

INTRODUCTION

The City of Rio Rancho developed this Strategic Plan to establish priorities for city government for 2009 to 2014. It represents the consensus that emerged from the collaborative efforts of the city leadership over a period of several months.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In summer 2008, the City of Rio Rancho initiated the development of a Strategic Plan. Management Partners, Inc. was retained to assist the city in the process. The purpose of this effort was to create a set of clear goals and strategies for meeting critical needs and challenges facing the community and city government.

Citizen input was essential to this process and it was solicited in a variety of ways. A key method employed was a statistically valid survey of resident opinions conducted during the summer of 2008 by the National Research Center to conduct the National Citizen Survey (NCS). NCS survey results of Rio Rancho citizens were compared to scores in a national benchmark. A complete copy of the Rio Rancho Citizen Survey Results is on the City's web site (www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us/citizensurvey).

The process also involved data collection, discussion, and preparation of goals and strategies. An environmental scan was prepared and strategic planning issues were identified from numerous sources. Previous studies and reports and budget documents were reviewed and each member of the Governing Body was interviewed. The City's management team provided information and perspectives about existing work plans and unmet needs, and the team participated in two strategic planning workshops. The Governing Body joined the management team in a day-long workshop to discuss potential multi-year goals and strategies for meeting those goals.

A graphic recorder captured the discussion of the Governing Body and staff, and some of the charts created at the workshop appear throughout this document.

Another source of community input was the series of reports from Transition Teams appointed by the Mayor to provide feedback on City needs and services. The Transition Team reports were presented in June 2008.

Additionally, to hear from Board and Commission members, the City designed and conducted an on-line survey in November and December 2008. Board and Commission members were asked to provide opinions about initial draft goals and strategies. During this timeframe, the City Manager or Assistant City Manager visited each Board and Commission to invite participation in the survey. All employees of the city were also invited to take this survey.

Community Conversation meetings were also held in each district throughout the spring, summer and fall. At these meetings, the Mayor met informally with citizens to hear their opinions and to share information about the City and strategic planning process.

On February 24, 2009, approximately 80 residents participated in a Community Workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to obtain specific input on draft goals and strategies. At the workshop, a brief presentation was provided that outlined the process and environmental scan themes. Citizens were invited to speak with members of the Governing Body and staff and to provide their input about draft goals and strategies.

Appendix I contains a complete timeline of the major activities in the Strategic Planning process.

COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan is for the period 2009 – 2014. It contains the following elements:

- Mission
- Vision
- Values
- Goals
- Strategies

A description of each of the elements is in Appendix II.

MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

At the joint Governing Body-Staff workshop participants engaged in visioning exercises. Following the workshop a subcommittee of staff and Governing Body members met to create mission, vision and values statements. These were then presented to the entire group. These statements appear in the next column.



Graphic Recorder Chart I:
Vision Exercise: Headlines for the Year 2031

Mission

The City of Rio Rancho's mission is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the community by providing excellent service to achieve a high quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Vision

A diverse, sustainable, family-friendly community that is safe, vibrant and attractive to residents, businesses and visitors.

Values

The overarching values of Rio Rancho are:

- Service
- Accountability
- Respect

The values statement for Rio Rancho is:

A philosophy of service, accountability and respect shall govern our interactions with citizens and with each other.

GOALS

The Strategic Plan promotes the City of Rio Rancho's vision by establishing goals and strategic directions for each of the issue areas identified during the planning process. The following six goals have been created to reflect the character of the community that is envisioned in the future. The goals are multi-year in nature.

GOAL 1: INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that the City develops new and has well-maintained infrastructure that fosters a quality community, supports a strong economy and meets the needs of current and future residents.

GOAL 2: DEVELOPMENT

Ensure the City has plans and policies in place to attract and create well-planned high-quality, stable, residential, commercial and industrial development.

GOAL 3: FISCAL HEALTH

Ensure that the City's fiscal health is strong with a growing tax base, sound financial policies and economically diverse funding solutions.

GOAL 4: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Provide services to ensure the safety and health of the community through quality police, fire and emergency medical services.

GOAL 5: GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Deliver quality services to meet community needs, assuring that the City is sufficiently staffed, trained and equipped overall.

GOAL 6: QUALITY OF LIFE

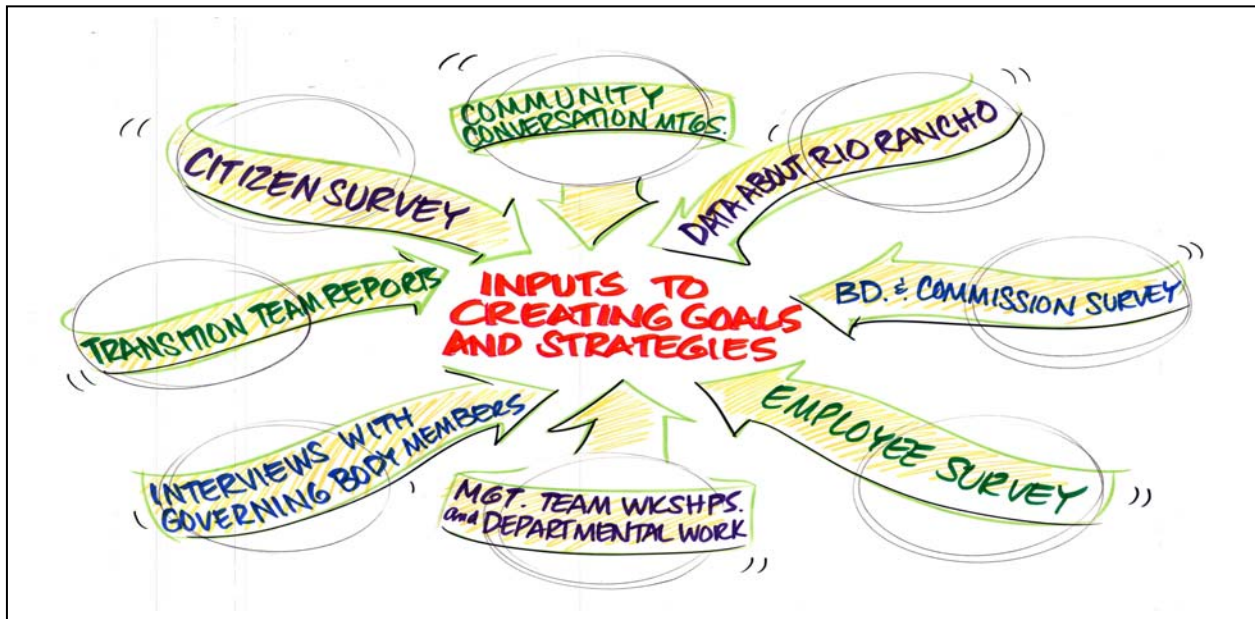
Provide quality of life services to meet community needs, assuring that there are strong relationships with all sectors of the community and ample opportunities for citizen engagement.

STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIZATION

Each goal has several strategies intended to help reach the goal over several years. Appendix II shows how the goals and strategies fit into the overall strategic planning process.

Two strategies per goal are priorities for focus by the City over the next 12 to 18 months (except the Development goal which contains three priorities for that period). The 12 – 18 month priorities are notated in this Strategic Plan as “FY 09 to 11.” These priorities were established based on input from the Governing Body at the workshop as well as consideration of all inputs into the process.

A timeline for subsequent strategies will be developed by the Governing Body and staff during annual discussions of the Strategic Plan.



Goal 1: INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure that the City develops new and has well-maintained infrastructure that fosters a quality community, supports a strong economy and meets the needs of current and future residents.

Rio Rancho is one of New Mexico’s newest communities, incorporated as a City in 1981. It comprises approximately 105 square miles. As a young, large community, the City’s infrastructure needs are substantial. Growth into less developed areas of the community puts demands on current infrastructure and creates demands for new infrastructure. Another factor that impacts infrastructure is that of diverse land ownership. Also known as antiquated platting, this land ownership pattern makes it very difficult to provide basic infrastructure in a well-planned manner. Finally, the creation of the new downtown in the City Center area also creates demand for expanded infrastructure in that part of the City. In particular, these needs are critical to economic development.

Citizen concern for infrastructure is evident in the results of the Citizen Survey. Rio Rancho scored below the benchmark of other cities for whom the survey has been administered on all dimensions in the transportation category. The infrastructure dimensions cited by Rio Rancho residents as in need of improvement include: ease of car travel, ease of bicycle travel, ease of walking, availability of paths and walking trails, traffic flow on major streets, and sidewalk maintenance. Additionally, the survey contained the multiple-choice policy question: "To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your property tax for each of the following purposes?" Among the choices offered to respondents, the ones receiving the most responses were "road improvements" and "more roads." Those two categories received the highest percentage of "strongly" or "somewhat" support ratings (83% and 77%, respectively).

Strategies

Seven strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the goal of developing new and having well-maintained infrastructure. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09-11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a plan for water sustainability and conservation to support growth and development over the long term.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a plan for financing the maintenance of existing streets.

Strategy C: Develop and implement a plan for expanding current and building new needed major roads (i.e. formal thoroughfare plans).

Strategy D: Develop and implement a plan for maintaining, improving and building sidewalks.

Strategy E: Establish new and maintain existing parks, trails and open space.

Strategy F: Develop and implement a plan for building and financing major water & wastewater utility infrastructure.

Strategy G: Develop and implement a plan for a recycling center, a single point of service for multiple special waste disposal services provided to residents that would prevent illegal dumping into our environment.

Strategy H: Enhance existing and explore new tools for addressing the drainage needs of the City.

Goal 2: Development

Ensure the City has plans and policies in place to attract and create well-planned, stable, high-quality residential, commercial and industrial development.

The City of Rio Rancho has experienced rapid growth in recent years. The 2000 Census reported a population of 51,765. Current population estimates exceed 80,000. Growth in the City has been predominantly residential. Families find Rio Rancho a desirable place to live. In November 2008, *Business Week* ranked Rio Rancho as the best place in New Mexico to raise children. In the Citizen Survey the City scored above the benchmark on both dimensions for housing: availability of affordable quality housing and variety of housing options.

The City is working to balance its focus on residential development with commercial and business-oriented development so that more amenities will be provided within Rio Rancho's borders, the

commercial tax base will be stronger, and good jobs will be available to local residents. The Citizen Survey showed that residents desire more retail opportunities.

Additionally, another factor that impacts development is that of diverse land ownership. Also known as antiquated platting, this land ownership pattern presents unique challenges to development.

Strategies

Seven strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the development goal. Strategies A, B and C are the three strategies for focus during FY 09-11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a unified vision of the level and type of growth to be allowed in the community, including but not limited to, a diversity of housing, by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Update and implement the citywide comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that targets businesses the community wants and makes Rio Rancho a destination for a variety of events and activities.

Strategy C (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a strategy for increasing the City's gross receipts tax base to support diverse community services and facilities.

Strategy D: Develop and implement a method of reforming the current antiquated platting (including proposing legislative changes at the State level) in order to ensure quality development and proper use of water resources in the future.

Strategy E: Develop and implement a set of approval criteria for new development, based on the Governing Body's vision for future development by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Strategy F: Develop, implement and enforce design criteria for new infrastructure associated with new development by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Strategy G: Develop and implement a Comprehensive plan containing clear principles and policies set forth to achieve the City's goals pertaining to public and private development by updating the Vision 2020 Plan.

Goal 3: FISCAL HEALTH

Ensure that the City's fiscal health is strong with a growing tax base, sound financial policies and economically diverse funding solutions.

The City receives more than half of its revenues (55%) from gross receipts tax and only 18% of its revenue from property tax. As a predominantly residential community that experiences substantial retail leakage to Albuquerque, the City faces budget constraints. Until the City's commercial tax base grows to a significant degree, challenges meeting all of the community's service delivery, infrastructure and quality of life interests will persist. This requires a clear focus on the City's fiscal health.

Fiscal health was identified as a priority by board and commission members as well as by employees in the on-line surveys conducted of those groups in fall 2008. Nearly all respondents selected either "Important" or "Very Important" in regards to fiscal health (97% of board and commission members and 100% of employees).

Strategies

Six strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the goal of fiscal health. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a clear policy regarding issuance of impact fee credits to ensure that credits provide true benefits to the City.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Re-establish and maintain a new General Obligation (GO) Bonding Cycle to help finance City infrastructure.

Strategy C: Complete an impact fee study and adopt a policy that clarifies when development should pay for the cost of necessary infrastructure and when tax dollars should be used.

Strategy D: Complete the analysis of water and wastewater rates needed to support the water system.

Strategy E: Develop and implement an annual review of fees and charges for City services, and research new fees.

Strategy F: Create mechanisms for effective and regular communications between the City and the schools in order to establish a mutual understanding of how plans for school expansions will be developed, paid for, and implemented.

Goal 4: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

Provide services to ensure the safety and health of the community through quality police, fire and emergency medical services.

The City of Rio Rancho is proud of its low crime rate, the second lowest in the state. Safety is one of the key characteristics that attract people to the community. Public safety was one of three highlights in the NCS Citizen Survey. Scores for “feeling safe” in both neighborhood and commercial areas were above the benchmark of other communities surveyed. Additionally, citizens scored Police and Fire services above the benchmark with “Excellent” (84%) or “Good” scores (92%).

The community’s population growth affects the demand for public safety services. The strategies below reflect a desire by the City to continue to proactively manage public safety services in an environment of change and limited resources.

Strategies

Four strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the public safety goal. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

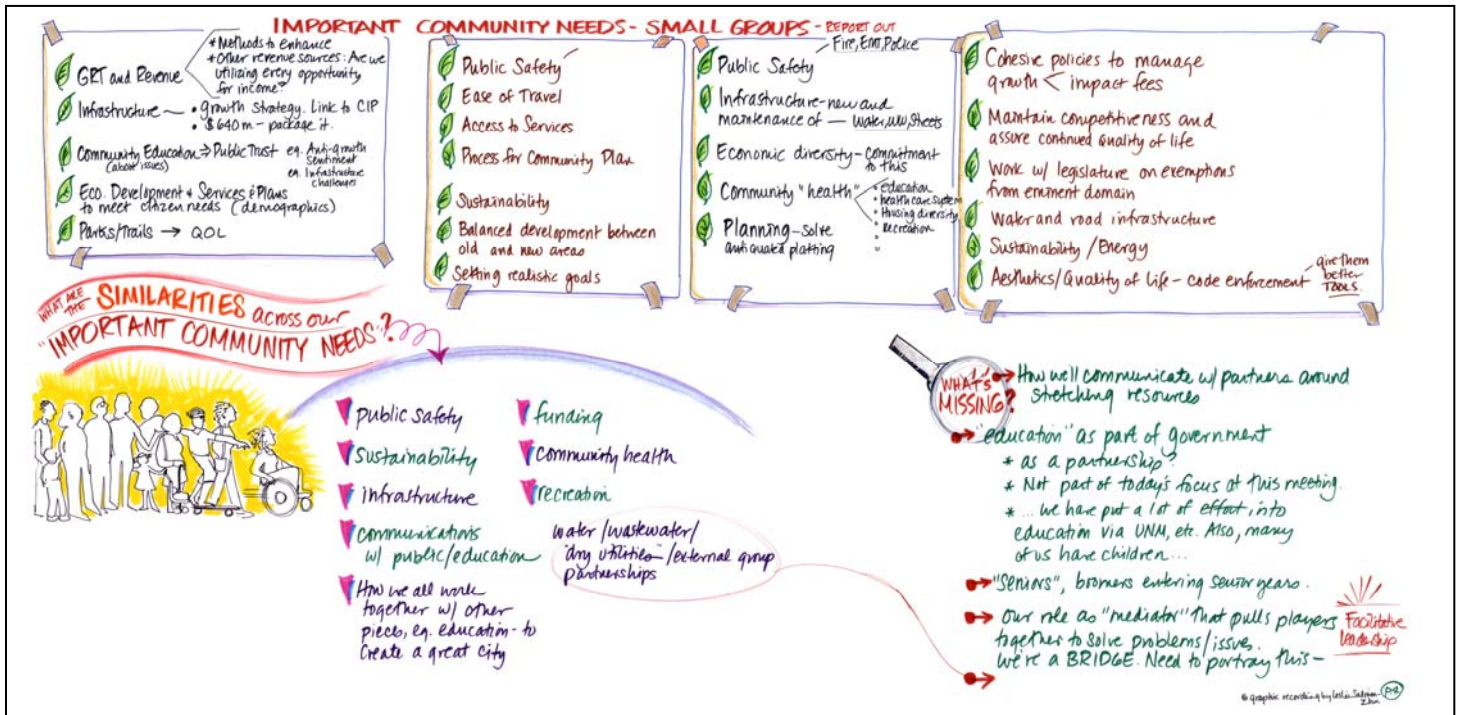
Strategy A (FY 09-11): Define and establish service and staffing levels.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Create and implement a plan to meet the public safety facilities needs, including a communications facility, new fire substations, fire headquarters facility, police substation, and municipal court building.

Strategy C: Develop a regional approach to Emergency Communications including conversion to a modern radio communications infrastructure in order to increase coverage and allow interoperability with other metro, state and federal agencies.

Strategy D: Create and implement a plan to establish, through voter approval, a public safety tax to fund new positions and capital.

Graphic Recorder Chart III: Community Needs



Goal 5: GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Deliver quality services to meet community needs, assuring that the City is sufficiently staffed, trained and equipped overall.

This goal pertains to operations and how we lead and manage our organization to best accomplish the delivery of services to citizens. On the Citizen Survey, the City scored below the benchmark on the dimensions of City employee knowledge, responsiveness, courteousness and overall impression. We recognize this as an area for improvement.

Additionally, a theme in the Mayor's Transition Team Report is a need for improved customer service by City government. The Transition Team Report also cites communication both within and outside the organization as integral to excellent service. The strategies in this category support delivery of quality services.

Strategies

Six strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the quality government services goal. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a supervisory and leadership development program to improve all staff effectiveness.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a plan to ensure the recruitment, retention and succession of quality employees.

Strategy C: Define a “culture of customer service” and provide training for each City employee to ensure they have the skills to meet the service delivery and customer service requirements of the City.

Strategy D: Evaluate existing mechanisms and then enhance, develop and implement a variety of means for residents to obtain information and access services.

Strategy E: Develop and promote a culture of sustainability. Sustainability is defined as: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The City of Rio Rancho is dedicated to achieving sustainability by conducting daily operations through balanced stewardship of human, financial, and natural resources.

Strategy F: Partner and collaborate internally as well as with jurisdictions of government, schools, and other private and public entities to enhance area services, including but not limited to human services and transit services

Goal 6: QUALITY OF LIFE

Provide quality of life services to meet community needs, assuring that there are strong relationships with all sectors of the community and ample opportunities for citizen engagement.

Quality of life is a cornerstone of the City of Rio Rancho. Community quality was a highlight in the results of the Citizen Survey. In the Citizen Survey, 80% of respondents rated the community as an “Excellent” or “Good” place to raise children. Additionally, 74% of respondents rated the community as an “Excellent” or “Good” place to retire. Both of these dimensions were above the benchmark. The strategies below are focused on building upon our successes in quality of life.

Strategies

Seven strategies, as listed below, have been identified to achieve the quality of life goal. Strategies A and B are the two strategies for focus during FY 09 - 11.

Strategy A (FY 09-11): Develop a plan to enhance culturally enriching programs within recreation, lifelong learning and the arts.

Strategy B (FY 09-11): Develop and implement a community-branding program to create a unified identity for the City.

Strategy C: Conduct community surveys to seek feedback about satisfaction with City services and the health of the community.

Strategy D: Increase communication and citizen involvement in creating the future of the City in order to create a stronger sense of community and higher level of public trust.

Strategy E: Create a facilities plan for enhancement of libraries, community centers, senior centers, parks and spaces that foster lifelong learning, recreation, interdisciplinary collaboration and a sense of community.

Strategy F: Identify long-term funding sources for future cultural, arts, senior services, parks and library facilities.

Strategy G: Create a plan for providing aesthetic improvements to neighborhoods.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Implementation and accountability are critical to the Strategic Plan. The Plan will help prioritize the work of the organization. It will also serve as a reference point for policy-making discussions by the Governing Body. The items below are actions the City will take to integrate the Strategic Plan into the organization.

- ✓ Incorporating Strategic Plan strategies into the budget process and budget document and integrate it into departmental work plans.
- ✓ Keeping the Governing Body apprised of status toward achievement of Plan goals by sharing information regularly.
- ✓ Providing a copy of the Strategic Plan to every City employee, creating forums to answer employee questions, and integrating the items within the Plan into day-to-day work of employees.
- ✓ Keep City employees apprised of accomplishments of Plan goals by sharing information regularly.
- ✓ Adding a category to Agenda Briefing Memos (ABMs) linking agenda items to the Strategic Plan
- ✓ Conducting an annual review of the Strategic Plan that includes a review of progress toward goals and revision as necessary.
- ✓ Making the City's Mission and Vision Statements highly visible.

Graphic Recorder Chart IV: Accountability and Workshop Wrap-up

ACCOUNTABILITY for the STRATEGIC PLAN

COMMENTS IN COMMON

GOV'S BODY ACTIONS

- ✓ City Manager's Report at Gov Body meetings
- ✓ Quarterly updates
- ✓ Use media
- ✓ Community mtgs

STAFF ACTIONS

Set policy:

- ✓ Resources re: priorities
- ✓ Refer to Strat Plan in decision-making

Reporting:

- ✓ Quarterly to CM to give to GB
- ✓ Updates to Boards + Commissions

Communicate:

- ✓ Give feedback to staff/City Mgr
- ✓ ASK questions as they arise
- ✓ Directors share w/ staff
- ✓ Sense of urgency re: deadlines
- ✓ Communicate obstacles sooner rather than later

Final Comments

Thank You All...

- * James Jimenez
- * For your time + good work today... will give me clear direction
- * Let me know what else is important to you not touched on today
- * This is not "set in stone", the plan will change over time.

Remember:

Thank You JAMES + LARVA

- * This establishes a baseline from where we can operate
- * We're in a critical point in our growing up process
 - to reinvent ourselves
 - to get back to CUSTOMER SERVICE
- * Pick the low-level fruits, those things doable ↓
- * This gives us a chance to trust each other
- * Let's see some TIMELINES so I can see measurable.
- * The "buck has to stop somewhere", via James or a mediator/facilitator
- * Trust the professionalism of one another - we're all making this city a better city.

Always get back to the person who files a complaint

Good Thoughts Are No Better Than Good Dreams Unless They Can Be Executed.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

© Graphic Recording by Indira Salaman-Zhu

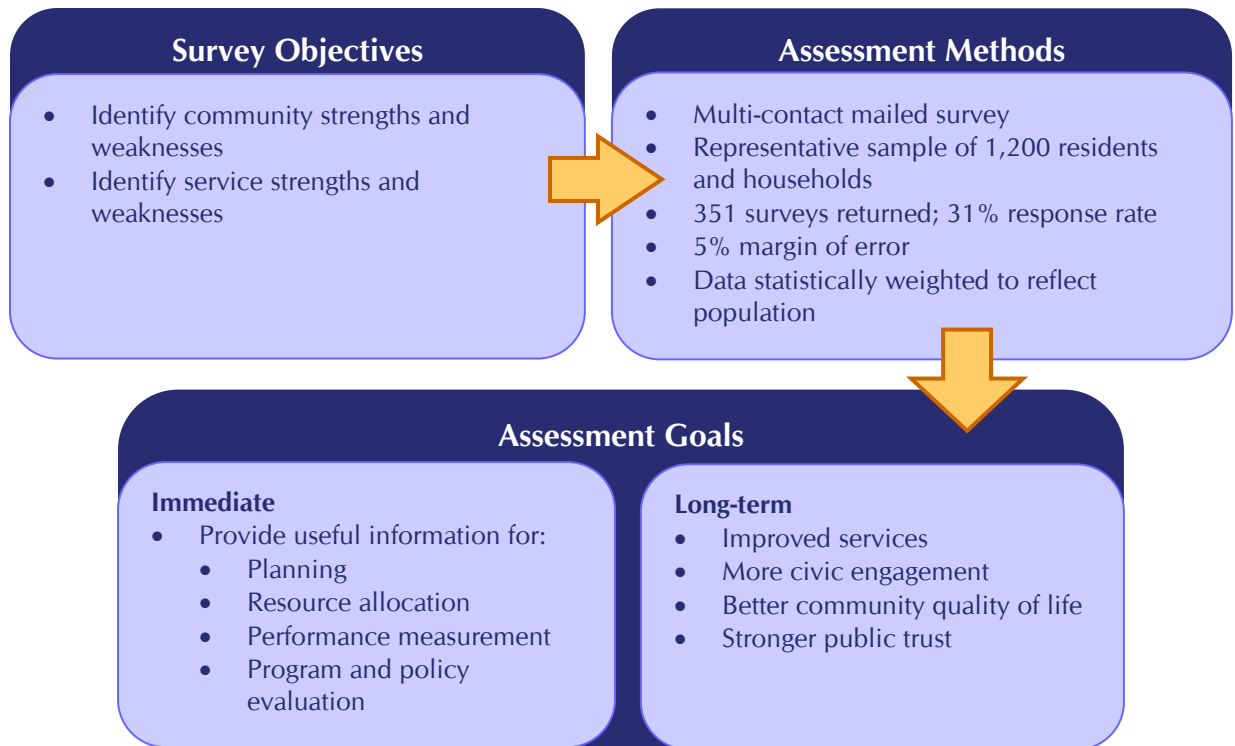
CITY OF RIO RANCHO, NM
2008
SURVEY

Survey Background

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The NCS was developed by NRC to provide a statistically valid survey of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government. The survey results may be used by staff, elected officials and other stakeholders for community planning and resource allocation, program improvement and policy making.

FIGURE 1: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ METHODS AND GOALS



The NCS focuses on a series of community characteristics and local government services, as well as issues of public trust. Resident behaviors related to civic engagement in the community also were measured in the survey.

FIGURE 2: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ FOCUS AREAS



The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage-paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. A total of 351 completed surveys were obtained, providing an overall response rate of 31%. Typically, response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for the City of Rio Rancho was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Rio Rancho staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems and provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Rio Rancho staff also augmented The National Citizen Survey™ basic service through a variety of options including geographic cross-tabulations of data, and an open-ended question.

Understanding the Results

As shown in Figure 2, this report is based around respondents' reports about eight larger categories: community quality, community design, public safety, environmental sustainability, recreation and wellness, community inclusiveness, civic engagement and public trust. Each section begins with residents' ratings of community characteristics and is followed by residents' ratings of service quality. For all evaluative questions, the percent of residents rating the service or community feature as "excellent" or "good" is presented. To see the full set of responses for each question on the survey, please see Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies (located the end of this section).

Margin of Error

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a "level of confidence" (or margin of error). The 95% confidence interval quantifies the sampling error or precision of the estimates made from the survey results. A 95% confidence interval can be calculated for any question and indicates that for every 100 random samples of this many residents, the population response to that question would be within the stated interval 95 times. The 95% confidence level for the City of Rio Rancho survey is generally no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (351 completed surveys).

Comparing Survey Results

Certain kinds of services tend to be thought better of by residents in many communities across the country. For example, public safety services tend to be received better than transportation services by residents of most American communities. Where possible, the better comparison is not from one service to another in the City of Rio Rancho, but from City of Rio Rancho services to services like them provided by other jurisdictions.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The City of Rio Rancho has comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Rio Rancho Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons were available, the City of Rio Rancho results were noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar to" the benchmark. This evaluation of "above," "below" or "similar to" comes from a statistical comparison of the City of Rio Rancho's rating to the benchmark.

"Don't Know" Responses and Rounding

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer "don't know." The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select more than one answer. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents did select more than one response. When a table for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

For more information on understanding The NCS report, please see Appendix B: Survey Methodology.

Executive Summary

This report of the City of Rio Rancho survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. A periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.

Most residents experience a good quality of life in the City of Rio Rancho and believe the City is a good place to live. The overall quality of life in the City of Rio Rancho was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 77% of respondents. Almost all report they plan on staying in the City of Rio Rancho for the next five years.

A variety of characteristics of the community were evaluated by those participating in the study. The three receiving the most favorable ratings were air quality, quality of the overall natural environment, variety of housing options. The three characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were employment opportunities, opportunities to attend cultural activities and shopping opportunities.

All of the community characteristics rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 24 characteristics for which comparisons were available, three were above the benchmark comparison, three were similar to the benchmark comparison and 18 were below.

Residents in the City of Rio Rancho were somewhat civically engaged. While only 30% had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, 94% had provided help to a friend or neighbor. Less than half had volunteered their time to some group or activity in the City of Rio Rancho.

In general, survey respondents demonstrated trust in local government. A majority rated the overall direction being taken by the City of Rio Rancho as “good” or “excellent.” This was lower than the benchmark. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of the City of Rio Rancho in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. Most rated their overall impression as excellent or good.

On average, residents gave somewhat favorable ratings to most local government services. All of the City services rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 33 services for which comparisons were available, 8 were above the benchmark comparison, 14 were similar to the benchmark comparison and 11 were below.

A Key Driver Analysis was conducted for the City of Rio Rancho which examined the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Rio Rancho’s services overall. Those key driver services that correlated most strongly with residents’ perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Rio Rancho can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents’ opinions about overall service quality. Services found to be influential in ratings of overall service quality from the

Key Driver Analysis were:

- City parks
- Public information services
- Police services
- Economic development
- Sidewalk maintenance

Of these services, those deserving the most attention may be those that were below or similar to the benchmark comparisons: city parks, public information services, economic development and sidewalk maintenance. For police services, the City of Rio Rancho is above the benchmark and should continue to ensure high quality performance.

Community Ratings

OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

Overall quality of community life may be the single best indicator of success in providing the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to quality of community life in the City of Rio Rancho – not only direct questions about quality of life overall and in neighborhoods, but questions to measure residents’ commitment to the City of Rio Rancho. Residents were asked whether they planned to move soon or if they would recommend the City of Rio Rancho to others. Intentions to stay and willingness to make recommendations provide evidence that the City of Rio Rancho offers services and amenities that work.

Most of the City of Rio Rancho’s residents gave favorable ratings to their neighborhoods and the community as a place to live. Further, a majority reported they would recommend the community to others and plan to stay for the next five years.

FIGURE 3: OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of life in Rio Rancho	Similar
Your neighborhood as place to live	Similar
Rio Rancho as a place to live	Similar
Remain in Rio Rancho for the next five years	Above
Recommend living in Rio Rancho to someone who asks	Similar

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Transportation

The ability to move easily throughout a community can greatly affect the quality of life of residents by diminishing time wasted in traffic congestion and by providing opportunities to travel quickly and safely by modes other than the automobile. High quality options for resident mobility not only require local government to remove barriers to flow but they require government programs and policies that create quality opportunities for all modes of travel.

Residents responding to the survey were given a list of five aspects of mobility to rate on a scale of “excellent,” “good,” “fair” and “poor.” Ease of car travel was given the most positive rating, followed by ease of walking in Rio Rancho.

FIGURE 4: COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Ease of car travel in Rio Rancho	Below
Ease of walking in Rio Rancho	Below
Ease of bicycle travel in Rio Rancho	Below
Availability of paths and walking trails	Below
Traffic flow on major streets	Below

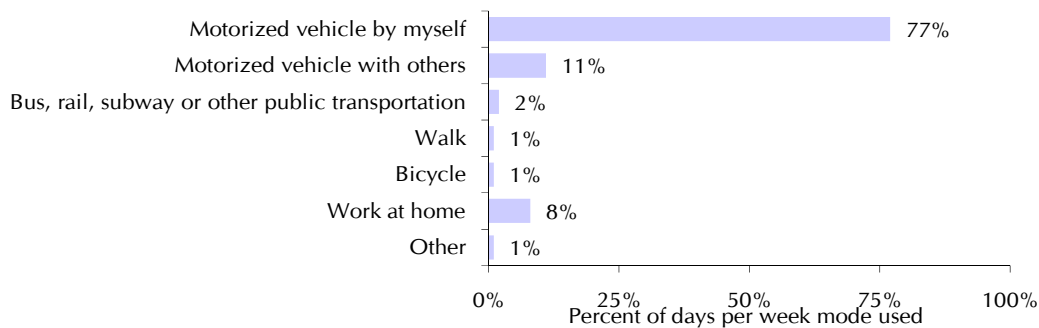
Five transportation services were rated in Rio Rancho. Four were below the benchmark and one was similar to the benchmark.

FIGURE 5: TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Street repair /maintenance	Below
Street cleaning	Below
Street lighting	Below
Sidewalk maintenance	Below
Light timing	Similar

By measuring choice of travel mode over time, communities can monitor their success in providing attractive alternatives to the traditional mode of travel, the single-occupied automobile. When asked how they typically traveled to work, single-occupancy (SOV) travel was the overwhelming mode of use. However, 2% of work commute trips were made by transit, 1% by bicycle and 1% by foot.

FIGURE 6: MODE OF TRAVEL USED FOR WORK COMMUTE



Housing

Housing variety and affordability are not luxuries for any community. When there are too few options for housing style and affordability, the characteristics of a community tilt heavily to a homogeneous palette, often of well-off residents. While this may seem attractive to a community, the absence of affordable townhomes, condominiums, mobile homes, single family detached homes and apartments means that in addition to losing the vibrancy of diverse thoughts and lifestyles, the community loses the service workers that sustain all communities – police officers, school teachers, house painters and electricians. These workers must live elsewhere and commute in at great personal cost and to the detriment of traffic flow and air quality. Furthermore lower income residents who can sustain in a community with mostly high cost housing pay so much of their income to rent or mortgage that little remains to bolster their own quality of life or local business.

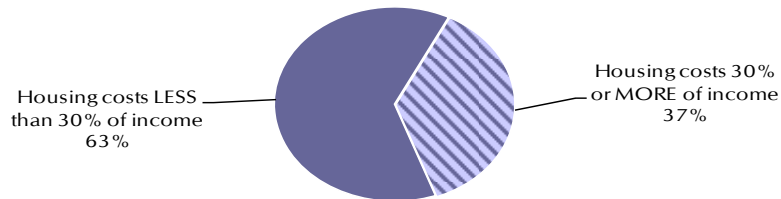
The survey of the City of Rio Rancho residents asked respondents to reflect on the availability of affordable housing as well as the variety of housing options. The availability of affordable housing was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 55% of respondents, while the variety of housing options was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 65% of respondents. The rating of perceived affordable housing availability was better in the City of Rio Rancho than the ratings, on average, in comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 7: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality housing	Above
Variety of housing options	Above

To augment the perceptions of affordable housing in Rio Rancho, the cost of housing as reported in the survey was compared to residents' reported monthly income to create a rough estimate of the proportion of residents of the City of Rio Rancho experiencing housing cost stress. About 37% of survey participants were found to pay housing costs of more than 30% of their monthly household income.

FIGURE 8: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHOSE HOUSING COSTS ARE "AFFORDABLE"



Land Use and Zoning

Community development contributes to a feeling among residents and even visitors of the attention given to the speed of growth, the location of residences and businesses, the kind of housing that is appropriate for the community and the ease of access to commerce, green space and residences. Even the community's overall appearance often is attributed to the planning and enforcement functions of the local jurisdiction. Residents will appreciate an attractive, well-planned community. The NCS questionnaire asked residents to evaluate the quality of new development, the appearance of the City of Rio Rancho and the speed of population growth. Problems with the appearance of property were rated, and the quality of land use planning, zoning and code enforcement services were evaluated.

The overall quality of new development in the City of Rio Rancho was rated as "excellent" by 13% of respondents and as "good" by an additional 45%. The overall appearance of Rio Rancho was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 57% of respondents and was lower than the benchmark. When rating to what extent run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles were a problem in the City of Rio Rancho, 50% thought they were a "major" or "moderate" problem.

FIGURE 9: BUILT ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Quality of new development in city	Similar
Overall appearance of Rio Rancho	Below

FIGURE 10: RATINGS OF POPULATION GROWTH

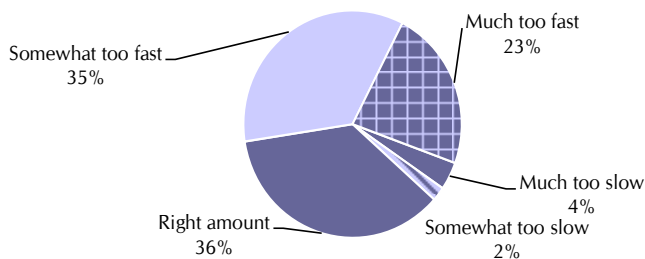


FIGURE 11: POPULATION GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Population growth seen as too fast	Similar

FIGURE 12: RATINGS OF NUISANCE PROBLEMS

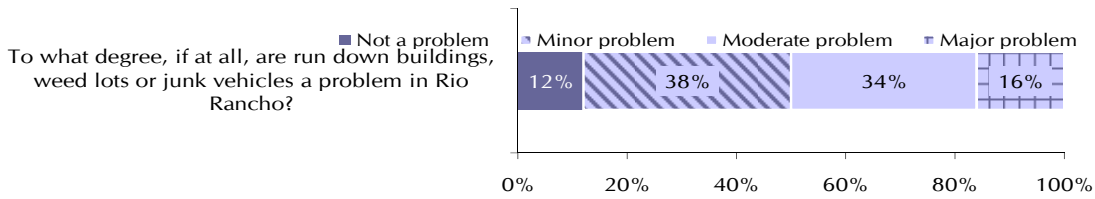


FIGURE 13: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Land use, planning and zoning	Below
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	Below
Animal control	Similar

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The health of the economy may color how residents perceive their environment and all the services that local government delivers. In particular, a strong or weak local economy will shape what residents think about job and shopping opportunities. Just as residents have an idea about the speed of local population growth, they have a sense of how fast job and shopping opportunities are growing.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of community features related to economic opportunity and growth. The most positively rated features were Rio Rancho as a place to work and the overall quality of business and service establishments in Rio Rancho. Receiving the lowest rating was employment opportunities.

FIGURE 14: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Employment opportunities	Below
Shopping opportunities	Below
Place to work	Below
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Rio Rancho	Below

When asked to evaluate the rate of job growth in Rio Rancho, 14% responded that it was the “right amount,” while 24% reported the “right amount” of retail growth was occurring in Rio Rancho.

FIGURE 15: JOB AND RETAIL GROWTH BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Retail growth seen as too fast	Below
Jobs growth seen as too slow	Above

FIGURE 16: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Economic development	Below

Residents were asked to reflect on their economic prospects in the near term. Eleven percent of the City of Rio Rancho residents expected that the coming six months would have a “somewhat” or “very”

positive impact on their family, while 55% felt that the economic future would be “somewhat” or “very” negative.

FIGURE 17: PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Positive impact of economy on household income	Below

PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety from violent or property crimes creates the cornerstone of an attractive community. No one wants to live in fear of crime, fire or natural hazards, and communities in which residents feel protected or unthreatened are communities that are more likely to show growth in population, commerce and property value.

Residents were asked to rate their feelings of safety from violent crimes, property crimes, fire and environmental dangers and to evaluate the local agencies whose main charge is to provide protection from these dangers. Many gave positive ratings of safety in the City Rio Rancho. About 80% percent of those completing the questionnaire said they felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from violent crimes and 77% felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from environmental hazards. Daytime sense of safety was better than nighttime safety and neighborhoods felt safer than commercial areas.

FIGURE 18: COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Safety in your neighborhood during the day	Above
Safety in your neighborhood after dark	Above
Safety in Rio Rancho's commercial areas during the day	Above
Safety in Rio Rancho's commercial areas after dark	Above
Safety from violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	Above
Safety from property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	Above
Toxic waste or other environmental hazard(s)	Similar

As assessed by the survey, 10% of respondents reported that someone in the household had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 81% had reported it to police.

FIGURE 19: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING

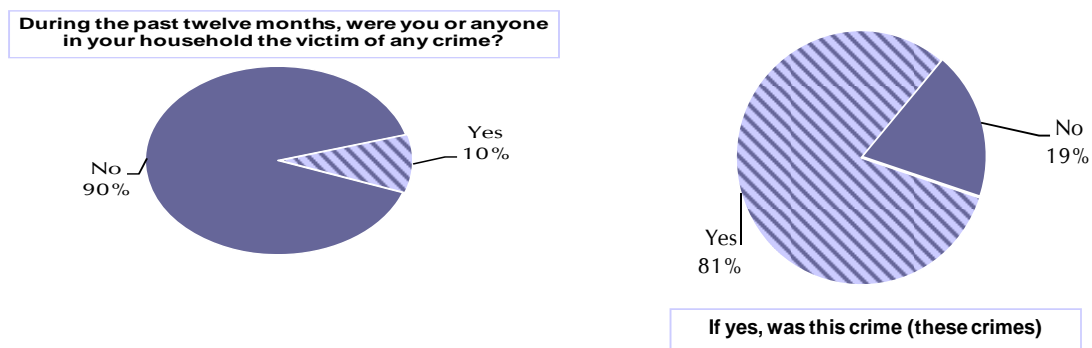


FIGURE 20: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Victim of crime	Below
Reported crimes	Above

Residents rated eight City public safety services; of these, five were rated above the benchmark comparison, two were rated similar to the benchmark comparison and one was rated below the benchmark comparison. Fire services and ambulance or emergency medical services received the highest ratings, while emergency preparedness and municipal courts received the lowest ratings.

FIGURE 21: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Police services	Above
Fire services	Above
EMS/ambulance	Above
Crime prevention	Above
Fire prevention and education	Similar
Traffic enforcement	Above
Courts	Similar
Emergency preparedness	Below

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Residents value the aesthetic qualities of their hometowns and appreciate features such as overall cleanliness and landscaping. In addition, the appearance and smell or taste of the air and water do not go unnoticed. These days, increasing attention is paid to proper treatment of the environment. At the same time that they are attending to community appearance and cleanliness, cities, counties, states and the nation are going “Green”. These strengthening environmental concerns extend to trash haul, recycling, sewer services, the delivery of power and water and preservation of open spaces. Treatment of the environment affects air and water quality and, generally, how habitable and inviting a place appears

Residents of the City of Rio Rancho were asked to evaluate their local environment and the services provided to ensure its quality. The overall quality of the natural environment was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 65% of survey respondents. Air quality received the highest rating, and it was above the benchmark.

FIGURE 22: COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Cleanliness of Rio Rancho	Below
Quality of overall natural environment in Rio Rancho	Below
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	Below
Air quality	Above

FIGURE 23: FREQUENCY OF RECYCLING BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	Similar

Of the five utility services rated by those completing the questionnaire, two were higher than the benchmark comparison, two were similar and one was below the benchmark comparison.

FIGURE 24: UTILITY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	Above
Sewer services	Above
Drinking water	Below
Recycling	Similar
Garbage collection	Similar

RECREATION AND WELLNESS

Parks and Recreation

Quality parks and recreation opportunities help to define a community as more than the grind of its business, traffic and hard work. Leisure activities vastly can improve the quality of life of residents, serving both to entertain and mobilize good health. The survey contained questions seeking residents’ perspectives about opportunities and services related the community’s parks and recreation services.

FIGURE 25: COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Recreation opportunities	Below

FIGURE 26: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Used Rio Rancho recreation centers	Below
Participated in a recreation program or activity	Below
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	Below

FIGURE 27: PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
City parks	Similar
Recreation programs or classes	Similar
Recreation centers or facilities	Below

Culture, Arts and Education

A full service community does not address only the life and safety of its residents. Like an individual who drudges to the office and returns home, a community that pays attention only to the life sustaining basics becomes insular, dreary and uninspiring to business and individuals. In the case of communities without thriving culture, arts and education opportunities, the magnet that attracts those who might consider relocating there is vastly weakened. Cultural, artistic, social and educational services elevate the opportunities for personal growth among residents. In the survey, residents were asked about the quality of opportunities to participate in cultural and educational activities.

Opportunities to attend cultural activities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 24% of respondents. Educational opportunities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 40% of respondents. Compared to the benchmark data, educational opportunities were below the average of comparison jurisdictions, as was cultural activity opportunities.

FIGURE 28: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	Below
Educational opportunities	Below

FIGURE 29: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Used Rio Rancho public libraries or their services	Similar

FIGURE 30: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Public schools	Above
Public library services	Similar

Health and Wellness

Healthy residents have the wherewithal to contribute to the economy as volunteers or employees and they do not present a burden in cost and time to others. Although residents bear the primary responsibility for their good health, local government provides services that can foster that well being and that provide care when residents are ill.

FIGURE 31: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality health care	Similar

COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS

Diverse communities that include among their residents a mix of races, ages, wealth, ideas and beliefs have the raw material for the most vibrant and creative society. However, the presence of these features alone does not ensure a high quality or desirable space. Surveyed residents were asked about the success of the mix: the sense of community, the openness of residents to people of diverse backgrounds and the attractiveness of the City of Rio Rancho as a place to raise children or to retire. They were also questioned about the quality of services delivered to various population subgroups, including older adults, youth and residents with few resources. A community that succeeds in creating an inclusive environment for a variety of residents is a community that offers more to many.

A high percentage of residents rated the City of Rio Rancho as an “excellent” or “good” place to raise kids and a high percentage rated it as an excellent or good place to retire. Most residents felt the local sense of community was excellent or good.

FIGURE 32: COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Sense of community	Similar
Rio Rancho as a place to raise kids	Above
Rio Rancho as a place to retire	Above

FIGURE 33: SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Services to seniors	Similar
Services to youth	Similar
Services to low income residents	Similar

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Government leaders, elected or hired, cannot run a jurisdiction alone and a jurisdiction cannot run effectively if residents remain strangers with little to connect them. Staff and elected officials require the assistance of local residents whether that assistance comes in tacit approval or eager help; and commonality of purpose among the electorate facilitates policies and programs that appeal to most and causes discord among few. Furthermore, when neighbors help neighbors, the cost to the community to provide services to residents in need declines. When residents are civically engaged, they have taken the opportunity to participate in making the community more livable for all. The extent to which local government provides opportunities to become informed and engaged and the extent to which residents take those opportunities is an indicator of the connection between government and populace. By understanding your residents’ level of connection to, knowledge of and participation in local government, the City can find better opportunities to communicate and educate citizens about its mission, services, accomplishments and plans. This survey information is essential for public communication and for helping local government staff to conceive strategies for reaching reluctant voters whose confidence in government may need boosting prior to important referenda.

Civic Activity

Respondents were asked about the perceived community volunteering opportunities and their participation as citizens of the City of Rio Rancho.

FIGURE 34: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in community matters	Below
Opportunities to volunteer	Below

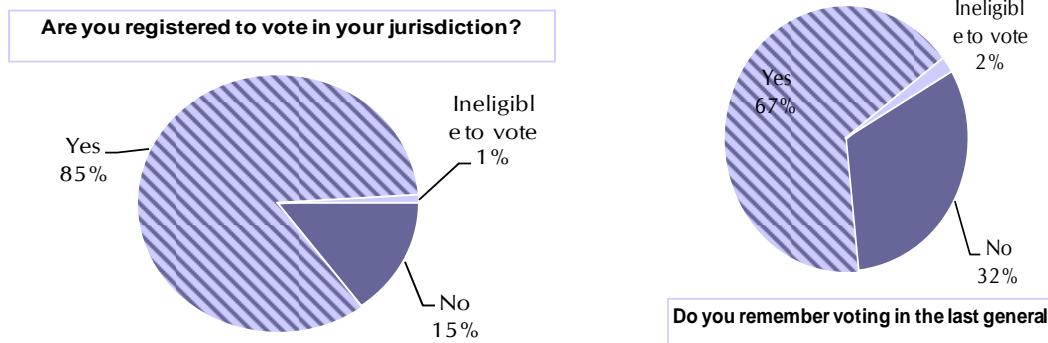
Most of the participants in this survey had not attended a public meeting in the 12 months prior, but the vast majority had helped a friend.

FIGURE 35: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	Similar
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television or on the City Web site	Below
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Rio Rancho	Below
Participated in a club or civic group in Rio Rancho	Below
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	Similar

City of Rio Rancho residents showed the largest amount of civic engagement in the area of electoral participation. About 85% reported they were registered to vote; 67% indicated they had voted in the last general election.

FIGURE 36: REPORTED VOTING BEHAVIOR



Information and Awareness

Those completing the survey were asked about their use and perceptions of various information sources and local government media services. When asked whether they had visited the City of Rio Rancho Web site in the previous 12 months, 70% reported they had done so at least once.

FIGURE 37: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Visited the City of Rio Rancho Web site	Above

FIGURE 38: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Cable television	Similar
Public information services	Similar

Social Engagement

Opportunities to participate in social events and activities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 34% of respondents.

FIGURE 39: SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	Below

Residents in Rio Rancho reported a fair amount of neighborliness. More than 46% indicated talking or visiting with their neighbors several times a week or more frequently.

FIGURE 40: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Has contact with neighbors at least once per month	Below

PUBLIC TRUST

Residents are more likely to cooperate with the proposals and policies advanced by their community leaders when trust in local government officials runs high. Trust can be measured in residents’ opinions about the overall direction the City of Rio Rancho is taking, their perspectives about the service value their taxes purchase and the openness of government to citizen participation. In addition, resident opinion

about services provided by the City of Rio Rancho could be compared to their opinion about services provided by the state and federal governments. If residents find nothing to admire in the services delivered by any level of government, their opinions about the City of Rio Rancho may be colored by their dislike of what all levels of government provide.

About half of respondents felt that the value of services for taxes paid was “excellent” or “good.” When asked to rate the job the City of Rio Rancho does at listening to citizens, 44% rated it as “excellent” or “good.”

FIGURE 41: PUBLIC TRUST BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Value of services for the taxes paid to Rio Rancho	Below
The overall direction that Rio Rancho is taking	Below
Job Rio Rancho government does at welcoming citizen involvement	Below
Job Rio Rancho government does at listening to citizens	Below
Overall image or reputation of Rio Rancho	Below

On average, residents of the City of Rio Rancho gave the highest evaluations to their own local government and the lowest average rating to the state government. The overall quality of services delivered by the City of Rio Rancho was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 65% of survey participants. The City of Rio Rancho’s rating was similar the benchmark when compared to other communities.

FIGURE 42: SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Services provided by the City of Rio Rancho	Similar
Services provided by the Federal Government	Similar
Services provided by the State Government	Similar
Sandoval County government general	Similar

City of Rio Rancho Employees

The employees of the City of Rio Rancho who interact with the public create the first impression that most residents have of the City of Rio Rancho. Front line staff who provide information, assist with bill paying, collect trash, create service schedules, fight fires and crime and even give traffic tickets are the collective face of the City of Rio Rancho. As such, it is important to know about residents’ experience talking with that “face.” When employees appear to be knowledgeable, responsive and courteous, residents are more likely to feel that any needs or problems may be solved through positive and productive interactions with the City of Rio Rancho staff.

Those completing the survey were asked if they had been in contact with a City employee either in-person or over the phone in the last 12 months; the 64% who reported that they had been in contact were then asked to indicate overall how satisfied they were with the employee in their most recent contact. City employees were rated highly; 68% of respondents rated their overall impression as “excellent” or “good.”

FIGURE 43: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of Rio Rancho within the last 12 months

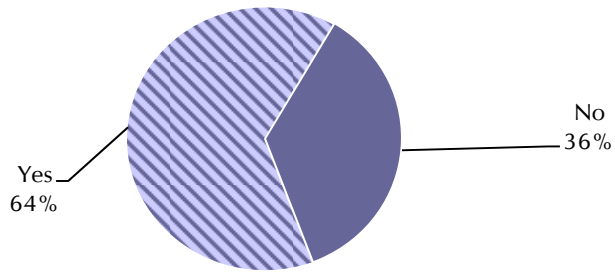


FIGURE 44: CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
Had contact with city employee(s) in last 12 months	Above

FIGURE 45: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BENCHMARKS

	Comparison to benchmark
City employee knowledge	Below
City employee responsiveness	Below
City employee courteousness	Below
Overall impression	Below

From Data to Action

RESIDENT PRIORITIES

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve residents' opinions of local government requires information that targets the services that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called Key Driver Analysis. The key drivers that are identified from that analysis do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the predictors of their behavior. When customers are asked to name the most important characteristics of a good or service, responses often are expected or misleading – just as they can be in the context of a citizen survey. For example, air travelers often claim that safety is the primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis reveals that frequent flier perks or in-flight entertainment predicts their buying decisions.

In local government core services – like fire protection – invariably land at the top of the list created when residents are asked about the most important local government services. And core services are important. But by using Key Driver Analysis, our approach digs deeper to identify the less obvious, but more influential services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of local government services. Because services focused directly on life and safety remain essential to quality government, it is suggested that core services should remain the focus of continuous monitoring and improvement where necessary – but monitoring core services or asking residents to identify important services is not enough.

A Key Driver Analysis (KDA) was conducted for the City of Rio Rancho by examining the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Rio Rancho's overall services. Those key driver services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Rio Rancho can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality.

Services found to be most strongly correlated with ratings of overall service quality from the Rio Rancho Key Driver Analysis were:

- City parks
- Public information services
- Police services
- Economic development
- Sidewalk maintenance

CITY OF RIO RANCHO ACTION CHART™

The 2008 City of Rio Rancho Action Chart™ on the following page combines three dimensions of performance:

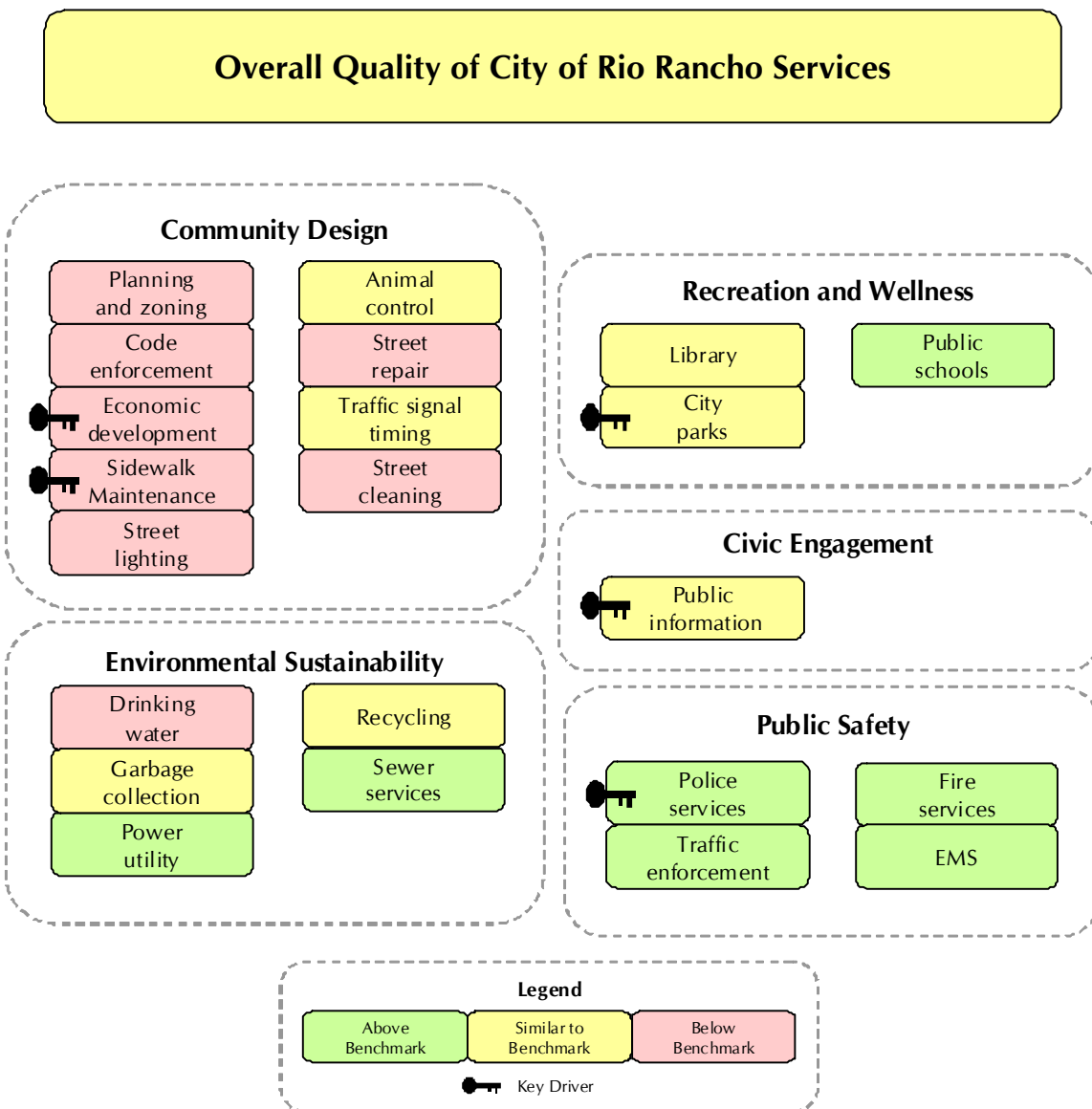
- Comparison to resident evaluations from other communities. When a comparison is available, the background color of each service box indicates whether the service is above the benchmark (green), similar to the benchmark (yellow) or below the benchmark (red).
- Identification of key services. A black key icon next to a service box indicates that service is key (either core or key driver)

Twenty-two services were included in the KDA for the City of Rio Rancho. Of these, seven were above the benchmark, eight were below the benchmark and seven were similar to the benchmark. The five key drivers are shown.

Considering all performance data included in the Action Chart, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In Rio Rancho, economic development and sidewalk maintenance were below the benchmark and city parks and public information services were similar to the benchmark. More detail about interpreting results can be found in the next section.

Services with a high percent of respondents answering “don’t know” were excluded from the analysis and were considered services that would be less influential. See Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies, Frequencies Including “Don’t Know” Responses for the percent “don’t know” for each service.

FIGURE 45: CITY OF RIO RANCHO ACTION CHART



Using Your Action Chart™

The key drivers derived for the City of Rio Rancho provide a list of those services that are uniquely related to overall service quality here. Those key drivers are marked by key symbols in the action chart. Because key driver results are based on a relatively small number of responses, the relationships or correlations that define the key drivers are subject to more variability than is seen when key drivers are derived from a large national dataset of resident responses. To benefit the City of Rio Rancho, NRC lists the key drivers derived from tens of thousands of resident responses from across the county. This list is updated every three years so that you can compare your key drivers to the key drivers from the entire NRC data set. Where your locally derived key drivers overlap national key drivers, it makes sense to focus even more strongly on your keys. Similarly, when your local key drivers overlap your core services, there is stronger argument to make for attending to your key drivers that overlap with core services. In the following table, we have listed your key drivers, core services and the national key drivers below and we have indicated the City of Rio Rancho key drivers that overlap core services or the nationally derived keys.

FIGURE 46: KEY DRIVERS COMPARED

Service	City of Rio Rancho Key Drivers	National Key Drivers	Core Services
City parks	✓		
Code enforcement			✓
Economic development	✓	✓	
EMS			✓
Fire			✓
Garbage collection			✓
Land use planning and zoning		✓	
Police services	✓	✓	✓
Public information services	✓	✓	
Public schools		✓	
Sidewalk maintenance	✓		
Sewer			✓
Storm drainage			✓
Street repair			✓
Water			✓

Policy Questions

“Don’t know” responses have been removed from the following questions, when applicable.

Policy Question 1					
To what extent do you support or oppose an increase in your property tax for each of the following purposes?	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
Police buildings	23%	41%	16%	20%	100%
Fire stations	29%	43%	14%	14%	100%
More parks	31%	38%	19%	13%	100%
More roads	37%	40%	15%	9%	100%
More recreation facilities	25%	44%	18%	14%	100%
More libraries	18%	41%	24%	18%	100%
More community/senior citizen facilities	19%	47%	20%	14%	100%
Road improvements	52%	31%	10%	6%	100%
Public Works facilities	24%	44%	19%	12%	100%

Policy Question 2	
To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in the City of Rio Rancho’s Gross Receipts Tax (commonly referred to as sales tax) to increase service levels of the City?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	10%
Somewhat support	43%
Somewhat oppose	23%
Strongly oppose	25%
Total	100%

Policy Question 3	
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the amount and quality of information you receive about what’s happening in the City of Rio Rancho?	Percent of respondents
Very satisfied	16%
Somewhat satisfied	52%
Somewhat unsatisfied	20%
Very unsatisfied	12%
Total	100%

Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies

FREQUENCIES EXCLUDING “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

Question 1: Quality of Life					
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Rio Rancho:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Rio Rancho as a place to live	29%	53%	15%	2%	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	34%	44%	17%	4%	100%
Rio Rancho as a place to raise children	30%	50%	18%	1%	100%
Rio Rancho as a place to work	16%	33%	28%	22%	100%
Rio Rancho as a place to retire	21%	53%	16%	10%	100%
The overall quality of life in Rio Rancho	21%	56%	21%	2%	100%

Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Rio Rancho as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Sense of community	13%	42%	32%	12%	100%
Overall appearance of Rio Rancho	9%	48%	32%	11%	100%
Cleanliness of Rio Rancho	11%	49%	32%	7%	100%
Overall quality of new development in Rio Rancho	13%	45%	26%	16%	100%
Variety of housing options	14%	51%	28%	7%	100%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Rio Rancho	7%	34%	41%	18%	100%
Shopping opportunities	5%	22%	38%	35%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	4%	20%	41%	34%	100%
Recreational opportunities	6%	32%	44%	17%	100%
Employment opportunities	2%	19%	42%	36%	100%
Educational opportunities	9%	31%	47%	14%	100%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	5%	29%	51%	16%	100%
Opportunities to volunteer	10%	44%	39%	6%	100%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	6%	44%	33%	17%	100%
Ease of car travel in Rio Rancho	8%	37%	36%	20%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Rio Rancho	6%	26%	35%	33%	100%
Ease of walking in Rio Rancho	9%	30%	31%	29%	100%
Availability of paths and walking trails	9%	26%	32%	33%	100%
Traffic flow on major streets	4%	30%	40%	26%	100%
Availability of affordable quality housing	13%	42%	33%	13%	100%
Availability of affordable quality health care	10%	42%	33%	15%	100%
Air quality	24%	57%	18%	1%	100%
Quality of overall natural environment in Rio Rancho	14%	51%	32%	3%	100%
Overall image or reputation of Rio Rancho	11%	51%	27%	10%	100%

Question 3: Growth						
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Rio Rancho over the past 2 years:	Much too slow	Somewhat too slow	Right amount	Somewhat too fast	Much too fast	Total
Population growth	4%	2%	36%	35%	23%	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	26%	43%	24%	4%	2%	100%
Jobs growth	36%	48%	14%	1%	0%	100%

Question 4: Code Enforcement	
To what degree, if at all, are rundown buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Rio Rancho?	Percent of respondents
Not a problem	12%
Minor problem	38%
Moderate problem	34%
Major problem	16%
Total	100%

Question 5: Community Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Rio Rancho:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	38%	41%	11%	8%	2%	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	16%	49%	15%	14%	6%	100%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	43%	34%	15%	5%	3%	100%

Question 6: Personal Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
In your neighborhood during the day	66%	27%	4%	3%	0%	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	37%	39%	12%	10%	1%	100%
In Rio Rancho's commercial areas during the day	53%	40%	5%	2%	0%	100%
In Rio Rancho's commercial areas after dark	24%	40%	20%	12%	3%	100%

Question 7: Crime Victim	
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents
No	90%
Yes	10%
Total	100%

Question 8: Crime Reporting	
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents
No	19%
Yes	81%
Total	100%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors						
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Rio Rancho?	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times	Total
Used Rio Rancho public libraries or their services	28%	24%	32%	10%	6%	100%
Used Rio Rancho recreation centers	52%	19%	18%	6%	5%	100%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	61%	18%	13%	5%	3%	100%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	19%	26%	30%	18%	8%	100%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	70%	20%	8%	1%	1%	100%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television or on the City Web site	62%	22%	11%	4%	2%	100%
Visited the City of Rio Rancho Web site (at www.ci.riorancho.nm.us)	30%	18%	30%	15%	6%	100%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	21%	8%	10%	9%	52%	100%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Rio Rancho	67%	14%	7%	3%	9%	100%
Participated in a club or civic group in Rio Rancho	81%	6%	5%	3%	4%	100%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	6%	24%	43%	15%	12%	100%
Attended an event at the Santa Ana Star Center	36%	36%	25%	2%	1%	100%

Question 10: Neighborliness	
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents
Just about everyday	23%
Several times a week	23%
Several times a month	26%
Once a month	11%
Several times a year	9%
Once a year or less	4%
Never	4%
Total	100%

Question 11: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Rio Rancho:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Police services	40%	44%	11%	5%	100%
Fire services	47%	45%	8%	0%	100%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	45%	44%	10%	1%	100%
Crime prevention	25%	43%	25%	8%	100%
Fire prevention and education	24%	50%	21%	6%	100%
Municipal courts	14%	46%	31%	9%	100%
Traffic enforcement	23%	46%	21%	10%	100%
Street repair	6%	30%	33%	31%	100%
Street cleaning	9%	33%	36%	22%	100%
Street lighting	7%	34%	32%	26%	100%
Sidewalk maintenance	6%	36%	31%	27%	100%
Traffic signal timing	7%	38%	32%	23%	100%
Garbage collection	27%	53%	15%	5%	100%
Recycling	24%	46%	20%	9%	100%
Drinking water	15%	42%	27%	16%	100%
Sewer services	20%	56%	21%	4%	100%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	19%	57%	22%	2%	100%
City parks	24%	51%	19%	6%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	19%	49%	26%	7%	100%
Recreation centers or facilities	17%	43%	26%	13%	100%
Land use, planning and zoning	5%	24%	37%	34%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	7%	28%	34%	30%	100%
Animal control	17%	44%	30%	10%	100%
Economic development	6%	31%	35%	28%	100%
Services to seniors	16%	49%	28%	7%	100%
Services to youth	12%	42%	33%	12%	100%
Services to low-income people	11%	34%	33%	22%	100%
Public library services	36%	48%	15%	2%	100%
Public information services	17%	39%	33%	11%	100%
Public schools	25%	45%	23%	8%	100%
Cable television	11%	37%	30%	21%	100%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	8%	31%	32%	29%	100%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space	5%	33%	30%	32%	100%

Question 12: Government Services Overall					
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The City of Rio Rancho	14%	51%	27%	7%	100%
The Federal Government	3%	38%	46%	13%	100%
The State Government	5%	35%	45%	15%	100%
Sandoval County Government	7%	39%	43%	11%	100%

Question 13: Contact with City Employees	
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Rio Rancho within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents
No	36%
Yes	64%
Total	100%

Question 14: City Employees					
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Rio Rancho in your most recent contact?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Knowledge	26%	43%	20%	11%	100%
Responsiveness	29%	40%	15%	17%	100%
Courtesy	36%	34%	18%	12%	100%
Overall impression	30%	38%	17%	15%	100%

Question 15: Government Performance					
Please rate the following categories of Rio Rancho government performance:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The value of services for the taxes paid to Rio Rancho	8%	40%	35%	18%	100%
The overall direction that Rio Rancho is taking	10%	43%	28%	18%	100%
The job Rio Rancho government does at welcoming citizen involvement	9%	35%	35%	20%	100%
The job Rio Rancho government does at listening to citizens	8%	31%	33%	28%	100%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity					
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Total
Recommend living in Rio Rancho to someone who asks	45%	42%	9%	5%	100%
Remain in Rio Rancho for the next five years	63%	24%	6%	7%	100%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy	
What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Percent of respondents
Very positive	3%
Somewhat positive	8%
Neutral	34%
Somewhat negative	43%
Very negative	12%
Total	100%

Question 18a: Policy Question 1					
To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in the City of Rio Rancho's Gross Receipts Tax (commonly referred to as sales tax) to increase service levels of the City?	Strongly support	Somewhat support	Somewhat oppose	Strongly oppose	Total
Police buildings	23%	41%	16%	20%	100%
Fire stations	29%	43%	14%	14%	100%
More parks	31%	38%	19%	13%	100%
More roads	37%	40%	15%	9%	100%
More recreation facilities	25%	44%	18%	14%	100%
More libraries	18%	41%	24%	18%	100%
More community/senior citizen facilities	19%	47%	20%	14%	100%
Road improvements	52%	31%	10%	6%	100%
Public Works facilities	24%	44%	19%	12%	100%

Question 18b: Policy Question 2	
To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in the City of Rio Rancho's Gross Receipts Tax (commonly referred to as sales tax) to increase service levels of the City?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	10%
Somewhat support	43%
Somewhat oppose	23%
Strongly oppose	25%
Total	100%

Question 18c: Policy Question 3	
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the amount and quality of information you receive about what's happening in the City of Rio Rancho?	Percent of respondents
Very satisfied	16%
Somewhat satisfied	52%
Somewhat unsatisfied	20%
Very unsatisfied	12%
Total	100%

Question D1: Employment Status	
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents
No	29%
Yes, full-time	65%
Yes, part-time	6%
Total	100%

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) by myself	77%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) with other children or adults	11%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	2%
Bicycle	1%
Bicycle	1%
Work at home	8%
Other	1%

Question D3: Length of Residency	
How many years have you lived in Rio Rancho?	Percent of respondents
Less than 2 years	18%
2 to 5 years	32%
6 to 10 years	17%
11 to 20 years	20%
More than 20 years	13%
Total	100%

Question D4: Housing Unit Type	
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents
One family house detached from any other houses	85%
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	1%
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	12%
Mobile home	1%
Other	2%
Total	100%

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)	
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	18%
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	82%
Total	100%

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost	
About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents
Less than \$300 per month	4%
\$300 to \$599 per month	10%
\$600 to \$999 per month	31%
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	31%
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	16%
\$2,500 or more per month	7%
Total	100%

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household	
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents
No	59%
Yes	41%
Total	100%

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household	
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents
No	78%
Yes	22%
Total	100%

Question D9: Household Income	
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)	Percent of respondents
Less than \$24,999	14%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	29%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	40%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	12%
\$150,000 or more	5%
Total	100%

Question D10: Ethnicity	
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	80%
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	20%
Total	100%

Question D11: Race	
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	2%
Black or African American	2%
White	82%
Other	14%

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option

Question D12: Age	
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents
18 to 24 years	3%
25 to 34 years	26%
35 to 44 years	20%
45 to 54 years	24%
55 to 64 years	9%
65 to 74 years	10%
75 years or older	9%
Total	100%

Question D13: Gender	
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents
Female	54%
Male	46%
Total	100%

Question D14: Registered to Vote	
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents
No	15%
Yes	85%
Ineligible to vote	1%
Total	100%

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election	
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?	Percent of respondents
No	32%
Yes	67%
Ineligible to vote	2%
Total	100%

FREQUENCIES INCLUDING “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

These tables contain the percentage of respondents for each response category as well as the “n” or total number of respondents for each category, next to the percentage.

Question 1: Quality of Life												
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Rio Rancho:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Rio Rancho as a place to live	29%	103	53%	183	15%	54	2%	9	0%	0	100%	348
Your neighborhood as a place to live	34%	118	44%	152	17%	58	4%	15	0%	0	100%	344
Rio Rancho as a place to raise children	25%	86	42%	143	15%	52	1%	4	17%	58	100%	342
Rio Rancho as a place to work	13%	44	26%	88	22%	75	18%	60	22%	75	100%	341
Rio Rancho as a place to retire	18%	62	44%	153	14%	48	8%	29	16%	55	100%	346
The overall quality of life in Rio Rancho	21%	73	56%	192	21%	74	2%	7	0%	0	100%	346

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Rio Rancho as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Sense of community	13%	44	41%	142	31%	107	12%	42	3%	10	100%	345
Overall appearance of Rio Rancho	9%	33	48%	167	32%	110	11%	39	0%	1	100%	350
Cleanliness of Rio Rancho	11%	40	49%	172	32%	110	7%	25	0%	0	100%	347
Overall quality of new development in Rio Rancho	12%	41	43%	149	25%	87	16%	54	5%	18	100%	349
Variety of housing options	14%	48	48%	167	27%	93	6%	22	5%	16	100%	345
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Rio Rancho	7%	23	34%	119	41%	141	18%	63	0%	1	100%	348
Shopping opportunities	5%	19	22%	76	38%	131	35%	123	0%	0	100%	349
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	4%	12	19%	64	38%	130	31%	107	9%	33	100%	346
Recreational opportunities	6%	20	30%	104	41%	141	16%	55	8%	27	100%	347
Employment opportunities	2%	6	15%	52	34%	117	29%	100	20%	68	100%	344
Educational opportunities	8%	27	27%	95	42%	145	12%	43	10%	35	100%	346
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	4%	14	25%	88	45%	155	14%	48	12%	40	100%	345
Opportunities to volunteer	7%	26	33%	115	29%	102	4%	15	26%	90	100%	348
Opportunities to participate in community matters	5%	17	36%	123	27%	93	14%	47	18%	63	100%	343
Ease of car travel in Rio Rancho	7%	25	36%	124	35%	119	19%	66	3%	10	100%	344
Ease of bicycle travel in Rio Rancho	5%	16	19%	66	26%	88	24%	83	26%	90	100%	344
Ease of walking in Rio Rancho	8%	29	27%	93	28%	98	26%	91	10%	33	100%	344
Availability of paths and walking trails	8%	29	23%	80	29%	98	29%	101	11%	36	100%	345

Question 2: Community Characteristics													
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Rio Rancho as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total		
	Traffic flow on major streets	4%	14	30%	102	39%	136	25%	86	2%	7	100%	345
Availability of affordable quality housing	11%	39	38%	129	29%	100	11%	38	10%	35	100%	342	
Availability of affordable quality health care	9%	32	37%	129	29%	101	14%	48	11%	39	100%	349	
Air quality	23%	80	56%	195	17%	60	1%	4	2%	7	100%	346	
Quality of overall natural environment in Rio Rancho	14%	47	49%	170	31%	106	3%	11	3%	11	100%	345	
Overall image or reputation of Rio Rancho	11%	39	50%	174	27%	92	10%	34	2%	7	100%	347	

Question 3: Growth														
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Rio Rancho over the past 2 years:	Much too slow		Somewhat too slow		Right amount		Somewhat too fast		Much too fast		Don't know		Total	
	Population growth	4%	13	2%	6	34%	117	33%	114	21%	74	7%	25	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	25%	86	41%	142	23%	80	3%	11	2%	7	6%	21	100%	348
Jobs growth	27%	94	36%	126	11%	38	0%	2	0%	1	25%	86	100%	346

Question 4: Code Enforcement		
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Rio Rancho?	Percent of respondents	Count
Not a problem	11%	38
Minor problem	35%	121
Moderate problem	32%	109
Major problem	14%	50
Don't know	7%	26
6	0%	1
Total	100%	344

Question 5: Community Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Rio Rancho:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
	Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	38%	131	40%	138	11%	39	8%	26	2%	7	1%	5	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	16%	55	48%	167	14%	50	14%	49	5%	19	2%	9	100%	348
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	38%	132	30%	104	14%	47	5%	17	2%	8	11%	38	100%	346

Question 6: Personal Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
In your neighborhood during the day	65%	226	27%	93	4%	14	3%	11	0%	0	0%	1	100%	345
In your neighborhood after dark	37%	128	39%	134	12%	41	10%	33	1%	4	1%	2	100%	342
In Rio Rancho's commercial areas during the day	51%	175	38%	132	5%	18	2%	8	0%	0	3%	11	100%	344
In Rio Rancho's commercial areas after dark	22%	77	37%	127	18%	61	11%	39	3%	10	9%	30	100%	344

Question 7: Crime Victim		
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	90%	312
Yes	10%	34
Don't know	0%	0
6	0%	1
Total	100%	347

Question 8: Crime Reporting		
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	18%	6
Yes	77%	27
Don't know	5%	2
Total	100%	35

Question 9: Resident Behaviors													
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Rio Rancho?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Total		
Used Rio Rancho public libraries or their services	28%	96	24%	84	32%	112	10%	33	6%	21	100%	346	
Used Rio Rancho recreation centers	52%	179	19%	65	18%	61	6%	21	5%	17	100%	343	
Participated in a recreation program or activity	61%	210	18%	62	13%	44	5%	18	3%	9	100%	343	
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	19%	65	26%	90	30%	101	18%	61	8%	26	100%	343	
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	70%	243	20%	68	8%	29	1%	3	1%	2	100%	345	
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television or on the City Web site	62%	214	22%	75	11%	37	4%	15	2%	6	100%	346	
Visited the City of Rio Rancho Web site (at www.ci.rio-rancho.nm.us)	30%	104	18%	62	30%	103	15%	51	6%	22	100%	343	
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	21%	73	8%	26	10%	36	9%	31	52%	178	100%	344	

Question 9: Resident Behaviors												
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Rio Rancho?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Total	
	Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Rio Rancho	67%	231	14%	48	7%	25	3%	9	9%	30	100%
Participated in a club or civic group in Rio Rancho	81%	280	6%	21	5%	17	3%	12	4%	15	100%	346
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	6%	20	24%	83	43%	149	15%	53	12%	39	100%	343
Attended an event at the Santa Ana Star Center	36%	125	36%	124	25%	88	2%	6	1%	5	100%	347

Question 10: Neighborliness		
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent respondents	Count
Just about everyday	23%	80
Several times a week	23%	80
Several times a month	26%	90
Once a month	11%	37
Several times a year	9%	31
Once a year or less	4%	15
Never	4%	15
Total	100%	348

Question 11: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Rio Rancho:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Police services	36%	125	40%	138	10%	36	4%	14	10%	33	100%
Fire services	38%	129	37%	125	6%	21	0%	0	20%	67	100%	343
Ambulance or emergency medical services	34%	115	33%	112	7%	25	1%	2	26%	89	100%	342
Crime prevention	20%	66	34%	114	19%	65	6%	20	22%	73	100%	338
Fire prevention and education	16%	54	33%	114	14%	48	4%	13	33%	113	100%	343
Municipal courts	7%	23	22%	75	15%	51	4%	15	51%	173	100%	336
Traffic enforcement	21%	70	42%	142	19%	64	9%	30	10%	33	100%	340
Street repair	6%	21	29%	97	32%	108	29%	99	4%	13	100%	338
Street cleaning	8%	29	30%	104	33%	114	21%	71	7%	24	100%	343
Street lighting	7%	24	34%	115	32%	108	26%	89	2%	5	100%	341
Sidewalk maintenance	5%	17	32%	109	28%	95	24%	82	11%	39	100%	342
Traffic signal timing	6%	22	37%	127	31%	106	23%	78	2%	8	100%	341

Question 11: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Rio Rancho:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Garbage collection	26%	90	52%	177	14%	49	5%	18	2%	8	100%
Recycling	21%	72	41%	138	18%	60	8%	27	13%	43	100%	340
Drinking water	14%	49	40%	137	25%	86	15%	53	6%	20	100%	344
Sewer services	16%	55	46%	155	17%	57	3%	11	18%	61	100%	339
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	19%	65	56%	192	22%	74	2%	8	1%	3	100%	342
City parks	21%	71	45%	152	17%	58	6%	19	12%	41	100%	342
Recreation programs or classes	11%	38	29%	100	16%	53	4%	14	40%	136	100%	340
Recreation centers or facilities	11%	37	28%	96	17%	58	9%	29	35%	118	100%	339
Land use, planning and zoning	4%	13	18%	61	29%	97	26%	89	23%	77	100%	338
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	6%	20	24%	81	29%	99	26%	87	15%	52	100%	339
Animal control	14%	49	38%	129	25%	86	8%	29	14%	49	100%	341
Economic development	5%	18	26%	88	29%	100	23%	78	17%	57	100%	341
Services to seniors	8%	28	25%	86	14%	50	4%	12	49%	169	100%	345
Services to youth	7%	24	24%	83	19%	65	7%	24	43%	145	100%	341
Services to low-income people	4%	14	13%	44	13%	44	9%	29	61%	209	100%	340
Public library services	30%	102	40%	136	13%	43	1%	5	16%	56	100%	342
Public information services	13%	44	28%	97	24%	82	8%	28	27%	93	100%	344
Public schools	18%	60	32%	109	16%	55	6%	19	29%	97	100%	340
Cable television	7%	24	23%	79	18%	62	13%	45	39%	131	100%	341
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	4%	13	15%	49	15%	49	13%	45	54%	183	100%	339
Preservation of natural areas such as open space	4%	13	23%	77	21%	71	22%	76	31%	106	100%	343

Question 12: Government Services Overall												
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	The City of Rio Rancho	13%	45	49%	167	26%	89	7%	24	6%	19	100%
The Federal Government	3%	9	31%	105	38%	128	11%	38	18%	62	100%	342
The State Government	4%	14	29%	99	37%	128	13%	43	17%	58	100%	342
Sandoval County Government	6%	19	33%	111	36%	122	9%	32	17%	59	100%	342

Question 13: Contact with City Employees		
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Rio Rancho within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	36%	123
Yes	64%	220
Total	100%	343

Question 14: City Employees												
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Rio Rancho in your most recent contact?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Knowledge	26%	57	42%	92	19%	43	11%	24	1%	3	100%	220
Responsiveness	28%	62	39%	86	14%	32	17%	38	1%	1	100%	220
Courtesy	36%	79	34%	74	18%	40	12%	26	0%	0	100%	220
Overall impression	30%	66	38%	84	17%	38	15%	32	0%	1	100%	220

Question 15: Government Performance												
Please rate the following categories of Rio Rancho government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
The value of services for the taxes paid to Rio Rancho	7%	24	35%	121	31%	105	16%	54	12%	40	100%	344
The overall direction that Rio Rancho is taking	9%	32	38%	131	25%	87	16%	56	11%	38	100%	344
The job Rio Rancho government does at welcoming citizen involvement	7%	23	26%	89	26%	88	15%	52	27%	91	100%	343
The job Rio Rancho government does at listening to citizens	6%	21	22%	77	24%	83	20%	70	27%	93	100%	344

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity												
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely		Somewhat likely		Somewhat unlikely		Very unlikely		Don't know		Total	
Recommend living in Rio Rancho to someone who asks	44%	154	42%	144	9%	30	5%	17	0%	2	100%	347
Remain in Rio Rancho for the next five years	61%	210	23%	79	6%	21	7%	25	3%	10	100%	345

Question 17: Impact of the Economy		
What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Percent of respondents	Count
Very positive	3%	10
Somewhat positive	8%	28
Neutral	34%	116
Somewhat negative	43%	147
Very negative	12%	42
Total	100%	343

Question 18a: Policy Question 1										
To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your property tax for each of the following purposes?	Strongly support		Somewhat support		Somewhat oppose		Strongly oppose		Total	
Police buildings	23%	77	41%	136	16%	54	20%	66	100%	333
Fire stations	29%	96	43%	142	14%	48	14%	48	100%	334
More parks	31%	101	38%	126	19%	62	13%	43	100%	332
More roads	37%	123	40%	132	15%	49	9%	29	100%	333
More recreation facilities	25%	81	44%	146	18%	60	14%	45	100%	332
More libraries	18%	59	41%	136	24%	79	18%	59	100%	333
More community/senior citizen facilities	19%	64	47%	157	20%	65	14%	45	100%	332
Road improvements	52%	175	31%	105	10%	35	6%	20	100%	335
Public Works facilities	24%	80	44%	145	19%	63	12%	40	100%	328

Question 18b: Policy Question 2		
To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in the City of Rio Rancho's Gross Receipts Tax (commonly referred to as sales tax) to increase service levels of the City?	Percent of respondents	Count
Strongly support	9%	31
Somewhat support	40%	137
Somewhat oppose	21%	72
Strongly oppose	23%	79
Don't know	8%	26
Total	100%	345

Question 18c: Policy Question 3		
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the amount and quality of information you receive about what's happening in the City of Rio Rancho?	Percent respondents	of Count
Very satisfied	15%	51
Somewhat satisfied	49%	167
Somewhat unsatisfied	19%	64
Very unsatisfied	11%	39
Don't know	7%	23
Total	100%	345

Question D1: Employment Status		
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	29%	97
Yes, full-time	65%	220
Yes, part-time	6%	22
Total	100%	338

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) by myself	77%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) with other children or adults	11%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	2%
Bicycle	1%
Bicycle	1%
Work at home	8%
Other	1%

Question D3: Length of Residency		
How many years have you lived in Rio Rancho?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than 2 years	18%	63
2 to 5 years	32%	109
6 to 10 years	17%	60
11 to 20 years	20%	69
More than 20 years	13%	45
Total	100%	346

Question D4: Housing Unit Type		
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Count
One family house detached from any other houses	85%	293
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	1%	4
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	12%	40
Mobile home	1%	2
Other	2%	7
Total	100%	347

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)		
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents	Count
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	18%	62
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	82%	277
Total	100%	339

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost		
About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than \$300 per month	4%	14
\$300 to \$599 per month	10%	34
\$600 to \$999 per month	31%	105
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	31%	104
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	16%	54
\$2,500 or more per month	7%	25
Total	100%	337

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household		
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent respondents	of Count
No	59%	205
Yes	41%	140
Total	100%	345

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household		
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	78%	270
Yes	22%	76
Total	100%	346

Question D9: Household Income		
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)	Percent respondents	of Count
Less than \$24,999	14%	46
\$25,000 to \$49,999	29%	96
\$50,000 to \$99,999	40%	131
\$100,000 to \$149,000	12%	39
\$150,000 or more	5%	17
Total	100%	329

Question D10: Ethnicity		
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents	Count
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	80%	269
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	20%	69
Total	100%	338

Question D11: Race		
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%	9
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	2%	8
Black or African American	2%	6
White	82%	279
Other	14%	48
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option		

Question D12: Age		
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents	Count
18 to 24 years	3%	10
25 to 34 years	26%	88
35 to 44 years	20%	67
45 to 54 years	24%	83
55 to 64 years	9%	30
65 to 74 years	10%	35
75 years or older	9%	30
Total	100%	343

Question D13: Gender		
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents	Count
Female	54%	185
Male	46%	160
Total	100%	345

Question D14: Registered to Vote		
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	14%	50
Yes	83%	287
Ineligible to vote	1%	2
Don't know	2%	7
Total	100%	346

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election		
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Did you vote in the last general election?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	32%	109
Yes	67%	229
Ineligible to vote	2%	5
Don't know	0%	1
Total	100%	344

Appendix B: Survey Methodology

The National Citizen Survey™ was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The National Citizen Survey™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The National Citizen Survey™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The National Citizen Survey™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

SURVEY VALIDITY

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can a jurisdiction be confident that the results from those who completed the questionnaire are representative of the results that would have been obtained had the survey been administered to the entire population? and 2) how closely do the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do?

To answer the first question, the best survey research practices were used for the resources spent to ensure that the results from the survey respondents reflect the opinions of residents in the entire jurisdiction. These practices include:

- Using a mail-out/mail-back methodology, which typically gets a higher response rate than phone for the same dollars spent. A higher response rate lessens the worry that those who did not respond are different than those who did respond.
- Selecting households at random within the jurisdiction to receive the survey. A random selection ensures that the households selected to receive the survey are similar to the entire population. A non-random sample may only include households from one geographic area, or from households of only one type.
- Over-sampling multi-family housing units to improve response from hard-to-reach, lower income, or younger apartment dwellers.
- Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure; in this case, the "birthday method." The cover letter included an instruction requesting that the respondent in the household be the adult (18 years old or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of year of birth.
- Contacting potential respondents three times to encourage response from people who may have different opinions or habits than those who would respond with only a single prompt.
- Soliciting response on jurisdiction letterhead signed by the highest ranking elected official or staff member, thus appealing to the recipients' sense of civic responsibility.
- Providing a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
- Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by City officials.
- Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to weight the data to reflect the demographics of the population.

The answer to the second question about how closely the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do is more complex. Resident responses to surveys are influenced by a variety of factors. For questions about service quality, residents' expectations for service quality play a role as well as the "objective" quality of the service provided, the way the resident perceives the entire

community (that is, the context in which the service is provided), the scale on which the resident is asked to record his or her opinion and, of course, the opinion, itself, that a resident holds about the service. Similarly a resident's report of certain behaviors is colored by what he or she believes is the socially desirable response (e.g., reporting tolerant behaviors toward "oppressed groups," likelihood of voting a tax increase for services to poor people, use of alternative modes of travel to work besides the single occupancy vehicle), his or her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), his or her confidence that he or she can be honest without suffering any negative consequences (thus the need for anonymity) as well as the actual behavior itself.

How closely survey results come to recording the way a person really feels or behaves often is measured by the coincidence of reported behavior with observed current behavior (e.g., driving habits), reported intentions to behave with observed future behavior (e.g., voting choices) or reported opinions about current community quality with objective characteristics of the community (e.g., feelings of safety correlated with rates of crime). There is a body of scientific literature that has investigated the relationship between reported behaviors and actual behaviors. Well-conducted surveys, by and large, do capture true respondent behaviors or intentions to act with great accuracy. Predictions of voting outcomes tend to be quite accurate using survey research, as do reported behaviors that are not about highly sensitive issues (e.g., family abuse or other illegal or morally sanctioned activities). For self-reports about highly sensitive issues, statistical adjustments can be made to correct for the respondents' tendency to report what they think the "correct" response should be.

Research on the correlation of resident opinion about service quality and "objective" ratings of service quality tend to be ambiguous, some showing stronger relationships than others. NRC's own research has demonstrated that residents who report the lowest ratings of street repair live in communities with objectively worse street conditions than those who report high ratings of street repair (based on road quality, delay in street repair, number of road repair employees). Similarly, the lowest rated fire services appear to be "objectively" worse than the highest rated fire services (expenditures per capita, response time, "professional" status of firefighters, breadth of services and training provided). Whether some research confirms or disconfirms that relationship between what residents think about a community and what can be seen "objectively" in a community, NRC has argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. NRC principals have written, "If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem."

SURVEY SAMPLING

"Sampling" refers to the method by which survey recipients were chosen. All households within the City of Rio Rancho were eligible to participate in the survey; 1,200 were selected to receive the survey. These 1,200 households were randomly selected from a comprehensive list of all housing units within the City of Rio Rancho boundaries. The basis of the list of all housing units was a United States Postal Service listing of housing units within zip codes. Since some of the zip codes that serve the City of Rio Rancho households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the jurisdiction, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to jurisdiction boundaries, using the most current municipal boundary file (updated on a quarterly basis), and addresses located outside of the City of Rio Rancho boundaries were removed from consideration.

To choose the 1,200 survey recipients, a systematic sampling method was applied to the list of households known to be within the City of Rio Rancho. Systematic sampling is a procedure whereby a complete list of all possible items is culled, selecting every Nth one until the appropriate amount of items is selected. Multi-family housing units were over sampled as residents of this type of housing typically respond at lower rates to surveys than do those in single-family housing units.

An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method. The birthday method selects a person within the household by asking the "person whose birthday has most recently passed" to

complete the questionnaire. The underlying assumption in this method is that day of birth has no relationship to the way people respond to surveys. This instruction was contained in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Selected households received three mailings, one week apart, beginning July 21, 2008. The first mailing was a prenotification postcard announcing the upcoming survey. The next mailing contained a letter from the mayor inviting the household to participate, a questionnaire and a postage-paid return envelope. The final mailing contained a reminder letter, another survey and a postage-paid return envelope. The second cover letter asked those who had not completed the survey to do so and those who have already done so to refrain from turning in another survey. Completed surveys were collected over the following five weeks.

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

Of the surveys mailed, 71 were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the 1,129 households receiving the survey mailings, 351 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 31%. In general, response rates obtained on local government resident surveys range from 25% to 40%.

In theory, in 95 cases out of 100, the results based on the number of responses obtained will differ by no more than five percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained had responses been collected from all City of Rio Rancho adults. This difference from the presumed population finding is referred to as the sampling error (or the “margin of error” or 95% confidence interval”). For subgroups of responses, the margin of sampling error is larger. In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of the public may introduce other sources of error. For example, the failure of some of the selected adults to participate in the sample or the difficulty of including all sectors of the population, such as residents of some institutions or group residences, may lead to somewhat different results.

SURVEY PROCESSING (DATA ENTRY)

Completed surveys received by NRC were assigned a unique identification number. Additionally, each survey was reviewed and “cleaned” as necessary. For example, a question may have asked a respondent to pick two items out of a list of five, but the respondent checked three; NRC staff would choose randomly two of the three selected items to be coded in the dataset.

Once all surveys were assigned a unique identification number, they were entered into an electronic dataset. This dataset was subject to a data entry protocol of “key and verify,” in which survey data were entered twice into an electronic dataset and then compared. Discrepancies were evaluated against the original survey form and corrected. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed.

SURVEY DATA WEIGHTING

The demographic characteristics of the survey sample were compared to those found in the 2000 Census estimates. Sample results were weighted using the population norms to reflect the appropriate percent of those residents. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics.

The variables used for weighting were housing tenure, gender/age. This decision was based on:

- The disparity between the survey respondent characteristics and the population norms for these variables
- The saliency of these variables in detecting differences of opinion among subgroups

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. This is done by: 1) reviewing the sample demographics and comparing them to the population norms from the most recent Census or other sources and 2) comparing the responses to different questions for demographic subgroups. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the Census and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting. A third criterion sometimes used is the importance that the community places on a specific variable. For example, if a jurisdiction feels that accurate race representation is key to staff and public acceptance of the study results, additional consideration will be given in the weighting process to adjusting the race variable.

A special software program using mathematical algorithms is used to calculate the appropriate weights. A limitation of data weighting is that only 2-3 demographic variables can be adjusted in a single study. Several different weighting “schemes” are tested to ensure the best fit for the data.

The process actually begins at the point of sampling. Knowing that residents in single family dwellings are more likely to respond to a mail survey, NRC oversamples residents of multi-family dwellings to ensure their proper representation in the sample data. Rather than giving all residents an equal chance of receiving the survey, this is systematic, stratified sampling, which gives each resident of the jurisdiction a known chance of receiving the survey (and apartment dwellers, for example, a greater chance than single family home dwellers). As a consequence, results must be weighted to recapture the proper representation of apartment dwellers.

The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the table on the following page.

Weighting Scheme for the City of Rio Rancho, NM 2008 Citizen Survey			
Respondent Characteristics	Population Norm ¹	Unweighted Survey Data	Weighted Survey Data
Tenure			
Rent Home	18%	16%	18%
Own Home	82%	84%	82%
Type of Housing Unit			
Single-Family Detached	84%	85%	85%
Attached	16%	15%	15%
Ethnicity			
Non-Hispanic	72%	82%	80%
Hispanic	28%	18%	20%
Race			
White/Caucasian	78%	82%	80%
Non-White	22%	18%	20%
Gender			
Female	53%	57%	53%
Male	47%	43%	47%
Age			
18-34	29%	14%	29%
35-54	44%	37%	44%
55+	27%	49%	27%
Gender and Age			
Females 18-34	15%	9%	15%
Females 35-54	23%	21%	23%
Females 55+	15%	27%	16%
Males 18-34	14%	5%	14%
Males 35-54	21%	16%	21%
Males 55+	12%	22%	12%

SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The survey dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency distributions were presented in the body of the report.

Use of the “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor” Response Scale

The scale on which respondents are asked to record their opinions about service and community quality is “excellent,” “good,” “fair” or “poor” (EGFP). This scale has important advantages over other scale possibilities (very good to very bad; very satisfied to very dissatisfied; strongly agree to strongly disagree, as examples). EGFP is used by the plurality of jurisdictions conducting citizen surveys across the U.S. The advantage of familiarity was one that NRC did not want to dismiss when crafting The National Citizen Survey™ questionnaire, because elected officials, staff and residents already are acquainted with opinion surveys measured this way. EGFP also has the advantage of offering three positive options, rather than only two, over which a resident can offer an opinion. While symmetrical scales often are the right choice in other measurement tasks, NRC has found that ratings of almost every local government service

¹ Source: 2000 Census

in almost every jurisdiction tend, on average, to be positive (that is, above the scale midpoint). Therefore, to permit finer distinctions among positively rated services, EGFP offers three options across which to spread those ratings. EGFP is more neutral because it requires no positive statement of service quality to judge (as agree-disagree scales require) and, finally, EGFP intends to measure absolute quality of service delivery or community quality (unlike satisfaction scales which ignore residents' perceptions of quality in favor of their report on the acceptability of the level of service offered).

“Don't Know” Responses

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don't know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC has been leading the strategic use of surveys for local governments since 1991, when the principals of the company wrote the first edition of what became the classic text on citizen surveying. In *Citizen Surveys: how to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, published by ICMA, not only were the principles for quality survey methods articulated, but both the idea of benchmark data for citizen opinion and the method for gathering benchmark data were pioneered. The argument for benchmarks was called “In Search of Standards.” “What has been missing from a local government's analysis of its survey results is the context that school administrators can supply when they tell parents how an 80 percent score on the social studies test compares to test results from other school systems...”

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services. Conducted with typically no fewer than 400 residents in each jurisdiction, opinions are intended to represent over 30 million Americans. NRC has innovated a method for quantitatively integrating the results of surveys that conducted by NRC with those that others have conducted. The integration methods have been thoroughly described not only in the Citizen Surveys book, but also in *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Scholars who specialize in the analysis of citizen surveys regularly have relied on this work (e.g., Kelly, J. & Swindell, D. (2002). Service quality variation across urban space: First steps towards a model of citizen satisfaction. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24, 271-288.; Van Ryzin, G., Muzzio, D., Immerwahr, S., Gulick, L. & Martinez, E. (2004). Drivers and consequences of citizen satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City, *Public Administration Review*, 64, 331- 341). The method described in those publications is refined regularly and statistically tested on a growing number of citizen surveys in NRC's proprietary databases. NRC's work on calculating national benchmarks for resident opinions about service delivery and quality of life won the Samuel C. May award for research excellence from the Western Governmental Research Association.

The Role of Comparisons

Benchmark comparisons are used for performance measurement. Jurisdictions use the comparative information to help interpret their own citizen survey results, to create or revise community plans, to evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions, to measure local government performance. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. When surveys of service satisfaction turn up “good” citizen evaluations, jurisdictions need to know how others rate their services to understand if “good” is good enough. Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its fire protection rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair. Streets always lose to fire. More important and harder questions need to be asked; for example, how do residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities?

A police department that provides the fastest and most efficient service—one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes and keeps the crime rate low—still has a problem to fix if the residents in the community it intends to protect believe services are not very good compared to ratings given by residents to their own objectively “worse” departments. The benchmark data can help that police department – or any department – to understand how well citizens think it is doing. Without the comparative data, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. NRC recommends that citizen opinion be used in conjunction with other sources of data about budget, personnel and politics to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

Jurisdictions in the benchmark database are distributed geographically across the country and range from small to large in population size. Most commonly, comparisons are made to the entire database. Comparisons may also be made to subsets of jurisdictions (for example, within a given region or population category). Despite the differences in jurisdiction characteristics, all are in the business of providing local government services to residents. Though individual jurisdiction circumstances, resources and practices vary, the objective in every community is to provide services that are so timely, tailored and effective that residents conclude the services are of the highest quality. High ratings in any jurisdiction, like SAT scores in any teen household, bring pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Comparison of Rio Rancho to the Benchmark Database

The City of Rio Rancho had comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Rio Rancho Survey was included in NRC’s database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons are available, Rio Rancho results are noted as being “above” the benchmark, “below” the benchmark or “similar to” the benchmark. This evaluation of “above,” “below” or “similar to” comes from a statistical comparison of Rio Rancho's rating to the benchmark (the rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked).