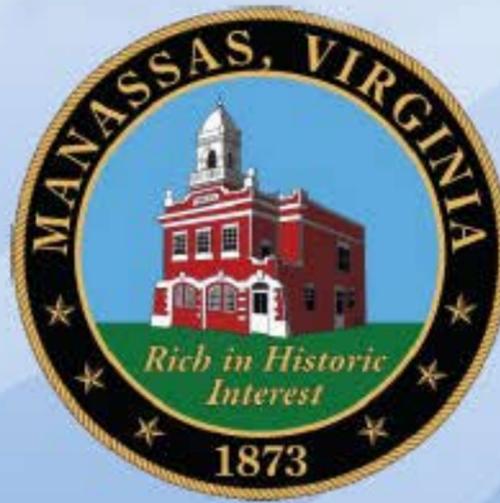


Findings Report for a Statistically Valid 2014 City of Manassas Community Survey



Submitted to

The City of Manassas, VA

By



725 W. Frontier Circle

Olathe, KS 66061

(913) 829-1215

December 2014

Section 1
Executive Summary

2014 Manassas Community Survey

Executive Summary Report

Overview and Methodology

During the fall of 2014, ETC Institute administered a Community Survey for the City of Manassas. The purpose of the survey was to assess citizen satisfaction with the delivery of major city services as part of the City's on-going effort to identify and respond to the needs and concerns of residents.

The seven-page survey was mailed to a random sample of 2,850 households in the City. Approximately seven days after the surveys were mailed residents who received the survey were contacted by phone. Those who indicated that they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing it by phone. The goal was to complete at least 400 surveys. ETC met that goal with a total of 405 complete surveys. The results for the random sample of 405 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.8%. In order to better understand how well services are being delivered by the City, ETC Institute geocoded the home address of respondents to the survey. The map shows the physical distribution of survey respondents based on the location of their home.

Interpretation of "Don't Know" Responses: The percentage of persons who gave "don't know" responses is important because it often reflects the level of utilization of City services. For graphing purposes, the percentage of "don't know" responses has been excluded to facilitate valid comparisons with other communities. When the "don't know" responses have been excluded, the text of this report will indicate that the responses have been excluded with the phrase "*who had an opinion.*" These "don't know" responses are however included in the tabular data section of the report.

Major Findings

- ❖ **Overall Satisfaction with City Services by Major Category:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 92% are satisfied with the *overall quality of fire and rescue services*. Other similar level of satisfaction include: Overall quality of electrical utility services (90%) and overall quality of police services (88%).
- ❖ **City Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 42% indicated that *overall flow of traffic and ease of getting around the City* as the item that should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other items that should receive the most emphasis include: Overall quality of public education (40%), overall quality of economic development (30%), and overall maintenance of City streets, sidewalks and infrastructure (25%).
- ❖ **Overall Perceptions of Manassas:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 78% were satisfied with the *overall quality of City of Manassas services*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Overall quality of life in the City of Manassas (73%), overall appearance of the City (72%), and the overall image of the City of Manassas (68%).
- ❖ **Satisfaction with Various Aspects of Public Safety:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 86% are satisfied with the *overall quality of fire services* is professionalism of fire and EMT emergency response. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Overall quality of local fire protection (86%), and quality of emergency medical services (84%).
- ❖ **Public Safety Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 40% indicated *visibility of police in neighborhoods* should receive the most emphasis from the City over the next two years. Other items include: The City’s efforts to prevent crime (35%), the visibility of police in retail areas (26%), the City’s efforts to enforce local traffic laws (23%), and overall quality of local police protection (23%).
- ❖ **How Safe Residents Feel in Certain Situations:** Based on the percentage of respondents who indicated they feel “very safe” or “somewhat safe,” 97% indicated they feel safe walking in their neighborhood during the day. Other similar indications of safety include: Overall feeling of safety in the City of Manassas (93%) and in commercial areas of the City (86%).

- ❖ **Resident Satisfaction with Transportation and Mobility:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 77% indicated that they are satisfied with the *overall maintenance of street signs and pavement markings*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Maintenance of streets in their own neighborhood (70%), availability of sidewalks (69%), and ease of getting around the City of Manassas (65%).

- ❖ **Transportation and Mobility Issues That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 32% indicated that *ease of traveling from home to regional roadways* should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other transportation and mobility that should receive the most emphasis include: Efficiency of traffic signal system (32%), ease of getting around the City of Manassas (25%), and availability of public parking in historic downtown (22%).

- ❖ **Resident Satisfaction with Community Appearance:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 86% indicated that they were satisfied with *residential curbside recycling*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Residential garbage and bulk trash collection (86%), residential yard waste collection (85%), and appearance of City buildings (81%).

- ❖ **Community Appearance Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 35% indicated *enforcing cleanup of litter on private property* as the community appearance item that should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other community appearance items include: Enforcing lawn maintenance of private property (29%), enforcing the maintenance of residential property (24%), and enforcing the removal of blighted or abandoned buildings (23%).

- ❖ **Resident Satisfaction with Planning and Economic Development:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 68% indicated that they were satisfied with *efforts to revitalize historic downtown*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Ability to attract visitors to historic Manassas (58%), efforts to encourage a variety of housing types (57%), and availability of quality housing (57%).

- ❖ **Planning and Economic Development Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 29% indicated the ability to *attract and retain full time private sector jobs* as the item that should receive the most attention over the next two years. Other items include: Efforts on developing large, vacant commercial and industrial areas to attract more employers (28%), efforts to improve existing commercial corridors (28%), and ability to attract retail business and restaurants (25%).

- ❖ **Satisfaction with Culture and Recreation:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 85% indicated that they were satisfied with *special events and festivals*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Variety and quality of programs at the Harris Pavilion (76%), proximity of your home to City parks and green space (76%), and hours of operation and services of the public library (75%).
- ❖ **Culture and Recreation Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 27% indicated *availability of walking and biking trails* should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other items that should receive the most emphasis include: Number of parks and open spaces (25%), availability of info about parks and recreation programs (22%), quality and number of athletic fields (18%), and variety of cultural and recreation programs (18%).
- ❖ **Satisfaction with Utility Services:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 93% indicated they were satisfied with the *reliability of water services*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Reliability of City electrical services (91%), how quickly power is restored after an unplanned outage (91%), and reliability of sewer services (89%).
- ❖ **Utility Service Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top two choices, 23% indicated the *overall value received from water and wastewater utility rates* should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other items include: Overall value received for electrical utility rates (21%), taste and odor of their own drinking water (21%), efforts to buy utility lines (19%).
- ❖ **Satisfaction With Health and Human Services:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 54% indicated that they were satisfied with *the availability of services to seniors*. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Availability of services to families and children (46%) and availability of services to people on a low r fixed income (41%).
- ❖ **Health and Human Service Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondent households top two choices, 23% indicated availability of services to seniors should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other items include: Efforts to preserve and increase the availability of affordable housing (22%), availability of services to families and children (15%), service availability to people on low or fixed income (15%), and availability of quality services supporting persons with mental, physical and cognitive disabilities and/or substance abuse (15%).

- ❖ **Satisfaction With Public Communication and Outreach:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” 70% indicated they were satisfied with the quality of the City’s website www.manassascity.org. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: Ease of access to information about City services (69%), quality of printed materials (67%), and opportunities to participate in local government (61%).
- ❖ **Resident Primary Source of Information About City Issues, Services, and Events:** Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents indicated that their primary source of information about City issues, services, and events comes from the *City Connection Newsletter*. Other primary sources include: The City website www.manassascity.org (57%) and the newspaper (31%).
- ❖ **Whether or Not Residents Have Contacted the City During the Past Year:** Fifty-six percent (56%) of respondents indicated that they have contacted the City of the past year and 44% indicated they did not.
- ❖ **Satisfaction With Customer Service and Characteristics:** Based on the sum of respondents who indicated “always” or “usually,” 86% indicated that Manassas employees are courteous and professional. Other similar levels of satisfaction include: The response time was reasonable (84%), they were satisfied with their experience (81%), and they were able to get their question/concern resolved (80%).
- ❖ **Respondent Level of Support for Budget Items Supported with General Tax Revenue:** The highest levels of support for budget items that respondents are willing to *increase services with increased fees and taxes* include: Education (34%), fire and rescue services (22%), and police services (21%). The highest levels of support for budget items that respondents are willing to *increase services but reduce other services* include: Streets and traffic (27%), health and human services (24%), development (22%), and culture and tourism (22%).
- ❖ **Most Important Factors Impacting Resident Decision to Live in Manassas:** Fifty-six percent (56%) indicated *affordability of housing* as the most important factor effecting their decision to live in Manassas. Other most important factors include: Near family or friends (39%) and safety and security (31%).
- ❖ **Reasons for Living in the City Items That Should Receive the Most Emphasis Over the Next Two Years:** Based on the sum of respondents top three choices, 38% indicated the *quality of the public school system* should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. Other items include: Safety and security (34%), employment opportunity (28%), and affordability of housing (25%).
- ❖ **Overall Opinion of the Certain Aspects of the City:** Based on the sum of respondents who indicated the item as “excellent” or “good,” 85% indicated that Manassas as a place to live as either excellent or good. Other similar opinion ratings include: Overall quality of life (73%) and as a place to visit (67%).