

City of Ramsey
Agenda
City Council Special Work Session
Wednesday, March 13, 2019
5:30 pm
Lake Itasca Room, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Topics for Discussion**
 1. Annual Strategic Planning
- 3. Adjournment**

CC Special Work Session

Meeting Date: 03/13/2019

Title:

Annual Strategic Planning

Purpose/Background:

Each year, the City Council and city leadership staff review the city's strategic plan and make updates as necessary. The City reviewed the current Strategic Plan at a work session on February 12, and had a follow-up work session on February 19 to review the organizational values, vision, mission, and objectives.

Staff was directed to prepare strategies to be used to obtain the organizational objectives for review at this work session.

Staff will be finalizing strategies on Monday, March 11, at which time they will be sent to the Council and added to this packet. The previous strategies (see attached existing Strategic Plan) will be examined by staff, and refined to best fit the revised objectives developed by the Council and staff at the last meeting. Once these strategies are completed and agreed upon by the Council, it is expected that action items will be developed in order to specify the priorities for action in the coming year. The development of the action items will be a separate exercise and not addressed this evening.

Timeframe:

Time Item

5:30 PM Welcome/Call to Order/Dinner Served

5:30 – 5:45 Review Agenda and Meeting Objectives

5:45 – 6:15 Review Values, Vision, Mission, and Objectives Developed at Previous Work Session

6:15 – 8:45 Review and Discuss Revised Strategies as Developed By Staff Leadership Team

8:45 – 9:00 Discuss Next Steps/Closing Comments

9:00 Adjourn

Funding Source:

Responsible Party(ies):

Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator

Outcome:

Review of the organization's Strategic plan strategies and agreement on next steps.

Attachments

CLEAN Draft

REDLINED Draft
BalancedScorecard
CitizenSurvey2018

Form Review

Inbox

Kurt Ulrich

Kurt Ulrich

Form Started By: Kathy Schmitz

Final Approval Date: 03/07/2019

Reviewed By

Kurt Ulrich

Kurt Ulrich

Date

02/14/2019 02:49 PM

03/07/2019 01:37 PM

Started On: 02/14/2019 02:22 PM

Strategic Plan Update

2019 Update – March 11 Version

ABOUT RAMSEY

Ramsey is a suburban city located in the northwestern part of Anoka County, with a population of approximately 26,500. Two rivers dominate its borders, the Rum River and the Mississippi River.

The first settlement in Ramsey began because of trading along the banks of the Mississippi. Many settlers came here on a steamboat called "The Governor Ramsey" named after our first territorial governor, from which the city reportedly acquired the name.

Only a few of the first houses and structures built in Ramsey remain today. The most notable structure of historic significance is on the National Register of Historic Places, the Old Ramsey Town Hall, located west of Highway 47 just north of County Road 116. This structure dates to the late 19th century and was originally used as a schoolhouse. The building is a community landmark and the city has preserved and maintained the structure, which currently sits vacant waiting for a user.

Two school districts now serve Ramsey, Elk River #728, and Anoka-Hennepin #11. Students from both districts regularly exceed the state average on the Minnesota Basic Standards in math, reading, and writing, and score well above the national average on college entrance exams.

Many people have chosen to live in Ramsey because of its rural character, wetlands, wildlife, parks, recreation and the housing choices. Our city is a mixture of farms, single-family homes on large parcels of land and single-family homes on urban sized lots ranging from starter homes to executive style homes. New to our city is senior housing apartments and single-level town homes. Our city's development slowed from 1997 to 2000 but, since the year 2001 the city has experienced growth in both townhouse, single-family and multi-family housing development within the urban services area. Our city boasts a growing business district. Within the city are 4 business parks: Energy Park, Business Park 1995, Gateway Park, and the Bunker Lake Industrial Park. Since 1995, we have added several thousand new jobs. We are proud of our commitment to attract economically and environmentally sound commercial development.

The City staff and City Council seek to manage future growth to provide a high quality of life, enhanced employment opportunities, and a stable tax base. We are proud to have Connexus Energy, Life Fitness, and a variety of manufacturing businesses as our lead employers. Looking ahead, our city is working toward retail and commercial growth that includes restaurants, shopping, entertainment and additional employment opportunities.

CORE VALUES

- Ethics and Integrity
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Cooperation and Teamwork
- Open and Honest Communications
- Excellence and Quality in the Delivery of Service
- Treating People with Respect and Fairness
- Adaptability and Continuous Learning

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Ramsey will be a secure, citizen-driven, collaborative community that respects the balance and connectivity between its unique urban, rural, and natural environment.

OUR MISSION

To work together to responsibly grow our community, and to provide quality, cost-effective, and efficient government services.

OBJECTIVES

These objectives represent the key priorities that all strategies attempt to achieve. Policy development should focus on advancing achievement of these objectives.

Financial Stability

A Balance of Rural Character and Urban Growth

An Active and Connected Community

Smart, Citizen-Focused Government

An Effective Organization

Please note: this document is a work in progress. Staff is still working on final formatting. Please focus on content over formatting at this stage.

STRATEGIES

Strategies are actions we take in order to accomplish our five key objectives.

Objective: Financial Stability

- Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings, and additional funding sources.
- Promote economic growth and development.

Objective: A Balance of Rural Character and Urban Growth

- Create a strong positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts, and key corridors.
- Enhance Community Engagement in policy decision-making processes.

Objective: An Active and Connected Community

- Improve the safety and mobility of regional transportation corridors.
- Connect the community both physically and socially to destinations, services, and activities.

Objective: Smart, Citizen-Focused Government

- Enhance customer service through process improvements.
- Enhance sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments.
- Improve City's communication and identity.

Objective: An Effective Organization

- Improve and sustain high organizational morale.
- Promote diversity and inclusion to embrace the community's demographics.



Strategic Plan Update

2019 Update – [March 11 Version](#)

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The City staff and City Council seek to manage future growth to provide a high quality of life, enhanced employment opportunities, and a stable tax base. We are proud to have Connexus Energy, [Life Fitness](#), and a variety of manufacturing businesses as our lead employers. Looking ahead, our city is working toward retail and commercial growth that includes restaurants, shopping, entertainment and additional employment opportunities.

CORE VALUES

- Ethics and Integrity
- Fiscal Responsibility
- Cooperation and Teamwork
- Open and Honest Communications
- Excellence and Quality in the Delivery of Service
- Treating People with Respect and Fairness
- Adaptability and Continuous Learning

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

~~Ramsey will be a secure, citizen-driven, collaborative community that respects the balance and connectivity between its unique urban, rural, and natural environment.~~

~~Ramsey will evolve through citizen-driven, collaborative processes that respect the balance and connectivity between its unique urban, rural, and natural environment for current and future generations.~~

OUR MISSION

To work together to responsibly grow our community, and to provide quality, cost-effective, and efficient government services.

OBJECTIVES

These objectives represent the key priorities that all strategies attempt to achieve. Policy development should focus on advancing achievement of these objectives.

Financial Stability

~~Ensure strategic economic development that complements the City's desired quality of life and builds a stable tax base, all while maintaining a low tax levy.~~

A Balance of Rural Character and Urban Growth

~~Ensure that a portion of the City's future growth continues to maintain Ramsey's historic rural character while attracting the services desired by our community.*~~

~~**Adapted from the Comprehensive Plan.*~~

An Active and Connected Community

~~Ensure that the City is a connected City that is part of a comprehensive regional transportation system that enable all to easily navigate the community and attracts business development.~~

An Active Community

~~Ensure that the City has access to a variety of recreational opportunities.*~~

~~**Adapted from the Comprehensive Plan.*~~

Smart, Citizen-Focused Government

~~Continue the delivery of quality services to ensure the City will have safe and thriving neighborhoods and business districts, and a cleaner environment.~~

An Effective Organization

~~Maintain highly functional Staff, Citizen Volunteers, and Elected Officials and governance structure that meets the increasingly ever-changing needs of the organization.~~

Please note: this document is a work in progress. Staff is still working on final formatting. Please focus on content over formatting at this stage.

STRATEGIES

Strategies are actions we take in order to accomplish our ~~four~~ five key objectives.

Objective: Financial Stability

Strategies designed to advance Financial Stability.

- ~~Improve budget preparation to identify~~ Identify and implement operational efficiencies, ~~and~~ cost savings, and additional funding sources.
- ~~Increase~~ Promote economic growth and development.
- ~~Leverage additional funding sources.~~

Objective: A Balance of Rural Character and Urban Growth

- Create a strong positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts, and key corridors.
- Enhance Community Engagement in policy decision-making processes.
- ~~—~~

Objective: An Active and Connected Community

Strategies designed to advance A Connected Community.

- Improve the safety and mobility of ~~major regional~~ transportation corridors, with an emphasis on Highway 10.
- ~~Improve the safety and mobility of Highway 10.~~

~~Objective: An Active Community~~

- Connect the community both physically and socially to destinations, services, and activities. Build community and connect people through recreational opportunities.

Objective: Smart, Citizen-Focused Government

Strategies designed to advance Smart, Citizen-Focused Government.

- ~~Improve and maintain the safety of the community.~~
- Enhance the level of customer service through process improvements.
- Enhance sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments.
- Define and promote Ramsey Brand. Improve City's communication and identity.
- ~~—~~
- ~~Plan for public facilities and infrastructure to meet the City's growth and service needs.~~

Objective: An Effective Organization

Strategies designed to advance An Effective Organization.

- ~~Improve City communication with the community.~~
- Improve and sustain high organizational employee morale.
- Promote diversity and inclusion to embrace the community's demographics.

- Ensure that the organization reflects the changing demographics of the community and addresses diversity and inclusion.

**City of Ramsey
2015-2018 Balanced Scorecard**

Fiduciary Perspective	Customer/Stakeholder Perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maintain the City's AA+ rating</i> • <i>Maintain a stable tax levy rate</i> • <i>Economic Development Director to initiate economic development</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher customer satisfaction rating from residents for overall public services and safety in the community</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain an 8 minutes, 36 seconds or better for average police response time</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain an 8 minutes, 39 seconds or better for average fire response time</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain an ISO rating of 5 or better in serviced areas</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain city's ratings of 6.5 average of road conditions</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher rating for business customer satisfaction with economic development and Police business Services</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain a maximum 10 business day plan review and 48 hour inspection window for building permits</i>
Internal Perspective	Learning and Growth Perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher satisfaction rating of policy makers by providing timely, pertinent, comprehensive information with options and recommendations to policy-makers and staff</i> • <i>Monitor development review timeline</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Achieve and maintain 100 percent of updated job descriptions, employee development plans, and develop a performance rating strategy for employees.</i> • <i>Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher employee satisfaction rating of Leadership Team</i>

Fiduciary Perspective

“If we succeed, how will we look to our property owners?”

Maintain the City's AA+ rating



The AA+ Rating was reaffirmed with 2018 bond sale.

Maintain a stable tax levy rate



Tax capacity rate reduced over time from 43.32% in 2016, 42.46% in 2017, 41.73% in 2018, and 40.30% in 2019.

Economic Development Director to initiate economic development efforts



2018 EDA work plan identified, prioritized, and monitored economic development initiatives. Major initiatives for 2018 including: Business retention and expansion, recruitment for restaurants and retail, COR development, Highway 10/RALF acquisitions, and selling of surplus City land.

Customer/Stakeholder Perspective

“To achieve our vision, how must we look to our customers?”

Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher customer satisfaction rating from residents for overall public services and safety in the community



The 2018 Citizen Survey showed the following satisfaction ratings of excellent/good: Police (91%), Fire (95%, and Customer Service (81%). Police and Fire responses improved over 2016 survey results.

*Achieve and maintain an 8 minutes, 36 seconds or better for average **police** response time*



Data from the new county-wide communication system indicates an average emergency response time of 5:42 minutes and 42 seconds for high priority calls, and 6 minutes and 40 seconds for low priority calls in 2018.

*Achieve and maintain an 8 minutes, 39 seconds or better for average **fire** response time*



Data from the new county-wide communication system indicates an average response time of 8 minutes and 17 seconds for emergency calls and 9 minutes and 47 seconds for non-emergency calls in 2018.

Achieve and maintain an ISO rating of 5 or better in serviced areas



100% of properties within the City's serviced areas have at least an ISO rating of 5. In August of 2017, the City's Fire Department was upgraded to an ISO rating of 4 in serviced areas. A positive reflection on our emergency communications, department operations, and water supply improvements.

Achieve and maintain city's ratings of at least a 6.5 average of road conditions



The City road reconstruction and maintenance program was developed in 2014, and was implemented with construction projects in 2015 through 2018. Currently City streets are rated at an average of 7.2. Miles of public streets rebuilt: 2018 - 1.08 miles; 2017 - 1.26 miles; 2016 – 1.89 miles; and 2015 – 1.11 miles.

Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher rating for business customer satisfaction with economic development and Police business Services



Based upon a 2013 Police Business Survey, 91.1% of respondents were satisfied with the Police response to calls for service. Businesses are surveyed at part of the City's business retention and expansion program. In 2017, 15 businesses were surveyed, and 79 business surveys have been conducted since 2012.

Achieve and maintain a maximum 10 business day plan review and 48 hour inspection window for building permits at least 70% of the time



A new Senior Planner position was added in 2017 in addition to process improvements and technology investments in order to continue to meet these standards. E-permits, plan submittal, and online scheduling were implemented in 2016 and 2017. Community Development has implemented an ongoing satisfaction survey to measure results and to look for ways to continue to improve.

Internal Perspective

“To satisfy our customers, property owners, and mission, what business processes must we excel at?”

Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher satisfaction rating of policy makers by providing timely, pertinent, comprehensive information with options and recommendations to policy-makers and staff



2018 Council/staff feedback of the City Administrator via the “CheckPoint 360” assessment tool reflected 100% alignment of executive skill set within “Favorable” zone.

Monitor development review timeline



The City has closely monitored development review timelines and achieved 100% compliance with statutory requirements, while also modifying ordinances and procedures to streamline process.

Learning and Growth Perspective

“To achieve our vision, how must our people learn, communicate, and work together?”

Achieve and maintain 100 percent of updated job descriptions, employee development plans, and develop a performance rating strategy for employees.



100% of job descriptions and performance measurements have been revised to reflect current jobs and organizational values. Employee development plans implemented in 2018 emphasizing continuous improvement. A new Public Works career development program was implemented with the 2019-2020 labor contract, with support from the University of Minnesota’s Resilient Communities Program and the City’s Labor Management Committee.

Achieve and maintain a 70 percent or higher employee satisfaction rating of Leadership Team



Based upon a 2016 employee survey, the following items were rated agree/strongly agree: Helpful work environment (80% vs. 77% in 2014), Ramsey is a good place to work (94% vs. 85% in 2014), Recommend Ramsey as workplace (94% vs. 90% in 2014), and Clear/consistent communications (69% vs. 65% in 2014). The Labor Management Committee decided an updated survey would be conducted in 2019.



THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Ramsey, MN

Community Livability Report

2018



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Boulder, Colorado 80301
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777 North Capitol Street NE Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002
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The National Citizen Survey™
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The NCS™ is presented by NRC in collaboration with ICMA.

NRC is a charter member of the AAPOR Transparency Initiative, providing clear disclosure of our sound and ethical survey research practices.

About

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) report is about the “livability” of Ramsey. The phrase “livable community” is used here to evoke a place that is not simply habitable, but that is desirable. It is not only where people do live, but where they want to live.

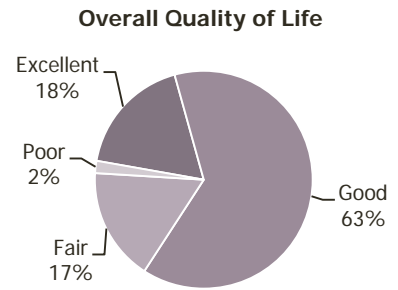
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement).

The Community Livability Report provides the opinions of a representative sample of 465 residents of the City of Ramsey. The margin of error around any reported percentage is 5% for all respondents. The full description of methods used to garner these opinions can be found in the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover.



Quality of Life in Ramsey

About 8 in 10 residents rated the quality of life in Ramsey as excellent or good. This was similar to ratings given in other communities across the nation (see Appendix B of the *Technical Appendices* provided under separate cover).



Shown below are the eight facets of community. The color of each community facet summarizes how residents rated it across the three sections of the survey that represent the pillars of a community – Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation. When most ratings across the three pillars were higher than the benchmark, the color for that facet is the darkest shade; when most ratings were lower than the benchmark, the color is the lightest shade. A mix of ratings (higher and lower than the benchmark) results in a color between the extremes.

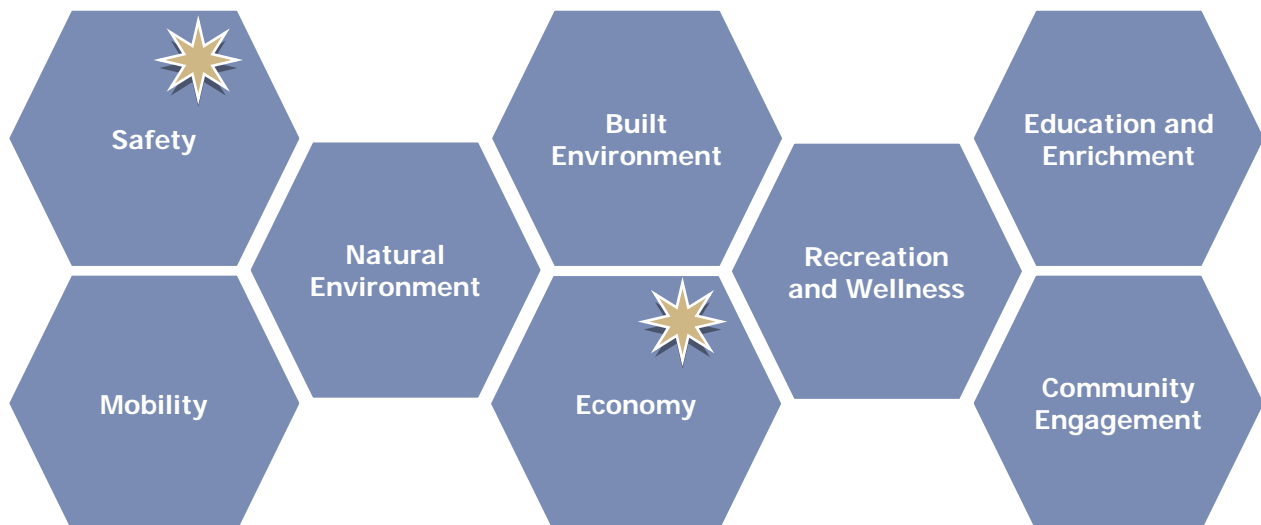
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. As in 2016, residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Ramsey community in the coming two years. All facets of community livability were rated positively and similar to the national benchmark. This overview of the key aspects of community quality provides a quick summary of where residents see exceptionally strong performance and where performance offers the greatest opportunity for improvement. Linking quality to importance offers community members and leaders a view into the characteristics of the community that matter most and that seem to be working best.

Details that support these findings are contained in the remainder of this Livability Report, starting with the ratings for Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation and ending with results for Ramsey’s unique questions.

Legend

- Higher than national benchmark
- Similar to national benchmark
- Lower than national benchmark

★ Most important



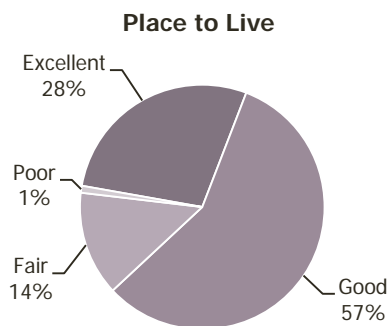
Community Characteristics

What makes a community livable, attractive and a place where people want to be?

Overall quality of community life represents the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. How residents rate their overall quality of life is an indicator of the overall health of a community. In the case of Ramsey, 85% rated the city as an excellent or good place to live. Respondents' ratings of Ramsey as a place to live were similar to ratings in other communities across the nation.

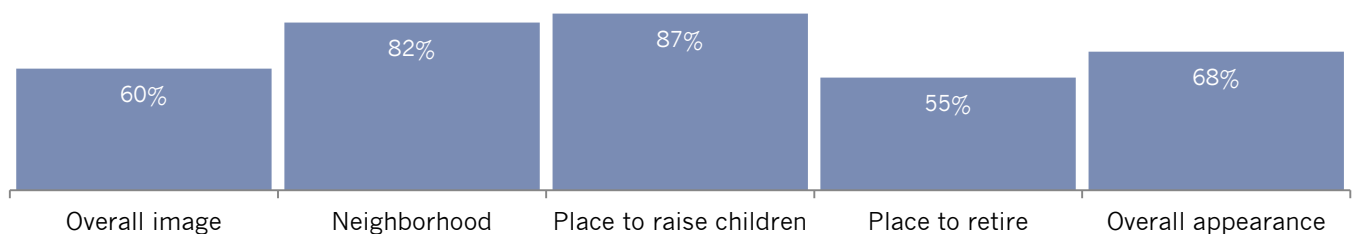
In addition to rating the city as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Ramsey as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Ramsey and its overall appearance. While ratings for these aspects ranged from 55% to 87% excellent or good, all community quality ratings were similar to those given elsewhere.

Delving deeper into Community Characteristics, survey respondents rated over 40 features of the community within the eight facets of Community Livability. Resident evaluations within the facets of Safety, Mobility and Natural Environment were positive and similar to the benchmark. In Built Environment, the rating for affordable quality housing was more positive than seen in other communities, while the rating for public places where people want to spend time was perceived as less positive. Other aspects that received ratings lower than the benchmark were recreational, education/enrichment and volunteer opportunities as well as several aspects within the facet of Economy.



When compared to 2016, residents were more likely in 2018 to positively rate Ramsey as a place to retire, as well as employment and fitness opportunities and cultural/arts/music activities (for more information see the *Trends over Time* report under separate cover).

Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)



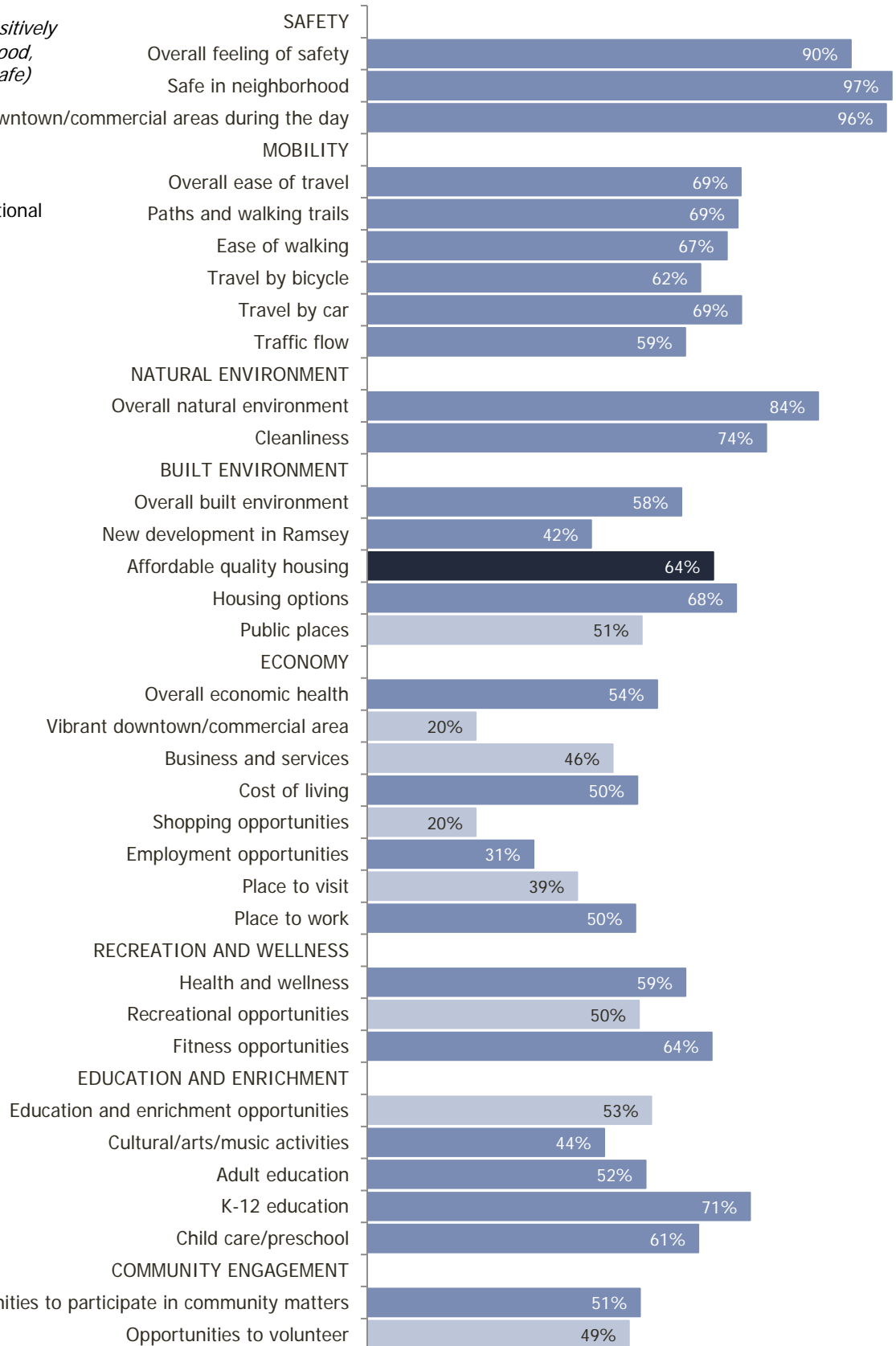
The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

*Percent rating positively
(e.g., excellent/good,
very/somewhat safe)*

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



Governance

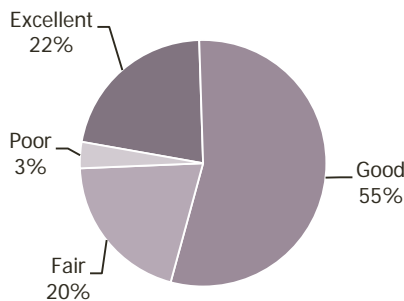
How well does the government of Ramsey meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

The overall quality of the services provided by Ramsey as well as the manner in which these services are provided is a key component of how residents rate their quality of life. About three-quarters of residents gave positive reviews to the overall quality of City services while about 4 in 10 favorably rated the services provided by the Federal Government; both of these evaluations were similar to those observed elsewhere across the country.

Survey respondents also rated various aspects of Ramsey’s leadership and governance. About 8 in 10 residents gave favorable marks to the customer service provided by the City, and roughly half were pleased with the remaining aspects of government performance. These ratings were all similar to the national benchmark and several trended up since 2016 (welcoming citizen involvement, confidence in City government, acting in the best interest of Ramsey and being honest).

Respondents evaluated over 30 individual services and amenities available in Ramsey. Most services were rated positively by a majority of respondents and were similar to ratings given in other communities. Several service evaluations improved from 2016 to 2018, including those for traffic signal timing, economic development and most aspects of Built Environment.

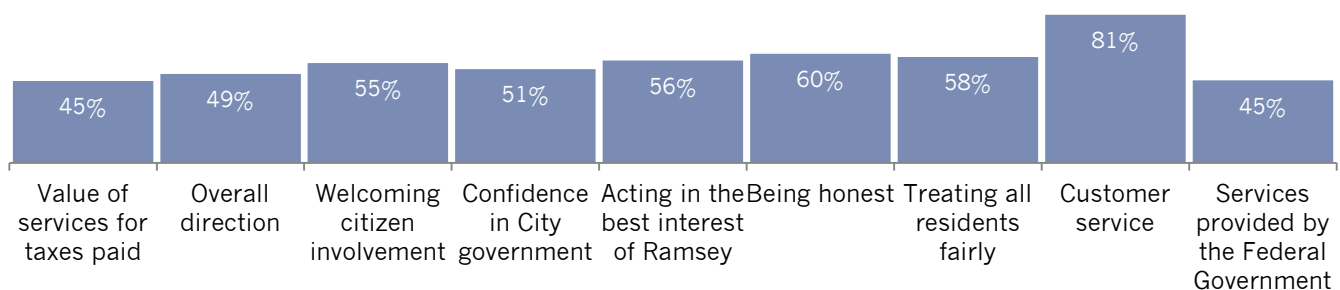
Overall Quality of City Services



Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



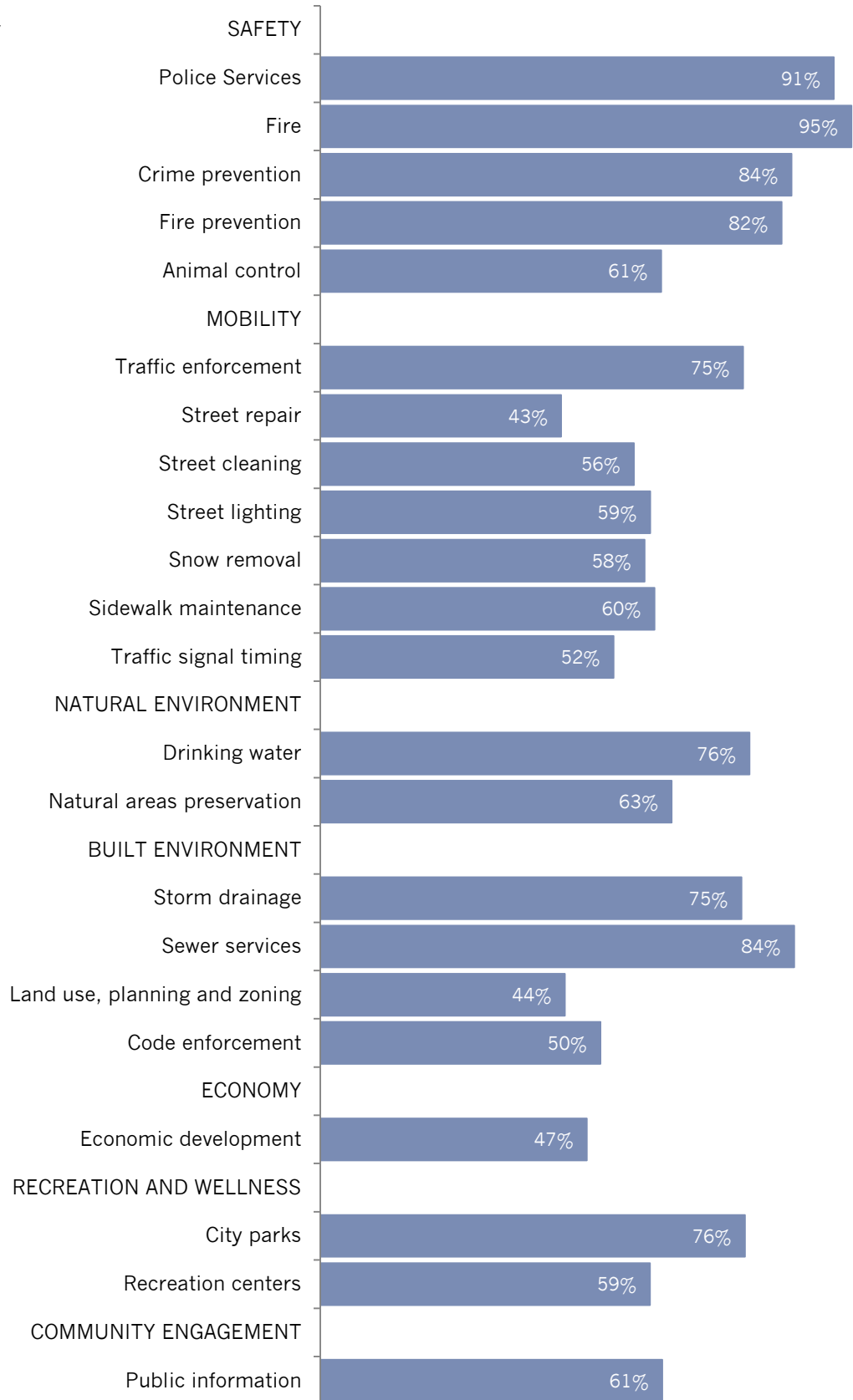
The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

Percent rating positively
(e.g., excellent/good)

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

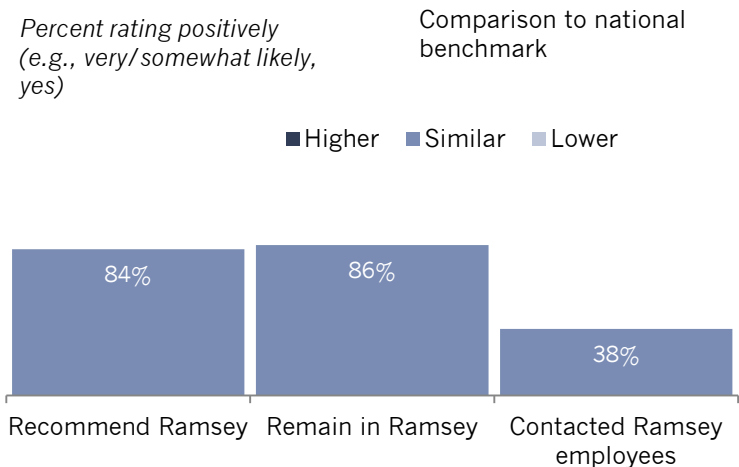
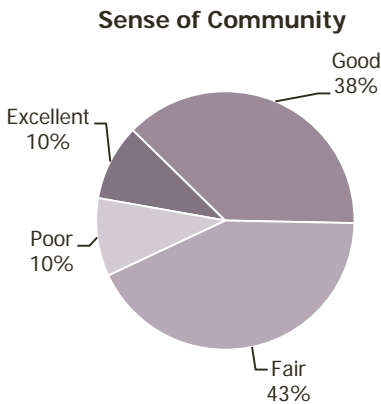


Participation

Are the residents of Ramsey connected to the community and each other?

An engaged community harnesses its most valuable resource, its residents. The connections and trust among residents, government, businesses and other organizations help to create a sense of community, a shared sense of membership, belonging and history. About half of residents gave excellent or good marks to the sense of community in Ramsey, which was similar to ratings seen in other communities. More than 8 in 10 residents would recommend living in Ramsey to someone who asked and planned to remain there for the next five years; these ratings were also similar to the national benchmark.

The survey included over 30 activities and behaviors for which respondents indicated how often they participated in or performed each, if at all. Levels of participation tended to vary widely across the different facets, making the comparison to the benchmark (and to Ramsey's ratings over time) helpful for interpreting the results. Participation rates tended to be similar to the national benchmark for most items. However, Ramsey residents were more likely than those who lived in other communities to have recycled at home and to not feel they were under housing cost stress, but less likely to work in Ramsey, to have campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate or to have volunteered. Further, survey respondents were more likely in 2018 than in 2016 to believe the economy would positively impact their income and or to have attended a City-sponsored event.



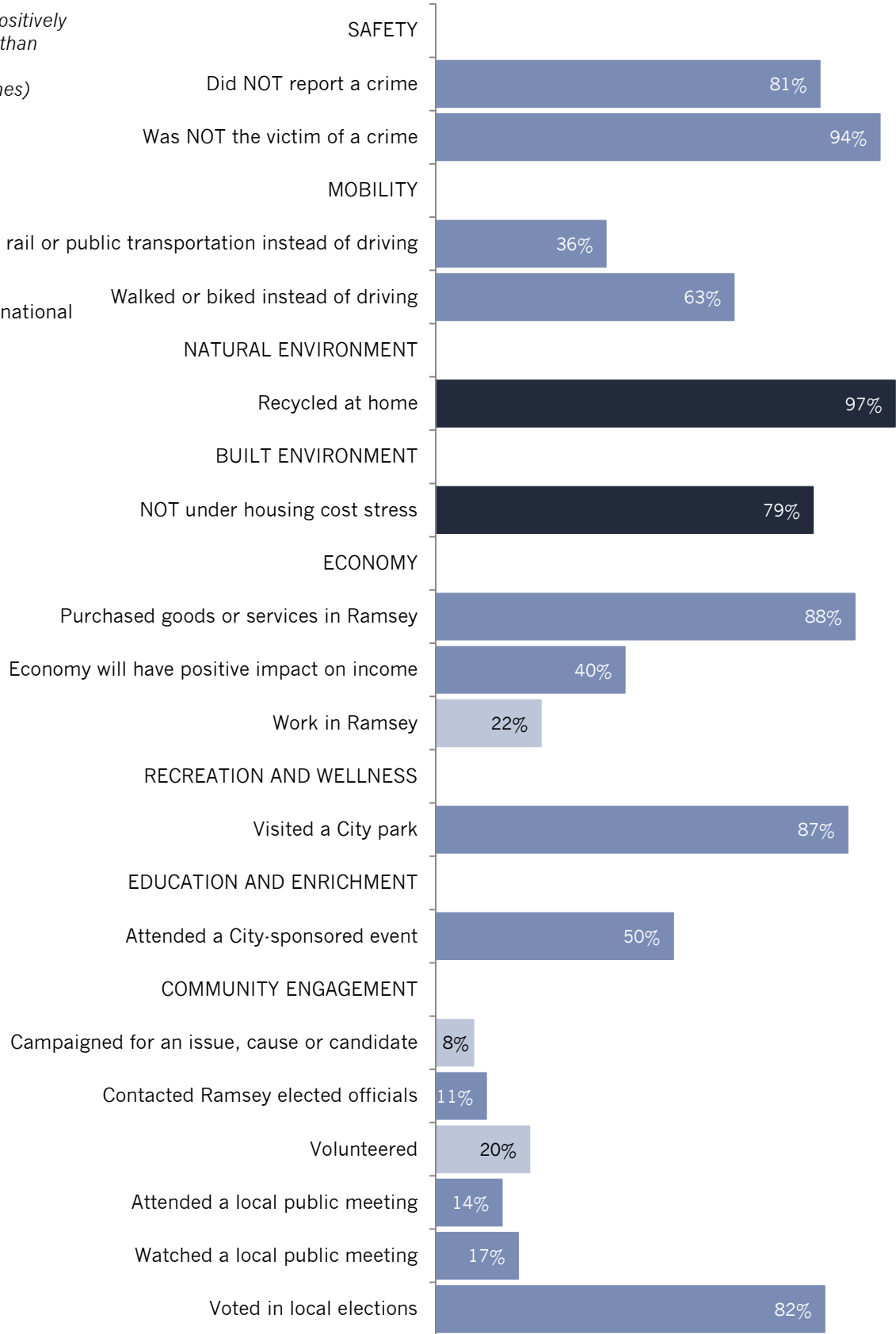
The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 3: Aspects of Participation

Percent rating positively
(e.g., yes, more than
once a month,
always/sometimes)

Comparison to national
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

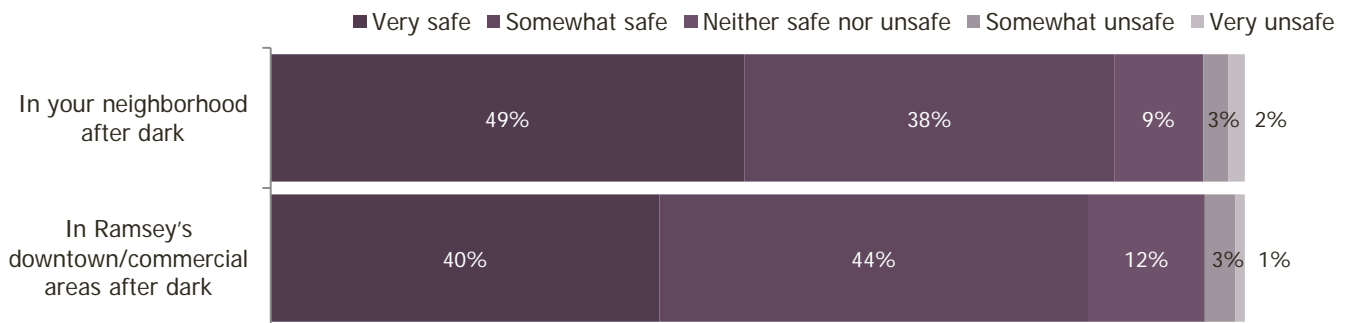


Special Topics

The City of Ramsey included six questions of special interest on The NCS as well as several line additions to standard questions. Topic areas included sources of City information, changes to new or existing amenities, City priorities and funding options for street maintenance, among others.

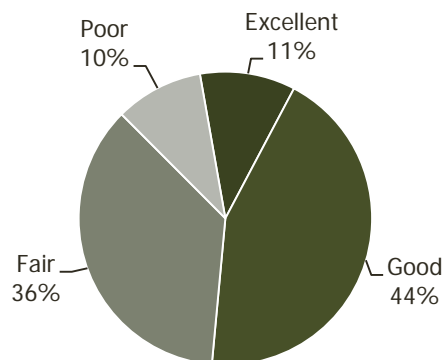
Thinking about their feelings of safety after dark, roughly 9 in 10 residents indicated that they felt safe in their neighborhoods or in Ramsey’s downtown/commercial areas after dark; very few residents felt unsafe in these areas.

Figure 4: Line Additions to Question 4
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:



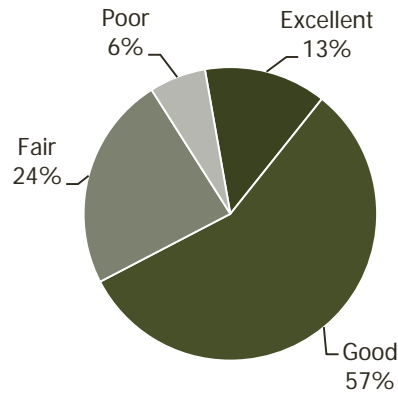
Slightly more than half of residents rated the overall condition of City maintained streets as excellent or good; about one-third thought the roads were in fair condition and 1 in 10 rated them as poor.

Figure 5: Line Addition to Question 5
Please rate the overall condition of City maintained streets:



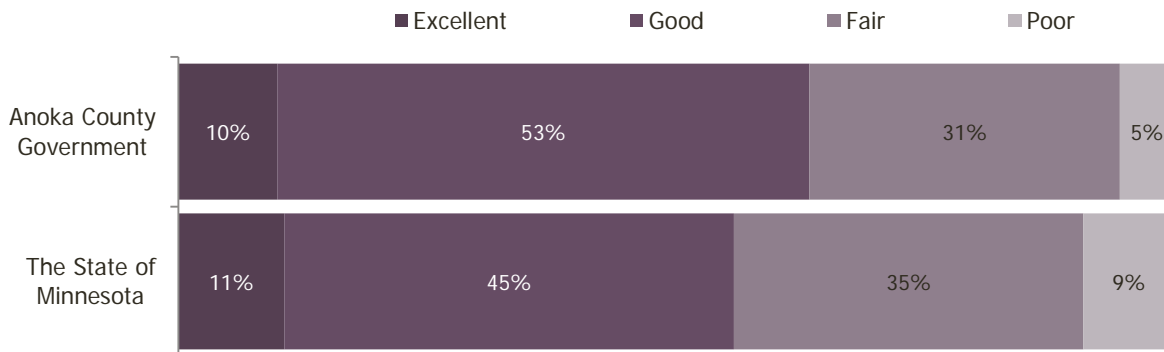
About 7 in 10 residents assessed the quality of Ramsey trail maintenance as excellent or good. About one-quarter rated the quality of the trails as fair and less than 1 in 10 thought it was poor.

Figure 6: Line Addition to Question 10
Please rate the quality of trail maintenance in Ramsey:



Residents' sentiments toward the County and State governments were similar: about 6 in 10 thought each was excellent or good, 3 in 10 thought each was fair and 1 in 10 rated the governments as poor.

Figure 7: Line Additions to Question 11
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?

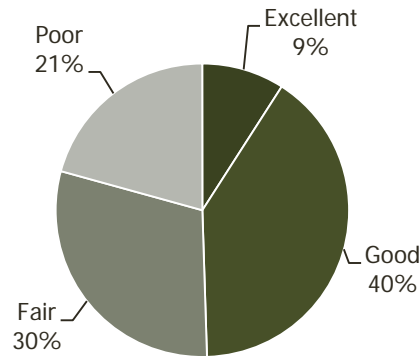


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When asked about the development and success of a Ramsey strategic plan, about half of residents thought that the Ramsey government had done an excellent or good job. Approximately 3 in 10 residents thought Ramsey had done a fair job on the plan and 2 in 10 rated it poorly.

Figure 8: Line Addition to Question 12

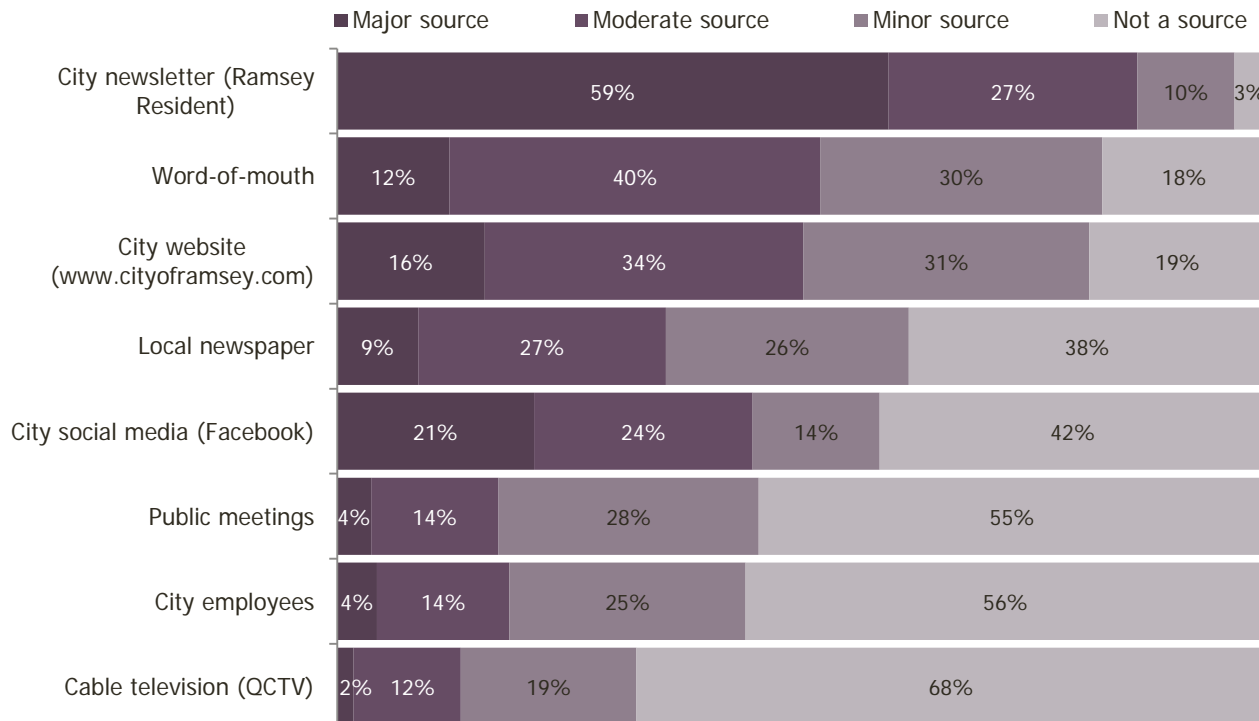
Please rate the following categories of Ramsey government performance: Development and success of a strategic action plan



Residents evaluated a list of sources of City information and indicated whether they considered each to be a major, moderate, minor or not a source of information. About 8 in 10 residents used the City newsletter as a major or moderate information source and another 1 in 10 considered it a minor source. About half of residents used word-of-mouth or the City website as major or moderate sources of information and another 3 in 10 used each of these as a minor source. The least-utilized sources of City information were public meetings, City employees and cable television; less than half of residents used any of these modes as an information source.

Figure 9: Sources of City Information

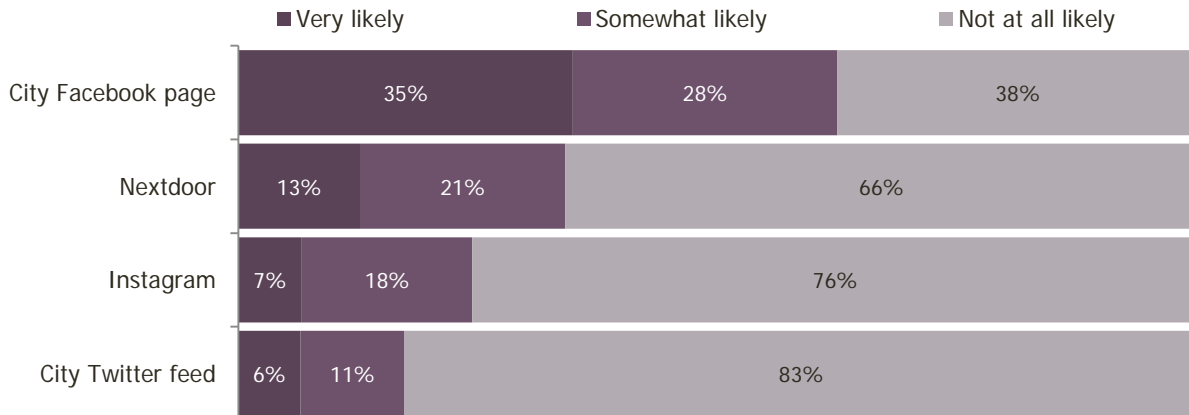
To what extent are each of the following a source of information for you about Ramsey city government and its activities?



When prompted about social media outlets, residents indicated they would be most likely to engage with the City in the future on Facebook (62% very or somewhat likely). In addition, about 4 in 10 would engage with the City on Nextdoor, one-quarter on Instagram and about 2 in 10 residents would be interested in engaging on the City Twitter feed.

Figure 10: Likelihood of Social Media Engagement

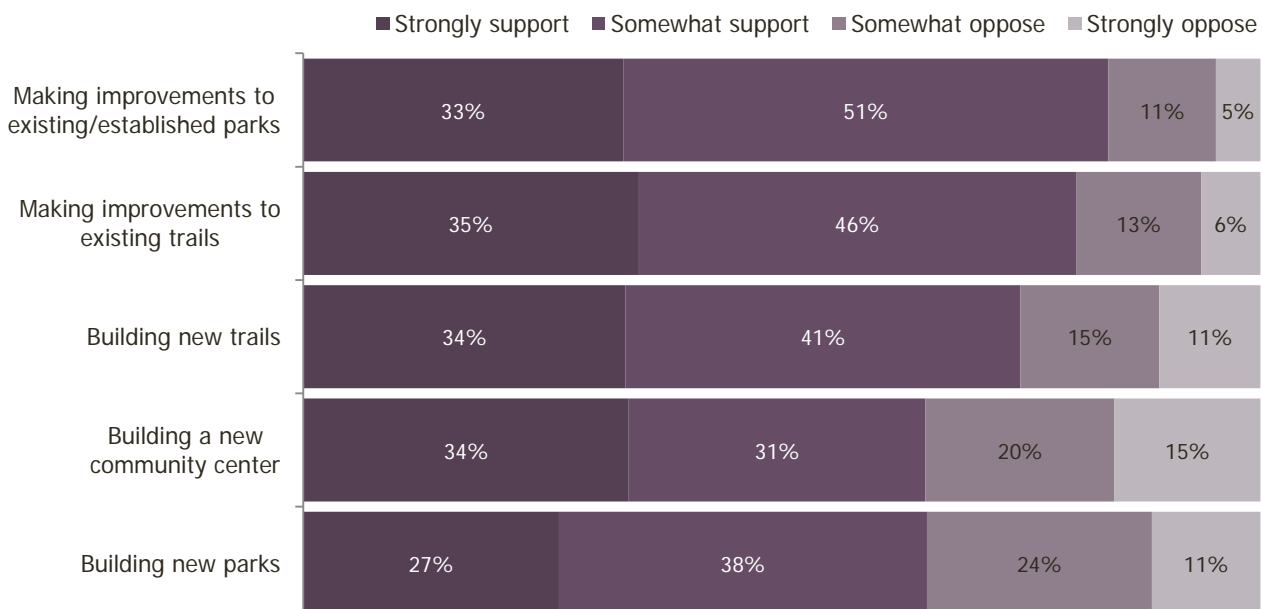
Please indicate how likely you would be, if at all, to engage with the City on the following social media platforms in the future:



Residents considered a list of City amenities and indicated the extent to which they would support or oppose the City investigating changes to each. Even though they were informed that changes to amenities could result in a tax increase, a strong majority of residents strongly or somewhat supported the City investigating each of the potential changes. Support was strongest for making improvements to existing/established parks and to existing trails as well as building new trails.

Figure 11: Support for Changes to City Amenities

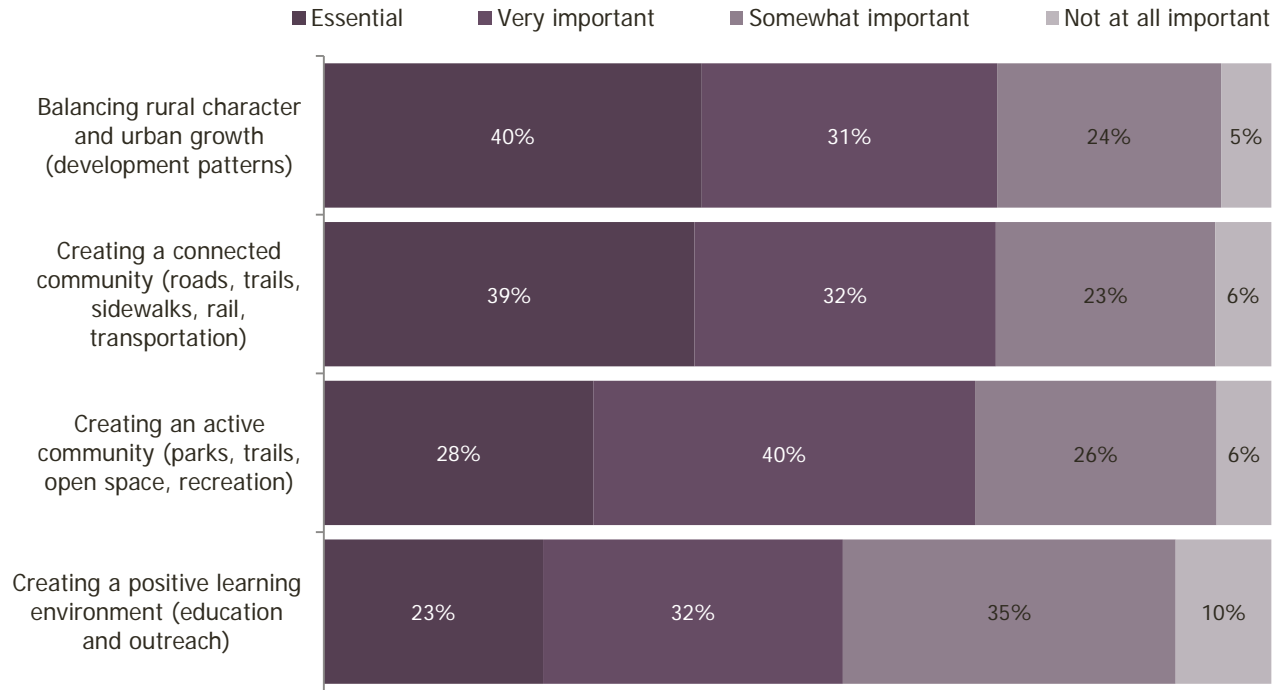
Please indicate to what extent you support or oppose the city investigating the following changes to new or existing amenities, each of which could accordingly result in an increase to the tax levy:



Thinking about the importance of four City priorities, about 7 in 10 residents thought that balancing rural character and urban growth, creating a connected community and creating an active community were each essential or very important. Creating a positive learning environment was rated as at least very important by a majority of Ramsey residents

Figure 12: Importance of City Priorities

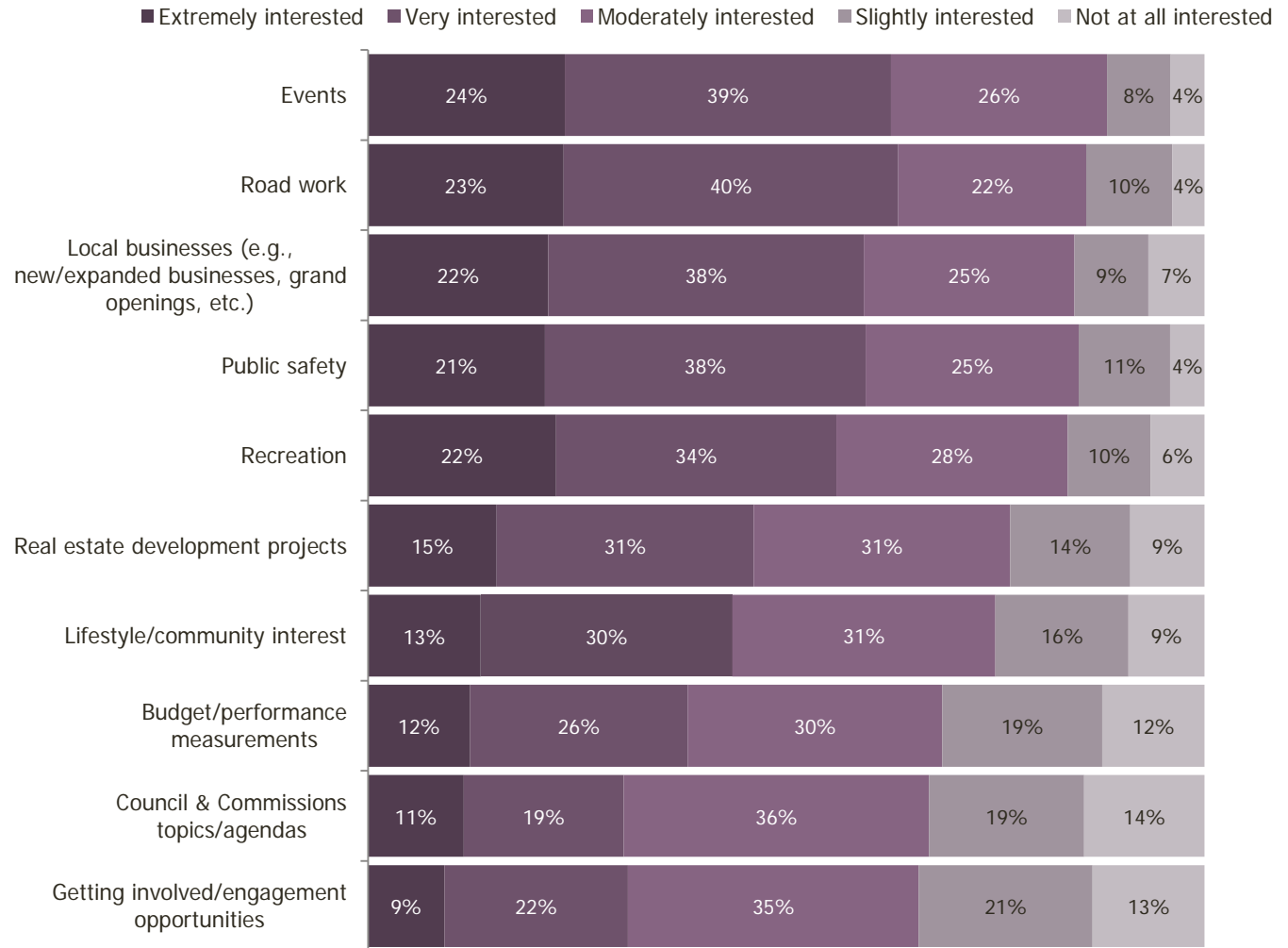
Please rate how important, if at all, you think each of the following priorities are for the City to focus on in the next five years:



Residents considered a list of news topics and indicated how interested they were in receiving information about each. About 8 in 10 residents were at least moderately interested in receiving information about events, road work, local business, public safety and recreation. Respondents were least interested in receiving information about Council and Commissions topics/agendas and getting involved/engagement opportunities; however, about 7 in 10 residents still expressed at least moderate interest in these topics.

Figure 13: Interest in City Information

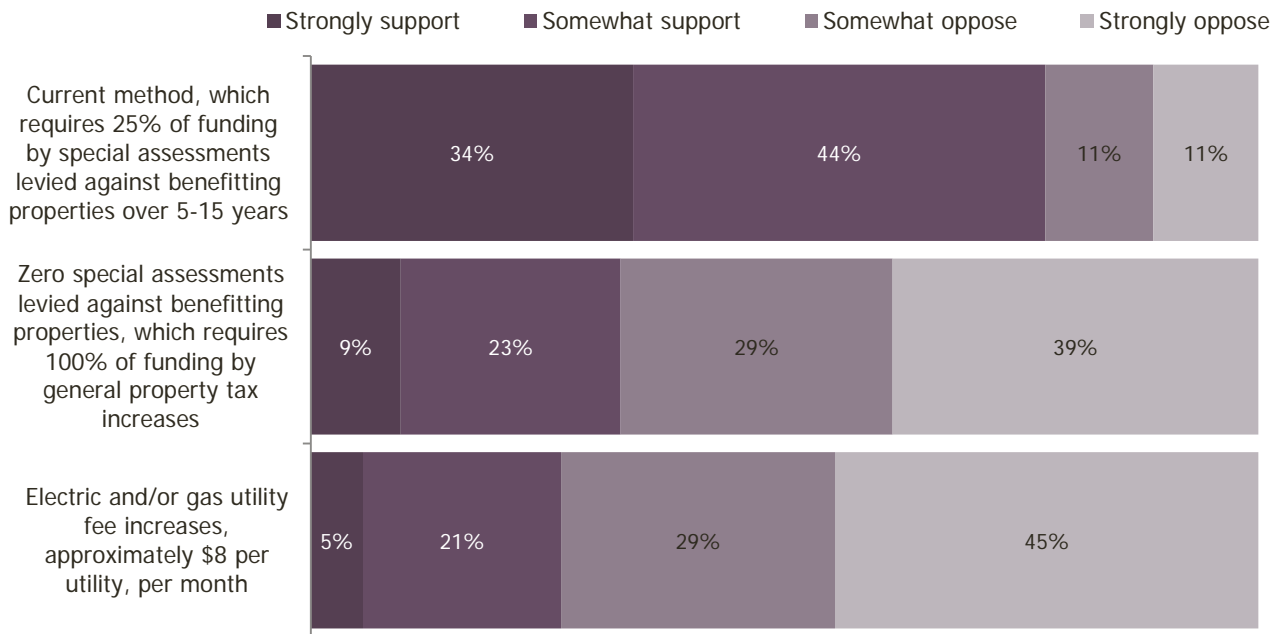
How interested are you, if at all, in receiving information from the City about each of the following topics?



For the final special interest question on the survey, residents indicated their level of support for three different funding options for City street maintenance. About 8 in 10 residents strongly or somewhat supported the current method of funding which requires 25% of funding by special assessments of benefitting properties. Residents indicated stronger opposition to the other two types of funding described (general property tax increases or utility fee increases).

Figure 14: Sources of Funding for City Street Maintenance

The City employs a long-term maintenance program to cost-effectively maintain all 175-plus miles of City streets. Currently, street reconstruction projects are funded 25% by special assessments levied against benefitting properties, and 75% by street reconstruction bonds, which are paid back using general property taxes. The City periodically evaluates funding sources for this on-going program. Please indicate the extent to which you would support or oppose the following funding sources:



Conclusions

Resident satisfaction with City services and government performance is on the upswing.

When presented with a series of questions about leadership and governance in Ramsey, about 8 in 10 residents gave favorable marks to the customer service provided by the City, and roughly half were pleased with items related to local government performance, including the value of services for taxes paid, the overall direction of the City and the job Ramsey government does at welcoming citizen involvement. These ratings were all similar to the national benchmark. Most notably, ratings for welcoming citizen involvement, overall confidence in City government, government acting in the best interest of Ramsey and being honest improved since 2016, demonstrating a positive increase in public trust. Further, ratings for select City services, such as traffic signal timing, land use, planning and zoning, and code enforcement also increased since the last survey iteration, and no services declined in ratings during that time.

The Economy continues to be a priority for residents.

As in 2016, residents indicated that the facet of Economy would be an important focus area for the City to address in the next two years. About half of residents gave favorable marks to the overall economic health of Ramsey, cost of living, the city as a place to work and economic development and these ratings were all similar to those given elsewhere. Further, resident sentiment toward employment opportunities and economic development improved since 2016, and more residents in 2018 believed that the economy would have a positive impact on their income in the next six months. Also, about 8 in 10 residents were quite interested in receiving information from the City about local business (e.g., new/expanded businesses, grand openings, etc.).

However, ratings for vibrant downtown area, overall quality of business and service establishments, shopping opportunities and Ramsey as a place to visit were lower than those seen in other communities across the country. While these ratings might be indicative of community support for greater economic development, it is important to note that balancing rural character and urban growth was identified as a key priority for the City in the upcoming five years.

Residents support improvements to Mobility.

About 6 in 10 residents or more gave positive ratings to most aspects of Mobility, including overall ease of travel, ease of travel by car, availability of paths and walking trails and traffic enforcement; these ratings were all similar to those given in other communities across the nation.

Road maintenance was important to residents with nearly 85% of respondents reporting they were interested in receiving information from the City about road work; the only type of information of greater interest related to community events. When asked about street maintenance funding, about 8 in 10 residents supported the current method of funding for City street maintenance, which requires 25% of funding by special assessments of benefitting properties.

Finally, connectivity is a priority for Ramsey residents. Seven in 10 residents thought that creating a connected community (roads, trails, sidewalks, rail, and transportation) was essential or very important to the future of the community. Further, when asked to consider a number of community enhancements (with a potential for a tax increase), a strong majority of residents supported the City making improvements to existing trails as well as building new trails.

THE NCSTM
The National Citizen SurveyTM

Ramsey, MN

Trends over Time

2018



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Summary

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The NCS communities. The NCS captures residents' opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central facets of community (Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment and Community Engagement). This report discusses trends over time, comparing the 2018 ratings for the City of Ramsey to its previous survey results in 2014 and 2016. Additional reports and technical appendices are available under separate cover.

Trend data for Ramsey represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially, represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected residents' opinions.

Meaningful differences between survey years have been noted within the following tables as being "higher" or "lower" if the differences are greater than six percentage points between the 2016 and 2018 surveys, otherwise the comparisons between 2016 and 2018 are noted as being "similar." Additionally, benchmark comparisons for all survey years are presented for reference. Changes in the benchmark comparison over time can be impacted by various trends, including varying survey cycles for the individual communities that comprise the benchmarks, regional and national economic or other events, as well as emerging survey methodologies.

Overall, ratings in Ramsey for 2018 generally remained stable. Of the 94 items for which comparisons were available, 78 items were rated similarly in 2016 and 2018 and 16 showed an increase in ratings; no items showed a decrease in ratings. Notable trends over time included the following:

- No items trended down from 2016 to 2018.
- In the pillar of Community Characteristics, Ramsey residents were more likely in 2018 than in 2016 to give positive ratings to the city as a place to retire as well as to employment, fitness and cultural/arts/music activities.
- Residents in 2018 tended to give higher ratings to Built Environment-related services than in 2016.
- Survey respondents were more likely in 2018 to favorably rate aspects of government performance such welcoming citizen involvement and overall confidence in City government.
- Respondents were more likely in 2018 than in 2016 to believe the economy would positively impact their income. They were also more likely to have attended a City-sponsored event.

The National Citizen Survey™

Table 1: Community Characteristics General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
	2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Overall quality of life	72%	80%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall image	51%	56%	60%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
Place to live	82%	87%	85%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Neighborhood	84%	87%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to raise children	83%	87%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Place to retire	51%	48%	55%	Higher	Lower	Lower	Similar
Overall appearance	77%	73%	68%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 2: Community Characteristics by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Safety	Overall feeling of safety	90%	90%	90%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe in neighborhood	94%	98%	97%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Safe downtown/commercial areas	94%	96%	96%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Overall ease of travel	68%	69%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Paths and walking trails	75%	68%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Ease of walking	70%	66%	67%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by bicycle	66%	60%	62%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Travel by car	64%	67%	69%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic flow	55%	56%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall natural environment	84%	81%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Cleanliness	82%	80%	74%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Overall built environment	56%	56%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	New development in Ramsey	48%	47%	42%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Affordable quality housing	69%	67%	64%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
	Housing options	75%	73%	68%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Public places	50%	56%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Overall economic health	50%	51%	54%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Vibrant downtown/commercial area	21%	20%	20%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Much lower
Economy	Business and services	49%	43%	46%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Cost of living	49%	49%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Shopping opportunities	23%	20%	20%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Employment opportunities	27%	24%	31%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Place to visit	35%	35%	39%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower

The National Citizen Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good, very/somewhat safe)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Recreation and Wellness	Place to work	42%	49%	50%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
	Health and wellness	66%	63%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreational opportunities	53%	50%	50%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Lower
	Fitness opportunities	60%	55%	64%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Education and enrichment opportunities	54%	52%	53%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Lower
	Cultural/arts/music activities	41%	37%	44%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar
	Adult education	54%	46%	52%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	K-12 education	75%	72%	71%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Child care/preschool	69%	56%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Community Engagement	Opportunities to participate in community matters	52%	47%	51%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Opportunities to volunteer	55%	46%	49%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower

Table 3: Governance General

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Services provided by Ramsey		74%	73%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Customer service		79%	81%	81%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Value of services for taxes paid		44%	45%	45%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Overall direction		48%	46%	49%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Welcoming citizen involvement		48%	48%	55%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Confidence in City government		43%	45%	51%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Acting in the best interest of Ramsey		43%	48%	56%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Being honest		47%	50%	60%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Treating all residents fairly		52%	56%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government		NA	37%	45%	Higher	NA	Similar	Similar

Table 4: Governance by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Safety	Police	86%	90%	91%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire	92%	93%	95%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Crime prevention	80%	79%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Fire prevention	83%	81%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Animal control	60%	62%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Traffic enforcement	68%	76%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street repair	45%	40%	43%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., excellent/good)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
	Street cleaning	57%	60%	56%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Street lighting	55%	57%	59%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Snow removal	55%	62%	58%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sidewalk maintenance	61%	65%	60%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Traffic signal timing	42%	46%	52%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Drinking water	72%	72%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Natural areas preservation	69%	57%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Built Environment	Storm drainage	73%	71%	75%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Sewer services	81%	78%	84%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Land use, planning and zoning	43%	37%	44%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Code enforcement	40%	44%	50%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Economy	Economic development	43%	41%	47%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar
Recreation and Wellness	City parks	75%	77%	76%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Recreation centers	59%	53%	59%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
Community Engagement	Public information	58%	57%	61%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 5: Participation General

	Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
	2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Sense of community	45%	51%	48%	Similar	Lower	Similar	Similar
Recommend Ramsey	82%	86%	84%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Remain in Ramsey	85%	86%	86%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Contacted Ramsey employees	44%	40%	38%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Table 6: Participation by Facet

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
Safety	Did NOT report a crime	90%	85%	81%	Similar	Higher	Similar	Similar
	Was NOT the victim of a crime	94%	92%	94%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Mobility	Used public transportation instead of driving	38%	35%	36%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Walked or biked instead of driving	56%	65%	63%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Natural Environment	Recycled at home	95%	96%	97%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Built Environment	NOT under housing cost stress	78%	80%	79%	Similar	Higher	Higher	Higher
Economy	Purchased goods or services in Ramsey	95%	90%	88%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Economy will have positive impact on income	29%	29%	40%	Higher	Similar	Similar	Similar

The National Citizen Survey™

		Percent rating positively (e.g., always/sometimes, more than once a month, yes)			2018 rating compared to 2016	Comparison to benchmark		
		2014	2016	2018		2014	2016	2018
	Work in Ramsey	20%	24%	22%	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Lower
Recreation and Wellness	Visited a City park	83%	88%	87%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
Education and Enrichment	Attended a City-sponsored event	53%	42%	50%	Higher	Similar	Lower	Similar
Community Engagement	Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate	11%	6%	8%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Lower
	Contacted Ramsey elected officials	11%	10%	11%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Volunteered	22%	17%	20%	Similar	Much lower	Much lower	Much lower
	Attended a local public meeting	14%	11%	14%	Similar	Lower	Lower	Similar
	Watched a local public meeting	26%	21%	17%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar
	Voted in local elections	83%	79%	82%	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar