



# **A SURVEY OF RESIDENT ATTITUDES IN ROUND ROCK**

**2008 Citizen Attitude Survey**

**SURVEY SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS  
FINAL VERSION**

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# 2008 CITY OF ROUND ROCK CITIZEN ATTITUDE SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

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# METHODOLOGY

The techniques used in this survey adhere to statistical standards used in the survey industry. The points to keep in mind when evaluating this report are:

(1) This survey has been conducted biannually since 1998 (1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006). This is the first year that Raymond Turco has been responsible for implementation of this project. This year's survey was conducted in a manner as outlined below. However, the firm was not responsible for previous projects and thus is unaware of the methodology specifics of previous efforts. Additionally, many of the questions included in the current survey were core items from prior projects.

(2) The sample for the telephone survey was composed of 401 residents within the city limits of Round Rock. Respondents were selected at random to participate. The sample was divided into four subsectors and each area was assigned a quota proportional to the number of households with available telephone numbers in that region. This method was followed in order to attain a statistically valid sampling. A survey with a random sample size of 401 respondents is accurate to within 5% at the 95% confidence level. This means there is one chance in twenty that the survey results may vary by as much as plus or minus 5% from the results that would be obtained by polling the entire population of the study area.

(3) All telephone interviews were conducted by professional interviewers under close professional supervision by Raymond Turco & Associates from our Grand Prairie, Texas, telephone call center. Interviews were recorded under controlled situations to minimize measurement error. The length of interviews varied with the average survey lasting approximately 12 minutes.

(4) Only complete surveys were accepted as part of the sample for the telephone survey, and interviewers were required to confirm the respondent's name and telephone number.

(5) Certain questions were written to permit the respondent to answer "no opinion." This was done so as to avoid the artificial creation of attitudes on issues where the interviewee may not have had an opinion.

(6) Interviewing began on April 17, 2008. The 401 interviews were completed by April 26. The survey was thus in the field for 10 days, a short enough time period to make this an accurate reading during the time period the study was being implemented.



(7) Completed questionnaires were checked for compliance with interviewing and sampling specifications. All editing and validation of interviews, coding of open-ended responses, data processing and computer analysis were processed by Raymond Turco & Associates of Arlington, Texas. The survey analysis was prepared by Ray Turco, President.



# SURVEY ACCURACY

Contrary to what may appear to be common sense, the accuracy of a telephone survey is not greatly influenced by the proportion of the total population that is interviewed. Instead, within a controlled environment, survey accuracy is directly related to the number of individuals interviewed. That is, a survey of 500 people out of a total population of 1,000 will yield results that are as accurate as a survey of 500 taken from a total population of 10,000.

For all practical purposes, the accuracy of "large" surveys (those involving more than 100 interviews) is approximately one divided by the square root of the number of interviews. For example, the error percentage or survey accuracy for a survey of 100 people is approximately plus or minus 10 percent (1 divided by 10). A survey of 401 people will have an error level of approximately 5 percent (1 divided by 25).

However, these error rates or accuracy levels must be applied and interpreted with three important caveats in mind. First, these are the 95 percent confidence limits. This means that given a sample of 401 people, 95 times out of 100 the "true" result will lie within plus or minus 5% of the observed answer.

Secondly, this error percentage applies solely to binary (yes/no, agree/disagree) questions. For example, if 55 percent of a sample of 401 voters said they would support a certain city action, then you can be 95% sure that "true" support lies between 50% and 60%.

Finally, the error percentage calculated as 1 divided by the square root of the number of responses is the "worst case" error. That is, it is based on the initial assumption that the percentage that is being estimated via the survey is 50 percent. If, from some other source, it is known or assumed that the "true" percentage differs from 50 percent, the actual survey error is less than that based on a 50% "true" percentage value.

Considering this information, a survey with a random sample size of 400 respondents is accurate to within approximately 5% at the 95% confidence interval. This means there is only one chance in twenty that the survey results may vary by as much as plus or minus 5% from the results that would be obtained by polling the entire population of the full study area.

As previously discussed, the statistical error decreases as the proportion answering the question in a given way moves away from 50% and as the number of persons responding to a given question increases. The sampling error



confidence interval for various proportions responding in a given way and for various numbers in the full sample responding are given in the following table:

**TABLE #1: SAMPLING ERROR AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL**

PERCENTAGE GIVING ANSWER	NUMBER RESPONDING TO QUESTION				
	50	100	250	500	600
50%	14.1%	10.0%	6.3%	4.5%	4.1%
40% or 60%	13.9%	9.8%	6.2%	4.4%	4.0%
30% or 70%	13.0%	9.2%	5.8%	4.1%	3.7%
20% or 80%	10%	8%	5%	4%	3%
10% or 90%	9%	6%	4%	3%	2%

In actual practice, survey results are frequently somewhat better than is indicated by the 95% confidence level sampling error estimate.

# 2008 RESPONDENT PROFILE

RESPONDENT GROUP	SUBGROUP	SURVEY SAMPLE	(N=)
<b>FULL SAMPLE</b>		100%	401
<b>AREA</b>	<b>Area I (Northeast)</b>	26%	106
	<b>Area II (Southeast)</b>	38%	153
	<b>Area III (Northwest)</b>	22%	90
	<b>Area IV (Southwest)</b>	13%	52
<b>SEX</b>	<b>Male</b>	53%	211
	<b>Female</b>	47%	190
<b>AGE</b>	<b>18 - 34 Years</b>	15%	60
	<b>35 - 44 Years</b>	24%	97
	<b>45 - 54 Years</b>	26%	103
	<b>55 - 64 Years</b>	21%	85
	<b>65 and older</b>	13%	53
<b>LENGTH OF RESIDENCE</b>	<b>Less than 5 Years</b>	27%	108
	<b>5 - 9 Years</b>	28%	111
	<b>10 - 19 Years</b>	24%	95
	<b>20 - 29 Years</b>	15%	59
	<b>30 Years Or More</b>	6%	26
<b>ETHNIC BACKGROUND</b>	<b>White - Anglo</b>	76%	306
	<b>African-American</b>	5%	22
	<b>Hispanic</b>	10%	40
	<b>American Indian</b>	1%	5
	<b>Asian</b>	1%	5
	<b>Other</b>	4%	18
<b>AGE OF RESPONDENT'S CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING AT HOME (MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED)</b>	<b>No Children</b>	49%	197
	<b>Under Age 6</b>	21%	84
	<b>Ages 6 - 12</b>	23%	92
	<b>Ages 13 - 18</b>	20%	80



RESPONDENT GROUP	SUBGROUP	SURVEY SAMPLE	(N=)
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	Under \$20,000	2%	10
	\$20,000 - \$35,000	8%	31
	\$35,001 - \$50,000	9%	38
	\$50,001 - \$75,000	20%	82
	\$75,001 - \$100,000	17%	69
	\$100,001 - \$150,000	16%	66
	Over \$150,000	8%	34
	Refuse to answer/Don't know	18%	71
<b>HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION</b>	Grade School	1%	3
	High School	14%	58
	Some College	20%	80
	College graduate	32%	127
	Graduate work	5%	20
	Graduate degree	27%	107
	Refuse to answer	1%	6
<b>EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF ROUND ROCK</b>	Yes	31%	124
	No	68%	272
	Refuse to answer	1%	5
<b>METHOD BY WHICH RESPONDENT ACCESSES THE INTERNET</b>	Cable modem	49%	195
	DSL	33%	131
	Regular telephone line	7%	27
	Other	4%	16
	Don't know	2%	7
	Not connected	6%	25



# PROFILE COMPARISON: 2000 - 2008

RESPONDENT GROUP	SUBGROUP	1998 SAMPLE	2000 SAMPLE	2002 SAMPLE	2004 SAMPLE	2006 SAMPLE	2008 SAMPLE
<b>AREA</b>	<b>Area I (Northeast)</b>	NA	NA	19%	19%	34%	26%
	<b>Area II (Southeast)</b>	NA	NA	29%	27%	35%	38%
	<b>Area III (Northwest)</b>	NA	NA	15%	20%	18%	22%
	<b>Area IV (Southwest)</b>	NA	NA	37%	34%	13%	13%
<b>SEX</b>	<b>Male</b>	52%	NA	46%	50%	50%	53%
	<b>Female</b>	48%	NA	54%	50%	50%	47%
<b>AGE</b>	<b>18 - 34 Years</b>	30%	NA	31%	37%	25%	15%
	<b>35 - 44 Years</b>	27%	NA	30%	31%	36%	24%
	<b>45 - 54 Years</b>	21%	NA	18%	17%	26%	26%
	<b>55 - 64 Years</b>	10%	NA	10%	10%	7%	21%
	<b>65 and older</b>	12%	NA	11%	6%	5%	13%
<b>LENGTH OF RESIDENCE</b>	<b>Less than 5 Years</b>	38%	40%	49%	42%	35%	27%
	<b>5 - 9 Years</b>	25%	20%	20%	23%	31%	28%
	<b>10 - 19 Years</b>	25%	26%	(10+) 31%	23%	21%	24%
	<b>20 - 29 Years</b>	(20+) 12%	(20+) 15%	NA	(20+) 14%	10%	15%
	<b>30 Years Or More</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	4%	6%
<b>ETHNIC BACKGROUND</b>	<b>White - Anglo</b>	85%	NA	69%	65%	68%	76%
	<b>African-American</b>	2%	NA	5%	7%	9%	5%
	<b>Hispanic</b>	8%	NA	19%	22%	14%	10%
	<b>American Indian</b>	NA	NA	1%	0%	NA	1%
	<b>Asian</b>	NA	NA	3%	4%	3%	1%
	<b>Other</b>	4%	NA	2%	2%	4%	4%



RESPONDENT GROUP	SUBGROUP	1998 SAMPLE	2000 SAMPLE	2002 SAMPLE	2004 SAMPLE	2006 SAMPLE	2008 SAMPLE
<b>AGE OF RESPONDENT'S CHILDREN UNDER 18 LIVING AT HOME (MULTIPLE RESPONSES ALLOWED)</b>	<b>No Children</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	49%
	<b>Under Age 6</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	21%
	<b>Ages 6 - 12</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	23%
	<b>Ages 13 - 18</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	20%
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>	<b>Under \$20,000</b>	5%	NA	4%	6%	1%	2%
	<b>\$20,000 - \$35,000</b>	12%	NA	11%	10%	9%	8%
	<b>\$35,001 - \$50,000</b>	21%	NA	18%	20%	12%	9%
	<b>\$50,001 - \$75,000</b>	26%	NA	19%	20%	26%	20%
	<b>\$75,001 - \$100,000</b>	16%	NA	20%	16%	27%	17%
	<b>\$100,001 - \$150,000</b>	7% \$100k+	NA	12%	11%	19%	16%
	<b>Over \$150,000</b>	NA	NA	3%	5%	4%	8%
	<b>Refuse to answer/Don't know</b>	13%	NA	14%	12%	7%	18%
<b>HIGHEST LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>Grade School</b>	2%	NA	2%	1%	1%	1%
	<b>High School</b>	18%	NA	14%	16%	12%	14%
	<b>Some College</b>	32%	NA	34%	35%	29%	20%
	<b>College graduate</b>	31%	NA	31%	29%	36%	32%
	<b>Graduate work</b>	5%	NA	4%	3%	3%	5%
	<b>Graduate degree</b>	12%	NA	16%	16%	19%	27%



RESPONDENT GROUP	SUBGROUP	1998 SAMPLE	2000 SAMPLE	2002 SAMPLE	2004 SAMPLE	2006 SAMPLE	2008 SAMPLE
<b>EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF ROUND ROCK</b>	<b>Yes</b>	21%	NA	21%	23%	25%	31%
	<b>No</b>	75%	NA	75%	73%	73%	68%
	<b>Refuse to answer</b>	1%	NA	1%	4%	2%	1%
<b>METHOD BY WHICH RESPONDENT ACCESSES THE INTERNET</b>	<b>Cable modem</b>	NA	NA	NA	40%	47%	49%
	<b>DSL</b>	NA	NA	NA	25%	41%	33%
	<b>Regular telephone line</b>	NA	NA	NA	34%	11%	7%
	<b>Other</b>	NA	NA	NA	1%	1%	4%
	<b>Don't know</b>	NA	NA	NA	1%	1%	2%
	<b>Not connected</b>	NA	NA	NA	18%	7%	6%

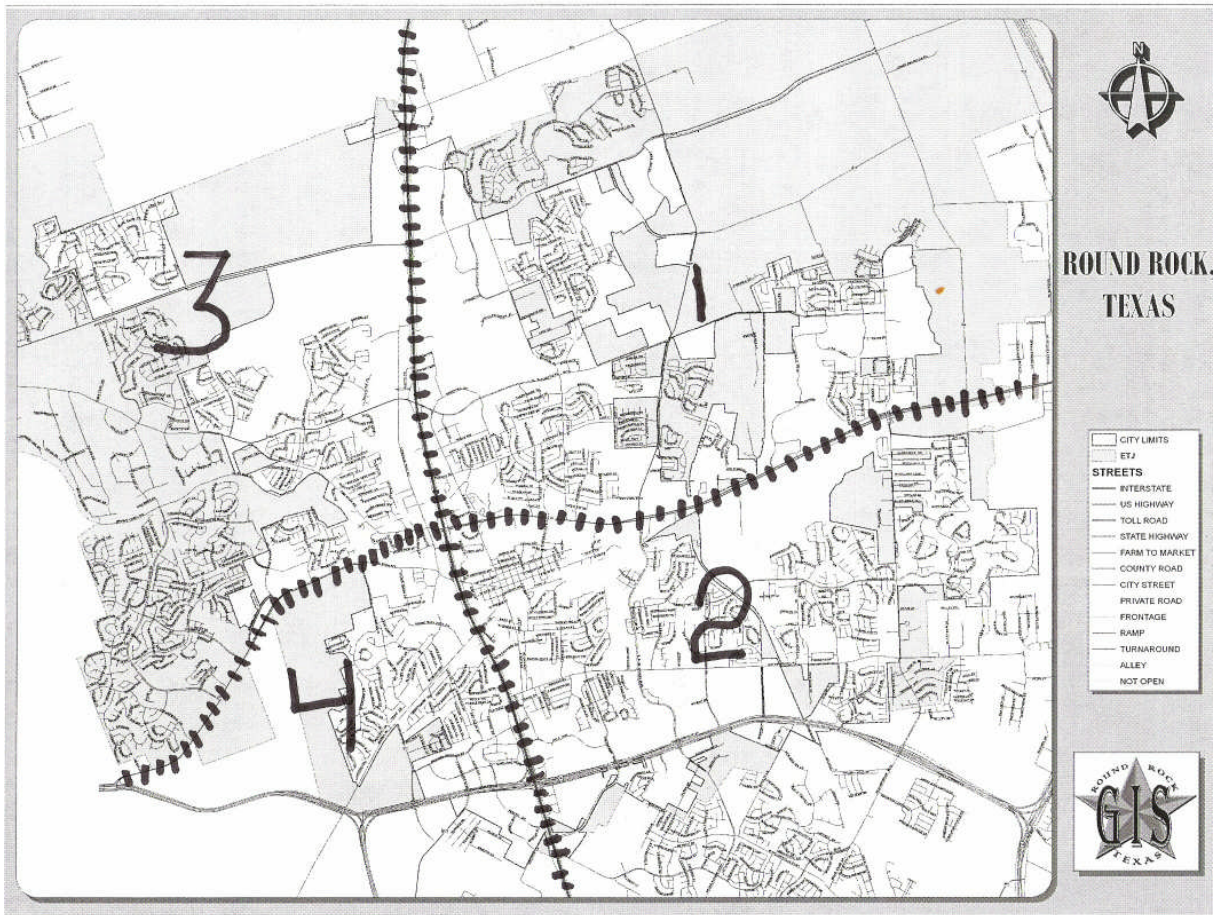
# CONTACT PROFILE

The 2008 sample contact universe was composed of households in the city of Round Rock with an available telephone number. The list was purchased from Experian, a nationally recognized list management firm. It was then compared with a city map and divided into the four subsectors, in order to attain statistically valid sampling areas. The following table summarizes the effectiveness of telephone contact.

TYPE OF CONTACT	%	(N=)
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE CONTACTS</b>	100%	6,834
<b>TOTAL CONTACTS MADE</b>		12,852
<b>COMPLETED</b>	3%	401
<b>ANSWERING MACHINE</b>	51%	6,581
<b>REFUSE TO ANSWER</b>	6%	819
<b>NO ANSWER</b>	21%	2,746
<b>WRONG NUMBER</b> (12% of possible contacts)		833
<b>CALL BACK</b>	10%	1,228
<b>LANGUAGE BARRIER</b>	1%	158
<b>DISCONTINUED INTERVIEW</b>	0%	87

# AREA DESIGNATION MAP CITY OF ROUND ROCK

AREA		DESCRIPTION
1	-	Northeast
2	-	Southeast
3	-	Northwest
4	-	Southwest



# OVERVIEW

The City of Round Rock retained the public opinion research firm of Raymond Turco & Associates to conduct its biannual citywide Citizen Attitude Survey. This project has been undertaken for the city every two years since 1998, although this is the first time this firm has been retained. The survey has allowed residents in a scientifically valid yet anonymous manner to comment on city-related services and issues. The purpose of the survey was to generate an attitudinal "snapshot" of the community and to build on the data developed in previous surveys to identify both positive and negative attitudinal trends relative to issues or other city-related initiatives. Most of the questions were identified as "core" questions and included from previous surveys. In addition to the core questions, several items were incorporated into the survey to address current issues being studied by the city. Questions in this survey focused on a broad array of issues: quality of life, road conditions, city services, customer service, code compliance, public information, and city-related initiatives, specifically curbside recycling. The information gathered in this report will allow elected officials, city staff, and concerned individuals to better understand how the general citizenry view these issues.

The survey investigated the following areas of interest:

## 1. Trending General Attitudes About Round Rock

- Evaluation of direction city is heading
- General community improvement rating
- General neighborhood improvement rating
- Frequency of feeling safe when walking alone in neighborhood at night
- Three biggest issues facing Round Rock within next five years
- Rating traffic situations in certain locations
- Traffic improvement rating compared to two years ago

## 2. Evaluating And Trending Opinions About City Services

- Assessment of local city services
- Assessment of service received from call to city of Round Rock for services or information
- Assessment of service received from e-mail directed to city of Round Rock for services or information



- ☑ Assessment of job city doing in addressing certain common issues
- ☑ Assessment of job city is doing managing traffic
- ☑ Assessment of job city is doing keeping citizens informed and listening to and responding to them

### **3. Assessing Curbside Recycling Opinions**

- ☑ Familiarity with city providing curbside recycling
- ☑ Frequency of participating in city's subscription-based recycling program
- ☑ Reasons for not participating in recycling program (subset of respondents who acknowledged not participating)
- ☑ Level of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding recycling efforts in Round Rock
- ☑ Likelihood of supporting mandatory curbside recycling program based on monthly impact fee

The following is a summary of the key findings concerning these areas.

# ANALYZING THE DATA

In reviewing this report, it is important to understand how the data was compiled and evaluated. This report was prepared by analyzing various subsets of data which was produced from the tabulation report, a separate document from this summary. In it, the survey results are compared to various variables, or subsets of the original findings. The summary report review those subsets and points out positive or negative correlation's, trends, or variances.

To better understand the numbers and percentages presented in the report, here is how the tabulation report was broken down:

- Subsector - the city was divided into four geographic regions, the Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, and Southwest
- Gender - the sample was divided by men and women
- Community improvement rating - the subset was divided into three groups - respondents who graded the community as getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same
- Neighborhood improvement rating - the subset was divided into three groups - respondents who graded their neighborhood as getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same
- Participation in curbside recycling program - this subset was divided into two groups, those who did and those who did not participate
- Range of household income - this subset was divided into four groups, by combining responses. They were under \$35,000 (k), \$35k-\$75k, more than \$75k, and declined to answer
- Highest education level - this subset was divided into three groups, by combining responses. They were high school graduate or less, any college experience up to a college graduate, and any graduate work
- Working in city - this subset was divided into two groups, those who did and those who did not work in the city
- Length of residence - This subset was divided into three groups, those being residents of under 5, 6-19, and 20+ years
- Age of respondent - This subset was divided into three groups, those being under 35, 36-55, and 55+ years of age
- Age of respondent's children - This subset was divided between people who did not have children or whose children were over 18, defined as nonparents, and parents, with children in one of three groups: under age 6, age 6-12, and age 13-18



- Ethnic background - The subset was divided into four groups, those being Anglos/Whites, African-Americans, Hispanics, and Others, people who did not fit into the other three subsets

Therefore, in the event that three or four percentages are presented in the report, they reflect one of the subsets first included in the tabulation report.

In addition, a primary evaluation technique utilized in this report is ratio comparisons. The ratios are determined by removing the no opinion response and dividing the combined positive comments into the combined negative answers. The resulting calculation brings about either a positive or negative number, indicating the direction toward which respondents leaned. For example, regarding statements about recycling efforts in Round Rock, residents voiced the highest agreement that "What's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price" to be most complimentary toward the "fire department", in which 89% agreed and 8% did not, equating to a ratio of 11.1:1, which means that 11 people would positively affirm that the city ensures the best service at the best price before one person would dispute it. In the same manner, regarding the statement, "I would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection," the agreement ratio was only 1.1:1, because agreement was 51% versus 47% disagreement. That ratio would imply that nearly as many people agree with it as dispute it, making it a much less positively perceived statement than the other. When ratios are described, both the positive and negative response will be Included within the parentheses.



# KEY FINDINGS

Over a 10-day period in April, 2008, Raymond Turco & Associates conducted the city's periodic Citizen Attitude Survey. This survey, which has been conducted every two years beginning in 1998, captures attitudes on a variety of city-related issues in the community from respondents randomly selected from phone-matched households. The full sample of 401 respondents was interviewed with a comprehensive questionnaire (see Appendix) that collected attitudinal data on core questions focusing on city direction, city and neighborhood improvement ratings, traffic management, city services, and communications. In addition, several new questions focused on the possible initiation of a city-wide mandatory fee curbside recycling program. The resulting tabulations were analyzed to assist city staff and elected and appointed officials in understanding public sentiment concerning these subjects. In addition, results from the current survey were compared with the general results of previous surveys so that both positive and negative attitudinal trends could be observed and noted in a scientifically valid setting.

The telephone survey included the responses of 401 individuals. Below is our analysis of the project:

## **TRENDING GENERAL ATTITUDES ABOUT QUALITY OF LIFE IN ROUND ROCK**

- ◆ Slightly better than four of five residents sampled (82%) felt that in general the city of Round Rock was headed in the right direction. By comparison, fewer than one in ten (9%) assessed the city as heading in the wrong direction, with the same percentage having no opinion on the issue (9%). Since the benchmark year, 1998, the right direction rating has increased from 69% to its current level of 82%, an improvement of nearly 15 percent. The opposing viewpoint has changed little (10%-9%), with the exception of a 16% rating in 2000. What has declined is the no opinion response (20%-9%). Current results show residents similarly complimentary, as right direction percentages varied three points (83% in the Northwest and Southwest, to 80% in Northeast). Similarly, wrong direction (10% in Southeast, to 8% in Southwest) and no opinion comments (10% in Northeast and Southwest, to 8% in others) differed but two points. Those who had lived in the city for the longest period of time were least likely to rate the city as headed in the right direction (83% of 0-9, to 85% of 10-19, to 76% of 20+ years), although that was still better than three of four within that subset. Younger respondents were most complimentary in terms of



believing the city was heading in the right direction (90% of 18-44, to 78% of 45-54 and 55+), as too parents (90% of under 6, to 90% of 6-12, to 85% of 13-18 year olds) rather than nonparents (77%), persons who either did not have any children or whose children were over the age of 18. (See Figure 1, page 31.)

- ◆ Forty-seven percent felt that in general, the quality of life in the city of Round Rock is getting better rather than worse (12%). The remaining 40% felt that it was about the same (36%) or had no opinion (4%) on the matter. The current mark of 47% is up 11 points since the benchmark results (36%), with that improvement coming from diminished getting worse perceptions (25%-12%). Interestingly, while getting better levels improved (34%-36%-43%-44%-47%-47%) and getting worse marks declined (21%-25%-19%-13%-14%-13%), about the same levels have changed little since 1998 (40%-35%-30%-37%-36%-36%), with the exception of the 10% drop and subsequent increase between 1998 and 2004. Current findings show getting better ratings highest in the Northeast (54%) rather than in the Southeast (45%) or the two western subsectors (43% and 44%). The Northeast was also the region least likely to say that the quality of life was getting worse (7%), compared to ratings of 14% (Southeast and Northwest) and 17% (Southwest) elsewhere. Believing the community had stayed about the same was a viewpoint shared similarly throughout Round Rock (38% in Northwest, to 35% in the Northeast). The older the respondent, the less likely he or she was to grade quality of life as getting better (54%-47%-40%). However, they were also more inclined to voice the status quo response (32%-33%-43%) rather than the negative viewpoint (8%-16%-14%). The older the child, the least likely parents were to grade community improvement as getting better (60%-54%-49%), with nonparents only 40% likely to assign that response. Nonparents assigned the highest getting worse (17%, to 6%-7%-11%) and about the same (39%, to 30%-34%-36%) responses. (See Figure 2, page 33.)
- ◆ Residents were nearly as likely to say that the quality of life in their neighborhood was getting better (21%) as it was getting worse (18%). The overriding opinion, as has been the case since 1998, was that quality of life was about the same (59%). Interestingly, although overall community improvement levels have increased, those opinions have not filtered down to the neighborhood level, as better (19%-23%-23%-23%-23%-21%), worse (13%-17%-16%-16%-15%-18%), and about the same (66%-58%-60%-59%-61%-59%) ratings have shown only minimal change since 1998. Individuals in the western portions of the city assigned higher getting better ratings (29% and 28%) than those in the eastern half (19% and 16%). Those least likely to grade neighborhoods better instead graded them

worse (24% and 22%, to 13% and 8%), as people in the Northeast and Northwest sectors assigned the lowest levels. In terms of status quo responses, percentages varied nominally, from 56% (Northeast) to 63% (Southwest). When compared with age, it was the youngest who most frequently graded neighborhood improvement as getting better (25%-15%-22%), with middle-aged respondents most hesitant to assign that answer. And there was practically no difference in terms of either getting worse (17%-19%-18%) or about the same (56%-64%-59%) findings. Parents, more so than nonparents (29%-30%-24%, to 18%), most frequently considered neighborhoods getting better. And although the variances were minor, getting worse opinions were highest among parents of young children (20%-14%-18%, to 18%), while nonparents most frequently assigned about the same levels (63%, to 51%-54%-56%). The ethnic tabulations showed Anglos/Whites least likely to consider neighborhoods getting better (19%, to 30% and 29%), as both Hispanic and Other respondents offered a higher percentage. What Whites/Anglos did most frequently was to rate neighborhoods about the same (62%, to 55% and 49%), and to a minimum extent getting worse (19%, to 15% and 18%). (See Figure 3, page 36.)

- ◆ Nearly nine of ten residents sampled in 2008 (88%) responded affirmatively to feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood at night, compared to one in ten (10%) who answered no to the question. The remaining 2% chose to have no opinion. The current rate of 88% is higher than the benchmark ratings but generally in line with previous levels (80%-85%-82%-84%-89%), an indication that even as the city has grown, residents overwhelmingly consider themselves safe when walking alone in their neighborhood at night. Perceptions of residents feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood were higher in the western subsectors of the city (90% in Southwest and 94% in Northwest) than in the eastern half (84% in Northeast and 86% in Southeast), although percentages throughout the city were extremely high. Men were more likely than women to perceive themselves safe (95%-81%), as too, people who graded the community as getting better (91%) rather than worse (74%). When compared with household income, those least likely to consider themselves safe had the lowest household income, at under \$35k (76%-92%-91%). This subset also voiced the highest no response (15%-8%-8%) as well as no opinion comment (10%-0%-1%). Also less likely to grade themselves safe were the less educated respondents (74%-91%-90%), as those having no more than a high school education least frequently graded themselves safe, instead saying they did not feel safe (20%-7%-10%), although that was still only one in five. (See Figure 4, page 38.)

- ◆ Growth/fast growth/controlling growth (48%) and traffic (36%) were identified by respondents as the biggest issues the city will face within the next five years. Following the top two issues were school-related issues (20%), road repair/maintenance/expansion (15%), high taxes/property taxes, public transportation/rail, and crime/gangs/inadequate police (each 13%), and overcrowding/overpopulation (12%). Each person was allowed to list up to three issues, which is why the percentages exceed 100%. When compared with the benchmark results, areas of less concern over the 10-year period included traffic (68%-43%), growth/fast growth/controlling growth (58%-36%), school-related issues (27%-20%), crime/gangs/inadequate police (23%-13%), and lack of affordable housing/housing-related (38%-4%), although this response has been at the single digit level since 2002. Conversely, survey participants were drawn more to the following issues as being the biggest the city will face: high taxes/property taxes (7%-13%); public transportation/rail (NA-13%); overcrowding/overpopulation (NA-12%); keeping up with infrastructure needs (NA-8%); lack of parks and recreation activities/maintenance (NA-8%); need for economic development (NA-5%), and lack of jobs/unemployment (NA-5%). Traffic was on the mind of many residents, as it was the overriding concern to residents in three of the four subsectors. It was tops in the western half of the city (53% and 52%), as well as in the Northeast (46%). Only in the Southeast was it not the top concern, as a slightly higher percentage listed growth/fast growth/controlling growth (35%-31%) as the biggest issues the city will face. Concern was consistent throughout the city relative to concerns such as school-related issues (24% in Southwest, to 17% in Northeast), road repair/maintenance/expansion (19% in Southeast, to 10% in Northwest), and high taxes/property taxes (14% in Southeast, to 12% in Northeast and Northwest). Issues with more sectional implications included crime/gangs of less concern in the Northwest (4%, to 13%-16%-11%), the western sections not as focused on overcrowding/overpopulation (6% and 8%, to 13% and 17%), and individuals in the Southeast most concerned with keeping up with infrastructure needs (13%, to 4%-6%-6%) and lack of parks and recreation activities/maintenance (10%, to 1% in Northeast). The only items among the top issues in which tenure in the community influenced one's response was traffic (37%-50%-48%), a greater concern to long-term inhabitants, and growth/fast growth/controlling growth (38%-38%-30%), of less concern. High taxes/property taxes (7%-10%-22%) drew a higher response from older individuals than younger ones. The same was true relative to keeping up with infrastructure needs (4%-9%-12%). The opposite was true in terms of the items of crime/gangs/inadequate police (13%-18%-7%) and overcrowding/overpopulation (18%-12%-7%), as it was younger individuals who most frequently mentioned these items. (See Table #2, page 40.)

- ◆ Nearly two of every three residents graded traffic situations on state roads and highways in Round Rock, like I-35, FM 1325, and RM 620, negatively, either only fair (34%) or poor (31%). Comparatively, only 34% assessed the situation positively, but more often good (30%), a soft assessment, rather than excellent (4%), a more intense recognition. The ratio of positive to negative opinions was a negative 0.5 to one, lower than any previous assessment (39%-59%, 0.7:1 in 2002, to 45%-55%, 0.8:1 in 2004, and 37%-63%, 0.6:1 in 2006). Relative to traffic situations in and around their neighborhood, respondents was more positive, assigning ratings of 69%, although the bulk of the ratings still were the general feeling of good (52%) versus a negative perception of 30%, for a positive ratio of 2.3:1. As with the state road and traffic assessment, the 2.3:1 ratio was lower than any previous year the question has been posed (75%-25%, 3.0:1, to 80%-20%, 4.0:1, to 75%-25%, 3.0:1). In comparing the intensity ratings, we note that excellent findings were higher in 2008 than any previous survey, whether the respondent was evaluating the traffic situation on state roads and highways (1%-2%-1%-4%) or in and around one's neighborhood (10%-13%-12%-17%), with the latter showing more improvement. People in the eastern parts of the city were more likely to assess traffic situations on state roads and highways excellent (6% and 6%) than their brethren in the west (1% and 2%), although the variance was minimal. Overall, the gap in positive marks for state roads and highways was ten percent, with many fewer positive opinions in the Northwest (29%) rather than other parts of the city (39%-35%-35%). In assigning excellent ratings for traffic situations in and around their neighborhood, levels varied at a slightly higher rate, with the high in the west (21% and 19%) rather than the east (17%-14%), although the full variance was less than ten percent. In comparing combined positive opinions, residents were fairly consistent in their assessment, with 72% and 69% in the east and 69% and 67% in the west. Of the three community improvement subsets, at no point did a majority voice a positive assessment of traffic situations on state roads and highways in Round Rock. The highest percentage was the 41% established by those most positive, declining to 30% for those sharing a status quo viewpoint and 22% for those most critical. Note that the percentage variance between the high and the low rating was 19%, the same difference for those evaluating traffic in and around their neighborhood (73%-67%-54%). Relative to neighborhood traffic situations, no matter how one rated the community, a majority was positive (73%-67%-54%). (See Tables #3 - #5, pages 43- 45.)
- ◆ Nearly two of three residents sampled (64%) judged that traffic in Round Rock compared to two years ago was getting worse. The remaining one third were similarly divided between feeling that traffic was getting better (15%) or staying about the same (18%). The final 3% of the sample chose the no opinion response. When compared with prior results, the current

level of 64% is lower than any previous survey (70%-68%-82%) and significantly different from that voiced only two years earlier. If the 2006 rating is removed, percentages have gradually declined since 2002, although respondents are still more negative than positive. Showing improvement was getting better levels (9%-8%-3%-15%), as too stayed the same ratings (13%-17%-12%-18%), with the exception of the spike in 2006. Current findings show very few individuals in the Northeast subsector willing to grade traffic in Round Rock as getting better (7%). In fact, percentages were three times higher in the Southeast (21%), and double the rate in the two western sectors (13% and 15%). What was similar in both eastern (16% and 20%) and western (17% and 15%) halves of the city was the about the same ratings. Getting worse findings varied dramatically between the Northeast and Southeast subsectors (75%-54%), compared to similar findings in the west (68% and 67%). Therefore, the Northeast appeared to be more impacted by negative traffic perceptions, especially when compared with the Southeast portion of the city. People who had lived in Round Rock for the longest period of time were most critical of the traffic compared to two years ago (62%-60%-74%) and, not surprisingly, least likely to say that it was getting better (14%-20%-12%). Younger people most frequently acknowledged improvement (22%-15%-7%), with older respondents more likely to say traffic was getting worse (55%-64%-74%). One response that did not vary significantly based on age was the about the same response (20%-17%-16%). The older the child, the more likely his or her parents were to say that traffic was getting worse (50%-53%-70%), with nonparents slightly more critical (71%) than people with teenage children. (See Figure 5, page 47.)

## ***Evaluating And Trending Opinions About City Services***

- ◆ The fire department (84%-10%, 8.4:1), trash collection (94%-17%, 5.5:1), police department (94%-18%, 5.2:1), the library (83%-16%, 5.2:1), and city-sponsored recreation activities, like the youth basketball program, swimming lessons, instructional classes, and community-wide events like the Easter Egg Hunt (84%-19%, 4.4:1) were the five local city services graded most positively. Because of the five-point scale utilized for the questioning, the grading scale was established by incorporating a ratio that combined the two positive responses (excellent and good) with the average comment and dividing that into the two negative items (below average and poor) and average response. Therefore, it was possible in this grading system for the percentages of the combined responses to exceed 100%. Of the 11 services tested, residents appeared to be least pleased with transportation planning (52%-59%, 0.9:1), the only service to score higher



negative comments, as well as city planning (79%-35%, 2.3:1), maintenance of city streets (89%-36%, 2.5:1), and municipal court (56%-20%, 2.8:1), although note that positive attitudes were a minimum twice that of negative opinions. When compared with 2000 results, only two services graded lower based on the ratios -- transportation planning (1.1:1-0.9:1) and the library (6.9:1-5.2:1). Conversely, growth in positive ratings was most noticeable regarding water and wastewater service (2.4:1-3.8:1), police (3.9:1-5.2:1), city parks (2.4:1-4.2:1), and city-sponsored recreational activities (2.9:1-4.4:1). Current ratings show residents most proud of the police department (37% excellent), trash collection and the fire department (both 36%), the library (33%), and city parks (30%). What did not please them, especially when compared with the top items, were transportation planning (5%), city planning (9%), and municipal court (10%). Additionally, only 13% rated maintenance of city streets excellent. When comparing the combined responses, nine of ten residents throughout the city were positive about trash collection (94%-93%-96%-93%), water and wastewater service (93%-95%-93%-96%), and police department (93%-94%-94%-90%). Other 90% positive perceptions involved maintenance of city streets in both western subsectors (90% and 92%, to both 88%) and city parks in the Northeast (92%, to 88%-88%-84%). Complimentary ratings were the predominant theme throughout the city, although opinions did differ relative to transportation planning (60% in Southwest, to 49% in Northwest) and municipal court (65% in Northeast, to 51% in Southeast). Negative impressions were most evident for transportation planning, as three of four subsectors posted majority critical ratings (56% and 58%, to 72% and 48%). The services with the second and third largest number of critical comments were maintenance of city streets (38% and 37%, to 37% and 29%) and city planning (24% and 38%, to 38% and 29%), especially in the Southeast and Northwest. When the three directional subsets are compared (improved-same-worse), the following services declined by the largest amount from top to bottom: library (89%-64%-56%, -33); transportation planning (58%-56%-28%, -30); city planning (88%-75%-60%, -28); municipal court (64%-54%-38%, -26), maintenance of city streets (94%-90%-72%, -22); and city sponsored recreational activities (90%-81%-70%, -20). (See Tables #6 - #8, pages 50- 55.)

- ◆ Excellent (16%) or good (37%) was the way respondents who acknowledged having called the city of Round Rock on the telephone for services or information described the service they received. Comparatively, 12% rated the service only fair, and 3% poor. Nearly one in three said they had never called the city (31%) and one percent had no opinion regarding the question. The ratio of positive to negative comments was 3.5:1, a level higher than in 2006 (58%-19%, 3.1:1) but lower than in 2004



(73%-14%, 5.2:1). Overall positive ratings are lower this year (58%-53%), as too negative comments (19%-15%), with the difference caused by higher never called the city ratings this year (20%-31%). In both 2006 and 2008, residents were similarly complimentary (16%-16%) and critical (3%-3%). People in the Northwest were much less likely to have telephone contact with the city, as their response of 40% never called the city was at least eleven percent higher than anywhere else (29%-29%-25%). The higher non-contact ratings caused other percentages in that part of the city to be lower, and the ratio showed residents there least positive in terms of evaluating service received on the telephone (44%-15%, 2.9:1), although positive opinions were nearly three times higher than negative attitudes. People in the Northeast were most favorable about customer service, at a ratio of 4.9:1 (59%-12%), followed by a 3.9:1 in the Southwest (59%-15%), and 3.5:1 in the Southeast (53%-15%). Also note that intense satisfaction was much higher in the Northeast (24%) than elsewhere (15%-8%-19%), with individuals in the Northwest least pleased. Respondents who had lived in the city for nine years or less were significantly more likely to have never called the city (37%-24%-24%). Being less apt to contact the city, it is not surprising to see that same group less inclined to grade the contact positively (49%-56%-63%), but in addition their critical comments were lowest (13%-18%-15%). Persons under the age of 44 were most likely to have never called the city, based on the survey results (38%-25%-28%). In terms of ethnic background, Hispanics were more likely to have never called the city (38%) than Whites/Anglos (31%) or Others (27%). However, it was Whites/Anglos who were most positive about the service they received (55%, to 43% of Hispanics and 51% of Others). (See Figure 6, page 57.)

- ◆ Asked to describe the service they receive when they e-mail the city of Round Rock for services or information, more than four of five (82%) said they had never e-mailed the city. Of the remaining 18%, 12% were positive of the service, 5% negative, and 2% had no opinion. Intensity ratings were minimal, with 4% considering the service excellent versus 2% poor. Therefore, although contact with the city by way of e-mail was minimal, the ratio of positive to negative opinions was 2.4 to one. Compared with previous findings, fewer people in 2008 acknowledged contacting the city in this manner, as levels of no contact were greater (58%-82%). However, the satisfaction ratio in 2006 was similar to the current mark (27%-10%, 2.7:1). No matter where one lived, be it the eastern portion of the city (81% and 82%) or western half (81% and 83%), at least four of five said they had never e-mailed the city. Satisfaction ranged from 14% in the Southwest to 10% in the Northeast. Comparatively, negative assessments of customer service were no less than 3% (Southeast) but no greater than 7% (Northwest). Of the individuals who did contact the city by way of e-mail, those most

positive about the service were long-term residents (11%-9%-16%), younger respondents rather than older (14%-14%-9%), parents rather than nonparents (13%-17%-13%, to 10%), and Hispanics rather than Whites/Anglos or Others (18%, to 12% and 6%). (See Figure 7, page 60.)

- ◆ Abandoned vehicles (78%-15%, 5.1:1) was the common problem residents felt the city was doing the best job addressing, based on this item scoring the highest ratio of positive to negative comments. Also graded positively, although at a lower level, were the common problems of enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way, such as keeping them clear of real estate signs and private business signs (69%-27%, 2.6:1) or lots overgrown with weeds (63%-32%, 2.0:1). When compared with the benchmark results, residents feel that the city is doing a better job addressing the stated problems now than did people in 1998, when the three items attained ratios of 2.6:1 (65%-25% for abandoned vehicles), 1.5:1 (52%-34% for enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way), and 0.9:1 (44%-48% for lots overgrown with weeds). Current ratios for the enforcement of the three common problems were higher in 2008 than any year except 2006, as attitudes about enforcement have appeared to decline over that time period. This was true for abandoned vehicles (2.6:1-2.7:1-3.4:1-7.4:1-5.1:1), lots overgrown with weeds (0.9:1-1.6:1-1.5:1-2.2:1-2.0:1), and enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way (1.5:1-1.2:1-1.7:1-3.3:1-2.6:1). Excellent ratings in 2008 were nearly twice as high for addressing abandoned vehicles (29%) as for public rights-of-way (16%) or lots overgrown with weeds (14%). Geography appeared to influence how residents graded enforcement, as positive marks varied at least ten percent on all three items. The Northeast was much less positive about the enforcement of abandoned vehicles (73%, to 87% in Southeast), while it was individuals in the Southwest who were least complimentary about the city addressing lots overgrown with weeds (55%, to 67% in Northeast and Southeast) and respondents in the Northwest, with the upkeep of public rights-of-ways (60%, to 75% in Southwest). Also note that addressing lots overgrown with weeds was more likely to be complimented by residents in the eastern half of the city rather than the west (both 67%, to 58% and 55%), the only issue addressed in this manner. Whether one's perspective of community improvement was positive (65%), status quo (62%), or negative (60%), a similar percentage of people graded the enforcement of lots overgrown with weeds similarly. That was not the case with the other two, as percentages varied 11% for abandoned vehicles (81%-75%-70%) and 16% for the upkeep of public rights-of-way (78%-61%-62%). (See Tables #9 - #11, pages 62 - 65.)
- ◆ For the first time, residents acknowledged being more positive (51% good and excellent) than negative (48% only fair and poor) in term of the job



they thought the city of Round Rock was doing managing traffic. Although the overall perception was positive, note that negative intensity ratings were still higher (13%-8%) indicating the continued presence of a critical element. When compared with previous findings, residents have also been more critical of traffic management, including the benchmark year of 2000 (25%-75%, 0.3:1), followed by 2002 (42%-53%, 0.7:1), 2004 (46%-53%, 0.9:1), and 2006 (36%-63%, 0.6:1). When comparing positive to negative intensity ratings, only in the Southeast was the excellent rating the prevailing attitude, and then by only one percent (10%-9%). In the Northeast (8%-14%), Northwest (6%-16%), and Southwest (8%-17%), survey participants were clearly more critical than complimentary. The ratios were positive in the Southeast (56%-44%, 1.3:1), the Northeast (53%-46%, 1.2:1), and the Southwest (52%-48%, 1.1:1). That was not the case in the Northwest, where the reputation was mostly negative, which brought the ratio down to 0.7:1 (42%-57%). People newer to the community were more positive than long-term city residents (54%-51%-44%) and less critical as well (45%-49%-55%). Age did not appear to have the same influence on attitudes as did tenure in the community, as both positive (54%-49%-51%) and negative (45%-49%-49%) feelings fluctuated. Parents of younger children were more complimentary of the job the city was doing managing traffic (60%-63%-48%), while those with older children and nonparents (48%) tended to be less so. (See Figure 8, page 66.)

- ◆ Local TV news (79%), Community Impact, the monthly publication (73%), and friends (70%) were the sources toward which residents most often looked to find out what was happening in Round Rock. Other popular sources included enclosures in their city utility bill (68%), *The Austin American Statesman* (56%), *The Round Rock Leader* (49%), and homeowner's association newsletter (46%). Of the 14 sources tested, respondents were least likely to utilize Community Conversations, the city of Round Rock blog (7%) and the city e-mail newsletter, *The Round Rock News* and public meetings (both 19%). In comparing the eight sources tested over the ten-year period, local TV news maintained its former high mark (80%-81%). Additionally, growth in utilization was noted for enclosures in their city utility bill (50%-66%) and the city web page (8%-40%). Conversely, utilization appeared to wane for both *The Austin American Statesman* (78%-56%) and *The Round Rock Leader* (68%-49%), as well as the Round Rock cable channel (45%-37%) and radio (50%-40%). Five sources were utilized by a majority of residents, regardless of where they lived. Those were *The Austin American Statesman* (58%-55%-56%-54%), local TV news (86%-76%-73%-81%), enclosures in their city utility bill (66%-65%-67%-79%), friends (68%-69%-76%-69%), and Community Impact, the monthly publication (69%-73%-78%-73%). Other majority marks included *The Round Rock Leader* (56%) in the Northeast and homeowner's association



newsletters in both the Northwest (53%) and Southwest (56%). And no matter where one lived, utilization of Community Conversations failed to reach double-digit reliance (7%-8%-8%-6%). Several sources showed varying degrees of utilization based on where people lived. Those in which percentages varied by at least ten percent numbered nine, including: Round Rock cable channel 10 (46% in Southwest, to 32% in Southeast); enclosures in city water bill (79% in Southwest, to 65% in Southeast); city web page (49% in Northwest, to 29% in Northeast); and public meetings (31% in Southwest, to 12% in Southeast); and The City Beat ad (47% in Northwest, to 33% in Southwest). When comparing the two extreme opinions about community improvement (getting better versus getting worse), with the status quo remark (about the same) between, the sources that defined the difference between the two in terms of reliance were local TV news (86%-77%-66%), *The Round Rock Leader* (53%-50%-38%), friends (74%-71%-60%), the city e-newsletter (22%-18%-12%), and Community Impact (74%-76%-64%). Also note that it was people who graded the community as about the same who were least likely to rely on Round Rock cable channel 10 (41%-32%-42%), public meetings (21%-17%-22%), and Community Conversations (11%-3%-8%). At the same time, they were the subset most apt to rely on The City Beat ad (34%-48%-40%). (See Tables #12 - #14, pages 68 - 71.)

- ◆ Residents in 2008 were more pleased with how the city was keeping them informed of city programs and services (68%-30%, 2.3:1) than listening to and responding to the needs of citizens (56%-32%, 1.8:1), although both were graded positively. When compared with the benchmark results, both keeping citizens informed (1.5:1-2.3:1) and listening and responding to needs (1.4:1-1.8:1) were thought of more highly, although the ratio showed more improvement in terms of keeping citizens informed rather than listening to and responding to needs. The combined positive ratings for keeping them informed of city programs and services were never below what was established in 1998 (59%-59%-64%-69%-68%), a statement that also held true for listening to and responding to the needs of citizens (53%-54%-63%-58%-56%). Note that between 2004 and 2008, positive assessments of listening to and responding to citizen needs have declined (63%-58%-56%), compared to limited growth for keeping one informed (64%-69%-68%). Residents throughout the city were more pleased with how the city was keeping people informed of city programs and services rather than listening to and responding to the needs of citizens. The variance in positive ratings between the two statements was most prominent in the Northwest (65%-51%) and Southeast (70%-57%), at 14% and 13%, respectively. Comparatively, only nine points separated the two statements in the Northeast (71%-62%) and just four percent in the Southwest (59%-55%). Additionally, note that the eastern part of the city



was more positive in both keeping people informed (71% and 70%, to 65% and 59%) and listening and responding (62% and 57%, to 51% and 55%). (See Tables #15 - #17, pages 73 - 75.)

### ***Evaluating Attitudes About Recycling Options In The Community***

- ◆ As many people in Round Rock were familiar (50%) as unfamiliar (49%) with the fact that for a \$4.00 monthly fee, the city provides curbside recycling services on a subscription basis. In addition, the very unfamiliar response was greater than its positive counterpoint (27%-21%). Two of every three residents (66%) in the Northwest subsector of Round Rock acknowledged being familiar with the fee-based curbside recycling program, of which 29% were very familiar. Both the intensity and combined familiarity ratings were highest within that subsector. It was also the only part of the city in which the very familiar comments outpaced the very unfamiliar remarks (29%-17%). The familiarity ratios showed the most knowledgeable people to reside in the Northwest (66%-35%, 1.9:1), followed by the Southwest (51%-48%, 1.1:1), the Southeast (49%-50%, 1.0:1), and finally the Northeast (36%-63%, 0.6:1), both the least familiar and subsequently most unfamiliar. Respondents who acknowledged participating in the recycling program were 92% familiar with it. Conversely, nonparticipants were only 42% familiar and 58% unfamiliar. Familiarity also improved based on the education level of the resident, moving from 31% of grade school or high school people, to 51% of college-educated personnel and 57% who had completed some level of graduate work. The level of familiarity one had with the city's fee-based curbside recycling services was also impacted based on tenure in the community, as newer residents voiced higher familiarity ratings than people who had lived in Round Rock for longer amounts of time (53%-51%-40%), with a significant drop-off occurring among those most-tenured city inhabitants. (See Figure 9, page 76.)
- ◆ Fewer than one of five (16%) Round Rock residents acknowledged participating in the city's subscription-based recycling program. Conversely, more than four of five (84%) admitted to not participating. In a follow-up question, unaware/unfamiliar with program (46%), opposed to paying (24%), and recycles on own/takes to center or school (14%) were the reasons given in an open-ended format as why the subset of residents or their families who were not participants in the program chose not to participate. A total of 12 responses were generated, but none except the above were mentioned by more than two percent of the sample. Residents in the Northwest, described in the previous question as being most familiar with the program, were also most likely to participate, but only

at rates of 22%, or less than one in four. Lower levels of participation were noted elsewhere in the city, namely 15% in the Southwest, 14% in the Southeast, and 11% in the Northeast. The higher the household income (10%-13%-19%) and education (10%-14%-21%) levels, the more likely residents were to participate, although rates were minimal. Regarding the follow-up query, being unaware or unfamiliar with the program was a consistent response from those who did not participate in it. This was demonstrated by the fact that percentages varied minimally, although it was a slightly more frequent comment in the southern portion of the city (48% and 49%) than the north (44% and 43%). There was a big difference between residents in the Northwest and Southwest relative to nonutilization because they were opposed to paying (31%-16%). Percentages in the eastern subsectors were both in the 20 percentile (22% and 25%). According to the responses, what happened more frequently in the Southwest than anywhere else was that people recycled on their own/took to center or school (26%), a level significantly higher than anywhere else (15%-9%-15%), especially the Southeast. The longer persons lived in Round Rock, the more likely they were to say the reason they chose not to participate was either being unaware/unfamiliar with program (43%-48%-51%) or recycles on own (12%-16%-18%). The response long-term city inhabitants were least likely to give was opposed to paying (27%-25%-16%). (See Figure 10 and Table #18, pages 79 and 81.)

- ◆ What's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price (89%-8%, 11.1:1) and I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents (81%-15%, 5.4:1) were the statements regarding recycling efforts in Round Rock that generated the highest levels of agreement from survey participants. In addition, nearly two of every three persons sampled agreed that what's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is (71%-25%, 2.8:1) and not only would I support the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well (64%-29%, 2.2:1). The three remaining items were more apt to be contested by residents, namely I would support paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees (57%-40%, 1.4:1) and I would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (51%-47%, 1.1:1). The last statement, I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents, but I would not participate, generated a much higher level of disagreement (20%-74%, 0.3:1), suggesting a level of commitment from residents should the city institute a city-wide curbside recycling program. The two highest rated statements from the standpoint of their agreement ratio also ranked first and second in terms of intensity ratings, indicating the commitment residents had to what's being most important is that the city ensures the



best service at the best price (31%) and supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents (30%). Four of five residents citywide agreed that what's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price (91%-86%-88%-94%), with agreement highest in the Northeast and Southwest subsectors. Additionally, supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents generated similar agreement levels everywhere but in the Southwest (83%-82%-85%-65%), where support was significantly less. And at least two of three residents affirmed that what's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is (73%-68%-75%-68%), with both northern zones more committed to this item than people in the south. In terms of disputing statements, at least 70% disagreed that they would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents but would not participate (72%-73%-81%-71%). In both eastern subsectors, residents were more likely to disagree with being willing to have curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection, a position that western quadrant residents did not share, as majorities in both locales agreed. Also note that both northern subsectors voiced more agreement with supporting the city's program but also other conservation programs than supporting the implementation of the program for all residents (66%-58% and 67%-57%). Comparatively, both statements were interchangeable in the western regions (61%-58% and 56%-56%), as similar percentages affirmed both items. When comparing agreement ratings based on the two community improvement extremes, the differences were most pronounced regarding support for paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees (60%-46%) and supporting the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well (66%-52%). Additionally, those most negative about community improvement most often agreed that they would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (58%-50%) and supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents but not participating (24%-17%). (See Tables #19 - #21, pages 83 - 87.)

- ◆ The threshold, or point at which residents became unlikely to support a mandatory fee curbside recycling program based simply on the monthly amount, was at \$3.01-\$4.00, the point at which a majority (60%) expressed being unlikely or very unlikely, compared with 37% who were likely or very likely. The for-against percentages for the various monthly fee increases were 74%-24% at \$0.00-\$1.00, 57%-32% at \$1.01-\$2.00, and 49%-49% at \$2.01-\$3.00. Note that very unlikely ratings were higher than unlikely findings, indicating that some are intensely opposed and with a higher fervor than the consensus negative opinion. In the Northeast (47%-52%) and Southwest (48%-50%) subsectors, the threshold was reached at the

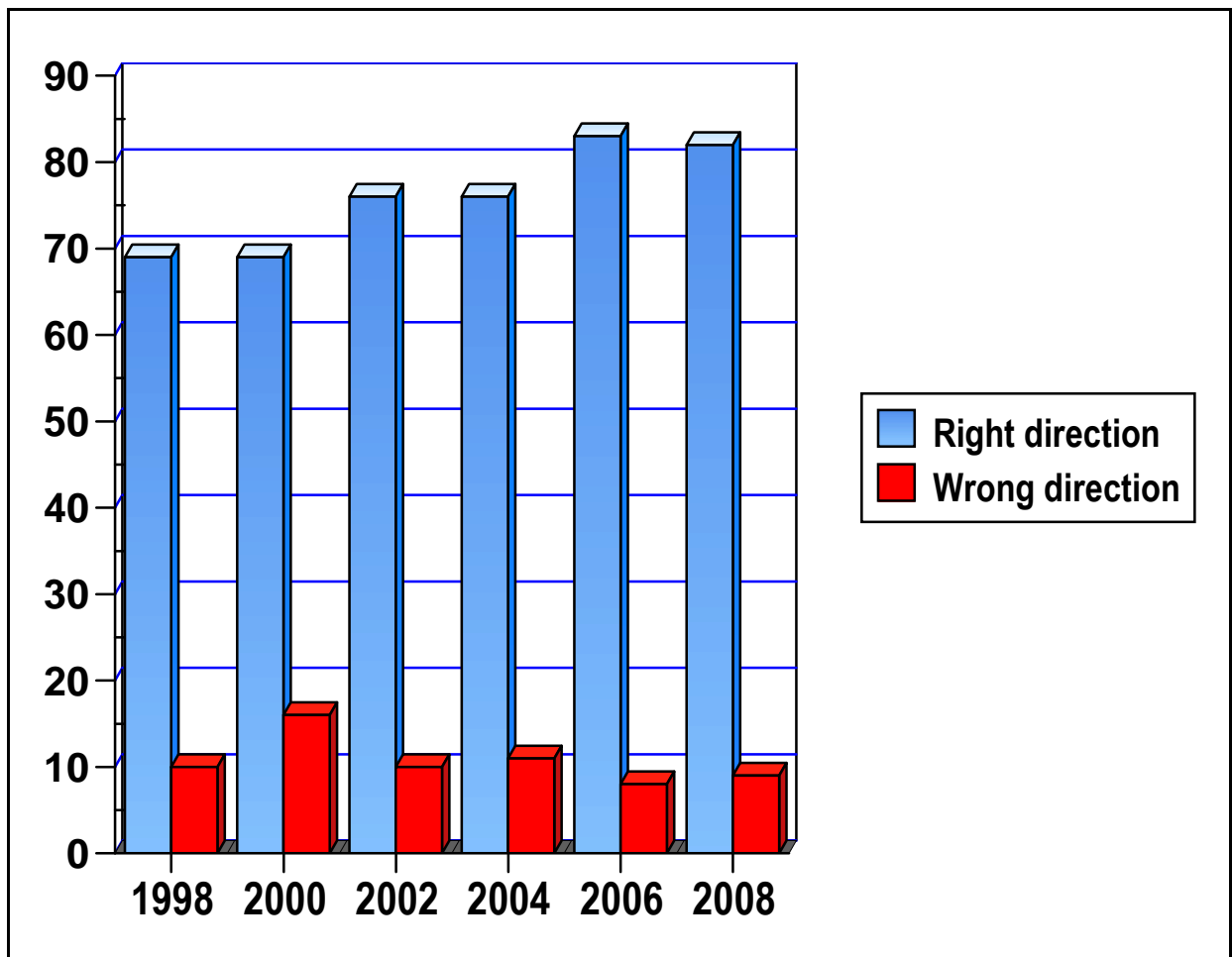


\$2.01-\$3.00 monthly increase range. Comparatively, a majority in the Northwest (47%-52%) and Southeast (36%-63%) said they would be unlikely to support a monthly fee increase at the next level, \$3.01-\$4.00. Note that unlikely ratings at the \$2.01-\$3.00 were fairly consistent, varying less than 10% (52% in Northeast, to 45% in Northwest). That was not the case at the next amount, as the high was 67% in the Northeast, as well as 63% in the Southeast, compared with 52% and 57% in the two western sectors, equating to an overall variance of 15 points. Monthly fees could increase to \$3.01-\$4.00 per month before people who graded the community as getting better expressed majority unlikely ratings (40%-59%). Comparatively, those negative toward community improvement reached the majority unlikely rate earlier, specifically at the \$1.01-\$2.00 level (48%-52%). And those who shared a status quo opinion split the difference between the other two, as they voiced majority unlikely ratings at \$2.01-\$3.00 (49%-50%). (See Tables #22 - #24, pages 88 - 90.)



# SECTION ONE: Trending General Attitudes About Round Rock

## DIRECTION CITY IS HEADING



**Figure 1: Comparing Respondent Assessment Of Direction City Is Heading By Response Year -- 1998 - 2008**

- ◆ Slightly better than four of five residents sampled (82%) felt that in general, the city of Round Rock was headed in the right direction. By comparison, fewer than one in ten (9%) assessed the city as heading in the wrong direction, with a similar rate having no opinion on the issue (9%). Since the benchmark year, 1998, the right direction rating has increased from 69% to

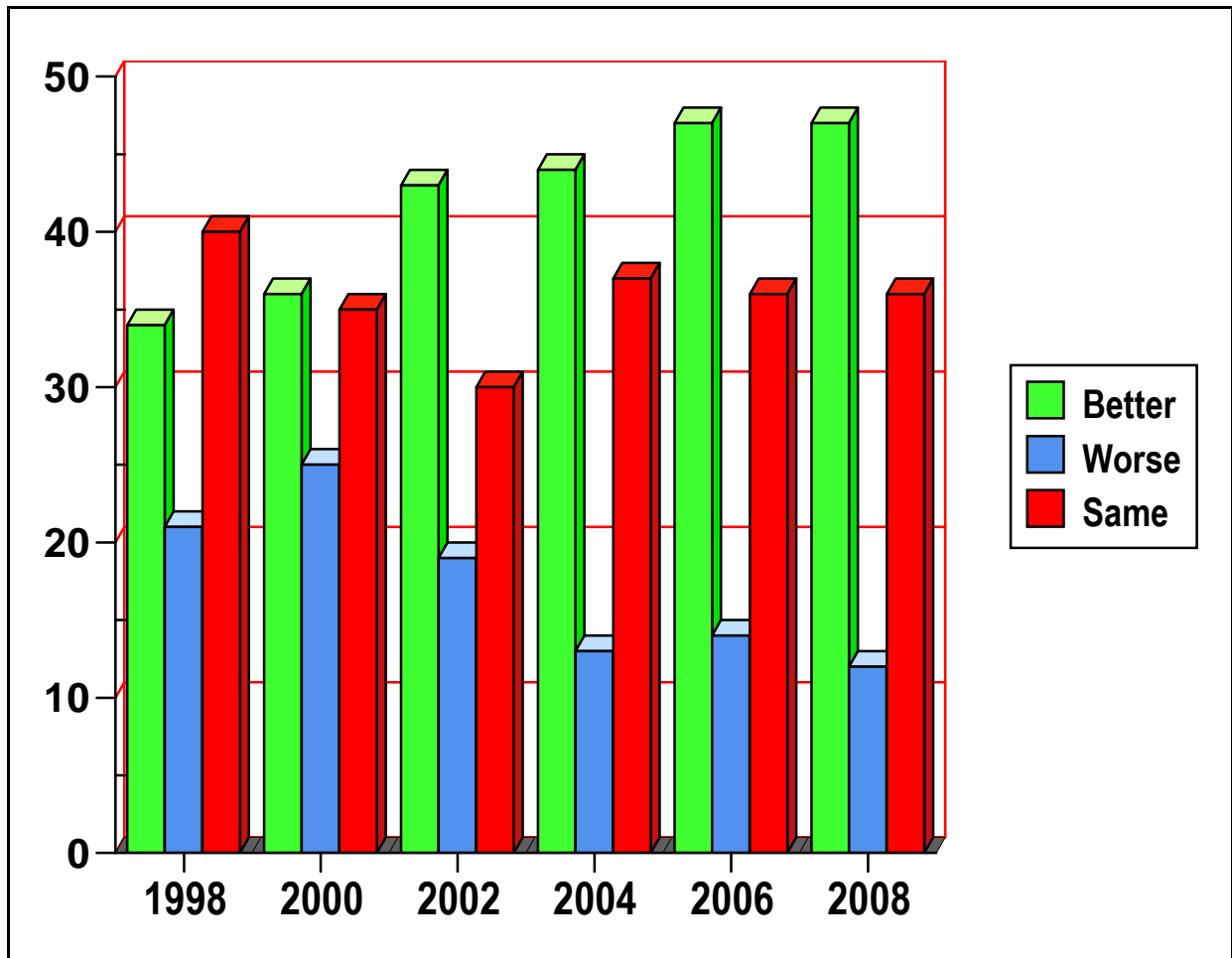
**its current level of 82%, an improvement of 13 percentage points. The opposing viewpoint has changed little (10%-9%), with the exception of a 16% rating in 2000. What has declined is the no opinion response (20%-9%).**

- ◆ Residents in all regions were complimentary, as right direction percentages varied three points (83% in the Northeast and Southwest, to 80% in the Northeast). Similarly, wrong direction (10% in Southeast, to 8% in Southwest) and no opinion comments (10% in Northwest and Southwest, to 8% in others) differed but two points. Also feeling that the city was heading in the right direction were both men and women (83%-81%). Ninety-four percent of respondents who rated the community as getting better felt the city was headed in the right direction. That was also the opinion of 79% of the residents who graded improvement about the same and 52% who felt the community was getting worse. People who considered the community to be worse, 12% of the sample, voiced both the highest wrong direction (3%-32%-10%) and no opinion (3%-16%-11%) comments. Individuals who felt their neighborhood was getting worse were still 71% apt to believe the city was headed in the right direction. However, that was still lower than if the neighborhood was perceived to be getting better (94%) or about the same (82%). Therefore, people negative about neighborhood improvement were more confident that the city was heading in the right direction than if the community was graded negatively (71%-52%).
- ◆ Respondents who participated in the city's recycling program were more apt to believe Round Rock was headed in the right direction than if they did not participate (92%-80%). Those most educated survey participants generated the highest right direction ratings, although the variance between grade/high school (77%) to college-related (82%) and graduate work (85%) was less than ten percent. Little difference in ratings existed when findings are compared with household income (83% of under \$35k, to 85% of \$35-\$75k, to 83% of more than \$75k) or whether or not the respondent worked in the city (80% of yes, to 83% of no). The only subgroup somewhat hesitant to say the city was heading in the right direction was the 18% who declined to answer the household income question, as only 73% gave the positive response. They were also the group most apt to believe the city was headed in the wrong direction (7%-8%-10%-11%), by a minimal difference, or had no opinion relative to this question (10%-8%-7%-15%). Note that those in the lowest household income range were least apt to grade the city as heading in the wrong direction.
- ◆ Those who had lived in the city for the longest period of time were least likely to rate the city as headed in the right direction (83% of 0-9, to 85% of 10-19, to 76% of 20+ years), although that was still better than three of four within that subset. They were more than twice as likely as newer city



inhabitants to believe Round Rock was headed in the wrong direction (6%-12%-15%), although the percentages were low compared with other opinions. Younger respondents were most positive about the city's direction (90% of 18-44, to 78% of 45-54 and 55+), as were parents (90% of under 6, to 90% of 6-12, to 85% of 13-18 year olds) rather than nonparents (77%), persons who either did not have any children or whose children were over the age of 18. And the ethnic tabulations showed Hispanics more complimentary of the direction the city was headed (93%) than either Whites/Anglos (81%) or Others (82%). The three subsets accounted respectively for 10%, 76%, and 14% of all participants.

## COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATINGS



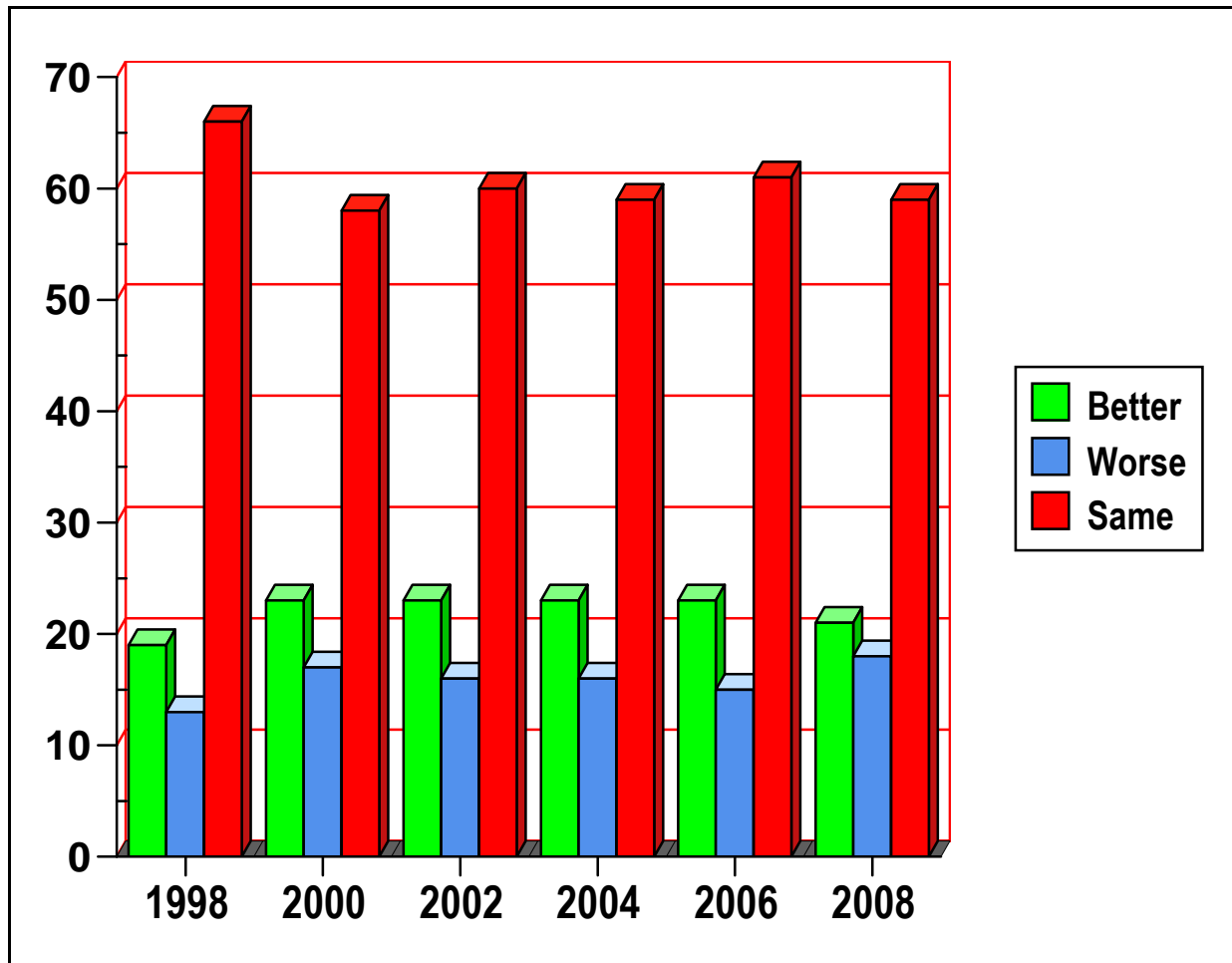
**Figure 2: Comparing Community Improvement Ratings By Response Year -- 1998 - 2008**

- ◆ **Forty-seven percent felt that in general, the quality of life in the city of Round Rock was getting better rather than worse (12%). The remaining 40% felt that it was about the same (36%) or had no opinion (4%) on the matter. The current mark of 47% is up 11 points since the benchmark results (36%), with that improvement coming from declining getting worse (25%-12%) perceptions. Interestingly, while getting better levels improved (34%-36%-43%-44%-47%-47%) and getting worse marks declined (21%-25%-19%-13%-14%-13%), staying the same levels have changed little since 1998 (40%-35%-30%-37%-36%-36%), with the exception of the 10% drop and subsequent increase between 1998 and 2004.**
- ◆ Current findings show better ratings highest in the Northeast (54%) followed by lower marks in the Southeast (45%) and both western subsectors (43% and 44%). The Northeast was also the region least likely to say that the quality of life was getting worse (7%), compared to ratings of 14% (Southeast and Northwest) and 17% (Southwest). Believing the community had stayed about the same was a viewpoint shared similarly throughout Round Rock (38% in Northwest, to 35% in the Northeast). Female survey participants more frequently graded the community as getting better (51%-43%), whereas male respondents voiced the highest getting worse (14%-11%) and about the same (39%-33%) levels. Residents who graded their neighborhood as getting better were more inclined to believe the city was getting better (68%) than if the neighborhood was about the same (43%) or getting worse (37%). Those believing the neighborhood was getting better were least likely to believe the city was getting worse (4%-27%-11%) or was about the same (22%-36%-42%). Those most critical about neighborhood direction were most negative about community improvement, with the status quo response for one having the highest response for the other.
- ◆ Recycling participants were most apt to believe that the community was getting better (52%-46%) or at least the same (40%-36%), but not getting worse (6%-14%), a distinction more often expressed by nonparticipants. Those earning the most also assigned the highest getting better marks (46%-43%-57%), with the lowest positive opinion voiced by those who declined to answer the income question (30%). Those earning more than \$75k were also least likely to grade community improvement about the same (32%-43%-28%), with the refused to answer subgroup offering the highest status quo response (48%). Believing the city was getting better (49%-46%-48%), worse (11%-12%-13%), or staying the same (30%-39%-35%) did not appear to be influenced by education level, as percentages either varied minimally or fluctuated. The same was true when comparing the opinions of people who did or did not work in the city, as both groups

showed little difference in grading the community as getting better (47%-47%), worse (13%-13%), or staying the same (35%-36%).

- ◆ When comparing the findings by length of residence, we note the lowest getting better rating to be among 20+ year residents (46%-54%-41%), but only five percent lower when compared to those newest to the city. Long-term inhabitants did, however, voice the highest getting worse ratings (11%-13%-18%), although at a ratio of less than one in five respondents. And only six percent separated the about the same levels (37%-33%-39%). The older the respondent, the less likely he or she was to grade quality of life as getting better (54%-47%-40%). However, older respondents were also most inclined to voice the status quo response (32%-33%-43%) rather than the negative viewpoint (8%-16%-14%). The older the child, the less likely parents were to grade the community trend as getting better (60%-54%-49%), with nonparents only 40% likely to assign that response. Additionally, those without children or whose children were over the age of 18 assigned the highest getting worse (17%, to 6%-7%-11%) and about the same (39%, to 30%-34%-36%) responses. The ethnic tabulations showed Hispanics more complimentary relative to community improvement (60%) than the other two groups (both 45%), as well as being least likely to be negative (8%, to 12% and 16%). It was Whites/Anglos who assigned the highest about the same ratings (38%, to 31% of Others and 28% of Hispanics).

## NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT RATINGS



**Figure 3: Comparing Neighborhood Improvement Ratings By Response Year -- 1998 - 2008**

- ◆ Residents were nearly as likely to say that the quality of life in their neighborhood was getting better (21%) as to say it was getting worse (18%). The overriding opinion, as has been the case since 1998, was that quality of life was about the same (59%). Interestingly, although overall community improvement levels have increased, those opinions have not filtered down to the neighborhood level, as better (19%-23%-23%-23%-23%-21%), worse (13%-17%-16%-16%-15%-18%), and about the same (66%-58%-60%-59%-61%-59%) ratings have shown only minimal change since 2000.
- ◆ Individuals in the western portions of the city assigned higher getting better ratings (29% and 28%) than those in the eastern half (19% and 16%). The belief that neighborhoods were worse was a more popular sentiment in the

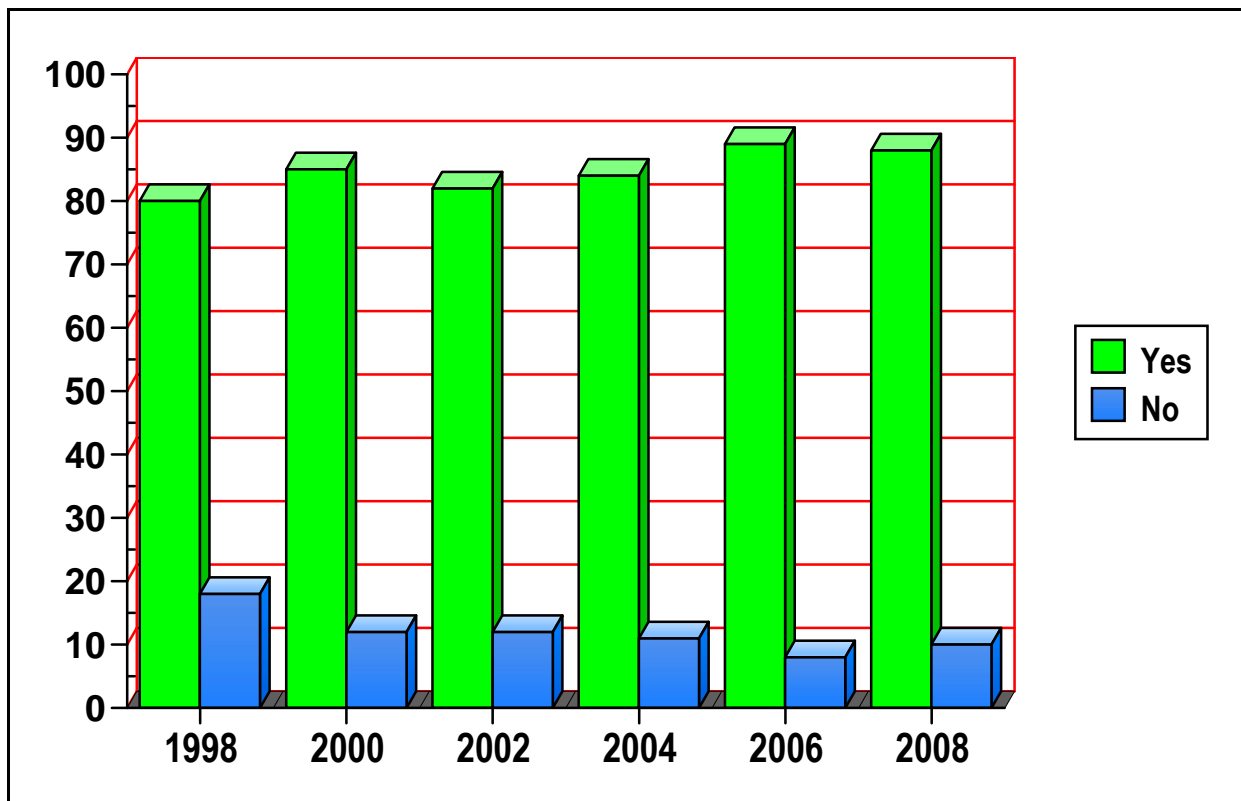
southern part of the city (24% and 22%, to 13% and 8%), as people in the Northeast and Northwest sectors assigned the lowest levels. In terms of status quo responses, percentages varied nominally, from 56% (Northeast) to 63% (Southwest). Men were more likely to grade their neighborhoods as getting better (25%-17%), while women more often considered them the same (63%-56%). Both were similar in rating neighborhoods worse (17%-19%). The 47% who rated the community better were 31% likely to assign similar viewpoints to their neighborhood. Comparatively, the 36% who graded community improvement about the same were only 13% likely to be positive toward their neighborhood, instead inclined to believe it was about the same (68%). And the 12% who felt community improvement was worse were 6% likely to rate neighborhoods as getting better, but 40% apt to grade them worse. Note that whether one believed the community was getting better (55%), worse (54%), or staying the same (68%), the majority position was that their neighborhoods were staying about the same.

- ◆ As with the two previous questions, residents who participated in the recycling program were more positive and more likely to grade quality of life in the neighborhood as getting better (32%-19%), not worse (15%-19%) or staying the same (53%-61%). When this question is compared with income levels, those making the most assigned the highest getting better marks (17%-18%-28%) and lowest getting worse findings (24%-21%-15%). About the same responses were similar, no matter one's household income (56%-60%-56%). Those declining to answer the income question were least likely to grade their neighborhood as getting better (13%), instead considering it about the same (68%). Additionally, 18% felt quality of life in the neighborhood was getting worse, ranking them second among the four subsets. Getting better ratings fluctuated when compared with education levels (25%-19%-24%), as there appeared to be little correlation between the two variables. The same was true for getting worse (15%-22%-15%) and about the same (59%-58%-60%) positions. Individuals who worked in the city were five points more apt to say neighborhood quality of life was improving (25%-20%), in contrast to being four percent less prone to say about the same (56%-60%) and two points lower for getting worse (17%-19%).
- ◆ Although the variance was minimal, the residents least likely to imply that neighborhood quality of life was getting better were 20+ year inhabitants (22%-23%-16%), who were above average in saying it had stayed the same (58%-57%-66%). However, getting worse ratings (18%-20%-16%) did not correlate with community tenure, as percentages fluctuated. When compared with age, it was the youngest who most frequently graded neighborhood improvement as getting better (25%-15%-22%), with middle-aged respondents most hesitant to assign that grade. And there was practically no difference in terms of either getting worse (17%-19%-18%)



or about the same (56%-64%-59%) findings. Parents, more so than nonparents (29%-30%-24%, to 18%), most frequently considered neighborhoods getting better. And although the variances were minor, getting worse opinions were highest among parents of young children (20%-14%-18%, to 18%), while nonparents most frequently assigned about the same levels (63%, to 51%-54%-56%). Anglos/Whites were least likely to consider neighborhoods getting better (19%, to 30% and 29%), as both Hispanic and Other respondents dispensed a higher percentage. Whites most frequently rated neighborhoods as about the same (62%, to 55% and 49%), and, to a lesser extent, as getting worse (19%, to 15% and 18%).

**FREQUENCY OF FEELING SAFE WHEN WALKING ALONE IN NEIGHBORHOOD AT NIGHT**



**Figure 4: Comparing Frequency Ratings For Feeling Safe When Walking Alone In Neighborhood At Night By Response Year -- 1998 - 2008**

- ◆ Nearly nine of ten residents sampled in 2008 (88%) responded affirmatively to feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood at night, compared to one in ten (10%) who answered no to the question. The remaining 2% had

**no opinion about the question. The current rating of 88% is higher than the benchmark standard but generally in line with previous levels (80%-85%-82%-84%-89%), an indication that even as the city has grown, residents overwhelmingly consider themselves safe when walking alone in their neighborhood at night. Also note that safety does not appear to be the reason residents have continued grading neighborhood improvement as having stayed the same since 1998, as such a vast majority continue to acknowledge feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood at night.**

- ◆ Perceptions of residents feeling safe walking alone in their neighborhood were higher in the western subsectors of the city (90% in Southwest and 94% in Northwest) than in the eastern half (84% in Northeast and 86% in Southeast), although percentages throughout the city were extremely high. Men were more likely than women to perceive themselves safe (95%-81%), as were people who graded the community as getting better (91%) rather than worse (74%). Also note that those assigning the status quo rating to community improvement more often sided with those positive about that situation (88%) rather than negative. The same trend was evident when comparing safety ratings to neighborhood improvement perceptions, as those grading neighborhoods as getting better or having stayed about the same were both more affirmative (both 92%) than if the perception was getting worse (71%). Also note that even those who felt their community or their neighborhood was getting worse were 74% and 71% likely to feel safe when walking in their neighborhood.
- ◆ Participants in the city's recycling program were likely to consider themselves safe when walking alone (95%-87%). And when the safety question is compared with household income, those least likely to consider themselves safe had the lowest household income, at under \$35k (76%-92%-91%). This subset also voiced the highest no response (15%-8%-8%) as well as no opinion comment (10%-0%-1%). Those declining to comment on the income question were 82% likely to say they were safe but 15% not likely, findings more in range with minimum-income ranges. Also less likely to grade themselves as safe were less educated respondents (74%-91%-90%), as those having no more than a high school education least frequently graded themselves safe, and were twice as likely as others to say they did not feel safe (20%-7%-10%). There was a four-point difference in frequency ratings when compared to people who did or did not work in the city (91%-87%), both marks consistent with the other.
- ◆ The longer respondents had lived in Round Rock, the less likely they were to say that they felt safe (90%-89%-82%), although the difference in levels was not significant. Similarly, the older the respondent, the less likely he or she was to answer this question affirmatively (90%-89%-84%), although the

difference in levels was less than ten percent. Whether one had children under the age of 18 (89%-90%-85%) or not (87%), there was not a significant gap in feeling safe ratings. And from the standpoint of ethnicity, “yes” ratings were higher among Hispanics (98%) than Others (91%) or Whites/Anglos (86%), who were more likely to be negative in response to the question.

### **THREE BIGGEST ISSUES CITY WILL FACE WITHIN NEXT FIVE YEARS**

**TABLE #2: COMPARING THREE BIGGEST ISSUES THE CITY WILL FACE WITHIN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS BY RESPONSE YEAR —- 2000 – 2008**

RESPONSE	OVERALL					
	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008
Traffic	68%	88%	70%	42%	53%	43%
Growth - fast growth - controlling growth	58%	46%	52%	43%	50%	36%
School related - overcrowding, lack of schools, system improvements	27%	35%	26%	31%	34%	20%
Road repair - maintenance - expansion	14%	7%	10%	23%	11%	15%
High taxes - property taxes – finances	7%	5%	9%	13%	14%	13%
Public transportation - rail	NA	5%	10%	17%	13%	13%
Crime - gangs - inadequate police	23%	17%	11%	16%	9%	13%
Overcrowding - overpopulation	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	12%
Keeping up with infrastructure needs	NA	NA	NA	NA	8%	8%
Lack of parks and recreation - activities - maintenance	NA	NA	NA	NA	4%	7%
Miscellaneous	20%	20%	9%	7%	NA	7%
Need for economic development	NA	NA	NA	NA	5%	5%
Lack of jobs - unemployment	NA	NA	NA	NA	2%	5%
Water shortage - quality	8%	8%	7%	5%	6%	5%
Planning and zoning issues	5%	5%	7%	4%	1%	4%
Lack of affordable housing - housing related	38%	38%	7%	5%	4%	4%
Transportation issues	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	4%
Economy - property values	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3%
Overconstruction	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3%
Lack of recycling program	0%	0%	NA	NA	0%	2%
Upkeep and beautification needs	NA	NA	NA	NA	1%	2%
Traffic violations	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2%

- ◆ **Growth/fast growth/controlling growth (43%) and traffic (36%) were identified by respondents as the biggest issues the city will face within the next five years. Following the top two issues were school-related issues (20%), road repair/maintenance/expansion (15%), high taxes/property taxes, public transportation/rail, and crime/gangs/inadequate police (each 13%), and overcrowding/overpopulation (12%). Each person was**



allowed to list up to three issues, which is why the percentages exceed 100%. A total of 21 areas of concern were generated by residents. When compared with the benchmark results, areas of less concern included traffic (68%-43%), growth/fast growth/controlling growth (58%-36%), school-related issues (27%-20%), crime/gangs/inadequate police (23%-13%), and lack of affordable housing/housing-related (38%-4%), although this response has been at the single digit level since 2002. Conversely, survey participants were more inclined toward the following issues: high taxes/property taxes (7%-13%); public transportation/rail (NA-13%); overcrowding/overpopulation (NA-12%); keeping up with infrastructure needs (NA-8%); lack of parks and recreation activities/maintenance (NA-8%); need for economic development (NA-5%), and lack of jobs/unemployment (NA-5%). Also note that concerns have fluctuated over the 10-year survey implementation period. The closest pattern to a gradual decline occurred for the issue of growth/fast growth/controlling growth (46%-58%-52%-43%-50%-36%), as ratings have fluctuated, although in 2004 and 2008 they dipped below the previous survey's benchmark.

- ◆ Traffic was on the minds of many residents, as it was the overriding concern to residents in three of the four subsectors. It was tops in the western half of the city (53% and 52%), as well as in the Northeast (46%). Only in the Southeast was it not the top concern, as a slightly higher percentage listed growth/fast growth/controlling growth (35%-31%) as the biggest issue the city will face. Concern with growth/fast growth/controlling growth was consistent throughout the city, as percentages ranged from 31% (Northwest) to 39% (Northeast). The same consistency marked the items school-related issues (24% in Southwest, to 17% in Northeast), road repair/maintenance/expansion (19% in Southeast, to 10% in Northwest), high taxes/property taxes (14% in Southeast, to 12% in Northeast and Northwest), and public transportation/rail (15% in Southeast and Northwest, to 9% in Northeast). Issues with more regional implications included crime/gangs of less concern in the Northwest (4%, to 13%-16%-11%), the western subsectors not as focused on overcrowding/overpopulation (6% and 8%, to 13% and 17%), and individuals in the Southeast most concerned with keeping up with infrastructure needs (13%, to 4%-6%-6%) and lack of parks and recreation activities/maintenance (10%, to 1% in Northeast). Additionally, road repair/maintenance/expansion did not draw the same degree of concern from people in the western sections of the city (11% and 10%, to 16% and 19%) when compared with the eastern halves.
- ◆ Among the top issues, men were more concerned with high taxes/property taxes (18%-8%) and public transportation (16%-9%), and women, with school-related (26%-15%), road repair/expansion (19%-12%), and

crime/gangs/inadequate police (15%-10%). Relative to the top issues of traffic (44%-41%) and growth/fast growth/controlling growth (35%-37%), the gender of the respondent had little influence on the response. When comparing getting better versus getting worse community ratings, a positive viewpoint led one to concentrate on growth/fast growth/controlling growth (37%-24%). Comparatively, high taxes/property taxes (16%-10%), crime/gangs, inadequate police (18%-12%) and keeping up with infrastructure needs (16%-6%) drew more attention from those grading community improvement negatively. Residents who considered community improvement the same assigned the highest levels to traffic (47%), growth/fast growth/controlling growth (38%) and high taxes/property taxes (17%). When comparing this question to neighborhood improvement ratings, five points separated the positive and negative evaluation in terms of traffic (46%-41%) and growth/fast growth/controlling growth (35%-30%), with those positive assigning the highest mark. One item of more concern to those negative about neighborhood improvement was crime/gangs/inadequate police (24%-8%). All other principal issues were mentioned at a similar rate.

- ◆ The only issues selected differently based on whether or not the respondent participated in the city's recycling program was nonparticipants being more likely to list traffic (43%-37%) and road repair/maintenance/expansion (17%-7%), crime/gangs/inadequate police (13%-8%), and overcrowding/overpopulation (13%-8%). As household income levels increased, residents appeared to place more emphasis on traffic (39%-40%-42%), school-related issues (14%-17%-23%), and lack of parks and recreation activities/maintenance (0%-2%-12%). Although the variance was not significant, lower income households most frequently said road repair/maintenance/expansion (19%-19%-15%) was the biggest issue the city would face. Those declining to answer the income level question were more concerned with traffic (49%) and high taxes/property taxes (21%), but less with growth/fast growth/controlling growth (31%) and road repair/maintenance/expansion (7%), when compared with the other subsets. The higher the level of one's education, the less concern he or she had with traffic (46%-44%-38%), although it was still the top concern to respondents. Also of less concern was crime/gangs/inadequate police (14%-15%-9%) and overcrowding/overpopulation (25%-11%-8%). However, items of more regard to those highly educated respondents included school-related issues (11%-21%-23%), high taxes/property taxes (9%-12%-16%), and lack of parks and recreation activities/maintenance (2%-6%-11%). And whether or not residents worked in the city, they were similarly concerned with the issues of traffic (43%-42%), growth/fast growth/controlling growth (37%-36%), and school-related issues (18%-21%). Those who worked outside the city were slightly more concerned with issues



such as road repair/maintenance/expansion (17%-12%), high taxes/property taxes (15%-10%), and need for economic development (7%-2%).

- ◆ The only item among the top issues in which tenure in the community influenced one's response was traffic (37%-50%-48%) being a greater concern to long-term inhabitants, and growth/fast growth/controlling growth (38%-38%-30%) of less regard. High taxes/property taxes (7%-10%-22%) drew a higher response from older individuals than younger ones. The same was true relative to keeping up with infrastructure needs (4%-9%-12%). The opposite was true relative to the responses crime/gangs/inadequate police (13%-18%-7%) and overcrowding/overpopulation (18%-12%-7%), as it was younger individuals who most frequently mentioned them. Parents were most concerned over the school-related issues (22%-23%-26%, to 15%) and crime/gangs/inadequate police (13%-17%-19%, to 8%). Conversely, it was nonparents who most often focused on high taxes/property taxes (18%, to 6%-14%-6%) and keeping up with infrastructure needs (11%, to 3%-4%-6%). Also note that the issue of growth/fast growth/controlling growth declined in interest as children aged (40%-39%-29%), with nonparents at 40%. The ethnic tabulations showed Whites/Anglos most concerned with traffic (45%, to 34% and 35%) and growth/fast growth/controlling growth (38%, to 29% and 31%). Others wanted the city to address issues like high taxes/property taxes (18%, to 13% and 8%), public transportation/rail (25%, to 10% and 16%) and crime/gangs/inadequate police (25%, to 10% and 18%). Additionally, Anglos/Whites wanted the city to address keeping up with infrastructure needs (10%, to 3% and 2%).

## RATING OF SELECTED TRAFFIC SITUATIONS

**TABLE #3: COMPARING THE ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION OF TRAFFIC SITUATIONS IN THE CITY BY RESPONSE YEAR**

TRAFFIC SITUATION	EXCELLENT				GOOD AND AVERAGE (Two responses 2002-2006)				BELOW AVERAGE (ONLY FAIR) OR POOR			
	2002	2004	2006	2008	2002	2004	2006	2008	2002	2004	2006	2008
On state roads and highways in Round Rock, like I-35, FM 1325, and RM 620	1%	2%	1%	4%	38%	43%	36%	30%	59%	55%	63%	65%
In and around your neighborhood	10%	13%	12%	17%	65%	67%	63%	52%	25%	20%	25%	30%

- ◆ **Nearly two of every three residents graded traffic situations on state roads and highways in Round Rock, like I-35, FM 1325, and RM 620 negatively,**



either only fair (34%) or poor (31%). Comparatively, one in three (34%) assessed the situation positively, but more often good (30%), a soft assessment, rather than excellent (4%), a more positive recognition. The ratio of positive to negative opinions was a negative 0.5 to one, lower than any previous assessment (39%-59%, 0.7:1 in 2002, to 45%-55%, 0.8:1 in 2004, and 37%-63%, 0.6:1 in 2006). Relative to traffic situations in and around their neighborhood, respondents were more positive, assigning positive ratings of 69%, although the bulk of the ratings still was the general feeling of good (52% and 17%) versus a negative perception of 30%, for a positive ratio of 2.3:1. As with the state road and traffic assessment, the 2.3:1 ratio was lower than any previous year the query has been posed (75%-25%, 3.0:1, to 80%-20%, 4.0:1, to 75%-25%, 3.0:1).

- ◆ In comparing the intensity ratings, we note that excellent ratings were higher in 2008 than any previous survey, whether the respondent was evaluating the traffic situation on state roads and highways (1%-2%-1%-4%) or in and around one's neighborhood (10%-13%-12%-17%), with the latter improving more. Part of the reason may have been the 5-point scale utilized from 2002-2006, compared to a 4-point scale in 2008. However, poor ratings were only one percent away from being the lowest score since 2002, for both state roads and highways (40%-30%-37%-31%) and only two percent relative to in and around the neighborhoods (12%-12%-9%-11%), although no real change has occurred among those most critical. It would appear that although residents continue to be critical of traffic situations on state roads and highways, those most opinionated appeared to be slightly more pleased than in previous years. At the same time, those most critical were less evident this year than previously, especially regarding state roads and highways. Therefore, the reputation of traffic situations continues to be negative, and more negative than before, although the positive intense ratings improved and the most critical comments declined.

**TABLE #4: ASSESSING CONDITION OF TRAFFIC SITUATIONS IN THE CITY BY SUBSECTOR**

TRAFFIC SITUATION	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR
On state roads and highways in Round Rock, like I-35, FM 1325, and RM 620	39%	61%	35%	64%	29%	71%	35%	66%
In and around your neighborhood	72%	28%	69%	30%	69%	32%	67%	32%

- ◆ Although the percentages were minimal, people in the eastern parts of the city were more likely to assess traffic situations on state roads and highways excellent (6% and 6%) than their brethren in the west (1% and 2%). Overall,



the variance of positive marks for state roads and highways was ten percent, with much less positive opinions in the Northwest (29%) than in other parts of the city (39%-35%-35%). In assigning excellent ratings for traffic situations in and around their neighborhood, excellent ratings varied by a slightly higher rate, with the higher percentages in the west (21% and 19%) rather than the east (17%-14%), although the full variance in ratings was less than ten percent. In comparing combined positive opinions, residents were fairly consistent in their assessment, with 72% and 69% in the east and 69% and 67% in the west.

- ◆ A supplemental review comparing the two traffic assessments with neighborhood improvement shows 9% and 31% who graded the situation positively to grade traffic situations on state roads and highway either excellent or good. That compared with 0% and 26% who rated neighborhoods getting worse, and those who shared the status quo viewpoint 4% and 32% likely to assign a positive grade. When it came to comparing neighborhood improvement with traffic situations, those most positive gave a higher excellent rating (28%) than if the grade was getting worse (3%) or staying the same (18%). Positive marks for the three subsets were 73%, 47% and 75%, compared to negative levels of 27%, 52%, and 25%.

**TABLE #5: ASSESSING CONDITION OF TRAFFIC SITUATIONS IN THE CITY BY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATING**

TRAFFIC SITUATION	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR
On state roads and highways in Round Rock, like I-35, FM 1325, and RM 620	41%	59%	22%	76%	30%	70%
In and around your neighborhood	73%	27%	54%	44%	67%	33%

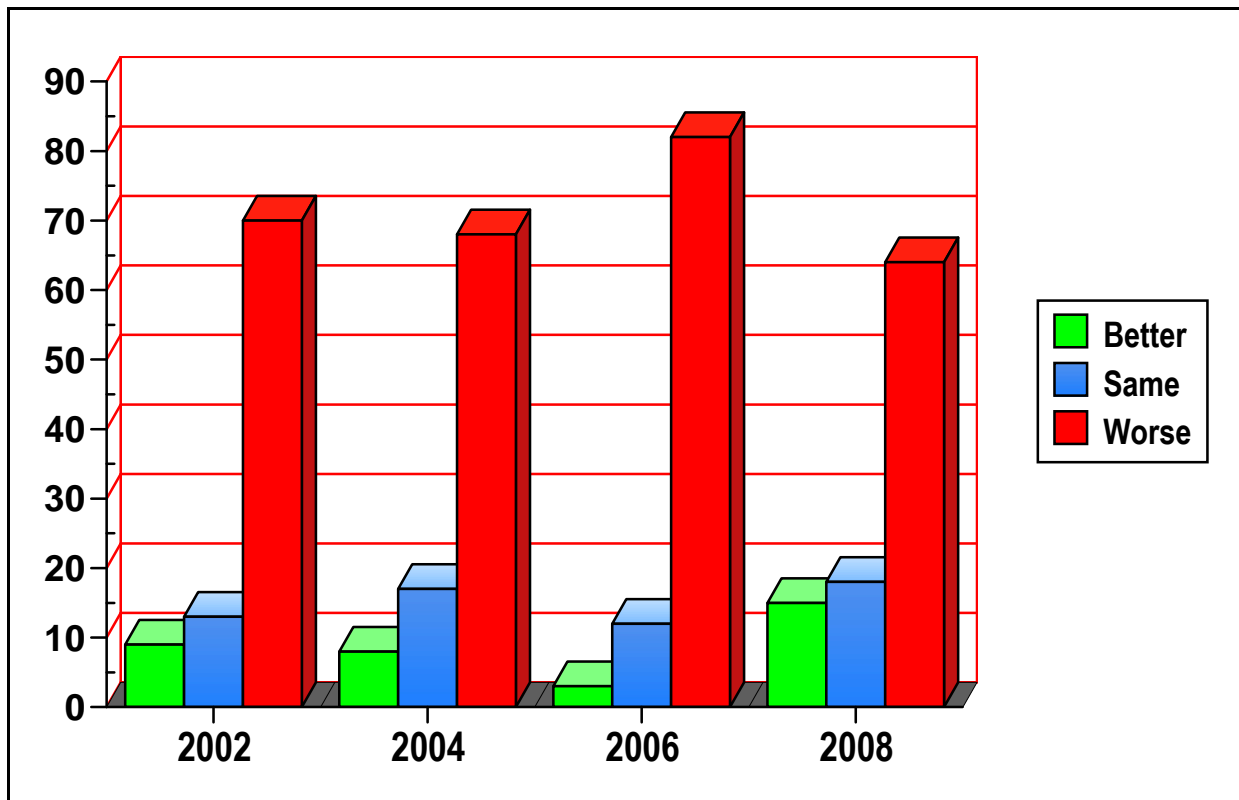
- ◆ Of the three community improvement subsets, at no point did a majority voice a positive assessment of traffic situations on state roads and highways in Round Rock. The highest percentage was the 41% established by those most positive, declining to 30% for those sharing a status quo viewpoint and 22% for those most critical. Note that the percentage variance between the high and the low rating was 19%, the same difference as for those evaluating traffic in and around their neighborhood (73%-67%-54%).
- ◆ When grading traffic situations on state roads and highways, there was very little difference in terms of excellent ratings (5%-4%-4%), indicating that one's opinion about community improvement did not make anyone more intense in his or her positive evaluation. However, where it did change was in terms of assigning a poor rating (24%-32%-57%), as those most negative



were more than twice as likely to be critical of the described traffic situations. Respondents who graded the community as getting better assigned the highest positive soft rating (36%-26%-18%), while the most significant stayed the same mark came from those rating the community as about the same (35%-38%-20%).

- ◆ Residents were critical about traffic situations on state roads no matter how long they had lived in the city (30%-32%-33%) or how old they were (29%-35%-30%), as each subset assigned similar poor ratings. The closest mark to a majority positive rating came from Hispanics, as 48% graded them good or excellent. That compared with percentages of 37% (Other) and 32% (Whites/Anglos).
- ◆ No matter how one rated the community, a majority of residents graded traffic situations in and around their neighborhood good or excellent (73%-67%-54%). Poor marks were highest among those grading the community as getting worse (9%-10%-28%), but they represented only 12% of the full sample. Those who believed the community had stayed about the same were generally in the same range as people positive. Combined good and excellent ratings exceeded 50% when compared by tenure in the community (72%-62%-68%) and age of the respondent (70%-70%-71%). In contrast to traffic situations on state roads and highways, Hispanics were no more positive (71%) than the others (69% and 73%).

## GRADING OF TRAFFIC IN ROUND ROCK COMPARED TO TWO YEARS AGO



**Figure 5: Comparing Traffic Improvement Ratings By Response Year -- 2002 - 2008**

- ◆ Nearly two of three residents sampled (64%) judged that traffic in Round Rock compared to two years ago was getting worse. The remaining one third were similarly divided between feeling that traffic was getting better (15%) or staying about the same (18%). The final 3% of the sample chose the no opinion response. When compared with prior results, the current level of 64% is lower than any previous survey (70%-68%-82%) and significantly different from that voiced only two years earlier. If the 2006 rating is removed, percentages have gradually declined since 2002, although respondents are still more negative than positive. Also showing improvement were getting better levels (9%-8%-3%-15%), as did stayed the same ratings (13%-17%-12%-18%), with the exception of the spike in 2006.
- ◆ Current findings show very few individuals in the Northeast subsector willing to grade traffic in Round Rock as getting better (7%). In fact, getting better ratings were three times higher in the Southeast (21%), and twice as high in the two western sectors (13% and 15%). What was similar in both the

eastern (16% and 20%) and western (17% and 15%) halves of the city was the about the same levels. Getting worse ratings varied dramatically between the Northeast and Southeast subsectors (75%-54%), compared to similar findings in the west (68% and 67%). Therefore, the Northeast appeared to be more impacted by negative traffic perceptions, especially when compared with the southeast portion of the city. Men and women were similar in their opinions about traffic, both assigning nearly the same better (15%-14%), worse (62%-66%), and about the same (20%-15%) percentages. No matter how positive or negative people were about their community (59%-70%-74%) or neighborhood (61%-65%-68%), significant percentages graded traffic as getting worse when compared to two years ago. And only those grading the two environments positively (21%-10%-10% and 26%-12%-12%) were willing to consider things as getting better.

- ◆ Whether the resident participated in the city's recycling program or not, he or she was just as likely to grade traffic better (13%-15%), worse (63%-65%), or about the same (18%-17%). The higher the household income, the less apt the person was to say that traffic had stayed the same (27%-18%-15%). Instead, those making the most money said that traffic was either getting better (15%-13%-18%) or worse (59%-64%-64%), but more often the negative response. And when compared by education, those more highly educated were less apt to grade traffic worse (69%-64%-61%), instead, looking more favorably toward it getting better (10%-16%-16%), but only minimally. It is also interesting to note that people who worked in the city were more likely to grade traffic better (21%-12%) or at least the same (24%-15%). Conversely, those who did not work in the city took a more critical viewpoint of traffic in Round Rock, assigning the higher getting worse rating (69%-54%).
- ◆ People who had lived in Round Rock for the longest period of time were most critical of traffic compared to two years ago (62%-60%-74%). And not surprisingly, they were least likely to say that it was getting better (14%-20%-12%), although the difference was not as pronounced. Younger people most frequently acknowledged improvement (22%-15%-7%), with older respondents more likely to say traffic was getting worse (55%-64%-74%). One response that did not vary significantly based on age was the about the same response (20%-17%-16%). The older the child, the more likely his or her parents were to say that traffic was getting worse (50%-53%-70%), with nonparents slightly more critical (71%) than people with teenage children. Parents, especially those with pre-teen children, were more likely to grade traffic as getting better (19%-24%-13%, to 12%) as well as being about the same (27%-21%-16%, to 14%). Note that parents of young children more often acknowledged that traffic had stayed the same, whereas pre-teen parents represented the highest getting better



response subset. From the Ethnic subset standpoint, it was Hispanics who most likely said traffic was getting better (23%, to 14% of Whites/Anglos and 13% of Others), Others who graded it as about the same (27%, to 16% and 15%), and Whites/Anglos who felt it was getting worse (67%, to both 55%).



# SECTION TWO: Evaluating And Trending Opinions About City Services

## ASSESSING QUALITY OF LOCAL CITY SERVICES

**TABLE #6: COMPARING QUALITY OF LOCAL CITY SERVICES BY  
RESPONSE YEAR — 2000 – 2008**

SERVICE	EXCELLENT (Exel/good in 2000)				GOOD				AVERAGE				BELOW AVERAGE POOR			
	'00	'04	'06	'08	'00	'04	'06	'08	'00	'04	'06	'08	'00	'04	'06	'08
Maintenance of city streets	NA	12%	14%	13%	NA	44%	45%	50%	NA	30%	29%	26%	NA	14%	11%	10%
Transportation planning	17%	4%	4%	5%	NA	21%	19%	22%	52%	29%	29%	25%	13%	29%	37%	34%
Trash collection	83%	29%	33%	36%	NA	52%	47%	46%	14%	16%	13%	12%	4%	2%	5%	5%
City planning	40%	5%	8%	9%	NA	39%	45%	44%	32%	35%	27%	26%	19%	7%	10%	9%
Water and wastewater service	63%	15%	16%	21%	NA	55%	55%	51%	25%	22%	21%	21%	11%	6%	5%	4%
Police department	72%	29%	31%	37%	NA	47%	48%	43%	17%	16%	13%	14%	6%	4%	5%	4%
Municipal court	36%	9%	7%	10%	NA	32%	31%	29%	19%	18%	18%	17%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Fire department	78%	37%	37%	36%	NA	46%	45%	38%	10%	8%	12%	10%	1%	0%	0%	0%
City parks	59%	25%	29%	30%	NA	42%	47%	43%	23%	22%	16%	15%	11%	4%	6%	6%
City-sponsored recreational activities like the youth basketball program, swimming lessons, instructional classes, and community-wide events like the Easter Egg Hunt	56%	25%	29%	28%	NA	43%	42%	41%	21%	14%	17%	15%	6%	4%	4%	4%
Library	73%	36%	32%	33%	NA	34%	39%	37%	10%	11%	15%	13%	2%	3%	3%	3%

- ◆ Fire department (84%-10%, 8.4:1), trash collection (94%-17%, 5.5:1), police department (94%-18%, 5.2:1), the library (83%-16%, 5.2:1), and city-sponsored recreation activities, like the youth basketball program, swimming lessons, instructional classes, and community-wide events like the Easter Egg Hunt (84%-19%, 4.4:1) were the five local city services graded most positively. Because of the five-point scale utilized for the questioning, the grading scale was established by incorporating a ratio that combined the two positive responses (excellent and good) with the middle response (average) and dividing that sum by the two negative items (below average and poor) coupled with the middle response. Because the



**middle response was combined with each side, the combined responses in this grading system exceed 100%. Of the 11 services tested, residents were least pleased with transportation planning (52%-59%, 0.9:1), the only service to score higher negatives than positives, as well as city planning (79%-35%, 2.3:1), maintenance of city streets (89%-36%, 2.5:1), and municipal court (56%-20%, 2.8:1). When compared with the 2000 results, only two services graded lower based on the ratios: transportation planning (1.1:1-0.9:1) and the library (6.9:1-5.2:1). Conversely, growth in positive ratings was most evident in terms of water and wastewater service (2.4:1-3.8:1), police (3.9:1-5.2:1), city parks (2.4:1-4.2:1), and city-sponsored recreational activities (2.9:1-4.4:1).**

- ◆ In comparing the results from the four surveys displayed in the above table and using the same ratio formulas, positive assessments for four services improved each year. Those were city planning (1.4:1-1.9:1-2.2:1-2.3:1), water and wastewater service (2.4:1-3.3:1-3.5:1-3.8:1), police department (3.9:1-4.7:1-5.1:1-5.2:1), and city parks (2.4:1-3.0:1-4.2:1-4.2:1). One additional service, maintenance of city streets, exhibited growth from 2002, as 2000 results were not available (NA-2.0:1-2.2:1-2.5:1). What has not changed since 2000 was residents' high perceptions of trash collection (5.2:1-5.4:1-5.2:1-5.5:1). Another service in which opinions have changed little was municipal court (2.4:1-2.8:1-2.7:1-2.8:1). City-sponsored recreational activities saw impressions increase between 2000 and 2004 before maintaining a high positive impression (2.9:1-4.6:1-4.2:1-4.4:1), while opinions of the library improved after two previous declines when compared with levels established in 2000 (7.0:1-5.8:1-4.8:1-5.2:1). Although highly rated in each survey, opinions have fluctuated regarding the fire department (8.0:1-11.4:1- 7.8:1-8.4:1). The final service, transportation planning, has been negatively perceived since 2004 (1.1:1-0.9:1-0.8:1-0.9:1), although opinions have varied little since first presented. Several of these questions were initially presented to residents in 1998 as part of that survey, generating positive ratios of 4.0:1 (92%-23% for police department and 92%-23% for trash collection), 3.9:1 (75%-19% for city-sponsored recreation activities), 3.0:1 (86%-29% for city parks and 79%-26% for library), and 2.5:1 (56%-22% for municipal court).
- ◆ In comparing excellent ratings from 2004 to 2008 (in 2000, posted results combined good and excellent responses), several services have shown a degree of improvement. Those were trash collection (29%-33%-36%), city planning (5%-8%-9%), water and wastewater service (15%-16%-21%), police department (29%-31%-37%), and city parks (25%-29%-30%). And when reviewing only the positive impressions (excellent/good), between 2000 and 2008, we note residents more pleased with transportation planning (17%-27%), city planning (40%-53%), water and wastewater service



(63%-72%), police department (72%-80%), city parks (59%-73%), and city-sponsored recreational activities (56%-69%). The remaining services were generally graded less positively, but by less than four percent over the 8-year period. Four services showed improvement in quality ratings every year: maintenance of city streets, since 2004 (56%-59%-63%); city planning (40%-44%-53%-53%); water and wastewater services (63%-70%-71%-72%); and police department (72%-76%-79%-80%). The fire department, the service shown by the ratio to be thought of differently each year, actually has seen positive opinions decline each year since 2004 (78%-83%-82%-74%), to where it is below the 2000 benchmark level, although minimally.

- ◆ Current levels show residents most proud of the police department (37% excellent), trash collection and the fire department (both 36%), the library (33%), and city parks (30%). What did not please them, especially when compared with the top items, were transportation planning (5%), city planning (9%), and municipal court (10%). Additionally, only 13% rated maintenance of city streets excellent. When comparing how residents ranked the services in terms of intensity versus community ratios, we note the police department scored higher in intensity rankings than community consensus (1st, to 3rd), indicating a portion of the community much more pleased with the department than the general public, although it was highly thought of in both areas. The same trend was evident relative to water and wastewater services (7th in intensity, to 10th in ratio). Conversely, the reputation of the fire department was greater than the community's experience, as the ratio was higher than its intensity grade (1st, to 3rd). The same was true in terms of city planning (7th in ratio, to 10th in intensity). It should be noted that fire departments are more often evaluated based on reputation, because most people don't come into direct contact based on its primary activity of fighting fires.
- ◆ When utilizing a five-point scale, assigning the status quo response to both positive and negative impressions helps to show in which direction the respondent is "leaning." For example, the highest positive grades were assigned to trash collection, water and wastewater service, and police department (each 94%), followed by maintenance of city streets (89%), city parks (88%), and fire department and city-sponsored recreational activities (both 84%). At the same time, the services evaluated most negatively were transportation planning (59%) and city planning (35%), as well as maintenance of city streets (36%). Note that maintenance of city streets was both highly rated and critically perceived because of its average score of 26% being applied to both viewpoints. In comparing the difference between the two viewpoints, the gaps between positive and

negative opinions were largest regarding trash collection (94%-17%, -77), police department (94%-18%, -76), and fire department (84%-10%, -74). Residents also voiced approval of water and wastewater service (94%-25%, -69), city parks (88%-21%, -67), and the library (83%-16%, -67). Comparatively, the narrowest differences occurred in the assessments of transportation planning (52%-59%, +7), municipal court (56%-20%, -36), and city planning (79%-35%, -44). Note that in almost all instances, positive impressions were significantly greater than the negative outlook.

**TABLE #7: COMBINED QUALITY (EXCELLENT/GOOD/AVERAGE TO AVERAGE/BELOW AVERAGE/POOR) RATINGS OF LOCAL CITY SERVICES IN 2008 BY SUBSECTOR**

SERVICE	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Maintenance of city streets	88%	38%	88%	37%	90%	37%	92%	29%
Transportation planning	50%	56%	52%	58%	49%	72%	60%	48%
Trash collection	94%	18%	93%	20%	96%	11%	93%	14%
City planning	81%	24%	78%	38%	77%	38%	75%	29%
Water and wastewater service	93%	20%	95%	28%	93%	27%	96%	29%
Police department	93%	16%	94%	21%	94%	21%	90%	11%
Municipal court	65%	23%	51%	22%	58%	17%	55%	16%
Fire department	88%	14%	87%	11%	86%	12%	82%	4%
City parks	92%	22%	88%	22%	88%	21%	84%	25%
City-sponsored recreational activities like the youth basketball program, swimming lessons, instructional classes, and community-wide events like the Easter Egg Hunt	88%	14%	86%	20%	83%	25%	81%	16%
Library	87%	15%	82%	18%	80%	21%	85%	10%

- ◆ In comparing the combined positive responses, nine of ten residents throughout the city were positive about trash collection (94%-93%-96%-93%), water and wastewater service (93%-95%-93%-96%), and police department (93%-94%-94%-90%). Other 90% positive perceptions involved maintenance of city streets in both western subsectors (90% and 92%, to both 88%) and city parks in the Northeast (92%, to 88%-88%-84%). Positive ratings were the predominant theme throughout the city, although opinions did differ relative to transportation planning (60% in Southwest, to 49% in Northwest) and municipal court (65% in Northeast, to 51% in Southeast).



- ◆ When evaluating services based on the contrast in ratings between positive and negative opinions, the gap showed people in the Northeast most complimentary of the police department (93%-16%, -77), trash collection (94%-18%, -76), fire department (88%-14%, -74), and city-sponsored recreational activities (88%-14%, -74). Comparatively, individuals from the Southwest leaned most toward the fire department (87%-11%, -76), trash collection (93%-20%, -73) and police department (94%-21%, -73); the Northwest, toward trash collection (96%-11%, -85), fire department (86%-12%, -74), and police department (94%-21%, -73); and in the Southeast, trash collection (93%-14%, -79), police department (90%-11%, -79), fire department (82%-4%, -78), and the library (85%-10%, -75). The difference was most narrow for transportation planning, in the Northwest (49%-72%, +23), Northeast (50%-56%, +6), Southeast (52%-58%, +6), and Southwest (60%-48%, -12). After that was municipal court in the Northeast (65%-23%, -42), Southeast (51%-22%, -29), and Southwest (55%-16%, -39), and city planning in the Northwest (77%-38%, -39).
- ◆ Negative impressions were most evident for transportation planning, as three of four subsectors posted majority critical ratings (56% and 58%, to 72% and 48%). The services with the second and third largest degrees of critical comments were maintenance of city streets (38% and 37%, to 37% and 29%) and city planning (24% and 38%, to 38% and 29%), especially in the Southeast and Northwest). Those were the only services in which combined negative perceptions exceeded 30%. Comparatively, across the board critical concerns were least evident as residents evaluated the fire department (14% and 11%, to 12% and 4%). When examining the various negative assessments, we found that differences were evident regarding transportation planning (72% in Northwest, to 48% in Southwest), city planning (38% in Southeast and Northwest, to 24% in Northeast), police department (21% in Southeast and Northwest, to 11% in Southwest), city sponsored recreational activities (25% in Northwest, to 14% in Northeast), and library (21% in Northwest, to 10% in Southwest).

**TABLE #8: COMBINED QUALITY (EXCELLENT/GOOD/AVERAGE TO AVERAGE/BELOW AVERAGE/POOR) RATINGS OF LOCAL CITY SERVICES IN 2008 BY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATING**

SERVICE	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Maintenance of city streets	94%	30%	72%	58%	90%	39%
Transportation planning	58%	51%	28%	78%	56%	64%
Trash collection	95%	13%	96%	20%	90%	22%
City planning	88%	24%	60%	62%	75%	45%
Water and wastewater service	96%	24%	84%	28%	92%	27%
Police department	96%	15%	82%	34%	93%	18%
Municipal court	64%	19%	38%	26%	54%	21%
Fire department	89%	10%	80%	20%	89%	9%
City parks	93%	17%	74%	30%	90%	27%
City-sponsored recreational activities like the youth basketball program, swimming lessons, instructional classes, and community-wide events like the Easter Egg Hunt	90%	14%	70%	32%	81%	22%
Library	89%	12%	56%	24%	64%	22%

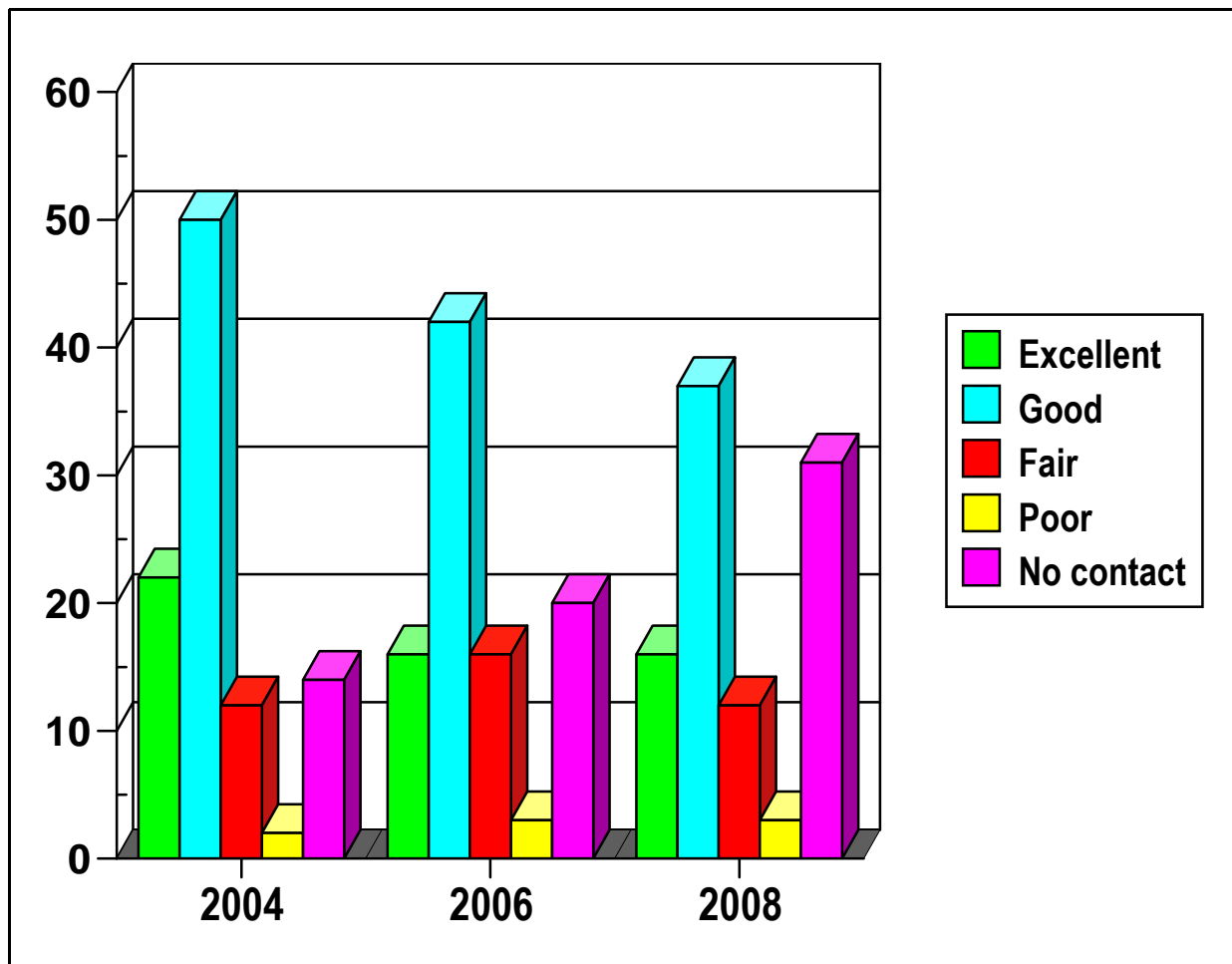
- ◆ Respondents who rated the community getting better assigned the highest combined positive ratings to water and wastewater service and police department (both 96%), trash collection (95%), maintenance of city streets (94%), city parks (93%), and city-sponsored recreational activities (90%). Conversely, they were most critical of transportation planning (51%), maintenance of city streets (30%), and city planning and water and wastewater services (both 24%). When the two contrasting viewpoints are explored, the gap showed this subset of respondents most pleased with trash collection (95%-13%, -82), police department (96%-15%, -81), fire department (89%-10%, -79), city parks (93%-17%, -76) and city sponsored recreational activities (90%-14%, -76). This group of residents was also the only one to more positively than negatively assess transportation planning (58%-51%, -7).
- ◆ Trash collection (96%), water and wastewater service (84%), police department (82%), and fire department (80%) were the services classified most positively by residents who had already graded the community as getting worse. At the same time, the services they rated most critically were transportation planning (78%), city planning (62%), and maintenance of city streets (58%). Overall, one-half of the services were assessed negatively at levels of 30% or higher. Not surprisingly, the gap between positive and negative assessments was more narrow with this group, although significant when evaluating trash collection (96%-20%, -76), fire department (80%-20%, -60), and water and wastewater service (84%-28%,



-56). Comparatively, the variance was most narrow relative to transportation planning (28%-78%, +50), city planning (60%-62%, +2), municipal court (38%-26%, -12), and maintenance of city streets (72%-58%, -14).

- ◆ Those respondents whose view of community improvement was status quo were most pleased with the police department (93%), water and wastewater service (92%), maintenance of city streets and city parks (both 90%) and fire department (89%), compared to being displeased with transportation planning (64%), city planning (45%), and maintenance of city streets (39%). And the gap between ratings showed them to lean most positively toward the fire department (89%-9%, -80), police department (93%-18%, -75), trash collection (90%-22%, -68), and water/wastewater service (92%-27%, -65). Transportation planning (56%-64%, +8), city planning (75%-45%, -30) were the programs least likely to be complimented by those critical of city direction.
- ◆ When the three directional subsets are compared (improved-same-worse), the following services declined by the largest amounts from top to bottom: library (89%-64%-56%, -33); transportation planning (58%-56%-28%, -30); city planning (88%-75%-60%, -28); municipal court (64%-54%-38%, -26); maintenance of city streets (94%-90%-72%, -22); and city sponsored recreational activities (90%-81%-70%, -20). Where community improvement ratings had minimal influence on one's opinion of city services were for items such as trash collection (95%-90%-96%, +1), fire department (89%-89%-80%, -9), water and wastewater service (96%-92%-84%, -12), and police department (96%-93%-82%, -14).

## RATING SERVICE RECEIVED FROM CITY ON THE TELEPHONE



**Figure 6: Comparing Service Received From City From Telephone Call By Response Year -- 2004 - 2008**

- ◆ Excellent (16%) or good (37%) was the way respondents who acknowledged having called the city of Round Rock on the telephone for services or information most often described the service they received. Comparatively, 12% rated the service only fair, and 3% poor. Nearly one in three said they had never called the city (31%) and one percent had no opinion regarding the question. The ratio of positive to negative comments was 3.5:1, a level higher than in 2006 (58%-19%, 3.1:1) but lower than in 2004 (73%-14%, 5.2:1).
- ◆ It is difficult to compare the benchmark ratio with the other two readings because "have never called the city" was not an available response, although 14% did respond "don't know" in 2004. Overall positive ratings

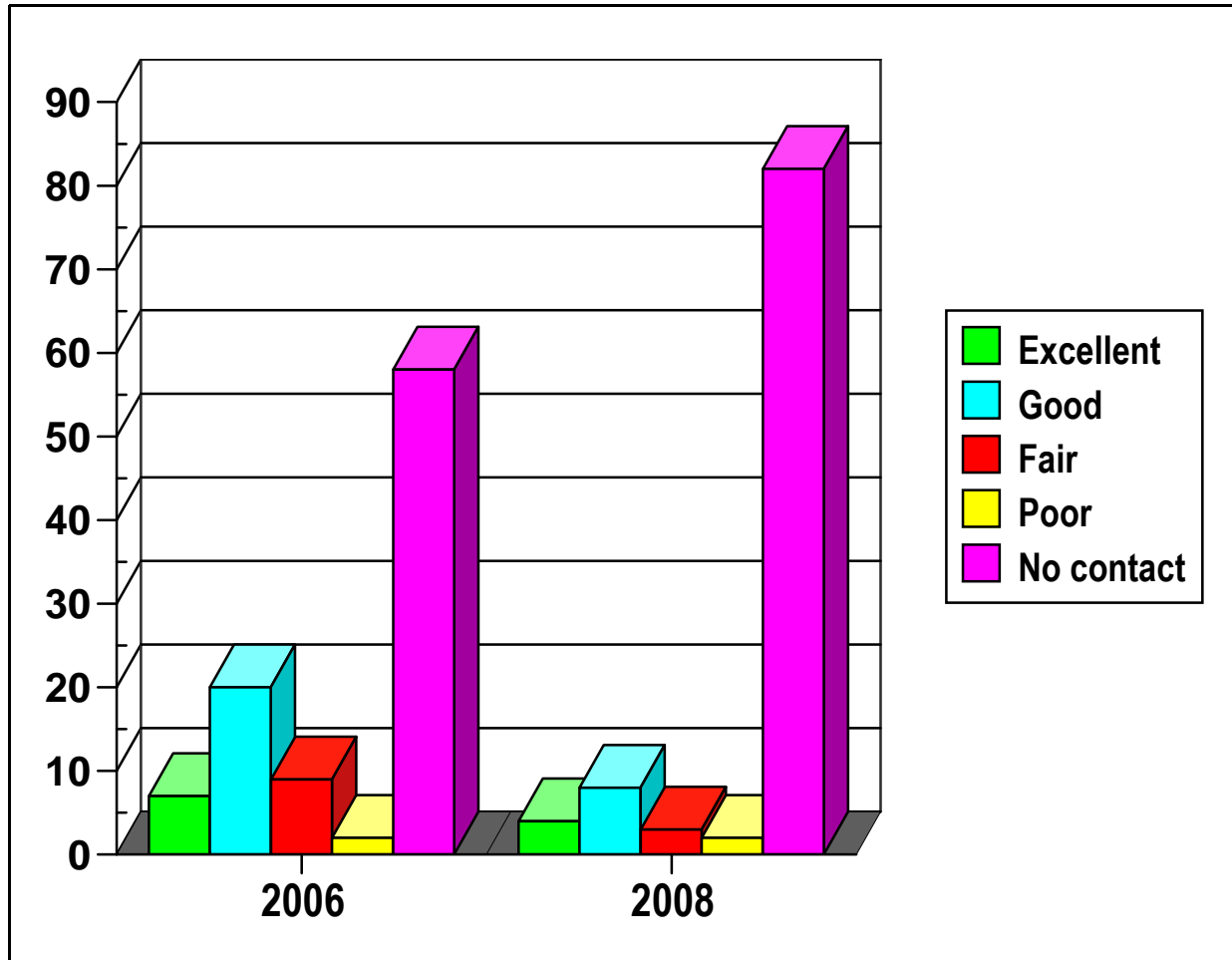
were lower this year (58%-53%), as were negative comments (19%-15%), with the difference caused by higher never called the city ratings this year (20%-31%). Note that in both 2006 and 2008, residents were similarly complimentary (16%-16%) and critical (3%-3%). Excellent ratings were higher in 2004 (22%), compared to poor levels being one percent less (2%).

- ◆ People in the Northwest were much less likely to have telephone contact with the city, as their response of 40% never called the city was at least eleven percent higher than anywhere else (29%-29%-25%). The higher non-contact ratings caused other percentages to be lower, and the ratio showed residents in this part of the city to be least positive in terms of evaluating service received on the telephone (44%-15%, 2.9:1), although positive opinions were nearly three times higher than negative attitudes. People in the Northeast were most positive about customer service, at a ratio of 4.9:1 (59%-12%), followed by a 3.9:1 in the Southwest (59%-15%), and 3.5:1 in the Southeast (53%-15%). Also note that intense satisfaction was much higher in the Northeast (24%) than elsewhere (15%-8%-19%), with individuals in the Northwest least pleased. However, note that negative opinions were no lower than 12% in the Northeast, but no higher than 15% anywhere else.
- ◆ Gender had no impact as to who did or did not contact the city, as identical rates of 31% said they had never called the city. Of those who did contact the city, positive levels were slightly higher among women (56%-51%) and negative marks with men (17%-11%). Noncontact ratings were slightly higher among people who felt community improvement was the same (34%) rather than worse (30%) or getting better (28%). However, people who graded the community positively had a more enjoyable experience (61%) with the service they received than if they felt the community had stayed the same (48%) or was getting worse (42%). Also, the more negative the perception, the higher the only fair or poor marks (11%-16%-24%). Note the ratio among those most positive was 5.5 to one, compared to 1.5 to one from negative individuals. Residents were much more positive about their experience with the city when the question is compared with neighborhood improvement rating, as excellent ratings were eight percent higher if it was getting better. The about the same (15%) and getting worse (7%) perspectives were similar. However, people who considered their neighborhood getting worse were 54% positive with the service received from the city, 12% higher than the community improvement rating showed. Also, a lower percentage of residents who graded their neighborhood as getting worse never called the city (23%).

- ◆ People who participated in the city's recycling program were more positive about customer service than nonparticipants (62%-52%), even though both groups had a 31% incidence of never having called the city. The income level of the household had little impact on customer contact, as percentages declined only minimally between those who earned the least and those who made the most (34%-33%-31%). The lowest never called the city rating came from people who declined to answer the income level question, at 27%. However, what did decline, based on income levels, was the customer service rating (57%-54%-51%), although by only six points. And those declining to answer the question were also only 51% positive about customer service. Negative opinions grew with higher income levels (9%-15%-16%), although the percentages were nominal. One finding that was evident was the influence of contact and education level. The higher the education level, the greater the likelihood someone would have contact with the city (36%-35%-24%), as respondents with more than a college education were least likely to have never contacted the city. However, those who did have contact with the city were not more or less pleased based on their education level, as positive comments fluctuated (55%-50%-56%), although those least educated were most intense in terms of excellent ratings (25%-14%-15%). Residents who did not work in the city were slightly more positive than those who did in terms of good or excellent ratings.
- ◆ Respondents who had lived in the city for nine years or fewer were significantly more likely to have never called the city (37%-24%-24%). Being less likely to contact the city, it is not surprising to see that same group less likely to grade the contact positively (49%-56%-63%), but in addition, their critical comments were lowest (13%-18%-15%). Persons under the age of 44 were most likely to have never called the city, based on the survey results (38%-25%-28%). Higher never called the city ratings led to lower excellent (14%-16%-19%), combined positive (49%-55%-57%), and lower combined negative (12%-18%-16%) ratings. What those percentages equated to was the highest ratio among the youngest portion of the sample (4.1:1-3.1:1-3.6:1). The older the child, the less likely the parent was to have never called the city (33%-32%-26%), with nonparents within that range, at 32%. In terms of overall perceptions, nonparents had 52% good or excellent opinions, compared to 53%, 52%, and 58% of parents sharing similar viewpoints. Negative opinions regarding customer service were similar no matter the age of one's children (12%-15%-15%, to 15% of nonparents). In terms of ethnic background, Hispanics were more likely to have never called the city (38%) rather than Whites/Anglos (31%) or Others (27%). However, it was Whites/Anglos who were most positive about the service they received (55%, to 43% of Hispanics and 51% of Others).

NonAnglo respondents were similarly critical at rates of 20%, compared to 13% of Whites/Anglos.

### **RATING SERVICE RECEIVED FROM CITY BY WAY OF E-MAIL**



**Figure 7: Comparing Service Received From City From E-Mail By Response Year -- 2006 & 2008**

- ◆ Asked to describe the service they receive when they e-mail the city of Round Rock for services or information, more than four of five (82%) said they had never e-mailed the city. Of the remaining 18%, 12% were positive about the service, 5% negative, and 2% had no opinion. Intensity ratings were minimal, with 4% considering the service excellent versus 2% poor. Therefore, although contact with the city by way of e-mail was minimal, the ratio of positive to negative opinions was 2.4 to one. Compared with previous ratings, fewer people in 2008 acknowledge contacting the city in

**this manner, as levels of no contact were greater (58%-82%). However, the satisfaction ratio in 2006 (27%-10%, 2.7:1) was similar to the current mark.**

- ◆ No matter where one lived, be it the eastern portion of the city (81% and 82%) or western half (81% and 83%), at least four of five said they had never e-mailed the city. Satisfaction ranged from 14% in the Southwest to 10% in the Northeast. Comparatively, negative assessments of customer service were no less than 3% (Southeast) but no higher than 7% (Northwest). Men and women were similar in their not e-mailing the city (81%-83%), while those who did were similarly satisfied with the service received (12%-12%). Eighty percent of people who rated the community as getting better have never e-mailed the city, ten points lower than those who considered it to be getting worse (90%). And those who felt it was about the same were more in line with those positive about community improvement, at 80%. Although limited because of the high percentage of non e-mail contact, customer service was evaluated more positively if a similar viewpoint was shared about the city in general (16%) rather than if one's assessment of the community was negative (6%) or status quo (9%). In terms of neighborhood improvement, there was no difference in never e-mailing the city (81%-81%-82%) whether the neighborhood was graded as better, worse, or the same. Quality ratings for the three subsets were 14%, 8%, and 12%.
- ◆ Never having e-mailed the city was not impacted by whether or not the respondent had participated in the city's recycling program (79%-82%) or worked in the city (81%-82%). Residents whose household income was more than \$75K had a higher rate of e-mailing, as their non-contact percentages were lower (85%-85%-79%), although not by a significant amount. Additionally, never e-mailing the city was influenced by education levels, as those less educated were more likely to have never engaged in that activity (87%-82%-80%), although at no time did the level dip below 80% who had not e-mailed the city. In terms of quality ratings, there was a slight advantage in quality among recycling program participants (14%-11%), households with higher income levels (9%-9%-16%), and by a slight margin those more educated (10%-11%-12%). Also more positive about the service received were individuals who worked in the city (13%-11%), although in all instances, the differences were negligible.
- ◆ One's lack of contact with the city by way of e-mail did not appear to be impacted based on tenure in the city (83%-81%-80%), and not significantly so when compared by the age of the respondent (81%-79%-85%). And when compared by the age of one's children, the range of non e-mailing was 84% (nonparents) to 77% (parents of pre-teens). The ethnic tabulations showed Others to most often not contact the city by way of e-mail (87%), a higher level than with either Whites/Anglos (81%) or Hispanics (78%). Of



those who did contact the city by way of e-mail, the most positive subsets were long-term residents (11%-9%-16%), younger respondents rather than older (14%-14%-9%), parents rather than nonparents (13%-17%-13%, to 10%), and Hispanics rather than Whites/Anglos or Others (18%, to 12% and 6%).

## ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING AT ADDRESSING CERTAIN COMMON PROBLEMS

**TABLE #9: COMPARING ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING ADDRESSING COMMON PROBLEMS BY RESPONSE YEAR -- 1998 – 2008**

PROBLEM	EXCELLENT					GOOD					ONLY FAIR/POOR				
	'98	'02	'04	'06	'08	'98	'02	'04	'06	'08	'98	'02	'04	'06	'08
Abandoned vehicles	11%	17%	15%	23%	29%	54%	52%	56%	58%	47%	25%	26%	21%	11%	15%
Lots overgrown with weeds	4%	9%	10%	13%	14%	40%	50%	48%	53%	49%	48%	36%	38%	30%	32%
Enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way, such as keeping them clear of real estate signs and private business signs	4%	8%	14%	17%	16%	48%	42%	47%	58%	53%	34%	48%	37%	23%	27%

- ◆ **Abandoned vehicles (78%-15%, 5.1:1) was the common problem residents felt the city was doing the best job addressing, based on this item scoring the highest ratio of positive to negative comments. Also graded positively, although at a lower level, were the common problems of enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way, such as keeping them clear of real estate signs and private business signs (69%-27%, 2.6:1) or lots overgrown with weeds (63%-32%, 2.0:1). Residents this year more often feel that the city is doing a good or excellent job addressing the stated problems than did people in 1998, when the three items attained ratios of 2.6:1 (65%-25%) for abandoned vehicles, 1.5:1 (52%-34%) for enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way, and 0.9:1 (44%-48%) for lots overgrowth with weeds.**
- ◆ Since 1998, gradual improvement has been evident for addressing all three issues. Growth was more noticeable regarding abandoned vehicles (11%-17%-15%-23%-29%), as excellent ratings improved 18% over the ten-year period. Comparatively, enforcing the upkeep of public rights-of-way saw excellent ratings increase by 12% (4%-8%-14%-17%-16%) and lots overgrown with weeds, ten points (4%-9%-10%-13%-14%). At the same time intensity ratings improved, the same was true for combined



positive marks, although all improvement was not gradual. Relative to abandoned vehicles, growth occurred through 2006 before declining this year (65%-69%-71%-81%-75%), although the current rating is still ten points higher than the benchmark levels. The same trend was true relative to lots overgrowth with weeds, as positive grades improved each year before diminishing this year (44%-57%-58%-66%-63%), with the current mark nearly twenty percent higher. Opinions of how the city handles enforcing the upkeep of public rights-of-way also improved before sliding slightly this year (52%-55%-61%-75%-69%), but still 17% greater. And as positive opinions improved, negative assessments declined, as ratings for each item were lower this year than in 1998. Overall, opinions improved slightly more with how the city was addressing upkeep of public rights-of-way rather than abandoned vehicles or lots overgrown with weeds.

- ◆ Current ratios for the enforcement of the three common problems were higher in 2008 than any year except 2006, as attitudes about enforcement have appeared to decline over that time period. This was true for abandoned vehicles (2.6:1-2.7:1-3.4:1-7.4:1-5.1:1), lots overgrown with weeds (0.9:1-1.6:1-1.5:1-2.2:1-2.0:1), and enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way (1.5:1-1.2:1-1.7:1-3.3:1-2.6:1).
- ◆ Excellent ratings in 2008 were nearly twice as high for addressing abandoned vehicles (29%) as for public rights-of-way (16%) or lots overgrown with weeds (14%). The intensity ratings ranked similarly when evaluating the quality ratios. Tops in both intensity and consensus ratings were the enforcement of abandoned vehicles, followed by upkeep of public rights-of-way and lots overgrown with weeds.

**TABLE #10: ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING ADDRESSING COMMON PROBLEMS BY SUBSECTOR**

PROBLEM	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR
Abandoned vehicles	73%	21%	87%	15%	78%	13%	77%	12%
Lots overgrown with weeds	67%	30%	67%	31%	58%	34%	55%	35%
Enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way, such as keeping them clear of real estate signs and private business signs	71%	26%	73%	25%	60%	37%	75%	23%

- ◆ Residents in the Southeast subsector of the city were most appreciative of how the city addressed the problems discussed, as they were on top in terms of combined good and excellent ratings for two of the three items,



and only two percent lower on the third issue. For example, 87% were positive about how the city addressed the common problem of abandoned vehicles, compared with percentages in the 70 percentile elsewhere (73%-78%-77%). The eastern portion of the city was similarly pleased with how the city was addressing lots overgrown with weeds (both 67%, to 58% and 55%). The final problem, enforcing the upkeep of public rights-of-way, was graded similarly by residents in the Southwest (75%), Southeast (73%), and Northeast (71%), but much lower than in the Northwest (60%).

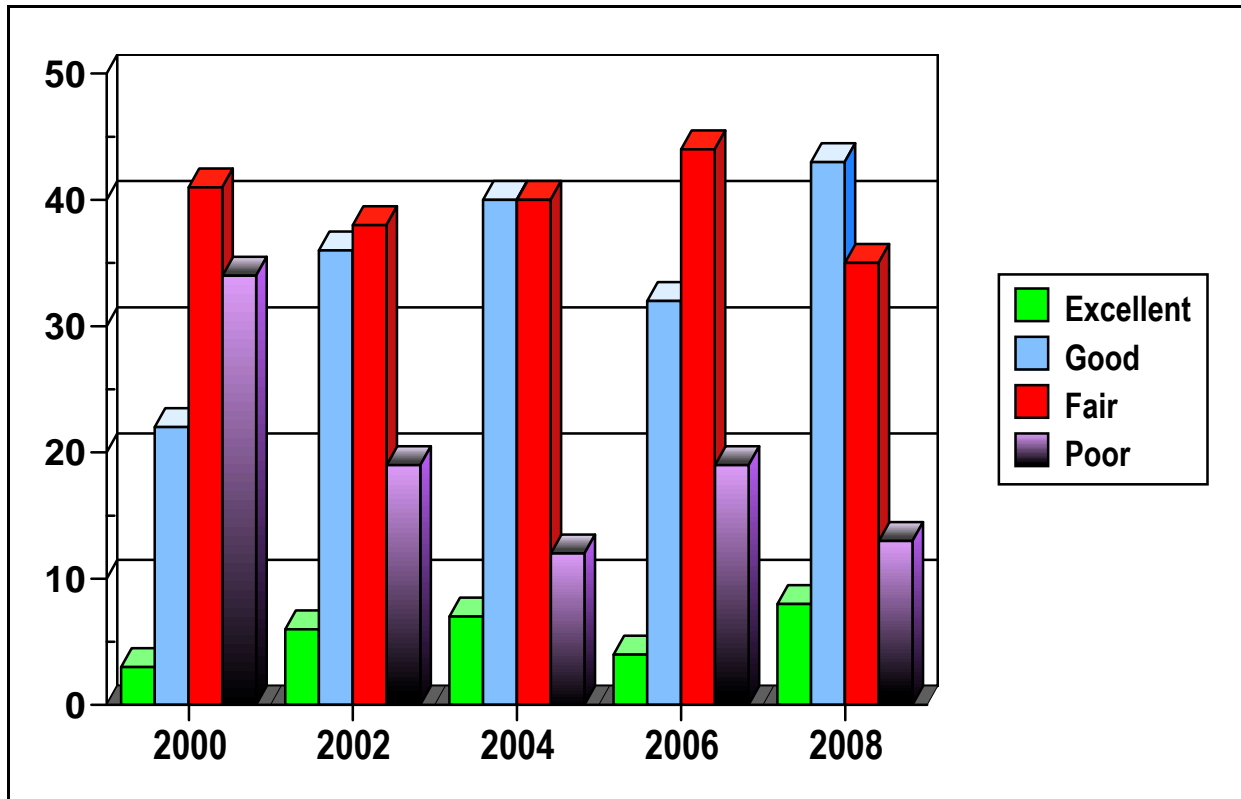
- ◆ Geography appeared to influence how residents graded enforcement. For example, positive marks varied at least ten percent for all three items. The Northeast was much less positive about the enforcement of abandoned vehicles (73%, to 87% in Southeast), while it was individuals in the Southwest who were least complimentary about the city addressing lots overgrown with weeds (55%, to 67% in Northeast and Southeast) and respondents in the Northwest, with the upkeep of public rights-of-ways (60%, to 75% in Southwest). Also note that the enforcement of lots overgrown with weeds was more likely to be complimented by residents in the eastern half of the city rather than the west (both 67%, to 58% and 55%), the only issue addressed in this manner.
- ◆ Throughout the city, nearly one of every three residents gave a negative assessment as to how the city addressed the problem of lots overgrown with weeds (30%-31%-34%-35%). And as has been stated, the upkeep of public rights-of-way appeared to be more of an issue in the Northwest (37%) than elsewhere (26%-25%-23%), as critical comments stood out there. The Northeast was the area most negative about how the city addressed the issue of abandoned vehicles (21%-15%-13%-12%), especially when compared with the two western portions of the city, where fair and poor ratings were lowest.

**TABLE #11: ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING ADDRESSING COMMON PROBLEMS BY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATING**

PROBLEM	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR
Abandoned vehicles	81%	12%	70%	22%	75%	19%
Lots overgrown with weeds	65%	31%	60%	34%	62%	33%
Enforcing upkeep of public rights-of-way, such as keeping them clear of real estate signs and private business signs	78%	21%	62%	36%	61%	35%

- ◆ Whether one's perspective of community improvement was positive (65%), status quo (62%), or negative (60%), a similar percentage of people graded the enforcement of lots overgrown with weeds similarly. That was not the case with the other two, as percentages varied 11% for abandoned vehicles (81%-75%-70%) and 16% for the upkeep of public rights-of-way (78%-61%-62%).
- ◆ People grading community improvement as getting worse had trouble differentiating between the enforcement of lots overgrown with weeds and the upkeep of public rights-of-way (60%-62%). The same was true for those who believed the community was about the same (62%-61%) and they went as far to place lots ahead of rights-of-way in terms of enforcement, although by only one percent. However, those most positive about community assessment were similar in their grading of the enforcement of abandoned vehicles and rights-of-way (81%-78%), and much less likely to be complimentary regarding lots overgrown with weeds (65%), although all three were highly rated, by at least two of every three.
- ◆ The same trend was evident regarding critical viewpoints of the three problems. Both those grading the community about the same (35% and 33%) or getting worse (36% and 34%) were slightly more critical about how the city enforced upkeep of public rights-of-way over lots overgrown with weeds. Conversely, those most positive about community improvement were drawn more to problems with lots overgrown with weeds (31%) rather than public rights-of-way (21%). When respondents evaluated lots overgrown with weeds, no opinion percentages were higher in the west (9% and 10%) than east (both 3%). The same was true in terms of abandoned vehicles (9% and 12%, to both 7%). That was not the case in terms of public rights-of-way (2% and 2%, to 4% and 2%), as no opinion findings were consistent throughout the city.

## ASSESSING JOB CITY DOING IN MANAGING TRAFFIC



**Figure 8: Comparing Performance Ratings For Job City Doing In Managing Traffic By Response Year -- 2000 - 2008**

- ◆ For the first time, residents reported more positive (51% good and excellent) than negative (48% only fair and poor) views of the city's job in managing traffic. Although the overall perception was positive, note that negative intensity ratings were still higher than positive findings (13%-8%) indicating the continued presence of a critical element. When compared with previous findings, residents have also been more critical of traffic management, including the benchmark year of 2000 (25%-75%, 0.3:1), followed by 2002 (42%-53%, 0.7:1), 2004 (46%-53%, 0.9:1), and 2006 (36%-63%, 0.6:1).
- ◆ When comparing positive to negative intensity ratings by area, only in the Southeast was the excellent rating the prevailing attitude, and then by only one percent (10%-9%). In the Northeast (8%-14%), Northwest (6%-16%), and Southwest (8%-17%), survey participants were clearly more critical than complimentary. However, ratings on either extreme were not tremendously high, indicating that most opinions were "soft" in terms of one's opinion. In other words, opinions were based on reputation and perhaps not personal experience, with the exception of those assigning intensity ratings. The ratio

was positive in the Southeast (56%-44%, 1.3:1), the Northeast (53%-46%, 1.2:1), and the Southwest (52%-48%, 1.1:1), also the areas where a majority were positive. That was not the case in the Northwest, where the reputation was mostly negative, which brought the ratio down to 0.7:1 (42%-57%, 0.7:1).

- ◆ Men and women were similarly positive (51%--52%) and critical (48%-48%) about the city's traffic management. And those who considered community improvement getting better were much more positive about traffic management (60%) than if the rating was about the same (49%) or getting worse (74%). The same trend was evident when reviewing findings by neighborhood improvement attitudes (62%-52%-35%), although all three subsets were more positive in their evaluation. However, poor ratings were similar regardless of how community (8%-13%-32%) or neighborhood (6%-9%-33%) improvement was graded.
- ◆ Recycling participants assigned higher excellent ratings to the job the city was doing in this area (15%-7%), but they were not the most positive group when compared with nonparticipants (50%-53%). Positive ratings fluctuated based on household income (56%-60%-47%), although those with the highest levels were least positive and most critical (44%-40%-53%). Also more apt to be critical were residents who declined to give their household income level (47%-52%). Opinions fluctuated based on education levels (56%-51%-51%), although it was those least educated who were most pleased. And although the difference was not significant, people who did not work in the city were more positive about traffic management than those who did (53%-49%), by four points. It was residents who worked in the city who were more negative (51%-47%), but the difference was less than the standard margin of error.
- ◆ People newer to the community were more positive than those long-term city residents (54%-51%-44%) and less critical as well (45%-49%-55%). Age did not appear to have the same influence on attitudes as did tenure in the community, as both positive (54%-49%-51%) and negative (45%-49%-49%) findings fluctuated. Parents of younger children were more complimentary of the job the city was doing managing traffic (60%-63%-48%), while those with older children and nonparents (48%) tended to be less so. Overall, parents of teenagers (41%-36%-52%) and nonparents (51%) were slightly more likely to be negative in their critique. And in terms of ethnicity, the most positive subsets were Others (60%) and Hispanics (53%) before Whites/Anglos (50%). In addition, Whites/Anglos were the only subsets to be evenly split between a positive and negative (50%, to 48% and 40%) impression of traffic management.

## FREQUENCY OF UTILIZING VARIOUS SOURCES TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ROUND ROCK

**TABLE #12: COMPARING FREQUENCY OF UTILIZING CERTAIN SOURCES TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ROUND ROCK BY RESPONSE YEAR -- 1998 – 2008**

SOURCE	YES						NO					
	'98	'00	'02	'04	'06	'08	'98	'00	'02	'04	'06	'08
<i>The Austin American Statesman</i>	78%	72%	62%	64%	56%	56%	21%	27%	35%	35%	42%	44%
<i>The Round Rock Leader</i>	68%	53%	45%	54%	47%	49%	30%	43%	51%	45%	51%	50%
Local TV news	80%	80%	80%	86%	81%	79%	18%	18%	15%	13%	17%	29%
Round Rock cable channel 10 (the channel that shows Round Rock city council meetings, city focus, etc.)	45%	45%	50%	51%	50%	37%	51%	53%	45%	47%	46%	62%
Radio	50%	46%	39%	48%	47%	40%	48%	53%	56%	50%	50%	60%
Enclosures in your city utility bill	50%	51%	62%	62%	66%	68%	46%	46%	34%	34%	29%	30%
Friends	72%	59%	59%	66%	70%	70%	26%	38%	39%	33%	29%	30%
City Web page	8%	19%	21%	29%	37%	40%	88%	79%	75%	68%	60%	59%
The city e-mail newsletter, the Round Rock News	NA	NA	8%	20%	18%	19%	NA	NA	91%	78%	79%	80%
Public meetings	NA	NA	22%	21%	22%	19%	NA	NA	74%	78%	76%	80%
The City Beat ad that runs every other week in the Round Rock Leader and Austin American Statesman	NA	NA	NA	51%	45%	40%	NA	NA	NA	46%	51%	59%
Community Impact, the monthly publication	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	73%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	27%
Your homeowner's association newsletter	NA	NA	NA	41%	56%	46%	NA	NA	NA	57%	41%	52%
Community Conversations, the city of Round Rock blog	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	7%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	91%

- ◆ Local TV news (79%), Community Impact, the monthly publication (73%), and friends (70%) were the sources toward which residents most often looked to find out what was happening in Round Rock. Other popular sources included enclosures in their city utility bill (68%), *The Austin American Statesman* (56%), *The Round Rock Leader* (49%), and homeowner's association newsletter (46%). Of the 14 sources tested, respondents were least likely to utilize Community Conversations, the city of Round Rock blog (7%) and the city e-mail newsletter, *The Round Rock News* and public meetings (both 19%). In comparing the eight sources tested over the ten-year period, local TV news maintained its former high mark (80%-81%). Additionally, growth in utilization was noted for enclosures in their city utility bill (50%-66%) and the city web page (8%-40%). Conversely, utilization appeared to wane for both *The Austin*

**American Statesman (78%-56%) and The Round Rock Leader (68%-49%), as well as the Round Rock cable channel (45%-37%) and radio (50%-40%).**

- ◆ Utilization of the city web page (8%-19%-21%-29%-37%-40%) has increased each year the survey has been administered. Additionally, enclosures in the city utility bill also saw utilization rates climb over the 10-year period (50%-51%-62%-62%-66%-68%). Reliance on some sources declined, rebounded, and then declined again, those being *The Round Rock Leader* (68%-53%-45%-54%-47%-49%), *The Austin American Statesman* (78%-72%-62%-64%-56%-56%), and radio (50%-46%-39%-48%-47%-40%). Among those sources tested over a shorter period of time, utilization of The City Beat ad has declined since first tested in 2004 (51%-45%-40%), while the city e-mail newsletter has seen growth since 2002, although not since 2004 (8%-20%-18%-19%), while utilization of homeowner's association newsletters (41%-56%-46%) has fluctuated.
- ◆ Five sources were utilized by a majority of survey participants to find out what was happening in Round Rock, followed by five more in the 40th percentile. In addition to *The Round Rock Leader* and homeowner's association newsletter, other secondary sources people looked to were radio and the city web page (both 40%), and with 37% utilization, the Round Rock cable channel 10.
- ◆ Community Impact, utilized by 73% of the sample, was a new source and included in the comprehensive listing for the first time. Conversely, another first-time listing, Community Conversations, the city of Round Rock blog, got only limited usage (7%). Also note that *The Austin American Statesman* was slightly more likely to be utilized than the local paper, *The Round Rock Leader* (56%-49%).
- ◆ Overall, television was a more popular source than newspapers to residents to find out what was going on in Round Rock. Also note that the top city source was the Community Impact, more so than the city web site, utility bill enclosures, the City Beat ad in the newspapers, public meetings, or the city blog.

**TABLE #13: FREQUENCY OF UTILIZING CERTAIN SOURCES TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ROUND ROCK BY SUBSECTOR**

SOURCE	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
<i>The Austin American Statesman</i>	58%	42%	55%	44%	56%	44%	54%	46%
<i>The Round Rock Leader</i>	56%	44%	48%	52%	47%	52%	46%	54%
Local TV news	86%	13%	76%	24%	73%	27%	81%	19%
Round Rock cable channel 10 (the channel that shows Round Rock city council meetings, city focus, etc.)	41%	59%	32%	66%	37%	63%	46%	54%
Radio	41%	59%	37%	62%	47%	53%	37%	63%
Enclosures in your city utility bill	66%	32%	65%	31%	67%	31%	79%	21%
Friends	68%	31%	69%	31%	76%	24%	69%	31%
City Web page	29%	69%	41%	56%	49%	51%	42%	58%
The city e-mail newsletter, the Round Rock News	22%	78%	18%	80%	22%	78%	15%	85%
Public meetings	17%	80%	12%	86%	24%	76%	31%	69%
The City Beat ad that runs every other week in the Round Rock Leader and Austin American Statesman	43%	56%	35%	63%	47%	53%	33%	67%
Community Impact, the monthly publication	69%	31%	73%	26%	78%	22%	73%	27%
Your homeowner's association newsletter	34%	65%	48%	50%	53%	47%	56%	44%
Community Conversations, the city of Round Rock blog	7%	92%	8%	90%	8%	91%	6%	94%

- ◆ Five sources were utilized by a majority of residents, regardless of where they lived. Those were *The Austin American Statesman* (58%-55%-56%-54%), local TV news (86%-76%-73%-81%), enclosures in their city utility bill (66%-65%-67%-79%), friends (68%-69%-76%-69%), and Community Impact, the monthly publication (69%-73%-78%-73%). Other majority marks included *The Round Rock Leader* (56%) in the Northeast and homeowner's association newsletter in both the Northwest (53%) and Southwest (56%). And no matter where one lived, utilization of Community Conversations failed to reach double-digit reliance (7%-8%-8%-6%).
- ◆ Several sources showed varying degrees of utilization based on where people lived. Nine sources had percentages that varied by at least ten percentage points: *The Round Rock Leader* (56% in Northeast, to 46% in Southwest); local TV news (86% in Northeast, to 73% in Northwest); Round Rock cable channel 10 (46% in Southwest, to 32% in Southeast); radio (47% in Northwest, to 37% in Southeast and Southwest); enclosures in city water bill (79% in Southwest, to 65% in Southeast); city web page (49% in Northwest, to 29% in Northeast); public meetings (31% in Southwest, to 12% in Southeast); The City Beat ad (47% in Northwest, to 33% in Southwest); and homeowner's association newsletters (56% in Southwest, to 34% in

Northeast). Note that radio was more popular in the northern sectors of the city (41% and 47%, to both 37%), as was the city e-mail newsletter (both 22%, to 18% and 15%) and City Beat ad (43% and 47%, to 35% and 33%). Additionally, the western portions of the city placed greater reliance on homeowner's association newsletters (53% and 56%, to 34% and 48%).

- ◆ Six sources, radio, friends, the city web page and e-mail newsletter, The City Beat ad, and Community Conversations were more likely to be utilized by people in the Northwest subsector than elsewhere, although the city e-mail newsletter (Northeast) and Community Conversations (Southeast) were utilized similarly elsewhere in the city. The Northeast was the region most likely to utilize the two primary newspapers as well as local TV news, while people in the Southwest assigned the highest utilization rates to the Round Rock cable channel 10, public meetings, and homeowners' association newsletters. The only source that scored its highest usage rate in the Southeast was the city blog, tied with the Northwest at 8%. And the Southwest subsector had the most sources with the lowest utilization rates (6), followed by the Northeast and Southeast (both 4) and the Northwest (1), although radio scored identical low ratings in both the Southeast and Southwest.

**TABLE #14: FREQUENCY OF UTILIZING CERTAIN SOURCES TO FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ROUND ROCK BY SUBSECTOR BY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATING**

SOURCE	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
<i>The Austin American Statesman</i>	56%	44%	52%	48%	58%	42%
<i>The Round Rock Leader</i>	53%	46%	38%	62%	50%	50%
Local TV news	86%	14%	66%	34%	77%	23%
Round Rock cable channel 10 (the channel that shows Round Rock city council meetings, city focus, etc.)	41%	58%	42%	58%	32%	67%
Radio	42%	58%	38%	62%	40%	59%
Enclosures in your city utility bill	69%	30%	64%	32%	67%	30%
Friends	74%	26%	60%	40%	71%	29%
City Web page	41%	57%	34%	62%	41%	59%
The city e-mail newsletter, the Round Rock News	22%	77%	12%	84%	18%	82%
Public meetings	21%	77%	22%	78%	17%	82%
The City Beat ad that runs every other week in the Round Rock Leader and Austin American Statesman	34%	65%	40%	60%	48%	51%
Community Impact, the monthly publication	74%	24%	64%	36%	76%	24%
Your homeowner's association newsletter	50%	49%	44%	52%	44%	55%
Community Conversations, the city of Round Rock blog	11%	87%	8%	92%	3%	97%



- ◆ No matter one's perspective of community improvement (better-worse-same), a majority of respondents acknowledged utilizing *The Austin American Statesman* (56%-52%-58%). This was not the case relative to the other newspaper source, *The Round Rock Leader* (53%-38%-50%), as those most negative placed it as much less reliable than the others. And local TV news, while utilized by majorities of all three subsets, was graded much lower by those who believed the community was getting worse (86%-66%-77%). There was also a drop-off of 14 percent relative to friends (74%-60%-67%) and 10% for Community Impact (74%-64%-76%). Utilization of city utility bill enclosures declined, but only minimally (69%-64%-67%). Also note that homeowners' association newsletters were slightly more effective among those positive about community improvement than others (50%-44%-44%).
- ◆ When comparing the two extreme opinions about community improvement, with the status quo remarks between, the sources that defined the difference between the two were local TV news (86%-77%-66%), *The Round Rock Leader* (53%-50%-38%), friends (74%-71%-60%), the city e-newsletter (22%-18%-12%), and Community Impact (74%-76%-64%). Also note that it was people who graded the community as about the same who were least likely to rely on Round Rock cable channel 10 (41%-32%-42%), public meetings (21%-17%-22%), and Community Conversations (11%-3%-8%). At the same time, they were the subset most apt to rely on The City Beat ad (34%-48%-40%).
- ◆ Nine of the fourteen sources were most often utilized by people who graded the community as getting better, although one tied with people who felt it had stayed about the same. Those grading the community as getting worse assigned the highest utilization rates to two sources, with the remaining three receiving their highest marks from those with a more status quo outlook on the community.

## ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING IN COMMUNICATING WITH RESIDENTS IN CERTAIN AREAS

**TABLE #15: COMPARING ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING IN COMMUNICATING WITH RESIDENTS IN CERTAIN AREAS BY RESPONSE YEAR -- 1998 – 2008**

AREA	EXCELLENT					GOOD					ONLY FAIR/POOR				
	'98	'02	'04	'06	'08	'98	'02	'04	'06	'08	'98	'02	'04	'06	'08
Keeping you informed of city programs and services	6%	11%	13%	16%	13%	53%	48%	51%	53%	55%	39%	40%	36%	30%	30%
Listening to and responding to the needs of citizens	5%	7%	5%	8%	10%	48%	47%	58%	50%	46%	37%	35%	37%	35%	32%

- ◆ Residents in 2008 were more pleased with how the city was keeping them informed of city programs and services (68%-30%, 2.3:1) than listening to and responding to the needs of citizens (56%-32%, 1.8:1). When compared with the benchmark results, both keeping citizens informed (1.5:1-2.3:1) and listening and responding to needs (1.4:1-1.8:1) were thought of more highly, although the ratio showed more improvement in terms of keeping citizens informed than listening to and responding to needs.
- ◆ Although minimal, intensity ratings doubled over the 10-year period for keeping people informed (6%-13%), with the same true for listening to and responding to citizen needs (5%-10%). And in both cases, percentages were never less than the benchmark findings. The combined positive ratings for the city keeping them informed of city programs and services were never below what was established in 1998 (59%-59%-64%-69%-68%), a statement that also held true for listening to and responding to the needs of citizens (53%-54%-63%-58%-56%). Note that between 2004 and 2008, positive assessments of listening to and responding to citizen needs declined (63%-58%-56%), compared to limited growth for keeping one informed (64%-69%-68%). This created a degree of separation and a more positive assessment for keeping people informed of city programs and services rather than listening to and responding to the needs of citizens, after nearly identical ratings between 1998 and 2004. Also note that fair/poor levels have declined more for keeping people informed (39%-40%-36%-30%-30%) than listening and responding (37%-35%-37%-35%-32%).
- ◆ Keeping people informed of city programs and services was thought of more highly by city residents than listening and responding to needs of

citizens (68%-56%), although both were graded positively by a majority of respondents. The reason the ratios did not vary as much (2.3:1-1.8:1) was because both items were criticized at a similar rate (30%-32%). Keeping people informed had only 2% of the sample assigning a no opinion response, compared to 11% who chose not to comment on how the city listened and responded to citizen needs.

**TABLE #16: ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING IN COMMUNICATING WITH RESIDENTS IN CERTAIN AREAS BY SUBSECTOR**

AREA	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR
Keeping you informed of city programs and services	71%	29%	70%	27%	65%	34%	59%	37%
Listening to and responding to the needs of citizens	62%	28%	57%	31%	51%	38%	55%	39%

- ◆ Residents throughout the city were more pleased with how the city was keeping people informed of city programs and services rather than listening to and responding to the needs of citizens. The variance in positive ratings between the two statements was most prominent in the Northwest (65%-51%) and Southeast (70%-57%), at 14% and 13%, respectively. Comparatively, only nine points separated the two statements in the Northeast (71%-62%) and just four percent in the Southwest (59%-55%). Because of the higher no opinion responses for the listening and responding statement, negative opinions varied no more than the four percent in both the Southeast (31%-27%) and Northwest (38%-34%). Variances elsewhere were two and one point. Additionally, note that the eastern part of the city was more positive in both keeping people informed (71% and 70%, to 65% and 59%) and listening and responding (62% and 57%, to 51% and 55%).
- ◆ Positive levels for statement one (71% in Northeast, to 59% in Southwest) and two (62% in Northeast, to 51% in Northwest) varied by at least ten percent. The same was true for critical comments, as negative comments varied for both keeping people informed (37% in Southwest, to 27% in Southeast) and listening and responding (39% in Southwest, to 28% in Northeast).

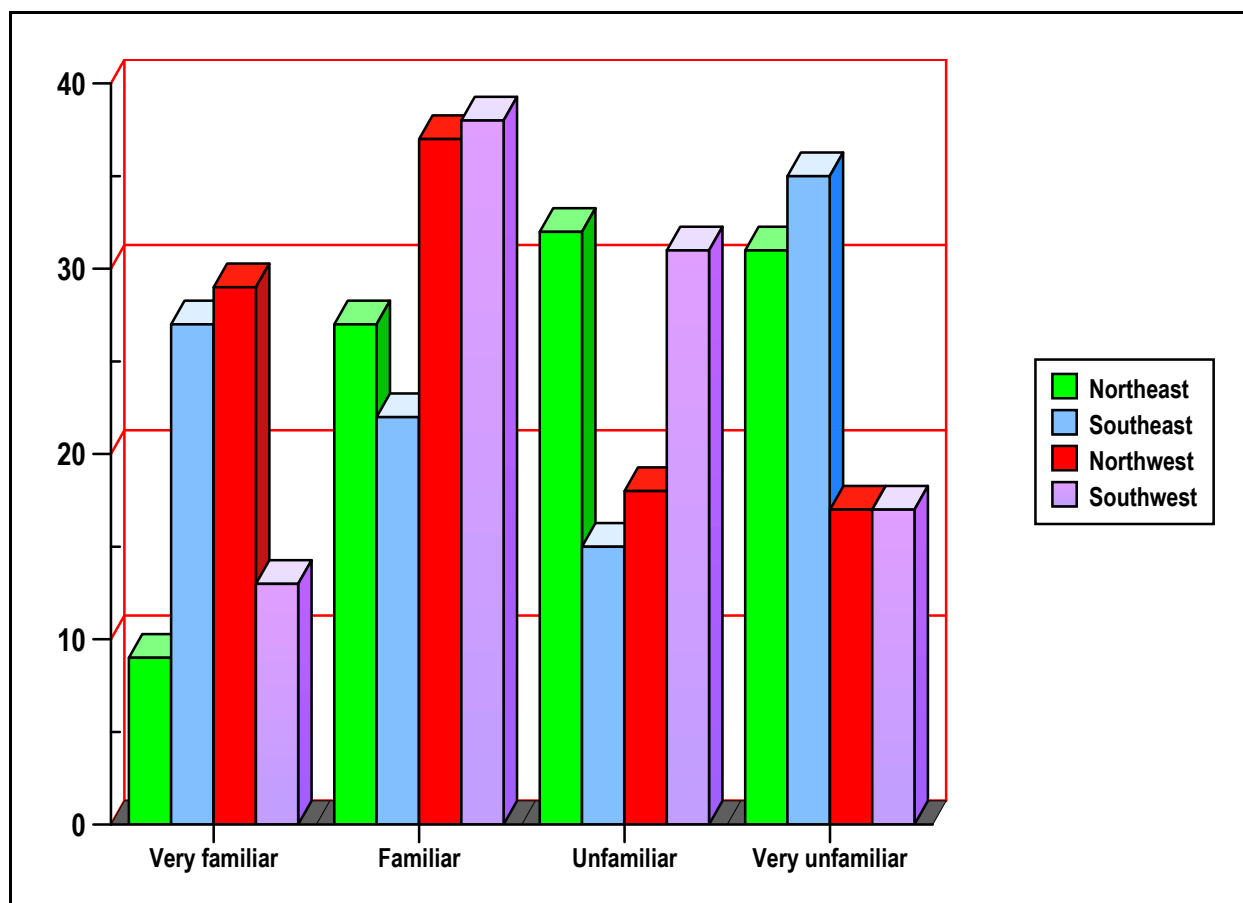
**TABLE #17: ASSESSMENT OF JOB CITY IS DOING IN COMMUNICATING WITH RESIDENTS IN CERTAIN AREAS BY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATING**

AREA	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR	EXCEL GOOD	FAIR POOR
Keeping you informed of city programs and services	75%	24%	54%	42%	66%	34%
Listening to and responding to the needs of citizens	67%	22%	32%	60%	52%	38%

- ◆ All three subsets were more content with how the city kept people informed of city programs and services (75%-54%-66) than listening to and responding (67-32-52). Note that the drop-off between positive and negative improvement ratings was greater regarding listening and responding (67%-32%, -35) than keeping people informed (75%-54%, -21). Even when comparing getting better and about the same levels, the gap was greater relative to listening and responding to the needs of citizens (67%-52%, -15) than keeping people informed of city programs and services (75%-66%, -9).
- ◆ In terms of negative attitudes, those positive about community were similar in their criticism of the two areas (24%-22%). If the opinion was about the same, fair or poor ratings were slightly higher for listening and responding (38%-34%), but fairly similar. However, those negative were much more critical of the listening and responding aspect rather than being kept informed (60%-42%).

# SECTION THREE: Evaluating Attitudes About Recycling Options In The Community

## FAMILIARITY WITH CITY'S FEE-BASED CURBSIDE RECYCLING SERVICES



**Figure 9: Familiarity With City's Fee-Based Curbside Recycling Services By Subsector**

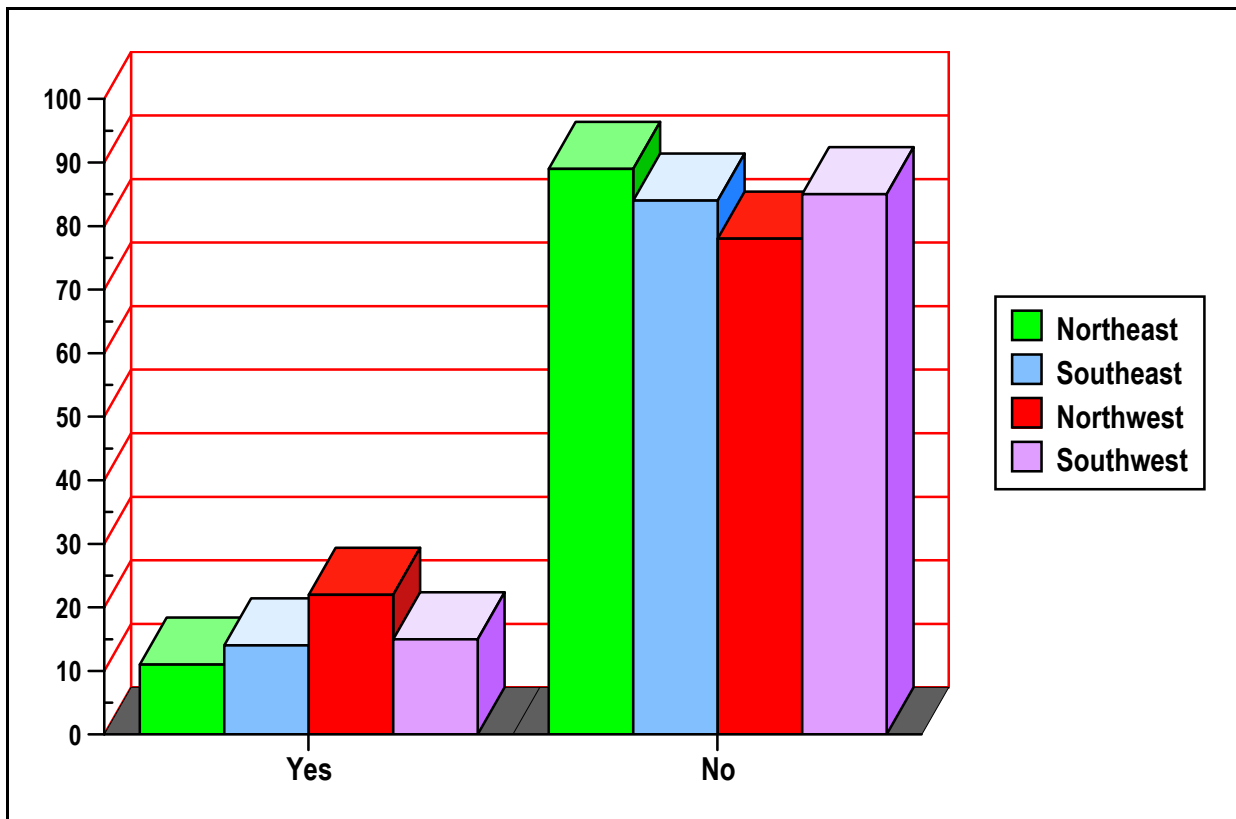
- ◆ As many people in Round Rock were familiar (50%) as unfamiliar (49%) with the fact that for a \$4.00 monthly fee, the city provides curbside recycling services on a subscription basis. By a slight margin, the very unfamiliar response was greater than its positive counterpoint (27%-21%), indicating that being unfamiliar was a more true indicator.

- ◆ Two of every three residents (66%) in the Northwest subsector of Round Rock acknowledged being familiar with the fee-based curbside recycling program, of which 29% were very familiar. Both the intensity and combined familiarity ratings were highest within the city. It was also the only part of the city in which the very familiar comments outpaced the very unfamiliar remarks (29%-17%). Both the Northwest and Southeast subsectors were similar in terms of very familiar levels (27%), although a significant proportion of people in the Southeast were also very unfamiliar (35%). Intense familiarity levels elsewhere were below 15% -- 13% in the Southwest and only 9% in the Northeast. In terms of very unfamiliar remarks, the eastern parts of the city were twice as likely to give that response as their counterparts in the western half of the city (31% and 35%, to both 17%). The familiarity ratios showed the most knowledgeable people to reside in the Northwest (66%-35%, 1.9:1), followed by the Southwest (51%-48%, 1.1:1), the Southeast (49%-50%, 1.0:1), and finally, the Northeast (36%-63%, 0.6:1), both the least familiar and consequently, most unfamiliar.
- ◆ Men and women were similarly familiar (51%-49%) and unfamiliar (48%-50%) about the recycling services. Findings were also similar depending on how community improvement was rated (51%-50%-49%), indicating that knowledge or lack thereof was not influenced based on how positive or negative the community was rated. However, the same was not true based on how residents rated their neighborhood, as those who thought it was getting worse were much less familiar than those who were either positive or assigned the status quo rating (51%-39%-53%). Those grading the community as getting worse were also more prone to be unfamiliar (48%-60%-47%).
- ◆ Respondents who acknowledged participating in the recycling program were 92% familiar with it. Conversely, nonparticipants were only 42% familiar and 58% unfamiliar. Program participants were especially more likely to be very familiar (61%-13%). Income level appeared to impact knowledge, as those with the highest income levels were more familiar with the program than those whose household income was lower (29%-44%-56%). Also increasing based on income levels were very familiar ratings (7%-17%-26%). People who declined to answer the household income question were 59% familiar, of which 25% were very familiar, levels similar to those in the highest income levels. Familiarity also increased based on the education level of the resident, moving from 31% of grade school or high school people, to 51% of college-educated personnel and 57% who had completed some level of graduate work. Also similar to household income levels, those most educated tended to voice the highest very familiar ratings (16%-20%-26%). Whether or not people worked

in the city had no influence on this question, as percentages were nearly identical (50%-51%).

- ◆ The level of familiarity one had with the city's fee-based curbside recycling services was also impacted based on tenure in the community, as newer residents voiced higher familiarity ratings than people who had lived in Round Rock for longer amounts of time (53%-51%-40%), with a significant drop-off occurring among those most-tenured city inhabitants. There was also a slight decline in familiarity based on the age of the individual, but not significant enough to draw attention (52%-51%-49%). Parents of younger children were more familiar (53%-55%-43%) than those with teenagers, with nonparents (50%) slightly less knowledgeable. The same trend was evident with regards to very familiar levels (26%-27%-18%, to 18%), as parents of young children and pre-teens generated the highest intensity levels. The ethnic tabulations showed Whites/Anglos as familiar as Hispanics (51%-51%), although Hispanics were least apt to be very familiar (23%-13%), indicating general familiarity but not extensive knowledge.

## PARTICIPATION IN CITY'S SUBSCRIPTION-BASED RECYCLING PROGRAM



**Figure 10: Participation in City's Subscription-Based Recycling Program By Subsector**

- ◆ Fewer than one of five (16%) Round Rock residents acknowledged participating in the city's subscription-based recycling program. Conversely, more than four of five (84%) admitted to not participating. In a follow-up question, unaware/unfamiliar with program (46%), opposed to paying (24%), and recycles on own/takes to center or school (14%) were the reasons given in an open-ended format by the subset of individuals who did not partake in the program as to why residents or their families chose not to participate. A total of 12 responses were generated, but none except the above were mentioned by more than two percent of the respondents.
- ◆ Residents in the Northwest, described in the previous question as being most familiar with the program, were also most likely to participate, but only at rates of 22%, or less than one in four. Lower levels of participation were noted elsewhere in the city, namely 15% in the Southwest, 14% in the Southeast, and 11% in the Northeast. Acknowledged participation was

higher among men than women (20%-11%). Although the previous question showed familiarity not impacted based on community improvement ratings, the same was not true relative to participation, as those most apt to participate graded the community either getting better or being about the same, not getting worse (17%-17%-8%). Also more likely to have participated in the program were people who rated their neighborhood improved rather than the other two positions (24%-13%-14%). The vast majority of residents, regardless of their position about community or neighborhood improvement, failed to participate in the recycling program.

- ◆ The higher the household income (10%-13%-19%) and education (10%-14%-21%) levels, the more likely city residents were to participate. Individuals who declined to respond to the household income level participated at levels closer to those at the high end of the income scale (15%) rather than the lower end. There was also little difference in participation based on whether or not the respondent worked in the city (14%-17%).
- ◆ The prior question indicated that long-term community members were least familiar with the recycling program, and this query appears to affirm that finding based on that subset being least likely to participate (18%-17%-7%). Also less likely to participate were people over the age of 55 (16%-18%-13%), although the percentages fluctuated rather than diminished based on age. Parents (20%-19%-20%) were more likely to participate than nonparents (13%), and the ethnic tabulations showed Whites/Anglos and Hispanics to involve themselves at similarly minor levels (17% and 15%), with Others only 9% apt to participate.

**TABLE #18: REASONS GIVEN BY RESPONDENTS NOT PARTICIPATING IN CITY RECYCLING PROGRAM FOR CHOOSING NOT TO PARTICIPATE BY SUBSECTOR AND GENDER OF RESPONDENT**

RESPONSE	OVERALL	NORTH EAST	SOUTH EAST	NORTH WEST	SOUTH WEST	MALE	FEMALE
Unaware - unfamiliar with program	46%	44%	48%	43%	49%	48%	45%
Opposed to paying	24%	22%	25%	31%	16%	23%	25%
Recycles on own - takes to center or school	14%	15%	9%	15%	26%	16%	12%
Doesn't want to - no need - no interest	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Doesn't have enough to recycle	2%	1%	3%	3%	0%	2%	2%
City won't supply bucket - bucket unavailable	2%	1%	5%	0%	0%	1%	3%
Lazy	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%
Inconvenient/hassle	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Inefficient pick up	2%	2%	1%	3%	0%	1%	2%
Lives in apartment	1%	4%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%
No time	1%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Hasn't gotten around to it	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Miscellaneous	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%

- ◆ Being unaware or unfamiliar with the program was a consistent response from those who did not participate in it. This was demonstrated by the fact that percentages varied minimally, although it was a slightly more frequent comment in the southern portion of the city (48% and 49%) than the north (44% and 43%). There was a big difference between residents in the Northwest and Southwest relative to nonutilization because they were opposed to paying (31%-16%). Percentages in the eastern subsectors were both in the 20 percentile (22% and 25%). According to the responses, what happened more frequently in the Southwest than anywhere else was that people recycled on their own/took to center or school (26%), a level significantly higher than anywhere else (15%-9%-15%), especially in the Southeast. All other responses generated 16% of the total percentage of comments.
- ◆ The gender of the respondent had little impact as to why people failed to participate, as both men and women said unaware/unfamiliar (48%-45%), opposed to paying (23%-25%), and recycling on own (16%-12%). Recycling on their own was a response more frequently given by residents who rated community improvement as getting worse (26%) rather than the other two (both 12%). They were also the subset most likely to say they were opposed to paying (23%-26%-23%), although the difference of opinion between the three subsets was minuscule. And people rating the community as about the same were most inclined to claim they were unaware of or unfamiliar with the program (46%-41%-50%), while people negative were least likely to

say it, as they focused on other areas. When compared with neighborhood improvement, respondents who shared the status quo opinion least often said unaware/unfamiliar (52%-54%-42%), but did more often say recycles on own (12%-6%-18%). Additionally, those who said their neighborhood was getting worse most often claimed they chose not to participate because of being opposed to paying (20%-27%-24%), although it was a consistent response no matter one's opinion about the direction of neighborhoods.

- ◆ Being unaware/unfamiliar with the program was most popular among people in the middle income level range (43%-53%-43%), whereas those making the most money said opposed to paying (19%-16%-30%) and recycles on own (14%-11%-17%) were why they chose not to participate. Based on the responses, it appeared that education level did not influence the direction of one's comments. For example, there was only a minimal variance for the responses unaware/unfamiliar (50%-44%-48%), opposed to paying (19%-28%-19%), or recycles on own (13%-13%-17%). People who worked in the city were more likely to say they were unaware/unfamiliar with program (52%-43%), while nonworkers claimed that they recycled on their own (17%-10%). Being opposed to paying as a reason for not participating was popular no matter where one worked (22%-25%).
- ◆ The longer one had lived in Round Rock, the more likely nonparticipants were to say the reason they chose not to get involved was either being unaware/unfamiliar with program (43%-48%-51%) or recycles on own (12%-16%-18%). The response long-term city inhabitants were least likely to give was opposed to paying (27%-25%-16%). The comments, being unaware/unfamiliar with program (47%-53%-41%), opposed to paying (25%-25%-23%), and recycles on own (11%-16%-15%) did not appear to be influenced by the age of the respondents, as levels fluctuated. Parents of teenagers were significantly more likely than others, nonparents included, to say they were unaware/unfamiliar with program (49%-41%-63%, to 44%), why they chose not to participate. Parents of pre-teens were most opposed to paying (22%-33%-23%, to 22%) and nonparents most frequently said they recycled on their own (11%-9%-11%, to 19%). The ethnic tabulations showed little variance in unaware/unfamiliar with program being the reason families chose not to participate (46% of Whites/Anglos, to 44% of Hispanics, to 47% of Others), although Others were most frequently opposed to paying (23%-21%-33%) and Whites/Anglos recycled on their own (16%-9%-9%).

## ATTITUDES ABOUT RECYCLING EFFORTS IN ROUND ROCK

**TABLE #19: OVERALL LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING RECYCLING EFFORTS IN ROUND ROCK**

STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NO OPINION	RATIO
What's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is.	27%	44%	20%	5%	4%	2.8:1
What's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price.	31%	58%	7%	1%	3%	11.1:1
I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents.	30%	51%	12%	3%	4%	5.4:1
I would support paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees.	15%	42%	27%	13%	2%	1.4:1
I would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection.	16%	35%	35%	12%	2%	1.1:1
I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents, but I would not participate.	5%	15%	51%	23%	6%	0.3:1
Not only would I support the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well.	17%	47%	20%	9%	7%	2.2:1

- ◆ **What's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price (89%-8%, 11.1:1) and I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents (81%-15%, 5.4:1) were the statements regarding recycling efforts in Round Rock that generated the highest levels of agreement from survey participants. In addition, nearly two of every three persons sampled agreed that what's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is (71%-25%, 2.8:1) and not only would I support the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well (64%-29%, 2.2:1). The three remaining items were more apt to be contested by residents, namely I would support paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees (57%-40%, 1.4:1) and I would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (51%-47%, 1.1:1). The last statement, I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents, but I would not participate, generated a much higher level of disagreement (20%-74%, 0.3:1), suggesting a level of commitment from residents should a city institute a city-wide curbside recycling program.**

- ◆ The two highest rated statements from the standpoint of their agreement ratio also ranked first and second in terms of intensity ratings, indicating the commitment residents had to what's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price (31%) and supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents (30%). Note that while there was an eight-point difference in agreement ratings (89%-81%), only one point separated the two intensity ratings (31%-30%). This could indicate that the city ensuring the best service at the best price was a very popular idea, but there was a greater degree of passion toward the curbside recycling program when comparing the two items. There was also a much wider gap in ratings between the next two statements, that what's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection the way it is (27%) and not only would I support the city having mandatory fee curbside collection recycling but other conservation programs as well (17%). The two ratios were similar, but ten points separated intensity findings, indicating that while the thought of supporting both the mandatory fee curbside recycling and other programs was encouraged, it did not generate the same degree of enthusiasm.
- ◆ The statements most intensely contested were for supporting the curbside recycling program but not participating (23%), support paying a modest fee if all residents were charged similar fees (13%), and not be willing to have city-wide recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (12%). No opinion ratings were highest regarding the support for the mandatory fee curbside recycling but other conservation programs as well (7%) and supporting the implementation of curbside recycling but not participating (6%).

**TABLE #20: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING RECYCLING EFFORTS IN ROUND ROCK BY SUBSECTOR**

STATEMENT	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	AGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE
What's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is.	73%	28%	68%	27%	75%	24%	68%	19%
What's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price.	91%	6%	86%	9%	88%	9%	94%	4%
I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents.	83%	13%	82%	14%	85%	9%	65%	31%
I would support paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees.	58%	39%	57%	41%	58%	38%	56%	40%
I would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection.	46%	52%	47%	50%	57%	41%	58%	41%
I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents, but I would not participate.	23%	72%	22%	73%	13%	81%	17%	71%
Not only would I support the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well.	66%	26%	67%	28%	61%	28%	56%	39%

- ◆ Four of five residents citywide agreed that what's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price (91%-86%-88%-94%), with agreement highest in the Northeast and Southwest subsectors. Additionally, supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents generated similar agreement levels everywhere but in the Southwest (83%-82%-85%-65%), where support was significantly different. And at least two of three residents affirmed that what's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is (73%-68%-75%-68%), with both northern zones more committed to this item than people in the south. In terms of disputing statements, at least 70% disagreed that they would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents but would not participate (72%-73%-81%-71%).
- ◆ Only a few of the statements saw agreement ratings vary significantly. For example, as has been noted, the Southwest subsector was much less likely to agree to support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for



all city residents (65%, to 85% in Northwest) and also assigned a much higher disagreement position (31%, to 9% in Northwest). The two western subsectors voiced higher agreement for not being willing to have a city-wide curbside recycling program if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (57% and 58%, to 46% and 47%), while the two northern subsectors more frequently agreed to support the city implementing the program but not participating (23% and 22%, to 13% and 17%) and supporting the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well (66% and 67%, to 61% and 56%).

- ◆ A review of several statements show how residents approached the subject of curbside recycling. For example, in the Southwest, thirty points separated the statements ensuring the best service at the best price and supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program (94%-65%). Comparatively, the difference between the two statements elsewhere was eight (91%-83% in Northeast), four (86%-82% in Southeast), and three (88%-85% in Northwest) points. Additionally, in both eastern subsectors, residents were more likely to disagree with being willing to have curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection, a position that western quadrant residents did not share, as majorities in both locales agreed. Also note that both northern subsectors voiced higher agreement with supporting the city's program but also other conservation programs than supporting the implementation of the program for all residents (66%-58% and 67%-57%). Comparatively, both statements were interchangeable in the western regions (61%-58% and 56%-56%), as similar percentages affirmed both items.

**TABLE #21: LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING RECYCLING EFFORTS IN ROUND ROCK BY COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATING**

STATEMENT	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	AGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE
What's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is.	74%	22%	66%	32%	69%	26%
What's most important is that the city ensures the best service at the best price.	90%	6%	90%	6%	87%	10%
I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents.	82%	14%	74%	20%	80%	14%
I would support paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees.	60%	38%	46%	50%	62%	36%
I would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection.	50%	49%	58%	42%	46%	49%
I would support the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents, but I would not participate.	17%	78%	24%	70%	19%	73%
Not only would I support the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well.	66%	26%	54%	44%	66%	25%

- ◆ What's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is was consistently popular no matter one's impression of the community (90%-90%-87%). Ranking second in terms of agreement ratings was supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents. Agreement for this item varied from 82% who graded the community as getting better, to 74% whose impression was negative. Similarly, the same variance was evident relative to what's most important is that the city keeps the current trash collection service the way it is, from 74% to 66%.
- ◆ When comparing agreement ratings based on the two community improvement extremes, we found that the differences were most pronounced regarding support for paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees (60%-46%) and supporting the city having mandatory fee curbside recycling, but other conservation programs as well (66%-52%). Additionally, those most negative about community improvement were still most likely to agree that they would not be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (58%-50%) and supporting the city implementing a curbside recycling program for all city residents but not participating (24%-17%).
- ◆ No matter the perspective people had about their community (better-worse-same), a significant percentage disagreed with supporting



paying a modest fee for curbside recycling if all residents were charged similar fees (38%-50%-36%), that they would be willing to have city-wide curbside recycling if it meant giving up one day of trash collection (49%-42%-49%), and among those negative, that they would support the recycling program but other conservation programs as well (26%-44%-25%). Those most negative about community improvement were least reluctant to give up a day of trash collection, as their agreement to disagreement rating was much different (58%-42%) than if people viewed the community as getting better (50%-49%) or about the same (46%-49%).

## **LIKELIHOOD OF SUPPORTING MONTHLY FEE INCREASES FOR CURBSIDE RECYCLING**

**TABLE #22: OVERALL LIKELIHOOD FOR SUPPORTING MONTHLY FEE INCREASES FOR CURBSIDE RECYCLING**

MONTHLY INCREASE	VERY LIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	VERY UNLIKELY	NO OPINION	RATIO
\$0.00 – \$1.00	51%	23%	5%	19%	1%	3.1:1
\$1.01 – \$2.00	37%	20%	8%	24%	1%	1.8:1
\$2.01 – \$3.00	23%	26%	16%	33%	1%	1.0:1
\$3.01 – \$4.00	20%	17%	17%	43%	2%	0.6:1
\$4.01 – \$5.00	14%	14%	17%	52%	2%	0.4:1
More than \$5.00	8%	8%	20%	61%	3%	0.2:1

- ◆ **The threshold, or point at which residents became unlikely to support mandatory fee curbside recycling program based simply on the monthly increase, was at \$3.01-\$4.00, the point at which a majority (60%) expressed being unlikely or very unlikely, compared with 37% who were likely or very likely. The for-against percentages for the various monthly fee increases were 74%-24% at \$0.00-\$1.00, 57%-32% at \$1.01-\$2.00, and 49%-49% at \$2.01-\$3.00. Note that very unlikely ratings were higher than unlikely findings, indicating that some are intensely opposed and with a higher fervor than the consensus negative opinion.**
- ◆ **As the monthly amount increased, very likely ratings declined and conversely, very unlikely findings grew. At both \$0.00-1.00 (51%-19%) and \$1.01-\$2.00 (37%-24%), the very likely rating was the dominant position. And at the \$2.01-\$3.00 amount, even though respondents were evenly split (49%-49%) in terms of support to opposition, the negative intensity rating was the dominant viewpoint (23%-33%). From that amount upward, very unlikely ratings were a minimum twice the very likely level.**

- ◆ One point of note is the low no opinion responses, indicating that residents appeared to understand the question and have enough knowledge or information to voice an opinion.

**TABLE #23: LIKELIHOOD FOR SUPPORTING MONTHLY FEE INCREASES FOR CURBSIDE RECYCLING BASED ON SUBSECTOR**

MONTHLY INCREASE	NORTHEAST		SOUTHEAST		NORTHWEST		SOUTHWEST	
	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY
\$0.00 – \$1.00	79%	19%	71%	26%	78%	22%	67%	31%
\$1.01 – \$2.00	73%	26%	61%	38%	71%	28%	62%	36%
\$2.01 – \$3.00	47%	52%	48%	49%	54%	45%	48%	50%
\$3.01 – \$4.00	31%	67%	36%	63%	47%	52%	38%	57%
\$4.01 – \$5.00	23%	75%	29%	70%	32%	65%	29%	67%
More than \$5.00	12%	86%	17%	79%	22%	73%	10%	86%

- ◆ In the Northeast (47%-52%) and Southwest (48%-50%) subsectors, the threshold was reached at the \$2.01-\$3.00 monthly increase range. Comparatively, a majority in the Northwest (47%-52%) and Southeast (36%-63%) said they would be unlikely to support an increase at the next level, \$3.01-\$4.00. Note that unlikely ratings at the \$2.01-\$3.00 were fairly consistent, varying less than 10% (52% in Northeast, to 45% in Northwest). That was not the case at the next amount, as the high was 67% in the Northeast, as well as 63% in the Southeast, compared with 52% and 57% in the two western sectors, equating to an overall variance of 15 points.
- ◆ In both the Northeast (52%-67%) and Southeast (49%-63%), the jump in unlikely ratings between the \$2.01-\$3.00 and \$3.01-\$4.00 ranges showed a definite change of attitudes regarding the monthly fee increase. The same increase in percentages was not evident in the western areas, as in both the Northwest (45%-52%) and Southwest (50%-57%), levels increased less than ten percent. The drop-off in likely ratings was more than ten percent in both the Northeast (47%-31%) and Southeast (48%-36%), compared to being at the ten percent mark in the Southwest (48%-38%), but less than ten percent in the Northwest (54%-47%).

**TABLE #24: LIKELIHOOD FOR SUPPORTING MONTHLY FEE INCREASES FOR CURBSIDE RECYCLING BASED ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT RATINGS**

MONTHLY INCREASE	GETTING BETTER		GETTING WORSE		ABOUT THE SAME	
	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY	LIKELY	UNLIKELY
\$0.00 – \$1.00	82%	17%	58%	42%	74%	23%
\$1.01 – \$2.00	74%	25%	48%	52%	67%	32%
\$2.01 – \$3.00	52%	46%	38%	62%	49%	50%
\$3.01 – \$4.00	40%	59%	30%	70%	38%	59%
\$4.01 – \$5.00	31%	68%	22%	78%	28%	68%
More than \$5.00	17%	81%	16%	84%	16%	80%

- ◆ Monthly fees could increase to \$3.01-\$4.00 per month before people who graded the community as getting better expressed majority unlikely ratings (40%-59%). Conversely, those negative about community improvement reached the majority unlikely rate earlier, specifically at the \$1.01-\$2.00 level (48%-52%). And those who shared a status quo opinion split the difference between the other two, as they voiced majority unlikely ratings at \$2.01-\$3.00 (49%-50%). Interestingly, those positive and those believing the community to be about the same were both 59% unlikely to support curbside recycling based on a monthly fee increase of \$3.01-\$4.00. For comparison purposes, the rate was reached by those negative about community improvement at the \$2.01-\$3.00 range. When the other two subsets were at 59%, people who considered the community as getting worse were already at 70% in terms of unlikely support.
- ◆ Because of people negative about community improvement being hesitant in terms of being likely to support the various fee increases, percentages varied throughout this question. That included \$0.00-\$1.00 (82% of better, to 58% of worse), \$1.01-\$2.00 (74% of better, to 48% of worse, and \$2.01-\$3.00 (52% of better, to 38% of worse). The differences in likely ratings at the next three amounts between those with positive and negative improvement attitudes were more narrow.