

2020

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE POINTE COUPEE PARISH GOVERNMENT

*An analysis of the results from the  
Quality of Life Survey  
conducted in Summer 2020*



This survey took place from June 1 – July 21, 2020. Respondents could complete the survey online or with a paper survey. Paper surveys were placed throughout the parish to ensure as many people within Pointe Coupee Parish could complete the survey as possible. This survey was open to all residents of Pointe Coupee Parish.

Disclaimer: The data shown in this report come directly from the surveys received by the Policy and Advocacy Fellow (PAF), Jamie McClung. The opinions are not those of any officials in the Parish Government, but are recommendations based on the survey results. The recommendations made within this report are only recommendations from the PAF, and not actions or decisions that have been voted on or agreed to by Pointe Coupee Parish Government. This study is available to the public.

## **To the residents of Pointe Coupee,**

Undertaking a community needs survey and report started as a reminder of my graduate school statistics and analysis classes. However, looking past the numbers and the graphs, this project quickly became a personal look into the hopes, fears, and dreams of Pointe Coupee. This report is a collection of recommendations based on everything that you shared with me, but before all of the analyses, graphs, and numbers, I first wanted to thank you by talking about the feelings that I saw in your answers and in your comments.

The comments that I read continued to struggle between a desire for modernization, more retail, larger shopping centers, and another desire for a community where neighbors still know one another and the towns of Pointe Coupee all teem with small town life. Community members continued to name more opportunities for jobs, learning, and recreation as what they longed for, but they also desired greater equality. That word “equality” continued to be written in comments. There is a desire for racial equality, socio-economic equality, educational equality.

In this letter and in this report, I want to tell neighborhood leaders, community members, pastors, teachers, the same thing that I have told myself: we cannot expect the government to change everything on its own. There is so much potential in each one of us, and it is only multiplied when we come together and share our hopes and goals. Through the summer of 2020, I have spoken to so many people that have the drive and willpower to change the community for the better and to increase this desired equality in the parish. Some of the recommendations in this report require community members to make these efforts.

However, I continued to hear calls of disappointment and frustration that the traditional who-you-know network causes some individuals to have access to jobs, leadership roles, and favors that less connected people do not have. This felt-reality can make individuals tired of fighting an uphill battle. This problem is not unique to Pointe Coupee, as many small towns have unofficial networks. Adding to these unofficial channels to ensure that all people have access to opportunities, regardless of their last name, has the potential to bring the parish closer to the equality that is sought by so many.

Most importantly, before reading this report I challenge you to not jump to conclusions that these numbers were solely influenced by news media, or events external to Pointe Coupee. Instead, ask yourself: if the graphs in this report are true, what can we do in the community so that the numbers change for the better? Have conversations about the issues because talking about them is not what will be divisive. The conversations may be hard, but they will be the first step toward creating something better.

Collaborate. Work together. Build something innovative.

Jamie McClung

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# Introduction

This report is a summary of the views that were expressed in the Quality of Life Survey that was completed in June and July 2020 within Pointe Coupee Parish. 607 individuals completed the survey and then the researcher conducted 12 follow up interviews with respondents and interviews of leaders within the parish. The report takes all of that data and condenses it into a digestible amount of information for anyone in the community.

By itself, however, this report is just numbers and overviews. It needs people in the community and in local government to utilize it as a tool to acquire more services and resources for the parish. Government and community leaders could use the data to build grant applications and use it to illustrate needs in the community. Residents can use the report to engage in conversations with community leaders. This report cannot be the last step, but must be the opening for a conversation. It is not complete, but is accurate, in that it does illustrate the desires of different groups of people for change in the parish and greater opportunities.

## How to Use this Report

This report contains different sections, which provide recommendations for different focus areas. Depending on your role in the community and what you are trying to understand, going directly to specific recommendations is the best way to take advantage of this report. Outside of the five formal, written recommendations, there are graphs from any additional survey questions that were not used for the written recommendations.

Sections within the data portion of this report are divided along intersectionalities of race, location, and/or income in different ways to determine how specific groups answered the survey questions. Some topics, such as infrastructure and recreation, require division of data by geography. However, quality of life can be evaluated by all the intersections of all three topics: geographic location, race, and income. Evaluating different parts of the community allows a holistic understand of which groups of people are most content with the services provided to them and which groups need to be met with to understand their misgivings.

## What Lens Do You Have?

Regardless of your role in the community, you can make use of this report. As you go through this report, try and suspend your own perception of the situation in Pointe Coupee. Instead view this report as a collection and aggregation of the perceptions of others, combined together to illustrate how citizens in the parish view their community.

As government leaders -- the main audience for this report -- know that your reality and understanding of the work you are doing is not being questioned, instead this is meant to give you an understanding of the lived realities of the constituents you are

meant to serve. If their realities are at odds with your own, then ask yourselves, “How do we create more visible efforts and programs? How do we re-align these two realities?” Intentions do not matter if progress cannot be seen or felt. For local government leaders, this report can assist in decision making and resource allocation. Understanding how different parts of the community think about roads, services, housing, or education (all sections in this report) can help decision makers more effectively decide what programs will be most successful in the community.

Community leaders within different localities, churches, or organizations can use this report to lobby the government to address the needs in their community. The report clearly highlights the different strengths and struggles of local communities across Pointe Coupee Parish, so leaders within those communities can look specifically at the graphs divided by geographic regions to understand how the communities within the parish differ from one another.

Business leaders can look specifically at which residents are most concerned about economic growth to understand how they should invest. There is a tangible desire for new retail and restaurant options, which means an opportunity for profit for business owners. However, also stressed in the survey responses was a lack of equal opportunity, so business leaders should ensure inclusive access and growth once they invest.

## Data Collection

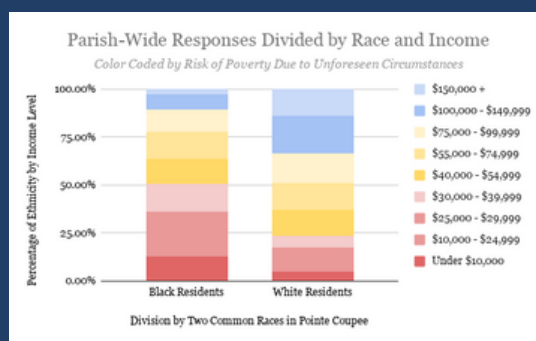
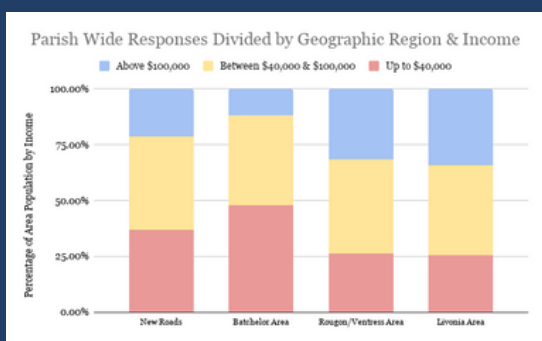
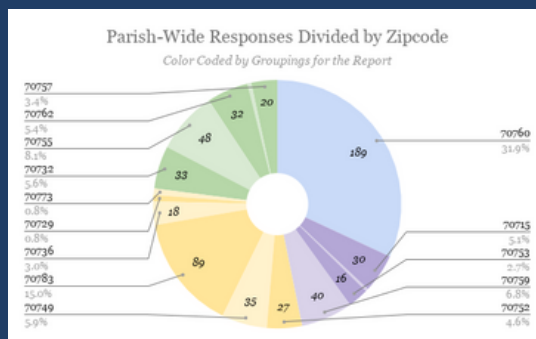
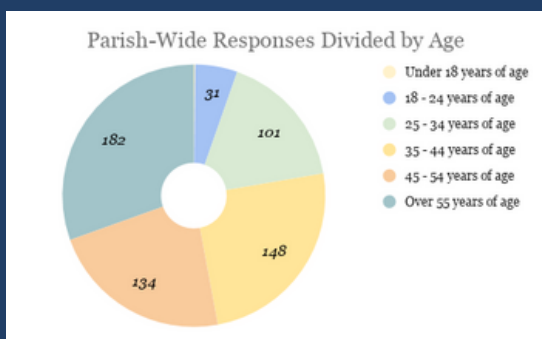
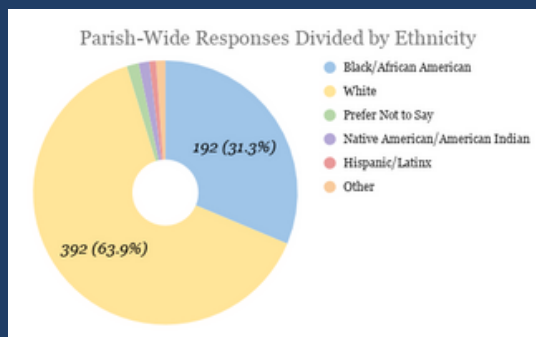
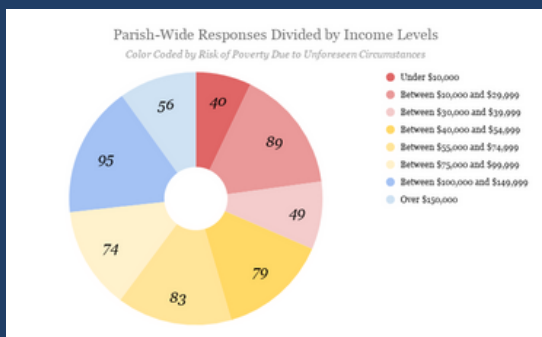
There were 607 responses to the Pointe Coupee Parish Quality of Life Survey. These responses were parish wide and represented regions and race/ethnicity as shown in the charts on the next page. Once results were collected, they were divided into subgroups based on these identities. I used these groups to determine if people in different parts of the parish or in different groups reacted differently to the questions and statements posed in the survey. A comparison of simple averages for groups will be displayed throughout this survey, but a t-statistic test was done to ensure that there are significant differences in the numbers.

Through this quantitative data and analysis of qualitative data through short answer questions, this report takes the lived experiences of residents across the parish to try to give recommendations to parish leaders about next steps and focus areas.

This survey was designed to get people to give honest opinions and because of the small, close knit community, there was an option for residents to be anonymous. This was designed to encourage as many people as possible to complete the survey. A large portion of responses came from individuals that remained anonymous, and a handful of individuals commented that they were intentionally doing so. For that reason, the option to stay anonymous does seem to have encouraged people to participate. However, this same feature means that we cannot be certain that people from outside the parish did not participate. Individuals did have to identify their communities and zip codes, but not specific addresses.

A final possible shortcoming of the report is that the Google Forms program duplicated some responses. Most were found by the researcher, but some may not have been. Because of the large number of responses, the small number of duplicates does not significantly affect the averages, but it should be noted that there could possibly be duplicates. Lastly, this should not be considered comprehensive. This should not be the final part of the conversation, but a starting point. This report can be used to identify needs of the parish as a whole and the four broad regions (New Roads, Batchelor and Morganza area, Livonia and Fordoche Area, and Rougon and Ventress area), but does not give a detailed division of data by zip code. This analysis can be done by others with the original, anonymous data, but this report is not that focused. Below is a snapshot of who responded within the Parish. Because of the large number of responses, we can take these to be accurate representations of the Parish as a whole, meaning that the numbers in this report have less than a 5% margin of error.\* For all graphs on race in this report, only Black/African American and White responses are used because of the low rate of response from other populations.

## Demographic Statistics



\*Sample size calculator was used from: [calculator.net](http://calculator.net)

## TOP FIVE

# TAKEAWAYS

# 1

## Community Equity

1 in 5 residents in Pointe Coupee believe that they lack access to a quality life because of their income. Black residents are 8 times more likely to feel they do not have access to a quality life due to race.

# 2

## Jobs & the Economy

Low-income residents of Batchelor, Innis, Lettsworth, and Morganza rated their access to jobs the lowest across the parish. This raises questions of access to transportation and/or local jobs.

# 3

## Education

Improving the education system in the parish was the NUMBER ONE response to the question, "What issue should parish government focus on most in the next five years?" 22.5% of responses named education.

# 4

## Infrastructure

Parish public works officials have worked on improving system wide road and drainage systems in the parish. However, there are widespread calls for continued focus on roads and drainage, along with wifi infrastructure.

# 5

## Future of the Parish

On average people disagreed with the statement, "My children and grandchildren will continue to live and work in Pointe Coupee Parish." Only approximately 1/3 of respondents agreed with the statement in any way.



# Recommendation #1

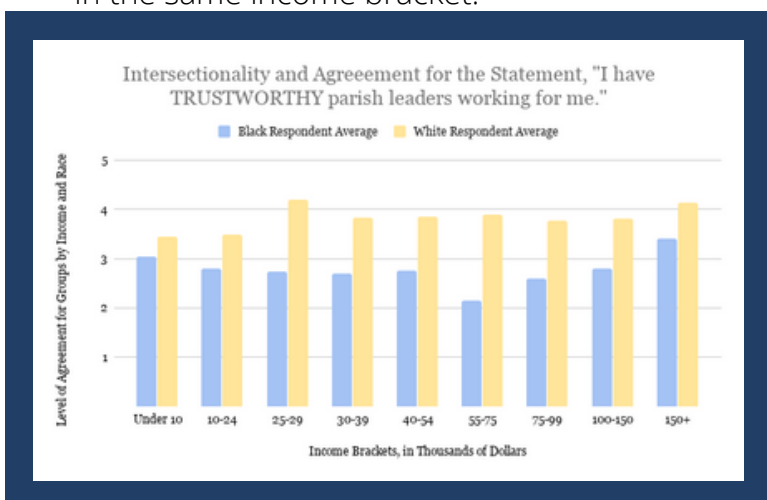
## Move from Involving to Collaborating

Recommendation: Create an online platform meant specifically for residents to provide concerns, ideas, and questions, and a specific individual to answer or implement these concerns/ideas.

Accountability and a desire for a greater sense of community made up nearly 10% of responses to the question, “What should parish government focus on most in the next 5 years?” Many of the concerns about accountability and bridging gaps in the community also came out in answers that were focused around improving education, job opportunities, and access to food. The Institute for Local Government has steps to increase the ease of input for community members. Pointe Coupee is already conducting some practices, but could expand to even more programs that allow for residents to have input in decision making.

**“[Make] sure families in all parts of the parish have access to food (namely fresh produce!) without having to drive far.” - New Roads resident**

Increasing space for community concerns about all of these issues through ensuring community members have a formal space to voice their concerns and an individual within the government to ensure concerns are heard is the first step towards building increased community trust in the government and other leadership bodies. The statement, “I have trustworthy parish government leaders working for me and my loved ones,” had mixed results, illustrated in the graph below. From the graph, the groups that have the least trust in elected officials are low-income White residents, and middle income Black residents. However, it is also clear that Black residents in all income groups have significantly lower trust in elected officials than White residents in the same income bracket.



From research done by the Institute of Local Government (ILG), 35% of residents in communities across the country have helped solve community problems. However, this does not mean that they have provided input to government bodies like the Parish Council. ILG’s process illustration lists steps to gradually increase community engagement from a

diverse set of voices; Pointe Coupee Parish Government is already conducting some of these initiatives, so adding to current actions will only increase the presence of community members in Parish decision making.

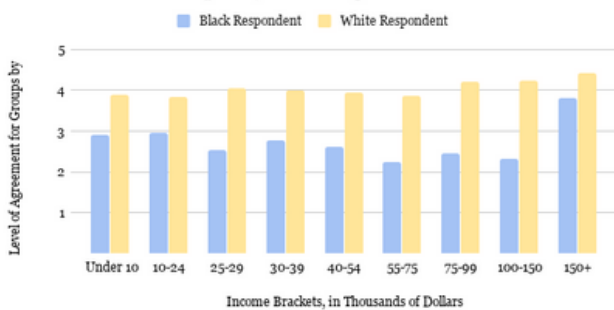
The Parish's use of Facebook and the parish website, along with this unique community needs survey, illustrate that leaders are already informing, consulting, and involving community input from diverse sources. Taking the next step to collaborate with community members would mean creating unique planning and reporting e-platforms.

Recommendations to support e-collaboration with community members, with additional funding, include: rotating meetings to different areas of the parish by using local government buildings or public buildings and encouraging neighborhood leaders to gain feedback from individuals who do not have access to internet or technology to share neighborhood concerns through collaboration tools. Increased access to parish government officials will also increase equity, if the concerns and comments are addressed adequately.

### How to Submit a Virtual Public Comment to Parish Council

1. Download the agenda from the Parish website at: [pcparish.org/council-meetings](http://pcparish.org/council-meetings)
2. Make sure that the issue you want to speak about is on the agenda.
3. Email the comment to [publiccomment@pcparish.org](mailto:publiccomment@pcparish.org) with the following:
  - Your name
  - Your address
  - The agenda item
  - Your comment

Intersectionality and Agreement for the Statement, "I have access to a quality of life regardless of RACE."



Concluding, people have appreciated the expanded communication of parish government officials through Facebook. They enjoy having transparent government messaging. However, for individuals that do not have Facebook, or for those that have concerns that they may want to voice privately to a person in parish government, increasing access to officials at structured times or virtually through structured

systems will allow increased accountability and transparency. As community members begin understanding these structured systems of feedback, it will hopefully encourage them to use these times to bring comments and complaints forward, so that parish employees can use more work time accomplishing tasks and less time answering phone calls.

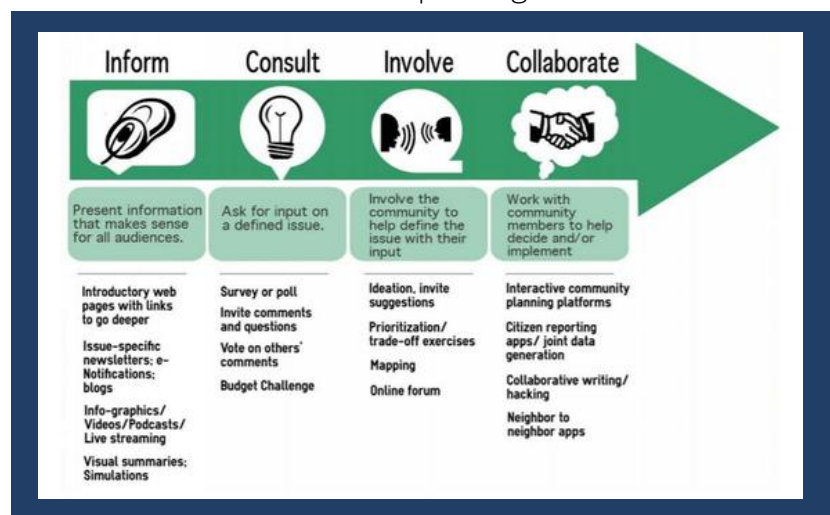


Image to the right: Process illustration from the Institute for Local Government's report, "Broadening Public Participation Using Online Engagement Tools." Page 5.

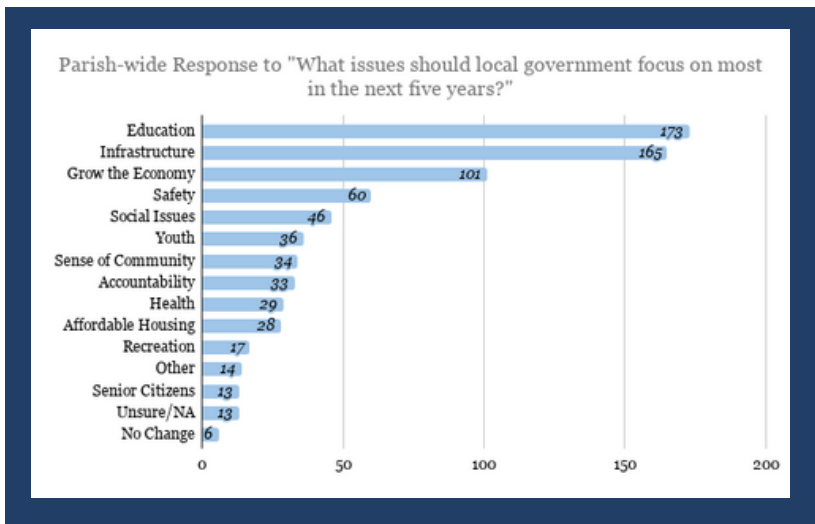
# Recommendation #2

## Incentivize & Build Knowledge

Recommendation: Ensure growth is equitable by building knowledge for businesses owners who identify as people of color, women, veterans, and other minority populations; expand business opportunities outside of New Roads/Hospital Road.

Incentives for business investment often come from the state and federal level. However, a strong local and regional support system for businesses can be a factor in a business remaining and/or expanding within the parish. The Pointe Coupee Chamber of Commerce already works with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and Louisiana Economic Development (LED) on efforts of business retention and expansion, small business assistance, and information sharing.

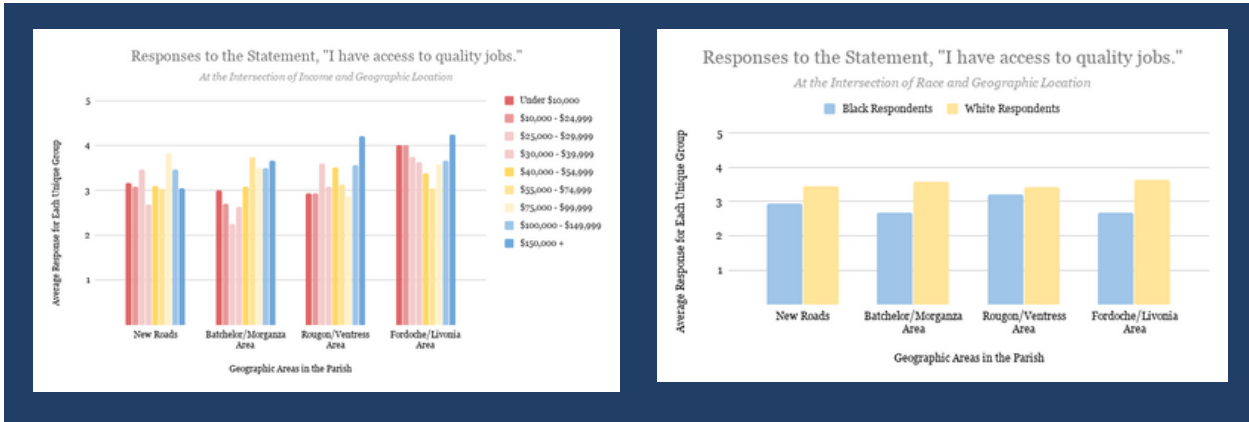
Survey responses called for increased industry and job opportunities in the parish. Several opportunities for more industry are in the process of being created. Continuing to grow existing businesses is what creates 80% of job growth, according to the Chamber, though, so focusing on growing the business already here could allow for greater growth than new businesses. To parallel to a recent effort at the governor's office called the Main Street Revitalization Grant, this recommendation for economic growth is to ensure that growth is equitable. This Main Street Revitalization Grant focuses on minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses for the first 60 days, and for at least \$40 million in funding across the state. Ensuring that these special groups that have the least access to traditional business networks have funding is what the grant is doing by prioritizing these



three groups. It is what the Parish should do by ensuring businesses that fall into these categories are also able to participate in and access regional or local networks.

Through conversations with the Chamber of Commerce and Louisiana Economic Development (LED), it was clear that some franchises, such as Raising Cane's, will not come to New Roads for some time. In fact, businesses often have a minimum threshold for making an investment in a community. For Raising Cane's, that threshold is a population of 40,000 people in a 5 mile radius. Instead of trying to attract larger corporations, the Chamber of Commerce can continue encouraging rural investment from rural communities and community members.

Despite more jobs coming from expanding businesses than from new businesses, a mix of new and expanding businesses for localities outside of New Roads would most encourage diversity in the economy and in the workforce. While there is agreement that more jobs are needed, the graph below illustrates that there is diversity in the belief that there is currently access to quality jobs for residents. Those who are most discontented seem to be Black Residents in Batchelor and Livonia areas, and middle



to low income residents across the parish. Some of this discontentment could be an inability to access jobs due to lack of transportation and lack of local places of employment. Other discontent for middle income respondents could come from lack of advancement, which a few respondents credited to leadership positions remaining within specific families. Creating formal job training programs and paths for all residents could create more visible equity in the parish.

Lastly, there is potential for growth waiting in Pointe Coupee, as shown by certified sites, which reduce the risks for development by providing data on potential development costs, environmental concerns, utilities, and access. These will encourage larger national and international businesses to come to Pointe Coupee -- if the workforce here is qualified for the corporations. There are opportunities for investors, but ensuring these investment opportunities also provide job opportunities for individuals across the spectrum will continue to increase equity in Pointe Coupee. Moving forward, equity in job training, advancement, and access will help encourage residents to invest in the parish, but will also assist in creating a trained and ready workforce. A quality workforce will also come with the next recommendation of this report: improving education.

Sources:  
 National Law Review. [Louisiana Main Street Grant Programs](#).  
 Louisiana Economic Development. [Interactive Shovel Ready Site Map](#).

### List of Certified Sites in Pointe Coupee Parish

Pointe Coupee Parish Port Industrial Park  
 Lettsworth; 44.57 acres

Kent Site  
 Batchelor; 902 acres

New Roads Industrial Park  
 New Roads; 71.571 acres

Angel Ranch Site  
 New Roads; 731.56 acres

New Roads Shopping Center  
 New Roads; 13,000 square feet

Moseley North Site  
 New Roads; 304.24 acres

Cleco Cajun Industrial Park  
 New Rads; 640 acres

Pointe Coupee Power Park  
 Jarreau; 1,541.95 acres

Woodley Site  
 Livonia; 341.42 acres

# Recommendation #3

## Expand Access in Education

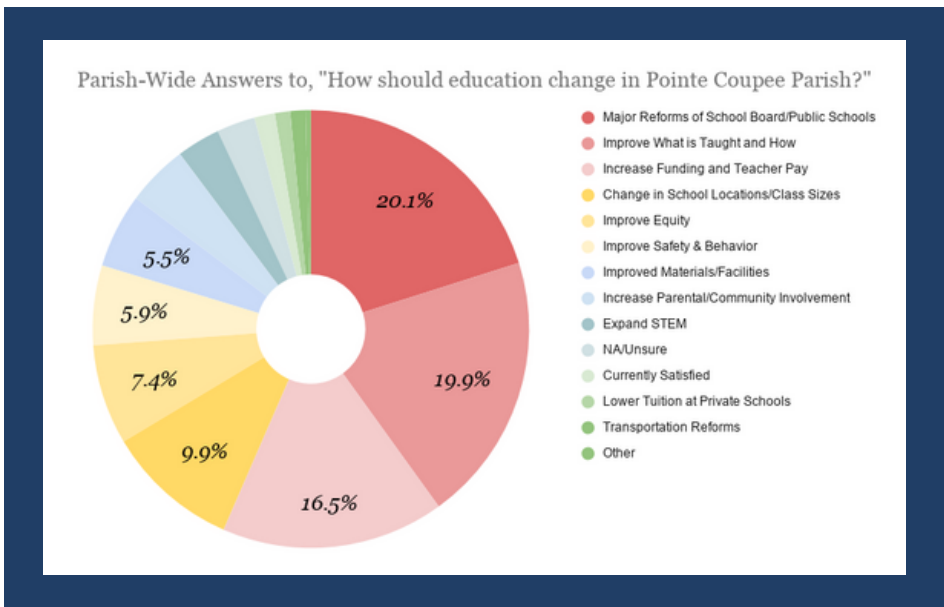
Recommendation: Create online streaming options for school board meetings and parent/teacher groups to increase representation of community members for transformation of public education in Pointe Coupee. Continue to increase support of all teachers and schools in Pointe Coupee.

Pointe Coupee Parish School System is small and embedded into the community. The central office building in New Roads is open Monday through Friday and there is an open door policy towards parents and teachers, according to central office leaders. A question must only travel through a few people before it reaches the superintendent, or you can directly send it via email.

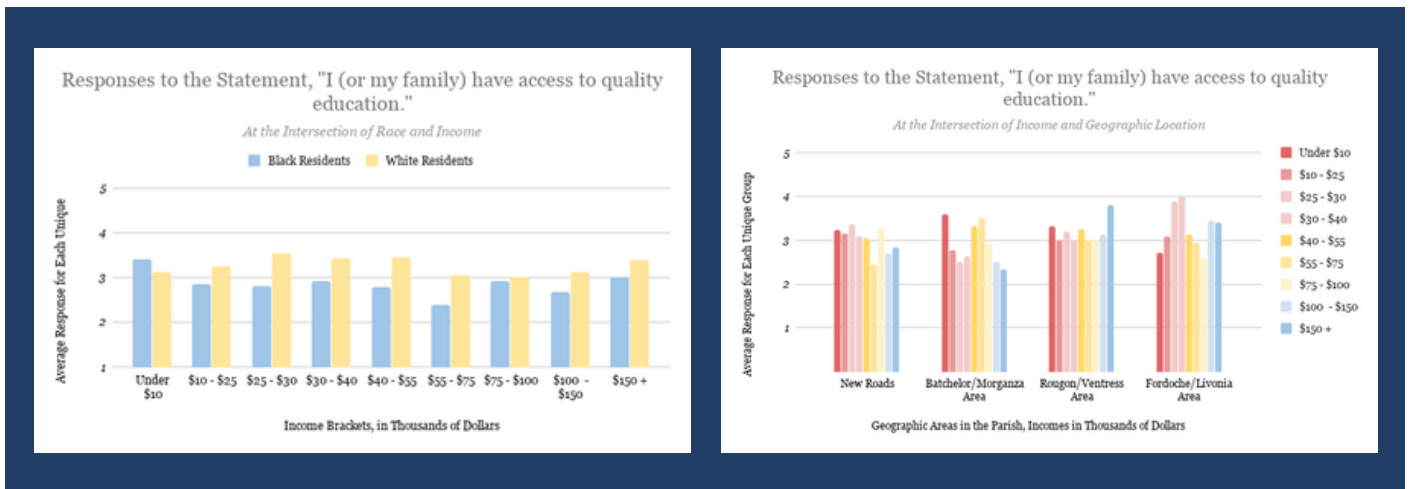
Despite this readiness to be available, there are not formal places to bring requests that parents and teachers can access. These groups could include parent-teacher associations (PTAs) or school improvement groups that are jointly chaired by parents and teachers and bring concerns to school leaders. The first step to increase access is to simply create a formal site to stream the school board meetings and accept public comments from virtual viewers, instead of requiring people that want to provide public comment to be present physically at the school board meetings. This is even more necessary during times when many people cannot come to public places like the current COVID-19 pandemic.

1 in 5 responses for the survey at the parish level requested major reforms for the school board and public schools. A nearly equal number of responses said they wanted the schools to improve what is taught and how that information is taught in school. From both of these responses, there was an overwhelming negative feeling about large processes happening at schools, in terms of teachers, leadership, and curriculum. More initiatives for not only transparency through information sharing, but transparency through teamwork allows parents and teachers to take part in decision making and

A breakdown of the responses across the parish. Included in the most popular category, "Major reforms of school board and public schools" were responses that included comments about "improving public schools", "many things need to be changed", and/or "school board reforms". Answers included in the second category, "Improve what is taught and how", include: "increased vocational classes", "better training", and "improved curriculum".



alleviate many concerns about how the school system cares for its students. Many times, the current school board meetings are during the week, when parents are just getting off of work, and do not want to go into New Roads, if they are from other parts of the parish, or teachers who commute from Baton Rouge are ready to commute back to Baton Rouge. Making it possible for individuals to attend meetings virtually allows more people to be involved. As shown below, there is a difference between responses along racial lines, with Black respondents being much more likely to rate education quality as poor. Geographic and income divisions show diversity in which income levels agree and disagree across localities. There could be many reasons for this and needs further study.



To address other issues that community members had with the school system -- low teacher pay and a perceived lack of qualified teachers -- the school board and the parish should consider innovative methods of attracting teachers to the parish, beyond just paying more. With the proximity of Louisiana State University and Southern University, receiving student teachers for their classroom practicum would be a great way to make PCP more known to people from outside the area and encourage qualified teachers that are passionate about public, rural education. Southern University already does practicums with at least two EBR public schools. It is unclear where LSU conducts its education practicum programs.

All of these additional recommendations, however, could be added to or improved through the creation of parent teacher associations (PTAs) or school improvement groups. Along with more public school board meetings accessible to more residents, groups for improvement that engage all residents, regardless of familial connections will improve public schools through the increase of idea sharing, and a feeling of ownership from more families. Investing in public schools is not taking away from private schools, but instead is making sure those who cannot afford private schools are still able to access quality, fair education.

Sources:  
 Southern University. [Clinical Partnerships and Practice](#).

# Recommendation #4

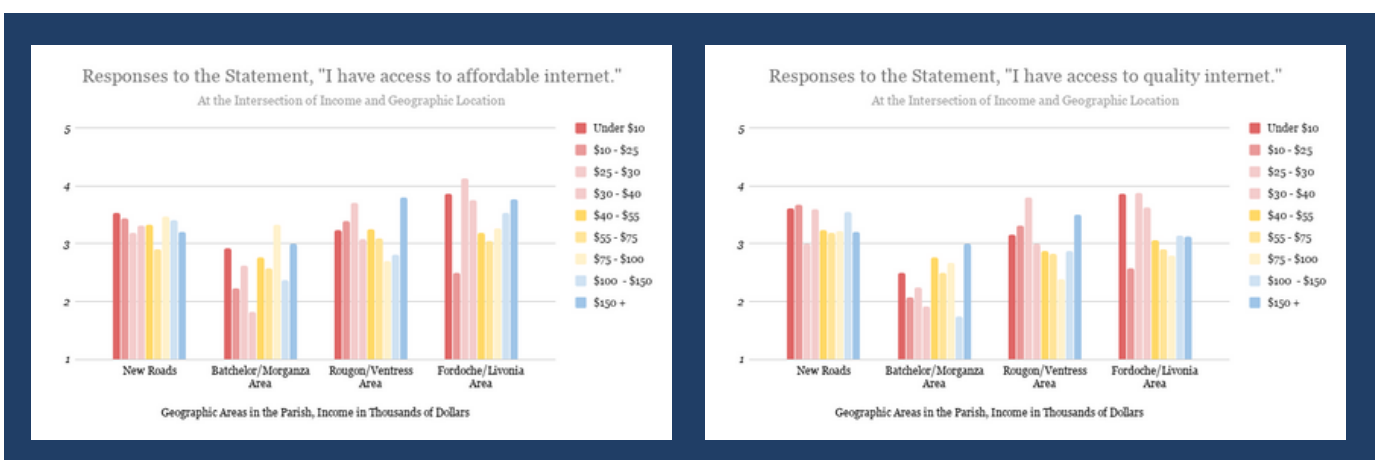
## Expand Broadband & Understanding

Recommendation: Expand broadband networks and increase competition in the broadband market, but also increase information sharing to help residents understand the efforts of parish government in traditional infrastructure.

One resident I talked to said that President Thibaut brought Pointe Coupee Parish into the 20th century. Although the comment was meant to be a recognition of advancing the community in terms of technology and modernity, it was also a comment on how far some people in the parish think we have to go before truly being considered a modern, state-of-the-art parish. Modernization means bringing reliable WiFi throughout the parish. A different route of modernization is traditional infrastructure. Through discussions with public works officials in the parish, the efforts to make large scale drainage and roads improvements have largely not yet been felt by some residents. They are focused on system improvements as opposed to patches from previous years. Increasing education around how system improvements will improve lives for all residents and which roads are the responsibility of parish officials and which are the responsibility of the state will help residents know who they should contact about road issues.

### *Broadband Internet Connectivity*

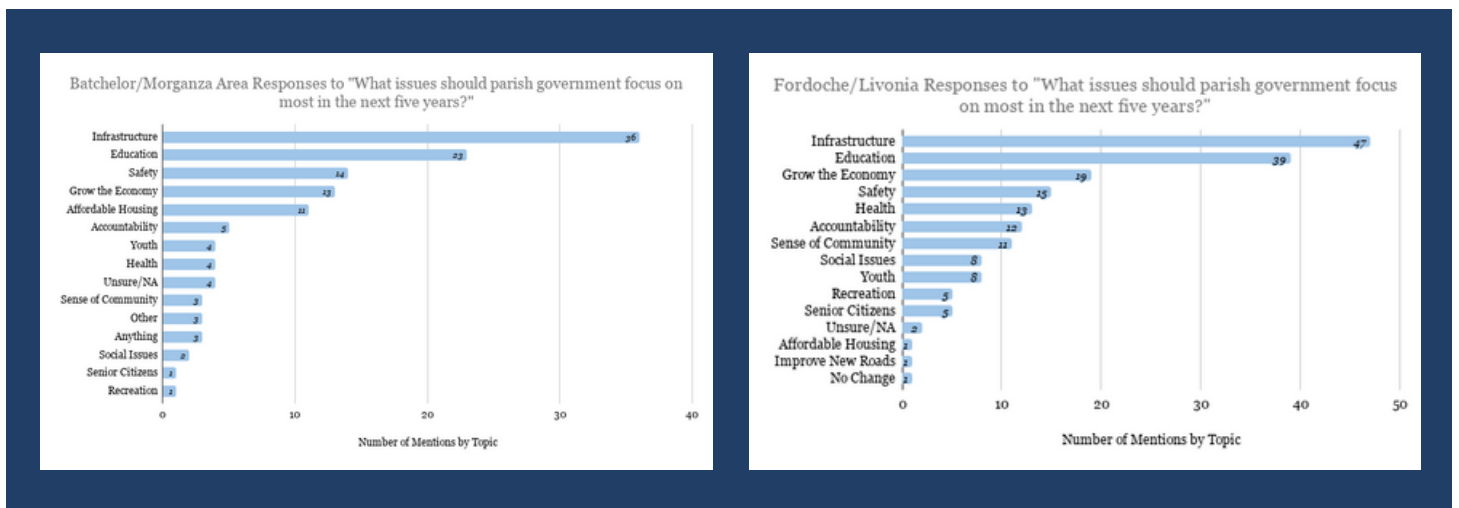
Despite STAR Communications having a USDA Grant for rural broadband connection, families still rate their internet connection with one of the lowest approval ratings of the survey. As illustrated in the graphs on this page, the region where residents feel least connected to quality WiFi is Morganza, Batchelor, Innis, and Lettsworth. Across regions, there is a slight trend of middle-income respondents feeling most disappointed about the quality and affordability of their internet connections. Especially because of the increase in demand for connectivity because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ever increasing need for virtual schooling, expanding locations for individuals to access the internet, particularly in rural areas of the parish, is necessary.



These possibilities for connectivity should be outside of the STAR network. Increasing options for WiFi connectivity through offering public places for connecting safely to WiFi would allow community members to be more connected. Additionally, it would increase competition for STAR Communications and encourage them to increase their service quality. Even if improvement to broadband networks is not cost effective, individuals in hard to connect areas will benefit from the ability to connect to hot spots in public spaces like churches, schools, clinics, and convenient stores. This portion of the recommendation is not just for the parish government. If community groups or churches recognize this as a need, organizing to purchase hot spots for community use is also something that can be done by individual organizations.

### *Increased Infrastructure Information Sharing*

Increased information sharing and education Information sharing was one of the largest issues that the survey illustrated. Nearly 1 of 3 of respondents from the northern end of the parish named infrastructure as a focus issue that should be addressed. Approximately 1 in 4 residents of the Livonia, Maringouin, and Fordoche area named infrastructure as a focus area. Those areas' priorities are illustrated in the graphs below. Infrastructure is one of the most popular areas on people's minds, along with education and the economy. Many people continued to name drainage and roads as the issues they wanted addressed, but during a conversation with the public works department it was clear that 1) they are changing how drainage and sewage has been addressed, going from case by case solutions to system solutions to increase efficiency and 2) many of the roads in the parish are state roads, not maintained by the parish.



From these two understandings, the recommendation for roads and drainage infrastructure is to increase information sharing with the public to help increase understanding of drainage processes and who to call about road improvements. For example, the state is going to begin repairs on LA-418 announced on July 9, 2020. Understanding which roads are maintained by the parish and which are maintained by the state and how to contact the right institutions can help people take control of their road networks more effectively. A large number of roads in the parish are state roads: LA-1, LA-10, LA-77, LA-984, LA-415. Directions for contacting state DOT officials is on the next page.





# Recommendation #5

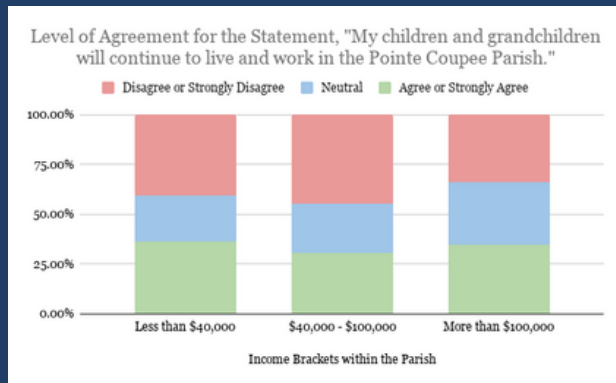
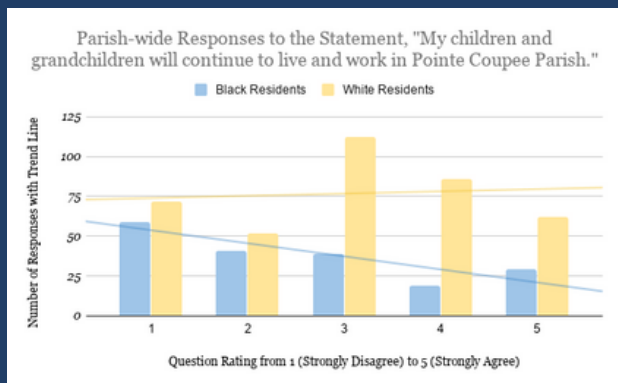
## Build a Vision & Follow Through

Recommendation: Build a vision through mapping a plan for the future in terms of education, the economy, and recreation; providing updates and progress reports that all residents can follow.

Residents do not believe that their children will remain in the parish. In contrast, they do enjoy living in the community themselves. The overwhelming request of residents to improve education and the economy are likely culprits to the reason behind the lack of belief that their future descendants will remain in the parish. In order to draw more young people and families into the parish, there needs to be benefits in education, recreation, and the economy that they can envision in Pointe Coupee.

The agree/disagree statement that received the most disagreement was “My children and grandchildren will continue to live and work in Pointe Coupee Parish.” The graph at the bottom of the page shows responses in terms of race and income. Across the parish, the average of responses was 2.84 -- between neutral and disagreement with the statement. Even more concerning is that the average rating for all middle income respondents, besides the ones on the North End, are also below neutrality. This is concerning because the middle income residents are the residents who are the tax base for the parish.

One respondent said it in a straightforward manner, “Fix the schools and we’ll stay.” Another noted that there are three different school systems -- Catholic school, False River Academy, and the public school system -- which creates inequalities that young families feel with their school aged children. A repetitive theme in comments was that education, jobs, and the economy as a whole were always grouped together as focus areas that needed to be addressed. A handful of people even responded to the question, “How should education in Pointe Coupee be changed?” with an answer that called on improved public school education in order for more businesses to come to the parish. Citizens recognize that unless we offer business leaders and investors an educated workforce and a quality public school system to send their own children, we

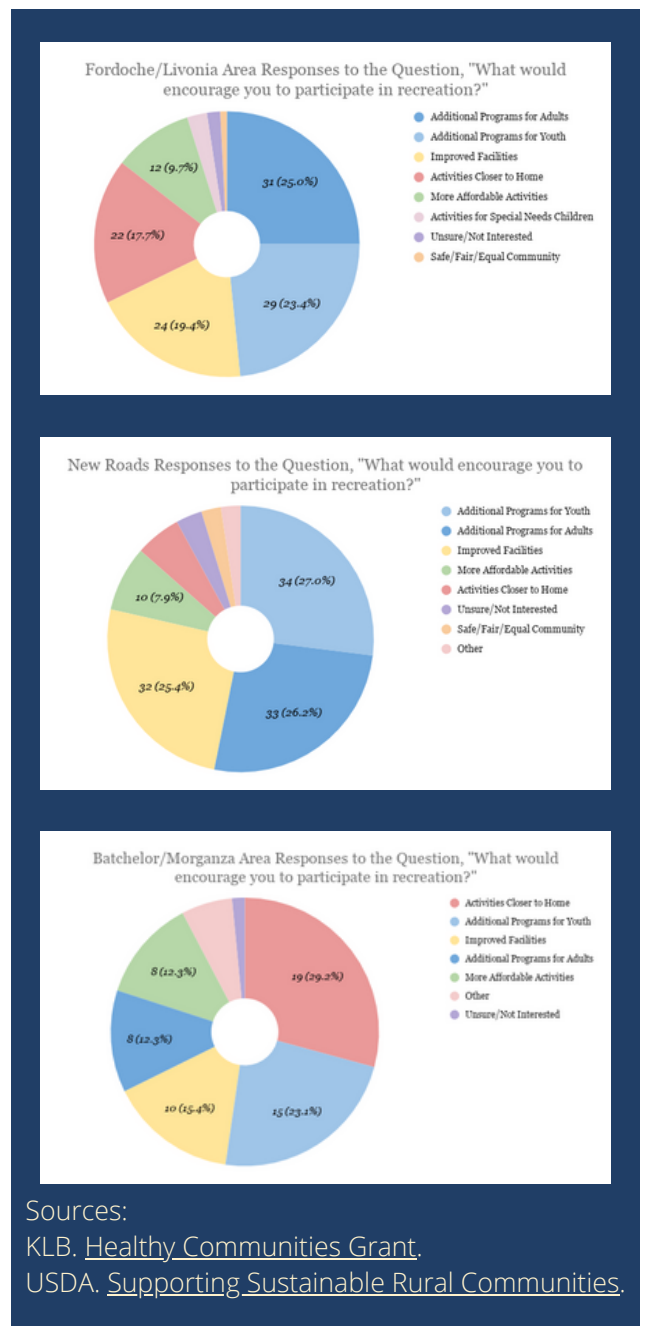


will not look as viable as West Feliciana or Zachary. Of course, without tax dollars to support improvements and recognition that quality public schools will support all residents, then improving public schools will be difficult.

Beyond education, young people want more activities and residents of all age groups said they would be interested in adult sports leagues, some even mentioning expanding recreation to water sports on False River. Increasing activities and recreational businesses, particularly around the unique body of water that False River is, would keep more young families in New Roads because of the recreation options. 136 people in the parish, *1 of every 5 responses*, said having more adult recreation activities would encourage them to participate in recreation. Just over *1 in 4 responses* said more activities for youth would convince them to participate. People want to see recreation expanded -- several asked for more options and not just sports. Officials at parish recreation have stated that they are also willing to offer more activities, they just need to know that people want them. The graphs below illustrate the requests by specific geographic region. The Fordoche/Livonia area's biggest wish is for adult activities.

In conjunction with both of these recommendations, continuing to bring Pointe Coupee into the 21st century through sustainable development and eco-living could make the parish an eco-leader in the state of Louisiana. There are grants available to increase the presence of green initiatives in the parish, including the Keep Louisiana Beautiful: Healthy Communities Grant that awards \$2,500 to \$8,000 to organizations and governments for projects to clean up communities. This is a state-level example of grant options, but there are national organizations to green communities, as well.

In addition to cleaning communities, having increased options for sustainable, eco-friendly businesses to come to Pointe Coupee will increase businesses in the parish, and depending on the business, jobs will increase as well. Looking towards the future through eco-business, focusing on supporting public schools, and ensuring that people in the parish have access to jobs, in all ways. This final recommendation is a combination of the recommendations before it, but the graphs within this recommendation illustrate that we need to address these issues to build confidence about the future.

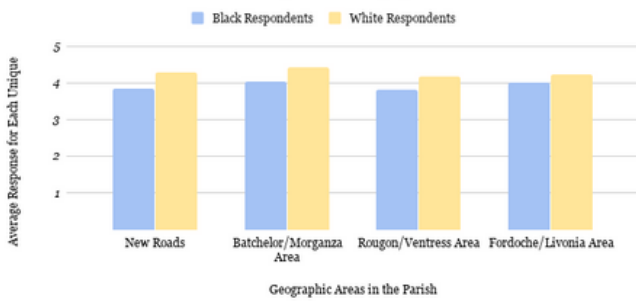


# BREAKDOWN OF RESULTS BY FOCUS AREA

# Community Statistics

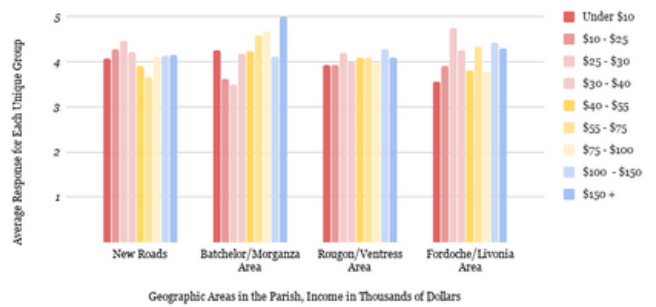
Parish Responses to the Question, "How much do you enjoy living in your community?"

At the Intersection of Race and Geographic Location



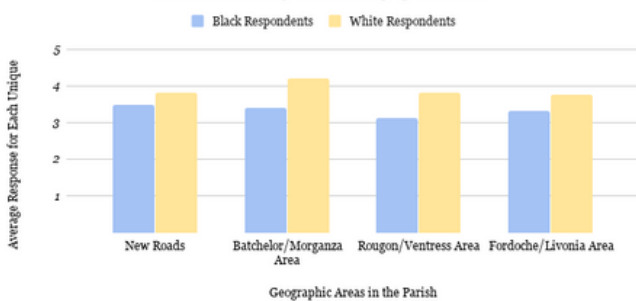
Parish Responses to the Question, "How much do you enjoy living in your community?"

At the Intersection of Income and Geographic Location



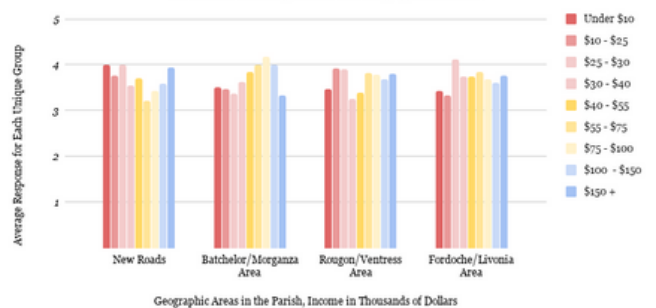
Parish Responses to the Question, "How strong is the sense of community in your community?"

At the Intersection of Race and Geographic Location



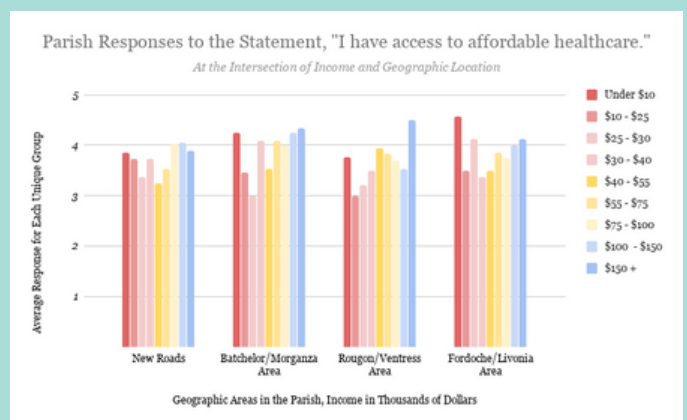
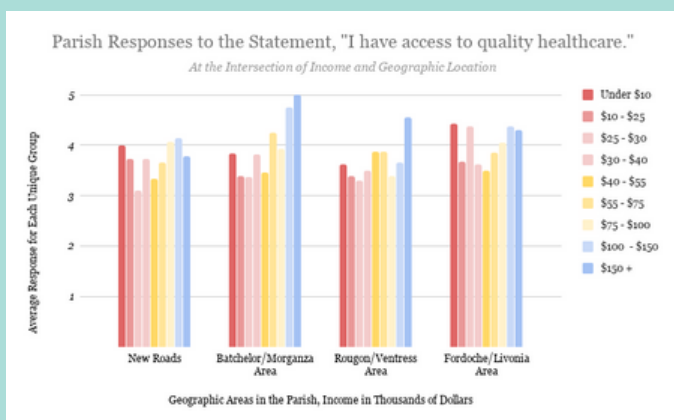
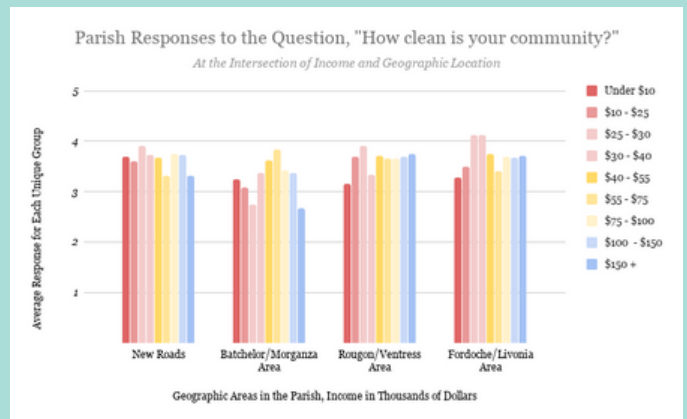
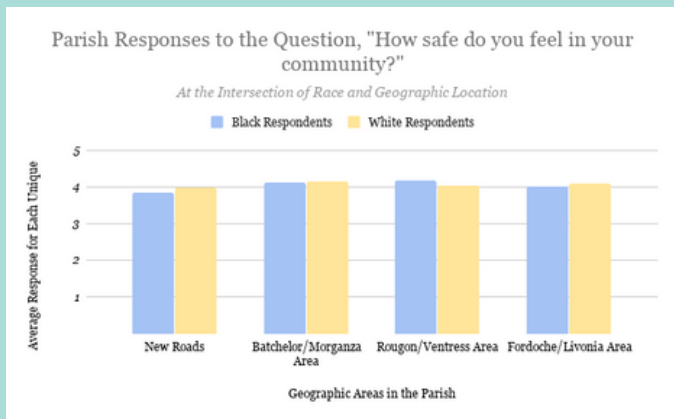
Parish Responses to the Question, "How strong is the sense of community in your community?"

At the Intersection of Income and Geographic Location



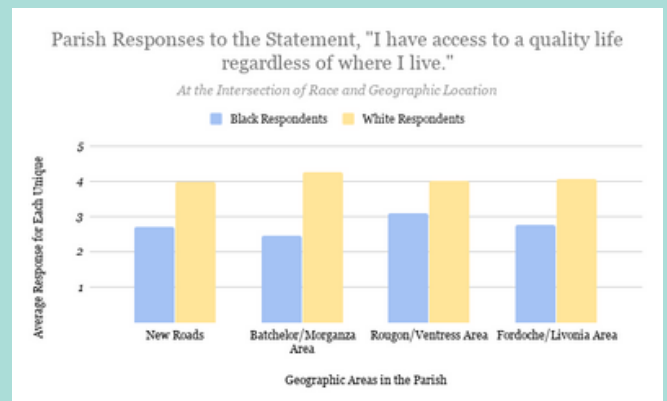
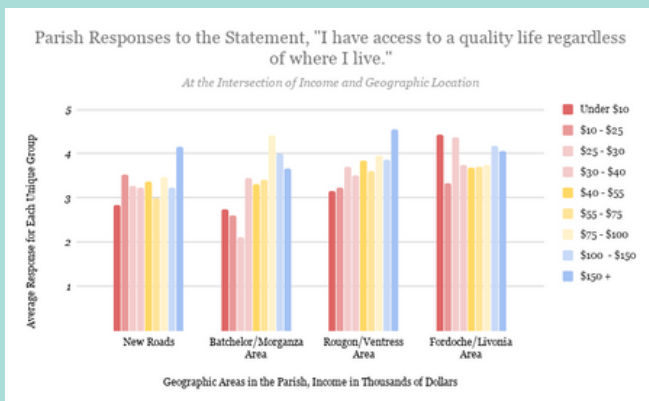
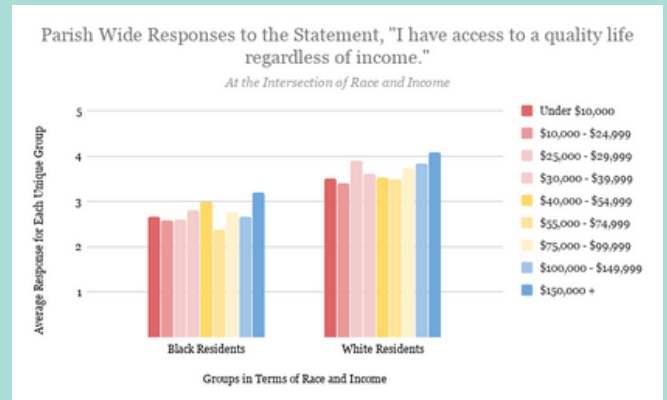
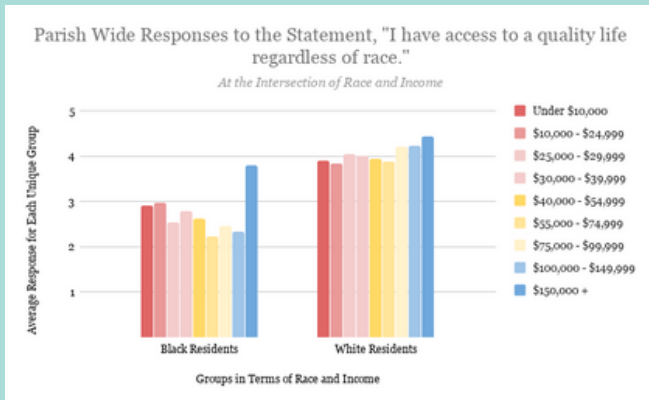
A wide range of community groups do enjoy living in their communities. The average is slightly lower for Black residents, but still above the neutral level. As for income differences, it depends on which locality in the parish the respondent resides in. Rougon, Ventress, and Jarreau have all income levels around the same average level of enjoyment. New Roads middle income residents have the lowest level of contentment; for the North End and the Fordoche, Livonia, Maringouin areas community contentment fluctuates as income rises. Answers about the sense of community tend to mirror differences in the levels of contentment in the community, but are lower across the board. An important question is how can we increase the sense of community in localities across the parish? How can we build community?

# Safety, Cleanliness, and Health Statistics



This is a collection of different topics, but grouped because of the relationship between safety, mental health, physical health, and the cleanliness of the natural environment. For all statistical groupings, people rated their feeling of safety around a 4 on the 5 point scale. People do feel mostly safe in Pointe Coupee. Cleanliness fluctuates in different areas, with the residents of the Batchelor, Lettsworth, Morganza region rating their communities the least clean. Encouraging cleaning programs with the earlier mentioned Healthy Communities Grant could benefit the North End. As for health care, there tends to be U-shapes across the region in access to affordable healthcare: low income and high income residents believe they access affordable healthcare, where the middle income residents are in less agreement with that statement. Quality care is different, particularly for the North End area, where I would then ask: Do low-income residents believe that they lack access to quality healthcare because they are unable to reach a clinic/care center close to their homes and are less likely to have transportation to a care center?

# Access to a Quality Life Statistics



These four graphs illustrate the effects of policies through history on groups of people in a community, whether the group is low-income, rural, Black, White, or some combination of these groups. There is not space to discuss the history of policies, up to recent history, that led to a feeling of inequality, but we should recognize that this inequality exists, and then begin asking ourselves what we can do *now that the damage is done*. How can we begin addressing the different view points we see in these four graphs?

Key differences of note are the following: Black respondents rate their access to a quality life significantly lower than White respondents, even in the same income brackets. When discussing access to a quality life regardless of race, even Black respondents at the highest income bracket do not rate their access to a quality of life higher than that of low-income White residents. Rural, North End respondents of low-income or who identify as Black are most likely to rate their access to a quality life as low.

When we look just at White respondents, low-income White responses are lower when asked about access to a quality life regardless of race, than high-income White responses. This is significant because of historic practices that placed low-income White residents in opposition to low-income Black residents. Examining the question of access to a quality life regardless of *income*, then, we see that every group besides middle income Black respondents rate their access to quality of life *lower* when talking about income than when talking about race - even high income residents! I cannot explain that, but it is definitely unexpected.

# Moving Forward

Reading this whole report can be overwhelming. There can be a feeling that there is so much that needs to change, so much room for improvement. However, there are also positive findings. People *do* enjoy living in their communities. They *do* have access to healthcare. Many groups *do* believe that their parish government officials in this new system of governance have made positive changes in the last year. People are struggling, but many say that they love New Roads and Pointe Coupee, despite the difficulties.

The next step is to start having conversations about how to address these difficulties and doing so that is equitable to all citizens. Addressing systems - like the public works team is doing with the drainage system and the roads - on a high level to make lasting change is what will help everyone. It is what has been done when governance systems changed, and when school board members received term limits. It can happen with other issues that involve access to food, access to quality education, access to a quality life.

If there are parts of this report that you have read and doubt, go ask individuals that you have not spoken to before, or that have a different identity than you. Even though statistically this report is accurate, every view in the parish is not represented. Every individual did not contribute. Overall trends mean one thing, but if conversations get started with people that are diverse and come from different areas or different ethnic backgrounds, that will be what changes the parish. This packet of paper will not.

Moving forward, challenge the parish to collaborate and build a community is innovative. A lack of funds or a lack of materials drives innovation. How can Pointe Coupee create something that is different than West Feliciana or Zachary or other surrounding parishes, but just as meaningful and successful?

**Questions about the survey, the report or the data used within can be sent to:**

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**Brown University BA'17, University of Notre Dame MGA'19**

**Questions about the impact or plans moving forward can be sent to:**

**Pointe Coupee Parish Government**

**(225) 638-9556**

**Submitting a concern or question at: <http://pcparish.org/contact/>**

**Or by contacting your Parish Council Member through contact info on the following webpage: <http://pcparish.org/parish-council/>**