



# WeVoters: Survey of Quincy, MA

## Summary

During December 2024 and January 2025, we sent out a survey asking "What do you want to see from Quincy?" WeVoters is launching a new project to reflect the issues and concerns that Quincy residents have about Quincy. We asked that respondents share their thoughts on how they would like to get involved or what topics they feel should be prioritized.

For the most part, people like Quincy and would like to stay here. But they are concerned about Quincy's government. Those responding to this survey are relatively young (under 65) and they vote. They want to get involved in local government and make Quincy a better place to live.

People want to hear from their local government and be heard by their local government. They prefer to hear that information in person (public hearings and meetings). And they want to hear about governance, specifically: changes in laws and regulations, city budget/spending, and city planning/development.

The public services with the greatest impact on respondents are road maintenance and public safety. However, local government transparency is the principal issue most want improved. Government accountability and transparency tends to be the topic that people are passionate about. With Quincy's massive changes in the past few years, development closely followed by fiscal responsibility are the biggest concerns.

The survey has its limitations. The sample size was small-186. A response of 30% is generally considered quite good. Our response rate is estimated at about 46%, given a guess of about 400 recipients in the email lists and social media. The survey was sent to people active in the community, thus people who are likely to respond (and **vote**). The respondents' demographics resembled U.S. Census data for Quincy, MA reasonably well (see Attachment I), adding to the credibility of the survey.

WeVoters will use the results of this survey to design a variety of programs. But we will need your help. If you would like to help, contact us at [wevoters@gmail.com](mailto:wevoters@gmail.com). WeVoters plans to provide workshops on how local government works and how Quincy residents can get involved. We also hope to share information about Quincy via email, [www.wevoters.org](http://www.wevoters.org), social media, QATV, and local newspapers.

More detailed survey data are given in Attachment I. A copy of the survey is provided at <https://bit.ly/3P0A729>.

We thank Mandy Huang and Kathy Thrun Nason for preparing the survey and this analysis and report.

## Respondents

We received 186 responses. The respondents looked similar to overall Quincy demographics, according to the US census. Respondents were white (78.0%) or Asian (11.88%). Most own their homes (62.4%) and have lived in Quincy for over 5 years (75.8%). This was a younger group with most (72.4%) under 65. The majority are registered to vote and voted in the 2023 municipal election.

## Satisfaction

People like Quincy (more than moderately satisfied 44.1%). But trouble does seem to be brewing with 33.3% moderately satisfied and with 22.6% not satisfied to a little bit satisfied. People do want to stay in Quincy with 65.6% who more than likely will be living here in the next 5 years. But once again, it is disturbing to see 28.5% not too sure and 5.9% not at all likely

This group votes with 95% registered to vote and 86% who voted in the 2023 municipal election.

## Civics Education and Involvement

People believe in civic education and know that it is important to understand what your local government does and how it affects them. People would like to get involved. They are motivated by making a positive impact on their community, civic duty, improving the local environment/infrastructure, contributing to causes they care about, meeting and connecting with new people. The activities they would most like to get involved in are attending city council meetings and public forums, participating in neighborhood improvement projects, organizing neighborhood events to raise awareness about local issues, joining a local committee, and engaging in digital activism.

Quincy residents want to see more people voting and want to see the mayor better reflect the needs and interests of the community. Some want to get involved, but don't know how to start.

## Communication

People want to know what the local government is doing. Primarily they would like to hear about city issues during public hearings and/or meetings. That gives further credence to the finding that the activities most are interested in (above) is attending city council meetings and public forums. People want to listen and be heard by the Mayor and the City Council. The information they want to hear about most is (ranked in order of interest):

- Public meetings or hearings on city issues
- changes to local laws/regulations,
- city budget/spending reports,
- city planning/development projects,
- traffic and road closures,
- public services, and
- upcoming community events.

It is notable that the priority needs for information are details about governance.

The preferred methods of communication for information are face to face, email, social media, and mail. The secondary sources are local newspapers, e.g. The Quincy Sun and the Patriot Ledger, and local cable news, e.g. QATV. Other methods like texts and the city website scored quite low.

Some comments<sup>1</sup> about communication from the survey respondents:

*“Would like to see citizens allowed to voice their opinions at city council meetings.”*

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<sup>1</sup> We received 100s of comments and have strived to select just a few examples of the area under discussion. Comments have been edited for spelling only to add clarity.



*“Public has so little input on matters that impact them. Once elected, the Mayor and Councilors actively discourage public participation.”*

*“I feel like the city has been blind-sided by recent events. The mayor and counselors are not listening to voters (taxpayers) or caring about the future financial situation of the city.”*

*“Attending city council meetings or public forums to provide feedback”*

*“Very concerned that the city does not post information about meetings & votes in a timely manner, that they are REMOVING rather than adding opportunities to comment in public hearings for schools, that they have made it harder to have citizen comments printed in the Quincy Sun”*

*“City Hall needs to listen to all citizens and not just the ones who donate to their campaigns.”*

## Issues

Public services impacting people the most are road maintenance and public safety. The other areas (ranked in order of number of responses) are: internet and technology, waste collection/recycle, parks and recreation areas, public libraries and community centers, updates on public transportation schedule/routes, public transportation, healthcare services, public schools and education, housing/homelessness, and social services.

Local government transparency is the principal area that most want to see improved. This result further emphasizes how much people want to hear from their politicians and be heard by their politicians.

Other areas they want improved (ranked in order) are: housing, quality of local government, public transportation, public safety (reduce crime), health care, homelessness, waste management/recycling, and cultural and green spaces. Surprisingly, road repair ranked last, despite road maintenance being the public service impacting them the most.

In the past few years, Quincy has been changing a lot. Development was the biggest concern, specifically including the use of eminent domain, empty lots, closing businesses and empty store fronts That concern was closely followed by fiscal responsibility (the mayoral and city council raises being the most frequently mentioned). The other concerns included roads, public transportation, and government transparency/accountability. When asked about other issues considered important- roads, and local government transparency were again considered important. The other issues included turning out the vote, bike infrastructure, and introducing some shopping and entertainment into Quincy.

The topics that people were passionate about are:

- Government accountability and transparency. People are passionate when it comes to increasing property taxes, fiscal responsibility, Granite links, and the lack of choice when voting. They want term limits. The need for public forums, and other mechanisms for citizen input were notable. The raises and the mayor were frequently noted.
- Overdevelopment and transportation issues closely followed accountability and transparency. People care about public transportation, law enforcement, parking, pedestrian safety and bike paths.



Some comments<sup>2</sup> about issues from the survey respondents:

*“Over-developers are ruining the heart of Quincy.”*

*“Stop tearing down old buildings to put up soulless gray boxes.”*

*“Over-development. Things/population are building too quickly for a continually weakening infrastructure.”*

*“Concerned with the amount of apartment buildings being built. Rent keeps increasing because of this and driving people who have lived in Quincy for decades out. There should be tax breaks for companies to build for permanent housing that people can buy instead of rent. Also, traffic to Boston is terrible because of all the new people moving in. It takes 30-40 minutes on the Neponset bridge just to get on the highway to go to Boston. Need to build another access point to get onto 93 north”*

*“Master plan for zoning, city charter review, term limits.*

*“The entire government needs to act like the city that it is. The recent news about Clasby's indictment shows that there is a lack of professionalism at the top, which allows for graft and corruption to occur. I make no comment on the mayor, as he was not in charge of reviewing expenses, but from a municipal accounting and purchasing perspective, which I am certified in the latter, this is astonishing to see. Even Human Resources is a mess, as they advertise jobs for a week, rarely post on popular job boards, implying an insular nature to the jobs process.”*

*“Increasing opportunities for small business and not favoring certain companies for all projects  
\*coughcoughfoxrock\* Also I wish the city did anything to encourage people to walk and use public transportation. We don't need more parking lots or traffic lanes; we need less cars.”*

*“Over building and incompetence of administration”*

*“Advertise jobs for a week, rarely post on popular job boards, implying an insular nature to the jobs process.”*

*“Term limits and fiscal accountability, transparency, and responsibility regarding city finances. Developers seem to be having too much power over city government and elections.”*

*“Irresponsible fiscal spending!”*

*“More transparency around local government spending and decision making.”*

*“Term limits and fiscal accountability, transparency, responsibility regarding city finances. Developers seem to have too much power over the city government and elections.”*

*“Government transparency also concerned about Quincy's non-car transportation accessibility - bus network and services seem very weak compared to comparable communities off the MBTA subway”*

*“The Quincy government seems to be inappropriately taking money and not spending it wisely. Over developers are ruining the heart of Quincy.”*

*“I think the mayor's raise is unspeakably frustrating.”*

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*“There is such a lack of oversight and the elected officials are not representing those who elected them out of concern of “rocking the boat.””*

*“Making Quincy more of a destination for a diverse variety of shopping opportunities, services, and a fun place to spend leisure and idle time with friends.”*

*“- making our schools the envy of the south shore; - improving the natural environment - parks, walking/biking accessibility, maintenance; incentivizing retail/restaurants in Quincy center; in general, Quincy has such a unique presence but can feel like a “pass through” sometimes with how neighborhoods are zoned (industrial) and the traffic/fast driving through the area. I want Quincy to be a beautiful, safe, walkable city where people of different backgrounds can happily raise their families.”*

## Conclusion

WeVoters is using the results of this survey to design programs. Those programs will address the things that people want to see. Principally Quincy city respondents want a local government that is both transparent and accountable and they want development that takes into account infrastructure (particularly roads, public transportation, bike paths) and respects neighborhoods and single residences. Our programs will include information about how government works and how you can get involved. We will provide information about Quincy governance, specifically, laws/regulations, budget/spending, city debt, and planning/development projects. We will deliver that information largely by email and social media, but also in local newspapers, QATV, and workshops.

WeVoters will also regularly update how to contact other activist groups who are taking action in the city. We will support other activists’ projects when it meets our own mission “holding our local government accountable and ensuring transparency by leveraging the power of our votes”. For example, we hope to help Quincy Votes improve voter turnout by supporting them and expanding their reach.

## Methodology

WeVoters designed the survey to elicit answers to the question “What do you want to see from Quincy?”

The survey was sent to the WeVoters and Pepo<sup>3</sup> email lists. PePo is a charitable café library based in North Quincy, MA. Links to the survey were also provided in social media. A copy of the survey is given in Attachment I. It included both closed and open questions. Closed questions included answering a direct question or ranking provided choices, Open questions asked respondents to provide their own answers. In the case of closed questions, simple percentages were calculated and overall ranking determined where choices were provided. Answers from the open questions were categorized and then issues ranked by the # of comments made in a particular category. Some people provided multiple answers thus there could be bias towards individuals, however, results from the closed questions generally supported the results from open questions.

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<sup>3</sup> Pepo is an AAPI-focused 501C(3) café library based in North Quincy, MA. They’re a third space, a place of community, and a place of radical love. We’re also run by everyday people, and we’re a charity with a focus on solidarity.

## Attachment I. Survey Data

### Survey Respondent and Available U.S. Census Demographics

	Survey	2024 U.S. Census*
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
White	78.0%	55.6%
Asian	11.8%	29.2%
Black or African American	2.7%	6.4%
<b>Age, years</b>		
65+	27.4%	17.7%
60-64	6.5%	
55-59	7.5%	
45-54	15.6%	
35-44	8.6%	
25-34	30.1%	
18-24	3.8%	
Under 18	0.5%	19.8%
<b>Female</b>	57.0%	49.8%
<b>Male</b>	38.7%	
<b>Non-binary</b>	1.1%	
<b>Home Ownership</b>		
Own	62.4%	45%**
Rent	32.8%	
Live with Parents	4.8%	
<b>Length of Residence</b>		
10+ years	66.1%	
1-3 yrs	14%	
5-7 yrs	9.7%	
3-5 yrs	8.1%	
Less than 1 yr	2.7%	
Greater than 1 yr		84.6%
Are you a Quincy resident?	100%	

\*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Quick Facts, Quincy city, MA

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/quincycitymassachusetts/PST045224>

\*\*Owner occupied

## Are you a registered voter?

	Percentage
Yes	95.2%
No	3.8%
I don't know	1.1%

## Did you vote in the 2023 municipal election?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	161	86.6%
No	26	14.0%

## Quincy City Ward

Ward	Percentage
1	16.1%
2	10.8%
3	26.3%
4	12.4%
5	20.4%
6	14.0%

## Satisfaction with living in Quincy (1 is not at all satisfied, 5 is extremely satisfied)

Satisfaction	Percentage
1	5.4%
2	17.2%
3	33.3%
4	38.7%
5	5.4%

## Likelihood that you will be living in Quincy in the next 5 years (1 is not at all likely, 5 is very likely)

Satisfaction	Percentage
1	5.9%
2	8.6%
3	19.9%
4	19.4%
5	46.2%

Likelihood to get involved in community events/activities (1 is not at all likely, 5 is very likely)

Likelihood	Percentage
1	5.4%
2	12.9%
3	37.1%
4	29.0%
5	15.6%

How important is it to know what your local government does and how it affects you? (1 is not at all important, 5 extremely important)

Importance	Percentage
1	0.5%
2	1.1%
3	4.3%
4	24.2%
5	69.4%

Do you think Civic Education is important?

	Percentage
Yes	87.1%
No	3.2%
I don't know	5.4%
I want to learn more myself	4.8%

If given the opportunity, would you be willing to participate in efforts to increase voter turnout and ensure that Quincy's City Council and Mayor better reflect the needs and interests of the community?

	Percentage
Yes	46.2%
No	18.8%
Yes, but I don't know where to start	24.7%
Maybe	2.2%



What motivates you to get involved in local community activities? (Select all that apply)

Motivation	Percentage
To meet new people and connect with others	13.1%
Civic duty or responsibility	16.4%
Desire to make a positive impact on the community	21.4%
To improve the local environment or infrastructure	16.2%
To engage with a specific cultural or ethnic group in the community	5.1%
Interest in volunteering for specific cause	11%
To contribute to causes I care about	15.2%
To fulfill service hours for school or work	1.1%
Protect my property values	0.2%
Get honest people elected	0.2%
To belong where I live	0.2%

What activity would you be most willing to participate in to get involved and improve the City of Quincy?

Activity	Percentage
Organizing or attending neighborhood events to raise awareness about local issues	17.7%
Attending city council meetings or public forums	23.5%
Join a local committee	16.7%
Participate in neighborhood improvement projects	19.1%
Engage in digital activism	12.1%
Attend workshops on topics like Civics 101	10.2%
None	0.7%

Which of the following items do you want to see improvement from in the City of Quincy? (Select all that apply)

Improve	Percentage
Housing	15.1%
Public transportation	9.6%
Green spaces	6.1%
Reducing crime/public safety	8.3%
Quality of Local gov't	13.8%
Transparency of Local gov't	16.2%
Tackling homelessness	8.2%
Waste management/recycling	6.6%
Healthcare expansion	8.2%
Cultural and rec spaces	6.6%
Road repair	1.4%

Which of these public service(s) impacts you as a resident of Quincy? (Select all that apply)

Public Service	Percentage
Healthcare services	8.51%
Housing/homelessness	4.63%
Public transportation	9.26%
Public schools and education	5.20%
Road maintenance	14.65%
Parks and rec facilities	10.11%
Public libraries and community centers	9.92%
Public safety	12.10%
Internet and tech	10.78%
Waste collection and recycling	10.49%
Social services	4.35%

What information would you like to receive or be notified of from the City of Quincy? (Select all that apply)

Information	Percentage
Changes to local laws and regulations	11.3%
Public meetings or hearings on city issues	11.4%
Traffic and road closures in the area	9.9%
Public health and safety alerts	8.6%
Upcoming community events	9.3%
Updates on public transportation schedule and routes	6.7%
City budget and spending reports	11.2%
Local educational programs and school updates	5.2%
Resources for healthcare and mental health services	5.8%
Public services	9.6%
Info about city planning and development projects	10.9%

Preferred methods of communication to stay informed about the actions and updates from the City of Quincy? (Select all that apply)

Communication Methods	Percentage
Social media	22.5%
Email	26.7%
Local news	6.9%
Local newspaper	14.5%
Printed handouts/flyers	5.9%
Mail	21.9%
NextDoor	0.2%
City Website	0.4%
Texts	0.6%
Reddit	0.2%

What activity would you be most willing to participate in to get involved and improve the City of Quincy? (Select all that apply)

Activity	Percentage
Organizing or attending neighborhood events to raise awareness about local issues	17.7%
Attending city council meetings or public forums	23.5%
Join a local committee	16.7%
Participate in neighborhood improvement projects	19.1%
Engage in digital activism	12.1%
Attend workshops on topics like Civics 101	10.2%
None	0.7%

Which topics, that we covered in the questions above, are you most passionate about and would like to see covered in our collaboration project? We aim to highlight issues and discussions that matter to the residents of Quincy. (Comments categorized, counted, percentages calculated and subsequently ranked)

Passionate Topics	Percentage
Housing (e.g., affordable housing)	4.0%
Education	4.8%
Public transportation	7.1%
Government accountability taxes, fiscal responsibility, term limits, raise, Koch, Granite Links, voter choice)	23.8%
Transparency (public forum, citizen input, community involvement	12.7%
Neighborhood Improvement Projects	3.2%
Tax increases	4.0%
Road repair/speed enforcement (parking, pedestrian safety, bike paths)	19.0%
Rats	1.6%
Public Safety	2.4%
Health care, hospital	2.4%
Development	7.9%
Digital equity/internet	2.4%
NIMBY	2.4%
Environmental/Green	2.4%

What concerns do you have about the changes that have happened in Quincy recently? (Comments categorized, counted, percentages calculated and subsequently ranked)

Concerns	Percentage
Housing (affordability, homeless)	5.06%
Development use of eminent domain, empty lot, closing biz, empty store fronts)	30.38%
Fiscal Responsibility (raises)	25.32%
Transparency	12.03%
Accountability (lack of integrity, respect for public)	7.59%
Roads/transportation	13.29%
Environment	0.63%
NIMBY	0.63%
Public Safety	1.27%
Healthcare	1.90%
Like Quincy as it is	1.90%

Are there issues, other than those we have identified, that you feel are important to improving Quincy? (Comments categorized, counted, percentages calculated and subsequently ranked)

Other Important Issues	Percentage
Voter turnout	12.5%
Adams Presidential center/Peacefield, community program	1.0%
Elected officials' responsibilities	1.0%
Professional city planning	1.9%
Education	1.9%
Transparency (Public Awareness, public respect)	11.5%
Bicycle Infrastructure	12.5%
Accountability (corruption investigation, integrity, term limits)	12.5%
Environment/Social justice (marshland improve, repair/build seawalls)	2.9%
Traffic, roads, sidewalks, multimodal transportation	31.7%
Shopping/fun	5.8%
Internet/digital equity	1.9%
Like Quincy	2.9%