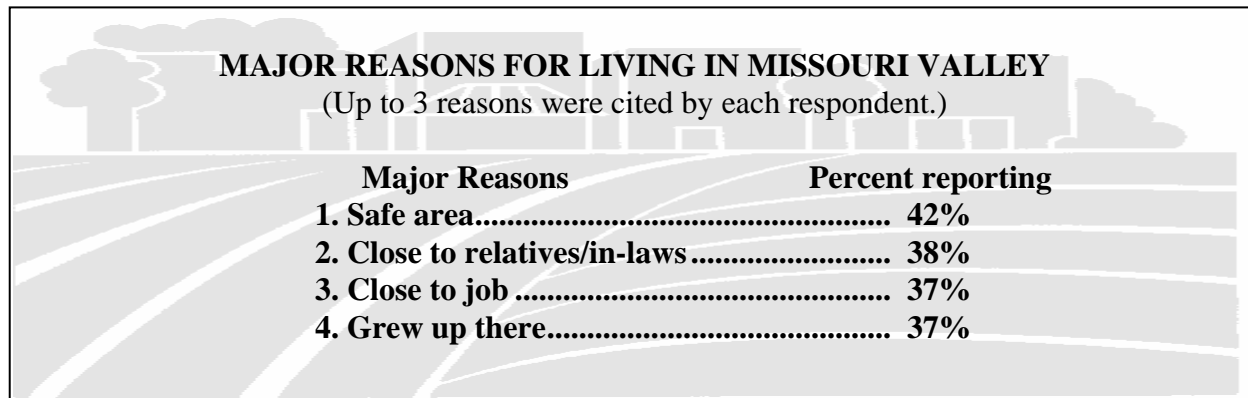


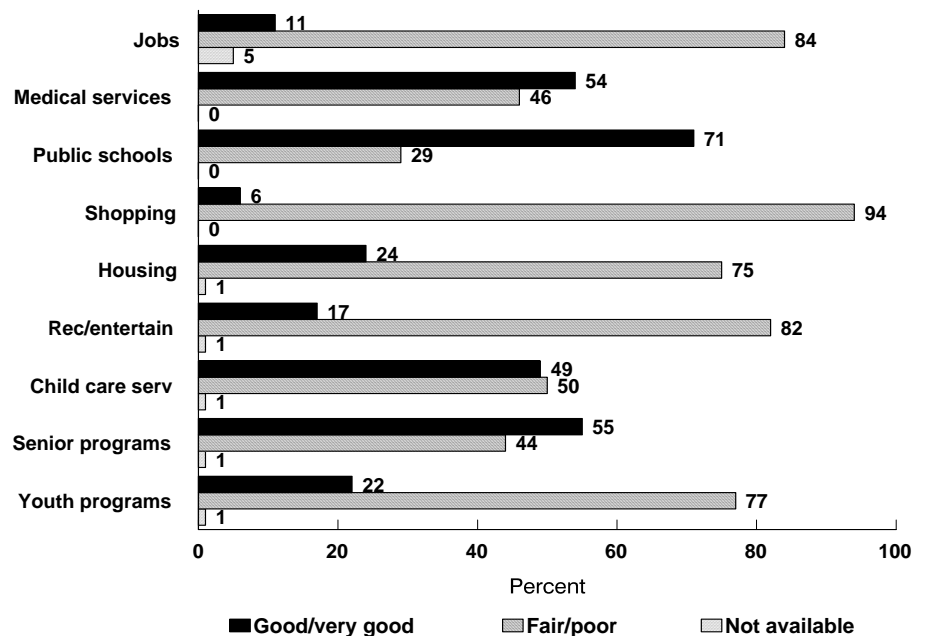
# RESIDENTS OF MISSOURI VALLEY SPEAK OUT

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 Missouri Valley's 112 survey participants.



## RATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN MISSOURI VALLEY

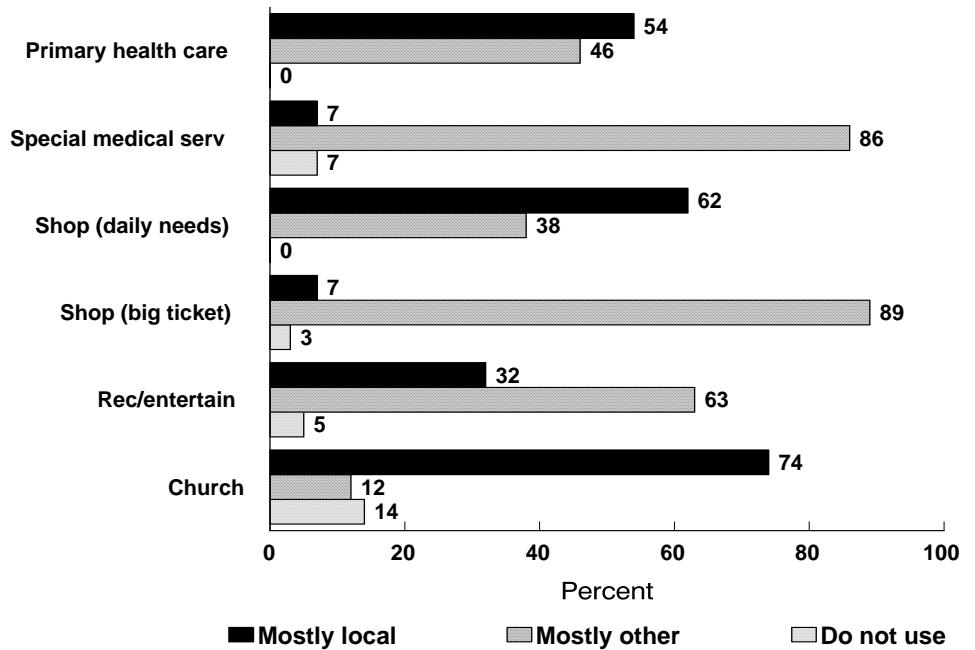
Nine local services and facilities were listed on the questionnaire along with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," "poor," or "not available." Of the 112 respondents from Missouri Valley, half or more gave medical services, public schools, and senior citizen programs a rating of either good or very good. But jobs, shopping, housing, recreation/



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

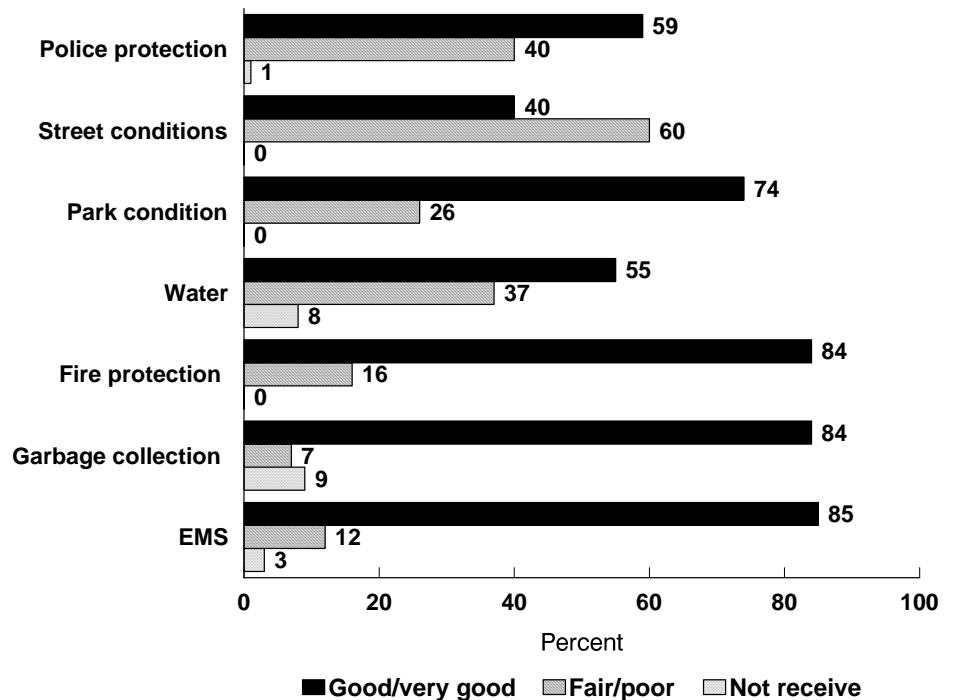
## LOCAL PURCHASING PATTERNS

For a variety of reasons, many residents of Iowa’s smaller towns rely on neighboring cities for services. Based on returned questionnaires, Missouri Valley residents follow this pattern. At least three- fourths of the people reported leaving Missouri Valley for specialized health care and shopping for “big ticket items.” Primary health care, shopping for daily needs, and church, were the services where at least half of the people reported remaining in Missouri Valley.



## RATING GOVERNMENT SERVICES

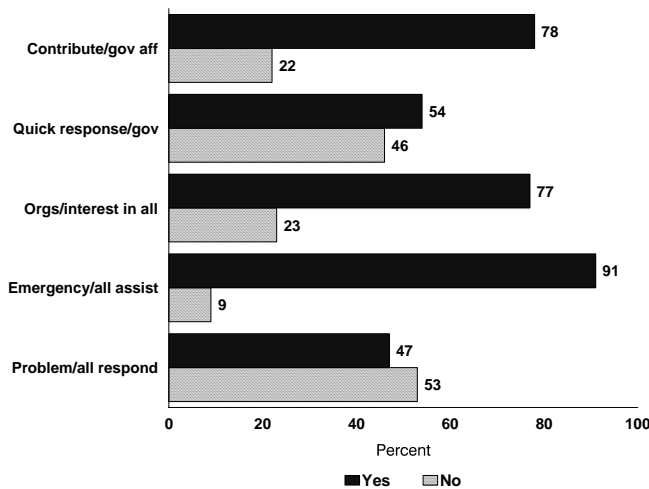
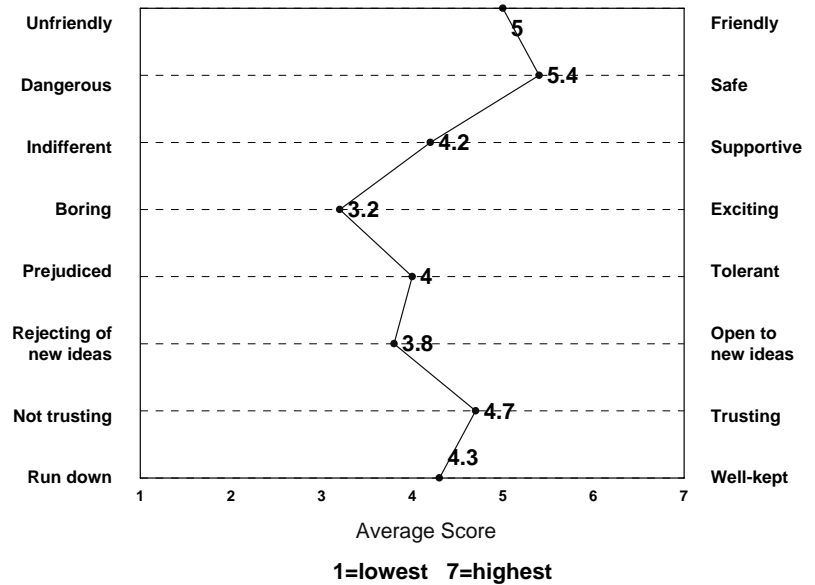
Seven services normally provided through local governments were included with the instructions to rate each as “very good,” “good,” “fair,” or “poor.” Emergency response service (EMS) was rated highest with 85 percent giving it a positive (very good or good) rating. Over half of the individuals also rated police and fire protection, park conditions, water, and garbage collection 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, Missouri Valley residents assigned the highest rating to the safety of residents, followed closely by friendliness of its people. The lowest rating was given to the amount of excitement offered.



According to survey respondents, Missouri Valley'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 felt that all are allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs and that organizations are interested in what is best for all residents. If any concern was noted about how Missouri Valley responds to problems, it pertained to how quickly a city office would respond in regards to a complaint

and when something needs to get done the whole community gets behind it where 46 percent and 53 percent, respectively, of the respondents reported dissatisfaction in these areas.

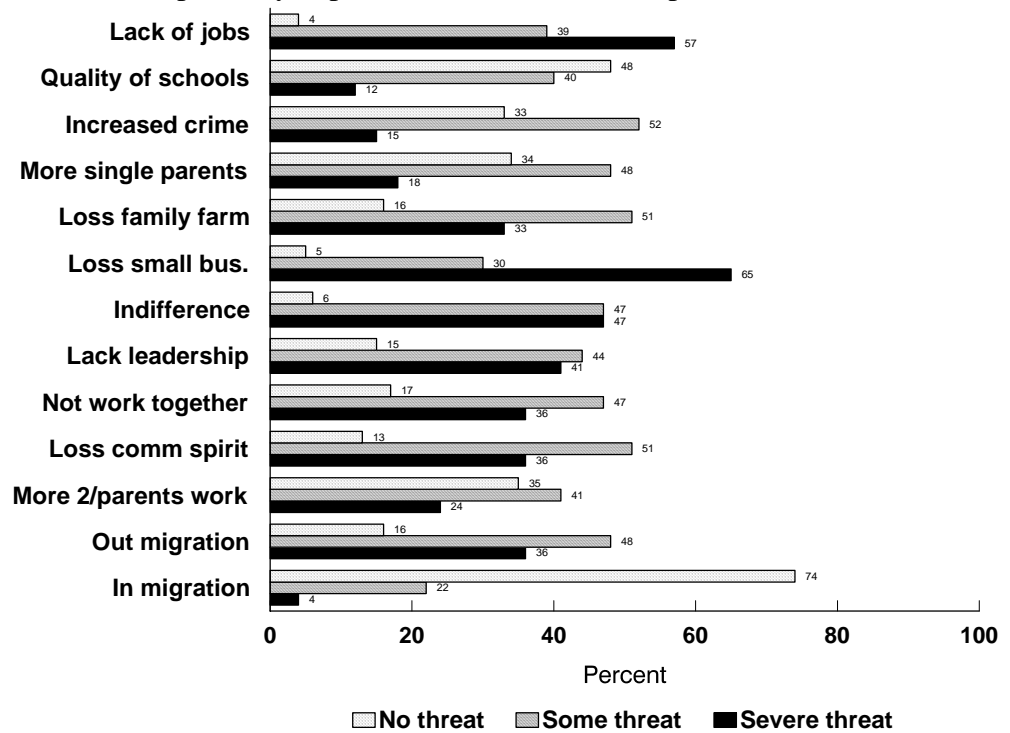
## INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN MISSOURI VALLEY ACTIVITIES

Over three-fourths of Missouri Valley residents are interested in being informed of community activities. Yet only about 37 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, 32 percent indicated being very or somewhat active.

Ties with other local residents often are an indication of their commitment to the community. In Missouri Valley's case, 34 percent of the respondents indicated knowing the name of half or more of the adult residents. Also, 49 percent indicated that half or more of their close personal friends live in Missouri Valley. As for their adult relatives and in-laws, 28 percent indicated that half or more of them live in Missouri Valley.

### 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 Missouri Valley, at least half of the residents see lack of jobs and loss of small businesses as conditions that pose serious threats to the future of the community. Loss of family farms, indifference about the community, lack of leadership, failure of people to work together, loss of community spirit, and people moving out of the community were considered serious threats by at least one-third of Missouri Valley residents. Minimal concern was expressed with people moving into the community.



### OVERALL COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

How important is it for Missouri Valley residents to feel a part of this community? When asked this question, 87 percent responded that it was important for them to feel a part of the community. When asked whether they feel "at home" in Missouri Valley, 89 percent said that they did. Furthermore 71 percent indicated they would be sorry to move away from Missouri Valley. In spite of the community concerns as indicated in the previous charts, the majority of residents see Missouri Valley as their home and are reluctant to move away from the community.

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