2021 City of Ritzville Community Survey Summary

Overview

The City of Ritzville distributed the annual community survey to gain feedback on current services and future projects. All responses will be used to provide feedback to the Mayor, City Council, and City Employees as they develop the 2022 budget and plan for projects and services in the coming year.

The survey covered demographics, quality of life, city services, safety, american rescue plan act funds, beautification funds, and proposed ordinances. There were 208 surveys mailed and 175 were completed either by hard copy or online. The total response rate was 22%.

The responses provided common themes with street repair/maintenance, economic development/planning and nuisance properties being listed as the top three priorities. Other top themes included improving the downtown buildings and beautification, increase crime prevention, and address the the increased homeless population in the downtown.

Overall respondents are satisfied with city services (61.68%) and have confidence in the municipal government (42.60%). There is room for improvement for how the government keeps citizens informed (61.54% somewhat informed), focuses on citizens' priorities (32.14% good), and manages the public's money (33.33% good). Efficient delivery of services was rated good at 45.51%.

The community responded feeling very safe (71.60%) and somewhat safe (23.67%) walking alone in the city during the day. The response went down for walking alone in the city after dark with 28.40% feeling very safe and 43.20% feeling somewhat safe. The highest responses as to why they felt unsafe was the increase in crime, homeless in town, and unknown people around town.

The top choice for the American Rescue Plan Funds (ARPA) was tied between hardship-addressing negative impacts to small businesses at 41.33%, and broadband infrastructure and internet access at 41.33%. The next top choice was city infrastructure at 34%.

There was a diverse list of responses to the beautification projects question with the top three suggestions being updates to the downtown (25.83%), beautify 1st Ave (11.67%) and clean up nuisance properties (10.83%).

As for proposed ordinances, 53.63% responded not important at all to having chickens in the backyards. The how important to ban fireworks due to fire danger had 51.83% extremely important responses. The not important at all had the highest response for the entire city fireworks ban at 36.36%, but when you add up all of the important categories (extremely important, important, slightly important), the percentage total is 50.91%.

2021 City of Ritzville Community Survey Results

Response Data	
Completed Surveys	175
Hard Copies	96
Online	79
Mailed	208
Response Rate	22%

Q1. Gender

Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	42.26%	71
Female	57.74%	97
Answered		**168**
Skipped		**2**

Q2. Age

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-24	2.37%	4
25-34	7.10%	12
35-44	8.88%	15
45-54	15.98%	27
55-64	18.34%	31
65 or above	47.34%	80
Answered		**169**
Skipped		**1**

Q3. Children Under the Age of 18 Living in Household

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	20.71%	35
No	79.29%	134
Answered		**169**
Skipped		**1**

Q4. Rent or Own

Answer Choices	Responses	
Rent	8.33%	14
Own	91.67%	154
Answered		**168**
Skipped		**2**

Q5. Garbage Pick up Day

Answer Choices	Responses	
Tuesday	20.71%	35
Thursday	39.64%	67
Friday	27.22%	46
Don't Know/Not Sure	12.43%	21
Answered		**169**
Skipped		**1**

Q6. Lived in Ritzville

Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than 9 years	34.32%	58
10-19 years	20.12%	34
20-29 years	15.98%	27
30 years or more	29.59%	50
Answered		**169**
Skipped		**1**

Q7. Rate Ritzville as Place to Live

Answer Choices	Responses	
Excellent	12.35%	21
Very Good	38.24%	65
Satisfactory	28.82%	49
Fair	17.65%	30
Poor	2.35%	4
Don't Know/Not Sure	0.59%	1
Answered		**170**
Skipped		**0**

Q8. Best About Ritzville

	Responses	
Small Town	29.94%	47
People/Community	26.75%	42
Peaceful/Quiet	14.01%	22
Services/Amenities	8.92%	14
Proximity	7.01%	11
Safe	7.01%	11
Affordable	1.91%	3
Less Traffic	1.27%	2
Slow Pace	1.27%	2
Weather	0.64%	1
Architecture	0.64%	1
Retirement	0.64%	1
Answered		**157**
Skipped		**6**

Q9. Least About Ritzville

	Responses	
Crime	16.00%	24
Lack of Amenities	30.67%	46
City Government	8.00%	12
People's Attitudes	10.67%	16
Nuisance Properties	7.33%	11
Train Whistle	6.67%	10
Homeless in Downtown	6.67%	10
Lack of Economic Dev.	4.67%	7
Lack of Housing Options	4.00%	6
Streets/Sidewalks	2.67%	4
Old Infrastructure	1.33%	2
New Police Laws	0.67%	1
Weather	0.67%	1
Answered		**150**
Skipped		**11**

Q10. Concerns About Ritzville

	Responses	
Crime	21.52%	34
Homelessness	16.46%	26
Lack of Growth Planning	16.46%	26
Politics/People	10.76%	17
Downtown (Empty Bldgs)	8.86%	14
Old Infrastructure/Streets	7.59%	12
Nuisance Properties	5.06%	8
Lack of Services/Activities	5.06%	8
Lack of Housing	4.43%	7
Lack of Community Support	1.27%	2
Trains	1.27%	2
Water/Sewer Hookup Fees	0.63%	1
Lack of Affordable Goods	0.63%	1
Answered		**158**
Skipped		**13**

Q11. Top Three Priorities

	Responses	
Streets Repair/Maintenance	**13.20%**	**45**
Econ Dev/Planning	**13.20%**	**45**
Nuisance Properties	**10.26%**	**35**
Downtown (Empty Bldgs)	9.09%	31
Crime Prevention	8.80%	30
Homelessness	6.74%	23
Community Activities	4.40%	15
Increase Law Enforcement	4.40%	15
Housing	4.11%	14
Water Infrastructure (Cost, Aval.)	4.11%	14
Infrastructure	2.05%	7
Permit/Code Enforcement	2.05%	7
Transportation/Amtrak Stop	2.05%	7
Support Local Businesses	1.76%	6
Sewer Infrastructure	1.76%	6
City Beautification	1.76%	6
Parks (maintenance, walking trail)	1.47%	5
Faster Internet	1.17%	4
Sidewalk Repairs	1.17%	4
Elected Officials Leadership	1.17%	4
Downtown Parking	0.88%	3
Train Whistle	0.88%	3
Better Use/Decrease Taxes	0.88%	3
Wheelchair Acess (Dr. Office, path)	0.59%	2
Utility Bill Accuracy	0.59%	2
Recycling	0.59%	2
Chicken Ordinance	0.29%	1
Golf Course	0.29%	1
Alleys	0.29%	1
Senior Services (help w/yards)	0.29%	1
Sprinklers at Cemetery	0.29%	1
	Answered	**341**
	Skipped	**15**

Q12. Actions Done in the Last 12 months

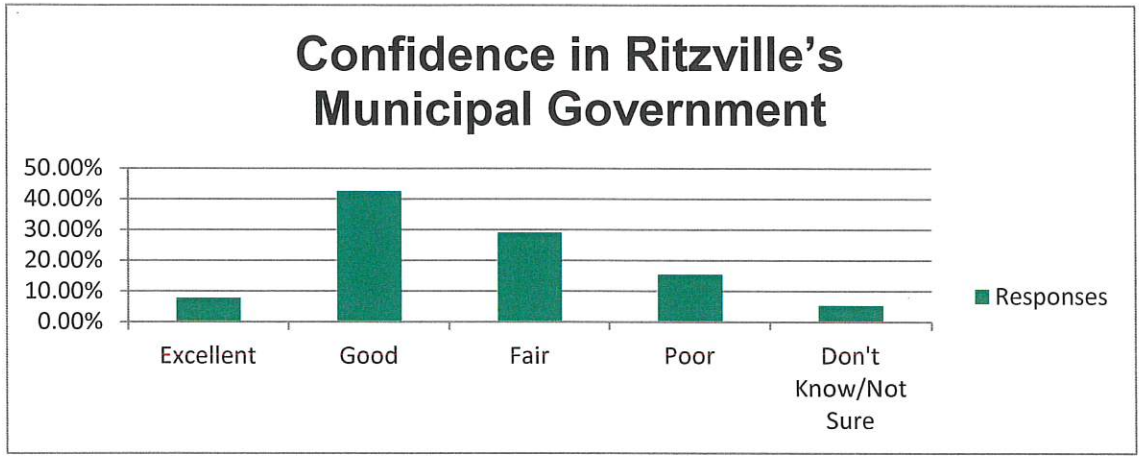
	Yes	No
Contacted the City of Ritzville.	**69.82%**	30.18%
Contacted City of Ritzville elected officials to express your opinion.	38.46%	**61.54%**
Attended a local public meeting.	26.63%	**73.37%**
Watched (online) or over the phone a local public meeting.	19.39%	**80.61%**
Volunteered your time to some group/ activity in Ritzville.	**55.36%**	**44.64%**
Campaigned or advocated for a local issue, cause, or candidate.	28.31%	**71.69%**
Voted in your most recent local election.	**89.35%**	10.65%
	Answered	**169**
	Skipped	**1**

Q13. Overall Satisfaction with City Services

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very satisfied	16.17%	27
Satisfied	**61.68%**	**103**
Dissatisfied	14.37%	24
Very Dissatisfied	3.59%	6
Don't Know/ Not Sure	4.19%	7
	Answered	**167**
	Skipped	**3**

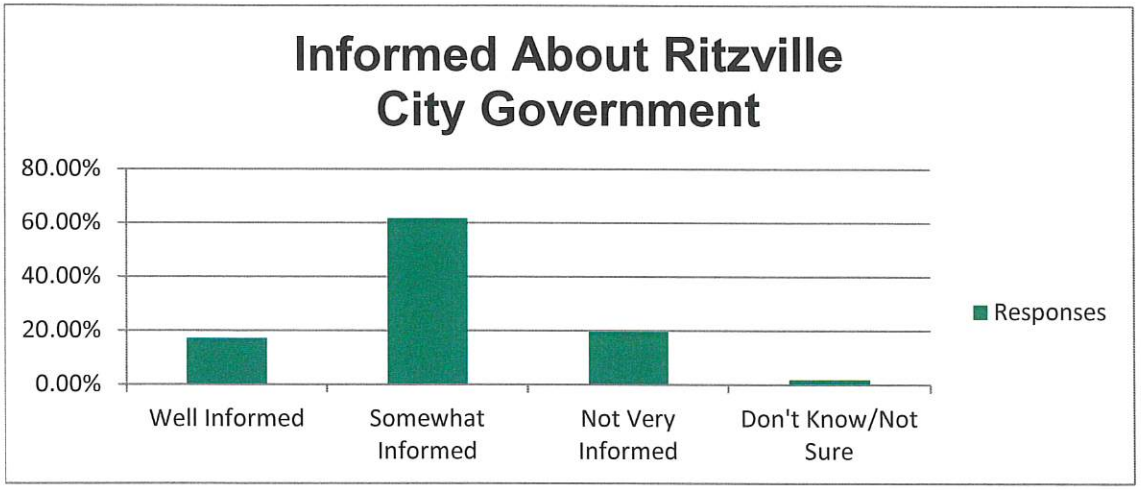
Q14. Confidence in Ritzville's Municipal Government

Answer Choices	Responses	
Excellent	7.69%	13
Good	**42.60%**	**72**
Fair	28.99%	49
Poor	15.38%	26
Don't Know/Not Sure	5.33%	9
	Answered	**169**
	Skipped	**1**



Q15. Informed About Ritzville City Government

Answer Choices	Responses	
Well Informed	17.16%	29
Somewhat Informed	**61.54%**	**104**
Not Very Informed	19.53%	33
Don't Know/Not Sure	1.78%	3
	Answered	**169**
	Skipped	**1**

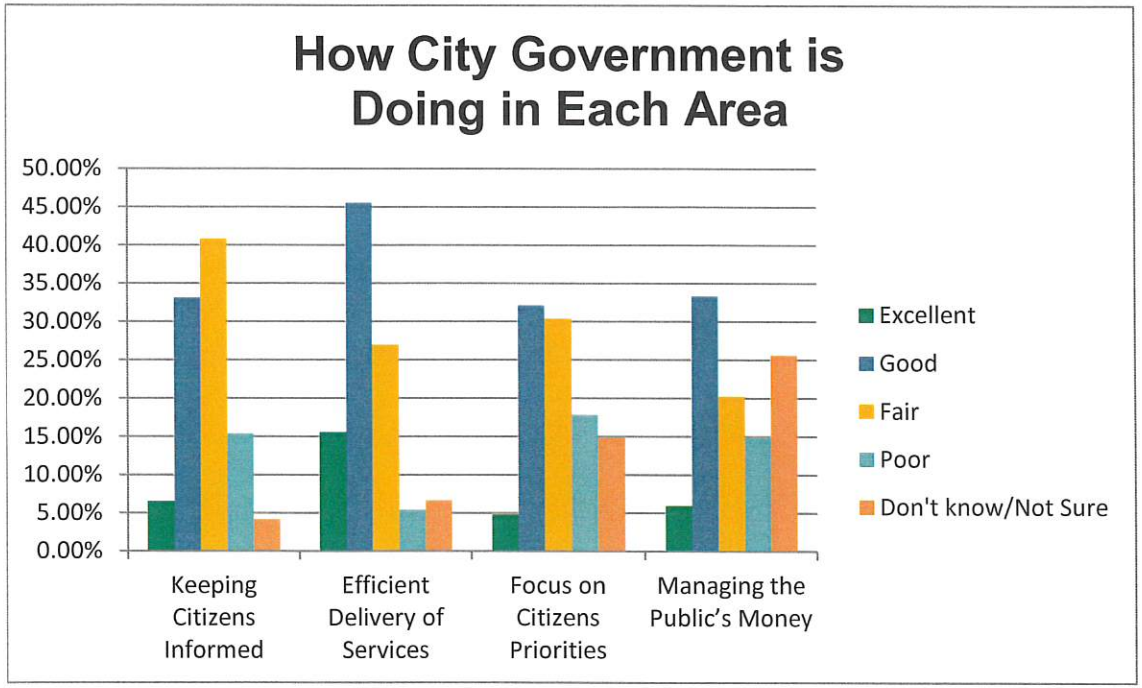


Q16. Primary Source of Information

	Responses	
Newspaper	**47.06%**	**80**
Facebook	**20.59%**	**35**
Council Members	10.00%	17
Word of Mouth	8.24%	14
City Minutes/Website	6.47%	11
Meetings	3.53%	6
City Employees	2.94%	5
Mail	1.18%	2
	Answered	**170**
	Skipped	**8**

Q17. How City Government is Doing in Each Area

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know/Not Sure
Keeping Citizens Informed	6.51%	**33.14%**	**40.83%**	15.38%	4.14%
Efficient Delivery of Services	15.57%	**45.51%**	26.95%	5.39%	6.59%
Focus on Citizens Priorities	4.76%	**32.14%**	**30.36%**	17.86%	14.88%
Managing the Public's Money	5.95%	**33.33%**	**20.24%**	14.88%	25.60%
				Answered	**169**
				Skipped	**1**



Q18. How Important the Following City Services are to Household

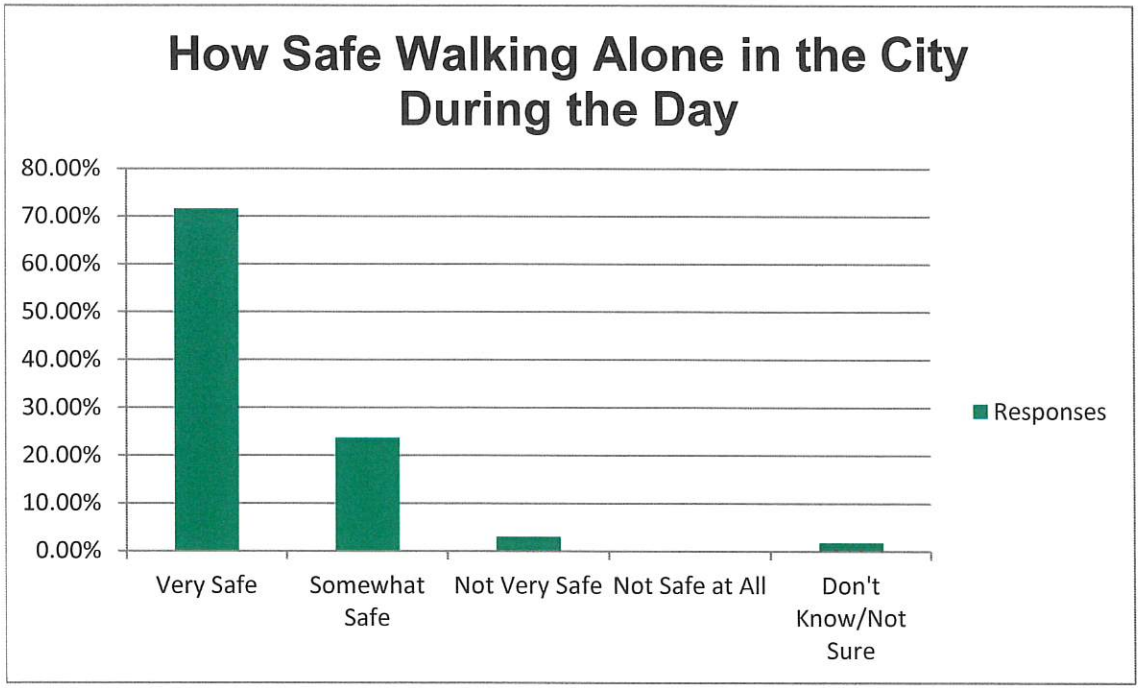
	Extremely Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not at All Important	No Opinion
Maintaining Streets	**49.41%**	**48.24%**	0.59%	1.18%	0.59%
Pedestrian Safety	**40.59%**	**41.76%**	10.00%	3.53%	4.12%
Tree City Program	7.06%	**36.47%**	**38.82%**	12.94%	4.71%
City Beautification Efforts	16.57%	**47.93%**	25.44%	7.10%	2.96%
Support for Services for People in Need	27.98%	**42.26%**	**20.83%**	6.55%	2.38%
Support for the Arts	6.55%	**36.31%**	**30.36%**	20.24%	6.55%
Police Response	**75.00%**	19.64%	2.98%	0.60%	1.79%
Fire Response	**84.12%**	13.53%	1.18%	0.00%	1.18%
City Parks (excludes waterpark)	31.76%	**54.12%**	9.41%	2.94%	1.76%
Recreational Opportunities	25.88%	**47.65%**	17.65%	5.88%	2.94%
Building Permitting and Inspection	24.85%	**50.30%**	17.75%	2.37%	4.73%
Code Enforcement	**30.00%**	**42.94%**	17.06%	4.71%	5.29%
Animal Control	24.71%	**47.65%**	18.82%	4.71%	4.12%
Infrastructure Upgrades (water/sewer)	**54.44%**	37.87%	4.14%	0.59%	2.96%
Availability of Sidewalks and Paths	25.60%	**48.21%**	20.24%	4.17%	1.79%
Recycling	**27.06%**	**34.12%**	**28.24%**	9.41%	1.18%
Garbage Collection	**47.93%**	**42.60%**	8.28%	0.00%	1.18%
Emergency Preparedness	**50.00%**	**40.00%**	7.06%	1.18%	1.76%
Emergency Alerts	**50.89%**	33.73%	10.65%	1.78%	2.96%
Community Events	23.08%	**52.66%**	18.34%	2.96%	2.96%
City Planning	30.59%	**52.35%**	9.41%	4.12%	3.53%
Economic and Business Development	**42.35%**	**41.76%**	8.82%	2.94%	4.12%
Support for Inclusive and Welcoming Community	26.04%	**40.83%**	20.12%	8.28%	4.73%
				Answered	**170**
				Skipped	**0**

Q19. Satisfaction Level with Each of the Following City Services

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatified	No Opinion
Fire Response and Suppression	**65.29%**	30.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.71%
Parking Enforcement (including handicapped/EV)	15.88%	**44.71%**	10.00%	5.29%	24.12%
Police Patrol	**35.71%**	**48.81%**	7.74%	4.76%	2.98%
Code Enforcement	10.65%	**37.87%**	18.93%	11.83%	20.71%
City Animal Control	5.88%	**52.35%**	14.12%	7.06%	20.59%
Sewer Services	26.47%	**54.12%**	4.12%	2.35%	12.94%
Garbage Collection	**48.24%**	**41.76%**	2.94%	0.59%	6.47%
Recycling Options	4.12%	**35.29%**	**31.18%**	18.82%	10.59%
Storm Drainage	14.12%	**62.35%**	4.71%	1.76%	17.06%
Street Cleaning	15.38%	**56.21%**	14.79%	5.33%	8.28%
Drinking Water	20.83%	**56.55%**	13.10%	4.76%	4.76%
Utility Customer Service	21.89%	**57.40%**	8.28%	0.59%	11.83%
Utility Bill Accuracy	15.38%	**53.85%**	11.24%	7.69%	11.83%
Utility Bill Delivery	15.48%	**54.76%**	13.69%	6.55%	9.52%
Historic Preservation Efforts	7.14%	**58.33%**	11.90%	2.98%	19.64%
Street Lighting	17.16%	**68.05%**	10.65%	0.00%	4.14%
Street Condition	5.36%	**54.17%**	23.81%	13.10%	3.57%
Parks and Equipment	16.57%	**71.60%**	5.92%	0.00%	5.92%
ADA Compliance at City-Owned Fac. and Parks	13.10%	**57.74%**	4.17%	0.00%	25.00%

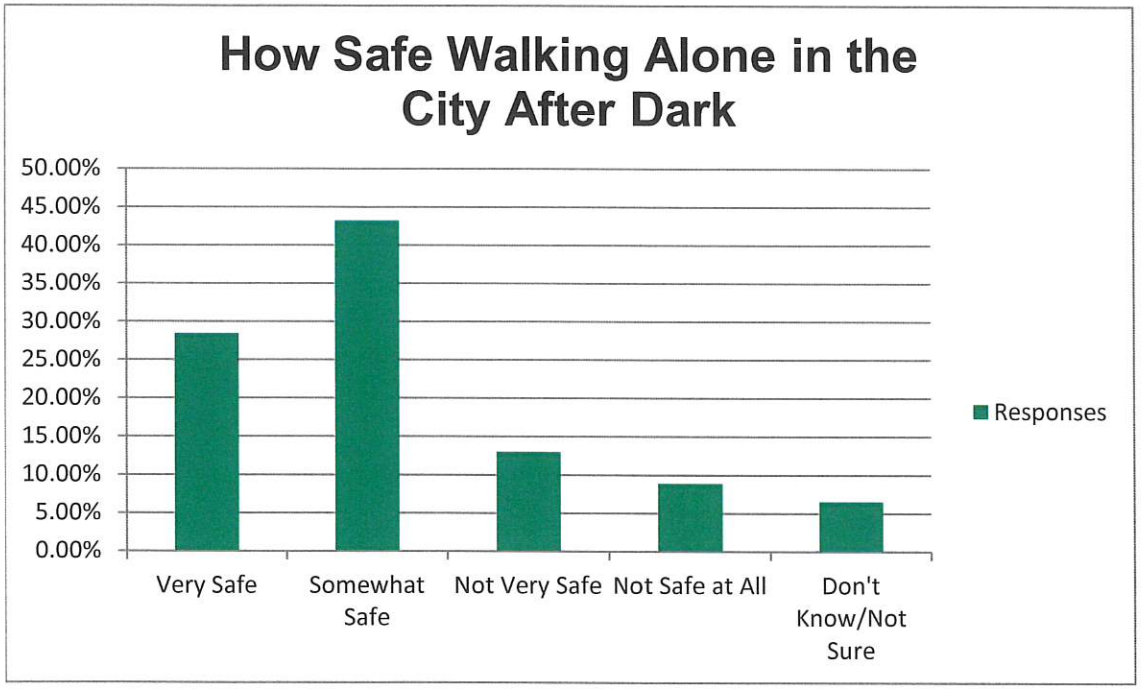
Q20. How Safe Walking Alone in the City During the Day

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Safe	**71.60%**	**121**
Somewhat Safe	23.67%	40
Not Very Safe	2.96%	5
Not Safe at All	0.00%	0
Don't Know/Not Sure	1.78%	3
	Answered	**169**
	Skipped	**1**



Q21. How Safe Walking Alone in the City After Dark

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very Safe	28.40%	48
Somewhat Safe	**43.20%**	**73**
Not Very Safe	13.02%	22
Not Safe at All	8.88%	15
Don't Know/Not Sure	6.51%	11
	Answered	**169**
	Skipped	**1**

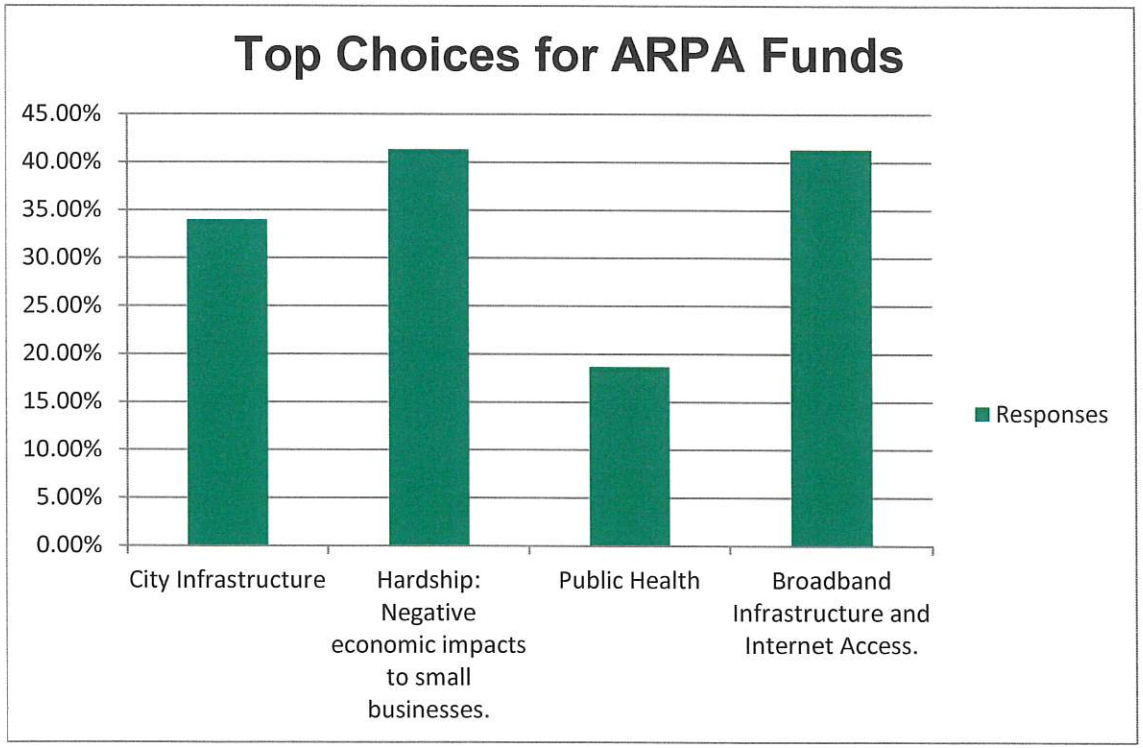


Q22. If Indicated Unsafe, Why?

	Responses	
Increase in Crime/Theft/Drugs	**20.41%**	**20**
Homeless in Town/Downtown	**20.41%**	**20**
Unknown/Unsavory People Around Town	14.29%	14
Inadequate Street Lighting	11.22%	11
People Walking at Night/"Tweekers"/Harrassed	10.20%	10
Inadequate Sidewalks	8.16%	8
Need More Police Patrols/Officers	5.10%	5
Speeding Vehicles	3.06%	3
Dogs	3.06%	3
State's Changes in Police Laws	3.06%	3
Men on Bicycles	1.02%	1
	Answered	**98**
	Skipped	**57**

Q23. Top Choices for ARPA Funds

Answer Choices	Responses	
City Infrastructure	**34.00%**	**51**
Hardship: Negative economic impacts to small bus.	**41.33%**	**62**
Public Health	18.67%	28
Broadband Infrastructure and Internet Access.	**41.33%**	**62**
	Answered	**150**
	Skipped	**20**



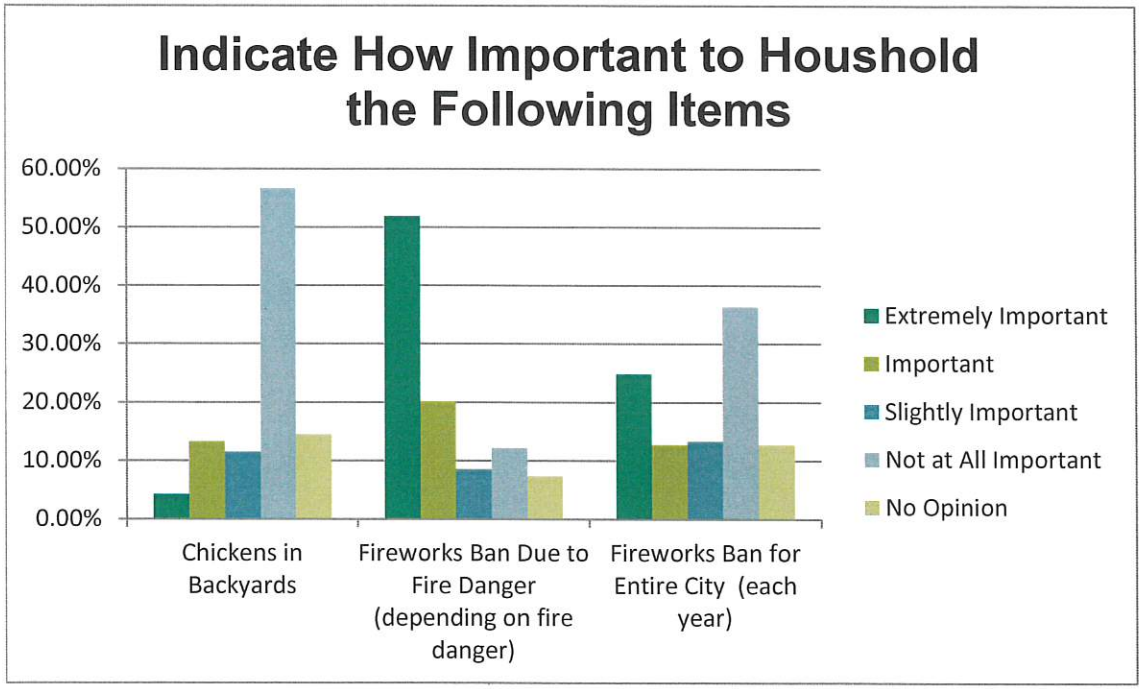
Q24. Beautification Project Suggestions

	Responses	
Update Downtown (bldgs, alleys, beautification)	**25.83%**	**31**
Beautify 1st Ave (entrance, napa sign, junk cars)	**11.67%**	**14**
Clean Up Nuisance Properties (yards, bldgs)	**10.83%**	**13**
Continued Maintenance (cemetery, parks, etc)	9.17%	11
Repair Streets	5.83%	7
Reduce Homeless Population	4.17%	5
Paint Street Signs	3.33%	4
Improvements to Walking Path	3.33%	4
Sidewalk Repair	2.50%	3
Weber Rd City Entrance	2.50%	3
Economic Growth	2.50%	3
Dog Path/Park	1.67%	2
Stop Train Whistles	1.67%	2
Tree Trimming (Golf Course & Streets)	1.67%	2
Danekas Rd Entrance Sign	1.67%	2
More Trees	1.67%	2
More Play Structures	1.67%	2
Cemetery Entrance	1.67%	2
Harscape Landscaping	0.83%	1
Fix Railroad Crossings	0.83%	1
Weed Control	0.83%	1
Fairgrounds (more hookups, updated bathrooms)	0.83%	1
Small Park by I-90	0.83%	1
Update Park Gazebo and Picnic Shelter	0.83%	1
Walking and Biking Paths	0.83%	1
More Activiites for Kids	0.83%	1
	Answered	**120**
	Skipped	**46**

Q25. Indicate How Important To Household the Following Items

	Extremely Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not at All Important	No Opinion
Chickens in Backyards	4.22%	13.25%	11.45%	**56.63%**	14.46%
Fireworks Ban Due to Fire Danger (depending on fire danger)	**51.83%**	20.12%	8.54%	12.20%	7.32%
Fireworks Ban for Entire City (each year)	24.85%	12.73%	13.33%	**36.36%**	12.73%

Total Fireworks Ban Extremely Important, Important, and Slightly Important **50.91%**



Q26. Interest in Being a Volunteer

Answer Choices	Responses	
Fair	**34.25%**	**25**
Rodeo	13.70%	10
Parade	23.29%	17
Main Street Program	23.29%	17
Downtown Development Association	21.92%	16
Chamber of Commerce	15.07%	11
Schools	**32.88%**	**24**
Library	**27.40%**	**20**
Public Development Authority	12.33%	9
Parks & Rec	**30.14%**	**22**
Eagles Club	19.18%	14
Lions Club	8.22%	6
City Committees	15.07%	11
Churches	**31.51%**	**23**
Car Club	6.85%	5
Gun Club	9.59%	7
Art in the Park	12.33%	9
Museums	15.07%	11
Fire Fighter	12.33%	9
Other (please specify)	21.92%	16
	Answered	**73**
	Skipped	**97**

Q27. Additional Comments and Suggestions

More connectivity available.
Stop making efforts to make a train stop here.

Surveys should not be anonymous, too easy to just hide the answers.

Concern for aquifer, adapt to COVID government.
Keep doing surveys, awesome idea.

Discuss the profane political banners displayed around town with inappropriate language for all to see.

Q27. Additional Comments and Suggestions (Continued)

Help people save downtown buildings.
Hope to see some improvements happen.

I have always supported our police. I love them. I believe in funding police but I don't like them afraid to do their job. Enforce our ordinances and codes.

Create a more dynamic community within Ritzville.
Create a town memorial for Larry Swift.

Stop allowing Collective Adventure to bring in new people, investigate and prosecute all crime

Thank you for all the city does, please keep at it. Fighting and minimizing crime and drugs is a priority.

Why are we allowing travel trailers to be parked on residential streets? Is there a law against it?

City employees should focus more on the "little" details such as litter and overgrown street signs.

End beautification projects and use funding for other city needs, use a local billing service instead of an "out of town" system, fund downtown projects to support local businesses.

Overall the city is doing a good job but there is always room for improvement.

The survey attempts citizen blaming for not joining committees, yet you pay people in charge who are not productive. All the expense for that story reading on the Fair path, no one uses that. How about moving them to a park. People could run around to find then next page. Exercise and learning.

Ritzville needs more progressive policies, ideas, and voices to be relevant in the future. Ritzville seems to be close minded and unfriendly to politics and ideas to anything not Republican. We need to be more inclusive.
You're doing a good job! Thank you!!

I am looking forward to hearing the results of this survey.

The city supervisory employees need to remember where their paychecks come from and do their jobs they were hired to do. The hourly employees aren't paid enough to do their jobs and salaried tasks also.
Ritzville is amazing!
That you guys actually listen to the people.

We need a recycling program. Whether we contract with the county, another county, or just the city has a program. The benefit outweighs the cost in creating less garbage, and being good stewards in a cleaner environment. Also, I appreciate the opportunity to give input. Than you for creating the survey.

All permits issued should be vetted by the planning commission before approval.

Q27. Additional Comments and Suggestions (Continued)

I see that I need to learn more about our town and what I can do to help. Business, city meetings, etc.

I have signed up for paperless billing. It needs work I still get a mailed bill and final payment notices even though I'm on Auto Pay.
There has been a cone sitting in the street on Division for more than 2 months. FIX IT ALREADY. Also hold the railroad accountable for the HORRIBLE conditions of the railroad crossing.
You forgot EMT on your list.
I love Ritzville.
If a city is going to send you a rude letter demanding you cut trees back they should supply people to do such a thing or simply come do it at a small cost. It's rude and unprofessional.

Would just love to see our little town back to way it use to be, people taking pride on their property, revitalization of our downtown.

Get rid of the junky houses and lots. Stop spending money on signs directing people downtown when they're not going to go there. They're buying gas and/or food and leaving. The business area is now along the freeway not downtown. GET RID OF THE RUN DOWN HOUSES AND LOTS. Get internet that is actually usable and can bring businesses to the town.
Changes for the hatred towards dogs in the park!!! My dog has his poo print done, maybe have it be a part of the license so if those who don't pick up their dogs poop they get fined. Sucks that responsible pet owners can't bring their dogs to the park for the kids to play with
Ritzville is fabulous! Could you please notify us on leaf pickup services? The appliance pickup is great way to keep the city clean! Thank you!!
I love the town just don't love how harvest price gouges people and think we need more businesses that can help town grow and keep money in Ritzville instead of Moses lake or Spokane.

Thank you for reaching out to the Ritzville community. I appreciate the opportunity to share my thoughts about this wonderful city.
Great job.
City is dying.

Fix the streets. Railroad crossings. The city cemetery looks like crap. Ease up on the historical district guidelines.