



**Morton Housing Market  
Market Research**

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MTG 341  
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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The survey's objectives were based upon on our initial meeting with Lenora Fisher, the Community Development Director for the Morton Economic Development Center. We were informed of the city's concerns regarding individuals not choosing to live in the village of Morton and the need to draw in new residents to the area. To gain a better understanding of how to draw a new market to Morton, we set four main objectives and one forward thinking objective for our survey to address several key issues. We hope to provide clarity to the Morton Economic Development Center to base future decisions upon. The main question our survey hopes to determine was:

Why are people choosing or not choosing to live in Morton, and how can the city of Morton draw individuals to relocate?

After sending out surveys through email and by handing out print copies to residents of Morton, IL we received 360 responses. From the data we received through the survey our recommendations are the following:

1. The most popular housing option in Morton is single family homes.
2. If Morton is to build more, they should cater to the younger age group, who are looking for long term rental options and starter homes under \$100,000.
3. The under 35 age group is a clear market gap for Morton.
4. Barriers to moving for these groups are the lack of restaurants, recreational activities and overall career opportunities for these individuals.

## **II. PROJECT STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES**

### **A. Project Statement:**

While meeting with Lenora, we identified there is a current disconnect between people who live in Morton and those that work there. Businesses are facing an issue in retaining and attracting the necessary workforce to expand and Lenora speculates this is due to unavailable housing and high price brackets in the area. She would like a comprehensive understanding of

the current market, demographics of those who currently live in the area, and barriers that potential homeowners are facing when looking to relocate.

## **B. Objectives**

### **1. Who currently lives in Morton?**

- a. What are their demographics?
- b. What do their households look like?
- c. What type of income does each household bring in?
- d. What type of housing do they live in?
- e. Why did they choose their current living situation?
- f. What were the biggest factors in deciding on Morton for them?

### **2. What does the current housing market look like?**

- a. What is the current availability?
- b. What types of housing is available?
- c. How are people accessing information about housing availability? (online, real estate agents, etc)

### **3. What criteria do people look for when choosing to live in Morton?**

- a. Are prices considered reasonable compared to surrounding areas? How does price compare in the greater Peoria area?
- b. Does the location have a positive or negative effect on their choice?
- c. What amenities does Morton offer?
- d. Does the ability to walk/bike the area have an impact on a residents choice?
- e. What values exist in the people that currently reside there?

### **4. What drew existing residents to Morton?**

- a. Why do you live in Morton?
- b. How long have you lived in Morton?
- c. Are you intending to stay in Morton?
- d. What drew you to Morton versus other areas?
- e. What does Morton lack that other areas you considered, or have knowledge on, have?

## **5. Looking Forward:**

- a. If the City of Morton were to construct new housing, what is most popular within the city?
- b. If most of their residents live in a certain type of housing, should they build more of the same?
- c. Are there pockets of the market they're missing?
- d. If there are barriers to moving to Morton, can they be removed or lessened? I.e. high tax rates.

## **III. Methodology**

Our research team met with Lenora Fisher, the Community Development Director for the Morton Economic Development Council, to discuss her needs for consultation between the two parties. Our team discussed Lenora's concern with individuals choosing or not choosing to locate in Morton and the reasonings behind these decisions. Through this meeting, we decided that our focus would be on current residents of Morton.

The team then outlined a project statement and list of research questions that our client, Lenora Fisher, and Kathie Brown, a member of the University of Illinois Extension, approved.

Three overarching questions were determined to encompass our team's research needs:

- What are the residents' perceptions of Morton?
- What are current residents' housing situations?
- Why did current residents choose to move to Morton? Once in Morton, what aspects of the community do they like or dislike?

Following Lenora's approval of the project statement and objectives, we began collecting secondary data to gain a better understanding of the Morton community. To begin, two examples of successful up and coming communities, downtown Peoria and Greenville, South Carolina, were provided for reference. The demographics of residents and their housing information in Morton were collected to be cross-referenced once survey respondents were in. Available housing within Morton was researched and listed in comparison to surrounding areas. Finally, information regarding how younger generations who are looking to settle down buy and what

individuals seek when looking for new homes was included to provide data on how those searching in the current market are known to act and what they are looking for.

Next, qualitative research was collected through the means of depth interviews. 14 interviews were conducted, two of which were with past residents while the rest were current residents. A series of broad questions centered around community perception of Morton and reasons for or against locating within the village were asked to gather a better understanding of what could be key issues for us to look further into during questionnaire development. Many of these interviews were over the phone interactions and began with individuals we had personal connections with, who then recommended more respondents to us to offer a wider scope of opinions. Key points and themes were then identified throughout all 14 of these interviews and compiled as a starting list of aspects that our group would dive deeper into and ensure to include into our survey.

After all secondary and qualitative data was collected and analyzed, we moved forward to begin preparing our survey. This survey would then become our quantitative data for which we could base conclusions and our presentation. Based on our prior research and discussions with Lenora, we highlighted several key factors that would be present within our survey: demographics, housing and living situations, and community perception. We worked with Dr. Mitch Griffin to outline a series of questions in each of those factors that would give us the best overall information about what current residents and their housing situations look like and how they view the community of Morton. Many of our questions utilized the Likert scale from one to 10, with one being either the least significant or the highest form of disagreement, and 10 being the most significant or the highest form of agreement. This scaled allowed us to detect similarities and differences between questions when analyzing our findings.

Once Dr. Griffin, Lenora, and Kathie were all satisfied with the survey that was developed, it was distributed both online and on paper. Our survey was hosted on Qualtrics or printed and in-person handed out. Both of these iterations were distributed by the Morton Economic Development Council. Printed surveys that were collected were manually put into Qualtrics once the deadline passed.

Because our survey was in combination with the other group conducting Morton research, we were able to have 360 survey responses out of the total 527. Our respondents selected that they either lived in Morton and did not work there or both lived and worked in Morton. SPSS was utilized to code and analyze this data. We enlisted the help of Dr. Griffin and followed marketing best practices to determine important variables and results to consider in our analysis and recommendations.

## **IV. Secondary Data**

### **UP-AND-COMING COMMUNITIES**

There are two specific examples of successful community revamps that we were interested in drawing inspiration from for our research. The focus of our research is to determine what, if anything, is keeping individuals from relocating to Morton and how those things can be overcome, so discovering if other areas had similar issues and were able to move forward was going to be key to determining if our goal could be accomplished.

The first example we found was Downtown Peoria, which is not only geographically close to Morton, but also has a comparable amount of individuals living within and around the area. The goal for this area is a three to five year strategic plan to revitalize this part of the city and increase the population by 10%, which is around 2,500 people. As of 2019, 29 business start-ups or relocations and 163 residential units have been brought to the area. There are currently 714 construction permits currently issued in the downtown Peoria area, with an estimated value of \$74 million dollars. This plan intends to bring in 50 new local businesses as it moves forward to incentive that population growth. By 2022 they want to increase the residential population by 1,300. In a study, they found that people who work in downtown Peoria have not enough adequate housing options in downtown Peoria. The four residential complexes located in the area are full and have been for a number of years. Since 2011, rent has steadily increased by 3.2 percent. Peoria is marketing this change in the downtown as a big city feel without the inconveniences of Chicago living, as they see the needs of individuals' to have amenities and options within a short commute to their homes.

A second and larger scale example of community improvements was found in Greenville, South Carolina, with a population of around 68,000. Over three decades of planning went in to revitalizing a 40 acre park within city limits, complete with a suspension bridge, new hotels, 100 locally owned restaurants and a new stadium for the Boston Red Sox farm team.. They made this community a walkable and family friendly downtown area that turned it into a destination that individuals both felt comfortable living in, but also wanted to enjoy and spend time at. Both Greenville and Peoria focused on turning their communities into places that individuals enjoyed beyond mere living and housing necessities and have been able to see growth within their populations and a new life breathed into these areas.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

- Population: 16,267
  - Persons under 5 years: 5.6%
  - Persons under 18 years: 24.6%
  - Persons 65 years and over, percent: 20.3%
- Median age of residents: 41.3 years old
- People living in Morton that are married: 69%
- People who have children under the age of 18: 41%
- White alone: 95.9%
- Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+ years: 44.9%
- Residents who live and work in Morton: 2,747 (35.5% of the population)
- Mean travel time to work (minutes): 19.5

## **HOUSING**

- Owner-occupied housing unit rate: 75%
- Median value of owner-occupied housing units: \$190,400
- Median selected monthly owner costs - with a mortgage: \$1521
- Median selected monthly owner costs - without a mortgage: \$574
- Median gross rent: \$921
- Median household income: \$76,888
- Size of family households:



- 2-persons: 2,283
- 3-persons: 801
- 4-persons: 863
- 5-persons: 323
- 6-persons: 222
- 7-or-more-persons: 42
- Education
  - High school or higher: 94.4%
  - Bachelor's degree or higher: 43.2%
- Residents who live AND work in Morton: 2,747 (35.5% of the population)

Information collected from

<http://www.city-data.com/housing/houses-Morton-Illinois.html> and

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/mortonvillageillinois>.

## HOUSING MARKET AVAILABILITIES

When looking at the housing market availabilities in Morton, the first assessment we made came from Zillow.com, a popular real estate site. When looking at the market overall, the Zillow Home Value Index, meaning the “median [estimate of the current market value for a home] valuation for a given geographic area on a given day” (CITE ZILLOW) was \$181,300. The median listing price was \$189,000, which is below of the median value of owner-occupied housing at \$190,400. The median sale price is lower still, at \$155,800.

## Morton Market Overview

Data through Mar 31, 2019

**\$181,300** ZHVI ?

 **-0.9%** 1-yr forecast ? (Mar 31, 2020)

**\$189,000** Median listing price

**\$155,800** Median sale price

When looking at Morton in comparison to other communities, the Home Value Index for the village is at \$1,000 higher than the closest communities, beginning with Groveland.

### Nearby Cities

NAME	MEDIAN ZHVI	NAME	MEDIAN ZHVI
<a href="#">Groveland</a>	\$180,000	<a href="#">Deer Creek</a>	\$149,900
<a href="#">Tremont</a>	\$155,200	<a href="#">Washington</a>	\$142,300
<a href="#">Mackinaw</a>	\$154,400	<a href="#">East Peoria</a>	\$115,700

The listings on Zillow.com featured 78 homes, which includes the following options: housing, apartments, condominiums/co-ops, and townhomes. When looking for housing options under \$100,000, there was only one listed. This was similar to the information on Realtor.com, which listed 89 homes available. These home styles are: house, condominium/townhouse, multi-family, and farm ranch. Once again, only one home under \$100,000 was listed. These homes were significant to our research due to our interest in reasonings as to why new individuals are not moving to Morton, due to potential high pricings for homes.

Moving to local realtors, we first looked at Melissa Stevenson Realtor and her listings in Morton. Her housing options are listed as “residential,” with only one under \$100,000. Jim Maloof Realtor is another realtor within the community, however, he does not have any current housing options listed in Morton for comparison. Both these realtors and the online sites for real estate provided an idea for our research on what individuals may not be included in the current market of Morton and who our group may want to gain more information on.

### **DRAWING A NEW MARKET**

Furthermore, we decided to take a closer look at what individuals are willing to move, what they are looking for in housing markets and options, and if there are any connections to both the successful communities we researched and potential gaps in the market of Morton. According to a Consumer Insights Report study conducted in 2014 by John Burns Consulting, the age group most likely to enter the housing market are millennials, or individuals currently under 35. This age group will account for two-thirds of new households in the coming years. This demographic is set to surpass Baby Boomers as the biggest generation. 20% of millennials are currently looking for new homes. This information showed our team that if Morton is going to attract new individuals, this group would be a prime target to introduce.

Millennials are characteristically willing to relocate for secure jobs, safer neighborhoods and their desired quality of life in terms of community amenities. When looking for homes, three-quarters are searching for single-family homes, which a majority of residents currently occupy in Morton; however, these individuals do not have the financial assets available to them when purchasing a home in the brackets we've found are available in Morton. 46% of millennials have student loan debt. That debt and high deposit requirements are the two factors that prevent buying for this age group. Factors such as these are forcing millennials to rent for longer periods of time or move back home to save money instead of purchasing homes. Owning properties is no longer a desired investment, with only 60% of these individuals deeming it part of their long term plan. This information is the reason we included how many housing options listed in Morton are priced below \$100,000.

## **V. Qualitative Research**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Qualitative data was collected from interviews with a specific set of questions for two respective groups: those who once lived in Morton and those who currently reside in Morton. We interviewed 14 people overall: seven female and seven male. The age range was from 22 to 75. Our questions were centered around discovering what past and current residents think about the community of Morton, the time they've spent there, and what about the village could be improved for residents.

### **PROCESS**

Specifically, we asked a combination of the following questions, depending on whether the individuals were current or past residents:

- What do you think about the community of Morton?
- What drew you to Morton?
- How long have you lived in Morton?
- What caused you to move out of Morton? (Only past residents)
- What were the deciding factors for you when moving to Morton?
- What could improve the city of Morton for residents?

### **A. Past Residents**

#### **Participant 1: Heidi Florey, BSN, RN**

- Supervisor for Neuro Surgery at St. Francis Medical Center
- Married

Heidi Florey was a resident of Morton for 12 years. She originally moved to Morton when she was young because her father worked in Morton and found it easier to be located near his workplace. They moved there from Eureka, Illinois. She later moved from Morton to East Peoria as a young college graduate when she married her husband. East Peoria was his hometown and she had gotten a full time job at OSF, so it helped with the commute time.

Heidi feels that Morton has a clean “hometown” feel with excellent schools and plenty of churches. It has a great downtown area with lots of shops and things to do, as well as not having a shortage entertainment. She enjoyed growing up in Morton because it was a safe area. Her parents would often let her and her friends roam the neighborhood and ride their bikes everywhere, giving her a sense of freedom and great childhood memories.

#### **Participant 2: Payton Hefflefinger**

- Student, University of Mississippi
- Single, grew up living in Morton

Payton Hefflefinger was a resident of Morton for 18 years and grew up knowing the safety and tight-knit community very well. Her parents chose Morton when they were deciding where to live after they first got married. They lived there as a family and, even after her parents got divorced, they both still bought houses in Morton to stay within the community. Payton enjoyed how close the community was overall, with a special emphasis on the small-town feel. She felt as though many people have strong relationships and share common interests, making it easy to feel connected to others.

With only one public grade school and one high school, she has noted how many kids and families have really grown up together. She said that there are many people that she went to grade school with that her family and her are still in touch with. Payton feels that, overall, Morton was a very safe and happy place to grow up in.

Payton moved out of Morton when she decided to attend the University of Mississippi after graduating from high school. Since then, her mother has also left Morton, but her father still lives there. She would not want to return to Morton or Illinois because she enjoys the south much better and her parents want to retire in the south, so she would like to be close to them.

## **B. Current Residents**

### **Participant 3: Alli Selke, BSN, RN**

- Supervisor Post Anesthesia Care Unit at St Francis Medical Center
- Families with small children

Alli Selke has lived in Morton for 8 years now. She moved to Morton because she heard about how great the school system was and wanted her children to attend a good public school. It was also much more convenient for her husband and her because of the proximity to St Francis Medical Center, where they both work. The commute is easier and she enjoys being able to spend time with her children. Alli also was drawn to Morton because the taxes were lower than any other surrounding towns of Peoria that they were considering, which is a great financial incentive.

One of the major deciding factors for Alli was the fact that Morton is close enough to Peoria to make it easy to go to town for anything you need, but is its own standing town. Therefore, she can enjoy amenities in town without being required to leave. Alli also enjoys that she doesn't need to stress about her children running around or riding their bike up to Dairy Queen because she feels it is a safe community and doesn't have to worry about them getting hurt.

### **Participant 4: Susan Rapp**

- Associate Director, Bradley University Academic Success Center
- Families with college aged children

Susan Rapp has lived in Morton about 15 years, having moved from East Peoria to Morton in 2004. She loves the Morton community, specifically her neighbors, the church she attends, and the few local business still offered. However, one of her main concerns were the amount of businesses that have been closed or empty for a while, as she cites "Kmart, two

Mexican restaurants, a gas station, the former Ruby Tuesday location” and more. She is satisfied with the amount of sporting facilities, such as baseball, softball, and disc golf, and believes there are many religious denominations and parks and villages in the town.

Susan moved to Morton from East Peoria before her three sons were in school because she was searching for a community with a strong school district. She’s happy with her decision to move, but is searching for Morton to replenish a lot of what she feels she has seen vanish in her time there, namely the restaurants and downtown area that she has watched cycle through different owners and options throughout her in the community. She mentioned Five Points center in Washington as being a structure or opportunity for Morton that she would love to see incorporated.

Most importantly, Susan believes there is a “rich culture and tradition [in Morton] with several generations of families living within the village limits” and while she appreciates the community values and close-knit feel, she often feels “out of the loop”. Despite having lived within the village for 15 years, she still does not feel accepted within the area. However, she accepts that now that her children are grown, her small circle of friends within the community are the only ones she often associates with, so her view of Morton “may be limited” in her eyes.

#### **Participant 5: Darrell Vierling**

- Retired, was employed in Morton

Darrell Vierling was born and raised about 6 miles outside of Morton on a family farm that would often trade with Morton, so he was been around the area his whole life. He moved to Morton when he married his wife and worked at Morton parts for Caterpillar. Since then, he has been transferred in and out of Morton because of work, but always makes his way back.

Darrell believes that Morton is managed well in a conservative manner. In fact, he served on the Village Board for 15 years in this same way. He believes that the largest “knock” against Morton is that most of the population belongs to very conservative religious groups, which he has not found to be a problem in either social settings or governmental affairs. However, he believes that these conservative groups have decided views on alcohol, gambling, and right to life and make their views very apparent to governmental officials and the press. Darrell thinks that the government takes this into account and proceeds with balancing the community well.

Deciding factors that have continuously brought Darrell back to Morton includes the fact that it is reasonably priced, convenient for work, has good public roads for his commute, and there is a Morton pride and maintained town assets. He believes that Morton could be improved by creating a more nature based view of the Park Districts assets that are not only focused on organized sports. He would like to see more activities for senior citizens and other members of the community. He also takes issue with taxes, but believes that the Illinois State Government is to blame for this. Overall, he is very satisfied with his life in Morton and plans on staying here for his retirement.

**Participant 6: Linda Vierling**

- Retired, was employed in Morton

Linda Vierling has lived in Morton for 43 years of her married life with her husband, Darrell. They have often moved around due to his job, but always return to Morton when given the opportunity. She originally moved to Morton because it was close to her husband's job and their families. Linda was also teaching school in Pekin for a few years, so it was a convenient commute for her as well.

Linda and her husband have always liked Morton for its size, which she stated was "not too small of a town and not as big as Peoria." They also felt that it had a good school district, which would be a deciding factor for when they would have children entering the public school system. They felt as though there was a lot offered in being so close to Peoria, but enjoyed the low crime and communality of living in a small town like Morton.

Linda had few remarks on what could improve the city of Morton for residents, but most had to do with businesses. She would like to see more family restaurants and other shopping venues besides Walmart, as well as hopefully seeing the commercial properties that are for sale to be filled with new owners.

**Participant 7: Aaron Rapp**

- Student, Bradley University
- Single, grew up living in Morton

Aaron Rapp has lived in Morton for 15 years, having moved from East Peoria in 2004. His family made the decision for a few reasons: location and environment. Morton allows his

parents a short commute time, as they work in Peoria and was also the location of the Catholic grade school that he attended. The move to Morton made sense in terms of location. Aaron also believes that the environment is ideal for raising a family in a safe, friendly community. This drew his family in, as well as the clean neighborhoods and kind people.

To Aaron, the community of Morton is very unique in that everyone seems to be friends with each other. The town is very-tight knit and has a “family” atmosphere in his eyes. He also feels that Morton has a very supportive community, whether it be the Morton Pumpkin Festival, a high school sporting event, or even the “16x defending state championship marching band”. Aaron believes that Morton is lacking something new to improve the city for residents. He doesn’t have anything specific, but feels as though it could be a business or event that could freshen things up. Aaron used to go to a restaurant called Seasons and enjoyed how their menu changed with the seasons, as it provided a different experience every time. A business like this or a better downtown experience would be revitalizing to the community and fit in with the charm of the village.

#### **Participant 8: Evan Fleming**

- All-Source Intelligence Analyst, Peoria Air National Guard
- Family with children

Evan Fleming has lived in Morton for nearly 7 years, having moved to the village in 2012 with his wife. They were originally drawn to Morton due to its location in reference to the Peoria metropolitan area, while still having a rural feel and orientation. They also heard great things about the school district and wanted their kids to get the best public school education that central Illinois could provide. They also considered Dunlap for this, but Morton had a better overall location and was closer to their families.

Overall, Evan believes that Morton is a well-off, smaller mid-western town. Morton provides him a “nice and clean” feel and he is very content with living in the village. The one area for improvement that he feels strongly about is providing more space for local businesses. He and his family enjoy being able to walk or ride bikes into downtown Morton, so having more of a selection of shopping from local businesses would instill a sense of belonging and support the community.



### **Participant 9: Tanner Peterson**

- Employee, Windmar Interiors
- Family with Kids

Tanner Peterson considers himself a Morton “lifer”, as he was born and raised in the town and has never left in 27 years. Tanner has created strong roots in the town, with family and friends playing the biggest role in keeping him around. He had considered moving, but did not want to leave his loved ones. Ultimately, he said that it came down to Morton being the community in which he wanted to raise his daughter. It has been a great place for his family and him and he wants his daughter to have that experience too.

To Tanner, Morton is one of the best communities around for a few reasons. It is a very family-oriented community, with friendly people that are always willing to lend a helping hand. He would recommend living in Morton to anyone and loves being a resident of the “Pumpkin Capital of the World.” Tanner feels, however, that Morton seems to be losing businesses and restaurants, so he believes that bringing in more businesses would really make a huge difference. He would like to see more sit down restaurants similar to buffalo wild wings.

### **Participant 10: Marcy Wiegardt**

- Global Marketing & Segment Talent Manager, Caterpillar
- Family with Children

Marcy Wiegardt has been living in Morton for 13 years. She was originally drawn to Morton because of the public school system. Her husband is a teacher and when they were looking to build a home, after outgrowing their first home in Peoria, he researched all of the school districts and picked Lettie Brown as the school he wanted their kids to go to.

Marcy likes the small-town, slower-pace, tight-knit community feel of Morton, but feels as though it is hard for “outsiders” to find their way. A lot of people grow up and stay in Morton, so there are already barriers to new families that want to become part of the community. She also told us that other communities view Morton as being a bit snobbish, thinking they are better than others. Overall, however, her experience has been very good and she believes that she made the right decision to move to Morton.

### **Participant 11: Tara K. Veltman**

- Experience Lead, Caterpillar
- Family with children

Tara Veltman has lived in Morton for 7 years and originally moved there because of her husband. He was born and raised there, so they decided to stay in Morton after they got married. They decided to stay because her husband works in the Morton CAT facility, which made his commute time very short. They also enjoyed how close everything is in Morton, especially most of their friends and family. School was also important to them, as they have two children, so the great school system was a major factor as well. The church they attend is also located in Morton, so they are content with all aspects.

Overall, Tara likes how close knit the community feels to them. She loves the safety and the location close to the interstate, which makes it easy for her or her husband to travel to Peoria or Bloomington if need be.

**Participant 12: Clayton Monfre**

- Owner, A Perfect Promotion
- Married, moved to Morton

Clayton Monfire has lived in Morton for 11 years. He originally moved to Morton due to its location and the overall housing market. When he first got married, he was working in Bloomington and his wife was working in Peoria, so it was a good central location for both of them. The housing market was very good as well, with plenty of options and different price points, which helped with making their decision. His wife was already living in Morton and they had family/friend ties, so it was a clear choice.

Clayton believes that Morton is a safe community that is very tight-knit. A lot of people that live in Morton are people that were born there, so there are plenty of long lasting relationships, which he thinks is a good thing. Clayton feels that residents really like the town and the people in it, which helps Morton stand out from other communities in the area.

**Participant 13: Jami Fischer**

- Families with college aged children

Jami Fischer has lived in Morton for 4 years, but believes that even in her short amount of time there, she has seen how great the community is. Jami was originally drawn to Morton

because her youngest daughter was entering 8th grade and she found a home across the street from the junior high. It gave her great piece of mind knowing that after school, she would have a short walk home.

Other deciding factors for Jami included the proximity to the interstate, which makes her commute only a 15 minute drive. She also enjoys the safety, convenience, and being close to family and friends in town.

In Jami's opinion, the community of Morton is truly a great one. It is tight-knit and has its pros and cons, as every community does. Having people that are always looking out for her and her family, as well as amazing neighbors, are pros. The cons are that if you were not born and raised in Morton, you may be viewed as an outsider but some. However, she said that it is all in who you choose to surround yourself with, as in any other community.

The first thing that came to mind for Jami, when considering community improvements, was more geared toward the high school. She is more than happy to pay taxes to benefit the schools, but does not believe that a higher sum of the funds should be allocated specifically to the high school football program. Instead, she believes they should be more evenly distributed amongst each of the sports and fine arts programs. This would allow all students who pursue athletic or fine arts programs an equal chance to benefit from all the advantages they each have to offer.

#### **Participant 14: Bill Akers**

- Families with college aged children

Bill Akers has lived in Morton for 19 years, but was drawn to Morton originally for the public school system, as well as the proximity to work and safe community. He believes that the safety, as well as cleanliness, have to do with the decent level of public services. To Bill, the home values are good and most have sidewalks and curbs. Morton has most of the businesses any family would need to avoid travel for goods and services and has a public school system that is rated one of the best in the state of Illinois, with even the high school specifically being ranked nationwide. For Bill, it is a little too conservative in many aspects but the people that have lived in Morton for generations are too reluctant to change. Overall, it is has been a great place to raise his family.

Bill made quite a few suggestions on how Morton could be improved for residents. First, Morton originally an old farming community, so other towns have grown out to meet their borders. He doesn't believe that the generations of established "Mortonites" want to evolve into a suburban draw from other areas in central Illinois. So, politically, the conservative control keeps the town from having an increased selection of goods and services.

Secondly, taxes have caused some issues in town. Bill believes that the school district needs to invest in the education staff and learning capabilities of the students by investing in school improvements in the current junior and senior high school buildings and locations. Both need building improvements in technology access and to accommodate the class sizes

Finally, Bill believes that the city services are only adequate. He hopes that the free lawn refuse drop off should be a year round program. Also, the Fire Department is volunteer, which does not work well with the size and call load in the town. Instead, Morton needs a professionally staffed career fire department to meet this demand. There should be a current and renewed attempt at youth activities for children/teenagers. Bowling and roller skating is what people did in the 1950's, according to Bill, and must be updated.

Overall, Bill's opinion is: "bottom line, the city needs to progress into the 21st century in a few areas, but, at the heart of it Morton a good and safe family community that is fortunate to have the premiere public school system in central Illinois."

## **FINDINGS**

Overall, the majority of Morton residents appear to be aware that the village is a seeming state of decline. Their opinions on the Morton community highlight a safe and tight knit place to live that offers a comfortable size, a strong school district, and an exclusive and conservative village. This family oriented community was a large draw for individuals, who stated that the safety of the area, the school systems, and the proximity to their workplaces were the utmost reasons they chose to relocate. These strengths are not without weaknesses, however, and our interviewees cited issues such as a need for more businesses, chain restaurants, and potential better outdoor or entertainment spaces as areas where Morton could use improvement. These

findings set a strong basis for the topics our survey would need to ask about to get a closer look at how a larger amount of residents feel about living in Morton.

## **VI. Sampling Plan**

The goal of our qualitative research was to give our team a better idea of what topics or areas of interest we should truly focus on when creating our survey. Being able to receive feedback from an age range of over 50 years, ranging from single individuals to retired couples who have been lifelong Mortonites, we believe we saw a large scope of what Morton residents believe are important to the community and their peers. Moving forward, our survey was designed to ask a series of questions about living situations within Morton, perceptions of residents in Morton, and what possible changes residents would suggest for the community. The general population for our data collection then involved all residents of Morton over the age of 18, regardless of background, age, or income. Each survey was meant to be conducted by a single member of the community to determine the scope of individuals in Morton we received responses from and to create an outline of who our respondents are and how they match the census.

The goal of the survey was to collect as many responses as possible, with a sampling unit of 12,347 individuals over the age of 18. We were looking for both residents who worked in Morton and residents who did not work in Morton, with the first Morton group focusing on individuals who work in Morton but do not live within the village. Most surveys were distributed online through Qualtrics, with a listing that the Morton Economic Development Council had on file. Few paper surveys were utilized, but were distributed at places of work in Morton. We utilized the method of convenience in these distributions, as we had limited time and resources.

Our goal was to reach a variety of community members who could contribute a multitude of different viewpoints and lifestyles. By utilizing the online survey, our team was able to provide equal opportunities for members of the community to access the survey, without having to be within a certain area at a specific time or be within a certain demographic or position to come into contact with paper survey distributions. The Economic Development Council was able

to access their listings of Morton residents and individuals who work within the community to provide a wide array of individuals the opportunity to fill out our survey.

### **Limitations**

Our method of simple random sampling made it difficult to measure what portions of the community we were most accessible to, as the listing was provided to as many residents as could be accessed and was encouraged to be sent around from those individuals throughout the community. This method also made it impossible to ensure all residents were aware of and had the opportunity to get the survey, because there was no clear cut way to ensure each demographic of Morton residents were able to have equal opportunity to access the survey. We have to assume that there are residents within Morton who do not have internet access, did not work at one of the few locations the paper surveys were distributed, or were not within one of the listings of residents that were available to the Morton Economic Development Council. Especially with the amount of Morton residents who are seniors, which accounts for around 20% of Morton's population. These individuals could have provided valuable insights to our survey, due to their likely long term stays in Morton and years of experience within the community.

Another limitation of the distribution of our survey falls on our reliance on the Economic Development Council to distribute the survey. Not many younger individuals within Morton may have much community involvement yet, and so we were running the risk of not connecting to these younger individuals due to a lack of concentrated efforts to target these groups and ensure their voices were heard.

## **VII. Survey**

Below is an attached copy of the averages and percentages we received on our survey for each question. These answers are all taken out of the 360 respondents for percentages and include only valid answers for means calculated. The demographics, housing marketing analysis, and community analysis that follow use these numbers as a base, however, they are focusing specifically on the valid percentages. Meaning, the information in our presentation discloses the

individuals who did not answer each question, whereas the below information includes the amount of individuals who may have chosen not to respond to a specific question.



We are students at Bradley University conducting a study for our Marketing Research class. During this study we have been working with the Morton Economic Development Council and University of Illinois Extension to gather information about those individuals who live or work in Morton. Any information you share with us will remain anonymous. We appreciate your participation in our study. We will close our survey on April 12.

**Which of the following best describes you?**

- a. I live in the village of Morton and work in Morton. **62.2%**
- b. I live in the village of Morton, but do not work in Morton. **37.8%**

**On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 indicating *Not at all Important* to 10 indicating *Extremely Important*, how important were each of the following in your decision to live in Morton?**

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	Mean
Career Opps	9.2	8.3	9.7	4.7	11.9	7.2	8.6	9.4	6.4	11.4	5.56
Spouse	11.7	5.8	4.4	1.7	6.9	4.7	5.8	10.6	12.5	24.7	6.62
Commute	3.3	2.5	3.1	3.9	9.2	8.1	9.7	18.6	15.3	21.1	7.28
Schools	2.8	.6	.8	1.1	2.2	1.9	5.3	10	18.1	53.6	8.76
Close-knit	2.8	3.3	3.6	1.4	8.1	10.6	15.8	16.1	15.8	18.9	7.26
Property taxes	6.4	4.4	6.9	4.7	18.9	9.4	10.8	14.4	8.6	9.2	6.02
Prox Rest.	9.7	7.2	9.2	10.6	19.4	11.9	10.3	7.5	2.8	2.5	4.91
Prox Activity	5.8	6.4	6.4	6.1	16.1	15.6	13.1	11.7	5.3	4.4	5.67
Safety	.8	0	.3	.3	2.2	3.1	4.2	17.8	24.7	45.3	8.89
Availability	1.9	3.9	4.2	5.8	10.3	11.1	12.8	17.8	10.8	12.2	6.78
House Value	1.1	.3	.8	1.4	4.4	5.3	8.6	19.7	26.4	28.3	8.27
Church	12.5	5	4.2	2.5	6.7	5.8	7.2	9.2	11.4	25	6.57

**On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 indicating *Strongly Disagree* to 10 indicating *Strongly Agree*, what is your level of agreement with each of the following statements regarding housing and living in Morton?**

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	Mean
Family Needs	0	.6	.8	2.2	4.2	3.9	5.3	14.2	19.2	49.4	8.72
Current Res	.8	.6	1.4	1.9	3.9	1.9	8.9	15.3	20.8	43.6	8.57
5 Year SAT	4.4	4.7	5	5	5.8	5	7.6	12.2	11.9	37.2	7.47
Affordable1	3.3	5.6	5.6	7.2	17.2	13.1	14.2	18.3	5.6	8.1	6.12
Affordable2	3.3	7.5	13.3	8.9	19.7	11.1	13.1	10.0	13.6	6.7	5.46
Rent Options	16.7	10.3	9.4	9.2	18.3	7.8	7.8	4.4	3.9	.8	4.28
Senior House	11.4	8.1	11.1	6.1	19.7	9.7	9.2	6.4	5.6	1.7	4.76
Annex Lands	16.1	10.3	10.6	6.4	18.9	5.0	4.2	5.8	4.2	3.3	4.32
Historic	6.4	4.4	3.3	6.1	15.6	9.2	10.0	12.5	9.7	16.1	6.45
Needs1	18.5	14.4	13.7	9.6	15.3	6.4	5.8	6.1	3.8	6.4	4.30
Needs2	8.1	6.7	8.1	6.7	15.8	7.2	10.8	12.8	7.2	4.7	5.49
Needs3	5.3	4.2	5.8	6.9	20.0	6.9	12.8	15.6	5.8	6.4	5.90
Needs4	9.7	12.5	8.9	9.4	15.0	6.7	10.0	5.8	2.8	2.2	4.56
Family1	22.2	5.3	4.4	2.5	6.9	3.1	3.1	4.7	7.5	25.8	5.78
Enjoyment	.6	.6	1.7	.8	2.5	5.0	6.1	18.1	17.2	46.1	8.65
Estate Taxes	5.8	5.6	4.4	5.6	16.9	12.2	14.4	11.9	5.6	13.1	6.12
Preference	3.3	2.8	1.7	1.4	6.9	2.8	5.0	10.3	15.8	46.7	8.22
Recommend	1.1	0	1.1	1.7	3.1	4.2	5.8	9.4	19.2	53.6	8.78



**On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 indicating Strongly Disagree to 10 indicating Strongly Agree, please rate your agreement with the following statements:**

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩	Mean
Community1	0	0	.3	.3	1.7	2.5	3.3	16.1	24.7	44.7	9.00
Community2	0	.3	0	0	1.4	2.2	2.5	13.9	26.1	47.2	9.09
Police	0	0	1.1	.3	1.7	3.6	3.6	11.7	24.7	46.7	8.97
Fire	0	0	.3	0	1.9	1.7	2.2	10.3	23.6	53.1	9.22
Health Care	3.6	4.4	4.2	2.8	8.6	8.3	6.9	15.0	12.2	26.9	7.24
Education	.6	.8	.6	.8	2.2	3.3	3.6	12.8	22.8	45.3	8.84
Employment	1.7	4.4	4.7	9.7	18.1	12.2	14.7	12.8	4.7	8.3	6.13
Food Options	6.4	11.7	11.9	13.9	16.1	10.8	11.9	5.3	1.7	1.9	4.68
Rec/Ent	4.2	8.3	13.6	8.6	18.6	14.2	10.3	8.3	2.8	3.3	5.12
Shopping	6.7	17.5	16.1	15.8	15.3	8.6	5.8	3.1	1.1	.8	4.07
Grocery	3.6	8.6	8.6	9.2	13.1	8.6	10.8	11.7	7.5	10.6	5.90
Fitness	1.7	3.3	3.9	5.3	13.1	10.3	14.2	17.5	10.0	13.1	6.79
Nightlife	10.3	16.9	17.8	10.0	13.1	8.3	6.9	3.9	.8	.8	3.96
Trails	.3	1.4	5.0	5.0	8.1	8.6	15.0	17.5	12.5	20.0	7.34
Preference2	.8	1.9	.8	1.4	3.3	4.7	5.0	8.9	15.0	50.8	8.64

**Housing Market:**

1. How long have you lived in Morton?
  - a. Less than 1 year      1.9%
  - b. 1 - 2 years      3.6%
  - c. 3 - 5 years      8.9%
  - d. 6 - 10 years      11.1%
  - e. 11 - 20 years      25.3%
  - f. 21 - 30 years      17.5%
  - g. 31 - 40 years      10.0%
  - h. 41+ years      15.3%
2. What type of home do you currently live in?
  - a. Renting an apartment      2.2%
  - b. Renting a condominium/townhouse      .3%
  - c. Own a condominium/townhouse      3.1%
  - d. Renting a duplex      1.4%
  - e. Own a duplex      .8%
  - f. Rent a single family home      3.6%
  - g. Own a single family home      82.2%
3. How many bedrooms does your home have?
  - a. 1      .3%
  - b. 2      9.2%
  - c. 3      34.7%
  - d. 4      38.1%
  - e. 5 or more      10.8%
4. How many bathrooms does your home have?
  - a. 1      8.6%
  - b. 2      32.8%
  - c. 3      29.2%
  - d. 4 or more      22.5%

5. What is your rent/mortgage payment each month?

- |                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| a. < \$499           | 16.7% |
| b. \$500 - \$799     | 10.8% |
| c. \$800 - \$999     | 10.3% |
| d. \$1,000 - \$1,199 | 13.1% |
| e. \$1,200 - \$1,499 | 16.1% |
| f. \$1,500 - \$1,699 | 5.8%  |
| g. \$1,700 - \$1,999 | 3.9%  |
| h. \$2,000+          | 5.8%  |

6. If you own or are paying a mortgage on a house or condominium, what would you estimate the current value of your home?

- |                               |       |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| a. I do not own my residence. | 4.7%  |
| b. Less than \$90,000         | 20.6% |
| c. \$90,000 - \$119,999       | 1.1%  |
| d. \$120,000 - \$149,000      | 1.9%  |
| e. \$150,000 - 179,999        | 8.6%  |
| f. \$180,000 - \$209,999      | 15.3% |
| g. \$210,000 - \$239,999      | 13.3% |
| h. \$240,000 - \$279,999      | 8.1%  |
| i. \$280,000 - \$309,999      | 10.8% |
| j. \$310,000 or more          | 6.4%  |

7. How important would each of the following factors be in your choice of a home to buy or rent? You can click and drag the items so the most important factor is at the top in #1, the second in # 2 and so forth until the least important factor is at the bottom.

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨	⑩
Age of Home	6.1	13.6	15.8	16.7	13.9	9.2	9.2	4.4	1.7	0
Condition of Home	40.8	25.8	13.6	5.3	1.9	1.9	.6	.6	0	0
Community	27.5	13.1	14.4	14.7	8.3	6.9	3.9	1.4	.3	0
Unit Size (Sq. ft)	4.7	20.0	23.6	17.2	12.5	5.8	4.4	1.7	.3	.3
Lot Size or Acreage	3.9	5.8	6.7	13.3	18.6	19.2	11.4	6.7	3.9	1.1
Prox to Daycare	0	0	0	.6	1.4	4.4	9.2	12.5	50.3	12.2
Prox to Work	2.8	3.9	3.6	9.2	10.3	13.3	24.2	18.6	4.2	.6
Prox to School	1.7	1.9	2.5	3.6	7.8	8.6	15.3	31.7	15.3	2.2
Street Appeal	1.7	4.6	9.2	8.6	14.7	20.6	11.4	10.6	9.2	.6
Other	1.4	2.2	1.1	1.4	1.1	.6	1.1	2.5	5.6	73.6

**Overall ranking of the above:**

1. Condition of Home
2. Community
3. Unit Size
4. Age of Home
5. Lot Size or Acreage
6. Street Drive-by Appeal
7. Proximity to Work
8. Proximity to School
9. Proximity to Daycare
10. Other

**8. Below are several factors that prevent people from buying a home. Why have you decided to rent instead of purchasing a home? Please rank the following items as they relate to your decision to not purchase a home from the most important factor to the least.**

	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥	⑦	⑧	⑨
Cheaper Rent	8.6	11.1	9.7	12.5	12.2	10.8	9.2	6.1	1.7
Poor Credit	.3	4.7	5.3	3.9	6.9	6.4	12.8	33.6	8.3
Intimidated	2.2	1.4	6.9	10.0	12.5	12.7	19.2	10.8	1.7
Job Uncertain	11.9	6.4	10.8	15.6	13.3	9.4	8.1	5.6	.8
Down Pay	2.8	5.3	7.2	11.4	17.2	17.4	15.0	5.6	1.1
Family Needs	13.6	19.2	15.6	7.8	8.6	8.6	5.6	3.1	0
New Homes	8.9	16.9	15.6	14.4	4.7	7.2	6.9	6.7	.6
Cost High	29.4	16.7	10.6	5.6	4.2	3.9	3.1	6.1	2.5
Other	4.2	.3	.3	.8	2.2	1.9	2.2	4.4	65.6

**Overall ranking of the above:**

1. Total Cost Too High
2. Lack of Homes that Meet my Family's Needs
3. Lack of Affordable Homes
4. Job Uncertainty
5. Lack of Down Payment
6. Intimidated by Loan Process
7. Have Poor Credit
8. Cheaper to Rent
9. Other

**The last few questions are only for categorical purposes only. Your individual identity or information will not be shared.**

1. What is your gender?
  - a. Male 30.8%
  - b. Female 60.6%

## 2. What is your age bracket?

a. 18 to 24 years	1.4%
b. 25 to 34 years	13.3%
c. 35 to 44 years	23.6%
d. 45 to 54 years	26.1%
e. 55 to 64 years	17.5%
f. 65 years or older	10.8%

## 3. What is your ethnicity?

a. Caucasian	89.2%
b. Hispanic or Latino	0.6%
c. African American	0%
d. Native American	0.3%
e. Asian/Pacific Islander	0.6%
f. Other	1.4%

## 4. What is your education level?

a. Less than a highschool diploma	0%
b. High school degree or equivalent	2.5%
c. Certification earned	0.8%
d. Some College	17.8%
e. Bachelor's degree	40.6%
f. Master's degree	28.1%
g. Doctorate	2.8%

## 5. What is your marital status?

a. Married	79.2%
b. Single	12.2%
c. Co-Living	1.1%

6. How many children under the age of 18 are living in your household?

- |              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| a. 0         | 46.7% |
| b. 1         | 13.6% |
| c. 2         | 19.2% |
| d. 3         | 7.8%  |
| e. 4         | 3.1%  |
| f. 5 or more | 1.7%  |

7. Did you attend a school in the Morton Public School system?

- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | 28.1% |
| b. No  | 63.9% |

8. Did your children attend, or do your children currently attend, a school in the Morton Public School system?

- |                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
| a. I do not have children.   | 14.7% |
| b. My children currently do. | 28.1% |
| c. My children did.          | 32.8% |
| d. My children do not.       | 16.4% |

9. How long is your typical commute to work? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

- |                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| a. 1-5 minutes   | 35.3% |
| b. 6-10 minutes  | 15.6% |
| c. 11-15 minutes | 7.5%  |
| d. 16-20 minutes | 9.4%  |
| e. 21-25 minutes | 4.2%  |
| f. 26-30 minutes | 4.5%  |
| g. 31-35 minutes | 0.8%  |
| h. 36-40 minutes | 0.8%  |
| i. 41-45 minutes | 0.3%  |

10. Which range reflects your gross annual household income?

- |                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| a. Less than \$25,000     | 0.6%  |
| b. \$25,000 to \$49,999   | 7.2%  |
| c. \$50,000 to \$74,999   | 7.5%  |
| d. \$75,000 to \$99,999   | 15.6% |
| e. \$100,000 to \$124,999 | 15.8% |
| f. \$125,000 to \$149,999 | 10.6% |
| g. \$150,000 to \$174,999 | 6.1%  |
| h. \$175,000 to \$199,999 | 5.8%  |
| i. \$200,000 or more      | 17.5% |

11. What is your zip code? 61550

12. What type of transportation do you most often use to get to and from work?

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Drive or ride in vehicle owned by self or family member | 84.7% |
| b. Drive or ride in vehicle owned by someone else          | 0.8%  |
| c. Carpool   | 0.6%  |
| d. Walk or bike  | 1.9%  |
| e. Public transport  | 0%    |
| f. Company supplied transport                              | 1.4%  |

13. Does your spouse/partner work in Morton?

- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | 26.1% |
| b. No  | 63.1% |

## **VIII. Demographics**

Out of the 360 respondents, our survey collected opinions on a fairly accurate representation of the current Morton population. We collected demographic information from our respondents including gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, spouse occupation location, number of children, Morton school attendance by respondent and children, education level, gross annual household income, commute time, and method of transportation.



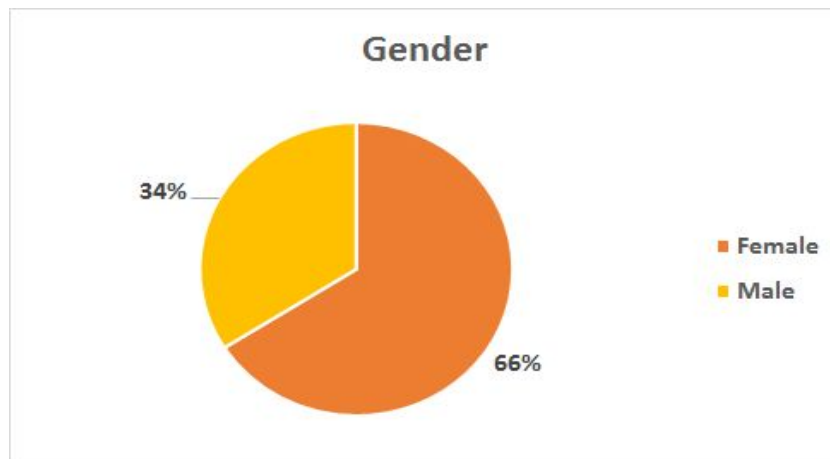
A brief overview of the demographic profile of our respondents can be summarized as: a majority of female, caucasian, married, high income, educated individuals with children that did/do attend Morton public schools, that live close to work.

This matches our secondary research of the census data of Morton fairly well. Of our respondents, 72% were aged 35 to 64, 88% own single family homes, 77% have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 64% have incomes higher than \$100,000. This compares to the census that states 49.5% of the Morton population are ages 19 to 64, 75% own their homes, 44.9% have a bachelor's degree or higher, and their median household income is \$76,888. Generally, our respondents were more educated and had a higher income than the typical Morton resident, which could have been due to the method of distribution of the survey.

A full analysis and breakdown of our respondent can be shown through the following charts, all of which include only valid percentages from our original survey data:

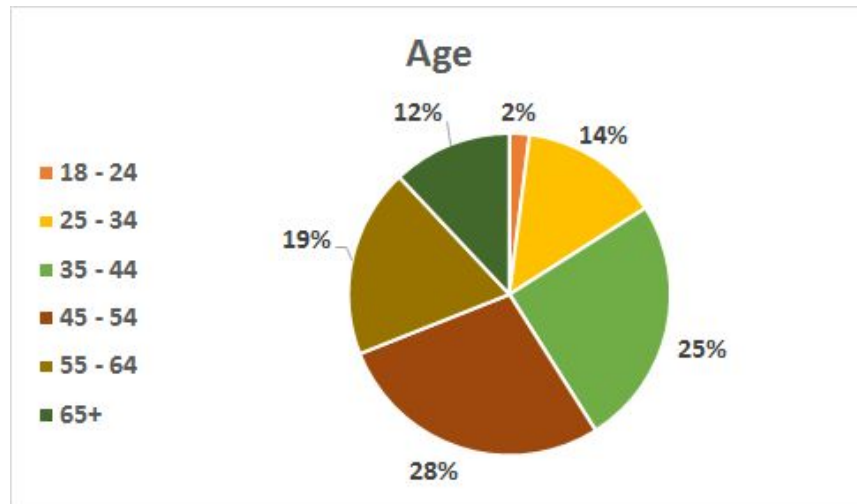
### **Gender of Respondents**

Out of 360 respondents, 66% of them were female, and 34% of them were male.



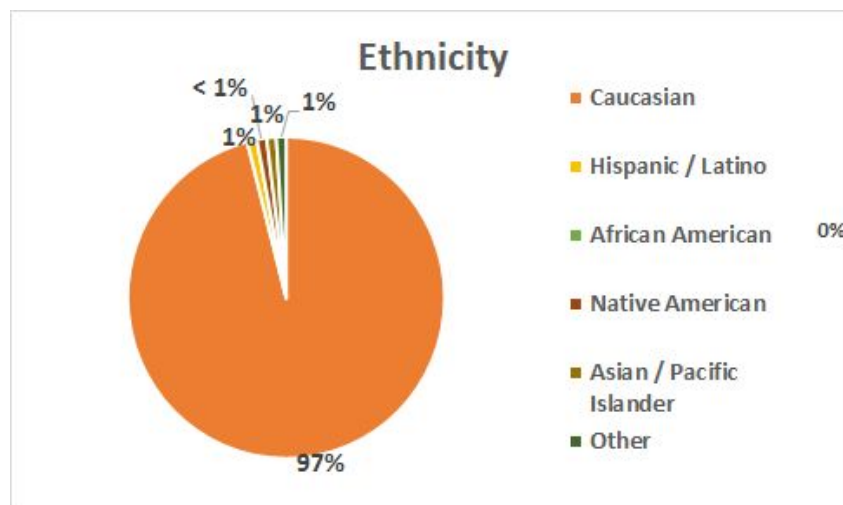
### Age of Respondents

The age range of our respondents was pretty diverse, covering a majority of different generations and categories. However, a majority of them did lie in the 45-54 category, and we experienced a lower amount of respondents in the 18-35 age categories. This matches up pretty well with the census as a majority of the population is over the age of 35.



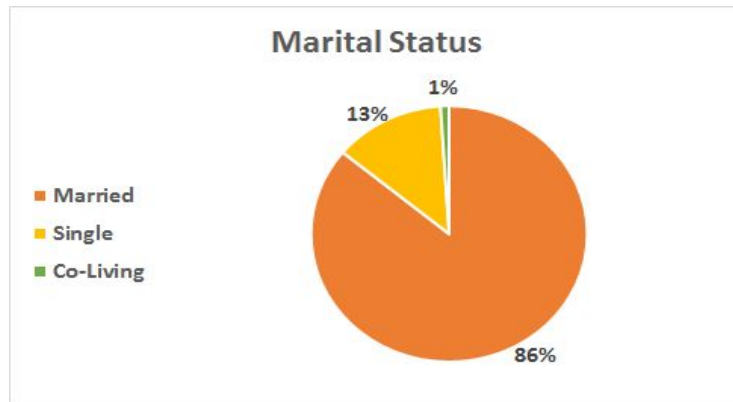
### Ethnicity of Respondents

Both the census and our survey displayed a lack of diversity in Morton, with both percentages totaling around 97%. Other ethnicities such as hispanic/latino, African American, Native American, and Asian/Pacific Islander each represented less than 1% of all respondents.



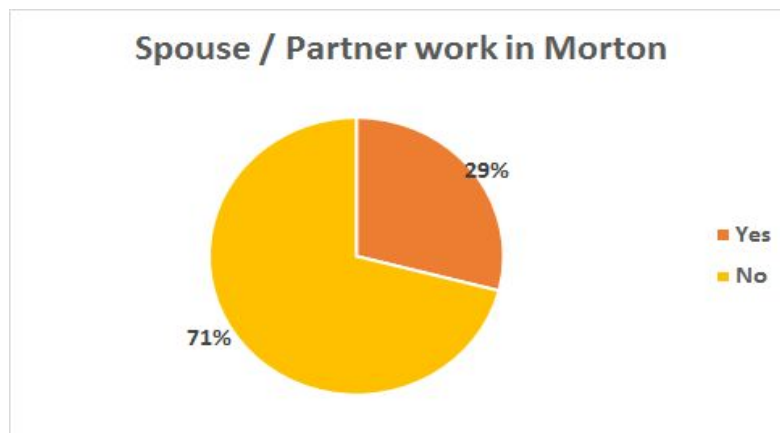
### Marital Status of Respondents

A heavy majority of our respondents were married, with 86% having a spouse, and 13% being single. We also had a 1% response for those who were not married, but co-living with an individual.



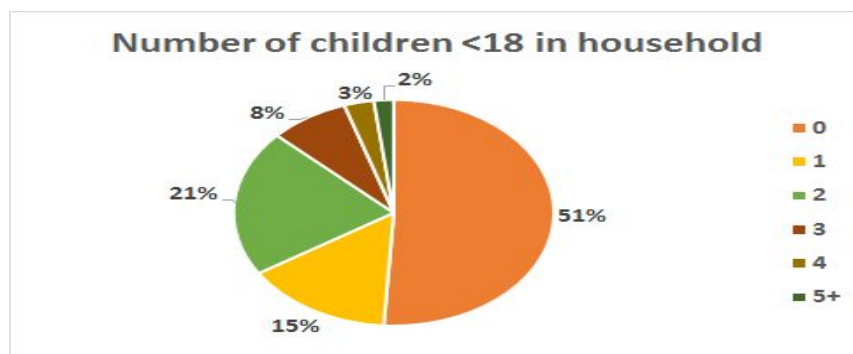
### Does the respondent's spouse work in Morton?

A majority of respondent's spouses do not work in Morton although they reside within the area.



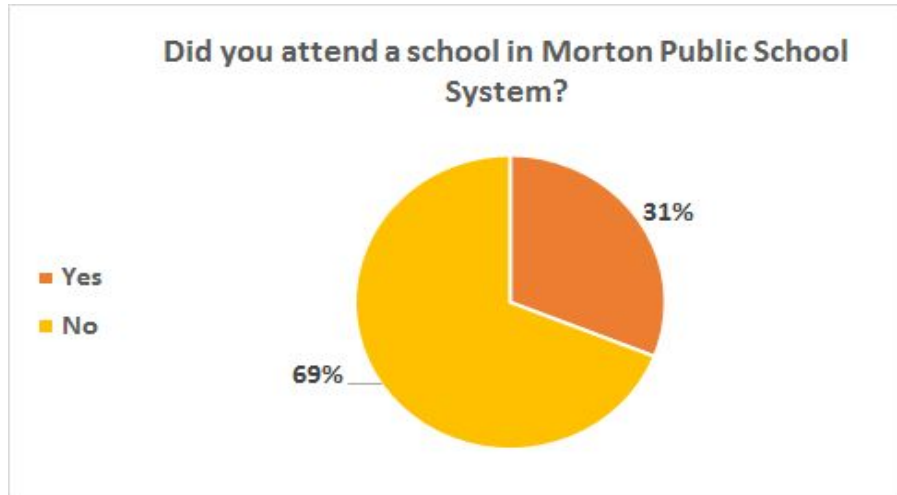
### Number of Children in Household

A majority of our respondents were in a higher age group, so many of them did not have children under the age of 18 living in their homes. If there were children present, a majority had either 1-2 under the age of 18.



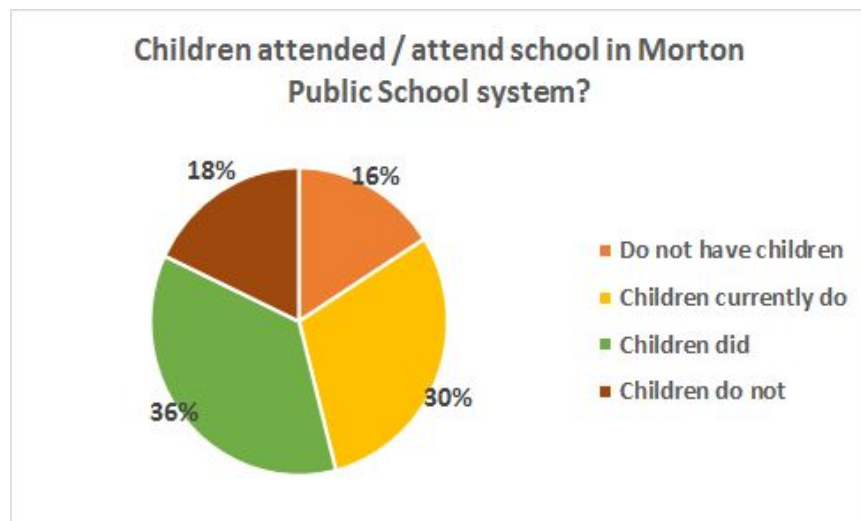
### Respondent Public School

Many individuals who responded to the survey did not personally attend the Morton public school system. This suggests that many of them moved into Morton vs. growing up here and staying. However, a fairly large portion (31%) attended Morton schools, and now live in the area.



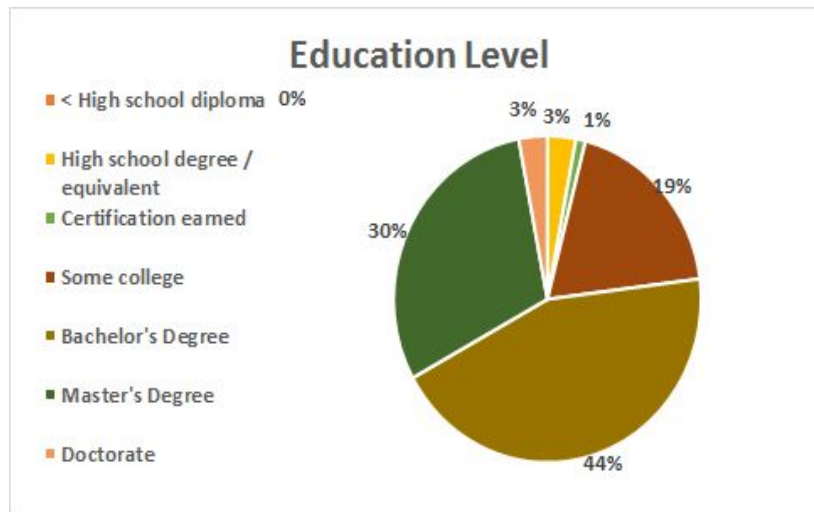
### Respondent's Children School

While a majority of respondents personally did not attend Morton public schools, 66% reported that their children have, or currently attend school in the Morton area. Only 18% report that they live in Morton but attend school in another district.



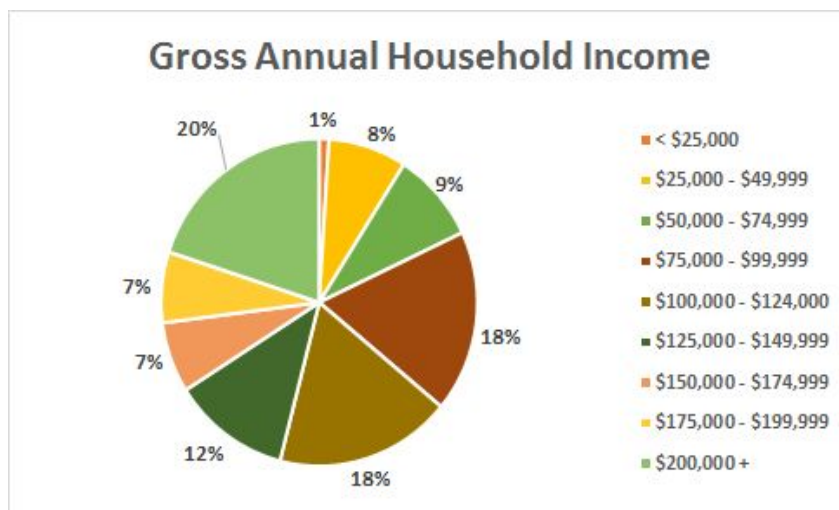
### Respondent Education

As previously stated, a majority of respondents are highly educated. 77% of respondents identified as having a Bachelor's degree or higher. 0% reported having less than a high school diploma, and less than 5% reported having less than some college education. Due to the higher income levels and age, it is understandable that their education level matches.



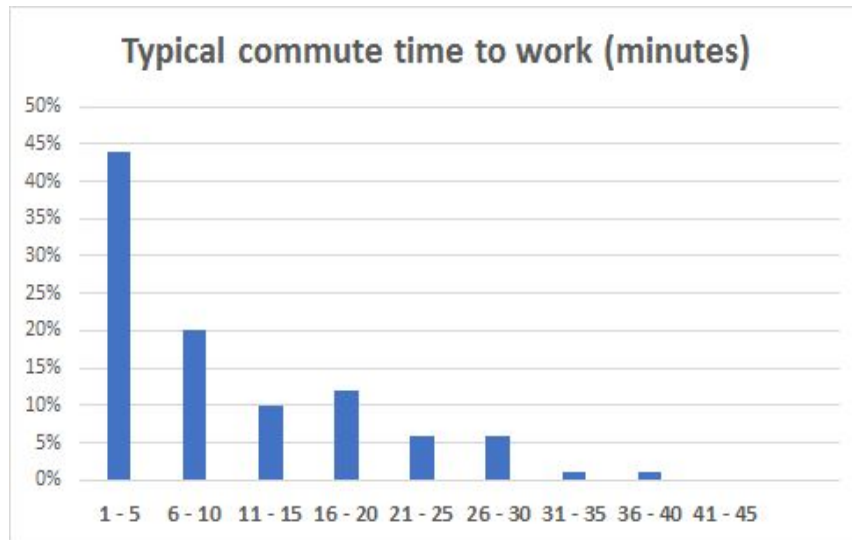
### Respondent Income

The gross annual household incomes of Morton residents is fairly evenly dispersed. The highest level of respondents (20%) reported making over \$200,000 a year. The next highest majority of respondents combined (36%) make an annual income of \$75,000-\$124,000. This fits with the census data that reported the mean income level to be \$76,888.



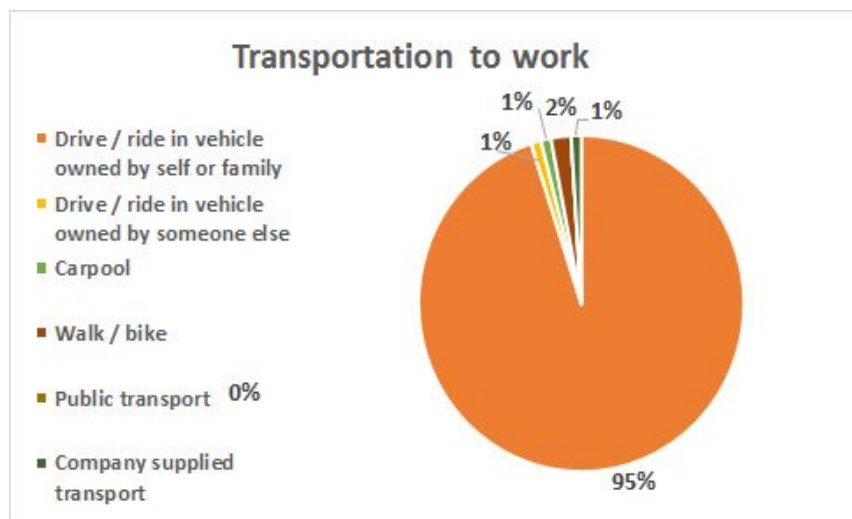
### Respondent Commute Time

The average commute time for Morton residents ranged in the 1-5 minute category. Virtually zero respondents identified as having a commute longer than 20 minutes, which suggests a majority of them work fairly close to home in the area.



### Respondent Method of Transportation

The majority of respondents (95%) drive to work by a vehicle owned by themselves or a member of their family. With high income levels, it is common for individuals to own their own cars - this also suggests that alternative modes of transportation such as walking, or public transport are not common or widely available.

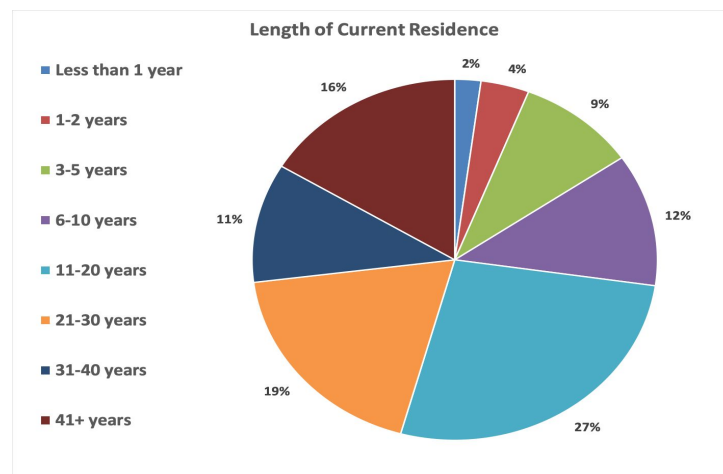


## IX. Housing Market Analysis

The following results are from the Housing Market segment of questions from the distributed survey, specifically questions 1-6.

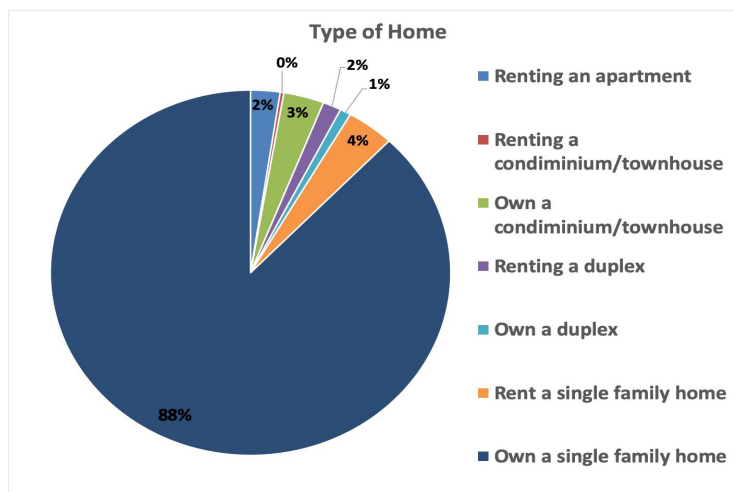
### Length of Current Residence

Most of the respondents have lived in Morton 11+ years, with the largest percentage of them (27%) having lived 11-20 years in Morton. This is consistent with what our group learned during our qualitative research, as many families have been in Morton for generations.



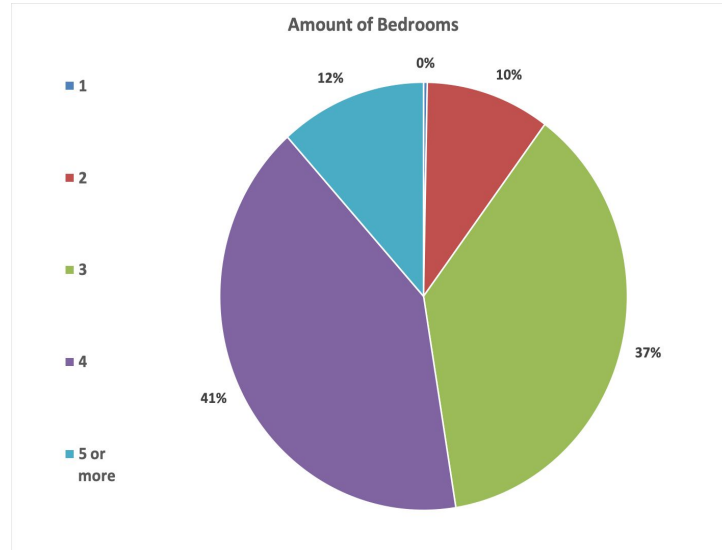
### Type of Home

The majority of the respondents (88%) own a single family home. There is a large difference between this segment and all other segments, with the closest respondent segment being people who rent a single family home (4%).



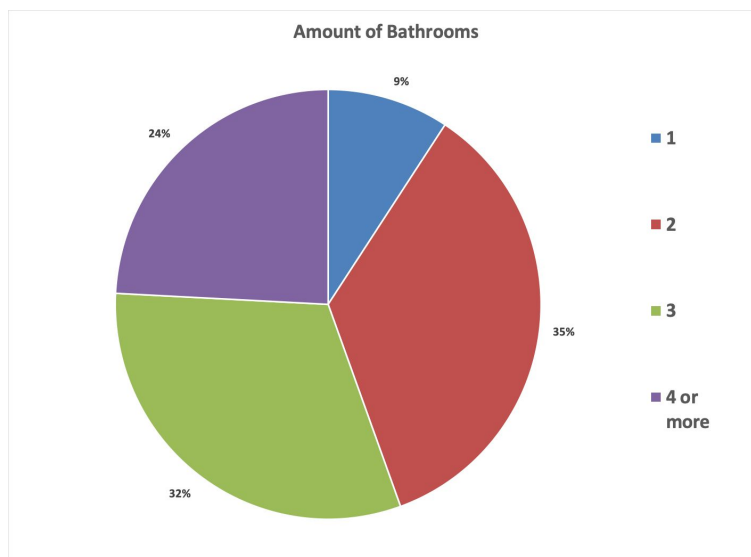
### Amount of Bedrooms

Most respondents have 3 or 4 bedrooms in their homes, at 78%. This makes sense, seeing that most people live in single family homes and not smaller living situations such as apartments.



### Amount of Bathrooms

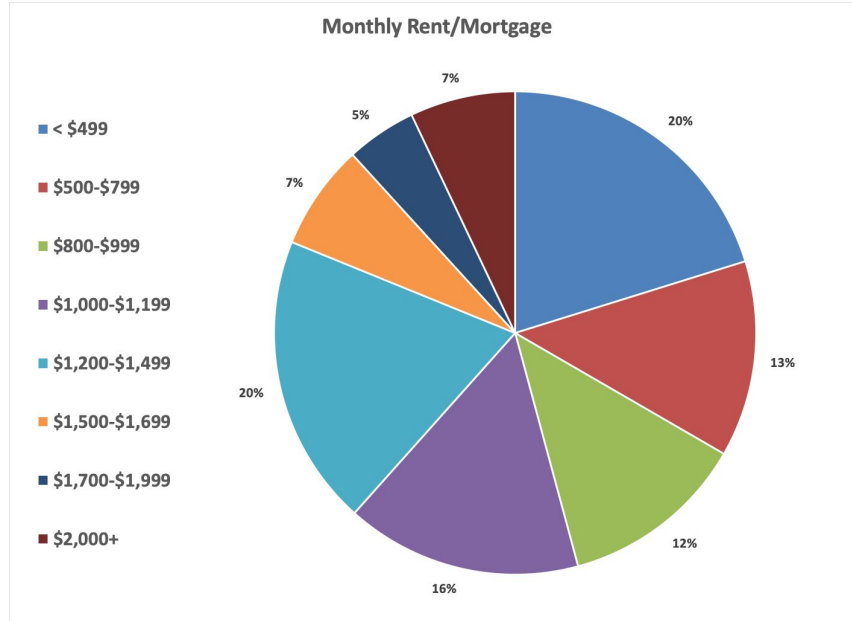
Most respondents also had 2 or 3 bathrooms as well (67%). This makes sense with the previous result of having 3 or 4 bedrooms, as these are all common aspects of single family homes.





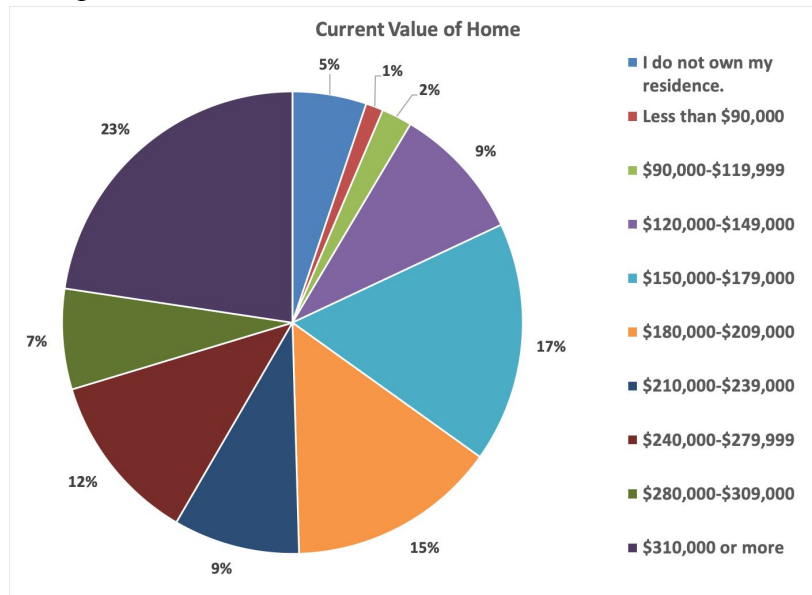
### Monthly Rent / Mortgage

Two respondent groups, <\$499 and \$1,200 - \$1,499 made up the majority of monthly rent / mortgage costs, at 20% each. There is a pretty even dispersion from less than \$499 to \$1,499.



### Current Value of Home

23% valued their homes at \$310,000 or more, which makes sense because our respondents do typically have incomes higher than the average. The next highest rankings are \$150,000 - \$179,000 and \$180,000 - \$209,000 which are much closer to the median housing value of around 190,000 and the sales price of about 155,000



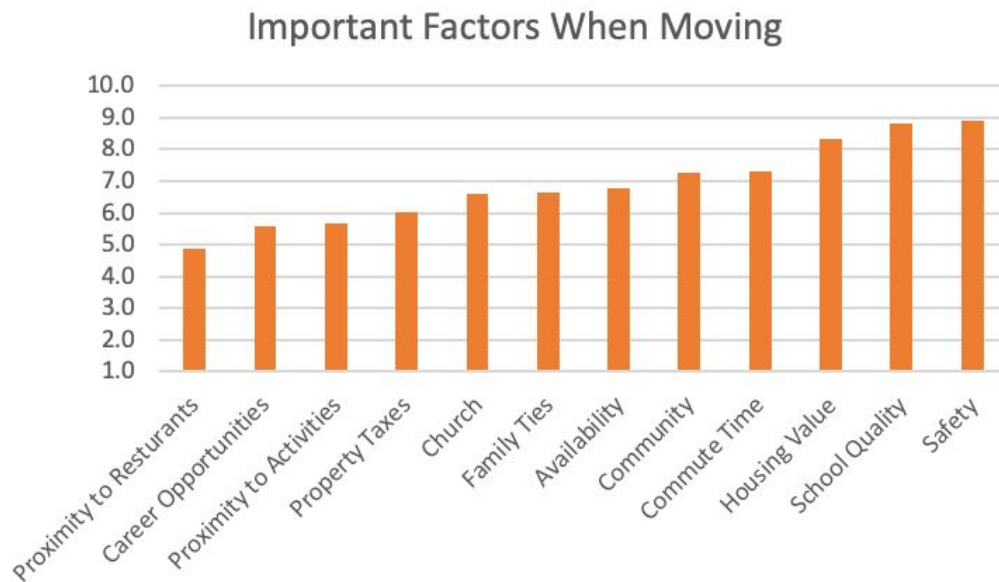
## X. Community Analysis: Housing and Living

The following section includes an analysis of the responses to the second and third questions of our survey:

## Q2: Important Moving Factors

We surveyed respondents on a variety of factors that were important to their decision to move to Morton. Respondents were asked to answer each question on the scale of 1 (Not at all Important) to 10 (Extremely Important). These questions were for us to get a more general understanding on what draws people to Morton.

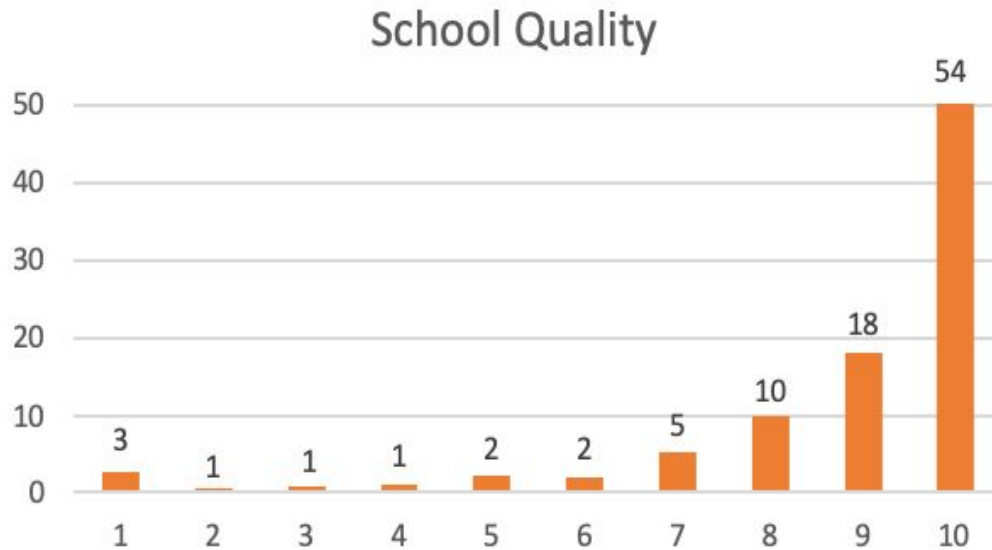
The top three factors that had the highest means, therefore being most important in the respondents decision to move to Morton, included: safety of the community, quality of schools and housing that maintains value. The bottom three included: career opportunities, proximity to restaurant and proximity to recreational activities. The following chart shows the average responses for each factor on a scale of 1-10:



The factors can be broken down by examining the top and bottom 3 to further understand what is important to those looking to move into Morton and potential factors that they believe Morton provides them with. Each of the following charts is broken up by valid percent of respondents that answered the question, based on what value they assigned to the factor.

### School Quality

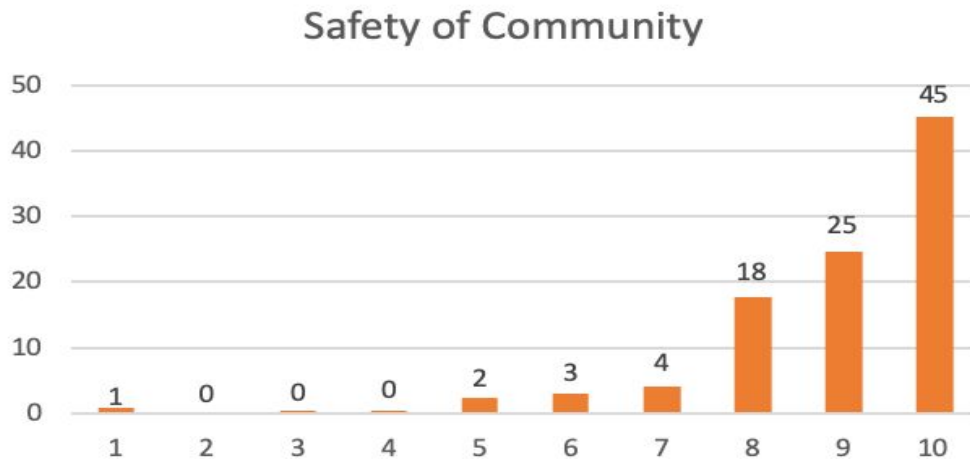
Being one of the leading factors, we can see that the importance of school quality is very high and opinions don't vary much. 54% of respondents felt that the quality of the schools was extremely important in their decision to move to Morton, giving it a score of "10."



The fact that school quality is of importance makes sense when you examine the demographics of respondents. 72% are between the ages of 35-64, 88% are married, 49% have children in their households and 66% have children that did or currently attend Morton public schools. This means that families with children are a large portion of the population, which means that they are very influenced by this specific factor.

### Safety of the Community

Again, we can see that importance does not vary much between respondents when it comes to the safety of the community. 45% of respondents felt that the safety of the community was extremely important in their decision to move to Morton, giving it a score of "10."



With a majority of respondents being wealthy families with children, they value their assets. 20% report an income over \$200,000 and 23% estimate their home value to be above \$310,000.

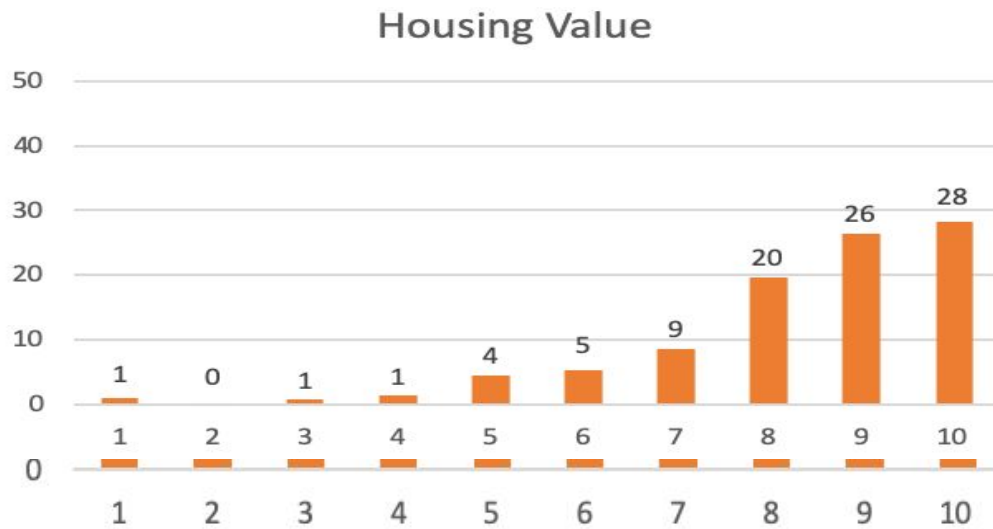
### **Housing that Maintains Value**

The next important factor was housing that maintains value. Although responses were a bit more disperse, the majority of respondents still considered this important. 28% of respondents felt that housing that maintains value was extremely important in their decision to move to Morton, giving it a score of “10.”

A majority of residents in Morton own their homes (88% own a single family home), with only 27% living in Morton under 10 years - the rest living anywhere from 11-41+ years. Due to the wide length of stay, and the fact that they own a home, the value of their home in the long run was important when choosing to live in Morton.

### **Career Opportunities**

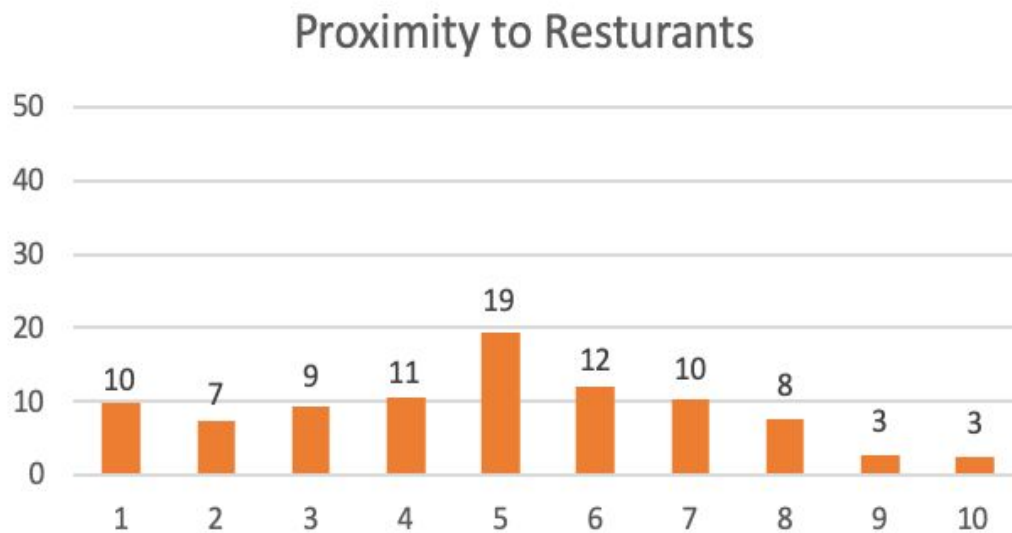
On the contrast, career opportunities was the lowest ranked in terms of importance to people when moving to Morton. The responses are very spread out between respondents as shown in the chart below:



Because a majority of respondents are in an older demographic, it can be assumed that they had career opportunities already set and other factors outweighed their decision.

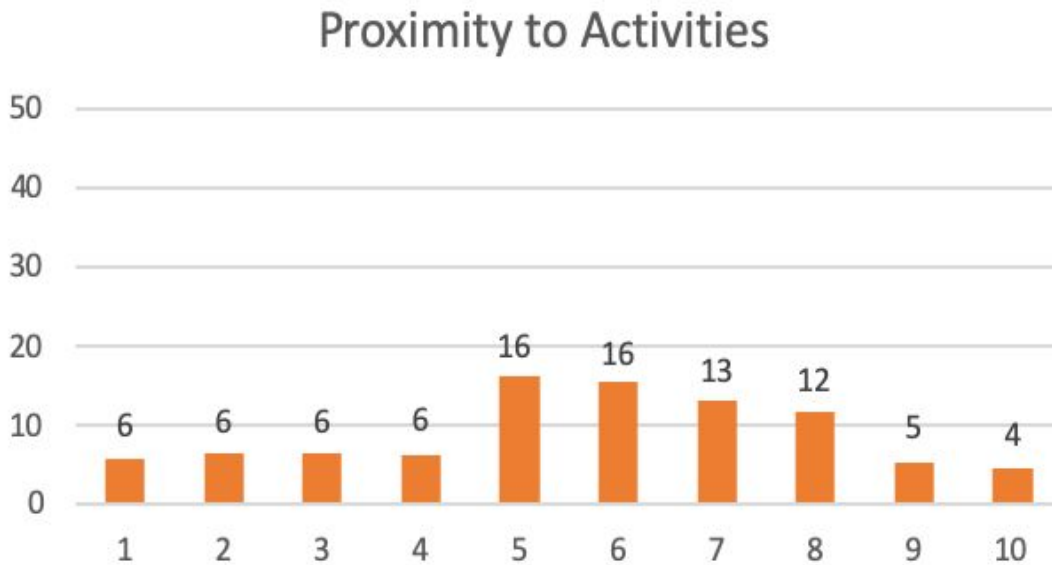
### Proximity to Restaurants

Proximity to restaurants was the next lowest ranked in terms of importance to people when moving to Morton. The responses are very spread out between respondents (highest being 5) as shown in the chart below:



### Proximity to Recreational Activities

Finally, the Proximity to recreational activities was the next lowest ranked in terms of importance to people when moving to Morton. The responses are centralized between 5-8 as shown in the chart below:



Once again, importance of these factors were most likely not important to an older demographic who might be well established, well endowed, and family oriented.

### Under 35 Analysis of Moving Factors

Considering all of the above, we decided to take a look at how our recommended target audience (millennials aged under 35) rated the factors above in terms of importance to their move to Morton. They rated the bottom 3 factors accordingly:

- 57% ranked 6 or higher on career opportunities
- 59% ranked 6 or higher on proximity to recreational activities
- 40% ranked 6 or higher on proximity to restaurants

### Q3: Housing and Living Agreement Statements

Next, we surveyed respondents agreement levels regarding their opinions on a variety of different housing and living statements. Respondents answered rated each factor on a scale of 1 being the it was Strongly Disagree, to 10 being Strongly Agree.

We grouped the questions in three categories which included the following statements:

- **Current living situation:** The existence of family ties to the area, if their home would fit their family's needs in 5 years, if they preferred Morton, if they were satisfied with their living situation, if they enjoy living in Morton, if their house fits their current needs, and if they would recommend Morton to others.
- **Housing value:** Which asked if they agreed that Morton should add housing options under \$100,000, \$100,000-\$149,000, \$150,000-\$200,000, and >\$200,000.
- **Housing market:** If Morton should add rental options, if the village should annex lands, add senior living, if there's a shortage of housing, if the housing available is affordable, real estate tax reasonability, and if Morton should preserve historic buildings.

### **Current Living Situation**

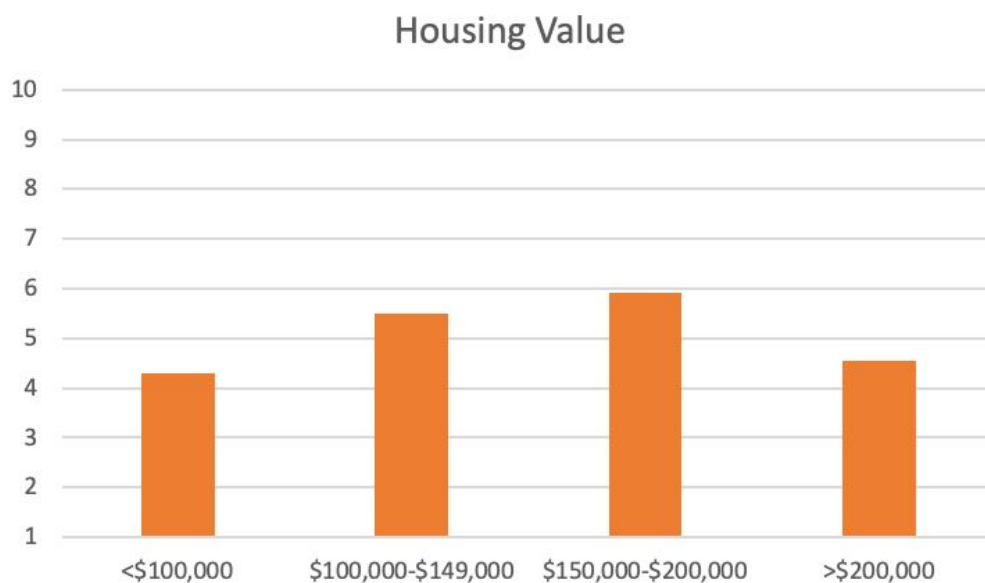
Respondents were asked to rate their agreements on statements regarding their current living situation. Over half of the below statements have an average response above 8.



We found that respondents are generally very satisfied with living in Morton. Residents are not only satisfied with their current housing situations, but they do not see it changing soon. They'd also recommend the area to others as a place to live.

### Housing Value

Respondents were asked to rate their agreements on statements regarding the housing availability that Morton should provide in regards to specific listing prices. As seen below, the responses remained fairly neutral as the respondents are higher income and do not plan on moving soon.





Low income housing is not seen to be necessary to respondents, as the average response was about a 4. This makes sense considering 64% of respondents make above \$100,000 a year. However, the greatest agreement is for housing options between \$150,000-\$200,000, which matches the median housing listing according to Zillow from our secondary research which sits at \$190,000.

### **Housing Market**

Respondents were asked to rate their agreements on statements regarding the housing market in Morton. As seen below, the responses remained fairly neutral as the respondents are higher income and do not plan on moving soon.



The lowest agreed upon statement is that Morton should add rental options. Keeping in mind that 88% of respondents own a single family home, and less than 10% rent, this adds up. The remaining are fairly neutral as they do not directly apply to respondents since they are not looking to relocate.

### **Conclusion**

Overall, residents in Morton enjoy living in the area and believe that their living situations meet their families needs. Due to their satisfaction, it does not provide much insight as to what Morton should bring to the area in terms of future development. While over 35 is focused on schools, safety, and housing value - it can be suggested that under 35 are concerned with career opportunities, restaurants, and activities in the area.

## X. Community Analysis: Community

The following section includes an analysis of the responses to the fourth question of our survey regarding their agreement with certain statements about the Morton community:

### Community Agreement Statements

We surveyed respondents on a variety of agreement statements that relate to the Morton community. Respondents answered rated each factor on a scale of 1 being the it was Strongly Disagree, to 10 being Strongly Agree.

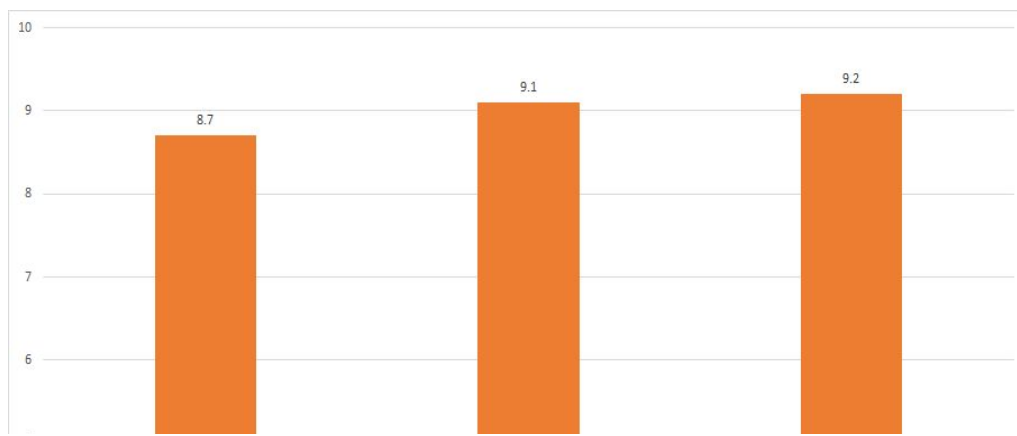
We have grouped these questions into three categories including:

- **Community:** Preference of living in Morton, Morton is a safe community, and Morton is a clean community.
- **Services:** Police, fire, education, healthcare, and employment.
- **Amenities:** Restaurants, recreation, shopping, grocery, fitness, nightlife, and parks and trails.

The following chart shows the average responses for each factor on a scale of 1-10:

### Community

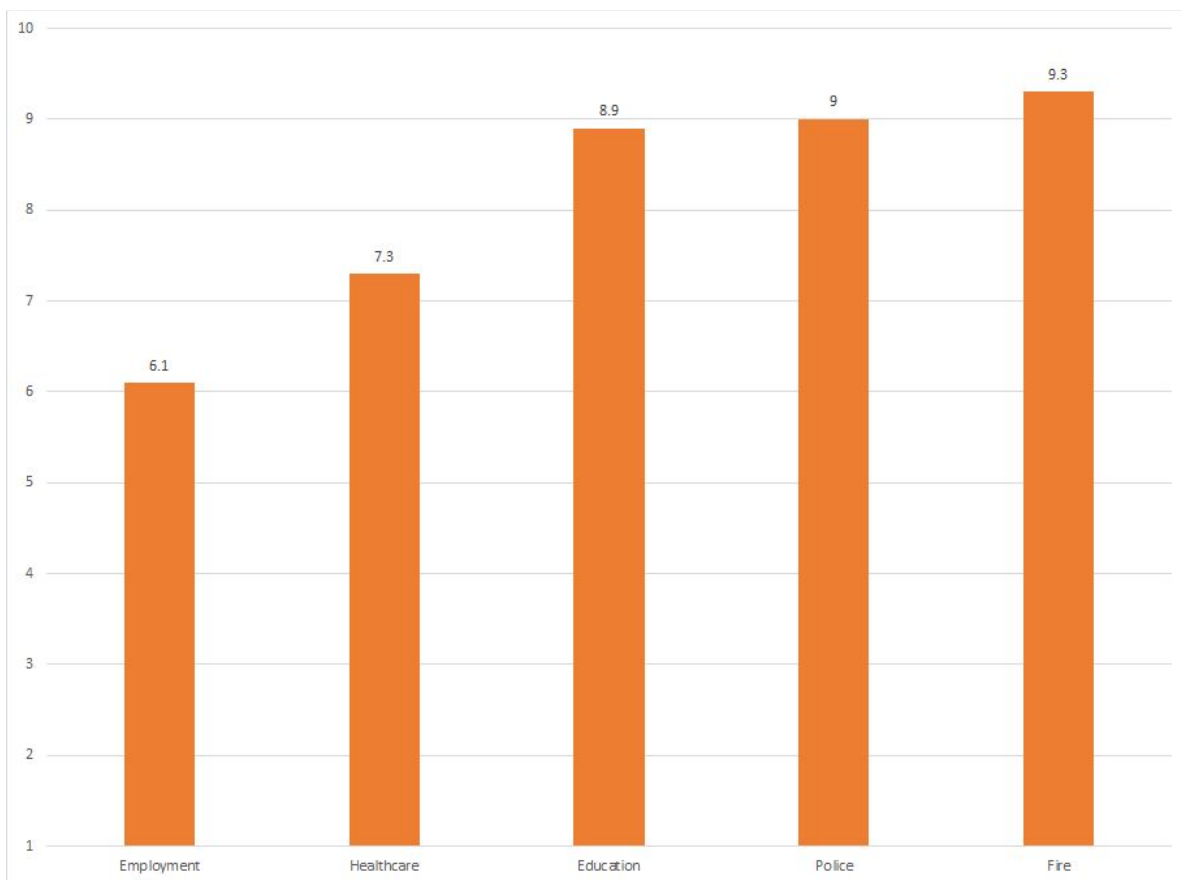
We first surveyed individuals on their general enjoyment of the community. As shown below, the average response for each question wavered around a 9, meaning individuals were highly satisfied with the cleanliness, safe environment and their general preference for living in Morton.



As seen before in Q2 and Q3, individuals enjoy living in Morton and felt that the safety of the community was an important deciding factor when choosing to live in Morton. We can now see that their perception is that Morton provides a very safe and enjoyable community, which is of value to them.

### Services

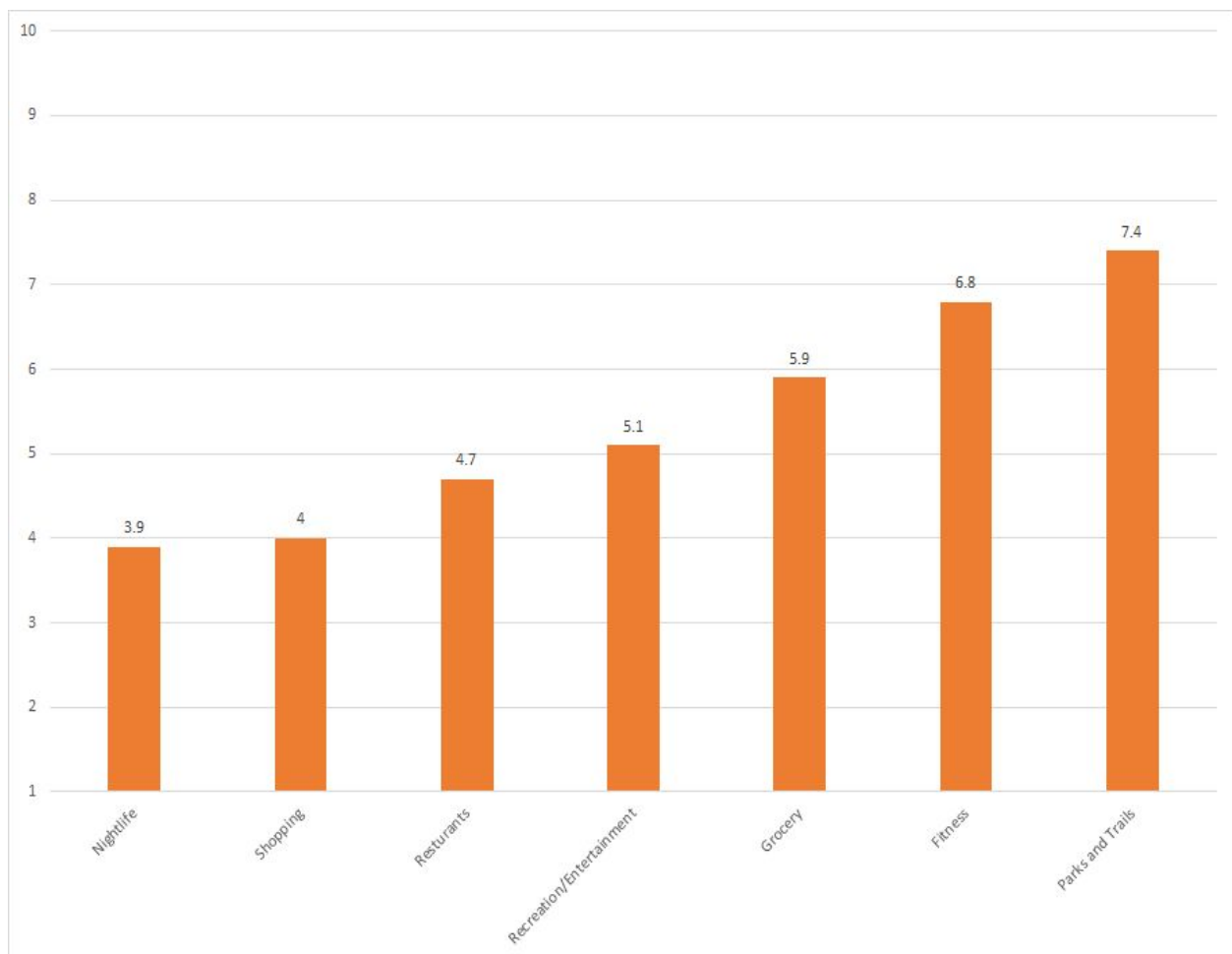
We then surveyed individuals on their perception of a variety of services offered in the Morton community. Overall, respondents were satisfied with the services offered in the community. As shown below, the average response for the police department, fire department, and educational services was about 9, determining high satisfaction for these services.



The lowest agreed upon statement was with the amount of employment opportunities, with an average of about 6. Respondents think that there is a fair amount of opportunities, but this is a service that could use improvement.

### Amenities

Lastly, we surveyed respondents on their agreement with various amenities that are offered. As shown below, respondents weren't very satisfied with the amenities. The average response across the board is 5.4. Individuals were generally satisfied with the fitness opportunities at 6.8 and the outdoor spaces, such as parks, trails, and bike paths, with a score of 7.4.



The lowest agreed upon statements were with nightlife, shopping, and restaurant/food opportunities, all scoring below a 5. We can see that respondents feel that there are not enough

amenities offered in the Morton community and would be of value to improve some of these services.

### **Under 35 Analysis of Community Agreement Statements**

Considering all of the above, we decided to take a look at how our recommended target audience (millennials aged under 35) rated the factors above in terms of their agreement with certain amenities in the community. They rated the following amenities accordingly:

- 60% ranked 5 or less for restaurants and food options.
- 54% ranked 5 or less for recreation and entertainment opportunities.
- 72% ranked 5 or less for shopping options.
- 74% ranked 5 or less for nightlife opportunities.

## **XII. Recommendations**

In conclusion, we recommended that Morton builds more single family starter homes under \$100,000 dollars. The majority of Morton residents reside in single family homes. We believe this will benefit the Morton community by adding new housing options in different pricing brackets. This will help attract a new younger age group that are looking for a starter home potentially located in the Village of Morton.

Morton is missing a clear gap in their market. The majority of Morton residents are over thirty five, with older children who are not living at home anymore. These older residents do not value nightlife, restaurants, and activities and much as the younger generation does. In order to attract this younger age group, Morton should revitalize the downtown. By adding new restaurants, recreational activities and career opportunities this will help draw a younger generation to the Village. This will make the Village of Morton a destination city rather than just a place where your house is located.

## **XIII. Appendix**

<https://www.peoriamagazines.com/ibi/2018/oct/strategic-plan-downtown-development>

<http://growpeoria.com/warehouse-district/>

<https://www.kentucky.com/news/local/news-columns-blogs/tom-eblen/article44104023.html>

<http://www.saveourgateways.com/HowGreenville.php>