

The City of Sioux Falls,  
South Dakota

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Report of Geographic Subgroup  
Comparisons  
2008



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# SURVEY BACKGROUND

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## About The National Citizen Survey™

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The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The National Citizen Survey™ was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The National Citizen Survey™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The National Citizen Survey™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The National Citizen Survey™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Sioux Falls staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries we used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Sioux Falls staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options for The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

One of the add-on options that Sioux Falls chose was to have crosstabulations of evaluative questions 1-15 by geographic areas, as defined by zip code in question 16c.

# UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

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## “Don’t Know” Responses

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On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A of the Report of Results. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in this report. In other words, the tables display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

## Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale

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Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 1 representing the best rating and 4 the worst, 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,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale.

## Understanding the Tables

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In this report, comparisons between geographic subgroups are shown. For most of the questions, we have shown only one number for each question. Usually this number is the rating on a 100-point scale. Sometimes this scale was not appropriate to use. In these cases we have summarized responses to show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who reported a crime, or the percent of respondents who felt the rate of growth was “about right.” For a few questions, we have shown the full set of responses: these include the question about respondents’ perceptions about the economy.

Anova and chi square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions by geographic subgroups. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between subgroups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are “real.” Where differences were statistically significant, they are marked in gray.

The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus 3 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (1,011 completed surveys). For each District (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5), the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 7% since sample sizes were approximately 185 for District 1, 259 for District 2, 195 for District 3, 190 for District 4, and 186 for District 5.

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**Responses by District**

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	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
District 1	185	18%
District 2	259	26%
District 3	195	19%
District 4	190	19%
District 5	186	18%

# COMPARISONS

## Quality of Life Ratings

Please circle the number that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
How do you rate Sioux Falls as a place to live?	75	79	72	76	72
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	73	81	67	65	63
How do you rate Sioux Falls as a place to raise children?	74	77	70	72	69
How do you rate Sioux Falls as a place to work?	65	65	58	61	57
How do you rate Sioux Falls as a place to retire?	53	57	54	57	56
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Sioux Falls?	68	72	68	68	65
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)					

Characteristics of the Community					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Sioux Falls as a whole:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Sense of community	60	59	54	57	57
Openness and acceptance	54	50	50	53	49
Overall appearance of Sioux Falls	66	69	63	67	61
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	54	53	52	56	56
Shopping opportunities	70	68	71	67	67
Recreational opportunities	57	58	56	62	59
Job opportunities	53	53	54	52	51
Access to affordable quality housing	53	51	50	49	44
Access to affordable quality child care	50	47	46	41	42
Access to affordable quality health care	60	64	53	55	54
Ease of car travel in Sioux Falls	53	61	56	59	54
Ease of bus travel in Sioux Falls	51	40	49	52	42
Ease of bicycle travel in Sioux Falls	60	61	59	63	55
Ease of walking in Sioux Falls	61	65	62	65	56
Educational opportunities	71	68	71	67	66
Overall image/reputation of Sioux Falls	71	69	68	69	63
Overall quality of new development in Sioux Falls	69	68	68	66	62
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)					

**Ratings of Growth**

Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Sioux Falls over the past 2 years:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Population growth	48%	54%	50%	44%	42%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.)	54%	61%	51%	59%	62%
Jobs growth	48%	48%	48%	40%	45%
Proportion of respondents rating as "About right"					

**Ratings of Potential Problems in Sioux Falls**

To what degree, if at all, are the following in Sioux Falls:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Crime	2%	4%	9%	9%	5%
Drugs	21%	19%	22%	26%	20%
Too much growth	8%	8%	13%	13%	11%
Lack of growth	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%
Graffiti	1%	1%	4%	2%	2%
Noise	2%	3%	6%	2%	5%
Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles	5%	4%	6%	8%	6%
Taxes	10%	12%	14%	14%	18%
Traffic congestion	22%	17%	24%	22%	20%
Unsupervised youth	5%	8%	7%	10%	14%
Homelessness	10%	12%	12%	17%	16%
Weeds	2%	3%	4%	5%	5%
Unwanted local businesses	4%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Percentage of Respondents Rating as a "Major Problem"					

**Ratings of Safety from Various Problems**

Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Sioux Falls:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Violent crime	72	76	71	70	68
Property crimes	63	67	61	61	60
Fire	78	81	77	77	75
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Very safe, 0=Very unsafe)					

**Ratings of Feelings of Safety in Various Areas**

Please rate how safe you feel:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
In your neighborhood during the day	98%	97%	94%	91%	90%
In your neighborhood after dark	81%	90%	77%	73%	69%
In Sioux Falls' downtown area during the day	85%	89%	87%	84%	83%
In Sioux Falls' downtown area after dark	24%	46%	41%	38%	36%
In Sioux Falls' parks during the day	86%	89%	87%	88%	84%
In Sioux Falls' parks after dark	26%	36%	33%	29%	30%
Percent of Respondents Rating "Very" or "Somewhat safe"					

**Crime Victimization and Reporting**

	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	11%	8%	16%	7%	15%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	86%	78%	65%	61%	71%
Percent of respondents whose households were victims of crime, and who reported the crime					

**Use of Community Amenities**

In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities?	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Used Sioux Falls public libraries or their services	71%	77%	68%	77%	77%
Used Sioux Falls city parks and recreation community centers	85%	92%	81%	90%	84%
Participated in a Sioux Falls city parks and recreation program or activity	52%	52%	47%	46%	49%
Visited a City park	92%	95%	89%	91%	91%
Ridden a local bus within Sioux Falls	8%	9%	14%	18%	22%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	22%	30%	13%	10%	19%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	51%	66%	54%	57%	61%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	92%	94%	90%	90%	97%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Sioux Falls	57%	68%	55%	44%	58%
Used the Internet for anything	85%	93%	91%	87%	83%
Used the Internet to conduct business with Sioux Falls	56%	67%	53%	52%	43%
Purchased an item over the Internet	75%	81%	68%	63%	60%
Proportion of respondents engaging in activity at least once in last 12 months					

Quality of Service Ratings					
How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Police services	68	72	65	64	63
Fire services	80	81	78	81	75
Ambulance/emergency medical services	77	74	73	76	71
Crime prevention	60	63	60	56	56
Fire prevention and education	69	70	68	66	66
Traffic enforcement	52	58	56	55	56
Garbage collection	68	72	67	70	67
Recycling	57	62	57	60	53
Street repair	34	32	32	31	31
Street cleaning	53	51	52	51	49
Street lighting	58	58	56	57	52
Snow removal	54	58	55	54	51
Sidewalk maintenance	52	53	53	53	47
Traffic signal timing	40	45	44	46	44
Amount of public parking	42	44	46	44	46
Bus/transit services	56	44	55	57	52
Storm drainage	50	49	48	50	44
Drinking water	64	69	61	64	62
Sewer services	64	67	64	64	59
City parks	74	78	76	74	75
Recreation programs or classes	66	69	68	68	70
Range/variety of city parks and recreation programs and classes	65	67	68	64	66

Quality of Service Ratings					
How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Parks and recreation centers/facilities	67	72	68	67	70
Accessibility of parks	71	76	72	69	73
Accessibility of parks and recreation centers/facilities	70	74	72	69	70
Appearance/maintenance of parks	72	78	72	71	74
Appearance of parks and recreation centers/facilities	69	73	69	68	71
Land use, planning and zoning	54	51	53	52	49
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	47	49	49	51	44
Animal control	59	59	62	64	54
Economic development	60	64	61	57	56
Health services	70	73	69	63	61
Services to seniors	62	66	64	57	57
Services to youth	54	55	51	48	48
Services to low-income people	48	47	51	43	40
Public library services	72	73	71	75	67
Variety of library materials	68	71	68	75	66
Public information services	62	63	61	66	55
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)					

**Ratings of Various Levels of Government**

Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by...	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
The City of Sioux Falls	66	66	63	60	61
The Federal Government	49	46	44	43	45
The State Government	55	50	47	48	52
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)					

**Proportion of Population Having Contact with City Employees**

	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Sioux Falls within the last 12 months?	43%	58%	52%	50%	60%
Percent of respondents who reported contact with a City employee in the last 12 months					

**Ratings of Contact with City Employees**

What was your impression of employees of the City of Sioux Falls in your most recent contact?	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Knowledge	67	70	65	67	70
Responsiveness	57	67	62	59	68
Courtesy	64	72	64	63	70
Overall Impression	63	68	63	62	67
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)					

**Ratings of Public Trust**

Please rate the following statements:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
I receive good value for the City of Sioux Falls taxes I pay	65	67	64	59	63
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Sioux Falls is taking	69	69	67	69	63
The City of Sioux Falls government welcomes citizen involvement	65	63	64	63	62
The City of Sioux Falls government listens to citizens	54	56	53	51	54
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Strongly agree, 0=Strongly disagree)					

**Perceptions of the Economy**

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Very positive	4%	1%	3%	4%	2%
Somewhat positive	15%	14%	18%	17%	16%
Neutral	38%	46%	39%	39%	38%
Somewhat negative	38%	31%	32%	31%	33%
Very negative	5%	8%	8%	9%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Policy Question 1**

Please rate the quality of the City's efforts in addressing each of the following:	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Blighted areas	43%	47%	39%	37%	41%
Promoting redevelopment	52%	58%	50%	42%	54%
Percent of Respondents Rating "Good" or "Excellent"					

**Policy Question 2**

	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
Please rate how well the City is managing growth	61%	64%	58%	58%	59%
Percent of Respondents Rating "Good" or "Excellent"					

**Policy Question 3**

	District				
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
The City is considering a proposal to build a new "Coliseum" that will be an events center for football, concerts and other events and replace the Howard Wood Stadium at that site. The proposal assumes that a donor would fund up to 50% of the costs for the project and the City would fund the remainder. To what extent do you support or oppose this proposal?	60%	67%	63%	63%	57%
Percent of Respondents Rating "Somewhat" or "Strongly support"					