



City of Roanoke 2015 Citizens Survey

Summary of Results

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February 2016



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Introduction

The Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research (CSR) has conducted citizens surveys periodically with the citizens of the City of Roanoke since the year 2000. The series of telephone surveys was designed to measure citizen opinions regarding municipal services and projects and to assess the strategic initiatives of the City of Roanoke government. Although slightly different survey instruments were used each year for the survey administration, the surveys were designed such that comparability in citizen ratings of services and initiatives was possible across years. The overall objective of the survey process is to garner public input that will guide the use of City resources and foster continual improvement in the services provided to citizens. Presentations of the results from the survey are made by CSR in each survey year to the Roanoke City Council.

For the administration of the 2015 Roanoke Citizens Survey, the CSR conducted a telephone survey of 600 residents of the City of Roanoke. This report summarizes the data collection procedures and results of the 2015 survey. Section 1 provides an overview of the survey instrument development and data collection procedures utilized by the CSR for the collection of the data. Section 2 provides a demographic profile of the survey respondents. Section 3 provides the findings from the 2015 survey for a variety of City issues and a comparison of the 2015 results from the survey on these items to the survey results from previous years. Section 4 provides an overview of findings related to City services along with comparisons between the 2015 findings related to City services with those from previous survey

years. Section 5 includes the survey findings related to survey respondent feelings of safety in the City. Section 6 provides an overview of findings regarding City of Roanoke government employee customer service. Section 7 provides the survey findings related to government communication with citizens. Section 8 includes a statement about data storage and conclusions for the project.

The 2015 survey instrument is included in *Appendix A*. *Appendix B* provides tables of response frequencies to all close-ended survey items. *Appendix C* provides response frequencies of the City service rating items re-tabulated to exclude responses of “not familiar with service” and “don’t know.” *Appendix D* lists all responses provided by respondents to open-ended survey questions. *Appendix E* provides response frequencies by selected demographic characteristics (age, gender, family income, and race).

1

Methodology

Sampling and Survey Instrument Design

A random-digit dialing (RDD) method was employed by the CSR for the administration of the 2015 survey. Both listed and unlisted telephone numbers were included in the sample for this project. Cellular numbers were also included in the random sample for the study. CSR worked with Survey Sampling International of Fairfield, CT, to define the parameters of the sample. The survey sample was randomly generated from numbers available to City of Roanoke



residents. Because some exchanges border areas outside the City of Roanoke and because survey respondents sometimes report residing in a neighboring geographic area to the target area, a screener question was also included in the survey. The screener question confirmed City of Roanoke residence prior to beginning the survey with a potential respondent. Sample members reporting residence in a locality other than the City of Roanoke were eliminated from the eligible sample pool for calling. There were 1,853 sample members with this final call disposition code.

Based on a total of 600 completed interviews, the survey has a sampling error of ± 3.6 percent. Therefore, in 95 out of 100 surveys completed with this number of interviews using the same sampling methodology and parameters, the results obtained would fall in a range of ± 3.6 percent of the results that would be achieved if interviews were completed with every potential respondent (in households with working land or cellular telephones) residing in the City of Roanoke. Smaller sampling errors are present for items on which there is polarized response (e.g. 90 percent identical response on an item).

The 2015 survey instrument is based on the surveys used in previous years in order that survey results and City performance in service areas can be measured across time. However, minor wording adjustments were made to the 2015 survey and several new items were included to assess the extent to which City residents would recommend living in Roanoke to someone who asks, if residents plan to continue living in Roanoke for the next five years, and how satisfied residents are with their current Internet service connectivity.



Data Collection Procedures

All telephone calls for the survey were made by CSR staff members utilizing a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system at the Blacksburg, Virginia location of the Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research. All calls were made during the period between August 27, 2015 through December 19, 2015. CSR wrote a calling program to be used with CATI for administering the 2015 City of Roanoke Citizens Survey. The program provides scripted survey items, precludes out of range responses and facilitates real-time data entry of all responses gathered on the telephone. The average length of survey interviews was just over 16 minutes.

Each interviewer collecting data for the survey project participated in a study-specific training session for the project. All interviewers working on the project have worked on a variety of survey projects (indeed, some of the interviewers for this survey worked on administrations of the City of Roanoke survey in previous years) and have participated in multiple training sessions in both interviewing techniques and CATI. All interviews were monitored by a CSR Call Center Supervisor in order to ensure accuracy and proper interviewing protocol. Clarifying notes for specific survey items appeared on the CATI screens for interviewers to ensure that identical prompts were used for respondents requesting additional information about survey items or response categories.



CSR programmed all call scheduling such that each sample member remaining as a non-respondent was attempted to be reached at least six times at different times of day on different days of the week. A total of 13,757 telephone numbers were attempted during the survey administration. Sample members reporting residence in a locality other than the City of Roanoke were excluded from the eligible sample pool (N=1,853); likewise, respondents who indicated a language or hearing barrier such that they could not respond or request that another adult in the household respond, were also excluded from the eligible sample pool (N=94). Households for which interviewers were told that only minors resided in the home were excluded from the eligible sample pool (N=30). Non-working telephone numbers (fax tones, out of service/disconnected numbers, automated disconnect services) were also excluded from the eligible sample pool (N=4,123). Non-residential numbers (N=1,115) were excluded from the eligible pool of sample members as well.

After the elimination of all the ineligible records described above, the remaining number of eligible sample members was 6,542. A total of 600 interviews were completed for this study. **Table 1** provides an overview of the final call dispositions for all sample members. Many sample members were never reached after numerous attempts and a final disposition of “no answer” was assigned. Therefore, the residency rate among these households is unknown.

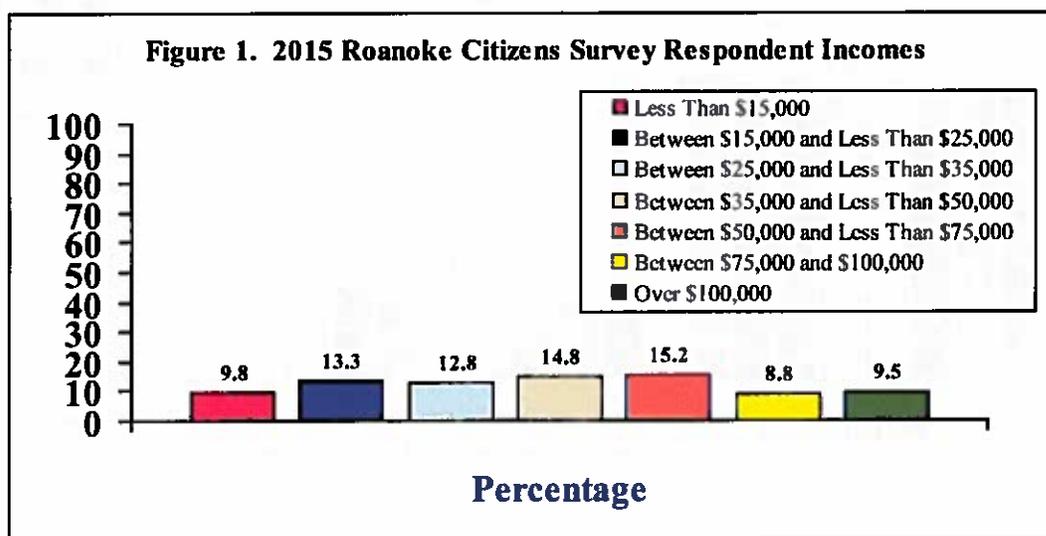


It may be assumed that a number of these households are indeed, ineligible sample members due to non-residence. CSR utilizes a standard conversion calling protocol in which all calls that are coded as “soft refusals” are re-attempted utilizing more senior interviewing staff. A call is coded as a “soft refusal” when the potential respondent refuses but does not indicate a reason for exclusion from the calling pool (i.e. refusal due to illness, request to be removed from calling pool, etc.). Likewise, all telephone numbers deemed to be temporarily disconnected are attempted periodically throughout the duration of the study.

Table 1	
Total Initial Sample	13,757
Ineligible Sample:	
Residence outside the City of Roanoke (1,853)	
Language/Hearing Barrier (143)	
Non-working telephone number (fax tones, out of service/disconnected numbers, automated disconnect services) (4,123)	
No Adult in Home (30)	
Non-residential telephone number (1,115)	
Eligible Sample	6,493
Total Number of Completed Interviews	600
Non-respondents:	
Final disposition of no answer, busy, answering machine or callback after six attempts (4,493)	
Refusals (1,401)	5,893

2 Respondent Demographic Profile

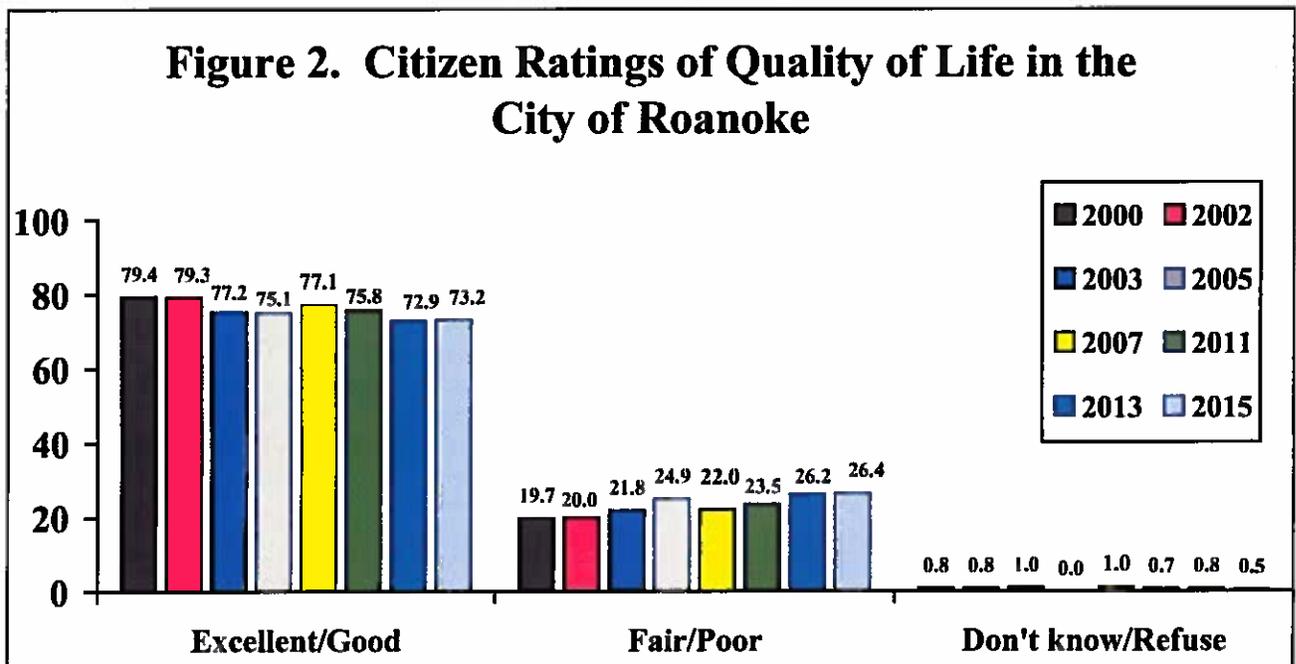
72 percent of respondents to the survey reported that they are white, with 19 percent of respondents reporting they are African American or Black. The remaining six percent of respondents reported being Asian, Hispanic or a member of some other group. Three percent of respondents refused to report their race. As has consistently been the case in previous administrations of the City of Roanoke Citizens Survey, more women than men responded (61% vs. 39%). 14 percent of survey respondents to the survey are 35 years of age or younger, with 26 percent reporting that they are between the ages of 36 and 55, 24 percent reporting that they are between the ages of 56 and 65, and 31 percent reporting that they are over age 65. Four percent of survey respondents refused to report their age. **Figure 1** depicts the income distribution reported by respondents to the 2015 survey. The family income profile for 2015 respondents is highly similar to that found in 2013 among survey respondents.



3

Findings Related to Quality of Life and Selected Issues

City of Roanoke residents continue to rate quality of life in the City highly. Almost three-fourths of Roanoke’s citizens (73%) rate the quality of life in the City as either ‘excellent’ or ‘good’. This is an identical percentage rating quality of life in the City favorably as 2013. As depicted in **Figure 2**, citizen responses to the survey item asking respondents to rate the quality of life in the community have remained positive across all survey years in which the item was asked.





As has been true in the previous survey years, there are some differences in citizen perceptions of quality of life in the City of Roanoke when viewed by certain respondent demographic characteristics. Overall, Roanoke residents with higher incomes tend to rate the quality of life in the City more favorably than those with lower incomes. For example, in the 2015 survey, respondents using the categories ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ to describe the quality of life in the City of Roanoke by self-reported income category are as follows:

- Less than \$15,000: 58% (down from 62% in 2013)
- Between \$15,000 and Less Than \$25,000: 61% (down from 62% in 2013)
- Between \$25,000 and Less Than \$35,000: 70% (down from 76% in 2013)
- Between \$35,000 and Less Than \$50,000: 68% (up from 67% in 2013)
- Between \$50,000 and Less Than \$75,000: 85% (up from 83% in 2013)
- Between \$75,000 and Less Than \$100,000: 81% (down from 85% in 2013)
- Over \$100,000: 91% (identical to % found in 2013)

Differences in perceptions of quality of life in the City of Roanoke were also evident when viewed by respondent age. Specifically, older respondents are more likely to rate the quality of life in Roanoke as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ than younger respondents are. For example, in the 2015 survey, respondents using the categories ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ to describe the quality of life in the City of Roanoke by self-reported age are as follows:

- 18-25: 79%
- 26-35: 62%
- 36-45: 58%
- 46-55: 73%
- 56-65: 74%
- >65: 80%

Quality of life in the City is also viewed differently according to the race of the respondent. Respondents who report their race as White are more likely (76%) to rate quality of life in the



City of Roanoke as either ‘excellent’ or ‘good’ than are respondents who report their race as African American/Black (61%), although more Black respondents rate the quality of life in the City of Roanoke favorably in 2015 than they did in 2013, when 55 percent rated quality of life in the City favorably.

There are also differences in the ratings of quality of life in the City when the responses are viewed by respondent gender. This year 75 percent of male respondents (an identical percentage as found in 2013) and 72 percent of female respondents (also an identical percentage as found in 2013) rate quality of life in the City as either ‘excellent’ or ‘good’.

On nine (compared to four in 2013) of the fifteen strategic initiatives or issues addressed in the survey, citizen ratings or agreement with the survey item went up this year. Specifically, feelings on the City of Roanoke in the following areas has improved:

- Offering multicultural events and attractions
- Greenway development effort
- Roanoke’s transportation system
- Informing/educating citizens about City services
- Services worth taxes paid by citizens
- Government officials involving citizens in the business of government
- Availability of downtown off-street parking
- Government focusing on unique needs of youths
- City/employees modeling/promoting good environmental management/stewardship

The area in which the most improvement in citizen opinions was found since 2013 is on the item “The City and its employees model and promote good environmental management and stewardship.” This item had a six percent increase in favorable ratings since 2013. Among the strategic issue areas included in the 2015 survey, the item with the most favorable opinions among citizens is “City government’s greenway development effort is a valuable asset to the City and its residents.”

Table 2 depicts the findings for the strategic initiative/issue items. One item utilizes different response categories so the findings for that item in the table combine responses of ‘excellent’ and poor’. This item is “City of Roanoke’s support of educational resources and opportunities for you and your family in Roanoke.” The findings for this item in 2015 were less favorable than in 2013. However, for the first time this year, this item included the word “financial” with the wording changed since 2013 to “City of Roanoke’s financial support of educational resources and opportunities for you and your family.”

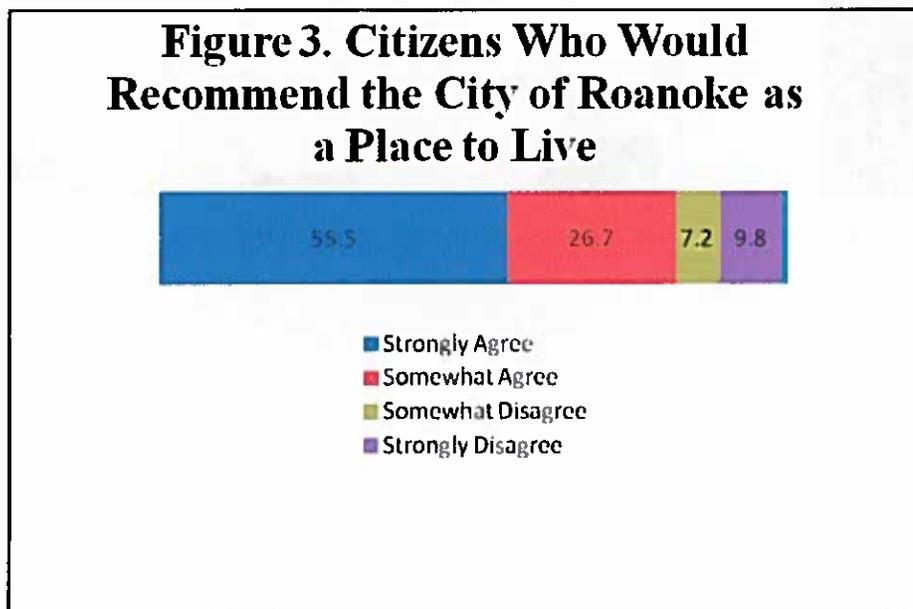
Survey Item	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2007	2011	2013	2015
City government’s greenway development effort is a valuable asset to the City and its residents.	NA	NA	NA	NA	75.2	67.6	82.7	83.0	86.2
City does good job offering multicultural events and attractions.	85.5	NA	79.0	NA	79.6	74.6	86.3	84.3	85.0
Roanoke's neighborhoods are good places to live.	83.2	NA	87.4	NA	85.3	76.9	85.3	85.5	83.3



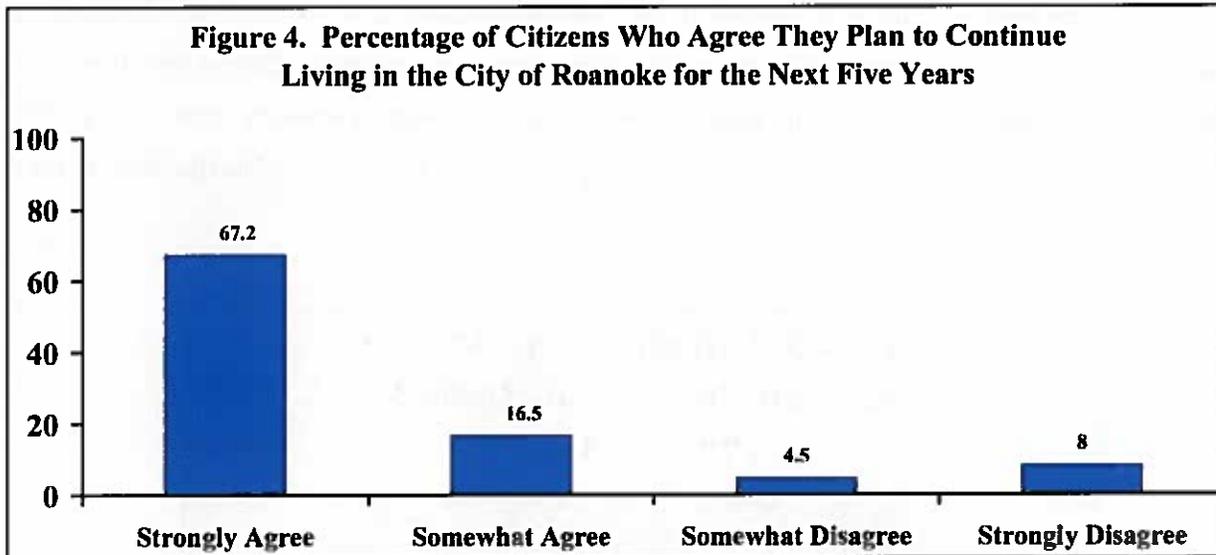
Table 2. Citizen Responses Regarding Selected Strategic Issues and Questions

Survey Item	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2007	2011	2013	2015
Roanoke's transportation system allows for a good mix of transportation options like auto, public transit, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic.	65.0	NA	74.1	NA	77.6	71.8	79.3	79.4	79.7
The City and its employees model and promote good environmental management and stewardship.	NA	67.8	73.5						
City government does a good job of informing/educating citizens about City services.	74.3	NA	66.3	NA	65.9	55.0	71.7	70.0	72.0
There is a good mix of housing types and affordability in Roanoke.	75.4	NA	77.0	NA	74.9	70.4	75.7	75.6	71.7
The services provided by the City of Roanoke are worth the taxes paid by its citizens.	65.8	75.1	70.3	69.7	67.1	57.4	63.8	66.7	68.5
City government does a good job of providing health and human services to citizens who need them.	71.0	NA	72.5	NA	70.9	60.5	60.5	66.7	66.3
City government officials actively involve citizens in the business of government.	63.9	NA	65.5	NA	60.2	48.7	63.2	62.0	64.3
City government performance is improving in Roanoke.	72.9	75.9	63.1	61.5	61.2	53.1	57.2	65.3	62.0
The overall economy of the City of Roanoke has improved during the past two years.	NA	58.6	57.2						
Downtown off-street parking (both garages and lots) is reasonably available.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	58.8	53.3	56.7
City government does a good job of focusing on the unique needs of youths.	56.3	NA	56.3	NA	49.7	39.9	50.2	53.8	55.2
(City of Roanoke's financial support of) Educational resources and opportunities available to you and your family in Roanoke*	64.9	NA	64.3	NA	67.1	59.9	53.7	53.6	47.8

A new survey item that was added in 2015 asked respondents the extent to which they agree that they would recommend living in Roanoke to someone who asks. City of Roanoke residents were highly favorable with regard to recommending living in Roanoke. Specifically, 82 percent of citizens would recommend the City as a place to live. **Figure 3** depicts the findings for this item.



Another new survey item that was added in 2015 asked respondents the extent to which they agree they would continue living in the City of Roanoke for the next five years. More than 8 in 10 respondents (84%) do plan on continuing to live in the City for the next five years. **Figure 4** depicts the findings for this item.



4

City of Roanoke Services

In the 2015 survey, 87 percent (up from 86% in 2013) of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the overall quality of services that the City of Roanoke government provides given its available resources. In the 2015 survey, citizens were not only asked to rate the quality of services provided by the City but were also asked to rate the level of importance of each service included in the survey. **Table 3** provides a comparison of the ratings among citizens of City services compared to respondent ratings of importance for each service. All responses of “not familiar with service,” “don’t know,” or “refuse to answer” were excluded in the tabulation of the percentages reported for each service. The service rating column includes responses of



‘excellent’ and ‘good’ and the importance column includes responses of ‘very important’. The services in Table 3 are ranked in descending order with the highest quality ratings at the top.

Table 3. 2015 City Service Ratings Compared with Importance of Service Ratings		
City Service	Quality Rating	Importance Rating
The 911 emergency call center	94.2	97.4
Emergency medical services and rescue	94.1	94.4
Police services	87.8	93.4
Removal of snow and ice from City streets	53.3	90.7
Fire protection services	94.7	89.1
Weekly trash collection	88.7	88.3
Street lighting	71.7	81.9
Valley Metro bus transportation services	74.2	80.2
Recycling	83.2	79.9
Public library services and programs	90.9	79.2
Street paving, maintenance and repair	42.1	78.5
Transportation planning for traffic	63.4	78.0
Bi-weekly pick-up of large trash items and brush	78.0	77.8
Efforts of the City to improve the quality of housing in the City	54.4	77.0
Animal control	78.6	75.2
City government support of neighborhood organizations	65.4	69.4
Citizens getting information about City services and activities	60.9	68.6
Code enforcement services	68.8	68.0
The City's efforts to promote environmental awareness to citizens	61.5	67.9
The condition of the City's parks, trails, and recreation facilities	85.3	67.0
Mowing of rights of way, street medians, and roadsides	70.5	65.7
The quality of the City's recreation programs	77.3	64.9
The quality of the City's sidewalks	57.3	64.8
The maintenance of trees along City streets and within parks	70.3	63.6
Mowing and maintenance of City parks	81.6	60.0
The City's marketing of its parks and recreation programs and services	76.9	59.5
The current level of bagged leaf collection service	65.9	59.4
The quality of Roanoke's athletic fields	76.2	56.7
The quality of events offered by the Berglund Center	79.0	56.5



A positive finding from the survey is that the services that received the highest quality ratings tended to also be those that are very important to citizens. **Table 4** provides the combined percentage of ‘excellent’ and ‘good’ ratings for each City service included in the 2015 survey along with the citizen ratings the service received in the surveys since 2000. As noted in the table, all service items were not asked in each year. Items not asked in a given year appear as “NA.” All ‘don’t know/refuse’ and ‘not familiar’ responses were excluded from the total number of responses for the percentage tabulations included in the table.

Findings regarding City services were highly favorable this year. Indeed, almost every service included in the survey received an increase in favorable ratings since 2013. Only three services decreased in favorable ratings since 2013: Code enforcement, which only decreased 1 percentage point since 2013, removal of snow and ice from City streets (decrease of 18 percent since 2013), and street paving, maintenance and repair (decrease of 5 percent since 2013).

Services with the at least a 5 percent improvement in favorable ratings since 2013 are:

- Recycling services (increase of 5 percent)
- Mowing and maintenance of city parks (increase of 7 percent)
- Animal control (increase of 6 percent)
- The City’s marketing of its parks and recreation services (increase of 5 percent)
- Mowing right of ways, street medians and roadsides (increase of 10 percent)
- City government support for neighborhood organizations (increase of 7 percent)
- Transportation planning for traffic (increase of 5 percent)
- City promotion of environmental awareness to citizens (increase of 6 percent)



Table 4. Service Ratings, Percentage “Excellent” and “Good” Combined 2000-2015

City Service	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2007	2011	2013	2015
Fire protection services	95.4	93.3	94.8	95.1	92.2	91.6	94.2	91.5	94.7
The 911 emergency call center	93.0	87.9	95.6	94.1	91.5	92.5	94.4	93.7	94.2
Emergency medical services and rescue	93.6	91.9	95.1	93.0	91.7	91.4	93.9	93.2	94.1
Public library services and programs	84.9	91.7	95.3	92.6	90.7	92.2	91.5	90.3	90.9
Weekly trash collection	87.7	76.4	90.0	84.6	85.9	87.5	85.4	87.7	88.7
Police service	79.9	75.7	84.1	79.1	80.4	79.1	85.0	83.6	87.8
The condition of the City’s parks, trails, and recreation facilities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	78.1	80.2	85.3
Recycling services	72.3	75.3	85.8	74.2	77.7	74.7	78.1	77.2	83.2
Mowing and maintenance of City parks	NA	NA	93.6	81.9	79.3	80.8	72.2	74.5	81.6
Quality of events offered by the Berglund Center	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	50.6	74.4	76.8	79.0
Animal control	72.1	66.4	83.8	67.9	65.3	67.5	73.3	72.5	78.6
Bi-weekly pick-up of large items and brush	63.4	68.2	84.5	75.6	76.5	76.5	72.3	75.9	78.0
The quality of the City’s recreation programs	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	71.6	74.4	77.3
The City’s marketing of its parks and recreation programs and services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	68.2	70.1	71.6	76.9
The quality of Roanoke’s athletic fields	NA	NA	NA	NA	57.8	58.6	75.9	76.4	76.2
Valley Metro bus transportation services	72.6	77.0	86.8	80.4	79.7	75.3	72.1	71.9	74.2
Street lighting	72.9	66.5	75.3	69.1	68.7	68.9	72.4	67.6	71.7
Mowing right of ways, street medians, and roadsides	NA	NA	84.9	72.5	66.7	68.5	60.2	60.7	70.5
The maintenance of trees along City streets and within parks	NA	NA	NA	NA	67.2	70.6	63.7	66.3	70.3
Code enforcement services	NA	NA	NA	54.3	43.8	46.3	65.3	69.9	68.8
Current level of bagged leaf collection service	NA	NA	NA	74.9	71.6	73.7	54.1	65.8	65.9
City government support for neighborhood organizations	63.9	62.9	80.1	64.3	59.9	55.9	63.9	58.2	65.4
Transportation planning for traffic	57.4	56.2	67.9	53.6	48.6	47.2	57.4	58.3	63.4
City’s efforts to promote environmental awareness to citizens	NA	NA	NA	50.2	50.8	45.3	57.6	55.2	61.5
Citizens getting information about City services/activities	67.7	65.1	77.5	64.1	56.7	59.3	61.4	57.0	60.9
Quality of the City’s sidewalks	NA	NA	NA	NA	49.3	43.1	58.7	56.0	57.3
Efforts of the City to improve quality of housing in City	NA	NA	NA	52.4	50.0	50.0	55.9	53.3	54.4
Removal of snow and ice from City streets	68.5	63.1	78.4	65.3	66.9	65.8	63.2	71.3	53.3
Street paving, maintenance and repair	52.2	51.2	63.8	48.2	40.4	42.7	48.2	47.3	42.1



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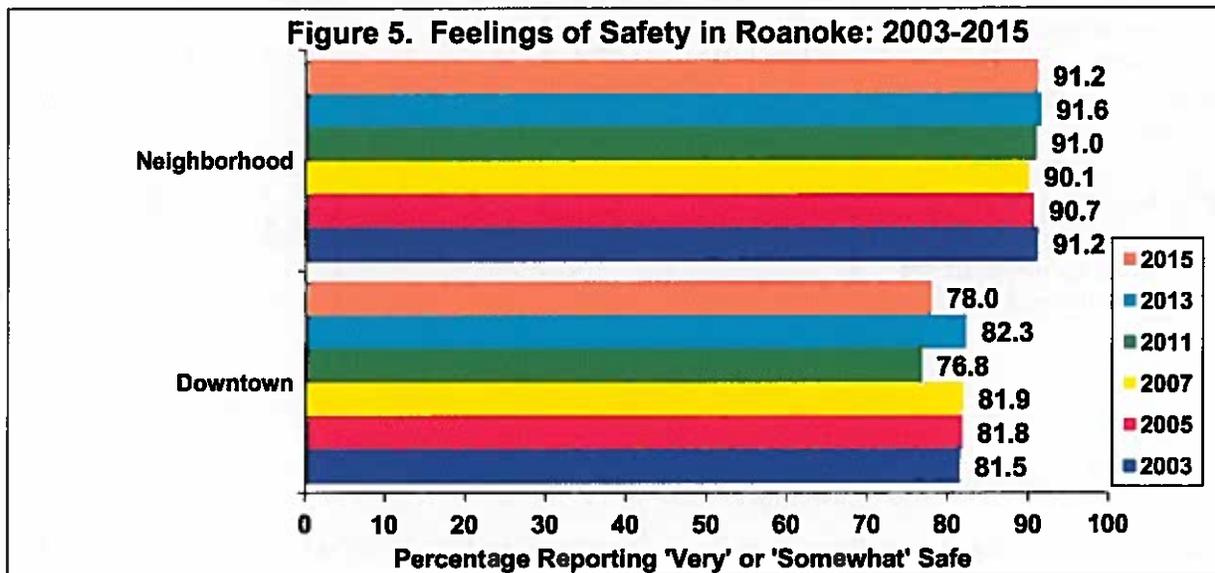
Citizen Perceptions of Safety

As depicted in **Figure 5**, City of Roanoke residents feel as safe in their neighborhoods in 2015 than they did in 2013. However, fewer respondents to the survey in 2015 reported feeling ‘very safe’ or ‘somewhat safe’ in downtown Roanoke than they did in 2013. There are differences in the survey responses related to feelings of safety when viewed by respondent gender. For example, in the 2015 survey more men than women reported feeling ‘very safe’ or ‘somewhat safe’ in their neighborhoods (93% vs. 90%) and downtown (82% vs. 75%). While high percentages of Roanoke citizens in all income categories report feeling safe in their neighborhoods, Roanoke citizens reporting a higher household income are more likely to feel ‘very safe’ or ‘somewhat safe’ in their neighborhoods, with more than 9 in 10 citizens in income categories above \$50,000.00 using these response categories.

Similarly, more than 90 percent or more of citizens reporting a household income in a category of at least \$75,000.00 used the categories ‘very safe’ or ‘somewhat safe’ to describe their feelings of safety in downtown Roanoke while fewer than 90 percent of citizens in lower income categories reported feeling ‘very safe’ or ‘somewhat safe’ downtown.



Among survey respondents reporting their race as African American/Black, 86 percent feel 'very safe' or 'somewhat safe' in their neighborhoods compared with 92 percent of White respondents. However, 78 percent of African American/Black respondents reported feeling 'very safe' or 'somewhat safe' in downtown Roanoke compared to 77 percent of White respondents.



6

City Government Customer Service

A variety of items measuring citizen ratings of City government employee customer service are included in the survey. All City government employee customer service ratings have





remained high, similar to the findings in 2013. Table 5 provides an overview of the survey findings from the customer service items included in the survey.

Survey Item	2000	2001	2002	2003	2005	2007	2011	2013	2015
City government employees are generally friendly, courteous, and helpful	86.8	87.9	85.4	86.2	88.9	82.1	85.5	87.1	87.2
City government employees provide prompt service	74.4	77.2	77.4	73.3	78.0	67.9	73.3	76.7	75.3
It is easy to contact the appropriate City government office when you need a particular service or have a question	72.3	70.9	70.1	68.2	66.7	61.5	70.3	70.3	73.8
City parking facility staff are generally polite and responsive	NA	NA	79.6	73.3	75.4	67.0	65.7	73.9	71.2

Survey respondents were asked which methods they would choose for contacting the City if they had a customer service request (excluding emergency calls). The most common method selected by respondents is calling the specific department involved (68%) followed by calling the City’s centralized customer service number (21%).

7 City Government Communication with Citizens

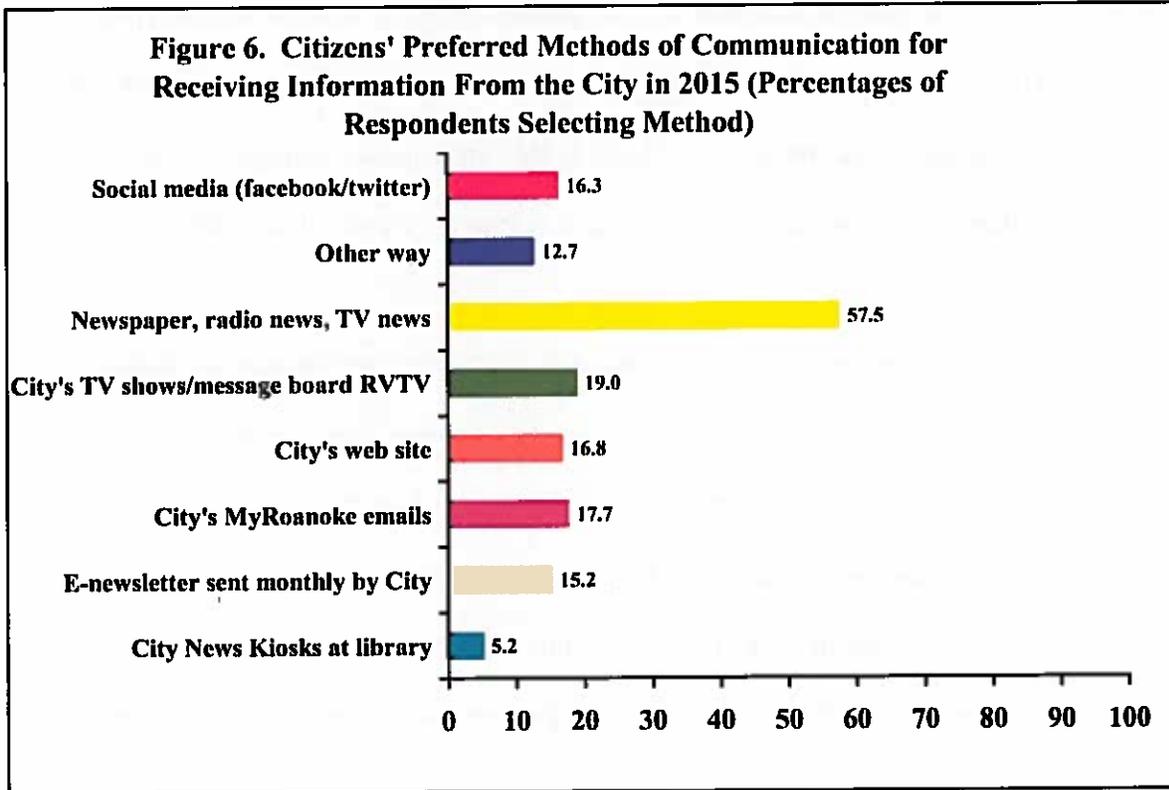
Identical to the percentage found in the 2013 survey, 12 percent of citizens indicated on the survey that there are services that are not currently offered that you would like to see



available on the City's web site. The individual responses regarding these services are provided in *Appendix D*. Thirty five percent of citizens reported that they view information about City services, activities, and public meetings by watching the City's Inside Roanoke television show on Roanoke Valley Television Channel 3 Cox Cable at least once a month or more.

As was the case in the previous years' surveys, the 2015 survey instrument included an item regarding the method of communication citizens prefer when receiving information from the City. Five percent of citizens prefer to receive information from the City by checking the City News kiosks at City library branches, 15 percent would like to receive an e-newsletter sent monthly by the City, 18 percent would prefer to communication through emails from the City's MyRoanoke news service. 17 percent prefer to visit the City's web site, 16 percent prefer to receive City communications by visiting social media sites like Facebook and Twitter (a significant increase in this preference since 2013), 19 percent prefer to watch the City's TV shows and message board on RVTV Channel 3, almost six in ten (57%) prefer to read the newspaper, listen to radio news, or watch news to get City information, and 13 percent reported they would prefer to communicate with the City in some other way.

Figure 6 depicts the preferred methods of communication among citizens for receiving information from the City. Citizens were asked this year to rate their level of satisfaction with their Internet service connectivity. 66 percent of respondents reported being either 'somewhat satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their Internet service connectivity.



8 Data Storage and Conclusion

An SPSS dataset from which the 2015 data in this summary report were derived accompanies this report in electronic format. All variable and value labels are provided on the SPSS dataset. All electronic files of the survey instrument, report, tabulations and presentations related to the data are the property of the City of Roanoke. However, the Center for Survey Research will retain copies of all project materials for a period of at least one year. No



information from this survey will be shared by the CSR with anyone other than project team members from the Office of the City of Roanoke Manager without the express permission of that office.

The findings from the 2015 City of Roanoke Citizens Survey indicate that City residents enjoy living in the City and are highly satisfied with a wide variety of aspects of living in the City and the services provided by the City. Indeed, City of Roanoke residents continue to rate quality of life in the City highly, even slightly higher than in the previous survey in 2013. Black respondents were significantly more favorable this year with regard to quality of life in the City than in 2013 (61% favorable vs. 55% favorable).

Positive findings were also found this year on a wide variety of strategic initiative survey items. Improvement was seen in more strategic area survey items this year than in 2013. The strategic area item with the highest increase was “The city and its employees model and promote good environmental management and stewardship.” Interestingly, the city government’s greenway development effort was also the highest rated item among the strategic areas addressed in the survey this year. Thus, citizens seem to be pleased with the environmental direction the City is taking.

Another highly positive finding on a new survey item this year is that 82 percent of City residents would recommend living in the City of Roanoke. Likewise, the majority of respondents



(84%) also plan on continuing to live in the City for the next five years. Citizens are also highly favorable with regard to services in the City of Roanoke this year. Indeed, there was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents indicating they are satisfied with the overall quality of services that the City of Roanoke government provides given its available resources compared to 2013. While most services in the City receive glowing ratings from citizens, more concern seems to be evident among City residents in the areas of snow and ice removal and paving, maintenance and repair of streets. Overall however, it is important to note that almost every service area included in the survey received an increase in favorable ratings since 2013. The biggest increase in favorable ratings among respondents was in the area of mowing right of ways, street medians and roadsides followed by the mowing and maintenance of city parks along with City government support for neighborhood organizations. Another positive finding this year is that feelings of safety in the City are remaining stable and are still high. However, as in previous surveys, citizens feel safer in their neighborhoods than in downtown.

Not surprising in relation to the other extremely positive survey findings with regard to strategic initiative areas and City services, ratings of City customer service customer service also remain favorable among citizens. Overall, the survey findings provide solid trend information indicating that the City is going in the right direction in strategic initiative areas, the provision of outstanding services to citizens, and in communicating with citizens.