

Summary of Results

Survey Background and Purpose

- The City of Minneapolis contracted with National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to conduct a citywide resident survey. The Minneapolis Resident Survey provides residents the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the city, as well as service delivery and their satisfaction with local government. The survey also permits residents to provide feedback to government on what is working well and what is not, and share their priorities for community planning and resource allocation.
- Resident perspectives are key in providing context that will be used by the City of Minneapolis to assess trends in its performance.
- This is the fourth iteration of the Minneapolis Resident Survey since the baseline study conducted in 2001. This is the second iteration conducted by NRC.

Methods

- The 2008 Minneapolis Resident Survey was administered by phone to a representative sample of Minneapolis residents from May 19, 2008 to July 11, 2008. A total of 1,258 surveys were completed. About a quarter of the interviews were completed with people of color and at least 96 interviews were completed with respondents in each of the 11 community planning districts. Twenty-seven interviews were completed in a language other than English. The overall response rate was 23%.
- Survey results were weighted so that respondent age, gender, ethnicity, ownership status (rent vs. own) and location of residence (community planning district) were represented as closely as possible to the proportions reflective of the entire city. (For more information see *Appendix IV: Detailed Survey Methodology*.) The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points around any given percent.
- For comparisons by survey year, the margin of error is plus or minus four percentage points around any given percentage point.

Summary of Findings

City Life

Minneapolis residents gave positive ratings when asked to rate various aspects of quality of life in the city and in their neighborhoods. Phillips, Near North and Camden residents tended to give lower ratings to quality of life in their neighborhoods and in the city as a whole. They were less likely to think their neighborhoods were clean and safe and were more likely to disagree that people in their neighborhoods look out for one another. Powderhorn residents were less likely to think that street lighting was adequate in their neighborhoods. Also, younger residents, residents of color, Latino/Hispanic residents, renters and lower income residents were less likely to have a positive image of their neighborhoods. Quality of life ratings were below average when compared with jurisdictions in National Research Center's database and when compared to select cities¹ identified by Minneapolis staff.

Public safety, transportation related issues, education, economic development and housing topped the list of challenges residents think Minneapolis will face in the next five years.

City Employees

A majority of respondents who reported having contact with a City employee in 2008 rated a variety of employee characteristics as good or very good. The proportion of respondents giving "fair" ratings for the ease

¹ Ann Arbor, MI; Austin, TX; Boulder, CO; Charlotte, NC; Denver (City and County), CO; Durham, NC; Oklahoma City, OK; Phoenix, AZ; Portland, OR; San Francisco, CA

of getting in touch with an employee decreased from 2005 and the proportion giving “very good” ratings has increased from 2005. Ratings of City employees were similar to or below the national average and when compared to select cities².

Police contact was down by six percentage points from 2005, while contact of 911 operators and the Fire Department was similar to 2005. Those respondents who reported having contact with each emergency service in the past two years were asked to rate their satisfaction with the professionalism shown by the staff with which they had contact. Nearly all respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the professionalism shown by Fire Department staff (99%) and 311 agents (96%). About 9 in 10 respondents (88%) reported satisfaction with 911 operators and 8 in 10 (81%) were satisfied with professionalism shown by Police Department staff with which they had contact.

City Services

Survey participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with a variety of City services. At least half of all respondents said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with each service, with fire protection and sewer services receiving the most positive ratings. Phillips, Near North and Camden residents tended to give lower satisfaction ratings than respondents living in other districts. People of color, respondents of Latino/Hispanic origin and low income residents were less likely to give high marks to City services when asked to rate their satisfaction with each service.

Eleven of 18 services were compared to National Research Center’s national database. Three services received ratings that were higher than the national average (keeping streets clean, animal control services, affordable housing development), four were similar to the national benchmark (providing park and recreation services, providing quality drinking water, providing sewer services, cleaning up graffiti) and four were below the national average (garbage collection and recycling programs, fire protection and emergency medical response, police services, repairing streets and alleys).

When compared to select cities in the database, 5 of 18 services were compared to select cities from the database. Four services (repairing streets and alleys, animal control services, keeping streets clean and affordable housing development) received ratings above the “select cities” benchmark and ratings for police services were similar to ratings given by jurisdictions included in the “select cities” benchmark comparison.

Five services received higher ratings in 2008 than in 2005 (affordable housing development, preparing for disasters, police services, protecting health and well-being of residents and protecting the environment) and four services received lower ratings in 2008 than in 2005 (animal control services, dealing with problem businesses and unkempt properties, revitalizing neighborhoods and repairing streets and alleys). Ratings for affordable housing have increased steadily over time (from 40% in 2001 to 65% in 2008), while street and alley repair has declined since 2003 (from 83% in 2003 to 57% in 2008).

When asked to rate the importance of each service, at least a quarter of respondents felt that each service was extremely important. Fewer than 10% of respondents rated each service as “not at all important.” Respondents to the 2008 survey were more likely to rate street and alley repair, preparing for disasters and cleaning up graffiti as important than 2005 survey respondents, averaging about a 4% increase from 2005 to 2008. Importance ratings for cleaning up graffiti have increased over time (40% in 2001 and 56% in 2008).

Services that were rated higher in importance and lower in satisfaction were: police services, protecting the environment and Revitalizing neighborhoods.

² Ann Arbor, MI; Austin, TX; Boulder, CO; Charlotte, NC; Denver (City and County), CO; Durham, NC; Oklahoma City, OK; Phoenix, AZ; Portland, OR; San Francisco, CA

Property Taxes

When asked specifically about increasing property taxes or fees to maintain or improve City services, responses were mixed. There also has been a steady decline in support for this idea over time. Powderhorn and Southwest residents were more likely to agree that property taxes should be increased to maintain or improve City services, while Nokomis and Camden residents were least likely to agree with this statement. Older residents (age 55 and older), those reporting a longer length of residency (20 years or more) and respondents who own their homes were less likely to agree that property taxes should be increased to maintain or improve City services.

Community Engagement

When asked how likely or unlikely they would be to use various approaches to try to influence a City decision on an issue they cared about, about 7 in 10 respondents (70%) reported that they would be somewhat or very likely to attend a community meeting. Two-thirds mentioned that they would be likely to contact a neighborhood group, an elected official or City staff (66%, 65% and 63%, respectively). Fewer respondents reported that they would be at least somewhat likely to work with a group not affiliated with the City (50%) or join a City advisory group (36%).

The proportion of respondents reporting that they would be likely to contact an elected official, City staff or work with a group not affiliated with the city was lower in 2008 than in 2005.

City Government Performance

Minneapolis residents gave fair ratings to City government performance, yielding a below average rating compared to the nation and to select cities³. About 6 in 10 respondents felt that the overall direction the City was taking was at least good, that the City does a good job of informing its residents on major issues and that the City provides meaningful opportunities for citizens to give input on important issues. Longfellow, Camden and Near North residents tended to give lower ratings for City government performance than their counterparts. Residents of color and those who rent their homes also were less likely to give positive ratings for City government performance. Residents reporting an annual income of \$100,000 or more tended to give higher ratings to Minneapolis City government than did other respondents.

Compared to 2005, City government ratings generally were similar, except for “representing and providing for the needs of all its citizens,” which received higher quality ratings in 2008 than in 2005.

Discrimination

Nearly one in five respondents (17%) reported that they had experienced some type of discrimination in Minneapolis during the past 12 months, similar to previous survey years. Responses were generally similar to 2005 reports of discrimination, however, reports of discrimination due to gender, economic status and social status decreased from 2005 to 2008.

Of the 20 respondents who reported experiencing discrimination “in dealing with the City,” 11 respondents said that police were involved, 3 mentioned Public Works and 2 mentioned Community Planning. The relative order of City departments mentioned as being responsible for discrimination changed from 2008 to 2005, however Police remains at the top of the list since 2003.

³ Ann Arbor, MI; Austin, TX; Boulder, CO; Charlotte, NC; Denver (City and County), CO; Durham, NC; Oklahoma City, OK; Phoenix, AZ; Portland, OR; San Francisco, CA