

# 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: SOCIAL CONNECTION & TRUST

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
<p><b>Social Isolation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolation – it has been hard for myself as I am a people’s person. Not being able to see touch people is very difficult.</li> <li>I’m alone more than ever. I live alone and the people I used to rely on no longer can. I fear if I catch this I will die because I am high risk. I already have a lung problem.</li> <li>Concerned about...Dying alone.</li> <li>We need emotional support for those who feel forgotten (elderly, homeless, unemployed) those who feel defeated by what is going on in our world at this time. The undocumented.</li> <li>We need volunteer visitors who check on our most vulnerable families and neighbors. Perhaps helping families understand how to use a communication system via their home windows that tells a passerby or volunteer they are OK.</li> <li>I am concerned about elderly and vulnerable people being even more underserved than they already were. I would want to see new or learn more about existing networks to safety deliver food, finances, and medications safety to those demographics.</li> <li>We need a list of live events – Rootdown’s yoga, Muskegon luge, rainbow project, etc. Things that build resilience and that we can continue to stay connected with each other and keep minds and bodies grounded.</li> <li>We need a community Easter service at the drive-in where we could safely assemble in fellowship and faith.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People are hurting financially and medically from the coronavirus pandemic. Millions of Americans are <a href="#">unemployed</a> and 1 in 4 are <a href="#">food insecure</a>. The struggle is widespread, <a href="#">overwhelming public welfare programs</a> in some cases. Many people are looking to their next-door neighbors for help.</li> <li>New York City has seen an influx of mutual aid groups — a website called Mutual Aid Hub reports 59 operating in the city now. Though the concept is not new, such efforts have gained <a href="#">energy</a> and <a href="#">attention</a> during the pandemic. Mutual aid involves ordinary people volunteering their time and resources to help one another, rather than relying solely on the government or large institutions for relief. <a href="#">Kaiser Health News</a>, July 27, 2020</li> </ul>

<p><b>Elders</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have had no contact with my grandchildren in over 4 weeks and I find that very difficult.</li> <li>• We've recently retired so our retirement account losses are very concerning for our future.</li> <li>• Always afraid I'm bringing the virus home from work. My 97 year old dad lives with us.</li> <li>• We need some sort of list of elderly, disabled who live without assistance so that they can be checked on and assisted if needed.</li> <li>• We need shoppers for the elderly. They shouldn't be in grocery stores. Some of the elderly don't have any family to shop for them.</li> <li>• Many (seniors) don't have families nearby, and if they do, if anyone is sick, they can't help. We're concerned about them having adequate food, TP, transportation to needed medical appointments, and social isolation!</li> <li>• We need resources for the elderly/vulnerable. Food, pharmacy, mental health.</li> </ul>	<p><b>More than 40%</b> of U.S. coronavirus deaths are tied to nursing homes. <a href="#">Axios 7/13/2020</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michigan ranks among the top ten states for nursing home deaths, prompting a <a href="#">partisan congressional inquiry</a> and <a href="#">bipartisan action</a> in the state Legislature to create COVID-only facilities that would house infected nursing home residents. <a href="#">The Bridge</a>, July 27, 2020</li> <li>• Federal health officials say the most vulnerable Medicare beneficiaries are hardest hit by the COVID-19 outbreak, with racial and ethnic minorities and dual-eligible patients experiencing the highest hospitalizations. A "snapshot" analysis of Medicare claims and encounter data between Jan. 1 and June 20 released by <a href="#">CMS</a> on Tuesday shows Medicare beneficiaries made up more than 549,000 of the 2.2 million total coronavirus cases reported in the U.S. during that period, accounting for more than 160,000 hospitalizations. (Johnson, 7/28)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Family Life</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burying my mother in the midst of this and not being able to be surrounded by emotional and physical support. And having to reopen wounds when we attempt to have an official service this summer. Canceling my son's wedding.</li> <li>• I have had to choose between educating and care for kids or going to work and pay bills.</li> <li>• I sent my 8 year old out of state because I am essential and work constantly in the community. I want my baby home but I know she is safer where she is.</li> <li>• The effects that limited space and limited solitude are having on my family members.</li> <li>• My children all live/work in other states; I worry that I may never see them again.</li> <li>• I can't go anywhere. It's like my dad is holding me hostage.</li> <li>• Not able to see my youngest daughter go to prom and graduate.</li> <li>• I had to cancel three trips. One to see one grandchild turn 2 and the other, her first birthday. Those are milestones I can't get back.</li> <li>• That the government will continue to overreach it's boundaries and continue to infringe my Constitutional rights.</li> <li>• My separation from my church is difficult.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One in three jobs held by women has been designated as essential, according to a New York Times analysis of census data crossed with the federal government's essential worker guidelines. Nonwhite women are more likely to be doing essential jobs than anyone else. Women make up nearly nine out of 10 nurses and nursing assistants, most respiratory therapists, a majority of pharmacists and an overwhelming majority of pharmacy aides and technicians. More than two-thirds of the workers at grocery store checkouts and fast food counters are women. <a href="#">NYT</a>, April 18, 2020</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child Care</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My wife and I are fortunate to be working from home, but our childcare was interrupted so that has been a big challenge.</li> <li>• Trying to work from home when my kids are here is challenging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some 17.5 million workers — 11 percent of the U.S. workforce — are taking care of young kids on their own and will be unlikely to return to work full-time</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Childcare is my only income. I am fearful of losing everything.</li> <li>• My home daycare is empty. One family laid off. Two essential working families are working from home.</li> <li>• I own the Discovery School childcare center and preschool and we currently have 7 children out of 120 that are still paying tuition.</li> <li>• I miss my daycare kids.</li> <li>• It has scared the hell out of me...I worry about my daycare children and their families. I was in the process of changing my license from family to group and everything is on hold because of the township and offices shut down. Now I am stuck with a quarter of the pay while all my kids stay home.</li> <li>• We need a place where childcare providers could actually receive unemployment because it's not going through when we do it.</li> <li>• We need safe and affordable child care for those who are essential employees. They already have mighty weighty issues to deal with minute by minute.</li> </ul>	<p>until schools and day cares fully reopen, according to an analysis by the University of Chicago's Becker Friedman Institute. Researchers estimate nearly 10 percent of economic activity won't happen as long as schools and day cares remain closed. <a href="#">Washington Post, July 3, 2020</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to child care remains a crucial barrier to reopening the state economy following the coronavirus lockdown. But, a recent survey from the Early Childhood Investment Corp. found less than half, 2,917 of 6,000 licensed facilities statewide, are open. <a href="#">The Bridge, 7/21/2020</a></li> <li>• The Center for American Progress, a Washington D.C.-based advocacy group, forecast in April that funding uncertainties tied to COVID-19 could result in the loss of more than 120,000 Michigan child care slots and 4.5 million in the nation. <a href="#">The Bridge, July 21, 2020</a></li> <li>• Michigan offers payment assistance to needy families for child care, but sets its household income threshold at 130 percent of the federal poverty line. Only five states have lower income eligibility limits for child care assistance.</li> <li>• According to the Michigan League of Public Policy, the number of Michigan families receiving child care assistance fell from 67,000 in 2003 to about 33,000 in 2010 to just under 20,000 for October 2019 through June. COVID-19 impact on the months ahead could be a severe test of the state's child care system – especially for low-income workers who already struggled to find affordable child care. <a href="#">The Bridge, July 21, 2020</a></li> </ul>
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