

# 2016 Pleasant Ridge Public Opinion Survey

## A Mayoral Summary of Major Findings

The first edition of the Pleasant Ridge Public Opinion Survey was launched in January 2016. The intent was to gauge resident opinions regarding services provided and community assets. Plans call for repeating the survey annually as a way of making sure that our strengths remain strong and that any identified weaknesses show improvement. Staff and elected officials were extremely pleased by the number of residents – 308 – who participated. While this summary is intended to highlight the primary findings, it was the large number of detailed “open ended” responses that demonstrated the thoughtfulness that residents brought to each of the survey questions. We will be posting the complete survey results so that anyone will be able to dive into the details.

Let us begin with what we believe to be the most important finding in the survey. When asked...

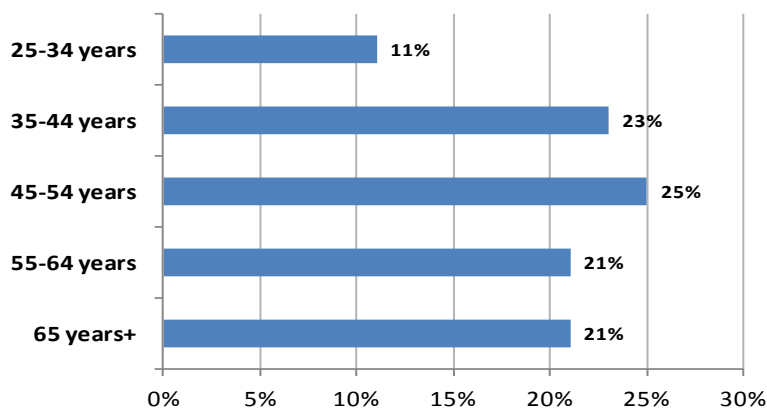
***“ Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with Pleasant Ridge as a place to live?”***

**99 percent** of respondents said they were “very satisfied” (72%) or “satisfied” (27%)

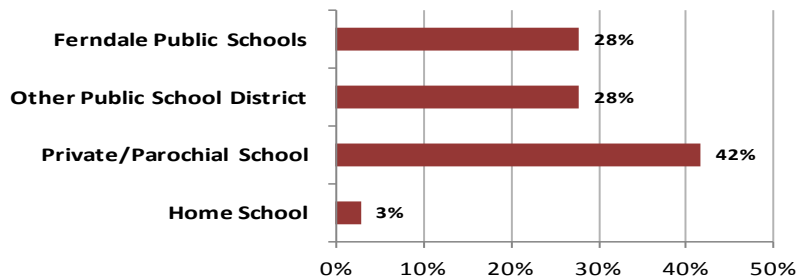
### Who Responded?

Before I move on to the other findings, allow me to tell you a little more about the residents who participated in the survey (we will finish with the document with a ranking of the most responsive streets).

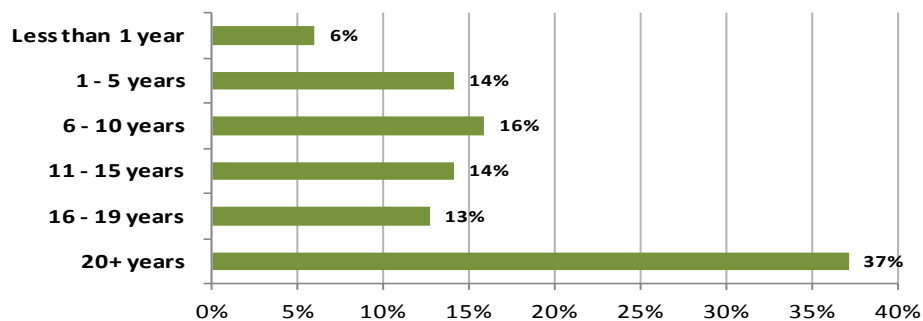
- **Gender** Female respondents outnumbered males 54 to 46 percent
- **Age** Respondents were well represented across all major categories and matched well with city demographics. Those between 18 and 24 years of age represented less than 1 percent.



- **School Attendance** Respondents with children in grades K-12 were most likely to utilize private or parochial schools. Other public districts in the area were utilized equal to Ferndale schools.



- **Years in Pleasant Ridge** While we received a good distribution of new and old residents, the domination by those living here for 20 years or more demonstrated the “sticking power” that our city has, as well as the strong attachment and engagement that long term residents have.



- **Reason for Coming** When asked the most important reason for moving to PR, respondents had a wide variety of answers. The top answers were **Walkable Neighborhoods, Geographic Location** and **Architectural Character**. These were followed by Tree-lined Streets, Sense of Community and Proximity to Traditional Downtowns, and the Pool/Community Center.
- **Moving?** When asked whether they had thoughts about moving in the next few years, 30 percent answered in the affirmative. When asked why, respondents led with **Downsizing or Senior Living, Schools** and **Property Taxes**.

## What Did They Say?

We now move on to the survey results. In each case, I will be providing the question followed by the distribution of responses. This is intended to be a summation of the highlights. For those of you who care to dig deeper, I invite you to go to the complete detailed summary.

### *Have you had contact with one or more Pleasant Ridge elected officials (Mayor and/or City Commissioners) in the past year?*

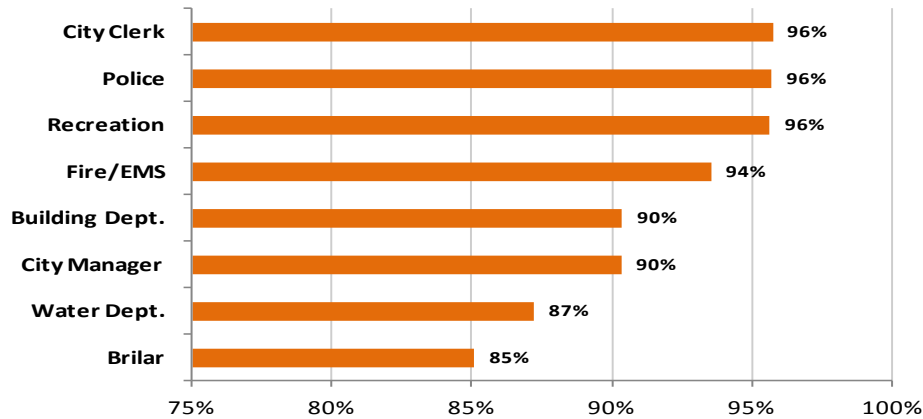
Of the 71 percent of respondents who had contact, **96 percent** were either “satisfied” (34%) or “very satisfied” (62%).

***Have you visited City Hall, or have you had direct contact with a Pleasant Ridge employee in the past year?***

Of the 86 percent of respondents who had contact, **97 percent** were either satisfied (30%) or “very satisfied” (67%).

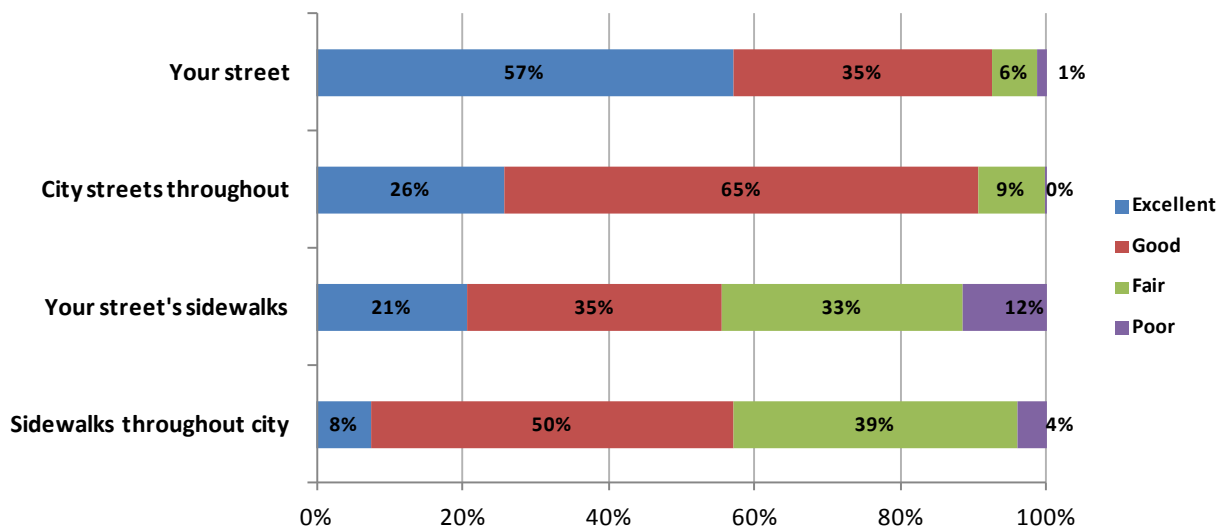
***How would you rate your contact over the past year (if any) with each of the following city departments?***

While the number of respondents who reported interacting with the various departments varied greatly, ranging from 210 with the Police to 52 with the Building Department, the share of those rating the quality of those interactions as “very satisfactory” or “satisfactory” was high across the board (as seen in the following chart).



***How would you rate the condition of the following?***

While residents tended to think more highly of the condition of their own street and sidewalks, the message was clear that sidewalk maintenance needs to be a city priority. After years of neglect, the beginnings of a regular sidewalk replacement and resurfacing program began last year.



***How satisfied are you with routine maintenance on neighborhood streets in the City?***

92 percent of respondents were either “very satisfied” (28%) or “satisfied” (64%)

***How satisfied are you with snow and ice removal on neighborhood streets?***

96 percent of respondents were either “very satisfied” (52%) or “satisfied” (44%)

***How satisfied are you with fall leaf pickup?***

91 percent of respondents were either “very satisfied” (35%) or “satisfied” (56%)

When asked ***“How safe do you feel in your home?”*** 50% answered “very safe” and 47% answered “safe”

When asked ***“How safe do you feel in the City?”*** 42% answered “very safe” and 54% answered “safe”

When asked to ***“rank the following parks and recreation facilities in order of their importance to you,”*** it was no surprise to see the **Community Center** and **Pool** easily outdistance the other nine, with the **Wellness Center** and **Gainsboro Park** coming in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

It was gratifying to see that respondents felt quite positive regarding the ***“quality”*** of each of their favorite recreational assets. The shares of respondents providing quality ratings of excellent or good for each of the top 4 were:

**Community Center – Excellent (45%) Good (49%)**

**Pool – Excellent (57%) Good (35%)**

**Wellness Center – Excellent (41%) Good (48%)**

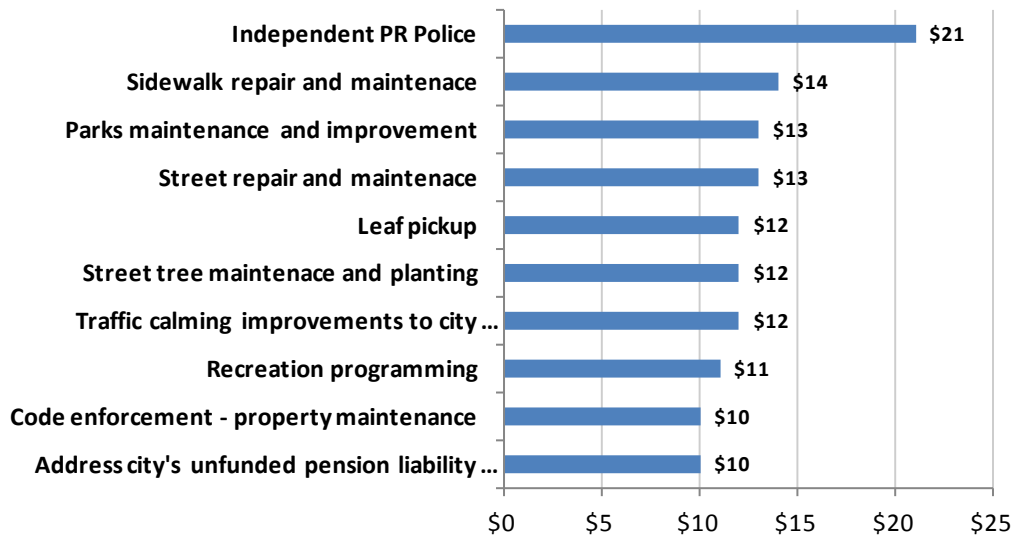
**Gainsboro Park – Excellent (23%) Good (59%)**

It is anticipated that the major reconstruction of Gainsboro Park, coupled with scheduled improvements elsewhere, will increase the “Excellent” responses in future surveys.

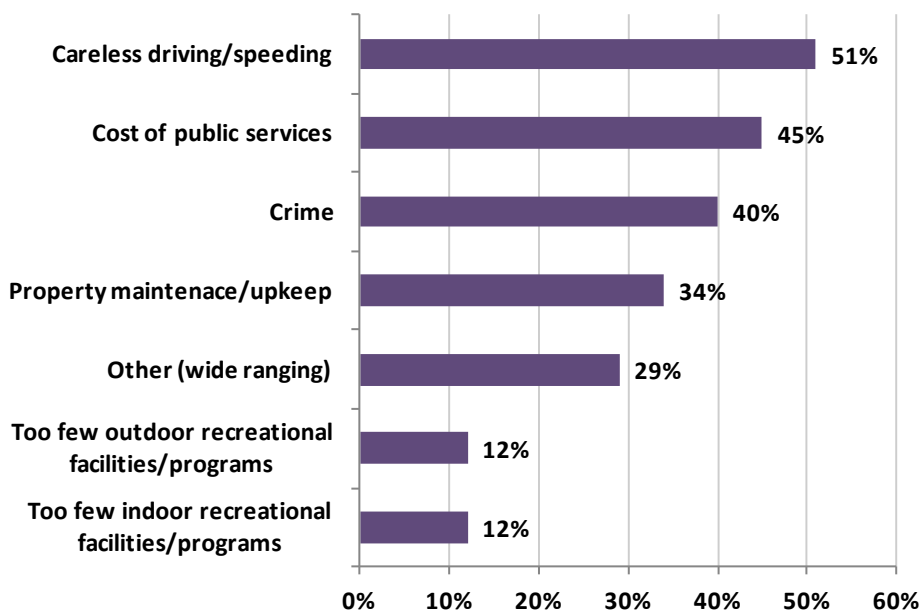
**Budget Priorities and Major Issues of Concern**

I want to finish this summary with the findings from two questions that will assist city staff and elected officials structure our budget priorities going forward. The first question asked residents to ***“assign points (100 total) to a list of public services to reflect how important each item is.”*** The second asks residents to ***“list up to 3 most serious problems facing the City today.”***

When asked how they would spend their budget dollars, Pleasant Ridge residents saw value in all of the public services listed though it was obvious that “an independent Police force” outdistanced all others as a highly valued service that must continue. The chart below provides the average dollar allocation across those respondents who selected each service.



When asked to name the most serious problems facing our city, **speeding, the cost of services, crime** and **property maintenance** led the list. More than one of every four respondents went off the formal list to provide other issues of importance to them. I encourage you to peruse the list at your leisure.



## Where Do the Respondents Live?

As promised at the outset, I finish with an analysis of the distribution of respondents by street. It would not be fair to rank streets by the number of responses received because there is a wide variation on the number of housing units per street. Therefore, this analysis is based on the number of responses as a share of the number of housing units (*response density*). There are two caveats to keep in mind. No allocation was made for vacant units (or for residents who spend their Januaries elsewhere). In addition, we need to remember that we allowed more than one respondent per household.

The following chart ranks streets based on the number of responses/number of housing units. And the winner, with a response quotient of 47.8 percent, is Kenberton. Five other streets followed with quotients between 35 and 40 percent.

I want to thank, on behalf of city staff and the city commission, all who participated in the survey. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated. For those of you reading this who did not take the survey, we still want to hear your thoughts. We have paper copies still available and would be happy to provide you with one upon request.

**RESPONSE QUOTIENT BY STREET – 2016 PLEASANT RIDGE OPINION SURVEY**

