



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS, MN

RESIDENT SURVEY

REPORT OF RESULTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February 2013

Prepared by:



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RESIDENT SURVEY TEAM

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¹ If you need this material in an alternative format please contact Neighborhood and Community Relations Department at 612-673-3737.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SURVEY PURPOSE AND METHODS

The City of Minneapolis contracted with National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to conduct a citywide resident survey. The Minneapolis Resident Survey gives residents the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the city, 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 to share their priorities for community planning and resource allocation.

Resident perspectives provide context that will be used by the City of Minneapolis to assess trends in its performance. To this end, the 2012 Minneapolis Resident Survey is the sixth iteration, including the baseline study conducted in 2001. This is the fourth iteration conducted by NRC.

The Minneapolis Resident Survey was administered by phone to a representative sample of Minneapolis residents from October 11, 2012 to November 28, 2012. A total of 1,378 surveys were completed. About one-quarter of the interviews were completed with people of color, one-quarter was with cell phone users² and at least 94 interviews were completed in each of the 11 community planning districts. Nineteen interviews were completed in a language other than English. The overall response rate was 20%.

Survey results were weighted so that respondent age, gender, ethnicity, race, home ownership versus renting status and home location (community planning district) represented as closely as possible the proportions of the entire city. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points around any given percent for all respondents. For comparisons by survey year, the margin of error is plus or minus four percentage points around any given percentage point.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The majority of Minneapolis residents remained happy with the city and their neighborhoods as places to live, giving the highest ratings since these aspects of the community first were measured in 2001.

- The city as a place to live was rated much above the national benchmark and the select cities benchmark.³ Neighborhood as a place to live was rated similar to the national benchmark (a comparison to select cities was not available).

More respondents than in the previous survey years reported that Minneapolis has gotten better as a place to live. Pride in living in the city has remained strong.

- In 2012, residents were twice as likely to feel like the city as a place to live had gotten better than gotten worse over the last two years.
- Nearly all respondents said that they were proud to live in Minneapolis and that they would recommend the city as a great place to live. This was similar to 2011.

² A cell phone user represents a respondent who either only has a cell phone which was their primary phone or those who had a cell phone and a landline but their cell phone was their primary phone.

³ Austin, TX; Boulder, CO; Charlotte, NC; Denver, CO (City and County); Durham, NC; Oklahoma City, OK; Portland, OR.

Public safety, education and transportation continued to be viewed as some of the biggest challenges facing the City in the next five years.

- Public safety and education were the two most frequently mentioned challenges in 2011. More residents in 2012 than in 2011 felt that transportation-related issues and housing were among the top three issues facing the City. Fewer in 2012 than in 2011 believed that education was one of the three biggest concerns facing the City in the next five years, although it was the second most frequently mentioned challenge.

Opinions of Minneapolis neighborhoods remained stable over time.

- Overall, at least three-quarters of respondents agreed or “strongly” agreed with each statement about their neighborhoods. Respondents agreed most that street lighting was adequate in their neighborhoods and that their neighborhoods had a good selection of stores and services that met their needs. A higher proportion of residents in 2012 were in agreement that their neighborhoods had a good selection of stores and services that met their needs.

Nearly all of the respondents who did not live or work Downtown had visited Downtown at least once in the last year.

- Respondents who did not live or work Downtown and who reported going Downtown only once or twice in the last year were asked what kept them from spending more time Downtown. The most commonly mentioned reasons were a lack of desire to go Downtown, followed by a lack of parking, preferring other shopping areas, cost of parking and feeling that there was nowhere to go.

Many residents reported a high use of computers, cell phones and the Internet; however, a majority said that they were most likely to get news and information about the City from traditional news media such as newspapers, radio and television.

- Eight in 10 respondents reported that their household had a desktop or laptop computer with Internet. More than half of residents were most likely to use a desktop or laptop computer with Internet at home daily, a cell phone and a computer at work and the Internet on a cell phone to get news about the City.
- The most frequently used means of obtaining information about the City was news media (6 in 10 respondents). One-quarter of residents used the City’s website and City mailings to get news and information about the local City government.

Familiarity with Minneapolis 311 has increased over time.

- Residents’ level of familiarity with Minneapolis 311 was at its highest in 2012, with 70% indicating that they were “somewhat” or “very” familiar compared to 59% in 2008.
- When asked how they got City of Minneapolis government news and information, compared to other sources fewer than 1 in 10 residents reported that they get government news and information from 311.

Those who had contact with City employees viewed their interactions positively.

- Half of respondents reported having contacted the City in the 12 months prior to the survey to get information or services, which was more contact than in 2011 and less than residents in other communities across the country.

- More residents in 2012 than in 2011 reported calling 311 to contact the City and fewer used the City's website.
- At least three-quarters of respondents rated the employee's courteousness, respectfulness, knowledge and willingness to help or understand as "good" or "very good." These evaluations were similar to 2011 and similar to or below the national benchmark comparisons.

A higher proportion of respondents in 2012 than in 2011 were happy with the public education in the Minneapolis Public Schools and felt that the quality of public education had improved over the last two years.

- Although more respondents in 2012 than 2011 said that they were satisfied with public education in the Minneapolis Public Schools (MSP), satisfaction with MSP was much below the national benchmark.
- Slightly more of respondents (one-third) felt quality of public education in Minneapolis Public Schools had improved than felt it had declined (one-quarter).

Survey respondents voiced high levels of satisfaction with the overall quality of City services as well as with the various individual services provided by the City.

- Nearly all residents (96%) said that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the overall quality of City services, a rating that was much below the national average but above the selected cities benchmark.
- Fire protection and emergency medical response, sewer services, 311 for City services and information, and park and recreation services were the top rated services. Repairing alleys, repairing streets, affordable housing development and mortgage foreclosure assistance were given the lowest satisfaction ratings. Providing quality drinking water, snow removal and repairing streets saw an increase in ratings from 2011 to 2012.
- Of the 13 services that could be compared to the national benchmark, two were above or much above and four were rated similar to the nation. Seven services were rated much below ratings given to other communities across the nation.

As in previous survey years, life and safety services were deemed the most important City services, and most received ratings in 2012 that were similar to 2011.

- Fire protection and emergency medical response, providing quality drinking water and Police services were rated as the most important services. More respondents in 2012 than in 2011 felt that garbage collection and recycling programs, cleaning up graffiti and animal control services were important. Although cleaning up graffiti and animal control services were believed to be less important than the other services, the importance of these services dipped in 2011 but rose in 2012.

Residents were divided on whether property taxes or fees should be increased to maintain or improve City services, which was similar to opinions given in 2011.

- Half of residents agreed that property taxes or fees should be increased to maintain or improve City services. About twice as many respondents "strongly" disagreed than "strongly" agreed with this proposal.

Snow removal and providing park and recreation services were identified as potential areas of focus for the City, as these were believed to be of higher importance, were rated below the national benchmark and were more likely to influence resident opinions about a property tax increase than were other services.

- A series of analyses were conducted to uncover which City services were among the most important and perceived to be delivered with the lowest quality, as well as which service correlated most highly a willingness to support a tax increase. Residents who gave higher ratings to the key services (or “drivers”) were more likely to support a tax increase to maintain or improve services, while those who gave lower ratings to the key services were less likely to support a tax increase to maintain or improve services.
- The key drivers for Minneapolis in 2012 were snow removal, providing quality drinking water, providing parks and recreation services and revitalizing Downtown. Because snow removal and providing park and recreation services were both below the national benchmark and were key drivers, these are services on which the City may want to focus resources for either maintaining or improving service levels to have the biggest payoff in resident willingness to pay for better or sustained service.

Most respondents gave favorable ratings to the City government performance.

- A majority of respondents were pleased with the overall direction the City is taking and with the job the City government does at effectively planning for the future and informing residents on major City issues. More residents in 2012 than in 2011 felt that the job the City does at effectively planning for the future was “good” or better, while fewer felt that the City does a “good” or “very good” job providing meaningful opportunities for citizen input.
- Of the three aspects of City government performance that could be compared to the national benchmark, the overall direction the City is taking was rated much above, providing opportunities for citizen input was similar and providing value for the taxes paid was below.

The small proportion of respondents who reported experiencing discrimination in the city in the last year were most likely to have experienced it while getting a job or at work, or in dealing with the City.

- One in six residents reported experiencing discrimination in the 12 months prior to the survey, which was similar to previous years.
- The 14% of respondents who indicated that their discrimination happened in dealing with the City were asked to provide the reason for the discrimination; “race” and “economic status” were the most frequently mentioned reasons. The City department most commonly involved in the discrimination was Police. The Police department received more complaints about discrimination in 2012 than in 2011.