

Princeton Economic Development Authority

Pulse of Princeton Survey Results
April 21, 2022
REVISED May 6, 2022

MAIN THEMES

- Tourism
- Manufacturing and Industrial
- Retail, Restaurants and Service Industries
- Transportation
- Housing
- Age-Friendly
- Private and Public Sector Relations





Pulse of Princeton 2022

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) of the City of Princeton requests your feedback for the city's EDA Strategic Plan. Please return the survey to City Hall at 705 2nd Street North

<p>How do you identify yourself to Princeton, Minnesota? (Select 1 option)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I live within the City of Princeton (non-townships)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I live within the Princeton ISD #477 School District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I work for a Princeton School Area Business</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I am a visitor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)</p>	<p>What is your favorite part of Princeton, Minnesota? (Select all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School District</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retail Shopping</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Parks/Recreation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Community</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Employment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)</p>		
<p>Which of the following areas should the city invest time and resources? (Select up to 3 answers)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tourism</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing / Industrial</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retail, Restaurants / Services Industries</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Age-Friendly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Private / Public Sector Relations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Age</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Under 18</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 19-29</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 30-39</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50-59</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 60-69</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 70-79</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Over 80</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Tourism</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing / Industrial</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Retail, Restaurants / Services Industries</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Housing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Age-Friendly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Private / Public Sector Relations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)</p>	<p>Age</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Under 18</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 19-29</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 30-39</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50-59</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 60-69</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 70-79</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Over 80</p>
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Comment



SURVEY MARKETING

- City of Princeton Website
- Facebook Community Groups
- Community Groups
- Posters around town including library
- City Hall and Princeton Chamber
- Electronic community sign
- HR Listservs



SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Responses	402
Responses January 2022	6
Responses February 2022	173
Responses March 2022	170
Manual May 2022	53



SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

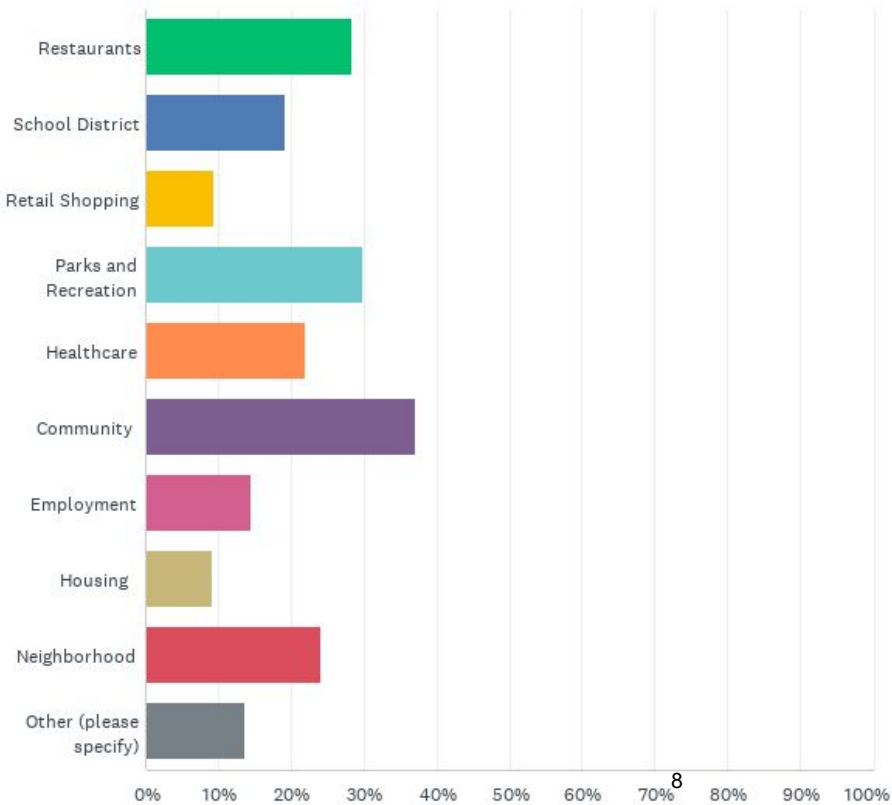
How do you identify yourself?	Sum of Survey Count
I am a visitor	17
I live within the Princeton ISD#477 School District	144
I live within the the City of Princeton (non-townships)	128
I work for a Princeton area business	86
Other (please specify)	27
Grand Total	402



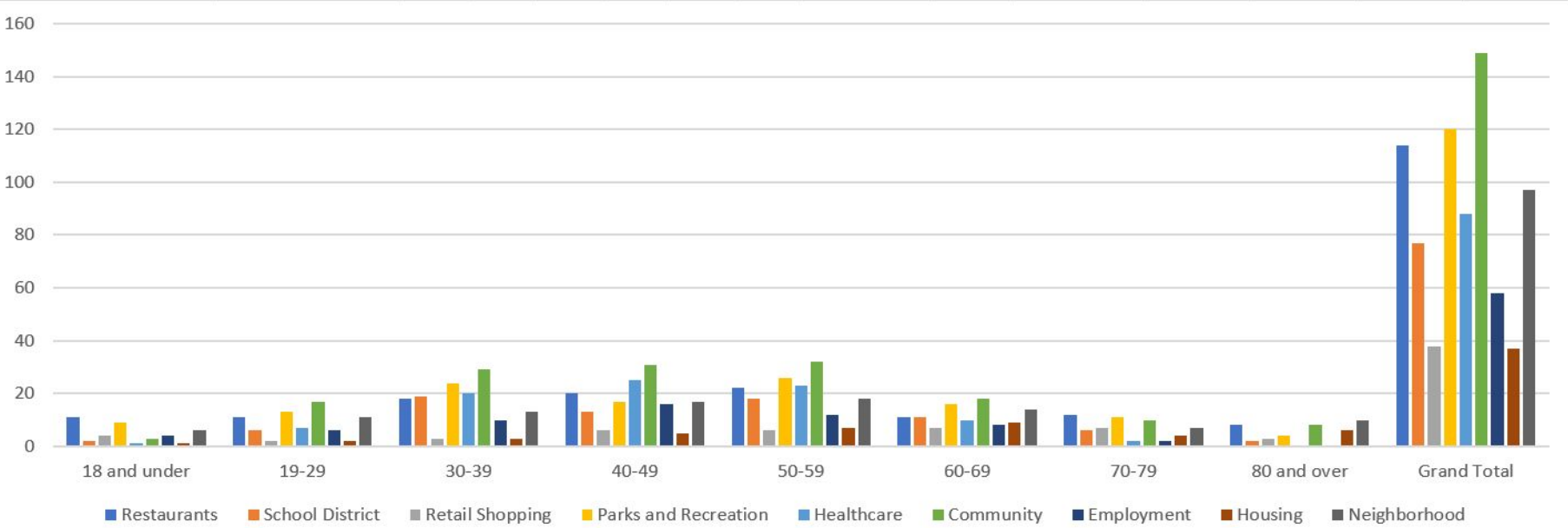
SURVEY COMMENT ASSUMPTIONS

- Airport comments = Transportation
- All community comments (children, elderly, etc) = Age-Friendly
- Recreation comments = Tourism

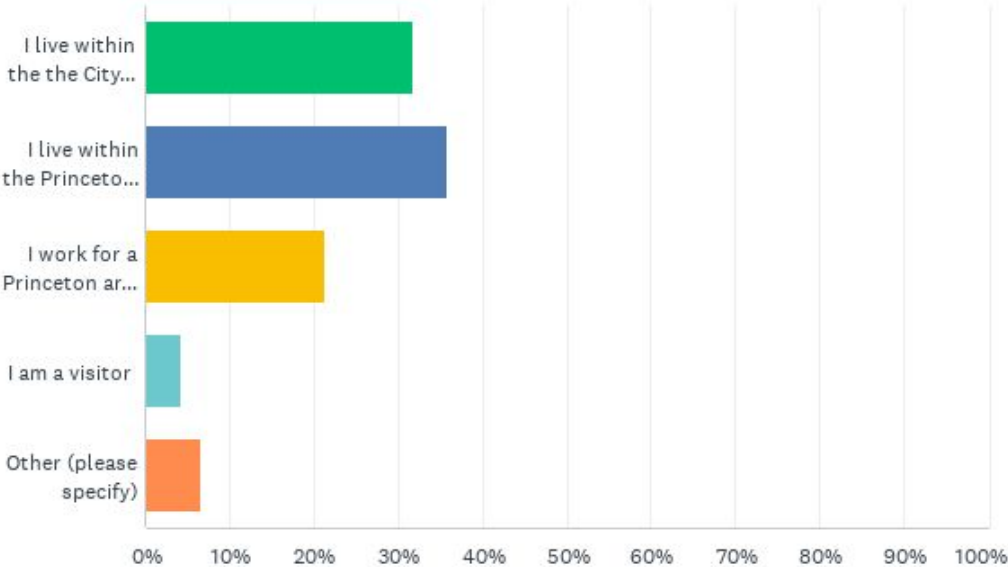
Q1 What is your favorite part of Princeton, Minnesota? (Select all that apply)



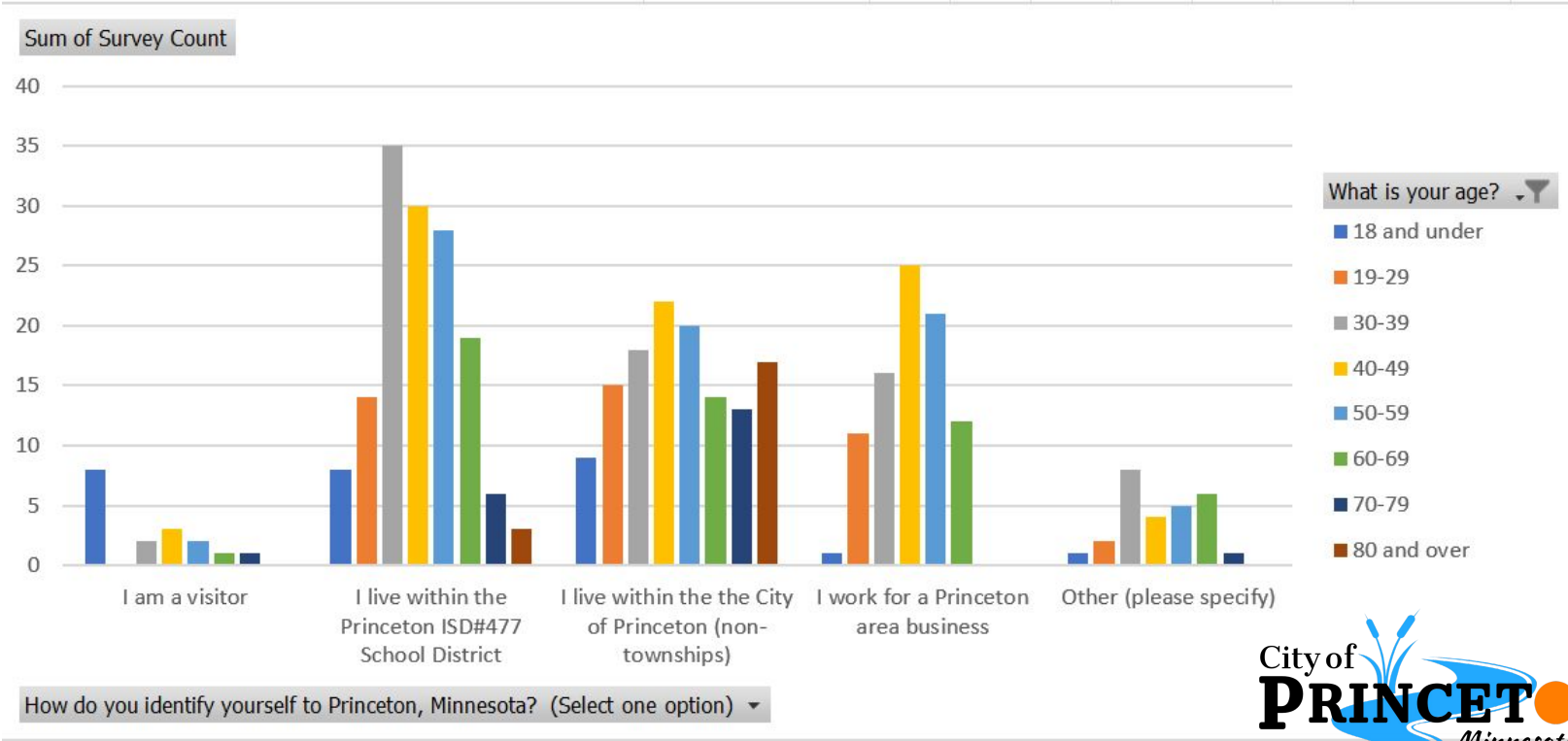
FAVORITE PRINCETON BY AGE



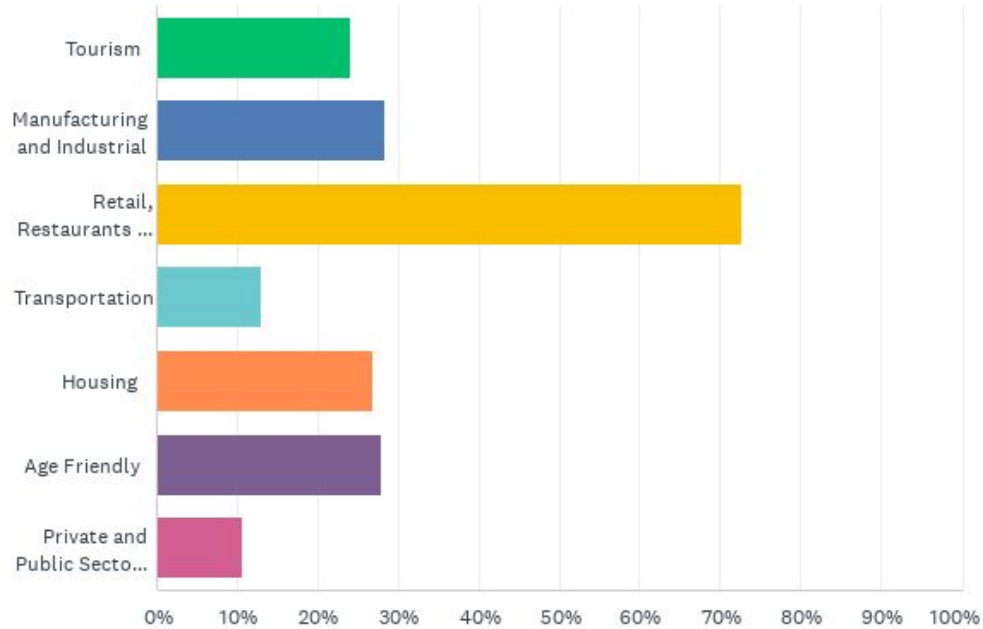
Q2 How do you identify yourself to Princeton, Minnesota? (Select one option)



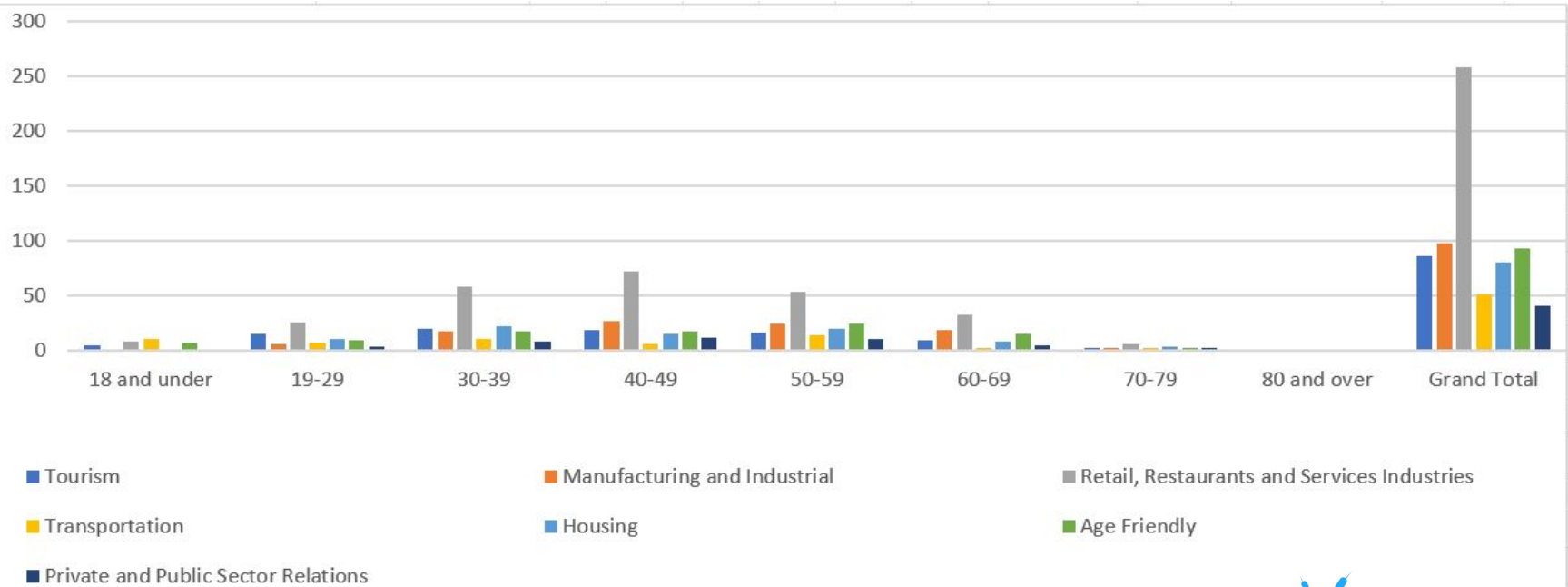
IDENTIFY IN PRINCETON BY AGE



Q3 Which of the following areas should the city invest time and resources? (Select up to 3 answers)

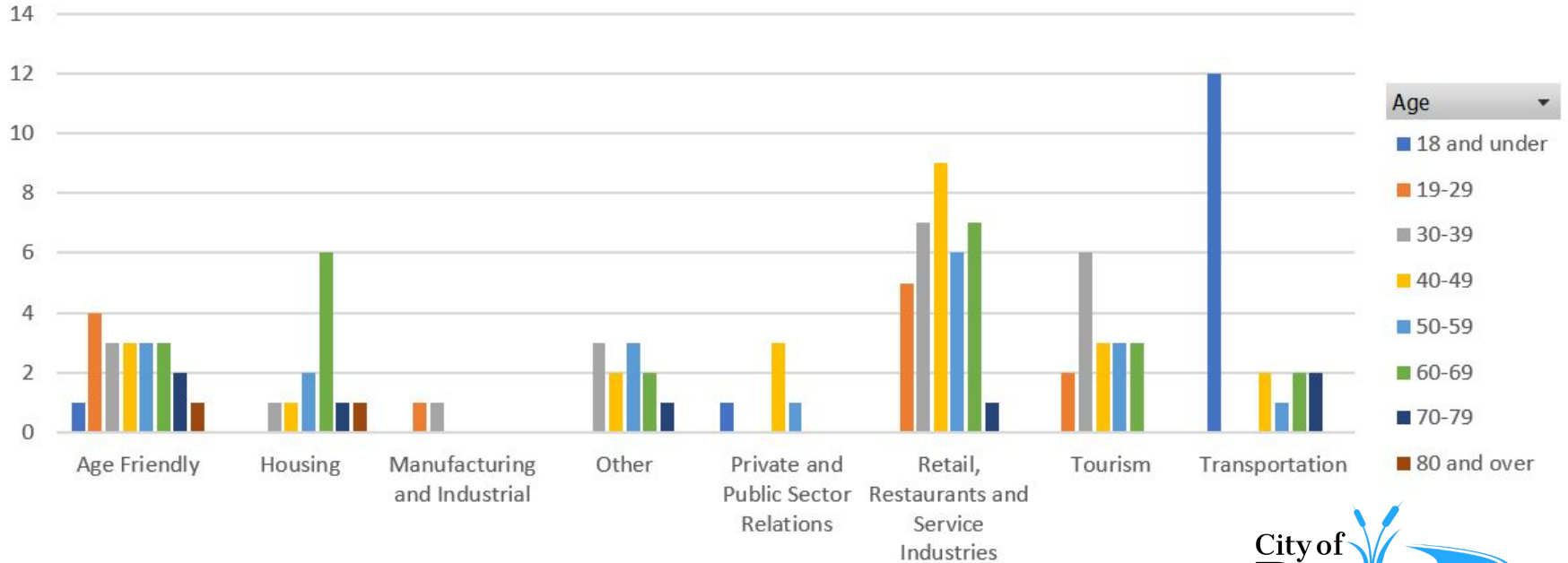


INVEST IN PRINCETON BY AGE



COMMENTS BY CATEGORY BY AGE

Sum of Comment Count



Strategic Planning Categories



PULSE OF PRINCETON SURVEY THEMES

1. Invest in a variety of **retail, restaurants and services** for both residents and visitors.
2. Invest in **park and recreation** for both residents and tourists.
3. Invest in more **age-friendly activities** for children and their families.
4. Invest in **age-friendly housing and services** for the elderly.
5. Invest in **quality of neighborhood** infrastructure like sidewalks and lighting.

PULSE OF PRINCETON TIMELINE

- **Jan-Mar 2022** - Survey Open and Closed
- **April 2022** - EDA Meeting - Survey Results Presented
- **April - May 2022** - EDA Members Review Survey Results and Develop Smart Goals for June 2022 EDA Meeting
- **June 2022** - EDA Meeting - Discuss Smart Goals
- **August 2022** - EDA Meeting - Discuss Smart Goals







PULSE OF PRINCETON SURVEY - OTHER IDENTITY

1. I live outside of the city limits
2. I am a cool kid from Austin 🇺🇸
3. township
4. Grew up there
5. Business Owner
6. Resident of Zimmerman/Livonia
7. live in school district and work in Princeton
8. Work in princeton and live within the school district
9. Nothing listed.
10. Husband works in Princeton, church is in Princeton and we dine/shop in Princeton and utilize community education but live in Zimmerman
11. I was born here.
12. Frequently visit: visit the town multiple times a week
13. I lived there and raised my children there.
14. Home grown
15. Live in school district and work for princeton business
16. Rural residential
17. I live in mille Lacs county
18. Own a business in Princeton
19. Township
20. The Mille Lacs County Fair
21. Family
22. Township resident
23. Surrounding area
24. Princeton Township
25. City home owner & work for Princeton business
26. I have a Princeton mailing address.
27. Sherburt



PULSE OF PRINCETON SURVEY - OTHER FAVORITE

- 1. Christ Our Light Church**
- 2. Small town atmosphere**
- 3. Princeton Alano Society**
- 4. Fairgrounds, churches**
- 5. Distance from cities (close but not too far)**
- 6. How much your basketball team sucke**
- 7. Nothing**
- 8. Nature**
- 9. Nothing**
- 10. Aldis and Coborns**
- 11. none**
- 12. Airport.**
- 13. Airport.**
- 14. Nothing listed.**
- 15. Airport.**
- 16. Airport.**
- 17. Airport.**
- 18. Airport.**
- 19. Airport.**
- 20. Airport.**
- 21. Airport.**
- 22. Airport.**
- 23. Airport**
- 24. Airport**
- 25. Airport**
- 26. Airport**
- 27. Airport**
- 28. Airport**

29. family
30. NOT, I repeat, NOT the taxes of this county! Disgustingly HIGH!
31. There are good people who live in the Princeton area
32. Scenery and small population
33. Small town, country living
34. Lifestyle Tint
35. Lifestyle Tint
36. Family there
37. Twice New Thrift Store
38. Nothing really
39. Its been home for 30+years
40. Smaller feel yet better options than small towns in all areas
41. Fair grounds
42. Nothing.
43. not sure
44. Country lifestyle, no silly urban mandates.
45. Walking trails ,by the dog park and north side river bottom trails
46. Family
47. The people
48. Nothing
49. beyond that Pnceton doesn't offer much - lacking retail for sure
50. Family
51. Don't have one.
52. Nothing entered
53. Friendly
54. Church and senior dining
55. No answer



PULSE OF PRINCETON SURVEY - COMMENTS

- 1. I am within the Princeton School district but hate how so many people on the Princeton Facebook page post racist comments. They also ridicule anyone who speaks against their political opinions. My husband and I lived in Princeton and our taxes were high but we did not see where the money went.**
- 2. #3 should have SCHOOLS. great education will attract more and more young families and improve community morale. lets take care of the kids and secure a great tax base**
- 3. Add more recreational outdoor activity spots. I think this would increase the moral of town and help bring a little color to all of our lives. Most of the workforce is constantly working and doesn't have the time to go out of town for the weekend to relax and shut they're minds off. If there was a place in town (or near) that would resolve the issue.**
- 4. Affordable senior housing. Our population is aging**
- 5. also need more housing for disabled mobility challenged people.**
- 6. Back the Blue !**
- 7. Being able to get the community more activities that are age appropriate, (ie.. teens to small children) something productive to do would be beneficial for everyone and will help with more foot traffic**
- 8. Bring in better restaurants!! And shops**
- 9. Build a community health/recreation center**
- 10. Chipotle please**
- 11. City invest to be less reliable on government.**
- 12. City streets need lots of work !!!!!**
- 13. continue updating/improving park system**
- 14. could use more family oriented activity centers/family outing things to do---batting cages, etc**
- 15. Enforcement of city ordinances by the Princeton Police Department are**

beyond pathetic!

- 16. fix up More Parks**
- 17. Fix up the parks especially Mark Park. I remember when that was a great park and a busy place especially during the rum river festival. It is nowhere near the level now.**
- 18. Get a good basketball team**
- 19. Get more retail stores**
- 20. Go Tigers!**
- 21. Great job**
- 22. Grew up in Princeton. Needs to keep it's small town charms, mom & pop stores, good food while increasing outside traffic to sustain them.
AFFORDABLE housing/rent opportunities for residential & business.**
- 23. Have to the rv park with discounts for veterans and allow monthly stays**
- 24. I also think that there should be something to help the homeless teenagers.**
- 25. I feel that the older population is being TOTALLY left out of affordable housing. A majority CANNOT afford a 250,000 one-level home. Section 8 housing along with market value apartments we have enough of. Also wondering what kind of supervision that residents of Belle Haven and the residential treatments residents have?**
- 26. I grew up in Princeton and recently moved back, in happy to see more businesses come in and flourish here, hoping to see more!**
- 27. I have lived in Princeton all my life. I have seen it grow in population but not so much in businesses. I would like to see the taxes go DOWN.
Property taxes are a terrible joke on us. Is that why we can't get businesses to come here? We need to make it attractive to come to Princeton. I love the Christmas decor and flower boxes, the blooming apple trees on main street. They take care of the streets pretty well. I like Princeton overall. Other than property taxes, it's a good place to live.**
- 28. I have lived in the city of Princeton for over 30 years and continue to be very disappointed in the lack of new businesses. I don't know if it is due to the HIGH Mille Lacs taxes or the lack of incentives offered by the city but very unfortunate that almost every new business that comes to Princeton locate on the Sherburne County side of Princeton.**

29. I wish there was a target, chipotle and other restaurants near the Walmart side of town. A minute clinic would be nice as the closest one is Cambridge. More summer kids activities or sports. I have 2 kids under 4 and not a lot of sports or activities are run that a working mom can get to. All ECFC classes are during the day. Swim lessons
30. I wish they could help out by Walmart and not have such HIGH property taxes so lots would sell and develop out there!
31. I would like to see more dark sky addressed. Stop with the blazing lights and consider other options. We can still be safe. I was on a Bennett Colorado board, decades ago, and we were moving toward this type of lighting
32. I would love to see Princeton do more to encourage more retail shopping & food in the downtown area. There are too many businesses in downtown that don't pull in retail customers which makes it hard for the others to survive. Princeton use to have a wonderful thriving downtown but not so much anymore.
33. Improve dog park. Lighting, landscaping
34. Invest in agriculture. Need more transparency especially regarding the schools in the district.
35. Invest in airport.
36. Invest in airport.
37. Invest in airport.
38. Invest in airport.
39. Invest in airport.
40. Invest in airport.
41. Invest in airport.
42. Invest in airport.
43. Invest in airport.
44. Invest in airport.
45. Invest in airport.
46. Invest in airport.
47. Invest in airport.
48. Invest in runway at the airport; lighted walk paths; indoor heated pool.
49. Invest in walk paths with lighting.

50. It seems like in the past 15-20 years the city has been underprepared/didn't get firm commitments from private entities before taking public sector action that didn't help projects come to fruition.
51. It would be great if they could bring back the drive through mail drop box again. It is hard to try to mail a letter when you have to actually get out of your car, especially in the winter. It is dangerous. Thank you.
52. Keep it small.
53. Lifestyle tint brings in so much new traffic to Princeton. They're amazing at customer service and a true delight to have in Princeton
54. Lifestyle Tint Rules!
55. Love living in Princeton - Very friendly & family oriented!
56. Love Princeton; Lived here over 40+ years; Worked in Princeton! Schools/Community working together! A great place to raise our boys!!
57. Love this community and would be very happy to see new and existing businesses thrive here!
58. Love this town! moving into town Erickson estates best choice I ever made!
59. Make sure there are places of community geared toward people from birth to elderly
60. Making the intersection more lanes or a turn lane coming out of northland drive by the McDonalds
61. More chain restaurants and stores!! Enough pizza and grocery already.
62. More restaurant selection would be great! Especially something along the lines of a Panera or Firehouse/Jersey Mikes. Better grocery options would also be nice. I love Coburns, but would like to see Walmart replaced/competing with something like a Target or Hyvee
63. More variety of new restaurants
64. more work on the roads and potholes.
65. Need MORE Big Name Restaurants- Olive Garden, Applebee's, TGI Fri's, or others
66. Need more businesses in town and more commercial building sites.
67. need more of a draw for Princeton residents, better, upscaled business, restaurants-there will be a huge change in the coming years to the highway portal going north, this town needs to get updated!!

- 68. Need stuff for kids to do**
- 69. No more new neighborhoods are needed**
- 70. Panera bread**
- 71. Parks and recreation, should be a high priority**
- 72. Please focus on getting more for kids! Gyms (that allows younger kids), an outdoor pool, anything that will help keep them here and busy. You can't focus all the attention on the older aged people.**
- 73. Please invest in downtown Princeton to make it appealing to both residents and potential businesses.**
- 74. Please, for the love, invest in better snow removal necessities. Other than that, we need to draw people in - we can't appeal to lake folk really, so what will bring people in? That's rhetorical, I'm not sure I have the answer.**
- 75. Princeton bulletin board and facebook pages alike are so negative and such a distasteful representation of our town. Born and raised in Princeton, it's disappointing. Our community should be represented in a more positive manner & encouraged to come together not argue over our small businesses and restaurants.**
- 76. Princeton has a few good restaurants but most lack quality food. Our sense of community would be better if we had more events to bring everyone together. Adults need to feel a sense of community to make the town better. It seems like most people have to leave town to eat or socialize which takes away from our local community. I suppose that is a drawback of a small town, we can only offer what people are willing to invest in town. More people who want to make Princeton "their" hometown will show up as they promote and invest here. We don't really have that sense of pride and ownership in Princeton. I'm not sure how you get it, I'm sure it takes money, patience and dedication. Also a willingness for companies/people to want to invest in town and make it their own.**
- 77. Princeton has a horrible reputation for drugs and the people are not known to be very friendly.**
- 78. Princeton is a great community with many things to offer. We need to work on re-energizing the downtown retail community and how to draw**

customers downtown.

79. Princeton is a great place to live!
80. Princeton is a small town community that used to be a destination and our money should be spent preserving the history and bringing back old sights instead of tearing down trees and digging up fields for more housing I personally don't want developments or town home communities or apartments complexes ruining this city we are a small town.... a country town... and a community the bigger we build the more we lose
81. Princeton needs to grow. We need more area.
82. Princeton NEEDS to invest in quality activities for youth ages 12-17 to participate in. ie.. skate park, park and rec programs
83. Princeton needs to work harder at buildin the community. Building a Community Center needs to be top priority. This would improve the quality of life for our families.
84. Princeton needs walking trails, given the large amount of people who live outside of town Princeton needs walking/biking/running trails that are accessible by car or foot. More investment in small business, to fill the open spaces downtown. Allow for more resturants, even if that means city ordinances need to change to allow for more liquor licenses.
85. residents seem very politically hostile- even just in stores, gas stations
86. School district sucks
87. TacoBell...Culvers...Menards...FleetFarm...
88. Take the splash pad fence down. Allow it to be a free attraction - like many other cities in MN.
89. The city should invest more funds towards parks and trails. In order to attract younger families there needs to be more retail options and entertainment options. The brewery opening in the spring is going to be a great start to this.
90. The city should work with Sherburne and Mille Lacs counties to get the bike trail from Zimmeran and further north. This would bring people to Princeton but it would also hold people here who go elsewhere to enjoy that sort of activity. Good for restaurants and retail.
91. The downtown needs a 'facelift'

92. The north end of town is pretty neglected. No sidewalks .roads are all patchey. Some due to the county but still in your city and seams like all the businesses are moving to Sherburne County side so maybe you should look into why that is. Thank you that is all for now.
93. The Princeton Area Chamber of Commerce is amazing!
94. The Princeton Public School will keep good families away. We need to set up good private Christian Schools or our Children and our future is at stake. Could use a good family restaurant as well.
95. The School District and facilities need to be improved in order to attract more people to move here. There is a large competitive school district that is located near by that offers better programs, and people are moving there instead.
96. There are NO decent 55+ apts/housing. Seems that section 8 and market values Apts are catered to. That along with treatment housing in residential areas.
97. There is no where to shop or eat in Princeton! We need more big box stores for shopping and better restaurants that are not fast food!
98. This is a community with virtually little for job opportunities, waning tax base and very little draw for ANY economic activity - it is a bedroom community with little future growth potential, today!
99. This town needs to upgrade their sewer systems and improve their streets.
100. We need a community center with a public pool or water park for the community and to boost tourism.
101. We need better food options.
102. We NEED more places to eat that's not pizza or burger joints. We lose money as a community because people have to travel to eat. Since they're already eating some where else they spend their money shopping near where they eat. We NEED kid friendly places. Bring a theater back, maybe a grand slam, arcades? We are surrounded by growing communities, we need to grow too
103. We need more restaurants that stay open past 2pm
104. We need more retail!!
105. we need more seat down restaurants and less gas stations

106. We need restaurants & shopping for sure
107. We need things in this town for the young people. Better housing and apartments.
108. we only have the "same kind" of restaurants here. There isn't a nice place to go. We have far too many pizza shops and parts stores.
109. While Princeton is a great place to live it could use some attention in the following areas. We must invest in infrastructure upgrades to make us competitive with other "high end" communities. Streets, sidewalks, stormsewer, sanitary mains, watermains, streetlighting to be particular. Beg, borrow or steal (TAX) all the money you can to get it done.
110. Work at bringing retail and industry instead of taxing them so high that they stay away.
111. Would love to see more care put into the downtown area to make it more friendly for retail tenets to bring the city back to life, as well as more attention to our parks and recreation for our kids
112. Would love to see more development of non-franchise restaurants and shops, and recreation for all ages.
113. Community center is needed in this town. Kids need an outlet.
114. FAVORITE: There is not much in Princeton as a drawing crowd. I was born and raised here. However was gone 50 years and am back. Things are not any better after 50 years. The main street road block for businesses. Thanks to our police who said "don't change the road".
OTHER COMMENTS: The rent is becoming too high for 55+ citizens. Crystal Court have raised rent and it is no longer affordable for 50+ citizens. Rent has gone up all over Princeton. That is NOT age-friendly. There needs to be 2 salaries to pay for rent here. There is not many places for 55+ citizen thats affordable anymore. The salaries aren't keeping up with living and housing.
115. Fix the streets.
116. For people who don't have internet/smart phones a much better way to communicate. Informal people of church; school; community event in Zimmerman, Milaca, Long Siding, Pease, maybe an events column in the Town & Country Shopper for free.
117. Housing and more for seniors. Teen Center for kids to go to instead of

the street.

- 118. Housing for seniors and a teen center.**
- 119. I like small town.**
- 120. We need a community center/teen center.**
- 121. We really need a teen center.**