



Public Safety Survey
Report of Results
December 2021



Executive Summary

The City of Sisters conducted a public safety survey in November of 2021. The intent of the survey was to reach residents and business owners within the City and gather direct data regarding feelings on public safety and levels of law enforcement. In order to do this, the City used utility accounts for residents and businesses as the survey distribution list.

A total of 1,800 surveys were distributed. There was a survey and return envelope within each delivered envelope with pre-paid postage. On the survey, the City noted to return the survey by November 30, 2021. However, as surveys were still coming in consistently past that date, the City included surveys returned through December 6, 2021.

Through December 6, 2021, the City received 662 completed surveys equaling a 36.7% response rate. Although the City had hoped for a slightly higher return rate, this is a robust response rate for a mailed survey.

The final survey that was distributed is attached as Exhibit A at the end of this report. If you would like a copy of the raw survey data, please contact Kerry Prosser, City Recorder, at kprosser@ci.sisters.or.us or call City Hall at 541-549-6022.

The introductory paragraph to the survey stated:

This survey is offered every two years, and the City of Sisters strongly values your opinion. Responses will inform the City Council and their continued prioritization of public safety in Sisters. We are asking you to take 10-15 minutes to complete this 21-question survey. You can either submit one survey on behalf of your household or indicate more than one set of responses on this survey. Please return to the City (either mail or drop off) by November 30th. A summary report will be issued of the survey results.

The following pages contain a compilation of the results from the surveys. The presentation of this data has not been editorialized. The use of this information will be shaped through additional in-person conversations at the City Council.

We hope you find this report helpful in summarizing the outputs from the public safety survey.

Results

Residency

- Question One in the survey asked whether the City of Sisters was the primary residence of the survey taker. There were 646 responses with 564 (87.3%) responding “yes”, and 82 (12.7%) responding “no”.
- Question Sixteen in the survey asked how long the survey taker had lived in Sisters. This was a fill-in-the-blank question. There were 624 responses with 229 (36.7%) indicating three or fewer years, 95 (15.2%) responses between 3-7 years, 106 (17%) indicated 7-14 years, 74 (11.9%) responses greater than 15 years, while 120 (19.2%) indicated they lived in Sisters 20 years or more.

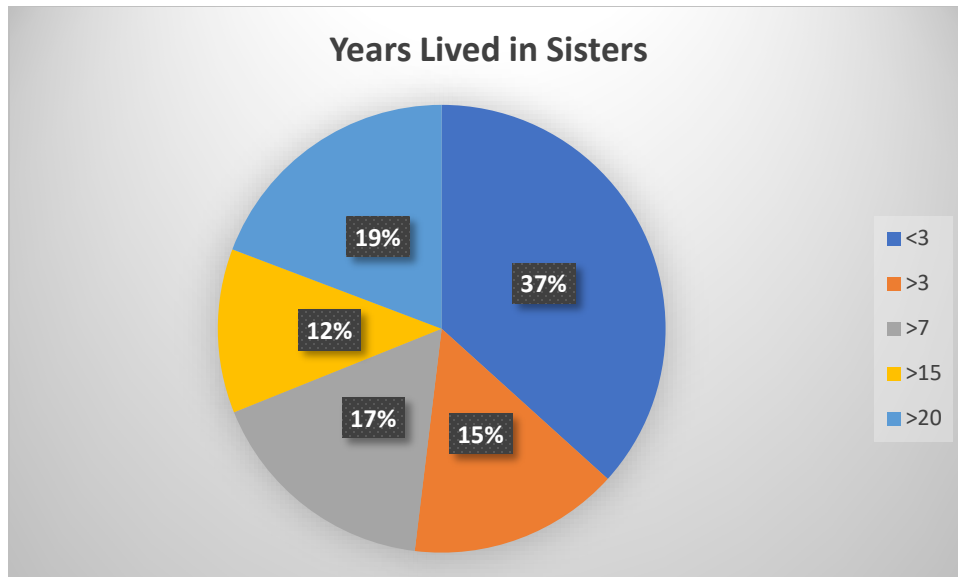


Figure 1: Question 16- 2021 Public Safety Survey

Public Safety Problems and Threats

- Questions Two through Nine asked about various threats to public safety (property crime, violent crime, illegal drugs, alcohol, domestic violence, child abuse, traffic safety, and public disorder offenses) and their level as a problem (major, moderate, minor, not, do not know). The charts below compare the **2021 results (in orange)** with the **2019 results (in yellow)**.

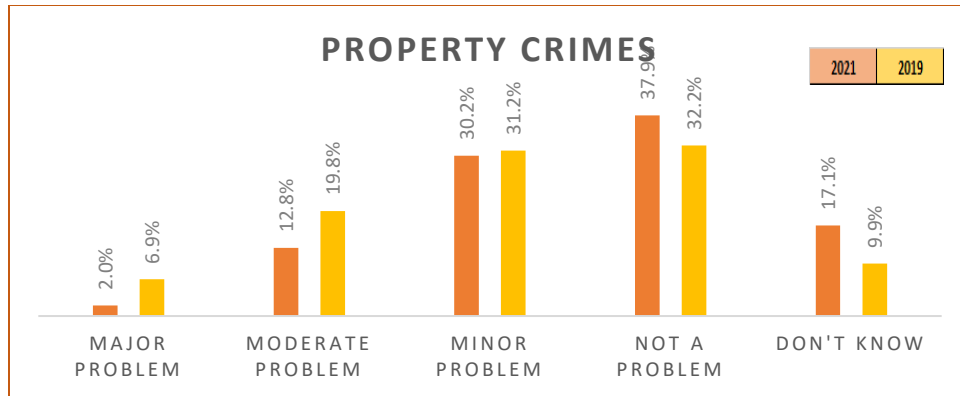


Figure 2: Question 2-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

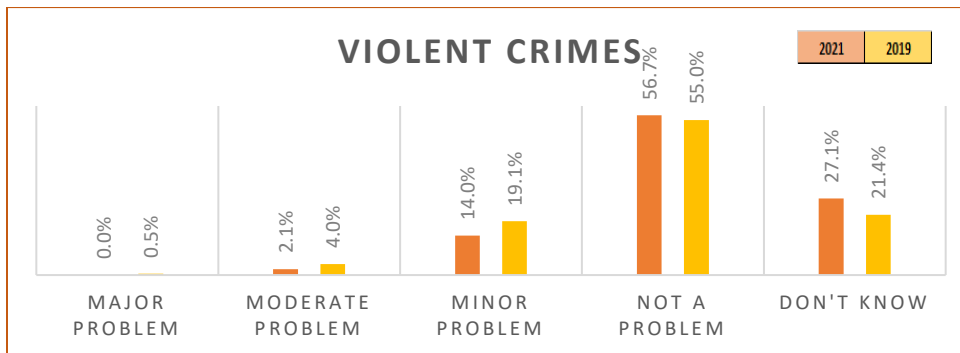


Figure 3: Question 3-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

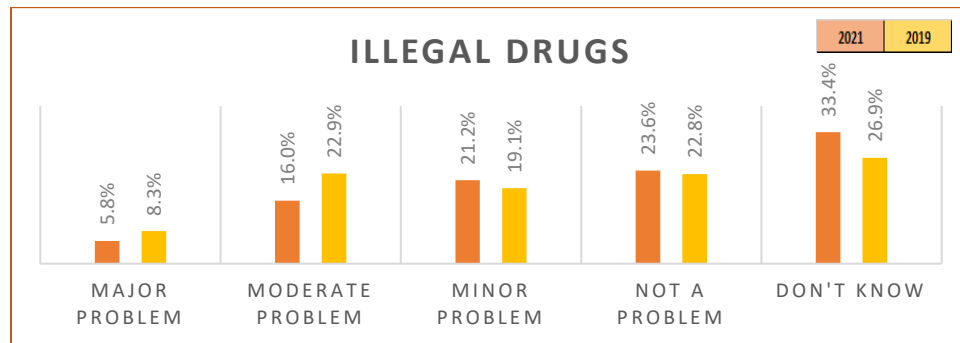


Figure 4: Question 4-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

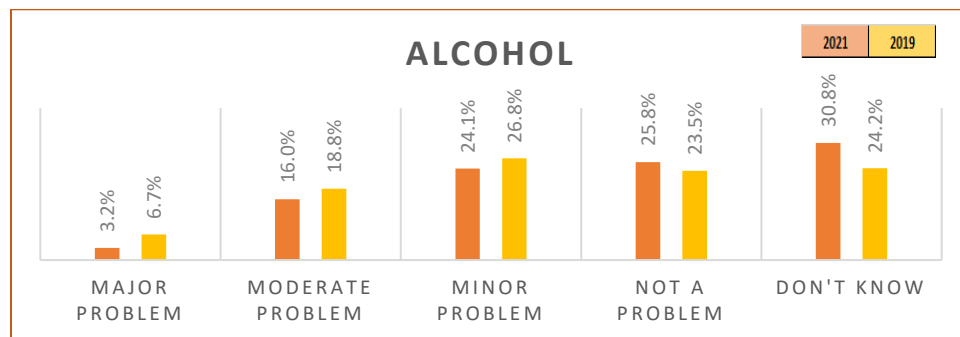


Figure 5: Question 5-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

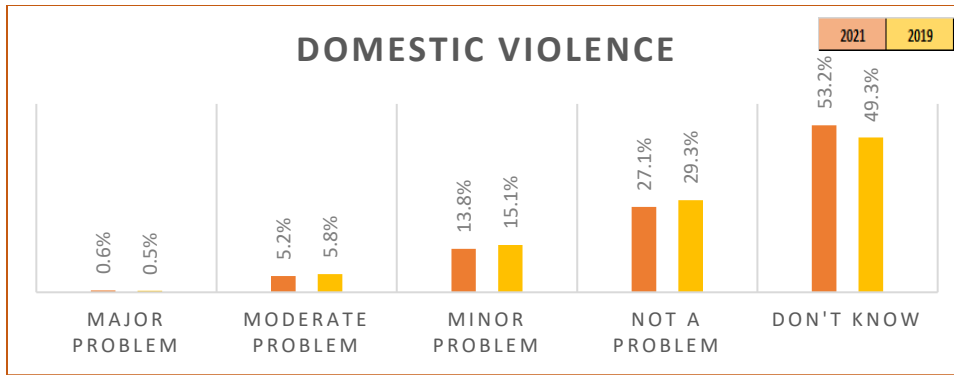


Figure 6: Question 6-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

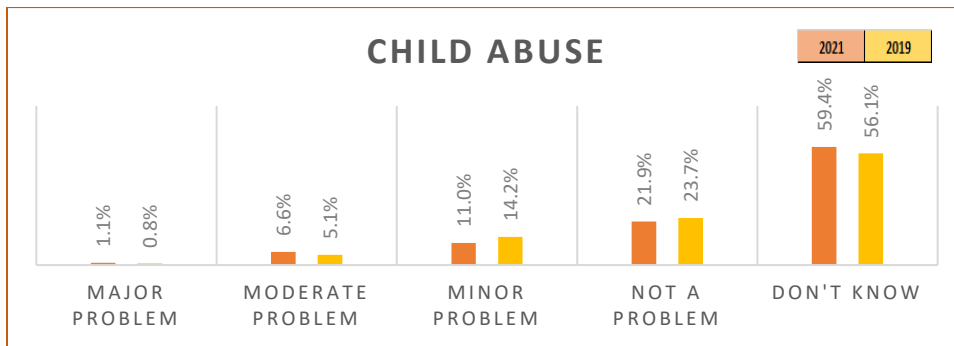


Figure 7: Question 7-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

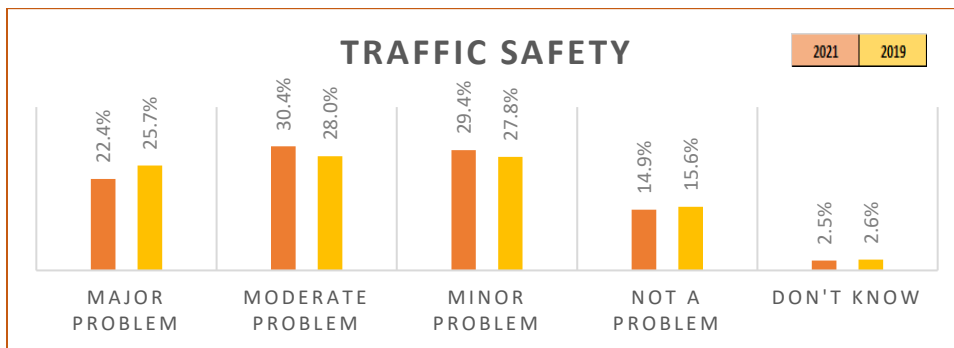


Figure 8: Question 8-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

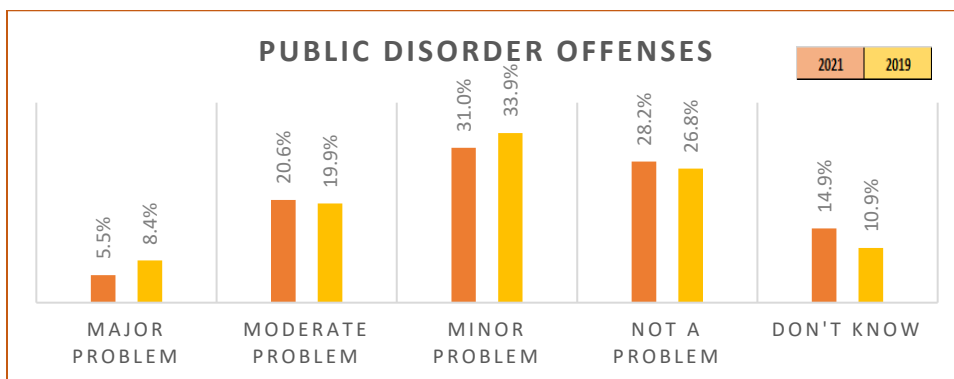


Figure 9: Question 9-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

- Question Ten asked survey takers, "which of the following do you think represents the biggest threat to public safety in Sisters?"

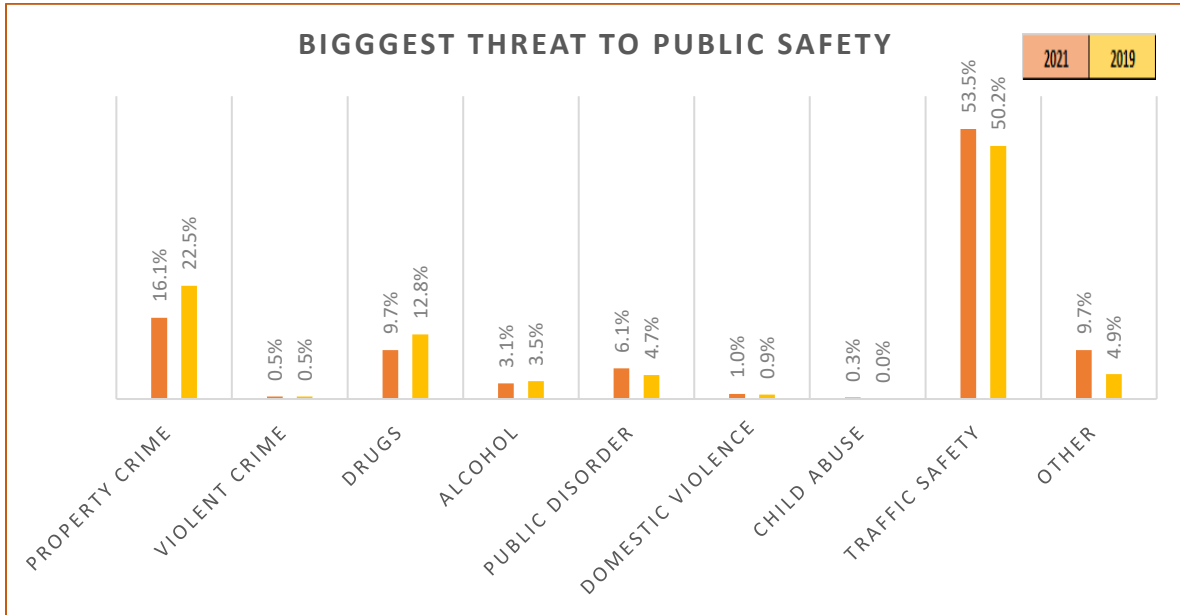


Figure 10: Question 10-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

Personal Safety

- Question Twelve focused on capturing the survey taker’s general feelings of safety during the day versus the night:

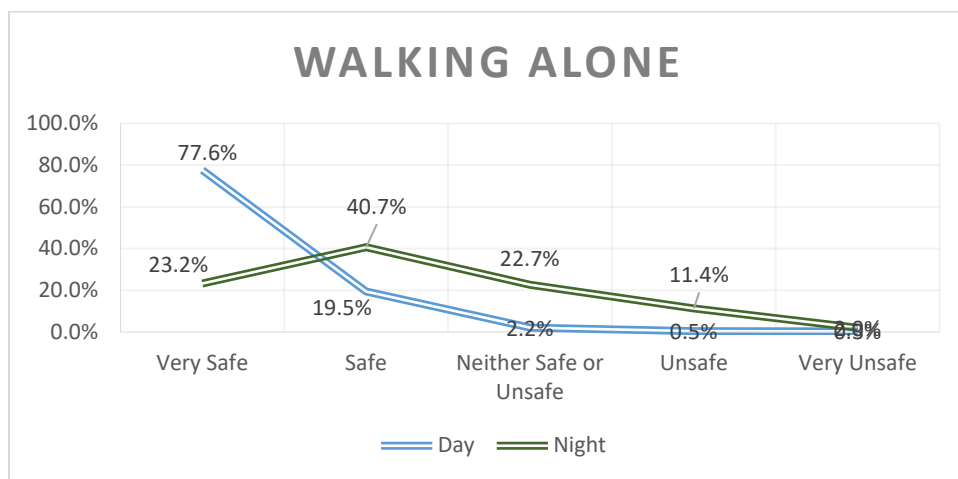


Figure 12: Question 12- 2021 Public Safety Survey

- Question Thirteen asked, “on a scale from 0-10, with 0 being never and 10 being all of the time, how often have you worried about the following in Sisters during the daytime?” Question Fourteen asked the same for nighttime.

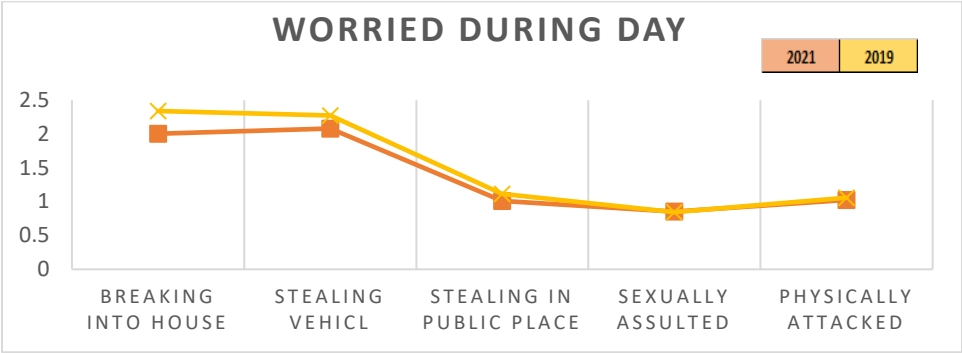


Figure 13: Question 13-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

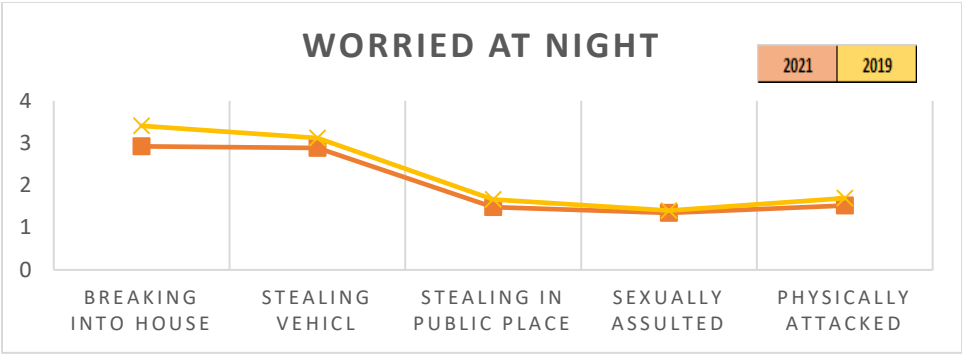


Figure 14: Question 14-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

- Question Fifteen asked, “on a scale from 0-10, with 0 strongly disagree, and 10 strongly agree to what extent do you agree with the following about Sisters?” Compared to 2019, there was no substantial change to these questions.
 - "Sisters is a good area to raise children."
 - Average was 8.97 (-.50%)
 - "I am happy to live/work here."
 - Average was 9.11 (-1%)
 - "People in Sisters can be trusted."
 - Average was 8.37 (0%)
 - "I share responsibility for the quality of life and safety in Sisters."
 - Average was 9.23 (-1%)
 - "I have been active in helping to improve the quality of life and safety in Sisters."
 - Average was 6.84 (-2%)

- Question Eleven asked, "what happened to public safety in the City of Sisters over the past 24 months? (By 'public safety' we mean things like property crime, violent crime, domestic violence, child abuse, public disorder, and traffic safety):

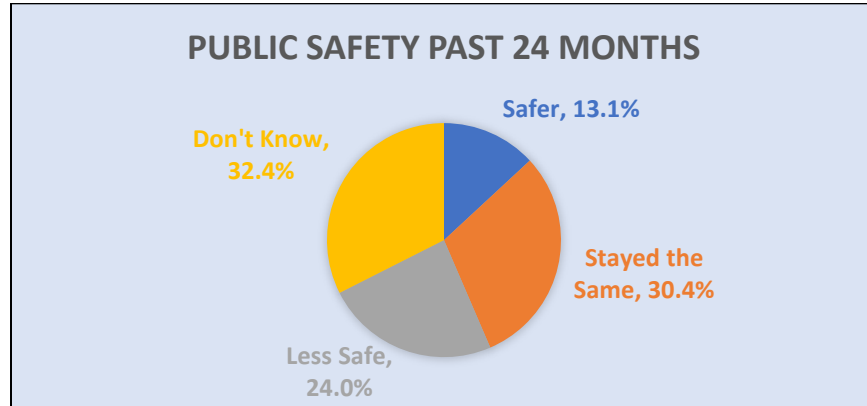


Figure 15: Question 11- 2021 Public Safety Survey

Current Law Enforcement Service and Increase of Revenue

- Question Seventeen asked, "how would you rate our contracted law enforcement service within the City from the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office?":

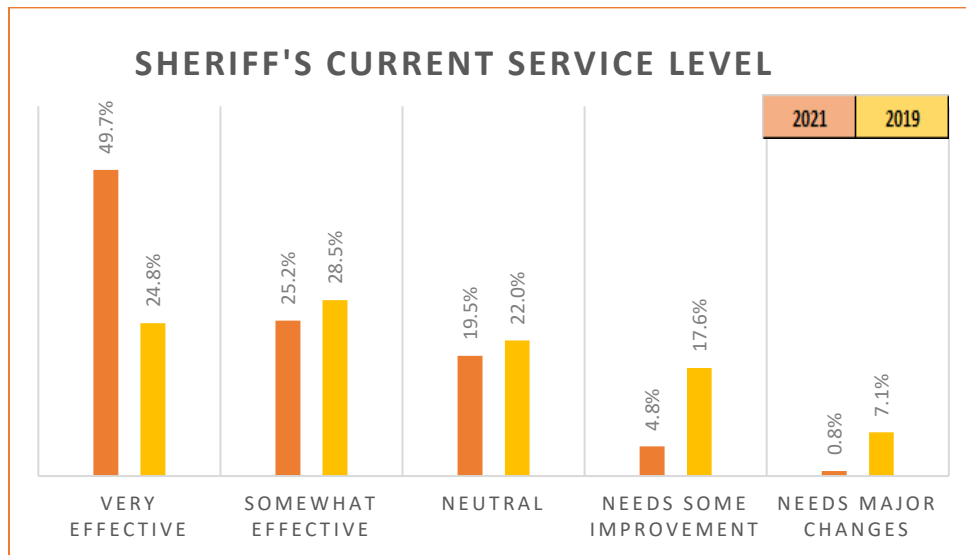


Figure 16: Question 17-Comparison between 2019 and 2021 Public Safety Surveys

- Question Eighteen asked, "based on your response above, what changes if any, would you recommend in regard to our contracted service with DCSO?" This was an open-ended question that allowed survey takers to share comments. Some of the comments shared are listed below:

- More local patrols, it would be great to meet more of the deputies
 - Like the foot patrol and bike patrols. Nice to see DCSO posted @ very visible locations
 - More emphasis on controlling speeders & reckless drivers
 - Make drivers accountable for driving far above the posted speed when entering Sisters
 - More traffic stings-too many people speeding into and out of the City.
 - More traffic control on Hwy 20 entering, traveling through town. Better signage would help
 - Issue more traffic citations in town and in residential neighborhoods!
 - The increased presence is positive-Raises everyone level of attention to traffic and safety
 - Our Sheriff's office is very visible
 - Do some community policing. Get out of the vehicles. Drop-in on downtown activities/shops.
 - Build relationships, trust. Help the community become community policing partners.
 - Too Many police officers
 - More traffic control around elementary and highway.
 - We like seeing the additional DCSO staff here in Sisters.
 - Traffic is too much-Need roundabout by Sisters Elementary
- Question Nineteen asked how important the following issues were to the survey taker:

1	Wildfire Prevention	364	28.8%
2	Traffic Safety	354	28.0%
3	Preserving Livability	240	19.0%
4	Houseless/Homeless support	127	10.0%
5	Environmental Sustainability	81	6.4%
6	Code Enforcement	37	2.9%
7	Noise Enforcement	37	2.9%
8	Other	25	2.0%

Figure 17: Question 19- 2021 Public Safety Survey

- Question Twenty asked, “how willing would you be to pay more per month (additional utility fee) or annually (property tax levy) for increased and enhanced law enforcement services in Sisters?”

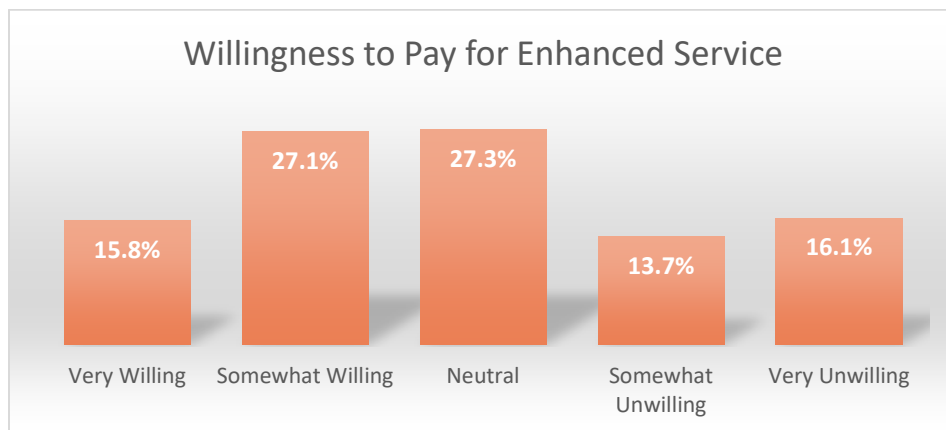


Figure 18: Question 20- 2021 Public Safety Surveys

Open-Ended Questions and Comments Section

- Question Twenty-one asked, “Do you have any public safety concerns not addressed in this survey?” Some of the comments shared are listed below:
 - The streets are too dark at night while driving
 - Curtail development/follow noise limits
 - Hate the traffic circle-unsafe. Put in a stoplight next time!
 - Fear of cougar attacks
 - It is hard to turn onto Hwy 20 at locust when traffic is speeding at 40 mph
 - A major threat is political division caused by outside influences.
 - Hwy 242 in front of churches & schools-drugs, speeding. Sheriff needs to be there more frequently.
 - Speeding and not stopping for pedestrians a problem on Cascade.
 - Homelessness if not addressed will be a primary concern for safety and security.
 - I don't want more light (for safety) if it degrades the dark night sky initiative
 - It is too dark to feel safe out at night.
 - I would like to see panhandling outlawed.
 - Local urgent medical care above emergency services
 - It is difficult to find bike racks to secure my bike in town.
 - Biggest threat: squatters/long term homeless camps
 - Biggest threat: The anti-mask group
 - Biggest threat: roving groups of vandalizing, unattended teenagers/children
 - Property damage and safety issues for domestic pets and public from aggressive deer.
 - Homeless in woods near trails used by public.

Conclusion

The Public Safety Survey asked a wide variety of questions to better understand current residents' and businesses' perspectives on public safety and law enforcement. With a response rate of 36.7%, this data will help shape the conversation regarding future public safety services in the City of Sisters.

Based on several of the quantitative questions, people generally feel very safe in Sisters both during the day and at night and are not worried about being a victim of crime. The biggest threat, 53.5%, was reported to be *Traffic Safety*, while the next largest threat was *Property Crimes* at 16.1%. Wildfire Prevention, 28.8%, and Traffic Safety, 28%, were the most important issues for survey respondents.

Current DCSO services were rated as *Very Effective* or *Somewhat Effective* by over 75% of respondents, while 19.5% indicated *Neutral* and 4.8% *Needs Some Improvement*, and .8% *Needs Major Changes*.

Overall, the City appreciates those that took the time to fill out the survey to help us better understand public sentiments on public safety and law enforcement needs and ultimately provide better services on behalf of the community.

EXHIBIT A
City of Sisters 2021 Public Safety Survey
(attached)

2021 CITY OF SISTERS PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

This survey is offered every two years and the City of Sisters strongly values your opinion. Responses will inform City Council and their continued prioritization of public safety in Sisters. We are asking you to take 10-15 minutes to complete this 21-question survey. You can either submit one survey on behalf of your household or indicate more than one set of responses on this survey. Please return to the city (either mail or drop off) by November 30th. A summary report will be issued of the survey results.

1. Is the City of Sisters your primary residence (*Your primary residence is the dwelling where you spend the most time*)?
 - Yes
 - No

2. Are PROPERTY CRIMES currently a problem (theft, burglary, car break-ins, etc.)?
 - Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know

3. Are VIOLENT CRIMES currently a problem (assault, robbery, rape, etc.)?
 - Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know

4. Are ILLEGAL DRUGS currently a problem (people using, people selling, driving under the influence, etc.)?
 - Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know

5. Is ALCOHOL currently a problem (use by minors, public drunkenness, driving under the influence, etc.)?
 - Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know

2021 CITY OF SISTERS PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

6. Is DOMESTIC VIOLENCE currently a problem (physical abuse, harassment, or stalking of a current/former intimate partner)?
- Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know
7. Is CHILD ABUSE currently a problem (physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, etc.)?
- Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know
8. Is TRAFFIC SAFETY currently a problem (aggressive driving, speeding, running stop signs, etc.)?
- Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know
9. Are PUBLIC DISORDER OFFENSES currently a problem (noise, squatters, trespassing, panhandling, etc.)?
- Major Problem
 - Moderate Problem
 - Minor Problem
 - Not a Problem
 - Don't Know
10. Which of the following do you think currently represents the biggest threat to public safety in Sisters? *(Select one item from the list below)*
- Property Crime
 - Violent Crime
 - Drugs
 - Alcohol
 - Public Disorder Offenses
 - Domestic Violence
 - Child Abuse
 - Traffic Safety
 - Other (describe): _____

2021 CITY OF SISTERS PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

11. What happened to public safety in the City of Sisters over the past 24 months? (By “public safety” we mean things like property crime, violent crime, domestic violence, child abuse, public disorder, and traffic safety)

- Safer
- Stayed the Same
- Less Safe
- Don't Know

12. How safe would you feel walking alone during the daytime and nighttime? Circle one from each column:

Daytime

Nighttime

Very Safe

Very Safe

Safe

Safe

Neither Safe or Unsafe

Neither Safe or Unsafe

Unsafe

Unsafe

Very Unsafe

Very Unsafe

13. On a scale from 0-10, with 0 being never and 10 being all of the time, how often have you worried about the following in Sisters during the daytime?

- Somebody breaking into your home/work and stealing or damaging things ____
- Somebody stealing your vehicle, things from it or damaging it ____
- Somebody stealing from you in a public place ____
- You or somebody you know being sexually assaulted ____
- You or somebody you know being physically attacked ____

14. On a scale from 0-10, with 0 being never and 10 being all of the time, how often have you worried about the following in Sisters during the nighttime?

- Somebody breaking into your home/work and stealing or damaging things ____
- Somebody stealing your vehicle, things from it or damaging it ____
- Somebody stealing from you in a public place ____
- You or somebody you know being sexually assaulted ____
- You or somebody you know being physically attacked ____

15. On a scale from 0-10, with 0 strongly disagree, and 10 strongly agree to what extent do you agree with the following about Sisters?

- Sisters is a good area to raise children ____
- I am happy to live/work here ____
- People in Sisters can be trusted ____
- I share responsibility for the quality of life and safety in Sisters ____
- I have been active in helping to improve the quality of life and safety in Sisters ____

16. How long have you lived in Sisters? _____

2021 CITY OF SISTERS PUBLIC SAFETY SURVEY

17. How would you rate our contracted law enforcement service within the City from the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office?

- Very Effective
- Somewhat Effective
- Neutral
- Needs Some Improvement
- Needs Major Changes

18. Based on your response to the question above, what changes, if any, would you recommend in regard to our contracted service with DCSO?

19. How important are the following issues to you, please circle your top two.

- Traffic Safety
- Wildfire Prevention
- Houseless/Homeless Support
- Code Enforcement
- Noise Enforcement
- Environmental Sustainability
- Preserving Livability
- Other _____

20. How willing would you be to pay more per month (additional utility fee) or annually (property tax levy) for increased law enforcement services in Sisters?

- Very Willing
- Somewhat Willing
- Neutral
- Somewhat Unwilling
- Very Unwilling

21. Do you have any public safety concerns not addressed in this survey?
