

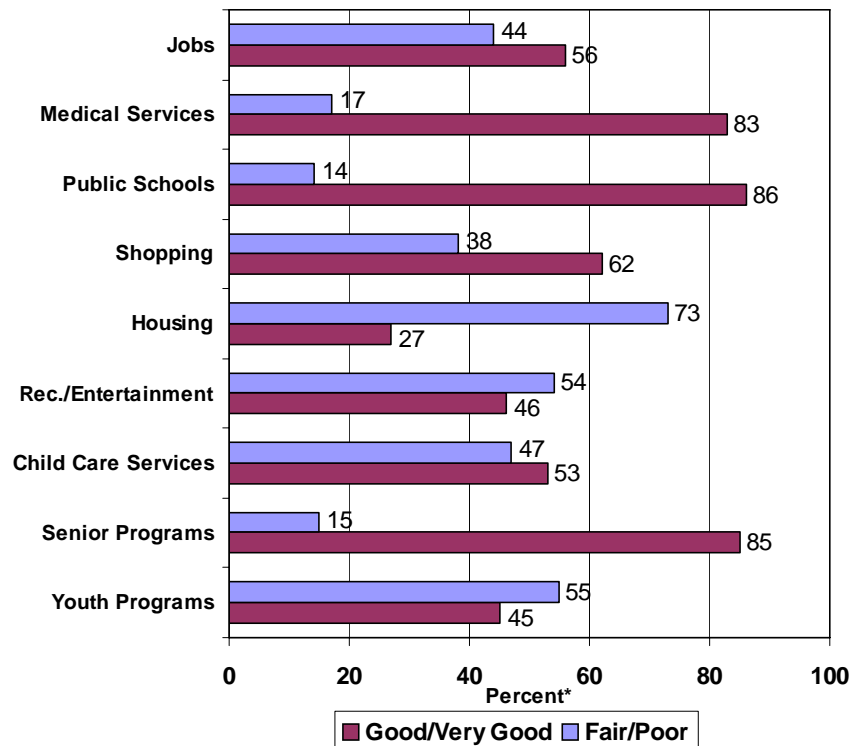
## RESIDENTS OF SPENCER SPEAK OUT

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 Spencer's 165 survey participants.



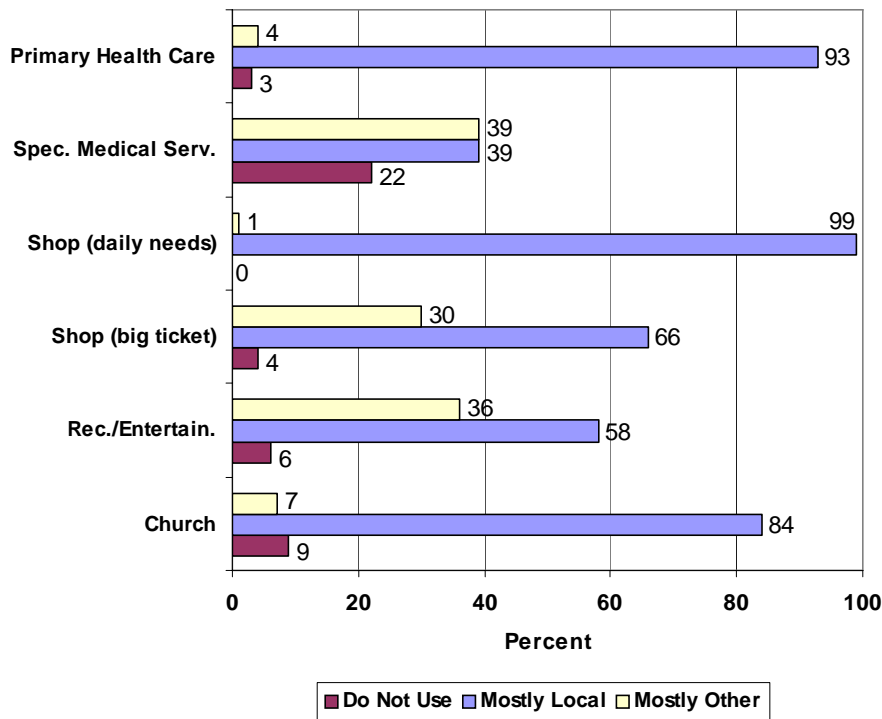
### RATING SERVICES AND FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN SPENCER

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 165 respondents from Spencer, over half gave public schools, senior programs, jobs, shopping, child care services, and medical services a rating of either "good" or "very good." On the contrary, housing, youth programs, and recreation and entertainment were rated "fair" or "poor" by at least half of the Spencer respondents.



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

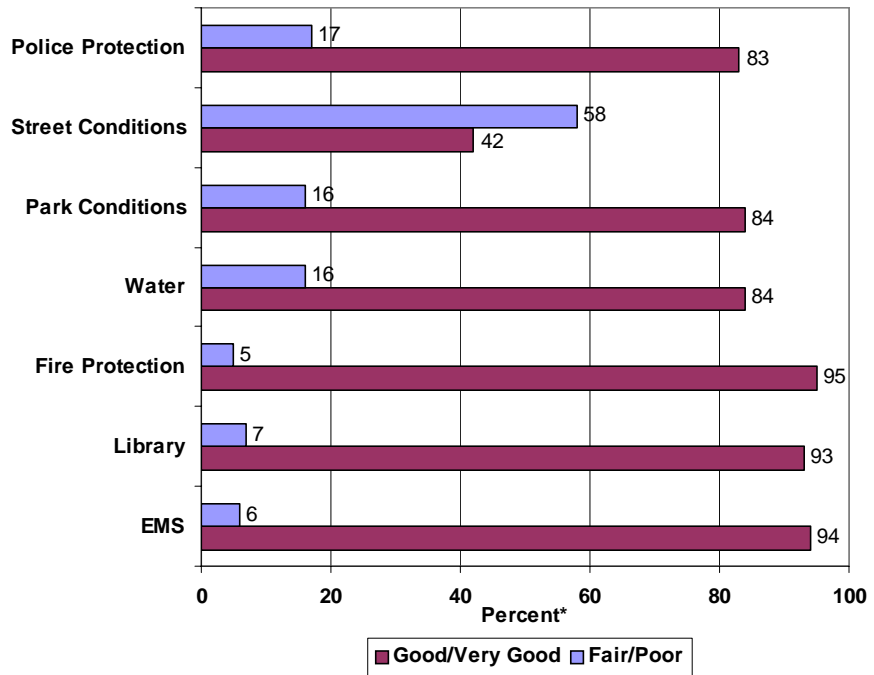
## LOCAL PURCHASING PATTERNS



For a variety of reasons, many Iowa residents rely on neighboring cities for services. Based on returned questionnaires, Spencer respondents do not follow this pattern. Half or more of the people reported remaining in Spencer for primary health care, church, recreation and entertainment, and shopping for big ticket and daily needs items. An equal amount of the respondents reported remaining in and leaving Spencer for specialized medical services.

## 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 95% of the respondents giving it a “very good” or “good” rating. Emergency response services (EMS), police protection, park conditions, water, and library services followed closely behind. Street conditions ranked the lowest with a majority of respondents giving it a

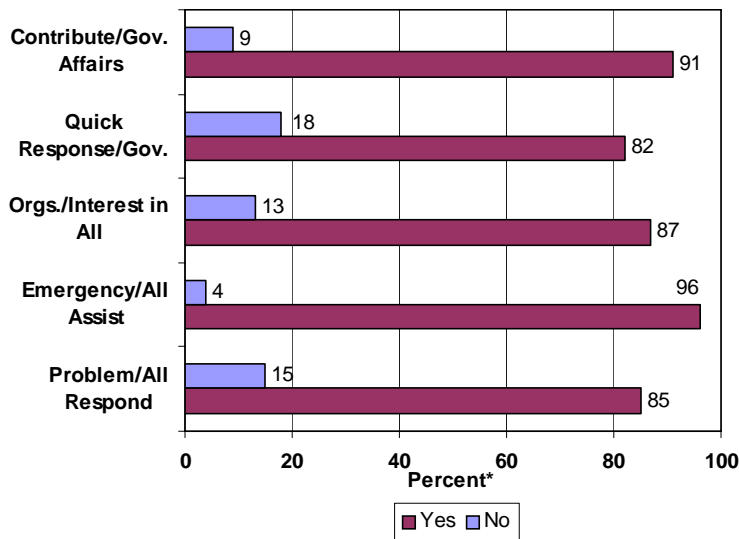
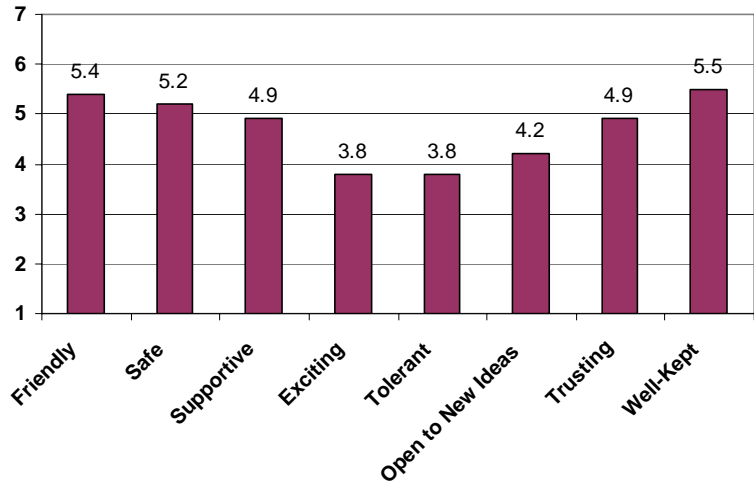


\*\*“Don’t know” and “undecided” responses not included.

## 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, Spencer respondents assigned the highest rating to the well-kept appearance of the city, followed closely by the friendliness of its residents. The lowest ratings were given to the amount of excitement offered to the residents and the tolerance of the residents.



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

According to survey respondents, Spencer's responsiveness to personal and community problems is generally quite favorable. Most everyone agreed that all were allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs and that everyone would help in case of an emergency. At least three-fourths also felt that a city office would give a quick response in regard to a complaint, that organizations are interested in what is best for all residents, and that when something needs to be done, everyone gets behind it.

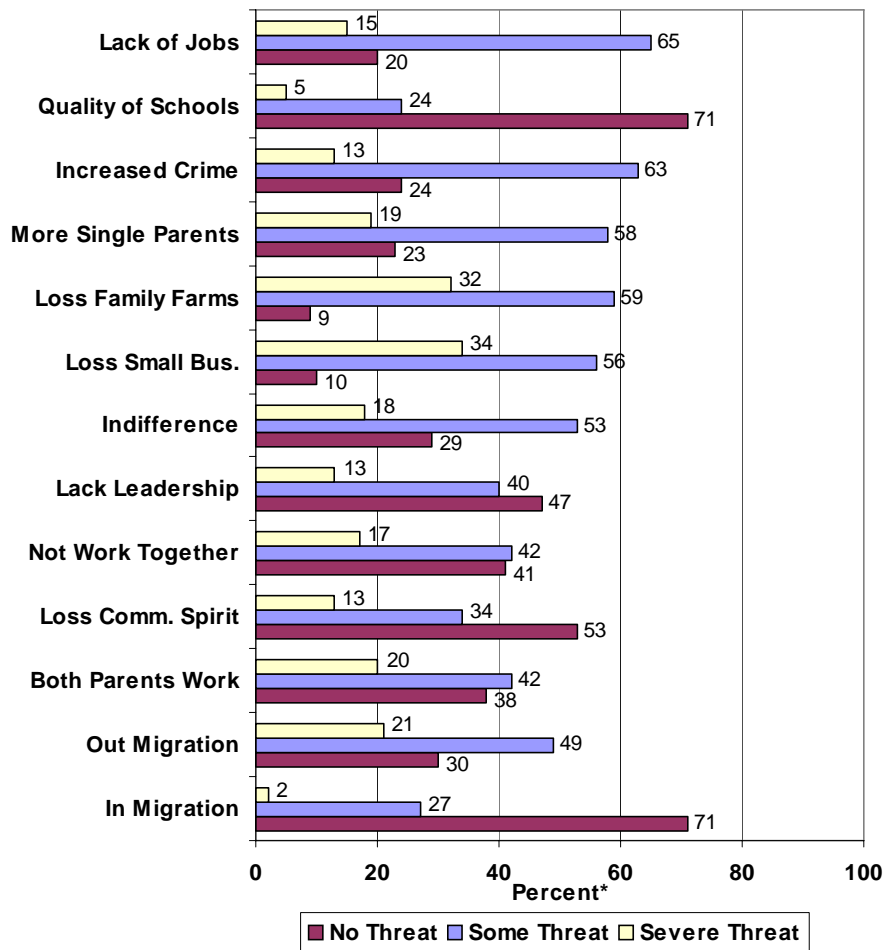
## INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN SPENCER ACTIVITIES

Over three-fourths of Spencer respondents are interested in being informed of community activities. Yet, only 50% 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, 39% indicated being "very active" or "somewhat active."

Ties between local residents often are related to commitment to the community. In Spencer's case, 60% of the respondents indicated knowing the name of more than 100 adult residents. In addition, 70% indicated that half or more of their close personal friends live in Spencer. As for the respondents' adult relatives and in-laws, 21% indicated that half or more of them also live in Spencer.

### 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 Spencer, at least three-fourths of the respondents see lack of jobs, loss of family farms, increased crime, more single parents, and loss of small businesses as conditions that pose threats ("some" or "severe") to the future of the community. Lack of leadership and loss of community spirit was considered a threat by about half of Spencer respondents. A large majority also expressed that the quality of schools and people moving into the community posed no threat to Spencer.



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

### OVERALL COMMUNITY ATTACHMENT

How important is it for Spencer residents to feel a part of their city? When asked this question, 88% 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 Spencer, 96% said that they did. Furthermore, 79% indicated they would be sorry if forced to move away from Spencer. In spite of the community concerns as indicated in the previous charts, the majority of respondents see Spencer as their home and are reluctant to move away from the area.

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