

Dakota County, Minnesota

Resident Survey

Report of Results

2013



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Understanding the needs of residents is important to Dakota County government, so it has conducted a regular, periodic survey of residents' opinions. This report includes Dakota County survey results dating back to 2001. In 2013, Dakota County was joined by Washington County, St. Louis County, Olmsted County, and Scott County, working together with National Research Center, Inc. (NRC), to develop a survey instrument with a set of shared questions, as well as questions unique to each County.

The Dakota County Resident Survey was administered by mail to 2,600 randomly selected households in February 2013, distributed among the seven County Commissioner Districts. Of the approximately 2,497 households that received a survey in the mail (the other surveys were sent to vacant households), 803 surveys were completed, providing a response rate of 32%.

Because Dakota County has administered a resident survey before, comparisons could be made between 2013 responses and those from prior years. Generally, comparisons between surveys are made through the conversion of ratings to a 100-point scale. Dakota County also elected to have its results compared to those of 42 other counties around the nation, comparisons made possible through NRC's national benchmark database. This database contains resident perspectives gathered in resident surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions, including cities and counties.

Key Findings

Dakota County residents experienced a high quality of life.

- Dakota County residents continued to rate their overall quality of life highly; the average rating was 76 on a 100-point scale. As in previous years, quality of life ratings were above the benchmark of other counties in the nation.
- When asked what they liked most about living in Dakota County, the most common responses were: location, general quality of life and their neighborhoods.

Residents considered taxes and crime as the most serious issues for the County.

- When asked what was the most serious issue facing the County, the top concerns were taxes, mentioned by 16% of residents, and crime, named by 14%. Traffic congestion and sense of community were other issues that residents most commonly considered serious issues for the County. The proportion considering taxes a serious concern in Dakota County has increased over time.
- Among the issues that were least likely to be mentioned as a concern were teen drug or alcohol use and growth and development.
- When asked to rate how much of a problem seven different potential issues in the County were, taxes garnered the biggest problem ratings among the listed issues, but only registered as a moderate problem.
- Among Dakota County residents' greatest health concerns were overweight adults and children, quality of parenting skills, illegal drug use and bullying.

Dakota County was considered safe, with road safety as the biggest safety concern.

- The average rating respondents gave ratings to safety in their neighborhood was 80 on the 100-point scale, a rating between "somewhat safe" and "very safe." Respondents also felt safe from violent crime (80) and from property crime (70).
- For the four safety ratings that could be compared to other counties, safety from violent crime, property crime and safety while in your neighborhood or while using parks and trails, ratings for Dakota County were above the benchmarks.
- The items that scored lowest for safety in the county were distracted, drunk or impaired drivers, motor vehicle crashes, and injuries while biking or walking on County roads. On the whole,

though, most of these ratings were above the scale midpoint, indicating that respondents felt more safe than unsafe. However, the rating for feelings of safety from distracted drivers was 49 on the 100-point scale, meaning that sentiment tipped towards feeling more unsafe than safe.

Residents approved of the Dakota County government performance.

- Almost 9 in 10 respondents (88%) approved of the job the Dakota County Board is doing. The average rating was 68 on a 100-point scale and was similar to the rating in 2011.
- Other aspects of government performance received average ratings from 52 to 61, indicating more positive than negative sentiment. These types of government performance items tend to get lower ratings than ratings for specific services. Of the four aspects of government job performance that could be compared to benchmarks (the job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents, the job Dakota County government does of listening to residents, the value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County, and the job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars), all were much above.
- Among the 4 in 10 residents who reported contacting a County government office, the average rating of the overall impression they had of their most recent contact was 70 on an 100-point scale. This rating was above the benchmark.

High marks were given for Dakota County services.

- The overall quality of services provided by the county was evaluated positively with an average rating of 62 on a 100-point scale. This rating was above the benchmark comparison.
- Of the 12 individual County services for which comparisons were available, Dakota County received ratings that were higher or much higher than the all-county benchmarks.
- The services receiving the highest ratings were libraries, parks and recreation and the trail and bikeway system. The assessment process/property tax system received the lowest ratings, the only service to receive an average rating below the midpoint of the 100-point scale (43).
- The three services found to have the greatest influence on overall ratings in the Key Driver Analysis were the assessment process/property tax system, 911 dispatch, and Recycling Zone services.
- About 4 in 10 respondents said that their household had used services at the Recycling Zone facility in the previous 12 months. The most common reason for not using the Recycling Zone was lack of familiarity.

Residents opposed the idea of raising property taxes to maintain current County service levels.

- When asked about support for, or opposition to, increasing property taxes to maintain County services at current levels, fewer respondents supported this idea than opposed it; 4 in 10 “somewhat” or “strongly” supported an increase, while 6 in 10 opposed it.
- Those completing the survey were also asked about their priorities or preferences for various County programs and services.
- The survey asked residents to rate the importance of providing a series of activities and services in Dakota County parks. Protecting/restoring woods, prairies, lakes, ponds and wetlands was given the highest importance rating, followed by trail networks for hiking, biking, or skiing, and gathering spaces in picnic grounds and shelters.
- Another prioritization question asked residents to indicate how important, if at all, it is for the County to continue investing funds for various open spaces and parkland for four different purposes. The most important investment was seen to be protecting lakes, streams and wetlands from pollution, followed closely by protecting the highest-rated natural areas.
- Among 16 library programs and services assessed, popular titles or current library materials and promotion, resources for early literacy and reading skills and technology access, computer classes and training were considered most essential.
- Survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they would support or oppose Dakota County investing in projects that make transit more convenient to use. Two-thirds somewhat or strongly supported this idea.

Residents relied on newsletters and newspapers to stay informed about Dakota County government.

- The Dakota County Newsletter, weekly community newspapers, and daily newspapers were reported as major sources of information about the County by about a third of respondents.
- Use of the Dakota County Web site as a minor or major source of information increased compared to 2011.
- When asked what services would be useful on the Web site, the most desired services were renewing or applying for a license, permit, or other application, applying for a library card and/or use other library resources and paying fees, fines or property taxes.

SURVEY BACKGROUND

Survey Purpose

The Dakota County Resident Survey provides residents the opportunity to rate the quality of life in the county, as well as service delivery and their satisfaction with County government. The survey also permits residents to provide feedback to the government on what is working well and what is not, and to share their priorities for community planning and resource allocation.

In 2013, Dakota County collaborated with Washington, Olmsted, Scott and St. Louis Counties on this survey project. The five counties worked together with National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to develop a survey instrument with a set of shared questions, as well as questions unique to each County. This report presents Dakota County's results. Comparisons of any questions asked by at least one of the other four participating counties can be found in *Appendix D: Comparison with Other Participating Counties*.

Methods

The Dakota County Resident Survey was administered by mail to 2,600 randomly selected households within the county in February 2013, distributed among the seven County Commissioner Districts. Of the approximately 2,497 households that received a survey in the mail (the other surveys were sent to vacant households), 803 surveys were completed, providing a response rate of 32%. The survey instrument itself appears in *Appendix I: Survey Instrument*.

Survey results were weighted so that respondent race, ethnicity, age, gender, housing tenure, and housing unit type were represented in the proportions reflective of the entire county, and then adjusted to match the appropriate proportions by County Commissioner District. (For more information see *Appendix A: Survey Methodology*.)

Responses to any open-ended questions and “other” responses appear verbatim in *Appendix B: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

How the Results Are Reported

“Don’t Know” Responses and Rounding

On many of the questions in the survey, respondents could give an answer of “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies* and is discussed in the body of this report if it is 20% or greater. However, the “don’t know” responses have been removed from the tables and analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs only display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select multiple responses. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents are counted in multiple categories. When a table for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice of rounding percentages to the nearest whole number.

Putting Evaluations onto a 100-point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative or frequency questions were made on four- or five-point scales with “1” representing the best rating, the scales had different labels (e.g., “essential,” “excellent,” “very safe”). To make comparisons easier, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent” for quality of life, then the result would be 100 on the 0-100 scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “fair,” then the result would be 33. The new scale can be thought of like the

thermometer used to represent total giving to United Way: the higher the thermometer reading, the closer to the goal of 100. In this case, a score of 100 would be the most positive response possible.

Precision of Estimates

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” and accompanying “confidence interval” (or margin of error). The 95% confidence interval for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus four percentage points around any given percent and no greater than plus or minus two points for any average rating on the 100-point scale for the entire sample (803 completed surveys). For any given subgroup from the survey, the margin of error rises to as much as plus or minus 10% or six points (on the 100-point scale) for a sample size of 100 to plus or minus 5% or three points (on the 100-point scale) for 400 completed surveys.

Comparing Survey Results by Respondent Subgroups

Selected survey results were compared by certain demographic characteristics of survey respondents and by the seven County Commissioner Districts in which respondents lived. Some comparisons are discussed throughout the body of the report and are presented in tabular form in *Appendix E: Comparison of Select Questions by Respondent Characteristics* (where differences between subgroups are statistically significant, the results in these tables are shaded grey).

Comparing Survey Results Over Time

Dakota County survey data were collected by telephone in 2001, 2004, 2006 and 2008. In 2011, the County switched data collection from telephone to mail and continued with mail in 2013. As a consequence of the switch in methodology, a decline from 2008 to 2011 in virtually all ratings was both expected and observed. In the previous survey administration by telephone in 2008, a small sample of residents was surveyed by mail to explore the magnitude of the differences between telephone and mail survey responses in Dakota County. Using 2008 survey research conducted by NRC in Dakota County that compared mail and telephone responses, as well as NRC’s analysis of national trends comparing telephone and mail responses, NRC adjusted the findings from 2001 to 2008 to maximize the comparability of results over time. This way the reported trendline data are not influenced by the decline that is attributable to the change in data collection mode from telephone to mail. Additional information on the comparing previous survey results can be found in *Appendix A: Survey Methodology*.

Differences of four or more points on the 100-point scale among average ratings between 2013 and 2011 and differences of six percentage points or more among percentages are considered meaningfully different.

Comparing Survey Results to Other Jurisdictions

Jurisdictions use the comparative information provided by benchmarks to help interpret their own residential survey results, create or revise community plans, evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions and measure local government performance. NRC’s database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in resident surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services. Conducted with typically no fewer than 400 residents in each jurisdiction, opinions are intended to represent more than 30 million Americans. Dakota County chose to have comparisons made to other counties across the nation. Additional information regarding benchmark comparisons can be found in *Appendix F: Benchmark Comparisons*.

Comparison of Dakota County to the Benchmarking Database

Jurisdictions to which Dakota County is compared can be found in *Appendix G: List of Counties in the Benchmark Comparisons*. National county benchmark comparisons have been provided when similar questions on the Dakota County survey are included in NRC’s database and there are at least five counties

in which the question was asked. There are 42 other counties in the NRC benchmark database. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of some counties included in the benchmark are similar to Dakota County and some are not, but all the benchmark counties share the same goal: being recognized for providing high-quality services to residents.

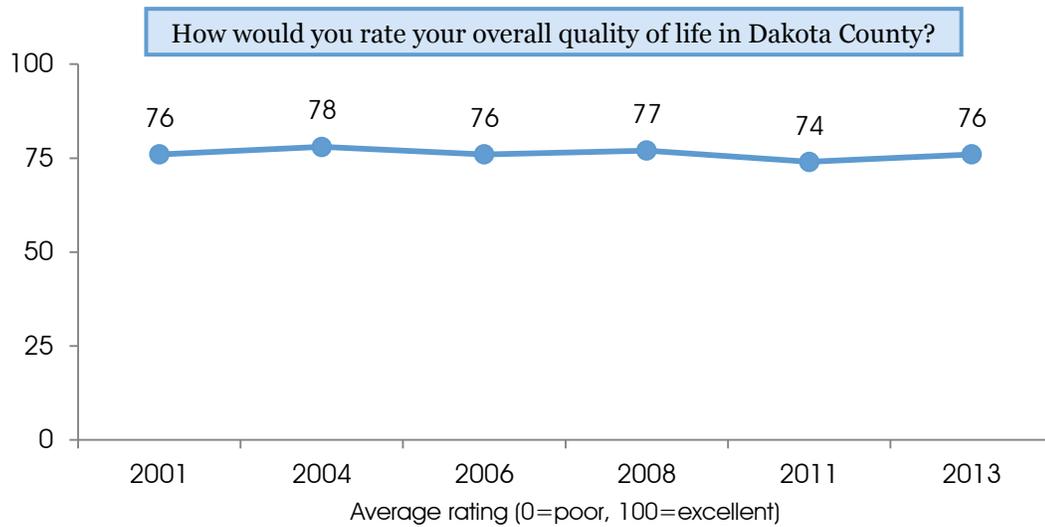
Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, Dakota County's results were generally noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark, or "similar" to the benchmark. For some questions – those related to resident behavior, circumstance, or to a local problem – the comparison to the benchmark is designated as "more," "similar," or "less" (for example, residents contacting the County in the last 12 months). In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of "much" (for example, "much less" or "much above"). These labels come from a statistical comparison of Dakota County's rating to the benchmark where a rating is considered "similar" if it is within the margin of error; "above," "below," "more," or "less" if the difference between Dakota County's rating and the benchmark is greater than but no more than twice the margin of error; and "much above," "much below," "much more," or "much less" if the difference between Dakota County's rating and the benchmark is more than twice the margin of error.

REPORT OF RESULTS

Quality of Life and Community

Survey respondents were asked to rate their overall quality of life in Dakota County. On a 100-point scale where zero equals “poor” and 100 equals “excellent,” Dakota County’s average rating was 76, similar to ratings in previous years. Dakota County’s overall quality of life was much higher than ratings given by other counties in the benchmark data set.

Figure 1: Quality of Life Compared by Year



The scale on the 2001 survey was "Excellent," "Good," "Only fair," "Poor."

Residents were asked to identify one thing that they liked most about living in Dakota County. Prior to 2011, this was an open-ended question where respondents were able to answer using their own words, and the telephone interviewer reported the response in the most appropriate category. The most frequently selected categories from previous surveys comprised most of the response options on the 2011 and 2013 mailed surveys, from which respondents were instructed to choose only one option. When a respondent identified an unlisted, or “other,” reason, the response was captured verbatim. These responses appear in *Appendix B: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

The location of the county was at the top of the list with about a third of respondents reporting it as the thing they liked most. Other more common responses were the quality of life in general (16%) and respondent’s neighborhood (10%).

When compared to previous years, location remained the most-liked characteristic of living in Dakota County and increased compared to 2011 ratings. Much of the variability over time in percentages and relative order likely is attributable to the change in question formatting.

Figure 2: Like Most About Living in County Compared by Year

What one thing do you like most about living in Dakota County?	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Location	38%	31%	26%	28%	27%	31%
Quality of life in general	16%	22%	5%	4%	3%	0%
My neighborhood	10%	11%	4%	5%	4%	7%
Open space	7%	4%	4%	4%	3%	0%
Parks/lakes	7%	9%	10%	8%	7%	4%
Schools	6%	6%	6%	8%	6%	9%
Small town feel	6%	6%	6%	3%	5%	5%
Rural character	4%	3%	7%	4%	5%	22%
Low taxes	3%	3%	0%	3%	4%	0%
People	2%	2%	5%	4%	2%	6%
Other	1%	2%	9%	8%	15%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

In 2013 and 2011, this question was presented as fixed response (i.e., respondents were presented a list of items from which to choose), whereas, between 2008 and 2001, this question was open-ended (i.e., no list presented).

County Characteristics

When asked to rate various characteristics as they related to the County as a whole, most characteristics received average ratings that were between “good” and “fair” on a 100-point scale, where zero is equal to “poor,” 33 equals “fair,” 67 represents “good,” and 100 is equivalent to “excellent.”

Dakota County as a place to live received the highest average rating (77 on the 100-point scale, or between “good” and “excellent”) and was a new question item in 2013. Recreational opportunities and the overall image or reputation of Dakota County received the next highest average ratings (68 and 66 respectively on the 100-point scale, or hovering right around “good”). Employment opportunities and ease of travel by public transit in Dakota County were rated least positively (50 and 45 respectively on the 100-point scale, or between “fair” and “good”), though employment opportunities were seen more positively in 2013 than in 2011. Note that approximately a fifth of respondents reported “don’t know” when asked about the ease of travel by public transit in Dakota County (see *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies*). Results presented in the report body are for those who had an opinion.

Ratings for all of Dakota County’s characteristics were above or much above ratings given in other counties across the country.

Figure 3: Average Ratings of County Characteristics Compared by Year

Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County.	Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Dakota County as a place to live	77	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	68	67	NA	NA	NA	NA
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	66	67	NA	NA	NA	NA
Educational opportunities	63	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Dakota County as a place to retire	60	58	NA	NA	NA	NA
Economic health of Dakota County	60	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	58	60	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sense of community	57	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Availability of quality affordable housing	53	49	47	46	50	NA
Employment opportunities	50	44	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ease of travel by public transit	45	44	NA	NA	NA	NA

New questions in 2013 were "Dakota County as a place to live," "Sense of community," "Educational opportunities," and "Economic health of Dakota County." All other questions were new in 2011 except for "Availability of affordable housing" which was worded as "Affordable housing" in 2006 and 2004. None of these questions were asked in 2001.

Figure 4: County Characteristics Benchmarks

	Comparison to benchmark
Dakota County as a place to live	Much above
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	Much above
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	Much above
Educational opportunities	Much above
Dakota County as a place to retire	Above
Economic health of Dakota County	Much above
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	Much above
Sense of community	Above
Availability of quality affordable housing	Much above
Employment opportunities	Much above
Ease of travel by public transit	Much above

Potential Problems

County residents responding to the survey evaluated a list of potential problems as being a “major problem,” a “moderate problem,” a “minor problem,” or “not a problem” in Dakota County. When converted to the 100-point scale where zero equals “not a problem” and 100 equals “major problem,” most items in the list of potential problems were thought to be between a “moderate” or “minor” problem (between 67 and 33). Taxes were viewed as most problematic, with an average rating of 48 on the 100-point scale, while traffic safety was viewed as least problematic, with an average rating of 34.

Note that about one in four respondents said “don’t know” when asked to rate how problematic poverty and access to affordable housing were in the county. The complete set of responses to this question appears in *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies*.

When comparisons to 2011 were available, ratings remained stable.

Ratings were compared by a selection of demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Respondents who lived in the County for more than 10 years generally gave higher ratings for potential problems than those living in the County for five or fewer years (see *Appendix E: Comparison of Select Questions by Respondent Characteristics*).

Figure 5: Average Ratings of Potential Problems Compared by Year

Please rate, to what degree, each of the following is a problem in Dakota County.	Average rating (0=not a problem, 100=major problem)					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Taxes	48	51	50	NA	45	NA
Access to public transit	41	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Traffic congestion	40	42	43	50	52	NA
Access to affordable housing	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Crime	39	39	35	44	38	NA
Poverty	39	36	32	36	33	NA
Traffic safety	34	36	NA	NA	NA	NA

The scale differed between years. In 2008, the bottom of the scale read "Not at all a problem," whereas in 2004, 2006, 2011 and 2013, it read "Not a problem." These questions were not asked in 2001. "Access to affordable housing" and "Access to public transit" were new questions in 2013.

Most Serious Issue Facing Dakota County

When asked about the most serious issue facing Dakota County, taxes and crime were considered top current issues by survey respondents.

In 2013 and in previous years, this was an open-ended question where respondents were able to answer, in their own words. The responses were captured verbatim and grouped into categories that best fit the response. These responses appear in *Appendix B: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*. In 2011, this question was presented as a fixed-response where respondents were presented with a list of items from which to choose.

Taxes, jobs, economic development, growth and development and schools topped the list in 2011, but in 2013, taxes and crime were considered top issues, along with traffic congestion and sense of community. Because of the methodological change (open-ended question in 2013 and in previous years versus fixed-response options in 2011), it is recommended that the reader make little of the differences between the 2013 responses compared to 2011 responses and the 2011 responses compared to responses to the open-ended question posed in 2008 and earlier. When provided a list to choose from, a respondent may bypass their first thought (say, “taxes”) as the list reminds them of a more serious issue (like their jobs), while in an interview or given the opportunity to write anything, a respondent would more likely stay with their first thought.

Figure 6: Most Serious Issue Facing Dakota County Compared by Year

What do you feel is the most serious issue facing Dakota County at this time?	Percent of respondents					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Taxes	16%	20%	17%	13%	10%	16%
Crime	14%	3%	5%	6%	4%	8%
Traffic congestion	9%	6%	7%	8%	9%	7%
Sense of community	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Jobs	7%	17%	3%	2%	2%	0%
Affordable housing	6%	5%	4%	4%	3%	0%
Economic development	6%	12%	3%	2%	3%	0%
Amount of county services	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Health	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Government spending	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Preserving natural areas/protecting natural resources	3%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Schools	3%	13%	7%	10%	12%	22%
Condition of roads	2%	8%	6%	4%	5%	4%
No issue	2%	0%	4%	6%	5%	0%
Teen drug/alcohol use	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Growth/development	0%	12%	17%	24%	22%	27%
Other	7%	2%	14%	7%	14%	14%

These percentages represent the 484 respondents who chose to write in a response. In 2011, this question was presented as fixed response (i.e., respondents were presented a list of items from which to choose), whereas, between 2008 and 2001 along with 2013, this question was open-ended.

Safety in Dakota County

Residents were asked how safe they felt from different types of crimes and drunk or impaired driving, as well as safety in different county locations. Responses to this question were converted to the 100-point scale where zero equals “very unsafe,” 33 is equal to “somewhat unsafe,” 67 represents “somewhat safe,” and 100 is equivalent to “very safe.” About half of the items received an average rating that was equal to “somewhat” safe or better. The lowest average rating was for feelings of safety from distracted drivers (average rating of 49, or between “somewhat safe” and “somewhat unsafe”).

Four of 12 safety ratings were compared to safety ratings in other counties across the country; Dakota County was rated much above the benchmark for each item.

The rating for feelings of safety from drunk or impaired drivers on County roads declined from 2011 and neighborhood safety increased. All other ratings remained similar.

Ratings were compared by a selection of demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Respondents who were 55 or older and those who were female generally gave lower ratings of county safety than did respondents who were under 55 and who were male (see *Appendix E: Comparison of Select Questions by Respondent Characteristics*).

Figure 7: Perception of Safety Compared by Year

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Dakota County.	Average rating (0=very unsafe, 100=very safe)					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
From domestic violence	83	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	80	80	80	73	79	NA
While in your neighborhood	80	75	83	84	86	78
While using Dakota County parks and trails	78	78	76	77	78	NA
From illegal use of prescription drugs	73	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70	72	72	67	72	NA
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs)	66	67	NA	NA	NA	NA
From identity theft	62	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county	62	64	NA	NA	NA	NA
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	60	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads	56	64	64	60	NA	NA
From distracted drivers on County roads	49	48	NA	NA	NA	NA

Several question parts were worded differently in earlier surveys. "From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads" was "From drunk drivers on County roads" in 2011 and "from drunk driving when traveling within the county" in 2008 and "traveling on county roads" in 2006; safety "in your neighborhood" was a separate question in 2008; "In Dakota County parks and trails" and "on trails in Dakota County parks" were combined in 2006 as follows: "on Dakota County parks and trails" and remained for 2008 and 2011 but was reworded in 2013 to "While using Dakota County parks and trails." "Safety from "drunk driving" and "safety on parks and trails" were not asked in 2004." From motor vehicle crashes on County roads," "From identity theft," "From domestic violence" and "From illegal use of prescription drugs" were new questions for 2013. In 2001, a question was asked about "How safe would you feel walking alone in your neighborhood in general?" with a response scale of "very safe," "reasonably safe," "very unsafe."

Figure 8: Safety Benchmarks

	Comparison to benchmark
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	Much above
While in your neighborhood	Much above
While using Dakota County parks and trails	Much above
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	Much above

Health Concerns

As in previous years, respondents were asked to rate potential health concerns in Dakota County. Average ratings for almost all potential health concerns, where zero equals “not at all a concern” and 100 equals “major concern,” fell between a “moderate” and “minor” concern; suicide and tobacco use were least concerning, with ratings of 29 and 31, respectively.

Note that at least one in five respondents said “don’t know” when asked if suicide, bullying, the health and support of older adults, the health and support of persons with disabilities, quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17, abuse and neglect of children, abuse and neglect of older adults and spread of infectious diseases, were of concern in the county (see *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies*).

Eleven of the 14 potential health concerns could be compared to 2011 survey results. Three remained stable between 2011 and 2013 (overweight adults and children, exposure to pollution in the water and tobacco use).

Parenting skills were seen as more of a concern in 2013, though a revision in question wording may at least partially explain the change. The remaining seven (underage alcohol use, abuse and neglect of children, alcohol abuse among adults, abuse and neglect of older adults, the health and support of older adults, the health and support of persons with disabilities and illegal drug use) all were seen as less concerning in 2013 than in 2011.

Ratings were compared by a selection of demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Respondents who were 55 or older generally gave higher ratings of the listed health concerns than did respondents who were under 55 (see *Appendix E: Comparison of Select Questions by Respondent Characteristics*).

Figure 9: Average Ratings of Health Concerns Compared by Year

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County.	Average rating (0=not at all a concern, 100=major concern)					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Overweight adults and children	58	59	58	55	54	NA
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17	51	42	38	46	37	NA
Illegal drug use	49	55	57	63	NA	NA
Bullying	49	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Underage alcohol use	48	55	60	61	57	NA
Abuse and neglect of children	47	52	46	38	37	NA
Alcohol abuse among adults	44	48	46	NA	NA	NA
Abuse and neglect of older adults	43	49	NA	NA	NA	NA
The health and support of older adults	42	53	47	56	NA	NA
The health and support of persons with disabilities	41	49	NA	NA	NA	NA
Exposure to pollution in the water	37	38	NA	NA	NA	NA
Spread of infectious diseases	36	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Tobacco use	31	32	40	52	49	NA
Suicide	29	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

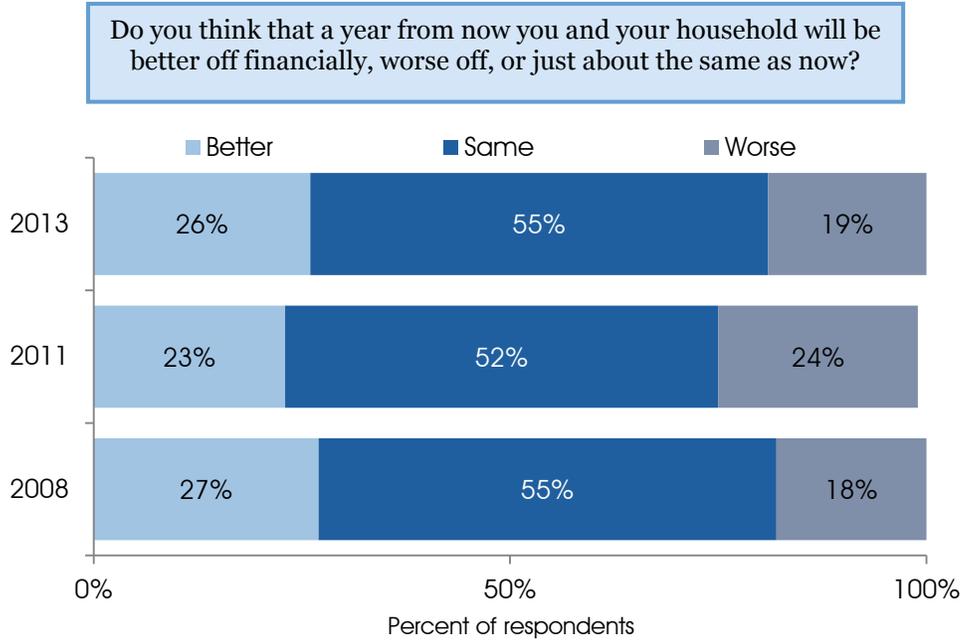
Several question parts were worded differently in earlier surveys. In 2006, "Tobacco use" was "Youth tobacco use;" in 2006 and 2004 "Underage alcohol use" was "underage drinking;" "Overweight adults and children" was "Obesity." Neither "Illegal drug use" nor "The health and support of our elderly and disabled" were asked in 2004 and "older adults" was "elderly" in 2011. In 2006, 2008 and 2011, "Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17" was "The adequacy of care and parenting for infants and young children" and in 2004 was "Inadequate care and parenting for infants and young children." In 2006 and 2004, "Abuse and neglect of children" and "Drinking and driving" were included in a different question set and used a different scale: "Major problem," "Moderate problem," "Minor problem," "Not a problem." These questions were not asked in 2001. New questions in 2013 include "Suicide," "Bullying" and "Spread of infectious disease."

Household Financial Status

Survey participants were asked to indicate if they thought their household would be better off financially, worse off, or about the same a year from now. A quarter of respondents thought their household would be better off financially in a year, another quarter thought their household would be worse off, and about half thought their household finances would be about the same.

When compared to 2011, residents' outlook was similar in 2013.

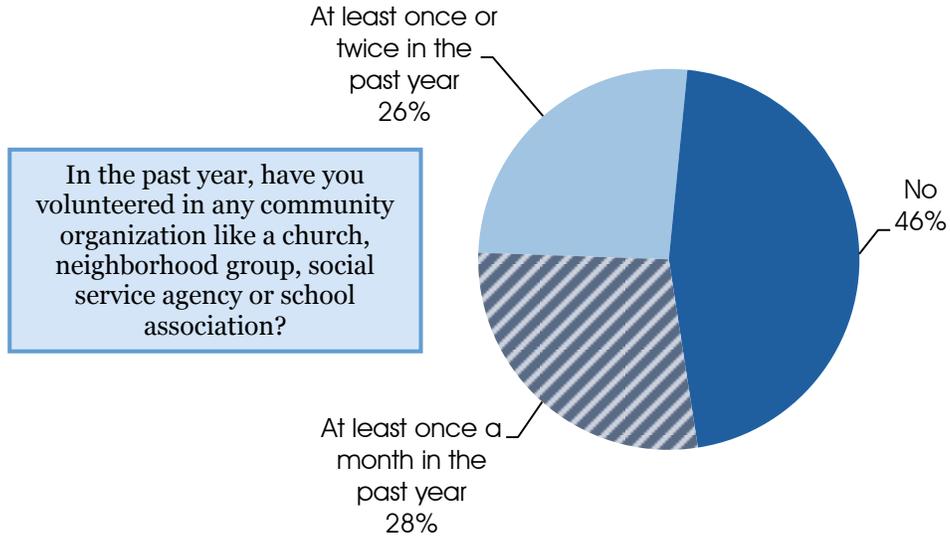
Figure 10: Financial Status Compared by Year



Volunteering in the Community

Residents were asked if they had volunteered in any community organization in the past year. About 3 in 10 reported volunteering at least once a month in the past year while about half reported that they had not volunteered. This was a new question in 2013.

Figure 11: Volunteering in the Community



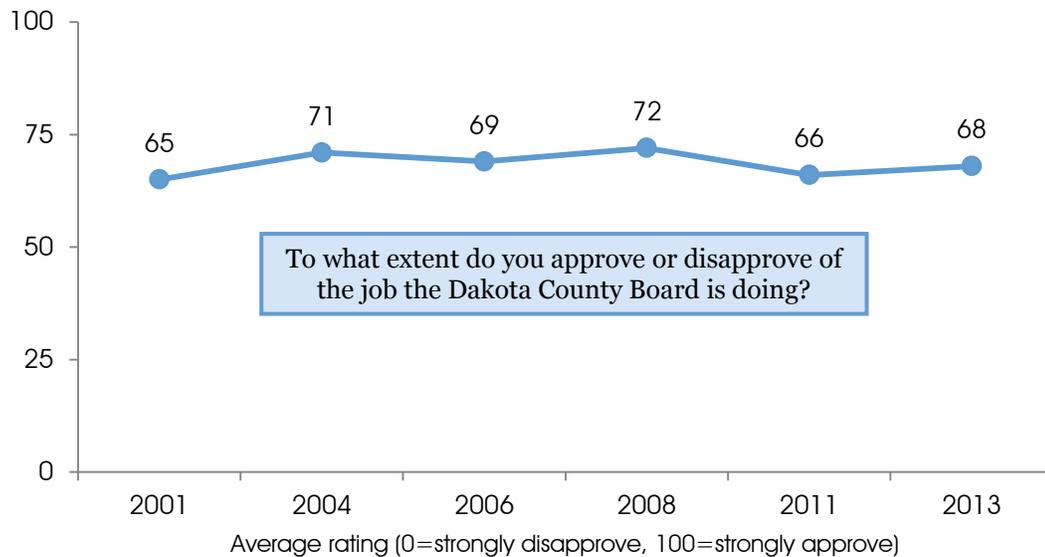
Evaluation of Government Services

Residents completing the survey were asked a series of questions related to Dakota County government and employee performance and the quality of County services.

County Government

As in previous surveys, respondents indicated the extent to which they approved or disapproved of the job the Dakota County Board is doing. When converted to the 100-point scale where zero represents “strongly disapprove” and 100 equals “strongly approve,” the average rating for how well the Dakota County Board is doing was 68, equivalent to “somewhat” approve, on average. This rating was similar to the 2011 rating (68 in 2013 versus 66 in 2011). Please note that 44% of respondents reported “don’t know” when asked this question (see *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies*).

Figure 12: Average Ratings of County Board Approval Compared by Year



In 2001, this question was worded differently: "From what you know, do you approve or disapprove of the job the County board is doing? And do you feel strongly that way?" and the response options were: "approve/strongly," "approve," "disapprove," "disapprove/strongly."

Survey respondents were asked to rate several aspects of Dakota County government performance. Ratings on the 100-point scale for the perception of the County Government were between “good” and “fair,” where zero equals “poor” and 100 equals “excellent.” Respondents rated the job the County does of providing information to residents positively, with an average rating of 61 on the 100-point scale. The value of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood and the government’s generally acting in the best interest of the community were also rate favorably; both of these areas of performance received average ratings of 60. Respondents rated the job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars least favorably (52). Note that for a number of items a high percent of respondents reported “don’t know” when asked to rate each item: the job Dakota County government does at listening to residents (35% said “don’t know”) and the job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars (22%).

Four of the seven aspects of Dakota County government performance could be compared to counties across the nation. Dakota County was much above the benchmark in each of these four areas: the job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents; the job Dakota County government does of listening to residents; the value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County; and the job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars.

Compared to 2011, ratings in 2013 generally stayed the same or improved. Residents felt the County had done better at listening to residents and managing tax dollars and that the value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County had improved.

Figure 13: Average Ratings of Perception of Government Compared by Year

Please rate the following categories of Dakota County government performance:	Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents	61	57	52	59	60	64
The value of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood	60	55	64	53	NA	NA
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	60	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Overall confidence in Dakota County government	58	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
The job Dakota County government does of listening to residents	54	48	48	44	47	NA
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County	54	46	46	48	54	43
The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars	52	44	45	48	51	NA

Question wording for some questions items changed in 2013. "The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents" was "The job Dakota County government does at informing residents" in 2011; "The value of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood" was "The importance of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood" in 2011. New items in 2013 were "Generally acting in the best interest of the community" and "Overall confidence in Dakota County government." Before 2011, respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with several statements. As with the response scale and question wording, the wording of the items also changed: "the job Dakota County government does at listening to residents" was "I feel Dakota government listens to citizens;" "The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County" was "I receive good value for the Dakota taxes I pay;" "The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars" was "Overall, I feel that Dakota County does a good job of managing tax dollars and "The importance of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood" was "I feel that the services provided by Dakota County are important to the quality of life in my neighborhood." This last item was worded as "the services that the County provides improve the quality of life in my neighborhood" in 2006. This change in the wording of response options may cause a decline in the percent of residents who offer a positive perspective on public trust. It is well to factor in the possible change due to question wording this way: if you show an increase, you may have found even more improvement with the same question wording; if you show no change, you may have shown a slight increase with the same question wording; if you show a decrease, community sentiment is probably about stable.

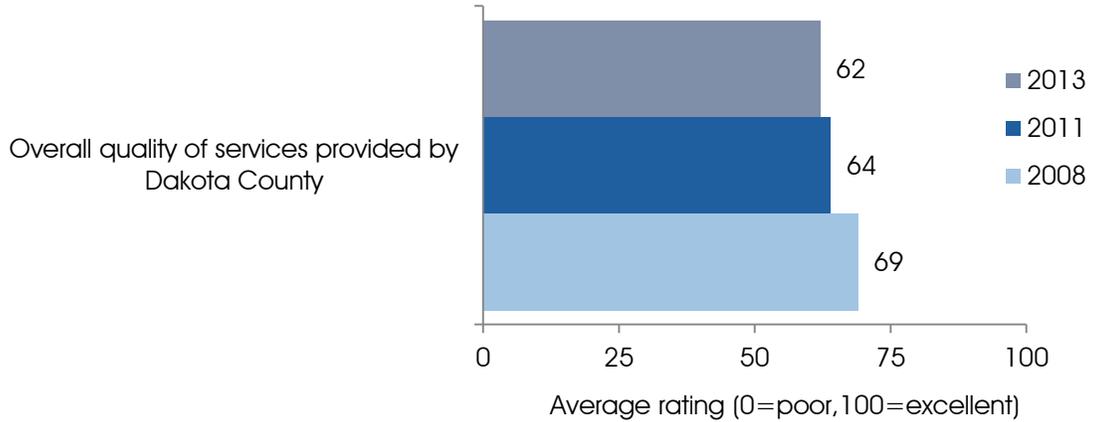
Figure 14: Perception of County Government Benchmarks

	Comparison to benchmark
The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents	Much above
The job Dakota County government does of listening to residents	Much above
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County	Much above
The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars	Much above

Overall Quality of County Services

Residents rated both specific County services and the overall quality of services provided by Dakota County. The average rating of 62 on the 100-point scale for overall quality of County services was higher than the national benchmark and similar to ratings in 2011.

Figure 15: Average Ratings of Overall Quality of County Services Compared by Year



County Services

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of 17 County services. When converted to a 100-point scale where zero is equal to “poor” and 100 represents “excellent,” average scores for six services were above 67 (or “good”): County libraries (average rating of 84), County parks and recreation (81), the trail and bikeway system (78), 911 dispatch services (77), and Sheriff services (77). Average ratings for other County services rated by 2013 residents were between “fair” and “good” on the 100-point scale.

Note that a relatively large proportion of respondents said “don’t know” when asked to rate the following County services: assessment process/property tax system (21%), public transportation/transit services (22%), trail and bikeway system (24%), services at the Recycling Zone (30%) 911 dispatch services (46%), self-service options on County Web site (53%), Sheriff services (53%), disaster preparedness (55%), services provided to older adults (59%) employment support services (60%), financial assistance for low-income families (63%) and services to veterans (71%). (See *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies.*)

Dakota County received ratings that were much higher than the county benchmark for 9 of the 12 services for which a comparison was available, higher for a single service, and similar for the remaining two services.

Fourteen of the 17 services could be compared to 2011. Sheriff services, services at the recycling zone, services provided to veterans, snow and ice removal on County roads, County libraries, and the condition of County roads, received higher average ratings in 2013 compared to 2011 ratings. Ratings for self-service options on the County Web site received a lower rating in 2013 than in 2011.

Ratings were compared by a selection of demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. Respondents who had lived in the County for five years or less gave generally higher ratings to County services than did those living in the County for more than 10 years (see *Appendix E: Comparison of Select Questions by Respondent Characteristics.*)

Figure 16: Average Ratings of County Services Compared by Year

Please rate the following services provided by Dakota County.	Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
County libraries	84	80	81	78	80	82
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	81	80	76	74	77	76
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	78	75	72	70	73	70
911 dispatch services	77	76	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sheriff services	77	70	69	70	70	72
Services at the Recycling Zone	70	66	NA	NA	NA	NA
Snow and ice removal on County roads	65	61	70	67	65	73
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration	65	66	NA	NA	NA	NA
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	63	56	53	57	59	63
Disaster preparedness and response	62	60	NA	NA	NA	NA
Self-service options on the County Web site	60	64	60	NA	NA	NA
Services provided to veterans	59	55	NA	NA	NA	NA
Services provided to older adults	58	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Financial assistance for low-income families	57	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment support services	51	49	51	NA	58	NA
Public transportation/transit services	51	48	43	47	48	NA
Assessment process/property tax system	43	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

New questions for 2013 included "Financial assistance for low-income families," "Services provided to older adults" and "Assessment process/property tax system." In 2011 "Services at the Recycling Zone" was "Recycling and drop-off services at the Recycling Zone." One question part was not included in 2006: "employment support services." In 2001, a few of these question parts were separate questions: "County libraries" was "overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by the Dakota County libraries?" "County parks and recreation" was "in general, how would you rate the quality of the county park system?" "Trail and bikeway system" was "how would you rate the quality of the County trail and bikeway system?" "Sheriff services" was "In general, how would you rate the services provided by the Sheriff's department?" "Snow and ice removal" was "how would you rate the snow and ice removal operations on county roads?" In 2001, the scale for all was "excellent," "good," "only fair," "poor."

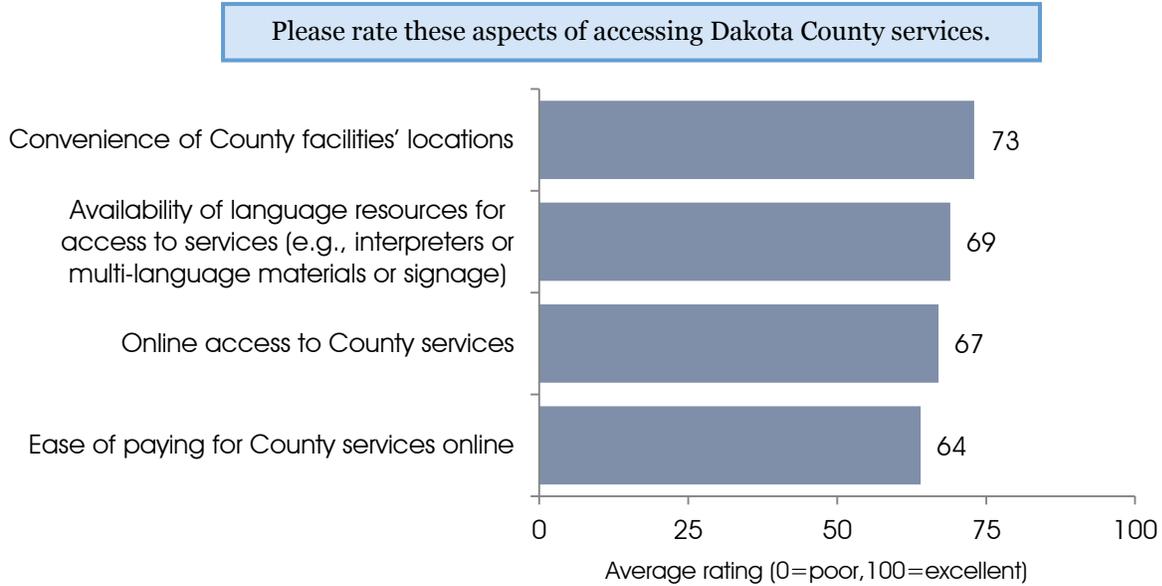
Figure 17: County Services Benchmarks

	Comparison to benchmark
County libraries	Much above
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	Much above
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	Much above
Sheriff services	Much above
Services at the Recycling Zone	Much above
Snow and ice removal on County roads	Much above
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	Much above
Disaster preparedness and response	Much above
Self-service on the County Web site	Similar
Services provided to older adults	Above
Financial assistance for low-income families	Much above
Public transportation/transit services	Similar

Access to County Services

Residents were asked to rate four dimensions of accessing Dakota County services. The most highly rated aspect of access was the convenience of County facilities' locations with an average rating of 73 on the 100-point scale where zero equals "poor" and 100 equals "excellent." Note that a relatively large proportion of respondents said "don't know" when asked to rate the ease of paying for County services online (43%) and the availability of language resources for access to services (71%). This question was new in the 2013 survey iteration.

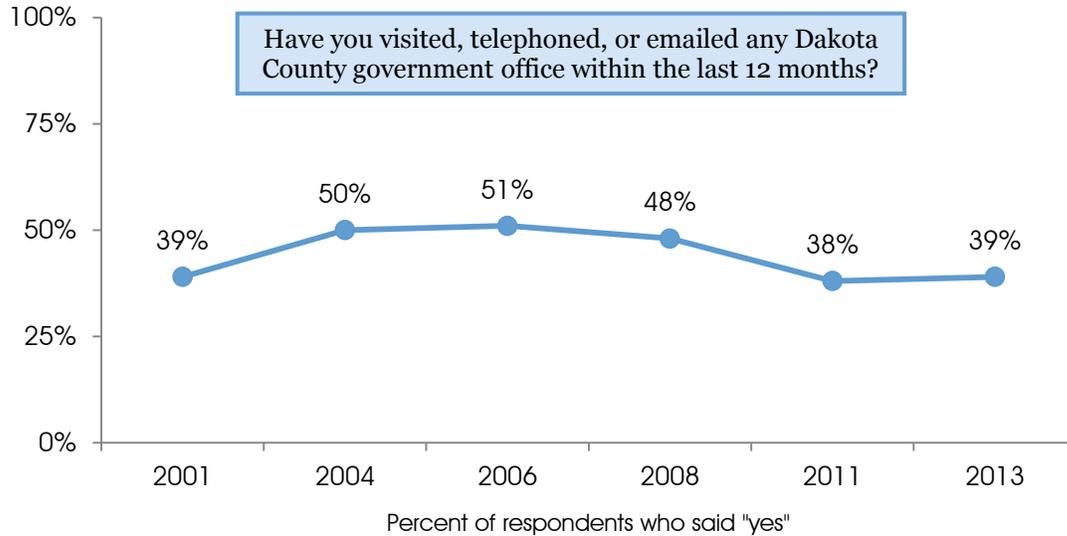
Figure 18: Average Ratings of Access to County Services



Contact with County Government

As in past years, respondents were asked if they had visited, telephoned, or emailed any Dakota County government office within the previous 12 months. A similar percentage of residents in 2013 and 2011 reported contacting a government office. The proportion of residents contacting County government also was much less than contact, on average, in counties across the nation.

Figure 19: Government Office Contact Compared by Year

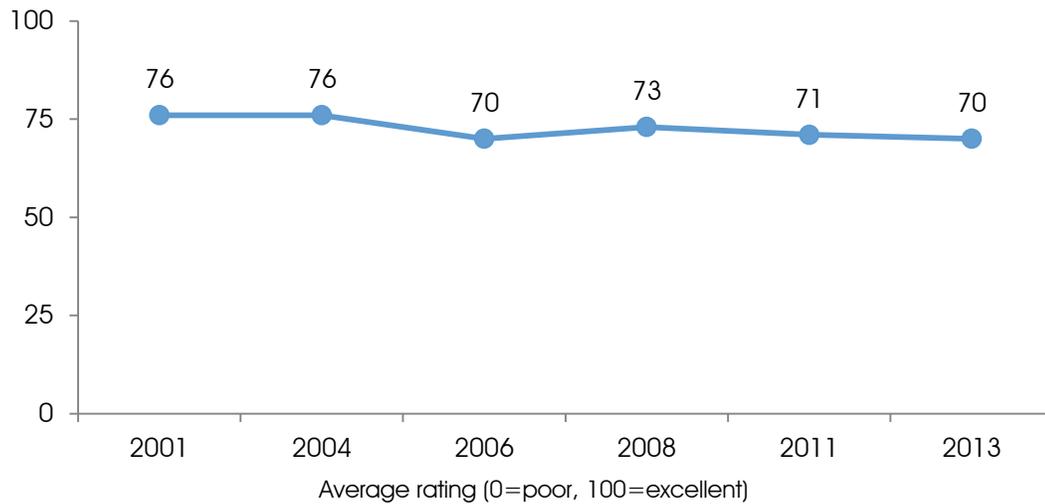


In 2001, this question was "During the past year, have you visited or telephoned one of these service centers [locations preceded the question]? Response scale was: "no;" "yes, visited;" "yes, telephoned;" "yes, both." In 2011, "email" was added as an additional method of contact. In 2013, respondents were given the only options of "Yes" and "No."

The 39% of respondents who reported having contacted a County government office were asked to give their impression of the employee with whom they had most recently had contact. Average ratings for all employee characteristics were above “good,” or 67, on the 100-point scale. The ratings for responsiveness and overall impression each were 70 points. Courtesy received an average score of 71 and knowledge was given a rating of 73. Ratings for the overall impression of County employees were similar in 2013 and 2011.

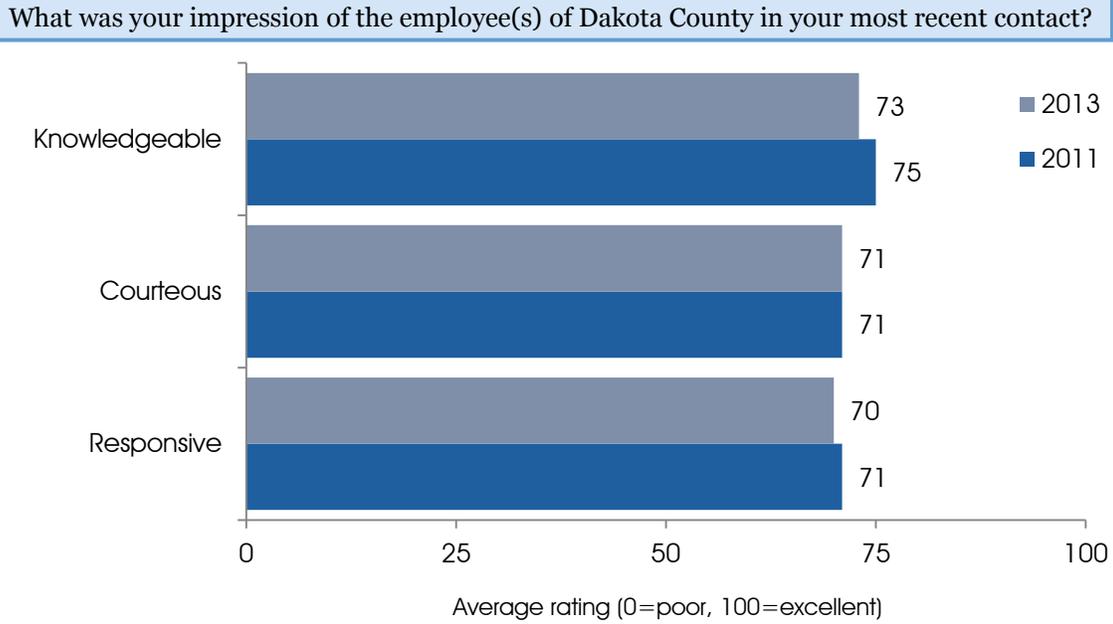
The average rating for employee courtesy was similar to the County benchmark and all other aspects were rated above the national average.

Figure 20: Overall Impression of Most Recent Contact with Dakota County Compared by Year



In 2001, the survey contained a question asking, “which department [in a government service center] did you contact or visit?” This question was then followed by “how would you rate the service overall?” Overall service had a response scale ranging from 1 to 5, with only values 5 (excellent) and 1 (poor) labeled.

Figure 21: Average Rating of Dakota County Employee Compared by Year



Knowledge, courtesy and responsiveness were new survey items in 2011. In 2013, "Knowledge" was changed to "Knowledgeable," "Courtesy" to "Courteous" and "Responsiveness" to "Responsive."

Figure 22: Perceptions of County Employees (Among Those Who Had Contact) Benchmarks

	Comparison to benchmark
Overall impression	Above
Knowledgeable	Above
Courteous	Similar
Responsive	Above

County Older Adult Services

Residents completing the survey were asked a series of questions related to older adults. A majority of residents reported that they were “not at all familiar” with older adult services in their community and only four percent reported being “very familiar.”

As would be expected, the level of familiarity with older adult services and activities increased with respondent age.

Figure 23: Familiarity with Older Adult Services

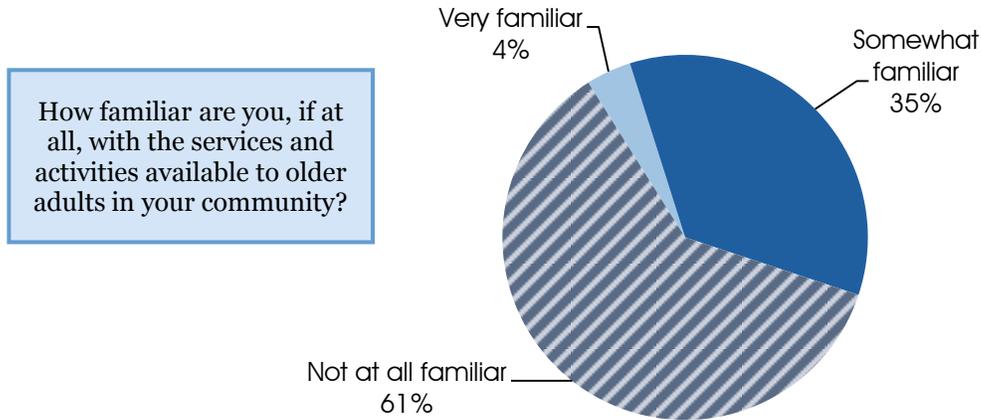
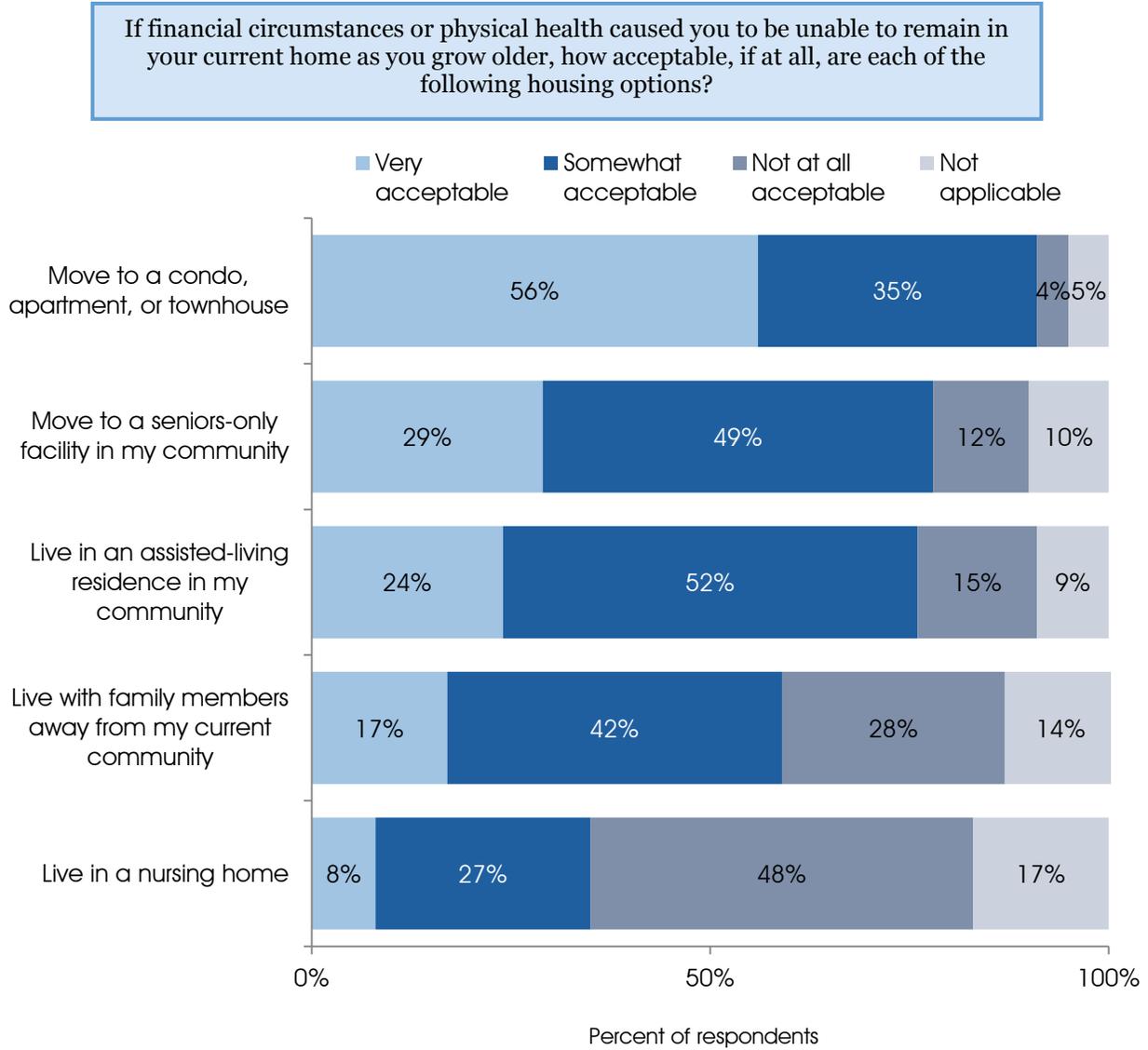


Figure 24: Familiarity with Older Adult Services Compared by Respondent Age

How familiar are you, if at all, with the services and activities available to older adults in your community?	Respondent age			
	18-34	35-54	55+	Overall
Very familiar	4%	3%	5%	4%
Somewhat familiar	20%	31%	52%	35%
Not at all familiar	76%	67%	43%	61%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Residents were also asked to consider how acceptable a list of housing options might be if circumstances made them unable to remain in their current home as they age. The most acceptable option was move to a condo, apartment, or townhouse (86% “very” or “somewhat” acceptable) while the least acceptable option was live in a nursing home (31%).

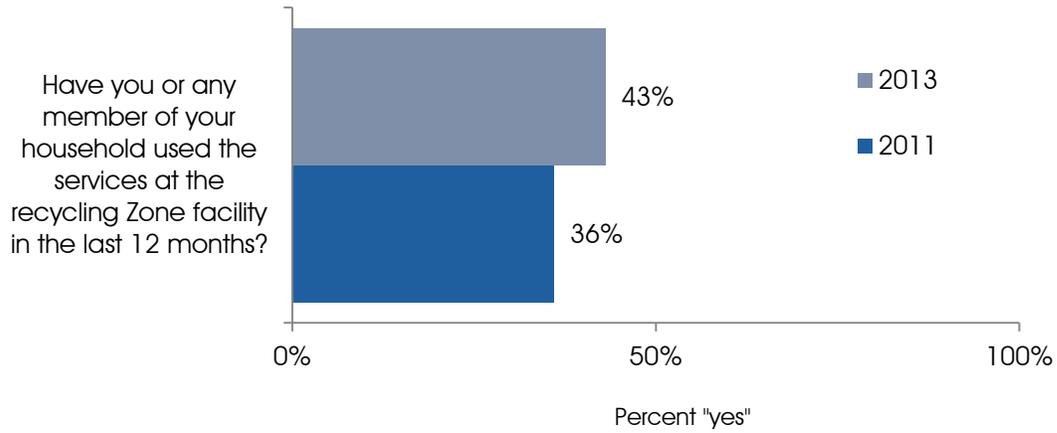
Figure 25: Older Adult Housing Options



Recycling in Dakota County

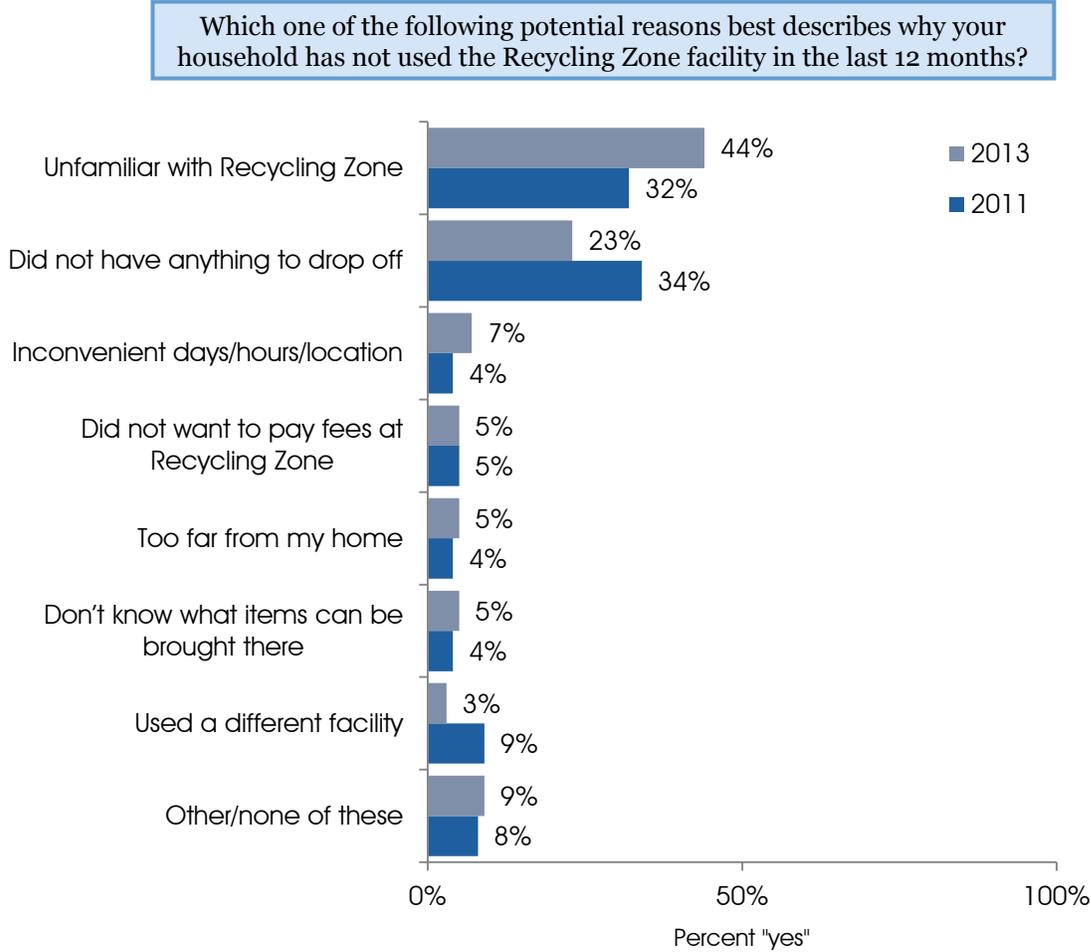
Residents also were asked specifically about their recycling habits. When asked if they or a household member used services at the Recycling Zone facility in the previous 12 months, about 4 in 10 respondents had done so. This percentage has increased since 2011.

Figure 26: Use of Recycling Zone Compared by Year



Residents who had not used Recycling Zone services were asked to identify the top reason their household had not used the facility. About 44% of these respondents said they were unfamiliar with the Recycling Zone, which is a higher percentage than was reported in 2011 (32%) and about 23% reported that they did not have anything to drop off, a percentage lower than the 2011 rating (34%). These two reasons for not using the Recycling Zone were the top two reasons for both 2011 and 2013. Near the bottom of the list of reasons for not using the Recycling Zone was that they didn't know what items could be brought there or they used a different facility.

Figure 27: Reasons Why Household Has Not Used the Recycling Zone Compared by Year



In 2011, "Don't know what items can be brought there" was "Don't know what can be recycled there" and "Used a different facility" was "Used a different recycling location." This question was not asked before 2011.

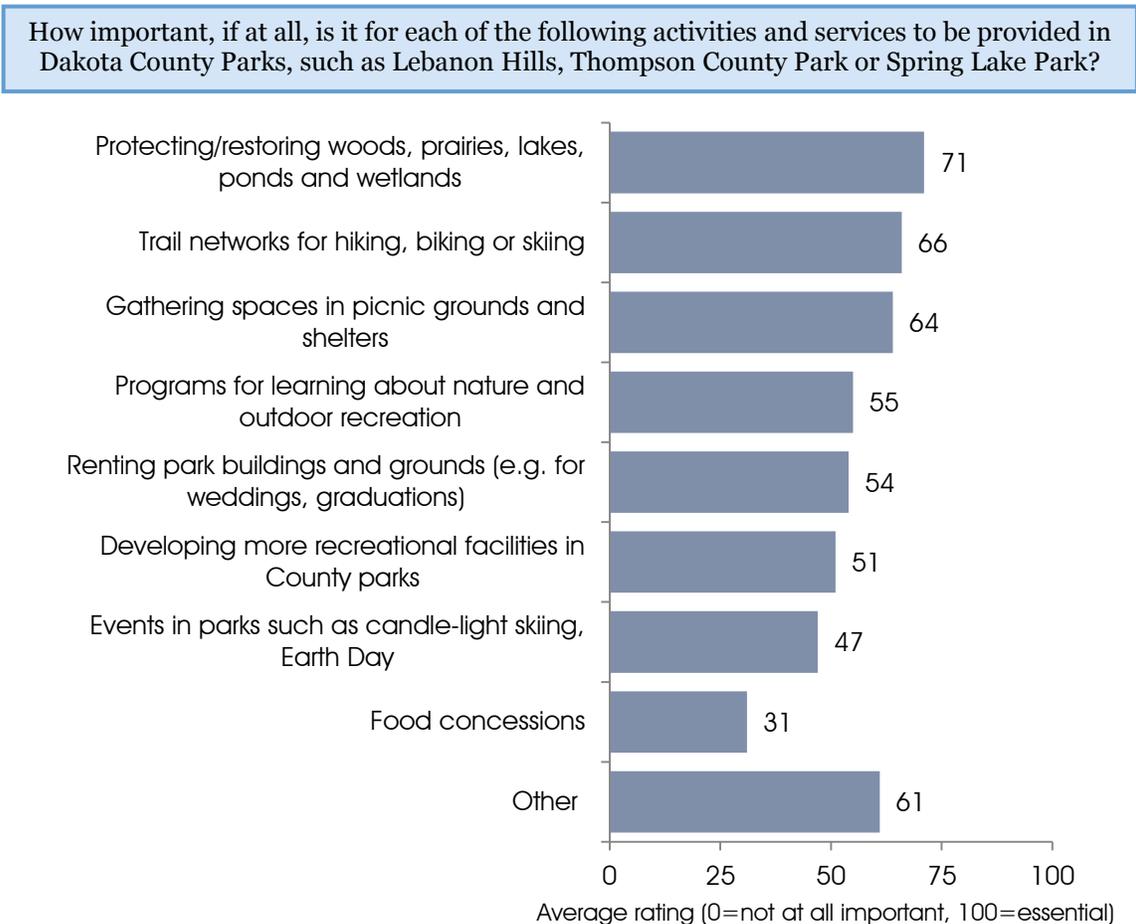
Fiscal Management and Planning

A number of questions on the 2013 survey were aimed at helping the County prioritize programs and services. Knowing where residents feel officials could trim and where resources should remain will aid the County government in making key decisions. Generally speaking, residents tend to evaluate core services as being the highest priority and more important to fund, while services that are less visible or serve fewer residents tend to be considered less important. Relative order over time may shift slightly and may be influenced by current budget circumstances, but broad patterns typically remain stable over time. Several new policy and planning-related questions were added to the 2013 survey.

Importance of County Parks Services

The survey asked residents about the importance of providing eight activities and services in Dakota County parks. The highest rated items were protecting/restoring woods, prairies, lakes, ponds and wetlands (71 average rating on the 100-point scale) followed by trail networks for hiking, biking, or skiing (66 average rating). The lowest rated items were food concessions (31) and events in parks such as candle-light skiing and Earth Day (47). Respondents were also given the option to rate an “other” program or service and write-in a response. These responses can be found in *Appendix B: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

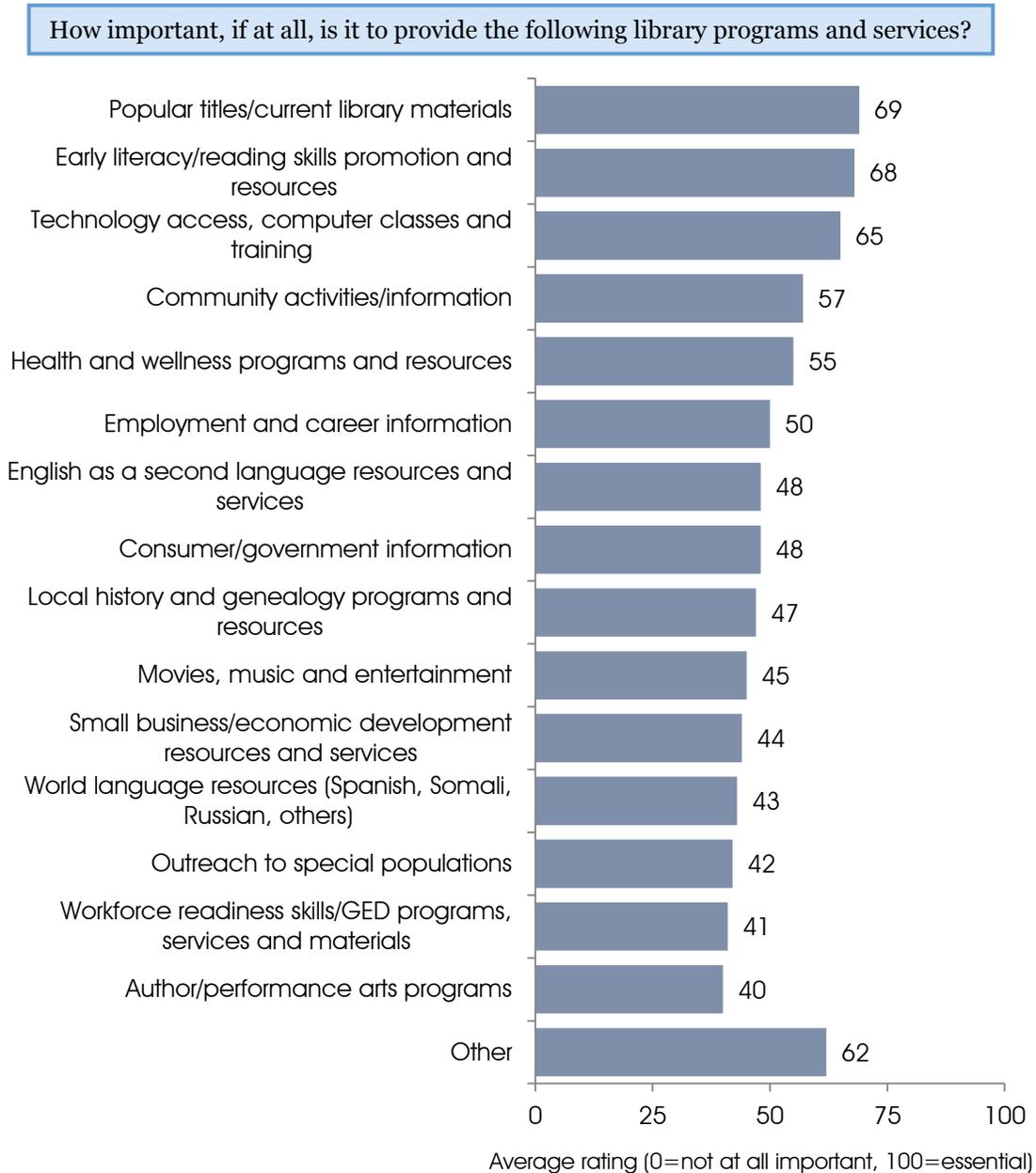
Figure 28: Importance of County Parks Services



Importance of Library Programs and Services

The survey asked residents about the importance of maintaining 16 library programs and services. Responses were converted to a 100-point scale where zero equals “not at all important” and 100 equals “essential.” The highest rated items were providing popular title/current library materials (69 on the 100-point scale) followed closely by early literacy/reading skills promotion and resources (68). The lowest rated items were author/performance arts programs (40) and outreach to special populations (41). Respondents were also given the option to rate an “other” program or service and write-in a response. These responses can be found in *Appendix B: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

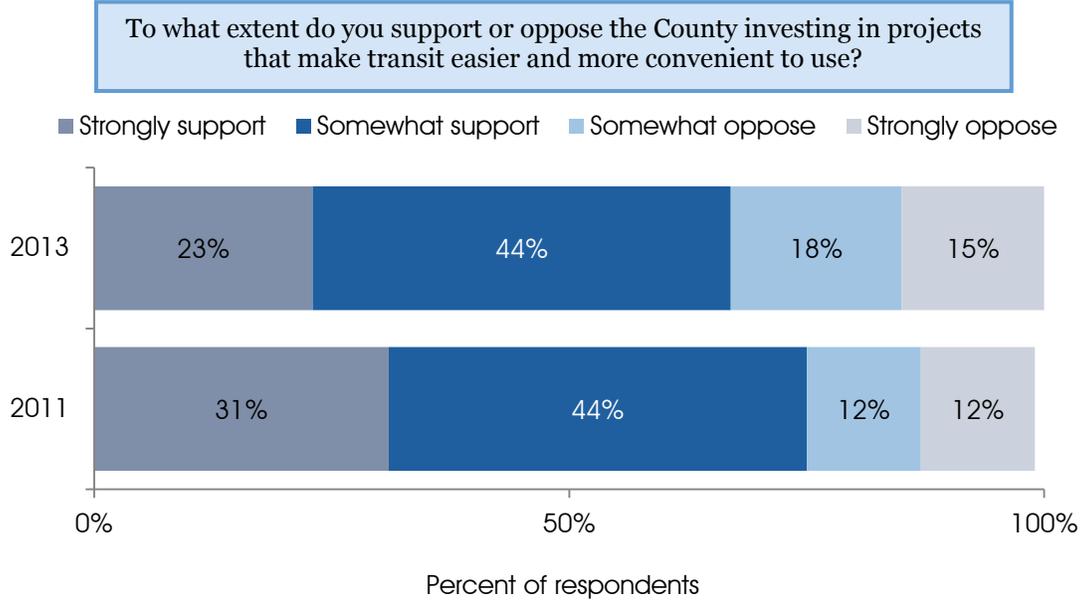
Figure 29: Importance of Library Programs and Services



Investing in Transit Projects

Survey participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they would support or oppose Dakota County investing in projects that make transit more convenient to use. A majority (67%) “somewhat” or “strongly” supported this idea. Fewer respondents offered “strong” support in 2013 compared with 2011.

Figure 30: Transit Projects Compared by Year

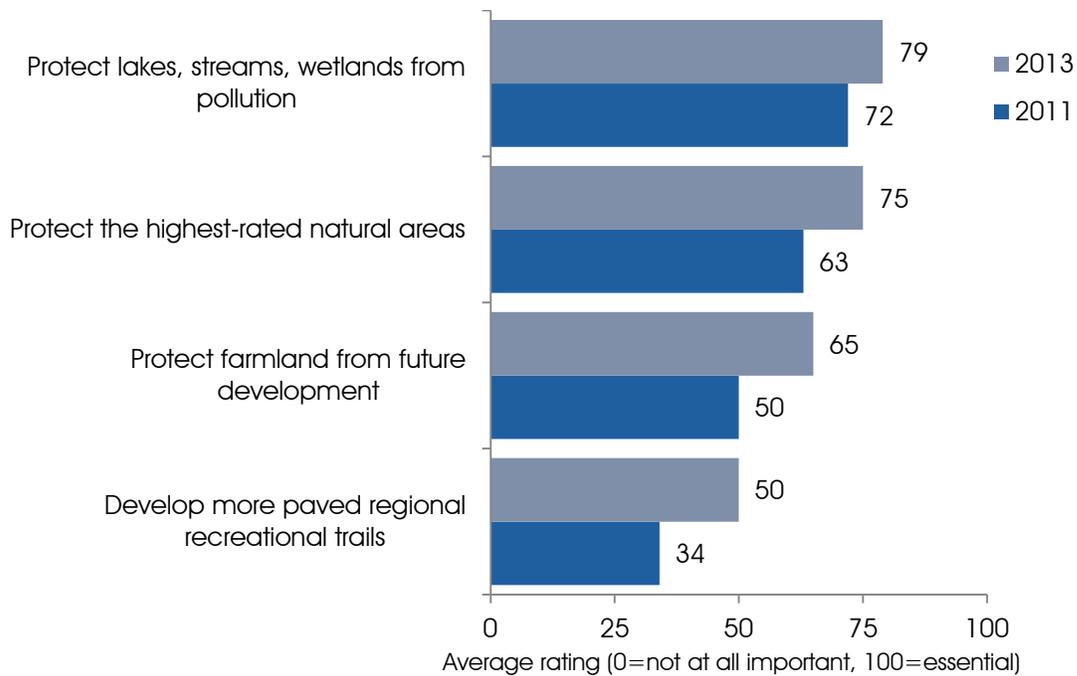


Importance of Investing in Open Spaces and Parkland

Those completing the survey were informed that since 2002, Dakota County has emphasized setting aside open spaces and parkland. They were asked to indicate how important it is for the County to continue investing funds in open spaces and parkland. On the 100-point scale (where zero equals “not at all important” and 100 equals “essential”), average ratings for protecting lakes, streams, and wetlands from pollution (79) and protecting the highest-rated natural areas (75) and protecting farmland from future development (65) were equal to about “very important” or higher. Developing more paved regional recreational trails (50) was rated between “very” and “somewhat” important. All items were seen as more important in 2013 than in 2011.

Figure 31: Importance of Investing in Open Spaces and Parkland Compared by Year

Since 2002, Dakota County has emphasized setting aside open spaces and parkland by dedicating small amounts of County funds in order to receive greater matching funds from non-County sources. How important, if at all, is it to continue investing County funds for these purposes:

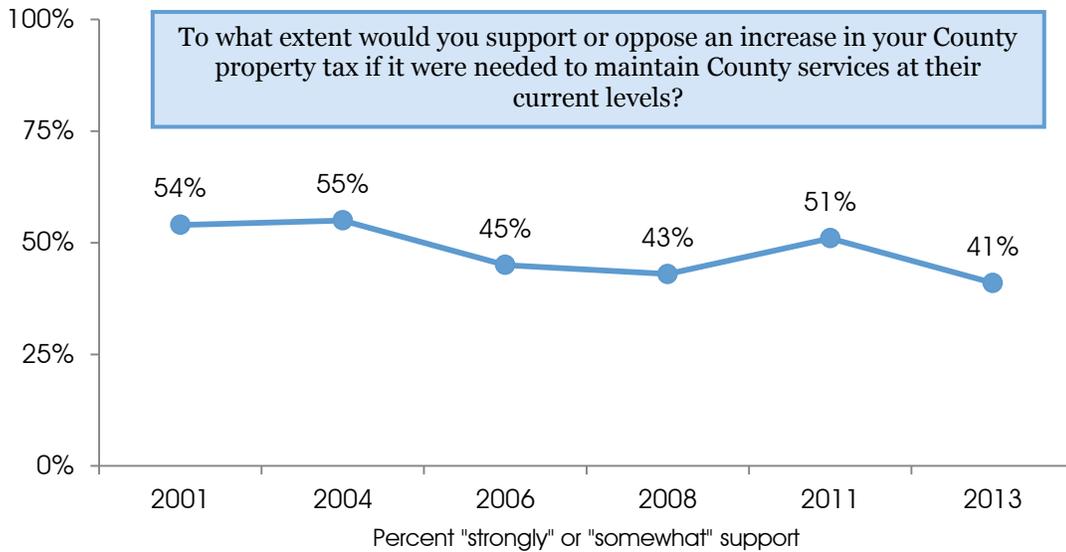


In 2011 "Develop more paved recreational trails" included "or corridors" and "Protect the highest-rated natural areas" was "Protect remaining natural areas." This question was not asked before 2011.

County Property Tax

When asked about support for or opposition to increasing property taxes to maintain services at current levels, more respondents opposed this idea (59%) than supported it (41%). This level of support was lower than in 2011 and similar to 2006 and 2008. About four times as many respondents offered strong opposition as those who offered strong support.

Figure 32: Level of Support for County Property Tax Compared by Year



Public Information and Communication

To understand the best ways to communicate with and inform residents about Dakota County government and its services, a series of questions about public information sources and access to communication methods was asked.

Potential Information Sources

Respondents were asked to indicate how much or little they relied on potential sources of information about Dakota County government. The Dakota County Newsletter, weekly community newspapers, and daily newspapers were reported as major sources of information about the County by about a third of respondents.

Fewer than half of respondents reported using the following sources of information: County Board meetings on local cable television, community meetings, telephone calls to Dakota County and other online news sources. At least one in five respondents said “don’t know” when asked about County Board meetings on local cable television, community meetings, telephone calls to Dakota County and other online news sources (see full set of responses to the question in *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies*).

In general, sources remained the same compared to 2011 ratings, though use of the Dakota County Web site as a minor or major source of information increased since 2011.

Figure 33: Potential Information Sources Compared by Year

Please rate the extent to which you use each of the following as sources of information about Dakota County government, if at all.	Percent using as a minor or major source					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Dakota County Newsletter	77%	74%	77%	79%	80%	87%
Weekly community newspapers	76%	79%	82%	82%	80%	93%
Dakota County Web site (www.dakotacounty.us)	73%	64%	66%	59%	NA	NA
Daily newspapers	72%	74%	80%	79%	79%	NA
Television news broadcasts	66%	70%	82%	79%	80%	NA
Other online news sources	49%	46%	78%	71%	67%	38%
Phone calls to Dakota County	42%	34%	50%	51%	50%	NA
Community meetings	32%	30%	56%	50%	48%	43%
County Board meetings on local cable television	26%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

In 2008, “Other online news sources” was “The Internet,” “Cable access programming” was “Cable television programming,” “Dakota County Web site (www.dakotacounty.us)” was “Dakota Web site on the Internet,” and “Phone calls to Dakota County” was “Dakota County employees.” In 2001, “The Dakota County newsletter” was “The county newsletter, The Dakota County Update.” In 2001, the response scale was: “a major source,” “a minor source,” “not a source” of information.

Accessing Information on the Web

Residents were asked to rate the usefulness of information and functions (services that can be accessed online) on Dakota County's Web site. When asked what information would be useful on the Web site, the most desired were recycling information (71%), information about County services (64%), and road/bridge construction projects information (62%). In 2011 this list remained the same except property sales/information was more desired than road/bridge construction projects information.

When asked what functions would be useful on the Web site, the most requested functions were renewing or applying for a license, permit, or other application (77%), applying for a library card and/or use other library resources (62%) and paying fees, fines or property taxes (61%). Usefulness of renewing or applying for a license, permit, or other application on the Web site increased compared to 2011 ratings and usefulness of reserving park facilities decreased compared to 2011. Responses to the "other" types of information and services residents would like to access via the Internet can be found in *Appendix B: Verbatim Responses to Open-ended Questions*.

In 2008 and earlier, this question was an open-ended question and in 2011 was converted to a set of fixed response options. In 2013, these items were broken into two sets of questions; one regarding information, the other useful tools or services. This change does limit the direct comparability of the data over time, so caution is advised regarding the interpretation of differences.

Figure 34: Useful Information on Dakota County's Web Site Compared by Year

What information would be useful to you on Dakota County's Web site?	Percent of respondents					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Recycling information	71%	68%	9%	3%	NA	NA
Information about County services	64%	62%	11%	7%	10%	NA
Road/bridge construction projects	62%	53%	5%	1%	NA	NA
Property sales/information	53%	61%	3%	5%	5%	NA
Contacting County departments or staff	48%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
County budget information	40%	40%	3%	1%	4%	NA
Information about services for older adults	40%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Information about the County Jail or its inmates	22%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Transportation options/information	1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Recreation information (parks, libraries, etc.)	1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
No internet/computer	3%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Other	7%	8%	26%	39%	NA	NA

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option. In 2001 "Recycling information" was "Garbage and recycling," "County budget information" was "Budget documents" and "Property sales/information" was "Research property sales/information." This question was not asked in 2001.

Figure 35: Useful Functions on Dakota County’s Web Site Compared by Year

What else would be useful for you to do on Dakota County's Web site?	Percent of respondents					
	2013	2011	2008	2006	2004	2001
Renew or apply for a license, permit, or other application	77%	67%	3%	3%	2%	NA
Apply for a library card and/or use other library resources	62%	59%	3%	5%	6%	NA
Pay fees, fines, or property taxes	61%	56%	8%	8%	4%	NA
Reserve park facilities	58%	79%	18%	30%	39%	NA
Online recording of vital records (birth, death, marriage)	40%	44%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Apply for public financial assistance	21%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Not applicable/no internet or computer	2%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nothing/no issue	1%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Other	4%	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option. In 2011 "Reserve park facilities" was "Park information (e.g., reservation at a regional park facility)." This question was not asked in 2001.

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Frequencies for demographic questions appear below and on the following pages.

Figure 36: Respondent District

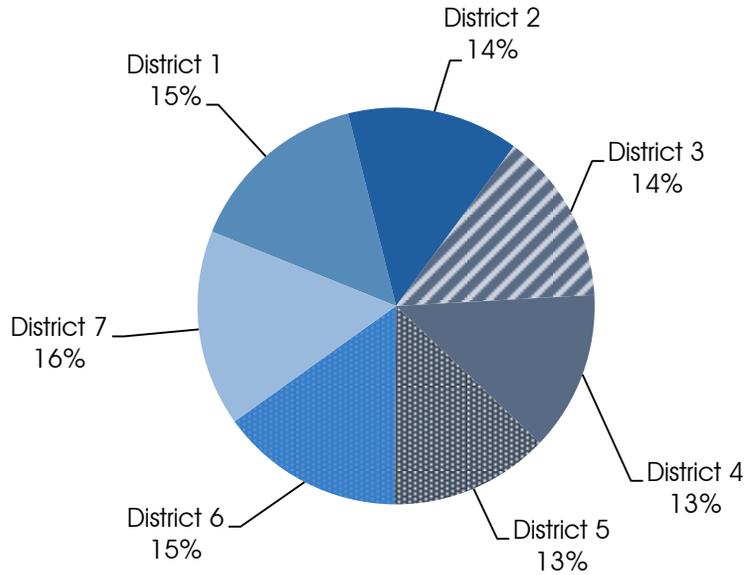


Figure 37: Respondent Length of Residency

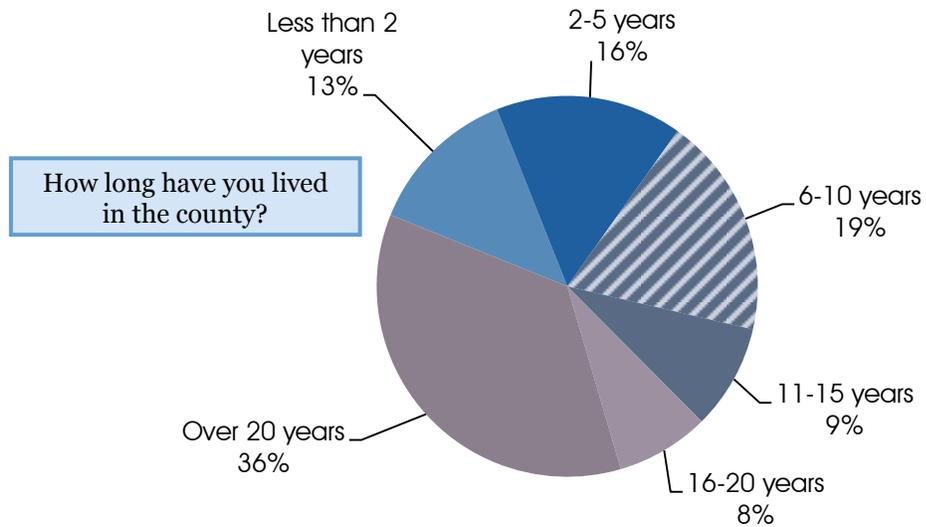


Figure 38: Respondent Employment Status

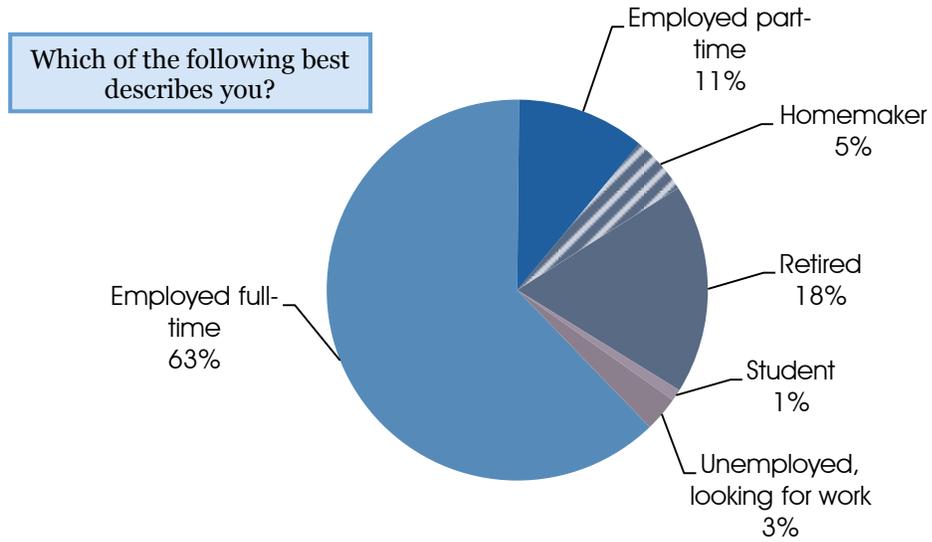


Figure 39: Job Seeker Type

Which of these describes the type of job-seeker you are? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Head of household	61%	N=12
Post-retirement older adult	5%	N=1
Person with disabilities	31%	N=6
Young adult (post-high school up to age 30)	10%	N=2
Military veteran of any age	8%	N=1
Member of a diverse community	0%	N=0

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Figure 40: Respondent City of Employment

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
Apple Valley	5%	N=31
Bloomington	8%	N=49
Burnsville	8%	N=46
Eagan	15%	N=88
Eden Prairie	1%	N=4
Edina	2%	N=14
Farmington	3%	N=16
Hastings	5%	N=31
Inver Grove Heights	3%	N=15
Le Sueur	0%	N=2
Lakeville	4%	N=23
Maplewood	0%	N=1
Mendota Heights	1%	N=8
Minneapolis	10%	N=62
Mnetonka	0%	N=3
Northfield	1%	N=5
Prior Lake	0%	N=3
Richfield	1%	N=3
Savage	0%	N=2
Shakopee	1%	N=4
South St. Paul	0%	N=1
St. Louis Park	0%	N=1
St. Paul	14%	N=83
West St. Paul	2%	N=10
Woodbury	1%	N=6
Rosemount	2%	N=15
Cottage Grove	0%	N=1
Newport	0%	N=1
St. Paul Park	0%	N=0
Plymouth	1%	N=7
Shorewood	0%	N=0
Golden Valley	1%	N=4
Pine Island	0%	N=1
Rochester	0%	N=1
Stewartville	0%	N=1
Metro area	0%	N=2
Lilydale	0%	N=1
Hudson ISI	0%	N=1
Randolph	0%	N=2
Roseville	0%	N=0
Brooklyn Park	0%	N=1

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
Multiple Cities	3%	N=17
Highland Park	0%	N=1
Dundas	0%	N=2
Rochester	0%	N=1
Faribault	0%	N=2
Other	2%	N=14
Don't know/refused/not applicable	2%	N=10
Total	100%	N=598

Figure 41: Respondent Housing Unit Type

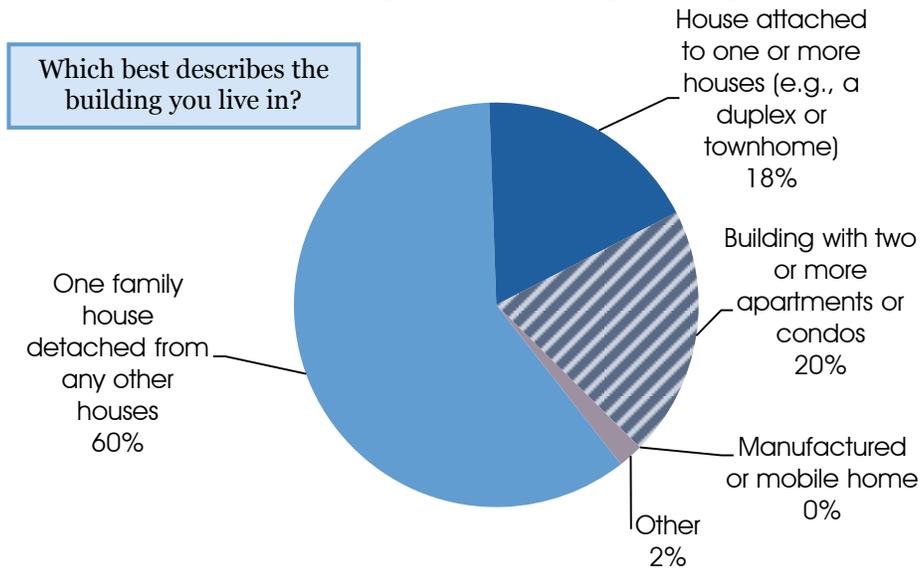


Figure 42: Respondent Housing Tenure

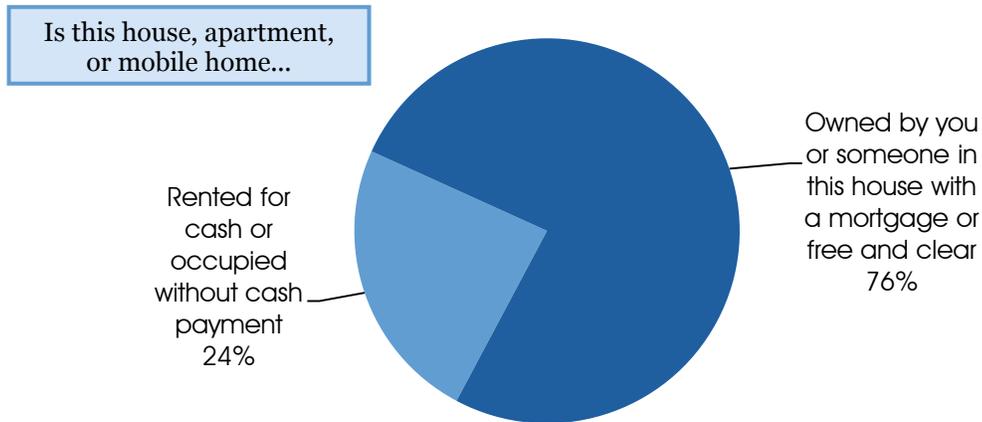


Figure 43: Respondent Ethnicity

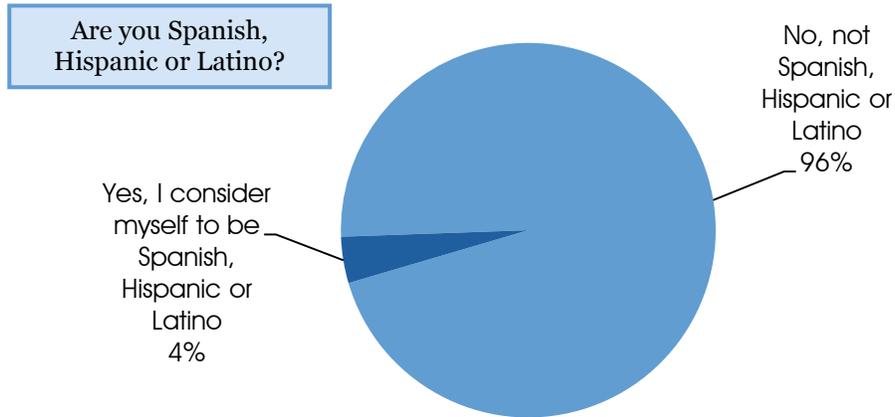


Figure 44: Respondent Race

What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Number
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%	N=3
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	3%	N=14
Black or African American	4%	N=15
White	91%	N=747
Other	3%	N=11

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Figure 45: Respondent Age

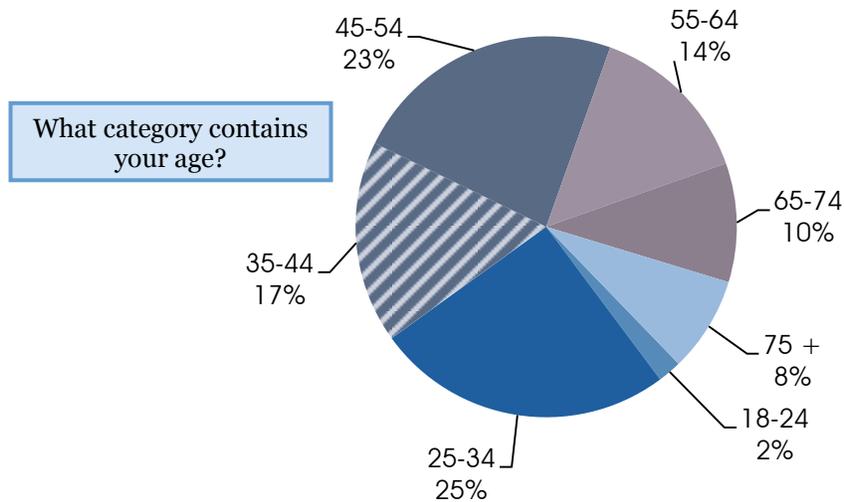


Figure 46: Respondent Gender

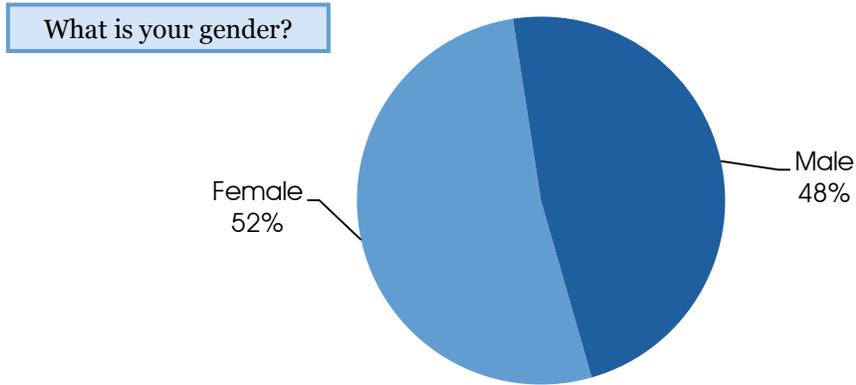


Figure 47: Presence of Children in the Household

How many children age 17 years and under live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Number
One	21%	N=106
Two	21%	N=107
Three	7%	N=35
Four	1%	N=6
Five or more	1%	N=6
None	48%	N=241
Total	100%	N=502

Figure 48: Presence of Adults under Age 65 in the Household

How many adults under age 65 years, including yourself, live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Number
One	29%	N=185
Two	53%	N=338
Three	8%	N=54
Four	3%	N=18
Five or more	1%	N=5
None	7%	N=44
Total	100%	N=644

Figure 49: Presence of Older Adults Age 65 and Over in the Household

How many persons age 65 years and over, including yourself, live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Number
One	20%	N=84
Two	14%	N=55
Three	0%	N=2
Four	0%	N=0
Five or more	1%	NN=5
None	64%	N=263
Total	100%	N=409

Figure 50: Household Income

Please indicate your household's annual income:	Percent of respondents	Number
Under \$15,000	5%	N=38
\$15,000-\$24,999	7%	N=61
\$25,000-\$34,999	10%	N=60
\$35,000-\$49,999	12%	N=92
\$50,000-\$74,999	18%	N=139
\$75,000-\$99,999	18%	N=129
\$100,000-\$149,999	18%	N=125
\$150,000-\$199,999	6%	N=44
\$200,000 or more	6%	N=39
Total	100%	N=727

APPENDIX A: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Survey Instrument Development

Dakota County has conducted a general residential survey every two or three years for more than 20 years. The surveys ask recipients about their perspectives on the quality of life in the county, use of County amenities, opinion on policy issues facing the County and assessment of County service delivery. These surveys permit County staff and elected officials to hear from a broad range of the population. The 2013 resident survey instrument development process began with a review of the 2011 survey. A list of topics was generated for new questions; questions were developed and modified to find those that were the best fit for the 2013 questionnaire. In an iterative process between County staff and NRC staff, a final five-page questionnaire was crafted.

Selecting Survey Recipients

“Sampling” refers to the method by which survey recipients are chosen. The “sample” refers to all those who were given a chance to participate in the survey. All households located in the county boundaries were eligible for the survey. Because County governments generally do not have inclusive lists of all the residences in the jurisdiction (tax assessor and utility billing databases often omit rental units), lists from the United States Postal Service (USPS), updated every three months, usually provide the best representation of all households in a specific geographic location. NRC used USPS data to randomly select the sample of households.

A larger list than needed was sampled so that a process referred to as “geocoding” could be used to eliminate addresses from the list that were outside the study boundaries. Geocoding is a computerized process in which addresses are compared to electronically mapped boundaries and coded as inside or outside desired boundaries. All addresses determined to be outside the study boundaries were eliminated from the sample. A random selection was made of the remaining addresses to create a final list of 2,600 addresses, each identified as being within one of the seven County Commissioner Districts.

Attached household units were over-sampled because residents of this type of housing typically respond at lower rates to surveys than do those in detached housing units.

An individual within each household was randomly selected to complete the survey using the birthday method. The birthday method selects a person within the household by asking the “person whose birthday has most recently passed” to complete the questionnaire. The underlying assumption in this method is that day of birth has no relationship to the way people respond to surveys. This instruction was contained in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

Survey Administration and Response

Each selected household was contacted three times. First, a prenotification announcement, informing the household members that they had been selected to participate in the Dakota County survey, was sent. Approximately one week after mailing the prenotification, each household was mailed a survey and a cover letter signed by the Chair of the County Board of Commissioners enlisting participation. The packet also contained a postage-paid return envelope in which the survey recipients could return the completed questionnaire to NRC. A reminder letter and survey, scheduled to arrive one week after the first survey, was the final contact. The second cover letter asked those who had not completed the survey to do so and those who had already done so to refrain from turning in another survey.

The mailings were sent in February 2013 and completed surveys were collected over the following six weeks. About 4% of the 2,600 surveys mailed were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the remaining 2,497 households, 804 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 32%; average response rates for a mailed resident

survey range from 25% to 40%. Additionally, responses were tracked by County Commissioner District. The following table shows the response rate for each district.

Table 1: Survey Response Rates by District

	Number mailed	Undeliverable postcards	Delivered surveys	Returned surveys	Response rate
District 1	300	6	294	100	34%
District 2	350	17	333	99	30%
District 3	350	11	339	112	33%
District 4	350	11	339	130	38%
District 5	550	37	513	132	26%
District 6	350	11	339	107	32%
District 7	350	10	340	124	36%
Overall	2,600	103	2,497	804	32%

95% Confidence Intervals

The 95% confidence interval (or “margin of error”) quantifies the “sampling error” or precision of the estimates made from the survey results. A 95% confidence interval can be calculated for any sample size, and indicates that in 95 of 100 surveys conducted like this one, for a particular item, a result would be found that is within plus or minus four percentage points of the result that would be found if everyone in the population of interest was surveyed. The practical difficulties of conducting any resident survey may introduce other sources of error in addition to sampling error. Despite best efforts to boost participation and ensure potential inclusion of all households, some selected households will decline participation in the survey (potentially introducing non-response error) and some eligible households may be unintentionally excluded from the listed sources for the sample (referred to as coverage error).

While the 95 percent confidence interval for the survey is generally no greater than plus or minus four percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample and plus or minus two points on the 100-point scale, results for subgroups will have wider confidence intervals. Where estimates are given for subgroups, they are less precise. For each subgroup from the survey, the margin of error rises to as much as plus or minus 10% or six points (on the 100-point scale) for a sample size of 100 to plus or minus 5% or three points (on the 100-point scale) for 400 completed surveys.

Survey Processing (Data Entry)

Mailed surveys were submitted via postage-paid business reply envelopes. Once received, staff assigned a unique identification number to each questionnaire. Additionally, each survey was reviewed and “cleaned” as necessary. For example, a question may have asked a respondent to pick two items out of a list of five, but the respondent checked three; staff would choose randomly two of the three selected items to be coded in the survey responses dataset.

Once all surveys have been assigned a unique identification number, they are entered into an electronic dataset. This dataset was subject to a data entry protocol of “key and verify,” in which survey data were entered twice into an electronic dataset and then compared. Discrepancies were evaluated against the original survey form and corrected. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed.

Weighting the Data

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the County. This is done by: 1) reviewing the sample demographics and comparing them to the population norms from the most recent Census or other sources and 2) comparing the responses to different questions for demographic subgroups. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the Census and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting. Several different weighting “schemes” are tested to ensure the best fit for the data. The data were weighted by housing tenure (rent or own), race, ethnicity, age, gender, and County Commissioner District. The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the following table.

Table 2: Dakota County Weighting Table 2013

Characteristic	Population Norm ¹	Unweighted Data	Weighted Data
Housing			
Rent home	24%	17%	24%
Own home	76%	83%	76%
Detached unit ²	62%	68%	61%
Attached unit ²	38%	32%	39%
Race and Ethnicity			
Hispanic	5%	2%	4%
Not Hispanic	95%	98%	96%
White	88%	95%	89%
Non-white	12%	5%	11%
White alone, not Hispanic	86%	92%	86%
Hispanic and/or other race	14%	8%	14%
Sex and Age			
18-34 years of age	29%	11%	27%
35-54 years of age	42%	34%	40%
55+ years of age	29%	55%	33%
Female	52%	59%	52%
Male	48%	41%	48%
Females 18-34	15%	7%	14%
Females 35-54	21%	20%	20%
Females 55+	16%	32%	18%
Males 18-34	14%	4%	13%
Males 35-54	21%	14%	20%
Males 55+	13%	23%	14%
District³			
District 1	15%	13%	15%
District 2	14%	12%	14%
District 3	14%	14%	14%
District 4	12%	16%	13%
District 5	13%	16%	13%
District 6	15%	13%	15%
District 7	16%	15%	16%

¹ Source: 2010 Census, ACS 2011

² Source: American Community Survey, 2011 5-year estimates

³ Source: Dakota County

Data Analysis

The surveys were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Frequency distributions and averages are presented in the body of the report. Chi-square or ANOVA tests of significance were applied to breakdowns of selected survey questions by County. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between groups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed in the selected categories of our sample represent “real” differences among those populations. Where differences between subgroups are statistically significant, they are marked with grey shading in the appendices.

Comparing to Previous Survey Results

Dakota County survey data were collected by telephone in 2001, 2004, 2006 and 2008. In 2011, the County switched data collection from telephone to mail and continued with mail in 2013. Switching data collection from telephone to mail was done to save costs, allow for more precise geographic sampling, cost-efficiently include cell phone-only households, gather more candid feedback and avoid interrupting residents with unwanted telephone calls. The growing rate of county households with only a cell phone challenged the County to ensure their inclusion, which is easier, less expensive and more accurate by mail than telephone.

Research is clear that a change in the method of survey data collection, by itself, will result in a change in results if the shift is from telephone administration to self-administration or vice versa. The change occurs even without change in resident perspectives and is attributed to the different environment that a survey respondent confronts when providing answers to a person on the telephone compared to offering anonymous opinions in private. Questions by telephone elicit more positive, optimistic, socially-desirable responses than do the same questions asked on a written self-administered questionnaire. The self-administered questionnaire brings out more candid responses.

As a consequence of the switch in methodology, a decline from 2008 to 2011 in virtually all ratings was both expected and observed. In the previous survey administration by telephone in 2008, a small sample of residents was surveyed by mail in order to explore the magnitude of the differences between telephone and mail survey responses in Dakota County. Using 2008 survey research conducted by NRC in Dakota County that compared mail and telephone responses, as well as NRC’s analysis of national trends comparing telephone and mail responses, NRC adjusted the findings from 2001 to 2008 in order to allow comparability of results over time. This way the reported trendline data are not influenced by the decline that is attributable to the change in data collection mode from telephone to mail.

When results are reported as an average on the 100-point scale for a question that was asked similarly in previous years, a slight adjustment was made to permit direct comparison between telephone and mail results. (Results that are reported as percentages and compared over time were not adjusted.) While the adjusted findings for data prior to 2011 reasonably control for the expected change from telephone to mail data collection, the comparability of data over time does have some limitations. Not only is there sampling error in each survey administration, but also, the change in survey methods occurred after a three-year gap in survey administrations and some question wording was inconsistent among survey years. Important historic differences are noted in the appropriate tables and figures. (NRC also was able to introduce statistical adjustments for the data prior to 2011 to account for any question and scale differences when possible. These adjustments are based on NRC’s analysis of resident surveys from across the nation.)

APPENDIX B: VERBATIM RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Following are verbatim responses to the open-ended questions on the survey. When applicable, responses have been grouped by the theme to which they were coded. The verbatim responses were not edited for grammar or punctuation.

Q3. What one thing do you like most about living in Dakota County?

Other (please specify)

- ◆ Bike trails
- ◆ Close to my job.
- ◆ Close to spouse work
- ◆ Closed to daughter
- ◆ Comparably less crime
- ◆ Family
- ◆ Family here
- ◆ Forming community
- ◆ Location of my home
- ◆ My wooded yard, large lot.
- ◆ No response
- ◆ Not the city no chaos, peaceful
- ◆ Proximity to airport
- ◆ Recycling
- ◆ Street snow removal
- ◆ Variety of stores & restaurants.
- ◆ We just moved here
- ◆ We make have because a lot become available & we built. That was 25yrs ago.
- ◆ Wild life close owl family.

Q8. What do you feel is the most serious issue facing Dakota County at this time?

Affordable housing

- ◆ Accessibility to an affordable housing for low income families
- ◆ Affordable housing
- ◆ Affordable housing
- ◆ Affordable living
- ◆ Amount of section 8 housing
- ◆ Assisted living and full care for Medicare recipients
- ◆ Cost of living
- ◆ Declining valuation of housing.
- ◆ Dispersion of affordable housing throughout the county.
- ◆ Home values and education
- ◆ House rental
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Housing affordability
- ◆ Housing for advantages top growth & seniors
- ◆ Housing values
- ◆ Housing values not rising fast enough
- ◆ Lack of affordable housing
- ◆ Low market housing property values
- ◆ Not enough affordable housing
- ◆ Over 55 housing
- ◆ Quality senior communities & transportation & medical care
- ◆ Rent
- ◆ Senior housing
- ◆ Senior housing
- ◆ To not build any more low income housing
- ◆ Unaffordable housing

County services

- ◆ Abuse of welfare system
- ◆ Care and protection of the vulnerable in a recovering economy (neglect of them)
- ◆ Government public services office
- ◆ Increasing rate of poverty & seeded support services
- ◆ Judicial system being a joke with criminals if you want to get at lenient penalty goes to Dakota county court.
- ◆ Lack of official government honesty
- ◆ More public transit for services and everyone
- ◆ Number of people dependent on government
- ◆ Providing appropriate & support services for young children & families.
- ◆ Raising the minimum wage to prevent child hunger
- ◆ Running out of money (funds) to help the disabled
- ◆ Support of person w/ disabilities
- ◆ The child support department
- ◆ The county attorney is incompetent
- ◆ The need for a new board of people all commissioner need to be replace
- ◆ The threat of too much government is greatest issue for entire nation

Condition of roads

- ◆ Buildings & roads
- ◆ Condition of roads transportation
- ◆ Improving roads for the traffic & mass transit
- ◆ Infrastructure keeping it in good shape
- ◆ Infrastructure repair roads highways bridges
- ◆ Infrastructure roads, bldg, etc.
- ◆ Maintaining streets & highways
- ◆ Probably roads & transportation and lack of revenue
- ◆ Repair & maintenance of all roads
- ◆ Road repairs in a timely manner
- ◆ Road replacement, transit options, housing ford troubled teens
- ◆ Roads & taxes
- ◆ Roads & traffic
- ◆ Streets being ruined by construction equipment e.g. by new transit station near 35 w/ Ct Rd 46
- ◆ The need for better roads

Crime

- ◆ Alcohol & drug use in teens.
- ◆ Alcohol & drugs in our teens & children
- ◆ Alcohol abuse
- ◆ Alcohol abuse among adults.
- ◆ Alcohol and drug abuse
- ◆ Alcohol and drug abuse in both adults and children
- ◆ Car breaking, bullying, underage drinking
- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Crime
- ◆ Crime coming from downtown areas
- ◆ Crime in parks.
- ◆ Crime. It's always crime, despite it not being so bad.
- ◆ Domestic abuse / invasive plants in lake
- ◆ Drinking & driving
- ◆ Drug abuse by young adults
- ◆ Drug overuse
- ◆ Drug usage & suicides
- ◆ Drug use
- ◆ Drug use among teens
- ◆ Drugs
- ◆ Drugs
- ◆ Drugs
- ◆ Drugs
- ◆ Drugs & crime
- ◆ Drugs among teenage boys
- ◆ Drugs crime
- ◆ Drugs Illegal any prescription drug abuse
- ◆ Drugs.
- ◆ Drunk drivers on road;
- ◆ Drunk and paired driving & drug use
- ◆ Home invasions
- ◆ Illegal drugs, cigarette buds (thrown all over property)
- ◆ Illegal drug
- ◆ Illegal drug access
- ◆ Illegal drug sales, distracted drivers, underage drinkers
- ◆ Illegal drug use
- ◆ Illegal drug use
- ◆ Illegal drug use
- ◆ Illegal drug use & activities in parks
- ◆ Impaired / distracted drivers/speeding!!
- ◆ Keep down the drug and crime probably.
- ◆ People without jobs stealing items from others property
- ◆ Poverty and increasing crime
- ◆ Presence of hard drugs & hard drug sales. It exists and is huge!
- ◆ Property crimes
- ◆ Renting to illegal residents pushing illegal drug use.
- ◆ Rising crime rates
- ◆ Teen crime
- ◆ Teen drug / alcohol use, teen behavioral health issues suicide, depression, anxiety.
- ◆ Teen drug use & teen suicide!
- ◆ Texting and driving
- ◆ Texting while driving & property crimes, taxes because of Obama & days
- ◆ Texting while driving & talking on cell phones while driving
- ◆ Theft
- ◆ Too much dui driving & not enough rest
- ◆ Underage alcohol & drug use
- ◆ Violence (domestic & sexual)
- ◆ Your adult drug use

Economic development

- ◆ Area of above are very important probably anything economic is most imp.
- ◆ Attracting/retain businesses hiring an educated work force
- ◆ Business development
- ◆ Business growth
- ◆ Continue to grow with the increase of population
- ◆ Denver grove needs more large businesses
- ◆ Economic climate the governor is proposing
- ◆ Economic development, public transportation
- ◆ Economic growth in southern most cities / business taxes high
- ◆ Economic turmoil not enough \$. Too many programs/services cut
- ◆ Economics: technology dynamics cost? Public & private infrastructure maintenance. Ex utilities & housing.
- ◆ Economy
- ◆ Economy and taxes
- ◆ Economy empty buildings
- ◆ Economy.
- ◆ Finances
- ◆ Financial
- ◆ Growth
- ◆ Growth (Too much) & drugs (Illegal & RX's)
- ◆ Growth and how to people control it
- ◆ Improve particularly getting business big & small to make dare
- ◆ Keeping up with growth in area. Need for mass transit
- ◆ Losing business places, change of population
- ◆ Maintaining area of growth on serious number
- ◆ Money
- ◆ Non growth of "clean" industry
- ◆ Poor dev. Choice Cedarville is a mess.
- ◆ Population growth outpacing infrastructure & services
- ◆ Poverty/economic downtown effects on lower middle class income families.
- ◆ Stakes on environment with building growth
- ◆ Staying economically viable
- ◆ The economy
- ◆ Transportation followed by proper economic base

Jobs

- ◆ Jobs
- ◆ Bringing more employment opportunities to Dakota co.
- ◆ Creating livable wage jobs
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Employment for those with only high school education.
- ◆ Employment of people
- ◆ Finding jobs
- ◆ Future economics i.e. Jobs, development, infrastructure
- ◆ Job opportunities for elder people
- ◆ Job, more people moving to Dakota County with same amount of jobs.
- ◆ Jobs
- ◆ Jobs
- ◆ Jobs
- ◆ Jobs high paying professional ones (e.g. Lockheed martin)
- ◆ Keeping and attracting good jobs
- ◆ Lack of quality employers/jobs vs. West metro.
- ◆ Maintaining knowledgeable employees
- ◆ More high paying jobs
- ◆ Not enough employment opportunities, education.
- ◆ Not enough jobs
- ◆ Not enough quality jobs.
- ◆ Property values recovering/economy/jobs
- ◆ Providing more good paying jobs for all. Attracting employers.
- ◆ Unemployment
- ◆ Unemployment
- ◆ Unemployment of residents
- ◆ Unemployment, the economy and parents having to work, in turn, children raising themselves. Drug use.

Preserving natural areas/protecting natural resources

- ◆ Chlorine in drinking water @ our Burnsville home (40 yr. Resident) would/may be reason to re locate
- ◆ Developmental issues i.e. Unused green space
- ◆ Environmental Issues
- ◆ Environmental pollutions removal of from air & water & land
- ◆ Exposure to pollution in water.
- ◆ Keeping open spaces open
- ◆ Land use
- ◆ Maintaining parks & walking/ biking trails & paths.
- ◆ Managing nature resources & preserving nature sparks
- ◆ Mining’s air & water pollution (sand mining, more mining & the oil refinery)
- ◆ Overcrowding and loss of parks
- ◆ Pollution
- ◆ Pollution from oil refinery can be smelled on windy case garbage dumps are quality not good.
- ◆ Pollution of air and water
- ◆ Street garbage!
- ◆ Uncontrolled parks after dark haze is very active after 10:00 pm
- ◆ Water air pollution
- ◆ Water quality of lakes, ponds

Schools

- ◆ Activities for youth to participate in after school a weekends
- ◆ Education of our minority students language barrier
- ◆ Education poor quality of schools in Burnsville.
- ◆ Good schools, adequate employment
- ◆ High school gets a bad rap
- ◆ In Dakota city as in the while of MN. Bring back good education for all student again
- ◆ K 12 education, stem programs.
- ◆ Lack of public transportation
- ◆ Poor teacher quality
- ◆ Programs like art being cut from school
- ◆ Progressivism & secularism of city/county government & schools
- ◆ Quality of schools
- ◆ Rising costs in the public school (i.e. salaries & retirement break!)
- ◆ Schools
- ◆ Slowly declining elementary & middle schools
- ◆ Sustaining programs, keeping standards in schools
- ◆ The disintegration of the school system.
- ◆ The public school has too many kids that don't speak English & not well behaved. It affects learning for other kids who want to learn.
- ◆ The school systems

Taxes

- ◆ Always concern of taxes, civic center/arts center continues
- ◆ Balancing growth tax strategy.
- ◆ High property taxes
- ◆ High real estate taxes with declining home values reduce taxes
- ◆ High taxes!!
- ◆ High taxes.
- ◆ Higher property taxes
- ◆ Home values & taxes
- ◆ Homeowner property taxes too high
- ◆ House values going down while taxes are up
- ◆ Increased taxes & spending for worthless programs
- ◆ Keep taxes down.
- ◆ Keeping property taxes law
- ◆ Keeping quality of life maintain without taxation
- ◆ Keeping quality services without raising taxes Obama will do that you and every one el
- ◆ Keeping taxes down
- ◆ Keeping taxes low
- ◆ Keeping up with present services while keeping taxes low
- ◆ Maintaining services vs. taxes
- ◆ Not raising taxes
- ◆ Property tax control
- ◆ Property tax system
- ◆ Property taxes
- ◆ Property taxes
- ◆ Property taxes
- ◆ Property taxes
- ◆ Property taxes & horrible management of Rosemount HS.
- ◆ Property taxes are unaffordable.
- ◆ Property taxes too high

- ◆ Traffic congestion speeders
- ◆ Traffic congestion, property tax
- ◆ Traffic congestion very unsafe for bikers crossing most major intersections drivers' not paying attention to pedestrians / bikers.
- ◆ Traffic flow
- ◆ Traffic levels / distracted drivers
- ◆ Traffic on cedar
- ◆ Traffic on Robert St.
- ◆ Traffic signal controls, prevent smooth traffic flow, money wasted on mass transit.

No issue

- ◆ I have none.
- ◆ I really don't have a major concern
- ◆ Lived here less than 6 months so not sure
- ◆ No opinion
- ◆ No opinion
- ◆ None

Health

- ◆ Ageing overweight pop.
- ◆ Bullying
- ◆ Bullying
- ◆ Bullying
- ◆ Bullying & school threats
- ◆ Bullying & suicide
- ◆ Especially suicide of young people (tall ages)
- ◆ Health & wellness of residents
- ◆ Health insurance - goofy Obama
- ◆ Health of the county, especially obesity in children
- ◆ Keeping the county safe
- ◆ Managing transportation particularly safety & access for walking & biking

Sense of community

- ◆ Changing demographics
- ◆ Developing sense of pride in community & neighborhood to help each other & product our sources.
- ◆ Enforcement of city love. As to many animals & Illegal snow
- ◆ Housing diversity is not always positive
- ◆ I feel like we are losing our close knit sense
- ◆ Illegal immigrants
- ◆ Influence of uneducated aliens w/a sense of entitlement
- ◆ Inner city type people moving to Dakota county
- ◆ Lack of diversity and acceptance of minorities.
- ◆ Lack of respect for other people
- ◆ Lack of sense of community
- ◆ Maintaining conservative focus.
- ◆ minorities
- ◆ Moral decay

Budget out of control due to government (yes local country gov't) trying do too much.

- ◆ Traffic speeds and volumes on city rd. 46
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Transportation into mpls.
- ◆ Transportation/traffic
- ◆ Transportation/traffic flow
- ◆ Young drivers paying more attention to their phone or showing off rather than to the road.

- ◆ None really @ this time
- ◆ None that I can think of
- ◆ Nothing
- ◆ Nothing major stands out traffic on city rd 42 & cedar ave
- ◆ Nothing!

- ◆ Mental health issues
- ◆ Need sidewalks! improve safety for kids walking and health of adults
- ◆ Obesity
- ◆ Obesity
- ◆ Over weight adults & children
- ◆ Overweight adults & children
- ◆ Overweight people
- ◆ Suicide
- ◆ Suicide & underage alcohol use
- ◆ Suicides drinking & driving
- ◆ Tobacco
- ◆ Tobacco Use
- ◆ Too many third world immigrants (Somalis) with diseases (whooping cough).

- ◆ Multi-cultural population
- ◆ Not being prepared as the population ages and a more diverse population
- ◆ People have little time for family/community due too long ea. Week working
- ◆ Entitlements & expectations from foreign refugees
- ◆ Quality of life as lower incomes more info Dakota county
- ◆ Racial problems
- ◆ Residents with the attitude that they are above the law.
- ◆ The decline of cultural values and out of control government spending
- ◆ The influx of people who done & assimilate
- ◆ Too much diversity
- ◆ Too much low income housing
- ◆ Tolerance of different people.
- ◆ Too many Somali & Muslims, deport them.

- ◆ Too much diversity. With diversity, comes more crime.

Government spending

- ◆ Balancing of budget w/ more scrutiny
- ◆ Balancing school needs & the budget
- ◆ Balancing what needs to be done with the funds to pay for it.
- ◆ Budget
- ◆ Budget balancing
- ◆ Budgeting
- ◆ Controlling spending
- ◆ Enough money to maintain infrastructure and programs.
- ◆ Excess spending programs which result in higher taxes
- ◆ Financial health
- ◆ Less of federal and/or state funds

Other

- ◆ Adult influence
- ◆ Airplane noise
- ◆ Airport noise in northern cities
- ◆ Am an ill non-Vet not upon things
- ◆ Cobs & home values.
- ◆ Construction, but it is for the eventual good of every one
- ◆ Decrease in growth due to aging communities such as Burnsville
- ◆ Expansion
- ◆ Find ways to affect kids to positive living.
- ◆ Increases in goods
- ◆ Keep the housing from cda my, reporters are not kept up.
- ◆ No action being taken
- ◆ Paying for performing arts center-no community rec center
- ◆ People getting older & moving away
- ◆ Personal data/privacy
- ◆ Poor parenting

Don't know

- ◆ Cannot thank of any. (May be the rental properties may be the rental property prices are hi).
- ◆ Can't single one problem over another. It's a big place
- ◆ Don't know

- ◆ Too much support of people who don't want to work
- ◆ Too republican/conservative

- ◆ Not enough money to fund all programs
- ◆ Over spending by our government
- ◆ Overspending
- ◆ Revenue stream
- ◆ Spending and taxes
- ◆ Spending money in a responsible manner
- ◆ Spending money on unnecessary transportation as skyways, & enough bars & grills there is morning places enough already!
- ◆ Too much spending
- ◆ Too much unnecessary government aide.
- ◆ Wasteful government spending

- ◆ Population density
- ◆ Poverty
- ◆ Quality of parenting skills.
- ◆ Robert street, leave it the way it is, just take off the top to get it back down to the manhole covers
- ◆ Should note the way Dakota sheriff's dept. Conyers bar stings also sheriffs worry about self-belt & fine. Eagan police worry about self-belt law & stopping at stop signs both need to focus on more important needs not focusing on crimes.
- ◆ Sprawl & to consequences
- ◆ These are my concerns anywhere in general
- ◆ Train noise as well of getting across tracks
- ◆ Urban sprawl
- ◆ Urban sprawl.
- ◆ What?
- ◆ Write the music program in ISD 196

- ◆ Honestly do not know factually. My perception is road driving safety
- ◆ I don't know
- ◆ I don't know
- ◆ I don't know.
- ◆ I haven't been here long enough to fairly answer this question
- ◆ I really do not know. I imagine taxes are.
- ◆ No one issue
- ◆ Not sure
- ◆ Not sure
- ◆ Not sure
- ◆ Only lived here for 6 months so not sure yet

Q17. What information would be useful to you on Dakota County's Web site?

Other (please specify)

- ◆ Air plane traffic
- ◆ Already available.
- ◆ Any city event also
- ◆ Community events
- ◆ Complete transparency in govt spending
- ◆ County board meetings & results
- ◆ Court info
- ◆ Detailed help on transit options.
- ◆ Do not use web side
- ◆ Don't have access
- ◆ Don't have computer
- ◆ Don't have web site
- ◆ Don't use
- ◆ Don't use
- ◆ Don't use it
- ◆ Don't use web site
- ◆ Easier to pay bills
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Events
- ◆ Food shelves and other comm. Resources/free toys
- ◆ Free classes
- ◆ Have no computer
- ◆ Have none
- ◆ Have not used
- ◆ I can find most of above
- ◆ I don't use the website
- ◆ Jobs
- ◆ Library
- ◆ Library info, parks, bike trails
- ◆ Links to transportation options from website
- ◆ Mass transportation
- ◆ Meeting information
- ◆ More
- ◆ More jobs & training
- ◆ Never used
- ◆ No cable
- ◆ No computer
- ◆ No computer etc.
- ◆ No computer on other electronics
- ◆ No computer people
- ◆ No on. Line internet
- ◆ No web
- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ None no computer
- ◆ Park info
- ◆ Parks & recreation
- ◆ Parks & trails info
- ◆ Parks and trails, library
- ◆ Public transportation
- ◆ School info
- ◆ Snow emergency / plowing info
- ◆ Transparency all around
- ◆ Transportation options
- ◆ Transportation options to cars
- ◆ Unable to use
- ◆ Volunteer apartments
- ◆ Volunteering in our community
- ◆ Who to call at police station after hours.

Q18. What else would be useful for you to do on Dakota County's Web site?

Other (please specify)

- ◆ Building permitting info tied code to gis ci.e, open, closed, code violation
- ◆ Community events & rec for kids
- ◆ Community meetings calendar
- ◆ Do not have cable
- ◆ Do not own computer
- ◆ Don't use
- ◆ Don't use the website
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Get referred for food sales
- ◆ Government services
- ◆ Have no computer!
- ◆ Have not used
- ◆ Housing affordable
- ◆ I don't use website very much
- ◆ More
- ◆ No computer
- ◆ No online web site
- ◆ No web site
- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ None

- ◆ None
- ◆ None
- ◆ None no computer
- ◆ Nothing right now
- ◆ Pay water bill online
- ◆ Pay water bills
- ◆ Property into noting info (precinct polling place)
- ◆ Reserve campsite, like we can in other counties so we tend to camp outside Dakota county.
- ◆ Support for links a link so helpful sides
- ◆ Unable to us

Q21. How important, if at all, is it to provide the following library programs and services?

Other (please specify)

- ◆ ebooks
- ◆ Books
- ◆ a consistent online interface
- ◆ Add more computer terminals and replace old terminals/keyboards.
- ◆ Anything else the library does
- ◆ be a Library, not an entertainment or training venue
- ◆ Book Club Materials
- ◆ Children’s Programs
- ◆ Christian books and movies
- ◆ Community activities for youth
- ◆ Don’t use
- ◆ E Books
- ◆ Emergency on line access
- ◆ English is not a Second Language where were you born?
- ◆ English is the language here
- ◆ English should be first language living in America not second!
- ◆ Evict the Somali and Muslims
- ◆ Game playing on computers not at all important
- ◆ German
- ◆ Hand Outs
- ◆ I do love the library but they can’t do everything
- ◆ I don't know.
- ◆ If can't speak English should not be here!
- ◆ Job and Training
- ◆ Kids’ Activities
- ◆ more customer influence over which books are ordered
- ◆ More kids programs at Apple Valley it has been cut back dramatically
- ◆ NA
- ◆ Never used Library
- ◆ Not able to use library often
- ◆ Online Book Rental
- ◆ Provide Books
- ◆ reference materials
- ◆ Should be English have del of book to retirement facilities
- ◆ Somali
- ◆ Story hour children’s programs
- ◆ Story times
- ◆ Unable to use
- ◆ Video Material/Used Book sale.

Q23. How important, if at all, is it for each of the following activities and services to be provided in Dakota County Parks, such as Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park or Spring Lake Park?

Other (please specify)

- ◆ 4X4 Jeep trails (Essential)
- ◆ Adequate parking (Essential)
- ◆ Bask trusting, for self-man cleanup, drinking fountains (some) (Very important)
- ◆ Beach development (Somewhat important)
- ◆ Budget (No rating)
- ◆ Dog parks (No rating)
- ◆ Dog parks (Essential)
- ◆ Equipment rental (Essential)
- ◆ Family camping facilities (Very important)
- ◆ Gun ranges (Very important)
- ◆ I just don’t use these (Don't know)
- ◆ Keep as undeveloped & low tech as possible (No rating)
- ◆ Let snowmobile trail go through U Lands again!!! (No rating)
- ◆ Love the new golf course club house for receptions and the community great addition and needed. (Essential)
- ◆ Maintain recreational golf (Very important)
- ◆ More bathroom places (No rating)
- ◆ More publisher research or mosquito spray effects (Very important)
- ◆ Not interested yet (No rating)
- ◆ Protection (Very important)
- ◆ Public shooting and archery range (Essential)
- ◆ Snow mobile trails (Very important)

- ◆ Unable to use. (No rating)
- ◆ Updating recreational facilities (Essential)
- ◆ Water park (Essential)
- ◆ Water quality and water shed tours (Essential)

D4. In what city do you primarily work?

Other (please specify)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|
| ◆ Airport | ◆ Minnetonka | ◆ Rochester |
| ◆ Airport | ◆ Minnetonka | ◆ Roseville |
| ◆ All Dakota county construction work | ◆ Mpls | ◆ Sales all over twin cities |
| ◆ All over | ◆ Mpls. | ◆ Shakopee |
| ◆ All over the place | ◆ New trier & Miedille | ◆ Shakopee |
| ◆ All the above | ◆ Newport | ◆ Shakopee |
| ◆ Also work at home go in 1 day or month to Bloomington | ◆ No job | ◆ Shakopee |
| ◆ Brooklyn park | ◆ None | ◆ Shakopee |
| ◆ Clean homes different counties | ◆ None. Don't work. | ◆ So Washington county |
| ◆ Cottage grove | ◆ None unemployed | ◆ South St Paul |
| ◆ Disabled | ◆ North field | ◆ South St. Paul |
| ◆ Do not work. | ◆ Northfield | ◆ South St. Paul |
| ◆ Don't | ◆ Northfield MN. | ◆ St Paul |
| ◆ Dundas, MN | ◆ Not working | ◆ St Louis park |
| ◆ Eden prairie | ◆ Not working | ◆ St. Louis park |
| ◆ Eden Prairie | ◆ Not working | ◆ St. Paul |
| ◆ Eden prairie | ◆ Out of my house | ◆ Telework from home office in Eagan |
| ◆ Eden prairie | ◆ Ply mouth | ◆ Travel |
| ◆ Faribault | ◆ Plymouth | ◆ Travel the state |
| ◆ Golden valley | ◆ Plymouth | ◆ Travel to multiple locations over side Dakota county |
| ◆ Golden valley | ◆ Plymouth | ◆ Traveling consultant |
| ◆ Golden Valley | ◆ Plymouth | ◆ Twin cities area |
| ◆ Golden valley & Bayport | ◆ Prior Lake | ◆ Unemployed |
| ◆ Highland park | ◆ Prior lake | ◆ Unemployed |
| ◆ Home based | ◆ Prior lake. | ◆ Vermillion |
| ◆ Home office | ◆ Randolph | ◆ Walk from home for company in VA |
| ◆ Hudson ISI | ◆ Randolph | ◆ Wine |
| ◆ If get job | ◆ Retired | ◆ Woodbury |
| ◆ Le center, MN | ◆ Retired | ◆ Woodbury |
| ◆ Lily dale | ◆ Retired | ◆ Woodbury |
| ◆ Madison, WI | ◆ Retired | ◆ Woodbury |
| ◆ Many Cities | ◆ Retired | ◆ Woodbury |
| ◆ Maplewood | ◆ Retired don't work or can I. | |
| ◆ Minnetonka | ◆ Retired from ford plant | |
| | ◆ Roberts | |

APPENDIX C: COMPLETE SET OF FREQUENCIES

The following pages contain two sets of responses to each question on Dakota County’s survey. The first set excludes “don’t know” responses and the second includes them.

Frequencies Excluding “Don’t Know” Responses

Table 3: Question 1

How would you rate your overall quality of life in Dakota County?	Percent of respondents	Number
Excellent	36%	N=282
Good	57%	N=445
Fair	6%	N=46
Poor	1%	N=4
Total	100%	N=778

Table 4: Question 2

Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Dakota County as a place to live	38%	N=303	54%	N=424	8%	N=60	0%	N=2	100%	N=790
Dakota County as a place to retire	19%	N=121	50%	N=322	23%	N=149	8%	N=49	100%	N=641
Sense of community	12%	N=94	51%	N=395	32%	N=248	4%	N=34	100%	N=771
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	15%	N=110	51%	N=365	27%	N=196	6%	N=45	100%	N=716
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	28%	N=216	50%	N=381	19%	N=144	3%	N=24	100%	N=765
Employment opportunities	6%	N=40	46%	N=300	38%	N=246	9%	N=61	100%	N=647
Educational opportunities	19%	N=134	55%	N=388	22%	N=154	4%	N=31	100%	N=707
Economic health of Dakota County	10%	N=71	60%	N=413	27%	N=184	2%	N=17	100%	N=685
Availability of quality affordable housing	9%	N=63	48%	N=318	35%	N=233	8%	N=52	100%	N=667
Ease of travel by public transit	12%	N=77	34%	N=210	32%	N=201	22%	N=136	100%	N=625
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	17%	N=132	66%	N=513	16%	N=123	1%	N=7	100%	N=775

Table 5: Question 3

What one thing do you like most about living in Dakota County?	Percent of respondents	Number
Home	0%	N=3
Location	38%	N=304
Low taxes	3%	N=23
My neighborhood	10%	N=78
Open space	7%	N=54
Parks/lakes	7%	N=58
People	2%	N=15
Quality of life in general	16%	N=130
Rural character	4%	N=30
Safe	0%	N=2
Schools	6%	N=46
Small town feel	6%	N=46
Other	1%	N=7
Total	100%	N=796

Table 6: Question 4

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a problem in Dakota County.	Not a problem		Minor problem		Moderate problem		Major problem		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Crime	16%	N=113	54%	N=375	27%	N=190	3%	N=20	100%	N=698
Taxes	20%	N=139	31%	N=215	35%	N=245	15%	N=105	100%	N=705
Traffic safety	29%	N=208	47%	N=338	20%	N=148	4%	N=33	100%	N=727
Traffic congestion	23%	N=175	41%	N=309	28%	N=211	7%	N=52	100%	N=747
Poverty	22%	N=131	44%	N=254	29%	N=166	5%	N=31	100%	N=582
Access to affordable housing	23%	N=136	42%	N=247	27%	N=161	8%	N=46	100%	N=591
Access to public transit	34%	N=222	27%	N=176	23%	N=153	17%	N=111	100%	N=662

Table 7: Question 5

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Dakota County.	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Total	
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	29%	N=225	55%	N=426	15%	N=113	2%	N=14	100%	N=779
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	48%	N=373	45%	N=350	7%	N=51	0%	N=2	100%	N=776
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs)	29%	N=215	46%	N=337	18%	N=132	6%	N=46	100%	N=729
From identity theft	20%	N=136	52%	N=352	23%	N=160	5%	N=34	100%	N=682
From domestic violence	58%	N=414	34%	N=243	7%	N=50	1%	N=7	100%	N=714
From illegal use of prescription drugs	42%	N=268	40%	N=254	15%	N=96	4%	N=24	100%	N=642
From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads	12%	N=91	50%	N=368	31%	N=227	7%	N=48	100%	N=735
From distracted drivers on County roads	8%	N=63	43%	N=316	35%	N=258	14%	N=104	100%	N=740
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	14%	N=102	57%	N=416	25%	N=187	4%	N=29	100%	N=734
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county	23%	N=165	47%	N=339	22%	N=155	8%	N=60	100%	N=718
While in your neighborhood	51%	N=396	41%	N=316	7%	N=58	1%	N=10	100%	N=780
While using Dakota County parks and trails	42%	N=299	50%	N=359	8%	N=55	1%	N=5	100%	N=718

Table 8: Question 6

In the past year, have you volunteered in any community organization like a church, neighborhood group, social service agency or school association?	Percent of respondents	Number
Yes, once or twice in the year	20%	N=153
Yes, once every other month	6%	N=49
No, I haven't volunteered	46%	N=360
Yes, about once a month	10%	N=81
Yes, more than once a month	17%	N=136
Total	100%	N=779

Table 9: Question 7

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County.	Not at all a concern		Minor concern		Moderate concern		Major concern		Total	
Exposure to pollution in the water	29%	N=197	39%	N=267	24%	N=166	8%	N=52	100%	N=682
Tobacco use	39%	N=279	36%	N=256	17%	N=121	7%	N=52	100%	N=707
Suicide	43%	N=265	35%	N=212	13%	N=81	8%	N=51	100%	N=609
Underage alcohol use	21%	N=140	31%	N=205	31%	N=205	17%	N=111	100%	N=660
Alcohol abuse among adults	21%	N=141	37%	N=243	29%	N=193	12%	N=80	100%	N=658
Illegal drug use	20%	N=128	33%	N=214	29%	N=188	18%	N=118	100%	N=649
Bullying	20%	N=125	30%	N=187	32%	N=195	18%	N=108	100%	N=615
The health and support of older adults	23%	N=145	40%	N=250	24%	N=147	13%	N=78	100%	N=621
The health and support of persons with disabilities	24%	N=144	40%	N=239	25%	N=145	11%	N=65	100%	N=593
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17	16%	N=97	36%	N=222	29%	N=179	20%	N=126	100%	N=623
Overweight adults and children	11%	N=77	27%	N=186	37%	N=250	24%	N=166	100%	N=678
Abuse and neglect of children	17%	N=102	42%	N=255	25%	N=153	16%	N=96	100%	N=608
Abuse and neglect of older adults	22%	N=127	42%	N=243	21%	N=122	15%	N=84	100%	N=576
Spread of infectious diseases	28%	N=170	44%	N=268	19%	N=114	9%	N=56	100%	N=608

Table 10: Question 8

What do you feel is the most serious issue facing Dakota County at this time?	Percent of respondents	Number
Affordable housing	6%	N=27
Amount of county services	5%	N=22
Condition of roads	2%	N=12
Crime	14%	N=64
Economic development	6%	N=30
Jobs	7%	N=31
Preserving natural areas/protecting natural resources	3%	N=15
Quality of county services	0%	N=2
Schools	3%	N=16
Taxes	16%	N=73
Teen drug/alcohol use	1%	N=4
Traffic congestion	9%	N=42
No issue	2%	N=11
Health	5%	N=25
Sense of community	9%	N=41
Government spending	4%	N=20
Other	7%	N=34
Total	100%	N=470

Table 11: Question 9

Do you think that a year from now you and your household will be better off financially or worse off, or just about the same as now?	Percent of respondents	Number
Much better	5%	N=39
Somewhat better	21%	N=156
About the same	55%	N=408
Somewhat worse	16%	N=117
Much worse	3%	N=26
Total	100%	N=746

Table 12: Question 10

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
County libraries	57%	N=410	39%	N=278	4%	N=31	0%	N=3	100%	N=722
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	49%	N=348	46%	N=329	5%	N=34	0%	N=2	100%	N=712
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	41%	N=236	52%	N=304	7%	N=41	0%	N=1	100%	N=582
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	18%	N=135	55%	N=416	24%	N=182	3%	N=19	100%	N=752
Snow and ice removal on County roads	24%	N=182	53%	N=406	20%	N=153	4%	N=31	100%	N=772
911 dispatch services	44%	N=186	47%	N=198	6%	N=27	3%	N=14	100%	N=424
Sheriff services	40%	N=149	52%	N=193	7%	N=27	0%	N=2	100%	N=370
Employment support services	11%	N=34	44%	N=140	33%	N=104	12%	N=38	100%	N=316
Financial assistance for low-income families	21%	N=62	38%	N=111	31%	N=89	10%	N=30	100%	N=292
Services at the Recycling Zone	32%	N=170	50%	N=270	15%	N=79	4%	N=20	100%	N=540
Public transportation/transit services	16%	N=101	38%	N=234	27%	N=164	19%	N=114	100%	N=613
Self-service options on the County Web site	14%	N=51	56%	N=203	26%	N=94	4%	N=16	100%	N=364
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration	20%	N=138	58%	N=395	19%	N=132	3%	N=22	100%	N=686
Disaster preparedness and response	18%	N=61	55%	N=192	23%	N=81	4%	N=14	100%	N=348
Services provided to veterans	17%	N=39	50%	N=114	25%	N=57	8%	N=19	100%	N=229
Services provided to older adults	13%	N=42	51%	N=162	31%	N=99	5%	N=15	100%	N=319
Assessment process/property tax system	8%	N=49	29%	N=177	47%	N=287	16%	N=94	100%	N=607
Overall quality of services provided by Dakota County	11%	N=84	64%	N=475	24%	N=181	1%	N=4	100%	N=744

Table 13: Question 11

Have you visited, telephoned, or emailed any Dakota County government office within the last 12 months?	Percent of respondents	Number
Yes	39%	N=300
No	61%	N=463
Total	100%	N=763

Table 14: Question 12

What was your impression of the employee(s) of Dakota County in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total	
Knowledgeable	36%	N=129	50%	N=180	14%	N=49	1%	N=5	100%	N=364
Responsive	35%	N=128	45%	N=162	16%	N=58	4%	N=16	100%	N=364
Courteous	37%	N=134	45%	N=164	13%	N=49	5%	N=19	100%	N=366
Overall impression	33%	N=120	47%	N=169	15%	N=55	4%	N=15	100%	N=359

Table 15: Question 13

Please rate these aspects of accessing Dakota County services.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total	
Convenience of County facilities' locations	32%	N=97	56%	N=172	10%	N=31	2%	N=5	100%	N=305
Online access to County services	23%	N=58	57%	N=143	17%	N=41	3%	N=7	100%	N=249
Ease of paying for County services online	22%	N=39	54%	N=98	19%	N=33	5%	N=10	100%	N=180
Availability of language resources for access to services (e.g., interpreters or multi-language materials or signage)	27%	N=25	55%	N=51	14%	N=13	3%	N=3	100%	N=92

Table 16: Question 14

Please rate the following categories of Dakota County government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total	
The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents	15%	N=97	56%	N=371	26%	N=170	3%	N=22	100%	N=659
The job Dakota County government does of listening to residents	10%	N=47	47%	N=226	37%	N=176	6%	N=29	100%	N=478
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County	11%	N=68	47%	N=288	35%	N=216	7%	N=46	100%	N=618
The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars	11%	N=61	45%	N=257	36%	N=205	9%	N=49	100%	N=572

Please rate the following categories of Dakota County government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Total	
The value of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood	15%	N=92	54%	N=337	28%	N=174	4%	N=23	100%	N=627
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	14%	N=90	56%	N=350	25%	N=159	4%	N=27	100%	N=627
Overall confidence in Dakota County government	12%	N=78	56%	N=378	28%	N=189	4%	N=27	100%	N=672

Table 17: Question 15

To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the job the Dakota County Board is doing?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly approve	18%	N=85
Somewhat approve	70%	N=325
Somewhat disapprove	8%	N=38
Strongly disapprove	3%	N=14
Total	100%	N=463

Table 18: Question 16

Please rate the extent to which you use each of the following as sources of information about Dakota County government, if at all.	Not a source		Minor source		Major source		Total	
County Board meetings on local cable television	74%	N=413	23%	N=128	3%	N=19	100%	N=560
Daily newspapers	28%	N=186	36%	N=233	36%	N=236	100%	N=655
Dakota County Web site (www.dakotacounty.us)	27%	N=163	49%	N=303	24%	N=148	100%	N=614
Weekly community newspapers	24%	N=157	38%	N=250	39%	N=257	100%	N=664
Community meetings	68%	N=397	27%	N=156	6%	N=32	100%	N=586
Dakota County Newsletter	23%	N=146	41%	N=265	36%	N=236	100%	N=647
Phone calls to Dakota County	58%	N=342	33%	N=192	9%	N=53	100%	N=587
Other online news sources	51%	N=282	34%	N=190	15%	N=83	100%	N=555
Television news broadcasts	34%	N=211	40%	N=248	26%	N=157	100%	N=615

Table 19: Question 17

What information would be useful to you on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Recycling information	71%	N=484
Information about County services	64%	N=436
Property sales/information	53%	N=361
Road/bridge construction projects	62%	N=418
Contacting County departments or staff	48%	N=323
County budget information	40%	N=270
Information about services for older adults	40%	N=271
Information about the County Jail or its inmates	22%	N=150
No internet/computer	3%	N=18
Transportation options/information	1%	N=7
Recreation information (parks, libraries, etc.)	1%	N=5
Nothing/no issue	0%	N=2
Other	7%	N=48

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 20: Question 18

What else would be useful for you to do on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Pay fees, fines, or property taxes	61%	N=379
Reserve park facilities	58%	N=362
Online recording of vital records (birth, death, marriage)	40%	N=249
Renew or apply for a license, permit, or other application	77%	N=479
Apply for a library card and/or use other library resources	62%	N=386
Apply for public financial assistance	21%	N=131
Not applicable/no internet or computer	2%	N=14
Nothing/no issue	1%	N=4
Other	4%	N=24

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 21: Question 19

To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your County property tax if it were needed to maintain County services at their current levels?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly support	7%	N=46
Somewhat support	34%	N=242
Somewhat oppose	29%	N=204
Strongly oppose	30%	N=212
Total	100%	N=705

Table 22: Question 20

To what extent do you support or oppose the County investing in projects that make transit easier and more convenient to use?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly support	23%	N=164
Somewhat support	44%	N=313
Somewhat oppose	18%	N=126
Strongly oppose	15%	N=106
Total	100%	N=709

Table 23: Question 21

How important, if at all, is it to provide the following library programs and services?			Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Total	
	Essential									
Popular titles/current library materials	38%	N=258	36%	N=250	22%	N=149	4%	N=29	100%	N=686
Early literacy/reading skills promotion and resources	35%	N=230	41%	N=271	19%	N=128	6%	N=37	100%	N=666
Workforce readiness skills/GED programs, services and materials	25%	N=169	39%	N=257	27%	N=181	8%	N=56	100%	N=663
Employment and career information	24%	N=165	42%	N=285	28%	N=189	6%	N=41	100%	N=680
Small business/economic development resources and services	18%	N=117	38%	N=251	35%	N=232	10%	N=63	100%	N=663
Consumer/government information	19%	N=127	36%	N=244	37%	N=245	8%	N=54	100%	N=670
Movies, music and entertainment	15%	N=103	26%	N=175	38%	N=262	21%	N=145	100%	N=684
Technology access, computer classes and training	29%	N=198	41%	N=280	25%	N=173	5%	N=35	100%	N=685
Community activities/information	22%	N=149	42%	N=286	31%	N=214	5%	N=34	100%	N=684
Local history and genealogy programs and resources	14%	N=94	34%	N=225	38%	N=255	14%	N=90	100%	N=664
Health and wellness programs and resources	19%	N=130	36%	N=250	35%	N=238	10%	N=71	100%	N=689
Author/performance arts programs	13%	N=89	27%	N=182	42%	N=281	18%	N=123	100%	N=675
Outreach to special populations	12%	N=80	25%	N=166	39%	N=255	23%	N=153	100%	N=655
English as a second language resources and services	16%	N=109	31%	N=208	34%	N=229	19%	N=124	100%	N=671
World language resources (Spanish, Somali, Russian, others)	12%	N=83	26%	N=169	39%	N=261	23%	N=149	100%	N=662
Other	84%	N=21	11%	N=3	1%	N=0	4%	N=1	100%	N=26

Table 24: Question 22

Since 2002, Dakota County has emphasized setting aside open spaces and parkland by dedicating small amounts of County funds in order to receive greater matching funds from non-County sources. How important, if at all, is it to continue investing County funds for these purposes:	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Total	
Protect lakes, streams, wetlands from pollution	51%	N=391	35%	N=269	12%	N=90	2%	N=12	100%	N=763
Protect farmland from future development	33%	N=251	36%	N=271	24%	N=181	7%	N=50	100%	N=753
Protect the highest-rated natural areas	44%	N=329	40%	N=304	14%	N=106	2%	N=17	100%	N=756
Develop more paved regional recreational trails	19%	N=140	28%	N=208	37%	N=279	16%	N=122	100%	N=749

Table 25: Question 23

How important, if at all, is it for each of the following activities and services to be provided in Dakota County Parks, such as Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park or Spring Lake Park?	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Total	
Programs for learning about nature and outdoor recreation	18%	N=131	37%	N=266	38%	N=276	7%	N=54	100%	N=727
Gathering spaces in picnic grounds and shelters	25%	N=186	45%	N=337	26%	N=194	4%	N=28	100%	N=745
Trail networks for hiking, biking or skiing	31%	N=226	42%	N=306	24%	N=173	4%	N=29	100%	N=734
Renting park buildings and grounds (e.g. for weddings, graduations)	16%	N=119	36%	N=266	41%	N=300	7%	N=50	100%	N=735
Events in parks such as candle-light skiing, Earth Day	14%	N=105	30%	N=216	40%	N=292	16%	N=117	100%	N=729
Food concessions	6%	N=44	17%	N=126	41%	N=298	36%	N=265	100%	N=733

How important, if at all, is it for each of the following activities and services to be provided in Dakota County Parks, such as Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park or Spring Lake Park?	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Total	
	Protecting/restoring woods, prairies, lakes, ponds and wetlands	41%	N=304	36%	N=269	20%	N=146	4%	N=28	100%
Developing more recreational facilities in County parks	16%	N=111	34%	N=242	39%	N=274	12%	N=84	100%	N=711
Other	52%	N=12	34%	N=8	14%	N=3	0%	N=0	100%	N=23

Table 26: Question 24

How familiar are you, if at all, with the services and activities available to older adults in your community?	Percent of respondents	Number
Very familiar	4%	N=30
Somewhat familiar	35%	N=272
Not at all familiar	61%	N=479
Total	100%	N=781

Table 27: Question 25

If financial circumstances or physical health caused you to be unable to remain in your current home as you grow older, how acceptable, if at all, are each of the following housing options?	Very acceptable		Somewhat acceptable		Not at all acceptable		Not applicable		Total	
	Move to a condo, apartment or townhouse	56%	N=403	35%	N=253	4%	N=26	5%	N=36	100%
Live with family members away from my current community	17%	N=121	42%	N=297	28%	N=198	14%	N=99	100%	N=715
Live in an assisted-living residence in my community	24%	N=173	52%	N=369	15%	N=108	9%	N=64	100%	N=713
Live in a nursing home	8%	N=56	27%	N=186	48%	N=326	17%	N=116	100%	N=684
Move to a seniors-only facility in my community	29%	N=204	49%	N=345	12%	N=82	10%	N=74	100%	N=704
Other	41%	N=31	21%	N=16	8%	N=6	29%	N=22	100%	N=75

Table 28: Question 26

Have you or any member of your household used the services at the Recycling Zone facility in the last 12 months?	Percent of respondents	Number
Yes	43%	N=331
No	57%	N=447
Total	100%	N=778

Table 29: Question 27

Which one of the following potential reasons best describes why your household has not used the Recycling Zone facility in the last 12 months?	Percent of respondents	Number
Unfamiliar with Recycling Zone	44%	N=189
Inconvenient days/hours/location	7%	N=30
Don't know what items can be brought there	5%	N=21
Did not want to pay fees at Recycling Zone	5%	N=24
Too far from my home	5%	N=21
Did not have anything to drop off	23%	N=98
Used a different facility	3%	N=12
Other/none of these	9%	N=39
Total	100%	N=434

Table 30: Question D1

How long have you lived in Dakota County?	Percent of respondents	Number
Less than 2 years	13%	N=58
2-5 years	16%	N=76
6-10 years	19%	N=87
11-15 years	9%	N=40
16-20 years	8%	N=37
Over 20 years	36%	N=167
Total	100%	N=465

Table 31: Question D2

Which of the following best describes you?	Percent of respondents	Number
Employed full-time	63%	N=497
Employed part-time	11%	N=89
Homemaker	5%	N=36
Retired	18%	N=139
Student	1%	N=5
Unemployed, looking for work	3%	N=23
Total	100%	N=790

Table 32: Question D3

Which of these describes the type of job-seeker you are? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Head of household	61%	N=12
Post-retirement older adult	5%	N=1
Person with disabilities	31%	N=6
Young adult (post-high school up to age 30)	10%	N=2
Military veteran of any age	8%	N=1
Member of a diverse community	0%	N=0

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 33: Question D4

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
Apple Valley	5%	N=31
Bloomington	8%	N=49
Burnsville	8%	N=46
Eagan	15%	N=88
Eden Prairie	1%	N=4
Edina	2%	N=14
Farmington	3%	N=16
Hastings	5%	N=31
Inver Grove Heights	3%	N=15
Le Sueur	0%	N=2
Lakeville	4%	N=23
Maplewood	0%	N=1
Mendota Heights	1%	N=8
Minneapolis	10%	N=62
Minnetonka	0%	N=3
Northfield	1%	N=5
Prior Lake	0%	N=3
Richfield	1%	N=3
Savage	0%	N=2
Shakopee	1%	N=4
South St. Paul	0%	N=1
St. Louis Park	0%	N=1
St. Paul	14%	N=83
West St. Paul	2%	N=10
Woodbury	1%	N=6
Rosemount	2%	N=15
Cottage Grove	0%	N=1
Newport	0%	N=1

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
St. Paul Park	0%	N=0
Plymouth	1%	N=7
Shorewood	0%	N=0
Golden Valley	1%	N=4
Pine Island	0%	N=1
Rochester	0%	N=1
Stewartville	0%	N=1
Metro area	0%	N=2
Lilydale	0%	N=1
Hudson ISI	0%	N=1
Randolph	0%	N=2
Roseville	0%	N=0
Brooklyn Park	0%	N=1
Multiple Cities	3%	N=17
Highland Park	0%	N=1
Dundas	0%	N=2
Rochester	0%	N=1
Faribault	0%	N=2
Other	2%	N=14
Refused/not applicable	2%	N=10
Total	100%	N=598

Table 34: Question D5

Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Number
One family house detached from any other houses	60%	N=479
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	18%	N=142
Building with two or more apartments or condos	20%	N=156
Manufactured or mobile home	0%	N=2
Other	2%	N=14
Total	100%	N=793

Table 35: Question D6

Is this house, apartment, or mobile home...	Percent of respondents	Number
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	24%	N=179
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	76%	N=578
Total	100%	N=757

Table 36: Question D7

Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents	Number
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	96%	N=732
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	4%	N=34
Total	100%	N=766

Table 37: Question D8

What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Number
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%	N=5
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	3%	N=23
Black or African American	4%	N=33
White	91%	N=715
Other	3%	N=23

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 38: Question D9

Which category contains your age?	Percent of respondents	Number
18-24	2%	N=17
25-34	25%	N=196
35-44	17%	N=139
45-54	23%	N=182
55-64	14%	N=114
65-74	10%	N=80
75 +	8%	N=65
Total	100%	N=793

Table 39: Question D10

What is your gender?	Percent of respondents	Number
Female	52%	N=411
Male	48%	N=373
Total	100%	N=784

Table 40: Question D11

How many of each of the following, including yourself, live in your household?	One		Two		Three		Four		Five or more		None		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	Children age 17 years and under	106	21%	107	21%	35	7%	6	1%	6	1%	241	48%	502
Adults under age 65 years	185	29%	338	53%	54	8%	18	3%	5	1%	44	7%	644	100%
Adults age 65 years and over	84	20%	55	14%	2	0%	0	0%	5	1%	263	64%	409	100%

Table 41: Question D12

Please indicate your household's annual income:	Percent of respondents	Number
Under \$15,000	5%	N=37
\$15,000-\$24,999	7%	N=51
\$25,000-\$34,999	10%	N=74
\$35,000-\$49,999	12%	N=91
\$50,000-\$74,999	18%	N=132
\$75,000-\$99,999	18%	N=131
\$100,000-\$149,999	18%	N=134
\$150,000-\$199,999	6%	N=42
\$200,000 or more	6%	N=41
Total	100%	N=732

Frequencies Including “Don’t Know” Responses

Table 42: Question 1

How would you rate your overall quality of life in Dakota County?	Percent of respondents	Number
Excellent	36%	N=282
Good	57%	N=445
Fair	6%	N=46
Poor	1%	N=4
Total	100%	N=778

Table 43: Question 2

Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
Dakota County as a place to live	38%	N=303	54%	N=424	8%	N=60	0%	N=2	0%	N=1	100%	N=791
Dakota County as a place to retire	15%	N=121	41%	N=322	19%	N=149	6%	N=49	19%	N=146	100%	N=788
Sense of community	12%	N=94	50%	N=395	31%	N=248	4%	N=34	2%	N=17	100%	N=787
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	14%	N=110	46%	N=365	25%	N=196	6%	N=45	9%	N=71	100%	N=787
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	27%	N=216	49%	N=381	18%	N=144	3%	N=24	3%	N=20	100%	N=786
Employment opportunities	5%	N=40	38%	N=300	31%	N=246	8%	N=61	17%	N=136	100%	N=783
Educational opportunities	17%	N=134	49%	N=388	20%	N=154	4%	N=31	10%	N=78	100%	N=785
Economic health of Dakota County	9%	N=71	53%	N=413	24%	N=184	2%	N=17	12%	N=97	100%	N=782
Availability of quality affordable housing	8%	N=63	41%	N=318	30%	N=233	7%	N=52	15%	N=117	100%	N=784
Ease of travel by public transit	10%	N=77	27%	N=210	26%	N=201	18%	N=136	20%	N=152	100%	N=776
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	17%	N=132	65%	N=513	16%	N=123	1%	N=7	1%	N=10	100%	N=785

Table 44: Question 3

What one thing do you like most about living in Dakota County?	Percent of respondents	Number
Home	0%	N=3
Location	38%	N=304
Low taxes	3%	N=23
My neighborhood	10%	NN=78
Open space	7%	N=54
Parks/lakes	7%	N=58
People	2%	N=15
Quality of life in general	16%	N=130
Rural character	4%	N=30
Safe	0%	N=2
Schools	6%	N=46
Small town feel	6%	N=46
Other	1%	N=7
Total	100%	N=796

Table 45: Question 4

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a problem in Dakota County.	Not a problem		Minor problem		Moderate problem		Major problem		Don't know		Total	
	14%	N=113	48%	N=375	24%	N=190	3%	N=20	11%	N=90	100%	N=789
Crime	14%	N=113	48%	N=375	24%	N=190	3%	N=20	11%	N=90	100%	N=789
Taxes	18%	N=139	27%	N=215	31%	N=245	13%	N=105	10%	N=82	100%	N=786
Traffic safety	27%	N=208	44%	N=338	19%	N=148	4%	N=33	6%	N=44	100%	N=771
Traffic congestion	23%	N=175	40%	N=309	27%	N=211	7%	N=52	3%	N=27	100%	N=774
Poverty	17%	N=131	33%	N=254	21%	N=166	4%	N=31	25%	N=198	100%	N=780
Access to affordable housing	17%	N=136	32%	N=247	21%	N=161	6%	N=46	24%	N=190	100%	N=781
Access to public transit	28%	N=222	22%	N=176	19%	N=153	14%	N=111	16%	N=127	100%	N=789

Table 46: Question 5

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Dakota County.	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	28%	N=225	54%	N=426	14%	N=113	2%	N=14	2%	N=13	100%	N=792
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	47%	N=373	44%	N=350	6%	N=51	0%	N=2	2%	N=17	100%	N=793
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs)	27%	N=215	43%	N=337	17%	N=132	6%	N=46	8%	N=63	100%	N=792
From identity theft	17%	N=136	45%	N=352	20%	N=160	4%	N=34	13%	N=103	100%	N=784
From domestic violence	52%	N=414	31%	N=243	6%	N=50	1%	N=7	10%	N=76	100%	N=791
From illegal use of prescription drugs	34%	N=268	32%	N=254	12%	N=96	3%	N=24	18%	N=143	100%	N=785
From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads	12%	N=91	46%	N=368	29%	N=227	6%	N=48	7%	N=58	100%	N=793
From distracted drivers on County roads	8%	N=63	40%	N=316	33%	N=258	13%	N=104	7%	N=52	100%	N=792
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	13%	N=102	53%	N=416	24%	N=187	4%	N=29	7%	N=56	100%	N=789
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county	21%	N=165	43%	N=339	20%	N=155	8%	N=60	9%	N=74	100%	N=793
While in your neighborhood	50%	N=396	40%	N=316	7%	N=58	1%	N=10	2%	N=12	100%	N=792
While using Dakota County parks and trails	38%	N=299	46%	N=359	7%	N=55	1%	N=5	9%	N=71	100%	N=789

Table 47: Question 6

In the past year, have you volunteered in any community organization like a church, neighborhood group, social service agency or school association?	Percent of respondents	Number
Yes, once or twice in the year	19%	N=153
Yes, once every other month	6%	N=49
No, I haven't volunteered	45%	N=360
Yes, about once a month	10%	N=81
Yes, more than once a month	17%	N=136
Don't know	2%	N=15
Total	100%	N=794

Table 48: Question 7

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County.	Not at all a concern		Minor concern		Moderate concern		Major concern		Don't know		Total	
Exposure to pollution in the water	25%	N=197	34%	N=267	21%	N=166	7%	N=52	13%	N=103	100%	N=785
Tobacco use	35%	N=279	33%	N=256	15%	N=121	7%	N=52	10%	N=79	100%	N=785
Suicide	34%	N=265	27%	N=212	10%	N=81	7%	N=51	22%	N=170	100%	N=780
Underage alcohol use	18%	N=140	26%	N=205	26%	N=205	14%	N=111	16%	N=122	100%	N=782
Alcohol abuse among adults	18%	N=141	31%	N=243	25%	N=193	10%	N=80	16%	N=123	100%	N=780
Illegal drug use	16%	N=128	27%	N=214	24%	N=188	15%	N=118	17%	N=131	100%	N=779
Bullying	16%	N=125	24%	N=187	25%	N=195	14%	N=108	21%	N=163	100%	N=777
The health and support of older adults	19%	N=145	32%	N=250	19%	N=147	10%	N=78	21%	N=161	100%	N=782
The health and support of persons with disabilities	19%	N=144	31%	N=239	19%	N=145	8%	N=65	23%	N=178	100%	N=771
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17	12%	N=97	29%	N=222	23%	N=179	16%	N=126	20%	N=154	100%	N=777
Overweight adults and children	10%	N=77	24%	N=186	32%	N=250	21%	N=166	13%	N=104	100%	N=782
Abuse and neglect of children	13%	N=102	33%	N=255	20%	N=153	12%	N=96	22%	N=172	100%	N=780
Abuse and neglect of older adults	16%	N=127	31%	N=243	16%	N=122	11%	N=84	26%	N=204	100%	N=780
Spread of infectious diseases	22%	N=170	34%	N=268	15%	N=114	7%	N=56	22%	N=172	100%	N=780

Table 49: Question 8

What do you feel is the most serious issue facing Dakota County at this time?	Percent of respondents	Number
Affordable housing	6%	N=27
Amount of county services	4%	N=22
Condition of roads	2%	N=12
Crime	13%	N=64
Economic development	6%	N=30
Jobs	6%	N=31
Preserving natural areas/protecting natural resources	3%	N=15
Quality of county services	0%	N=2
Schools	3%	N=16
Taxes	15%	N=73
Teen drug/alcohol use	1%	N=4
Traffic congestion	9%	N=42
No issue	2%	N=11
Health	5%	N=25
Sense of community	8%	N=41
Government spending	4%	N=20
Other	7%	N=34
Don't know/refused	4%	N=20
Total	100%	N=490

Table 50: Question 9

Do you think that a year from now you and your household will be better off financially or worse off, or just about the same as now?	Percent of respondents	Number
Much better	5%	N=39
Somewhat better	20%	N=156
About the same	52%	N=408
Somewhat worse	15%	N=117
Much worse	3%	N=26
Don't know	5%	N=40
Total	100%	N=787

Table 51: Question 10

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
County libraries	52%	N=410	35%	N=278	4%	N=31	0%	N=3	8%	N=67	100%	N=788
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	44%	N=348	42%	N=329	4%	N=34	0%	N=2	9%	N=73	100%	N=785
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	31%	N=236	40%	N=304	5%	N=41	0%	N=1	24%	N=187	100%	N=770
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	17%	N=135	53%	N=416	23%	N=182	2%	N=19	4%	N=32	100%	N=784
Snow and ice removal on County roads	23%	N=182	51%	N=406	19%	N=153	4%	N=31	3%	N=22	100%	N=794
911 dispatch services	24%	N=186	25%	N=198	3%	N=27	2%	N=14	46%	N=361	100%	N=785
Sheriff services	19%	N=149	25%	N=193	3%	N=27	0%	N=2	53%	N=414	100%	N=784
Employment support services	4%	N=34	18%	N=140	13%	N=104	5%	N=38	60%	N=468	100%	N=784
Financial assistance for low-income families	8%	N=62	14%	N=111	11%	N=89	4%	N=30	63%	N=490	100%	N=782
Services at the Recycling Zone	22%	N=170	35%	N=270	10%	N=79	3%	N=20	30%	N=237	100%	N=777
Public transportation/transit services	13%	N=101	30%	N=234	21%	N=164	14%	N=114	22%	N=173	100%	N=785
Self-service options on the County Web site	7%	N=51	26%	N=203	12%	N=94	2%	N=16	53%	N=405	100%	N=769

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration	18%	N=138	50%	N=395	17%	N=132	3%	N=22	12%	N=96	100%	N=783
Disaster preparedness and response	8%	N=61	25%	N=192	10%	N=81	2%	N=14	55%	N=430	100%	N=778
Services provided to veterans	5%	N=39	15%	N=114	7%	N=57	2%	N=19	71%	N=553	100%	N=781
Services provided to older adults	5%	N=42	21%	N=162	13%	N=99	2%	N=15	59%	N=464	100%	N=783
Assessment process/property tax system	6%	N=49	23%	N=177	37%	N=287	12%	N=94	21%	N=165	100%	N=772
Overall quality of services provided by Dakota County	11%	N=84	61%	N=475	23%	N=181	0%	N=4	4%	N=34	100%	N=778

Table 52: Question 11

Have you visited, telephoned, or emailed any Dakota County government office within the last 12 months?	Percent of respondents	Number
Yes	39%	N=300
No	61%	N=463
Total	100%	N=763

Table 53: Question 12

What was your impression of the employee(s) of Dakota County in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Knowledgeable	32%	N=129	45%	N=180	12%	N=49	1%	N=5	9%	N=37	100%	N=400
Responsive	32%	N=128	40%	N=162	15%	N=58	4%	N=16	9%	N=36	100%	N=400
Courteous	33%	N=134	41%	N=164	12%	N=49	5%	N=19	9%	N=36	100%	N=403
Overall impression	30%	N=120	43%	N=169	14%	N=55	4%	N=15	9%	N=36	100%	N=396

Table 54: Question 13

Please rate these aspects of accessing Dakota County services.	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Convenience of County facilities' locations	30%	N=97	53%	N=172	10%	N=31	2%	N=5	5%	N=16	100%	N=322
Online access to County services	18%	N=58	45%	N=143	13%	N=41	2%	N=7	22%	N=70	100%	N=320
Ease of paying for County services online	12%	N=39	31%	N=98	11%	N=33	3%	N=10	43%	N=138	100%	N=319
Availability of language resources for access to services (e.g., interpreters or multi-language materials or signage)	8%	N=25	16%	N=51	4%	N=13	1%	N=3	71%	N=227	100%	N=319

Table 55: Question 14

Please rate the following categories of Dakota County government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents	13%	N=97	50%	N=371	23%	N=170	3%	N=22	11%	N=83	100%	N=742
The job Dakota County government does of listening to residents	6%	N=47	31%	N=226	24%	N=176	4%	N=29	35%	N=263	100%	N=741
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County	9%	N=68	39%	N=288	29%	N=216	6%	N=46	16%	N=121	100%	N=739
The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars	8%	N=61	35%	N=257	28%	N=205	7%	N=49	22%	N=163	100%	N=735
The value of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood	13%	N=92	46%	N=337	24%	N=174	3%	N=23	14%	N=106	100%	N=733
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	12%	N=90	48%	N=350	22%	N=159	4%	N=27	15%	N=110	100%	N=737
Overall confidence in Dakota County government	11%	N=78	51%	N=378	26%	N=189	4%	N=27	9%	N=66	100%	N=738

Table 56: Question 15

To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the job the Dakota County Board is doing?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly approve	12%	N=85
Somewhat approve	44%	N=325
Somewhat disapprove	5%	N=38
Strongly disapprove	2%	N=14
Don't know	37%	N=276
Total	100%	N=738

Table 57: Question 16

Please rate the extent to which you use each of the following as sources of information about Dakota County government, if at all.	Not a source		Minor source		Major source		Don't know		Total	
County Board meetings on local cable television	56%	N=413	17%	N=128	3%	N=19	24%	N=179	100%	N=739
Daily newspapers	25%	N=186	31%	N=233	31%	N=236	12%	N=93	100%	N=748
Dakota County Web site (www.dakotacounty.us)	22%	N=163	41%	N=303	20%	N=148	17%	N=127	100%	N=741
Weekly community newspapers	21%	N=157	34%	N=250	35%	N=257	10%	N=75	100%	N=739
Community meetings	54%	N=397	21%	N=156	4%	N=32	20%	N=148	100%	N=733
Dakota County Newsletter	20%	N=146	36%	N=265	32%	N=236	13%	N=100	100%	N=747
Phone calls to Dakota County	46%	N=342	26%	N=192	7%	N=53	21%	N=152	100%	N=739
Other online news sources	39%	N=282	26%	N=190	11%	N=83	24%	N=173	100%	N=728
Television news broadcasts	28%	N=211	33%	N=248	21%	N=157	17%	N=125	100%	N=740

Table 58: Question 17

What information would be useful to you on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Recycling information	71%	N=484
Information about County services	64%	N=436
Property sales/information	53%	N=361
Road/bridge construction projects	62%	N=418
Contacting County departments or staff	48%	N=323

What information would be useful to you on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
County budget information	40%	N=270
Information about services for older adults	40%	N=271
Information about the County Jail or its inmates	22%	N=150
No internet/computer	3%	N=18
Transportation options/information	1%	N=7
Recreation information (parks, libraries, etc.)	1%	N=5
Other	7%	N=48
Nothing/no issue	0%	N=2

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 59: Question 18

What else would be useful for you to do on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Pay fees, fines, or property taxes	61%	N=379
Reserve park facilities	58%	N=362
Online recording of vital records (birth, death, marriage)	40%	N=249
Renew or apply for a license, permit, or other application	77%	N=479
Apply for a library card and/or use other library resources	62%	N=386
Apply for public financial assistance	21%	N=131
Other	4%	N=24
Not applicable/no internet or computer	2%	N=14
Nothing/no issue	1%	N=4

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 60: Question 19

To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your County property tax if it were needed to maintain County services at their current levels?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly support	6%	N=46
Somewhat support	31%	N=242
Somewhat oppose	26%	N=204

To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your County property tax if it were needed to maintain County services at their current levels?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly oppose	27%	N=212
Don't know	9%	N=69
Total	100%	N=774

Table 61: Question 20

To what extent do you support or oppose the County investing in projects that make transit easier and more convenient to use?	Percent of respondents	Number
Strongly support	21%	N=164
Somewhat support	41%	N=313
Somewhat oppose	16%	N=126
Strongly oppose	14%	N=106
Don't know	8%	N=64
Total	100%	N=773

Table 62: Question 21

How important, if at all, is it to provide the following library programs and services?	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Don't know		Total	
Popular titles/current library materials	34%	N=258	33%	N=250	20%	N=149	4%	N=29	9%	N=68	100%	N=755
Early literacy/reading skills promotion and resources	31%	N=230	36%	N=271	17%	N=128	5%	N=37	12%	N=87	100%	N=753
Workforce readiness skills/GED programs, services and materials	22%	N=169	34%	N=257	24%	N=181	7%	N=56	12%	N=91	100%	N=754
Employment and career information	22%	N=165	38%	N=285	25%	N=189	5%	N=41	10%	N=73	100%	N=752
Small business/economic development resources and services	16%	N=117	33%	N=251	31%	N=232	8%	N=63	12%	N=90	100%	N=753
Consumer/government information	17%	N=127	33%	N=244	33%	N=245	7%	N=54	11%	N=80	100%	N=749
Movies, music and entertainment	14%	N=103	23%	N=175	35%	N=262	19%	N=145	9%	N=64	100%	N=747
Technology access, computer classes and training	26%	N=198	37%	N=280	23%	N=173	5%	N=35	9%	N=67	100%	N=752

How important, if at all, is it to provide the following library programs and services?	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Community activities/information	20%	N=149	38%	N=286	29%	N=214	5%	N=34	9%	N=65	100%	N=749
Local history and genealogy programs and resources	13%	N=94	30%	N=225	34%	N=255	12%	N=90	11%	N=86	100%	N=750
Health and wellness programs and resources	17%	N=130	33%	N=250	32%	N=238	9%	N=71	9%	N=65	100%	N=754
Author/performance arts programs	12%	N=89	24%	N=182	37%	N=281	16%	N=123	10%	N=75	100%	N=751
Outreach to special populations	11%	N=80	22%	N=166	34%	N=255	20%	N=153	12%	N=93	100%	N=748
English as a second language resources and services	15%	N=109	28%	N=208	30%	N=229	17%	N=124	11%	N=80	100%	N=751
World language resources (Spanish, Somali, Russian, others)	11%	N=83	22%	N=169	35%	N=261	20%	N=149	12%	N=89	100%	N=750
Other	84%	N=21	11%	N=3	1%	N=0	4%	N=1	0%	N=0	100%	N=26

Table 63: Question 22

Since 2002, Dakota County has emphasized setting aside open spaces and parkland by dedicating small amounts of County funds in order to receive greater matching funds from non-County sources. How important, if at all, is it to continue investing County funds for these purposes:	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Protect lakes, streams, wetlands from pollution	50%	N=391	35%	N=269	12%	N=90	2%	N=12	2%	N=15	100%	N=777
Protect farmland from future development	32%	N=251	35%	N=271	23%	N=181	6%	N=50	3%	N=22	100%	N=775
Protect the highest-rated natural areas	42%	N=329	39%	N=304	14%	N=106	2%	N=17	3%	N=22	100%	N=778
Develop more paved regional recreational trails	18%	N=140	27%	N=208	36%	N=279	16%	N=122	4%	N=27	100%	N=776

Table 64: Question 23

How important, if at all, is it for each of the following activities and services to be provided in Dakota County Parks, such as Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park or Spring Lake Park?	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not at all important		Don't know		Total	
Programs for learning about nature and outdoor recreation	17%	N=131	35%	N=266	36%	N=276	7%	N=54	6%	N=43	100%	N=771
Gathering spaces in picnic grounds and shelters	24%	N=186	43%	N=337	25%	N=194	4%	N=28	4%	N=32	100%	N=777
Trail networks for hiking, biking or skiing	29%	N=226	40%	N=306	23%	N=173	4%	N=29	5%	N=35	100%	N=770
Renting park buildings and grounds (e.g. for weddings, graduations)	15%	N=119	35%	N=266	39%	N=300	6%	N=50	5%	N=36	100%	N=771
Events in parks such as candle-light skiing, Earth Day	14%	N=105	28%	N=216	38%	N=292	15%	N=117	6%	N=43	100%	N=772
Food concessions	6%	N=44	16%	N=126	39%	N=298	34%	N=265	5%	N=39	100%	N=772
Protecting/restoring woods, prairies, lakes, ponds and wetlands	39%	N=304	35%	N=269	19%	N=146	4%	N=28	4%	N=31	100%	N=777
Developing more recreational facilities in County parks	15%	N=111	32%	N=242	36%	N=274	11%	N=84	7%	N=53	100%	N=763
Other	51%	N=12	33%	N=8	14%	N=3	0%	N=0	2%	N=0	100%	N=24

Table 65: Question 24

How familiar are you, if at all, with the services and activities available to older adults in your community?	Percent of respondents	Number
Very familiar	4%	N=30
Somewhat familiar	35%	N=272
Not at all familiar	61%	N=479
Total	100%	N=781

Table 66: Question 25

If financial circumstances or physical health caused you to be unable to remain in your current home as you grow older, how acceptable, if at all, are each of the following housing options?	Very acceptable		Somewhat acceptable		Not at all acceptable		Not applicable		Don't know		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Move to a condo, apartment or townhouse	53%	N=403	33%	N=253	3%	N=26	5%	N=36	6%	N=46	100%	N=765
Live with family members away from my current community	16%	N=121	39%	N=297	26%	N=198	13%	N=99	7%	N=50	100%	N=765
Live in an assisted-living residence in my community	22%	N=173	48%	N=369	14%	N=108	8%	N=64	7%	N=58	100%	N=771
Live in a nursing home	7%	N=56	24%	N=186	43%	N=326	15%	N=116	10%	N=79	100%	N=763
Move to a seniors-only facility in my community	26%	N=204	45%	N=345	11%	N=82	10%	N=74	8%	N=65	100%	N=769
Other	16%	N=31	8%	N=16	3%	N=6	12%	N=22	60%	N=114	100%	N=188

Table 67: Question 26

Have you or any member of your household used the services at the Recycling Zone facility in the last 12 months?	Percent of respondents	Number
Yes	43%	N=331
No	57%	N=447
Total	100%	N=778

Table 68: Question 27

Which one of the following potential reasons best describes why your household has not used the Recycling Zone facility in the last 12 months?	Percent of respondents	Number
Unfamiliar with Recycling Zone	44%	N=189
Inconvenient days/hours/location	7%	N=30
Don't know what items can be brought there	5%	N=21
Did not want to pay fees at Recycling Zone	5%	N=24
Too far from my home	5%	N=21
Did not have anything to drop off	23%	N=98
Used a different facility	3%	N=12
Other/none of these	9%	N=39
Total	100%	N=434

Table 69: Question D1

How long have you lived in Dakota County?	Percent of respondents	Number
Less than 2 years	13%	N=58
2-5 years	16%	N=76
6-10 years	19%	N=87
11-15 years	9%	N=40
16-20 years	8%	N=37
Over 20 years	36%	N=167
Total	100%	N=465

Table 70: Question D2

Which of the following best describes you?	Percent of respondents	Number
Employed full-time	63%	N=497
Employed part-time	11%	N=89
Homemaker	5%	N=36
Retired	18%	N=139
Student	1%	N=5
Unemployed, looking for work	3%	N=23
Total	100%	N=790

Table 71: Question D3

Which of these describes the type of job-seeker you are? (Please check all that apply.)	Percent of respondents	Number
Head of household	61%	N=12
Post-retirement older adult	5%	N=1
Person with disabilities	31%	N=6
Young adult (post-high school up to age 30)	10%	N=2
Military veteran of any age	8%	N=1
Member of a diverse community	0%	N=0

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 72: Question D4

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
Apple Valley	5%	N=31
Bloomington	8%	N=49
Burnsville	8%	N=46
Eagan	15%	N=88
Eden Prairie	1%	N=4
Edina	2%	N=14
Farmington	3%	N=16
Hastings	5%	N=31
Inver Grove Heights	3%	N=15

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
Le Sueur	0%	N=2
Lakeville	4%	N=23
Maplewood	0%	N=1
Mendota Heights	1%	N=8
Minneapolis	10%	N=62
Minnetonka	0%	N=3
Northfield	1%	N=5
Prior Lake	0%	N=3
Richfield	1%	N=3
Savage	0%	N=2
Shakopee	1%	N=4
South St. Paul	0%	N=1
St. Louis Park	0%	N=1
St. Paul	14%	N=83
West St. Paul	2%	N=10
Woodbury	1%	N=6
Rosemount	2%	N=15
Cottage Grove	0%	N=1
Newport	0%	N=1
St. Paul Park	0%	N=0
Plymouth	1%	N=7
Shorewood	0%	N=0
Golden Valley	1%	N=4
Pine Island	0%	N=1
Rochester	0%	N=1
Stewartville	0%	N=1
Metro area	0%	N=2
Lilydale	0%	N=1
Hudson ISI	0%	N=1
Randolph	0%	N=2

In what city do you primarily work?	Percent of respondents	Number
Roseville	0%	N=0
Brooklyn Park	0%	N=1
Multiple Cities	3%	N=17
Highland Park	0%	N=1
Dundas	0%	N=2
Rochester	0%	N=1
Faribault	0%	N=2
Other	2%	N=14
Refused/not applicable	2%	N=10
Total	100%	N=598

Table 73: Question D5

Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Number
One family house detached from any other houses	60%	N=479
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)	18%	N=142
Building with two or more apartments or condos	20%	N=156
Manufactured or mobile home	0%	N=2
Other	2%	N=14
Total	100%	N=793

Table 74: Question D6

Is this house, apartment, or mobile home...	Percent of respondents	Number
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	24%	N=179
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear	76%	N=578
Total	100%	N=757

Table 75: Question D7

Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents	Number
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	96%	N=732
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	4%	N=34
Total	100%	N=766

Table 76: Question D8

What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Number
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1%	N=5
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	3%	N=23
Black or African American	4%	N=33
White	91%	N=715
Other	3%	N=23

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one response.

Table 77: Question D9

Which category contains your age?	Percent of respondents	Number
18-24	2%	N=17
25-34	25%	N=196
35-44	17%	N=139
45-54	23%	N=182
55-64	14%	N=114
65-74	10%	N=80
75 +	8%	N=65
Total	100%	N=793

Table 78: Question D10

What is your gender?	Percent of respondents	Number
Female	52%	N=411
Male	48%	N=373
Total	100%	N=784

Table 79: Question D11

How many of each of the following, including yourself, live in your household?	One		Two		Three		Four		Five or more		None		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Children age 17 years and under	106	21%	107	21%	35	7%	6	1%	6	1%	241	48%	502	100%
Adults under age 65 years	185	29%	338	53%	54	8%	18	3%	5	1%	44	7%	644	100%
Adults age 65 years and over	84	20%	55	14%	2	0%	0	0%	5	1%	263	64%	409	100%

Table 80: Question D12

Please indicate your household's annual income:	Percent of respondents	Number
Under \$15,000	5%	N=37
\$15,000-\$24,999	7%	N=51
\$25,000-\$34,999	10%	N=74
\$35,000-\$49,999	12%	N=91
\$50,000-\$74,999	18%	N=132
\$75,000-\$99,999	18%	N=131
\$100,000-\$149,999	18%	N=134
\$150,000-\$199,999	6%	N=42
\$200,000 or more	6%	N=41
Total	100%	N=732

APPENDIX D: COMPARISON WITH OTHER PARTICIPATING COUNTIES

Questions asked by more than one Minnesota County in 2013 are included below for comparison. Cells with grey shading indicate statistically significant differences.

Table 81: Aspects of Quality of Life

Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in the county. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
How would you rate your overall quality of life in the County?	76	73	69	66	77
The County as a place to live	77	72	75	67	NA
As a place to raise children	NA	72	71	66	NA
As a place to work	NA	71	52	50	NA
the County as a place to retire	60	53	55	54	58
Your neighborhood as a place to live	NA	NA	74	NA	NA
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	58	57	61	42	57
Recreational opportunities in the County	68	NA	67	67	70
Employment opportunities	50	58	42	32	45
Educational opportunities	63	63	NA	58	NA
Economic health of the County	60	NA	NA	NA	NA
Availability of quality affordable housing	53	50	51	42	50
Availability of affordable quality child care	NA	51	52	NA	NA
Availability of affordable health care	NA	70	53	NA	NA
Ease of travel by public transit	45	NA	43	NA	NA
Overall image or reputation of the County	66	NA	NA	54	69
Access to higher education resources	NA	NA	52	NA	NA
Cost of living in the County	NA	NA	NA	40	NA
Rural character and natural environment	NA	NA	NA	NA	69
Sense of community	57	NA	NA	NA	58
Overall feeling of safety in the County	NA	NA	NA	NA	70

Table 82: Like Most about Living in County

What one thing do you like most about living in the county?	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Home	0%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Job opportunities	NA	0%	NA	NA	NA
Location	38%	21%	30%	NA	25%
My neighborhood/community	10%	5%	7%	NA	13%
Open space	7%	3%	16%	NA	14%
Parks/lakes	7%	7%	9%	NA	7%
People	2%	4%	NA	NA	2%
Quality of life in general	16%	37%	NA	NA	21%
Rural character	4%	11%	NA	NA	NA
Safe	0%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Schools	6%	2%	3%	NA	5%
Services	NA	3%	0%	NA	NA
Small town feel	6%	NA	26%	NA	8%
Unsure	0%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Low taxes	3%	0%	NA	NA	3%
Healthcare/Mayo Clinic	NA	0%	NA	NA	NA
Convenience, access	NA	NA	8%	NA	NA
Other	1%	6%	2%	NA	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	NA	100%

Note: Statistical significance not tested

Table 83: Perceptions of Community Safety

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel in the County. Average rating (0=very unsafe, 100=very safe).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
In your home	NA	87	88	NA	NA
While in your neighborhood	80	81	83	NA	79
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70	64	73	63	72
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	80	68	81	68	81
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs)	66	61	66	47	68
From identity theft	62	59	NA	NA	60
From domestic violence	83	NA	NA	NA	NA
From illegal use of prescription drugs	73	NA	NA	NA	NA
From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads	56	55	61	45	62
From distracted drivers on County roads	49	48	50	35	53
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	60	NA	NA	NA	NA
From environmental hazards, including toxic waste	NA	73	NA	NA	NA
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county	62	NA	NA	NA	67
Traveling within the County	NA	NA	80	NA	NA
While using the County parks and trails	78	67	76	NA	NA

Table 84: Health Concerns

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in the county. Average rating (0=not at all a concern, 100=major concern).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Depression	NA	58	NA	66	NA
Exposure to pollution in the water	37	38	21	NA	NA
Tobacco use	31	47	27	58	46
Suicide	29	46	29	55	40
Underage alcohol use	48	58	49	71	56
Alcohol abuse among adults	44	56	47	69	50
Illegal drug use	49	64	55	77	55
Bullying	49	58	52	68	47
The health and support of older adults	42	52	47	66	45
The health and support of persons with disabilities	41	49	45	62	44
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17	51	57	47	69	51
Overweight adults and children	58	NA	53	NA	NA
Overweight children	NA	70	NA	69	58
Overweight adults	NA	68	NA	73	59
Abuse and neglect of children	47	59	46	67	45
Abuse and neglect of older adults	43	52	NA	61	41
Abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults	NA	NA	41	NA	NA
Unplanned pregnancy	NA	51	NA	60	NA
Mental illness/mental health issues	NA	56	46	NA	NA
The adequacy of school readiness for children	NA	48	NA	NA	NA
Sexually transmitted diseases	NA	45	34	54	NA
Drinking and driving	NA	64	NA	NA	NA
Distracted driving	NA	72	NA	NA	NA
Motor vehicle crashes	NA	54	NA	NA	NA
Domestic violence	NA	57	47	66	48
Abuse of prescription drugs	NA	NA	46	69	47
Pedestrian and bicyclist safety	NA	NA	NA	47	NA
Spread of infectious diseases	36	NA	NA	NA	36

Table 85: Most Serious Issue Facing the County

What do you feel is the most serious issue facing the County at this time?	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Affordable housing	6%	2%	9%	NA	9%
Amount of county services	5%	7%	NA	NA	NA
Condition of roads/Infrastructure (2%	7%	7%	10%	8%
Crime	14%	22%	22%	4%	2%
Violent crime	NA	NA	6%	NA	NA
Economic development	6%	2%	NA	6%	12%
Growth/development	NA	NA	NA	5%	17%
Jobs	7%	6%	NA	24%	11%
Politics/political issues	NA	10%	NA	NA	NA
Preserving natural areas/protecting natural resources	3%	2%	NA	NA	NA
Quality of county services	0%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Health and safety/Safety	NA	7%	NA	NA	NA
Schools	3%	4%	10%	3%	6%
Taxes	16%	9%	35%	14%	22%
Teen drug/alcohol use	1%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Traffic congestion	9%	NA	12%	NA	8%
No issue	2%	1%	NA	NA	NA
Health	5%	NA	NA	2%	NA
Sense of community	9%	11%	NA	NA	NA
Government spending	4%	NA	NA	13%	NA
Mining	NA	NA	NA	4%	NA
Poverty/homelessness	NA	NA	NA	0%	NA
Bad driving	NA	2%	NA	NA	NA
Other	7%	9%	NA	14%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Statistical significance not tested

Table 86: Financial Status

	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Do you think that a year from now you and your household will be better off financially or worse off, or just about the same as now? Average rating (0=much worse, 100=much better).	52	NA	52	NA	NA

Table 87: County Services

Please rate each of the following services provided by the county. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Maintenance of County roads	NA	53	NA	40	NA
County libraries	84	NA	75	NA	81
County parks and recreation	81	70	73	NA	82
Trail and bikeway system	78	NA	63	NA	78
Condition of County roads	63	NA	54	NA	59
Snow and ice removal on County roads	65	58	60	53	59
911 dispatch services	77	NA	77	72	77
Sheriff services	77	63	69	65	74
Employment support services	51	NA	52	43	54
Financial assistance for low-income families	57	50	53	43	NA
Services at the County recycling center/zone	70	71	NA	57	72
Public transportation/transit services	51	NA	50	NA	NA
Self-service options on the County Web site	60	56	63	52	NA
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration	65	65	64	NA	72
Licensing and vehicle registration	NA	NA	NA	59	NA
Records and vital statistics	NA	NA	NA	55	NA
Disaster preparedness and response	62	60	60	52	59
Services provided to veterans	59	51	58	46	58
Services provided to older adults	58	55	NA	48	57
Protection of recreational and drinking water	NA	64	62	NA	NA
Land use services, including building and conditional use permitting	NA	54	NA	45	NA
Probation monitoring	NA	48	57	NA	NA
Assessment process/property tax system	43	48	NA	31	NA
Child protection services	NA	57	58	47	NA
Mental health services	NA	49	NA	NA	NA
Public health	NA	58	NA	51	NA
Drug and alcohol services	NA	52	NA	NA	NA
Adult protective services	NA	53	NA	NA	NA
Preventing youth crime	NA	NA	48	NA	NA
Information about the work of the County Board	NA	NA	NA	42	NA
On-site wastewater and septic permitting	NA	NA	NA	43	NA
Management of County-owned land	NA	NA	NA	47	NA
Services to youth/children and families	NA	NA	NA	39	NA
Overall quality of services provided by the County	62	58	60	46	65

Table 88: Contact with the County

	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Have you visited, telephoned, or emailed any County government office within the last 12 months? Percent who said "yes."	39%	41%	44%	41%	51%

Table 89: Department Contacted

Please select the office contacted, choosing the most recent if more than one contacted in the last 12 months.	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Adult & Family Services	NA	10%	NA	4%	NA
County Board/Administration	NA	2%	NA	2%	NA
Family Support & Assistance/Financial Assistance	NA	9%	NA	8%	NA
Planning/Planning and Community Development	NA	4%	NA	3%	NA
Recording & Abstracting/Recorder	NA	6%	NA	3%	NA
Vital Records	NA	16%	NA	NA	NA
Child & Family Services	NA	3%	NA	3%	NA
Election & Voter Registration	NA	13%	NA	NA	NA
Finance	NA	0%	NA	NA	NA
Property Assessment/Assessor	NA	5%	NA	28%	NA
Real Estate Tax Collection	NA	7%	NA	NA	NA
Community Correction	NA	NA	NA	2%	NA
Environmental Resources	NA	3%	NA	2%	NA
Human Resources	NA	3%	NA	6%	NA
Public Health	NA	2%	NA	1%	NA
Sheriff's Office	NA	7%	NA	5%	NA
County Attorney	NA	1%	NA	3%	NA
Facilities & Building Operations	NA	1%	NA	NA	NA
Information Technology Solutions (ITS)	NA	0%	NA	NA	NA
Public Works & County Engineer	NA	5%	NA	5%	NA
Veterans' Services	NA	1%	NA	3%	NA
County Auditor	NA	NA	NA	11%	NA
Land and Minerals	NA	NA	NA	5%	NA
DMV	NA	NA	NA	1%	NA
Other	NA	NA	NA	4%	NA
Total	NA	100%	NA	100%	NA

Note: Statistical significance not tested

Table 90: Employee Characteristics

What was your impression of the employee(s) of the County in your most recent contact? Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Knowledgeable	73	72	74	68	75
Responsive	70	69	73	64	74
Courteous	71	72	75	65	75
Overall impression	70	70	74	63	73

Table 91: Perceptions of Government

Please rate the following categories of the County government performance. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
The job the County government does of providing information to residents	61	56	58	43	65
The job the County government does of listening to residents	54	46	49	35	52
The value of services for the taxes paid to the County	54	46	42	34	50
The job the County government does at managing tax dollars	52	43	41	30	49
The value of the County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood	60	NA	56	NA	56
Overall confidence in the County government	58	NA	NA	39	NA
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	60	50	NA	NA	NA
My knowledge of the work of the County Board	NA	47	NA	NA	38
Effectively planning for the future	NA	48	NA	32	NA
Working through priority issues facing the County	NA	49	NA	NA	NA
Supporting the quality of life in the County	NA	NA	NA	41	60

Table 92: Approval of County Board

	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the job the County government is doing? Average rating (0=strongly disapprove, 100=strongly approve).	68	NA	NA	57	69

Table 93: Potential Information Sources

Please rate the extent to which you use each of the following as sources of information about County government, if at all. Percent using as a minor or major source.	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
County Board meetings on local cable television	26%	28%	26%	30%	33%
Cable broadcasts of the County Board meetings	NA	NA	21%	NA	NA
Daily newspapers	72%	83%	65%	85%	67%
The County Web site	73%	54%	64%	49%	68%
Weekly community newspapers	76%	NA	82%	73%	69%
Community meetings	32%	40%	30%	41%	28%
The County Newsletter	77%	NA	74%	NA	80%
Phone calls to the County	42%	39%	NA	44%	38%
Other online news sources	49%	NA	42%	NA	50%
Television news broadcasts	66%	86%	68%	NA	66%
Other county residents (such as neighbors or friends)	NA	81%	NA	81%	NA
County employees	NA	42%	40%	48%	NA
The radio	NA	74%	40%	69%	NA
Reports, flyers or brochures	NA	63%	NA	61%	NA
County listservs and other County electronic newsletters	NA	25%	NA	NA	27%
Social Media like Facebook and Twitter	NA	28%	NA	NA	25%

Table 94: Top Preference for Contact

Which one of the following methods would you prefer using if you wanted to contact the County government for a suggestion or concern?	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Call a commissioner	NA	15%	14%	19%	NA
Call a staff person	NA	25%	34%	31%	NA
Go to a public meeting	NA	12%	4%	7%	NA
Appointment to a County advisory committee	NA	NA	1%	NA	NA
Send an email	NA	21%	40%	28%	NA
Social media outlets	NA	NA	2%	12%	NA
Fill out an online survey	NA	0%	3%	NA	NA
Provide feedback online, during web streams of meetings	NA	1%	1%	NA	NA
Other	NA	4%	2%	2%	NA
County website	NA	22%	0%	0%	NA
Total	NA	100%	100%	100%	NA

Note: Statistical significance not tested

Table 95: Desired Internet Service Information

What kind of County service or information would you like to access via the Internet?	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Recycling information	71%	NA	56%	NA	58%
Information about County services	64%	NA	73%	NA	61%
Property sales/information	53%	NA	59%	NA	55%
Road/bridge construction projects	61%	NA	NA	NA	55%
Contacting County departments or staff	47%	NA	NA	NA	NA
County budget information	40%	NA	74%	NA	36%
Information about services for older adults	40%	NA	NA	NA	39%
Information about the County Jail or its inmates	22%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Access public County records	NA	NA	50%	NA	44%
Statistics about crime	NA	NA	62%	NA	NA
Statistics about health	NA	NA	43%	NA	NA
Meeting calendars, agendas, or minutes	NA	NA	42%	NA	38%
General information about the county	NA	NA	NA	NA	58%
Other information	7%	NA	7%	NA	11%
Pay fees, fines, or property taxes	55%	NA	61%	NA	61%
Reserve park facilities	53%	NA	73%	NA	72%
Online recording of vital records (birth, death, marriage)	36%	NA	49%	NA	38%
Renew or apply for a license, permit, or other application	70%	NA	73%	NA	65%
Apply for a library card and/or use other library resources	56%	NA	NA	NA	57%
Apply for public financial assistance	19%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Other service	3%	NA	7%	NA	NA
Jobs/volunteer opportunities	NA	NA	1%	NA	NA

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

Note: Statistical significance not tested

Table 96: Importance of County Parks Services

How important, if at all, is it for each of the following activities and services to be provided in County Parks? Average rating (0=not at all important, 100=essential).	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Programs for learning about nature and outdoor recreation	55	41	NA	NA	NA
Gathering spaces in picnic grounds and shelters	64	NA	NA	NA	NA
Trail networks for hiking, biking or skiing	66	61	NA	NA	NA
Renting park buildings and grounds (e.g. for weddings, graduations)	54	NA	NA	NA	NA
Events in parks such as candle-light skiing, Earth Day	47	NA	NA	NA	NA
Food concessions	31	NA	NA	NA	NA
Protecting/restoring woods, prairies, lakes, ponds and wetlands	71	NA	NA	NA	NA
Developing more recreational facilities in County parks	51	NA	NA	NA	NA
Equipment rentals such as canoes, paddleboats, snowshoes, etc.	NA	42	NA	NA	NA
Opportunities to hunt and/or fish	NA	48	NA	NA	NA
Local food production such as community gardens	NA	51	NA	NA	NA
Overnight accommodations for tents, RVs or camper cabins	NA	42	NA	NA	NA

Table 97: Support for Property Tax to Maintain Services

	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your County property tax if it were needed to maintain County services at their current levels? (Percent strongly or somewhat support)	41%	NA	38%	39%	NA

Table 98: Use of Recycling/Household Hazardous Waste Facility

	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Have you or any member of your household used the services at the recycling center/household hazardous waste Facility in the last 12 months? Percent who said "yes."	43%	63%	27%	NA	NA

Table 99: Reasons Why Household Has Not Used the Recycling/Household Hazardous Waste Facility

Which one of the following potential reasons best describes why your household has not used the recycling center/household hazardous waste facility in the last 12 months?	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Unfamiliar	48%	29%	39%	NA	NA
Inconvenient days/hours/location	8%	4%	9%	NA	NA
Don't know what items can be brought there	5%	5%	NA	NA	NA
Did not want to pay fees	6%	9%	NA	NA	NA
Too far	5%	5%	5%	NA	NA
Did not have anything to drop off	25%	29%	56%	NA	NA
Used a different facility	3%	19%	NA	NA	NA
Other/none of these	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option.

Note: Statistical significance not tested

Table 100: Older Adult Services

How familiar are you, if at all, with the services and activities available to older adults in your community?	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
Very familiar	4%	7%	3%	8%	2%
Somewhat familiar	35%	47%	34%	47%	34%
Not at all familiar	61%	46%	63%	44%	64%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 101: Ability to Pay for Assisted Living or Nursing Home Care

Average rating (0=not at all confident, 100=very confident)	Dakota County	Olmsted County	Scott County	St. Louis County	Washington County
How confident are you, if at all, that you have sufficient personal financial resources to pay for assisted living or nursing home care that you and/or other family members may require, knowing that Medicare does not pay for long-term care?	NA	42	43	31	NA

APPENDIX E: COMPARISON OF SELECT QUESTIONS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Geographic Crosstabulations

Cells shaded grey indicate statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Table 102: Ratings of Overall Quality of Life by Commissioner District

	Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)							Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	
How would you rate your overall quality of life in Dakota County?	72	74	81	75	75	76	81	76

Table 103: Ratings of Community Characteristics by Commissioner District

Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County	Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)							Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	
Dakota County as a place to live	70	74	82	76	74	79	82	77
Dakota County as a place to retire	54	64	67	60	55	59	60	60
Sense of community	53	56	59	58	50	63	59	57
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	50	62	61	60	57	59	60	58
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	60	63	72	72	65	69	74	68
Employment opportunities	45	45	58	50	48	55	48	50
Educational opportunities	57	60	66	65	60	64	67	63
Economic health of Dakota County	55	55	65	60	59	57	65	60
Availability of quality affordable housing	50	57	52	53	50	50	59	53
Ease of travel by public transit	34	50	47	36	42	49	59	45
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	62	66	71	66	61	69	70	66

Table 104: Ratings of Problems by Commissioner District

Please rate, to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a problem in Dakota County	Average rating (0=not a problem, 100=major problem)							Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	
Crime	43	44	34	40	40	30	41	39
Taxes	57	43	42	49	44	52	49	48
Traffic safety	36	33	30	31	37	33	35	34
Traffic congestion	36	35	36	32	53	38	46	40
Poverty	43	54	36	32	40	35	33	39
Access to affordable housing	45	42	41	38	39	36	37	40
Access to public transit	58	37	38	45	46	37	26	41

Table 105: Ratings of Safety by Commissioner District

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel in Dakota County	Average rating (0=very unsafe, 100=very safe)							Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	69	67	74	68	69	77	68	70
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	78	74	86	83	77	86	79	80
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs)	53	62	76	69	71	71	65	66
From identity theft	59	61	65	61	67	63	60	62
From domestic violence	77	80	87	83	87	87	80	83
From illegal use of prescription drugs	59	74	81	76	77	77	71	73
From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads	51	58	59	56	56	60	53	56
From distracted drivers on County roads	45	51	50	48	47	51	48	49
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	55	61	63	59	59	62	62	60
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county	63	62	60	59	64	65	57	62
While in your neighborhood	80	78	81	80	80	84	80	80
While using Dakota County parks and trails	75	77	73	81	80	80	77	78

Table 106: Ratings of Health Concerns by Commissioner District

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County	Average rating (0=not at all a concern, 100=major concern)							Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	
Exposure to pollution in the water	38	38	33	43	41	31	36	37
Tobacco use	39	34	29	29	29	26	30	31
Suicide	45	25	21	26	24	26	30	29
Underage alcohol use	58	45	41	41	43	47	53	48
Alcohol abuse among adults	56	46	37	33	45	41	46	44
Illegal drug use	60	52	40	41	47	39	56	49
Bullying	55	55	46	45	44	43	52	49
The health and support of older adults	45	43	39	35	46	34	49	42
The health and support of persons with disabilities	39	48	40	34	45	32	47	41
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17	53	58	47	48	51	41	58	51
Overweight adults and children	61	63	58	56	61	49	59	58
Abuse and neglect of children	45	52	43	43	51	41	50	47
Abuse and neglect of older adults	38	49	43	38	51	32	48	43
Spread of infectious diseases	37	39	31	35	41	29	41	36

Table 107: Ratings of County Services by Commissioner District

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County	Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)							Overall
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	District 6	District 7	
County libraries	81	82	85	83	80	85	89	84
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	79	77	83	84	80	80	85	81
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	77	76	78	79	75	78	81	78
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	59	58	67	62	63	62	68	63
Snow and ice removal on County roads	59	65	66	63	65	68	71	65
911 dispatch services	76	81	80	78	76	81	70	77
Sheriff services	76	80	84	73	75	82	74	77
Employment support services	51	50	56	49	55	51	49	51
Financial assistance for low-income families	56	50	55	58	70	64	50	57
Services at the Recycling Zone	68	62	76	73	72	74	66	70
Public transportation/transit services	41	49	54	46	46	57	63	51
Self-service options on the County Web site	63	59	59	58	56	65	58	60
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration	64	65	68	64	64	66	63	65
Disaster preparedness and response	58	58	68	66	58	68	62	62
Services provided to veterans	52	60	71	57	53	67	56	59
Services provided to older adults	57	56	63	58	49	64	54	58
Assessment process/property tax system	38	44	47	44	45	43	43	43
Overall quality of services provided by Dakota County	59	59	66	62	60	66	63	62

Demographic Crosstabulations

Cells shaded grey indicate statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Table 108: Ratings of Overall Quality of Life by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18- 34	35- 54	55+	Female	Male	
How would you rate your overall quality of life in Dakota County?	76	72	77	77	75	74	77	77	75	77	76	76	76

Table 109: Ratings of Community Characteristics by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18- 34	35- 54	55+	Female	Male	
Dakota County as a place to live	74	74	78	78	75	75	78	77	76	77	77	77	77
Dakota County as a place to retire	60	52	63	59	62	64	59	55	58	65	63	57	60
Sense of community	53	52	59	58	55	53	58	55	56	59	60	54	57
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	58	58	57	60	57	56	59	59	56	60	56	61	58
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	58	65	70	68	67	64	69	64	69	69	68	68	68

Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
Employment opportunities	55	41	50	50	49	46	51	53	49	47	50	49	50
Educational opportunities	66	55	64	63	62	62	63	62	62	65	64	62	63
Economic health of Dakota County	58	53	59	60	59	57	60	60	58	61	60	58	60
Availability of quality affordable housing	55	39	53	55	50	43	56	50	52	57	52	53	53
Ease of travel by public transit	51	42	46	47	43	43	46	46	46	44	45	46	45
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	66	65	67	67	65	64	67	66	66	68	67	66	66

Table 110: Ratings of Problems by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Ratings of Problems by Respondent Demographic Characteristics													
Please rate, to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a problem in Dakota County. Average rating (0=not a problem, 100=major problem)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
Crime	31	32	41	40	36	34	40	30	39	45	41	36	39
Taxes	36	48	54	53	39	37	51	38	52	50	48	48	48
Traffic safety	29	26	38	34	33	30	34	28	33	38	33	34	34
Traffic congestion	38	34	43	40	39	37	40	33	41	43	37	42	40
Poverty	34	37	39	37	42	43	37	31	38	46	42	35	39
Access to affordable housing	35	44	43	37	45	49	36	34	42	43	41	39	40
Access to public transit	39	41	40	39	45	47	39	38	39	47	42	40	41

Table 111: Ratings of Safety by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel in Dakota County. Average rating (0=very unsafe, 100=very safe)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70	72	72	69	73	71	70	71	71	69	69	71	70
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	83	83	81	80	82	82	80	86	80	76	78	83	80

Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel in Dakota County. Average rating (0=very unsafe, 100=very safe)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs)	72	70	64	64	69	68	66	70	65	65	66	67	66
From identity theft	70	60	63	59	67	65	61	75	58	57	62	63	62
From domestic violence	86	88	81	82	84	83	83	88	81	81	83	84	83
From illegal use of prescription drugs	79	81	70	71	77	75	73	76	71	73	73	73	73
From drunk or impaired drivers on County roads	62	62	55	54	59	60	55	61	57	52	54	58	56
From distracted drivers on County roads	57	55	48	46	52	54	47	55	48	44	48	50	49
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	65	67	60	58	63	63	59	65	59	58	57	64	60
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county	64	69	62	60	64	63	61	66	59	61	59	64	62
While in your neighborhood	82	82	81	80	80	81	80	82	81	78	78	83	80
While using Dakota County parks and trails	82	78	78	76	80	82	77	81	77	74	73	83	78

Table 112: Ratings of Health Concerns by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County. Average rating (0=not at all a concern, 100=major concern)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
Exposure to pollution in the water	34	41	36	38	36	40	36	30	40	38	40	34	37
Tobacco use	34	20	30	28	35	39	28	31	27	35	33	29	31
Suicide	22	19	33	29	30	30	28	22	30	34	35	22	29
Underage alcohol use	41	43	49	48	48	46	48	39	48	56	52	43	48
Alcohol abuse among adults	38	39	46	44	44	45	44	37	43	52	45	43	44
Illegal drug use	39	42	51	50	47	47	49	39	49	56	51	46	49
Bullying	47	44	48	47	52	56	47	43	50	52	55	41	49
The health and support of older adults	39	35	42	42	42	44	41	32	41	50	43	41	42
The health and support of persons with disabilities	38	38	39	39	43	46	39	33	40	47	44	38	41
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17	49	43	51	50	54	54	50	48	50	56	53	49	51
Overweight adults and children	55	51	59	56	61	62	57	56	56	63	60	57	58
Abuse and neglect of children	44	43	47	46	47	50	45	40	45	55	49	44	47
Abuse and neglect of older adults	41	44	41	41	46	49	41	36	41	52	44	42	43

Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County. Average rating (0=not at all a concern, 100=major concern)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
Spread of infectious diseases	34	36	35	36	37	36	36	29	36	44	37	35	36

Table 113: Ratings of County Services by Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
County libraries	82	83	85	84	84	84	84	84	83	85	87	81	84
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	81	79	79	82	80	82	81	82	81	80	82	80	81
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	76	74	78	77	78	80	77	80	77	76	80	75	78
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	61	67	62	62	64	62	63	63	61	64	63	62	63

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
Snow and ice removal on County roads	61	65	65	65	66	64	66	63	64	68	64	66	65
911 dispatch services	79	79	75	77	77	77	77	80	74	78	76	78	77
Sheriff services	80	78	77	77	78	81	76	80	77	76	77	78	77
Employment support services	63	40	48	50	53	54	50	55	49	50	51	52	51
Financial assistance for low-income families	61	66	51	56	57	58	56	59	57	54	54	60	57
Services at the Recycling Zone	72	52	61	71	67	71	70	66	72	69	72	68	70
Public transportation/transit services	52	48	52	53	47	47	52	50	54	47	50	51	51
Self-service options on the County Web site	61	52	61	60	60	61	60	61	59	59	60	60	60
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration	65	60	65	64	66	66	64	59	66	68	64	65	65
Disaster preparedness and response	61	63	61	62	62	62	62	67	58	63	65	59	62
Services provided to veterans	62	62	52	58	60	58	59	63	57	57	56	61	59
Services provided to older adults	65	60	55	57	58	57	58	64	57	55	59	55	58
Assessment process/property tax system	50	44	40	42	47	54	41	50	41	42	42	44	43

Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County. Average rating (0=poor, 100=excellent)	Length of residency			Respondent housing unit type		Rent or own		Age			Gender		Overall
	5 years or less	6 to 10 years	More than 10 years	Detached	Attached	Rent	Own	18-34	35-54	55+	Female	Male	
Overall quality of services provided by Dakota County	60	60	62	63	61	61	62	61	62	62	62	62	62

APPENDIX F: BENCHMARK COMPARISONS

Understanding the Benchmark Comparisons

Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. When surveys of service satisfaction turn up “good” resident evaluations, it is necessary to know how others rate their services to understand if “good” is good enough or if most other communities are “excellent.” Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its sheriff services rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair, because street maintenance always gets lower ratings than do sheriff services. More illuminating is how residents’ ratings of sheriff services compare to opinions about sheriff services in other communities and to resident ratings over time.

A sheriff department that provides the fastest and most efficient service – one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes, and keeps the crime rate low – still has a problem to fix if the residents in the county rate sheriff services lower than ratings given by residents in other cities with objectively “worse” departments.

Benchmark data can help that sheriff department – or any County department – to understand how well residents think it is doing. Without the comparative data, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. Residents’ opinions should be used in conjunction with other sources of data about budget, population demographics, personnel, and politics to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

Comparison Data

NRC’s database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in resident surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The comparison evaluations are from the most recent survey completed in each jurisdiction; most communities conduct surveys every year or in alternating years. NRC adds the latest results quickly when surveys are completed, keeping the benchmark data fresh and relevant.

NRC has designed a method for quantitatively integrating the results of surveys that we have conducted with those that others have conducted. These integration methods have been described thoroughly in *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, and in NRC’s first book on conducting and using citizen surveys, *Citizen Surveys: how to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, published by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). Scholars who specialize in the analysis of resident surveys regularly have relied on NRC’s work.⁴⁵ The method described in those publications is refined regularly and statistically tested on a growing number of resident surveys in NRC’s proprietary databases.

Jurisdictions in NRC’s benchmark database are distributed geographically across the country and range from small to large in population size. Comparisons may be made to all jurisdictions in the database or to a subset of jurisdictions (such as only other counties), as in this report. Despite the differences in jurisdiction characteristics, all are in the business of providing local government services to residents. Though individual jurisdiction circumstances, resources, and practices vary, the objective in every community is to provide services that are so timely, tailored, and effective that residents conclude the

⁴ Kelly, J. & Swindell, D. (2002). Service quality variation across urban space: First steps towards a model of citizen satisfaction, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24, 271-288.

⁵ Van Ryzin, G., Muzzio, D., Immerwahr, S., Gulick, L. & Martinez, E. (2004). Drivers and consequences of citizen satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City, *Public Administration Review*, 64, 331-341.

services are of the highest quality. High ratings in any jurisdiction, like SAT scores in any teen household, bring pride, and a sense of accomplishment.

Dakota County chose to have comparisons made to all counties in the NRC database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions) has been provided when a similar question on the Dakota County survey was included in NRC’s database and there were at least five jurisdictions for which the question was asked.

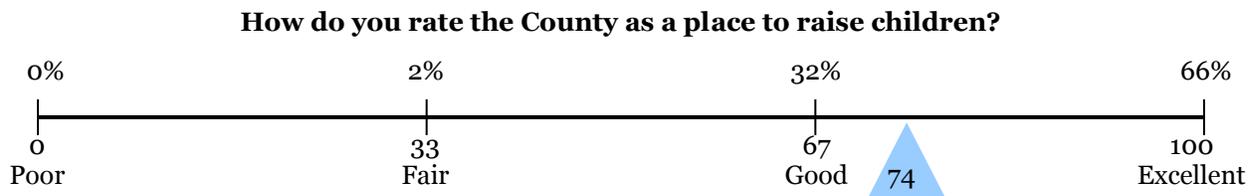
Putting Evaluations onto the 100-point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a four-point scale with 1 representing the best rating and 4 the worst, the benchmarks are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus two points based on all respondents.

The 100-point scale is not a percent. It is a conversion of responses to an average rating. Each response option is assigned a value that is used in calculating the average score. For example, “excellent”=100, “good”=67, “fair”=33 and “poor”=0. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the average rating would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor,” the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If half the respondents gave a score of “excellent” and half gave a score of “poor,” the average would be in the middle of the scale (like the center post of a teeter totter) between “fair” and “good.” An example of how to convert survey frequencies into an average rating appears below.

Example of Converting Responses to the 100-point Scale

How do you rate the County as a place to raise children?						
Response option	Total with “don’t know”	Step 1: Remove the percent of “don’t know” responses	Total without “don’t know”	Step 2: Assign scale values	Step 3: Multiply the percent by the scale value	Step 4: Sum to calculate the average rating
Excellent	32%	= $32 \div (100-11) =$	36%	100	= $36\% \times 100 =$	36
Good	46%	= $46 \div (100-11) =$	52%	67	= $52\% \times 67 =$	35
Fair	9%	= $9 \div (100-11) =$	10%	33	= $10\% \times 33 =$	3
Poor	2%	= $2 \div (100-11) =$	2%	0	= $2\% \times 0 =$	0
Don’t know	11%		--			
Total	100%		100%			74



Interpreting the Results

Average ratings are compared when similar questions are included in NRC's database, and there are at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. Where comparisons are available, three numbers are provided in the table. The first column is Dakota County's rating on the 100-point scale. The second column is the rank assigned to the County's rating among jurisdictions where a similar question was asked. The third column is the number of jurisdictions that asked a similar question. The fourth column shows the benchmark, followed by a comparison of Dakota County's average rating (column one) to this benchmark.

Where comparisons for quality ratings were available, the Dakota County's results were generally noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar" to the benchmark. For some questions – those related to resident behavior, circumstance or to a local problem – the comparison to the benchmark is designated as "more," "similar" or "less" (for example, the percent of residents having contacted the County in the last 12 months.) In instances where ratings are considerably higher or lower than the benchmark, these ratings have been further demarcated by the attribute of "much," (for example, "much less" or "much above"). These labels come from a statistical comparison of Dakota County's rating to the benchmark where a rating is considered "similar" if it is within the margin of error; "above," "below," "more" or "less" if the difference between the County's rating and the benchmark is greater than but no more than twice the margin of error; and "much above," "much below," "much more" or "much less" if the difference between Dakota County's rating and the benchmark is more than twice the margin of error.

Benchmarks for county jurisdictions are shown in this report; municipalities or "other" types of jurisdictions (e.g. districts) were not included.

National County Benchmark Comparisons

Table 114: Overall Community Quality Benchmark

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
How would you rate your overall quality of life in Dakota County?	76	8	36	Much above

Table 115: Community Characteristics Benchmarks

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
Dakota County as a place to live	77	7	30	Much above
Dakota County as a place to retire	60	12	28	Above
Sense of community	57	7	21	Above
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	58	6	22	Much above
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	68	7	24	Much above
Employment opportunities	50	3	25	Much above
Educational opportunities	63	8	21	Much above
Economic health of Dakota County	60	1	16	Much above
Availability of quality affordable housing	53	2	25	Much above
Ease of travel by public transit	45	6	18	Much above
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County	66	11	25	Much above

Table 116: Community Safety Benchmarks

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70	7	25	Much above
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	80	6	25	Much above
While in your neighborhood	80	4	6	Much above
While using Dakota County parks and trails	78	2	7	Much above

Table 117: County Services Benchmarks

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
County libraries	84	1	26	Much above
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby)	81	2	19	Much above
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail	78	2	6	Much above
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42)	63	1	6	Much above
Snow and ice removal on County roads	65	2	22	Much above
Sheriff services	77	1	9	Much above
Financial assistance for low-income families	57	2	24	Much above
Services at the Recycling Zone	70	8	24	Much above
Public transportation/transit services	51	2	5	Similar
Self-service options on the County Web site	60	6	9	Similar
Disaster preparedness and response	62	7	27	Much above
Services provided to older adults	58	8	28	Above

Table 118: Overall Quality of County Services Benchmark

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of services provided by Dakota County	62	14	33	Above

Table 119: Contact with County Office Benchmark

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
Have you visited, telephoned, or emailed any Dakota County government office within the last 12 months?	39	21	24	Much less

Table 120: Perceptions of County Employees (Among Those Who Had Contact) Benchmarks

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
Knowledgeable	73	8	29	Above
Responsive	70	7	27	Above
Courteous	71	8	13	Similar
Overall impression	70	7	28	Above

Table 121: Public Trust Benchmarks

	Dakota County average rating	Rank	Number of Jurisdictions for Comparison	Comparison to benchmark
The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents	61	3	7	Much above
The job Dakota County government does of listening to residents	54	1	16	Much above
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County	54	5	32	Much above
The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars	52	1	7	Much above

APPENDIX G: LIST OF COUNTIES IN THE BENCHMARK COMPARISONS

Listed below are the jurisdictions included in the national county benchmark comparisons provided for Dakota County followed by its 2010 population according to the U.S. Census.

Adams County, CO	441,603	Lane County, OR	351,715
Albemarle County, VA	98,970	Larimer County, CO	299,630
Arapahoe County, CO	572,003	Lee County, FL	618,754
Arlington County, VA	207,627	Los Alamos County, NM	17,950
Baltimore County, MD	805,029	Maricopa County, AZ	3,817,117
Beltrami County, MN	44,442	Marin County, CA.....	252,409
Botetourt County, VA	33,148	Mecklenburg County, NC.....	919,628
Boulder County, CO.....	294,567	Montgomery County, MD.....	971,777
Brevard County, FL	543,376	Montgomery County, VA	94,392
Cabarrus County, NC.....	178,011	Olmsted County, MN	144,248
Carver County, MN.....	91,042	Otsego County, MI	24,164
Charlotte County, FL	159,978	Palm Beach County, FL.....	1,320,134
Chesterfield County, VA	316,236	Pasco County, FL.....	464,697
Dakota County, MN.....	398,552	Peoria County, IL	186,494
Dorchester County, MD	32,618	Pinal County, AZ	375,770
Douglas County, CO	285,465	San Juan County, NM	130,044
Escambia County, FL.....	297,619	Scott County, MN	129,928
Gunnison County, CO.....	15,324	St. Louis County, MN	200,226
Hanover County, VA.....	99,863	Washington County, MN	238,136
Jackson County, MI.....	160,248	Washoe County, NV	421,407
Jefferson County, CO.....	534,543	York County, VA.....	65,464
Johnson County, KS	544,179		

APPENDIX H: FROM DATA TO ACTION

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve services or communication, and therefore also residents' opinions of local government, requires information that targets the service areas that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

One possible approach for identifying resident priorities is using Key Driver Analysis (KDA).⁶ KDA was conducted for Dakota County by examining the statistical relationships between ratings of each service asked about on the survey and ratings of the County's overall services. KDA digs deeper to identify the less obvious, but more influential, services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of County government services. The services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall service quality have been identified as key drivers. The strength of the correlation between individual key driver services and the overall quality of services suggests that improving ratings for key driver services may impact ratings of overall service quality.

Although the survey did not include a comprehensive list of all services provided by Dakota County, 10 important County services that were included on the survey were considered for the KDA. Services with approximately 50% or more respondents answering "don't know" were excluded from the analysis (see *Appendix C: Complete Set of Frequencies* for a full set of responses including "don't know").

Three of these 10 services were identified as key drivers for the County: assessment process/property tax system, services at the Recycling Zone and 911 dispatch services. The assessment process/property tax system was a new question in 2013 (so a comparison to 2011 was not available) and a benchmark comparison was not available. Ratings for 911 dispatch services were similar when compared to 2011 and a benchmark comparison was not available. Recycling Zone services increased from 2011 to 2013 and ratings were much above the national county benchmark.

Considering all performance data included in the summary table below, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are trending down or that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In Dakota County, where comparisons were available, all key driver services were similar to or above the national benchmark and ratings remained stable or increased when compared to 2011. Therefore, these are services on which the County may wish to keep a watchful eye to maintain the high evaluations of the overall quality of County services.

Table 122: Dakota County 2013 Key Driver Services

Key Driver Services	Comparison to national benchmark	Comparison to 2011 Dakota County survey
Assessment process/property tax system	NA	NA
911 dispatch services	NA	Similar
Services at the Recycling Zone	Much above	Trending up

⁶ In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called Key Driver Analysis (KDA). The key drivers that are identified from that analysis do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the predictors of their behavior. Air travelers often claim that safety is the primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis reveals that frequent flier perks or in-flight entertainment predicts their buying decisions.

APPENDIX I: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The following pages contain the 2013 survey instrument.



Dakota County Administration Center
Office of Planning and Analysis
1590 Highway 55
Hastings, MN 55033

Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Boulder, CO
Permit NO. 94

Dear Dakota County Resident,

Your household has been randomly selected to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about your community and local government.

You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for providing us with your valued opinions!

Sincerely,



Kathleen A. Gaylord
Chair, Dakota County Board of Commissioners

Dear Dakota County Resident,

Your household has been randomly selected to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about your community and local government.

You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for providing us with your valued opinions!

Sincerely,



Kathleen A. Gaylord
Chair, Dakota County Board of Commissioners

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Sincerely,



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Dear Dakota County Resident:

Dakota County Commissioners want to know what you think about your community and local government. You have been randomly selected to participate in the 2013 Dakota County Resident Survey that was mailed with this letter.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Resident Survey. Your answers will help Dakota County Commissioners and staff make decisions that affect your community. We hope you find the questions interesting, and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

To get a scientifically reliable sample of Dakota County residents, please have the adult (age 18 or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday complete this survey. The adult's year of birth does not matter.

After the appropriate member of the household spends a few minutes answering all the questions, please return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Your household has been selected at random to participate in the survey. Your responses will remain completely anonymous.**

If you have questions about this survey, please call Dakota County's survey manager, Jane Vanderpoel, at 651-438-4423.

Please help us make Dakota County a great place to live! Thank you for your help and participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen A. Gaylord". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kathleen A. Gaylord
Chair, Dakota County Board of Commissioners



Dear Dakota County Resident:

About one week ago we sent you the enclosed survey that asks for your opinions about Dakota County. If you have already completed the survey and returned it, we thank you and ask you to disregard this letter. **Do not complete the survey a second time.** If you haven't had a chance to get to the survey, please complete it now. Your opinions are very important to us!

Dakota County Commissioners sincerely want to know what you think about your community and local government. You have been randomly selected to participate in the 2013 Dakota County Resident Survey that was mailed with this letter.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Resident Survey. Your answers will help Dakota County Commissioners and staff make decisions that affect your community. We hope you find the questions interesting, and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

To get a scientifically reliable sample of Dakota County residents, please have the adult (age 18 or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday complete this survey. The adult's year of birth does not matter.

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Please help us make Dakota County a great place to live! Thank you for your help and participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen A. Gaylord".

Kathleen A. Gaylord
Chair, Dakota County Board of Commissioners

Dakota County Resident Survey 2013

Please complete this questionnaire if you are the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who most recently had a birthday. The adult's year of birth does not matter. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only. Thank you.

1. How would you rate your overall quality of life in Dakota County? Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. Please rate each of the following characteristics of Dakota County.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Dakota County as a place to live	1	2	3	4	5
Dakota County as a place to retire	1	2	3	4	5
Sense of community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Openness and acceptance toward people of diverse backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational opportunities in Dakota County	1	2	3	4	5
Employment opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Educational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Economic health of Dakota County	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of quality affordable housing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of travel by public transit	1	2	3	4	5
Overall image or reputation of Dakota County.....	1	2	3	4	5

3. What one thing do you like most about living in Dakota County?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of life in general | <input type="checkbox"/> Low taxes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open space | <input type="checkbox"/> My neighborhood | <input type="checkbox"/> People |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks/lakes | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rural character | <input type="checkbox"/> Small town feel | |

4. Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a problem in Dakota County.

	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Moderate problem</u>	<u>Major problem</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Crime	1	2	3	4	5
Taxes.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic safety.....	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic congestion	1	2	3	4	5
Poverty	1	2	3	4	5
Access to affordable housing	1	2	3	4	5
Access to public transit	1	2	3	4	5

5. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel in Dakota County.

	<u>Very safe</u>	<u>Somewhat safe</u>	<u>Somewhat unsafe</u>	<u>Very unsafe</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
From property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft).....	1	2	3	4	5
From violent crimes (e.g., rape, assault, robbery).....	1	2	3	4	5
From illegal drug activity (e.g., manufacturing or selling drugs).....	1	2	3	4	5
From identity theft.....	1	2	3	4	5
From domestic violence	1	2	3	4	5
From illegal use of prescription drugs	1	2	3	4	5
From <u>drunk or impaired</u> drivers on County roads	1	2	3	4	5
From distracted drivers on County roads	1	2	3	4	5
From motor vehicle crashes on County roads	1	2	3	4	5
From being injured while biking or walking on roads in the county.....	1	2	3	4	5
While in your neighborhood.....	1	2	3	4	5
While using Dakota County parks and trails	1	2	3	4	5

6. In the past year, have you volunteered in any community organization like a church, neighborhood group, social service agency or school association?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, once or twice in the year | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, about once a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, once every other month | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, more than once a month |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No, I haven't volunteered | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

Dakota County Resident Survey 2013

7. Please rate to what degree, if at all, each of the following is a health concern in Dakota County.

	<u>Not at all a concern</u>	<u>Minor concern</u>	<u>Moderate concern</u>	<u>Major concern</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Exposure to pollution in the water.....	1	2	3	4	5
Tobacco use.....	1	2	3	4	5
Suicide.....	1	2	3	4	5
Underage alcohol use.....	1	2	3	4	5
Alcohol abuse among adults.....	1	2	3	4	5
Illegal drug use.....	1	2	3	4	5
Bullying.....	1	2	3	4	5
The health and support of older adults.....	1	2	3	4	5
The health and support of persons with disabilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of parenting skills of parents of children ages 0-17.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overweight adults and children.....	1	2	3	4	5
Abuse and neglect of children.....	1	2	3	4	5
Abuse and neglect of older adults.....	1	2	3	4	5
Spread of infectious diseases.....	1	2	3	4	5

8. What do you feel is the most serious issue facing Dakota County at this time?

9. Do you think that a year from now you and your household will be better off financially, or worse off, or just about the same as now?

- Much better
 Somewhat better
 About the same
 Somewhat worse
 Much worse
 Don't know

10. Please rate each of the following services provided by Dakota County.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
County libraries.....	1	2	3	4	5
County parks and recreation (e.g., Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park, Lake Byllesby).....	1	2	3	4	5
Trail and bikeway system like Big Rivers Trail.....	1	2	3	4	5
Condition of County roads (e.g., Cliff or Pilot Knob Roads, Kenwood Trail, Wentworth Ave., or County Road 42).....	1	2	3	4	5
Snow and ice removal on County roads.....	1	2	3	4	5
911 dispatch services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Sheriff services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Employment support services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Financial assistance for low-income families.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services at the Recycling Zone.....	1	2	3	4	5
Public transportation/transit services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Self-service options on the County Web site.....	1	2	3	4	5
Records, vital statistics, licensing, and vehicle registration.....	1	2	3	4	5
Disaster preparedness and response.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services provided to veterans.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services provided to older adults.....	1	2	3	4	5
Assessment process/property tax system.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of services provided by Dakota County.....	1	2	3	4	5

11. Have you visited, telephoned, or emailed any Dakota County government office within the last 12 months?

- Yes → Go to question 10
 No → Skip to question 11

12. What was your impression of the employee(s) of Dakota County in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Knowledgeable.....	1	2	3	4	5
Responsive.....	1	2	3	4	5
Courteous.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall impression.....	1	2	3	4	5

Dakota County Resident Survey 2013

13. Please rate these aspects of accessing Dakota County services.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Convenience of County facilities' locations	1	2	3	4	5
Online access to County services	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of paying for County services online	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of language resources for access to services (e.g., interpreters or multi-language materials or signage).....	1	2	3	4	5

14. Please rate the following categories of Dakota County government performance.

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
The job Dakota County government does of providing information to residents...	1	2	3	4	5
The job Dakota County government does of listening to residents.....	1	2	3	4	5
The value of services for the taxes paid to Dakota County.....	1	2	3	4	5
The job Dakota County government does at managing tax dollars	1	2	3	4	5
The value of Dakota County services to the quality of life in my neighborhood.....	1	2	3	4	5
Generally acting in the best interest of the community	1	2	3	4	5
Overall confidence in Dakota County government	1	2	3	4	5

15. To what extent do you approve or disapprove of the job the Dakota County Board is doing?

- Strongly approve
 Somewhat approve
 Somewhat disapprove
 Strongly disapprove
 Don't know

16. Please rate the extent to which you use each of the following as sources of information about Dakota County government, if at all.

	<u>Not a source</u>	<u>Minor source</u>	<u>Major source</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
County Board meetings on local cable television	1	2	3	4
Daily newspapers	1	2	3	4
Dakota County Web site (www.dakotacounty.us).....	1	2	3	4
Weekly community newspapers.....	1	2	3	4
Community meetings.....	1	2	3	4
Dakota County Newsletter	1	2	3	4
Phone calls to Dakota County	1	2	3	4
Other online news sources.....	1	2	3	4
Television news broadcasts	1	2	3	4

17. What information would be useful to you on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply).

- Recycling information
- Information about County services
- Property sales/information
- Road/bridge construction projects
- Contacting County departments or staff
- County budget information
- Information about services for older adults
- Information about the County Jail or its inmates
- Other (please specify) _____

18. What else would be useful for you to do on Dakota County's Web site? (Please check all that apply).

- Pay fees, fines, or property taxes
- Reserve park facilities
- Online recording of vital records (birth, death, marriage)
- Renew or apply for a license, permit, or other application
- Apply for a library card and/or use other library resources
- Apply for public financial assistance
- Other (please specify) _____

19. To what extent would you support or oppose an increase in your County property tax if it were needed to maintain County services at their current levels?

- Strongly support
 Somewhat support
 Somewhat oppose
 Strongly oppose
 Don't know

20. To what extent do you support or oppose the County investing in projects that make transit easier and more convenient to use?

- Strongly support
 Somewhat support
 Somewhat oppose
 Strongly oppose
 Don't know

Dakota County Resident Survey 2013

21. How important, if at all, is it to provide the following library programs and services?

	<u>Essential</u>	Very <u>important</u>	Somewhat <u>important</u>	Not at all <u>important</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
Popular titles/current library materials.....	I	2	3	4	5
Early literacy/reading skills promotion and resources	I	2	3	4	5
Workforce readiness skills/GED programs, services and materials.....	I	2	3	4	5
Employment and career information	I	2	3	4	5
Small business/economic development resources and services.....	I	2	3	4	5
Consumer/government information.....	I	2	3	4	5
Movies, music and entertainment	I	2	3	4	5
Technology access, computer classes and training.....	I	2	3	4	5
Community activities/information	I	2	3	4	5
Local history and genealogy programs and resources	I	2	3	4	5
Health and wellness programs and resources.....	I	2	3	4	5
Author/performance arts programs.....	I	2	3	4	5
Outreach to special populations.....	I	2	3	4	5
English as a second language resources and services.....	I	2	3	4	5
World language resources (Spanish, Somali, Russian, others)	I	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify: _____).....	I	2	3	4	5

22. Since 2002, Dakota County has emphasized setting aside open spaces and parkland by dedicating small amounts of County funds in order to receive greater matching funds from non-County sources. How important, if at all, is it to continue investing County funds for these purposes:

	<u>Essential</u>	Very <u>important</u>	Somewhat <u>important</u>	Not at all <u>important</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
Protect lakes, streams, wetlands from pollution.....	I	2	3	4	5
Protect farmland from future development.....	I	2	3	4	5
Protect the highest-rated natural areas.....	I	2	3	4	5
Develop more paved regional recreational trails.....	I	2	3	4	5

23. How important, if at all, is it for each of the following activities and services to be provided in Dakota County Parks, such as Lebanon Hills, Thompson County Park or Spring Lake Park?

	<u>Essential</u>	Very <u>important</u>	Somewhat <u>important</u>	Not at all <u>important</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
Programs for learning about nature and outdoor recreation.....	I	2	3	4	5
Gathering spaces in picnic grounds and shelters	I	2	3	4	5
Trail networks for hiking, biking or skiing	I	2	3	4	5
Renting park buildings and grounds (e.g. for weddings, graduations).....	I	2	3	4	5
Events in parks such as candle-light skiing, Earth Day	I	2	3	4	5
Food concessions	I	2	3	4	5
Protecting/restoring woods, prairies, lakes, ponds and wetlands	I	2	3	4	5
Developing more recreational facilities in County parks	I	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify) _____	I	2	3	4	5

24. How familiar are you, if at all, with the services and activities available to older adults in your community?

- Very familiar Somewhat familiar Not at all familiar

25. If financial circumstances or physical health caused you to be unable to remain in your current home as you grow older, how acceptable, if at all, are each of the following housing options?

	Very <u>acceptable</u>	Somewhat <u>acceptable</u>	Not at all <u>acceptable</u>	Not <u>applicable</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
Move to a condo, apartment or townhouse	I	2	3	4	5
Live with family members away from my current community	I	2	3	4	5
Live in an assisted-living residence in my community	I	2	3	4	5
Live in a nursing home	I	2	3	4	5
Move to a seniors-only facility in my community	I	2	3	4	5
Other	I	2	3	4	5

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26. Have you or any member of your household used the services at the Recycling Zone facility in the last 12 months?

- Yes → Skip to question D1 No → Go to question 27

27. Which one of the following potential reasons best describes why your household has not used the Recycling Zone facility in the last 12 months?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unfamiliar with Recycling Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> Too far from my home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inconvenient days/hours/location | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not have anything to drop off |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know what items can be brought there | <input type="checkbox"/> Used a different facility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Did not want to pay fees at Recycling Zone | <input type="checkbox"/> Other/none of these |

Our last questions are about you and your household. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

D1. How long have you lived in Dakota County?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 2 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 to 15 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 to 5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 16 to 20 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 to 10 years | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 20 years |

D2. Which of the following best describes you?

- Employed full-time → Skip to D4
 Employed part-time → Skip to D4
 Homemaker → Skip to D5
 Retired → Skip to D5
 Student → Skip to D5
 Unemployed, looking for work → Go to D3

D3. Which of these describes the type of job-seeker you are?

(Please check all that apply.)

- Head of household
 Post-retirement older adult
 Person with disabilities
 Young adult (post-high school up to age 30)
 Military veteran of any age
 Member of a diverse community

D4. In what city do you primarily work?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apple Valley | <input type="checkbox"/> Lakeville |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bloomington | <input type="checkbox"/> Mendota Heights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burnsville | <input type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eagan | <input type="checkbox"/> Richfield |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edina | <input type="checkbox"/> Rosemount |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmington | <input type="checkbox"/> Savage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hastings | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Paul |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inver Grove Heights | <input type="checkbox"/> West St. Paul |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

D5. Which best describes the building you live in?

- One family house detached from any other houses
 House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)
 Building with two or more apartments or condos
 Manufactured or mobile home
 Other

D6. Is this house, apartment or mobile home...

- Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment?
 Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?

Please respond to both questions D7 and D8:

D7. Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?

- No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino
 Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino

D8. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be.)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
 Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander
 Black or African American
 White
 Other

D9. Which category contains your age?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 + |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 | |

D10. What is your gender?

- Female Male

D11. How many of each of the following, including yourself, live in your household?

Children age 17 years and under _____
 Adults under age 65 years _____
 Adults age 65 years and over _____

D12. Please indicate your household's annual income:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$15,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000-\$99,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000-\$24,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000-\$149,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000-\$34,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000-\$199,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$35,000-\$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000-\$74,999 | |

Thank you very much! Please return the completed survey in the postage-paid envelope to:
 National Research Center, Inc., PO Box 549, Belle Mead, NJ 08502