



900 Church St. • Lynchburg, VA 24504 • T: (434) 455-3990 • F: (434) 847-1536 • www.lynchburgva.gov

The City of Lynchburg, Virginia

Report of Geographic Subgroup Comparisons 2006



National Research Center, Inc.
3005 30th St. • Boulder, CO 80301 • T: (303) 444-7863 • F: (303) 444-1145 • www.n-r-c.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Survey Background.....	1
About The National Citizen Survey™	1
Understanding the Results	2
“Don’t Know” Responses	2
Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale	2
Understanding the Tables	2
Comparisons	4

SURVEY BACKGROUND

About The National Citizen Survey™

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

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

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

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

One of the add-on options that Lynchburg chose was to have crosstabulations of evaluative questions 1-16c by geographic areas, as defined by ward.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

“Don’t Know” Responses

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

Putting Evaluations onto a 100-Point Scale

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

Understanding the Tables

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

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

The 95 percent confidence level for this survey is generally no greater than plus or minus 5 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (411 completed surveys). For each Ward (1, 2, 3 or 4), the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 11% since sample sizes were approximately 114 for Ward 1, 81 for Ward 2, 91 for Ward 3, and 125 for Ward 4. Please see the table below for the number of completed surveys returned by Ward.

Response Rate and Returns by Ward			
	Number of Completed Surveys	Overall Percent of Sample	Response Rate
Ward 1	114	28%	40%
Ward 2	81	20%	29%
Ward 3	91	22%	32%
Ward 4	125	30%	44%
Total	411	100%	36%

COMPARISONS

Quality of Life Ratings

	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
How do you rate Lynchburg as a place to live?	69	59	61	72
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	80	40	63	70
How do you rate Lynchburg as a place to raise children?	75	59	56	70
How do you rate Lynchburg as a place to work?	50	44	45	53
How do you rate Lynchburg as a place to retire?	61	56	53	60
How do you rate the overall quality of life in Lynchburg?	65	53	60	61
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Characteristics of the Community

Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Lynchburg as a whole:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Sense of community	55	45	48	51
Openness and acceptance	39	39	36	49
Overall appearance of Lynchburg	61	50	56	56
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	41	44	43	46
Shopping opportunities	46	50	55	52
Air quality	63	52	61	63
Recreational opportunities	48	41	54	48
Job opportunities	35	29	36	37
Access to affordable quality housing	54	40	46	54
Access to affordable quality child care	50	40	41	51
Access to affordable quality health care	58	47	49	55
Ease of car travel in Lynchburg	56	55	47	53
Ease of bus travel in Lynchburg	48	42	49	38
Ease of bicycle travel in Lynchburg	42	36	41	36
Ease of walking in Lynchburg	49	44	48	46
Educational opportunities	66	55	59	68
Overall image/reputation of Lynchburg	58	50	51	58
Overall quality of new development in Lynchburg	51	52	50	55
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Ratings of Growth

Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Lynchburg over the past 2 years:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Population growth	59%	64%	52%	60%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.)	50%	42%	38%	55%
Jobs growth	29%	21%	21%	34%
Proportion of respondents rating as "About right"				

8

Ratings of Potential Problems in Lynchburg

To what degree, if at all, are the following in Lynchburg:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Crime	46	27	38	42
Drugs	34	13	28	31
Too much growth	60	63	61	56
Lack of growth	74	61	74	79
Graffiti	74	68	68	70
Noise	76	51	56	70
Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles	51	30	48	50
Taxes	36	41	42	37
Traffic congestion	43	41	46	46
Unsupervised youth	50	27	45	44
Homelessness	53	46	56	55
Weeds	64	41	60	59
Absence of communications from the City of Lynchburg translated into languages other than English	73	58	78	83
Unwanted local businesses	83	73	80	76
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Not a problem, 0=Major problem)				

Ratings of Safety from Various Problems

Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you in Lynchburg:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Violent crime	71	49	58	68
Property crimes	65	45	46	61
Fire	78	68	69	74
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Very safe, 0=Very unsafe)				

Ratings of Feelings of Safety in Various Areas

Please rate how safe you feel:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
In your neighborhood during the day	95	76	87	93
In your neighborhood after dark	85	55	65	80
In Lynchburg's downtown area during the day	78	77	70	78
In Lynchburg's downtown area after dark	43	48	29	39
In Lynchburg's parks during the day	75	73	73	69
In Lynchburg's parks after dark	32	35	24	29
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Very safe, 0=Very unsafe)				

Crime Victimization and Reporting

	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	4%	15%	19%	11%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	44%	71%	64%	79%
Percent of respondents whose households were victims of crime, and who reported the crime				

Use of Community Amenities

In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities?	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Used Lynchburg public libraries or their services	75%	71%	69%	71%
Used Lynchburg recreation centers	54%	45%	47%	42%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	47%	43%	47%	42%
Visited a Lynchburg park	87%	75%	87%	80%
Ridden a local bus within Lynchburg	22%	48%	26%	13%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	23%	34%	30%	28%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	58%	72%	39%	75%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	74%	64%	64%	71%
Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Lynchburg	65%	40%	57%	51%
Read the City Source Newsletter	35%	49%	39%	40%
Used the Internet for anything	84%	64%	79%	72%
Used the Internet to conduct business with Lynchburg	41%	33%	46%	42%
Purchased an item over the Internet	77%	48%	64%	54%
Proportion of respondents engaging in activity at least once in last 12 months				

Quality of Service Ratings				
How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Police services	67	57	63	68
Fire services	79	77	75	77
Ambulance/emergency medical services	74	69	68	76
Crime prevention	63	42	51	56
Fire prevention and education	64	61	58	68
Traffic enforcement	53	54	54	61
Garbage collection	71	59	67	66
Recycling	56	45	54	52
Yard waste pick-up	54	51	57	54
Street repair	46	39	40	42
Street cleaning	51	38	46	49
Street lighting	55	41	51	56
Snow removal	55	49	52	54
Sidewalk maintenance	52	41	44	46
Traffic signal timing	50	45	42	40
Amount of public parking	48	38	41	39
Bus/transit services	56	52	60	47
Storm drainage	55	51	54	54
Drinking water	58	49	54	54
Sewer services	56	50	58	55
City parks	56	55	63	56
Recreation programs or classes	53	52	62	55

Quality of Service Ratings				
How do you rate the quality of each of the following services?	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Range/variety of recreation programs and classes	50	48	58	52
Recreation centers/facilities	57	51	55	47
Accessibility of parks	62	58	63	56
Accessibility of recreation centers/facilities	56	54	62	49
Appearance/maintenance of parks	58	56	67	56
Appearance of recreation centers/facilities	57	54	64	50
Land use, planning and zoning	35	45	31	30
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	38	26	37	35
Animal control	52	38	54	50
Economic development	46	45	47	45
Health services	57	55	56	56
Services to seniors	51	51	54	53
Services to youth	44	39	46	42
Services to low-income people	43	44	45	49
Public library services	64	62	68	70
Variety of library materials	64	58	64	68
Public information services	58	53	62	58
Municipal courts	60	57	61	58
Public schools	58	59	57	55
Cable television	45	28	42	32
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Ratings of Various Levels of Government

Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by...	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
The City of Lynchburg	57	54	54	55
The Federal Government	47	49	48	42
The State Government	47	51	56	46
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Proportion of Population Having Contact with City Employees

Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Lynchburg within the last 12 months?	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
56%	63%	66%	68%	
Percent of respondents who reported contact with a City employee in the last 12 months				

Ratings of Contact with City Employees

What was your impression of employees of the City of Lynchburg in your most recent contact?	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Knowledge	63	64	72	66
Responsiveness	69	61	68	61
Courtesy	67	64	71	66
Overall Impression	64	65	66	62
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor)				

Ratings of Public Trust

Please rate the following statements:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
I receive good value for the City of Lynchburg taxes I pay	56	49	45	57
I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Lynchburg is taking	60	53	52	60
The City of Lynchburg government welcomes citizen involvement	57	60	57	60
The City of Lynchburg government listens to citizens	48	56	47	52
Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Strongly agree, 0=Strongly disagree)				

Perceptions of the Economy

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Ward			
	1	2	3	4
Very positive	3%	4%	4%	2%
Somewhat positive	24%	24%	14%	17%
Neutral	39%	40%	49%	48%
Somewhat negative	29%	23%	21%	27%
Very negative	5%	9%	12%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Policy Question #1

Ward

1 2 3 4

Citizens now have the opportunity to conduct business over the Internet with the City. Such business includes applying for jobs with the City, paying utility bills, paying parking tickets and requesting services. Please indicate how likely or unlikely you

49% 51% 50% 40%

Percent rating "Somewhat" or "Very Likely"

Policy Question #2

Ward

1 2 3 4

To what degree do you support or oppose using public funds to provide incentives to businesses to boost economic development?

57% 56% 59% 61%

Percent rating "Somewhat" or "Strongly support"

Policy Question #3

Ward

1 2 3 4

To what degree would you support or oppose the City in providing wireless Internet services for a fee to businesses or residents?

51% 54% 59% 55%

Percent rating "Somewhat" or "Strongly support"