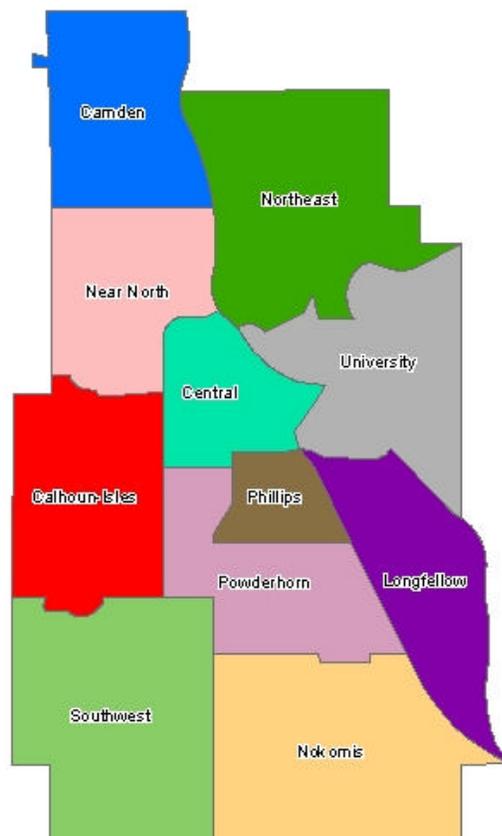


# CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS CITIZEN SURVEY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

In April 1999, the City of Minneapolis committed to a new model of performance measurement for the city – a major element of this model focuses on engaging citizens in the City’s outcomes. The *Minneapolis Citizen Survey* is a key component of these engagement efforts.

The survey development process was overseen by a Citizen Survey staff development team, representing several departments of City government. MarketLine Research staff met with all City Department Heads or their representatives to understand departments’ information needs and to receive direction on how the survey could assist current departmental performance measurement efforts.

From these discussions a draft survey was presented to the City for review and comment. The survey was pre-tested on November 9<sup>th</sup>, the day following City elections. Subsequently 1,210 telephone interviews were conducted with Minneapolis citizens from November 11, 2001 through January 4, 2002. Interviews ranged in length from 11 minutes to over 62 minutes: the average interview length was just over twenty minutes.

## STUDY OBJECTIVES

The survey was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- ❑ To measure citizen satisfaction with City services and perceptions about key quality of life indicators. Collected information will be used as a baseline from which to compare future survey results,
- ❑ To gather citizen information on citizen priorities, which will inform the citywide strategic planning/goal setting process as well as departments’ business planning efforts,
- ❑ To gauge citizen need for services, their expectations regarding the level of those services, and their willingness to pay for service enhancements or maintenance of existing services,
- ❑ To gather information about citizen’s knowledge and behavior, and
- ❑ To determine how citizens get their information about the City.

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE MANAGEMENT

Data for this study was collected through telephone surveys of 1,210 randomly selected households. Respondents within households were selected using the “last birthday” technique (interviewer asks to speak with the person 18 years of age or older that had the most recent birthday in the household). At least four callbacks were made for each telephone number.

As with all surveys, this research is subject to sampling error. The ending sample of 1,210 interviews provided a maximum margin of error of +/- 2.8% at the citywide level. The error margin is larger for subsamples.<sup>1</sup>

The goal based on research design was to maintain a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 10% at a 95 percent level of confidence within each community subsample.

To achieve this goal for each of the City's 11 communities a minimum of 100 residents within each community were interviewed providing a maximum margin of error of +/- 9.8%. In achieving a random selection of 100 citizens from each community over sampling resulted. Ending samples within each community were subsequently weighted back to reflect *2000 Census* population figures for each community.

### **SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION**

Data collection was conducted at MarketLine Research located adjacent to Dinkytown near the University of Minnesota. To achieve the best level of citizen representation, interviews were conducted in English, Hmong, Somali and Spanish languages. All English interviews were completed using MarketLine's computer-aided telephone interviewing system (CATI). Non-English surveys were translated to the target language, conducted wholly in the target language and recorded on paper.

### **DATA WEIGHTING**

Gender, housing, and income makeup of the ending sample is representative (within a +/- 5% margin) of the *2000 Census*. Data for community population, ethnicity and age segments were over- and underrepresented. Subsequently, it was adjusted slightly by statistical weighting to match *current* estimates for population, ethnicity and age groupings.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

The data gathered in the course of this study provides opportunities for management to evaluate key operational and performance areas both citywide and on a community by community basis.

The data provides opportunities to examine:

- ❑ Delivery of City services,
- ❑ Best methods for providing information to citizens,
- ❑ Satisfaction with received services,
- ❑ Desired future service requirements and citizen priorities,
- ❑ Citizen support levels for additional service requests, and
- ❑ Individual community priorities.

Information in this Citizen Survey provides a baseline against which the opportunity to track program and service changes over time can be realized. Department specific data from this study can supplement ongoing efforts at performance measurement. Most importantly communication of this study's key findings offers a unique tool for building upon, strengthening and focusing attention on the City's citizen engagement process already underway.

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this study, tests of statistical significance were not performed on subsamples that did not meet the minimum requirements of the analytical procedures used.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD RATINGS

86% of respondents rate Minneapolis as a ‘good’ (44%) or ‘very good’ (42%) place to live. 11% responded ‘only fair,’ and 3% rated Minneapolis as a ‘poor’ place to live.

Following the question asking citizens to rate the City as a place to live, survey participants were asked how they would rate their neighborhood as a place to live (using the same scale). 79% rated their neighborhoods as ‘good’ or ‘very good,’ but there were greater disparities among respondents from the different communities. Citizens in the Phillips (35% ‘good’ or ‘very good’) and Near North (54% ‘good’ or ‘very good’) Communities are statistically significantly more likely to view their neighborhoods less favorably than do citizens citywide. In contrast, citizens who live in the Southwest Community (96% ‘good’ or ‘very good’) are significantly more likely to view their neighborhoods more favorably than do citizens citywide.

### ATTACHMENT TO MINNEAPOLIS

When asked if they thought they would be living in the City five years from now, 66% of respondents said yes, whereas 25% think they will be living some place else.

### CHALLENGES FACING THE CITY

When asked their opinion of what are the three biggest challenges facing the City in the next five years, housing was the most frequently mentioned response, followed closely by public safety, transportation and education.

The issues mentioned most often by citizens were:

- ❑ *Housing / Affordability / Availability / Condition*  
39% of respondents noted housing as a major challenge facing the City. Some described the challenge as ‘affordable housing for all incomes’ (18%) while others mentioned ‘housing in general’ as an issue (16%). 2% specifically mentioned ‘homelessness.’
- ❑ *Crime / Public Safety*  
Public safety issues in general were mentioned by 31% of all citizens. Although many different types of crimes or public safety issues were mentioned, no particular type of crime (i.e. drugs, gangs, neighborhood safety) was mentioned by at least 5% of the citizens.
- ❑ *Transportation*  
25% of the citizens mentioned some type of transportation issue as a major challenge in the future. The two transportation issues mentioned most often were public transportation /mass transit (9%) and traffic congestion (8%).
- ❑ *Education*  
25% of respondents mentioned education as a major challenge facing Minneapolis.

Other challenges of note include the following:

- ❑ Although managing City government was mentioned as a challenge by 17% of the citizens, they described this challenge in many different ways. More than half mentioned some fiscal responsibility including taxes in general, real estate/business taxes, balancing the budget and funding for neighborhoods.
- ❑ 15% of all the citizens interviewed were not able to think of at least one challenge facing the City in the next five years.

## **PERCEPTION OF CITY'S HOUSING SELECTION**

When asked whether Minneapolis residents have a good choice of different housing types, 60% agreed or strongly agreed, whereas 35% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

## **PERCEIVED CHANGE IN MINNEAPOLIS IN THE PAST 3 YEARS**

When asked how the City has changed in the last 3 years as a place to live, 33 % responded that the City has gotten better, 52% said stayed the same, and 15% responded gotten worse

## **DOWNTOWN USE AND PERCEPTIONS**

When asked questions about downtown Minneapolis, 17% of those surveyed reported that they work downtown. 63% of respondents visit downtown for non-work related purposes at least once per month, whereas 11% responded they never go downtown for non-work related purposes. 74% of citizens who go downtown feel safe walking through downtown in the evening, and 85% consider downtown to be clean.

## **DISCRIMINATION IN MINNEAPOLIS**

16% of survey respondents reported that they had personally experienced discrimination in the past 12 months. Discrimination occurred most frequently in situations where citizens were seeking service in a store or restaurant. Race was the most likely reason given for feeling discriminated against (52% of those reporting discrimination). Gender and age were the second most frequently reported reasons (12% each).

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS -- PERCEPTION OF QUALITY**

To assess neighborhood conditions, citizens were asked their level of agreement (strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree) with the following five statements:

- ❑ *People in my neighborhood look out for one another.*  
73% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement regarding community connectedness. Residents in Southwest and Nokomis communities are statistically more likely to feel connected than do all residents citywide, whereas residents in the Near North and University communities are statistically less likely to feel connected than do all residents citywide.
- ❑ *My neighborhood is a safe place to live.*  
82% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their neighborhood is a safe place to live. Residents in the Southwest, Nokomis, University and Calhoun-Isles Communities are statistically more likely to view their neighborhoods as safe than are all City residents as a group. Residents in Phillips and Near North Communities are statistically less likely to view their neighborhoods as safe than are citywide residents as a group.
- ❑ *My neighborhood has a good selection of stores and services meeting my needs.*  
69% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement regarding commercial variety in their neighborhoods. Residents in the Calhoun-Isles Community are statistically more likely to feel their neighborhood has a good selection of stores and services than are all residents citywide. Conversely, residents in Camden and Near North Communities are statistically less likely to feel their neighborhoods have a good selection of stores and services.

- ❑ *My neighborhood is clean and well maintained.*  
81% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement regarding the cleanliness of their neighborhoods. Residents in the Southwest, Nokomis and Calhoun-Isles Communities are statistically more likely to feel their neighborhoods are clean and well maintained than are statistically all residents citywide. Residents in the Phillips, Powderhorn and Near North Communities are statistically less likely to see their neighborhoods as clean and well maintained.
- ❑ *Traffic speeds in my neighborhood are not a problem.*  
64% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that traffic speeds are not a problem in their neighborhoods. Residents in the Near North Community are statistically more likely to feel traffic speeds in their neighborhoods are a problem compared to how residents citywide view traffic.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD IRRITANTS**

When asked the open ended question regarding what two things bothered them the most about their neighborhood, the most frequent responses included the following: crime (20%), issues related to City services (16%), noise pollution (15%), traffic (15%), and cleanliness (15%).

### **NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (NRP)**

59% of respondents reported being familiar with the NRP. When those familiar with NRP were asked to rate the impact of NRP on their neighborhood, 59% said it had ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ impact. 65% noted that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Because of the NRP, City residents have more influence on how important issues are addressed, public services delivered, and public funds used.”

### **CITIZEN CONTACT WITH THE CITY IN THE PAST YEAR**

38% of respondents noted that they have contacted the City for information or services in the last year. Of those who reported such contact, 74% reported they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the time it took to reach the right person. 79% reported they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the helpfulness of City employees.

### **INFORMATION ACCESS**

63% of respondents said that they use the Internet. 23% stated that they have visited the City’s website. Of those who have visited the City’s website, 93% would find it helpful to access information about a City department or service, 90% would find it helpful to access information regarding City regulations or policies and City Council actions, 84% would find it helpful to access information about their neighborhood, 84% would find it helpful to report a problem such as bad street pavement or a missing sign, 79% would find it helpful to acquire a permit or license, and 78% would find it helpful to apply for a City job.

When asked whether they use the City Calendar, 47% reported they used it, 48% reported they did not use it, and 5% did not recall receiving it.

### **SNOW EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Radio and television were the most preferred sources to receive snow emergency parking information (90% responded they would like to get snow emergency information from that source), conversely the least preferred source is the newspaper (46%). Response to other sources of information include the following: signage (73%), 348-SNOW (66%), the snow emergency brochure (56%), the City Calendar (59%), the City website (49%).

When asked the open ended question 'What could the City do to help you comply with parking restrictions during a snow emergency,' almost 40% of respondents either didn't think it was a problem for them or weren't able to make a suggestion. 25% of respondents mentioned some type of notification, and 21% mentioned more frequent and/or clearer signage.

**CITIZEN CONTACTS WITH MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES**

55% of respondents had contact with one or more of Minneapolis' public safety services in the past three years. 45% had contact with the police; 13% had contact with the Fire Department; and 33% had contact with 911.

The majority of contacts with Public Safety service providers are viewed favorably by Minneapolis' citizens. When asked how satisfied were they with the professionalism of the public safety officials, 96% of those having contact with fire fighters were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied;' 78% of those having contact with police officers were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied;' and 90% of those having contact with 911 operators were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied.'

**DELIVERY OF CITY SERVICES - SATISFACTION, INTEREST AND SUPPORT**

Citizens rated fifteen (15) basic services provided by the City of Minneapolis. After citizens expressed their satisfaction with each service (very satisfied = 4, satisfied = 3, dissatisfied = 2, and very dissatisfied = 1), they were then asked to provide an opinion on how much attention and resources the City should devote to each service area in the future. They were given the choices of a lot more attention (4 points), more attention (3 points), some attention (2 points), or a lot less attention (1 point).

The following table provides the average score for each of the fifteen services.

| Area of Service  | Average Level of Satisfaction (4 pt. scale) | Average Level of Attention (4 pt. Scale) |
|--|---|--|
| Preserving and providing affordable housing for low-income residents | 2.27  | 3.08                                     |
| Protecting the environment, including air, water and land            | 2.83  | 2.83                                     |
| Reducing the impacts of airport noise                                | 2.71  | 2.51                                     |
| Preparing for disasters  | 2.97  | 2.67                                     |
| Revitalizing downtown  | 2.91  | 2.35                                     |
| Revitalizing neighborhood commercial areas                           | 2.80  | 2.74                                     |
| Snowplowing City streets   | 2.86  | 2.58                                     |
| Repairing streets and alleys   | 2.70  | 2.72                                     |
| Keeping streets clean  | 2.93  | 2.46                                     |
| Cleaning up graffiti   | 2.84  | 2.47                                     |
| Dealing with problem businesses and unkempt properties               | 2.69  | 2.75                                     |
| Providing garbage collection and recycling programs                  | 3.27  | 2.29                                     |
| Providing animal control services                                    | 3.05  | 2.16                                     |
| Providing Police services  | 3.05  | 2.63                                     |
| Providing fire protection and emergency medical response             | 3.30  | 2.46                                     |

Preserving and providing affordable housing for low-income residents stood out as the service that had the highest level of interest in terms of future attention and the lowest level of current satisfaction.

For those services on which a respondent thought ‘more’ or ‘a lot more’ attention should be focused in the future, the question was asked as to whether they would agree that property taxes should be increased to maintain or improve that service. Preserving and providing affordable housing for low-income residents and protecting the environment had the most support. Animal control services had the least support.

### **SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHER PUBLIC ENTITIES**

Although the Mayor and City Council are not responsible for Minneapolis’ parks, schools and libraries, because these systems play such a strong role in quality of life for our residents, a question was included in the survey regarding citizen satisfaction. 90% of respondents reported they were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with Minneapolis’ efforts at maintaining parks and providing recreational opportunities; 88% were expressed satisfaction library services, and 62% were either ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with public education in Minneapolis.

### **REACTION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE APPROACHES**

To help guide planning for criminal justice reform, three questions were asked regarding citizen support. 85% of respondents supported the ability of offenders of minor crimes to be able to do community service instead of jail time. 85% supported providing treatment and counseling in addition to jail time. 84% of respondents agreed with the statement “Not all offenders of minor crimes are able to pay their fines to avoid jail time. For offenders unable to pay, a program should be set up to allow them to work off the fine to avoid jail time.”

### **CITIZEN ASSESSMENT OF CITY GOVERNANCE**

Citizens were asked a series of four questions to measure citizen perceptions of the performance of City Government. They were asked how they would rate Minneapolis City government on the following issues:

- ❑ *Communicating with its citizens?*  
49% of respondents replied that Minneapolis City government was either ‘very good’ or ‘good’ at communicating with its citizens. 36% responded ‘only fair,’ and 12% responded ‘poor.’
- ❑ *Representing and providing for the needs of all its citizens?*  
48% of respondents replied that Minneapolis City government was either ‘very good’ or ‘good’ at representing and providing for the needs of all its citizens. 37% responded ‘only fair,’ and 12% responded ‘poor.’
- ❑ *Effectively planning for the future?*  
49% of respondents replied that Minneapolis City government was either ‘very good’ or ‘good’ at effectively planning for the future. 34% responded ‘only fair,’ and 10% responded ‘poor.’
- ❑ *Providing value for your tax dollars?*  
54% of respondents replied that Minneapolis City government was either ‘very good’ or ‘good’ at providing value for their tax dollars. 32% responded ‘only fair,’ and 11% responded ‘poor.’

**A full reporting of the survey results is available online at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us)**

**Questions regarding the survey may be forwarded to**

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