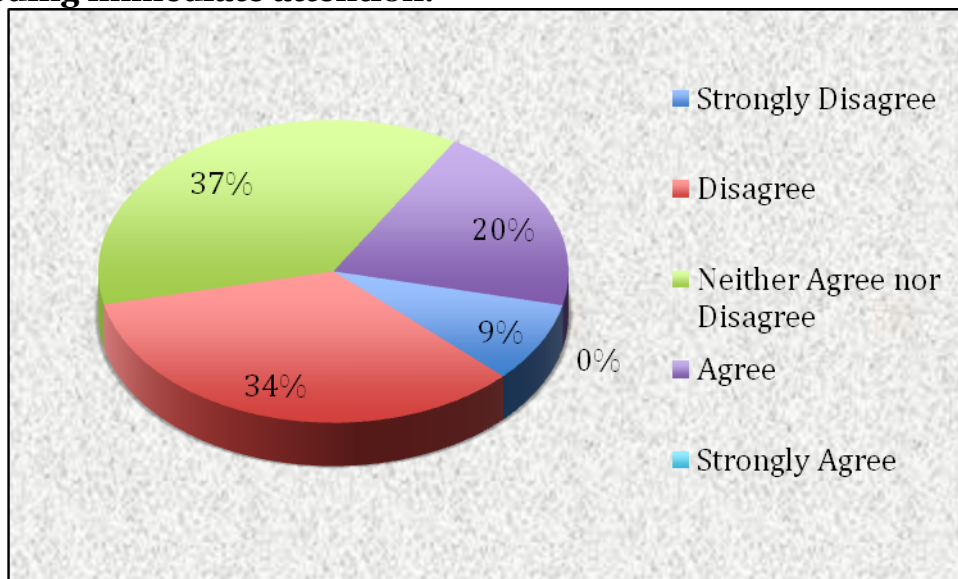


## **Building leadership**

### **The Status of Civic Health Indicator Building Leadership in Newark**

One civic health component under the broad area of problem solving is building leadership. The following pie chart represents ratings for the indicator statement, “Overall, Newark is doing very well as it relates to building leadership. This is a strong asset for the city, as opposed to needing immediate attention.” The chart does not include “I do not know” responses, of which there were nineteen (35 percent). “I do not know” responses are relevant for this component and will be discussed below.

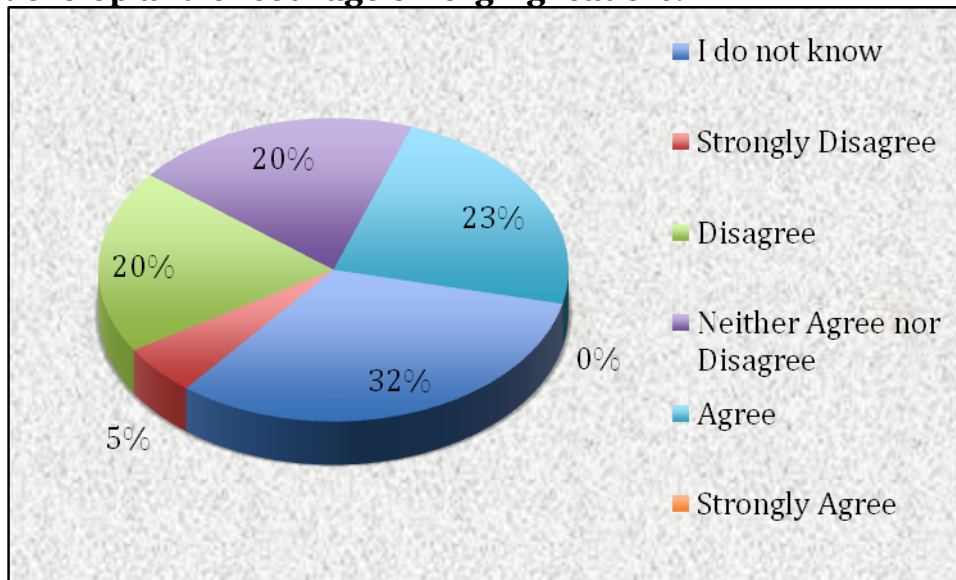
**Figure 9: Building Leadership: “Overall, Newark is doing very well as it relates to building leadership. This is a strong asset for the city, as opposed to needing immediate attention.”**



Only 20 percent of survey takers agree Newark is doing well as it relates to building leadership. No survey takers strongly agree with any specific indicator statements under this component, nor do they strongly agree that Newark is doing very well as it relates to building leadership. The average response to the overall health of building leadership as well as to all individual indicator statements was below the “Neither agree nor disagree” rating, excluding “I do not know” responses, and below the “Disagree” rating if “I do not know” responses were included as zeros in the calculation of averages.

The following pie chart represents ratings for the specific indicator, “Newark has programs to develop and encourage emerging leaders.” The chart includes “I do not know” responses because these responses indicate that whether or not Newark has these programs, these community members are not aware of them.

**Figure 10: Leadership Development Programs: “Newark has programs to develop and encourage emerging leaders.”**



Thirty-two percent of survey takers do not know if Newark has such programs. Fifty-seven percent either do not know or disagree that Newark has such programs. Survey takers believe building leadership is a weak civic health area for the City of Newark.

### **Pragmatic steps to enhance the community’s civic health indicator of building leadership for the community**

The civic health component of building leadership and all specific indicator statements regarding leadership development received the lowest ratings by survey takers. Active citizens wrote in their comments that they knew of some leadership programs, but that these programs were not well promoted and were within some specific organizations and agencies, and that those who are included in leadership programs tend to be a non-diverse group.

According to the civic health index, Newark should have programs to develop and encourage emerging leaders, and these programs should reflect the diversity of the community. Additionally, leadership trainings should provide avenues for immediate application of their new skills.

People are disconnected from government for numerous reasons, including scandals, wars, special interest control or perceived control, and gerrymandering and noncompetitive elections. According to the New York Times, “What sets democracies apart is offering real choices in elections... something that is increasingly rare in the

United States.” In the City of Newark, only two of seven potential city elections in the past two years were contested. No one has filed for the April 2009 election as of yet. Without new leaders to replace the old leaders, a community’s future is not sustainable.

One survey taker notes he has not “found many ways that students can take leadership roles.” An active citizen writes, “There are leadership opportunities and leadership building efforts but they occur within organizations and agencies. We need more cross-pollination. How about instituting a Public Allies model for young Newark residents?” An elected official circles “Newark” in the statement “Newark has programs to develop and encourage emerging leaders” and writes “UD?” Another active citizen writes, “I think Newark has programs to encourage leadership but everyone around the table is the same color and gender.”

One active citizen discusses how leadership development should be an on-going process. “Every council member attending community meetings should be reaching out- not just to constituents, but specifically be looking for the person, preferably young person, with new ideas and energy.”

The City of Newark does have some leadership programs that people participate in and that could be further promoted, for example the Citizens’ Police Academy, which gives citizens an experiential education about law enforcement and how the City of Newark’s police department operates. Additionally the City of Newark’s Parks and Recreation Department has a Youth Beautification Corps Program that employs up to three Newark teenagers aged 15 to 18 during the summer and works closely with them in Parks operations. The University of Delaware, the state, and other organizations do offer some leadership programs – these programs could be better advertised in the community.

### **1. Neighborhood Leadership Institute**

One community that is working to proactively engage citizens in leadership training, with a focus on average citizens instead of those already in leadership positions, is the City of Los Angeles. The city works to build the capacity of grassroots leaders to advocate for the betterment of their communities. Under the leadership of Councilman Eric Garcetti, Council District 13 has a Neighborhood Leadership Institute, which trains neighborhood leaders in community organizing and government. Community members who go through the training get involved in their neighborhoods and immediately work for change. The Neighborhood Leadership Institute has graduated over 100 neighborhood activists. Training includes such skills as how to organize and lead a community meeting, how to organize a campaign, how to build power in order to bring about positive community change, and how to involve and develop new leadership in community organizing efforts.

### **2. Citizen Academies**

Other communities, such as Colorado Springs, Colorado, Sacramento, California, and Orange County, Florida, are offering citizen academies. The local government offers courses and public sessions on areas like land use development, public financing, transportation, parks management, and other areas. The purpose of these courses is to empower citizens to be able to effectively participate in their local government.

### **3. Youth Councils**

Many communities are also building leadership among their youth. By giving young people a “direct role in shaping or influencing local policies and programs,” the community will not only aid from the perspective of young people, but also young people will develop necessary leadership skills to contribute to the community. A number of communities now have Youth Councils. These councils range from serving in an advisory role, working with the city to address community problems, playing a direct role in the enactment of city ordinances, and allocating city funds for youth programs.

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