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The City of Livermore, California

Report of Geographic Subgroup
Comparisons
2008



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SURVEY BACKGROUND

About The National Citizen Survey™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

The National Citizen Survey™ was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The National Citizen Survey™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The National Citizen Survey™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The National Citizen Survey™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Livermore staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries we used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Livermore staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options for The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

One of the add-on options that Livermore chose was to have crosstabulations of evaluative questions 1-16a by geographic areas, as defined by geographic location in question 16b.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

“Don’t Know” Responses

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A of the Report of Results. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in this report. In other words, the tables display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 1 representing the best rating and 4 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale.

Understanding the Tables

In this report, comparisons between geographic subgroups are shown. For most of the questions, we have shown only one number for each question. Usually this number is the rating on a 100-point scale. Sometimes this scale was not appropriate to use. In these cases we have summarized responses to show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who reported a crime, or the percent of respondents who felt the rate of growth was “about right.” For a few questions, we have shown the full set of responses: these include the question about respondents’ perceptions about the economy.

Anova and chi square tests of significance were applied to these comparisons of survey questions by geographic subgroups. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between subgroups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed are “real.” Where differences were statistically significant, they are marked in gray.

City of Livermore staff chose to divide the city into four geographic areas on question 16b of the survey, respondents were asked to select in which of the four quadrants they reside. The quadrants were: NW Quadrant (North of Stanley Blvd/Railroad Avenue and West of Livermore Avenue), SW Quadrant (South of Stanley Blvd/Railroad Avenue and West of Livermore Avenue), NE Quadrant (North of First Street/I-580 and East of Livermore Avenue), and the SE Quadrant (South of First Street/I-580 and East of Livermore Avenue).

The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus 3 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (1,000 completed surveys). For each quadrant of the city, the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 9% due to the size of individual geographic areas. See the table below for sample sizes for each quadrant.

Please indicate in which area of the city you live:

	Number of respondents	Percent of respondents
NW Quadrant	131	17%
SW Quadrant	224	29%
NE Quadrant	199	26%
SE Quadrant	207	27%
Total	761	100%

COMPARISONS

Quality of Life Ratings

Please circle the number that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
How do you rate Livermore as a place to live?	77	76	76	77
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	66	72	66	72
How do you rate Livermore as a place to raise children?	70	71	68	71
How do you rate Livermore as a place to work?	59	58	62	64
How do you rate Livermore as a place to retire?	60	55	48	52
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Livermore?	71	70	68	70
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Characteristics of the Community				
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Livermore as a whole:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Sense of community	55	63	58	65
Openness and acceptance	56	59	56	62
Overall appearance of Livermore	64	61	64	68
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	52	54	59	58
Shopping opportunities	45	40	47	49
Air quality	47	54	54	48
Recreational opportunities	55	57	63	60
Job opportunities	33	33	39	41
Access to affordable quality housing	30	29	25	30
Access to affordable quality child care	41	34	39	40
Access to affordable quality health care	45	47	45	45
Ease of car travel in Livermore	47	47	43	49
Ease of bus travel in Livermore	46	38	44	50
Ease of rail/subway travel in Livermore	28	22	29	23
Ease of bicycle travel in Livermore	56	57	53	61
Ease of walking in Livermore	63	65	60	66
Educational opportunities	57	55	57	57
Overall image/reputation of Livermore	62	62	61	62
Overall quality of new development in Livermore	63	58	60	64
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Ratings of Growth

Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Livermore over the past 2 years:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Population growth	33%	43%	35%	43%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.)	44%	53%	55%	55%
Jobs growth	23%	24%	37%	39%
Proportion of respondents rating as "About right"				

Ratings of Potential Problems in Livermore

To what degree, if at all, are the following in Livermore:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Crime	6%	7%	3%	3%
Drugs	19%	12%	14%	11%
Too much growth	18%	16%	15%	18%
Lack of growth	2%	4%	3%	5%
Graffiti	5%	8%	4%	3%
Noise	10%	7%	8%	6%
Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles	6%	9%	5%	6%
Taxes	13%	15%	15%	12%
Traffic congestion	29%	28%	42%	33%
Unsupervised youth	12%	6%	10%	12%
Homelessness	6%	3%	9%	6%
Weeds	4%	3%	4%	4%
Absence of communications from the City of Livermore translated into languages other than English	4%	2%	4%	2%
Toxic waste or other environmental hazard(s)	4%	2%	4%	5%
Percentage of Respondents Rating as a "Major Problem"				

Ratings of Safety from Various Problems

Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Livermore:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Violent crime	71	77	78	71
Property crimes	60	63	66	61
Fire	77	80	76	78
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Very safe, 0=Very unsafe)				

Ratings of Feelings of Safety in Various Areas

Please rate how safe you feel:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
In your neighborhood during the day	97%	97%	95%	92%
In your neighborhood after dark	69%	83%	83%	76%
In Livermore's downtown area during the day	94%	97%	94%	96%
In Livermore's downtown area after dark	71%	73%	76%	75%
In Livermore's parks during the day	83%	87%	89%	85%
In Livermore's parks after dark	34%	32%	43%	39%
Percent of Respondents Rating "Very" or "Somewhat safe"				

Crime Victimization and Reporting

	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	12%	18%	12%	13%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	80%	77%	62%	55%
Percent of respondents whose households were victims of crime, and who reported the crime				

Use of Community Amenities				
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities?	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Used Livermore public libraries or their services	83%	77%	78%	86%
Used Livermore recreation centers	73%	62%	70%	74%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	51%	54%	57%	58%
Visited a Livermore park	89%	90%	92%	93%
Ridden a local bus within Livermore	22%	27%	32%	25%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	22%	29%	22%	20%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	49%	48%	53%	50%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	93%	97%	94%	98%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Livermore	41%	51%	49%	43%
Read City of Livermore Newsletter	96%	93%	90%	96%
Used the Internet for anything	95%	96%	94%	94%
Used the Internet to conduct business with Livermore	41%	56%	54%	54%
Purchased an item over the Internet	87%	87%	86%	87%
Proportion of respondents engaging in activity at least once in last 12 months				

Quality of Service Ratings				
How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Police services	65	66	68	68
Fire services	79	78	81	81
Ambulance/emergency medical services	79	74	80	77
Crime prevention	55	59	61	60
Fire prevention and education	63	68	69	72
Traffic enforcement	58	56	61	59
Garbage collection	74	70	69	71
Recycling	76	74	72	74
Yard waste pick-up	72	73	71	75
Street repair	49	47	49	48
Street cleaning	52	53	53	57
Street lighting	50	49	53	53
Snow removal	72	76	82	81
Sidewalk maintenance	45	43	49	46
Traffic signal timing	44	41	45	46
Amount of public parking	55	52	57	54
Bus/transit services	52	45	55	53
Storm drainage	57	57	60	61
Drinking water	44	49	47	53
Sewer services	63	61	62	65
City parks	68	68	70	66
Recreation programs or classes	67	66	71	67

Quality of Service Ratings				
How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	64	63	69	63
Recreation centers/facilities	68	67	68	72
Accessibility of parks	72	71	73	72
Accessibility of recreation centers/facilities	67	64	69	72
Appearance/maintenance of parks	70	67	72	69
Appearance of recreation centers/facilities	72	69	73	76
Land use, planning and zoning	40	46	50	50
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	49	43	52	50
Animal control	58	62	61	61
Economic development	49	48	55	58
Health services	56	55	59	54
Services to seniors	54	61	58	63
Services to youth	43	49	52	56
Services to low-income people	40	43	44	47
Public library services	77	81	75	82
Variety of library materials	74	77	70	78
Public information services	58	57	59	61
Public schools	54	56	56	52
Cable television	49	53	47	53
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Ratings of Various Levels of Government

Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by...	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
The City of Livermore	59	62	62	65
The Federal Government	38	38	36	38
The State Government	43	41	38	40
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Proportion of Population Having Contact with City Employees

	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Livermore within the last 12 months?	46%	57%	49%	56%
Percent of respondents who reported contact with a City employee in the last 12 months				

Ratings of Contact with City Employees

What was your impression of employees of the City of Livermore in your most recent contact?	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Knowledge	70	63	74	70
Responsiveness	62	57	69	71
Courtesy	64	68	75	76
Overall Impression	62	62	72	70
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Ratings of Public Trust

Please rate the following statements:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
I receive good value for the City of Livermore taxes I pay	65	62	58	65
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Livermore is taking	63	68	64	68
The City of Livermore government welcomes citizen involvement	64	64	66	68
The City of Livermore government listens to citizens	54	56	57	58
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Strongly agree, 0=Strongly disagree)				

Perceptions of the Economy

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Very positive	2%	0%	5%	1%
Somewhat positive	13%	12%	14%	9%
Neutral	41%	41%	39%	45%
Somewhat negative	36%	41%	33%	39%
Very negative	8%	6%	9%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Policy Question #1				
Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements: "I am disturbed by noise in my neighborhood from the following source(s):"	Please indicate in which area of the city you live:			
	NW Quadrant	SW Quadrant	NE Quadrant	SE Quadrant
Airplanes from the Livermore Airport only (not over flight planes going to/from other airports)	38%	16%	11%	14%
Traffic noise (cars, trucks, etc.)	42%	39%	42%	32%
Trains	24%	22%	15%	27%
Garbage pick-up trucks	33%	31%	30%	30%
Percent rating "Somewhat" or "Strongly agree."				