



**BOROUGH OF  
STATE COLLEGE, PA  
2011**

**Report of Geographic Subgroup Comparisons**

**C O N T E N T S**

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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 Borough of State College 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. Borough of State College 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.

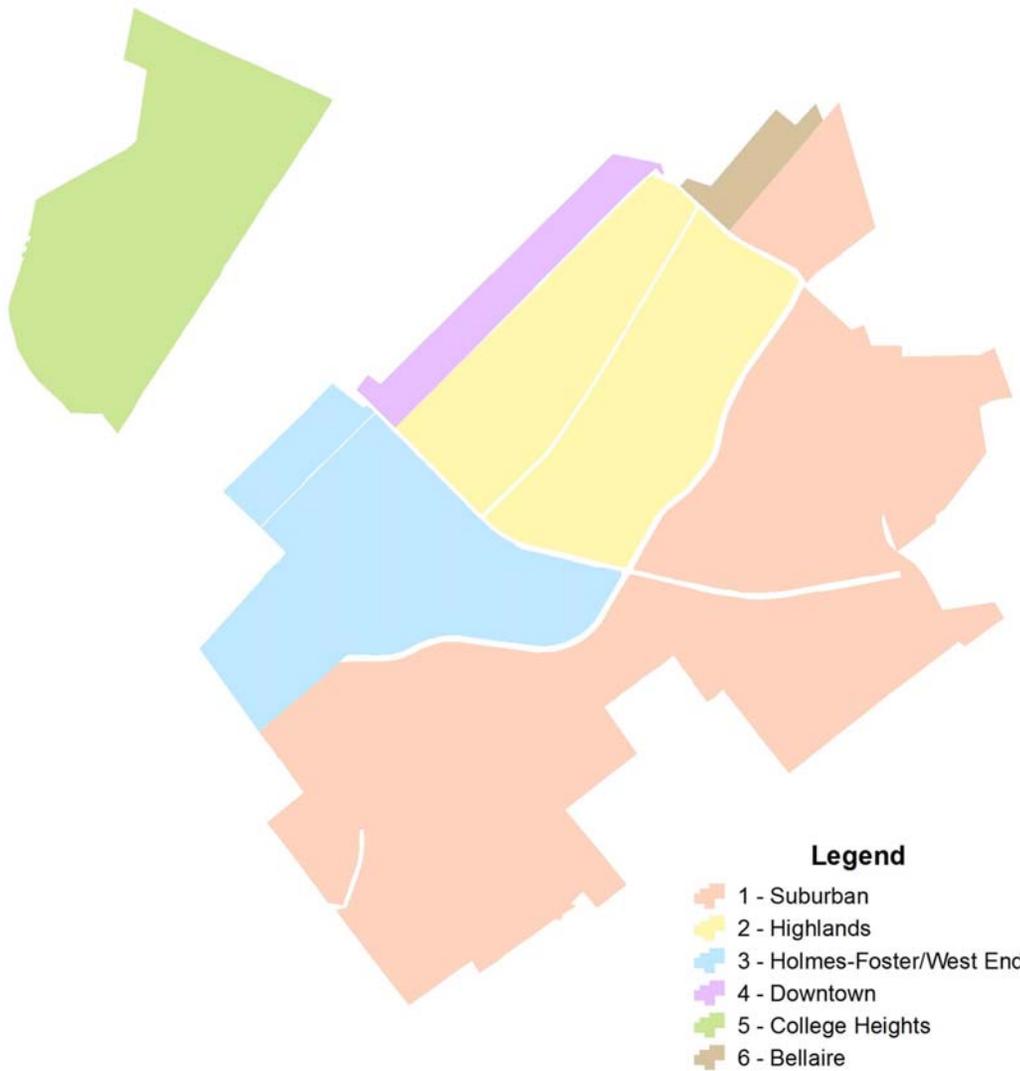
### UNDERSTANDING THE TABLES

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 (584 completed surveys). For each neighborhood, the margin of error rises to approximately + or - 15% since sample sizes for each neighborhood were approximately 243 for Suburban, 160 for Highlands, 62 for Holmes-Foster/West End, 77 for Downtown/Bellaire and 42 for College Heights.

### The National Citizen Survey™ The Borough of State College, PA 2011 Geographic Comparison Areas



## 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 State College:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
State College as a place to live	87%	89%	85%	88%	93%	88%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	86%	71%	68%	73%	100%	78%
State College as a place to raise children	82%	61%	57%	57%	91%	70%
State College as a place to work	69%	65%	65%	65%	71%	67%
State College as a place to retire	72%	50%	61%	47%	82%	60%
The overall quality of life in State College	86%	80%	80%	83%	93%	83%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to State College as a whole:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Sense of community	70%	72%	66%	76%	49%	70%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	72%	60%	64%	67%	68%	67%
Overall appearance of State College	84%	82%	69%	77%	87%	81%
Cleanliness of State College	83%	71%	61%	70%	90%	76%
Overall quality of new development in State College	63%	52%	37%	62%	35%	56%
Variety of housing options	44%	47%	32%	56%	50%	46%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in State College	65%	72%	53%	77%	52%	68%
Shopping opportunities	46%	45%	38%	50%	35%	45%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	69%	62%	59%	74%	70%	67%
Recreational opportunities	72%	68%	72%	79%	75%	72%
Employment opportunities	43%	59%	45%	67%	33%	51%
Educational opportunities	92%	96%	95%	95%	100%	94%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	77%	80%	70%	95%	81%	81%

Question 2: Community Characteristics (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to State College as a whole:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	88%	74%	72%	87%	85%	82%
Opportunities to volunteer	85%	79%	86%	91%	82%	84%
Opportunities to participate in community matters	75%	68%	68%	82%	71%	73%
Ease of car travel in State College	69%	54%	54%	43%	86%	60%
Ease of bus travel in State College	69%	69%	69%	71%	83%	70%
Ease of bicycle travel in State College	69%	66%	50%	74%	74%	68%
Ease of walking in State College	85%	88%	92%	96%	93%	89%
Availability of paths and walking trails	81%	77%	76%	81%	80%	79%
Traffic flow on major streets	54%	36%	33%	49%	60%	46%
Amount of public parking	42%	26%	31%	24%	53%	34%
Availability of affordable quality housing	31%	35%	24%	29%	53%	32%
Availability of affordable quality child care	48%	34%	44%	19%	61%	42%
Availability of affordable quality health care	58%	48%	54%	45%	68%	55%
Availability of affordable quality food	71%	62%	67%	63%	71%	67%
Availability of preventive health services	70%	64%	55%	62%	80%	66%
Air quality	87%	81%	81%	79%	92%	84%
Quality of overall natural environment in State College	89%	80%	81%	73%	95%	83%
Overall image or reputation of State College	81%	83%	76%	83%	85%	82%

Question 3: Growth (Percent of respondents)						
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in State College over the past 2 years:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Population growth too fast	41%	34%	44%	36%	45%	39%
Retail growth too slow	39%	42%	33%	23%	36%	36%
Job growth too slow	73%	58%	78%	46%	53%	63%

Question 4: Code Enforcement (Percent a "major" problem)						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicle a major problem in State College	1%	0%	3%	1%	11%	2%

Question 5: Community Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in State College:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	82%	85%	72%	81%	95%	82%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	70%	73%	67%	65%	75%	70%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	86%	91%	82%	89%	97%	88%

Question 6: Personal Safety (Percent "very" or "somewhat" safe)						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
In your neighborhood during the day	99%	98%	96%	100%	100%	99%
In your neighborhood after dark	80%	75%	64%	82%	89%	78%
In State College's downtown area during the day	97%	99%	91%	100%	100%	98%
In State College's downtown area after dark	54%	70%	49%	79%	62%	64%

Question 7: Contact with Police Department (Percent a "yes")						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the Borough of State College Police Department within the last 12 months?	33%	38%	32%	37%	41%	36%

Question 8: Ratings of Contact with Police Department (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the Borough of State College Police Department?	90%	66%	76%	69%	94%	77%

Questions 9 and 10: Crime Victimization and Reporting (Percent "yes")						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
During the past 12 months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	9%	10%	5%	9%	9%	9%
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	85%	81%	100%	74%	77%	82%

Question 11: 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 State College?	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Used State College public libraries or their services	72%	52%	69%	42%	78%	60%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	59%	60%	49%	57%	73%	59%
Visited a neighborhood park or Borough park	92%	79%	87%	84%	96%	87%
Ridden a local bus within State College	73%	89%	74%	97%	37%	80%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	22%	14%	20%	15%	11%	18%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other Borough-sponsored public meeting on cable television, the Internet or other media	43%	23%	31%	22%	48%	32%
Read State College Newsletter	63%	54%	50%	52%	75%	58%
Visited the Borough of State College Web site (at www.statecollegepa.us)	61%	50%	60%	44%	68%	55%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	95%	90%	98%	89%	99%	93%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in State College	54%	54%	44%	60%	50%	54%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in State College	50%	38%	45%	40%	67%	45%
Participated in a club or civic group in State College	43%	43%	34%	48%	30%	42%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	95%	92%	94%	83%	98%	92%

Question 12: Neighborliness (Percent at least several times a week)						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Visit with neighbors at least several times a week	35%	29%	22%	36%	45%	33%

Question 13: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in State College:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Police services	82%	77%	81%	82%	91%	81%
Fire services	98%	91%	89%	95%	100%	95%
Ambulance or emergency medical services	96%	94%	92%	90%	100%	94%
Crime prevention	77%	63%	72%	73%	69%	71%
Fire prevention and education	84%	74%	77%	72%	100%	79%
Municipal courts	74%	65%	56%	50%	93%	67%
Traffic enforcement	61%	61%	66%	68%	64%	63%
Street repair	56%	53%	53%	58%	47%	55%
Street cleaning	81%	78%	76%	74%	79%	78%
Street lighting	55%	61%	55%	64%	65%	59%
Snow removal	67%	53%	69%	62%	83%	63%
Sidewalk maintenance	69%	45%	48%	56%	69%	57%
Traffic signal timing	57%	54%	52%	64%	50%	56%
Bus or transit services	79%	76%	82%	91%	75%	80%
Garbage collection	93%	89%	97%	86%	95%	91%
Recycling	85%	76%	82%	77%	86%	81%
Yard waste pick-up	85%	66%	74%	76%	99%	79%
Storm drainage	78%	59%	61%	73%	95%	72%
Drinking water	64%	55%	51%	57%	72%	59%
Sewer services	85%	75%	77%	80%	85%	81%
Power (electric and/or gas) utility	75%	69%	60%	67%	80%	71%
Borough parks	95%	91%	93%	90%	93%	93%
Recreation programs or classes	84%	76%	86%	81%	77%	81%
Recreation centers or facilities	79%	74%	81%	75%	76%	77%
Land use, planning and zoning	56%	52%	47%	66%	52%	56%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc.)	73%	65%	57%	75%	66%	69%
Animal control	79%	71%	82%	87%	97%	80%
Economic development	60%	59%	41%	74%	61%	60%

Question 13: Service Quality (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in State College:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Health services	73%	73%	67%	83%	93%	75%
Services to seniors	83%	90%	71%	86%	86%	84%
Services to youth	79%	77%	62%	78%	75%	76%
Services to low-income people	48%	74%	47%	58%	62%	56%
Public library services	93%	90%	88%	88%	100%	91%
Public information services	78%	82%	56%	79%	87%	77%
Public schools	91%	93%	87%	84%	89%	90%
Cable television	62%	65%	57%	63%	71%	63%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	70%	49%	47%	69%	86%	62%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	62%	54%	56%	66%	62%	60%

Question 14: Government Services Overall (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
The Borough of State College	83%	80%	67%	76%	86%	79%
The Federal Government	44%	40%	40%	56%	48%	45%
The State Government	38%	33%	37%	44%	44%	38%
Centre County Government	69%	71%	66%	66%	70%	69%

Question 15: Recommendation and Longevity (Percent "somewhat" or "very" likely)						
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Recommend living in State College to someone who asks	85%	83%	79%	85%	99%	84%
Remain in State College for the next five years	58%	27%	38%	27%	72%	42%

Question 16: Impact of the Economy (Percent "somewhat" or "very" positive)						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
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:	6%	12%	13%	11%	13%	10%

Question 17: Contact with Fire Department (Percent a "yes")						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the Borough of State College Fire Department within the last 12 months?	6%	8%	6%	4%	2%	6%

Question 18: Ratings of Contact with Fire Department (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
What was your overall impression of your most recent contact with the Borough of State College Fire Department?	76%	100%	100%	70%	100%	87%

Question 19: Contact with Borough Employees (Percent "yes")						
	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Have you had any in-person, phone or email with an employee of the Borough of State College within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	40%	34%	35%	33%	56%	38%

Question 20: Borough Employees (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the Borough of State College in your most recent contact?	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
Knowledge	83%	84%	63%	85%	90%	82%
Responsiveness	84%	83%	73%	92%	81%	83%
Courtesy	80%	71%	67%	87%	96%	79%
Overall impression	79%	73%	73%	88%	81%	79%

Question 21: Government Performance (Percent "excellent" or "good")						
Please rate the following categories of State College government performance:	Neighborhood					
	Suburban	Highlands	Holmes-Foster/West End	Downtown/Bellaire	College Heights	Overall
The value of services for the taxes paid to State College	66%	60%	57%	65%	61%	63%
The overall direction that State College is taking	64%	60%	57%	68%	60%	63%
The job State College government does at welcoming citizen involvement	54%	65%	47%	59%	51%	57%