

# *The Morris Leatherman Company*

## **2018 Findings and Implications**

### **City of Roseville**

#### *Quality of Life Issues:*

Ninety-five percent rate their quality of life as either “excellent” or “good.” In fact, a very high 45% deem it “excellent.” Only five 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.

At 19% and 17%, respectively, “strong neighborhood/good housing” and “closeness to family” lead the list of attributes people like most about living in the community. “Safe community” is third, at 13%, followed by “closeness to job” and “friendly people,” each at 12%. “close to job.” The most serious issues facing the city remain “rising crime” at 22%, up nine percent in two years. “High taxes” ranks next at 17%. Fifteen percent point to “aging population,” while ten percent cite “aging infrastructure.” A “booster” group of 17%, one-half of the 2016 result, says there are “no” serious issues facing the community; while significantly lower than two years ago, is still twice as high as the Metropolitan Area suburb.

Eighty-three percent think things in Roseville are generally headed in the “right direction.” But, 15% regard things are “off on the wrong track,” a five-fold increase in two years. This is primarily due to perceptions of “rising crime” in the community. Secondary factors contributing to the increase include “poor City spending,” “high taxes,” and “growing diversity.”

A very high rating of 87% of the sample report the general sense of community in the City of Roseville is “very strong” or “somewhat strong”; twelve percent rate it lower. Seventeen percent report a closer connection to the City of Roseville “as a whole,” a decrease of eight percent since the last study, while 30% have a closer connection to their “neighborhood,” also down 18% in two years. Six percent report a closer connection to the “School District”; fifteen percent, triple the 2016 level, to their “church; eleven percent, almost triple the 2016 level, to their “workplace”; and, 22%, up 10% since the last study, to their “family and friends.” Intermediary institutions and social precincts are replacing geography as cohesive forces. An almost-unanimous 98% feel “accepted” in the City of Roseville.

In thinking about a city’s quality of life, 39%, up 14% in two years, feel the most important aspect is “safety.” Eighteen percent point to “sense of community,” 17% cite “good schools,” and nine percent, down nine percent in two years, point to the “upkeep of the city.” Nineteen percent, an increase of six percent in two years, believe “lower taxes” and 17% feel the same about “better roads” as aspects of the city which need to be fixed or improved in the future. Eleven percent each cite “more public transit” or “more senior housing.” But, 17%, a decrease of 22% in two years, think there is “nothing” or are unsure about anything needing fixing or improving. Forty-one percent, a decline of 18% since the 2016 study, 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 each would like to see “more public transportation” or “more sidewalks,” and 13%, almost double the 2016 level, would like to see “more jobs.”

### ***Community Characteristics:***

In assessing the one or two most important characteristics of a high quality of life community, 59%, up six percent since the last study, point to “low crime rate” and 42% choose “good school system.” This continues the order of the top two choices two years ago. Twenty-two percent pick “job opportunities,” and 21%, select “sense of community.” “Low property taxes” dropped from 21% to 11%, and “well-maintained properties” declined from 27% to 14%. There are four characteristics moderate percentages consider to be of least importance: “variety of shopping opportunities,” chosen by 19%, “variety of park and recreation opportunities,” at 12%, “sense of community,” at 11%, and “community events and festivals,” at 10%.

When examining the number or quantity of various community characteristics, majorities of residents think Roseville has “about the right amount” of 10 of 12 discussed. In the two cases where opinions are more skewed in one direction or the other, residents tend to see “too many” affordable rental units and “too few” assisted living facilities for seniors. The 10 attributes posting higher levels of agreement about sufficient current numbers are: market rate rental units, condominiums, townhomes, 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.

Eighty-seven percent, seven percent lower than the 2016 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, 88%, a six percent decrease, are committed to stay in the city if they were going to move from their current home for downsizing. While most of the small number of residents who are not “committed” to stay in the city report there is nothing missing or could be improved to make them more committed to stay, about 12% each would like to see expanded choices in senior housing, affordable housing, and public transit.

### ***City Services:***

In evaluating specific city services, the mean approval rating is 85.8%, a significant 4.6% decrease over the 2016 level. If we consider only residents holding opinions, the mean score is a

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higher 90.8%, again well within the top 10% of summary ratings in the Metropolitan Area. Over 95% rate police protection, fire protection, emergency medical services, sewer and water, building inspections, and code enforcement as either “excellent” or “good.” Between 90% and 94% favorably rate drainage and flood control, animal control, and pathway repair and maintenance in the parks. Between 83% and 89% similarly rate snow plowing, trail and pathway plowing in parks, trail and pathway plowing in neighborhoods, and pathway repair and maintenance in neighborhoods. The only outlier: fifty-eight percent rate street repair and maintenance favorably, while 42% rate it unfavorably. This service rating is below the Metropolitan Area norm. The decrease in the average rating can be attributed to aspects of snow plowing and a significant drop in the rating of city street repair and maintenance. In addition, concern about flooding became a more intense concern in this study.

***Property Taxes:***

Roseville residents became more fiscally conservative during the past two years. Fifty-three percent, a nine percent increase since the last study, think their property taxes are “high” in comparison with neighboring suburban communities, while 34%, a nine percent decrease, see them as “about average.” Eighty-five percent, a nine percent decrease, 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 quartile of Metropolitan Area suburbs. While 51% of the sample would **oppose** an increase in their city property taxes to maintain city services at their current level, 35% would support an increase under these circumstances; this split dramatically reverses the 2016 majority, 58%-38%, supporting this type of tax increase.

Solid majorities endorse the City continuing to invest in long-term infrastructure projects. By an 99%-1% margin, residents support investing in city roads. A 94%-4% majority favors investments in water and sewer pipes, and an 83%-16% majority feels the same about city buildings. An 82%-18% majority is in favor of continued investment in pedestrian pathways, and a 75%-25% majority endorses continued investments in bikeways. Overall, the average change in support in comparison with the 2016 study is +5.4%, reflecting the growing consensus in favor of long-term investments during the past four years.

***City Government and Staff:***

Respondents give the Mayor and Council a job approval rating of 82%, down 11% in two years, and a disapproval rating of 17%. The current almost five-to-one approval-to-disapproval rating

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of the Mayor and City Council remains among the top quartile of ratings in the Metropolitan Area suburbs.

Citizen empowerment is still high but shows a decline in the two-year interim between studies. The number of residents -- 26% -- who feel they could not have a say about the way the City of Roseville runs things is at the suburban norm. This level of alienation is 12% higher than the 2016 level. The source of disapproval is fiscal: "poor spending decisions" and "high taxes." Overall, the inability to influence decision-makers is not now a major issue but appears to be a growing concern.

Residents award the City Staff a job approval rating of 93% and a disapproval rating of only four percent. Both the absolute level of approval and the 23-to-1 ratio of approval-to-disapproval are also among the top in the Metropolitan Area suburbs.

***Neighborhoods and Businesses:***

Ninety-seven percent rate the general appearance of the community as either "excellent" or "good"; only three percent are more critical in their evaluations. "Messy yards" is the chief complaint of the small number posting a negative judgment. Over the past two years, 65% think the appearance of Roseville "remained about the same," while 29% see an "improvement," and only six percent, a "decline." Code enforcement is also highly rated: 94% award this service either an "excellent" or "good" rating; only six percent are more critical, focusing on "messy yards," "junk cars" and "loose animals." Only 45% are aware Roseville offers a housing program for residential home improvements and foreclosure protection.

***Garbage Collection:***

By a narrow 42%-37% margin, residents oppose the City of Roseville changing from the current system, in which residents may choose from several different haulers, to a system where the City chooses a hauler or set of haulers for their area; thirteen percent strongly favor this change, while 18% strongly oppose it. A sizable 22% are unsure.

Supporters of the change base their decision primarily on "less truck traffic." Opponents cite "want to choose my own hauler," "like current hauler," and "competition creates lower cost."

***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 “rent,” “don’t have enough waste,” “consider it a hassle,” and “their association does that.” Most program participants, 84%, put their recyclables out for collection every two weeks; fourteen percent do so monthly. By a 49%-47% split, participants narrowly support a change to a weekly collection schedule for recyclables. When changes or improvements are discussed only one suggestion is made by many current participants: fifteen percent would like “bigger containers.”

By a 42%-39% margin, residents narrowly oppose a curbside collection program for compostable waste for an additional fee. The main reasons for opposition are the “additional cost,” “smell,” and “not enough waste to be useful,” while the main reason for support is “general environmental benefits.” If a curbside collection program for compostable waste were available, 31%, down 19% in two years, of the households surveyed would be at least “somewhat likely” to participate; but, using standard market projection techniques, only 11% would participate in the new program.

As an alternative to a curbside collection system for compostable waste, only 15% are either “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to use a central drop-off location; using standard market projection techniques, only five percent of Roseville households would be expected to use the central location. “Likely users” report they would expect to use the site about “once every other week.”

***Public Safety:***

In rating the seriousness of public safety concerns in the City of Roseville, 20% think “drugs” and 19% each feel “youth crimes and vandalism” or “traffic speeding” are the greatest concern. Fifteen percent feel similarly about “business crimes, such as shoplifting and check fraud.” As in the earlier 2014 and 2016 studies, no one category clearly dominates. But, only seven percent consider none of these as serious concerns, one-third of the level in the survey taken two years ago.

Eighty-one percent, down nine percent since the 2016 study, rate the amount of police patrolling in their neighborhood as “about the right amount,” while 15%, twice the 2016 level, think it is “not enough,” and four percent see “too much.”

***Parks and Recreation:***

Ninety-five percent rate the park and recreation facilities in Roseville as either “excellent” or “good.” Only three percent are more critical. Among the City’s recreational facilities, 33% most frequently use “trails,” 29% most often use “neighborhood parks,” and 11% most frequently use “athletic facilities.” But, 28% of the City’s households do not use any of these facilities. Ninety-five percent highly rate the upkeep and maintenance of Roseville City Parks; only three percent are more critical in their judgments.

Forty-one percent again report household participation in a city-sponsored park and recreation program. While a large majority have no suggestions for offering new or expanding current park and recreation programs, fifteen percent support offering “more events in the parks – either concerts/movies or fitness.”

Forty-seven percent, up 21%, report household members use the trail system at least once per week; twenty-two percent, one-half the 2016 level, do so several times a monthly or just monthly; and, 10% are less frequent trail users. Twenty-one percent report no one in their household uses the trails at all. In prioritizing expansions or improvements of the City’s trail system, 35% each pick “construction of trails connecting the neighborhood and shopping and business areas” or “construction of trails connecting neighborhoods and parks.” Twenty-four percent choose “construction of additional trails for exercise within parks.”

Eighty-nine percent, an increase of ten percent since the 2016 study, are aware the City opened new park buildings at Autumn Grove, Lexington, Rosebrook, Oasis, Sandcastle and Villa Parks. Fifty-four percent of the sample visited or used one of the new park buildings. Among the 46% not visiting a new park building, 36% report “they have no time or are too busy,” 23% report “age or health issues,” and 22% have “no interest.” But, 99% of park building visitors rate their experience as either “excellent” or “good,” and an emphatic 98% would consider using one of the new park buildings again in the future. A nearly-unanimous 99% feel the current mix of recreational or sports facilities meets the needs of members of their household.

***Communications Issues:***

The City Newsletter and the City website are the most often indicated primary sources of information about the community, at 38% and 36%, respectively. The local newspaper ranks third, at 10%. The “grapevine” is relied upon by four percent of the sample, one-half of the 2016 level. Preferred sources of information about City Government and its activities are somewhat

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different from the existing communications pattern. This time, the City website and City publications and newsletters are at the top of the list, at 27% and 26%, respectively. Fourteen percent each choose “mailings to their home” or “e-mail.”

Eighty-two percent receive the “Roseville City News,” and 93% of this group regularly read it. The reach of the publication is 76% of the community’s households, up five percent in two years. The newsletter’s effectiveness as an information channel is moderately rated: eighty-four percent, down seven percent since the 2016 study, highly rate its effectiveness in keeping them informed about activities in the city.

Social media usage among Roseville residents continues to increase. Eighty-seven percent use “e-mail,” 75% use Facebook, and 62% access the “City website.” Forty-four percent use “YouTube,” 32% tweet, and 31% use “Nextdoor.” And, 15% report using other social media sites. Over 60% of the users of five social media sources would be likely to use each to obtain City information: the “City website,” at 98%, “Nextdoor,” at 90%, other social media sites, at 87%, “e-mail,” at 70%, and “Facebook,” at 64%.

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

***Conclusions:***

The key issue currently facing decision-makers is addressing perceptions about “rising crime,” particularly “drugs” and “youth crimes and vandalism.” Concerns about crime in Roseville are beginning to erode the high levels of approval and support for the quality of life, fiscal management of the community, direction of the city, tax tolerance, government job ratings, and sense of community. Since 39% rate “safety” as the most important aspect of city’s future quality of life, “crime”—together with its prevention and reduction – should be given a high place in the discussion of issues, policies, and resource allocation. At the same time, judgments of City property tax levels have become more negative during the past two years, creating a more limiting factor in using additional funds to augment and expand services.

Community development efforts should again focus on helping seniors stay in the community, since moderate concerns continue about the lack of assisted living opportunities for seniors. This perception is in line with the very high levels of commitment to staying in the city if residents moved from their current homes. Surprisingly, there is also growing concern about the sufficiency of entertainment and dining opportunities in the community.

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The parks and recreation system remain the “crown jewel” in the City’s quality of life. Usage is still higher than expected viewed against the demography of the community. The new park buildings are very well-received by the public. Trails and neighborhood parks play an unusually large and growing role in city life, acting as key ingredients in the strong sense of community. No strong consensus is present on future city trails and sidewalk expansions: thirty-five percent each support the construction of trails connecting neighborhoods and parks, the same percent favor the construction of trails connecting neighborhoods and shopping/business areas, and 24% would prioritize the construction of additional trails for exercise within parks.

Information levels about City Government activities are still high in comparison with neighboring communities. Even though some slippage occurred during the past two years, traceable to concerns about crime, positive ratings of both the Mayor, City Council and City Staff are at the top of the Metropolitan Area. “Roseville City News,” the city’s newsletter, and the City website are very well used and exceptionally well regarded. In fact, the City newsletter still possesses a higher readership and effectiveness ratings than most peer communities.

In past studies, citizens were clearly enthusiastic about their City. While continuing to have a larger “City Booster” core than other communities, the perception of “rising crime” has shrunk this reservoir of goodwill. To regain the core of loyalty, though, decision-makers will both need to tackle these perceptions as well as clearly communicate rationales and expected outcomes from crime-related policies.

***City Demographics:***

Roseville remains a demographically balanced first-ring suburban community but showing more generational change and somewhat greater diversity than in the 2016 study. The median longevity of adult residents is 12.3 years, down 0.7 years since the last study. Twenty-four percent of the sample report moving to the city during the past five years, while 33% are there for more than two decades. Nine percent report they will move in the next five years, about one-half the 2016 level; in contrast, 81% have no plans to leave during the next ten years.

Twenty-four percent of city households classify themselves as “single, no other family at home,” down nine percent in two years. Seven percent are “single parents with children at home.” Nineteen percent are “married or partnered, with children at home.” Forty-seven percent are “married or partnered with no children or no children at home,” up six percent since the 2016 study. Sixty-three percent classify themselves as “White,” down eight percent in two years. Twelve percent are “African-American,” and ten percent are “Asian-Pacific Islanders.” Five percent are “Hispanic-Latino.” Two percent classify themselves as “Native American,” while eight percent are “mixed/bi-racial.”



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Twenty-five percent of Roseville households contain residents over 65 years old. Twenty-six percent report the presence of adults between the ages of 50 and 64; sixty-three percent contain adults between the ages of 18 and 49. Twenty-seven percent of the households contain school-aged children or preschoolers. Sixty-one percent own their current homes, down five percent since the last study, while 38% rent.

The average age of respondents is 49.1 years old. Thirty-eight percent of the sample fall into the over 55 years age range, while 23% 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.