

# LIVABILITY LAB

MUSKEGON COUNTY CHALLENGE: LL 2.0

Holding strong to the community's audacious vision:  
Creating a system that ensures livability for all Muskegon County residents.

The world changed significantly since the first Livability Lab challenge cycle wrapped on January 23, the impact on our community is profound. One thing that doesn't change is the perseverance of Muskegon County residents. The Livability Lab action teams are adjusting to and addressing current community conditions, and are ready to work through the next challenge cycle.

**COMMUNITY CONDITIONS:** The Community Conditions below were identified by resident surveys gathered March - July 2020; and by local, state and national databases and reports.

## LIVABILITY ELEMENT: HEALTH

COMMUNITY CONDITIONS AND COVID IMPACT  
CONSIDERING THE NEXT PHASE OF CHIR WORK AND LIVABILITY LAB

| HEALTH INFLUENCERS                 | SNAPSHOT OF MUSKEGON COUNTY RESIDENT INPUT FROM SURVEY MATERIAL  | SNAPSHOT OF NATIONAL, STATE OR LOCAL POLICY OR OTHER IMPACT FACTORS   |
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| <p><b>COVID/Coronavirus</b></p>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every day I leave my home to go to work or the grocery store. I am in fear I will contract it and spread it to my family at home who are high risk.</li> <li>• Get people information. I feel like we don't know enough about the virus or have done enough testing.</li> <li>• I am worried that we are not doing enough to stop the spread of COVID19. I believe our lockdown needs to be more comprehensive.</li> <li>• That the Muskegon Health Department inform the community on what is going on with COVID19 cases here. What are they doing? How are they communicating information to us as I have not seen or heard a thing from them.</li> <li>• We need drive up testing sites.</li> <li>• We need...Local information! Is our hospital prepared? Do we have supplies, beds and medical workers to take care of us? Can we get tested? Who is leading Muskegon in terms of decisions?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To date, Michigan has had 84,429 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 6,247 confirmed deaths (MLive 8/6/20)</li> <li>• Muskegon County has had 1,105 confirmed cases and 57 deaths. (Muskegon County Health Department 8/6/20)</li> <li>• In Michigan, people ages 20-29 represent nearly a quarter of all cases in the last two months, up from 12 percent before June 5. And people under 20 make up 16 percent of infections in the last two months, up from 4 percent from March through June. <a href="#">The Bridge, 8/3/2020</a> <a href="#">The Bridge, 8/3/2020</a></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Access to Healthcare</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mercy/Hackley hospitals not being capable of handling even a mild outbreak of cases.</li> <li>• Access to healthcare for all who need it.</li> <li>• Having to drive 45 minutes to get help when we have two hospitals here.</li> <li>• We need access to telemedicine for all houses.</li> <li>• Increase telehealth counseling services.</li> <li>• Getting my medication – I don't have delivery service.</li> <li>• We had to send my mother to the ER via ambulance and we couldn't go with her.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of visits for chest pain, heart attacks and other medical issues not related to the COVID virus fell sharply, suggesting people were delaying care for conditions that might be fatal if left untreated, researchers said in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly report.</li> <li>• More people are delaying care which will have lasting impacts on their health and the healthcare system. Around 1 in 3 Americans are delaying</li> </ul>   |

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|                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I took my son to the hospital twice and was sent home. I am so disappointed in our health care system. (son subsequently tested positive at a GR hospital)</li> <li>• We need..low-cost internet. Internet is now an essential service.</li> </ul>   | <p>medical care as they cope with the financial losses and stress caused by COVID-19. <u>Modern Healthcare</u>, May 4, 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital emergency department visits across the country declined by 42 percent during the early months of the pandemic — a “striking decline,” according to a <a href="#">report</a> this month by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <u>The Bridge</u>, July 5, 2020</li> <li>• Deaths recorded by emergency personnel outside Michigan hospitals jumped 62 percent this spring as the coronavirus first raged through the state, according to the state health department. The stark increase lends support to the notion that residents, including many with cardiac issues, decided to ride out chest pains or other serious symptoms at home rather than seek treatment in hospitals that were filling up with patients with suspected COVID-19.</li> <li>• The 62 percent rise in “out-of-hospital” deaths was recorded between March 15 and May 23, when compared to the same period in 2019, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, which reviewed data from the state’s emergency medical services agencies. <u>Bridge</u>, July 5, 2020</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Health Care Delivery</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having to be put on the frontline without appropriate equipment such as a N95 mask. You don’t know you are caring for a positive patient until after the fact. There wouldn’t be a shortage of N95 masks if step down masks were ok.</li> <li>• Increased worry of being infected and the uncertainty of my job as a healthcare worker, despite the sacrifices we have made.</li> <li>• I have a daughter working the front lines at a hospital in Indiana. Not being (able) to see my baby with me during this crisis is keeping me up at night.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On April 1, Trinity Health Michigan announced furloughs of about 2,600 employees, nearly 10 percent of its 28,000-person workforce. Some clinical staff who worked in elective health care service areas were recalled in previous weeks. Of those 2,600 furloughed in Michigan, 1,000 full-time equivalents, or 3 percent of the workforce, will either be laid off or have their schedules reduced, said Rob Casalou, president of Trinity's Michigan, Georgia and Florida markets. Casalou said Michigan faces a projected \$400 million revenue loss in fiscal 2021, which starts July 1. "In June we were 60 percent of our patient volume of February. By the end of the year we will be about 80 percent, but it is hard to predict" the COVID-</li> </ul>  |

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|                               |   | 19 positive cases this fall, he said. <a href="#">Crain's Detroit Business</a> , June 29,2020   |
| <b>Physical Health</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have to shop for our parents, but my wife has to do most of the work because I personally check too many of the wrong boxes in terms of likelihood of catching it. I've been trapped inside for weeks already due to my health, and the inability to move the needle into the positive column making me feel sad and useless.</li> <li>Health as I have many autoimmune diseases and get an infusion every 8 weeks.</li> <li>I worry about my health as I have an autoimmune disorder. The stress of not having normalcy and the not knowing is the worst.</li> <li>That I might actually get the virus and because of my age and comorbidities, I might not survive it, and like everyone else, I'm not done living.</li> <li>My worry and concern is that my immune system is low due to Crohns Disease and I am more susceptible to getting COVID-19.</li> <li>Health concerns as my daughter is immunocompromised.</li> <li>I have deep concerns for my children and myself. We all have a genetic lung disease and are at risk for serious complications. And, although only work one day per week, to say that I am terrified that I may contract COVID or that I may pass it on to my boys.</li> <li>Medical appointments and procedures were canceled.</li> <li>My wife's low immune system...worried she will catch it.</li> </ul> | <p><b>U.S. Census: Weekly Pulse Newsletter:</b></p> <p><a href="#">See Data Tables</a></p> <p>Based on responses collected July 9 <b>through July 14, 2020</b>, the Household Pulse Survey estimates that during the COVID-19 pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>40.1%</b> of adults had delayed getting medical care in the previous 4 weeks</li> <li>Coronavirus patients with underlying health conditions were hospitalized six times more often than otherwise healthy patients during the first four months of the pandemic, and they were 12 times more likely to die, according to federal health data released Monday.</li> <li>Most commonly, Covid-19 patients reported having heart disease (32%), diabetes (30%) and chronic lung disease (18%).</li> <li>Roughly 45% of patients with pre-existing conditions ended up in the hospital, compared to 7.6% of otherwise healthy patients. And nearly 20% of patients with secondary conditions died, compared to 1.6% of those without.</li> <li>By almost every measure, far fewer cancers are being diagnosed during the coronavirus pandemic, whether the decline shows up in screening mammograms and colonoscopies or in other tests ordered after troubling symptoms prompt a doctor's visit. A research letter published Tuesday in JAMA Network Open notes a steep downward slope in newly identified cases of six common cancer types, based on weekly numbers from <a href="#">Quest Diagnostics</a>. (Cooney, 8/4)</li> </ul> |
| <b>Uninsured/Underinsured</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>...losing my insurance. There's no way I can pay out of pocket for my insulin.</li> <li>Feeling isolated...being cut off of Medicaid</li> <li>No work and losing my insurance.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) could leave about 23.3 million Americans — including 827,000 Michigan residents — without health care</li> </ul>   |

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|  |   | <p>coverage during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new report. Michigan Advance, July 2, 2020</p> <p><b>People who are uninsured will likely face unique barriers accessing COVID-19 testing and treatment services.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families USA estimates that 222,000 workers in MI became uninsured because of job losses between February and May of 2020. MI's uninsurance rate spiked to 12% in May – a 46% increase from last year. <a href="#">Crain's Detroit Business</a>, 7/20/20</li> <li>• 12% of Michigan residents do not have health coverage. Prior to COVID the percentage was 3%.</li> <li>• Over half of the uninsured do not have a usual place to go when they need medical care, and one in five uninsured adults in 2018 went without needed medical care due to cost.</li> <li>• Studies repeatedly demonstrate that uninsured people are less likely than those with insurance to receive services for major health conditions and chronic diseases.</li> <li>• Without a usual source of care, the uninsured may not know where to go to get tested if they think they have been exposed to the virus and may forego testing or care out of fear of having to pay out-of-pocket for the test.</li> <li>• The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act requires hospitals to screen and stabilize patients with emergent conditions, however, they are not required to provide the care at no cost for patients who cannot pay, and they are not required to provide treatment for non-emergent conditions. As a result, uninsured individuals are less likely to use the emergency department than people with insurance, and the high costs of ED care may dissuade those without coverage from seeking care in that setting. <a href="#">Kaiser Family Foundation</a> 3/16/2020</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Public Information &amp; Personal Protection</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need consistent and same messaging resource available in multiple languages in multiple ways: print, TV, radio, podcast, and social media.</li> <li>• We need access to purchase disinfectant, masks and gloves.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even as scientists race to develop a vaccine for the coronavirus, repeated polls have found significant numbers of people, especially African Americans, saying they may opt out once a vaccine is approved.</li> </ul>   |

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|                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No one will wear masks because there are quite a few different myths, theories, and health “professional” statements. No one know what to do. How can someone else tell me I cannot wear a mask? I do not understand.</li> <li>• Willful ignorance and conspiracy theories will needlessly kill our fellow Americans. It needs to stop, and fact-checking of official comments should be a top priority.</li> <li>• We need...Obviously a vaccine but until then, antibody and wide spread regular testing for people so we can safely resume contact with others. Ultimately people need to have face to face contact and we need a plan to do it safely.</li> <li>• Will I lose my job? When will the pandemic end? The communications regarding COVID-19 are non-consistent. What is wrong and what is right?</li> <li>• We need...Someone to lead us. A local leader keeping us informed. Someone giving us hope and keeping vigilant, honest, factual, and most importantly positive. We need leadership.</li> <li>• We need to provide more free protective equipment like face masks, gloves and hand sanitizer.</li> <li>• It would be wonderful if we could have a venue to get accurate information to the public. With real information maybe the hysteria would quiet down. Don't believe everything you read on the internet!</li> <li>• We need communication to the youth that are still in the streets.</li> <li>• Distribute Postcards or flyers - make postcard or letter look like a check so people open it up</li> <li>• No - mail information to residence. Everyone can't use Facebook or the Internet</li> <li>• No - we need more information about this virus and how it is affecting our community</li> </ul> | <p>Reluctance stems from a host of concerns, from the headlong rush to eliminate COVID-19 to misgivings about government motives in administering a vaccine. There is wariness even among some who generally support immunization efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A June <a href="#">Newsweek poll</a> found that just 44 percent of Black respondents said they would be willing to take a COVID-19 vaccine, compared to 62 percent of Latino respondents and 70 percent of white people. <a href="#">The Bridge</a>, July 28,2020</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Behavioral Health</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a tie between my employment and mental health.</li> <li>• Stress. I know most everyone is feeling it. This is the first time in my life I've felt the need for pharmaceutical intervention.</li> <li>• It's exacerbated my wife's anxiety.</li> <li>• I am a young widow and being isolated has brought on waves of grief and depression.</li> <li>• I've been trapped inside for weeks already due to my health, and the inability to move the needle into the positive column making me feel sad and useless.</li> <li>• Very high anxiety and fear.</li> <li>• Being able to remain in contact with friends via Facebook and texting. Without that...I'm certain my mental health would suffer greatly. Bluntly...suicidal.</li> <li>• Makes it difficult to combat depression by limiting activities.</li> <li>• We need...A warm line, which is typically a peer support help line for people in distress with emotional or mental health concerns. Callers can get information</li> </ul>   | <p><b>U.S. Census: Weekly Pulse Newsletter:</b></p> <p><b><u>See Data Tables</u></b></p> <p>Based on responses collected July 9 <b>through July 14,</b> 2020 the Household Pulse Survey estimates that during the COVID-19 pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>26.2%</b> of respondents reported having little interest or pleasure in doing things more than half the days/nearly every day last week</li> <li>• <b>24.8%</b> of respondents reported feeling down more than half the days/nearly every day last week</li> </ul>              |

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|  | <p>about resources and supports, as well as have a listening ear, often from someone who has also experienced mental health crisis/mental illness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social isolation has been hard. I live alone and really miss interacting with others.</li> <li>• Isolation – it has been hard for myself as I am a peoples’ person. Not being able to see, touch people is very difficult.</li> <li>• It (COVID) has impacted my life in an emotional way.</li> <li>• Social isolation!</li> <li>• Isolation from family and friends.</li> <li>• Much stress due to working hard to make proper decisions.</li> <li>• (Worried) That this will last longer than I can mentally bare.</li> <li>• We need mental health care for those going stir crazy!</li> <li>• We need a virtual friend – where folks who live with mental disorders (anxiety, depression, etc) can video chat with someone to help ease the negative feelings brought on by the virus ad social distancing. Basically like a therapist but no insurance required. Just a network of people wanting to help/befriend those who need/want.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>33.9%</b> of respondents reported feeling anxious or nervous more than half the days/nearly every day last week</li> <li>• The health risks of infection differ by generation. For many young adults, life lived at a social distance, with a lack of peer support, comes at a high cost to mental health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says nearly half of people between 18 and 29 report feeling symptoms of anxiety or depression. That’s significantly higher than the rate for both their parents and their grandparents. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for people under 35. <a href="#"><u>NPR Health, 7/5/20</u></a></li> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Alcohol sales went up</u></a> at the beginning of the pandemic as anxiety and isolation rose, and sheltering in place may have made some families realize that a loved one needed help for an addiction. Homeless and poor Americans, because they often live in close quarters, have been <a href="#"><u>particularly prone</u></a> to catching COVID-19 — leaving drug rehabs dedicated to this population especially vulnerable. <a href="#"><u>Kaiser Health News, July 6, 2020</u></a></li> <li>• In the week ending March 21, sales on alcoholic beverages spiked by 55 percent according to market research firm Nielsen. Sprints sales increased by 75 percent compared to the same dates in 2019. Beer purchases up by 66 percent, then wine, up 42 percent year-on-year. <a href="#"><u>Newsweek, August 3, 2020</u></a></li> <li>• In May, Michigan emergency room visits related to opioid overdoses surged 42 percent over the numbers in April — from 439 to 625, according to the <a href="#"><u>Michigan Department of Health and Human Services</u></a>.</li> <li>• Over the three months from April through June, EMS runs for probably overdoses were 26 percent higher than in the same period in 2019. This increase occurred even as overall emergency runs nosedived in Michigan with people being afraid to enter hospitals during a pandemic.</li> </ul> |
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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meanwhile, medical examiners representing more than a dozen Michigan counties told Bridge they are seeing an uptick in opioid-related deaths in preliminary data. That squares with trends cited by the American Medical Association, which reports <u>more than 35 states are reporting increases in opioid-related mortality</u>. <u>The Bridge</u>, July 27, 2020</li></ul> |
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