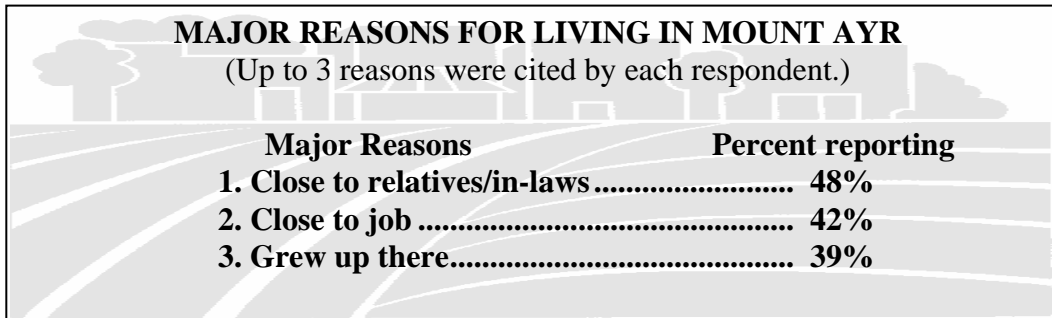


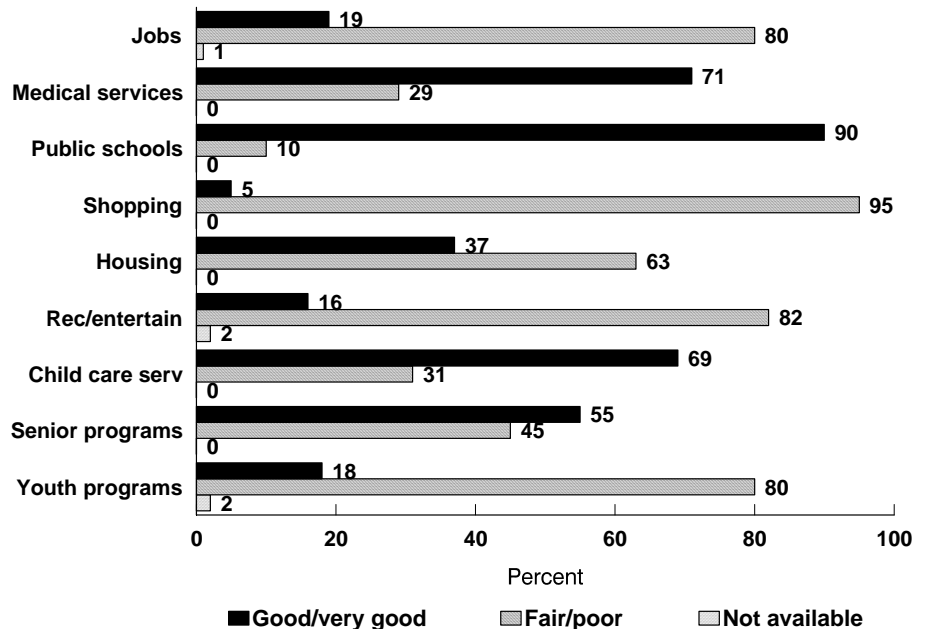
## RESIDENTS OF MOUNT AYR SPEAK OUT

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 Mount Ayr's 102 survey participants.



### RATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN MOUNT AYR

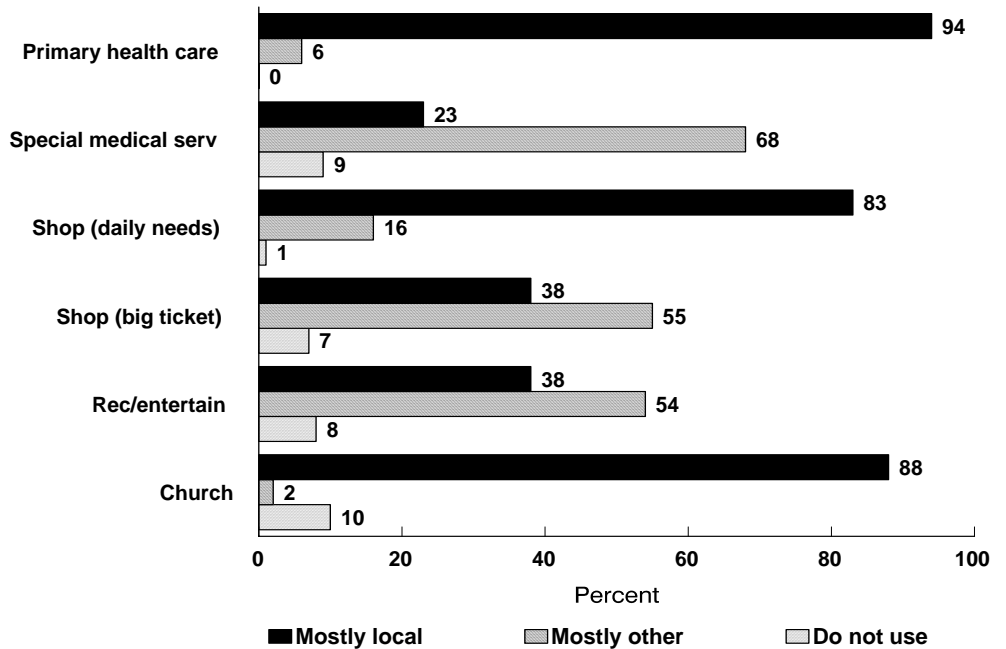
Nine local services and facilities were listed on the questionnaire along with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," "poor," or "not available." Of the 102 respondents from Mount Ayr, half or more gave medical services, public schools, child care services, and senior citizen programs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



entertainment, and programs for youth 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 all respondents from Mount Ayr.

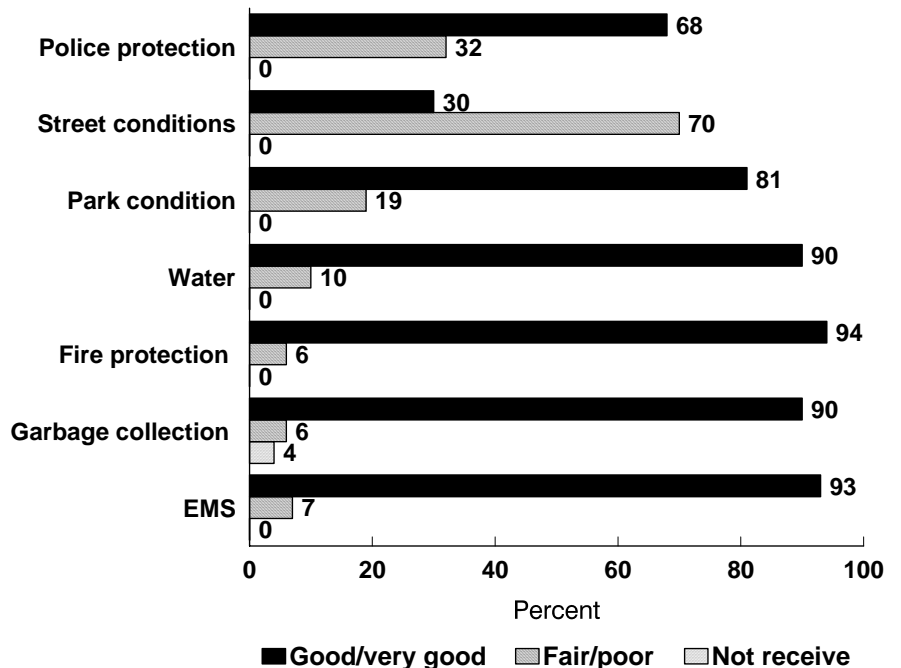
## LOCAL PURCHASING PATTERNS

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



## RATING GOVERNMENT SERVICES

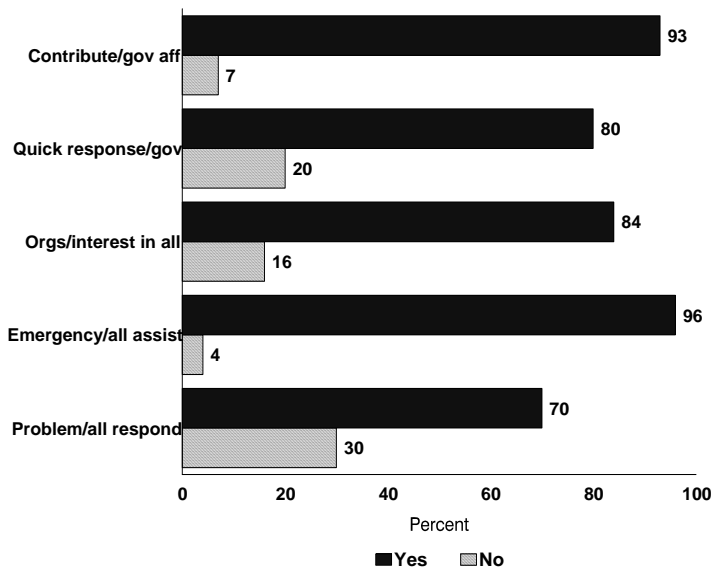
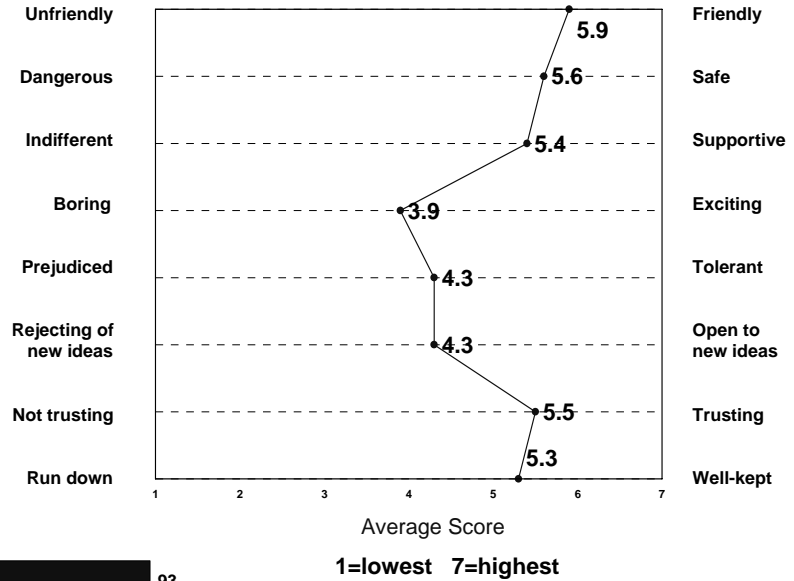
Seven services normally provided through local governments were included with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," or "poor." Fire protection was rated highest with 94 percent giving it a positive (very good or good) rating. Over half of the individuals also rated police protection, park conditions, 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, Mount Ayr residents assigned the highest rating to the friendliness of its residents, followed closely by the safety of its residents. The lowest rating was given to the amount of excitement offered.



According to survey respondents, Mount Ayr'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 all are allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs, that a city office would give a quick response in regards to a complaint, and that organizations are interested in what is best for all residents. If any concern was noted about how

Mount Ayr responds to problems, it pertained to when something needs to get done, the whole community gets behind it where 30 percent of the respondents reported dissatisfaction in this area.

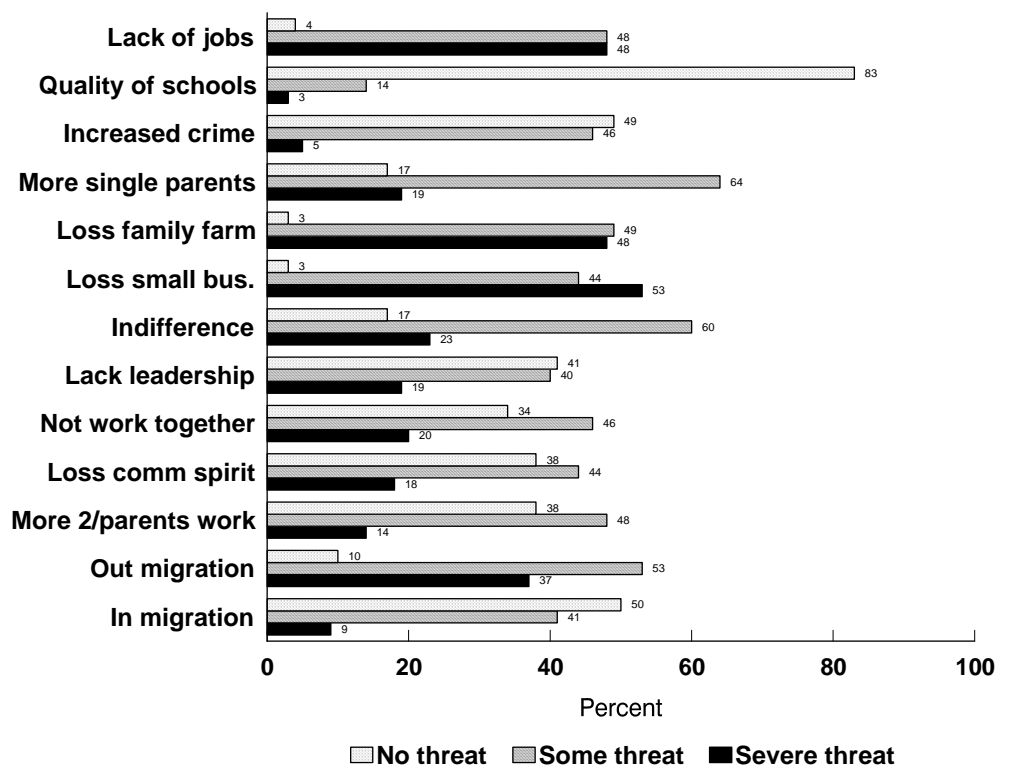
## INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN MOUNT AYR ACTIVITIES

Over three-fourths of Mount Ayr residents are interested in being informed of community activities. Yet only about 57 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, 48 percent indicated being very or somewhat active.

Ties with other local residents often are an indication of their commitment to the community. In Mount Ayr's case, 63 percent of the respondents indicated knowing the name of half or more of the adult residents. Also, 75 percent indicated that half or more of their close personal friends live in Mount Ayr. As for their adult relatives and in-laws, 33 percent indicated that half or more of them live in Mount Ayr.

### 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 Mount Ayr, at least half of the residents see loss of small businesses as a condition that poses a serious threats to the future of the community. Lack of jobs, loss of family farms, and people moving out of the community were considered serious



threats by at least one-third of Mount Ayr residents. Minimal concern was expressed with the quality of schools and people moving into the community.

### OVERALL COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

How important is it for Mount Ayr residents to feel a part of this community? When asked this question, 97 percent responded that it was important for them to feel a part of the community. When asked whether they feel "at home" in Mount Ayr, 98 percent said that they did. Furthermore 88 percent indicated they would be sorry to move away from Mount Ayr. In spite of the community concerns as indicated in the previous charts, the majority of residents see Mount Ayr as their home and are reluctant to move away from the community.

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