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## Satisfaction with Community Life in Non-Metropolitan Nebraska

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# CENTER FOR APPLIED RURAL INNOVATION

A Research Report\*

**Satisfaction with Community Life in Non-  
Metropolitan Nebraska**

*2009 Nebraska Rural Poll Results*

Rebecca J. Vogt  
Randolph L. Cantrell  
Bruce B. Johnson  
Bradley D. Lubben

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**Nebraska**  
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\*These reports have been peer reviewed by colleagues at the University of Nebraska. Any questions, suggestions, or concerns should be sent directly to the author(s).

All of the Center's research reports detailing Nebraska Rural Poll results are located on the Center's World Wide Web page at <http://cari.unl.edu/ruralpoll/>

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## *Executive Summary*

Most of the smaller communities in rural Nebraska have experienced population decline since 2000 while most of the larger communities have experienced population growth. Most communities are also facing budget issues due to the economic recession. Given these conditions, how do rural Nebraskans feel about their community? Are they satisfied with the services provided? Are they planning to move from their community next year? Do their perceptions differ by community size, the region in which they live, or their occupation?

This report details 2,852 responses to the 2009 Nebraska Rural Poll, the fourteenth annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their community. Trends for some of these questions are examined by comparing data from the thirteen previous polls to this year's results. For all questions, comparisons are made among different respondent subgroups, that is, comparisons by age, occupation, region, etc. Based on these analyses, some key findings emerged:

- ***Rural Nebraskans are less positive about their communities this year.*** The proportion of rural Nebraskans that viewed positive change in their communities decreased this year. The proportion saying their community has changed for the better declined from 30 percent last year to 23 percent this year (the lowest proportion of all fourteen years, also occurring in 2003). Only in these two years (this year and 2003) has the proportion of rural Nebraskans viewing negative change in their communities been greater than the proportion viewing positive change, although the proportions were almost identical in 2003. (page 2)
- ***By many different measures, rural Nebraskans are positive about their community.***
  - ✓ *Many rural Nebraskans rate their community favorably on its social dimensions.* Many rural Nebraskans rate their communities as friendly (74%), trusting (63%) and supportive (67%). (page 6)
  - ✓ *Many rural Nebraskans express positive sentiments about their community.* Approximately two-thirds (67%) agree with the statement that “my community is very special to me.” And 62 percent agree with the statement that “I feel I can really be myself in my community.” (page 10)
  - ✓ *Over one-half of rural Nebraskans say it would be difficult to leave their community.* Fifty-two percent say it would be difficult for their household to leave their community. Less than one-third (31%) indicate it would be easy for their household to leave their community and 17 percent gave a neutral response. (page 11)
- ***Residents of smaller communities are more likely than residents of larger communities to rate their community favorably on its social dimensions and to have positive sentiments about their community.***

- ✓ *Residents living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to rate their community as friendly, trusting and supportive.* Three-quarters (75%) of persons living in or near communities with populations under 1,000 say their community is supportive, compared to 60 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more. (page 6)
- ✓ *Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to express positive sentiments about their community.* Forty-two percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people agree with the statement that no other place can compare to my community. In comparison, 27 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more agree with this statement. (page 10)
- ***Except for a few services that are largely unavailable in rural communities, rural Nebraskans are generally satisfied with basic community services and amenities.*** At least 70 percent of rural Nebraskans are satisfied with the following services or amenities: fire protection (87%), parks and recreation (74%), library services (74%), and religious organizations (71%). On the other hand, at least one-third of rural Nebraskans are dissatisfied with the entertainment, retail shopping, restaurants, streets and roads, arts/cultural activities, and local government in their community. (page 7)
- ***Satisfaction with some social services has declined during the past thirteen years.*** As an example, the proportion of rural Nebraskans satisfied with nursing home care in their community has dropped from 63 percent in 1997 to 45 percent this year. (page 5)
- ***Few rural Nebraskans are planning to move from their community next year, and the potential movers who are planning to move out of Nebraska decreased from last year.*** Only four percent of rural Nebraskans are planning to move from their community in the next year. Of those who are planning to move, one-third (33%) are planning to leave Nebraska. Last year, 50 percent of the potential movers planned to leave the state. (page 4)

## *Introduction*

Recent community level Census data show that most small communities in Nebraska have experienced population decline since 2000. However, most larger communities have experienced population growth during this same time period. Most communities are also facing budget issues due to the economic recession.

Given these conditions, how do rural Nebraskans feel about their community? Are they satisfied with the services provided by their community? Are they planning to move from their community in the next year? Have these views changed over the past fourteen years? This paper provides a detailed analysis of these questions.

The 2009 Nebraska Rural Poll is the fourteenth annual effort to understand rural Nebraskans' perceptions. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their community. Trends for some of these questions will be examined by comparing the data from the thirteen previous polls to this year's results.

### *Methodology and Respondent Profile*

This study is based on 2,852 responses from Nebraskans living in the 84 non-metropolitan counties in the state. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed in March and April to approximately 6,400 randomly selected households. Metropolitan counties not included in the sample were Cass, Dakota, Dixon, Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy, Saunders, Seward and Washington. The 14-page questionnaire included questions pertaining to well-being, community, the current economic climate,

television viewing, self employment and work. This paper reports only results from the community portion of the survey.

A 45% 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.

Appendix Table 1 shows demographic data from this year's study and previous rural polls, as well as similar data based on the entire non-metropolitan population of Nebraska (using 2000 U.S. Census data). As can be seen from the table, there are some marked differences between some of the demographic variables in our sample compared to the Census data. Certainly some variance from 2000 Census data is to be expected as a result of changes that have occurred in the intervening nine years. Nonetheless, we suggest the reader use caution in generalizing our data to all rural Nebraska. However, given the random sampling frame used for this survey, the acceptable percentage of responses, and the large number of respondents, we feel the data provide useful insights into opinions of rural Nebraskans on the various issues presented in this report. The margin of error for this study is plus or minus two percent.



Since younger residents have typically been under-represented by survey respondents and older residents have been over-represented, weights were used to adjust the sample to match the age distribution in the non-metropolitan counties in Nebraska (using U.S. Census figures).

The average age of respondents is 50 years. Sixty-eight percent are married (Appendix Table 1) and 68 percent live within the city limits of a town or village. On average, respondents have lived in Nebraska 43 years and have lived in their current community 28 years. Fifty-two percent are living in or near towns or villages with populations less than 5,000. Ninety-five percent have attained at least a high school diploma.

Forty-one percent of the respondents report their 2008 approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, as below \$40,000. Forty-seven percent report incomes over \$50,000.

Seventy-seven percent were employed in 2008 on a full-time, part-time, or seasonal basis. Eighteen percent are retired. Thirty-one percent of those employed reported working in a management, professional, or education occupation. Thirteen percent indicated they were employed in agriculture.

***Trends in Community Ratings (1996 - 2009)***

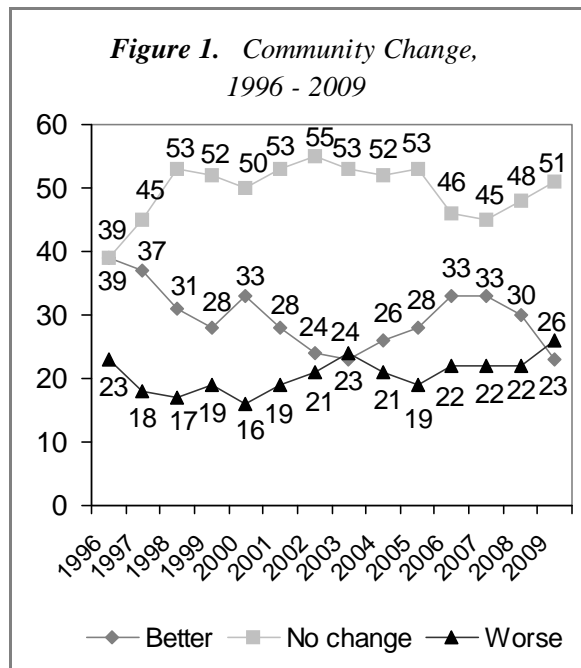
Comparisons are made between the community data collected this year to the thirteen previous studies. These were independent samples (the same people were not surveyed each year).

*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, no change or worse.

One difference in the wording of this question has occurred over the past fourteen 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. Also, in 2007 the middle response "same" was replaced with "no change."

Rural Nebraskans are less positive about their communities this year. The proportion of rural Nebraskans that viewed positive change in their communities decreased this



year (Figure 1). Following a seven year period of general decline, the proportion saying their community has changed for the better increased from 23 percent in 2003 to 33 percent in both 2006 and 2007. It then dipped slightly to 30 percent last year and declined further to 23 percent this year (the lowest proportion of all fourteen years, also occurring in 2003). Only in these two years (this year and 2003) has the proportion of rural Nebraskans viewing negative change in their communities been greater than the proportion viewing positive change, although the proportions were almost identical in 2003.

The proportion saying their community has stayed the same first increased from 1996 to 1998. It then remained fairly steady during the following eight years but declined in both 2006 and 2007. However, the proportion increased slightly to 48 percent last year and increased further to 51 percent this year. The proportion saying their community has changed for the worse has remained fairly steady across all fourteen years, but increased from 22 percent last year to 26 percent this year (the highest proportion in all years of this study).

### *Community Social Dimensions*

Respondents were also asked each year if 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 has remained

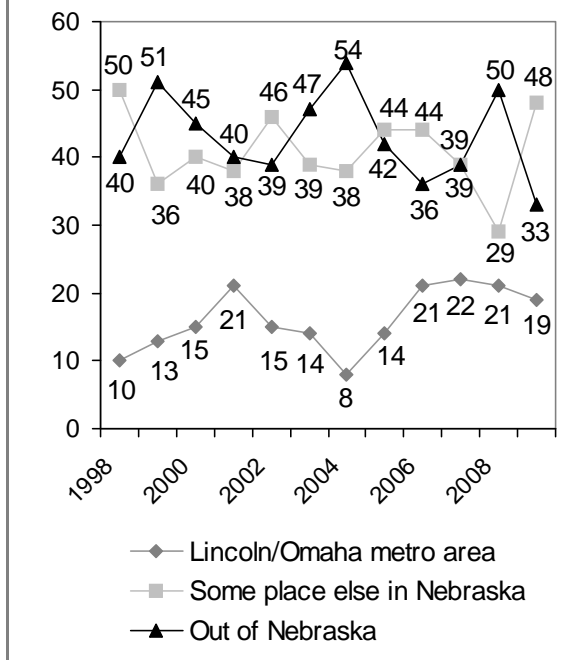
fairly steady over the fourteen year period, ranging from 69 to 75 percent. The proportion of respondents who view their community as trusting has also remained fairly steady, ranging from 59 to 66 percent. A similar pattern emerged when examining the proportion of respondents who rated their community as supportive. The proportions rating their community as supportive have ranged from 60 percent to 67 percent over the fourteen year period.

### *Plans to Leave the Community*

Starting in 1998, respondents were asked, “Do you plan to move from your community in the next year?” The proportion planning to leave their community has remained relatively stable during the past twelve years, ranging from 3 percent to 6 percent.

The expected destination for the persons planning to move has changed over time (Figure 2). The proportion of expected movers planning to leave the state sharply decreased this year (from 50 percent last year to 33 percent this year). Since the highest proportion in this study (54 percent in 2004), the proportion of expected movers planning to leave the state had generally decreased to 39 percent in 2007. However, it spiked upward last year and then declined sharply this year. The proportion of expected movers planning to move to either the Omaha or Lincoln area increased from 8 percent in 2004 to 21 percent in 2006. That proportion has held fairly steady during the past three years. After the proportion of expected movers planning to move to other areas of rural Nebraska declined from 44 percent in 2006 to 29 percent last year, it increased sharply to 48 percent this year.

**Figure 2. Expected Destination of Those Planning to Move: 1998 - 2009**



**Satisfaction with Community Services and Amenities**

Respondents were also asked how satisfied they are with various community services and amenities each year. They were asked this in all fourteen studies; however, in 1996 they were also asked about the availability of these services. Therefore, comparisons will only be made between the last thirteen studies, when the question wording was identical. The respondents were asked how satisfied they were with a list of 25 services and amenities, taking into consideration availability, cost, and quality.

Table 1 shows the proportions very or somewhat satisfied with the service each year. The rank ordering of these items has remained relatively stable over the thirteen

years. However, the proportion of rural Nebraskans satisfied with many social services has declined across all thirteen years of the study. As an example, the proportion of rural Nebraskans satisfied with nursing home care has dropped from 63 percent in 1997 to 45 percent this year. In addition, satisfaction with entertainment services (entertainment, retail shopping and restaurants) have also generally declined over the past thirteen years. Two services added in 2006 have shown steady increases in their satisfaction levels during the past three years - cellular phone service and Internet service. In 2006, 49 percent of rural Nebraskans were satisfied with their cellular phone service. That proportion increased to 61 percent this year.

**The Community and Its Attributes in 2009**

In this section, the 2009 data on respondents' evaluations of their communities and its attributes are examined in terms of any significant 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**

The perceptions of the change occurring in their community by various demographic subgroups are examined (Appendix Table 2). Residents living in or near mid-sized communities are more likely than persons living in or near smaller or larger communities to say that their community has changed for the better. Thirty percent of persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 1,000 to 4,999 believe their community has changed for the

**Table 1. Proportion of Respondents Very or Somewhat Satisfied with Each Service, 1997 - 2009**

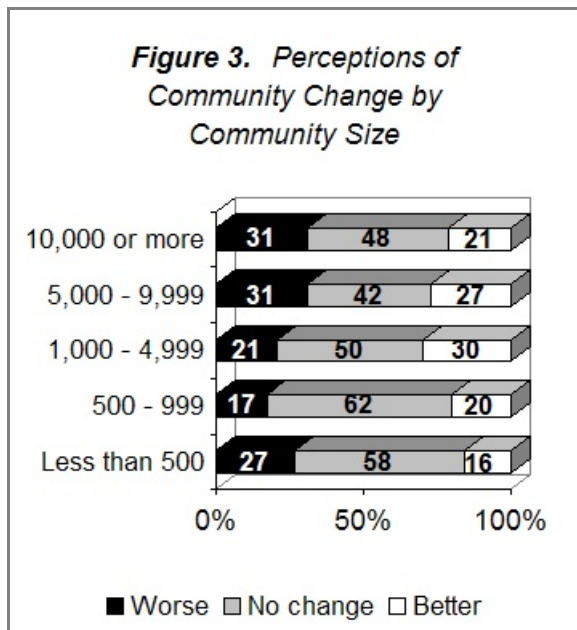
Service/Amenity	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
Fire protection	87	86	85	86	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Parks/recreation	74	75	74	75	74	75	76	74	73	77	75	77	77
Library services	74	75	74	73	72	74	74	74	71	79	72	78	78
Religious org.	71	73	72	72	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Education (K-12)	68	70	68	68	68	68	69	69	69	73	72	74	71
Medical care services	67	66	63	71	71	71	71	69	71	72	70	73	73
Sewage/waste disposal*	66	67	66	66	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sewage disposal	*	*	*	*	63	67	64	66	61	63	63	63	68
Water disposal	*	*	*	*	62	65	62	64	60	61	60	61	66
Solid waste disp.	*	*	*	64	63	65	63	64	60	60	60	59	61
Law enforcement	64	62	63	64	63	63	65	63	61	64	63	64	66
Housing	61	59	59	61	60	61	60	62	57	56	62	63	61
Cell phone services	61	58	54	49	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Internet service	58	57	51	50	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Community recycling	52	48	50	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Streets and roads*	51	49	55	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Streets	*	*	*	60	60	59	62	61	51	59	62	59	*
Highways/ bridges	*	*	*	69	70	69	70	69	65	68	68	66	*
Senior centers	47	47	48	55	59	58	61	62	58	59	62	65	66
Restaurants	47	45	50	54	54	56	54	51	53	55	56	57	59
Nursing home care	45	47	46	53	55	55	57	57	55	56	59	62	63
Local government	41	38	40	41	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
County govt.	*	*	*	*	47	48	51	47	49	49	53	53	48
City/village govt.	*	*	*	*	46	45	48	45	46	45	51	50	46
Retail shopping	40	39	41	45	47	49	45	45	47	47	49	48	53
Day care services	*	28	31	42	45	47	45	44	43	46	45	50	51
Child day care services	32	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Entertainment	29	26	30	34	32	36	33	32	33	33	34	35	38
Head start programs	28	26	29	37	39	41	40	38	39	40	37	41	44
Mental health services	24	23	23	27	30	31	30	30	29	30	29	32	34
Arts/cultural activities	24	25	26	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Adult day care services	22	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Airport	*	*	*	26	31	32	32	32	29	30	*	*	*
Public transportation services*	19	17	17	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Airline service	*	*	*	15	15	18	17	16	15	15	*	*	*
Taxi service	*	*	*	11	12	12	11	10	10	9	8	9	11
Rail service	*	*	*	9	11	13	11	11	10	10	11	11	14
Bus service	*	*	*	7	7	11	10	9	10	9	10	11	13

\* = Not asked that particular year; \* New items added in 2007 that combine previous items (indented below each).

better, compared to 16 percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people (Figure 3). Persons living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to say they have seen no change in their community during the past year. Persons living in or near the largest communities are most likely to say their community has changed for the worse.

When comparing responses by region, persons living in the Panhandle were the group *least* likely to say their community has changed for the better during the past year (see Appendix Figure 1 for the counties included in each region).

Persons with higher education levels are more likely than persons with less education to say their community has changed for the better during the past year. Persons who have lived in their community for more than five years are more likely than persons who have lived in the community for five years or less to say their community has changed



for the worse during the past year.

### 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 (74%), trusting (63%) and supportive (67%).

Respondents' ratings of their community on these dimensions differ by some of the characteristics examined (Appendix Table 3). Persons living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than persons living in or near the largest communities to rate their community as friendly, trusting and supportive. Three-quarters (75%) of persons living in or near communities with populations under 1,000 say their community is supportive, compared to 60 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more.

When comparing responses by region, residents of the North Central region are the group most likely to rate their community as both friendly and trusting.

Persons with higher income levels are more likely than persons with lower incomes to rate their community as friendly. Seventy-eight percent of persons with household incomes of \$60,000 or more rate their community as friendly, compared to 69 percent of persons with household incomes under \$20,000.

When comparing responses by age, persons between the ages of 30 and 39 are the group most likely to rate their community as friendly. Persons age 65 and older are more likely than younger respondents to view their community as trusting. Both of these age groups (age 30 to 39 and age 65 and older) are most likely to rate the community as supportive.

The widowed respondents are the marital group most likely to view their community as supportive. Persons with the highest education levels are more likely than persons with less education to rate their community as friendly, trusting and supportive. When comparing responses by occupation, persons with management, professional or education occupations are the group most likely to view their community as both friendly and supportive. Persons with occupations in agriculture are the group most likely to rate their community as trusting.

Persons who have lived in their community only a short time are more likely than persons who have lived in their community longer to rate their community as trusting. Just over two-thirds (68%) of persons who have lived in their community for five years or less rate their community as trusting, compared to 62 percent of persons who have lived in their community for more than five years.

### *Satisfaction with Community Services and Amenities*

Next, rural residents were asked to rate how satisfied they are with 25 different 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. Only four services listed have a higher proportion of dissatisfied responses than satisfied responses and those services are largely unavailable in rural communities.

The services or amenities respondents are most satisfied with (based on the combined percentage of “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” responses) include: fire protection (87%), library services (74%), parks and recreation (74%), religious organizations (71%), education (K-12) (68%) and medical care services (67%) (Appendix Table 4). At least one-third of the respondents are either “very dissatisfied” or “somewhat dissatisfied” with entertainment (51%), retail shopping (48%), restaurants (44%), streets and roads (42%), arts/cultural activities (38%), and local government (34%).

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, retail shopping and restaurants in their community. As an example, 65 percent of persons between the ages of 19 and 29 are dissatisfied with entertainment, compared to only 30 percent of persons age 65 and older.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their community’s entertainment, retail shopping and restaurants include: persons living in or near communities with populations between 1,000 and 9,999; persons with higher household incomes;

persons with higher education levels; and persons with sales or office support occupations.

When comparing responses by region, residents of the North Central region are the group most likely to report being dissatisfied with the retail shopping in their community.

Panhandle residents are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to express dissatisfaction with the streets and roads in their community. One-half (50%) of Panhandle residents are dissatisfied with the streets and roads, compared to 37 percent of residents of the Southeast region.

Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their streets and roads include: persons under the age of 64, persons without a four year college degree, and persons with food service or personal care occupations.

Younger persons are more likely than older persons to be dissatisfied with the arts/cultural activities in their community. Over one-half (53%) of persons age 19 to 29 are dissatisfied with their community's arts/cultural activities, compared to 20 percent of persons age 65 and older.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their arts/cultural activities include: persons living in or near communities with populations ranging from 500 to 4,999; Panhandle residents; residents of the North Central region; persons with the highest household incomes; persons with the highest education levels; and persons with sales or office support occupations.

Panhandle residents are the regional group

most likely to express dissatisfaction with their local government. Forty-four percent of Panhandle residents are dissatisfied with their local government, compared to 25 percent of residents of the Southeast region. Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their local government include: persons living in or near the largest communities, persons with the highest household incomes, persons age 50 to 64, and persons with occupations classified as "other."

Persons with healthcare support or public safety occupations are more likely than persons with different occupations to be dissatisfied with public transportation services in their community. Forty-two percent of persons with these types of occupations are dissatisfied with their public transportation services, compared to 21 percent of persons with occupations in agriculture.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with their public transportation services include: persons living in or near the largest communities, Panhandle residents, persons age 40 to 64, and persons with higher education levels.

Persons with the highest education levels are more likely than persons with lower educational levels to be dissatisfied with their community recycling. Thirty-two percent of persons with at least a four-year college degree are dissatisfied with their community recycling, compared to 22 percent of persons with a high school diploma or less education.

Other groups most likely to express dissatisfaction with their community

recycling include: persons with the highest household incomes, persons under the age of 50, and persons with food service or personal care occupations.

Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to express dissatisfaction with the cellular phone service in their community (Figure 4). Thirty-nine percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people are dissatisfied with their community's cellular phone service, compared to 17 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more.

Persons living in the Panhandle and North Central regions are more likely than persons living in other regions of the state to express dissatisfaction with their cellular phone service. Twenty-eight percent of residents of these two regions are dissatisfied with their cellular phone service, compared to 20 percent of persons living in

the South Central region.

Persons under the age of 65 are the age group most likely to express dissatisfaction with the cellular phone service in their community.

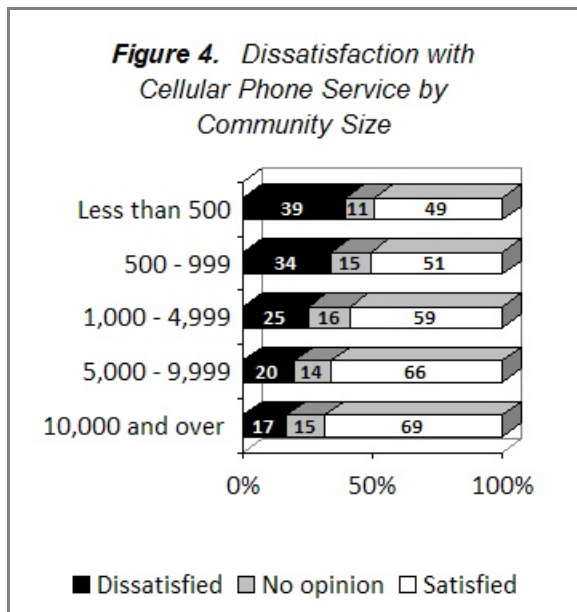
Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to be dissatisfied with the law enforcement in their community. Just over one-third (34%) of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people are dissatisfied with their community's law enforcement, compared to 18 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more.

Other groups most likely to be dissatisfied with the law enforcement in their community include: younger persons, persons with lower education levels and persons with food service or personal care occupations.

### *Feelings About Community*

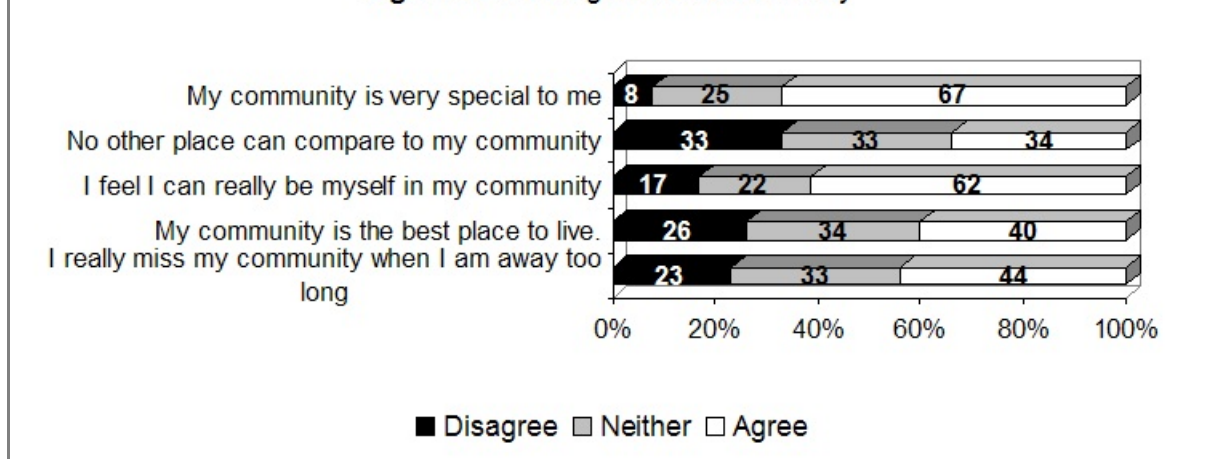
The respondents were next given some statements about their community and were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with each. Approximately two-thirds (67%) agree with the statement that "my community is very special to me." (Figure 5) And 62 percent agree with the statement that "I feel I can really be myself in my community."

Responses to this question differ by many of the characteristics examined (Appendix Table 6). Persons living in or near smaller communities are more likely than persons living in or near larger communities to express positive sentiments about their





**Figure 5. Feelings About Community**



community. Persons living in or near the smallest communities are more likely than residents of larger communities to agree with all of these statements about their community. As an example, 42 percent of persons living in or near communities with less than 500 people agree with the statement that no other place can compare to my community. In comparison, 27 percent of persons living in or near communities with populations of 10,000 or more agree with this statement.

Older persons are more likely than younger persons to agree with each statement listed. For example, 77 percent of persons age 65 and older agree with the statement that my community is very special to me, compared to approximately 63 percent of persons under the age of 65. Similarly, widowed respondents are the marital group most likely to agree with each of the statements listed.

Long term residents are more likely than newcomers to the community to express positive sentiments about their community. As an example, 42 percent of persons living

in their community for more than five years agree with the statement my community is the best place to live, compared to 29 percent of persons living in the community for five years or less.

Persons with agriculture occupations are the occupation group most likely to express positive sentiments about their community. Three-quarters (75%) of persons with occupations in agriculture agree with the statement that my community is very special to me, compared to 55 percent of persons with production, transportation or warehousing occupations.

Residents of the North Central region are more likely than persons living in different regions of the state to agree with the statement that no other place can compare to my community. Panhandle residents join the North Central region residents as the groups most likely to agree that they really miss their community when they are away too long.

Persons with the lowest household incomes are more likely than persons with higher

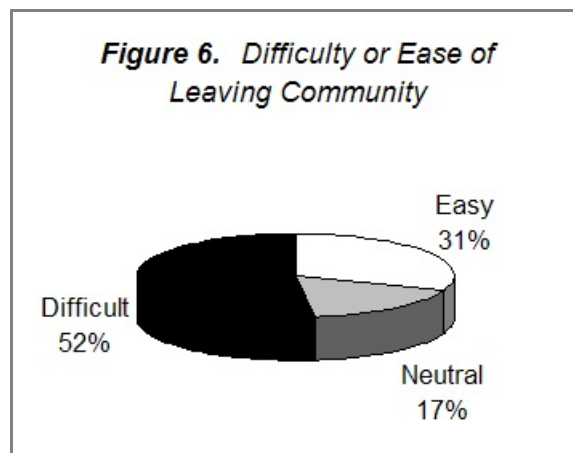
incomes to agree with the statements that no other place can compare to my community, my community is the best place to live, and I really miss my community when I am away too long.

Females are more likely than males to agree with the statement that my community is very special to me. Persons with lower education levels are more likely than persons with more education to agree with the statements that no other place can compare to my community and my community is the best place to live. Persons with some college education (but less than a four year degree) are the education group *least* likely to agree with the statement that my community is very special to me.

Next, respondents were asked a question about how easy or difficult it would be to leave their community. The exact question wording was “Assume you were to have a discussion in your household about leaving your community for a reasonably good opportunity elsewhere. Some people might be happy to live in a new place and meet new people. Others might be very sorry to leave. How easy or difficult would it be for your household to leave your community?” They were given a seven point scale where 1 indicated very easy and 7 denoted very difficult. Over one-half (52%) of rural Nebraskans say it would be difficult to leave their community<sup>1</sup> (Figure 6). Less than one-third (31%) indicate it would be easy for their household to leave their community.

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<sup>1</sup> The responses on the 7-point scale are converted to percentages as follows: values of 1, 2, and 3 are categorized as easy; values of 5, 6, and 7 are categorized as difficult; and a value of 4 is categorized as neutral.



Responses to this question are examined by region, community size and various individual attributes (Appendix Table 7). Many differences emerge.

Older persons are more likely than younger persons to say it would be difficult to leave their community. Sixty-two percent of persons age 65 or older think it would be difficult to leave their community, compared to 43 percent of persons age 19 to 29.

Similarly, widowed persons are the marital group most likely to say it would be difficult to leave their community. Sixty-one percent of widowed respondents believe it would be difficult to leave their community, compared to 45 percent of persons who are divorced or separated or persons who have never married.

Long term residents of the community are more likely than newcomers to say it would be difficult to leave their community. Fifty-five percent of persons who have lived in their community for more than five years say it would be difficult to leave their community, compared to 36 percent of persons living in the community for five

years or less (Figure 7).

Other groups most likely to say it would be difficult to leave their community include: persons living in or near the smallest communities and persons with occupations in agriculture. When comparing responses by education levels, persons with some college education (but less than a four year degree) are the group *least* likely to say it would be difficult to leave their community.

### ***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.

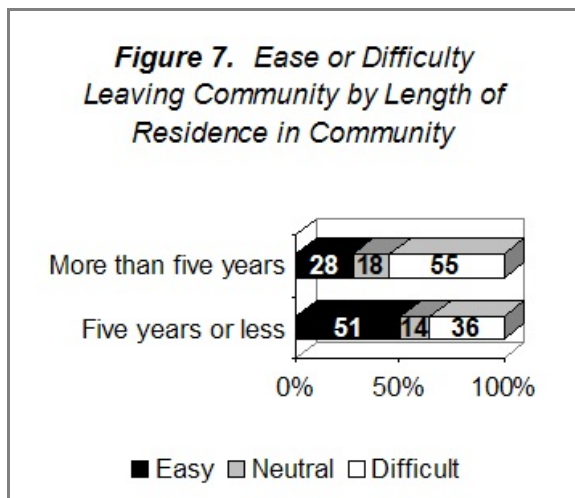
Only four percent indicate they are planning to move from their community in the next

year, 12 percent are uncertain and 83 percent have no plans to move. Of those who are planning to move, over two-thirds (67%) plan to remain in the state, with 19 percent planning to move to either the Lincoln or Omaha area and 48 percent plan to move to another part of the state. One-third (33%) are planning to leave Nebraska.

Intentions to move from their community differed by many of the characteristics examined (Appendix Table 8). Younger respondents are more likely than older respondents to be planning to move from their community in the next year. Eight percent of persons between the ages of 19 and 29 are planning to move next year, compared to only two percent of persons age 65 and older. An additional 20 percent of the younger respondents indicate they are uncertain if they plan to move.

Persons who have never married are the marital group most likely to be planning to move from their community. Twelve percent of persons who have never married are planning to move in the next year, compared to three percent of both the married and widowed respondents. An additional 23 percent of the persons who have never married are uncertain if they plan to move.

Persons with lower household incomes are more likely than persons with higher incomes to be planning to move from their community in the next year. Persons with occupations classified as "other" are more likely than persons with different occupations to be planning to move from their community in the next year. Twelve percent of persons with these types of occupations are planning to move from their



community next year, compared to one percent of persons with food service or personal care occupations.

Persons without a four year college degree are more likely than persons with at least a four year college degree to be uncertain if they are planning to move from their community in the next year. Newcomers to the community are more likely than long-term residents to be uncertain if they are planning to leave their community in the next year.

Potential movers from the Panhandle are more likely than potential movers from other parts of the state to be planning to leave Nebraska. Over one-half (56%) of the potential movers in the Panhandle plan to move to some place other than Nebraska, compared to nine percent of potential movers in the Northeast region.

Potential movers age 30 to 64 are more likely than potential movers who are both younger and older to be planning to leave the state. Persons with higher educational levels that are planning to move in the next year are more likely than persons with less education who are planning to move to expect to leave the state. Forty-five percent of potential movers with at least a four year college degree plan to leave Nebraska, compared to 24 percent of potential movers with a high school diploma or less education.

### ***Conclusion***

Rural Nebraskans are less positive about their communities this year. The proportion of rural Nebraskans viewing negative change in their communities was greater than the

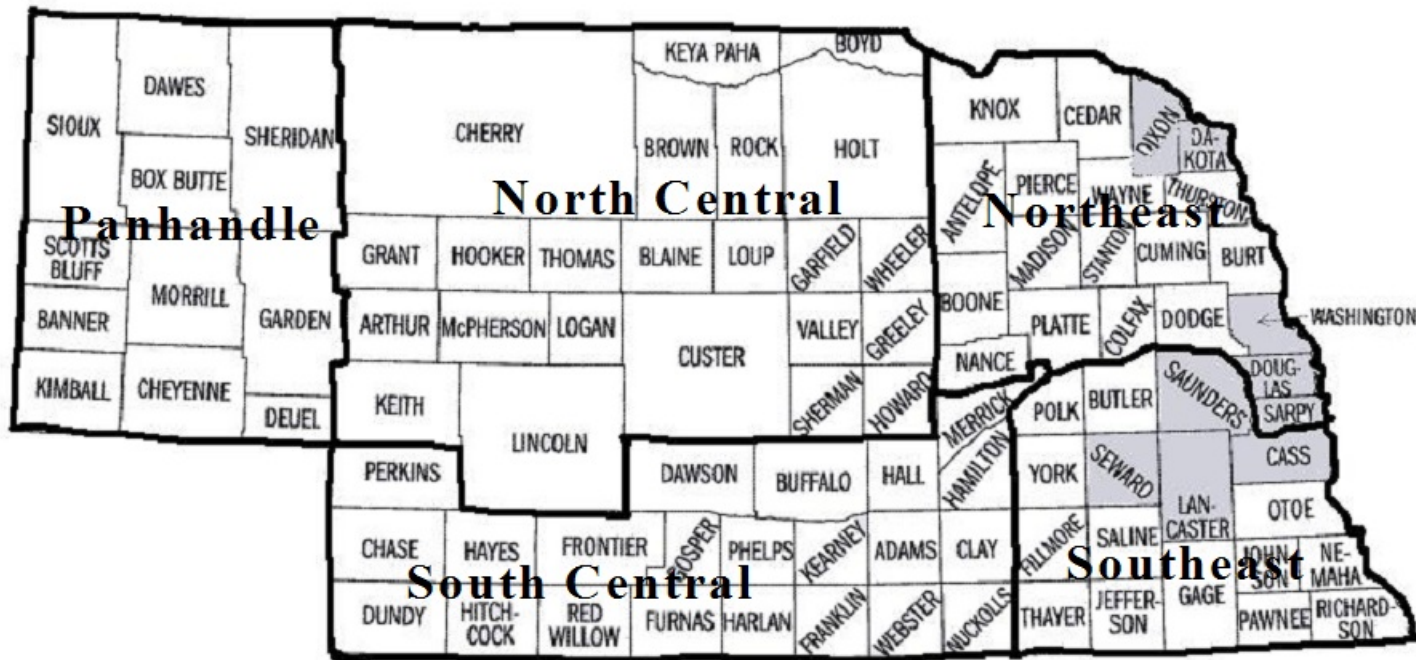
proportion viewing positive change.

However, most rural Nebraskans characterize their communities as friendly, trusting and supportive. Many also say their community is very special to them and that they can be themselves in their community. Over one-half indicate it would be difficult for their household to move from their community.

Furthermore, most rural Nebraskans are planning to stay in their community next year. Only four percent are planning to move and twelve percent are uncertain.

Many differences are detected by community size. Residents of smaller communities are more likely than residents of larger communities to express positive sentiments about their community. The smaller community residents rate their communities higher on their social dimensions (as being friendly and trusting) and are more likely to have higher levels of attachment to their community. Thus, smaller communities have positive attributes that can be marketed to potential new residents.

# Appendix Figure 1. Regions of Nebraska



■ Metropolitan counties (not surveyed)

*Appendix Table 1. Demographic Profile of Rural Poll Respondents<sup>1</sup> Compared to 2000 Census*

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2000</b>
	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Poll</b>	<b>Census</b>
<b>Age : <sup>2</sup></b>							
20 - 39	32%	32%	31%	33%	34%	34%	33%
40 - 64	44%	44%	44%	43%	42%	42%	42%
65 and over	24%	24%	25%	24%	24%	24%	24%
<b>Gender: <sup>3</sup></b>							
Female	57%	56%	59%	30%	32%	33%	51%
Male	43%	44%	41%	70%	68%	67%	49%
<b>Education: <sup>4</sup></b>							
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	7%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade (no diploma)	3%	3%	6%	4%	4%	4%	10%
High school diploma (or equivalent)	26%	26%	26%	28%	28%	31%	35%
Some college, no degree	25%	25%	23%	25%	24%	24%	25%
Associate degree	15%	12%	14%	13%	15%	14%	7%
Bachelors degree	20%	21%	18%	18%	17%	16%	11%
Graduate or professional degree	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	8%	4%
<b>Household Income: <sup>5</sup></b>							
Less than \$10,000	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%	9%	10%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	9%	10%	13%	12%	12%	14%	16%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	13%	14%	15%	14%	15%	16%	17%
\$30,000 - \$39,999	13%	14%	14%	15%	16%	16%	15%
\$40,000 - \$49,999	12%	13%	13%	16%	15%	13%	12%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	13%	11%	12%	12%	12%	12%	10%
\$60,000 - \$74,999	14%	13%	11%	12%	10%	11%	9%
\$75,000 or more	21%	18%	16%	13%	14%	10%	11%
<b>Marital Status: <sup>6</sup></b>							
Married	68%	70%	70%	70%	72%	69%	61%
Never married	10%	10%	10%	11%	10%	11%	22%
Divorced/separated	11%	11%	10%	9%	10%	10%	9%
Widowed/widower	11%	9%	10%	10%	8%	9%	8%

<sup>1</sup> Data from the Rural Polls have been weighted by age.

<sup>2</sup> 2000 Census universe is non-metro population 20 years of age and over.

<sup>3</sup> 2000 Census universe is total non-metro population.

<sup>4</sup> 2000 Census universe is non-metro population 18 years of age and over.

<sup>5</sup> 2000 Census universe is all non-metro households.

<sup>6</sup> 2000 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*

<b>Communities across the nation are undergoing change. When you think about this past year, would you say...</b>				
<b>My community has changed for the</b>				
	<u>Worse</u>	<u>No Change</u>	<u>Better</u>	<u>Significance</u>
<i>Percentages</i>				
<b><u>Community Size</u></b>		(n = 2617)		
Less than 500	27	58	16	
500 - 999	17	62	20	
1,000 - 4,999	21	50	30	$\chi^2 = 71.62^*$ (.000)
5,000 - 9,999	31	42	27	
10,000 and up	31	48	21	
<b><u>Region</u></b>		(n = 2702)		
Panhandle	31	54	15	
North Central	22	57	21	
South Central	26	50	24	$\chi^2 = 23.74^*$ (.003)
Northeast	27	49	25	
Southeast	26	47	27	
<b><u>Income Level</u></b>		(n = 2533)		
Under \$20,000	28	52	20	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	28	52	20	$\chi^2 = 12.31$ (.055)
\$40,000 - \$59,999	28	49	23	
\$60,000 and over	24	50	26	
<b><u>Age</u></b>		(n = 2709)		
19 - 29	26	52	22	
30 - 39	21	52	28	
40 - 49	26	51	23	$\chi^2 = 22.96^*$ (.003)
50 - 64	32	46	22	
65 and older	25	54	21	
<b><u>Gender</u></b>		(n = 2697)		
Male	28	51	22	$\chi^2 = 2.38$ (.304)
Female	25	51	24	
<b><u>Marital Status</u></b>		(n = 2697)		
Married	25	51	24	
Never married	29	48	23	
Divorced/separated	29	51	20	$\chi^2 = 4.56$ (.602)
Widowed	25	52	23	
<b><u>Education</u></b>		(n = 2689)		
H.S. diploma or less	28	53	20	
Some college	26	53	21	$\chi^2 = 20.98^*$ (.000)
Bachelors or grad degree	25	46	29	

Appendix Table 2 continued.

<i>Communities across the nation are undergoing change. When you think about this past year, would you say...</i>				
<i>My community has changed for the</i>				
	<i>Worse</i>	<i>No Change</i>	<i>Better</i>	<i>Significance</i>
<b><u>Occupation</u></b>		(n = 1918)		
Mgt, prof or education	24	50	26	
Sales or office support	26	55	20	
Constrn, inst or maint	26	48	26	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	30	46	25	
Agriculture	28	49	22	
Food serv/pers. care	26	48	26	$\chi^2 = 9.97$
Hlthcare supp/safety	27	50	23	(.765)
Other	29	47	24	
<b><u>Yrs Lived in Community</u></b>		(n = 2632)		
Five years or less	18	57	25	$\chi^2 = 15.95^*$
More than five years	28	50	23	(.000)

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.



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

	<i>My community is...</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>My community is...</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>My community is...</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
	<i>Unfriendly</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Friendly</i>		<i>Distrusting</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Trusting</i>		<i>Hostile</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Supportive</i>	
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2610)			<i>Percentages</i> (n = 2556)			(n = 2539)					
Less than 500	12	8	80		15	13	72		12	13	75	
500 - 999	8	22	70		14	22	64		9	16	75	
1,000 - 4,999	10	14	76	$\chi^2 =$	12	19	69	$\chi^2 =$	12	17	72	$\chi^2 =$
5,000 - 9,999	10	14	76	35.62*	19	23	59	51.48*	14	25	61	54.25*
10,000 and up	12	18	70	(.000)	19	26	56	(.000)	15	25	60	(.000)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2692)			(n = 2635)			(n = 2621)					
Panhandle	11	15	74		18	20	63		15	19	66	
North Central	9	11	80		14	15	71		13	14	73	
South Central	11	15	74	$\chi^2 =$	17	22	62	$\chi^2 =$	12	22	66	$\chi^2 =$
Northeast	12	19	69	17.32*	14	27	59	28.59*	14	21	65	14.62
Southeast	10	14	76	(.027)	17	18	65	(.000)	14	19	68	(.067)
<b>Individual Attributes</b>	(n = 2525)			(n = 2474)			(n = 2463)					
<i>Income Level</i>												
Under \$20,000	13	18	69		17	25	58		15	20	64	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	11	19	70	$\chi^2 =$	18	20	63	$\chi^2 =$	14	21	65	$\chi^2 =$
\$40,000 - \$59,999	10	15	75	18.32*	16	22	62	8.50	12	22	66	8.73
\$60,000 and over	10	12	78	(.005)	15	20	66	(.204)	13	17	70	(.189)
<i>Age</i>	(n = 2696)			(n = 2640)			(n = 2624)					
19 - 29	12	18	70		20	21	59		13	24	63	
30 - 39	10	10	80		15	22	63		10	18	71	
40 - 49	12	15	73	$\chi^2 =$	17	23	60	$\chi^2 =$	17	21	62	$\chi^2 =$
50 - 64	12	16	72	22.72*	17	21	62	24.24*	15	19	67	31.05*
65 and older	8	16	76	(.004)	11	18	71	(.002)	9	19	72	(.000)
<i>Gender</i>	(n = 2688)			(n = 2632)			(n = 2616)					
Male	11	14	75	$\chi^2 =$	15	20	65	$\chi^2 =$	14	19	67	$\chi^2 =$
Female	11	16	73	(.392)	16	22	62	(.268)	13	20	67	(.599)

Appendix Table 3 continued

	<i>My community is...</i>				<i>My community is...</i>				<i>My community is...</i>			
	<i>Unfriendly</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Friendly</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>Distrusting</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Trusting</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>Hostile</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Supportive</i>	<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
<i>Marital Status</i>	(n = 2686)				(n = 2631)				(n = 2617)			
Married	11	15	74		16	20	63		14	19	68	
Never married	10	19	72	$\chi^2 =$	16	24	61	$\chi^2 =$	14	28	59	$\chi^2 =$
Divorced/separated	11	15	74	6.39	17	24	59	9.18	14	23	63	23.93*
Widowed	8	16	77	(.381)	11	20	69	(.163)	7	18	75	(.001)
<i>Education</i>	(n = 2679)				(n = 2623)				(n = 2609)			
H.S. diploma or less	12	18	70	$\chi^2 =$	17	22	61	$\chi^2 =$	14	20	66	$\chi^2 =$
Some college	11	17	72	26.11*	17	24	59	30.08*	15	23	62	27.97*
Bachelors degree	9	11	80	(.000)	14	16	71	(.000)	10	16	74	(.000)
<i>Occupation</i>	(n = 1938)				(n = 1924)				(n = 1915)			
Mgt, prof or education	9	12	80		14	20	66		14	14	73	
Sales or office support	11	21	68		16	29	55		9	23	67	
Constrn, inst or maint	9	16	75		12	19	69		13	19	68	
Prodn/trans/warehsing	16	15	70		17	28	55		17	20	63	
Agriculture	12	11	78	$\chi^2 =$	14	16	71	$\chi^2 =$	10	22	68	$\chi^2 =$
Food serv/pers. care	17	26	58	45.70*	30	28	43	54.56*	24	23	54	36.76*
Hlthcare supp/safety	8	15	78	(.000)	18	18	65	(.000)	12	23	65	(.001)
Other	14	14	73		19	27	54		14	23	64	
<i>Yrs Lived in Comm.</i>	(n = 2633)				(n = 2579)				(n = 2568)			
Five years or less	12	15	73	$\chi^2 =$	15	17	68	$\chi^2 =$	13	18	70	$\chi^2 =$
More than five years	11	15	74	0.92	16	22	62	6.05*	13	20	66	2.40
				(.631)				(.048)				(.301)

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

**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	51	19	29
Retail shopping	48	12	40
Restaurants	44	9	47
Streets and roads	42	7	51
Arts/cultural activities	38	38	24
Local government	34	25	41
Public transportation services	29	52	19
Community recycling	27	20	52
Cellular phone service	24	15	61
Law enforcement	23	13	64
Housing	20	19	61
Internet service	20	22	58
Medical care services	19	15	67
Mental health services	19	57	24
Nursing home care	14	41	45
Parks and recreation	14	12	74
Child day care services	13	55	32
Education (K - 12)	12	20	68
Adult day care services	12	66	22
Sewage/waste disposal	12	23	66
Head Start programs	8	64	28
Senior centers	7	45	47
Library services	7	20	74
Religious organizations	6	23	71
Fire protection	3	10	87

\* 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>Streets and roads</i>		
	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>											
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2667)			(n = 2675)			(n = 2677)			(n = 2666)		
Less than 500	43	28	29	46	23	31	39	14	47	42	6	52
500 - 999	50	24	26	47	21	32	45	16	39	37	9	54
1,000 - 4,999	56	19	25	50	11	39	46	9	45	40	7	54
5,000 - 9,999	55	17	29	59	7	34	48	9	44	47	7	46
10,000 and over	52	15	33	45	6	49	43	5	51	44	5	51
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 53.30^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 142.30^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 49.08^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 13.49 (.096)$		
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2748)			(n = 2763)			(n = 2767)			(n = 2757)		
Panhandle	54	18	28	51	10	39	41	11	49	50	5	45
North Central	51	20	29	55	11	34	40	10	50	45	3	53
South Central	49	18	33	42	10	48	45	7	48	41	6	53
Northeast	53	22	25	53	13	34	44	10	46	42	10	48
Southeast	52	19	29	44	16	40	47	11	42	37	7	57
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 13.45 (.097)$			$\chi^2 = 48.50^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 13.67 (.091)$			$\chi^2 = 37.29^* (.000)$		
<b>Income Level</b>	(n = 2575)			(n = 2583)			(n = 2588)			(n = 2575)		
Under \$20,000	38	29	32	39	16	44	33	15	52	42	7	52
\$20,000 - \$39,999	48	24	28	48	13	39	41	10	49	42	8	50
\$40,000 - \$59,999	58	15	28	53	11	37	48	8	44	45	7	49
\$60,000 and over	58	13	29	51	9	40	48	7	45	41	5	54
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 81.07^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 31.40^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 46.37^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 7.28 (.296)$		
<b>Age</b>	(n = 2756)			(n = 2767)			(n = 2772)			(n = 2763)		
19 - 29	65	12	23	59	12	29	55	7	38	48	11	41
30 - 39	63	13	24	50	14	36	51	8	41	44	6	50
40 - 49	57	15	29	51	10	39	45	9	45	48	5	47
50 - 64	49	20	31	49	10	41	42	9	49	42	6	53
65 and over	30	33	37	36	14	50	30	12	58	32	6	62
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 197.77^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 70.70^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 84.43^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 65.96^* (.000)$		
<b>Education</b>	(n = 2734)			(n = 2746)			(n = 2751)			(n = 2741)		
High school or less	44	25	31	45	14	41	40	11	49	43	8	50
Some college	53	20	27	48	13	39	46	9	45	45	6	50
College grad	56	14	30	52	7	41	45	8	47	38	7	55
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 42.51^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 24.61^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 12.38^* (.015)$			$\chi^2 = 13.54^* (.009)$		
<b>Occupation</b>	(n = 1953)			(n = 1956)			(n = 1959)			(n = 1942)		
Mgt, prof, education	58	14	28	51	8	41	48	7	44	38	7	55
Sales/office support	64	12	24	59	10	32	55	10	35	46	7	47
Const, inst or maint	54	19	27	46	15	39	45	8	47	47	7	47
Prodn/trans/warehs	63	14	23	56	11	33	49	7	44	49	13	38
Agriculture	37	28	36	43	16	42	36	11	54	38	7	55
Food serv/pers. care	55	12	33	48	13	39	51	5	45	52	1	48
Hlthcare supp/safety	61	13	27	54	9	37	44	10	46	44	2	54
Other	47	19	33	55	7	38	43	7	50	44	2	54
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 64.42^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 30.33^* (.007)$			$\chi^2 = 29.75^* (.008)$			$\chi^2 = 51.14^* (.000)$		

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Only the ten services with the highest combined percentage of very or somewhat dissatisfied are included in this table.

Appendix Table 5 continued.

	<i>Arts/cultural activities</i>			<i>Local government</i>			<i>Public transportation</i>			<i>Community recycling</i>		
	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>											
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2657)			(n = 2678)			(n = 2644)			(n = 2672)		
Less than 500	36	44	20	31	26	43	27	63	10	28	31	41
500 - 999	44	44	12	30	29	42	28	63	9	29	24	47
1,000 - 4,999	42	36	22	32	26	42	26	57	17	30	19	51
5,000 - 9,999	36	34	30	40	22	38	29	46	25	27	15	58
10,000 and over	37	35	29	38	23	39	34	43	23	25	18	57
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 50.17^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 17.90^* (.022)$			$\chi^2 = 97.54^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 54.63^* (.000)$		
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2741)			(n = 2765)			(n = 2729)			(n = 2756)		
Panhandle	43	31	26	44	20	37	38	48	14	23	21	56
North Central	43	37	20	39	22	40	27	54	19	28	21	51
South Central	37	37	26	34	24	42	30	49	20	25	19	55
Northeast	37	43	20	33	29	39	28	56	16	30	23	48
Southeast	37	37	26	25	30	45	26	53	21	30	18	52
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 22.35^* (.004)$			$\chi^2 = 38.42^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 24.96^* (.002)$			$\chi^2 = 15.24 (.055)$		
<b>Income Level</b>	(n = 2572)			(n = 2587)			(n = 2556)			(n = 2578)		
Under \$20,000	30	44	26	30	30	40	30	46	24	24	25	51
\$20,000 - \$39,999	36	42	22	33	28	39	31	49	20	27	23	51
\$40,000 - \$59,999	44	35	21	35	26	40	31	52	18	30	17	53
\$60,000 and over	43	31	26	37	21	43	29	56	16	29	18	53
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 41.09^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 17.44^* (.008)$			$\chi^2 = 18.02^* (.006)$			$\chi^2 = 15.29^* (.018)$		
<b>Age</b>	(n = 2749)			(n = 2770)			(n = 2736)			(n = 2764)		
19 - 29	53	33	15	31	38	31	27	62	11	34	22	44
30 - 39	46	38	17	36	31	34	28	58	14	30	21	49
40 - 49	45	33	22	38	22	40	34	51	15	33	17	50
50 - 64	34	38	28	41	20	40	33	48	20	26	21	53
65 and over	20	47	33	25	21	54	24	46	30	16	21	63
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 166.31^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 119.93^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 98.64^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 66.37^* (.000)$		
<b>Education</b>	(n = 2728)			(n = 2751)			(n = 2715)			(n = 2741)		
High school or less	30	50	20	34	26	40	26	49	25	22	24	55
Some college	39	39	22	38	26	36	29	54	17	28	23	49
College grad	47	24	30	30	23	47	34	53	14	32	14	54
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 122.40^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 26.75^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 35.91^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 42.15^* (.000)$		
<b>Occupation</b>	(n = 1947)			(n = 1960)			(n = 1938)			(n = 1951)		
Mgt, prof, education	46	27	27	30	27	43	30	56	15	30	16	54
Sales/office support	50	29	21	38	25	37	36	50	14	35	14	51
Const, inst or maint	40	46	14	44	27	28	26	61	13	32	27	41
Prodn/trans/warehs	41	42	17	46	25	29	31	51	18	25	25	50
Agriculture	28	51	21	29	27	45	21	66	12	21	27	52
Food serv/pers. care	45	32	24	34	28	39	27	49	25	38	16	47
Hlthcare supp/safety	48	32	20	35	27	38	42	45	14	34	14	52
Other	46	30	23	50	12	38	26	53	21	19	19	61
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	$\chi^2 = 77.46^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 45.06^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 47.34^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 51.07^* (.000)$		

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Only the ten services with the highest combined percentage of very or somewhat dissatisfied are included in this table.

Appendix Table 5 continued.

	<i>Cellular phone service</i>			<i>Law enforcement</i>		
	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>No opinion</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>					
<b>Community Size</b>		(n = 2651)			(n = 2685)	
Less than 500	39	11	49	34	14	53
500 - 999	34	15	51	30	15	56
1,000 - 4,999	25	16	59	21	11	67
5,000 - 9,999	20	14	66	22	14	64
10,000 and over	17	15	69	18	13	69
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		$\chi^2 = 102.00^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 55.07^* (.000)$	
<b>Region</b>		(n = 2739)			(n = 2769)	
Panhandle	28	15	57	27	13	60
North Central	28	14	58	26	13	62
South Central	20	14	66	21	14	65
Northeast	24	15	61	21	13	66
Southeast	25	16	59	21	14	64
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		$\chi^2 = 17.55^* (.025)$			$\chi^2 = 10.00 (.264)$	
<b>Income Level</b>		(n = 2562)			(n = 2596)	
Under \$20,000	22	28	50	24	15	61
\$20,000 - \$39,999	23	17	60	24	15	61
\$40,000 - \$59,999	28	13	59	24	16	61
\$60,000 and over	23	7	70	21	10	70
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		$\chi^2 = 116.21^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 23.41^* (.001)$	
<b>Age</b>		(n = 2745)			(n = 2776)	
19 - 29	28	11	61	30	18	52
30 - 39	26	10	64	24	13	63
40 - 49	28	11	61	25	13	62
50 - 64	26	12	62	21	13	67
65 and over	14	28	59	16	10	73
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		$\chi^2 = 126.17^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 56.79^* (.000)$	
<b>Education</b>		(n = 2723)			(n = 2756)	
High school or less	23	20	58	25	14	62
Some college	26	14	59	26	14	60
College grad	23	10	68	17	12	71
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		$\chi^2 = 41.31^* (.000)$			$\chi^2 = 31.33^* (.000)$	
<b>Occupation</b>		(n = 1943)			(n = 1961)	
Mgt, prof, education	26	9	66	17	13	71
Sales/office support	27	11	62	24	13	63
Const, inst or maint	27	14	59	28	17	56
Prodn/trans/warehs	23	10	67	23	20	57
Agriculture	31	11	59	27	12	60
Food serv/pers. care	27	14	59	38	13	49
Hlthcare supp/safety	24	13	63	25	11	63
Other	21	7	71	23	5	72
<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>		$\chi^2 = 15.22 (.363)$			$\chi^2 = 51.80^* (.000)$	

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Only the ten services with the highest combined percentage of very or somewhat dissatisfied are included in this table.

**Appendix Table 6. Feelings About Community by Region, Community Size and Individual Attributes**

	<i>My community is very special to me.</i>			<i>No other place can compare to my community.</i>				
	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Chi-square</i> <i>(sig.)</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Chi-square</i> <i>(sig.)</i>
	<i>Percentages</i>							
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2726)				(n = 2713)			
Less than 500	6	18	76		27	31	42	
500 - 999	4	21	75		27	34	39	
1,000 - 4,999	8	20	72		32	31	37	
5,000 - 9,999	8	30	62	$\chi^2 = 66.5^*$	34	34	32	$\chi^2 = 50.4^*$
10,000 and up	11	30	59	(.000)	40	34	27	(.000)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2787)				(n = 2769)			
Panhandle	7	28	66		29	34	37	
North Central	8	20	72		30	29	41	
South Central	8	26	65		35	33	31	
Northeast	10	25	65	$\chi^2 = 14.6$	36	32	33	$\chi^2 = 16.3^*$
Southeast	7	23	70	(.067)	32	34	35	(.039)
<b>Income Level</b>	(n = 2609)				(n = 2597)			
Under \$20,000	9	20	71		26	33	41	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	9	26	65		33	33	34	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	8	26	66	$\chi^2 = 6.96$	34	33	33	$\chi^2 = 24.00^*$
\$60,000 and over	8	26	66	(.325)	39	31	30	(.001)
<b>Age</b>	(n = 2792)				(n = 2777)			
19 - 29	8	29	63		39	36	26	
30 - 39	7	29	64		40	31	30	
40 - 49	11	24	66		35	33	32	
50 - 64	11	26	63	$\chi^2 = 49.8^*$	34	35	31	$\chi^2 = 84.3^*$
65 and older	5	18	77	(.000)	23	29	48	(.000)
<b>Gender</b>	(n = 2782)				(n = 2769)			
Male	9	27	64	$\chi^2 = 8.66^*$	32	33	35	$\chi^2 = 0.98$
Female	8	23	69	(.013)	34	32	34	(.612)
<b>Marital Status</b>	(n = 2783)				(n = 2766)			
Married	8	24	68		35	32	34	
Never married	12	31	56		36	38	26	
Divorced/separated	12	30	59	$\chi^2 = 44.8^*$	34	36	30	$\chi^2 = 37.68^*$
Widowed	3	19	78	(.000)	22	31	47	(.000)
<b>Education</b>	(n = 2773)				(n = 2757)			
H.S. diploma or less	9	23	68		30	31	39	
Some college	8	28	64	$\chi^2 = 14.0^*$	32	36	32	$\chi^2 = 28.49^*$
Bachelors degree	9	21	70	(.007)	39	30	30	(.000)
<b>Occupation</b>	(n = 1972)				(n = 1972)			
Mgt, prof, education	11	23	66		40	33	27	
Sales/office support	8	33	59		37	30	34	
Const, inst or maint	9	29	62		35	36	29	
Prodn/trans/warehs	6	39	55		41	35	24	
Agriculture	5	20	75		24	33	43	
Food serv/pers. care	14	14	72		31	34	34	
Hlthcare supp/safety	8	24	68	$\chi^2 = 56.0^*$	41	35	24	$\chi^2 = 43.38^*$
Other	9	21	70	(.000)	36	29	35	(.000)
<b>Yrs Lived in Comm.</b>	(n = 2656)				(n = 2641)			
Five years or less	13	39	48	$\chi^2 = 76.1^*$	45	32	23	$\chi^2 = 34.9^*$
More than five years	8	22	70	(.000)	32	33	36	(.000)

Appendix Table 6 continued.

	<i>I feel I can really be myself in my community.</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>	<i>My community is the best place to live.</i>			<i>Chi-square (sig.)</i>
	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Agree</i>		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
	<i>Percentages</i>							
<b><u>Community Size</u></b>	(n = 2698)				(n = 2680)			
Less than 500	14	17	69		23	28	49	
500 - 999	12	20	68		16	39	45	
1,000 - 4,999	15	24	62		23	35	41	
5,000 - 9,999	20	22	59	$\chi^2 = 26.8^*$	30	31	38	$\chi^2 = 51.02^*$
10,000 and up	19	23	58	(.001)	31	34	35	(.000)
<b><u>Region</u></b>	(n = 2754)				(n = 2733)			
Panhandle	14	22	64		25	30	44	
North Central	15	18	67		20	37	43	
South Central	18	23	60		29	33	38	
Northeast	18	22	60	$\chi^2 = 11.66$	28	33	39	$\chi^2 = 18.00^*$
Southeast	15	23	62	(.167)	23	36	41	(.021)
<b><u>Income Level</u></b>	(n = 2583)				(n = 2560)			
Under \$20,000	17	20	63		23	29	49	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	17	23	60		28	32	40	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	16	24	60	$\chi^2 = 6.42$	27	38	36	$\chi^2 = 20.59^*$
\$60,000 and over	17	20	63	(.378)	27	35	38	(.002)
<b><u>Age</u></b>	(n = 2761)				(n = 2738)			
19 - 29	18	27	54		32	40	27	
30 - 39	19	17	64		27	39	34	
40 - 49	18	26	56		30	33	37	
50 - 64	20	22	58	$\chi^2 = 81.9^*$	27	34	40	$\chi^2 = 132.4^*$
65 and older	9	16	75	(.000)	16	26	58	(.000)
<b><u>Gender</u></b>	(n = 2751)				(n = 2728)			
Male	17	21	63	$\chi^2 = 0.89$	26	34	41	$\chi^2 = 0.09$
Female	17	22	61	(.642)	26	34	40	(.954)
<b><u>Marital Status</u></b>	(n = 2749)				(n = 2728)			
Married	17	21	62		26	34	40	
Never married	17	25	59		29	40	32	
Divorced/separated	22	29	49	$\chi^2 = 52.5^*$	32	34	33	$\chi^2 = 66.62^*$
Widowed	7	16	77	(.000)	14	25	61	(.000)
<b><u>Education</u></b>	(n = 2742)				(n = 2720)			
H.S. diploma or less	17	20	63		25	28	47	
Some college	17	23	60	$\chi^2 = 3.84$	27	36	37	$\chi^2 = 27.46^*$
Bachelors degree	16	21	63	(.428)	26	36	38	(.000)
<b><u>Occupation</u></b>	(n = 1961)				(n = 1949)			
Mgt, prof, education	18	21	61		30	35	35	
Sales/office support	18	22	60		29	36	35	
Const, inst or maint	15	21	64		24	42	34	
Prodn/trans/warehs	22	28	50		33	37	30	
Agriculture	13	19	68		22	30	48	
Food serv/pers. care	27	17	56		25	36	39	
Hlthcare supp/safety	17	24	59	$\chi^2 = 26.1^*$	27	44	29	$\chi^2 = 34.3^*$
Other	21	17	62	(.025)	33	28	39	(.002)
<b><u>Yrs Lived in Comm.</u></b>	(n = 2632)				(n = 2605)			
Five years or less	23	22	55	$\chi^2 = 16.2^*$	35	35	29	$\chi^2 = 30.2^*$
More than five years	16	22	63	(.000)	24	34	42	(.000)



*I really miss my community when I am away too long.*

*Chi-square (sig.)*

	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Agree</i>	
				<i>Percentages</i>
<b><u>Community Size</u></b>	(n = 2714)			
Less than 500	17	31	52	
500 - 999	17	36	47	
1,000 - 4,999	21	35	45	
5,000 - 9,999	25	36	39	$\chi^2 = 42.85^*$
10,000 and up	28	33	39	(.000)
<b><u>Region</u></b>	(n = 2774)			
Panhandle	20	32	49	
North Central	21	29	50	
South Central	25	32	44	
Northeast	25	36	39	$\chi^2 = 24.09^*$
Southeast	20	39	41	(.002)
<b><u>Income Level</u></b>	(n = 2596)			
Under \$20,000	19	31	50	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	24	34	42	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	23	36	41	$\chi^2 = 13.49^*$
\$60,000 and over	26	32	43	(.036)
<b><u>Age</u></b>	(n = 2777)			
19 - 29	25	38	37	
30 - 39	25	33	43	
40 - 49	29	32	39	
50 - 64	26	35	39	$\chi^2 = 89.52^*$
65 and older	12	30	58	(.000)
<b><u>Gender</u></b>	(n = 2768)			
Male	23	32	45	$\chi^2 = 1.65$
Female	23	34	43	(.438)
<b><u>Marital Status</u></b>	(n = 2769)			
Married	23	33	44	
Never married	25	38	37	
Divorced/separated	29	35	36	$\chi^2 = 40.05^*$
Widowed	13	29	58	(.000)
<b><u>Education</u></b>	(n = 2759)			
H.S. diploma or less	21	32	47	
Some college	24	35	41	$\chi^2 = 8.10$
Bachelors degree	24	32	44	(.088)
<b><u>Occupation</u></b>	(n = 1967)			
Mgt, prof, education	30	31	39	
Sales/office support	27	32	41	
Const, inst or maint	22	36	43	
Prodn/trans/warehs	25	41	35	
Agriculture	18	31	52	
Food serv/pers. care	26	31	43	
Hlthcare supp/safety	24	36	40	$\chi^2 = 27.60^*$
Other	27	36	38	(.016)
<b><u>Yrs Lived in Comm.</u></b>	(n = 2642)			
Five years or less	33	38	29	$\chi^2 = 48.8^*$
More than five years	21	33	46	(.000)

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

**Appendix Table 7. Opinions About Leaving Community by Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes**

*Assume you were to have a discussion in your household about leaving your community for a reasonably good opportunity elsewhere. How easy or difficult would it be for your household to leave your community?*

	Easy	Neutral	Difficult	Chi-square (sig.)
	<i>Percentages</i>			
<b><u>Community Size</u></b>		(n = 2730)		
Less than 500	23	17	60	
500 - 999	32	16	51	
1,000 - 4,999	30	18	52	
5,000 - 9,999	33	14	54	$\chi^2 = 30.61^*$
10,000 and up	36	18	46	(.000)
<b><u>Region</u></b>		(n = 2788)		
Panhandle	29	17	53	
North Central	30	14	56	
South Central	34	18	48	
Northeast	32	19	50	$\chi^2 = 14.70$
Southeast	28	16	56	(.065)
<b><u>Income Level</u></b>		(n = 2608)		
Under \$20,000	29	18	54	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	33	16	51	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	33	19	47	$\chi^2 = 9.10$
\$60,000 and over	32	15	53	(.168)
<b><u>Age</u></b>		(n = 2795)		
19 - 29	40	18	43	
30 - 39	32	15	53	
40 - 49	34	16	50	
50 - 64	33	19	48	$\chi^2 = 59.66^*$
65 and older	21	17	62	(.000)
<b><u>Gender</u></b>		(n = 2786)		
Male	32	16	52	$\chi^2 = 0.82$
Female	31	18	51	(.665)
<b><u>Marital Status</u></b>		(n = 2784)		
Married	30	18	52	
Never married	39	16	45	
Divorced/separated	41	14	45	$\chi^2 = 34.44^*$
Widowed	23	16	61	(.000)
<b><u>Education</u></b>		(n = 2777)		
H.S. diploma or less	27	19	55	
Some college	35	17	48	$\chi^2 = 17.94^*$
Bachelors degree	32	15	53	(.001)
<b><u>Occupation</u></b>		(n = 1973)		
Mgt, prof, education	37	15	48	
Sales/office support	35	13	52	
Const, inst or maint	34	19	48	
Prodn/trans/warehs	40	20	39	
Agriculture	26	11	63	
Food serv/pers. care	24	26	50	
Hlthcare supp/safety	29	17	54	$\chi^2 = 48.15^*$
Other	32	19	49	(.000)
<b><u>Yrs Lived in Comm.</u></b>		(n = 2658)		
Five years or less	51	14	36	$\chi^2 = 93.87^*$
More than five years	28	18	55	(.000)

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

**Appendix Table 8.** Plans to Leave Community by Community Size, Region and Individual Attributes

	Do you plan to leave your community in the next year?			Chi-square (sig.)	If yes, where do you plan to move?			Chi-square (sig.)
	Yes	No	Uncertain		Lincoln/Omaha metro areas	Some other place in NE	Some place other than Nebraska	
Percentages								
<b>Community Size</b>	(n = 2725)				(n = 108)			
Less than 500	7	80	13		19	52	30	
500 - 999	5	86	9		0	69	31	
1,000 - 4,999	3	86	11		24	52	24	
5,000 - 9,999	3	83	14	$\chi^2 = 15.45$	0**	38**	63**	$\chi^2 = 12.11$
10,000 and up	4	83	13	(.051)	31	36	33	(.146)
<b>Region</b>	(n = 2784)				(n = 110)			
Panhandle	7	82	12		13	31	56	
North Central	4	83	12		0	59	41	
South Central	4	83	13		27	41	32	
Northeast	4	85	11	$\chi^2 = 7.60$	18	73	9	$\chi^2 = 18.80^*$
Southeast	5	83	12	(.474)	33	33	33	(.016)
<b>Income Level</b>	(n = 2601)				(n = 109)			
Under \$20,000	8	80	12		10	53	37	
\$20,000 - \$39,999	4	81	16		24	43	33	
\$40,000 - \$59,999	4	84	12	$\chi^2 = 26.05^*$	24	48	29	$\chi^2 = 2.47$
\$60,000 and over	5	86	10	(.000)	22	46	32	(.872)
<b>Age</b>	(n = 2789)				(n = 112)			
19 - 29	8	72	20		21	71	9	
30 - 39	5	82	13		21	33	46	
40 - 49	5	85	10		20	36	44	
50 - 64	3	86	11	$\chi^2 = 67.14^*$	28	28	44	$\chi^2 = 20.31^*$
65 and older	2	89	9	(.000)	0	73	27	(.009)
<b>Gender</b>	(n = 2780)				(n = 112)			
Male	4	85	12	$\chi^2 = 2.38$	16	44	40	$\chi^2 = 1.82$
Female	5	83	13	(.304)	22	51	28	(.402)
<b>Marital Status</b>	(n = 2777)				(n = 110)			
Married	3	86	11		15	58	27	
Never married	12	65	23		23	42	36	
Divorced/separated	7	78	15	$\chi^2 = 97.00^*$	30	25	45	$\chi^2 = 8.96$
Widowed	3	88	9	(.000)	0**	71**	29**	(.176)
<b>Education</b>	(n = 2770)				(n = 112)			
H.S. diploma or less	4	84	12		18	58	24	
Some college	4	81	15	$\chi^2 = 16.53^*$	8	64	28	$\chi^2 = 17.28^*$
Bachelors degree	5	86	9	(.002)	33	23	45	(.002)

Appendix Table 8 continued.

	<i>Do you plan to leave your community in the next year?</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>	
<b>Occupation</b>	(n = 1973)			(n = 76)			
Mgt, prof, education	4	83	13	35	44	22	
Sales/office support	4	86	10	10	80	10	
Const, inst or maint	2	81	17	33**	0**	67**	
Prodn/trans/warehs	7	77	16	19	44	38	
Agriculture	3	92	5	0**	63**	38**	
Food serv/pers. care	1	86	14	0**	100**	0**	
Hlthcare supp/safety	5	78	16	$\chi^2 = 44.99^*$	33**	44**	$\chi^2 = 17.71$
Other	12	76	12	(.000)	0**	50**	(.220)
<b>Yrs Lived in Comm.</b>	(n = 2654)			(n = 105)			
Five years or less	7	75	19	$\chi^2 = 28.32^*$	13	26	$\chi^2 = 1.28$
More than five years	4	85	11	(.000)	18	34	(.527)

\* Chi-square values are statistically significant at the .05 level.

\*\* Note: Row percentages are calculated using a row total that contains less than 10 respondents.

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