



Thank you for the opportunity to present

*2009
Community Survey*





Introduction

The Center for Research & Public Policy (CRPP) is pleased to present the results to a *2009 Community Survey* designed to assist the City of Battle Creek, Michigan in understanding the levels of service satisfaction among Battle Creek residents.

The research study included a comprehensive telephone survey. Interviews were conducted among residents of Battle Creek by phone. CRPP, working together with Battle Creek officials, designed the survey instrument to be used when calling residents. This report summarizes statistics collected from a telephone survey administered April 13 – 24, 2009.

The City of Battle Creek, Michigan commissioned this study to independently and objectively collect views on City services, community needs and awareness of City policies.



Introduction

Areas for investigation within this report include:

- **Quality of life;**
- **Opinions on local issues;**
- **Ratings of community services;**
- **Awareness and use of City services;**
- **Communication methods;**
- **Unmet/under-met community needs; and**
- **Demographics.**



Introduction

Using a quantitative research design, CRPP completed 500 interviews among Battle Creek, Michigan residents.

All telephone interviews were conducted April 13 – 24, 2009 among residents of the City of Battle Creek, Michigan. Survey input was provided by officials of the City of Battle Creek.

Survey design at CRPP is a careful, deliberative process to ensure fair, objective and balanced surveys. Staff members, with years of survey design experience, edit any bias. Further, all scales used by CRPP (either numeric, such as one through ten, or wording such as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree) are balanced evenly. And, placement of questions is carefully accomplished so that order has no impact.



Introduction

All population based surveys conducted by CRPP are proportional to population contributions within States, towns, and known census tract, group blocks and blocks. This distribution ensures truly representative results without under or over representation of various geographic or demographic groups within a sampling frame.

CRPP utilized a “super random digit” sampling procedure, which derives a working telephone sample of both listed and unlisted telephone numbers. This method of sample selection eliminates any bias towards only listed telephone numbers. Additionally, this process allows randomization of numbers, which equalizes the probability of qualified respondents being included in the sampling frame.



Methodology

One survey instrument was used to elicit information from all Battle Creek residents. Respondents qualified for the survey if they confirmed to be a head of their household, at least eighteen years of age, and a current resident of Battle Creek.

Training of the researchers and a pre-test both occurred during the first night of fielding, which took place on April 13, 2009.

All telephone interviews were conducted from CRPP headquarters located in Trumbull, Connecticut. Research was conducted primarily during the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. weekdays.



Methodology

CRPP researchers and senior staff completed all facets of this *2009 Community Survey*. These aspects included: survey design, sample stratification, pre-test, fielding, editing, coding, computer programming, analysis and report preparation.

Statistically, a sample of 500 completed telephone interviews represents an accuracy level of $\pm 4.5\%$ at the midpoint of a 95% confidence level.

In theory, a sample survey of Battle Creek residents would differ no more than $\pm 4.5\%$ than if all residents were contacted and included in the survey.

That is, if random probability sampling procedures were reiterated over and over again, sample results may be expected to approximate larger population values within $\pm 4.5\%$.



Highlights

On Quality of Life...

- While the clear majority of all Battle Creek respondents, 89.6%, reported their overall quality of life as being either “very good” (20.2%) or “good” (69.4%), another 9.8% reported their quality of life as “poor” (7.2%) or “very poor” (2.6%).

| <i>Quality of life</i> | <i>2009</i> |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Very good | 20.2% |
| Good | 69.4 |
| Poor | 7.2 |
| Very poor | 2.6 |
| Don't know/unsure | 0.6 |
| <i>Total good</i> | <i>89.6</i> |
| <i>Total poor</i> | <i>9.8</i> |



Highlights

- More than two-thirds of respondents, 69.4%, reported their overall quality of life in Battle Creek compared with two years ago as either “better” (8.0%) or “no change, but good” (61.4%). Just over one-quarter, 28.6%, reported their quality of life is “worse” (24.4%) or “no change, and poor” (4.2%) as compared with two years ago.

| <i>Quality of life compared to two years ago</i> | <i>2009</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Better | 8.0% |
| No change, but good | 61.4 |
| No change, and poor | 4.2 |
| Worse | 24.4 |
| Don't know/unsure | 2.0 |



Highlights

- The top reasons given for why respondents continue to live in Battle Creek were listed as: “birthplace” (33.4%), “work” (19.6%) and “location” (16.0%).
- “Friendly people” (19.0%), “close to family” (14.8%) and “it’s my home” (14.2%) were reported most often as the things respondents like most about Battle Creek.



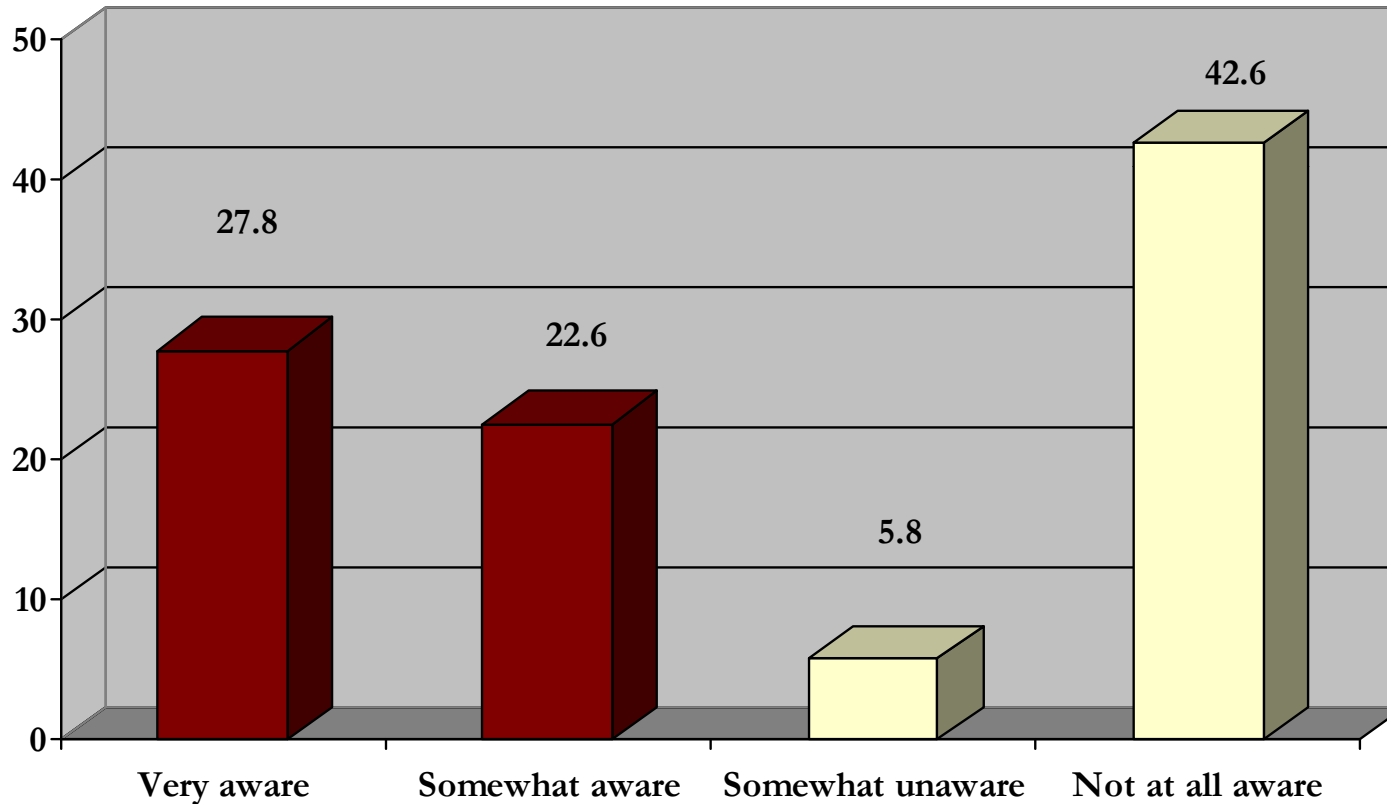
Highlights

On Local Issues...

- The top issues, on a local level, that respondents reported being most concerned with were listed as: “crime” (27.8%), “unemployment” (26.2%), “condition of roads” (16.0%) and “taxes” (14.2%).
- While half of all respondents, 50.4%, reported being “very aware” (27.8%) or “somewhat aware” (22.6%) the City banned the use of phosphorous in lawn fertilizers, another 48.4% reported being “somewhat unaware” (5.8%) or “not at all aware” (42.6%).



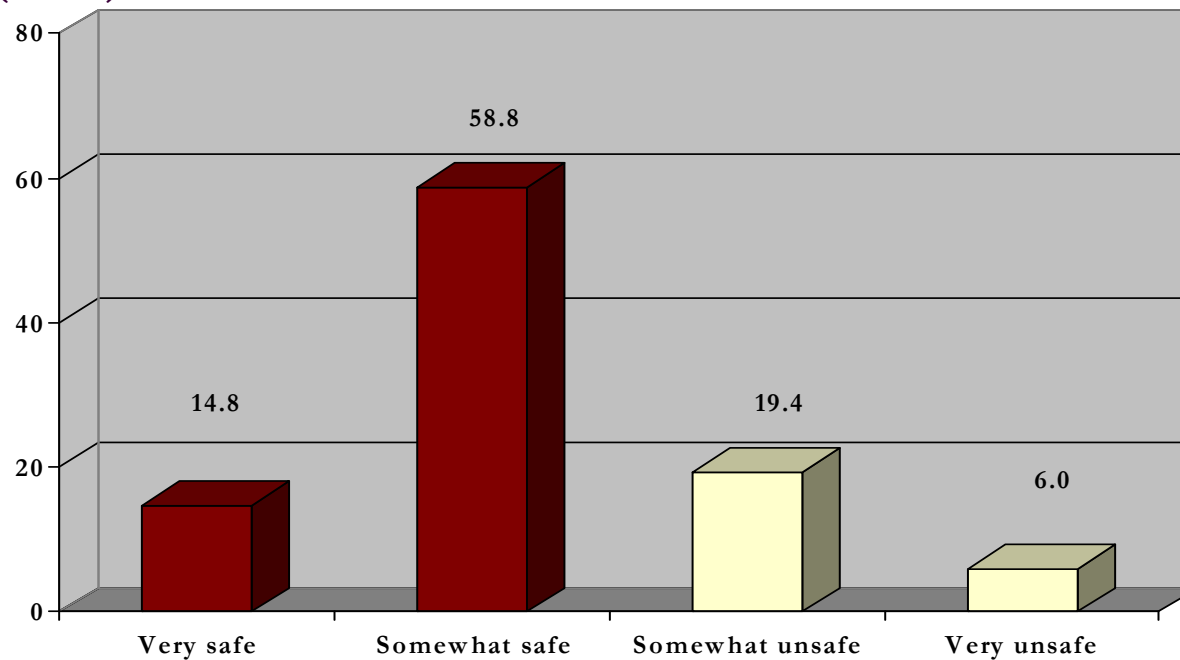
How aware the City banned use of phosphorous in lawn fertilizers?





Highlights

- Nearly three-quarters of all respondents, 73.6%, reported feeling either “very safe” (14.8%) or “somewhat safe” (58.8%) in the City of Battle Creek, while another 25.4% reported feeling “somewhat unsafe” (19.4%) or “very unsafe” (6.0%).





Highlights

On Community Services...

- The top rated City or community services were listed as “fire department,” “refuse/trash collection,” and “street signs and signals” receiving an “excellent” or “good” rating of 87.4%, 86.8%, and 79.8% respectively.



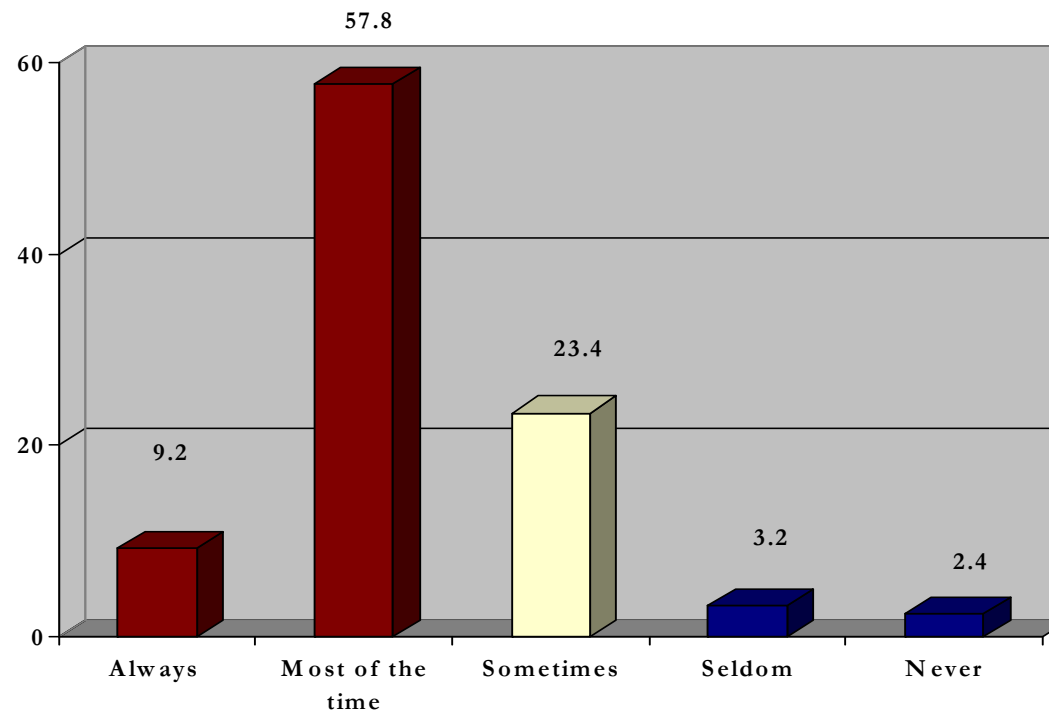
Rating City Services

| <i>City/Community Service</i> | <i>2009 Excellent & Good (w/DKs)</i> | <i>2009 Excellent & Good (w/o DKs)</i> |
|--|--|--|
| Fire Department | 87.4% | 93.4 |
| Refuse/Trash Collection | 86.8 | 88.9 |
| Street signs and signals | 79.8 | 80.9 |
| Police Department | 78.8 | 82.8 |
| Water and sewer services | 72.4 | 81.5 |
| Quality of tap water in your home | 66.8 | 73.2 |
| Parks and Recreation Department | 63.4 | 80.7 |
| Street plowing (snow) | 60.8 | 62.3 |
| Street sweeping/cleaning (trash/dirt) | 59.8 | 66.0 |
| Code Compliance Enforcement Department | 50.0 | 68.9 |
| Building Permit Service Department | 46.6 | 76.6 |
| Street maintenance and repair | 46.2 | 47.0 |
| <i>Average positive rating</i> | <i>66.6</i> | <i>75.2</i> |



Highlights

- Importantly, more than two-thirds of respondents, 67.0%, reported the City meets their service expectations either “always” (9.2%) or “most of the time” (57.8%).





Highlights

- When asked to consider both the services provided by the City of Battle Creek and the taxes they pay to the City, 71.8% of respondents reported the value of the services were either “very good” (6.4%) or “good” (65.4%) for the amount of tax dollars they pay.

| <i>Value of services for tax dollars paid</i> | <i>2009</i> |
|---|--------------------|
| Very good | 6.4% |
| Good | 65.4 |
| Poor | 18.8 |
| Very poor | 4.0 |
| Don't know/unsure | 5.4 |
| <i>Total good</i> | <i>71.8</i> |
| <i>Total poor</i> | <i>22.8</i> |



Highlights

- While 70.8% of respondents reported they or their family participate in curbside recycling, another 28.0% do not.
- Over one-quarter of respondents, 29.5%, reported there was “nothing” the City could do to encourage them to participate in its curbside recycling program. This was followed by 22.6% of respondents reporting “provide a bin/don’t have a bin.”



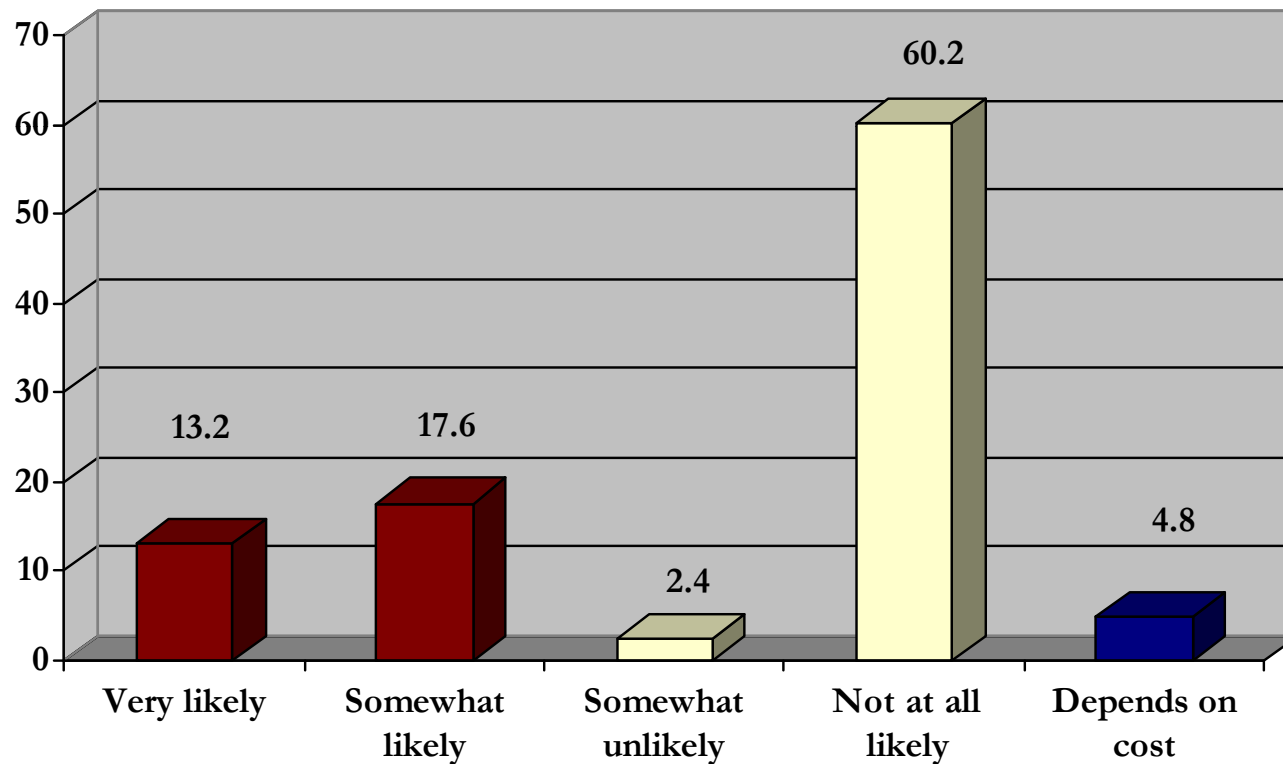
Quality of Life

On Service Awareness and Use...

- While 62.6% of respondents reported being “somewhat unlikely” (2.4%) or “not at all likely” (60.2%) to utilize an online bill payment service to pay certain City services such as their water bill, another 30.8% reported being either “very likely” (13.2%) or “somewhat likely” (17.6%).



Likelihood of using online bill payment option





Highlights

- More than three-quarters of all respondents, 79.8%, reported visiting downtown Battle Creek within the past year, with 11.6% of those respondents visiting daily.

| <i>How often have you visited downtown Battle Creek over the past year?</i> | <i>2009</i> |
|---|-------------|
| Daily | 11.6% |
| At least once per week | 25.6 |
| At least once per month | 42.6 |
| Did not visit in the past year | 19.2 |
| Don't know/unsure | 1.0 |

- Having “more stores” (24.6%), “more family restaurants” (10.2%) and “more activities” (9.8%) were reported most frequently when asked what the City could do to encourage residents to visit downtown more frequently.



Highlights

On Communications...

- Nearly three-quarters of all respondents, 71.8%, reported the City either “exceeds their expectations” (2.2%) or “meets their expectations” (69.6%) when thinking about the level of communication between the City government and its residents. Another 22.4% reported the City fails to meet their communication needs.

| <i>Level of communication between the city government and the residents...</i> | <i>2009</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Exceeds your expectations | 2.2% |
| Meets your expectations | 69.6 |
| Fails to meet your expectations | 22.4 |
| Don't know/unsure | 5.8 |



Highlights

- Two-thirds of respondents, 66.0%, reported usually getting their news about City services from “newspapers.” This was followed by “cable TV” (23.8%).
- In addition, a similar majority of respondents, 70.2%, also reported looking in “newspapers” to get information on upcoming City sponsored events and activities. Again, this was followed by “cable TV” (22.4%).



Highlights

- Those respondents (21.2% or 106 respondents) who had visited the website were asked to rate the website on three characteristics using a scale of one to ten where one was very good and ten was very poor. The following table presents positive ratings (1-4) for each of the characteristics. For comparison, results have been presented with “don’t know” responses included and excluded from the data.

| <i>Website</i> | <i>2009 Positive Ratings (1-4 w/ DKs)</i> | <i>2009 Positive Ratings (1-4 w/o DKs)</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Finding what you need quickly | 63.2% | 66.3 |
| Having useful information | 60.4 | 64.0 |
| Visually pleasing | 56.6 | 61.9 |



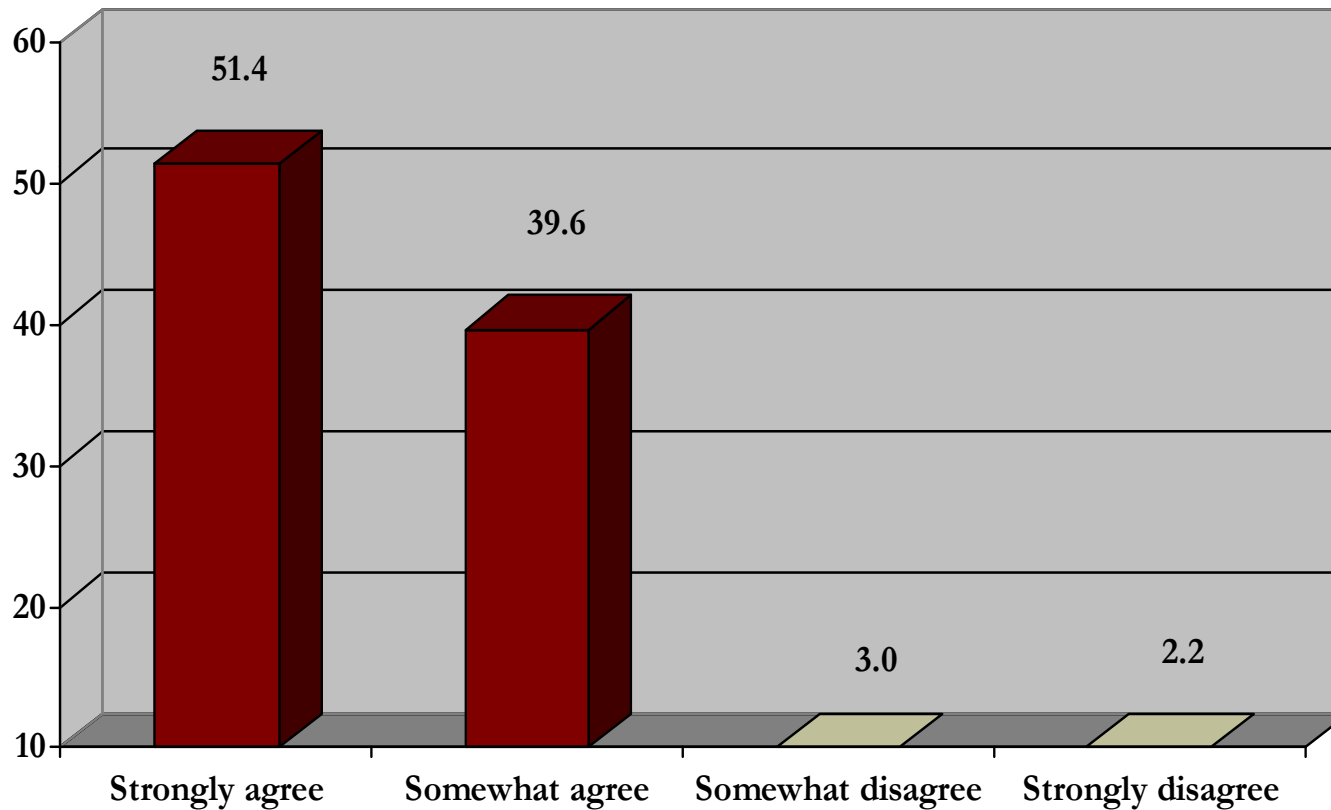
Highlights

On Community Needs...

- Impressively, the large majority of respondents, 91.0%, reported to either “strongly agree” (51.4%) or “somewhat agree” (39.6%) with the following statement: “As a resident of Battle Creek, you can make a difference in making your neighborhood a better place to live.”



“As a resident of Battle Creek, you can make a difference in making your neighborhood a better place to live.”





Highlights

- When asked, more than one-third of respondents, 37.4%, reported residents can make their neighborhood a better place to live if they “organize/participate in neighborhood association/watch.” This was followed by “partner/volunteer with community organizations” (23.0%).

| <i>Examples on how residents can make their neighborhood a better place to live</i> | <i>2009</i> |
|---|-------------|
| Organize/Participate in neighborhood association/watch | 37.4% |
| Partner/Volunteer with community organizations | 23.0 |
| Pick-up/maintain public property | 19.0 |
| Organize/Participate in organized resident group | 17.0 |
| Don't know/unsure | 15.6 |
| Get involved in City Government | 11.6 |
| Adopt-a-park | 3.2 |
| Other | 1.6 |



Highlights

- While more than half of all respondents surveyed, 56.0%, were “unsure” which needs of Battle Creek residents are either unmet or under-met, 6.4% reported “elderly services.” This was followed by “street care” (4.6%) and “tech services” (4.6%).
- Finally, when asked, respondents estimated that 36.33% of their light sockets have compact fluorescent light bulbs.



As a reminder...



Highlights

On Quality of Life...

- While the clear majority of all Battle Creek respondents, 89.6%, reported their overall quality of life as being either “very good” (20.2%) or “good” (69.4%), another 9.8% reported their quality of life as “poor” (7.2%) or “very poor” (2.6%).

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Key Driver

- 4 areas of measurement
 - Overall quality of life
 - Crime rate/feeling safe
 - City meeting expectations
 - Value for tax dollars paid

- 17 core areas of focus

- Looking for “gaps” or differences from composite

- Findings are consistent across all 4 areas

- Let’s take a look...



Key Driver

Street maintenance and repair 31.2%
Excellent and good (-29.6)

Level of communication between city
gov't and residents 46.9%
Exceeds and meets (-24.9)

Street plowing (snow) -51.8%
Excellent and good (-20.6)

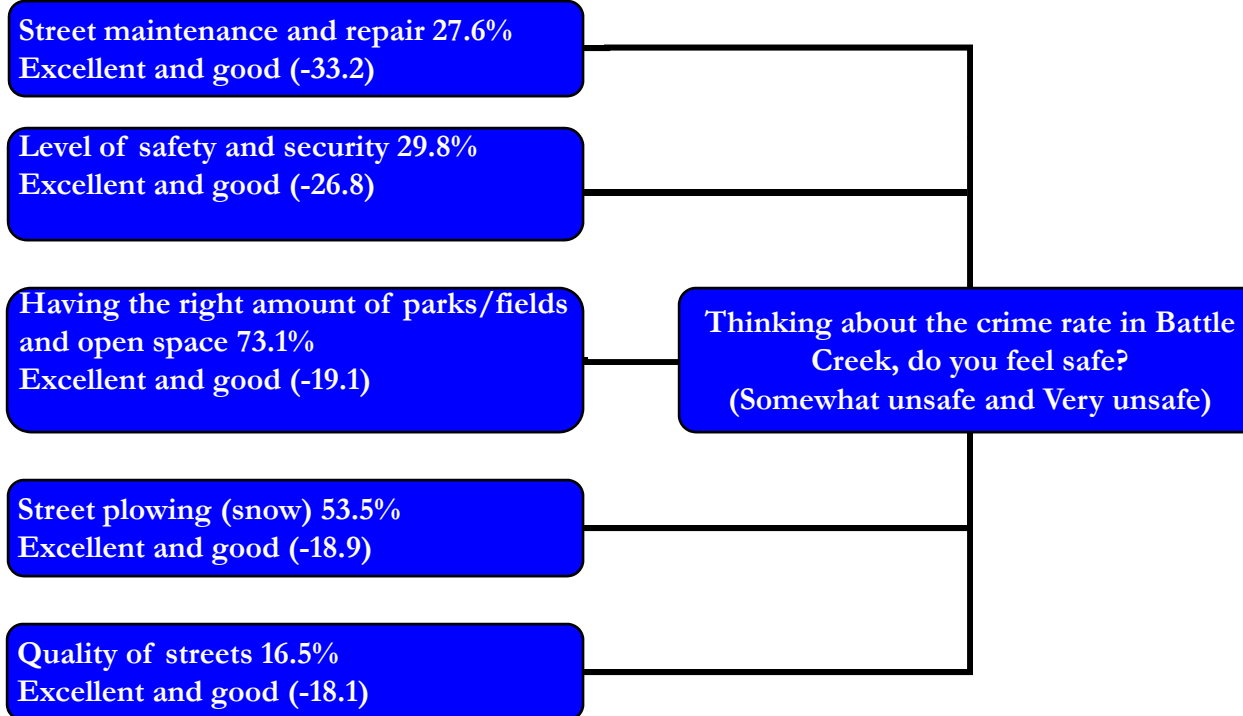
Having the right amount of parks and
fields and open space 73.3%
Excellent and good (-18.9)

Level of safety and security 39.1%
Excellent and good (-17.5)

Overall quality of life in Battle Creek
(No change and poor/Worse)

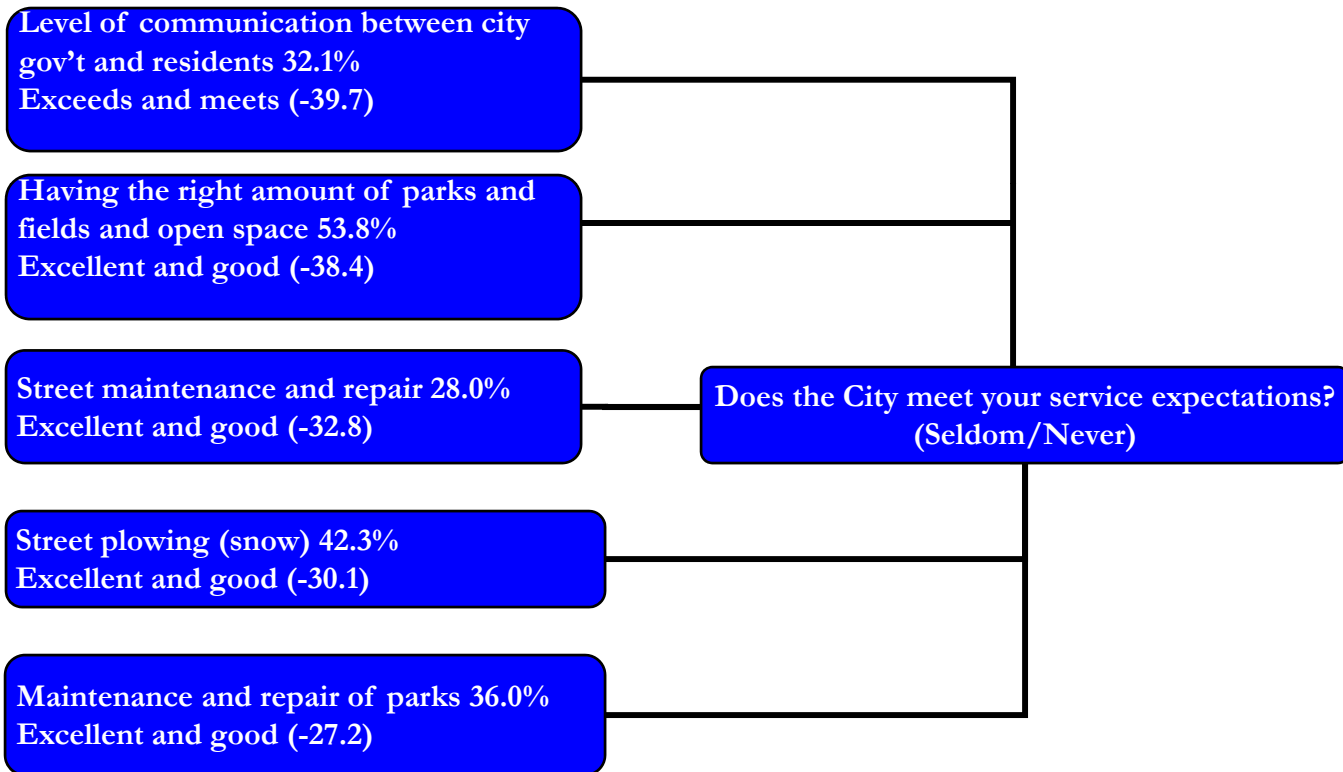


Key Driver



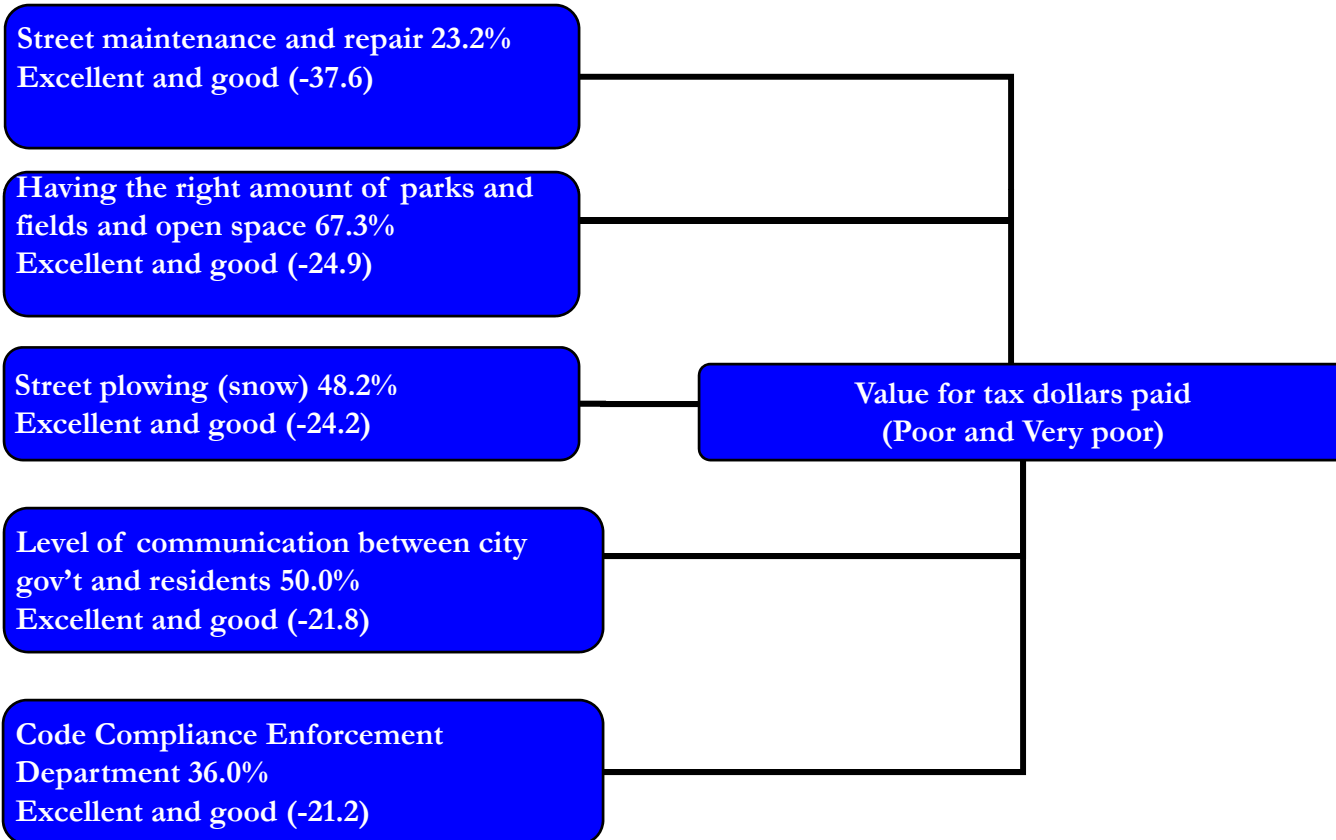


Key Driver





Key Driver





Thank you for the opportunity to present

Any Questions?