



## Muhlenberg College/Morning Call

### 2021 City of Allentown Resident Survey

#### Key Findings:

1. About 2 out of 3 adult residents of Allentown give the city a positive rating as a place to live, with 10% saying Allentown is an excellent place to reside, and 56% rating the city as a good place to live.
2. While most Allentown residents give the city a positive rating as a place to live, more (46%) say life in the city is getting worse than say it is getting better (29%). This is a reversal from 2017, when most residents (53%) of the city indicated that life in Allentown was getting better, and only 27% said it was getting worse.
3. As it was in 2017, crime and safety issues were identified as the most important issues facing the city, with 37% of Allentonians offering this topic as the key issue.
4. Allentown residents are divided on if Mayor Ray O'Connell deserves reelection, with 28% stating he deserves another term, 28% indicating he doesn't and 48% unsure if O'Connell deserves to be reelected as the Queen City's chief executive.
5. A majority (57%) of Allentown residents give the city's response to the COVID-19 a positive evaluation, with 14% indicating the response was excellent and 43% saying it was good.

#### Methodological Statement

The following report contains the results of a telephone survey of 410 residents of the City of Allentown between April 8 and 15, 2021. Respondents were interviewed on both landlines (138) and cell phones (272). With a randomly selected sample of respondents the margin of error for the surveys is +/- 5.5% at a 95% level of confidence. Margins of error for questions with smaller sample size will be larger. In addition to sampling error, one should consider that question wording and other fielding issues can introduce error or bias into survey results. The data has been weighted by age, race and gender to reflect population parameters in Allentown in 2020 as established by the United States Bureau of the Census. The calculation of sampling error takes into account design effects due to the weighting identified above. In order to reach a representative sample of likely voters both land lines and cell phones were called up to 4 times. The response rate for this survey as calculated using the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) RRII formula is approximately 7%. Due to rounding the totals provided in the frequency report may not total 100%. The survey instrument (presented in its entirety below) was designed by Dr. Christopher P. Borick of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in conjunction with the staff of the *Morning Call*. The survey was funded exclusively by the *Morning Call* and the MCIPO. For more detailed information on the methods employed please contact the MCIPO at 484-664-3444 or email Dr. Borick at [cborick@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:cborick@muhlenberg.edu).

**CITY OF ALLENTOWN SURVEY  
SPRING 2021**

**FREQUENCY AND INSTRUMENT REPORT**

Q1: Thank you. What is your current age? (READ LIST)

- 1. 18-29.....22%
- 2. 30-49.....30%
- 3. 50-65.....28%
- 4. Over 65.....21%

Q2: Are you a resident of the city of Allentown?

- 1. Yes.....100%
- 2. No (Terminate Call).....

Q3: How many years have you lived in Allentown? (READ LIST)

- 1. 1-5..... 24%
- 2. 6-10..... 13%
- 3. 11-20..... 23%
- 4. 21 years or more..... 39%

Q4: Overall, how would you rate Allentown as a place to live? Would you say it's an excellent, good, not so good, or poor place to live?

- 1. Excellent..... 10%
- 2. Good.....56%
- 3. Not So Good.....25%
- 4. Poor..... 8%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 1%

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	10%	66%	20%	4%	0%
2021	10%	56%	25%	8%	1%

Q5: In general, would you say that life in Allentown is getting better or getting worse?

- 1. Getting Better..... 29%
- 2. Getting Worse.....46%
- 3. Staying the Same (Vol).... 20%
- 4. Not Sure (Vol)..... 6%

	<b>Getting Better</b>	<b>Getting Worse</b>	<b>Staying the Same</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	53%	27%	12%	8%
2021	29%	46%	20%	6%

Q6: What would you say is the most important issue facing the City of Allentown today?

- Crime/Safety..... 37%
- Schools/Education.....12%
- Jobs/Economy..... 10%
- Drugs..... 8%
- COVID-19..... 5%
- Roads/Infrastructure..... 5%
- Blight..... 5%
- Taxes..... 5%
- Government/Mayor Issues..... 3%
- Racism..... 2%
- Other..... 4%
- Not Sure..... 3%

Q7: Next I would like you to rate the quality of various categories of life in Allentown. For each category that I mention, please rate it as either excellent, good, not so good, or poor as it pertains to life in Allentown. First, the Economy?

- 1. Excellent..... 3%
- 2. Good.....54%
- 3. Not So Good.....29%
- 4. Poor..... 9%.
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 5%

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	2%	67%	23%	7%	2%
2021	3%	54%	29%	9%	5%

Q8: Next, parking?

- 1. Excellent..... 3%
- 2. Good.....18%
- 3. Not So Good.....30%
- 4. Poor.....44%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 5%

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	6%	38%	31%	23%	3%
2021	3%	18%	30%	44%	5%

Q9: Public Schools?

- 1. Excellent..... 3%
- 2. Good.....27%
- 3. Not So Good.....25%
- 4. Poor..... 23%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 22%

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	4%	17%	42%	25%	12%
2021	3%	27%	25%	23%	22%

Q10: Efforts to address urban blight?

- 1. Excellent..... 3%
- 2. Good.....31%
- 3. Not So Good.....36%
- 4. Poor..... 21%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 9%

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	4%	40%	29%	12%	15%
2021	3%	31%	36%	21%	9%

Q11: Race Relations?

- 1. Excellent..... 4%
- 2. Good.....48%
- 3. Not So Good.....27%
- 4. Poor..... 14%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 7%

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not So Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	4%	60%	21%	11%	5%
2021	4%	48%	27%	14%	7%

Q12: Next, I have a few questions regarding your level of concern for a variety of issues. For each issue that I mention please tell me if you are very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

First, how concerned are you with the availability of affordable housing in Allentown?

- 1. Very Concerned.....41%
- 2. Somewhat Concerned..... 28%
- 3. Not Too Concerned..... 24%
- 4. Not At All Concerned..... 7%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 1%

Q13: How concerned are you with the city government raising taxes?

- 1. Very Concerned.....54%
- 2. Somewhat Concerned.....27%
- 3. Not Too Concerned.....15%
- 4. Not At All Concerned..... 3%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 2%

Q14: How concerned are you with becoming a victim of a crime in Allentown?

- 1. Very Concerned.....30%
- 2. Somewhat Concerned..... 27%
- 3. Not Too Concerned..... 29%
- 4. Not At All Concerned.....14%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 1%

	<b>Very Concerned</b>	<b>Somewhat Concerned</b>	<b>Not too Concerned</b>	<b>Not at All Concerned</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
2017	38%	29%	20%	14%	0%
2021	30%	27%	29%	14%	1%

Q15: How concerned are you with Allentown Police using excessive force?

- 1. Very Concerned..... 26%
- 2. Somewhat Concerned.....24%
- 3. Not Too Concerned..... 23%
- 4. Not At All Concerned..... 23%
- 5. Not Sure (Vol)..... 4%

Q16: Next, I have a few questions about this year’s mayoral election in Allentown, First I will read a list of candidates seeking to become mayor of Allentown. For each candidate whose name I read, please let me know if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the candidate, or if you haven’t heard enough about the candidate to form an opinion. (ROTATE LIST) First, Ray O’Connell

- 1. Favorable.....21%
- 2. Unfavorable.....14%
- 3. Haven’t heard enough to form opinion..... 49%
- 4. Not Sure (VOL).....15%

Q17: Next, Ce-Ce Gerlach

- 1. Favorable.....16%
- 2. Unfavorable.....8%
- 3. Haven’t heard enough to form opinion..... 64%
- 4. Not Sure (VOL).....12%

Q18: Matt Tuerk

- 1. Favorable..... 6%
- 2. Unfavorable..... 4%
- 3. Haven't heard enough to form opinion..... 77%
- 4. Not Sure (VOL)..... 13%

Q19: Julio Guridy

- 1. Favorable..... 13%
- 2. Unfavorable..... 7%
- 3. Haven't heard enough to form opinion..... 67%
- 4. Not Sure (VOL)..... 13%

Q20: Tim Ramos

- 1. Favorable..... 8%
- 2. Unfavorable..... 6%
- 3. Haven't heard enough to form opinion..... 72%
- 4. Not Sure (VOL)..... 14%

Q21: Which of the following best describes your type of participation in the May 2021 primary election?  
(READ LIST)

- 1. I plan to vote in person .....38%
- 2. I plan to vote by mail..... 17%
- 3. I don't plan to vote in the 2021 primary election..... 25%
- 4. Not Sure (Vol)..... 20%

Q22: Next, I would like to ask you a few questions about Allentown Mayor Ray O'Connell. First do you approve or disapprove of the way Ray O'Connell is doing his job as Mayor.

- 1. Approve.....30%
- 2. Disapprove.....22%
- 3. Not Sure (Vol).....48%

Q23: Do you think that Mayor Ray O'Connell deserves to be reelected as Mayor of Allentown or does not deserve to be reelected as Mayor Allentown?

- 1. Deserves to be reelected.....28%
- 2. Does not deserve to be reelected .....28%
- 3. Not Sure (Vol).....45%

Q24: Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that The City of Allentown should spend less money on the Allentown Police Department and more money on social services including but not limited to mental health services, substance abuse treatment, street medicine and affordable housing.

- 1. Strongly agree.....40%
- 2. Somewhat Agree.....25%
- 3. Somewhat Disagree.....14%
- 4. Strongly Agree.....14%
- 5. Not Sure..... 8%

Q25: In general would you say the City of Allentown's response to the COVI-19 pandemic has been excellent, good, fair or poor?

- 1. Excellent..... 14%
- 2. Good..... 43%
- 3. Fair..... 30%
- 4. Poor..... 8%
- 5. Not sure..... 5%

Q26: Finally, I have a few questions about yourself. Which of the following categories best describes your racial identity? Are you (READ LIST)

- 1. White/Caucasian.....32%
- 2. African-American..... 13%
- 3. Hispanic.....35%
- 4. Latino.....10%
- 5. Asian.....2%
- 6. Native American.....<1%
- 7. Mixed race.....5%
- 8. or other.....2%
- 9. Not Sure (Vol).....1%

Q27: Which of the following categories best describes your current voting status? Are you registered as a (READ LIST)

- 1. Democrat..... 60%
- 2. Republican..... 16%
- 3. Independent..... 14%
- 4. Other Party..... 5%
- 5. Not registered to vote in PA ..... 3%
- 6. Not Sure (Volunteered)..... 3%

Q28: What is your current marital status? Are you (READ LIST)

- 1. Single.....38%
- 2. Married..... 41%
- 3. Separated..... 2%
- 4. Divorced.....11%
- 5. Widowed..... 4%
- 6. Partnered..... 3%
- 7. Not sure (Volunteered).....<1%

Q29: What is your highest level of education? (READ LIST)

- 1. Less than High School..... 5%
- 2. High School Graduate.....30%
- 3. Some college or technical school.....36%
- 4. College graduate (4 yr only).....20%
- 5. Graduate or professional degree..... 8%

Q30: Which of the following categories best describes your family income? Is it (READ LIST)

- 1. Under \$20,000.....13%
- 2. \$20,000-\$40,000.....27%
- 3. \$40,000-\$60,000.....22%
- 4. \$60,000-\$80,000.....18%
- 5. \$80,000-\$100,000..... 8%
- 6. Over \$100,000.....12%

Q31: Does your household include children that are under the age of 18?

- 1. Yes.....36%
- 2. No..... 64%

Q32: What is the zip code for the municipality where you live?

- 18101..... 5%
- 18102.....33%
- 18103.....30%
- 18104.....16%
- 18109.....15%

Q33: Finally to which gender identity do you most identify? (READ LIST)

- 1. Male..... 49%
- 2. Female..... 51%
- 3. Transgender Male.....<1%
- 4. Transgender Female.....<1%
- 5. Or you do not identify as male, female or transgender.....<1%