

# ***City of Edgewood, Kentucky***

## **Citizen Survey**

Analysis of Findings

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## *Executive Summary*

The City of Edgewood Citizen Survey was designed to gain input and information from citizens on the services provided by the City of Edgewood. The survey was mailed in the early part of March 2009 to all households in the city, with a request to return the survey by March 31, 2009. The results were compiled and coded and the data was entered by students in the NKU MPA program and analyzed throughout April of 2009. The findings will be presented in the MPA Capstone class and also to the City of Edgewood in May 2009.

Similar to the previous survey, conducted in 1998, citizens were highly responsive to the survey with a total of 1,214 surveys returned out of 3,231 surveys mailed (i.e. a response rate of 37.6%). This represents nearly a 10.7% increase in the number of returned surveys (1,110) and a response rate increase of less than one percent (36.8%) from the 1998 survey. According to The National Citizen Survey, response rates typically obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

The major findings of this survey are:

- 1) Citizens of Edgewood are satisfied with the services they receive. Of the 12 service areas addressed in this survey, seven had rates of satisfaction above 90%. Four areas were above 80%. The lowest rate of satisfaction was 78.1% (for physical condition of streets). The mean or “average” satisfaction was 91.9%. (compared to 87.48% in 1998)
- 2) According to the satisfaction index, based upon each response for each service area, citizens are highly satisfied with their services. The index ranged from 1 (very satisfied) to 4 (very dissatisfied). The mean or “average” satisfaction level was 1.76, which is an excellent score on the index. (compared to 1.89 in 1998)
3. Twenty-six percent of the survey respondents have made a complaint/inquiry to the City of Edgewood with 69% satisfied with the handling of the complaint/inquiry. This represents a 9% improvement from the 1998 survey.
4. The mean or “average” helpfulness ratings of various city department personnel was 89.6%. This is a very high level of helpfulness. The helpfulness level in 1998 was 85%. The data shows that there was improvement in helpfulness in a few areas.
5. Edgewood citizens noted several factors as positive influences on the city’s image. The rankings closely mirror the results from the prior survey. Although street conditions is still the lowest rated area for having a positive effect on the city’s image at 81%, this represents an improvement from 69% in the 1998 survey.
6. The citizens of Edgewood are informed on city issues. The city newsletter is the most popular source (87.5%) for information. Twenty-six percent of respondents would like to receive the city newsletter via email. Only 2.2% of respondents do not follow city issues.

The number of citizens with internet access has more than doubled since the last survey. (42.7% to 88%). This represents a large increase in the number of citizens who use the internet.

7. Fifty-eight percent of respondents recycle every week while another 13% recycle most of the time. This means that 71% of residents recycle at least most of the time. This is a high rate in spite of the fact that there has been an increase in the number of people who do not recycle at all (from 9.2% in 1998 to 17% in 2009) according to the survey data.

8. Most residents (81.8%) do not wish to see a change in taxes or services. Some citizens desire less tax and fewer services (15.45%). A small number of citizens expressed a willingness to pay more taxes for more services (2.6%). This shows that most citizens would like to see a continuation of current tax and spending policies.

9. When respondents were asked which area they would support increased spending, if the city were to increase spending in a particular area, the top choice was streets (54.6%) with police the second choice (17.6%). If the city were to decrease spending in one area, the overwhelming choice (72.6%) was recreation. These responses closely mirror the responses of the survey conducted in 1998.

10. The responses of citizens were very mixed when asked if they would prefer one day a week garbage pick up from the existing two days a week garbage pick up. Fifty three percent of the respondents would prefer that the city stay with two days a week garbage pick up.

# **ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS**

The findings of the survey are presented in the following sections:

- I, Service Satisfaction
- II. Inquires and Helpfulness
- III. City Image
- IV. Staying Informed
- V. Recycling and Garbage Services
- VI. Taxation and Spending Policy
- VII. Demographics of the Respondents
- VIII: Trends: Comparison of the 1998 and 2009 Survey Findings
- V. Conclusion

## *I. Service Satisfaction*

This analysis will begin by looking at the services provided by the City of Edgewood that were rated by the citizens in Question # 1 of the survey. The analysis of the data is detailed below along with graphs to serve as visual aids. This question sought to measure the level of citizen satisfaction on the following twelve different service areas:

- |                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Physical Condition of Streets      | 7. Police Protection          |
| 2. Storm Sewer Service                | 8. Crime Prevention Programs  |
| 3. Street Sweeping Service            | 9. Fire Protection            |
| 4. Snow Removal                       | 10. Life Squad Protection     |
| 5. Waste Collection                   | 11. Recreational Activities   |
| 6. Street Lighting along City Streets | 12. Dog Warden/Animal Control |

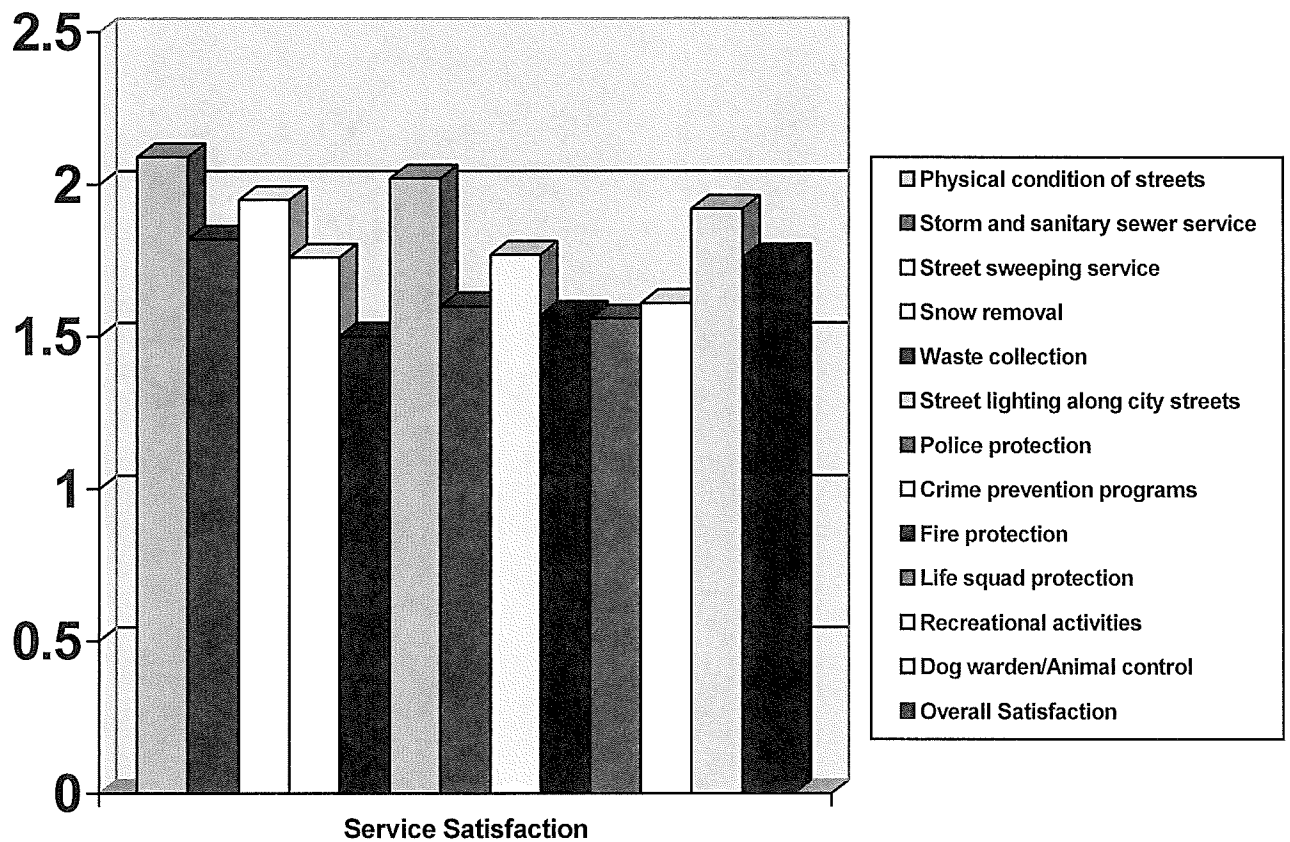
Citizens were asked to choose between four different levels of satisfaction for each service: Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, and Very Dissatisfied. The great majority of all respondents answered each field, and the results indicate a high level of citizen satisfaction with the services provided by the City of Edgewood. The chart below shows the percentage of respondents who either chose "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" for each field. Based upon the averages, the average satisfaction rate is 91.9% which is a very impressive rate. Fire Protection (99.1%) and Life Squad (98.7%) received the top two satisfaction rates. Physical Condition of Streets (78.1%) and Street Lighting along City Streets (80.9%) received the worst satisfaction rates.

The following table documents the findings:

<b>Physical Condition of Streets</b>	<b>78.1%</b>
<b>Storm Sewer Service</b>	<b>92.9%</b>
<b>Street Sweeping Service</b>	<b>87.1%</b>
<b>Snow Removal</b>	<b>89.5%</b>
<b>Waste Collection</b>	<b>97.7%</b>
<b>Street Lighting along City Streets</b>	<b>80.9%</b>
<b>Police Protection</b>	<b>96.7%</b>
<b>Crime Prevention Programs</b>	<b>95.8%</b>
<b>Fire Protection</b>	<b>99.1%</b>
<b>Life Squad Protection</b>	<b>98.7%</b>
<b>Recreational Activities</b>	<b>96.9%</b>
<b>Dog Warden/Animal Control</b>	<b>89.4%</b>

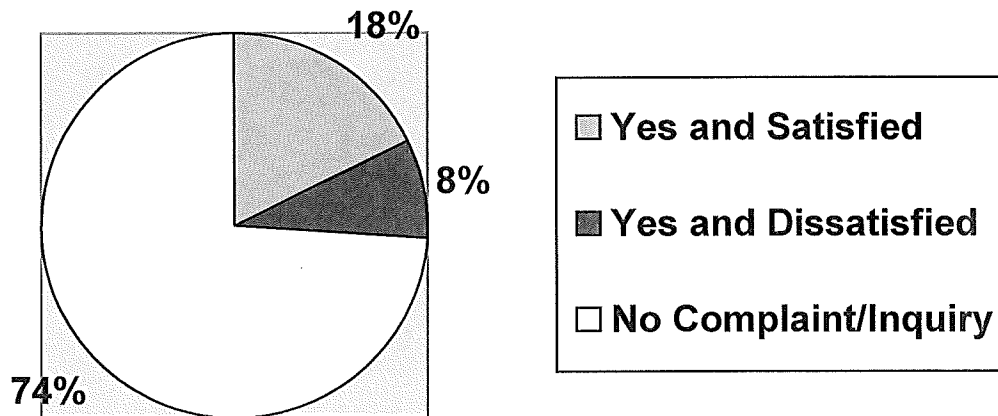
To analyze the overall satisfaction with all the services, a satisfaction index, similar to that used in the 1998 Edgewood Citizen Survey was developed, utilizing the average of the twelve questions concerning satisfaction. For this index, the responses were given a

value of one through four: one for Very Satisfied, two for Satisfied, three for Dissatisfied, and four for Very Dissatisfied. All valid responses were used in this index. The overall median or most common choice was “Satisfied” or 2. The average scores follow fairly closely to the satisfaction rates in the above chart. The mean or average of all the responses was 1.76. According to the satisfaction index, this means that, on the average, people were satisfied to very satisfied with services.



## **II. Inquiries and Helpfulness**

The second question on the survey refers to whether or not citizens have made a complaint/inquiry in the past 12 months to the City of Edgewood. If they answered ‘Yes’ then they were asked if they were satisfied or not satisfied with the way that their complaint/inquiry was handled. The pie chart below shows that only 26% (18% Satisfied and 8% Dissatisfied) of respondents had a complaint/inquiry in the past 12 months. By breaking the numbers down further, findings show that 69% were satisfied with the way that their complaint/inquiry was handled and 31% were dissatisfied.



For the next question, citizens were asked to rate the helpfulness of various city officials using the following rating scale: Very Helpful, Helpful, Not Very Helpful, Not Very Helpful at All, and No Contact. In order to get more useful results, the “No Contact” response was added because it is unlikely that a huge number of citizens encounter all of these personnel. The table below shows the levels of helpfulness for each field. According to the table below, fire personnel, and recreation personnel are the top two most helpful departments, and Building and Zoning and the City Administrator are the two least helpful.

<b>The City Council</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>The Mayor</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>City Administrator</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>City Clerk</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Building and Zoning</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Police Personnel</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Fire Personnel</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Public Works Personnel</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Park Maintenance Personnel</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Recreation Personnel</b>	<b>96%</b>

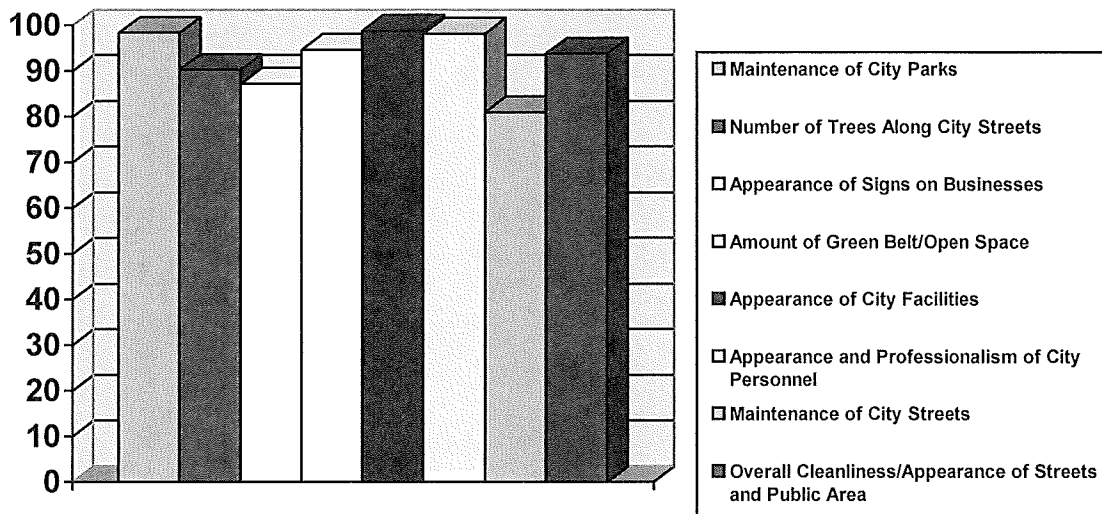
### **III. City Image**

The fourth question on the survey was designed to measure the effect, positive or negative, of several items on the city's image. The following items were rated:

- 1.Maintenance of City Parks
- 2.Number of Trees along City Streets
- 3.Appearance of Signs on Business
- 4.Amount of Green Belt/Open Space
5. Appearance of City Facilities
- 6.Appearance/Professionalism City Personnel
- 7.Maintenance of City Streets
- 8.Overall Cleanliness/ Appearance of Streets and Public Area

The graph below compares the items rated by their effect on the city's image. Every item was thought to have a positive effect on the city's image by a majority of citizens. The highest rated areas were Appearance of City Facilities (98.8%) and Maintenance of City Parks (98.4%). The lowest two areas were Maintenance of City Streets (81%) and Appearance of Signs on Business (87.2).

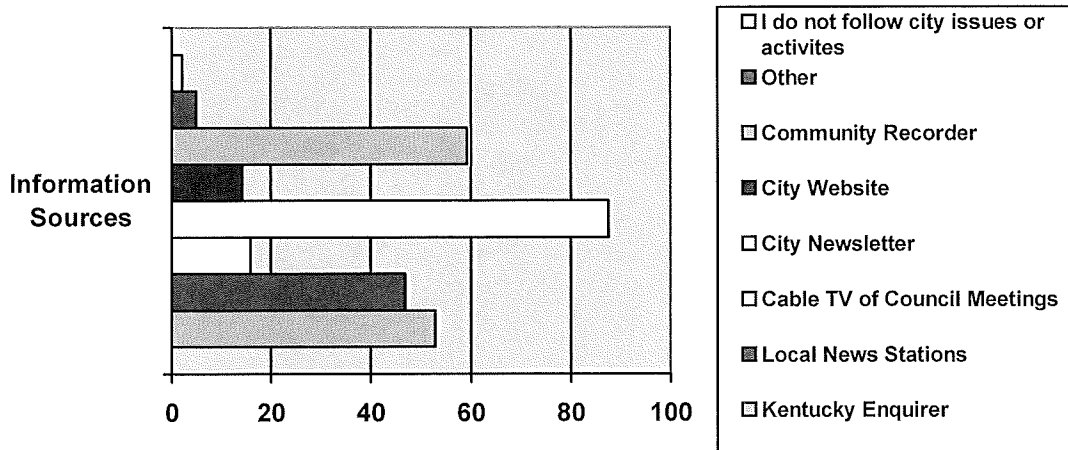




## *IV. Staying Informed*

One of the purposes of this survey was to identify sources that citizens use to gain information on the City of Edgewood. As the chart below shows, the City Newsletter was the most popular source (87.5%), followed by the Community Recorder (59.2%) and the Kentucky Enquirer (52.8%) to round out the top three. The next choices were Local news Networks (46.8%), Cable TV of Council Meetings (15.9%), the City Website (14.3%), and 5% receive information from other outlets. A common write in for the “Other” selection was city signs/billboards. Impressively, only 2.2% of respondents stated that they do not follow city issues.

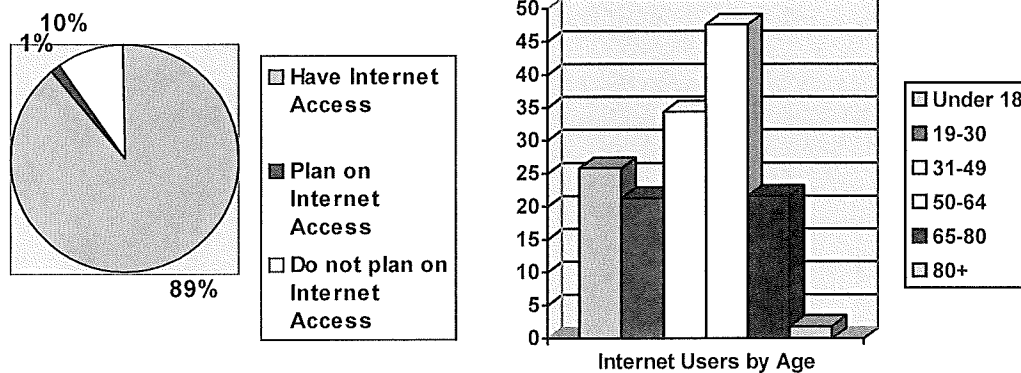
Citizens were also asked if they would like to receive the city newsletter via e-mail. Of all the responses, 26% of people said they would like to receive the city newsletter via e-mail. This finding is important due to the fact that the city newsletter was the most popular source of information.



The survey also inquired about citizens' access to the internet. Eighty-eight percent of respondents currently have internet access, fewer than 2% plan on getting internet access, and just under 10% of respondents do not plan on getting internet access.

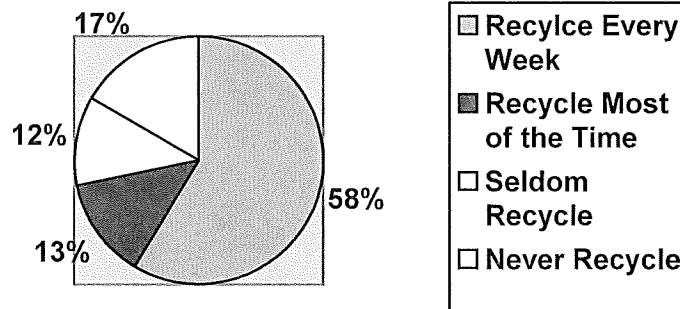
Of the households who have internet access, the most popular age bracket for internet users is the 50-64 age group (47.6%). This is followed by the 31-49 age group (34.4%), under 18 age group (25.8%), 65-80 with 21.6%, 19-30 with 21.3%, and lastly, 80+ age group (1.8%).

The following pie chart and bar graph present the findings:



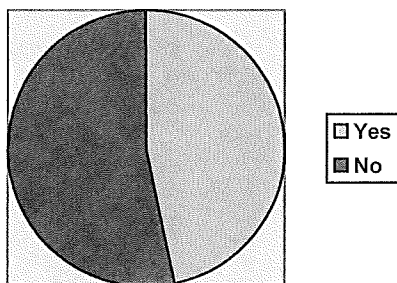
## ***V. Recycling and Garbage Services***

The next question dealt with the city's recycling service and frequency of its usage. The choices the respondents could choose from were: A) Recycle Every Week, B) Recycle Most of the Time, C) Seldom Recycle or D) Never Recycle. The findings show that, 58.7% of citizens recycle every week, 12.9% recycle most of the time and 11.8% seldom recycle. This means that 83.3% of the citizens recycle at least every once in a while. The chart below illustrates these findings.

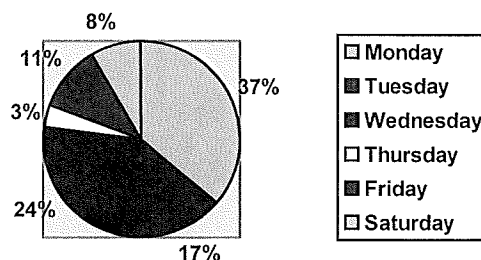


Towards the end of the survey, citizens were asked about their opinions on whether the City of Edgewood should switch from twice a week garbage pick up to once a week garbage pick up. The responses were quite mixed. A small majority (53%) said "No" to the idea of switching to once a week garbage pickup. There were a number of comments expressing the displeasure at the possibility of switching to once a week garbage pick up. As a follow up question citizens were also asked what their preferred garbage collection day would be if the city switched to once a week garbage pick up. The chart below shows these numbers. However, there were also a number of residents who cited saving money or resources and said that they would prefer once a week garbage pick up.

**Would you like to switch to once a week garbage pick up?**

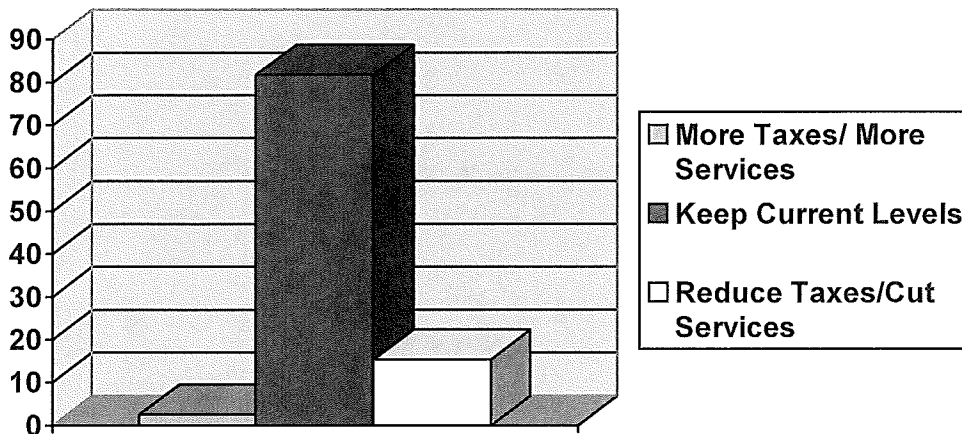


**Preferred Garbage Pick Up Day**

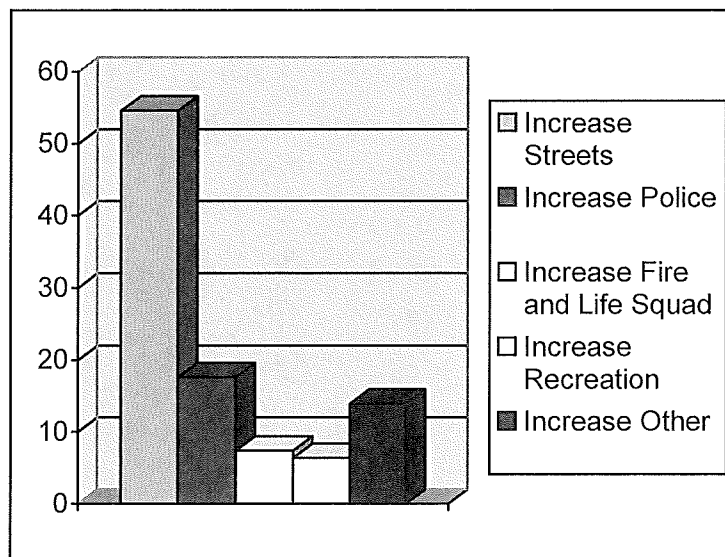


## ***VI. Taxation and Spending Policy***

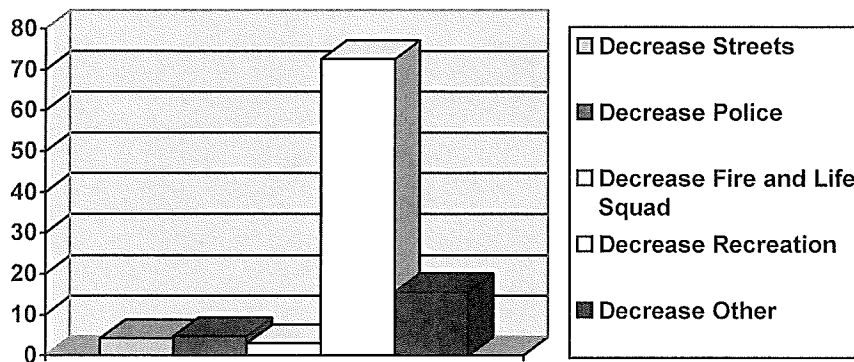
This question sought to find out how citizens felt about the taxes they were paying for city services. Overwhelmingly, citizens expressed their desire for the city to keep the current levels of taxes and services (81.8%). Only, 2.6% wanted to pay more taxes for more services, and the remaining 15.4% wanted tax cuts and services reduced.



The next question asked respondents which service area they would want to see increased funding if the city were to increase funding for a particular service area. As the chart illustrates below, the choice of "Increase Streets" was the most popular with 54.6%, followed by "Increase Police" with 17.6%. The third choice was the "Increase Other" with 13.9%. For the "Increase Other" choice, many respondents wrote in responses. Many respondents expressed their wish for the city to not increase spending and wrote in "None". Some of these responses cited the current economic conditions as justification for their answers. Another popular write in for this question was street lighting.

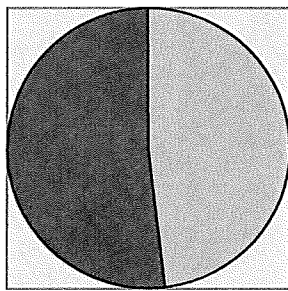


The next question asked respondents to select one service area that they would choose to be decreased, if the city were to take such an action. As the chart below shows, overwhelmingly, the top choice was “Decrease Recreation” with 72.6% of the respondents. “Decrease Other” followed this with 15.5%. The other three choices were under 5% for this question.

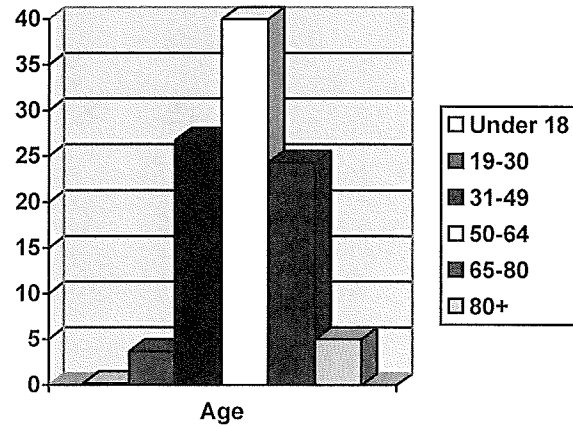


## **VII. Demographics**

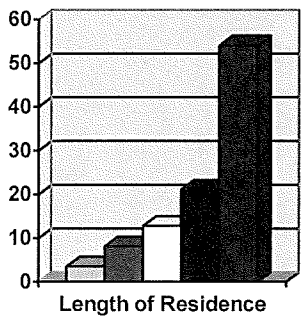
The graphs and charts below show various demographic information on the respondents who completed this survey. The demographic statistics included below are: Gender, Age, Income, Length of Residence, Voting, Education Level, and Number of Children. By taking the highest ranking category of each area, the typical survey taker could be described as a female, between the ages of 50-64, over 20 years of living in Edgewood, a voter, education between 12-16 years, an income of over \$100,000 per year, and 0 children living at home. Rates of income, education, and voting rates are above the national averages.



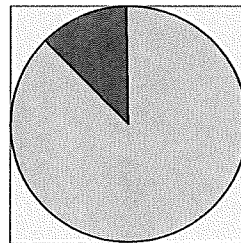
□ Male  
■ Female



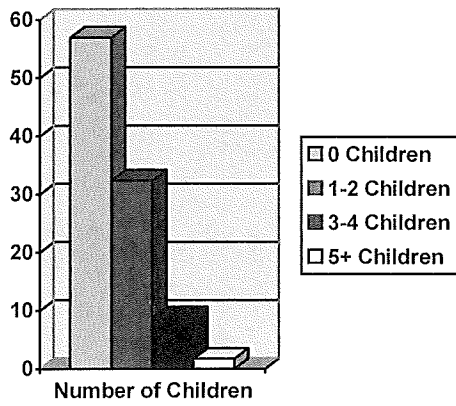
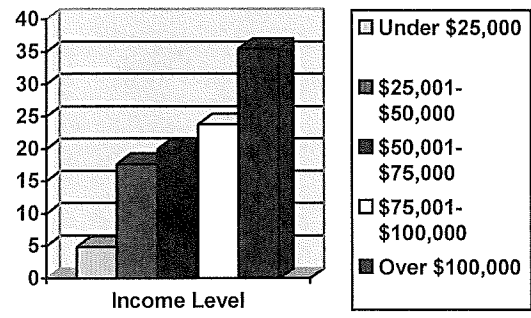
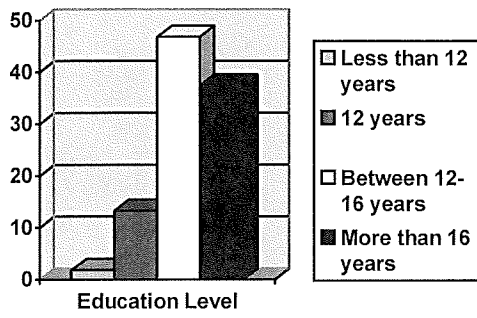
□ Under 18  
■ 19-30  
■ 31-49  
□ 50-64  
■ 65-80  
□ 80+



□ Under 2 years  
■ Between 2 and 5 years  
□ 5-10 years  
■ 11-20 years  
■ 20+ years



□ Voted in last Edgewood City Council Elections  
■ Did not vote in last election



## **VIII: Trends: Comparison of Surveys**

The 2009 City of Edgewood Citizen Survey was mostly based on the previous survey the city conducted in 1998. The main reason to use almost the same set of question was to offer a comparison of results. By comparing these two sets of results, it can be determined whether the city is better or worse in certain areas since the last survey. This section will highlight a few of the areas where there has been a change since the last survey.

1) The first area is service satisfaction. In 1998, the overall “average” satisfaction rate was 87.46%. The current survey shows a 91.9% satisfaction rate which is almost a 4.5% improvement. In addition, the satisfaction index scores improved from a mean of 1.89 to 1.76, which also indicates a small increase in satisfaction. In 1998 the two areas that ranked the lowest were Street Lighting (65.5%) and Physical Condition of Streets (66.5%). In the current survey, these two areas are still rated lower than the others but Street Lighting (80.9%) and Physical Condition of Streets (78.1%) both saw double digits improvements in their satisfaction averages. There were other small changes in other areas but these represent the most significant changes over this ten year time period.

2) There is also some evidence to show that the city is doing a better job handling complaints/inquiries. In 1998, 41% of citizens who made a complaint/inquiry were not satisfied with the way their situations were handled, whereas 59% were satisfied. Currently, 31% were dissatisfied and 69% were satisfied. According to the breakdown of the helpfulness of each department or individual, there is further evidence to back up signs of improvement. In 1998, there were three areas, which had rankings under 80% on helpfulness. However, in the current survey there is only one area under 80% and that is Building and Zoning with 79%. It is important to note that this still represents a 6% improvement from the 1998 survey results for satisfaction with Building and Zoning.

3) There were also improvements in some areas with respect to the image of the city. In 1998, only 69% thought that City Streets were a positive influence on the city’s image. However, results from this survey show that 81% of citizens believe that City Streets have a positive influence on the City of Edgewood.

4) By comparing the results of the two surveys, it would appear that the citizens of Edgewood are recycling less than they did in 1998. In 1998, 67.5% of citizens recycled every week, whereas only 58% do so currently. Nearly the same number recycles most of the time at around 13%. Two percent more citizens seldom recycle now (12%) compared to 1998 (10%). Finally, the number of citizens that never recycle nearly doubled. Seventeen percent of respondents never recycle now compared to 9.2% in 1998.



## **Conclusion**

The citizens of Edgewood responded well to the survey and provided valuable feedback. This feedback should provide the City of Edgewood government, its elected officials and administrators with valuable information. Overall, citizens are highly satisfied with their services. There is also evidence that the operations and services of the City of Edgewood have improved since the last Citizen Survey