

**Hastings, Minnesota
City Council Workshop
July 15, 2024**

The City Council of the City of Hastings, Minnesota met in a workshop on Monday, July 15, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Volunteer Room at the Hastings City Hall, 101 East 4th Street, Hastings, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Fasbender, Councilmembers Fox, Haus, Lawrence, Leifeld, Pemble, and Vihrachoff

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Administrator Dan Wietecha
Assistant City Administrator Kelly Murtaugh
Communication Coordinator Dawn Skelly

Mayor Fasbender called the workshop to order at 5:30 pm and welcomed councilmembers and staff for discussion about the Community Survey. Skelly presented an overview of the results of the community survey, providing a snapshot in time of the perceptions of livability and quality of life in the City of Hastings. The survey looks at safety, mobility, health/wellness, economy, parks/recreation, education/arts/culture, and other characteristics of livability.

Skelly reported that 13% of those who were sent the survey responded (479 responses of 3800 sent) and the results were weighted to be representative of the demographic profile of the city residents. The results are benchmarked with 500 other communities. Overall, the quality of life in the city is “good to excellent” and most are likely to remain in the community. Council discussion on the response rate comparison to earlier surveys and validity of weighting of survey.

Skelly reported the key findings of the survey. Ease of traveling around the city, availability of paths/trails, snow removal, historic preservation, safety, and fitness opportunities as higher than benchmark cities. The highest performing areas are resident perceptions of public safety, recreational opportunities, mobility, and the local business climate. The lowest performing areas are governance, affordability, and K12 schools. Council discussed sharing the K12 information with the school district.

For news, residents cited the city website, Rivertown News (quarterly printed newsletter), City Update (e-newsletter), and the city Facebook page as their top news sources. Discussion on the ongoing value of these sources. Council discussion on the historic problem about knowing where to go for information and expressed appreciation for the work led by Skelly.

Skelly reported on some survey items where there was a gap between the perception of quality and the level of importance placed on that item by residents. The largest gaps were in the areas of economy and utilities.

Council discussed that in past years, it seemed that not much was done with the results of the survey, and they would like to ensure that they pay attention to what they can learn from the results at the “10,000 ft level.” Further discussion led to integration with the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan as well as the ability to drill down further into the data. The online survey system does allow for dissecting of data by ward as well as the ability to do interim “pulse” surveys on specific topics that would benefit from additional feedback.

Council discussed the ways in which a pulse survey could enhance the data already collected, serve as an outreach tool to newer residents, and inform transparency and communication efforts.

ADJOURNMENT

Workshop adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Mary D. Fasbender, Mayor

Kelly Murtaugh, City Clerk