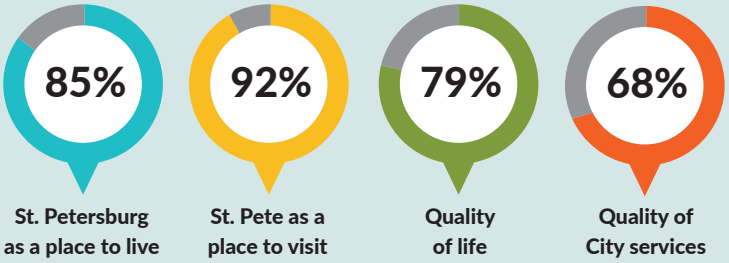
2024
ST. PETERSBURG COMMUNITY SURVEY

BACKGROUND

The City of St. Petersburg partnered with the National Research Center at Polco to administer the National Community Survey™, a reporting tool that has been used to gauge the livability of more than 500 communities across the US. The survey was referred to publicly as the 2024 St. Petersburg Community Survey and was intended to provide an initial baseline of results, a "pulse check" of public opinion.

OVERALL PERCEPTIONS

Scored a rating of Good or Excellent



METHODOLOGY

Timeframe: January 16 - March 5, 2024

Delivery Mechanism: A statistically significant sampling of 5,000 households was randomly selected to initially receive a mailing inviting them to take the survey beginning on January 16, 2024. Data collection for this portion of the survey remained open for seven weeks. The 5,000 households had the option to complete the survey online or on paper, ensuring equity of access in the sampling. The survey was then opened publicly to the entire city February 13 – March 5, 2024.

Response:

Randomly Selected Households:	**590 responses**
Citywide Polling:	**2,497 responses**

The results presented below are from the statistically significant sampling of the 5,000 households since it has the lowest margin of error of results (4%). The results from this main survey effort represent the most robust consensus of resident opinions.

WHERE WE SHINE

Scored a rating of Good or Excellent higher than national benchmarks. *(*) indicates a rating of similar to the national benchmark.*

- Recreational opportunities — 84%
- Overall opportunities for education, arts, and culture — 80%
- Opportunities to attend cultural, arts, music activities — 86%
- Opportunities to attend special events and festivals — 84%
- Community support for the arts — 83%
- Vibrancy of downtown/commercial area — 86%
- Variety of business and service establishments — 81%
- Shopping opportunities — 72%
- Water resources (beaches, lakes, ponds, riverways, etc.) — 83%
- The ease of travel by public transportation in St. Petersburg (e.g., bikeshare, ferry, Downtown Looper, Central Ave. Trolley, Sunrunner, PSTA) — 49%
- Public places where people want to spend time — 72%
- Attracting people from diverse backgrounds — 72%
- Opportunities to participate in social events and activities — 75%
- Quality of Fire services — 89%*
- Quality of Ambulance or emergency medical services — 83%*
- Quality of Police services — 70%*
- Overall health and wellness opportunities — 77%*
- Garbage collection — 81%*
- Sewer services — 65%*
- Drinking water — 59%*

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AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY

Scored a rating of Good or Excellent lower than national benchmarks.

16%
Cost of living

35%
Ease of public parking

13%
The availability of affordable quality housing

53%
safety from fire, flood, or other natural disaster

46%
K-12 education
(not provided by the City)

38%
taking care of vulnerable residents
(elderly, disabled, homeless, etc.)

62%
St. Pete as a place to raise children

49%
Utility billing

47%
stormwater management
(storm drainage, dams, levees, etc.)

48%
the overall quality of utility infrastructure
(water, sewer, stormwater, electric/gas, broadband)

ACTIONS WE'RE TAKING

Funding, resources, and programs aimed at tackling our Areas of Opportunity.

Economy

- The City's Housing Opportunities for All Plan currently has 2,148 housing units in the pipeline or completed, and 96% of those units are for households with less than 80% Area Median Income (AMI).
- In 2024, the City introduced the Renter Utility Relief Program to allocate $3 million to help St. Pete renters pay past-due electric, sanitation, and water bills.
- The City's Utility Assistance Program allows utility customers to make one-time or recurring donations through their utility bill to help other utility customers in need.

Mobility

- Nearly 900 public parking spaces are planned or under construction in the EDGE District and Downtown. Additionally, parking garages are planned for the Historic Gas Plant District Redevelopment.
- A Parking Study Update is planned for Fiscal Year 2025, which will yield data and recommendations to help improve the ease of public parking.
- The City's Complete Streets initiative aims to create streets that are safe and convenient for all users of the roadway. The Complete Streets Plan is slated for an update in 2025, partially funded by a successful grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Community Design

- The City has pursued and secured millions of dollars in federal funding for projects related to infrastructure, affordable housing, community resources, and more.

Utilities

- St. Pete's Water Plan and the Stormwater Master Plan are in effect to address St. Pete's aging water infrastructure and efficiently provide continued reliable service and increase resiliency for the future.

Safety

- Teams from more than 20 City departments activate the Emergency Operations Center to help residents prepare for, endure, and recover from hurricanes and large storms.
- The City is in the process of replacing 56 existing backflow preventers, which help prevent flooding and standing water on streets and in neighborhoods..

Education, Arts, and Culture

- In 2024, Mayor Welch hired a new Education and Youth Opportunities Director to ensure educational pathways are equitable, achievable, and measurable.

Inclusivity and Engagement

- Each year, the City awards funding to social service agencies that provide homeless services and/or homeless prevention services through Social Action Funding Grants. In Fiscal Year 2023, the City awarded $578,023 to 10 local organizations.