



Westminster Public Safety Advisory Council (PSAC) 2018 Survey Results

August 27, 2018

Agenda

- Purpose
- Survey Process
- Respondent Demographics
- Results
 - Preferred Methods of Communication
 - Detailed Results
 - Write-ins
- Interpretation
- Path forward

Purpose

- The PSAC conducted a survey to develop qualitative and quantitative data on the public perception of safety while living in or visiting the City of Westminster
- This data will help to inform the city on public safety perceptions for future communication and interactions with the community
- The survey is a potentially repeatable process for the city to track metrics over time

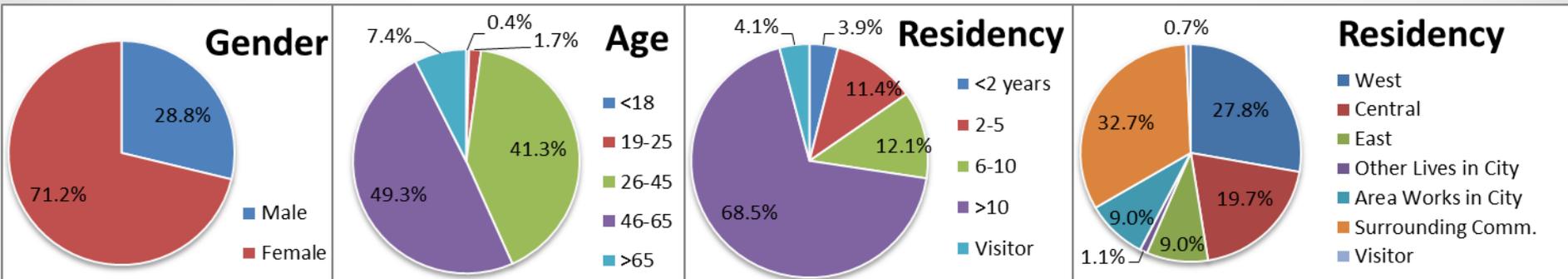
The survey indicates the public ***perception*** of safety -- it does not represent safety ***factual data***.

Survey Process

- PSAC developed and approved 14 survey questions
 - Evaluate safety perception based on
 - Day, Night
 - Home, neighborhood, downtown district, other public areas (parks)
 - Collect demographics based to enable deeper analysis of results
 - Gender, age, area and time of residence
 - Preferred method of communication for future interaction with residents
 - Write-in opportunity
- Utilize web-based survey tool
- Survey was open for the month of May 2018
- Various methods for survey awareness
 - Email to parents of city school students (heaviest response)
 - CCT editorial and article (good response)
 - Facebook, other social media
 - City website, info cards with QR code, newsletter with city water bill
- Five \$25 restaurant gift card incentive provided

Respondent Demographics

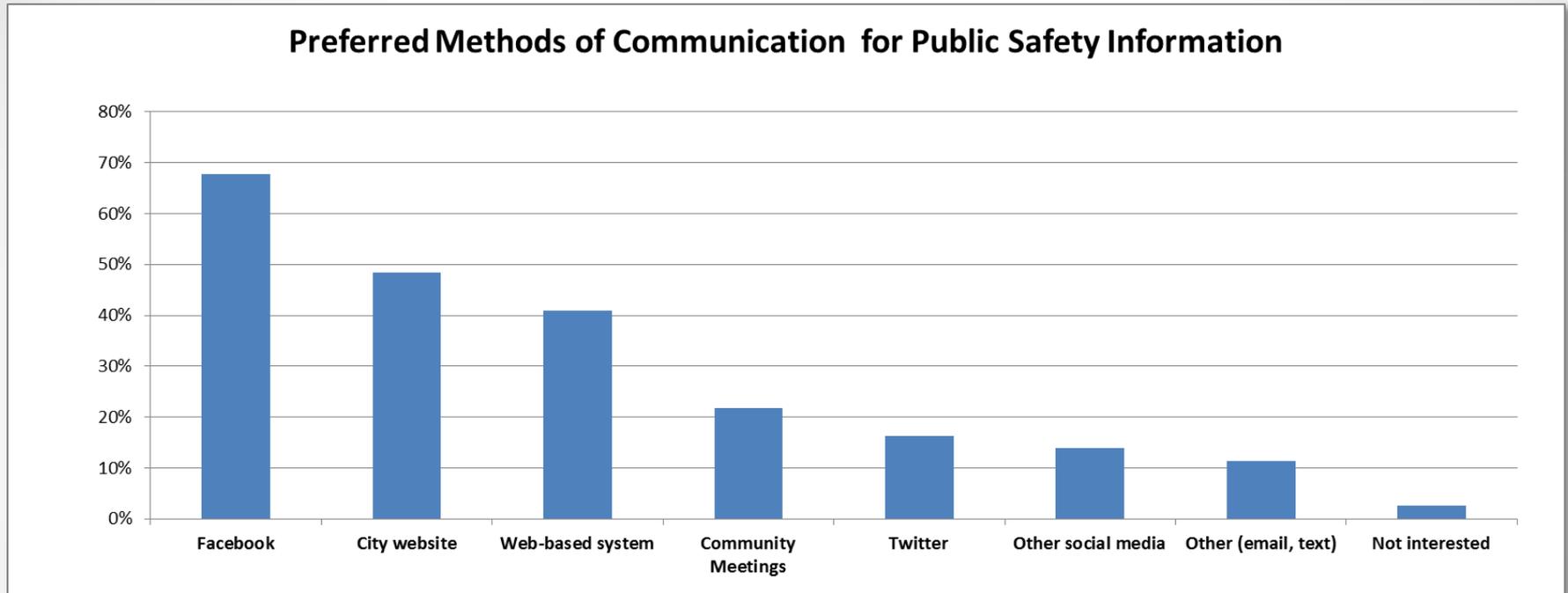
Who took the survey?



- 1296 respondents
 - We had a great public response to provide good statistical accuracy
 - ~380 needed to provide 95% confidence that results are within 5% of being representative of the entire population
- Potential sampling biases
 - Higher female response
 - Low response from <26 residents – potentially missing McDaniel student input
 - Low response from senior residents
 - Potentially low response from “East” Westminster

Results

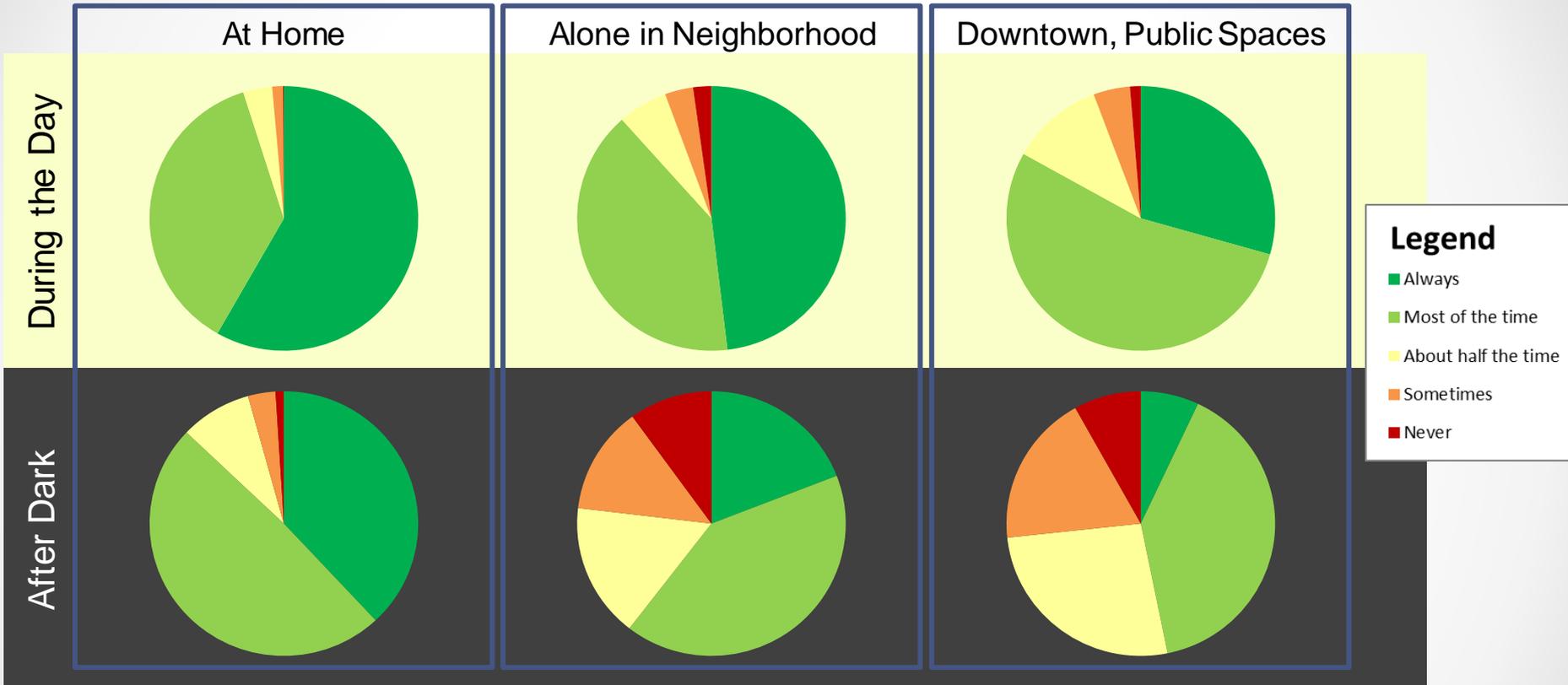
Preferred Methods of Communication



- Facebook and the City website are the predominant method that residents requested that the city use for communicating information about public safety
- Consider potential bias based on age demographics

Results

How often do you feel safe when...

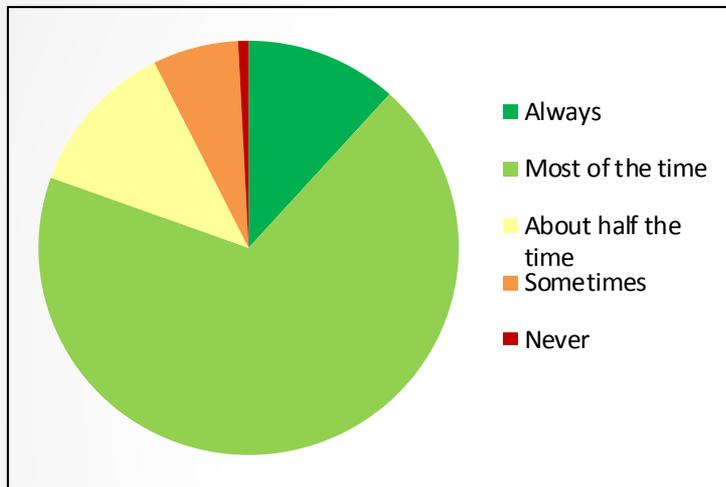


Trends show that residents feel more safe during the day and the closer they are to home.

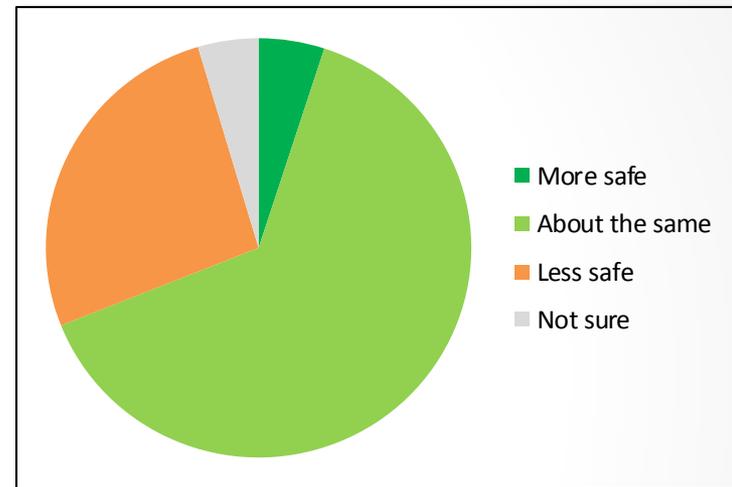
Results

High Level Perceptions

Overall



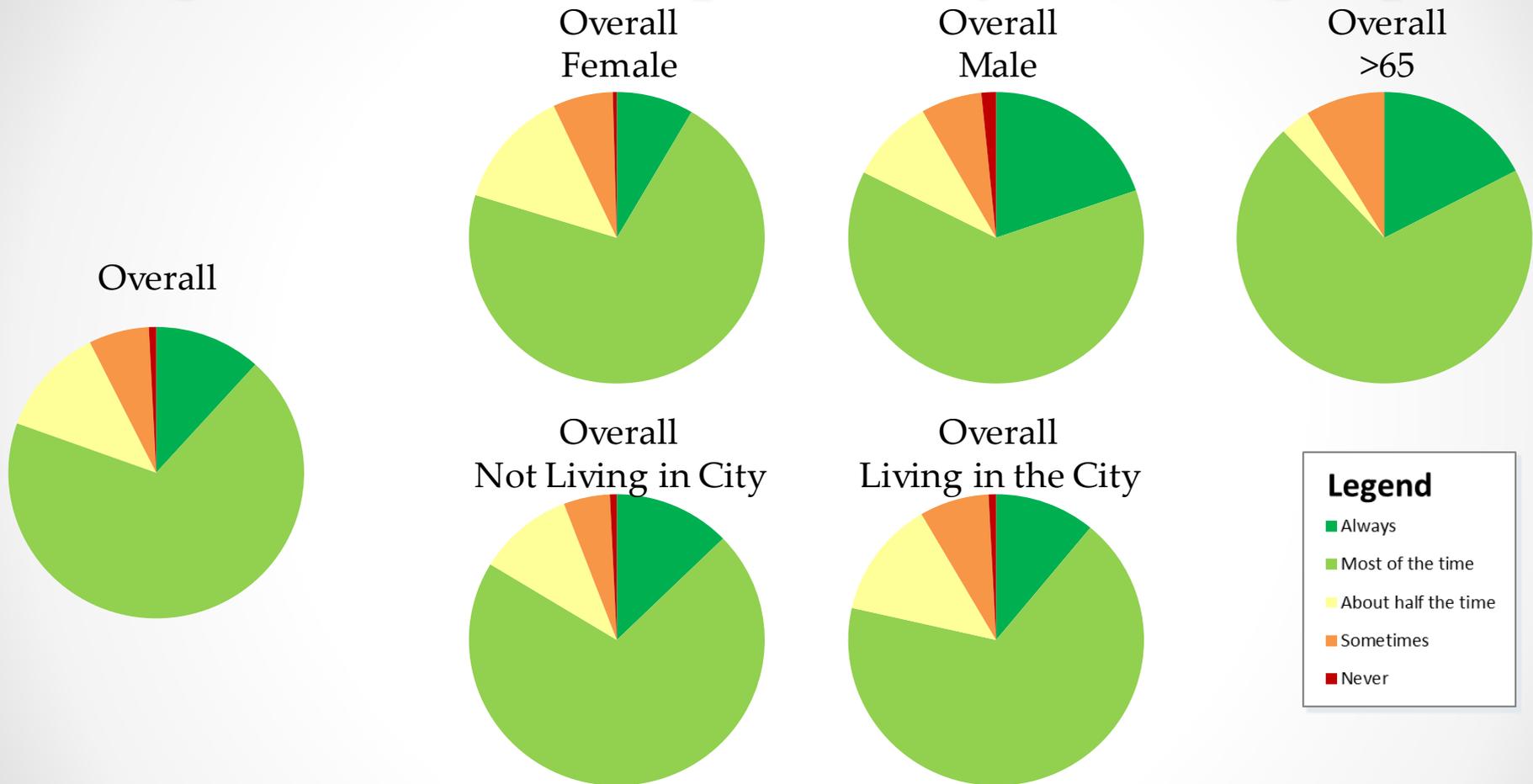
Compared to 2 Years Ago



- The majority of residents feel safe at least most of the time
- There is a portion of residents that perceive safety concerns at some point
- Although a majority of residents feel safety has remained about the same compared to 2 years ago, more residents perceive a negative shift than positive

Results

High Level Perceptions by Demographics

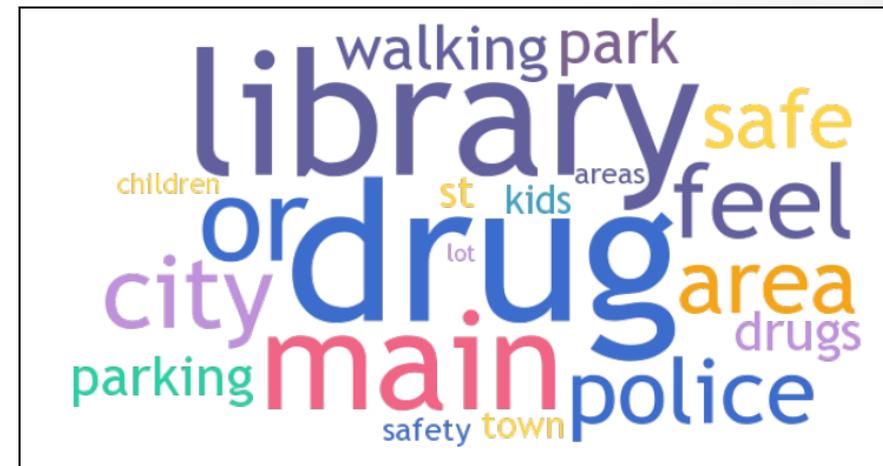


No significant differences across any of the examined demographics.

Results

Write-Ins

- Nearly half of the 1300 respondents took the opportunity to write-in a comment on safety
 - Responses ranged from applauding efforts of the police department to identifying very specific issues
- Primary perceived issues
 - Vagrancy / homelessness
 - Drugs
 - Pan-handling
 - Activities in the vicinity of the library



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Interpretation

- Great response rate: ~1 300 total respondents
- The majority of residents report feeling safe at least most of the time – more so during the day and the closer they are to home
- No significant differences across any of the examined demographics
- Most frequently reported safety concern perceptions were:
 - Vagrancy / homelessness
 - Drugs
 - Panhandling
 - Activities in the vicinity of the library
- Residents would prefer Facebook and the City website for future communications about public safety information
- The survey asked qualitative questions about safety, but did not specifically capture “value” or “expectation”
 - Missing question: “How happy are you with the level of safety in Westminster?”

Path Forward

- Suggest to track metrics over time using a periodic survey
 - Determine methods to better capture <26 and >65 population
 - Future surveys should include value / expectation question(s)
- Plan for future public communications using Facebook, the city's website, and the Carroll County Times
- Request direction from the city on what to do with this data
 - Formally publish survey results?
 - Additional communication regarding safety concerns cited in responses?