



The National Citizen Survey™

CITY OF RIO RANCHO, NM 2008

Report of Open-ended Questions

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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 survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and 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.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Rio Rancho staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Rio Rancho staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

ABOUT CLOSED-ENDED AND OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Questions can either be asked in a closed-ended or open-ended manner. A closed-ended question is one where a set of response options is listed on the survey. Those taking the survey respond to each option listed. Open-ended questions have no answer choices from which respondents select their response. Instead, respondents must “create” their own answers and state them in their own words. The verbatim responses are categorized by topic area using codes. An "other" category is used for responses falling outside the coded categories. In general, a code is assigned when at least 5-10% of responses will fit the code.

Advantages of an open-ended question include:

- Responses are not prompted, allowing respondents to provide answers that are not anticipated or well known.
- This type of question tends to capture response options that come to mind most quickly.
- The final result can be richer, since verbatim responses are included in an appendix, giving you and others a chance to “hear” the voice of respondents in their own words.
- There is a smaller risk of missing important dimensions.

VERBATIMS

Respondents were asked to record their opinions about Rio Rancho in the following question:

- What do you think will be the single biggest issue facing the City of Rio Rancho in the next year?

The verbatim responses were categorized by topic area and those topics are reported in the following table with the percent of responses given in each category. Those verbatim responses are grouped by the first topic listed in each comment whenever a respondent mentioned more than a single topic. Verbatim comments that contain more than one topic appear only once in the category of the first topic listed.

Results from the open-ended question is best understood by reviewing the table of frequencies that summarize responses as well as the actual verbatim responses themselves.

What do you think will be the single biggest issue facing the City of Rio Rancho in the next year?	
	Percent of Respondents
Economic, cost of living, tax issues	24%
Infrastructure issues, water, traffic, roads	20%
Growth issues	20%
Retail growth, shopping, restaurants, recreation	11%
Jobs	8%
Crime, gangs, safety issues	4%
Public transportation	3%
Other	7%
Don't know/nothing	3%
Total	100%

VERBATIM RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The following pages contain the respondents' verbatim responses as written on the survey and have not been edited for spelling or grammar. Proper names of individuals and inappropriate language have been edited. Responses have been organized by coded topic areas.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE THE SINGLE BIGGEST ISSUE FACING THE CITY OF RIO RANCHO IN THE NEXT YEAR?

Economic, cost of living, tax issues

- Value of homes, attracting enough new business, managing budgeting with increasing costs.
- Economic job growth. Bringing in new business. Transportation in and out of Rio Rancho.
- Economics. The economy will continue to decline. More jobs are needed that appeal to middle class/low income families.
- Decreased revenue from reduced home development
- Economy
- Economy
- Revenue stream - gross receipts not able to support city's expenses. It is time to change NM revenue sharing - property taxes collected to be distributed per capita. Cities like RR, Aztec, Mesilla, etc should combine forces to make changes to tax codes.
- The economy & need more jobs here in city, & less taxes.
- Lack of affordable housing such as apartments.
- Taxes
- Downpass of the overall economy of the country will greatly affect progress of the city.
- Inflation
- Property foreclosures
- Filling houses
- Quality service by administrative personnel growth of "new" downtown economic & employment issues
- Our failing economy as a country
- Gas prices, cost of living, no pay raises to accomodate these higher prices. People cant survive if prices keep going up but dont receive raises from employment to accomodate the inflation. It puts us all in debt!
- Increase in cost of living
- Stop taxing so much
- I think the biggest issue is taking in more gross receipts tax to improve this growing city.
- Trying to pass levies & increasing property & state taxes to pay for city improvements. Too much waste, abuse & corruption in city government.
- Gas prices and business for employment
- I believe the single biggest issue facing the city in the next year will be the economy; for example, loss of jobs/lack of jobs, loss of homes/too many homes being built with no one moving into them.
- Strong government leadership with focus on economic development.
- National economy - we're in a recession & gas prices are both taking ability to pay bills, mortgage etc. For a lot of people. Don't raise property taxes. When the economy picks up we need to limit building because of water & quality of life.

- Energizing new businesses and maintaining a common sense budget
- Property tax is far to high & at the worst possible time. Housing values are down, retail is weak in R.R. and yet your taxes are well above where they should be!
- Overtaxation - too much pressure on citizens to pay for all the gov't wants to do.
- The reduction of real estate sales, both land sales and residential sales.
- Economic impact on city budget notes: waste management is not doing a very good job with our recycling needs - 1. They need to collect our glass 2. We need bigger recycle cans to encourage more recycling. This is the city of vision - let's lead the way and make our collective tomorrow better!!
- The economy and where it will be and how it is going to affect us.
- Cost of housing vs. cost of food/fuel, etc...
- Economy. Poor residential street maintenance
- Striking a balance between taxation & services provided. Increased taxes and/or "special levys" will negatively impact Rio Rancho's growth & prosperity.
- Not to raise house personal property taxes!
- Money
- Tax revenues from declining real estate values
- Economy
- Decrease in housing values or road paving
- Increasing the gross receipts tax income.
- Compensating locally for a worsening national economy.
- Income from sales receipts -stability in city hall -responsive police department
- Economic development
- Ability to maintain public services at affordable prices for seniors & families with children
- Budget & corrupt officials!
- Increased revenue requirements of citizens of R.R. i.e. higher taxes.
- Avoiding increasing (again) the gross receipts tax. Making the Star Center more viable (widening the roads that service to 4 lanes would help). Providing more retail services to northern meadows (a grocery store would real help.)
- The housing market
- Business expansion - economic growth (there seems to be plans, but changes aren't happening fast enough.)
- Budget shortfall due to economy & ongoing payout to former city personnel
- Cost of living
- Spending too much time, money, tax dollars moving city center in a down economy.
- The housing market. The property tax for our home is \$3,700.00 a year. Considering we live on the edge of no where - I don't know why it's so high. Many families were made shady lending deals and will likely have to leave their homes. Our mortgage has gone up over \$300.00 a month due to taxes.
- Economy
- Gas prices & new homes the cost is to high
- Anything to do with tax increases.
- The price of energy
- (1) Economic development and growth (2) water to support growth

Infrastructure Issues, water, traffic, roads

- Water availability, quality of land for houses to be built upon.
- The water issues to ensure we have adequate water - long pre active interest for the youth - to keep gangs away!
- Fixing the roads & infrastructure before we build houses, houses & more houses. We need a lot of work on what we already have & we must address our water situation, we cannot keep building like we have been
- Completion of roads to support growing community the City of Rio Rancho gaining enough revenue from new business to provide excellent service to the public without raising taxes + being able to have better notification to the public + less closed door meetings + open door policies. Gaining quality gov't. Leaders who are not corrupt or dishonest.
- More roads and road improvements rework the water company's billing
- City planning/road improvement/restrict home bldg. Permits/better labor quality/bldg. Inspection
- Developing the infrastructure, especially roads, to support the growth in Rio Rancho. The city has a plan, when do we start using it?
- Too many houses being built on dirt roads without proper drainage.
- Timely egress to I-25/I-40 & Alb.
- Road improvement & flood prevention. Developing infra-structure. Response of city to citizens who are not loudly voicing opinions.
- Low energy use buildings, water.
- Need better access to I25 and residential road repair.
- Traffic flow on 528
- Traffic - synchronize the damn lights on 528!
- Traffic
- Water & conservation - street repairs sidewalks - shopping opportunities "there are more cracks in the streets than in the sidewalks
- Road work - clean up yards
- Water to supply massive growth in housing, etc.
- (1) Water (2) overcrowded schools (3) gangs
- More streets (ave)
- Rain & snow - the arroyos running in many home areas. Taking a long time for road repairs.
- Too many people & cars - not enough roads. Need more bridges - at least 2 or 3.
- Flooding streets, flood control, traffic flow, paving roads.
- Must improve the upkeep of older sections of RR and improvement and enforcement of city codes! Lack of responses in this area is a negative to the city by residents & visitors.
- Traffic control
- Having to fight the traffic on 528, we need more roads that head east, a road right through corralas, aeuly one or two through the village
- Infrastructure - roads
- Lack of infrastructure - end developer heaven new developments should have roads, drainage, water & sewer - so should old areas
- Traffic between Rio Rancho & Albuquerque
- Infrastructure (shopping, roads, utilities, water). Enchanted hills area is in dire need of eating establishments. Money going to Bernalillo!
- Gas, roads/commutes/traffic.
- The traffic the way people drive
- Infrastructure streets water supply & pertinent info.

- 1. Roads and limiting the extreme impact that subdivision developers have on planning and development 3 city employees should respond to resident emails
- Widening road on Unser between Cherry and King.
- Traffic caused by not enough arterial roads.
- Proper water drainage and running out of water
- Traffic - unfortunately, because of the roads and how the planning and maintenance has not coincided with the uncontrolled building growth in the city.
- Water & pollution
- Rio Rancho needs to pave the assessment districts in Unit 17 so we prevent a repeat of the flooding - everytime it rains the city is a safety hazard
- Maintaining the current conditions, road paving, police enforcement (none)
- Traffic
- The inability of the water supply to keep up with the out of control growth.
- Water is settles in our area. Street repair is done half a*@\$ed.
- Rapidly increasing population with no new infrastructure added and an already run-down existing infrastructure.
- Traffic & roads
- Traffic in NW areas.
- I think water should be a big issue.
- Getting dirt roads paved, erosion problems
- Running out of water!
- Traffic
- Traffic
- Roads, lack of businesses in the city
- Underground pipes need to be replaced -
- Infrastructure
- Water, utilities
- (1) Traffic (overcrowding on 528) (2) lack of commercial business
- Long term - get a secondary water source
- Traffic, continuing education, public transportation to Albu.
- No sidewalks, people don't want to live here.
- Flood control & improvement of roads local bus service
- Protection & development of water reserves for all citizens not just for citizens in developed areas. I live off Del Carmen & I am always told that because it is undeveloped I am totally responsible for making sure water safety.
- Traffic flow on NM528 and traffic flow to get across the river to I-25. All this growth & no plans for major highways or other ways to get around Rio Rancho & to & from Albuquerque

Growth issues

- Keeping up with the growth in population.
- Growth spurt law enforcement for increasing population jobs
- The overcrowding in the public schools due to the increase in new housing construction.
- Population growth and lack of restaurants/shops
- Too much growth
- Growth & public safety
- Another way into Rio Rancho and not enough hotels or resorts to handle all the growth.
- Population growth - too fast

- Big time city developing w/out qualified employees to run it. We moved from out of state in May 2007. Moved to Rio Rancho b/c housing was affordable. We are currently exploring options to relocate to Abq no matter the cost. This city doesn't offer much to young adults except excessive police harrassment which is wasteful tax dollars.
- There doesn't seem to be a thoughtful, reasonable, real visionary plan for Rio Rancho's growth. This is due, in part, because the city council lacks educated leadership, there is no concern for standards of decency in the city planning department, and the city has a strong bias toward developers with no regard for citizen's concerns and no regard for the increasing lack of water to support development.
- Lack of progress in development of civic center areas, lack of progress in fixing roads
- How to recover from all this growth for growth's sake.
- (1) population growth. (2) need more businesses here to accommodate the residents. Not many choices. Have to go to Albuquerque.
- Growth/traffic/school pop. Increasing
- City growth in both families moving in & businesses
- Development planning
- School overcrowding further deterioration of older sections of R.R. not enough fire protection - new areas!
- City Hall's priorities, focus needs to be on improving the quality of existing, older areas, not on new residential development. R.R. is inundated with empty, abandoned mc mansions.
- Growth - schools
- Traffic - they are building way way to many new homes & the roads out of Rio Rancho can not keep up. Thats why I moving out of this crappy town!!
- Increased growth, traffic & water treatment.
- Too much growth of housing, not enough schools or roads to support this growth.
- Population growth = impact on public schools
- Too many housing developements, roads, schools, jobs etc. Need to catch up. Need public transportation system.
- Growing population - our water resources
- Lack of growth from homesales down
- Development of downtown
- The population in Rio Rancho getting to big. By building more house that means we are inviting more people to come into this community & that is not a good thing. Then people wonder why we don't have anymore water.
- Availability of services and retail versus population growth. We need quality dining and retail establishments in Rio Rancho.
- Growth - spread out too far too fast!
- Too rapid growth, and as always - taxes.
- If population growth reaches estimates, traffic will be a nightmare. Same for water availability etc.
- Population growth, traffic
- Building CNM, finishing downtown area
- Trying to develop the area around the city center with our poor economy and the mess with the housing market.
- Growth & economy
- Over-development
- There is no "single" issue. We need roads to accommodate the growing population and traffic. We need the retail - I mostly shop in Albuquerque - even farmer's markets, Trader Joes. We

need a better public transportation system - currently we have practically 0. We are the 2nd largest city, but have no bus system.

- Controlled growth and infrastructure development in new growth areas.
- Trying to grow at a knowledgeable and reasonable rate. Keeping up with the public demands such as new park, roads, new businesses, facilities.
- Over growth
- Population and traffic. Not enough routes into city of Abq. Must go north or south
- Rapid growth. Too many homes not enough retail.
- Over population, lack of infrastructure to support it
- Too rapid increase in population, out growing city's ability to keep up with education, roads, police and fire support, etc.
- Dealing with growth (roads, water needs, traffic)
- Too much housing - over building, not enough roads to support ignoring older areas
- Growth versus services available & money for projects needed.
- Schools & city growth.
- Too much growth too soon!
- Growing too fast.
- Growth & infrastructure issues
- Population increase & traffic
- Keeping up with the growth of the city - roads, schools, employment opportunities, housing (affordable single family dwellings on lots bigger than a postage stamp!).
- Increase with building.
- Control growth & national planning (city hall too far from current population) road construction & repair - RR is the poster child of bad roads
- Due to exponential overgrowth in housing development, RR public schools is seeing a dramatic increase in overcrowding, also the city's inability to maintain adequate infrastructure in existing road maintenance, sidewalk construction, intersection street lighting etc.....
- Planned growth
- Growth, housing markets, affordability of commute
- Too many houses - not enough schools and childcare options. Stop building residential until city services and infrastructure can support the population.
- Building way too many houses that cost too much to buy - not enough people to buy them - not enough jobs that pay enough to buy one
- Growth - we need more businesses & higher paying jobs
- Growth/economic situation of Americans
- School & growth too fast

Retail growth, shopping, restaurants, recreation

- Retail development of new town center. Bus service with the rest of town & Abq.
- As we have seen in the past few years - "the city of vision" is not a city of vision - too much of our taxes go to Bernalillo County - because of losing the building of stores, shops, & restaurants.
- Getting more retail so we don't have to use Albuquerque as much - which would help revenue for the city without raising taxes transportation so cars don't have to be our only means of moving around city
- Not enough commercial buildings/also not fast enough.
- Downtown. Get on with it. More commercial biz.

- More avenues for entertainment in Rio Rancho would help keep tax dollars in Rio Rancho. Movie theater, roller skating rink, parks, miniature golf, etc...this would eliminate the need for property or sales tax increases.
- Retail shopping & restaurants
- We need more retail and other businesses to move into RR.
- Attracting business to build & diversify the tax base.
- Development of the town center making transportation available to the rail runner having at least 4 bus runs per day so citizens can get to say the mall - or to the rail runner
- Local sources of shopping schools & jobs and amenities to match the growth in population
- Budget development of new city center
- Getting businesses to come to the city. We need the tax revenue and to have such a variety of options for shopping that we don't have to drive into Abq.
- Not enough shopping, jobs or restaurants too much traffic
- Too many people moving in - fast growth - without enough restaurants & retail stores, but most importantly the traffic is horrible already
- Rio Rancho is a "bedroom community". We seriously need to encourage commercial & retail growth to keep tax money & jobs in our growing community. Most of the residents drive to Abq for shopping & entertainment *offer tax breaks to businesses relocating here. *we must obtain another post office!
- I live in Northern Meadows and must traveled (2 trips weekly) 40 miles plus just to buy groceries - add to the rising cost of food an fuel costs additional 100 to 150 a month. We need stores now.
- Attracting new & diverse businesses to compliment new house development
- (1) Commercial development...RR needs more large businesses. (2) Corrupt city leaders...i.e. the mayor & councilors
- Need to bring in more retail to support the growth of Rio Rancho. Need to have more schools. Need sidewalks for Rio Rancho.
- Bring in new businesses
- New development of businesses
- The growth of the downtown area
- Attracting enough retail businesses to keep pace with population growth, especially in newly developed residential areas, and a good public transit system to ensure we can get to these businesses.
- Need more schools, shopping mall, need Wal-Mart, Target in NE Rio Rancho
- Not enough businesses to support the growing population gas stations grocery stores, businesses in general, employment opportunities
- Development - places like Northern Meadows do not have gas or grocery services nearby. Transportation also - no public transportation w/in Rio Rancho
- More businesses to keep our taxes here.
- More retail & family restaurants alternate routes re 528
- Building up new town center & surrounding area.
- There is little to no shopping in the city. Bring in a health food store. I take my money to east Abq because of the great health food stores they offer.
- Developing the "new" downtown area and the surrounding areas to bring more people to that "side" of town.
- Need for commercial business development
- Developing a commercial tax base rather than a homeowner tax base. Also having a city council that responds to the people.
- Commercial growth.

Jobs

- Closing or job reduction of Intel
- Employment
- Jobs for people that reside on this city
- I think the single biggest issue will be bringing jobs - good paying jobs to the city.
- Job
- Making money
- Jobs in the community economic structure.
- Jobs, street repairs, more lights in neighborhoods
- Develop. An economy not based on housing starts! Jobs..jobs..jobs. I would like to have a job in the city I live in.
- Employment opportunities, over crowded schools, and the ability to sustain independently owned businesses.
- Bringing good jobs and more businesses to Rio Rancho
- More jobs supporting business owners more. Need more shopping areas
- Jobs to support the growth here crimes - as the city grows
- Not losing employment industries and slowing the housing developers.
- Increase available jobs, thereby increasing population.
- Not enough jobs, too many people have to spent time & money to travile to Abq, plus all the housing developments are destroying the land! What is happening to the “land of enchantment”?
- Intel rehiring otherwise people will have to move away.
- Employment opportunities
- Creating high quality jobs.
- Employment opportunities for local citizens
- Increase in population compared to number of jobs available
- No good job

Crime, gangs, safety issues

- Controlling encroaching crime in the neighborhoods
- Security/crime
- Crime
- Crime bad plumbing put in the older home. So hopefully they make better homes.
- Crime
- Crime/drug activity/gangs
- The police dept needs help with there costumer service!
- Stop letting D.P.S. use scare tactics to get more & more money while other services are really lacking, the police need to patrol the neighborhoods, as well as the parking lots at gas stations, no police drive the dirt roads.
- Gangs - destruction of property crime
- Gangs
- The need for more police officers - fire personnel - because of all the growth.
- Violence/crime prevention
- Crime

- Violent crime traffic

Public transportation

- Transportation + job opportunities honesty of city employees in reference to development.
- I will like for you guys to put more buses to go every where in Rio Rancho not just to Wal-Mart to Abq. More thanks.
- Transportation: connections with railrunner.
- Public transportation within RR and to/from Abq
- Providing more public transportation have to walk way to far to get to bus stop to get to Abq.
- Public transportation, water consumption, buildings that is unaffordable for commercial rentals.
- Public transportation. We need it.
- Mass transit.
- No public transportation/taxi, too many houses - not enough businesses which means no local jobs
- Public transportation - traffic congestion

Other

- The presidential election, gas prices.
- Choice of appointed city officials i.e.: city manager
- People not taken the time to care for their property and the value of property dropping because of up keep. Is poor.
- Becoming a city with a distinct identity. We are still considered a bedroom community of Albuquerque. What is the vision of the "city of vision" I don't have a clue. People come to live here primarily because it's cheaper
- Get TV news to feature something other than crime!! Talk about local officials & community programs - talk slower when giving contact information or use repeat close captions re BBC news
- Continuity in our government!
- Having a city manager
- The lack of summer & school care for children. It's a shame that parents have to camp out to get their kids into a decent program. Enforcing weed control in residential areas.
- City Hall
- Crossing the Rio Grande.
- Sad 7
- Rejection by citizens of city center move to middle of desert, away from town.
- Repair of existing grammar schools. Hiring good teachers! Realization that the old city hall could have been kept - repaired utilizing buildings already built - miles & miles of huge condo's and homes seen to be copying Los Angeles strung out suburbs. Most are for old people - new families are in the old part of Rio Rancho.
- We need a good Christian school. We drive to Alb for school.
- Discontent among elected officials
- Getting off the back side and getting the city moving again and finding out why the city has to pay employer that designing before the contract is up?
- There are too many, there is no "single biggest issue." Rio Rancho needs to improve a great many things and is only better to live in than Albq. because it is smaller. 1. Animal control "officers" have refused to come to the aid of dogs injured/run over in the main intersections of Rio Rancho (528/southern most recent) on numerous occasions when I called them for help

because it has been at night/evening and they are closed, so they refuse to leave their homes while “on call” and do their jobs! Rio Rancho animal control does not have the welfare of animals - mostly injured animals - as a concern at all.

- Incompetent city officials poor mgm of public fund poor mgm of public schools & school buses
- Graft - nepotism -
- Schools
- Getting Santa Anna Star to operate in the black.
- 1. Getting quality candidates to fill vacant positions 2. Too much same old tactics - bring in new blood. 3. Involve community involvement, welcome new ideas.
- Over population of abandoned houses.
- Housing! Too many formally owner-occupied houses turning to rentals. House prices falling. People failing to maintain their houses adequately.
- City council giving golden parachutes to officials elected officials not listening to people wishes
- Taking care of needs of older part of Rio Rancho. Overspending on infrastructure, etc in the new city area.
-

Don't know

- Been here 3 month
- I personally haven't lived in Rio Rancho long enough, nor have I paid a lot of attention to the politics of the city to know how to answer this question.
- Not sure.
- The lack of [REDACTED]!!!!!!! Please don't let him leave!!! (Shame on you!!!) City council & mayor I'm really scared for this city!
- Don't know
- No ideas
- No idea
- Don't know
- Don't know