

# **2015 FRONTENAC RESIDENT POLL: A SUMMARY REPORT**

## **Executive Summary**

*The Warren Poll* interviewed by mail 592 Frontenac adult residents by mail from April 1 - May 26, 2015 for a return rate of 50.1%. The mail survey approach was used instead of the once more popular phone survey because Frontenac is a community too small (only 1185 valid households) to attain a representative sample by phone because of the very high rejection rates in phone surveys coupled with other problems now common in phone surveys such as the use of cell phones. Fortunately, the very high response rate of around 50% should allow City officials to feel confident that this sample is very representative of how citizens in Frontenac feel as a whole toward various issues asked in this community survey.

The demographical data reflected in this citizen survey reflect quite well the demographical data reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for Frontenac's adult population. That is, adult residents of Frontenac reflect an older, more stable community with 42.6% of its residents having lived in Frontenac over twenty years, most of them being "empty nesters" living in households with only one to two people.

*The Warren Poll* found in this community survey that the vast majority of Frontenac residents are very pleased with their community with 98.6% ranking Frontenac as a "good" to "excellent" place to live with 93.6% rating the quality of services provided by the City as "good" to "excellent," while 91.4% rated their satisfaction with City employees as "good" to "excellent." When asked to rank specific City services, all City services received laudable rankings by residents, but especially fire, ambulance and paramedic services, and police with over three-quarters of the respondents giving these services an "excellent" rating. Even the lowest ranked

City services, street maintenance and brush cleaning, still received about an 80% "good" to "excellent" rating by residents.

When residents were asked about whether they would prefer to have their taxes increased to keep City services at the present level or their services reduced, residents opted to have their taxes increased. Residents strongly favored paying higher taxes to maintain police, fire, and EMS services (55.9%) versus having these services cut back (23.9%). Almost a third, 32.7%, expressed a willingness to pay \$300 or more in property taxes to avoid a reduction in City services, while 50.5% said they would be willing to pay at least \$200 or more to keep City services at the present level.

A majority of residents, 59.5%, expressed a willingness to pay at least \$20.00 more in utility taxes per month to preserve City services as the current level, although the majority of residents, 53.1%, preferred paying a combination of property taxes and utility taxes if taxes had to be raised to maintain services. When citizens were asked whether they would support any reasonable tax to maintain City services at the current level, 43.5% said "yes," only 29.2% said "no," while 27.3% were "undecided," suggesting overall residents much prefer having their taxes raised to preserve current City services to having City services reduced.

Strong support was found in this community survey for Frontenac promoting more retail development as a way to boost sales tax revenues with 74.4% saying "yes" to this idea. Residents would most like to see more retail development at Lindbergh Boulevard and the Shriner's site.

Residents were asked a few questions pertaining to the City possibly purchasing land for park use. Survey results indicate only lukewarm support for this idea. Although 48.3% of the respondents said they favor the idea, over half of the citizenry, 54.4%, were unwilling to pay any additional property taxes for the City to purchase, develop, and maintain parks. However, if the

City did decide to develop parks, residents most favored having biking, walking, and jogging trails in the parks (63.8%), followed next by playgrounds (47%) and picnic areas (31.1%).

A fairly high percentage of citizens, 57.9%, did favor partnering with area schools and churches to develop recreational opportunities for Frontenac residents. However, residents were very cool to the idea of having their tax dollars used to subsidize Frontenac residents so they could use Des Peres' "The Lodge" at resident rates. Only 23.4% said "yes" to the idea.

*The Warren Poll* found that residents overall felt that the City kept them reasonably informed about important issues with 79.4% saying that the City did a "good" to "excellent" job doing so. Yet fewer residents, 66.4%, gave the City a "good" to "excellent" score on keeping them informed about the City's finances. Over half (53.8%) of Frontenac's residents reported in this survey that they read the City's email "almost every week" with the vast majority (71.2%) saying that they prefer to receive news about the City by e-mail.

Regarding the City leaf vacuuming program, 78.7% said they currently use the leaf vacuuming program, but only 44.8% noted that they would use the program if they had to pay \$100 per year to use it. There was strong support for changing the leaf pick-up schedule from its current schedule to starting in early November and ending in late December.

Concerning the proposal by "Better Together" to merge St. Louis County with St. Louis City to reduce service inefficiencies and thereby promote cost-savings, only 30.3% of Frontenac residents were favorable to the idea.

---

## Survey Research Methodology

*The Warren Poll* interviewed 592 Frontenac adult residents (i.e., 18 years or older) by mail from April 1 - May 26, 2015, constituting a return rate of approximately 49.9% of eligible valid households in Frontenac ( $592/1181 = 50.13\%$ ). Four returned questionnaires were not included in the tabulations because they were sent in after the final deadline (May 26th) when the 588 returned questionnaires had already been processed. Valid households were determined by using the latest household listings provided to *The Warren Poll* by the City of Frontenac along with the 2010 U.S. Census data on the number of residential households in Frontenac (1267) and then subtracting business addresses (22) and undeliverable addresses returned by the Post Office (54), and questionnaires returned by residents who checked on the questionnaire that they no longer lived in Frontenac (6), and the four questionnaires returned after the deadline for a total of 1181 households.

A mail survey was used in this community survey instead of the once more popular phone interview approach for two basic reasons. One, Frontenac is a small community of only 3,482 people living in just 1,267 households, according to the 2010 U.S. census. This means that it would be practically impossible to reach a sufficient number of households by phone to attain a representative sample since the average rejection rate in resident phone surveys runs close to 80% in the Midwest and much higher in other parts of the country (e.g., New York City has a rejection rate of about 90%). Two, about 41% of the nation's population in 2015 rely on cell phones alone with no ability to reach them by landline phones ([www.chicagobusiness.com/.../four-in-10-u-s-home](http://www.chicagobusiness.com/.../four-in-10-u-s-home)). Of course, this presents serious problems to survey researchers because cell phones are not linked to specific areas as are landline phones,

making calling to specific communities very problematic. All of this means that the only viable approach was to use a mail poll to survey Frontenac residents.

Fortunately, the response rate was so high by Frontenac residents in this community survey that Frontenac City officials and residents may place a lot of confidence in its results. That is, with about a 50% response rate, the poll can be considered quite representative of Frontenac's population as a whole. Please note that percentages in this Summary Report may on not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

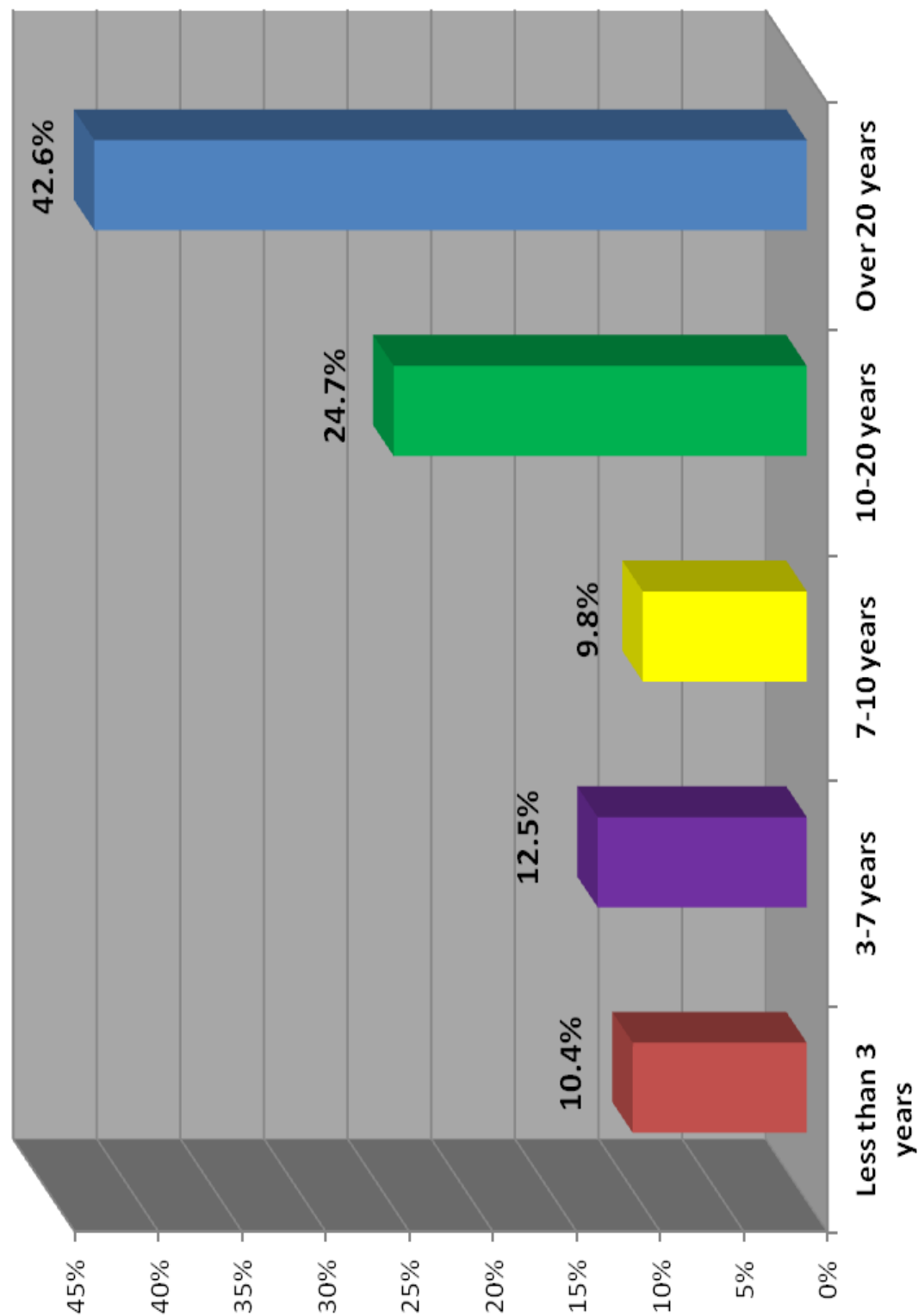
## **Demographical Characteristics of Frontenac Residents**

It should be noted at the outset that Frontenac demographics from this poll reflect quite closely the demographics reported by the latest U.S. Census. *Warren Poll* survey findings reveal that Frontenac is a relatively small, stable community (Population: 3,482; 2010 U.S. Census; 3,508 2012 estimate) with an aging population. As would be expected of a community with an older population, most residents have lived in Frontenac for many years with 67.3% of the residents reporting in this survey that they have lived in Frontenac for over ten years; 42.6% noted that they have lived in Frontenac over twenty years ( see Graph 1 ).

The age statistics found in this survey matched the U.S. Census statistics for Frontenac almost perfectly when adjusting for the fact that only those eighteen years or older were interviewed and that questionnaires were only sent to the names in the various households deemed "stakeholders" of the property. The vast majority of respondents in this survey reported that they were 45 years or older. More specifically, 52.4% said that they were between 45-65 years old, while 38.7% said that they were over 65. Only about 9% indicated that they were under 45 years of age.

Consistent with U.S. Census data, *The Warren Poll* also found that Frontenac households are

Graph 1: Years Living In Frontenac



largely made up of apparently "empty nesters" with almost 60% of residents reporting that only one (14.3%) or two (45.1%) live in their household. Thirteen percent noted that three live in their household, while 17.4% reported four, 8.1% said five, while only 2.1% mentioned that six lived in their household. Although "seven or over" was a possible response, no respondents answered "seven or more".

The assertion that most Frontenac households are made up of "empty nesters" is confirmed by the poll finding that 68.3% of the residents reported in this survey that no person under 19 lives in their household. Twelve percent said one does, 15.2% said that two do, 3.4% mentioned that three do, while 1.2% disclosed that there were four in their household under 19 years of age.

Regarding the addresses of respondents, 39.2% mentioned that they live off Geyer Road, 18.4% said that they live off Clayton Road, 15.7% said that they live off Conway Road, 6.5% noted that they live in West End Park, while 4.5% said they live off Bopp Road. Another 15.7% answered "other," but the vast majority of these residents mentioned that they live off Spoede Road.

Males were slightly overrepresented in this survey because more questionnaires were sent to males than females, anticipating that fewer males would respond to the questionnaire than females, as is the norm, but this did not turn out to be the case. However, both males and females are amply represented in this survey since both males and females representation hover around the 50% mark so weighting was not deemed necessary.

### **Residents Rank Frontenac As A Great Place to Live; Give High Marks To The Quality Of Services Provided By The City, As Well As Express Laudable Satisfaction With City Employees**

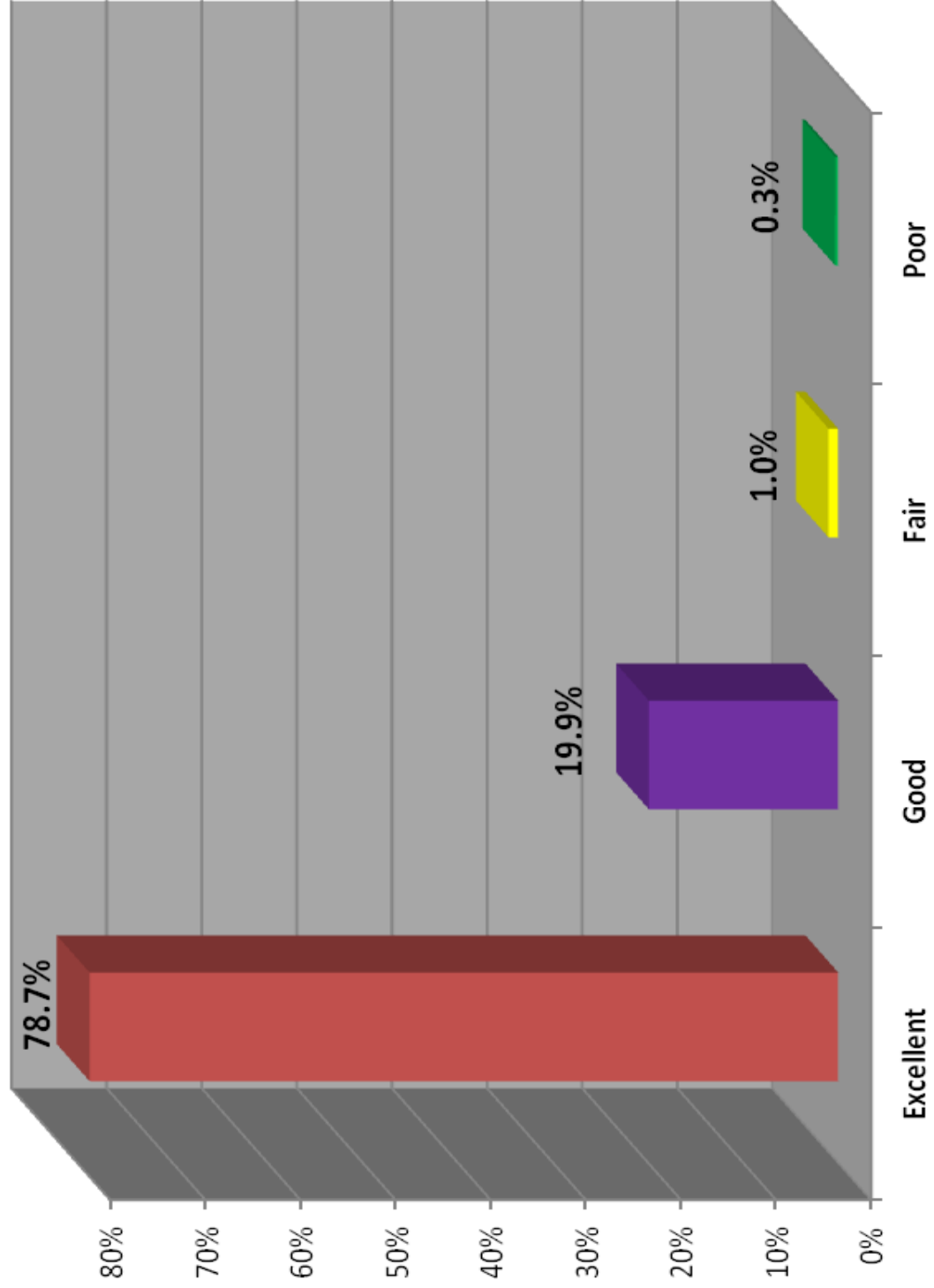
Frontenac residents in this citizen survey were asked: "In general, how would you rate

Frontenac as a place to live?” Nearly all residents (98.6%) responded that Frontenac was a “good” (19.9%) to “excellent” (78.7%) place to live with only an insignificant percentage answering “fair” (1%) to “poor” (.3%) ( see Graph 2 ). Of course, this result helps explain the previous finding that a majority of Frontenac's residents (67.3%) have lived in Frontenac for at least ten years with 42.6% of these residents having lived in Frontenac for more than twenty years. Obviously, residents would choose to move elsewhere if they regarded Frontenac as an undesirable place to live. However, statistics in polls are relative and this is why benchmarking is so commonplace in the survey research field. Benchmarks provide comparisons so survey findings can be placed into perspective. For example, in two recent citizen polls conducted by *The Warren Poll*, 62.9% of Creve Coeur residents rated their community as a "good" to "excellent" place to live, while 56.7% of Brentwood residents ranked their community as a "good" to "excellent" place to live. Therefore, Frontenac residents, by comparison, ranked their community more favorably as a place to live than residents of both Creve Coeur and Brentwood.

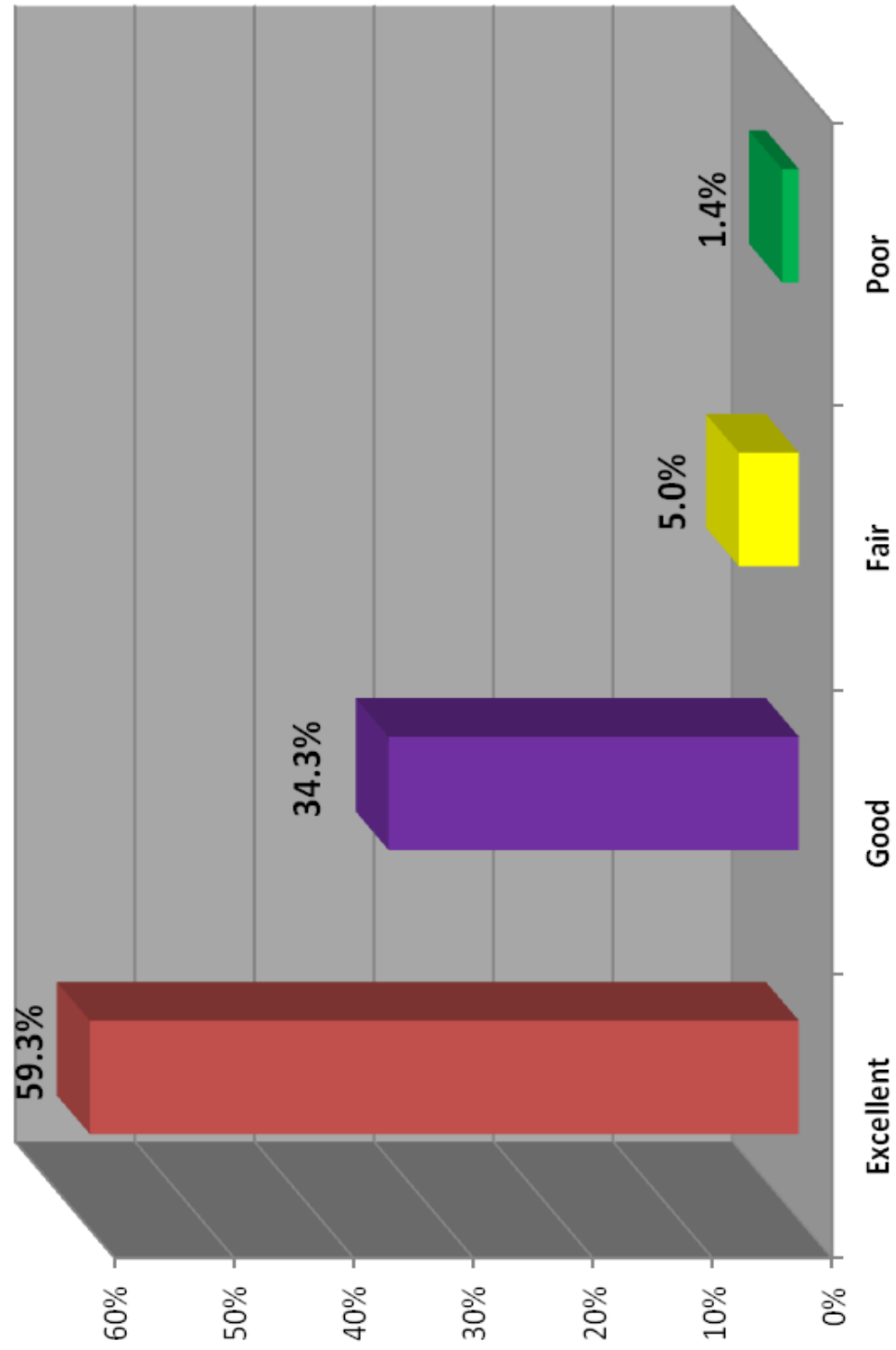
Frontenac residents in this survey also gave very positive overall ratings to the services provided by the City of Frontenac. To the question, “Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by the City of Frontenac?”, 93.6% responded “good” (34.3%) to “excellent” (59.3%) with only 5% saying “fair” (1.4%) to “poor” (1.1%) ( see Graph 3 ). Compared to the same questions asked of Creve Coeur and Brentwood residents, Frontenac ratings were slightly more positive. Additionally, the Frontenac citizenry expressed high satisfaction with City employees with 91.4% giving City employees a "good (36%) to "excellent" (55.4%) rating. Only a small percentage gave City employees a "fair" (6.9%) to "poor" (1.8%) rating.



Graph 2: Resident Ranking Of Frontenac As Place To Live



**Graph 3: Residents Rate The Quality Of Services Provided By Frontenac.**



## **Resident Rankings Of 12 Specific City Services Provided By The City of Frontenac**

Frontenac residents were asked to rank 12 specific services provided by the City of Frontenac as “excellent”, “good”, “fair”, or “poor”. Table 1 displays that overall these individual City services were ranked quite positively by residents. Table 1 provides a rank ordering of these services from the highest to lowest ranked service in the “excellent” category. Combined “good” to “excellent” ratings may cause a different ranking, so careful attention should be paid to all “excellent”, “good”, “fair”, and “poor” rankings because they tell a more complete picture of the rankings. Normally, however, the “excellent” ranking percentage is quite reflective of the overall ranking of the service. To make the rankings more meaningful, percentages in the rankings exclude residents who answered NA or left the category blank. For example, apparently some residents did not feel comfortable ranking fire services because they had no direct experience with the Fire Department. However, the vast majority of residents ranked each service. Please consult Appendix A of this Summary Report for all percentages for answers to each question in the Frontenac questionnaire. Consult the computer print-out, submitted with this Summary Report, for all frequencies and percentages.

Table 1 shows that Frontenac’s citizenry gave the highest ranking to “fire services” with a laudable 83.7% “excellent” rating, followed very closely by "ambulance and paramedic services," which received a 81.9% "excellent" rating, while police came in third place with a 75.1% "excellent" percentage. These three City services placed in the top tier by themselves because no other City service came close to receiving such lofty "excellent" percentages, although Table 1 displays clearly that residents gave all City services a very respectable combined "good" to "excellent" rating.

The next four ranked City services in Table 1 were all bunched with similar "excellent" ratings. They include Friday e-mailings (56%), recycling services (55.1%); snow plowing, excluding private sub-divisions (53.9%); and trash pick-up services (53.5%). Ratings for the City newsletter/postcards and leaf vacuuming were not far behind in the rankings, receiving "excellent" percentages of 48% and 46.5% respectively with almost identical "good" percentage scores.

**Table 1: Rank Ordering By "Excellent" Rating of Twelve City Services by Frontenac Residents (in %). Note: Combined "good" to "excellent" rankings are in parentheses.**

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
1. Fire services (1)	83.7	14.9	.7	.7
2. Ambulance and paramedic services (2)	81.9	16.0	1.0	1.0
3. Police (3)	75.1	20.6	3.2	1.1
4. Friday e-mailings (6)	56.0	34.25	6.0	3.75
5. Recycling services (5)	55.1	35.6	6.7	2.6
6. Snow plowing, excl. private subdivs. (4)	53.9	37.6	6.3	2.2
7. Trash pick-up services (7)	53.5	35.6	7.4	3.5
8. City newsletter/postcards (9)	48.0	39.0	10.3	2.7
9. Leaf vacuuming (8)	46.5	41.1	9.9	2.4
10. Sidewalk maintenance (12)	40.5	39.0	14.0	6.5
11. Street maintenance (11)	40.2	40.4	14.3	5.1
12. Brush cleaning (10)	38.7	44.4	13.5	3.4

Residents gave their lowest "excellent" rating to sidewalk maintenance (40.5%), street maintenance (40.25), and brush cleaning (38.7%), although even these City services still had quite impressive combined "good" to "excellent" percentage scores of roughly 80%.

In sum, Frontenac City services overall received very favorable ratings from residents. Not a single City service received any negative reviews that City officials should really be concerned about, especially since very few residents gave any City service a "poor" rating. The highest "poor" ratings were for sidewalk maintenance (6.5%) and street maintenance (5.1%), but this obviously constitutes a relatively small percentage of Frontenac residents expressing concern

over sidewalk and street maintenance. On the positive side, it should be noted that half of the services in Table 1 were given over 90% "good" to "excellent" rankings by Frontenac's citizenry.

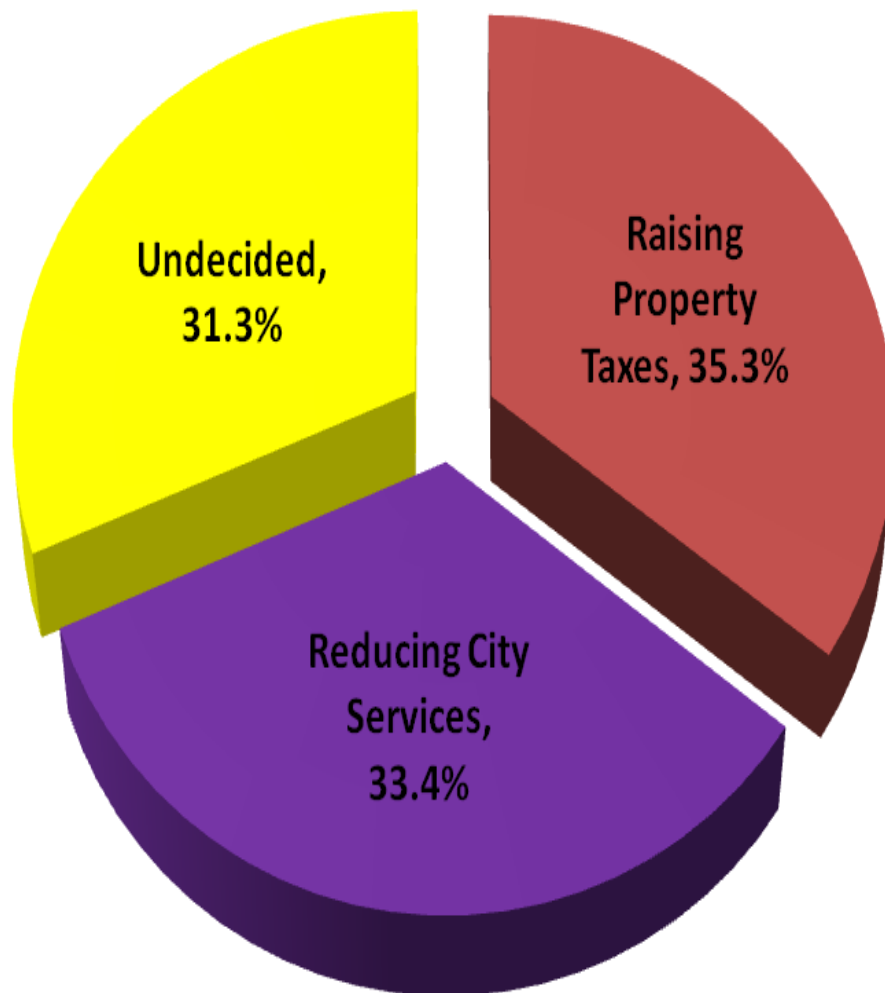
### **Resident Opinion On Whether The City Should Find New Revenues To Maintain The Current Level Of City Services Or Reduce Services Due To Projected Declining Revenues**

A chief objective in this resident survey was to tap citizen opinion on whether the City should look for additional revenue sources in the coming years to maintain the current level of City services or cut back services. Specifically, to place the financial situation into perspective, residents were told the following before they were asked a series of questions pertaining to City finances:

The City of Frontenac has been able to rely on sales tax revenues to finance the current level of City services. However, as stated in recent mailers which are posted on the City Web site, the City projects that in the next five years, due to relatively flat tax revenues and increased sharing of the sales tax revenues with other cities mandated by state law, the City will no longer be able to maintain the current level of City services unless City taxes are increased.

Residents were first asked a vague question to determine in principle whether they would support raising property taxes to maintain City services or cutting back on existing City services. Specifically, residents were asked: "Without knowing how much property taxes would have to be increased or what sort of City services would have to be cut, do you favor raising property taxes to maintain the current level of City services or reducing City services?" The Frontenac citizenry was very split in answering this question with 35.3% saying they favored "raising property taxes," while 33.4% answered that they favored "reducing City services." The remaining 31.3% were "undecided" (see Graph 4 ). However, citizen support for raising taxes for maintaining current City services increased dramatically once residents were informed as to what specific services may have to be reduced. That is, when citizens were told that police, fire,

**Graph 4: Residents Favoring Raising Property Taxes Versus  
Reducing City Services**

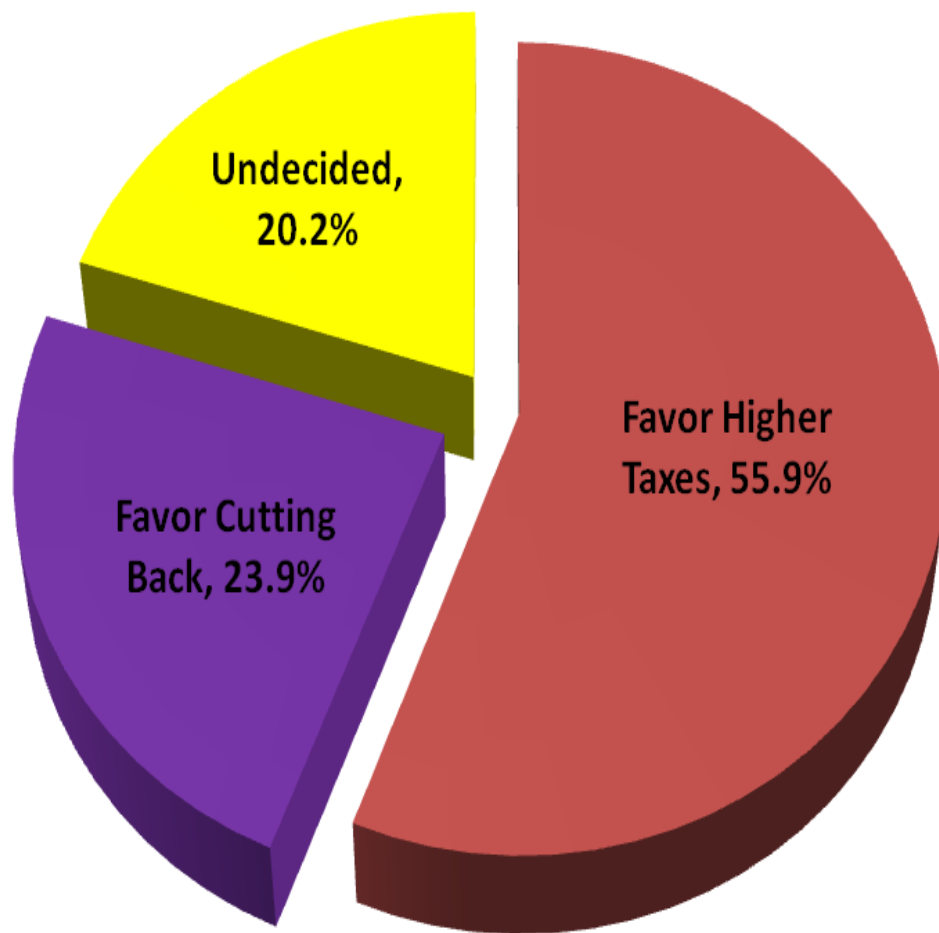


and EMS services may have to be cut back within the next five years unless the City brings in additional revenues, residents overwhelmingly "favored paying higher taxes" to maintain these services (55.9%) than "cutting back" on these services (23.9%), although 20.2% remained "undecided" ( see Graph 5 ).

The reason for this more than two to one ratio of support by Frontenac's citizenry for paying more in taxes to maintain the current level of police, fire, and EMS services can be seen in the fact that most residents do not want to see any reduction in response time by police, fire, and EMS. When residents were asked what would be an acceptable lengthening of response time for you if cuts to police, fire/EMS services had to be lengthened due to cuts, over half of Frontenac's residents (51.7%) said "no lengthening in average response time" was acceptable. Another 11.6% answered "one minute," 17.6% said "two minutes," while 9.2% said "three," 2.4% "four," 4.4% "five," .4% "six," and 2.8% said "seven minutes or more." However, the reality is that 90.1% of the residents responded that they would either find acceptable no increase in response time to police, fire, or EMS services or only up to three minutes. This is a typical finding by *The Warren Poll* in community surveys. When it comes to police, fire, and EMS services, citizens find these services as vitally important to the safety of the community and most often express serious concern over having these services compromised in any way. Consequently, they normally express a strong willingness to continue to fund these services at the current level or even increase funding in order to insure that these services perform at an optimum level.

In this community survey Frontenac residents showed a willingness to pay more in property taxes to maintain City services at the present level. Residents were asked: "If property taxes had to be increased to maintain City services at the current level, how much in additional property taxes would you be willing to pay?" Twenty-one percent said they would be willing to pay up to a \$100 more; 17.8% up to \$200 more; 13.2% up to \$300 more; 5.4% up to \$400 more 9.2% up to \$500 more .4% up to \$600 more,

**Graph 5: Residents  
Favoring Higher Taxes To Maintain Police, Fire, and EMS  
Or For Cutting Back.**



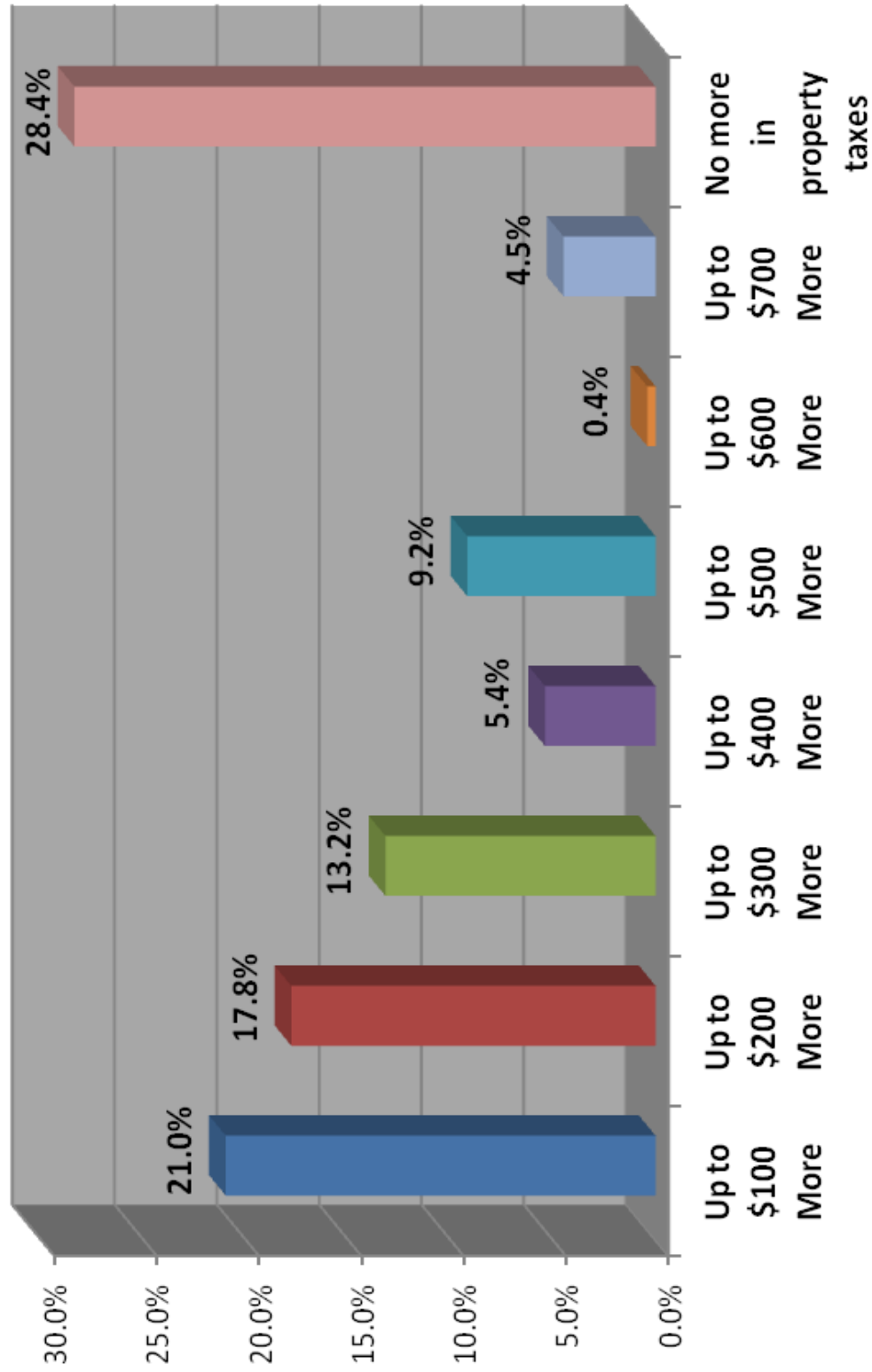


and .5% up to \$700 more. Only 28.4% expressed an unwillingness to pay any more in property taxes. Compared to other citizen surveys, this is actually a relatively low percentage of residents in communities not willing to pay any more in property taxes. Naturally, as found in virtually all community surveys, the plurality of residents opted to pay the lower amounts more in property taxes, but still in this survey about one third of Frontenac residents, 32.7%, indicated that they would be willing to pay at least \$300 or more in property taxes per year to maintain City services at the current level and just over half, 50.5%, said that they would be willing to pay at least \$200 more ( see Graph 6 ).

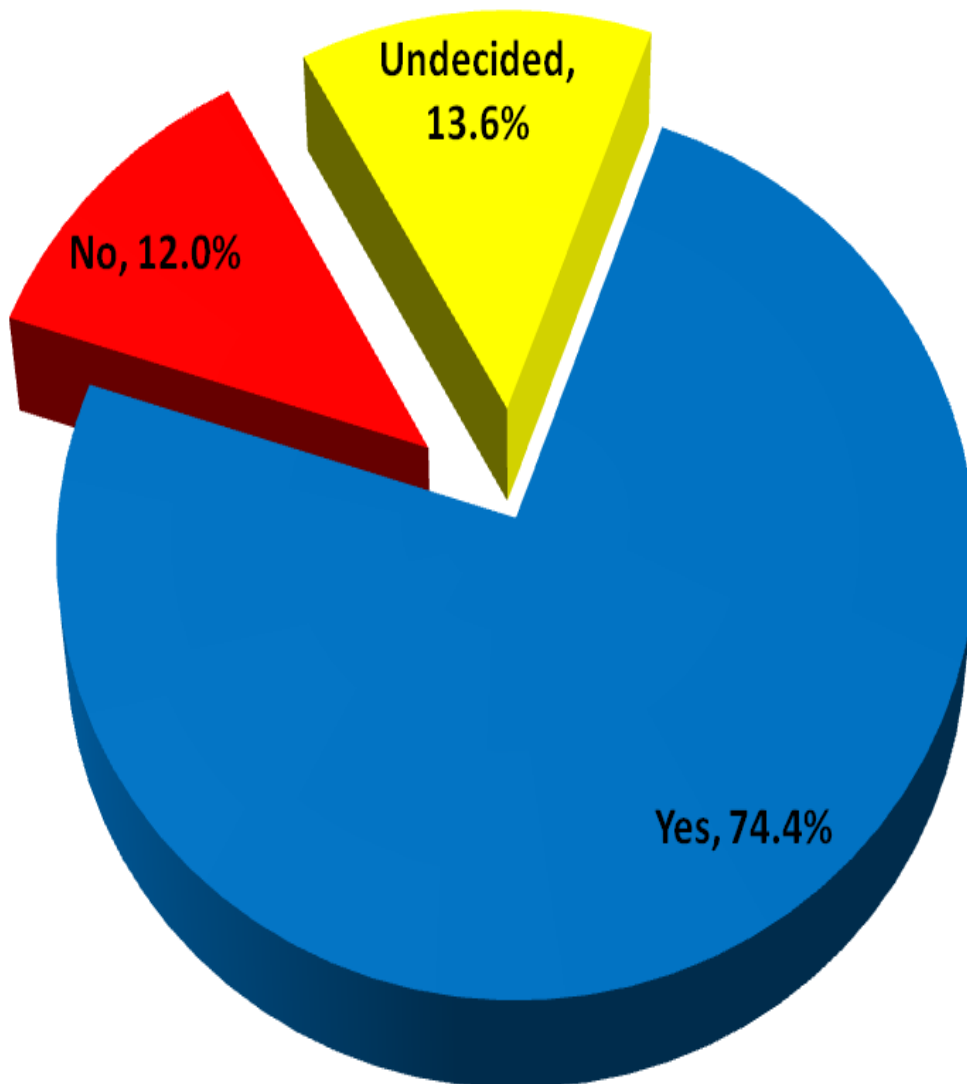
Residents were told that one revenue option may be to raise the utility tax rate. The question was posed: "Not knowing how much the City would have to raise its utility tax rate, would you support in principle the City raising its residential utility tax rate to maintain the current level of services?" A strong plurality, 43% said "yes," while 30.6% said "no" and 26.5% were "undecided." Then residents were asked: "If the City had to increase the City utility tax rate to maintain the present level of City services, how much more in utility taxes per month would you be willing to pay?" Although a sizable percentage, 40.5%, said "none," 59.5% said at least \$20.00 more per month. This should add comfort to City officials contemplating having to raise taxes to maintain City services at current levels. In this resident survey Frontenac residents were informed that it was not feasible to increase the sales tax rates because the City is already at the highest rate for City services permitted under state law, so residents were asked whether they would support in principle efforts by the City to bring in additional sales tax revenues by promoting more retail development in Frontenac. Almost three out of four residents (74.4%) said "yes" with only 12% saying "no." The remaining percentage, 13.6% were "undecided" (see Graph 7 ).

A follow-up question asked residents where they would support more retail business. Residents were most supportive of development on Lindbergh Boulevard (91%); followed closely by the Shriner's Hospital site (90.3%); then by German Boulevard, (78.5%), and

**Graph 6: Residents Willing To Pay More In Property Taxes To Maintain City Services At Current Level**



**Graph 7: Residents Supporting In Principle More Retail Development In Frontenac.**



Clayton Road (60.9%). There were a few other sites mentioned by residents under the "Other," but the numbers were too low to warrant mentioning.

## **Resident Opinion On Parks And Recreation Considerations**

In this section of the Frontenac community survey residents were first asked: "Do you favor or oppose the City purchasing land for park use?" A modest plurality favored the idea (48.3%), while only 9% fewer residents (39.3%) opposed the idea, with only 12.4% noting that they were "undecided." Support for the City actually using property tax dollars to buy, develop, and maintain park land was quite weak with over a majority of the residents, 54.4% saying that they would be unwilling to pay any property taxes toward this City endeavor. Almost a quarter of the respondents (23.7%) would be willing to pay "up to \$100" more in property taxes annually for park use, but support drops sharply after that with only 12.4% willing to pay "up to \$200," 3.6% "up to \$300, and 5.8% "up to \$400.

The cool support for the City using property taxes to purchase, develop, and maintain parks should be put into perspective. Normally, citizens in community surveys express much more support for putting their tax dollars toward infrastructure or basic services than what many citizens see as non-essential services. This is especially true when residents are asked to prioritize what tax dollars should be spent on in a long list of services/facilities. Several residents in this survey also commented in the margins or in the final open-ended question that the City should not be contemplating using tax money for parks when simultaneously telling residents that it may be forced to raise taxes or reduce essential services (see written comments by residents in the questionnaires returned with this Summary Report).

However, if the City did purchase land for park use, residents were asked to prioritize the activities that they would "most like to see" to "least like to see" in the parks. Table 2 shows how

**Table 2: Rank Ordering Of Activities Frontenac Residents Would "Most Like To See" In Their Parks (in %): 1 = "Most Like To See"; 2 = "Like To See" 3 = "Would Not Like To See"; 4 = "Would Least Like To See" \*Note: Combined "Like to See" and Most Like to See" are in parentheses.**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Biking, Walking, and Jogging Trails (1)	63.8	10.3	5.1	10.5
2. Playgrounds (2)	47.0	17.5	8.9	15.2
3. Picnic Areas (3)	31.1	21.7	12.4	22.1
4. Dog Parks (4)	22.5	12.6	12.8	39.3
5. Tennis Courts (5)	15.7	15.1	20.2	35.7
6. Adult Exercise Equipment (6)	14.2	14.0	18.5	39.1
7. Basketball Court (7)	4.5	13.1	19.3	46.8
8. Handball Courts (8)	3.5	6.2	19.3	56.8
9. Inline Hockey Rinks (9)	2.7	2.9	14.6	64.0

these activities were ranked by Frontenac residents. It should be noted at the outset that resident rankings for activities they would "most like to see" and the combined rankings for "most like to see" and "would like to see" were the same. This rarely happens in such rankings. In any event, the Frontenac citizenry showed a strong preference for including "biking, walking, and jogging trails" in their parks if the City were to purchase and develop City parks. A combined percentage of 74.1% said they would "most like to see" or "like to see" "biking, walking, and jogging trails" in their parks. No other activity came close to this preference. Residents would "most like to see" "playgrounds" (47%), "picnic areas" (31.1%), and "dog parks" (22.5%), but all other possible City park activities received very little interest, especially basketball courts (6.2%), handball courts (3.5%), and inline hockey (2.7%). It should be mentioned, however, that the City should realize that these ratings may not actually represent the real preference for all residents of Frontenac, including children since those under 18 would be

much more likely to prefer such park inclusions as basketball courts, tennis courts, handball courts, and inline skating rinks than those older adult residents who filled out these questionnaires. This is critically important for City officials to consider when contemplating what to include in City parks, as parks and recreation directors understand.

It has already been acknowledged that only a minority of residents favor the City using property taxes to buy, develop, and maintain park land for resident use. However, a comfortable majority, 57.9%, responded in this survey that they would "support City efforts to partner with area schools and churches to develop recreational opportunities for City residents." Only 23.9% said they would not support such efforts, while 18.2% were "undecided" ( see Graph 8 ).

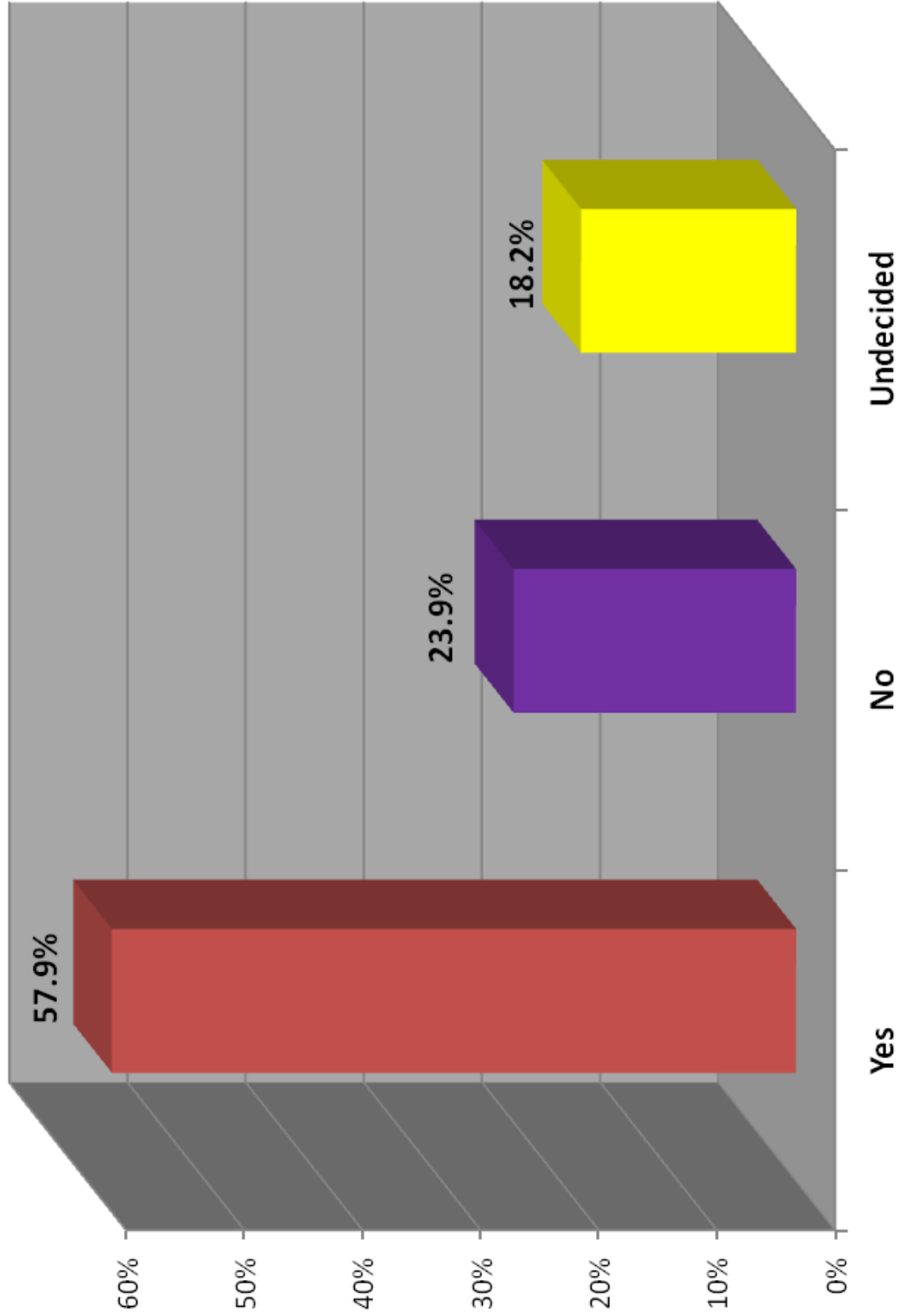
However, only 23.4% of residents favored "the City of Frontenac utilizing a portion of its parks and storm water sales tax to pay the difference between the annual non-resident rate of \$800 for a family versus the resident rate of \$500 or \$470 for the non-resident individual rate versus the resident rate of \$300 so Frontenac residents could become members of "The Lodge" at Des Peres' resident rates." Close to three of five residents (56.4%) of the respondents in resident survey opposed this idea, while 20.2% were "undecided" ( see Graph 9).

## **Resident Opinion On City-Resident Communications**

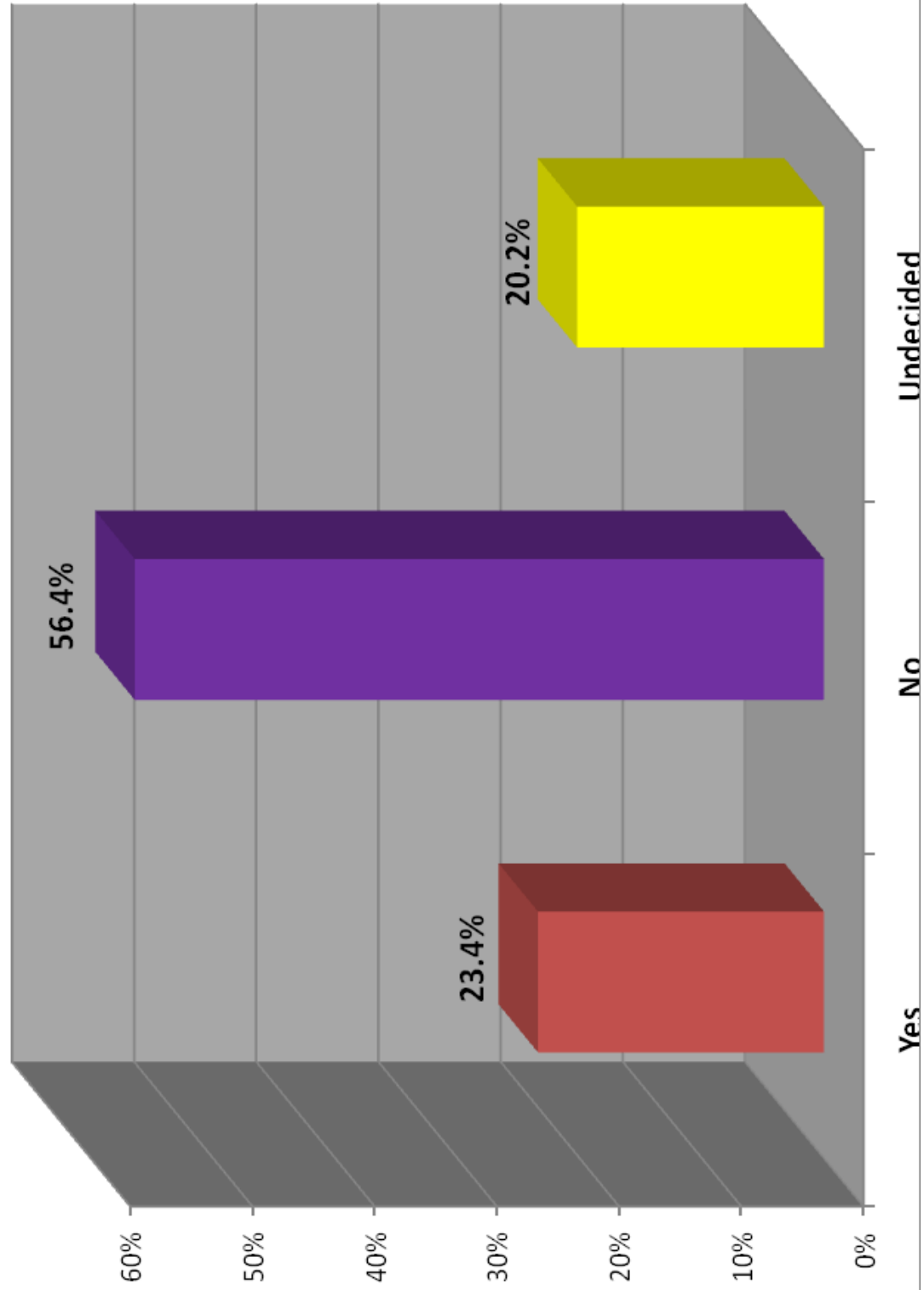
Residents were asked their opinion on how well the City keeps citizens informed about important issues. Over one-third of the residents, 36%, thought the City was doing an "excellent" job keeping residents informed about important issues, while another 43.4% believed the City was doing a "good" job. Only 20.6% felt the City was doing a "fair" (14%) to "poor" (6.6%) job ( see Graph 10).

Residents were not as positive on how well the City was doing in keeping residents informed about the City's finances in particular. Less than a quarter of the citizenry (24%) said the City

**Graph 8: Residents Favoring Partnering With Area Schools And Churches To Promote Recreational Opportunities**

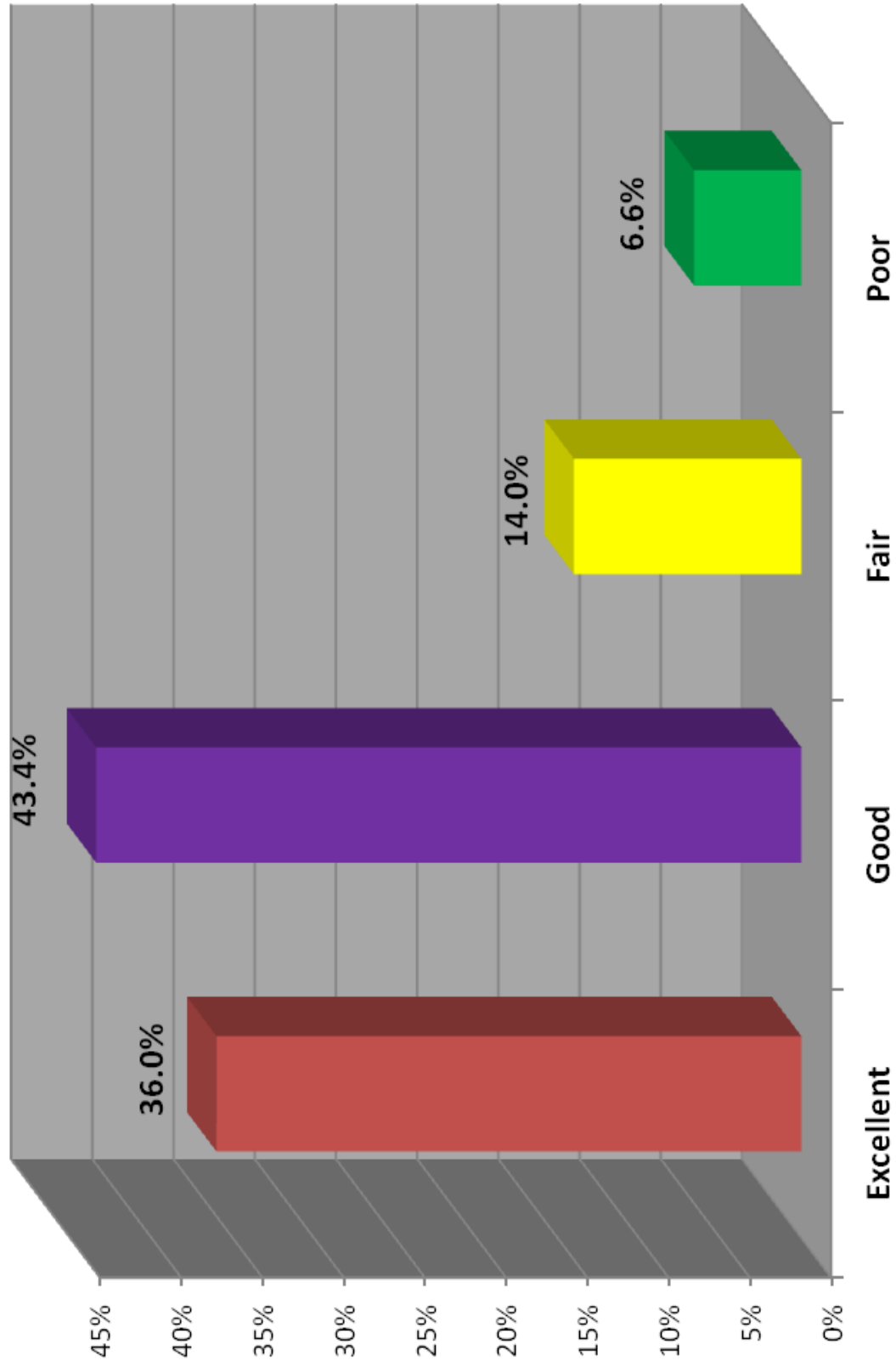


**Graph 9: Residents Supporting The City Using Some Parks And Storm Water Sales Taxes To Subsidize Use Of "The Lodge" At Resident Rates**





**Graph 10: Resident Ranking Of The Job The City Is Doing On Keeping Them Informed About Important Issues**



was doing an "excellent" job. Another 42.4% felt the City was doing a "good" job on keeping residents informed about the City's finances, while 22.4% said a "fair" job, while 11% answered that the City was doing a "poor" job. However, in fairness to the City, cross-tabs revealed that respondents most likely to give the City a "fair" to "poor" rating for keeping them informed about financial issues also were the most likely to say that they "never" read the City's email or "don't subscribe" to the City's email (Pearson Chi-Square sig. at the .007). While only 28.3% of residents who said that they read the City's email "almost every week" gave the City a "fair" (19.2%) to "poor" (9.1%) rating on keeping them informed about the City's finances, 52.3% of residents who said that they "never" read the "City's email gave the City a "fair" (36.4%) to "poor" rating (15.9%), while 41.9% of the citizenry who said that they "don't subscribe" gave the City a "fair" (25.8%) to "poor" (16.1%) rating.

Survey results show that 53.8% of residents reported reading the City's email "almost every week" and 15.9% noted that they read it a "few times a year," while 7.9% acknowledged that they "never" read the City's email with another 22.4% said that they "don't subscribe." When residents were asked what their preference was for receiving news about the City, the vast majority of residents (71.2%) answered "by email," 26% said "by mail," while only 2.8% said "by social media."

Frontenac residents were also asked if they would attend "community forums on proposed tax increases versus service reductions," if the City held them. Almost half responded, 47.6%, that they would, while 12.2% said they would not with 40.3% said "maybe." Experience regarding such responses to this sort of question reveals that a lot more people say that they would attend such events than actually would. This is because respondents in public opinion polls, as experienced survey researchers understand, tend to answer such questions in a way that upholds

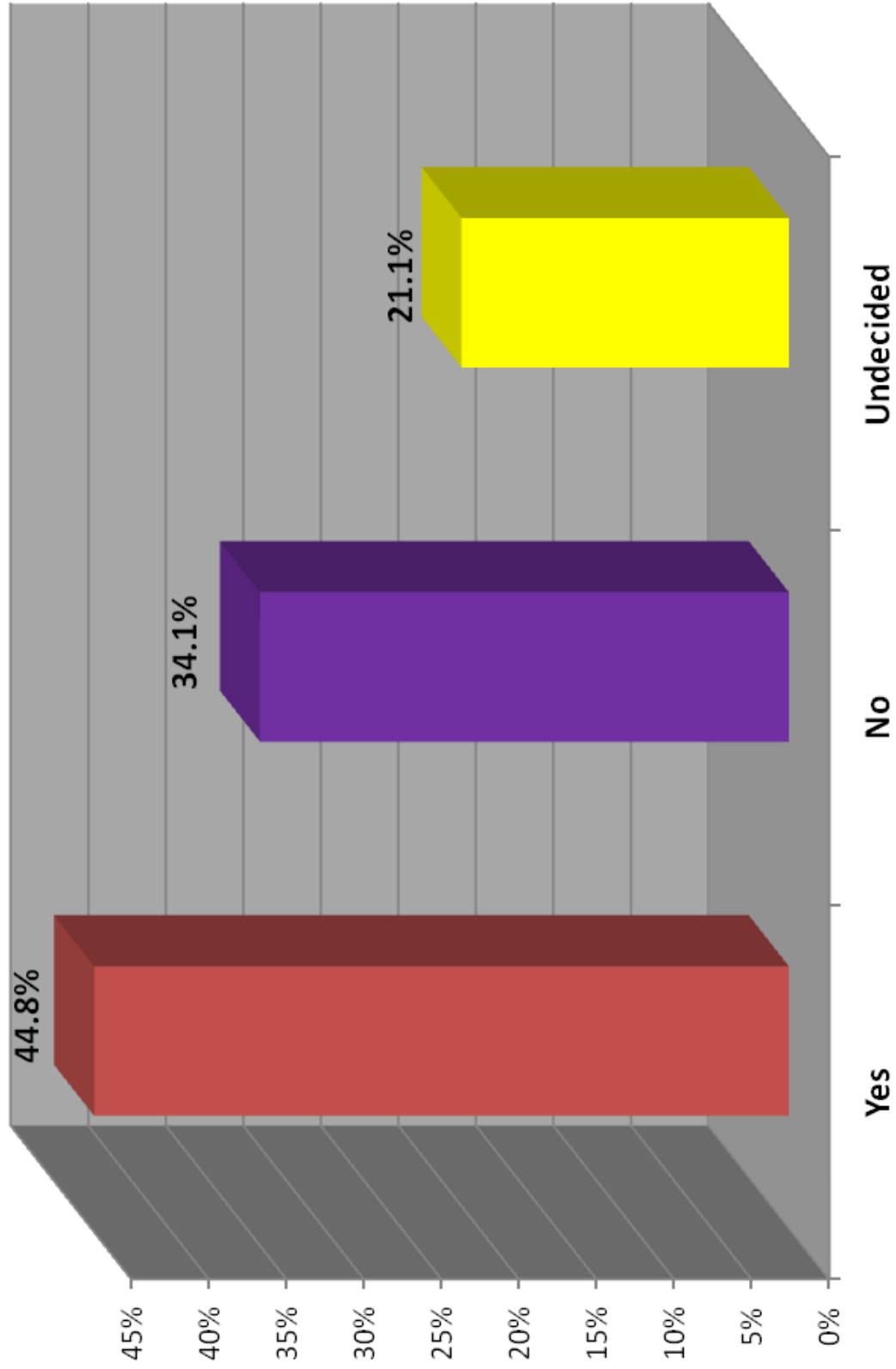
what they understand to be acceptable community standards. This is similar to a much greater percentage of people saying to pollsters that they intend to vote in the next election, although many fewer people actually do. In short, the City should not expect almost half of the residents to show up at a community forum on proposed tax increases versus service reductions.

### **Additional Resident Opinions On Frontenac's Leaf Vacuuming Program**

As Table 1 shows, residents are quite satisfied with Frontenac's leaf vacuuming program with 81.4% of the residents giving the program a "good" (38.2%) to "excellent" (43.2%) rating. However, in this section of the community survey City officials wanted to know how many residents used the leaf vacuuming program now and how many would continue to use it if it would cost \$100 per year. Presently, 78.7% of the residents reported that they use the leaf service with 21.3% saying they don't. If they were to be charged \$100 annually for the leaf service, only 44.8% of the residents said that they would use the leaf vacuuming service, 34.1% said they would not, while 21.1% said that they were "undecided" ( see Graph 11).

Residents, who presently use the leaf service, were asked if they prefer to keep the present leaf vacuuming schedule starting in late October and ending the four pick-up dates in early December or commencing the first leaf pick-up in early November with the last pick-up in late December. Close to a third, 30.7%, preferred keeping the present schedule, while most residents, 61.3% favored "keeping the four leaf collections, but starting the first leaf collection in early November and having the last collection in mid to late December."

**Graph 11: Residents Saying They Would Use Leaf Vacuuming Service If Charged \$100 Annually For Service**



## **Frontenac Resident Opinion On "Better Together's" Proposed St. Louis County-St. Louis City Merger**

One final opinion question was asked in this community survey. After being briefed on the Better Together's perceived advantages of a St. Louis County-St. Louis City merger, residents were asked whether they would support "in principle such a merger?" Less than a third of the residents (30.3%) said "yes," while almost half (49.5%) said "no," with 20.2% noting that they are "undecided." This rather overwhelming rejection of the merger was to be expected since previous polling has shown only feeble support for such a merger in the past. *The Warren Poll* has conducted two surveys on this question and both times St. Louis County residents rejected the merger proposal by around 73%. Frontenac residents actually showed somewhat more support for the proposal, but this is probably because "Better Together" has done a much better job in publicizing the economic advantages of the merger for the entire St. Louis County-St. Louis City area than previous promoters of the merger. It should be noted that other surveys on this question by *The Warren Poll*, as well as other polling organizations, have polled the county and city residents overall, not just one city as has been done here. This question about the proposed merger was asked here because the merger could impact Frontenac residents in the future if the merger was passed, but also because it was convenient at this time to tap Frontenac's citizenry on this important "metro-wide" issue while they were answering other questions in this survey.

---

# Appendix A

## Frontenac Resident Survey

(Note: Numbers represent percent of residents responding to each response category)

Please help the City of Frontenac by answering various questions that can assist City officials in Frontenac plan for the future. The questionnaire will only take a short time to complete and your opinions are very important. Once completed, please return the questionnaire to *The Warren Poll* in the enclosed, addressed stamped envelope. Your answers will be held in strictest confidence by *The Warren Poll* and never will your name be disclosed. Thanks for your help!

1. Do you currently live within the City limits of Frontenac? NA Yes NA No **(If no, please send this questionnaire back in the envelope provided, noting that you do not live in Frontenac.)**
2. How many years have you lived in Frontenac?  
10.4 less than 3 years 12.5 3-7 years 9.8 7-10 years 24.7 10-20 years 42.6 Over 20 years
3. In general, how would you rate Frontenac as a place to live?  
78.7 Excellent 19.9 Good 1.0 Fair .3 Poor
4. Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of services provided by the City of Frontenac?  
59.3 Excellent 34.3 Good 5.3 Fair 1.4 Poor
5. In general, how would you rate your satisfaction with City employees?  
55.4 Excellent 36.0 Good 6.9 Fair 1.8 Poor

**Please rate the following Frontenac City services as “Excellent”, “Good”, “Fair”, or “Poor”  
If you cannot rate the service, please check NA.**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	NA
6. Fire services	60.1	10.7	.5	.5	28.2
7. Ambulance and paramedic services	55.4	10.8	.7	.7	32.3
8. Street maintenance, excluding private subdiv.	37.2	37.4	13.3	4.7	7.3
9. Sidewalk maintenance	29.7	28.7	10.3	4.8	26.5
10. Police services	72.9	20.0	3.1	1.0	3.0
11. Brush clearing/trimming	32.9	37.7	11.4	2.9	15.2
12. Trash pick-up services	52.2	34.7	7.3	3.5	2.4
13. Recycling services	51.4	33.2	6.3	2.4	6.8
14. Leaf vacuuming	43.2	38.2	9.2	2.3	7.1
15. Snow plowing, excluding private subdivisions	48.3	33.7	5.6	1.9	10.4
16. City newsletter/postcards	46.2	37.6	9.9	2.6	3.7
17. Friday e-mailings	40.6	24.8	4.3	2.7	27.5

### Now turning to a few questions concerning City finances and services

The City of Frontenac has been able to rely on sales tax revenues to finance the current level of City services. However, as stated in recent mailers which are posted on the City Web site, the City projects that in the next five years, due to relatively flat tax revenues and increased sharing of the sales tax revenues with other cities mandated by state law, the City will no longer be able to maintain the current level of City services unless City taxes are increased.

18. Without knowing how much property taxes would have to be increased or what sort of City services would have to be cut, do you favor raising property taxes to maintain the current level of City services or reducing City services?

35.3 Raising property taxes    33.4 Reducing City services    31.3 Undecided

19. Police, fire, and EMS services make up the greatest percentage of the City's budget. If the City does not bring in additional tax revenues, the City projects that within the next five years it will have to cut funding for these services. This would mean that staff would have to be reduced and response times for police, fire, and EMS could increase by an uncertain number of minutes. Additionally, a reduction in staff and lengthened response times for fire services may mean homeowners insurance rates could increase by as much as \$400 annually. Knowing this, would you favor paying higher taxes to maintain police, fire, and EMS services at the current level or cutting back on these services?

55.9 Favor paying higher taxes to maintain police, fire, and EMS services at the current level

23.9 Favor cutting back on these services

20.2 Undecided

20. Currently, emergency response time for police and fire/EMS services average three minutes, well below the national average. If cuts to police, fire/EMS services caused response times to be lengthened, what would be an acceptable lengthening of response time for you?

51.7 No lengthening in average response time    2.4 Four additional minutes

11.6 One additional minute    4.4 Five additional minutes

17.6 Two additional minutes    .4 Six additional minutes

9.2 Three additional minutes    2.8 Seven or more additional minutes

21. If property taxes had to be increased to maintain City services at the current level, how much in additional property taxes would you be willing to pay?

21.0 Up to \$100 more in property taxes per year

17.8 Up to \$200 more in property taxes per year

13.2 Up to \$300 more in property taxes per year

5.4 Up to \$400 more in property taxes per year

9.2 Up to \$500 more in property taxes per year

.4 Up to \$600 more in property taxes per year

4.5 Up to \$700 more in property taxes per year

28.4 I would not be willing to pay any additional amount in property taxes per year

22. A revenue option for the City may be to raise residential utility tax rates which are currently very low. Not knowing how much the City would have to raise its utility tax rate, would you support in principle the City raising its residential utility tax rate to maintain the current level of services?

43.0 Yes    30.6 No    26.5 Undecided



23. If the City had to increase the City utility tax rate to maintain the present level of City services, how much more in utility taxes would you be willing to pay per month.

43.3 Up to \$20.00 more per month

10.9 Up to \$30.00 more per month

5.3 Up to \$40.00 more per month

40.5 I would not be willing to pay any more in utility taxes per month

24. If the City has to raise City taxes to maintain the present level of City services, which option below would you most prefer?

25.5 An increase in property taxes alone

21.4 An increase in City utility taxes alone

53.1 A combination of an increase in property taxes and utility taxes

25. Do you think that it is so important for the City of Frontenac to maintain the current level of City services that you would support any reasonable tax increase whether it is a property tax increase, a utility tax increase, or a combination of both?

43.5 Yes 29.2 No 27.3 Unsure

26. It is not a feasible option to increase sales tax rates because the City is at the highest rate for City services permitted by state law, but the City of Frontenac could attempt to bring in more sales tax revenues if it permitted more retail development in Frontenac. Do you support in principle the City promoting more retail development in Frontenac?

74.4 Yes 12.0 No 13.6 Undecided (If you answered "No" to this question, skip to Question #32)

Would you support City efforts to promote more retail businesses of a similar character as currently exists on the following locations:?

27. Lindbergh Blvd. 91.0 Yes 5.2 No 3.8 Undecided

28. Clayton Road 60.9 Yes 30.1 No 9.1 Undecided (Please specify locations on Clayton Road) \_\_\_\_\_

29. German Blvd. 78.5 Yes 8.0 No 13.5 Undecided

30. Shriner's Hospital site 90.3 Yes 3.8 No 5.9 Undecided

31. Other too few to list; consult print-out (Please name specific locations)

### Now turning to a few other questions concerning parks and recreation

32. Do you favor or oppose the City purchasing land for park use?

48.3 Favor 39.3 Oppose 12.4 Undecided

33. How much would you be willing to pay additionally in property taxes annually for the City to purchase land to develop and maintain parks?

54.4 Zero 23.7 Up to \$100 12.4 Up to \$200 3.6 Up to \$300 5.8 Up to \$400

If the City purchased land for park use, what activities would you like to see in these parks? From the following list, please answer "1" for "Most like to see," "2" for "Like to see," 3 for "Would not like to see," and "4" for "Would least like to see."

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>N/A</b>
34. Playgrounds	47.0	17.5	8.9	15.2	11.4
35. Picnic areas	31.1	21.7	12.4	22.11	12.7
36. Biking, walking, jogging trails	63.8	10.3	5.1	19.5	10.3
37. Dog parks	22.5	12.6	12.8	39.3	13.0
38. Adult exercise equipment	14.2	14.0	18.5	39.1	14.2
39. Tennis courts	15.7	15.1	20.2	35.7	13.3
40. Basketball courts	6.2	13.1	19.3	46.8	14.6
41. Handball courts	3.5	6.2	19.3	56.8	14.1
42. Inline hockey rinks	2.7	2.9	14.6	64.0	15.8

43. Would you support City efforts to partner with area schools and churches to develop recreational opportunities for City residents? 57.9 Yes 23.9 No 18.2 Undecided

44. Regarding a related recreation matter, "The Lodge" is Des Peres' community center with fitness equipment, indoor and outdoor pools, a basketball court, saunas, meeting rooms, fitness classes, and other features. Would you favor the City of Frontenac utilizing a portion of its parks and storm water sales tax to pay the difference between the annual non-resident rate of \$800 for a family versus the resident rate of \$500 or \$470 for the non-resident individual rate versus the resident rate of \$300 so Frontenac residents could become members of "The Lodge" at Des Peres' resident rates?  
23.4 Yes 56.4 No 20.2 Undecided

### **Now for a few questions on City-resident communications**

45. How would you rate the job the City is doing in keeping residents informed about important issues?  
36.0 Excellent 43.4 Good 14.0 Fair 6.6 Poor

46. How would you rate the City in keeping the residents informed about the City's finances?  
24.0 Excellent 42.4 Good 22.4 Fair 11.1 Poor

47. How often would you say you read the City's e-mail?  
53.8 Almost every week 15.9 A few times a year 7.9 Never 22.4 Don't subscribe

48. Would you prefer to receive news about the City?  
71.2 By e-mail 26.0 By mail 2.8 By social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)

49. If the City were to hold community forums on proposed tax increases versus service reductions, would you attend?  
47.6 Yes 12.2 No 40.3 Maybe

### **Turning now to a few questions on Frontenac's leaf vacuuming program**

50. The City contracts for annual leaf vacuuming at a cost of \$100,000. Do you use this leaf vacuuming service?  
78.7 Yes 21.3 No

51. Would you use the leaf vacuum service if there was an annual cost of \$100 per home?

44.8 Yes 34.1 No 21.1 Undecided

52. (Answer only if you answered "Yes" to Question #50) Currently, there are four leaf collections: late October; early November; late November; and early December. Which leaf collection option would you prefer?

38.7 Keeping the present leaf collection schedule

61.3 Keeping the four leaf collections, but starting the first leaf collection in early November and having the last collection in mid to late December

**Just one question concerning your opinion on a "metro-wide" issue that could potentially have an impact on Frontenac residents in the future.**

53. St. Louis City separated from St. Louis County in 1876. A group called "Better Together" has been promoting the idea that having St. Louis City reunite with St. Louis County would benefit both St. Louis City and St. Louis County. "Better Together" maintains, among other things, that a St. Louis City-St. Louis County merger would promote cost-savings and we would be better equipped to approach and resolve problems impacting St. Louis City-St. Louis County. Not knowing all the details at this time, would you in principle favor such a merger?

30.3 Yes 49.5 No 20.2 Undecided

**So we may compare responses by the demographical traits of all other Frontenac residents responding to this survey, please answer the following few questions. Thanks.**

54. Counting yourself, how many people live in your household? 14.3 One 45.1 Two 13.0 Three 17.4 Four 8.1 Five 2.1 Six 0 Seven or over

55. Counting yourself, how many persons in your household are:

31.8 Under 19 years old 68.2 19 years or older

56. Which of the following best describes the location of your home?

39.2 Off Geyer Road 15.7 Off Conway Road 6.5 In West End Park 18.4 Off Clayton Road 4.5 Off Bopp Road 15.7 Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

57. Could you please indicate your age group? .3 Under 30 8.5 30-44 52.4 45-65 38.7

58. Please indicate your gender. 54.6 Male 45.6 Female

59. If you have any further comments or suggestions for Frontenac City officials, please add them here.

28.0 Oppose assisted living

15.9 Improve city's financial/tax management

7.3 Favors mergers with county/neighborhood cities for financial and service advantages

8.5 Need better streets/sidewalks

7.3 Various positive comments about Frontenac