



**ETC INSTITUTE**

MARKETING RESEARCH, DEMOGRAPHY, STATISTICAL APPLICATIONS

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April 19, 2021

Chris Engel  
City Administrator  
City of Merriam  
9001 W. 62nd Street  
Merriam, KS 66202

**Subject: Leading the Way Award Winners – Spring 2021 Announcement**

Dear Mr. Engel:

On behalf of ETC Institute, I want to congratulate the City of Merriam for winning our **Leading the Way Award**.

ETC Institute's "Leading the Way Award" was created to recognize local governments for outstanding achievement in the delivery of services to residents. Recipients of the award rank in the top 10% of all local governments in the United States with regard to their composite performance in the three core areas that are assessed on ETC Institute's DirectionFinder® Survey:

- satisfaction with the overall quality of services
- satisfaction with customer service provided by employees, and
- satisfaction with the value residents think they receive for local taxes and fees.

A maximum of 100 points are awarded in each of these three areas based on the results of the survey. In order to rank in the "Top 10% of All Cities", a city must have received a composite score of 210 or more, which means the city scored an average of at least 70 points in all three areas. The threshold of 210 was established using the results of surveys from more than 400 communities that have participated in ETC Institute's DirectionFinder® Survey over the past two years. **The City of Merriam's composite rating was 236 which was 82 points above the average composite score of 154 for all cities in the United States.**

**The City of Merriam is truly setting standard in many areas.** In addition to ranking in the top 10% overall, the City of Merriam also rated in the top 10% of all cities that participated in our DirectionFinder® between August 2020 and February 2021 in the areas list below.

- Condition of street signs and traffic signals
- Condition of major streets
- Management of traffic flow on city streets

- Condition of streets in neighborhoods
- Mowing and tree trimming along streets and public areas
- Snow removal on major city streets
- Condition of sidewalks
- Enforcement of mowing and cutting of weeds on private property
- Bulky item pick-up services

Since 1999, ETC Institute's DirectionFinder® Survey has been administered to nearly two million residents in all 50 states. Although ETC Institute has provided "benchmarking" data that has allowed communities, like Merriam, to compare your results with other communities for many years, ETC Institute did not formally recognize the top performers until 2020. The crystal award that you are receiving weighs 11 pounds to represent the 11 cities that participated in ETC Institute's DirectionFinder® Survey the first year the survey was conducted in 2000.

More details about the Leading the Way Award, including the names of other award winners, are now available on our website at [etcinstitute.com](http://etcinstitute.com).

ETC Institute will feature the City of Merriam as a winner of the award on our website and social media pages over the next few weeks. If you would like us to present the award virtually at a future meeting, we would be glad to do so. We can even provide a sample press release if needed.

**Once again, congratulations to you, the Mayor, the City Council, and all City employees for your outstanding achievements!**

Sincerely,



Christopher Tatham, CEO  
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