



Greater Dubuque Development Corporation  
2017 Community Perceptions Survey

**Data Results**

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Public Opinion Survey Center

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# *Introduction*

Commissioned by the Greater Dubuque Development Corporation (GDDC) as part of their efforts in economic and community development, this random sample live-caller telephone survey of 501 residents conducted 9/9/17-9/24/17 captured opinion of the Dubuque Community on topics such as the direction of the city, challenges and opportunities for the community, perceptions of safety, and other important issues such as race relations. The survey provides a rich source of data, and a snapshot of public opinion on a number of key issues. The survey methodology is provided in more detail in a separate section below, but the survey was designed to be reproducible so that longitudinal analysis can take place in the future. Such reproducibility allows for comparisons across time and furnishes a way to determine whether or not improvement is being realized in critical areas such as perceptions of the direction of the city, safety, and race relations.

Included in this report are some of the major findings from the survey results, as well as the complete results presented in frequency tables (i.e., the number/percentage of responses) and in cross tabulation across questions. These cross-tabulations allow the reader to see across two questions simultaneously (e.g., how people of a certain age answered a particular question). Also included is the survey instrument itself.

# 1. *General Impressions of Dubuque and Quality of Life Measures*

Note: due to rounding, percentages might not add to 100%

- 73% Say Dubuque is heading on the Right Track
  - 18% say Dubuque is heading in the Wrong Direction
  - 9% say they are Unsure

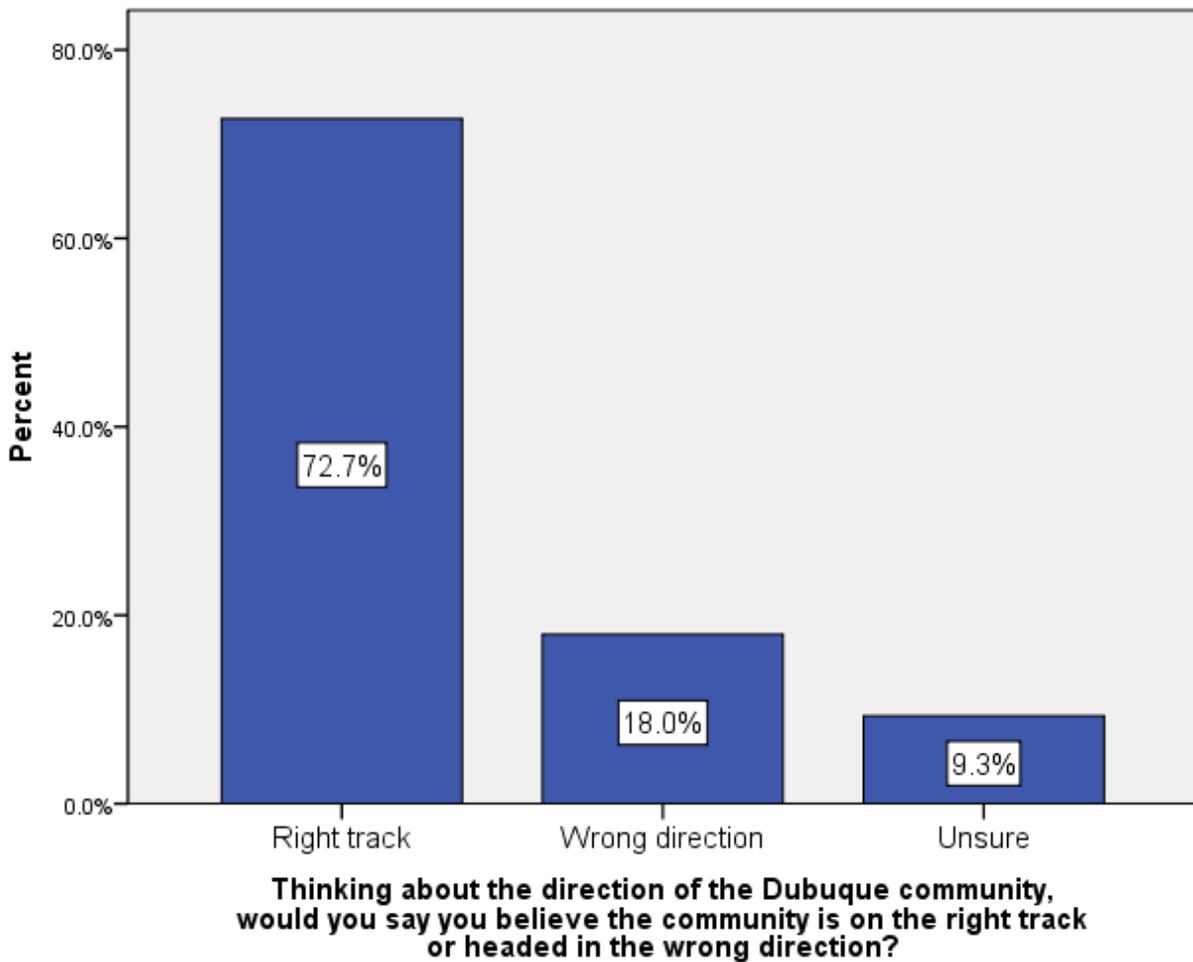


Figure 1.1 Direction of Community

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree, respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with several statements about Dubuque. A response of a 3 is reflective of a neutral position to the statement. Figure 1.2 provides a summary of the affirmative responses.

- 84% Agree/Strongly Agree that Dubuque is a good place to live
  - 11% Neutral
  - 5% Disagree/Strongly Disagree
  
- 72% Agree/Strongly Agree Dubuque is a good place to work
  - 18% Neutral
  - 7% Disagree/Strongly Disagree
  
- 82% Agree/Strongly Agree that Dubuque is a good place to raise a family
  - 11% Neutral
  - 7% Disagree/Strongly Disagree
  
- 62% Agree/Strongly Agree with statement that Dubuque is a safe place to live
  - 11% Disagree/Strongly Disagree
  - 27% Neutral

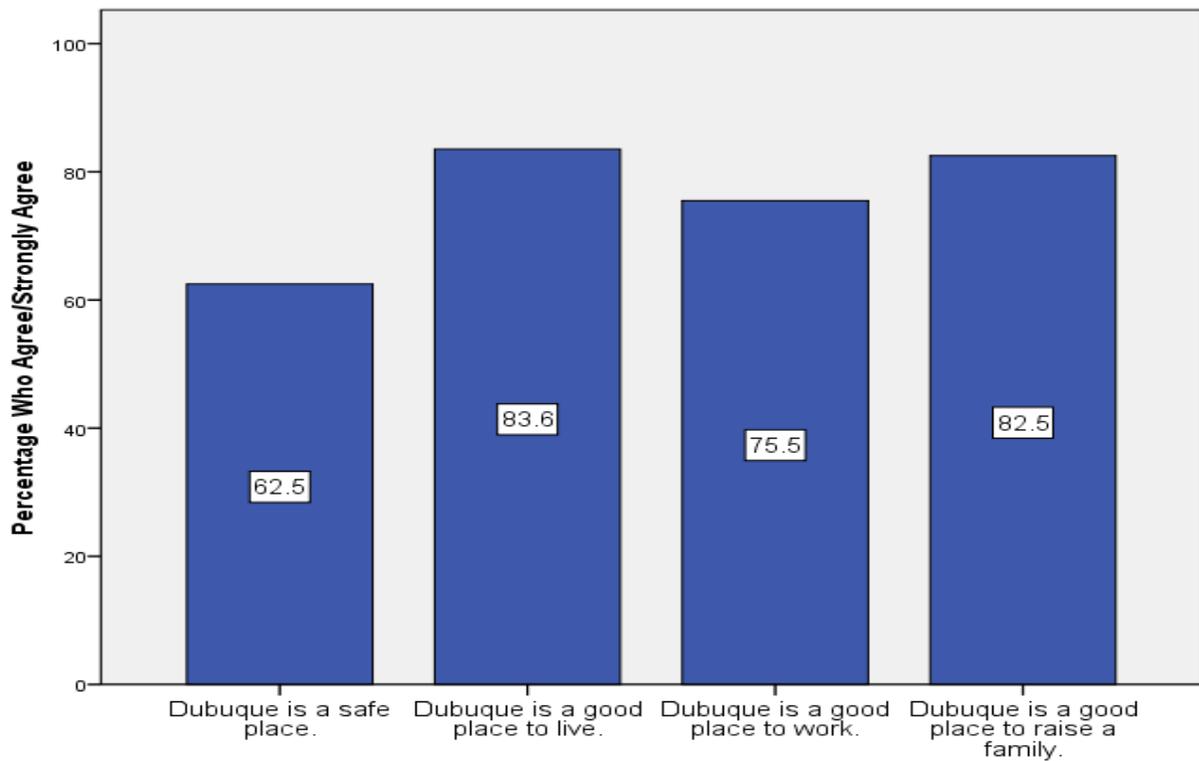


Figure 1.2 Agreement with Statements on Community Conditions

Comment:

It is clear from the data that strong majorities of Dubuque residents hold favorable views of their community, but there is variation across other categories (e.g., those in the lowest income bracket of the survey, < \$30k, are more likely to see Dubuque going in the wrong direction). It is also clear from the results above, however, that the area of safety may be a concern. Even in this category of safety it should be noted that only 11% disagree with the statement that “Dubuque is a safe place to live.” Nearly a third of respondents hold a more neutral position to the statement of Dubuque as a safe place in which to live. These findings should be coupled with the results from the community area-specific questions to provide the most accurate picture of the perceptions of safety across the community.

## 2. Area/Neighborhood Findings

Residents were asked about their frequency of going to different parts of the community for shopping and other opportunities, their perceptions of safety in their own neighborhoods, as well as that across Dubuque.

- In terms of frequency of going to parts of the community for “shopping, services, restaurants, entertainment, or to use parks, bike trails, or other recreation facilities,” 43% indicated that in an average month they went to the Westend 10+ times for such things, 23% indicated going to the Northend 10+ times, and 19% to Downtown 10+ times.

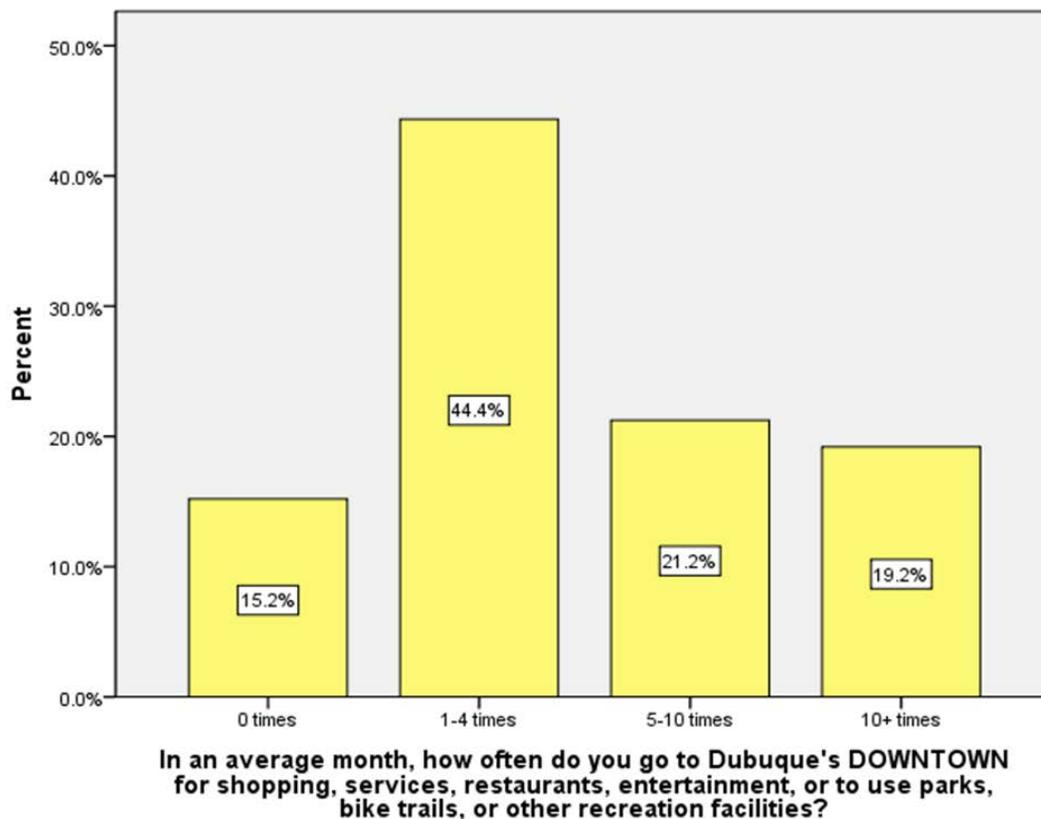


Figure 2.1 Monthly Frequency of Downtown shopping, services, etc.

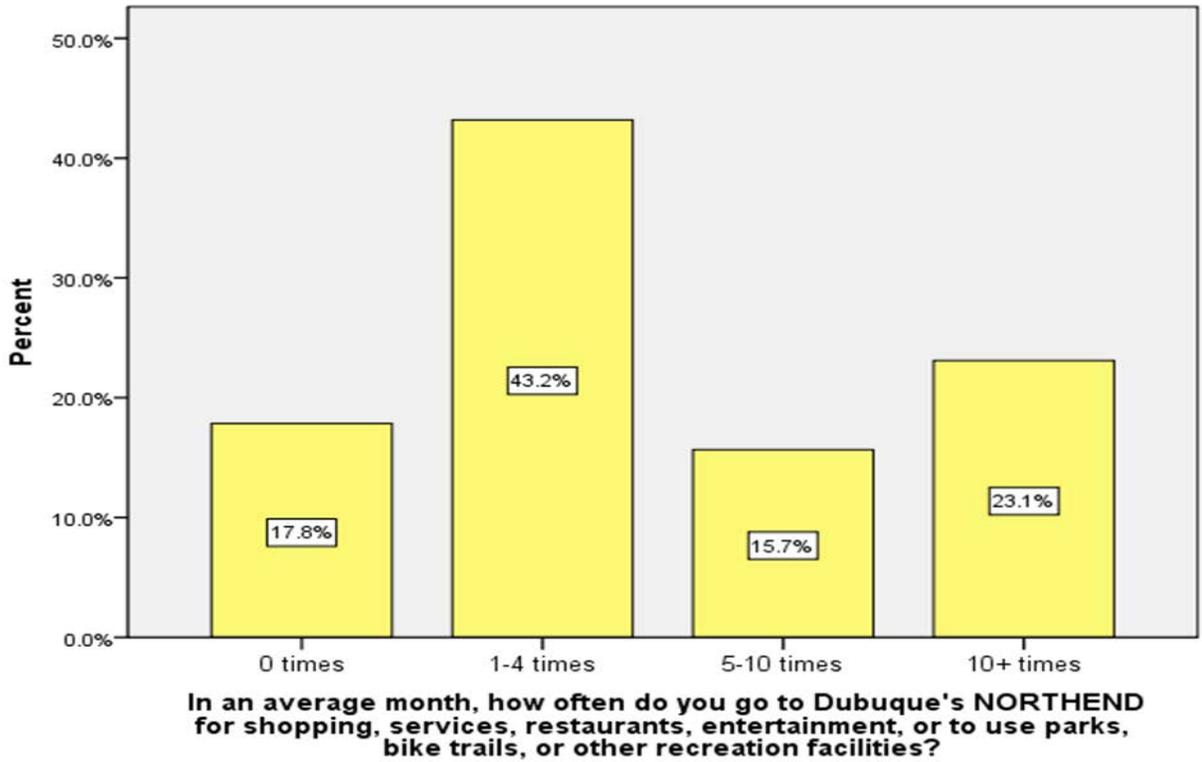


Figure 2.2 Monthly Frequency of Northend shopping, services, etc.

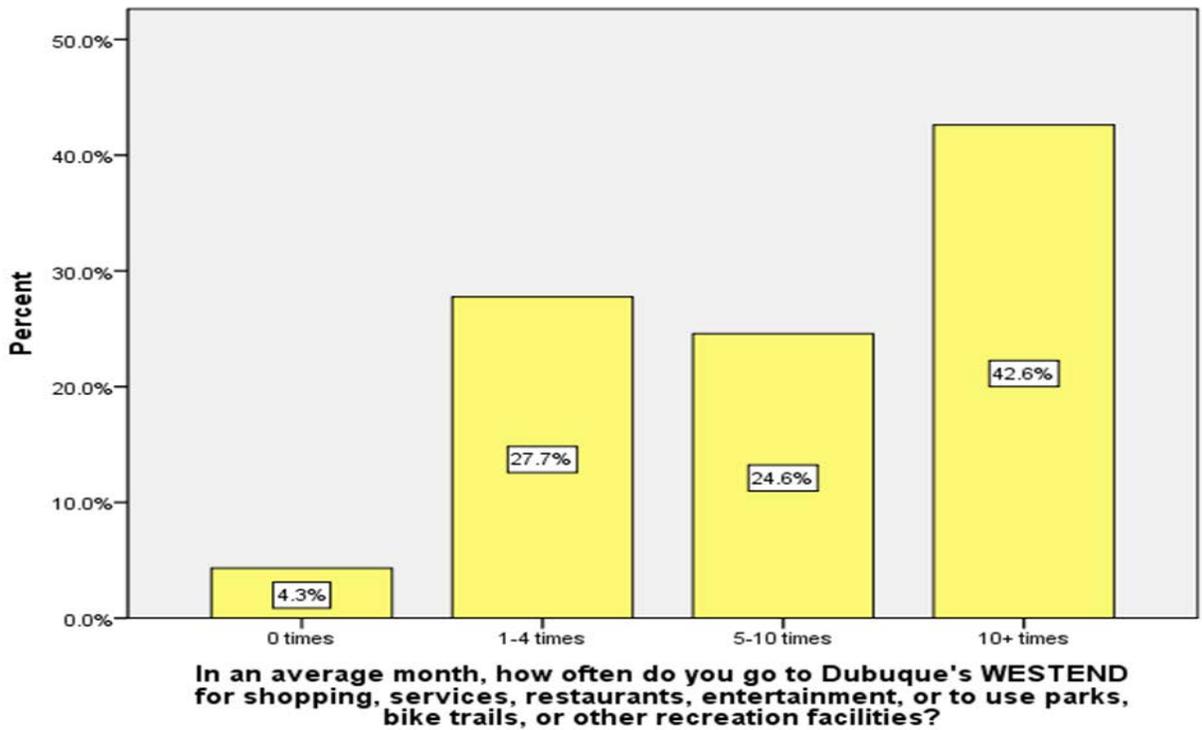


Figure 2.3 Monthly Frequency of Westend shopping, services, etc.

- People overwhelmingly tend to feel safe in their own neighborhood, with 94% saying they feel very safe or safe in their neighborhood (56% feel very safe, 38% feel safe). 5% indicated they feel unsafe, and 1% feel very unsafe. Figure 2.4 provides a summary of this across the parts of the community.

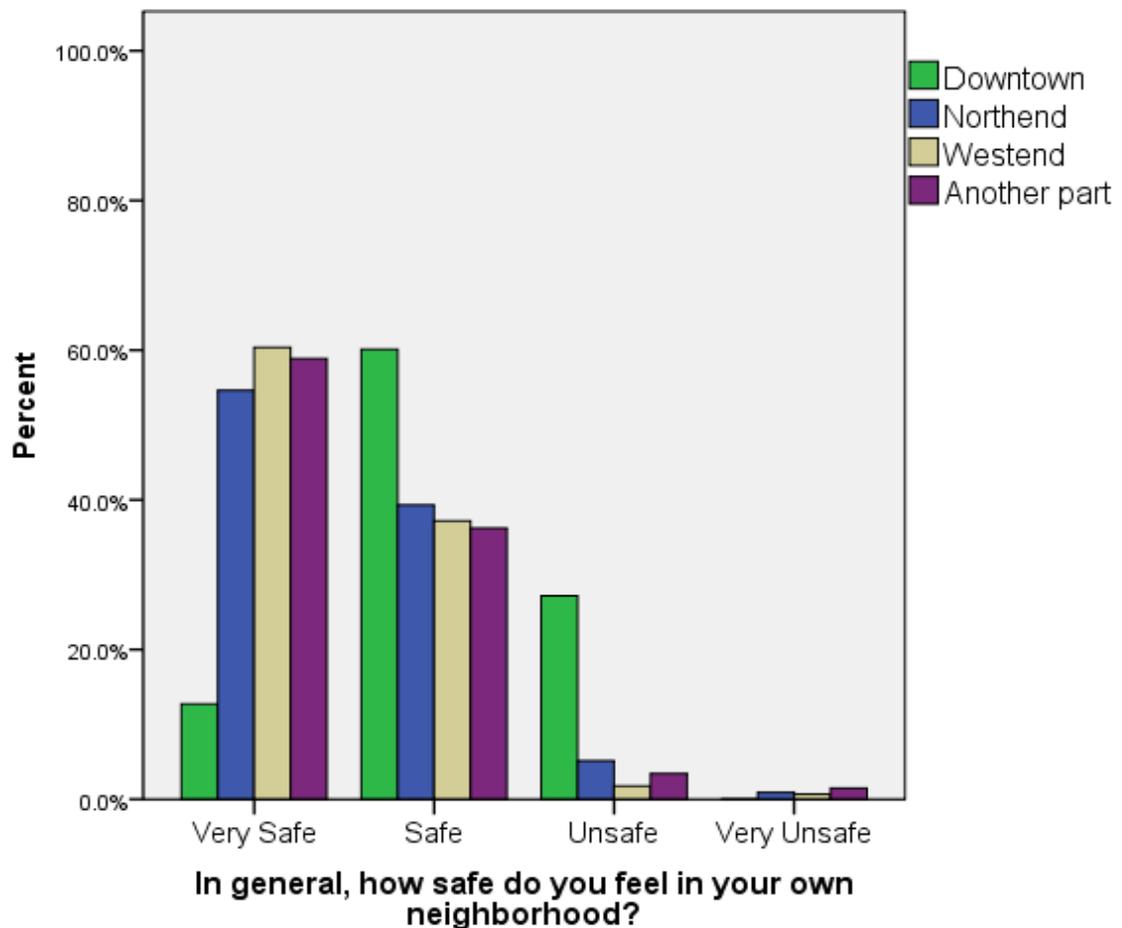


Figure 2.4 Perception of Safety in Own Neighborhood by Location of Respondent.

- When asked to agree or disagree with the statement “I feel safe in the [Downtown/Northend/Westend],” respondents reported feeling safest in the Westend.
  - 92% agreed with the statement that they feel safe in the Westend
    - 4% disagreed, and 4% were unsure (see figure 2.5)
  - 57% agreed with the statement that they feel safe in the Northend
    - 27% disagreed, and 15% were unsure (see figure 2.6)
  - 46% agreed with the statement that they feel safe in the Downtown
    - 38% disagreed, and 17% were unsure (see figure 2.7)

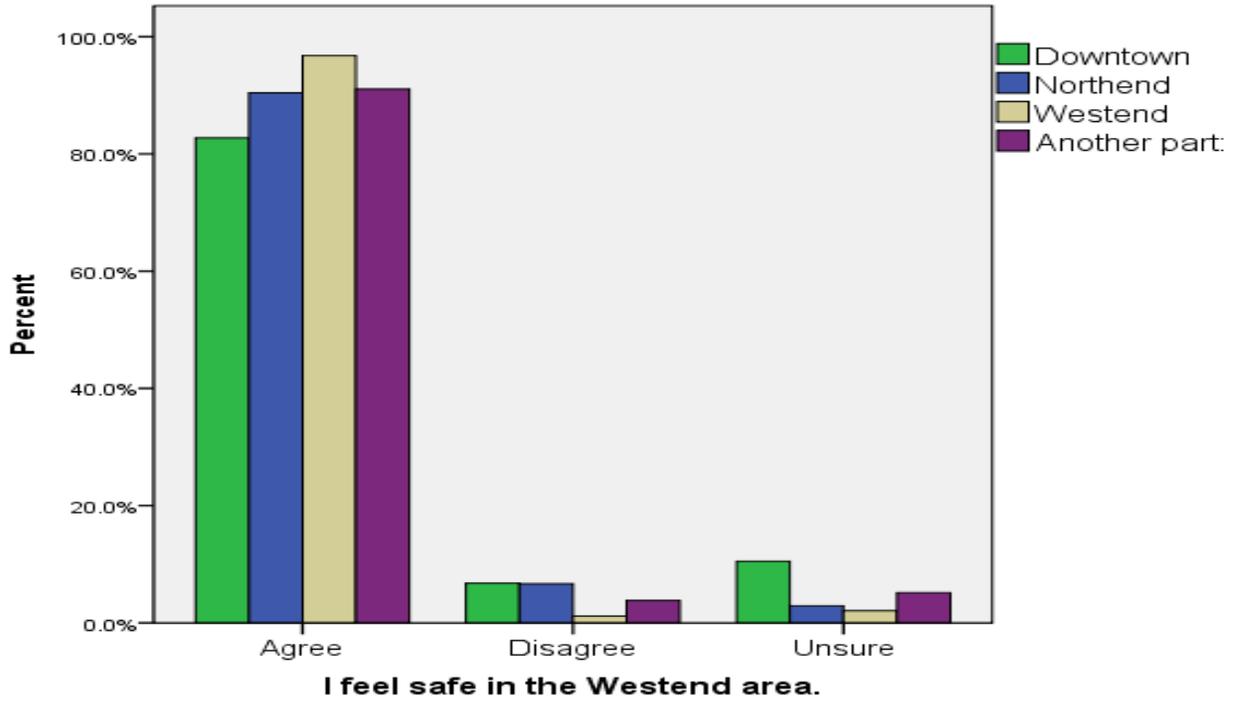


Figure 2.5 Perception of Safety in the Westend by Area of Residence

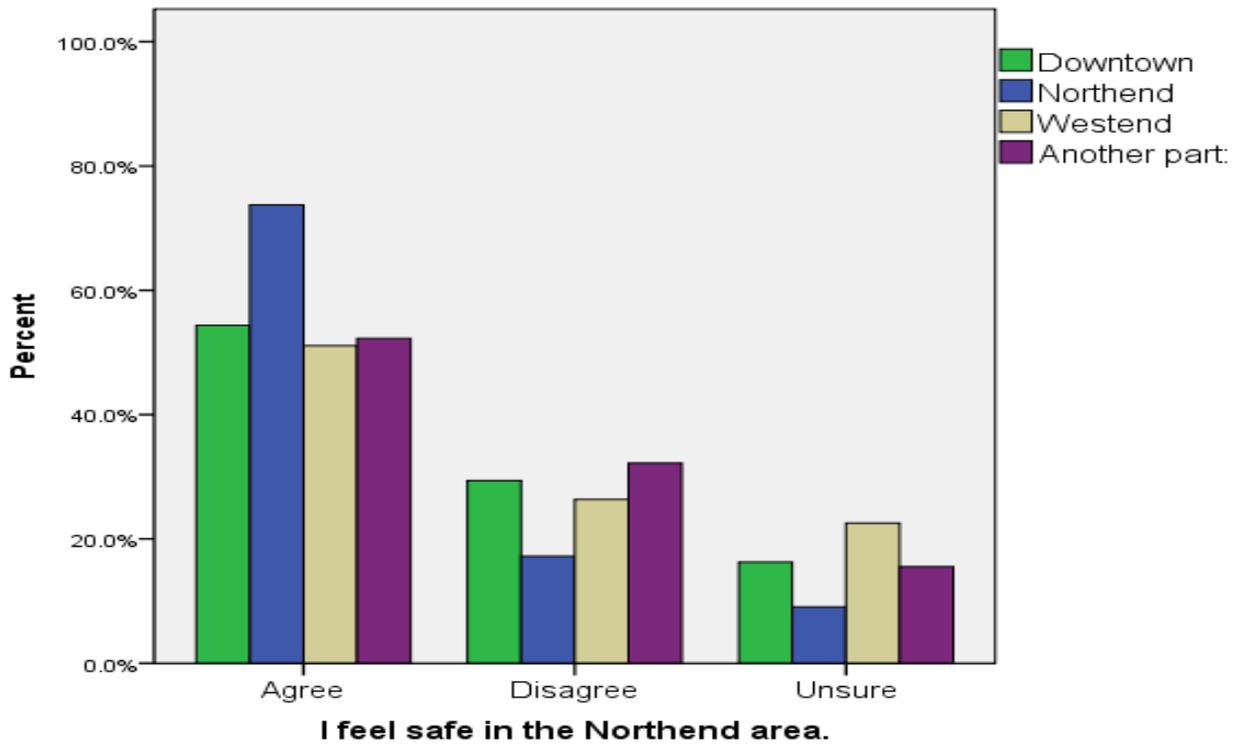


Figure 2.6 Perception of Safety in the Northend by Area of Residence

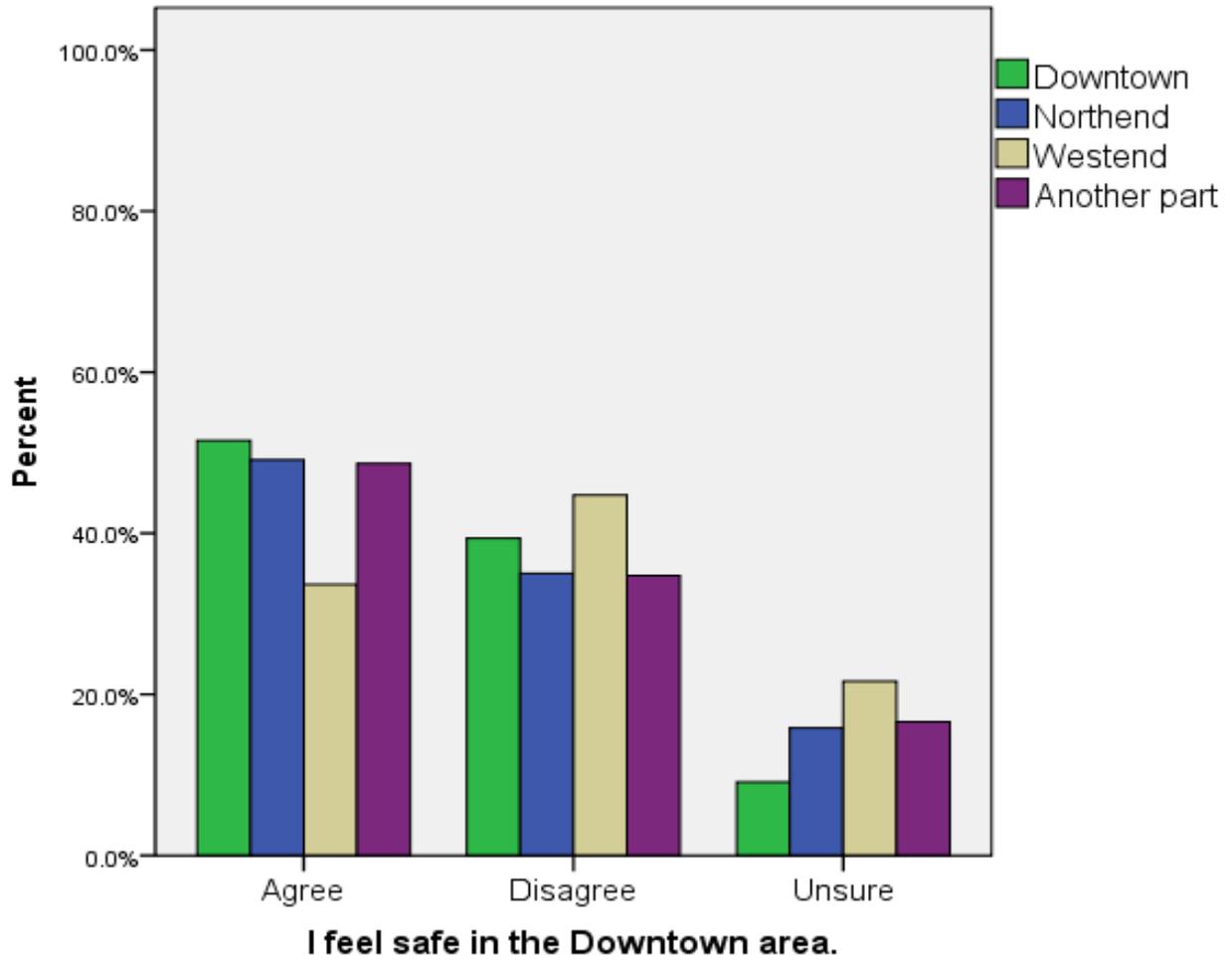


Figure 2.7 Perception of Safety in the Northend by Area of Residence

### 3. *Diversity and Dubuque*

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree, respondents were asked to state their level of agreement with several statements about Dubuque and the issues of diversity and inclusion. A response of a 3 is reflective of a neutral position to the statement.

- 68% Agreed/Strongly Agreed with the statement “Diversity is beneficial to our community.”
  - 10% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed
  - 19% Neutral
  - 3% Unsure

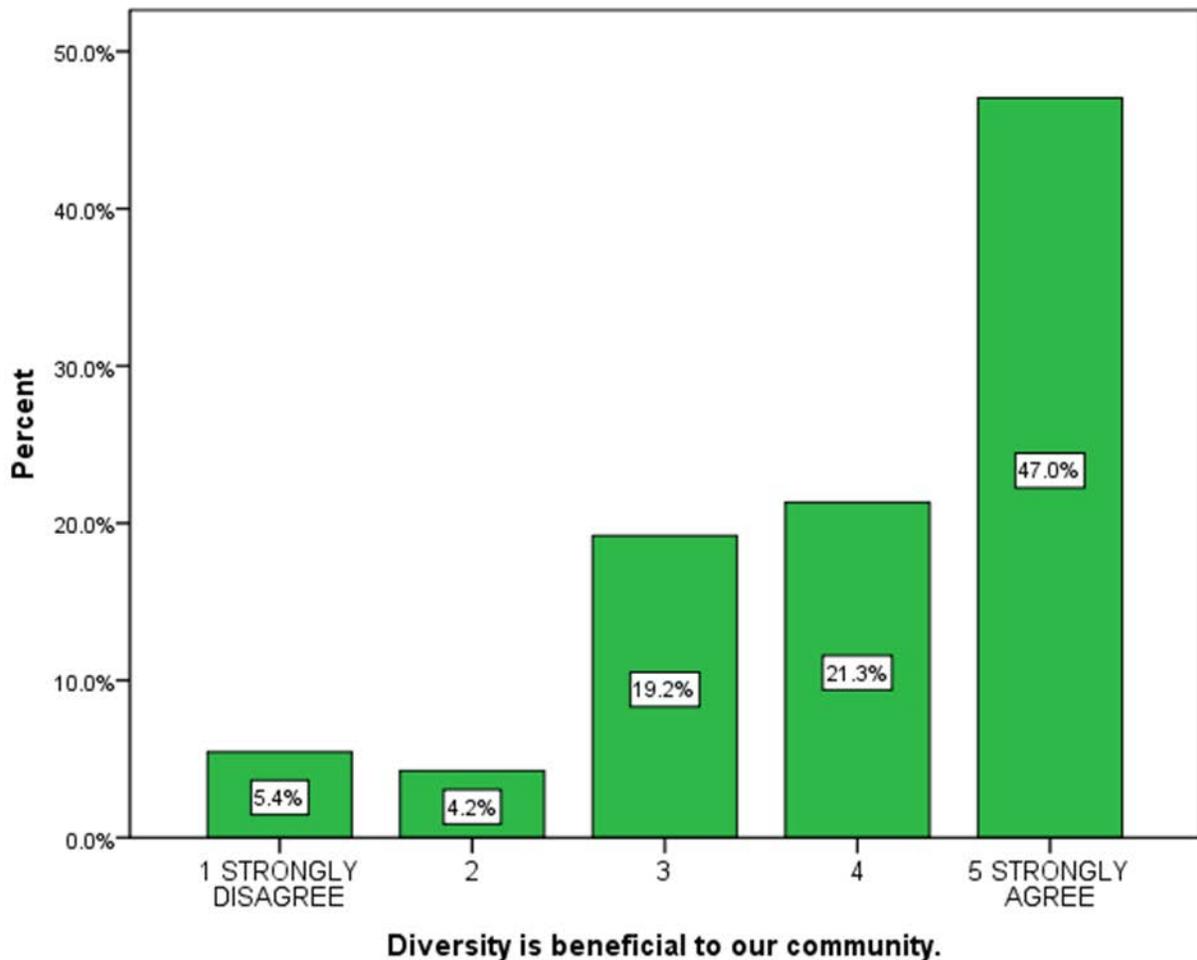


Figure 3.1 Agreement with “Diversity is beneficial to our community”

- 55% Agreed/Strongly Agreed with the statement “Dubuque is a welcoming community to people of different backgrounds.”
  - 16% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed
  - 29% Neutral
  - 1% Unsure

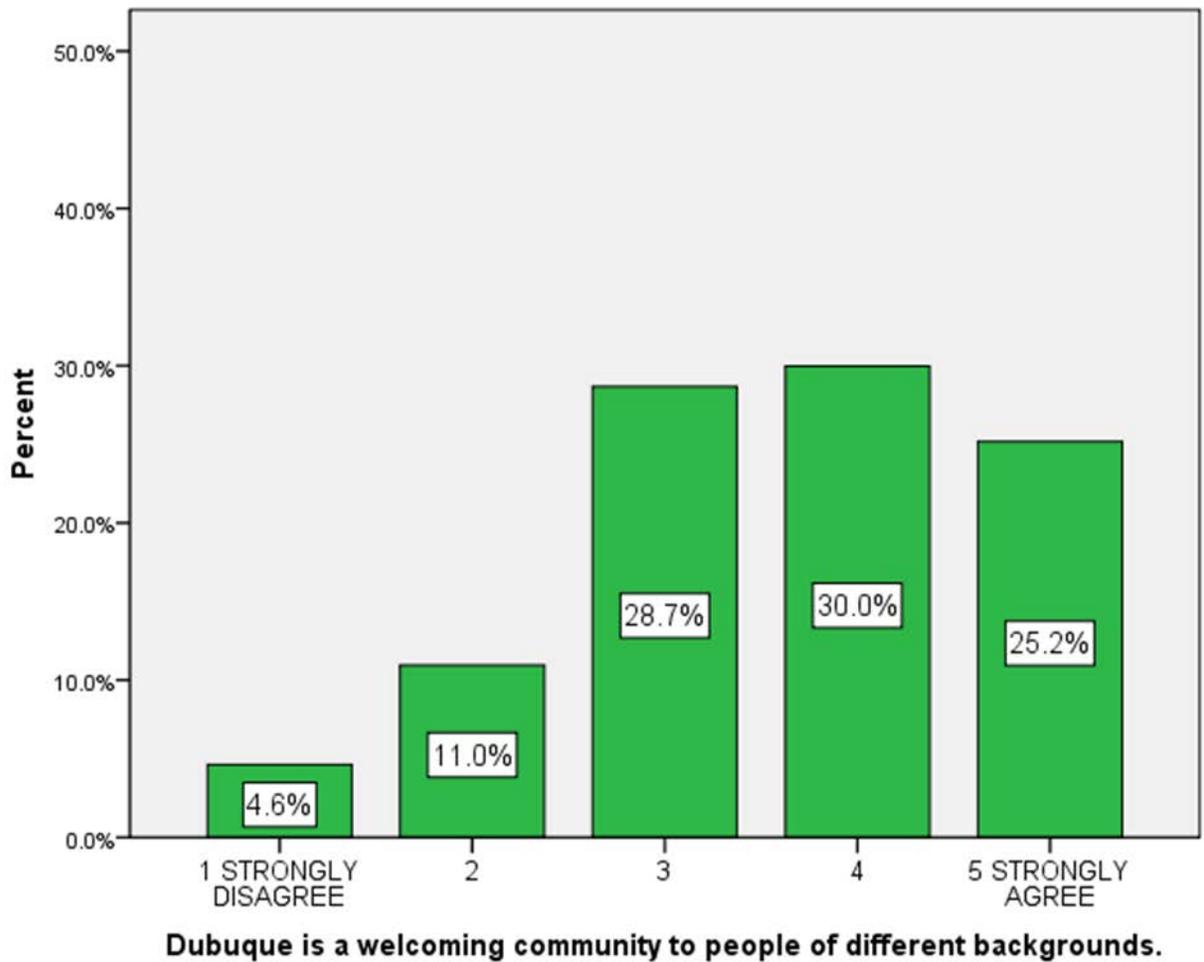


Figure 3.2 Agreement with “Dubuque is a welcoming community to people of different backgrounds”

- 46% Agreed/Strongly Agreed with the statement “Dubuque is an inclusive community.”
  - 13% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed
  - 36% Neutral
  - 5% Unsure

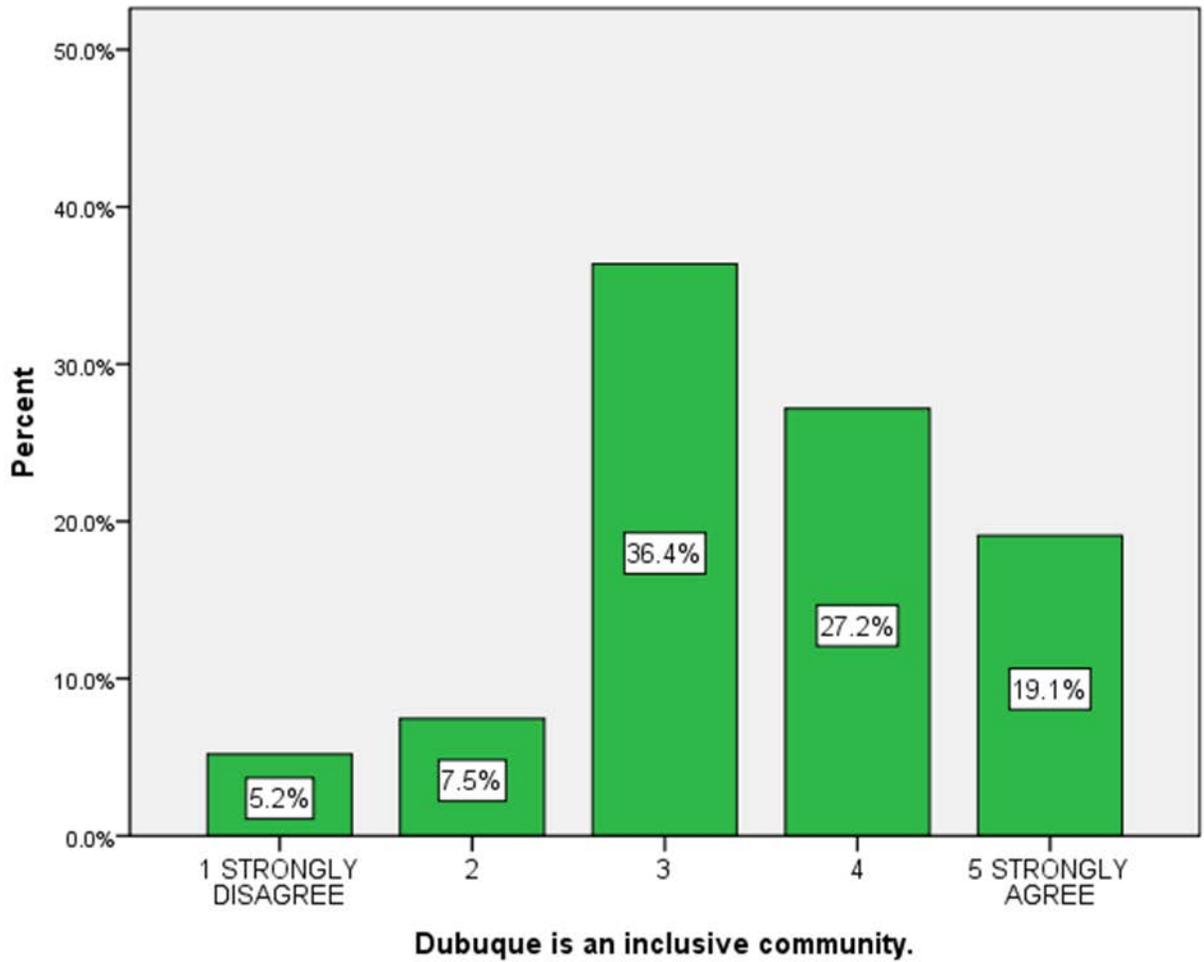


Figure 3.3 Agreement with “Dubuque is an inclusive community”

## 4. *Challenges for the Community*

- When asked to choose from a list of issues what is “the biggest challenge facing the community as a whole,” 39% said race relations, 21% limited employment options, and 17% said poverty.

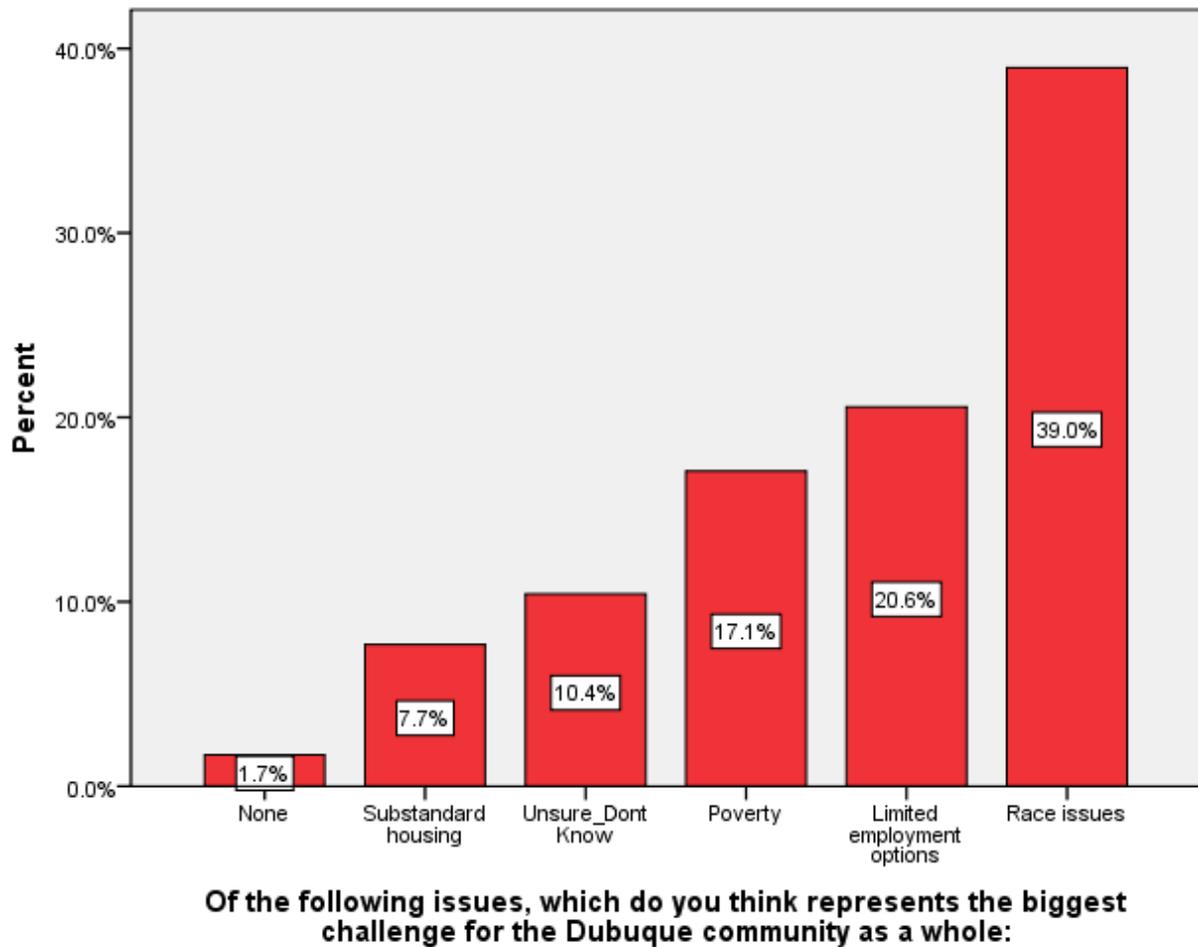


Figure 4.1 Biggest Challenge Facing Dubuque

- When asked to choose from a list of issues “what is the biggest challenge in their neighborhood,” limited employment options, race relations, and substandard housing were the top 3 issues selected. However, the most popular response to the question was unsure/don’t know.

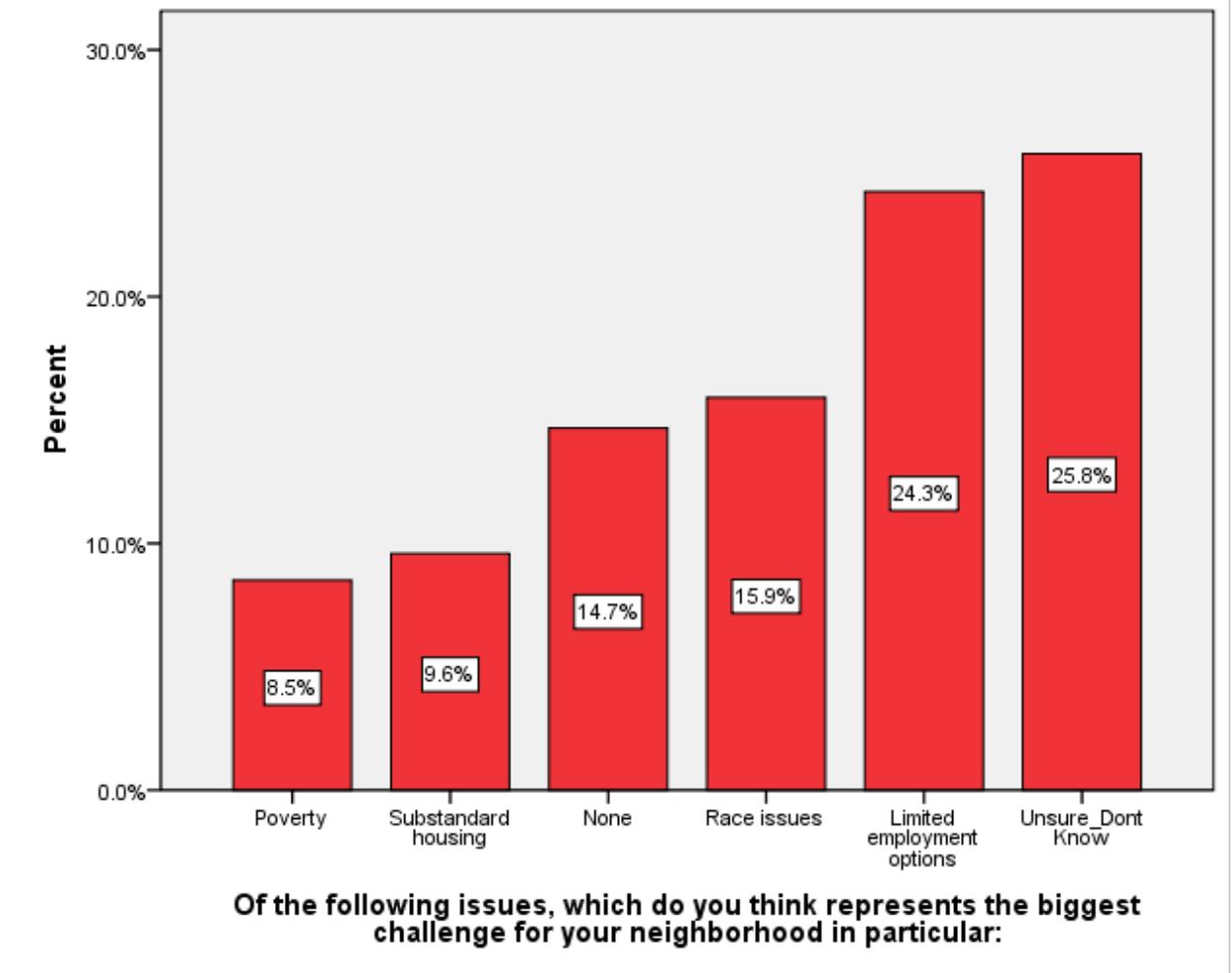


Figure 4.2 Biggest Challenge Facing Neighborhood

- Notably, race relations and substandard housing were the most notable issues for those living in the Downtown area. Figure 4.3 shows responses regarding biggest challenges by area of residence of respondents.

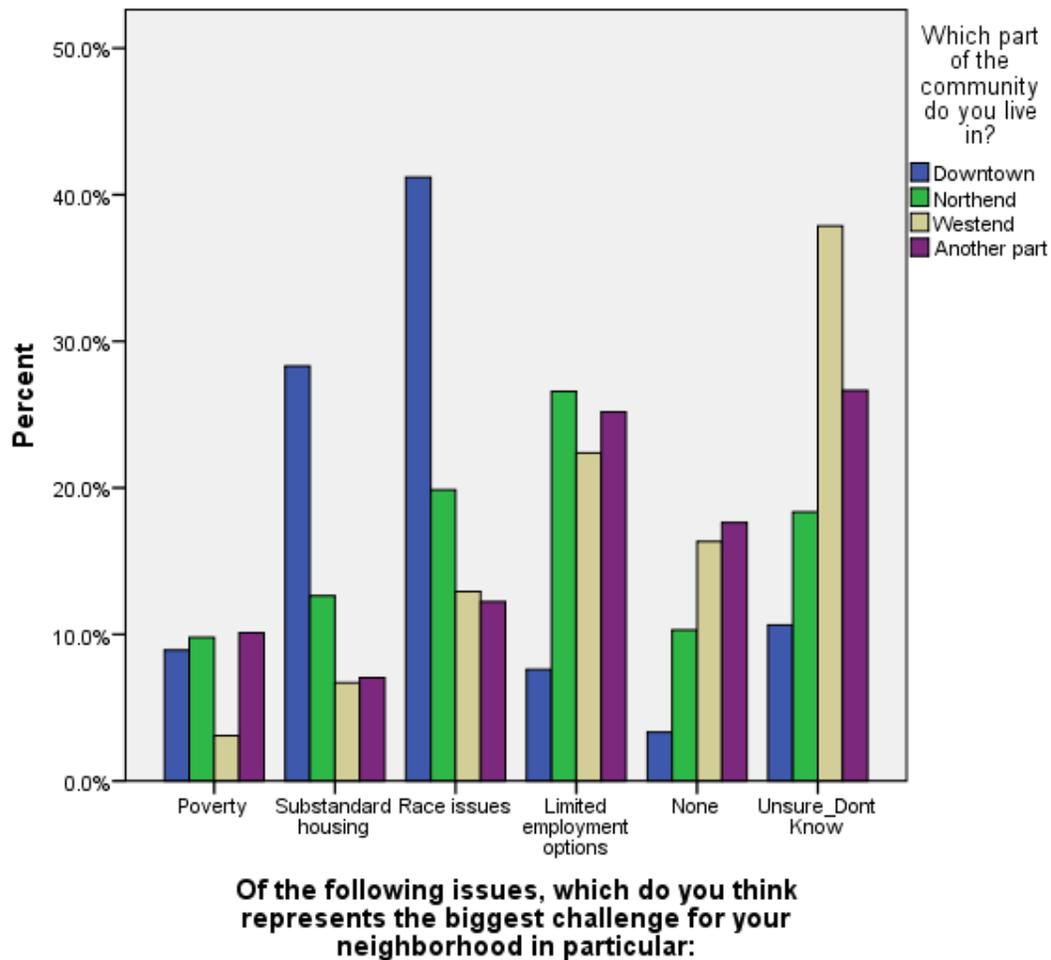
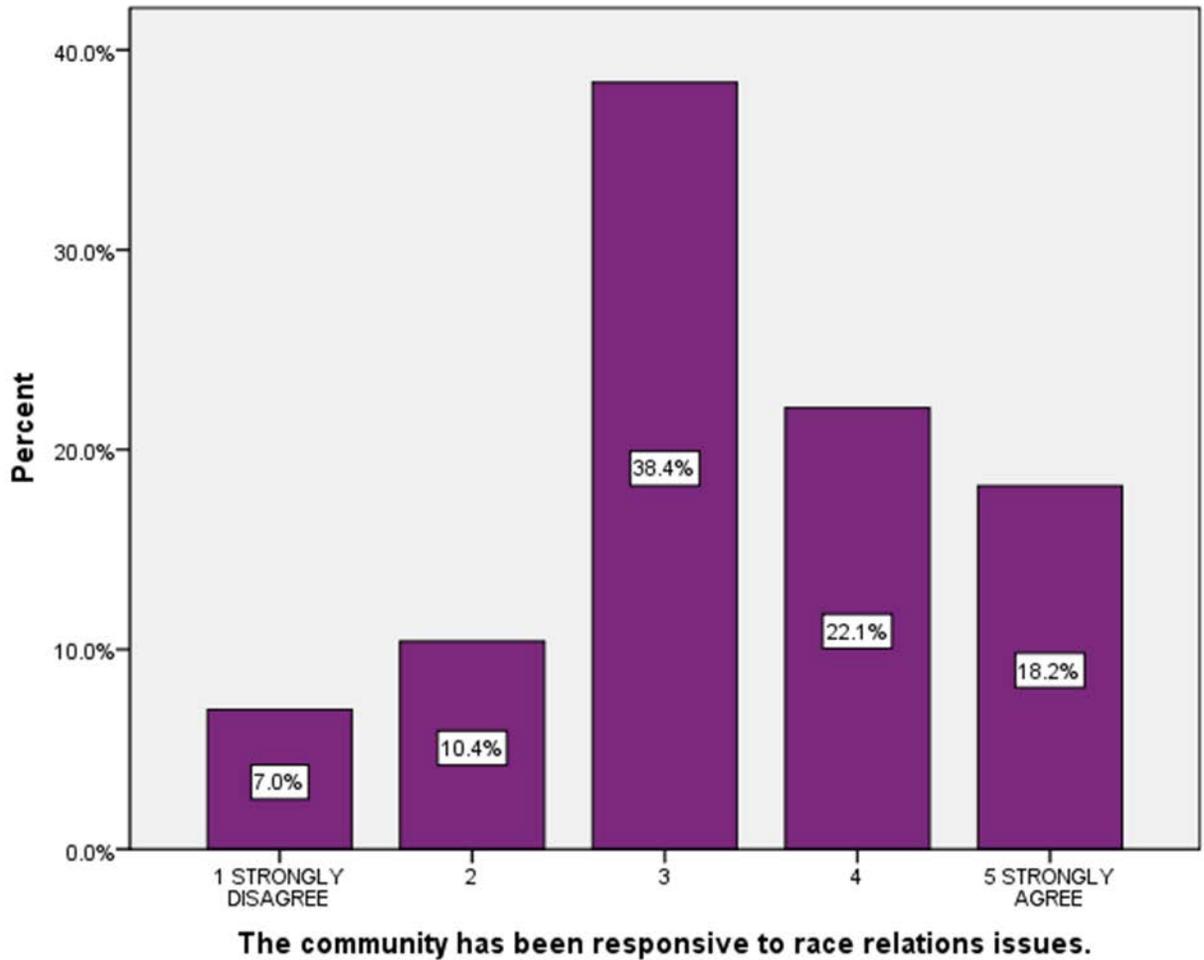


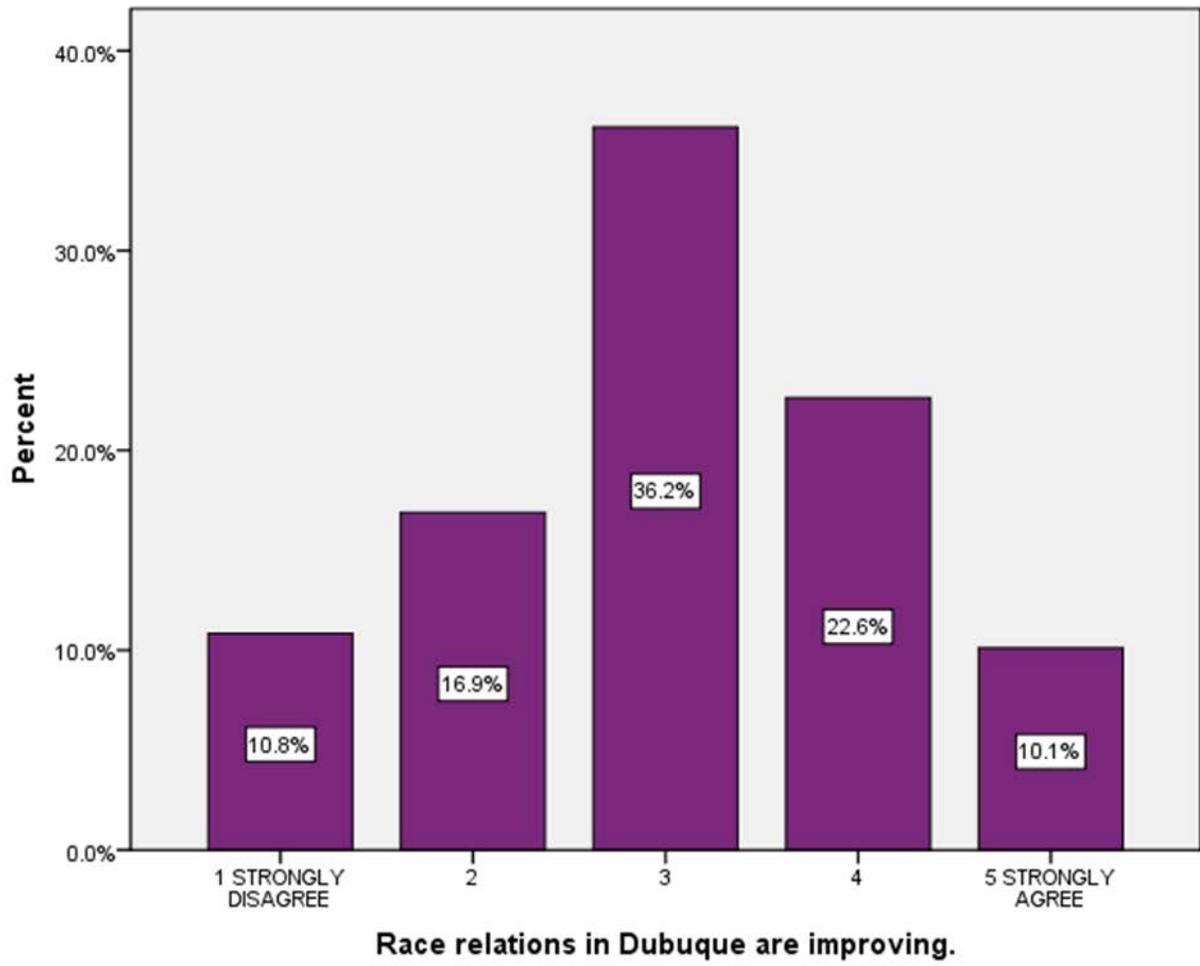
Figure 4.3 Biggest Challenge to Neighborhoods by Area of residence

## 5. *Race Relations in Dubuque*

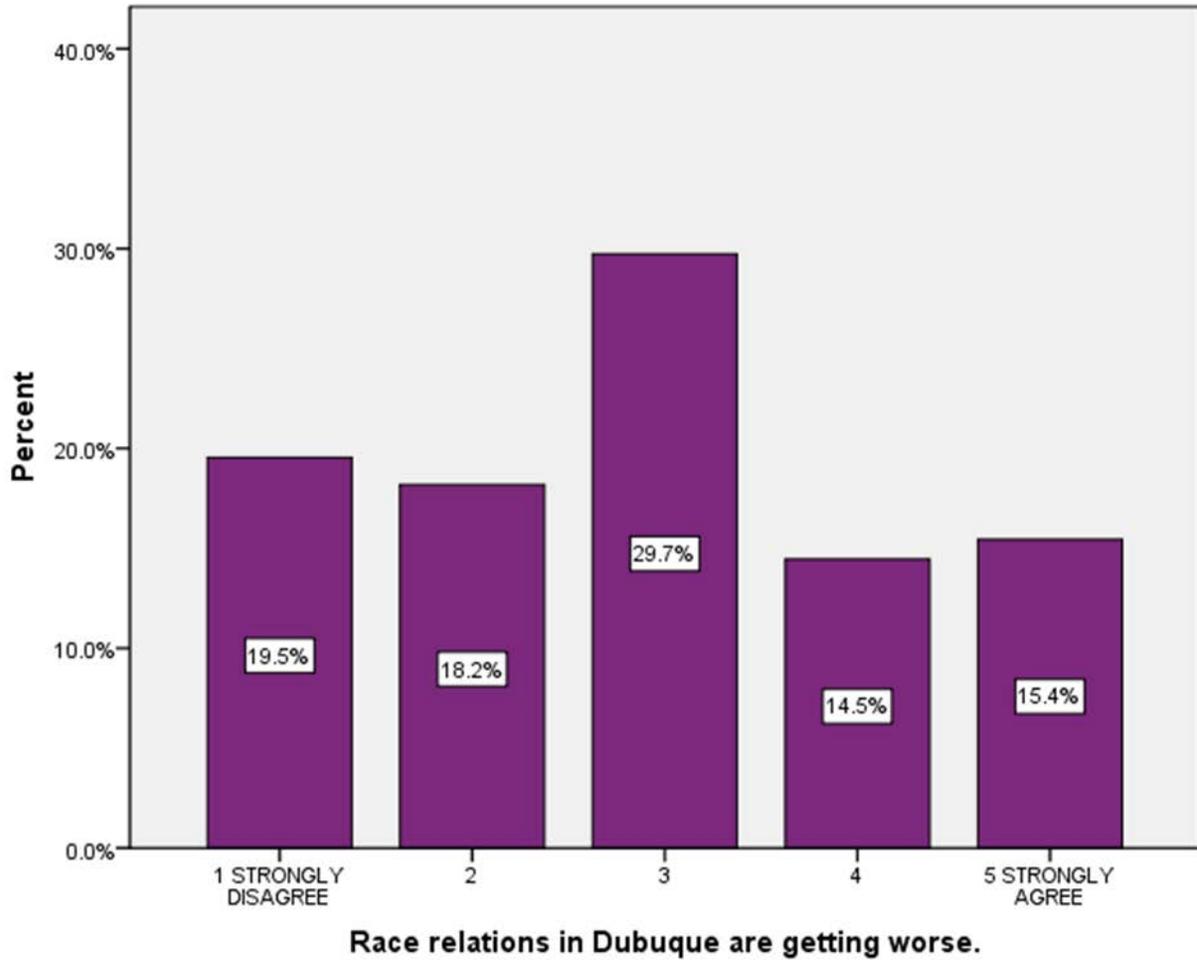
- Respondents were asked their level of agreement with the statement “the community has been responsive to race relation issues.” 40% said they Agreed/Strongly Agreed, 17% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed, 38% Neutral, and 4% Unsure



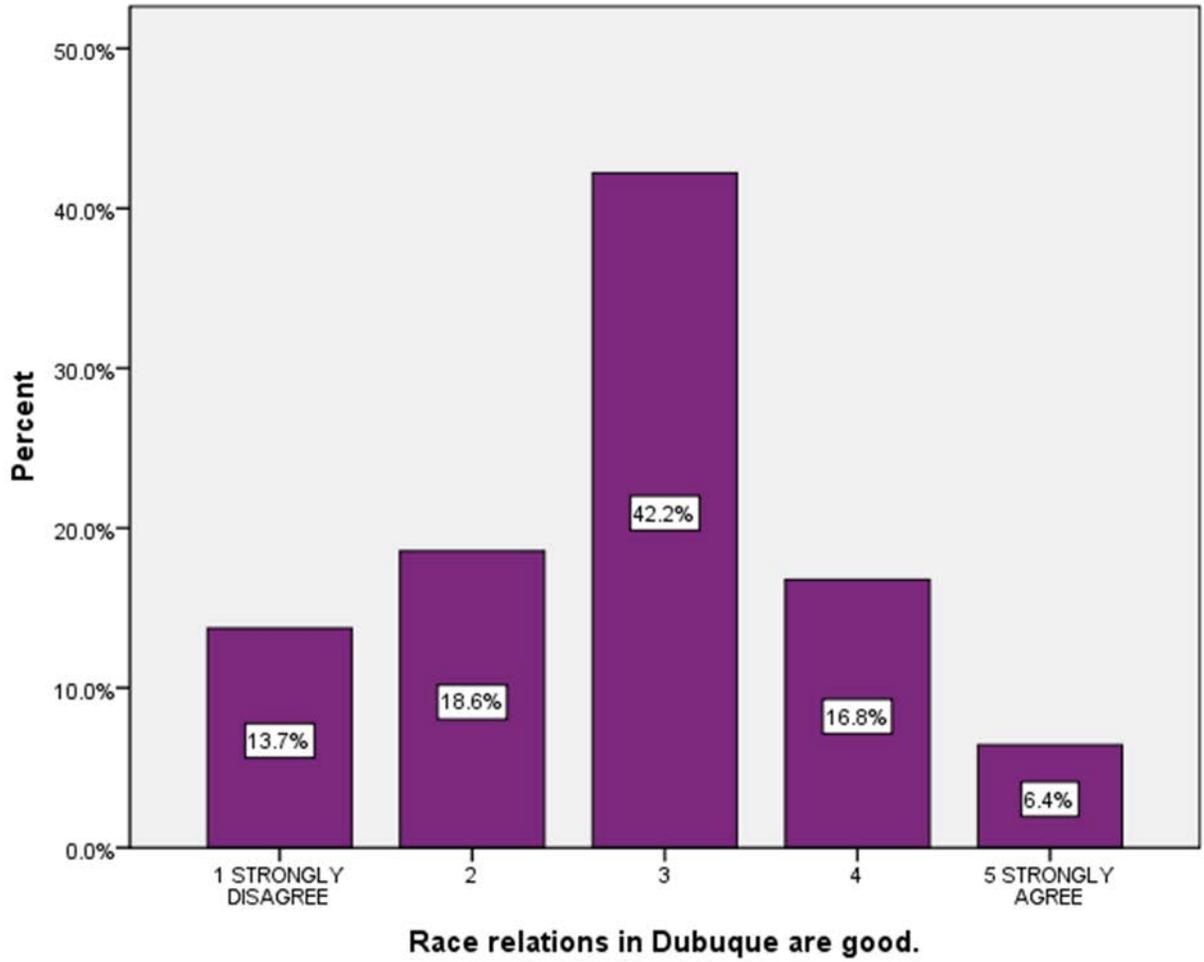
- Respondents were asked their level of agreement with the statement “race relations in Dubuque are improving.” 33% said they Agreed/Strongly Agreed, 28% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed, 36% Neutral, and 3% Unsure



- Respondents were asked their level of agreement with the statement “race relations in Dubuque are getting worse.” 38% said they disagreed/strongly disagreed, 30% say they agreed/strongly agreed, 30% Neutral, and 3% Unsure.



- Respondents were asked their level of agreement with the statement “race relations in Dubuque are good.” 23% said they Agreed/Strongly Agreed, 32% Disagreed/Strongly Disagreed, 42% Neutral, and 2% Unsure



# *Conclusions*

The survey results reveal some of the important currents, both positive and negative, within public opinion of Dubuque residents. The data reveal points of common and shared perception, as well as where there is significant differences in opinion and areas of potential tension. For instance, the data suggest that while there is an overwhelming sense of safety in one's own neighborhood, perceptions of safety across other areas of town reflect more concern regarding safety. Differences in perceptions of safety do exist along demographic lines as well. For instance, those in the lowest income bracket in the survey are more likely to see their neighborhoods as unsafe and lacking services.

While there is strong majority support for the notion that "diversity is beneficial to our community," results indicate work remains to be done regarding improved race relations. Younger residents tend to be in stronger agreement that diversity is beneficial, and those in the Downtown and Westend are more likely to disagree with the statements that "race relations are improving" and that "race relations in Dubuque are good." Further examination of the cross tabulations in the appendix will continue to yield insights into the complex public opinion within Dubuque.

# *Appendix A*

## **Methodological Note**

The survey was limited to resident adults of the City of Dubuque, Asbury, and Key West. Questions on the instrument were developed in collaboration with the GDDC. The total number of respondents surveyed was 501, and was conducted 9/9/17-9/24/17. The sample was split between a Random Digit Dial (RDD) and listed sample (i.e., commercially available lists of households within the target area). The final sample reflected 57.5% cell phone and 42.5% landline. The survey was administered with live professional callers using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing system. Sample and calling provided by Braun Research, Inc. Results were targeted and post-sample weights applied to approximate demographic variables (e.g., Age, Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Census Tract—see below on geographic targets) for the population. The 2015 U.S. Census American Community Survey data was used for weighting/targeting purposes. A geographic target was employed to approximate distribution of the area's population within U.S. Census tracts (as indicated in last U.S. Census). Results from the full sample have a margin of error of +/- 4%. Margins of error for subsamples will be larger. In addition, some subsamples such as African Americans are very small, and caution should be exercised when extrapolating results for these populations in isolation. Also, please note that due to the weighting and rounding procedures, total counts within crosstabulations may indicate slight variation.