

# 2019 WINNETKA CAUCUS SURVEY

## “Pulse of Winnetka”

### RESPONSE SUMMARY

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*This document represents the collaborative effort of the 2019 Winnetka Caucus Council to summarize both the quantitative and qualitative verbatim comments from the 2019 Survey, conducted June 3-16, 2019. We hope this captures the “Pulse of Winnetka” as of June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019. We present these findings and encourage you to review the entire survey posted on [www.winnetkacaucus.org](http://www.winnetkacaucus.org).*

**Responses:** 1,300 survey responses were received, representing about 15.5% of the target population of approximately 8,400 individuals (or about 4,200 households), the largest response rate in the last 7 years and a 21% increase from last year. The sampling margin of error is 3.5% at a 99% confidence interval.

#### Demographics & Communications:

- 59% Female
- 57% between 45-64 years old
- 69% have lived in Winnetka 11 years or longer
- 52% have children (birth through Grade 12)
- 80% receive information from the print media, and 78% via e-mail
- 90% prefer e-mail as the method of communication from Village Boards

### VILLAGE OF WINNETKA

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**Summary: Winnetkans are passionate about their community. Over 300 general comments were posted, many regarding the health of our business districts, working more effectively with residential and commercial developers, and attracting new businesses. There were strong opinions both for and against the Winnetka Music Festival.**

- 81% favor each of the five taxing bodies annually publishing a 1-year, 3-year and 5-year view of projected major capital expenditures.
- 50% agree that the Village should move to reduce the floor area ratio and/or allowed impermeable surface for new building and renovation projects, while 40% disagreed.
- 62% feel that the Village should encourage the preservation of historic homes.
- 79% support lowering the cost of permits required for the rehabilitation of such historic homes.
- 45% support extending historic home demolition permits from 60 days to 120 days, while 40% do not support it.
- 46% support increasing the Village’s budget in support of events such as the Memorial Day parade, the Fourth of July parade and Fourthfest, and the Winnetka Music Festival, while 40% do not support an increase.

### WINNETKA-NORTHFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

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**Summary: Winnetkans are avid users of our Libraries and view them as valuable assets to the community. Over 225 general comments were posted, many complimenting the staff. Respondents have enjoyed the move towards digital offerings, and want more communication from the Library - both in e-mail and social media form - especially with respect to programming and resources available to Library patrons, such as apps.**

- 90% have used at least one branch of the Library in the last year.
- 58% were aware of and have utilized access to materials from 26 other facilities.
- 60% have not participated in any Library programs in the past year, with time constraints being the primary reason listed for why respondents did not participate.
- 59% have not downloaded any of the apps available through the Library, with many respondents indicating that they were unaware that such apps are available to Library users.
- 67% have never visited The Studio.
- 57% learn about the Library through The Source and other print materials, and 44% learn about the Library through its website.

## **WINNETKA PARK DISTRICT**

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**Summary: Winnetkans value our parks and beaches. Over 225 general comments were posted, the vast majority of which opposed an off-leash dog park, with several comments supportive of the existing dog beach. There were also several comments and concerns regarding budget, costs, and taxes.**

- Approximately 40% of respondents were not dog owners or did not want an off-leash dog park. Of those who did want a park, site conditions, cost to develop, and available parking were ranked as the top three criteria for site selection.
- Open field, shaded areas, and dog cleaning/rinsing were ranked the three most important potential amenities for those who did want a off-leash dog park.
- 30% indicated \$26-\$75 would be the most they would be willing to pay annually to access an off-leash dog park.
- 49% are unfamiliar with the Winnetka Waterfront 2030 plan, with improvement of water quality, remediation of bluff erosion, and improvement in roads, stairs and walkways, and parking were ranked as the three most important aspects of the Winnetka Waterfront 2030 plan.
- Remediating drainage issues, repaving the surface, and increasing/improving access were ranked as the three most important improvement steps for the Green Bay Trail, with 44% of respondents seeing private non-profit potential funding sources as best suited to partner with the Village for the improvements.

## **WINNETKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 36**

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**Summary: Winnetka residents continue to be passionate about D36 schools, and sentiments regarding the April 2019 referendum were top-of-mind, both in questions and in the more than 300 open-comment responses. The majority of respondents had engaged with the relevant issues and had enough information prior to voting, and believe that they referendum was rejected based both on cost and scope. While satisfaction with the quality of education ranks high, many are dissatisfied with the D36 school board, and many comments focused on ensuring that student experience and outcomes are prioritized, and that taxes are either already too high or should not be raised further.**

- 81% had sufficient information on the referendum prior to voting.
- 78% felt that the Referendum was voted down because the tax impact/cost was too high.
- 48% are dissatisfied with the fiscal stewardship of the D36 school board, with 41% satisfied.
- 76% are satisfied with the overall quality of education being provided by the D36 system.

- 66% support the issuance bonds to fund only high-priority facility improvements, in an effort to address long-term facility needs. Closing an elementary school and shift grade combinations(33%) was selected second most.
- 76% of respondents responded to at least one survey, participated or asked to participate in a focus group, and/or attended at least one informational session about the proposed improvements that would have been funded by the Referendum.
- As to respondents' primary opinion regarding the imposition of additional taxes, had the Referendum passed, there was a 3-way, 27% split among the following: (a) such taxes were inappropriate as there may be additional local tax increases and/or additional state or county tax increases, (b) they were inappropriate as there may be increased tax burden which would decrease the value of property in the district and/or make selling a home in the district more difficult, and (c) the increased tax burden is/would have been appropriate.
- Makerspaces, multi-purpose/cafeteria space, and expanded classrooms for collaborative learning were ranked as the top three selections as most important educational improvement to address, should budgetary resources become available. Approximately 20% answered no opinion.