City of Houston Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment: Household Survey Results

Prepared for:

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Executive Summary

The City of Houston contracted with R&M Consultants to help update its Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment. As part of this effort, R&M Consultants' subcontractor, McDowell Group, an Alaska research and consulting firm, conducted a mail survey (with an online option) of both City of Houston residents and nonresident property owners. The purpose of the survey was to gather input from City residents and property owners on a variety of comprehensive planning issues, such as transportation and recreation needs. The survey also asked residents about environmental issues, economic development, city services, and other aspects of their community. Key findings are summarized below.

Quality of Life

Respondents rated quality of life in Houston an average of 6.9 on a scale of one-to-ten (with 10 being "high"). Just over four in ten respondents (42 percent) said their quality of life was high (rating of 8, 9, or 10 combined).

- More than eight of ten respondents (83 percent) agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that Houston is a good place to live with respect to outdoor recreation and enjoying a rural lifestyle.
- More than two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that Houston could use more community planning.
- Houston residents were more likely to agree or strongly agree that Houston is a safe place to live compared to nonresident property owners, 64 percent versus 39 percent. Approximately two respondents in ten disagreed or strongly disagreed that Houston is safe (22 percent).

Transportation-Related Projects

Improved roads and road maintenance are the most widely held transportation concerns in Houston and are considered very important by 62 percent of respondents.

- Younger respondents were more likely than older respondents to rate a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie very important (38 percent versus 23 percent), and more of them said a Hawk Lane bike path is very important (41 percent versus 24 percent).

Recreation-Related Projects

The top recreation issues for most respondents are creation of recreation programs for youth and maintenance of existing trails and pathways, which both were rated important or very important by 76 percent of respondents.

Houston residents were more likely than nonresident property owners to:

- Rate the creation of recreation programs for youth very important (33 percent versus 24 percent).
- Rate the creation or expansion of an indoor recreation facility very important (32 percent versus 22 percent).

- Rate more motorized trails and pathways very important (36 versus 17 percent).
- Rate non-motorized trails and pathways not important (40 percent versus 27 percent).

Support for Environmental-Related Issues

When asked about their level of support for three environmental-related issues, more than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) said they are very supportive of protecting drinking water quality, while 29 percent are very supportive of stricter enforcement of flood plan development regulations, and 27 percent are very supportive of stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams.

Economic Development Initiatives

When asked the importance of seven economic development initiatives, more than half of respondents (52 percent) said supporting extension of utility services is very important, followed by recruiting new business (42 percent), and supporting natural resource development (35 percent).

- Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks, attracting more tourism, developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River, developing a "town center" with pedestrian-friend facilities, and recruiting new business all have somewhat less support among residents than among nonresident property owners.

City Services

Eight in ten respondents said continuing to provide fire and emergency services and road maintenance are very important, while 43 percent and 36 percent respectively rated community planning and animal control and shelter very important. All four services were considered very important by more than one-third of respondents.

- Residents were more likely to rate nearly all of the city services very important compared to nonresidents, with the exception of animal control and shelter.

Willingness to Pay for New or Improved City Services or Facilities

Approximately one-third of respondents said they are very willing to pay for improved city fire and emergency response and improved road maintenance through increased property taxes. Only 6 percent of respondents were very willing to pay for cemetery development and maintenance, and 58 percent were not willing to pay for this service at all.

- Men were more likely than women to say they are not willing to pay for city services through increased taxes.

Land Use Regulation

Four in ten respondents said there is just enough regulation of private-property land use, two in ten said there is too much regulation, and an equal number said there is too little regulation.

- Men were more likely to say there is too much private property regulation compared to women, 26 percent versus 11 percent.

Respondent Demographics

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) lived in Houston at least nine months during the past year. The average number of years a Houston resident respondent had lived in the community was 13.3 years.
- Only 4 percent of the Houston residents who responded are renters.
- Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, and 41 percent were female. The average age of all respondents was 56.7 years.
- Average Houston resident household size for all respondents was 2.6 people. The average number of children in Houston households with children was 2.1 children.
- The median annual household income for all respondents was $63,000.

Methodology

The City of Houston contracted with R&M Consultants to update its Comprehensive Plan (completed in 1999 and amended in 2003), as well as conduct a Community Impact Assessment. As part of that process, R&M Consultants subcontracted with McDowell Group, an Alaska research and consulting firm, to conduct a community household survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather opinions of Houston property owners (including non-Houston residents) and residents about the city's priorities for the next 20 years. The survey enhances community engagement and survey results will inform the planning process.

McDowell Group met with the City of Houston Comprehensive Impact Assessment and Comprehensive Plan Revision Steering Committee in August and October committee meetings to discuss survey content, as well as review of and pre-test the survey instrument. McDowell Group also attended the September 18 "Future's Workshop" held in Houston to hear community concerns and issues that were also considered for incorporation into the survey design.

On November 7, 2014, a postcard was mailed to 1,651 Houston resident households (including renters and home owners), and property owners. The purpose of the postcard was to provide advance notice of the survey. There were 209 returned post cards with bad addresses. These addresses were removed from the sample (new total of 1,442). The survey was mailed on November 12, 2014. Households were given the option to complete the survey by mail or go online to a secure website, enter their assigned password, and complete the survey. On November 21, another postcard was mailed to the thank residents who had completed the survey and encourage those that had not to do so at their earliest convenience. On December 5, a second survey was sent to 1,259 nonrespondents of the first survey mailing. Responses were accepted until January 15, 2015. A total of 365 surveys were completed for a response rate of 25.3 percent.

A self-reported survey has the potential for self-selection bias. While the survey results may be representative, if this was a statistically random survey (such as a telephone administered survey), all responses would have a potential margin of error at the 95 percent confidence interval of +/-5.0 percent. In addition to reporting totals for all questions, this report identifies potentially statistically significant differences in responses for the following major subgroups:

- **Residency** – Residents of Houston and individuals who own property in Houston but whose primary residence is elsewhere (termed "nonresidents).
- **Age** – For sub-group analysis by age groups, "young" respondents are defined as those who indicated they were under 35 years old, "middle age" respondents are defined as 35 to 54 years old, and "older" respondents are defined as those who are 55+ years old.
- **Gender –** Male and female.

A total of 170 respondents (47 percent) provided verbatim responses to an open-ended statement, "*Please feel free to comment about any other planning issues you feel are important for the City of Houston to consider as it develops its new Comprehensive Plan and Community Impact Assessment.*" These comments are sorted by general theme and are found under separate cover, *Appendix – Verbatim Comments*.

Residency

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65 percent) lived in Houston at least nine months during the past year.

Did you live in Houston for more than 9 months in the past year?

	All Responses n=357	Houston Residents n=233	Nonresident Property Owners n=124
Yes	65%	100%	-
No	35	-	100%

Houston Resident Length in Community

Houston resident respondents were evenly distributed by length of residency and lived an average of 13.3 years in Houston.

How many years have you lived Houston?

n=228	Houston Residents
1 to 5 years	24%
6 to 10 years	32
11 to 20 years	23
21+ years	21
Average (Years)	**13.3 years**

Home Ownership

Only 4 percent of the Houston resident respondents are renters.[1]

Do you own or rent your Houston residence or property?

n=228	Houston Residents
Own	94%
Rent	4
Some other arrangement	3

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

[1] In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average for Houston was 17 percent rental units of all housing units.

Of the nonresident property owners, 94 percent said they do not rent their Houston property to others.

Do you rent your Houston property to others?

n=113	Nonresident Property Owners
Yes	6%
No	94

Rating of Quality of Life

All respondents were asked to rate their quality of life in Houston on a scale from 1 (very poor) to 10 (very good). Eighteen percent of respondents chose to not answer the question because they did not live in Houston. Of the remaining respondents, four in ten respondents (42 percent) reported their quality of life as high (8, 9, 10 combined), and 51 percent rated it medium (4, 5, 6, 7 combined). Only 7 percent of respondents said their quality of life is low (1, 2, 3 combined). The average response for quality of life was 6.9.

Young respondents were more likely to rate their quality of life as high (52 percent 8, 9, 10 combined) compared to middle age (39 percent 8, 9, 10 combined) and older respondents (41 percent 8, 9, 10 combined).

Quality of Life Rating (1 to 10)

n=344	Percent of Total
High rating (8, 9, 10 combined)	**42%**
10 – Very good	16%
9	9
8	18
Medium rating (4, 5, 6, 7 combined)	**51%**
7	20%
6	11
5	15
4	4
Low rating (1, 2, 3 combined)	**7%**
3	2%
2	4
1 – Poor	1
Average rating	**6.9**

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Level of Agreement with Statements about Community Life

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Houston is a good place to live with respect to outdoor recreation (83 percent) and enjoying a rural lifestyle (83 percent). Approximately two in ten disagreed or strongly disagreed that Houston is affordable (21 percent), safe (22 percent), or family friendly (20 percent), however.

More than two-thirds (68 percent) agreed or strongly agreed Houston could use more community planning, and 49 percent agreed or strongly agreed the community could use more landscaping of public spaces.

Please indicate your level of agreement regarding the following statements about the community of Houston…

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Unsure/ Don't know
Houston is a good place for outdoor recreation.	30%	53%	6%	3%	9%
Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle.	25	58	5	3	8
Houston could use more community planning.	33	35	10	6	16
Houston is a good place for people to live affordably.	13	57	14	7	10
Houston is family-friendly.	9	56	16	4	16
Houston is a safe place to live.	9	55	15	7	14
Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces.	23	26	22	12	16

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

There were several statistically significant differences between Houston residents and nonresident property owners on the above statements about community life.

- Houston residents were *more* likely to agree Houston is a safe place to live compared to nonresident property owners (64 percent versus 39 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to disagree Houston is family-friendly than nonresidents (21 percent versus 7 percent, respectively).
    - Likewise, young respondents were *more* likely to disagree Houston is family-friend (31 percent) compared to middle age and older respondents (both 15 percent).
- Residents were *more* likely to strongly agree Houston is a good place to enjoy a rural lifestyle compared to nonresidents (30 percent versus 18 percent, respectively).

- Residents were *more* likely to disagree and strongly disagree Houston is a good place for people to live affordably (17 and 9 percent, respectively), compared to nonresidents (6 and 1 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to agree and strongly agree Houston could use more community planning (37 and 40 percent, respectively), compared to nonresidents (24 and 25 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to agree Houston could use more landscaping of public spaces than nonresidents (30 percent versus 20 percent, respectively).

Level of Importance

Of the nine transportation issues presented in the survey, more respondents considered improved road maintenance very important (62 percent) than any other. Paved roads (38 percent) and more road lighting (36 percent) received the next highest percentages of "very important" ratings. All nine issues were considered very important by at least 20 percent of respondents.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following transportation-related projects…

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don't know
Improved road maintenance	62%	27%	5%	6%
More paved roads	38	33	23	6
Improved lighting on road	36	34	23	7
New road between Houston and Port Mackenzie	28	30	30	13
Development of a Hawk Lane bike path	26	29	32	12
Improved street/road signage	25	42	25	8
Public transportation (bus service) between Houston and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	24	35	31	10
New Alaska Railroad depot/train stop	23	35	30	12
Development of a "Park and Ride" lot for commuters	22	36	32	11

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

Many of the statistically significant differences between Houston residents and nonresident property owners were related to Houston's roads. The "very important" percentages of the various road issues for residents and nonresidents are as follows:

- Improved road maintenance: 70 percent of residents versus 48 percent of nonresidents.
- More paved roads: 45 percent of residents versus 26 percent of nonresidents.
- Improved road lighting: 38 percent of residents versus 29 percent of nonresidents.

Residents were *more* likely to consider improved street/road signage as not important compared to nonresidents (29 percent versus 19 percent, respectively). Other differences between residents and nonresidents include the following:

- Residents were *more* likely to say public transportation between Houston and the Mat-Su Borough is very important or somewhat important (27 and 38 percent, respectively), compared to nonresidents (16 and 28 percent, respectively).
    - However, residents were *more* likely to say a new Alaska Railroad depot/train stop is not important compared to nonresidents (33 percent versus 23 percent, respectively).
    - Residents also were *more* likely to say development of a "Park and Ride" lot for commuters is not important compared to nonresidents (37 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to say development of a Hawk Lane bike path is very important compared to nonresidents (30 percent versus 19 percent, respectively).

OTHER DIFFERENCES

Men were *more* likely than women to say various transportation-related issues were not important. The "not important" percentages of men and women are shown below:

- Improved road lighting: 28 percent not important for men versus 16 percent for women.
- Public transportation between Houston and the Mat-Su Borough: 38 percent of men versus 23 percent of women.
- New Alaska Railroad depot/train station: 34 percent of men versus 23 percent of women.
- Development of Hawk Lane bike path: 40 percent of men versus 22 percent of women.
    - Women were *more* likely to rate a Hawk Lane bike path very important compared to men: 36 percent versus 20 percent, respectively.

There were also statistically significant differences among age groups:

- Young and middle age respondents were *more* likely to rate a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie as very important compared to older respondents (38 and 34 percent, respectively, versus 23 percent).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate the development of a Hawk Lane bike path very important compared to older respondents (41 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate more paved roads not important (38 percent) compared to middle age and older respondents (both 21 percent).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate improved road/street signage not important (48 percent) compared to middle age (27 percent) and older respondents (22 percent).

Highest Transportation-Related Priority

When respondents were asked to identify the single most important priority among the transportation issues listed, improved road maintenance again rose to the top, with 37 percent of respondents saying it is most important. More paved roads and a new road between Houston and Port MacKenzie were considered most important among those on the list by 15 percent and 12 percent of respondents, respectively.

Of the transportation-related projects listed, which one should be the most important priority for the City?

n=335	Percent of Total
Improved road maintenance	37%
More paved roads	15
New road between Houston and Port MacKenzie	12
Improved lighting on road	7
Public transportation (bus service) between Houston and other parts of the Mat-Su Borough	7
Development of a Hawk Lane bike path	6
New Alaska Railroad depot/train stop	4
Development of a "Park and Ride" lot for commuters	3
Improved street/road signage	1
Unsure/Don't know	10

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Answers given for "the most important transportation project" did not vary significantly by subgroups.

Level of Importance

Respondents were asked the importance of seven recreation-related projects/issues in Houston. The percentage of “very important” ratings for the top five recreation issues are all similar (within the statistical margin of error). Combining “very important” and “somewhat important” categories suggests the top issues for recreation are creation of recreation programs for youth and maintenance of existing trails and pathways, which both had a combined rating of 76 percent.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support each of the following recreation-related projects…

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don’t know
Creation of recreation programs for youth	30%	46%	17%	8%
Maintenance of existing trails and pathways	29	47	16	7
More motorized trails and pathways	29	33	30	8
Creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as an ice rink, swimming pool, or running track	29	32	31	7
Improved public access to lakes	27	43	23	6
More non-motorized trails and pathways	22	34	35	9
Creation of new parks with playground	19	44	30	7

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

The following are the statistically significant differences between Houston resident respondents and nonresident property owners on recreation-related issues.

- Residents were *more* likely to rate the creation of recreation programs for youth as very important compared to nonresidents (33 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Residents were also *more* likely to rate the creation or expansion of an indoor recreation facility very important compared to nonresidents (32 percent versus 22 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to rate the maintenance of existing of trails and pathways not important compared to nonresidents (19 percent versus 12 percent, respectively).
    - However, residents were *more* likely to rate more motorized trails and pathways as very important compared to nonresidents (36 and 17 percent, respectively), and they were *more* likely to rate non-motorized trails and pathways not important (40 percent and 27 percent, respectively).

Other Differences

- Female respondents were *more* likely to rate the creation of new parks with playgrounds very important compared to men (25 percent versus 14 percent, respectively).
- Women were *more* likely to rate maintenance of existing trails and pathways very important compared to men (37 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Men were *more* likely to say more non-motorized trails and pathways were not important compared to women (44 percent versus 24 percent, respectively).
- Middle age respondents were *more* likely to say more motorized trails and pathways were very important compared to older respondents (39 percent versus 25 percent, respectively).
- Young respondents were *more* likely to rate the expansion of indoor recreation facilities very important compared to older respondents (45 percent versus 26 percent, respectively).

Highest Recreation-Related Priority

The four top issues for "most important priority" among the recreation issues listed were creation of recreation youth programs (16 percent), improved public access to lakes (16 percent), creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities (15 percent), and more motorized trails and pathways (14 percent).

Of the recreation-related projects listed, which one should be the most important priority for the City?

n=335	Percent of Total
Creation of recreation programs for youth	16%
Improved public access to lakes	16
Creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as an ice rink, swimming pool, or running track	15
More motorized trails and pathways	14
Maintenance of existing trails and pathways	11
More non-motorized trails and pathways	9
Creation of new parks with playground	7
Unsure/Don't know	13

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

Residents were *more* likely than nonresidents to say more motorized trails and pathways and the creation or expansion of indoor recreation facilities are the most important recreation projects, 18 percent resident versus 8 percent nonresident for trails and pathways, and 17 percent resident versus 10 percent nonresident for indoor facilities. There was no statistically significant difference between residents and nonresidents in their responses to the other recreation options.

Level of Support

Respondents were asked about their support of three environmental-related issues. More than two-thirds of respondents (69 percent) were very supportive of the protection of drinking water quality, more than twice the "very supportive" percentages for stricter enforcement of flood plan development regulations (29 percent) and stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams (27 percent).

Please indicate how supportive you are for the City of Houston to strengthen each of the following environmental-related issues…

	Very supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not supportive	Unsure/ Don't know
Protection of drinking water quality	69%	20%	6%	5%
Stricter enforcement of flood plain development regulations	29	36	25	11
Stricter regulation of land near rivers, lakes, and streams	27	37	27	9

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

With respect to environmental issues,

- More residents were very supportive of the protection of drinking water quality than nonresident property owners (78 percent versus 52 percent, respectively).
- Residents were *more* likely to be very supportive of flood plain development regulations compared to nonresidents (33 percent versus 21 percent, respectively).

OTHER DIFFERENCES

- More men said they were not supportive of stricter regulation of land near water sources than women (33 percent versus 19 percent, respectively), and stricter enforcement of flood plain development (29 percent versus 19 percent, respectively).
- More women were very supportive of drinking water quality compared to men (76 percent versus 66 percent, respectively).

Economic Development Initiatives

Level of Importance

When asked the importance of seven economic development initiatives, more than half of respondents (52 percent) said supporting extension of utility services is very important, followed by recruiting new business (42 percent), and supporting natural resource development (35 percent). All issues were considered very important by at least one-quarter of respondents; however, developing a "town center," developing a tourism attraction, attracting more tourism, and attracting more industrial development were all described as not important by more than one-quarter of respondents as well.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to support new development or expansion in each of the following areas of economic development…

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don't know
Supporting extension of utility services	52%	30%	12%	6%
Recruiting new business	42	40	13	5
Supporting natural resources development in the area	35	34	22	8
Developing a "town center" with pedestrian-friendly facilities	31	33	28	8
Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River	29	33	31	8
Attracting more tourism development	27	39	29	6
Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks	26	39	26	9

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

Residents are *more* likely to rate several of the economic development issues not important compared to nonresidents:

- Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks: 31 percent of residents versus 17 percent of nonresidents rated it not important.
- Attracting more tourism development: 35 percent of residents versus 16 percent of nonresidents rated it not important.
- Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River: 36 percent of residents versus 21 percent of nonresidents.

- Developing a "town center" with pedestrian-friend facilities: 32 percent of residents versus 20 percent of nonresidents.

- Recruiting new business: 15 percent of residents versus 8 percent of nonresidents.

Residents are *more* likely to say the extension of utility services is very important compared to nonresidents, 55 percent of residents compared to 44 percent of nonresidents.

OTHER DIFFERENCES

- Young respondents were *more* likely to say recruiting new business is very important compared to middle age and older respondents (62 percent versus 44 and 38 percent, respectively).

- Young respondents were *more* likely to say supporting natural resource development is very important compared to older respondents (56 percent versus 31 percent).

- Middle age respondents were *more* likely to say supporting the extension of utility services is very important compared to older respondents (64 percent and 46 percent, respectively).

- Male respondents were *more* likely than women to say attracting more tourism development is not important (32 percent versus 23 percent, respectively) and developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River is not important (35 percent versus 22 percent, respectively).

Highest Economic Development Priority

When asked to identify the single most important priority among the economic development initiatives, 30 percent of respondents said supporting extension of utility services is most important. Recruiting new businesses and developing a "town center" followed, with 16 percent and 12 percent of respondents respectively.

Of the economic development projects listed, which one should be the most important priority for the City?

n=345	Percent of Total
Supporting extension of utility services	30%
Recruiting new business	16
Developing a "town center" with pedestrian-friendly facilities	12
Attracting industrial development along the railroad tracks	10
Supporting natural resources development in the area	9
Developing a tourism attraction along the Little Susitna River	6
Attracting more tourism development	6
Unsure/Don't Know	12

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

- Residents were more likely than nonresidents to say supporting extension of utility services is the most important economic development initiative (34 percent versus 21 percent, respectively).

There was no other statistically significant difference in responses between residents and nonresidents, or by age or gender.

Level of Importance

When asked the importance of four city services, eight in ten respondents said continuing to provide fire and emergency services and road maintenance are very important (80 percent and 79 percent, respectively). All four services were considered very important by more than one-third of respondents.

Please indicate how important it is for the City of Houston to continue providing the following services…

	Very Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Unsure/ Don't know
Fire and emergency services	80%	16%	1%	4%
Road maintenance	79	16	2	4
Community planning	43	38	12	7
Animal control and shelter	36	38	20	6

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents were *more* likely to rate nearly all of the city services very important compared to nonresidents. The "*very important*" percentages of residents and nonresidents are shown below for the various services:

- Road maintenance: 84 percent of residents rated it *very important* versus 67 percent of nonresidents.
- Fire and emergency services: 84 percent of residents versus 72 percent of nonresidents.
- Community planning: 46 percent of residents versus 36 percent of nonresidents.

On the remaining city service, residents were *more* likely to consider animal control and shelter not important compared to nonresidents (22 percent versus 13 percent, respectively).

- Male respondents were also *more* likely to consider animal control and shelter as not important compared to female respondents (26 percent versus 10 percent, respectively).

Willingness to Pay for City Services or Facilities

Approximately one-third of respondents said they were very willing to pay for improved city fire and emergency response (35 percent) and improved road maintenance (34 percent) through increased property taxes. Only 6 percent of respondents were very willing to pay for cemetery development and maintenance, and 58 percent were not willing to pay for this service at all.

Please indicate how willing you are to pay for the following suggested new or improved City of Houston services or facilities through increased property taxes…

	Very willing	Somewhat willing	Not willing	Unsure/ Don't know
Improved city fire and emergency services	35%	44%	17%	4%
Improved road maintenance	34	40	21	5
Funding of Public Safety Officers	26	29	40	6
Cemetery development and maintenance	6	24	58	12

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

Residents were *more* likely to say they are not willing to pay for funding for public safety officers through increased property taxes than nonresidents (45 percent versus 30 percent, respectively), and not willing to pay for cemetery development and maintenance (63 percent versus 48 percent, respectively).

Other Differences

Men were *more* likely than women to say they are not willing to pay for all the city services through increased taxes. The "*not willing*" percentages of male respondents and female respondents are shown below:

- Funding of public safety officers: 46 percent of men said they are not willing versus 31 percent of women.
- Improved city fire and emergency services: 22 percent of men versus 9 percent of women.
    - *Conversely*, women were *more* likely to say they are very willing to pay for this improved fire and emergency services than men (43 percent versus 31 percent, respectively).
- Cemetery development and maintenance: 63 percent of men versus 50 percent of women.
- Improved road maintenance: 24 percent of men versus 17 percent of women.
    - *Conversely*, women were *more* likely to say they are very willing to pay for improved road maintenance than men (41 percent versus 28 percent, respectively).

Solid Waste Fee

Respondents were evenly split between very willing (28 percent), somewhat willing (30 percent), and not willing (30 percent) to pay a fee for using a solid waste transfer station.

Please indicate how willing you are to pay a fee to drop off your garbage at a solid waste transfer station in Houston…

n=345	Very willing	Somewhat willing	Not willing	Unsure/ Don't know
Solid waste drop off fee	28%	30%	30%	12%

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HOUSTON RESIDENTS AND NONRESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS

Residents were *more* willing to pay a garbage drop off fee than nonresidents, 31 percent said they are very willing versus 22 percent, respectively.

Perceptions on Land Use Regulations

Approximately four in ten respondents said there is just enough regulation of private-property land use, slightly more than two in ten said there is too much regulation, and about another two in ten said there is too little regulation. The remaining one-fifth of respondents were unsure/do not know.

In Houston, do you feel there is too much, too little, or just enough private property regulation?

n=356	Percent of Total
Too much regulation	21%
Too little regulation	19
Just enough regulation	41
Unsure/Don't Know	20

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Differences Between Houston Residents and Nonresident Property Owners

- Twenty-four percent of residents said there is too much regulation compared to 14 percent of nonresidents, while 45 percent of residents said there is just enough regulation compared to 33 percent of nonresidents.
- Men were *more* likely to say there is too much private property regulation compared to women (26 percent versus 11 percent).

This section provides a demographic profile of survey respondents, including age, gender, household size and characteristics, and educational attainment. Demographic data is presented for the total sample, as well as for Houston residents and nonresident property owners.

Age and Gender

Fifty-nine percent of respondents were male, and 41 percent were female.[2] The average age of all respondents was 56.7 years. Houston resident respondents had an average age of 54.8 years, and the average age of nonresident property owners was 60.2 years.

Age and Gender

	All Responses	Houston Residents	Nonresident Property Owners
Age	**n=343**	**n=223**	**n=114**
Less than 25 years	1%	1%	1%
25 to 34 years	8	11	2
35 to 44 years	8	8	7
45 to 54 years	24	23	24
55 to 64 years	32	33	31
65+ years	28	24	36
Average age	**56.7 years**	**54.8 years**	**60.2 years**
Gender	**n=356**	**n=229**	**n=121**
Male	59%	59%	59%
Female	41	41	41

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

[2] In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average gender breakout for Houston was 51 percent male and 49 percent female.

Houston Resident Household Characteristics

Average household size for Houston resident respondents was 2.6 people.[3] For households with children under age 18, the average number of children in the household was 2.1.

Household Size and Children in the Houston Household

	Houston Residents
Household Size	**n=223**
0	0%
1	17
2	47
3	12
4+	22
Average household size	**2.6 people**
Children in Household**	**n=229**
0	69%
1	12
2	9
3	5
4+	3
Average # children for households with children	**2.1 children**
Average # children for all households	**0.6 children**

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

[3] In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average average household size for Houston was 2.61 (+/-0.35).

Household Income

The median household income for all respondents was $63,000, and that did not vary among residents and nonresidents.[4]

Annual Household Income (Self-Reported)

	All Responses n=312	Houston Residents n=207	Nonresident Property Owners n=100
Less than $15,000	7%	7%	6%
$15,001 to $25,000	8	9	6
$25,001 to $35,000	9	12	4
$35,001 to $50,000	13	15	8
$50,001 to $75,000	23	21	27
$75,001 to $100,000	17	17	17
Over $100,000	23	18	32
Median household income	**$63,000**	**$63,000**	**$63,000**

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of Houston resident respondents and nonresident property-owner respondents are similar in most respects. Nonresident property owners were slightly more likely to have a bachelor's degree than Houston residents (29 percent versus 18 percent, respectively).

Educational Attainment

	All Responses n=352	Houston Residents n=228	Nonresident Property Owners n=119
Less than high school degree	3%	3%	3%
High school diploma/GED	16	18	13
Vocational/technical certificate	9	11	6
Some college	28	28	28
Associate's degree	9	10	7
Bachelor's degree	22	18	29
Master's degree	12	11	12
Doctorate	1	1	3

Note: Due to rounding, results may not add to 100 percent.

[4] In comparison, the U.S. Census American Community Survey 2009-2013 Five-Year Average median household income for Houston was $51,974 (+/-$8,656).