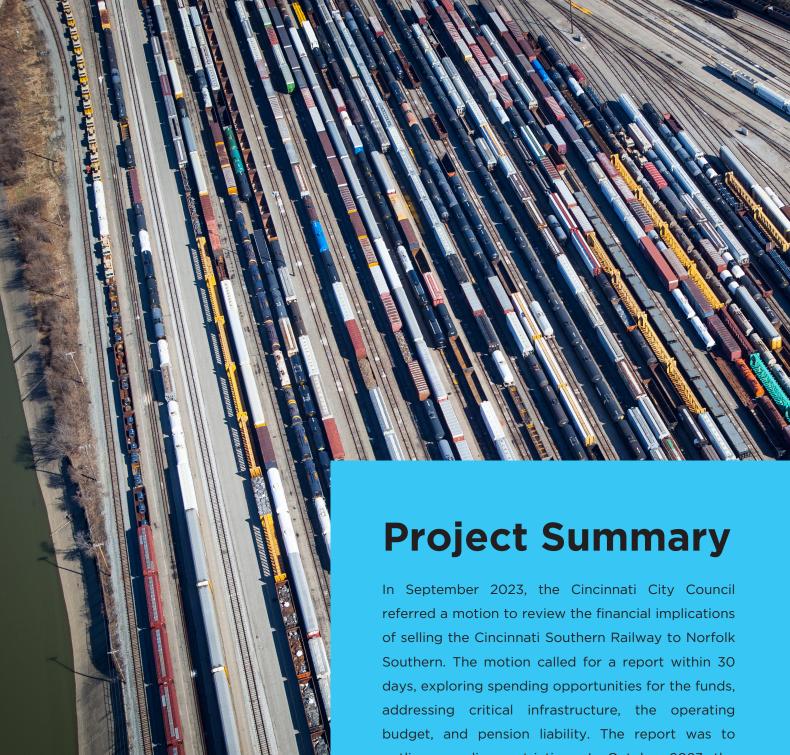


Community Engagement on Proposed Sale of the Cincinnati Southern Railway (CSR)

Summary Report

December 2023



In September 2023, the Cincinnati City Council referred a motion to review the financial implications of selling the Cincinnati Southern Railway to Norfolk Southern. The motion called for a report within 30 days, exploring spending opportunities for the funds, addressing critical infrastructure, the operating budget, and pension liability. The report was to outline spending restrictions. In October 2023, the City Administration presented the "Cincy on Track" Plan, proposing a \$250 million spending plan over 10 years. It covered various aspects, including the sale overview, fund use eligibility, governance, annual payments, capital maintenance, guiding principles, project prioritization, economic inclusion, community development, and budget impacts. City Manager Sheryl Long initiated community engagement sessions for community member feedback on desired projects. The report provides an update on these initial sessions.



Acknowledgments

Mayor

Aftab Pureval

City Council

Jan-Michelle Lemon Kearney, Vice Mayor

Victoria Parks, Pcommunity member Pro Tem

Jeff Cramerding

Reggie Harris

Mark Jeffreys

Scotty Johnson

Liz Keating

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Seth Walsh

Executive Administration

Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager

William "Billy" Weber, Assistant City Manager

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Virginia Tallent, Assistant City Manager

Special Thanks to Staff Members Representing:

City Managers Office

Office of Communications

Department of City Planning & Engagement

Office of Budget & Evaluation

Department of Transportation & Engineering

Parks

Recreation

Department of Public Services

Health Department

Project

Background

Cincy on Track is the concept from the City Administration to identify existing infrastructure projects in critical need of funding over the next ten years.

The City Council, at its session on September 7, 2023, referred the following motion for review and report. MOTION, submitted by Councilmembers Cramerding and Harris, WE MOVE that the administration prepare a report within the next thirty (30) days on the financial implications of the sale of the Cincinnati Southern Railway to Norfolk Southern, pending approval from Cincinnati voters. The report should address the possible spending opportunities for these funds, including the extent to which these funds can be used to remedy the City's outstanding \$500 million of critical failing infrastructure, the City's operating budget, and the City's pension liability. It should consider these challenges to our city budget as well as others that impede attaining a structurally balanced budget. It should also address how the spending of these funds is restricted and what they cannot be used for.

On October 3rd 2023, City Manager Sheryl Long presented and released the "Cincy on Track" Plan

to the City Council and public during the Budget and Finance Committee meeting. The plan outlined the proposed \$250 million spending plan over the course of 10 years. The Administration went over the following topics: Overview of Proposed Sale, Eligibility of Use of Funds, Trust Governance, Annual Payments, Capital Maintenance Needs and Existing Capital Resources, Project Guiding Principles, Prioritization of Projects, Economic Inclusion, Community Economic Development, and Operating Budget Impacts. Multiple elements of this plan relate to the City's desire to improve the quality of life for its community members, while also addressing the continued population growth.

Shortly thereafter, City Manager Long directed staff to conduct a host of community engagement sessions to garner feedback from the public in an effort to identify potential projects they desired to be completed with the usage of the funds. The following report represents an update about the initial engagement sessions.

About Our

Correspondence & Promotion

In addition to accessing all materials on the City of Cincinnati website, the Communications team created flyers to promote the meetings, including a QR code, for access to the websites. Flyers were emailed to community community members, non-profit organizations, community councils, and City recreation

centers. Leading up to the events, weekly emails and flyers were sent out for distribution. The City of Cincinnati Facebook, Twitter page, and Instagram were updated to distribute meeting information as well. The information was shared with our partners in Media.





Public

Meetings

The City Manager's Office planned three City-wide community engagement meetings to be held in October and November 2023. The primary goal of the community engagement meetings was to reach out to the general public and community community members to gather their input on making the City of Cincinnati Capital Infrastructure equipped for the future.

The City Manager's Office received additional support from the Communications Department, Department of City Planning and Engagement, Department of Transportation and Engineering, Office of Budget and Evaluation, Department of Public Services, Health Department, Cincinnati Recreation Commission, and Parks Department. The meetings were led by City Manager Sheryl Long and Assistant City Manager William "Billy" Weber.



Meeting #1

Evanston Rec Center October 21, 2023



Meeting #3

Winton Hills Rec Center November 2, 2023



Meeting #2

Hirsch Rec Center October 26, 2023

Meeting notes and associated presentations are included in the Appendix.

Needs & Priorities

Assessment

To gain a better understanding of the City's Capital Budget, as well as community members desired needs, the team utilized a triangulated approach to gather feedback.

The following provides the format of the community engagement sessions. Administration identified three overarching topics to guide the sessions and activities:



Inform - Provide background and general information on the proposed sale.



ୁଦ୍ନ Consult - Garner feedback on existing infrastructure needs/priorities



• Consult - Garner feedback on needs priorities for the City outside of existing infrastructure

The meetings were approximately 2 hours. When community members walked-in, they were directed to an area that displayed two activity boards which comprised of a city map and two questions. Members were encouraged to place a yellow dot on the map to identify which neighborhood they lived in. Secondly, community members wrote their responses to two questions:

- What is the most important thing for the City to address in the upcoming budget?
- What are you hoping to gain from attending this workshop?

The first twenty minutes included an introduction by City Administration, explanation as to why are we here, and a PowerPoint presentation to include the Proposed Sale of the Cincinnati Southern Railway Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and a comprehensive overview of the City's capital budget. The purpose of this was to ensure that community members were able to gain a thorough understanding of the existing Capital Budget and ensure that Administration was not advocating for or against the ballot initiative. After the presentation members were encouraged to meander throughout the room to visit five stations, utilizing three dots. The purpose of the three dots were to identify the top three areas of interest that are important to you from the following preestablished categories:

- Parks Department
- Recreation Department
- Streets & Sidewalks
- Department of Public Services
- Health Department





Next, members were asked to rank various City services from highest impact to lowest impact in your individual daily life.

The next 45 minutes included small breakout groups that allowed individuals to work with their fellow community members to discuss, deliberate, balanced existing and present а infrastructure capital budget. Staff explained to community members that the City currently utilizes approximately \$40 million in General Capital resources address existing infrastructure needs each fiscal year. In addition, this allocation of the \$40 million consists of \$26 million from Railway Lease payments and an additional \$14 million

from a combination of sources related to property and income taxes. With this information community members were to discuss and collectively develop their own capital budget to total \$40 million. At the conclusion of the exercise, each group spokesperson reported to the full group how they developed their budget and shared stories on what they learned and the difficulties when there are various competing interests and limited resources.

Administration believes that in order for this plan to be successful, it must be built on a foundation of a community involvement process which forms the cornerstone of the plan.

Meeting

Summaries

In the following section, you will find a summary of data collected from the three community engagement events.



The following summary includes an overview of community members who attended these sessions, an explanation of the exercises conducted, and the feedback the City received on funding priorities.



There were approximately 100 community members that attended this meeting, with 7 Departments representing the City of Cincinnati serving as facilitators, notetakers, small group sessions facilitators, and assistants.



There were approximately 45 community members that attended this meeting, with 7 Departments representing the City of Cincinnati serving as facilitators, notetakers, small group sessions facilitators, and assistants.



There were approximately 30 community members that attended this meeting, with 7 Departments representing the City of Cincinnati serving as facilitators, notetakers, small group sessions facilitators, and assistants.







Community Member Comments

Common Themes

Information gathered from each engagement session was recorded in meeting notes and consistent themes of community-wide needs and priorities were identified. The primary themes from the focus groups are highlighted on the following page.

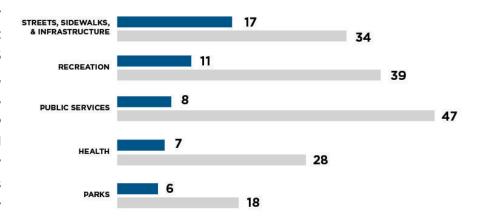




Understanding Priorities

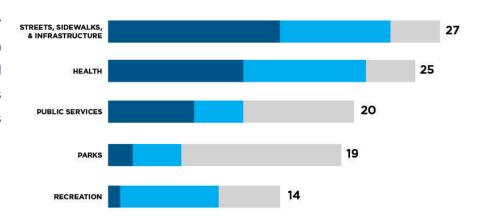
Meeting #1

For the first event, community members were asked to select and rank their top 3 out of 5 service categories (Recreation, Parks, Health, Public Services, Streets and Sidewalks). enhance clarity, the total "Importance of Category Community member" displayed. Each category included 5 subcategories, initially meant for individual ranking, but the approach was revised. Totals for all subcategories within each category were calculated for a clearer understanding.



Meeting #2 & 3

For the 2nd and 3rd events, City community members were again asked to provide their input and asked to pick 3 of the 5 categories and rank those 3 categories chosen by importance.





Understanding Priorities

Meeting #2 & 3 continued...

After ranking their top priorities, community members were then asked to go to the three categories they chose and again rank subcategories by 1-5 (1 being most important, 5 being least important). Ideally, each community member would only rank 3 of the 5 categories they chose. This was not always the case, and in order to account for this, a ranking system was used to determine what City community members deemed most important. Responses were tallied for each subcategory and then multiplied by the ranking (1-5) each tally was put in. This value was then divided by the total count for each subcategory to give an average between 1 and 5.

STREETS, SIDEWALKS, & INFRASTRUCTURE						
SERVICE AREA	Total Responses	Rank of Importance				
Lack of Alternative Transportation Options	23	1				
Street Construction/Maintenance	33	2				
Lack of Pedestrian Crosswalks	21	3				
Broken, Cracked, Uneven Sidewalks	26	4				
Poorly Timed Traffic Signals	27	5				

HEALTH							
SERVICE AREA	Total Responses	Rank of Importance					
Accessibility of Healthcare Services	22	1					
Quality of Healthcare Services	23	2					
Communicable Disease & Outbreak Response	22	3					
Access to Data	19	4					
Accessibility of Immunization Services	20	5					

PUBLIC SERVICES							
SERVICE AREA	Total Responses	Rank of Importance					
Overall Cleanliness of Public Areas	20	1					
Consistency of Trash & Recycling Services	18	2					
Clean-up of Trash & Debris on Private Property	19	3					
Clean-up of Illegal Dumping Sites	22	4					
Maintenance of Community memberial, Commercial, & Business Buildings	22	5					



Understanding Priorities

Meeting #2 & 3 continued...

PARKS							
SERVICE AREA	Total Responses	Rank of Importance					
Quality of Parks Department Youth Program Activities	30	1					
Quality of Parks Facilities	26	2					
Quality of Customer Service from Parks Employees	25	3					
Quality of Walking & Biking Trails in City Parks	22	4					
Maintenance of City Parks	21	5					

RECREATION							
SERVICE AREA	Total Responses	Rank of Importance					
Quality of Recreation Department Youth Program Activities	28	1					
Maintenance of City Recreation Centers	27	2					
Quality of Outdoor Athletic Fields	25	3					
Maintenance of other Recreation Facilities	23	4					
Maintenance of City Swimming Pools	23	5					



Conclusion

Many community
members across the City
of Cincinnati willingly
provided their time
and support to the
community engagement
activities.

Citv Administration recognizes that with the passage of Issue 22, there will be continuous community engagement activities and re-evaluation processes that seeks to receive meaningful feedback from community members to identify infrastructure projects that are important to them and what they desire to prioritize. At a future date, staff intends to conduct a comparative analysis against the priorities identified by community members and what is already recommended in the five-year Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Year 2024 - 2029. It was critical to conduct these sessions in order to chart a cohesive and inclusive path forward when addressing infrastructure needs throughout the City of Cincinnati. Administration has already begun to actively create a robust and comprehensive plan as it relates to the successful implementation and execution of Cincy on Track that ultimately must be approved by the City Council.





Prioritizing Equity

The Administration will prioritize projects to drive increased equity in our City by analyzing the demographics of the beneficiaries most directly affected by each proposed project and identifying those projects that can deliver the most benefit to historically underserved minority and low-income communities. The intent is that this methodology for decision making will create and institutionalize a new approach that will drive consistently equitable infrastructure funding and improve service delivery to our communities in the greatest need moving forward.

Our Commitment

In the launching of the Cincy on Track plan, the Mayor and Council, and staff clearly recognize the importance of an inclusive process. The dialogue that has resulted speaks to the City's potential and has identified a number of areas

where the City could emerge as a regional and national leader.

An equitable, inclusive community engagement approach to public decisions ensures that the people most affected and most marginalized, especially those who have been historically left out of these conversations have a say in the decisions that affect their lives. Inclusive civic engagement results in government processes, practices, and decisions that are more responsive to community priorities, avoid many unforeseen consequences, and create relationships that will hold the City of Cincinnati more accountable. With a greater commitment to intentionally increasing equity in our community engagement efforts, we believe this put us in a better position to address social and health inequities and promote access to resources, services, and programs that make the City of Cincinnati the best place to live, work, and play.

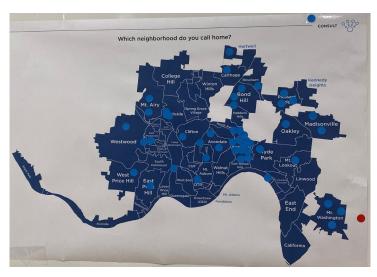


City of Cincinnati

801 Plum Street Cincinnati, OH 45202

311 *or* 513-765-1212 engage.cincy@cincinnati-oh.gov www.cincinnati-oh.gov

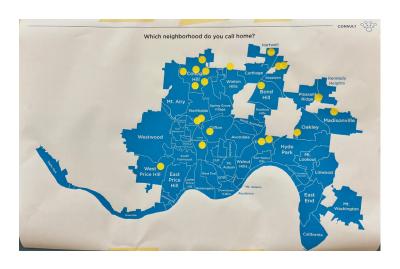
Meeting #1 - Neighborhood Representation



Meeting #2 - Neighborhood Representation

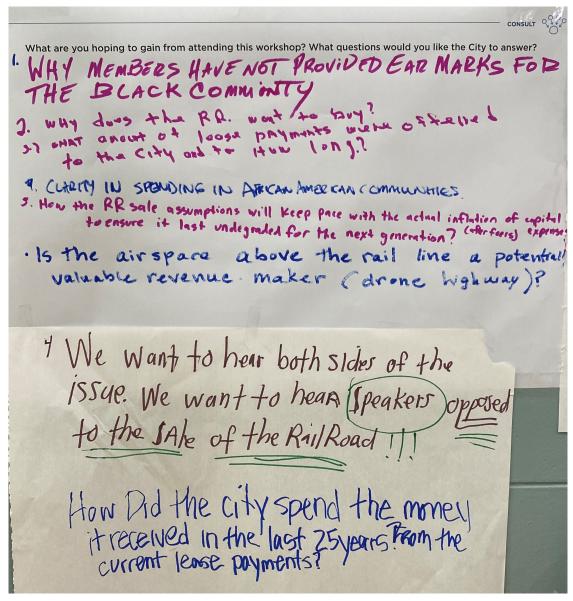


Meeting #3 - Neighborhood Representation





Meeting #1 - Questions





Meeting #1 - Future Budgets

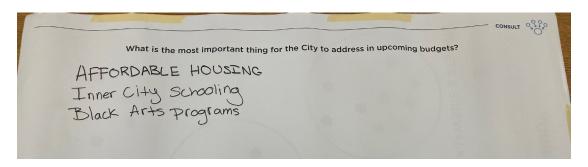
CONSULT OF CONSULT
What is the most important thing for the City to address in upcoming budgets?
1. Fairly dispersing funds in the neighborhoods 1 To the Black. 2. Frostoms for the kids 3. FOOD STORE FOR THE BLACK COMMITY 4 15 There a detailed INVENTION of the BACK 10 MANNEY.
4 Is there a detailed INDENTONY of the "backlog" that actually to this & 400.1111111)
5. The Ribicalous number of tax abatements that go to Rich white communities.
6. HOW THE MONEY FROM THE RAILWAY SALE WILL BE DISTRIBUTED EQUITABLY SPECIFICALLY (AA COMMUNITY INFRACTURE, DOWNING, DOWNING, WEST OND 1 Continued Bood Lingue of Feet on Links (Administration (Konac))
7. Continued Reclining affect on Lirbon Communities (KONAC) Lock of investment in Cubican Communities unless Developers come to the Community!
9 THE CTEMBER OF OUT Classed in Black Communities - OMAR Circums
If the next City Council changes the laws regarding use of the \$, what recourse will voters have? *DO SOMETHING TO ADDRESS THE INCREASE IN PROPERTY TAXES. APPRAISAL IS EXCRAZY!

Meeting #2 - Future Budgets

What is the most important thing for the City to	o address in upcoming budgets?
. Sate Moads . Gun violence + put money back in the community	- who will oversee Rip nown a How much will
Safer Ruads and more Malumourth	they look part?
Kepave Roads Repaint Crossoulks	
Add More Crosswelles Bus Stop Shalters Copp of busines	
Speed brings Widen some well traveled roads (ex. McK new Univ. Hospital) Stroky to see if new stop light need to be added ations ections that only have stops currently	

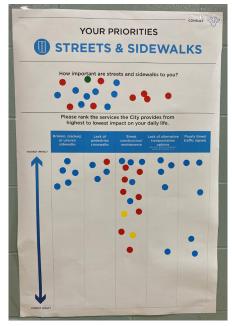


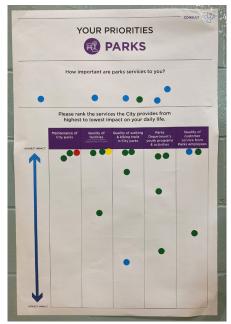
Meeting #3 - Future Budgets

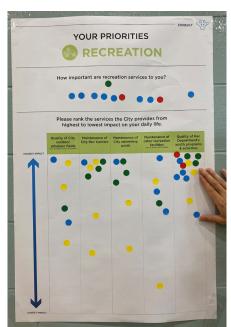


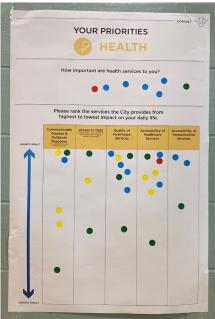


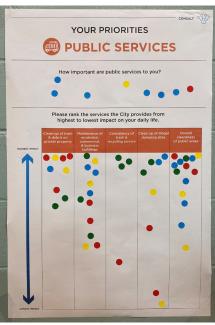
Meeting #1 - Activity 1, "Your Priorities"













Meeting #1 - Activity 2, "Budgeting"









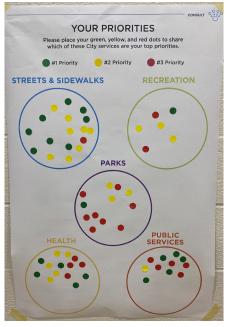


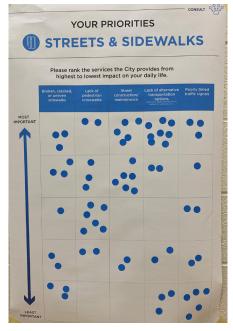


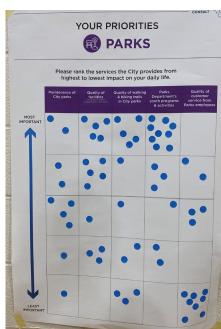


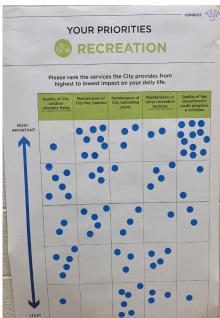


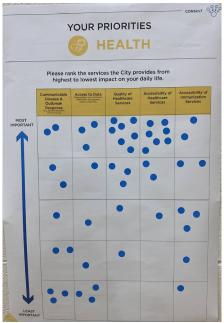
Meeting #2 - Activity 1, "Your Priorities"

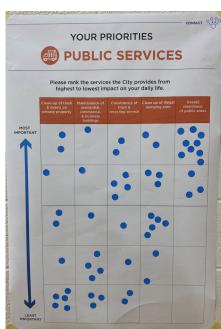














Meeting #2 - Activity 2, "Budgeting"

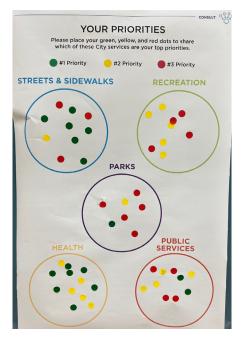


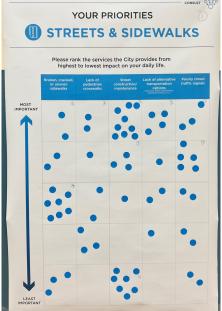


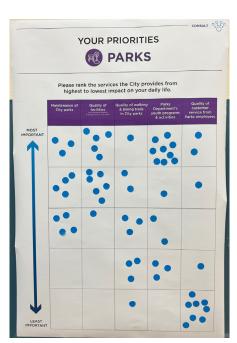


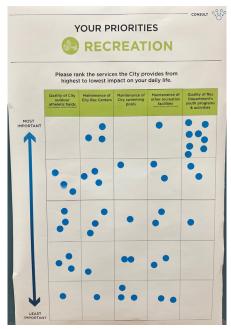


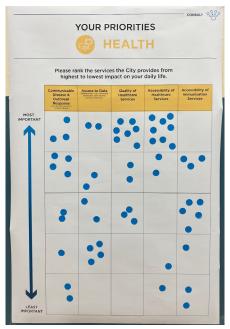
Meeting #3 - Activity 1, "Your Priorities"

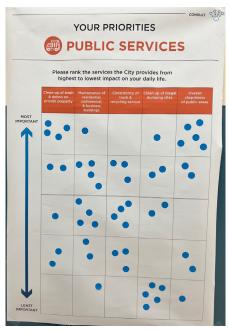














Meeting #3 - Activity 2, "Budgeting"

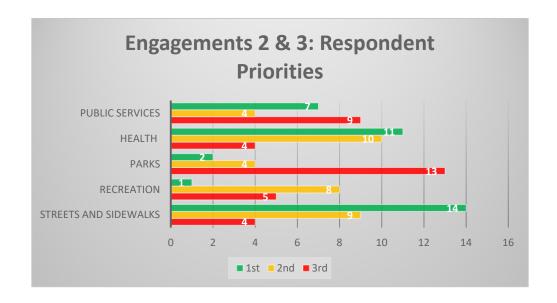






Activity Responses & Priority Analysis Meeting #1

Priorities	1st	2nd	3rd	total
Streets and sidewalks	14	9	4	27
Recreation	1	8	5	14
Parks	2	4	13	19
Health	11	10	4	25
Public Services	7	4	9	20



Meeting #2&3 - Recreation

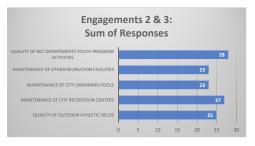
2 & 3 events combined Recreation

	Quality of	Maintena nce of City	Maintena nce of City	Maintena nce of other	Quality of Rec departme nts youth
	athletic	Recreatio	swimming		program
importance	fields	n Centers	pools	n facilities	
. 5	1	11	3	3	20
4	9	6	2	6	4
3	5	8	4	3	3
2	8	1	5	6	0
1	2	1	9	5	1
Sum of Res	25	27	23	23	28

						Quality of
			Maintena	Maintena	Maintena	Rec
	Quality	of	nce of	nce of	nce of	departme
	outdoo	r	City	City	other	nts youth
	athletic	2	Recreatio	swimming	Recreatio	program
	fields		n Centers	pools	n facilities	activities
Sum of Res		25	27	23	23	28

				Quality of
	Maintena	Maintena	Maintena	Rec
Quality of nce of		nce of	nce of	departme
outdoor	City	City	other	nts youth
athletic	Recreatio	swimming	Recreatio	program
fields	n Centers	pools	n facilities	activities
5	55	15	15	100
36	24	8	24	16
15	24	12	9	9
16	2	10	12	0
2	1	9	5	1
74	106	54	65	126

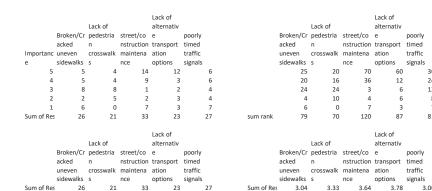
					Quality of
		Maintena	Maintena	Maintena	Rec
	Quality of	nce of	nce of	nce of	departme
	outdoor	City	City	other	nts youth
	athletic	Recreatio	swimming	Recreatio	program
	fields	n Centers	pools	n facilities	activities
Sum of Res	2.96	3.93	2.35	2.83	4.50

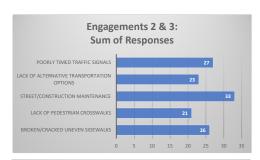






Meeting #2&3 - Streets, Sidewalks, & Infrastructure





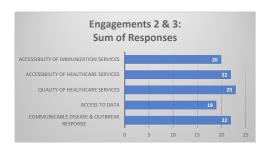


Meeting #2&3 - Health

	Communi cable Disease & Outbreak	Access to	Quality of Healthcar	Accessibili ty of Healthcar	Immuniza		Communi cable Disease & Outbreak	Access to	Quality of Healthcar		Immuniza
	response	Data	e Services	e Services	Services		response	Data	e Services	e Services	Services
5	5	5	13	15	2		25	25	65	75	10
4	6	3	5	4	5		24	12	20	16	20
3	3	3	4	1	8		9	9	12	3	24
2	3	5	1	1	2		6	10	2	2	4
1	5	3	0	1	3		5	3	0	1	3
Sum of Res	22	19	23	22	20	sum rank	69	59	99	97	61

	Communi				Accessibili
	cable			Accessibili	ty of
	Disease &		Quality of	ty of	Immuniza
	Outbreak	Access to	Healthcar	Healthcar	tion
	response	Data	e Services	e Services	Services
Sum of Res	22	19	23	22	20

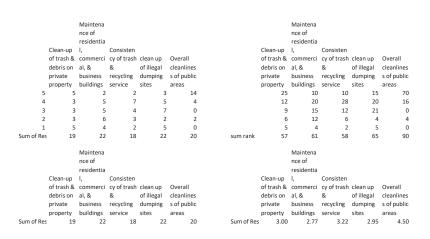
	Communi	Accessibili				
	cable	Accessibili	ty of			
	Disease &		Quality of	ty of	Immuniza	
	Outbreak	Access to	Healthcar	Healthcar	tion	
	response	Data	e Services	e Services	Services	
Sum of Res	3.14	3.11	4.30	4.41	3.05	

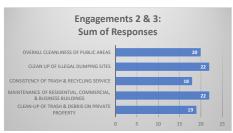






Meeting #2&3 - Public Services







Meeting #2&3 - Parks



															Quality of
						Parks		Quality of					Quality of	Parks	customer
				Quality of		Department:	s	customer					walking &	Departme	service for
				walking &		youth		service for			Maintena		biking	nts youth	Parks
	Maintenance	of	Quality of	biking trails	in	program		Parks			nce of City	Quality of	trails in	program	employee
	City parks		facilities	City parks		activities		employees			parks	facilities	City parks	activities	S
Sum of Res		21	26		22		30		25	Sum of Res	3.62	4.08	3.09	4.17	1.96

