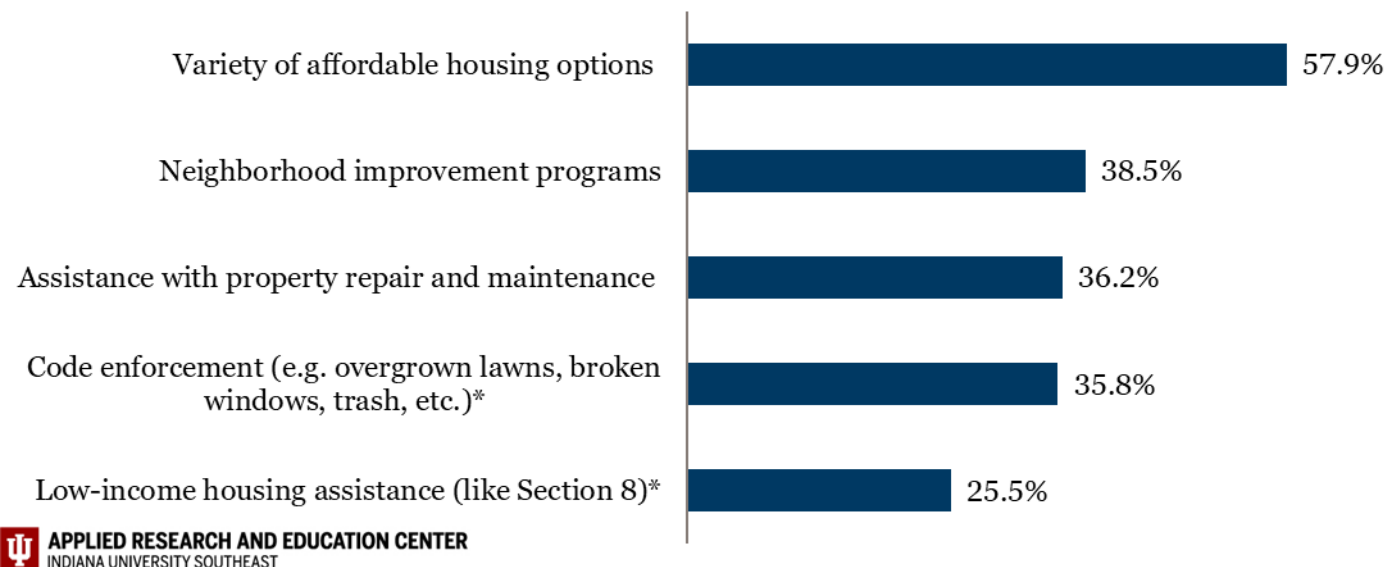


With funding from the Community Foundation of Southern Indiana, the IU Southeast Applied Research and Education Center held community listening sessions and surveyed Clark and Floyd county residents, nonprofit, business, and local government leaders, and the Foundation's fund holders to identify priorities, assets, aspirations, and opportunities for growth and improvement to support thriving communities. Findings will be used to guide the Foundation's grant making to support the community's *Priorities for Progress*.

*Basic Needs* looks at how well the region meets basic human needs, which include food, clothing and shelter. The ability for individuals to meet their own basic needs is imperative to the proper functioning of other community systems. Without these needs being met, it can be difficult or even impossible for individuals to maintain employment, attend school, and practice healthy lifestyle behaviors.

### Most Frequently Selected Priorities for Housing

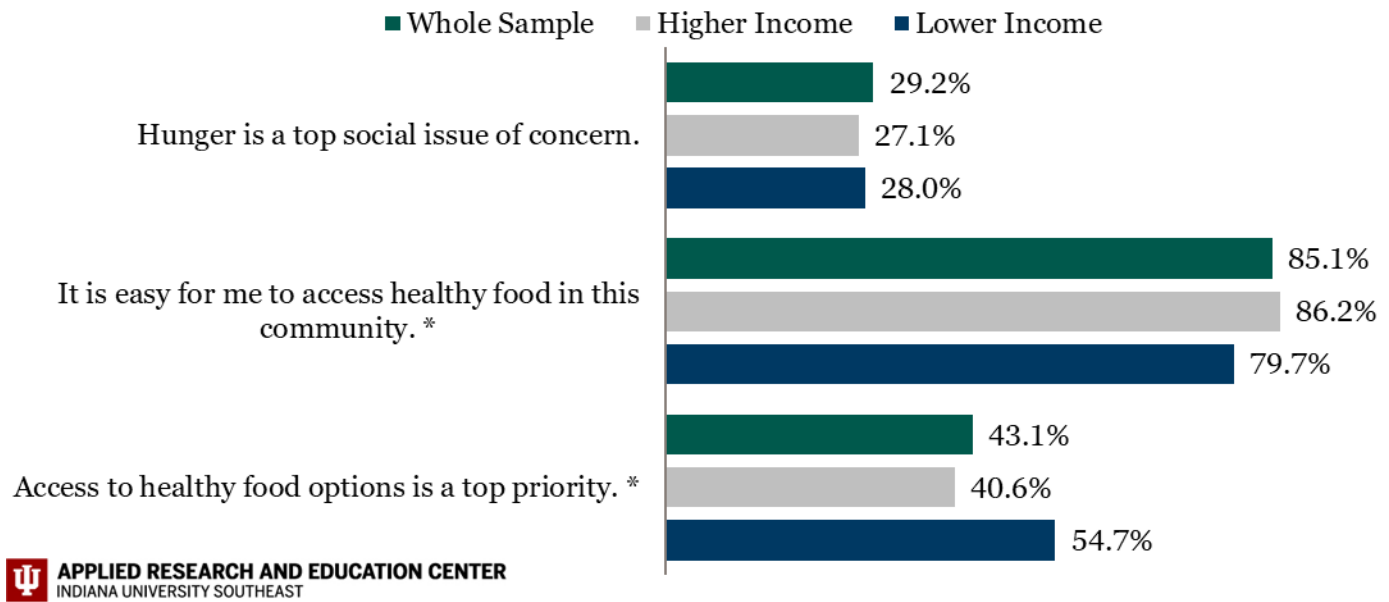


With approximately 11% of the two-county region being food insecure, a focus on basic needs has been a priority for the region. Despite improvements in housing and food security between 2015 and 2020, gains quickly disappeared amid the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recession. Understanding the short-term effects of the pandemic, along with existing long-term data on food and housing insecurity, is vital to improving access to basic needs in the region.

### Housing Priorities for Progress

- Engage mixed income development by increasing affordable housing requirements for new development targeting multiple income levels (e.g. 30 percent area median income and 60 percent area median income).
- Enforce codes at local rentals to even the playing field and remove disincentives to participation in federal rental assistance models.
- Identify potential partners and funding models, design and implement a program that provides home repair support for low-income homeowners.

## Hunger and Access to Healthy Food



Nearly 30% of the full sample said that hunger was one of their top five social issues. Despite the relative success of programs specifically targeting food insecurity in the region, residents of Clark and Floyd counties remain concerned. Church groups and other nonprofit organizations are important sources for free meals in the region. Interfaith groups, such as the Center for Lay Ministries (CLM) and Hope Southern Indiana meet significant need through their food pantries.

### Food Security Priorities for Progress

- Support increased wages for low-skill occupations, and build and attract living wage jobs across the economy. Skilled or unskilled, full-time workers need to earn enough to feed and house their families.
- Work to bring a full service grocery to downtown New Albany.
- Work with TARC and with Indiana state government to improve public transportation that can facilitate access to groceries for food deserts within the region's population centers.
- Work to improve public transportation between population centers and rural communities.
- Support and encourage small business development to bring full service grocery stores to Borden and New Washington.

### Community perceptions of Clark and Floyd counties' performance in meeting basic needs of low-income children and youth

