



# CITY OF SURPRISE, AZ 2010

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 Surprise 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 Surprise 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 five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (409 completed surveys). For each of the three geographic areas the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 10% since sample sizes were approximately 196 for the retiree communities, 92 for residential area 1 and 117 for residential area 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 Surprise:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Surprise as a place to live	88%	95%	92%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	96%	88%	77%
Surprise as a place to raise children	73%	82%	83%
Surprise as a place to work	39%	45%	61%
Surprise as a place to retire	91%	75%	77%
The overall quality of life in Surprise	87%	89%	87%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Surprise as a whole:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Sense of community	73%	73%	60%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	79%	81%	77%
Overall appearance of Surprise	78%	85%	85%
Cleanliness of Surprise	84%	87%	86%
Overall quality of new development in Surprise	65%	74%	74%
Variety of housing options	79%	76%	79%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Surprise	70%	65%	65%
Shopping opportunities	46%	46%	65%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	35%	42%	38%
Recreational opportunities	81%	64%	69%
Employment opportunities	19%	24%	23%
Educational opportunities	53%	43%	39%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	73%	59%	53%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	86%	75%	83%
Opportunities to volunteer	82%	66%	73%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	68%	58%	61%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Surprise as a whole:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Ease of car travel in Surprise	47%	43%	35%
Ease of bus travel in Surprise	9%	21%	12%
Ease of bicycle travel in Surprise	29%	49%	44%
Ease of walking in Surprise	60%	57%	55%
Availability of paths and walking trails	47%	56%	46%
Traffic flow on major streets	27%	34%	27%
Amount of public parking	53%	62%	58%
Availability of affordable quality housing	70%	69%	74%
Availability of affordable quality child care	50%	50%	64%
Availability of affordable quality health care	75%	65%	60%
Availability of affordable quality food	76%	80%	73%
Availability of preventive health services	72%	69%	67%
Air quality	52%	66%	64%
Quality of overall natural environment in Surprise	65%	69%	69%
Overall image or reputation of Surprise	68%	74%	80%

Question 3: Growth (Percent "too fast")			
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Surprise over the past 2 years:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Population growth	57%	47%	52%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	18%	9%	11%
Jobs growth	8%	1%	0%

Question 4: Code Enforcement (Percent at least a "minor" problem)			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Surprise?	76%	80%	81%

Question 5: Community Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)			
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Surprise:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	83%	82%	82%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	76%	65%	64%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	80%	83%	78%

Question 6: Personal Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)			
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
In your neighborhood during the day	95%	92%	90%
In your neighborhood after dark	92%	80%	75%
In Surprise's downtown area during the day	79%	88%	87%
In Surprise's downtown area after dark	50%	65%	70%

Questions 7 and 8: Crime Victimization and Reporting (Percent "yes")			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	3%	12%	6%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	72%	96%	100%

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 Surprise?	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Used Surprise public libraries or their services	72%	69%	72%
Used Surprise recreation centers	49%	66%	55%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	32%	56%	38%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	66%	96%	82%
Ridden a local bus within Surprise	2%	3%	8%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	28%	18%	16%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	62%	36%	43%
Read Surprise Newsletter (Progress Magazine)	91%	96%	83%
Visited the City of Surprise Web site (at www.surpriseaz.com)	53%	79%	72%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	88%	95%	88%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Surprise	44%	28%	23%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Surprise	54%	43%	41%
Participated in a club or civic group in Surprise	47%	13%	18%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	98%	90%	83%

Question 10: Neighborliness (Percent at least once per month)			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
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)?	96%	79%	75%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Surprise:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Police services	94%	84%	76%
Fire services	97%	94%	95%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	98%	86%	93%
Crime prevention	84%	68%	73%
Fire prevention and education	91%	83%	75%
Municipal courts	75%	81%	90%
Traffic enforcement	65%	75%	66%
Street repair	37%	50%	48%
Street cleaning	75%	76%	80%
Street lighting	80%	66%	67%
Sidewalk maintenance	71%	62%	73%
Traffic signal timing	45%	47%	54%
Bus or transit services	19%	37%	15%
Garbage collection	99%	93%	88%
Recycling	90%	87%	85%
Yard waste pick-up	85%	65%	77%
Storm drainage	72%	54%	69%
Drinking water	73%	57%	64%
Sewer services	85%	76%	78%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	89%	75%	80%
City parks	85%	82%	78%
Recreation programs or classes	83%	73%	75%
Recreation centers or facilities	83%	83%	76%
Land use, planning and zoning	49%	62%	52%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	54%	47%	51%
Animal control	75%	71%	70%
Economic development	45%	49%	41%
Health services	80%	70%	68%

Question 11: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Surprise:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Services to seniors	80%	79%	71%
Services to youth	62%	70%	74%
Services to low-income people	59%	47%	59%
Public library services	89%	85%	89%
Public information services	78%	70%	73%
Public schools	62%	57%	59%
Cable television	72%	76%	75%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	67%	50%	50%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	49%	62%	62%

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?	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
The City of Surprise	77%	78%	77%
The Federal Government	42%	40%	35%
The State Government	30%	43%	34%
Maricopa County Government	41%	50%	48%

Question 13: Contact with City Employees (Percent "yes")			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Surprise within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	26%	55%	47%

Question 14: City Employees (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Surprise in your most recent contact?	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Knowledge	80%	90%	90%
Responsiveness	88%	82%	90%
Courtesy	93%	84%	91%
Overall impression	85%	82%	91%

Question 15: Government Performance (Percent "excellent" or "good")			
Please rate the following categories of Surprise government performance:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
The value of services for the taxes paid to Surprise	59%	59%	54%
The overall direction that Surprise is taking	57%	70%	52%
The job Surprise government does at welcoming citizen involvement	50%	57%	48%
The job Surprise government does at listening to citizens	41%	54%	45%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity (Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely)			
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Recommend living in Surprise to someone who asks	95%	91%	90%
Remain in Surprise for the next five years	90%	90%	86%

Question 17: Impact of the Economy (Percent "somewhat" or "very" positive)			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
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:	13%	12%	17%

Question 18a: Policy Question 1 (Percent "somewhat" or "strongly" support)			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
To what extent do you support or oppose increasing taxes and/or fees to ensure that City services continue to be provided at current levels?	41%	56%	49%

Question 18b: Policy Question 2 (Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely)			
	Area		
	Retiree Communities	Residential Area 1	Residential Area 2
Use a local bus service throughout the City	19%	34%	30%
Pay a fee to ride a local bus service throughout the City	27%	36%	40%
Use commuter rail along Grand Avenue to a light rail connection in Phoenix, if you could leave your vehicle at a Park and Ride lot in Surprise	59%	52%	59%