



A Portrait of Baltimore 2024

Results of the 2024 Baltimore Area Survey

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Results of the 2024 Baltimore Area Survey

1. Overview

The 2024 Baltimore Area Survey (BAS) is an annual survey to measure various aspects of life among residents living in the Baltimore region. The BAS 2024 asked 163 questions of a statistically representative sample of residents who live in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. We seek to complement existing data and to fill gaps where they exist to help Baltimore-area residents, community groups, policy makers, and businesses better understand the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of fellow residents. This, our second “Portrait of Baltimore” report, summarizes initial findings from the BAS 2024.

The list of questions we ask is always developed with our Community Collaboration Committee. Since this was our second year conducting the survey, the BAS 2024 offered our first opportunity to compare how experiences and attitudes of Baltimore-area residents have changed over the past year. We decided on some questions to repeat to measure those changes. These included questions about neighborhood satisfaction, food and transportation insecurity, and evaluations of local government. We also asked about the Key Bridge collapse, likely the biggest event to befall Baltimore in some time to understand how it has affected Baltimore-area residents. Our goal is to continue the BAS well into the future to understand the evolution of experiences among Baltimore-area residents.

Themes

We organized the initial findings into four themes that touch on different aspects of life in the Baltimore area: neighborhoods and schools, local government services, food insecurity, and connectivity. The themes provide an overview of the experiences and attitudes of Baltimore-area residents.

Neighborhoods & Schools

Measuring residents’ satisfaction and perceptions of their neighborhoods and public schools are one of our top goals since such data do not exist elsewhere. These data supplement those published by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, departments of planning in both Baltimore City and Baltimore County, and the Census Bureau estimates. We compared these measures to data from the BAS 2023. We also included

questions this year about residents' desire to move and report on one of those questions.

Local Government Services

Continuing with the local focus, our second theme reports on perceptions and attitudes about local government. We asked a series of questions about trust in local government and how residents feel served by the local government. We compared the responses to those that we reported last year in the BAS 2023. This year, we also inquired about how satisfied residents felt about specific services provided at the local level, including sanitation, policing, schools, and public transit.

Food Insecurity

We followed up on the notable findings from the BAS 2023 that showed the high share of Baltimore-area residents that experienced “food insecurity,” or the inability to afford food for their households. After publishing that report, we received suggestions to ask whether residents felt that they had access to grocery stores nearby. We followed those suggestions and report on that question.

Mobility & Connectivity

In the final section of the report, we investigate how connected residents are through transportation and internet access. We asked about issues that residents experienced related to transportation, either due to a lack of transportation or its unreliability. We compare the results to those that we found in the BAS 2023. We report on the conditions of residents who live along the planned Red Line corridor, which we were able to do because of a generous grant from the **CHARMED Center** at Johns Hopkins that allowed us to over-sample residents along that corridor. The collapse of the Key Bridge was a major disruption to transportation. We report initial findings on the share of residents who reported that their lives had been affected by the Key Bridge collapse. We plan to follow up with a more in-depth report on the Key Bridge in the near future. Finally, in addition to understanding the lack of physical connections through transportation, we also measured residents' access to home high-speed internet to understand digital disconnection.

Methods

The BAS 2024 comprises data from 1,492 respondents, 934 (63 percent) from Baltimore City and 558 (37 percent) from Baltimore County. These responses came from mailings that we sent to 11,500 randomly selected addresses in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. The randomness of the addresses that we included in the sample is important because that randomness allows us to statistically estimate the experiences of Baltimore-area residents and to observe differences between groups, for example by race or on either side of the City/County line. All of the results are weighted to ensure that the results represent the population of Baltimore City and Baltimore County. The overall margin of error, meaning how much we may expect true values to differ from our numbers here, is ± 3.8 percentage points. When we estimate subgroups, the margins of error will be higher (we list margins of error for other groups as well as more information on the methods in the appendix).

2. Neighborhoods and Schools

Neighborhood Satisfaction and Improvement

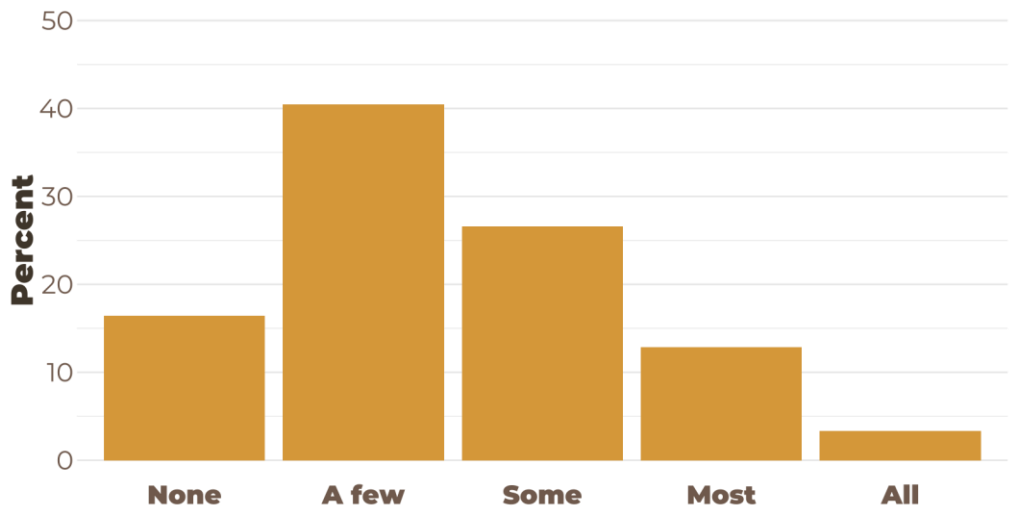
As we did in [our 2023 report](#), we asked BAS 2024 respondents about their neighborhood satisfaction and about how they perceived change in their neighborhood over the past five years. For reference, most respondents in the Baltimore-area considered their neighborhoods comprise between one and nine blocks and residents in both Baltimore City and Baltimore County reported similar number of blocks belonging to their neighborhoods. Below, we report the results for Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Before we turn to satisfaction levels, however, this year we asked respondents how many neighbors on their street they knew by name to get a sense of how well residents know their neighbors. The results are shown in Figure 2.1. About 15 percent of residents knew all or most people on their street. Another quarter of residents knew some of the people and the plurality, 40.4 percent, only knew a few people while 16.4 didn't know anyone on their street. There were not any significant differences between residents of Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

Figure 2.1: Share of people Baltimore-area residents knew by name who lived on their own street

Neighbors Known

Share of neighbors that residents know by name on their own street



About a quarter of Baltimore City residents were both satisfied with their neighborhoods and thought that their neighborhoods had improved

Baltimore City

Figure 2.2 shows a graph presenting results of questions about neighborhood satisfaction and neighborhood change among Baltimore City residents. The left side of the plot shows that over seven in ten residents of Baltimore City are satisfied with their neighborhoods and, among those who are satisfied, just under half report being “very satisfied.” Among residents who reported being satisfied with their neighborhood, about a third reported that their neighborhoods had improved over the past year (overall, 28.1 percent of

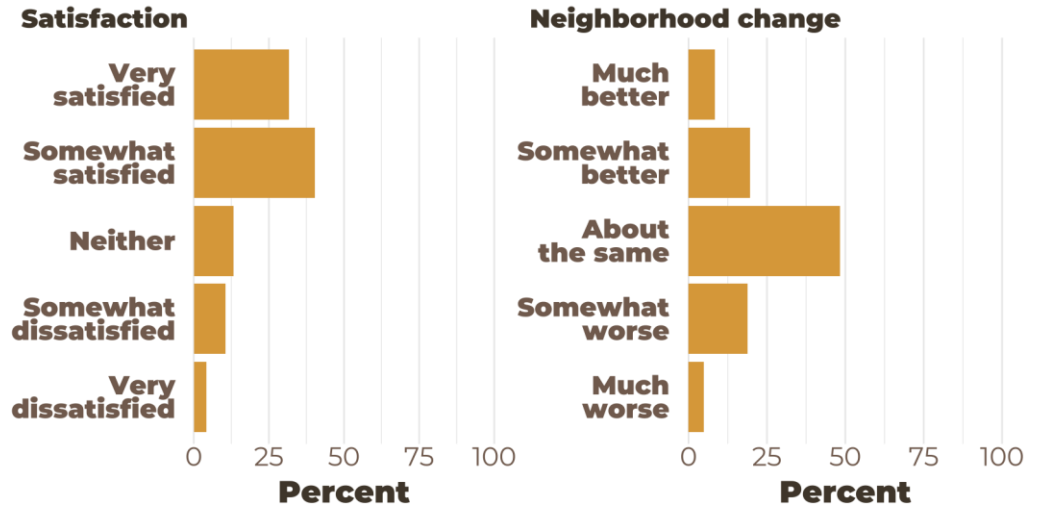
Baltimore City residents indicated that their neighborhood had improved). Taken together, about a quarter of Baltimore City residents were both satisfied with their neighborhoods *and* thought that their neighborhoods had improved. In contrast, only 7.3 percent of Baltimore City residents reported being dissatisfied with their neighborhoods *and* that they had gotten worse, though 23.7 percent of Baltimore City residents overall reported that their neighborhoods had gotten worse.



Figure 2.2: Percentages of Baltimore City residents reporting how satisfied they are with their current neighborhood and how they perceive their neighborhoods have changed in the past five years

Baltimore City Neighborhood Perceptions

Satisfaction with neighborhood and perceived neighborhood change among Baltimore City residents



Baltimore County

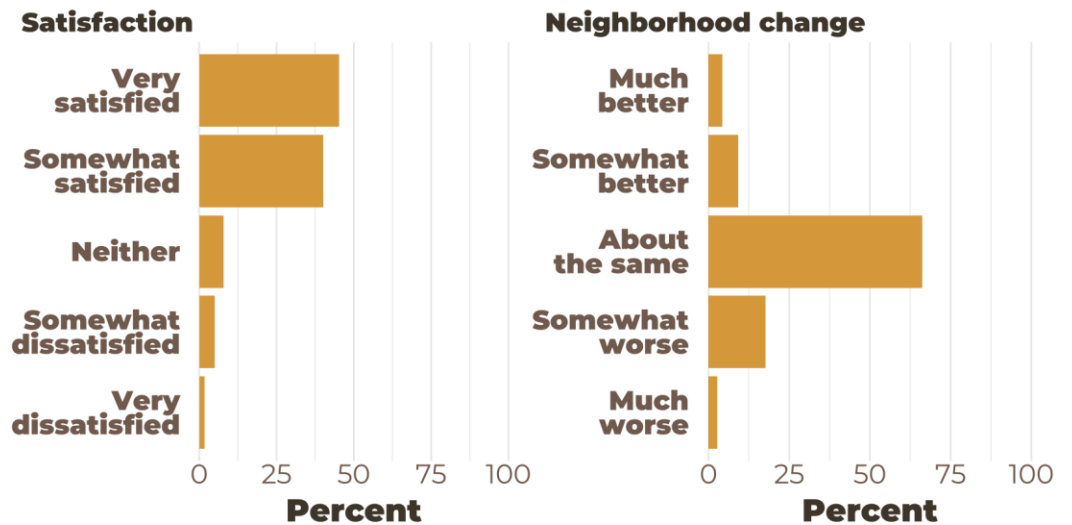
In Baltimore County, Figure 2.3 shows that 85.3 percent of Baltimore County residents are satisfied with their neighborhoods: 45.2 percent were very satisfied and another 40.1 percent were somewhat satisfied. Two-thirds of Baltimore County residents thought that their neighborhoods had stayed the same over the past five years, neither getting better nor getting worse.



Figure 2.3: Percentages of Baltimore County residents reporting how satisfied they are with their current neighborhood and how they perceive their neighborhoods have changed in the past five years

Baltimore County Neighborhood Perceptions

Satisfaction with neighborhood and perceived neighborhood change among Baltimore County residents



A larger share of Baltimore County residents thought that their neighborhoods had gotten worse, 20.4 percent, compared to those who thought that their neighborhoods had gotten better, 13.4. The sentiment of declining neighborhood quality was especially high among those who were dissatisfied with their neighborhood: 4.9 percent of Baltimore County residents dissatisfied with their neighborhoods thought that they had gotten worse.

Moving Preferences

In addition to getting a sense of their satisfaction with neighborhoods, we also asked respondents about where they would prefer to live. We phrased the question to ask them if they “had a choice about where to live three years from now, where would you prefer to live?” As Figure 2.4 shows, about a third of Baltimore-area residents want to stay in their same house and another 7.7 percent indicate that, while they would not want to stay in the same home, they would like to stay in the same neighborhood. Together, this means that about two in every five Baltimore-area residents would prefer to continue living in their current neighborhoods. Another one in five residents wanted to stay in the jurisdiction in which they currently lived. In both jurisdictions, about one in five residents would prefer to live in another neighborhood of the same jurisdiction. The remaining two in five residents were evenly split between those who wanted to move to another jurisdiction in the state and those who wanted to leave the state altogether.

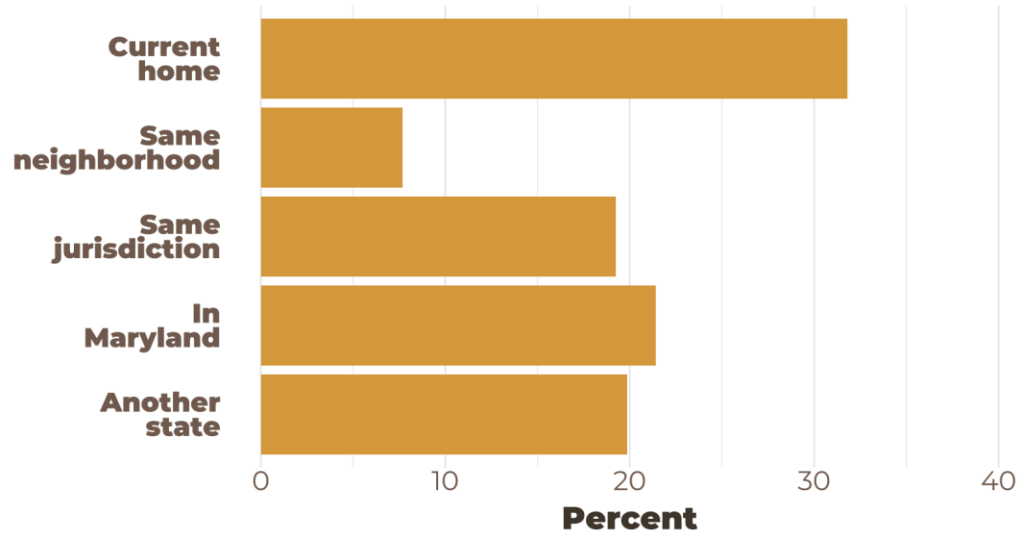
43.7 percent thought that it would be fairly or very difficult to find another home as good as their current one in a place they would want to live



Figure 2.4: Percentages of Baltimore-area residents who report locations where they would prefer to live three years in the future

Preferred Place to Live

Locations where residents report wanting to live in three years



Unsurprisingly, residents who were most satisfied with their current neighborhoods were most likely to report wanting to continue to live in their neighborhood in the future. About four in ten residents who were satisfied in their current neighborhoods wanted to stay in those neighborhoods. In a potential worrying sign for the state, 32.3 percent of residents who report being neither satisfied or dissatisfied with their current neighborhood would prefer to leave the state, which is not much higher than the 36.9 percent who report being dissatisfied with their current neighborhoods. Additionally, if residents did find themselves needing to move, 43.7 percent thought that it would be fairly or

very difficult to find another home as good as their current one in a place they would want to live, including almost half of homeowners and more than a third of renters.

Public School Quality and Improvement

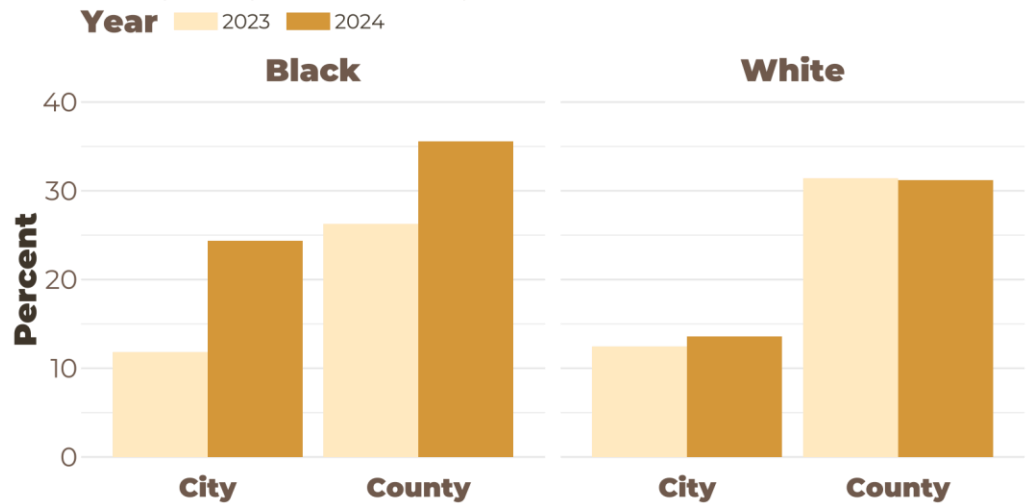
As we did in 2023, we asked respondents about the quality of public schools in their neighborhood and their perception of change in the public schools. We found substantial increases in the percentage of Black residents who evaluated schools as having high quality, rating schools as either “very good” or “excellent.” Compared to 2023, the share of Black Baltimore City residents who rated the public schools in their neighborhood as high quality doubled, from 11.8 percent to 24.3 percent. Black residents in Baltimore County also reported an increase in school quality where more than a third of residents evaluated their schools as having high quality, up from a quarter of Black Baltimore County residents in 2023. Evaluations among White residents in both Baltimore City and Baltimore County were almost exactly the same across years.

Compared to 2023, the share of Black Baltimore City residents who rated the public schools in their neighborhood as high quality doubled

Figure 2.5: Percentage of Baltimore-area residents who report that schools in their neighborhood are very good or excellent by race, jurisdiction, and year

School Quality

Percent of residents who report schools in neighborhood are very good or excellent, by race, jurisdiction and year



We want to be careful when we interpret these changes because the surveys were conducted at different times of year: the BAS 2024 was conducted at the beginning of the school year (September to November 2024) while the BAS 2023 occurred after the end of the school year (June and July 2023). But residents themselves also report seeing improvement. Three in ten Black Baltimore City residents reported that schools had gotten somewhat or much better in the past year (last year about two in ten reported that schools had gotten better). A similar share of White residents in Baltimore City also reported that schools had improved. In Baltimore County, just under three in ten Black residents reported that schools had improved, a share of residents that was about the same as last year.

3. Governance

Trust in Local Government

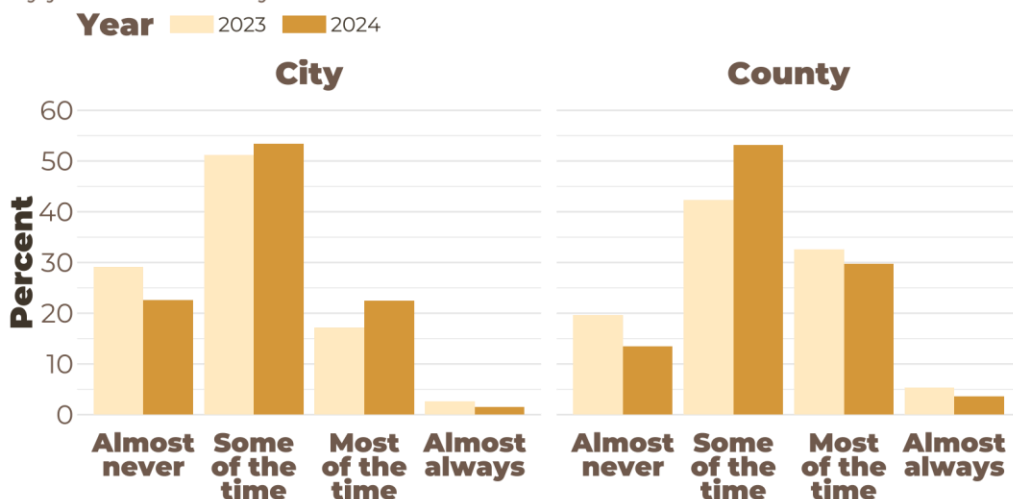
In 2024, 22.6 percent of Baltimore City residents reported that they could “almost never” trust local government, down from 29.1 percent in 2023

Distrust in local government declined among Baltimore City residents in the past year. We asked respondents how much of the time they could trust the local government to do what is right. In 2024, 22.6 percent of Baltimore City residents reported that they could “almost never” trust local government, down from 29.1 percent in 2023. We would be unlikely to have observed this difference by random chance if no decline in distrust occurred over the past year. Figure 3.1 shows that the share of residents who reported that they could trust local government to do what is right “most of the time” increased from 17.2 percent to 22.5 percent (the smaller increase means we are less confident that the difference isn’t due to random chance). In all, about a quarter of Baltimore City residents reported that they could trust their local government to do what was right most or almost all of the time. The remaining half of residents could trust local government “some of the time.”

Figure 3.1: Percent of Baltimore-area residents who report how often they trust their local government 'to do what is right' by jurisdiction and year

Trust in Local Government

How often residents trust that local government will do what is right, by jurisdiction and year



Distrust in local government also declined among Baltimore County residents since 2023. The share of Baltimore County residents who reported that they almost never trusted local government to do what was right declined by 6.2 percentage points, from 19.6 percent in 2023 to 13.4 percent. Like 2023, about a third of Baltimore County residents reported trusting the local government to do what was right at least most of the time. The stability of those who trusted local government most of the time suggests that the declining distrust was concentrated among those who report that they trust the local government to do what is right “some of the time,” from 42.4 percent to 53.1 percent.

Public Services

In addition to asking about trust in general, this year we also included questions about satisfaction with different services that government agencies provide. We asked about four areas of service: sanitation, policing, public schools, and public

transit. The first two areas—sanitation and policing—are largely governed by the governments of Baltimore City and Baltimore County. Public schools are governed by school districts while public transportation in the Baltimore region is governed by the Maryland Transit Authority, a state agency. Respondents could indicate that they were “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with the service, “very” or “somewhat” dissatisfied, or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Figure 3.2 displays the shares of residents who were either somewhat or very satisfied with these services by jurisdiction.

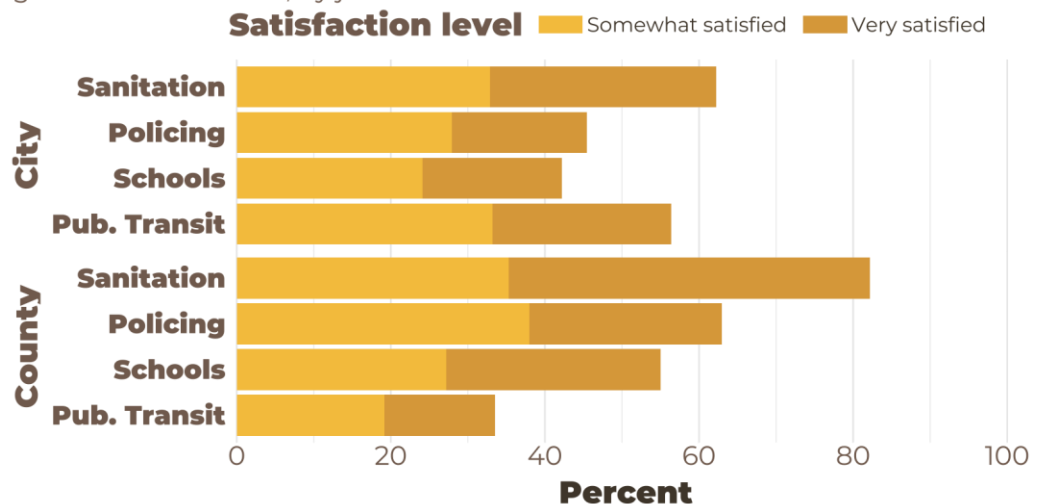
A majority of Baltimore City residents were satisfied with both sanitation services and public transit. About three in five Baltimore City residents, 62.2 percent, were satisfied with sanitation services and were evenly split between those who are very and somewhat satisfied. Public transit services were evaluated favorably by 56.4 percent of residents, with slightly more indicating that they were somewhat satisfied than very satisfied. Just under half of Baltimore City residents (45.5 percent) were satisfied with the police. About one in eight city residents, however, was “very dissatisfied” with policing.

Only about two in five Baltimore City residents were satisfied with the public schools in their neighborhood. Another approximately two in five (38.6 percent) said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. More than half (53.9 percent) of Baltimore City residents who have children in their household, however, report being satisfied with public schools. In contrast, only 35.7 percent of Baltimore City residents without children report being satisfied with public schools and only 21.7 percent report being dissatisfied.

Figure 3.2: Percent of Baltimore-area residents who are somewhat or very satisfied with different types of government services

Satisfaction with Government Services

Percent of residents who report being somewhat or very satisfied with government services, by jurisdiction



An overwhelming share of County residents were satisfied with sanitation services, almost half were “very satisfied” and another 35 percent were “somewhat satisfied.” A majority of Baltimore County residents were also satisfied with policing and schools in their neighborhoods, with 62.9 percent and

55 percent reporting that they were at least somewhat satisfied with the services. Satisfaction with public transit substantially lagged behind other services, though the plurality of Baltimore County residents (43.2 percent) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

4. Access to Healthy Food

Change in Food Insecurity

One of the starkest findings from the BAS 2023 was the high level of food insecurity among Baltimore-area residents, especially among Black residents. Using a measure created by the United States Department of Agriculture to measure the level of food security, we found that 36 percent of Baltimore-area residents—and more than half of Black Baltimore-area residents—experienced food insecurity.

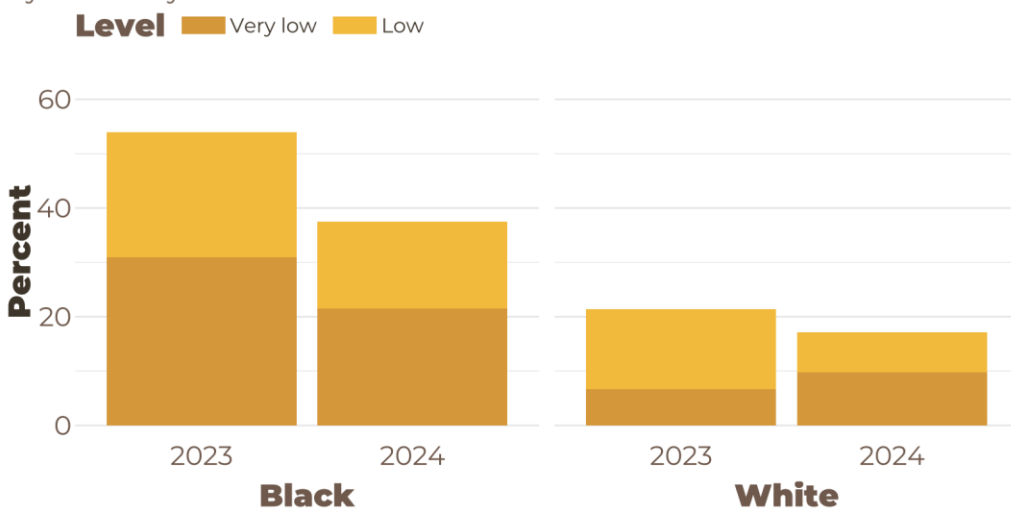
We found evidence that food insecurity substantially declined and the drop was highest among Black Baltimore-area residents. Using the USDA measure, which is based on six survey questions, we found that 28.4 percent of Baltimore-area residents reported experiencing food insecurity, a decline of 7.5 percentage points compared to what we found last year. Among Black Baltimore-area residents, the decline was even more pronounced: the share of Black residents experiencing food insecurity dropped to 37.5 percent from 53.9 percent in 2023. The share of Black residents who experienced very low food security decreased from about three in ten to about two in ten. Although the disparity between Black and White residents declined as well, the gap between the share of residents remained profound. About one in six White Baltimore-area residents (17.1 percent) experienced food insecurity in 2024, which was less than half the share of Black Baltimore area residents who experienced food insecurity. Despite the pronounced drop in the share of residents experiencing food insecurity, the rates are still high. The USDA, using a slightly longer set of questions from December 2023, found that 13.5 percent of Americans experienced low food security.¹

Food insecurity substantially declined and the drop was highest among Black Baltimore-area residents

Figure 4.1: Percent of Baltimore-area residents that experienced low or very low food security by race and year

Low Food Security

Percent of residents who experienced low or very low food security, by race and year



¹ For the USDA report, see: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=109895>

Compared to Black Baltimore-area residents, White Baltimore-area residents are about twice as likely to strongly agree that they had grocery store convenient to where they live

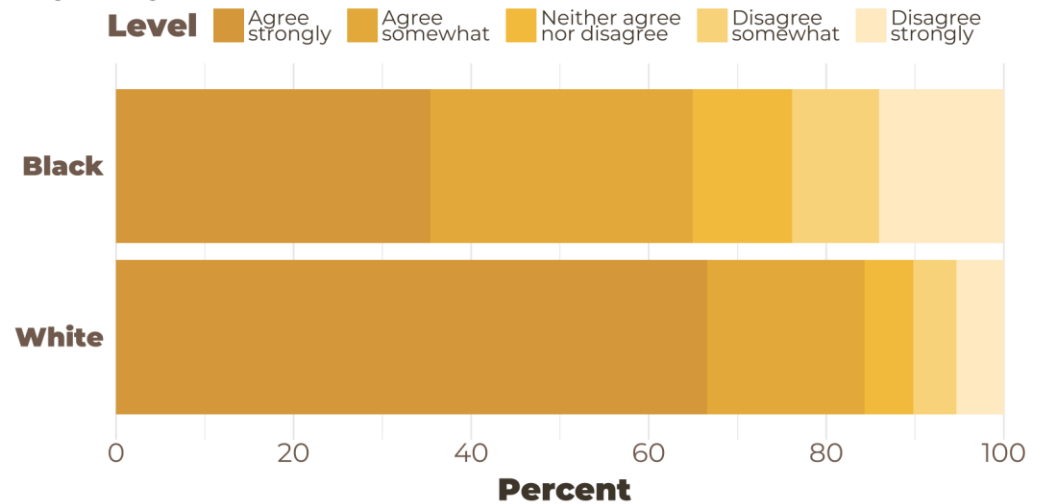
Access to Grocery Stores

We also gathered evidence this year about whether Baltimore-area residents reported having access to a grocery store that sold healthy food. Specifically, we asked respondents how much they agreed with the statement “there are grocery stores with fresh and healthy food choices convenient to where I live.” The results show a profound racial disparity in access to grocery stores: compared to Black Baltimore-area residents, White Baltimore-area residents are about twice as likely to strongly agree that they had grocery stores convenient to where they live. About two-thirds of White Baltimore-area residents strongly agree that they have a grocery store “with fresh and healthy food choices convenient to where I live.” When we considered whether residents agreed that they have any access, the gap narrowed slightly, but was still very large, 84.3 percent of White residents agreed that they had a grocery store convenient to where they lived compared to only 65 percent of Black residents. Meanwhile, almost a quarter of Black Baltimore-area residents disagree that they have a grocery store convenient to where they live, among those 14 percent strongly disagreed. Among White residents, only about 10 percent disagreed and only 5.3 percent strongly disagreed.

Figure 4.2: Level of agreement that Baltimore-area residents report when asked if they have grocery stores with fresh and healthy food choices convenient to where they live by race

Access to Grocery Store

Level of agreement that residents have grocery stores convenient to where they live, by race



5. Connectivity & Mobility

More than two-thirds of Baltimore-area residents who make less than \$30,000 a year experienced transportation issues

We conclude this report by considering how Baltimore-area residents maintain connections across the region through transportation and to the wider world through internet access. In both cases, we find that there are large economic and racial disparities.

Transportation Insecurity

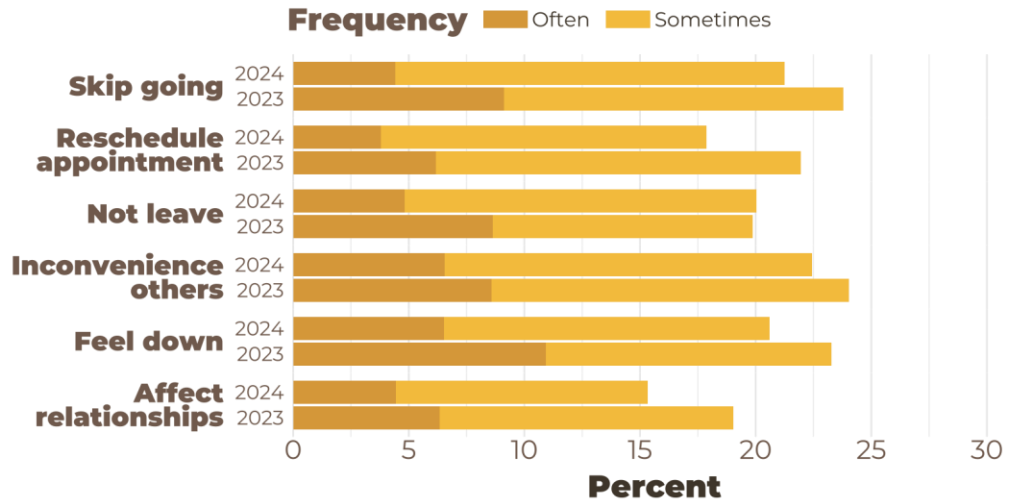
Figure 5.1 plots the percentages of Baltimore-area residents who reported experiencing problems with transportation. The first three items reflect missed opportunities including skipping going places due to a lack of transportation, needing to reschedule appointments, and not leaving their houses. The last three items reflect the social and psychological dimensions of transportation

and include whether people feel like they inconvenience their friends, family, or neighbors because they needed help with transportation, whether they feel down, and whether a lack of transportation has affected their relationships with others.

Figure 5.1: Percentage of Baltimore-area residents who reported experiencing issues related to transportation sometimes or often by year

Transportation Issues

Percentage of residents who experienced issues related to transportation, by year



Forty-two percent of residents living in neighborhoods along which the Red Line would run experienced at least one transportation issue, ten percentage points higher than residents who lived outside of the Red Line corridor

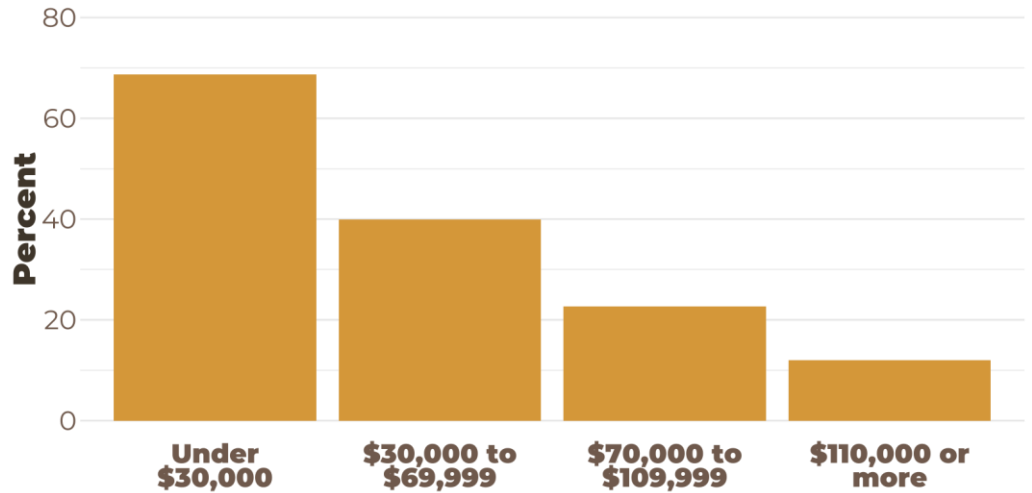
The results do not indicate much change in the share of Baltimore-area residents who experienced the six transportation issues. There was, however, some decline in the severity with which Baltimore-area residents face those issues as fewer residents reported that they “often” experienced the issue. The share of residents who reported that they often skipped going places and felt down because of transportation problems respectively declined by 4.7 and 4.4 percentage points. We can be reasonably confident that a change occurred for these items and that the difference isn’t due to random chance. The shares of residents who often did not leave their home and who often rescheduled appointments decreased by 3.8 and 2.4 percentage points, but we are slightly less confident that a decrease cannot be attributed to chance.

Income substantially shapes whether residents experience transportation insecurity. Figure 5.2 shows how many residents experienced at least one of the six transportation issues. More than two-thirds of Baltimore-area residents who make less than \$30,000 a year experienced transportation issues. The share of residents making less than \$30,000 were 28.8 percentage points more likely to have experienced one of these issues than the next highest income group, those who made more than \$30,000 and less than \$70,000. The poorest Baltimore-area residents were three times more likely than those who made between \$70,000 and \$110,000 and over five times more likely than the wealthiest Baltimore-area residents to experience transportation insecurity. Race also mattered: 43.2 percent of Black and 22 percent of White Baltimore-area residents had at least one transportation issue, levels similar to what we found last year.

Figure 5.2: Percentage of Baltimore-area residents who reported experiencing at least one transportation issue by income

Transportation Insecurity

Percentage of residents who faced at least one transportation issue, by income

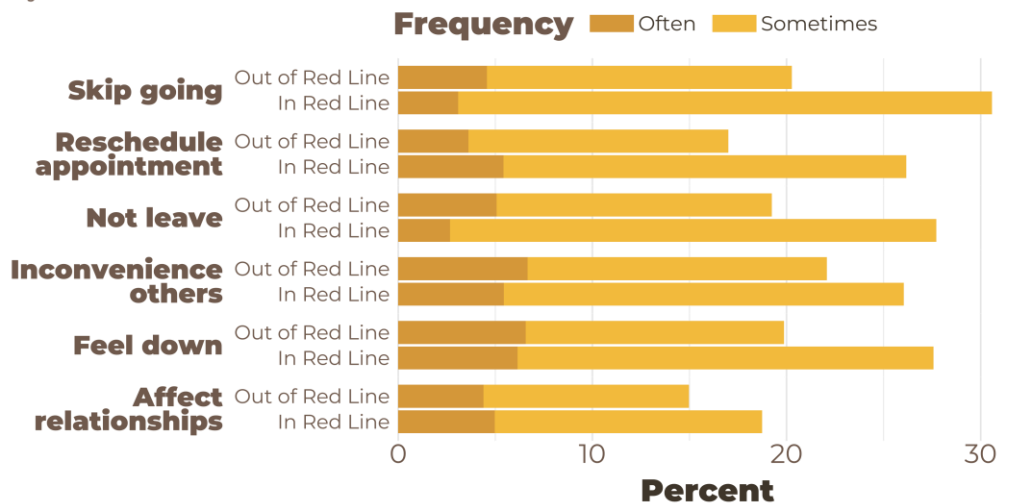


We also examined differences in the frequency with which residents who lived in the in the proposed Red Line corridor experienced transportation issues compared to those who lived elsewhere in the Baltimore area. Forty-two percent of residents living in neighborhoods along which the Red Line would run experienced at least one transportation issue, ten percentage points higher than residents who lived outside of the Red Line corridor. Figure 5.3 shows the share of residents who reported experiencing transportation-related issues by whether they lived in or out of the Red Line corridor. The rates of “sometimes” experiencing issues was three to eleven percentage points higher for residents of Red Line neighborhoods compared to those not in those neighborhoods. Similar shares of residents inside and outside of the Red Line’s path reported experiencing transportation issues “often.”

Figure 5.4: Percentage of Baltimore-area residents who reported experiencing issues related to transportation sometimes or often by residence in the Red Line corridor

Transportation Issues along Red Line

Percentage of residents who experienced issues related to transportation, by residence in Red Line corridor



Only 56.4
Baltimore-area
residents making
less than \$30,000 a
year report having
access to high-
speed internet at
home

Figure 5.4: Percent of Baltimore-area residents who have access to high-speed internet at home by income

A third of
Baltimore-area
residents who make
less than \$30,000
both lacked high-
speed internet *and*
experienced one or
more issues with
transportation

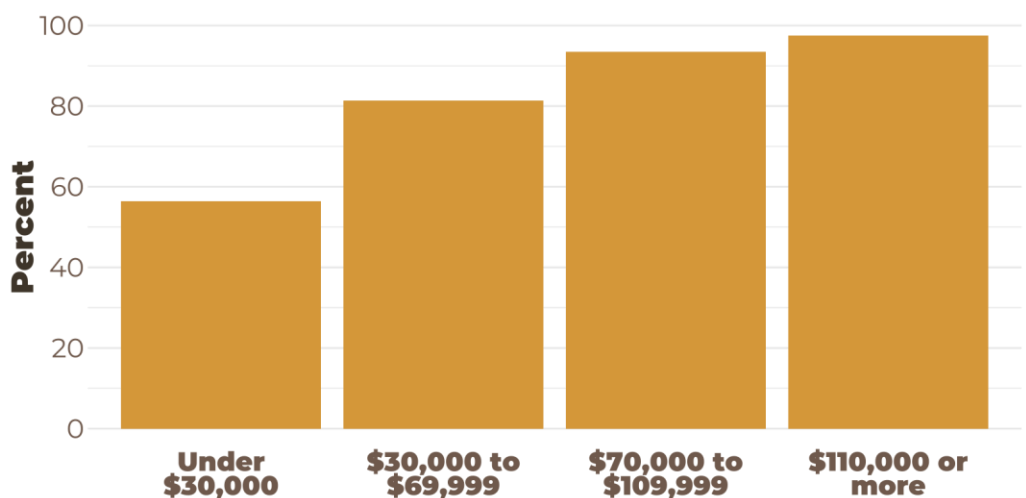
Internet Access

We also find a profound inequality in home access to high-speed internet connections by income. Only 56.4 percent of Baltimore-area residents making less than \$30,000 a year report having access to high-speed internet at home. Some reported having dial-up internet (4.2 percent) and another 15.4 percent have a different source of internet or are unsure what source of internet access they have. That means that almost one in four Baltimore-area residents making less than \$30,000 does not have access to any home internet service. In comparison, 81.4 percent of Baltimore-area residents making between \$30,000 and \$70,000 report having high-speed internet at home and more than 90 percent of Baltimore-area residents who make more than \$70,000 a year have access to high-speed internet.

When we consider the lack of internet access and transportation insecurity together, we found that a third of Baltimore-area residents who make less than \$30,000 both lacked high-speed internet *and* experienced one or more issues with transportation.

Home High-Speed Internet

Percent of residents who have access to high-speed internet at home, by income



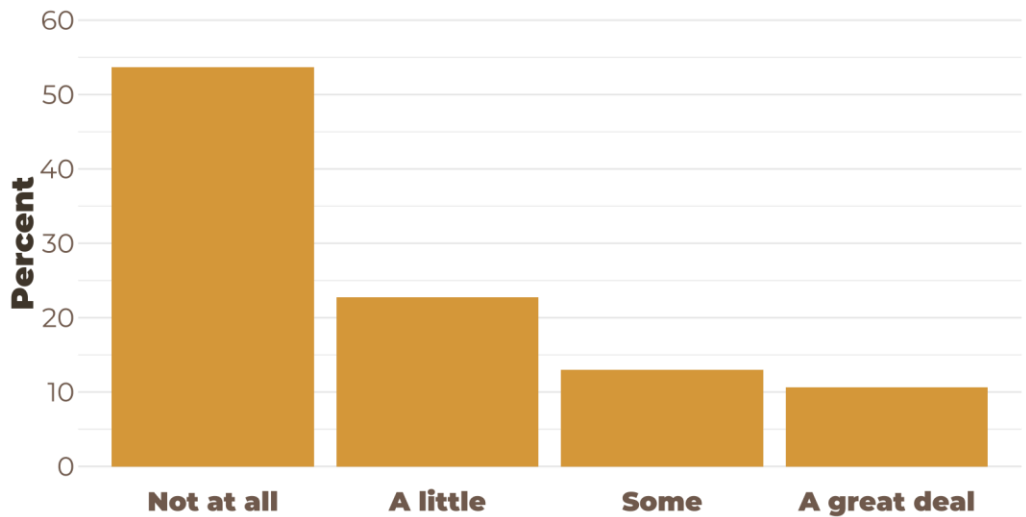
Key Bridge Collapse

We asked respondents how the collapse of the Key Bridge impacted their lives and those of their families. Just under half of residents across the whole Baltimore area reported that their lives had been affected. Around a quarter of residents reported that the collapse of the bridge affected their lives “a little,” 13 percent reported that it had affected them “some,” and about one in ten reported that it affected them “a great deal.” A future report that we plan to release will cover more aspects of the Key Bridge’s collapse on the lives of residents of the Baltimore area.

Figure 5.5: Percent of Baltimore-area residents reporting levels of impact of Key Bridge collapse on their lives

Effect of Key Bridge Collapse

Amount of impact the collapse of the Key Bridge had on lives of residents



6. Conclusions

Conditions for Baltimore-area residents improved

One of the most notable findings from the **BAS 2023** was the extremely high level of food insecurity in the Baltimore area. The results this year provide some good news on that front: fewer Baltimore-area residents experienced food insecurity this year than last. In the past year, the share of residents who experienced food insecurity declined by 7.5 percentage points. The decline in food insecurity was even more pronounced among Black Baltimore-area residents among whom the decline was double that of residents overall (16.5 percentage points).

But the high share of Baltimore-area residents who experience food insecurity tempers this good news. We find that slightly more than one in four Baltimore-area residents reported experiencing food insecurity, a share twice as high as the national average. It is also the case that barely a majority of Black Baltimore-area residents agreed that they had a grocery store convenient to them while, in comparison, six out of every seven White residents reported having access to a grocery store. What is more, Black residents were two and a half times more likely than White residents to “strongly disagree” that a grocery store was convenient.

We also found that the share of Baltimore-area residents who often experienced transportation issues declined as well. Yet, the share of Baltimore-area residents who experienced at least one issue related to transportation remained relatively stable. Taken together, these results suggest that Baltimore-area residents experienced a declining severity of transportation-related issues. Like with food insecurity, the share of residents who experienced transportation insecurity was high even after the decline. The Red Line may alleviate some of these disparities since those who lived along the corridor were more likely to experience issues related to transportation than those who did not.

Evaluations of local government have also improved

The BAS 2024 results also show that fewer Baltimore-area residents in both Baltimore City and Baltimore County distrust their local governments. Shares of residents who “almost never” trust fell to less than a quarter of residents in Baltimore City and fewer than one in seven residents in Baltimore County. The share of respondents in Baltimore City who said that they trusted the government to do what is right “most of the time” increased by more than five percentage points between surveys. In Baltimore County, the response indicating that residents trust their local government to do what is right “some of the time” received the largest increase in the past year.

We found differences in levels of satisfaction for specific government services among Baltimore-area residents. Levels of satisfaction were generally higher in Baltimore County than in Baltimore City, but the pattern across different services was similar: residents were most satisfied with sanitation, followed by policing, and then by schools. The notable exception was in public transportation. A majority of Baltimore City residents were satisfied with public transportation compared to only about a third of Baltimore County residents. In addition to evaluating changing levels of trust, measuring satisfaction with these services will be important to track in the future.

Schools were also evaluated as being better among Black Baltimore-area residents in 2024 than they were in 2023. The share of Black residents in Baltimore City who reported that schools in their neighborhoods were “very good” or “excellent” more than doubled in the past year. The share of Black Baltimore County residents increased by more than 10 percentage points, so that over a third now rate schools as very good or excellent.

Poverty profoundly shapes Baltimore-area connectivity and mobility

While we saw signs of improvement in the shares of Baltimore-area residents who experienced food and transportation insecurity, profound economic and racial inequality shape how connected Baltimore-area residents can be. More than two-thirds of Baltimore-area residents who made less than \$30,000 experienced at least one issue with transportation and less than three in five had high-speed internet in their home. Even compared to residents who make at least \$30,000 but less than \$70,000 (which is below the median income in the Baltimore area), this group experiences disadvantages. Among those in the next income group, only two in five experienced an issue with transportation and fewer than one in five lacked high-speed internet at home. The lack of connections physically via transportation and virtually via internet may make receiving services, healthcare, and finding work very difficult for poorer Baltimore-area residents.

In conclusion, the results show some signs of positive change in the Baltimore area, albeit in an area with stubbornly high inequality and large shares of residents who face issues with daily living. The sense of satisfaction with neighborhoods and the declining distrust in local government may offer space for local governments to implement policies that may further improve the lives of residents. One focus may be helping the Baltimore-area’s poorest residents become more connected and improve mobility in the region. It is our goal to

work with the Baltimore community—local governments, businesses, community organizations, and residents—to continue tracking these trends and to identify those that emerge in the future.

7. Appendix

The 2024 Baltimore Area Survey was funded by Johns Hopkins University. It was coordinated by the university's 21st Century Cities Initiative (21CC) and the sampling and data collection was conducted by Westat.

Detailed Methods

Data come from 1,492 responses, 934 from Baltimore City residents and 558 responses from Baltimore County residents, to surveys sent to 11,500 addresses in postal route files. Residents in the household were invited to the survey and given information about the survey so that they could make an informed decision about whether they wanted to participate. A \$2 bill was enclosed in every envelope and respondents were offered \$5 for completing the survey, which took about 20 minutes on average. A unique URL and corresponding QR code were provided to respondents to fill out the survey online and the option was also provided to receive a paper copy of the survey. If respondents did not respond, they were sent up to three reminders. The initial invitations were sent on September 23, 2024 and data collection closed on November 12, 2024. The response rate for the survey was 19.9 percent using the RR3 standard set by the American Association of Public Opinion Researchers that accounts for the eligibility of sampled addresses to be included.

We seek to make analyses using the BAS 2024 representative of Baltimore-area adults. We use several methods to do this. Addresses in Baltimore City and in neighborhoods with larger shares of Black and Latino residents (in both Baltimore City and Baltimore County) were over-sampled to ensure a larger sample of respondents who identified as Black or Latino. Neighborhoods along the proposed Red Line corridor were also over-sampled (a future publication will provide a more in-depth report of transportation in the Baltimore area). Sample weights account for the unequal probability that residents in different neighborhoods would be selected to participate in the study.

The survey weights also account for the unequal rates at which households participated in the survey after they were invited. These post-response weights were calculated so that the weighted share of respondents was the same as the share of residents in the Baltimore area by jurisdiction, race, gender, home ownership status, educational attainment, and public use microdata areas (twelve geographic areas constructed by the Census Bureau).

Statistical Uncertainty of Results and Comparisons Over Time

We strive to collect data that represent Baltimore-area residents. We cannot interview every person in the Baltimore area, which is why we rely on the sample that we described above. The fact that we cannot ask everyone means that there could be differences in the actual responses we would get if we could ask every Baltimore-area resident and the answers we got from this particular sample. We use the steps above to make sure that the sample of residents that we get is as random as possible, which allows us to use statistical methods to measure our uncertainty.

We characterize that uncertainty in the “margin of error.” The margin of error reflects the range of values where we expect the true value of the population to fall, and we expect to be correct for 95 percent of all possible samples we could draw. Therefore, it is helpful to keep in mind that the percentages reported here reflect that uncertainty.

As we noted earlier, the overall margin of error in the sample is ± 3.8 percent. The margin of error will be larger for subgroups in the population because we are relying on smaller samples. For example, the margin of error for Baltimore City residents in the sample is ± 5.1 percent and for Baltimore County residents is ± 5.3 percent. Tables of MOE for different groups used in the report are listed below.

When we make comparisons over time we also need to be aware of that uncertainty in samples from *both* years, which makes the results a little more complicated. Therefore, when we compare how results changed over time, we generally try to note where we are confident that a true change has occurred and where we are less certain because the change may reflect the particular respondents we randomly sampled each year.

Table 7.1: Number of survey respondents and margin of error by race in BAS 2024

Race	N	MOE
Black	522	+/- 6.0
White	773	+/- 5.3
Other	162	+/- 12.7

Table 7.2: Number of survey respondents and margin of error by income in BAS 2024

Income	N	MOE
Under \$30,000	256	+/- 9.1
\$30,000 to \$69,999	347	+/- 7.6
\$70,000 to \$109,999	287	+/- 8.2
\$110,000 or more	472	+/- 6.9

Acknowledgement

The Red Line supplement to the BAS 2024 was made possible by a grant from the Center for Community Health: Addressing Regional Maryland Environmental Determinants of Disease (CHARMED) funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences award 5P30ES032756.



What is Baltimore Area Survey?

The Baltimore Area Survey (BAS) is a new, annual, representative survey of Baltimore City and County residents being run by Johns Hopkins 21st Century Cities Initiative (21CC). The BAS will help scholars, community members, and policymakers learn more about the Baltimore area's strengths and challenges from residents. 21CC affiliated researchers will partner with Baltimore community leaders and policy makers to identify pertinent topics to study and then field a survey with questions on those topics to a representative address-based sample of Baltimore City and Baltimore County residents every year. Having the survey in the field on an annual basis means that policy makers and community leaders are never more than a year away from asking important questions and having timely data. The survey will also allow for measuring change over time and looking at perceptions and opinions before and after significant events.

Find out more:

Website: 21cc.jhu.edu/research/baltimore-area-survey

Email: 21CC@jhu.edu