

APRIL 2022

ARGO SPEAKS

A SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT FINDINGS



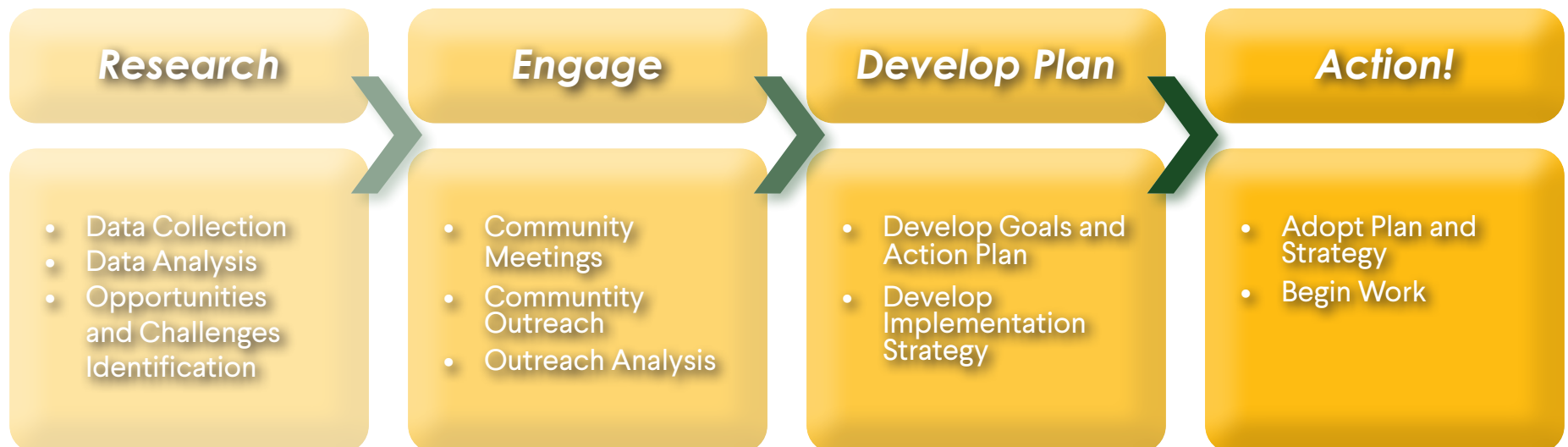
ARGO SPEAKS

ARGO SPEAKS is an analysis of the public input gathered from the people of Argo. It is the second step in a four phased approach to create and implement a strategic master plan for the community. This report was compiled using the guidance and direction of Argo residents as communicated through stakeholder and public meetings as well as online surveys and comments. As an objective analysis, this document reports the input of Argo residents as given, without drawing any final conclusions or recommendations. Along with the trends and conditions identified in step one, the findings in this report will be used to help generate specific development goals in the upcoming plan development phase. This report should be used to spark critical thinking and conversations about the future of Argo and to identify important topics for further exploration.



In 2021, the city of Argo initiated a strategic master planning process to develop a new comprehensive plan and draft a new zoning ordinance. Known as Argo ALIVE, this process draws upon statistical analysis, community and stakeholder vision, and strategic recommendations to generate an action plan that can be used by Argo to guide future development practices. The final product is a living document forged by and for the Argo community.

PROCESS OVERVIEW



METHODS + PARTICIPANTS

The following summarizes the outreach methods used throughout the public input phase of the planning process as well as the demographic makeup of participants. Outreach was conducted via stakeholder and general public meetings along with the online community survey and comments left on the project website (*argolive.com*).

Total Involvement: **305 people**



Stakeholder Interviews

The outreach campaign began with a group of roughly 10-12 stakeholders (civic leaders, business owners, etc.) who engaged in small group discussions on key topics such as mobility, housing, and economic development. They helped the GMC project team to get an early understanding of Argo's current needs, challenges, and opportunities. They also helped provide initial feedback prior to the public meeting.



Online Survey & Website

Online platforms were also used to maximize the amount of input received and to give those unable to attend in person events the chance to voice their thoughts prior to developing the draft plan. 234 responses to the online survey were collected. 87% of respondents were current residents of Argo, 4% currently work in Argo, and 2% own a business in Argo. 47% of the responses were from long-term residents who have lived in Argo for more than 15 years.



Public Meeting / Charrette

The focal point of the outreach campaign was a public meeting and workshop that was hosted in Argo City Hall on March 1, 2022. There was a relatively diverse group of about 65 interested citizens in attendance, although participants skewed slightly older and whiter, with underrepresentation of young adults and racial minorities. A free community BBQ dinner was served, after which findings from the existing trends and conditions research were presented to the public. Attendees then completed a questionnaire in which they rated the importance of various development priorities. The meeting concluded with a mapping exercise in which small groups suggested improvements they would like to see included in the draft master plan.

RESULTS

The following section summarizes the input from all portions of the public outreach campaign. Findings are grouped by topic and are not intended to be exclusive or absolute as there was wide variation in opinions received during the outreach.



1. General Opinion (pg. 4)

Overall, Argonians love their city and a strong majority would like to see further population growth and the development of a walkable town center on Hwy 11. The condition of the city's roads received the lowest rating of the city's infrastructure and services while city facilities (city hall, etc.) had the highest ratings.



2. Parks & Recreation (pg. 6)

About 2/3 of residents feel that city parks are insufficient for their recreational needs and that more public events should be hosted by the city. The top requested recreational amenities were:

1. Walking/ biking/ hiking trails
2. Parks/ green space
3. Splash pad



3. Transportation (pg. 7)

Roads were a primary area of concern for residents, who stressed the need for new cycling and pedestrian infrastructure as well as road repairs and/ or upgrades at the following locations (top 3):

1. Blackjack Road
2. Roulain Road
3. Highway 11



4. Housing (pg. 8)

A large majority of respondents felt that housing options in Argo are affordable, while they were split almost evenly on whether more housing should be developed to accommodate the city's growing population. The most requested types of new housing were:

1. Traditional Single-Family Detached
2. Garden Homes (detached, small lots)
3. Apartments/ townhomes



5. Economy (pg. 9)

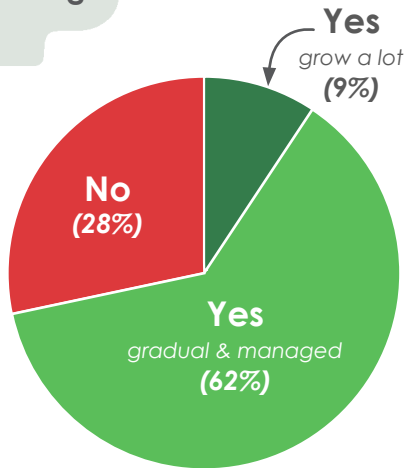
Fast food is the most used type of business in town, followed by retail stores and pharmacies. 86% of respondents felt that Argo needs to be proactive in increasing the number of businesses located in town. The most requested types of new businesses in Argo were:

1. Grocery
2. Dine-in Restaurants
3. Healthcare services

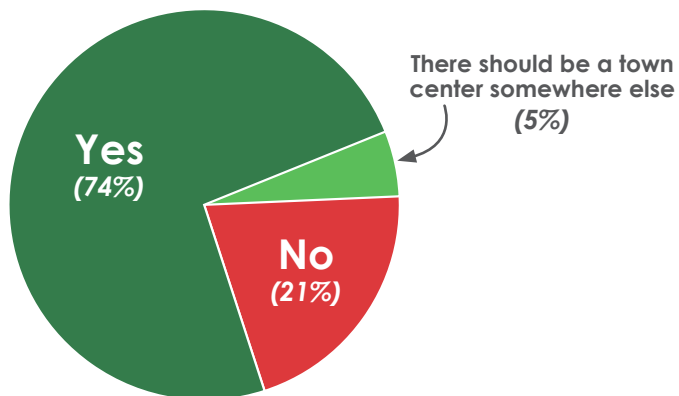
1. GENERAL OPINION

Future Growth & Development

Would you like to see continued population growth in Argo?



Would you like Argo to have a walkable town center on the Hwy 11 commercial corridor?



Municipal Services Ratings

Parks & Recreation Opportunities



2.7
avg. rating

Road Conditions



2.2
avg. rating

Visual Character



2.4
avg. rating

City Facilities (city hall, fire station, etc.)



3.5
avg. rating

Water & Sewer Services



3.4
avg. rating

Telecommunication Services (internet, cell, etc.)



2.5
avg. rating

Favorite Things

What do you love about Argo?

	Votes		Votes
1. Small town feel	70	6. Small businesses	12
2. Community/ people	31	7. Natural beauty of land	11
3. Safety/ low crime	28	8. Current leadership	7
4. Location/ convenience	22	9. Affordability	6
5. Quiet	16	10. Homes/ neighborhoods	5

Development Priorities Ranking

1. Improve roads as Argo continues to grow.
2. Proactively recruit retail businesses.
3. Encourage growth while protecting Argo's charm.
4. Expand the city's job market.
5. Improve the "look and feel" of Highway 11.
6. Protect strategic natural/ agricultural land.
7. Develop a strategic annexation strategy.
8. Expand the city's water and sewer infrastructure.
9. Expand parks and recreation in the city.
10. Develop walking trails in the city.

total
score

219

195

192

175

172

161

155

151

148

144

Opportunities

The following opportunities were identified as local strengths to be capitalized on as part of the city's future growth plan:

- Population growth
- Regional location
- US 11/ I-59 travelers
- Low crime rate
- Good schools
- Land affordability and availability
- Low interest rates
- New dining/ retail
- New outdoor recreation
- New grocery store
- Smart housing growth
- New zoning code
- Design guidelines
- Landscaping/ beautification
- Community policing
- Upgrades/ renos of homes & businesses
- Improved telecom
- Better industry areas
- More funding for city
- Business recruitment
- Better infrastructure
- More walkability

Challenges

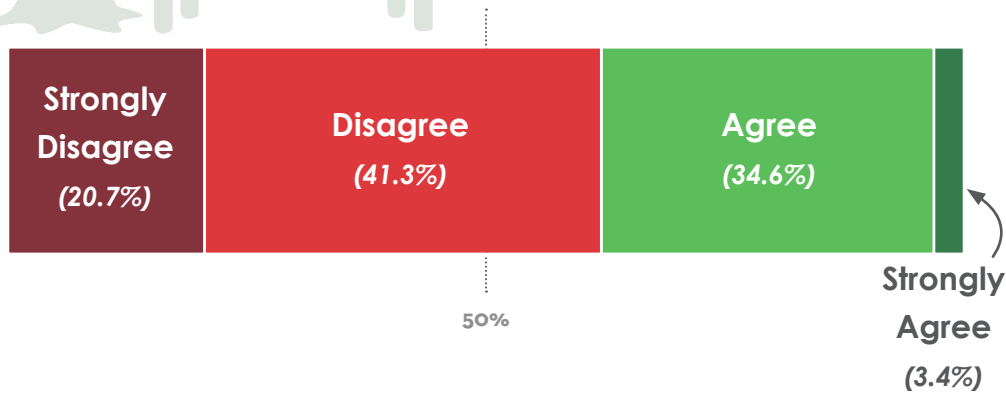
The following are challenges identified by participants as potential obstacles to success that should be addressed in the master plan:

- Road conditions
- Traffic congestion
- Overpolicing
- Stormwater control
- NIMBY (anti-change mentality)
- US 11 / Argo Road intersection
- Lack of zoning
- Visually unattractive
- Disengaged citizens
- Underfunded city
- Trussville expansion
- Illegal dumping/ litter
- Perceived corruption
- Inadequate telecom
- Uncooperative large landowners
- Lack of regional collaboration
- Low quality building development
- Lack of dining and entertainment options
- Animal control
- Train blocking roads
- Small commercial/ industrial footprint

2. PARKS & RECREATION

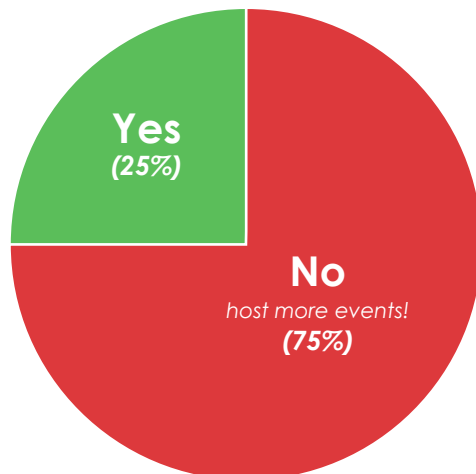
Current Opportunities

Argo has enough public parks and open space to support all of my recreational needs.



Community Events

Does Argo have enough public event opportunities in the city?



New Recreation Wanted

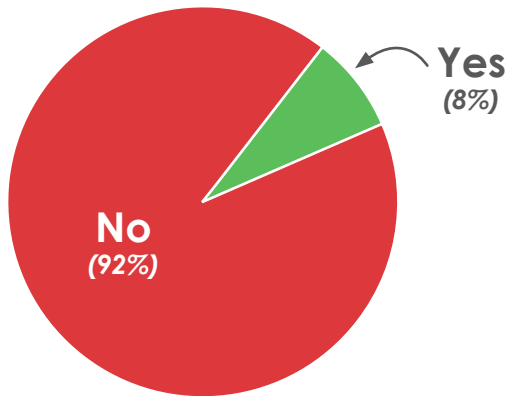
What recreational opportunities does Argo not have that you would like to see added?

		Votes
1.	Walking/ biking/ hiking trails	43
2.	Parks/ green space	27
3.	Splash pad	10
TIE 4.	Community pool	10
	Playgrounds	9
6.	Dog park	6
7.	Tennis courts	5
TIE 8.	Basketball courts	5
	Youth sports fields	5
	Driving range	3
	Sports complex	3
TIE 11.	Golf course	3
	Outdoor track	3
	Movie theater/ drive-in	3
	Pickleball courts	2
	Disc golf course	2
TIE 16.	Fishing	2
	Archery park	2
	Handicap accessible play area	2
20.	Bowling alley	1

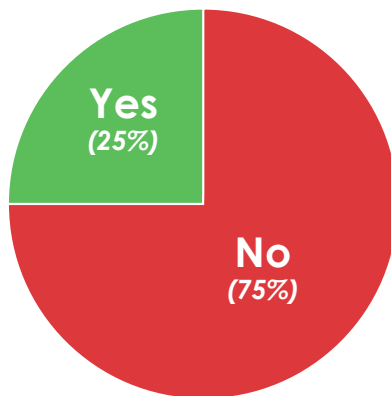
3. TRANSPORTATION

Roadway Safety

Would you feel safe from traffic if walking or biking along Argo's streets?



Does Argo have adequate street lighting and traffic control measures?



Road Priority List

* neighborhood roads

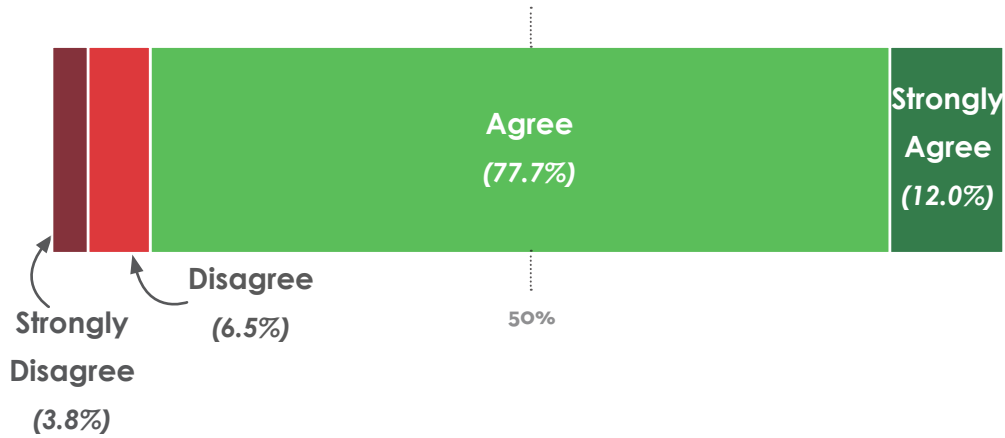
Which roads in Argo, if any, need repairs and/ or upgrades?

		Votes
1.	Blackjack Road	42
2.	Roulain Road	32
3.	Highway 11	26
4.	Argo-Margaret Road	20
5.	Cedar Creek Road	11
6.	Interstate-59	8
7.	Mountain Oaks Subdivision *	7
8.	Inthawoods Circle *	6
TIE 9.	Will Keith Road	4
	Freeze Mountain Drive *	4
TIE 10.	Moccasin Trail *	3
	Country Living Circle *	3
TIE 11.	Leopard Lane *	2
	Honor Keith Road	2
	Katie Lane *	2
	Rocky Ridge Road *	2
	Liles Lane	2
	Bill Smith Road	2
	Farm Lake Road *	2
	Smith Ridge Way *	2

4. HOUSING

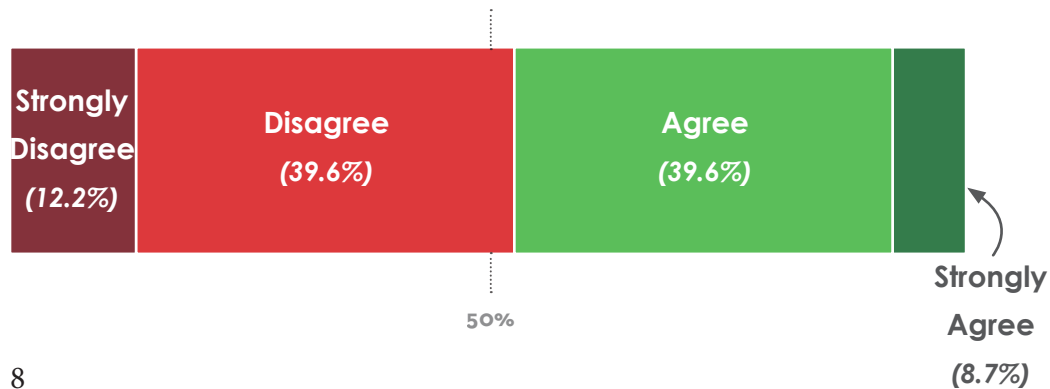
Affordability

Housing opportunities in Argo are affordable to me.



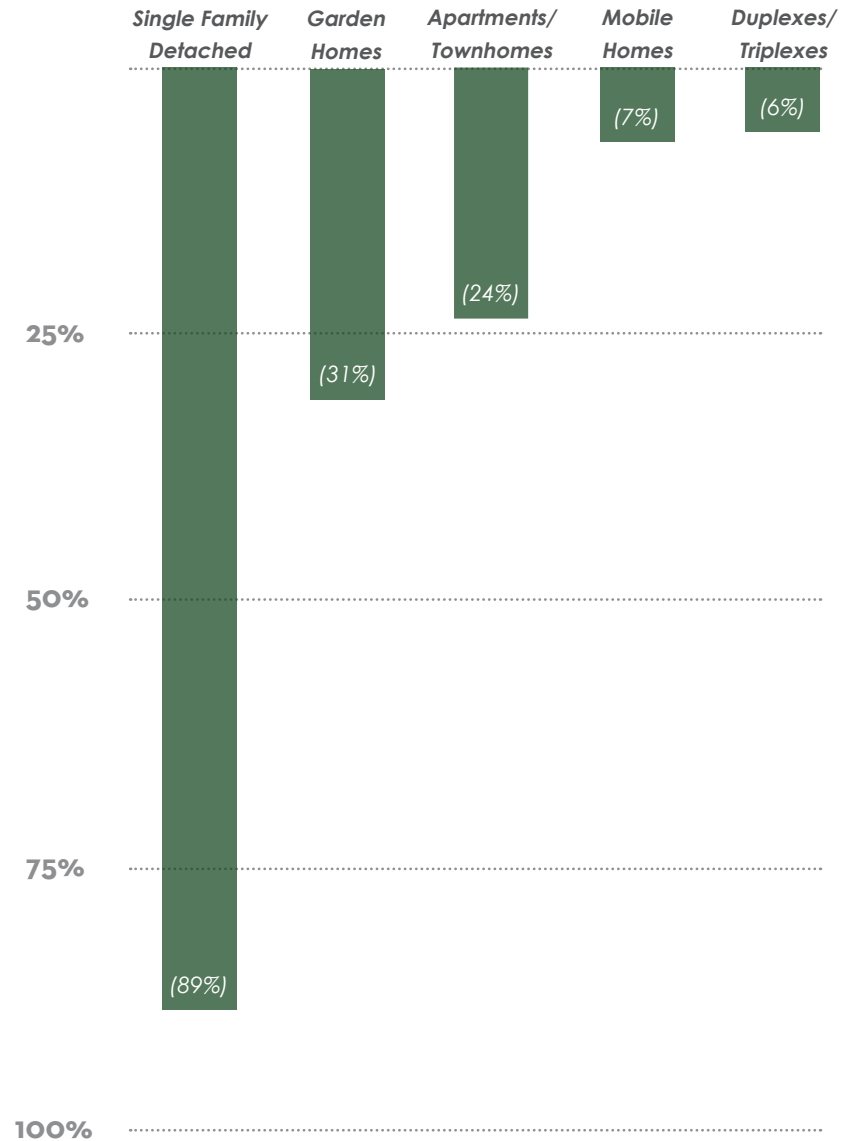
New Development

Argo needs to develop more housing to accommodate its growing population.



Housing Types

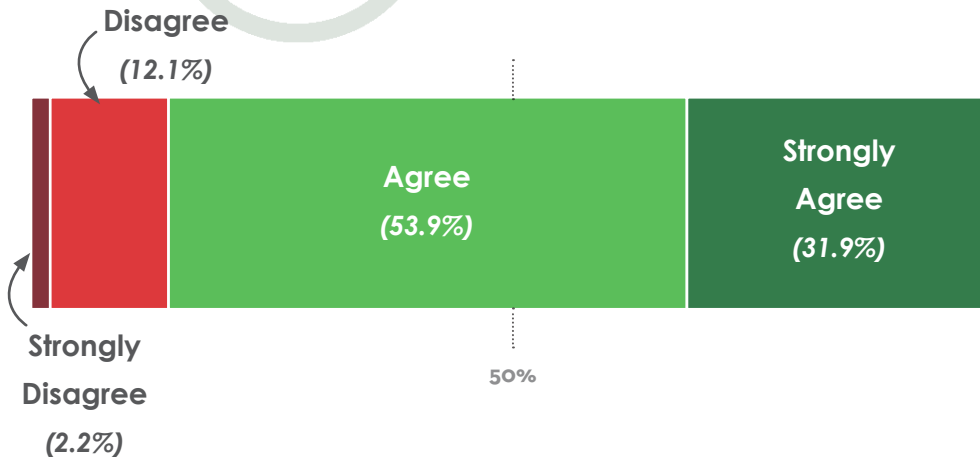
What additional types of housing are needed in Argo, if any?



5. BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Business Development

Argo needs more businesses in the city.



Patronage

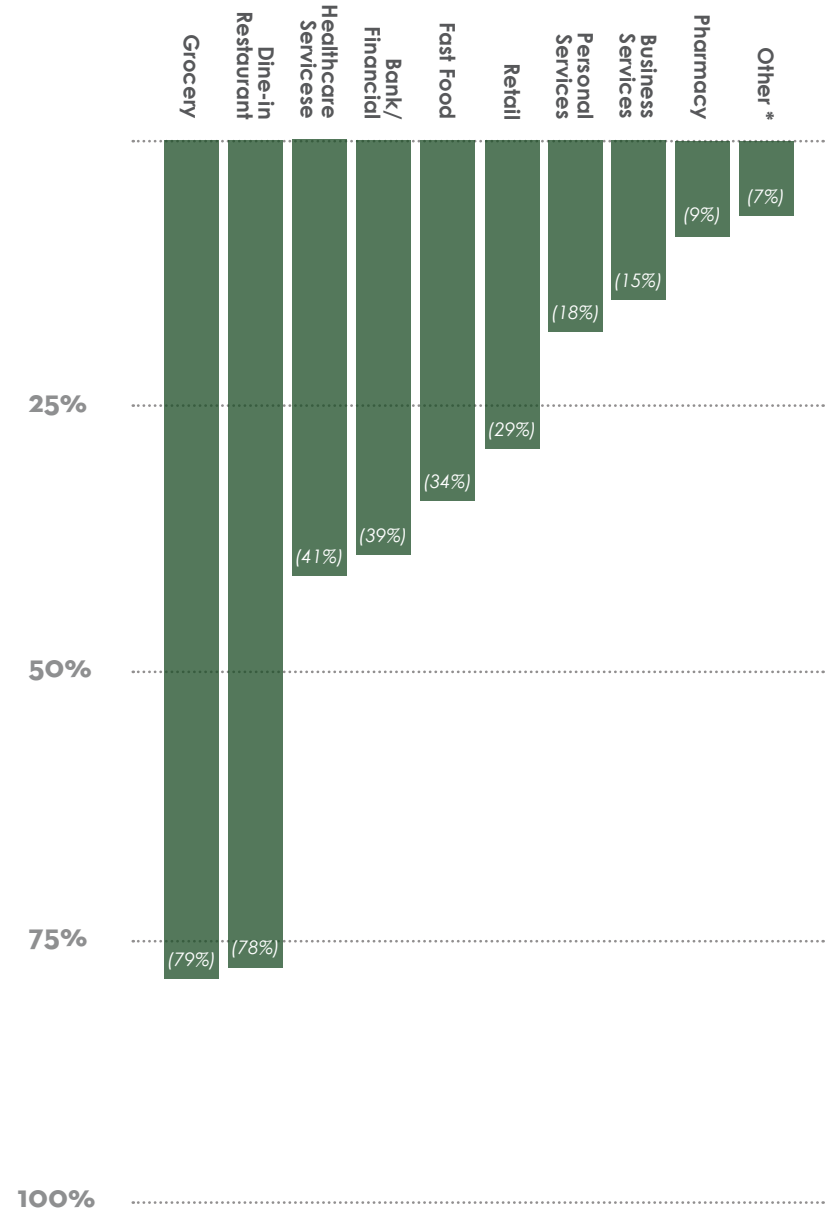
What kinds of businesses do you commonly utilize in Argo?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Fast Food (71%) | 6. Other * (21%) |
| 2. Retail (62%) | 7. Personal Services (18%) |
| 3. Pharmacy (37%) | 8. Business Services (2%) |
| 4. Grocery (31%) | 9. Healthcare Services (2%) |
| 5. Sit-down restaurant (27%) | 10. Bank/ Financial (2%) |

* gas stations / convenience stores / vets, etc.

New Business Types Wanted

What kinds of businesses would you like to have more of in Argo, if any?



* entertainment & recreation / light industrial / bars / auto shop, etc.

