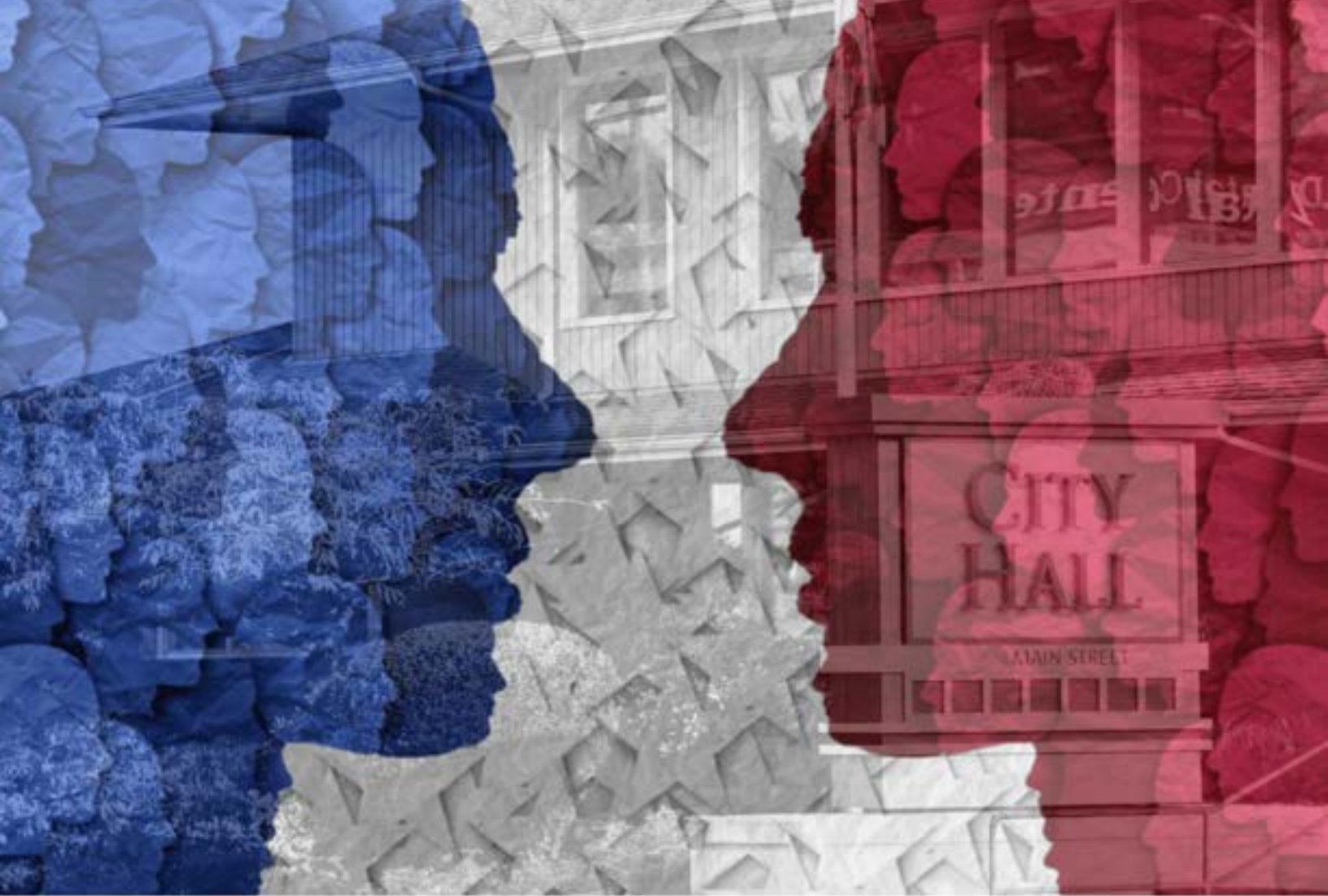




Polarization in America: Survey of Local Government

Fall 2026

This report is the fourth in a series.



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About This Report

This CivicPulse report is the fourth installment in a series commissioned by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, formerly Carnegie Corporation of New York, to assess political polarization as experienced by local government officials, find solutions that reduce division, and share these findings to help strengthen communities. It draws on a national survey of municipal, county, township, and school board officials conducted in June 2026.

About CivicPulse

CivicPulse is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization dedicated to enhancing local and state government in the US by conducting representative surveys of public officials, producing actionable research, and facilitating practitioner-researcher dialogue.

About the Andrew Carnegie Foundation

The Andrew Carnegie Foundation, formerly Carnegie Corporation of New York, works to reduce political polarization through grants that support ladders of opportunity and a more peaceful world. Its funding provides individuals with the knowledge and tools needed to improve their lives, participate fully in society, and advance peace. Learn more at carnegie.org.

More Information

More about the CivicPulse-Carnegie *Polarization in America* series can be found [here](#). Media inquiries can be sent to Nathan Lee, Managing Director, at nathanlee@civicpulse.org. Requests for the data associated with this report and any other questions can be directed to info@civicpulse.org.

Executive Summary

This report marks the fourth installment in CivicPulse's *Polarization in America: Survey of Local Government* series, supported by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. The series is based on four nationally representative surveys of municipal, county, township, and school board officials in America, conducted in August 2024, January 2025, September 2025, and June 2026. This latest survey, conducted for nine weeks starting June 21, 2026, covers three subjects: updated benchmarks on national and local polarization, benchmarks on polarization of specific topics nationally and locally, and an assessment of what local officials are most proud of in their own institutions.

Local officials remain far less concerned about polarization in their own communities than in the country as a whole, but that gap is narrowing. Concern about the country remains very high: 91% of local officeholders say polarization is substantially harming the nation, roughly in line with every survey in this series since 2024. Reports of substantial negative effects in their communities had been stable, holding at 30–31% across the three previous surveys. This survey, that figure jumped to 41%—the largest single shift recorded at either level. The increase reached even smaller communities (under 50,000 residents), which still report fewer negative effects than larger ones.

New to this survey, officials rated how polarizing each of eight topics is nationally and in their own communities, then identified which of the topics are becoming more polarizing as the midterms approach. Immigration tops the national list, rated as substantially polarizing by 84% of officials, ahead of cost of living (74%) and election administration and foreign affairs (both 72%). In their own communities, cost of living comes first at 58%, followed by taxes at 54% and housing at 41%. Immigration sits lower on that local list, at 36%, but it ranks third among the topics officials say are becoming more polarizing as the midterms approach. Public safety and homelessness are the least polarizing of the topics local governments handle directly, at 28% and 19%, respectively.

The final section turns to local sources of pride. Officials were asked, in an open-ended question, what they are proud of in their own board or community despite the national political climate. County and municipal officials pointed most often to community solidarity, then to avoiding party labels, with civil discourse and tangible accomplishments tied close behind. School board officials pointed most often to student-centered decision-making, followed by academic achievement and community support for their schools.

Read together, the three sections point in the same direction. Local resilience is strongest where local authority and decision making are clearest, and it is under most strain where officials are absorbing decisions beyond their control, particularly when handed down from the federal level.

STATE OF POLARIZATION: SUMMER 2026 UPDATE

The findings in the first section benchmark polarization over time by comparing the June 2026 survey with the preceding surveys in September 2025, January 2025, and August 2024.

1. **National Strife Remains High.** Ninety-one percent of local officeholders say polarization is doing substantial harm to the country. This figure has ranged between 83% (January 2025) and 91% (June 2026) across the four surveys. Fewer than 3% say polarization affects the country “a little” or “not at all,” while two-thirds report that it affects the country “a great deal.”
2. **Local Polarization Rising Sharply.** Forty-one percent of officials report substantial negative effects of polarization in their own communities, an eleven-point rise over September 2025 and the largest single-survey shift the series has recorded. Officials describe constituents arriving at meetings angrier than before, national talking points entering local forums, and decisions made at higher levels that constrain local governments. Nearly seven in ten expect conditions to worsen further before the midterms.
3. **Smaller Communities Catching Up.** Smaller communities have so far been relatively insulated from local polarization: across the past three surveys, only 28% reported substantial negative effects. This year, for the first time, that share has risen—to 39% among communities under 50,000 residents. Officials there point to their dependence on funding and policy set at higher levels, which leaves less room to absorb change. Larger communities (over 50,000 residents) continue to report greater effects, at 49%.

POLARIZATION BY TOPIC

The second section introduces issue-level benchmarking to the series. Officials rated how polarizing each of eight topics is nationally and in their own communities, then identified which of the topics are becoming more polarizing as the midterms approach.

4. **Immigration Is the Most Polarizing Topic Nationally.** Officials rate immigration as the most polarizing topic nationally, at 84%, ahead of cost of living (74%), election administration (72%), and foreign affairs (72%). Homelessness ranks last at 40%.
5. **Cost of Living Is the Most Polarizing Topic Locally.** In their own communities, officials rank cost of living first at 58%, taxes second at 54%, and housing third at 41%. Officials describe the increased division stemming from budget constraints of both residents and the local government.
6. **Immigration Beginning to Directly Impact Local Politics.** Nearly half (44%) of officials say immigration is becoming more polarizing locally as the midterms approach. They describe it shifting from a national issue to something they now deal with directly, with raised tension in public meetings about enforcement activity and service capacity.
7. **Public Safety and Homelessness Are Less Divisive.** Of the topics local governments own operationally, these two draw the least division, at 28% and 19%. Although these topics can be challenging to manage, officials and residents find common ground due to the concrete nature of the work.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESILIENCE

The third section is based on an open-ended question inviting officials to share what they are proud of in their own board or community despite the challenges of the national political climate. Responses were coded into recurring themes and are reported separately for municipal and county officials and school board officials.

8. **Municipal and County Officials Take Pride in Community Solidarity.** County and municipal officials most often take pride in the solidarity of their communities (32%), then avoiding party labels (20%), followed by civil discourse and tangible accomplishments, tied at 19% each. They described community solidarity as residents showing up for one another across political lines, and budgets approved for shared needs.
9. **School Boards Come Together Around Students.** School board officials most often named student-centered decision-making (35%), then academic achievement and program quality (21%) and community support for their schools (18%). They described the practice in operational terms: asking first how a choice serves students allows a board to debate more productively and come to an agreement.

Introduction

This report is based on a national survey of local government leaders and is the fourth in a series supported by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. The purpose of the series is to benchmark polarization in America as local officials experience it, identify local solutions, and explore opportunities to scale those solutions. The first survey in [August 2024](#) found that polarization is perceived to be far less divisive locally than nationally, though worse in communities of 50,000 or more residents. The [January 2025](#) survey examined the programs and activities that local leaders believed could improve civic participation and, in turn, reduce the negative effects of polarization. The [September 2025](#) survey assessed the role of local public institutions in fostering civic participation and documented both wide support for youth civics programming and its limited availability.

This report draws on a fourth survey of local government leaders conducted in June 2026, and it adds three facets to the series. First, it updates the national and local polarization benchmarks that have anchored every survey. Second, it introduces issue-level benchmarking: officials rated how polarizing each of eight specific topics is at the national level, then rated the same topics in their own communities, and then identified which topics are becoming more polarizing as the midterm elections approach. Third, it asks officials, in their own words, what they are proud of in their own board or community despite the broader political environment. Taken together, the three sections describe a period in which local officials report both the sharpest rise in local polarization the series has recorded and a durable account of what still works in their own institutions.

Key Terms Defined

Key terms used in the report are defined below.

- **Polarization:** Divisions between more liberal and more conservative individuals or groups. This is the definition respondents were given in the survey itself, and all polarization measures in this report should be read against it.
- **Local officials:** Used in this report when a finding covers both respondent groups—county and municipal officials and school board officials.

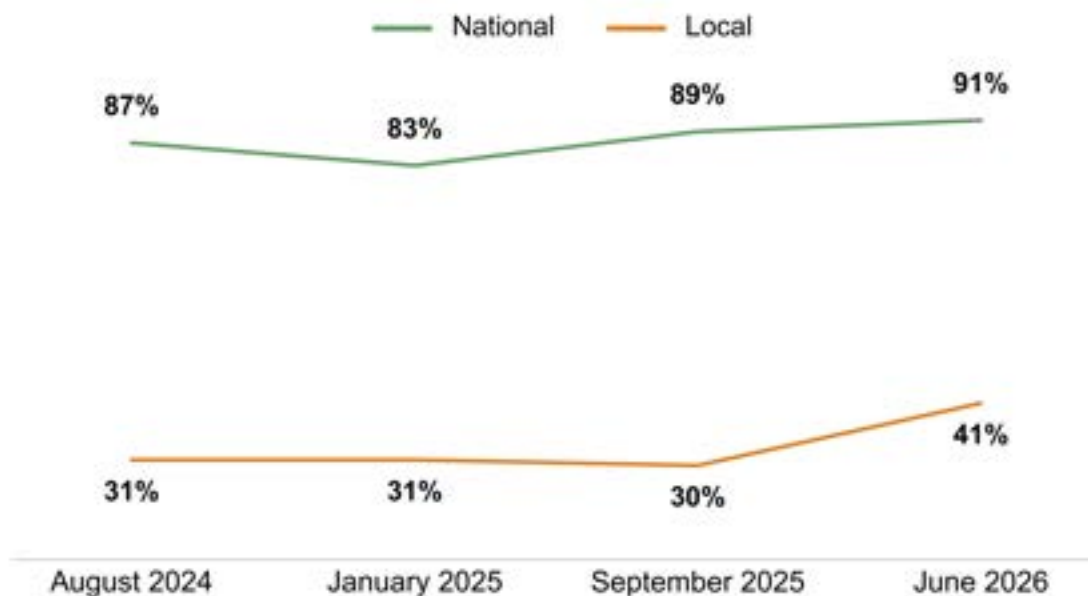
State of Polarization: Summer 2026 Update

This section benchmarks polarization over time by comparing results from the June 2026 survey with those from the three preceding surveys, conducted in September 2025, January 2025, and August 2024. In each survey, local government officials were asked to assess how much political polarization is negatively affecting the country as a whole and, separately, their own communities.

Local officials are still far less worried about polarization in their own communities than about polarization nationally, but the gap is closing. Concern about the country remains very high: 91% of local officeholders say polarization is doing substantial harm to the nation, roughly in line with every survey since 2024. Reports of substantial negative effects in their communities had been steady, sitting at 30–31% across the three prior surveys. In this survey, that number rose to 41%—the largest single-survey change recorded at either level. The question and overall results appear below.

In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting...
our country? | your local community?
(Not at all <=> A great deal)

Figure 1. Perceived Negative Effects of Polarization Over Time, National vs. Local



Note: Percentage of local government leaders who said political polarization is negatively affecting the country (green) or their local community (orange) "a lot" or "a great deal." Results are based on national CivicPulse surveys conducted in August 2024 (n = 1,412), January 2025 (n = 1,274), September 2025 (n = 1,399), and June 2026 (n = 1,224). Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows: National - ±2%, ±2%, ±2%, ±2%; Local - ±2%, ±3%, ±2%, ±3%.

Finding 1: National Strife Remains High

The June 2026 survey finds that 91% of local officeholders view political polarization as having “a great deal” or “a lot” of negative effects on the country (Figure 1). That is in line with the 89% recorded in September 2025, and with every survey since tracking began: across four surveys the reading has ranged only between 83% and 91%. In August 2024, at the height of the presidential campaign, it stood at 87%.

At 91%, the national reading is close to its practical ceiling. Fewer than 3% of officials in this survey described polarization as affecting the country “a little” or “not at all,” and two-thirds selected the most severe option available, “a great deal” (Figure A1). National conflict has become, for this population, an ambient condition rather than an episodic one.

Officials tend to contrast their work against the national landscape. As one council member for a mid-sized city in Washington put it, “Our local council tends to stay clear of the national issues. Local issues tend to be less divisive and easier to find common ground.... State and national are on a whole other level of divisiveness and vitriol—which means working for the people is harder.”¹ A commissioner for a large municipality in Georgia described a similar separation, noting that the midterms “won’t change the actual fabric of our community. On the ground, residents remain focused on practical everyday needs—like safe housing, solid infrastructure, and youth opportunities—and local government will continue to deliver those services steadily, regardless of the national political climate.”

“State and national are on a whole other level of divisiveness and vitriol—which means working for the people is harder.”

— Council member, mid-sized city in Washington

Finding 2: Local Polarization Rising Sharply

In the June 2026 survey, 41% of local officeholders reported that polarization is having “a great deal” or “a lot” of negative effects in their own communities, up from 30% in September 2025 (Figure 1). This is the largest single-survey increase recorded anywhere in the series, on either question. It is also a break in a pattern that had been remarkably stable: 31% in August 2024, 31% in January 2025, and 30% in September 2025. Where the national figure has stayed high and roughly flat, the local figure held steady for a year and then moved eleven points at once.

The distance between the two remains large. Local officials are still less than half as likely to report substantial harm in their own communities (41%) as in the country as a whole (91%). But the gap has narrowed from 59 points to 50. The distinctive finding of the first three surveys—that local politics was largely insulated from national conflict—now holds with an important qualification.

1. When quoting from survey responses, “small” refers to communities with populations under 10,000, “medium” or “mid-sized” refers to populations between 10,000 and 50,000, and “large” refers to communities of 50,000 or more residents.

“Polarization in national politics is making people angry and mean at the local level.... This has never happened before this year.”

— Mayor, small city in California

The open-ended responses in the survey add a description of the mechanism at street level. Officials point to three channels that demonstrate increased polarization: constituents arriving at meetings angrier than before, national rhetoric entering local forums directly, and federal policy changes landing on local governance without local input.

The first channel is the most frequently described. A mayor of a small city in California reported that “polarization in national politics is making people angry and mean at the local level. Locals have started to attend local council meetings to say very unpleasant things to Council members and other residents. This has never happened before this year.” A commissioner for a mid-sized municipality in Pennsylvania similarly noted “increased opposition at public meetings as the election nears.”

The second channel is the appearance of national subject matter on local agendas. As a trustee for a mid-sized municipality in Illinois explained, “The issues brought on by the midterm elections percolate to people’s everyday conversations. This shapes their view of local governance and the community. When talking to people, national (or state) issues become assigned to local governance, even when the issue is not in the purview of local governance.” Several officials pointed to social media and broadcast news as the culprit. A school board member in a mid-sized district in Washington observed that “as the elections get closer, media and particularly social media are impacting people’s emotions. As divisive political ads ramp up, I only see this worsening.”

The third channel is the most concrete: decisions made at the federal level that change what a local government can do. Officials in this survey referred to shifts in federal funding, enforcement activity, and cost-sharing arrangements as matters they now have to explain to residents without having had any part in setting. A county legislator in a large New York county suggested that changes to nutrition-assistance cost-sharing “are going to burden counties” while the county has no say in the underlying policy.

It is worth noting what the finding does and does not say: 41% is a minority. Most local officials still do not describe polarization as substantially harming their own community, and the most common response on the local question remains “a moderate amount” (Figure A1). The finding is about direction and speed, not about a majority.

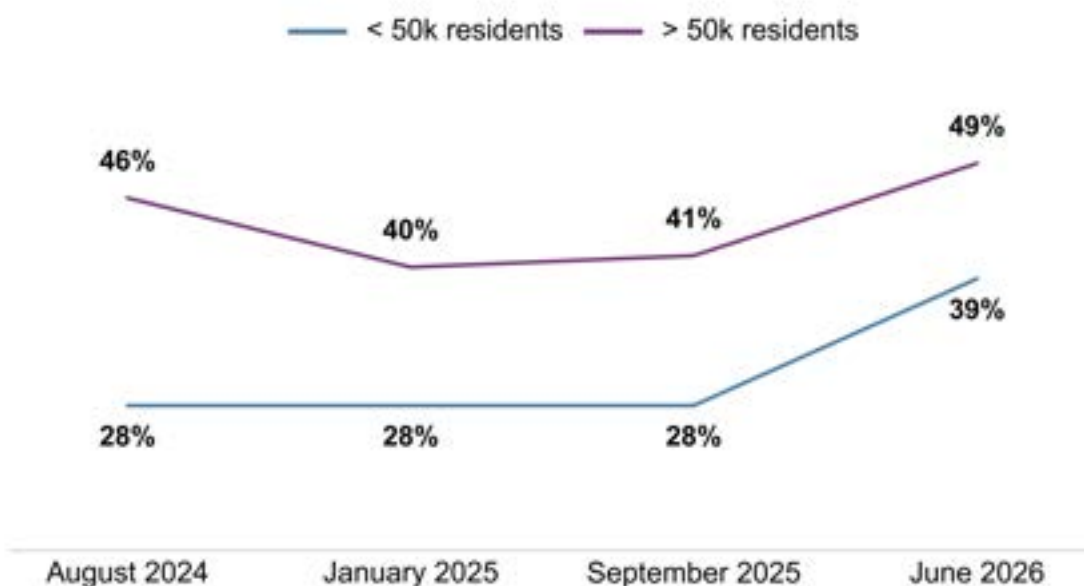
What Officials Expect Between Now and November

Because this survey was fielded as the midterm campaign was getting underway, officials were also asked what they expect to happen before the election. Sixty-nine percent expect polarization in their community to worsen at least “a moderate amount” in the lead-up to the midterms, and 38% expect it to worsen “a lot” or “a great deal” (Tables A4-6). Asked where that pressure will land, officials pointed outward more than inward. Thirty percent expect substantial effects on everyday life for residents, compared with 22% who expect substantial effects on local governance itself, 26% of school board officials who expect substantial effects on school board governance, and 20% who expect substantial effects on everyday life for students (Tables A7-9). The expectation, in other words, is that the campaign will be harder on communities than on the institutions governing them.

Finding 3: Smaller Communities Catching Up

Community size remains the most reliable predictor of local polarization across this series, and larger communities still report greater divisiveness: 49% of officials in places with more than 50,000 residents report substantial negative effects locally (Figure 2). What has changed is the smaller communities. Through the three earlier surveys, they held steady at 28%—this survey, 39% of officials in communities under 50,000 report substantial negative effects, the first change the series has recorded at that population level. Larger communities have changed little by comparison, and the size gap has narrowed without closing.

Figure 2. Perceived Negative Effects of Polarization Over Time, by Population Size



Note: Percentage of local government leaders who said political polarization is negatively affecting their local community “a lot” or “a great deal,” segmented by population size of the community (< 50k residents vs. > 50k residents). Results are based on national CivicPulse surveys conducted in August 2024 (n = 1,412), January 2025 (n = 1,274), September 2025 (n = 1,399), and June 2026 (n = 1,224). Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows: < 50k residents - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$; > 50k residents - $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 7\%$, $\pm 7\%$, $\pm 7\%$.

Officials in smaller communities describe a clear pattern: their local governments rely more heavily on money from state and federal sources, so when funding decisions change in Washington or a state capital, those communities have more trouble absorbing the impact. A school board president for a small district in Alaska described how his community “is largely insulated from outside politics on a national level. The only exception to that is its impact on federal funding for schools.”

“[Our town] is largely insulated from outside politics on a national level. The only exception to that is its impact on federal funding for schools.”

— School board president, small district in Alaska

Cost pressure compounds the effects of polarization. A chairman of a board of trustees for a small township in Ohio described the combination: “The increase in cost of living is very concerning for our rural Appalachian community. We have an added impact of being a tourist destination, which made the taxes go up as all the housing is getting bought up by rental companies, and our kids can't afford to live here.” Other officials pointed to land-use conflicts that arrive from outside and divide neighbors along lines that have little to do with party. A supervisor for a small municipality in Wisconsin reported that “because we are a rural community, the pressure to have renewable energy sited here is polarizing just about everyone and in some cases dividing families.”

Officials in the smallest communities continue to describe conditions much as earlier surveys of this series did. Boards remain formally nonpartisan, agendas remain concrete, and residents know one another. A chairman of a board of supervisors for a small municipality in Wisconsin described the arrangement in terms that would have fit any of the three previous reports: “The elected leaders in our rural communities are focused on the people and good governance. Our elected positions are non-partisan. The local community expects their taxes to be used wisely without regard to political division.” An alderman for a small city in Missouri described it this way—the recurring complaints his office receives are “about the roads and trash collection” rather than about politics.

Polarization by Topic

The June 2026 survey introduced benchmarking to the series to identify issues driving local polarization. Officials rated how polarizing each of eight topics is at the national level, then rated the same eight topics in their own communities, then identified which of the topics are becoming more polarizing as the midterms approach. The topics were housing, cost of living, public safety, homelessness, immigration, taxes, election administration, and foreign affairs.

For each topic, officials were asked how polarizing it is at the national level and, separately, in their own community. The percentage who answered “a lot” or “a great deal” was calculated for each. The results are displayed in Figure 3.

From your perspective, how polarizing is each of the following topics at the national level?

For the same set of topics, how polarizing is each topic in your local community?

(Not at all <--> A great deal)

Housing | Cost of living | Public safety | Homelessness | Immigration | Taxes | Election administration | Foreign affairs

Figure 3. Most Polarizing Topics at the National vs. Local Level

National level			Local level		
1	Immigration	84%	1	Cost of living	58%
2	Cost of living	74%	2	Taxes	54%
3	Election administration	72%	3	Housing	41%
3	Foreign affairs	72%	4	Immigration	36%
5	Taxes	68%	5	Public safety	28%
6	Public safety	55%	6	Election administration	26%
7	Housing	52%	7	Foreign affairs	22%
8	Homelessness	40%	8	Homelessness	19%

Note: Percentage of local government leaders who said each topic is polarizing “a lot” or “a great deal” at the national level (green) or in their local community (orange). Election administration and foreign affairs are tied at the national level and share rank 3. Results are based on the June 2026 CivicPulse national survey (n = 1,224). Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National level - ±2%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%; Local level - ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±3%, ±2%, ±2%.

Finding 4: Immigration Is the Most Polarizing Topic Nationally

Asked to rate how polarizing each topic is at the national level, local officials placed immigration first by a clear margin. Eighty-four percent said immigration is polarizing “a lot” or “a great deal” nationally, ten points ahead of cost of living (74%), the next topic on the list. Election administration and foreign affairs tied for third most polarizing, at 72%. Taxes came next at 68%, then public safety (55%), housing (52%), and homelessness (40%) (Figure 3, national side).

Officials did not simply agree that immigration is contentious at the national level; most put it at the far end of the scale. Sixty-three percent chose the strongest of the five options offered, “a great deal,” while just 6% chose “a little” or “not at all.” Officials on opposite sides of the issue describe it in similarly absolute terms. A county commissioner in a large New Mexico county wrote that “immigration and public safety go hand in hand. We need to control illegal immigration. If not, crime skyrockets, drug trafficking and human trafficking increases.” A school board member in a large Colorado district described the reverse position and the same impasse: “As we continue displacing people and talking about humans like they aren't people, we see serious divide,” adding that on this and the other flashpoint topics, “people cannot see past their side.”

Officials' reading of immigration matches what polling of the general public found around the same time. Gallup, surveying in June of 2026, found 73% of Americans saying immigration is a good thing for the country. That figure does not specify the split beneath it: it is 91% among Democrats and 50% among Republicans, a 41-point gap ([Brenan 2026](#)). The gap is durable—over the 25 years Gallup has asked the question, it has fluctuated between roughly 20 and more than 50 points, and it has widened again in the past year.

Finding 5: Cost of Living Is the Most Polarizing Topic Locally

In their own communities, officials ranked cost of living first (58%), taxes second (54%), and housing third (41%) (Figure 3, local side). No other topic reaches 40% locally.

The contrast with the national list is sharpest on the topics local governments have least authority over. Immigration, foreign affairs, and election administration each drop more than 45 points between the national and local ratings—immigration from 84% to 36%, foreign affairs from 72% to 22%, and election administration from 72% to 26%. The economic topics drop far less: 16 points for cost of living, 14 for taxes, and 11 for housing. A local government does not control the cost of living, but it does set property tax rates, approve utility charges, and decide whether new housing gets built. Those decisions land in the same household budget.

Two features of the affordability debate help explain why cost of living leads the local list. Partisan divides now show up in beliefs about inflation itself—its recent level, its future path, and the central bank's target—not merely in views about how to respond to it ([Farhart and Struby 2026](#)). And affordability pressure has proven remarkably durable even as measured inflation has fallen, in part because people don't credit wage gains as offsetting higher prices—raises register as a reward for performance, not compensation for the cost of living ([Stantcheva](#)

2024). A resident who believes prices are rising and a resident who believes they are stabilizing will not agree about whether a proposed local tax increase is reasonable.

“Beyond the loud voices, there is an undercurrent of people feeling less able to afford the basics with the current economy and taxes and fear of losing their housing.”

— School board member, mid-sized district in Massachusetts

Officials describe this as a shift in the emotional register of ordinary budget conversations. A school board member in a mid-sized Massachusetts district pointed to “an undercurrent of people feeling less able to afford the basics with the current economy and taxes and fear of losing their housing or having others in the community lose their housing.” A council member for a mid-sized city in Utah described a rate discussion that turned into something broader: facing a needed property tax increase, “we’ve had people come and suggest that we get rid of crossing guards and cut employee wages instead of a tax. There is a real need for educating people on how governments work.”

Notably, several officials described these divisions as cutting across party rather than along it. A council member for a small city in Iowa put it directly: “The main polarization is regarding property taxes and the two sides are becoming less Dem v. Rep and more local v. state government.” A council member for a small city in Ohio described the same displacement from a different angle, noting that “small issues such as park use and energy aggregation can become proxy issues for cost-of-living issues and public safety issues.” When affordability is the underlying pressure, it surfaces through whatever local decision is nearest to hand.

School districts encounter this pressure at its sharpest, because a levy or bond campaign asks residents to accept a higher tax bill. A school board member for a small district in New York described a budget that “failed the first time and the second time only passed by 5 votes,” with a possible district merger ahead, “fueled by the high cost of living and people either unwilling or unable to pay higher taxes.”

The midterm context intensifies this. Cost of living and taxes are, by a wide margin, the two topics officials most often identify as becoming more polarizing locally in the run-up to the election—64% and 59% respectively (Figure 4). For local governments, that means the most consequential campaign issue is also the one they are most often required to legislate directly.

Finding 6: Immigration Beginning to Directly Impact Local Politics

Officials were also asked which topics, if any, are becoming more polarizing in their local community as the midterm elections approach. Cost of living led at 64% and taxes followed at 59%, consistent with Finding 5. The third-ranked topic in the list is the notable one: 44% of officials named immigration, ahead of housing (38%), election administration (32%), public safety (24%), foreign affairs (21%), and homelessness (17%) (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Topics Becoming More Polarized
in Local Communities as Midterms Approach**

1	Cost of living	64%
2	Taxes	59%
3	Immigration	44%
4	Housing	38%
5	Election administration	32%
6	Public safety	24%
7	Foreign affairs	21%
8	Homelessness	17%

Note: Percentage of local government leaders who said each topic is becoming more polarizing in their local community as the midterm elections approach. Respondents could select multiple topics. Results are based on the June 2026 CivicPulse national survey (n = 1,224). Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

Immigration also shows the largest gap between where officials put it locally today and where they expect it to go. Thirty-six percent describe immigration as substantially polarizing in their community now, and 44% describe it as becoming more so in the leadup to the midterms—the widest difference for any topic in the set, ahead of cost of living and election administration (each with a difference of 6% pts). By this measure, immigration is the most rapidly polarizing topic at the local level even though it ranks only fourth in absolute terms.

This matters because immigration has historically been understood as a federal matter, well outside the purview of local governance. That understanding is changing in practice. Communities have become the setting for a widening range of immigration-related policy and administrative activity even where formal authority rests elsewhere ([McConnell 2026](#)), and research on local immigration policy finds that it shapes where immigrants choose to live regardless of their legal status, with concerns about safety and discrimination operating

across status categories ([Lueders 2025](#)). A topic that once reached local government mainly as campaign rhetoric now reaches it as a governing question.

Officials describe this shift from multiple directions. A council member for a mid-sized city in California reported that “my community has immigrants and some of them are not citizens. There has been concern about the operations of ICE and Border Patrol and dividing families, including those who are on a pathway to citizenship.” A school board member in a small New Jersey district described the effect on school participation: “Our students are afraid of ICE arresting their parents. Parents are afraid to come to the school for meetings and events.” A council member for a small city in Minnesota reported that enforcement activity and related arrests in the metropolitan area “has created tension in the community. People are just on edge.”

“Our students are afraid of ICE arresting their parents. Parents are afraid to come to the school for meetings and events.”

— School board member, small district in New Jersey

Other officials reported the opposite reading of the same policy environment. A supervisor for a small township in Michigan explained that “we feel generally safer due to immigration enforcement. If midterm elections cause that to go the other way, we don't feel safer.” A council member for a small city in Georgia reported that among constituents he knows, the belief that enforcement remains insufficient “will impact how people vote more than concerns about the economy, inflation or gas prices.”

A third group of officials described immigration arriving as a service-capacity question rather than a political one. A school board member for a small elementary district in Illinois reported that “our area is getting a big number of immigrants and refugees. Our small local school has [more than 40] separate languages. The issue isn't the kids, it's the financial and systemic support that's needed.” For that district, the immediate matter is staffing and funding. What the data show, taken together, is a topic that local officials increasingly have to manage in the ordinary course of governing, and on which their residents disagree sharply.

Schools and municipalities are meeting the same shift in different places. For schools it arrives as enrollment questions, attendance drops, and parents who stop coming to meetings; for municipalities, as enforcement activity, public comment, and calls from constituents. Both are now handling a subject that neither has much authority over.

Finding 7: Public Safety and Homelessness Are Less Divisive

Public safety and homelessness sit at the bottom of both national and local polarization rankings among the topics that fall within local authority. Public safety is described as substantially polarizing by 55% of officials nationally and 28% locally; homelessness by 40% nationally and 19% locally, making homelessness the least polarizing topic in the set on both measures (Figure 3). Public safety and homelessness are also among the topics least often identified as becoming more polarizing as the midterms approach, at 24% and 17% respectively. Only foreign affairs, at 21%, sits between them (Figure 4).

These are also the topics local governments most directly own. Police departments, emergency services, shelter provision, and encampment policy are local responsibilities in a way that immigration enforcement and foreign affairs are not, and residents can see what their government is doing about them. Officials described that visibility as supporting common ground rather than eroding it. As a council member for a large municipality in New Mexico put it, “our community wants better roads, more employment and things to do in my municipality and that is what we, as municipal leaders, work on.”

What this pattern suggests is that officials retain more common ground on the problems they are directly responsible for solving than on the economic and immigration questions arriving from outside—even as overall polarization rises. It is consistent with the account of local resilience that emerged in the first survey in this series, in which officials attributed the relative calm of local politics to the practical, concrete character of the decisions in front of them ([CivicPulse 2024](#)). The reservoir of agreement has not disappeared. It is being drawn on by a narrower set of topics than before.

“Less divisive” is not the same as “not a problem.” A topic can register low on polarization and still be among the hardest problems an official faces: a school board president in a large Florida district reported serving students experiencing homelessness alongside a water infrastructure problem and described outside groups “attacking elected people rather than working to fix the issues.” The relative calm may also partly reflect low salience rather than genuine agreement: where a topic is not currently a live local issue, officials have little occasion to observe division over it. A council member for a small town in Maryland described the local baseline behind that calm: “We have no real crime in [our town]. Our police department has a 95% case closure rate, and no one has been murdered in town in at least 40 years.” What the question captures is what officials are seeing, and on these two topics they are seeing less conflict.

Is the Campaign Bringing Residents In, or Driving Them Apart?

Officials were also asked whether the upcoming elections are increasing resident engagement, and whether that increase has been more positive or more negative. Forty-nine percent report at least a moderate increase in engagement, though only 17% describe the increase as large (Tables A16-18). Among officials who reported any increase, the assessment is mixed rather than negative: 51% describe the change as “an even mix,” 28% as more negative, and 21% as more positive (Tables A19-21). A school board member in a mid-sized Washington district captured the ambivalence: “At least people are talking, but I don’t know how much people actually listen or just respond to react.” Others reported concrete gains. A school board member in a mid-sized Massachusetts district noted that “increased involvement by residents in city government, particularly the school department, has forced greater transparency during the budget process.” A selectwoman in a small New Hampshire town summarized the balance as “about an equal number of negative complainers to positive solution seekers.”

Local Government Resilience

The first two sections of this report document rising polarization: a national figure holding near the top of its range, the largest single-survey increase in local polarization, and a set of specific topics through which national conflict is arriving in local communities. This section turns to what is holding. Despite the pressures described above, most local officials continue to describe their own institutions as functioning—and in this survey they were asked to say so in their own words.

The June 2026 survey included an open-ended question inviting officials to share anything about their own board or community that they are particularly proud of despite the broader political challenges the country faces. Responses were coded into recurring themes. Because the question is open-ended, the resulting percentages describe what officials chose to raise unprompted rather than their agreement with items on a list, which makes them a useful measure of what is most salient to local leaders about their own institutions. Results are displayed separately for county and municipal officials and for school board officials in Figure 5.

Each of the three previous reports found that local government is comparatively insulated from national polarization, and observers have pointed to local government as evidence that polarization is not an inevitable feature of American politics, attributing the difference to concrete problem-solving, proximity between officials and residents, cross-cutting local identities, and the largely nonpartisan structure of local elections ([CivicPulse 2025](#)).

That account has a conspicuous exception. School boards have been the most visible site of local political conflict in recent years. A Brookings study of school board conflict found that the share of students in districts experiencing board-community conflict rose from 8% before the pandemic to 47% during it, settling at 18% afterward—well above the pre-pandemic baseline—and that roughly 62% of students attended districts that experienced at least one extreme incident, such as harassment or threats directed at board members, between 2020 and 2022 ([Valant et al. 2026](#)). Related work documents how school board races have been drawn into national culture-war debates, with candidates' positions on nationally divisive issues shaping outcomes more than district-specific concerns ([Shah, Weinschenk, and Yiannias 2024](#)).

Recent analysis complicates that picture. A study of roughly 100,000 school board meetings across 1,600 districts found that most meetings are relatively civil and that high-conflict meetings have been concentrated in a small number of communities, peaking in late 2021 ([Holman, Johnson, and Simko 2026](#)). The question this section addresses, then, is not whether school boards have faced conflict—they have—but how local leaders in both groups describe the institutional culture they are operating within, and whether the two groups describe it in the same terms. They do not.

Finally, we want to offer an opportunity to share anything else about your [local/school] board or community that you are particularly proud of despite the broader political challenges this country faces.

(open-ended)

Figure 5. What are local officeholders most proud of in their board or community?

Municipal/County/Township Officials			School Board Officials		
1	Community solidarity	32%	1	Student-centered decision-making	35%
2	Avoiding party labels	20%	2	Academic achievement & program quality	21%
3	Civil discourse	19%	3	Community support for schools	18%
3	Tangible accomplishments	19%	4	Fiscal responsibility	15%
5	Fiscal responsibility	17%	4	Civil discourse	15%
6	Community-focused governance	13%	4	Defense of public education	15%
7	Cross-ideological collaboration	11%	7	Civic engagement	13%
8	Effective contrast to higher levels of government	10%	8	Strong leadership & board-administration partnership	11%
9	Transparency & open governance	8%	8	Cross-ideological collaboration	11%
10	Protecting vulnerable residents	7%	8	Avoiding party labels	11%

Note: Percentage of local government officials whose response was coded into each category, in response to the question, 'We want to offer an opportunity to share anything else about your local/school board or community that you are particularly proud of despite the broader political challenges this country faces'. Percentages are of the 337 officials who named something they are proud of. Categories are not mutually exclusive, so columns do not sum to 100%. Based on the June 2026 CivicPulse national survey (n = 1,224). Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: Municipal/county/township officials - $\pm 7\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$; school board officials - $\pm 7\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 5\%$.

Finding 8: Municipal and County Officials Take Pride in Community Solidarity

Among municipal, county, and township elected officials, the most common theme raised was not an accomplishment of the government at all. It was the community itself. Thirty-two percent of officials who answered pointed to community solidarity—residents showing up for each other across political lines. Avoiding party labels ranked second at 20%, with civil discourse and tangible accomplishments tied behind it at 19% each (Figure 5, left side).

Officials describing solidarity tended to describe it as something demonstrated under strain rather than merely a general disposition. A council member for a mid-sized city in Minnesota described a community that has shifted politically in recent years and nonetheless holds together: "The community has shown that they are always willing to come together when

other members of our community are in need, regardless of who they are.” A mayor of a mid-sized city in Georgia described the same phenomenon as a byproduct of density of relationship: the town “can be a frustrating place politically because there is often not party discipline. But that’s largely because people have deep relationships in our community that transcend party affiliation. That’s a good thing overall and allows for more conversations to happen across party lines than may happen in other places.”

“People have deep relationships in our community that transcend party affiliation... That allows for more conversations to happen across party lines than may happen in other places.”

— Mayor, mid-sized city in Georgia

Solidarity also showed up as budget behavior. A selectman for a small town in Maine reported that “residents can coalesce around local issues, such as tackling food insecurity, regardless of the polarization. The residents voted to triple the food pantry budget and continue to support projects that better the community in the long term.” That is a useful illustration of the difference between agreement and cooperation: the community did not become less politically divided, but it approved a specific expenditure by a wide margin.

The next most common themes describe the governing body rather than the community. The most common one is the claim that party labels have no bearing on local decisions. A selectman for a small town in Massachusetts put it categorically: “Our select board operates entirely outside any national political interests. We operate on behalf of our town, doing so in a fair and democratic process. Political parties are never mentioned nor do they attempt to influence our process.” A chairman of a board of supervisors for a small township in Pennsylvania described the same thing as sustained effort rather than a natural condition: “Our board consists of 3 Republicans. None of us has a Republican agenda.... We all work together to ensure that politics have no place in our roles as township supervisors, and I believe that all of us are dedicated to promoting and working for the common good.”

On discourse, a commissioner for a small municipality in North Carolina described the standard his board holds: “How well the board behaves with civility and thoughtfulness. We can and do disagree passionately about different issues and remain collegial, and each of us supports board decisions and works to make them work for our residents even when we disagree with passage.” When discussing delivery of services, officials were specific and unglamorous. A council member for a small town in New York listed a fiber-optic broadband installation reaching every residence and a rail trail connecting the township to a regional biking network.

Fiscal responsibility is the next most common theme, at 17%. The remaining themes are about political self-definition rather than accomplishment: community-focused governance (13%), cross-ideological collaboration (11%), and their government functioning as an effective contrast to higher levels of government (10%)—closely related ideas that together describe a shared posture toward national politics rather than a governing accomplishment.

Finding 9: School Boards Come Together Around Students

School board officials answered the same question very differently. Their most common theme, named by 35% of school board officials who answered, was student-centered decision-making—using student welfare as the explicit test for board decisions. Academic achievement and program quality ranked second at 21%, and community support for schools third at 18% (Figure 5, right side). Three themes then follow at 15% each: fiscal responsibility, civil discourse, and defense of public education.

Despite being the institution that has faced the most visible political conflict of the past five years with elevated rates of board-community conflict persisting after the peak during the pandemic ([Valant et al. 2026](#)), school board officials describe how they are able to cut through disagreement and focus on students. The most common tactic school board officials describe is a shared decision rule. Officials describe the rule in operational terms. A school board member in a mid-sized district in Virginia explained: “Our board is unified in prioritizing student academic outcomes and opportunities. The first question we ask on every issue is, ‘How does this benefit our students?’ It keeps the discussion focused where it needs to be and centers our work on the main objective—educating students.” A school board member in a mid-sized district in Ohio described why it works even on an ideologically mixed board: “For the most part, we have kept a lot of the polarization away from our board governance, even though I believe we do have a diverse ideological board. People across the ideological spectrum care about the quality of our schools, and I think that makes polarization a bit more diminished for us.”

“The first question we ask on every issue is, ‘How does this benefit our students?’ It keeps the discussion focused where it needs to be.”

— School board member, mid-sized district in Virginia

The second theme, academic achievement and program quality, was described with the same specificity municipal officials brought to their tangible accomplishments. A school board member in a mid-sized district in Minnesota described a career academy “where students learn by doing and engage in real-world, hands-on experiences every day. This isn’t a slogan, it’s the lived reality in our classrooms.” A school board member for a small district in Pennsylvania noted that despite “a skeletal staff... our test scores are almost always higher than the state averages and considerably higher than other schools of our size. All board decisions are made based on what is most beneficial for our students.”

The next cluster in the school board list describes the conditions that make the decision rule workable. Fifteen percent of school board officials who answered pointed to civil discourse, which officials described as maintained deliberately rather than inherited. A school board member in a large Tennessee district explained that “as a board, we are respectful of each other and are not antagonistic.... We are respectful in our discussions and do not limit reflection on what we feel is important, regardless of viewpoint.” Defense of public education was named just as often (15%), reflecting a group of officials whose pride was specifically in holding a line against external pressure. Strong leadership and a functioning board-administration partnership followed at 11%. A school board president in a large

Wisconsin district described a board that “allows the administration to do their job with great oversight by the School Board,” adding that “we work well together; everyone understands their role.”

The third theme moves outward to the community. A school board member in a mid-sized district in Michigan pointed to “our track record of close to 2-1 win ratio on school related millage questions in our community. Strong local support for our schools. As a result, we are finishing [a large] bond construction project that has a wide range of student and community benefits.” A school board president in a mid-sized district in South Dakota described the underlying social conditions in their community: “The Democrats and Republicans all get along, they know each other, work with each other, respect and listen to each other, and use common sense vs extremes.” Read alongside the research showing that high-conflict meetings are concentrated in a minority of districts rather than universal ([Holman, Johnson, and Simko 2026](#)), these accounts describe institutions that have been tested and have largely kept functioning.

This was an optional open-ended question about what officials are proud of, so the responses are not a representative census of local government conditions; they describe what officials chose to volunteer when invited to name something positive. Pride in an institution is also not the same as an absence of conflict within it. Several officials described boards that function well now precisely because they came through a contested period—an election cycle that changed the board's composition, a difficult superintendent transition, a budget that failed before it passed.

Conclusion

This report marks the fourth installment in CivicPulse's *Polarization in America: Survey of Local Government* series, supported by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. The series is based on nationally representative surveys of municipal, county, township, and school board officials in America, conducted in August 2024, January 2025, September 2025, and June 2026.

For three surveys, the central finding of this series was a gap. Local officials described national politics as deeply damaged while describing their own communities as comparatively resilient. That gap was the series' most durable result—and its most hopeful one. It showed that local government could keep functioning through a period of intense national conflict, which demonstrated that polarization was not inevitable at the local level, and that local institutions were doing something worth understanding. The June 2026 survey qualifies that finding. National concern remains at 91%, essentially where it stood in September 2025. Local concern rose eleven points in a single survey, from 30% to 41%—the largest shift the series has recorded at either level. The distance between the national and local numbers is still wide at 50 points, but it has closed by nine.

The increase reached smaller communities as well. Community size has been the clearest divide on this measure since the first survey in this series. However, this survey suggests smaller communities may be somewhat less insulated from polarization than they previously appeared.

The issue-level data complicate a simple local/national divide. Cost of living is the most divisive issue on the local polarization list. And while a local government does not control the cost of living, it does contribute to it by setting property tax rates, approving utility charges, and deciding whether new housing gets built. Immigration, a subject where local governments hold little formal authority and residents disagree sharply, is becoming increasingly polarizing at the local level even though it is nationally driven. Public safety and homelessness, the topics local governments most directly own, remain the least divisive.

The final section documents what remains hopeful. Asked what they are proud of in their own board or community despite the political environment, county and municipal officials pointed first to community solidarity, then to avoiding party labels, with civil discourse and tangible accomplishments tied behind. School board officials pointed first to student-centered decision-making, followed by academic achievement and program quality, and then community support for schools.

Read together, the three sections point in the same direction. Local resilience is strongest where local authority is clearest, and it is under most strain where officials are absorbing decisions made elsewhere. The report findings suggest that officials retain more common ground on the problems they are directly responsible for solving than on the economic and immigration challenges arriving from outside—even as overall polarization rises.

Local government resilience has been the most encouraging finding of this series for two years, and it remains encouraging. Officials continue to describe communities that show up for one another, boards that disagree without fracturing, and work that gets done. But the June 2026 results are the first to show that insulation is weakening, and they identify the topics through which it is doing so. The practices that have made local government resilient are still working, but they are strained.

Key Takeaways

- **Affordability is the most polarizing issue at the local level.** Cost of living (58%) and taxes (54%) are the two most divisive topics in officials' own communities, and both are expected to intensify before the midterms.
- **Nationally driven issues are arriving locally regardless of authority.** Immigration is the most polarizing topic nationally (84%), and officials expect it to become even more so locally as the midterms approach.
- **Smaller communities face new exposure.** Reported local effects among communities under 50,000 residents held flat at 28% across three surveys and jumped to 39% in this one, narrowing the gap with larger communities (49%).
- **Topics local governments own remain the least divisive.** The topics local governments own operationally—public safety and homelessness—remain the least divisive in this survey.

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List of Quotes

All quotes that appear in the report, in the order in which they appear.

State of Polarization: Summer 2026 Update

“Our local council tends to stay clear of the national issues. Local issues tend to be less divisive and easier to find common ground.... State and National are on a whole other level of divisiveness and vitriol—which means working for the people is harder.”

— *Council member, mid-sized city in Washington*

“However, the elections won’t change the actual fabric of our community. On the ground, residents remain focused on practical everyday needs—like safe housing, solid infrastructure, and youth opportunities—and local government will continue to deliver those services steadily, regardless of the national political climate.”

— *Commissioner, large municipality in Georgia*

“Polarization in national politics is making people angry and mean at the local level. Locals have started to attend local council meetings to say very unpleasant things to Councilmembers and other residents. This has never happened before this year.”

— *Mayor, small city in California*

“I have noticed increased opposition at public meetings as the election nears.”

— *Commissioner, mid-sized municipality in Pennsylvania*

“The issues brought on by the midterm elections percolate to people’s everyday conversations. This shapes their view of local governance and the community. When talking to people, national (or state) issues become assigned to local governance, even when the issue is not in the purview of local governance.”

— *Trustee, mid-sized municipality in Illinois*

“As the elections get closer, media and particularly social media are impacting peoples’ emotions. As divisive political ads ramp up, I only see this worsening.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Washington*

“SNAP cost shifts as a result of One Big Beautiful Bill are going to burden counties while taxes favor the wealthy and further spread the divide between affordability and having to make choices in order to meet most basic needs.”

— *County legislator, large county in New York*

“[Our town] is largely insulated from outside politics on a national level. The only exception to that is its impact on Federal funding for schools.”

— *School board president, small district in Alaska*

“The increase in cost of living is very concerning for our rural community. We have an added impact of being a tourist destination, which made the taxes go up as all the housing is getting bought up by rental companies and our kids can't afford to live here.”

— *Chairman, Board of Trustees, small township in Ohio*

“Taxes are starting to become a huge issue. Along with that, because we are a rural community, the pressure to have renewable energy sited here is polarizing just about everyone and in some cases dividing families.”

— *Supervisor, small municipality in Wisconsin*

“The elected leaders in our rural communities are focused on the people and good governance. Our elected positions are non-partisan. The local community expects their taxes to be used wisely without regard to political division.”

— *Chairman, Board of Supervisors, small municipality in Wisconsin*

“In a bedroom community such as ours, there's more local complaints about the roads and trash collection.”

— *Alderman, small city in Missouri*

Polarization by Topic

“Immigration and public safety go hand in hand. We need to control illegal immigration. If not, crime skyrockets, drug trafficking and human trafficking increases.”

— *County commissioner, large county in New Mexico*

“As we continue displacing people and talking about humans like they aren't people, we see serious divide ... people cannot see past their side.”

— *School board member, large district in Colorado*

“Beyond the loud voices, there is an undercurrent of people feeling less able to afford the basics with the current economy and taxes and fear of losing their housing or having others in the community lose their housing.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Massachusetts*

“Our city needs to do a property tax increase. We've had people come and suggest that we get rid of crossing guards and cut employee wages instead of a tax. There is a real need for educating people on how governments work.”

— *Council member, mid-sized city in Utah*

“The main polarization is regarding property taxes and the two sides are becoming less Dem v. Rep and more local v. state government.”

— *Council member, small city in Iowa*

“Small issues such as park use and energy aggregation can become proxy issues for cost of living issues and public safety issues.”

— *Council member, small city in Ohio*

“We had a very difficult time getting our budget to pass this year; it failed the first time and the second time only passed by 5 votes ... fueled by the high cost of living and people either unwilling or unable to pay higher taxes.”

— *School board member, small district in New York*

“My community has immigrants and some of them are not citizens. There has been concern about the operations of ICE and Border Patrol and dividing families, including those who are on a pathway to citizenship.”

— *Council member, mid-sized city in California*

“Our students are afraid of ICE arresting their parents. Parents are afraid to come to the school for meetings and events.”

— *School board member, small district in New Jersey*

“With the ICE occupation of [our metro area] and now the arrest of 15 individuals associated with the protest, [this] has created tension in the community. People are just on edge.”

— *Council member, small city in Minnesota*

“For example, we feel generally safer due to immigration enforcement. If midterm elections cause that to go the other way, we don't feel safer.”

— *Supervisor, small township in Michigan*

“Many people I know are convinced there are still too many dangerous illegal alien criminals present in the country. This will impact how people vote more than concerns about the economy, inflation or gas prices.”

— *Council member, small city in Georgia*

“Our area is getting a big number of immigrants and refugees. Our small local school has [more than 40] separate languages. The issue isn't the kids, it's the financial and systemic support that's needed.”

— *School board member, small elementary district in Illinois*

“We focus on the everyday needs of our community, other than partisan voting, and there are a lot of unaffiliated voters; our community wants better roads, more employment and things to do in my municipality and that is what we, as municipal leaders, work on.”

— *Council member, large municipality in New Mexico*

“There are outside groups that are attacking elected people rather than working to fix the issues.”

— *School board president, large district in Florida*

“We have no real crime in [our town]. Our police department has a 95% case closure rate, and no one has been murdered in town in at least 40 years.”

— *Council member, small town in Maryland*

“At least people are talking, but I don't know how much people actually listen or just respond to react.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Washington*

“Increased involvement by residents in city government, particularly the school department, has forced greater transparency during the budget process.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Massachusetts*

“We’re seeing about an equal number of negative complainers to positive solution seekers.”

— *Selectwoman, small town in New Hampshire*

Local Government Resilience

“We’re a progressive council with a “middle of the road” mayor, living in a small city that’s transitioned into a pretty left leaning area over the past several years. Despite all of that, the community has shown that they are always willing to come together when other members of our community are in need, regardless of who they are.”

— *Council member, mid-sized city in Minnesota*

“[Our city] can be a frustrating place politically because there is often not party discipline. But that’s largely because people have deep relationships in our community that transcend party affiliation. That’s a good thing overall, and allows for more conversations to happen across party lines than may happen in other places.”

— *Mayor, mid-sized city in Georgia*

“Residents can coalesce around local issues, such as tackling food insecurity, regardless of the polarization. The residents voted to triple the food pantry budget and continue to support projects that better the community in the long term.”

— *Selectman, small town in Maine*

“Our select board operates entirely outside any national political interests. We operate on behalf of our town, doing so in a fair and democratic process. Political parties are never mentioned nor do they attempt to influence our process.”

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“Our board consists of 3 Republicans. None of us has a Republican agenda.... We all work together to ensure that politics have no place in our roles as township supervisors, and I believe that all of us are dedicated to promoting and working for the common good.”

— *Chairman, Board of Supervisors, small township in Pennsylvania*

“How well the board behaves with civility and thoughtfulness. We can and do disagree passionately about different issues and remain collegial, and each of us supports board decisions and works to make them work for our residents even when we disagree with passage.”

— *Commissioner, small municipality in North Carolina*

“Our board is unified in prioritizing student academic outcomes and opportunities. The first question we ask on every issue is, ‘How does this benefit our students?’ It keeps the discussion focused where it needs to be and centers our work on the main objective—educating students.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Virginia*

“For the most part, we have kept a lot of the polarization away from our board governance, even though I believe we do have a diverse ideological board. People across the ideological spectrum care about the quality of our schools and I think that makes polarization a bit more diminished for us.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Ohio*

“My school is a state-of-the-art career academy, where students learn by doing and engage in real-world, hands-on experiences every day. This isn't a slogan, it's the lived reality in our classrooms.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Minnesota*

“We are a small district with a skeletal staff; however, our test scores are almost always higher than the state averages and considerably higher than other schools of our size. All board decisions are made based on what is most beneficial for our students.”

— *School board member, small district in Pennsylvania*

“As a board, we are respectful of each other and are not antagonistic.... We are respectful in our discussions and do not limit reflection on what we feel is important, regardless of viewpoint.”

— *School board member, large district in Tennessee*

“We are a very solid board that allows the administration to do their job with great oversight by the School Board. We work well together; everyone understands their role.”

— *School board president, large district in Wisconsin*

“We are proud of our track record of close to 2-1 win ratio on school related millage questions in our community. Strong local support for our schools. As a result, we are finishing [a large] bond construction project that has a wide range of student and community benefits.”

— *School board member, mid-sized district in Michigan*

“Generally speaking, in [our town] the Democrats and Republicans all get along, they know each other, work with each other, respect and listen to each other, and use common sense vs extremes.”

— *School board president, mid-sized district in South Dakota*

Appendix

Additional Figures

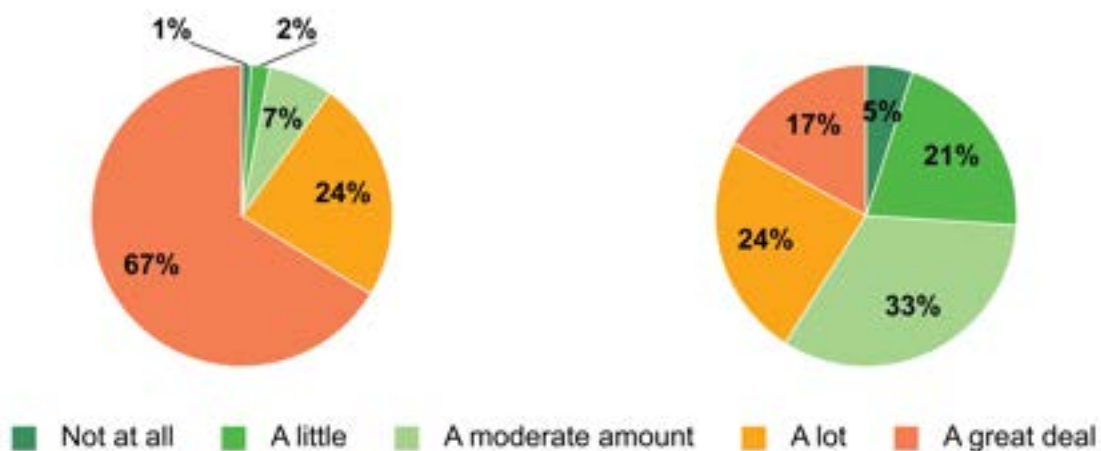
Figure A1 shows the full distribution of responses to the two benchmarking questions presented in Section 1, rather than the collapsed “a lot” or “a great deal” measure used in Figure 1. Two-thirds of officials selected the most severe option available for the national question; responses to the local question are distributed much more evenly across the scale.

Figure A1. Perceived Negative Effects of Polarization, National vs. Local

In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting...

our country?

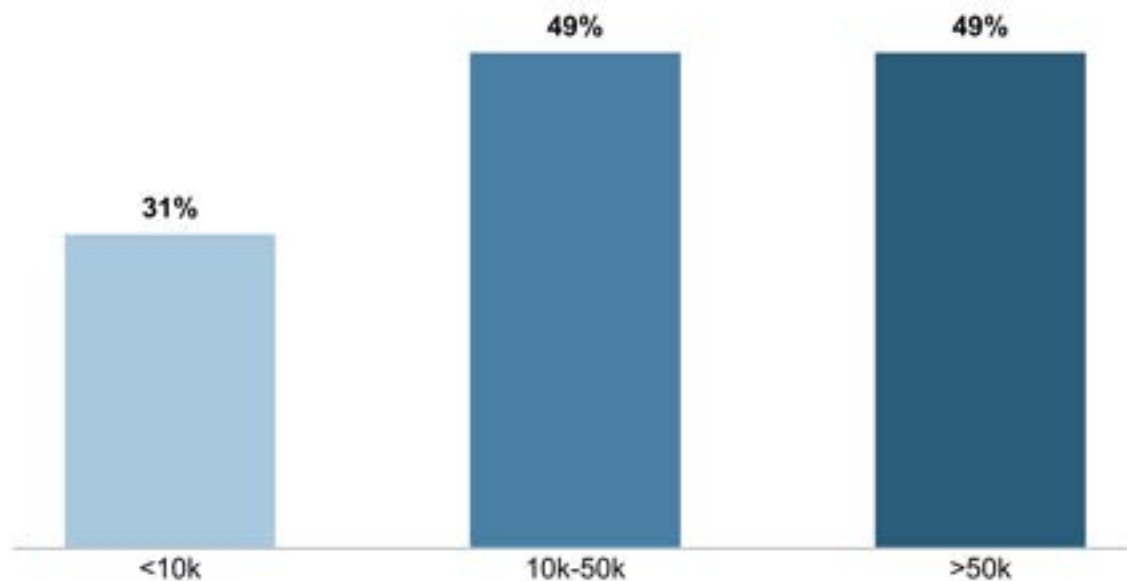
your local community?



Note: Distribution of responses to the question “In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting our country?” (left) and “In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting your local community?” (right). Results are based on a national CivicPulse survey of 1,224 local government officials conducted in June 2026. Margins of error (95% confidence level) are as follows, from “A great deal” to “Not at all”: National - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 1\%$; Local - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 1\%$. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Figure A2 shows local polarization by community size on a cross-sectional basis, using three population categories rather than the two shown over time in Figure 2. It indicates that the increase among smaller communities discussed in Finding 3 is concentrated in communities of 10,000 to 50,000 residents rather than distributed evenly across all smaller communities.

Figure A2. Perceived Effects of Local Polarization, by Population Size



Note: Percentage of local government leaders who said political polarization is negatively affecting their local community “a lot” or “a great deal,” segmented by population size of the community. Results are based on the June 2026 CivicPulse national survey (n = 1,224). Margins of error (95% confidence level) are as follows, from left to right: $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 7\%$.

Survey Results

**Table A1. Perceived Negative Effects of Polarization
(All Officials)**

	National	Local
A great deal	67%	17%
A lot	24%	24%
A moderate amount	7%	33%
A little	2%	21%
Not at all	1%	5%

Note: Distribution of responses to the questions "In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting our country?" (National) and "In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting your local community?" (Local). Results correspond with the local government officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 1\%$; Local - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 1\%$.

**Table A2. Perceived Negative Effects of Polarization
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	National	Local
A great deal	69%	17%
A lot	22%	23%
A moderate amount	8%	32%
A little	1%	22%
Not at all	1%	5%

Note: Distribution of responses to the questions "In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting our country?" (National) and "In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting your local community?" (Local). Results correspond with the municipal/county/township officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National - $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 1\%$; Local - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A3. Perceived Negative Effects of Polarization
(School Board Officials)**

	National	Local
A great deal	65%	17%
A lot	26%	25%
A moderate amount	7%	34%
A little	2%	19%
Not at all	1%	4%

Note: Distribution of responses to the questions “In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting our country?” (National) and “In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting your local community?” (Local). Results correspond with the school board officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National - $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 1\%$; Local - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A4. Perceived Effects of Midterms on Local Polarization
(All Officials)**

	Selected
A great deal	17%
A lot	21%
A moderate amount	30%
A little	23%
Not at all	9%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent do you expect political polarization in your community to get worse in the leadup to the midterm elections?” Results correspond with the local government officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A5. Perceived Effects of Midterms on Local Polarization
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	Selected
A great deal	15%
A lot	21%
A moderate amount	31%
A little	25%
Not at all	8%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent do you expect political polarization in your community to get worse in the leadup to the midterm elections?” Results correspond with the municipal/county/township officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A6. Perceived Effects of Midterms on Local Polarization
(School Board Officials)**

	Selected
A great deal	19%
A lot	21%
A moderate amount	30%
A little	20%
Not at all	10%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent do you expect political polarization in your community to get worse in the leadup to the midterm elections?” Results correspond with the school board officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A7. Perceived Effects of Midterm-related Polarization on Communities
(All Officials)**

	Everyday life for residents
A great deal	10%
A lot	20%
A moderate amount	29%
A little	30%
Not at all	11%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent will the potential polarization associated with the midterms affect the following?” Results correspond with the local government officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Everyday life for residents is the only item in this question asked of both groups; local governance was asked only of municipal, county and township officials, and school board governance and everyday life for students only of school board officials. Those items are reported in the two tables that follow. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A8. Perceived Effects of Midterm-related Polarization on Communities
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	Local governance	Everyday life for residents
A great deal	9%	10%
A lot	14%	18%
A moderate amount	29%	30%
A little	31%	31%
Not at all	18%	11%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent will the potential polarization associated with the midterms affect the following?” Results correspond with the municipal/county/township officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: Local governance - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$; everyday life for residents - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A9. Perceived Effects of Midterm-related Polarization on Communities
(School Board Officials)**

	School board governance	Everyday life for students	Everyday life for residents
A great deal	9%	7%	10%
A lot	16%	12%	22%
A moderate amount	23%	27%	29%
A little	27%	35%	30%
Not at all	24%	19%	10%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent will the potential polarization associated with the midterms affect the following?” Results correspond with the school board officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: School board governance - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$; everyday life for students - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$; everyday life for residents - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A10. Most Polarizing Topics, National vs. Local
(All Officials)**

	National	Local
Immigration	84%	36%
Cost of living	74%	58%
Election administration	72%	26%
Foreign affairs	72%	22%
Taxes	68%	54%
Public safety	55%	28%
Housing	52%	41%
Homelessness	40%	19%

Note: For each topic, the percentage of local government officials who said it is polarizing “a lot” or “a great deal” at the national level and in their own community. Topics are ordered by the national figure. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National - $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$; Local - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A11. Most Polarizing Topics, National vs. Local
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	National	Local
Immigration	84%	35%
Cost of living	74%	54%
Election administration	72%	24%
Foreign affairs	71%	20%
Taxes	69%	51%
Public safety	55%	29%
Housing	54%	41%
Homelessness	40%	19%

Note: For each topic, the percentage of municipal/county/township officials who said it is polarizing “a lot” or “a great deal” at the national level and in their own community. Topics are ordered by the national figure. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$; Local - $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A12. Most Polarizing Topics, National vs. Local
(School Board Officials)**

	National	Local
Immigration	85%	38%
Cost of living	74%	63%
Foreign affairs	74%	23%
Election administration	73%	29%
Taxes	67%	57%
Public safety	56%	27%
Housing	50%	41%
Homelessness	40%	19%

Note: For each topic, the percentage of school board officials who said it is polarizing “a lot” or “a great deal” at the national level and in their own community. Topics are ordered by the national figure. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: National - $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$; Local - $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A13. Topics Becoming More Polarizing as the Midterms Approach
(All Officials)**

	Selected
Cost of living	64%
Taxes	59%
Immigration	44%
Housing	38%
Election administration	32%
Public safety	24%
Foreign affairs	21%
Homelessness	17%

Note: Percentage of local government officials who selected each topic in response to "As the midterm elections approach, which of these topics, if any, are becoming more polarizing in your local community?" Respondents could select multiple topics. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A14. Topics Becoming More Polarizing as the Midterms Approach
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	Selected
Cost of living	64%
Taxes	57%
Immigration	42%
Housing	41%
Election administration	31%
Public safety	27%
Foreign affairs	21%
Homelessness	17%

Note: Percentage of municipal/county/township officials who selected each topic in response to "As the midterm elections approach, which of these topics, if any, are becoming more polarizing in your local community?" Respondents could select multiple topics. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A15. Topics Becoming More Polarizing as the Midterms Approach
(School Board Officials)**

	Selected
Cost of living	65%
Taxes	61%
Immigration	45%
Housing	36%
Election administration	33%
Public safety	21%
Foreign affairs	21%
Homelessness	16%

Note: Percentage of school board officials who selected each topic in response to "As the midterm elections approach, which of these topics, if any, are becoming more polarizing in your local community?" Respondents could select multiple topics. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A16. Perceived Effects of Midterms on Resident Engagement
(All Officials)**

	Selected
A great deal	4%
A lot	13%
A moderate amount	32%
A little	32%
Not at all	19%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question "To what extent are the upcoming elections increasing resident engagement?" Results correspond with the local government officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 2\%$.

**Table A17. Perceived Effects of Midterms on Resident Engagement
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	Selected
A great deal	4%
A lot	15%
A moderate amount	34%
A little	31%
Not at all	15%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent are the upcoming elections increasing resident engagement?” Results correspond with the municipal/county/township officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 3\%$.

**Table A18. Perceived Effects of Midterms on Resident Engagement
(School Board Officials)**

	Selected
A great deal	4%
A lot	10%
A moderate amount	30%
A little	32%
Not at all	24%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question “To what extent are the upcoming elections increasing resident engagement?” Results correspond with the school board officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 2\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 4\%$.

**Table A19. Perceived Nature of Increased Resident Engagement
(All Officials)**

	Selected
Entirely positive	1%
More positive	20%
An even mix	51%
More negative	26%
Entirely negative	2%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question "Has the increase in resident engagement been more positive or more negative?" Results correspond with the local government officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey and reported some increase in resident engagement. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 3\%$, $\pm 1\%$.

**Table A20. Perceived Nature of Increased Resident Engagement
(Municipal/County/Township Officials)**

	Selected
Entirely positive	1%
More positive	21%
An even mix	49%
More negative	28%
Entirely negative	2%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question "Has the increase in resident engagement been more positive or more negative?" Results correspond with the municipal/county/township officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey and reported some increase in resident engagement. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 1\%$.

**Table A21. Perceived Nature of Increased Resident Engagement
(School Board Officials)**

	Selected
Entirely positive	1%
More positive	19%
An even mix	55%
More negative	23%
Entirely negative	2%

Note: Distribution of responses to the question "Has the increase in resident engagement been more positive or more negative?" Results correspond with the school board officials who took the June 2026 CivicPulse survey and reported some increase in resident engagement. Percentages are unweighted, consistent with the figures reported in the body of this report, and may not sum to 100 due to rounding. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from top to bottom: $\pm 1\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 4\%$, $\pm 1\%$.

**Table A22. Perceived Negative Effects of Local Polarization by Population Size
and Respondent Type**

	Under 10,000	10,000–50,000	Over 50,000
Municipal/county/township	32%	53%	43%
School board	30%	47%	54%

Note: Percentage of officials in each group who said political polarization is negatively affecting their local community "a lot" or "a great deal," segmented by population size. Percentages are unweighted. Margins of error (based on 95% confidence level) are as follows, from left to right: Municipal/county/township - $\pm 5\%$, $\pm 7\%$, $\pm 10\%$; school board - $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 6\%$, $\pm 9\%$.

Survey Methodology

Municipal, county, and township officials invited to participate in the survey were drawn randomly from a dynamically updated comprehensive list of all top elected officials (e.g., mayor, county executive) and governing board members (e.g., council member, county legislator) serving townships, municipalities, and counties with populations of 1,000 or more. School board officials invited to participate in the survey were drawn randomly from a nationally comprehensive list of all K-12 school board members. The survey was conducted from June 23 to August 21, 2026. Participants were recruited over the course of nine weeks via email with a link to the online survey. There were 1,224 responses.

Survey Composition and Representativeness

Table A23. Distribution of Respondents by Respondent Type

Respondent type	Number of respondents
Municipal/county/township officials	638
School board officials	586
Total	1,224

Table A24. Distribution of Respondents by Government Type

Government type	Number of respondents
County	91
Municipality/township	547
School district	586
Total	1,224

**Table A25. Representativeness of Community Demographics of
County/Municipal/Township Respondents**

	Number of residents	Proportion of college-educated residents	Proportion of residents who voted Republican in 2024
Sample median	8,220	0.20	0.54
Sampling frame median	7,520	0.18	0.60

Table A26. Representativeness of Community Demographics of School Board Respondents

	Number of residents	Proportion of college-educated residents	Proportion of residents who voted Republican in 2024
Sample median	17,618	0.20	0.59
Sampling frame median	9,780	0.17	0.66

Table A27. Representativeness by Region of County/Municipal/Township Respondents

	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Sample proportion	0.37	0.27	0.20	0.16
Sampling frame proportion	0.39	0.22	0.28	0.11

Table A28. Representativeness by Region of School Board Respondents

	Midwest	Northeast	South	West
Sample proportion	0.30	0.29	0.18	0.22
Sampling frame proportion	0.39	0.24	0.21	0.16

Questionnaire

There is a lot of talk about political polarization in America now. For the purposes of this survey, consider political polarization to be defined as divisions between more liberal and more conservative individuals or groups.

In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting our country?

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

In your view, how much is political polarization currently negatively affecting your local community?

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

To what extent do you expect political polarization in your community to get worse in the leadup to the midterm elections?

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

To what extent will the potential polarization associated with the midterms affect the following:

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

Grid rows: School board governance, Everyday life for residents, Local governance, Everyday life for students

Please tell us more about how you think the midterms will or won't impact your community.

We'd now like to ask about a range of specific topics and your perspective on them both nationally and locally. Although some of these issues go beyond local governance, we're interested in your general sense of each topic based on your observations.

From your perspective, how polarizing is each of the following topics at the national level?

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

Grid rows: Housing, Cost of living, Public safety, Homelessness, Immigration, Taxes, Election administration, Foreign affairs

For the same set of topics, how polarizing is each topic in your local community?

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

Grid rows: Housing, Cost of living, Public safety, Homelessness, Immigration, Taxes, Election administration, Foreign affairs

Here's the list of topics one last time. As the midterm elections approach, which of these topics, if any, are becoming more polarizing in your local community? Select all that apply.

Response options: Housing, Cost of living, Public safety, Homelessness, Immigration, Taxes, Election administration, Foreign affairs, Other (please specify), None of the above

Please tell us more about how the upcoming elections are affecting polarization for one or more of the topics listed.

Next, we turn to resident engagement in local governance and how it's changing in the lead up to the midterm elections.

To what extent are the upcoming elections increasing resident engagement?

Response options: Not at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal

Has the increase in resident engagement been more positive or more negative?

Response options: Entirely positive, More positive, An even mix, More negative, Entirely negative

Please tell us more about why the increased resident engagement has been more positive or more negative.

Finally, we want to offer an opportunity to share anything else about your local/ school board or community that you are particularly proud of despite the broader political challenges this country faces.

Before submitting your survey, please provide any comments on its contents, or suggestions for future topics. We take all feedback seriously.