Trust & Transparency in Community Associations

Snap Survey

October 2026



411 Respondents Across 40 U.S. states and D.C.

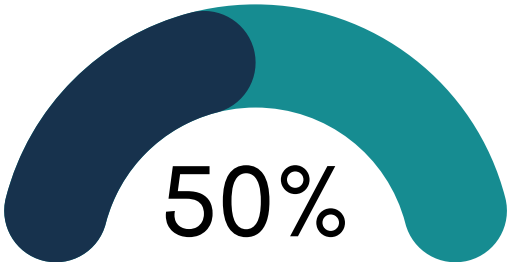
What Builds Confidence in Community Leadership?

This survey explores perspectives from homeowners, volunteer leaders, managers, and business partners on transparency, communication, professional expertise, misinformation, AI, and actions that help maintain or rebuild trust. Participation was voluntary; findings reflect respondents' experiences and perceptions and may not represent all community associations.

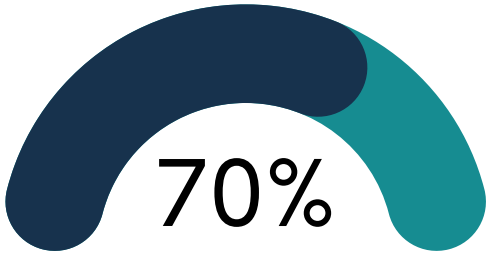
RESPONDENT PROFILE

- **40%** Board/Committee Member
- **22%** Community Association Manager
- **17%** Homeowner/ Resident
- **8%** Management Executive/CEO
- **13%** Business Partners/Other

At-A-Glance



Reported high resident trust in board leadership and decision-making



Said strengthening trust is a high or very high priority over the next 12 months.

High trust = "a great deal" or "quite a bit." Bases: 407 and 409 respondents, respectively.

TOP REPORTED ACTIONS FOR MAINTAINING OR REBUILDING TRUST

- **65%** Communicating early and providing regular updates
- **53%** Explaining decisions and alternatives considered
- **49%** Providing opportunities for resident questions and input

Respondents selected actions they had seen help maintain or rebuild trust. Multiple responses allowed; 408 respondents.

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Trust in Leadership & Information

Respondents reported varying levels of trust in leadership and information sources. Boards, managers, and professional advisers received higher trust ratings than other residents and unofficial social media groups. Findings reflect respondents' experiences and perceptions of the communities they know or serve.

Trust in Board Leadership



A great deal or quite a bit | **Some** | **Very little or none** | **Don't know**

Respondent perceptions of resident trust in board leadership and decision-making; 407 respondents.

82% reported at least some resident trust in board leadership.

Includes "some," "quite a bit," and "a great deal."

Trust in Community Association Information Sources



High trust combines "a great deal" and "quite a bit." Percentages include "don't know" and "not applicable" responses; bases vary by source.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Respondents reported greater trust in boards and professional advisers than in informal sources. Lower trust ratings do not necessarily mean information is inaccurate.

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Governance Practices & Changes in Trust

Most respondents agreed that board decisions serve their community's best interests. Fewer agreed that residents have meaningful input or that potential conflicts of interest are disclosed. Looking back five years, respondents reported mixed changes in trust rather than a uniform decline.

Governance Practices

Percentage who agree or strongly agree



Bases: 402–408, including "don't know" and N/A. Table: increased/decreased combine "somewhat" and "a great deal"; unable to assess/N/A combines insufficient experience, "don't know," and N/A.

How Has Trust Changed?

Perceived change in resident trust compared with five years ago

Leadership or adviser group	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased	Unable to assess/ N/A
Board leadership	30%	31%	30%	9%
Managers or management companies	27%	27%	32%	14%
Business partners / Professional advisers	20%	45%	14%	21%

KEY TAKEAWAY Confidence in board intentions is stronger than agreement about some governance practices. Perceived changes in trust vary, with board trust nearly evenly divided among improvement, stability, and decline.

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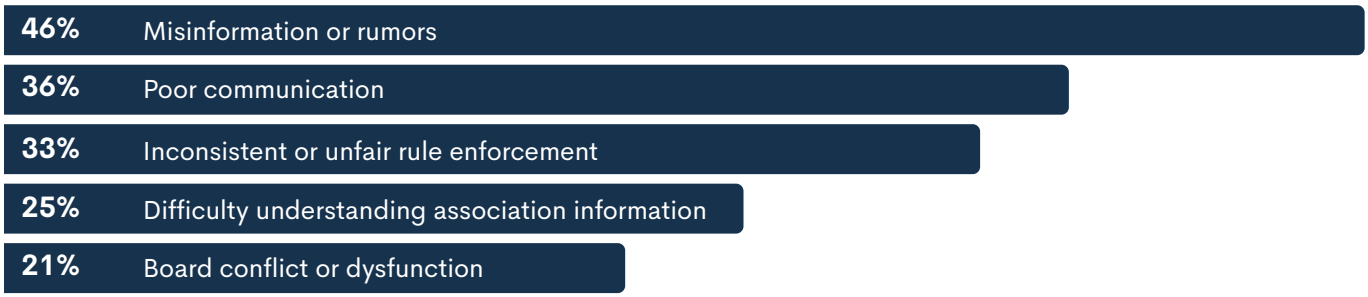
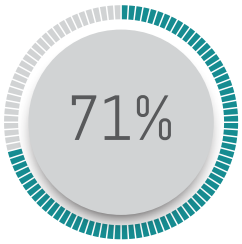
What Erodes Trust—and What Helps Restore It

Respondents most often identified misinformation, poor communication, and inconsistent rule enforcement as risks to trust. Early communication, clear explanations, and opportunities for resident input were the most frequently reported effective responses.

Top Five Risks to Trust



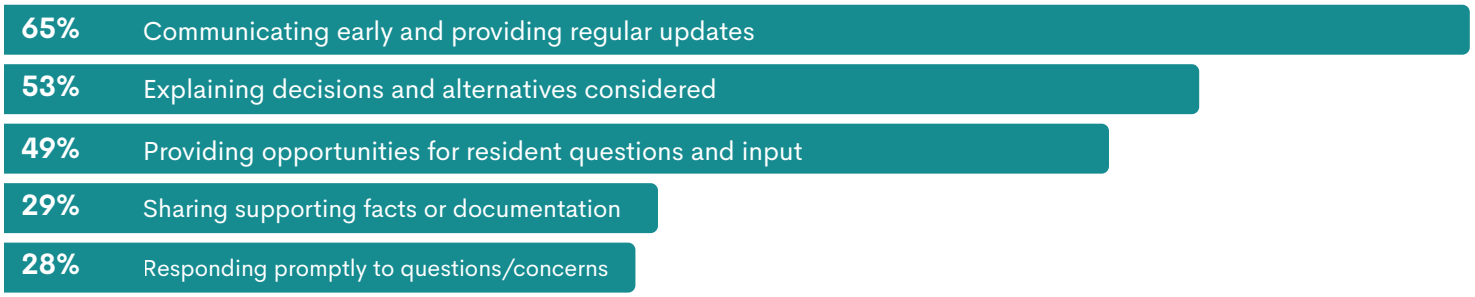
Multiple responses allowed; 410 respondents.



Reported that misinformation caused confusion or conflict at least sometimes in the past 12 months.

Includes "sometimes," "often," and "very often"; 411 respondents.

Actions Seen Helping Maintain or Rebuild Trust



Respondents selected actions they had seen help maintain or rebuild trust. Multiple responses allowed; 408 respondents.

KEY TAKEAWAY Clear, timely communication and opportunities for resident input were among the most frequently reported ways to maintain or rebuild trust.

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Artificial Intelligence & Trust

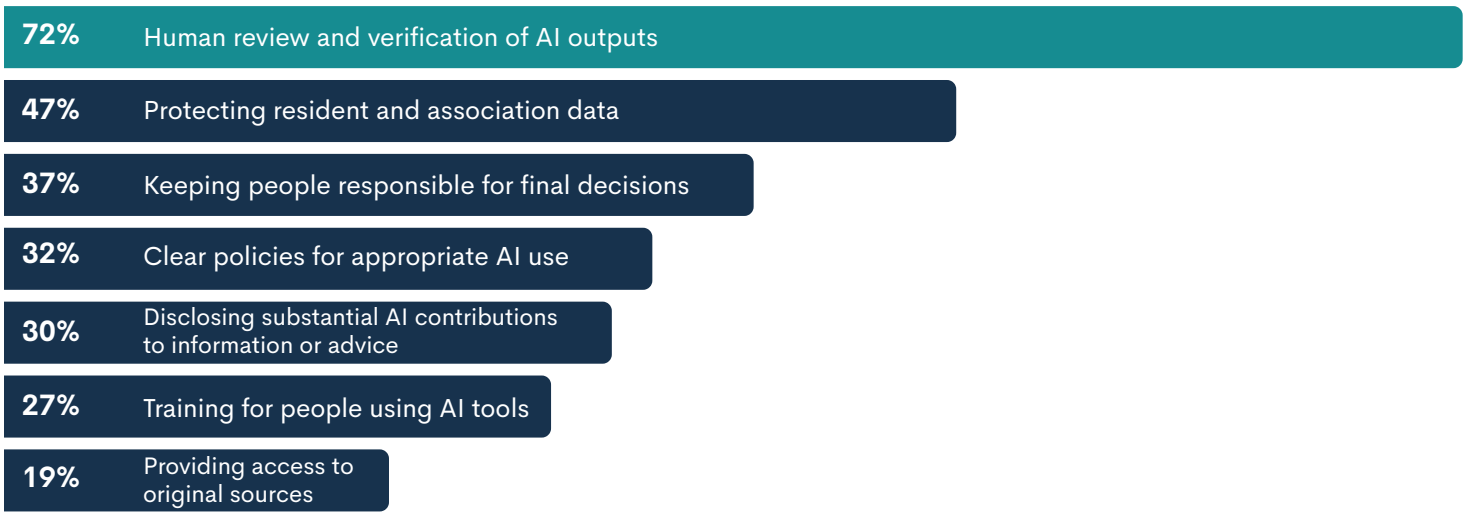
Respondents were more likely to expect AI to weaken trust than strengthen it, while one-quarter were unsure. Human review and verification was the most frequently selected safeguard, followed by protecting personal and confidential information.

How Might AI Affect Trust?



Expected effect of AI-generated information on trust over the next two years. Strengthen/weaken combine two categories; 410 respondents. Totals may differ from 100% due to rounding.

Top Safeguards for AI Use



Multiple responses allowed; 407 respondents.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Human oversight was the leading safeguard respondents selected for AI use, followed by privacy protection and human responsibility for final decisions.

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Why Trust Matters

Respondents linked low trust with conflict, lower participation, difficulty recruiting volunteers, and resistance to financial decisions. Their written comments emphasized communication, listening, education, and accountability as ways to strengthen confidence in community leadership.



Reported observing community challenges they believed were related to low trust in the past 12 months.

409 respondents.

Top Five Challenges Associated With Low Trust



Multiple responses allowed; 310 respondents. Results reflect perceived connections with low trust.

Selected Respondent Ideas for Strengthening Trust

EXPLAIN THE WHY
Communicate decisions, financial needs, and alternatives in clear language.

LISTEN & RESPOND
Invite questions, acknowledge concerns, and follow up.

BUILD UNDERSTANDING
Help residents and volunteer leaders understand their roles and responsibilities.

DEMONSTRATE ACCOUNTABILITY
Make records accessible, disclose conflicts, and follow through on commitments.

Themes summarized from open-ended responses; not ranked.

FINAL THOUGHT Trust has practical implications for community participation, volunteer leadership, and decision-making. Respondents' experiences point to communication, openness, and accountability as priorities for action.

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