Town of Richmond Comprehensive Planning Public Opinion Survey Report, 2008

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Executive Summary

In October 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to 1,053 Town residents and property owners. The surveys were followed up with reminder postcards and a second mailing to non-respondents. The overall response rate was 62 percent (650 completed questionnaires). The results provided in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.2 percent with 95 percent confidence. Statistical tests do not indicate that "non-response bias" is a problem with this sample. The demographic profile of the sample contains fewer young people than would be expected and respondents have more formal education and higher household incomes.

Richmond residents said they are generally pleased with the quality of life they enjoy. Nine in ten rated the quality of life as good or excellent, and few rate it as only fair or poor. The factors that induce people to live in Richmond are small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle, cost of housing, and natural beauty and surroundings.

Public services and facilities were given positive ratings by a majority of the respondents. The highest rated services and facilities were garbage collection/clean up days, recycling, the public school system, and the New Richmond public library.

A majority of Richmond residents are willing to use public funds for the following recreational facilities: off-road hiking and nature trails, hunting and fishing access on public land, ballfields and other facilities in New Richmond, and on-road bicycle routes.

Large majorities of respondents indicated that they have a high level of concern about preserving the Town's various natural resources (groundwater, surface water, air, etc.) and cultural heritage. The majority of those who think it is important to protect the Town's natural and cultural resources are also willing to use regulations and taxes to protect those resources.

Most respondents said the current network of roads in the Town meets current needs, and two-thirds said the condition of Town roads is acceptable. Four in ten said that improvement of the quality of the Town's roads was second among their top three priorities (behind reducing property taxes).

Majorities of respondents agreed or strongly agreed there is a need for more single family housing and senior housing, but majorities said they did not see a need for more housing subdivisions, seasonal/recreational homes, multi-family units, or mobile homes. A majority of the respondents (56%) said the addition of 1,327 new residents since 2000 was "about right amount of growth." Among the 44 percent who did not agree with the current growth rate, most felt the growth was "too much."

Residents clearly preferred conservation design for rural housing developments, which features smaller individual lots with preserved common open space in the development. Richmond residents were also open to reducing the minimum lot size for housing near existing communities and raising the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas.

Regarding appropriate types of businesses in the Town, respondents favored a variety of business types, including agriculture/agri-business, wind power, home based businesses, composting, convenience stores, golf courses, and retail.

A large majority of respondents said productive agricultural land within the Town should be used for agriculture. At the same, time 55 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the use of productive agricultural land for residential use as well. Respondents opposed use of productive farmland for commercial or

industrial uses. A majority said they are concerned about the amount of farmland being converted to non-farm uses. Overall, nearly 70 percent disagreed that landowners should be able to develop their land any way they want, but a majority of farmland owners agreed with this proposition.

A majority said they support programs to use public funds to purchase development rights from private landowners in order to preserve farmland, open space or environmentally important areas, but residents oppose programs that allow developers to purchase development rights in one area and transfer them to another area in return for being allowed to increase the density of development. Large majorities said they believe it is important or very important to cooperate with neighboring governments on land use issues and sharing public services.

Direct mail is the preferred method of receiving information from the Town government.

The top priority issue for Town residents was reduction of local property taxes. Improving the quality of the roads and developing a boundary agreement with New Richmond were a distant second and third. Residents expressed a wide variety of concerns when asked to list one thing they would like to change about the Town of Richmond. The most frequent topics were concerns about the recent amount of development in the Town and concerns about roads.

Survey Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gather opinions of residents about community planning issues regarding the future of the Town of Richmond. The survey serves as a key component of the public participation portion of the comprehensive plan for the Town. The Town chose to work with the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls to survey residents of the Town of Richmond about vital planning issues.

Survey Methods

In October 2008, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls mailed surveys to 1,053 Town residences and property owners. The SRC received 650 completed surveys, which is a very strong 62 percent response rate. Based on the estimated number of adults in the population of the Town (2,051)[1], the results provided in this report are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 3.2 percent with 95 percent confidence.

Any survey has to be concerned with "non-response bias". Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who don't return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. **Based upon a standard statistical analysis that is described in Appendix A, the Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that there is little evidence that non-response bias is a concern for this sample.**

In short, the data gathered in this survey is expected to accurately reflect public opinion about the planning issues facing the Town of Richmond.

In addition to the numeric responses, respondents provided additional written comments which were compiled by the SRC from the surveys. **Appendix B to this report contains the complete compilation of comments.**

Appendix C contains a copy of the survey questionnaire with a quantitative summary of responses by question.

[1] 2008 Wisconsin Department of Administration Estimate

Profile of Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographic profile of respondents to the Town of Richmond Comprehensive Planning Public Opinion Survey. Where comparable data were available from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, they were included to indicate the degree to which the sample represents the underlying adult population in the Town.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Gender	**Count**	**Male**	**Female**				
Sample	618	53%	47%				
Census (18+)	1080	51%	50%				
Age 18+	**Count**	**18-24**	**25-34**	**35-44**	**45-54**	**55-64**	**65+**
Sample	625	1%	20%	23%	28%	16%	12%
Census	1080	11%	17%	28%	23%	10%	11%
Households with Children	**Count**	**With Children**	**Without Children**				
Sample	610	51%	49%				
Census	524	48%	52%				

Length of Residency	**Count**	**Less than 1 year**	**1 to 5 years**	**5.1 – 10 years**	**10.1 – 15 years**	**15.1 – 20 years**	**20.1 to 30 years**	**Over 30 Years**
Sample[2]	610	2%	37%	22%	6%	7%	8%	16%

Residential status	**Count**	**Farmland Owner**	**Rural Resident (non-farm)**	**Other**		
Sample	639	6%	92%	1%		

Employment Status	**Count**	**Full-Time**	**Part-Time**	**Self**	**Unemp.**	**Retired**	**Other**
Sample	630	62%	11%	7%	3%	15%	3%
Census (Age 16+)	1,186	70%[3]		6%	2%	23%	

Highest Level of Education	**Count**	**Less than High Sch.**	**High Sch. Dipl.**	**Some College/ Tech**	**Tech/ College Grad.**	**Bachelor's Degree**	**Graduate/ Professional Degree**
Sample	628	1%	18%	25%	20%	26%	11%
Census (age 25+)	973	10%	38%	25%	7%	14%	6%

Annual Household Income Range	**Count**	**<$15,000**	**$15-$24,999**	**$25-$49,999**	**$50-$74,999**	**$75-$99,999**	**$100,000+**
Sample	612	1%	4%	18%	28%	26%	24%
Census	539	6%	10%	22%	27%	20%	15%

Commute time (min.)	**Count**	**< 10**	**10-14**	**15-19**	**20-29**	**30-44**	**45+**	**NA**
Sample	627	8%	7%	6%	16%	21%	30%	12%
Sample — adjusted[4]	554	7%	7%	8%	18%	27%	34%	---
Census	832	18%	15%	8%	16%	21%	22%	

[2] Census data does not contain a length of residence category.
[3] Census employment data does not differentiate between full-time and part-time workers.
[4] Percentages recalculated after removing the non-commuters

There are substantially fewer young adults (age 18-24) in this sample than the Census indicates should have been included. Our experience is that younger residents in most jurisdictions are less likely to participate in surveys than are their older neighbors. Additionally, the sample has more respondents age 45 and above than would have been expected. About one-third of the variables tested showed a statistically significant difference between the opinions of those older than 45 and those younger than that. An examination of those variables found no distinct pattern to the variables containing age-related differences. Furthermore, the differences in the percentages of the responses of the age groups were generally quite small and did not alter the overall response pattern and interpretation of the questions. Differences of opinion based on age will be noted as we proceed through this report.

The respondents also had higher levels of formal education than indicated in the Census data and had higher annual incomes. Comparison of income data however to the Census is problematic due to the age of the data and the growth of incomes since the 2000 Census.

Given the recent rapid population growth in Richmond, it is not surprising that nearly four in ten respondents have lived in Richmond for five years or less.

Half of respondents reported that their commute to work takes at least 30 minutes. Compared to the 2000 Census data, Richmond respondents reported longer commute times.

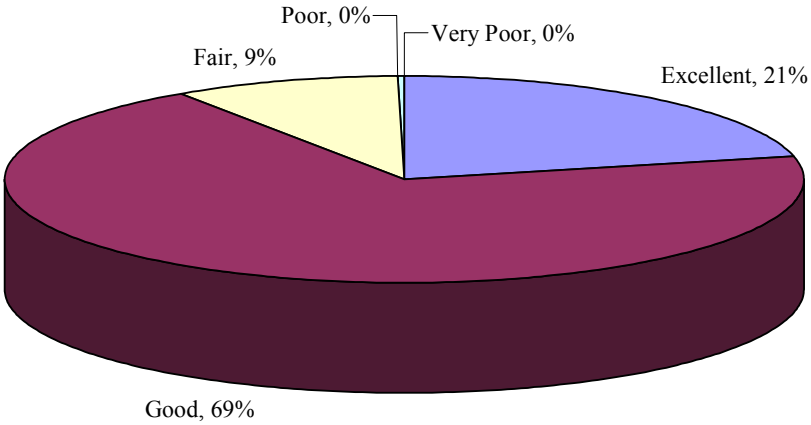
As we analyze the data, we will identify when various demographic groups have significantly different views.

Quality of Life

The initial section of the survey asked respondents a series of questions about the quality of life in the Town of Richmond. Chart 1 shows that 9 of 10 Richmond residents felt that the overall quality of life in the Town is good (69%) or excellent (21%). There was remarkable uniformity of opinion, with no significant differences among the demographic groups. It is also remarkable that there is virtually no one who rates the quality of life as poor or very poor. These results indicate a high level of satisfaction with the Town's quality of life.

In a similar question on the St. Croix County survey that went to all areas of the County, 90 percent of County residents also rated the overall quality of life as good or excellent.

Chart 1. Overall Quality of Life Rating in Richmond



Some of the key reasons for residents' satisfaction with life in Richmond are summarized in Chart 2. Respondents were asked to identify the three most important reasons they have chosen to live in the Town. The small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle available to them in Richmond stood out at the top. It was included as one of the top three reasons for living in the Town by 61 percent of the respondents. It is also clear that the cost of housing is an important reason for residing in the Town, with 40 percent including it in their top three. Rounding out the top three reasons was the natural beauty and surroundings (36%).

Proximity to the Twin Cities, being near to family and friends, and being near place of work were grouped together with about 30 percent of the priority votes.

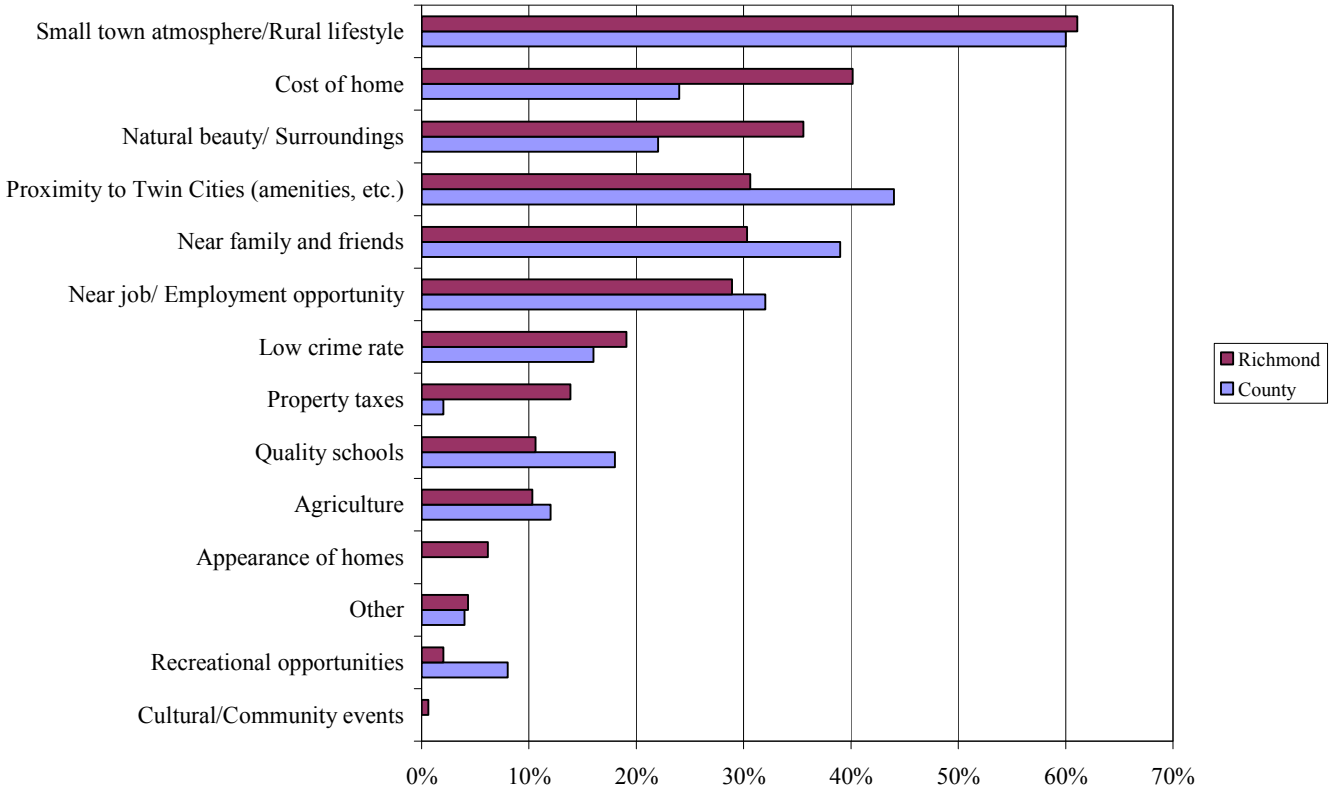
Low crime rate, property taxes, quality schools, and agriculture were included in the top three by 10 to 19 percent.

Relatively few included appearance of homes, recreational opportunities, and cultural events among their priority reasons for living in the town.

Respondents to the county-wide comprehensive planning survey were given a similar list of items to prioritize. The top six reasons in both surveys were the same, but in slightly different rank order. Both groups ranked the small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle as their top reason for choosing where they live. But the respondents to the overall county survey included proximity to the Twin Cites and being near

family and friends in their top three. The full comparison of the identical items on the list is shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2. Top Reasons for Choosing Place of Residence



Demographic differences in the reason for living in the Town of Richmond include:

- Small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle was more important to respondents who have lived in the Town more than 20 years and those who are age 45 and above.
- The cost of a home was a higher priority for residents in the following groups: currently employed, less than age 45, non-farm residents, recently arrived residents (five or fewer years), those with more formal education, and households with incomes of $50,000 or more.
- Being near family and friends was more important to farmland owners, retirees, single adult households, and households with annual incomes less than $50,000.
- Agriculture was more important to farmland owners, residents who have lived in the Town for more than 20 years, and for those who are age 45 and above.
- Natural beauty was a more important factor for single adult households and those with higher incomes.
- Proximity to the Twin Cities was more important to non-farm residents.
- Not surprisingly, being near employment opportunities was more important to respondents currently employed.

Community Services and Facilities

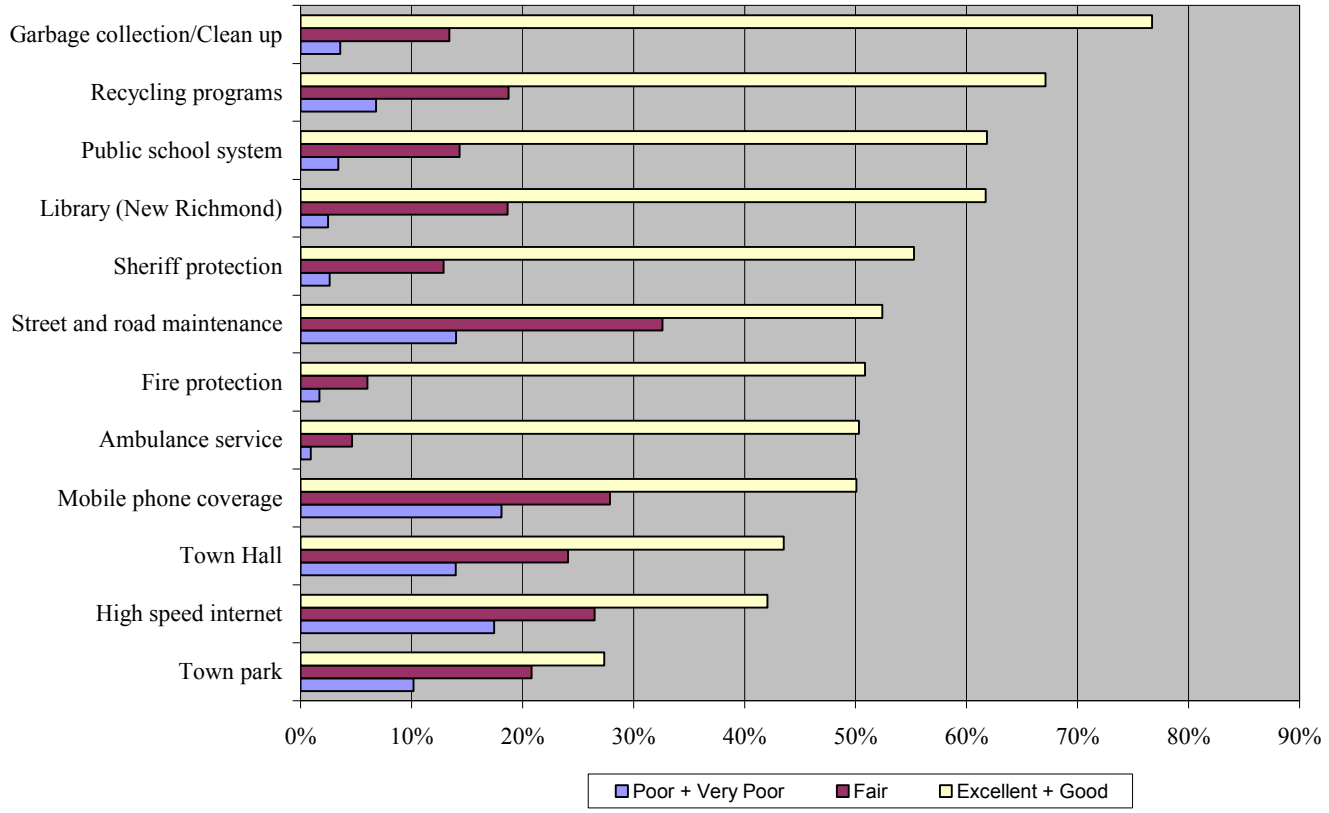
Town of Richmond respondents said they are generally pleased with community services and facilities available to them. Respondents were asked to rate each service or facility as excellent, good, fair, poor, or don't know. As shown in Chart 3, nine of the 12 services/facilities were rated excellent or good by at least

half the respondents. Richmond residents were particularly pleased with garbage collection/clean-up days; more than three-fourths of respondents rated this item as good or excellent. Between 60 percent and 70 percent gave combined good or excellent ratings to recycling services, the public school system, and the New Richmond Public Library.

Respondents were more lukewarm in their ratings of street and road maintenance, which was viewed favorably by a bare majority (53%) of respondents; a third rated it only fair, and one in seven said it was poor or very poor. Other items whose ratings were lukewarm include mobile (cell) phone coverage, the Town Hall, and high speed internet access.

Ambulance and fire protection had high percentages of responses in the "don't know" category (more than 40%), presumably because relatively few residents have experience using these emergency services. Among respondents who had an opinion, more rated these services as good or excellent than fair, poor, or very poor. The town park ("Callie's Corner") also received a high proportion (42%) of "don't know" responses, but about as many rated it fair, poor or very poor as rated it good or excellent.

Chart 3. Ratings of Community Services & Facilities



Regarding demographic differences, non-farm residents were more likely to give lower ratings to the Town Hall and the maintenance of roads.

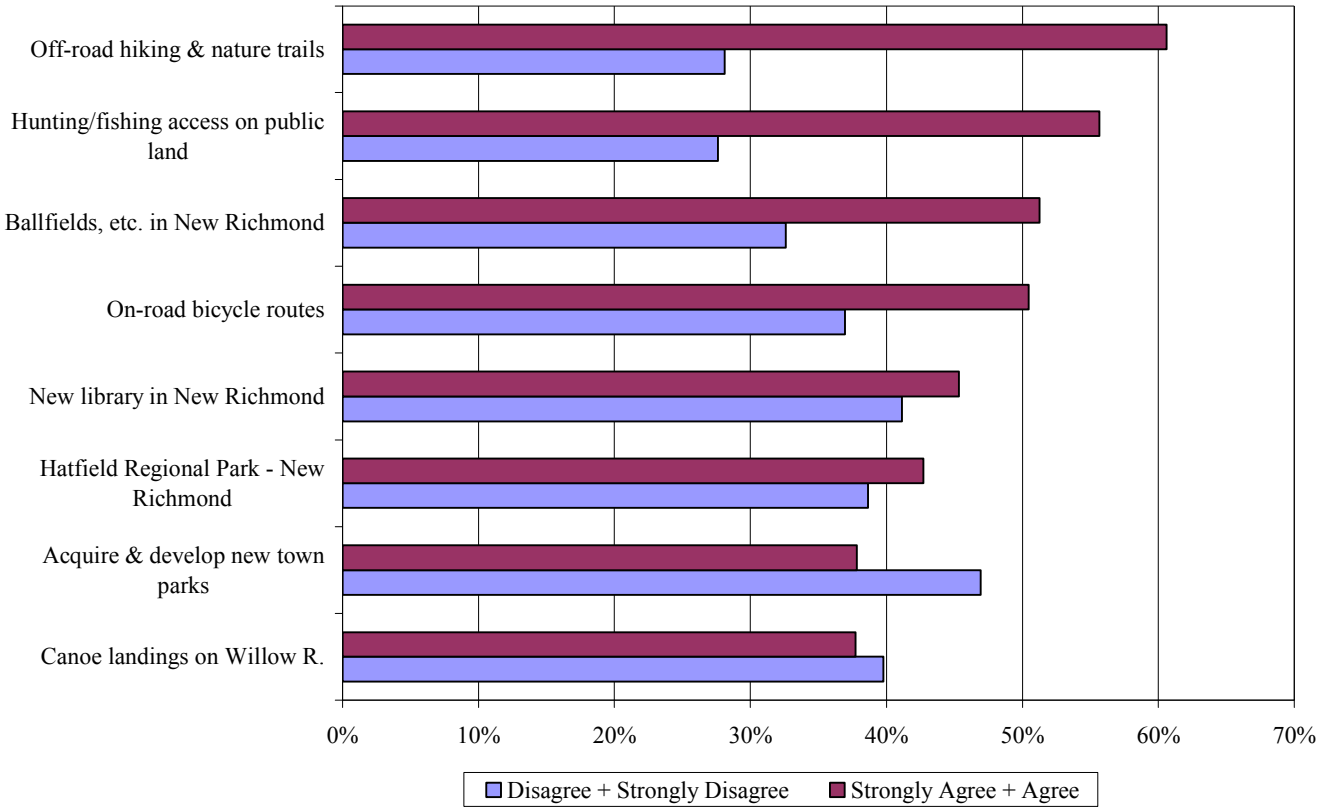
The most significant variation across demographic groups was the proportion of respondents who provided a "don't know" response to different services. The following demographic groups had higher percentages of answers in the "don't know" category.

- Ambulance service: respondents less than age 45, respondents in the workforce, households without children, recently arrived residents (5 years or less), respondents with more formal education, and households with higher income.

- Fire protection: Women, younger respondents (less than age 45), non-farm residents, households without children, recent arrivals, respondents with more formal education, and households with higher income.
- High speed Internet: Retirees, single adult households, and households with less than $50,000 annual income.
- Public Library (New Richmond): Recently arrived residents.
- Town Park: Residents under age 45, non-farm residents, recently arrived residents, those with more formal education, and households with higher income.
- Sheriff service: Residents under age 45, recently arrived residents, and households with higher income.
- Town Hall: Residents under age 45 and recently arrived residents.
- Public school system: Households without children.

Richmond residents were presented a list of recreational facilities and asked if the Town should use public funds to support each. The results are shown in Chart 4. Off-road hiking and nature trails had the most support; more than 60 percent said they agree or strongly agree with this type of expenditure. Over half of respondents supported Town tax dollars for hunting and fishing access on public land. About half agreed or strongly agreed with using Town taxes for ballfields and other recreation facilities in the City of New Richmond and on-road bicycle routes. Respondents had split opinions regarding use of Town taxes for the remaining items: new library in New Richmond, Hatfield Regional Park in New Richmond, new town parks, and canoe landings on the Willow River.

Chart 4. Use Public Funds For:



By demographic slice:

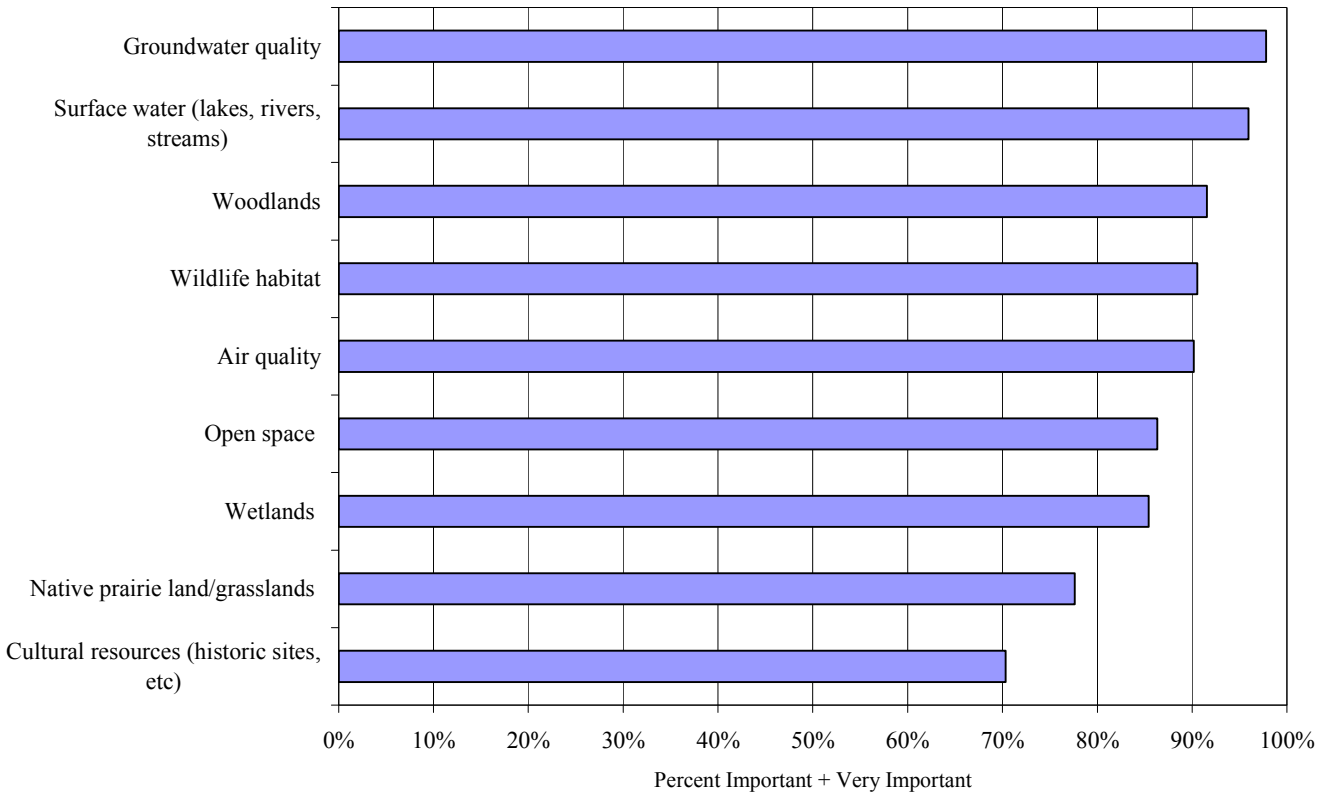
- Respondents under age 45 were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the use of Town taxes for ballfields and other active recreation areas in New Richmond, off-road hiking and nature trails, acquisition and development of new town parks.
- A higher proportion of single adult households agreed or strongly agreed with the use of Town taxes for ballfields and other active recreation areas in New Richmond and for Hatfield Regional Park in New Richmond. Households with two or more adults were more likely to support a new library in New Richmond.
- Households with children more strongly supported ballfields and other active recreation areas in New Richmond, Hatfield Regional Park, and the acquisition and development of new town parks.
- Owners of farmland were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with using taxes for more off-road hiking and nature trails.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Chart 5 indicates that residents in Richmond are quite interested in preserving natural and cultural resources in their Town. Respondents were asked how important they think it is that the Town should protect the resources included in Chart 5. The percentage of respondents saying that it was "important" or "very important" to do so ranged from a low of 71 percent for protecting cultural resources (historic sites, etc.) to near unanimity for protecting groundwater (98%) and surface water (96%).

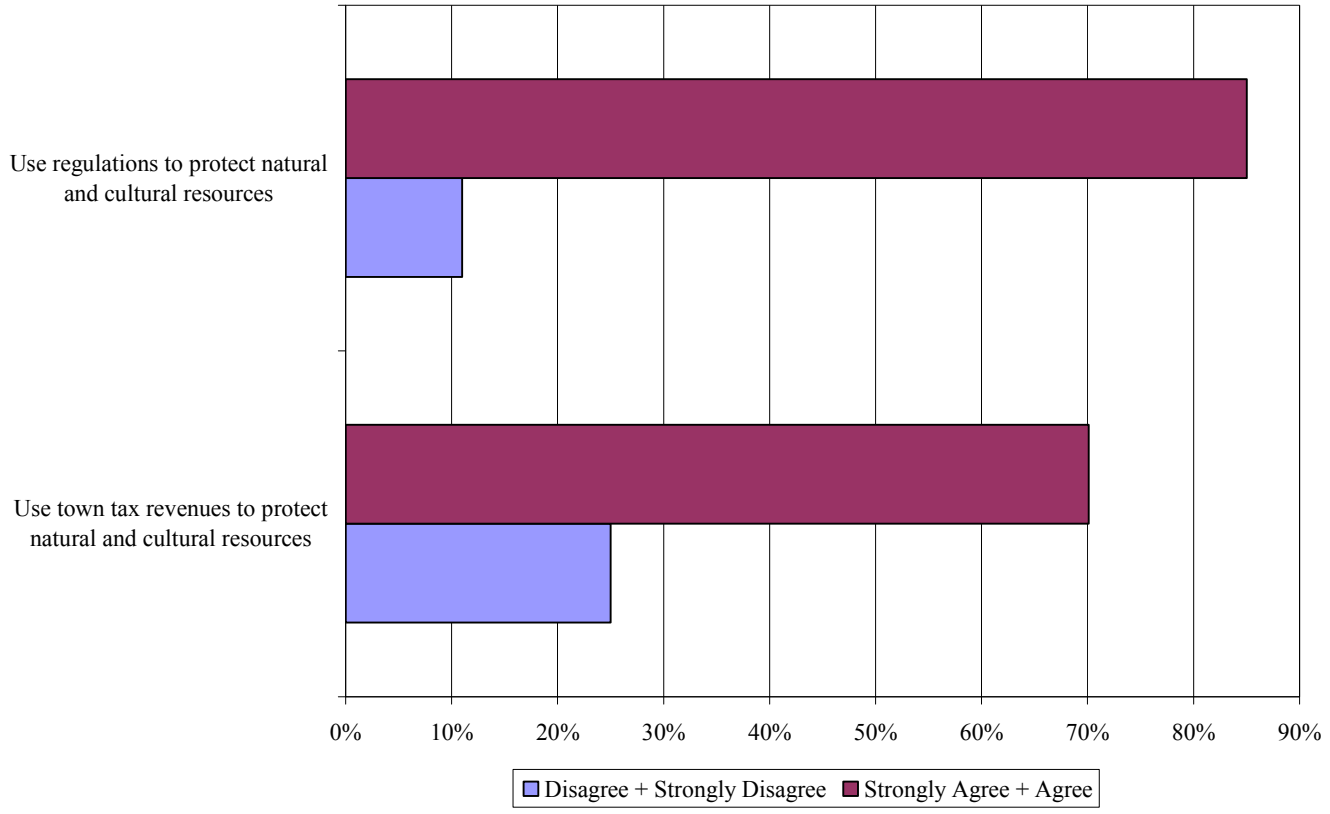
Retired respondents were more likely to give lower levels of importance to protection of cultural resources.

Chart 5. Importance to Protect Natural and Cultural Resources



Two follow-up questions in this section of the survey asked if tax revenues and regulations should be used to protect the resources in Chart 5. The results, summarized in Chart 6, indicate that large majorities of Richmond residents said they support both taxes and regulation for the protection of the Town's natural and cultural resources. Eighty-five percent agreed or strongly agreed with the use of regulations. Seventy percent agreed or strongly agreed with the use of taxes. The fact that a large majority of respondents were in favor of taxing themselves to protect these resources is a remarkably strong result.

Chart 6. Taxes and Regulation for Resource Protection



A higher proportion of non-farm residents agreed or strongly agreed with the use of regulations to protect natural and cultural resources.

Transportation

As shown in Chart 7, a large majority (80%) of Richmond residents felt that the current road network meets the needs of its citizens, which is very similar to the responses of respondents to the county-wide comprehensive planning survey in which 87 percent agreed that the road network meets their needs. Two of three residents said the condition of the Town's roads is acceptable.

Two of three respondents said the Town should cooperate with the County and neighboring jurisdictions to implement bike and pedestrian trails and routes; fewer (44 percent) favor additional off-road trails in the Town for non-motorized uses. About half of the respondents said they agree or strongly agree that additional biking and walking lanes are needed along existing public roads. Slightly fewer than half of Town residents said there should be a commuter park-n-ride lot for State Highway 64/65, but one in four said they had no opinion about the need for such a lot.

With regard to demographics, retirees and households with less than $50,000 annual income were slightly less enthusiastic about cooperating with the County and neighboring communities regarding the development of biking and pedestrian trails.

As shown in Chart 8, most residents of Richmond believe that some type of traffic management technique is needed at the intersection of County Highway G and State Highway 65. Only seven percent said nothing needs to be done at that intersection. The preferred traffic management technique was the installation of traffic lights (56%) rather than a turn lane (20%), roundabout (12%), or 4-Way stop (6%).

Chart 7. Opinions About Transportation Issues

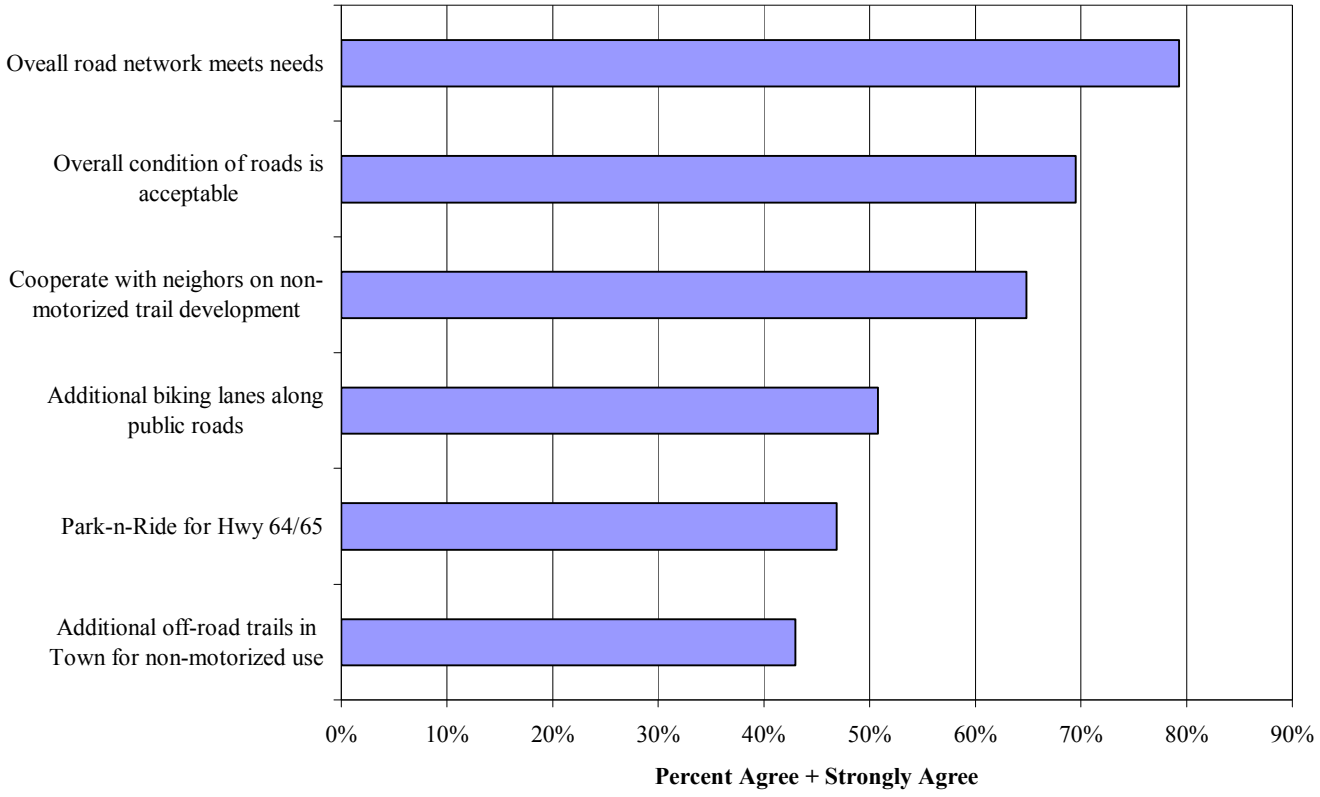
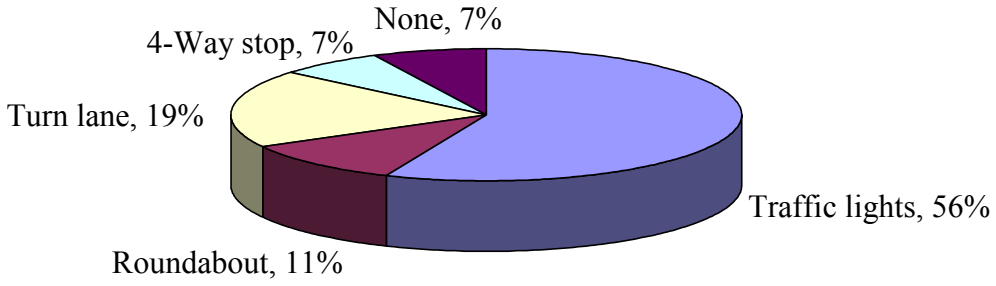


Chart 8. Preferred Traffic Management County G and State 65 Intersection



Housing

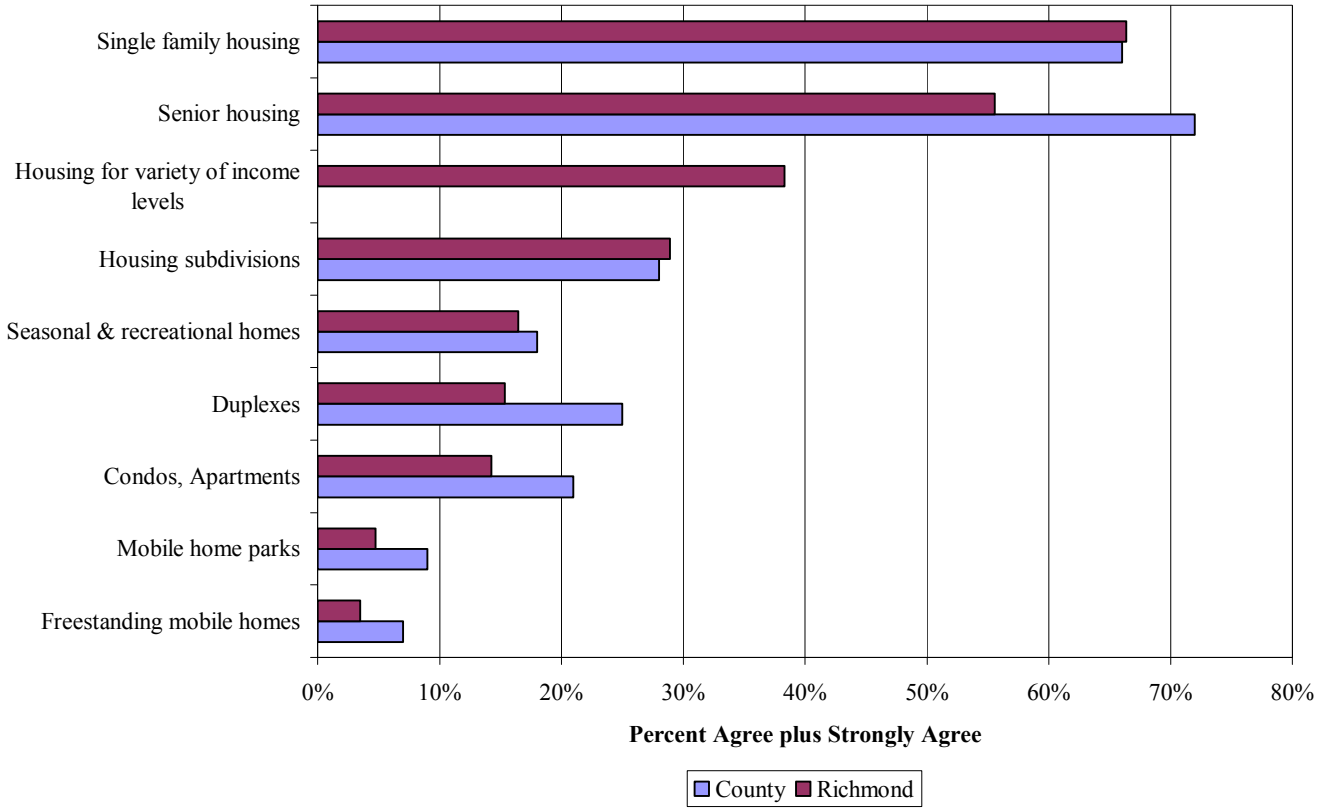
Richmond residents were asked if additional units of assorted types of housing are needed in the Town. As shown in Chart 9, Town residents expressed differing opinions about the need for various housing types. Two of three respondents agreed or strongly agreed there is a need for more single family housing in the Town, and a majority (55%) said there was a need for housing for senior citizens.

However, majorities opposed all other types of housing. Fewer than four in ten said there is a need for housing that would meet the needs of a variety of income levels, and less than a third said there is a need for more housing subdivisions. Multiple-family housing (duplexes, apartments, and condos), and seasonal housing received support from no more than a quarter of respondents. Few said there is a need for more mobile homes, whether in a mobile home park (5%) or freestanding (4%).

Households with incomes less than $50,000 were more likely to agree or strongly agree that more senior housing is needed in the Town. A higher proportion of farmland owners agreed or strongly agreed that more subdivisions are needed in Richmond.

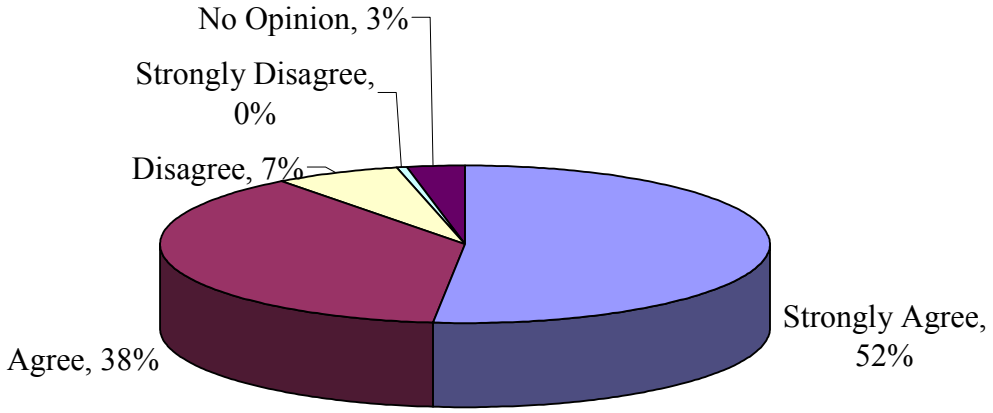
A nearly identical question was asked on the county-wide survey; eight of the nine housing types were the same in each survey. As shown in Chart 9, the overall response pattern was similar: majorities said there is a need only for single family housing and senior housing. With the exception of single family housing and housing subdivisions, fewer Richmond residents said there is a need for all other types of housing than the overall county average.

Chart 9. Additional Housing Needs



As shown in Chart 10, Richmond residents said the aesthetics of nearby housing is an important item, with more than 90 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing that the external appearance of residences in their neighborhoods is important. Richmond residents shared the same opinion about neighborhood aesthetics as the overall county average.

Chart 10. External Appearance of Neighboring Residences is Important

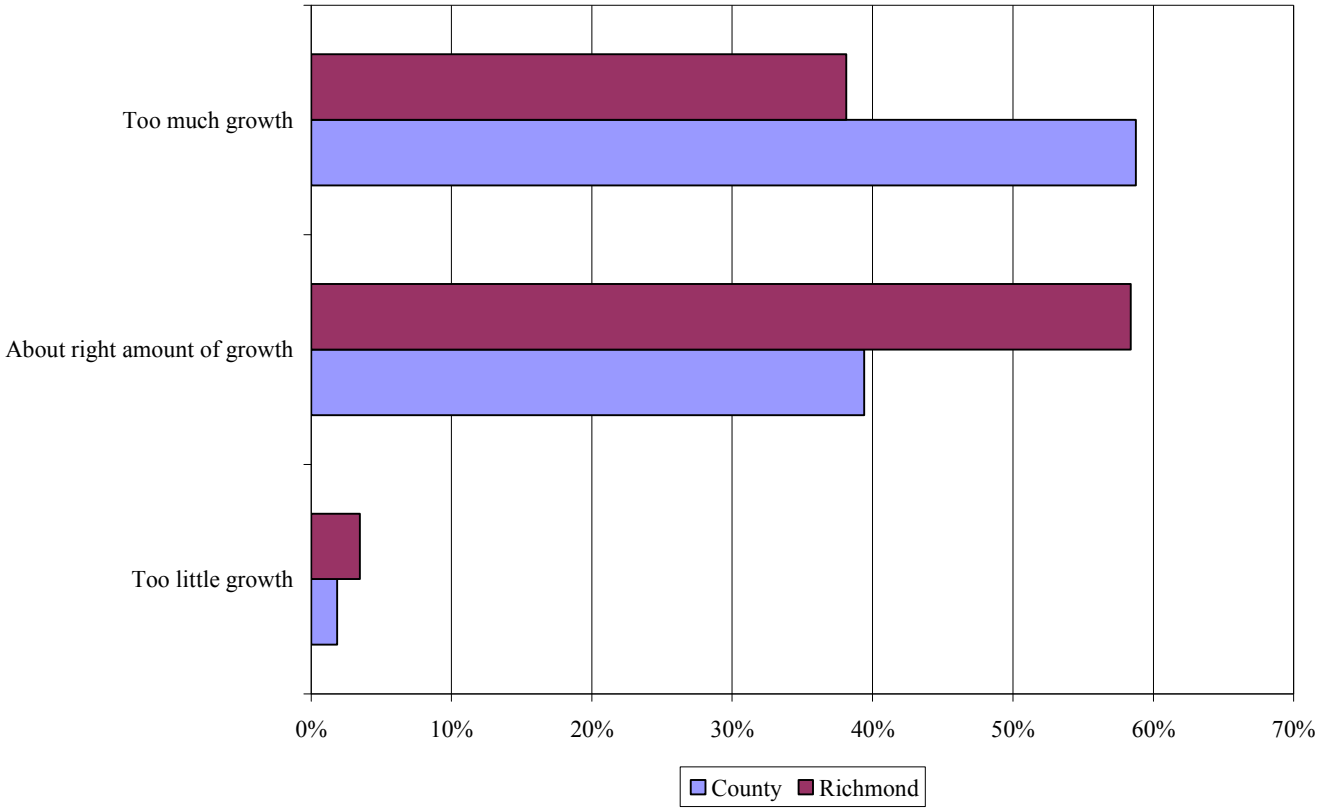


Residents were then asked their opinion about the recent rate of population growth in the Town since the 2000 Census. The results are shown in Chart 11. A majority of the respondents (58%) said the addition of 1,327 new residents (85% increase) since 2000 was "about right amount of growth." At the same time a relatively large minority of four in ten thought this rate represented "too much growth." Only four percent thought this amount of growth was "too little."

Respondents who have lived in Richmond more than five years were evenly split between saying the growth rate was too much or about right. On the other hand recent arrivals were more likely to say the recent growth rate was about right.

As shown in Chart 11, when compared to the overall county average, a higher percentage of Richmond residents said the recent amount of growth is about right. The response from the county-wide survey was a near mirror image, 59 percent saying the overall county growth rate was "too much" and 39 percent saying it was "about right."

Chart 11. Opinions About Recent Population Growth



Respondents were given three scenarios and asked if they favored varying the minimum lot size for each. As shown in Table 2, a majority of Town of Richmond residents said they favored increasing the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas. However, respondents had split opinions about reducing the lot size near existing communities or in places where small scale sewage treatment systems are available. The latter scenario generated 17 percent "no opinion" responses. Farmland owners were more likely to agree or strongly agree with reducing the minimum lot size where small scale sewage treatment systems are available. Women, long-term residents, and higher income households were more likely to have no opinion about this scenario.

Compared to the responses in an identical question on the county-wide survey, Richmond residents are more willing to increase the minimum lot size in environmentally sensitive areas and less willing to reduce the minimum lot size in either of the other two scenarios.

Table 2. Opinions About Variations in the Minimum Lot Size

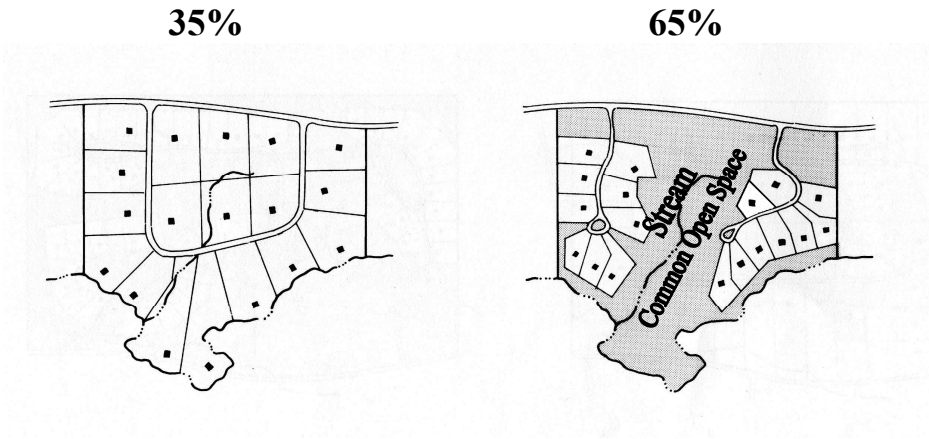
	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Larger lots in environmentally sensitive areas	639	19%	49%	17%	5%	9%
Smaller lots near local communities	637	8%	38%	30%	16%	8%
Smaller lots with small scale sewage treatment	641	5%	39%	30%	10%	17%

The last question relating to housing issues was about the preferred layout for rural housing lots. Respondents were shown a drawing of a hypothetical traditional rural housing development with large lots and an alternative design of the same site which has smaller individual lots with preserved open

space. As shown in Figure 1, two of three Richmond residents preferred the alternative layout. There was no difference in the responses among the demographic groups.

The response pattern among the respondents to the county-wide average was also in favor of the alternative design, although the county respondents had an even stronger preference for the alternative (77%).

Figure 1. Preferred Rural Housing Layout



Economic Development

Richmond residents were asked which types of businesses they believe are appropriate to be located in the Town. The results are shown in Chart 12 and indicate a willingness to consider a fairly wide array of businesses in the Town.

Agriculturally related businesses were viewed most favorably. Production agriculture, direct farm marketing of products, and agricultural service industries were favored by large majorities ranging from 86 percent to 93 percent. However, a majority said they do not favor large scale farms with over 500 animal units.

Between 70 and 80 percent said wind power generators and home-based businesses are appropriate in Richmond. Majorities ranging from 60 to 70 percent said they agreed or strongly agreed that composting sites, convenience stores/gas stations, golf courses, dog boarding, and retail/commercial businesses are also appropriate in the Town Richmond.

About half favored storage businesses and industrial/manufacturing, while slightly less than half said gravel pits and privately owned campgrounds were appropriate.

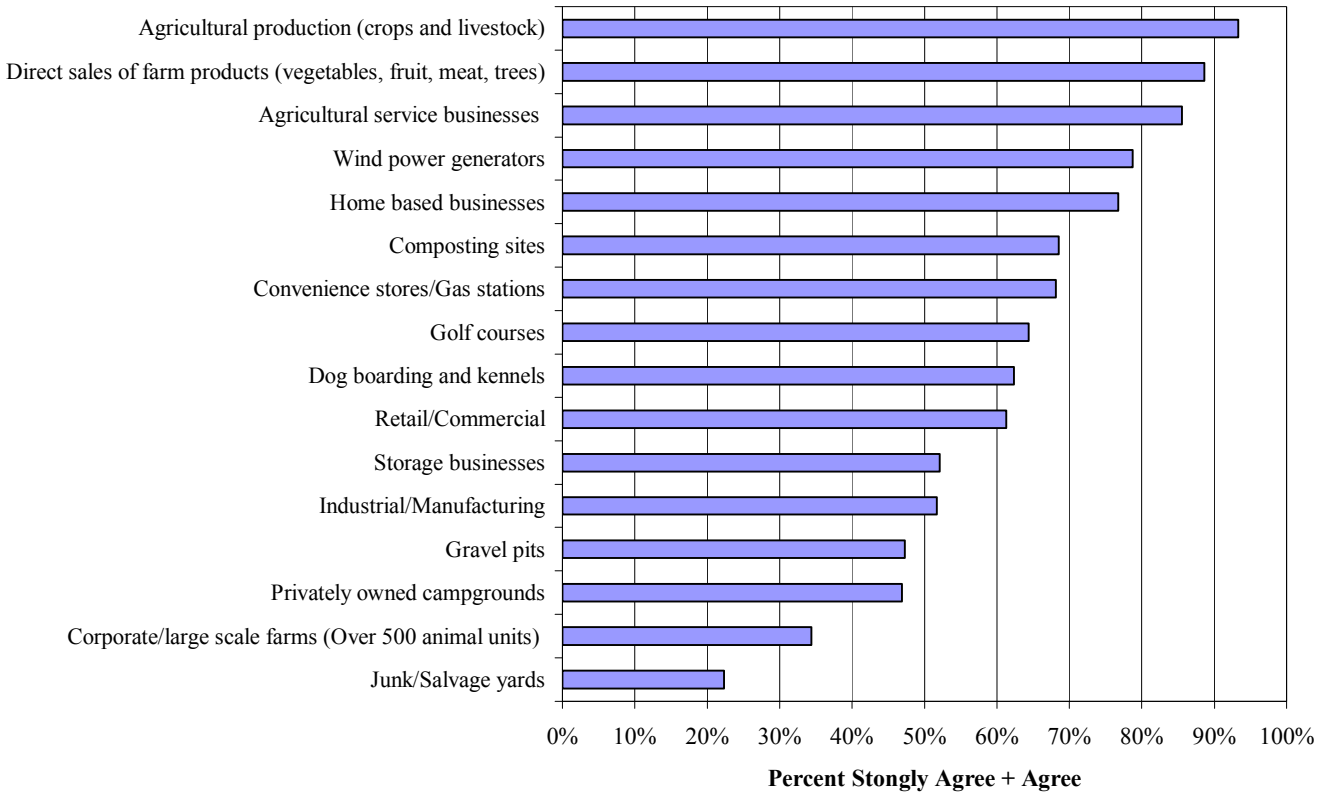
Two thirds said junk/salvage yards are not an appropriate business in the Town.

By demographic slice:

- Home based businesses were more highly favored by respondents currently in the workforce, households with two adults, and by households with $50,000 or more annual income.
- Retirees were more opposed to junk/salvage yards.

- Respondents currently in the workforce were more likely to favor golf courses, agricultural service operations, and commercial/retail businesses.
- Households with children were more likely to agree to strongly agree that golf courses are appropriate in Richmond.
- Farmland owners more strongly favored production agriculture, agricultural service businesses and were less opposed to junk/salvage yards.

Chart 12. Appropriate Business Types in Richomond



Agriculture

Chart 13 shows that there was a near consensus on allowing productive farmland to continue being used in agriculture; at the same time 55 percent agreed or strongly agreed with the use of productive agricultural land for residential use as well. In contrast, a majority of Richmond residents do not support the use of productive farmland for commercial or industrial uses.

Farmland owners were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the use of productive agricultural land for agricultural use, residential use, and commercial use.

The overall pattern of responses in the county-wide survey was similar to Richmond, but the Town's residents were less opposed to the use of productive farmland for commercial and industrial uses and were more likely to agree with the use of productive farmland for residential purposes.

Chart 13. Productive Agricultural Land Should Be Used For:

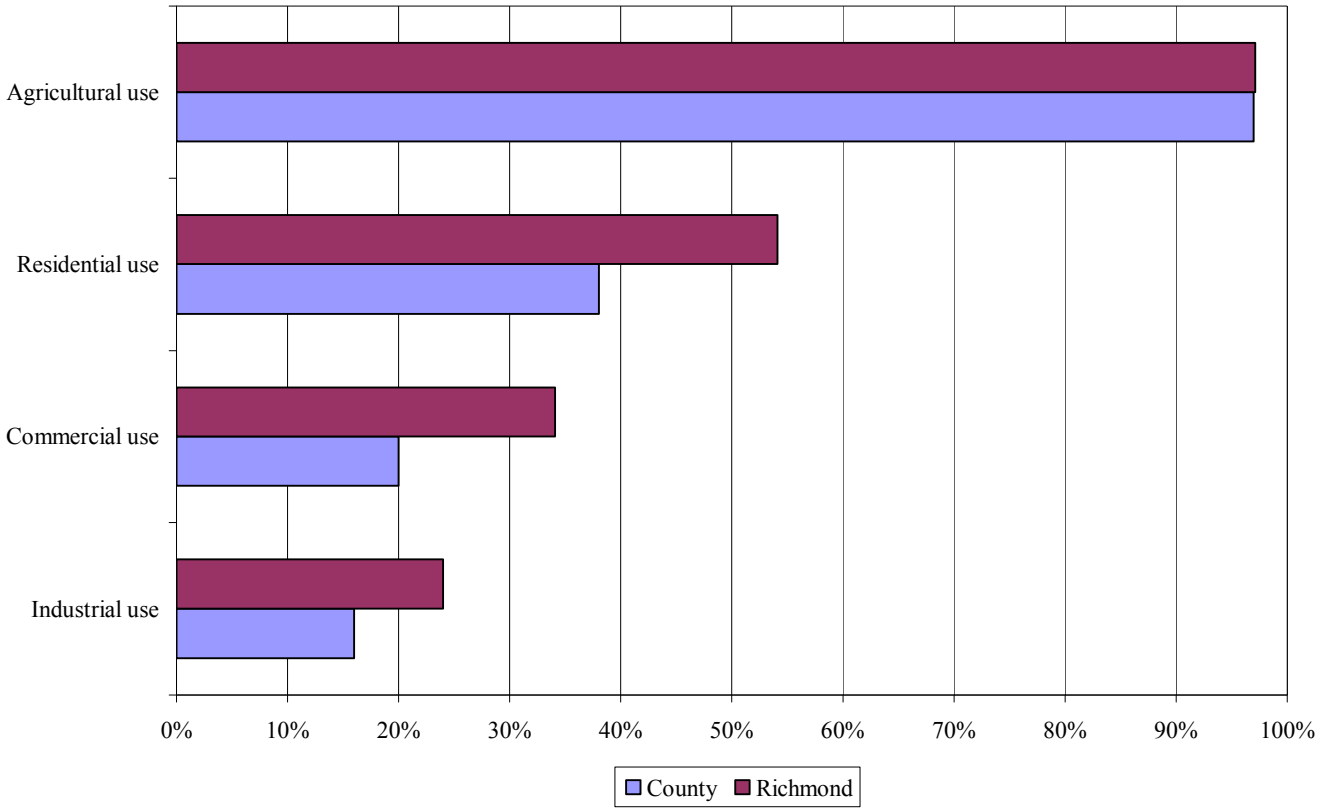


Table 3 contains the responses to five additional questions about agriculture. Slightly more than half said too much farmland is being converted to non-farm uses.

A majority of Richmond residents said they disagree (42%) or strongly disagree (17%) that landowners should be able to develop their land any way they want. A majority (61%) said there should be some restrictions on how much of their land owners should be allowed to develop but that landowners should be allowed to subdivide their land into house lots consistent with minimum lot size regulations.

When asked about restricting agricultural operations because of proximity to residences, six of ten disagreed or strongly disagreed with restricting farm activity.

Among the demographic groups, recent residents were less sure that agricultural operations should not be restricted because of proximity to residences. Women were more likely to have no opinion on this issue. Recent residents were more likely to have no opinion regarding whether too much farmland is being converted to non-farm uses.

The strongest differences of opinion in this group of questions were between the views of farmland owners and non-farm residents.

- More than 70 percent of farmland owners agreed or strongly agreed that landowners should be able to develop their land any way they want, while only a third of non-farm residents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Paradoxically, farmland owners are <u>more</u> likely to believe

that too much farmland is being converted to non-farm uses (65 percent combined agree and strongly agree) compared to 55 percent of non-farm residents who agree or strongly agree.

- Only a third of farmland owners said there should be restrictions on how much of a property owner's land should be able to be developed, compared to two-thirds of non-farm residents who agreed or strongly agreed.
- Farmland owners are nearly unanimous (98%) in their agreement that agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences, but 58 percent of non-farm residents hold this opinion.

Table 3. Opinions About Agriculture

	Count	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Too much farmland is being converted to non-farm uses.	623	26%	38%	19%	3%	14%
Landowners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want.	619	12%	24%	42%	17%	4%
There should be restrictions on how much of their land owners should be allowed to develop.	623	15%	46%	22%	10%	7%
Landowners should be allowed to subdivide their land consistent with minimum lot size regulations into housing lots.	623	10%	55%	19%	6%	10%
Agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences.	621	23%	37%	22%	8%	9%

Land Use

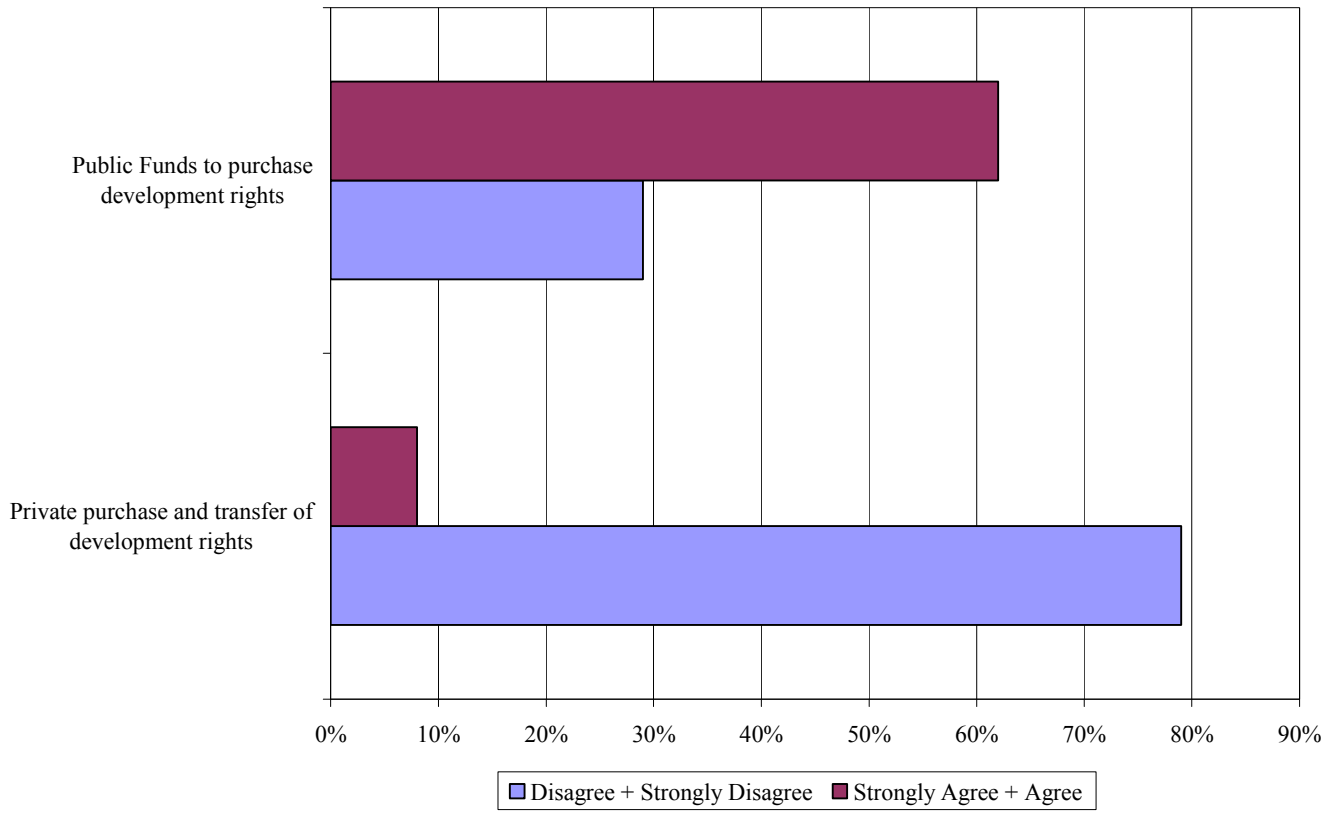
As shown in Chart 14, nearly two of three Richmond respondents said they support programs to use public funds to purchase development rights from private landowners in order to preserve farmland, open space or environmentally important areas.

In contrast, fewer than one in ten respondents support programs that allow developers to purchase development rights in one area and transfer them to another area in return for being allowed to increase the density of development.

There were no differences among the response patterns of the demographic groups.

Richmond residents shared the same opinion regarding these development rights programs with the overall average for St. Croix County. In the county-wide survey, 58 percent favored the public purchase program, and 14 percent supported the private purchase/transfer program.

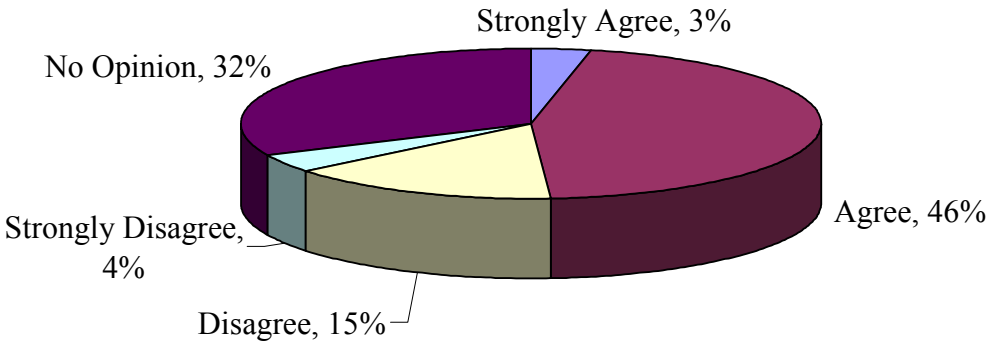
Chart 14. Opinions About Development Rights Programs



About half of Richmond residents said they are satisfied with enforcement of existing land use regulations (Chart 15). But a third of respondents had no opinion, and just one in five said they are dissatisfied. More recent residents (five years or less) were more likely to have no opinion on this question.

Compared to the responses to the same question on the county-wide survey, Richmond residents were slightly more satisfied than the average county resident.

Chart 15. Satisfied with Enforcement of Existing Ordinances



Richmond residents were asked about the importance of cooperating with neighboring local governments on land use and annexations and on public services such as ambulance service. The results are shown in Table 4. Large majorities of respondents said such cooperation is important or very important. Although Richmond residents have strong opinions about both type of cooperation, they felt more strongly about the cooperation regarding public services: 51 percent said this was very important compared to 38 percent who said it is very important to cooperate regarding land use and annexation issues.

Table 4. Importance to Cooperate With Neighboring Jurisdictions:

	Count	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
Land use and annexations	603	38%	48%	6%	3%	6%
Public services (e.g., ambulance)	612	51%	43%	1%	1%	3%

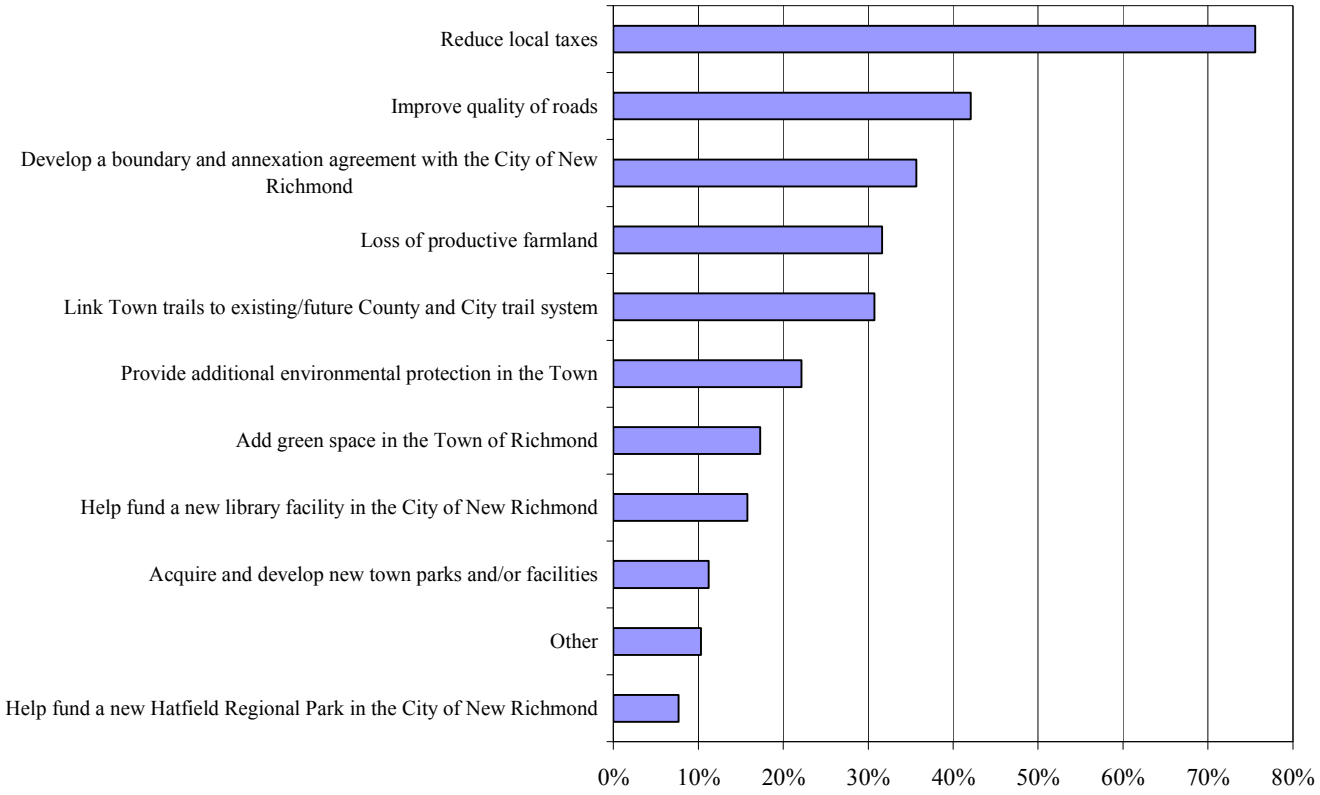
There were no noteworthy differences in the responses among the demographic groups.

Priority Issues

When asked to identify their top three priorities from a list of ten items, Richmond residents said their most important issue was to reduce local property taxes. They spread their remaining two priority choices among a variety of issues. Improving the quality of roads came in second and developing a boundary and annexation agreement with the City of New Richmond was third. The complete list is shown in Chart 17. Of these three, reduction of property taxes was the top choice by far. Three of four respondents included it among their top three. Improvement of the quality of roads was chosen by about four in ten, which is slightly more than the 33 percent who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the quality of the Town's roads is acceptable (see Chart 7).

Development of a boundary agreement with New Richmond was included in their top three by about a third of respondents. Slightly less than a third of Richmond residents included the loss of productive farmland and linking Town trails to a broader system of trails among their three priorities. At the other end of the priority ratings were the following items: additional environmental protection in the Town (22% in top three), additional green space in the Town (17%), financial assistance for a new library in New Richmond (16%), new Town parks (11%), and financial assistance for Hatfield Regional Park in New Richmond (7%).

Chart 16. Top Three Priority Town Issues



The SRC notes the following differences among the demographic groups:

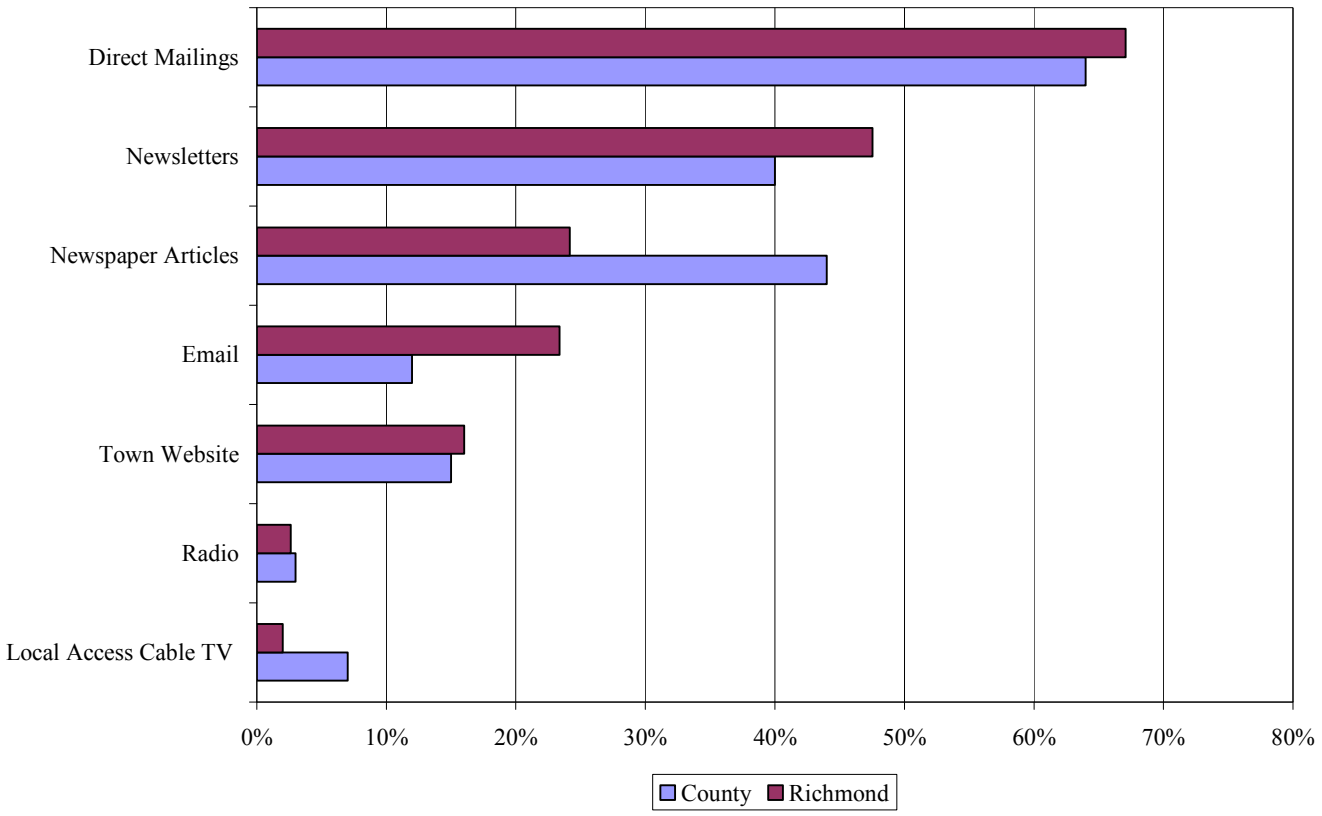
- Recent residents (five or less years) were more likely to include property tax reduction as their top priority.
- The development of a boundary and annexation agreement with the City of New Richmond was a higher priority for men, respondents age 45 and older, farmland owners, and long-term residents (20 or more years).
- The loss of productive farmland was given a higher priority by respondents age 45 and older and by single-adult households.

Preferred Communication Method

Respondents were asked to identify the two most effective ways for the Town of Richmond to provide its residents with information. Chart 18 summarizes the responses and indicates that direct mail is, by a large measure, the preferred information conduit; no other item was chosen by a majority of respondents. Newsletters were in second place, having been among the top two preferences for 47 percent. Other surveys of this type that the SRC has done around the state have consistently identified direct mailings as a preferred means of getting information about public services, including comprehensive planning.

Higher income households ($50,000 and above) were slightly more likely to prefer Internet (web site and email) and less likely to prefer newspapers.

Chart 17. Two Preferred Methods of Communication



Desired Change in Richmond

Near the end of the survey, respondents were asked the following open-ended question, "If you could change one thing about the Town of Richmond, what would it be?" About half of respondents (305) chose to answer this question. The answers were grouped into specific topics by the SRC and are summarized in Table 5. The complete list of responses is included in Appendix B.

Although there were a variety of topics among the responses, three topics accounted for 56 percent of all comments. In a virtual tie for first place with 20 percent each were comments relating to development and growth in the Town and comments about roads and transportation.

Table 5. One Change in Richmond by Topic

Topic	Count	%
Development/Growth	61	20%
Roads/Transportation	60	20%
Taxes	49	16%
Recreation	18	6%
Police-Law Enforcement	15	5%
Appearance of Homes	13	4%
Government	12	4%
Shopping – Retail	10	3%
Services – Utilities	9	3%
Nothing/Like Richmond	9	3%
Annexation	8	3%
Communication	7	2%
Environment	7	2%
Town Hall	5	2%
Employment	4	1%
Miscellaneous	18	6%
Total	**305**	**100%**

Nearly all the comments about development and growth were concerns about the rate at which these have been occurring in Richmond. As noted earlier, 40 percent of the respondents said the Town has been

growing too rapidly, and the comments within this topic contain the expressions of concern about that issue. Typical comments include:

"Slow down the development of all those new houses."
"Restrict and limit the number of housing and commercial developments."

The SRC divided the comments related to roads/transportation into two groups. First were a group related to specific roads and intersections, and within this group the most frequent issue was for improvements to 140th Street. The second group of transportation comments contained more general statements about streets and transportation. Typical comments include:

"Widen the roads on 140th St. so that there is a center line and shoulders on both sides...it is dangerously narrow right now."
"Please place a stop light or stop sign to break up traffic at Hwy 65/Hwy G junction. Something needs to be done!"

Comments about local property taxes were in third place with 16 percent of the comments. Most responses related to taxes stated a specific desire for lower property taxation and concerns about inequitable assessments. Typical comments include:

"Lower property taxes."
"Taxes are too high."

Concerns about noise and animal control were most frequent among the comments related to police and law enforcement.

Conclusions

The results of this survey indicate that, in large measure, Richmond residents are pleased with the quality of life they have in the Town. They particularly value the small town atmosphere/rural lifestyle, cost of housing, and the natural beauty of the Town.

They value the natural and cultural resources in the Town and are willing to use tax dollars and regulations to protect the resources that make the Town a place they find attractive as a place to live. On the other hand, there is also a clear desire for lower taxes among property owners in the Town.

They were generally satisfied with the services and facilities in the Town. The overall condition of roads and streets in the Town was viewed favorably. However, there is concern in the responses about specific streets and intersections.

The rate of growth this decade divides the residents of the town into a slightly larger group who said the growth rate of this decade is about right and a relatively large minority who said the Town is growing too rapidly. Balancing the opinions and desires of these two groups presents a particular challenge for the Plan Commission and the Town Board.

The Town's relationship with the City of New Richmond is an important issue to the Town's residents. Most gave high importance to cooperating on land annexations and emergency services and the development of a boundary agreement with the City.

Appendix A – Non-Response Bias Test

Any survey has to be concerned with "non-response bias." Non-response bias refers to a situation in which people who don't return a questionnaire have opinions that are systematically different from the opinions of those who return their surveys. For example, suppose most non-respondents are not satisfied with the adequacy of the current road network in the Town (Question 7), whereas most of those who returned their questionnaire said they are satisfied with the road network. In this case, non-response bias would exist, and the raw results would overstate public's opinion about the adequacy of the road network in Richmond.

The standard way to test for non-response bias is to compare the responses of those who return the first mailing of a questionnaire to those who return the second mailing. Those who return the second questionnaire are, in effect, a sample of non-respondents (to the first mailing), and we assume that they are representative of that group. In this survey, 432 people responded to the first mailing, and 218 responded to the second mailing.

We found 17 variables with statistically significant differences between the mean responses of these two groups of respondents (Table A1) out of 109 tested. Table A1 indicates that even when statistical differences exist, the magnitude of this difference is very small. **The Survey Research Center (SRC) concludes that there is little evidence that non-response bias is a concern for this sample.**

Table A1 – Statistically Significant Differences Between Responses of First and Second Mailings

Variable	Mean First Mailing	Mean Second Mailing	Statistical Significance
1i. Property taxes	.13	.06	.014
1k. Quality Schools	.16	.10	.049
3j. Recycling programs	2.38	2.39	.004
3k. Garbage collection/clean up days	2.17	2.54	.000
4b. On-road bicycle routes	2.66	2.91	.016
13. Commuting time	4.68	5.00	.023
15a. Housing for a variety of income levels	2.81	3.17	.000
20g. Dog boarding and kennels	2.56	2.79	.019
20h. Golf courses	2.45	2.65	.025
20i. Gravel pits	2.77	3.08	.001
20j. Home based businesses	2.27	2.65	.000
20n. Retail/Commercial	2.47	2.71	.008
21b. Residential use	2.54	2.72	.036
24. Consistent with minimum lot size	2.47	2.77	.002
30a. Future land use annexations	1.85	2.10	.006
30b. Public services	1.57	1.83	.001
32. Direct mailings	.70	.61	.012

Appendix B – Town of Richmond Community Planning Survey Comments

Question 1. ***What are the three most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Richmond?***

Other' responses (21 responses)

- Born here **(2x)**
- Affordable acreage
- Born and raised here
- Can't afford to move.
- College nearby (UWRF)
- Cost of land
- Country area living
- Grew up here
- Hobby Farm
- House built here and paid for
- In the middle of Hudson, Stillwater and New Richmond.
- Live in country
- Newer house and grandparents lived here
- Possibility to flip house
- Price lot-acreage
- Proximity to New Richmond
- Purchased from parents
- Quiet
- Room to breath
- Where Kiel grew up.

Question 20. ***The following types of economic/business development are appropriate in the Town of Richmond.***

'Other' responses (33 responses)

- Solar panels **(2x)**
- American jobs stay here.
- Anything to keep energy cost down and clean air.
- Bait Shop
- Big retail needed
- Chain restaurants (franchises)
- Churches
- Churches and conservancy land
- Commercial/industrial as long as there is a designated business park
- Energy related
- Family restaurant
- Fast food restaurants
- Food Co-ops
- Get rid of the Turkey Farms. Can't stand the smell some days. Put a gas station on the corner of 105th and 64.
- High quality grocery store
- Industry to help with taxes
- More restaurants
- Nicer shopping centers like the one in Hudson-Woodbury
- Other alternative energies
- Rec Public Pool
- Restaurant variety
- Restaurants
- Restaurants- fast food
- Sales
- Shooting range- rifle and pistol
- Shopping center with retail clothing
- Social Services
- Super Target and Cub Foods
- Support more alternative energy businesses
- Would like to see more done in this area
- Youth recreation, i.e. Action City in "Eau Claire" or "Giggle Factory"

Question 31. ***Please identify your top three town issues.***

'Other' responses (64 responses)

- Cable TV **(2x)**
- Reduce local taxes **(2x)**
- Add sidewalks
- Adjust property taxes lower to reflect the market value of your home.
- Animal control
- Animal ordinance
- Attract new businesses and industry
- Audit why some very nice property homes with land are paying less taxes than homes of littler size and less land.
- Bring in retail this allows competition- it helps keep prices competitive.
- Clean up yard around house of cars, trucks and debris
- Develop a boundary with city of New Richmond but those affected by any annexation should decide.
- Develop hiking/biking trails
- Do not annex homes in town of Richmond unless asked and home owners agree. No annexation of our homes!
- Do not annex us into city!!
- Don't annex us!!
- Encourage business
- Enforcement of town regulations
- Farming regulations
- Fund bike trails into city of NR (to keep our children safe)
- Get rid of the existing City Council and Mayor - Get rid of their corruption
- Hockey Rink
- I do not want to be annexed to N.R.
- Improve - widen - redo 140th St. Most important for Safety
- Increase commercial/industrial to improve residential taxes
- Reduce spending, Limit Government
- Less development
- Limit new housing developments
- Loss of wildlife and land
- Maintain DNR land and protect wild animals.
- Make residents clean up their homes - our neighbor has a pit and township wont do anything.
- Make road from 144 to Richmond way to connect to the schools from the east.
- Monitoring and governing of future land use
- More fire departments
- More High-Speed Internet options
- No annexation to the City of New Richmond.
- People frauding the welfare system
- Plant more trees and forests. Its great for wild life and global warming. Trees renew the earth and air.
- Prevent commercial/industrial development directly next to homes (i.e. protect zones)
- Protect Land Owner Rights
- Public Service Agreements
- Public services ambulance and fire protection
- Reduce taxes
- Reduce taxes more
- Retail/business
- Road safety at intersections, more round-abouts or traffic lights
- Send out Township (New Richmond) reminder once a year of recycling, (example = Bottles, cans, newspaper, plastic), there's always new people moving in
- Stay out of city of New Richmond jurisdiction
- Stay the way we are
- Stop development
- Stop funding facilities that only a small percentage of residences use (sports, etc.).
- Stop housing development too many empty houses for sale at present.
- Stop light on 65 and G would help with traffic flow because of all the schools
- Too many housing developments with cookie cutter houses-UGLY!
- Trails, trails, trails!
- Try to go green, i.e. Building materials, windmills.
- Walk paths
- Welcome new businesses retail/restaurants
- Widen 140th street
- Wind power generators
- Winter snow plowing

Question 33. ***If you could change one thing about the Town of Richmond what would it be?***

Development/Growth (61 responses)

- Amount of housing going up **(2x)**
- Encourage growth, encourage development **(2x)**
- Fewer Developments **(2x)**
- Fewer housing developments **(2x)**
- Less development **(2x)**
- A slow but steady rate of development. Being able to match up residential needs with the growth of government is very important economically.
- Availability of larger lots not in a subdivision for single family homes
- Better planning of development, better layout of new roads. Require buffer areas that protect encroachment of public lands (DNR and Federal lands)
- Change the number of houses per acre of land
- Control over residential growth
- Curtail additional residential development.
- Do not let good farm land go residential.
- Go back ten years and develop a plan so we don't have this dreadful mess of subdivisions that just seem helter-skelter
- Have more control of my land for planting trees, improving my ponds or digging a hole in my fields without getting and paying for permits, from the township, city, county and state.
- Housing developments
- I would not allow any strip malls, gas stations or major retailers. We do not need any more parking lot lights. I like to see the stars at night.
- I would not allow anymore land to be rezoned from agriculture
- In this economy buy cheap parkland. In this economy we do not want more empty new houses in developments, slow growth
- Keep City of New Richmond from being aggressively sucking a broader Tax Base. The township is just that, a township-Rural. No Wal-Mart or commercial district.
- Keep the rural atmosphere
- Less developments for housing, taking away farmland.
- Less growth.
- Less housing development- I moved here to be rural.
- Less people
- Less subdivisions
- No more development
- No more developments next to us. We loved the farmland. Help farmers to keep farmland.
- No more houses being built on all the good farm land. We have too many new people moving in our area.
- No more housing developments or 10+ acre minimum
- No subdevelopments
- Not allow housing developments on farmland.
- Open spaces, limited housing developments
- Put up few or no more cheap condo or town house units.
- Quit adding developments
- Quit allowing housing developers to put up ugly developments with cookie cutter houses.
- Quit the two acre minimum and cluster houses and then put the responsibility on developer to maintain a minimum of grassland (open/habitat) and waterway protection. Bury your hatchet with the City, you will get more done
- Reduce "gray area" in zoning rules
- Reduce number and size of subdivisions on 140th street.
- Restrict and limit the number of housing and commercial developments.
- Restricted growth
- Restrictions on so much fertile farm land turned over to housing that is needed for dairying and food supplies
- Review for all prospective housing/development. There is too much ""New Junk"" being built.
- Slow down building-no spec houses, too many twin and condos. Take care of seniors.
- Slow down the development of all those new houses.
- Stay small.
- Stop growth
- Stop housing developments.
- The amount of farm land being converted into housing developments

- The amount of housing that is currently abundantly available for purchase and continue to be built - stop already. There are vacant houses to purchase, builders can stop building and driving down property values.
- The fear homeowners have of the city taking over and making our town smaller and smaller and the city bigger!
- The influx of people who want to change this farm community into a suburb of the Twin Cities.
- The number of former farm sites that are now half developed subdivisions is distressing. I wish there was some way that all of them could be fully developed or built out before any more large pieces of land are compromised.
- The planning for various zones (i.e., location of gas stations, gravel pits near homes) doesn't seem to be well thought out or enforced.
- There seems to be too much sprawl.
- Too many developments of low quality.
- To stop developers from their greedy destruction of the rural community.

Roads/Transportation (60 responses)

References to Specific Roads/Intersections (30 responses)

- 140th between Paper Jack Drive and Cty G.
- 140th Street - it is too narrow and has lots of foot/bike traffic!
- 140th Street widened
- A stop light at GG and 65. You can sit there for up to 20 minutes trying to get onto the highway.
- Better Roads- 140th Ave west Boardman sucks.
- Continue to improve roads. 140th St. is narrow and dangerous. This road is heavily traveled with very poor pavement and shoulder.
- Do whatever is necessary to advance the upgrade of Hwy 65 from New Richmond to Interstate 94 immediately for the purpose of safety and efficiency.
- Expand and improve 140th from New Richmond going south and add a road that connects it to the new school.
- Fix 140th-dangerous road
- Four Lane Highway 65 up to county G and widen the road to the east of 65 from County Road G to the new school as so many people are using them now days. Widen 157th Ave. from 65 to the east and turn off lane at Dalton Liquor
- Get the roads fixed; 170th, 105th Ct K all just south of 64. They are horrible. Roads need to actually be plowed in the winter and more slow down signs for roads with sub divisions and with children.
- Having a better road on 140th street into the city of NR- and add a bike trail! This road is dangerous- no lines and too many hills. Too narrow.
- Improve roads - improve already existing infrastructure instead of spending money only on new roads/developments. Stop just patching! Feeder routes to Hwy 64 are unsafe
- Improve the condition of 140th Street-widen.
- Increase capacity on 65 from NR to Roberts to ease secondary road traffic.
- Install traffic lights at G and 65, long waits at busty times, many accidents at this location.
- Make 140th St. wider or add a bike /walk trail along the side of it.
- Make the road through CR 144 to Richmond Way to connect the schools to the east.
- Please place a stop light or stop sign to break up traffic at Hwy 65/Hwy G junction. Something needs to be done!
- Put new Highway 65 in.
- Put shoulders on the road for bicyclists and right turn lanes off 65 onto 140th, etc.
- Supply the road from 140th St to new High School
- The dangerous curve on the northern end of 95th street.
- They should widen 140th and connect it with Richmond way.
- There needs to be a connection between 95th and County Road A that would allow all the families out in the country better access to town (and more people might move out here.)
- Traffic and speed on 140th Street! More parks, trails
- Trails on GG and 140th and don't raise taxed value above market value
- Widen 140th St. from Cty G to Cty GG
- Widen 140th St. so you don't think you're going to crash evertime you meet a car.
- Widen the roads on 140th St. so that there is a center line and shoulders on both sides...it is dangerously narrow right now.

Other Roads/Transportation (30 responses)

- Better modes of transportation. Train or bus into metro area. (Woodbury Oakdale)
- Better roads.
- Better snow removal system
- Better/more snowplowing in the winter
- Bitter conditions of roads in winter
- Fix the road system-widen and repair roads for safety for all.
- Happy overall-little better job of snow plowing-more reactive.
- Improve roads and road maintenance. Spend more on road improvements and installation. More asphalt so they last longer. Snow plowing is terrible. It takes too long to clear and they don't clear cul-de-sacs. They made our builder put in a cul-de-sac; yet they don't maintain it.
- Improve roads or enforce better speed limit control.
- Improve roads-rural. Not patch work.
- Improve the road quality
- Keep fixing the roads.
- Less dump truck traffic. Too much noise and jake braking.
- No gravel roads.
- On the hour plowing of streets and roads in winter season,
- Paint lines on all roads to help visibility in bad weather i.e. fog, snow...
- Road conditions and maintenance. Again, we need traffic lights at busy intersections.
- Road Improvements/Service
- Road safety-more shoulders, deceleration and turning lanes.
- Safer roads
- Stop paving roads only where board members live and maintain/pave all roads when needed
- Straighten out our roads- make them safer to drive, walk and bike on.
- Street names rather than numbered streets. It is very confusing to find addresses. My 3 year old son died in our house while waiting for an ambulance to arrive. Witnesses said the ambulance drove back and forth trying to find our house. My other son (age 6) had to run out to the street to flag the ambulance down because it drove past the house.
- Take a good look at roads in residential areas
- Take all the tax money and upgrade the cart paths to real roads
- The road for the housing development across the street from my house, wasn't lined up with my driveway. We lost our privacy with that road
- The rural roads need to be upgraded with the amount of housing developments increasing.
- Township roads have many blind hills which contribute to accidents.
- Widen the rural roads, wider lanes and shoulders due to growth.
- Wider roads.

<u>Taxes (49 responses)</u>

- Lower taxes **(10x)**
- Lower property taxes **(9x)**
- Property taxes **(2x)**
- Reduce taxes **(2x)**
- Taxes **(2x)**
- I do not agree with the higher property assessment values when the economy is dictating lower property values!
- Less taxes
- Lower my taxes please they are too high
- Lower school taxes.
- Lower taxes or fewer homes.
- Lower taxes. Keep City of New Richmond from being aggressively sucking a broader Tax Base.
- Lower the tax burden on families
- Property tax increases
- Property taxes are outrageous! Homestead or some other option
- Property taxes based on current market values, not the artificially inflated assessment values.
- Reduce local taxes.
- Reduce property taxes and lower assessment values to 2008 market value and not base assessment on prior year's values.
- Reduce Property taxes.
- Reduce real estate taxes. Provide a minimum of service, but adequate level for quality living.
- Review how property taxes are assessed.
- Tax Level
- Taxes and regulation are out of control. These things are to benefit all, not just some.
- Taxes are too high.
- Taxes for schools! If you don't own property and pay taxes, you can't vote!
- Taxes too high.

- The cost of my property taxes. I love living here, but the cost is getting too high.
- They can quit spending tax payers money for stuff or things not needed. Like new school and parks etc.
- We can have a nicer house in a different area for less.... the taxes here are way too high!
- You're taxing everyone out of their homes! More for sale signs will be going up in 2009.

Recreation (18 responses)

- Add walking trails.
- Bike/pedestrian lanes on roads.
- Have a safe place to walk outside of our development. Bike- people drive too fast to walk out on 140th- its just not safe.
- Hiking trails, snowshoe trails, more parks, playgrounds for children near or in new developments.
- More hiking and biking trails.
- More land open to public hunting
- More parks and trails.
- More safe outdoor walking trails.
- Provide more choices for individuals of all ages (i.e. parks, restaurants, sports complex, community center, etc.)
- Put a solid surface on bridge on snowmobile trail that crosses 10 mile creek (behind Waldorff's development) so it is safer for walking, biking and horseback riding
- Safe walking paths for my family and dogs off roads.
- Safer places to bike with my kids directly from our home.
- The inability to use/operate all terrain vehicles.
- There would be a paved trail for bikers/hikers along the roads.
- There would be horse trails available for public use throughout the town and open public land.
- Walking paths.
- We would love to have trails leading around the area and into the town. Kids would love to ride bikes to school but we don't feel it's safe enough because of HWY!

Police - Law Enforcement (15 responses)

- Being able to enforce through the sheriff office public disturbances such as barking dogs. This ongoing problem has greatly affected our quality of life.
- Enforce speed limits in some areas.
- Get some law enforcement on Cty Rd A to stop the people who are speeding.
- I feel that we need a better animal control system. The current one is bad.
- I would want a person who enforces policies and rules. We have reported and complained at least 10 times to ***** about our neighbor who has six dogs that bark constantly and two horses all on a 1.5 acre lot. This is clearly a violation of Town of Richmond policy but it appears that ***** chooses not to enforce a policy that does not impact himself.
- Noise control: 1.barking dogs, number of dogs or animals allowed at a non-farm, private residence, leash laws and 2. Reasonable starting time for road work and harvesting or planting (before 6 am is NOT reasonable). Large numbers of roosters crowing at 4 am are not fun either!! Is there a law about animals other than dogs?
- Noise ordinances
- Ordinance of noise/barking dogs. Violators should be fined.
- Ordinance on junk in front yards. People should have to fence off their junk or get rid of it and if not done so, after notification the town does it for them and sends them a bill for the cost.
- Ordinance which requires homeowners to maintain their property such as lawn maintenance and not storing "junk" parts in their yards!
- Regulate and clean up outdoor furnaces. Their smoke makes us sick all winter long.
- The ability to enforce neighbors to be respectful and keep their property clean of debris and junk cars, boats, garbage, etc.
- To have New Richmond police be able to "police" in the town of Richmond. Too many people don't know how to be neighborly and follow basic rules.
- A way to enforce neighborhood covenants. We have neighbors who own more than 2 dogs- that constantly bark and wander out of their yards- and we have multiple neighbors who park their semi rigs on our streets, even though our needs are supposedly not designed for such weights.
- Add covenants to development agreements, etc. Residential lots should be restricted or require variance to add other buildings,

excess vehicles, junk, etc. Hobby enterprise expanding near my home. Was variance/permit required?

Appearance of Homes (13 responses)

- All property owners should have to clean up their surroundings on their property.
- Better ordinances on what people's yards look like. What trash or garbage stuff they leave around their yards makes the neighborhood look bad.
- Clean up the town of Boardman. Some homes are a wreck.
- Enforce appearance of homes.
- Enforce covenants in housing areas-no sheds which do not match house etc. We moved here with them on the books but in housing areas it seems people do what they want.
- Find a way to maintain properties that are foreclosed on. Mostly require the lawns to be mowed.
- Have people on Cty Rd A to clean their property. It's a mess.
- Have the homeowners on Co Rd. E in Boardman (by the town hall) clean up the house's and yards. It's a huge eye-sore
- Enforce covenants in our neighborhood. Example-No pole barns, no unlicensed cars parked in driveway.
- Make the homeowners of Boardman clean up their property - some are ok but most are a mess and a real eyesore to the Town of Richmond
- Need a law about people having trashy yards. Lot's of "eye sores" around.
- People would keep up lawn/yards.
- The view of the run down houses and the people in the apartments.

Government (12 responses)

- Any dependence on city of New Richmond.
- Being F*** with by the a** holes who think they are the Godfathers of New Richmond. Leave us alone.
- Covenants- a landowner- should be able to do with their property as they see fit. A "board" does not need to make rules for the rest of us who live here and pay taxes.
- Get and prohibit the ******* out of any ties to the Town and Plan Commission.
- Get more community members involved with the future of our township.
- Happy with Town Chairman-works hard.
- Have ***** be town chair for life as long as he lives to be at least 500.
- I would give the town board greater power in the decision making process. The city of New Richmond has way too much power and is trying to ram "their" rules and regulations down our throats.
- I would have a more law- experienced, modern and aggressive board in place to prevent any further annexation into the City of New Richmond. Boundary agreements not adequate. Protect citizens that don't want to become annexed by knowledgably standing up to NR city board.
- The City government is trying to run it like New York City. We are a small town. We have no common sense anymore!
- Township government needs to ensure there is a solid, all encompassing plan for the future strategic direction of the township. This would eliminate the constant reaction to individual circumstances.
- Work better with the city of New Richmond.

Shopping – Retail (10 responses)

- A competitor for Wal-Mart would be nice. Target, Kohl's etc. I need more options for clothes.
- Add more shopping stores and food, (fast food and take out).
- Do everything possible to attract new businesses and industry to create jobs and help reduce the taxes and the loss of businesses such as Pamida.
- Eliminate Wal-Mart and keep other "Big Box" stores from opening in area.
- Give me a grocery store.
- Have a better grocery store (CUB) and a Target or Kohl's for clothing and household items.
- I think there should be more retail stores. (I understand there has to be x amount of population first to do this.)
- Increase large scale shopping and restaurant opportunities (i.e. Target, Menards, Green Mill, etc.)
- More retail development between New Richmond and Roberts. A lot of residents live in this area, but is anywhere from 5-8 miles to either town.
- We need more accessibility to shopping (clothing, goods) and good quality meat & produce (organic, grass-fed meats, etc.)

Nothing/Like Richmond (9 responses)

- Nothing **(3x)**
- Don't change anything!
- Great City
- I am very pleased overall with my neighborhood and community.
- I like it here
- Nothing, I like it the way it is.
- Very satisfied

Services – Utilities (9 responses)

- Don't charge people for recycling.
- Explore the use of wind power and sun power
- Have engineers look at the water flow/drainage issues on 140th and in the subdivisions. Be sure culverts are working properly to deal with the storm water.
- Home pick-up for recyclables.
- Household pick up of yard waste.
- Keep recycling area cleaned up.
- Let us put wind generators up to cut sown on high heat/energy bills. Tax breaks on them or even less interest loans to buy these!
- Recycling fees paid into a moneymaking enterprise are unnecessary, outside of appliance disposal and garbage fees. Scrap aluminum is fairly lucrative racket itself, so why change to have residents drop them off?
- Upgrade oil (used) recycling to allow taxpayer to keep own containers-instead of lousy exchange program. Model Example= City of Hudson

Annexation (8 responses)

- Curtail the City of New Richmond from forcibly annexing certain areas.
- Do not let the city of New Richmond annex any more land. We want nothing to do with New Richmond City.
- Don't annex with New Richmond.
- Improve stability of township boundaries remaining. Reduce the threat of township boundaries moving into city of New Richmond.
- Not allow City of New Richmond to annex land by Hwy 64 (Halle Bldrs. development).
- Not allowing us to be annexed into the city of New Richmond.
- Stop annexation of properties to city of New Richmond
- The threat of annexation hanging over our heads.

Communication (7 responses)

- Availability of township guidelines and regulations. Knowing who to call for what.
- Better communication.
- Communication among and between board members and residents.
- Communication to residents. We moved here 8 months ago and would like to be involved in town meetings and issues and don't know how.
- Provide all governmental matters to the residents. Let residents be aware of all that is going on more than putting in local paper. Need mailings-timely mailings.
- The communication level between the Town of Richmond officials, St. Croix County officials, and the Town of Richmond residents.
- The incomplete/inaccurate communications (or lack thereof) required town of Richmond meetings, events and developments.

Environment (7 responses)

- Focus more heavily on environmental issues and increasing sustainable efforts.
- Improve ground water
- Keep the green space.
- Maybe more trees!
- More public land along the rivers to protect water quality.
- More trees.
- More trees. Longer summers.

Town Hall (5 responses)

- A new town hall with ball fields and move the garbage collection to a new location. The trash makes the town hall look very bad.
- Need new town hall with playground and park area.
- Need new town hall.
- Town hall is ready to fall down.
- Would like better park area next to town hall.

Employment (4 responses)

- Better (higher pay and challenging) local employment opportunities.
- Bring in more jobs. Stop making it so hard for business to come into town. Open doors and let others do the same for those in need

of a job. Why spend time going to the cities to work, when we could do it here?
- Closer to work.
- Just one thing...we need more jobs.

Miscellaneous (18 responses)

- Communications (high speed internet, cell phone, coverage, cable TV, etc.)
- Discounts for home owners who try to "green" their homes/property.
- Dog owners be made accountable for neglect of their pets.
- Don't allow farmers to use turkey s--t to fertilize with. The smell is awful! There has to be something else they can use?
- Have an identity separate from New Richmond, i.e., festivals, street dances- fun things.
- I think there should be a non-profit pregnant care center. This would be for pregnant women at first confirmation of pregnancy through age 2. This is also for any woman no matter what her income is. In other words a "free clinic". There is much that goes into it. And the expecting mothers will be doing their share also.
- It's proximity to the city of New Richmond
- More good restaurants
- Move recycling site to an area not as visible makes Boardman area look very tacky
- Neighbors are loud, they walk on my land, their kids are unsupervised and their pets run wild.
- No burning of garbage. Make people recycle.
- Plow Boardman under.
- Population density
- Reduce the number of bars and liquor stores! Alcohol creates problems, but what does it solve!
- Thank you for allowing us to voice our opinion.
- The town needs to work more closely with the city of New Richmond.
- This survey is too long to be effective. I am fatigued and busy. Be more concise in the future please.
- Turkey smell (turkey's are ok though)

Question 36. *Employment*

'Other' responses (16 responses)

- Home maker **(7x)**
- Disabled **(2x)**
- At home parent
- Full-time student
- Housewife
- Semi Retired
- Stay at home mom
- Student
- Two jobs

Question 37. *Residential Status*

'Other' responses (11 responses)

- Hobby Farm Owner **(2x)**
- Commercial property owner
- Land only- no household
- Live on edge of New Richmond
- Lot owner
- Own land-plan to build in near future.
- Owner Resident
- Rent acres for farm production
- Resident with a little hay ground
- Retired farmer = some land

Appendix C - Quantitative Summary of Responses by Question

TOWN OF RICHMOND COMMUNITY PLANNING SURVEY

Please return by October 24, 2008

Using blue or black ink, please fill the circle that most closely matches your response on the following:
Please fill the circle: Like this: ● Not like this: ✓ ✗ /

QUALITY OF LIFE

1. From the following list, a – n, mark the THREE most important reasons you and your family choose to live in the Town of Richmond. Mark ● three. (percent answered YES)

10%	a. Agriculture	36%	f. Natural beauty/ Surroundings	11%	k. Quality schools
6%	b. Appearance of homes	31%	g. Near family and friends	2%	l. Recreational opportunities
39%	c. Cost of home	30%	h. Near job/ Employment opportunity	61%	m. Small town atmosphere/Rural lifestyle
1%	d. Cultural/Community events	15%	i. Property taxes	4%	n. Other: **See Appendix B**
19%	e. Low crime rate	31%	j. Proximity to Twin Cities (amenities, etc.)		

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
2. How would you rate the overall quality of life in the Town of Richmond?	22%	68%	10%	1%	0%

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES These questions ask your opinion about community facilities and services available to Town of Richmond residents.

3. Rate the quality of the following services and facilities available to Town of Richmond citizens:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
a. Ambulance service	19%	31%	5%	1%	0%	44%
b. Fire protection	19%	33%	6%	1%	0%	41%
c. High speed internet	11%	32%	27%	10%	7%	13%
d. Library (New Richmond)	17%	45%	18%	2%	1%	17%
e. Mobile (cell) phone coverage	8%	43%	28%	12%	5%	4%
f. Town park (Callie's Corner)	5%	22%	21%	7%	3%	42%
g. Sheriff protection	10%	45%	13%	2%	1%	29%
h. Town Hall	8%	37%	25%	10%	3%	17%
i. Public school system	13%	49%	15%	3%	1%	19%
j. Recycling programs	16%	52%	18%	6%	2%	6%
k. Garbage collection/Clean up days	19%	59%	13%	3%	1%	5%
l. Street and road maintenance	9%	44%	33%	10%	4%	1%

4. The Town of Richmond should use public funds to provide the following:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Ballfields, active recreation areas in New Richmond	7%	44%	22%	11%	15%
b. On-road bicycle routes	13%	38%	24%	13%	12%
c. Canoe landings along the Willow River	6%	32%	29%	11%	21%
d. Off-road hiking and nature trails	14%	47%	22%	7%	11%
e. Hatfield Regional Park in New Richmond	6%	36%	26%	13%	18%
f. Hunting/fishing access to public land	13%	42%	20%	8%	17%
g. Acquire and develop new town parks	8%	30%	36%	11%	15%
h. A new library facility in New Richmond	11%	34%	26%	15%	13%

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES. We would like your opinion about the following natural and cultural resource issues.

5. How important is it for the Town of Richmond to protect the following?	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
a. Air quality	20%	51%	21%	3%	6%
b. Cultural resources (historic sites, etc)	74%	24%	1%	0%	1%
c. Groundwater quality	40%	45%	10%	1%	3%
d. Open space	37%	41%	15%	2%	5%
e. Native prairie land/grasslands	58%	38%	3%	0%	1%
f. Surface water (lakes, rivers, streams)	44%	41%	11%	1%	3%
g. Wetlands	46%	44%	7%	0%	2%
h. Wildlife habitat	46%	45%	6%	0%	2%
i. Woodlands	20%	51%	21%	3%	6%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
6a. Town tax revenues should be used to protect the preceding list of resources (5a to 5i).	15%	56%	19%	5%	6%
6b. The Town of Richmond should use regulations to protect the preceding list of resources (5a to 5i).	25%	60%	7%	3%	6%

TRANSPORTATION These questions ask your opinion about transportation issues in the Town of Richmond.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
7. The overall road network (roads, streets, and highways) in the Town of Richmond meets the needs of its citizens.	13%	67%	13%	6%	1%
8. The overall condition of roads and streets in the Town of Richmond is acceptable for present needs.	8%	60%	23%	8%	1%
9. There should be a designated car/van park-n-ride for State Highway 64/65.	8%	40%	25%	4%	24%
10. Additional biking lanes and walking lanes are needed along public roadways in Richmond.	19%	33%	30%	8%	11%
11. Additional off-road trails for only non-motorized use (e.g., hiking, walking, horses) are needed in the Town.	14%	30%	36%	7%	13%
12. The Town should cooperate with the County and neighboring communities to implement bike/pedestrian trails and routes.	22%	44%	20%	6%	8%

13. If one or more adults in your household works outside the home, how many minutes (one way) does it take the one who drives the furthest to commute to work each day?	Under 10	10-14	15-19	20-29	30-44	45+	NA
	8%	7%	6%	16%	21%	30%	12%

14. Which of the following traffic management techniques would you **MOST** prefer to be used at the intersection of County Highway G and State Highway 65 to reduce accidents? Mark ● ONE only.

Traffic lights	Roundabout	Signage (turn lane only)	4-Way Stop	None
56%	12%	20%	6%	7%

HOUSING/DEVELOPMENT We would like your opinion about housing development in the Town of Richmond.

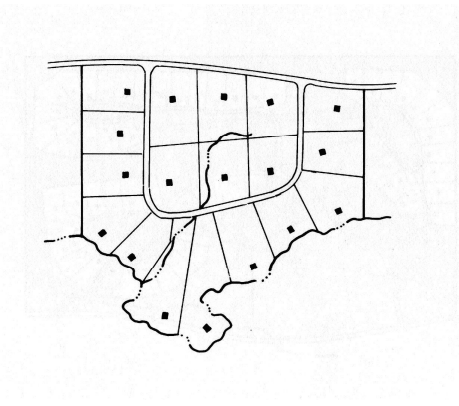
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
15. More of the following types of housing are needed in the Town of Richmond:					
a. Housing for a variety of income levels	7%	32%	34%	18%	9%
b. Condominiums, apartments	1%	13%	41%	36%	8%
c. Duplexes	1%	16%	42%	32%	9%
d. Freestanding mobile homes	1%	3%	36%	56%	5%
e. Housing subdivisions	3%	27%	37%	24%	9%
f. Mobile home parks	1%	4%	32%	58%	5%
g. Seasonal and recreational homes	1%	16%	41%	25%	17%
h. Senior housing	9%	46%	20%	12%	13%
i. Single family housing	20%	47%	15%	9%	10%
16. The external appearance of residences in my neighborhood is <u>important</u> to me.	52%	38%	7%	0%	3%

17. The population the Town of Richmond grew by about 1,327 people or 85% between 2000 and 2008. How do you feel about this amount of growth?	Too much growth	About right amount of growth	Too little growth
	38%	58%	4%

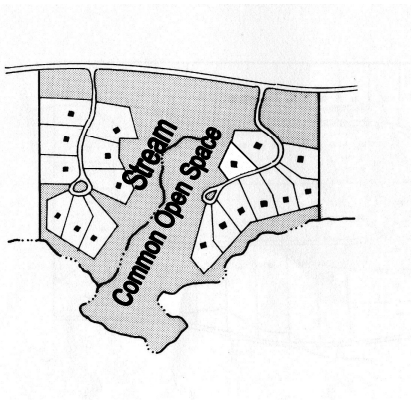
18. Variations from the 2 acre minimum residential lot size should be allowed for:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Smaller lots near local communities (e.g. New Richmond)	7%	39%	30%	17%	8%
b. Larger lots in environmentally sensitive areas (lakes, steepness of terrain, wildlife habitat, etc.)	19%	50%	17%	6%	9%
c. Smaller lots where small scale sewage treatment systems are available	4%	39%	30%	11%	16%

19. Traditionally, rural housing developments have been designed on large lots as in the diagram (Option A) on the left below. An alternative layout for rural housing is the "*cluster*" concept, which has smaller lots and permanently preserved open space as in the diagram (Option B) on the right below. Please mark ● which you prefer (one only).

35% **OPTION A**



65% **OPTION B**



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT The following question asks how you view economic development in the Town

20. The following types of economic/business development are appropriate in the Town of Richmond.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Agricultural production (crops and livestock)	41%	53%	3%	0%	3%
b. Agricultural service businesses	26%	60%	6%	1%	8%
c. Composting sites	15%	55%	16%	3%	11%
d. Convenience stores/Gas stations	11%	57%	21%	6%	6%
e. Corporate/large scale farms (Over 500 animal units)	6%	29%	36%	18%	10%
f. Direct sales of farm products (vegetables, fruit, meat, trees)	23%	65%	5%	1%	5%
g. Dog boarding and kennels	7%	57%	18%	5%	12%
h. Golf courses	10%	55%	21%	6%	8%
i. Gravel pits	5%	44%	26%	12%	12%
j. Home based businesses	15%	64%	8%	1%	13%
k. Industrial/Manufacturing	7%	44%	31%	9%	8%
l. Junk/Salvage yards	3%	20%	36%	33%	8%
m. Privately owned campgrounds	4%	44%	23%	14%	15%
n. Retail/Commercial	12%	50%	21%	8%	9%
o. Storage businesses	4%	48%	26%	9%	12%
p. Wind power generators	30%	48%	7%	5%	9%
q. Other: **See Appendix B**	30%	19%	1%	0%	49%

AGRICULTURE The following questions ask for your opinion about agriculture in the Town.

21. We should allow productive farmland to be used for:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
a. Agricultural use	59%	38%	0%	0%	2%
b. Residential use	8%	47%	31%	8%	6%
c. Commercial use	4%	30%	43%	15%	7%
d. Industrial use	3%	21%	48%	20%	8%
22. Landowners should be allowed to develop their land any way they want.	12%	24%	42%	17%	4%
23. There should be restrictions on how much of their land owners should be allowed to develop.	15%	46%	22%	10%	7%
24. Landowners should be able to subdivide their land consistent with minimum lot size regulations into housing lots.	10%	55%	19%	6%	10%
25. There is too much farmland being converted to non-farm uses.	26%	38%	19%	3%	14%
26. Agricultural uses should not be restricted because of proximity to residences.	23%	37%	22%	8%	9%

LAND USE These questions ask your opinion about land use issues in the Town of Richmond

Some Wisconsin Towns have put programs in place that allow land owners to sell and transfer the development rights to their land. Sale of development rights ensures the land will be used in agriculture or remain as open space in the future. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
27. The Town of Richmond should use public funds to purchase development rights to preserve farmland, maintain open space or protect important environmental areas.	23%	41%	21%	8%	8%
28. The Town of Richmond should allow developers to purchase development rights from one Town property and transfer them to another in order to increase the number of lots that can be developed on the receiving property.	1%	8%	49%	31%	11%
29. I am satisfied with the enforcement of existing land use regulations in the Town of Richmond.	3%	46%	15%	4%	31%

30. How important is it for the Town to seek agreements with neighboring jurisdictions on the following:	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	No Opinion
a. future land use and annexations	38%	48%	6%	3%	6%
b. public services such as ambulance service and fire protection.	51%	43%	1%	1%	3%

SPECIFIC ISSUES The following question asks how you view select issues facing the Town of Richmond.

31. From the following list of Town issues issues, a – k, please identify your top **THREE** issues.

1st	2nd	3rd		1st	2nd	3rd	
4%	5%	8%	a. Add green space in the Town of Richmond	1%	2%	5%	g. Help fund a new Hatfield Regional Park in the City of New Richmond
15%	13%	8%	b. Develop a boundary and annexation agreement with the City of New Richmond	1%	4%	6%	h. Acquire and develop new town parks and/or facilities
5%	8%	9%	c. Provide additional environmental protection in the Town	3%	13%	15%	i. Link Town trails to existing/future County and City trail system
7%	12%	12%	d. Loss of productive farmland	49%	14%	12%	j. Reduce local taxes
9%	19%	15%	e. Improve quality of roads				
3%	6%	7%	f. Help fund a new library facility in the City of New Richmond	3%	3%	4%	k. Other **See Appendix B**

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS

32. What are your two preferred methods of receiving information from Richmond Town Government? Mark ● your top two only. **(Percent answered YES)**

Direct Mailings	Radio	Newspaper Articles	Newsletters	Town Website	Email	Local Access Cable TV Channel
67%	2%	25%	47%	16%	25%	2%

33. If you could change one thing about the Town of Richmond what would it be?

See Appendix B

DEMOGRAPHICS Please tell us some things about you: **Please choose only one answer per question.**

34. Gender:	**Male**	**Female**
	53%	47%

35. Age:	**18–24**	**25–34**	**35–44**	**45–54**	**55–64**	**65+**
	1%	21%	23%	29%	15%	11%

36. Employment Status:	**Employed full-time**	**Self - employed**	**Employed part-time**	**Unemployed**	**Retired**	**Other: See Appendix B**
	62%	11%	7%	3%	15%	3%

37. Which of the following best describes your residential status in the Town of Richmond?

Farmland owner	**Rural Resident (non-farm)**	**Renter**	**Other: See Appendix B**
6%	92%	0%	1%

	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6+**
38. Number of adults (18 or older) in household:		9%	78%	10%	2%	1%	0%
39. Number of children (under 18) in household:	51%	19%	20%	8%	2%	0%	0%

40. If you are a Town resident, how long have you lived in the Town of Richmond?

Less than 1 year	**1 to 5 years**	**5.1 – 10 years**	**10.1 – 15 years**	**15.1 – 20 years**	**20.1 to 30 years**	**Over 30 Years**
2%	37%	22%	6%	7%	8%	16%

41. Highest Level of Education:	**Less than high school**	**High school diploma**	**Some college/tech**	**Tech college graduate**	**Bachelor's degree**	**Graduate or professional degree**
	1%	18%	25%	20%	26%	11%

42. Household Income range:	**Less than $15,000**	**$15,000 - 24,999**	**$25,000 – 49,999**	**$50,000 – 74,999**	**$75,000 – 99,999**	**$100,000 or more**
	1%	4%	18%	28%	26%	24%

Thank You for Completing the Survey!

Please return your survey by October 24, 2008 to:
Survey Research Center
University of Wisconsin - River Falls
410 S. Third St.
River Falls, WI 54022-5001