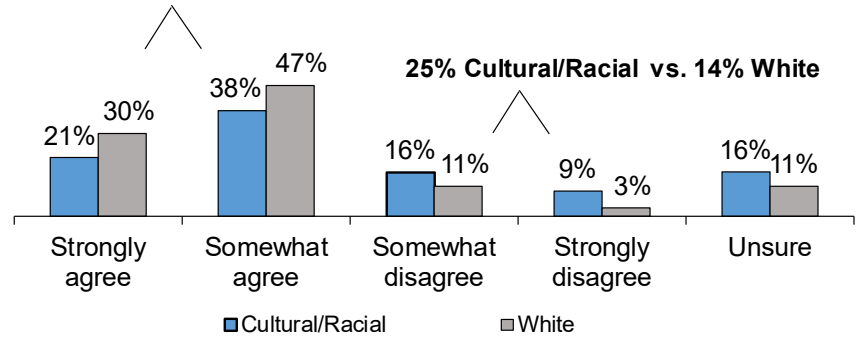
Only three in five (59%) said that they believe their community is a good environmental steward, 18 percentage points lower than rural White residents. One in four (25%) did not agree; 16 percent were unsure.

Cultural/Racial Residents:
Community Provides Diverse Cultural Opportunities and the Arts



Community is a Good Steward of the Environment

59% Cultural/Racial vs. 77% White



25% Cultural/Racial vs. 14% White



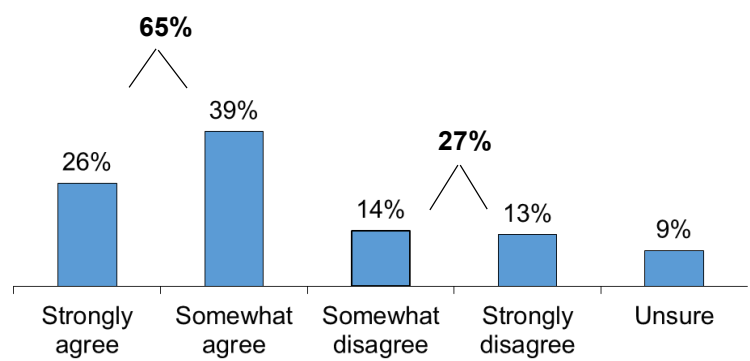
Internet Access

About two-thirds (65%) felt their community does a commendable job at improving access to the internet. Twenty-seven percent disagreed. White residents had similar results.

Education

About two-thirds (67%) of cultural/racial community members – and 78 percent of rural Whites – believed their community provides lifelong learning opportunities. Twenty-three percent disagreed; 10 percent were unsure.

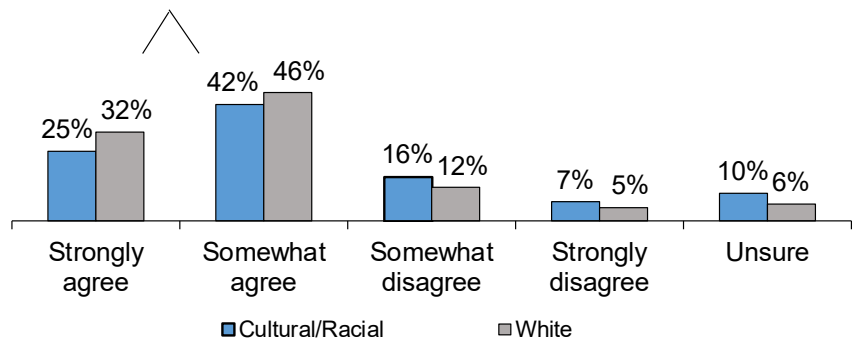
Cultural/Racial Residents:
Community is Improving Access to the Internet



Rural White residents had similar responses

Community Provides Lifelong Learning Opportunities

67% Cultural/Racial vs. 78% White





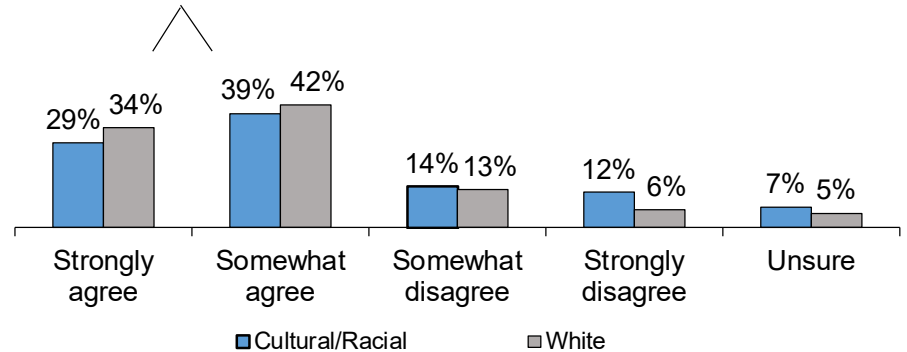
Similarly, 68 percent of cultural/racial survey participants – and 76 percent of their White counterparts – believed their community makes sure that every student in their community succeeds. About one in four (26%) disagreed; seven percent were unsure.

Healthcare

Seven in 10 (70%) rural Minnesotans with a cultural/racial background – and eight in 10 Whites – felt that their community provides adequate healthcare services to residents, while 24 percent did not feel that this is the case.

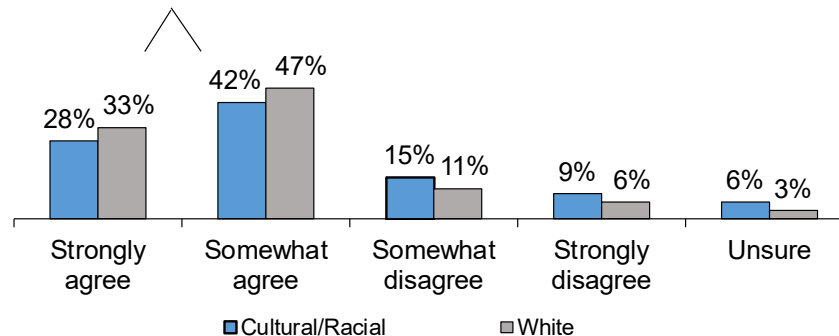
Community Makes Sure Every Student Succeeds

68% Cultural/Racial vs. 76% White



Community Provides Adequate Healthcare Services

70% Cultural/Racial vs. 80% White

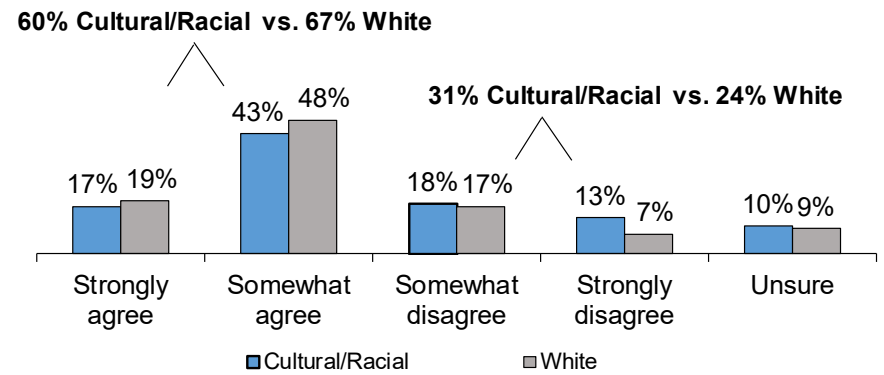




Mental Health

New to this year’s Rural Pulse survey was asking rural Minnesotans how well they feel their local community addresses mental health issues, including suicide prevention. Six in 10 individuals within the cultural/racial study – and 67 percent of Whites – felt that their community effectively provides for mental health needs, while 31 percent did not feel that this is the case. Another 10 percent were unsure.

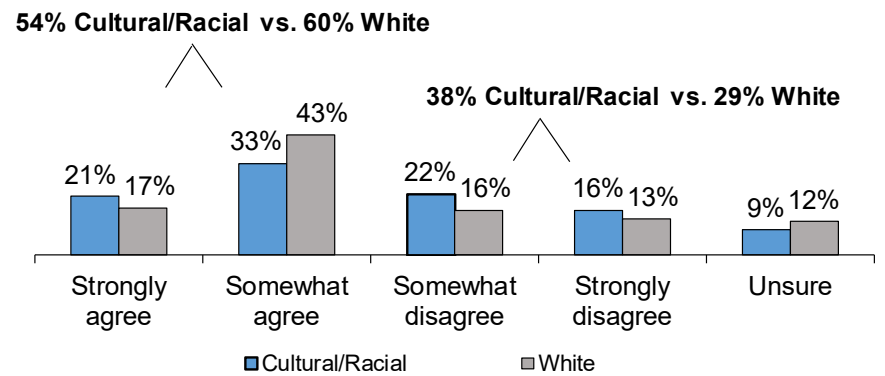
Community Addresses Mental Health Issues, Including Suicide



Opioids and Drug Abuse

Also new in 2019, Minnesotans in rural areas were asked if they feel their community adequately addresses opioids and drug abuse. Only 54 percent of cultural/racial residents – and six in 10 Whites – believed that their community is doing well in this area, while 38 percent did not agree. Another nine percent were unsure.

Community Addresses Opioids and Drug Abuse





Community Performance by Cultural/Racial Group

Community performance ratings varied significantly between different cultural communities. Notably, Native Americans gave the lowest grades to their local communities in nearly all service areas queried, compared to other groups analyzed. Availability of childcare and affordable housing were rated as the lowest-performing areas for Native American respondents. Hispanics and Latinos felt their local areas highly underperform when it comes to addressing opioids and drug abuse, and availability of childcare. African American residents gave the least satisfactory grades for addressing opioids and drug abuse, and environmental stewardship. Respondents of Asian descent were the most unsatisfied with their communities' response to opioids and drug abuse, and providing affordable housing.

Agree Community Performs Well

	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American
Elder care	79%	73%	82%	57%
Healthcare	68%	81%	79%	60%
Controlling crime	87%	76%	84%	49%
Accessible public transportation for all	65%	68%	76%	62%
Good roads and infrastructure	67%	68%	76%	57%
Making sure every student succeeds	74%	74%	77%	47%
Lifelong learning opportunities	65%	69%	74%	58%
Internet access	67%	71%	72%	51%
Cultural/arts opportunities	63%	58%	67%	61%
Inclusion	66%	63%	67%	47%
Addressing mental health	65%	60%	64%	53%
Environmental stewardship	57%	58%	72%	45%
Availability of childcare	61%	56%	63%	32%
Affordable housing	62%	55%	64%	36%
Opioids and drug abuse	56%	47%	62%	48%

Strongly or somewhat agree

Lowest agreement within culture/race



Importance Versus Satisfaction

Study participants expressed significant concern that their communities are not meeting expectations – particularly regarding drug abuse, mental health issues, affordable housing, economic development, adequate healthcare, job opportunities and childcare availability.

Cultural/Racial Residents: Importance vs. Satisfaction

	Importance Mean	Performance Mean	Difference
Opioids and drug abuse	3.6	2.7	-9
Addressing mental health	3.6	2.7	-9
Affordable housing	3.5	2.6	-9
Economic development	3.5	2.7	-8
Healthcare	3.7	2.9	-8
Job opportunities	3.6	2.8	-8
Availability of childcare	3.5	2.7	-8
Elder care	3.7	3.0	-7
Adequate workforce	3.5	2.8	-7
Crime	3.6	3.0	-6
Public transportation for all	3.5	2.9	-6
Good infrastructure	3.5	2.9	-6
Closing student achievement gaps / making sure every student succeeds	3.5	2.9	-6
Environmental stewardship	3.4	2.8	-6
Lifelong learning opportunities	3.4	3.0	-4
Internet access	3.3	2.9	-4
Cultural/arts opportunities	3.2	2.8	-4
Inclusion	3.2	2.8	-4

Importance vs. satisfaction of performance
4 = High, 1 = Low



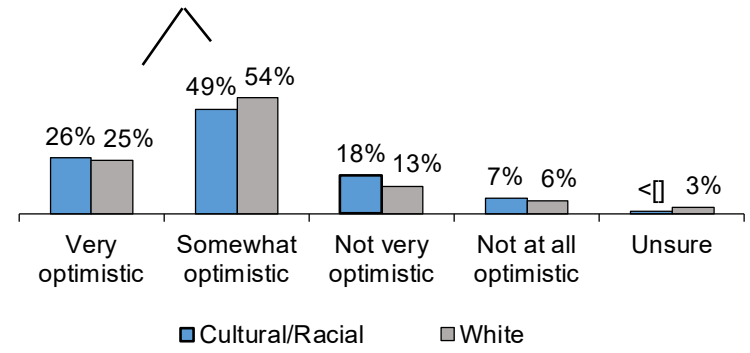
Optimism Exists About Rural Quality of Life

When asked how optimistic they feel about their community's future, three-quarters (75%) of cultural/racial respondents – and 79 percent of their rural White counterparts – felt positive.

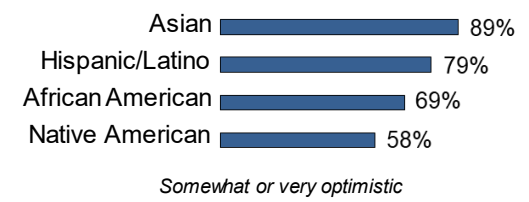
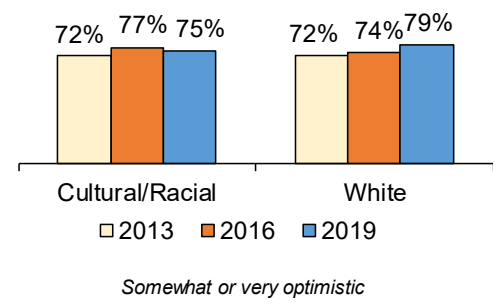
Asian Americans in rural Minnesota were the most optimistic about their communities' future (89%), while Native Americans were less likely to agree (58%).

Optimism About Future of Their Community

75% Cultural/Racial vs. 79% White



Optimistic About Future of Their Community

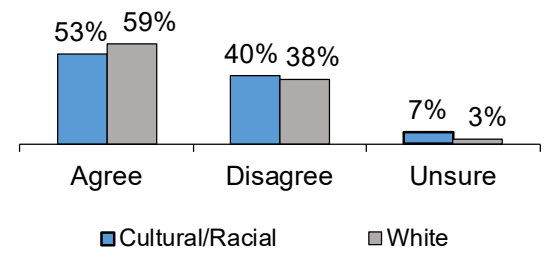




Rural Voice

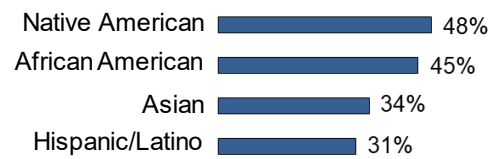
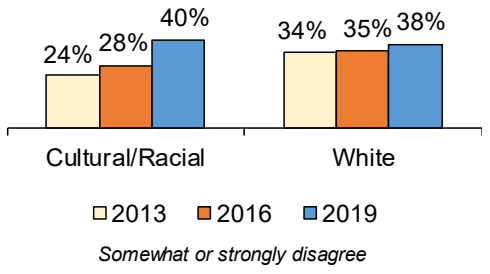
Rural Minnesotans indicated concern about the priority placed upon their interests. When asked if the needs and well-being of rural Minnesota communities are as important to legislators and policymakers as those of metropolitan cities, about two in five (40% cultural/racial, 38% White) felt that they are not – a continued, significant decrease in confidence since 2013 study findings, particularly amongst cultural communities. Only about half (53%) were satisfied that their voice is being heard; seven percent were unsure.

Needs and Well-being of Rural Communities are as Important to Legislators and Policymakers as Metropolitan Areas



Native Americans and African Americans were the least likely to feel rural needs are a significant concern to legislators and policymakers (48% and 45% in disagreement).

Disagree Needs and Well-Being of Rural Communities are Important to Legislators and Policymakers



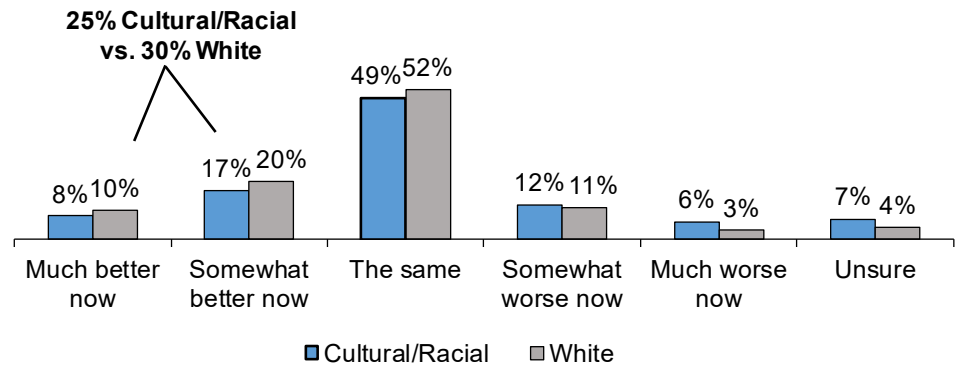
Somewhat or strongly disagree



Economic Optimism is Fluctuating

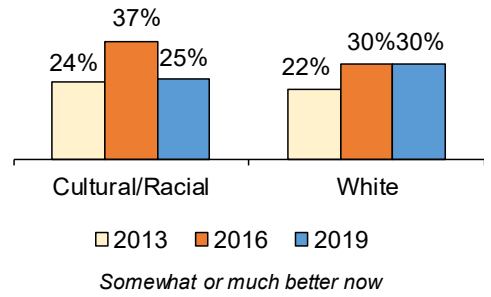
Rural survey participants were asked to gauge the condition of their community's economy now as compared to a year ago. One in four (25%) cultural/racial community members – and 30 percent of Whites – said that they believed it had improved. About half felt it stayed the same (49% and 52% respectively). Eighteen percent (and 14% Whites) indicated that their local economy had regressed over the last year. While that number remained steady for rural White since 2016 study findings, this represented a 12 percentage point regression for cultural community groups overall.

Condition of Local Economy Compared to One Year Ago

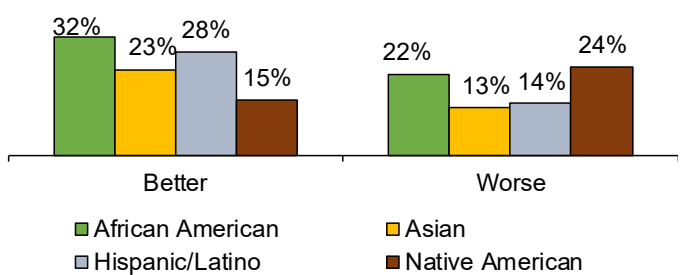


African Americans (32%) were the most likely to have cited a positive economic upturn compared to a year ago. Native Americans were – significantly – the least likely to have agreed.

Believe Local Economy is Better Compared to One Year Ago



Condition of Local Economy Compared to One Year Ago



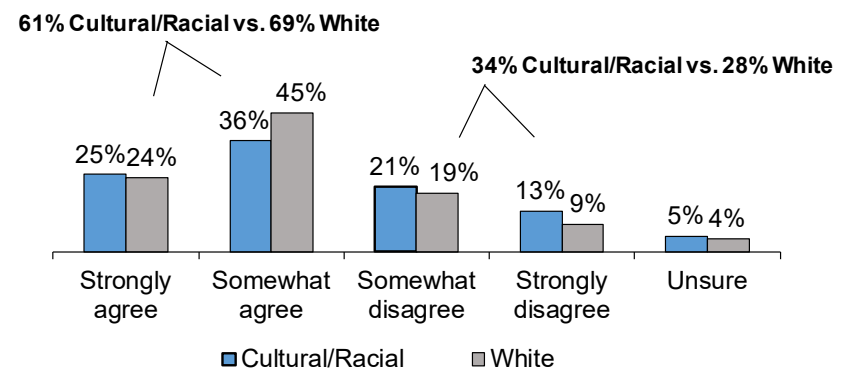


Jobs are Still a Concern, Particularly for Native Americans

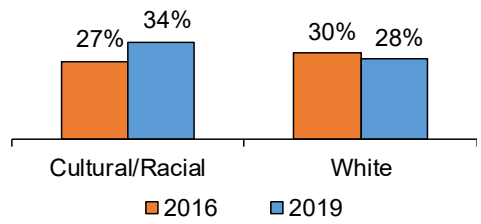
About six in 10 (61%) study participants – and 69 percent of Whites – believed that their community maintains and grows existing job opportunities, an increase of seven percentage points since 2016 study findings. A third (34%) disagreed.

Native Americans surveyed were the most likely to be concerned about the lack of existing jobs (49%). One in four Hispanic respondents (25%) felt jobs are scarce.

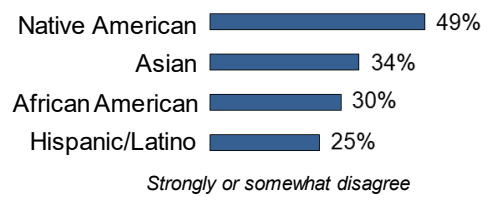
Community Successfully Maintains and Grows Job Opportunities



Disagree that Community Successfully Maintains and Grows Existing Job Opportunities



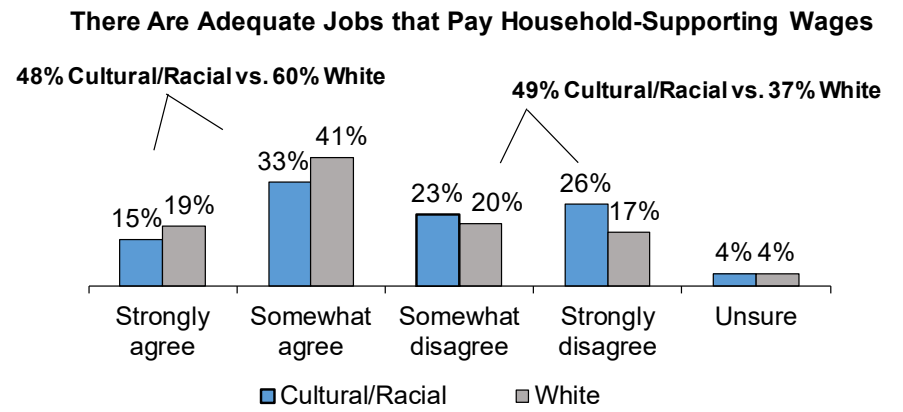
Strongly or somewhat disagree



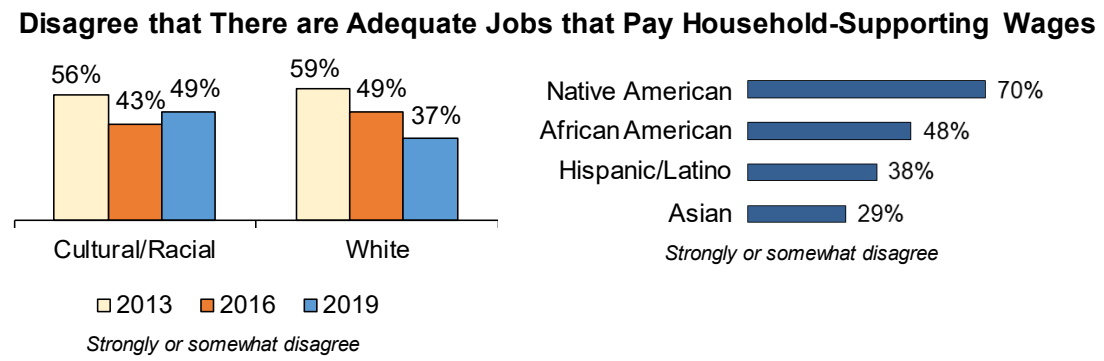
Strongly or somewhat disagree



While the belief that there are sufficient living-wage jobs increased for rural Whites, the number slightly decreased from Rural Pulse 2016 for cultural/racial respondents. About half (48%) of cultural/racial respondents surveyed – and 60 percent of Whites – felt there are jobs that pay a living wage available within their local communities. Another half (49%) – and 37 percent of Whites – felt household-supporting job opportunities are deficient.



Again, Native Americans were highly concerned about the lack of adequate-paying jobs (70%). Asian (29%) and Hispanic (38%) respondents were by far the least likely to feel living-wage jobs are lacking.

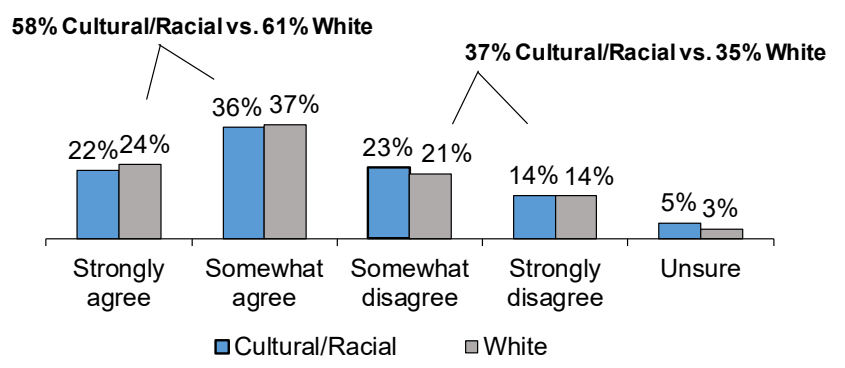




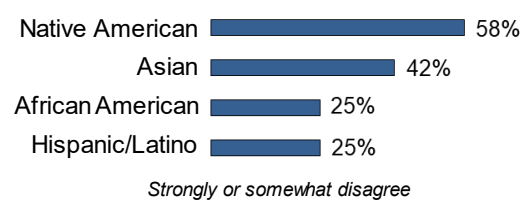
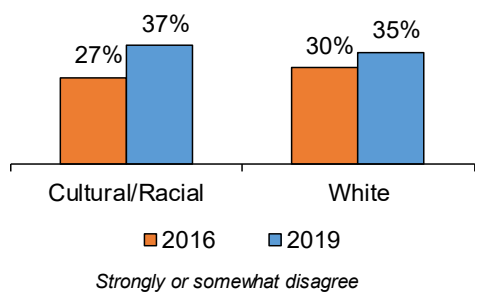
More than a third of rural Minnesotans (37% cultural/racial, 35% White) believed that their community does not do enough to support economic growth through entrepreneurship and attracting new businesses, which shows even less confidence than 2016 Rural Pulse findings. Fifty-eight percent and 61 percent, respectively, felt positive about their community's economic development efforts.

Native Americans (58%) were the least likely to feel that there is sufficient economic development in their local community.

Community Provides Economic Development
(Supporting entrepreneurship and attracting new businesses)

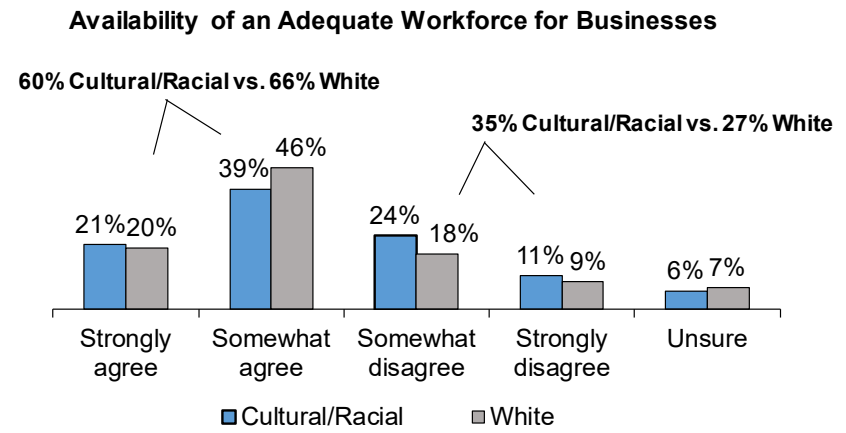


Disagree that Community Sufficiently Provides Economic Development

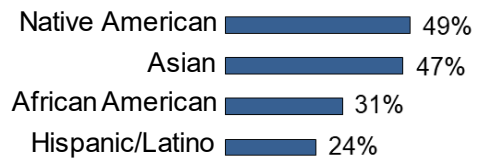




New to Rural Pulse 2019, survey participants were asked if they feel their community has an adequate workforce available. About three in 10 rural Minnesotans (35% cultural/racial, 27% White) believed that there are not enough workers to assist the needs of local businesses. About six in 10 (60% cultural/racial, 66% White) felt their communities have a sufficient labor pool.



Disagree That There is an Adequate Workforce



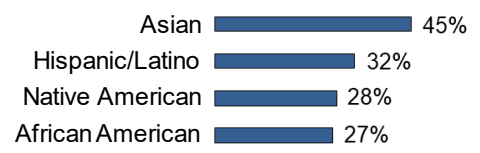
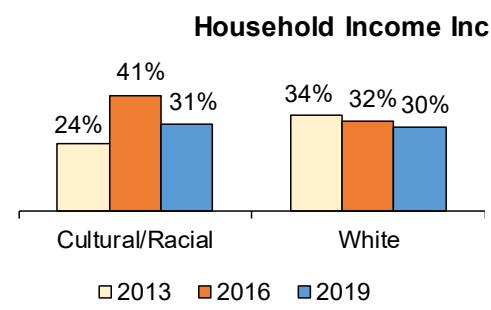
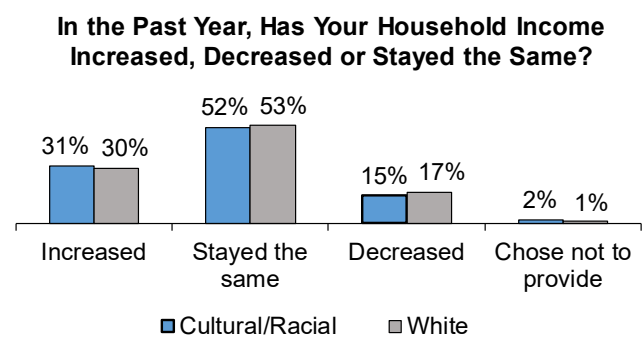
Strongly or somewhat disagree



Impact of the Economy on Families

Three in 10 rural Minnesotans (31% cultural/racial, 30% White) noted that their household income has increased over the past year – a decline from 2016 study findings, particularly for cultural/racial respondents. Some rural households are still coping with a decrease in wages (15% cultural/racial, 17% White). About half said their household income did not change within the past 12 months.

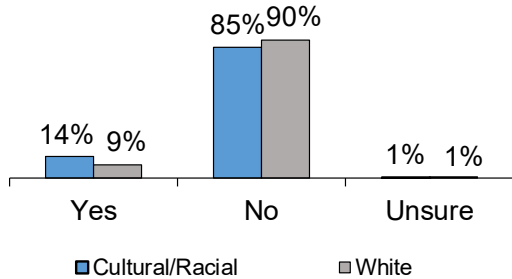
Asian (45%) and Hispanic (32%) communities were the most likely to have said their household saw an increase in income.



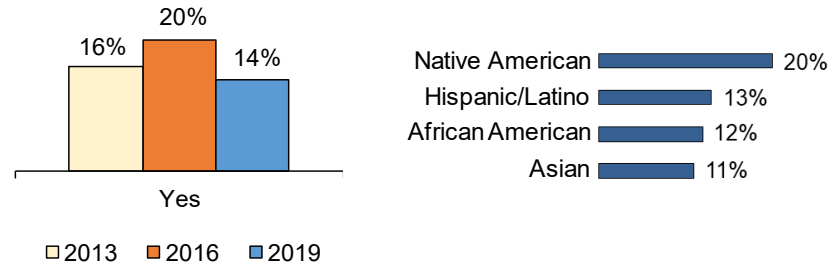


Job loss impacted 14 percent of cultural/racial residents – and nine percent of Whites – within the last 12 months. That was a six percentage point improvement over 2016 survey findings. Native Americans (20%) were the most likely to have said someone in the household lost their job.

Household Job Loss in Past Year



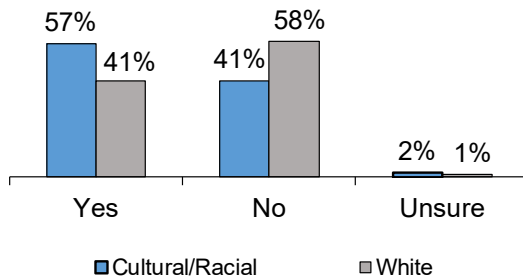
**Cultural/Racial Residents:
Someone in Household Lost a Job Over Past Year**



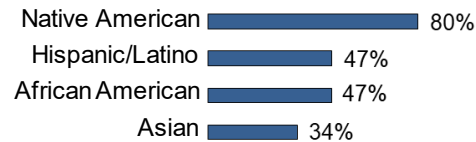
Another new question to the Rural Pulse study this year was whether residents had ever experienced poverty. Nearly six in 10 (57%) rural cultural/racial respondents said they have at some point in their life; 41 percent said that they had not. [Note: Definition of poverty was left to personal interpretation.]

Notably, four in five Native American survey respondents said they have, or are currently, experiencing poverty. Asian Americans (34%) were the least likely to have said they have endured such.

Ever Experienced Poverty



Have Experienced Poverty



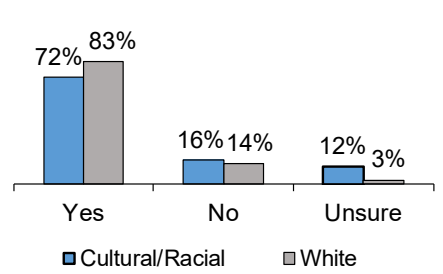


Migration

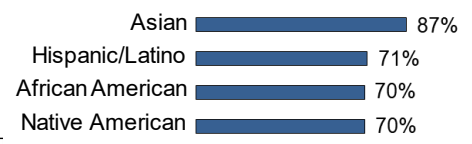
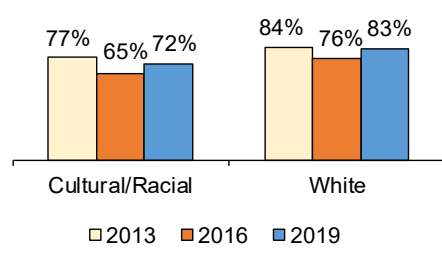
Some 16 percent of rural cultural/racial study participants said that they do not expect to be living in their current community five years from now, a decline from 2016 study findings. Although, another 12 percent were unsure.

Those of Asian heritage (87%) were the most likely to have said they expect to stay in their current community long-term.

Expect to Live in Same Community Five Years From Now

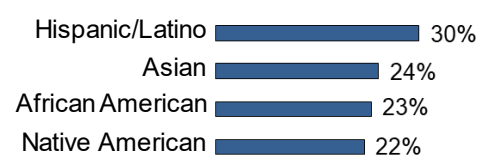


Expect to Live in Same Community Five Years From Now

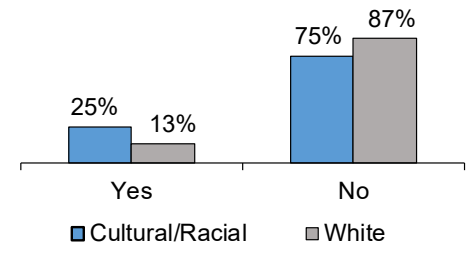


One in four (25%) areas indicated that they have considered leaving their community for a metro area within the past two years, nearly twice as many compared to White respondents (13%).

Have Considered Moving to a Metro Area Within Past Two Years



Considered Moving to a Metro Area Within Past Two Years

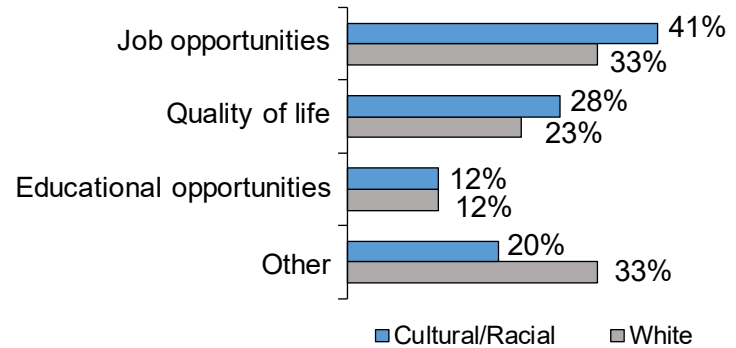




Jobs was the primary reason for migration consideration for rural Minnesotans, which was a shift for cultural/racial community members since 2016 findings, when they placed quality of life as the top focus.

Of those who have contemplated a move, two in five (41%) cultural/racial group respondents, compared to 33 percent of their White counterparts, said it would be to pursue job opportunities. Quality of life was cited as the primary factor for 28 percent. Educational opportunities was also noted by 12 percent as a consideration for a potential move. Other responses included housing availability, among others. (See Appendix for full listing of other responses.)

Of Those Who Considered a Move to Metro Area, Main Reason for Doing So



Main Reason for Considering a Move to Metro Area

	Cultural/Racial			Caucasian		
	2013	2016	2019	2013	2016	2019
Job opportunities	44%	33%	41%	51%	44%	33%
Quality of life	35%	60%	28%	18%	39%	23%
Educational opportunities	13%	5%	12%	11%	4%	12%

Limited sample size

■ Top response within year



African Americans (59%) and Native Americans (48%) were the most likely to have said job opportunities are a significant motivator for considering a move to a more populated, urban area.

Main Reason for Considering a Move to Metro Area

	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American
Job opportunities	59%	44%	32%	48%
Quality of life	29%	22%	28%	28%
Educational opportunities	0%	11%	15%	14%

Limited sample size

Top response within culture/race

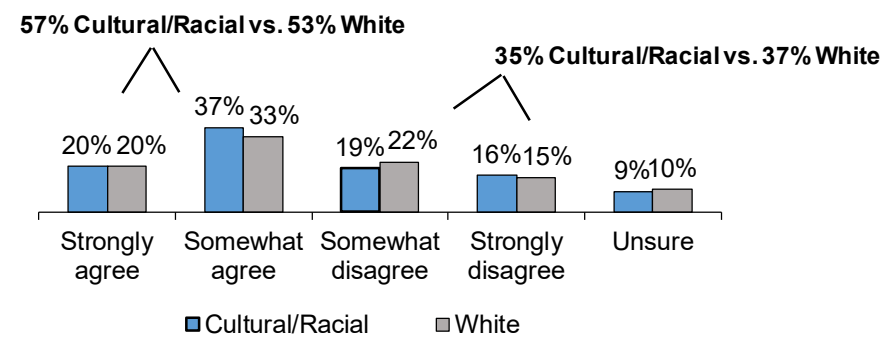


Leadership Composition

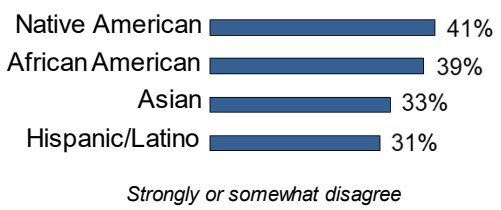
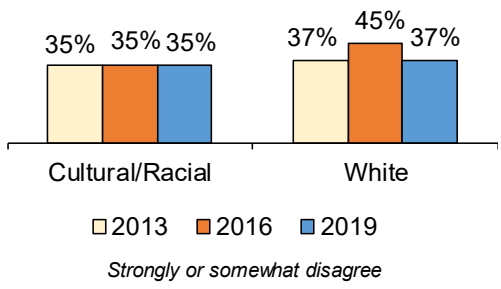
Rural Pulse study findings have remained steady from 2013 to 2019 in cultural/racial communities regarding their opinions about diversity within community leadership roles. More than half believed that local community leadership encompasses people from differing backgrounds; however, many still did not agree (35% cultural/racial, 37% White). One in 10 were unsure.

Native Americans (41%) and African Americans (39%) were the most likely to feel inclusiveness is lacking in leadership.

People from Diverse Backgrounds Fill Leadership Roles Within the Community



Disagree that Leadership Roles are Filled by People from Different Backgrounds

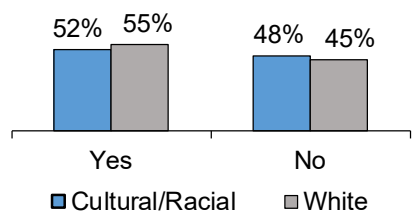




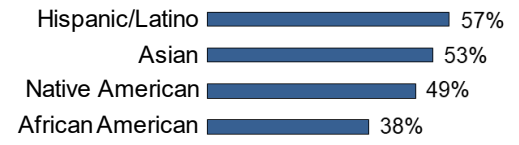
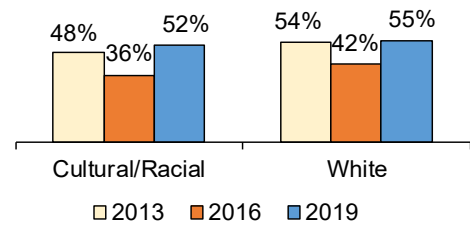
More than half of rural residents (52% cultural/racial, 55% White) said that they have served in a leadership role, whether it be youth sports, city government, a local nonprofit organization or other. This constitutes a significant 16 percentage point increase within cultural/racial groups since 2016 study findings.

Hispanic (57%) and Asian (53%) respondents were the most likely to say that they have served in a leadership role. African Americans (38%) were the least likely to have served in such a capacity.

Served in a Community Leadership Role

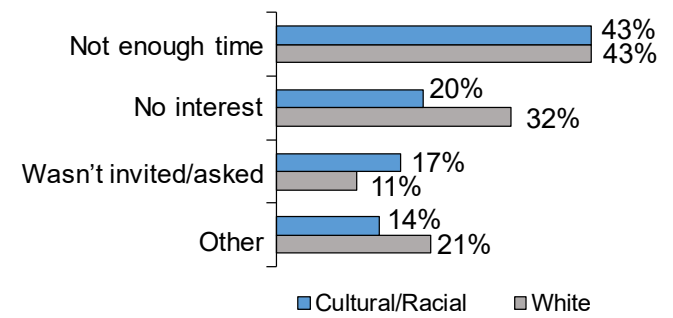


Have Served in a Community Leadership Role



More than two in five (43%) who had not served as a leader said that the primary reason was lack of time. Twenty percent of cultural/racial respondents said they would have no interest in doing such, compared to 32 percent of Whites. Seventeen percent – compared to 11 percent of Whites – noted that they have never been invited to participate as a leader. Another 14 percent gave other reasons such as a being new to the area, among others. *(See Appendix for full listing of other responses.)*

Why Haven't Served in a Leadership Role



Those who have not served; multiple responses allowed



While most who have not served in leadership said that they do not have the time to delegate to such, Asian residents were also the most likely to have said they have no interest in serving. For those responding, by far more Native Americans (31%) noted that they have never been asked or invited to participate in leadership.

Why Haven't Served in a Leadership Role

	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American
Not enough time	41%	33%	44%	42%
No interest	15%	33%	19%	12%
Wasn't invited/asked	13%	22%	4%	31%

Limited sample size
Multiple responses allowed

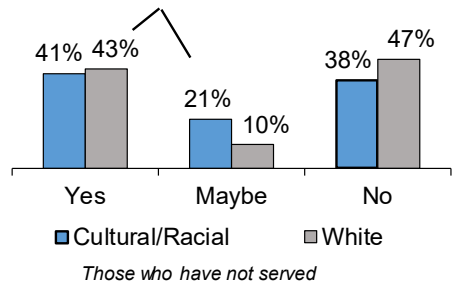
■ Top response within reason

Although many had not served in a leadership role within their community to date, 62 percent of cultural/racial respondents – and 53 percent of Whites – expressed at least some interest in doing so, although openness to consideration declined compared to 2016 study findings. Forty-one percent indicated that they would definitely be interested in an invitation to serve, and another 21 percent said they might consider such an opportunity. Thirty-eight percent said they had no interest.

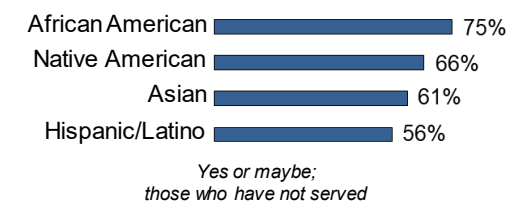
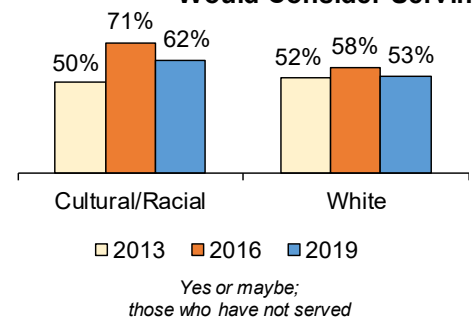
African American survey participants (75%) showed the greatest interest. Hispanics were the least likely (56%).

Would You Consider Serving if Asked?

62% Cultural/Racial vs. 53% White



Would Consider Serving in a Leadership Role if Asked



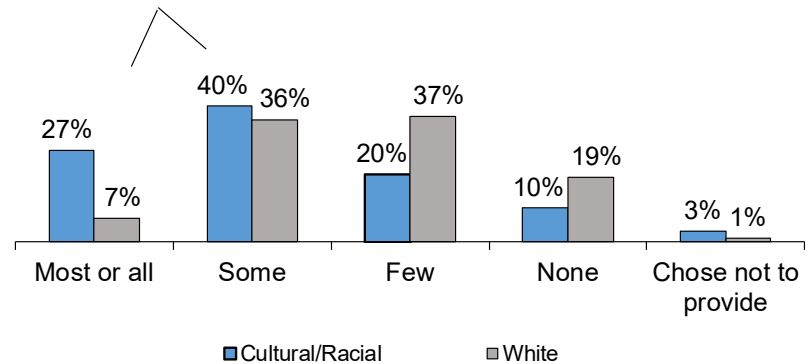


Inclusion

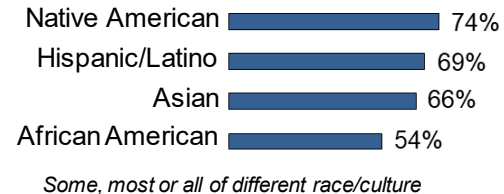
New to the 2019 Rural Pulse were some additional questions specific to inclusion. When asked how many of their close friends are of a different race or culture, two-thirds (67%) of cultural/racial groups within rural Minnesota reported at least some are. That was 24 percentage points higher than responding White residents (43%). Breaking it down further, 27 percent of those said most of their close friends are of a differing race or culture, and 40 percent said some. Another 20 percent said they have a few, while one in 10 said they have no close friends of a different race or culture than themselves (nearly double that of responding Whites at 19%). Three percent chose not to answer the question.

Native Americans (74%), Hispanics (69%) and Asian residents (66%) cited greater diversity in their friendship circle than those of African American descent (54%).

Number of Close Friends of a Different Race or Culture
67% Cultural/Racial vs. 43% White



Have at Least Some Close Friends of a Different Race or Culture

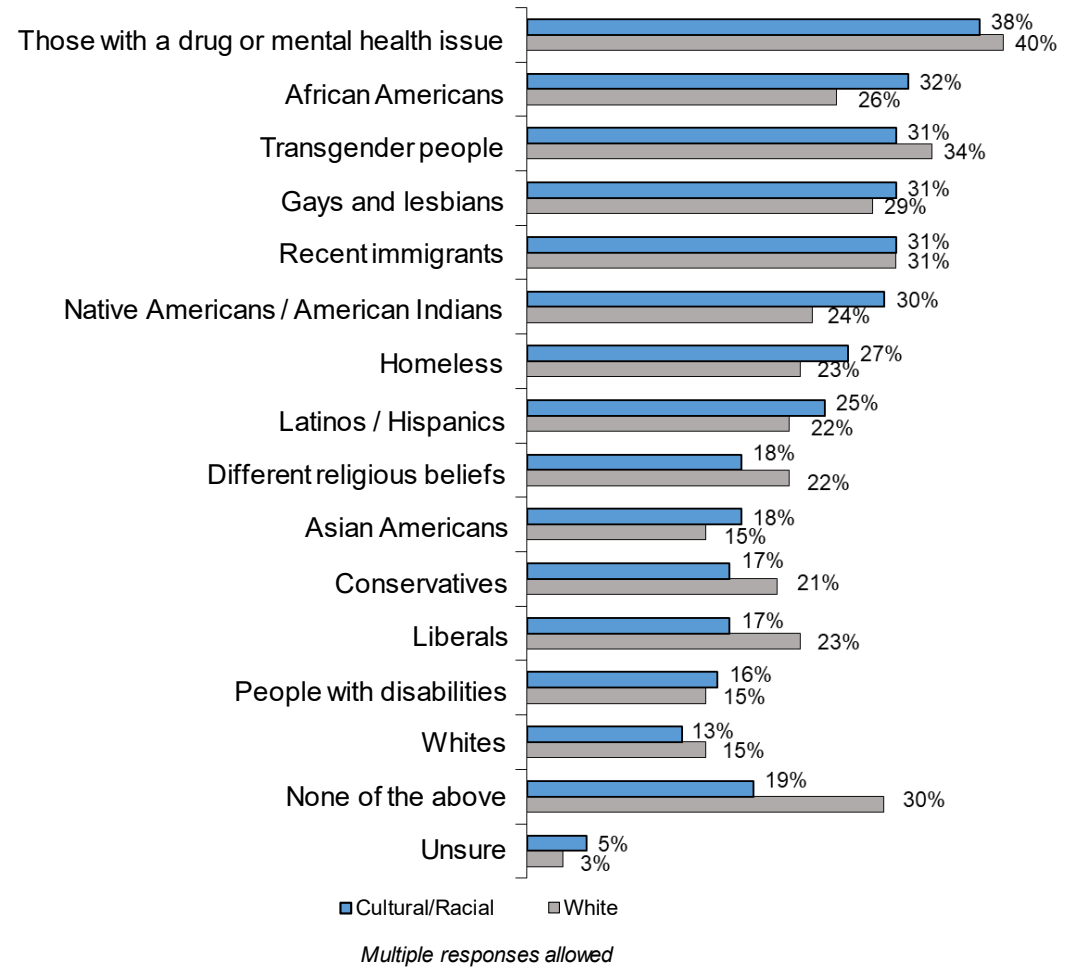




Study participants were asked if any groups of individuals experience discrimination, bias or harassment within their community. About four in 10 (38%) identified those with a drug or mental health issues as experiencing the most negative effects within their community, followed by African Americans (32%); transgender, gay and lesbian individuals, and recent immigrants (31% each), and Native Americans (30%). Five percent were unsure. Top responses for rural Whites included the same groups in a slightly different order.

The most notable differences were that White respondents were less likely than cultural/racial residents overall to feel African Americans (26% and 32% respectively) and Native Americans (24% and 30% respectively) experience discrimination. Overall, White residents were less likely than their cultural/racial counterparts to feel that discrimination or bias amongst any particular group exists, with 30 percent answering none to the question compared to 19 percent of cultural/racial community respondents.

Perceptions of Which Groups May Experience Discrimination, Bias or Harassment in Their Local Community





In comparing the four primary cultural sectors, there were some key differences as well. For instance, African Americans in rural Minnesota felt the most discriminated people in their local community are African Americans and drug addicts/those with mental health issues.

Hispanic residents believed the top groups that experience bias or harassment included Latinos/Hispanics and recent immigrants.

Those with an Asian background were the most likely cultural group to have felt that discrimination is not an issue (29%). Of those who did, those they felt are subjected to discrimination are transgenders and recent immigrants.

Native Americans were the most concerned about discrimination within their local communities. More than half felt drug addicts/those with mental health issues (58%), as well as their own people (53%), experience the greatest bias or harassment.

**Cultural/Racial Residents:
Perceptions of Which Groups May Experience
Discrimination, Bias or Harassment in Their Local Community**

	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Native American
Drug addicts or those with mental health issues	35%	26%	22%	58%
African Americans	37%	26%	25%	40%
Transgender people	34%	37%	23%	39%
Gays and lesbians	27%	34%	24%	43%
Recent immigrants	32%	37%	27%	33%
Native Americans	22%	18%	17%	53%
Homeless	24%	21%	17%	42%
Latinos / Hispanics	19%	18%	28%	27%
Religious beliefs	12%	16%	15%	26%
Asian Americans	10%	26%	17%	21%
Conservatives	10%	16%	17%	16%
Liberals	8%	18%	18%	19%
People with disabilities	12%	18%	12%	24%
Whites	4%	13%	9%	22%
None of the above	20%	29%	23%	11%

Multiple responses allowed

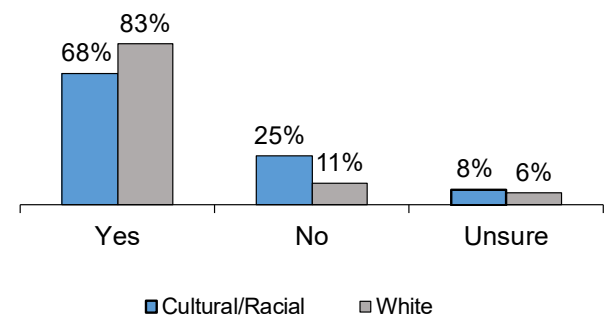
■ Top responses within culture/race



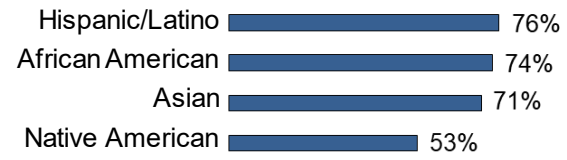
When asked if they feel people in their community are able to stand up to hatred and discrimination if they see it occur, about two-thirds (68%) agreed, compared to 83 percent of Whites. One in four (25%) disagreed; eight percent were unsure.

Hispanics (76%), African Americans (74%) and those of Asian descent (71%) were more likely to believe that people are able to stand up to hatred and discrimination if they see it occur. Native Americans were much less likely to have agreed, with only about half (53%) feeling that such bias is addressed.

Do They Believe People in Their Community are Able to Stand Up to Hatred And Discrimination When They See it Occur?



Believe People in Their Community are Able to Stand Up to Hatred And Discrimination



APPENDIX



Rural Pulse 2019 Survey Other Responses: Cultural/Racial

Leadership Composition

Why have you not served in leadership?

- New to the area – 5
- Didn't think I was smart enough
- Don't need to be in public service to lead
- Felon
- Harder for me being Hispanic
- Health issues
- Homebody
- I live outside the city limits
- I stay quiet
- In the past I have in other communities, but right now it's not possible
- No real place for me to do that
- No reason
- Not social
- Retired
- Something else
- The opportunity never came
- There's no leadership roles for anyone but white people
- I don't know – 2

Migration

What would you say was the main reason you have considered moving?

- All of the above – 3
- Climate/weather – 2
- Housing – 2
- Closer to family
- Curiosity about the city
- Getting married
- Health
- More opportunities with life in the city
- Not enough opportunities for a person of color in this community.
- Opportunities
- The convenience
- We liked the small town, then the city tried to annex us. I went to city council meetings and wasn't happy with that; the rules are never fair.

Demographics

How would you describe your ethnic and cultural background?

Multi-Cultural

- Native American and White – 19
- Asian and White – 3
- Indian and White – 3
- African American and Native American – 2
- African American and White
- Greek and Norwegian
- Latino and White
- Native American and Jewish
- Native American and other



- Diverse
- 50/50
- A lot of things

Other

- American – 8
- Indian – 2
- Hebrew

How would you describe your gender today . . .

- Uncertain mixed