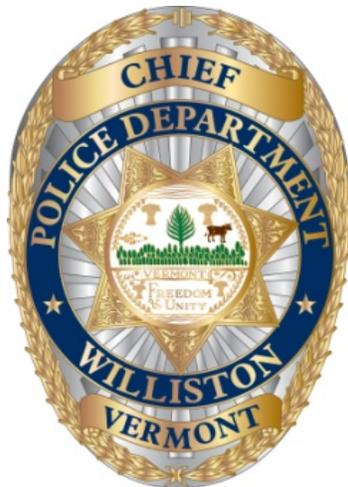


COMMUNITY SURVEY

2013



SEPTEMBER 6, 2013
WILLISTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
7928 Williston Road, Williston VT 05495

Basic Information

Survey period was from July 15, 2013 thru August 15, 2013.

We received 317 responses via Survey Monkey with another 8 hand written responses, Total 325. Our goal was to receive 5% of the residential population or about 435 responses.

325 Responses equates to approximately 3.7% of the towns residential population (Based on the latest estimate of 8,696 from American Fact Finder, <http://factfinder.census.gov>). A community survey denotes everyone within the community and not just residents. The survey did not include any manner of differentiation between resident and community member.

Summary

All in all, we were pleased with the outcome of the survey. Based on the type of survey (very general and unscientific) I believe this shows that we are doing a good job and have a professional standing within the community. One of the most important parts to a survey like this is that it offers the community a chance to provide feedback and offer input. Many respondents included quick notes of thanks for asking the communities input and to thank us for our service. Some respondents expressed criticisms in the general comments section and we will be taking a close look at those comments to see if there are ways for us to improve. Most criticisms concerned excessive speed issues, but some were directed toward interactions with employees and others about police equipment. All in all, 124 surveys had miscellaneous comments added.

Going through the survey responses starting with question #1, it seems as though there is a feeling that the crime rate in Williston is no different today than it was a year ago, see Figure 1. Only about 29% of respondents felt that it had increased.

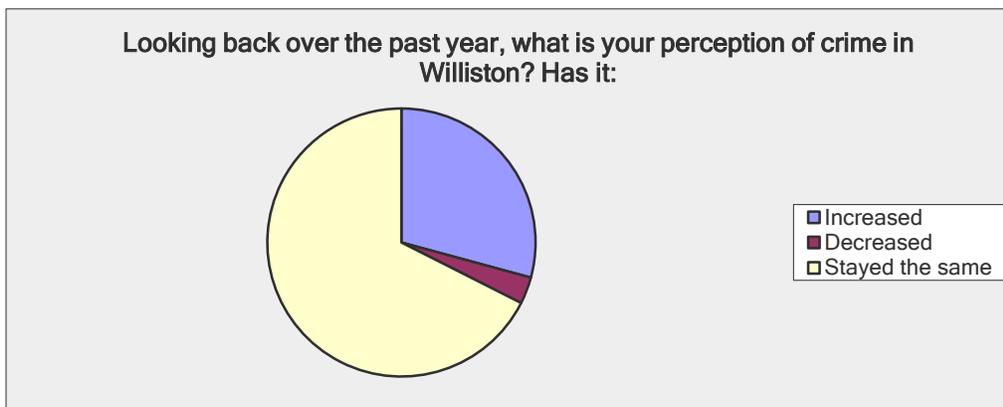


Figure 1

Even though there was some feeling that crime had increased, respondents, overall, did not feel that they had to change or limit their activities (Figure 2). As an example of change, we noted one respondent mentioned the installation of a security alarm in a home.

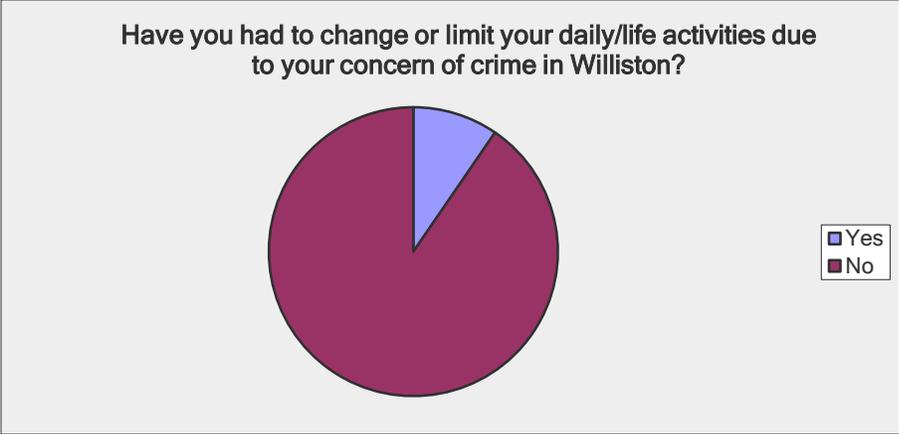


Figure 2

The next two questions (Figures 3 & 4) surround respondents concerns about different types of activity during the day and night hours. The charts represent averages where the higher the number, the more significant the concern. The questionnaire was rated with 1 being no concern, 2 being "Very little" concern, 3 being "Somewhat" concerned, and 4 being "Significant" concerns.

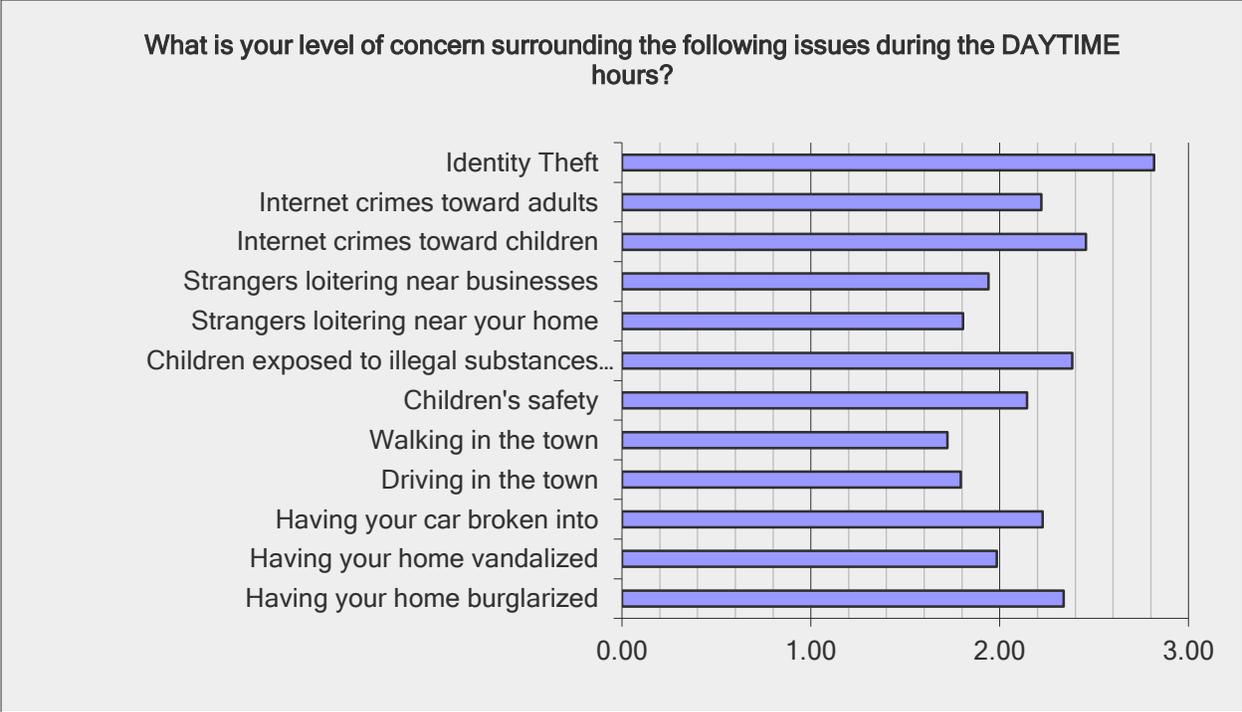


Figure 3

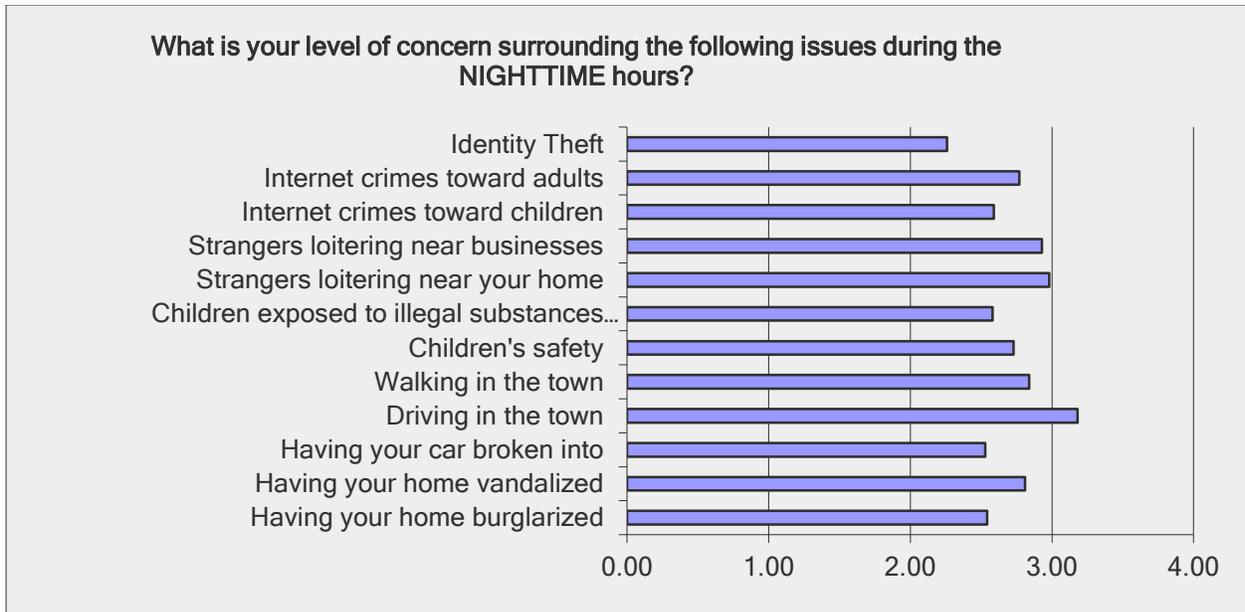


Figure 4

In the following chart, Figure 5, the rating criteria was actually the opposite from above, the closer the averages approached 4, respondents felt the issues were less of a problem in the town. Respondents identified that the operation of vehicles was more of a problem than noise issues or even burglaries. There are many areas in Williston that experience some form of traffic issue, but mostly around the area of Tafts Corners and along Route 2 and 2A. Our town has areas of high congestion as well as rural areas where speeds can be significantly higher. It was evident in my first year as Police Chief, after looking at our traffic crash statistics, that more attention is needed in and around intersections, but also noted that our officers have been doing a tremendous job. Efforts commenced prior to this survey to obtain additional grant funding for extra traffic safety enforcement efforts.

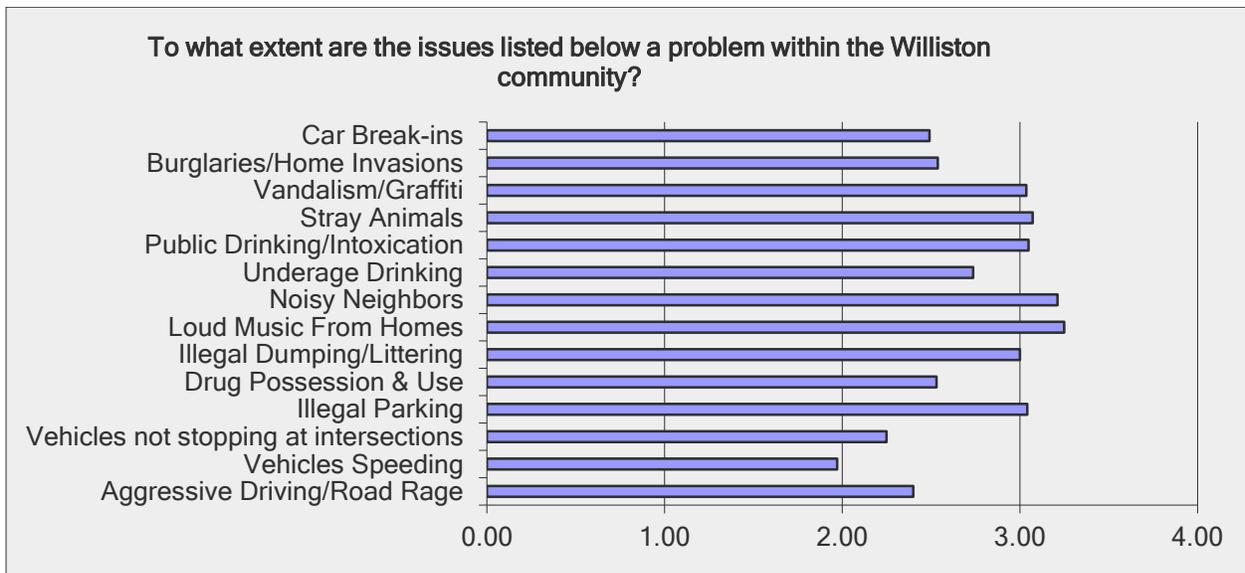


Figure 5

Question 6 points toward our agency, employees, and services provided. As the department head for our agency, I was very pleased with the responses in this question. Although there isn't a manager around that wouldn't love to have an all-around "Excellent" rating, I am very satisfied that we are in the "Good" to "Excellent" range. Ratings in the chart (Figure 6) are as follows: 1 = Poor, 2 = Fair, 3 = Average, 4 = Good and 5 = Excellent. Juvenile Services/Programs is low, but for good reason; We do not have, as of yet, any dedicated programs, but encourage our officers to interact with the community youth, have a presence in school, and participate in events such as safety days and hand out gift bags during Halloween.

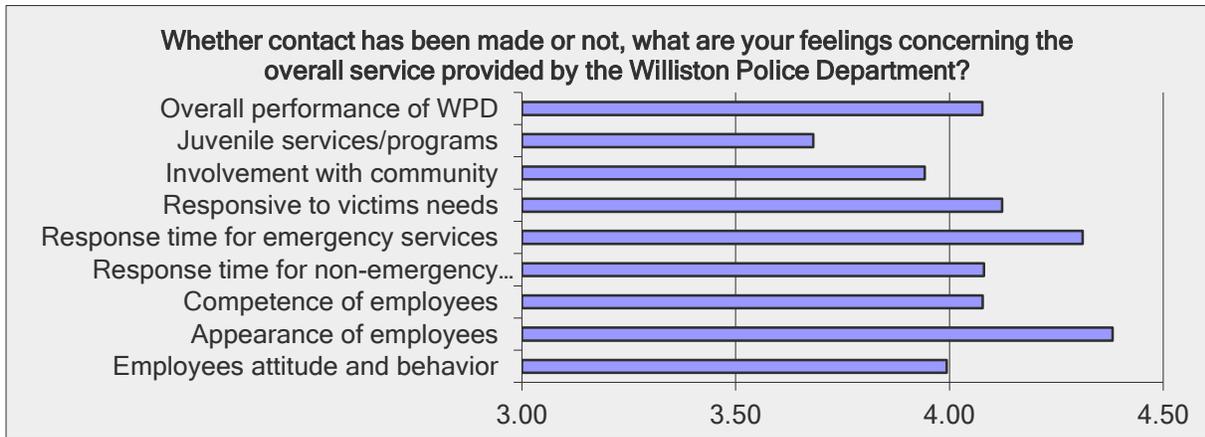


Figure 6

As the new Police Chief, I was very happy to see that the community felt safe (See Figures 7 & 8), not only in the town as a whole, but within their respective neighborhoods. Specifically looking at those surveys that listed their neighborhoods as being not safe, the areas listed were all over town with no specific neighborhood pinpointed. Of the responses, only 12 people listed their neighborhood as not being safe and another 9 people skipped the question all together. Being such a low number and scattered makes it difficult to assess this question, but maybe perceptions could change with additional communication or community outreach.

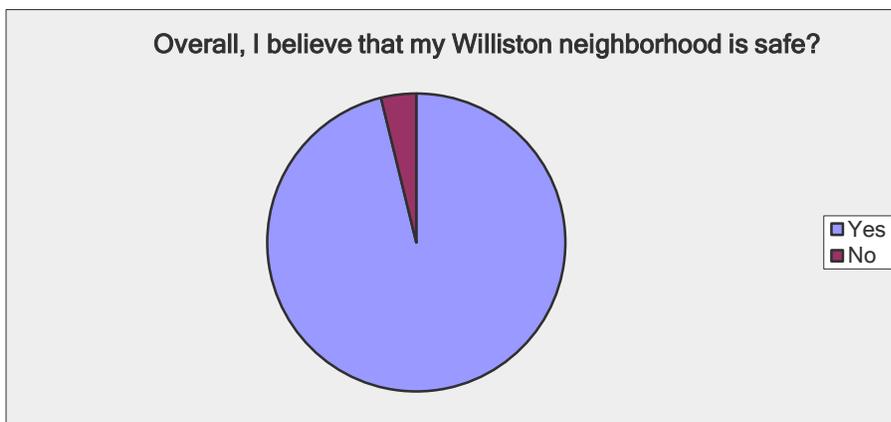


Figure 7

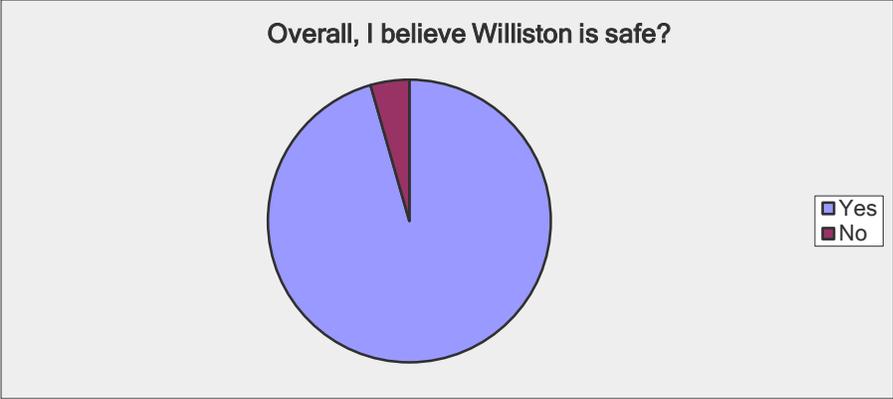


Figure 8

In the following questions (Figures 9-11), those that were victims of a crime, nearly 25% felt more in need of assistance than what might have been provided by our officers. This is an area that we can certainly improve on by asking simple questions of victims to see what their needs may be and also making the time to do a little more follow up contact with our victims. In some cases, additional assistance simply isn't available for the type of issue at hand. It is apparent that this survey did not reach the intended audience based on the number of responses indicating they weren't victims. We do perform a more directed survey to random complainants and victims on an ongoing monthly basis asking for immediate feedback and there are limited indications that our agency is weak on offering advice or providing victim service information.

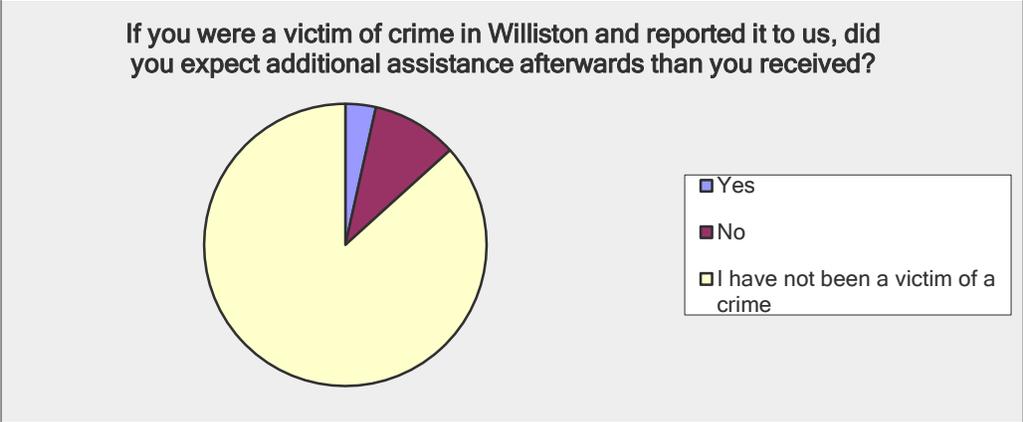


Figure 9

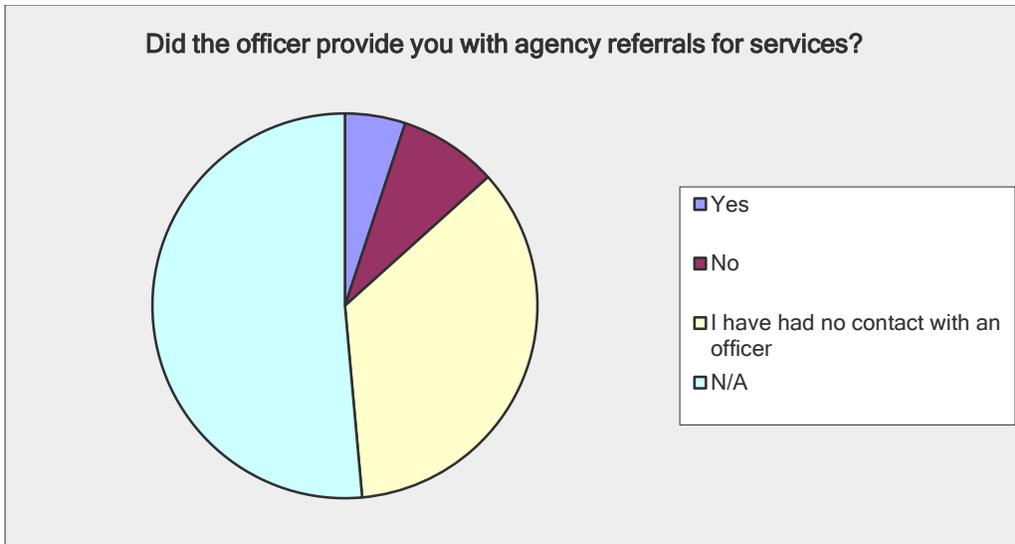


Figure 10

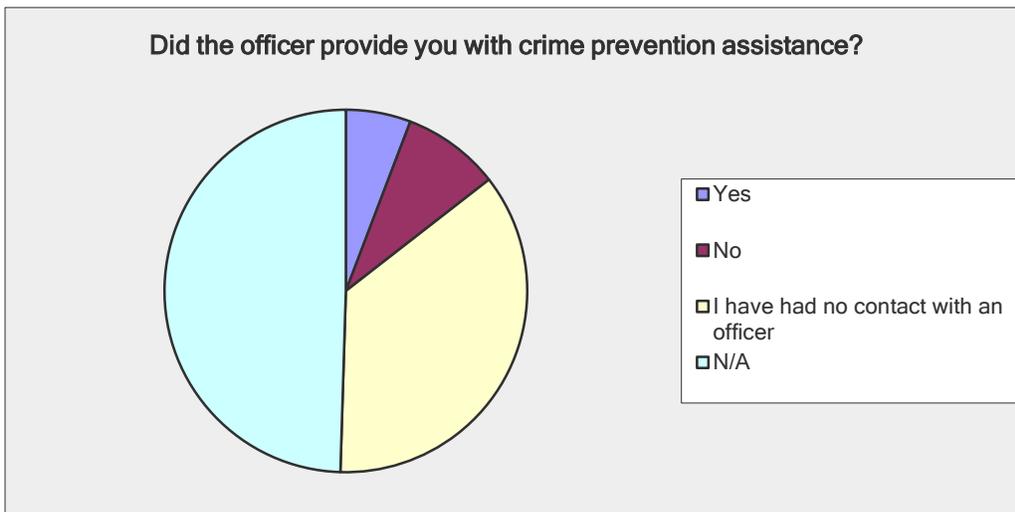


Figure 11

Those people who encountered a Williston Police Officer seem to be satisfied with their interaction (see Figures 12 & 13). It is encouraging to know this because this helps in determining whether an agency has any significant personnel or morale issues. Poor morale can certainly affect our interactions with our clients. We also know that we will never have 100% satisfaction by those who interact with us because there are times that negative consequences are the result of the interaction or a party may simply disagree with the outcome. Our goal cannot be to please everyone, but to perform our functions professionally, with our intent on doing so in a caring, humanistic, uniform, and common sense manner.

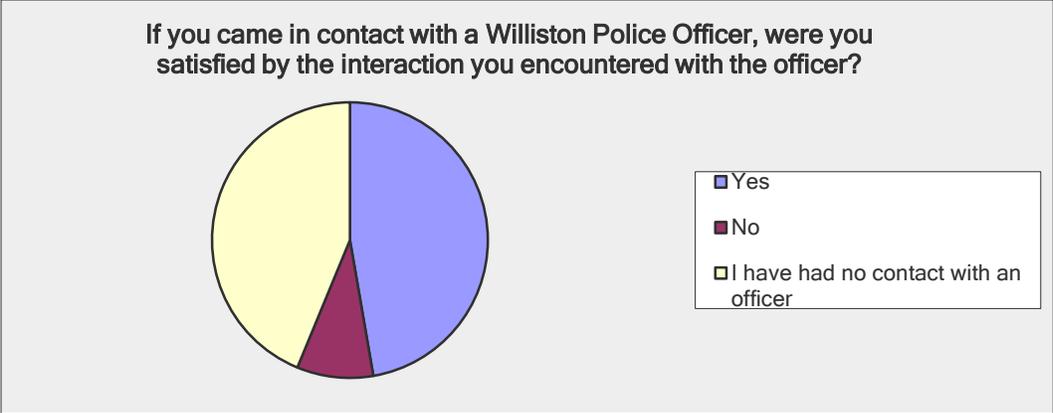


Figure 12

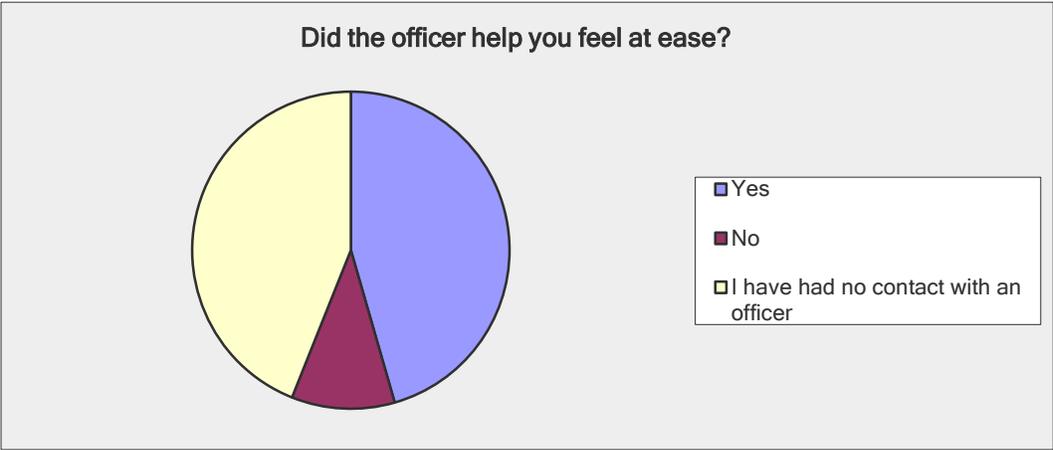


Figure 13

In an effort to gauge the delivery of services to our clients in an equal and non-judgmental manner, I believe we rated rather high (see Figure 14). There was an overwhelming majority of responses by those we had contact with that answered affirmatively their interaction with employees was without judgment.

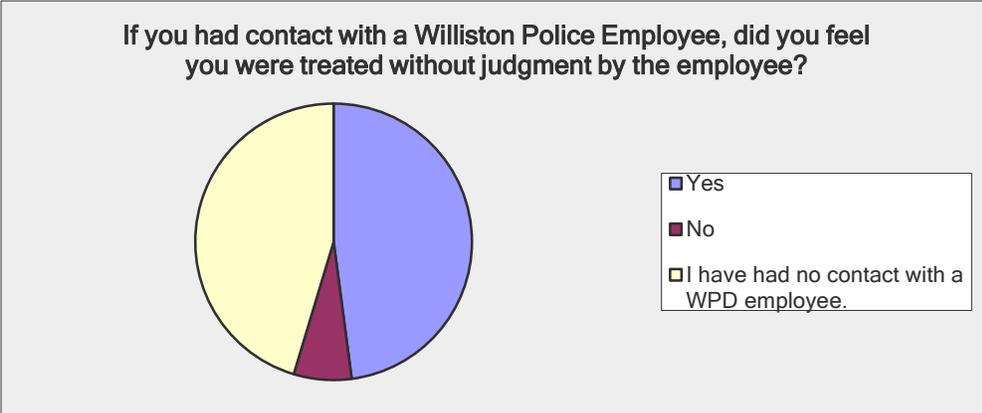


Figure 14

Out of 325 Surveys, 313 respondents answered this question about future planning (Figure 15). In this scale, the closer you approach 5, the more important each of these ideas is to the respondent. Since the survey started, we have already started an agency newsletter and have included in this year's goals the task to research the cost of getting an employee certified in RAD as well as look at alternatives to providing some form of school resource services. If we cannot afford to do this this year, we will look at alternatives to provide some RAD training for our community.

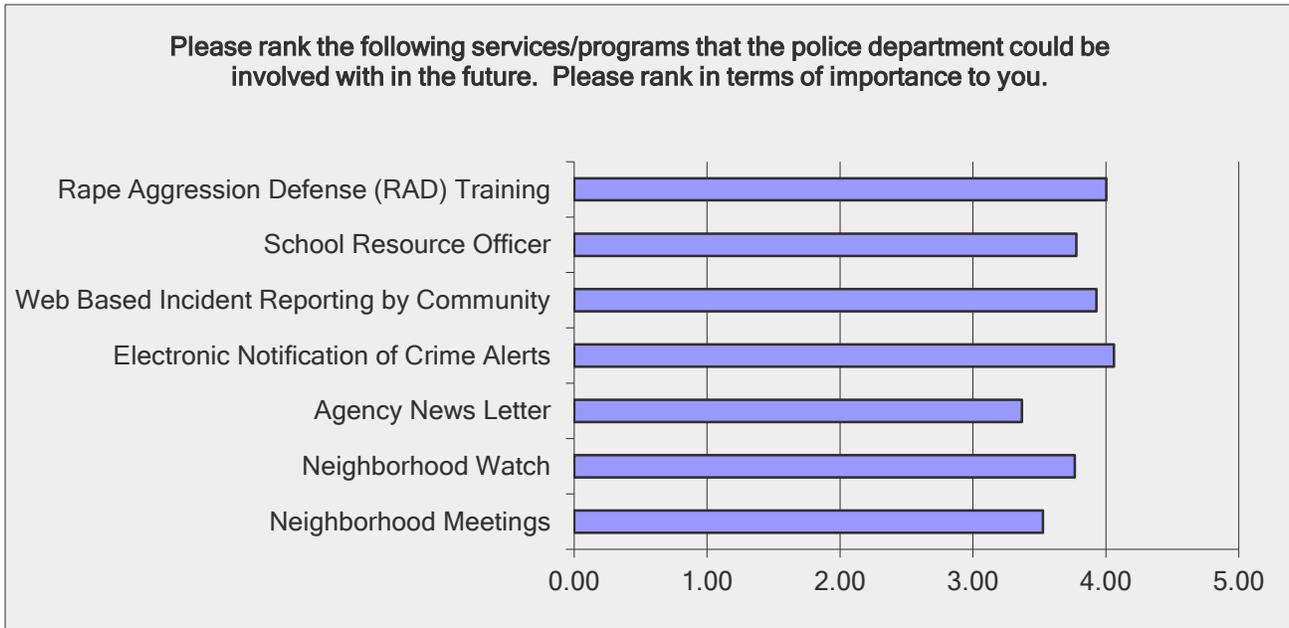


Figure 15

As this is the first survey conducted I think the response was great. I would like to conclude by adding a few of the specific quotes from respondents and thanking all those who took the time to complete the survey.

“As a member of the LGBT community, I was pleased and impressed that I felt no discrimination whatsoever by police officers when I had to report an incident. They were not in the least judgmental, but were highly professional and caring.”

“My impression is that the WPD has been placed under extreme demand due to crimes committed at the box stores. I would like to see those businesses bear additional financial responsibilities of security, potentially freeing the WPD from these demands.”

“There is a lot of speeding on Oak Hill Road and I think there could be a greater police presence. The electronic sign showing speed is very good.”

“ditch the expensive big cars for cheaper less macho angry and fuel efficient versions give the automated plate readers away spend more time in rural williston”

“Thank you for your service. We understand the town is growing and it is difficult to be in all places, but please do not overlook the areas that are not subdivision neighborhoods, especially those areas with a commuter road where drivers consistently exceed the speed limit and some even choose to make a nuisance of themselves. These areas and side streets are 'neighborhoods' too, just looking a little different from the traditional layout. Thanks for listening.”

“My impression is that the police department spends far too much time targeting driving violations for ticketing purposes and not enough on safety and crime prevention.”

“The speeding on North Williston Road is out of control. I am often passed if I am going the speed limit. I feel unsafe walking along the bike path because of the speed of passing cars. I wish there was more of a police presence on North Williston Road. It doesn't look like the traffic and volume of cars is going away anytime soon so it would be great if the speed limit could be enforced.”

“Several summers ago my teenage son used to bike home from his friends home late at night. He was often followed or stopped by a police officer – checking whether he was OK (no drugs/drinking I assume) That was great! The police officer gave him a light for his bike as he didn't have one. That was SUPER! My son has a good association with the police because of that one officer's concern and actions. Nice job! (My son now drives a car, still no drugs or drinking and driving) :o)”