

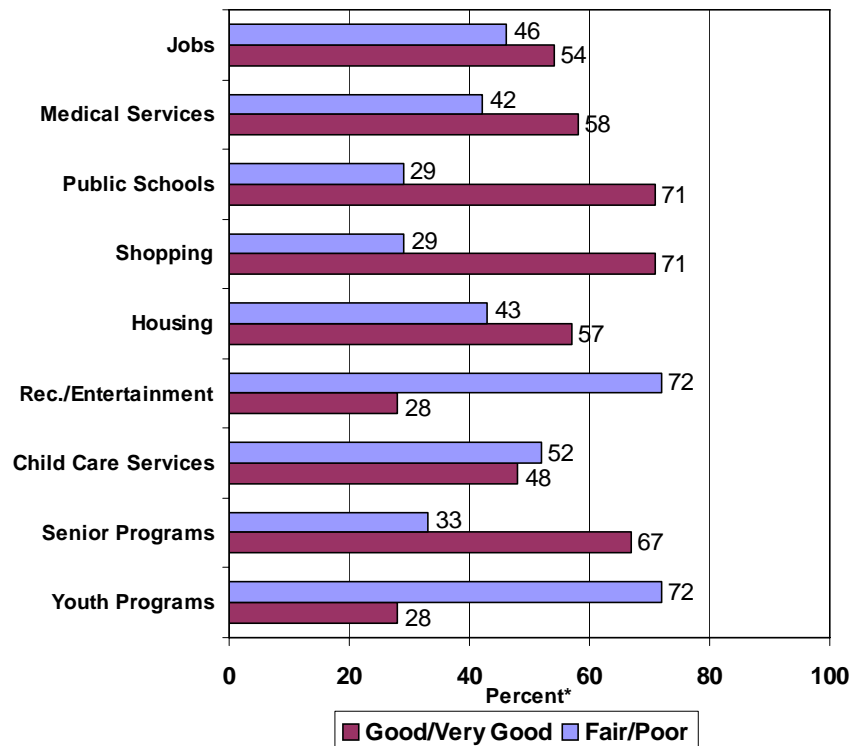
RESIDENTS OF FORT DODGE SPEAK OUT

During June 1997, you were one of 4,750 households asked to participate in a statewide survey of Iowa urban residents. The purpose of this survey was to identify the problems and opportunities facing the state's urban communities. The households that were asked to take part in the study were randomly selected from telephone directories of 15 cities in Iowa. Selection of cities was also random where 15 cities were selected from Iowa's 30 cities having at least 10,000 residents. Of the 4,750 questionnaires mailed out, 2,901 (or 61%) were completed and returned. Below are highlights of the results as reported by Fort Dodge's 173 survey participants.



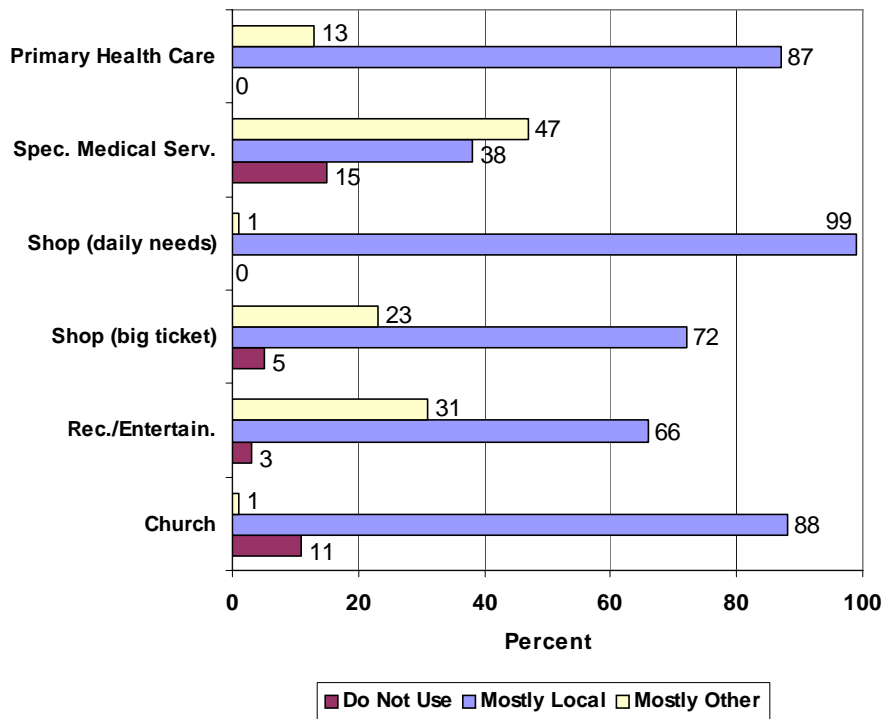
RATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN FORT DODGE

Nine local services and facilities were listed on the questionnaire, along with the instructions to rate each as "very good," "good," "fair," or "poor." Of the 173 respondents from Fort Dodge, approximately three-fourths gave public schools and shopping a rating of either "good" or "very good." On the contrary, youth programs and recreation and entertainment were rated either "fair" or "poor" by approximately three-fourths of the Fort Dodge respondents.



**"Don't know" and "undecided" responses not included.

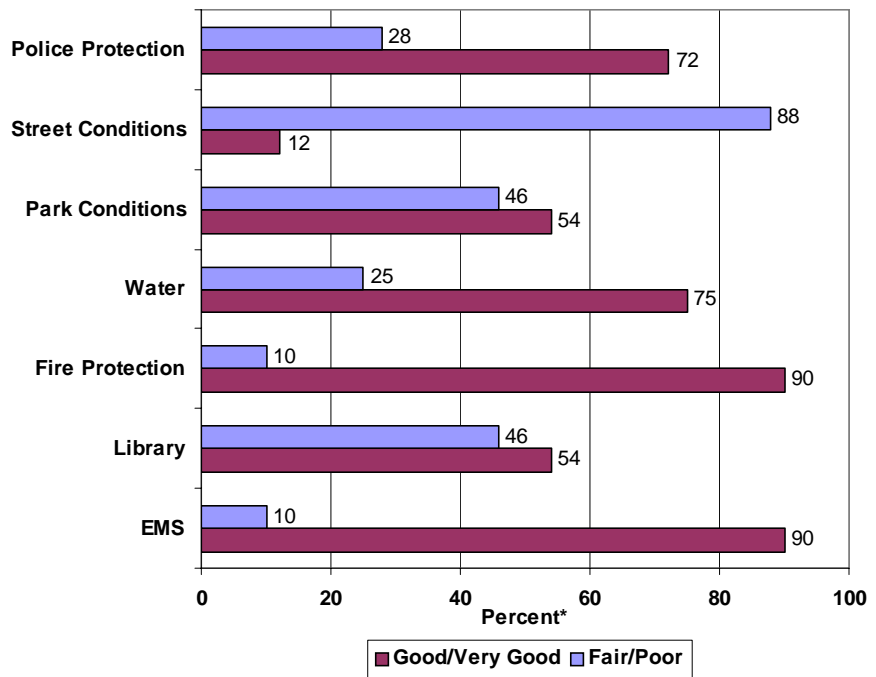
LOCAL PURCHASING PATTERNS



For a variety of reasons, many Iowa residents rely on neighboring cities for services. Based on returned questionnaires, Fort Dodge respondents generally do not follow this pattern. A majority of people reported remaining in Fort Dodge for primary health care, church, recreation and entertainment, and shopping for big ticket and daily needs items. In fact, specialized medical services was the only service for which almost half of the people reported leaving Fort Dodge.

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 and emergency response services (EMS) were rated highest with 90% of the respondents giving both a “very good” or “good” rating. Police protection, park conditions, and water service followed behind. Street conditions ranked the lowest with a large majority of the respondents giving it a rating of “fair” or “poor.”

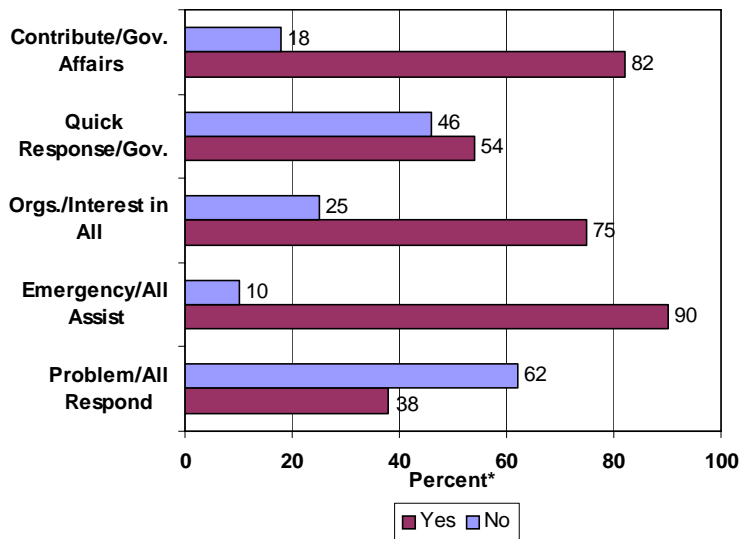
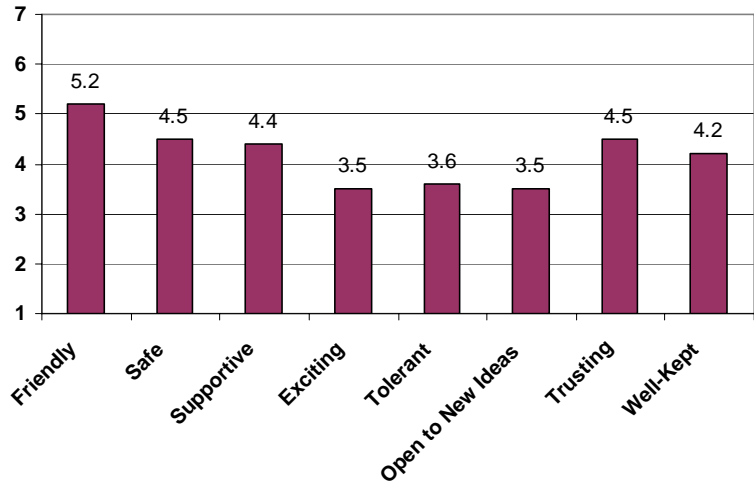


*“Don’t know” and “undecided” responses not included.

FRIENDLINESS AND EVIDENCE OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT

In addition to describing cities by their physical traits, important social features are also significant when evaluating local conditions. Accordingly, questions were included in the survey asking residents to assess various social characteristics of their communities.

Of the eight attributes evaluated on a 7-point scale, Fort Dodge respondents assigned the highest rating to the friendliness of its residents. The lowest rating was given to the amount of excitement offered to the residents and to how open residents are to new ideas.



*"Don't know" and "undecided" responses not included.

According to survey respondents, Fort Dodge's responsiveness to personal and community problems is generally quite favorable. A large majority agreed that all were allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs, organizations are interested in what is best for all residents, and that everyone would help in case of an emergency. Approximately half or more felt that a city office would not give a quick response in regard to a complaint and that when something needs to be done, not everyone gets behind it.

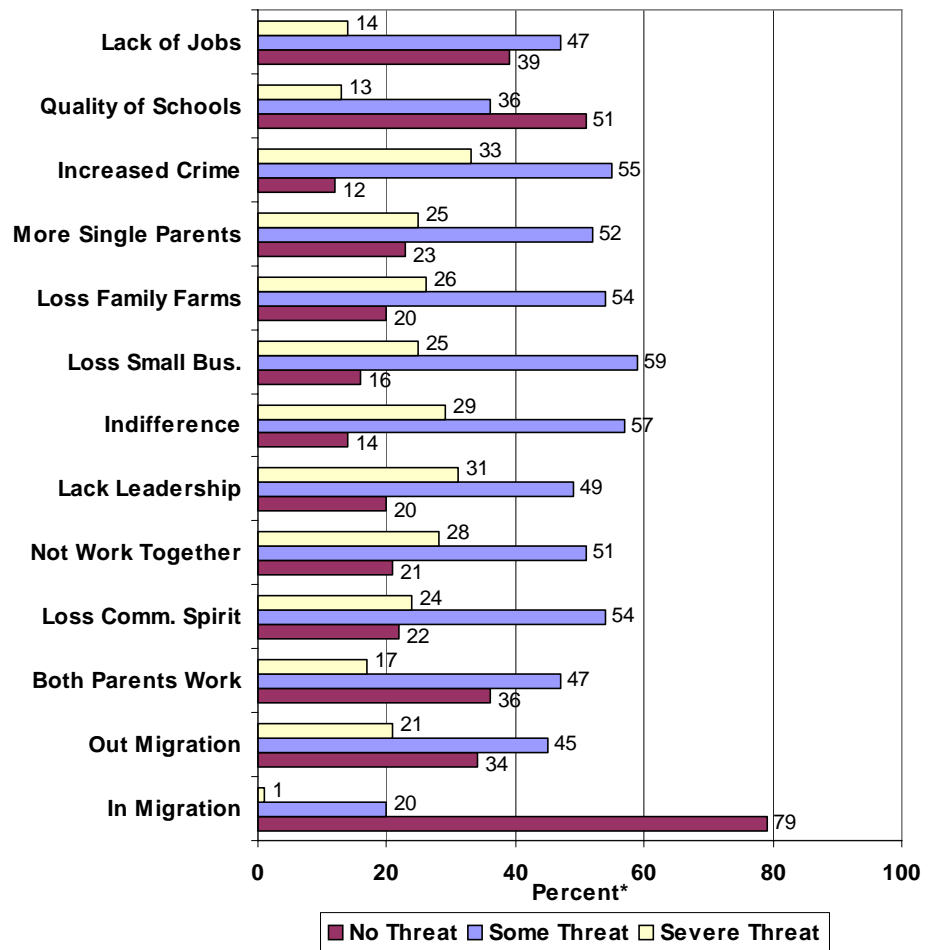
INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN FORT DODGE ACTIVITIES

Over three-fourths of Fort Dodge respondents are interested in being informed of community activities. Yet, only 53% 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, 34% indicated being "very active" or "somewhat active."

Ties between local residents often are related to commitment to the community. In Fort Dodge’s case, 71% of the respondents indicated knowing the name of more than 100 adult residents. In addition, 71% indicated that half or more of their close personal friends live in Fort Dodge. As for the respondents’ adult relatives and in-laws, 34% indicated that half or more of them also live in Fort Dodge.

PERCEIVED COMMUNITY THREATS

The future of Iowa’s urban communities will probably depend on whether or not important trends will continue over the course of the next few years. In the case of Fort Dodge, over three-fourths of the respondents see loss of family farms, increased crime, increase in single parents, resident indifference, lack of leadership, the residents not working together, loss of community spirit, and loss of small businesses as conditions that pose threats (“some” or “severe”) to the future of the community. Less concern was expressed with quality of schools and people



*“Don’t know” and “undecided” responses not included.

OVERALL COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

How important is it for Fort Dodge residents to feel a part of their city? When asked this question, 92% of the survey respondents reported that it was important for them to feel a part of the city. When asked whether they feel “at home” in Fort Dodge, 94% said that they did. Furthermore, 73% indicated they would be sorry if forced to move away from Fort Dodge. In spite of the community concerns as indicated in the previous charts, the majority of respondents see Fort Dodge as their home and are reluctant to move away from the area.

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