

# 2023 Local Health Assessment Summary



Hillsborough Township  
February 2024

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# About

- Hillsborough conducted a broad local health assessment in 2023.
- Goals:
  - Collect data about local health issues and community conditions that impact health
  - Engage community members and key leaders in discussing health
  - Develop an action plan to improve specific health issues
  - Earn a “[Gold Star in Health](#)” through Sustainable Jersey, demonstrating Hillsborough’s commitment to a healthy community
- This report is a summary of the local health assessment designed and conducted by our community.

# Local Health Assessment Methods

- **Focus:** health outcomes and behaviors, community conditions that impact health (“social determinants of health”), priority populations who are most affected
- **Timing:** Conducted from April-December 2023
- **Data Sources:**
  - Reviewed published statistics (including [U.S. Census](#), [City Health Dashboard](#), [Healthy Community Planning Report](#) (NJDOH/NJDEP), [NJ Flood Mapper](#) [Municipal Snapshot](#))
  - Distributed and analyzed community health survey (476 participants)
  - Conducted interviews and focus groups with community leaders and local groups

# Partners

- **Hillsborough Health Department:** The township department that provides and supports essential public health services.
- **Sustainable Hillsborough:** The committee that implements best practices for what communities could and should do to contribute to a sustainable future. Hillsborough has been certified with Sustainable Jersey for 12 years.
- **Mayor's Wellness Campaign:** A community health initiative led by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute with the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, with a goal of supporting mayors in pursuit of promoting healthy, active living and wellness as a way of life in their communities.
- **Hillsborough Health Collaborative:** A group of local stakeholders with the goal to identify and address key issues related to community health and wellness in Hillsborough. Members include representatives from township departments, local organizations and businesses, and community residents.

# Data Gathering - Focus Groups and Interviews

## Focus Groups (June through December)

Group	Description
18-25 year olds	Camp counselors working at YMCA
BoroSafe	Mental health and suicide prevention group
Interfaith Council	Religious leaders
Millstone Board of Health	Board of Health members
Municipal Alliance	Substance use prevention group
One Hillsborough	Advocacy group committed to strengthening the social fabric
Senior citizens	Members of chapter club
South Asian community	South Asian residents
Spanish-speaking residents	Attendees of social hour at Mary Mother of God church
Westering Place residents	Apartment complex with affordable housing units

## Interviews (May through October)

Stakeholder	Role
Anna Mahler	HMS Student Assistance Counselor
Anthony Ferrera	Township Administrator
Ashley Rose	Rotary Club President
Ben Green	YMCA District VP of Operations
Bob Fenster	HHS Teacher
Gil Pilarte	HHS Student Assistance Coordinator
Helen Machat	HHS Nurse
Mike McMahon	Chief of Police
Mike Volpe	HPS Superintendent
Roy Freiman	State Assemblyman
Shawn Lipani	Mayor
Tim Wolf	Director of Family Success Center, Pastor of New Horizon Church

# Summary of Findings

(from published statistics, survey, focus groups, and interviews)

## Highlights:

- Recreation
- Education
- Community

## Top health concerns:

- Mental health
- Substance use
- Chronic disease

## Top concerns among community conditions / “social determinants of health”:

- Transportation and infrastructure
- Safety
- Economic stability
- Healthcare access
- Community engagement/isolation
- Communication
- Food access



## Priority populations:

- Low-income individuals and families
- Age groups: seniors, young adults (18-25), children and families
- Immigrants, English language learners
- Communities of color
- LGBTQ+
- People with disabilities, physical, or mental health conditions

# Hillsborough Highlights





*“Hillsborough is a great community with lots of recreational activities and social services.”*

*“Hillsborough is a wonderful small yet big town. I am proud to be called a resident.”*

*“The moment I moved in it felt like home!”*

*“As a member of this community, I feel very honored to live in such a nice community.”*

*“Being a member of this community is a big blessing as it is filled of progress & opportunity. The people support and help each other.”*



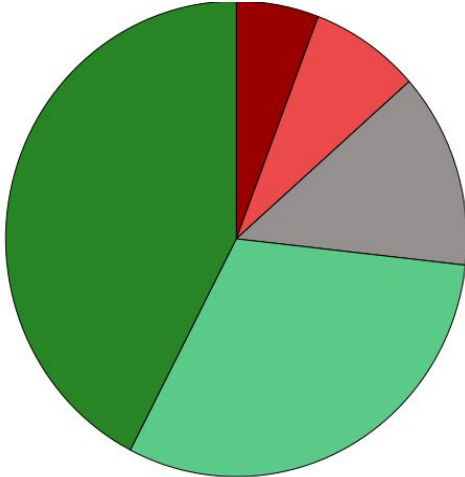
**Shop Hillsborough**



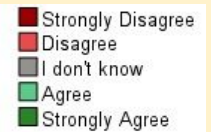
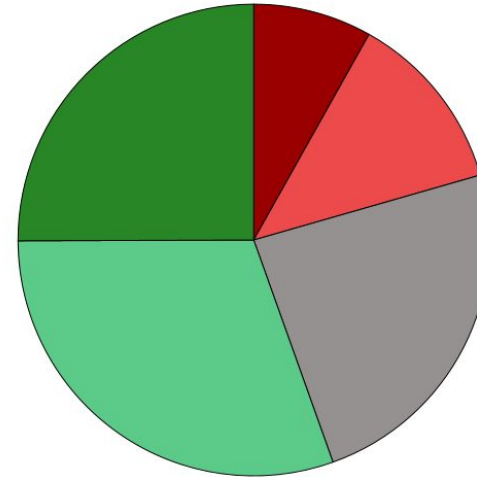
# Recreation



**My neighborhood (within 1-2 miles) has at least two free or low-cost recreational facilities. For example: parks, ball fields, playgrounds, trails.**



**There are free or low-cost entertainment and recreational activities offered in town.**



# Recreation

## Published Statistics

- 33 parks, greenways, and recreation areas (7,567 acres)
- Additional 1,950 acres preserved open space (non-farmland)
- 18 public spaces where people can gather safely and freely
- 2 community garden plots accessible to the public

## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Focus groups
  - YMCA, parks, senior center are all good aspects of living in Hillsborough
  - Library has great classes/services
  - Recreation, physical activity - wide range of activities (sports, stem, chess) and age groups; comparatively priced, variety of locations/times
- Interviews
  - Many parks in town, we have athletic leagues and recreation programs
  - Eagle Scouts and Girls Scouts contribute to maintaining an open space and nature that benefits the community

# Education

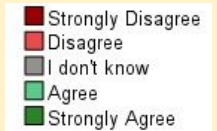
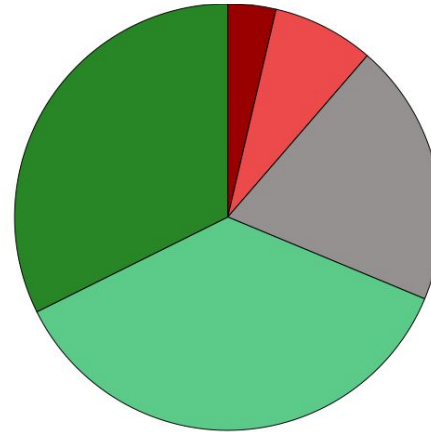
## Published Statistics

- High school graduation rate: 96.5% (vs. 94.3% for county and 90.5% for state)
- Bachelor's degree or higher: 60.7% (vs. 56.1% for county and 41.5% for state)



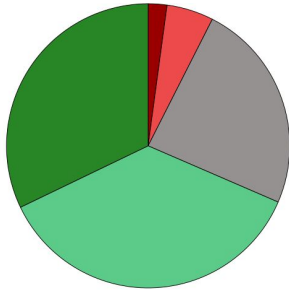
## Survey Results

**Our schools adequately prepare students for college or a career.**

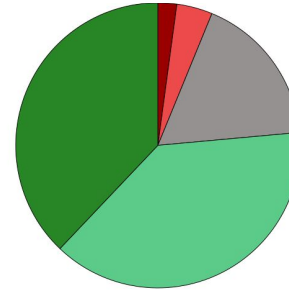


# Community

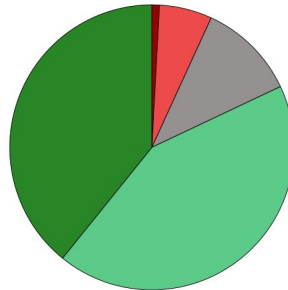
**Children and youth in my town have positive role models in the community.**



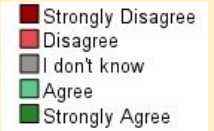
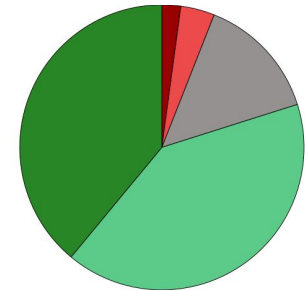
**The police are doing a good job to keep residents safe.**



**People in my neighborhood (within 1-2 miles) can be trusted.**



**I feel like I belong in this community. I generally feel welcome wherever I go in town.**



# Health Outcomes and Behaviors





# Health outcomes and behaviors

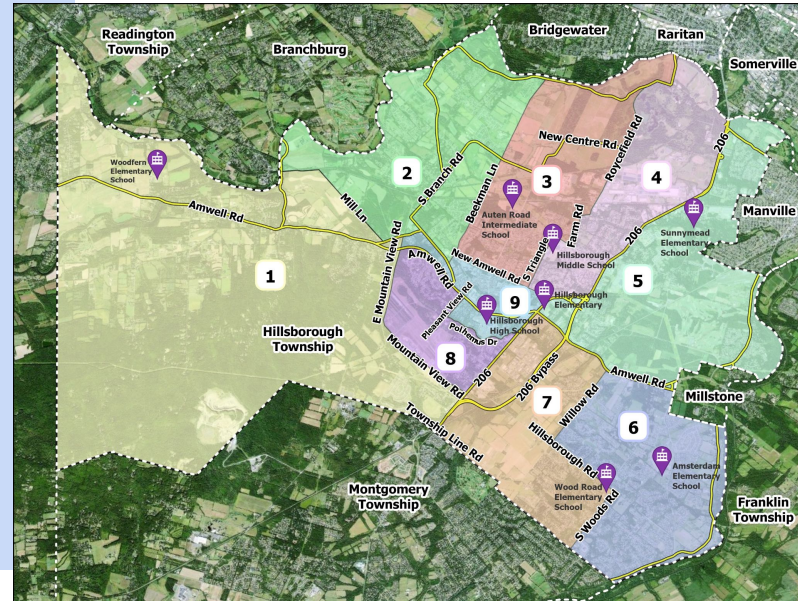
## Published Statistics

Hillsborough has better health statistics than state/national comparisons for most indicators. However, here are some areas of concern:

- Health conditions
  - Diabetes (esp Regions 1, 4, 5)
  - Obesity (esp Region 4)
  - Mental health distress (esp Regions 4 & 9)
- Health outcomes
  - Heart Attack
  - Stroke
  - Lung cancer deaths
  - Life expectancy (esp Regions 2, 4, 5)
- Health behaviors
  - Physical inactivity (esp Regions 4, 5)

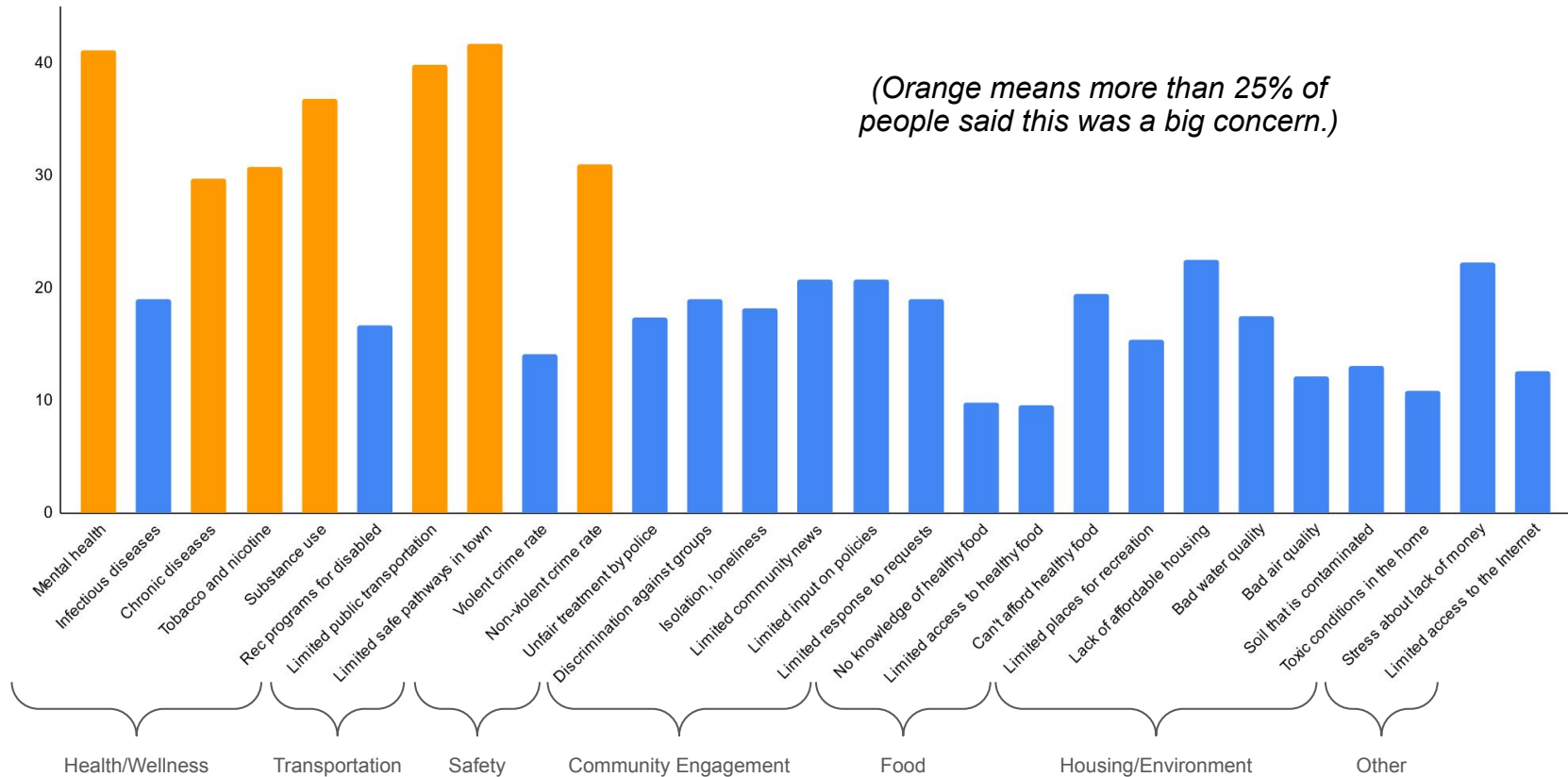
## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Mental health and substance use
- Chronic disease (diabetes, heart disease, cancer)



# Top concerns from survey\*

*(Orange means more than 25% of people said this was a big concern.)*



\*Survey question: Thinking about the health of Hillsborough residents, please rate each of these items as either: "Not an issue/concern", "Neutral/Not sure", "A big issue/concern."



# Mental Health



## Key Takeaway:

- Mental health concerns are common, and it is hard to access treatment services due to stigma and availability of providers.

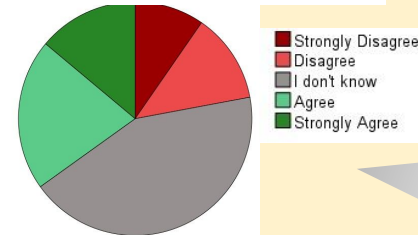
## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Focus groups
  - Lack of access to counseling/therapists
  - Stigma prevents people asking for help
- Interviews
  - Anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts becoming more common (esp in youth)
  - Lack of access to mental health services (insurance coverage, long waitlists, lack of diversity in counselors)
  - Stigma, hesitancy to seek help

## Survey Results

- 41% of respondents rated “Mental health issues” as a Big Concern (2nd highest concern)

A variety of mental health care programs and services are offered in town.



*“Wish there was...more affordable mental health services”*

*“The stigma of mental issues is real and many providers do not even take the ‘best’ insurance.”*

*“I would like...mental health services to be more clearly advertised in Hillsborough newspapers, in the library, and online.”*

*“Limited to no community mental health supports/ resources”*

Grey boxes are quotes from open-ended survey questions.

# Substance Use



## Key Takeaway:

- There are substantial concerns about substance use and vaping, especially by youth.

## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Focus groups
  - Vaping and other drug use
  - Easy access to substances
  - Illegal drugs in youth
  - Addiction to substances, pornography, and gambling
  - Need more prevention programs and more services for teenagers
- Interviews
  - Substance use trends are steady, moderate compared to other towns
  - Anti-drug efforts at school not taken seriously
  - Substance use among students dealing with anxiety and depression
  - Substance use contributes to physical unwellness

## Survey Results

- Rated “Big Concern” by respondents:
  - Substance use - 37% (4th highest concern)
  - Tobacco and Nicotine Use - 31% (6th highest concern)

*“School children are exposed to drugs and sudden increase in number of smoke/vape shops in every corner is a big concern.”*

*“Schools are becoming unsafe as more kids are smoking, vaping, etc”*

*“Vape shops need to be limited and monitored occasionally by HPD. They all sell to minors..every teen knows it..and they are going unchecked. This is a public health crisis for our minors.”*

# Chronic Disease



## Key Takeaway:

- Residents are concerned about and must manage conditions like diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, especially in certain regions.

## Survey Results

- Almost 30% of survey respondents rated “Chronic diseases” as a Big Concern (7th highest concern)

*“Promote health education and make people aware of the benefits of living a reasonable life and exercising moderately.”*

## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Focus groups
  - Need more education, health screenings, prevention programs for various health issues (e.g. cancer screenings)
  - Cancer and diabetes
  - Concerns about allergies and asthma due to allergens present in town
- Interviews
  - Many police calls for heart attacks, CPR, and difficulty breathing
  - Low income households have more chronic diseases, especially diabetes
  - Lack of physical activity in gym classes

# Community Conditions (“Social Determinants of Health”)

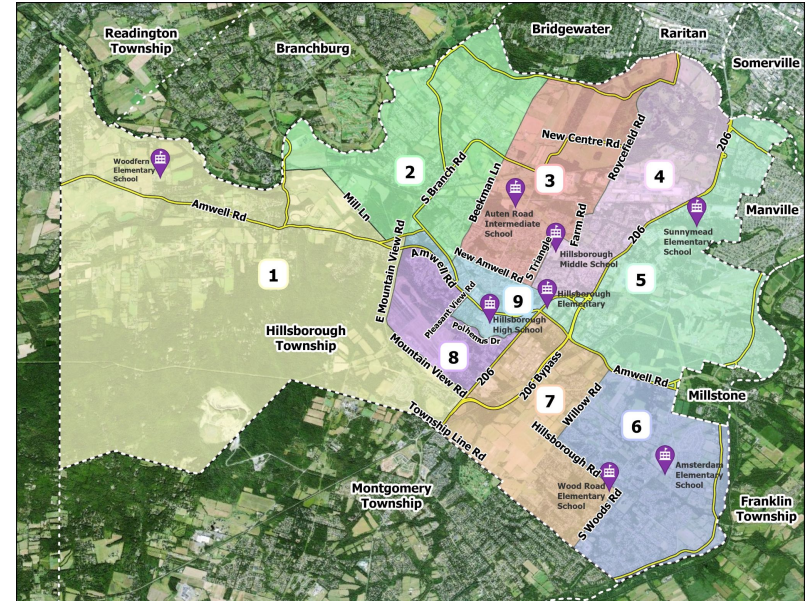


Social determinants of health are the nonmedical factors that influence health outcomes. They include the conditions in the environments where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life outcomes.

# Community Conditions: Published Statistics

Local data: Hillsborough has better health statistics than county/state/national comparisons for most indicators. However, here are some areas of concern:

- Transportation - Public transit options
- Economic
  - Poverty rate (esp Region 4)
  - Credit security index (esp Regions 1 & 4)
  - Income inequality (esp Regions 2, 3, 6, 7, 8)
  - Rent burden (esp Regions 1, 2, 7)
- Access to Care - Persons without health insurance (esp Regions 4 & 9)
- Education - HS graduation rate (esp Region 5)
- Environmental
  - Air Quality Index (esp Regions 5 & 6)
  - Scrap metal facilities (esp Regions 4 & 5)
  - Radon tests
  - Lead exposure risk (esp Region 4)
  - Private well test results



# Top concerns among community conditions

- Public transportation
- Infrastructure
- Community Safety
- Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety
- Financial challenges
- Healthcare access
- Community engagement
- Communication about resources
- Access to healthy food

# Public Transportation - Lack of Public Transit



**Key Takeaway:**

- Although most households have a car, most people want a convenient, affordable, efficient public transit option.

## Local Statistics

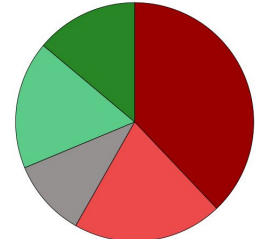
Indicator	Hillsborough	County
# of public transit options (bus lines, train or light rail stops)	Bus Lines: <i>SCOOT</i> - 3 buses Train/Light Rail: 0	Bus Lines: 7 Train/Light Rail: 11 stations
% of Households lacking private vehicles	3.07%	4.17%

- Central area is more positive in their views on transportation than East and West.

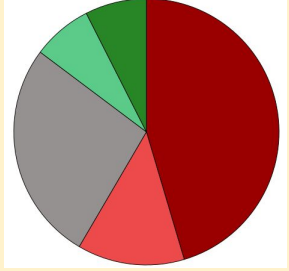
## Survey Results

- Respondents ranked transportation as a “Big Concern”
  - 43%: limited safe pathways to get around town (#1 response)
  - 39%: limited reliable public transportation (#3 response)

**Many stores, banks, markets, doctors or other places I need to go are within walking distance (within 1-2 miles) of my home.**



**Public transportation stops in my neighborhood at convenient times.**



■ Strongly Disagree  
■ Disagree  
■ I don't know  
■ Agree  
■ Strongly Agree

# Public Transportation - Lack of Public Transit



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Lack of public transportation was one of most common challenges mentioned
- Participants mentioned that adding public buses could help alleviate traffic/congestion concerns
- Seniors who don't feel comfortable driving anymore expressed interest in having convenient busing as an option for getting around town



*Seniors (in the South Asian community) often can't drive or don't have a car... this makes it hard for them to get to doctors' appointments. [South Asian focus group]*

*Transportation is a big issue, can't get to 206 from Westering, there are no busses that service this area... Maybe the SCOOT could expand its route to include us. There needs to be better outreach about SCOOT stops and hours. [Westering focus group]*

*"A public transportation system that runs every 15 minutes, such as trams or buses, is essential."*

*"If don't have a car - getting around next to impossible. Unless you have money for Uber."*

Grey boxes are quotes from focus groups and/or interviews.



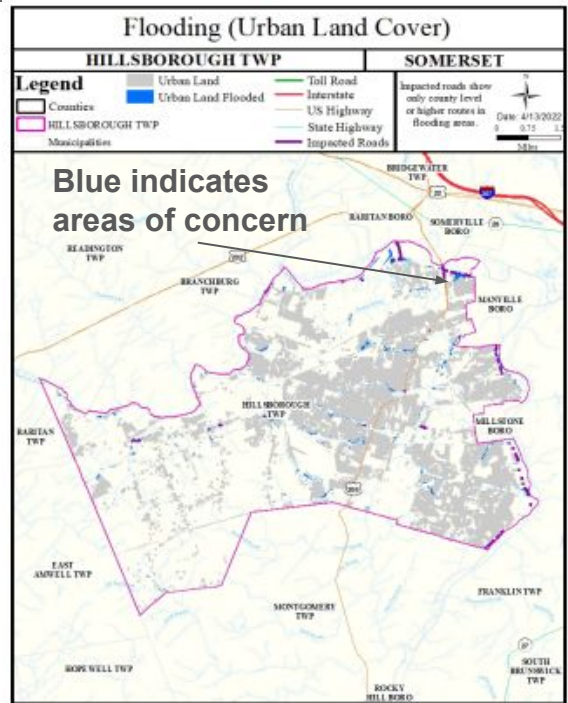
# Infrastructure - Flooding Concerns



**Key Takeaway:**

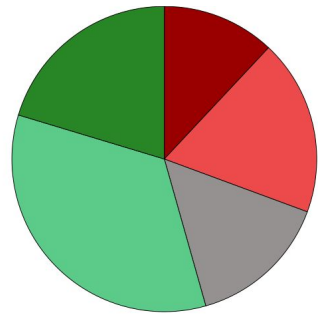
- Flooding is a major concern as roadways become impassable and residents feel trapped and in danger.

## Local Statistics



## Survey Results

**Streets and homes in my neighborhood (within 1-2 miles) are safe after storms, with no flooding.**



- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- I don't know
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

*"Flooding is an increasing issue. More attention should be paid to streams, retention basins, wetlands, etc.."*

*"Also, last year when we had all those flash floods in Hillsborough, the town wasn't prepared at all."*

*"Manage flooding instead of building in flood zones."*

# Infrastructure - Flooding Concerns



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Flooding and environmental conditions cause stress and isolation
- Concerns about flooding at schools and adjacent fields
- A general feeling that residents/ community pulls together during times of flooding/crisis, but want more of a plan for how to deal with these issues long-term
- Many residents mentioned Hurricane Ida and the havoc it wreaked - ruined basements, having to move, losing possessions, etc.



*I had to move out my senior year when Ida hit - it totally affected my schoolwork. [18-25 year old focus group]*

*Most of the calls for flooding are in ...Dukes Parkway East, River Road, and Clawson Ave / South Branch Road. [Chief McMahon]*

# Infrastructure - Warehouses

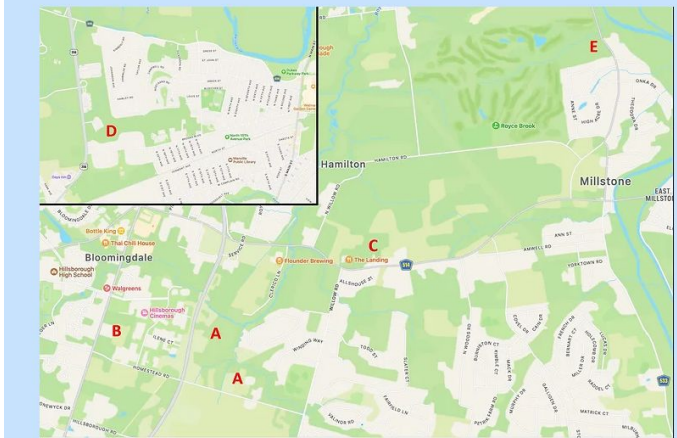


## Key Takeaways:

- There are many concerns about the potential building of warehouses, which may bring trucks to neighborhoods, causing noise, road damage, pollution, etc.

## Local Map

The location of the proposed warehouse projects is shown below.



## Survey Quotes

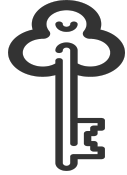
*“The increased possibility of warehouses will increase traffic and pollution having a negative impact on the community.”*

*“We are looking at 7 large warehouses in zones that allow warehouses. The Master Plan and zoning ordinances should have been updated earlier.”*

*“Don’t build warehouse in residential areas!”*

*“Proposed large warehouses will decrease traffic safety, increase air pollution, increase noise pollution, and increase flooding.”*

# Community Safety



## Key Takeaways:

- Although Hillsborough has low reported crime rates, residents feel less safe, with reports of harassment.
- Most people do not know where to get help or where to go in an emergency.
- Bikers and walkers don't feel safe or encouraged due to road conditions and lack of walker/biker infrastructure.

## Local Statistics

Indicator	Hillsborough	County
Crime rate	512.6 crimes per 100,000 people	929.2 crimes per 100,000 people

## Survey Results

- 31% of survey respondents rated "Non-violent crime rate" as a Big Concern (5th highest concern)

*"Crime is on upswing and will only get worse."*

*"I have heard high school kids walking to and from school have encountered bad characters in car following them or troubling them. I used to take long walks within 1 to 2 miles of my neighborhood but lately don't feel safe."*

*"Lately, not feeling as safe as I did years ago. Too many car break-ins and home burglaries."*

# Community Safety



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Lack of safety (physical safety or not being able to be who you are)
- Safety concerns on streets
- Road infrastructure not built for pedestrians or cyclists
- Lack of sidewalks
- Vehicle and pedestrian accidents
- Dangerous conditions for students walking to school (especially in inclement weather like cold, rain, or snow)

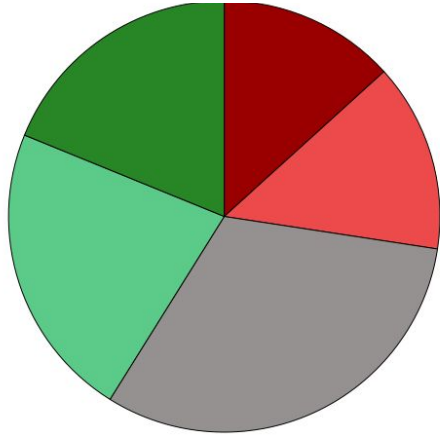
*We've had lots of problems with kids knocking on windows, harassing neighbors. It's a big problem. [Focus Group]*

# Community Safety

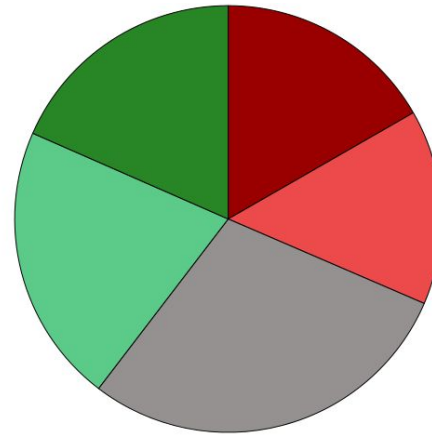


## Survey Results

I know where to go for emergency shelter during an emergency. For example, during severe storms, floods or fires.



I know the evacuation route that I could take out of my neighborhood during an emergency.

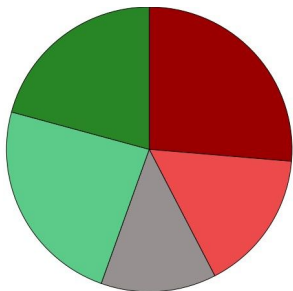


# Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety

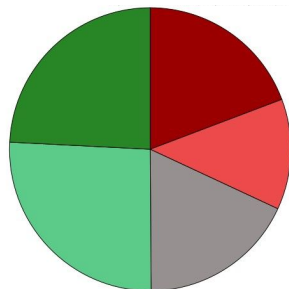


## Survey Results

There are safe sidewalks and crosswalks on most of the streets in my neighborhood.



There are places to bike in my neighborhood that are safe from traffic.



Strongly Disagree  
Disagree  
I don't know  
Agree  
Strongly Agree

*"I would like to see more bicycle lanes ... the main thoroughfares in Hillsborough and ...more police presence along these new bike lanes to educate drivers of the law."*

- Central and Millstone/Other areas are more positive in their views of town walkability than the East and West sides of town

*"Lack of sidewalks along many roads and in many neighborhoods. Where there are sidewalks, in many places they are often very uneven from panel to panel, creating tripping hazards and making them difficult or impossible to use by those with mobility aids, e.g. wheelchair users.... There is a lack of separated/protected bike infrastructure."*

*"Kids don't have a safe way to walk to school. There is no school bus within 2 miles... no crossing guards... no option of public transportation. Our kids safety is not taken into consideration."*

# Economic Stability



## Key Takeaways:

- Although Hillsborough is a relatively wealthy town, there are residents who struggle with making ends meet.
- Housing and childcare costs are a concern, especially in certain regions.

## Published Statistics

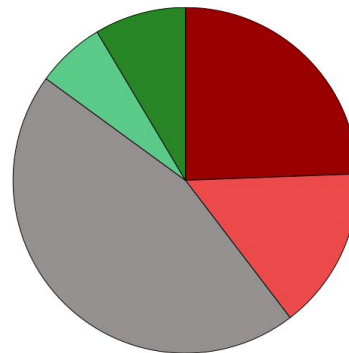
Indicator	Hillsborough	County
Poverty rate in Children	1.7% (Region 5 = 3.7%)	5.9% (County)
Credit Insecurity Index (limited access to credit)	8.6% Region 1 - 16.4% Region 4 - 16.7%	20.2% average across all City Health Dashboard cities
Income inequality	41.1 (on a scale of -100 to 100, 0 indicates equality)	-2 average across City Health Dashboard cities
Rent burden (% of households where ≥30% of income is spent on rent)	48.1% Region 2 - 100% Region 1 - 91.1% Region 7 - 65.5%	50.3% average across City Health Dashboard cities

## Survey Results

*"If it was a good place to live, then there would be programs for housing affordability and rent control."*

*"With the cost of everything going up, some people have to choose food over letting their kids have healthy outlets for physical and mental exercise."*

**People in my neighborhood (within 1-2 miles) can get free or low-cost child care when they need it.**



■ Strongly Disagree  
■ Disagree  
■ I don't know  
■ Agree  
■ Strongly Agree



# Economic Stability



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- High cost of living
- Lack of affordable housing, high rent
- Costs keep increasing
- Families stress about financial issues
- People coming to Hillsborough for schools but struggling with lifestyle costs
- Parents struggle to afford various necessities
- Cost of recreation programs leads to families being left out
- Access to financial resources and information

*It took my family 3 or 4 years to get placed in affordable housing after being on a wait list... we had to move multiple times and it was super stressful for my Mom. [18-25 year old Focus Group]*

*We just moved here last year and it was really hard to find a place we could afford... There also aren't enough good-paying job opportunities in town, like in government. [South Asian Focus Group]*

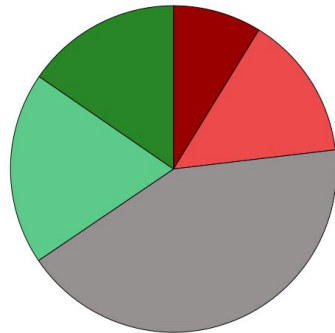


## Key Takeaways:

- Access to healthcare can be challenging due to costs, difficulties navigating insurance, transportation, and availability of providers.

## Survey Results

**There are free or low-cost health and wellness programs in town. For example, classes on nutrition, smoking cessation, weight management.**

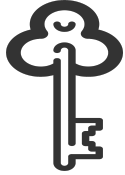




## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Focus groups
  - Access to affordable healthcare for uninsured
  - Change in medical access via computers, lack of computer literacy
  - Costs of healthcare, like doctor's visits and prescriptions
  - Some people don't have insurance, or no providers are in-network, and those that are very far with no transportation available. Many Hillsborough doctors do not take Medicaid/Medicare.
  - How much does Medicare cover for you
- Interviews
  - It is difficult to navigate the complexities of health insurance
  - Difficulties arising from socioeconomic status and finding transportation to receive care
  - Financial issues, what insurance doesn't cover of health care bills
  - Nightmare to gain access to mental health providers
  - Trouble accessing medications; we need to get rid of the barriers.

# Community Engagement



## Key Takeaways:

- Community engagement was a common topic in focus groups and interviews.
- Concerns include lack of connection and support, lack of representation of diverse groups, and a desire for more events and programming.

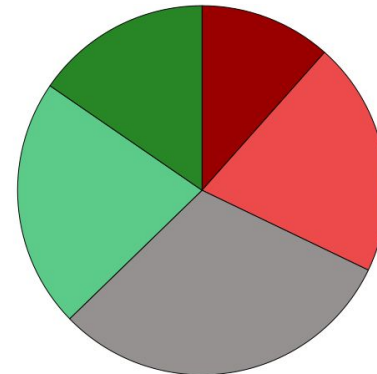
## Survey Results

*"It would be nice to have multicultural events in town."*

*"We need a community center."*

*"There is a lack of diversity on boards and commissions."*

**There are free or low-cost cultural events (art shows, concerts, street fairs) held in town that people can enjoy.**



■ Strongly Disagree  
■ Disagree  
■ I don't know  
■ Agree  
■ Strongly Agree

# Community Engagement



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Engagement
  - Relationships and community connections, residents depending on each other for support
  - Lack of cohesion and engagement in the community
  - Feelings of exclusion, isolation, loneliness, esp among seniors
  - Size of the town and lack of a common area make accessibility a challenge
- Diversity
  - Language and cultural barriers; lack of translation services and English classes
  - Lack of representation and voice for certain communities
  - Create a diversity commission
  - Increase resources for underrepresented groups
- Events and programming
  - Desire for meaningful and inclusive programming
  - Inclusive and low-cost youth programs
  - Few attend existing township programs, apathy
  - Need better gathering places

# Communication about Resources



## Key Takeaways:

- Residents are looking for better communication about community resources and services. Many do not know about existing programs, resources, and services.

## Published Statistics

Indicator	Hillsborough	County
Households with Internet access	94%	94%

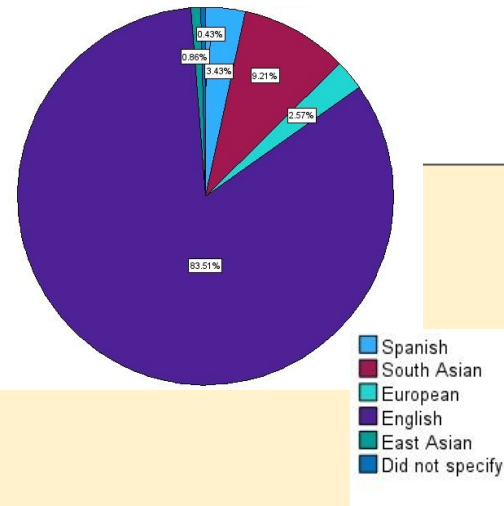
## Survey Results

*“Connecting people with information may be most important for wellbeing of community.”*

*“Need more wellness awareness like social media, newspapers, local tv news.”*

*“I would like food pantries and mental health services to be more clearly advertised in Hillsborough newspapers, in the library, and online.”*

## LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME



# Communication about Resources



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Lack of awareness of available resources
- Difficulty in sharing information, especially to underrepresented groups
- Seniors (esp those who don't speak English) are often left out
- Need for more interpersonal and connected communication
- Better dissemination of information through various channels
- Increased awareness campaigns

- Good ways to reach people (in no particular order):
  - Emails
  - Flyers
  - Mailers
  - Newsletters
  - Social media
  - Short messages/videos
  - Website & online resources
  - Phone calls & community text messages, text message chains
  - Community outreach
  - Targeted outreach for the Spanish community through bodegas and word of mouth
  - Flyers/newspaper articles in the Indian supermarket
  - Email lists for specialized outreach to members with discounted fees

# Access to Healthy Food



## Key Takeaway:

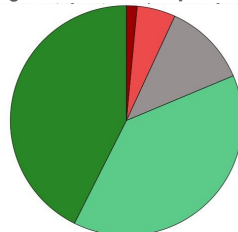
- Although survey data indicate people are able to access (by car only) and afford healthy food, there are sub-groups of residents who have difficulty getting to grocery stores and affording food.

## Local Statistics

Food Indicator	Hillsborough	County/State
Participation in National School Lunch Program	~10%	21.5%
# of local emergency food providers	2 (C.A.N. & Feeding Hands)	Multiple, depending on town

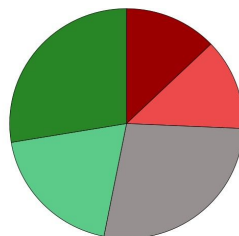
## Survey Results

I can find fresh fruits, vegetables, and healthy food choices in good condition at prices I can afford in town.

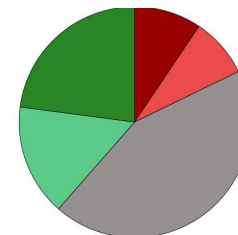


*"For some members of the population food, housing, transportation and jobs can be a big issue."*

I know where to go or what to do during an emergency if I need help getting food.



There is a food pantry in town that is open during times when I can go.



■ Strongly Disagree  
■ Disagree  
■ I don't know  
■ Agree  
■ Strongly Agree



# Access to Healthy Food



## Focus Group & Interview Input

- Strengths - Food pantries like the Community Assistance Network
- Challenges
  - Access to healthy food - cost, transportation
  - Food pantry - limited hours, hesitancy to use due to stigma
- It's nearly impossible to walk to get healthy food, but there are several grocery stores people can drive to
- If you don't have a car, it's very challenging to get healthy food

*Food pantry could deliver food or meals to the affordable housing areas... Maybe there could be a free community garden.*  
[Westering Apts Focus Group]

*School lunches do not have enough healthy options... kids won't eat it.*  
[South Asian Focus Group]



# Summary of Key Takeaways

## **Mental Health:**

- Mental health concerns are common, and it is hard to access treatment services due to stigma and availability of providers.

## **Substance Use:**

- There are substantial concerns about substance use and vaping, especially by youth.

## **Chronic Disease:**

- Residents are concerned about and must manage conditions like diabetes, cancer, and heart disease, especially in certain regions.

## **Public Transportation**

- Although most households have a car, most people want a convenient, affordable, efficient public transit option.

## **Infrastructure**

- Flooding is a major concern as roadways become impassable and residents feel trapped and in danger.
- There are many concerns about the potential building of warehouses, which may bring trucks to neighborhoods, causing noise, road damage, pollution, etc.

## **Community Safety:**

- Although Hillsborough has low reported crime rates, residents feel less safe, with reports of harassment.
- Most people do not know where to get help or where to go in an emergency.

## **Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety**

- Bikers and walkers don't feel safe due to lack of sidewalks and bike lanes.

## **Economic Stability:**

- Although Hillsborough is a relatively wealthy town, there are residents who struggle with making ends meet.
- Housing and childcare costs are a concern, especially in certain regions.

## **Healthcare Access:**

- Access to healthcare can be challenging due to costs, difficulties navigating insurance, transportation, and availability of providers.

## **Community Engagement:**

- Community engagement was a common topic in focus groups and interviews.
- Concerns include lack of connection and support, lack of representation of diverse groups, and a desire for more events and programming.

## **Communication about Resources:**

- Residents are looking for better communication about community resources and services. Many do not know about existing programs, resources, and services.






## **Access to Healthy Food:**

- Although survey data indicate people are able to access (by car only) and afford healthy food, there are sub-groups of residents who have difficulty getting to grocery stores and affording food.

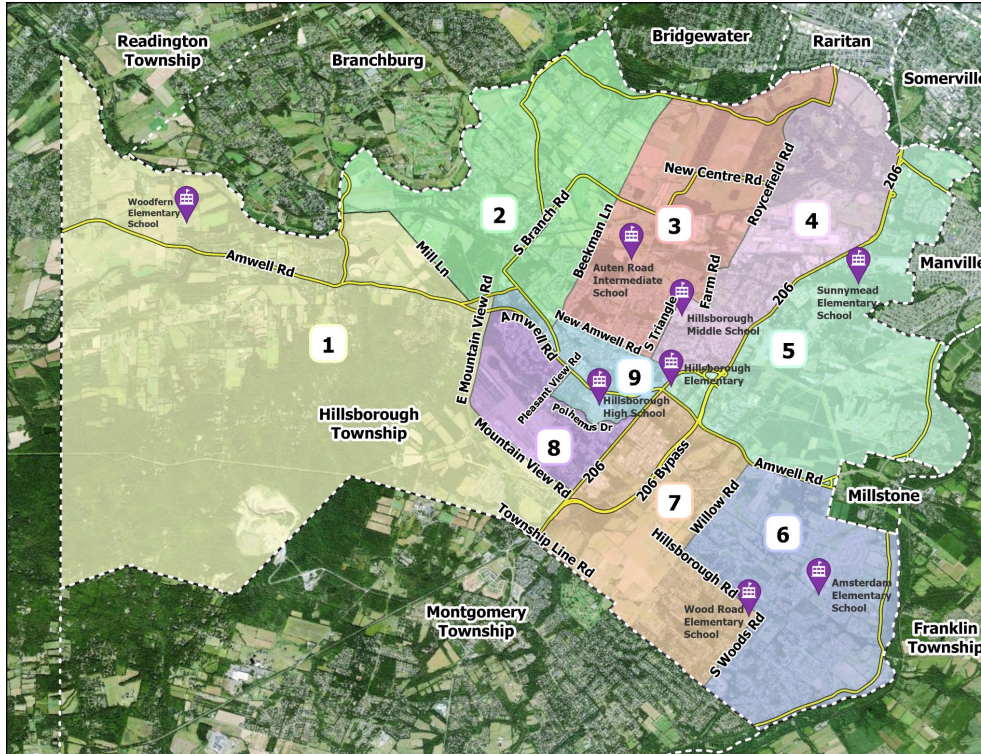
# Priority Populations



# Priority groups

 <p><small>Created by Shutterstock (Shutterstock.com)</small></p>	<b>Economic Disadvantage</b>	People with low income or limited assets, low-wage workers with multiple jobs, solo caregivers
 <p><small>Created by Shutterstock (Shutterstock.com)</small></p>	<b>Age Groups</b>	Senior citizens; infants and children and their parents, young adults (18-25)
 <p><small>Created by Shutterstock (Shutterstock.com)</small></p>	<b>Difficulty Accessing Information</b>	People with low literacy, people with limited English proficiency
 <p><small>Created by Shutterstock (Shutterstock.com)</small></p>	<b>People with Health Conditions</b>	People living with chronic health conditions, people living with mental illness or substance use, people with disabilities
 <p><small>Created by Shutterstock (Shutterstock.com)</small></p>	<b>Isolation (Cultural, Geographic, or Social)</b>	People without reliable transportation, immigrants and refugees, people in stigmatized groups (e.g. LGBTQ, racial/ethnic minorities, disabled)

# Priority regions in Hillsborough



Regions 1, 4, & 5 come up most frequently with worse scores on measures like:

- Poverty
- Credit security index
- Lacking health insurance
- HS graduation rate
- Life expectancy
- Diabetes
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Rent burden
- Potential environmental hazards
- Air quality index
- Lead exposure risk index

# Top Priority Areas for Action



1. Communication about Resources



2. Mental Health and Substance Use



3. Community Engagement



4. Chronic Disease



5. Access to Healthy Food

The Hillsborough Health Collaborative selected the top priorities based on the following criteria:

- **Significance:** How much does this issue affect health and wellness in Hillsborough? Also, how much does it affect our priority populations and cause health disparities?
- **Impact:** How much effect could we have on improving this issue? Consider short-term impact as well as more sustainable long-term impact.
- **Partnerships:** How many organizations or groups are currently working on this issue, or would be interested in collaborating?
- **Feasibility:** How feasible will it be to make progress on this issue, given the existing resources and political will?

If you have any questions or feedback, please reach out to the Hillsborough Health Collaborative:

[healthcollaborative@hillsborough-nj.org](mailto:healthcollaborative@hillsborough-nj.org)  
(908) 308-2299

