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Executive Summary 2016 City of Roseville

City Demographics:

Roseville is still a demographically balanced first-ring suburban community, but showing more generational change and somewhat greater diversity than in the 2014 study. The median longevity of adult residents is 13.0 years, down 2.7 years since the last study. Twenty-one percent of the sample report moving to the city during the past five years, while 17% were there for more than three decades. Seventeen percent report they will move in the next five years, six percent higher than in the 2014 study; in contrast, 61% have no plans to leave during the next ten years.

Thirty-three percent of city households classify themselves as “single, no other family at home.” Seven percent are “single parents with children at home.” Nineteen percent are “married or partnered, with children at home.” Forty-one percent are “married or partnered with no children or no children at home.” Seventy-one percent classify themselves as “White,” down six percent in two years. Eleven percent each are “African-American,” and nine percent are “Asian-Pacific Islanders.” Five percent are “Hispanic-Latino.” Two percent classify themselves as “Native American,” while two percent are “mixed/bi-racial.”

Twenty-six percent of Roseville households contain residents over 65 years old. Twenty-one percent report the presence of adults between the ages of 50 and 64; sixty-five percent contain adults between the ages of 18 and 49. Twenty-six percent of the households contain school-aged children or pre-schoolers. Sixty-six percent own their current homes, while 34% rent.

The average age of respondents is 49.3 years old. Thirty-seven percent of the sample fall into the over 55 years age range, while 21% are less than 35 years old. Women outnumber men by four percent in the sample. Fifteen percent live north of Highway 36 and west of Snelling Avenue. Forty-five percent reside north of Highway 36 and east of Snelling Avenue. Twenty-five percent are south of Highway 36 and east of Snelling Avenue, while 15% live south of Highway 36 and west of Snelling Avenue.

Quality of Life Issues:

Ninety-nine percent rate their quality of life as either “excellent” or “good.” In fact, a very high 46% deem it “excellent.” Only one percent rate the quality of life lower. The overall positive rating is at the top of suburban communities, while the “excellent” rating remains among the top five communities in the Metropolitan Area.

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June 2016

At 18% and 14%, respectively, “strong neighborhood/good housing” and “safe community” lead the list of attributes people like most about living in the community. “Friendly people” is third, at 13%, followed by “close to family,” at 10%, “close to job,” at nine percent, and “parks and trails,” also at nine percent. The most serious issues facing the city remain “rising crime” and “high taxes,” at 13% and 10%, respectively. Eight percent point to “poor city spending,” and seven percent cite “lack of jobs and businesses.” A “booster” group of 36%, twelve percent higher than in the 2014 study, says there are “no” serious issues facing the community; the size of the booster group in Roseville is five times higher than the norm for a Metropolitan Area suburb.

Ninety-five percent think things in Roseville are generally headed in the “right direction.” Only three percent regard things “off on the wrong track,” primarily due to “rising crime,” “poor City spending,” and “growing diversity.”

A top rating of 91% of the sample report the general sense of community in the City of Roseville is “very strong” or “somewhat strong”; only eight percent rate it lower. Twenty-five percent report a closer connection to the City of Roseville “as a whole,” while 48% have a closer connection to their “neighborhood.” Six percent report a closer connection to the “School District”; five percent, to their “church; four percent to their “workplace”; and, 12% to their “family and friends.” An almost-unanimous 99% feel “accepted” in the City of Roseville.

In thinking about a city’s quality of life, 25%, down seven percent in two years, feel the most important aspect is “safety.” Eighteen percent point to “sense of community,” while 17% cite “good schools.” Sixteen percent point to “city upkeep.” Fourteen percent each believe “better roads” and “more jobs” are aspects of the city which needs to be fixed or improved in the future. Thirteen percent feel the same about “lower taxes.” But, 33% think there is “nothing” or are unsure about anything needing fixing or improving. Fifty-nine percent believe there is “nothing” or are unsure about anything currently missing from the community which, if present, could greatly improve the quality of life for residents. Sixteen percent would like to see “more public transportation,” while eight percent want “more affordable housing,” and seven percent would like to see “more jobs.”

Community Characteristics:

In assessing the one or two most important characteristics of a high quality of life community, 53% point to “low crime rate” and 43% choose “good school system.” This reverses the order of the top two choices two years ago. Twenty-seven percent pick “well-maintained properties,” and 21% select “low property taxes.” There are two characteristics moderate percentages consider to be of least importance: “community events and festivals,” picked by 32%, and “variety of shopping opportunities,” chosen by 23%.

The Morris Leatherman Company
June, 2016

In examining the number or quantity of various community characteristics, majorities of residents think Roseville has “about the right amount” of 11 of 12 discussed. In fact, in all but three cases, the percent of residents seeing “too few” or “too many” is relatively equal, indicating even splits in opinions about each of these characteristics. In the three cases where opinions are more skewed in one direction or the other, residents tended to see “too few.” When considering condominiums, 25% think there are “too few,” while 12% see “too many.” Similarly, with respect to townhomes, 28% see “too few” and 16% judge there to be “too many.” Finally, in thinking about assisted living for seniors, 25% feel there are “too few” opportunities, while 13% see “too many.” The 10 attributes posting higher levels of agreement about current numbers are: affordable rental units, market rate rental units, affordable owner-occupied housing, “move up” housing, higher cost housing, parks and open space, trails and bikeways, service and retail establishments, and entertainment and dining opportunities.

Ninety-four percent, six percent higher than the 2014 study, are either “very committed” or “somewhat committed” to stay in Roseville if they were going to move from their current home to upgrade. Just as impressive, 94%, a seven percent increase, are committed to stay in the city if they were going to move from their current home for downsizing.

City Services:

In evaluating specific city services, the mean approval rating is 90.4%, a significant 4.1% increase over the 2014 level. If we consider only residents holding opinions, the mean score is a high 94.6%, well within the top 10% of summary ratings in the Metropolitan Area. Over 95% rate police protection, fire protection, police protection, emergency medical services, drainage and flood control, building inspections, code enforcement, trail and pathway plowing in parks and pathway repair and maintenance in neighborhoods as either “excellent” or “good.” Between 90% and 94% favorably rate sewer and water, animal control, snow plowing, trail and pathway plowing in neighborhoods, and pathway repair and maintenance in the parks. The only exception: eighty-one percent rate street repair and maintenance, nevertheless 16% higher than the Metropolitan Area norm. Ironically, the major irritants leading to lower ratings are not street maintenance-specific; they are “turkeys and coyotes,” at 30%, “poor water taste,” at 22%, and “flooding,” at 17%.

Property Taxes:

Roseville residents can be classified as fiscal moderates. Forty-four percent think their property taxes are “high” in comparison with neighboring suburban communities, while 43% see them as

The Morris Leatherman Company
June, 2016

“about average.” Ninety-four percent of the residents view city services as either an “excellent” or a “good” value for the property taxes paid; this endorsement level continues to place Roseville within the top decile of Metropolitan Area suburbs. While 58% of the sample would favor an increase in their city property taxes to maintain city services at their current level, 38% would oppose an increase under these circumstances; this split dramatically reverses the 2014 plurality, 49%-40%, opposed to this type of tax increase.

Solid majorities endorse the City continuing to invest in long-term infrastructure projects. By an 89%-11% margin, residents support investing in city roads. An 86%-13% majority favors investments in water and sewer pipes, and an 81%-19% majority feels the same about pedestrian pathways. Lower support levels, although still resounding, are the 75%-25% majority in favor of continued investment in bikeways and the 74%-25% in favor of City buildings. Overall, the average change in support in comparison with the 2014 study is +5.2%, reflecting a growing consensus in favor of long-term investments.

City Government and Staff:

Respondents give the Mayor and Council a job approval rating of 93%, up five percent in two years, and a disapproval rating of only four percent. The almost 23-to-one approval-to-disapproval rating of the Mayor and City Council remains among the top ratings in the Metropolitan Area suburbs.

Citizen empowerment is at a very high level. A comparatively low number of residents -- 14% -- feel they could not have a say about the way the City of Roseville runs things, if they want. This level of alienation is 8% lower than the 2014 level. Most communities score between 20% and 30% on this query. Overall, the inability to influence decision-makers is not a major issue.

Residents award the City Staff a job approval rating of 97% and a disapproval rating of only two percent. Both the absolute level of approval and the 49-to-one ratio of approval-to-disapproval are also among the top Metropolitan Area suburbs.

Neighborhoods and Businesses:

Ninety-eight percent rate the general appearance of the community as either “excellent” or “good”; only two percent are more critical in their evaluations. “Messy yards” and “rundown homes” are the chief complaints of the small number posting a negative judgment. Over the past two years, 61% think the appearance of Roseville “remained about the same,” while 31% – a five percent increase since the last study – see an “improvement,” and only seven percent, a “decline.” Code enforcement is also highly rated: 93% award this service either an “excellent” or “good” rating, a six percent increase since the 2014 study; only four percent are more critical,

The Morris Leatherman Company
June, 2016

focusing on “messy yards,” “loose animals,” and “rundown homes.” Only 57% are aware that Roseville offers a housing program for residential home improvements; similarly, only 52% are aware the City also sponsors free home and garden workshops each February and Fall.

Curbside Recycling:

Seventy-five percent participate in the curbside recycling program by separating recyclable items from the rest of their garbage. The 25% who do not participate indicate they “don’t have enough recycling,” “don’t recycle at all,” and “don’t want to separate recyclables from their garbage.” A smaller percentage of nonparticipants report their “building or association handles it.” Most program participants, 72%, put their recyclables out for collection every two weeks; twenty-seven percent do so on a monthly basis. By a 70%-26% majority, participants oppose a change to an every week collection schedule for recyclable. Of the minority supporting the change, only 53% would still favor a change if it increased their costs. When changes or improvements are discussed only two suggestions are made by most numbers of current participants: Six percent would like “bigger containers” and four percent would like “more timely pick-ups.”

By a 49%-32% margin, residents oppose a curbside collection program for compostable waste for an additional fee. The main reason for opposition is the “additional cost,” while the main reason for support is “general environmental benefits.” If a curbside collection program for compostable waste were available, 50% of the household’s surveys would be at least “somewhat likely” to participate; but, using standard market projection techniques, only 16% would actually participate in the new program.

Public Safety:

In rating the seriousness of public safety concerns in the City of Roseville, 19% feel “youth crimes and vandalism” is their greatest concern. Eighteen percent feel similarly about “traffic speeding,” 11% point to “break-ins and theft from automobiles,” and nine percent each see the most serious concern as “residential crimes, such as burglary and theft” or “drugs.” As in the 2014 study, no one category clearly dominates. But, 21% consider none of these as serious concerns, up seven percent since the survey taken two years ago.

Ninety percent rate the amount of police patrolling in their neighborhood as “about the right amount,” while eight percent think it is “not enough,” and two percent see “too much.”

The Morris Leatherman Company
April, 2016

Parks and Recreation:

Ninety-nine percent rate the park and recreation facilities in Roseville as either “excellent” or “good.” Only one percent is more critical. Among the City’s recreational facilities, 39% most frequently use “neighborhood parks,” 26% most often use “trails,” and seven percent most frequently use “athletic fields.” But, 28% of the City’s households do not use any of these facilities. Ninety-seven percent highly rate the upkeep and maintenance of Roseville City Parks; only two percent are more critical in their judgments. A nearly unanimous 98% feel existing recreational or sports facilities offered by the City of Roseville meet the needs of their households.

Forty-one percent again report household participation in a city-sponsored park and recreation program. While the vast majority have no suggestions for offering new or expanding current park and recreation programs, five percent support offering “more events in the parks.”

Twenty-six percent report household members use the trail system at least once per week, a 13% decrease since the last study; forty-five percent do so several times a monthly or just on a monthly basis, a 17% increase in two years; and, 10% are less frequent trail users. Twenty percent report no one in their household uses the trails at all. In prioritizing expansions or improvements of the City’s trail system, 41% choose “construction of trails connecting neighborhoods and parks,” 25% pick “construction of additional trails for exercise within parks,” and 21% favor “construction of trails connecting the neighborhood and shopping and business areas.”

Seventy-nine percent are aware the City opened new park buildings at Autumn Grove, Lexington, Oasis, Sandcastle and Villa Parks. Forty-nine percent of the sample visited or used one of the new park buildings. Among the 51% not visiting a new park building, 40% report “they have no time or are too busy,” 28% have “no interest,” 18% report “age or health issues,” and 10% think the distance is “too far.” But, 99% of park building visitors rate their experience as either “excellent” or “good,” and an emphatic 95% would consider using one of the new park buildings again in the future.

Community Center:

By a 75%-19% majority, residents support *in concept* the construction of a Community Center by the City of Roseville; this level of support is 11% higher than in the 2014 study. Sixty-six percent of the sample, up 14% in two years, indicate that a member of their household would be at least “somewhat likely” to use the facility if it were built; using standard market projection techniques, the expected user level would be 21% of the city’s households.

The Morris Leatherman Company
April, 2016

Communications Issues:

The City Newsletter remains the most often indicated primary source of information about the community, at 44%. The local newspaper ranks second, at 17%, and the “City website,” is third, at 14%. The “grapevine” is relied upon by nine percent of the sample. Preferred sources of information about City Government and its activities are somewhat different from the existing communications pattern. This time, City publications and newsletters are at the top of the list, at 31%. Twenty-two percent choose “mailings to their home,” nineteen percent prefer “e-mail,” and 16% opt for the “City Website.”

Eighty-three percent receive the “Roseville City News,” and 85% of this group regularly read it. The reach of the publication is 71% of the community’s households, down eight percent in two years. The newsletter’s effectiveness as an information channel is highly regarded: ninety-one percent highly rate its effectiveness in keeping them informed about activities in the city.

Social media usage among Roseville residents is increasing. Twenty-two percent use Nextdoor, 35% use Speak Up Roseville, 41% tweet, 48% use YouTube, and 68% post or read Facebook. But, 76% use e-mail, and of this group, 72% are likely to use it to obtain information about the City of Roseville. In a similar fashion, 58% visit the City Website, and of this group, 95% are likely to access it for city information.

Ninety-three percent rate the City’s overall performance in communicating key local issues to residents as either “excellent” or “good.” Only six percent are more critical in their evaluations. This rating is also among the top three in the Metropolitan Area.

Conclusions:

Overall, Roseville citizens are extremely satisfied with their community, and very high ratings on nearly all aspects of city operations are commonplace. In fact, city service ratings, already very positive two years ago, improved even further across the board. The key issue facing decision-makers in the future is addressing perceptions about “rising crime,” particularly “youth crimes and vandalism,” “break-ins and theft from automobiles,” and “drugs” Property tax levels have diminished as a secondary concern, but their level is still a limiting factor; however, residents are willing to increase property taxes to maintain city services at their current level.

Community development efforts should primarily focus on helping seniors stay in the community, since moderate concerns are the lack of assisted living opportunities for seniors, townhomes, and condominiums. In addition, the attraction of more job-producing businesses to the city will address one of the key needs identified by residents.

The Morris Leatherman Company
June, 2016

The parks and recreation system is the “crown jewels” in the City’s quality of life. Usage is higher than expected viewed against the demography of the community. The new park buildings have been well-received by the public. Trails and neighborhood parks play an unusually large role in city life, acting as key ingredients in a strong sense of community. In the last two years, support in concept for and likely use of a community center increased. Still, electoral success will in large part depend on the financing structure for its construction and operations.

Information levels about City Government activities are startlingly high in comparison with neighboring communities. Positive ratings of both the Mayor and City Council and City Staff are at the top of the Metropolitan Area. “Roseville City News,” the city’s newsletter, is exceptionally well regarded: it still possesses a higher readership and effectiveness ratings than most peer communities.

In the past study, citizens were clearly enthusiastic about their City. Now, with the “City Booster” percentage at 36% – a 12% increase in two years – an even larger reservoir of goodwill has been established. Once again, this will serve decision-makers very well as current issues are tackled, new issues are encountered, and relatively tough decisions must be made.

Methodology:

This study contains the results of a telephone survey of 400 randomly selected adult residents of the City of Roseville. Survey responses were gathered by professional interviewers across the community between April 22nd and May 6th, 2016. The average interview took 22 minutes. All respondents interviewed in this study were part of a randomly generated sample of adult residents of the City of Roseville. In general, random samples such as this yield results projectable to their respective universe within ± 5.0 percent in 95 out of 100 cases.