



Voices of the Community: Montgomery County

General Satisfaction in Most Areas, but Room for Growth Exists

When asked about a variety of aspects of Montgomery County – including availability of affordable housing, access to healthcare, and availability of dining, cultural, and entertainment venues – fewer residents tended to rate these dimensions as “excellent” compared with all other surrounding areas. However, in every aspect that was listed, residents were also more likely than average to rate them as “good,” and less likely than average to rate them as “poor.”

This was also true when Montgomery County residents were asked how good a place it is to live for a variety of different groups, such as seniors, women, racial minorities, and LGBTQ+ people: in nearly every case, respondents were more likely than average to say the county is a “good” place for those groups, but *less* likely than average to say it is “very good.” The data suggest that while these residents are generally satisfied with the area in nearly every facet, there is consensus that there is room for improvement.

Moreover, Montgomery County respondents are less optimistic than those from other areas. Twenty-one percent believe that living conditions in the Greater Washington region will be better in the next five years, and 27% say economic conditions are currently improving – both measures are the lowest of any jurisdiction.

Mixed Responses for Families with Children

While the 39% of residents that say Montgomery County is an “excellent” place to raise children – trailing only the 56% of Loudoun County residents who say the same – does break the trend discussed above, it remains average in many areas that are important to families with children. For example, while the percentage of residents who say Montgomery County has “excellent” public schools (34%) and is “very safe” for children (50%) far outpace its immediate neighbors in DC and Prince George’s County, it is generally matched or exceeded in these areas by all Virginia respondents.

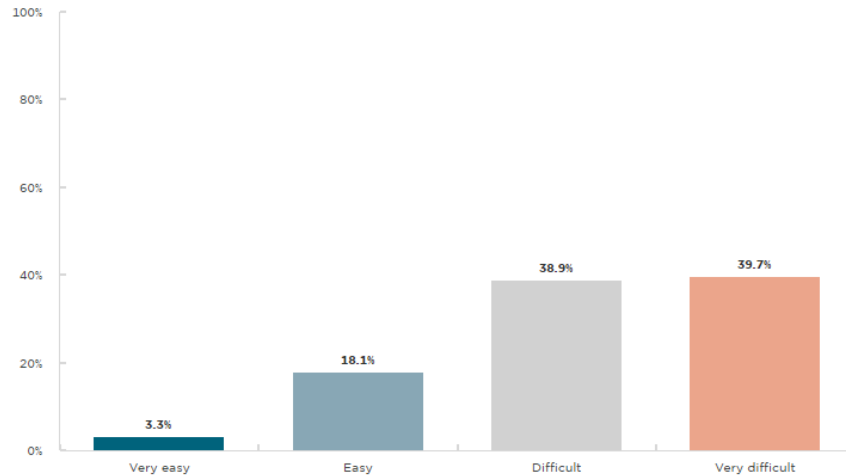
One area where the county stands out is in the cost of childcare, as well as how frequently parents use it: 49% of respondents with children under 18 in their household report using childcare services at least once a week, and 29% say they use it five or more days per week. Of the 65 respondents with children under the age of 5, 78% said it is “difficult” or “very difficult” for them to afford childcare.

How difficult is it to pay for high-quality childcare for your child/children?

Montgomery County, MD

21.4%
Easy

Breakdown of Responses



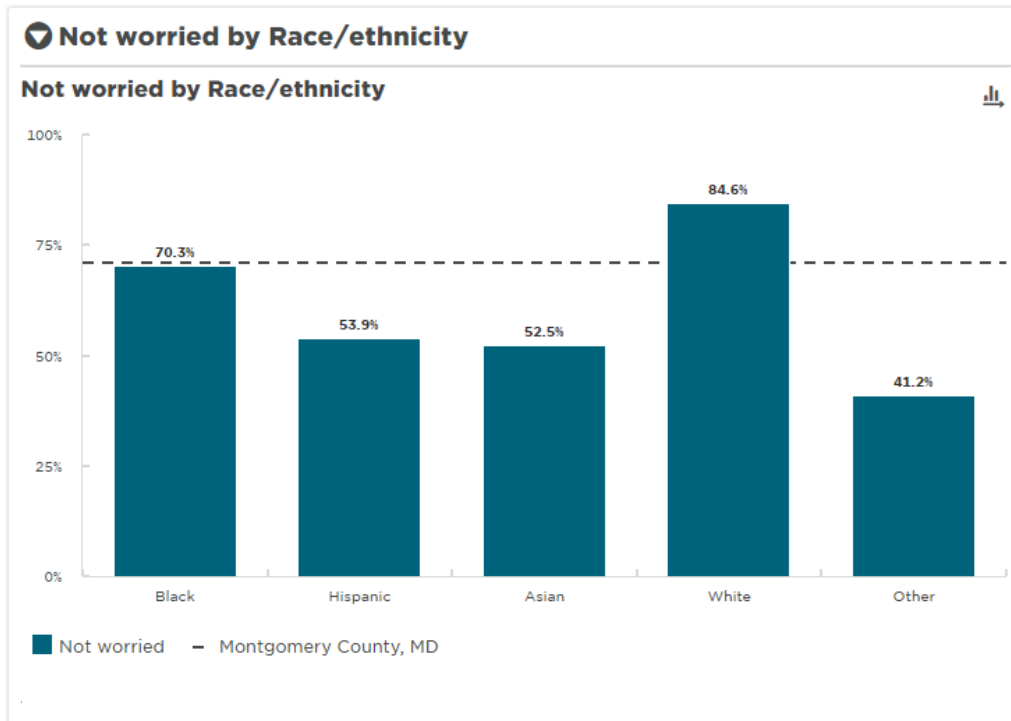
Residents of Color Positive About Core Aspects of Community, But Concerned About Financial Security

When asked whether they would recommend Montgomery County to others as a place to live, 83% of residents of color say that they are likely or very likely to recommend the area, the highest percentage of any region surveyed. This overall sentiment may reflect the fact that 91% of residents of color say the county is a “good” or “excellent” place to raise children, 73% say the county is a “good” or “very good” place for racial and ethnic minorities, 98% say it is a “safe” or “somewhat safe” place to live, and 69% have a “fair amount” or “great deal” of confidence in their local government – all among the highest proportions in the Greater Washington region.

While residents of color are generally positive about these aspects of Montgomery County, they cite concerns about financial security. More than one-quarter (28%) of residents of color are “just getting by” or finding it at least “somewhat difficult” to live on their current finances. Perhaps more troubling, 43% of residents of color are “very” or “somewhat worried” about their ability to pay their rent or mortgage, second only to Washington, DC.

By Demographics

How worried are you about not being able to pay your rent or mortgage?



Lower-Income Residents Also More Satisfied in Key Areas

Though there is some overlap with the elevated satisfaction among residents of color, respondents with an annual household income of less than \$48,000 demonstrated even higher levels of agreement in important areas. For example, these residents are as likely as those earning more than \$48,000 to have at least “a fair amount” of confidence in local government (63%) and are three times more likely to have “a great deal” of confidence (17%). Moreover, 85% of those earning less than \$48,000 say that the changes occurring in Montgomery County are generally benefiting everyone or benefiting people like them.

Interestingly, 38% of lower-income residents say that the availability of affordable housing is “good” or “excellent,” nearly three times the rate of respondents earning more than \$48,000 (14%). By smaller margins, those earning less than \$48,000 are also more likely to say that public schools and access to public transportation are excellent, and that the area is “very safe.” That 85% of these residents are likely – including 57% who are “very likely” – to recommend Montgomery County as a place to live suggests that the community delivers strong services for those earning less than the median income. Thus, while costs of housing and childcare may represent barriers to entry for some lower-income families, those residents see a strong foundation in the resources and services the community offers to them.