

**City of Ramsey**  
**Agenda**  
**City Council Special Work Session**  
**Strategic Planning**  
**Thursday, February 27, 2020**  
**5:30 pm**  
**Lake Itasca Room, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW**

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

## CC Special Work Session

Meeting Date: 02/27/2020

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### Title:

Annual Strategic Planning Session

### Purpose/Background:

Each year, the City Council and city leadership staff review the city's strategic plan and make updates as necessary.

Based upon the history of the current plan and the work done last year to refine the city's values, vision, mission and objectives it is proposed that this session focus on action items and strategies. It appears that values, vision, mission and objectives are still relevant today, while many action items have been advanced or completed.

If individual Council Members have concerns with the values, vision, mission and objectives, the Council may set aside some time to discuss these items. The proposed schedule does not provide time to discuss values, vision, mission and objectives in any detail, but there is some flexibility to do so.

Staff will provide an update detailing the status of current action items prior to the meeting next week.

### Timeframe:

#### Time Item

5:30 PM Call to order/dinner served

5:35 – 5:45 Review agenda and meeting objectives

5:45 – 6:05 Review current *Strategic Plan*

6:05 – 7:30 Discuss revisions to existing plan: focus on action items and strategies.

7:30 – 7:45 Discuss next steps/closing comments

9:00 p.m. Adjourn at or prior to this time/based upon discussion.

### Resource Documents:

2019 Strategic Plan

Business Survey

2018 Citizen Survey

### Funding Source:

### Responsible Party(ies):

Kurt Ulrich, City Administrator

Tim Gladhill, Deputy City Administrator

### Outcome:

Annual Review of Strategic Plan and agreement on next steps.

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### **Attachments**

Strategic Plan 2019

Business survey

CitizenSurvey2018

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### **Form Review**

**Inbox**

Kurt Ulrich

Form Started By: Kathy Schmitz

Final Approval Date: 02/21/2020

**Reviewed By**

Kurt Ulrich

**Date**

02/21/2020 12:49 PM

Started On: 02/19/2020 08:49 AM

# Strategic Plan Update

2019 Update – May 28 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 (Saint Francis Boulevard) just north of County Road 116 (Bunker Lake Boulevard). This 19th century structure was originally used as a schoolhouse. The building is a community landmark and the City is working on a long term plan for the structure.

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. Ramsey is a mixture of farms, large-lot single family, urban single-family, and multi-family with a range of prices that appeals to a wide variety of families and individuals. The City is expected to grow by approximately 10,000 people over the next 20 years. Economic Development continues to be a priority for our City. With nearly 7,000 employees working in Ramsey everyday, new industrial and retail growth may add an additional 5,000 employees over the next 20 years. We are proud of our commitment to attract economically and environmentally sound commercial development.

Ramsey is committed to manage future growth to provide a high quality of life, enhanced employment opportunities and a stable tax base. Looking ahead, our city is working toward retail and commercial growth that includes restaurants, shopping, entertainment and additional employment opportunities.

*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.*

## 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

## VISION

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

## MISSION

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

## OBJECTIVES

Financial Stability

A Balance of Rural Character and Urban Growth

An Active and Connected Community

Smart, Citizen-Focused Government

An Effective Organization

## STRATEGIES

Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings and additional funding sources.

Promote economic growth and development.

Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.

Enhance Community Engagement in policy decision-making processes.

Strengthen and enhance our identity and brand.

Improve the safety and mobility of transportation corridors.

Connect the community both physically and socially to destinations, services and activities.

Enhance customer service through process improvements.

Enhance sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments.

Improve City's communication.

Improve and sustain high organizational morale.

Strive to reflect the demographics of the community.

# ACTION PLAN

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
<b>Strategy: Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings and additional funding sources.</b>				
1. Complete a Road Maintenance Funding Study and Public Engagement/Education Process.	Q3 2019	Existing Staff WSB Contact Budget Impact = Medium	Updated policy on appropriate funding for long term maintenance of local roads.  Results will influence future decision on road funding.	Bruce Westby
2. Implement a Road Maintenance Funding Program.	Q1 2020	Budget Impact = Medium	Retain existing program or choose a new program.	Diana Lund
3. Identify and improve one organizational workflow process.	2019	Budget Impact = Low	Experienced cost savings as a result of improved workflow.  Example: Purchasing Policy	Kurt Ulrich
4. Create an Alternative Funding Toolkit.	2019	Budget Impact = Low	List of potential funding sources for capital improvements.  Improved funding partnership and successful capital projects.	Diana Lund
5. Evaluate Asset Management Options for Public Infrastructure.	2019	Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	Improved tracking of roads, utilities, etc.  More efficient utilization of personnel resources.	Bruce Westby
<b>Strategy: Promote economic growth and development.</b>				
6. Expand Business Retention and Expansion efforts.	2019	Existing Staff: Budget Impact = Low	Stable base of local employers, representing the largest opportunity for future growth of jobs and tax base.  Increase the number of business visits.  Improve the quality and attendance at EDA events.	Sean Sullivan
7. Expand recruitment process to secure new commercial (retail) users.	2019	Existing Staff: Real estate broker Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	Continued growth of jobs, tax base, and services.  5,000 square feet of new retail space.	Sean Sullivan
8. Expand recruitment process to secure new industrial users.			Continued growth of jobs, tax base, and services.  50,000 square feet of new industrial space.	
9. Complete Comprehensive Housing Study and recruit new residential neighborhoods.	Q3 2019	Existing Staff: Budget Impact = Medium RCP Report	Plan for market relevant housing to jobs ratio (1 job per 1.5 household).	Tim Gladhill
<b>Strategy: Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.</b>				

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
10. Create baseline metrics to track and evaluate effectiveness of changes to Code Enforcement Program and use to track future trends.	Q4 2019	Existing Staff: Budget Impact = Low	Reduced blight and public nuisance.  Improved responsiveness of neighborhood concerns.  Improved empathy to private property rights and complex regulations.  Improved aesthetics and reduced blight along Highway 10 and Highway 47.	Tim Gladhill
11. Create a coalition of local multifamily (apartments, condos, etc.) property managers.	2019	Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	Ensure that multifamily properties maintain high quality.  Consider HOAs	Chloe McGuire Brigl
<b>Strategy: Enhance Community Engagement in policy decision-making processes.</b>				
12. Create Public Engagement Toolkit/Manual.	Q1 2020	Existing Staff: Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	New and improved engagement with the community on all key policy topics.	Tim Gladhill
<b>Strategy: Strengthen and enhance our identity and brand.</b>				
13. Complete a feasibility study for a future Postal Facility to obtain a Ramsey ZIP Code.	2020	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Medium RCP Report (community identity)	ZIP Code will identify itself as Ramsey.  Take a step forward in achieving a Ramsey ZIP Code.  Seek third-party funding to assist.	Kurt Ulrich
14. Install and/or replace signs at Highway 10/Ramsey Boulevard, Highway 10/Rail Station.	Q3 2019	Budget Impact = Medium to High RCP Report	Unified community brand for key nodes.	Chloe McGuire Brigl
15. Develop a plan for Historic Town Hall.	Q3 2019	Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	Adaptive reuse and tax base generation of historic town hall.  Consider other buyers.	Kurt Ulrich
<b>Strategy: Improve the safety and mobility of transportation corridors.</b>				
16. Complete County Road 5 Corridor Study.	Future Parking Lot List  Revisit adding	Budget Impact = Medium	Unified vision for Nowthen Boulevard.  Improved safety and reduced congestion.	Bruce Westby
17. Complete State Highway 47 Study Update.	Q1 2020	Existing Staff: Budget Impact = Medium	Unified vision for Highway 47.  Improved safety and reduced congestion.	Bruce Westby
18. Complete the Ramsey Gateway Study.	Q4 2019	Existing Staff/Resources Budget Impact = High RCP Report	Unified vision for Highway 10.  Improved safety and reduced congestion.	Tim Gladhill

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
<b>Strategy: Connect the community both physically and socially to destinations, services, and activities.</b>				
19. Complete the Master Parks and Trail Plan/Capital Improvement Program Update.	2019	Existing Staff/Resources Budget Impact = Medium RCP Report	Adequate parks, trails and public spaces, both future and existing.  Unique recreation destinations.	Mark Riverblood
20. Update Recreation Programming Work Plan	2019	Budget Impact = Low	Deliver a diversity of programs that finds a balance of revenue and access.	Mark Riverblood
<b>Strategy: Enhance customer service through process improvements.</b>				
21. Complete snow removal study and alternatives analysis.	2019	Budget Impact = Low	Ensure process and staffing for snow removal meets community expectations.	Grant Riemer
<b>Strategy: Enhance sustainability and efficiency through public facilities and infrastructure investments.</b>				
22. Complete Regional Surface Water Supply Feasibility Study.	Q1 2020	Study funded by Metropolitan Council. Budget Impact = Low	Adequate supply of water to supply community's future vision.  Ensure that groundwater is the most appropriate source for the future.	Bruce Westby
23. Explore Water Supply Treatment Options			Reduce levels of manganese in municipal water supply.	
24. Complete Plans and Specifications for Future Public Works Campus.	2019	Budget Impact = High	Adequate space to effectively maintain public infrastructure.  Savings of time and money in operational efficiencies.	Grant Riemer
25. Consider smart irrigation rebate program.	2019	Budget Impact = Medium	Reduced demand on public water supply and avoid/delay of infrastructure investments.	Chris Anderson
<b>Strategy: Improve City's communication.</b>				
26. Update Communications Plan.	2019	Existing Staff Budget Impact = Low RCP Report	Improved external communication.  Provide more information of interest to residents in multiple formats.  New and more effective ways to reach the community, including but not limited to social media.  Talking Points for Key Projects.  Policy, process, and timing for communicating key topics.  Improved administration of Ramsey Resident Newsletter.	Megan Thorstad
27. Enhance Employee Intranet.	Q4 2019	Budget Impact = Low	Enhanced access for personnel policies and resources for existing and future Councilmembers, Employees, and Commissioners.  Improved internal communication.	Colleen Lasher

Action	Timeframe	Resources	Key Outcomes and Indicators	Responsible Party
<b>Strategy: Improve and sustain high organizational morale.</b>				
This remains a high priority for the community and is addressed in multiple actions above.				
<b>Strategy: Strive to reflect the demographics of the community.</b>				
This remains a high priority for the community and is addressed in multiple actions above.				

*Budget Impact Key; Low = Existing Staff/thousands of dollars; Medium = Additional Staff/Consultants/tens of thousands of dollars; High = capital improvement/hundreds of thousands of dollars.*

*RCP Report = Partnership with the University of Minnesota completed in 2018. This partnership created a library of resources and policy alternatives. A full list of completed reports can be found online at [rcp.umn.edu/ramsey-projects](http://rcp.umn.edu/ramsey-projects).*

## PARKING LOT LIST

Action	Strategy
Complete a Development Fee Impact Study.	Identify and implement operational efficiencies, cost savings and additional funding sources.
Complete Comprehensive Streetscape and Greenway Manual.	Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.
Complete Neighborhood Plans for Pearson Properties and Makowsky Farms.	Create a positive image for residential neighborhoods, business districts and key corridors.
Remodel 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor of City Hall for additional collaboration and meeting space.	Enhance Community Engagement in policy decision-making processes.
Complete a Fire Department Duty Crew Analysis.	Enhance customer service through process improvements.
Complete Organization Staffing Plan.	Improve and sustain high organizational morale.

## CULTURE

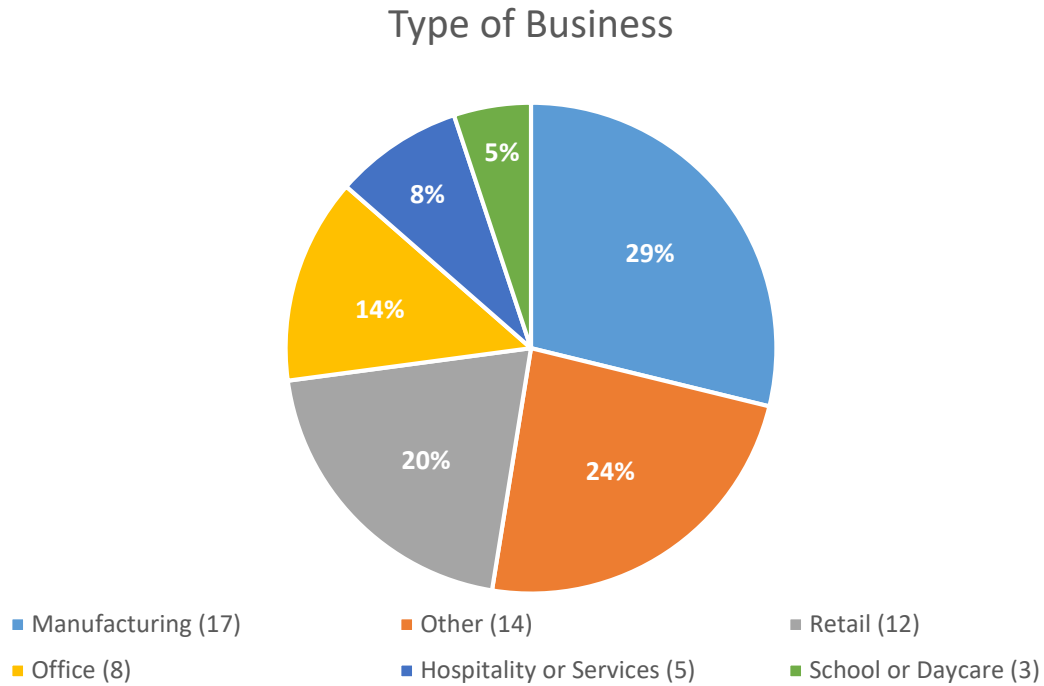
- Utilize Strategic Plan to prioritize budget requests.
- Leverage additional funding sources.
- Seek grants to do high priority projects.
- Seek public and private partnerships.
- Improve Park and Recreation revenue through user fees and sponsorships.
- Provide adequate public safety staffing based upon common metrics (i.e., calls for service, time of day caseload, land use and population, citizen expectations).
- Continue Staff Recognition Programs.
- Increase awareness of various employee resources.

# 2019 Business Survey

In 2019 we sent a survey to 361 businesses. Out of those businesses, 59 of them participated in the survey for a 16% participation rate. We had 63 responses as four businesses took the survey twice, several months apart. Their second response (when applicable) has been removed from the results of this survey for more accurate results.

**Question One: What is your business' name?**

**Question Two: What type of business are you?**



**Question Three: How many full time employees (FTE's) do you have?**

The majority of the businesses (33) had fewer than ten employees.  
Nine said they had 11 – 20 employees.  
Nine said they had 21 – 50 employees.  
Five said they had 51 – 100 employees.  
Three said they have over 100 employees.

**Question Four: Do you lease or own your building?**

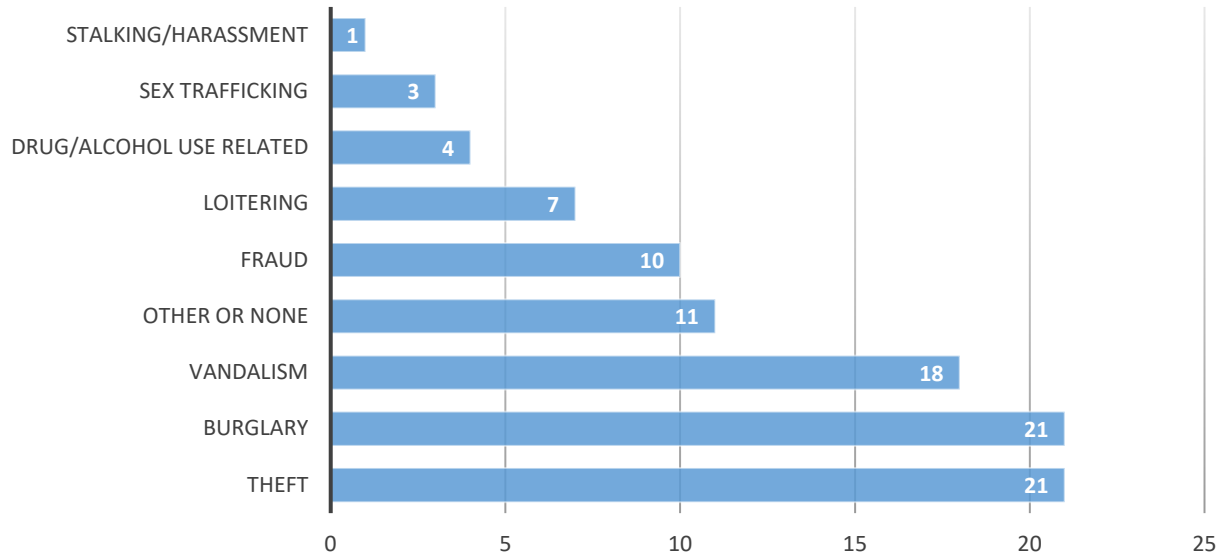
Leased:	24	41%
Owned:	35	59%

**Question Five: Do you expect to expand your building, or relocate to a new building, within the next two years?**

Yes:	8	14%
No:	51	86%

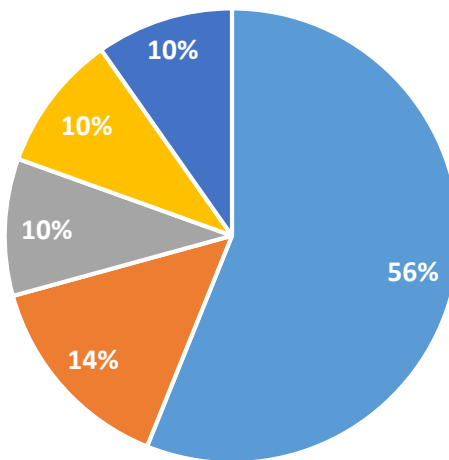
**Question Six: Which of the following are the top two most pressing public safety or crime-related issues that impact your business?**

### Public Safety/Crime Concerns



**Question Seven: What, if anything, can the Ramsey Police Department do to address the concerns raised in the previous question:**

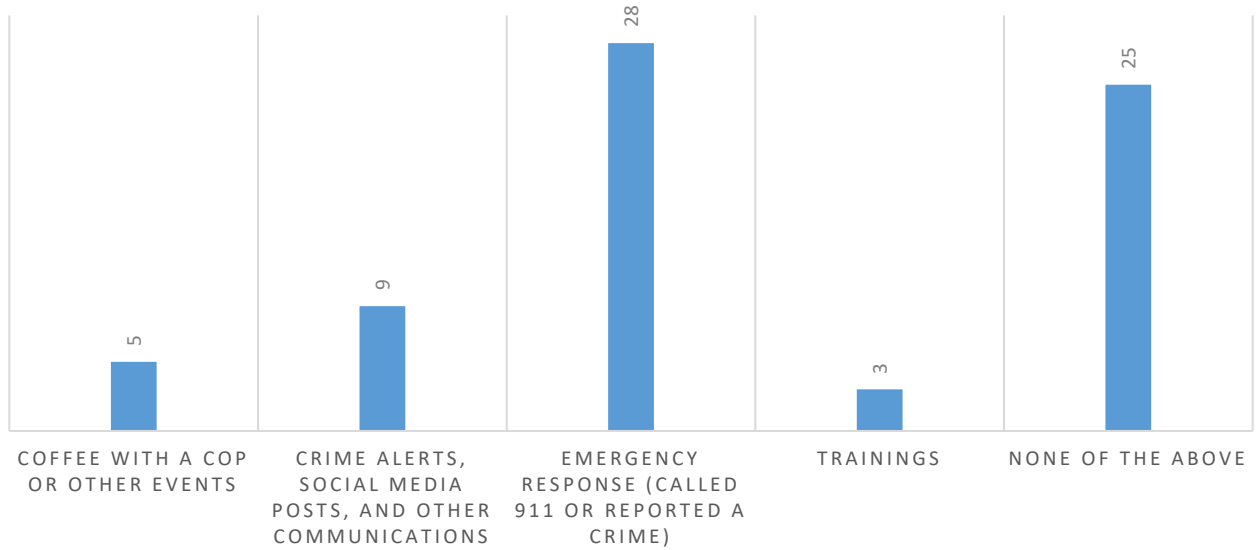
### What Can RPD Do?



- More Patrol (area or in person)
- Keep Up the Great Work
- Not Sure/Don't Know
- N/A or Nothing
- Other (trainings, change laws, or traffic flow)

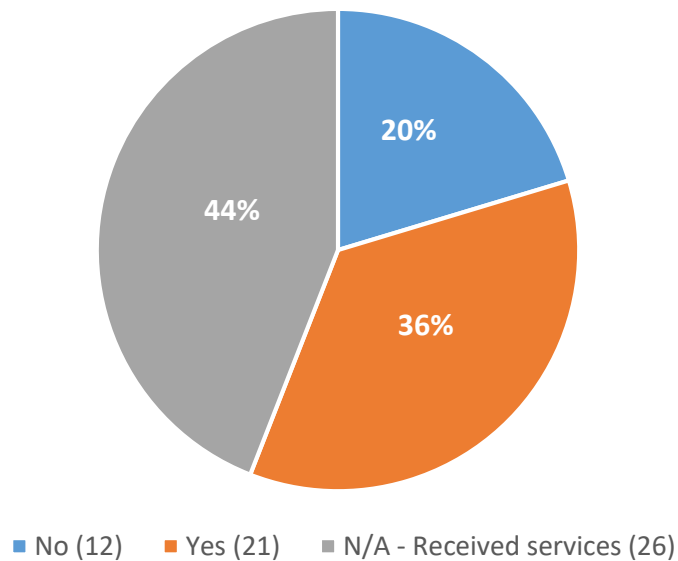
**Question Eight: For each service, please check the box if you have used it (multiple answers are accepted).**

### POLICE SERVICES USED

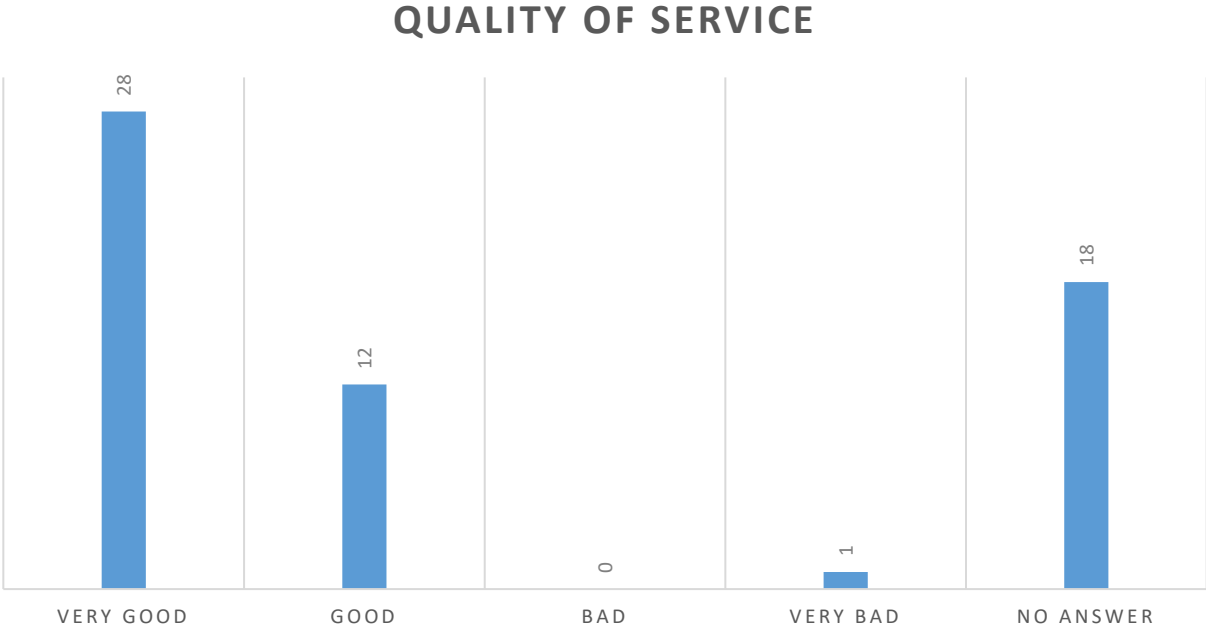


**Question Nine: If you have not received services, were you aware of them? If you have not used any services please skip this question.**

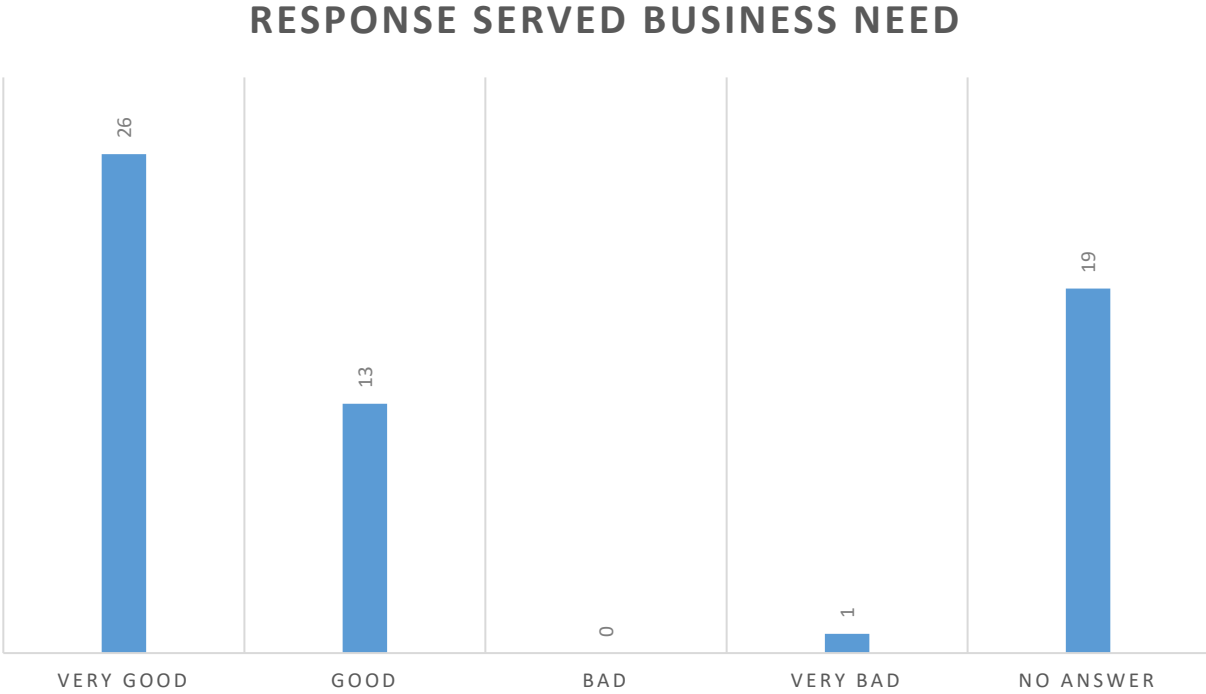
### Aware of Police Services



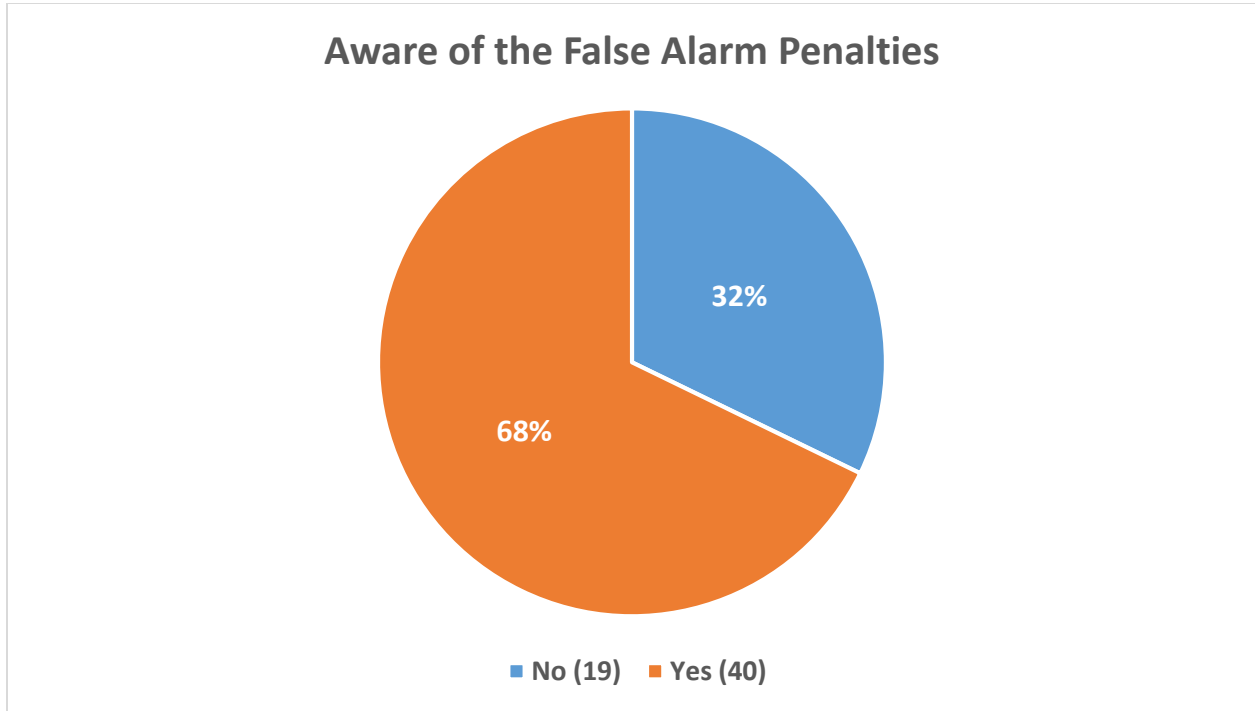
**Question Ten: If you've received services, how would you rate their quality?**



**Question Eleven: If you've received services, how would you rate their responses served your needs as a business owner?**



**Question Twelve: Are you aware of the ordinance around false alarms which states “for the third false alarm in a calendar year, the administrative penalty as established by council ordinance shall be imposed. Additional civil penalties are imposed for each false alarm thereafter during the same calendar year”?**



**Question Thirteen: Would you be interested in a free business safety training?**

No	33	56%
Yes	26	44%

**Question Fourteen: What types of training should the Ramsey Police Department Provide?**

Active Shooter/evacuation training	De-escalation / removing someone / self-defense
Scam/Fraud/Vandalism prevention	Common crimes to help protect businesses
Safe driving tips	AED/CPR use

**Question Fifteen: Please indicate which time(s), if any, that you could attend training:**

Weekdays – Morning	24	Weekends – Morning	2
Weekdays – Afternoon	17	Weekends – Afternoon	2
Weekdays – Evening	3	Weekends – Evening	1

**Question Sixteen: What types of format should trainings be in?**

Webinar/Online	11 or 42%	Class/Group Setting	8 or 41%
Any type	4 or 15%	One on One	3 or 12%

**THE NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

Ramsey, MN  
Community Livability Report

2018



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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.

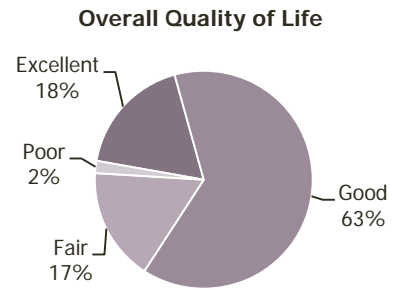
Great communities are partnerships of the government, private sector, community-based organizations and residents, all geographically connected. The NCS captures residents’ opinions within the three pillars of a community (Community Characteristics, Governance and Participation) across eight central 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.

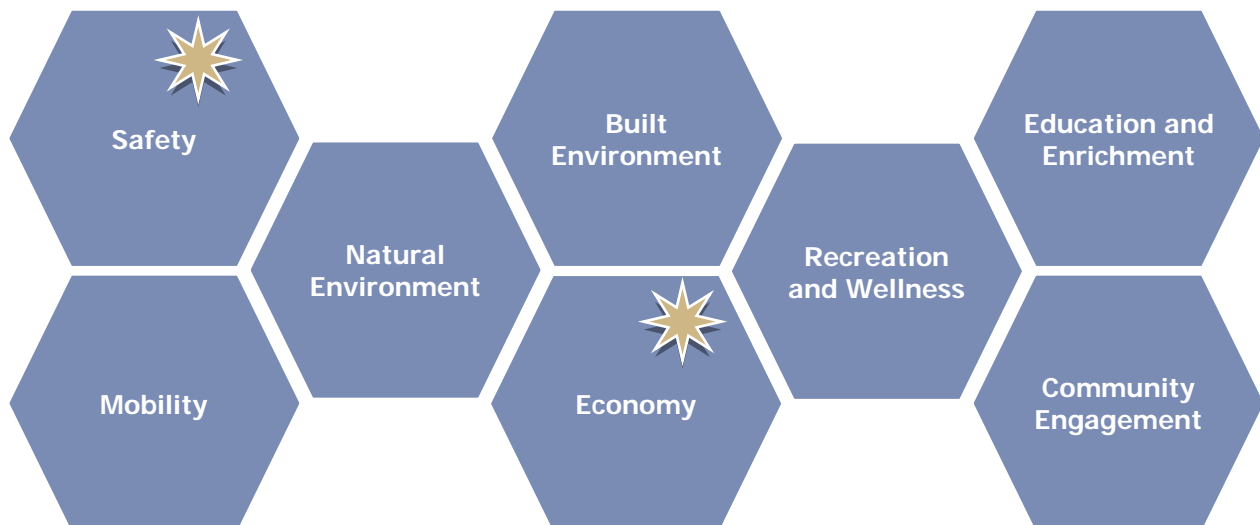
In addition to a summary of ratings, the image below includes one or more stars to indicate which community facets were the most important focus areas for the community. As in 2016, residents identified Safety and Economy as priorities for the Ramsey community in the coming two years. All facets of community 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



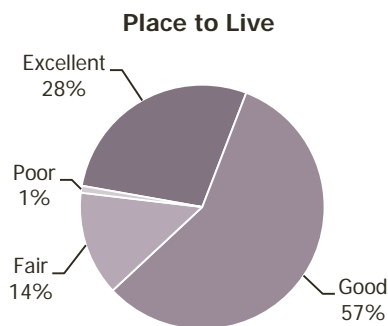
# Community Characteristics

*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.

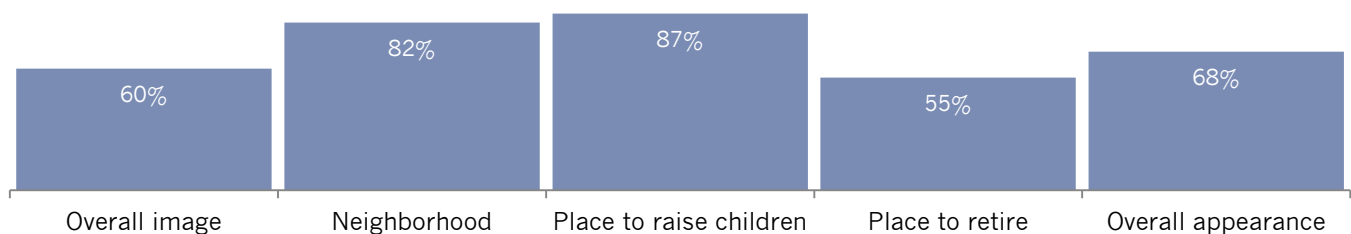
In addition to rating the city as a place to live, respondents rated several aspects of community quality including Ramsey as a place to raise children and to retire, their neighborhood as a place to live, the overall image or reputation of Ramsey and its overall appearance. While ratings for these aspects 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)



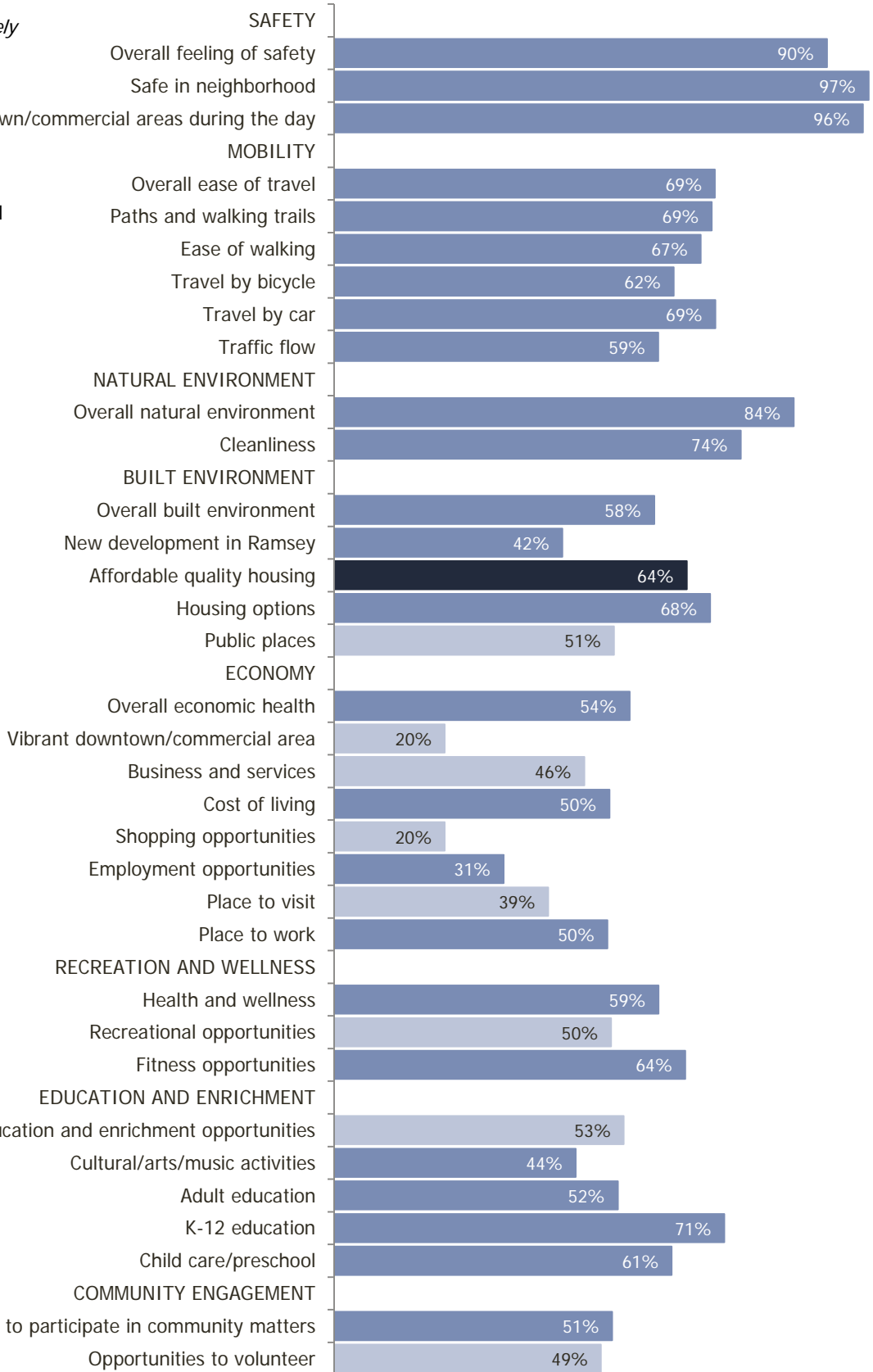
# The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 1: Aspects of Community Characteristics

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower



# Governance

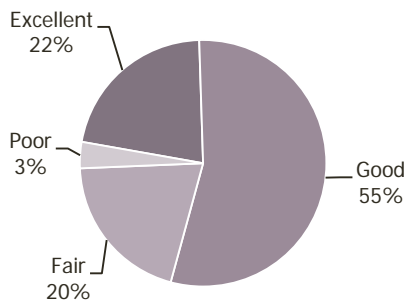
*How well does the government of Ramsey meet the needs and expectations of its residents?*

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.

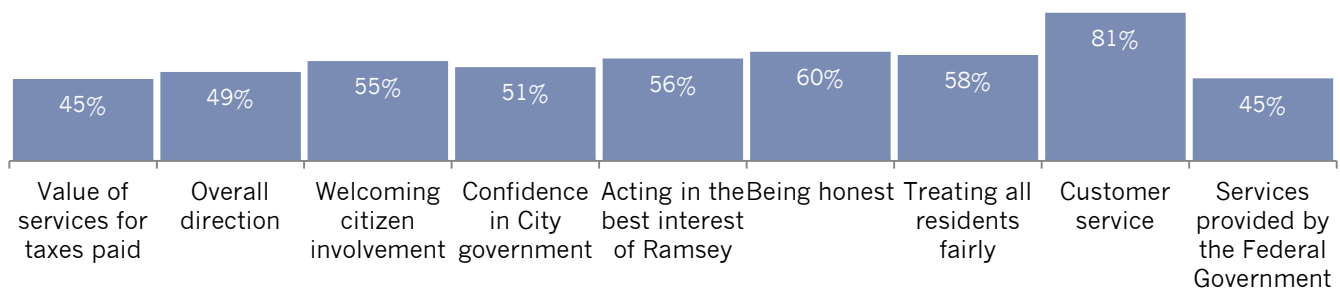
**Overall Quality of City Services**



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

Comparison to national benchmark

■ Higher ■ Similar ■ Lower



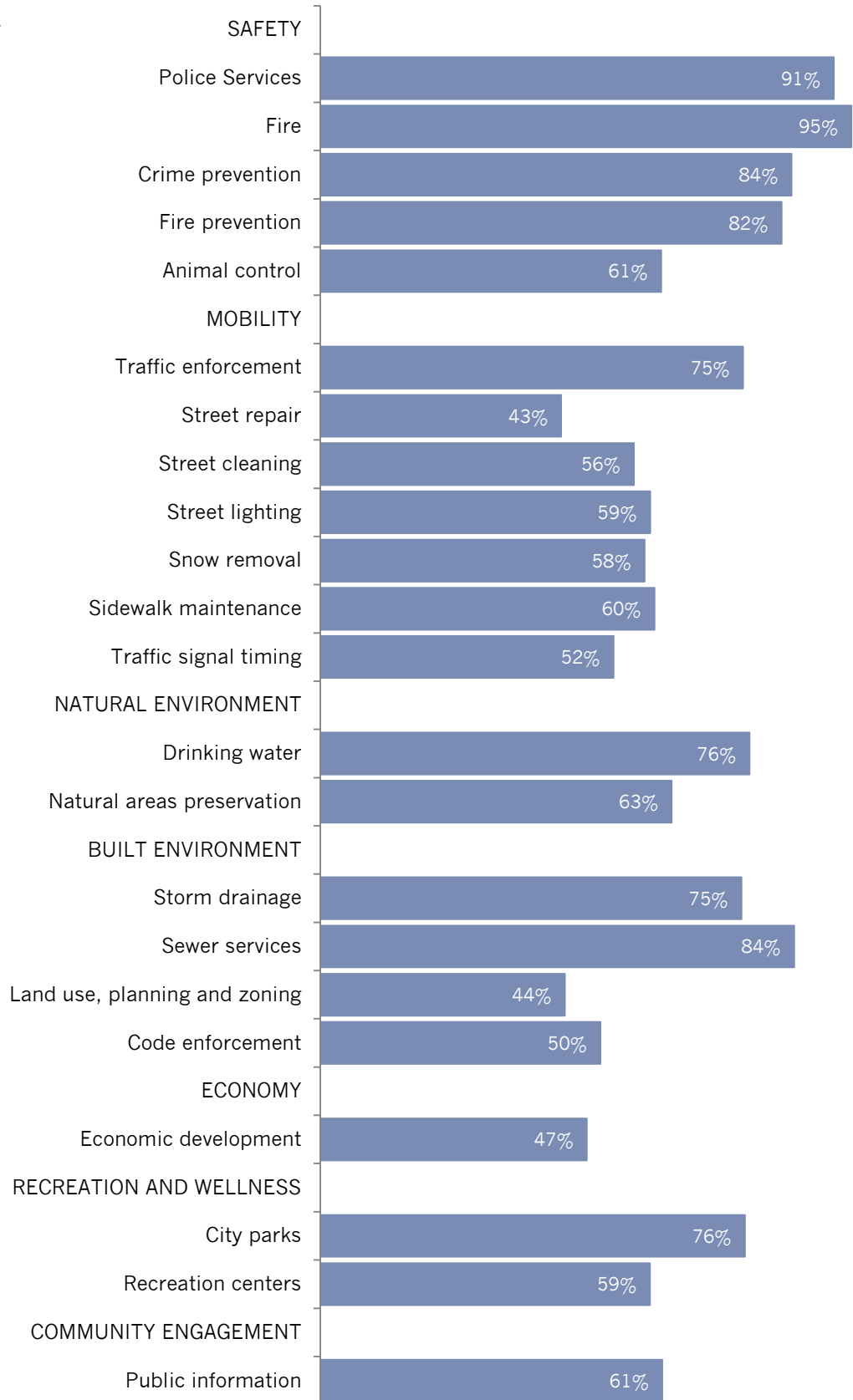
## The National Citizen Survey™

Figure 2: Aspects of Governance

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

Comparison to national  
benchmark

- Higher
- Similar
- Lower

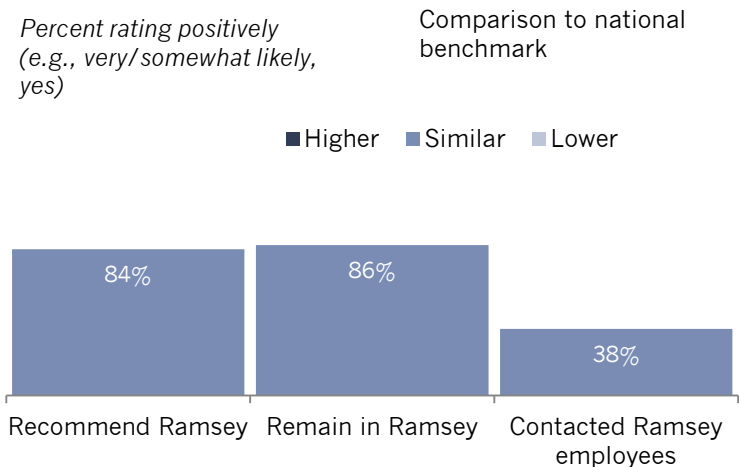
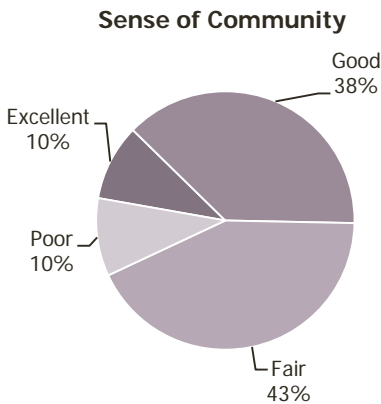


# Participation

*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.



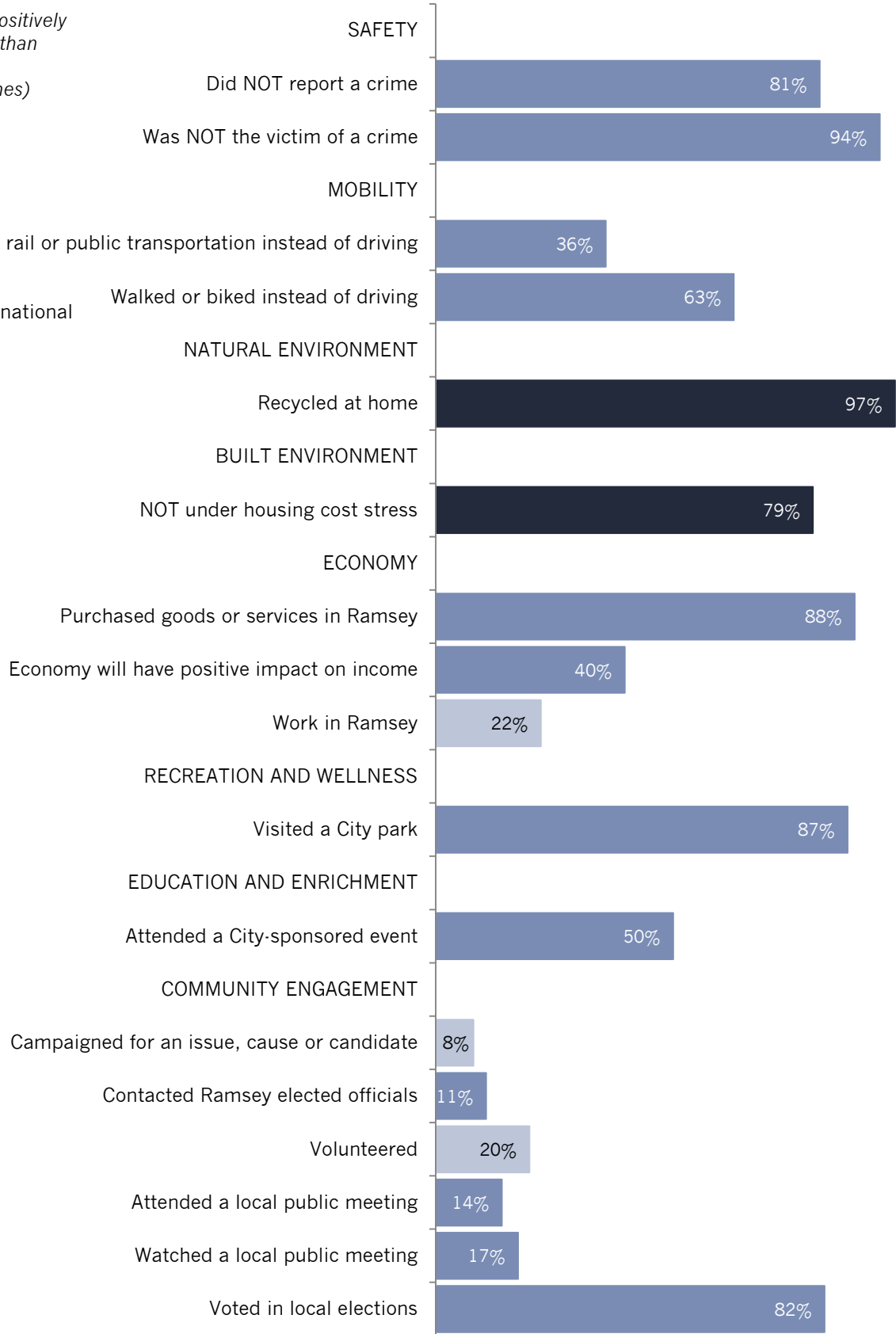
# The National Citizen Survey™

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

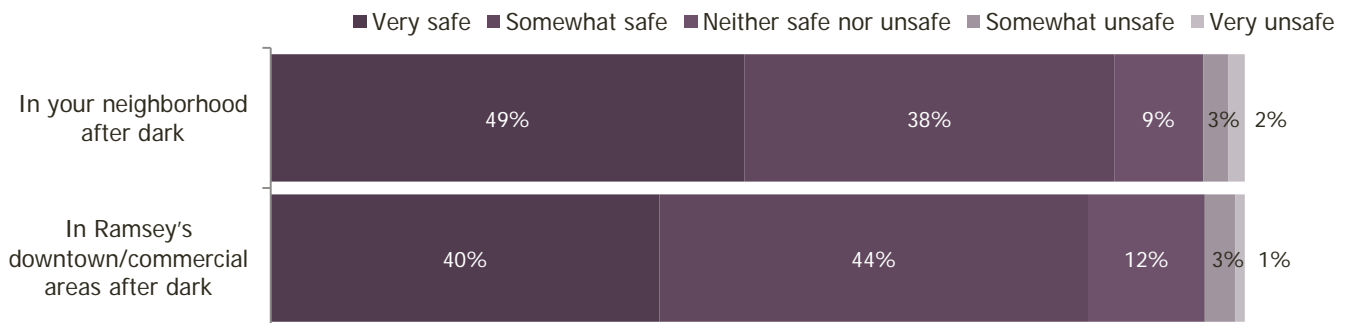


# Special Topics

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.

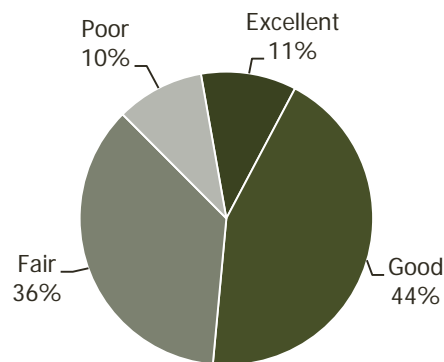
Thinking about their feelings of safety after dark, roughly 9 in 10 residents indicated that they felt safe in their neighborhoods or in Ramsey’s downtown/commercial areas after dark; very few residents felt unsafe in these areas.

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.

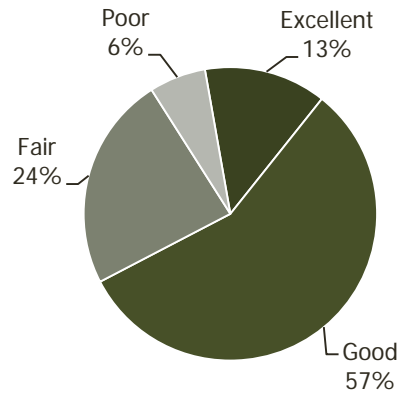
Figure 5: Line Addition to Question 5  
Please rate the overall condition of City maintained streets:



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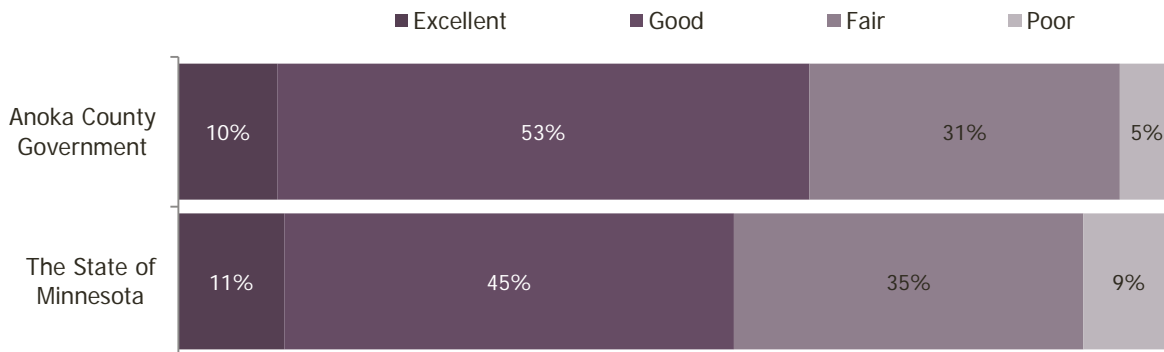
About 7 in 10 residents assessed the quality of Ramsey trail maintenance as excellent or good. About one-quarter rated the quality of the trails as fair and less than 1 in 10 thought it was poor.

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?

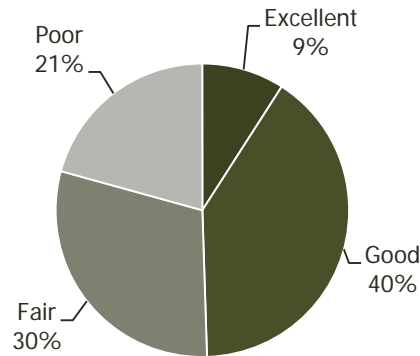


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When asked about the development and success of a Ramsey strategic plan, about half of residents thought that the Ramsey government had done an excellent or good job. Approximately 3 in 10 residents thought Ramsey had done a fair job on the plan and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

Figure 8: Line Addition to Question 12

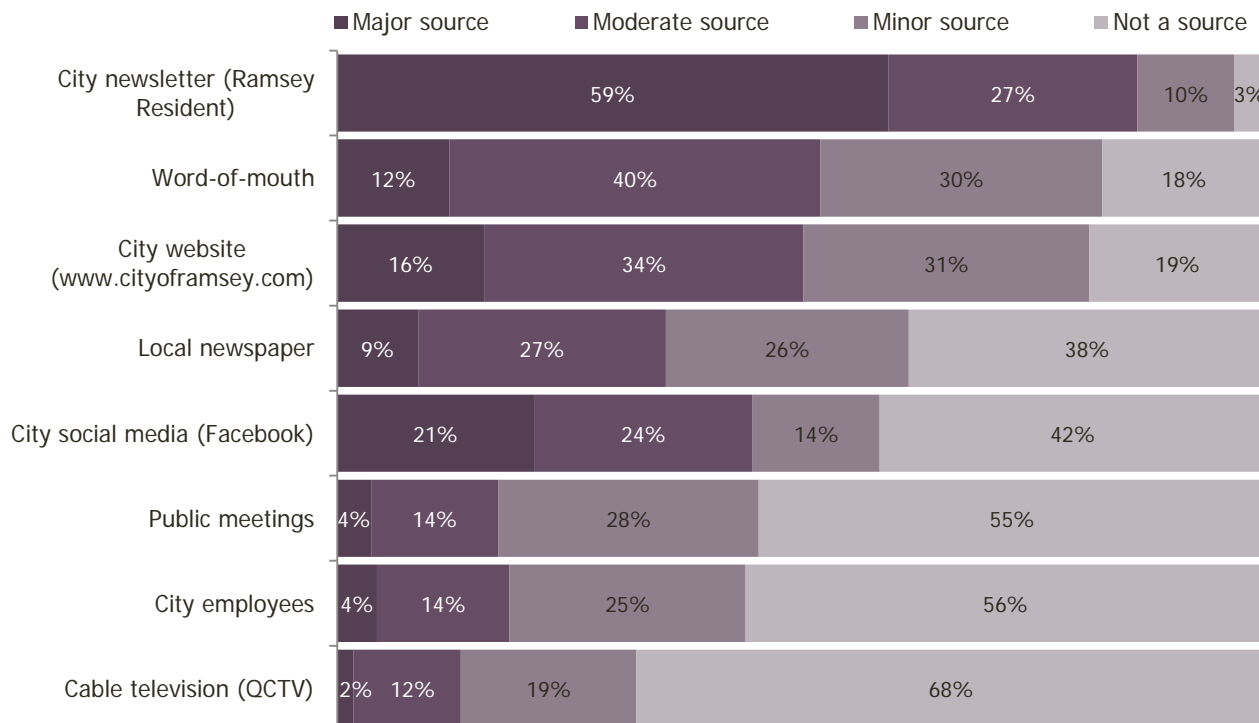
Please rate the following categories of Ramsey government performance: Development and success of a strategic action plan



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

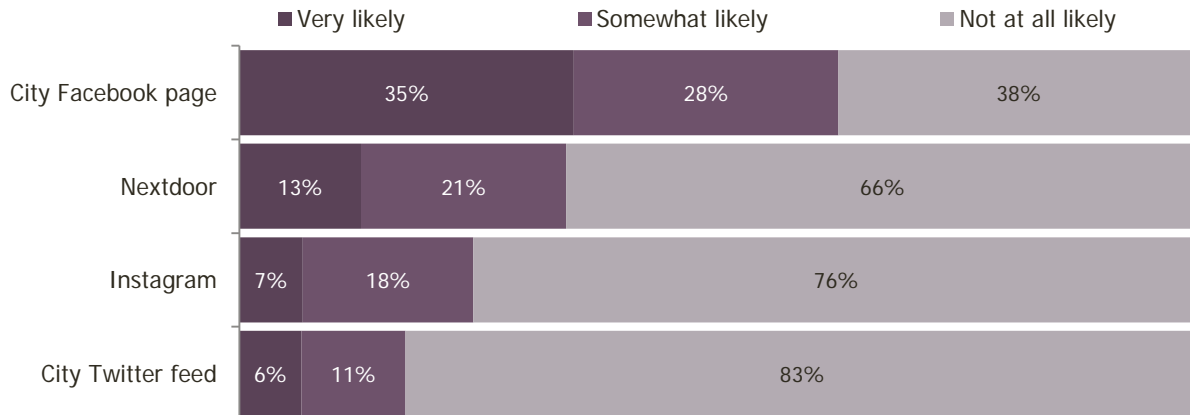
To what extent are each of the following a source of information for you about Ramsey city government and its activities?



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

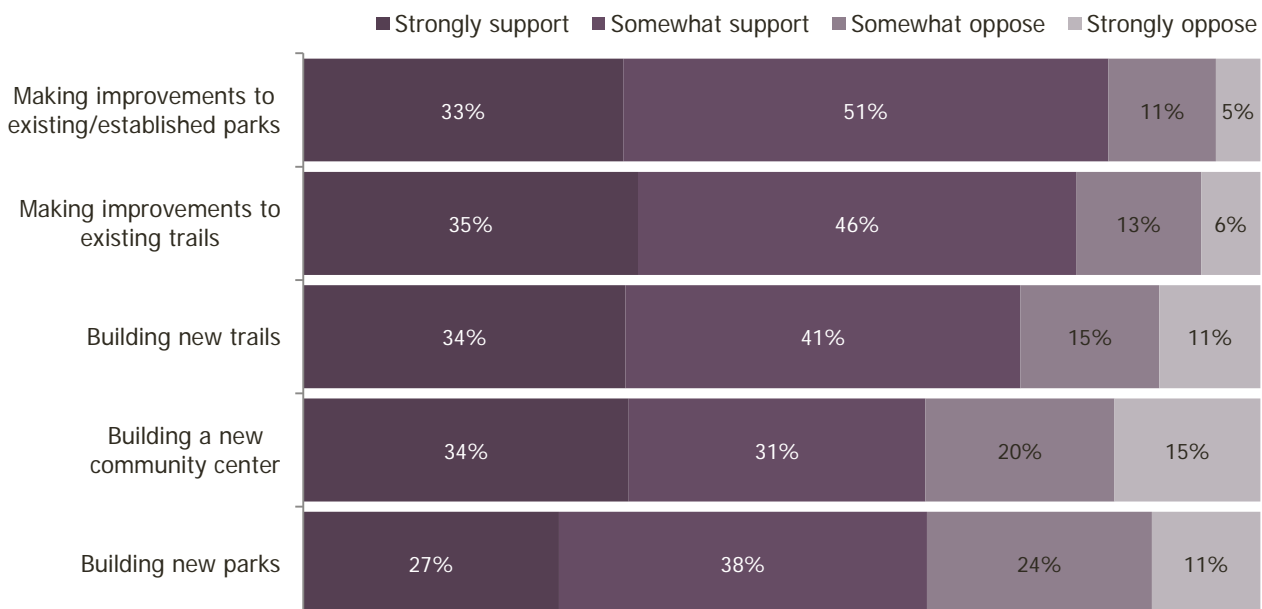
Please indicate how likely you would be, if at all, to engage with the City on the following social media platforms in the future:



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

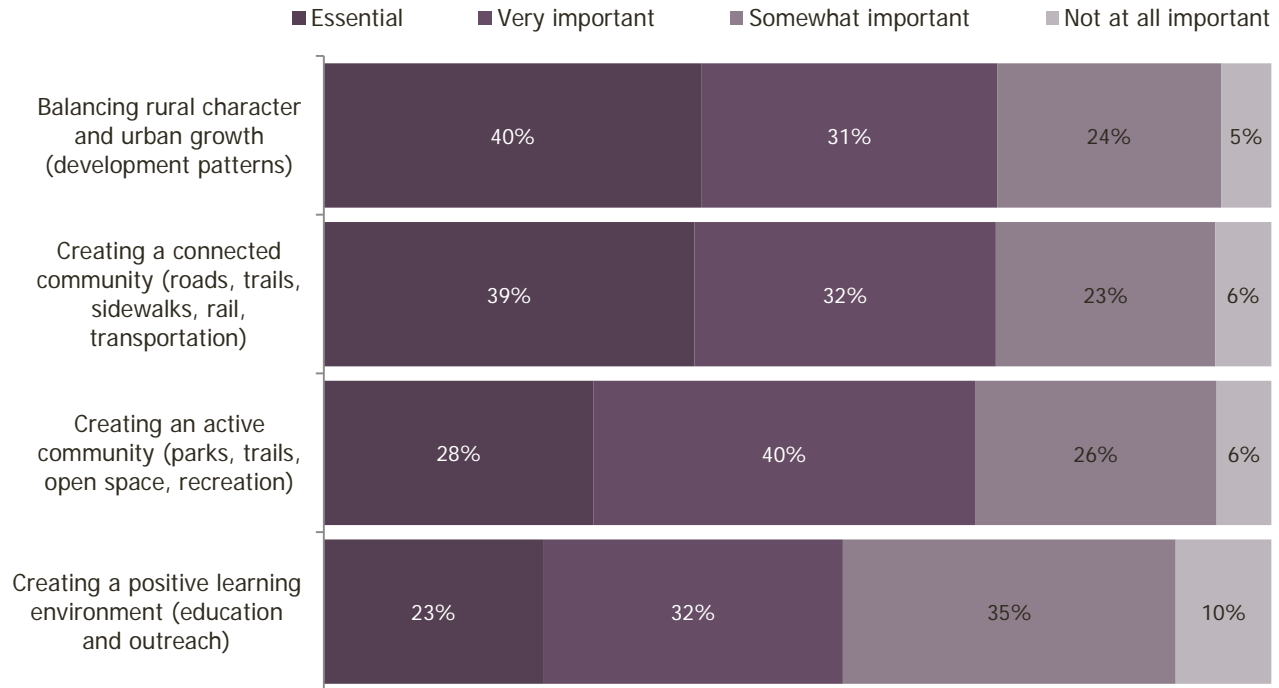
Please indicate to what extent you support or oppose the city investigating the following changes to new or existing amenities, each of which could accordingly result in an increase to the tax levy:



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

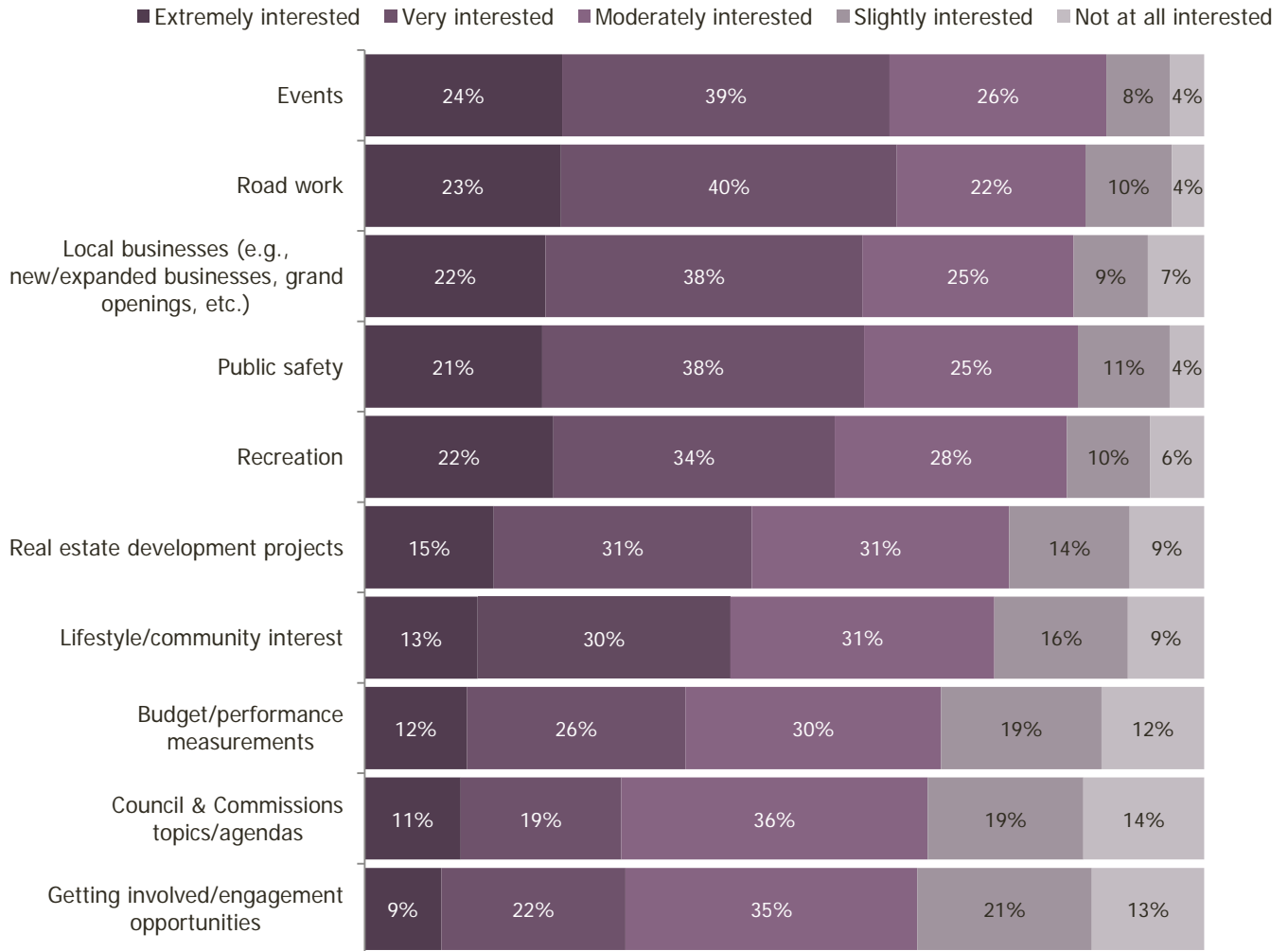
Figure 12: Importance of City Priorities

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.

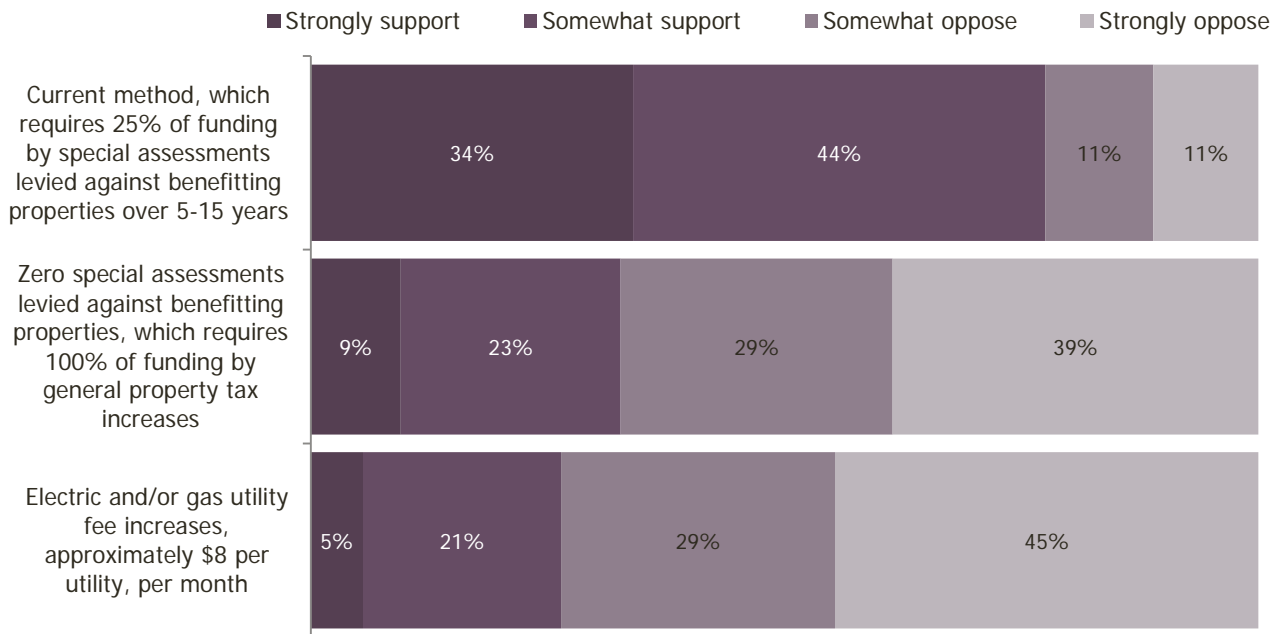
Figure 13: Interest in City Information  
*How interested are you, if at all, in receiving information from the City about each of the following topics?*



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 NCS**<sup>TM</sup>  
The National Citizen Survey<sup>TM</sup>

# 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.

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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

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		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

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		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