2012 Baltimore Citizen Survey

Online Citizen Survey Report

City of Baltimore/ Department of Finance/ Bureau of the Budget and Management Research

The Baltimore City Citizen Survey serves as an annual report card for City government. Baltimore City implemented the survey in 2009 to provide residents the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the City and their satisfaction with City government. The 2012 online Citizen Survey acts as an online supplement to the Schaefer Center's Random-Digit-Dialing (RDD) phone survey and was created by Baltimore City and hosted on SurveyMonkey.com. 1,294 respondents completed the online survey from March 1 to May 31, 2012.

Respondents to the online survey were a self-selected group of higher-income and better-educated residents of Baltimore City as compared to the average City resident. The differences between the online and RDD respondents are shown in *Chart 1.*
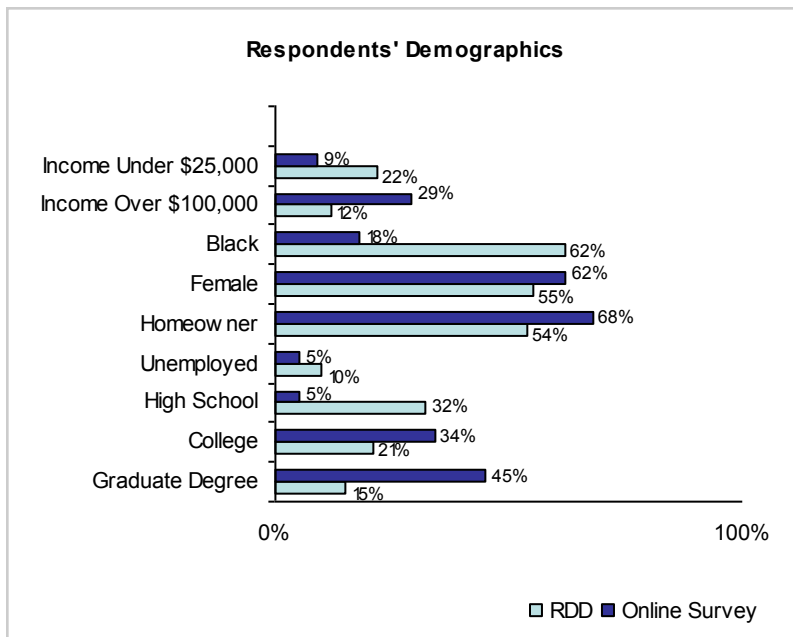

Chart 1: Respondents' Demographics

Key Findings

Demographics of Online Survey Respondents:

- Earn a higher income
- More likely to own a home
- Higher education level
- Less likely to be unemployed

Online Survey Respondents:

- Have different perceptions of their own neighborhood and downtown
- Rated public schools and reducing crime as their top two priorities
- Were more likely to be unsatisfied than satisfied with City services
- Rated safety-related services as good or excellent less often than neighborhood-related services
- More likely to rate quality of life as a problem
- Rated vacant properties, illegal drugs, property crime, and violent crime as their biggest safety concerns
- Rated the cleanliness of their neighborhoods and the City significantly lower than RDD respondents

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First, Second, Third Priorities

Online survey respondents were asked to identify their first, second, and third most important priorities out of seven City goals. A quarter of online respondents rated reducing crime and public schools as their first priorities, while almost half (49%) of RDD respondents rated public schools as their top priority. Improving city infrastructure was the highest rated second (17%) and third (21%) priority for online survey respondents. Reducing crime was the highest rated second (22%) and third (21%) priority for RDD respondents.

	First Priority	**Second Priority**	**Third Priority**
Online Survey	Reducing Crime and Public Schools 25%	City Infrastructure 17%	City Infrastructure 21%
RDD	Public Schools 49%	Reducing Crime 22%	Reducing Crime 21%

Chart 2: Respondents Who Rated Specific City Goals as Their First, Second, or Third Priority

First Priority

Half of online survey respondents rated reducing crime (25%) or improving public schools (25%) as their first priority, followed by economic development (13%), making the city cleaner (11%), and building city infrastructure (11%). Improving citizen health was least frequently rated a first priority for online survey respondents (6%), followed by youth development (9%).
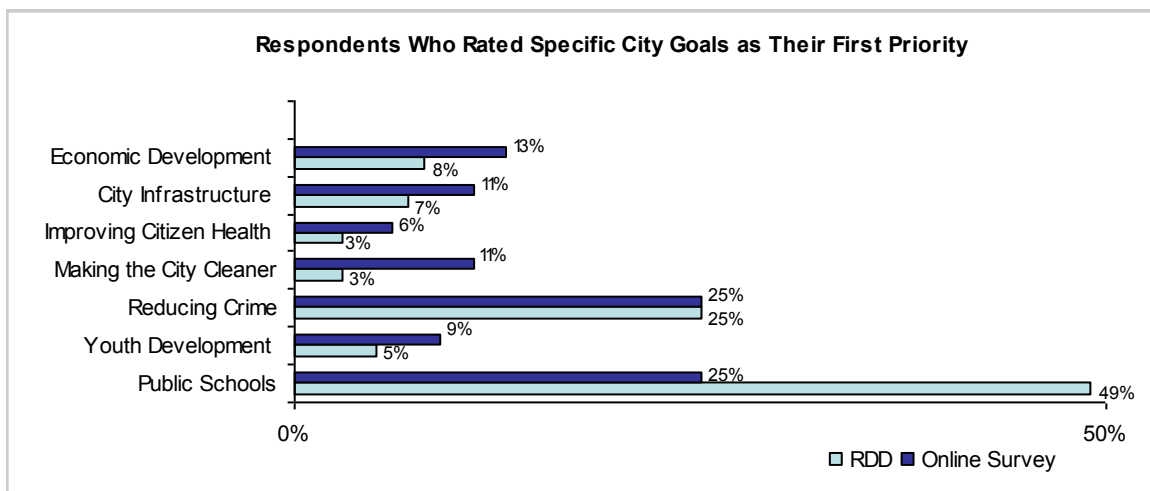

Chart 3: Respondents Who Rated Specific City Goals as Their First Priority

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Priority 1– Better Schools

Almost half (43%) of online survey respondents had no experience with Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS). Those with experience with the public school system were more likely to rate BCPS as poor (19%) than excellent (3%). Of those likely to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years, BCPS were a consideration for 16% of respondents.
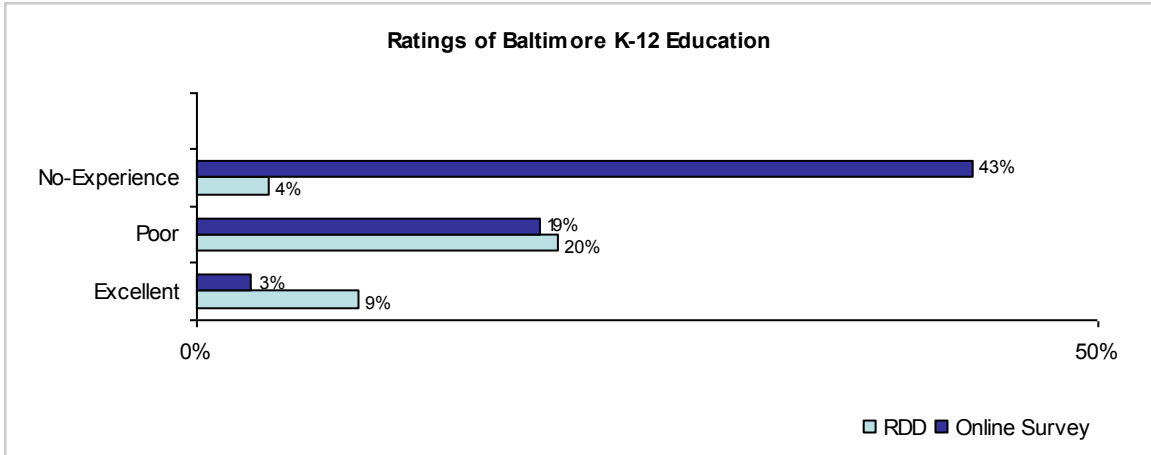
Ratings of Baltimore K-12 Education

Category	RDD	Online Survey
No-Experience	4%	43%
Poor	20%	19%
Excellent	9%	3%

Chart 4: Ratings of Baltimore K-12 Education

Priority 2– Safer Streets

Safety-Related Services

Reducing crime was the first priority of a quarter of online survey respondents (25%).   On average, online respondents were less likely to rate safety-related services as good or excellent than RDD respondents. Less than half of online respondents rated found safety-related services to be good or excellent in each category: police protection, fire protection, EMS/ambulance, 311 (non-emergency), and street lighting. Among online respondents, the highest rated service was street lighting (49%) and the lowest was EMS/ambulance services (19%).

Respondents Who Rated Safety-Related Services Good or Excellent

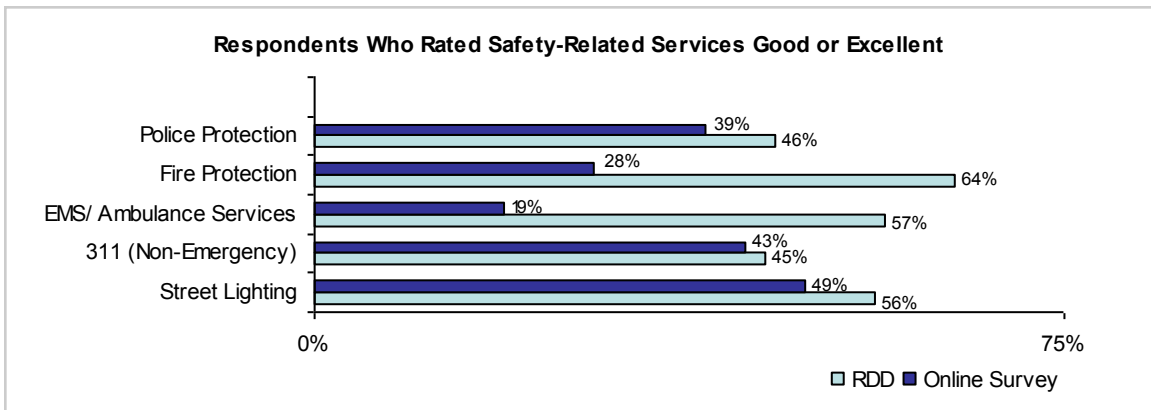| Category	RDD	Online Survey
Police Protection	46%	39%
Fire Protection	64%	28%
EMS/ Ambulance Services	57%	19%
311 (Non-Emergency)	45%	43%
Street Lighting	56%	49%

Chart 5: Respondents Who Rated Safety-Related Services as Good or Excellent

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Police Protection

On average, RDD respondents were more likely to rate their satisfaction with police in their neighborhood as satisfied or very satisfied than online respondents. Of all areas of police satisfaction, none received a majority of satisfied or very satisfied ratings from either online or RDD respondents. Online and RDD respondents rated professionalism of police in their neighborhood similarly (44% and 46% respectively). There was a significant difference (21%) in satisfaction ratings between online and RDD respondents concerning the ability of police to prevent crime in their neighborhood.
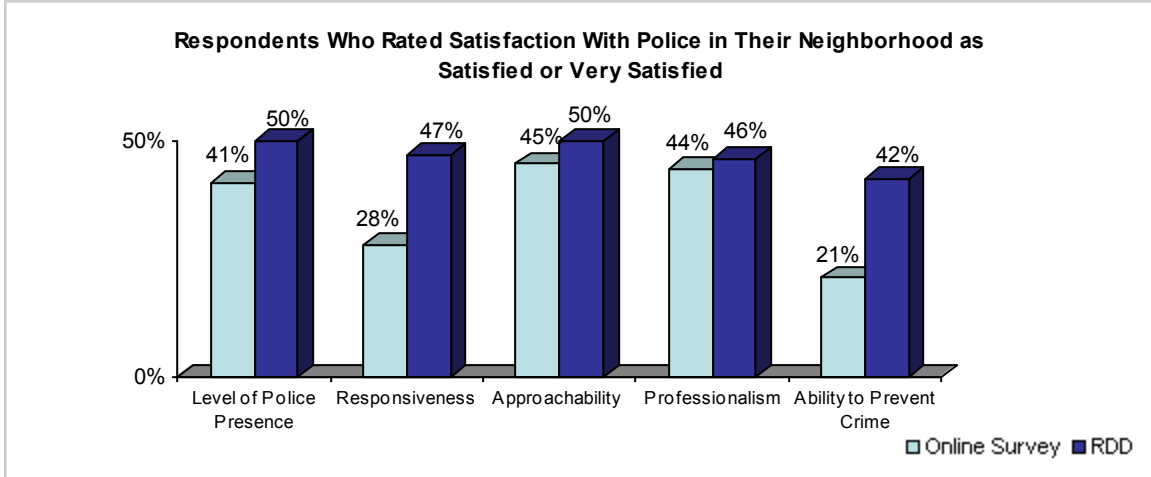
Chart 6: Respondents Who Rated Satisfaction With Police in Their Neighborhood as Satisfied or Very Satisfied

Safety Across the City

Online survey respondents rated their own neighborhood during the day as safest (94%), followed by downtown during the day (89%). With the exception of City parks, online survey respondents were more likely than RDD respondents to rate all areas of the City as safe or very safe.

Chart 7: Respondents Who Rated Different Areas of the City Safe or Very Safe

Safety Concerns

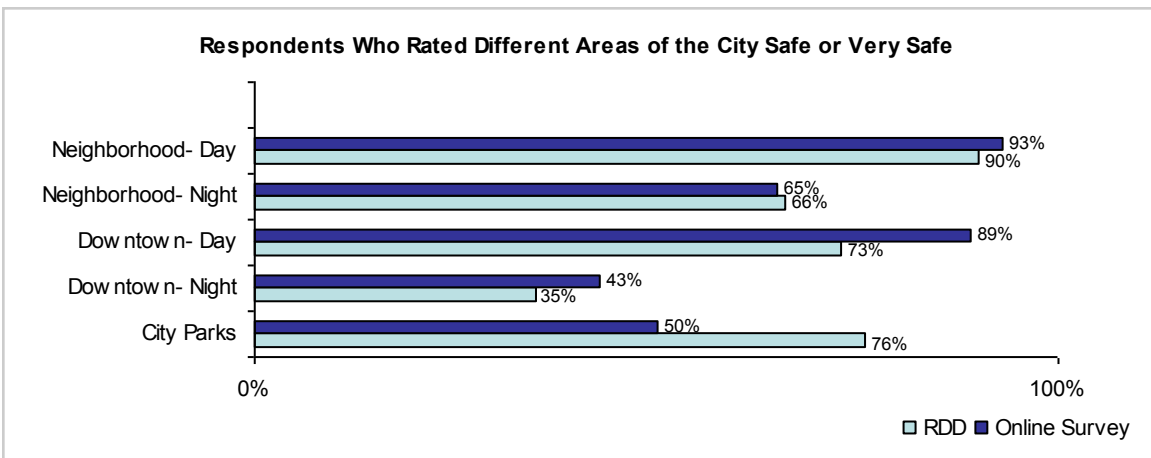Online survey respondents rated vacant property as their biggest safety concern; over three-fourths (88%) of respondents rated the problem to be serious or very serious. Other top safety concerns included: illegal drugs (86%), violent crime (84%), and property crime (79%). Online survey respondents were more likely than RDD respondents to rate all safety concerns as a serious or very serious problem.
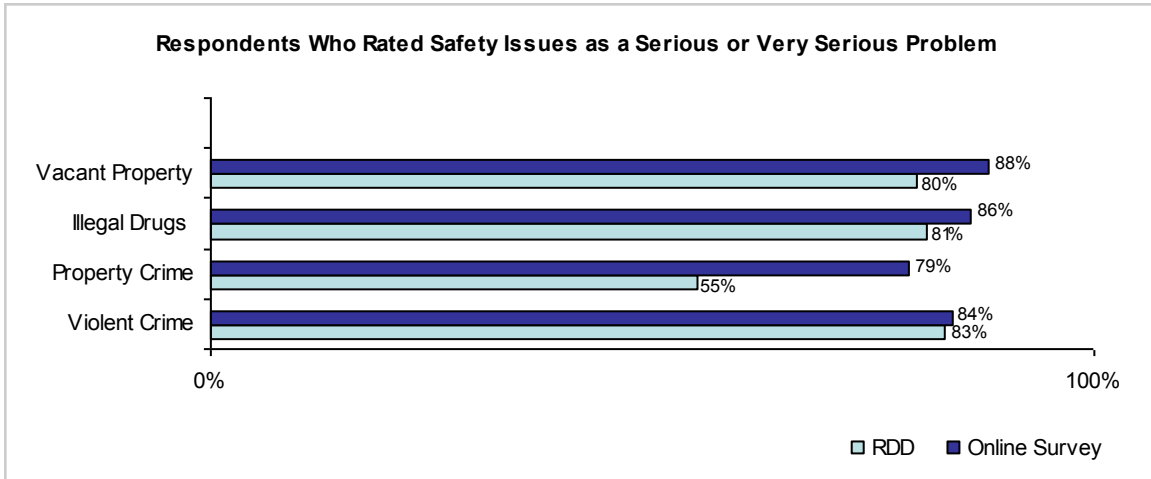
Respondents Who Rated Safety Issues as a Serious or Very Serious Problem

Category	Online Survey	RDD
Vacant Property	88%	80%
Illegal Drugs	86%	81%
Property Crime	79%	55%
Violent Crime	84%	83%

Legend: □ RDD ■ Online Survey

Chart 8: Respondents Who Rated Safety Issues as a Serious or Very Serious Problem

Crime and Safety Perceptions

Online respondents' perceptions of crime and safety were informed primarily by personal experience (84%) and the experiences of friends and family (82%). The factor which was least likely to influence online and RDD respondents was entertainment. The perception of crime and safety by RDD respondents were more likely to be influenced by radio, entertainment, and TV news than online respondents.

Influencing Factors on Respondents' Perceptions of Crime & Public Safety, Rated Large or Very Large Role

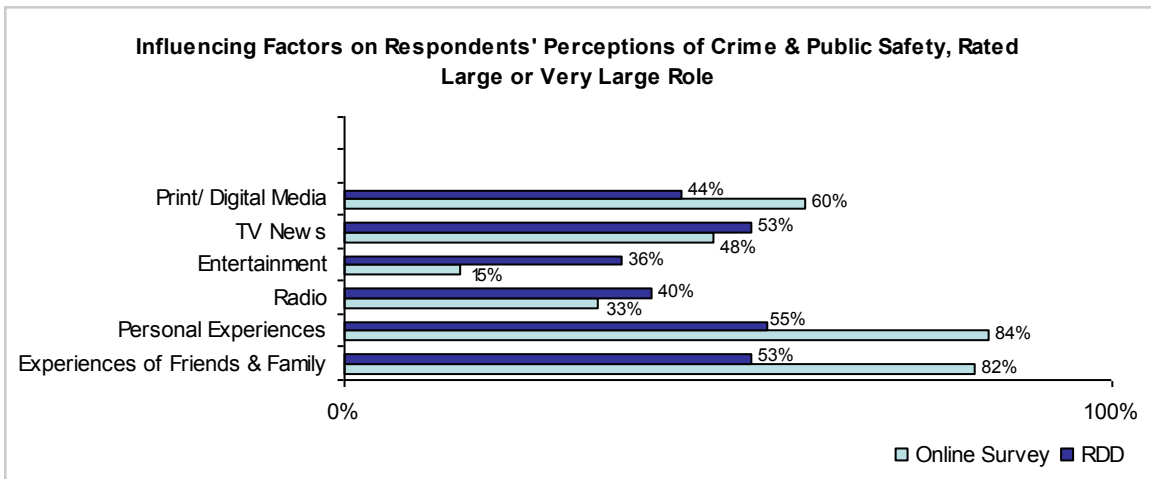| Category	RDD	Online Survey
Print/ Digital Media	44%	60%
TV News	53%	48%
Entertainment	36%	15%
Radio	40%	33%
Personal Experiences	55%	84%
Experiences of Friends & Family	53%	82%

Legend: □ Online Survey ■ RDD

Chart 9: Influencing Factors on Respondents' Perceptions of Crime and Public Safety, Rated Large or Very Large Role

Priority 3—Stronger Neighborhoods

<u>Quality of Life</u>

Illegal drug use (62%) and vacant buildings (62%) had the highest percentage of online respondents rating them as very serious problems, while illegal drug use (52%) and violent crime (53%) had the highest percentage of RDD respondents rating them as very serious problems. Of the 14 quality of life issues surveyed, over half were rated more highly as a very serious problem by online survey than RDD respondents. Property crime (15%) and vacant buildings (14%) had the largest difference between online and RDD respondents as being a very serious problem.

Perception of Quality of Life Issues (Rated as a Very Serious Problem)

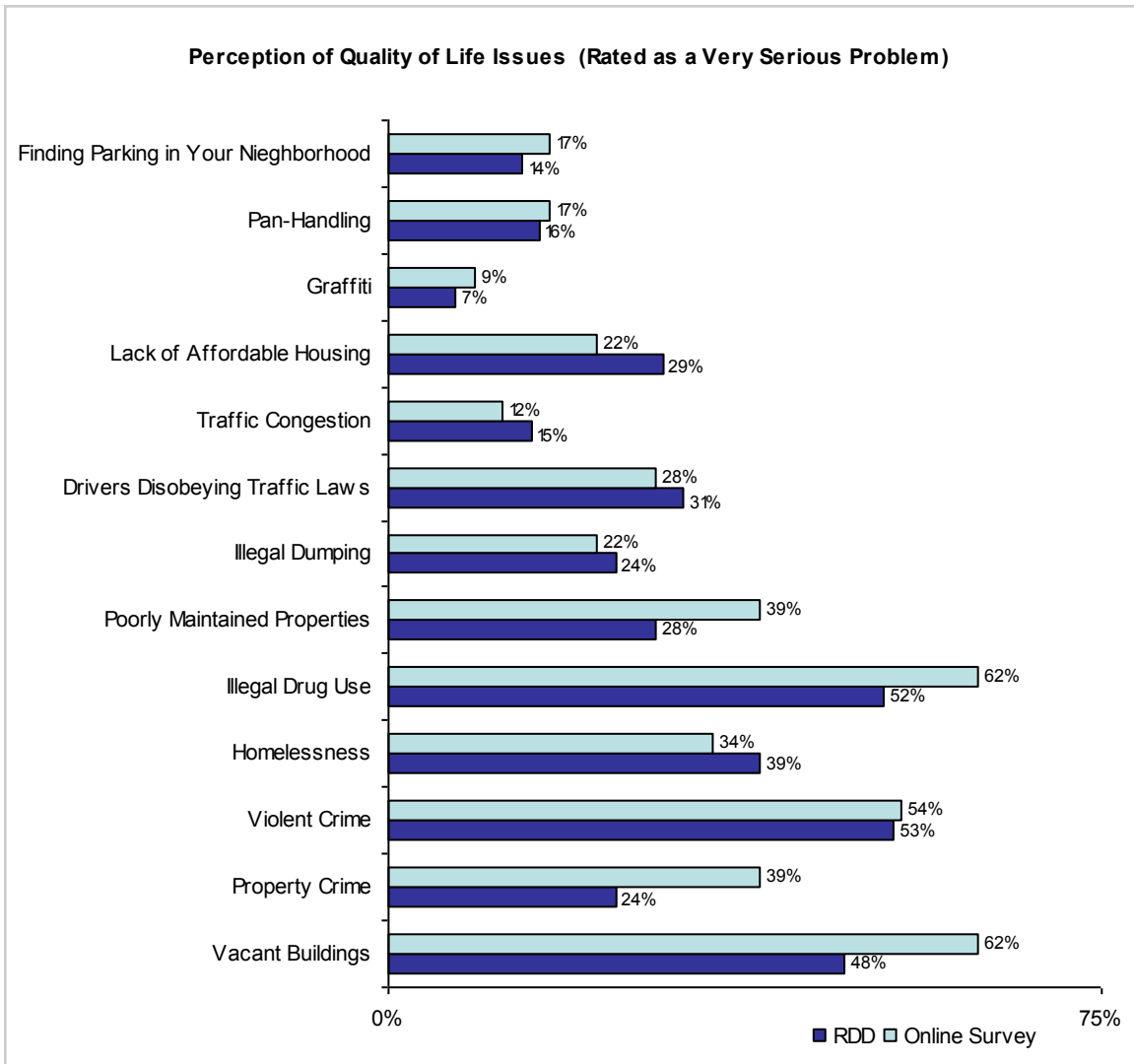| Issue	RDD	Online Survey
Finding Parking in Your Nieghborhood	14%	17%
Pan-Handling	16%	17%
Graffiti	7%	9%
Lack of Affordable Housing	29%	22%
Traffic Congestion	15%	12%
Drivers Disobeying Traffic Laws	31%	28%
Illegal Dumping	24%	22%
Poorly Maintained Properties	28%	39%
Illegal Drug Use	52%	62%
Homelessness	39%	34%
Violent Crime	53%	54%
Property Crime	24%	39%
Vacant Buildings	48%	62%

Chart 10: Perception of Quality of Life Issues

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Neighborhood-Related Services

Less than 50% of online respondents rated the six neighborhood-related services as good or excellent. Street lighting was the service that was rated most highly (48%) by online survey respondents. Housing code enforcement received the lowest rating from both online and RDD respondents. Sidewalk and street maintenance received similar ratings from both online and RDD respondents, with roughly a quarter of all respondents rating the service as good or excellent.
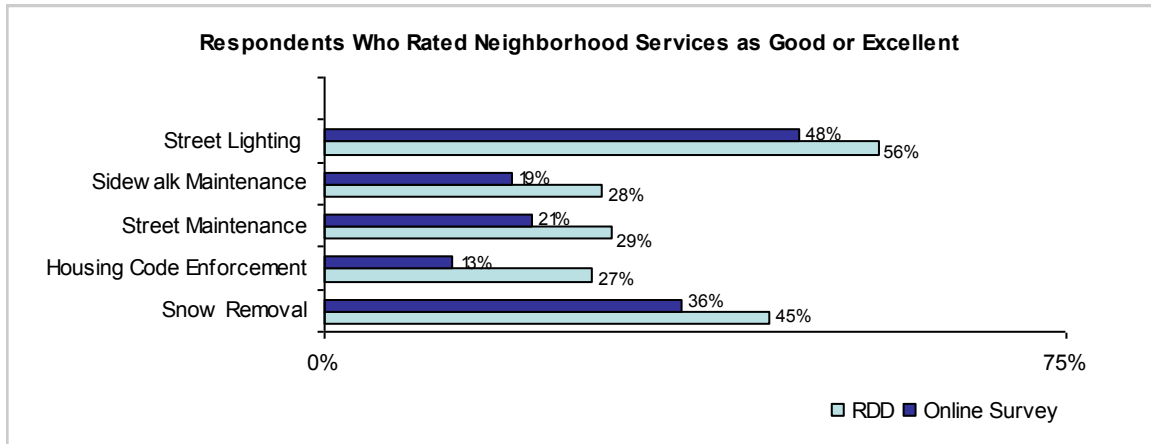
Respondents Who Rated Neighborhood Services as Good or Excellent

Service	RDD	Online Survey
Street Lighting	56%	48%
Sidewalk Maintenance	28%	19%
Street Maintenance	29%	21%
Housing Code Enforcement	27%	13%
Snow Removal	45%	36%

Chart 11: Respondents Who Rated Neighborhood Services as Good or Excellent

Priority 4– Growing Economy

Online survey respondents were more likely than RDD respondents to rate the availability of good jobs, recreational activities, and cultural events as good or excellent. The availability of cultural events received the most good or excellent ratings from both online and RDD respondents.

Respondents Who Rated Availability of Jobs, Recreational Activites & Cultural Events as Good or Excellent

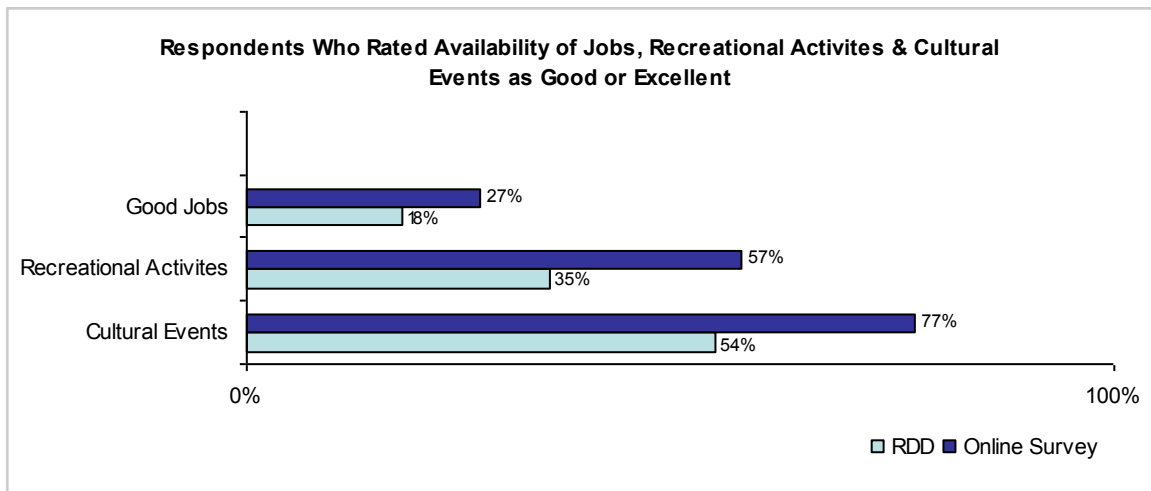| Category	RDD	Online Survey
Good Jobs	18%	27%
Recreational Activites	35%	57%
Cultural Events	54%	77%

Chart 12: Respondents Who Rated Availability of Jobs, Recreational Activities, & Cultural Events as Good or Excellent

Priority 5- Innovative Government

On average RDD respondents were more satisfied with City services than online respondents. Online survey respondents were most likely to rate their overall satisfaction with City services as either "unsatisfied" (30%) or "neither satisfied nor unsatisfied." Only 2% of online respondents were very satisfied with city services.

Overall Satisfaction with City Services

Online Survey

1% 2%
13%
24%
30%
30%

- ☐ Very Satisfied
- ■ Satisfied
- ■ Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied
- ■ Unsatisfied
- ■ Very Unsatisfied
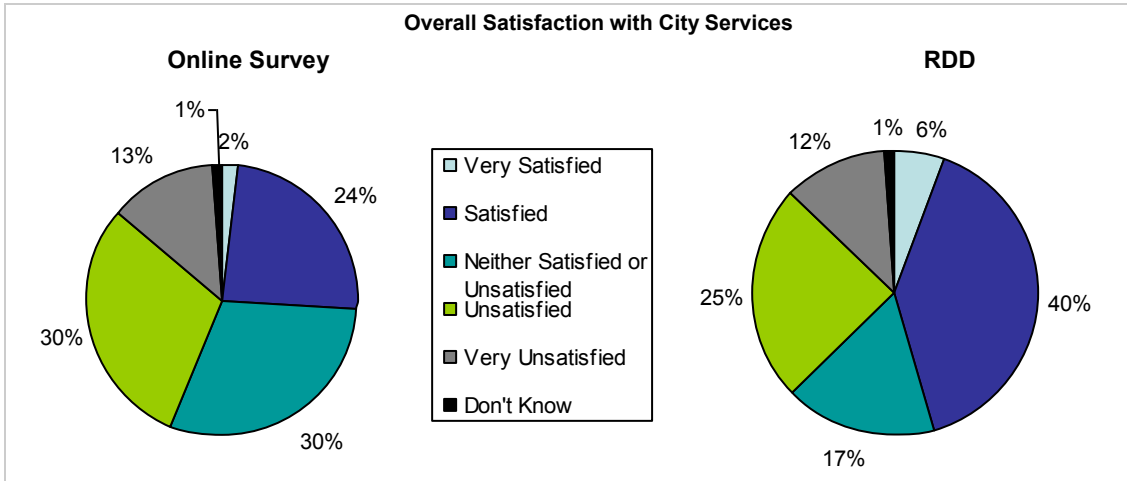- ■ Don't Know

RDD

12% 1% 6%
25%
40%
17%

Chart 13: Overall Satisfaction With City Services

Priority 6– Cleaner & Healthier City

Clean and Sustainable Services– Importance

Online survey respondents ranked all services related to a clean and sustainable Baltimore above a seven (on average) on a ten point scale (with ten being the most important). Trash removal and water and sewer services received the highest importance rating by online respondents. Tree planting and maintenance was considered the least important service to both online and RDD respondents, followed by rat control and curbside recycling. With the exception of trash removal, online survey respondents ranked all City services related to a clean and sustainable Baltimore lower than RDD respondents.
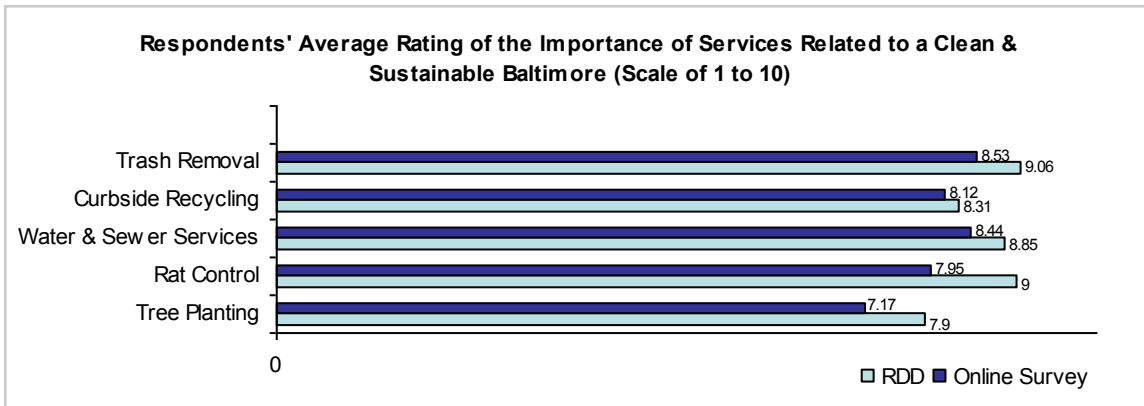
Respondents' Average Rating of the Importance of Services Related to a Clean & Sustainable Baltimore (Scale of 1 to 10)

Service	Online Survey	RDD
Trash Removal	8.53	9.06
Curbside Recycling	8.12	8.31
Water & Sewer Services	8.44	8.85
Rat Control	7.95	9
Tree Planting	7.17	7.9

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☐ RDD ■ Online Survey

Chart 14: Respondents' Average Rating of the Importance of Services Related to a Clean & Sustainable Baltimore

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Clean and Sustainable Services– Ratings

Curbside recycling was the most highly rated service related to a clean and sustainable Baltimore, with over three-fourths of online respondents rating the service as good or excellent (70%). Rat control received the lowest percentage of online survey respondents rating it as good or excellent (16%).
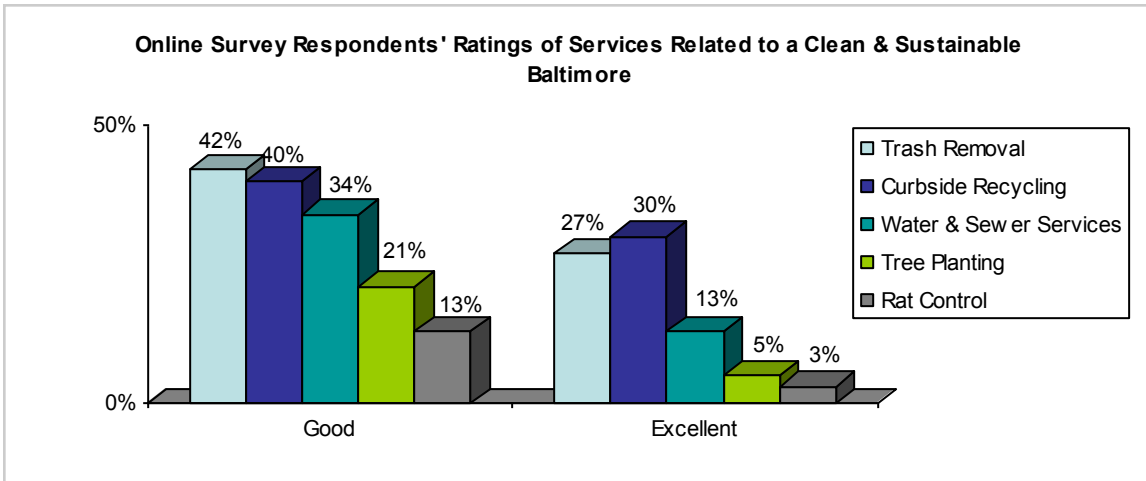
Online Survey Respondents' Ratings of Services Related to a Clean & Sustainable Baltimore

Good:
- Trash Removal: 42%
- Curbside Recycling: 40%
- Water & Sewer Services: 34%
- Tree Planting: 21%
- Rat Control: 13%

Excellent:
- Trash Removal: 27%
- Curbside Recycling: 30%
- Water & Sewer Services: 13%
- Tree Planting: 5%
- Rat Control: 3%

Chart 15: Respondents' Ratings of Services Related to a Clean & Sustainable Baltimore

Cleanliness

RDD respondents were more likely to rate the cleanliness of the all areas of the City as good or excellent than online respondents. In all three areas for which citizens were surveyed, the City was the least likely to receive a cleanliness rating of good or excellent by either online and RDD respondents.
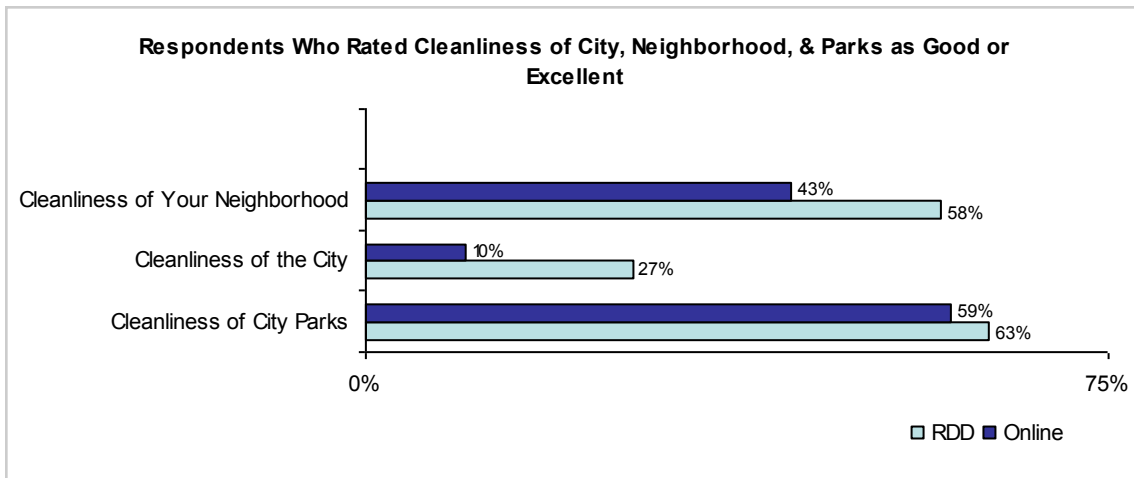
Respondents Who Rated Cleanliness of City, Neighborhood, & Parks as Good or Excellent

- Cleanliness of Your Neighborhood: Online 43%, RDD 58%
- Cleanliness of the City: Online 10%, RDD 27%
- Cleanliness of City Parks: Online 59%, RDD 63%

Chart 16: Respondents Who Rated Cleanliness of City, Neighborhood, & Parks as Good or Excellent

Likelihood of Leaving Baltimore

Online survey respondents were more likely to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years. About a third of both online and RDD respondents were not likely to leave Baltimore in one to three years.
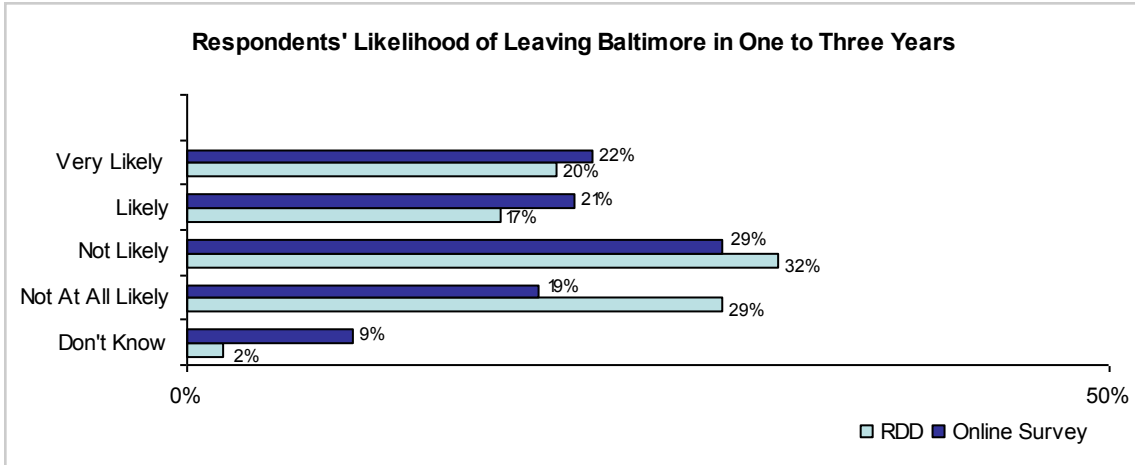
Respondents' Likelihood of Leaving Baltimore in One to Three Years

Category	RDD	Online Survey
Very Likely	20%	22%
Likely	17%	21%
Not Likely	32%	29%
Not At All Likely	29%	19%
Don't Know	2%	9%

Chart 17: Respondents' Likelihood of Leaving Baltimore in One to Three Years

Reasons for Leaving Baltimore

Of all online survey respondents likely to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years, over half of respondents identified high taxes (24%), poor public schools (16%), or the crime rate (11%) as their reason for leaving. Almost a quarter of online respondents (21%) provided a different reason than those listed.
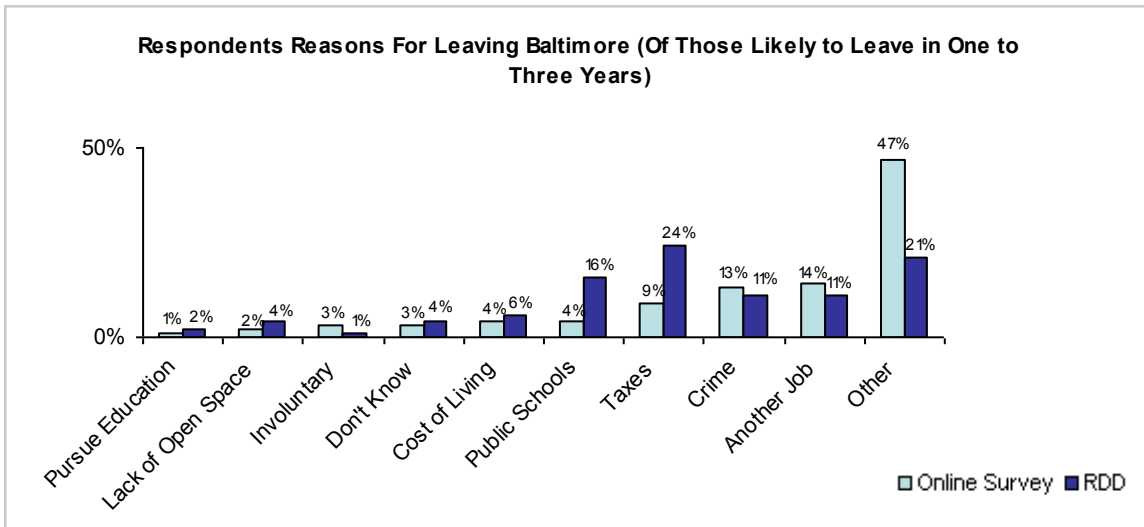
Respondents Reasons For Leaving Baltimore (Of Those Likely to Leave in One to Three Years)

Reason	Online Survey	RDD
Pursue Education	1%	2%
Lack of Open Space	2%	4%
Involuntary	3%	1%
Don't Know	3%	4%
Cost of Living	4%	6%
Public Schools	4%	16%
Taxes	9%	24%
Crime	13%	11%
Another Job	14%	11%
Other	47%	21%

Chart 18: Respondents Reasons for Leaving Baltimore (Of Those Likely to Leave in One to Three Years)

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Conclusion

Respondents to the online survey were a self-selected group of high-income and well-educated residents of Baltimore City. For responses related to *Better Schools* and *Safer Streets*, online survey respondents were less likely to have experience with BCPS, were more likely to rate different areas of the city as safe or very safe, and were more likely to rate safety issues, such as violent crime and illegal drug use, as a serious or very serious problem than RDD respondents. Improving public schools and reducing crime were rated as their top priorities out of seven City goals.

For responses related to *Stronger Neighborhoods,* and *A Growing Economy,* online respondents were less likely to rate neighborhood-related services as good or excellent, but were more likely than RDD respondents to rate the availability of recreational activities and culture events as good or excellent. Online survey respondents were more likely to rate quality of life issues as a serious or very serious problem, other than the availability of parking.

Regarding *Innovative Government,* online survey respondents were less likely to be satisfied with city services. In regards to a *Cleaner and Healthier City*, online survey respondents were likely to rate trash and recycling services as good or excellent, but less likely to rate tree planting and maintenance and rat control as good or excellent. Tree planting and maintenance was considered the least important service to both online and RDD respondents. The cleanliness of city parks received the most ratings of good or excellent by both RDD and online respondents.

Online respondents were more likely than RDD respondents to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years, with 43% of online respondents responding that doing so was likely or very likely compared to 37% of RDD respondents stating the same. Over half of the online respondents who plan to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years cite high taxes, poor public schools, or the crime rate as their number one reason for doing so.

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