



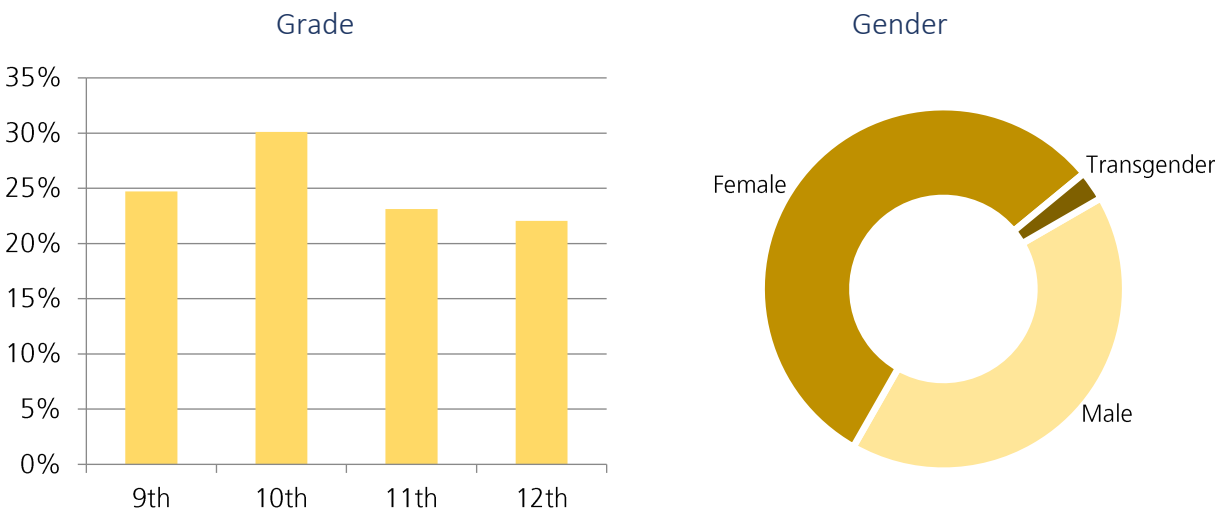
## Beaverton Gen Z Survey Results

June 28 2019

As younger generations enter young adulthood and are soon to be entering the workforce and housing market, understanding their preferences is essential to plan successfully for the future. Defined as the generation born between 1995 and 2015, they are the first group in mass to be native technology-users. Never before has anyone grown up in an age of instant and international connectivity with such ease. As such, much of their emerging opinions have been formed in ways that are different than older generations. As a unique and important cohort, it is beneficial for cities to stay in touch with how to include and incorporate their values into the planning process if they have any hopes of retaining them or enticing them to return.

### *Who Took the Survey?*

The 190 students who participated in the survey were fairly distributed along high school classes, 41 students were in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 43 in 11<sup>th</sup>, 56 in 10<sup>th</sup>, and 46 in 9<sup>th</sup> grade (some did not answer). Additionally, slightly above half of the respondents identified as female (55.8%) with the remaining students identifying as male (41.6%) or transgender (2.6%).



### *General Attitudes*

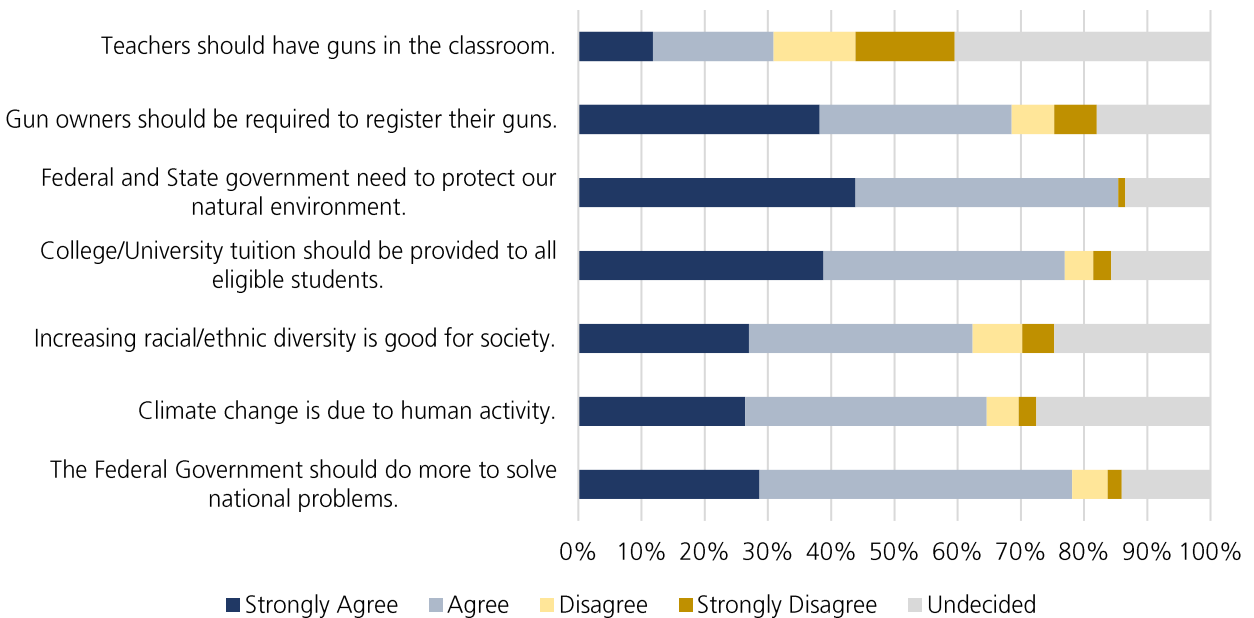
To determine where Beaverton's Generation Z population stands on national issues, students were given several statements on current national debates and asked to report their level of agreement. The three issues that received the most support among the students were "the federal and state government needs to protect our natural environment" (84.2%), "the federal government should do more to solve national issues" (70.2%), and "college/university tuition should be provided to all



eligible students” (69.6%). Interestingly, the statement “climate change is caused by human activity,” received 20% fewer “strongly agree” or “agree” votes than their top answer, but regardless of the source of climate change they still believe that the government should protect nature. The issues that have the greatest support among students indicate a preference for greater government investment and involvement, especially in relation to the natural environment and education. While students believe that “gun owners should be required to register their guns” (68.5%) they are less certain about whether “teachers should have guns in the classroom.” The statement received the most polarized response with students supporting the statement by a small margin and recording the highest percent of undecided students at 40.5%.

While local governments may feel that they do not have a role in influencing such large issues, it’s noteworthy that the values reported in this survey suggest Generation Z will likely follow Millennials to places that are tough on guns, protect nature, value education, and have a diverse population. And if the state doesn’t evolve with the youth, they will likely continue to leave. In the meantime, some of these issues can be addressed locally. Understanding the size of your carbon footprint, incorporating green policies into the local zoning ordinance, educating the public on how to reduce their emissions are ways the City can show that they are listening to the youth and progressing toward a greener future. Being an inviting place to live that embraces racial/ethnic diversity as a part of community development can also be spearheaded by the City. Sharing the results about guns in the classroom with the school district may open a larger discussion about how to keep students safe in the classroom.

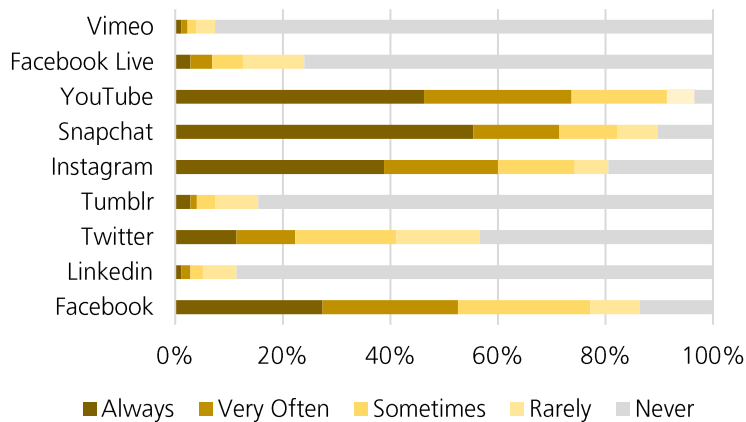
### General Attitudes on National Issues





## Social Media

### Social Media Preferences

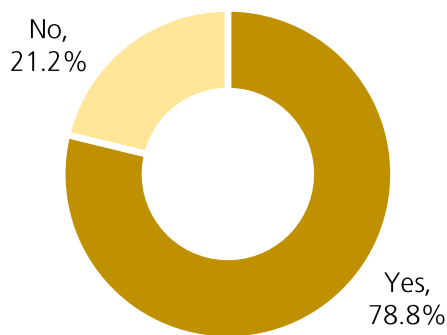


With the widespread prevalence of social media use, especially among Generation Z, communication techniques have to adapt to fit the digital landscape. In order to reach the youth, communities must embrace digital methods to broadcast their message. The top social media platforms that survey respondents “always” use are Snapchat, YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. What these

platforms have in common is visual-heavy, short messages that grab a user’s attention. It is worth investigating how to effectively communicate on social media aside from a city Facebook page.

## Beaverton Community

### Do you like living here?



The good news is that a large percentage (78.8%) of students enjoy living in Beaverton. To determine their stance on possible local issues, students were asked to respond to a series of statements. A majority of students (51.8%) agree that “it’s easy to find access sites to water-related recreation activities,” but also agree that “[Beaverton] needs a place that sells and/or rents recreation equipment (58.2%).” Another statement that had a majority support among the students is the

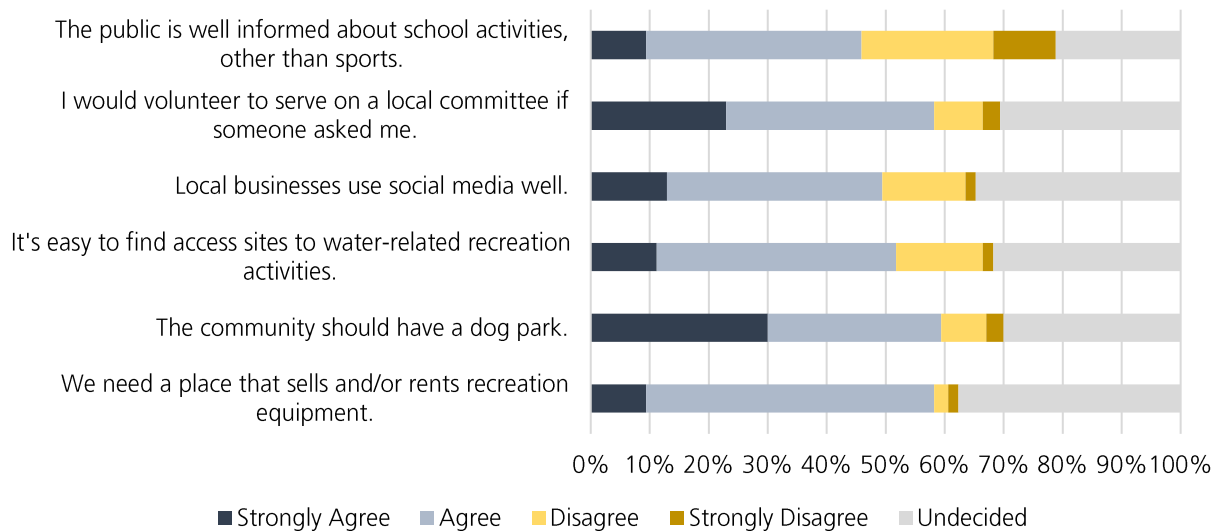
desire for a dog park in Beaverton (59.4%) – together these results show how important outdoor recreation is to youth who need somewhere to go that is low-cost.

Surprisingly, students also recorded that they would “volunteer to serve on a local committee if someone asked” (58.2%). This indicates that Beaverton’s Generation Z population wants to be involved in the community but is uncertain how to start. If it’s important to keep the youth in the community, inviting them to be on a decision-making board is a good first step.



It is notable that 29% of students reported that getting to and from destinations is a problem for them. Possibly because the family shares one car and members have conflicting schedules, and few alternatives exist outside of a personal vehicle—an obstacle to getting involved in local issues or finding and keeping a job.

### General Attitudes on Beaverton Area Issues

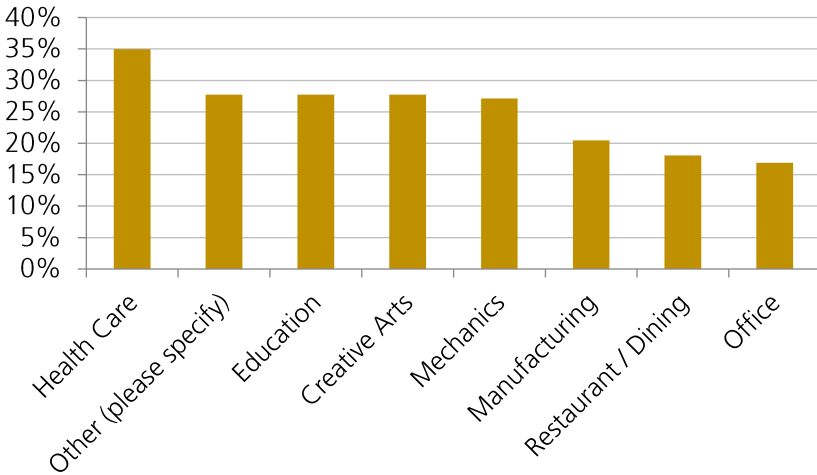


### Local Career Experiences

During high school, there are opportunities for students to visit local employers to see their daily operations and learn about the industry. However, between 53% to 62% of the students had not heard about this opportunity to visit non-manufacturing and/or manufacturing businesses, respectively. Half of the students who took the tour left with a favorable impression. These findings expose a missed opportunity in proactively promoting this experience to high school students and to track how effectively it retains youth. Alternatively, there is a cooperative education experience that gives academic credit for structured job experience in different fields. The students' selection indicates what fields interest them. Health care (34.9%) came in first, followed by creative arts tied with education and mechanics (27.7%). Aside from the listed options, student wrote several others in the open response: public safety/criminal justice, agriculture, construction, engineering, IT, among others.



## Opportunities for Co-op Education Experiences

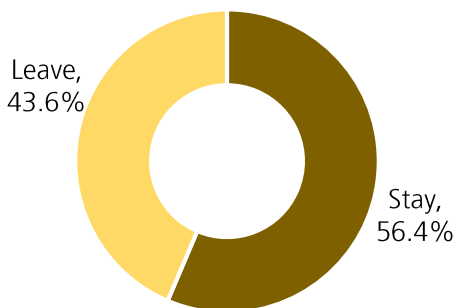


## Post-Graduation Career

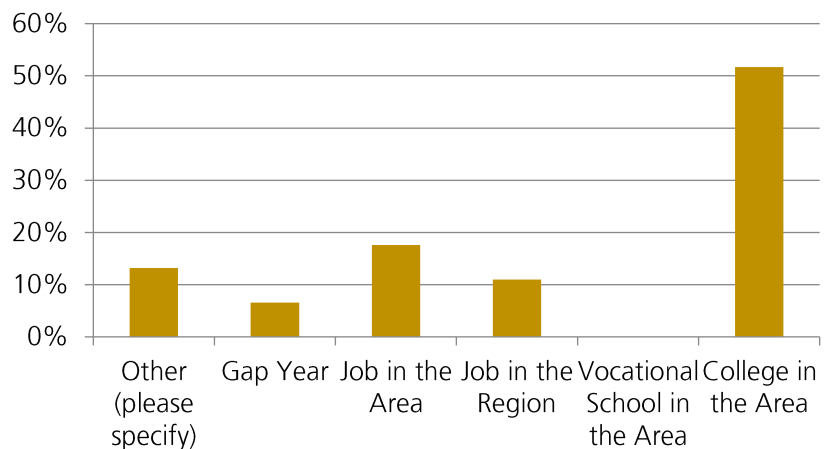
Students were asked what field they were considering after high school or college. "Other" was the most common response, followed by healthcare (17.9%), law enforcement (7.9%), and education and social services (7.3%). Only 6 students plan to join the military.

A majority of students plan to stay after high school graduation (56.4%). Of the roughly 44% that plan to stay in the community or close, over half of them still plan to attend college. The students that have decided to leave Beaverton are mostly going to a college or university in Michigan (63.4%), a small number are leaving the state for additional schooling, or plan to find work in the state but outside of the City. Their top school choices are University of Michigan, Central Michigan University, Michigan State University, and Mid Michigan Community College, but very few responded to which schools they would attend.

## After High School Plans

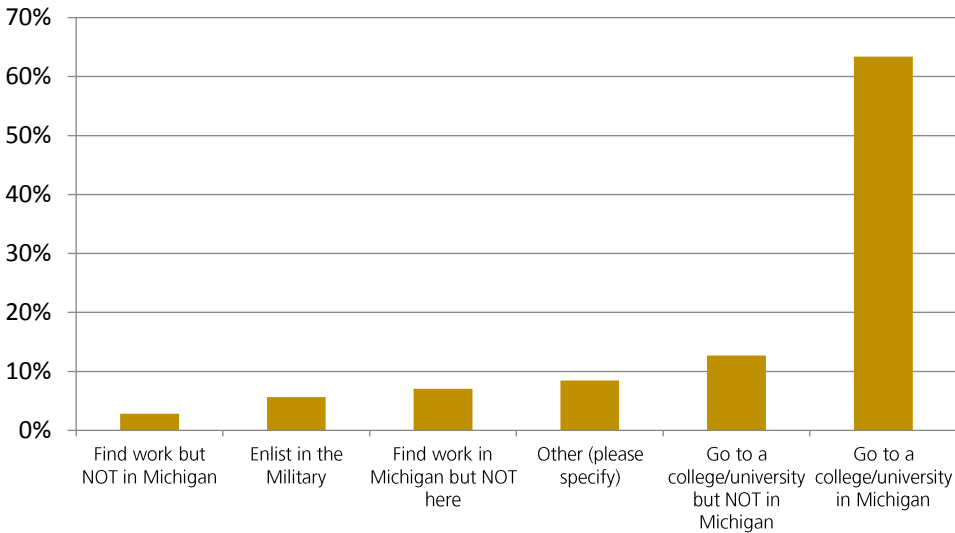


## Plan to Stay in the Community





### Plan to Leave the Community

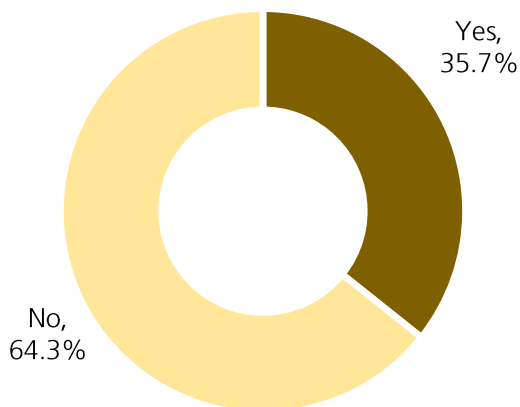


### Returning

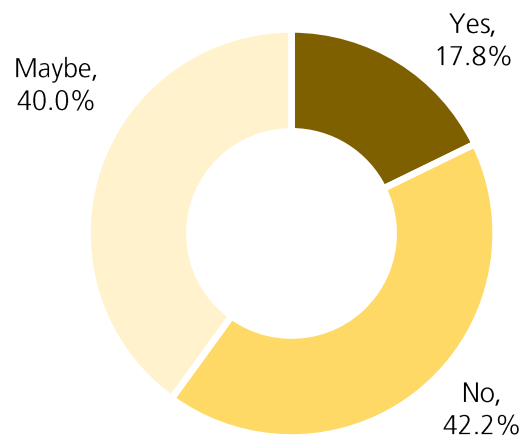
When asked if they plan to return to the area after college, 64.3% of them said “no.” The main reason for not wanting to return is simply a desire “to live elsewhere” (51.1%) but there

is also the perception that there are no jobs within their field or that their career goals cannot be realized in the Beaverton area (35.5%). For those that said they will return cited, “family” was the most common reason (84%). When asked if they would come back later in life, as opposed to directly after college, the results were more favorable. A smaller percentage said no (42.2%) but a greater percentage selected maybe (40.0%). Similarly, those who expressed a desire to return later in life would do so to be near friends and family (73.1%) and/or to retire (15.4%), but less commonly for “affordable housing and the cost of living.”

### Return After College

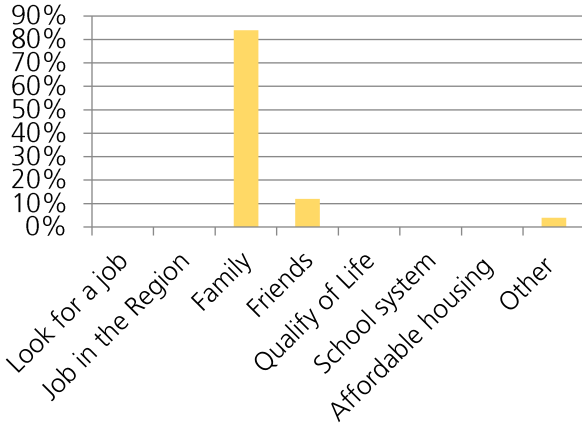


### Return Later in Life





### Reasons for Returning After College



### Reasons for Returning Later in Life

