



The Research Bureau

**Citizen Satisfaction with Municipal Services
and Quality of Life in Worcester:
2006 Survey Findings**

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Center for Community Performance Measurement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the summer of 2006, the Center for Community Performance Measurement at The Research Bureau mailed a survey to 10,000 randomly selected households in Worcester. *The 2006 Survey of Worcester Residents* included questions about quality of life, public safety, quality of and satisfaction with municipal services, and taxes and budget priorities. A total of 1,615 surveys were completed and returned to The Research Bureau where staff entered and analyzed the data. This report summarizes the survey's principal findings, and is divided into the following 11 parts:

- ❖ Introduction and Purpose
- ❖ Satisfaction with Quality of Life and City Services
- ❖ Public Safety
- ❖ Worcester Public Library
- ❖ Worcester Public Schools
- ❖ Contact with City Departments and Communications
- ❖ City Budget and Municipal Spending
- ❖ Appendix A: Survey Methodology
- ❖ Appendix B: Respondent Characteristics
- ❖ Appendix C: Survey Instrument
- ❖ Appendix D: City of Worcester Crime Statistics

Summary of Findings

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (64%) were satisfied with the overall quality of life in Worcester. Survey findings included the following:

- ❖ Users of the Worcester Public Library provided high ratings for many aspects of service including assistance provided by library staff (96% satisfied), children's programs (94% satisfied), computer/online resources (93% satisfied), and selection of library materials (93% satisfied).
- ❖ Among respondents receiving assistance from Worcester's emergency service providers –Police, Fire, and UMass Memorial EMS (ambulance service)- the vast majority were satisfied with these providers' response times, professionalism, and quality of service.
- ❖ About nine out of ten (91%) respondents stated that they felt "safe" or "very safe" walking alone in their neighborhoods during the daytime.
- ❖ Seventy-nine percent of respondents rated residential trash collection and recycling services as "excellent" or "good."
- ❖ About three-quarters of respondents rated residential sewer and drainage services as "excellent" or "good."

- ❖ Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents thought that snow removal on major City streets was “excellent” or “good” (though as smaller percentage, 51%, offered the same ratings when asked about snow removal on streets in their neighborhood).
- ❖ Sixty-two percent of respondents were satisfied with Worcester as a place to raise children.
- ❖ Half of all respondents were satisfied with Worcester as a place to live during retirement.
- ❖ Forty-eight percent of respondents rated the Worcester Public Schools as “good” or “excellent,” 36% of respondents said they were “fair,” and 16% gave a rating of “poor” or “very poor.”
- ❖ Forty-six percent of respondents were satisfied with the overall appearance of Worcester.
- ❖ Street and sidewalk cleanliness were deemed “excellent” or “good” by 37% of respondents (about one in three).
- ❖ Among respondents “occasionally” or “frequently” spending time Downtown, 28% stated that they felt safe when walking in the Downtown area at night.
- ❖ Twenty-seven percent of respondents rated the condition of their neighborhood streets as “good” or “excellent,” 31% said they were “fair,” and 43% said they were “poor” or “very poor.”
- ❖ Twenty-one percent of respondents thought that the condition of neighborhood sidewalks was “good” or “excellent,” 33% said they were “fair,” and the largest proportion, 46%, reported that they were “poor” or “very poor.”

Respondents were also asked to express their views about taxes, spending, and budget priorities.

- ❖ Forty-five percent of respondents stated that they were satisfied with the value of services received for their City tax dollars, while 55% were dissatisfied.
- ❖ Fifty-seven percent of respondents were satisfied with the City’s efforts to control the cost of municipal government.
- ❖ Nearly eight out of ten respondents (79%) indicated that they were unwilling to pay more in property taxes in order to see municipal services increased.
- ❖ When asked whether there are areas where municipal spending should be increased, 70% of respondents said “yes.” Almost one in three of these respondents thought that spending on the Worcester Public Schools should be increased.
- ❖ When asked whether there are areas where municipal spending should be reduced, 55% of respondents said yes. About one in five of these respondents proposed reducing the City’s workforce (including specific suggestions to reduce spending on management positions).

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Research Bureau's Center for Community Performance Measurement (CCPM) is pleased to present the results of its *2006 Survey of Worcester Residents*. The survey, developed as a performance measurement tool, gave residents the opportunity to rate their satisfaction with a number of quality-of-life concerns in the City and to evaluate the performance of the City's major public services, such as street maintenance, refuse collection, public library services, and police and fire protection.

We emphasize that while the findings from this survey describe *how* residents judge the services provided by municipal government, they do not tell us *why* residents feel the way they do. Nor does this report describe specific changes or identify actions that may be needed to improve citizen satisfaction in the future. Nevertheless, the results of this survey are important because "people judge government performance in ways that often differ markedly from the standard measures that governments use to evaluate themselves."¹ When used in conjunction with other performance measurement data, the findings from citizen surveys become an important tool in sound decision-making and resource allocation.²

Methodology

The findings described in this report are based on a mail survey sent to 10,000 Worcester households in July 2006. The sample was selected from a purchased list containing all residential mailing addresses within the City. A systematic sampling method was used, which closely approximates random sampling by selecting approximately every seventh address until the desired number of households is obtained. This method allowed all households an equal chance of being included in the sample. (See **Appendix A** for further methodological discussion.)

Completed surveys were received from 1,615 residents, for a response rate of 16%.³ Respondent characteristics are detailed in **Appendix B** and a copy of the survey instrument is included in **Appendix C**. As a rule in survey research, a minimum of 400 representative responses are needed to make generalizations about the population as a whole from information obtained from a sample. The analyses contained in this report are based on more than four times the number of responses required for statistically valid analysis and reporting. The analyses presented here are typically based only on responses that stated an opinion, and exclude "don't know," "no opinion," and "not applicable" responses. (See **Appendix C, Table C-1**.)

¹ Barbara Cohn Berman, *Listening to the Public: Adding the Voices of the People to Government Performance Measurement and Reporting*. (Fund for the City of New York, 2005).

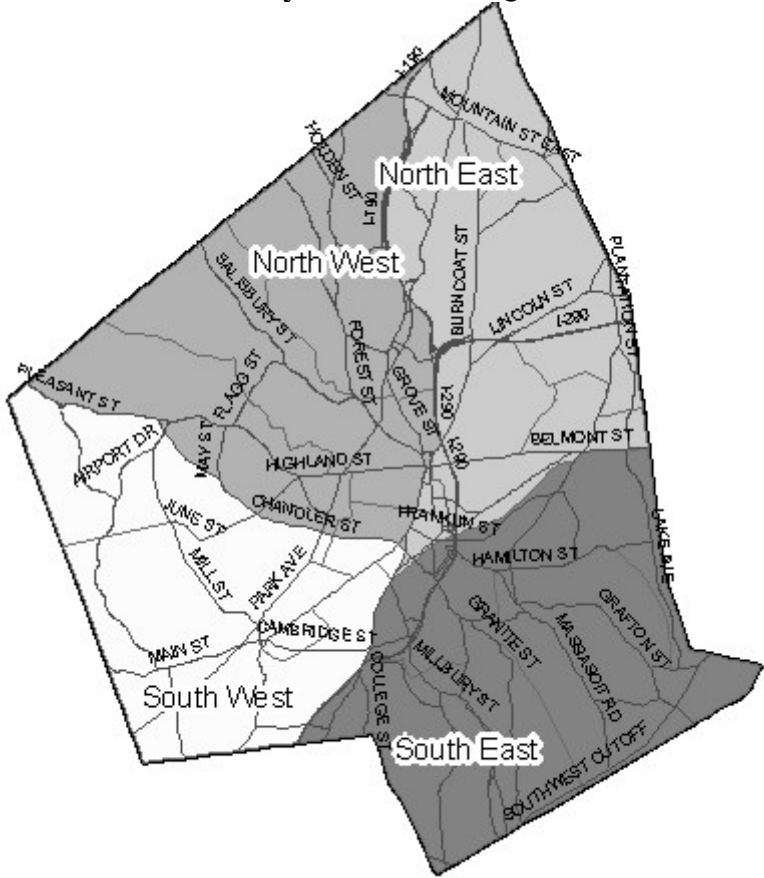
² The CCPM regularly issues reports Benchmarking the City's performance in the areas of economic development, public safety, public education, municipal and neighborhood services, and youth services. All reports are available at www.wrrb.org

³ Completed surveys were entered by CCPM staff into a database. The validity of the entered data was verified by running frequency distributions for each survey question to identify responses that did not fall within the valid response range, and identified errors were corrected.

Geographic Analysis of Data

Respondents were asked to identify the neighborhood in which they reside and to provide the name of the street on which they live. This information was used to determine in which of the four quadrants of the City the respondent lived (see map below), and most survey questions were analyzed at both the citywide and quadrant levels. A total of 1,523 respondents (94.3%) provided sufficient information to be assigned to a quadrant. Many of the charts and tables contained in this report show data at both the citywide and quadrant levels. However, for the most part, our discussion focuses on the findings for the larger sample of *all* respondents, as we typically observed relatively small differences when comparing responses across quadrants.⁴

City of Worcester Quadrants



Quadrant Information

Total Responses = 1,615 with +/- 2.4% Margin of Error

Northwest: (379 Responses, +/- 5.0% Margin of Error)
Includes Crown Hill/Piedmont, Elm Park, Indian Hill, Indian Lake East, Newton Square, Salisbury/Forest Grove, West Tatnuck/Salisbury

Northeast: (352 Responses, +/- 5.2% Margin of Error)
Includes Bell Hill, Brittan Square, Burncoat, Great Brook Valley, Greendale, N. Lincoln Street, Shrewsbury Street

Southwest: (364 Responses, +/- 5.1% Margin of Error)
Includes Beacon Brightly, Beaver Brook, Columbus Park, Cider Mill, Hadwen Park, Main Middle, South Worcester, Tatnuck, University Park and Webster Square

Southeast: (428 Responses, +/- 4.7% Margin of Error)
Includes Broadmeadow Brook, College Hill, Franklin/Plantation, Grafton Hill, Green Island, Hamilton, Lake Park, Quinsigamond Village, Union Hill, Vernon Hill

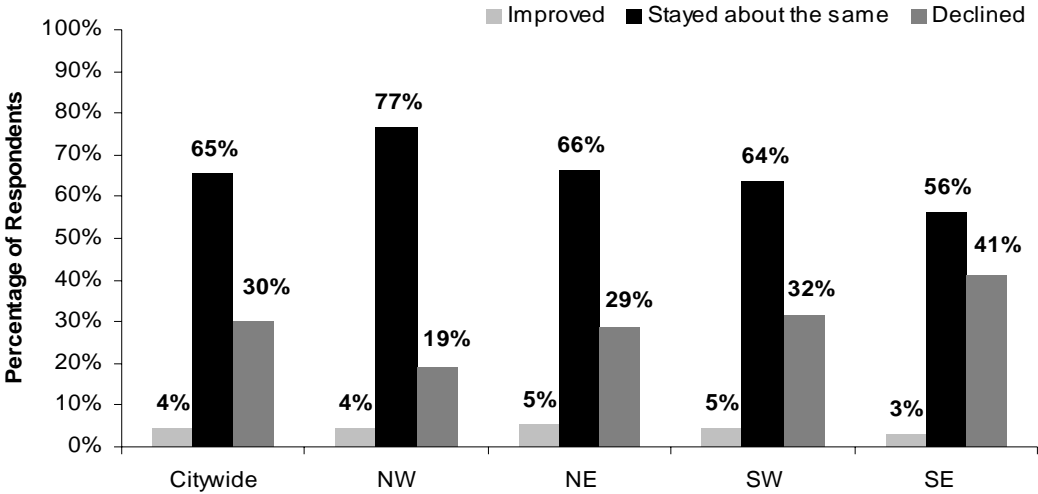
⁴ Our analysis did not include tests of statistical significance. A statistically significant difference does not necessarily imply that the difference is a meaningful one. Small, but statistically significant differences may have no practical policy implications.

SATISFACTION WITH QUALITY OF LIFE AND CITY SERVICES

Quality of Life Issues

Respondents were asked to rate a range of quality-of-life issues using a scale of “very satisfied,” “satisfied,” “dissatisfied,” and “very dissatisfied.” Nearly 60% of respondents stated they were “satisfied” with the overall quality of life in the City, 5% were “very satisfied,” about 30% were “dissatisfied,” and another 5% were “very dissatisfied.” As shown in **Figure 1**, when asked about the quality of life in their neighborhood over the past five years, about two-thirds (65.4%) of respondents citywide indicated that it had stayed about the same, 30% judged that it had declined, and 4.4% stated that it had improved. Residents in the Northwest quadrant were most likely to report that the quality of life in their neighborhood was unchanged (77%), while those residing in the Southeast quadrant were most likely to state that it had declined (41%).

Figure 1: Quality of Life During the Past Five Years



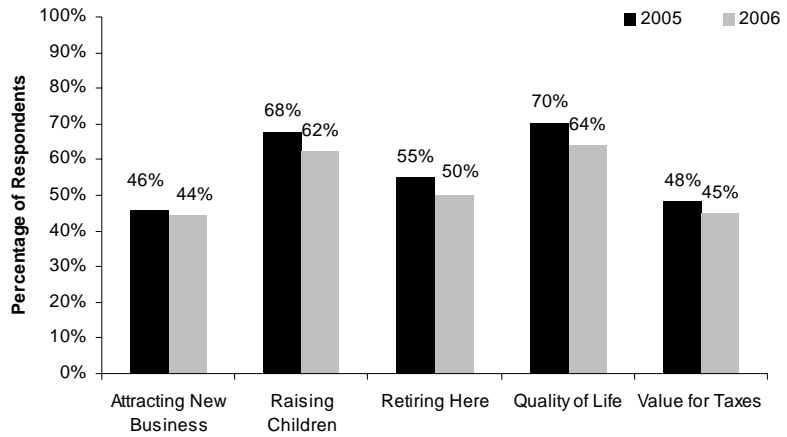
As shown in **Table 1**, almost two-thirds of respondents (62.1%) expressed satisfaction (“very satisfied” or “satisfied”) with Worcester as a place to raise children. About half of respondents were satisfied with the cost of living in Worcester and with Worcester as a place to retire. However, less than half of respondents were satisfied with the following aspects of life in Worcester: the City’s overall appearance (46.2%), the value of services received for their City tax dollars (45.1%) and the City’s efforts to attract new business (44.3%).

Table 1: Satisfaction with Quality of Life Issues

Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following based on your experiences or observations during the past 12 months	n	Percentage of Respondents			
		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Worcester as a place to raise children	1476	8.2%	53.9%	27.2%	10.8%
Worcester as a place to live during retirement	1487	6.7%	43.3%	34.0%	16.0%
The overall quality of life in Worcester	1520	5.1%	58.9%	30.8%	5.3%
The value of services received for your City tax dollars	1520	4.9%	40.2%	38.0%	16.9%
The cost of living in Worcester	1492	3.7%	46.8%	36.4%	13.1%
The City's efforts to attract businesses and jobs to the area	1491	3.6%	40.7%	42.9%	12.8%
The overall appearance of Worcester	1522	3.1%	43.1%	43.0%	10.8%

Figure 2 shows a number of areas where respondent satisfaction declined when comparing the 2005 and 2006 survey findings. Fewer residents said that they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the overall quality of life in Worcester (64% vs. 70% in 2005). The proportions of respondents expressing positive feelings about Worcester as a place to raise children and as a place to

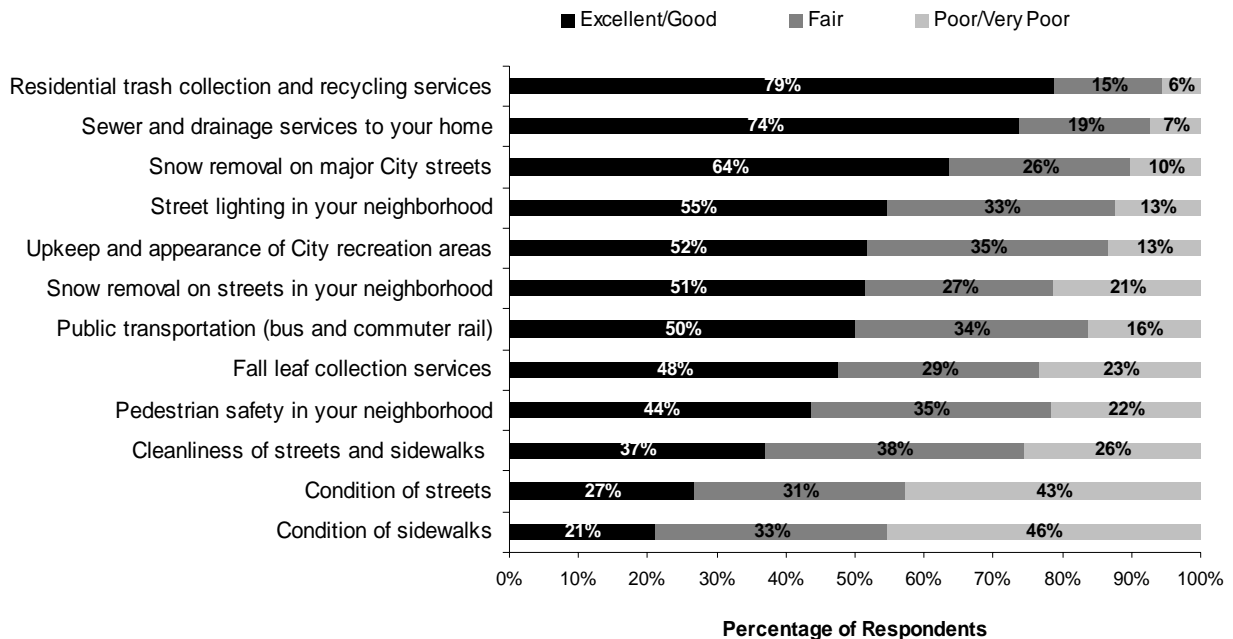
Figure 2: Respondents Satisfied or Very Satisfied with Quality of Life Issues in Worcester, 2005-2006



retire declined by 6% and 5%, respectively. While satisfaction with the City’s efforts to attract businesses and jobs to the area declined by only two percent, less than half of the respondents expressed satisfaction with municipal performance in this area. Similarly, only 45% of residents expressed satisfaction with the value of services received for their City tax dollars (down slightly from 48% in 2005), with 40% of respondents “satisfied” and only 5% “very satisfied.”

As shown in **Figure 3**, respondents were asked to rate a number of municipal services using a scale of “excellent,” “good,” “fair,” “poor,” and “very poor.” Residential trash-collection services received the highest rating from respondents citywide, with 79% rating the service “excellent” or “good.” Sewer and drainage services were also highly rated, with almost three-quarters (74%) of respondents providing an “excellent” or “good” rating.

Figure 3: Respondents' Ratings of Various Municipal Services



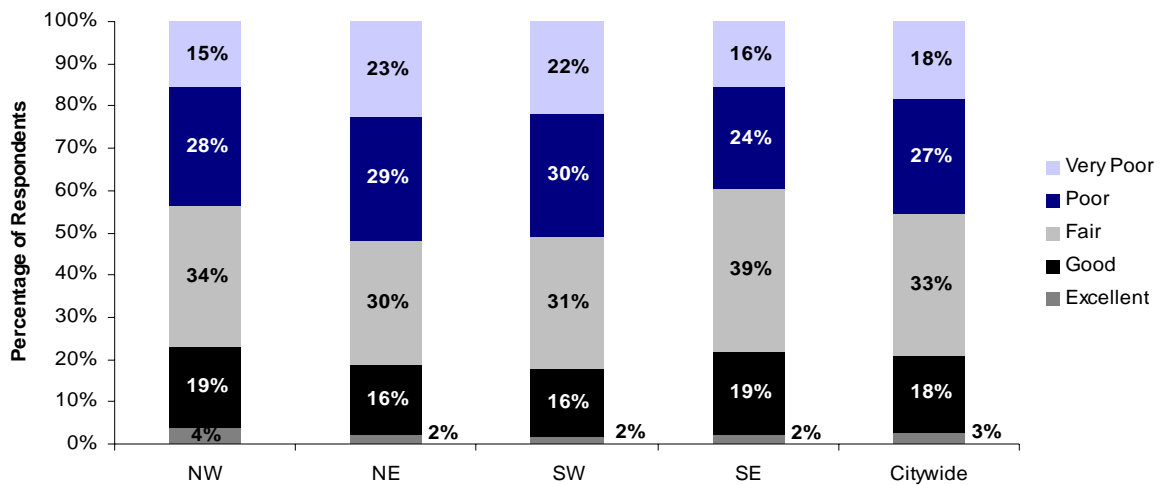
Snow Removal

Almost two-thirds of respondents citywide (64%) rated snow removal on major City streets as “excellent” or “good,” with 26% indicating “fair” and the remaining 10% “poor” or “very poor.” A smaller proportion of respondents (51.4%) gave a positive rating for snow removal on streets in their own neighborhood, while more than one in five respondents (21.4%) gave a “poor” or “very poor” rating for this service.

Street & Sidewalk Conditions

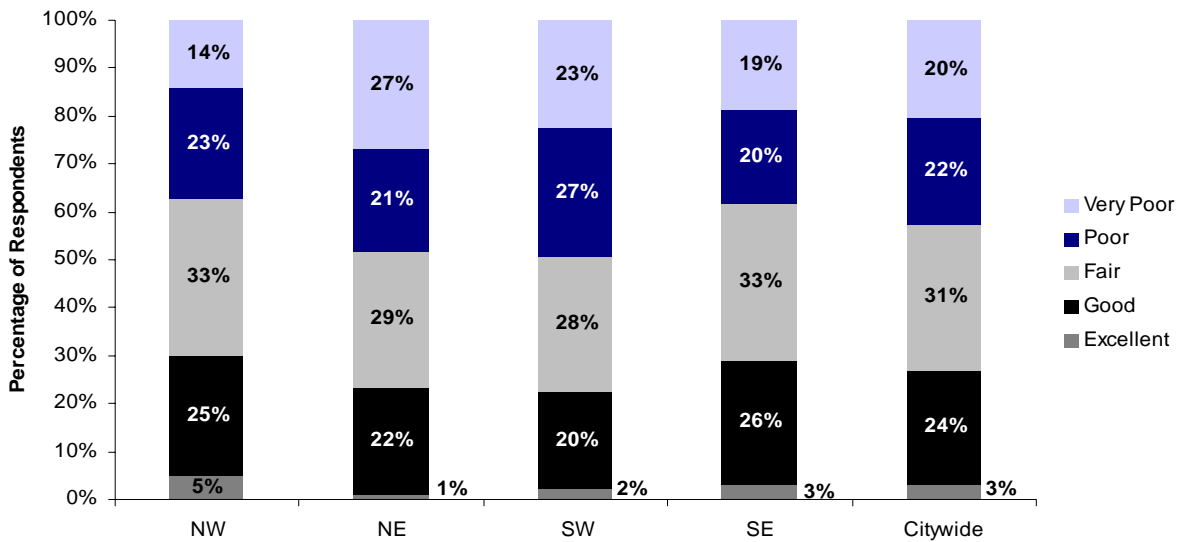
The condition of neighborhood sidewalks (smoothness/evenness) received the lowest rating of any condition, service, or issue. **Figure 4** shows that citywide, only about one in five respondents (21%) gave an “excellent” or “good” rating (with the vast majority of those being “good” ratings), 33% stated “fair,” and a larger proportion of respondents offered a “poor” or “very poor” rating (46%). The most unfavorable sidewalk conditions were reported in the Northeast and Southwest quadrants.

Figure 4: Condition of Neighborhood Sidewalks



The condition of neighborhood streets/road surfaces also received relatively poor ratings. **Figure 5** shows that about 27% of respondents citywide offered a positive (“excellent” or “good”) rating, with a substantially larger proportion of respondents (43%) offering a “poor” or “very poor” assessment. The cleanliness of streets and sidewalks fared slightly better but still received poor ratings as well; about 37% of respondents gave an “excellent” or “good” rating, while more than one-quarter gave a “poor” or “very poor” rating. As with sidewalk conditions, the most unfavorable street/road conditions were reported in the Northeast and Southwest quadrants.

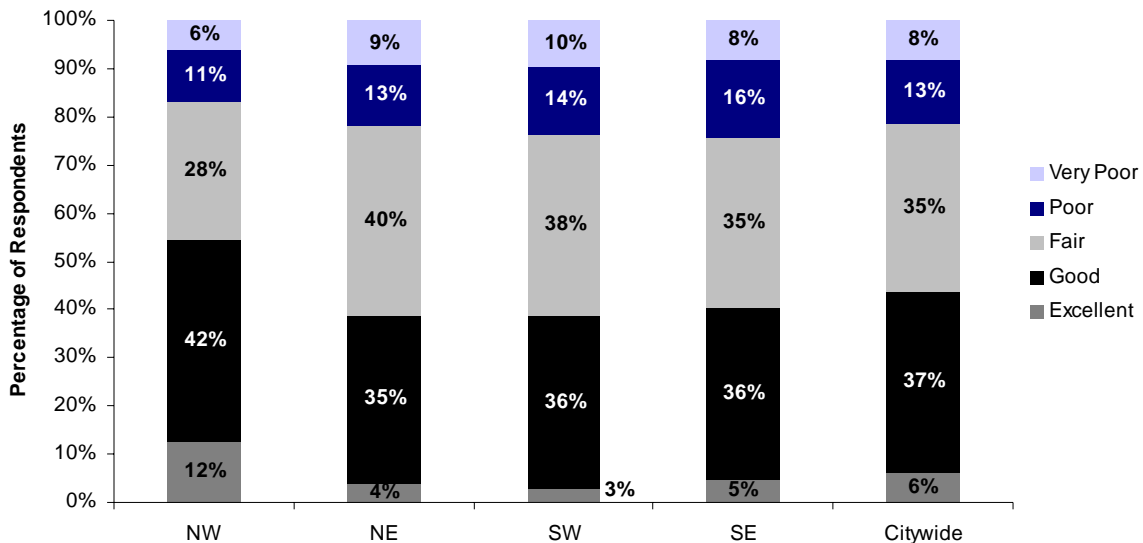
Figure 5: Condition of Neighborhood Street/Road Surfaces



Pedestrian Safety

Figure 6 shows that more than one in five (22%) respondents rated pedestrian safety in their neighborhood as “poor” or “very poor.” Respondents in the Northwest quadrant were most likely to offer positive ratings (54.6%) for pedestrian safety compared to 38.6% in the Northeast, 33.8% in the Southwest, and 40.4% in the Southeast.

Figure 6: Pedestrian Safety in Respondents' Neighborhoods

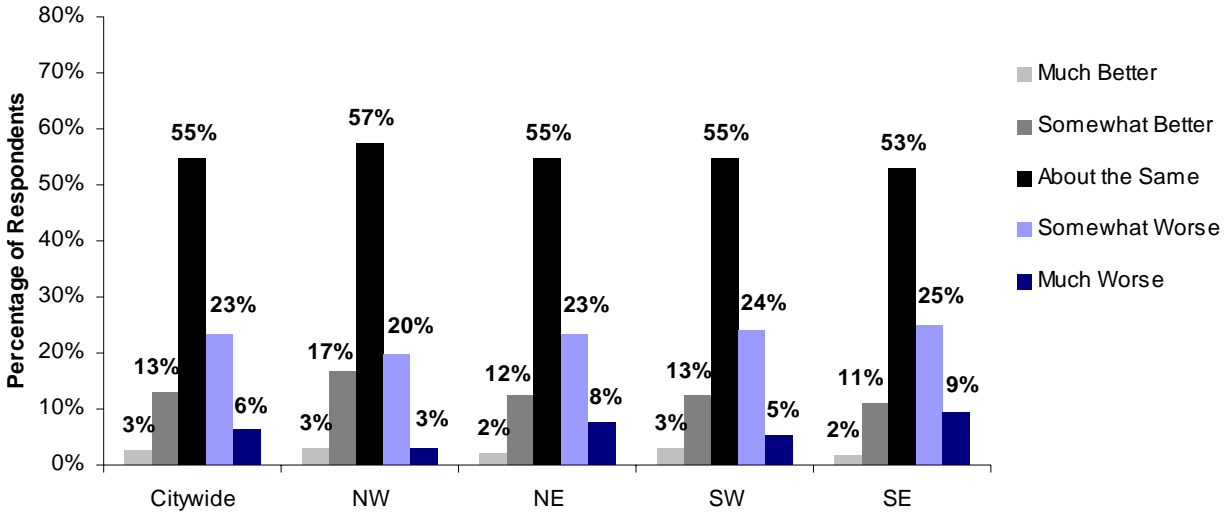


Physical Condition of Neighborhoods

Using a five-point scale ranging from “much better” to “much worse,” respondents were asked to describe changes in the physical condition of their neighborhood over the past five years. Citywide, 15.6% of respondents indicated that the physical condition of their neighborhood had become “much better” or “somewhat better,” slightly more than half (54.7%) stated it was “about the same,” and 30% said it was “somewhat worse” or “much worse.” Respondents stating that the physical condition of their neighborhood had become “somewhat worse” or “much worse” were more likely than those who perceived it to be unchanged or improved to rate the condition of streets surfaces in their neighborhood as “poor” or “very poor” (59.5% vs. 35.8%), to rate sidewalk conditions as “poor” or “very poor” (59.1% vs. 40.0%), to rate the cleanliness of streets and sidewalks as “poor” or “very poor” (46.4% vs. 18.5%), and to judge that rundown or deteriorating properties were a problem in the neighborhood (35.9% vs. 17.2%).

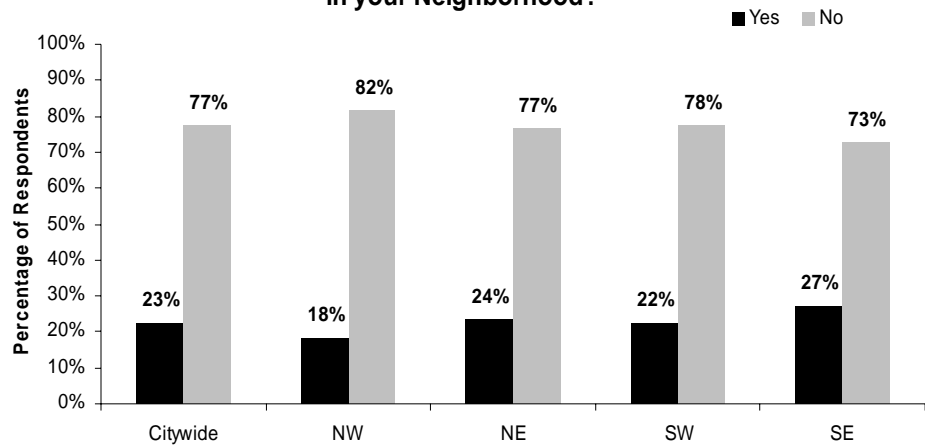
Figure 7 shows that residents of the Southeast quadrant were most likely to report that the physical condition of their neighborhood had become “much worse” (9%), while residents in the Northwest quadrant were most likely to state that the conditions were “somewhat better.” In each of the quadrants, relatively small proportions- between two and three percent- of respondents indicated that the physical condition of their neighborhood had become “much better” in the past five years.

Figure 7: Physical Condition of Neighborhood During Past Five Years



As shown in **Figure 8**, 22.6% of respondents citywide thought that rundown or deteriorating properties were a problem in their neighborhood. About 15% of respondents reported that the number of rundown or deteriorating properties had increased over the previous 12 months, while 12% reported that the number had

Figure 8: Are Rundown or Deteriorating Properties a Problem in your Neighborhood?



decreased. Further analysis reveals that respondents who thought that deteriorating properties were a problem in their neighborhood were more likely to rate the quality of life and the physical condition in their neighborhood over the past five years as having declined or worsened.⁵

Most Serious Neighborhood Issue

In addition to asking respondents to rate the various concerns and services described above, they were also asked to describe, in their own words, the most serious problem facing their neighborhood today. The 1,606 problems identified are provided in detail and also have been grouped into categories, as shown in **Table 2** below.⁶ Issues related to public safety - including drugs, gangs, break-ins, and loitering- made up almost one-third of the total responses received as the most serious neighborhood problem.

Differences by Quadrants

Respondents from the Northwest quadrant were the only group who did not identify public safety issues as their top problem; instead, 26% of problems identified were related to infrastructure features (streets, sidewalks, etc.). More specifically, traffic-related issues (e.g., speeding cars and dangerous intersections), were cited the most often by respondents in the Northwest quadrant (13.6% of responses) and in the Southwest quadrant (10.1% of responses). Eleven percent of the issues identified by respondents in the Northeast quadrant related to the poor condition of streets, while “drugs” were the most frequently cited problem (12.4%) in the Southeast quadrant.

⁵ See CCPM report 06-05, *Benchmarking Municipal and Neighborhood Services in Worcester: 2006* for further discussion of the physical condition of Worcester’s neighborhoods, and ComNET (Computerized Neighborhood Environment Tracking), a tool used to document more than 11,800 neighborhood problems since 2001.

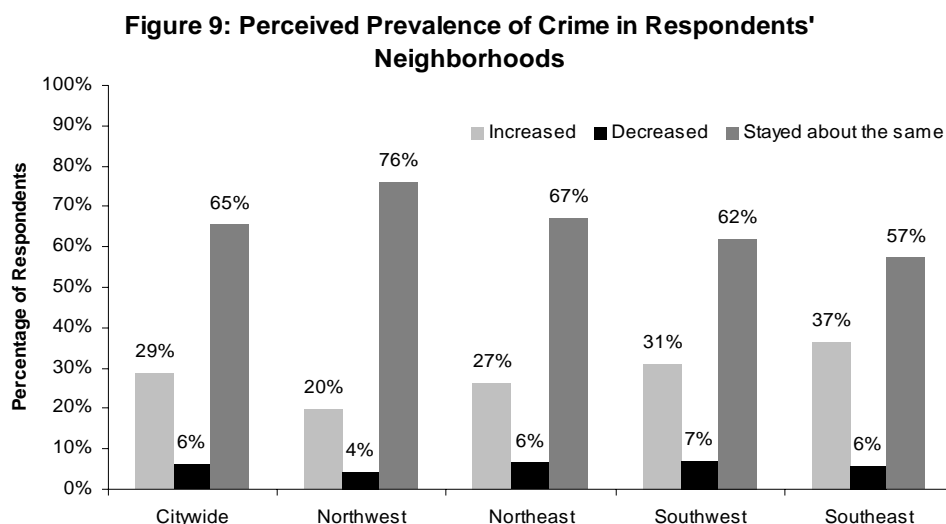
⁶ Respondents frequently identified more than one problem facing their neighborhood (1,002 respondents identified a total of more than 1,600 problems). The percentages in Table 2, are based on the total number of comments (1,606) received.

Table 2: What do you think is the most serious problem facing your neighborhood today?	Citywide (n=1606)	Percent of Total Responses			
		NW (n=369)	NE (n=339)	SW (n=388)	SE (n=442)
Drugs	8.4%	5.1%	8.3%	7.7%	12.4%
Crime	6.9%	5.1%	8.0%	6.4%	7.7%
Safety/ Do not feel safe	2.7%	1.8%	3.8%	3.1%	1.6%
Break-ins/ Theft	2.5%	1.6%	2.7%	2.3%	3.2%
Gangs	2.5%	1.9%	3.2%	1.8%	3.2%
Need more police or firefighters/ lack of police presence	2.3%	1.1%	2.7%	2.6%	2.3%
Vandalism/ Grafitti	1.2%	1.1%	0.6%	1.5%	1.8%
Guns/Violent Crime	1.2%	0.3%	2.1%	1.0%	1.1%
Animal control	1.0%	1.6%	1.5%	0.8%	0.2%
Prostitution	0.9%	0.8%	0.6%	2.1%	0.2%
Loitering	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Total Public Safety Related Issues	29.6%	20.3%	33.3%	29.4%	33.9%
Noise	3.9%	3.8%	3.8%	3.1%	4.8%
Building/ Construction/ Overdevelopment	3.4%	2.4%	5.0%	2.8%	3.2%
Condition of properties/ Upkeep	3.1%	3.0%	5.0%	1.8%	2.9%
Litter/Trash	2.4%	2.4%	3.2%	1.8%	2.5%
Cultural/ Socioeconomic tensions	2.2%	1.4%	0.6%	2.3%	3.6%
Lack of community/ Disrespect for neighbors	1.7%	1.9%	1.2%	2.1%	1.8%
General uncleanliness	1.3%	0.8%	0.9%	1.8%	1.4%
Abandoned buildings/ Vacant Storefronts	1.2%	0.5%	1.2%	1.8%	1.6%
Trees- proper care	1.2%	1.6%	1.2%	1.5%	0.7%
Absentee landlords/ Not enough owner-occupied housing	1.2%	1.6%	0.6%	0.5%	1.8%
Illegal dumping	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%
Dissatisfaction w/ delivery of City services	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	1.0%	0.2%
Lack of stores	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Physical Condition of Neighborhood/Quality of Life	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
Trash Collection	0.2%	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%	0.0%
Zoning issues/ Illegal businesses	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%
Abandoned vehicles	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Total Physical Condition/Quality of Life Related Issues	23.9%	20.9%	24.2%	22.4%	26.2%
Poor condition of streets	8.4%	11.4%	10.9%	6.7%	6.1%
Poor condition of sidewalks	4.1%	6.0%	5.6%	3.6%	2.3%
Snow removal/ Sanding	1.6%	1.9%	2.1%	2.6%	0.2%
Missing/ Lack of sidewalks	1.2%	1.9%	0.9%	0.8%	1.4%
Private streets	1.0%	0.8%	0.3%	1.8%	0.7%
Street lighting	0.9%	0.8%	1.8%	0.3%	0.9%
Leaf collection	0.6%	1.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.2%
Infrastructure	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	0.7%
Flooding/ Pumping station failure	0.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.0%	0.7%
Ongoing construction/ Difficult to get around	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Clogged catchbasins/sewers	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.7%
Crosswalks	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Total Infrastructure Related Issues	19.6%	26.0%	23.3%	17.3%	14.7%
Speed of traffic/ Dangerous intersections	10.5%	13.6%	7.4%	10.1%	11.5%
Lack of parking/ Illegal parking	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%	2.1%	1.8%
Pedestrian safety	1.1%	0.5%	0.9%	1.8%	0.9%
Lack of public transportation	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%
Location of airport/ Lack of flights or airlines	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Total Traffic & Parking Related Issues	14.3%	17.3%	11.2%	14.4%	14.7%
Property taxes too high/ Other taxes	1.9%	2.2%	1.2%	2.6%	1.6%
High cost of living/ Affordable housing	1.2%	1.9%	1.2%	1.5%	0.5%
Lack of jobs	0.4%	0.0%	0.3%	1.5%	0.0%
Financial Health of City/ Debt	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Total Cost of Living/ Economic Health Related Issues	3.7%	4.1%	2.7%	5.9%	2.0%
Hanging out/ Unsupervised/ Obnoxious behavior	2.4%	1.4%	2.4%	2.6%	3.2%
Lack of safe places for children to play	0.6%	0.5%	0.0%	1.0%	0.7%
Not enough for kids to do	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
Lack of jobs for youth	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%
Total Youth Behavior Related Issues	3.4%	2.2%	2.7%	3.6%	4.8%
Schools- poor quality/ poor performance	0.7%	1.4%	0.3%	0.8%	0.5%
Education/Youth	0.4%	0.8%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
School buildings in disrepair/ upkeep	0.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%
Lack of programming/ funding cuts for youth	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
School closings/ Large class sizes	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%
Total Education Related Issues	2.0%	3.3%	0.6%	2.8%	1.6%
Location of social service providers	1.0%	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.2%
Homelessness/ Panhandlers	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	1.5%	0.2%
Subsidized housing	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Total Social Services Related Issues	2.0%	3.8%	0.9%	2.8%	0.7%
Total Parks/Recreation Related Issues	0.9%	2.2%	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%
Total Environmental Quality Related Issues	0.6%	0.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%

PUBLIC SAFETY

Perceived Neighborhood Safety

As shown in **Figure 9**, citywide, nearly two-thirds of respondents judged that the level of crime in their neighborhood had stayed about the same during the past year, 29% reported an increase, and 6% thought that crime had decreased. Over one-half of respondents (52.4%) who perceived increased crime in their neighborhood also indicated a decline in the overall quality of life in their neighborhood during the past five years. Respondents in the Southeast quadrant were most likely to perceive that crime in their neighborhood had increased (37%) compared to 31% in the Southwest, 27% in the Northeast, and 20% in the Northwest.⁷



When asked how safe they felt walking alone in their neighborhoods, respondents felt safest walking alone during the daytime with the vast majority (91%) feeling “very safe” or “somewhat safe.” As shown in **Table 3** and **Figure 10**, the proportion of respondents who felt “very safe” walking alone in their neighborhood at nighttime decreased by more than half, from 55% to 19.5%, and the proportion of respondents feeling either “very safe” or “safe” walking alone at nighttime also dropped substantially, to 62%.

⁷ Respondents’ perceptions are in some cases at odds with actual crime trends, as measured by criminal incidents to which the Worcester Police respond (see Appendix D for incident data provided by the Worcester Police Department’s Crime Analysis Unit). For example, more than a quarter of respondents from Worcester’s Northeast quadrant thought that crime in their neighborhood had increased during the previous twelve-month period; however, when comparing the twelve-month period ending June 2005 with the twelve-month period ending in June 2006, the number of reported incidents (dispatched calls) to which WPD responded decreased by 2.4% (463 calls) in the Northeast Sector. Notably, robberies declined there by 25%, and larceny from motor vehicles declined by 24%.

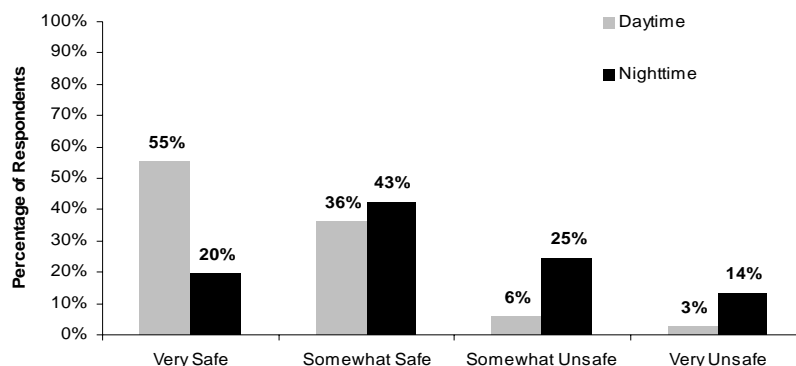
There are numerous factors that shape an individual’s perception of crime (e.g., media portrayals of crime, victimization, the physical condition of a neighborhood, etc.) and we caution that the survey data presented here only reflect respondents’ perceptions of the level of crime, and do not necessarily explain why they may think that way. Finally, there are numerous studies and reports describing a disconnect between the public’s perception of crime and actual crime rates in cities throughout the country.

Table 3: Feeling of Safety Walking Alone in Neighborhood

How safe do you feel walking alone <i>in your neighborhood</i> during the daytime	Percent of Respondents				
	All Respondents (n=1562)	Northwest (n=369)	Northeast (n=336)	Southwest (n=352)	Southeast (n=420)
Very safe	55.3%	68.6%	52.7%	49.4%	51.0%
Somewhat safe	36.2%	27.1%	37.8%	42.0%	38.8%
Somewhat unsafe	5.9%	3.8%	6.5%	5.1%	6.7%
Very unsafe	2.6%	0.5%	3.0%	3.4%	3.6%

How safe do you feel walking alone <i>in your neighborhood</i> at nighttime	Percent of Respondents				
	All Respondents (n=1538)	Northwest (n=361)	Northeast (n=333)	Southwest (n=344)	Southeast (n=416)
Very safe	19.5%	31.0%	15.3%	15.4%	15.1%
Somewhat safe	42.5%	42.1%	44.4%	41.0%	43.5%
Somewhat unsafe	24.5%	19.7%	24.0%	27.3%	26.2%
Very unsafe	13.5%	7.2%	16.2%	16.3%	15.1%

Figure 10: How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood during the daytime and at nighttime? (Citywide)



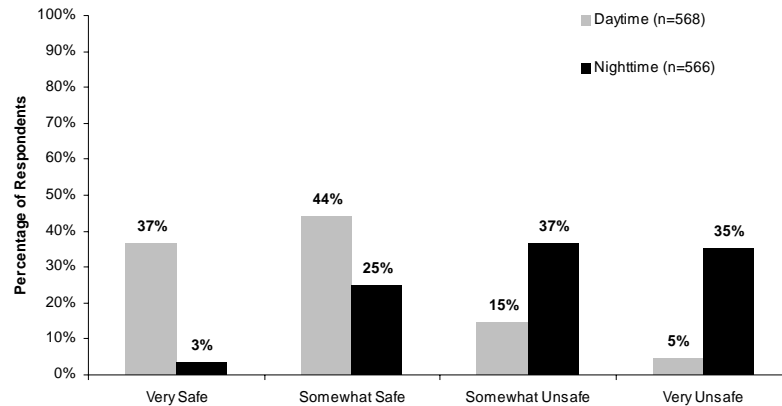
Downtown Worcester

When respondents were asked how often they had spent time in Downtown Worcester during the previous 12-month period, 11% stated “frequently,” 26% stated “occasionally,” 40% stated “rarely,” and 23% said “never.” The most frequently cited reason for not spending more time downtown, noted by 54% of those who had never, rarely, or occasionally spent time downtown during the previous 12 months, was that there was “nothing to do downtown/no reason to go downtown,” followed by 22% citing safety concerns. Twenty percent of those who did not frequent downtown mentioned a lack of restaurants or retail establishments, and 16% stated that parking issues (including cost and proximity/availability) kept them away from downtown.⁸

⁸ Since some respondents provided more than one reason for not spending time downtown, these percentages sum to greater than 100%.

Respondents reported feeling less safe walking downtown during both the daytime and nighttime than they reported feeling when walking in their own neighborhoods. Among respondents stating that they “occasionally” or “frequently” spend time downtown, 37% reported feeling “very safe” downtown during the day, but only 3% reported feeling “very safe” at night, while instead, about one in three reported feeling “very unsafe” when walking downtown at night (see **Figure 11**).

Figure 11: How safe do you feel walking in Downtown Worcester? (Respondents who frequently or occasionally spend time downtown)



Victimization

Citywide, about 13% of respondents reported that they or a member of their household had been a victim of crime during the previous 12-month period, as shown in **Table 4**.⁹ More than two-thirds (71.5%) of these reported victims were between the ages of 35 and 64, 17% were between 18 and 24 years old, and 12% were 65 and older. Citywide, more than three-quarters (78.5%) of respondents who had been victimized said that they had reported the crime to police, while 21.5% did not do so.

When asked about the level of crime in their neighborhood, respondents who had been victimized were more likely to think that it had increased compared to non-victims. Sixty-one percent of victims believed crime had increased in their neighborhood during the previous 12 months, compared to 23% of non-victims.

Table 4: Crime Victims

In the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household been the victim of a crime?	All Respondents (n=1562)	Percent of Respondents			
		Northwest (n=368)	Northeast (n=337)	Southwest (n=346)	Southeast (n=420)
Yes	13.3%	9.2%	15.7%	14.2%	15.5%
No	86.7%	90.8%	84.3%	85.8%	84.5%
If yes, did you report the crime to the police?	(n=205)	(n=32)	(n=53)	(n=49)	(n=65)
Yes	78.5%	78.1%	73.6%	73.5%	84.6%
No	21.5%	21.9%	26.4%	26.5%	15.4%

⁹ Caution is urged in making any comparisons of these findings across quadrants due to the small sample size which produces a high margin of error.

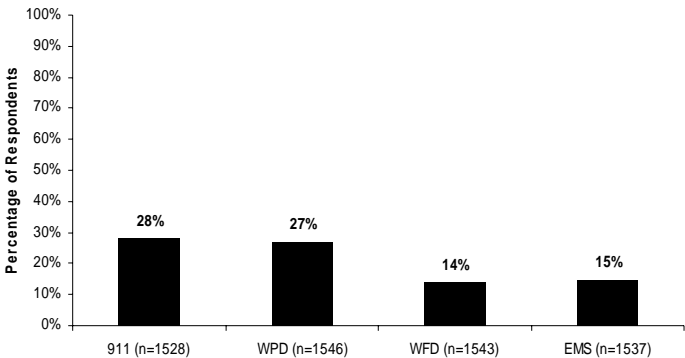
Emergency Response

Respondents who called 911 for emergency assistance, and those who received assistance from the Worcester Police Department, the Worcester Fire Department, or ambulance services provided by UMass Memorial EMS during the previous 12 months (see **Figure 12**) were asked to rate their satisfaction with how quickly help arrived, the professionalism of the staff (police officers, fire fighters, and paramedics), and the quality of service provided. These findings are described below and detailed in **Table 5**.

911 Callers

About twenty-eight percent of respondents indicated that during the previous 12-month period they or someone in their household had called 911 to request police, fire, or emergency medical (ambulance) services. Among those calling 911, 90% were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the assistance received from the person who took the call.

Figure 12: Respondents Having Had Contact with Emergency Services Providers During the Previous 12 Months



Worcester Police Department

Slightly more than one-quarter of respondents (27%) indicated that they or a member of their household had received assistance from the Worcester Police Department during the previous 12 months. A large percentage of those who received assistance expressed satisfaction with WPD’s response time, (76.2% “very satisfied” or “satisfied”), level of professionalism (about 80% “very satisfied” or “satisfied”), and the quality of service (78% “very satisfied” or “satisfied”).

Worcester Fire Department

Fewer than 14% of respondents reported having received assistance from the Worcester Fire Department during the previous 12-month period. Those who had received emergency medical, fire suppression, or other services from the WFD were overwhelmingly satisfied with the WFD’s response time (98.1% “very satisfied” or “satisfied”), the professionalism of WFD’s staff (97.5% “very satisfied” or “satisfied”), and the quality of service provided (97.1% “very satisfied” or “satisfied”), with a large percentage of these responses being “very satisfied.”

UMass Memorial EMS – Ambulance Services

Finally, of the group of respondents (14.8%) stating that they or a member of their household had received assistance from UMass Memorial EMS (ambulance/paramedic services), 96% were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with response time (how quickly help arrived) and with the professionalism of staff, while almost 95% expressed satisfaction with the quality of service provided.

Table 5: Satisfaction with Emergency Services

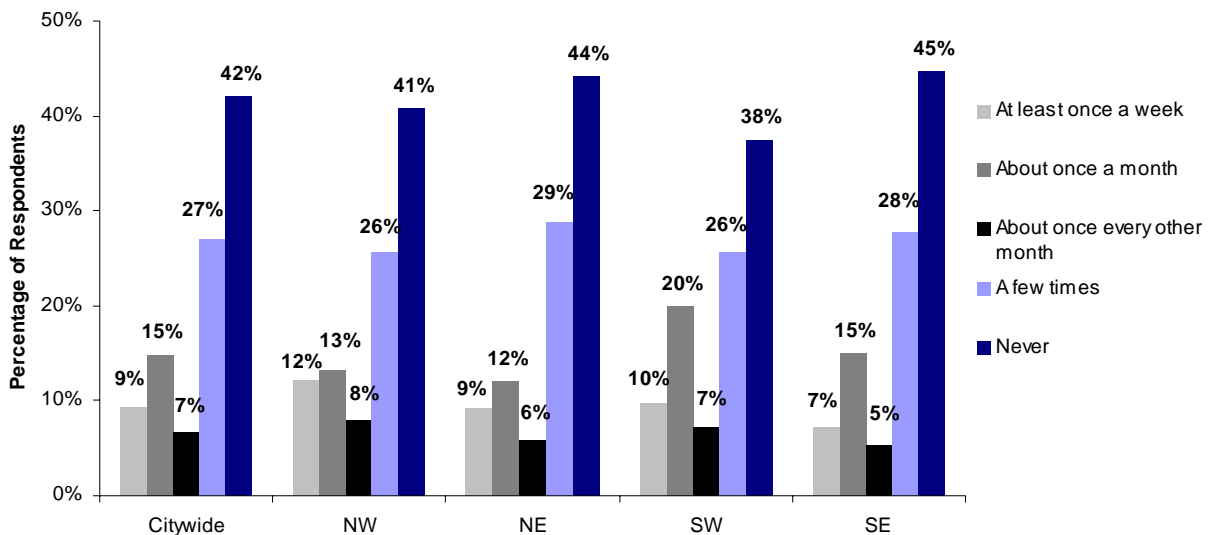
In the past 12 months have you or any member of your household called 911 to request police, fire, or emergency medical/ambulance services?	All Respondents (n=1528)			
Yes	28.1%			
No	71.9%			
<i>If yes, How satisfied were you with:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
The assistance you received from the person who took your 911 call? (n=425)	48.7%	41.4%	6.1%	3.8%
In the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household received assistance from the Worcester Police Department?	All Respondents (n=1546)			
Yes	26.7%			
No	73.3%			
<i>If yes, How satisfied were you with:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
WPD's response time? (n=407)	40.3%	35.9%	14.0%	9.8%
Professionalism of staff? (n=406)	40.4%	39.9%	12.3%	7.4%
Quality of service provided? (n=404)	37.6%	40.1%	14.4%	7.9%
In the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household received assistance from the Worcester Fire Department?	All Respondents (n=1543)			
Yes	13.8%			
No	86.2%			
<i>If yes, How satisfied were you with:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
WFD's response time? (n=207)	77.8%	20.3%	1.9%	0.0%
Professionalism of staff? (n=202)	82.2%	15.3%	1.5%	1.0%
Quality of service provided? (n=205)	79.5%	17.6%	2.0%	1.0%
In the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household received assistance from UMass Memorial EMS (Ambulance/Advanced Life Support Services)?	All Respondents (n=1537)			
Yes	14.8%			
No	85.2%			
<i>If yes, How satisfied were you with:</i>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Ambulance/paramedic response time? (n=221)	71.0%	25.3%	2.7%	0.9%
Professionalism of staff? (n=222)	74.8%	21.6%	2.3%	1.4%
Quality of service provided? (n=223)	73.5%	21.1%	4.0%	1.3%

WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Survey respondents were asked approximately how often they or other members of their household used the Worcester Public Library facilities and/or online services during the previous 12-month period. Nearly one in ten respondents reported that they or someone in their household used the WPL at least once per week, 15% had used it about once a month, and about 34% had used it less frequently, but at least a few times during the prior year. Forty-two percent of respondents indicated they or other household members had not used the WPL during the previous 12 months (See **Figure 13**). When looking at WPL use by quadrant in 2006, the “never” responses ranged from 38% in the Southwest to 45% in the Southeast.

Further analysis reveals that those between the ages of 35 and 44 used the library with the greatest frequency; 35.4% of these individuals reported that they (or someone in their household) used the WPL “at least once a week” or “about once a month.” In 2005, respondents between the ages of 55 and 64 were the group that used the WPL with the greatest frequency.

Figure 13: Frequency of use of Worcester Public Library



Overwhelmingly, respondents were satisfied with the assistance provided by the library staff (95.7% satisfaction), children’s programs (94.1%), the WPL’s computer resources/online services (93.4%), and selection of library materials (93.3%). Users of the WPL expressed the greatest level of dissatisfaction with the branch libraries’ hours of operation; 18% of respondents were either “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with this aspect of the WPL.¹⁰ In comparison, 15.6% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the Main Library’s hours of operation.¹¹

¹⁰ Currently, the WPL operates two branch libraries, the Francis Perkins branch in Greendale (open a total of 45 hours Monday through Friday), and the Great Brook Valley branch, which is open 2pm – 5pm Monday through Friday.

¹¹ The Main Library is open from 9am-9pm Tuesday through Thursday, 9am-5:30pm Friday and Saturday, open on Sundays for four months out of the year, and closed on Mondays.

Table 6: Satisfaction with WPL Services

In general, how satisfied were you with the following aspects of the Worcester Public Library?	n	Percent of Respondents			
		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Library hours of operation (Main Library)	794	22.9%	61.5%	13.5%	2.1%
Library hours of operation (Branch libraries)	587	21.5%	60.6%	16.0%	1.9%
Selection of library material	790	32.4%	60.9%	5.8%	0.9%
Assistance provided by library staff	783	45.6%	50.1%	3.4%	0.9%
Children's programs	506	35.6%	58.5%	5.3%	0.6%
Computer resources/online services	600	32.2%	61.2%	5.5%	1.2%

In the 2006 survey, respondents who indicated they never used the Worcester Public Library in the past year were asked to provide their reasons for not doing so. Almost one-third of respondents answered that they had “no reason to go” or that they “did not read.” About 18% indicated that they did not use the WPL and its services because they used the internet or their home computer for research. Seventeen percent responded that they bought or shared books and newspapers, and about 10% said they used libraries in other towns or college libraries.¹²

Table 7: Worcester Public Library

If you have not used the Worcester Public Library in the previous 12 months, why not?	Percent of Total Respondents (n= 483) Identifying Issue
No reason to go/ Don't read	31.1%
Use internet for research/ Use home computer	17.8%
Buy or share books	17.0%
Use libraries in other towns/ College libraries	9.5%
No time to go to library/ No time to read	9.3%
Location inconvenient	8.1%
Not safe/ Afraid to go downtown	5.6%
Parking (lack of or cost of)	4.6%
No transportation to get there	3.3%
Hours of Operation (not enough, inconvenient)	1.9%
Branch library closed	1.0%
General dislike	1.0%
Don't Know	0.8%
Homebound/ Unable to get around	0.8%
Unsure of where located	0.8%
Never get there- but will in future	0.8%
Borrowing policy	0.4%

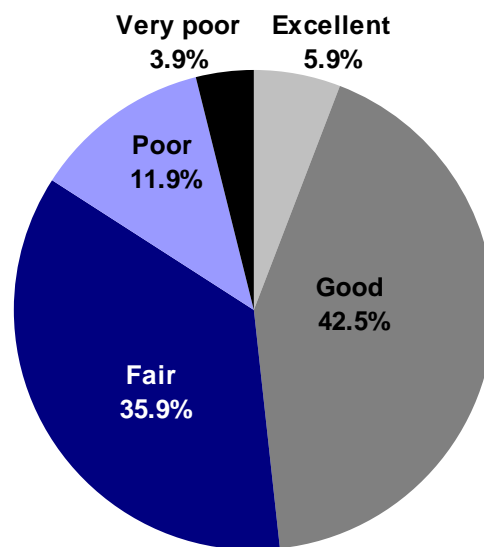
¹² Responses add to more than 100% because respondents may have provided multiple reasons.

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Respondents were asked “Based on your knowledge of the Worcester Public Schools, how would you rate the public education system in Worcester?”

As shown in **Figure 14** below, the largest percentage of responses fell into the “good” category (43%), followed by “fair” (36%). Six percent of respondents offered the highest rating of “excellent,” while about one in eight respondents gave the City’s public schools a rating of “poor”, and 4% a rating of “very poor.”¹³

Figure 14: How would you rate the public education system in Worcester?



Compared to all respondents (as described above), a higher percentage of those with children under the age of 18 in their household rated the public education system as poor (21%) or “very poor” (6%).¹⁴

Further analysis reveals that 70% of respondents who rated the Worcester Public Schools as “poor” or “very poor” were also “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with Worcester as a place to raise children. Among respondents rating public education highly (“excellent” or “good”), about 81% were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with Worcester as a place to raise children.

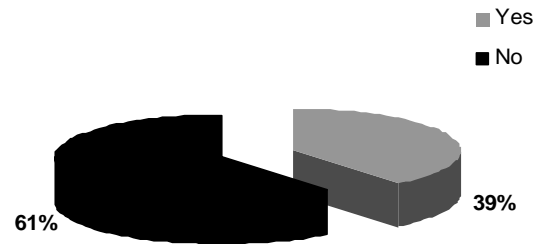
¹³ The question wording in 2006 was slightly different than in 2005, when respondents were asked to rate “the quality of public education in Worcester.” In 2005, about two-thirds of respondents expressed satisfaction (“satisfied” or “very satisfied”) with the quality of public education in Worcester, while one-third were either “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied.”

¹⁴ The children in these households may or may not attend the Worcester Public Schools. Respondents were only asked to identify the number of children under the age of 18 living in the household. These households may include children who are not yet school age, as well as children who are enrolled in a school outside the WPS.

CONTACT WITH CITY DEPARTMENTS & COMMUNICATIONS

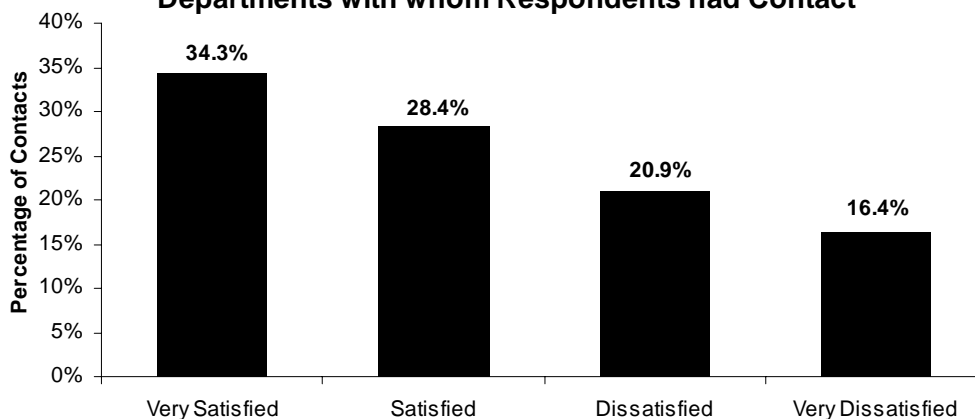
As shown in **Figure 15**, about four out of ten respondents (39.2%, or 606) stated that they had contacted one or more City departments with a question, service request, or complaint during the previous 12-month period. Among these respondents, 555 provided further detail when asked to identify the specific offices or departments they had contacted, and to rate their level of satisfaction with the professionalism and courteousness of the staff with whom they had contact. The most frequently mentioned contact was with the Department of Public Works and Parks (54%), followed by the Department of Health and Human Services (12%), the Worcester Police Department (7%), the Office of the Treasurer and Collector (6%), and the City Clerk’s Office (about 5%).¹⁵

Figure 15: Have you or any member of your household contacted the City with a question, service request, or a complaint during the past 12 months?



As shown in **Figure 16** below, respondents reported being “very satisfied” with the professionalism and courteousness of the staff with whom they had contact about one-third of the time, while about 28% of the time they were “satisfied.” Twenty-one percent of the time respondents were “dissatisfied,” and 16.4% of the time they reported being “very dissatisfied.”

Figure 16: Satisfaction with the Professionalism/courteousness of the Staff in the Various Departments with whom Respondents had Contact

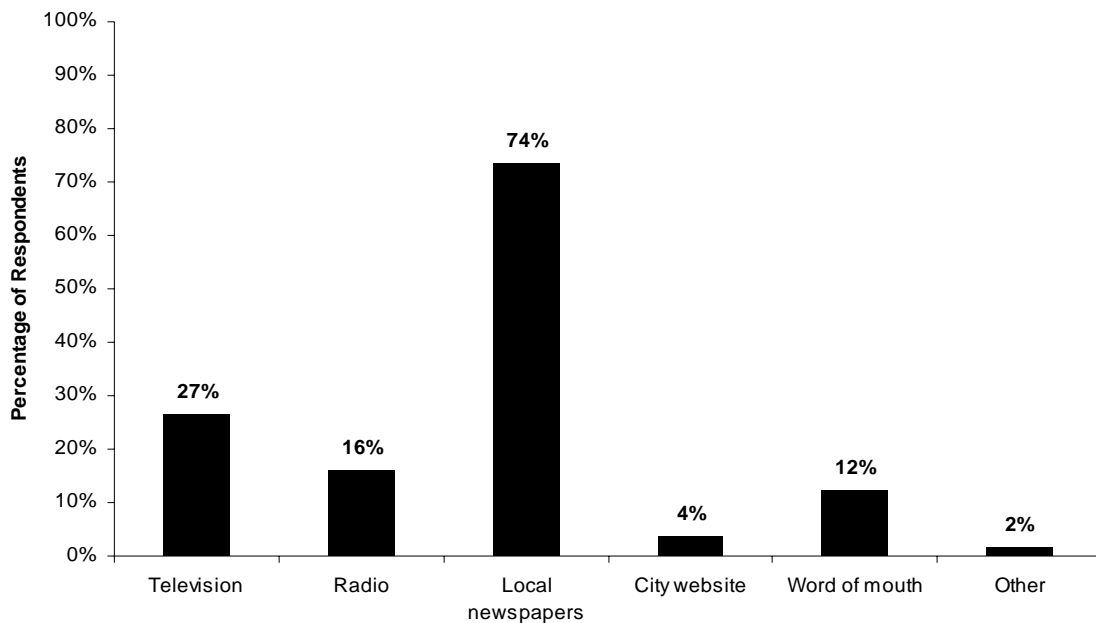


¹⁵ The question did not ask about the nature of the contact or the number of times an individual may have contacted a particular office.

Primary Sources of Information about City Issues, Services, and Events

Local newspapers are by far the most frequently identified primary source of information about City issues, services, and events (73.5% of respondents). Slightly more than one-quarter of respondents indicated “television” as a primary source, and 16% cited “radio.” (The percentages shown in **Figure 17** do not sum to 100% across source types because respondents could choose more than one answer.)

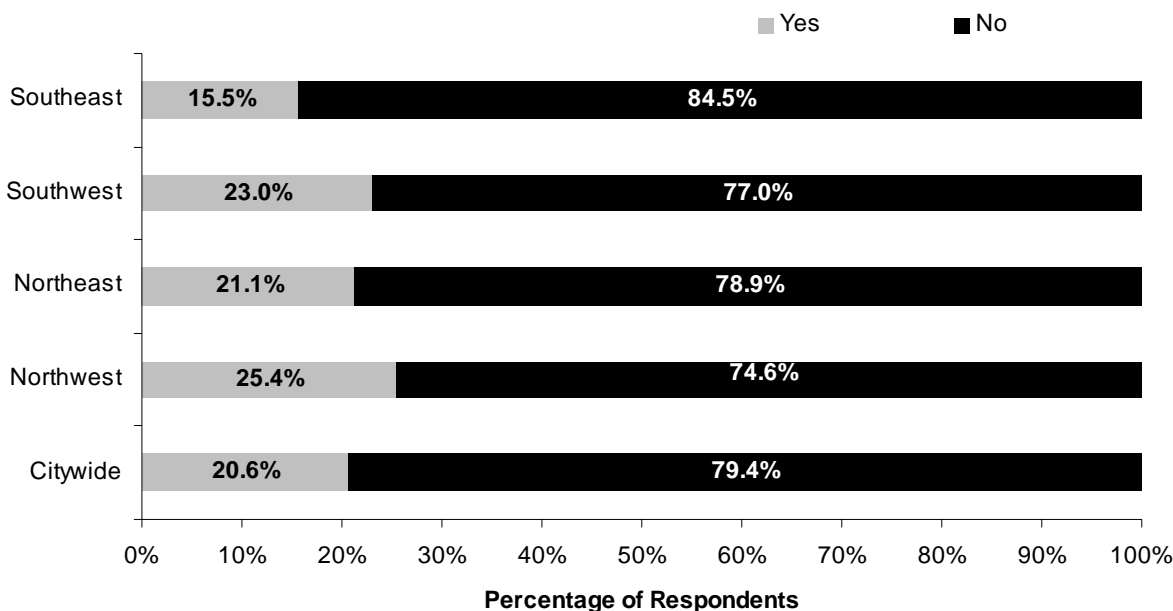
Figure 17: Respondents' Primary Sources of Information about City Issues, Services, and Events



CITY BUDGET AND MUNICIPAL SPENDING

As shown in **Figure 18**, nearly four out of five respondents citywide (79.4%) indicated that they were unwilling to pay more in property taxes in order to see municipal services increased; this percentage ranged from 75% in the Northwest to 85% in the Southeast. Further analysis found that the more dissatisfied respondents were with the value of services received for their City tax dollars, the more likely they were to say “no” to an increase in property taxes: 38% of respondents who were “very satisfied” with the value of City services indicated that they would be willing to pay more in property taxes to see municipal services increased, while only 8% of “very dissatisfied” respondents said the same.

Figure 18: Are you willing to pay more in property taxes to see municipal services increased?



When asked whether they were satisfied with the City’s efforts to control the costs of municipal government, 42.7% of respondents citywide indicated some level of dissatisfaction. Respondents in the Southeast quadrant were the most likely to express dissatisfaction, (38.3% were “dissatisfied”) and more than ten percent (10.5%) were “very dissatisfied” with the City in this respect.

Table 8: Satisfaction with City’s Efforts to Control Costs of Government

How satisfied are you with the City's efforts to control the cost of municipal government?	Percentage of Respondents				
	Citywide n=1377	Northwest n=319	Northeast n=293	Southwest n=318	Southeast n=373
Very Satisfied	2.2%	2.2%	2.4%	0.9%	0.8%
Satisfied	55.1%	60.2%	54.9%	58.8%	50.4%
Dissatisfied	34.9%	32.0%	35.5%	32.4%	38.3%
Very Dissatisfied	7.8%	5.6%	7.2%	7.9%	10.5%

Respondents were also asked to describe, in their own words, what they thought the City should make its top budget priority and any services or areas where municipal spending should be reduced or increased. As shown in **Table 9**, twenty-nine percent of respondents thought that the Worcester Public Schools should be the top budget priority, followed by City streets (22.2% of respondents), public safety or efforts to reduce crime (12.4% of respondents), and efforts to increase economic development (9.8% of respondents).

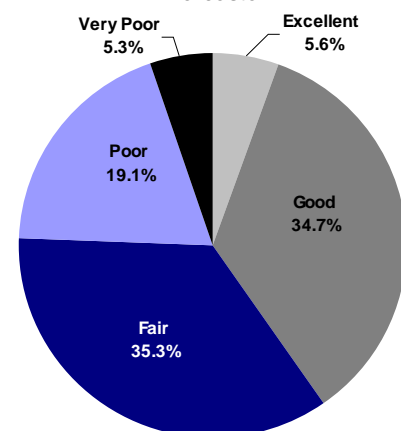
Table 9: Budget Priority

What do you think the City should make its top budget priority next year?	Percent of Total Respondents (n=1129) Identifying Issue
Worcester Public Schools/ Education/ Schools	29.4%
Streets	22.2%
Public Safety/ Reduce crime	12.4%
Reduce property taxes	10.1%
Economic Development/ bring jobs and employers to City	9.7%
Downtown Development (CitySquare, Courthouse)	7.9%
Improve physical condition/ appearance/ cleanliness of city	7.2%
Sidewalks	7.1%
Police Department	6.7%
Housing affordability/ cost of living	3.4%
Fire Department/ Fire Stations	2.8%
Parks/ Recreation	2.4%
Public Transportation	2.2%
Youth Services	2.1%
Ending Homelessness	1.9%
Elder Services	1.7%
Infrastructure	1.7%
Snow Plowing	1.5%
Worcester Regional Airport	1.3%
Neighborhood & Housing Development	1.1%
Public Health/ Human services/ service programs	1.1%
Other	1.1%

(Percentages in Table do not sum to 100% as respondents may have identified more than one priority)

Further analysis reveals the following about respondents who think that the City should make the Worcester Public Schools the top budget priority next year: fewer than half of respondents (47%) have children under the age of 18 living in their household; a greater proportion rated the City’s public education system as “excellent” or “good” (40%) than “poor” or “very poor” (25%); and about one-third (31.7%) indicated the WPS was an area where spending should be increased (see **Figure 19**).

Figure 19: Those who chose WPS as a budget priority and how they rated public education in Worcester



Seventy percent of survey respondents answered “yes” when asked whether there are areas/services where municipal spending should be increased. These respondents were also asked to indicate, in their own words, the specific areas or services where they desired increased spending. The greatest proportion (31.5%) stated the Worcester Public Schools/ public education, followed by the upkeep and repair of streets (29.9%), and the Worcester Police Department (14%). **Table 10** below summarizes these findings.

Table 10: Areas/ Services to Increase Municipal Spending

Are there areas/services where municipal spending should be increased?	All Respondents (n=1027)
Yes	69.5%
No	30.5%
<i>Please Describe:</i>	Percentage of Respondents Identifying Area/Service (n=642)
Worcester Public Schools/ Education	31.5%
Streets	29.9%
Police Department	14.0%
Parks/ Recreation	10.1%
Sidewalks	9.2%
Improve physical condition/ appearance/ cleanliness of city	8.7%
Fire Department/ Fire Stations	7.8%
Public Safety/ Reduce crime	7.6%
Economic Development/ bring jobs and employers to City	4.5%
Trash/ Recycling/ Bulk Waste	4.2%
Public Transportation	3.9%
Snow Plowing	3.9%
Downtown Development (CitySquare, Courthouse)	3.4%
Elder Services	3.4%
DPW	2.5%
Youth Services	2.5%
Ending Homelessness	2.3%
Public Health/ Human services/ service programs	2.2%
Neighborhood & Housing Development	2.0%
Worcester Public Library	1.6%
Worcester Regional Airport	1.6%
Infrastructure	1.2%
Housing affordability/ cost of living	1.1%

(Percentages in Table do not sum to 100% as respondents may have identified more than one area/service)

When asked whether there are areas/services where municipal spending should be reduced, 55.3% of respondents said “yes.” **Table 11** lists the top areas/services where these respondents would like to see spending reduced. About one in five identified reductions in the City’s workforce (including specific suggestions to reduce spending on management positions), followed by employee salaries (18.4%) and employee health insurance (10.3%). About eight percent of respondents thought that spending on police details at construction and utility repair sites should be eliminated.

Table 11: Areas/ Services to Reduce Municipal Spending

Are there areas/services where municipal spending should be reduced?		All Respondents (n=889)
Yes		55.3%
No		44.7%
Please Describe:		Percentage of Respondents Identifying Area/Service (n=348)
City workforce/ Management		21.0%
Employee Salaries		18.4%
Health Insurance		10.3%
Eliminate Police Detail at Construction Sites		7.8%
Worcester Public Schools/ Education		7.2%
Downtown Development (CitySquare, Courthouse)		5.2%
Fire Department/ Fire Stations		4.6%
Parks/ Recreation		4.3%
Worcester Regional Airport		3.7%

(Percentages in Table do not sum to 100% as respondents may have identified more than one area/service)

OBSERVATIONS

While almost two-thirds (64%) of the survey respondents expressed positive views (“satisfied” or “very satisfied”) with the overall quality of life in Worcester in 2006, a sizable minority, one in three respondents, are dissatisfied. When asked to rate specific services, respondents expressed the greatest satisfaction with the Worcester Fire Department, UMass Memorial EMS (ambulance services), residential trash collection and recycling services. However, there were a number of municipal services or quality-of-life issues with which fewer than half of all respondents were satisfied, and as noted earlier in this report, there are a number of areas where satisfaction has decreased this year. For the second year in a row, respondents were least satisfied with the condition of their neighborhood streets (27% rating them “good” or “excellent”), and their neighborhood sidewalks (21% rating them “good” or “excellent”).

The findings detailed in this report offer insights on how satisfied residents are with a wide range of municipal services and issues affecting their quality of life; however, it does not attempt to identify factors that may contribute to high or low performance ratings or levels of satisfaction. The City, specifically department or program heads, should use the results to assess their agency's performance and identify initiatives to better serve the public. This report is intended to help focus these efforts by identifying areas where those whose tax dollars pay for City services have expressed the least satisfaction, while also highlighting areas of particular success.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Survey Distribution

A cover letter from the City Manager and Mayor accompanied the five-page 29-question survey to explain its purpose and importance.¹⁶ The letter assured respondents that their responses would be anonymous and requested that a member of the household who was at least 18 years of age complete and return the survey (at no cost using Business Reply Mail) to The Research Bureau. The cover letter was printed in both English and Spanish, and households in need of Spanish- language translation assistance to complete the survey were provided with a phone number to call. One week later, a postcard was mailed to all addresses receiving the initial survey, asking those who had not yet participated to do so, while thanking those who had already completed and returned the survey. A copy of the survey instrument is included as **Appendix C**.

Margin of Error

The margin of error measures the precision with which the results from a sample reflect the true feelings of the entire population. Using a 95% level of confidence, the margin of error for the survey sample as a whole (n = 1,615) is plus or minus 2.4%. This means that if 58.9% of respondents in our sample reported that they were “satisfied” with the overall quality of life in the City, one may be confident that between 56.5% and 61.3% of the population would also report that they were “satisfied” with the overall quality of life.¹⁷

The margin of error for various subgroups discussed in the analysis section of this report can be found on page 4. The quadrants and other subgroup results (e.g., users of the Worcester Public Library, and users of 911, police, fire, and ambulance services) will have higher margins of error due to smaller sample sizes (i.e., estimates become less precise as the sample size decreases).

¹⁶ The survey instrument was developed by staff at The Research Bureau and refined following review by City officials.

¹⁷ With a confidence level of 95%, there is a 5% chance that an estimate derived from a sample will fall outside the confidence interval of 56.5% to 61.3%.

APPENDIX B: RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The tables below show detailed responses to questions about age, sex, race, ethnicity, income, and neighborhood of residence. The data reveal some differences between our sample and the general population of Worcester (according to 2005 American Community Survey data from the U.S. Census Bureau), so while the results may not perfectly represent the attitudes of the general adult population in the City, we believe the results reasonably approximate the view of the larger adult population.

- ❖ More than three-quarters of respondents (76.9%) have lived in Worcester 11 or more years.
- ❖ A substantially higher proportion of respondents owned their own home (71.3%) rather than renting their home (28.7%). According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey, 47.3% of Worcester's occupied housing units were owner-occupied and 52.7% were renter-occupied.
- ❖ Forty-three percent of respondents were male; 57% were female. According to the 2005 American Community Survey, 46% of Worcester's adult (18 years and over) residents were male and 54% were female.
- ❖ About 24% of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44, 22% were between 45 and 54 years, 35% in the 55 to 74 range, and nearly one in five (18%) were 75 or older.
- ❖ Separate questions asked respondents to indicate their racial and ethnic background. The vast majority (92%) stated that they were White/Caucasian, and four percent identified themselves as Black/African American, and 8% of respondents stated that they were Hispanic or Latino.
- ❖ More than half (about 57%) of respondents reported household incomes under \$50,000 in 2005, 29% reported incomes between \$50,000 and \$99,999, and 14% indicated that their household income was \$100,000 or more. According to the 2005 American Community Survey, the median household income in Worcester was \$37,797.

Quadrant/Neighborhood

In which neighborhood do you live?	Percent of Respondents (n=1446)
Northwest Quadrant	
Crown Hill/Piedmont	0.6%
Elm Park	4.5%
Indian Hill	2.2%
Indian Lake East	2.4%
Newton Square	3.7%
Salisbury/Forest Grove	4.9%
West Tatnuck/Salisbury	3.3%
Northeast Quadrant	
Bell Hill	2.2%
Brittan Square	0.8%
Burncoat	8.4%
Great Brook Valley	0.6%
Greendale	4.7%
North Lincoln Street	2.3%
Shrewsbury Street	1.9%
Southwest Quadrant	
Beaver Brook	0.8%
Beacon Brightly	0.1%
Cider Mill	0.1%
Columbus Park	1.3%
Hadwen Park	1.3%
Main Middle	1.0%
South Worcester	2.2%
Tatnuck	8.2%
University Park	0.8%
Webster Square	6.2%
Southeast Quadrant	
Broadmeadow Brook	0.8%
College Hill	0.9%
Franklin/Plantation	1.7%
Grafton Hill	8.2%
Green Island	0.5%
Hamilton	2.2%
Lake Park	1.9%
Quinsigamond Village	4.2%
Union Hill	0.6%
Vernon Hill	4.6%
Other	9.9%

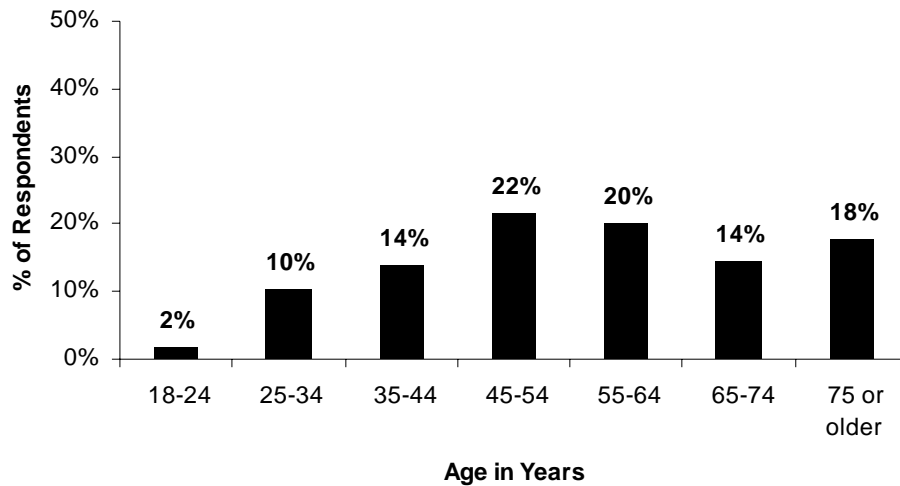
Length of Residence in Worcester

How long have you lived in Worcester?	All Respondents (n=1538)	Northwest (n=376)	Northeast (n= 349)	Southwest (n=362)	Southeast (n=426)
Less than one year	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
1-5 years	13%	11%	12%	15%	13%
6-10 years	9%	10%	6%	9%	11%
11 or more years	77%	78%	80%	75%	74%

Age

What is your age?	All Respondents (n=1518)	Northwest (n=373)	Northeast (n=342)	Southwest (n=355)	Southeast (n=422)
18-24	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
25-34	10%	10%	11%	9%	12%
35-44	14%	12%	14%	14%	15%
45-54	22%	20%	21%	22%	22%
55-64	20%	23%	18%	21%	19%
65-74	14%	14%	15%	15%	15%
75 or older	18%	20%	17%	16%	16%

Age of Respondents (n=1518)



Sex

What is your sex?	All Respondents (n=1513)	Northwest (n=372)	Northeast (n=342)	Southwest (n=353)	Southeast (n=420)
Male	43%	41%	40%	47%	43%
Female	57%	58%	60%	53%	57%
Total	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%

Race

Which of the following best describes your racial background?	All Respondents (n=1440)	Northwest (n=355)	Northeast (n=328)	Southwest (n=329)	Southeast (n=406)
American Indian of Alaska Native	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Asian	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Black/African American	4%	3%	6%	4%	4%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
White/Caucasian	92%	93%	90%	93%	92%
More than one race	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Ethnicity

Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?	All Respondents (n=1370)	Northwest (n=350)	Northeast (n=308)	Southwest (n=320)	Southeast (n=370)
Yes	8%	6%	8%	11%	6%
No	92%	94%	92%	89%	94%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Homeowners vs. Renters

Do you rent or own your home?	All Respondents (n=1516)	Northwest (n=372)	Northeast (n=340)	Southwest (n=359)	Southeast (n=420)
Rent	29%	22%	33%	30%	29%
Own	71%	78%	67%	70%	71%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Household Income

What was your total household income in 2005?	All Respondents (n=1391)	Northwest (n=340)	Northeast (n=314)	Southwest (n=329)	Southeast (n=388)
Less than \$25,000	28%	22%	30%	30%	29%
\$25,000-\$49,999	29%	26%	29%	24%	35%
\$50,000-\$99,999	29%	28%	34%	32%	25%
\$100,000-\$199,999	13%	21%	7%	12%	11%
\$200,000 or more	1%	4%	0%	1%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

2006 Survey of Worcester Residents

This survey should be completed by a member of your household who is at least 18 years of age. The City of Worcester will use your responses to improve services for residents. Your responses will remain anonymous. Completed surveys should be refolded with the Research Bureau return address appearing on the outside of the questionnaire, and sealed using tape. Return postage has been paid. Thank you!

1 Please rate your level of satisfaction with each of the following based on your experiences or observations during the past 12 months by circling the number that corresponds to your opinion.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
The cost of living in Worcester	4	3	2	1
The City's efforts to attract businesses and jobs to the area	4	3	2	1
Worcester as a place to raise children	4	3	2	1
Worcester as a place to live during retirement	4	3	2	1
The overall appearance of Worcester	4	3	2	1
The overall quality of life in Worcester	4	3	2	1
The value of services received for your City tax dollars	4	3	2	1

2 During the past five years, has the physical condition of your neighborhood become:

- ₁ Much better ₂ Somewhat better ₃ About the same ₄ Somewhat worse ₅ Much worse

3 During the past five years, has the overall quality of life in your neighborhood:

- ₁ Improved ₂ Stayed about the same ₃ Declined ₄ Not applicable- haven't lived here 5 years

4 Please rate each of the following based on your experiences or observations during the past 12 months by circling the number that corresponds to your opinion.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not Applicable
Condition of street/road surfaces (smoothness/evenness) in your neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	0
Condition of sidewalks (smoothness/evenness) in your neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	0
Cleanliness of streets and sidewalks in your neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	0
Pedestrian safety in your neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	0
Street lighting in your neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	0
Fall leaf collection services	5	4	3	2	1	0
Snow removal on streets in your neighborhood	5	4	3	2	1	0
Snow removal on major City streets	5	4	3	2	1	0
Residential trash collection and recycling services	5	4	3	2	1	0
Sewer and drainage services to your home	5	4	3	2	1	0
Upkeep and appearance of City recreation areas	5	4	3	2	1	0
Public transportation (bus and commuter rail)	5	4	3	2	1	0

5 What do you think is the most serious problem facing your neighborhood today?

6 Based on your knowledge of the Worcester Public Schools, how would you rate the public education system in Worcester? ₁ Excellent ₂ Good ₃ Fair ₄ Poor ₅ Very poor

7a During the past 12 months, approximately how often have you or other members of your household used the Worcester Public Library facilities and/or online services?

- ₁ At least once a week ₂ About once a month ₃ About once every other month ₄ A few times
₅ Never → skip to question 7c

7b In general, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of the Worcester Public Library:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No Opinion/ Did Not Use
Library Hours of Operation (Main Library)	4	3	2	1	0
Library Hours of Operation (Branch Libraries)	4	3	2	1	0
Selection of Library Material	4	3	2	1	0
Assistance Provided by Library Staff	4	3	2	1	0
Children's Programs	4	3	2	1	0
Computer Resources/Online Services & Databases	4	3	2	1	0

7c If you have not used the Worcester Public Library in the past 12 months, why not?

8a In the past 12 months how often did you spend time in downtown Worcester?

- ₁ Never ₂ Rarely ₃ Occasionally ₄ Frequently → skip to question 9a

8b What are the primary reasons that you did not spend more time downtown?

PUBLIC SAFETY

9a Are rundown or deteriorating properties a problem in your neighborhood?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No

9b During the past 12 months, do you think the number of rundown or deteriorating properties in your neighborhood has: ₁ Increased ₂ Decreased ₃ Stayed about the same ₄ Don't know

10 How safe do you feel:

	Very Safe	Somewhat Safe	Somewhat Unsafe	Very Unsafe
Walking alone in your neighborhood during the daytime	4	3	2	1
Walking alone in your neighborhood at nighttime	4	3	2	1
Walking in Downtown Worcester during the daytime	4	3	2	1
Walking in Downtown Worcester at nighttime	4	3	2	1

11 In the past 12 months, do you think crime in your neighborhood has:

- ₁ Increased ₂ Decreased ₃ Stayed about the same ₄ Don't know

12a In the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household been a victim of a crime?

- ₁ Yes ₂ No ➔ skip to question 13a

12b Did you report the crime to the police? ₁ Yes ₂ No

13a In the past 12 months, have you or any member of your household called 911 to request police, fire, or emergency medical/ambulance services? ₁ Yes ₂ No ➔ skip to question 14a

13b How satisfied were you with the assistance you received from the person who took your 911 call?

(If you have called 911 more than once in past 12 months, please base your response on the last time you called)

- ₁ Very Satisfied ₂ Satisfied ₃ Dissatisfied ₄ Very Dissatisfied ₅ Don't Know

14a In the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household received assistance from the Worcester Police Department? ₁ Yes ₂ No ➔ skip to question 15a

14b How satisfied were you with the Worcester Police Department's:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Response time (how quickly help arrived)	4	3	2	1
Professionalism of staff	4	3	2	1
Quality of service provided	4	3	2	1

15a In the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household received assistance from the Worcester Fire Department? ₁ Yes ₂ No ➔ skip to question 16a

15b What services did the Worcester Fire Department provide? Check (✓) all that apply

- ₁ Emergency Medical Services ₂ Fire Suppression ₃ Other (please describe _____)

15c How satisfied were you with the Worcester Fire Department's:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Response time (how quickly help arrived)	4	3	2	1
Professionalism of staff	4	3	2	1
Quality of service provided	4	3	2	1

16a In the past 12 months, have you or a member of your household received assistance from UMass Memorial EMS (Ambulance/Advanced Life Support Services) ₁ Yes ₂ No ➔ skip to question 17a

16b How satisfied were you with the ambulance service/paramedic's:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Response time (how quickly help arrived)	4	3	2	1
Professionalism of staff	4	3	2	1
Quality of service provided	4	3	2	1

SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUDGET PRIORITIES

17a Have you or any member of your household contacted the City with a question, service request, or a complaint during the past 12 months? ₁ Yes ₂ No skip to question 18

17b In the space below please indicate any municipal offices/departments you contacted in the past 12 months and rate your satisfaction with the professionalism/courteousness of the staff with whom you had contact.

City Department/Office (Please list the departments/offices you have contacted)	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
1	4	3	2	1
2	4	3	2	1
3	4	3	2	1
4	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1

18 Which of the following is your primary source of information about City issues, services, and events?
₁ Television ₂ Radio ₃ Local newspapers ₄ City Website ₅ Word of Mouth ₆ Other

19a What do you think the City should make its top budget priority next year?

Please describe

19b How satisfied are you with the City's efforts to control the costs of municipal government?

₁ Very Satisfied ₂ Satisfied ₃ Dissatisfied ₄ Very Dissatisfied

19c Are there areas/services where municipal spending should be reduced? ₁ Yes ₂ No

Please describe

19d Are there areas/services where municipal spending should be increased? ₁ Yes ₂ No

Please describe

19e Are you willing to pay more in property taxes to see municipal services increased? ₁ Yes ₂ No

ABOUT YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD

The following questions are about you and your household and are included only to allow us to determine how well our results represent the opinions of a variety of citizens. Your survey is anonymous, and this information will not be used to identify you in any way.

20 In which neighborhood do you live?

- 1 Beacon Brightly
- 2 Beaver Brook
- 3 Bell Hill
- 4 Brittan Square
- 5 Broadmeadow Brook
- 6 Burncoat
- 7 Cider Mill
- 8 College Hill
- 9 Columbus Park
- 10 Crown Hill/Piedmont
- 11 Elm Park
- 12 Franklin/Plantation
- 13 Grafton Hill
- 14 Great Brook Valley
- 15 Green Island
- 16 Greendale
- 17 Hadwen Park
- 18 Hamilton
- 19 Indian Hill
- 20 Indian Lake East
- 21 Lake Park
- 22 Main Middle
- 23 Newton Square
- 24 North Lincoln St.
- 25 Quinsigamond Village
- 26 Salisbury/Forest Grove
- 27 Shrewsbury Street
- 28 South Worcester
- 29 Tatnuck
- 30 Union Hill
- 31 University Park
- 32 Vernon Hill
- 33 West Tatnuck/Salisbury
- 34 Webster Square
- 35 Other: _____

21 On what street do you live? _____

22 How long have you lived in Worcester?

- 1 Less than one year
- 2 1-5 years
- 3 6-10 years
- 4 11 or more years

23 Do you rent or own your home? 1 Rent 2 Own

24a Are you currently employed outside the home (full- or part-time)? 1 Yes 2 No → skip to question 25

24b Do you work in Worcester? 1 Yes 2 No

24c On average, how long is your commute (one-way)?

- 1 Less than 15 minutes
- 2 15-30 minutes
- 3 31-60 minutes
- 4 more than 60 minutes

25 What is your sex? 1 Male 2 Female

26 What is your age?

- 1 18-24 2 25-34 3 35-44 4 45-54
- 5 55-64 6 65-74 7 75 or older

27 How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? _____

Note: Please answer both questions 28a and 28b

28a Which of the following best describes your racial background?

- 1 American Indian or Alaska Native
- 2 Asian
- 3 Black/African American
- 4 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- 5 White/Caucasian

28b Are you Hispanic or Latino? 1 Yes 2 No

29 What was your total household income in 2005?

- 1 Less than \$25,000
- 2 \$25,000-\$49,999
- 3 \$50,000-\$99,999
- 4 \$100,000-\$199,999
- 5 \$200,000 or more

Table C-1: Number of Respondents per Survey Question

Question	# of Respondents Answering Survey Questions				
	Citywide	Northwest	Northeast	Southwest	Southeast
1.1	1492	351	316	339	403
1.2	1491	345	321	347	399
1.3	1476	343	325	342	389
1.4	1487	352	325	341	391
1.5	1522	363	330	342	403
1.6	1520	358	335	344	405
1.7	1520	359	331	342	407
2	1554	363	339	352	413
3	1456	345	314	324	393
4.1	1574	369	337	358	422
4.2	1424	339	301	325	380
4.3	1551	367	333	351	413
4.4	1560	370	334	353	416
4.5	1563	367	339	355	416
4.6	1471	357	314	330	389
4.7	1556	369	338	352	414
4.8	1558	372	338	350	415
4.9	1476	352	319	329	400
4.10	1466	353	307	330	396
4.11	1457	340	299	337	404
4.12	1126	261	231	257	311
5	1002	230	207	240	279
6	1448	337	311	333	389
7a	1560	369	340	347	418
7b.1	794	188	155	204	216
7b.2	587	144	139	139	141
7b.3	790	193	167	199	202
7b.4	783	193	163	191	204
7b.5	506	115	102	131	139
7b.6	600	143	117	149	168
7c	483	127	106	104	134
8a	1572	369	346	353	419
8b	1149	276	253	263	306
9a	1574	372	344	352	420
9b	1135	269	235	256	318
10.1	1562	369	336	352	420
10.2	1538	361	333	344	416
10.3	1504	351	322	344	408
10.4	1483	339	320	339	402
11	1133	259	249	263	303
12a	1562	368	337	346	420
12b	205	32	53	49	65
13a	1528	360	331	341	405
13b	425	90	94	96	118
14a	1546	363	336	346	412
14b.1	407	85	96	96	109
14b.2	406	85	95	96	109
14b.3	404	85	95	96	109
15a	1543	366	335	346	408
15b	212	44	53	53	50
15c.1	207	42	53	51	48
15c.2	202	41	51	50	48
15c.3	205	42	51	50	49
16a	1537	360	334	345	411
16b.1	221	46	47	51	60
16b.2	222	46	46	52	62
16b.3	223	46	47	52	62
17a	1545	367	342	348	402
17b	555	143	124	115	147
18	1571	370	345	354	414
19a	1129	273	255	265	291
19b	1377	319	293	318	373
19c	348	88	88	100	102
19d	642	175	149	164	154
19e	1366	323	284	309	374
20	1446	351	333	351	403
21	1320	320	306	315	372
22	1538	376	349	362	426
23	1516	372	340	359	420
24a	1487	370	333	347	412
24b	934	222	210	228	256
24c	927	22	205	226	254
25	1513	372	342	353	420
26	1518	373	342	355	422
27	1404	354	318	327	385
28a	1440	355	328	329	406
28b	1370	350	308	320	370
29	1391	340	314	329	388

APPENDIX D: CITY OF WORCESTER CRIME STATISTICS

Selected Incident Types Reported to WPD								
	Total Dispatched Calls*	Robbery	Breaking & Entering	Larceny from Motor Vehicle	Vandalism	Motor Vehicle Theft	Disorder	Noise
Citywide								
FY05	75058	427	1228	1769	2313	1154	11932	4419
FY06	74479	418	1295	1632	2211	1032	12054	4425
% change FY05-FY06	-0.8%	-2.1%	5.5%	-7.7%	-4.4%	-10.6%	1.0%	0.1%
Northeast Sector								
FY05	19127	116	330	502	625	333	3106	930
FY06	18664	87	284	381	539	289	2972	909
% change FY05-FY06	-2.4%	-25.0%	-13.9%	-24.1%	-13.8%	-13.2%	-4.3%	-2.3%
Southeast Sector								
FY05	19776	81	344	434	651	284	2696	1266
FY06	18835	108	388	422	543	295	2653	1377
% change FY05-FY06	-4.8%	33.3%	12.8%	-2.8%	-16.6%	3.9%	-1.6%	8.8%
Southwest Sector								
FY05	19703	153	301	331	553	327	3837	1126
FY06	20468	141	344	389	593	268	4090	1193
% change FY05-FY06	3.9%	-7.8%	14.3%	17.5%	7.2%	-18.0%	6.6%	6.0%
Northwest Sector								
FY05	16027	77	251	467	456	204	2269	1096
FY06	16107	79	277	386	509	176	2305	939
% change FY05-FY06	0.5%	2.6%	10.4%	-17.3%	11.6%	-13.7%	1.6%	-14.3%

Source: Worcester Police Department, Crime Analysis Unit

* Reported incidents to which WPD officers respond

Mission Statement:

The Research Bureau serves the public interest of the Greater Worcester region by conducting independent, non-partisan research and analysis of public policy issues to promote informed public debate and decision-making.



The Research Bureau

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