



## 2013 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 2013 online Citizen Survey acts as an online supplement to the University of Baltimore Schaefer Center's Random-Digit-Dialing (RDD) phone survey. The online survey was created by Baltimore City and hosted on Survey-Monkey.com with 1,029 respondents taking the survey from June 1 through August 1, 2013.

Respondents to the online survey were a self-selected group of Baltimore City residents with higher incomes and more education than the average City resident. Demographic differences between the online and RDD respondents are shown in Chart 1. The demographics of online survey respondents in 2013 are similar to the demographics of online survey respondents in the previous year.

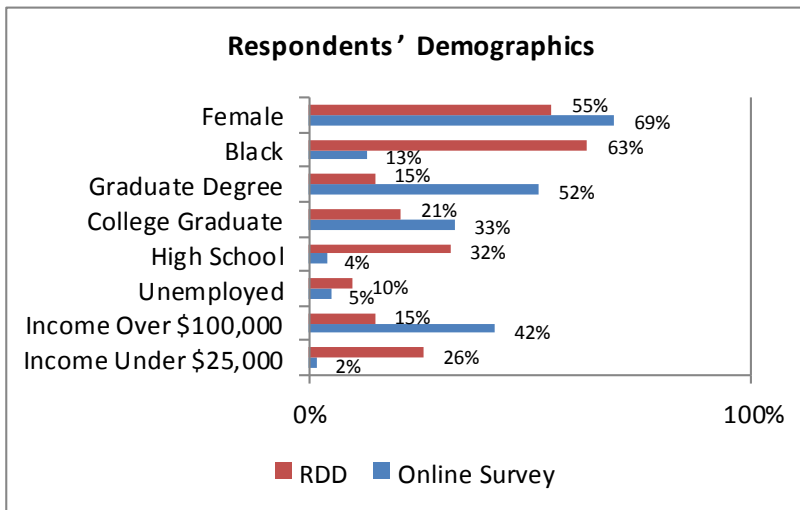


Chart 1: Respondents' Demographics

#### Key Findings

Demographics of online survey respondents compared to RDD respondents:

- Higher incomes
- Higher education levels
- Less likely to be unemployed
- More likely to be White

Online survey respondents:

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

## Most Important City Services

Online survey respondents were asked what they thought were the most important services that Baltimore City provides. Without being prompted with a list, they were asked for their opinions on the most important and second most important services. Just under half of online respondents (49%) ranked “police” as the most important service, with another 9% saying “safety.” The next most common answer was “education” or “schools” with 20% giving one of those responses. Every other category was ranked most important by single-digit percentages of respondents. These responses are considerably different from those in the random sample of the RDD survey, as shown in Table 1. A third of online respondents also named “police” (19%) or “protection” (15%) as the second most important city service.

	Ranked Most Important by Largest %	Ranked Most Important by 2nd Largest %
Online Survey	Police 49%	Education/Schools 20%
RDD	Ambulance, fire, EMS 15%	Trash/Sanitation, Cleanliness 13%

Table 1: Respondents’ Views of Most Important City Services

## Overall Satisfaction with City Services

A quarter of online respondents said they were satisfied with City services, and a third said they were unsatisfied with them. Thirteen percent were very unsatisfied, while 29% were neither satisfied nor unsatisfied. Online respondents were less satisfied overall than RDD respondents.

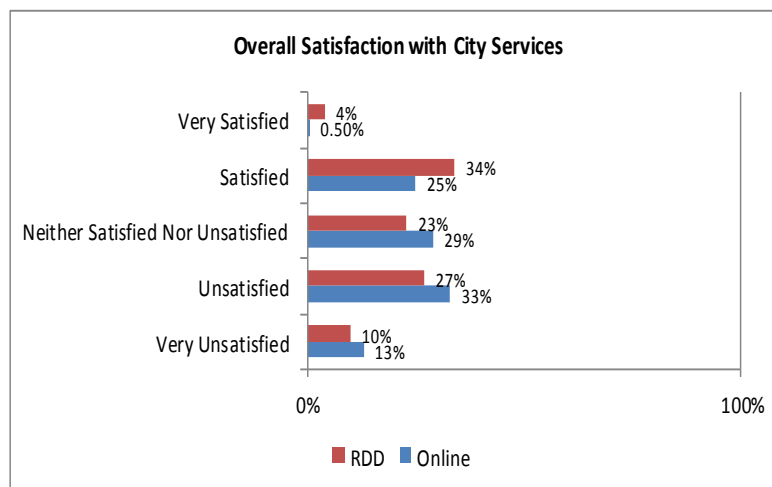


Chart 2: Respondents’ Ratings of Satisfaction with City Services

## Priority 1 – Better Schools

More than half (46%) of online survey respondents had no experience with Baltimore City Public Schools (City Schools). Those with experience with the public school system more often rated City Schools as poor (17%) than as good (11%) or excellent (3%). Of those likely to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years, the quality of City Schools was a consideration for 18% of online respondents. A similar number of online respondents from 2012 (19%) and 2011 (17%) rated City Schools as poor.

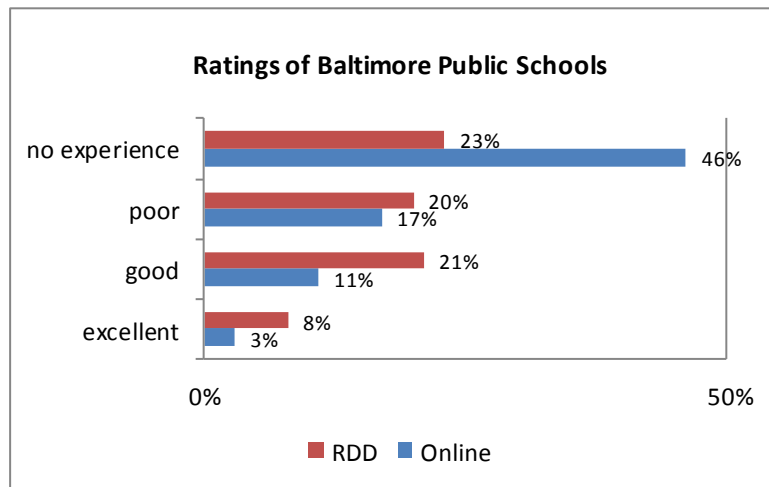


Chart 3: Respondents’ Ratings of Baltimore’s K-12 Education

## Priority 2 – Safer Streets

### Safety-Related Services

Of the safety-related services provided by the City, just under half (49%) of online respondents said they considered police the most important. Another 9% named safety. On a 10-point scale where 10 is the most important service, online respondents gave police protection the highest importance rating at 9.28 and fire protection the second highest at 9.18.

Nearly half (47%) of the online respondents rated police protection as good or excellent and 7% rated it as poor, with another 29% saying they had no experience with police. Three out of five (61%) online respondents said they had no experience with fire protection, but of the 30% who said they had had experience, all but 2% rated the service as good or excellent. Almost equal percentages of online respondents gave high ratings and low ratings to the non-emergency 311 response service: 41% said the service was good or excellent, while 40% said it was fair or poor. Chart 4 shows these results.

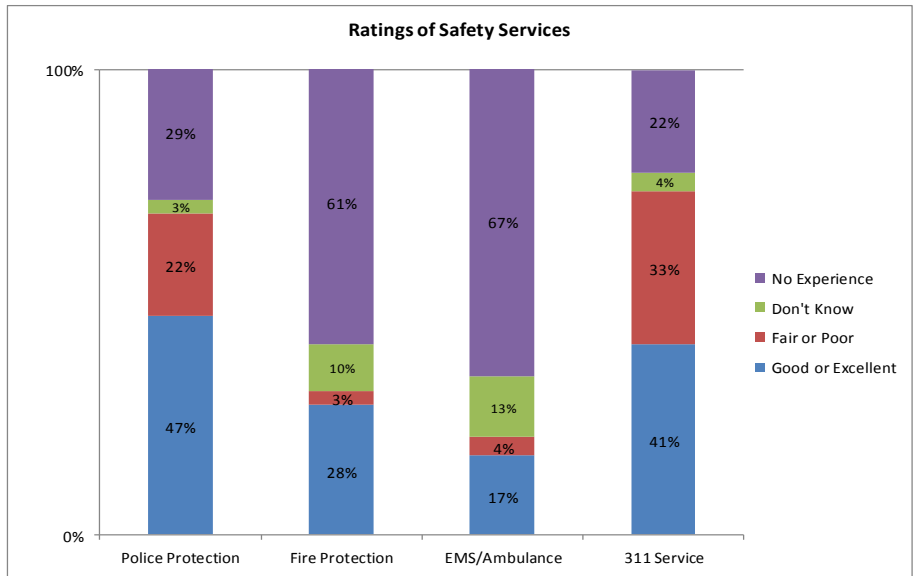


Chart 4: Online Respondents Who Rated Safety Services as Either Fair/Pair or Good/Excellent

Because significantly higher percentages of the online respondents than the RDD respondents said they had no experience with safety-related services, most of the average ratings are not directly comparable. An exception is the 311 ratings, shown in Chart 5. Online respondents were less likely than RDD respondents to rate 311 service as good or excellent.

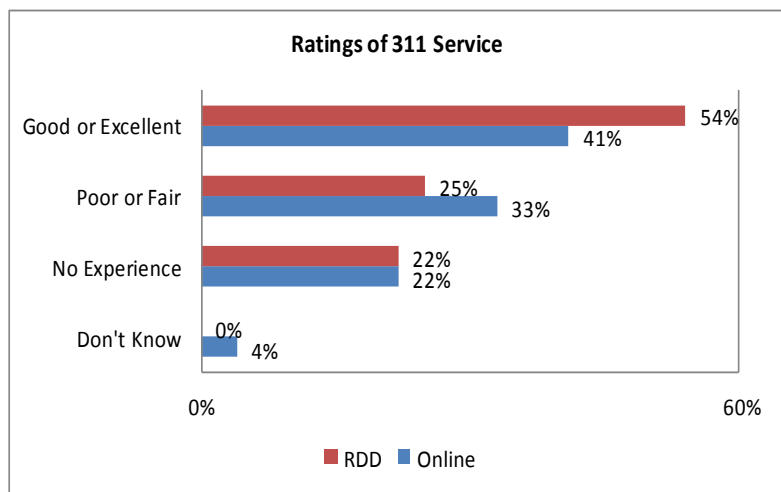


Chart 5: Respondents Who Rated 311 Service as Good/Excellent or Poor/Fair

More than half (56%) of online respondents indicated that their overall perception of the City Police Department was somewhat favorable (44%) or very favorable (11%), close to the percentages for RDD respondents.

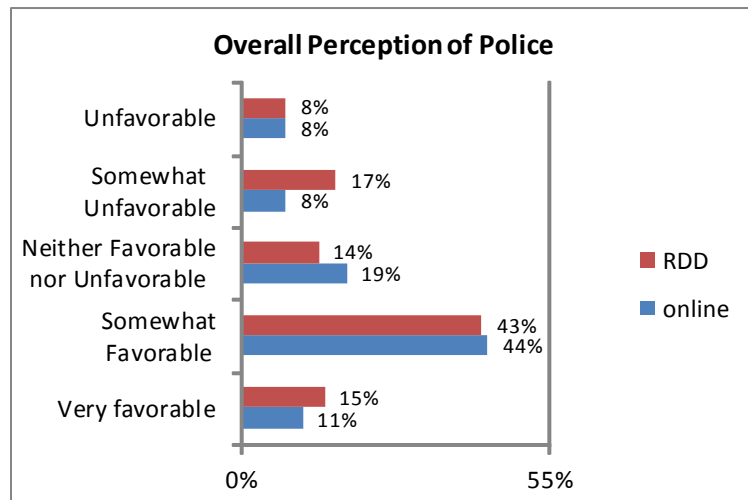


Chart 6: Respondents’ Perceptions of Police as More or Less Favorable

Overall, no more than half of online respondents said they were satisfied with five different aspects of policing in their neighborhoods. Online respondents were also less likely than RDD respondents to say they were satisfied or very satisfied with those aspects.

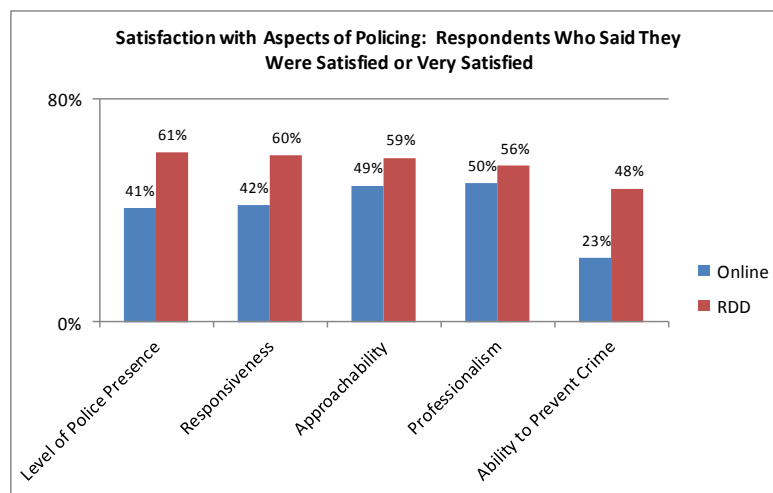


Chart 7: Respondents Who Rated Favorably Aspects of Policing in Their Neighborhoods

## Safety Across the City

Ninety-five percent of online respondents rated their own neighborhoods as safe or very safe during the day, and 70% said their neighborhoods were safe or very safe at night as well. Online survey respondents were more likely than RDD respondents to rate all areas of the City as safe or very safe.

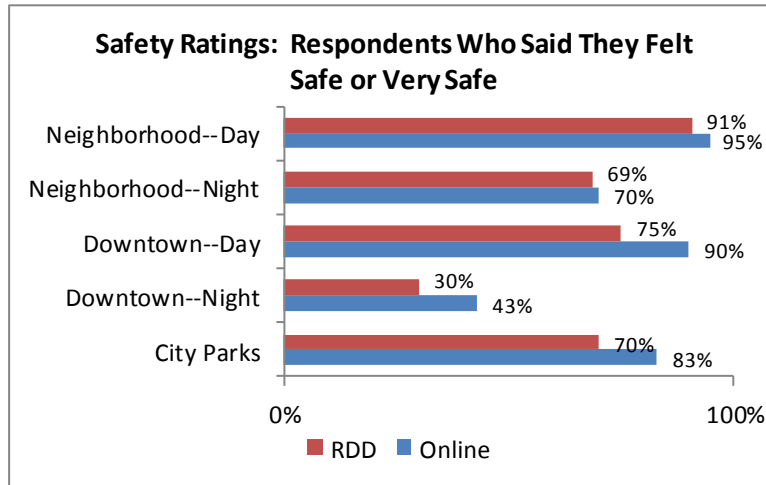


Chart 8: Respondents Who Rated Different Areas of the City as Safe or Very Safe

## Biggest Safety Concerns

More than eight out of ten online respondents rated violent crime, illegal drugs and vacant or abandoned buildings as serious or very serious concerns among five problems that are safety-related: 85% of respondents rated violent crime and vacant or abandoned buildings as serious or very serious, and 84% rated illegal drug use as serious or very serious. Crime involving property such as theft was viewed as serious or very serious by 77% of online respondents, while 55% saw the breaking of traffic laws as serious or very serious. Online and RDD respondents deemed these five problems as serious or very serious at similar percentages except for property crime. Online respondents saw property crime as serious or very serious more frequently than RDD respondents. These findings are illustrated in Chart 9.

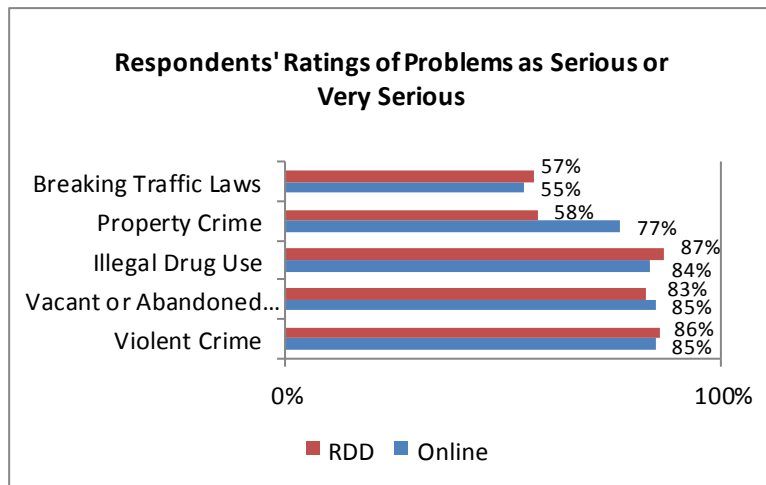


Chart 9: Respondents Who Rated Safety Issues as a Serious or Very Serious Problem

### Priority 3—Stronger Neighborhoods

#### Quality of Life

From a list of possible problems in the City, online respondents were most likely to rate illegal drug use as very serious at 62%. RDD respondents were also most likely to rate illegal drug use as very serious and at almost the same percentage (60%). The next largest percentages of both groups calling a problem very serious corresponded to vacant or abandoned buildings or to violent crime, with online respondents slightly more often picking abandoned buildings as very serious and RDD respondents slightly more often picking violent crime. Lack of affordable housing showed the greatest difference between online and RDD respondents' views of seriousness, with 31% of RDD respondents but only 18% of online respondents deeming it very serious.

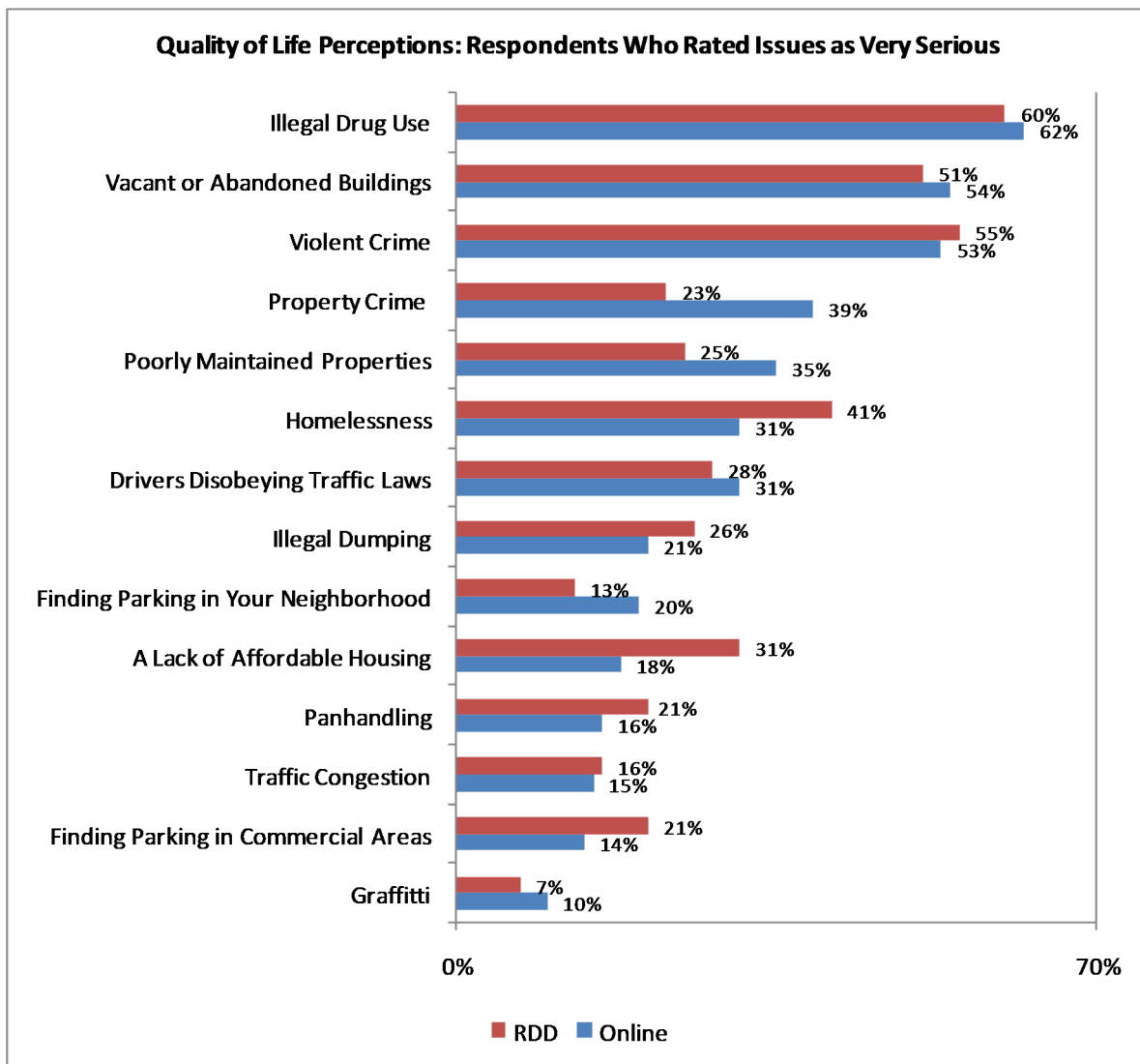


Chart 10: Respondents Who Rated Quality of Life Issues as a Very Serious Problem

## Neighborhood-Related Services

In terms of neighborhood-related services, online respondents were fairly satisfied with City parks and libraries, with more than 60% rating those services as good or excellent. Online respondents were less likely to rate services having to do with streets and sidewalks as good or excellent: street lighting, snow removal, street maintenance, and sidewalk maintenance were associated with good or excellent ratings for between 50% (lighting) and 19% (sidewalk maintenance) of respondents.

Libraries received the highest ratings of all services from both online and RDD respondents, while housing code enforcement received the lowest from both. The biggest gap between the ratings of online and RDD respondents was in association with parks, with 66% of online respondents rating them as good or excellent but only 48% of RDD respondents. These results are depicted in Chart 11.

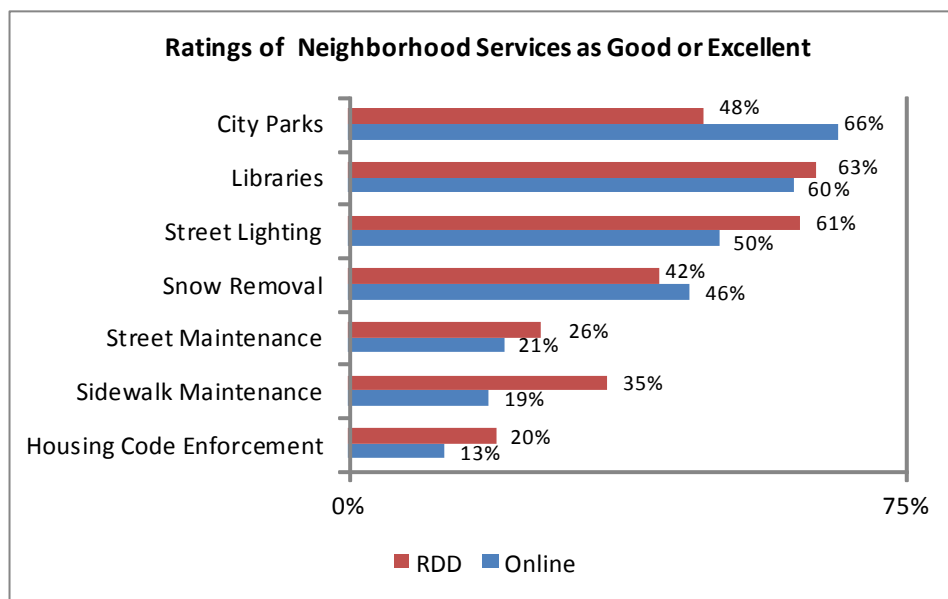


Chart 11: Respondents Who Rated Neighborhood Services as Good or Excellent



**Priority 4– Growing Economy**

Well more than half of online respondents rated the availability of both recreational and cultural activities as good or excellent, but fewer than a third (31%) said the availability of good jobs was good or excellent. RDD respondents gave considerably lower ratings in each of these categories, but like online respondents, rated cultural activities as the most available of the three types and job opportunities as the least available.

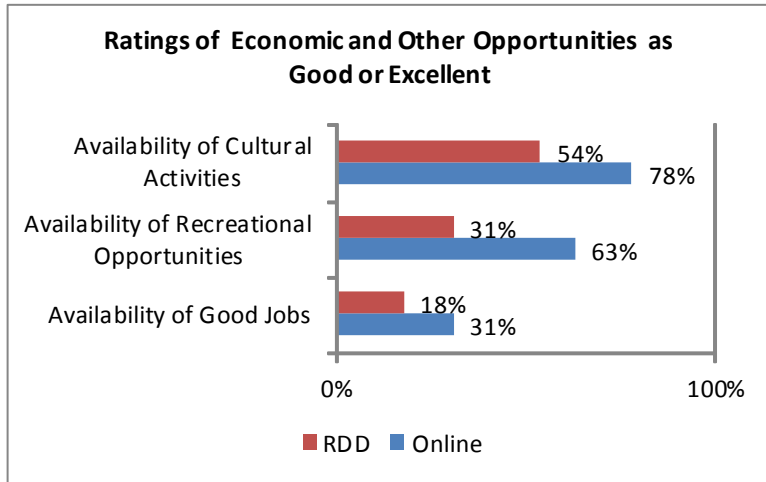
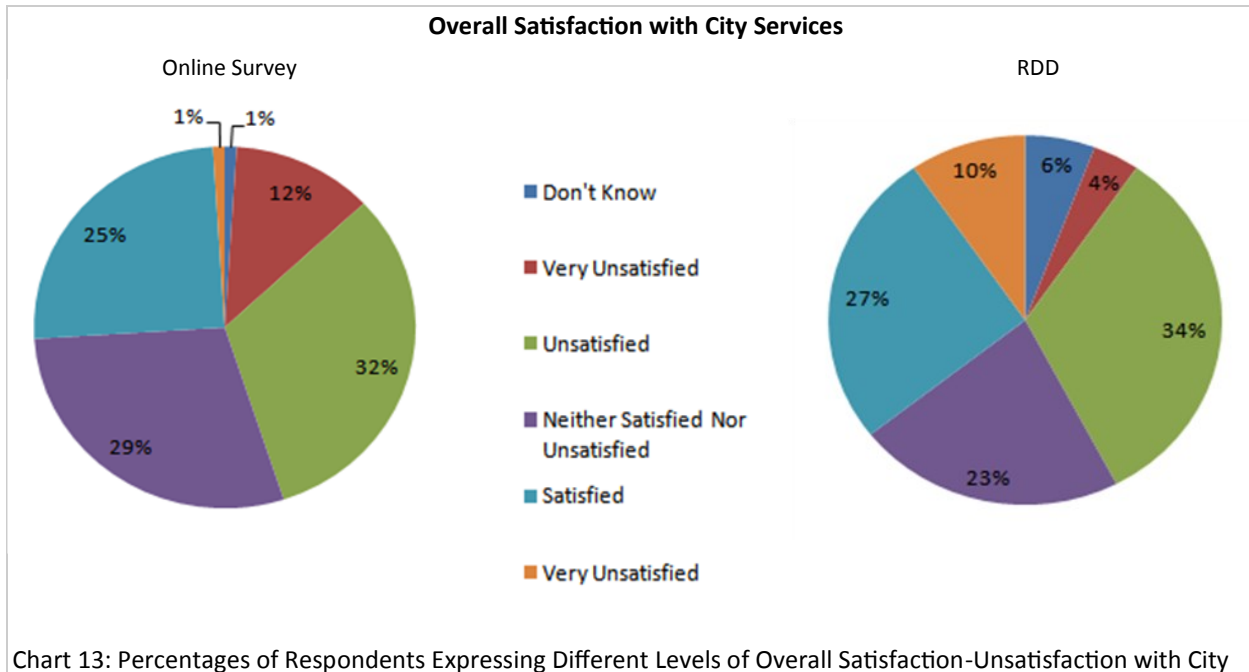


Chart 12: Respondents Who Rated Availability of Jobs, Recreational Activities, and Cultural Events as Good/Excellent

**Priority 5—Innovative Government**

Overall Satisfaction with City Services

Online respondents were less satisfied with City services than RDD respondents. The largest percentage (32%) of online respondents characterized themselves as unsatisfied rather than very satisfied, satisfied or very unsatisfied, which was also true of RDD respondents (34%). But online respondents were less likely to be very satisfied and more likely to be very unsatisfied than RDD respondents. Just 1% of online respondents were very satisfied with City services. Chart 13 illustrates these results.



## Priority 6—A Cleaner and Healthier City

### Services for a Clean and Sustainable City — Importance

Considering the importance of services related to a clean and sustainable Baltimore, online respondents ranked two services—trash removal and water and sewer— at about an average of 9 on a 10-point scale where 10 is the most important. They ranked two services—rat control and curbside recycling—at about 8, and one service—tree planting and maintenance—at about 7.

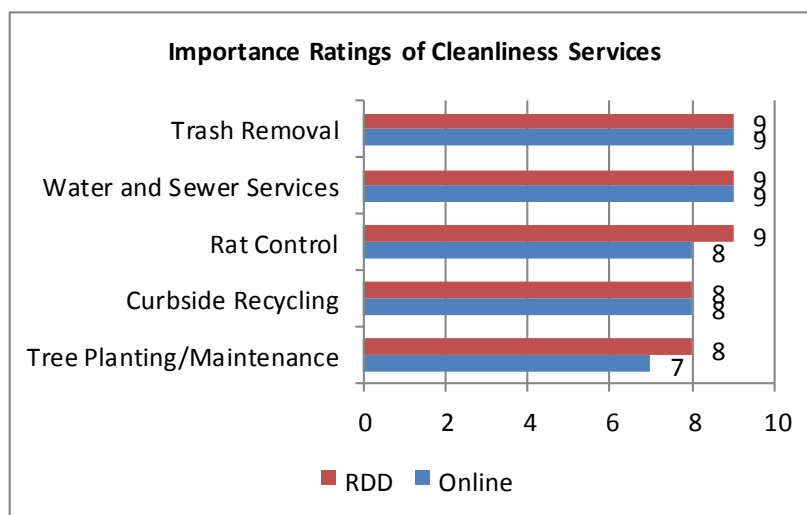


Chart 14: Respondents' Ratings of the Importance of Services Related to a Clean and Sustainable Baltimore (Scale of 1 to 10)

## Clean and Sustainable Services – Quality of Service Ratings

Among five services related to a clean and sustainable City, online respondents were most likely (65%) to rate the quality of trash collection as excellent or good. A similar percentage of online respondents (59%) rated curbside recycling as excellent or good, but less than half that percentage (27%) gave tree planting and maintenance favorable ratings and just 16% deemed rat control excellent or good.

For every service but one, RDD respondents were more likely to give favorable ratings than online respondents, thought mostly not by a wide margin. The largest gap was in tree maintenance and planting, with just 27% of the online respondents deeming the service excellent or good.

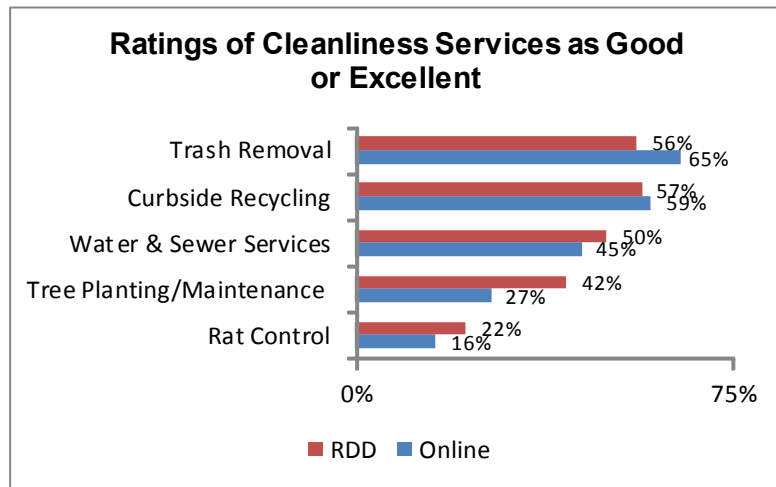


Chart 15: Respondents' Ratings of Quality of Services Related to a Clean and Sustainable Baltimore

## Cleanliness

Online respondents were considerably less likely than RDD respondents to rate the cleanliness of the City or their neighborhoods as good or excellent. Both online and RDD respondents rated their neighborhood's cleanliness as much better than citywide cleanliness.

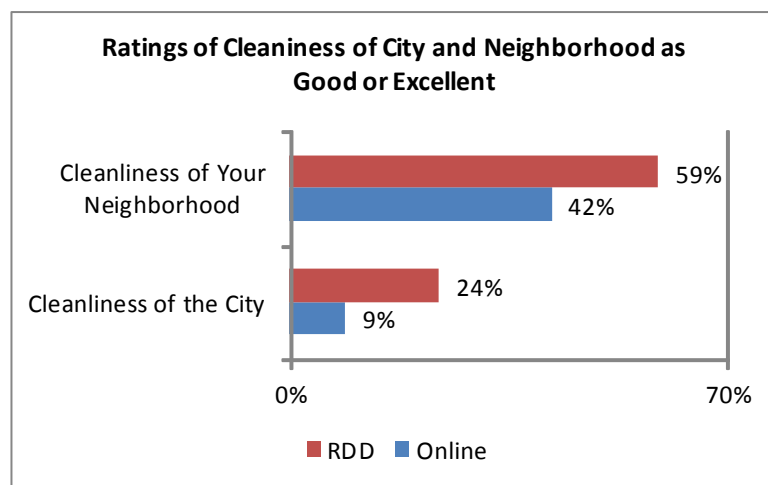


Chart 16: Respondents Who Rated Cleanliness of the City and Neighborhood as Good or Excellent

## Likelihood of Leaving Baltimore

Online respondents were slightly more likely than RDD respondents to say they were likely to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years. About a third of both online and RDD respondents said were not likely to leave Baltimore in that time period.

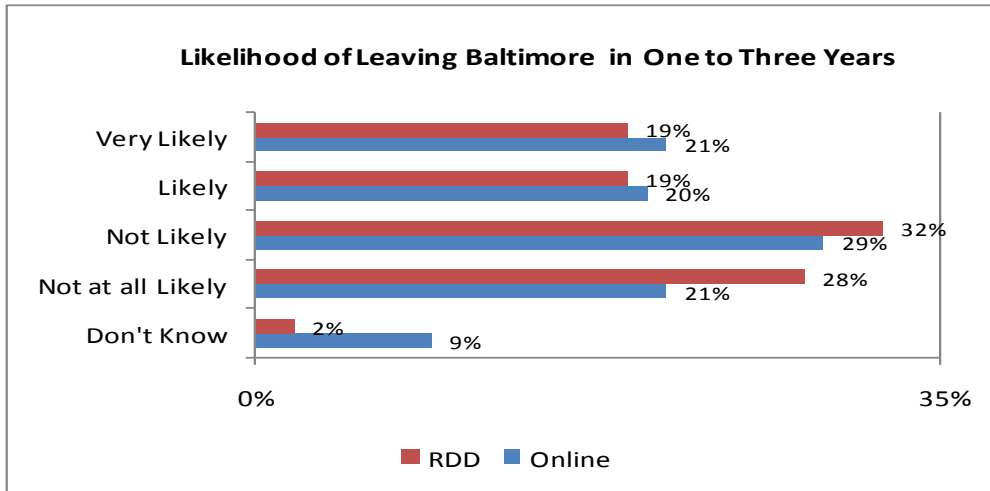


Chart 17: Respondents’ Expressed Likelihood of Leaving Baltimore in One to Three Years

## Reasons for Leaving Baltimore

Of the 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 (19%), or the crime rate (12%) as their reason for leaving. RDD respondents to the same question were considerably less likely to name high taxes (9%) or poor public schools (4%) as their reasons for leaving, but about as likely to cite crime (14%).

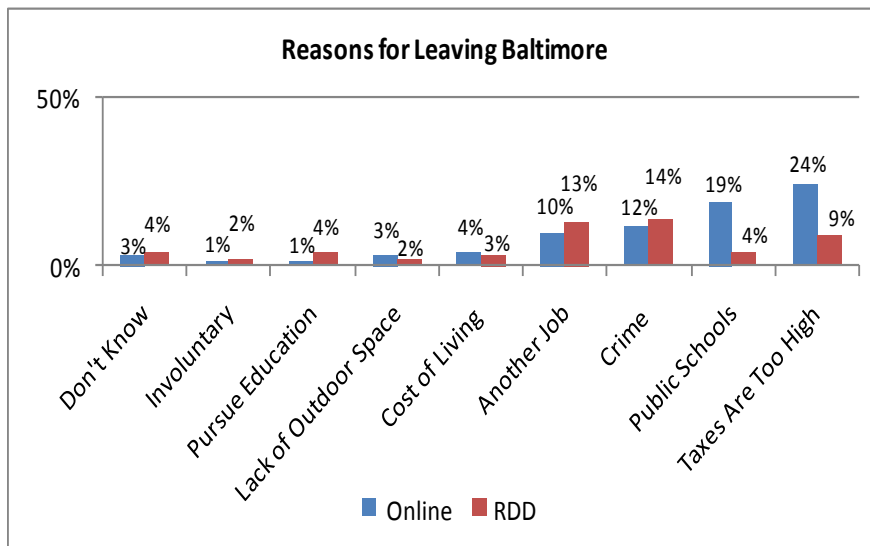


Chart 18: Respondents’ Reasons for Leaving Baltimore (of Those Likely to Leave in One to Three Years)

## Baltimore's Government Access TV Channel

The 2013 Citizen Survey included questions that were requested by the City's government-access, cable channel to gauge citizens use of and preferences for the television service.

### Viewership

Online respondents were more likely than RDD respondents to have never viewed City government's cable TV channel. In both groups those who considered themselves regular viewers constituted 10% or less of the total number of respondents.

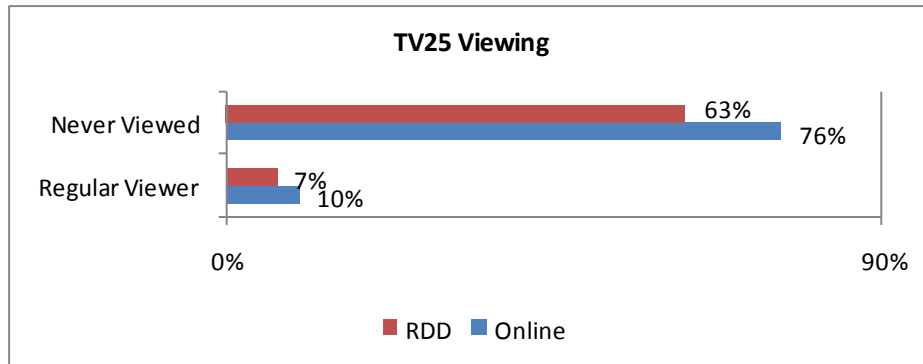


Chart 19: Respondents Who Have Viewed City Government's TV25 and Who Watch It Regularly

### Viewer Preferences

Among those who watch TV25, both online and RDD respondents, City Council hearings were the content they turned to the most. RDD respondents were a little more likely than online respondents to watch other types of community events on TV25. Online respondents said by about a four to one margin (62% to 15%) that they would like to see more government meetings and hearings on TV25, but a plurality of RDD respondents (41%) said they would not like to see more government meetings and hearings on TV25.

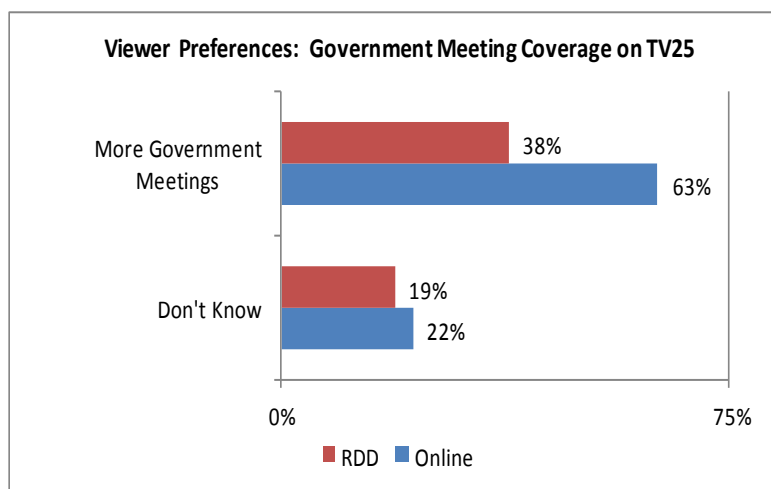


Chart 20: Respondents Who Would Like to See More Government Meetings and Hearings on TV25

## Importance of TV25

Most online respondents said they didn't know if the City should discontinue TV25. Of those who offered a view, almost equal percentages said the service should be continued (20%) and discontinued (22%).

## **Conclusion**

Respondents to the online survey were a self-selected group of comparatively high-income and well-educated residents of Baltimore City.

Just under half of these respondents ranked police as the most important City service, making it the most common first choice. The next most common (20% of respondents) first choice was schools. Online respondents were less satisfied with City services than RDD (that is, random-sample) respondents.

*Better Schools Priority.* Online respondents were less likely than random-sample respondents to have experience with City Schools and to rate the schools as good or excellent.

*Safer Streets Priority.* Nearly half of online respondents rated police protection as good or excellent. More than half said they had a favorable perception of the Police Department, similar to random-sample respondents. Online respondents were more likely than random-sample respondents to say they felt safe or very safe in various City locales, but both online and RDD respondents were about equally likely to rate illegal drug use and violent crime as serious problems. Online respondents were more likely, however, to rate property crime as a serious problem.

*Stronger Neighborhoods Priority.* Online respondents were mostly similar to random-sample respondents in the City quality of life issues they deemed very serious. Online respondents were more likely than random-sample respondents, however, to say that property crime was very serious and less likely to say a lack of affordable housing was very serious. Online respondents were less likely than random-sample respondents to rate most neighborhood-related services as good or excellent.

*Growing Economy Priority.* Online respondents were considerably more likely than RDD respondents to rate the availability of recreational activities and cultural events in Baltimore as good or excellent. Online respondents were also more likely than random-sample respondents to rate the availability of good jobs in Baltimore as good or excellent.

*Innovative Government Priority.* Online respondents were less satisfied with City services than random-sample respondents. Online respondents were also less likely to be very satisfied and more likely to be very unsatisfied than RDD respondents.

*A Cleaner and Healthier City Priority.* Online respondents were more likely than random-sample respondents 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. Online respondents were considerably less likely than RDD respondents to rate as good or excellent the cleanliness of the City or their own neighborhoods.

*Leaving Baltimore.* Similar percentages of online respondents and random-sample respondents said they were likely or very likely to leave Baltimore in the next one to three years. Over half of the online respondents who expect to leave Baltimore cite high taxes, poor public schools, or the crime rate as their primary reason. Online respondents were about equally as likely as RDD respondents to cite crime as their primary reason for planning to leave, but they were more likely to cite schools or taxes.

*Baltimore's Government Access TV Channel.* Online respondents were less likely than random-sample respondents to watch the City's TV25, and much more likely to say they would like to see more government meetings and hearings on the channel. Of online respondents with an opinion, almost equal percentages favored continuing and discontinuing the channel.