

# LIVABILITY LAB

MUSKEGON COUNTY CHALLENGE: LL 2.0

Holding strong to the community's audacious vision:  
 Creating a system that ensures livability for all Muskegon County residents.

The world changed significantly since the first Livability Lab challenge cycle wrapped on January 23, the impact on our community is profound. One thing that doesn't change is the perseverance of Muskegon County residents. The Livability Lab action teams are adjusting to and addressing current community conditions, and are ready to work through the next challenge cycle.

**COMMUNITY CONDITIONS:** The Community Conditions below were identified by resident surveys gathered March - July 2020; and by local, state and national databases and reports.

## LIVABILITY ELEMENT: SAFETY AND SECURITY

COMMUNITY CONDITIONS AND COVID IMPACT  
 CONSIDERING THE NEXT PHASE OF CHIR WORK AND LIVABILITY LAB

HEALTH INFLUENCERS	SNAPSHOT OF MUSKEGON COUNTY RESIDENT INPUT FROM SURVEY MATERIAL	SNAPSHOT OF NATIONAL, STATE OR LOCAL POLICY OR OTHER IMPACT FACTORS
<p><b>Housing Instability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the vulnerable people experiencing homelessness will die. And when this is done, we will have such demand for our services we will be overwhelmed with the need and lack of resources to help.</li> <li>• I worry about how I am going to pay my bills – mostly the mortgage.</li> <li>• Safe housing for those who have nothing.</li> <li>• We need...Housing would be my number one goal. It is Muskegon's biggest need and has been for quite some time. I assist clients in attempting to find affordable housing, and will say that unless an individual is chronically homeless and is able to get a homelessness verification letter, they will remain homeless.</li> <li>• We need help for those who have no shelter.</li> <li>• We need a negotiator to help people pay their rent, keep the lights on, and get food for suffering families.</li> <li>• We need to take care for the homeless, the elders and runaway children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Americans owe more than \$21.5 billion in overdue rent, according to <a href="#">one recent analysis</a> that underlined the urgency of the housing crisis facing American renters as the coronavirus pandemic drags on. With eviction moratoriums ending in many cities and states, experts are warning of an impending wave of families being forced out of their homes with devastating collateral consequences if immediate action is not taken to keep people housed. <a href="#">Route 50</a>, August 4, 2020</li> <li>• The CARES Act, which was signed into law in March, established a temporary moratorium on evictions for all rental units that were backed by some form of federally financing, including Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac loans. That moratorium ended July 31.</li> <li>• The CARES Act moratorium protected some 12.3 million rental units nationwide, a <a href="#">report from the Urban Institute</a> estimated. And while many cities and states passed their own eviction moratoriums, many of those have either already expired or are set to end soon. <a href="#">MarketWatch</a> 7/24/20</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Michigan Supreme Court estimated last week that there could be a backlog of some 75,000 eviction cases. One of the nation’s leading online legal resource programs, Michigan Legal Help provides extensive information and assistance to families at risk of eviction. During the pandemic, Michigan Legal Help has been visited 10,000 times each day. <a href="#">Crain’s Detroit Business</a>, 7/5/2020</li> </ul> <p><b>U.S. Census: Weekly Pulse Newsletter:</b></p> <p><a href="#">See Data Tables</a></p> <p>Based on responses collected July 9 <b>through July 14</b>, 2020 the Household Pulse Survey estimates that during the COVID-19 pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>26.5%</b> of adults either missed last month’s rent or mortgage payment, or had slight or no confidence that their household could make the next payment on time. <a href="#">Pulse Survey</a></li> <li><b>41%</b> of Latino parents/primary caregivers report having trouble paying for their rent or mortgage. The cost of housing has been more challenging for those who are renting their homes, as we see 49% of renters in the survey indicating that they are having trouble paying their rent compared to 35% for those who own their home. <a href="#">Brookings</a> 7/27/2020</li> </ul>
<p><b>Food Insecurity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I work with emergency food and the food system as a whole, so the impact is on my job. Primarily – trying to find resources for people in hospitality who are losing their income, trying to find food access for those who have none, trying to find purchasers for farms who need to sell their products.</li> <li>Who’s feeding homeless on the weekends?</li> <li>As of now I don’t qualify for food stamps. Having kids home all day has impacted food source greatly.</li> <li>The weekly drive to pick up free food for the kids at the school really raised all our spirits! The kids love to see some staff and wave. And, seeing what’s in their bag – familiar food from school!</li> <li>Difficulty obtaining food and supplies.</li> <li>Worry or concern? ... Food!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">According to Feeding America</a>, 1 in 6 Americans could face hunger because of the coronavirus outbreak.</li> <li>From the beginning of March through the end of June, food banks across the country distributed more than 1.9 billion meals. Food banks gave out 20 percent more food than in an average month. <a href="#">Washington Post</a>, August 4, 2020</li> <li>Nearly four in 10 Black and Hispanic households with children are struggling to feed their families during the coronavirus pandemic — a dramatic spike that is exacerbating racial inequities and</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are not used to going to the food store and not finding usual staples.</li> <li>• Grocery shopping has been a struggle.</li> <li>• We now have grocery shopping protocols upon coming home that take as long as it does to purchase the groceries. We also go to the store far less but buy more each time.</li> <li>• We need food delivery/pick up web sites for the grocery stores.</li> <li>• Help your community with food resources.</li> <li>• Drive up food trucks!</li> <li>• We need more free food access points.</li> <li>• We need a comprehensive data base of food and hospitality related resources county wide.</li> <li>• Meal/food delivery from pantries for those who are at high risk and unable to visit them right now</li> </ul>	<p>potentially threatening the health of millions of young Americans. <a href="#">Politico</a>, July 6, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The percentage of families who are considered food insecure has surged across all groups and is already much higher than during the depths of the Great Recession, according to new research by economists at Northwestern University based on Census Bureau data. (Bottemiller Evich, 7/6) <a href="#">Politico</a>, July 6, 2020</li> <li>• Nearly every category of food became more expensive at some point since February, according to data released Friday by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Beef and veal prices saw the steepest spike (20.2 percent), followed by eggs (10.4 percent), poultry (8.6 percent) and pork (8.5 percent).</li> <li>• Compared with this time last year, prices for beef and veal are up 25.1 percent. Eggs are up 12.1 percent, and pork is up 11.8 percent from a year earlier, according to seasonally adjusted BEA data.</li> <li>• For many staples, the price hikes were most severe earlier in the spring and summer when ruptured supply chains clashed with a surge in consumer demand. <a href="#">Washington Post</a>, 8/5/2020</li> </ul> <p><b>U.S. Census: Weekly Pulse Newsletter:</b></p> <p><a href="#">See Data Tables</a></p> <p>Based on responses collected July 9 <b>through July 14</b>, 2020 the Household Pulse Survey estimates that during the COVID-19 pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>12.1%</b> of Americans lived in households where there was either sometimes or often not enough to eat in the previous 7 days</li> <li>• On average, households spent <b>\$211.34 a week</b> to buy food at supermarkets, grocery stores, online, and other places to be prepared and eaten at home.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Transportation Availability</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need reliable, safe transportation for those in need.</li> <li>• Personal transportation for wheelchair users to be able to enjoy things outside of the immediate area and not constrained to public transportation. It is difficult enough for able bodied individuals to wait on busses in inclement weather. So much more so for physically handicapped.</li> <li>• Transportation or a grocery service for low income people and those without transportation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Utility Access and Assistance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need low cost internet. Internet is now an essential service. It's essential for kids in school and adults working from home. It is essential for virtual doctor and mental health appointments, banking, etc. There are no libraries or schools open. Even if they were they have limited computers and time limits. We cannot afford our internet yet. We have no options right now but to put it on credit. You can't have it within 30 days to be eligible for Spectrum internet assist which is sad because we might have to cancel all together. With the kids needing to do school work, we can't cancel for 30 days unless its summer. However, we are unable to work and have no income.</li> <li>• Greater bandwidth in rural communities – this is a real problem in my community. I worry about the children who are trying to do their school work and people who are attempting to work from home.</li> <li>• ...help on utilities, I don't have a mortgage.. I'm a single mom and this is a huge hit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2,477 Michigan residents have gotten their water services restored since March under the state's Restart Grant Program.</li> <li>• As for how many Michiganders still remain without access to clean water, however, the state's <a href="#">uniquely deregulated</a> water sector makes it virtually impossible to know. Michigan's water utilities have been untouched by economic regulation since the mid-1990s — meaning that utilities are not required to report data to the state, like how many residents have been shut off due to nonpayment and how many have been reconnected. <a href="#">Michigan Advance</a>, July 8, 2020.</li> <li>• More than two-thirds of people living in households where someone has received or expects a cash payment under a federal coronavirus relief program have used the money mostly for expenses— particularly costs like <a href="#">housing, utilities and food</a>, according to new survey data.</li> <li>• The Census Bureau released the estimates this week. They're derived from the latest edition of the bureau's "Household Pulse Survey," which aims to measure a number of the effects that the coronavirus pandemic is having on Americans households. <a href="#">Route 50</a>, June 26, 2020</li> </ul>