Calistoga Community Conversation

November 2019

Executive Summary

The Napa County Health and Human Services Agency partnered with UpValley Family Centers, the Calistoga Joint Unified School District and the City of Calistoga to host a community conversation on November 21, 2019. In small groups, community members discussed their experiences living and working in Calistoga and recorded their thoughts on color-coded sticky notes. At the end of the meeting, each small group shared the highlights of their conversations with the whole group.

Additionally, community members were invited to provide feedback, via a written community survey, about housing, Parks & Rec programs, transportation, types of new businesses they would like to have in Calistoga, and anything else on their minds. Spanish-English interpretation was provided within the small groups and throughout the meeting. Findings from the facilitated discussion and the survey are included in this report and key results summarized below.

Small Group Discussions

Approximately **94** people attended the Community Conversation.
Opportunities for Feeling Included: Community members identified participating in community events and school activities, volunteering in the community, going to local businesses, and the friendly feeling in Calistoga as things that make them feel included. Community events included parades, concerts in the park, youth sports, community meetings like this one, and more.
Barriers to Feeling Included*:* The top three barriers to feeling included were lack of affordability, especially in housing, language barriers, and limited options in entertainment, especially for youth.
Personal Actions to Make Calistoga Welcoming: Community members' most common responses to what they could do to improve Calistoga were being friendly to locals and tourists, and being involved in community events as volunteers, participants, and organizers.

Community Survey

We collected **56** responses to the written Community Survey.
Housing: Community members mentioned affordability as part of their top housing concern in 93% of responses. The other major theme was a mismatch between the type of housing that was available and the type of housing needed by locals, especially for working families.
Parks & Recreation activities were popular among respondents, with 71% of people saying that yes, they or a family member participate in Parks & Rec programs. The pool was the most commonly used program, mentioned in 43% of responses, followed by sports/fitness activities, using park spaces, and attending Concerts in the Park.
Transportation: The top transportation concerns were about limited public transportation and a desire for infrastructure and safety improvements, especially for walking and biking. Traffic and affordability were also concerns.
New Businesses: Many community members wanted to see more food and restaurant options, and more entertainment and activity options, especially those that are affordable and family-friendly.
Anything Else: The most common responses were that participants loved Calistoga and appreciated the opportunity to come together as a community to discuss these issues. People also voiced additional concerns or wishes that did not fit into the previous survey questions.

Introduction

In November 2019, UpValley Family Centers, the Calistoga Joint Unified School District, and Napa County Health and Human Services Agency partnered to host a Community Conversation to discuss what feeling included in the community looks like, along with other issues impacting Calistogans. This Conversation continued a discussion that began in February 2016 at a Community Town Hall, where residents shared their thoughts about what already made Calistoga a great place to live and their hopes for making it even better.

To ensure everyone could participate, Spanish-English interpretation was provided throughout the evening. Additionally, factsheets about Calistoga and the written Community Survey were provided in English and Spanish (see Appendix.)

Methods

Data Collection

Community members recorded their responses to the small group discussion questions on color-coded sticky notes, writing only one thought per sticky note. Over the course of the evening, these written responses were collected, roughly grouped by theme, and placed on a large board where anyone participant could review them.

Analysis

The responses to the small group discussion questions and the responses to the written survey questions were collected and copied into Word documents. Spanish responses were translated into English. These documents were then uploaded into Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis program, and marked with codes to identify topics discussed by community members. Responses were often marked with more than one code. For example, a response could be labelled with *lack of affordability* and *housing*, or with *friendliness* and *local businesses.* At least two people agreed on the codes used to mark each response. The number of times codes were used and which codes were used together were analyzed to find the most common responses for each question. Excel was then used to create charts of the most common responses.

Results for Facilitated Discussion Questions

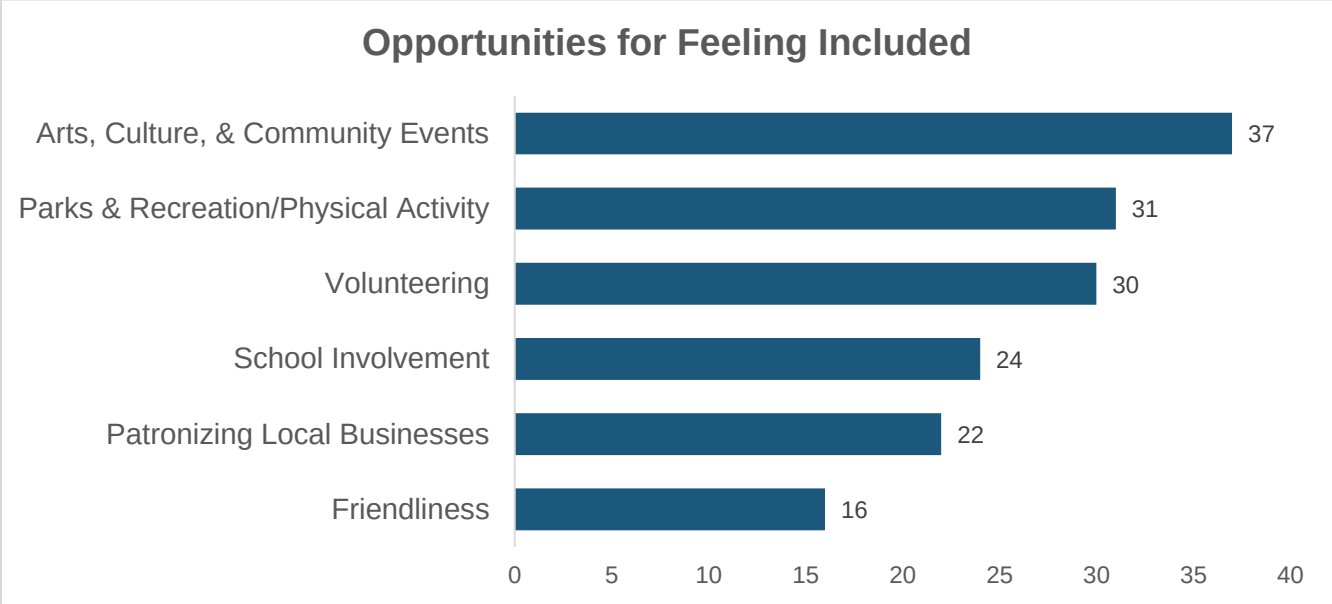
Approximately 94 people attended the Community Conversation and participated in the small group discussions. Some responses are quoted in this report to provide a sampling of the most common themes.

Results for Survey Questions

Additionally, 56 participants answered at least one question of the written Calistoga Community Survey. Because all questions were optional, the total number of responses per question varied. Where appropriate, responses to the final question—"Is there anything else on your mind that you would like to share?"—were analyzed with responses to the survey questions on the same topic. For example, if respondents expressed a housing concern in the final question that was different from their answer to the earlier housing question, those responses were analyzed along with the other responses about housing concerns.

Discussion Question 1: Opportunities for Feeling Included in Calistoga

Community Conversation participants filled out about 170 sticky notes in response to the question, ***"What are the things you do or experience that help you feel like you are part of our community?"*** Overwhelmingly, the most common responses were attending, participating in, and volunteering for community events and school activities.



Participants listed many events, including Concerts in the Park, parades, city council meetings, the fair, Calistoga Wine Experience, fundraisers and other special events.

> "I feel I'm part of the community when I attend [events] like [the] Christmas parade or 4th of July."
>
> "Community gatherings like First Friday downtown."
>
> "Attending Community Events: Tractor Parade, Holiday Fair, Halloween."
>
> "What makes me a part of the community is that I go to events like the Fair or recreational events."

Community members said 31 times that volunteering made them feel included in the community. Participants volunteered their time at the mobile home park, at church, for community events, and through community organizations like the Chamber of Commerce, Soroptimists, Coalition for Community Leaders, Calistoga Community School Initiative, the Family Center and others.

> "Being a volunteer at event[s] like this one."
>
> "Ser voluntario en el Family Center cuando hay eventos y soy promotora. [Being a volunteer in the Family Center when there are events and I am a promotora.]"
>
> "Volunteering in nonprofit to create community activities."

Many people felt included because of involvement in school classrooms, in youth sports, school music programs, after school programs and school meetings.

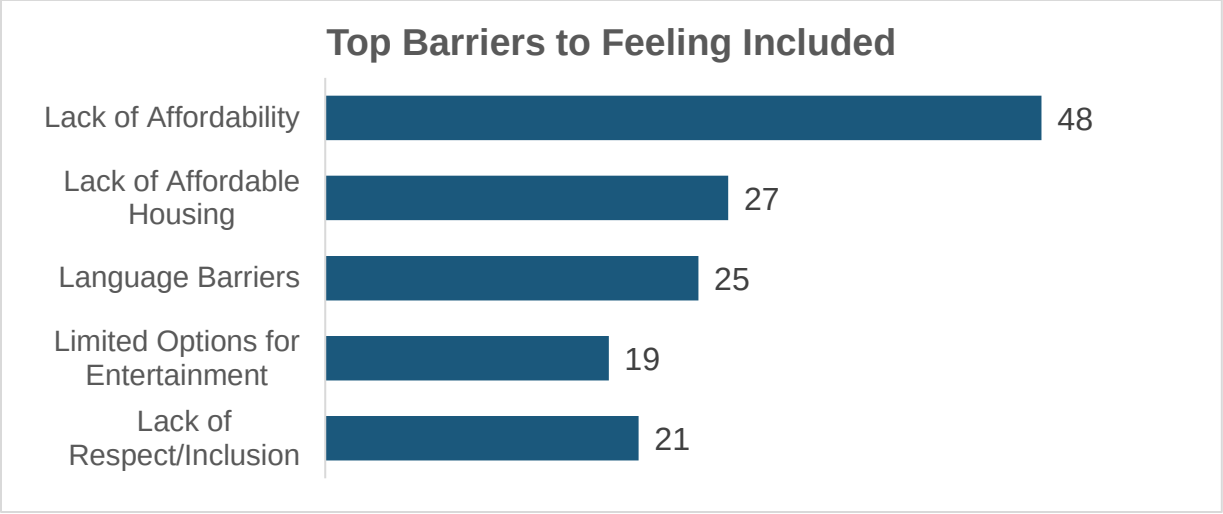
> "[I] participate in school activities, [like] games, open house, concerts."
>
> "Volunteering for the Calistoga Junior-Senior after school program."
>
> "Asistir a las Juntas de la Escuela. [Attending school meetings.]"
>
> "Participating in inclusive activities like kids' swim lessons."
>
> "Coaching sports."

Community members named local shops and restaurants as places where they felt included, particularly the Farmer's Market and CalMart. Also mentioned were Ace Hardware, Calistoga Roastery, the Post Office and spas. Participants appreciated that Calistoga is a friendly town.

> "Going to CalMart is usually a social event."
>
> "Share with 'conocidos' and friends when we run into each other on the street/in the shops."
>
> "Shops and restaurants are open + supported/owned by locals."
>
> "Constantly seeing familiar faces around town or [at] the grocery store & being welcoming."
>
> "Que mucha gente me conoce y me saluda amablemente. [That many people know me and greet me kindly.]"
>
> "I have noticed this town is very friendly! [Tourists], community, businesses all share a warmth."
>
> "Everyone is friendly!"

Discussion Question 2: Barriers to Feeling Included in Calistoga

Community Conversation participants filled out approximately 150 blue sticky notes in response to the question, ***"What are barriers to feeling like you are part of our community?"*** The most commonly mentioned barrier in Calistoga was ***lack of affordability***, named 48 times. Participants also identified ***language barriers*** and ***limited options for entertainment*** as important concerns.



Lack of affordability was a concern for many participants living and working in Calistoga, including public transportation, special events, and local shops and restaurants. ***Lack of affordable housing*** was the most common affordability issue, named 27 times.

Participants cited ***language barriers*** as an obstacle to feeling like part of their community 25 times. Some participants pointed to their own or the community's lack of language proficiency—in either English or Spanish—as creating barriers to interpersonal communication. As one participant put it, "[It] seems like we have 2 Calistogas separated by language & culture." Many expressed ideas for countering this barrier, including more classes in English and Spanish, more multicultural and bilingual events, and more translation. People also saw an impact to the community as a whole when there was a lack of translation available at community events, such as council meetings.

Participants identified ***limited options for entertainment*** 24 times, naming lack of arts, cultural activities, events, dining, and other entertainment options as creating barriers to feeling included in the community. A lack of activities available specifically for youth was cited 9 times. ***Limited options for entertainment*** combined with ***lack of affordability*** increased barriers to participating in the community by limiting access to collective meeting spaces, like restaurants.

> "[A barrier] that make[s] me not feel a part of the community is the lack of youth opportunities Calistoga offers."
>
> "[A barrier to feeling included is] limited low cost restaurants to hang out with friends, meet new friends."

Discussion Question 3: Personal Actions to Make a Welcoming Community

In response to being asked***, "What is one thing you personally can do to help make Calistoga a welcoming community?"***, participants returned nearly 80 responses on yellow sticky notes. Community members expressed a commitment to being friendly, participating in community events, volunteering, increasing Spanish/English communication, and more. Some examples are listed below.

Being Friendly

"Ser amable con los turistas. [Be friendly with tourists.]"

"Continue being a welcoming + friendly Calistogan to both [tourists] + those who live here."

"Hacer amistades nuevas. [Make new friendships.]"

"Welcome new people to the community."

Participating in Community Events

"Crear mas eventos multiculturales. [Create more multicultural events.]"

"Colaborar en eventos. [Collaborate on events.]"

"Asistir a las juntas de la ciudad para estar informados. [Attend city meetings to be informed.]"

"Lead resilience workshops to help the whole community to recover + strengthen after trauma."

"Create events: weekly or occasionally that bring people together [and] focus on teens."

Volunteering

"I can volunteer for community events."

"Continue to volunteer in [different] ways & venues!"

"Start to volunteer soon!"

Increasing Spanish/English communication

"Learn to speak Spanish."

"Do a Spanish version of our website."

"Start a language exchange "intercambio" group."

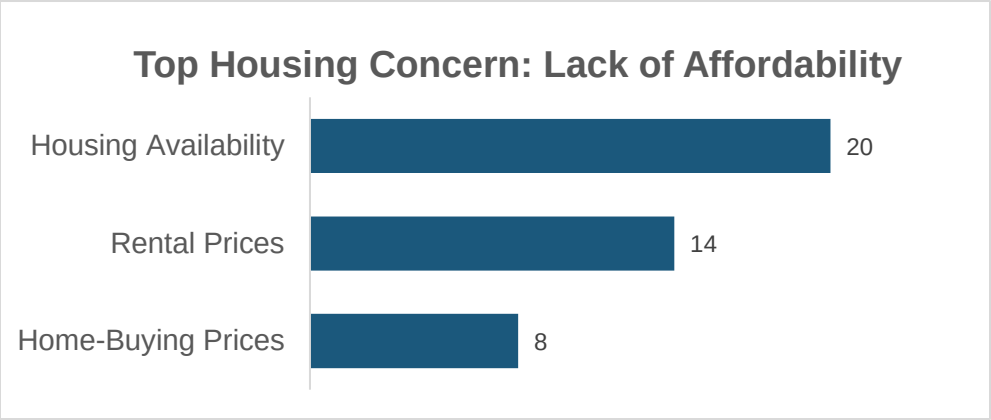
More

"Organize block party neighbors reunion."

"Be more accepting of other's opinions by listening more, talking less!"

Survey Question 1: Biggest Housing Concerns

Participants were asked, ***"What is your biggest concern around housing in Calistoga?"*** Out of 61 responses about housing, the biggest concern was ***lack of affordability***, named 52 times. More specifically, 20 responses were about concern over not enough affordable housing available in Calistoga, 14 were concerned about ***rental prices***, and 8 were concerned about ***home-buying prices***. People also mentioned that the kind of ***housing available*** is for tourism or second homes and not the kind of housing needed by people living and working in Calistoga.



"[I]t continues to get more expensive + not affordable/not enough housing in general."

"[I]t is far too expensive for most residents and there is a lack of inventory."

"We need enough affordable housing to allow the people that work here to live here."

"[L]as rentas están muy altas y las casas muy caras. [Rents are very high and houses very expensive.]"

"The cost. While I work here, I cannot afford to live here."

"#1 obstacle is cost & availability."

"[N]o workforce housing for middle income/lower middle income/rentals, buying, downsizing."

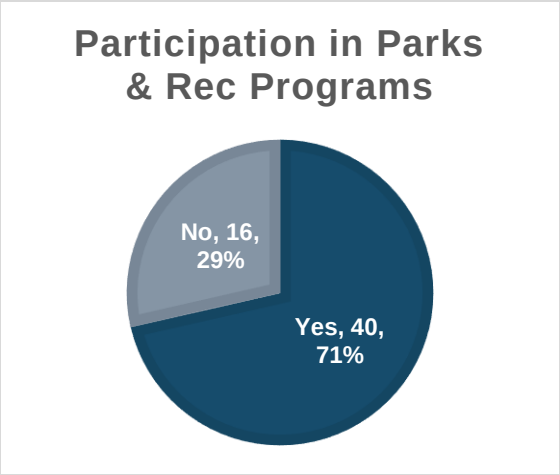
"Que es muy cara y muchos de nuestros vecinos se tienen que salir porque no pueden pagar por vivienda y menos comprar casa. [That it is very expensive and many of our neighbors have to leave because they can't pay for housing and less buy a house.]"

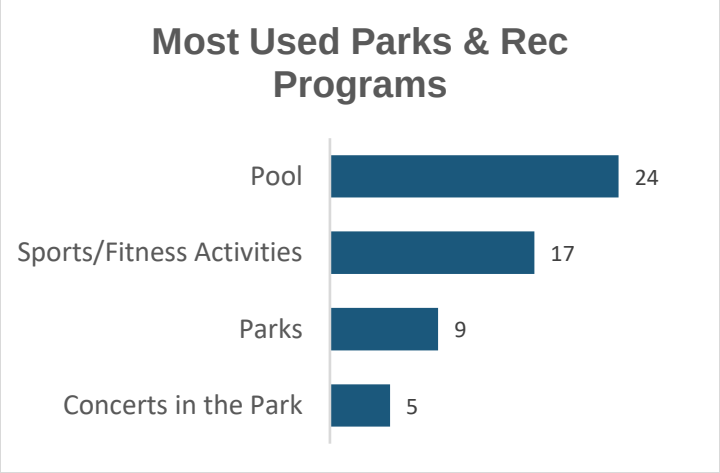
"[S]ingle family homes being used as second homes, weekend rentals – reduces housing for locals."

"[A]ffordable housing for local working people + seniors."

Survey Question 2: Participation in Parks & Recreation Programs

When asked ***"Do you or your family members participate in Parks & Rec programs?"***, 71% of survey takers said ***yes*** while 29% said ***no***.





The most popular Parks & Rec program was the ***pool*** and pool-related activities, named 24 times by participants. Many people said they or their children participated in ***sports and fitness activities.*** And several mentioned going to ***parks*** and ***concerts in the park***. Concerts in the Park was also mentioned 8 times in response to the discussion question about things that make people feel included.

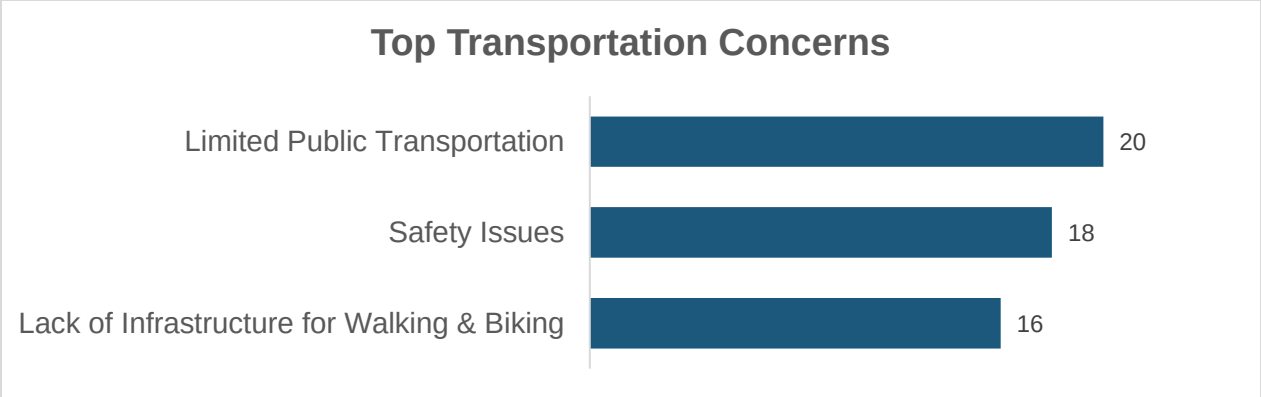
> "Yes – community pool, swim lessons."
>
> "Yes – Swim lessons, Tennis, Soccer, Zumba."
>
> "Yes – sports and public pool."
>
> "Yes – musica en el parque, eventos deportivos [music in the park, sporting events] ."
>
> "Yes – Adult Softball."
>
> "Yes – anything age appropriate – offer some on weekends for younger ages."

The most common reason for not participating in programs was a lack of time, named by 6 survey takers, where the schedule of the programs did not work with their work schedules. A handful of people wanted to see more events, longer hours, and more public parks, with a few specific requests for a skate park or mountain bike park.

> "No – Most of the times they are on the weekend and we are most busy at the time."
>
> "No – work + family, lack of childcare."

Survey Question 3: Biggest Transportation Concerns

Out of 54 responses, survey takers named ***limited public transportation***, ***safety issues***, and ***lack of infrastructure for walking and biking*** most often in response to, ***"What is your biggest concern around transportation in Calistoga (including driving, walking, biking and public transit)?"***



People said ***limited public transportation*** options—both because of limited schedules and limited destinations—was their biggest transportation concern. Along with the cost, these limited options made it especially difficult for folks who did not have a car to get where they needed to go when they needed to.

> "There is a need for regular + well-scheduled public transportation to Santa Rosa."
>
> "Que no hay transporte para personas que no manejar para ir al hospital de Santa Helena. [That there isn't transportation for people who don't drive to go to the St. Helena hospital.]"
>
> "It's harder to get around because they close at a certain time and prevents us from doing what we want and have to be home or anywhere else at a certain time."
>
> "[N]o reliable shuttle."
>
> "[C]ost – [affordable] for locals, especially youth and seniors."

Many responses mentioned safety concerns, like a need for more street lighting, drunk or distracted drivers, and dangerous intersections.

> "[S]ome streets need more lighting or roads need to be fixed."
>
> "Drunk Drivers."
>
> "Dangerous 4 way stop intersection exiting Rancho de Calistoga."

Several participants wanted to see better conditions for ***walking and biking***. Some mentioned safety concerns, such as poor lighting or lack of sidewalks. Others wanted to see more space dedicated to biking, like bike lanes and bike racks.

> "[T]here needs to be more lighting/better lighting through out walking paths, [in] the loop."
>
> "Not having enough bike racks for [bicycles]; and not having bike lanes."

Survey Question 4: New Businesses Wishlist

A total of 49 responses were analyzed for the question, ***"What types of new businesses would you like to see in Calistoga?"*** Community members wanted to see more options in entertainment, more activities for kids, more family-friendly restaurants, overall more affordable options and more. Some responses are listed below.

Entertainment & Dining Options

"[M]ore activity business for kids to play."

"[B]owling, more good eats, more children friendly indoor places, indoor activities for all ages."

"[L]ower cost food places to go eat, meet friends – small movie theater!"

"[M]ore food options that are more affordable, movie [theater]."

"A place for the arts: [Cabarets], Dueling pianos, dance classes, etc."

"[A]ffordable restaurants, movie theater, activity center open to all ages."

"[C]ine [Movie theater]"

"senior center"
"I would love to see a new arcade place & a rec. center so that we can have a place to go when we are bored."

"Me gustaria ver una tienda de dulces Mexicanos o cosas de diferentes culturas. [I would like to see a Mexican sweets store or things of different cultures.]"

Affordable/Kid-Friendly Options

"[F]amily friendly restaurants(prices), variety store."

"Restaurantes o fuentes de comida accesible para [g]ente de bajos [ingresos]. [Restaurants or food sources that are accessible for people with low incomes.]"

"Family style (and price) restaurant, store selling things for kids, things for kids to do."

"[U]na tienda de comida barata. [An inexpensive food store.]"

"Cheap places to get food for kids when they get lunch. Also more clothes store for youngsters."

Focused on Locals

"[B]usinesses for our community, not tourists."

"[M]as negocios para el pueblo y no enfocarse solamente en el turismo. [More businesses for locals and not focusing only on tourism.]"

Survey Question 5: Anything Else

We asked, ***"Is there anything else on your mind that you would like to share?"*** Some of the responses to this question fit into one of the other four survey question topics and were analyzed in those responses. The remaining 29 responses covered many topics, and several survey takers expressed a love for Calistoga and gratitude for the evening's conversation.

> "Thank you for bringing us together – excellent conversations!"
>
> "All in all, this is a great town!"
>
> "[V]ery special that this community is interested in doing this exercise."
>
> "Keep bringing in locals to [communicate] on problem[s] they might be facing or that they think could be facing as a family."
>
> "I love Calistoga – don't let it become any more exclusive."
>
> "I'm proud of this event and I hope the ideas that come out of this are brought to fruition."

Others expressed concerns that did not fit into the previous survey questions, such as safety and accessibility of generators during PSPS events, lack of street lamps and how to prepare for a shooting.

> "[C]oncern about the divided community during PSPS – [with] some having electricity + others not. Cost of generators not accessible for some low income seniors. ALSO may not be a good idea to have so many generators going at once – pollution, danger."
>
> "[Q]ue hay muy poca iluminación en las calles. [That there is very little lighting in the streets.]"
>
> "[C]omo podemos prepararnos para un tiroteo. [How we can prepare ourselves for a shooting.]"

Respondents also took this opportunity to voice what they would like to see happen in Calistoga, including expanding school music programs, more prevention education in schools, more activities at the fair, and residential discounts at local businesses.

Conclusion

The 2019 Calistoga Community Conversation brought together community members and leaders to talk about the importance of feeling included in our community, what is already bringing people together, things that make feeling included more difficult, and what changes the community would like to see.

Attending school and community events, especially with a youth focus, was the number one way that participants felt like part of the community. These events included parades, cultural and holiday celebrations, concerts, sports games, and community meetings. Volunteering, at schools and through community organizations also provided opportunities for belonging. Community members felt that going to local businesses was a social experience, and many said they felt Calistoga was a friendly and welcoming town.

The written survey asked participants about Parks & Rec programs, and more than 70% responded that yes, they or someone in their family participated. Over half of survey takers used the pool. Community members mentioned Concerts in the Park in both the small group discussion and the written survey responses. Over 40% of respondents participated in sports or physical activity programs through the department.

Community participants identified lack of affordability—especially for housing, food and restaurants, and local businesses—as the biggest barrier to feeling like part of the community. Language barriers and limited options for entertainment also made it more difficult for people to spend time together. Through the written survey, participants were given the opportunity to share their biggest concerns around housing. These results echoed some of the themes from the small group discussion, with affordability of housing being the major concern. The written survey also asked participants about transportation concerns, and they replied that limited public transportation, safety issues and need for better infrastructure, especially for walking and biking, were impacting them the most.

When asked what kind of new businesses they would like to see in town, Calistogans wanted more options for entertainment, dining and food, especially options that were affordable and family-friendly. People also wanted to see businesses that were focused on locals rather than tourism.

Overall, Calistogans love their town and appreciate local events, the friendly atmosphere, and Parks & Rec programs. During the final small group discussion question, community members had many ideas for how they personally could make Calistoga a welcoming place, including ways to be friendly, participate in community events, and volunteer their time and talents. These actions mirror the things that people had identified in the first question as things that already made them feel like part of community.

Appendix

Calistoga Factsheet – English Version

Calistoga

By the Numbers

5,281
people lived in Calistoga in 2017.

114
total licensed day care slots, compared to the 209 children aged 5 years old and younger that lived in Calistoga in 2018.

41%
of 3rd grade students in Calistoga Unified School District met grade-level reading standards in 2017-2018.

73%
of students in Calistoga Unified School District qualified for free and reduced-price meals in 2017-2018.

2%
of 11th grade students in Calistoga Unified School District lived in a shelter, car, campground, or other transitional or temporary housing in 2018-2019.

44%
of households were cost-burdened in 2017, meaning they spend 30% or more of their total income towards housing.

41%
of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park.

1.6
violent crimes were committed per 1,000 people in 2014-2016.

Calistoga Factsheet – Spanish Version

Calistoga

estadísticas

5,281
personas vivieron en Calistoga en el 2017.

114
espacios totales de guarderías con licencia, en comparación con los 209 niños de 5 años o menores que vivieron en Calistoga en el 2018.

41%
de estudiantes de tercer grado en el Distrito Escolar de Calistoga alcanzaron los estándares de lectura en 2017-2018.

73%
de estudiantes en el Distrito Escolar de Calistoga calificaron para comidas gratis y de precio reducido en el 2017-2018.

2%
de estudiantes de undécimo grado en el Distrito Escolar de Calistoga vivieron en un refugio, automóvil, campamento u otro alojamiento temporal en el 2018-2019.

44%
de los hogares estaban sobrecargados de costos en el 2017, lo que significa que el 30% o más de sus ingresos totales se van a gastos de vivienda.

41%
de residentes viven a 10 minutos a pie de un parque.

1.6
delitos violentos se cometieron por cada 1,000 personas del 2014 a 2016.

Calistoga Community Written Survey

Calistoga Community Survey

1) What is your biggest concern around housing in Calistoga? _____

_____

2) Do you or your family members participate in Parks & Rec programs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which ones?_____

If no, what keeps you from participating? _____

_____

3) What is your biggest concern around transportation in Calistoga (including driving, walking, biking and public transit)?

_____

_____

4) What types of new businesses would you like to see in Calistoga? _____

_____

5) Is there anything else on your mind that you would like to share? _____

_____

Calistoga Community Survey

1) What is your biggest concern around housing in Calistoga? _____

_____

2) Do you or your family members participate in Parks & Rec programs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which ones?_____

If no, what keeps you from participating? _____

_____

3) What is your biggest concern around transportation in Calistoga (including driving, walking, biking and public transit)?

_____

_____

4) What types of new businesses would you like to see in Calistoga? _____

_____

5) Is there anything else on your mind that you would like to share? _____

_____