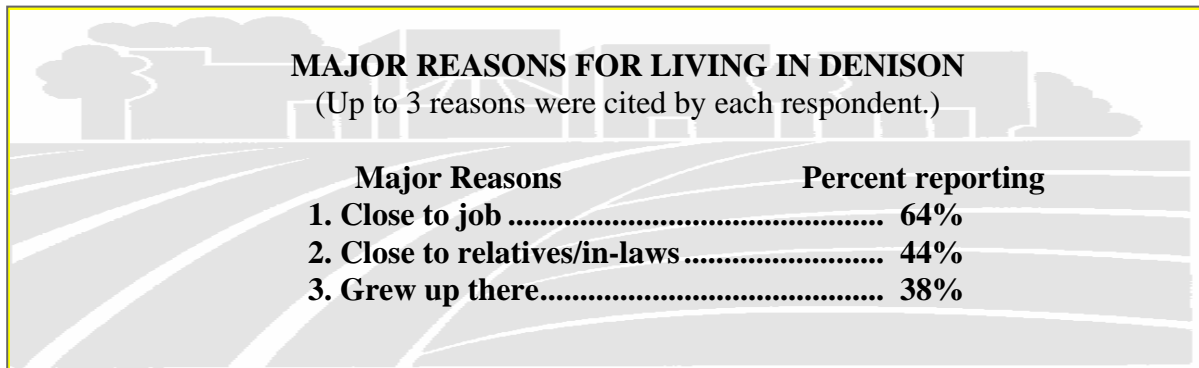


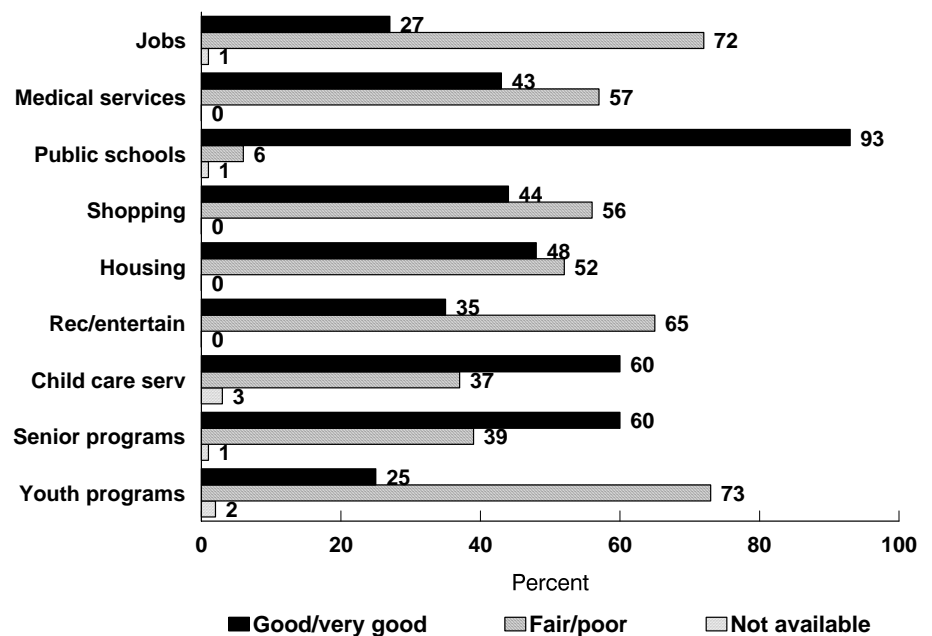
## RESIDENTS OF DENISON SPEAK OUT

During July 1994, you were one of 15,000 households asked to participate in a statewide survey. The purpose of this survey was to identify the problems and opportunities facing Iowa's rural communities. The households asked to take part in the study were randomly selected from telephone directories of 100 Iowa communities (150 households per directory). Selection of communities was also random where one community with 500-10,000 residents was selected from each of Iowa's 99 counties. (Because of its geographic size, two communities were included for Pottawattamie County, one from West and another from East Pottawattamie.) Of the 15,000 questionnaires mailed out, 10,798 (or 72%) were completed and returned. Below are highlights of the results as reported by Denison's 102 survey participants.



### RATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN DENISON

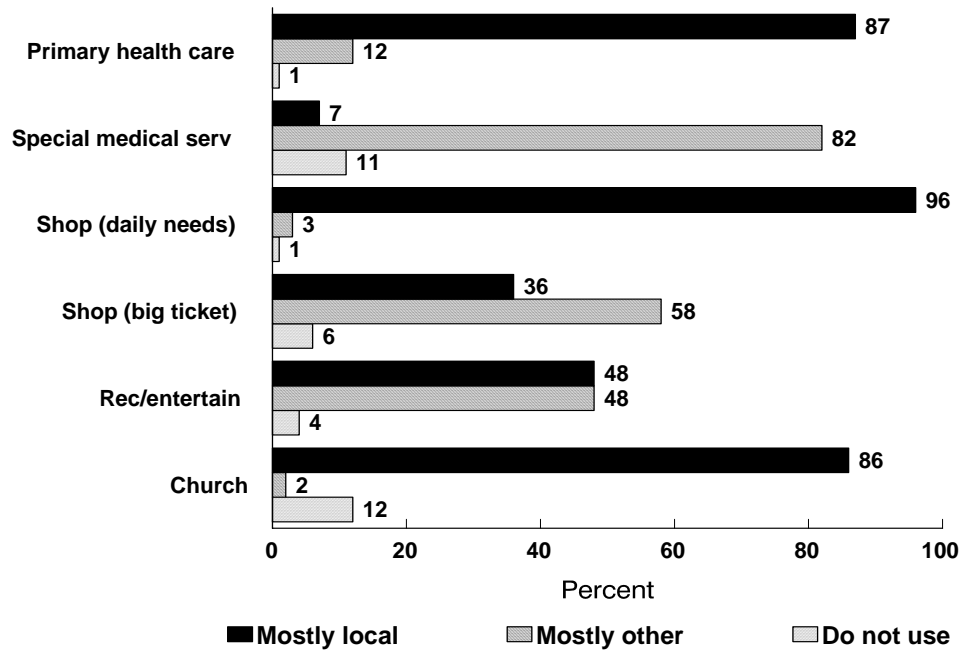
Nine local services and facilities were listed on the questionnaire along with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," "poor," or "not available." Of the 102 respondents from Denison, half or more gave public schools, child care services, and senior citizen programs a rating of either good or very good. But jobs, medical services, shopping, housing, recreation/



entertainment, and youth programs were rated no better than fair by at least half of the people. All services were indicated as being available by at least half of the respondents in Denison.

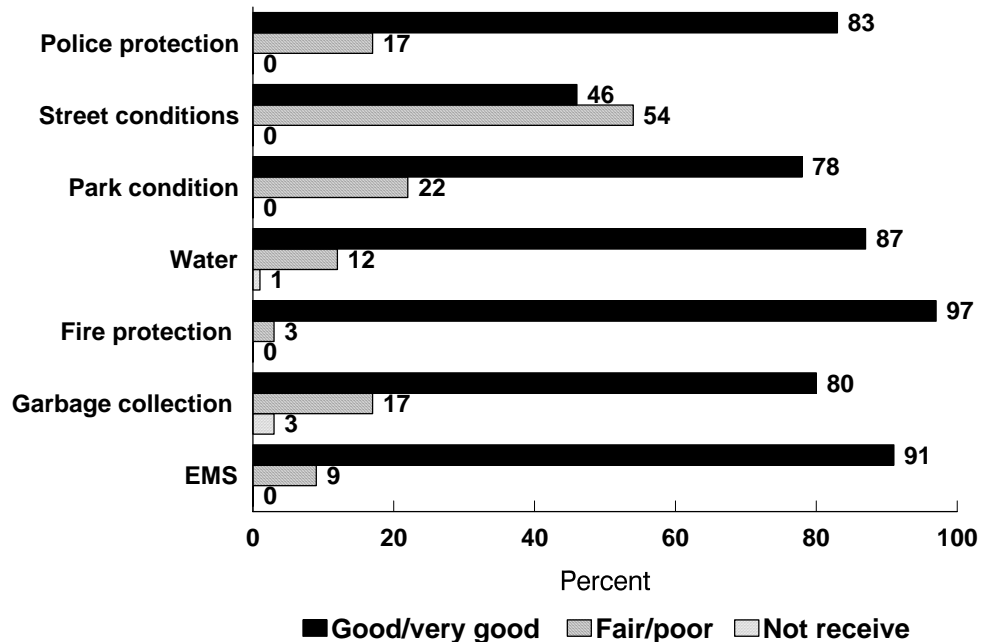
## LOCAL PURCHASING PATTERNS

For a variety of reasons, many residents of Iowa's smaller towns rely on neighboring cities for services. Based on returned questionnaires, Denison residents do not follow this pattern. At least three-fourths of the people reported leaving Denison for specialized medical care. Primary health care, shopping for daily needs, and church were the services where at least half of the people reported remaining in Denison.



## RATING GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Seven services normally provided through local governments were included with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," or "poor." Fire protection was rated highest with 97 percent giving it a positive (very good or good) rating. Over half of the individuals also rated police protection, condition of parks, water, garbage collection, and emergency response

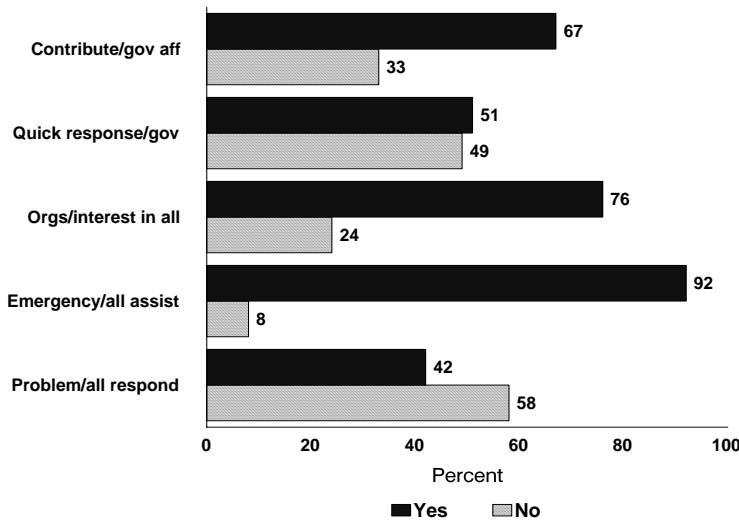
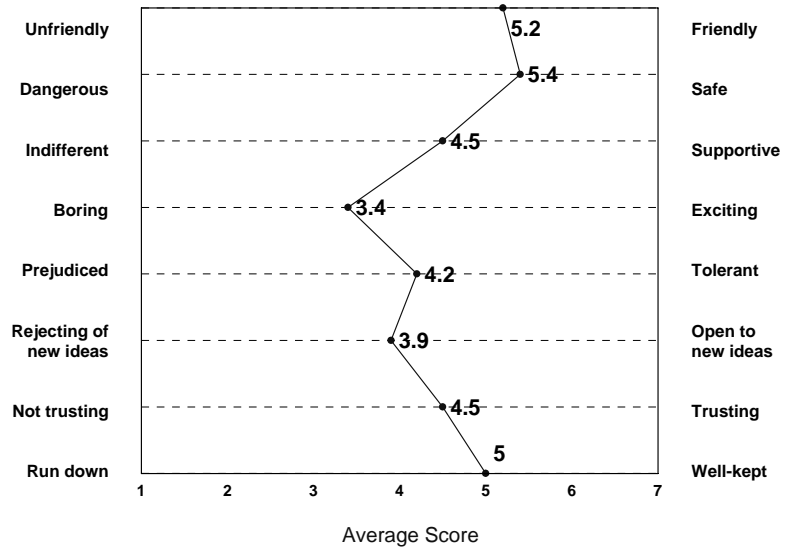


service (EMS) positively, while street conditions received a lower rating (fair or poor) by a majority of the respondents.

## FRIENDLINESS AND EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In spite of the frequently publicized economic problems recently experienced by many of Iowa's smaller communities, reference often is made of their favorable social climates. However, no information to date has been available to determine the extent to which Iowa's rural communities do in fact possess favorable social environments. Accordingly, questions were included in the survey asking residents to evaluate various social attributes of their communities.

Of the eight attributes evaluated on a 7-point scale, Denison residents assigned the highest rating to the safety of Denison, followed closely by the friendliness of its residents. The lowest rating was given to the amount of excitement offered.



1=lowest 7=highest

According to survey respondents, Denison's responsiveness to personal and community problems is generally quite favorable. Most everyone agreed that in the case of an emergency all residents would help. At least three-fourths also felt that organizations are interested in what is best for all residents. If any concern was noted about how Denison responds to problems, it pertained to whether all are allowed to contribute to local

governmental affairs, how quickly a city office would respond in regards to a complaint, and that when something needs to get done the whole community gets behind it where 33 percent, 49 percent, and 58 percent of the respondents, respectively, reported dissatisfaction in these areas.

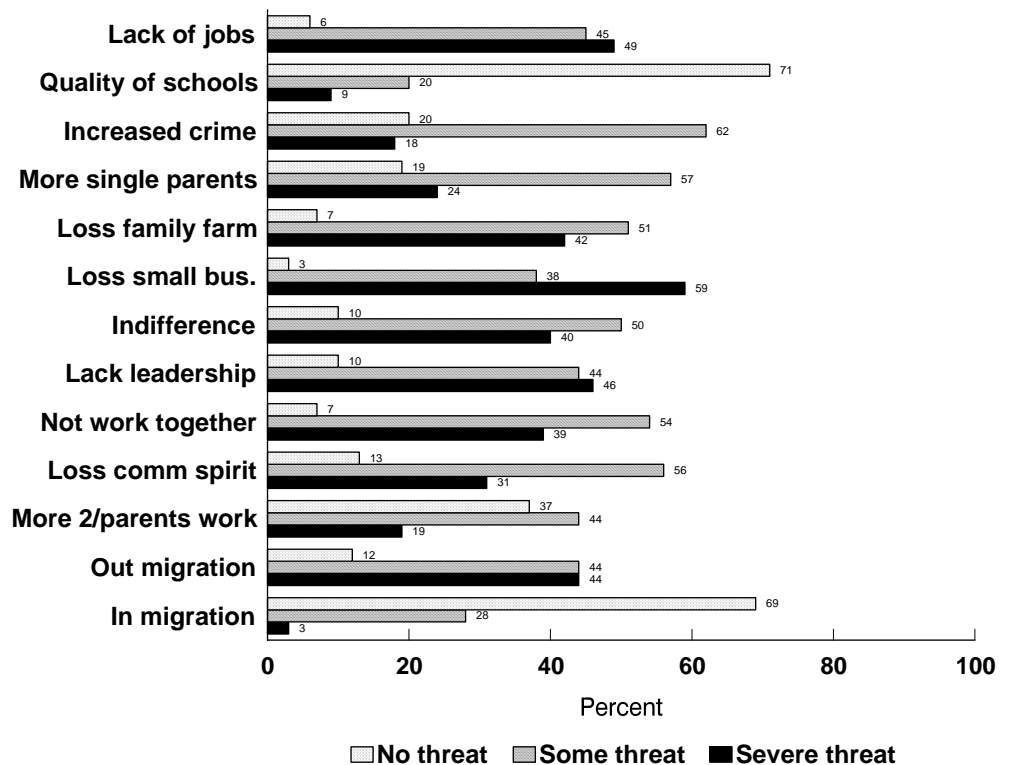
## INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN DENISON ACTIVITIES

Over three-fourths of Denison residents are interested in being informed of community activities. Yet only about 44 percent reported having participated over the past year in any community improvement project. When asked to describe their level of involvement in local community improvement activities and events, 42 percent indicated being very or somewhat active.

Ties with other local residents often are an indication of their commitment to the community. In Denison’s case, 22 percent of the respondents indicated knowing the name of half or more of the adult residents. Also, 61 percent indicated that half or more of their close personal friends live in Denison. As for their adult relatives and in-laws, 23 percent indicated that half or more of them live in Denison.

### PERCEIVED COMMUNITY THREATS

The future of Iowa’s rural communities will probably depend on whether or not important trends will continue over the course of the next few years. In the case of Denison, at least half of the residents see loss of small businesses as a condition that poses a serious threat to the future of the community. Lack of jobs, loss of family farms, indifference about the community, lack of leadership, failure of people to work together, and people moving out of the community were considered serious threats by at least one-third of Denison residents. Minimal concern was expressed with quality of schools and people moving into the community.



### OVERALL COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

How important is it for Denison residents to feel a part of this community? When asked this question, 22 percent responded that it was important for them to feel a part of the community. When asked whether they feel “at home” in Denison, 61 percent said that they did. Furthermore 23 percent indicated they would be sorry to move away from Denison. In spite of the community concerns as indicated in the previous charts, the majority of residents see Denison as their home and are reluctant to move away from the community.

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