

trforward, has released the results of its community issues survey. trforward is an ad hoc group of Thief River Falls Area citizens discussing the current state of the community and the future of living here in an organized and purposeful fashion.

trforward is not about raising taxes, seeking donations, or community leaders deciding what is best for Thief River Falls. It is about using our greatest resource, our residents, to make our community great. It is the intention of the trforward group to use these survey results and the comments at local community forums to set a series of goals to achieve a desirable quality of life which may be the result of changes to the community, improvements to availability of desired activities, or by just leaving things the way they are.

The survey, which received 1,875 responses, rated the Thief River Falls Area as a good place to live and raise a family, as a place with a strong sense of community and a willing stable of volunteers. The Thief River Falls area is also a place where people are generally satisfied with their schools, satisfied with their jobs and a place they say they are proud to live.

The survey responses also identified 6 general areas for further discussion.

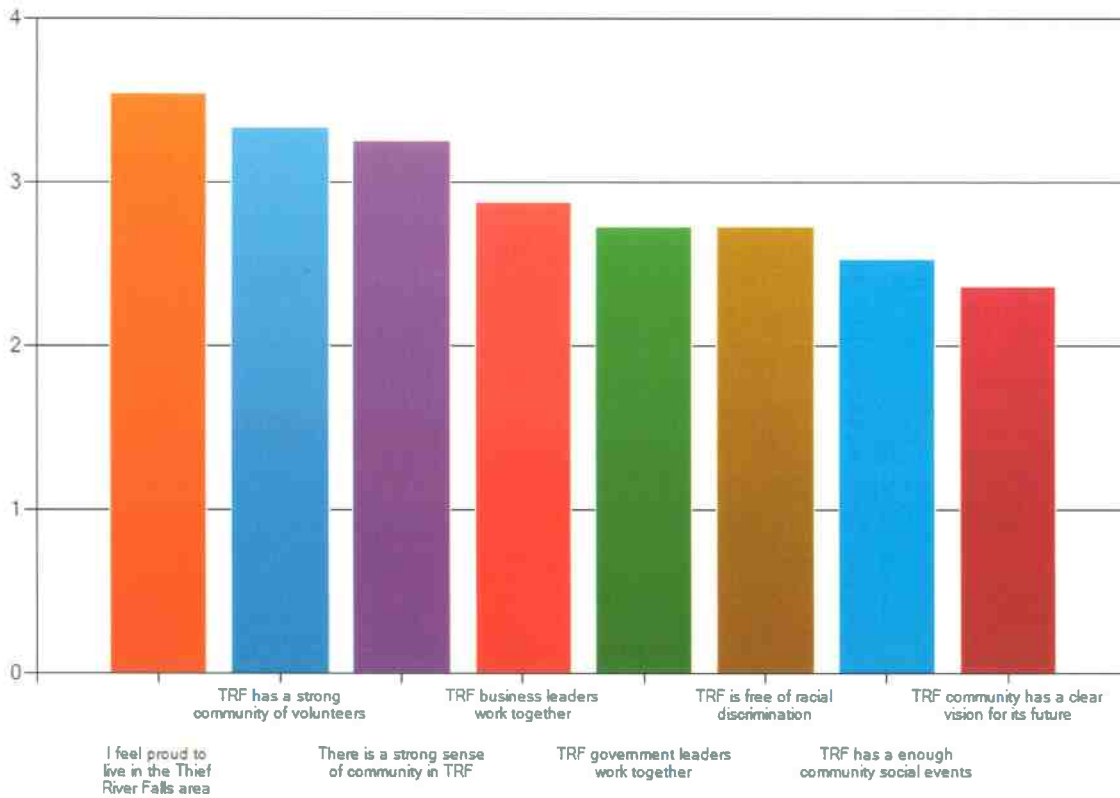
1. Retail/Services/Restaurants
2. Recreational Opportunities
3. Sustainable Growth Goal
4. Beautification/Trees/Recycling
5. Local Public Transportation
6. Crime and Drugs

The survey was designed and conducted by a group of volunteers which formed a sub-committee of the trforward effort which was nicknamed the EARS because we wanted to listen to what the community had to say. The committee members are as follows:

David Beito, Chair  
Laura Anderson  
Maryel Anderson  
Fay Auchenpaugh  
Odette Bendickson  
Linda Bentson  
Brenda Bruggeman  
Nate Dalager  
Rob Giffen  
Frank Hammerlink  
Polly Reed  
Darryl Tveitbak

# Thief River Falls Area as a Place to Live

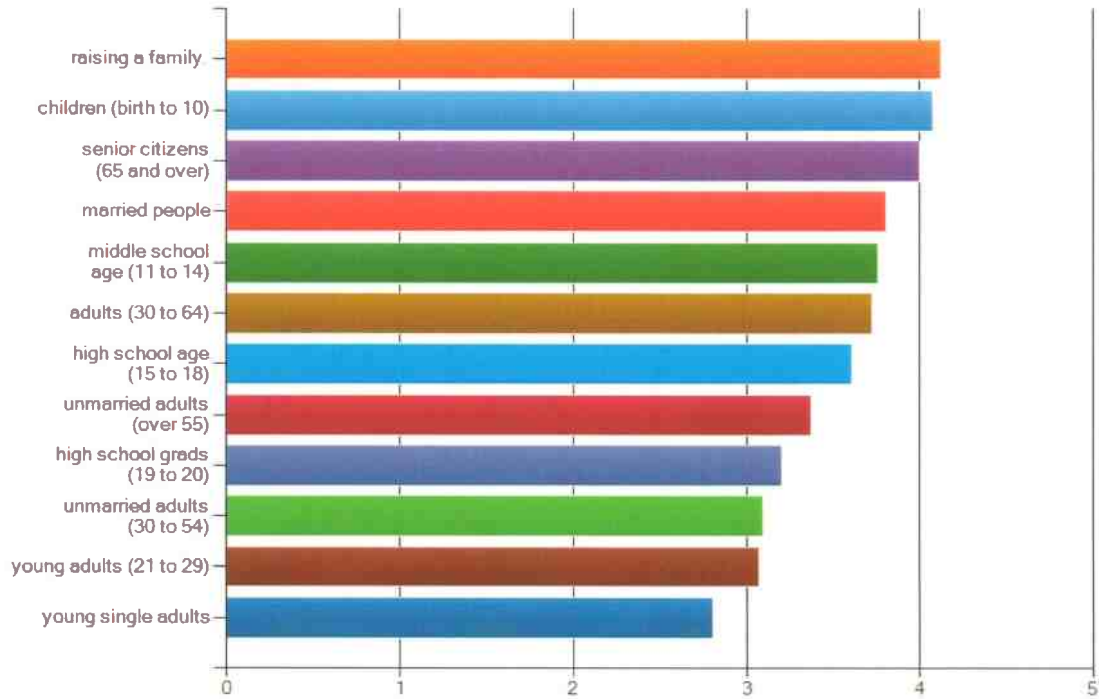
To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements:



On a scale of 1 to 5 the Thief River Falls Area received high marks as a place people are proud to live, a strong community of volunteers and a strong sense of community. Respondents expressed a desire for additional community social events and did not feel that the TRF community has a clear vision for its future. Respondents rated TRF has having a clear vision for the future at an average of 2.37 with a rating of 2 meaning “Disagree”.

Respondents highly rated the Thief River Falls Area as a good place to raise a family, especially small children, and as a good place for senior citizens. An area that tilted slightly toward disagreement was TRF as a good place for young single adults.

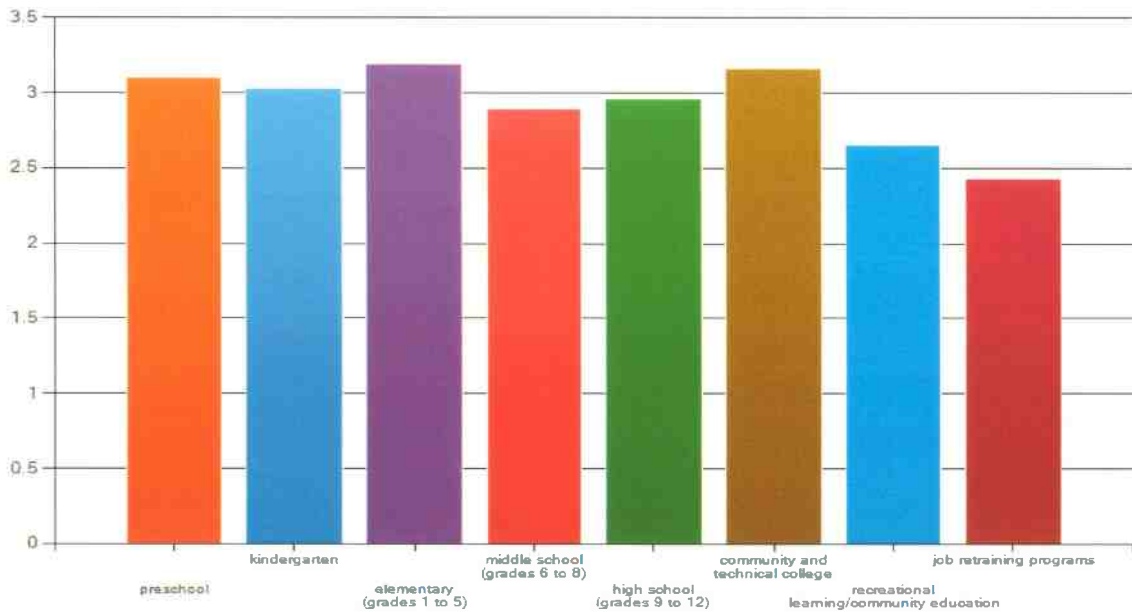
### TRF is a good place for...



### Schools Rate Well

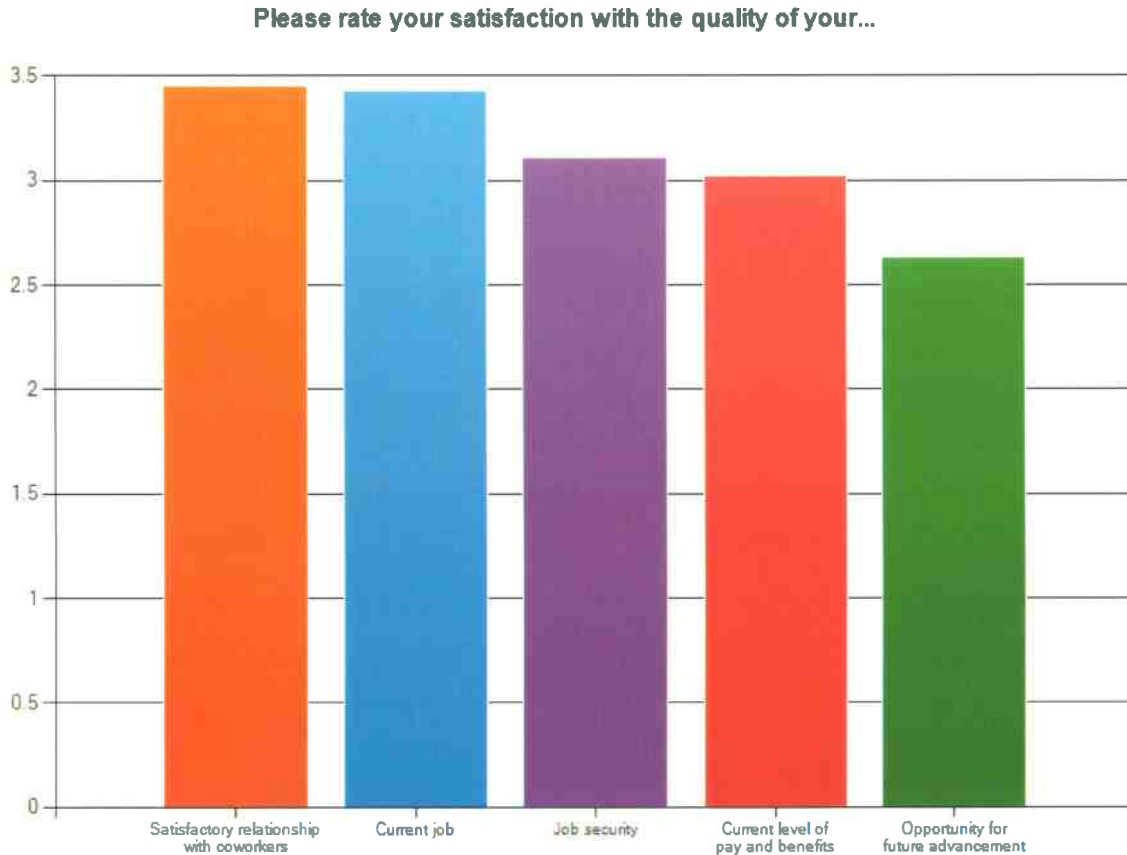
Respondents also expressed general satisfaction with our schools, an important resource for a strong community.

### Please rate your satisfaction with the quality of our community's...



## Job Satisfaction

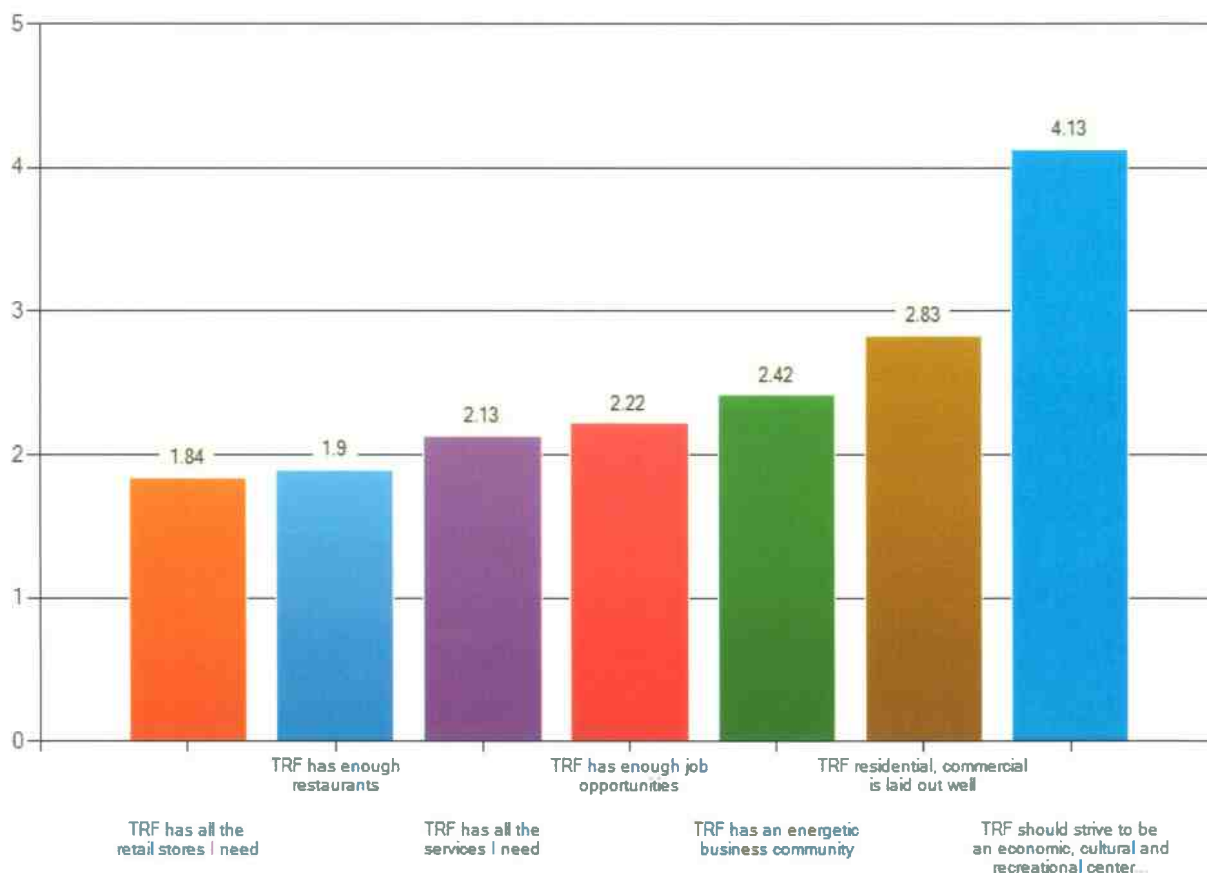
The majority of respondents said they were satisfied with their current job, their relationship with their coworkers, job security and level of pay. Opportunity for advancement rated between “Somewhat Satisfied” and “Satisfied”.



These positive rankings show that the Thief River Falls Area ranks well in some of the most important issues that people and businesses look at when selecting a community. We have much to be thankful for and proud of and we have the attitude and the assets to further improve the quality of life in our community.

## Retail/Services/Restaurants

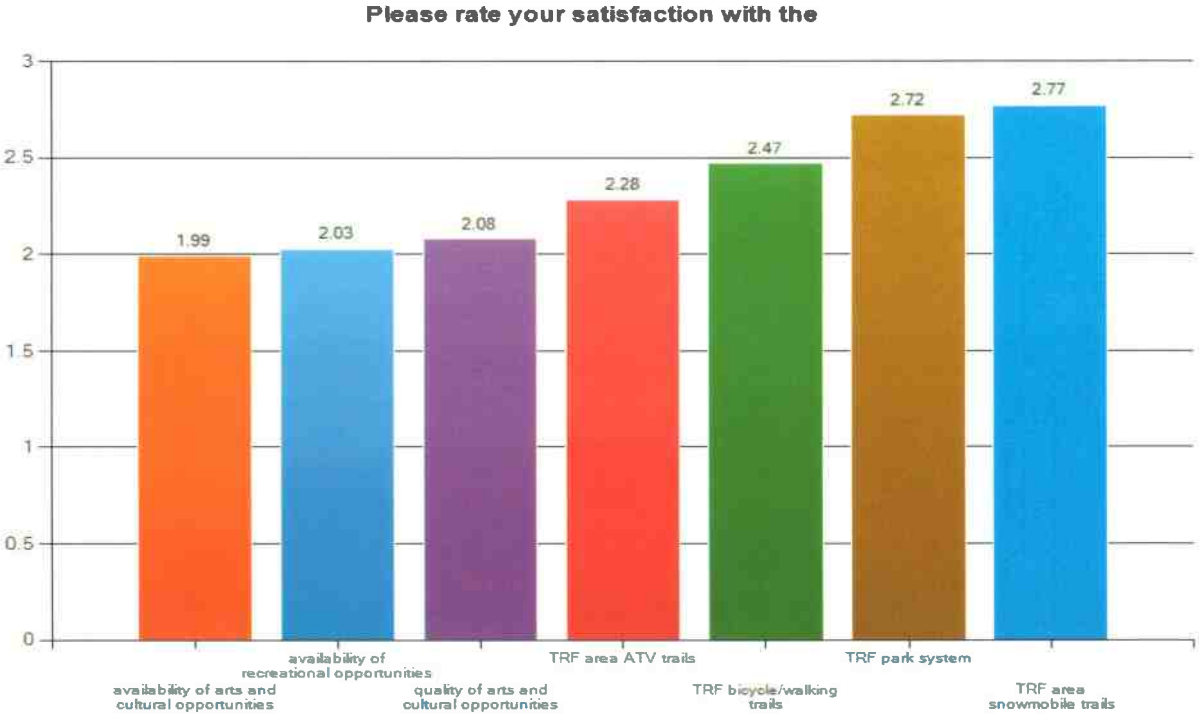
To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements:



Survey question responses were ranked on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being “strongly disagree”, 5 being “strongly agree” and 3 being “neutral”. When ranked responses to questions are averaged it is rare for the average rank to exceed 4 or to be less than 2. Therefore, when average rankings approach or exceed 4 or approach or are less than 2, the issue being discussed is considered to be of a high interest in the surveyed population.

Two of the lowest scoring areas in the survey were access to retail stores and restaurants with a rating of 1.84 and 1.90 respectively. Access to services ranked only slightly higher at 2.13. While these three areas appear to fall short of people’s expectations, respondents seemed to want the Thief River Falls Area to aspire to a high level by giving one of the highest agreement scores to “TRF should strive to be an economic, cultural and recreational center for Northwest MN” at 4.13. The combination of high aspirations and low perceived achievement identifies these three areas as areas of high concern.

# Recreational Opportunities



Another area that called attention to itself with ratings from 1.99 to 2.06 (a rating of 2 would be “somewhat satisfied”), was the availability of arts, cultural and recreation opportunities and the quality of arts and cultural opportunities. While ATV and snowmobile trails had a relatively low score, over 33% of respondents answered “N/A” which surprisingly indicated a lower interest in these categories.

In general, all categories of recreational opportunities scored below a score of 3 (satisfied) so a desire for improvement could be argued for bicycle/walking trails, ATV trails and less so for the park system and snowmobile trails.

## Specific Facilities and Improvements

Most respondents were in favor of some facility including a swimming pool with an outdoor swimming pool achieving support from 73.70%. Respondents were also in favor of more bicycle/walking trails, a large park and more trees. Generally, taxes were not in favor as a funding source for either building or maintaining these facilities except for the maintenance of an outdoor swimming pool where respondents were 57.20% in favor of using tax dollars for this purpose.

Please state your opinion on the following projects (if you have no opinion you can leave the answer blank)

**TRF Needs This**

	Yes	No	Response Count
Outdoor public swimming pool	73.7% (1,185)	26.3% (423)	1,608
Indoor public swimming pool	51.1% (733)	48.9% (701)	1,434
Multi function community center with pool, fitness equipment, basketball courts, etc	64.1% (979)	35.9% (549)	1,528
More bicycle/walking trails	64.7% (977)	35.3% (534)	1,511
A large park with multiple outdoor activities and large picnic/community gathering area	52.8% (775)	47.2% (694)	1,469
More small neighborhood parks	29.8% (418)	70.2% (985)	1,403
Soccer fields	37.5% (500)	62.5% (833)	1,333
Baseball fields	30.7% (400)	69.3% (904)	1,304
Trees	64.9% (919)	35.1% (497)	1,416

**Use Taxes to Build**

	Yes	No	Response Count
Outdoor public swimming pool	48.3% (588)	51.7% (628)	1,214
Indoor public swimming pool	35.6% (341)	64.4% (617)	958
Multi function community center with pool, fitness equipment, basketball courts, etc	50.7% (528)	49.3% (513)	1,041
More bicycle/walking trails	47.8% (474)	52.2% (518)	992
A large park with multiple outdoor activities and large picnic/community gathering area	39.3% (354)	60.7% (547)	901
More small neighborhood parks	22.6% (174)	77.4% (595)	769
Soccer fields	25.8% (200)	74.2% (574)	774
Baseball fields	24.9% (184)	75.1% (556)	740
Trees	49.5% (444)	50.5% (453)	897