



CITY OF MONTPELIER, VT 2009

Report of Geographic Subgroup Comparisons

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SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

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

The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Montpelier staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Montpelier staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

“DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

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

UNDERSTANDING THE TABLES

In this report, comparisons between geographic subgroups are shown. For most of the questions, we have shown only one number for each question. We have summarized responses to show only the proportion of respondents giving a certain answer; for example, the percent of respondents who rated the quality of life as “excellent” or “good”, or the percent of respondents who felt the rate of growth was “about right.”

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

The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus four percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (558 completed surveys). For each Voting District (1, 2 or 3), the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 8% since sample sizes were approximately 161 for Voting District 1, 214 for Voting District 2 and 186 for Voting District 3.

COMPARISONS

Cells shaded grey indicate statistically significant differences between subgroups.

Question 1: Quality of Life (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Montpelier:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Montpelier as a place to live	89%	93%	89%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	79%	85%	81%
Montpelier as a place to raise children	84%	93%	92%
Montpelier as a place to work	71%	71%	68%
Montpelier as a place to retire	56%	63%	64%
The overall quality of life in Montpelier	83%	87%	84%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Montpelier as a whole:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Sense of community	74%	81%	81%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	78%	79%	80%
Overall appearance of Montpelier	84%	81%	82%
Cleanliness of Montpelier	85%	85%	83%
Overall quality of new development in Montpelier	48%	48%	48%
Variety of housing options	28%	29%	34%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Montpelier	62%	70%	66%
Shopping opportunities	34%	50%	50%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	62%	75%	66%
Recreational opportunities	73%	72%	72%
Employment opportunities	26%	19%	23%
Educational opportunities	58%	67%	58%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	67%	76%	74%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	75%	85%	83%
Opportunities to volunteer	69%	90%	84%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	71%	86%	79%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Montpelier as a whole:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Ease of car travel in Montpelier	45%	52%	48%
Ease of bus travel in Montpelier	28%	34%	37%
Ease of bicycle travel in Montpelier	48%	61%	47%
Ease of walking in Montpelier	86%	85%	76%
Availability of paths and walking trails	76%	73%	71%
Traffic flow on major streets	30%	32%	38%
Amount of public parking	18%	23%	24%
Availability of affordable quality housing	17%	23%	18%
Availability of affordable quality child care	33%	30%	25%
Availability of affordable quality health care	44%	51%	44%
Availability of affordable quality food	53%	71%	61%
Availability of preventive health services	45%	62%	49%
Air quality	81%	91%	81%
Quality of overall natural environment in Montpelier	81%	91%	80%
Overall image or reputation of Montpelier	82%	88%	82%

Question 3: Growth (Percent "too fast")			
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Montpelier over the past 2 years:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Population growth	15%	12%	14%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	4%	2%	4%
Jobs growth	2%	0%	2%

Question 4: Code Enforcement (Percent at least a "minor" problem)			
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Montpelier?	Voting District		
	1	2	3
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Montpelier?	86%	86%	88%

Question 5: Community Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)			
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Montpelier:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	92%	92%	86%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70%	77%	72%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	83%	87%	79%

Question 6: Personal Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)			
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
In your neighborhood during the day	97%	98%	97%
In your neighborhood after dark	85%	89%	86%
In Montpelier's downtown area during the day	98%	100%	96%
In Montpelier's downtown area after dark	81%	84%	74%

Questions 7 and 8: Crime Victimization and Reporting (Percent "yes")			
	Voting District		
	1	2	3
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	15%	15%	7%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	66%	87%	57%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors (Percent at least once in past 12 months)			
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Montpelier?	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Used Montpelier public libraries or their services	76%	86%	86%
Used Montpelier recreation centers	52%	63%	64%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	49%	50%	52%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	83%	87%	86%
Ridden a local bus within Montpelier	28%	27%	22%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	33%	52%	48%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	42%	45%	52%
Read the City Page in the Montpelier Bridge	85%	87%	88%
Visited the City of Montpelier Web site (at www.montpelier-vt.org)	52%	62%	53%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	91%	96%	98%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Montpelier	62%	63%	65%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Montpelier	43%	46%	48%
Participated in a club or civic group in Montpelier	38%	33%	45%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	96%	96%	96%

Question 10: Neighborliness (Percent at least once per month)			
	Voting District		
	1	2	3
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	83%	86%	86%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Montpelier:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Police services	87%	83%	84%
Fire services	96%	96%	97%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	96%	95%	96%
Crime prevention	80%	80%	74%
Fire prevention and education	78%	80%	75%
Traffic enforcement	55%	65%	63%
Street repair	33%	34%	27%
Street cleaning	69%	63%	59%
Street lighting	63%	73%	61%
Snow removal	61%	65%	62%
Sidewalk maintenance	48%	42%	42%
Traffic signal timing	59%	62%	63%
Bus or transit services	56%	49%	54%
Yard waste pick-up	48%	54%	61%
Storm drainage	49%	69%	50%
Drinking water	59%	65%	60%
Sewer services	72%	86%	79%
City parks	89%	91%	88%
Recreation programs or classes	83%	85%	80%
Recreation centers or facilities	73%	77%	70%
Land use, planning and zoning	49%	49%	43%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	37%	51%	40%
Animal control	45%	60%	54%
Economic development	35%	31%	34%
Health services	51%	67%	58%
Services to seniors	75%	79%	72%
Services to youth	67%	65%	60%
Services to low-income people	48%	65%	59%
Public library services	91%	92%	92%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Montpelier:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Public information services	63%	73%	70%
Public schools	78%	89%	75%
Cable television	57%	54%	51%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	55%	69%	65%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	69%	77%	74%

Question 12: Government Services Overall (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Voting District		
	1	2	3
The City of Montpelier	79%	85%	75%
The Federal Government	42%	39%	47%
The State Government	55%	55%	61%
Washington County Government	55%	51%	57%

Question 13: Contact with City Employees (Percent "yes")			
	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Montpelier within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	66%	69%	71%

Question 14: City Employees (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Montpelier in your most recent contact?	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Knowledge	91%	90%	83%
Responsiveness	85%	88%	76%
Courtesy	91%	93%	85%
Overall impression	86%	89%	81%

Question 15: Government Performance (Percent "excellent" or "good")

Please rate the following categories of Montpelier government performance:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
The value of services for the taxes paid to Montpelier	40%	50%	48%
The overall direction that Montpelier is taking	52%	61%	54%
The job Montpelier government does at welcoming citizen involvement	62%	64%	66%
The job Montpelier government does at listening to citizens	60%	56%	55%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity (Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely)

Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Recommend living in Montpelier to someone who asks	83%	88%	85%
Remain in Montpelier for the next five years	77%	82%	85%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy (Percent "somewhat" or "very" positive)

	Voting District		
	1	2	3
What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	11%	11%	14%

Question 18a: Policy Question 1 (Percent "somewhat" or "strongly" agree)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Voting District		
	1	2	3
The City should collect alternate revenues (e.g., sales tax, rooms/meals/alcohol tax) to reduce reliance on property taxes and bring in more funding from non-residents	71%	80%	77%
The City should consolidate municipal service (e.g., police, ambulance, dispatch, etc.) with neighboring communities even if it means a reduction in direct control of those services	45%	48%	52%
The City should add 500 new housing units within city limits (approximately 1,000 new residents) over the next 5-10 years	63%	59%	61%

Question 18b: Policy Question 2 (Percent "very important" or "essential")			
How important, if at all, is it for the City to maintain the following services at current levels	Voting District		
	1	2	3
Police	85%	78%	84%
Dispatch	87%	80%	80%
Fire	87%	86%	90%
Ambulance	91%	89%	87%
Roads	83%	88%	87%
Sidewalks	79%	86%	83%
Water	91%	90%	92%
Sewer	86%	92%	89%
Schools	85%	86%	83%
Parks	76%	74%	65%
Recreation	69%	65%	65%
Senior Services	75%	73%	71%
Library	71%	78%	73%
Planning	75%	68%	72%
Community Justice Center	55%	61%	61%
Capital Projects (i.e., road construction, buildings, bridges, etc.)	83%	81%	79%
Downtown (i.e., events, promotions, etc.)	64%	69%	61%