

PERU
IMPERUUVING AS ONE

PERU
COMMUNITY SURVEY
RESULTS

NOVEMBER 12, 2018

N EXTENSION

Table of Contents

Executive Summary..... 2

About the Survey 5

Peru Survey Process..... 5

Peru Community Services and Amenities..... 6

Downtown Revitalization..... 8

Housing 9

Community/College Relations 16

Community Involvement 17

Community Vision, Sense of Place, Culture of Change, and Leadership..... 20

Demographics 24

Executive Summary

The online Peru Community Survey was marketed to community residents through various sources by members of the steering team. It was also marketed to people who live near Peru, those who work there, Peru State College students and others who shop or frequent Peru. A total of 377 people completed at least some of the questions in the survey. The question topics included: community services and amenities, downtown revitalization, housing, community/college relations, community involvement, and entrepreneurial community characteristics.

In the following data summary, some comparisons are made between different groups of respondents: 1) Peru residents (persons living within Peru city limits, including students living in Peru, as well as persons living on farms or acreages near Peru) (n = 118), 2) students at Peru State College (persons living on campus) (n = 90), and 3) persons living in or near another community (n = 119). These groups are created by combining responses to questions asking if they live within the city limits of Peru and if they are a student.

Some of the key findings include:

Peru Community Services and Amenities

- Peru residents are more likely than on campus students and out of town respondents to rate the following community services as poor: street conditions, condition of sidewalks, broadband/Internet services, and street lighting. As an example, 56 percent of Peru residents rate the condition of sidewalks as poor, compared to 35 percent of persons living in or near another community or 15 percent of on campus students.
- Over one-half of all the respondents rated the college library and college fitness center as either good or excellent. Almost one-half rated the Duck Creek Recreation Area and lake as well as the splashpad as either good or excellent.
 - ✓ Peru residents are more likely than the other two groups to rate the following amenities as excellent: splashpad, Sid Brown Memorial Park, Steamboat Trace Trailhead area, Duck Creek Recreation Area and lake, and the college fitness center. As an example, 48 percent of Peru residents rate Duck Creek Recreation Area and lake as excellent, compared to 10 percent of on campus students and 37 percent of out of town respondents. And, 41 percent of Peru residents rate the college fitness center as excellent, compared to 26 percent of on campus students and 29 percent of out of town respondents.
 - ✓ Peru residents are more likely than the other groups to rate the following amenities as poor: ballfield area, existing RV facilities, public restrooms at Neal Park, and Neal Park. As an example, 34 percent of Peru residents rate the ballfield area as poor, compared to 13 percent of out of town respondents and nine percent of on campus students.

Downtown Revitalization

- At least one-third of the respondents said the following items should be the highest priority: attract new retail business (48%), support/improve existing businesses (40%), and attract new service businesses (39%).

- ✓ Both out of town respondents and Peru residents are more likely than on campus students to rate downtown sidewalk improvements, attract new retail business, beautification of downtown, support/improve existing businesses and sidewalk campus to downtown as the highest priority. As an example, 59 percent of out of town respondents and 45 percent of Peru residents rate attract new retail business as the highest priority, compared to 33 percent of on campus students.

Housing

- Almost seven in ten residents (69%) rate their residence as good or excellent.
 - ✓ Most Peru residents (81%) rate their residence as excellent or good. However, most off-campus students (54%) rate the quality of their residence as fair or poor.
- Off-campus students are more likely than Peru residents to agree or strongly agree that their dwelling is in need of repair. Six in ten off-campus students agree that their dwelling is in need of repair, compared to 37 percent of Peru residents.
- Over four in ten respondents say the stock of higher-end homes for sale and new construction affordable homes for sale are not at all adequate. Over four in ten respondents say the existing stock of affordable rental units or homes are at least adequate.
 - ✓ Peru residents are more likely than the other two resident groups to rate the following items as not at all adequate: new construction affordable homes for sale, subsidized rental housing, and assisted living housing. As an example, 58 percent of Peru residents rate new construction affordable homes for sale as not at all adequate, compared to 14 percent of on campus students and 42 percent of out of town respondents.

Community/College Relations

- When asked to rate how important various Peru State College activities are to the community of Peru, most respondents rate each as important or very important to the community. At least four in ten say the following activities are very important: educational offerings, providing job opportunities, faculty and staff active in the community, and students active in the community.

Community Involvement

- At least one-half of the respondents agree that they have a good bond with others in this community. At least four in ten agree with the following: I feel like a member of this community, I belong in this community, and I feel connected to this community.
- Most Peru residents (71%) say they probably or definitely will live in Peru five years from now. In comparison, only 13 percent of students (both on campus as well as those living off campus in Peru) and 31 percent of out of town respondents share this opinion.

Community Vision, Sense of Place, Culture of Change and Leadership

- Just over three in ten respondents believe Peru has a strong identity. Over two in ten believe it has a sense of purpose, the community listens to people's opinions, has goals to accomplish the vision, that it shares information openly, the community creates opportunities for diverse

community member involvement in visioning and planning processes, and the community has a shared vision for the future.

- Just over one-third of respondents believe Peru celebrates its heritage and culture. At least three in ten respondents believe the community has a majority of residents who feel they belong in the community, has a majority of residents who strongly identify with the community, and has a majority of residents who have strong pride in the community.
- At least two in ten respondents believe Peru is open to new ideas, that it promotes innovation and creativity and that the community proactively drives change.
- Just over one-third of the respondents believe Peru has leaders who are motivated to improve the economic and social well-being in the community. Over two in ten believe the community has leaders who engage and empower citizens, has leaders who work together to solve issues, and uses a variety of tools for communication to keep citizens in the loop.



About the Community Survey

Some of the questions asked in the survey are from the ECAP (Entrepreneurial Community Activation Process) Discovery Tool which is an online tool developed to measure how residents view their community relative to eight characteristics. This survey only asked about four of those characteristics: community vision, culture of change, leadership and sense of place. Residents are asked to rate various dimensions of their community. For these items respondents rated each on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 denoted “not at all” and 5 indicated “completely.” Residents are also asked a couple open-ended questions about their community as well as some standard demographic questions that are used to make comparisons among community residents.

In addition, at the request of the Peru steering committee, residents were asked a number of other questions. Those question topics included: community services and amenities, downtown revitalization, housing, community/college relations, and community involvement.

Peru Community Survey Process

In Peru, the online survey was marketed to community residents through various sources. It was also marketed to people who live near Peru, those who work there, Peru State College students and others who shop or frequent Peru. The residents also had the option of completing a paper copy of the survey. A total of 377 people completed at least some of the questions in the survey.

Data Comparisons

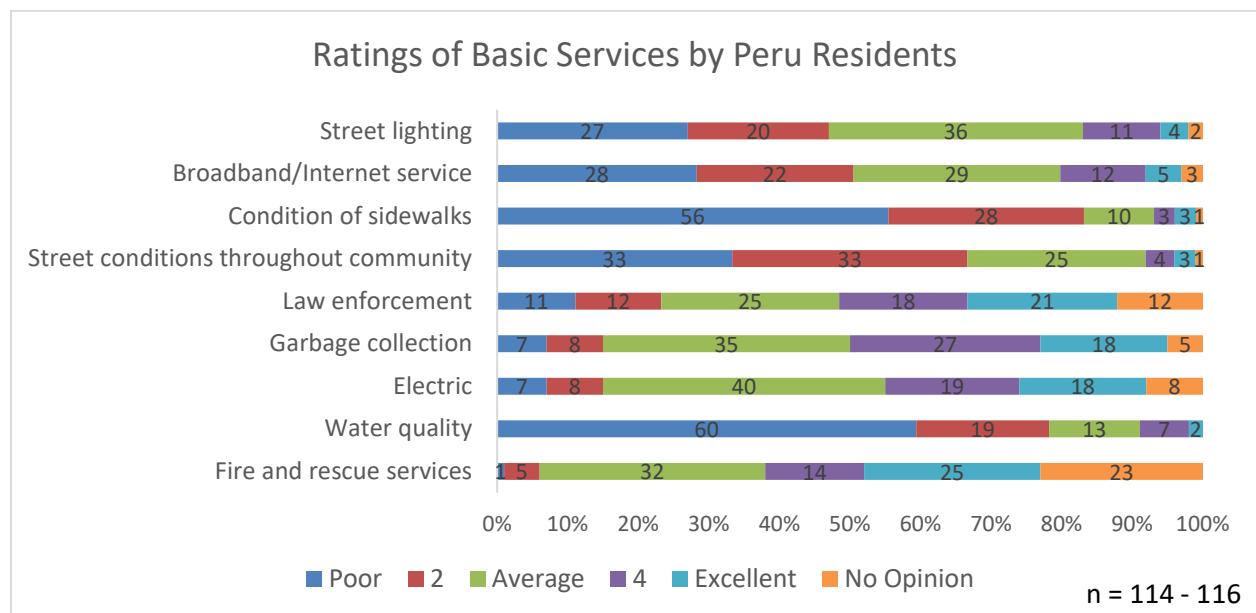
In the following data summary, some comparisons are made between different groups of respondents: 1) Peru residents (persons living within Peru city limits, including students living in Peru, as well as persons living on farms or acreages near Peru) (n = 118), 2) students at Peru State College (persons living on campus) (n = 90), and 3) persons living in or near another community (n = 119). These groups are created by combining responses to questions asking if they live within the city limits of Peru and if they are a student.

Peru Community Services and Amenities

The questions included in this section were requested by the Peru steering team. Respondents were asked to rate basic services in Peru. Peru residents (including those living in or near Peru but excluding on campus students) have differing opinions compared to on campus students and persons living in or near other communities when rating some of these services:

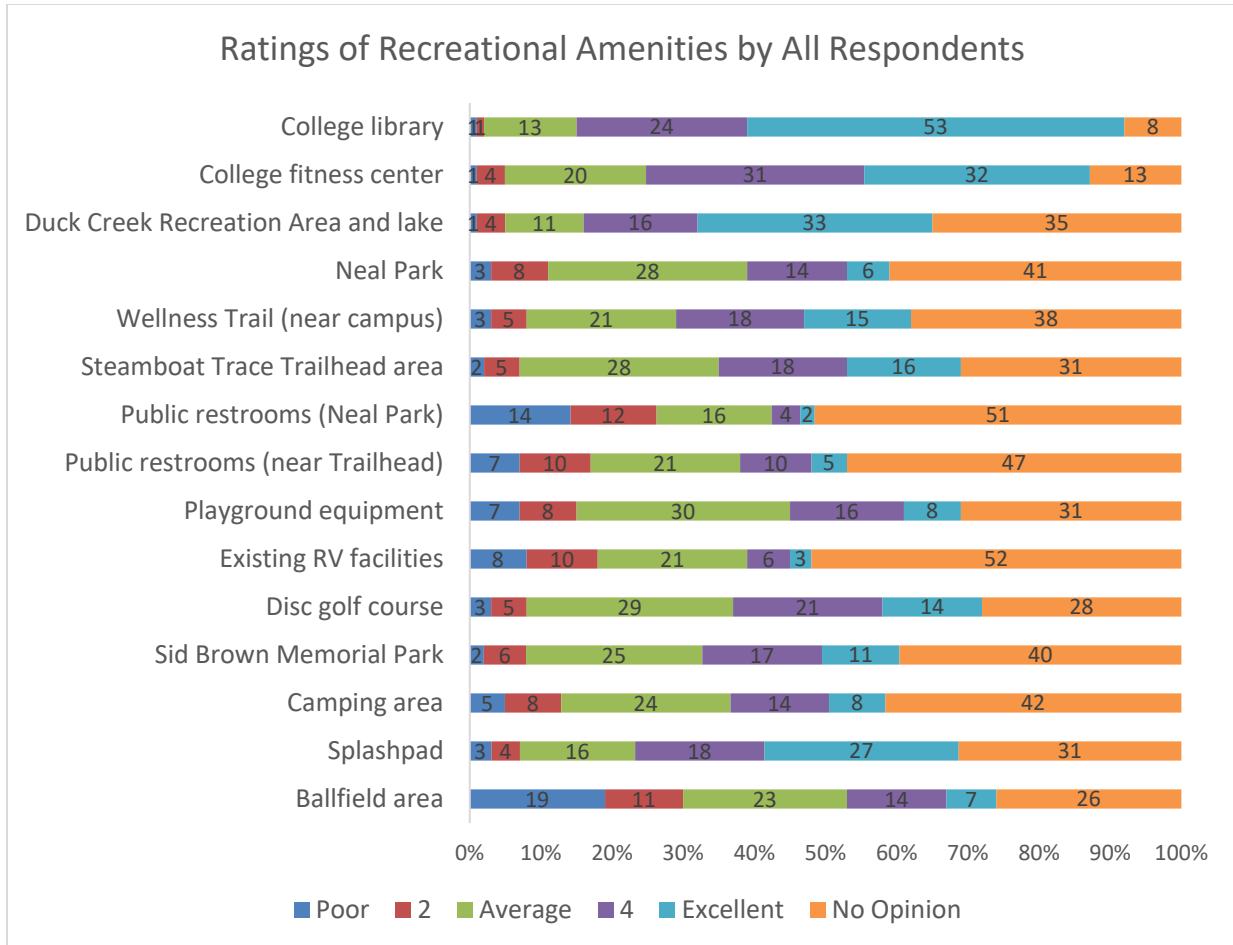
- Many of these differences are due to on campus students and out of town respondents being more likely to answer no opinion to these items.
- Peru residents are more likely than the other two groups to rate garbage collection as excellent.
- However, Peru residents are more likely than the other two groups to rate the following services as poor: street conditions, condition of sidewalks, broadband/Internet services, and street lighting. As an example, 56 percent of Peru residents rate the condition of sidewalks as poor, compared to 35 percent of persons living in or near another community or 15 percent of on campus students.

Only one difference is detected when comparing ratings between persons living inside Peru city limits and persons living on farms or acreages near Peru. Persons living on farms or acreages near Peru are more likely than those living inside city limits to rate law enforcement as poor. One-quarter (25%) of those living on farms or acreages rate law enforcement as poor, compared to six percent of those living inside Peru city limits. Conversely, 23 percent of those living within city limits rate law enforcement as excellent, compared to 11 percent of those living on nearby farms or acreages.



Next, respondents were asked to rate the condition of recreational amenities. Many respondents had no opinion about the various amenities listed. Over one-half of the respondents rated the college library

and college fitness center as either good or excellent. Almost one-half rated the Duck Creek Recreation Area and lake as well as the splashpad as either good or excellent.

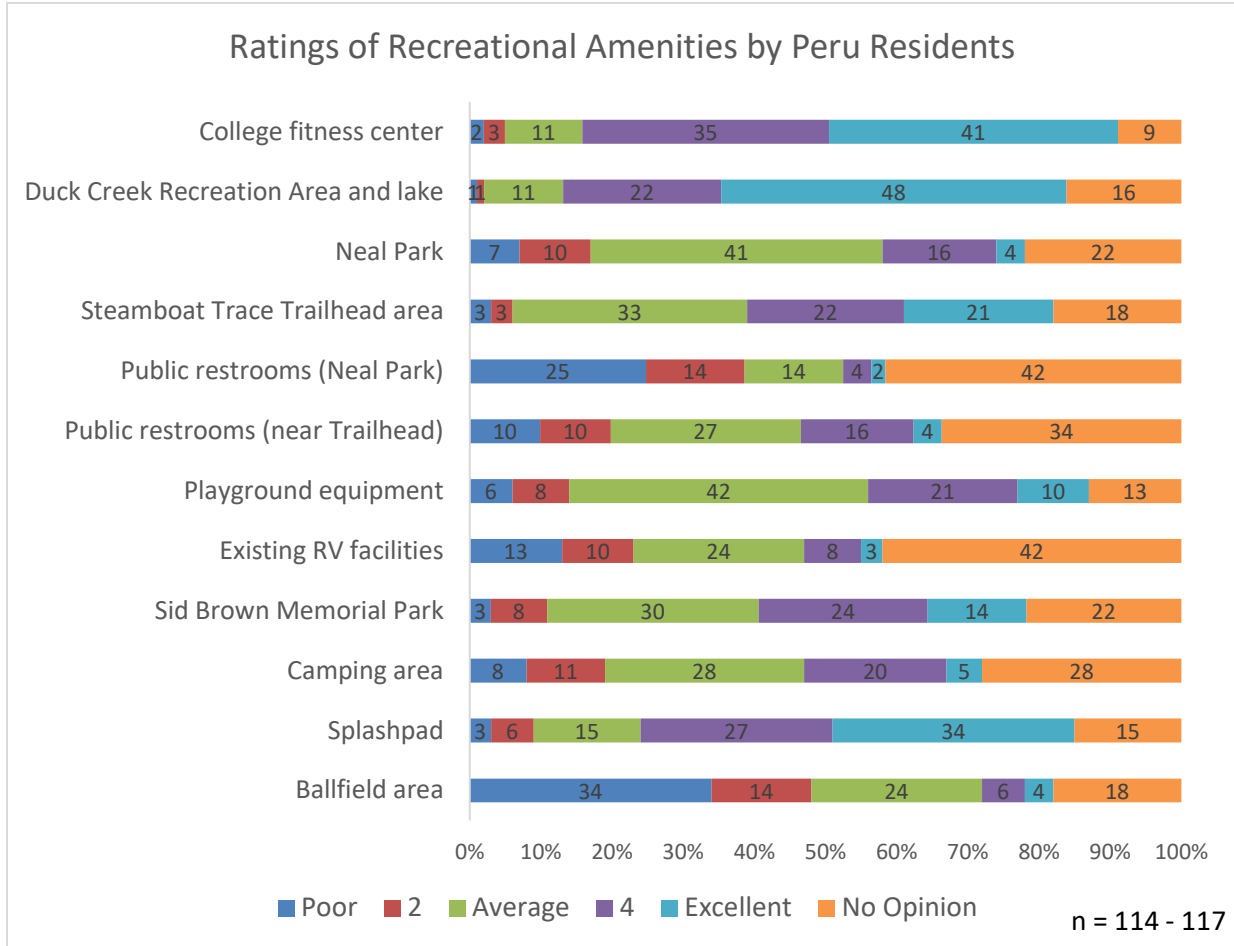


There are also some differences between those groups when rating some of these amenities. Only the items that have statistically significant differences are included in the chart below. Differences detected include:

- Again, most of these differences are due to on campus students and out of town respondents answering no opinion to many of these items.
- Peru residents are more likely than the other two groups to rate the following amenities as excellent: splashpad, Sid Brown Memorial Park, Steamboat Trace Trailhead area, Duck Creek Recreation Area and lake, and the college fitness center. As an example, 48 percent of Peru residents rate Duck Creek Recreation Area and lake as excellent, compared to 10 percent of on campus students and 37 percent of out of town respondents. And, 41 percent of Peru residents rate the college fitness center as excellent, compared to 26 percent of on campus students and 29 percent of out of town respondents.
- Peru residents are more likely than the other groups to rate the following amenities as poor: ballfield area, existing RV facilities, public restrooms at Neal Park, and Neal Park. As an example,

34 percent of Peru residents rate the ballfield area as poor, compared to 13 percent of out of town respondents and nine percent of on campus students.

- Peru residents are the group most likely to rate playground equipment and the public restrooms near the Trailhead as either good or average.



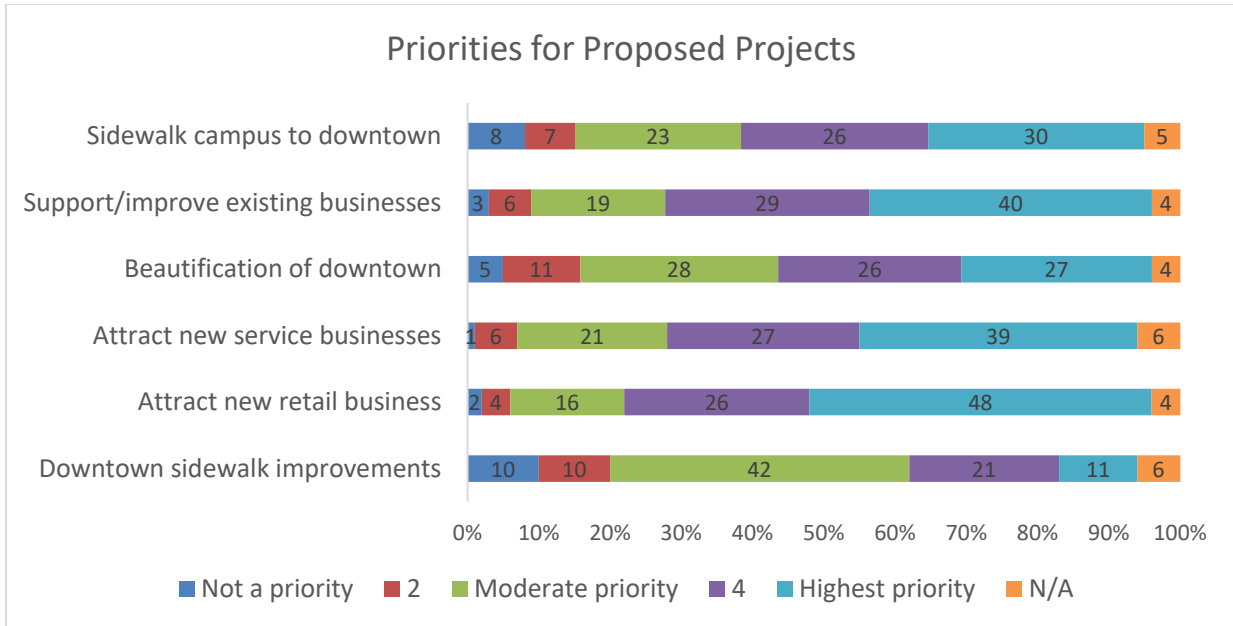
Downtown Revitalization

Respondents were given a number of proposed projects and were asked to rate the priority they would give to each. At least one-third of the respondents said the following items should be the highest priority: attract new retail business (48%), support/improve existing businesses (40%), and attract new service businesses (39%).

Some of the priority ratings for the projects differed by the three resident categories:

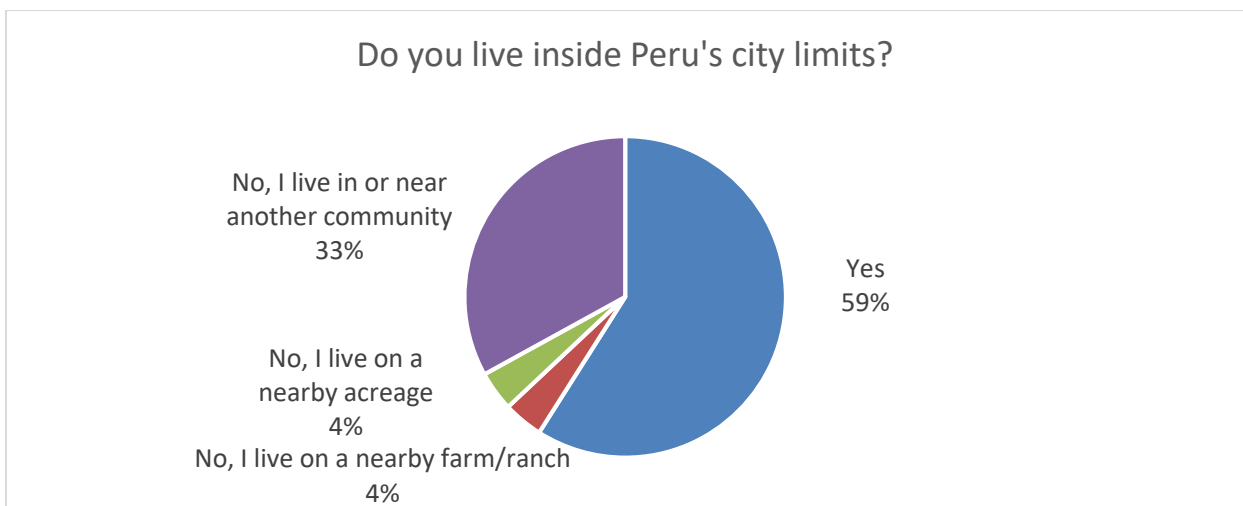
- Both out of town respondents and Peru residents are more likely than on campus students to rate downtown sidewalk improvements, attract new retail business, beautification of downtown, support/improve existing businesses and sidewalk campus to downtown as the highest priority. As an example, 59 percent of out of town respondents and 45 percent of Peru

residents rate attract new retail business as the highest priority, compared to 33 percent of on campus students.



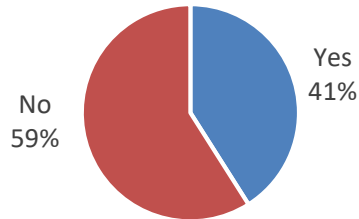
Housing

Next, respondents were asked a series of questions on housing. But first, they were asked a couple demographic questions. They were asked if they live inside Peru’s city limits. Almost six in ten respondents (59%) live inside Peru’s city limits. One-third (33%) live in or near another community.



The respondents who live outside Peru’s city limits were then asked if their desired housing was available, would they move to/within Peru. Just over four in ten (41%) would move to Peru if their desired housing was available.

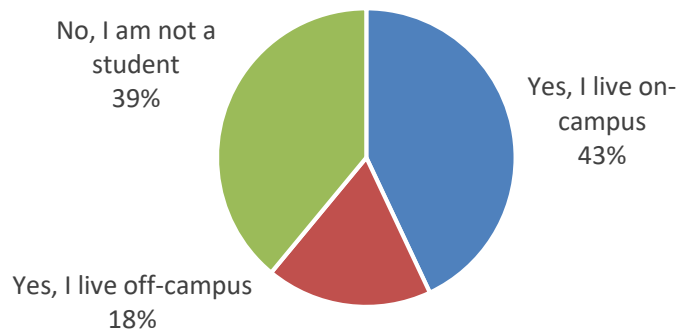
If you live outside Peru's city limits and your desired housing was available, would you move to/within Peru?



n = 145

Next, the respondents who live within Peru's city limits were asked if they were a student at Peru State College and if so, where they live. Just over four in ten answered that they are students who live on-campus. Just under four in ten are not students.

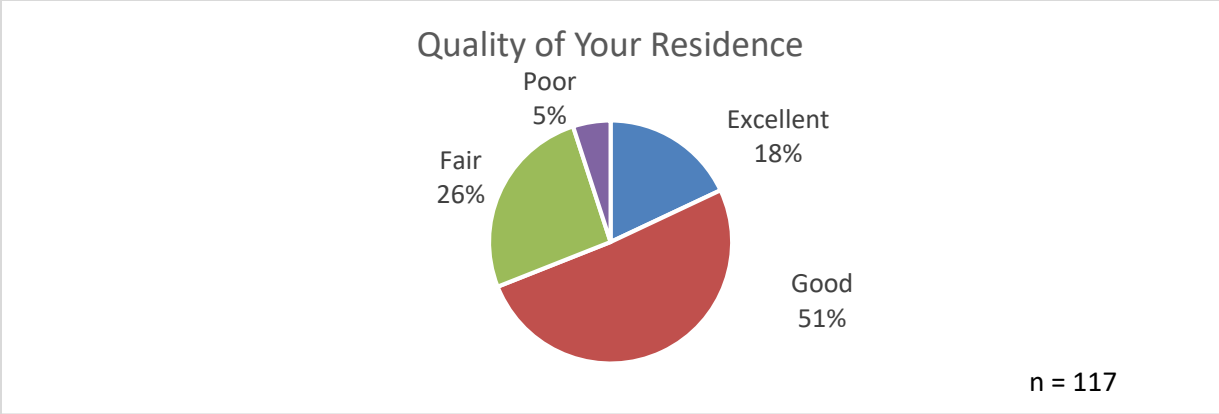
Are you a student at Peru State College? If so, where do you live?



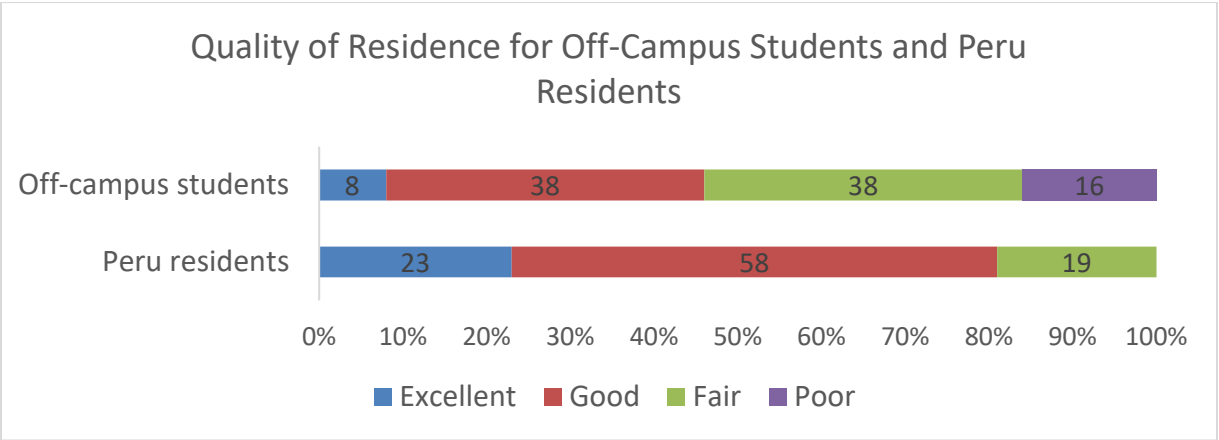
n = 208

People who live outside Peru's city limits and on-campus students were asked to skip the next series of questions. Thus, only persons living inside Peru's city limits were asked the following questions about their residence.

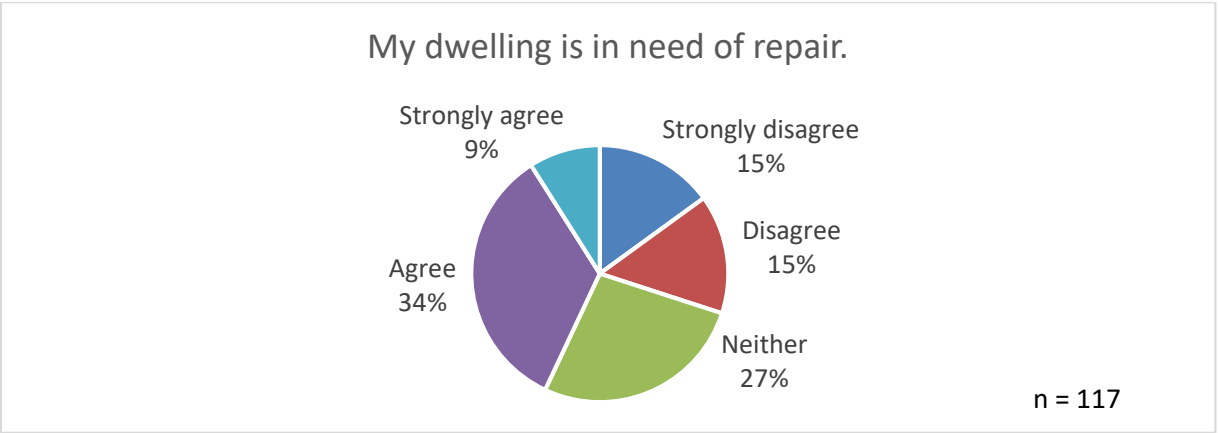
First, they were asked to rate the quality of their residence. Almost seven in ten residents (69%) rate their residence as good or excellent.



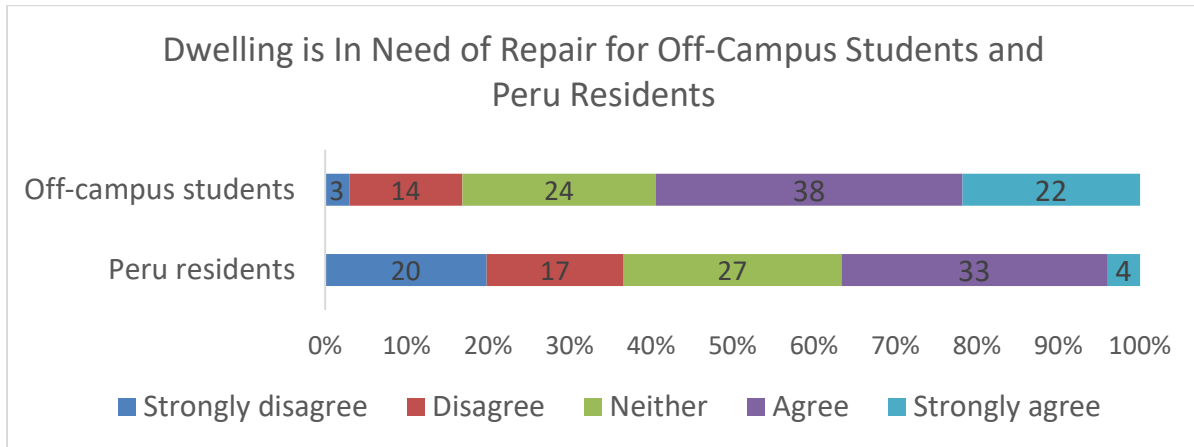
Most Peru residents rate their residence as excellent or good. However, most off-campus students rate the quality of their residence as fair or poor.



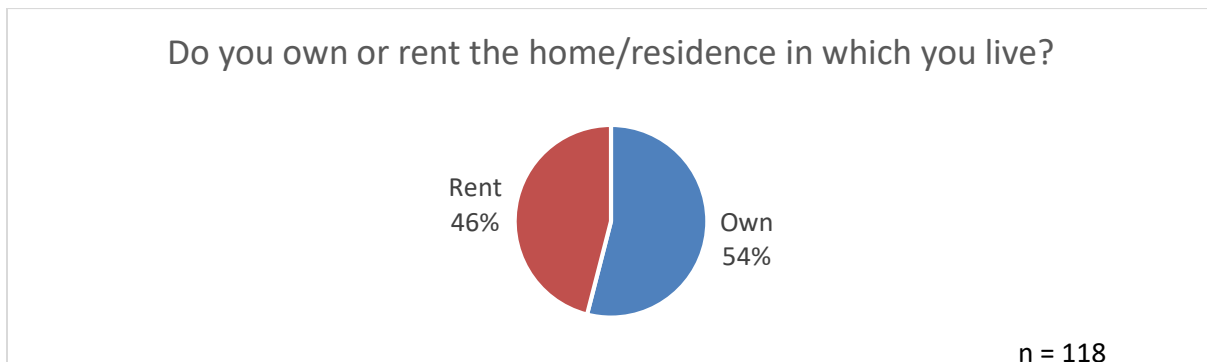
They were next asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with the following statement: My dwelling is in need of repair. Just over four in ten residents (43%) agree or strongly agree that their dwelling is in need of repair. Three in ten (30%) disagree or strongly disagree.



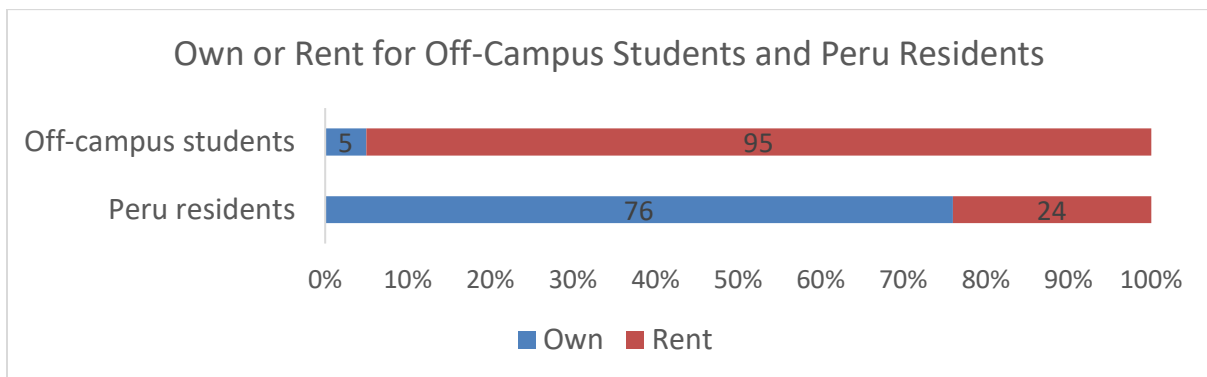
Similar to the housing quality question, off-campus students are more likely than Peru residents to agree or strongly agree that their dwelling is in need of repair. Six in ten off-campus students agree that their dwelling is in need of repair, compared to 37 percent of Peru residents.



Just over one-half of the residents own their home/residence in which they live.

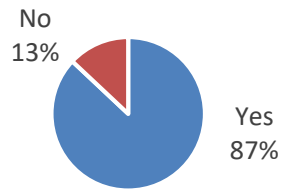


As no surprise, most off-campus students (95%) rent their home or residence. Just over three-quarters (76%) of Peru residents own their home.



Persons who rent were asked if their current rental meets their needs. Almost nine in ten renters (87%) say their rental meets their needs.

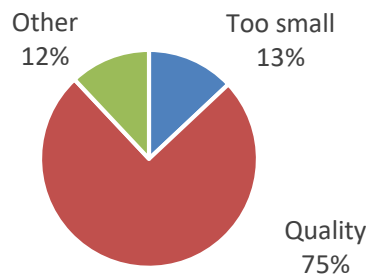
Does your current rental meet your needs?



n = 53

Those who said their current rental does not meet their needs were asked to indicate the primary reason why not. Three-quarters of that group said their rental does not meet their needs because of quality reasons.

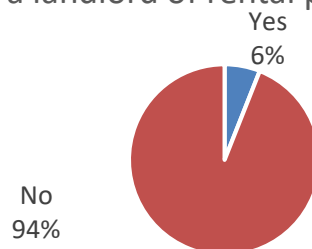
If current rental does not meet needs, why not?



n = 8

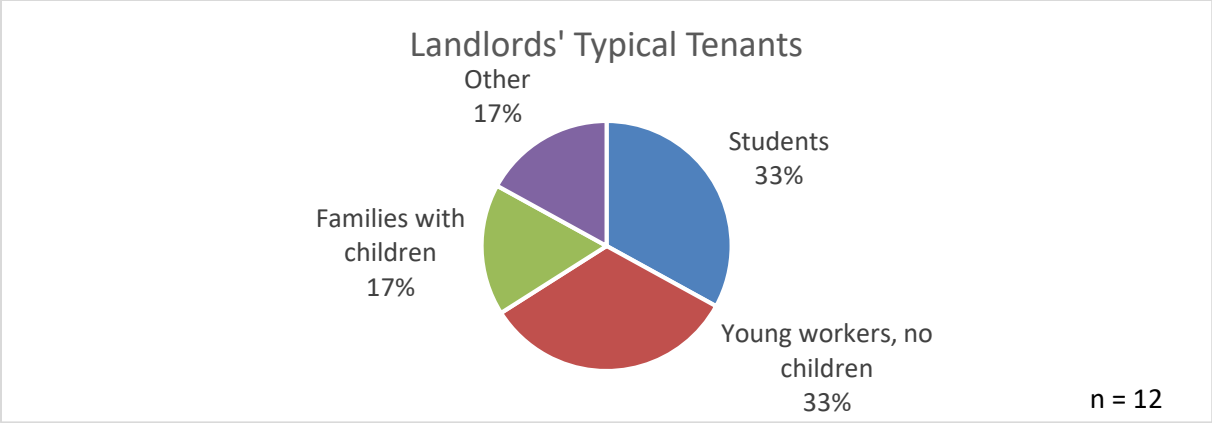
Next, residents were asked if they are a landlord of rental property in Peru. Persons living outside of Peru's city limits were also asked this question. Six percent of the respondents are landlords of rental property in Peru.

Are you a landlord of rental property in Peru?

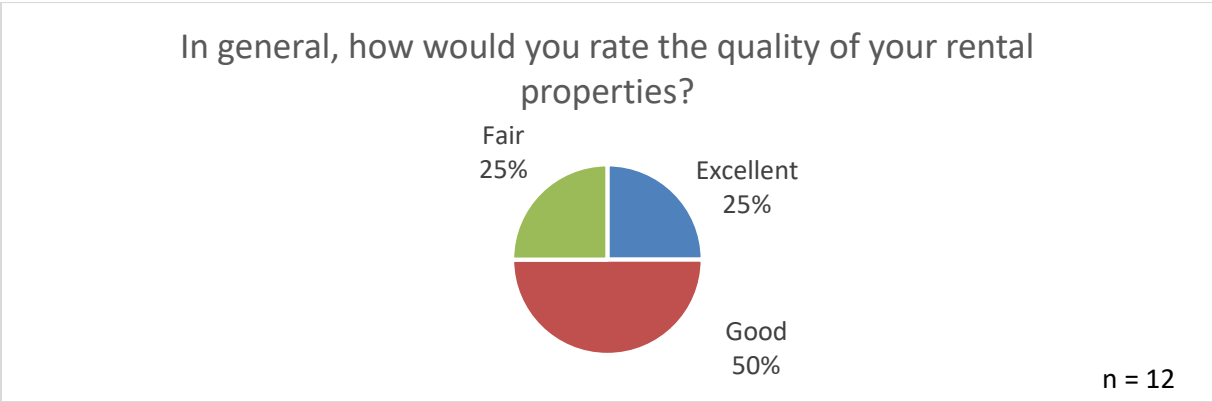


n = 211

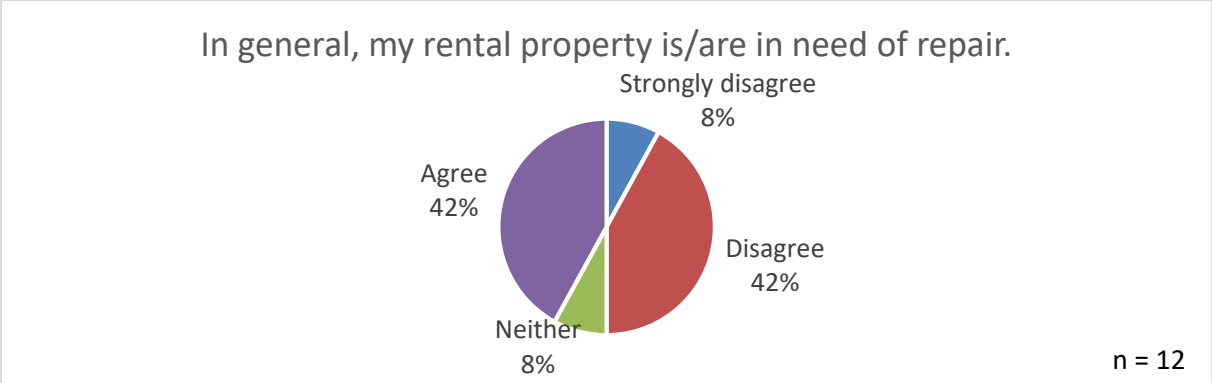
The landlords of rental property in Peru were asked their typical tenants. One-third of landlords have students as their typical tenants and one-third rent to young workers with no children.



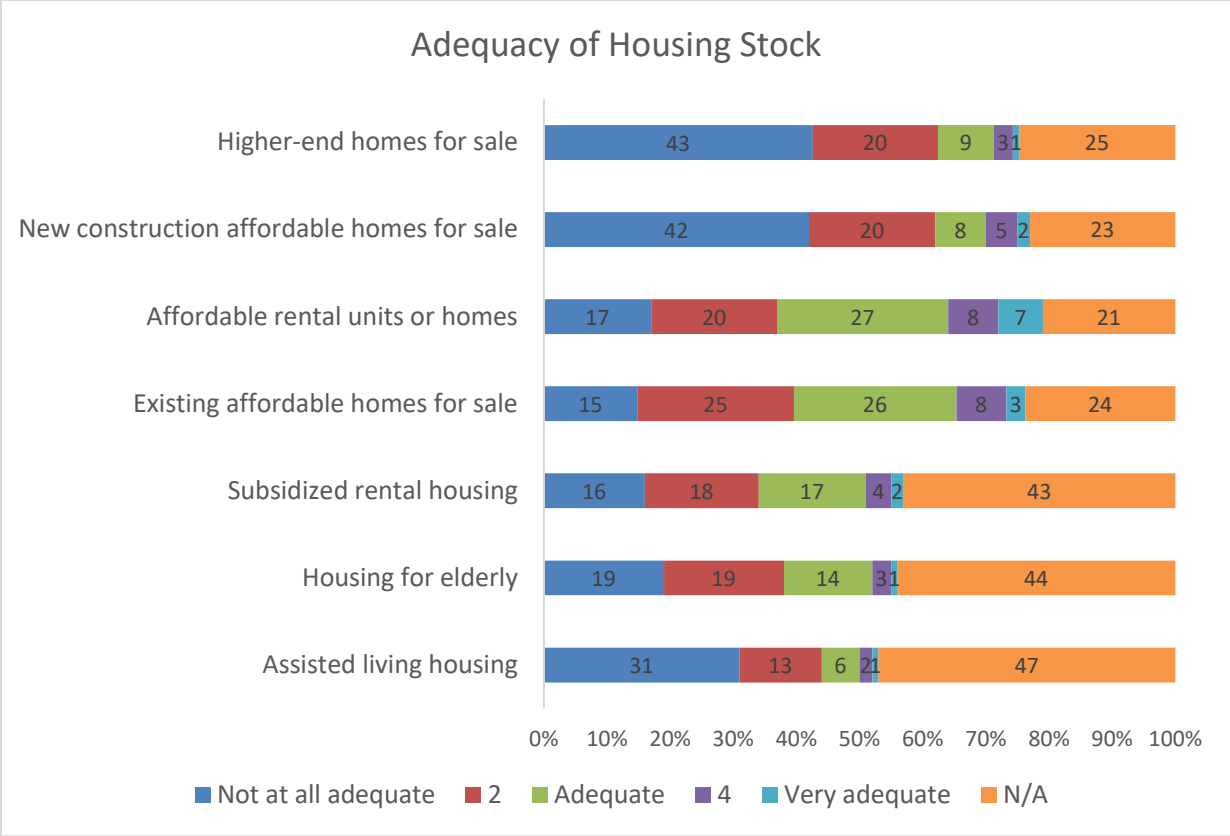
Landlords were also asked to rate the quality of their rental properties. Three-quarters of landlords rate their rental properties as either excellent or good.



The final question asked of landlords was if they agree or disagree that their property is/are in need of repair. Just over four in ten landlords (42%) agree with that statement.

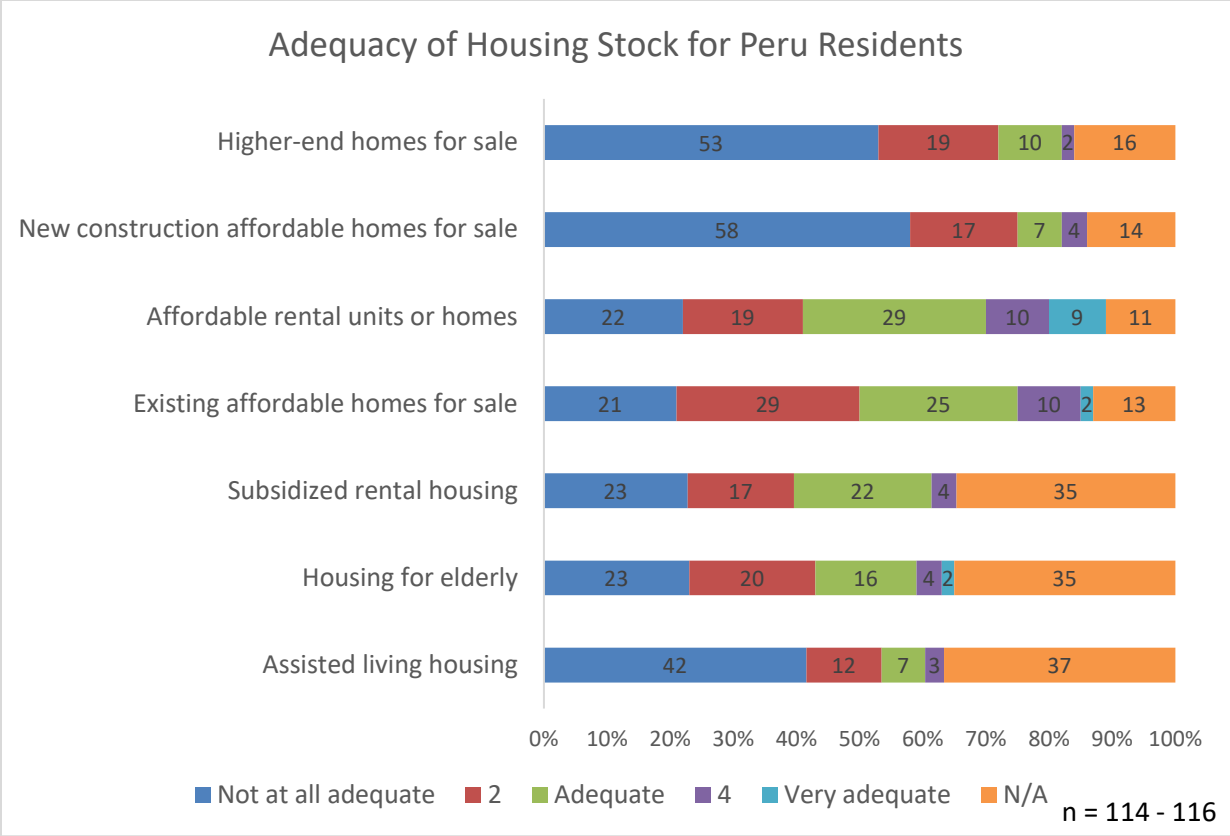


Finally, all respondents were given various types of housing stock and were asked to rate the adequacy of each. Over four in ten respondents say the stock of higher-end homes for sale and new construction affordable homes for sale are not at all adequate. Over four in ten respondents say the existing stock of affordable rental units or homes are at least adequate.



There are differences in opinions among the resident category groups when asked to rate the adequacy of various housing stock categories:

- Similar to other ratings, many of these differences are due to on campus students and out of town respondents being more likely than Peru residents to answer not applicable for the items.
- Peru residents are more likely than the other two groups to rate the following items as not at all adequate: new construction affordable homes for sale, subsidized rental housing, and assisted living housing. As an example, 58 percent of Peru residents rate new construction affordable homes for sale as not at all adequate, compared to 14 percent of on campus students and 42 percent of out of town respondents.
- Both Peru residents and out of town respondents are more likely than on campus students to rate the following as not at all adequate: existing affordable homes for sale, higher-end homes for sale, affordable rental units or homes, and housing for elderly. Approximately one in five persons in those two groups rate existing affordable homes for sale as not at all adequate, compared to none of the on campus students. And, 22 percent of both Peru residents and out of town respondents say affordable rental units or homes are not at all adequate, compared to five percent of on campus students.

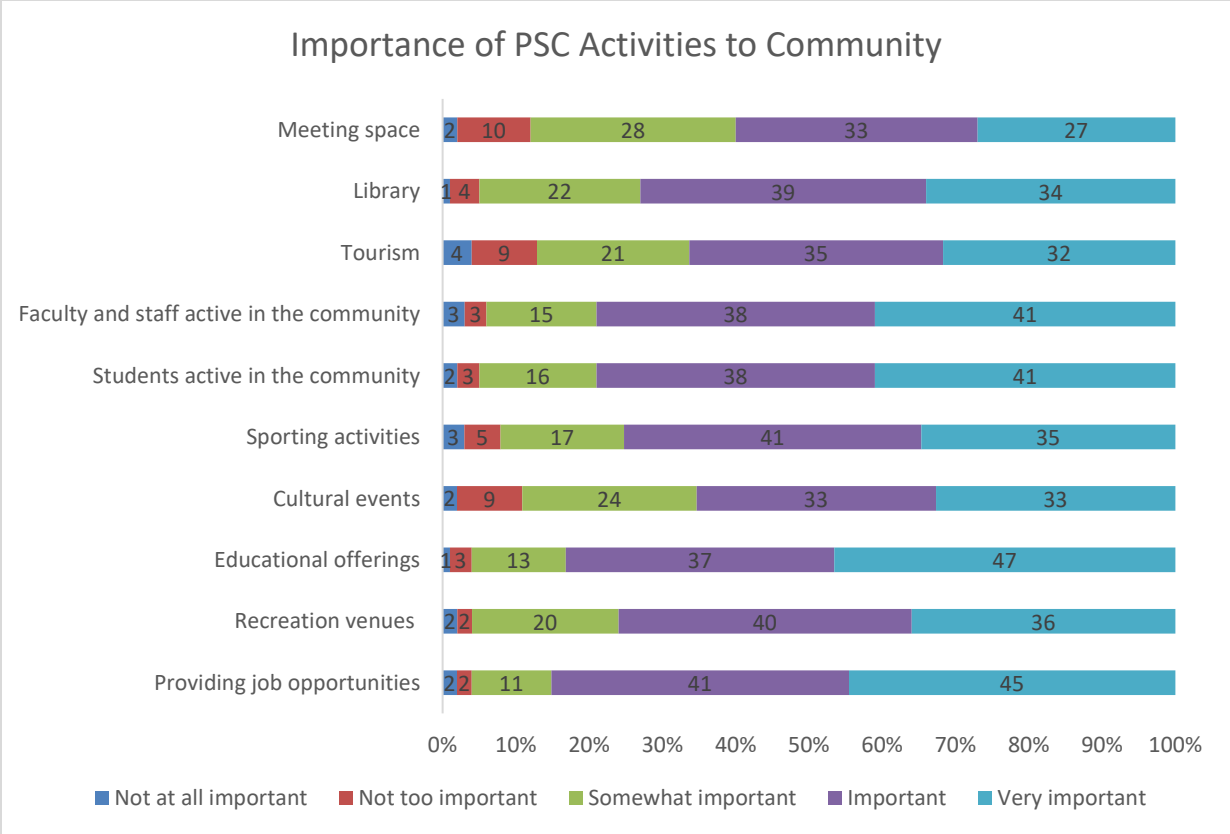


Community/College Relations

Next, respondents were asked to rate how important various Peru State College activities are to the community of Peru. Most respondents rate each of the activities listed as important or very important to the community. At least four in ten say the following activities are very important: educational offerings, providing job opportunities, faculty and staff active in the community, and students active in the community.

There are some differences in opinion among the resident categories:

- Cultural events are most likely to be rated as very important by both out of town respondents and Peru residents. Over three in ten of these two groups rate this item as very important, compared to just over one-quarter (26%) of on campus students.
- Out of town respondents are more likely than both Peru residents and on campus students to rate tourism and meeting space as very important. Just over four in ten (42%) out of town respondents rate tourism as very important, compared to 30 percent of Peru residents and 23 percent of on campus students.



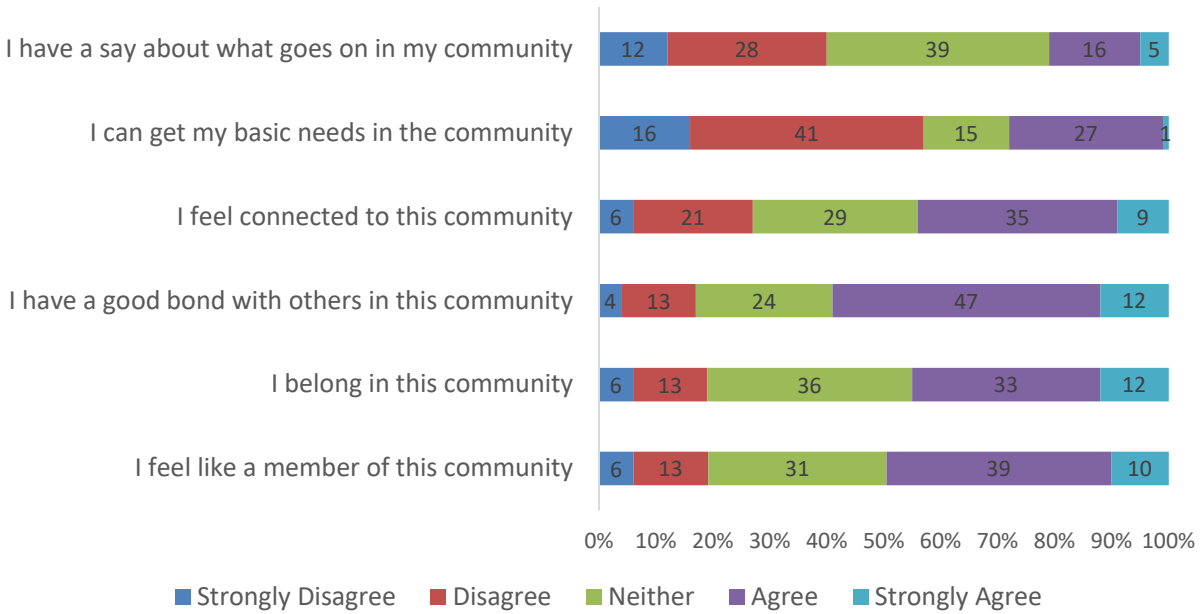
Community Involvement

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with various statements about Peru. At least one-half agree that they have a good bond with others in this community. At least four in ten agree with the following: I feel like a member of this community, I belong in this community, and I feel connected to this community.

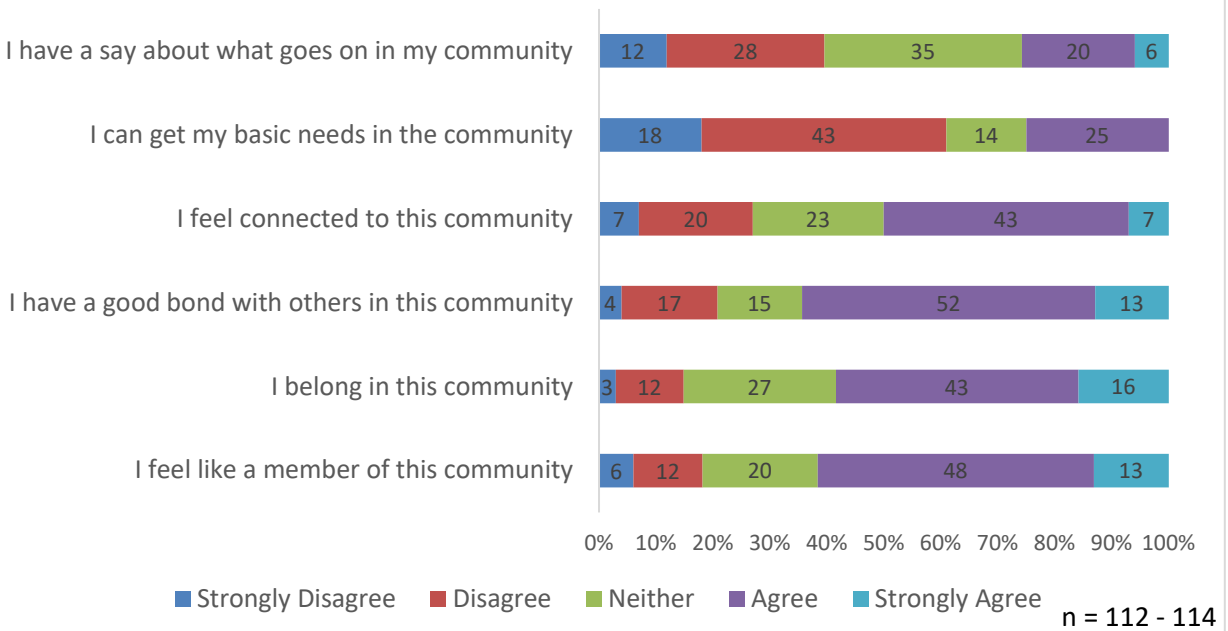
Some differences of opinions among the resident categories are found:

- On campus students are more likely than the other two groups to agree that they can get their basic needs in the community. Over four in ten on campus students agreed or strongly agreed with that statement, compared to less than one-quarter of Peru residents and out of town respondents.
- Out of town respondents are *less* likely than on campus students or Peru residents to agree with the following: they feel like a member of the community and they belong in the community. Just over three in ten out of town respondents agree that they belong in the community, compared to 59 percent of Peru residents and 47 percent of on campus students.

Connectedness in Peru

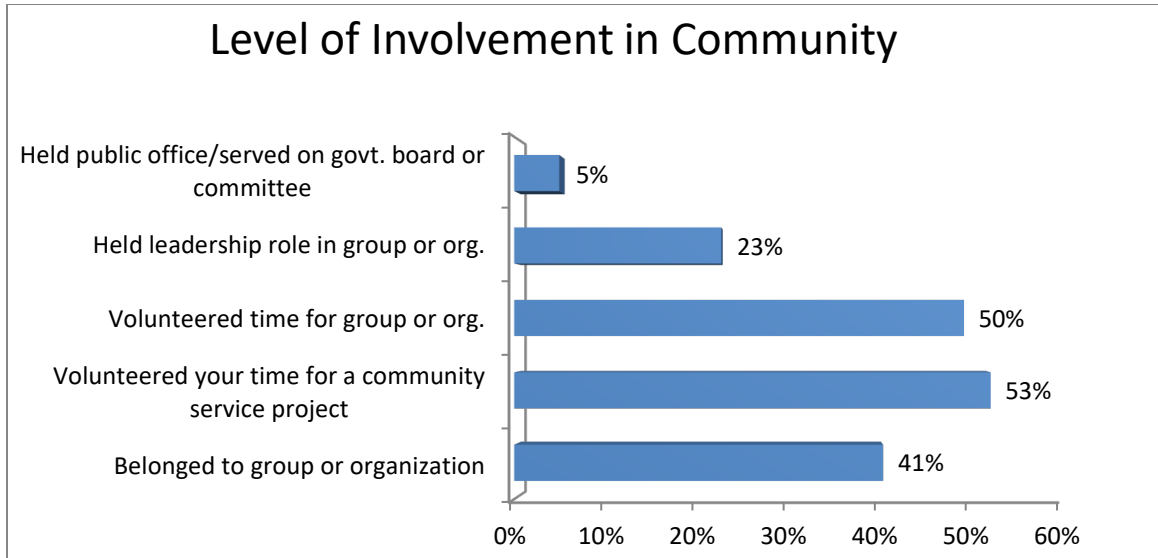


Connectedness in Peru for Peru Residents

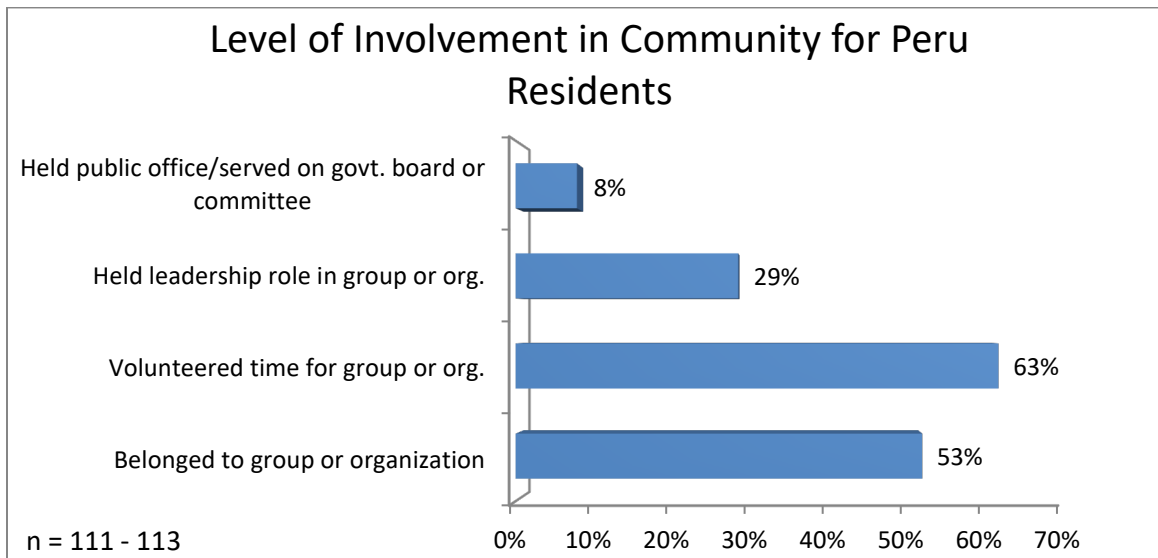


Just over one-half of the respondents have volunteered their time for a community service project during the past five years. One-half of the respondents have volunteered their time for a community group or organization. Just over four in ten respondents have belonged to a community group or organization. Just under one-quarter (23%) have held a leadership role in a community group or

organization during the past five years and five percent have held a public office or served on a government board or committee.



Peru residents are more likely than both on campus students and out of town respondents to have done the following in the past five years: belonged to a community group or organization, volunteered time for a community group or organization, held a leadership role in a community group or organization, and held public office or served on a government board or committee.



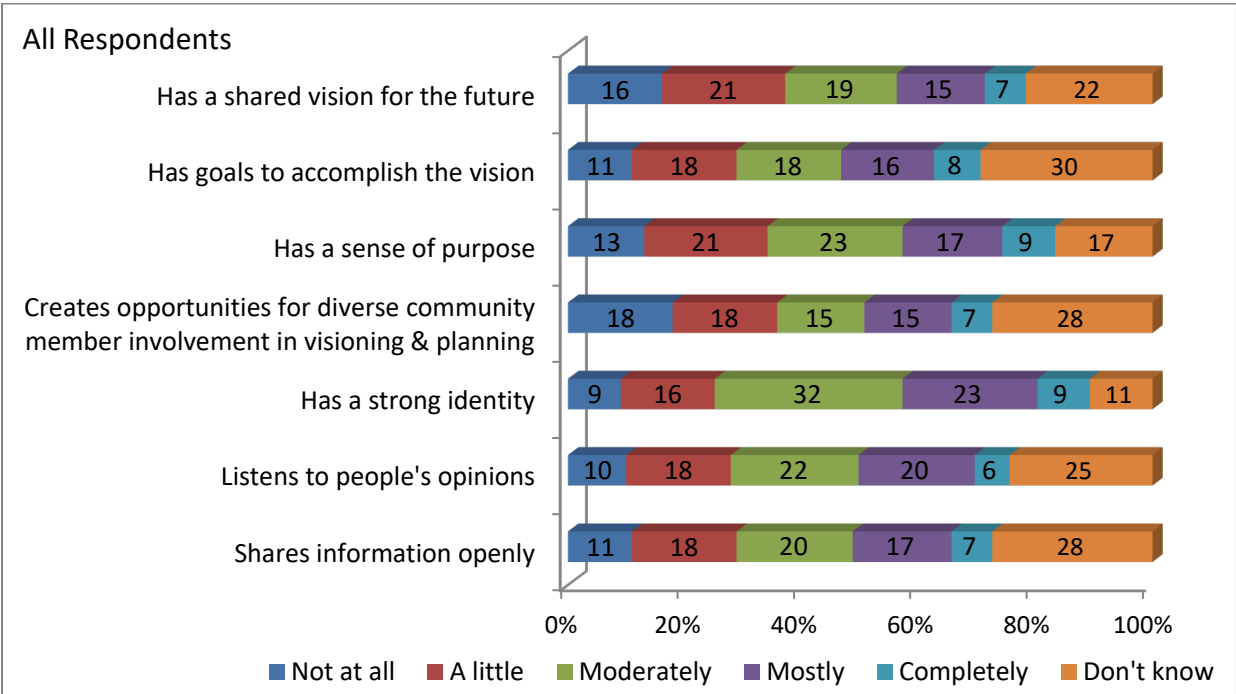
Community Vision, Sense of Place, Culture of Change, and Leadership

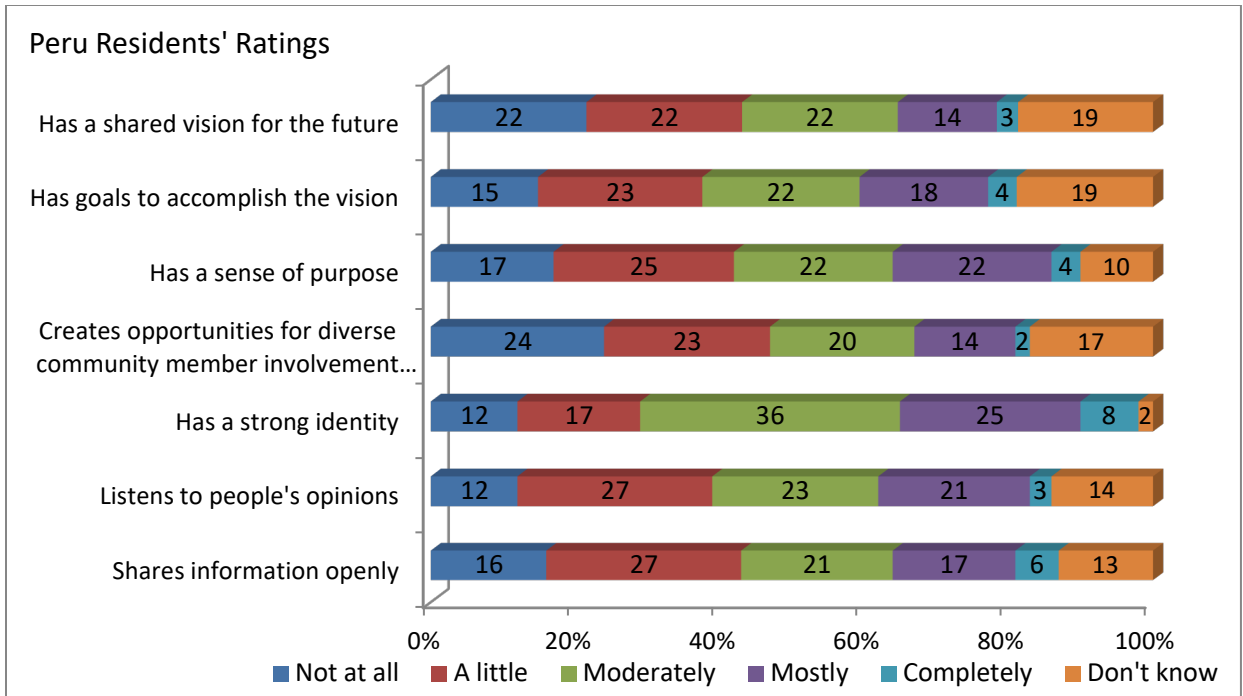
The community was rated by residents on 18 different dimensions, each using a five-point scale where 1 indicated “not at all” and 5 denoted “completely.” They were also given the option to answer don’t know.



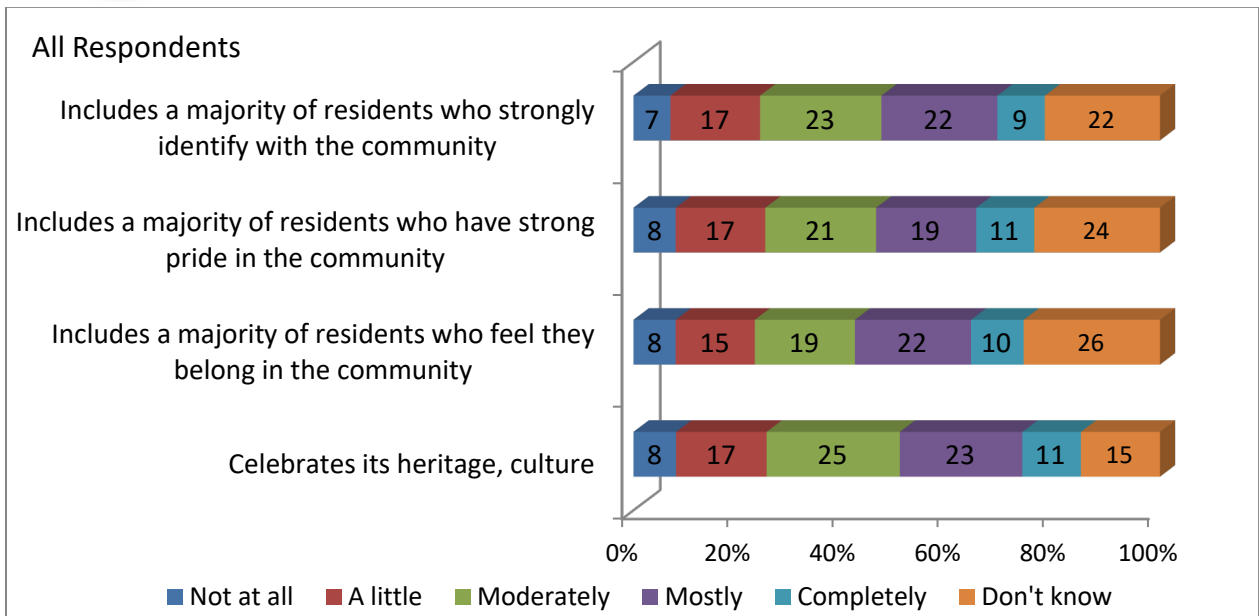
Just over three in ten respondents believe Peru has a strong identity. Over two in ten believe it has a sense of purpose, the community listens to people’s opinions, has goals to accomplish the vision, that it shares information openly, the community creates opportunities for diverse community member involvement in visioning and planning processes, and the community has a shared vision for the future.

On campus students are more likely than Peru residents and out of town respondents to believe Peru has all of the components of community vision. As an example, just over four in ten students (43%) believe it mostly or completely has a strong identity, compared to 23 percent of out of town respondents and 33 percent of Peru residents.

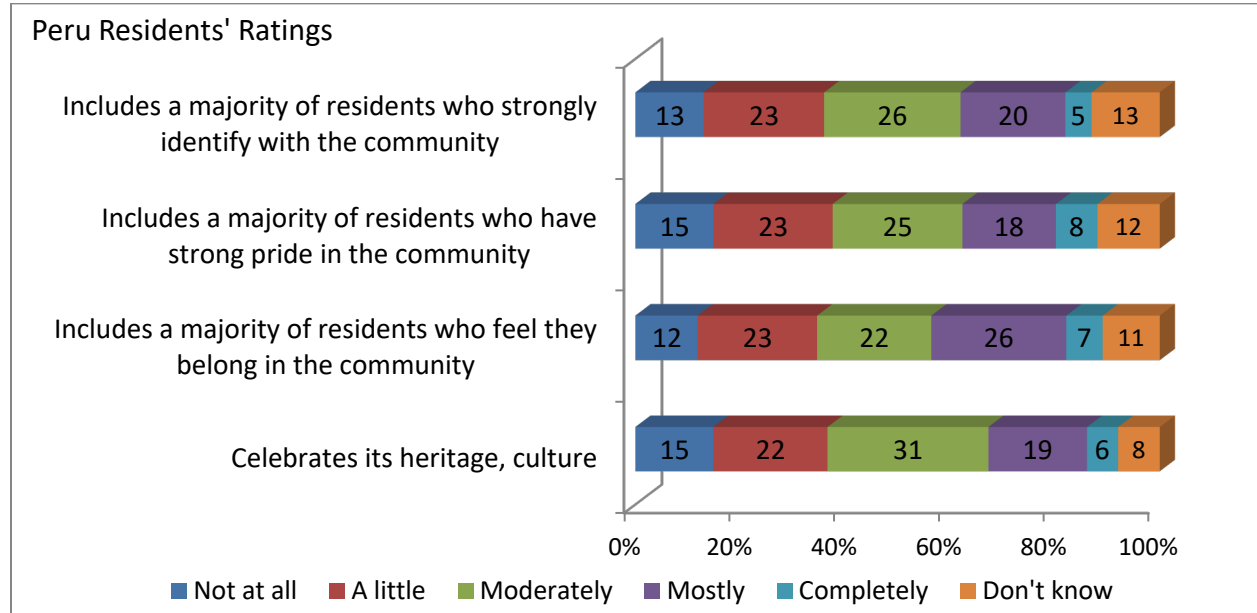




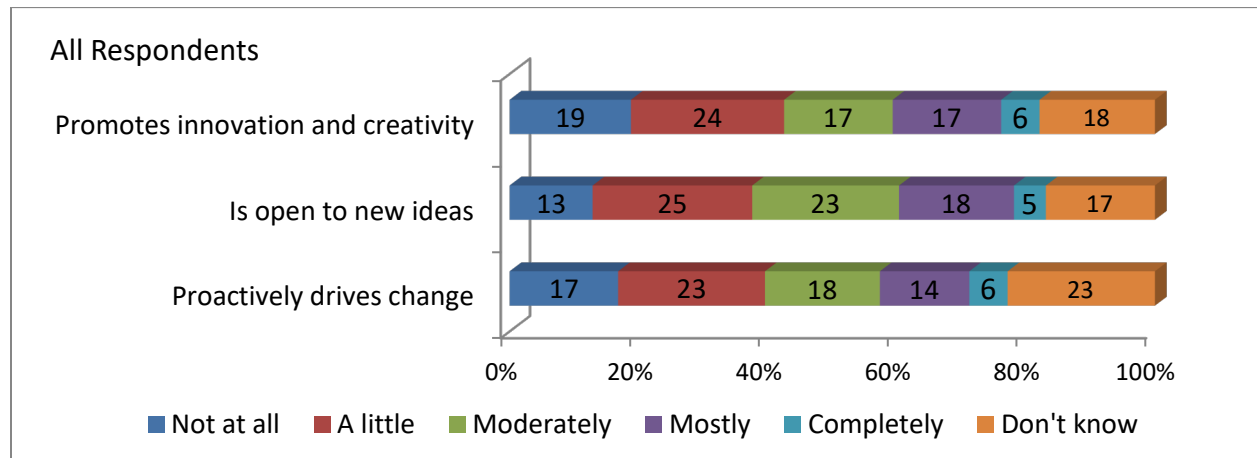
Just over one-third of respondents believe Peru celebrates its heritage and culture. At least three in ten respondents believe the community has a majority of residents who feel they belong in the community, has a majority of residents who strongly identify with the community, and has a majority of residents who have strong pride in the community.



Again, on campus students are more likely than Peru residents and out of town respondents to believe Peru has all of the components of sense of place. As an example, over four in ten on campus students (46%) believe it mostly or completely includes a majority of residents who feel they belong in the community, compared to 22 percent of out of town respondents and 32 percent of Peru residents.

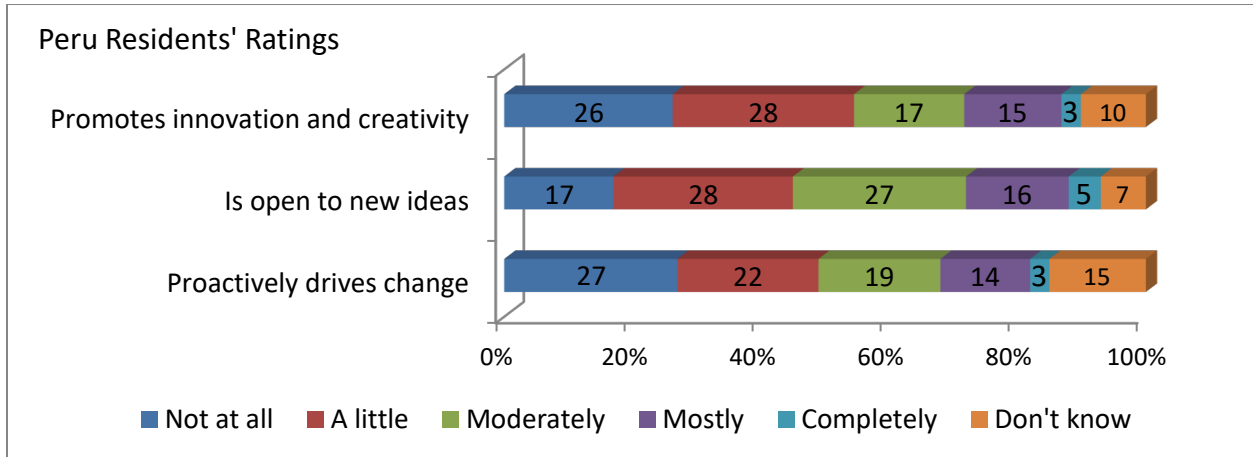


At least two in ten respondents believe Peru is open to new ideas, that it promotes innovation and creativity and that the community proactively drives change.

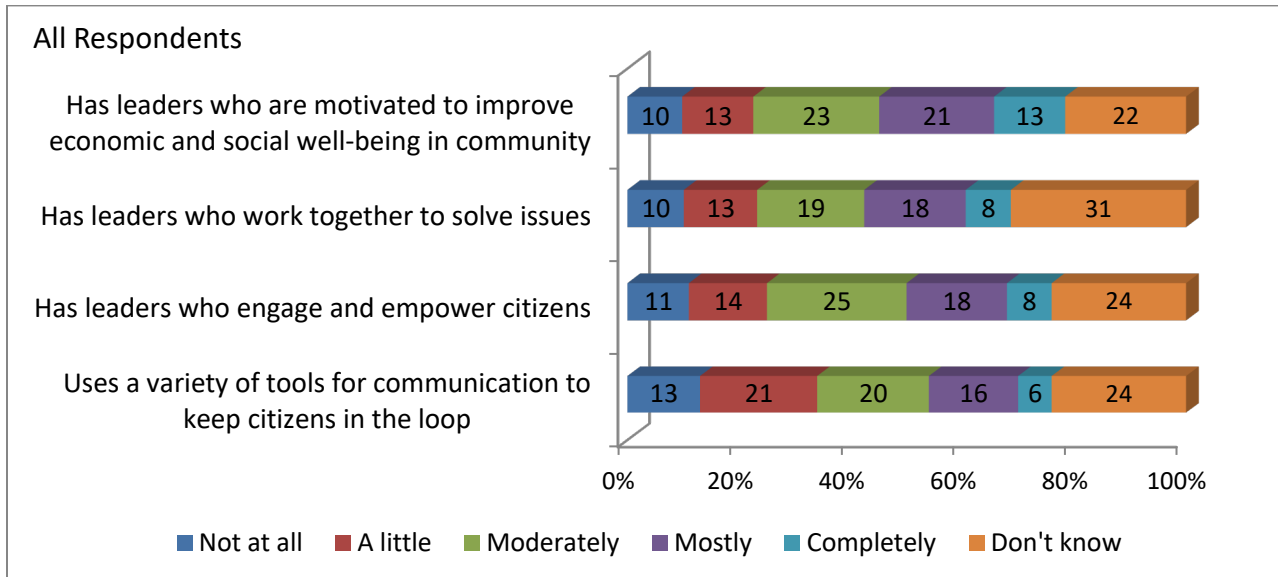


On campus students are more likely than Peru residents and out of town respondents to believe Peru has all of the components of culture of change. Just over one-third (35%) of students say Peru mostly or

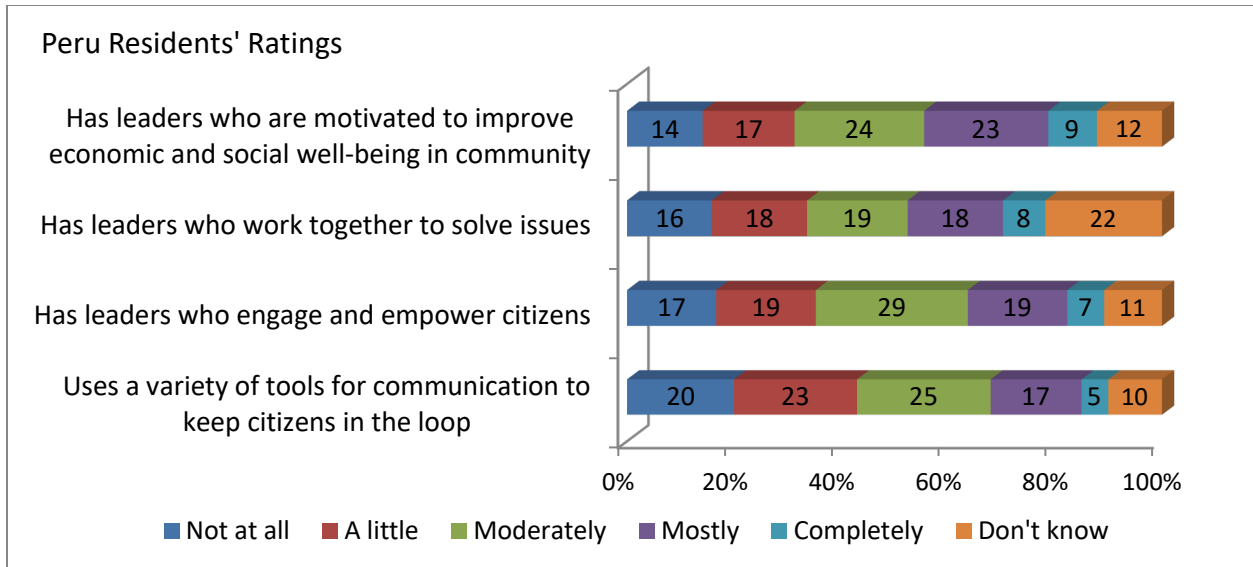
completely proactively drives change, compared to 14 percent of out of town respondents and 17 percent of Peru residents.



Just over one-third of the respondents believe Peru has leaders who are motivated to improve the economic and social well-being in the community. Over two in ten believe the community has leaders who engage and empower citizens, has leaders who work together to solve issues, and uses a variety of tools for communication to keep citizens in the loop.

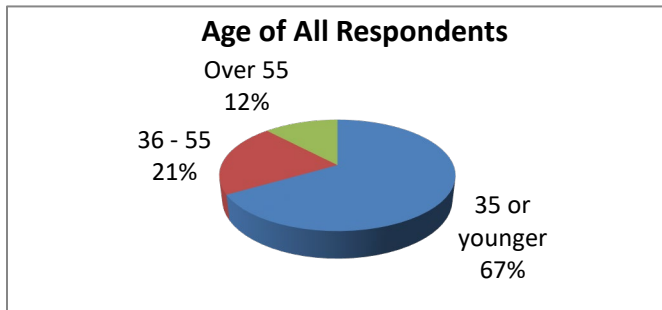


On campus students are more likely than out of town respondents and Peru residents to believe Peru has all of the components of leadership. Just over one-third (36%) of students say Peru mostly or completely has leaders who work together to solve issues, compared to 25 percent of Peru residents and 21 percent of out of town respondents.



Demographics

The average age of respondents was 33. Two-thirds (67%) of the respondents are age 35 or younger. Over two in ten (21%) are between the ages of 36 and 55.

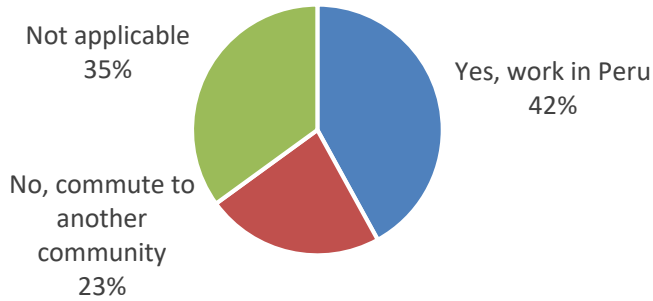


The age categories of the Peru residents are as follows: 55 percent are age 35 or younger, 22 percent are age 36 to 55 and 23 percent are over the age of 55.

Most of the respondents (61%) most closely identify with Peru. Almost four in ten identified a different community with which they most closely identify, with Auburn being the most frequently mentioned (12% of total respondents). Almost three-quarters (72%) of the respondents have lived in their community for ten years or less, while 15 percent have lived there for more than 25 years.

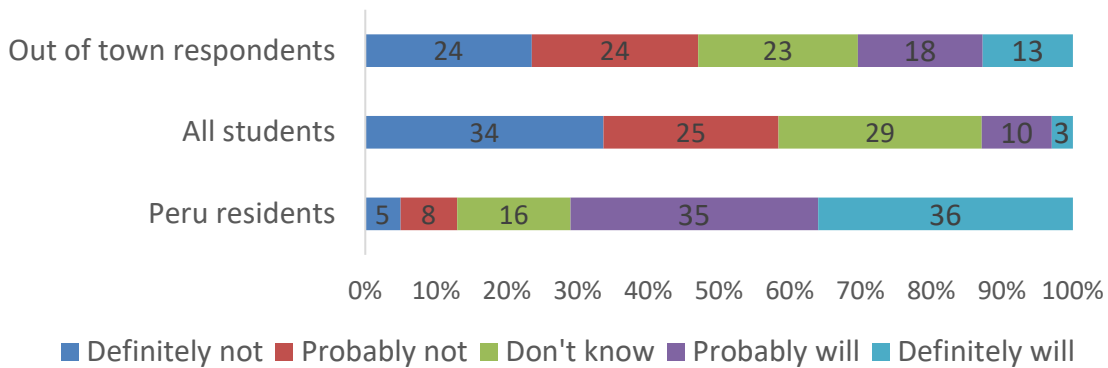
Over four in ten respondents work in Peru and over two in ten commute to another community for their work. Just under one-half (46%) of Peru residents work in Peru and 25 percent commute to another community.

Are you employed in Peru or do you commute out of town for employment?



Most Peru residents (71%) say they probably or definitely will live in Peru five years from now. In comparison, only 13 percent of students (both on campus and those living off campus in Peru) and 31 percent of out of town respondents share this opinion.

Likelihood of Living in Peru Five Years from Now by Resident Categories



This Community Survey Report is a product of
Nebraska Extension – Community Vitality Initiative
Survey Manager, Rebecca Vogt

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension educational programs
abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of
Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

