COMMUNITY SURVEY DATA REPORT

May 2021

Prepared by:

United Citizens of Pine Bluff

Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Acknowledgements

Last fall over 50 Pine Bluff citizens came together and held numerous virtual meetings to address our public safety concerns and our desire to improve the quality of life of our city. Through these conversations, "United Citizens of Pine Bluff" was formed. We began gathering data, and held conversations with the mayor and police chief.

United Citizens of Pine Bluff decided that community input was needed and discussed the best method to gather the information. We created a survey for citizens to complete in order to gauge awareness and perceptions of crime, individual experiences with crime, along with expectations and ideas about how to address our challenges moving forward.

The authors would like to thank the many individuals that provided input to and feedback on the survey design and draft report. We would also like to thank the many area leaders and volunteers from organizations including the area law enforcement, mayor's office, city council, and various small businesses for your support.

Executive Summary

This report summarizes data collected from community surveys conducted in Pine Bluff during January and February 2021 as part of the citizens' initiative to improve the safety in Pine Bluff. This survey is for citizens to complete in order to gauge perceptions of crime, along with expectations and ideas about how to address our challenges moving forward.

The 15-minute, voluntary community survey was based on guidance from community members, and community surveys conducted in other areas. The survey was conducted primarily online in English and Spanish. A total of 797 surveys were completed during the 6 week period; 712 online and 85 paper surveys.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The majority of respondents were female, 68.1% (531). About an equal number of respondents were African American 71.1% (552), and White15.3% (119). Most respondents were non-Hispanic 91.7% (709). 55.2% (442) of respondents had no children in the household, 16.7% (128) with one child, and 15.2% (117) with 2 children in the household.

The majority of the ages of participants were 60 and over 34.3% (267), age group 50-59 were 23.1% (180), age group 40-49 18.8% (131), and the remaining percent of surveys were filled out by citizens in the age group 13-39 25.7% (200). 46.5% (351) of respondents were married, single respondents were 38.3% (289), and 15.3% (115) are living with a partner or single.

The majority of citizens who completed the survey have lived in the Pine Bluff community for over 25 years 62.5% (483) and 72.8% (554) of survey participants are home owners. Nearly one third, 40% (301) of survey participants live on the south side of Pine Bluff, west side 36% (231), north side 12.2% (92), and east side 11.8% (89).

The citizens were asked questions about economic demographics; 62.9% (484) of citizens are employed, 37.1% (285) are unemployed, disabled, or retired. 35% (268) of respondents were college graduates.

SAFETY

The citizens were asked questions about safety within the city of Pine Bluff; 54.8% (428) felt safe, 40.2% (314) did not feel safe, while 5% (39) felt very safe within the community. 20.5% (160) did not feel safe at night in their home while 46.5% (465) did feel safe at night in their home. 75.4% (591) citizens did not feel safe walking at night in the community while 20% (157) felt safe. 61.2% (481) citizens felt safe in the daytime in their resilience, while 8.9% (70) did not feel safe. 55.3% (435) felt safe walking in the daytime in their community while 29.9% (235) did not feel safe.

The survey respondents feel the greatest issues in Pine Bluff are gun violence 62.6% (488), gang activity 44.5% (347), and homicide at 47.8% (373).

71.3% (556) Respondents indicated they have changed or limited their activities due to crime within the city. 28.7% (224) noted their activities have not changed due to crime. 80.9% (634) feel that crimes in the city are being committed by youth and adults. The majority of respondents are very concerned about the crime in the city, 71% (561).

PINE BLUFF POLICE DEPARTMENT

The citizens were asked questions regarding the police department; 63.9% (484) felt that the police are responsive to their needs, 36.1% (274) feel that the police are not responsive to their needs. 79.3% (621) noted they would not hesitate to call the police, while 20.7% (162) noted they would hesitate. 71.6% (560) respondents note they have not been a victim of crime in the past 3 years, 23.7% (185) had been victimized and reported it to the police while 4.7% (35) noted they had been a victim of a crime and did not notify the police. 44.1% (343) were neutral in regards to the police showing concern for their rights as a member of the community, 42.2% (328) agree, and 13.8% (107) disagree. 48.1% (374) of the citizens responded neutral that Pine Bluff police are fair when making decisions that affect them, 35.8% (278) agree, while 16.1% (125) disagree. 46.4% (362) of respondents noted that Pine Bluff Police are effective at preventing crime while 39.4% (307) disagree, and 14.2% (111) agree. When asked if they feel Pine Bluff Police are honest and ethical when dealing with citizens 43.9% (340) neutral, 41% (318) agree, and 15.1% (117) disagree. 40.7% (317) responded neutral when asked if they trust the police, 40.4% (314) agree, and 18.9% (147) disagree.

COMMUNITY

The citizens were asked questions about Pine Bluff as a community; 42.4% (329) disagree with the statement Pine Bluff is a great place to raise a family, 34.9% (272) was neutral, and 22.8% (178) agree. 45.6% (355) disagree that Pine Bluff offers a good quality of life, 37.1% (289) neutral, and 17.2% (134) agree. 70% (544) of respondents disagree that Pine Bluff is a clean and attractive community while 24.3% (189) neutral. 71.6% (55) disagree to the statement that Pine Bluff provides multiple activities for citizens of various ages, 17.4% (135) neutral, and 11.1% (86) agree. 39.8% (309) disagree that Pine Bluff leadership is a good reflection of our community, 31.6% (245) are neutral, and 28.6% (222) agree. 40.2% (313) of respondents are proud to live in Pine Bluff while 34.3% (267) are neutral. 34.3% (34) respondents agree the community is improving in providing job opportunities for the residents while 23.2% (23) disagree. 54.1% (418) responded disagreeing with the statement that our schools are improving, 30.1% (233) neutral, and 15.8% (122) agree.

NEXT STEPS

At the end of this report, we have listed priority goals in broad terms and captured suggestions from participants based on the open ended responses of the survey. It is our intent to visit with groups such as the public safety committee, the mayor and full city council, law enforcement agencies, small businesses, school and education officials, social services, mental health counselors, senior citizens, youth groups, clergy and others to work on reasonable and necessary recommendations that will help to reduce gun violence and other crimes and improve public safety and quality of life. This phase of the process will begin in the next few weeks.
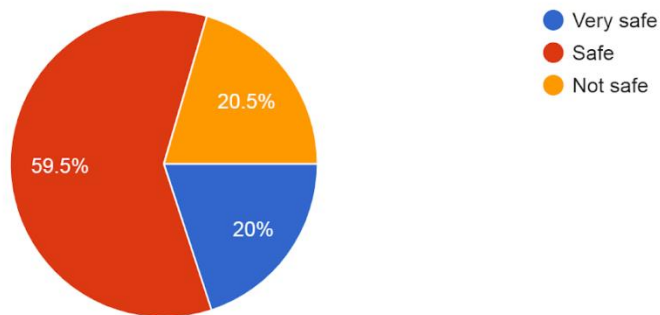
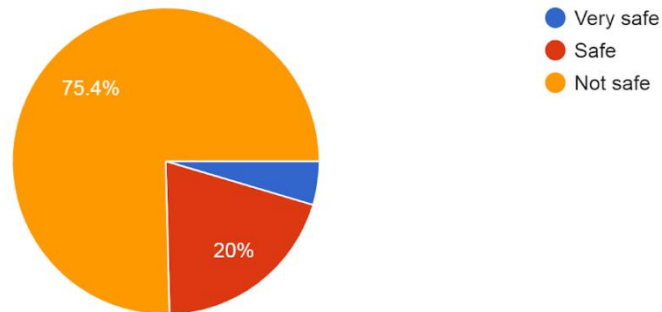# *GRAPHS*

How safe do you feel in Pine Bluff?

781 responses

- ● Very safe
- ● Safe
- ● Not safe

40.2%

54.8%
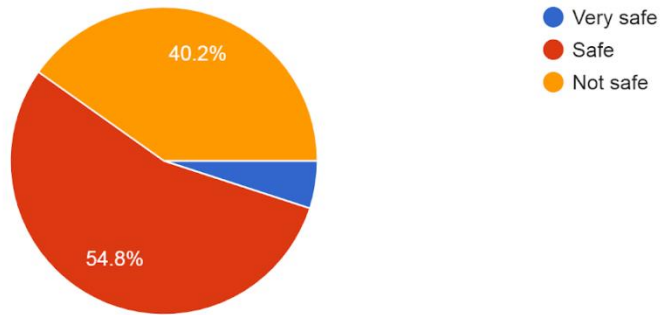
How safe do you feel at night in your home?

781 responses

- ● Very safe
- ● Safe
- ● Not safe

20.5%

59.5%

20%

How safe do you feel walking at night in your community?
784 responses

- Very safe
- Safe
- Not safe

75.4%
20%

How safe do you feel in the daytime in your home?
786 responses

- Very safe
- Safe
- Not safe

61.2%
8.9%
29.9%
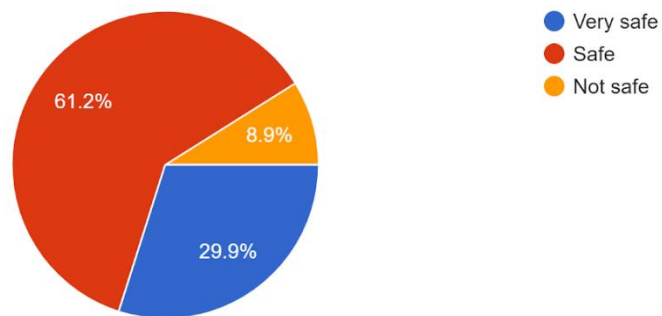
How safe do you feel walking in the daytime in your community?
787 responses

- Very safe
- Safe
- Not safe

29.9%
55.3%
14.9%
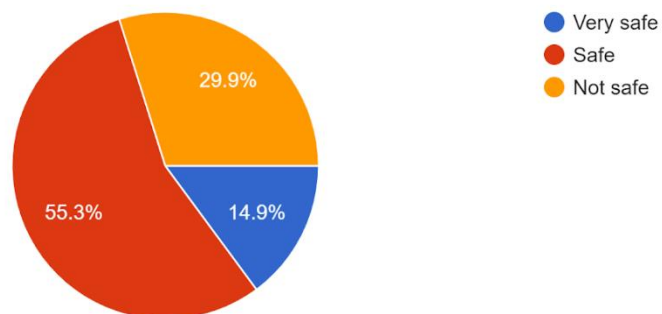
Please select the top three (3) issues you think are the greatest problems in Pine Bluff.

780 responses

Issue	Count (Percentage)
Burglaries/theft (auto)	103 (13.2%)
Burglaries/theft (house/apart…	216 (27.7%)
Child abuse	37 (4.7%)
Child sexual predators/intern…	51 (6.5%)
Disorderly conduct/public int…	30 (3.8%)
Disorderly/unsupervised youth	162 (20.8%)
Domestic violence	110 (14.1%)
Driving under the influence (…	45 (5.8%)
Drug abuse (sale or manufa…	202 (25.9%)
Fraud/identity theft	19 (2.4%)
Gang activity	347 (44.5%)
Gun violence	488 (62.6%)
Hate crimes (crimes against…	41 (5.3%)
Homeless or transient-relate…	49 (6.3%)
Homicide	373 (47.8%)
Mugging	17 (2.2%)
Physical assault	46 (5.9%)
Prostitution	5 (0.6%)
School safety (bullying, fighti…	114 (14.6%)
Sexual assault/rape	27 (3.5%)
Sex trafficking	20 (2.6%)
Traffic issues	41 (5.3%)
Underage drinking	27 (3.5%)
Vandalism	50 (6.4%)

Have you limited or changed your activities in Pine Bluff because you are concerned about crime?

780 responses

- Yes: 71.3%
- No: 28.7%
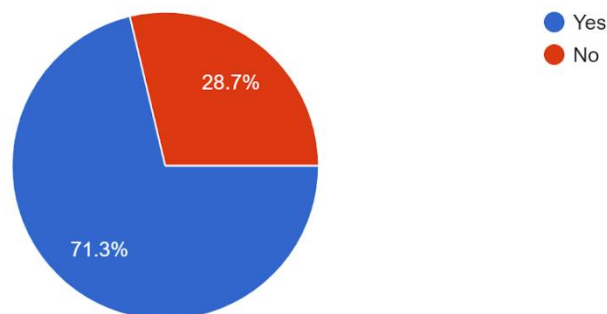
Who do you feel are committing the majority of the crimes in Pine Bluff?

784 responses

- ● Youth
- ● Adults
- ● Both (Youth and Adults

80.9%

15.7%
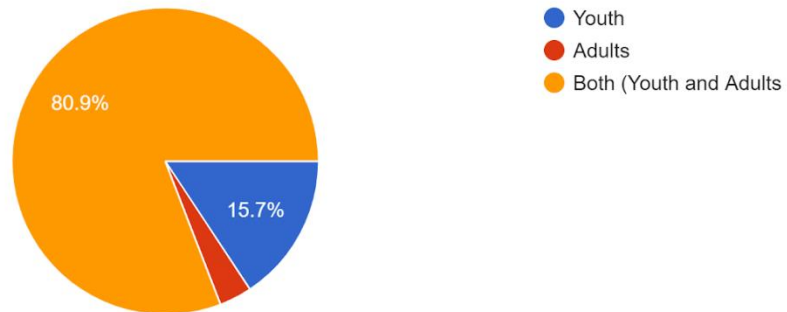
How concerned are you about the crime in Pine Bluff?

790 responses

- ● Very concerned
- ● Concerned
- ● Somewhat concerned
- ● Not concerned

21.5%

71%
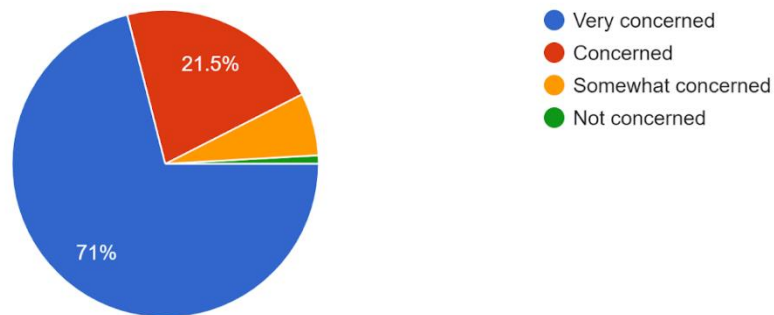
Do you feel the Pine Bluff police department is responsive to your needs?

758 responses

- ● Yes
- ● No

36.1%

63.9%
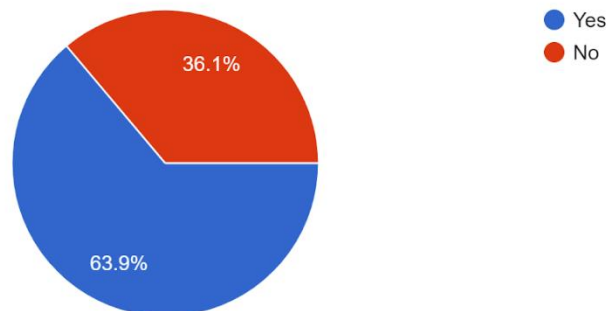
Would you hesitate to call the Pine Bluff police department?

783 responses

- ● Yes
- ● No

79.3%

20.7%
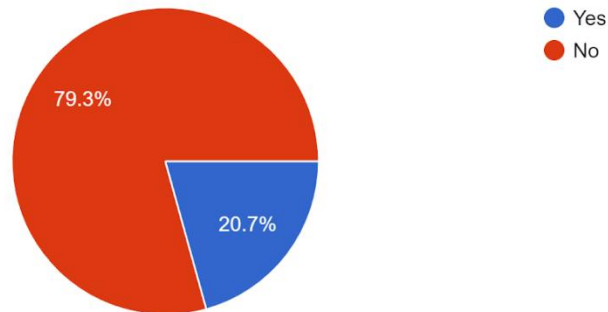
Has anyone in your household been a victim of a crime in the past three (3) years?

782 responses

- ● Yes - Reported it to the police
- ● Yes - Did not report it to the police
- ● No

71.6%

23.7%
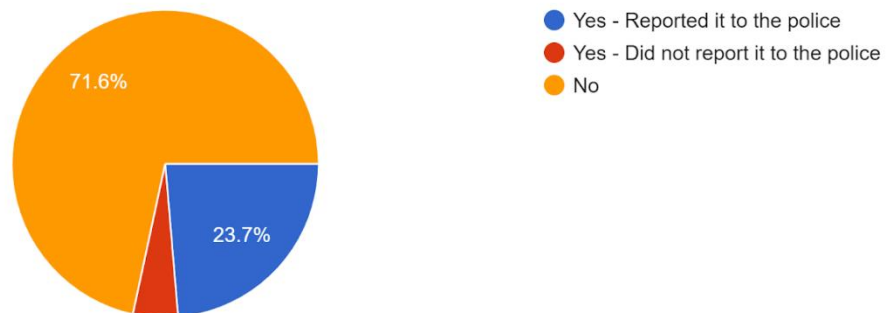
Pine Bluff Police show concern for your rights as a member of the community

778 responses

- ● Agree
- ● Disagree
- ● Neutral

44.1%

13.8%

42.2%
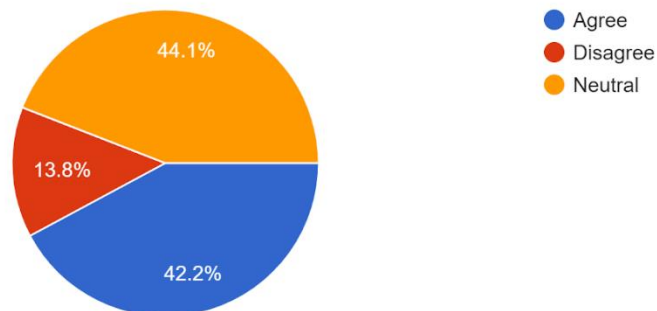
Pine Bluff Police show a real interest in being fair when making decisions that affect you.

777 responses

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

48.1%
16.1%
35.8%
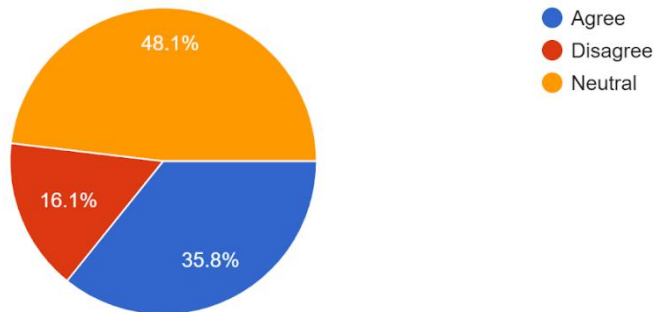
Pine Bluff Police are effective at preventing crime.

780 responses

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

46.4%
14.2%
39.4%
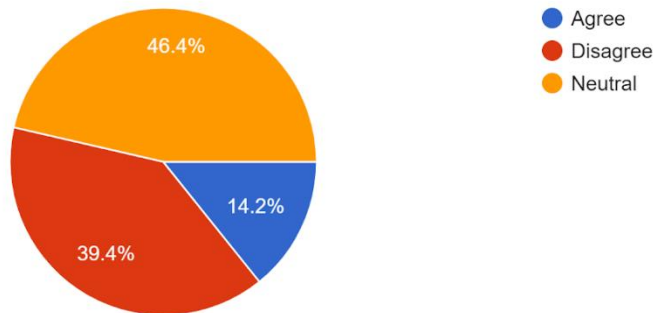
Pine Bluff Police are honest and ethical when dealing with you.

775 responses

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

43.9%
15.1%
41%
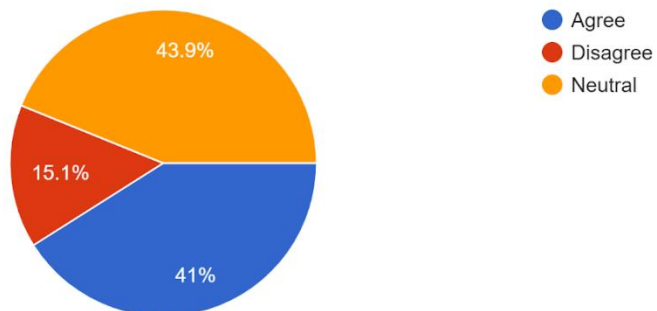
I trust the Pine Bluff Police.

778 responses

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

40.7%
18.9%
40.4%
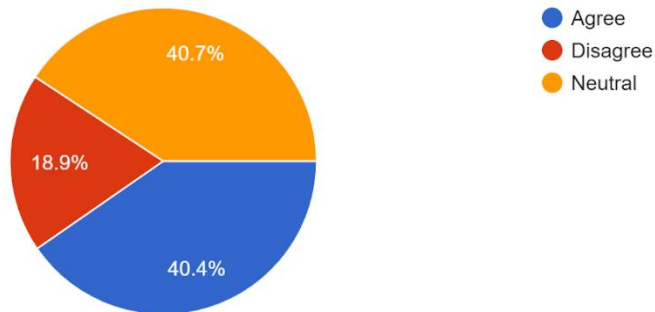
Pine Bluff offers a good quality of life.

778 responses

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

37.1%
45.6%
17.2%
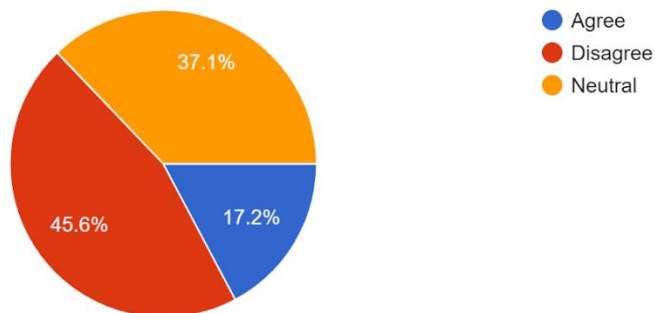
Pine Bluff is a clean and attractive community.

777 responses

- Agree
- Disagree
- Neutral

24.3%
70%
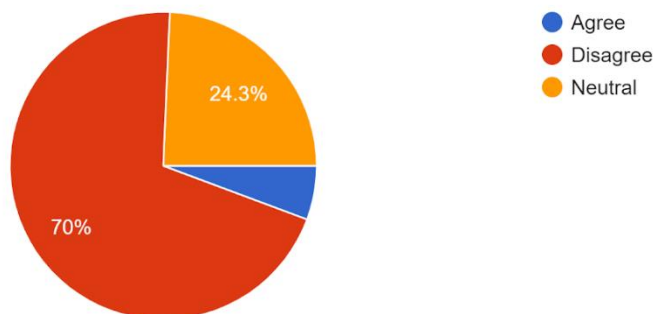
Pine Bluff provides multiple activities for citizens of various ages.
777 responses

- 🔵 Agree
- 🔴 Disagree
- 🟠 Neutral

17.4%
71.6%
11.1%
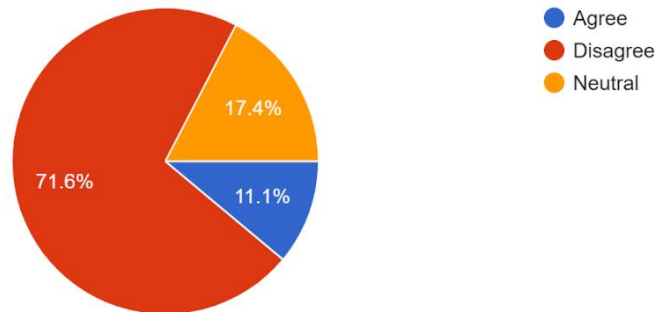
Pine Bluff leadership is a good reflection of our community.
776 responses

- 🔵 Agree
- 🔴 Disagree
- 🟠 Neutral

31.6%
39.8%
28.6%
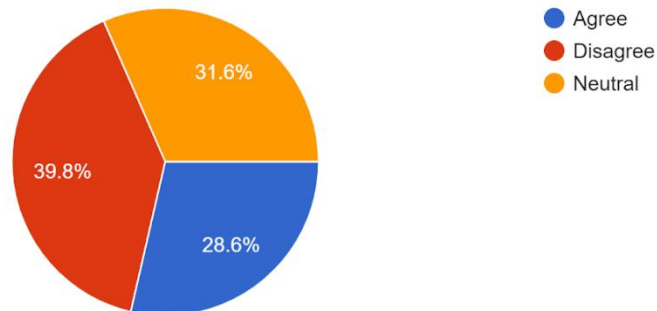
I am proud to live in Pine Bluff.
778 responses

- 🔵 Agree
- 🔴 Disagree
- 🟠 Neutral

34.3%
25.4%
40.2%
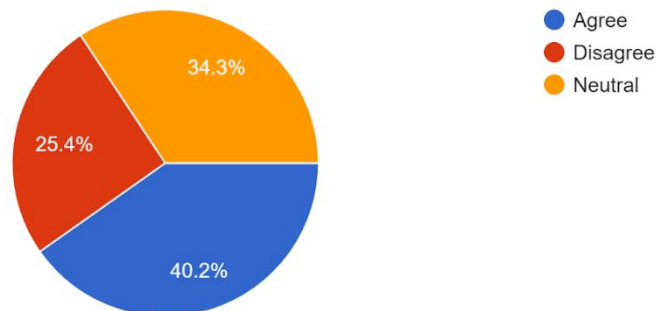
The community is improving in providing job opportunities for the residents of Pine Bluff.

99 responses

- ● Agreee
- ● Disagree
- ● Neutral

42.4%

23.2%

34.3%
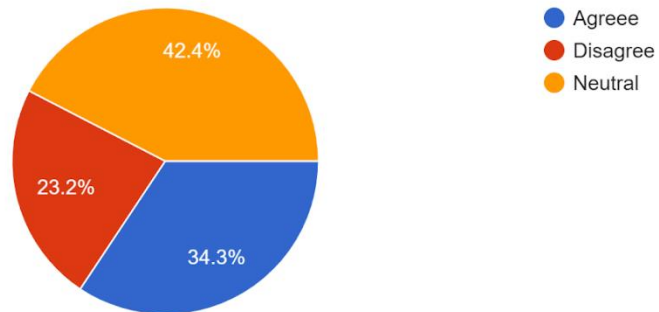
The schools in our community are improving.

773 responses

- ● Agree
- ● Disagree
- ● Neutral

30.1%

54.1%

15.8%
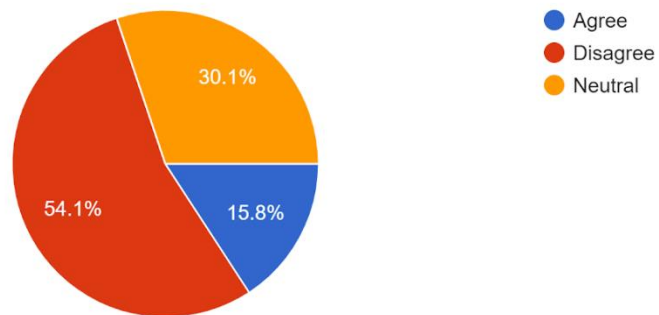
Priorities Based on Open Response Survey Questions

1. Safety - Increase community capacity by improving safety in the city of Pine Bluff for all residents and visitors.
   a. Police Visibility
      i. Implement community policing
      ii. Implement bike patrol
      iii. Neighborhood precinct
   b. Gangs and Guns
      i. Enforce laws
      ii. Enforce curfew for youth
   c. Crime Hot Spots
      i. Increase patrol in the area
      ii. Increase lighting in the area
      iii. Install cameras and/or cop in the sky technology
      iv. Enforce curfew in the area

2. Community - To increase community involvement by improving the understanding of community needs and resources
   a. Youth Intervention
      i. Recreational activities: in addition to the aquatic park, library, and Merrill Center; movie theater, o-kart racing, trampoline park
      ii. Communication with city officials regarding activities
      iii. Transportation - consistent bus schedules with fees posted
      iv. Reduce school violence by implementing:
         1. Social emotional learning
         2. Trust building
         3. Relationship building
         4. Community business adopting schools
         5. Restorative practices
         6. Anonymous tip line
         7. Trade school programs
         8. More cameras at school buildings

3. Beautification
   a. County and city workers post schedules
   b. Enforce ordinances and penalties
      i. Business parking lots
      ii. Homeowners

        1. Abandoned properties
        2. Area beautification (yard maintenance, trash, etc.)
    iii. Landlords/Slumlords
        1. Uninhabitable properties
        2. Drug houses
  c. Drainage issue
  d. Illegal dumping

4. Economic Development
  a. Increase jobs/industries
  b. Workforce programs for youth
    i. Apprenticeship programs or youth
  c. Small business training and or assistance
  d. Career training
    i. Interview skills
    ii. Resume preparation
    iii. Career assessment
    iv. Interview attire
  e. Pine Bluff Promise - implement tuition assistance or all students in Pine Bluff who graduate to continue college or career training after high school
  f. Restaurants
  g. Shopping centers/stores
  h. Hotels
  i. Improve internet/Wi-Fi/Broadband
  j. Improve water structure

5. Police - To increase community safety by reducing crime and disorder by carefully examining the characteristics of problems in neighborhoods and applying appropriate problem solving remedies.
  a. Increase the Police Force
    i. Each police officer must live within the city of Pine Bluff
    ii. Police corruption/Anti-corruption
    iii. Recruitment
        1. Increase pay
        2. Increase incentives
    iv. Visibility/bike patrol
    v. Positive presence in communities
    vi. Solve cases (murder)

b. Police Training
   i. Cultural sensitivity
   ii. Dealing with citizens with special needs; psychological or mental disabilities
   iii. Racial sensitivity
   iv. De-escalation/Proactive techniques
c. Enforcement of Laws
   i. Curfew
   ii. Speeding
   iii. Illegal street racing