

# CITY OF GENEVA

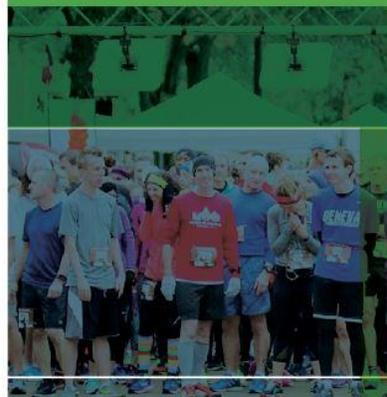
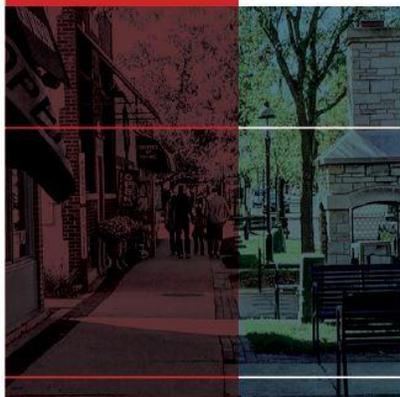
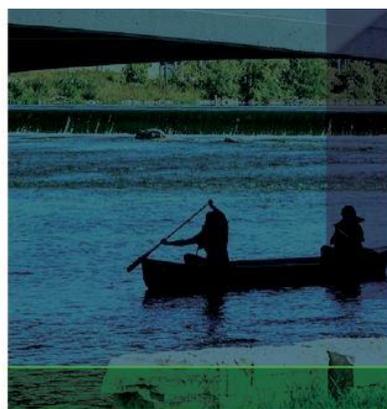
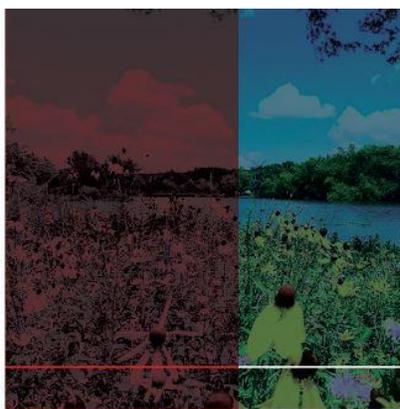
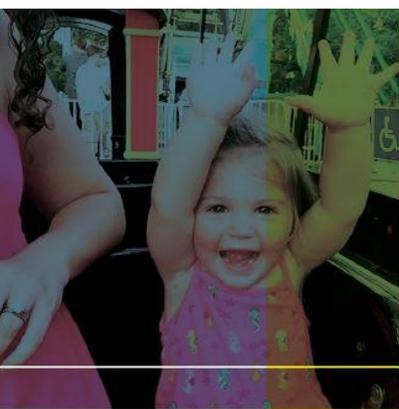
## 2017 KEY THEMES REPORT & ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

November, 2017

STRATEGIC PLAN STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### STRATEGIC PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PREPARED BY:





## A LETTER FROM YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE,

The Geneva Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC) is pleased to share with you our 2017 Key Themes Report & Engagement Summary – a collection of community input gathered to support the City’s strategic planning process. This report is the first step in our new



strategic planning approach. The report identifies broad themes that SPAC will utilize to draft the next Strategic Plan which will have objectives and goals within those visions.

This report is the result of stakeholder feedback and the hard work of SPAC and the City over the last year. It illustrates our core commitments to the City and its residents including:

- **A Commitment To Transparency.** We will ensure stakeholders are informed of, listened to, and involved in the decision making process. Ongoing communication and access to planning documents through all mediums is a priority.
- **A Commitment To Our Community.** We will put our community first. That includes municipal staff, residents, and those who work and play within the City. Engaged partnerships with one another will advance City activities at all levels.
- **A Commitment To Quality.** As we move forward, we will regularly review our Strategic Plan, building upon continuous improvement and accountability to ensure we are meeting the needs of our residents and other stakeholders.

This is a resource document that will guide our next Strategic Plan, but we must now create and share the plan. This is a different process than one we have used in the past, and SPAC is very excited about the opportunity. We hope that you will join us and ensure that Geneva remains a vibrant, safe, and attractive city for its residents and visitors.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is the result of a collaborative effort between City leadership, residents, municipal staff, and other stakeholders of Geneva, Illinois. Thomas P. Miller and Associates, LLC (TPMA) acknowledges the leadership and feedback provided by the City and the hundreds of individuals who shared their time and perspectives during interviews, community meetings, focus groups, and through an online survey. TPMA also would like to thank the Mayor, City Council, and department heads for their participation in the Strategic Planning Workshop. Special recognition goes to the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC) and the City Administrator who guided this process.

### Strategic Plan Advisory Committee:

- Elizabeth Clements, Chair
- Mark Brault, Vice-Chair
- Jennifer Main, Treasurer
- Barb Merrill, Secretary
- Brendan Cassin
- Brian Beveridge
- Alexa Schwab
- Daniel Janis
- Davis Dickinson, Student Representative

### City Administrator:

- Stephanie Dawkins



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Letter From SPAC .....	1
Acknowledgements .....	2
Executive Summary .....	4
Introduction .....	5
<b>Our Key Themes</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Economic Vitality.....	8
Strong Governance .....	9
Environmental Stewardship .....	10
Excellent Municipal Services .....	11
Quality of Life.....	12
<b>Engagement to Date</b> .....	<b>12</b>
One-on-One Interviews.....	13
Community Meetings.....	15
Online Survey .....	20
Strategic Planning Workshop .....	24
Focus Groups.....	27
<b>Future Engagement Recommendations</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Appendix .....	38
Community Survey Results .....	38



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the past twenty years, the City of Geneva has utilized a community-based strategic planning process. This process is guided by a citizen advisory committee – the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC). The Strategic Plan has been updated three times since its inception in 1997, and in 2016, City Council determined it was again time to update the Strategic Plan. Currently, SPAC is working on that update through a new approach which begins with stakeholder input. This input will be utilized to create, rather than vet as traditionally done, the plan’s visions and goals.

The City of Geneva and SPAC engaged Thomas P. Miller and Associates (TPMA) in 2017 to facilitate the collection of this broad stakeholder input. Through a two-month process TPMA engaged with 101 stakeholders through one-on-one interviews, community meetings, focus groups, and a strategic planning workshop. TPMA also obtained 427 responses to an online survey.

All input was provided to SPAC and is synthesized in this Key Themes Report & Engagement Summary. Five broad themes emerged which capture stakeholder feedback. These are:

- **Economic Vitality** – *Stimulating Strong and Competitive Opportunities*
- **Strong Governance** – *Setting Vision and Valuing Collaboration*
- **Environmental Stewardship** – *Preserving the Natural Environment*
- **Excellent Municipal Services** – *Superior Delivery and Commitment*
- **Quality of Life** – *Fostering a Resilient, Safe, Inclusive, and Vibrant City*

This report is the first step in creating Geneva’s next Strategic Plan. It serves as a resource document to guide the development of actionable goals and strategies that come from the stakeholders who live, work, and play in our City. The goal of this process is to outline a path forward of continued and future success.



## INTRODUCTION

### About the City of Geneva's Strategic Planning Process

In 1996, the City's Mayor and Aldermen initiated a community-based strategic planning process. This was done to engage Geneva's residents and the business community in planning for the City's future. An action plan was developed, and the committees prioritized their recommendations for implementation. The Geneva City Council adopted the plan in June 1997. In 1999, the City created the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC). In 2006, the City determined that an update of the Strategic Plan was necessary and conducted a process whereby public meetings were held, key person interviews were held, and a random sample community survey was conducted. A consulting firm worked closely with the City Council and staff to produce and adopt the City's Strategic Plan for 2007. The plan was again updated through a public process in 2014. Each year, the City Council and management staff use the Strategic Plan in a workshop setting to prioritize identified goals and objectives which are then used in the commencement and development of the City's annual budget. In 2015 and 2016, SPAC met to revise and consolidate the goals before the Chairman presented the updated Strategic Plan to the City Council. At the Strategic Planning Workshop in November, 2016, the City Council determined it was once again time to update the Strategic Plan. Currently, SPAC is working on that update.

### About the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

The Strategic Plan Advisory Committee (SPAC) is comprised of nine members appointed at large by the Mayor, with the advice and consent of the City Council. SPAC holds open meetings the third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers Conference Room, 109 James St. The purpose and intent of the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee is to preserve the life of the Strategic Plan document by prioritizing strategic communal goals, conveying them to City staff and elected officials, and where possible, assisting in their implementation. SPAC has three subcommittees including, International Cultural Exchange Committee, Student Government Program, and the Natural Resources Committee.



## The Stakeholder Engagement Process

The City of Geneva engaged Thomas P. Miller and Associates in 2017 to facilitate the collection of stakeholder input that will help the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee transition the City from its previous Strategic Plan. TPMA engaged with 101 stakeholders through one-on-one interviews, community meetings, focus groups, and a strategic planning workshop. TPMA also obtained 427 responses to an online survey. This was accomplished through a three-phase engagement process that included:

## Stakeholder Engagement Process



**Phase 1 - Initial Engagement:** Phase 1 of the stakeholder engagement process commenced in mid-September with a teleconference launch meeting between TPMA and SPAC. From mid-to-late October, TPMA conducted seven one-on-one teleconference interviews and engaged with 52 members of the City community through two in-person community meetings. During the same timeframe, 427 individuals participated in an online survey.



**Phase 2 - Strategic Planning Workshop:** Building from the feedback collected in Phase 1, TPMA facilitated a Strategic Planning Workshop with the Mayor, City Council, and Department Heads on November 3, 2017. This session included small group discussions that centered on vision and success for the strategic planning process, identifying opportunities for growth, and discussing feedback collected to date.



**Phase 3 - Deeper Dive and Synthesis:** Drawing from the data collected in Phases 1 and 2, TPMA engaged 28 stakeholders through four in-person focus groups in early November. Following the focus group sessions, TPMA conducted a teleconference strategy meeting with SPAC to discuss feedback collected to date and outline a structure for the engagement report. Taking all feedback into consideration five key themes were identified and included in the final report, along with breakdowns from each engagement tactic, as well as recommendations for future engagement activities.



## OUR KEY THEMES

This section summarizes five key themes from the stakeholder engagement process that will be critical to consider as part of the development of Geneva’s next Strategic Plan. Each theme builds off of one or more of the others. Goals and strategies related to these themes should be developed holistically and executed proactively.



### ○ **Economic Vitality**

- Evaluating Policies and Tools
- Exploring Development
- Reviewing and Incorporating Best Practices



### ○ **Strong Governance**

- Setting and Driving Vision
- Elevating Goals and Strategies Toward Vision
- Enhancing Internal and External Communication
- Perpetuating Propriety and Civility



### ○ **Environmental Stewardship**

- Reviewing Changes in Best Practices
- Identifying Community Leadership Opportunities
- Evaluating New Policies



### ○ **Excellent Municipal Services**

- Reviewing and Updating Ordinances
- Clearly Communicating Priorities to Staff
- Ensuring Employee Satisfaction



### ○ **Quality of Life**

- Enhancing Civic Engagement
- Assessing and Maintaining Community Vitality
- Embracing Diversity

Each key theme is presented with a description and a rationale for why it was chosen. Additionally, some specific input topics that relate to each theme are provided as examples. These topics are divided between strengths – core foundations Geneva can build from and leverage – and opportunities – tangible areas the City can explore for continued and future success.



## Economic Vitality

### Stimulating Strong and Competitive Opportunities

#### Description

Economic vitality is key to driving business development, tax revenue, and a healthy cultural scene. Building a strong economy includes creating jobs, enhancing community attractiveness, stimulating entrepreneurship, and fostering opportunity. This should be done through proactively:

- Evaluating policies and tools,
- Exploring development, and
- Reviewing and incorporating best practices.

#### Rationale

Development or business climate was addressed in each of the engagement activities conducted through this process. Stakeholders feel strongly that the business climate in Geneva is mostly positive. However, almost all feel that there is room for continued growth. “Good” and “analytical” development approaches are cited, with tangible concerns centered on Randall Road and the East Side Corridor. City image is continuously cited as an area for improvement, with special notice paid to increasing tourism. Also identified is the need to grow and maintain a residential base strong enough to support future development and commercial activity.

Below are examples of relevant strengths and opportunities identified by stakeholders during this process:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Thriving Commercial Corridor and Strong Commercial Base</li> <li>○ Positive Business Climate</li> <li>○ Active Chamber</li> <li>○ Quality Shopping and Restaurants</li> <li>○ Locally-Owned Businesses</li> <li>○ Fox River</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East Side Development</li> <li>○ “Good” Development</li> <li>○ More Industrial Development</li> <li>○ Randall Road Development</li> <li>○ Larger Commercial Development</li> <li>○ Encouraging Tourism</li> <li>○ Developing Promotional Materials</li> <li>○ Diversification</li> <li>○ “Analytically-Led” Development</li> <li>○ Creating a River District</li> </ul>



## Strong Governance

### Setting Vision and Valuing Collaboration

#### Description

City governance encompasses the Mayor, City Council, City Administrator, and Department Heads. Strong governance which values collaboration is essential to developing and executing a vision for continued success. This should include proactively:

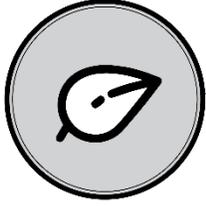
- Setting and driving vision,
- Elevating goals and strategies toward vision,
- Enhancing internal and external communication, and
- Perpetuating propriety and civility.

#### Rationale

A lack of vision stemming particularly from City Council, as well as mixed views on City government’s communication and transparency arose in almost every engagement activity. Stakeholders feel strongly that political will should remain consistent with strategic goals and that there is a need for consensus among Council and municipal staff. The overall view of the political environment within the City is not positive. Lack of vision and reactionary decisions are cited continuously as a concern. Also cited is a strong community desire for increased advocacy and intergovernmental cooperation particularly related to development activities in border areas and on County property. Further, stakeholders cite mixed perceptions of how well the City maintains transparency and note that there is always room for improvement in communication.

Below are examples of relevant strengths and opportunities identified by stakeholders during this process:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Good Public Servants</li> <li>○ Engaged Community</li> <li>○ Strong Planning Process</li> <li>○ Transparency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Streamlining Regulations</li> <li>○ Intergovernmental Cooperation</li> <li>○ Improving Communications</li> <li>○ Advocating Across Communities</li> <li>○ Maintaining Political Will</li> <li>○ Addressing Reputational Pull/Push</li> </ul>



## Environmental Stewardship

### Preserving the Natural Environment

#### *Description*

Progressing in an environmentally sound manner will benefit future generations. We are all stewards of our environment, and maintaining natural assets can play a large role in community identity. This should include proactively:

- Reviewing changes in best practices,
- Identifying community leadership opportunities, and
- Evaluating new policies.

#### *Rationale*

Environmental stewardship arose prevalently in the community meetings, but also as a topic of opportunity in the Strategic Planning Workshop. Stakeholders feel strongly that Geneva's environmental assets and attractions play a heavy role in community identity and should be maintained. Residents are particularly proud of the City's drinking water quality and tree canopy. Community meeting participants cite strong needs for intentional planning around protecting the environment, be it through sustainability planning or reviewing and expanding existing ordinances. In addition, alternative energy sourcing both for public and private consumption is a large topic of concern.

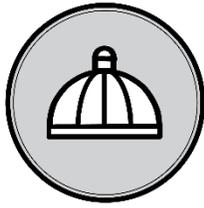
Below are examples of relevant strengths and opportunities identified by stakeholders during this process:

#### *Strengths*

- Natural Resources
- Greenspace
- Quality Drinking Water
- Rural Setting
- Tree Canopy

#### *Opportunities*

- Review Tree Ordinance
- Alternative Energy Sourcing
- Sustainability Planning
- Maintaining Greenspace Ratio
- Maintaining Water Quality
- Environmentally-Led Policy Decisions



## Excellent Municipal Services Superior Delivery and Commitment

### Description

A City thrives when its aligned and committed workforce delivers quality public services. Facilitating employee satisfaction and adapting to address specific and changing needs are critical. This should be done through proactively:

- Reviewing and updating ordinances,
- Clearly communicating priorities to staff, and
- Addressing employee satisfaction.

### Rationale

Stakeholders take great pride in the services provided by the City. Municipal services were cited as a strength, especially in the community meetings and focus groups. Additionally, respondents to the broader community survey were extremely positive when asked to rate or value municipal service provision and access. A broad concern cited by stakeholders was employee engagement. Employees feel undervalued and consistently asked to do more with less. They take great pride in their work and look for City Council in particular to better appreciate what employees do on a daily basis. In addition, stakeholders cite major concerns relative to the City's financial planning. Stakeholders feel that with more intentional capital planning, municipal services can be greatly improved. Further, stakeholders identified multiple opportunities and a desire to be more innovative and technologically adept in service provision should resources be available.

Below are examples of relevant strengths and opportunities identified by stakeholders during this process:

#### Strengths

- Safe and Clean
- Quality Public Services at a Reasonable Cost
- Committed Municipal Staff

#### Opportunities

- Employee Satisfaction
- Improve Signage
- Address Financial Planning
- Install Wayfinding
- Better Snow Removal
- Improving Downtown Traffic Flow
- Reviewing Zoning Practices
- Garbage Pickup Frequency
- Pedestrian Safety



## Quality of Life Fostering a Resilient, Safe, Inclusive, and Vibrant City

### Description

People who live, work, and play in Geneva want access to services and opportunities to participate in their community. It is critical to foster a strong sense of belonging and engagement with a diverse population. This should include proactively:

- Enhancing civic engagement,
- Assessing and maintaining community vitality, and
- Embracing diversity.

### Rationale

Quality of life factors came up as a priority in each of the engagement activities conducted. Overall, there is a great sense of community, and people are seen as a major strength for the City. Stakeholders stress that there are good amenities and that the City is viewed as beautiful, with a downtown that attracts visitors and tourists, especially during the holidays or for festivals. Ideas to improve bicycle and pedestrian friendliness is the most prevalent topic cited by stakeholders in this area, particularly among the City’s young adults. In addition, stakeholders cite a strong desire to increase diversity and multi-cultural amenities in the City. Further noted was a cultural resistance to change, be it development-based or other. Stakeholders feel a strong need to blend the mix of progressive and quaint into community identity to see future success.

Below are examples of relevant strengths and opportunities identified by stakeholders during this process:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pedestrian and Bike-Friendly</li> <li>○ Proximity to Chicago</li> <li>○ Downtown Destination</li> <li>○ History and Architecture</li> <li>○ Family-Friendly</li> <li>○ Festivals and Events</li> <li>○ Minor League Sports</li> <li>○ Sense of Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve Bike Paths and Walkability</li> <li>○ Affordable Housing</li> <li>○ Senior Housing</li> <li>○ Promoting Public Art</li> <li>○ Riverfront Access</li> <li>○ Diversity Outreach</li> <li>○ More Community Gatherings</li> <li>○ More Engagement Opportunities</li> <li>○ More Weekday Entertainment</li> <li>○ Maintain Historic Charm</li> <li>○ Facilitate Volunteerism and Philanthropy</li> </ul>



## ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

The key themes above represent the input collected throughout the engagement process. To gather this information, TPMA utilized five different stakeholder engagement tactics:

- One-on-One Interviews,
- Community Meetings,
- An Online Survey,
- A Strategic Planning Workshop, and
- Focus Groups.

In total, 94 stakeholders were engaged in-person and 434 stakeholders were engaged by either teleconference call or online survey. Throughout the process, TPMA also conducted multiple calls with the SPAC Executive Committee to guide day-to-day activities, as well as two teleconference sessions with the full SPAC Committee to both launch the project and to review collected feedback.

The sections below present a summary of collected feedback from each of the five tactics listed above. The complete online survey results are also presented as an Appendix.

### One-on-One Interviews

Between October 20 - 30, TPMA conducted thirty-minute, one-on-one teleconference interviews with seven key stakeholders identified by the City of Geneva and SPAC. These interviews aimed to gather high-level information to prepare TPMA facilitators when conducting the community meetings, as well as later tactics. The format of the interviews followed a basic layout for an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Stakeholders interviewed included:

- Bob Mann
- Cynthia Albright
- Dave Rogers
- Jay Womack
- Joe Stanton
- Mary Stith
- Mayor Burns

#### ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

**Location:** Teleconference

**Date:** October, 2017

**Participants:** 7

**Method:** Questions followed a general SWOT framework. The teleconference calls lasted roughly 30 minutes each.

The results of those interviews are presented in the aggregate in the following pages.



### *Strengths*

The strengths of Geneva include its location, both in proximity to Chicago as well as more rural settings. Fox River also runs through the City and can be seen as an asset. There are good parks and the City is viewed as beautiful, with a downtown that attracts visitors and tourists, especially during the holidays or festivals. The City has good schools and access to transportation. There is a thriving commercial corridor with a strong commercial base. The City is not struggling financially, has weathered the Recession well, and does a good job of providing good services at a reasonable cost. Overall, there is also a great sense of community, and the people are seen as a major strength/asset. There are good public servants in elected positions, and many citizens volunteer or otherwise offer time and services to the community. The citizens are generally viewed as hardworking and law-abiding.

### *Weaknesses*

On the other hand, weaknesses for Geneva include revenue sourcing and generation. It is believed that the City needs to grow the community in order to grow the tax base, and there is a delicate balance between this growth and the preservation of the “small town” feel or identity for which Geneva is known. Possible strains on revenue sourcing could include the lack of an industrial base or even a reluctance to increase the tax burden of residents, passing new fees for businesses instead. This can make Geneva less business-friendly. The already cumbersome processes for businesses, with little support or guidance from the City, make it more difficult to set-up or run businesses in Geneva than in other areas. A perceived tension has grown between the downtown merchants and the local government, with the two not being able to agree on how best to keep the City up-to-date. The City needs to continue to ensure that strong infrastructure is in place to help businesses thrive, and underdeveloped areas, like the east side, need attention to get up-to-par with the rest of the City. Redevelopment opportunities would need to be supported by the community. The community has opposed past plans for increased density in housing, which could be explained by unappealing building plans, misunderstanding around affordable housing, or outright desire to exclude low- to moderate-income individuals and families from the community. However, affordable housing is seen as a challenge, especially for long-time resident seniors who wish to age within the community. It is also difficult for this particular population (i.e. the elderly), along with others who may have limited or restricted access to technology to find information about the City and its services. This could be perceived as a lack of outreach by the City to inform citizens.

### *Opportunities*

The respondents identified a number of specific areas where the City could improve. In general, the various intergovernmental groups could do a better job of working together on issues, making decisions that will not help one group at the expense of another (TIF district was given as an example). There is always an opportunity to improve communication. This extends as much to informing citizens of services as it does to facilitating more organized conversations around world issues and how they might affect the community. There is an opportunity to enhance relationships with communities to



the east and west through expanded communication, and there is belief that the City should become more pro-active with the legislature in Springfield, advocating for towns and special task forces. There are opportunities to sell or promote the town more, and the Chamber is doing a good job of leading this. The City could work internally to improve signage throughout the town (e.g. if riding along the river, there are few/no signs to direct into town). The City should encourage *good* development, including identifying properties in the downtown area that could be developed. The east side corridor is an area that could use improvement, including more outreach to attract visitors. Other opportunities include additional parking downtown, short-term rental regulation, continued work improving bike paths and other environmental attractions, expansion and increased support of cultural arts, diversifying and offsetting energy use with renewable energy, improving safety around transportation infrastructure (i.e. train station), and making a friendlier and less-subjective path to opening businesses.

### *Threats*

Threats to progress in the City include any unforeseen downturns in the economy, lack of diversity within the community and lack of inclusion in civic participation, fear of population influx and prevailing attitudes of complacency, any conflicts between the City and the Chamber over how to improve the downtown, and stagnation of ideas or lack of new perspectives.

Final thoughts from respondents included an emphasis on updating plans, ensuring cooperation, managing expectations and facilitating conversations, better organization around housing issues responses, involving the businesses/merchants more in solution creation, and being able to make tough decisions that are right for the City, even if impacting residents.

## Community Meetings

TPMA facilitated two community meetings. The first was held on October 24 at 6:00pm at the Geneva Fire Department, and the second was held on October 25 at 10:00am at the Geneva City Hall. Twenty-four stakeholders participated in the first meeting and twenty-eight stakeholders participated in the second.

Outreach and invitation for these sessions was a broad process that included multiple mediums. TPMA created social media content and visuals, as well as a press release and flyers. Working with Kevin Stahr, the City's Communications Coordinator, and members of SPAC, these materials were distributed via the City's social media channels, website, and newsletter, as well as to media and through SPAC member's personal social media platforms and network. In addition, flyers were posted around Geneva and handed out in person at locations such as the train station.

### COMMUNITY MEETINGS

**Locations:** Geneva Fire Department and City Hall

**Date:** October, 2017

**Participants:** 52

**Method:** Facilitation followed a general SOAR framework. Meetings lasted roughly two hours each.



To facilitate the sessions, TPMA used the SOAR – strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results – framework. This framework takes a greater strengths-based approach than SWOT and pushes for creativity and optimism. TPMA facilitators asked participants to brainstorm what they felt were Geneva’s strengths, which were then captured on white boards or easel pads. The group was then asked to brainstorm opportunities for the City, building from the previously identified strengths. Participants were given a break and asked to prioritize strengths and opportunities through voting. After this exercise, TPMA facilitators reviewed voting with the group and began consolidation of overlapping themes. When general consensus was developed, TPMA facilitated a high-level discussion of aspirations and a brainstorming around measuring success relative to these opportunities.

In addition to the discussion, TPMA asked – but did not require – attendees to sign in and provide contact information for further updates and engagement. To capture feedback from any attendees that may not have spoken up, a sheet asking attendees to “Tell us what we missed...” was provided. Not including two SPAC members each that attended the Community Meetings (these SPAC members were not counted as part of the 52 participants), 45 sign-ins were gathered and provided back to SPAC. Additionally, five comment sheets were gathered and provided back.

Based from the input gathered between each meeting, below are the top twelve topics identified and prioritized (by total number of votes) for Geneva’s strengths and opportunities:

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Opportunities</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Downtown Destination</li> <li>○ Natural Resources</li> <li>○ Pedestrian and Bike Friendly</li> <li>○ Schools/Parks/Library</li> <li>○ History and Architecture</li> <li>○ Family-Friendly and Safe</li> <li>○ Quality Drinking Water</li> <li>○ Restaurants</li> <li>○ Transportation and Access to Chicago</li> <li>○ City Services</li> <li>○ Festivals and Events</li> <li>○ Community Engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ East Side Development</li> <li>○ Affordable / Senior Housing</li> <li>○ Sustainability Planning</li> <li>○ Downtown Parking</li> <li>○ Expanding Opportunities in the Arts</li> <li>○ Bike / Pedestrian Friendliness</li> <li>○ Maintaining Historic Charm</li> <li>○ Leveraging Natural Resources</li> <li>○ Industrial Development</li> <li>○ Reducing Speed on Fargo Blvd.</li> <li>○ Redeveloping Randall Road</li> <li>○ Facilitating Volunteerism and Philanthropy</li> </ul>

While some of the topics identified in the strengths category (for example Schools/Parks/Library) do not affect the City budget, they are important to capture from a strengths perspective as elements to build from. However, topics identified under opportunities that are identified as not directly impacting the City budget were removed from inclusion in the list above and are “parked” for this report. “Parked” topics that arose during the opportunities discussion are listed on the following page. Of these, all but Parks and Library Programming, Bridge Maintenance, Expanding the Bus Service, and Dam Safety were all prioritized by voting.



### *“Parked” Topics*

- Mill Race Development
- Master Highway Plan
- Settler’s Hill Development
- Indoor Pool or Community Center
- Island Park Walking Trails
- Parks and Library Programming
- Bridge Maintenance
- Expanding the Bus Service
- Dam Safety

A complete list of strengths and opportunities captured by day and in order of prioritization is provided below and on the following page for reference:

### *Strengths*

<i>Community Meeting 1: 10/24/2017</i>	<i>Community Meeting 2: 10/25/2017</i>
1. Downtown Destination	1. Downtown
2. Natural Resources	2. Fox River
2. History, Architecture, and Historic District	3. City Services
2. Parks/Library/Schools	4. Historic Buildings and Preservation
3. Pedestrian and Bike-Friendly	4. Walking and Bike Paths
4. Family-Friendly and Safe	4. Low Crime
4. Quality Drinking Water	5. Festivals and Events
5. Train and Access to Chicago	5. Restaurants and Entertainment
6. Restaurants	6. Schools
6. Chamber	6. Destination City
6. Engaged Community/Communities	6. Parks and Forest Preserves
7. Public Services	7. Quality of Life
7. Festivals/Events	7. Train
7. Strong Planning Process	7. Water Quality
7. County Seat	8. Pedestrian Friendly
7. Deep Roots For Returning Generations	8. Historic District
8. Clean	8. Residential Diversity
8. Fermilab	8. Access to Chicago
8. Local Shopping	9. Swedish Days, Vine Festival
	9. Nearby Communities
	9. Hospital
	9. Beautification
	9. Shopping
	9. Caring Culture
	9. Friendly
	9. Volunteerism
	9. Access to Healthcare
	9. Locally Owned Shops
	9. Local Bus Service
	9. Minor League Sports
	9. Library



## Opportunities

<i>Community Meeting 1: 10/24/2017</i>	<i>Community Meeting 2: 10/25/2017</i>
1. Eastern Gateway Development	1. East Side Development
2. Affordable Housing	2. Senior Housing and Affordable Housing and Apartments
3. Sustainability Planning	3. Expanding Opportunities in the Arts
4. Downtown Parking	3. Indoor Pool or Community Center
5. Mill Race Development	4. Leveraging the River
5. Senior Housing	4. Development of Settlers Hill
6. Industrial Development	4. Pedestrian Access and Maintenance
7. Bike Trail	4. Fargo Boulevard Speed Reduced
8. Alternative Energy Sources	5. Lighting
9. Maintain Historic Charm	5. Downtown Parking
9. Master Highway Plan	5. Gateway Improvement on the East Side
9. Proactive Strategy for Volunteerism and Philanthropy	5. 1-Level Homes
9. Randall Road Redevelopment	5. Snow Removal
10. Settler's Hill Development	5. Downtown Traffic Flow
10. Master Sidewalk Plan	5. Diversity Outreach
10. Promoting Public Art	6. Welcome Committee
10. Riverfront Access	6. Commercial Opportunities
11. Review Tree Ordinance	6. Parks and Library Programming
11. Communicate with Neighboring Communities	6. Energy Provision and Service
11. Side Street Parking	6. Fill Available Historic Structures
11. Invest in Areas Outliving Life Expectancy	7. Bridge Maintenance
11. Promoting Water Quality	7. Expanding Bus Service
11. Inter-District Cooperation	7. Increase Industrial Base
11. Unify State and 3rd Streets	7. Dam Safety
12. Grocery Store	7. Community Gathering Opportunities
12. Citizen-Oriented Events	7. Weekday Entertainment
12. Downtown Residential Housing	7. Downtown Residential Housing
12. Maintaining Greenspace Ratio	7. Garbage Pickup and Recycling
12. Green Pedestrian Street Space	7. Car and Pedestrian Visibility
12. Improve and Maintain Signage	7. Vertical Development
	7. Zoning

After the strengths and opportunities discussions and voting exercises, TPMA facilitators spent a brief time with the groups asking if these opportunities reflect what Geneva should aspire to be. Across the board, participants felt that the opportunities accurately captured an aspirational Geneva and had no further comment.

Toward the end of each session, TPMA asked stakeholders to identify the activities or outcomes they would like to see to measure success moving forward. Results are captured on the following page and are aggregated between both meetings. These topics should be used to guide and track implementation of any relevant goals and strategies produced in the strategic plan.



## Results

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- Track Parking (counts/supply and demand)
- Healthy Housing Market
- Increased Industrial Base
- Economically Viability (specifically strength of the business community)
- Track Tourism Dollars
- Visibly See More People (foot traffic)
- Alternative Transportation to Town
- Walkability / Bikeability Scores
- Infrastructure Created
- Senior Population Stable and Amenities
- Preserved Historic Character
- Reduced Tax Burden on Residents
- Visible and Non-Visible Movement to Sustainability
- Tree Counts (maintained and diversified)
- Vacant Buildings Reduced (retail landscape)
- Demographic Diversity
- Accessibility to Healthcare
- Monitor Water Quality Beyond Minimum
- Housing Occupation (percentage occupied and length of time occupied)
- Square Footage of Available Business Space
- Maintain Character (quality of life and preservation)
- Stay True to Strengths
- Use Historic Buildings
- Utilize Volunteers when Possible
- Community Involvement
- Maintain Positive Reputation
- Track Progress of Census Data (housing and diversity of demographics)
- Continue to Track Tourism Statistics
- Increase Traffic to the River and Settler's Hill



## Online Survey

In late October, TPMA released an online survey through SurveyMonkey which was left open for roughly two weeks. The questions and format were copied from a 2013 survey fielded by the City with the intent to later explore benchmarking opportunities, if desired.

The survey gauged stakeholder opinions on what it is like to live in Geneva. In addition to informing the Strategic Plan update, this survey allowed residents the opportunity to influence the operation and policies of the City in order to improve quality of life in the community and allow Geneva to continue to be a place that residents want to live, work, and play.

The survey was opened to collect responses on October 18, 2017, and closed on October 30, 2017.

During this period, a total of 427 responses were collected. The survey link was promoted through a number of methods, including the City's social media accounts, newsletter, and on flyers and press releases promoting the Community Meetings. Being online only, the method of distribution varied greatly from the same survey that was distributed in 2013 through solely a paper option and in conjunction with residents' utility bills. If benchmarking is considered at a later date, this data limitation should be considered as it will directly affect both demographics and access of respondents as well as residential status.

Questions from the survey addressed issues central to the City's strategic planning update process focusing on services provided by the City, safety, responsiveness of City Government, communication methods, and appearance of streets and public places. Respondents were asked 31 different closed- and open-ended questions. Some questions allowed respondents to prioritize topics such as most important services or preferred methods of communication. The survey concluded with a series of questions that allowed respondents to provide demographic information such as age, race, and ward of residence. One change to the survey was the inclusion of an interactive ward map to help respondents communicate in which ward they live.

Overall, the tone and response rate in the survey was very positive. A complete breakdown of survey responses is included in the Appendix. Responses to some key questions are illustrated in the following pages.

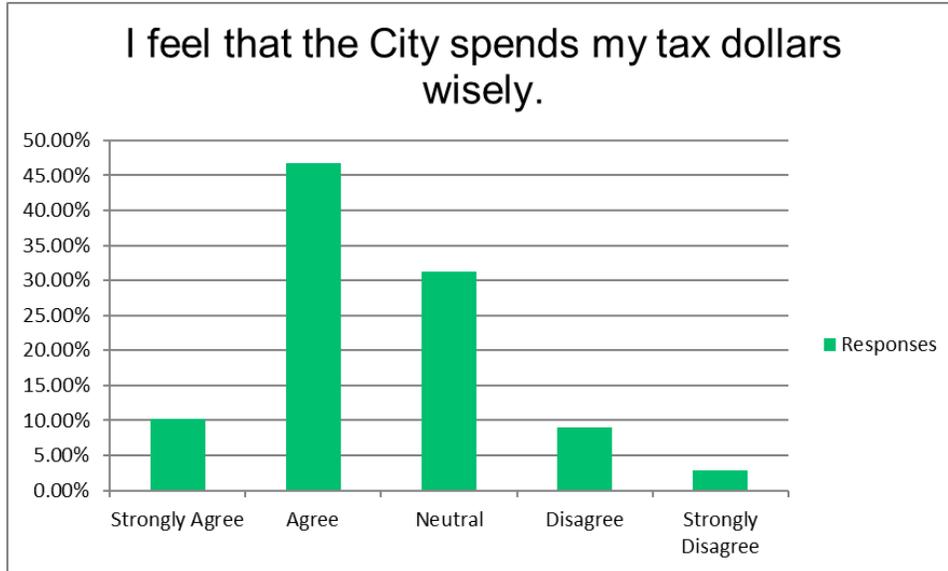
### ONLINE SURVEY

**Location:** Digital

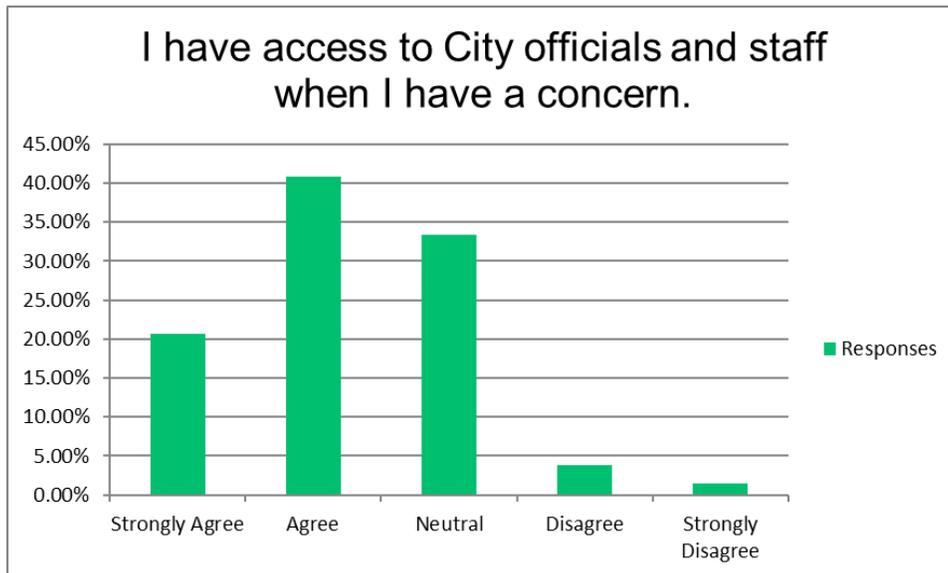
**Date:** October, 2017

**Participants:** 427

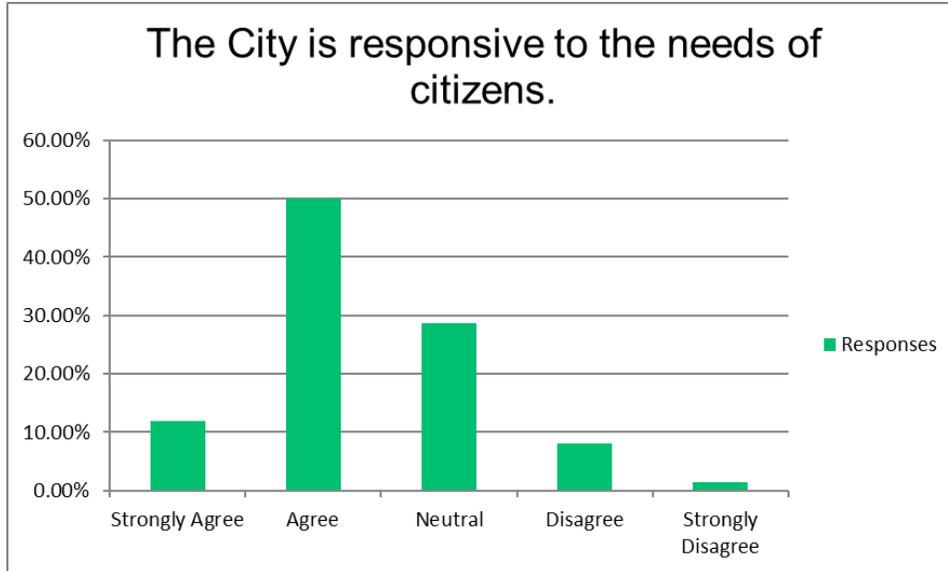
**Method:** The survey was fielded online through SurveyMonkey. It was left open for roughly two weeks.



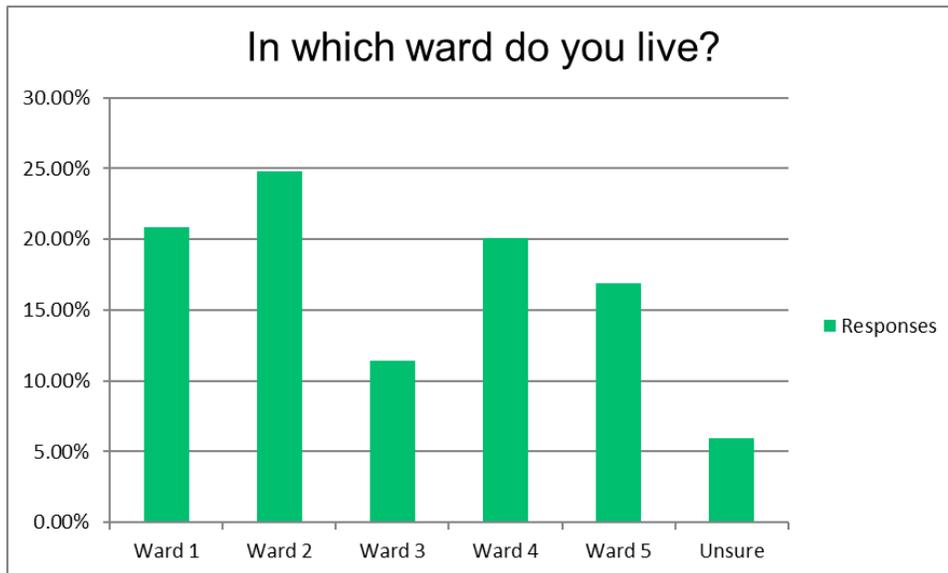
The majority of respondents feel that the City spends their tax dollars wisely. 241 respondents, or 57%, selected agree or strongly agree, while 50 respondents, or 12%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 132 respondents, or 31%, selected neutral, which was the second most selected response behind agree.



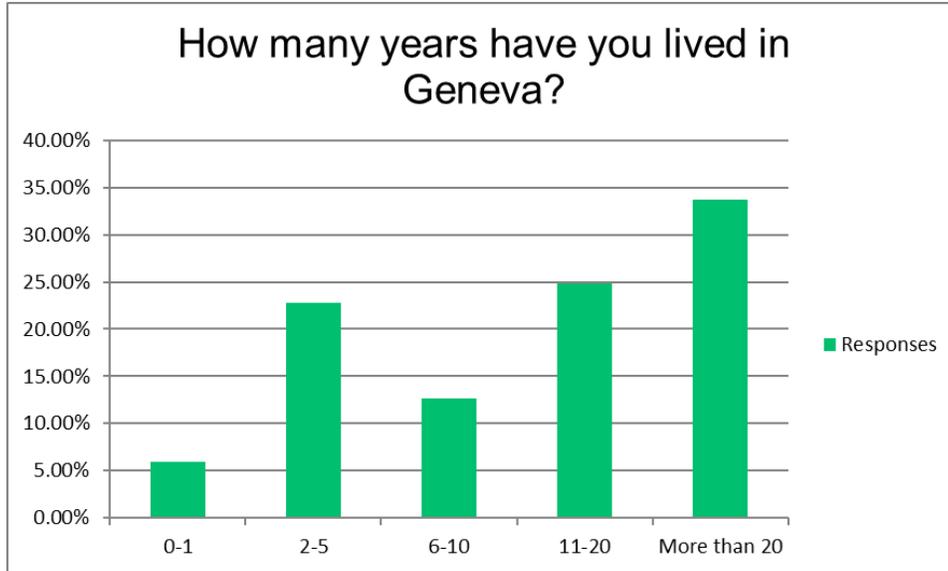
The majority of respondents feel they have access to city officials when they have concerns. 241 respondents, or 62%, selected agree or strongly agree, while 32 respondents, or 8%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 142 respondents, or 33%, selected neutral, which was the second most selected response behind agree.



The majority of respondents feel that the City of Geneva is responsive to the needs of citizens. 264 respondents, or 62%, selected agree or strongly agree, while 40 respondents, or 9%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 122 respondents, or 29%, selected neutral, which was the second most selected response behind agree.

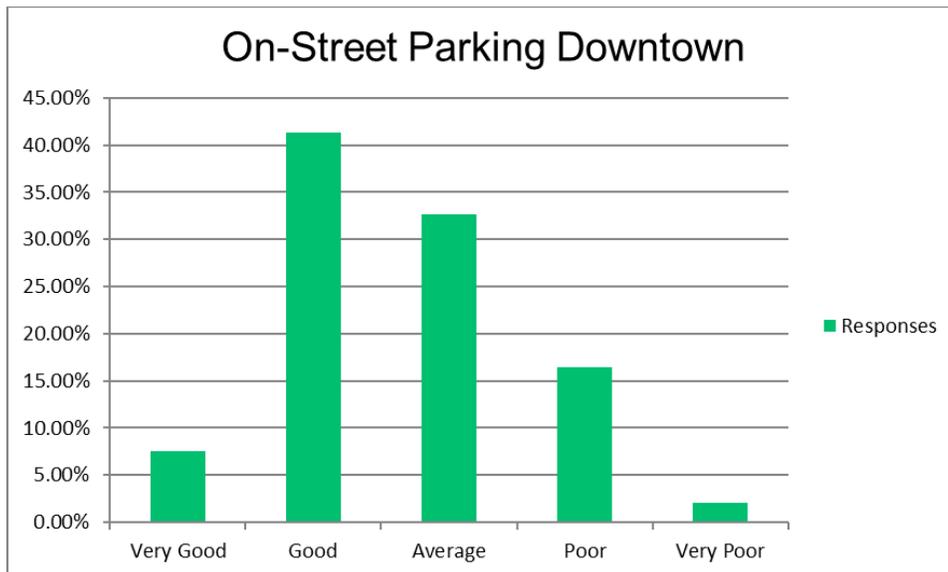


Ward 2 had the most respondents with 63, or 24.89%; but, it was closely followed by Wards 1 and 4, which each had 53 and 51 respondents respectively, or approximately 20% each. Together, Wards 1, 2, and 4 accounted for approximately 75% of survey responses.



The majority of respondents have lived in the Geneva community for at least 11 years. 139 respondents, or 59%, indicated that they have lived in Geneva for 11-20 years or more than 20 years. 84 respondents, or 35%, indicated they have lived in Geneva for 2-10 years, and the remaining 14 respondents, or 6%, have lived in Geneva for one year or less.

While some topics such as Downtown Parking arose as opportunities to address during other engagement tactics, survey respondents indicated that parking stock was average-to-very good. Paired together survey responses and additional engagement feedback should be used holistically in decision-making for the strategic planning process moving forward.



The majority of respondents feel that the City of Geneva has an average yet sufficient amount of parking. 256 respondents, or 74%, selected good or average, while 64 respondents, or 18%, selected poor or very poor. Additionally, 26 respondents, or 8%, selected very good, which received the fourth most responses.



## Strategic Planning Workshop

TPMA facilitated a Strategic Planning Workshop on November 3, 2017 that lasted from 8:30-11:45am CST. In attendance were:

- Mayor Burns
- Alderman Becky Hruby
- Alderman Craig Maladra
- Alderman Dean Kilburg
- Alderman Jeanne McGowan
- Alderman Jim Radecki
- Alderman Richard Marks
- Alderman Robert Swanson
- Alderman Tara Burghart
- Eric Passarelli, Police Chief
- Michael Antenore, Fire Chief
- Cathleen Tymoszenko, Economic Development Director
- David DeGroot, Community Development Director
- Rich Babica, Director of Public Works
- Stephanie Dawkins, City Administrator

### STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

**Location:** Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital

**Date:** November, 2017

**Participants:** 15

**Method:** The session was facilitated with small group breakouts and large group discussion. The meeting lasted roughly three hours.

Jeanne Fornari was the recording secretary, and Ken Morris (a guest from New Zealand) participated as an observer.

In the workshop, TPMA provided an overview of the process and first engaged the group in a brainstorming session around Vision and Success, with no prior review of collected community feedback. During this session, the room was split into four groups of four who were given easels and paper to scribe notes. These groups were brought back together for report-out and discussion. Input is aggregated below by guided question:

### *How would you define success for this plan?*

Participants used the following word to define success for the plan: definable, achievable and attainable, realistic and practical, affordable, differentiated, focused, and concise. Additionally, participants stressed that the plan should include goals with a specific outcome and broad stakeholder input and buy-in, as well as be easily communicated and representative of the entire community. Participants measure success as the Council and municipal staff working within a strategic plan adopted by the community. They noted that the importance of listening to staff when the Strategic Plan is cited for decision-making processes, as well as using the plan in a smart way to guide response to ad-hoc issues as relevant.



### *What would you like the plan to accomplish?*

Participants used the following words to describe what they would like the plan to accomplish: accountability, focus, and clear intent. Additionally participants noted the need for the community to have access to the plan and to see that input has been heard, as well as a definition of what “must” be done versus what the City “should” or “like” to do. Along this line, participants stressed a desire for the plan to have strategies that enable the implementation of realistic goals and which provide a roadmap for continued and future success in areas like economic vitality, quality of life, safety, etc. They also noted that the plan should be published online with bullet points that provide a snapshot of Strategic Plan goals, as well as be updated continually. The Council would also like more intentional discussion time in meetings for specific elements of the plan.

### *What will make it different?*

Participants used the following words to describe what will make this plan different: concise, focused, simple, adaptable, specific and defined, measureable, easily understood, and clear. Additionally, participants stressed the need to align goals with resources; create a living and breathing document more frequently evaluated by Council, SPAC, and staff; and to establish specific “pillars” within the plan to which fidelity is maintained. Participants would like to see reference to the plan at all public meetings, for example City Council Meetings, Committee of the Whole (COW), Plan Commission (PC), Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Council would like have a joint meeting with COW and SPAC at least once a year as a community feedback opportunity and to have SPAC take a leadership role in consolidating goals. It was stressed that the strategic plan should help guard against reactivity to political whim.

Next, TPMA primed a second brainstorming exercise around Opportunities by sharing community-identified strengths before breaking into the small groups again. After bringing the groups back together, TPMA shared community-identified opportunities and facilitated further report-out and discussion.

### *What are the opportunities to best meet the needs of our stakeholders and community?*

Participants identified the following:

- Encouraging More Tourism
- Developing a Riverfront District
- East Side Corridor/Commercial Development
- Pedestrian Safety
- Environmental-Led Policy Decisions
- Diversifying Economic Base
- Housing/Density (Residential) within Downtown Boundary
- Senior and Affordable Housing
- Promoting of the City through the Chamber
- Addressing Reputational Pull/Push
- Fox River Access
- Analytically-Led Economic Development And Other Public Policy Decisions
- Maintaining Community Vitality



Additionally, participants noted that the development of Randall Road – while identified and prioritized as an opportunity by the community – should be moved to an even higher level of prioritization.

### *What new skills/resources do we need to move forward?*

Participants used the following words to describe skills and resources needed to move forward: political will and conviction, communication, consensus-building, collaboration and relationships, and flexibility. Additionally, participants noted that political will needs to remain consistent with strategic goals, that there is a need for consensus among Council and staff, and that collaboration with other elected officials, organizations, and committees should be a priority.

### *How can we reframe challenges to be seen as existing opportunities?*

Participants predominately referenced identified opportunities when asked to reframe challenges. Some themes that were again stressed included: reframing the discussion on redevelopment, exploring the definition of affordable housing and density, communicating better, a focus on smart growth and sustainability, and leveraging the City's brand to encourage more tourism. In addition, participants noted that the City should repackage, transform, and transcend its current assets.

TPMA then shared targeted survey results with the group, as well as next steps in the process and asked for further topical areas to probe during focus groups. Below are aggregated topical areas where further clarification is desired:

### *Areas for Further Detail*

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- Innovation and Innovative Ideas (particularly related to services)
- Historic Character (what is the area being referenced?)
- Affordable Housing and Density (how is this defined?)
- Redeveloping Randall Road (what should this look like?)
- River District (what could this look like?)
- Roadmap for the Next 50 Years (particularly related to land access)
- Youth Retention (do students see a future in Geneva?)
- Bike / Pedestrian Improvements (what are some specific improvements?)
- Drug Issue (is this an issue for the entire City?)



## Focus Groups

TPMA conducted four separate focus groups on November 7, 2017. These were conducted in-person with community stakeholders. Stakeholders included City employees, high school students, business leaders, civic leaders, and religious leaders. Total attendance for all focus groups was 28 individuals; the breakdown of attendance for each focus group is as follows:

- **CITY EMPLOYEE FOCUS GROUP** – eight attendees
- **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT FOCUS GROUP** – eight attendees
- **BUSINESS AND CIVIC LEADERS FOCUS GROUP** – five attendees
- **CIVIC AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS FOCUS GROUP** – seven attendees

### FOCUS GROUPS

**Locations:** City Hall and Geneva Community High School

**Date:** November, 2017

**Participants:** 28

**Method:** Focus groups were facilitated with small group guided discussion. Each session lasted roughly one hour.

Each focus group was guided by a series of high-level, open-ended questions that aimed to dive deeper into future priorities for Geneva's Strategic Plan. Some questions were specific to one particular focus group while others were broad and asked in each. Nested under each question were further questions not captured specifically within this report, but used to guide discussion based from previous community feedback. Each focus group lasted approximately one hour with the first fifty minutes dedicated to addressing prepared questions, and the final ten minutes devoted to addressing any outlying yet relevant topics stakeholders wanted to volunteer. This information is presented by group and question below.

### City Employees

General themes from the City Employees Focus Group include ways that the City could be more innovative in the services it provides and that employees do not feel valued in their roles, specifically by City Council. Employees were asked the following italicized questions. Summarized responses to these questions are listed below each question:

*Are there ways the City could be more innovative in the services it provides or in how it provides those services?*

Employees feel the City's parking system software is an area that could be improved because the parking system software is outdated and prone to malfunction. Furthermore, it does not integrate well with the City's other technologies. City employees feel that the City's technologic infrastructure has been slowly pieced together over time and to cover up problems, but that nothing has been solved at once or integrated together. For these reasons, City employees would like to see Geneva's technological infrastructure modernized and synchronized to improve government efficiency and service provision. In addition to parking systems, employees feel that the work order system could be improved. The work order system is not digitalized and requires employees to send



orders by fax. This creates difficulty, as other departments cannot immediately notify public works of issues they encounter in the field. For example, if a police officer or firefighter sees an issue that needs to be communicated back to public works, there is no way for them to do that from their vehicle due to the City's current technology. Employees also feel that it is difficult for residents to conduct business on an electronic level with the City. In addition to outdated software, employees noted that vehicles in the public works fleet are outdated and should be decommissioned and replaced. However, they feel that there is no capital funding set aside to purchase new equipment.

### *How do you stay up to date on what is going on in the City, and how could the City be more transparent?*

Employees feel that Geneva does a satisfactory job at being transparent because the City makes all information available online. However, employees did identify that information about utilities could be made more visible. Areas for improvement include the water department's website, which was described as, "practically non-existent", and that more information could be provided for the public works department in general.

### *Looking forward, what do you think are the biggest opportunities for Geneva to grow and prosper?*

When answering this question, employees mostly identified existing issues that if solved, would make Geneva a better place to work and live. The first theme brought up is that City employees have many good and progressive ideas, but the funding for these ideas is often reactionary, meaning issues are solved only after they become a problem. Employees feel that the City could be a better place if there were more proactive funding for positive ideas. Employees continued to explain specific areas where funding could help improve City services. One of these areas is funding for the Geneva police department as pedestrians frequently complain about speeding in the City. However, the police do not have enough units available to address this adequately. Furthermore, calls to the police department regarding mental health have more than doubled, but the department lacks enough specialized officers to address this issue properly. Improving police staffing would allow the department to have the necessary resources to solve problems proactively. In addition, City employees feel that in general other departments are consistently being told to do more with less. Employees would like to see a way to show residents that there is a correlation between what they pay for and the services they receive. Employees feel that the City could do a better job educating citizens on the problems City departments face, such as ageing equipment. Another area employees would like to see improve is the political climate.

Employees describe Geneva's political environment as, "gut wrenching" and "toxic", and that this environment portrays them very negatively. This is very troubling for employees who feel as if they are still delivering high-quality services with fewer resources. This political environment has created distrust between City Council and City employees. Employees feel that members of the City Council need to better appreciate what employees do on a daily basis.



### *Are there ways the City could collaborate better with residents and neighboring communities?*

Employees noted that there are some difficulties regarding collaboration. For example when discussing regional collaboration, each City has a different culture and that services would be better in some cities compared to others. However, employees did note current efforts already occurring where departments from Geneva and neighboring cities are collaborating. The Geneva police department is one example, as the police department communicates best practices with departments from other cities. Besides collaboration with other cities, employees would like to see better communication with residents that illustrates what City employees are doing to make Geneva a great place to live.

### *Other comments from City Employees*

Employees were given the opportunity to address anything else not covered during the discussion. Employees brought to light the City's compensation program noting that it is not competitive and frustrates employees. Employees cannot make sense of the system due to confusing wording and definitions related to terms such as midpoint, maximum, and earning potential. To address this, employees would like to see tangible descriptions of the protocol for receiving compensation.

### **Geneva High School Students**

General themes from the Geneva High School Students Focus Group pertained to improving pedestrian and cyclist safety and ways to make Geneva more appealing to young people. Students were asked the following italicized questions, and responses to these questions are listed below each question:

### *How do you stay up to date on what is going on in the City, and how could the City be more transparent?*

According to students, the best way to engage young people in the community is through social media; however students do not necessarily feel that social media from the high school or the City is engaging. The types of events students would have interest in attending and would like to be engaged about include events that the library and park district are hosting. A potential way to better engage students would be to broadcast information about City events through the high school's morning announcements. Additionally, students feel that it would be good to have a centralized location for all relevant City information, and though it may not be feasible, suggested a City of Geneva app for this. Students also feel that the City should utilize online surveys to engage the City similar to the one used in an earlier phase of this strategic planning process, because utilizing a survey like this would make engaging with the City more accessible and would generate more feedback. However, students were not aware of the previous strategic planning survey prior to the focus group. To increase transparency and engagement, students recommend that City Council provides a regular flow of information and that it would be nice to have a middle ground to participate in local politics. Students feel that currently there are either people who are very engaged in local politics and those that are not engaged at all, but if there was a middle ground, local community participation in government could increase especially for young residents.



### *Looking forward, what do you think are the biggest opportunities for Geneva to grow and prosper?*

Students explained that Fabyan Forest could be an asset community members would be interested in if it was made more accessible from downtown, especially by bicycle, as Fabyan forest is currently an underutilized community asset. Students would also like to see more diversity in the community. Students noted that Geneva is currently not a very diverse place to live and that this is a weakness. They feel the lack of diversity makes life complicated for certain community members, specifically because the community lacks businesses with products that cater to different cultures.

### *Do you see a future in Geneva? Why or why not? If you left Geneva, do you think you would come back?*

Students feel that Geneva is a great place to raise a family, which draws many people to the community. This causes the City to attract parents and families but does not allow for the retention of younger residents. For these reasons, most students would like to leave Geneva as young adults, but would consider coming back to raise a family or to visit.

### *What do you do for fun/entertainment in Geneva? Is there anything you travel outside the City for?*

In Geneva, students often go downtown for fun and entertainment and enjoy City events such as Swedish Days and the Christmas Tree Lighting, but there could be more events like these to help small businesses and to provide more entertainment. Students also feel that Geneva is very lively in the summer but slows down during the winter months. To address this, the City could add an indoor space that hosts engaging events for the community. Additionally students would like a better concert venue closer to downtown in addition to the venue at River Park because that venue is not well attended. A way students came up with to address this is to have a rotating stage around the downtown area for concert type events. Students would also appreciate more affordable but quality dining options that cater towards a younger crowd because most current options are rather expensive. In addition to downtown, students visit the City's local parks for entertainment and specifically cited Frisbee golf at Wheeler Park as an attraction. Students find themselves traveling outside of the City to go see movies or to buy groceries. Students have difficulty finding everyday products that are generally found in larger commercial grocery stores since many of the shops in Geneva are more specialized.

### *Are there any areas for improvement related to bicycle or pedestrian friendliness in the City?*

As frequent bicycle riders, students have constructive opinions on ways to improve bicycle and pedestrian friendliness. Students noted that the City has quality bike paths but that they could be more connected especially to downtown. To access downtown by bicycle, students have to cross at the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> street, which they feel is dangerous. Placing signage that alerts drivers to yield to cyclists or pedestrians or constructing pedestrian bridges could help improve safety. Furthermore, students often



encounter vehicles parked in bike lanes throughout town, which makes cycling difficult. Additionally, students explained that there should be some type of method to calm traffic around the high school as speeding and hazardous driving often occurs in this location. According to students, some areas of the City have poor street lighting, which makes walking and driving more hazardous.

### *Other comments from Geneva High School Students:*

Students were given the opportunity to address anything else that was not covered during the discussion. Students brought to light that they feel the City does a good job catering to young people especially through park space, but in general, the City feels like it is built for young children and parents, and there could be more intentional offerings for teens and young adults.

## **Business and Civic Leaders**

General themes from the Business and Civic Leaders Focus Group indicate that the City typically supports local business well and that there is a clash between two groups in the City, one that wants to be progressive and another that pushes back on change. Local civic and business leaders were asked the following italicized questions. Summarized responses to these questions are listed below each question:

### *Are there ways the City could be more innovative in the services it provides or in how it provides those services? Are there ways the City could incentivize entrepreneurship?*

Local civic and business leaders feel that the Chamber of Commerce effectively listens to local business and is supportive of business' needs. For example, the festivals the Chamber and City sponsor help bring a large amount of tourism that is positive for local businesses. However, business leaders feel that the City needs to figure out ways to implement change. This is due to a prominent number of community members opposed to progressive ideas because of fears that change will negatively affect Geneva's small town atmosphere. Business leaders would like to see a mix of quaint yet progressiveness, because making no proactive changes in the community will cause Geneva to be non-competitive. A solution needs to be identified that allows the City to communicate why change is positive and to promote buy-in.

### *How do you stay up to date on what is going on in the City, and how could the City be more transparent?*

Business leaders find that the City does a good job communicating with businesses, and that it is on businesses to actively engage with this information. Attendees of this focus group predominantly use the City website, push notification alerts, and the City Facebook page to stay up-to-date on City information.

### *What is the business climate like in Geneva? What policies or other improvements could improve the business climate?*

Civic and business leaders feel that the business climate in Geneva is mostly positive, though some have experienced issues when trying to work with the City. However, some



civic and business leaders feel that the City has been difficult to work with especially for new development, and described “layers of red tape” that have affected projects. Civic and business leaders suggest the City review and update existing regulation that could harm the business climate. Civic and business leaders do feel that there is an entrepreneurial culture in Geneva as they consistently see new businesses joining the Chamber of Commerce. While the local business community is strong, civic and business leaders would like to see larger commercial businesses developed in Geneva such as an Apple Store. However, it was noted that for a development like an Apple Store to be feasible, the City would need to be more diverse and have a significant amount of young people to support larger commercial business. Additionally, a tool civic and business leaders feel could help attract this development is a video that highlights and sells Geneva and its key attributes.

### *What are some ways the City could incentivize business attraction, growth, and retention?*

Business leaders offered suggestions about how the City could improve business retention, attraction, and expansion, which also touched on parts of the City that could be developed in addition to the type of image the City should be promoting. One suggestion is for Geneva to become home rule to provide the City more autonomy to make laws and regulations more that are attractive to businesses. Civic and business leaders also suggest that that the City should look into developing the waterfront where Mill Race was, as well as the City’s old bottling plant. The City could also consider developing an entertainment district as civic and business leaders feel this would truly set the City apart from competitors and make it a destination. Additionally, business leaders feel parking could be improved or expanded as it can sometimes be difficult to find spaces. One reason for this may be that wayfinding for public parking is not effective or obvious. Geneva’s image was another area civic and business leaders would like to see improved because downtown is very vibrant at night and this is not due to the quaint image that is traditionally promoted. For this reason, civic and business leaders suggest the City develop an image that is a mix of quaint and vibrant.

### *What kind of development, if any, would you like to see in the City?*

Civic and business leaders do not want the City to be based on 1800s and 1900s infrastructure and believe future development should be more progressive. Civic and business leaders would not like to see what they deemed “fake historic” buildings, or new developments that copy older infrastructure just to look old. Additionally, civic and business leaders would like to see affordable housing in the community because property taxes are very high and affordable housing would make it more practical to live in Geneva. During the focus group, civic and business leaders feel that affordable housing includes homes under \$250,000 and apartments for roughly \$800 a month. Civic and business leaders feel that apartments would be in very high demand.

### *Other comments from Business and Civic Leaders:*

Business leaders feel that the City does a great job overall and that citizens really care about Geneva; however, the “not in my back yard mentality” and resistance to growth



needs to be overcome. The City could also do a better job clearly communicating intentions. This was specifically mentioned in relation to the dining tax as some restaurant owners felt targeted by the tax. If the City had originally expressed the tax's purpose, restaurant owners would not have felt singled out. Finally, civic and business leaders want the City to do a better job communicating the purpose of the Historic Preservation Commission because residents do not understand that it is to preserve old history rather than to promote new historic-looking buildings.

### **Civic and Religious Leaders**

General themes from the Civic and Religious Leaders Focus Group suggest that the City could do a better job communicating intentions and that there is a need for more diversity in many different aspects of the community. Civic and religious leaders were asked the following italicized questions, and responses to these questions are listed below each question:

#### *Are there ways the City could be more innovative in the services it provides or in how it provides those services?*

Civic and religious leaders think that Geneva is transparent but perceptions that the City is not transparent still exist in the community. The televised City meetings help create transparency, and City information is readily available. But, some community members feel that the City is still not transparent enough and that this perception needs to be addressed even if it is inaccurate. Increasing voter turnout is one suggestion that could help solve this. Additionally, civic and religious leaders feel innovation is coming from the library which should be leveraged. They noted that the library is acting like a twenty-second century space, as it is a very forward-thinking and active place that offers strong programs for the community and is technology-centric.

#### *How do you stay up to date on what is going on in the City, and how could the City be more transparent?*

Civic and religious leaders stay updated on community information similarly to stakeholders from other focus groups. This includes utilizing Facebook and social media in addition to attending City Council meetings or watching the online recording. Members of this focus group do feel that the City could help improve perceptions of transparency. Members from this focus group feel that their aldermen are not involved enough in the community and in their wards specifically and that these officials could do a better job increasing their community visibility. Focus group members suggested that aldermen walk their wards more or facilitate events where constituents can share opinions. Furthermore, members of this focus group feel that the barrier to understand what is going on in local politics needs to be lowered to encourage more civic engagement. One suggestion from this group to address this issue would be to distribute a reoccurring one-pager that explains current key topics relating to community government at or prior to each Council Meeting. Civic and religious leaders noted that members of City Council often reference meetings that the public has not been a part of during the weekly City Council meeting. This is viewed as a shared understanding by City Council about issues that does not exist to the public, which then creates a perception that there is a lack of transparency even if that is not the intention.



### *Looking forward, what do you think are the biggest opportunities for Geneva to grow and prosper?*

Civic and religious leaders think that there are opportunities for the community to utilize current assets and to promote diversity to help grow Geneva. Fermilab<sup>1</sup> is a large hub for science and technology only a short drive from Geneva, but the community does not significantly engage with the lab. This focus group would like the City to look at ways to increase engagement with Fermilab, as it could be the foundation for a large Midwest technology hub. Additionally community and religious leaders think that the City should work to complete bike paths and sidewalks throughout the community as some remain unfinished or unconnected. It is also important that the City identify why there is significant resistance to diversity, which has created a lack of diversity in housing, income, age, race, etc.

### *Are there improvements that could be made related to housing?*

Civic and religious leaders would like to see more affordable housing in the community because they believe none currently exists. For this reason, their children and grandchildren cannot live in the community as young adults. This group would also like to see affordable housing for senior citizens because there are not places for older residents to downsize. Due to property tax rate and the lack of senior living space, some individuals from this group worry they would have to move out of Geneva following retirement.

### *What is important to the community identity of Geneva?*

Civic and religious leaders feel that the historical character and way the downtown looks is very important to Geneva's identity. This includes the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street's character and Geneva's small town feel. This group also identified some negative aspects about Geneva's community identity such as the lack of diversity and resistance to change. Civic leaders feel that the City is going to have to change to remain relevant but that this does not mean the City has to lose what makes it unique, such as continuing to utilize historic buildings and remaining a destination City. However, civic and religious leaders noted that Geneva should work to build more sustainable business in order to not be as reliant on tourism. Similarly to other focus groups, civic and religious leaders feel that the City is far too reactive to problems and needs to plan for things before they become challenges. One member of the focus group noted that sometimes they feel like Geneva is just a, "pretty little picture with nothing behind it", like a cardboard City.

### *What kind of development, if any, would you like to see in the City?*

Civic and religious leaders would like the City to have more of a vision about what downtown wants to be related to development. This group believes that there is a strong adversity to change in the community and that this will need to be overcome to promote new development. For this reason, Geneva should pick one idea or vision for development and pursue it. One area this could be is affordable housing, as it would bring

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<sup>1</sup> Fermilab is a particle physics and accelerator laboratory located in Batavia, Illinois. It is managed through the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Science - <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/index.html>.



young people to the City, which would enhance long-term sustainability. Community and religious leaders feel that if Geneva stays a community for older people it will not be sustainable. A roadblock for this is that there is a lack of common language throughout the community. Additionally, there is a perception that significant amounts of people in Geneva do not want to live around lower income individuals, which prevents affordable housing from being developed. Community and religious leaders feel that the City needs to create a realistic perception about what affordable housing means because many current residents get this term confused with low-income housing.

*Other comments from Civic and Religious Leaders:*

Closing thoughts from civic and religious leaders pertained to making Geneva more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. This group would like to see sidewalks connected so their children can walk to school and for the bike trail to be cleared more effectively during the winter. Community and religious leaders also identified the needs for more traffic signage, including stop signs on Second Street and signs on 4<sup>th</sup> Street requiring drivers to yield to pedestrians.



## FUTURE ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Continued stakeholder engagement and collaboration is critical for effective planning. Turnout and overall tone from stakeholders engaged in this process was very positive. The City communicates well through a variety of mediums which is critical as different tools and approaches can be relevant to different stakeholder groups and for different engagement goals. For example:

- City newsletters and flyers, etc. are effective at providing **Information and Education** to the community;
- Websites, surveys, and public meetings are effective at providing **Information and Gathering Feedback**;
- Workshops and focus groups provide avenues for **Involvement and Consultation**; and
- Community advisory committees like SPAC are critical for **Extended Involvement**.

To maintain its track record of effective engagement, the City should continue to deepen opportunities. A higher number of focus groups and one-on-one interviews will be critical when probing deeper issues. In addition, the City should host public open houses that give stakeholders more control over their time commitment and a more personal setting for feedback. This tactic should include the same overall invitation strategy as a community meeting, but rather than a facilitated group discussion, different “stations” and handouts would be developed and made available for stakeholders to circle through at their leisure.

Further recommendations include continued adaptation and review of the tactics used for outreach and engagement, as well as intentional benchmarking. Additionally, continued follow-up and thanking stakeholders is critical. To broaden the network for invitations and outreach, the City should also identify community influencers at the onset of the engagement process. Once identified, the City should develop media kits that are distributed to these influencers to make it easier for them to promote engagement opportunities broadly. SPAC and the Committee of the Whole should hold at least one joint public meeting per year to facilitate a closer working relationship

### FUTURE ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase the number of one-on-one interviews and focus groups conducted
- Conduct public open houses
- Review and adapt strategies
- Benchmark one or more tactic
- Identify influencers to help with outreach
- Develop and supply a media kit for outreach
- Hold joint SPAC/COW meetings
- Field surveys online and through paper copies
- Continue to strive for diversity in engagement



While the overall tone of the process was very positive, there were a few areas of concern that arose either from the facilitator or stakeholder perspective. These are listed below with recommendations for addressing each:

<i>Concerns</i>	<i>Recommendations to Address</i>
The Survey was only made available online.	Based from the demographics represented when the survey was delivered online versus via paper with a utility bill, TPMA strongly recommends fielding the survey in both mediums moving forward.
There were topics discussed at Community Meetings that were not relevant to the City budget.	TPMA recommends continued educational outreach – potentially in the invitations for community meetings – that illustrate topical areas that may not impact the City budget.
Bottled water was served at the Community Meetings.	Stakeholders are proud of City water. TPMA recommends providing tap water at all Community Meetings.
It was hard to hear and see topics captured for discussion in the Community Meetings.	TPMA recommends utilizing public open houses to provide residents with hearing or visual impairments the opportunity for more personal and accessible feedback.
Locations for the Community Meetings were hard to access.	TPMA recommends hosting community meetings at locations that are single story, handicap accessible, and which have adequate parking.
City Council was concerned with the detail of topics discussed at the Strategic Planning Workshop.	TPMA recommends an update memo on the process and expectations be delivered to the Mayor, Department Heads, and City Council prior to any direct engagement.
Stakeholders engaged in the process did not reflect Geneva’s diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic, etc.).	TPMA recommends identifying individuals representative of Geneva’s diversity to consult or participate in the outreach process.



# APPENDIX:

## Community Survey Results

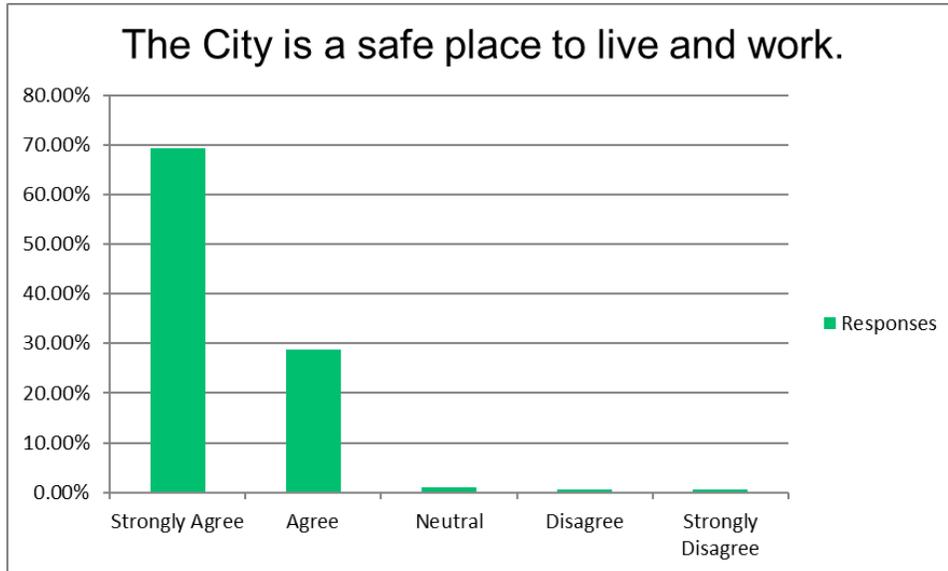


## APPENDIX: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In the section that follows, detailed response information is provided for each survey question. This information includes the question number, an explanation of the question, a visual representation of responses, and a brief analysis of response data.

### Question One:

Respondents were asked to select their level of agreement using a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree for the following statement: *The City is a safe place to live and work.*



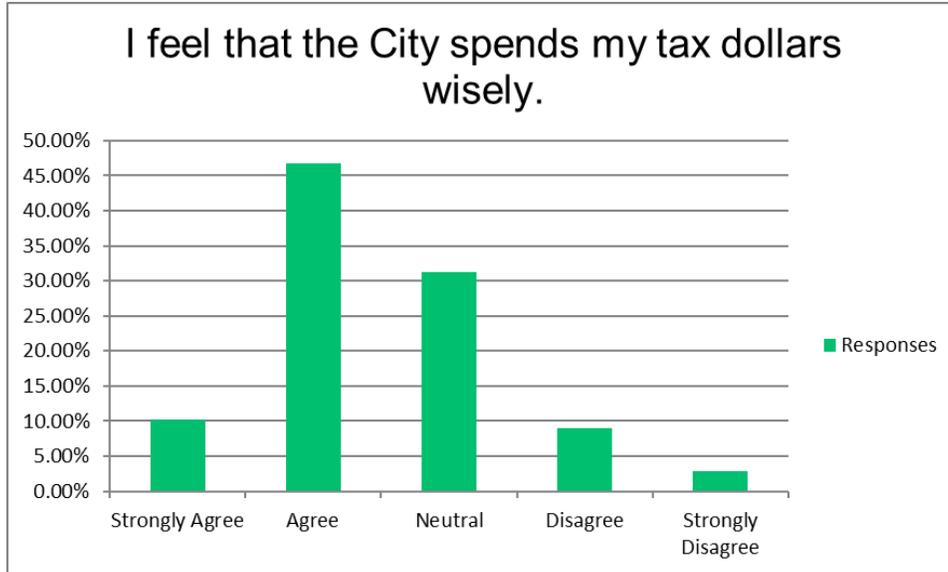
Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	69.25%	295
Agree	28.87%	123
Neutral	0.94%	4
Disagree	0.47%	2
Strongly Disagree	0.47%	2
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>426</b>

Nearly all respondents believe that Geneva is a safe place to live and work. 418 respondents, or 98%, percent selected agree or strongly agree while only 4 respondents, or 1%, selected disagree or strongly disagree.



Question Two:

Respondents were asked to select their level of agreement using a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree for the following statement: *I feel the City spends my tax dollars wisely.*



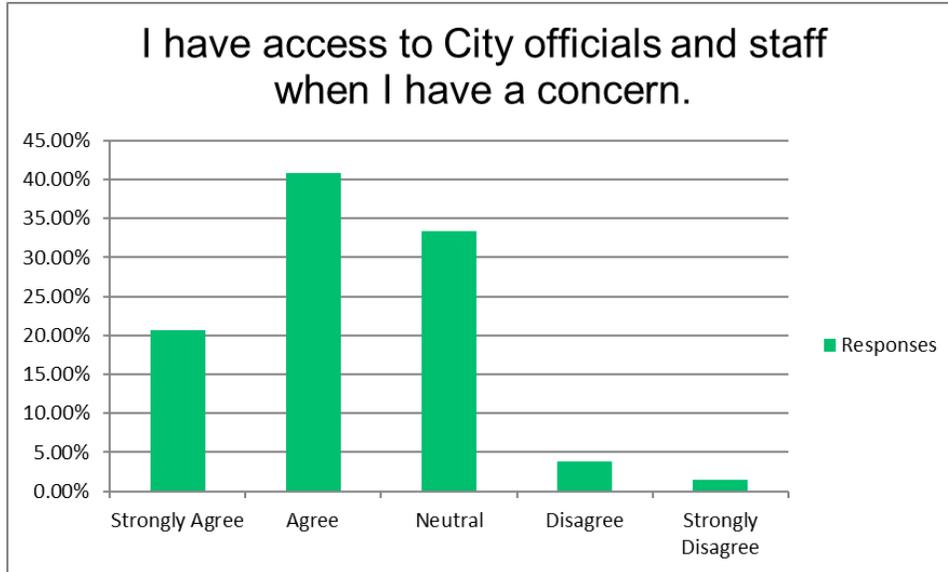
Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	10.17%	43
Agree	46.81%	198
Neutral	31.21%	132
Disagree	8.98%	38
Strongly Disagree	2.84%	12
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>423</b>

The majority of respondents feel that the City spends their tax dollars wisely. 241 respondents, or 57%, selected agree or strongly agree, while 50 respondents, or 12%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 132 respondents, or 31%, selected neutral, which was the second most selected response behind agree.



### Question Three

Respondents were asked to select their level of agreement using a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree for the following statement: *I have access to City officials and staff when I have a concern.*



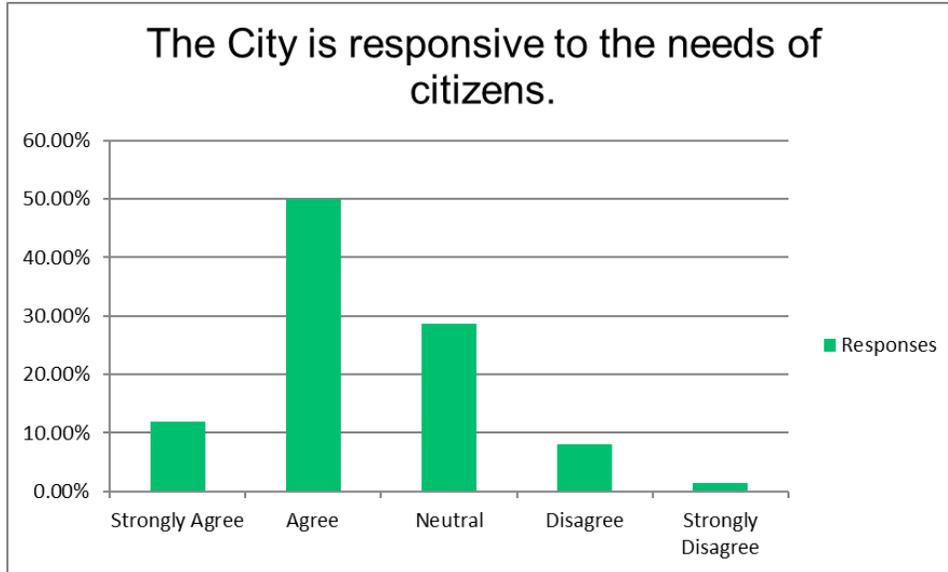
Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	20.66%	88
Agree	40.85%	174
Neutral	33.33%	142
Disagree	3.76%	16
Strongly Disagree	1.41%	6
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>426</b>

The majority of respondents feel they have access to City officials when they have concerns. 241 respondents, or 62%, selected agree or strongly agree, while 32 respondents, or 8%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 142 respondents, or 33%, selected neutral, which was the second most selected response behind agree.



### Question Four

Respondents were asked to select their level of agreement using a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree for the following statement: *The City is responsive to the needs of citizens.*



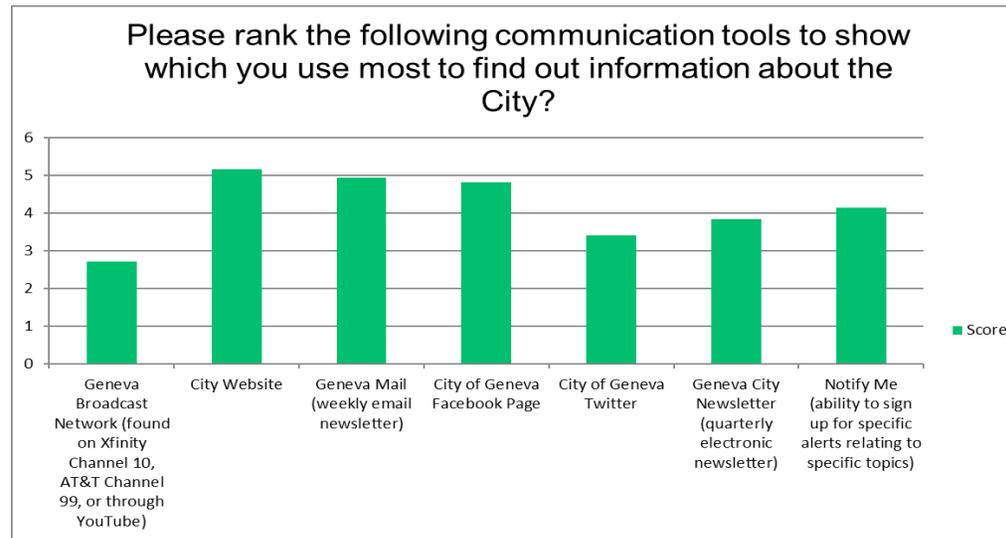
Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	11.97%	51
Agree	50.00%	213
Neutral	28.64%	122
Disagree	7.98%	34
Strongly Disagree	1.41%	6
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>426</b>

The majority of respondents feel that the City of Geneva is responsive to the needs of citizens. 264 respondents, or 62%, selected agree or strongly agree, while 40 respondents, or 9%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 122 respondents, or 29%, selected neutral, which was the second most selected response behind agree.



### Question Five

Respondents were asked how they receive communication about City services and programs and then rank these communication tools on a scale of 1-7 based on which they use the most.



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	Score							
Geneva Broadcast Network (found on Xfinity Channel 10, AT&T Channel 99, or through YouTube)	6.19%	12	6.70%	13	9.79%	19	7.22%	14	10.82%	21	16.49%	32	42.78%	83	194	2.7
City Website	27.59%	72	21.84%	57	21.84%	57	10.34%	27	7.66%	20	8.05%	21	2.68%	7	261	5.16
Geneva Mail (weekly email newsletter)	20.28%	43	23.11%	49	19.81%	42	18.40%	39	7.55%	16	7.55%	16	3.30%	7	212	4.94
City of Geneva Facebook Page	27.85%	66	18.99%	45	13.08%	31	11.39%	27	10.55%	25	10.97%	26	7.17%	17	237	4.81
City of Geneva Twitter	10.20%	20	9.18%	18	13.78%	27	10.71%	21	15.31%	30	15.31%	30	25.51%	50	196	3.4
Geneva City Newsletter (quarterly electronic newsletter)	3.26%	7	10.23%	22	17.21%	37	26.98%	58	26.05%	56	11.16%	24	5.12%	11	215	3.84
Notify Me (ability to sign up for specific alerts relating to specific topics)	21.78%	49	13.78%	31	7.56%	17	12.00%	27	15.56%	35	16.00%	36	13.33%	30	225	4.13
															<b>Answered</b>	<b>301</b>

Respondents were asked to rank communication tools to illustrate which ones are most used to inform residents on community information. Rankings were aggregated and scored to illustrate which tools are most used. A higher score represents more utilization by residents while a lower score represents less utilization. The highest ranked platform for communication was the City Website with a score of 5.16 followed by the Geneva weekly email newsletter, which received a score of 4.94. The City’s Facebook Page was slightly less than the weekly newsletter with a score of 4.81. Notify Me was the fourth most used platform with a score of 4.13 followed by the City’s Quarterly newsletter and Twitter Page, which received the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> highest scores of 3.84 and 3.4 respectively. The Geneva Broadcast network received the lowest score of 2.7 indicating it is the least utilized for information.



## Question Six

Respondents were asked to respond to the following open-ended question: *In your opinion, how could the City communicate better?* A word cloud is provided below to illustrate common themes among the responses.



77% of responses to this open-ended question fit into seven (7) major categories. These groups are listed below with the percentage of response associated with each grouping.

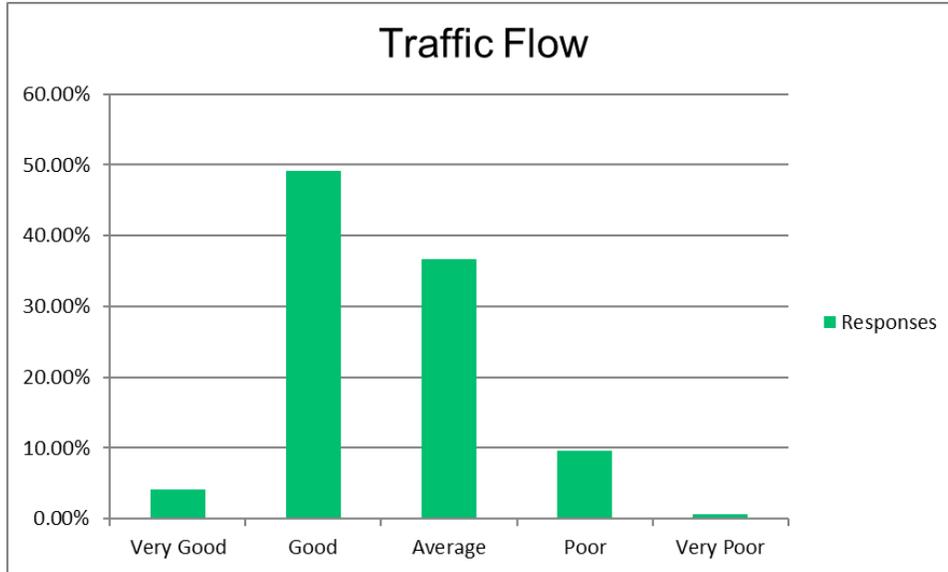
- The City of Geneva is doing well with current communication efforts – 26%
- Continue to utilize and build on communication through social media, emails, and texts – 13%
- Make residents more aware of the various methods the City uses to communicate – 9%
- Use more physical mailers or papers to update citizens that don't use social media – 9%
- Information needs to be presented in a more timely manner and in more detail – 9%
- Hold more public meetings with City Officials – 6%
- Include more information on the City website – 5%





### Question Seven

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of Geneva’s streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Traffic Flow*



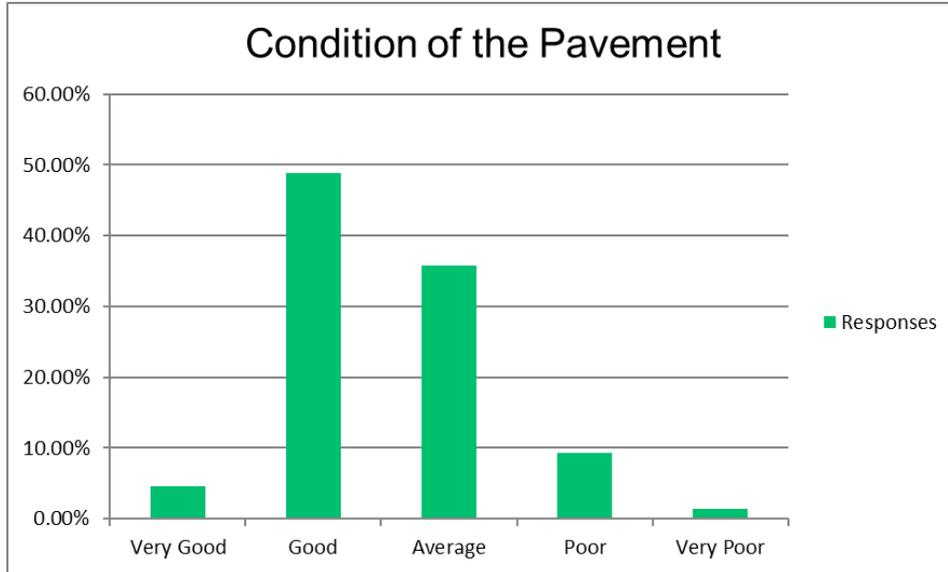
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	4.05%	14
Good	49.13%	170
Average	36.71%	127
Poor	9.54%	33
Very Poor	0.58%	2
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

Residents in Geneva consider the City’s traffic flow to be average to good as 297 respondents, or 86%, selected those choices. The other three choices received a combined total of 49 responses, or 14% of the total vote.



### Question Eight

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of Geneva’s streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Condition of the Pavement*



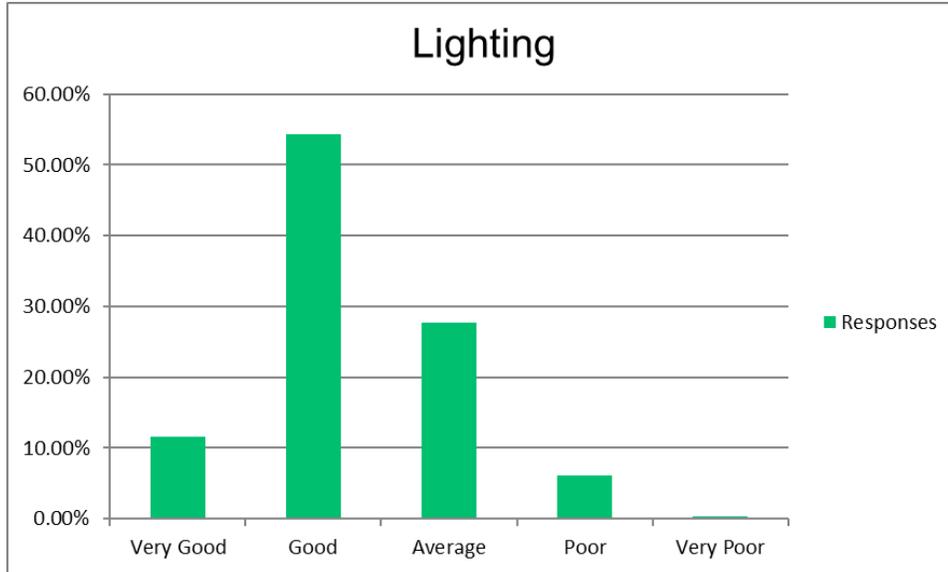
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	4.62%	16
Good	48.84%	169
Average	35.84%	124
Poor	9.25%	32
Very Poor	1.45%	5
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

Residents consider the condition of pavement in Geneva to be average to good as 293 respondents, or 85%, selected these choices. The other three choices received a combined total of 53 responses, or 15% of the total vote.



### Question Nine

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of the City streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Lighting*



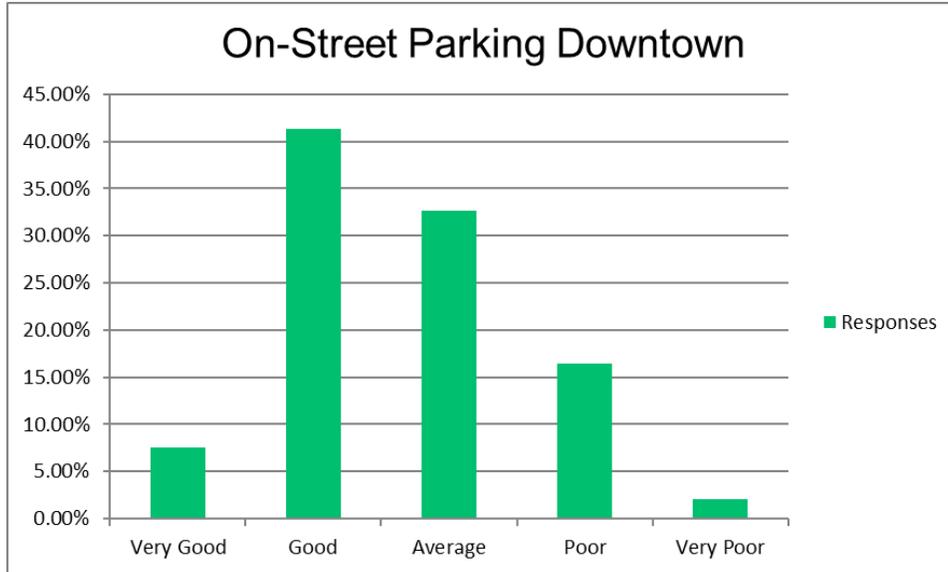
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	11.56%	40
Good	54.34%	188
Average	27.75%	96
Poor	6.07%	21
Very Poor	0.29%	1
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

The majority of respondents feel that the City of Geneva has appropriate lighting. 228 respondents, or 66%, selected good or very good, while 22 respondents, or 6%, selected disagree or strongly disagree. Additionally, 96 respondents, or 28%, selected average, which was the second most selected response behind good.



### Question Ten

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of Geneva’s streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *On-Street Parking Downtown*



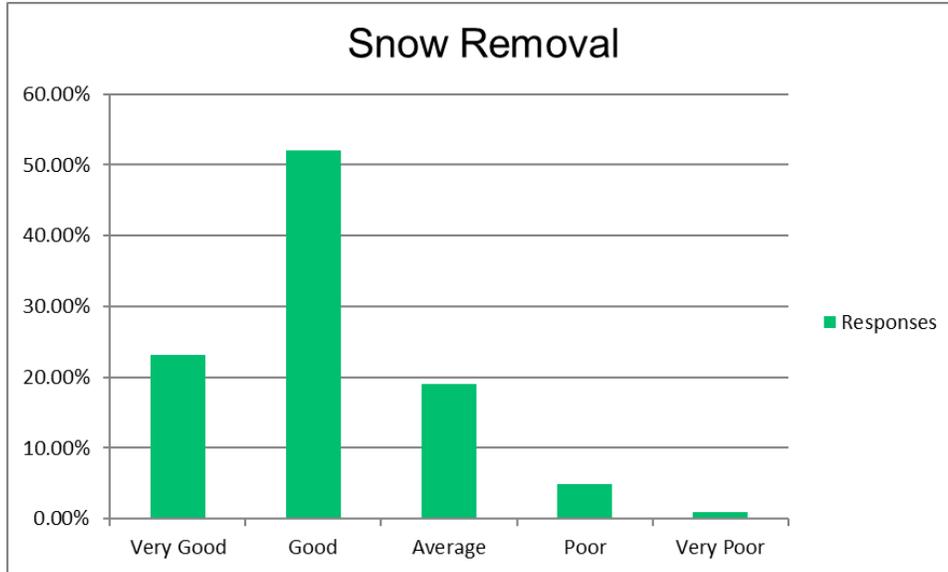
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	7.51%	26
Good	41.33%	143
Average	32.66%	113
Poor	16.47%	57
Very Poor	2.02%	7
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

The majority of respondents feel that the City of Geneva has an average yet sufficient amount of parking. 256 respondents, or 74%, selected good or average, while 64 respondents, or 18%, selected poor or very poor. Additionally, 26 respondents, or 8%, selected very good which received the fourth most responses.



### Question Eleven

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of Geneva’s streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Snow Removal*



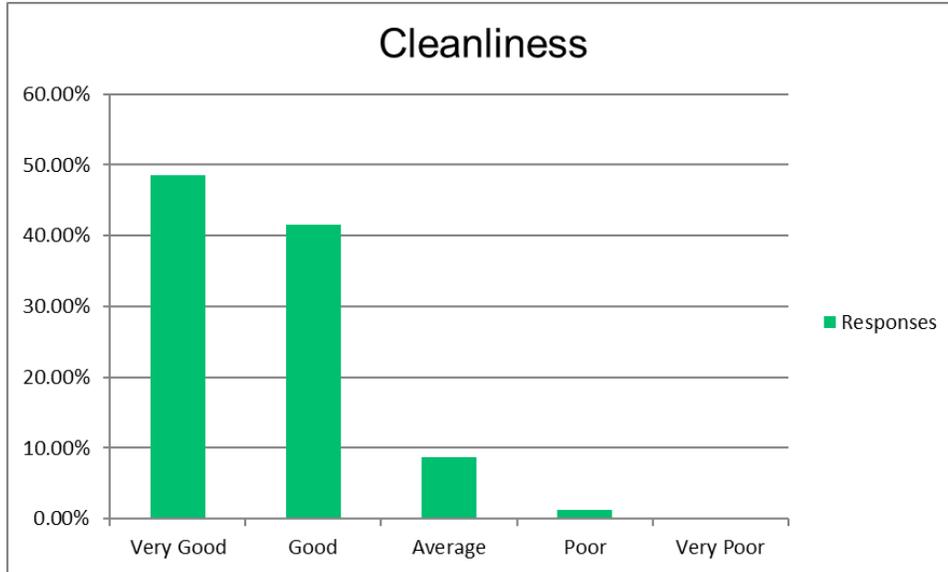
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	23.12%	80
Good	52.02%	180
Average	19.08%	66
Poor	4.91%	17
Very Poor	0.87%	3
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

The majority of respondents feel that the City of Geneva does a good job of snow removal. 326 respondents, or 94%, selected average, good, or very good, and good and very good were the first and second most chosen options. Only 20 respondents, or 6%, selected disagree or strongly disagree.



## Question Twelve

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of the City streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Cleanliness*



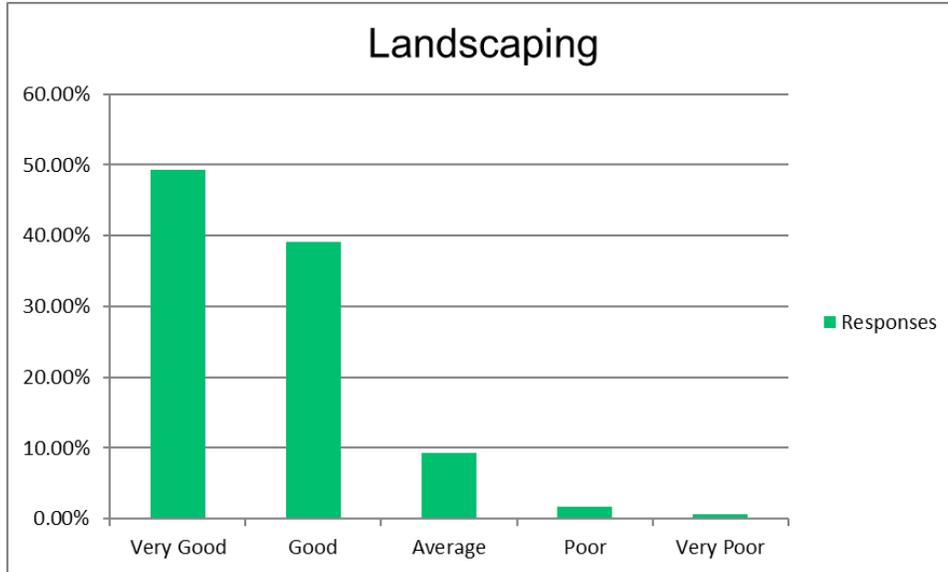
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	48.55%	168
Good	41.62%	144
Average	8.67%	30
Poor	1.16%	4
Very Poor	0.00%	0
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

Residents of Geneva rated the City’s cleanliness very high as 312 respondents, or 90%, selected good or very good, with very good receiving the most of any response category. No respondents rated cleanliness as very poor, and only four (4) respondents or approximately 1% rated cleanliness in Geneva as poor. Average received the third most responses with 30, or 9% of votes.



### Question Thirteen

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of Geneva’s streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Landscaping*



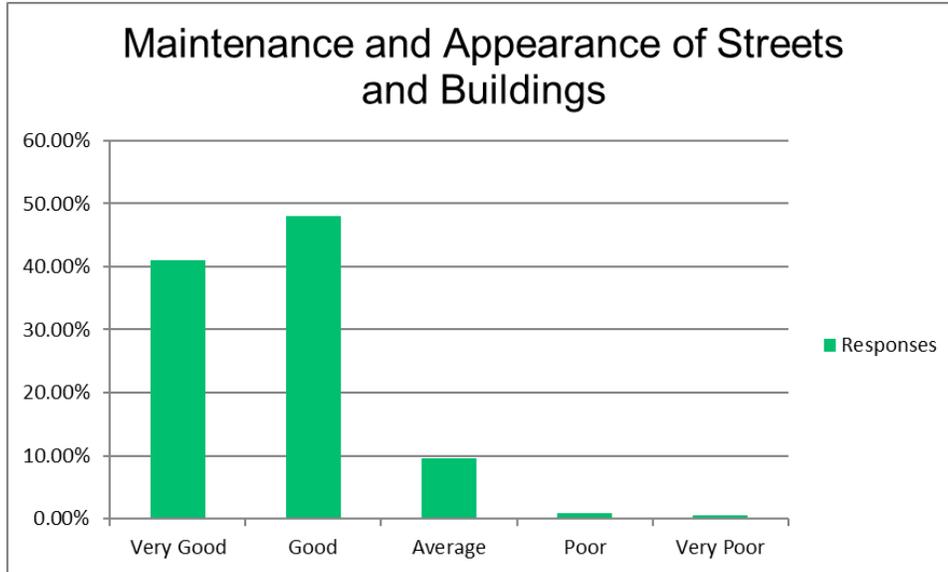
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	49.28%	170
Good	39.13%	135
Average	9.28%	32
Poor	1.74%	6
Very Poor	0.58%	2
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>345</b>

Residents of Geneva rated the City’s landscaping very high as 305 respondents, or 88%, selected good or very good, with very good receiving the most of any response category. Only two (2) respondents rated cleanliness as very poor and six (6) respondents rated cleanliness in Geneva as poor, which when combined account for 2% of all responses. Average received the third most responses with 32, or 9% of votes.



### Question Fourteen

Respondents were asked to think about the general appearance of Geneva’s streets and public areas and to rate their satisfaction with the following aspect, using a five-point scale from very good to very poor: *Maintenance and Appearance of Streets and Buildings*



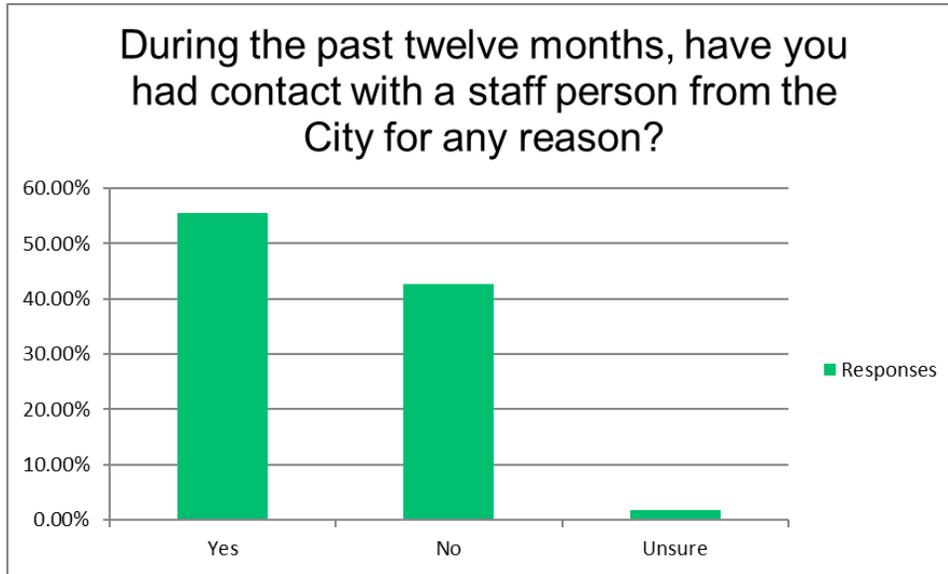
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good	41.04%	142
Good	47.98%	166
Average	9.54%	33
Poor	0.87%	3
Very Poor	0.58%	2
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>346</b>

Residents of Geneva rated the City’s maintenance and appearance of streets and buildings highly as 308 respondents, or 89%, selected good or very good. Only five (5) respondents rated cleanliness as very poor or poor, which when combined accounted for 1% of all responses. Average received the third most responses with 33, or 10% of votes.



### Question Fifteen

Respondents were asked if they had contact with a staff person from the City during the past twelve months.



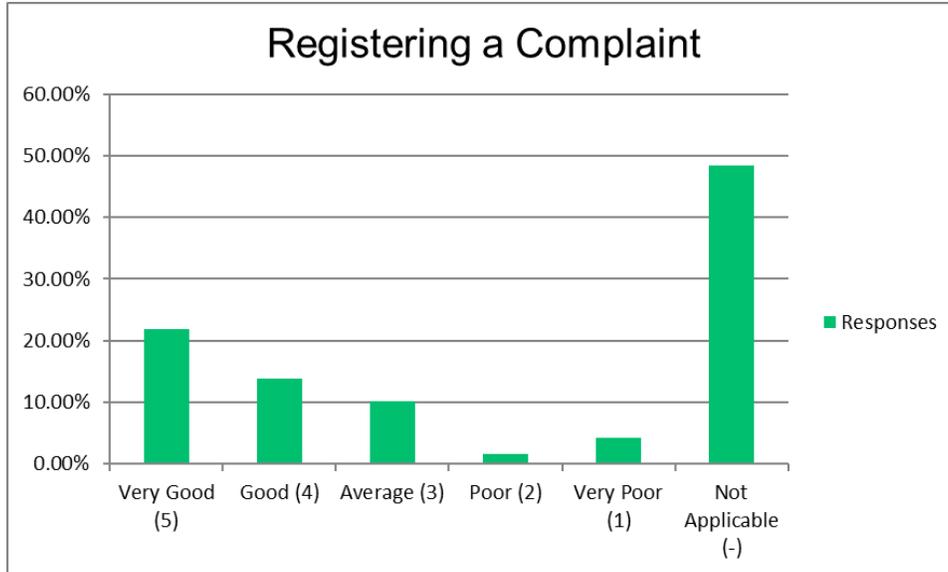
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	55.56%	190
No	42.69%	146
Unsure	1.75%	6
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>342</b>

The majority of respondents, or 56%, indicated that they have had contact with City staff in the 12 months. Yes was chosen by 190 respondents in contrast to No, which was chosen 146 times, or by 43% of respondents.



### Question Sixteen

Respondents that answered that they had contact with a staff person from the City within the last twelve months were prompted to indicate their level of satisfaction for the following listed aspects, using a five-point scale from very poor to very good: *Registering a Complaint*



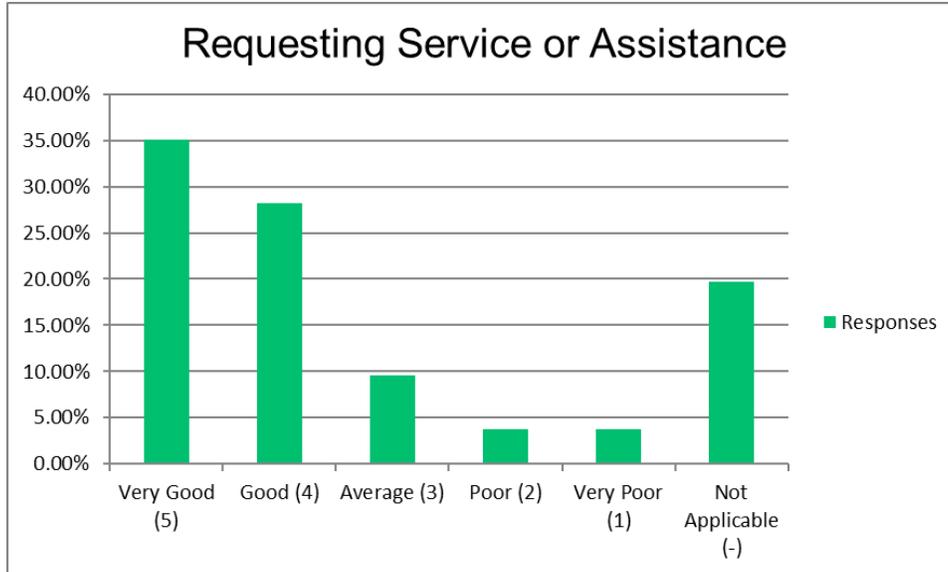
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good (5)	21.81%	41
Good (4)	13.83%	26
Average (3)	10.11%	19
Poor (2)	1.60%	3
Very Poor (1)	4.26%	8
Not Applicable (-)	48.40%	91
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>188</b>

Many respondents, or 48%, indicated not applicable when asked about their experience registering a complaint with the City. Of the respondents that did register a complaint 67, or 36%, of respondents indicated they have had good or very good experiences registering complaints. Only 11 respondents, or 6%, rated this experience poor or very poor. Average was the third most common choice as it received 19 votes, or 10% of responses.



### Question Seventeen

Respondents that answered that they had contact with a staff person from the City within the last twelve months were prompted to indicate their level of satisfaction for the following listed aspects, using a five-point scale from very poor to very good: *Requesting Service or Assistance*



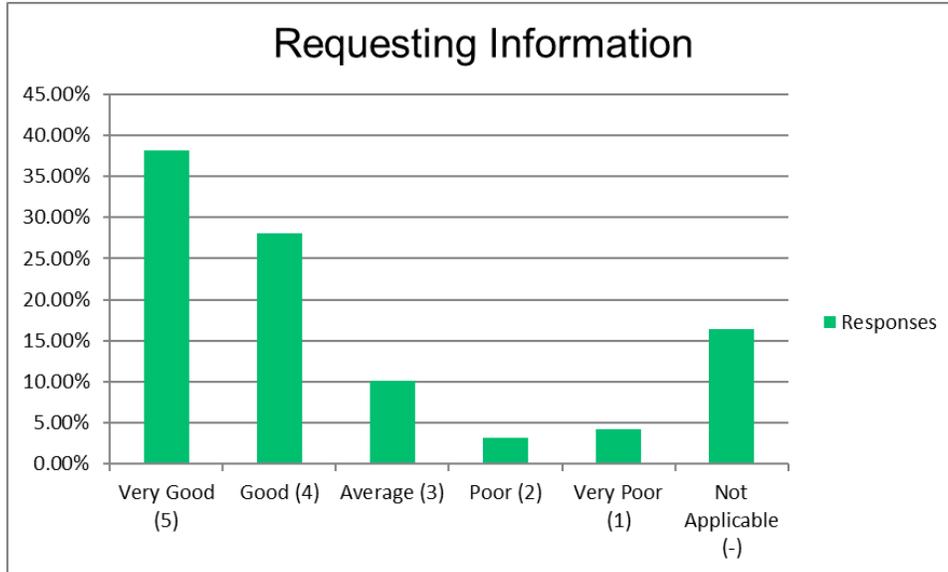
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good (5)	35.11%	66
Good (4)	28.19%	53
Average (3)	9.57%	18
Poor (2)	3.72%	7
Very Poor (1)	3.72%	7
Not Applicable (-)	19.68%	37
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>188</b>

The majority of respondents experienced good or very good service when requesting assistance from the City of Geneva as 119 respondents, or 63%, selected those choices. Very poor and poor only received 14 combined responses, or 7%, while average received 18 responses, or 10%.



## Question Eighteen

Respondents that answered that they had contact with a staff person from the City within the last twelve months were prompted to indicate their level of satisfaction for the following listed aspects, using a five-point scale from very poor to very good: *Requesting Information*



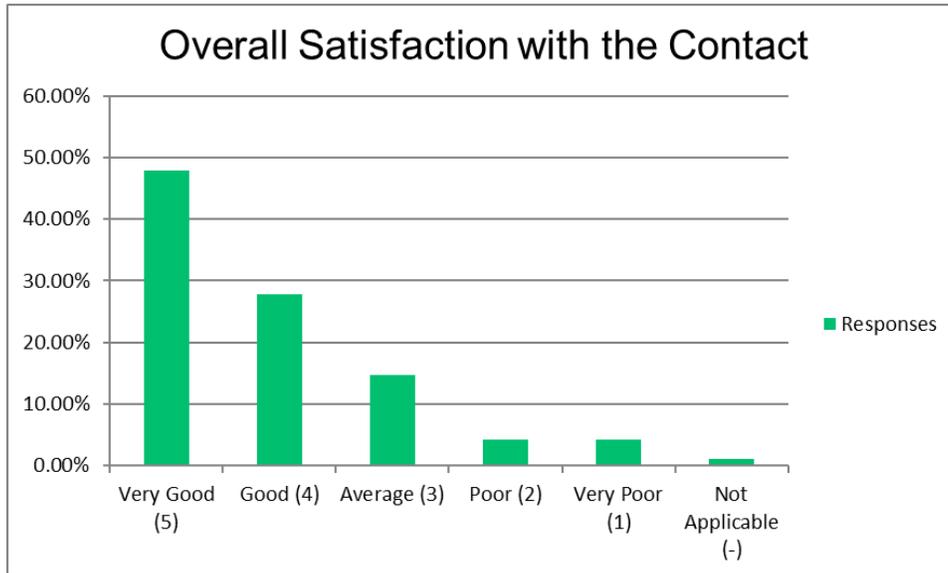
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good (5)	38.10%	72
Good (4)	28.04%	53
Average (3)	10.05%	19
Poor (2)	3.17%	6
Very Poor (1)	4.23%	8
Not Applicable (-)	16.40%	31
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>189</b>

The majority of respondents indicated positive experiences when requesting information from the City. 125 respondents, or 66%, indicated that their experiences have been good or very good when requesting information, while only 15 respondents, or 8%, indicated a poor or very poor experience. Average was selected by 19 respondents, or 10%.



### Question Nineteen

Respondents that answered that they had contact with a staff person from the City within the last twelve months were prompted to indicate their level of satisfaction for the following listed aspects, using a five-point scale from very poor to very good: *Overall Satisfaction with the Contact*



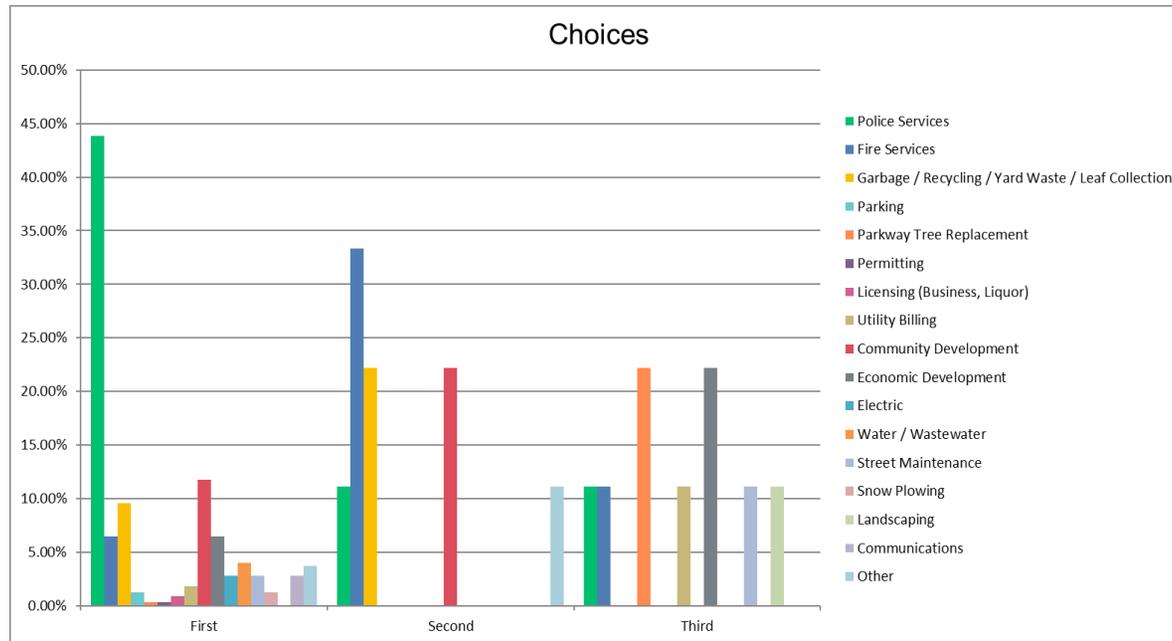
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Good (5)	47.89%	91
Good (4)	27.89%	53
Average (3)	14.74%	28
Poor (2)	4.21%	8
Very Poor (1)	4.21%	8
Not Applicable (-)	1.05%	2
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>190</b>

The majority of respondents indicated strong satisfaction when having contact with City staff. 144 respondents, or 75%, indicated that their contacts with staff have been good or very good, while only 16 respondents, or 8%, indicated a poor or very poor experience. Average was selected by 28 respondents, or 15%.



### Question Twenty

Respondents were asked to indicate the three City services that are most important to them, beginning with most important first, followed by their second- and third-most important services. Question 20 asked residents to indicate the City service that is most important to them.



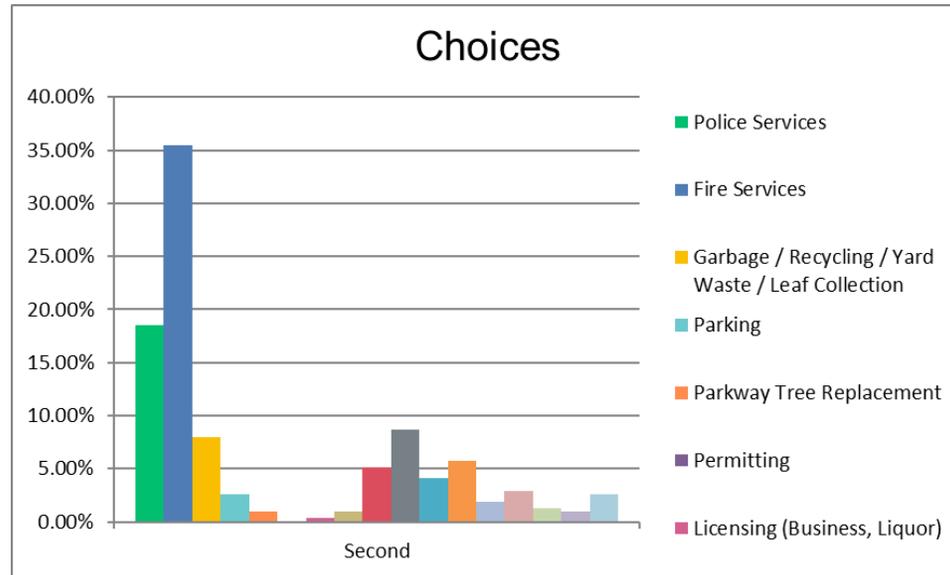
	Police Services	Fire Services	Garbage / Recycling / Yard Waste / Leaf	Parking	Parkway Tree Replacement	Permitting	Licensing (Business, Liquor)	Utility Billing	Community Development	Economic Development	Electric	Water / Wastewater	Street Maintenance	Snow Plowing	Landscaping	Communications	Other	Total
First	43.83% 142	6.48% 21	9.57% 31	1.23% 4	0.31% 1	0.31% 1	0.93% 3	1.85% 6	11.73% 38	6.48% 21	2.78% 9	4.01% 13	2.78% 9	1.23% 4	0.00% 0	2.78% 9	3.70% 12	324
Second	11.11% 1	33.33% 3	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	9
Third	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9
																	<b>Answered</b>	<b>324</b>

Most respondents noted police services as the most important City service as 142 respondents, or 44%, selected this service. Community development received the second most first place votes as 38 respondents, or 12%, selected the category.



### Question Twenty-One

Respondents were asked to indicate the three City services that are most important to them, beginning with most important first, followed by their second- and third-most important services. Question 21 asked residents to indicate the City service that is second-most important to them.



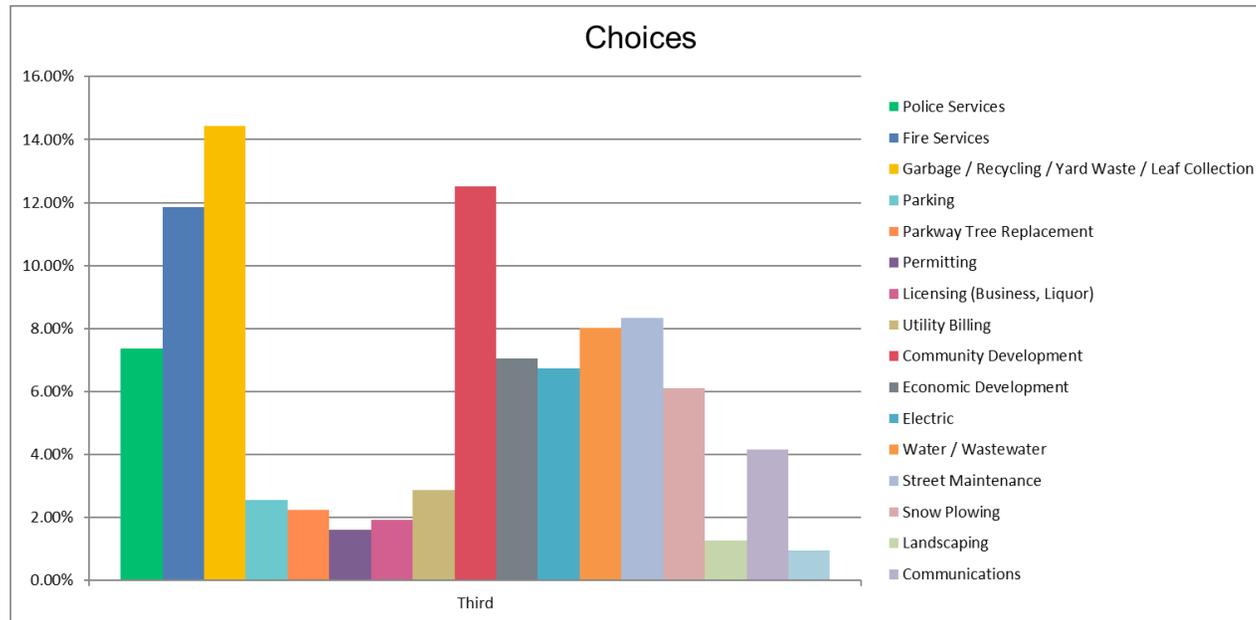
	Police Services	Fire Services	Garbage / Recycling / Yard Waste / Leaf Collection	Parking	Parkway Tree Replacement	Permitting	Licensing (Business, Liquor)	Utility Billing	Community Development	Economic Development	Electric	Water / Wastewater	Street Maintenance	Snow Plowing	Landscaping	Communications	Other	Total	
Second	18.53% 58	35.46% 111	7.99% 25	2.56% 8	0.96% 3	0.00% 0	0.32% 1	0.96% 3	5.11% 16	8.63% 27	4.15% 13	5.75% 18	1.92% 6	2.88% 9	1.28% 4	0.96% 3	2.56% 8	313	
																		Answered	313

Most respondents noted fire services as the second most important City service as 111 respondents, or 35%, selected this service. Police was the next most common selection for the second most important service as 58 respondents, or 19%, chose this. The third and fourth choices for the second most important service were economic development and garbage, recycling, yard waste, and leaf collection. Economic development was selected by 27 respondents, or 9%, while garbage, recycling, yard waste, and leaf collection was selected by 25 respondents, or 8%.



### Question Twenty-Two

Respondents were asked to indicate the three City services that are most important to them, beginning with most important first, followed by their second- and third-most important services. Question 22 asked residents to indicate the City service that is third-most important to them.



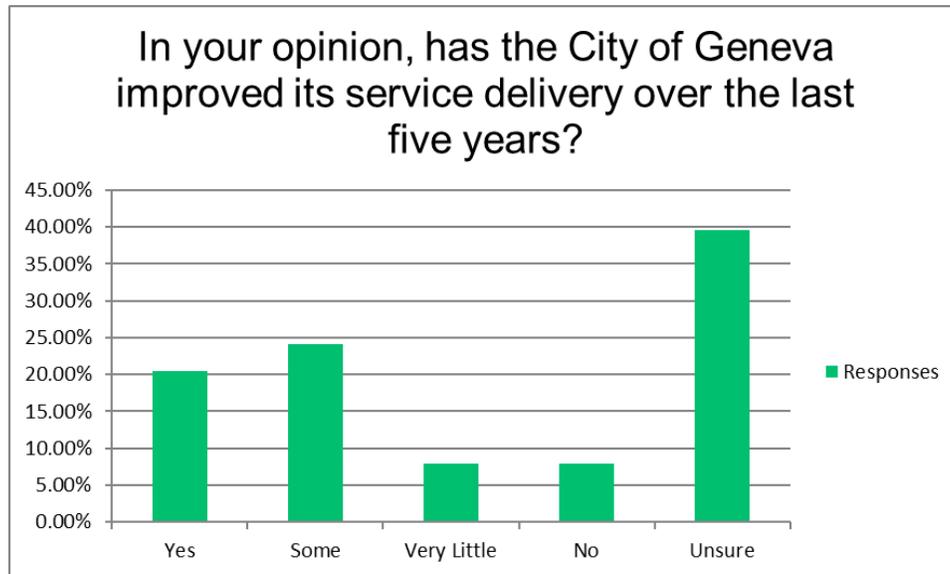
	Police Services	Fire Services	Garbage / Recycling / Yard Waste / Leaf	Parking	Parkway Tree Replacement	Permitting	Licensing (Business, Liquor)	Utility Billing	Community Development	Economic Development	Electric	Water / Wastewater	Street Maintenance	Snow Plowing	Landscaping	Communications	Other	Total
Third	7.37% 23	11.86% 37	14.42% 45	2.56% 8	2.24% 7	1.60% 5	1.92% 6	2.88% 9	12.50% 39	7.05% 22	6.73% 21	8.01% 25	8.33% 26	6.09% 19	1.28% 4	4.17% 13	0.96% 3	312
																	<b>Answered</b>	<b>312</b>

Garbage, recycling, yard waste, and leaf collection received the most selections by respondents as Geneva’s third most important service, followed by community development. 45 Respondents or 14% selected Garbage, recycling, yard waste, and leaf collection and 39 respondents, or 13%, selected community development. Fire services ranked third with 37 responses, or 12%.



### Question Twenty-Three

Respondents were asked in their opinion, has the City of Geneva improved its service delivery over the last five years?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	20.43%	67
Some	24.09%	79
Very Little	7.93%	26
No	7.93%	26
Unsure	39.63%	130
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>328</b>

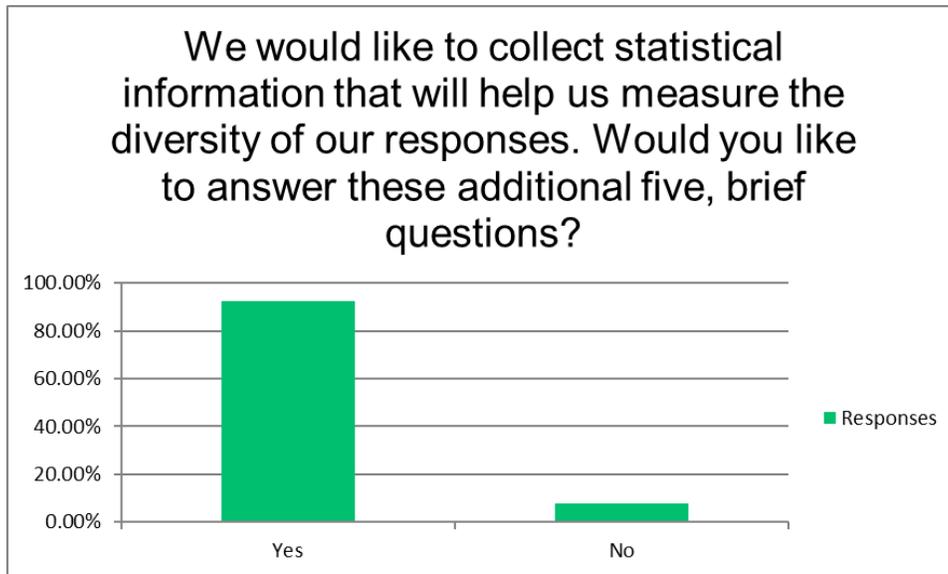
Respondents had varying responses about whether the City of Geneva has improved service delivery in the past five years. 146 respondents, or 45%, selected either yes or some, indicating that there was some level of noticeable improvement to service delivery. Unsure received the most individual responses with 130, or 40%, indicating that a large number of respondents have not noticed any improvement.





### Question Twenty-Five

Respondents were asked if they would provide demographic data in order to measure the diversity of responses. If they selected yes, they were prompted to answer additional questions.



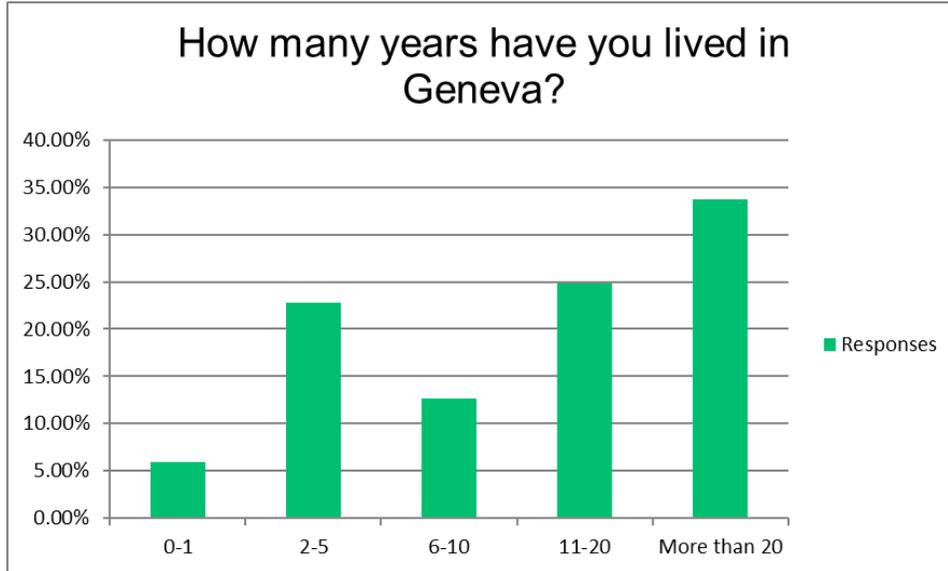
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	92.41%	292
No	7.59%	24
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>316</b>

292 respondents, or 92%, indicated they would be willing to provide demographic data.



### Question Twenty-Six

Respondents were asked how many years they lived in Geneva.



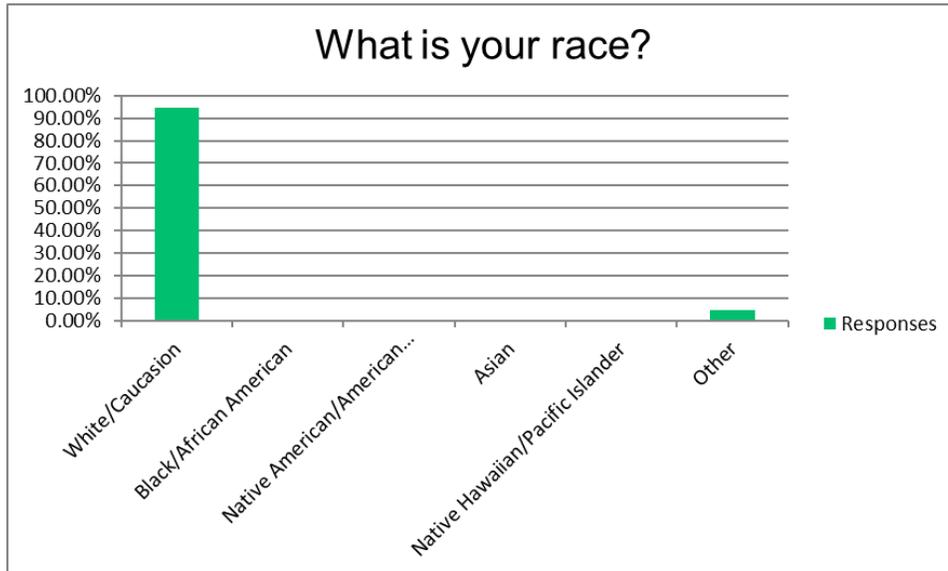
Answer Choices	Responses	
0-1	5.91%	14
2-5	22.78%	54
6-10	12.66%	30
11-20	24.89%	59
More than 20	33.76%	80
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>237</b>

The majority of respondents have lived in the Geneva community for at least 11 years. 139 respondents, or 59%, indicated that they have lived in Geneva for 11-20 years or more than 20 years. 84 respondents, or 35%, indicated they have lived in Geneva for 2-10 years, and the remaining 14 respondents, or 6%, have lived in Geneva for one year or less.



## Question Twenty-Seven

Respondents were asked which race they most closely identify themselves with.



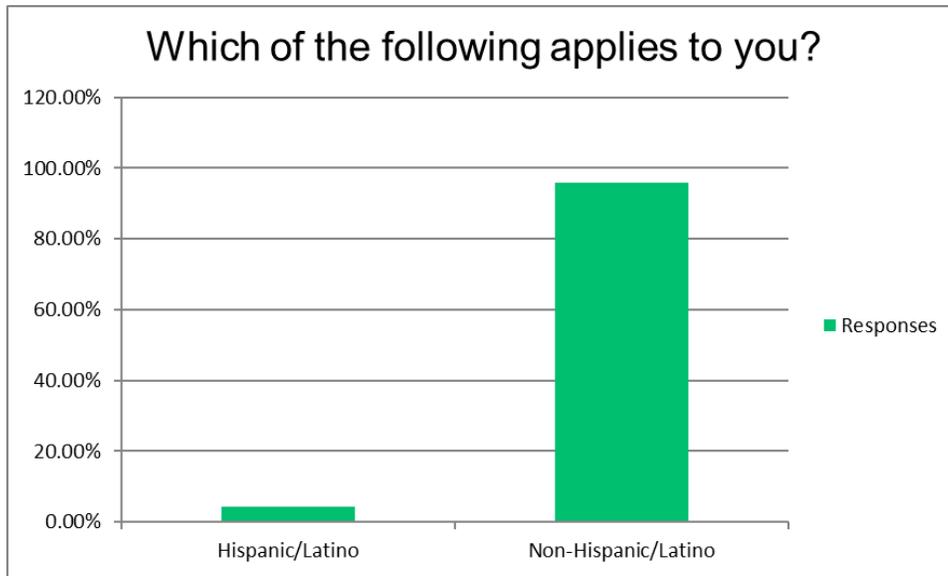
Answer Choices	Responses	
White/Caucasian	94.69%	232
Black/African American	0.00%	0
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native	0.00%	0
Asian	0.41%	1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.41%	1
Other	4.49%	11
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>245</b>

Almost all respondents, or 95%, racially identified as White/Caucasian, as 232 of respondents selected this choice.



### Question Twenty-Eight

Respondents were asked which of the following designations applies to them: Hispanic/Latino or Non-Hispanic/Latino



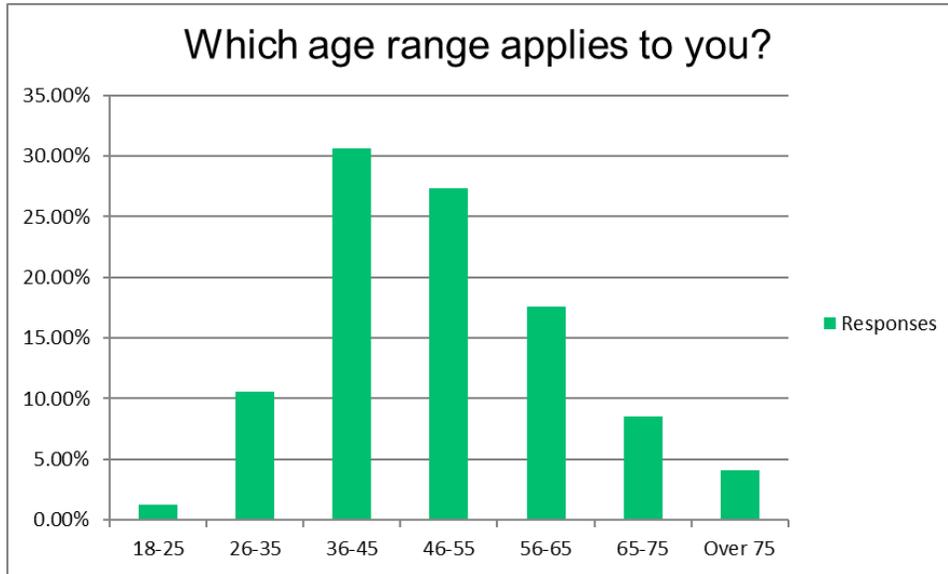
Answer Choices	Responses	
Hispanic/Latino	4.18%	10
Non-Hispanic/Latino	95.82%	229
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>239</b>

Almost all respondents, or 96%, racially identified as Non-Hispanic/Latino, as 229 of respondents selected this choice.



### Question Twenty-Nine

Respondents were asked about the age range they most identified with and could choose between seven options ranging from 18-25 to over 75.



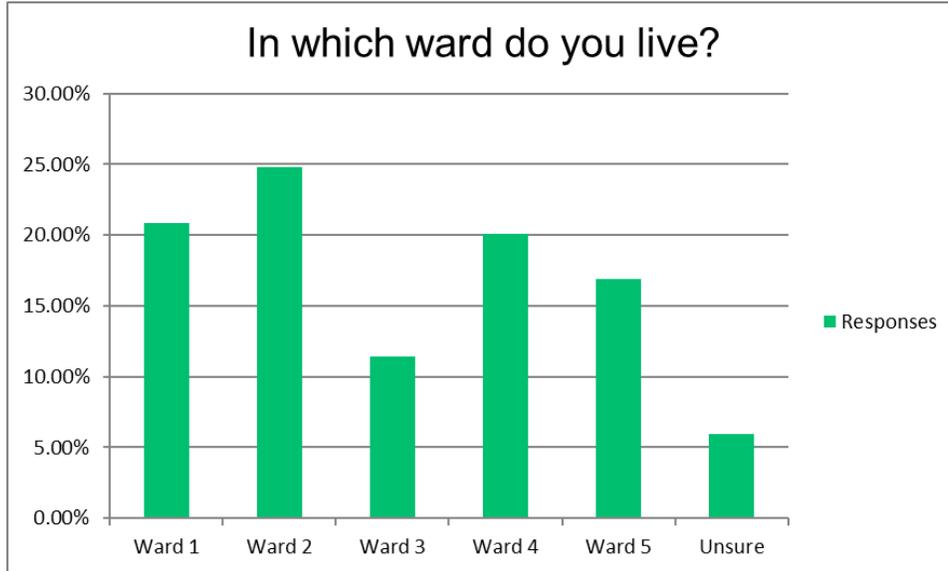
Answer Choices	Responses	
18-25	1.22%	3
26-35	10.61%	26
36-45	30.61%	75
46-55	27.35%	67
56-65	17.55%	43
65-75	8.57%	21
Over 75	4.08%	10
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>245</b>

Most respondents to the survey were in the 36-45 year old age range, which 75 respondents, or 31%, identified with. The second most common age group for respondents was the 46-55 year old age range, which was selected by 67 respondents, or 27%. All other age groups combined represented 103 respondents, or 42%.



### Question Thirty

Respondents were shown an Interactive Ward Map and asked to identify in which ward they live.



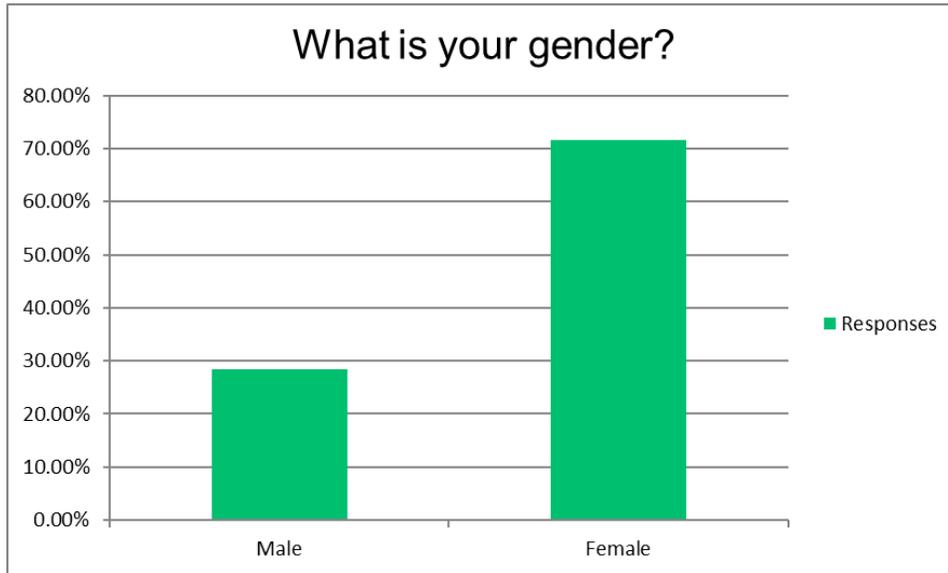
Answer Choices	Responses	
Ward 1	20.87%	53
Ward 2	24.80%	63
Ward 3	11.42%	29
Ward 4	20.08%	51
Ward 5	16.93%	43
Unsure	5.91%	15
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>254</b>

Ward 2 had the most respondents with 63, or 24.89%; but, it was closely followed by Wards 1 and 4, which each had 53 and 51 respondents respectively, or approximately 20% each. Together, Wards 1, 2, and 4 accounted for approximately 75% of survey responses.



### Question Thirty-One

Respondents were asked to identify their gender.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	28.40%	73
Female	71.60%	184
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>257</b>

Over two-thirds of respondents identified as women. 184, or 72%, of respondents were women while 29%, or 73 respondents identified as men.