

Edina's Quality of Life A Historical Trend Review

Prepared July 2024

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Edina's Quality of Life Survey

Since 2011, Edina has conducted a “Quality of Life” survey every odd numbered year. Each survey asked residents to share their opinion of City government. The most recent survey was completed in 2023 and, along with the other surveys, can be found on Edina's website:

<https://www.EdinaMN.gov/QuickLinks.aspx?CID=198>

All the data, used to create the graphs which follow, was taken directly from the reports on the City's website.

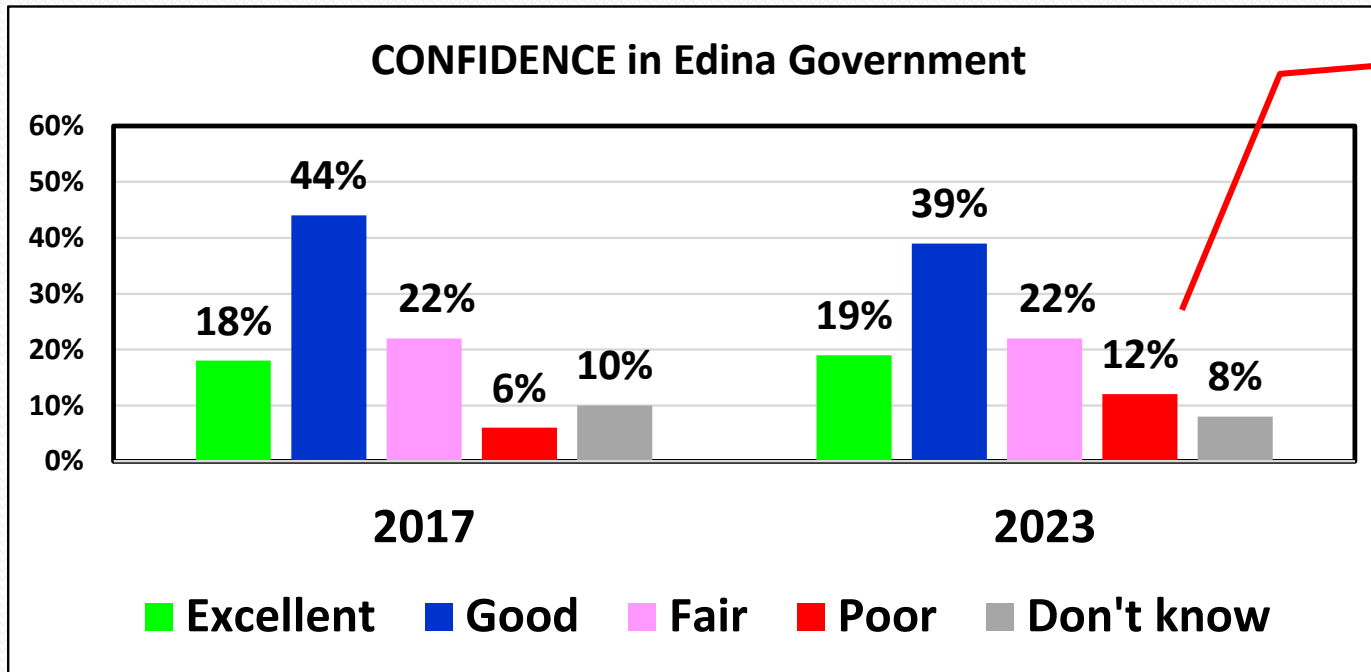
A Look At the Pulse of Our City

The purpose of the following review is to look at the **TREND** of resident's responses with respect to six key questions:

- 1) What is your **CONFIDENCE** in City government?
- 2) What is your opinion of whether the City acts in the **BEST** interest of the community?
- 3) What is your opinion of **VALUE** received for taxes paid?
- 4) Is Edina on the **RIGHT or WRONG** track?
- 5) What is your **MOST** serious concern?
- 6) Other than voting, do you feel that you **HAVE a SAY?**

2017 vs 2023

What is your CONFIDENCE in Edina's Government?

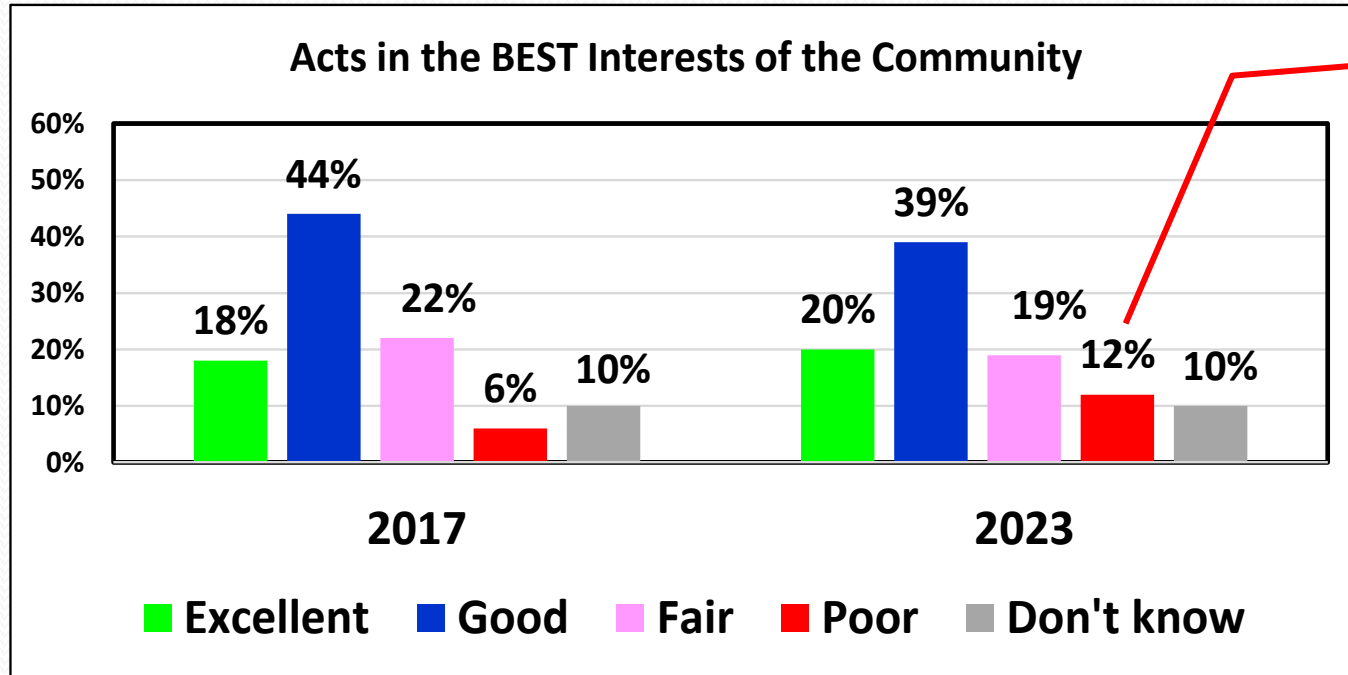


The percent of residents who's CONFIDENCE in Edina is now "Poor" has doubled to 1 in 10.

- Less than 1 in 5 residents have an "Excellent" view of Edina's government, a ratio which has remained relatively unchanged since 2017.
- Since 2017, there has been a substantial downward shift from "Good" to "Poor".

2017 vs 2023

City acts in the BEST interests of the community?

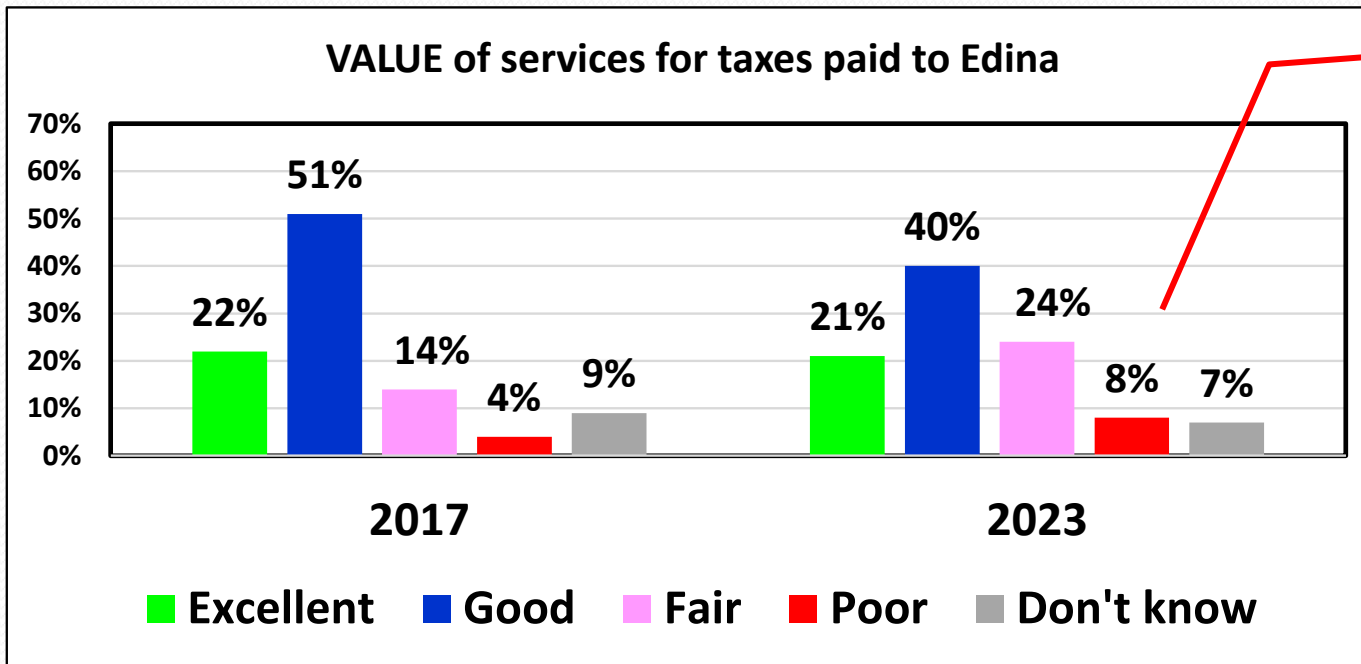


The percent of residents who have a “Poor” opinion of the City acting in their BEST interest has doubled to over 1 in 10.

- 1 in 5 residents have an “Excellent” view that Edina acts in their BEST interest, a ratio that has remained relatively unchanged since 2017.
- There has been a substantial downward shift from “Good” to “Poor”.

2017 vs 2023

What is your opinion of the VALUE of taxes paid?

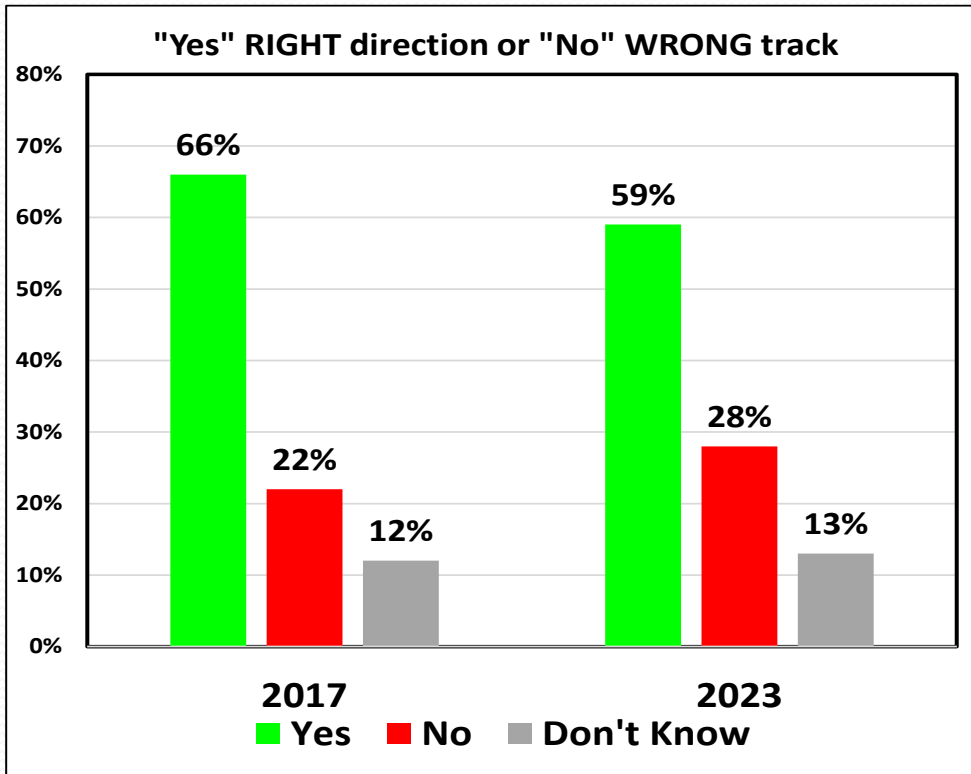


The percent of residents who believe their VALUE for taxes paid is now “Poor” has doubled.

- 1 in 5 residents have an “Excellent” view of their taxes VALUE, a ratio that has remained relatively unchanged since 2017.
- There has been a substantial shift downward from “Good” to the categories “Fair” and “Poor”.

2017 vs 2023

Headed in the RIGHT direction or on the WRONG track?



- Confidence in Edina has been in decline since 2017.
- What had been 1 in 5, residents who believed Edina was on the WRONG track, is now almost 1 in 3 who feel Edina is on the WRONG track.

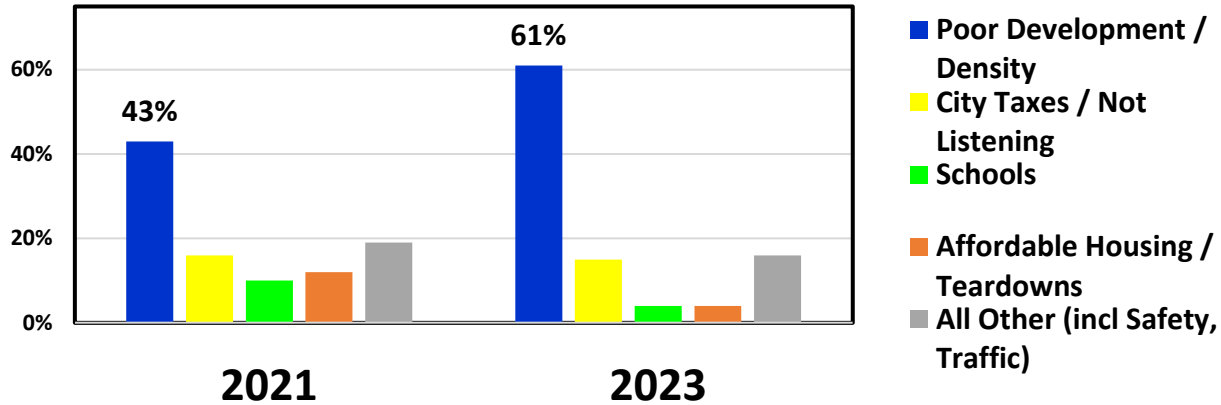
Reference page 9 for:

- what residents shared as their reason for being on the WRONG track, and
- what they feel is the MOST important issue facing Edina.

2021 vs 2023

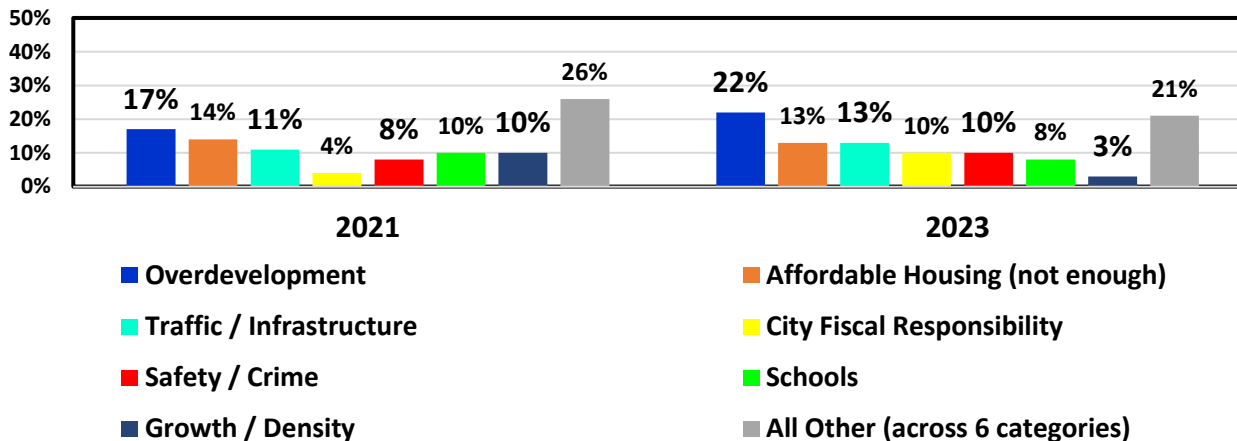
If WRONG track, why --- and --- What is your MOST serious concern

If WRONG track, why



The categories at left were created by the survey company, Polco, based on written responses of those residents who replied “No”, Edina is not on the right track.

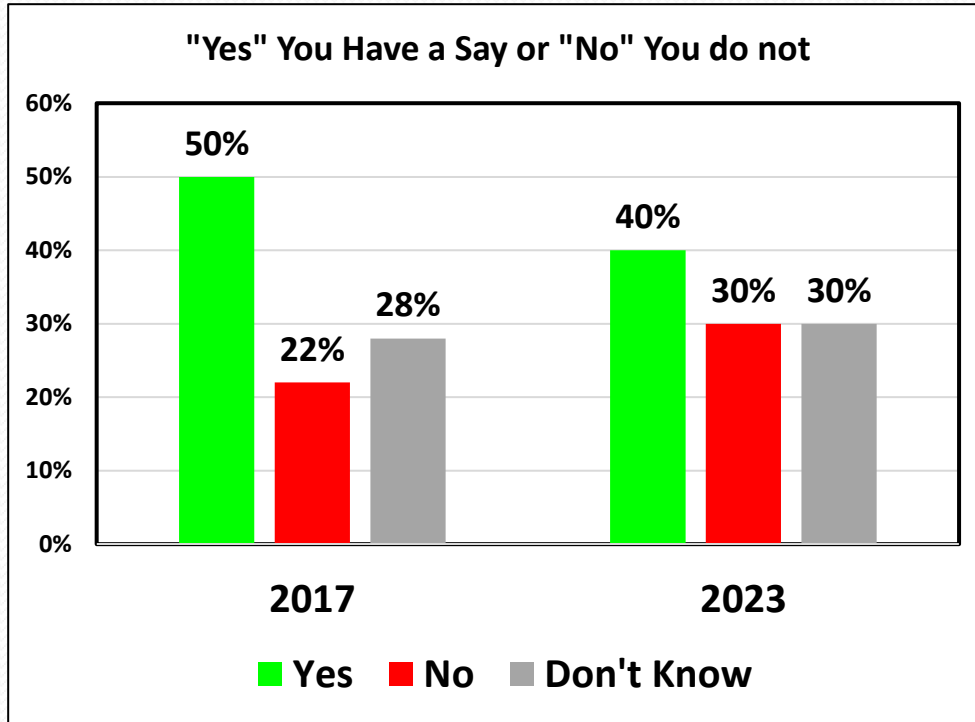
MOST serious concern



Due to a change in what questions were asked, only 2023 and 2021 have comparable data for MOST serious concern. Therefore, the same years are shown for “why” WRONG track.

2017 vs 2023

Other than voting, do you feel you HAVE a SAY?



- Residents who believe they HAVE a SAY in how Edina is run has been in decline since 2017.
- As of 2023, almost 1 in 3 Edina residents feel that they do not HAVE a SAY in Edina government.
- When combined with those that “don’t know”, 60% of residents cannot answer “Yes”.

The top 3 reasons shared by residents:

- 1) Residents are not listened to
- 2) Decisions are biased towards special interests
- 3) Leaders have an agenda and decisions are predetermined

Resident Engagement

Survey Year	<u>2017</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2023</u>
# of Households Selected	1,500	1,500	2,000	2,000
# of Undeliverable Mailed Surveys	(82)	(99)	(220)	(96)
# of Net Households	1,418	1,401	1,780	1,904
# of Replies	477	427	518	475
Response %	34%	30%	29%	25%

- The % of households responding to the survey has declined EVERY year since 2017.
- The decline in engagement is consistent with an electorate that feels it does not “Have a Say”.

Summary: Key Takeaways

Results from city-wide, large randomized surveys initiated by the City in 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2023 bear out that:

- Resident engagement and confidence in City government has declined substantially.
- Residents feel that they are not listened to and that special interests and City leadership drive a predetermined agenda.
- Residents feel much less satisfied and have become substantially less engaged.

Edina's Quality of Life A Historical Trend Review

Appendix

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- 16) How Does This Analysis Differ
- 17) How the ‘Same’ Results Can Be So Different
- 18) “CONFIDENCE in Edina” and “Acts in BEST interest”
2017, 2019, 2021, 2023
- 19) What is Your Opinion of the “VALUE of Taxes Paid”
2017, 2019, 2021, 2023
- 20) “RIGHT / WRONG track” and “HAVE a SAY”
2017, 2019, 2021, 2023
- 21) Polco report cover page for 2023, with notations added referencing the page numbers where data was found.

The Surveys & The Years Reviewed

The surveys performed in 2011 and 2013 were phone surveys. The 2011 and 2013 reports did not say how many respondents were interviewed and were only 18 and 22 pages respectively. Subsequent reports have exceeded 150 pages. Given the lack of comparability, no further reference will be made to those two surveys.

- Since 2015, all five surveys were conducted by the same third party consulting firm, Polco, via a U.S. postal mailing.
- Also, since 2015, there has been little change to the questions asked either in the total number of questions, their wording, or the scale against which they were judged. Therefore, as has been assumed by the City in their prior analyses, response rates to most questions are comparable across those years.
- **As a result, this review chose to compare replies from 2017 to 2023, the time period over which the current Mayor and City Manager have had the most influence.**

How Does This Analysis Differ

As previously noted, the data used to generate the graphs and trend lines in this analysis comes directly from the Polco reports which are posted on the City's website. However an important difference is that, when they City conveyed their message to the Council and residents, the City chose to convey results so as to skew them in the City's favor. The City chose to emphasize results which 1) did **not** include "don't know" replies and 2) **combined** "Excellent" and "Good" replies into a single category. Given the substantial positive shift these two assumptions confer upon the results, one can only assume it was done on purpose. (reference the following page for a specific example)

Our view is that the exclusion of replies when conveying resident opinions is inappropriate and "Excellent" do not equate to "Good". In addition, the use of a four point rather than a five point scale further exacerbates a skewing to 'higher' scores. i.e. the use of (Excellent / Good / Poor / Fair) versus (Excellent / Above Average / Average / Below Average / Poor) --- a method more in line with an A/B/C/D/F grading system.

How the ‘Same’ Results Can Be So Different

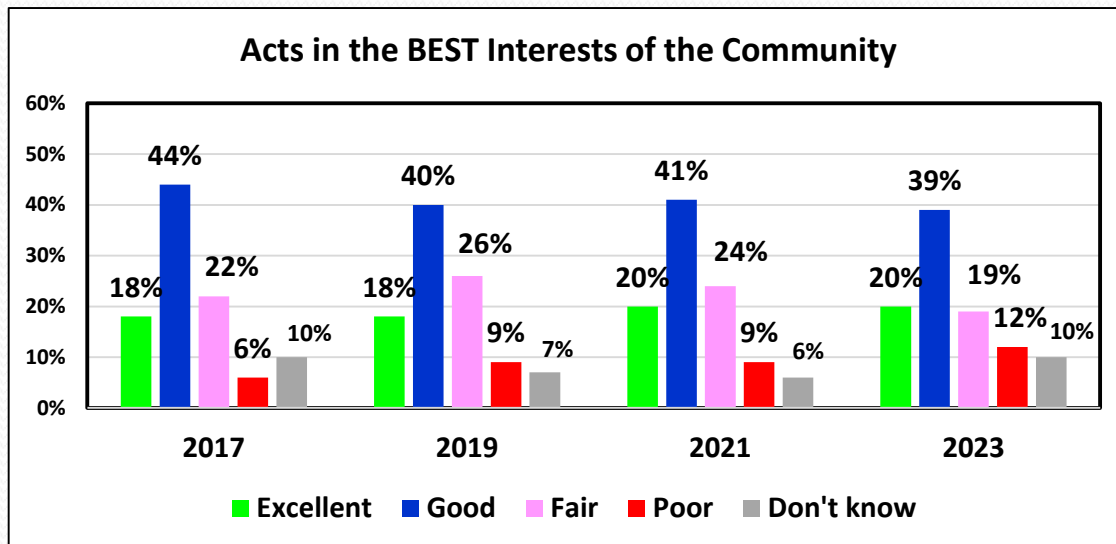
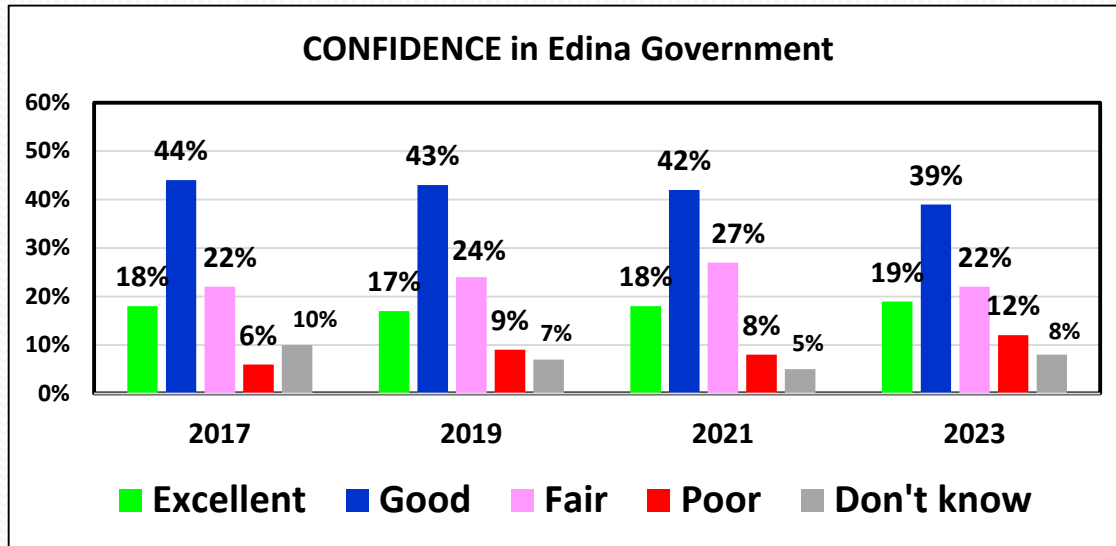
Question : Is Edina headed in the RIGHT direction or WRONG track?

		<u>As shown in this report</u>	<u>As reported by the City</u>	
	<u># Replies</u>	<u>%’s Including “Don’t Know”</u>	<u>%’s Excluding “Don’t Know”</u>	<u>Net Change Higher / (Lower)</u>
RIGHT direction	265	59%	68%	9%
WRONG track	127	28%	32%	4%
Don’t Know	57	13%	N/A	N/A
Total	449	100%	100%	13%

- The City’s narrative would have you think that 68% of residents felt the City was headed in the RIGHT direction. Our opinion is that only 59% thought that was the case.
- When “Don’t Know” replies are **EXcluded** it over-weights the largest reply category. In this case, “RIGHT direction”.
- The City’s narrative to Council and residents lacked transparency as to the true % across all questions that included a “Don’t Know” answer.

The Four Most Recent Surveys 2017, 2019, 2021, & 2023

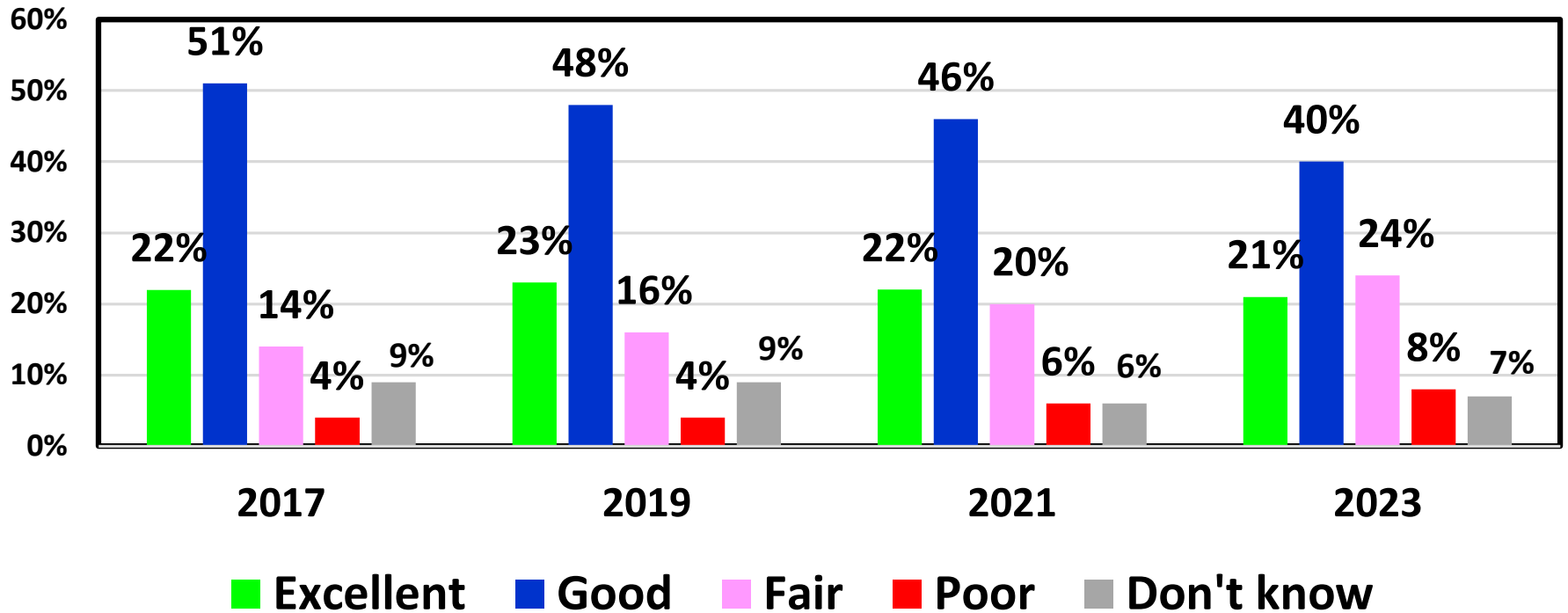
“CONFIDENCE in Edina” & “Acts in BEST Interest”



The Four Most Recent Surveys 2017, 2019, 2021, & 2023

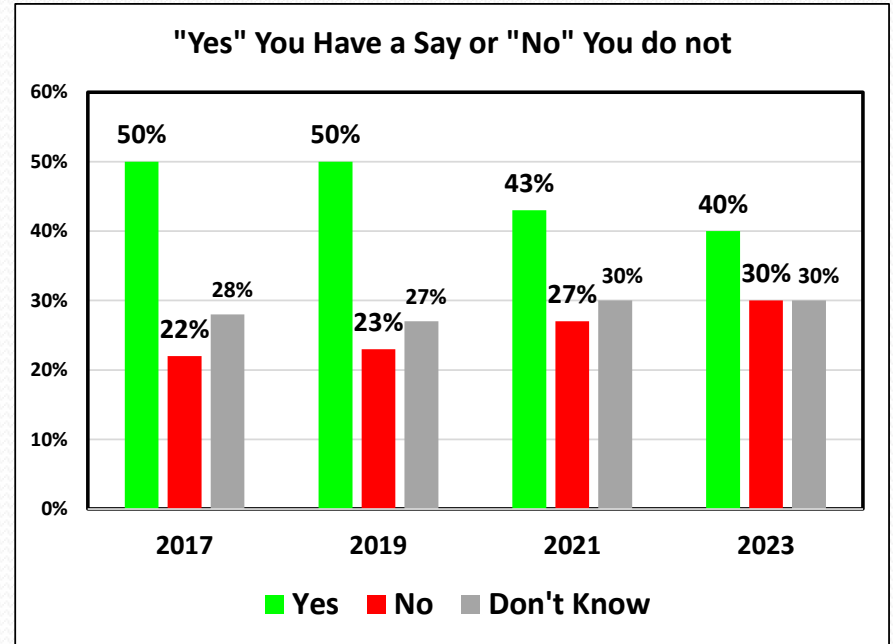
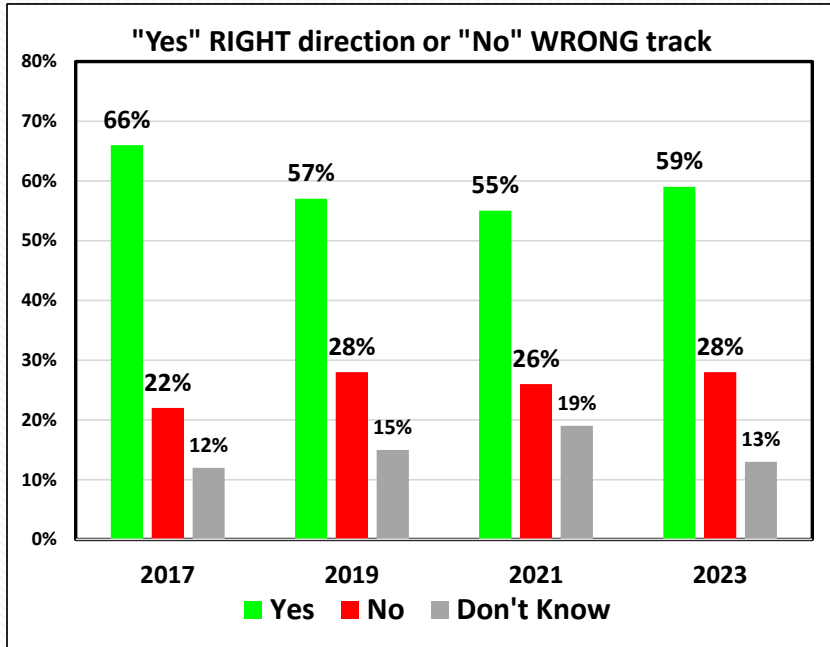
What is your opinion of the VALUE of taxes paid?

VALUE of services for taxes paid to Edina



The Four Most Recent Surveys 2017, 2019, 2021, & 2023

“RIGHT / WRONG track” & “HAVE a SAY”





2023 Polco Report – Cover Page

Since 2015, every Quality of Life survey report has been over 150 pages. The cover page for the 2023 survey is shown at right.

To assist those who believe in “*trust but verify*”, the page number references where the data for this historical trend analysis was found have been added in **red font**.

A similar cover page for 2017 is available upon request.

Rev #45



KEY PAGES

- pages 31 and 78-79 --- "MOST serious concern"
- page 47 & 97-98 --- "RIGHT or WRONG track" & "if No, WHY"
- pages 49 & 99--- "HAVE a SAY"



City of Edina
Resident Survey 2023

- page 94 --- "VALUE of taxes paid" & "BEST interest" & "resident CONFIDENCE"
- pages 271-272 --- # of surveys, # of replies, reply %

Report of Results

June 2023

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 **Polco**  **NRC**

8001 Terrace Ave., Middleton, WI 53562
info.polco.us • 608-709-8683