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The Dynamics of Community Life in Rural Nebraska

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CENTER FOR APPLIED RURAL INNOVATION

A Research Report*

**The Dynamics of Community Life
in Rural Nebraska**

2001 Nebraska Rural Poll Results

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Nebraska
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
& NATURAL RESOURCES

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Executive Summary

Many rural communities have experienced population losses during the past decade. Coupled with the aging population, this has resulted in many communities struggling to remain viable. However, improvements in technology have presented many opportunities for the rural areas to grow and prosper. Given these changes, how do rural Nebraskans feel about their community? Are they planning to move from their community in the next year?

This report details 3,199 responses to the 2001 Nebraska Rural Poll, the sixth annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their community and their plans to move or stay in their community. Trends for the community questions are examined by comparing data from the five previous polls to this year's results. For all questions, comparisons are made among different respondent subgroups, i.e., comparisons by age, occupation, region, etc. Based on these analyses, some key findings emerged:

- ***Rural Nebraskans have increasingly stated that their community has remained the same.*** This year, 53 percent state their community has remained the same during the past year, compared to 38 percent in 1996. Conversely, the proportion saying their community has changed for the better has declined from 38 percent in 1996 to 28 percent this year. The proportion saying their community has changed for the worse has remained fairly steady across all six years.
- ***Farmers and ranchers are less likely than persons with different occupations to believe their community has changed for the better during the past year.*** Only 18 percent of the farmers and ranchers say their community has changed for the better, compared to 39 percent of the persons with administrative support positions.
- ***Respondents living in larger communities are more likely than the persons living in smaller communities to state their community has changed for the better.*** Thirty-four percent of the persons living in communities with populations of 5,000 or more say their community has changed for the better, compared to only 16 percent of the persons living in communities with less than 500 people.
- ***The majority of rural Nebraskans rate their community as friendly, trusting, and supportive.*** Seventy-two percent rate their community as friendly, 62 percent say their community is trusting, and 62 percent rate their community as supportive.
- ***Over one-third of rural Nebraskans are dissatisfied with the following services and amenities in their community: entertainment, retail shopping, streets, and restaurants.*** Service and amenities residents are most satisfied with include parks and recreation, basic medical care services, library services, and education (K - 12).

- ***Younger respondents report being more dissatisfied with their city/village government as compared with older respondents.*** Thirty-eight percent of the persons between the ages of 19 and 39 are dissatisfied with their city/village government, compared to 24 percent of the persons age 65 and older.
- ***Persons living in the Panhandle are more likely than those living elsewhere to be dissatisfied with their airline service.*** Thirty-one percent of the Panhandle residents are dissatisfied with their airline service, as compared to only 11 percent of the residents in the Southeast region of the state.
- ***Only four percent of the respondents are planning to move from their community in the next year.*** This proportion has remained fairly steady during the past four years.
- ***The proportion of younger rural Nebraskans planning to move from their community has increased from last year.*** In 2000, 10 percent of the persons age 19 to 29 were planning to move from their community and 10 percent were uncertain. This year, 18 percent are planning to move and 13 percent are uncertain.
- ***The rural Nebraskans who are planning to move from their community are increasingly planning to move to the metropolitan areas of the state.*** The proportion of persons planning to move to either the Lincoln or Omaha metropolitan areas has steadily increased during the past three years. In 1999, 10 percent of the expected movers planned to move to the metropolitan areas, compared to 18 percent this year. The proportion of expected movers planning to leave the state has decreased since 1999 (from 52 percent to 44 percent).
- ***The younger respondents are more likely than the older respondents to be planning to move from their community in the next year.*** Eighteen percent of the persons age 19 to 29 are planning to leave their community, compared to only three percent of the persons age 65 and older. Thirteen percent of the younger respondents are undecided about their plans to move.
- ***The top three ranked factors influencing rural Nebraskans' decisions to move from their community are: lack of economic opportunities in their current community, for lower taxes, and to find a better job.*** Seventy-two percent of those either planning to move or considering a move cite a lack of economic opportunities in their community as being “very important” or “somewhat important” in influencing their decision to move, 67 percent want to move to lower their taxes, and 66 percent are looking to find a better job.
- ***Approximately one-third of rural Nebraskans say “to find a better job” is the most important factor influencing their decision to move from their community in the next year.*** Thirty-two percent identify this item as the most important factor influencing their

decision to move. Eleven percent cite the following factors as being the most important factors influencing their move: being closer to relatives, for lower taxes and a reason other than those listed.

- ***Economic opportunities are more important considerations for the younger persons as compared to the considerations influencing older respondents' migration decisions.***
The top reasons influencing the decision to move for the persons under the age of 50 are: lack of economic opportunities, for lower taxes, and to find a better job. The persons age 65 and older who are considering a move cite the following reasons: for lower taxes, to lower cost of living, better access to health care, and for a more desirable climate.

Introduction

During the 1980s, much of rural Nebraska experienced out-migration, causing many difficulties in smaller communities. In that decade, only four of Nebraska's 87 rural (i.e., non-metropolitan) counties gained population. However, during the 1990s 34 of these 87 counties experienced a population increase. While this is a notable increase, it still remains that over 60 percent of the non-metropolitan counties in the state experienced population declines during this past decade. The population declines, fueled by death rates exceeding birth rates and out-migration outstripping in-migration, leave behind an aging population and small towns that are struggling to remain viable. At the same time, improvements in technology present opportunities for rural communities to grow and prosper.

Given the above, how do rural Nebraskans feel about their community? Do they think their community has changed for the better or worse during the past year? Are rural Nebraskans satisfied with the services and amenities their community provides? Are they planning to move from their community in the next year? If so, what factors have led to their decision to move? Do these factors differ by the respondents' age or the size of their community?

This paper provides a detailed analysis of these questions. It also examines changes over time in rural Nebraskans' perceptions of their community.

The 2001 Nebraska Rural Poll is the sixth annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their

community and their satisfaction with services and amenities in their community. Trends will be examined by comparing the data from the five previous polls to this year's results. In addition to these items, respondents were asked whether they plan to stay or move from their community in the next year and what factors influenced their decision to move.

Methodology and Respondent Profile

This study is based on 3,199 responses from Nebraskans living in the 87 non-metropolitan counties in the state. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed in February and March to approximately 6,400 randomly selected households.

Metropolitan counties not included in the sample were Cass, Dakota, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy and Washington. The 14-page questionnaire included questions pertaining to well-being, community, work, federal farm policy, charitable giving, and cost of living. This paper reports only results from the community portion of the survey.

A 50% response rate was achieved using the total design method (Dillman, 1978). The sequence of steps used follow:

1. A pre-notification letter was sent requesting participation in the study.
2. The questionnaire was mailed with an informal letter signed by the project director approximately seven days later.
3. A reminder postcard was sent to the entire sample approximately seven days after the questionnaire had been sent.
4. Those who had not yet responded within approximately 14 days of the original mailing were sent a replacement questionnaire.

The average respondent is 56 years of age. Seventy percent are married (Appendix Table 1¹) and sixty-nine percent live within the city limits of a town or village. On average, respondents have lived in Nebraska 48 years and have lived in their current community 33 years. Fifty-nine percent are living in or near towns or villages with populations less than 5,000.

Sixty-one percent of the respondents report their approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, for 2000 is below \$40,000. Twenty-five percent report incomes over \$50,000. Ninety-one percent have attained at least a high school diploma.

Sixty-nine percent were employed in 2000 on a full-time, part-time, or seasonal basis. Twenty-six percent are retired. Thirty-one percent of those employed report working in a professional, technical or administrative occupation. Seventeen percent indicate they are farmers or ranchers. When jointly considering the occupation of the respondent and their spouse/partner, 19 percent of the employed are involved in farming or ranching. The employed respondents report having to drive an average of 11 miles, one way, to their primary job.

Trends in Community Ratings, 1996 - 2001

As mentioned earlier, this is the sixth annual Nebraska Rural Poll, and therefore comparisons are made between the data collected this year to the five previous

studies. It is important to keep in mind when viewing these comparisons that these were independent samples (the same people were not surveyed each year).

Community Change

To examine respondents' perceptions of how their community has changed, they were asked the question, "Communities across the nation are undergoing change. When you think about this past year, would you say...My community has changed for the..." Answer categories were "better," "same" or "worse."

One difference in the wording of this question has occurred over the past six years. Starting in 1998, the phrase "this past year" was added to the question; no time frame was given to the respondents in the first two studies.

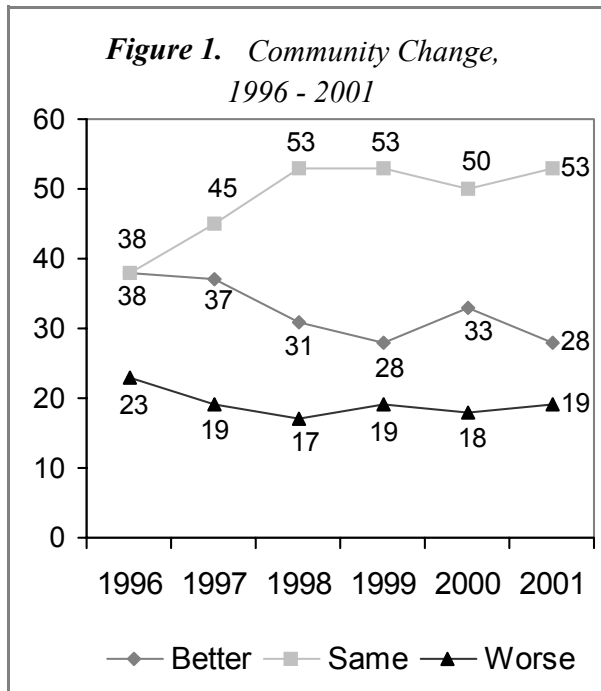
During this six-year period, there has been a general upward trend in the proportion of respondents indicating their community has remained the same. Thirty-eight percent of the 1996 respondents stated their community had stayed the same (Figure 1). The proportion increased to 53 percent this year.

Conversely, the proportion saying their community has changed for the better has declined over all the study periods (from 38 percent in 1996 to 28 percent this year). The proportion saying their community has changed for the worse has remained fairly steady across all six years.

Community Social Dimensions

Respondents were also asked each year if

¹ Appendix Table 1 also includes demographic data from previous rural polls, as well as similar data based on the entire non-metropolitan population of Nebraska (using 1990 U.S. Census data).



they would describe their communities as friendly or unfriendly, trusting or distrusting, and supportive or hostile. For each of these three dimensions, respondents were asked to rate their community using a seven-point scale between each pair of contrasting views.

The proportion of respondents who view their community as friendly increased when compared to last year. This year, 72 percent declare their community is friendly, compared to 68 percent last year.² In the first four studies, approximately 73 percent felt their community was friendly. Thus, last year appears to be a slight deviation from the general pattern.

² The responses on the 7-point scale are converted to percentages as follows: values of 1, 2, and 3 are categorized as friendly, trusting, and supportive; values of 5, 6, and 7 are categorized as unfriendly, distrusting, and hostile; and a value of 4 is categorized as no opinion.

The proportion of respondents who viewed their community as trusting increased from 62 percent in 1996 to 66 percent in 1999. It then decreased to 59 percent in 2000, but rose again to 62 percent this year. A similar pattern emerged when examining the proportion of respondents who rated their community as supportive. The proportion stating their community was supportive first increased from 62 percent in 1996 to 65 percent in 1999, then it dropped to 60 percent in 2000 but increased slightly to 62 percent this year.

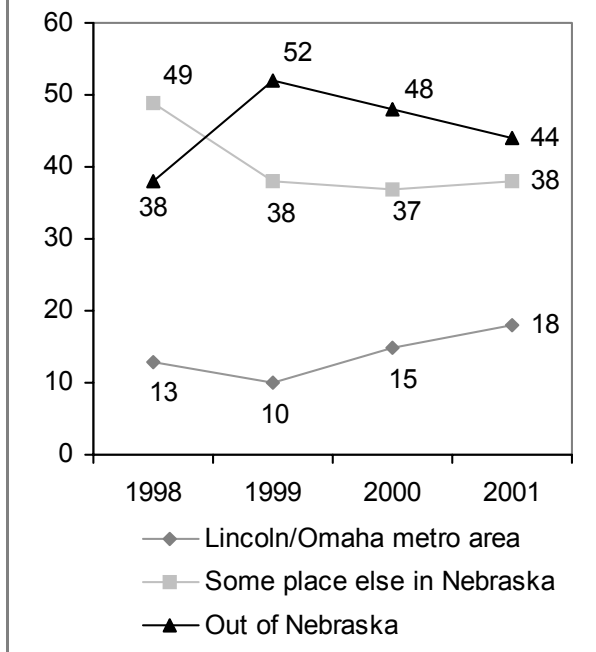
Plans to Leave the Community

To determine whether or not respondents planned to leave their community, they were asked, “Do you plan to move from your community in the next year?” This question was only included in the studies starting in 1998. The proportion planning to leave their community has remained relatively stable during the past four years. Approximately three percent of the respondents each year indicated they were planning to leave their community in the next year. This year, that proportion was four percent.

However, the proportion of younger respondents who are planning to move from their community in the next year increased between 2000 and 2001. In 2000, 10 percent of the persons age 19 to 29 were planning to move and 10 percent were uncertain. This year, 18 percent are planning to move and 13 percent are uncertain.

The expected destination for the persons planning to move has changed over time (Figure 2). The proportion planning to move to either the Lincoln or Omaha

Figure 2. Expected Destination of Those Planning to Move: 1998 - 2001



metropolitan areas has steadily increased during the past three years. In 1999, 10 percent of the expected movers planned to move to the metropolitan areas. However, this year 18 percent of the respondents planning to move were expecting to move to one of these cities.

The proportion of expected movers planning to leave the state has decreased since 1999. That year, 52 percent planned to leave the state. However, only 44 percent of this year's respondents that are planning to move expect to leave Nebraska.

Satisfaction with Community Services and Amenities

Respondents are also asked how satisfied they are with various community services and amenities each year. They were asked

this in all six studies; however, in 1996 they were also asked about the availability of these services. Therefore, comparisons will only be made between the last five studies, when the question wording was identical. The respondents were asked how satisfied they were with a list of 26 services and amenities, taking into consideration availability, cost, and quality.

Table 1 shows the proportions very satisfied with the service each year. The rank ordering of these items has remained relatively stable over the five years. In addition, many of the proportions remained fairly consistent between the years.

The Community and Its Attributes in 2001

In this section, the 2001 data on respondents' evaluations of their communities and its attributes are first summarized and then examined in terms of any differences that may exist depending upon the size of the respondent's community, the region in which they live, or various individual attributes such as household income or age.

Community Change

Over one-half (53%) of the respondents state their community has stayed the same during the past year, 28 percent say their community has changed for the better, and 19 percent believe it has changed for the worse (see Figure 1).

When examining the responses by various demographic subgroups, many differences are detected in respondents' perceptions of the change occurring in their community (Appendix Table 2). Differences occur with each variable examined, with the exception

Table 1. Proportions of Respondents “Very Satisfied” with Each Service, 1997 - 2001

<i>Service/Amenity</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1997</i>
Library services	40	43	40	41	44
Education (K - 12)	31	32	36	33	35
Parks and recreation	29	31	30	29	34
Basic medical care services	27	26	27	27	31
Senior centers	25	25	27	25	31
Sewage disposal	24	26	28	23	31
Water disposal	22	24	26	21	29
Solid waste disposal	22	22	24	19	25
Nursing home care	21	20	25	24	27
Law enforcement	19	19	19	17	22
Housing	16	16	19	14	17
Highways and bridges	16	16	18	15	NA
Restaurants	15	14	17	16	19
Day care services	13	13	16	15	17
Head start programs	13	12	13	12	16
Streets	11	12	16	12	NA
Retail shopping	11	11	12	10	14
Airport	11	11	NA	NA	NA
Mental health services	10	9	9	8	11
City/village government	10	8	11	7	10
County government	9	7	10	6	9
Entertainment	7	5	6	6	8
Airline service	4	4	NA	NA	NA
Rail service	3	3	3	3	5
Taxi service	3	3	2	2	3
Bus service	3	2	3	2	4
Air service	NA	NA	5	5	6
Streets and highways	NA	NA	NA	NA	1

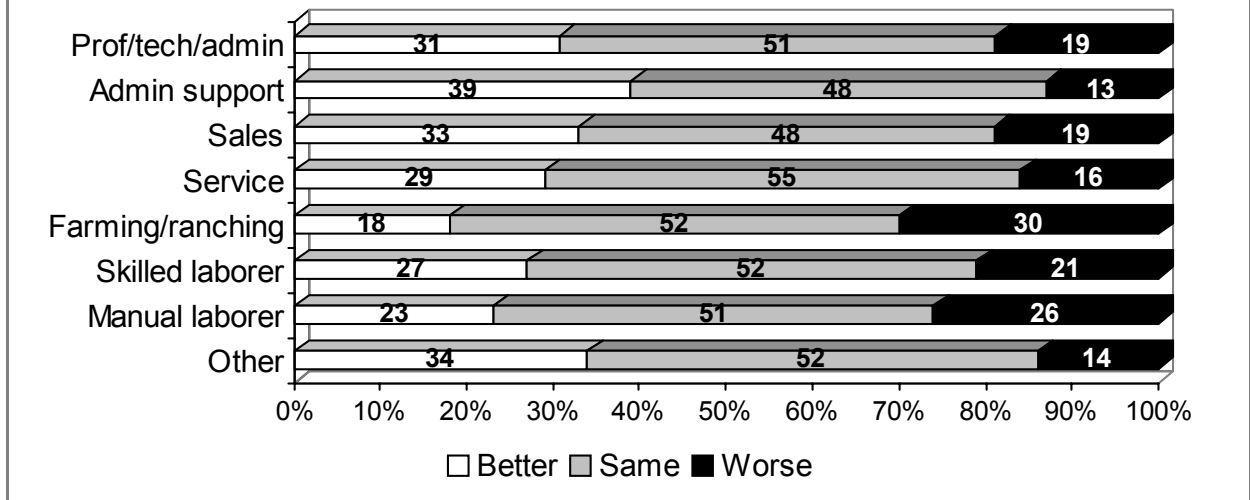
NA = Not asked that particular year

of marital status.

Persons with administrative support occupations are more likely than persons with different occupations to say their community has changed for the better during the past year (Figure 3). Thirty-nine percent of the persons with this type of occupation state their community has changed for the better, compared to only 18 percent of the farmers and ranchers.

Respondents living in or near the largest communities are more likely than respondents living in or near the smallest communities to contend that their community has changed for the better. Thirty-four percent of the persons living in or near communities with populations of 5,000 or more declare their community has changed for the better; yet, only 16 percent of the persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people share this opinion.

Figure 3. Perceptions of Community Change by Occupation



The other groups most likely to say their community has changed for the better include: persons living in the Panhandle (see Appendix Figure 1 for the counties included in each region), respondents with the highest household incomes, the youngest respondents, females, and persons with higher educational levels.

Community Social Dimensions

In addition to asking respondents about their perceptions of the change occurring in their community, they were also asked to rate its social dimensions. They were asked if they would describe their communities as friendly or unfriendly, trusting or distrusting, and supportive or hostile. Overall, respondents rate their communities as friendly (72%), trusting (62%) and supportive (62%).

Respondents’ ratings of their community on these dimensions differ by some of the demographic and community characteristics (Appendix Table 3). Persons living in or near the smaller communities are more

likely than those living in or near larger communities to rate their community as friendly, trusting, and supportive. For example, 67 percent of the persons living in or near communities with less than 1,000 people view their community as trusting, compared to 56 percent of the persons living in or near the communities with populations of 10,000 or more.

The older respondents are more likely than the younger respondents to state their community is both trusting and supportive. Sixty-seven percent of the persons age 65 and older view their community as trusting, yet only 55 percent of the persons between the ages of 19 and 29 feel the same way.

The widowed respondents are more likely than the other marital groups to rate their community as friendly, trusting, and supportive. Seventy percent of the widowed respondents rate their community as supportive, compared to only 53 percent of the divorced or separated respondents.

The persons with higher incomes and the respondents with higher educational levels are the other groups most likely to state their community is friendly.

Satisfaction with Community Services and Amenities

To gauge rural residents' satisfaction with their communities' services and amenities, they were asked to rate how satisfied they were with a list of 26 services and amenities, taking into consideration cost, availability, and quality. Residents report high levels of satisfaction with some services, but other services and amenities have higher levels of dissatisfaction.

At least one-third of the respondents are either "very dissatisfied" or "somewhat dissatisfied" with the following: entertainment (43%), retail shopping (40%), streets (40%), and restaurants (36%) (Appendix Table 4). The four services or amenities respondents are the most satisfied with (based on the combined percentage of "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" responses) include: parks and recreation (74%), basic medical care services (73%), library services (73%), and education (K - 12) (70%).

The ten services and amenities with the greatest dissatisfaction ratings were analyzed by community size, region and various individual attributes (Appendix Table 5). Many differences emerge.

Younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to be dissatisfied with the entertainment in their community. Fifty-eight percent of the persons between the ages of 19 and 39 are dissatisfied with entertainment, compared to only 26 percent

of the persons age 65 and older.

The respondents with occupations classified as "other" are more likely than the respondents with different occupations to express dissatisfaction with entertainment. Fifty-four percent of the respondents with these occupations are dissatisfied with entertainment, compared to 34 percent of the farmers or ranchers.

Other groups more likely to express dissatisfaction with entertainment include: persons living in or near the larger communities, respondents living in the Panhandle, persons with higher household incomes, the divorced or separated respondents, and persons with higher educational levels.

Persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 500 to 4,999 are more likely than persons living in communities of different sizes to be dissatisfied with the retail shopping in their community. Forty-five percent of the persons living in or near communities of this size are dissatisfied with retail shopping, compared to 32 percent of the persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people.

Respondents with occupations classified as "other" are more likely than those with different occupations to express dissatisfaction with retail shopping. Forty-seven percent of these respondents are dissatisfied with retail shopping, compared to 31 percent of the farmers and ranchers.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with retail shopping include: persons living in both the North Central and Northeast

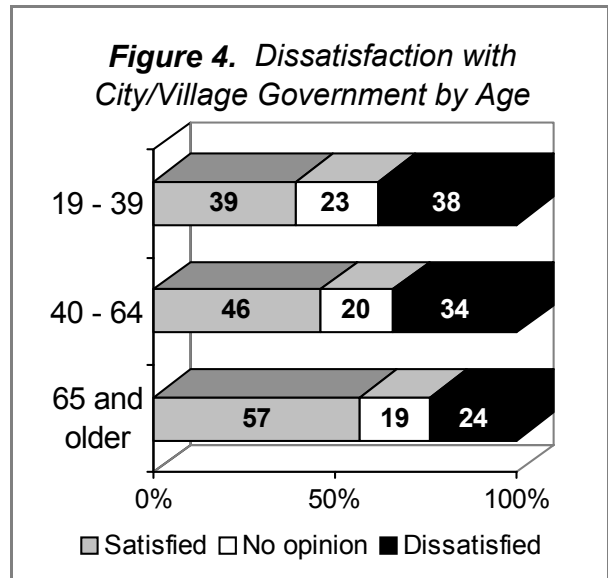
regions of the state, the younger respondents, females, and the persons with higher educational levels.

Persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 500 to 4,999 are also more likely to express dissatisfaction with their community’s restaurants. Forty-three percent of the persons living in communities of this size are dissatisfied with its restaurants, compared to 27 percent of the persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people.

Other groups more likely to be dissatisfied with the restaurants in their community include: persons living in the Southeast region, respondents with higher income levels, younger respondents, persons who are divorced or separated, respondents with higher educational levels, and both persons with professional occupations and occupations classified as “other.”

Younger respondents are more likely than the older respondents to express dissatisfaction with their city/village government. Thirty-eight percent of the persons age 19 to 39 are dissatisfied with their city/village government, compared to 24 percent of the persons age 65 and older (Figure 4).

The other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their city/village government include: persons living in or near the largest communities, males, respondents with some college education, and the laborers. The widowed respondents are the marital group least likely to be dissatisfied with their city/village government.



Persons living in the Northeast region of the state are more likely than those living elsewhere to express dissatisfaction with the streets in their community. Forty-three percent of the persons living in this region are dissatisfied with their community’s streets, compared to 33 percent of the persons living in the Panhandle.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with the streets include: persons living in or near the largest communities, persons with lower income levels, the younger respondents, females, the divorced/separated respondents, persons with lower educational levels, and the laborers.

The younger respondents are more likely than the older respondents to be dissatisfied with their county government. Approximately 32 percent of the persons under the age of 65 are dissatisfied with their county government, compared to 20 percent of the persons age 65 and older.

The other groups most likely to express

dissatisfaction with their county government include: males, the married respondents, persons with some college, and both the farmers and ranchers and laborers.

Persons living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than those living in or near larger communities to be dissatisfied with the law enforcement in their community (Figure 5). Thirty-three percent of the residents living in or near communities with less than 500 people express dissatisfaction with their community's law enforcement. Only 21 percent of the persons living in or near communities with populations of 5,000 or more are dissatisfied with their law enforcement.

Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with law enforcement include: persons living in the North Central region of the state, persons with lower income levels, younger respondents, persons

with lower educational levels, and the laborers.

The persons with professional occupations are more likely than the persons with different occupations to express dissatisfaction with the housing in their community. Thirty-three percent of the persons with professional occupations are dissatisfied with their community's housing, compared to 23 percent of the laborers.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with the housing in their community include: persons living in or near the smallest communities, persons living in the Panhandle and South Central regions of the state, persons with higher incomes, the younger respondents, females, the divorced/separated respondents, and the persons with higher educational levels.

The older respondents are more likely than the younger respondents to be dissatisfied with the bus service in their community. Twenty-six percent of the persons age 65 and older are dissatisfied with the bus service, compared to 15 percent of the persons age 19 to 39.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with the bus service include: persons living in or near the largest communities, respondents living in the Panhandle, persons with lower income levels, the divorced/separated and widowed respondents, and persons with higher levels of education.

Persons living in the Panhandle are more likely than persons living elsewhere to be dissatisfied with their community's airline service (Figure 6). Thirty-one percent of the

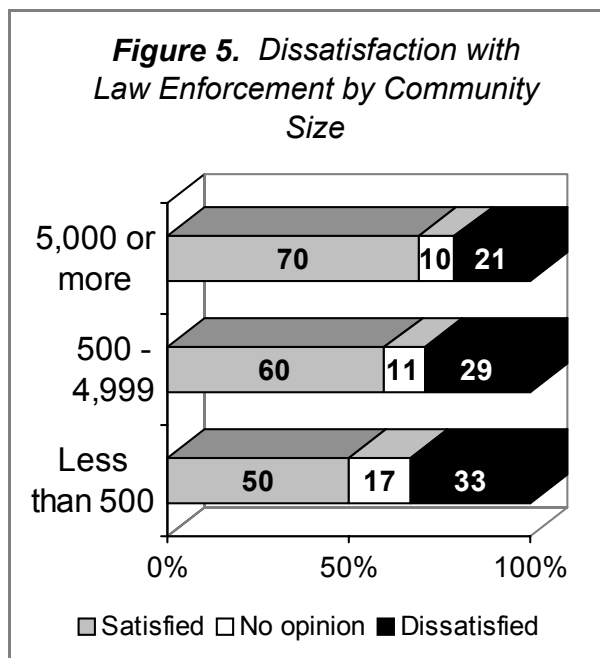
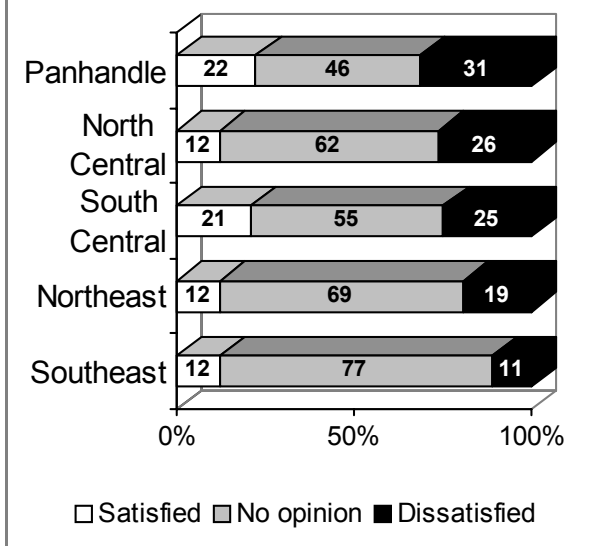


Figure 6. Dissatisfaction with Airline Service by Region



Panhandle residents are dissatisfied with the airline service in their community, compared to only 11 percent of the persons living in the Southeast region of the state.

Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with the airline service include: persons living in or near the largest communities, respondents with higher income levels, persons between the ages of 40 and 64, respondents with the highest educational levels, and the persons with professional occupations.

Plans to Leave the Community

To determine rural Nebraskans' migration intentions, respondents were asked, "Do you plan to move from your community in the next year?" Response options included yes, no, or uncertain. A follow-up question (asked only of those who indicated they were planning to move) asked where they

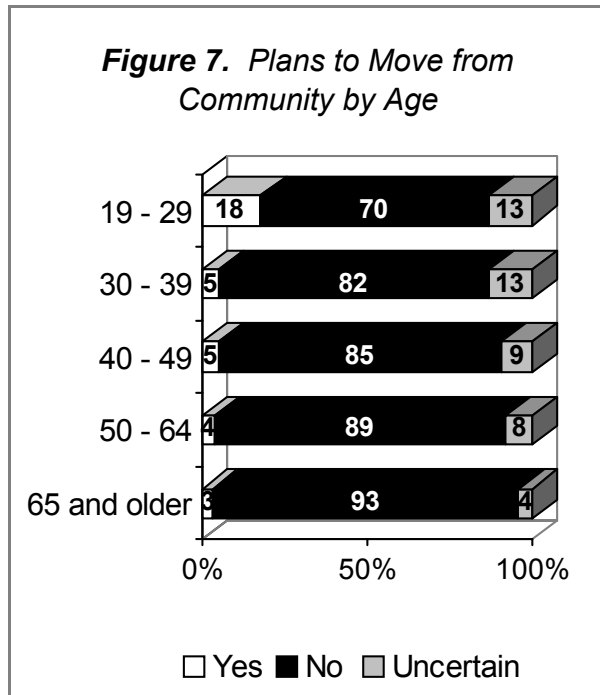
planned to move. The answer categories for this question were: Lincoln/Omaha metro areas, some place in Nebraska outside the Lincoln/Omaha metro areas, or some place other than Nebraska.

Only four percent indicate they are planning to move from their community in the next year, eight percent are uncertain, and 88 percent have no plans to move. Of those who are planning to move, 56 percent plan to remain in the state, with 18 percent planning to move to either Lincoln or Omaha and 38 percent plan to move to another part of the state. Forty-four percent are planning to leave the state.

Intentions to move from their community differed only by age, marital status, and occupation (Appendix Table 6). Younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to be planning to move from their community in the next year (Figure 7). Eighteen percent of the persons between the ages of 19 and 29 are planning to move next year, compared to only three percent of the persons age 65 and older.

The respondents who have never married and the persons who are divorced or separated are more likely than the married or widowed persons to be planning to move. When comparing the responses by occupation, persons with professional, service, and manual labor occupations are the groups most likely to be planning to move in the next year.

The expected location where they plan to move differed by region, income, age, and marital status. The groups most likely to be planning to leave the state include: persons living in the Panhandle, respondents with



lower incomes, the oldest respondents, and the persons who are divorced or separated.

Factors Influencing Decision to Move

It is important to understand why people would choose to move away from their community. In order to obtain this information, the respondents who indicated they were planning to move from their community in the next year and the persons who were uncertain about their plans to move were asked to rate how important various considerations were when deciding to move from their current community.

Approximately two-thirds of the persons either planning to move or considering a move say the following are either “very important” or “somewhat important” considerations: lack of economic opportunities in their current community (72%), for lower taxes (67%), and to find a

better job (66%).

Then, these respondents were asked to give the most important factor that influenced their decision to move from their community. Thirty-two percent of the potential movers state it was “to find a better job.” Eleven percent say the following factors are the most important influences on their decision to move: to be closer to relatives, for lower taxes, and a reason other than those listed on the survey.

Since the out-migration of youth from rural Nebraska has been a growing concern, the considerations were examined by age to see if any differences emerge (Appendix Table 7). For the respondents under the age of 50, the top three considerations are the same (although their rank order is slightly different). These are the same three considerations mentioned earlier.

The lack of economic opportunities in their current community is an important consideration for the persons under the age of 65, but is rated much lower by the respondents age 65 and over. Similarly, the consideration “to find a better job” is one of the top considerations for the respondents under the age of 50, but is rated lower by the older respondents.

Looking “for a more desirable climate” is rated fairly high by the persons age 65 and older, but is not a top consideration for the younger respondents. And, the persons between the ages of 30 and 39 rate “to find higher quality education for your children (K - 12)” fairly high, but this is not a highly rated consideration for persons of different ages.

The ratings of these considerations were also examined by the size of the respondent's community. In a few instances, the rank ordering is different for the different size classes. For instance, "to lower the cost of living" is rated fairly high by respondents living in communities with populations of 500 or more. However, this consideration is not as highly rated by the persons living in the communities with less than 500 people.

Also, "better access to health care" is one of the top considerations for persons living in communities with populations ranging from 500 to 999. Yet, this reason ranks lower among persons living in communities of different sizes. Finally, the consideration "to reduce current commute" is rated higher by persons living in the smallest communities than it is by the persons living in larger communities.

Conclusion

Overall, rural Nebraskans have favorable views of their communities. The majority of the respondents either felt their community had stayed the same or changed for the better during the past year. In addition, most also characterize their communities as friendly, trusting, and supportive.

Respondents living in larger communities are more likely than the persons living in smaller communities to say their community has changed for the better during the past year. However, the persons living in the smaller communities are more likely to rate their communities as friendly, trusting, and supportive.

The services and amenities in the

communities that residents are most dissatisfied with include: entertainment, retail shopping, streets, and restaurants. The services and amenities drawing the highest satisfaction ratings include: parks and recreation, basic medical care services, library services, and education (K - 12).

Most rural Nebraskans are planning to stay in their community next year. Only four percent report planning to move and eight percent are uncertain. Forty-four percent of the persons planning to move say they will move out of Nebraska.

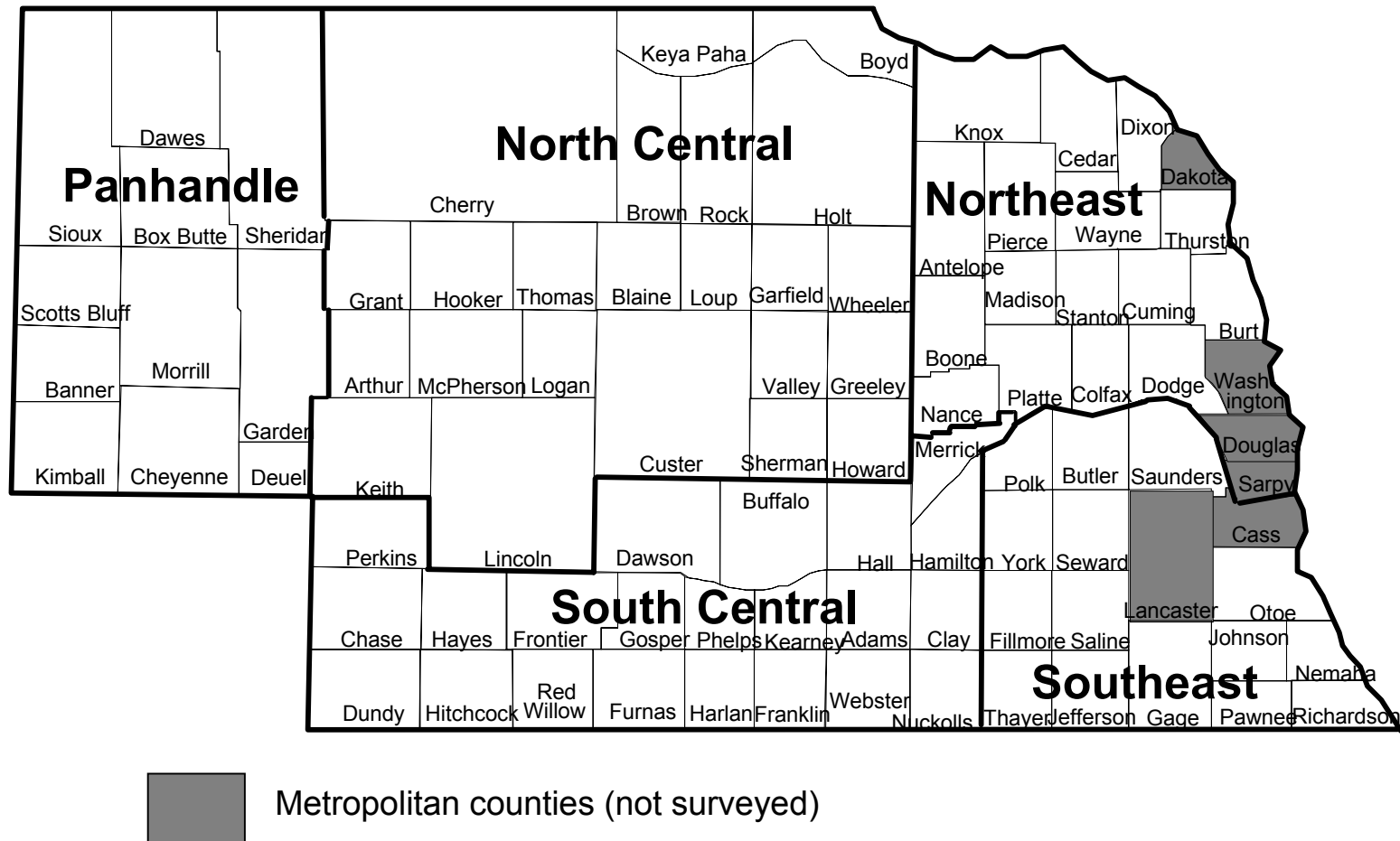
When asked the factors that influenced their decision to move, the reasons are primarily economic. The factor that was most frequently cited as a very important or somewhat important reason for moving was the lack of economic opportunities in their current community. Other important factors include to lower taxes and to find a better job. When asked to identify the most important factor that influenced their decision to move, the top-rated reason was to find a better job.

These economic considerations are more important for the younger persons. The top reasons given by the persons age 65 and older who are considering a move include: for lower taxes, to lower cost of living, better access to health care, and for a more desirable climate.

The highest ranked factors influencing the potential movers' decision to stay or leave their community indicate that more needs to be done to provide economic opportunities in rural areas. This is especially true if rural communities hope to retain their younger residents. More economic opportunities and

better jobs would appear to help make the decision to remain in rural Nebraska easier for the younger generation.

Appendix Figure 1. Regions of Nebraska



Appendix Table 1. Demographic Profile of Rural Poll Respondents Compared to 1990 Census

	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1990
	Poll	Poll	Poll	Poll	Poll	Census
Age : ¹						
20 - 39	17%	20%	21%	25%	24%	38%
40 - 64	49%	54%	52%	55%	48%	36%
65 and over	33%	26%	28%	20%	28%	26%
Gender: ²						
Female	37%	57%	31%	58%	28%	49%
Male	63%	43%	69%	42%	72%	51%
Education: ³						
Less than 9 th grade	4%	2%	3%	2%	5%	10%
9 th to 12 th grade (no diploma)	5%	4%	5%	3%	5%	12%
High school diploma (or equivalent)	35%	34%	36%	33%	34%	38%
Some college, no degree	26%	28%	25%	27%	25%	21%
Associate degree	8%	9%	9%	10%	8%	7%
Bachelors degree	13%	15%	15%	16%	14%	9%
Graduate or professional degree	8%	9%	8%	9%	9%	3%
Household income: ⁴						
Less than \$10,000	9%	3%	8%	3%	7%	19%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	16%	10%	15%	10%	16%	25%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	20%	15%	18%	17%	19%	21%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	16%	19%	18%	20%	18%	15%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	14%	17%	15%	18%	14%	9%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	9%	15%	9%	12%	10%	5%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	8%	11%	8%	10%	7%	3%
\$75,000 or more	8%	11%	10%	10%	8%	3%
Marital Status: ⁵						
Married	70%	95%	76%	95%	73%	64%
Never married	7%	0.2%	7%	0.4%	8%	20%
Divorced/separated	10%	2%	8%	1%	9%	7%
Widowed/widower	14%	4%	10%	3%	10%	10%

¹ 1990 Census universe is non-metro population 20 years of age and over.

² 1990 Census universe is total non-metro population.

³ 1990 Census universe is non-metro population 18 years of age and over.

⁴ 1990 Census universe is all non-metro households.

⁵ 1990 Census universe is non-metro population 15 years of age and over.

Appendix Table 2. Perceptions of Community Change by Community Size, Region, and Individual Attributes

Communities across the nation are undergoing change.				
When you think about this past year, would you say...				
My community has changed for the				
	<i>Better</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Worse</i>	<i>Significance</i>
<i>Percentages</i>				
<i>(n = 3020)</i>				
<u>Community Size</u>				
Less than 500	16	59	26	
500 - 999	26	56	17	
1,000 - 4,999	27	52	21	P ² = 71.50
5,000 - 9,999	34	48	18	(.000)
10,000 and up	34	51	16	
<u>Region</u>				
<i>(n = 3029)</i>				
Panhandle	32	55	13	
North Central	25	58	18	
South Central	31	48	21	P ² = 28.35
Northeast	25	56	19	(.000)
Southeast	26	54	21	
<u>Individual Attributes:</u>				
<i>Income Level</i>				
<i>(n = 2773)</i>				
Under \$20,000	22	58	20	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	26	53	21	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	31	50	19	P ² = 35.86
\$60,000 and over	37	46	17	(.000)
<i>Age</i>				
<i>(n = 3000)</i>				
19 - 29	33	54	13	
30 - 39	29	52	19	
40 - 49	28	50	22	P ² = 27.93
50 - 64	27	51	23	(.000)
65 and older	28	58	15	
<i>Gender</i>				
<i>(n = 3015)</i>				
Male	26	54	20	P ² = 8.21
Female	31	52	17	(.017)
<i>Marital Status</i>				
<i>(n = 3017)</i>				
Married	28	52	20	
Never married	25	59	17	
Divorced/separated	25	55	20	P ² = 5.40
Widowed	30	53	17	(.494)
<i>Education</i>				
<i>(n = 3004)</i>				
No H.S. diploma	23	59	18	
H.S. diploma	25	55	20	
Some college, 2 year degree	26	54	20	P ² = 38.30
Bachelors or graduate degree	37	46	17	(.000)

Appendix Table 2 Continued.

Communities across the nation are undergoing change.				
When you think about this past year, would you say...				
My community has changed for the				
	<i>Better</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Worse</i>	<i>Significance</i>
<i>Occupation</i>		(n = 1995)		
Professional/tech/admin.	31	51	19	
Admin. support	39	48	13	
Sales	33	48	19	
Service	29	55	16	
Farming/ranching	18	52	30	
Skilled laborer	27	52	21	
Manual laborer	23	51	26	P ² = 49.55
Other	34	52	14	(.000)

Appendix Table 3. Measures of Community Attributes in Relation to Community Size, Region, and Individual Attributes

	My community is...				My community is...				My community is...			
	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Unfriendly</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>Trusting</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Distrusting</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>Supportive</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Hostile</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
Community Size	(n = 3003)				<i>Percentages</i> (n = 2920)				(n = 2919)			
Less than 500	74	18	8		67	21	13		66	23	12	
500 - 999	78	11	10		67	22	12		67	21	12	
1,000 - 4,999	73	16	11	P ² =	64	22	14	P ² =	63	23	14	P ² =
5,000 - 9,999	70	20	10	28.72	59	26	15	25.31	60	26	14	18.86
10,000 and up	67	22	11	(.000)	56	25	19	(.001)	56	28	16	(.016)
Region	(n = 3010)				(n = 2920)				(n = 2922)			
Panhandle	74	16	10		63	24	13		64	24	12	
North Central	74	17	9		61	26	13		61	25	14	
South Central	73	17	10	P ² =	61	23	16	P ² =	63	24	14	P ² =
Northeast	71	18	11	6.38	62	23	15	5.35	63	25	12	4.79
Southeast	69	20	12	(.605)	62	22	16	(.719)	59	25	15	(.780)
Individual Attributes:	(n = 2755)				(n = 2694)				(n = 2695)			
<i>Income Level</i>	(n = 2755)				(n = 2694)				(n = 2695)			
Under \$20,000	69	19	12		61	23	16		60	25	15	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	71	20	9	P ² =	61	24	15	P ² =	61	25	14	P ² =
\$40,000 - \$59,999	71	18	12	13.72	61	23	16	3.10	60	25	15	3.22
\$60,000 and over	77	13	10	(.033)	65	21	14	(.797)	64	22	13	(.781)
<i>Age</i>	(n = 2983)				(n = 2895)				(n = 2897)			
19 - 29	71	17	12		55	26	19		57	28	15	
30 - 39	69	20	11		61	22	18		59	27	15	
40 - 49	70	18	12	P ² =	59	24	17	P ² =	57	25	18	P ² =
50 - 64	71	18	11	11.21	62	22	17	25.04	61	25	15	35.64
65 and older	75	17	8	(.190)	67	23	11	(.002)	69	22	9	(.000)

Appendix Table 3 continued.

	<i>My community is...</i>				<i>My community is...</i>				<i>My community is...</i>			
	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Unfriendly</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>Trusting</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Distrusting</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>Supportive</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Hostile</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
<i>Gender</i>		(n = 2998)		P ² =		(n = 2912)		P ² =		(n = 2914)		P ² =
Male	73	17	10	1.15	63	22	15	2.59	61	25	14	2.97
Female	71	19	10	(.562)	61	25	15	(.274)	64	23	13	(.227)
<i>Marital Status</i>		(n = 3000)				(n = 2911)				(n = 2913)		
Married	73	17	10		63	23	15		62	23	14	
Never married	68	20	11	P ² =	58	24	18	P ² =	56	29	15	P ² =
Divorced/separated	62	23	14	19.28	55	25	20	12.96	53	30	17	27.50
Widowed	75	18	8	(.004)	66	23	11	(.044)	70	22	8	(.000)
<i>Education</i>		(n = 2985)				(n = 2899)				(n = 2903)		
No H.S. diploma	67	18	15		61	23	17		64	20	17	
H.S. diploma	73	17	10	P ² =	63	23	14	P ² =	62	25	13	P ² =
Some college	71	20	10	13.00	60	24	16	8.24	59	26	15	12.01
Bachelors or graduate degree	75	15	10	(.043)	66	21	13	(.221)	66	22	12	(.062)
<i>Occupation</i>		(n = 1997)				(n = 1982)				(n = 1974)		
Prof/tech/admin.	72	18	11		63	23	15		62	24	14	
Admin. support	69	22	9		61	23	16		65	28	7	
Sales	75	16	8		65	21	14		61	24	15	
Service	75	15	10		62	26	12		60	25	15	
Farming/ranching	72	17	10		63	21	16		61	24	15	
Skilled laborer	68	22	10	P ² =	60	21	19	P ² =	56	29	16	P ² =
Manual laborer	66	20	14	10.20	57	23	20	10.30	59	25	16	8.54
Other	71	18	11	(.747)	60	20	20	(.740)	56	28	16	(.860)

Appendix Table 4. Level of Satisfaction with Community Services and Amenities

<i>Service/Amenity</i>	<i>Dissatisfied*</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied*</i>
		<i>Percentages</i>	
Entertainment	43	23	34
Retail shopping	40	12	48
Streets	40	8	53
Restaurants	36	9	55
City/village government	32	20	48
County government	29	21	51
Law enforcement	26	12	62
Housing	25	17	58
Bus service	21	68	11
Airline service	21	63	16
Rail service	21	68	11
Highways and bridges	21	13	66
Basic medical care services	17	10	73
Taxi service	16	73	11
Airport	15	53	31
Mental health services	15	54	31
Solid waste disposal	14	25	61
Education (K - 12)	14	17	70
Parks and recreation	14	12	74
Day care services	12	46	43
Nursing home care	12	29	58
Sewage disposal	10	27	63
Water disposal	10	28	62
Library services	10	17	73
Senior centers	8	30	62
Head start programs	7	54	39

* Dissatisfied represents the combined percentage of “very dissatisfied” or “somewhat dissatisfied” responses. Similarly, satisfied is the combination of “very satisfied” and “somewhat satisfied” responses.

Appendix Table 5. Measures of Satisfaction with Ten Services and Amenities in Relation to Community Size, Region, and Individual Attributes

	<i>Entertainment</i>			<i>Retail shopping</i>			<i>Restaurants</i>			<i>City/village government</i>		
	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>											
Community Size	(n = 2933)			(n = 2949)			(n = 3001)			(n = 3018)		
Less than 500	34	35	32	43	25	32	58	15	27	49	25	26
500 - 4,999	30	24	46	43	12	45	48	9	43	49	19	32
5,000 and over	37	18	45	55	7	38	60	7	33	47	18	34
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 73.10 (.000)			P ² = 132.18 (.000)			P ² = 70.07 (.000)			P ² = 18.03 (.001)		
Region	(n = 2983)			(n = 2998)			(n = 3050)			(n = 3068)		
Panhandle	33	20	47	54	7	39	57	8	36	48	19	32
North Central	33	22	45	44	12	44	57	9	35	46	24	30
South Central	41	21	38	56	11	34	59	9	32	49	19	33
Northeast	33	22	45	43	13	44	54	10	37	49	20	31
Southeast	27	28	44	44	16	40	47	11	42	49	20	32
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 40.08 (.000)			P ² = 50.47 (.000)			P ² = 24.56 (.002)			P ² = 5.40 (.714)		
Income Level	(n = 2739)			(n = 2750)			(n = 2793)			(n = 2807)		
Under \$20,000	36	26	37	49	14	37	59	10	31	46	23	31
\$20,000 - \$39,999	33	23	44	47	12	41	53	9	37	48	20	33
\$40,000 - \$59,999	32	21	48	49	11	41	51	8	42	47	18	35
\$60,000 and over	34	18	48	46	11	43	52	9	40	53	17	30
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 21.78 (.001)			P ² = 7.05 (.316)			P ² = 18.86 (.004)			P ² = 11.41 (.076)		
Age	(n = 2957)			(n = 2970)			(n = 3021)			(n = 3039)		
19 - 39	30	13	58	43	10	46	50	5	44	39	23	38
40 - 64	31	20	48	46	12	42	51	9	40	46	20	34
65 and over	41	33	26	55	13	32	62	11	28	57	19	24
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 183.61 (.000)			P ² = 39.06 (.000)			P ² = 59.27 (.000)			P ² = 58.06 (.000)		
Gender	(n = 2971)			(n = 2988)			(n = 3037)			(n = 3056)		
Male	34	24	42	50	13	37	55	10	36	48	19	33
Female	34	22	45	45	11	44	54	8	38	49	22	29
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 2.45 (.294)			P ² = 11.22 (.004)			P ² = 3.50 (.173)			P ² = 6.71 (.035)		
Marital Status	(n = 2972)			(n = 2988)			(n = 3039)			(n = 3057)		
Married	34	23	43	48	12	40	53	10	37	47	19	33
Never married	31	19	51	47	11	41	57	7	36	42	25	33
Divorced/separated	30	16	54	49	11	41	54	6	40	45	22	33
Widowed	40	32	28	50	13	37	61	11	29	59	19	22
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 59.51 (.000)			P ² = 1.98 (.922)			P ² = 17.49 (.008)			P ² = 31.43 (.000)		
Education	(n = 2953)			(n = 2968)			(n = 3018)			(n = 3037)		
High school or less	36	27	37	50	13	37	57	12	32	48	22	30
Some college	32	20	48	46	13	41	52	9	40	45	19	36
College grad	34	19	47	49	8	44	54	6	40	55	16	29
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 39.98 (.000)			P ² = 21.46 (.000)			P ² = 34.05 (.000)			P ² = 25.88 (.000)		
Occupation	(n = 1997)			(n = 2005)			(n = 2023)			(n = 2029)		
Prof/tech/admin.	31	17	51	47	10	43	50	8	42	49	19	32
Farming/ranching	39	27	34	54	15	31	58	10	32	44	27	30
Laborer	29	22	49	42	13	45	49	12	39	40	23	37
Other	29	17	54	43	10	47	52	6	42	47	18	35
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	P ² = 41.50 (.000)			P ² = 27.61 (.000)			P ² = 20.01 (.003)			P ² = 19.14 (.004)		

Appendix Table 5 continued.

	<i>Streets</i>			<i>County government</i>			<i>Law enforcement</i>			<i>Housing</i>		
	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>											
Community Size		(n = 3001)			(n = 2998)			(n = 3009)			(n = 2992)	
Less than 500	50	11	39	50	20	30	50	17	33	49	23	28
500 - 4,999	57	7	36	53	19	28	60	11	29	60	17	23
5,000 and over	50	8	43	49	22	29	70	10	21	61	14	25
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 25.39 (.000)			P ² = 5.41 (.248)			P ² = 69.92 (.000)			P ² = 31.71 (.000)	
Region		(n = 3049)			(n = 3047)			(n = 3056)			(n = 3046)	
Panhandle	59	8	33	50	20	30	64	12	24	59	15	26
North Central	56	11	34	51	21	29	59	11	30	53	24	24
South Central	52	6	42	53	19	28	66	10	23	59	15	26
Northeast	48	8	43	50	23	27	62	12	26	61	16	23
Southeast	53	8	39	50	21	29	58	13	29	57	18	25
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 25.92 (.001)			P ² = 5.78 (.672)			P ² = 15.86 (.044)			P ² = 19.66 (.012)	
Income Level		(n = 2790)			(n = 2786)			(n = 2795)			(n = 2784)	
Under \$20,000	48	10	41	49	24	27	59	13	28	57	19	23
\$20,000 - \$39,999	51	7	42	50	21	30	60	12	28	57	18	24
\$40,000 - \$59,999	53	8	39	51	18	31	65	9	26	60	13	27
\$60,000 and over	58	6	37	55	18	27	67	11	23	60	13	26
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 17.14 (.009)			P ² = 12.58 (.050)			P ² = 12.91 (.044)			P ² = 15.59 (.016)	
Age		(n = 3024)			(n = 3020)			(n = 3028)			(n = 3018)	
19 - 39	44	9	47	41	28	32	56	14	30	52	16	32
40 - 64	52	7	41	48	19	33	61	11	28	56	17	27
65 and over	58	9	34	61	19	20	68	11	21	65	19	17
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 32.12 (.000)			P ² = 84.06 (.000)			P ² = 29.06 (.000)			P ² = 52.49 (.000)	
Gender		(n = 3039)			(n = 3035)			(n = 3045)			(n = 3033)	
Male	55	8	38	52	18	31	63	12	25	61	17	22
Female	49	8	43	50	26	24	62	11	27	54	18	29
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 8.98 (.011)			P ² = 36.45 (.000)			P ² = 1.61 (.447)			P ² = 18.19 (.000)	
Marital Status		(n = 3041)			(n = 3037)			(n = 3046)			(n = 3034)	
Married	53	8	39	51	18	31	63	11	26	59	17	24
Never married	46	13	41	44	29	28	54	15	31	51	18	30
Divorced/separated	50	6	44	45	26	29	61	14	25	50	17	33
Widowed	55	9	37	58	25	18	67	10	23	64	18	18
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 14.95 (.021)			P ² = 49.21 (.000)			P ² = 12.43 (.053)			P ² = 25.99 (.000)	
Education		(n = 3020)			(n = 3016)			(n = 3026)			(n = 3014)	
High school or less	51	8	41	50	23	27	60	12	28	57	20	23
Some college	51	7	42	49	20	31	60	12	28	57	17	26
College grad	58	8	35	56	16	28	71	9	20	61	11	27
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 10.93 (.027)			P ² = 14.44 (.006)			P ² = 25.59 (.000)			P ² = 25.56 (.000)	
Occupation		(n = 2019)			(n = 2018)			(n = 2021)			(n = 2019)	
Prof/tech/admin.	53	5	42	50	20	30	67	10	23	55	13	33
Farming/ranching	55	14	31	53	14	33	59	11	30	51	25	24
Laborer	44	9	48	40	27	33	53	13	34	58	19	23
Other	51	6	43	49	20	31	60	12	28	59	14	28
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 47.88 (.000)			P ² = 25.36 (.000)			P ² = 22.24 (.001)			P ² = 40.14 (.000)	

Appendix Table 5 continued.

	<i>Bus service</i>			<i>Airline service</i>		
	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>					
Community Size		(n = 2770)			(n = 2782)	
Less than 500	7	76	17	11	73	16
500 - 4,999	7	74	19	10	76	14
5,000 and over	15	61	25	23	47	30
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 68.77 (.000)			P ² = 230.33 (.000)	
Region		(n = 2816)			(n = 2826)	
Panhandle	11	58	31	22	46	31
North Central	10	65	25	12	62	26
South Central	12	66	22	21	55	25
Northeast	11	71	18	12	69	19
Southeast	8	77	16	12	77	11
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 49.30 (.000)			P ² = 142.60 (.000)	
Income Level		(n = 2596)			(n = 2604)	
Under \$20,000	14	62	25	16	65	18
\$20,000 - \$39,999	10	69	20	14	67	20
\$40,000 - \$59,999	7	71	22	17	58	26
\$60,000 and over	10	72	18	18	57	25
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 23.71 (.001)			P ² = 23.48 (.001)	
Age		(n = 2790)			(n = 2800)	
19 - 39	8	77	15	13	70	18
40 - 64	9	71	20	15	62	23
65 and over	15	60	26	20	61	20
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 56.13 (.000)			P ² = 24.94 (.000)	
Gender		(n = 2804)			(n = 2815)	
Male	10	70	21	16	62	22
Female	12	67	21	16	65	19
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 5.28 (.071)			P ² = 4.93 (.085)	
Marital Status		(n = 2806)			(n = 2817)	
Married	9	72	20	15	64	22
Never married	12	68	20	16	62	22
Divorced/separated	12	63	26	20	59	21
Widowed	18	56	26	19	63	18
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 43.89 (.000)			P ² = 9.81 (.133)	
Education		(n = 2787)			(n = 2798)	
High school or less	12	70	18	16	67	17
Some college	10	68	22	15	63	22
College grad	8	68	25	16	56	28
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 16.33 (.003)			P ² = 30.13 (.000)	
Occupation		(n = 1918)			(n = 1922)	
Prof/tech/admin.	9	70	21	17	58	25
Farming/ranching	9	73	18	13	70	18
Laborer	8	77	15	12	71	17
Other	9	70	21	15	61	24
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		P ² = 8.61 (.197)			P ² = 27.52 (.000)	

Appendix Table 6. Plans to Leave Community by Community Size, Region, and Individual Attributes

	<i>Do you plan to leave your community in the next year?</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>If yes, where do you plan to move?</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>		<i>Lincoln/Omaha metro areas</i>	<i>Some other place in NE</i>	<i>Some place other than Nebraska</i>	
Community Size	(n = 3069)				<i>Percentages</i>			
Less than 500	4	90	7		16	58	26	
500 - 999	4	91	6		8	25	67	
1,000 - 4,999	4	87	9		9	41	50	
5,000 - 9,999	5	87	9	P ² = 10.76	11	39	50	P ² = 14.12
10,000 and up	6	86	8	(.216)	31	31	38	(.079)
Region	(n = 3081)				(n = 129)			
Panhandle	5	86	9		0	19	81	
North Central	5	87	8		17	28	56	
South Central	5	87	7		17	50	33	
Northeast	5	89	7	P ² = 9.43	32	36	32	P ² = 18.37
Southeast	3	89	9	(.308)	17	44	39	(.019)
Individual Attributes:								
Income Level	(n = 2817)				(n = 127)			
Under \$20,000	5	87	8		27	24	50	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	5	87	9		19	30	51	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	4	88	8	P ² = 3.13	11	64	25	P ² = 13.36
\$60,000 and over	5	89	6	(.792)	17	44	39	(.038)
Age	(n = 3052)				(n = 129)			
19 - 29	18	70	13		40	32	28	
30 - 39	5	82	13		11	47	42	
40 - 49	5	85	9		12	32	56	
50 - 64	4	89	8	P ² = 111.86	19	52	30	P ² = 15.98
65 and older	3	93	4	(.000)	13	29	58	(.043)
Gender	(n = 3067)				(n = 129)			
Male	5	87	8	P ² = 2.56	13	39	48	P ² = 5.02
Female	4	89	7	(.278)	29	36	36	(.081)
Marital Status	(n = 3069)				(n = 129)			
Married	4	89	7		14	43	43	
Never married	8	80	12		53	24	24	
Divorced/separated	7	79	14	P ² = 46.96	19	19	62	P ² = 22.11
Widowed	4	92	4	(.000)	0	57	43	(.001)

	<i>Do you plan to leave your community in the next year?</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>If yes, where do you plan to move?</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>		<i>Lincoln/Omaha metro areas</i>	<i>Some other place in NE</i>	<i>Some place other than Nebraska</i>	
	(n = 3052)				(n = 129)			
<i>Education</i>					<i>Percentages</i>			
No H.S. diploma	3	91	7	P ² = 11.27 (.080)	14	29	57	P ² = 4.56 (.602)
H.S. diploma	3	89	7		18	47	35	
Some college	5	87	8		14	40	46	
Bachelors or graduate degree	6	86	8		26	29	45	
	(n = 2022)				(n = 90)			
<i>Occupation</i>								
Prof/tech/admin.	6	86	8	P ² = 26.49 (.022)	16	43	41	P ² = 12.95 (.530)
Admin. support	4	90	6		50*	25*	25*	
Sales	4	85	11		14*	29*	57*	
Service	6	82	12		46	8	46	
Farming/ranching	1	93	6		0*	50*	50*	
Skilled laborer	5	86	9		10*	40*	50*	
Manual laborer	6	87	8		23	39	39	
Other	3	93	5		0*	50*	50*	

* = That row represents 10 or fewer respondents.

Appendix Table 7. Factors Influencing Decision to Move from Community in Relation to Age and Community Size

	<i>Age categories</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>19 - 29</i>	<i>30 - 39</i>	<i>40 - 49</i>	<i>50 - 64</i>	<i>65 and older</i>	
	<i>Percent Rating Each Factor as "Somewhat Important" or "Very Important"</i>					
Lack of economic opportunities in current community	69	88	85	69	27	72
For lower taxes	54	67	70	72	61	67
To find a better job	84	85	82	56	9	66
To lower cost of living	54	64	66	70	61	64
Better access to health care	43	67	57	68	57	60
For more cultural opportunities	54	60	53	59	36	54
To be closer to relatives	43	47	49	54	50	49
For a more desirable climate	29	49	47	48	52	46
Looking for a safer place to live	31	49	47	54	24	45
To find higher quality education for your children (K - 12)	24	65	40	17	9	33
To reduce current commute	21	43	37	30	20	33
<u>Leaving farming and ranching</u>	5	14	14	10	11	12

Appendix Table 7 Continued.

	<i>Community size categories</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>Less than 500</i>	<i>500 - 999</i>	<i>1,000 - 4,999</i>	<i>5,000 - 9,999</i>	<i>10,000 and over</i>	
	<i>Percent Rating Each Factor as "Somewhat Important" or "Very Important"</i>					
Lack of economic opportunities in current community	70	73	74	71	71	72
For lower taxes	57	63	64	71	74	67
To find a better job	62	63	64	69	70	66
To lower cost of living	44	63	64	75	69	64
Better access to health care	46	66	61	61	65	60
For more cultural opportunities	49	62	50	57	55	54
To be closer to relatives	39	45	53	42	55	49
For a more desirable climate	28	53	52	36	51	46
Looking for a safer place to live	32	33	36	51	58	45
To find higher quality education for your children (K - 12)	33	33	29	33	37	33
To reduce current commute	46	50	37	24	21	33
Leaving farming and ranching	20	24	11	13	5	12

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