

VILLAGE OF RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY SURVEY
SPRING 2005

PREPARED BY THE
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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the 2005 Village of Riverside Community survey. The survey was sent to a random sample of 1000 registered voters. Participants were asked about their perceptions of Riverside as a place to live, their evaluation of the quality of services offered in the Village, needed capital improvements, interest in a community center, opinions about economic development in the central business district and preferred methods of communicating information within the Village. A total of 646 completed surveys are included in this report. Listed below are the major findings of the study.

- 53 percent of the respondents rated Riverside as an excellent place to live.
- 52 percent believed their neighborhood was a very safe and secure.
- 53 percent believed the value they got for their tax dollar was good or excellent.
- 71 percent of the respondents rated Villages services either excellent of good.
- 63 percent favored developing a community center and 34 percent opposed the construction of a community center. Fundraising rather than a tax increase referendum was the preferred method of financing a community center if it were to be built.
- 66 percent indicated that refuse needs would be satisfied if pick-up were once a week.
- 80 percent of respondents favored Village aid to develop the Central Business District.
- 66 percent of the respondents supported added parking in the central business.
- Road improvements appeared to have the highest priority of ten services rated for improvement. Over one-third of the respondents rated it as *the* most important service needing improvement and a majority ranked it in the top three services for improvement.
- Respondents tended to want plowing and salting of streets upon any accumulation of snow and the cutting of grass on public lands before it reaches 14 inches to be maintained. They were split on whether the sweeping of Village streets an average of 14 times per year should be maintained or reduced.
- Fire and police services were rated highly in the survey.

- Respondents were not overly enthusiastic about the job existing businesses in Riverside were doing to fulfill their shopping and service needs. Only 23 percent rated them as doing an excellent or good job, while 42 percent rated them as poor or very poor
- Newspapers were the dominant source of information for respondents to get news concerning the Village followed by mailings and word of mouth.
- 39 percent of respondents reported that they had visited the Village website.
- 68 percent preferred recreation brochures as the best way to inform them of recreational events and programs.
- 56 percent indicated the Riverside Review is their source for Public Safety information.

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Introduction

The Village of Riverside is a community of 8,895 people based on the 2000 Census. It is located along the Des Plaines River, nine miles west of Chicago. Riverside has been recognized nationally and internationally as one of the first planned suburban communities in the country. The world-famous landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his partner Calvert Vaux designed the Village between 1868 and 1869.

The architects wanted Riverside to combine the pleasures of rural living with urban conveniences such as community-provided gas, water services, and maintained streets. Olmsted and Vaux went further in attempting to maintain a pastoral feel in an urban setting... Instead of planning the community's streets in a grid fashion as most other cities are laid out, they planned the streets to follow the area's natural contours. Streets follow the Des Plaines River, and continue from there to wind all through the Village. The town's plan which was completed in 1869, also accorded for a Grand park system that uses several large parks as a foundation, with 41 smaller triangular parks located by intersections throughout town to provide for additional green spaces and an open, rural feeling. (Riverside Illinois Community Web Site – History).

“The idea was to create attractive and highly functional access interspersed with public grounds for rest and recreation: a community with the best attributes of the country and city”.¹ In 1970 the entire Village was designated a National Historical Landmark. This report provides information on how well the Village was working for its residents in 2005 and serving their needs. It presents the findings of the 2005 Village of Riverside Community survey. The survey was sent to a random sample of 1000 registered voters. Participants were asked about their perceptions of Riverside as a place to live, their evaluation of the quality of services offered in the Village, needed capital improvements, interest in a community center, opinions about economic development in the central business district and preferred methods of communicating information within the Village.

The sample of registered votes received a notification postcard alerting them to the upcoming survey and an initial mailing of the questionnaire with a cover letter from the Village manager, and then a few days later a reminder postcard was sent to all individuals in the sample. Individuals not completing the survey were sent up to two follow-up mailings of the questionnaire. Participants were provided a postage-paid envelope in which they could return the completed questionnaire to the Public Opinion Laboratory at Northern Illinois University with whom the Village had contracted to implement the study.

A total of 646 registered voters completed the survey out of the 1000 individuals who received a questionnaire. Of the 1000 surveys mailed out, 33 were returned as

¹ Faiks, Sarah, Jarrett Kest, Amanda Szot, Molly Vendura. 2001. “Revisiting Riverside: A Frederick Law Olmsted Community,” <http://snre.umich.edu/ecomgt/pubs/riverside.htm>.

undeliverable. Removing the undeliverables from the calculation resulted in an overall response rate of 67 percent. Thirty-nine percent were completed from the first mailing, an additional 20 percent were completed and returned from the second mailing, and the final mailing increased the response rate another eight percent. (An additional 15 questionnaires were received after the cutoff date to begin the analysis.)

Description of Survey Participants

Respondents were asked a number of questions about themselves so that the range of individuals participating in the study could be determined. Table 1 presents the distribution of characteristics of the individuals completing questionnaires.

Respondents were predominantly long time residents of the village. They were also a highly educated group with 67 percent having a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree. Women were a majority of the respondents. Ten percent of the households had a disabled person living in them. The youngest age group and the more senior citizens tended to have lived in Riverside for 16 or more years than those in the age ranges of 30-39 and 40-49. The percentages of those having lived in Riverside for 16 or more years by age group were 61 percent of those between the ages of 18-29, 20 percent of those 30-39, 31 percent of those 40-49, 66 percent of those 50-64 and 85 percent of those 65 and older. Forty-one percent of those between the ages of 30-39 reported living in Riverside for 1 to 5 years.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Respondents

| Characteristic | Percent | Number |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|
| Sex | | |
| Men | 37 | 236 |
| Women | 57 | 370 |
| Age | | |
| 18-29 | 5 | 31 |
| 30-39 | 11 | 71 |
| 40-49 | 24 | 154 |
| 50-64 | 29 | 187 |
| 65 and over | 15 | 96 |
| No answer | 17 | 107 |
| Household Income | | |
| Under \$30,000 | 4 | 28 |
| \$30,001-\$50,000 | 8 | 50 |
| \$50,001-\$75,000 | 12 | 79 |
| \$75,001-\$125,000 | 26 | 166 |
| \$125,001-\$200,000 | 19 | 125 |
| Over \$200,000 | 12 | 78 |
| Don't know/Won't say | 19 | 120 |
| Years lived in Riverside | | |
| Less than one year | 1 | 9 |
| 1-5 years | 14 | 91 |
| 6-10 years | 15 | 95 |
| 11-15 years | 14 | 89 |
| 16 or more years | 54 | 347 |

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| No answer | 2 | 15 |
| Physically handicapped or disabled person in household | 10 | 62 |
| Education | | |
| Some high school | .5 | 3 |
| High school graduate | 7 | 47 |
| Some college, no degree | 15 | 94 |
| Associate's degree | 6 | 41 |
| Bachelor's degree | 33 | 213 |
| Graduate or professional degree | 34 | 222 |
| No Answer | 4 | 26 |
| Internet access | | |
| Yes | 85 | 546 |
| No | 13 | 81 |
| No answer | 3 | 19 |
| Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding and not everyone responded to each question. | | |

Evaluation of Riverside

Survey participants were asked several questions about living in the Village of Riverside. They were asked how they would describe Riverside as a place to live, how safe and secure they felt in their neighborhood, and how much value they believed they got for their tax dollar in Riverside.

Participants in the survey were quite positive about living in Riverside. Few rated the community as a poor or very poor place to live and a majority checked that it was an excellent or good place to live (Figure 1). Only four respondents believed their neighborhood was unsafe, while a majority thought it was a very safe place to live (Figure 2). Approximately 11 percent believed the value they got for their tax dollar in Riverside was poor or very poor while a majority rated it as either good or excellent (Figure 3).

- 96 percent rated Riverside as an excellent or good place to live.
- 52 percent believed their neighborhood was very safe and secure.
- 53 percent believed the value they got for their tax dollar was good or excellent.

Figure 1. How would you describe Riverside as a place to live?

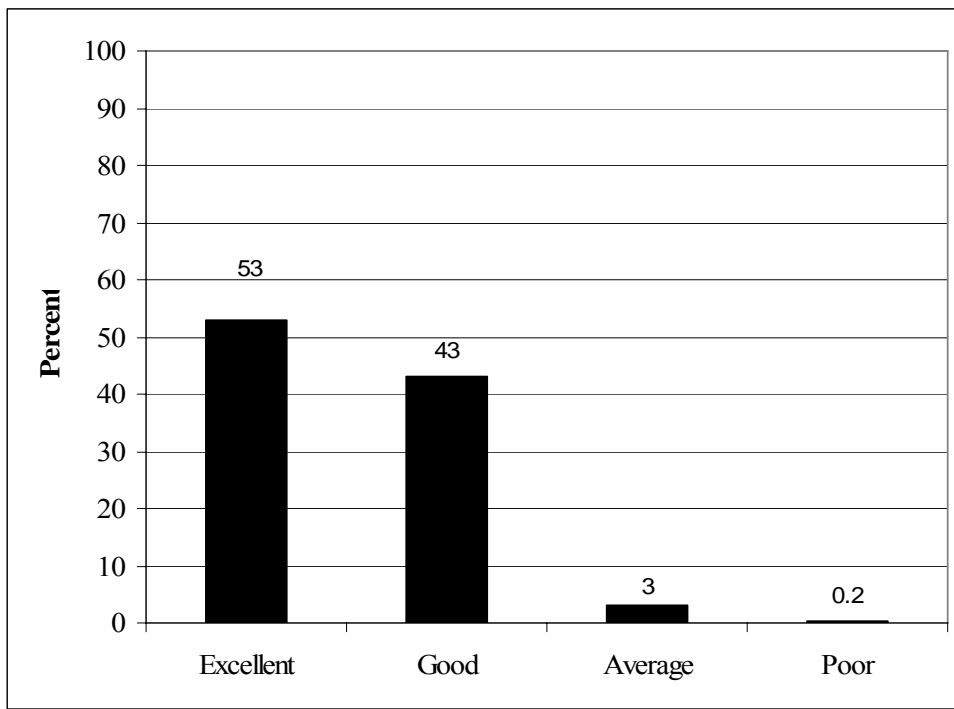


Figure 2. How safe and secure do you feel in your neighborhood?

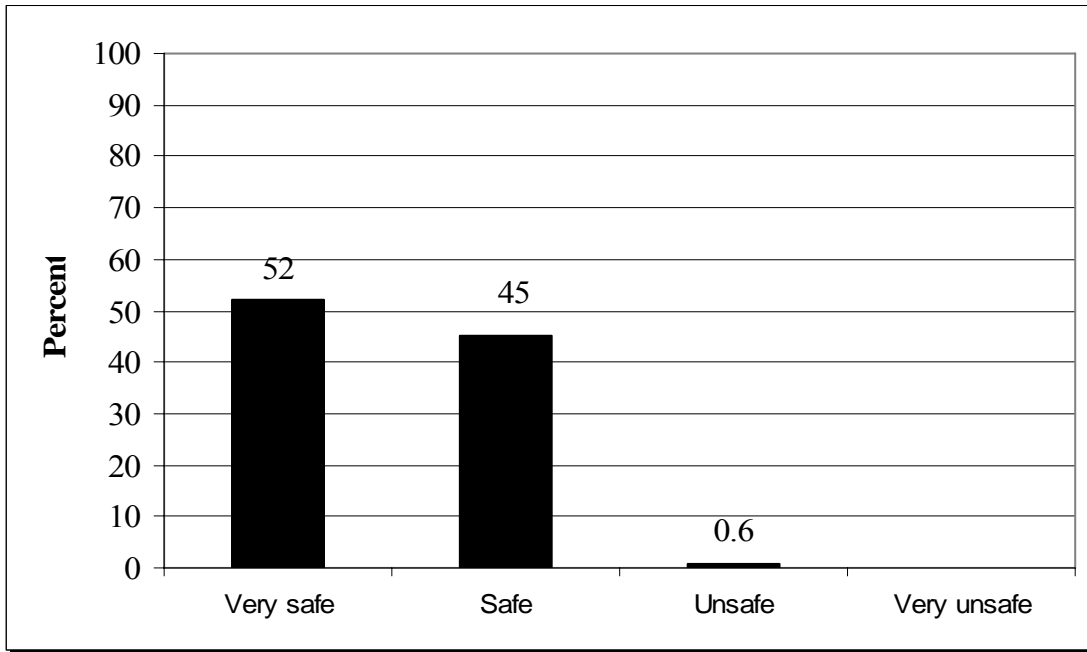
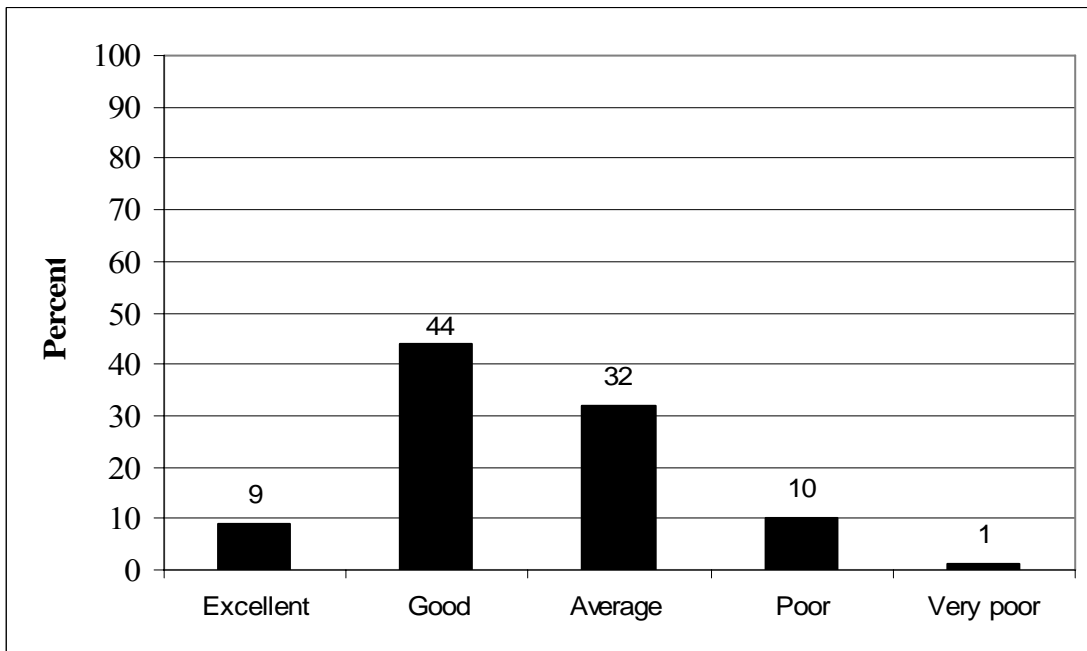


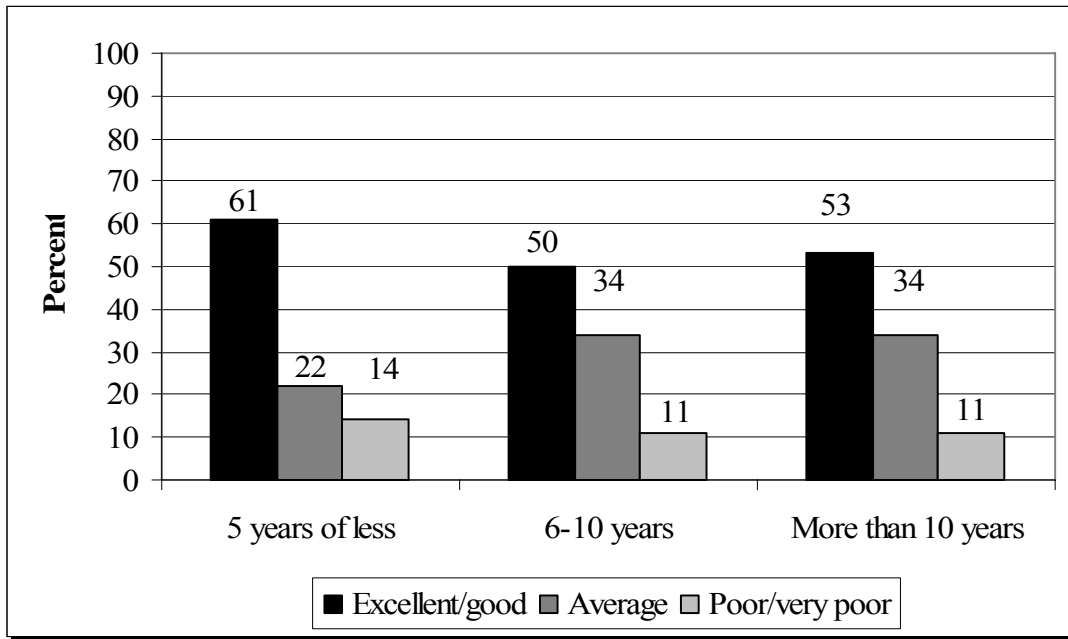
Figure 3. Overall how would you rate the value you get for your tax dollar in Riverside?



Newcomers to Riverside (people who have lived in the Village five years or less) were both the most positive about the value they got for their tax dollar and also more

negative. People who had lived in the village for six to ten years and more than ten years were more likely to respond that they got an “average” value for their tax dollar (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Value of Tax Dollar by Length of Residence in Riverside



Village Services

A number of questions addressed issues regarding Village Services. Survey participants were asked whether they had worked with the Building Department, to rate a set of capital improvement projects, how tax dollars should be used and to rate the importance to them of 34 Village services and their satisfaction with those services.

Working with the Building Department. First respondents were asked whether they had worked with the Building Department in the past six months and if so, whether the information and instructions they had received were adequate and what information would have been more helpful.

- 15 percent of the respondents reported having worked with the Building Department in the past six months (94 respondents).

Respondents who had lived in the Village for five or fewer years were the most likely group to have worked with the Building Department. Of those individuals, 24 percent reported having worked with the Building Department, compared with 19 percent of those who had lived in the Village for six to ten years, and 13 percent of those who had lived in the village for more than ten years.

Of this subgroup of respondents who had worked with the Building Department, 62 percent reported that the information or instructions they had been given were adequate and 33 percent checked that they were inadequate (36 respondents). Five percent did not indicate whether the information or instructions were adequate or inadequate.

The individuals who had worked with the Building Department in the past six months were provided with the opportunity to tell in their own words what information would have been more helpful. A total of 41 responses were given to this question. The major comment centered on the negative attitude of village employees. Table 2 summarizes the responses.

Table 2. What information would have been helpful?

| Comment | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Negative attitude of employees | 15 | 37 |
| Unnecessary Regulation | 1 | 2 |
| New Construction | 2 | 5 |
| Perceived Favoritism | 2 | 5 |
| More efficient process to get information | 2 | 5 |
| Unresponsive to complaints and questions | 8 | 20 |
| More understandable information and codes | 5 | 12 |
| Negative Customer Service | 3 | 7 |
| Service has been good | 2 | 5 |
| Online Services | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 41 | |

Capital Improvements. Respondents were asked to rate ten services for potential improvement in terms of importance to them. In the question, respondents were informed that *In the last five years, the Village has invested money in the water system and the street improvement program. With this in mind, please rate the following services in order of importance to you.*

- Road improvements appeared to have the highest priority for improvement. Over one-third of the respondents rated it as *the most* important service needing improvement and a majority ranked it in the top three services for improvement.

Table 2. Rating of Capital Improvements

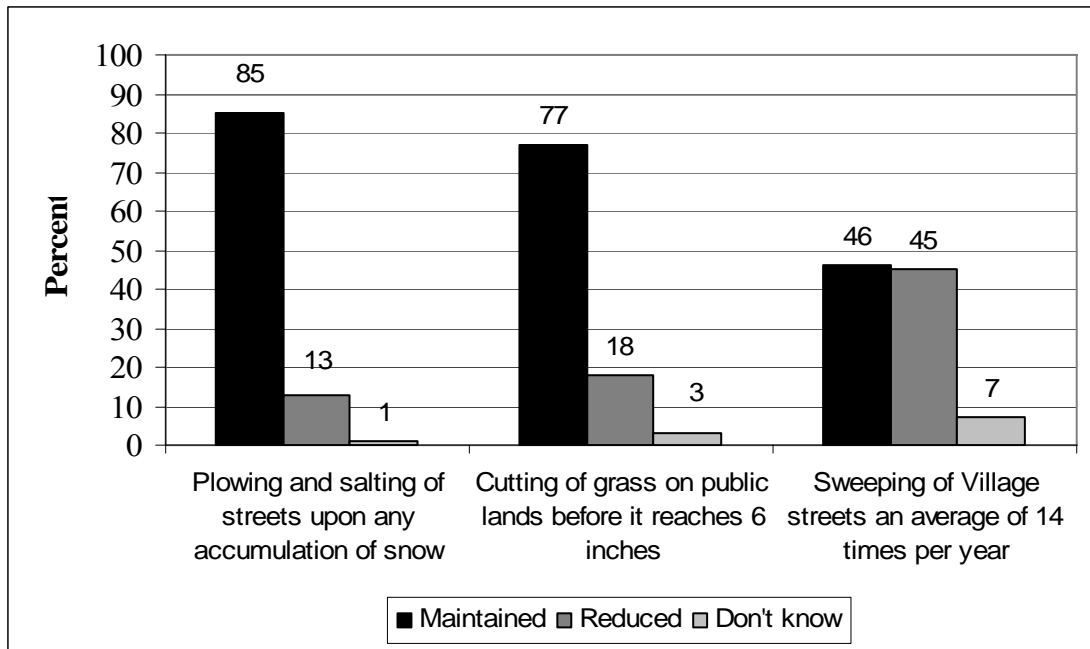
| Improvement | 1- most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10-least important |
|--|-------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|--------------------|
| Alley improvements | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 4% | 5% | 10% | 12% | 49% |
| Increase commuter parking | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 26 | 16 |
| Increase CBD parking | 9 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 15 | 6 | 6 |
| Park improvements | 7 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 5 |
| Rebuild Fire Station | | | | | | | | | | |
| Two Restoration/Adaptive reuse of the Youth Center | 3 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 15 | 12 | 10 |
| | 13 | 9 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| Road improvements | 36 | 17 | 16 | 10 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Sewer line improvements | 10 | 18 | 18 | 11 | 11 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Sidewalk replacement | 7 | 15 | 14 | 17 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| Water line improvements | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 12 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

Not all of the survey participants responded to this question by ranking each of the items. Some only checked one or two items. Data are missing for approximately 10 percent of the respondents.

Maintaining Services. Respondents were told the reductions in state tax sharing dollars, lower yields on invested funds and increases in insurance, pension and compensation costs were negatively affecting Village operating revenues and that the Village must look closely at services. They were asked whether three services should be maintained at current levels or reduced. Figure 5 shows the responses. Respondents overwhelmingly want plowing and salting of streets upon any accumulation of snow and the cutting of grass on public lands before it reaches 6 inches to be maintained. They were evenly divided on whether sweeping of Village streets an average of 14 times per year should be maintained or reduced.

Figure 5. Should each of the following services be maintained at current levels or reduced?



Additional Services. One-third of the respondents checked that the Village should provide additional services or improve some existing services. They were then asked what additional services or improvements they would like to see the Village make. A total of 264 respondents provided ideas about additional services or improvements they would like to see. Improving the parks and bringing in more business led the list of suggestions. Table 3 provides a summary of the additional services or improvements survey participants would like to see; 35 different types of suggestions were made.

Table 3. What types of improvements would you like to see the Village make?

| Comment | Number of People with Comment |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Improve the look of the parks | 43 |
| Bring in more business | 40 |
| Road/Curb Improvements | 28 |
| Trim Trees | 22 |
| Better Snow Removal | 17 |
| More police enforcement in general | 16 |
| Beautification of City | 13 |
| Light/Street Light improvement | 11 |
| Clean up roadway | 8 |
| Improve internet and cable service | 7 |
| Improved regulation of tear-downs and buildings | 7 |
| Leaf Cleanup | 7 |
| Enforce parking regulation | 6 |
| Better Customer Service | 6 |
| Senior Services | 4 |
| Youth Center | 4 |
| Enforce city ordinance concerning dogs | 3 |
| Public Transportation | 3 |
| Better Signage | 3 |
| Water and Sewer improved | 3 |
| Community Center | 2 |
| Animal Control | 2 |
| Better dissemination of information | 2 |
| Better Recreation | 2 |
| Bike Path | 1 |
| Train Tunnel improvements | 1 |
| All city services should be improved | 1 |
| Recycling program | 1 |
| Garbage Service | 1 |
| Senior assistance to maintain home | 1 |

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Quiet Zone | 1 |
| Mosquito Control | 1 |
| Full-time Department | 1 |
| Gated Community | 1 |
| Public transportation | 1 |
| Total | 264 |

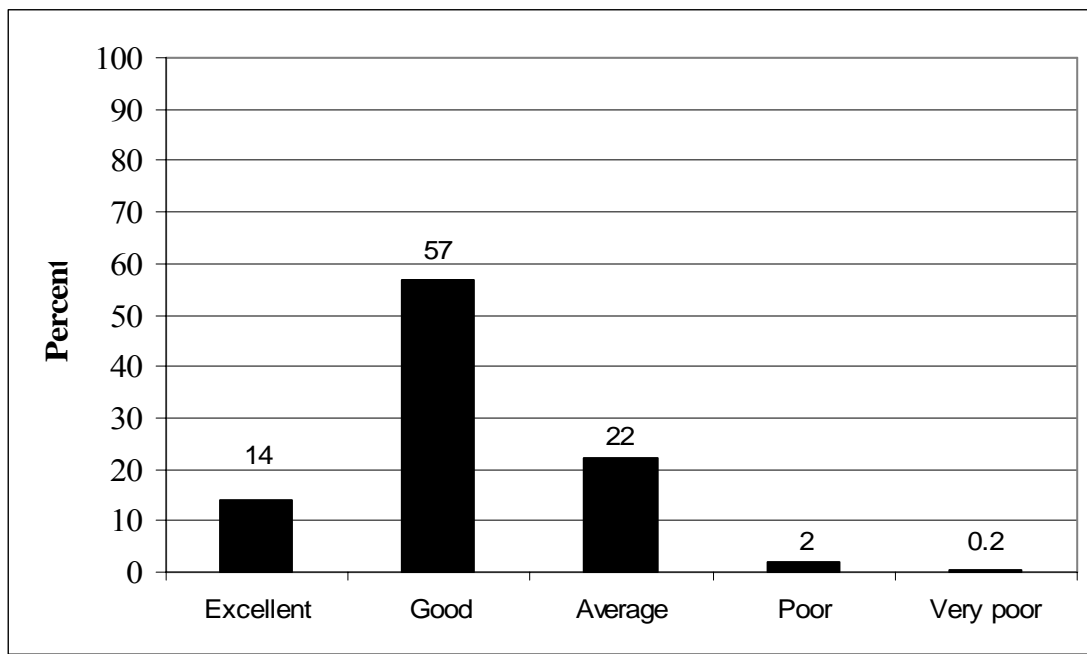
Evaluation of Village Services

Village services were evaluated quite positively. Asked how they would rate the quality of services the Village provides, 71 percent said they were either excellent or good. Only two percent rated them as poor or very poor (Figure 6).

- 71 percent of the survey respondents rated village services as either excellent or good.

Length of residence in the Village had little effect on ratings of the quality of Village services. Seventy-five percent of those who had lived in the Village for five years of less, 69 percent of those who had lived in the Village for six to ten years, and 72 percent of those who had lived in the Village for more than ten years rated its services as good or excellent.

Figure 6. Overall, how would you rate the quality of services the Village provides?



Importance of and Satisfaction with Individual Services. Respondents were presented with 35 services that they were asked to rate in terms of importance to them and their level of satisfaction with each one. They were provided with a scale from 1 to 7 with 1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest for each service.

Regarding the importance of these services, summing the lowest three points on the scale (1, 2, and 3), we find that only one service had more than ten percent of the respondents rating it as of low importance—the community cable channel. Fire and policy services, perhaps not too surprisingly, were the services most likely to be rated as of high importance.

Table 4. Importance Rating of Village Services

| Service | Low | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | High | N |
|---|-----|----|----|----|----|----|------|----|
| Fire and Emergency Medical Services | | | | | | | | |
| a. Fire services | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 8% | 83% | 3% |
| b. Emergency medical services | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 83 | 3 |
| c. Firefighter attitude and behavior | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 14 | 59 | 11 |
| d. Emergency response time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 80 | 7 |
| e. Non-emergency response time | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 20 | 17 | 33 | 13 |
| f. Use of education to prevent fires | 2 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 16 | 19 | 37 | 10 |
| g. Professionalism of the Fire Department | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 19 | 58 | 9 |
| Park and Recreation Services | | | | | | | | |
| h. Office hours | 3 | 2 | 3 | 12 | 22 | 16 | 19 | 15 |
| i. Recreation brochure | 3 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 18 | 24 | 24 | 8 |
| j. Quality of recreational programs | 3 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 15 | 26 | 30 | 11 |
| k. Variety of recreational programs | 3 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 15 | 27 | 27 | 10 |
| l. Recreational facilities (e.g., parks, scout cabin) | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 14 | 27 | 31 | 9 |
| Police Services | | | | | | | | |
| m. Service provided by dispatch | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 14 | 72 | 5 |
| n. Service provide by patrol officers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 74 | 4 |
| o. Officer attitude and behavior | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 72 | 3 |
| p. Emergency response time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 79 | 6 |
| q. Non-emergency response time | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 19 | 17 | 42 | 8 |
| r. Professionalism of the Police Department | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 70 | 4 |
| Street, Water and Forestry Services | | | | | | | | |
| s. Snow plowing | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 25 | 56 | 1 |
| t. Street repair/maintenance | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 25 | 52 | 1 |
| u. Street cleaning | 1 | 3 | 5 | 12 | 27 | 19 | 26 | 2 |
| v. Tree trimming | 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 26 | 27 | 24 | 3 |
| x. Central Business District maintenance | 1 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 16 | 30 | 38 | 2 |
| y. Parks maintenance | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 14 | 33 | 37 | 2 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| z. Water/sewer service | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 28 | 53 | 2 |
| aa. Water pressure | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 29 | 51 | 2 |
| bb. Water taste | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 22 | 61 | 3 |
| cc. Maintenance of street lights | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 12 | 30 | 44 | 3 |
| dd. Sewer repair | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 24 | 52 | 7 |
| General Services and Communication | | | | | | | | |
| ee. Professionalism of people answering village phones | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 14 | 25 | 43 | 4 |
| ff. Village office hours | 1 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 23 | 27 | 29 | 6 |
| gg. Village correspondence and communications | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 20 | 30 | 31 | 5 |
| hh. Village website (www.riverside.il.us) | 3 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 16 | 20 | 17 | 26 |
| ii. Community Cable Channel | 10 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 14 | 11 | 12 | 27 |

Regarding satisfaction with the same set of services, substantial minorities checked “no opinion” on a number of the items and some did not check any of the response categories. Twenty percent of the respondents rated their satisfaction with street maintenance and repair at the low end of the scale. Dissatisfaction with water pressure and Central Business District maintenance was also expressed in the survey. There seemed to be little dissatisfaction with fire and police services.

Table 5. Satisfaction Rating with Village Services

| Service | Low | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | High | N |
|---|-----|----|----|----|----|-----|------|-----|
| Fire and Emergency Medical Services | | | | | | | | |
| a. Fire services | 0% | 0% | 1% | 1% | 5% | 14% | 51% | 17% |
| b. Emergency medical services | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 49 | 21 |
| c. Firefighter attitude and behavior | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 44 | 25 |
| d. Emergency response time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 13 | 44 | 25 |
| e. Non-emergency response time | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 13 | 32 | 31 |
| f. Use of education to prevent fires | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 14 | 27 | 32 |
| g. Professionalism of the Fire Department | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 13 | 42 | 23 |
| Park and Recreation Services | | | | | | | | |
| h. Office hours | 1 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 24 |
| i. Recreation brochure | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 16 | 21 | 24 | 15 |
| j. Quality of recreational programs | 2 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 19 | 18 | 16 | 19 |
| k. Variety of recreational programs | 2 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 19 | 18 | 14 | 17 |
| l. Recreational facilities (e.g., parks, scout cabin) | 2 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 17 | 16 | 18 | 14 |
| Police Services | | | | | | | | |
| m. Service provided by dispatch | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 18 | 43 | 16 |
| n. Service provide by patrol officers | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 18 | 45 | 12 |
| o. Officer attitude and behavior | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 16 | 46 | 11 |

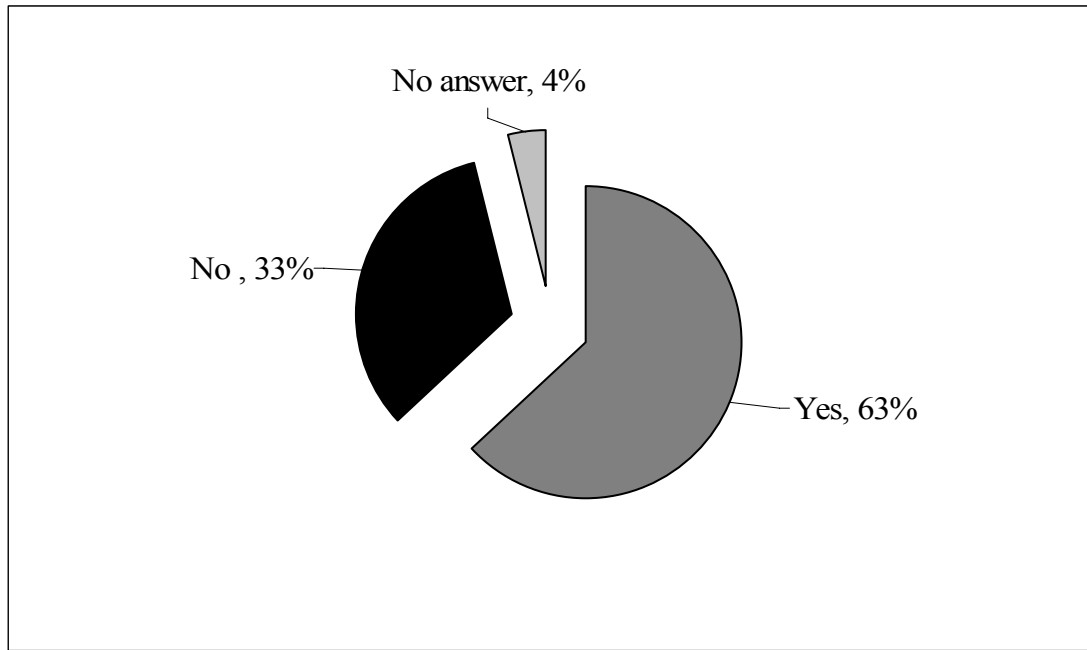
| | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| p. Emergency response time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 47 | 20 |
| q. Non-emergency response time | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 15 | 40 | 20 |
| r. Professionalism of the Police Department | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 16 | 47 | 12 |
| Street, Water and Forestry Services | | | | | | | | |
| s. Snow plowing | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 15 | 25 | 37 | 1 |
| t. Street repair/maintenance | 5 | 5 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 14 | 11 | 1 |
| u. Street cleaning | 1 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 21 | 24 | 25 | 5 |
| v. Tree trimming | 3 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 26 | 23 | 17 | 6 |
| x. Central Business District maintenance | 5 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 21 | 21 | 14 | 4 |
| y. Parks maintenance | 1 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 22 | 27 | 18 | 5 |
| z. Water/sewer service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 17 | 26 | 24 | 6 |
| aa. Water pressure | 6 | 5 | 7 | 10 | 17 | 20 | 21 | 2 |
| bb. Water taste | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 15 | 27 | 31 | 4 |
| cc. Maintenance of street lights | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 17 | 28 | 28 | 4 |
| dd. Sewer repair | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 16 | 23 | 21 | 16 |
| General Services and Communication | | | | | | | | |
| ee. Professionalism of people answering village phones | 3 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 15 | 20 | 25 | 8 |
| ff. Village office hours | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 18 | 27 | 22 | 8 |
| gg. Village correspondence and communications | 2 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 18 | 27 | 24 | 7 |
| hh. Village website (www.riverside.il.us) | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 17 | 12 | 36 |
| ii. Community Cable Channel | 3 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 9 | 41 |

Community Center and Recreational Services

A community center was described to survey participants as a building for a community's educational and recreational activities meeting the needs of all ages.

- 63 percent of the respondents favored Riverside developing a community center and 34 percent opposed this idea; four percent did not respond to the question.

Figure 7. Should the Village of Riverside develop a Community Center?



Women were somewhat more in favor of a community center than men although both sexes favored it; 68 percent of the female respondents and 60 percent of the male respondents believed the Village should develop a community center. Support for a community center was not related to household income. Support was equally favorable across all income levels. Respondents in the younger age groups were the most supportive of a community center (Table 6). Those who were newcomers to the Village were also most supportive of a community center; 77 percent of those who had lived in the Village for five years or less favored the building of a community center compared with 59 percent of those who had lived in the Village for six to ten years and 62 percent of those who had lived in the Village for more than ten years.

Table 6. Opinion of the Village of Riverside building a community center by Age Group

| Age Group | Yes | No |
|-----------|-----|----|
| 18-29 | 71% | 29 |
| 30-39 | 79 | 20 |
| 40-49 | 69 | 28 |
| 50-64 | 55 | 40 |
| 65-94 | 62 | 32 |

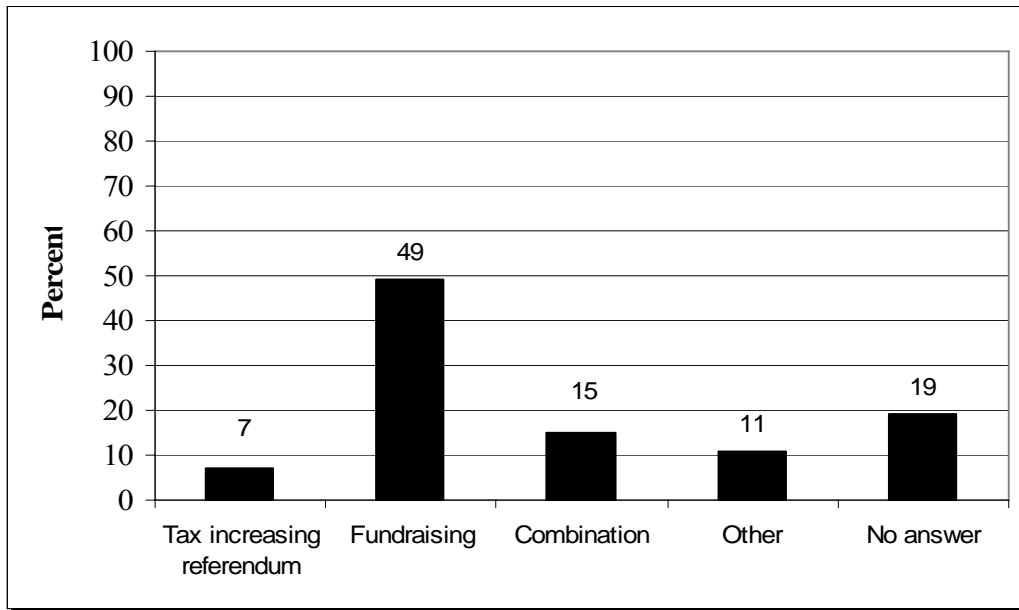
Those who did not favor the Village developing a community center were asked for their reasons for not favoring it. There were a total of 189 responses to this question that could be coded into 10 categories (Table 7). Cost was the major reason for not favoring a community center and a substantial group of respondents felt that existing facilities in general met their needs.

Table 7. What are your reasons for not being in favor of a community center

| Comments | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Costs | 54 |
| Existing Facilities in General Meet Need | 50 |
| More important priorities | 26 |
| More important priorities | 26 |
| The Center is not needed | 18 |
| School Buildings Fill Need | 13 |
| Will not or have no interest in using the facility. | 9 |
| Don't Know anything about the Community Center Plan | 6 |
| Private Clubs meet need | 6 |
| The Youth Center fills the Need | 5 |
| Use other communities' facilities | 2 |
| Total Responses | 189 |

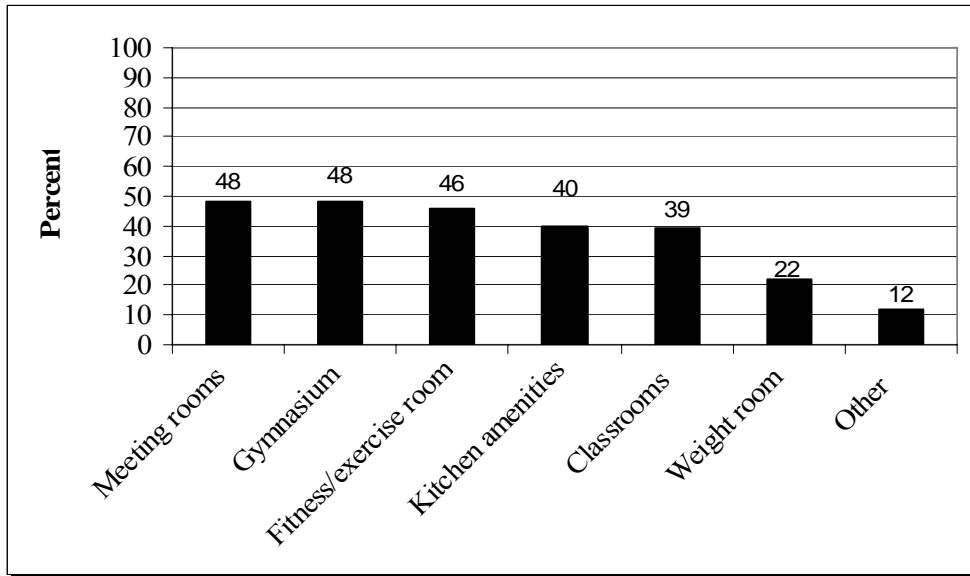
Funding the Community Center. Two options—tax increasing referendum and fundraising— were presented to the survey participants as ways to fund a community center. Respondents were also offered the opportunity to provide other suggestions. Fundraising was the main way respondents believed a community center should be financed. There was little support for a tax increasing referendum (Figure 8).

Figure 8. A Community Center should be funded by:



Community Center Amenities. Respondents were asked to check from a set of six amenities the ones they thought should be included in a Community Center. Figure 9 shows the percentages checking each of the six amenities. None of the amenities was favored by a majority of the respondents, but there was substantial support for each of the items although less than one-quarter of the respondents checked that they would like to have a weight room included in a community center.

Figure 9. What would you like included in a Community Center?



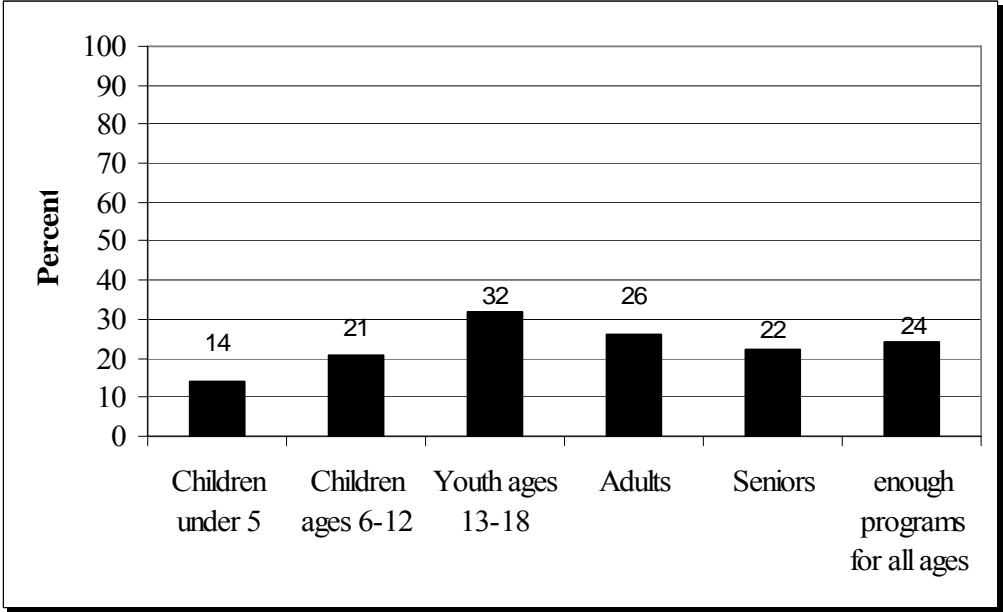
There were 54 responses regarding other amenities. The main suggestion was for a pool which 10 people mentioned. Below is a listing of the suggestions.

- A little for everyone
- All if built.
- Arcade games
- Auditorium/banquet space
- Babysitting service.
- Being able to rent out
- Children's classes & rec. activities
- Climbing wall
- computers/internet access (3)
- Game room
- Games
- Games, bingo, cards, elderly activities
- Have a possible food pantry to help not only us, but other communities
- Indoor pool
- Internet chat room, coffee shop
- large meeting room to seat at least 100
- Like North Riverside
- Music & dance for teens
- Music practice rooms w/piano
- Music room for large & small groups
- Office
- Party room facility (2)

- Place for teens to go (2)
- Play room for little kids
- Pool (10)
- Pool tables, ping pong tables
- Pool, Ping Pong and game room
- Rec. dept programs
- Room for kids
- Room for playing cards.
- Senior activities & exercises
- Snack room, pool for all residents
- Social workers
- Some place for kids to go (older)
- Something for teenagers
- Stage film projection
- Theatre
- TV
- Water park for children
- Wood working & shop

Classes for Different Age Groups. Figure 10 shows the percentages of respondents checking that more classes should be offered for each age group. There was minority support for more classes for all of the age groups while nearly one-quarter thought there were enough programs for all ages now.

Figure 10. For which age groups would you like to see more classes offered?



Future Recreational Programs and Events. Survey participants were asked what recreational programs or events that were not currently provided they would like to see in the future.

Table 8. Recreational Programs and Events Desired

| Comments | Frequency |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Instructional/educational programming | 38 |
| Fitness Programs | 28 |
| Organized Sports | 18 |
| Children Programs | 17 |
| Teen Activities | 17 |
| Senior activities | 13 |
| Theatre/Music in the park | 11 |
| Day trips | 9 |
| Outdoor Trips | 7 |
| Dance lessons and dances | 7 |
| Weekend activities | 3 |
| Open Gym | 3 |
| Adult Activities | 3 |
| Better Parks | 3 |
| Movie in the park | 2 |
| Waterpark Trips | 2 |
| Family Activities | 2 |
| Ice Skating | 1 |
| Year round swimming | 1 |
| Outdoor Activities | 1 |
| Bike Path | 1 |
| New Playground equipment | 1 |
| Total | 188 |

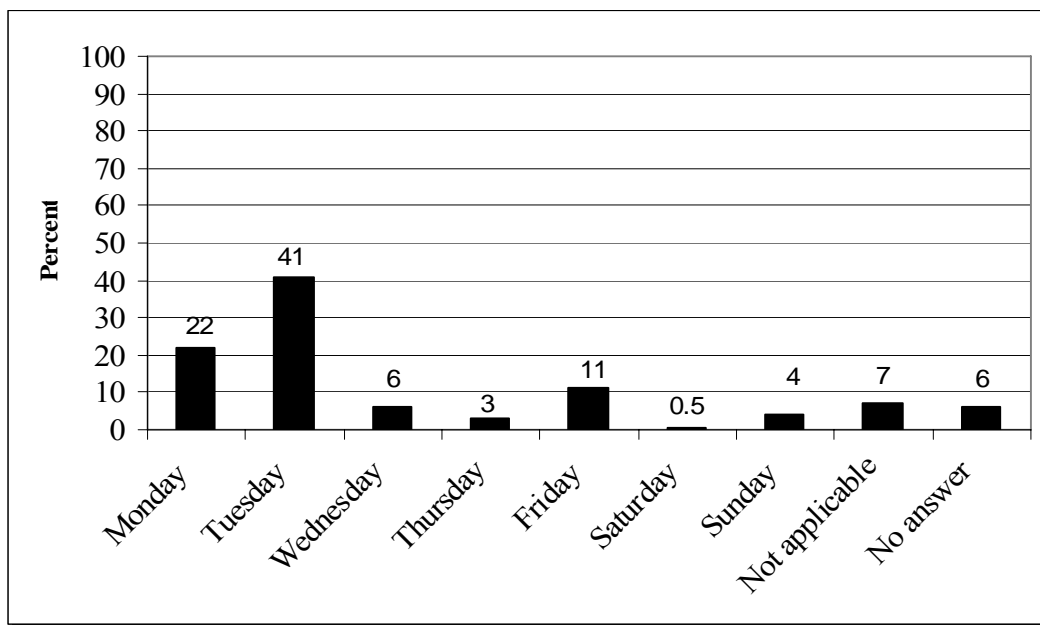
Refuse Collections

Several questions asked about respondents' use of the village's refuse collection system and their acceptance of a once-a-week refuse pick-up service. Currently the Village provides refuse service pickup twice a week on Tuesdays and Fridays.

- Seventy-three percent of the respondents said that they use both pick-ups of the twice-a-week refuse services.
- Of the 23 percent who said they do not use the pick service both days, 97 percent use it on Tuesday; only 3 people indicated that they used it on Friday only.
- Seventeen percent reported using back door pick-up and 79 percent use curbside pick-up
- Sixty-six percent reported that their refuse collection needs would be satisfied if refuse pick-up were offered once-a-week and 29 percent reported that their needs would not be satisfied.

Asked if refuse pick-up were offered once-a-week, what day they would most prefer to have refuse pick-up, respondents tended to opt for Tuesday, followed by Monday (Figure 11).

Figure 11. If refuse pick-up were offered once-a-week, what day of the week would you most prefer to have refuse pick-up?



Economic Development

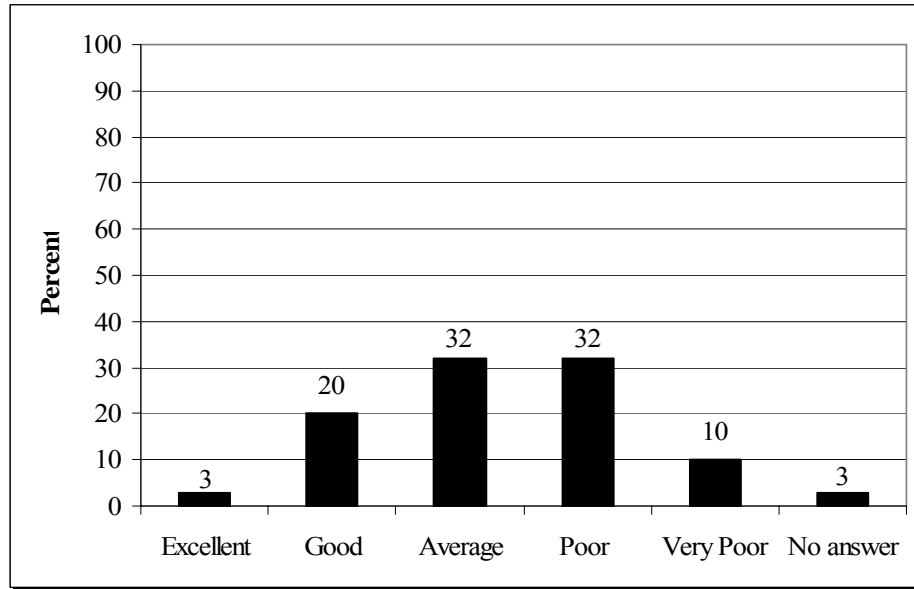
A number of items dealt with economic development issues in the Village. First respondents were asked to rate eight potential or existing uses and services of the central business district from most important to least important. Food was most on their minds for the central business district based on the ratings for the importance of grocery/take home food and for restaurants. Tourism, on the other hand, tended to be rated as of much less importance.

Table 9. Rating of Importance of Potential and Existing Uses and Services of the Central Business District

| Uses/Services | Most important | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Least important |
|--|----------------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|
| Antiques, Crafts, Gifts | 3% | 5% | 9% | 11% | 16% | 16% | 16% | 14% |
| Business services | 11 | 16 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 10 |
| Grocery/Take Home Food | 45 | 19 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Entertainment – Art Galleries, Theater | 5 | 7 | 11 | 9 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 9 |
| Personal Services | 7 | 12 | 17 | 14 | 15 | 12 | 9 | 7 |
| Retail Sales | 8 | 11 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 5 |
| Restaurants | 25 | 26 | 18 | 13 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Tourism | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 8 | 12 | 54 |

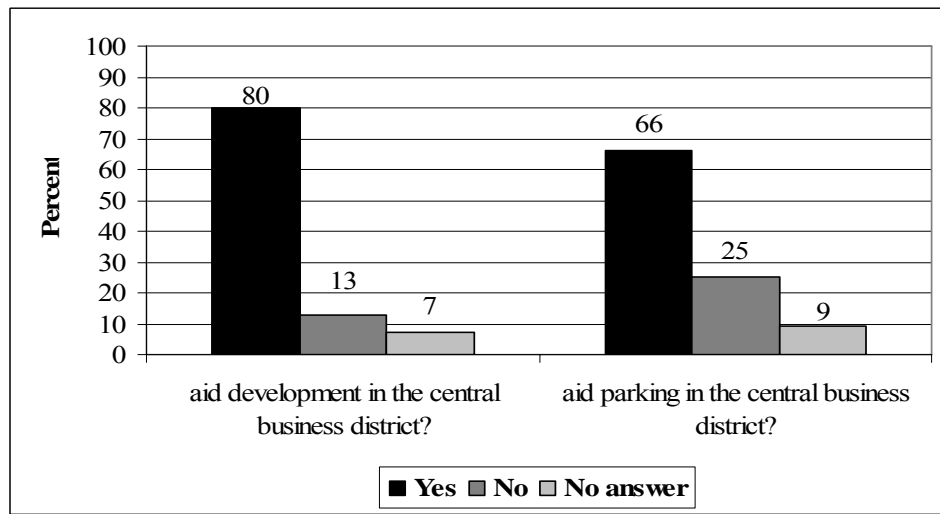
Fulfillment of Shopping and Services Needs. Respondents were not overly enthusiastic about the job existing businesses in Riverside were doing fulfilling their shopping and service needs. Only 23 percent rated them as doing an excellent or good job, while 42 percent rated them as poor or very poor (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Overall, how well do existing businesses in Riverside fulfill your needs for shopping and services?



Business Incentives. Respondents were asked if they would support Village incentives to aid central business district development and to aid parking in the central business district. They were overwhelmingly in favor of Village incentives to aid development in the central business district and predominantly supportive of Village incentives to aid parking in the central business district (Figure 13).

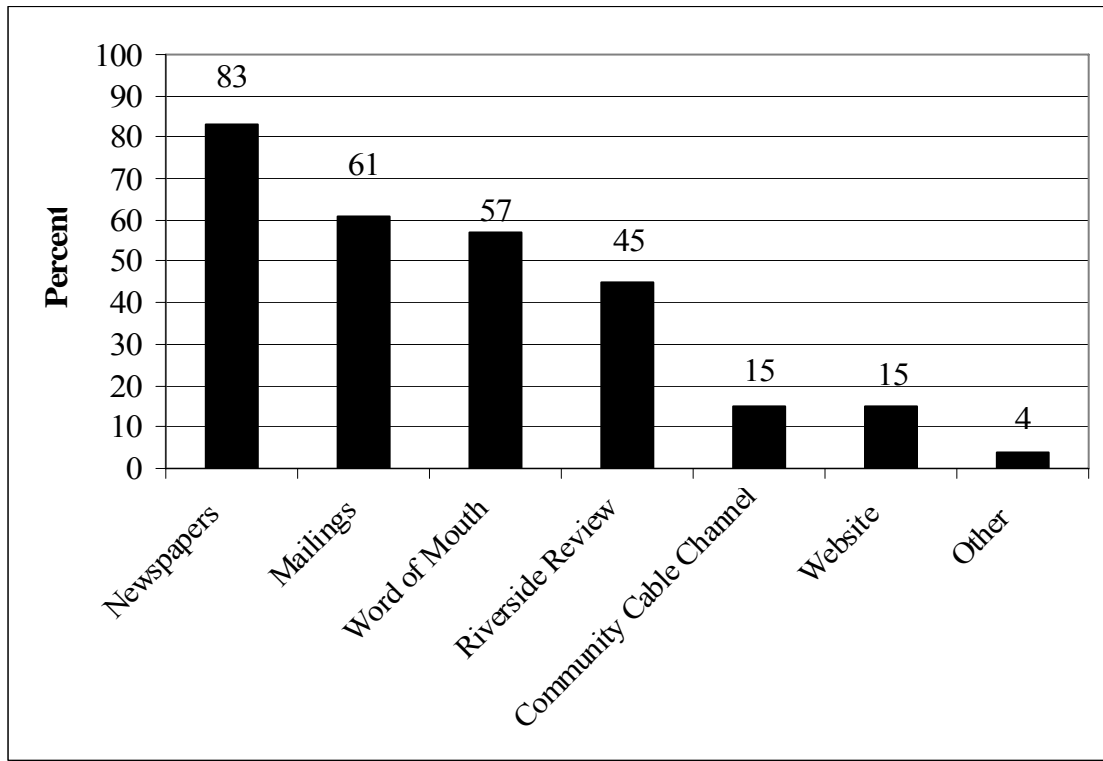
Figure 13. Would you support Village incentives to:



Communications

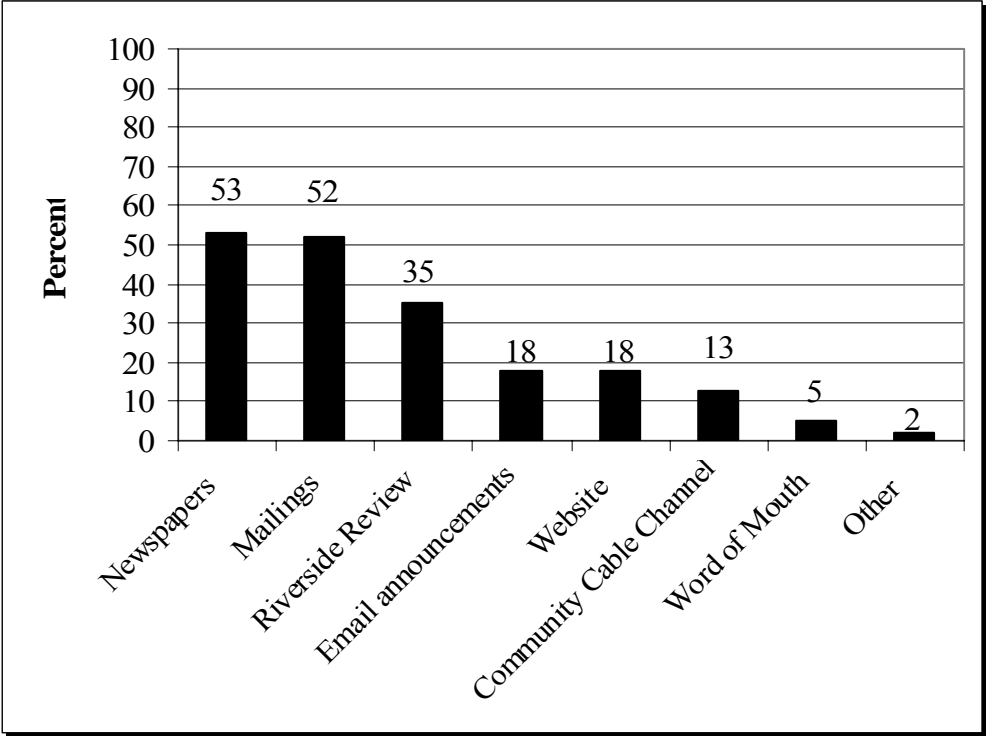
A number of questions asked about the ways in which residents obtain information about the Village and how they would prefer to get information. Newspapers were the dominant source of information for respondents to get news concerning the Village followed by mailings and word of mouth. (Figure 14).

Figure 14. What sources do you normally use to get news concerning the Village?



News Source Preferences. Asked what news sources they would prefer the Village use more often to relay information, respondents tended to check the same sources that they were currently using. A majority cited newspapers and mailings (Figure 15).

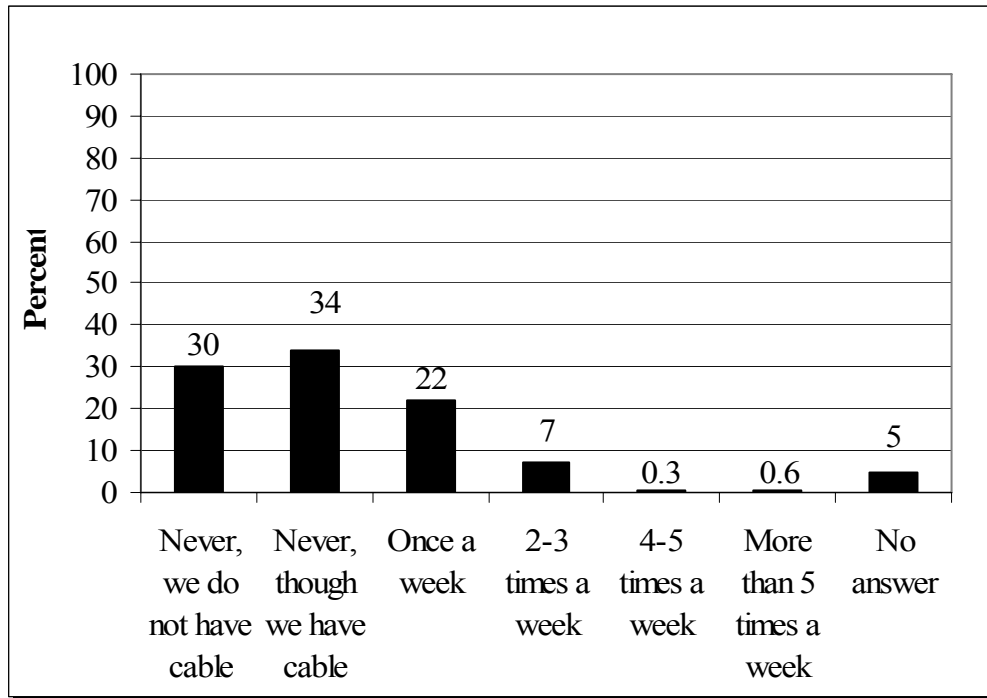
Figure 15. What sources would you prefer the Village use more often to relay information?



Concerning “other” preferred sources of information, seven individuals listed the Landmark as a preferred source of news about the Village. Two people each cited emails and the Riverside Traders. One person each cited central school notes to the home, church, community organizations, friends, gossip, Junior woman’s club, library, month old newsletter, posters, signs posted at the library and at businesses, and TV.

Community Cable Channel. Thirty percent of the respondents reported watching the Community Cable Channel. Approximately one in five reported watching it once a week and a few individuals reported watching it more often (Figure 16).

Figure 16. How often, on average, do you or members of your household watch the Community Cable Channel?



Respondents were provided with the opportunity to tell what other types of programming they would like to see on the community cable channel.

Table 10. What other types of programming would you like to see on the Community Cable Channel?

| Comments | Frequency |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Scheduled Local News/News Programming | 13 |
| School Events | 12 |
| All Community Events | 10 |
| Community Calendar | 5 |
| Local Sports | 5 |
| Instructional Programming | 5 |
| Local History | 5 |
| Publish a program guide | 4 |
| Rules and Regulations of Community | 3 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Improve quality of sound and picture | 3 |
| Job Posting | 2 |
| Movies | 2 |
| The programming is good the way it is. | 2 |
| Local Church Coverage | 2 |
| Business Features | 2 |
| Music/Theatre Events | 2 |
| RB-TV | 2 |
| Student Programs | 1 |
| House Tours | 1 |
| Traditional Television Programs | 1 |
| Children Oriented Programming | 1 |
| Emergency Broadcasts | 1 |
| Total | 82 |

Website. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents reported that they had visited the Village website.

Respondents were asked what other types of information or service they would like to see on the website.

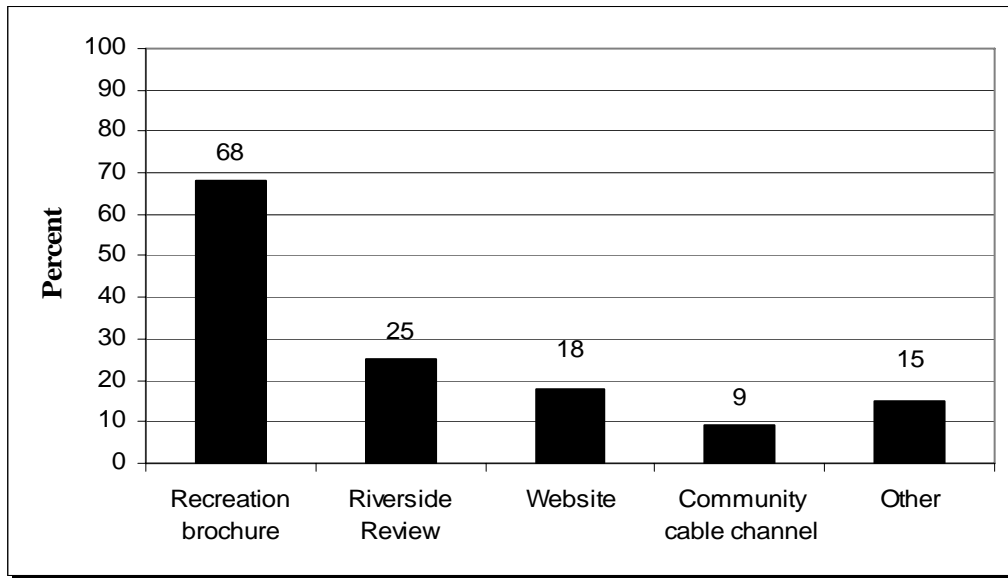
Table 11. What other types of information would you like to see on the website?

| Comment | Frequency |
|--|-----------|
| Community Calendar | 29 |
| Online Registration and online forms | 7 |
| Governmental meeting minutes and agenda | 6 |
| Real Estate Information | 5 |
| Riverside Rules and Regulation | 4 |
| Ability to pay fees online | 3 |
| Scheduled Garbage Pick-up | 3 |
| Village history | 2 |
| Links to local business | 2 |
| Governmental Official's Office Information | 1 |
| Information on Senior programs | 1 |
| Police report | 1 |
| Total | 64 |

Information on Recreational Events and Programs. Survey participants were asked to select from four methods which one they considered to be the best way to inform them of recreational events and programs in Riverside. They could also list other preferred methods. Respondents were suppose to check only one method, however many checked more than one. Figure 17 presents percentages for all mentions and thus adds to more than 100 percent. The recreation brochure was by far the most

preferred method of getting such information. Newspapers and mailings were the main other option respondents listed.

Figure 17. What is the best way to inform you of recreational events and programs in Riverside?



Information on Village Issues and Programs. Finally, the survey participants were asked to give the best way to inform them about five issues and programs of the Village. Again respondents were supposed to check only one response but many checked more than one. The percentages in Table 12 reflect the overall responses given by the respondents. The Riverside Review was the main method of receiving information the respondents checked.

Table 12. What is the best way to inform you on the following Village issues/programs?

| Issues/Programs | Community Cable Channel | Riverside Review | Website | Other |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------|-------|
| Public Safety | 15% | 56% | 18% | 21% |
| Fire and Crime Prevention | 14 | 55 | 18 | 20 |
| Public Works Projects | 13 | 54 | 20 | 21 |
| Community Development | 13 | 53 | 21 | 21 |
| Finances/Budgeting | 11 | 54 | 22 | 21 |

Conclusion

Registered voters participating in this study were quite positive about their living experience in Riverside. A majority considered it an excellent place to live and felt safe in their neighborhood, and a majority believed that value they got for their tax dollar and that Village services were either good or excellent. Very few respondents rated the Village as being poor on any of these items.

Respondents rated the police and fire service highly. There was some question about the service of the Building Department. Roads improvements appeared to be the major area needing to be addressed. Central business district maintenance was also an area of concern expressed by a substantial minority of respondents.

Respondents were supportive of building a community center but favored a fundraising effort to finance its construction rather than a tax increase referendum. There was interest in a range of amenities to be offered in a community center, in proposed recreation programs and events and in having more classes offered for different age groups.

Two-thirds of the respondents reported that their refuse needs would be satisfied if the Village moved to once-a-week pickup. The preferred day for such pick-up would be Tuesday. The current days are Tuesday and Friday.

Regarding economic development issues, survey participants primarily were looking for more food options in the central business district when asked to rate the importance to them of eight potential or existing uses and services of the central business district. At the opposite end, they were not particularly interested in tourism. They were not overly enthusiastic about the job existing businesses in Riverside were doing fulfilling their shopping and service needs. Only 23 percent rated them as doing an excellent or good job, while 42 percent rated them as poor or very poor. At the same time, respondents were supportive of the idea of Village incentives to aid development and parking in the central business district.

To receive information about the Village, respondents predominantly used newspapers, mailings and to a slightly lesser extent, word-of-mouth. Forty-five percent reported using the Riverside Review. Few reported getting information from the Community Cable Channel or the Village website. The sources they were using were also the preferred sources that they cited. The Riverside Review was cited by a majority of respondents as the best way to get them information on a variety of Village issues and programs. To obtain information about recreational events and programs, the respondents most preferred the Village's recreation brochure.

Thirty-nine percent of the respondents reported that they had used the Village website and 30 percent reported watching the Community Cable Channel. A community calendar was the most frequently cited type of information that respondents suggested should be on the Village's website.