

Resident Owned Communities (ROCs)

A model for collective ownership of manufactured home communities preserving affordable housing

In the US, **2.7 million homeowners** live in manufactured home communities. Most mobile home parks are commercially owned. As parks change hands or are sold to developers, residents in commercially owned parks are particularly vulnerable to displacement and homelessness in the context of today's affordable housing crisis. **Resident Owned Communities (ROCs) offer an alternative.** Members gain control over monthly lot fees, repairs, and improvements, and have lifetime security against unfair eviction.



14 ROCs
551 homes



Since 2010, NeighborWorks Montana has established 14 ROCs with 551 homes across Montana. In 2021, residents from 9 ROCs were surveyed (119) and interviewed (8) about benefits of ROCs.

Park Improvement



Clean up and improve infrastructure

Establish policies to make park safer

Resident Benefits



Better quality of life

Greater financial security

Community Benefits



More social connections

Stronger civic engagement



Park Improvement

Clean up and improve park infrastructure

“Knowing the cops aren’t going to show up in the middle of the night, it’s been a wonderful shift. My husband has anxiety. Having it be peaceful and quiet has been astronomical for him. He’s disabled. He has chronic anxiety disorder. His number of medications has reduced since we’ve moved here.”

“The water infrastructure system had arsenic levels four times the legal limit. The water came out of our taps blood red... people were hauling, buying water. [Since becoming a ROC], we have secured 7 or 8 million in grants for improvements. We have a new well... it’s just fantastic.”

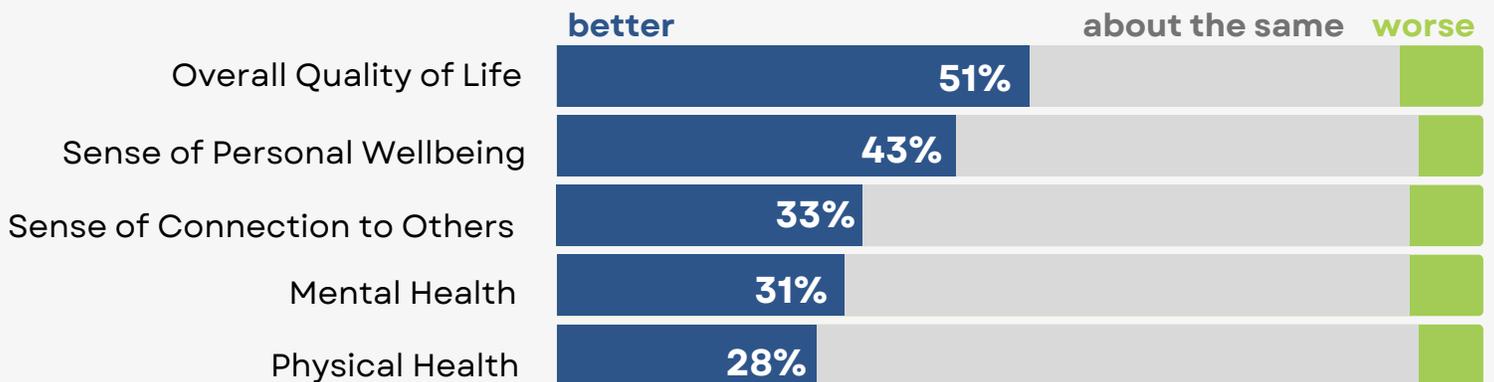
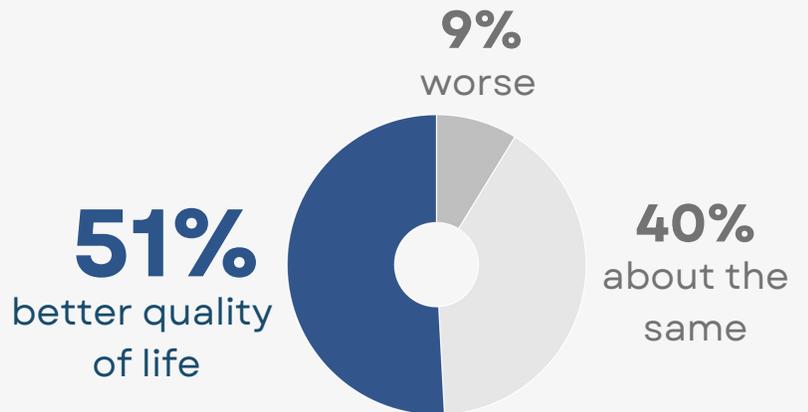
Establish policies to make park safer



Resident Benefits

Better quality of life for ROC residents

Over half of ROC members report they have a better quality of life since living in the ROC, and some ROC members report that many aspects of their life are better since living in a ROC.

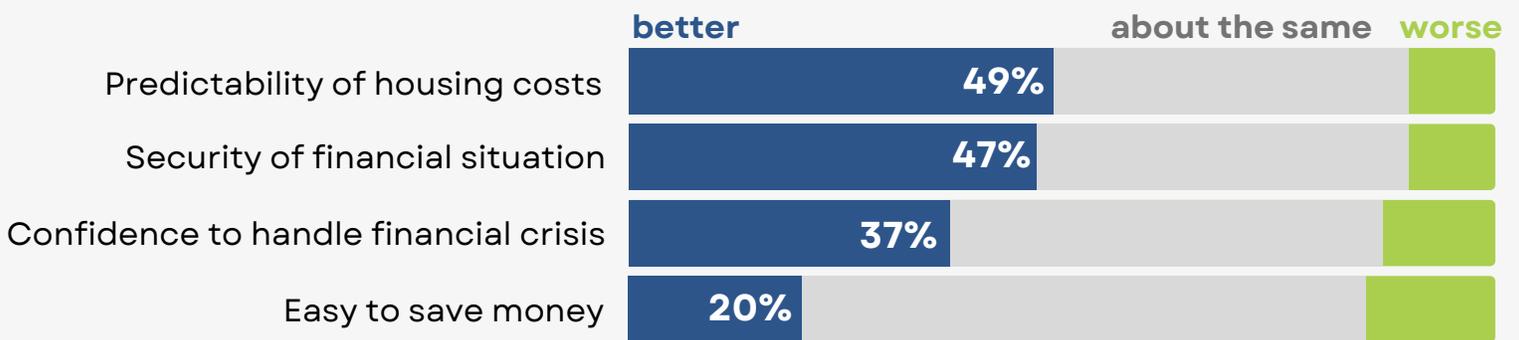


Greater financial security for ROC residents

ROC members know their rent will not steeply increase and their park will not be sold. This gives members “peace of mind” and enables them to direct more of their income to other needs.

“ It’s like a security blanket. Things you don’t have to worry about anymore. ”

“ That’s one of your big, big deals in life, is a roof over your head. That’s probably one of the greatest factors in helping remove stress... that was better for my health and for everybody’s health in the family. ”

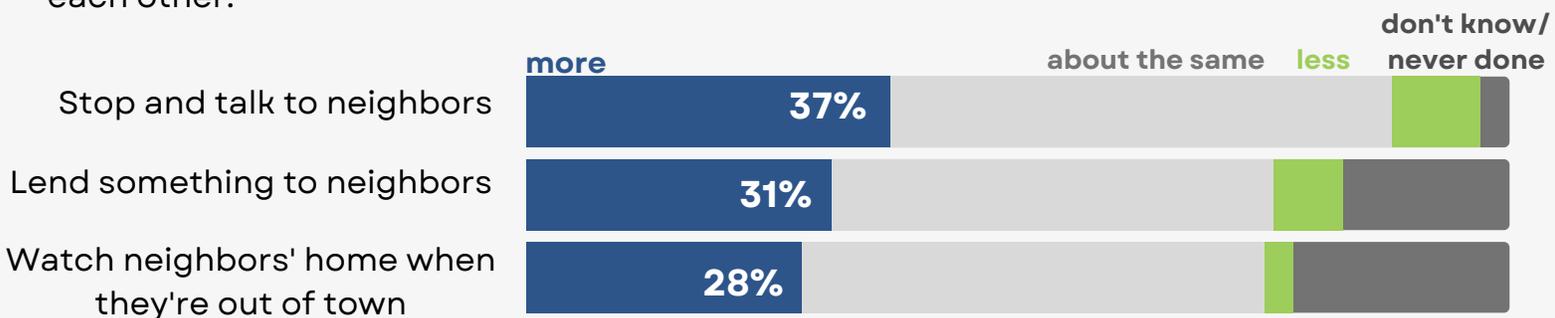


Community Benefits

More social connections among ROC residents

ROCs provide greater opportunities for residents to connect and support each other.

“ The other night it was 10:30 and a car went racing around the street. I ran out and [a neighbor] across the street came out. His neighbor came out too. People down the street came out, and we’re all out there talking about who this guy is and what we can do about it. [...] I think we’re getting more people who want to get involved. ”

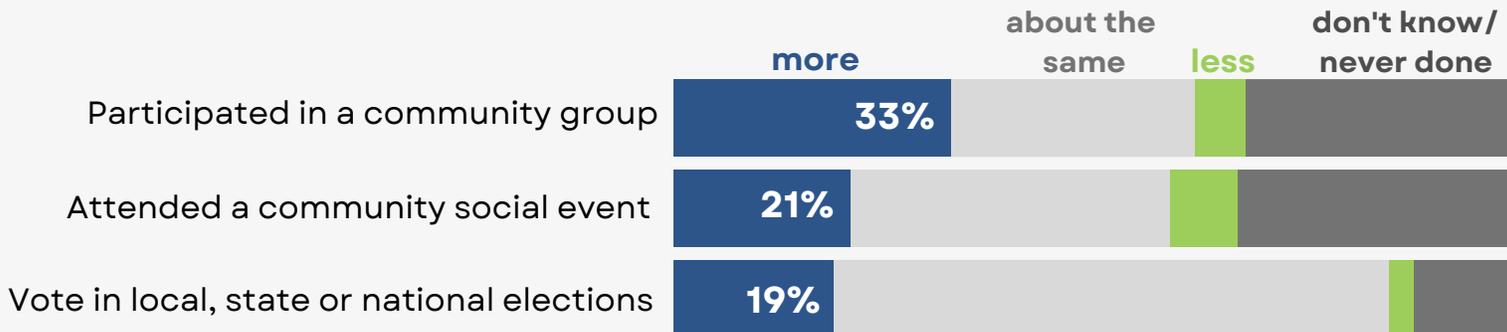


Stronger civic engagement among ROC residents

As residents join ROC governance boards, fulfill the responsibilities of their roles, and guide community improvement projects, they develop new skills and leadership qualities and become the “go-to” people in their communities.

“ I have learned that if you don't like what you have, you have to get up and you have to do something about it, any kind of challenge that you may have. I mean, you can't just lay back and let that challenge or that problem just roll on... you got to stand up, you gotta take one piece at a time until you complete it. ”

“ My role [in putting the play area together] was ... to guide everyone and help where people needed help. And that's what I did... I knocked on the doors and I asked if they would be able to spend some time helping put it together. [...] We had a few that said, 'Oh sure, just call to let me know,' so I called them and let them know and they came and we put it together. ”



NeighborWorks Montana provides essential support to ROCs.



“ NeighborWorks was absolutely such a blessing for me. When I first became president here, we had one other member on the board, and that was it. The previous president had left, and he had taken all the paperwork with him. It was kind of a mess. But NeighborWorks had a gal who worked with us... I called her and talked to her about it and she helped me navigate all that. They will almost help you with anything and everything... ”

In 2021, Insight for Action surveyed 119 and interviewed 8 residents from 9 ROCs established by NeighborWorks Montana.

The Carsey Institute of University of New Hampshire also documented positive economic benefits of ROCs.