

Quality of Life Final Results from City of Brookings Survey, 2004

As of April 11, 2005, 562 completed surveys from the Brookings city sample have been returned to the Rural Sociology Department. Surveys were sent out to a random sample of approximately 2,710 Brookings' households. Based upon this sample size, the survey results have a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 4.5% (<http://www.surveyguy.com/SGcalc.htm>). The following are some preliminary findings from the Brookings survey. State data is not included here.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Age: Range = 18-83 years
Median = 50-51 years

Gender: Males = 65.2%
Females = 34.8%

Marital Status: Married = 71.2%
Never married = 10.6%
Divorces/Separated = 8.8%
Widowed = 9.4%

Households with children under 19 years in the household = 32.9%

Size of community of respondent:

Less than 100 = 0.0%
100-499 = 0.4%
500-999 = 0.0%
1,000-4,999 = 0.5%
5,000-9,999 = 2.4%
10,000-19,999 = 80.7%
20,000 or more = 16.0%

Length of residence:

In South Dakota	Range = 1-80+ years	Median = 35-36 years
In community	Range = 1-80+ years	Median = 21-22 years

Location of residence:

Within city limits = 81.6%
On a farm = 4.6%
Outside city, but not on farm = 13.8%

Household income: Median = \$35,000-45,000

Educational attainment: Median = Associate (2 year degree)

Racial or ethnic group: 98.2% Caucasian (white)

COMMUNITY

Assessment of community change over past year:

Changed for the better = 45.0%

Stayed about the same = 46.3%

Changed for the worse = 8.7%

Perceptions of community as:

Friendly = 80.9%

Trusting = 74.3%

Supportive = 74.3%

Plans to move from community in the next year:

Yes = 5.2%

No = 88.6%

Uncertain = 6.1%

Of those who plan to move – where?

To a metro area (Sioux Falls or Rapid City) = 15.4%

Elsewhere in South Dakota = 12.8%

Out of state = 71.8%

Satisfaction with public services and community amenities

Greatest satisfaction (Somewhat + Very satisfied) with:

Parks and recreation = 90.6%

Library services = 90.1%

Solid waste disposal = 81.8%

Highways and bridges = 80.9%

Law enforcement = 81.1%

Streets = 80.1%

Housing = 89.4%

Sewage disposal = 79.6%

Water disposal = 78.6%

Education (K-12) = 74.1%

Least satisfaction (Somewhat + Very dissatisfied) with:

Retail shopping = 61.7%

Restaurants = 36.7%

Airline service = 26.8%

Basic medical care services = 25.5%

Bus service = 24.8%

City/Village government = 22.2%

Community transit = 19.7%

Assessment of community resources:

Adequate and appropriately distributed: 40.0%
 Adequate, but not appropriately distributed = 37.2%
 Limited resources = 19.2%
 Financial crisis = 3.5%

Involvement in community leadership:

Hold/have held one or more elected offices = 7.3%
 Hold/have held one or more appointed positions = 11.1%
 Hold/have held one or more volunteer positions = 34.6%

Major reason for NOT holding a public position:

Not interested = 47.2%
 No one has asked – 38.1%
 Not enough time = 33.8%
 Already involved in other ways = 21.9%

Most important reasons FOR involvement (by those involved):

Feel it is important to help community or county = 68.2%
 Want to do something for a cause important to me = 65.1%
 Interest in future of community or county – 61.5%
 Feel I can make a difference in community or county = 48.8%

INDIVIDUAL & FAMILY WELL-BEING

How well off compared to five years ago?

Better off = 50.9%
 About the same = 36.7%
 Worse off = 12.4%

In comparison to parents when they were my age?

Better off = 68.8%
 About the same = 21.8%
 Worse off = 9.4%

How well off do you expect to be in 10 years from now?

Better off = 45.1%
 About the same = 41.8%
 Worse off = 13.2%

Sense of powerlessness – agreement/disagreement with statement: Life has changed so much in our modern world that most people are powerless to control their own lives.

Strongly agree + Agree = 22.3%
 Strongly disagree + Disagree = 67.5%

Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with Aspects of Life

Most satisfied (Satisfies + Very satisfied) with:

Greenery and open space = 90.6%
 Family = 89.4%
 Clean water = 87.9%
 Clean air = 87.7%
 Housing = 83.9%
 Friends – 83.2%
 Education = 81.2%

Least satisfied (Dissatisfied + Very dissatisfied) with:

Job opportunities = 33.8%
 Financial security during retirement – 32.4%
 Current income level – 30.9%

WORK

Current employment status:

Employed = 75.9%
 Retired = 19.3%
 Full-time homemaker = 1.3%
 Student = 1.3%
 Unemployed, looking for work = 0.2%
 Unemployed, not looking for work – 0.2%
 Disabled = 1.9%

Location of employment:

Home or local community = 80.4% (self); 63.5% (spouse or partner)
 5 miles or less (one way) to work = 75.4% (self); 72.7% (spouse or partner)

Occupational category of respondent and spouse/partner:

Sales = 9.7% (self); 3.1% (spouse/partner)
 Manual laborer = 5.2% (self); 6.9% (spouse/partner)
 Professional, technical, administrative = 49.8% (self); 46.6% (spouse/partner)
 Service = 9.7% (self); 9.4% (spouse/partner)
 Farming/Ranching = 1.9% (self); 1.6% (spouse/partner)
 Skilled laborer = 11.4% (self); 5.9% (spouse/partner)
 Administrative support = 5.2% (self); 10.3% (spouse/partner)
 Other = 7.1% (self); 16.0% (spouse/partner)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Most supported approaches (Strongly Support):

- Raise wages to attract and retain people = 49.5%
- Fund more biotechnology = 44.2%
- Emphasize more local processing of grains and livestock = 43.0%
- Focus on retention and expansion of existing industries = 42.9%
- Focus on improving and maintaining rural infrastructure = 39.1%
- Emphasize tourism in state = 38.1%
- Focus on economic development by SD universities & colleges = 37.1%
- Emphasize agricultural exports = 34.9%
- Emphasize more manufacturing jobs in non agriculture industries = 32.3%
- Diversify agriculture production to include specialty crops = 32.2%
- Focus on main street business development = 28.4%

Least supported approaches (Strongly Oppose):

- Promoting gambling opportunities for tourism = 36.0%
- Increase sales tax to provide property tax relief = 16.8%
- Provide tax incentives to companies to relocate = 6.3%
- Increase state's population to match growth of neighboring states = 6.3%

REGIONALISM

Retail business collaboration likely to provide better goods and services – 71.4% agree or strongly agree.

Belief that combining community or county services in a region will increase prices for consumers of services - 53.3% disagree or strongly disagree

Belief that communities in a region working together to generate new businesses are better able to create quality jobs for residents – 83.1% agree or strongly agree

Belief that combining community or county services in a region will lower quality of services – 57.1% disagree or strongly disagree

Belief that combining community or county services in a region will improve access to services – 56.0% agree or strongly agree

Services that respondents are most willing to raise revenue to keep in community:

- Schools (K-12) = 60.4%
- Fire protection = 54.5%
- Emergency medical services = 51.1%
- Street maintenance = 43.6%
- Law enforcement = 41.9%

Services that respondents are most willing to combine with others:

- County road maintenance = 69.6%
- Telecommunication services = 66.4%
- Licenses and permits = 63.5%
- Health clinic = 63.4%
- Veterans services = 62.7%
- Property assessment = 62.5%
- County Weed control = 62.4%
- Economic development activities = 61.3%

Services that respondents are most willing to reduce in order to keep:

- Fairs = 30.8%
- Promoting tourism – 28.3%
- Property assessment = 25.2%
- Recreational facilities = 24.0%
- County weed control = 21.2%
- Licenses and permits = 20.3%

Services that respondents are most willing to eliminate if necessary:

- Fairs = 22.6%
- Promoting tourism = 6.7%

MOST PRESSING COMMUNITY ISSUE

The following issues were cited by ten or more respondents in response to a final, open-ended question:

- Too few retail stores (72)
- Need for living wages/benefits (35)
- Poor community planning and budget management (32)
- Inadequate public school funding (30)
- Negative impact of Wal-Mart/Super Wal-Mart on community (28)
- Need for employment opportunities (24)
- Poor community development (21)
- Greater retention of high school and college graduates (20)
- Other taxes (20)
- Abuse of authority/dishonesty of elected and appointed officials (19)
- Poor economic development (22)
- Closing of stores (17)
- Need more affordable housing, especially for low/limited income (18)
- Affordable health care (16)
- Too few restaurants (14)
- Abuse/use of Drugs/Alcohol (13)
- Child/social welfare (12)
- Need for new businesses to be attracted to community (13)
- High energy prices (11)

Inadequate medical/surgical care (11)
Community relations/cohesion concerns (10)
Railroad use/expansion (10)