

City of Gladstone,
Michigan

2007 Citizen Survey

Summary of Results

City of Gladstone
Office of the City Manager

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Executive Summary

The 2007 Gladstone Citizen Survey is the first comprehensive citizen survey conducted by the City of Gladstone. This assessment serves as a scorecard for the community by providing an evaluation of the services offered by the City of Gladstone. The results of the survey will be utilized by the City Commission in future strategic planning and resource allocation.

How the Survey Was Conducted

1200 households were randomly selected to participate in the survey conducted in late November of 2007. Of the eligible households, 604 completed surveys were returned to yield a response rate of approximately 50%, accounting for non-deliverable addresses. The resulting sample size is more than large enough to result in a 95% confidence interval of less than ± 5 percentage points for each question.

How the Report Is Organized

The Gladstone Citizen Survey addresses many topics related to life in the community. The body of the report is mainly an analysis of the sections covered in the survey. The responses reported within this report exclude “don’t know” or non-responses. They are included within the survey attached to the report in Appendix I. Many of the questions have been converted to a 100-point scale with 100 being the best and 0 the worst. For practical purposes a score of 67 would equal “good” on a 4-point scale. Using the percent-of-maximum scale an answer of “excellent” on a 4-point scale would equal 100 points, conversely an answer of “poor” would equal no points.

Overall Quality of Life

The majority of respondents (87%) rated the overall quality of life in Gladstone as “good” or “excellent.” It should be noted that the residents’ rating of the quality of life in Gladstone is significantly higher than national averages.

Neighborhood

Average ratings for the quality of the respondents’ neighborhood was approximately 66 on a 100-point scale with 79% of respondents rating their neighborhood as either “good” or “excellent.”

Job Opportunities and Access to Affordable Housing

On the questions of job opportunity and access to affordable housing, the City of Gladstone saw very low and moderately low ratings respectively. Only 5% of residents rated job opportunities “good” or “excellent” and 39% rated access to affordable housing “good” or “excellent.” This yielded scores of 12 and 42 respectively on a 100-point scale. These scores are significantly lower than many of the other indicators influencing quality of life in the community. The economic base of the region, types of employment and the quantity available, and the relationship between wages and the cost of housing probably have the most impact on this low ranking.

Public Safety

Perhaps one of the most significant contributors to the high rating for overall quality of life is the remarkable ratings for public safety. Over 92% of residents feel “somewhat safe” or “very safe” from violent crimes in the City of Gladstone, and around 81% feel the same regarding property crimes. This yielded scores of 86 and 76 on a 100-point scale respectively.

Very high scores regarding public safety should come as no surprise, historically the City of Gladstone and the region as a whole have had a very low rate of both violent and property crimes. Even as other regions in the United States have experienced rising rates of violence the Gladstone Public Safety Department’s annual report reveals flat or decreasing rates of most crime in the City.

Most residents also feel safe walking alone at night in their neighborhoods with 88% reporting they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” and in the downtown with 85% responding they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe.” Residents felt slightly less safe walking in a park outside of their neighborhood.

Respondents were overwhelmingly confident with fire protection; approximately 90% felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” from fires. Using a 100-point scale, safety from fires scored 83, a very high rating

Problems Affecting Quality of Life

A number of questions were asked regarding perceptions of the overall quality of life within Gladstone. They included taxes, traffic, crime, rundown housing and a number of other socioeconomic indicators. Taxes, not surprisingly, were considered most problematic in Gladstone. In some ways, most surprising was the perception that drugs are very problematic in our community. Of least concern were traffic and graffiti,

indicating an efficient transportation system and a lack of crime associated with many other urbanized areas.

Citizen Involvement in Government

Gladstone is much like other communities across the nation and has a difficult time involving citizens in government. Of those surveyed, 82% indicated that they have “once or never” attended a City Commission meeting in the past 12 months. Although it does appear many more residents get information regarding local government by watching City Commission meetings, 49% indicated that they have watched a commission meeting more than once in the last 12 months. Citizen involvement should always be a top priority of municipal government and a means of improving participation should be explored.

City Services

Overall, 78% of respondents rated City services as “good” or “excellent.” This rating is slightly above national averages, although in many cases individual services ranked higher or lower than national comparables. A more detailed comparison of all City services is provided below and in later sections of this report.

Positive ratings were given to public safety, ranging from 74 to 80 on a 100-point scale. Police services received 74 on a 100-point scale and fire received an 80 on the same scale.

Parks and Recreation scores ranged from 61 to 75 on a 100-point scale. Although Gladstone’s recreation programs ranked slightly below the national average, both recreation facilities and park maintenance exceeded the national average.

Planning and Zoning and services to youth both rated least among City services. These services respectively received scores of 55 and 51 on a 100-point scale. However, the relatively low rating for planning and zoning should be tempered by the fact that land use issues tend to be both contentious and unpopular.

Street and sidewalk maintenance rated higher than the national average at 60 and 55 respectively, with snow removal and street lighting also exceeding national averages with a rating of 63 and 66 on a 100-point scale.

Solid waste, water, sewer and electrical services ranged from 72 to 78 on the 100-point scale. Garbage and sewer services ranked the highest among the four utilities, however respondents were very satisfied with all of the aforementioned services.

Open-ended Comments

Residents were asked for their input on two questions:

1. What do you feel will be the single most important issue facing the City of Gladstone over the next several years, and
2. Comments and suggestions you would like the City of Gladstone to consider.

It was felt that that residents should be given an opportunity to tell us specifically what they believe are the important issues facing Gladstone. Whereas the rest of the survey instrument consists of close-ended evaluative questions, this section was intended to give citizens an opportunity to communicate directly with their City government. A categorized table of the first open-ended question is included in Appendix III. The responses to both open-ended questions will be available in paper and electronic formats.

Survey Background

What the Survey Is About

In 2007 the City of Gladstone Commission decided that it would begin a Strategic Planning process. As the first step toward this goal the City decided to conduct its first Citizen Survey. Subsequent surveys will be sent every two years to coincide with the Strategic Planning process and provide elected officials and City staff with a means to measure citizen satisfaction with government, and how to improve it. The survey should be viewed as a consumer scorecard for the community that provides an accurate cross-section of our residents. This and future surveys will be an important tool for measuring both trends in the community and a basis for adjusting the Strategic Plan to address important issues as they arise.

The results of the survey are intended to guide future planning and resource allocation choices by sampling a representative cross-section of our community. These randomly administered surveys are carefully formulated, tabulated and analyzed to provide elected officials with the best means of unbiased decision-making. The survey instrument and survey methodology are provided in the appendices of this report. A vast majority of respondents are typically not involved with local government, other than elections, and rarely attend City Commission meetings, but are typical of the over 5,000 residents that call Gladstone their home.

How the Survey Was Conducted

1200 households, including apartments and senior housing, were chosen at random to participate in the survey conducted in November of 2007.

Each household was first mailed a postcard explaining that they would receive a Citizen Survey within the next two weeks. The survey packet included a cover letter signed by the Mayor, the survey instrument and a self addressed stamped envelope to return the completed survey. Of the 1200 eligible households, 604 had returned the survey before this report was written, for a response rate 52.4%, when non-deliverable surveys were excluded. The national average response rate for this type of survey is around 32%. The 95% confidence interval means accuracy of 4.5 percentage points either positively or negatively for each answer.

Understanding the Results

Converting Responses to a 100-Point Scale

Responses to the majority of the evaluative questions on the survey were made on a 4-point scale ranging from “excellent” to “poor.” Many of these results in this report have been converted to a 100-point scale to make easier comparisons with national averages. Converting to the 100-point scale began by assigning a numerical value to each of the descriptive rankings, in this case “excellent” equals 4, “good” equals 3 and so on. If “don’t know” was checked or the respondent left the question blank, the response was not included in the score computation. After determining the values on a 4-point scale the results were converted to the 100-point scale used by the National Research Center, the largest provider of citizen surveys in the country, to compare results on a national basis. Using the 100-point scale, each response was assigned a number: excellent=100, good=67, fair=33 and poor=0. These numbers were then used to weigh each percentage for evaluative questions. Below is a hypothetical example where 20% of respondents rated a service “excellent,” 40% “good,” 30% “fair” and 10% “poor” for a score of 65 on a 100-point scale.

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{Excellent} & & \text{Good} & & \text{Fair} & & \text{Poor} \\ 20(1) & + & 40(.75) & + & 30(.5) & + & 10(0) = 65 \end{array}$$

For evaluative questions on a 5-point scale including those dealing with public safety and government involvement, a similar scale was used by assigning a weight of 100, 75, 50, 25 and 0 to coincide with the five categories ranging from the most satisfied to the least satisfied.

For the sake of simplicity, any score that is 67 or above on the 100-point scale should be considered “good” to “excellent.” Many scores are well above and below this threshold, however it is important not to view lower scores as “bad”, lower scores should be viewed as an opportunity for improvement.

Handling “Don’t Know” Responses and Non-Responses

Almost every question has some percentage of “don’t know” or non-responses. The statistics included in this report are given without this type of response.

Precisions of Estimates

It is typical to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence.” The 95 percent confidence interval is generally no greater than ± 4.5

percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample. For example if the proportion of respondents who rate the overall quality of life in Gladstone as “excellent” is 35%, had we been able to ask the same question to every adult in the City of Gladstone, we would discover that between 31.5% and 39.5% would rate the overall quality of life in Gladstone as “excellent.”

The reason why a 95% confidence interval is favored when doing survey is the balance it strikes between the number of surveys that must be sent and the accuracy of the results. Although it is possible to make the results more accurate by choosing a larger sample size, increasing precision by two percentage points would require an increase in the sample size by over 1,000 participants, essentially doubling the required size of the sample.

Quality of Life

Many questions in the survey were devoted to quality of life in Gladstone. Although low crime rates, an unspoiled natural environment and abundant free time influence the daily lives of our residents, many more factors contribute to the quality of life in Gladstone.

Overall Quality of Life in the Community

A majority of residents (87%) rated the overall quality of life in Gladstone as “good” or “excellent.” Eleven percent rated it “fair” and only two percent said overall quality of life was “poor.” This rating on a 100-point scale equaled 70 which is well above the national average of 65. These scores are shown in figures 1 and 2.

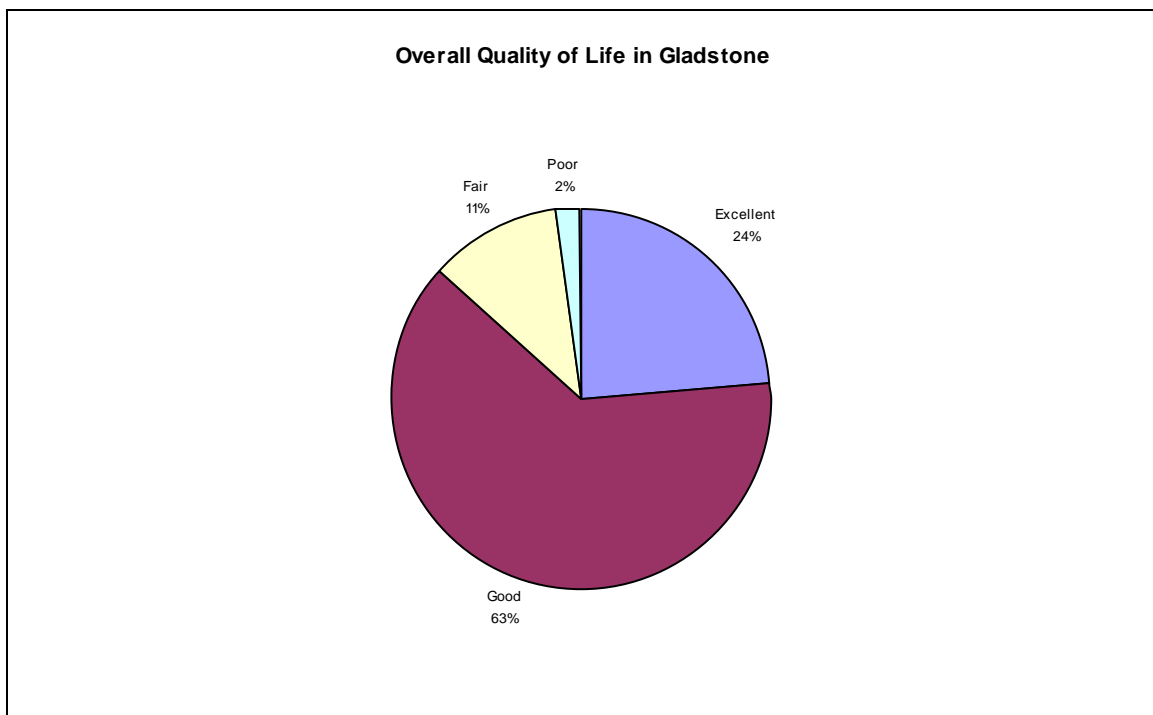


Figure 1 – Overall Quality of Life

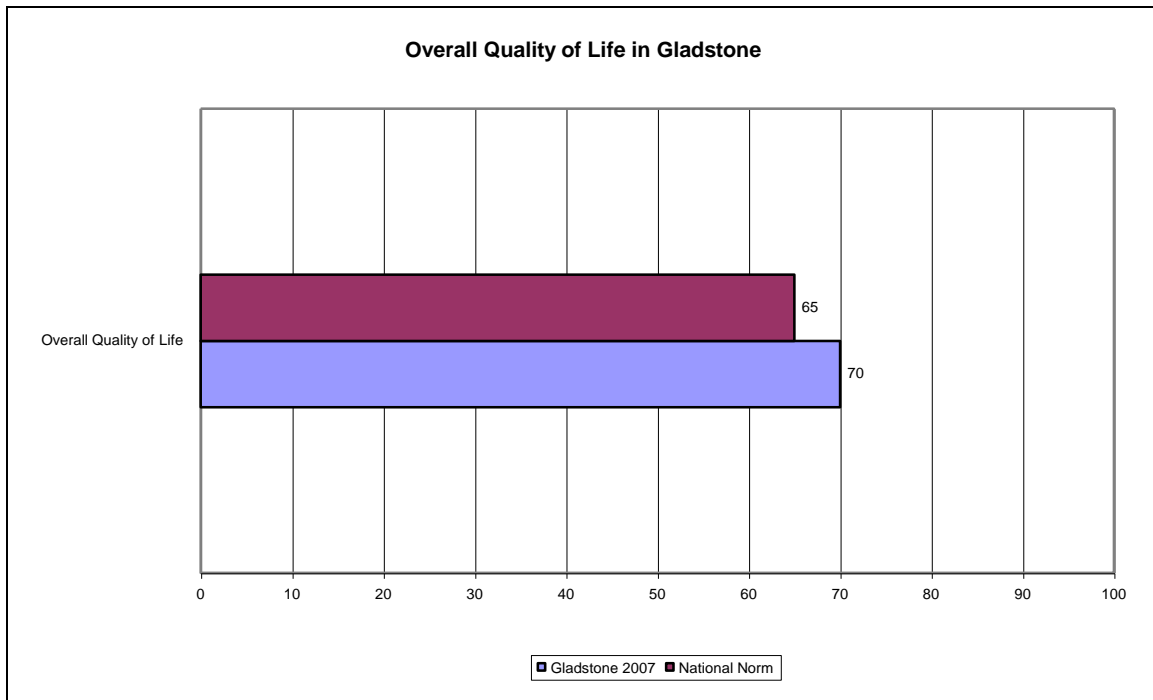


Figure 2 - Quality of Life

Quality of Neighborhood, Place to Raise Children and Retire

The overall quality of neighborhoods in Gladstone received a rating of 66 points on a 100-point scale. This score equals the national average for quality of neighborhoods, 79% of Gladstone residents saying quality of their neighborhood is either “good” or “excellent.”

Respondents rated Gladstone much higher than the national average as a place to raise children with 89% of residents rating Gladstone “good” or “excellent” in this area, resulting in a score of 75 points. Many factors influence this rating, however, access to quality schools and a very low crime rate are probably the most influential in this rating.

Respondents also gave Gladstone a high rating as a place to retire. 70% of respondents rated Gladstone “good” or “excellent” in this category, which resulted in a score of 62 on the 100-point scale. This score is well above the national average of 53 points.

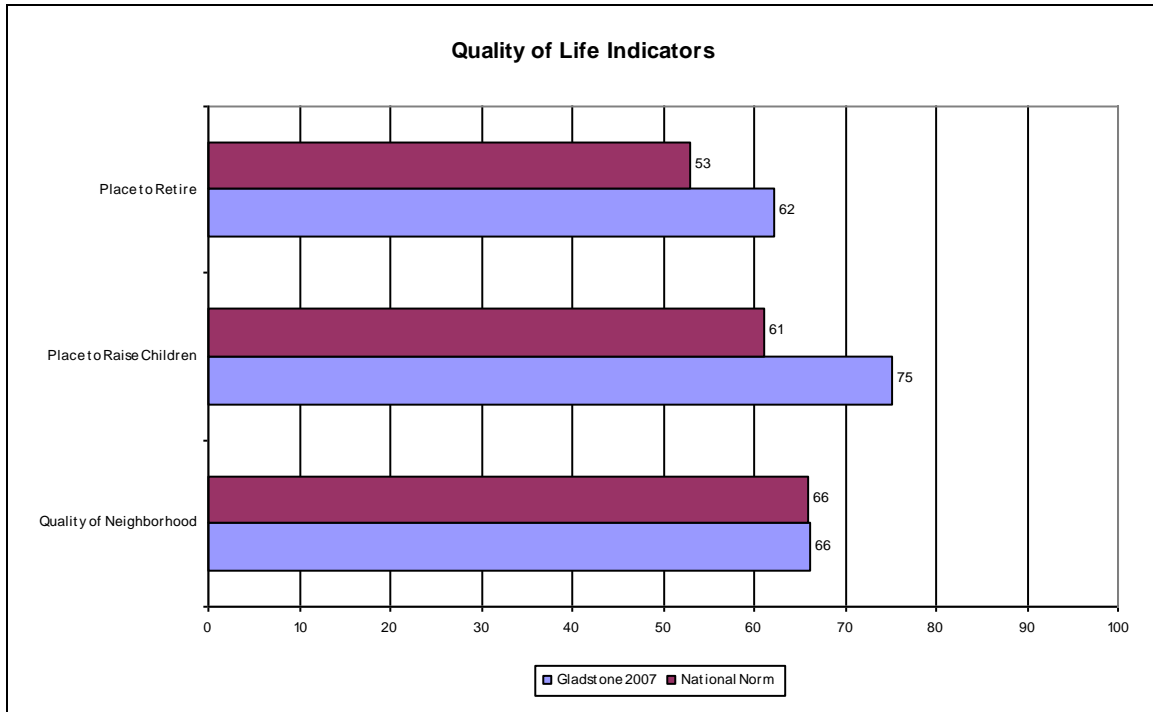


Figure 3 – Quality of Life Indicators

Job Opportunities and Access to Affordable Housing

Of all the evaluative questions asked on the survey instrument, job opportunities, economic development, and access to affordable housing scored among the lowest. Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the percentage breakdown for job opportunities and access to affordable housing. Job opportunities received a rating of 12 on a 100-point scale, economic development a score of 33 and access to affordable housing a score of 42 on the same scale.

Improving this situation will require diversified economic growth, higher paying employment and a wider array of housing choices, all of which will be a great challenge in the context of the location of our community.

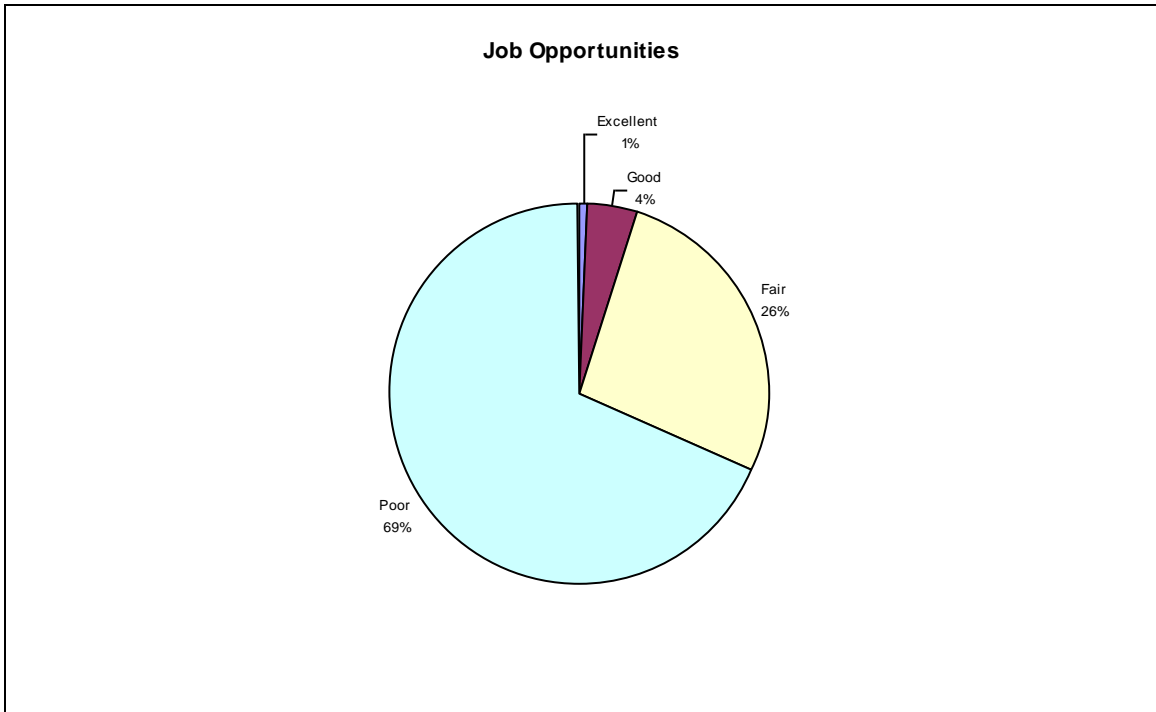


Figure 4 – Job Opportunities

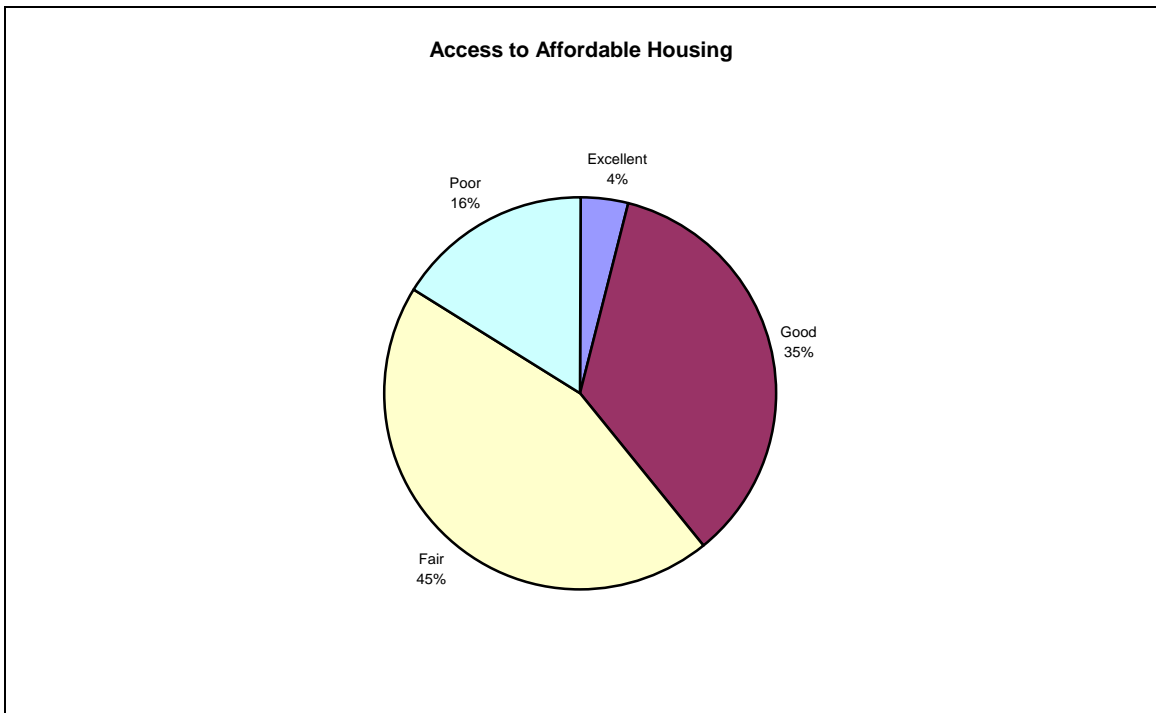


Figure 5 – Access to Affordable Housing

Safety

Perhaps the single most important factor influencing overall perception of quality of life is how safe residents feel. Citizens were asked to rate three different aspects of safety in general, including how safe they feel from violent crimes, property crimes and fire. They were then asked more specific questions about how safe they feel walking alone at night in the following situations: in their neighborhood, in downtown areas and in city parks outside their neighborhood.

An overwhelming number of residents (92%) felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” from violent crimes in Gladstone. As expected residents did not feel quite as safe from property crimes, although a very high percentage (81%) felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” from this type of activity. Residents also indicated they felt safe from fires, 90% said they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe.” Table 1 shows the scores on the 100-point scale.

How Safe Respondents Feel From:	
Violent Crime	86
Property Crime	76
Fires	83

When specifically asked how safe residents feel in certain situations, responses were again very positive. Respondents felt safe walking alone at night in their neighborhood, with 88% of residents saying they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe.” A similar number (85%) said they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe” walking alone at night in downtown Gladstone. Residents felt most unsafe walking alone at night in a park outside of their neighborhood, with 64% saying they felt “somewhat safe” or “very safe.” These percentages all equaled very good scores when converted to a 100-point scale. Figure 6 shows how our scores compared with national averages.

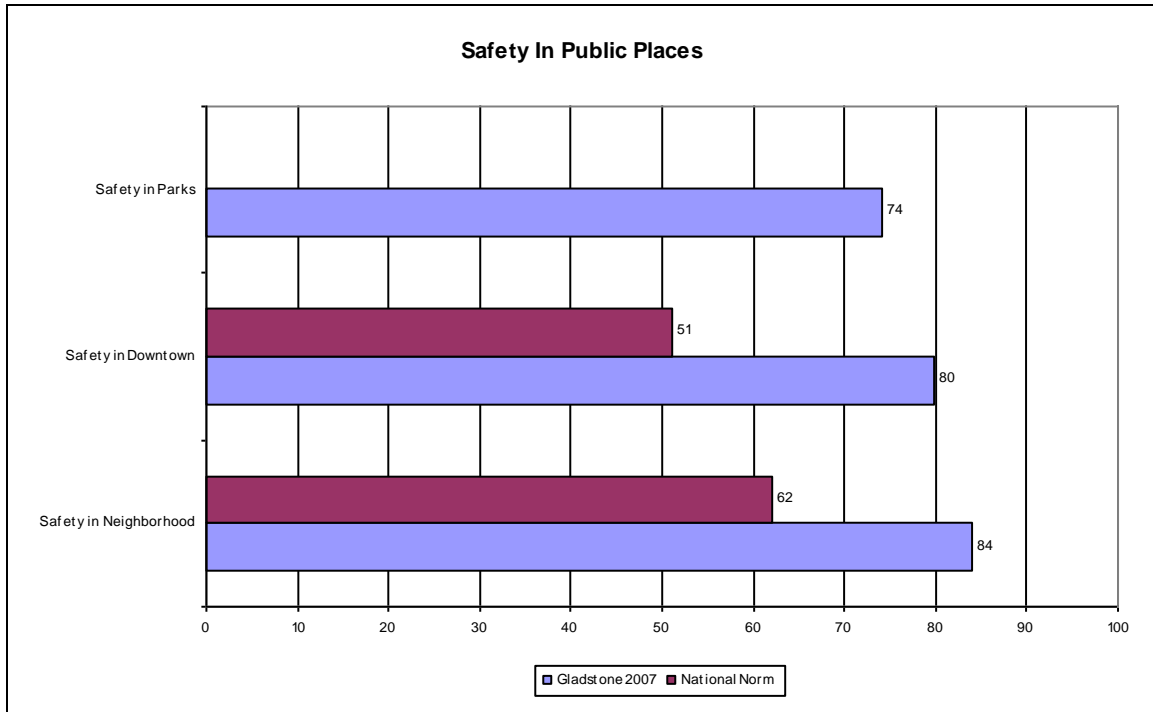


Figure 6 - Safety In Public Places

Problems Affecting Quality of Life

Residents were asked a series of questions to measure perception of various problems that influence quality of life in the community. These issues were rated from “not a problem” to an “extreme problem.” Of all the problems affecting quality of life only taxes were considered to be an “extreme problem” by more than 10% of the residents.

The majority of responses were either “not a problem” or a “minor problem.” Somewhat surprisingly drugs were cited as the second most “extreme” problem while graffiti, traffic and crime were considered the most minor problems.

A break down of the top three problems identified by respondents as either an “important problem” or a “major problem” were drugs (63%), taxes (52%) and growth (36%). The figure below converts the 5-point scale to a 100-point scale, a higher score indicates a less extreme problem while a low score indicates a more extreme problem.

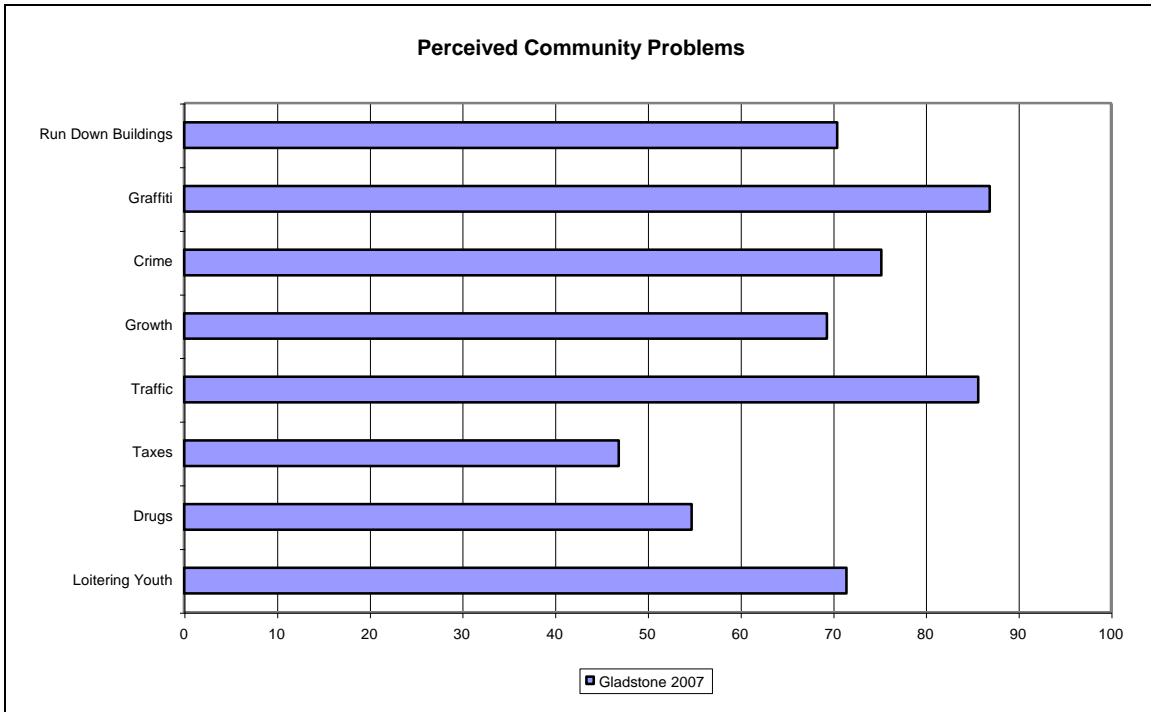


Figure 7 – Perceived Community Problems

City Services

Survey respondents were asked to rate a large number of services provided by City government. Overall satisfaction was 65 on a 100-point scale. Overall satisfaction, by percentages, is shown in Figure 8 below.

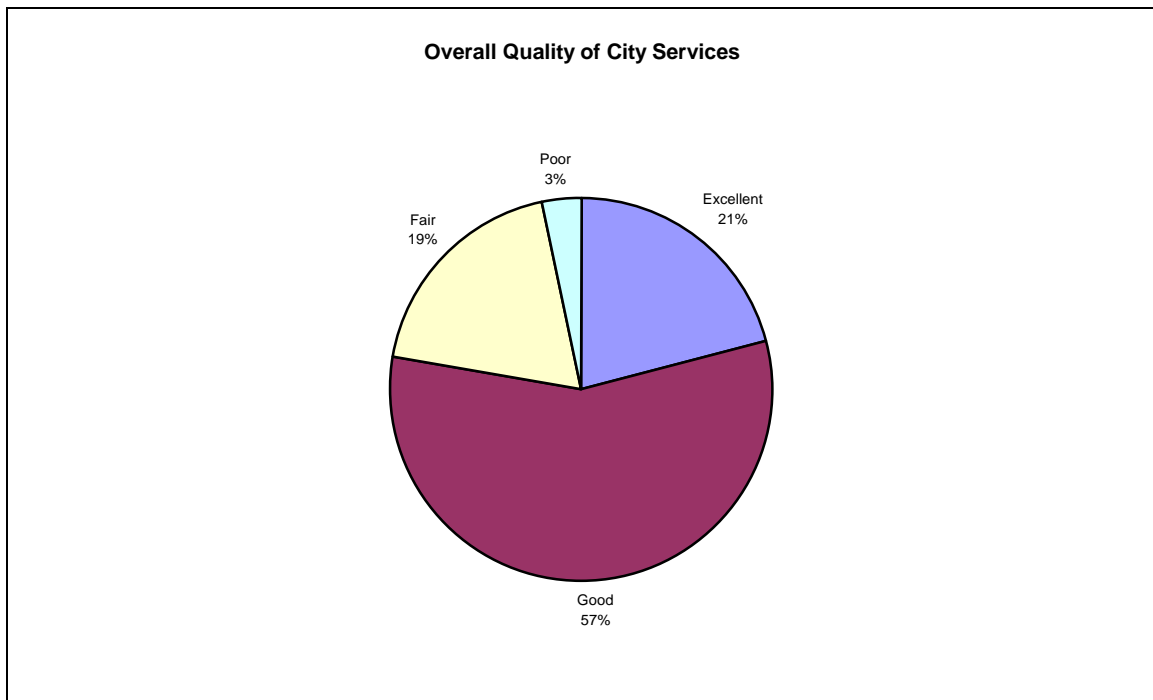


Figure 8 – Overall Quality of Services

Of all services, fire and garbage were rated the highest, scoring 80 and 78 respectively on a 100-point scale. Other services rated very highly include police, city parks, ease of travel by car and water quality.

Within the category of public safety services, police and fire services both scored at or above 74 on a 100-point scale, which results in a rating of somewhere between “good” and “excellent” within our ranking criteria. Enforcement of traffic laws received a lower rating of 66 on a 100-point scale, which is still much better than the national of 58. Figure 9 and Figure 10 graphically shows the ratings for public safety services and utility services.

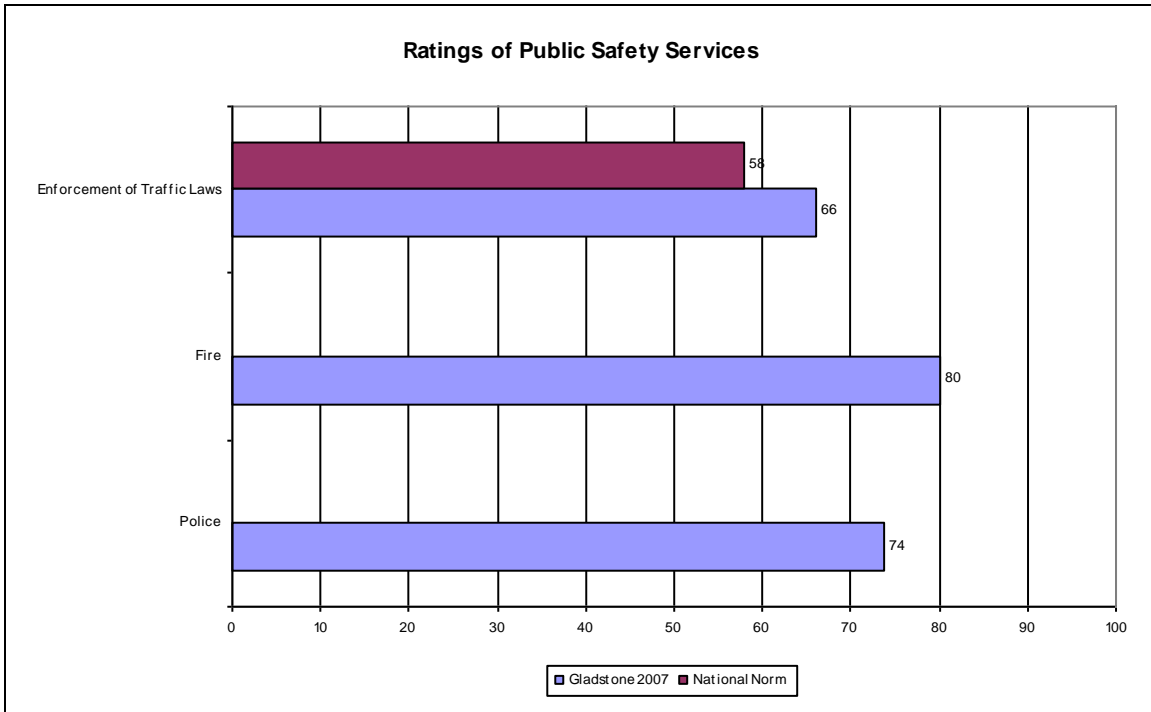


Figure 9 – Ratings of Public Safety Services

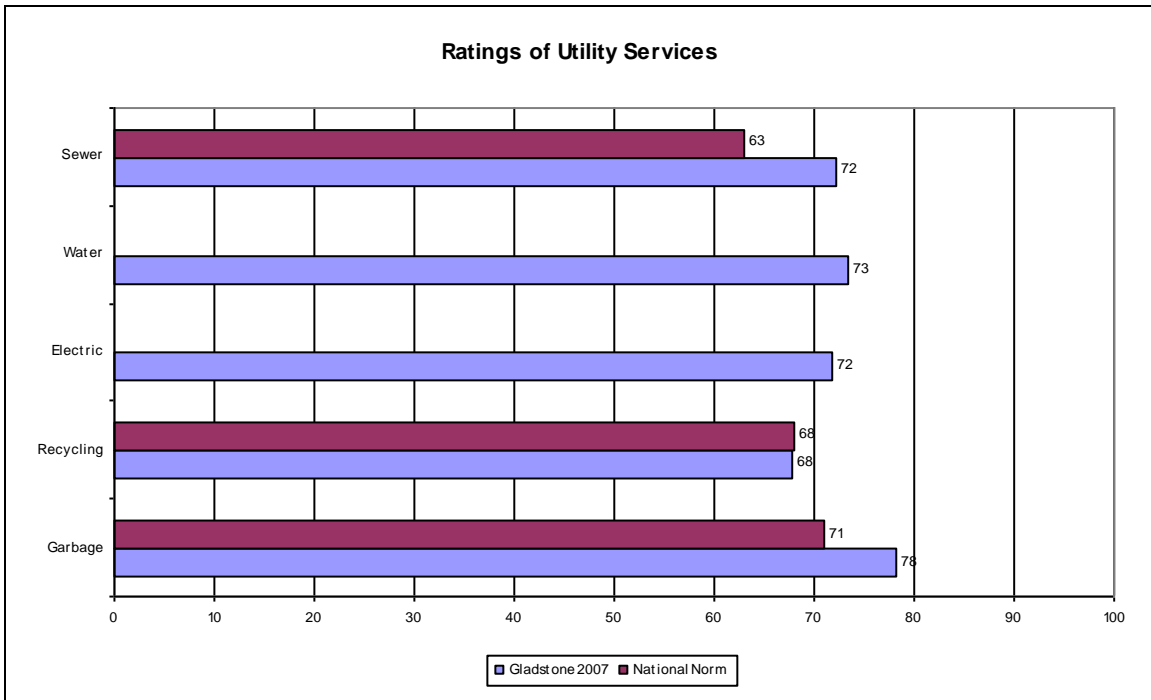


Figure 10 – Ratings of Utility Services

Utility services scores were quite positive with garbage collection being the second highest rated City service overall. Scores ranged from a low of 68 for recycling services to a high of 78 for garbage collection, every score for the utilities ranged from “good” to “excellent” in the context of the ranking criteria. The most likely reasons for the lower rating regarding recycling services is the lack of a dedicated recycling center in Gladstone and the fact that many renters are not aware of curbside recycling services.

Street and sidewalk services, as expected, scored more modestly than the enterprise fund utilities. Scores ranged from 55 to 67 on a 100-point scale. Ratings for sidewalk and street maintenance activities did score above the national average. Although ratings in the 50s and 60s appear low, leaders should be aware of the fact that typically street and transportation issues score among the lowest in all citizen surveys and should not be surprised. Future surveys can help measure the success of any programs that are implemented to address sidewalk and street maintenance. The ratings for sidewalks and streets are shown below in Figure 11.

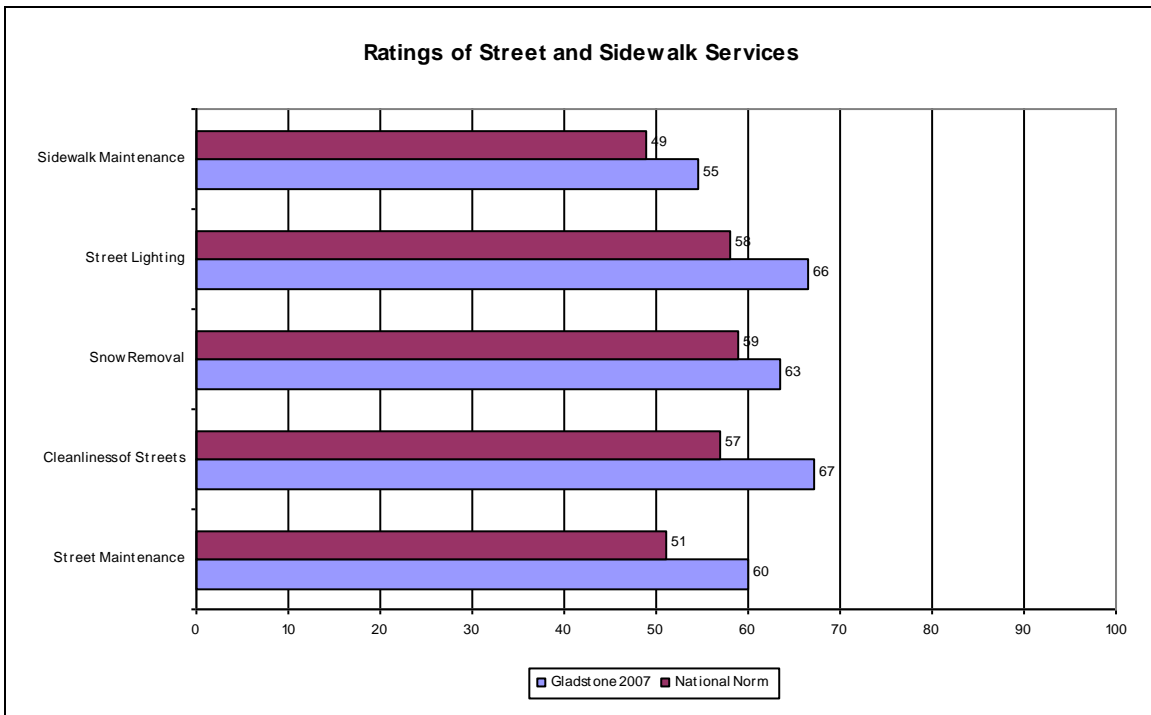


Figure 11 – Ratings of Streets and Sidewalks

Parks and Receptions services, for the most part, scored well, with only recreation programs scoring below the national average. Recreational facilities, park maintenance and city parks scored between 68 and 75 on the 100-point scale while recreation

programs scored only 61 on the 100-point scale. More diversified and adult-centered programming may help improve the recreation programs score in future surveys. Figure 12 shows the ratings for Parks and Receptions services with associated national averages.



Figure 12 – Ratings for Parks and Recreation Services

Table 2: City Services	
City Services	Rating on a 100-point Scale
Police Services	74
Fire Services	80
Garbage Collection	78
Recycling Services	68
Electric Services	72
Water Services	73
Sewer Services	72
Recreation Facilities	68
Recreation Programs	61
Park Maintenance	73
City Parks	75
Street Maintenance	60
Cleanliness of Streets	67
Snow Removal	63
Street Lighting	66
Ease of Car Travel	74
Enforcement of Traffic Laws	66
Services to Seniors	62
Water Quality	73
Planning and Zoning Services	55
Storm Drainage	61
Sidewalk Maintenance	55
Services to Youth	51

Satisfaction with City Government

The six questions that assess the public's opinion of the City's overall direction and the delivery of information to and communication with the public received moderate ratings. Of note, however, is that Gladstone did score higher than the national average in both welcoming citizen involvement and satisfaction with the overall direction of the City.

No questions scored above 63 or below 52. This should not be surprising as the local governmental process almost always receives modest ratings. This is in large part due to the limited interaction that most citizens have with local elected officials and an overall view of government processes. Obviously improving future scores is a desirable outcome and a plan to increase citizen involvement should be considered.

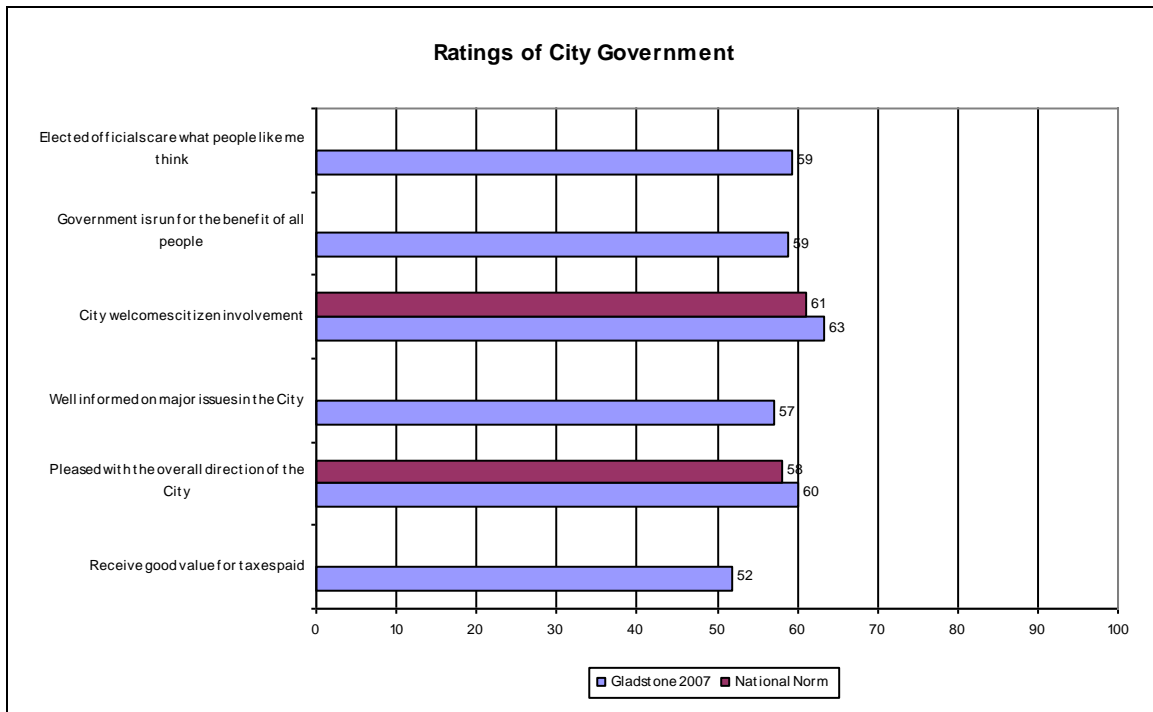


Figure 13 – Ratings of City Government

Open-ended Comments

A table summarizing the most common responses to the first open-ended comment is contained in Appendix III. Verbatim responses to the second open-ended comment are available on the original survey documents and will also be available electronically in the future. The questions included on the survey were:

1. The most important issue facing the City of Gladstone over the next several years; and
2. Comments and suggestions you would like the City of Gladstone to consider.

Conclusion

Citizen surveys provide elected and appointed officials with the unique opportunity to understand the perspective of the “average” resident of Gladstone. This survey is a representative sample of Gladstone citizens that typically do not “participate” in government in the traditional sense, i.e. by coming to public meetings.

The first Gladstone Citizen Survey received an amazing response – over 50% of the 1200 surveys that went out were completed and returned. The survey results are statistically

valid and empirically defensible. Most of the residents that returned the survey filled out either one or both of the open-ended comments at the end of the survey with specific ideas and concerns that are invaluable to the City Commission when setting future policy and direction. Citizen surveys are dynamic documents that should be revisited continually and if used correctly it can be a powerful tool for the continuous improvement of our community.

It should be noted that this is the first time residents of Gladstone were surveyed regarding almost every aspect of City government. This should be viewed only as a starting point and the City should plan on administering a citizen survey biannually. Although many important questions were asked, there is always room for improving the survey instrument to ask more specific questions regarding governmental policy. Future recommendations also include asking geographic and demographic information in order to determine specifically how different neighborhoods feel about the issues, how different ages and sexes view the same question and so on.

Gladstone has taken a large step forward by surveying its residents. It takes great courage and vision for government to open itself to comment and criticism, many times the answers we receive are not positive. However, this is an essential step to improve how residents both interact and view their local government. Hopefully the results of the survey and this report are viewed as an important planning tool in the future of Gladstone.

Appendix I. Survey Instrument

City of Gladstone Citizen Survey

Please complete this questionnaire if you are the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who most recently had a birthday. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

1. Please check the box that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Overall how would you describe the quality of life in the City of Gladstone?.....	23%	63%	11%	2%	1%
b. How would you rate the overall quality of your neighborhood?....	24%	55%	15%	5%	0%
c. How do you rate the City of Gladstone as a place to raise children?.....	36%	48%	9%	2%	5%
d. How do you rate the City of Gladstone as a place to live?.....	28%	56%	13%	2%	1%
e. How do you rate the City of Gladstone as a place to retire?.....	25%	41%	19%	9%	5%

2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to the City of Gladstone as a whole:

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Sense of Community.....	15%	59%	20%	2%	4%
b. Overall appearance of the City.....	17%	62%	18%	1%	2%
c. Quality of K-12 schools in the City of Gladstone.....	19%	48%	13%	2%	19%
d. Opportunities to attend cultural activities.....	3%	24%	42%	22%	10%
e. Opportunities for leisure-time activities.....	17%	50%	25%	6%	3%
f. Shopping opportunities.....	1%	11%	33%	53%	1%
g. Recreation opportunities.....	20%	48%	24%	6%	2%
h. Job opportunities.....	1%	4%	24%	63%	8%
i. Access to affordable housing.....	3%	32%	41%	15%	8%
j. Economic development.....	2%	20%	44%	25%	9%
k. Cable television.....	9%	39%	28%	19%	4%

3. Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in the City of Gladstone:

	<u>very safe</u>	<u>somewhat safe</u>	<u>neither safe nor unsafe</u>	<u>somewhat unsafe</u>	<u>very unsafe</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Violent crimes (e.g., homicide, robbery).....	54%	38%	6%	2%	0%	0%
b. Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft).....	29%	52%	12%	5%	1%	0%
c. Fires.....	43%	47%	8%	1%	1%	0%

4. Please rate how safe you feel walking alone at night:

	<u>very safe</u>	<u>somewhat safe</u>	<u>neither safe nor unsafe</u>	<u>somewhat unsafe</u>	<u>very unsafe</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. In your neighborhood.....	53%	34%	7%	4%	1%	1%
b. In the City's downtown area.....	40%	43%	10%	5%	1%	1%
c. In city parks outside your neighborhood.....	32%	42%	16%	8%	1%	2%

5. To what degree are the following problems in the City of Gladstone:

	<u>not a problem</u>	<u>minor problem</u>	<u>important problem</u>	<u>major problem</u>	<u>extreme problem</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Loitering youth.....	21%	52%	15%	5%	3%	4%
b. Drugs.....	8%	24%	44%	14%	3%	7%
c. Taxes.....	10%	21%	30%	20%	16%	2%
d. Traffic.....	53%	34%	7%	1%	0%	4%
e. Growth.....	31%	27%	26%	9%	3%	4%
f. Crime.....	24%	51%	20%	1%	0%	4%
g. Graffiti.....	52%	39%	3%	1%	0%	5%
h. Run down houses and buildings.....	18%	52%	22%	4%	2%	2%

6. Please rate the speed of growth in the following areas in the City of Gladstone over the past 2 years:

	<u>much too slow</u>	<u>somewhat too slow</u>	<u>right amount</u>	<u>somewhat too fast</u>	<u>much too fast</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Population Growth.....	14%	30%	48%	3%	0%	5%
b. Business/retail growth.....	43%	42%	12%	0%	0%	4%
c. Jobs Growth.....	59%	32%	4%	0%	0%	4%

7. In the last 12 months about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members done the following things:

	<u>once or never</u>	<u>twice</u>	<u>3 to 12 times</u>	<u>13 to 26 times</u>	<u>more than 26 times</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Used public libraries or their services in the City of Gladstone.....	44%	12%	23%	9%	9%	2%
b. Used the recreation centers.....	49%	11%	26%	7%	5%	2%
c. Participated in a recreation program or activity.....	63%	11%	16%	3%	3%	3%
d. Visited a neighborhood or city park.....	8%	12%	42%	17%	19%	2%
e. Attended a City Commission meeting or other public meeting.....	80%	10%	6%	1%	1%	2%
f. Watched a City Commission meeting or other public meeting about city matters on television.....	51%	15%	26%	6%	1%	1%
g. Used curbside recycling provided by the City.....	32%	5%	13%	12%	36%	2%
h. Volunteered your time to some group/activity in the City of Gladstone.....	64%	8%	13%	4%	8%	3%
i. Used the Internet for anything.....	31%	1%	5%	5%	55%	3%
j. Used the Internet to obtain information about the City of Gladstone.....	66%	11%	19%	2%	1%	1%
k. Read a City Newsletter.....	59%	11%	19%	2%	4%	5%

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
8. Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by the City of Gladstone?.....	19%	53%	17%	3%	7%

9. How do you rate the quality of each of the following City of Gladstone services?

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Police department services.....	37%	45%	11%	3%	4%
b. Fire services.....	42%	45%	5%	0%	8%
c. Garbage collection (solid waste).....	43%	45%	6%	2%	3%
d. Recycling.....	27%	42%	13%	6%	12%
e. Electric services.....	33%	50%	11%	4%	2%
f. Water services.....	34%	47%	10%	3%	7%
g. Sewer services.....	30%	46%	9%	3%	12%
h. Recreation facilities.....	25%	47%	15%	2%	10%
i. Recreation programs and classes.....	13%	35%	19%	3%	29%
j. Park maintenance.....	32%	52%	11%	2%	3%

k. City parks.....	36%	50%	10%	1%	3%
l. Street maintenance.....	20%	47%	26%	7%	1%
m. Cleanliness of streets.....	24%	55%	16%	4%	1%
n. Snow removal.....	25%	48%	17%	9%	1%
o. Street lighting.....	24%	52%	17%	4%	2%
p. Ease of car travel in the city.....	31%	57%	9%	1%	2%
q. Enforcement of traffic laws.....	21%	53%	13%	5%	9%
r. Services to seniors.....	13%	40%	14%	4%	30%
s. Water quality.....	31%	50%	10%	1%	7%
t. Planning and zoning.....	9%	36%	21%	6%	29%
u. Storm drainage.....	13%	50%	21%	4%	12%
v. Sidewalk maintenance.....	11%	44%	28%	8%	8%
w. Services to youth.....	8%	33%	19%	12%	28%

10. Have you had phone or in-person contact with a City of Gladstone employee within the last 12 months (including police, clerks, planners or any others)?

27% No -----> GO TO QUESTION #12
 73% Yes

11. What was your impression of City employees in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)

	<u>excellent</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>fair</u>	<u>poor</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. Knowledge.....	34%	34%	5%	2%	25%
b. Responsiveness.....	36%	29%	7%	3%	25%
c. Courtesy.....	42%	28%	5%	2%	24%
d. Overall impression.....	34%	33%	6%	2%	24%

12. Please rate the following statements by checking the box that most closely represents your opinion:

	<u>strongly agree</u>	<u>agree</u>	<u>neither agree nor disagree</u>	<u>disagree</u>	<u>strongly disagree</u>	<u>don't know</u>
a. I receive good value for the City taxes I pay.....	5%	31%	32%	18%	8%	5%
b. I am pleased with the overall direction that the City is taking.....	8%	41%	35%	11%	3%	3%
c. I am well informed on major issues in the City of Gladstone.....	6%	35%	39%	14%	3%	3%
d. The City of Gladstone welcomes citizen involvement.	8%	45%	35%	7%	1%	3%
e. The city's government is really run for the benefit of all the people.....	7%	38%	37%	10%	4%	3%

f. Most elected officials care what people like me think..	8%	41%	33%	11%	5%	2%
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Our last questions are meant to allow you to tell us anything you think is important to guarantee the City will continue to provide its citizens with the best, most responsive government.

1. What do you feel will be the single most important issue facing the City of Gladstone over the next several years?

2. Please use the following space for comments, suggestions and solutions you would like the City of Gladstone to consider.

Appendix II. Methodology

Sample Selection

1200 random households were selected to participate in this survey. Individuals were selected by the most recent birthday of someone over 18 years old.

Survey Administration

Households received two mailings two weeks apart during the month of November, 2007. The first mailing was a postcard informing the household that they had been selected to participate in the survey. The second mailing included the survey instrument, a cover letter signed by the Mayor encouraging residents to complete the survey, and a self addressed stamped envelope to return completed surveys. The response rate of the survey is shown in the table below. Undeliverable surveys have been excluded from the calculations found within in the body of this report.

Disposition	Households	
	Number	Percent
Complete	604	50%
No Response	548	46%
Undeliverable	48	4%
Total	1200	100%

Appendix III. Open-ended Comments

Table 4: Categorized Responses to Open-ended Question 1

What do you feel will be the single most important issue facing the City of Gladstone over the next several years?

Comment Category	% of Respondents Making A Comment	Number of Respondents
Jobs	21%	128
Taxes	19%	112
Business/Economic Development	10%	61
Utilities/Services	7%	44
Infrastructure	2%	15
Population Growth	2%	14
Housing	2%	11
City Budget	1%	9
Schools	1%	9
Growth	1%	8
Beautification	1%	6
Shopping Opportunities	1%	4
Crime	1%	4
City Government	0%	3
City Promotion	0%	2
Drugs	0%	2
Youth	0%	2
Harbor	0%	1
Beach	0%	1
Traffic	0%	1
Do Nothing	0%	1
Tourism	0%	1
No Response	27%	165
Total	100%	604